A Will Eternal

0000 awe-chapter-1
0001 awe-chapter-2
0002 awe-chapter-3
0003 awe-chapter-4
0004 awe-chapter-5
0005 awe-chapter-6
0006 awe-chapter-7
0007 awe-chapter-8
0008 awe-chapter-9
0009 awe-chapter-10
0010 awe-chapter-11
0011 awe-chapter-12
0012 awe-chapter-13
0013 awe-chapter-14
0014 awe-chapter-15
0015 awe-chapter-16
0016 awe-chapter-17
0017 awe-chapter-18
0018 awe-chapter-19
0019 awe-chapter-20
0020 awe-chapter-21
0021 awe-chapter-22
0022 awe-chapter-23
0023 awe-chapter-24
0024 awe-chapter-25
0025 awe-chapter-26
0026 awe-chapter-27
0027 awe-chapter-28
0028 awe-chapter-29
0029 awe-chapter-30
0030 awe-chapter-31

0031 awe-chapter-32
0032 awe-chapter-33
0033 awe-chapter-34
0034 awe-chapter-35
0035 awe-chapter-36
0036 awe-chapter-37
0037 awe-chapter-38
0038 awe-chapter-39
0039 awe-chapter-40
0040 awe-chapter-41
0041 awe-chapter-42
0042 awe-chapter-43
0043 awe-chapter-44
0044 awe-chapter-45
0045 awe-chapter-46
0046 awe-chapter-47
0047 awe-chapter-48
0048 awe-chapter-49
0049 awe-chapter-50
0050 awe-chapter-51
0051 awe-chapter-52
0052 awe-chapter-53
0053 awe-chapter-54
0054 awe-chapter-55
0055 awe-chapter-56
0056 awe-chapter-57
0057 awe-chapter-58
0058 awe-chapter-59
0059 awe-chapter-60
0060 awe-chapter-61
0061 awe-chapter-62
0062 awe-chapter-63
0063 awe-chapter-64
0064 awe-chapter-65
0065 awe-chapter-66
0066 awe-chapter-67

0067 awe-chapter-68
0068 awe-chapter-69
0069 awe-chapter-70
0070 awe-chapter-71
0071 awe-chapter-72
0072 awe-chapter-73
0073 awe-chapter-74
0074 awe-chapter-75
0075 awe-chapter-76
0076 awe-chapter-77
0077 awe-chapter-78
0078 awe-chapter-79
0079 awe-chapter-80
0080 awe-chapter-81
0081 awe-chapter-82
0082 awe-chapter-83
0083 awe-chapter-84
0084 awe-chapter-85
0085 awe-chapter-86
0086 awe-chapter-87
0087 awe-chapter-88
0088 awe-chapter-89
0089 awe-chapter-90
0090 awe-chapter-91
0091 awe-chapter-92
0092 awe-chapter-93
0093 awe-chapter-94
0094 awe-chapter-95
0095 awe-chapter-96
0096 awe-chapter-97
0097 awe-chapter-98
0098 awe-chapter-99
0099 awe-chapter-100
0100 awe-chapter-101
0101 awe-chapter-102
0102 awe-chapter-103

0103 awe-chapter-104
0104 awe-chapter-105
0105 awe-chapter-106
0106 awe-chapter-107
0107 awe-chapter-108
0108 awe-chapter-109
0109 awe-chapter-110
0110 awe-chapter-111
0111 awe-chapter-112
0112 awe-chapter-113
0113 awe-chapter-114
0114 awe-chapter-115
0115 awe-chapter-116
0116 awe-chapter-117
0117 awe-chapter-118
0118 awe-chapter-119
0119 awe-chapter-120
0120 awe-chapter-121
0121 awe-chapter-122
0122 awe-chapter-123
0123 awe-chapter-124
0124 awe-chapter-125
0125 awe-chapter-126
0126 awe-chapter-127
0127 awe-chapter-128
0128 awe-chapter-129
0129 awe-chapter-130
0130 awe-chapter-131
0131 awe-chapter-132
0132 awe-chapter-133
0133 awe-chapter-134
0134 awe-chapter-135
0135 awe-chapter-136
0136 awe-chapter-137
0137 awe-chapter-138
0138 awe-chapter-139

0139 awe-chapter-140
0140 awe-chapter-141
0141 awe-chapter-142
0142 awe-chapter-143
0143 awe-chapter-144
0144 awe-chapter-145
0145 awe-chapter-146
0146 awe-chapter-147
0147 awe-chapter-148
0148 awe-chapter-149
0149 awe-chapter-150
0150 awe-chapter-151
0151 awe-chapter-152
0152 awe-chapter-153
0153 awe-chapter-154
0154 awe-chapter-155
0155 awe-chapter-156
0156 awe-chapter-157
0157 awe-chapter-158
0158 awe-chapter-159
0159 awe-chapter-160
0160 awe-chapter-161
0161 awe-chapter-162
0162 awe-chapter-163
0163 awe-chapter-164
0164 awe-chapter-165
0165 awe-chapter-166
0166 awe-chapter-167
0167 awe-chapter-168
0168 awe-chapter-169
0169 awe-chapter-170
0170 awe-chapter-171
0171 awe-chapter-172
0172 awe-chapter-173
0173 awe-chapter-174
0174 awe-chapter-175

0175 awe-chapter-176
0176 awe-chapter-177
0177 awe-chapter-178
0178 awe-chapter-179
0179 awe-chapter-180
0180 awe-chapter-181
0181 awe-chapter-182
0182 awe-chapter-183
0183 awe-chapter-184
0184 awe-chapter-185
0185 awe-chapter-186
0186 awe-chapter-187
0187 awe-chapter-188
0188 awe-chapter-189
0189 awe-chapter-190
0190 awe-chapter-191
0191 awe-chapter-192
0192 awe-chapter-193
0193 awe-chapter-194
0194 awe-chapter-195
0195 awe-chapter-196
0196 awe-chapter-197
0197 awe-chapter-198
0198 awe-chapter-199
0199 awe-chapter-200
0200 awe-chapter-201
0201 awe-chapter-202
0202 awe-chapter-203
0203 awe-chapter-204
0204 awe-chapter-205
0205 awe-chapter-206
0206 awe-chapter-207
0207 awe-chapter-208
0208 awe-chapter-209
0209 awe-chapter-210
0210 awe-chapter-211

0211 awe-chapter-212
0212 awe-chapter-213
0213 awe-chapter-214
0214 awe-chapter-215
0215 awe-chapter-216
0216 awe-chapter-217
0217 awe-chapter-218
0218 awe-chapter-219
0219 awe-chapter-220
0220 awe-chapter-221
0221 awe-chapter-222
0222 awe-chapter-223
0223 awe-chapter-224
0224 awe-chapter-225
0225 awe-chapter-226
0226 awe-chapter-227
0227 awe-chapter-228
0228 awe-chapter-229
0229 awe-chapter-230
0230 awe-chapter-231
0231 awe-chapter-232
0232 awe-chapter-233
0233 awe-chapter-234
0234 awe-chapter-235
0235 awe-chapter-236
0236 awe-chapter-237
0237 awe-chapter-238
0238 awe-chapter-239
0239 awe-chapter-240
0240 awe-chapter-241
0241 awe-chapter-242
0242 awe-chapter-243
0243 awe-chapter-244
0244 awe-chapter-245
0245 awe-chapter-246
0246 awe-chapter-247

[0247 awe-chapter-248]
[0248 awe-chapter-249]
[0249 awe-chapter-250]
[0250 awe-chapter-251]
[0251 awe-chapter-252]
[0252 awe-chapter-253]
[0253 awe-chapter-254]
[0254 awe-chapter-255]
[0255 awe-chapter-256]
[0256 awe-chapter-257]
[0257 awe-chapter-258]
[0258 awe-chapter-259]
[0259 awe-chapter-260]
[0260 awe-chapter-261]
[0261 awe-chapter-262]
[0262 awe-chapter-263]
[0263 awe-chapter-264]
[0264 awe-chapter-265]
[0265 awe-chapter-266]
[0266 awe-chapter-267]
[0267 awe-chapter-268]
[0268 awe-chapter-269]
[0269 awe-chapter-270]
[0270 awe-chapter-271]
[0271 awe-chapter-272]
[0272 awe-chapter-273]
[0273 awe-chapter-274]
[0274 awe-chapter-275]
[0275 awe-chapter-276]
[0276 awe-chapter-277]
[0277 awe-chapter-278]
[0278 awe-chapter-279]
[0279 awe-chapter-280]
[0280 awe-chapter-281]
[0281 awe-chapter-282]
[0282 awe-chapter-283]

0283 awe-chapter-284
0284 awe-chapter-285
0285 awe-chapter-286
0286 awe-chapter-287
0287 awe-chapter-288
0288 awe-chapter-289
0289 awe-chapter-290
0290 awe-chapter-291
0291 awe-chapter-292
0292 awe-chapter-293
0293 awe-chapter-294
0294 awe-chapter-295
0295 awe-chapter-296
0296 awe-chapter-297
0297 awe-chapter-298
0298 awe-chapter-299
0299 awe-chapter-300
0300 awe-chapter-301
0301 awe-chapter-302
0302 awe-chapter-303
0303 awe-chapter-304
0304 awe-chapter-305
0305 awe-chapter-306
0306 awe-chapter-307
0307 awe-chapter-308
0308 awe-chapter-309
0309 awe-chapter-310
0310 awe-chapter-311
0311 awe-chapter-312
0312 awe-chapter-313
0313 awe-chapter-314
0314 awe-chapter-315
0315 awe-chapter-316
0316 awe-chapter-317
0317 awe-chapter-318
0318 awe-chapter-319

0319 awe-chapter-320
0320 awe-chapter-321
0321 awe-chapter-322
0322 awe-chapter-323
0323 awe-chapter-324
0324 awe-chapter-325
0325 awe-chapter-326
0326 awe-chapter-327
0327 awe-chapter-328
0328 awe-chapter-329
0329 awe-chapter-330
0330 awe-chapter-331
0331 awe-chapter-332
0332 awe-chapter-333
0333 awe-chapter-334
0334 awe-chapter-335
0335 awe-chapter-336
0336 awe-chapter-337
0337 awe-chapter-338
0338 awe-chapter-339
0339 awe-chapter-340
0340 awe-chapter-341
0341 awe-chapter-342
0342 awe-chapter-343
0343 awe-chapter-344
0344 awe-chapter-345
0345 awe-chapter-346
0346 awe-chapter-347
0347 awe-chapter-348
0348 awe-chapter-349
0349 awe-chapter-350
0350 awe-chapter-351
0351 awe-chapter-352
0352 awe-chapter-353
0353 awe-chapter-354
0354 awe-chapter-355

0355 awe-chapter-356
0356 awe-chapter-357
0357 awe-chapter-358
0358 awe-chapter-359
0359 awe-chapter-360
0360 awe-chapter-361
0361 awe-chapter-362
0362 awe-chapter-363
0363 awe-chapter-364
0364 awe-chapter-365
0365 awe-chapter-366
0366 awe-chapter-367
0367 awe-chapter-368
0368 awe-chapter-369
0369 awe-chapter-370
0370 awe-chapter-371
0371 awe-chapter-372
0372 awe-chapter-373
0373 awe-chapter-374
0374 awe-chapter-375
0375 awe-chapter-376
0376 awe-chapter-377
0377 awe-chapter-378
0378 awe-chapter-379
0379 awe-chapter-380
0380 awe-chapter-381
0381 awe-chapter-382
0382 awe-chapter-383
0383 awe-chapter-384
0384 awe-chapter-385
0385 awe-chapter-386
0386 awe-chapter-387
0387 awe-chapter-388
0388 awe-chapter-389
0389 awe-chapter-390
0390 awe-chapter-391

0391 awe-chapter-392
0392 awe-chapter-393
0393 awe-chapter-394
0394 awe-chapter-395
0395 awe-chapter-396
0396 awe-chapter-397
0397 awe-chapter-398
0398 awe-chapter-399
0399 awe-chapter-400
0400 awe-chapter-401
0401 awe-chapter-402
0402 awe-chapter-403
0403 awe-chapter-404
0404 awe-chapter-405
0405 awe-chapter-406
0406 awe-chapter-407
0407 awe-chapter-408
0408 awe-chapter-409
0409 awe-chapter-410
0410 awe-chapter-411
0411 awe-chapter-412
0412 awe-chapter-413
0413 awe-chapter-414
0414 awe-chapter-415
0415 awe-chapter-416
0416 awe-chapter-417
0417 awe-chapter-418
0418 awe-chapter-419
0419 awe-chapter-420
0420 awe-chapter-421
0421 awe-chapter-422
0422 awe-chapter-423
0423 awe-chapter-424
0424 awe-chapter-425
0425 awe-chapter-426
0426 awe-chapter-427

0427 awe-chapter-428
0428 awe-chapter-429
0429 awe-chapter-430
0430 awe-chapter-431
0431 awe-chapter-432
0432 awe-chapter-433
0433 awe-chapter-434
0434 awe-chapter-435
0435 awe-chapter-436
0436 awe-chapter-437
0437 awe-chapter-438
0438 awe-chapter-439
0439 awe-chapter-440
0440 awe-chapter-441
0441 awe-chapter-442
0442 awe-chapter-443
0443 awe-chapter-444
0444 awe-chapter-445
0445 awe-chapter-446
0446 awe-chapter-447
0447 awe-chapter-448
0448 awe-chapter-449
0449 awe-chapter-450
0450 awe-chapter-451
0451 awe-chapter-452
0452 awe-chapter-453
0453 awe-chapter-454
0454 awe-chapter-455
0455 awe-chapter-456
0456 awe-chapter-457
0457 awe-chapter-458
0458 awe-chapter-459
0459 awe-chapter-460
0460 awe-chapter-461
0461 awe-chapter-462
0462 awe-chapter-463

0463 awe-chapter-464
0464 awe-chapter-465
0465 awe-chapter-466
0466 awe-chapter-467
0467 awe-chapter-468
0468 awe-chapter-469
0469 awe-chapter-470
0470 awe-chapter-471
0471 awe-chapter-472
0472 awe-chapter-473
0473 awe-chapter-474
0474 awe-chapter-475
0475 awe-chapter-476
0476 awe-chapter-477
0477 awe-chapter-478
0478 awe-chapter-479
0479 awe-chapter-480
0480 awe-chapter-481
0481 awe-chapter-482
0482 awe-chapter-483
0483 awe-chapter-484
0484 awe-chapter-485
0485 awe-chapter-486
0486 awe-chapter-487
0487 awe-chapter-488
0488 awe-chapter-489
0489 awe-chapter-490
0490 awe-chapter-491
0491 awe-chapter-492
0492 awe-chapter-493
0493 awe-chapter-494
0494 awe-chapter-495
0495 awe-chapter-496
0496 awe-chapter-497
0497 awe-chapter-498
0498 awe-chapter-499

0499 awe-chapter-500
0500 awe-chapter-501
0501 awe-chapter-502
0502 awe-chapter-503
0503 awe-chapter-504
0504 awe-chapter-505
0505 awe-chapter-506
0506 awe-chapter-507
0507 awe-chapter-508
0508 awe-chapter-509
0509 awe-chapter-510
0510 awe-chapter-511
0511 awe-chapter-512
0512 awe-chapter-513
0513 awe-chapter-514
0514 awe-chapter-515
0515 awe-chapter-516
0516 awe-chapter-517
0517 awe-chapter-518
0518 awe-chapter-519
0519 awe-chapter-520
0520 awe-chapter-521
0521 awe-chapter-522
0522 awe-chapter-523
0523 awe-chapter-524
0524 awe-chapter-525
0525 awe-chapter-526
0526 awe-chapter-527
0527 awe-chapter-528
0528 awe-chapter-529
0529 awe-chapter-530
0530 awe-chapter-531
0531 awe-chapter-532
0532 awe-chapter-533
0533 awe-chapter-534
0534 awe-chapter-535

0535 awe-chapter-536
0536 awe-chapter-537
0537 awe-chapter-538
0538 awe-chapter-539
0539 awe-chapter-540
0540 awe-chapter-541
0541 awe-chapter-542
0542 awe-chapter-543
0543 awe-chapter-544
0544 awe-chapter-545
0545 awe-chapter-546
0546 awe-chapter-547
0547 awe-chapter-548
0548 awe-chapter-549
0549 awe-chapter-550
0550 awe-chapter-551
0551 awe-chapter-552
0552 awe-chapter-553
0553 awe-chapter-554
0554 awe-chapter-555
0555 awe-chapter-556
0556 awe-chapter-557
0557 awe-chapter-558
0558 awe-chapter-559
0559 awe-chapter-560
0560 awe-chapter-561
0561 awe-chapter-562
0562 awe-chapter-563
0563 awe-chapter-564
0564 awe-chapter-565
0565 awe-chapter-566
0566 awe-chapter-567
0567 awe-chapter-568
0568 awe-chapter-569
0569 awe-chapter-570
0570 awe-chapter-571

0571 awe-chapter-572
0572 awe-chapter-573
0573 awe-chapter-574
0574 awe-chapter-575
0575 awe-chapter-576
0576 awe-chapter-577
0577 awe-chapter-578
0578 awe-chapter-579
0579 awe-chapter-580
0580 awe-chapter-581
0581 awe-chapter-582
0582 awe-chapter-583
0583 awe-chapter-584
0584 awe-chapter-585
0585 awe-chapter-586
0586 awe-chapter-587
0587 awe-chapter-588
0588 awe-chapter-589
0589 awe-chapter-590
0590 awe-chapter-591
0591 awe-chapter-592
0592 awe-chapter-593
0593 awe-chapter-594
0594 awe-chapter-595
0595 awe-chapter-596
0596 awe-chapter-597
0597 awe-chapter-598
0598 awe-chapter-599
0599 awe-chapter-600
0600 awe-chapter-601
0601 awe-chapter-602
0602 awe-chapter-603
0603 awe-chapter-604
0604 awe-chapter-605
0605 awe-chapter-606
0606 awe-chapter-607

0607 awe-chapter-608
0608 awe-chapter-609
0609 awe-chapter-610
0610 awe-chapter-611
0611 awe-chapter-612
0612 awe-chapter-613
0613 awe-chapter-614
0614 awe-chapter-615
0615 awe-chapter-616
0616 awe-chapter-617
0617 awe-chapter-618
0618 awe-chapter-619
0619 awe-chapter-620
0620 awe-chapter-621
0621 awe-chapter-622
0622 awe-chapter-623
0623 awe-chapter-624
0624 awe-chapter-625
0625 awe-chapter-626
0626 awe-chapter-627
0627 awe-chapter-628
0628 awe-chapter-629
0629 awe-chapter-630
0630 awe-chapter-631
0631 awe-chapter-632
0632 awe-chapter-633
0633 awe-chapter-634
0634 awe-chapter-635
0635 awe-chapter-636
0636 awe-chapter-637
0637 awe-chapter-638
0638 awe-chapter-639
0639 awe-chapter-640
0640 awe-chapter-641
0641 awe-chapter-642
0642 awe-chapter-643

0643 awe-chapter-644
0644 awe-chapter-645
0645 awe-chapter-646
0646 awe-chapter-647
0647 awe-chapter-648
0648 awe-chapter-649
0649 awe-chapter-650
0650 awe-chapter-651
0651 awe-chapter-652
0652 awe-chapter-653
0653 awe-chapter-654
0654 awe-chapter-655
0655 awe-chapter-656
0656 awe-chapter-657
0657 awe-chapter-658
0658 awe-chapter-659
0659 awe-chapter-660
0660 awe-chapter-661
0661 awe-chapter-662
0662 awe-chapter-663
0663 awe-chapter-664
0664 awe-chapter-665
0665 awe-chapter-666
0666 awe-chapter-667
0667 awe-chapter-668
0668 awe-chapter-669
0669 awe-chapter-670
0670 awe-chapter-671
0671 awe-chapter-672
0672 awe-chapter-673
0673 awe-chapter-674
0674 awe-chapter-675
0675 awe-chapter-676
0676 awe-chapter-677
0677 awe-chapter-678
0678 awe-chapter-679

0679 awe-chapter-680
0680 awe-chapter-681
0681 awe-chapter-682
0682 awe-chapter-683
0683 awe-chapter-684
0684 awe-chapter-685
0685 awe-chapter-686
0686 awe-chapter-687
0687 awe-chapter-688
0688 awe-chapter-689
0689 awe-chapter-690
0690 awe-chapter-691
0691 awe-chapter-692
0692 awe-chapter-693
0693 awe-chapter-694
0694 awe-chapter-695
0695 awe-chapter-696
0696 awe-chapter-697
0697 awe-chapter-698
0698 awe-chapter-699
0699 awe-chapter-700
0700 awe-chapter-701
0701 awe-chapter-702
0702 awe-chapter-703
0703 awe-chapter-704
0704 awe-chapter-705
0705 awe-chapter-706
0706 awe-chapter-707
0707 awe-chapter-708
0708 awe-chapter-709
0709 awe-chapter-710
0710 awe-chapter-711
0711 awe-chapter-712
0712 awe-chapter-713
0713 awe-chapter-714
0714 awe-chapter-715

0715 awe-chapter-716
0716 awe-chapter-717
0717 awe-chapter-718
0718 awe-chapter-719
0719 awe-chapter-720
0720 awe-chapter-721
0721 awe-chapter-722
0722 awe-chapter-723
0723 awe-chapter-724
0724 awe-chapter-725
0725 awe-chapter-726
0726 awe-chapter-727
0727 awe-chapter-728
0728 awe-chapter-729
0729 awe-chapter-730
0730 awe-chapter-731
0731 awe-chapter-732
0732 awe-chapter-733
0733 awe-chapter-734
0734 awe-chapter-735
0735 awe-chapter-736
0736 awe-chapter-737
0737 awe-chapter-738
0738 awe-chapter-739
0739 awe-chapter-740
0740 awe-chapter-741
0741 awe-chapter-742
0742 awe-chapter-743
0743 awe-chapter-744
0744 awe-chapter-745
0745 awe-chapter-746
0746 awe-chapter-747
0747 awe-chapter-748
0748 awe-chapter-749
0749 awe-chapter-750
0750 awe-chapter-751

0751 awe-chapter-752
0752 awe-chapter-753
0753 awe-chapter-754
0754 awe-chapter-755
0755 awe-chapter-756
0756 awe-chapter-757
0757 awe-chapter-758
0758 awe-chapter-759
0759 awe-chapter-760
0760 awe-chapter-761
0761 awe-chapter-762
0762 awe-chapter-763
0763 awe-chapter-764
0764 awe-chapter-765
0765 awe-chapter-766
0766 awe-chapter-767
0767 awe-chapter-768
0768 awe-chapter-769
0769 awe-chapter-770
0770 awe-chapter-771
0771 awe-chapter-772
0772 awe-chapter-773
0773 awe-chapter-774
0774 awe-chapter-775
0775 awe-chapter-776
0776 awe-chapter-777
0777 awe-chapter-778
0778 awe-chapter-779
0779 awe-chapter-780
0780 awe-chapter-781
0781 awe-chapter-782
0782 awe-chapter-783
0783 awe-chapter-784
0784 awe-chapter-785
0785 awe-chapter-786
0786 awe-chapter-787

0787 awe-chapter-788
0788 awe-chapter-789
0789 awe-chapter-790
0790 awe-chapter-791
0791 awe-chapter-792
0792 awe-chapter-793
0793 awe-chapter-794
0794 awe-chapter-795
0795 awe-chapter-796
0796 awe-chapter-797
0797 awe-chapter-798
0798 awe-chapter-799
0799 awe-chapter-800
0800 awe-chapter-801
0801 awe-chapter-802
0802 awe-chapter-803
0803 awe-chapter-804
0804 awe-chapter-805
0805 awe-chapter-806
0806 awe-chapter-807
0807 awe-chapter-808
0808 awe-chapter-809
0809 awe-chapter-810
0810 awe-chapter-811
0811 awe-chapter-812
0812 awe-chapter-813
0813 awe-chapter-814
0814 awe-chapter-815
0815 awe-chapter-816
0816 awe-chapter-817
0817 awe-chapter-818
0818 awe-chapter-819
0819 awe-chapter-820
0820 awe-chapter-821
0821 awe-chapter-822
0822 awe-chapter-823

0823 awe-chapter-824
0824 awe-chapter-825
0825 awe-chapter-826
0826 awe-chapter-827
0827 awe-chapter-828
0828 awe-chapter-829
0829 awe-chapter-830
0830 awe-chapter-831
0831 awe-chapter-832
0832 awe-chapter-833
0833 awe-chapter-834
0834 awe-chapter-835
0835 awe-chapter-836
0836 awe-chapter-837
0837 awe-chapter-838
0838 awe-chapter-839
0839 awe-chapter-840
0840 awe-chapter-841
0841 awe-chapter-842
0842 awe-chapter-843
0843 awe-chapter-844
0844 awe-chapter-845
0845 awe-chapter-846
0846 awe-chapter-847
0847 awe-chapter-848
0848 awe-chapter-849
0849 awe-chapter-850
0850 awe-chapter-851
0851 awe-chapter-852
0852 awe-chapter-853
0853 awe-chapter-854
0854 awe-chapter-855
0855 awe-chapter-856
0856 awe-chapter-857
0857 awe-chapter-858
0858 awe-chapter-859

0859 awe-chapter-860
0860 awe-chapter-861
0861 awe-chapter-862
0862 awe-chapter-863
0863 awe-chapter-864
0864 awe-chapter-865
0865 awe-chapter-866
0866 awe-chapter-867
0867 awe-chapter-868
0868 awe-chapter-869
0869 awe-chapter-870
0870 awe-chapter-871
0871 awe-chapter-872
0872 awe-chapter-873
0873 awe-chapter-874
0874 awe-chapter-875
0875 awe-chapter-876
0876 awe-chapter-877
0877 awe-chapter-878
0878 awe-chapter-879
0879 awe-chapter-880
0880 awe-chapter-881
0881 awe-chapter-882
0882 awe-chapter-883
0883 awe-chapter-884
0884 awe-chapter-885
0885 awe-chapter-886
0886 awe-chapter-887
0887 awe-chapter-888
0888 awe-chapter-889
0889 awe-chapter-890
0890 awe-chapter-891
0891 awe-chapter-892
0892 awe-chapter-893
0893 awe-chapter-894
0894 awe-chapter-895

0895 awe-chapter-896
0896 awe-chapter-897
0897 awe-chapter-898
0898 awe-chapter-899
0899 awe-chapter-900
0900 awe-chapter-901
0901 awe-chapter-902
0902 awe-chapter-903
0903 awe-chapter-904
0904 awe-chapter-905
0905 awe-chapter-906
0906 awe-chapter-907
0907 awe-chapter-908
0908 awe-chapter-909
0909 awe-chapter-910
0910 awe-chapter-911
0911 awe-chapter-912
0912 awe-chapter-913
0913 awe-chapter-914
0914 awe-chapter-915
0915 awe-chapter-916
0916 awe-chapter-917
0917 awe-chapter-918
0918 awe-chapter-919
0919 awe-chapter-920
0920 awe-chapter-921
0921 awe-chapter-922
0922 awe-chapter-923
0923 awe-chapter-924
0924 awe-chapter-925
0925 awe-chapter-926
0926 awe-chapter-927
0927 awe-chapter-928
0928 awe-chapter-929
0929 awe-chapter-930
0930 awe-chapter-931

0931 awe-chapter-932
0932 awe-chapter-933
0933 awe-chapter-934
0934 awe-chapter-935
0935 awe-chapter-936
0936 awe-chapter-937
0937 awe-chapter-938
0938 awe-chapter-939
0939 awe-chapter-940
0940 awe-chapter-941
0941 awe-chapter-942
0942 awe-chapter-943
0943 awe-chapter-944
0944 awe-chapter-945
0945 awe-chapter-946
0946 awe-chapter-947
0947 awe-chapter-948
0948 awe-chapter-949
0949 awe-chapter-950
0950 awe-chapter-951
0951 awe-chapter-952
0952 awe-chapter-953
0953 awe-chapter-954
0954 awe-chapter-955
0955 awe-chapter-956
0956 awe-chapter-957
0957 awe-chapter-958
0958 awe-chapter-959
0959 awe-chapter-960
0960 awe-chapter-961
0961 awe-chapter-962
0962 awe-chapter-963
0963 awe-chapter-964
0964 awe-chapter-965
0965 awe-chapter-966
0966 awe-chapter-967

0967 awe-chapter-968
0968 awe-chapter-969
0969 awe-chapter-970
0970 awe-chapter-971
0971 awe-chapter-972
0972 awe-chapter-973
0973 awe-chapter-974
0974 awe-chapter-975
0975 awe-chapter-976
0976 awe-chapter-977
0977 awe-chapter-978
0978 awe-chapter-979
0979 awe-chapter-980
0980 awe-chapter-981
0981 awe-chapter-982
0982 awe-chapter-983
0983 awe-chapter-984
0984 awe-chapter-985
0985 awe-chapter-986
0986 awe-chapter-987
0987 awe-chapter-988
0988 awe-chapter-989
0989 awe-chapter-990
0990 awe-chapter-991
0991 awe-chapter-992
0992 awe-chapter-993
0993 awe-chapter-994
0994 awe-chapter-995
0995 awe-chapter-996
0996 awe-chapter-997
0997 awe-chapter-998
0998 awe-chapter-999
0999 awe-chapter-1000
1000 awe-chapter-1001
1001 awe-chapter-1002
1002 awe-chapter-1003

1003 awe-chapter-1004
1004 awe-chapter-1005
1005 awe-chapter-1006
1006 awe-chapter-1007
1007 awe-chapter-1008
1008 awe-chapter-1009
1009 awe-chapter-1010
1010 awe-chapter-1011
1011 awe-chapter-1012
1012 awe-chapter-1013
1013 awe-chapter-1014
1014 awe-chapter-1015
1015 awe-chapter-1016
1016 awe-chapter-1017
1017 awe-chapter-1018
1018 awe-chapter-1019
1019 awe-chapter-1020
1020 awe-chapter-1021
1021 awe-chapter-1022
1022 awe-chapter-1023
1023 awe-chapter-1024
1024 awe-chapter-1025
1025 awe-chapter-1026
1026 awe-chapter-1027
1027 awe-chapter-1028
1028 awe-chapter-1029
1029 awe-chapter-1030
1030 awe-chapter-1031
1031 awe-chapter-1032
1032 awe-chapter-1033
1033 awe-chapter-1034
1034 awe-chapter-1035
1035 awe-chapter-1036
1036 awe-chapter-1037
1037 awe-chapter-1038
1038 awe-chapter-1039

1039 awe-chapter-1040
1040 awe-chapter-1041
1041 awe-chapter-1042
1042 awe-chapter-1043
1043 awe-chapter-1044
1044 awe-chapter-1045
1045 awe-chapter-1046
1046 awe-chapter-1047
1047 awe-chapter-1048
1048 awe-chapter-1049
1049 awe-chapter-1050
1050 awe-chapter-1051
1051 awe-chapter-1052
1052 awe-chapter-1053
1053 awe-chapter-1054
1054 awe-chapter-1055
1055 awe-chapter-1056
1056 awe-chapter-1057
1057 awe-chapter-1058
1058 awe-chapter-1059
1059 awe-chapter-1060
1060 awe-chapter-1061
1061 awe-chapter-1062
1062 awe-chapter-1063
1063 awe-chapter-1064
1064 awe-chapter-1065
1065 awe-chapter-1066
1066 awe-chapter-1067
1067 awe-chapter-1068
1068 awe-chapter-1069
1069 awe-chapter-1070
1070 awe-chapter-1071
1071 awe-chapter-1072
1072 awe-chapter-1073
1073 awe-chapter-1074
1074 awe-chapter-1075

1075 awe-chapter-1076
1076 awe-chapter-1077
1077 awe-chapter-1078
1078 awe-chapter-1079
1079 awe-chapter-1080
1080 awe-chapter-1081
1081 awe-chapter-1082
1082 awe-chapter-1083
1083 awe-chapter-1084
1084 awe-chapter-1085
1085 awe-chapter-1086
1086 awe-chapter-1087
1087 awe-chapter-1088
1088 awe-chapter-1089
1089 awe-chapter-1090
1090 awe-chapter-1091
1091 awe-chapter-1092
1092 awe-chapter-1093
1093 awe-chapter-1094
1094 awe-chapter-1095
1095 awe-chapter-1096
1096 awe-chapter-1097
1097 awe-chapter-1098
1098 awe-chapter-1099
1099 awe-chapter-1100
1100 awe-chapter-1101
1101 awe-chapter-1102
1102 awe-chapter-1103
1103 awe-chapter-1104
1104 awe-chapter-1105
1105 awe-chapter-1106
1106 awe-chapter-1107
1107 awe-chapter-1108
1108 awe-chapter-1109
1109 awe-chapter-1110
1110 awe-chapter-1111

1111 awe-chapter-1112
1112 awe-chapter-1113
1113 awe-chapter-1114
1114 awe-chapter-1115
1115 awe-chapter-1116
1116 awe-chapter-1117
1117 awe-chapter-1118
1118 awe-chapter-1119
1119 awe-chapter-1120
1120 awe-chapter-1121
1121 awe-chapter-1122
1122 awe-chapter-1123
1123 awe-chapter-1124
1124 awe-chapter-1125
1125 awe-chapter-1126
1126 awe-chapter-1127
1127 awe-chapter-1128
1128 awe-chapter-1129
1129 awe-chapter-1130
1130 awe-chapter-1131
1131 awe-chapter-1132
1132 awe-chapter-1133
1133 awe-chapter-1134
1134 awe-chapter-1135
1135 awe-chapter-1136
1136 awe-chapter-1137
1137 awe-chapter-1138
1138 awe-chapter-1139
1139 awe-chapter-1140
1140 awe-chapter-1141
1141 awe-chapter-1142
1142 awe-chapter-1143
1143 awe-chapter-1144
1144 awe-chapter-1145
1145 awe-chapter-1146
1146 awe-chapter-1147

1147 awe-chapter-1148
1148 awe-chapter-1149
1149 awe-chapter-1150
1150 awe-chapter-1151
1151 awe-chapter-1152
1152 awe-chapter-1153
1153 awe-chapter-1154
1154 awe-chapter-1155
1155 awe-chapter-1156
1156 awe-chapter-1157
1157 awe-chapter-1158
1158 awe-chapter-1159
1159 awe-chapter-1160
1160 awe-chapter-1161
1161 awe-chapter-1162
1162 awe-chapter-1163
1163 awe-chapter-1164
1164 awe-chapter-1165
1165 awe-chapter-1166
1166 awe-chapter-1167
1167 awe-chapter-1168
1168 awe-chapter-1169
1169 awe-chapter-1170
1170 awe-chapter-1171
1171 awe-chapter-1172
1172 awe-chapter-1173
1173 awe-chapter-1174
1174 awe-chapter-1175
1175 awe-chapter-1176
1176 awe-chapter-1177
1177 awe-chapter-1178
1178 awe-chapter-1179
1179 awe-chapter-1180
1180 awe-chapter-1181
1181 awe-chapter-1182
1182 awe-chapter-1183

1183 awe-chapter-1184
1184 awe-chapter-1185
1185 awe-chapter-1186
1186 awe-chapter-1187
1187 awe-chapter-1188
1188 awe-chapter-1189
1189 awe-chapter-1190
1190 awe-chapter-1191
1191 awe-chapter-1192
1192 awe-chapter-1193
1193 awe-chapter-1194
1194 awe-chapter-1195
1195 awe-chapter-1196
1196 awe-chapter-1197
1197 awe-chapter-1198
1198 awe-chapter-1199
1199 awe-chapter-1200
1200 awe-chapter-1201
1201 awe-chapter-1202
1202 awe-chapter-1203
1203 awe-chapter-1204
1204 awe-chapter-1205
1205 awe-chapter-1206
1206 awe-chapter-1207
1207 awe-chapter-1208
1208 awe-chapter-1209
1209 awe-chapter-1210
1210 awe-chapter-1211
1211 awe-chapter-1212
1212 awe-chapter-1213
1213 awe-chapter-1214
1214 awe-chapter-1215
1215 awe-chapter-1216
1216 awe-chapter-1217
1217 awe-chapter-1218
1218 awe-chapter-1219

1219 awe-chapter-1220
1220 awe-chapter-1221
1221 awe-chapter-1222
1222 awe-chapter-1223
1223 awe-chapter-1224
1224 awe-chapter-1225
1225 awe-chapter-1226
1226 awe-chapter-1227
1227 awe-chapter-1228
1228 awe-chapter-1229
1229 awe-chapter-1230
1230 awe-chapter-1231
1231 awe-chapter-1232
1232 awe-chapter-1233
1233 awe-chapter-1234
1234 awe-chapter-1235
1235 awe-chapter-1236
1236 awe-chapter-1237
1237 awe-chapter-1238
1238 awe-chapter-1239
1239 awe-chapter-1240
1240 awe-chapter-1241
1241 awe-chapter-1242
1242 awe-chapter-1243
1243 awe-chapter-1244
1244 awe-chapter-1245
1245 awe-chapter-1246
1246 awe-chapter-1247
1247 awe-chapter-1248
1248 awe-chapter-1249
1249 awe-chapter-1250
1250 awe-chapter-1251
1251 awe-chapter-1252
1252 awe-chapter-1253
1253 awe-chapter-1254
1254 awe-chapter-1255

1255 awe-chapter-1256
1256 awe-chapter-1257
1257 awe-chapter-1258
1258 awe-chapter-1259
1259 awe-chapter-1260
1260 awe-chapter-1261
1261 awe-chapter-1262
1262 awe-chapter-1263
1263 awe-chapter-1264
1264 awe-chapter-1265
1265 awe-chapter-1266
1266 awe-chapter-1267
1267 awe-chapter-1268
1268 awe-chapter-1269
1269 awe-chapter-1270
1270 awe-chapter-1271
1271 awe-chapter-1272
1272 awe-chapter-1273
1273 awe-chapter-1274
1274 awe-chapter-1275
1275 awe-chapter-1276
1276 awe-chapter-1277
1277 awe-chapter-1278
1278 awe-chapter-1279
1279 awe-chapter-1280
1280 awe-chapter-1281
1281 awe-chapter-1282
1282 awe-chapter-1283
1283 awe-chapter-1284
1284 awe-chapter-1285
1285 awe-chapter-1286
1286 awe-chapter-1287
1287 awe-chapter-1288
1288 awe-chapter-1289
1289 awe-chapter-1290
1290 awe-chapter-1291

1291 awe-chapter-1292
1292 awe-chapter-1293
1293 awe-chapter-1294
1294 awe-chapter-1295
1295 awe-chapter-1296
1296 awe-chapter-1297
1297 awe-chapter-1298
1298 awe-chapter-1299
1299 awe-chapter-1300
1300 awe-chapter-1301
1301 awe-chapter-1302
1302 awe-chapter-1303
1303 awe-chapter-1304
1304 awe-chapter-1305
1305 awe-chapter-1306
1306 awe-chapter-1307
1307 awe-chapter-1308
1308 awe-chapter-1309
1309 awe-chapter-1310
1310 awe-chapter-1311
1311 awe-chapter-1312
1312 awe-chapter-1313
1313 awe-chapter-1314
1314 awe-chapter-1315

0000 awe-chapter-1

Mount Hood lay in the Eastwood Mountain Range, and at its base was a quaint little village. The villagers there lived off the land, and didn’t have much to do with the outside world.

Currently it was dawn, and the villagers were congregated at the village gate to see off a young man of fifteen or sixteen years of age. He seemed thin and weak, but had a healthy, fair complexion, and an overall charming appearance. He wore an ordinary green robe that had apparently been washed so many times it was nearly worn through. Something about the way he was dressed, plus the innocent look in his eyes, made him seem exceptionally quick-witted.

His name was Bai Xiaochun.

The surrounding villagers exchanged glances, shrugged helplessly, and then pretended to look even more reluctant to see him leave.

A white-haired old man stepped out of the crowd and said, “Xiaochun, ever since your dad and mom left us, oh so long ago, you... you have been, er--” he paused for a moment “--such a good kid!!” Seeing that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t left yet, he continued, “Don’t tell me you’re not interested in living forever? All you have to do is become an immortal, and then you can live forever! That’s a really, really long time! Well, it’s time for you to leave now. Even a baby eagle must learn to fly eventually. No matter what situations you run into out there, you have to hang in there and keep moving forward. Once you leave the village, you can't come back, because your path will always lie ahead, not behind!”

The old man patted Bai Xiaochun kindly on the shoulder.

“Live forever....” Bai Xiaochun murmured. A tremor ran through him, and a look of determination slowly filled his eyes. Under the encouraging gazes of the old man and the other villagers, he nodded his head seriously and looked around at everyone one last time. Finally, he turned and walked away from the village.

As he disappeared off into the distance, the villagers started to look more and more excited. Their forlorn expressions turned to those of joy, and the kind-faced old man began to tremble. Tears even streamed down his face.

The village was soon echoing with cries of rejoicing. Some people even took out gongs and drums and began banging them excitedly.

“The weasel is gone,” someone said, “but oh, my poor chickens. He hated the roosters crowing at dawn, so he somehow got all the kids in the village to eat every chicken we had....”

“Today is the beginning of a new era!”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was still fairly close to the village, and could actually hear the sounds of the gongs and drums. He even caught wind of some of the cries of excitement.

He stopped in his tracks, a strange expression on his face. After a moment, he cleared his throat and proceeded on his way. Accompanied by the faint sounds of rejoicing, he began to make his way toward Mount Hood.

Mount Hood wasn’t a very tall mountain, but it was covered with thick vegetation. Therefore, despite the fact that it was dawn, beneath the trees, it was dark and quiet.

“Double-Dog told me that he was hunting some wild pigs a few days ago and saw an immortal flying around....” Bai Xiaochun proceeded along, heart thumping. Suddenly, a rustling sound could be heard from some nearby shrubs. It almost sounded like a wild pig, and it immediately caused Bai Xiaochun to grow extremely nervous. The hair on the back of his neck stood up straight as he asked, “Who is it? Who’s there?!”

He quickly pulled four axes and six machetes out of his travel pack, but that in and of itself didn't make him feel much safer, so he also produced a bit of black incense from within his robe, which he clutched tightly in his left hand.

“Don’t come out!” he shouted, trembling. “Don’t even think about coming out! I've got axes and machetes, and this incense can call lightning from the heavens, and even summon immortals! If you dare to show your face, you're dead!” Finally, he turned and ran toward the mountain path, simultaneously juggling all of the various weapons in his hands. Clanking sounds could eventually be heard as axes and machetes began to fall to the ground left and right.

Perhaps whatever it was that had been rustling around in the shrubbery really did end up getting frightened by him. The sounds ceased, and no wild animal burst out of the bushes. Bai Xiaochun hurried toward the mountain, wiping the sweat from his brow. By this point, his face was pale, and he was almost considering giving up this crazy idea of climbing the mountain, but then he thought about the incense stick, which his parents had handed down to him before they died. Supposedly, it had been passed down from their ancestors, a gift bestowed by a down-and-out immortal they had saved. Before departing, the immortal had given it to them to pay back the kindness they had shown. Furthermore, the immortal had even promised to take a member of the Bai Clan as a disciple. He told them that merely burning the incense stick would summon him to their side.

Bai Xiaochun had actually lit the incense stick more than ten times in the past few years, and yet, no immortal had ever shown up. It had eventually reached the point that Bai Xiaochun was starting to suspect whether or not the story about the immortal was even true. Finally, he’d resolved to climb the mountain. For one thing, the incense stick was almost used up, and also, there was the matter of the flying immortal being sighted recently.

And that was how he ended up in his current situation. His theory was that if he could get a bit closer to the immortal, then perhaps it would be easier for that immortal to sense the incense stick.

Standing in front of the mountain, he hesitated for a moment, then gritted his teeth and decided to keep going. Thankfully, the mountain wasn’t very high, and it didn't take long to reach the peak, where he stopped, panting. He looked at the village down below, and an emotional expression appeared on his face. Then he glanced at the finger-nail sized bit of black incense. It had clearly been burned on numerous occasions, and was almost completely used up.

“It’s been three years. Bless me, mom and dad. It *has* to work this time!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and then carefully lit the incense. A stiff breeze instantly kicked up, and in the blink of an eye, dark clouds filled the sky. Lightning crackled, and deafening thunder boomed in his ears.

The majesty of the entire scene caused Bai Xiaochun to tremble, fearful that he might be killed by the lightning. He very nearly spit on the incense to extinguish it, but managed to hold back.

“I've lit this incense twelve times in the past three years, and this is the thirteenth time. I have to let it burn! Come on, Xiaochun! The lightning won’t kill you. At least probably not....” All twelve times that he had lit the incense in the past, there had been lightning and thunder, and yet no immortal had ever appeared. Each time, he had gotten so scared that he spit on the incense to put it out. He actually found it a bit strange that a supposedly immortal stick of incense could be extinguished with some ordinary saliva.

Bai Xiaochun sat there shaking in fear as the thunder boomed around him. Suddenly, a streak of light appeared in the air off in the distance.

It was a middle-aged man wearing luxurious clothing. He had the demeanor of a transcendent being, yet he looked weary and travel-worn. In fact, if you looked closely, his eyes seemed to flicker with extreme exhaustion.

“Finally I can see exactly what moron has been lighting that incense stick all the time for the past three years!”

Every time the man thought about what he had experienced during the past few years, he got extremely annoyed. Three years ago, he had sensed the medicinal aura of an incense stick he had given away back when he was in the Qi Condensation stage. That immediately caused him to recall the debt he owed back in the mortal world.

The first time he flew out in response to the incense stick being lit, he had assumed it would be a simple matter of heading out and then immediately returning. He had never imagined that before even being able to find the incense, its aura would suddenly vanish, severing his connection to it. If it had happened only once, it wouldn’t have been a big deal. However, over the course of three years, the aura had appeared more than ten times.

Over and over again his search was interrupted, ensuring that he was constantly leaving his sect and then going back. Back and forth, back and forth. It was torment.

As he closed in on Mount Hood, he caught sight of Bai Xiaochun. Fuming with numerous frustrations, the man landed on the mountain top and waved his hand, instantly extinguishing the sputtering incense stick.

The thunder ceased, and Bai Xiaochun stared at the man in shock.

“Are you an immortal?” Bai Xiaochun asked cautiously. Still unsure about what exactly was going on, he slipped his hand behind his back and grabbed an axe.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. Although he was still a bit scared, he sat up straight and quietly said, “Junior most definitely is from the Bai Clan. I'm Bai Xiaochun.”

“Alright, well tell me this,” Li Qinghou said, his voice cool. “Why did you light that incense so many times over the past three years!?” He very much wanted to know the answer to this question.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the question, his mind spun as he tried to come up with a good answer. Finally, a melancholic expression appeared on his face, and he looked down toward the village at the bottom of the mountain.

“Junior is a sentimental and righteous person,” he said. “I simply couldn’t bear to part with my fellow villagers. Every time I lit the incense, I was overwhelmed with feelings of sorrow. The mere thought of leaving them behind was far too painful.”

Li Qinghou stared in shock. He had never considered such a possibility, and as such, the anger in his heart faded even more. He could tell from this young man’s words alone that he was definitely good material.

However, the next thing he did was send his divine sense down toward the village, and he heard the sounds of drums and gongs and rejoicing. He even heard the villagers talking about how glad they were that ‘the weasel’ was gone. An unsightly expression appeared on his face, and he felt a headache coming on. He looked back at the charming and pure Bai Xiaochun, who seemed like he wouldn’t hurt a fly, and suddenly realized that this kid was a villain to the core.

“Tell me the truth!” Li Qinghou said, his voice echoing like thunder. Bai Xiaochun was so frightened that he started shaking.

“Hey, you can’t blame me!” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding very miserable. “What kind of crappy incense is this anyway!? Every time I lit it, lightning would start crashing around everywhere! I almost got killed on several occasions! In fact, avoiding that lightning thirteen times was quite a feat!”

Li Qinghou looked silently at Bai Xiaochun.

“If you were so scared, then why did you light it over ten times?!” he asked.

“’Cuz I'm scared of dying!” Bai Xiaochun replied indignantly. “Isn’t the point of immortal cultivation to be able to live forever? I want to live forever!”

Li Qinghou was once again struck speechless. However, he found the kid’s fascination with living forever laudable, and realized that his personality might change a bit after some hard training in the sect.

After a moment of thought, he waved his sleeve, sweeping Bai Xiaochun up into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

“Alright, come with me,” he said.

“Where are we going?” asked Bai Xiaochun, suddenly realizing that they were flying. “Ah, we're so high....” The ground was very, very far down, causing the blood to drain from his face. He immediately dropped his axe and grabbed onto the Immortal’s leg.

Li Qinghou looked down at him clutching his leg. Feeling a bit at a loss, he replied, “The Spirit Stream Sect.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0001 awe-chapter-2

The Spirit Stream Sect was located in the Eastwood Continent on the lower branch of the Heavenspan River, and was divided between the north and south banks. Its history stretched back countless years, and was very famous in the area.

Eight enormous cloud-wreathed mountains towered over the Heavenspan River. Four of those mountains were located on the north bank of the river, whereas three were on the south bank. Shockingly, one mountain, the most majestic of them all, rose up from the middle of the river itself.

The entire top half of that mountain was covered with brilliant white snow, and rose up so high that the peak of the mountain wasn’t even visible. The middle of the mountain had been hollowed out, allowing the golden river water to flow right through it, and causing the mountain itself to somewhat resemble a bridge.

Currently, a beam of light was speeding along near the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect. It was none other than Li Qinghou and Bai Xiaochun. As they raced into the servants’ quarters beneath the third peak, it was just possible to hear Bai Xiaochun shouting out in fear.

He was scared to death from all the flying. They had passed over countless mountains, and the entire time, he had felt like he was losing his grip on Li Qinghou’s leg.

Eventually, everything turned into a blur. When everything finally became clear again, he realized that they had landed just outside of a building. He stood there, legs trembling, looking around at a scene that was very different from what he was used to back at the village.

Towering up in front of the building was a huge stone, upon which three characters were written in flamboyant calligraphy.

Department of Servant Affairs.

Sitting next to the stone was a pock-faced woman. As soon as she caught sight of Li Qinghou, she rose to her feet and clasped hands in greeting.

“Send this kid to the Ovens,” Li Qinghou said. Without another word, and paying no further heed to Bai Xiaochun, he then transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

When the pock-faced woman heard him mention the Ovens, she stared in shock. She looked Bai Xiaochun over, then handed him a bag which contained a servant’s uniform and other items. Face expressionless, led him away from the building toward a nearby path, simultaneously explaining some of the basic sect rules and customs. The path was paved with green limestone, and wound through numerous buildings and courtyards. The fragrant aroma of plants and flowers filled the air, and the entire place seemed like a celestial paradise. As he looked around, Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to thump with excitement, and his previous nervousness and anxiety began to fade.

“This place is awesome,” he thought. “It's way better than the village!” His eyes shone with anticipation as he followed the woman along. The scenery only continued to get more and more spectacular. He even saw some beautiful women along the way, which instantly caused his heart to surge with delight.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun got even more excited. That was because he caught sight of what appeared to be their destination; at the end of the path was a seven-story building that sparkled like crystal. There were even celestial cranes soaring in the air above it.

“Are we there yet, Elder Sister?” Bai Xiaochun asked excitedly.

“Yes,” she replied coolly, her face as expressionless as ever. She pointed to a small path off to the side. “That’s where we’re going.”

Bai Xiaochun looked in the direction she was pointing, heart bursting with anticipation. But then, his entire body went stiff, and he rubbed his eyes. He looked again, a bit more closely, and saw a gravel path lined by haphazardly-constructed thatch-roofed huts that looked like they might disintegrate at any moment. A strange aroma wafted out from the area.

Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, but no tears would come. Still clinging to a scrap of hope, he asked the pock-faced woman another question.

“Elder Sister, did you point in the wrong direction just now?”

“Nope,” she replied coolly, stepping onto the gravel path. When Bai Xiaochun heard her response, all of the beauty of the place seemed to disappear. A bitter expression appeared on his face as he continued to follow her.

The entire area was filled with hundreds of huge cooking woks, within which fat men were boiling rice.

Sensing that someone had approached, the young men looked up and saw the pock-faced woman. The fattest of the young men, the one who looked like a mountain of flesh, hefted his ladle and hurried over. The ground trembled as he walked, and his fat bounced and jiggled in a way that made Bai Xiaochun stare in shock. Without even thinking about it, he began to feel around for an axe.

“The magpies were singing especially beautiful songs this morning, and now I know why,” the mountain of flesh cried out as he ran over. His eyes flickered with a lustful gleam. “It was all because you were coming, big sis. Could it be that you’ve changed your mind? You finally realized how talented I am, and want to take advantage of this auspicious day to formally become my Daoist partner?”

The pock-faced woman looked at the mountain of flesh with both disgust and anger.

“I’m just here to deliver this kid to the Ovens,” she said. “Task accomplished. I’ll take my leave now!” Then she hurried off.

Bai Xiaochun gasped. He had taken the time to check out the woman on their way here, and she really looked like a freak. He couldn’t help but wonder what kind of taste this fat man had. Apparently even someone with a face like hers got him all hot and bothered.

Before Bai Xiaochun could consider the matter any more, the mountain of flesh was suddenly standing in front of him, panting a bit. The young man was so huge that Bai Xiaochun found himself completely covered by his shadow.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the enormous young man and his quivering rolls of flesh, and swallowed hard. This was actually his first time ever seeing someone so fat.

The mountain of flesh glanced resentfully at the pock-faced woman, who was making her way back up the gravel path, then looked back at Bai Xiaochun.

“Well well, we have a newcomer. We’d left a spot open for Xu Baocai to join, so this complicates matters.”

Bai Xiaochun felt nervous just looking at the young man’s enormity, and subconsciously took a few steps back. “Elder Brother, I am your humble... er, humble servant Bai Xiaochun....”

“Bai Xiaochun? Hmm.... White skin, slender and dainty. You look pretty innocent. Excellent, excellent. Your name really fits my taste.” The mountain of flesh looked him over, then clapped Bai Xiaochun on the shoulder, which very nearly sent Bai Xiaochun flying off to the side.

“Uh, what’s your name, Elder Brother?” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and looked up thoughtfully as he prepared to make fun of the young man’s name.

The mountain of flesh chuckled and slapped his chest, causing the fat to ripple back and forth. “I'm Big Fatty Zhang. That’s Second Fatty Huang, and that’s Third Fatty Hei...”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard these incredibly stirring names, he abandoned any plans to make fun of them.

“As for you,” Big Fatty Zhang continued, “from now on, you’ll be Ninth Fatty Bai! Er.... Wait a second, Junior Brother. You’re way too skinny! If you go around looking like that, you’ll lose face for the Ovens! Well, I guess that doesn’t matter for now. Don't worry. After a few years, you’ll get fat too. Then we’ll call you Ninth Fatty Bai.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the nickname Ninth Fatty Bai, he grimaced.

“Well, since you're already our Ninth Junior Brother, you don't count as an outsider any more. Here in the Ovens, we have a long-standing tradition of carrying woks on our backs. See this wok here on my back?” He slapped the wok and continued boastfully: “It’s the king of woks, forged from the highest quality iron and engraved with an earthflame spell formation. When you use this wok to cook up spirit rice, the flavor is far, far better than the rice cooked in any other wok. By the way, you’ll have to choose a wok to carry on your back, too. Then you’ll look really impressive.”

Glancing at Big Fatty Zhang’s wok, and realizing that everyone else in the Ovens was similarly adorned, Bai Xiaochun suddenly got an image of himself walking around in such a fashion.

“Elder Brother,” he blurted, “is it possible to opt out of the wok-carrying thing...?”

“Are you kidding me? Wok-carrying is an important tradition in the Ovens! Later on when you’re out in the sect, people will see the wok on your back and instantly recognize that you’re from the Ovens! Once they know that, they won’t dare to pick on you. The Ovens has a lot of influence around here, you know!” Big Fatty Zhang winked at Bai Xiaochun. Allowing no further discussion of the matter, he led Bai Xiaochun to one of the thatch-roofed huts, within which were stacks of thousands of woks, most of which were covered in layers of dust. Clearly, no one had been in here for quite some time.

“Go ahead and pick one, Ninth Junior Brother, then come on over and help tend to the rice. If the rice burns, then the

Outer Sect disciples will make a scene again.” With that Big Fatty Zhang turned and ran back to join the other fat men as they hustled and bustled among the more than one hundred cooking woks.

Sighing in despair, Bai Xiaochun looked over the woks, and was agonizing over which one to pick when he suddenly noticed one particular wok off in the corner, buried under a big pile.

It was a unique wok that, instead of being circular, was shaped like an oval. It almost didn’t even look like an oval, but rather, like a turtle shell. There were also some faint markings visible on its surface.

“Eee?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes brightened, and he quickly walked over and squatted down to look at the wok more closely. After dragging it out and examining it further, his eyes began to shine with satisfaction.

He had been fond of turtles ever since he was young, mostly because they represented longevity. Considering that he had come to learn about immortal cultivation for the purposes of living forever, as soon as his saw the turtle-shell wok, he knew that it was an auspicious sign, a good omen.

After he emerged with the wok, Big Fatty Zhang caught sight of him and hurried over, ladle in hand.

“Ninth Junior Brother, why did you pick that one?” he asked sincerely, rubbing his ample belly. “That wok has been in there for years, and nobody has ever used it, mainly because it looks like a turtle shell and people don’t want to put it on their backs. Umm… are you sure, Ninth Junior Brother?”

“I'm sure.” Bai Xiaochun said resolutely, looking fondly at the wok. “This is the wok for me.”

Big Fatty Zhang tried to dissuade him some more, but eventually realized that Bai Xiaochun had made up his mind. Finally, he gave him a strange look and stopped trying. After assigning him one of the Ovens’ thatch-roofed huts for housing, he went back to work.

Soon, dusk had fallen. Bai Xiaochun sat in his thatch-roofed hut, examining the turtle-shaped wok. One thing that stuck out to him were the designs traced on the back of the wok, which were so faint that you wouldn’t see them unless you looked closely.

He could instantly tell that this was no ordinary wok. Carefully putting it on the stove, he looked around the little hut. It was very simple. In addition to the stove, it had a bed, a desk, and an ordinary copper mirror hanging on the wall. As Bai Xiaochun had his head turned to look around, the seemingly-ordinary wok behind him suddenly emitted a flash of violet light!

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, this had been a day packed with all sorts of momentous events. He had finally arrived in the land of his dreams, a world of immortals. At the moment, he was still in a bit of a daze.

After a bit of time passed, he took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine with anticipation.

“I'm gonna live forever!” As he sat there, he pulled out the bag which the pock-faced woman had given him.

Inside the bag was a medicinal pill, a wooden sword, some incense, a servant’s uniform, and a command medallion.

Finally, there was a bamboo scroll with several small characters written on the cover.

“Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. Qi Condensation Manual.”

It was evening, and Big Fatty Zhang and the others in the Ovens were bustling about. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was looking at the bamboo scroll, eyes shining with anticipation. He had come here in order to learn how to live forever, and he held the key to achieving that goal in his hands right now. After taking a deep breath, he opened the scroll.

Moments later, his eyes were gleaming with excitement. The bamboo scroll had three pictures, and accompanying text that described how cultivation was divided into two stages of Qi Condensation and Foundation Establishment. As far as the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, it was divided into ten levels, each of which corresponded to the ten levels of Qi Condensation.

By practicing cultivation to a given level, it was possible to exercise control over physical objects. After reaching the third level, you could control half of a small cauldron. At the sixth level, it became half of a large cauldron. At the ninth level, it was a full cauldron. As for the final full circle, you could actually control two full cauldrons.

Unfortunately, this scroll only described up to the third level of the art, with no further information about the subsequent levels. The key to the whole thing was cultivation, using a prescribed set of breathing techniques to develop the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his mind and began to regulate his breathing. Then he closed his eyes and imitated the posture depicted in the first picture in the bamboo scroll. He was able to hold on for three breaths of time before intense pain filled him. Finally, he let out a shout and gave up. From what he could tell, using this breathing technique actually sucked all the air out of him, making it impossible to actually breathe.

“This is way too hard,” he thought. “According to the description under the picture, when you practice this kind of cultivation, you should be able to sense a strand of qi flowing through you. Just now, though, the only thing I felt was intense pain.” He was starting to get frustrated. However, for the sake of living forever, he gritted his teeth and tried again. He repeated the process over and over again until it was the middle of the night. During that entire time, he never once sensed any sort of qi in his body.

He had no way of knowing it, but even someone with exceptional latent talent who tried to cultivate the first level of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art would need at least a month to succeed, unless they had some outside help. Considering that, it was simply impossible that he could have succeeded after only a few hours.

Body aching painfully, Bai Xiaochun finally stretched, and was about to go wash his face when, all of a sudden, he heard a commotion outside. He stuck his head out of the window and immediately caught sight of a sallow-faced young man standing in the door of the main courtyard of the Ovens. He looked angry.

“I’m Xu Baocai! Whoever it was that took my spot here, get the hell out here right now!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0002 awe-chapter-3

The motion of Bai Xiaochun sticking his head out of the window instantly attracted the attention of the sallow-faced young man. Enraged, he yelled, “So, you’re the guy who took my spot!”

It was too late for Bai Xiaochun to duck his head back into the window. He immediately pasted an innocent expression onto his face and said, “No, it wasn’t me!”

“Liar! You’re so skinny and short, you’re obviously a newbie here!” Xu Baocai clenched his hands into fists and stared furiously at Bai Xiaochun. He was so angry that he looked like he might explode at any moment.

Feeling quite wronged, Bai Xiaochun peeped: “It really had nothing to do with me!”

“I don’t care! Three days from now on the southern slope of the sect, you and I are gonna have a fight to the death! If you win, then I’ll have no choice other than to suck it up. If you lose, then I get my spot back.” Xu Baocai shoved his hand into his robe and pulled out a blood notice, which he threw onto Bai Xiaochun’s window sill. The notice was covered with countless versions of the character “DIE,” all of them written in blood.

Bai Xiaochun looked down at all the “DIE” characters and couldn’t miss the killing intent roiling off of them. His heart went cold. Then he remembered that Xu Baocai had just mentioned a ‘fight to the death,’ and he gasped.

“Elder Brother, this isn’t that big a deal! Why did you have to go and use your own blood to write so many characters? Didn’t it... hurt?”

“Not a big deal?!” Xu Baocai roared, gnashing his teeth. “Humph! I’ve been living frugally for ages. I saved up spirit stones for seven years! Seven years, do you hear me!?!? Only then could I afford to bribe the honor guard into getting me a spot in the Ovens! Then you decide to stick your foot into the door? This enmity will never be reconciled! Three days from now is the day you die!”

“I think I’ll pass,” Bai Xiaochun said, picking up the blood notice gingerly between his thumb and forefinger, and then tossing it out the window.

“YOU!” raged Xu Baocai. Suddenly, he felt the ground shaking, and he realized that there was a mountain of flesh standing there next to him. It was hard to say how long Big Fatty Zhang had been standing there, but there he was, off to the side, coldly measuring up Xu Baocai.

“Ninth Fatty,” he said, addressing Bai Xiaochun, “you’re on dish duty with Second Brother.” Then he looked back at Xu Baocai. “As for you, stop causing such a ruckus! Get your ass out of here!” He swept his ladle through the air threateningly, causing a gust of wind to spring up.

Xu Baocai’s face fell, and he backed up several steps. He wanted to keep arguing, but seeing the impatient look on Big Fatty Zhang’s face, he shot a venomous look at Bai Xiaochun, then stalked off.

As Bai Xiaochun thought about it, he realized that considering the vicious look Xu Baocai had given him, he was certain to pop up again at some point. Therefore, the best thing to do in this situation would be to stay put in the

Ovens. Most likely, Xu Baocai wouldn’t dare to come back there and cause trouble.

Days passed. Bai Xiaochun slowly got used to working in the Ovens during the day, and cultivating the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art at night. However, progress was slow. Eventually he got to the point where he could endure for four breaths of time, but no more, leaving him very frustrated.

On one particular night in the middle of his cultivation session, he suddenly heard a big commotion among the fat Elder Brothers.

“Close the gate, close the gate! Hurry up, Second Fatty Huang, close that gate!”

“Third Fatty Hei, check and see if anyone is spying on us. Quickly!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked in shock. Having learned from his previous mistake, he avoided the window and peeked through a crack in the door. What he saw was a bunch of fatties bustling around the courtyard so fast they were almost flying.

Moments later, the main gate to the Ovens was closed tightly. Furthermore, for some reason, a light mist had sprung up, making the fatties look even more mysterious than ever.

Bai Xiaochun watched the scene playing out. The fatties were now hustling over to one particular thatched hut. Despite all the mist, Bai Xiaochun could clearly see Big Fatty Zhang’s formidable frame, and he seemed to be speaking to the others. The whole scene was very odd, so Bai Xiaochun began to edge away from the door in an attempt to pretend he hadn’t seen anything at all.

However, it was at that exact point that Big Fatty Zhang's voice echoed out: "Ninth Fatty, I know you're watching. Get out here!" Although he didn't speak very loud, his voice instantly weighed down on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then slowly walked out the door, putting on the innocent expression of a person who wasn't capable of even hurting a fly.

As soon as he neared the group of fatties, Big Fatty Zhang grabbed him and pulled him over to stand among them. Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun caught a whiff of some unique aroma, something that instantly caused a warm feeling to spread throughout his body.

He looked around at the others, and saw that they all had euphoric expressions on their faces. For some reason, he also felt enlivened. It was then that he noticed that Big Fatty Zhang was holding a magical mushroom in his hand. It was about the size of an infant's hand, and as translucent as crystal; all it took was a single glance, and anyone could tell that it was no ordinary item.

Big Fatty Zhang looked over at Bai Xiaochun, then held out the mushroom and gruffly said, "Come on, Ninth Junior Brother, take a bite."

"Uhh..." replied Bai Xiaochun, eying the magical mushroom. Then he looked around at all the fat Elder Brothers, and hesitated. Big Fatty Zhang instantly got irritated. From the look on his face, if Bai Xiaochun didn't eat the mushroom, the two of them would become enemies.

It wasn't just him. Second Fatty Huang, Third Fatty Hei, and all the others were all glaring at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard. Even in his wildest dreams, he would never have imagined himself in a situation where people would flip out in anger if he didn’t take a bite of a priceless magical mushroom, as if it were nothing more than a chicken leg. And yet, that was exactly what was happening right in front of his very eyes.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was thumping as he gritted his teeth and accepted the magical mushroom. Finally, he opened his mouth and took a big bite. The mushroom instantly dissolved in his mouth, causing a wonderful sensation to fill his body, something many times more intense than what he had experienced moments before when merely smelling it. Almost instantly, his face flushed bright red.

“Excellent. Elder Sun demanded that we use this hundred-year-old magical mushroom in a soup. If we all take a bite, then we’ll have to sink or swim together!” Big Fatty Zhang looked extremely content as he opened his mouth and took a nibble. Then he tossed the mushroom to the next fatty in line, and soon, all of them were munching on mushroom flesh. Now that they were all chewing together, the group smiled at Bai Xiaochun as if he were now one of them.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled as he realized that all these guys were essentially partners in crime. Furthermore, considering they had gotten so fat this way, it probably wasn’t dangerous to join them. It was little wonder Xu Baocai had given him a challenge notice with the word “DIE” written on it so many times….

“Elder Brother,” Bai Xiaochun said, “that magical mushroom was scrumptious! I feel like my whole body's on fire!” He licked his lips and looked impatiently at Big Fatty Zhang.

In response, Big Fatty Zhang's eyes began to shine brightly. With a hearty laugh, he flamboyantly pulled out a sealwort flower, which he handed to Bai Xiaochun.

"Now do you see how amazing the Ovens is, Junior Brother? I wasn't lying! Alright, eat up. Eat till you're stuffed!"

Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to shine as he took a big bite. Next, Big Fatty Zhang pulled out some sort of natural precious material, something that looked like a golden jewel, which emanated a fragrant aroma.

Bai Xiaochun needed no prompting from Big Fatty Zhang. He immediately took a bite and swallowed it down. The tangy flavor filled him with a wonderful sensation. After that, Big Fatty Zhang produced an incredibly sweet red spirit fruit.

More items emerged. Magical mushrooms, various medicinal ingredients, spirit fruits and other precious items. Bai Xiaochun partook of them all, as did the other fatties. He ate so much that soon, his head was spinning. He almost felt drunk, his body hot and burning to the point where white steam rose up from the top of his head. He already felt as fat as a ball.

The more he ate, the more kindly Big Fatty Zhang and the others looked at him. In the end, they slapped their stomachs and laughed heartily, and they all truly seemed like partners in crime.

Head swimming, Bai Xiaochun stretched out his arms and legs. His hand landed on Big Fatty Zhang's giant stomach, and his foot landed off to the side. He began to laugh along with the others.

"Other servant departments would kill to get one of their own into the Outer Sect. But we kill to make sure we stay out! Who wants to go there anyway? What’s so good about the Outer Sect, huh?” Big Fatty Zhang sounded very proud of this. As he finished speaking, he pulled out a ginseng root. The root itself had countless faintly visible age rings, and was covered with numerous rootlets. Clearly, this ginseng root was very old.

“Ninth Junior Brother, our cultivation bases are all strong enough that we could have become Outer Sect disciples a long time ago. However, we prefer to hide our true level. Look, there are Outer Sect disciples who would kill for the chance to get a single bite of a one-hundred-year-old ginseng root like this. Do we look scared?” Big Fatty Zhang subsequently plucked a rootlet off and popped it into his mouth, chewed, and swallowed. Then he handed the ginseng root to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was so stuffed he almost couldn’t see straight. “Elder Brother, I'm full.... I really can’t eat another bite--”

Before he could even finish speaking, Big Fatty Zhang plucked off a rootlet and stuffed it into Bai Xiaochun's mouth.

“Ninth Junior Brother, you’re far too skinny, so skinny that the girls in the sect won’t like you. In our sect, they like guys like us Brothers, stalwart and plump! Come on, eat....” Big Fatty Zhang let out a huge burp. Then he picked up a stack of empty bowls, simultaneously pointing to two scrolls hanging on either side of the nearby thatched hut, upon which was written a couplet. “Look, we have a saying here that goes *I’d rather starve to death in the Ovens than struggle up the ladder in the Outer Sect*.”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at the couplet and said, “Yeah, for sure! We all want to starve to death here! Uh... yeah, starve to death.”

Then he slapped his stomach and let out a burp.

Hearing this, Big Fatty Zhang and the others all started laughing. They all were finding Bai Xiaochun to be increasingly charming.

“Today is a great day,” Big Fatty Zhang said. “Ninth Junior Brother, I have something important to tell you. We have certain ways of doing things here in the Ovens, and to fit in, you need to memorize a certain mnemonic. Pay attention. *Fruits and herbs of a magical nature; Nibble the edges but spare the stem; Slice the meat thin when there's some to butcher; As for the bones leave some flesh on them; Spirit congee? Water it down until it's thin; Fine wine? Half a cup will do you in*.

“These six lines were compiled after years of suffering by previous generations. If you go about eating following these principles, then you’re guaranteed to be safe. Alright, let’s call it a night. Head to sleep everyone, today’s midnight snack is over. The Outer Sect disciples are still waiting for their soup.” As he spoke, Big Fatty Zhang began to fill the empty bowls with rice gruel.

Bai Xiaochun’s head was spinning, and he couldn't stop thinking about the six lines of truth he had just been told. He looked over at Big Fatty Zhang and the others filling up the bowls, let out a burp, then squatted down to examine the bowls themselves. Then, his mouth turned up into a smile.

“Elder Brothers, these bowls are too nice.”

Big Fatty Zhang and the others looked back at him with strange expressions.

Looking as charming as ever, he chuckled and said, “At first glance, they don’t look very big, but can actually hold a lot of food. Why don’t we make them look big, but hold less food? For example, we could make the bottom of the bowls... thicker!”

Big Fatty Zhang stared in shock, as though he had just been struck by lightning. His rolls of fat then began to quiver, and his eyes began to shine brightly. The other fatties began to pant, and their fat also began to tremble.

All of a sudden a loud smacking sound rang out as Big Fatty Zhang slapped his thigh. Then he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Yes, yes, YES! That’s an idea worth passing down! Future generations in the Ovens will all benefit from this! Ninth Junior Brother, I never imagined that someone as charming as you would actually be as crafty as this! Hahaha! You were born to be a part of the Ovens!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0003 awe-chapter-4

Everyone was in a wonderful mood, and were extremely pleased with Bai Xiaochun. Not only was he very charming, he seemed to have lots of crafty ideas. Big Fatty Zhang decided that a reward was in order, and pressed a grain of spirit rice into Bai Xiaochun’s hand.

Bai Xiaochun laughed happily as he staggered back to his room. Before he could climb in bed, all of the spiritual energy he had absorbed by eating the various precious materials suddenly burst out inside of him. His head spun, and he flopped face-first down onto the ground, where he immediately began snoring.

He slept wonderfully for the entire night. The following morning at dawn, when he opened his eyes, they shone brightly. He looked down to find that he was fatter than the day before. Furthermore, his skin was covered in a sticky layer of filth. When he hurried out to wash up, Big Fatty Zhang and the others were preparing breakfast for the sect disciples. When they saw Bai Xiaochun’s bedraggled appearance, they started laughing.

“Ninth Junior Brother, all that filth comes from the impurities in your body. Once you get rid of it, it will be much easier for you to practice cultivation. Take a few days off, we won’t need your help anyway. In a few days you can start working again.”

“Don’t forget about that grain of spirit rice! Eat it up quickly before it goes bad.”

“Sure thing,” Bai Xiaochun replied. Feeling quite energetic, he returned to his room and grabbed the turtle-shaped wok off of the stove. After filling it with water from the washroom, he returned and put it back on the stove. Then he pulled out the grain of spirit rice to examine it. It was about the size of his thumb, crystalline in appearance, and fragrantly aromatic.

“If immortals eat this stuff, then it must be incredible.” Sighing, he threw a few pieces of wood into the stove, then lit the fire. He was immediately hit by a blast of heat, which caused him to back up, blinking anxiously. Then he looked down at the fire and clicked his tongue.

“That’s no ordinary fire. It lights faster and also burns a lot hotter than the fire in the village.” Taking another look at the burning logs in the fire, he realized that they were not ordinary pieces of wood.

About this time, the fire began to burn even hotter than before, and Bai Xiaochun watched in amazement as one of the designs etched into the back of the turtle shell wok began to light up, starting at what appeared to be the tail of the turtle shell and ending where the head would be. Soon, the entire design was shining brightly.

Bai Xiaochun stared in amazement, then slapped his thigh.

“I knew it! This is some sort of treasure! It's definitely way better than Eldest Brother’s wok!” More certain than ever that this wok was something extraordinary, Bai Xiaochun quickly tossed the grain of spirit rice into the water.

Then he sat off to the side with the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art bamboo scroll. Emulating the movements and breathing techniques depicted in the first picture, he began to cultivate.

He had only just begun when, suddenly, his eyes went wide; the posture which had been so difficult to maintain just the day before, was now much easier to assume. In fact, he actually felt very comfortable, without the slightest sensation of awkwardness. In addition, the breathing technique no longer left him feeling as if he were suffocating. Instead, he felt a very pleasant sensation.

Furthermore, he was absolutely certain that before today he could only maintain the posture for about three or four breaths of time, but this time, after seven or eight breaths, he didn't feel the least bit of pain or discomfort.

Suppressing his excitement, Bai Xiaochun calmly continued until thirty breaths of time had passed. Just when he was finally starting to feel weak and uncomfortable, a strand of qi suddenly appeared inside of him. It was very cold, and swirled around rapidly; before it could make a full circle through his body, it vanished. However, Bai Xiaochun was so excited he leapt to his feet.

“Qi! Hahaha! Finally some qi appeared!” Bursting with excitement, he began to pace back and forth in his room. He quickly came to the conclusion that it must have something to do with all the precious materials he had consumed the previous night. Suddenly he wished he had eaten more.

“No wonder Elder Brother Zhang would rather starve to death in the Ovens than go climb the ladder in the Outer Sect. Not even the Outer Sect disciples would have opportunities like this.” Sitting down anxiously, he once again began to practice cultivation.

This time, he was able to maintain the posture and breathing for a full sixty breaths of time. At that point, a flow of qi appeared in him, almost a trickle, that rapidly circulated through his body.

Having experienced this once before, he was ready, and began to guide the qi through a specific path, as indicated by the first picture in the bamboo scroll.

Soon, the qi was flowing through him in just the way he wanted. He maintained the posture and movements indicated in the first illustration, and as he did, he could sense streams of coldness emerging from various parts of his body, almost like drops of water, which merged into the qi flow, causing it to grow larger and larger.

In the end, it was like a tiny stream, flowing in a continuous cycle. A tremor ran through him, and it was as if a layer of fog had suddenly been stripped away from his mind. A rumbling sound echoed out from his body.

He suddenly felt lighter and more agile than before. At the same time, globules of filth were expelled from the pores all over his body.

Unlike last time, the stream of qi inside of him didn’t vanish, but instead, remained there, circulating through his body. Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, and they shone even more brightly than before. His mind even seemed to move a bit quicker and his body felt lighter and faster.

“A permanent qi vessel,” he thought excitedly. “That’s the sign that I've successfully cultivated the first level of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art! It also means that I’ve reached that, what’s it called...? The first level of Qi Condensation!” Bai Xiaochun was overjoyed, and immediately ran to the washroom.

When Big Fatty Zhang and the others saw him, they exchanged knowing glances. Although they were a bit surprised that Bai Xiaochun had reached the first level so quickly, they all knew why it had happened.

After returning to his room, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and then began to study the bamboo scroll more thoroughly.

“After cultivating the first level of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, I should be able to control physical objects. Wow, this is basically an immortal magical technique. I should be able to shoot things through the air.” Eyes shining, he followed the instructions prescribed in the scroll, moving both hands together in a special way to perform an incantation. Then, he waved his finger at the nearby desk. Instantly, the stream inside of him surged like a bucking bronco, racing toward his right index finger and then out through the tip of his finger.

It turned into something like an invisible thread, which then attached itself to the nearby desk. However, almost as soon as it reached the desk, the connection grew unstable, and the thread disintegrated.

Bai Xiaochun’s face went pale. After a moment of recuperation, he reviewed what he had just done, then decided to give up on moving the desk. Instead, he pulled out the wooden sword from his bag and placed it on top of the desk. He wasn’t sure what type of wood the sword was made from, but despite being much lighter than the desk, it still seemed unusually heavy. He waved his finger toward it, and the wooden sword twitched, then slowly floated an inch up into the air before falling back down onto the desk.

Bai Xiaochun was anything but discouraged. After a few more excited attempts, he was able to get the sword to rise higher and higher. Soon it was ten inches, then twenty, then thirty.... By the time dusk fell, he could get the wooden sword to fly in a straight line. Although it wasn’t very fast, and he couldn't quite make it turn, it wouldn’t fall down as easily as it had when he first started practicing.

“Henceforth, I, Bai Xiaochun, am an immortal!” He rose proudly to his feet, held his left hand behind his back, and then waved his right hand, causing the wooden sword to fly unsteadily back and forth in his room.

Eventually, his qi began to grow unstable, so he put the wooden sword away and continued to practice cultivation. Later, he caught wind of a fragrant aroma coming from the wok, causing him to raise his head and take a deep sniff. Suddenly feeling ravenous, he realized that he had been busy cultivating all day, and had completely forgotten about the spirit rice boiling in the wok. He immediately walked over and lifted the lid to look inside.

The moment he did, the strong, fragrant aroma of spirit rice wafted out. Furthermore, at some point during the process, a brilliant, glowing silver design had appeared on the surface of the rice!

The design was clearly visible, and when Bai Xiaochun looked at it closely, he suddenly felt lost within the light. After a while, though, the design began to fade. He narrowed his eyes, and after some more thought, picked up the grain of spirit rice and held it in his hand for a closer look.

“That design looks really familiar....” His eyes flickered with a thoughtful gleam. He ducked his head to look under the stove, and saw that the fire had long since burned out. The pieces of wood were nothing more than ash now, and the design on the wok had once again faded into obscurity.

However, he could still tell that the silver design on the grain of rice was the same design as the one on the back of the wok.

He decided not to continue to investigate the design, and to be safe, chose not to eat the rice for the time being. Instead, he put it into his bag, sat there for a moment in contemplation, then left his hut to help Big Fatty Zhang and the others.

Before long, half a month had passed. Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation progress had once again slowed down. However, after some discreet inquiries, he learned that silver designs never appeared on spirit rice when it was cooked.

His curiosity had definitely been piqued. The more he learned about it, the more it seemed that there was something special about this particular grain of rice, not to mention his wok, which seemed even stranger. A few days later, Third Fatty Hei left the Ovens to go purchase supplies, giving Bai Xiaochun the perfect opportunity to sneak into the Four Seas Room, a place where servants could get general information about cultivation.

On his way back to his hut, he did his best to conceal the excitement which filled his heart. After closing the door behind him, he immediately took out the grain of spirit rice and studied the silver design. Gradually, an expression of disbelief appeared on his face.

“When immortals practice cultivation, there are three skills they can't do without. The first is medicine concocting, the second is equipment forging, and the third is spirit enhancement!” Bai Xiaochun thought back to the images he had dug up when searching through the ancient records in the Four Seas Room. One of them had closely resembled the silver design that was now visible on the grain of rice.

“Spirit enhancement!” After a moment, he took a long, deep breath.

Spirit enhancement was a special technique in which the energy of heaven and earth was forced into physical objects. It was a type of magic that essentially replaced the natural functions of nature, a technique which could be used on medicinal pills, incense, or magical items. Unfortunately, it was forbidden by heaven and earth, ensuring that the rate of success was limited. A success would lead to the item being vastly more powerful. A failure would result in the spiritual energy of the item becoming completely useless.

The most shocking thing about spirit enhancement was that it could be performed over and over again. Every success increased the effects of the spirit enhancement by tenfold, leading to heaven-shaking, earth-toppling transformations.

Of course, the more precious the item was to begin with, the more terrifying the results of success would be.

Unsurprisingly, the chances of success decreased with each enhancement. In fact, after a certain point, even some spirit enhancement grandmasters wouldn’t dare to go any further. After all, the ramifications of a failure in that case would be difficult to accept.

“The ancient records said that the Spirit Stream Sect’s guardian treasure is an item that was somehow enhanced ten times by spirit enhancement. The Heavenhorn Sword!” Bai Xiaochun’s throat felt dry. Eyes shining with disbelief and confusion, he swallowed and looked over at the turtle-shaped wok. There were ten faint decorative lines on the back of it, and when he looked at them, his heart began to beat so hard it felt like it was about to burst out of his chest.

As of this moment, he was sure that the design which had appeared on the spirit rice was a mark of spirit enhancement. Furthermore, the source of that design was none other than his wok!

After a moment of hesitation, he gritted his teeth. If he didn’t get to the bottom of this mystery, he wouldn't be able to sleep. He knew for a fact that this wok was something extraordinary, and therefore, he couldn't let anyone in on his secret.

He waited until it was late in the night, then very quietly tip-toed over to the wok. After taking a deep breath and trying not to think about what would happen if he failed, he pulled out his wooden sword and threw it inside, the same way he had thrown the grain of rice in.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0004 awe-chapter-5

After waiting for what seemed like forever, nothing unusual happened. Bai Xiaochun looked thoughtfully at the patterns on the turtle-wok, and then looked down into the stove itself. Nothing remained of the wood but ash so he left, to return a few minutes later with some more firewood.

Firewood for personal use wasn’t very common in the Ovens, so he’d been forced to go find Big Fatty Zhang to make a special request for some more.

After kindling the fire, Bai Xiaochun once again focused on the first design on the turtle-wok. As the wood burned, the design lit up. Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to thump with excitement, and then suddenly, the wooden sword began to shine with blinding silver light.

He backed up a few paces, after which the light slowly faded away, and a piercing sensation began to emanate out from inside the wok.

He took a deep breath and carefully sidled up to the wok. The wooden sword, just like the grain of spirit rice, now had a bright silver design on it, which gradually faded to a deep silver color!

The sword appeared different than before. Although it was still made of wood, it now seemed more like it was made from metal. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up as he carefully took the sword out of the wok. It felt heavier, and also emanated a certain coldness.

“It worked! My first spirit enhancement on the wooden sword worked!” Bai Xiaochun fondled the sword ecstatically, then glanced over at the wok and tried to decide what to do with it. In the end, he decided to just leave it where it was. The more he treated it like an ordinary item, the less likely it was that anyone would pay attention to it.

As for the spirit rice, he decided to eat it bit by bit over time. He would also be careful to not let anyone see the wooden sword. As an added measure, he came up with the idea of somehow painting over the glowing design.

Finally, he tidied his room, then walked out nonchalantly, as if nothing unusual had occurred. Over the next few days, he collected some various liquid materials from the Ovens which he used to paint the sword, making it bright and colorful, albeit somewhat unsightly. The most important thing was that the spirit design was covered up well enough that it wasn’t obvious. In the end, Bai Xiaochun nodded his head in satisfaction.

As the days passed, Bai Xiaochun became as comfortable with life in the Ovens as a fish in water. He quickly fit in with the other Elder Brothers, and also became familiar with the work that went on there. He soon found that different types of fire were necessary for cooking different spirit foods. In fact, the different types of fire were described in terms of color; there were one-colored flames, two-colored flames, and so on. The wood he had used earlier to heat the turtle-wok had been one-colored firewood.

Big Fatty Zhang began to grow especially fond of Bai Xiaochun, and took special care of him. Furthermore, just as he’d said, after a few months passed, Bai Xiaochun was starting to gain weight.

He was no longer the scrawny kid he had been when he had first joined the sect. He was fatter, but at the same time, his skin was also fairer and clearer than before. He also looked more harmless than ever, and was clearly reaching the point of being deserving of the title Ninth Fatty Bai.

He also experienced the special snack-time arrangement on more than one occasion. However, what Bai Xiaochun found especially frustrating was that, despite gaining weight, his cultivation seemed to progress as slowly as ever. Eventually, he stopped worrying about that and spent most of his time eating and drinking with his Elder Brothers. Life was good. As the months passed, he heard bits of gossip about recent events in the Spirit Stream Sect.

In addition, Big Fatty Zhang taught him more about the sect in general. He learned that the sect disciples were divided into the Inner and Outer Sects. Any servant who could practice cultivation all the way to the third level of Qi Condensation would be able to challenge one of the trials by fire, which were paths that existed on the various mountain peaks in the sect. A servant who passed the trial by fire could join that mountain peak as an Outer Sect disciple. Only by becoming an Outer Sect disciple could anyone truly become a part of the Spirit Stream Sect.

However, accomplishing such a feat would count as a stunning accomplishment, and would be equivalent to the old saying about the fish leaping over the dragon gate. Only the top three competitors in the monthly trials by fire would be accepted, meaning that the number of people who could become an Outer Sect disciple was limited.

On one particular day, Seventh Fatty had been scheduled to go out and purchase supplies, but ended up being busy with some other matters. As a result, Big Fatty Zhang called for

Bai Xiaochun and told him to stand in for Seventh Fatty. Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, recalling the incident with Xu Baocai from a few months before. Although it probably wasn't anything to worry about, he couldn't shake his anxiety. Before leaving, he went back to his room and collected eight meat cleavers [1. Quick note about the meat cleavers. In Chinese the word is literally "vegetable knife," and could more properly be translated as "kitchen knife." However, the most common kitchen knife that you find in most Chinese households is what we would call a cleaver in English. You can see that by going to baidu and doing an image search for the term "vegetable knife" in Chinese. You'll see a couple "normal" kitchen knives in that image search, because the word could also mean that. However, in both home kitchens and restaurant kitchens in China, cleavers are used for everything from cutting big chunks of meat to julienning vegetables, as you can see demonstrated by Anthony Bourdain and Eric Ripert in this video] and also donned six long leather coats. By the time he was finished getting dressed, he looked like a round ball.

However, he also felt much safer, which was the important thing. The last thing he did was strap his wok onto his back, leaving him feeling very safe. He then staggered out of the Ovens and down the mountain.

As he walked along the green limestone paths in the sect, he gazed around at the beautiful buildings and courtyards, and began to feel prouder than ever.

"How time flies!" he mused, clasping his hands behind his back. "Life is like a dream. I, Bai Xiaochun, have only spent a few months practicing cultivation. However, as I think back to the mortal world, and my life in the village, it fills my eyes with tears." He walked along with eight meat cleavers hanging from his belt, a wok on his back, and multiple layers of clothing, looking very much like a dilapidated toy ball. Occasionally, he would encounter other servants, who would stare at him out of the corners of their eyes as he passed.

There were even a few female disciples who couldn’t help but laugh out loud when they saw him. They covered their mouths with their hands, and the sound of their laughter was like silver bells, clear and melodious.

Face slightly flushed, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but feel even more impressive than ever. Clearing his throat, he stuck his chest out and continued to saunter along.

Before too much time had passed, and before he had even left the third peak’s servants’ district, he noticed that quite a few servants were rushing off into the distance, looking very excited. They appeared to be heading in the direction of the path that led up to the top of the third peak, a place where Outer Sect disciples often congregated.

More and more servants began running over in that direction, looking very excited. Surprised by the scene, Bai Xiaochun quickly grabbed a scrawny servant who happened to be running by.

“Junior Brother, what’s going on?” Bai Xiaochun asked quizzically. “Why is everyone running over there?”

The young man looked over angrily, but then saw the black wok on Bai Xiaochun’s back, and his expression turned envious.

“I didn't realize you were from the Ovens, Elder Brother. Why don’t you come along? Two Chosen from the Outer Sect, Zhou Hong and Zhang Yide, are fighting it out in the trial by fire arena. Supposedly, the two of them have a beef with each other. Whatever happens, they're both at the sixth level of Qi Condensation, so we should be able to learn a bit by watching them, and maybe even gain some enlightenment.” Finishing his explanation, the young man hurried off, apparently worried about missing out on any of the action.

Feeling very curious, Bai Xiaochun set off in a hurry, following the flow of people as they left the servants’ district and headed to the foot of the third peak, where a large raised platform could be seen.

The platform was about 3,000 meters wide, and was surrounded by a crowd of servants. There were even people watching from positions further up on the mountain, all of whom wore resplendent clothing, and were clearly Outer Sect disciples.

Two young men occupied the platform, both of whom wore extravagant outfits. One of them had a scar running down his face, the other had skin as white as jade. The two of them were fighting back and forth, causing booming sounds to echo out.

The glow of magical items surrounded both of them. Floating in front of the scar-faced youth was a small flag that fluttered of its own volition, as if some invisible hand were waving it. The swirling flag formed the shape of a mist tiger, which let out deafening roars.

The jade-faced youth danced back and forth as he fought. He had a small blue sword which whistled through the air, leaving behind streaks of light.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the sword flying about, he gasped. Although he could control his own wooden sword in a similar way, it would be impossible to even compare his level of skill with that of the jade-faced young man.

What was even more remarkable was how the two young men didn't seem to be holding anything back. Killing intent roiled off of them, and within a short time, numerous deadly situations arose. Both were heavily wounded, and despite the fact that the wounds weren’t critical, it was still a shocking sight.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time seeing cultivators fighting, and it was very different from how he had imagined immortals would look when they fought. The cruel and vicious way they attacked each other left his heart pounding in fear.

“Immortal cultivation... isn’t just about living forever? What’s this fighting and killing all about? What if I end up losing my poor little life...?” Bai Xiaochun swallowed nervously as he watched the scar-faced youth’s mist tiger lunging voraciously at the other young man. Wiping the sweat from his brow, Bai Xiaochun suddenly realized that the outside world was a very dangerous place; it was probably a much better idea to stay back in the Ovens where it was safe.

Having reached this conclusion, he began to hurry off when, all of a sudden, he heard someone shouting his name.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

He turned his head and saw the author of the blood notice, Xu Baocai, hurrying in his direction, a vicious expression on his face. A wooden sword floated next to him, glittering with an unusual light that clearly surpassed the first level of Qi Condensation. As the sword flew along, it left a streak of light in its wake, and sent a formidable spirit pressure emanating out.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that wooden sword heading in his direction, his eyes went wide, and an intense sense of deadly crisis welled up in him.

“He’s gonna kill me!” he thought.

Instantly, he began to run in the opposite direction, screaming: “Murder! Murder!”

The other servants in the area all heard, and looked over in shock. The cries were so loud that even Zhou Hong and Zhang Yide stopped fighting.

In fact, even Xu Baocai was unnerved by the screams. He had obviously just yelled Bai Xiaochun’s name and then started to chase him. His sword hadn’t even touched Bai Xiaochun, and yet Bai Xiaochun was screaming as though he had been stabbed repeatedly.

Xu Baocai hated Bai Xiaochun so much his gums itched. Face ashen, he ran after him, shouting: “Come on, Bai Xiaochun, you know how to fight! What are you running away for!?”

“If I knew how to fight, why would I be running away, you moron!? I would have killed you a long time ago! Murder! Murder!” Bai Xiaochun’s screams grew even louder as he fled in the opposite direction like a fat little bunny.

Meanwhile, in a building which jutted out into the air at the very peak of the mountain, two men were in the middle of playing a game of Go. One was middle-aged, the other was an old man. The middle-aged man was none other than Li Qinghou. As for the old man, he had a full head of white hair, and a ruddy complexion. His eyes glittered brightly, and he was clearly no ordinary individual. Currently, he was looking down at the scene playing out down below.

Chuckling, he said, “What an interesting child you brought back to the sect, Qinghou.”

“How embarrassing, sect leader. The kid’s personality definitely needs a lot more work.” Feeling a headache coming on, Li Qinghou placed his game piece onto the board and then shook his head.

“The kids in the Ovens are pretty stuck up, and yet this kid fits right in," scoffed the old man, stroking his beard. "Not an easy task. Hmm...”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0005 awe-chapter-6

The sound of Bai Xiaochun’s screams undulated through the air beneath the third peak, catching the astonished attention of numerous servants. All of them could clearly see Bai Xiaochun, black wok on his back, wearing several layers of clothing, running at breakneck speed through the servants’ district. He looked like a fat, round ball.

From a distance, it was difficult to actually make out Bai Xiaochun himself, but you would definitely see the black wok, which made him look almost like a beetle as he flew along.

Then there were the eight meat cleavers that hung from his belt, which clashed and clanked as he fled.

“Murder!” he hollered as he ran, picking up speed. “Someone save me! I don’t want to die....”

Xu Baocai was hot on his tail, face ashen, eyes gleaming ferociously and heart filled with both anxiety and rage.

Chasing Bai Xiaochun this way was catching quite a bit of attention from the servants, and Xu Baocai was worried that the honor guard might notice. The nervousness in his heart continued to grow.

“Quit screeching, dammit!” Xu Baocai raged. “Quiet down! What are you screaming for? Shut *up*!” Gritting his teeth, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the wooden sword to flicker with light and then shoot toward the fleeing Bai Xiaochun.

A clang rang out as the wooden sword slammed into Bai Xiaochun’s black wok. As the noise echoed out, Bai Xiaochun continued running as if nothing had happened.

Xu Baocai gnashed his teeth. The big wok on Bai Xiaochun’s back covered nearly half of his body, making it very difficult to hit him. However, feeling that he had little other choice, Xu Baocai continued to give chase.

And so they raced through the servants’ district, Bai Xiaochun leading the way, Xu Baocai running behind him.

“This guy is pretty fast, even with that wok on his back!” thought Xu Baocai, huffing and puffing as he fell further behind in the chase. His cultivation base was at the second level of Qi Condensation, and he was running as hard as he could. However, Bai Xiaochun was running with the passion of a rabbit whose tail had been stepped on. No matter what Xu Baocai did, he couldn't catch up.

More horrifying was that he was starting to get tired, and yet hadn’t even laid a finger on his opponent. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun didn't seem to be the least bit tired at all, and was also screaming like a pig at the slaughterhouse.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun caught sight of the little path leading to the Ovens, and his eyes glittered with excitement. He suddenly felt as though he were arriving home, and the sensation was so moving that he almost cried.

“Elder Brother, save me!” he cried. “He’s trying to murder me!” A trail of dust rose into the air behind him as he ran toward the Ovens at breakneck speed. Big Fatty Zhang and the others heard his screaming and hurried out, shocked expressions on their faces.

“Elder Brother, save me! Xu Baocai is trying to kill me! My poor little life is on the line!” Bai Xiaochun quickly scrambled behind Big Fatty Zhang.

Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes gleamed with a ferocious light as he looked around vigilantly, but he saw no one.

“Xu Baocai?” he asked. It was at this point that Xu Baocai finally appeared, huffing and puffing as he ran down the path toward the Ovens.

When Bai Xiaochun realized how far behind Xu Baocai was, a quizzical expression appeared on his face.

“Eee? Why is he running so slowly?”

Big Fatty Zhang looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then back at the panting Xu Baocai. The motion caused the fat on his face to quiver a bit.

Xu Baocai had expended a lot of effort in the chase, so as he neared the Ovens and then heard what Bai Xiaochun said, he was filled with so much rage that he felt like he was about to explode. With a roar, he waved his right hand, sending his wooden sword stabbing toward a nearby tree.

A bang could be heard, and the tree quivered as the sword pierced through it, leaving behind a gaping hole.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he cried, “our differences are irreconcilable!” His eyes were completely bloodshot as he glared at Bai Xiaochun, and then the hulking Big Fatty Zhang. Finally, he turned angrily and began to stalk off back down the path.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as he looked at the hole in the tree. Then he looked back at the fuming Xu Baocai, and swallowed hard as an uneasy feeling rose up in his heart.

Big Fatty Zhang looked at Xu Baocai’s retreating figure, and his eyes flickered with a sinister gleam. Then he patted Bai Xiaochun on the shoulder.

“Don’t worry, Ninth Junior Brother. Xu Baocai might have some good connections in the sect, but if he dares show his face here again, we Elder Brothers will cut off one of his legs!” Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, though, his tone changed. “Although, it would probably be best if you didn't leave the Ovens, Ninth Junior Brother. You’re looking a bit skinny, I think I should fatten you up a bit. After all, Elder Zhou is celebrating his decade-birthday in a few days.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded his head absentmindedly as he stared at the hole Xu Baocai’s wooden sword had left in the tree.

He then followed his Elder Brothers back into the Ovens. Later, he sat in his room, brooding and feeling more uneasy than ever. The fact that his opponent could send a wooden sword through a tree meant that if it had hit him, he would definitely be a corpse now.

“This isn’t gonna work, not unless I plan on staying inside the Ovens for the rest of my life. What if he catches me next time I go out...?” Bai Xiaochun just couldn’t stop thinking about the venomous look Xu Baocai had cast his way before leaving.

“I came here to live forever, not to die....” The feeling of insecurity and anxiety caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to slowly become shot with blood. After a long moment passed, he gritted his teeth.

“Fudge! I'm gonna do it! I'm gonna go all-out! I'm gonna go so all-out that I’ll terrify myself, let alone everyone else!” His eyes were now completely bloodshot. Instead of saying that Bai Xiaochun was the type of person who was afraid of dying, it would be more accurate to say that he was simply insecure. The ordeal he had just gone through had only served to stoke his determination.

“I’m gonna practice cultivation! I'm gonna get stronger!!” Bai Xiaochun’s breath came in ragged pants as he made his decision. He pulled out the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art bamboo scroll, opened it up to the second illustration, and then immediately began to practice cultivation.

He was afraid of dying, but he was also viciously persistent. Were he not, he would never have been able to light that stick of incense thirteen times throughout the years, despite the threat of the lightning.

Grinning with vicious determination, he assumed the posture in the second illustration, tenaciously maintaining the pose. Before, he had only been able to last for about ten breaths of time, but this time, he actually lasted for fifteen.

He ended up wracked with pain, forehead dripping with great drops of sweat. However, the vicious gleam in his eye didn’t fade. Soon, he was able to last for twenty breaths of time, then thirty. The small stream that was the qi vessel in his body was now ten percent complete. Gasping for breath, vision fading to black, he finally rested for a moment, then started cultivating again.

The night passed relatively uneventfully. Soon it was the next day. And the day after that. And yet another day.... Eventually fifteen days went by. Other than eating and visiting the restroom, Bai Xiaochun never left his room. To someone who had just begun the practice of cultivation, such tediousness was usually difficult to endure. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't even come close to giving up.

Big Fatty Zhang and the others were shocked by his relentless practice of cultivation. It must be stated that cultivating the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art was no easy task. In principle, it was relatively simple. However, the postures that had to be maintained to reach the various levels all led to unimaginable pain, and therefore required incredible perseverance. Normally speaking, the servants in the sect would give up after only a few days of trying to cultivate it.

Therefore, when Big Fatty Zhang and the others saw Bai Xiaochun continue to cultivate it for more than half a month, they felt like they were observing an entirely different person than the one they had met a few months ago.

His clothes grew wrinkled, his hair became disheveled, his eyes were completely bloodshot. He seemed completely bedraggled, and at the same time, completely focused. Regardless of the pain he felt, he never gave up.

Another thing that happened was that he began to lose some of the fat he had built up. At the same time, the spirit pressure he radiated increased by more than fifty percent. He was now very close to the great circle of the first level of Qi Condensation.

Apparently, all of the precious materials he had eaten had built up in his fat. By practicing cultivation in the way he was, it was forcing those items to materialize as part of his cultivation base. It also ended up making his body tougher than the average person.

“Ninth Junior Brother, why don’t you take a break? You’ve been practicing cultivation nonstop for more than half a month.” Big Fatty Zhang and the others tried to persuade him to stop. However, when he looked up at them, they saw a gleam of determination in his eyes that left them shaken.

Time passed. Soon, Bai Xiaochun had been practicing cultivation like mad for a full month. Big Fatty Zhang and the others were shocked. In fact, Big Fatty Zhang even said, “He’s not cultivating, he’s killing himself!”

By this point in his cultivation, Bai Xiaochun could hold the pose in the second illustration for longer than 100 breaths of time. Soon, he reached 150 breaths of time. The spiritual energy inside of him was not a small stream any more. It was far, far larger than that.

Another month passed. Big Fatty Zhang and the others trembled in fear, worried that Bai Xiaochun really was killing himself from working too hard. Even as they were working up a plan to go get rid of Xu Baocai, a huge rumbling could be heard coming from Bai Xiaochun’s hut.

As the sound echoed about, the spirit pressure of the second level of Qi Condensation erupted out from the hut, spreading for dozens of meters in all directions. As soon as Big Fatty Zhang and the others sensed it, they looked up with expressions of shock.

“Little Junior Brother has broken through!”

“The second level of Qi Condensation! He hasn’t even partaken of the Ovens’ snack arrangement for more than half a year, and he’s already reached the second level of Qi Condensation! That’s pretty rare!”

“It took me a whole year to reach the second level of Qi Condensation....” Even as they were making exclamations of shock, a crash could be heard as Bai Xiaochun’s door opened, and he burst out, looking exhausted and disheveled. However, his eyes were glittering brightly.

Big Fatty Zhang and the others were just about to hurry over to offer congratulations when Bai Xiaochun flashed through the air and nimbly landed on the bamboo fence that surrounded the Ovens. He clasped his hands behind his back and tilted his head up proudly, looking off into the distance with a profound gleam in his eyes. He looked every bit like a proud, lonesome hero.

Big Fatty Zhang and the others exchanged dismayed glances.

“What is he standing there for? He looks so weird....”

“Did little Junior Brother... get possessed or something?”

Almost as soon as they looked over at Bai Xiaochun and his odd appearance, they heard his voice echoing out, sounding proud and wise.

“Xu Baocai is a consummate Chosen among the servants of the Spirit Stream Sect, matchlessly vicious, and famous far and wide. His cultivation base is even in the terrifying second level of Qi Condensation. However, my cultivation base is also in the second level of Qi Condensation. A fight between us will be an even match. It will likely be a fight talked about in all the lands, a battle that will shake the entire sect. However, it must be fought, no matter how much blood and gore flows, no matter how many bones are shattered and tendons... wait a second. No, this battle is far, far too important. I have to keep practicing cultivation!”

Having finished speaking, Bai Xiaochun looked around for a moment, then flicked his sleeve and returned to his room. The door slammed shut behind him as he began another session of secluded meditation. Big Fatty Zhang and the others swallowed hard, and exchanged glances. Finally, Third Fatty Hei said, “Don’t tell me we gave Junior Brother some spoiled food?”

Second Fatty Huang shivered and replied, “Oh no! This is bad! Junior Brother is drunk on spiritual energy! He’s gone crazy from cultivation.... We mustn’t provoke him now!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0006 awe-chapter-7

In the following days, Big Fatty Zhang and the others kept a constant eye out on Bai Xiaochun’s thatched hut. As for Bai Xiaochun, breaking through to the second level of Qi Condensation gave him quite a boost in self-confidence, and he continued to focus on cultivation.

Currently, he was in his room, wiping the sweat from his brow. He was buck naked, gritting his teeth against the pain as he tried to maintain the posture of the third image in the bamboo scroll.

His qi vessel was no longer a flowing stream, but rather, a small river. It flowed through his body, and with every rotation, cracking sounds would emanate out from inside of him. His previously rotund body was now thin once again, and in fact, he was even thinner than when he had first arrived in the Ovens.

However, there seemed to be energy building up in his body. As he continued to practice cultivation, the flesh and muscle that covered his skinny frame pulsed with power. In fact, if you listened carefully, you would even be able to hear the sound of his heartbeat echoing about in his room.

More and more spirit pressure was condensing inside of him, filling Bai Xiaochun with a feeling of increasing power. After several more days passed, the pain increased to point where it was simply too much, and he had to give up.

He was left panting, eyes completely bloodshot. He had the strong feeling that he simply couldn't continue on this way. Although he naturally absorbed the spiritual power of heaven and earth while cultivating, that flow simply couldn't keep up with how much power he was wasting. Furthermore, the Ovens’ snack arrangement wasn’t a regular occurrence, and only happened on lucky occasions.

Most other people cultivated the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art by practicing it once every few days. Even people who were more devoted would only practice it once per day. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun had been practicing nonstop. It was no small wonder that Big Fatty Zhang and the others were shocked. In fact, many Inner Sect disciples would have been astonished to hear about what he was doing.

However, having reached this level of cultivation still left Bai Xiaochun feeling insecure and uneasy. After all, he was the type of person who would rather be safe than sorry. Finally, he pulled out the grain of spirit rice that he had enhanced and looked at it for a long moment before using an ordinary wok to cook it up. After the spiritual energy began to waft out of it, he quickly gobbled it down.

As soon as the spirit rice entered his mouth, it turned into a thick blast of spiritual energy that was exponentially more powerful than ordinary spirit rice. In fact, the two types couldn’t even be considered to be on the same level. As the rumbling sounds echoed out inside of him, he began to practice cultivation. He instantly assumed the posture in the third illustration, and at the same time, began to regulate his breathing.

Half a month later, deep in the night, a tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and he opened his eyes. He suddenly realized that at some indeterminable point, he had actually broken through from the second level of Qi Condensation to the third level.

This development caused him to go wild with joy. Excitement filled his eyes, and he began to laugh uproariously. Examining himself, he realized that the qi vessel inside of him had thoroughly transformed into a small river.

The small river circulated through his body at high speed, moving far, far faster than it had before. In fact, he could even send the spiritual energy around to different parts of his body, all with a simple thought.

“The third level of Qi Condensation! That spirit enhancement was incredible!” He rose to his feet, licking his lips at the thought of producing another spirit-enhanced grain of spirit rice. However, it was at this point that he remembered something the bamboo scroll had mentioned about the growth of internal meridians. Right now, he needed to let his body adapt to the expanded meridians, and temporarily couldn’t continue to practice cultivation.

Putting his idea about the spirit rice on the back burner, he walked out of his room, all the while looking extremely proud of himself. However, almost as soon as he set foot out the door, he caught sight of the little path outside of the Ovens, and the tree with the hole in it. Although it was late at night, the tree was clearly visible in the moonlight.

“This won’t do. Xu Baocai’s wooden sword is obviously beyond ordinary. Even being in the third level of Qi Condensation won't guarantee my safety!” Frowning, he stood there in thought for a moment before taking out his own multi-colored wooden sword. Then he looked back at the wok inside his room.

“I think I’ll feel a bit more confident if I do a second spirit enhancement,” he thought. Without any further hesitation, he retrieved some of the Ovens’ spirit wood.

After getting fully prepared, he stood in front of his mysterious wok and kindled the fire. Once the design on the wok lit up, he tossed the wooden sword inside.

However, after waiting for quite some time, there didn’t seem to be any reaction. Bai Xiaochun frowned and looked at the design on the turtle-wok, then glanced down and realized that the fire had already burned out. Nothing but ash remained of the wood. Muttering to himself, he went out to find some more spirit wood. However, after burning several more batches, he didn’t see any difference in the wooden sword.

“These pieces of firewood are all for one-colored flames,” he thought. “Maybe that’s just not hot enough. Maybe I need the heat... of a two-colored flame?” He left his room again and found a piece of violet-colored firewood, which was relatively rare in the Ovens. In fact, after searching for a while, he could only find a single piece.

After kindling it, the flame appeared, a two-colored flame that was far hotter than a one-colored flame!

Almost as soon as the two-colored flame touched the surface of the turtle-wok, the second design began to shine brightly. As for the flame itself, it rapidly began to fade away; apparently the power of the flame was being sucked away. Soon, the two-colored flame had burned out, leaving behind nothing but ash. However, the turtle-wok’s second design was now shining brightly.

“It worked!” he thought, eyes shining. He quickly put the wooden sword back inside, whereupon silver light began to shimmer. This time, it lasted for several breaths of time longer than the first time he had done the spirit enhancement.

The light began to dim, but then, it suddenly flared up and shot directly toward Bai Xiaochun. This sudden change occurred so quickly that he couldn’t even react. His vision swam with light as an indescribably cold sensation washed through him. It almost felt as if he were being frozen over. There was nothing he could do to stop it from happening; it felt as if the coldness was viciously grabbing at his insides.

His face went pale, and his vision blurred. It was as if something inside of him was being sucked out and merged into the turtle-wok.

Finally, the silver light faded away, and within the wok, the wooden sword appeared, sharper than ever. In fact, it was so sharp that looking at it hurt the eyes.

Although it was still painted gaudily, the veins of the wood inside had already changed. If you scraped away the paint, you would find that they seemed to be filled with starlight, as if the sword had been thoroughly and completely transformed.

In virtually the same moment as the new wooden sword appeared, thunder crackled in the air above the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect. It was almost as if the Heavens were rumbling in rage, causing shock to rise up in the hearts of countless cultivators in the Spirit Stream Sect. However, almost as soon as the thunder crackled out, it was gone.

As the thunder was booming, a second silver design appeared on the wooden sword. After flickering for a moment, the design faded away into the gaudy paint.

Bai Xiaochun, however, couldn't even look at the sword. He staggered backward, a grim look on his face. After a long moment passed, he recovered his composure, although fear still lingered in his heart.

“What did it suck out of me...?” he thought, nervously looking at his reflection in the copper mirror on the wall. After examining himself closely for a moment, he rubbed his eyes, then gaped at his reflection, looking as shocked as a wooden chicken.

There in the mirror, he could see that at the very top of his forehead was a white hair. Although his face didn't look any different, he couldn't shake the feeling that the white hair made him look at least a year older.

“My lifespan!!” he murmured, aghast.

“Just now, my lifespan was reduced. My... my...” He wanted to cry, but no tears would come. His whole purpose in learning about cultivation was to live forever. Now, instead of reaching the goal of living forever, he had actually lost one year of his lifespan, which was a huge blow.

“Screwed.... How could I ever have imagined that I, Bai Xiaochun, would be so careful in life, only to end up screwing myself like this....” He sat there in a daze for a while before finally chuckling bitterly. After calming himself down, he looked back at the turtle-wok, whereupon a strange gleam gradually rose in his eyes. For some reason, after having some of his longevity sucked away, it now felt like there was some sort of connection between him and the wok, as if he could actually control it now.

Heart thumping, he extended his hand and pointed a finger at it.

The turtle-wok immediately flickered, shrank down, and flew toward Bai Xiaochun. In the blink of an eye, it disappeared into the tip of his finger. Eyes wide with shock, Bai Xiaochun leapt to his feet and backed up a few steps. He looked down at his finger, and then back at the empty stove.

“This... this....” He pointed his finger down at the ground, and a black gleam of light flashed, and a clanking sound rang out as the wok appeared once more.

After experimenting a few more times, his expression flickered from grim, to delighted, to mournful. Finally, he sighed.

“Well, I can suck this thing into my body, but the price I had to pay was a year of longevity. How come it still seems like I screwed myself?”

The next day at noon, Bai Xiaochun was trying to figure out a way to get back the longevity which had been sucked away from him. He was in the middle of doing some research when, all of a sudden, he looked up. He had just sensed that there were eight people heading toward the entrance of the Ovens.

That was something he would never have been able to detect when only in the first level of Qi Condensation. However, now that he was in the third level, he could instantly sense that one of the eight people was none other than Xu Baocai.

Almost at the same time, Xu Baocai’s voice suddenly rang out, filled with fury and hatred.

“Bai Xiaochun, you have Elder Brothers to protect you, but so do I! Today, the enmity between the two of us is going to end permanently!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0007 awe-chapter-8

As soon as he realized that Xu Baocai was coming, Bai Xiaochun shot to his feet.

“Well, he came sooner than expected....” he thought, his eyes flickering with hesitation. Although he had done everything he could to prepare in the last half-year or so, he still didn't feel ready. As far as he was concerned, the best option would have been to go into the conflict in the fourth level of Qi Condensation. Only then would he have felt safe.

Seeing that Xu Baocai had come with a group of seven others, Bai Xiaochun knew that hiding wasn’t an option. Gritting his teeth, he said, “Fine! I’m gonna go for it!”

Taking a deep breath, he quickly donned eight leather coats, and then attached his backup wok to his back. Only then did he nervously open his door and step out.

The first thing he saw was Big Fatty Zhang and the others out by the front gate, hefting meat cleavers and huge kitchen ladles as they blocked the path of Xu Baocai and his friends.

“I was wondering why I heard the crows squawking this morning,” Big Fatty Zhang roared, his voice echoing like thunder as he stood there, tall and mountain-like. “As it turns out, a bunch of brats from the Supervisors’ Department decided to come cause a scene here in the Ovens!”

“Other people might be scared of the Ovens, Big Fatty Zhang, but the Supervisors’ Department doesn’t give a crap about you. We received a complaint from Junior Brother Xu, and we're here with the authority of the Supervisors’ Department. Do you really dare to resist us?” Seven arrogant-looking men clustered around Xu Baocai. Although they wore servant uniforms, their sleeves were conspicuously embroidered with the character ‘Supervisor,’ indicating that they were from the Supervisors’ Department, and had a status and power beyond ordinary servants.

One of the men was a burly fellow who looked as tough as a tiger and as sturdy as a bear. He emanated the spirit pressure of the third level of Qi Condensation, and his eyes glittered coldly as he stared at Big Fatty Zhang. Apparently, he didn't seem fazed at all by Big Fatty Zhang and the others.

“Hogwash!” replied Big Fatty Zhang. “He was trying to kill my Junior Brother. How do you explain that!?” He then laughed coldly as his hand whistled through the air, causing the big black wok on his back to suddenly fly up into the air, looking completely majestic. The burly man’s cohorts looked on with flickering expressions, and as for the burly man himself, his eyes widened. Then his hand flashed in an incantation gesture, causing a small flag to fly out. Mist poured out of the flag, from within which the roaring of a wild beast could be heard.

Even as the figurative swords were being drawn, Xu Baocai saw Bai Xiaochun stepping out of his thatched hut, and all his previous rancor and hatred erupted inside of him.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he roared.

As soon as the words left Xu Baocai’s mouth, he waved his hand, sending his wooden sword flying out.

Looks of shock could be seen on the faces of Big Fatty Zhang and the others. Just as they were about to leap to stop the wooden sword, the burly man from the Supervisors' Department laughed coldly and blocked their path.

However, it was in that same instant that Bai Xiaochun, eyes bloodshot, roared, "Xu Baocai, you've pushed things too far! You and I are going to go all out!"

Bai Xiaochun's heart was pounding. He had never actually been in a fight in his entire life, much less magical combat against another cultivator.

He was so nervous that he was shaking. Roaring to build his own courage, he unleashed the power of the third level of Qi Condensation, holding nothing back from his cultivation base. He poured all of his spiritual energy into his wooden sword, then waved his finger to send it flying toward Xu Baocai.

As the wooden sword whistled through the air, the two designs hidden by the garish paint flickered slightly. Suddenly, the sword expanded in size and exploded with an oppressive coldness as it bore down on Xu Baocai.

The speed and majesty with which it shot through the air caused Big Fatty Zhang, as well as the group from the Supervisors' Department, to gasp and stare in astonishment. As the ferocious aura of the sword filled the area, all hearts were struck with shock, and suddenly, nobody was interested in fighting any more, and instead stared at the sword.

Xu Baocai hadn't even gotten close to Bai Xiaochun yet, and was struck with terror by his energy. From what he could tell, this version of Bai Xiaochun was completely different than the person he had faced several months before. The way he gritted his teeth and looked like he was going all out caused Xu Baocai’s heart to fill with shock.

Next, his eyes widened with disbelief as he saw Bai Xiaochun’s wooden sword speeding toward him. It was like a stream of white light, bursting with the type of energy that he had only seen during fights between Outer Sect disciples. He was so flabbergasted that his scalp went numb.

A bang rang out as Bai Xiaochun’s wooden sword slammed into Xu Baocai’s. Xu Baocai’s wooden sword trembled, completely incapable of standing up to the force of the blow. Starting from the tip, it shattered into pieces. In the blink of an eye, it was completely destroyed, transformed into countless shimmering fragments.

As for Bai Xiaochun’s wooden sword, it didn't even pause. It continued to shoot through the air toward Xu Baocai, who by this point was scared witless. Using all the power he could muster, he dodged out of the way. The wooden sword whistled past him, slicing his shoulder in the process, and then slashing into a nearby tree.

A boom rattled out as the tree was chopped completely in half, and then collapsed onto the ground, sending a cloud of dust into the air. Xu Baocai let out a miserable shriek as blood splashed all over his arm. Face pale, he immediately fell back.

Luckily for him, Bai Xiaochun wasn't very adept at controlling physical objects. Otherwise, that sword would definitely have killed him.

“Third level of Qi Condensation! Impossible! This is impossible!” Xu Baocai looked at Bai Xiaochun, and he seemed as terrified as if he had just caught sight of a ghost. To be able to unleash such power in a wooden sword clearly required the third level of Qi Condensation, and he simply could not imagine how Bai Xiaochun could have made such an astonishing transformation in only a few months. Things were playing out in exactly the opposite as he had imagined they would, which was impossible for him to accept. It was like he was in a living nightmare.

He wasn't the only shocked one. The burly man from the Supervisors' Department and all of his friends all gasped and looked over at Bai Xiaochun with serious expressions.

"Forming sharpness with spiritual energy and unleashing sword light! That's only possible by cultivating the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art into the Lightness-in-Heaviness Realm! There's no other way to unleash a divine ability like that!" The burly man from the Supervisors' Department gasped, and fear could now be seen in his eyes as he looked at Bai Xiaochun.

His fellows had the exact same reaction, and there was almost no need to even mention Big Fatty Zhang and the others, who were also completely shocked. Although they had sensed that Bai Xiaochun had reached the third level of Qi Condensation, the fact that he could cause sword light to emanate out from the wooden sword, and also make it grow larger, showed that he really had reached the Lightness-in-Heaviness Realm, something they had been completely unaware of before.

Even Bai Xiaochun was a bit shaken by what had just happened with the wooden sword. He stared at the toppled tree, then at the ashen-faced Xu Baocai, and suddenly threw his head back and laughed.

"So, Xu Baocai, it turns out you are the weak one! Eat my sword!" Delighted that he was clearly stronger than Xu

Baocai, Bai Xiaochun immediately began chasing Xu Baocai, laughing the entire time.

Bai Xiaochun’s gaze caused Xu Baocai to tremble, and the sight of him rushing over, laughing uproariously, was completely terrifying. Xu Baocai immediately scrambled to flee.

However, he could only take a few steps before Bai Xiaochun was upon him. As he closed in, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but think of how Xu Baocai had chased him relentlessly, forcing him to spend so many bitter days practicing cultivation. That bitterness turned into power, which he now used to kick viciously at Xu Baocai.

“Let’s see you try to kill me again!” he yelled, punching Xu Baocai in the eye. Xu Baocai let out a miserable shriek and fell to the ground. He wanted to fight back, but his cultivation base was only at the second level of Qi Condensation, leaving him powerless to do anything to Bai Xiaochun.

“You provoked the Young Master, so now he’s going to show you that he's not to be trifled with!” Fuming with rage, Bai Xiaochun continued to kick and punch Xu Baocai, who was now wailing in anguish.

Cracking sounds could be heard that caused both the burly man and the others from the Supervisors’ Department, as well as Big Fatty Zhang and the others, to all stare in shock. They watched Xu Baocai being beaten, and Bai Xiaochun excitedly doing the beating, and their hearts prickled with fear.

Tears streamed down Xu Baocai's face, and his heart overflowed with grief. He still couldn’t believe that Bai Xiaochun had experienced such a drastic transformation in just a few short months. Even more unbelievable was that he could use the divine ability of Lightness-in-Heaviness. That was something that was impossible to achieve without years of work and significant skill.

In his mind, Bai Xiaochun obviously must have someone powerful helping him. Furthermore, he was surely more powerful than he had let on before. However, because of his despicable and shameless personality, he had pretended to be weak. Most outrageous was that Xu Baocai had completely fallen for the act.

At that point, Xu Baocai was overwhelmed with sorrow, and simply passed out.

Seeing that Xu Baocai had fallen unconscious, Bai Xiaochun patted the dust off of his clothes and then waved his hand, causing his wooden sword to fly over into his sleeve. Then, looking every bit the lonely hero, he did his best to hide the excitement in his eyes.

The burly man from the Supervisors’ Department looked deeply at him, his expression conflicted. Finally, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Junior Brother Bai, you did a good job of concealing your true strength,” he said, his face expressionless. “You’ve earned our admiration.” Then, he turned and left with his fellows, picking up the unconscious Xu Baocai and taking him along too.

After they left, Big Fatty Zhang and the others clustered around Bai Xiaochun, smiling broadly. After all, the people from the Supervisors’ Department were outsiders, and they knew that Bai Xiaochun had worked hard over the past months. Therefore they were pleased with the overall outcome.

“Nice work, kid. You didn't kill yourself for half a year for nothing!” Big Fatty Zhang patted Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder.

“That’s right. I worked so hard that I scared even myself!” Bai Xiaochun lifted his chin as proudly as a cocky rooster, as if daring Big Fatty Zhang and the others to ever laugh at him again.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0008 awe-chapter-9

According to an ancient saying, time flying by is like catching a glimpse of a white colt flashing past a chink in a wall. That is exactly what happened for Bai Xiaochun. A month later, cold winds blew down the Heavenspan River and through the Spirit Stream Sect. All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun realized that he had been in the sect for a year already.

The past year had been chock-full of one event after another. He had left the world of mortals to become a cultivator, elevated his cultivation base to the third level of Qi Condensation, and had resolved all the conflicts that cropped up due to him joining the Ovens.

Xu Baocai never showed up at the Ovens again, and when Bai Xiaochun left on supply runs and saw him from a distance, he would scurry away, clearly terrified.

Despite all of that, however, after a month went by, Bai Xiaochun looked as anxious as ever, and was sighing constantly. He didn't talk to Big Fatty Zhang and the others about his concerns; he simply wallowed in his helplessness.

“One year of longevity....” he thought, looking at a tree off in the distance, whose leaves had already begun to turn yellow and fall to the ground.

“I'm just like that tree, and those falling leaves are just like my one lost year of longevity....” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt very sentimental.

During the course of the past month, he had come up with countless ideas on how to restore the lost longevity, and yet, that white hair on his head remained as white as ever. He made some roundabout inquiries of Big Fatty Zhang, and learned that in the cultivation world, methods did indeed exist which could restore longevity. However, such methods were either well-kept secrets, or as easy to track down as a phoenix feather or a qilin horn.

Soon, he even lost interest in eating and drinking, and his face became wan and pallid. Eventually, he decided that he had no choice but to give up and accept the fact that he had lost the longevity. However, the following day when he went out on an Ovens supply run, he happened to catch sight of an enormous stone stele below the Third Peak, and all of a sudden, he started to pant.

On the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, all of the mountain peaks had stone steles like this one. It was covered with dense script, lines and lines of writing that glittered with bright light. Occasionally, the lines of script would flow like water as old characters were replaced by new ones.

That stone stele was where missions were handed out by the Spirit Stream Sect. Anyone in the sect who wanted to could accomplish the missions to earn the spirit stones necessary for cultivation, as well as merit points.

The merit points could be used to pay admission fees to scripture sermons or the Magical Arts Pavilion. They could also be used to gain access to all sorts of special places in the sect set aside for certain aspects of cultivation. Virtually everything in the sect could be acquired with merit points, and they were actually viewed as more valuable than spirit stones.

At the moment, quite a few Outer Sect disciples were gathered around the third peak’s Mission Stele, staring at the missions. When one of them selected a mission to take, they would respectfully notify the middle-aged cultivator sitting cross-legged beneath the stele.

There were even some servants mingling with the Outer Sect disciples. The servants wore their uniforms, and the Outer Sect disciples wore green robes embroidered with cloud and river designs, making it very easy to tell who was who.

There were certain missions that only Inner Sect disciples could accept, but missions like that wouldn’t show up on this particular stone stele. The missions here could be accepted by Outer Sect disciples and servants alike.

Many ambitious servants viewed this place as their first step in becoming like that fish which leaped over the dragon gate, achieving a meteoric rise.

Bai Xiaochun stood there for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, face grim as he stared at one particular line of script in the middle of the stone stele. Eventually, a look of hesitation appeared in his eyes.

“Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill...." he murmured. "I never imagined that this stone stele would offer a medicinal pill like that as a reward. From the name alone, you can tell that the pill probably increases longevity." After a bit of thought, he approached the middle-aged cultivator.

When the Outer Sect disciples sensed Bai Xiaochun approaching, they completely ignored him. Considering their status, they didn’t care at all about servants, who they viewed as beneath them.

Bai Xiaochun waited until the crowd around the middle-aged cultivator thinned a bit, then, looking as charming and innocent as possible, clasped hands and bowed in greeting.

“Good afternoon, Elder Brother,” he said.

The middle-aged cultivator looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, then nodded slightly.

The problem of his own longevity swirled in Bai Xiaochun’s mind as he asked: “Elder Brother, one of the missions is to go search for some medicinal plants. The reward is an Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. Might I ask whether or not that pill is useful for extending longevity?”

“Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.... Yeah, it’s this mission right here. That pill really can prolong your age and enhance your longevity. In fact, it adds a whole year. However, it has a lot of limitations. It can only be used if you’re at the fifth level of Qi Condensation or lower, and can only be consumed once. If you take the pill more than one time, it simply won’t do anything. You could say that it's valuable, but unfortunately, one year of longevity doesn't really count for much.” Seeing how charming and innocent Bai Xiaochun looked, the middle-aged cultivator decided to add a bit more information.

“Generally speaking, this is a pill that disciples will give to their mortal family members who are reaching the ends of their lives. However, it's still very expensive. Do you want to accept the mission?”

Bai Xiaochun looked back at the stone stele, did some calculations, and then nodded.

The middle-aged cultivator waved his finger at the stone stele, and the mission turned gray. At the same time, he produced a jade slip which he handed over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greenspirit leaf, earthdragon fruit, and stonebeetle husk,” the man said coolly. “Collect the proper amounts of those three medicinal ingredients, and you can exchange them for an Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.” After that, he paid no further heed to Bai Xiaochun, and instead turned and began to explain other missions to the nearby Outer Sect disciples.

Bai Xiaochun left, clutching the jade slip in his hands, the term “Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill” echoing about in his mind. His eyes began to glow with decisiveness.

“I'm definitely going to get that medicinal pill and make up for the one year of longevity I lost.”

Bursting with determination, he hurried to the Four Seas Room, where he poured over the information available to servants. He soon found an introduction to greenspirit leaf, a type of medicinal plant that only grew in habitats occupied by hopespirit birds. Hopespirit birds lived in large colonies, and usually grew to the second level of Qi Condensation, making the greenspirit Leaf difficult to harvest. As a result, it tended to be expensive.

Unfortunately, there was no record in the Four Seas Room of the earthdragon fruit or the stonebeetle husk. Bai Xiaochun patted his bag, smiled bitterly, and left. After returning to the Ovens, he asked Big Fatty Zhang and the others about them. Nobody had ever heard of earthdragon fruit, but Third Fatty Hei knew about stonebeetle Husk. Apparently, it was nothing more than the molted exoskeleton of a type of spirit bug called a stonebeetle.

Supposedly, those exoskeletons were extremely tough and heavy, but were uncommon on the south shore. However, they were common on the north shore, a result of the fact that most of the techniques they cultivated there were shamanic magics. Unfortunately, despite the fact that both the north and south shores were part of the Spirit Stream Sect, they were separated by the main mountain bridge. Furthermore, only Inner Sect disciples qualified to be able to cross that mountain bridge to get from one shore to the other.

“What are you asking about these medicinal ingredients for?” Big Fatty Zhang asked, patting his stomach. “You can’t eat them, you know. Besides, if you try to buy them at the south bank market, the prices are ridiculously high.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the word ‘market’ mentioned, his eyes suddenly lit up. After offering a quick explanation, he hurried down the mountain. In the year he had been a part of the Ovens, he had only been out of the sect on a few occasions, and yet, was very familiar with the market outside of the sect.

Most of the stalls were run by various cultivator clans related to sect disciples. There were even some establishments that were owned by disciples, and catered specifically to other disciples. Gradually, a set of unspoken rules had come to be established that everyone abided by.

Generally speaking, any supplies that the Ovens needed could be found here.

Bai Xiaochun strolled around the market for a while and visited several medicinal plant shops. By the time he got back to the Ovens, his brow was furrowed and he was heaving sighs left and right.

“What a rip-off! Especially the earthdragon fruit. All it is is a kind of fruit that grows underground. Why is it so expensive!?” Bai Xiaochun was dismayed to discover that, given his current situation, he was essentially incapable of getting the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.

He basically had no concept of money. To him, no amount of wealth could compare to longevity. Unfortunately, he was currently embarrassingly short on funds. Furthermore, he knew that although his Elder Brothers possessed extremely ample bellies, their bags were as empty as his. They definitely weren’t any richer than he was.

Although nobody would go to the trouble of calling them to task for eating a bit of the food from the Ovens’ supplies, if they tried to sell that food, the Supervisors Department would definitely catch on, and would not be happy.

After thinking about the matter from numerous angles, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t come up with any ideas for how to make some money, other than to sell some spirit enhanced items.

However, that didn't quite seem like the appropriate thing to do. He continued to ponder the matter for a few more days. On one particular morning, he was sitting cross-legged in his hut practicing cultivation when he heard the sound of bells echoing out through the sect.

The sound wasn’t very loud, and quickly faded away. Bai Xiaochun slowly opened his eyes. He wasn’t surprised by the tolling of the bells. In fact, they rang out every month. He had learned from Big Fatty Zhang that the bells indicated that a trial by fire was beginning for servants. Whoever succeeded would be given a spot as an Outer Sect disciple.

For those extremely ambitious servants who wanted to become Outer Sect disciples, the first step to becoming the fish who leaped over the dragon gate was to reach the third level of Qi Condensation. Then they could select one of the trials by fire. The trials by fire were nothing more than a path of stone steps that led to the top of the mountain peak. However, that path was imbued with magical power, making each step extremely arduous. Anyone who managed to make it to the top would be qualified to become an Outer Sect disciple.

Unfortunately, spots in the Outer Sect were limited, so only the first three competitors to the top, the best of the best, would be able to get in. After all, there were many servants in the Spirit Stream Sect. There were thousands and thousands on the south bank alone. Therefore, there were always fierce struggles to succeed.

Of course, the members of the Ovens would rather die of starvation in the Ovens than try to climb the ladder in the Outer Sect. Therefore, on this particular day every month, they turned their noses up at all the hustle and bustle.

Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes. However, a moment later, they snapped open, and a strange expression could be seen therein. Then, they began to glitter with excitement as a new idea formed in his head. He shot to his feet and began to pace back and forth inside his hut. After considering this idea for quite some time, a delighted expression appeared on his face.

“This is the ticket!” he exclaimed. Then he pushed his door open and cried out to Big Fatty Zhang and the others, who were currently debating about which unlucky servant would be promoted to be an Outer Sect disciple.

“Elder Brothers, I've figured out how to get rich, but I need your help. Then, we can all get rich together!” He licked his lips and looked at Big Fatty Zhang and the others, eyes gleaming.

Big Fatty Zhang was familiar with this expression; it was the same look Bai Xiaochun had on his face when he brought up the idea of making the bottoms of the bowls thicker. Considering how much that idea had benefited the Ovens, Big Fatty Zhang couldn't wait to hear Bai Xiaochun’s idea.

“Ninth Fatty, what's your plan? To tell you the truth, we’re all completely destitute, and it’s all the fault of that damned Supervisors Department. If it weren't for them, we could sell some of our stuff and get totally rich!” Big Fatty Zhang clapped Bai Xiaochun on the shoulder, eyes shining with anticipation.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0009 awe-chapter-10

Bai Xiaochun looked around at his Elder Brothers, who were staring at him with eyes that glittered like spirit stones. Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes looked like they were about to erupt with flames. Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, feeling more than a little bit proud of himself.

“Elder Brother, check this out. The three mountain peaks of the Spirit Stream Sect all have a trial by fire every month, giving us servants a chance to become like the fish that leaped over the dragon gate, right?" Bai Xiaochun glanced around at everyone, looking like the picture of charm and innocence.

Big Fatty Zhang nodded in response.

“However, the sect only wants the best of the best. Therefore, no matter how many people participate in the trial by fire, only the top three disciples per mountain peak get picked. Am I right?” He licked his lips, and his eyes were beginning to shine. Big Fatty Zhang listened thoughtfully.

A ruminative expression could also be seen on Third Fatty Hei’s face, although everyone else seemed confused.

Big Fatty Zhang looked at Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes also began to shine. “Do you mean....”

“Considering the levels of your cultivation bases, Elder Brothers, and mine, it would be easy to sweep the trials by fire of all three mountains....” Bai Xiaochun looked around at his Elder Brothers. All of them had cultivation bases at the third level of Qi Condensation; Big Fatty Zhang and Third

Fatty Hei were actually at the peak of the third level. Were it not for the fact that they didn't want to leave the Ovens, and thus kept their cultivation bases suppressed, they could have broken through to the next level long ago.

“Therefore,” Bai Xiaochun continued, speaking very quickly, “all we have to do is get to the peak of the mountains as quickly as possible, and hold the top three spots. Then, we can... sell them to whoever comes along after us!” He stopped and looked at Big Fatty Zhang and the others.

Big Fatty Zhang was trembling.

“So low down....” he said. Then he took a deep breath and slapped his thigh. An unprecedentedly bright glow appeared in his eyes. The method described by Bai Xiaochun wasn't very complicated at all, and was in fact quite simple. It was merely a different way of thinking that, after being spoken out loud, was easy to understand. However, before being explained, it was actually the opposite of what everyone would have thought the idea to be.

Big Fatty Zhang seemed to be in the midst of spiritual enlightenment. It was as if a door had been opened, leading to a brand new type of life. He couldn’t hold back from laughing heartily.

Third Fatty Hei stamped an excited foot, face flushed from either embarrassment or excitement. “This couldn’t be any more low down! Hahaha!”

As the other fatties understood, they started getting excited. Panting, they couldn’t help but stare at Bai Xiaochun with more admiration than ever.

“Great idea! Let’s do it!”

“Fudge! That bunch of bastards from the Supervisors Department have persecuted us into poverty for years now. Thankfully, Ninth Junior Brother is here now. Let’s do it!” Then, they began to excitedly discuss the details of how to carry out such a plan.

After they were sure that there was nothing they had overlooked, they decided to try out their scheme in the following month’s trials by fire. Big Fatty Zhang slapped his thigh in delight.

“Tonight is snack night!”

Excited conversations filled the Ovens. The following month was one of extreme enthusiasm. In fact, just to play it safe, everyone took time to practice cultivation, which was a rare occurrence. In the end, everyone was waiting impatiently for the day of the trial by fire to arrive.

Finally, it did.

The sun shone brightly in the morning sky. Beneath the three mountain peaks on the south shore of the Spirit Stream Sect, an unprecedented scene was playing out. There at the entrance to each of the trails leading up the mountains, shockingly, three black woks appeared.

A closer look revealed that underneath those black woks were extraordinarily formidable fatties. The sight was truly impressive.

These were the nine members of the Ovens, and this was, in fact, their first time attending the trials by fire held for servants at the three mountain peaks. Just as they had planned, three of their number went to each of the three mountain peaks.

Large groups of servants were hurrying toward the mountain peaks from all directions, cracking their knuckles and looking very excited. Many of these servants had attempted the trials by fire on numerous occasions, only to fail in the end. For others, it was their first time attending. Everyone was both excited and nervous, and hoped that they could be like a galloping divine steed and make a meteoric rise to become an Outer Sect disciple.

As they neared the various mountain peaks, they caught sight of the fatties from the Ovens.

“The Ovens? What are they doing here?”

“I've been a servant for nine years already, and I've participated in the trials by fire thirty times. This is the first time I’ve ever seen anyone from the Ovens here....” The other servants were shocked, and began to spread word. Soon, everyone was talking about the fact that all three of the mountains had people from the Ovens waiting there for the trials by fire.

“This is big! I can’t believe the Ovens people all are going to vie for a spot in the Outer Sect. What’s going on...?”

Bai Xiaochun, Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei were all waiting at the bottom of the third peak. When they heard the shocked exclamations of the other servants, they didn’t react at all. In fact, their faces were so calm that it almost seemed they were away on astral journeys and were completely oblivious to all of the conversations around them.

They were completely and utterly focused on the trial by fire starting line. To them, this was not the path of a trial by fire; instead, it was a glittering, glowing road to spirit stones.

Bai Xiaochun looked especially solemn, with his eyes turned up in thought.

Soon, a figure could be seen floating down from the three mountains. The person to land by Bai Xiaochun and the others was a middle-aged man who had the demeanor of a transcendent being. The first thing he noticed as he alighted next to the starting line was the mountain of flesh that was Big Fatty Zhang.

Then he looked over at Bai Xiaochun and Third Fatty Hei. This man was the honor guard in charge of the trial by fire, and currently, his heart was filled with astonishment.

“Did the sun rise from the west today?” he thought. “Usually the people from the Ovens would rather die than become Outer Sect disciples. What's going on?”

After blinking a few times to make sure he wasn’t seeing things, an expression of encouragement appeared on the man’s face. He flicked his sleeve and began to speak, his voice echoing out in all directions.

“Let the trial by fire for promotion to the Outer Sect... begin!” As soon as the words left his mouth, bells began to toll throughout the sect. At the same time, the starting lines to the trials by fire lit up, indicating that the event had begun.

Instantly, Big Fatty Zhang shot forward, an expression of extreme focus on his face. He kicked up a huge wind as he ran toward the stone steps leading up the mountain, moving so fast you might think he was being chased by a ravenous beast.

Third Fatty Hei also leapt into motion behind Big Fatty Zhang, a brutal gleam in his eyes that seemed to indicate that anyone who tried to overtake him on the path was threatening his life.

In third place was Bai Xiaochun, who leapt onto the path as quickly as a rabbit, thinking about nothing else but the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. In the blink of an eye, the three of them were dashing madly up the path.

All of that happened so quickly that the other servants barely had time to react. Their faces immediately fell and, gritting their teeth, they scrambled onto the path and began to climb toward the peak.

Similar scenes played out on the other two mountains, with the fatties from the Ovens instantly taking the lead.

The third mountain peak was known as Fragrant Cloud Peak, and currently Bai Xiaochun and his companions were flying along the trial by fire path, far ahead of everyone else. However, it didn't take long before they felt increasing pressure weighing down on them, forcing them to slow their pace.

Bai Xiaochun looked around and realized that seven or eight people were closing in behind him. Suddenly, he was filled with a feeling of anxiety; it was as if these people were on the verge of stealing his Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.

“Taking away my Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill is the same as taking away my life!” He suddenly held his breath, causing his face to turn scarlet. Then he sent spiritual energy streaming out into his body, which formed into a powerful, surging force. All of a sudden, he charged forward like wild boar whose tail had just been stepped on. In the blink of an eye, his speed more than doubled, and he had passed Third Fatty Hei and even Big Fatty Zhang.

Third Fatty Hei let out a roar, and then used some unknown technique to similarly increase his speed and suddenly pass up Big Fatty Zhang and race closer to Bai Xiaochun. Seeing that he had just been passed by his two companions, Big Fatty Zhang started getting anxious.

He took a deep breath and then, all of a sudden, his rolls of fat seemed to shrink. It was almost as if he was burning his fat in exchange for a burst of speed. Rumbling sounds could be heard as he closed the distance between himself and Third Fatty Hei. Soon, all three of them were speeding along rapidly.

When the servants behind them saw what was happening, their jaws dropped in shock. Looks of despair appeared on their faces, and yet, they weren’t willing to give up so easily, and pushed onward with all the strength they could muster. Unfortunately, there was nothing they could do to catch up with Bai Xiaochun and the others. Their tempers having reached the limit, they began to cry out curses.

“Dammit! Are they high on aphrodisiacs or something? How could they be so fast!”

Soon, enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, and Bai Xiaochun had already reached the top of the mountain. In fact, he could even see two Outer Sect disciples standing just beyond the finish line, waiting there to receive the servants.

As soon as the two Outer Sect disciples caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, they smiled slightly, and one of them said, “Congratulations, Junior Br--”

However, before he could even finish speaking, his eyes went wide with shock.

Bai Xiaochun barreled along a few more paces, but then screeched to a halt a mere step in front of the finish line.

He stood there looking at the Outer Sect disciples, and they looked back at him. Then, he gave them a charming smile, and spun to face the other direction.

“Stop!” he roared, throwing his hands up into the air. Instantly, Third Fatty Hei and Big Fatty Zhang wheezed to a stop next to him. The three of them stood there looking at each other, breathing heavily. Then, they broke out into laughter.

The two Outer Sect disciples exchanged dismayed glances, unsure of what exactly was happening. The fact that these three suddenly stopped running at this point seemed to indicate that they were crazy.

“Junior Brothers,” one of the Outer Sect disciples said cautiously, “the three of you are the first to arrive at the finish line. Just step on over, and you will be promoted into the Outer Sect."

“Outer Sect disciples?” Big Fatty Zhang said, waving his hand dismissively. “Who wants to become Outer Sect disciples?” He continued to stand there along with Third Fatty Hei, two mountains of flesh who completely blocked the exit gate.

Bai Xiaochun sat down in front of them, jaw tilted up as he waited, lofty and proud.

The two Outer Sect disciples didn’t seem pleased. “Huh? If you don’t want to be Outer Sect disciples, then what are you doing here? Are you people crazy or something?!”

Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei and Bai Xiaochun pretended not to have heard, and kept their eyes focused further on down the mountain.

Soon, enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn. Finally, a long-faced servant struggled up the path, gasping and wheezing. When he saw Bai Xiaochun and the others, he immediately sighed. However, his eyes burned with an unyielding light. This was his ninth time participating in the trial by fire, and this was the first time he'd even come close to winning. But then, along came the people from the Ovens.

Looking furious, he was just about to turn to leave when Bai Xiaochun shot to his feet and yelled, “Elder Brother, don’t go! Come, come. You know what? I just can’t bear to leave the Ovens. All of a sudden, I don’t want to be an Outer Sect disciple after all. Maybe I should give my spot up....”

The long-faced servant stared in shock for a moment, and then his eyes began to shine.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0010 awe-chapter-11

Hope! That was the word that flashed into the mind of the long-faced young man as soon as he heard Bai Xiaochun’s words. But then he glanced at the mountains of meat sitting there behind him, grinning maliciously, and he hesitated.

“You....”

Bai Xiaochun stepped forward with an utterly charming smile, looking like the type of person who wouldn’t harm a fly. He clasped the long-faced servant on the shoulder and said, “Congratulations on becoming an Outer Sect disciple, Elder Brother. You are the fish that leaped over the dragon gate. You will soar like a shooting star, your future limitless. However, your Junior Brother here worked really hard to run all the way to the finish line. Don’t you think it would be appropriate to give a little compensation?”

The servant's face darkened. If he didn’t understand by now what was going on, then he didn’t deserve to have lived for so many years. He looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then at Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei. Then his expression flickered as he rapidly considered the matter, trying to decide if it was worth it.

It didn’t take very long before the long-faced young man gritted his teeth and made his decision. If he lost this chance, it might seem like all he was losing was a month of time. However, who knew what other sort of powerful expert would appear during that month. Besides, who was to say whether or not the three people from the Ovens... might not show up again in the next trial by fire.

Most important of all was that this young man was dead set on becoming an Outer Sect disciple, and now, hope had been set down right in front of him. Finally, he stamped his foot.

“How much compensation do you want?” he asked through gritted teeth.

Beaming, Bai Xiaochun quickly replied, “Not much, not much. Look, I prepared for several months to participate in this trial by fire. How about we agree to twenty spirit stones? That should be enough.”

When he heard the number mentioned, the long-faced young man’s heart trembled. He flicked his sleeve, and was just about to refuse, when Bai Xiaochun once again spoke up.

“Look, it’s not that I'm being greedy. All three of us are together, you see, so you can’t just think about me. My Eldest Brother and Third Elder Brother both starved themselves and lost a lot of weight for the sake of this trial by fire.”

In that respect, Bai Xiaochun wasn't lying at all. Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei had both lost quite a bit of fat on their way up the mountain.

The long-faced servant eyed Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei, and inwardly began to let loose a torrent of curse words. Then, he started to bargain, and ended up agreeing on sixteen spirit stones. Heart twinging in pain, he finally tossed a bag over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Alright?” he asked, his voice hoarse.

“Wonderful,” replied Bai Xiaochun cheerily. “Okay, Elder Brother, please wait off to the side for a moment. Once we have two more takers, we’ll open the way to the exit gate.” Bai Xiaochun tossed the spirit stones to Big Fatty Zhang.

When the long-faced servant realized that they were going to wait for two more people to come, anticipation suddenly welled up in his heart. It was a situation of “if I get screwed, you better not have a smile on your face.”

By this point, the two Outer Sect disciples on the other side of the exit gate realized what was going on, and their eyes were wide with disbelief.

“Wh-what are you people doing?” one of them shouted. “You’re actually selling spots in the Outer Sect? What gall!”

Big Fatty Zhang was elatedly counting the spirit stones when he heard the Outer Sect disciples. Looking irritated, he turned to glare at them. “What are you hollering for? It was tiring reaching this point, and now I don’t feel like going any further. Don’t tell me we’re not allowed to let other fellow disciples continue on past us? If they want to give us some compensation for our efforts, what's so wrong with that, huh?”

The two Outer Sect disciples weren’t really sure how to respond to such a statement.

It was at this point that seven or eight flushed faces could be seen hurrying up the path. The sound of their gasping pants rang out almost like thunder. In the lead position was a burly man of about thirty years of age. He was bare-chested, and looked very impressive as he strode up to the top of the mountain. Bai Xiaochun immediately stepped forward, eyes gleaming.

“You’re a bit late, Elder Brother. However, I suddenly don’t want to become an Outer Sect disciple. Would you like my spot?”

The burly man stared in shock, then turned back to look at all the other servants coming up the mountain behind him. Then he snorted coldly and said, “You think you can extort money from me, you little brat? Beat it!”

Roaring, the man waved his arm, causing the spirit pressure of the third level of Qi Condensation to surge out.

Bai Xiaochun backed up a pace and shouted, “Eldest Brother!”

Almost immediately, a mountain of flesh descended from above.

The burly man’s face fell as he looked up. Then, a huge boom rang out as the mountain of flesh smashed into him.

The burly man let out a miserable shriek as Big Fatty Zhang proceeded to sit down on top of him. Although he struggled, it was impossible for him to free himself. In fact, if it weren’t for the fact that he was so big and strong to begin with, the air would have been squeezed out of his lungs, and he would have fainted.

When the seven or so servants coming up the mountain behind the burly man saw what was happening, their eyes went wide with shock.

The two Outer Sect disciples also gasped. The burly man stuck under Big Fatty Zhang almost seemed to be deflating, and they couldn’t help but feel a bit sorry for him.

Eyes darting about, Bai Xiaochun leaned over and whispered, “Eldest Brother, we have an audience.”

Having known Bai Xiaochun for over a year now, Big Fatty Zhang understood exactly what he meant. Glaring down at the burly man, he clenched his massive hands into hammer-like fists and then began to beat him soundly.

“How dare you try to freeload off of Lord Fatty! What brazen gall!

“It was really hard to climb all the way up here. We wanted to become Outer Sect disciples, but just happened to give up at the last minute. Of course we want some compensation!

“Fudge, I can’t believe you refused us!” After beating him for a bit, Big Fatty Zhang then jumped back up into the air and then slammed down onto the man. The burly man was shrieking miserably, and could barely breathe. Then Big Fatty Zhang prepared to jump up again, and the man suddenly held a bag out in a shaking hand. Face filled with terror, he blurted, “Here, take some compensation!”

Big Fatty Zhang immediately helped the burly man to his feet. Face beaming, he took the bag, glanced inside, then helped the man dust off his clothes.

“Hahaha. Why didn’t you say so earlier, bro? Look, people are already lining up ahead of you. All we need is one more and we’ll open the path.”

The burly man looked both humiliated and enraged, but didn’t dare to say anything. He stalked over to stand next to the long-faced servant, feeling incredibly depressed. As for the long-faced servant, he already felt a little better, and couldn’t help but feel that he was smarter than this burly fellow.

“That was incredible, Eldest Brother!” Bai Xiaochun said, grinning from ear to ear. Then he looked over excitedly at the other servants who had been following the burly man, but were now standing there looking terrified.

Big Fatty Zhang smiled proudly, then walked back to his place by the entrance, where he sat down again to block the way.

The two Outer Sect disciples exchanged dismayed glances. Compared to what had just happened now, the way Bai Xiaochun and the others had extorted the long-faced servant almost seemed mild and gentle.

“They’re... they’re actually robbing people!!”

“This is robbery!” They were infuriated, but also a little bit jealous, and couldn’t help but wish they had come up with a similar idea back when they had been participating in the trial by fire.

Most conflicted of all were the seven servants who had been following close behind the burly man. As they watched Big Fatty Zhang crushing and beating the burly man, their eyes began to shine with a bright light.

Previously, becoming an Outer Sect disciple had almost seemed like an impossibility. But now... they all of a sudden had hope.

Looking around excitedly at all the people, Bai Xiaochun suddenly cried out in a high-pitched voice: “Ladies and gentlemen, there’s one spot left. How about this, we’ll give it to the highest bidder!”

Immediately, the crowd of people realized what was happening, and the sound of their panting grew even louder.

The looks in their eyes became even stranger, and their hearts filled with all sorts of wild possibilities. Almost immediately, people began crying out bids, making it seem almost like an auction.

“I’ll bid ten spirit stones!”

“Eleven!”

“That spot belongs to me. I’ll bid fifteen spirit stones!”

Bai Xiaochun, Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei were instantly elated.

When the two Outer Sect disciples heard what was going on, it was like pouring oil onto a fire. From their perspective, extortion was one thing, and robbery could potentially be overlooked. But to see the situation turning into an auction left their minds spinning. It was so outrageous that waves of shock seemed to batter their hearts. To them, the most villainous among the three wasn’t Big Fatty Zhang, but rather, the seemingly charming and innocent Bai Xiaochun!

“Outrageous! Shameless!” One of them finally gritted his teeth and spun around, eyes bloodshot with either jealousy or fury, he wasn't sure which, as he went to report the matter to the Honor Guard.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t actually very pleased with the level of bids being called out. His eyes turned up in thought for a moment, and then he cried out, “Ladies and gentlemen, we need to hurry things up. Otherwise, other servants are going to show up, and then who knows what lengths they’ll go to in order to win!”

In response to his words, the voice of a young woman suddenly called out from further back down the mountain.

“I, Hou Xiaomei, bid thirty spirit stones! I come from one of the cultivator clans and have tons of money. Let’s see who dares to try to steal my spot!” A pretty young girl huffed and puffed her way up the mountain. She had white skin and a slim frame, and looked quite young.

When Big Fatty Zhang saw the pretty young girl, his eyes went wide. He was just about to say something, but stopped himself and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Almost as soon as Hou Xiaomei’s words left her mouth, the rest of the servants were thrown into a huge commotion, calling out increasingly high bids. In the end, she named a price that left the horse-faced youth and the burly man trembling in fear. In fact, they even felt like they had just gotten a huge deal.

Hou Xiaomei strode out from the crowd, her ample chest leading the way. She looked back scornfully at everyone else, then joined the long-faced young man and the burly fellow, who called himself Lord Wolf. Together, they walked up to the final step and then exited the trial by fire.

Behind them, Bai Xiaochun, Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Congratulations, Fellow Daoists. You are the fish who leaped over the dragon gate, you are galloping divine steeds!”

The long-faced servant and the others stood there at the top of the mountain, somewhat in a daze. Although they were now Outer Sect disciples, for some reason, it wasn’t as joyous of an occasion as they had imagined. Then they heard the words uttered by Bai Xiaochun and the others, and the long-faced young man and the burly servant exchanged rueful, bitter glances.

Hou Xiaomei, on the other hand, seemed extremely excited. Her charming face was even a bit flushed.

“I never thought that I, Hou Xiaomei, would ever encounter such luck,” she thought proudly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0011 awe-chapter-12

And thus, the trial by fire concluded. As Hou Xiaomei walked further up the mountain, Big Fatty Zhang looked at her and rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

Bai Xiaochun was also staring at Hou Xiaomei as she walked off into the distance, his heart filled with conflicting emotions. Then he heard Big Fatty Zhang, and turned to find him looking at him out of the corner of his eye.

“Hey, what are you looking at!?” he yelled.

Big Fatty Zhang laughed loudly at Bai Xiaochun’s anger, then pulled out the bag of spirit stones and quickly changed the topic.

“Come, come, why don't we count our spirit stones? We’re rich now! Hahaha! This really was a great idea.”

“What's the point in counting them?” replied Bai Xiaochun with a cold harrumph. “No matter how many times you do it, it won't change how many there are.”

“Ninth Junior Brother, you don’t understand. What you’re looking at is just spirit stones, but what you’re counting is... life.” Big Fatty Zhang rarely spoke of the profundities of life. To hear him speak in such a way left Bai Xiaochun shocked. He took the bag and tried to count the spirit stones the way Big Fatty Zhang would, but quickly got bored and handed the bag back.

It was at about this time that glittering light rose up along the trial by fire path. Everyone’s vision swam, and when it became clear again, they were back at the bottom of the mountain.

When the middle-aged honor guard who was in charge of the trial by fire saw Bai Xiaochun and the others, a strange expression appeared on his face. After a moment, he shook his head and ignored them. As far as he was concerned, the sect would have to figure out what to do with the Ovens.

Bai Xiaochun and the others were nervous, but seeing that there were no immediate repercussions, they exchanged glances, cleared their throats, and quickly headed back to the Ovens.

Big Fatty Zhang kept counting the spirit stones over and over again, all the way until they were back at the Ovens. The other fatties soon returned, also elated. Everyone exchanged glances, and then looked extremely proud of themselves.

After the loot had been split up, Bai Xiaochun went back to his hut. He had come to this place seeking to live forever. Were it not for the fact that he needed the medicinal plants to exchange for an Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill, he would never have even thought for a moment about spirit stones.

That night, nobody in the Ovens could sleep. Big Fatty Zhang and the others were simply too excited from getting rich all of a sudden. In the past, their coin purses had been depressingly empty, but now, the future seemed bright and glorious. That having been said, they were still worried about the possible repercussions of what they had done, making it difficult for them to fall asleep.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he couldn’t stop thinking about the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill, and was equally unable to fall asleep.

The next day, the news about the Ovens blocking the path during the trial by fire spread like wildfire through the entire servants district on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect. Soon, everybody had heard.

“Did you hear what the Ovens crew did?!?!”

“Are they crazy? I can't believe they did that! Heavens! They sold spots into the Outer Sect! Outrageous! How come I never thought to do that?!”

“I’ve heard that the people from the Ovens have important backgrounds and are really well connected in the sect. Otherwise, how could they dare to do something so infuriating!?” All departments and individuals in the servants district were talking about the Ovens.

In the following days, the crew tried to keep a low profile, and even avoided going out alone. One evening several days later, Bai Xiaochun was ladling soup out into one thick-bottomed bowl after another. Suddenly, he heard the sounds of footsteps coming from the path outside.

“Everyone from the Ovens get out here immediately! The Supervisors Department has received orders to investigate your role in what happened during the trials by fire!” Even as the voice called out, the main gate of the Ovens was kicked in loudly.

The sound of the door being kicked open echoed out as several servants burst in, all of them wearing the robes of the Supervisors Department. Leading them all was none other than the burly man who had come last time with Xu Baocai.

Big Fatty Zhang and Bai Xiaochun exchanged a glance, then walked out nonchalantly to face the combative group from the Supervisors Department.

“I thought I heard the crows squawking this morning,” Big Fatty Zhang said. “I should have known that you would be showing up today, Chen Fei.”

Chen Fei laughed coldly as he looked first at Big Fatty Zhang and then at Bai Xiaochun. Their completely calm demeanor caused him to frown.

On the way, he had been extremely excited, having believed himself to have finally gained the advantage he needed to be able to take down the Ovens, to put an end to the animosity that had existed for years between their two departments.

“Quit pretending to be so calm!” Chen Fei said with a cold, eerie laugh. His eyes flickered with a fierce light. “People of the Ovens, allow me to ask, did the nine of you attend the most recent trial by fire for servant promotion to the Outer Sect?”

“Sure did,” Big Fatty Zhang replied, chuckling.

“That's all I need to know. Take them away!” Chen Fei didn’t mince his words. He waved his right index finger, and immediately, a dozen or so servants from the Supervisors Department quickly hurried forward with iron manacles to arrest the Ovens staff.

Seeing this, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but laugh and say, “Is your Supervisors Department in charge of everything? You can even disqualify us from being able to become Outer Sect disciples? You guys are pretty powerful.”

Chen Fei couldn’t help but think of the recent incident with the flying sword. He held his hand out to stop the other servants, then looked at Bai Xiaochun with narrowed eyes.

“Junior Brother Bai, if you're still not convinced of my authority, then answer me another question. Did you Ovens people block the exit of the trial by fire and then sell spots in the Outer Sect? Do you dare to admit that you did such a thing?!”

“Of course I admit it!” Bai Xiaochun replied with a calm nod, looking quite charming. He even pointed at Big Fatty Zhang and the others and said, “So do they.”

“That's right, we all do. So what?!” Big Fatty Zhang said with a hearty laugh.

Chen Fei’s face flickered. He had never imagined that the Ovens staff would actually admit to the allegations. He had expected them to give in only after a bitter and protracted battle of wits.

The way things were playing out seemed strange, and an odd feeling was growing inside of him. Therefore, it was without another word that he growled, “Excellent. Since you admit it, then it saves me having to ask more questions. You're going to come with me to the Hall of Justice. If any of you dare to resist us, then in accord with the sect rules, you’ll be immediately expelled!”

With that, he flew forward toward Bai Xiaochun, followed by the rest of his group.

However, it was at this point that Bai Xiaochun suddenly extended his right hand and performed an incantation gesture. Immediately, a beam of sword light shot out from his sleeve, transforming into a colorful wooden sword. The instant the sword appeared between the two groups, it let off an oppressively cold glow. Chen Fei stopped in his tracks, his face falling.

“Bai Xiaochun, how dare you resist arrest!”

“Elder Brother Chen, the Supervisors Department might have the right to question us, but where did you get the right to arrest us?”

“Hmph! What you admitted to violates sect rules, of course I have the right to arrest you!”

“Wait, what sect rule did we violate?” Bai Xiaochun asked with narrowed eyes. Big Fatty Zhang and the others also looked at Chen Fei with narrowed eyes and cold smiles.

“You sold a spot into the Outer Sect, which violates sect rule number... wait, huh?” Suddenly, Chen Fei stopped speaking, and his face fell. Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead.

It was only at this point that he suddenly realized that there was actually no sect rule specifically forbidding people from selling spots into the Outer Sect while on the path of the trial by fire.... After all, not many people would think to do such a thing, and even if they did, they would likely not have the gumption to go through with the plan....

“Elder Brother Chen, why are you sweating?” Bai Xiaochun asked, sounding flabbergasted. However, as he spoke, his words grew louder and louder. “Come on, what rule was it that we violated? Just say it. Wait, could it be that we didn't violate any sect rules? Elder Brother Chen, did you trick the Hall of Justice into carrying out your own personal vendetta? Is that why you came here to punish us? Elder Brother Chen, what you are doing is a violation of volume nine statute number eleven of the sect rules! That comes with a heavy punishment!” By the end of his speech, he felt great.

“Liar! I....” It wasn’t just Chen Fei’s face who fell. All of the other servants from the Supervisors Department all realized that a huge mistake had been made.

It was at this point that Big Fatty Zhang smiled viciously, lifted up both hands, and cracked his knuckles. Fierce gleams appeared in the eyes of the other fatties as they began to walk toward the group from the Supervisor’s Department.

“Chen Fei, the Hall of Justice will deal with your violation of sect rules,” said Big Fatty Zhang with a vicious grin, his energy surging. “But right now, you had better explain how you’re going to compensate for the Ovens’ cherished main gate, which was painstakingly forged by the hands of numerous past ancestors who died in the process!”

Since they had dared to block the finish line of the trial by fire, they had naturally done so after being fully prepared. Bai Xiaochun had suggested early on that they research the sect rules before enacting their huge plan.

“Charge!” cried Big Fatty Zhang. His mountain-like figure immediately caused Chen Fei and the others to begin to tremble.

Instantly, the clashing and clanging sounds of battle rang out in the courtyard. As for Bai Xiaochun, his body flashed through the air as he alighted on his usual spot atop the bamboo fence which surrounded the courtyard. He flicked his sleeve and clasped his hands behind his back. Looking off into the distance, he looked every bit the lonely hero who didn't deign to participate in the fighting.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, reduced the Supervisors Department to ash....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0012 awe-chapter-13

The Supervisor’s Department and the Ovens had been at odds for years. There was a lot of friction between the two, but usually things were kept under control. The worst that ever happened were minor injuries.

The battle over the trial by fire went on for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Big Fatty Zhang and the others beat Chen Fei and the Supervisors Department squad until they were black and blue. Only when they forked over enough spirit stones to pay for the main gate were they allowed to leave, cursing the entire time.

Before departing, Chen Fei looked over at Bai Xiaochun standing there on the bamboo fence, and the hatred in his heart grew deeper. As far as he was concerned, ever since Bai Xiaochun showed up, the Ovens had only become more and more repulsive.

The fight had attracted quite a bit of attention in the servants district. Many of the servants, upon realizing that the Supervisors Department could do nothing to the Ovens, were angrier than ever. However, other servants were like Hou Xiaomei, and felt that what the Ovens had done meant that they would now have a good opportunity in the trials by fire.

In fact, when the trials by fire started the following month, the Ovens crew proudly made their way to the starting line.

The surrounding servants looked at them furiously.

Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat, looked around at the other servants, and said, “Ladies and gentlemen, if you get to the top more quickly than us, then you won’t have to buy a spot. We're doing this for the good of the sect! A good struggle will bring out the best of the best!”

He had been instructed by Bai Xiaochun to word things in such a way, and the result was that the surrounding servants clenched their jaws in anger.

When the bells began to toll, and the trial by fire began, the Ovens crew, as well as all the other servants, began to race up the mountain as if their lives depended on it.

Soon, the fatties and Bai Xiaochun were so far ahead they couldn’t even be seen. The other servants smiled bitterly, but continued on with the race.

Apparently, they had taken Big Fatty Zhang’s words to heart….

Yet again, the Ovens crew succeeded in spectacular fashion, which caused a huge commotion in the servants district. After all, they had profound cultivation bases, and their physical frames were enormous. No one dared to say anything.

The Ovens was now more in the spotlight than they had ever been. Although they were well known in the servants district, their current fame surpassed anything from past years.

Another two months passed, and whenever there were trials by fire, the Ovens crew quickly hurried over. As far as they were concerned, that time of the month was their spirit stone payday.

Bai Xiaochun was also excited by the buildup of spirit stones. He would soon have enough to buy all of the medicinal plants he needed. Eventually, yet another round of trials by fire began.

It was currently dawn. Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, and all the other fatties woke up early. Bai Xiaochun joined them, and the nine of them sped along, then split into three groups, with the group led by Big Fatty Zhang heading toward Fragrant Cloud Peak.

However, a group from the Supervisors Department intercepted them en route. No explanations were given, and fighting broke out immediately. The Supervisors Department held the advantage in terms of numbers, leading to a chaotic battle. Soon, the toll of bells could be heard, causing Big Fatty Zhang to grow so anxious that his eyes were shot with blood.

As soon as the sound of the bells could be heard, the group from the Supervisors Department scattered. Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun and Third Fatty Hei were incensed, but had no time to give chase. They immediately sped toward the trial by fire on Fragrant Cloud Peak. When they arrived at the entrance of the path, nobody was there, so they instantly began to race up the mountain.

“Those Supervisors Department bastards!” cursed Big Fatty Zhang. “Just wait until we’re done here, I’ll call all the Junior Brothers together and we’ll go beat the crap out of ‘em!” He was pushing so hard that the fat in his body was burning away, making him visibly thinner. However, the result was explosive speed.

Bai Xiaochun was also furious. He only needed a few more spirit stones to reach his goal. Gritting his teeth, he pushed forward with all the speed he could muster. Keeping pace with Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei, he shot up the path, passing one servant after another.

As soon as they reached the top of the mountain, their faces darkened. Standing there at the peak, blocking the entrance, were three people.

Standing up front was Chen Fei, flanked by two burly men who appeared to be at the third level of Qi Condensation. As soon as they saw Bai Xiaochun and the others, they started laughing uproariously.

“Big Fatty Zhang and Bai Xiaochun are here! Well, don’t worry, we still have spots left. You want one?”

Big Fatty Zhang gritted his teeth. Eyes bloodshot, he yelled, “Despicable! Shameless! You flunkies!”

“Hey, since this isn’t breaking sect rules, then if you people from the Ovens can come here, then so can the Supervisors Department!”

“Hahaha! This business belongs to the Supervisors Department now!”

When Bai Xiaochun and the others heard the mocking laughter of Chen Fei and his friends, their rage burned. Now it was obvious why the others from the Supervisors Department had ambushed them on the way here. It was all a big plot!

Big Fatty Zhang let out a bellow of rage and was just about to attack Chen Fei. As far as he was concerned, a fight at this point was unavoidable. Furthermore, he had no way of knowing how often the same thing would happen again in the future. It was essentially the same as stealing spirit stones from him, which caused his fury to bubble and boil.

Third Fatty Hei was equally enraged. However, in the same moment that the two of them were about to attack, Bai Xiaochun looked up in thought and then suddenly whispered, “Eldest Brother, run as fast as you can and then push them over the finish line. We might not get any spirit stones this time, but at least the Supervisors Department won’t be able to steal our business in the future!”

Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes immediately went wild with joy. More than ever, he realized how much of a villain Bai Xiaochun was. Laughing heartily, he suddenly shot forward. Third Fatty Hei followed Big Fatty Zhang, chuckling, eyes shining.

The path wasn’t very wide, and when Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei charged forward together, they were almost like a huge wall.

A wind kicked up as they sped directly toward Chen Fei and the others.

Bai Xiaochun followed behind Big Fatty Zhang, letting out a wild whoop.

Without the slightest hesitation, Chen Fei and his friends attacked. However, it did no good. Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei were charging forward like startled wild boars.

Their dual attack was shocking enough to make ghosts and gods weep. They charged madly forward, slamming into Chen Fei and his friends, forcing them back. Chen Fei and his friends were completely shocked, and when they realized what the Ovens crew was doing, their scalps felt like they were about to explode.

In any other situation, Chen Fei and his friends would dodge to the side or counterattack. But here, fleeing backward would do no good, and would in fact hasten their defeat.

As they were pushed back, their faces filled with fury.

Obviously, they had no desire to become Outer Sect disciples. After being promoted, they would no longer be in the Supervisors Department, and would become ordinary disciples again, losing access to their ill-gotten gains.

“Elder Brother Zhang, stop it!” blurted Chen Fei, sweat pouring down his forehead. “There’s something I want to say--” However, before he could finish, he was interrupted by Bai Xiaochun.

“Eldest Brother, keep going! Push them over the finish line!”

In response, Big Fatty Zhang let out a roar and pushed forward even harder. Third Fatty Hei joined him, and rumbling sounds echoed out as they shoved Chen Fei and two other burly fellows down the narrow path. The first to cross the finish line was one of the burly men, who then stood there at the top of the mountain, wanting to cry, but unable to.

The other burly fellow let out a miserable scream. Staggering backward, he began to beat his chest in regret.

Last to cross over was Chen Fei. No matter how he struggled, the path was too narrow, and a boom could be heard as he was forced off the path. He glared back at Big Fatty Zhang and the others, eyes bloodshot and filled with murder.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” The person they hated the most wasn’t Big Fatty Zhang, but rather Bai Xiaochun, who had come up with the despicable plan to begin with.

The two Outer Sect disciples at the top of the mountain had been watching as the whole scene played out. They cleared their throats, and then backed up a bit, having nothing to say.

Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei now stood at the finish line, sticking their chests out in pride and laughing heartily.

“See you later, Chen Fei!” said Big Fatty Zhang, slapping his stomach and causing the fat to jiggle. “Hahaha! Although, not in the servants district! Hahaha! I’ll miss you! Congratulations on becoming an Outer Sect disciple!”

Chen Fei and his friends very nearly coughed up blood, and in their hearts, they wanted nothing more than to commit murder.

Bai Xiaochun lifted his chin up, looking very pleased. “There’s no need to thank us, Elder Brothers. Congratulations on becoming the fish which leaped over the dragon gate. As Outer Sect disciples, your meteoric success will be like the galloping divine steed. We Junior Brothers offer sincere congratulations!”

However, even as his words rang out, a cold harrumph rang out from the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

“There’s no need for congratulations, you’re coming too.”

Almost as soon as the words entered Bai Xiaochun’s ears, he began to tremble. His eyes filled with fear as a powerful force surged down from further up the mountain, enveloped him, and then began to pull up the mountain.

Bai Xiaochun let out a miserable shriek, and quickly latched his arms around a tree that bordered the trial by fire.

“Elder Brothers, save me!” he screamed.

This development occurred too quickly. Before Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei could even react, a cracking sound could be heard as the tree Bai Xiaochun was holding on to split in half. He flew backward like a kite with its string cut, spinning upward toward the top of the mountain. At the same time, a middle-aged man appeared up above, wearing a long blue cloak, looking very threatening despite not looking angry. It was none other than…

Li Qinghou.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0013 awe-chapter-14

Chen Fei and his friends were always happy to gloat in the misfortune of others. As they watched what was happening to Bai Xiaochun, they couldn’t help but feel as if the grand laws of heaven were truly being enforced implacably. As for the two Outer Sect disciples in charge of the trial by fire, they looked on with hatred, a sensation that no other servant had ever caused them to feel.

“I don’t wanna go....” Bai Xiaochun plopped onto the ground and immediately began to wail, his voice filled with such a feeling of being abused that any listener would surely weep.

Simultaneously, back down on the path, Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei saw Li Qinghou and began to quiver. They quickly bowed their heads to avoid notice.

“Ah, Ninth Junior Brother, it’s not that I refused to save you. Now that the peak lord of Fragrant Cloud Peak has shown up, you have no choice but to suck it up in the Outer Sect....” Big Fatty Zhang heaved continuous sighs in his heart as he hunched his shoulders and tried to inconspicuously scuttle away. However, it was at that point that Li Qinghou’s voice suddenly rang in his ears.

“You two are coming along as well.” As soon as Big Fatty Zhang heard the words, a powerful force dragged both him and Third Fatty Hei up into the air. They didn’t even have a chance to grab onto a tree before they were hauled to the top of the mountain.

“I don’t want to go!” Big Fatty Zhang wailed, sounding even more miserable than Bai Xiaochun. “I’d rather die in the

Ovens than climb the ladder in the Outer Sect....” He sounded so miserable, in fact, that Bai Xiaochun looked up in surprise and forgot to cry.

Third Fatty Hei didn’t say anything, but instead looked silently down toward the bottom of the mountain, face a picture of depression and longing.

When Li Qinghou heard Big Fatty Zhang’s miserable wailing, his face darkened and he said, “Shut up!”

Instantly, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, face solemn as he stood there. Instead of looking sullen like he had before, he was the complete opposite, as if he had suddenly switched faces.

Big Fatty Zhang stared in shock, and then immediately stood up. Inwardly, he felt as if the persecution he was enduring was like an ocean that threatened to overwhelm him. He just couldn’t figure out why Li Qinghou wouldn’t say anything when Bai Xiaochun wailed, and then yelled at him when he did the same thing.

“Bai Xiaochun, you’ll be staying here with me, as an Outer Sect disciple of Fragrant Cloud Peak.” Li Qinghou looked at Bai Xiaochun and felt a headache coming on. He had just gone into secluded meditation when he got the news about the Ovens crew and everything that was going on. Even the sect elders were talking about it. Of course, from their perspective, the whole thing was quite amusing, and a nice break from the monotony of cultivation. None of them were even inclined to dole out any punishment.

However, it wasn’t something that could be allowed to go on indefinitely, so Li Qinghou came to straighten matters out.

After he finished speaking, he flicked his sleeve, ignoring Chen Fei and the other two men as he looked at something further up on Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Bai Xiaochun sighed bitterly and said his goodbyes to Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei. All of a sudden, he remembered something. He turned his head to look at Third Fatty Hei, a strange expression on his face as he asked, “Third Elder Brother, your name... is actually Chen Qingrou? Hahaha! What a good name. It makes you sound like a smoking hot babe!”

Third Fatty Hei gave a cold but depressed snort, then turned and began to walk down the mountain.

“What’s wrong with him?” Bai Xiaochun asked, looking at Big Fatty Zhang.

Big Fatty Zhang looked back at him with a strange look in his eyes. Then, he clapped him on the shoulder and spoke, his voice solemn and sincere.

“Ninth Junior Brother, there’s something I never told you before. Third Fatty Hei actually isn’t your Elder Brother. In fact... she's your Elder Sister.” Clearing his throat, he turned and hurried off.

Bai Xiaochun stared at him blankly. It felt like thunder was crashing around inside his head, as if the whole world were collapsing.

“Elder... Elder Sister?” After a long moment passed, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and was about to turn and look at Third Fatty Hei, when suddenly Li Qinghou’s cold voice rang out.

“Quit running your mouth and catch up! ”

Bai Xiaochun hurried after Li Qinghou, looking more bitter than ever. After a few paces, he turned, looked back down at the Ovens, and sighed.

It had been quite a while since Bai Xiaochun learned that the Spirit Stream Sect's north bank had four mountain peaks, and that the south bank had three. Li Qinghou was the peak lord of the third mountain, Fragrant Cloud Peak. The position of peak lord was very distinguished in the sect.

Although Fragrant Cloud Peak didn't look very big, upon entering it, one would realize that it was filled with the singing of birds and the fragrant aroma of flowers. It looked like a celestial paradise, and was actually much larger on the inside than it appeared to be from the outside.

Actually, the finish line of the trial by fire was only the peak of one of the auxiliary spurs of the mountain as a whole, and really only counted as the foot of the mountain.

Mist swirled about everywhere, as well as an occasional medicinal aroma, a single whiff of which would lift the spirits and send a warm feeling through the body. Bai Xiaochun could immediately tell that this place was extraordinary. He took a deep breath, and his cultivation base, which hadn't made much progress in the past months, instantly surged to life.

Li Qinghou didn't look back, but his eyes gleamed with a bit of admiration. Even he felt that Bai Xiaochun's progress in cultivation in the past year wasn't bad.

"Now that you're an Outer Sect disciple, you can't go and cause any more trouble," Li Qinghou said slowly. "Practicing cultivation is like rowing a boat against the current. It requires constant effort."

Bai Xiaochun didn’t dare say anything back. He put on the most charming expression he could, and nodded continuously.

“Sect resources are only one aspect of cultivation for Outer Sect disciples,” Li Qinghou continued. “You also need to work hard and take advantage of whatever opportunities come your way. There are plenty of missions that you can take on for the sect. In a moment, you can go look at the missions and pick a few to start your training.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his heart suddenly thumped. A while back when flipping through the sect rules, he had noticed one particular rule about Outer Sect disciple being required to accomplish at least one mission every so often. If they didn’t, they would be punished by being demoted from Outer Sect disciple to servant.

He immediately went wild with joy. However, Li Qinghou had apparently realized what he was thinking, and coolly said, “Don’t go thinking about breaking the sect rules. Other people might be demoted to servant for not accomplishing missions, but if you try something like that, I’ll expel you from the sect and return you to your village. A hundred years from now I might even burn some incense for you, if I haven’t forgotten about you by then.”

That frightened Bai Xiaochun half to death. If he had never seen this world of immortals, it wouldn’t have been so bad. But now that he was on the way to living forever, he had no desire at all to go back to his village. If that happened, he might as well forget about trying to live forever. He quickly smacked himself in the chest and told himself that he would definitely go and accomplish some missions.

Soon, they were in the middle section of Fragrant Cloud Peak. A building appeared out of the mists, not very large, but very elegant-looking. Visible through one of the windows was a young man, who sat there quietly reading a book.

As if having sensed someone approaching, the young man looked up, revealing a handsome-looking face. When he saw Li Qinghou, he immediately walked out of the building and clasped hands in greeting.

“Disciple offers greetings, peak lord.”

“This is disciple Bai Xiaochun. Take him and get him set up in the Outer Sect.” Li Qinghou gave Bai Xiaochun a final look before transforming into a beam of prismatic light that shot further up the mountain.

Now that Li Qinghou was gone, Bai Xiaochun could heave a sigh of relief. All of a sudden, he felt as if a weight had been lifted off of his shoulders, and the sky was now blue again.

The young man measured Bai Xiaochun up, then laughed.

“Ah, are you the guy who’s been blocking the trial by fire and selling spots? It’s... Bai Xiaochun, right?”

Bai Xiaochun chuckled. “You’re praising me for nothing, Elder Brother. A small thing like that isn’t even worth mentioning.”

The young man laughed even harder at that. Clearly, he was very amused by Bai Xiaochun. Dropping the topic, he began to lead Bai Xiaochun around Fragrant Cloud Peak, pointing out some of the important buildings along the way.

“Fragrant Cloud Peak occupies an important position on the south bank. Green Crest Peak is known for its sword cultivators, Violet Cauldron Peak for their magical techniques. As for the Fragrant Cloud Peak, we excel in concocting spirit medicines.

“Fragrant Cloud Peak is famous even among the four great sects on this branch of the Heavenspan River. That’s especially true of his excellency the peak lord, who is one of the two most famous apothecaries in the Eastwood Continent.

“Therefore, becoming an Outer Sect disciple of Fragrant Cloud Peak also makes you an apprentice apothecary. That means you need to study about plants and vegetation, as well as different medicine concocting techniques.” The young man continued to provide even more detailed explanations to Bai Xiaochun as they walked along. Eventually, they reached the location where Bai Xiaochun received his Outer Sect disciple clothing and equipment, including a bag of holding.

Although the bag of holding didn’t fit much inside, Bai Xiaochun found the thing to be marvelous. After testing it out a few times, he put it away as carefully as if it were a precious treasure.

What delighted him more than anything else was that getting promoted to Outer Sect disciple also came with a reward of twenty spirit stones. Now, he had just enough to buy the medicinal plants he needed.

Soon it was dusk. Thanks to the explanations provided by the young man, Bai Xiaochun now knew a lot about Fragrant Cloud Peak. Eventually, the young man led him to a place called the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

From there, he received a jade slip.

“This jade slip describes 10,000 types of plants and vegetation. You need to memorize all of them, and then you can get the second jade slip.

“Junior Brother Bai, the path of cultivation is a long one, and spirit medicines are an aid that you can’t do without. If you can become an apothecary, you’ll be able to achieve a meteoric rise here.

“Apprentice apothecary, journeyman apothecary, master apothecary....” the young man said with a smile. “Junior Brother Bai, your future progress will all depend on what good fortune you encounter.” By the time night fell, the young man had led him to the courtyard dwelling the sect had arranged as his residence.

“Junior Brother Bai, I have to head off the mountain tomorrow, so I won’t be able to accompany you to the Scripture Pavilion. Go there at dawn to get the rest of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art mnemonics. You’ll also be able to pick one more magical technique from the selection they have there. It’s a good opportunity to get some things for free. After that, you’ll have to pay merit points for any magical techniques you want.

“If there’s anything you don’t understand, you can always come looking for me. My name is Hou Yunfei. Many thanks for taking care of Xiaomei for me.” Hou Yunfei smiled, clasped hands and bowed. Then he turned and walked away.

“Hou Yunfei?” Bai Xiaochun returned the bow and watched Hou Yunfei walking off. After a moment of thought, he recalled the face of a young woman.

“Hou Xiaomei!” he thought, blinking. He suddenly realized that he had struck it very lucky, as if he'd shoved a random stick into the ground only to have it grow into a lovely shady tree.

After a moment, he took a deep breath and then looked over at his courtyard residence. His eyes gleamed, and he stood tall and straight beneath the moonlight.

“Well, I guess becoming an Outer Sect disciple isn’t that bad after all!” Flicking his sleeve, he walked into the courtyard.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0014 awe-chapter-15

Moonlight flooded down onto Fragrant Cloud Peak of the Spirit Stream Sect, dispersing some of the mists that covered it, and causing the entire scene to be spectacularly beautiful.

About halfway down the east face of the mountain, at the end of a side path, was a courtyard residence. The courtyard itself was as large as a field, and was filled with the delicate fragrance of flowers and plants. The residence itself was a log cabin, complete with a desk and a bed inside, all of which were made from some sort of magenta-colored wood that let off a lovely, fragrant aroma. This place was far superior to anything in the servants' district.

The field in the courtyard had been cleared, and was ready for planting. There was even a well in one corner. Bai Xiaochun looked around at the moonlit scene, and his eyes sparkled with satisfaction.

"Outer Sect disciples are official disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect, so naturally they get much better compensation than the servants. This residence really isn't bad at all. Although, I remember Eldest Brother saying that Inner Sect disciples get to live in immortal's caves... I wonder what those are like." Bai Xiaochun looked up toward the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Only Inner Sect disciples qualified to live on the top half of the mountain.

After a while, he went back into the log cabin, where he stretched lazily and then took out his bag of holding. After patting it carefully, a bottle of medicinal pills appeared in front of him, as well as a green stick of incense.

“Wow, this thing is awesome,” he thought, rubbing the bag of holding fondly. After a moment, his eyes came to rest on the medicinal pill bottle and the green incense. The pill bottle had a label on it, upon which were written the words ‘Spirit Condensation.’ As for the incense, the words ‘Green Rising’ were carved on the side. He had received similar things when he had become a servant. Consuming such pills would increase his cultivation base, and inhaling the smoke from the burning incense stick would have a similar effect.

“Using them as-is would be a big waste. It would be much better to use spirit enhancement on them first. Maybe I could even use them to break through a bottleneck in my cultivation base.” After pondering the matter for a bit, he made his decision. However, he only had one-colored firewood on hand, so he decided to go down the mountain the following morning to get something better.

Having made his decision, he sat down cross-legged and began to meditate. When it came to his cultivation, he had never given up. Although his progress had slowed recently, he still spent time every day on it.

The whole purpose to practicing cultivation was to live forever, so of course he would stick to it.

The night passed uneventfully, and soon it was dawn. Sunlight poked through the mist, making it seem as if valuable treasures were descending. Bai Xiaochun had been cultivating all night. He opened his eyes, donned his Outer Sect disciple clothing, and then hurried out of his log cabin to find the Scripture Pavilion that Elder Brother Hou had mentioned the day before.

The Scripture Pavilion was some distance away from his own residence, on another side of the mountain. It took about an hour of walking before he saw a cluster of towering pagodas off in the distance. They radiated shimmering light, and sent pulsing pressure out in all directions.

He encountered quite a few other Outer Sect disciples, all of whom were hustling about busily. When they sensed that Bai Xiaochun was only at the third level of Qi Condensation, they completely ignored him.

Bai Xiaochun didn't care, but considering that most of the disciples he encountered had cultivation bases far higher than his own, he proceeded cautiously. There were even a few he encountered whose cultivation bases were so high that they were unreadable. Those ones always had crowds of other disciples clustered around them, laughing and chatting with them as they walked along.

The closer he got to the Scripture Pavilion, the more disciples he saw. Just as he was about to enter the area of the building itself, a beam of light flew down toward the area from one of the distant mountain peaks. Within that beam of light, it was possible to see a young man standing on a flying disk, who circled around Fragrant Cloud Peak before flying back off into the distance.

“That’s Qian Dajin from the Hall of Justice! Elder Brother Qian!”

“Elder Brother Qian is an Inner Sect disciple, and also a member of the Hall of Justice. He’s famous! I heard that he’s in the great circle of the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and has access to temporary flight items. I'm so jealous!”

Bai Xiaochun also looked over jealously. After Qian Dajin disappeared, he sighed inwardly.

“One of these days, when I can fly, I’m going take time every day to fly in circles around Fragrant Cloud Peak!” Muttering to himself in anticipation, he began to push his way through the crowd toward the Scripture Pavilion.

The building was huge. The first floor was completely empty except for a long table. Behind the table, an old man sat there with his eyes closed in meditation. All the disciples who wanted to go past him would put their identity medallion onto the table. After it shone with glittering light, they would pass by respectfully.

Copying everyone else, Bai Xiaochun placed his identity medallion onto the table. It only took a moment for it to glitter, after which he picked it back up and followed the other disciples up the stairs to the second floor.

This floor was filled with numerous shelves, which were packed with jade slips or the occasional bamboo scroll. All of them shimmered with bright light, making the second floor of the Scripture Pavilion an extraordinary place.

Seeing another staircase further off, Bai Xiaochun looked around and then walked over. However, when he tried to step onto it, his foot bounced back.

A young man was sitting off to the side, with straight eyebrows and a bamboo scroll in his hand. When he sensed what was happening, he looked up at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun put on his most charming expression and then curiously asked the young man, “Elder Brother, what qualifications do you need to go up there?”

“What, are you new here?” the young man replied slowly. “You have to be at the fifth level of Qi Condensation to go up there.” With that, he continued to read the bamboo scroll.

Bai Xiaochun could tell the young man didn’t want to be disturbed. Forgetting about the third floor, he began to stroll around the second floor. Occasionally he would pick up a jade slip to examine, or look through some bamboo scrolls. He saw all sorts of different magical techniques, all of which seemed very exciting.

That was especially true of something called the Flame Dao magical technique, which seemed especially exceptional.

After a while, he found a jade slip for the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. It had descriptions and pictures for the fourth to eighth levels. He quickly grabbed it and then continued to stroll about.

Time passed, and soon evening was approaching. Bai Xiaochun had browsed about seventy percent of the second floor, and by now, the crowds were thinning.

“These eight seem really incredible....” he thought, looking over his selections. One was a bamboo scroll, somewhat dilapidated, but something that had caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to widen with excitement the moment he saw it.

“Undying Live Forever Technique!!”

He took a deep breath as he examined the introduction to the technique. Apparently, cultivating this technique to the ultimate degree would make a person undying and also be able to live forever.

Panting, he once again examined the name of the technique, and then decided that this was his decision!

He had begun practicing cultivation for the purpose of living forever, so finding a technique like this one almost made it seem like they were mysteriously connected by destiny.

Laughing heartily, he held the bamboo scroll in his hand as he climbed down the stairs.

Back in the main hall of the first floor, the old man was still sitting behind the table with his eyes closed, looking exactly like he had before. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun put the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art jade slip and the Undying Live Forever Technique bamboo scroll onto the table, the man’s eyes slowly opened.

He looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, which left Bai Xiaochun trembling. The man’s gaze felt like lightning. Shivering, Bai Xiaochun immediately put on his most respectful expression.

Thankfully, the old man quickly looked down at Bai Xiaochun’s identity medallion.

“Newly promoted disciples can take a copy of the first eight levels of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art,” the old man said slowly, his voice hoarse. “They may also select a technique of their choosing.” Then his eyes fell upon the Undying Live Forever Technique bamboo scroll, and he frowned slightly.

“Although the name of this technique sounds astonishing, it's incomplete. Furthermore, the more you cultivate it, the more difficult it becomes. The pain is so excruciating that ordinary people can’t endure it. Even most Inner Sect disciples can’t cultivate it successfully. The majority give up. It's been here in the Scripture Pavilion for quite some time. Are you sure you want this particular magic?” The old man looked at Bai Xiaochun.

After hearing the old man’s words, Bai Xiaochun got the feeling that this technique had been waiting here for years just for him. Then he thought again about the words ‘undying’ and ‘live forever’, and his blood felt like it was boiling. He immediately responded, “Senior, I definitely want it, very much!”

The old man said nothing further to dissuade him. He waved his right hand, sending two blank jade slips flying out. After the copies were made, he handed them to Bai Xiaochun, then paid him no more heed and went back to meditating.

Bai Xiaochun put the jade slips away. Eyes gleaming with anticipation, he left the Scripture Pavilion and headed back to his courtyard residence.

By the time he got back, it was already nighttime. Once again inside his log cabin, he sat down cross-legged, took a deep breath, and pulled out the jade slip for the Undying Live Forever Technique. Then he circulated his spiritual energy and sent it into the jade slip. After closing his eyes, the technique's magical incantation appeared in his mind.

An hour later, he opened his eyes again, and a thoughtful expression could be seen.

Just as the old man had said, the Undying Live Forever Technique was incomplete. According to the description, the technique was cultivated in two ways, internally and externally. It was further broken down into the external aspects of skin, flesh, and muscle.

The internal aspects were bones and blood.

As for this incomplete version, it only contained the technique for cultivating skin. Also, the cultivation method truly did seem to be a torment. Furthermore, to cultivate it required a huge expenditure of resources. However, there were several secret magics listed inside that seemed almost beyond belief. For example, there was one called the Throat Crushing Grasp that was supposedly unbeatable.

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, then looked once more at the words ‘undying’ and ‘live forever’. Finally, his eyes filled with determination, and he followed the description in the information, using both of his hands to strike various positions on his body.

Bai Xiaochun was focused on not dying and living forever in a way that vastly outmatched other people. Therefore, he did exactly as the technique required, and beat himself the entire night.

The following day, his whole body hurt. It didn't matter whether he stood up or sat down. Even lifting his arm hurt. And yet, he gritted his teeth and continued to do as the technique manual instructed, and forced himself to move.

“Owwwwwww.... Relax then flex.... aaaaooowwwww.... flex then relax!” he said, repeating one of the lines from the technique as he hopped and skipped around the courtyard. He let out one miserable shriek after another, and tears were streaming down his face. Finally, he gritted his teeth, grabbed some spirit stones, and headed down the mountain.

He figured that if he had to move around, he might as well just go out and buy the medicinal plants he needed to get the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. That would be a lot better than doing nothing more than exercising in his courtyard.

Soon, numerous Outer Sect disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak saw a very strange sight. There was a fair-faced young man hopping and skipping about in a very strange fashion. He was also crying out at the top of his lungs in a fashion which almost sounded euphoric.

“Ah ah, oh oh! Ah ah, oh oh! Ah... ah... ah... ah...”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t want to cry out, but the pain was just too much. In fact, it hurt so much that he was pretty sure that even not moving would also hurt. However, all he had to do was think about the words ‘undying’ and ‘live forever’, and he continued with vicious determination. And thus he continued all the way down to the market outside of the sect.

Trembling, he bought all of the medicinal plants he needed, as well as some one-colored firewood. The two-colored firewood was much more expensive, so he only bought one piece. After that, he ran out of spirit stones.

Gritting his teeth, he went back to the Missions Office and handed in the mission he had taken when he was still a servant. In return, he got the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.

The pill was yellow, about as big as his thumbnail, and emanated a strange medicinal aroma. He looked at the pill, his body still burning with so much pain that he could barely talk. Sweat poured down him, soaking him completely.

Clenching his teeth, he climbed back up the steps of Fragrant Cloud Peak, leaving a trail of sweat behind him as he went. He got quite a few surprised and even cynical glances from other Outer Sect disciples. After all, he was really sweating far beyond what was normal.

He really wasn't sure what was going on. By the time he got back to his courtyard residence, it was the middle of the night. As soon as he walked inside, he collapsed onto the ground, unconscious.

Despite having passed out, the pain woke him up several times through the night. By the time the light of dawn spread out across the sky, though, he woke up and realized that the pain was gone.

“An incomplete minor cycle....” he thought, recalling the technique’s introduction. If he could go for a full day and night without passing out, that would be a complete minor cycle. If he could complete eighty-one minor cycles, that would count as a minor circulation. After that, his skin would be changed, and would reach a point that the process wouldn't be so painful.

“If the technique were simple, everyone would do it, and then everyone would be able to live forever. The harder it is, the more I’m going to cultivate it! Then I’ll really be undying and able to live forever!” His eyes filled with determination; his obsession with living forever was strong, and had reached a truly astonishing level.

Now that his body didn’t hurt any more, he pulled out the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill and studied it. He was just about to eat it when all of a sudden he seemed to recall something. Looking around to make sure no one was watching, he hurried into his log cabin and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the turtle-wok to appear.

“To consume it the way it is would be a big loss. The best thing to do is eat it after doing a spirit enhancement.” Licking his lips, he produced the two-colored flame firewood and kindled it beneath the turtle-wok. Immediately, the log burst into flames, and moments later, became ash. At the same time, two glowing designs appeared on the turtle-wok.

After a moment of hesitation, he placed the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill inside. Almost as soon as the spirit medicine entered the wok, silver light flashed. Having experienced this before, Bai Xiaochun’s expression didn’t change in the least, and he continued to stare at the wok.

After a moment, the silver light faded away and, shockingly, two silver designs could be seen on the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill. The medicinal aroma which floated off of it was now much stronger than it had been before, so strong that a mere sniff would enliven the spirits.

“It's too bad I don’t have anything to make a three-colored flame.” He picked up the spirit medicine and put it into his mouth. The instant it melted, it transformed into a scalding current that swept through his body.

Bai Xiaochun felt his mind rumbling, and his body felt like a furnace. However, even as he was consumed by heat, the white hair on his head turned black again. A powerful surge of life force replenished him, and after a moment, he could tell that it was even stronger than before. A bit of blood oozed out of his nose.

“Major success!” he thought, his eyes widening. He immediately began to cultivate the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, but found that there was little difference. After all, this spirit medicine replenished vital energy, not spiritual energy. More blood flowed out of his nose, and the scalding current inside of him expanded. He felt like he was an inflatable ball that was on the verge of popping. Astonishment filled him.

Actually, the result of performing a twofold enhancement on the spirit medicine ensured that the result vastly exceeded anything from before, and was far more valuable. Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base, which was at the third level of Qi Condensation, simply couldn't take it.

At this critical juncture, he suddenly thought of the Undying Live Forever Technique. He immediately leapt up and began hitting himself as hard as possible.

Popping sounds rang out, and the scalding current began to clear up. Bai Xiaochun didn't dare to stop. It wasn't until an hour later that the current faded away completely. He was in so much pain that he fell down onto the ground, panting for air. However, he looked more excited than ever, and his eyes shone with an intense gleam.

"It has something to do with the spirit enhancement, but the main thing was that spirit medicine. Spirit medicine... is remarkable.... It can increase spiritual energy and can increase longevity.... Well, I wonder if there's a type of medicine that can make people live forever!" The more he thought about it, the more excited he got, and the brighter his eyes shone.

"Fragrant Cloud Peak trains apothecaries....

"Well then, I'm going to become an apothecary. I'm going to make.... a Live-Forever Never-Die Pill!" Bai Xiaochun began to pant, and his intrigue for spirit medicine reached an unheard-of level.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0015 awe-chapter-16

Bai Xiaochun lay there in the courtyard, filled with that obsessiveness of his. His body ached, and yet somehow he could tell that his skin was tougher than before. That made him look forward more than ever to becoming an apothecary.

After laying there in the courtyard for more than an hour, the shaky, painful feeling eventually faded away. Bai Xiaochun crawled into a cross-legged position, eyes flickering as he patted his bag of holding to produce the medicinal pills and medicinal incense.

After closer inspection, he took a deep breath, looked around furtively, then headed back into the log cabin, where he once again took out the turtle-wok.

“I could consume this medicinal pill as is. But after I do a spirit enhancement, it should be able to break my cultivation base through from the third level of Qi Condensation to the fourth. It’s too bad that two-colored firewood is so expensive. The Ovens has some, but I'm not longer a servant there anymore, which makes things complicated.” Bai Xiaochun’s excitement regarding the medicinal pill continued to grow. After a bit of thought, he ceased any hesitation and produced a piece of one-colored firewood.

“I’ll just do a basic enhancement! That’ll be good enough!” He quickly lit the firewood, and the resulting one-colored flame caused the first turtle-wok design to light up. He opened the medicinal pill bottle and poured out the three medicinal pills it contained, all of which were as large as longan fruits.

After performing three spirit enhancements, flickering silver designs could be seen on the surface of the medicinal pills. He also enhanced the green incense. In the end, he sat there looking at the four different spirit medicines upon which he had performed a basic enhancement. Finally, he placed the incense stick in front of him and then popped the three medicinal pills into his mouth.

Then he examined the pictures in the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art manual, and followed the mnemonics as he began to practice cultivation. Soon, the spiritual energy in his body was seething. He could now maintain the posture for much longer than before, and he could feel his cultivation base rising rapidly.

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the little river of spiritual energy inside of him was flowing through his body, and he could sense that he was nearing a breakthrough to the fourth level of Qi Condensation.

“I just need to hold on for one hundred breaths of time, and I can break through!” He gritted his teeth as he continued to maintain the posture in the fourth picture. His body was swelling up so much that he felt like a ball, and cracking sounds could be heard inside of him. Great beads of sweat were rolling off of him.

It was at this point that the spiritual energy began to wane. Bai Xiaochun's eyes narrowed in concentration, and he blew a mouthful of spiritual energy onto the green incense stick in front of him.

As soon as the spiritual energy touched the green incense, it lit up, causing tendrils of green smoke to swirl about like green snakes. They flew through the air, entering into Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and then turning into strong spiritual energy. Within moments, the river of spiritual energy inside of him had doubled in size.

Rumbling could be heard as a wind-like shockwave rolled out from Bai Xiaochun, spreading out through the cabin and then into the courtyard. His eyes opened, and they shone with pleasure.

“The fourth level of Qi Condensation!” he exclaimed, laughing.

He could immediately sense the spiritual energy surging through him, carrying with it a strong life force. He felt more agile, and when he looked down, he saw black filth caked all over his body. That would be the impurities within his body that had just been forced out.

His body flickered as he floated out of the log cabin. After tidying up the courtyard a bit, he stood there feeling very energized. He quickly performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger, causing his wooden sword to fly out of his bag of holding in a streak of light.

He sent it flying back and forth, eyes gleaming with satisfaction. The wooden sword was already extraordinary, but now that it was combined with the cultivation base of the fourth level of Qi Condensation, it possessed an even more striking air.

“Spirit enhancement is pretty awesome. It would be great if I could use a three-colored flame, though. A medicinal pill like that would be incredible!” The more he thought about it, the more miraculous spirit medicine seemed to be. Regardless of whether it was in pill form or incense form, it was definitely an absolute necessity for practicing cultivation.

“I'm definitely going to become an amazing apothecary! I’ll concoct a Live-Forever Never-Die Pill! Then I’ll enhance it tenfold--no, wait, I’ll enhance it a hundredfold!” Bai Xiaochun's desire to become an apothecary was growing stronger. Suddenly, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a jade slip.

It was none other than the jade slip given him by Hou Yunfei when they had gone to the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion together. Inside were images of 10,000 types of plants and vegetation. Only Fragrant Cloud Peak had ancient records of this type, and they were something that all apprentice apothecaries had to master.

Of course, a mere 10,000 types of plants and vegetation was only the beginning. According to Hou Yunfei, after memorizing those, you could acquire another volume.

With a look of resolve, he circulated his spiritual energy, and images of various types of plants and vegetation rose up in his mind. He was filled with a strange feeling, as if a whole new page of life had opened up in front of him. There were even descriptions of the medicinal plants needed to trade for an Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.

After examining the contents of the jade slip, he realized that memorizing each of the 10,000 items wouldn’t really be that difficult. However, he wasn’t just any old person. His goal was to become a great apothecary who could concoct a Live-Forever Never-Die Pill.

The vicious determination concealed in his personality once again exploded out. This was not just memorizing a simple list; he had to carefully observe all of the details of each type of medicinal plant. Only after understanding a plant fully could he move on to the next one.

Back when he had been under such pressure because of Xu Baocai, he had practiced cultivation like mad for the better part of half a year. Now, with even grander aspirations, a similar thing was occurring.

He studied the medicinal plants down to the tiniest detail, until he could close his eyes and recall an image of each and every one.

However, he still felt as if that wasn’t enough, and wished he could study the actual items to make his research complete. Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about that. All he could do was carefully research what he had at his disposal, which included the shapes of the leaves and the patterns of the veins.

Even that wasn't enough for Bai Xiaochun though. He also studied the roots and the fruits. It was almost as if the plants themselves were right in front of him, several times their normal size and dug up out of the ground for him to study.

After that, he still didn't feel confident enough. Next, he studied the tiny hairs growing on the plants, and even the tiny pore-like openings beneath them.

Time passed. Soon, a month had gone by. During that time, he spent time every day practicing the fourth level of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, and was getting much more comfortable with his cultivation base. At the same time, he hadn’t forgotten about the Undying Live Forever Technique. Every day, he endured the pain as he ran around his courtyard practicing it, simultaneously memorizing the plants and vegetation from the jade slip. Unfortunately, the jade slip had no table of contents, so he wasn’t sure exactly how many he had memorized so far.

In addition to exercising in his courtyard, he would often stop by the spirit field in the corner, where he was growing ten medicinal plants.

These ten plants were spiritwinter bamboo. He had gone to Fragrant Cloud Peak’s Outer Sect disciple Mission Stele half a month before and selected a simple, non-dangerous mission to get them.

Bai Xiaochun didn't dare to forget what Li Qinghou had told him. Sect disciples needed to complete at least one mission every half year; it was a sect rule that Bai Xiaochun had kept firmly planted in mind.

The merit point reward for this mission was significant, and could actually be even higher depending on how many goods were turned in at the end. It was a simple mission, but required quite a bit of time wastage; he had to care for the plants for three months before he could hand the mission in.

Of course, the spiritwinter bamboo could be catalyzed by a cultivator's spiritual energy, which would make it grow faster. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun had no time to test that method, and had simply planted the seeds in his spirit field as soon as he had gotten back.

“You grow so slowly,” he said, looking down at the spirit field. From the description in the jade slip, he knew that spiritwinter bamboo required a lot of spiritual energy to grow properly. If the soil it was growing in didn’t have strong spiritual energy, then the cultivator would need to add spiritual energy personally.

He squatted down and picked up a handful of soil from the spirit field. After a moment, he muttered, “I bet this spirit field doesn’t have enough spiritual energy, and that's why the spiritwinter bamboo is growing so slowly.

“What can I do to get the spirit field’s spiritual energy to be a bit stronger...?” After a moment of thought, his expression lit up, and he extended his right hand, within which materialized the turtle-wok.

He looked at the wok, and then back at the spirit field, and his eyes began to shine.

“If this wok can enhance anything, then... I should be able to perform a spirit enhancement on the spirit soil, right?” Feeling very curious all of a sudden, he quickly dug up the spiritwinter bamboo seeds, then filled the turtle-wok with spirit soil and produced a piece of one-colored firewood to perform a test.

Soon, silver light flashed, and the spirit soil in the turtle-wok glowed with the design of a basic spirit enhancement. The light quickly faded, but the spirit soil clearly emanated a much stronger spiritual energy than before.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted. Not feeling the slightest bit inconvenienced whatsoever, he quickly began to enhance one wokful of spirit soil after another. After more than an hour had passed, when he was just about out of one-colored firewood, the entire spirit field had benefited from a basic spirit enhancement.

Of course, that was only the top level of soil. He didn't have enough firewood to go any lower. Therefore, because there was no foundation for the spirit soil, after enough time passed, it would gradually return to normal.

Even so, the current spiritual energy in the spirit field had undergone a heaven-shaking, earth-toppling transformation, and was so strong that it caused a fragrant aroma to swirl about.

Bai Xiaochun immediately planted the spiritwinter bamboo seeds again, then stood off to the side watching. It didn’t take long before some tiny buds popped up and began to grow rapidly.

In the blink of an eye, they were almost a meter tall. In fact, if disciples in the sect who were adept at growing medicinal plants saw what was happening, they would certainly gasp. Even if a cultivator skillfully nourished the plants with spiritual energy, they wouldn’t grow so fast.

After all... no one in the cultivation world had ever been so extravagant as to perform spirit enhancement on soil, all for the purpose of growing ten stalks of spiritwinter bamboo....

Not even the famous grandmasters of spirit enhancement would ever think to do such a thing; it was simply far too much of a waste.

Seeing that the spiritwinter bamboo was now growing well, Bai Xiaochun felt very pleased. He turned back and continued to jog around the courtyard, simultaneously studying the plants and vegetation in the jade slip.

The sun was setting, and the sky grew dark. Considering that the stalks of spiritwinter bamboo had already grown higher than a meter, and had apparently still not reached its full height, it was hard to say... exactly how tall they would be in three months....

That night, Bai Xiaochun finally put the jade slip down. After vicious hard work, he had finally thoroughly memorized all

10,000 types of plants and vegetation. He had even found some areas in the descriptions of the medicinal plants that revealed how they conflicted with other medicinal plants.

“Tomorrow morning, I’m going to go get the second volume about plants and vegetation. I wonder what the test at the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion will be like. Can I really pass it?”

Bai Xiaochun set his chin and flicked his sleeve. He had just been planning on uttering some bold and audacious words, but then, just couldn’t help but feel a bit anxious. Clearing his throat, he picked up the jade slip again and began to study some more. He just couldn’t shake the fear that some problem would come up in the test.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0016 awe-chapter-17

The next morning at dawn, Bai Xiaochun woke up early. As soon as he walked out of his log cabin, he looked over at the spiritwinter bamboo and saw that it was already taller than half the height of an average person. He nodded his head in satisfaction, then left the courtyard and headed in the direction of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

The sun rose up over the horizon, sending scintillating beams of light out in all directions. The multi-colored sunlight dancing among the mists like golden carps was a truly spectacular sight. Bai Xiaochun was currently hurrying along a path along with numerous other Outer Sect disciples. He didn't recognize any of them, which caused him to suddenly miss his Elder Brothers from the Ovens.

“I wonder how Eldest Brother is doing, and Third Fatty Hei....” Sighing inwardly, he walked along for about an hour, until the sun was high in the sky. Finally, he saw the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion off in the distance, and the ten shocking stone steles set up outside of it.

Those stone steles were the identifying feature of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion. Green light emanated off of them, rising a hundred or more meters up into the air. It was an amazing sight, like ten giants standing there, completely intimidating.

Visible on the surface of the stones steles were lines of text, a ranking system that went from one to a hundred.

Toward the top, there were no names, only various images, which were in fact the insignias of various Outer Sect

Chosen who had become famous apothecaries in the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

Every apothecary had a unique insignia which they would use to mark the satisfactory spirit medicines they had concocted. It was a tradition that went back throughout the ages, and therefore, it was an important honor to all apothecaries.

The last time he had come here, Hou Yunfei had explained all of these things briefly. But now that Bai Xiaochun was coming here alone, he couldn’t help but stare at the ten stone steles.

The first thing that caught his attention was the eye-catching insignia on the first place position of the foremost stone stele.

According to Hou Yunfei, that magic bottle was the insignia of... Zhou Xinqi!

The name was not unfamiliar to Bai Xiaochun. Back when he was a servant, he remembered sitting under the moonlight once as Big Fatty Zhang munched on a ginseng rootlet and sighed about Zhou Xinqi.

She came from a clan of mortals, and several years ago had been discovered by one of the Senior members of the sect, who sensed that she had unusual latent talent. When she arrived in the sect and was formally tested, her latent talent caused a huge commotion in the Spirit Stream Sect.

She had a rare plant and vegetation spirit meridian, which not only made her speed of cultivation many times greater than the average person, but also gave her astonishing potential when it came to concocting medicine. After joining Fragrant Cloud Peak, she became Li Qinghou’s only apprentice, and was actually viewed as the most important apothecary next to Li Qinghou, and a future pillar of the sect!

According to the rules of the Spirit Stream Sect, it didn't matter how high a person's latent talent was, they couldn’t automatically become an Inner Sect disciple. Therefore, Zhou Xingqi was just like all the other Chosen from the other mountain peaks on the south bank. They all started out as disciples in the Outer Sect, where they trained hard to improve. However, the cultivation resources they had access to were actually provided by the Inner Sect.

Everyone knew that it wouldn't be long before Zhou Xinqi would prove herself and become an Inner Sect disciple.

On top of all that, she was astonishingly beautiful, which earned her the wide admiration of countless male disciples.

Because of all of these reasons, she was very famous on Fragrant Cloud Peak. In fact, the Inner Sect disciples didn’t view her as belonging to the Outer Sect. Even the conservative Inner Sect as a whole feared her.

As Bai Xiaochun considered all these matters, he suddenly felt very curious about Zhou Xinqi. Then he made his way from one stone stele to the next, closely looking at all ten. Soon, he was virtually struck speechless.

“Zhou Xinqi is amazing. Of these ten stone steles, her name is in first place on eight! I don't see her name at all on the other two; presumably she hasn’t competed for those yet!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were as wide as saucers as he looked at all the stone steles.

By now, the crowd of disciples that had gathered around the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion had swelled to quite a number.

Bai Xiaochun looked away from the stone steles and found the location where he could exchange his jade slip for the second volume of plants and vegetation. As he looked around, he realized that there really were a lot of people present, almost as if they were gathering in advance for some reason. Suddenly, he heard people talking excitedly.

“Elder Sister Zhou is coming!”

“Hahaha! So the rumors were true! Elder Sister Zhou is coming today. We didn’t come in vain!”

“Elder Sister Zhou has already taken first place in the five volumes of plants and vegetation and three volumes of spirit creatures. This time she’ll definitely challenge the fourth volume of spirit creatures!”

The buzz of conversation rose and fell, and the crowd grew more packed. Bai Xiaochun was stuck in the very middle, but thankfully he wasn’t as fat as he had been before. After jostling around a bit, he managed to get out in front. Just as he did, he looked up and saw a bright beam of light flying through the air.

It was blue flying silk, standing atop which was a young woman wearing the clothing of the Outer Sect. Long black hair flew behind her in the wind; she had narrow, phoenix-like eyebrows and eyes that shone as cold as the moon. Her complexion was lovely, her frame thin and lithe.

As she flew toward one of the ten stone steles, a cheer rose up from the surrounding Outer Sect disciples. She landed and, without even glancing around, headed directly toward one of the log cabins erected beneath the stone steles.

It was only at this point that Bai Xiaochun noticed that all ten of the stone steles had log cabins beneath them. In fact, there were currently people going in and out of all of them, and that included the one the young woman had just entered.

The surrounding disciples were very excited. Bai Xiaochun looked around and found one particular disciple who looked skinnier and weaker than the others, and sidled up to him.

Then, he cried out loudly, “At long last, I can lay eyes on Elder Sister Zhou again. This time she’s definitely going to take first place on the ninth stone stele!”

After that, he turned and asked the skinny guy for more details about what was going on. Considering the young man was in such a good mood, he quickly gave a detailed explanation.

“Elder Sister Zhou wants to be the first person from ancient times to now to have first place in all ten stone steles. And she’s the only person who could possibly do it. All she has to do is take the test for the fourth and fifth volumes of spirit creatures, and she’ll definitely take first place in both!”

Bai Xiaochun decided that the most important thing was to get the second volume of plants and vegetation, which meant that he had to go take the test in the appropriate log cabin. If he succeeded, the volume would be his. Therefore, he began to push his way through the crowd to the first stone stele. It wasn’t easy, and after he got there, he found that all the cabins were already occupied. After waiting a bit, he saw a crestfallen disciple moping out from one of them, but that didn’t discourage him at all. He immediately entered the log cabin.

Once inside, it was as if he was completely separated from the cacophony of sound on the outside; everything here was peaceful and quiet. The log cabin wasn’t very large, and in the middle, a prayer mat was laid out in front of a small stone stele.

Bai Xiaochun sat down cross-legged in the prescribed fashion, then pulled out the jade slip that contained the first volume of plants and vegetation. He placed it up against the stone stele, and it sank down inside. The stone stele shuddered, and began to shine brightly.

“According to what the Elder Brother outside said, now is when I'm supposed to decide what insignia will identify me as an apothecary.” After thinking for a moment, he chuckled and drew the image of a turtle. He loved turtles, and although his drawing was a bit misshapen and ugly, in his eyes it was pretty good.

The turtle insignia flickered a few times, and Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He settled his qi and cleared his mind, and his eyes began to shine brightly. Finally, he slowly reached out and put his hand onto the stone stele. In the moment that he touched it, rumbling sounds filled his mind, and his vision swam. When it became clear again, he was no longer in the log cabin, but in an illusory world.

Before he could size up his surroundings, light flashed in front of him, and countless medicinal plants appeared, filling his field of view.

None of the medicinal plants were intact. Instead, they were broken up into pieces of ten or more, all of which were scattered about.

Just by looking around, it was impossible to tell how many plants there were in total.

This testing method of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion was what countless Outer Sect disciples of the Fragrant Cloud

Peak dreaded. Throughout the years, numerous disciples had taken the test, only to feel completely useless at the end. Because of that, if your name made it into the top 100 on the stone stele, you would be the object of mass envy and approval.

That was especially true of the first place spot, which led to total fame.

A cold, emotionless voice suddenly rang out: “In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, re-assemble the spirit plants. Your test results will be based on the total number you put together. You may begin now.”

“That’s it?” Bai Xiaochun thought. He almost couldn’t believe it. He had immersed himself in studying the medicinal plants in the jade slip to the point where even now, he could already spot hundreds of medicinal plant parts that he could piece together.

He had been really worried about this test, but now that he saw what it was like, he heaved a sigh of relief. However, he still wasn’t completely at ease.

“It can’t be this easy. Considering the test is so simple, the final target to pass must be incredibly high.” Once again feeling nervous, he quickly waved his finger through the air, pointing at a dozen or so medicinal plant fragments. Immediately, those fragments pieced themselves together, forming two medicinal plants.

Next he waved both hands in the air, not even pausing as he sent countless plant fragments flying around and forming together. One medicinal plant after another was formed, until soon he had 100 medicinal plants.

He looked up in thought for a moment, and his spirits lifted. Tuning everything else out, he focused completely on the medicinal plant fragments, his hands flying about rapidly. Then, he suddenly thought about how terrible it would be to fail the test, and went all out with even more vicious determination. His eyes were completely bloodshot, and his hands moved even faster.

100 plants. 200 plants. 300 plants. 500 plants.... 1,000 plants!

Sweat poured down his face, white steam rose from the top of his head, and his hands flew. He looked around, instantly identifying more medicinal plant parts that could be pieced together. Back when he had been memorizing the medicinal plants in the jade slip, he had been so devoted to the process that he had reached the point where he wished he could grind the plants into powder to study them further.

However, that wasn't possible, so he could only study them in minute detail until he felt that he understood them completely.

If any of the disciples on the outside could see what was happening, they would gasp in disbelief. To them, this test was so terrifying it made the hair on their necks stand up straight. None of them could possibly imagine how thoroughly Bai Xiaochun had researched the medicinal plants in the jade slip.

Time passed. 2,000 plants. 3,000 plants....

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot as he forced his hands to follow his train of thought. He even relied on the power of the fourth level of Qi Condensation, fearful that he wouldn't be able to keep up.

Despite how fast he was going, he wasn't sure if he would be able to pass, so all he could do was grit his teeth and keep going.

4,000 plants. 5,000 plants. 6,000 plants. 7,000 plants....

He wasn't sure how much time had passed, and there were still some plant fragments left. Suddenly, light began to shine everywhere, and his vision swam. The log cabin came back into view again, and the jade slip appeared on the surface of the stone stele. It was the same slip he had put in before, which contained the first volume of plants and vegetation.

“I missed a few, but only a few....” he thought apprehensively. After picking up the jade slip, he walked out of the log cabin, feeling completely crestfallen. It was at this point that he heard the cheering on the outside.

He looked up in the direction of the log cabin Zhou Xinqi had entered. As she walked out, her name suddenly appeared in first place.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0017 awe-chapter-18

“Hahaha! Elder Sister Zhou did it! Didn't I say she would get another unprecedented first place spot!?”

“She definitely deserves to have that plants and vegetation spirit meridian. Her options for the future are endless!”

“Elder Sister Zhou, we’ll be waiting for you to set another record. When you get first place in all ten, the Great Spirit Stream Bell will toll to notify the whole sect!” All of the surrounding Outer Sect disciples were cheering. Although there were a few disgruntled faces to be seen, and a few sharply spoken words, they were drowned out by the overwhelming applause. Zhou Xinqi’s position among the disciples here was like the sun within the sky. In fact, she was well regarded by virtually everyone on Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Although she was normally quite cold, the applause of the surrounding disciples couldn’t help but make her feel a bit pleased with herself, and she smiled slightly. That smile caused the cheering to grow even louder.

Bai Xiaochun stood there in the crowd, feeling quite envious of her. Muttering to himself, he looked back at the first stone stele and suddenly, his eyes went wide. Then he looked back down at the jade slip with the first volume of plants and vegetation, and after closer scrutiny, he realized that in addition to the original 10,000 types of plants and vegetation, another 10,000 had been added. His heart suddenly swelled with joy.

He then turned his head to look at the first stone stele, and saw that right above the magic bottle insignia was the image of a turtle. Suddenly, he felt wonderful.

He had originally planned to leave immediately. But now, filled with excitement, he waited to hear the audience begin to applaud his accomplishment. However, it quickly became apparent that everyone was only paying attention to Zhou Xinqi, and hadn't even noticed what had just occurred. In fact, even Zhou Xinqi was preparing to depart.

Bai Xiaochun immediately started getting nervous. Blinking, he suddenly called out in his most astonished voice: “Look! Elder Sister Zhou isn’t in first place on the first stone stele anymore! Somebody else took her place! Weird! Now there’s a really cool-looking turtle there. I wonder who drew that?”

His voice pierced through the cheering, and as people heard the shocking nature of his words, they started to turn around to look at the stone stele. Soon, faces fell, and cries of alarm rang out.

That in turn caused more people to spin around in shock. Expressions of disbelief could be seen as more and more people began to stare at the text on the first stone stele.

“Th-th... somebody actually passed up Elder Sister Zhou on the first stone stele!”

“That’s impossible! Heavens! Somebody surpassed Elder Sister Zhou, and with that ugly-looking turtle. Who could it be?!”

“There’s actually somebody who can pose a challenge to Elder Sister Zhou in terms of skill with plants and vegetation? This is ground-breaking!! Elder Sister Zhou just took first place on the ninth stone stele, but she still only has a total of eight first place positions!”

Everyone was in an uproar, and the sounds of discussion filled the air. Moments ago, everyone had been cheering Zhou Xinqi, and could not possibly have been prepared for something unexpected like this to happen.

Bai Xiaochun stood there in the crowd, so pleased with himself that he almost started laughing. However, he knew that doing so wouldn't be very appropriate, so he held himself back. Instead, he cried out in shock like everyone else around him.

Actually, he had never had even the slightest clue that he could actually take first place.

It was at this point that Zhou Xinqi, who had just been on the verge of leaving, suddenly trembled where she stood. After hearing the cries echoing out around her, her phoenix-like eyes turned to look at the first stone stele, and she saw the turtle in the first place spot.

At first she frowned, but then her expression calmed. In fact, she wasn’t even shocked at all. As far as she was concerned, when she had taken first place in the test of the first volume of plants and vegetation, it had been just after she was promoted into the Outer Sect. Back then, she hadn’t tried as hard as she could have when she took the test, and that was not to mention the advancement she had made since then.

“Not bad,” she said coolly. “It looks like there might be a new rising star in the sect.” With that, her body flickered as she shot toward the first stone stele.

In her mind, this was a simple matter. The moment someone exceeded her, she would take back what was hers.

Her movement immediately caused a ripple of excitement to run through the crowd of disciples. All of them stared in anticipation as Zhou Xinqi walked into the log cabin to take the test for the first volume of plants and vegetation.

“Elder Sister Zhou is going to take back the first place spot which rightfully belongs to her! Whichever Junior Brother drew that turtle seems pretty good. What a pity that he’ll only be able to stay in first place for the time it takes an incense stick to burn.”

“Well, that’s how it should be. He’s definitely Chosen when it comes to plants and vegetation. He’s just unlucky to have encountered Elder Sister Zhou.”

After hearing what everyone was saying, Bai Xiaochun started feeling nervous. Not only had he run out of time, but Zhou Xinqi was simply too famous.

Even he himself was starting to think that maybe he belonged in second place.

“Ah, that’s fine too,” he consoled himself. “If I get in second place, then second place it is. Men shouldn't be fighting women anyway!” He wanted to leave, but couldn't quite make himself do so. He couldn’t stop wondering about whether or not he would lose out on what he had just won.

Soon, enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, and the name list hadn’t changed. Bai Xiaochun was still in first place, and Zhou Xinqi was now walking out from inside the log cabin. Her expression was calm, and she was completely confident, having used eighty percent of her skill to piece together 4,000 of the total of 10,000 medicinal plants.

From her perspective, she had already outclassed all the other naturally gifted disciples.

However, as soon as she walked out, she realized that not a sound could be heard. In fact, all eyes were staring at her with strange expressions. There were even looks of shock.

She looked around blankly, then turned to inspect the stone stele. It was at this point that she realized that the magic bottle which represented her name was still beneath the ugly turtle.

Everything was dead quiet, and all the surrounding disciples, even Bai Xiaochun, were staring with gaping jaws. Bai Xiaochun then looked over at Zhou Xinqi and realized that, other than being quite good-looking... maybe she wasn’t that special after all.

Zhou Xinqi’s eyes narrowed briefly, and then her expression returned to normal.

“This person really has some talent with plants and vegetation. Now I’m a bit curious to find out who he is.” Her body flickered and she once again entered the log cabin.

This time, Bai Xiaochun didn't even think about leaving. He stood there in the crowd, holding his breath in anticipation. The surrounding Outer Sect disciples were no longer discussing the matter in loud voices. Instead, they were whispering in hushed tones, watching the unprecedented scene playing out in front of them.

Furthermore, many of them were glancing up at the turtle mark, which now seemed utterly mysterious to them. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Zhou Xinqi emerged once again, and that enigmatic sensation increased.

The turtle... was still on top!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and then he cried out in a loud voice to incite the other disciples: “Heavens, who is this person!?!?”

Finally, the crowd, which had been silent up until now, exploded with conversation.

“Elder Sister Zhou tried twice and yet didn’t surpass the turtle! How could this be happening? How many medicinal plants did that person complete!?”

“Did anybody see which Elder Brother it was that just took the test?”

Zhou Xinqi stood beneath the stone stele, frowning. Just now, she had used all the skill she possessed to piece together 6,000 plants. She could never have imagined that she would still be stuck in second place.

Her eyes narrowed, and she gave a cold harrumph as she spun and walked back into the log cabin, a very serious look in her eyes.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, she emerged again, her expression grave. She turned yet again and went back in, and the same amount of time passed before she emerged, face pale. Expression staunch, she once again entered.

Once. Twice. Three times. Four times....

The surrounding cultivators were panting as they watched Zhou Xinqi try over and over again. However, the end result was that everyone lapsed into complete silence.

The scene playing out in front of them was terrifying. They could never have possibly imagined that whoever owned the turtle insignia could have pieced together so many medicinal plants, and so thoroughly surpassed Zhou Xinqi.

As of that moment, everyone was completely thunderstruck by the turtle.

That was especially true of Zhou Xinqi, who once again emerged, her beautiful eyes shot with blood. Everyone in the audience gasped.

Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but clear his throat. Right now, he couldn't just blurt out that he was the person in first place. However, the desire to do that very thing itched in his heart like a restless cat. Actually, it was a wonderful feeling.

“Now's not the time,” he thought. “I’ll find an opportunity in the future to make a big scene in front of everybody. I’ll make sure everyone knows that the person who holds the first place spot on the first stone stele is none other than me, Bai Xiaochun!” Looking up, he realized that it was getting dark, and yawned, looking like the picture of a lonely hero.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, reduced Zhou Xinqi to nothing more than ash....” With that, he flicked his sleeve and turned, walking away through the crowd.

As he departed, Zhou Xinqi gritted her teeth, and stubbornly entered the log cabin to once again take the test for the first volume of plants and vegetation....

Eventually, the moon hung high in the sky, and Zhou Xinqi stood there, completely exhausted as she stared up at the turtle. She could never have predicted that a day like this would come, that something like this would happen.

The crowds departed, and word of the turtle became the talk of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

One would think that the matter was over, but the next day, as the sun shone down onto the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, the disciples were shocked to see Zhou Xinqi return and once again go into the first stone stele's log cabin. Yet again, she failed, over and over.

One day, two days, three days.... For a full three days, she never gave up. Soon, the gossip about the turtle disciple had reached a fever pitch in Fragrant Cloud Peak.

There was not a single person who hadn't heard about the matter, and even the Inner Sect disciples were talking about it.

Seven days later, Zhou Xinqi stood beneath the stone stele, staring up listlessly at the turtle. She had tried over and over again during the past seven days. She had held nothing back, and had even pushed herself to the point of piecing together 7,000 plants. However, she still couldn't surpass that mysterious disciple.

“Just who are you?!” she murmured. Finally, she took a deep breath, gritted her teeth, and turned to leave. She would no longer attempt to compete over the first stele. However, the image of that turtle was now burned deeply into her psyche.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0018 awe-chapter-19

The comfortable life of an Outer Sect disciple on Fragrant Cloud Peak was great for Bai Xiaochun. Although he missed the delicious food he had access to back in the Ovens, everything else was quite satisfactory.

In terms of his progress in cultivation, and his research into plants and vegetation, he truly felt as if he was living life to the fullest. The only downside was that his courtyard residence was relatively remote, and there was no one around to chat with, so he got bored sometimes.

“Could it be that all cultivators are so lonely?” he thought, sighing as he stood there in the courtyard looking up into the sky. Somehow, he felt much older and more grown up.

The winds of autumn had passed, and snow had begun to fall occasionally, causing the temperature to drop significantly. Snowflakes drifted about in the air, and the spiritwinter bamboo in Bai Xiaochun’s courtyard was growing strong and healthy. They were now taller than Bai Xiaochun himself, and emerald green in color. They were like a splash of spring in the middle of the winter cold.

A month had passed since he had taken first place on the first stone stele of plants and vegetation. However, the second volume of plants and vegetation was much more difficult than he'd anticipated, causing his research to slow. But that didn’t change the most important thing to him, which was that Zhou Xinqi never took back the first place spot on the first stone stele. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun still felt a lot of pressure to be able to piece together all of the incomplete medicinal plants that he hadn’t been able to before.

“I have an amazing reputation now. I can't let that wench Zhou Xinqi surpass me.” From that moment, Bai Xiaochun decided that he would continue to work harder and harder until he reached his secret goal of being able to proudly announce in front of everyone that he was Apothecary Turtle.

Although his progress with the second volume of plants and vegetation was slow, his cultivation of the Undying Live Forever Technique was rapidly nearing the point where he would be able to achieve a full minor circulation.

Although the pain only continued to get worse, Bai Xiaochun remained completely focused on the terms ‘undying’ and ‘live forever’.

“Three more days. According to the description of the Undying Live Forever Technique, in three days I’ll be able to complete a minor circulation.” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and continued to speed around his courtyard, simultaneously studying the second volume of plants and vegetation.

The three days passed by quickly. On the evening of the third day, it began to snow, covering the Spirit Stream Sect in a blanket of shimmering silver.

Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of running when a tremor ran through him, and he suddenly stopped in place. The pain that he had been enduring for the past eighty-one days suddenly vanished.

A flow of heat exploded through him, converging on his skin, which felt as if it were broiling in an oven.

The snowflakes melted before they could even get near him, instantly transforming into a white mist.

“It worked!” he exclaimed ecstatically, despite his dry throat. Although he felt like he was on fire, when he looked down, he saw a black light flowing over his skin, which circulated around him and then vanished.

He then poked his arm with his right hand, and could tell how incredibly tough it was. His eyes shone, and shook his arms and legs a bit. Instantly, he could tell that he was much faster than before. He started to run forward, then let out a cry of shock as he appeared several meters away in the blink of an eye.

He could now move twice as fast as he could before. Completely delighted, Bai Xiaochun ran around a bit to test out his new speed, and was very satisfied.

Without any further hesitation, he used the Undying Live Forever Technique mnemonic to continue practicing cultivation. This new method involved closing his mouth and nose and then attempting to breathe through his skin. An inhalation and exhalation counted as a minor cycle. He needed to practice eighty-one minor cycles per day for eighty-one days to complete a minor circulation.

If he could accomplish that, then, combined with the painful minor circulation he had already completed, he would have made his initial success in acquiring the Undying Skin.

After practicing a few times, Bai Xiaochun got the knack of it and struggled to get through one minor cycle. Afterward, his body seemed much more gaunt.

He also felt incredibly hungry, and gurgling sounds could be heard coming from his stomach. He ignored that, and continued breathing, causing his body to get even skinnier. After breathing in and out fifteen times, his body looked like nothing more than a bag of bones.

It was as if all the nutrients that existed inside of him had been sucked out of him. However, his skin looked even more resilient than before.

Bai Xiaochun couldn't hold on any longer. His vision was fading, and his eyes had turned green from the indescribable hunger which filled him. He was so hungry that he could eat an elephant in a single bite.

“This isn't working, I'm starving to death!!” He looked around, salivating, only to realize that there was nothing in the area to eat except for the verdant bamboo he was growing, which at the moment looked quite attractive.

Unable to hold back because of the incredible hunger, he sped over to the spiritwinter bamboo and took a big bite out of one of them.

Crunching sounds could be heard as he ripped out a huge chunk and began to chomp it down. After swallowing, his face twisted, and he shivered from the bitter flavor.

“Too bitter.... I need to eat some real food....” He suddenly missed the Ovens more than ever. Never before in his life had he ever been this hungry, so hungry that he felt like he was going to faint. His eyes were turning even more green, and he was panting. Finally, he bolted out of the courtyard.

Racing down the mountain path at top speed, he would occasionally encounter other Outer Sect disciples. To them, it felt like a wind was blowing past their bodies, and they turned in shock to stare at Bai Xiaochun running off into the distance.

He raced down the mountain, into the servants’ district and straight toward the Ovens. Not wanting to waste time opening the door, he flew over the main gate.

The Ovens crew was in the middle of cooking. Now that Big Fatty Zhang and Third Fatty Hei were gone, Second Fatty Huang had become the leader. He was currently ladling out some rice gruel into a bowl, when suddenly a wind blasted in his face, and the bowl was gone, to be replaced by Bai Xiaochun’s gaping mouth.

“Huh?” Second Fatty Huang was startled, and stood there gaping for a moment. Before anybody could say anything, Bai Xiaochun grabbed one of the nearby woks and began to guzzle it down. Apparently that wasn’t enough, because he then simply dunked his head into the wok, draining the rice gruel....

One wok, two woks, three woks.... Bai Xiaochun rapidly drank down a hundred woks of gruel. He was like a bottomless pit, and still didn't feel close to being full.

“Still hungry! This isn't working! I'm so hungry... I need meat!” He looked around frantically and quickly caught sight of the mountains of meat that were his Elder Brothers.

The fatties of the Ovens stared at Bai Xiaochun in shock. They had seen hungry people before, but had never seen someone this hungry. It was like the ghost of a person who had died from starvation.

Then they realized that he was staring at them and salivating. Second Fatty Huang suddenly backed up rapidly, simultaneously shouting, “Ninth Fatty, quickly, there’s some spirit food in the kitchen that we prepared for Elder Zhou!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gleamed, and he immediately charged toward the kitchen.

Outside, Second Fatty Huang and the others exchanged dismayed glances.

“Did you see that? That’s the fate in store for people who become Outer Sect disciples. Look at how hungry little Junior Brother is....”

“You could beat me to death before I agree to become an Outer Sect disciple!” The other fatties were all completely determined to hold fast to their decision, although they felt bad for Bai Xiaochun.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was doing his best to control himself and abide by the six lines of truth from the Ovens. He would only nibble the edges, and not eat the entire item. After all, if he broke the rules, that could implicate his Elder Brothers, which was something he would never do.

After drinking the gruel and nibbling the edges of the spirit food, Bai Xiaochun’s hunger had been reduced a bit. He could deal with it now, so he walked out of the kitchen, wanting to cry but not able to find any tears. This Undying Live Forever Technique was far too terrifying. Although he didn’t have to deal with any pain now, the hunger was enough to drive a person mad.

“Second Elder Brother....” he said, looking nervously at Second Fatty Huang.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun looked normal again, Second Fatty Huang finally felt relieved. He walked up and patted him on the shoulder in sympathy.

“Little Junior Brother, don't worry. Thankfully, we were already preparing some food for Elder Zhou. Look at how hungry you are! Ai. From now, you come back more often to fill up, alright?”

Bai Xiaochun was very moved. However, he gritted his teeth and decided that he would do the opposite. After all, one day if he ever reached the point where he lost control, he might end up clearing out the entire Ovens....

Second Fatty Huang and the others escorted him out, and Bai Xiaochun sighed continuously as he trekked back up Fragrant Cloud Peak. All of a sudden, the wonderful, carefree feeling from before was gone, replaced by despair. He really was scared of starving himself to death now.

“I wonder if there really were some Spirit Stream Sect disciples who died from starvation in the past. I definitely don't want to be the first.” Scowling miserably, he was in the middle of trying to figure out how to resolve the food and hunger issue when suddenly he heard a rooster crowing off in the distance.

The sound caused him to pause in place and slowly turn his head to stare in the direction of the crowing.

“Chickens....” Looking around to ensure that nobody was watching him, he ducked into a nearby thicket, vanishing with a whoosh. Then he began to slink along like a weasel.

Moments later, he appeared outside the fence that surrounded Fragrant Cloud Peak’s spirit fowl farm. Inside were a group of chickens strutting around arrogantly, as large as calves, with three-colored tails. Bai Xiaochun eyed them with glistening eyes, and began to salivate.

“Meat....” he murmured, then began to chuckle, a strange sound that, when coupled with his wide smile, was completely terrifying.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0019 awe-chapter-20

Spirit tail chickens were far larger than ordinary chickens. They had very resilient feathers and extremely ferocious temperaments. After reaching full maturity, they were comparable to the second level of Qi Condensation.

Not only was their meat edible, so were their eggs. Their blood and bones could be added to medicines, and when you burned their tails, they could create rare, three-colored flames. Because of all that, large amounts of spirit tail chickens were being raised in all of the three mountains on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect.

However, they did not actually belong to the sect itself. Instead, they were the personal property of Li Qinghou and the Peak Lords of the other two mountain peaks, who assigned certain disciples to raise them and take care of them. On Fragrant Cloud Peak, there were three areas specially set aside to breed them.

Bai Xiaochun crouched in the thicket looking at the spirit tail chickens. Back when he had worked in the Ovens, he had never seen the chickens alive, but had eaten their meat and knew it was delicious. Furthermore, Big Fatty Zhang had mentioned that they loved to eat spirit bugs.

After observing the chickens for a while, Bai Xiaochun flickered into motion. He did not do anything rash, but instead went back down the mountain, where he spent some spirit stones to buy some spirit bugs, after which he returned to his courtyard residence.

By the time he got back, he was so hungry that he had to fight not to faint, and immediately began to look around for something to eat.

It didn't take long for his gaze to fall upon the spiritwinter bamboo, whereupon his eyes began to shine. The bamboo stalks were already around three meters tall, and thick as a fist. From the spirit glow they emanated, they seemed far beyond ordinary.

Bai Xiaochun immediately hurried over and began to walk around the bamboo stalks, laughing heartily as he studied them closely. Based on what he had studied about plants and vegetation, he was quickly able to identify the toughest among the various stalks, which he cut off at the base and then sliced in half.

When it came to stealing chickens, Bai Xiaochun had a very special method. The key lay in the word ‘steal’ itself. Being able to get the chickens without anyone noticing was an art form.

He quickly used some of the bamboo to craft a device called a bamboo cicada.

He had learned how to make bamboo cicadas from his father when he was young. Supposedly, they were effective in catching all sorts of creatures from chickens to phoenixes. Once the bamboo cicada itself was finished, he used some strips of bamboo to weave a cord. After finishing that, he tested out the cord’s strength, tied it to the bamboo cicada, then flew out into the darkness of night.

“I'm gonna eat chicken!!” His stomach grumbled, but his eyes were shining with a green light. Because of how starving he was, he moved even faster than normal, and soon arrived at the spirit tail chicken farm.

As he neared, he tiptoed up to the fence, placed a spirit insect onto the bamboo cicada, then threw the bamboo cicada over the fence. Next, he crouched hungrily off to the side, holding the cord, which was attached to the cicada.

Further inside the fence were some log cabins, where certain Outer Sect disciples resided and practiced cultivation. The chicken farm was quite large, with over a hundred spirit tail chickens, most of whom were laying on the ground. A few were walking about, occasionally sticking their heads up haughtily and looking around. After a bit of time passed, one of the spirit tail chickens seemed to have noticed something. It turned and looked at something a ways away, then walked over. It immediately saw the spirit insect sitting there, prompting it to peck its beak down to grab it.

However, as soon as the spirit tail chicken pecked at the spirit insect, right at the critical moment, the bent piece of bamboo snapped open, ingeniously forcing the chicken's beak open.

The spirit tail chicken wanted to cry out, but its beak was stuck open, and it couldn't emit any sounds. Then it tried to close its beak and crush the bamboo, but the bamboo was too resilient, and its efforts were in vain.

No matter how the spirit tail chicken struggled, it couldn't make a peep as it was quickly dragged toward the fence, then up and over, straight into Bai Xiaochun's hands. Bai Xiaochun quickly drew upon the power of the fourth level of Qi Condensation, sending massive amounts of force into his hands, which he used to snap the chicken's neck. Then he tossed it into his bag of holding. From the way he moved, it seemed he was quite a veteran when it came to this sort of thing.

The entire affair took only about thirty breaths of time, and most of that time had been spent lying in wait. Were it not for that, it would have been accomplished even faster.

Bai Xiaochun raced excitedly back to his courtyard residence, whereupon a fragrant aroma soon filled the air. By dawn, the entire chicken was now in Bai Xiaochun’s belly.

The only thing left were the feathers and the bones scattered about....

After eating the entire spirit tail chicken, most of Bai Xiaochun’s hunger was abated. Having replenished his body, he now felt quite warm and comfortable.

In fact, he even seemed to have a bit more spiritual energy inside. However, the most apparent change had to do with his Undying Live Forever Technique. Bai Xiaochun immediately began to breathe in and out, for roughly eight cycles.

With every inhalation and exhalation, pulsating warmth would spread through his body and then converge on his skin. That in turn caused his skin to become tougher and more resilient. It even flickered with a black light. However, if you looked closely, it was just as fair and clear as before.

“The Undying Live Forever Technique starts with pain, then moves to hunger. This type of cultivation is definitely quite difficult, however, the results are excellent.” With that, he extended his right hand, within which appeared his wooden sword. Then, he carefully and softly tapped the blade onto the back of his hand.

The wooden sword had a twofold spirit enhancement, but when it touched his skin, Bai Xiaochun could sense a faint force of resistance. He ceased any testing, more convinced than ever that he needed to continue cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique.

“According to the description, the Undying Skin has four stages: iron, bronze, silver, and gold. Right now I’ve just started. But if I can last for eighty-one days... I should be able to develop Undying Iron Skin.” Bai Xiaochun looked around at the scattered chicken bones, and in his heart, he now realized what was the key to successfully cultivating the Undying Iron Skin.

“Thankfully, there are plenty of spirit tail chickens on the mountain,” he thought, laughing heartily. He was now more interested in the spirit tail chickens than ever.

What he didn't know was that in the past 10,000 years in the Spirit Stream Sect, very few people had ever cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique. Most who did ended up quitting during the terrifying torment that was the first eighty-one days. Although some managed to continue, the main problem after that was how much money it cost to keep going.

In order to cultivate the technique all the way to the stage of Undying Gold Skin, the expenditure involved was simply terrifying. Even an entire sect would have a hard time forking over so much. After all, those resources could be used on other, less wasteful techniques. Although those other techniques weren’t as marvelous, a sect had to consider what was most cost-effective.

That was the main reason why the Undying Live Forever Technique had ended up gathering dust in the Scripture Pavilion.

After practicing cultivation for a bit, Bai Xiaochun gathered up the chicken bones and buried them in the nearby spirit soil, along with the feathers.

Then he left his courtyard residence and found a place where the Outer Sect disciples tended to congregate, where he eavesdropped a bit to see if anyone was talking about the chicken being stolen. Based on his experience stealing chickens back in his village, he knew that the most optimal method was to only strike once every few days.

After eavesdropping a bit, he didn’t hear anyone mention anything about a missing chicken. However, during his eavesdropping, he also learned that the three-colored tail feathers of the spirit tail chickens could be used to kindle three-colored flames.

Having learned this, Bai Xiaochun immediately trotted back to his courtyard residence and dug up the three-colored tail feathers out of the spirit soil. Then he sat there, studying them thoughtfully.

“No wonder they raise so many spirit tail chickens here.” He immediately stored the three-colored feathers in his bag of holding. To others, such feathers were nothing more than kindling for three-colored flames. To him, though, they were fuel to perform threefold spirit enhancements.

He didn’t attempt to do so immediately, though. His plan was to get some spirit medicine first, then perform a spirit enhancement to make the medicine more powerful.

After resting for a few days, Bai Xiaochun started getting hungry again one night. He put down the second volume of plants and vegetation and headed out into the darkness of night. When he returned, he had two more spirit tail chickens in his bag of holding.

And that was how time passed by. Soon, a month had gone by, during which time, news about the missing spirit tail chickens began to spread on Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Even Li Qinghou heard about the matter. After all, in only a month of time, a few dozen chickens had gone missing from the three spirit tail chicken farms. However, Li Qinghou didn't pay much attention to the matter, as he had important affairs to handle which ended up taking him off of the mountain.

Most depressed of all were the seven or eight Outer Sect disciples in charge of raising the spirit tail chickens. It wasn’t that they cared a lot for the chickens themselves, but rather, that the chickens weren’t really theirs to begin with. Although the peak lord didn't say anything, they felt the matter to be a big loss of face. After all, whoever was stealing the chickens was doing it right under their noses.

However, there was nothing they could do about it. No matter what they did to try to protect the chickens, the chickens kept going missing. What was most puzzling of all was that the chickens went missing without a trace. Not even a sound could be heard, as if they had vanished into thin air.

By now, Bai Xiaochun’s body was now completely back to normal, and in fact, he had even gained a bit of weight. However much the Undying Live Forever Technique sucked away from him, he would replenish it with chicken meat. His face had a healthy flush, and he was once again living a comfortable life.

He was in a wonderful mood, and his belly was full. As a result, his research into the second volume of plants and vegetation picked up speed. Eventually, the day arrived when he was finished studying. Based on what had happened last time, he had studied everything in even more minute detail, including the leaves, stems, roots, veins, and even the tiny hairs on the surface of the plants. He was now more confident than ever, and was sure that even if the plants were split into dozens of parts, he would still be able to identify them.

Chest puffed out proudly, he strode out of his courtyard residence.

"This time, I'm going to make sure everybody knows that I am the Lord Turtle who passed up Zhou Xinqi!” Filled with anticipation, he headed straight for the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0020 awe-chapter-21

10,000 Medicines Pavilion was one of the most lively locations on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Virtually every day, crowds of Outer Sect disciples came and went. One reason was because of the ten stone steles, and the other reason was because of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion itself, which was located in the middle of all those stone steles. That was where you could exchange merit points for medicinal plants and pill formulas.

Every so often there were also tests for promotion to journeyman apothecary, or occasions when the medicinal pills concocted by various disciples were bought back by the sect. For a variety of reasons, the area was almost always a boiling cauldron of voices.

Because of the lively nature of the place, it had eventually become a place to talk about the latest news. Although it had started as an exchange of information about plants and vegetation, eventually, everything in the sect came to be talked about. Big things, small things, even random gossip was all passed among the various disciples.

When Bai Xiaochun arrived, the place was packed. Some people were coming and going, but about thirty to fifty percent of the disciples were standing around talking. There were also disciples lined up to challenge the stone steles and earn a place on the name lists.

Bai Xiaochun squeezed through the crowds for a while before finally nearing the second stone stele. Just when he was about to walk up to the stele itself, he happened to overhear three Outer Sect disciples up ahead talking about him.

“Did you guys hear? Something really weird has been going on in the sect recently. Someone has been specifically stealing Peak Lord Li’s spirit tail chickens! Supposedly, over a hundred have already gone missing.”

“What do you mean a hundred? I heard that it won't be long before Peak Lord Li doesn’t have any chickens left at all. The disciples in charge of the Spirit Tail Chicken farm have put him on the most wanted list. They even said that when they catch him, they’re going to chop him up and feed him to the chickens!”

“Definitely weird. Why are all these prodigies showing up in Fragrant Cloud Peak all of a sudden? First there was the mysterious turtle, and now this mighty chicken bandit!”

Bai Xiaochun subconsciously hunched his shoulders guiltily. After all, he'd done nothing more than steal a few chickens, right? Who would have known that it would cause such a stir? From the look of it, almost everybody knew.

Furthermore, when he realized that the spirit tail chickens actually belonged to Li Qinghou, he got even more scared.

“Gee, I didn't steal THAT many,” he thought. He almost felt like he was being framed. Just as he was trying to think of a way to change public opinion about the matter of the mighty chicken bandit, he heard the sound of a commotion from behind him.

“Hey girly, what’s with the shoving? Are you late to be reincarnated or something?!”

“So what if I'm shoving, huh? There’s nothing special about you. If you’re afraid of crowds, what’d you come here for anyway? You should feel lucky to get shoved by a girl like me.”

“You....”

For some reason, the voice sounded familiar to Bai Xiaochun. He turned to see a fair, delicate young woman standing there, chest puffed up, hand on her hip as she arrogantly stared down a burly-looking fellow.

“Hou Xiaomei?” Bai Xiaochun said, blinking.

The young woman was indeed Hou Xiaomei, and when she heard his voice, she turned over and saw him, and the arrogance on her face quickly transformed into joy.

“Big Bro Xiaochun, it's you!” she exclaimed, turning and hurrying in his direction. Before she even arrived, Bai Xiaochun felt her hot, pure aura brushing past his face.

“Hey, chaste little sister,” he replied, looking over the vivacious and charming Hou Xiaomei. [1. This exchange involves some wordplay that’s impossible to translate directly. Hou Xiaomei’s name literally means “little sister,” so it would be silly to call her “little sister little sister.” Instead he literally calls her by his own name, although it comes across sounding kind of funny and/or flirtatious]

Hou Xiaomei’s face flushed a bit in response to Bai Xiaochun’s words.

“Oh, stop it, Big Bro Xiaochun!” she said sweetly. “You’re such a tease, just call me Hou Xiaomei!”

And just like that, the previously bristling young woman was suddenly beautiful and charming. Quite a few surrounding Outer Sect disciples’ eyes began to gleam. As for the burly man she had just been arguing with, he suddenly had goosebumps as he realized what a moody and temperamental girl she was.

“Big Bro Xiaochun,” she gushed, “my big brother left the mountain and hasn't come back, and this is my first time here. Where do I go to get the second volume of plants and vegetation?” This really was her first time here. Before, her older brother had helped her handle everything, and now that she was on her own, she didn't know what to do. Luckily, she ran right into Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun smiled as he explained the process to her, going into minute detail. Hou Xiaomei nodded occasionally. By the time he finished explaining, she not only felt that he was a good person, she also felt that he was also extremely knowledgeable.

After finishing, Bai Xiaochun looked at Hou Xiaomei to ensure that she had no further questions. Then he pointed over at the first stone stele, the one which tested the first volume of plants and vegetation, and calmly said, “See that stone stele? All the people who leave their mark at the top of the list are like Chosen in the sect. Any one of those people are the type who will shake the whole cultivation world in the future.

“I won’t go into all the names, just the second one on the list. See that magic bottle insignia? That represents one of the female Chosen here on Fragrant Cloud Peak, Zhou Xinqi!”

“Zhou Xinqi!” exclaimed Hou Xiaomei, her eyes shining as she looked over at the magic bottle insignia. “So, that magic bottle stands for the Peak Lord’s apprentice, the one with the plants and vegetation spirit meridian, Elder Sister Zhou, who’s destined to join the Inner Sect!” From the way Hou Xiaomei talked about Zhou Xinqi, it was obvious that she held her in immense esteem. Hearing Bai Xiaochun’s explanation about the magic bottle symbol seemed to get her even more excited.

Bai Xiaochun continued to explain matters placidly for a bit longer, until he noticed that Hou Xiaomei seemed to be completely fixated on the magic bottle, and wasn’t paying attention at all to the turtle which had obviously surpassed it. He felt a bit irritated; after all, hadn’t the whole point of his explanation been to get her to notice the turtle?

“Ahem, well, Zhou Xinqi is definitely amazing, that’s why she was able to get to second place on the first stone stele of plants and vegetation!” He made sure to especially emphasize the words ‘second place.’

Hou Xiaomei gaped for a moment, then frowned.

“Second place? Who does that turtle above Elder Sister Zhou represent? It looks so ugly.”

Hearing this, Bai Xiaochun felt much happier. In his mind, he really did need to educate Hou Xiaomei a little bit more. Putting on a very solemn demeanor, he began to speak in a very earnest tone.

“You’re wrong there, Xiaomei. Did you know that the cool-looking turtle actually represents the most mysterious, admirable and transcendent disciple in the entire sect?

“There are many legends about this person. Whenever he appears, he causes a huge uproar in the sect, and is the center of all attention. Countless disciples follow his every move, envy him and even cheer out loud for him.”

“Really?” Hou Xiaomei was a simple and pure girl, and the things Bai Xiaochun was saying caused her to stare in skeptical shock.

“You should know that two months ago, this disciple made a big splash when he destroyed Zhou Xinqi’s hopes of having the first place spot on all nine stone steles!

“You should know that in his debut appearance, he took the first place spot in the first stone stele. He did it as easily as flipping over his hand.

“You should know that Zhou Xinqi personally witnessed it happen. For the following seven days, she neither slept nor rested. She challenged the stone stele over and over again, but even after she did everything she could, she was still in second place, and was forced to concede defeat.

“You should know that I, Bai Xiaochun... ahem” Bai Xiaochun was getting very excited, and in the end, he wanted to reveal himself as the mighty Lord Turtle, but held back at the last moment. The ideal time to reveal his identity was in front of a big crowd. To do so in front of just a single young girl was too much of a waste.

“That's all true?” Hou Xiaomei asked, eyes shining as brightly as glittering stars on a moonless night. She was now staring at the little turtle, her flushed face the picture of adoration.

“Of course it’s true,” Bai Xiaochun replied, sighing inwardly. In his mind, he had just done a very good thing, which was helping straighten the course of a child who had strayed off onto the wrong path. Feeling quite a sense of accomplishment, he swished his sleeve and ignored Hou Xiaomei's adoration as he headed toward the second stone stele.

He elbowed his way through the crowd, then waited for a bit until he was next in line. He had to wait a while for one of the log cabins to empty up, after which he strode into the door and disappeared.

The log cabin looked the same inside as the last one he had been in. After drawing a turtle, his vision swam, and rumbling sounds filled his ears. When he could see again, he was once again in that familiar empty space. No cold voice spoke out this time; instead, the fragmented plants and vegetation immediately appeared in front of him.

Since Bai Xiaochun had been prepared for this, his eyes shone and his hands sped to work. In the blink of an eye, one spirit plant after another was pieced together.

Time passed. When the time was up, he could tell that he had completely surpassed the record he initially set when he had first been tested for the time it takes an incense stick to burn.

Unfortunately, time was up. Bai Xiaochun's vision swam, and when he could see clearly, he was back in the log cabin. Despite having come up slightly short, he was still completely confident in the results. Quickly snatching up the third volume of plants and vegetation, he turned and walked out of the door of the log cabin, heart pounding in anticipation.

Outside, he could see countless Outer Sect disciples, many of whom were looking up at the name list. Bai Xiaochun's currently felt very heroic.

“This time I'm going to shake the entire sect! I'm going to make sure that everyone knows Bai Xiaochun is the famous Lord Turtle!” He could envision what it would be like to the object of adoration of tens of thousands of disciples, and could already see the look of shock on Hou Xiaomei’s face.

When he thought about that, Bai Xiaochun couldn't hold back from laughing loudly. Then he lifted his hand grandly, and was just about to shout out at the top of his lungs that he was the mighty Lord Turtle, when...

All of a sudden, a voice rang out from among the Outer Sect disciples lined up for the trial by fire.

“Do you think the little turtle who stole Elder Sister Zhou’s limelight will dare to make an appearance?”

“I doubt it. Elder Sister Zhou’s fans are crazy. I heard that they’ve been searching the entire south bank for the little turtle. They even spread word that as soon as they find him, they’ll skin him alive....”

“I heard that too. There are even some Inner Sect disciples who've joined in on the search.”

Bai Xiaochun’s hand hung in the air as he listened to what the people were saying. Suddenly, his heart began to tremble. When he heard that there were Inner Sect disciples looking for him too, his forehead began to drip with sweat, and he quickly scratched his head, and then dropped his hand as if nothing at all had happened.

Enraged, he wormed his way through the crowd, an anxious, bereaved expression on his face.

“This is ridiculous. They’re pushing things too far. All I did was take first place, right? And now the Inner Sect disciples are involved? Was it worth it?” This time, his expression was real, and not the least bit pretend.

Almost as soon as he worked his way into the crowd, someone noticed that the name list on the second stone stele had changed, and immediately, a huge uproar ensued.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0021 awe-chapter-22

“Look at the second stone stele! That little turtle... it's showed up again!!”

“It's in first place again! Just who is this little turtle? Whoever it is has taken two first place spots in a row!”

“Now Elder Sister Zhou doesn’t have eight first place spots, she only has seven!”

The Outer Sect disciples were in a complete uproar, and countless cries of alarm could be heard ringing about. However, there was one voice in the crowd, a girl, who was crying out excitedly.

“Go, little turtle, go!” That young woman was none other than Hou Xiaomei. Thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s earlier prodding, she was now a huge fan of the little turtle. Now that she suddenly saw the little turtle take two first place spots, her sense of adoration increased rapidly. In fact, the little turtle had now surpassed Zhou Xinqi’s place in her heart.

The sound of commotion rolled in waves, until everyone was shouting out. After all, the little turtle really was very famous, and now it had once again proven by its actions that whoever it represented was qualified to challenge Zhou Xinqi.

In fact, there were even some people who were starting to anticipate the scene of the little turtle surpassing Zhou Xinqi in all ten stone steles.

Bai Xiaochun was there in the crowd, still a bit depressed, but also secretly felt pleased with himself. He was only a bit regretful that nobody knew who he was.

“Hmph. One of these days, I'm going to reveal that I'm Lord Turtle in front of an even bigger crowd!” he promised himself.

Despite his oath, he wasn't ready to give up just yet. He next began to participate in all the shouting. Occasionally, a piercing voice would ring out, drawing the crowd into further commotion.

“Heavens! Who could it be!? I love this guy!”

“The idol of the masses! Lord Turtle is invincible!”

Thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s piercing cries, the Outer Sect disciples’ discussions grew even more feverish. However, it was in that instant that a cold snort rang out, and a figure leapt out of the crowd to stand atop one of the log cabins.

It was a young man with a cold, grim expression on his face. His icy voice rang out across the crowd as he said, “I better not find out who that damned little turtle is. If I do, he’ll regret ever having stolen the limelight from Junior Sister Zhou!”

“Same here! The little turtle is probably hiding in the crowd right now. I'm gonna find him!” The second voice belonged to that of another young man, who also flew up to the roof of the log cabin and looked around coldly at the crowd. Apparently he had his eye on Bai Xiaochun, not because he thought that he was the little turtle, but because Bai Xiaochun’s shouting earlier had been quite blatant, and irritated the young man.

Soon, more people began to say similar things, seven or eight of them. Furthermore, when they unleashed the incredible power of their cultivation bases, it was obvious that the strongest among their number was in the seventh level of Qi Condensation.

These people were obviously fans of Zhou Xinqi, and famous ones at that. Their appearance on the scene caused the crowd to immediately quiet down and stop discussing the matter. However, inwardly, most people were irritated at what was happening, and loathed the young men more than ever.

Although everyone liked Zhou Xinqi, she was only a single person. The disciples present weren't stupid, and actually admired someone who could challenge Zhou Xinqi based on individual merit.

When Bai Xiaochun found himself the subject of the young man’s glare, he didn't feel very confident. However, after considering that there were so many bystanders who the young man didn’t dare to offend, Bai Xiaochun glared back with a look that said, “If you dare to do something to me, I’ll fight back to the death.”

At this point in the standoff, a beam of light shot through the air in the direction of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, within which a graceful figure could be seen. It was none other than Zhou Xinqi.

“It's Elder Sister Zhou.”

“Elder Sister Zhou is coming.” The standoff ended. As soon as the Outer Sect disciples caught sight of Zhou Xinqi, smiles broke out on their faces.

The seven or eight young men who were her fans quickly retracted their cultivation bases. Looking completely confident and at ease, they clasped hands to Zhou Xinqi.

Zhou Xinqi had come because first, she had already heard about the change to the ranking list on the second stone stele, and second, she had another matter to attend to. After glancing around, she easily guessed what had caused the standoff. She looked over at the eight fans, her eyes flickering with displeasure and even disgust.

“The affairs of Zhou Xinqi have not reached the level where others need to interfere,” she said coldly. “Besides, if a new Chosen disciple has appeared on Fragrant Cloud Peak, that’s something fortunate for the sect as a whole. If you people let something like this happen again, then don’t blame your Junior Sister for losing her temper.” Her voice cut with the sharpness of a sword, and the eight fans looked angry. However, they didn't dare to say a word.

Zhou Xinqi looked up at the little turtle on the second stone stele, and her heart filled with an unyielding spirit. She looked out over the crowd and said in a cool, arrogant voice, “Whichever Junior Brother it was who happened to surpass me on the stones steles for the first and second volumes of plants and vegetation, if you’re still scuttling around in the crowd and don’t feel like showing your true face, then so be it. Do as you wish.”

The surrounding Outer Sect disciple cheered in response. For most of them, Zhou Xinqi was the true Chosen of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Bai Xiaochun stood there in the crowd, musing that Zhou Xingqi definitely deserved to be Chosen. Her words just now had been marvelously spoken. He looked up for a moment in thought. He could clearly hear the haughtiness in her words, and what caused him to sigh the most was not that he didn't want to reveal himself. No, it was the killing intent flickering in the eyes of her adoring fans.

Zhou Xinqi’s expression was calm as she coolly addressed the crowd as a whole. “Ladies and gentlemen, I came here for another reason today, and I hope I can have the support of each and every one of you.”

Her words instantly got everyone excited, and everyone waited respectfully to see what she had to say next.

“The tranquility of Fragrant Cloud Peak has been disturbed of late. My Master, Li Qinghou, has had quite a few spirit tail chickens go missing. He is currently out of the sect, and most likely doesn’t care too much about the matter. However, as his apprentice, I have a responsibility to do something about it. I sincerely hope that all my fellow disciples will work hard to catch this chicken thief. If anyone manages to apprehend him, I will personally reward that person with a treasured jade pendant!” Even as she spoke, Zhou Xinqi pulled out a green jade pendant from inside her robe. It let off a gentle glow that made it obvious it was an extraordinary item.

“This is an item I came across some years ago that contains potent defensive power.” As her voice echoed out, the numerous Outer Sect disciples looked at the jade pendant, and excited expressions could be seen on many of their faces. Some even began to call out various promises.

“Don’t worry, Elder Sister Zhou. That chicken thief won't have a place to hide!

“How dare he steal the peak lord’s chickens! This chicken thief is daring to the extreme. We’ll definitely be paying close attention to the matter!” Soon, almost everyone in the crowd had cried out assurances that they would help, especially Zhou Xinqi’s fans, whose eyes burned passionately as they cried out louder than everyone else.

Bai Xiaochun stood in the middle of the crowd, somewhat stunned. The surrounding disciples were getting worked up into a frenzy, and he felt like a cold wind was blowing down his spine.

However, he still wasn’t willing to give up. Even just thinking about the hunger caused from cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique caused sweat to bead up on his forehead. His mind raced as he tried to come up with ideas, and a moment later, his eyes lit up. Suddenly, he slapped his chest and projected his voice through the crowd.

“Elder Sister Zhou, I, Bai Xiaochun, will definitely accomplish this mission, even if I have to climb a mountain of blades or swim to the bottom of a vat of boiling oil. I will catch this chicken thief!” His piercing voice couldn't be missed, and as he spoke, he shouldered his way forward to stand at the front of the crowd.

The way he made his entrance caused numerous eyes to fall upon him, as did the way he loudly slapped his own chest. Even Zhou Xinqi’s fans felt a bit overwhelmed, and Zhou Xinqi herself couldn’t help but look over at him.

Seeing how much her fellow disciples supported her caused a smile to break out on Zhou Xinqi’s face. She nodded slightly, and was just turning to leave when all of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun’s piercing voice once again weighed down onto the crowd.

“Elder Sister Zhou, I have a suggestion. Why don’t we form a chicken thief task force? If we work together, it will make it much easier to catch this vile traitor, and protect the peak lord’s spirit tail chickens!” From the righteous tone of Bai Xiaochun’s voice, it seemed that he was willing to spare no effort to accomplish the mission set forth by Elder Sister Zhou.

Zhou Xinqi stared in shock. As for the rest of the crowd, quite a few of them thought it was a good idea and began to voice their approval.

“Good idea,” someone said. “However, cultivation is still our main priority, so the matter must be voluntary.” Zhou Xinqi looked over at Bai Xiaochun once more. In her opinion, this Junior Brother of hers was not only fair and pure, he seemed inherently charming. Furthermore, he appeared to be piously devoted to her, which left her with a very favorable impression. Nodding, she gave him a smile.

“Since the idea was put forth by this zealous Junior Brother, I suggest that he form the chicken thief task force. Take these ten silk bands to use as tokens of identification for the task force members.” With that, she produced ten bands of blue silk from within her bag of holding. With the wave of a hand, she sent them flying toward Bai Xiaochun, where they landed in his hand.

“Don’t worry, Elder Sister, I’ll handle everything!” He stood there with silk bands in hand, looking prouder than ever. In fact, he looked like he would yield to no one when it came to the Peak Lord’s chickens, and would even be willing to sacrifice his life for the cause.

Zhou Xinqi’s eyes glowed with admiration, and she couldn’t help but muse that there were very few responsible Junior Brothers like this in the sect. Taking one last look at Bai Xiaochun’s charming appearance, she turned and left.

Zhou Xinqi's fans were not happy to suddenly see her and Bai Xiaochun on good terms. Furthermore, they also regretted not winning her favor in such a fawning way themselves.

After Zhou Xinqi left, the disciples from the spirit fowl farm also left, thanking the crowd profusely in the process. They especially expressed thanks to Bai Xiaochun, who stood there, chest puffed up as he cursed the chicken thief. Then, he organized the chicken thief task force, filling it with other disciples whose cultivation bases did not exceed his.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun hurried away, wiping the sweat from his brow. Sighing, he thought,

“That was a close one. I almost lost access to my food source. It’s a good thing you're so clever and quick-witted, Bai Xiaochun. Heh heh.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun felt very pleased with himself. Humming a little tune, he headed once again in the direction of his courtyard residence. Back in the courtyard, the spiritwinter bamboo in the spirit field was growing frighteningly high. It was now three meters high, thicker than his calf, and shocking in appearance.

That night, when dark clouds filled the sky and everything was pitch black, Bai Xiaochun sat there with his eyes wide open, licking his lips.

“The night is dark, and I'm feeling hungry yet again....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0022 awe-chapter-23

It was late at night, and Fragrant Cloud Peak was blanketed in darkness. If you held your hand out in front of you, you wouldn’t even be able to see your fingers. Other than the whispering wind, everything was peaceful and quiet. Not even a peep could be heard coming from the birds and beasts.

Bai Xiaochun hurried through the darkness, Zhou Xinqi’s silk band tied around his arm, following the path that led to one of the spirit tail chicken farms. As he sped along, he would occasionally duck into a nearby thicket and proceed along in concealment.

Soon, the spirit tail chicken farm came into view up ahead. Most of the chickens were asleep, although a few were walking about to and fro. There was even one chicken in particular which was strolling in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

He crouched there in the thicket, licking his lips until the spirit tail chicken neared the fence. Just as he was pulling out his bamboo cicada, his heart flip-flopped, and a look of vigilance filled his eyes.

At the same time, shouting could be heard from behind him as numerous figures charged toward him through the night. They even had flame globes which cast radiant light out into the night.

“Damned chicken thief! Finally you show your face!”

“We’ve been waiting for you here for days! Now we’ve got you surrounded, let’s see how you try to escape!” As the cries echoed out, eight figures closed in on Bai Xiaochun, completely surrounding him.

These were the disciples in charge of taking care of the chickens. Even after days of painstakingly laying in wait, they had never imagined that today would be the day when everything paid off. Their hearts were filled with righteous ardor as they prepared to immediately execute justice upon the chicken thief.

When their words rang out, Bai Xiaochun was initially very nervous. But then he looked up in thought for a moment and let out a cold snort.

“Shut up, you people!” he said. “Keep it down!” His words were spoken without the slightest politeness, as if justice were on his side. He did nothing to attempt to flee, but instead, arrogantly rose to his feet, making sure that the silk band on his arm was clearly visible.

“See that?!” he asked. “I'm the captain of the chicken thief task force.” Brow furrowed, he looked around at the eight disciples, clearly displeased.

This sudden development caused the eight interlopers to stare in shock. Some of these disciples had seen Bai Xiaochun earlier in the day. After examining him a bit closer, they started to hesitate.

One of the disciples seemed a bit skeptical about the situation. “Oh, it’s Junior Brother Bai. Well... what are you doing here so late at night, huh?”

His words caused the other disciples to stare suspiciously at Bai Xiaochun.

Flicking his sleeve and frowning, Bai Xiaochun angrily said, “Elder Sister Zhou herself asked me to be the captain of the chicken thief task force, so of course I’ll do everything in my power to catch the chicken thief. I've even given up my nightly cultivation routine to come here and lay in wait. However, considering how much of a racket you people are making, I’m sure the chicken thief has long since fled.” He really did look like the picture of someone trying to catch a thief.

The chicken farm disciples exchanged dismayed glances, and some of them even looked a bit embarrassed. As for the most suspicious of the disciples, his expression softened a bit, although he still didn't seem totally convinced.

Seeing that their suspicions hadn’t been completely dispelled, Bai Xiaochun gave a cold harrumph and, before anyone could ask any more questions, he decided to seize the initiative and put the onus on them.

“No wonder you people have lost so many spirit tail chickens! You’re completely negligent. Look over there, your fence is even broken!” He pointed over to a spot where there really was a hole in the fence, although it wasn’t very obvious. It had actually been punched into the fence by a struggling spirit tail chicken that he had been in the process of stealing a while back.

The chicken farm disciples looked in the direction that Bai Xiaochun was pointing, and when they saw the hole, expressions of shock appeared on their faces. It was true that they really hadn’t paid much attention to tiny details like this in the past.

“And look at that spirit tail chicken. How did you plan to protect it after it walked all the way over here!?” Bai

Xiaochun seemed to be getting more and more angry, and was even raising his voice, causing the chicken farm disciples’ faces to flush with shame.

“According to my investigation, this spot right here is the most remote location on the chicken farm. You should be guarding this place especially closely. But look, I was here for ages before any of you people showed up.” The more Bai Xiaochun talked, the angrier he got. In the end, he let out a long sigh.

“How do you people expect to catch a thief like this, huh? Based on my experience catching thieves, if my speculations are correct, then this is the location in which the most chickens were taken.” As soon as the words left his mouth, the chicken farm disciples began to tremble inwardly. Exchanging glances, they saw the shock in each others’ eyes. Based on the information they had, this was indeed the location where they had lost the most chickens.

In fact, that was the reason why they had decided to stand guard here. Bai Xiaochun had hit the nail square on the head, causing the entire group to look at him with increasing admiration.

Even the disciple who had been the most suspicious of him now felt that he had been in the wrong. First he thought about how Bai Xiaochun had sacrificed his cultivation time to come catch the thief, and then he remembered how enthusiastic and duty-bound he had seemed earlier in the day. Finally, the disciple took a deep breath, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Junior Brother Bai, please don't be too deeply offended at what I said earlier. Many thanks for your sacrifice. We will repair this spot immediately, and will definitely increase the guard in this area!”

Everyone else clasped hands as well, thinking about how rare it was to find someone as zealous as Bai Xiaochun. He was obviously trying to help them, and that made them even more sorry for their impulsiveness earlier.

Bai Xiaochun sighed, then earnestly offered them a few more pieces of advice before turning to leave. As he walked off, the eight disciples once again clasped hands and bowed, completely moved by what he had just done.

“Junior Brother Bai is such a good guy.”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun was out of sight, a cold wind brushed against his back, and he realized that he was sweating profusely from how close of a call it had been. However, his stomach was still grumbling, so he decided to go to the other two chicken farms to see if there was still a chance to make a move.

He strolled down the mountain path, looking around cautiously as he went along to make sure he wasn’t being followed. His expression was grave as he pondered how to go about stealing a chicken from the next chicken farm. As the wind blew, it fluttered the silk band tied around his arm.

Meanwhile, up in dark night air, a woman stood on a blue flying silk, completely undetectable to everyone down below as she examined the situation on this part of Fragrant Cloud Peak. Suddenly, her expression flickered as she caught sight of Bai Xiaochun walking along, looking around vigilantly. Her eyes gradually began to glow with praise.

“This little Junior Brother really takes his responsibilities seriously.” Naturally, that woman was Zhou Xinqi, who had been inspecting the area. Earlier, there had been lots of disciples on patrol, but as the night wore on, most of them had gone back to practice cultivation. Bai Xiaochun was the only one out and about actually trying to catch the thief.

“With him around, the chicken thief will definitely have to rein things in.” Zhou Xinqi looked away and then headed back to her Immortal’s cave, feeling much better about the situation.

Two hours later, Bai Xiaochun had circled back around to his courtyard residence. Once inside, he slapped his bag of holding to produce two spirit tail chickens. Chuckling to himself, he plucked them and tossed them into the wok, soon after which, a fragrant aroma filled the air, causing him to salivate. Then, he didn't even wait for them to cool before wolfing them down ravenously.

Finally, he burped, patted his belly, and then laid back, looking so content he almost seemed drunk.

Another month passed, during which time Bai Xiaochun conscientiously went out at night, looking very solemn as he appeared randomly to inspect the various chicken farms.

Despite that, the chickens still continued to go missing. They seemingly disappeared without a trace, which was a deep mystery. The chicken farm disciples were increasingly feeling as if they had lost all face. Filled with passion, they continuously swore oaths to not give up until the chicken thief was incarcerated.

Bai Xiaochun seemed to be taking things even more seriously than them. He was completely devoted to defending the chicken farms, as if he wasn’t even willing to rest until the thief was apprehended. There was even one occasion in which he stood guard at one chicken farm for four days and four nights.

The hard work being put in seemed to put a lot of pressure on the chicken thief, and the rate of thievery seemed to have been reduced. However, the thief didn’t disappear altogether. Eventually, nearly half of the spirit tail chickens on Fragrant Cloud Peak were now gone, and the ones left behind were mostly juveniles.

In the end, even the chicken farm disciples began berating themselves, and couldn't help but sigh emotionally. They were of the opinion that if the rest of the chicken thief task force was as conscientious as Junior Brother Bai, then the chicken thief would definitely have been caught already.

Zhou Xinqi was getting particularly anxious. One afternoon when Bai Xiaochun was sitting cross-legged at one of the chicken farms, looking around vigilantly, a blue flying silk descended from above, upon which was Zhou Xinqi.

After seeing who it was, Bai Xiaochun charmingly called out, “Elder Sister Zhou.”

When Zhou Xinqi’s beautiful eyes fell upon Bai Xiaochun, she smiled and said, “Hard at work, I see, Junior Brother Bai.”

Soon, other disciples in the area were rushing up, clustering around Zhou Xinqi and also Bai Xiaochun.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I offer my profound thanks for your assistance recently,” she said softly. “I am truly grateful. However, the chicken thief is still as brazen as ever. Therefore, I will join you to stand guard.” After looking around at the group, she frowned slightly and continued, “I’m wondering if perhaps the chicken thief has a connection to my Master. Otherwise, wouldn't he steal spirit tail chicken from the other mountain peaks too? Instead, he seems to be targeting only my Master's chickens!"

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his eyes began to shine brightly, and he very nearly slapped his thigh. What Zhou Xinqi said made a lot of sense, and as he thought about it, he couldn't help but look off in the direction of Violet Cauldron Peak. Slowly, his eyes narrowed to cover over the wily glint deep therein.

Now that Zhou Xinqi had shown herself, many of her admirers also began to flock to the area. Soon, vast crowds had gathered at Fragrant Cloud Peak's spirit tail chicken farms.

The chicken thief was now incapable of doing anything, and in the following days, not a single spirit tail chicken was lost.

Even still, the mysterious and unfathomable chicken thief was already completely famous. In fact, many people had taken to calling him the Chicken-Thieving Fiend. He had caused such a stir among the disciples that he was considered to stand alongside the owner of the little turtle as one of the most mysterious figures on Fragrant Cloud Peak. In fact, even the Outer Sect disciples on Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak had heard about him.

Now that the chicken thief had apparently vanished, Zhou Xinqi felt a lot better. Although he had never been apprehended, when she thought about how hard Bai Xiaochun had worked over the past month or more, she ended up rewarding him with the jade pendant anyway, as a form of encouragement.

When the matter finally came to an end, Bai Xiaochun's earnestness and devotion had caused quite a few fellow

Outer Sect disciples to notice how pure, charming, and dedicated he was.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0023 awe-chapter-24

Bai Xiaochun sat in his courtyard on Fragrant Cloud Peak, looking at the jade pendant sitting there in his hand. After activating it with some spiritual energy, the pendant began to glow with a soft, green light that surrounded his body.

Next, he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, causing his wooden sword to appear. It circled around in the air and then shot back toward Bai Xiaochun. However, as soon as it hit the green light, it was as if it had suddenly run into a patch of water, causing it to slow down significantly.

“What a treasure!” he murmured, putting the wooden sword away and clasping the jade pendant in his hand, feeling a little embarrassed.

“Ah well, it doesn’t matter. Li Qinghou is Zhou Xinqi’s Master, but he's my mentor too. In fact, considering our relationship, I should probably call him uncle.” Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun put the jade pendant away, then stood up and stretched lazily.

After eating more than half of Li Qinghou’s chickens, his Undying Live Forever Technique was progressing by leaps and bounds. It was now more than seventy percent complete. Of course, the spirit tail chickens replenished his vital energy, not his spiritual energy. However, even though his cultivation base was still at the fourth level of Qi Condensation, it had made some progress, and was more refined than before.

He buried all the chicken bones in the spirit soil, which was now filled with so much spiritual energy that it bordered on ridiculous. As for his spiritwinter bamboo, it was now more than two meters tall, and no longer purely emerald green; dark dots had begun to appear within the green.

Most important of all were the spirit tails, which could produce three-colored flames. Bai Xiaochun had been collecting them, and now had several hundred. Whenever he thought about the three-colored flames that the spirit tails could produce, his heart filled with anticipation.

“I'm in no hurry with my cultivation base. As long as I can get enough medicinal pills, I can do a threefold spirit enhancement on them and advance with flying speed. The most important thing to do is make some progress with my Undying Skin!” Almost as soon as the thought entered his mind, Bai Xiaochun’s stomach started to grumble. At first he looked in the direction of Fragrant Cloud Peak’s chicken farms, but then he turned toward Violet Cauldron Peak.

“Eldest Brother is on Violet Cauldron Peak, I wonder how he's been doing lately.” Thinking about all the things that had happened back in the Ovens, he raced out of his courtyard, down the mountain, and toward Violet Cauldron Peak.

Of the three mountains on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, Green Crest Peak focused on swords, Fragrant Cloud Peak concentrated on spirit medicine, and Violet Cauldron Peak excelled in magical techniques and spirit enhancement. Furthermore, the south bank’s most fundamental technique, the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, actually came from Violet Cauldron Peak.

Bai Xiaochun walked along the path toward Violet Cauldron Peak, and by the time he got there, evening was falling. He looked up at the mountain, which was wreathed in clouds and mist. High up in the air, he was just barely able to make out tiny shadows flitting around in beams of prismatic light. He sighed.

“I wonder when I’ll be able to get some kind of flying treasure, and then do something like that. Then my world will really open up, and I’ll actually be on the path to living forever.” Eyes gleaming with anticipation, he began to ascend Violet Cauldron Peak.

Although he wasn't a disciple of Violet Cauldron Peak, as an Outer Sect disciple, he was qualified to go to any of the various mountains. As he walked along, he asked some people about where Zhang Dahai lived. Thanks to his charming manner, he almost immediately got an answer, and quickly hurried off in the direction indicated.

Big Fatty Zhang’s residence was located on a different part of the mountain compared to the location of Bai Xiaochun’s place on Fragrant Cloud Peak. It was on the sunny side of the mountain, where there was stronger spiritual energy. There weren’t many residences here; they were sprinkled about like stars in the night sky, apparently in some prescribed pattern.

Although it was evening, and the light wasn't very clear, it was still possible to see the swirling mists and abundant spirit plants, all of which gave the place a celestial feeling.

Taking a deep breath, Bai Xiaochun looked around enviously. “Eldest Brother really does have connections in the sect. I can’t believe he got a place like this. It's way better than mine.”

It only took a bit of looking to find Big Fatty Zhang’s residence. The courtyard was filled with weeds, as if no one had tended to it for ages. Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock, then knocked on the main gate. However, there was no response.

“Am I in the wrong place?” he thought. Even as he stood there, shocked, the front door of the building inside the courtyard slowly creaked open, and an emaciated figure appeared, holding a flying sword in his right hand. Dim silver light flickered around his left hand as he trudged out. Looking exhausted, then languidly said, “Who is it?!”

Even as the words left the man’s mouth, he suddenly saw Bai Xiaochun standing there across the courtyard, and a tremor ran through him. A look of delight appeared on his face, almost as if he had just caught sight of a blood relative. Suddenly, he flew forward, pushed the main gate open, and then stood there looking at Bai Xiaochun. Then he laughed loudly and said, “Ninth Junior Brother!”

“Who are you?!” Bai Xiaochun responded, backing up, his eyes wide. Although this person seemed familiar for some reason, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t identify him at all.

He had average features, and was very skinny. Although he couldn’t be described as being only skin and bones, he was almost to that point. His eyes shone with vigor, and yet were sunken in. From the ripples of his cultivation base, he seemed to be in the great circle of the fourth level of Qi Condensation.

When the emaciated young man saw Bai Xiaochun’s expression, he looked like he was about to start crying.

“Ninth Fatty, it’s me, Big Fatty!” he said. Face filled with intense grief, he went on to say, “Ninth Fatty, you have no idea how much I've suffered during the past year. My master is so demanding! As soon as I got here, she told me she doesn’t like fatties, and that I had to go hungry for half a year!

“Half a year, Ninth Fatty! Do you know what I ended up looking like after half a year? It took me forever just to gain this much weight back.” This emaciated young man was none other than Big Fatty Zhang, who was now standing there weeping.

Bai Xiaochun looked him over carefully. Having heard the story, and confirmed that he really was his Eldest Brother, Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. The Eldest Brother he remembered, and this person standing in front of him, looked like two completely different people.

“Is there some grudge between you and your Master?” Bai Xiaochun asked sympathetically.

“That old shrew! I....” Big Fatty Zhang said a few words, but then shivered and didn’t dare to continue. Pulling Bai Xiaochun into his courtyard, he said, “Ninth Junior Brother, I miss the Ovens! Nobody can survive in a place like this. I’ve never been full the entire time I've been here, plus there’s no way for me to make any money. Ah, I’m so hungry!” He then proceeded to tell Bai Xiaochun everything that had happened to him from the moment he had arrived.

As Bai Xiaochun listened to the bitter tale, he suddenly realized that his decision to start stealing chickens was definitely the right thing to do. He looked at Big Fatty Zhang’s emaciated frame, then sighed and patted his bony shoulder.

“Since you’re in some trouble, Elder Brother, then Junior Brother will naturally help. Just wait here for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. I’ll be right back.” Big Fatty

Zhang gaped in shock as Bai Xiaochun turned and left the courtyard.

On his way up the mountain, Bai Xiaochun had already taken note of where Violet Cauldron Peak’s spirit tail chicken farms were located. Taking advantage of the darkness of night, he suddenly vanished.

Big Fatty Zhang had no idea what was going on, nor any clue as to what Bai Xiaochun might be doing. He waited there at his front gate for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, after which Bai Xiaochun returned, carrying a spirit tail chicken in each hand.

When Big Fatty Zhang saw the spirit tail chickens, his eyes went wide. Before he could say anything, though, Bai Xiaochun hustled him into the courtyard. Ignoring Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun expertly produced a wok, boiled some water, plucked the chickens and tossed them in. With that, he dusted off his sleeves, lifted his chin and looked at Big Fatty Zhang.

Big Fatty Zhang was panting, and his eyes were wide. He pointed at the chickens in the wok, and then back at Bai Xiaochun, and a look of disbelief crept up on his face.

“Y-you... don’t tell me that you are the Chicken-Thieving Fiend of Fragrant Cloud Peak!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun chuckled. Then, as if he were very familiar with the process, placed his hand onto the wok and sent out some spiritual energy to ensure that the chicken meat was perfectly tender. Soon, a fragrant aroma wafted out. Bai Xiaochun reached in, pulled out a chicken leg, and then handed it to Big Fatty Zhang.

“Eat!” he said, imitating the way Big Fatty Zhang had handed him the magical mushroom back when he had first joined the Ovens.

Big Fatty Zhang swallowed a few times as he stared at the chicken leg. Finally, he grabbed it and wolfed it down. From that point on, it wasn’t necessary for Bai Xiaochun to say anything. Big Fatty Zhang flew over to the wok and virtually dunked his face in. The two chickens were rapidly consumed down to the bones, except that he couldn’t stop there; crunching sounds could be heard as he chomped them down too.

Finally, he smacked his belly, and laid back, looking nearly drunk with contentment. Then he and Bai Xiaochun exchanged a look and started laughing.

“Ninth Fatty, you’re incredible,” he said, looking very proud. “You really were paying attention back in the Ovens. I never would have imagined that Fragrant Cloud Peak’s illustrious Chicken-Thieving Fiend would turn out to be my bro.”

“Cultivation is innately a heaven-defying thing. As cultivators, it's only natural to contend with the heavens, and fight with men. You have to rely on yourself! What do a few spirit tail chickens count for?” Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, but was unable to conceal how pleased he was with himself. He had been keeping his identity a secret for far too long now; being able to share it, and then see the look on Big Fatty Zhang’s face, made him feel wonderful.

“The true pity is that I’ve eaten so many spirit tail chickens on Fragrant Cloud Peak that only the chicks are left. They don’t taste very good, otherwise I’d invite you to live with me over there, and we could eat our fill every day. You would definitely gain all your weight back.” Bai Xiaochun sighed.

When Big Fatty Zhang heard that, his eyes gleamed, and he immediately crawled to his feet.

“Violet Cauldron Peak has them too. The west, south, and north faces of the mountains all do. They’re guarded by two shifts a day, each shift manned by seven disciples!” Big Fatty Zhang went on to explain in further detail. When he was finished, he found Bai Xiaochun looking at him with a strange expression. Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat and said, “After I heard about the Chicken-Thieving Fiend, I decided to try to do the same thing as him. Unfortunately, the chickens are too hard to steal. As soon as you get close, they start making noise. Not only did I not even come close to stealing a chicken, I almost got caught.” Big Fatty Zhang seemed a bit embarrassed about the whole thing.

Bai Xiaochun laughed, then edged closer to Big Fatty Zhang and began to whisper something. Gradually, Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes began to glow brighter and brighter, and he was even panting. Then Bai Xiaochun pulled out his bamboo cicada, and after a moment wide smiles covered their faces and they began to chuckle.

Soon, laughter rang out from within the courtyard, and it sounded terrifying.

From that day on, Bai Xiaochun began to visit Big Fatty Zhang more often, and gradually, the spirit tail chickens from Violet Cauldron Peak began to go missing....

Every night, two great chicken bandits struck. One did the stealing, the other stood watch. Soon, the disciples of Violet Cauldron Peak were in an uproar, and everyone was discussing the matter.

“Did you hear? The Chicken-Thieving Fiend from Fragrant Cloud Peak has set his eyes on Violet Cauldron Peak!”

“I actually saw it happen! The Chicken-Thieving Fiend isn’t a person, it's a team of two!”

When the news got back to Fragrant Cloud Peak, the Outer Sect disciples there all took deep breaths and looked sympathetically in the direction of Violet Cauldron Peak.

“So the Chicken-Thieving Fiend has learned to be balanced. He's finally not stealing chickens from our Fragrant Cloud Peak....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0024 awe-chapter-25

It got to the point that, a month later, the rumors were flying like crazy. Even the Xu Meixiang, the peak lord of Violet Cauldron Peak, who was none other than the old shrew Big Fatty Zhang had mentioned, caught wind of what was happening. Bai Xiaochun and Big Fatty Zhang had no choice but to cease their activities. After discussing the matter together, they decided to go rescue Third Girly Hei.

Therefore, the two of them went to Green Crest Peak.

Third Girly Hei was a bit thinner, but not conspicuously. However, she now emanated a somewhat seductive air, which left Bai Xiaochun and Big Fatty Zhang virtually speechless. They barely even recognized her. Her previously swarthy face even looked somewhat elegant. One could easily imagine how, if she continued to lose weight, she would eventually turn into a true beauty.

However, once she heard about the spirit tail chickens, her eyes began to shine.

From then on, the spirit tail chickens on Green Crest Peak began to go missing....

By now, the Chicken-Thieving Fiend was completely famous on the south bank. It was virtually impossible to find an Outer Sect disciple who hadn’t heard of him, and even the servants knew the name.

Before long, the Elders took note of the matter. Although the Chicken-Thieving Fiend eventually vanished without a trace, never to reappear again, Third Girly Hei and Big Fatty Zhang both visibly regained a lot of weight. Although they weren’t as impressive as they had been in the past, they were still much sturdier.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he finally... finished eighty-one cycles, at long last sating his hunger. It was at that point that the three of them gave up on stealing chickens.

Although the eighty-one cycles of the Undying Live Forever Technique hadn’t been performed in succession, but rather built up over time, the result was absolutely the same.

On one particular day, Bai Xiaochun sat in his courtyard in Fragrant Cloud Peak, his expression solemn. His skin was emanating iron-colored pulses, and even glowed with a flickering black light. An incredible aura radiated off of him, making him seem savage and wild.

He had endured eighty-one days of pain and then eighty-one days of hunger. That combination transformed into a shocking power that erupted up inside of Bai Xiaochun, over and over again.

Each eruption was filled with boundless vital energy, which then poured into Bai Xiaochun’s skin, causing it to become increasingly iron-colored. The black glow grew more blinding, and the toughness of his skin increased exponentially.

Eventually, it reached the point that if anyone had happened to catch sight of him standing there, they would think they were looking at an iron statue, and not a flesh and blood human.

His mind was reeling as the bursts of energy continued. After the 19th time, he realized that they weren’t slowing down at all, but were actually increasing in intensity.

Bai Xiaochun didn't move a muscle, and didn’t even seem to be breathing. However, if you looked closely, you would see that all of the pores on his body were dilated as he silently absorbed the energy of heaven and earth in the area.

“After eighty-one eruptions, my Undying Skin will reach the initial stage of completion, and I’ll be in the Iron Skin stage!” The Undying Live Forever Technique’s mnemonic floated in Bai Xiaochun’s mind, and a firm and unswerving expression could be seen on his face. All of his hard work over the past year, including enduring all the pain and hunger... had all been for this moment!

RUMBLE!

The vital energy inside of him erupted out once more, and the iron color of his skin deepened. Every time the vital energy poured into the flesh of his skin, it was as if it were being tempered by the strikes of thousands of forge hammers.

As of this moment, he pulsed with energy, like a divine weapon in the forging process!

RUUUUMMMMBLLE!

28 times. 30 times. 40 times. 48 times.....

Time passed. Three days later, Bai Xiaochun remained in the exact same spot. Although no bystander would be able to hear anything, to him, it sounded like endless thunder was booming in his ears.

However, it was at this point that the vital energy inside of him erupted out for the 49th time. Suddenly, the power redoubled, and a tremor ran through him. At the same time, tiny cracks began to appear on his skin, as if it couldn’t endure any longer.

Although the cracks were few, as soon as they appeared, Bai Xiaochun’s heart sank.

“So, the signs of impending death have finally appeared....” Bai Xiaochun frowned. The introduction to the Undying Live Forever Technique mentioned cracks like this. During the process of reaching the initial stage of success, they were guaranteed to show up. How long each individual could hold on would depend on their willpower, and would end up determining the quality of the future Undying Skin.

Even if you didn't endure for very long at all, you could still successfully cultivate the Undying Skin. However, the quality would naturally fall short of perfect.

If you could hold on through all 81 eruptions of vital energy, then you could reach a state of perfect flawlessness.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gleamed with determination for a moment before he closed them once more. Rumbling explosions continued to erupt inside of him. 50 times. 60 times. 70 times.... Unexpectedly, one breath took him through five whole days, during which he endured all the way past 70.

The cracks covering him were so numerous that his skin almost looked like a turtle’s. In many places, the cracks had joined together, making him resemble a broken flower vase that had been pieced back together.

He looked like he might shatter at any moment.

“Only seven more times!” he thought, his eyes completely bloodshot. Panting, he clenched his jaw, and that vicious streak in his personality surged to life.

74 times!

77 times!

79 times!

Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared, although it wasn't very loud of a roar, more like a muffled grunt. His body trembled as he endured yet another eruption, reaching a total of 80.

The vital energy poured into his skin which, although it was covered with cracks, was like iron; anyone who saw it would surely be shocked.

“Last one!” he said. As the final burst of vital energy surged out, he suddenly extended his right hand and smashed it down toward the ground.

A boom rang out, and a huge crater appeared. The final blast of vital energy erupted as everything reached a conclusion. Endless amounts of vital energy poured into his skin, causing the cracks to immediately vanish, leaving him looking sleek and smooth. The black glow vanished, and he looked just as fair and pure as before. However, now his skin was far tougher than ordinary skin, although nobody could tell that by looking at him.

Bai Xiaochun stood there panting for a moment before looking up at the crater he had just blasted into the ground. Then he looked at his skin, and his expression brightened. Finally, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

He waved his right hand, causing his wooden sword to fly out, which then transformed into a black beam that slashed at his forearm. As soon as it hit, a metallic clang rang out, and the wooden sword unexpectedly flew backward. As for his arm, it felt almost like a mosquito had bitten him. When he examined the point of impact, his skin wasn’t harmed at all.

“Undying Skin!” he cried, unable to contain his joy. It must be stated that his wooden sword was no ordinary magical item; it had received a twofold spirit enhancement. Although it was made from ordinary materials, because of the spirit enhancement, it could be considered a magical item worthy of a Chosen. Despite that, though, it hadn’t hurt him at all.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly flickered into motion, shooting forward. A buzzing sound could be heard as he suddenly appeared more than thirty meters away. He could now move many times faster than before, leaving him completely delighted.

As for the power he could unleash, a mere look at the crater in the ground revealed that it was also many times greater than before. Furthermore, this was only the initial stage of success of the Undying Skin. Although it couldn't be said that he had completely cast off his mortal body, he was definitely vastly different than before.

“With defensive power like this,” he thought, "I, Bai Xiaochun, am going to be much safer on the path to living forever.” Bai Xiaochun was extremely pleased with himself. Next, he examined his cultivation base and saw that he had also made quite a bit of progress in that aspect as well. He was now in the great circle of the fourth level of Qi Condensation.

Furthermore, it was not the ordinary great circle. Because of how the spiritual energy had been compressed inside of him, it’s quality was far beyond compare to an ordinary cultivator of the same stage as himself.

Feeling very satisfied, he sped a few laps around the courtyard, then suddenly stopped, eyes gleaming. Lifting his right hand out in front of him, he held his thumb and forefinger out in a U shape. Then he pinched them together, causing a black glow to appear on them. Although nothing happened, cracking sounds could be heard in the air up ahead of him.

Eyes widening, he turned and dashed over to a nearby rock, where he once again caused the black light to flash from his two fingers. As soon as he pinched the fingers together, cracking sounds could be heard as the rock exploded like a piece of tofu.

He flickered into motion again, appeared next to the spiritwinter bamboo, which was now more than nine meters tall. After identifying the toughest of the bamboo stalks, he pinched his fingers together. A boom could be heard as the bamboo shattered.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and sank down to the ground, where he looked down at his two fingers, and the black glow which was slowly fading away from them. After a bit of time passed, he let out a long breath.

“So, that’s the Throat Crushing Grasp, huh...?” he murmured quietly. That was one of the secret magics of the Undying Live Forever Technique, something that could only be unleashed after reaching the first stage of initial success. Supposedly, it could double one’s power, and could not be countered.

Just now, Bai Xiaochun had only used about fifty percent of his full power. He couldn't even imagine how powerful and terrifying the secret magic would be if he unleashed its full power.

From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, a secret magic like that should be used for killing people. After a moment of silent thought, he came to the conclusion that although it was brutal, he still needed to practice it in earnest. Therefore, he began to zip back and forth in his courtyard, causing a black flashing light and cracking sounds to echo out.

Time passed. In the blink of an eye, half a month went by. During that time, Bai Xiaochun never left his courtyard. He stayed there practicing the entire time. Naturally, he had no way of knowing that after months of being away, Li Qinghou had finally returned to the Spirit Stream Sect, and was currently flying through the air atop a beam of green light, heading directly toward Fragrant Cloud Peak.

After he landed, and before he could even rest, two beams of light shot out from Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak and headed in his direction. Soon, he could make out the figure of an old man in one of the beams of light. He looked like a sharp, unsheathed sword, and emanated the unique pressure of a Foundation Establishment cultivator.

In the other beam of light was graceful woman. She looked like a natural beauty, exquisite despite the strange expression on her face. It almost looked like she didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Together with the old man, she alighted on the mountain peak.

These two were the peak lords of Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak respectively. After arriving at Fragrant Cloud Peak, they had a private discussion with Li Qinghou, then left.

Li Qinghou stood atop Fragrant Cloud Peak, rubbing the bridge of his nose. Finally, he sent out some divine sense, focusing it on the three spirit tail chicken farms in their various locations on the mountain. When he saw that the only things left were chicks, he similarly looked like he didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Sighing, he waved his sleeve and began to walk down the mountain. From the direction he took…

It seemed he was heading directly toward Bai Xiaochun’s courtyard residence.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0025 awe-chapter-26

Li Qinghou had actually never been to the area where Bai Xiaochun's residence was located. After all, it was in a somewhat remote part of the mountain. As he proceeded along, the courtyard residence soon became visible off in the distance.

However, before he could get very close, a fair, clear-faced figure appeared, holding a piece of roasted meat in his hand, walking and eating at the same time. He seemed to be engrossed in his eating, and was even humming a little tune.

Li Qinghou's face darkened as he realized that the meat currently being stuffed into Bai Xiaochun's mouth was definitely a chicken leg. Anger instantly flared up in his heart.

"Bai Xiaochun!!" he roared, his voice booming out like thunder. Bai Xiaochun, who was in the middle of sucking on the chicken bone, very nearly jumped up into the air in fright.

"Peak Lord Li!" he gasped, his eyes widening. Without even thinking about it, he stuffed the entire chicken bone into his mouth, then vigorously crunched it to pieces and swallowed it down, his face turning a deep purple in the process.

In the entire sect, the person he feared the most was Li Qinghou, which was especially true after having eaten so many of his chickens. Bai Xiaochun actually felt a little bit guilty. Wiping the sweat from his brow, he hurried over, looking extremely charming and also very sincere as he clasped hands and bowed in greeting.

“Disciple offers greetings, Peak Lord.”

Li Qinghou looked at Bai Xiaochun, his face completely expressionless. Inwardly, he felt a bit torn. Bai Xiaochun’s ancestor had truly shown him a great kindness, and Li Qinghou was the type of person who valued such things deeply. Despite what Bai Xiaochun had obviously done, he couldn’t forget about what had happened all those years ago.

The peak lords from Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak had come to speak with him about the matter of the spirit tail chickens. Although the chickens weren’t necessarily very expensive, Li Qinghou couldn’t allow other people to criticize his own disciple, so he compensated them with several times more than the chickens’ actual value.

Now, he looked at Bai Xiaochun, feeling even more irritated than ever at how he wasn't living up to expectations.

Li Qinghou snorted and then said, “You’ve been an Outer Sect disciple for a little more than half a year, but your cultivation base has only progressed from the third level of Qi Condensation to the fourth. Pleased with yourself?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked, then cleared his throat, unsure of how to respond. However, he continued to put on the charming face, reassuring himself that as long as he maintained the right attitude, things should work out fine in the end. However, when he thought about the fact that he had just been munching on a spirit tail chicken leg, he couldn’t help but sweat.

Li Qinghou felt a headache coming on. After a moment of thought, he coolly continued, “Considering how you’ve been fooling around, you obviously have a lot of time on your hands. In that case, why don’t you join the competition for fourth and fifth level Qi Condensation disciples in three months? It will be right here on Fragrant Cloud Peak.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound. He had heard about the competition Li Qinghou was referring to. He knew that there were prizes to be won, but he had also heard that the fighting was fierce. If you weren’t careful, it was even possible to get injured. Bai Xiaochun scowled.

“Peak Lord, I’m only at the fourth level of Qi Condensation. If I join in the competition, what happens if one of them ends up beating me to death? What would I do then...?”

Li Qinghou completely ignored his question. Looking very serious, he said, “It’s not a request. You will join the contest. Plus, if you don’t place in the top 5, then I’ll....”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. “I know, you’ll expel me from the sect, right...?”

Li Qinghou glared at him. Knowing how mischievous Bai Xiaochun was, he realized that the threat of being expelled from the sect probably wasn’t enough to keep him in place. Remembering how much Bai Xiaochun feared death, he suddenly swished his sleeve, sweeping Bai Xiaochun up from the courtyard and then flying toward the top of the mountain.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to thump madly. Li Qinghou’s expressionless face gave him a very bad feeling. The wind buffeted his face as they flew along, and before he had time to even analyze the matter, Li Qinghou had taken him to a location behind Fragrant Cloud Peak.

It was a place considered to be a restricted area, a place few disciples ever visited. The first thing he noticed was the thick vegetation everywhere.

As they flew down toward the area, Li Qinghou pulled Bai Xiaochun along until they were in a valley. Almost immediately, a sinister aura could be sensed, and the various plants in the area brightened in color, and even began to rustle.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart raced as he looked at the plants, and a sensation of deadly crisis rose up in his heart. He was just about to speak when, all of a sudden, a crimson viper raised its head, flicking its forked tongue as it stared icily at Bai Xiaochun.

“Snake!” Bai Xiaochun had no choice but to follow Li Qinghou into the valley, and when he did, his scalp went numb as he realized that the ground, the plants, and even the trees in this place were filled with countless snakes.

All of them were brightly colored, making it obvious that they were vipers. Furthermore, all of them were staring at him with cold, beady eyes, forked tongues flicking in and out of their mouths.

Bai Xiaochun started trembling. He had always been scared of snakes, and the way these ones were looking at him left him terrified. Although they didn't actually seem like they were going to attack him, their long fangs dripped with venom in a very frightening fashion.

It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun suddenly remembered that he had his Undying Skin, and that these vipers probably wouldn’t be able to bite through it. Considering that, even if there were more snakes than there already were, to him they were about as dangerous as feeble chickens. In the end, they weren’t really very scary at all.

However, his eyes then turned up in thought, and he realized how risky it would be to not look scared. If that happened, Li Qinghou might take him to an even more dangerous place. Therefore, he immediately let out a shriek, and tried to look as frightened as possible.

Li Qinghou let out a cold snort, then unleashed his cultivation base. The wriggling snakes slowly moved out of the way to make a small path, at the end of which was a pitch-black cave that emanated a noxious odor.

“Uncle Li, s-spare me, please!” Bai Xiaochun called out in a quavering voice. “I didn’t break any sect rules!” Li Qinghou’s face was completely expressionless as he grabbed Bai Xiaochun and dragged him over to the cave. Once they reached the cave mouth, he waved his sleeve, causing the darkness to fill with a bit of light.

Bai Xiaochun could instantly see that the cave was filled with numerous vipers, some of them very large. The hissing sounds they made seemed to contain some strange, mesmerizing power that instantly caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to go wide.

A sensation of crisis rose up, and he began to pant as he realized that the cultivation base power of these vipers was unexpectedly high. There was even one four-colored viper that was comparable to the fifth level of Qi Condensation.

The stares of the snakes made Bai Xiaochun feel as if a cold wind were blowing down his back. Then he thought about his Undying Skin and realized that he wouldn't last for very long against these snakes. This time, he didn’t need to pretend, he really was scared.

“This is 10,000 Snakes Valley,” Li Qinghou said, voice cool, “where we harvest venom here on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Each one of these snakes is extremely venomous. In fact, a single drop of their venom is potent enough to kill a hundred oxen.

“Any cultivator under Foundation Establishment bitten by one of these snakes, who doesn’t get the antidote in time, will die. Deep in the cave is the snake king, who is in the great circle of Qi Condensation. Get bitten by that snake, and even I would have a hard time saving you.

“If you don’t get in the top 5 in the Outer Sect’s competition, don’t worry. I won’t expel you from the sect. I’ll just bring you here and have you harvest venom.” Li Qinghou looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“Um... uh... Uncle Li, don’t worry, it’s just a little sect competition, right? Only the top 5, you said, right? I’ll definitely pull it off!” Bai Xiaochun’s tongue felt as if it were sticking to the roof of his mouth, and his face was deathly pale. When he heard that there were even more fearsome vipers in the depths of the cave, he swore to himself that he would never come back to this place again in his entire life.

When Li Qinghou heard Bai Xiaochun’s declaration, he smiled inwardly. However, his face remained completely expressionless, and he even snorted as he took Bai Xiaochun away. When they got back to Fragrant Cloud Peak, he tossed Bai Xiaochun onto a mountain path and then turned as if to leave.

But then he stopped and looked back. Voice casual, he said, “Oh right, how were the spirit tail chickens?”

Without even waiting for Bai Xiaochun to respond, he turned and flew off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun sighed, then turned and headed back toward his courtyard, frowning the entire way. As he walked along, the wind blew, rustling the leaves, which made him think about the vipers.

Back in his courtyard, he sat there, gnashing his teeth and scowling. “Li Qinghou.... More like Li the Snake! Ridiculous!”

“I’ll definitely never go back to that 10,000 Snakes Valley. If I get bitten, I’ll lose my poor little life.” In that moment, Bai Xiaochun made his decision. “I’m definitely going to go all out to get into the top 5!”

“If I’m going to join that competition, then considering the level of my cultivation base, I'm definitely going to need some spirit medicine!” Taking a deep breath, Bai Xiaochun clenched his fists. A wild gleam appeared in his eyes as he glanced around. Eventually, his gaze fell upon the spiritwinter bamboo.

“After I finish the spiritwinter bamboo mission and get my reward, I’ll have enough merit points to get some spirit medicine. Unfortunately, the bamboo hasn’t even reached fifteen meters. I'm not sure if that meets the requirements....” Having reached this point in his train of thoughts, Bai Xiaochun still wasn’t certain about the bamboo. However, he didn’t have any other options. After doing a few calculations, he confirmed that the appointed deadline to hand in the spirit vegetation was rapidly approaching.

Bai Xiaochun scowled his way through a few more days. At dawn on the fourth day, he got up early and walked over to the bamboo. Then he wrapped his arms around one stalk after another to pull them up out of the ground.

What he found was that although the bamboo did not seem to be very heavy, each and every stalk actually felt as if it were made from metal, and was incredibly heavy.

The ground trembled constantly until ten stalks of bamboo were uprooted. Each one was close to fifteen meters tall, and as thick as a person. Throwing them over his shoulder, he marched out of the courtyard in the direction of the Missions Office.

Unfortunately, his bag of holding wasn't very big inside, and the bamboo just wouldn’t fit in it. That was why he had to physically carry the bamboo. Thankfully, he was much stronger now, having achieved the Undying Iron Skin. Otherwise, he would never have been able to pull the task off.

As he walked along, he muttered to himself miserably. But then he thought about the competition, and the vipers, and possibility of his bones and tendons being snapped in the fighting.

“Why am I so unlucky...?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0026 awe-chapter-27

The bamboo was extremely heavy, and he was carrying ten stalks. Couple that with the fact that he was climbing a mountain, and soon Bai Xiaochun was huffing and puffing. The more he thought about it, the more he felt that he was in a really unfair situation.

“I began to practice immortal cultivation because I want to live forever. Why the heck would I go around fighting and killing, huh?

“This bamboo could obviously grow a bit taller, but right now I need those merit points....” The more he thought about the situation, the more annoyed he got at the unfairness of it all. Sighing, he hefted his spiritwinter bamboo as he hiked up the mountain path.

Currently, quite a large group of Outer Sect disciples was gathered outside of Fragrant Cloud Peak’s Missions Office, hands filled with various medicinal plants which they would exchange for merit points.

A Fragrant Cloud Peak Elder was present to inspect the items being handed in. The amount of merit points given as a reward depended on the quality of the items handed in.

Just outside of the building itself was a wide, flat boulder, upon which a ruddy-faced, white-haired old man sat cross-legged. A seemingly endless line of disciples stretched out in front of him, and everyone in line had spirit plants clutched in hand. When the old man gave his appraisal, a young assistant off to the side would record the information and dole out the merit points.

“Not bad. This watermist orchid already has four petals. Mid-grade item.

“This woodvein ginseng is a bit too dark, and the earth-type power is too strong. It’s completely out of balance. Sorry, it doesn’t meet the requirements.”

Circling about overhead was a flock of elegant five-colored phoenixes, each one more than three meters long. Occasionally, they would make melodious calls that rang out in the area.

They were spirit pets belonging to the elder who sat there, and whenever the appointed day came to hand in plants and vegetation, the birds would come along with him. They were, of course, the subject of much envy on the part of the Outer Sect disciples.

The elder’s cultivation base was in the Foundation Establishment stage, and was clearly beyond ordinary. Although his overall skill with spirit medicines didn’t match up to Li Qinghou’s, he was still very famous in the sect. Furthermore, his obsession with the Dao of medicines had reached a frightening level that even Li Qinghou couldn't equal. Many people even said that if a third master apothecary ever appeared in the Eastwood Continent, then it would definitely be this very Elder Zhou.

There was one particular young man in the line who wasn't very handsome, but stood tall and straight. When he reached Elder Zhou, he clasped hands and bowed respectfully. “Greetings, Elder Zhou, it’s me, Chen Zi’ang.”

When the other Outer Sect disciples in the area heard the young man's name, they all looked over curiously.

“Oh, so he’s Elder Brother Chen Zi’ang. I heard that he's quite gifted when it comes to growing spirit plants.”

“I heard that too. Ever since Chen Zi’ang joined the sect, he’s never grown a spirit plant that got less than a high-grade rating. He’s really incredible!”

As the discussions continued in low tones, Chen Zi’ang stood there with a tranquil, indifferent expression on his face. However, deep in his eyes burned a proud and lofty air.

Elder Zhou could see how pleased Chen Zi’ang was. He had long since been keeping an eye on him, considering how gifted he was when it came to growing spirit plants.

“Zi’ang, what type of plant did you grow this time?” Elder Zhou asked warmly.

“Elder Zhou, I'm happy to report that I grew spiritwinter bamboo!” With that, Chen Zi’ang waved his hand, causing ten stalks of spiritwinter bamboo to appear. Each one was as thick as an arm, and over two meters long. They were emerald green, and even flickered with a faint green glow.

“I first soaked the seeds in a spirit spring, then ground some spirit stones into gravel to act as soil. Next, I fed the plants with my own spiritual energy at least every six hours. Every three days, I would carefully tend to their leaves, and I even used the Ninegreens Profound Magic I mastered, as well as other medicinal plants, to grow them to this level!”

“Very good,” said Elder Zhou, stroking his beard. The praise in his eyes was clear. “These stalks of bamboo are over two meters long, and pulse with green energy. They exceed the high-grade mark, and can be classified as extreme high-grade. I encourage you to keep working hard. If you can grow the bamboo to over three meters, then they will be classified as superior-grade.”

When the surrounding Outer Sect disciple heard the words extreme high-grade, even more discussions broke out, and numerous envious gazes were cast in the direction of the spiritwinter bamboo.

A smile broke out on Chen Zi’ang’s face, and the lofty gleam in his eyes intensified. He clasped hands and bowed, and was just about to walk over to the assistant to collect his merit points, when a cold snort suddenly rang out.

“Elder Zhou, Disciple Zhao Yiduo also grew some spiritwinter bamboo!” A long-faced young man with narrow eyes suddenly appeared. As he approached, he cast a glance of disdain in Chen Zi’ang’s direction. [1. Zhao Yiduo’s name in Chinese is 赵一多 zhào yī duō. Zhao is a common surname. Yi means “one” and duo means “more”]

His sudden appearance on the scene instantly caused excitement among the surrounding Outer Sect disciples, who all looked over at him.

“It’s Elder Brother Zhao Yiduo! Elder Brother Zhao’s skill with spirit plants and vegetation is supposedly neck and neck with Chen Zi’ang’s!”

“Well now we get to see them face off. They’ve been rivals for some time now, and both of them want to be known as the number one botanist among all the disciples.”

Chen Zi’ang’s expression immediately darkened. He looked coldly at Zhao Yiduo, who glared back at him. The hostility in their eyes instantly intensified.

“Zhao Yiduo, go ahead and take out your spiritwinter bamboo,” Elder Zhou said encouragingly. Apparently, even he was interested in finding out what was going to happen. He was well aware of the competition between the two young disciples, and was in fact happy to see it. It was only by means of healthy competition that great advancement could be made.

Zhao Yiduo clasped hands and bowed to Elder Zhou, then slapped his bag of holding to produce ten stalks of spiritwinter bamboo, each and every one of which was over three meters long and thicker than a person’s leg. They were bright emerald green and even seemed somewhat crystalline. From the spiritual energy they emanated, it was clear that they were beyond normal, and also far above Chen Zi’ang’s in terms of quality.

The mere sight of the bamboo sent the crowd into an uproar. Most people had heard that spiritwinter bamboo could grow longer than three meters, but had never seen it before.

Spiritwinter bamboo three meters long! I wonder how long it took to grow?”

“That spiritwinter bamboo has reached the point where it’s emanating spiritual energy. Elder Brother Zhao’s ability with plants definitely puts him as the number one Outer Sect disciple on Fragrant Cloud Peak!”

Seeing how excited the crowd was, Zhao Yiduo smiled provokingly at Chen Zi’ang.

Chen Zi’ang’s face immediately darkened.

As for Elder Zhou, his eyes gleamed with praise as he looked at the bamboo and then nodded.

“Excellent, excellent. Quite a few disciples have handed in spiritwinter bamboo today, but yours is definitely the best in terms of quality. It isn’t high-grade, it's definitely superior-grade. Very, very good job, Zhao Yiduo. Keep up the good work!”

Zhao Yiduo once again bowed to Elder Zhou, then looked over challengingly at Chen Zi’ang. “Junior Brother Chen, it seems you need to put some more work into your studies.”

Chen Zi’ang’s expression grew even darker, and he snorted coldly. “Isn’t it a bit early to gloat, Elder Brother Zhao? After all, it doesn’t count when you have someone helping you. Next time, I’ll definitely grow the spiritwinter bamboo to five meters tall!”

Hearing this, Zhao Yiduo laughed heartily. “Junior Brother Chen, if you talk yourself up too much, you’re bound to crash and burn. spiritwinter bamboo is extremely hard to grow because of the incredible amount of spiritual energy it requires. For Qi Condensation disciples like us, growing it to three meters is the absolute limit of the limit. And you think you’re going to grow it to five meters? Only Foundation Establishment Elders could do something like that. That’s not even to mention six meters. In all the years I’ve been in the sect, I've never even seen six-meter-tall Spiritwin--”

Before Zhao Yiduo could even finish speaking, booming thuds could be heard from the path leading up to the Missions Office, as if some enormous creature were approaching. Instantly, the Outer Sect disciples turned in shock, whereupon gasps began to ring out.

The standoff between Zhao Yiduo and Chen Zi’ang was also interrupted, and both of them frowned and looked over toward the path.

Soon, what became visible were the tops of several stalks of enormous bamboo, thicker than a person. They were a bright emerald green, and if you looked closely, you would even see some violet specks flickering on their surface. They also emanated a splendid, multicolored glow.

Even more shocking was the powerful spiritual energy emanating off of the bamboo, which instantly led to cries of shock.

“Wh-what is that stuff!?”

“It looks like some kind of tree! But at the same time, it also looks like bamboo!”

Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo were frowning, and couldn't even identify what it was they were looking at. However, they could tell that it was something incredible. Off to the side, Elder Zhou’s eyes were wide as he stared at the bamboo, and he even began to pant slightly.

Everyone stared as more and more of the bamboo became visible. When the bamboo was completely revealed, shockingly, each stalk was fifteen meters tall, and it was being carried by a petite young man, who was currently panting as he trudged up the path, the bamboo slung over his shoulder.

He almost looked like an ant carrying a steamed mantou....

Every step that he took resulted in a booming thud, and as he walked along, the Outer Sect disciples made way for him, shocked by how strong he appeared to be.

The young man was, of course, Bai Xiaochun, who had been grumbling to himself the entire way about the brutality of the competition and the horror of 10,000 Snakes Valley.

Although he wanted to cry, no tears would come, and as he trudged along, he didn’t even notice the crowd of people looking at him. When he reached Elder Zhou, he tossed the bamboo down onto the ground, which resulted in a huge boom. Then he sat down on top of the bamboo, huffing and puffing a bit as he wiped the sweat from his brow.

“I couldn't fit this bamboo in my bag of holding. Man, I'm totally worn out. Oh, hello Elder, I’m here to hand in this mission.” All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun got an odd feeling, and looked around to find everyone in the crowd staring at his bamboo. Gasps could even be heard.

“Bamboo.... That stuff is actually bamboo?”

“It's so big! I’ve never seen bamboo that big before. Come on, they must be trees, right?!”

Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo couldn’t conceal their astonishment as they realized what they were looking at. However, they almost couldn't make themselves believe it was true, and knelt down to inspect the bamboo more closely. Zhao Yiduo began to tremble, and had to resist the urge to try and break open one of the bamboo stalks to examine it from the inside.

Before he could, Elder Zhou tromped over and then waved his sleeve, sending Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo tumbling off to the side. Then Elder Zhou stood there, staring at the bamboo with wide eyes. After a long moment, he took a deep breath and said, “Th-this... this really is spiritwinter bamboo!!”

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples gaped in shock for a moment, and then burst into an uproar.

"Spiritwinter bamboo!! I can't believe those big trees... are actually spiritwinter bamboo!!”

“How is that even possible? How could spiritwinter bamboo get so thick? Heavens, they’re actually fifteen meters long!”

“Fifteen meters and as thick as a person. Th-that’s... bamboo?”

The sounds of the uproar grew even louder as people began to compare Bai Xiaochun’s bamboo with that of Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0027 awe-chapter-28

Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock at the commotion. Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo, apparently completely oblivious to the pain caused by Elder Zhou tossing them aside, rushed back toward the bamboo and knelt down to examine it.

Elder Zhou began to study the stalks of bamboo one by one, his expression that of shock and elation.

Everyone’s crazed reaction left Bai Xiaochun somewhat alarmed. In his mind, these people were acting like lunatics. It was just bamboo, after all, right? Besides, he had originally planned to grow it to a total of thirty meters before turning it in.

Bai Xiaochun took a few steps back and then tried to get the Elder’s attention.

“Elder....” he cried loudly.

“Wonderful! Amazing!” Elder Zhou said, laughing as he began to caress each and every inch of the bamboo. Apparently, he hadn’t even heard Bai Xiaochun speaking. "Spiritwinter bamboo like this is extremely rare. Only by growing it to fifteen meters can it achieve such a deep green color. In fact, at this point, it's not a medicinal plant, but rather, the primary ingredient to forge spirit bamboo swords. It can even be used to cast certain unique magical techniques!

“Listen up everyone. Take a deep breath.” Looking very excited, Elder Zhou closed his eyes and breathed in deeply through his nose. “Can you smell that fragrance? It smells like flesh and bone, right? That's the unique aroma that appears after this type of bamboo reaches fifteen meters!”

Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo earnestly followed suit. The other disciples in the area also pressed forward to do the same.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. He had noticed that same aroma as he was carrying the bamboo down the path. However, he was pretty sure that... it was actually the aroma of chicken bones. After all, he had buried several hundred spirit tail chicken skeletons in the spirit field where he had grown the spiritwinter bamboo. Furthermore... those bones had all been stripped clean of their meat by none other than him.

By now, Bai Xiaochun was thoroughly convinced that these people were crazy.

“Elder....” he cried out again.

However, it was at this point that a violent tremor ran through Elder Zhou; flames of rage sprang up in his eyes, and his expression twisted with rage.

“Dammit! What the hell happened here? Someone actually bit a chunk out? Spiritwinter bamboo is extremely bitter and can’t be eaten raw! What bastard actually bit a chunk out and ruined the quality!?” Elder Zhou seemed to be filled with grief; to him, it was like discovering a perfect piece of beautiful jade, only to find one part that had been destroyed by pests. His head suddenly whipped up to look at Bai Xiaochun.

“It wasn’t me!” Bai Xiaochun blurted, backing up nervously. He suddenly thought back to the first time he had been struck by incredible hunger. In his desperation at not having anything to eat, he had taken a bite out of one of the stalks of bamboo. How could he ever have imagined this would be the terrifying scene that would result when he went to hand in the mission, or how that single bite would affect these lunatics?

When the surrounding disciples heard what Elder Zhou said, they peered over toward the last of the spiritwinter bamboo stalks, and sure enough, there was a big bite mark clearly visible.

Elder Zhou stared at the damaged portion of the bamboo, then let out a long sigh. After all, he was a Foundation Establishment cultivator, and was obsessed with the Dao of medicines. However, this bamboo that Bai Xiaochun had brought was so shocking, and so different from anything Elder Zhou had ever seen before, that he had lost his composure just now.

Finally, he took a deep look at Bai Xiaochun, then flicked his sleeve.

“This bamboo is extreme super-grade... no, wait, supreme-grade. Yes, list it as supreme-grade. The reward is 10,000 merit points!” The audience gasped in response. The usual reward for plant-growing missions was usually about 10 merit points. At the most, one might be able to get 100. But in this case, the reward was 10,000!

Off to the side, the assistant gaped in shock. For years and years, it had always been a rarity to have a spirit plant listed as supreme-grade.

In fact, this was the first one in hundreds of years.

Bai Xiaochun was very excited, and immediately walked over to the assistant and handed over his identity medallion. The assistant hesitated for a moment, then looked over at Elder Zhou, who was still studying the bamboo, then gritted his teeth and gave the merit points to Bai Xiaochun.

Having acquired his merit points, Bai Xiaochun quickly turned to leave, determined to never come back and deal with these lunatics ever again.

However, before he could leave, Elder Zhou suddenly called out. “Hey, what’s your name?”

“Bai Xiaochun,” was the immediate response. “I'm Bai Xiaochun, and my uncle is Li Qinghou!” Before coming here, he had been completely unaware that the bamboo would cause such a scene, and he was actually a bit worried about that, which was why he pulled out Li Qinghou’s name, as sort of a threat.

“Hmph.” Elder Zhou seemed to be irritated that Bai Xiaochun would resort to dropping Li Qinghou’s name. “You might think you’re pretty clever, but the Spirit Stream Sect is one of the great sects, with a long history. There are always disciples who come along with their secrets and their unique good fortune. I won’t lower myself to the level of asking for the specifics of how you grew this bamboo, but next time you grow something similar, you make sure to bring it all to me. I’ll make sure you get a nice reward of merit points!” Finally, he waved his hand to dismiss Bai Xiaochun, then went back to studying the bamboo. It was at this point that, because of the matter with the bamboo, the entire mission-handover event concluded.

Bai Xiaochun clutched his identity medallion firmly in hand as he hurried away from the Missions Office and then headed directly toward Fragrant Cloud Peak’s Spirit

Medicine Pharmacy, which was where disciples could acquire spirit medicines.

It was also where disciples could hand over spirit medicines that they had crafted, and thus earn merit points.

Bai Xiaochun sped over at top speed, then hurried around the Spirit Medicine Pharmacy trying to choose what to buy. Eventually he decided to purchase a bottle of medicinal pills suitable for the fifth level of Qi Condensation. These medicinal pills were by no means cheap. Bai Xiaochun had originally assumed that 10,000 merit points was a lot, but unexpectedly, the spirit medicines were actually very expensive.

“Greengod Spiritgathering Pills,” he murmured, looking at the medicinal pill bottle he held in his hand. Inside were three medicinal pills, which had cost him fully 4,000 merit points.

However, these were pills that ordinary Qi Condensation disciples would usually not have access to. They were quite extraordinary; not only was their medicinal strength greater than that of ordinary spirit medicine, they could provide purer spiritual energy.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t convinced that merely stepping into the fifth level of Qi Condensation would be enough, so he planned to break through all the way to the great circle of the fifth level.

He had thought about aiming for the sixth level of Qi Condensation to avoid having to fight in the competition, but if he did that, he could well imagine how Li Qinghou would come up with some other method of punishing him.

As for the rest of his merit points, he didn't let them go to waste. He traded them for some disposable defensive talismans. With those hidden in his robe, he felt much safer.

Unfortunately, he didn’t have enough merit points to go through with his plan of heading to the Treasure Pavilion to acquire a weapon or two suitable for the Qi Condensation stage. Instead, he headed back toward his residence. Once back in the courtyard, he sat down cross-legged in his log cabin, then pulled the medicinal pills out and studied them closely.

“I still have three months to go. It’s time for some secluded meditation!” Gritting his teeth, he looked around to make sure no one was watching, then performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. Instantly, the turtle-wok flew out, along with a bunch of spirit tails, which he used to start a three-colored flame.

One tail feather wasn't enough to satisfy the turtle-wok. He had to feed in ten before the three designs on the wok lit up brightly. Then, he took a deep breath and put the three medicinal pills inside to perform a threefold spirit enhancement.

After the process was completed, the Greengod Spiritgathering Pills in his hand had three silver designs covering their surfaces. Finally, he placed one of them in his mouth.

The medicinal pill dissolved, and spiritual energy began to course through him explosively. Bai Xiaochun instantly began to utilize the breathing techniques and postures of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, using them to manage the flow of the spiritual energy.

A few days later, rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun’s log cabin, and numerous dust particles blasted out in a shock wave. Moments later, Bai Xiaochun's laughter could be heard ringing out.

“Fifth level of Qi Condensation!” he said, panting, eyes shining brightly. After eating so many spirit tail chickens recently, his cultivation base had already reached the great circle of the fourth level of Qi Condensation. By eating that one medicinal pill, he was able to easily break through into the fifth level.

More filth was expelled out from inside of him, but not as much as before. After washing up, he didn’t immediately take out another medicinal pill, but rather, took time to stabilize his cultivation base. After five days passed, he took out the second of his threefold spirit enhanced Greengod Spiritgathering Pills, and consumed it. As the spiritual energy coursed through him, the river that was his spirit meridian grew larger, and flowed faster, causing his cultivation base to climb higher at a rapid rate.

After stabilizing himself for a few more days, he consumed the third Greengod Spiritgathering Pill, and his cultivation base shot up to the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation.

By this point, everything about him seemed different than before. His skin was fairer, and there was something unique about his energy.

Bai Xiaochun was quite happy, but also realized that, normally speaking, it would be impossible to use only three medicinal pills to break through from the great circle of the fourth level of Qi Condensation all the way to the great circle of the fifth level, and then be only a hair away from reaching the sixth level.

As far as he could tell, the only reason he was able to do so was the turtle-wok and its spirit enhancement ability.

The more Bai Xiaochun practiced cultivation, the more obvious it was to him how helpful the turtle-wok was. That in turn caused him to become even more curious about its origins.

Although it looked like a turtle shell, the more he studied it, the more it seemed that it wasn’t.

In recent days, he had looked more into the matter of spirit enhancement, and had learned that Violet Cauldron Peak was known for their spirit enhancement abilities. In fact, if you paid enough merit points, you could even acquire the services of the Elders there to perform spirit enhancements. Word had it that the peak lord of Violet Cauldron Peak was a grand master when it came to spirit enhancements.

Running his fingers along the designs that covered the turtle-wok, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered. Finally, he shook his head. There were too many things he didn’t understand, and it wouldn't do any good to waste time thinking about them. Reaching his hand out, he caused the green jade pendant and his wooden sword to appear.

These were the only magical devices he owned at the moment. Gritting his teeth, he produced some more spirit tails as he prepared to perform threefold spirit enhancements on them.

“I wonder what the wooden sword and jade pendant will look like after I do the threefold spirit enhancement.”

The wave of a hand caused the three designs on the turtle-wok to light up. When he sent the jade pendant flying inside, silver light shone, and rumbling sounds like that of thunder could be heard. Thankfully, they didn’t echo out very far, so nobody heard them.

When the silver light faded away, the green jade pendant had three silver designs on it, which flickered brightly for a moment before fading away. However, Bai Xiaochun could sense that the jade pendant’s aura was now as different from before as the Heavens were from the Earth.

In fact, it was even possible to see glowing violet specks within the green of the jade pendant. Even the shape of the pendant had changed; instead of being oval, it had now been flattened into a circular shape.

Bai Xiaochun poured some spiritual energy into it, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as a green shield sprang up around him, fully a meter thick and completely astonishing to behold.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0028 awe-chapter-29

After performing a quick test on the defensive power of the jade pendant, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but laugh out loud. Next, he turned his attention to the wooden sword. He had acquired this wooden sword the moment he had joined the sect, and since then, had performed spirit enhancements on it twice.

“With the protective power of this jade pendant, after I perform a threefold spirit enhancement on my little wooden sword, I’ll definitely be completely extraordinary!” Bai Xiaochun smiled, then began to prepare the little wooden sword for the spirit enhancement.

Silver light flickered within the turtle-wok. As it faded away, the little wooden sword appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun. Three silver designs gleamed on its surface, then gradually faded away. At the same time, the physical appearance of the sword changed. It was longer by a finger’s length, and the grain of the wood was now virtually completely violet.

There was also a bizarre aroma which pulsed out of the sword, an aroma which, upon entering the nose, seemed sweet, but quickly caused the mind to enter a state of confused distraction.

Bai Xiaochun trembled for a moment, but then his eyes grew clear. He looked in shock at the wooden sword for a moment, then reached out to grab it, whereupon he found that it was many times heavier than before. Unexpectedly, as he held it in his hand, it felt as heavy as a boulder.

Eyes glittering, he examined the sword, and gradually a profound gleam rose up in his eyes.

“This wooden sword is made from the rarely-seen heavycloud wood,” he murmured, “which only needs to be refined for forty-nine days before you can use it in equipment forging. It can also be used in mass-production.” Next, he focused on the veins in the wood of the sword.

“Violet veins. There’s only one explanation for that. After performing these handful of spirit enhancements, these are the signs of the sword’s transmogrification.” Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and began to review the information about heavycloud wood that he had gleaned when studying about plants and vegetation.

After a while, his eyes opened, and they gleamed with anticipation. He performed an incantation gesture and then tapped the little wooden sword, which instantly caused a black light to flicker out, within which were tiny violet specks. Suddenly, the sword shot out of the log cabin, across the courtyard, and then another thirty meters or so, where it stabbed into a huge boulder.

Without making a single sound, the sword then spun around inside of the rock, pierced out of it, and flew back to Bai Xiaochun.

The sword wasn’t damaged at all, and in fact began to emanate a piercing aura.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression brightened. He played around with the sword a little bit more, then once again painted over the designs. Finally, he opened the door of his log cabin, stepped out, and took a deep breath. Unfortunately, as soon as he thought about the competition in two months, his previously high spirits sank a bit.

“This isn't good enough. I’m still not well enough prepared. The other people in the competition are definitely going to be vicious beasts. I need to do more.” Grinding his teeth, he thought about the two levels of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, which he had read about in the manual.

Lightness-in-Heaviness. Heaviness-in-Lightness.

Those two levels of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art were powerful magics that appeared when cultivating the art. If both were cultivated to the pinnacle, they could lead to a divine ability called Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning.

On the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, the fundamental techniques of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art were something that virtually everyone practiced. However, few people cultivated Lightness-in-Heaviness, and as for the second stage of Heaviness-in-Lightness, that was even more rare. As for those who cultivated the art to the absolute peak, and could unleash the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning divine ability, they were most rare of all.

Actually, the majority of those who gained enlightenment of Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning were disciples from Violet Cauldron Peak.

“Lightness-in-Heaviness.... Only by reaching that stage of being able to completely control physical objects can I even be absolutely assured of rising above the pack.” Bai Xiaochun continued to think about the description of the technique as he gazed down at the little wooden sword.

Back when he had fought his battle with Xu Baocai, everyone from the Supervisors’ Department and even the Ovens had mistakenly assumed that he had gained enlightenment of Lightness-in-Heaviness. Now that he thought back to the situation, an idea flickered through his mind.

“The reason people thought I had achieved Lightness-in-Heaviness was because of how adeptly I controlled my little wooden sword. However, the real reason behind that was mostly because of how incredible the sword became after my spirit enhancement.

“The truth of the matter is that my ability to control it isn’t actually that incredible, and definitely is not Lightness-in-Heaviness.” Frowning, Bai Xiaochun randomly sat down cross-legged and looked at the wooden sword. Gradually, his eyes grew blank, and were soon shot with blood.

A moment later, his right hand suddenly waved up into the air, sending the little wooden sword flying out. It whistled through the air in front of him, kicking up a cloud of dust. Bai Xiaochun’s frown deepened as his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then pointed his finger out. However, what he pointed at wasn’t the sword, but rather, the huge rock outside the courtyard that he had just stabbed with the sword moments ago.

The wave of his finger caused the huge stone to tremble slightly, then gradually rise up into the air by about one third of a meter. But then Bai Xiaochun’s spiritual energy grew unstable, and it thumped back down with a boom.

Bai Xiaochun was not dismayed, though. In fact, quite the opposite. His eyes began to shine brightly. Focusing completely, he circulated his spiritual energy and once again waved his finger.

Once, twice, three times....

Time passed. Half a month was gone in the blink of an eye. Virtually that entire time, Bai Xiaochun worked on trying to control the boulder. Of course, this boulder was about as tall as three people put together, and weighed about 1,500-1,600 kilograms. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was already in the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation, manipulating an object like this was not an easy task.

The only reason Bai Xiaochun could do so was because of the extraordinarily refined state of his cultivation base. Anyone else in the fifth level of Qi Condensation would never be able to move the boulder more than a handful of centimeters.

Bai Xiaochun worked hard for an entire month. By this point, he realized that the reason controlling the boulder was so difficult wasn’t because of a lack of spiritual energy, but rather, that his level of control was lacking. Even when he still had plenty of spiritual energy, the connection would always break.

“The key is to move the threads of spiritual energy at a constant speed,” he muttered hoarsely, eyes bloodshot but shining brightly. “That’s how to make sure they never break.”

It was the same principle that applied to mortals when they were making noodles at home. If you pulled the dough apart too quickly, it would snap. If you went too slowly, it would be impossible to stretch them out very far. You had to use just the right amount of strength, and then you can control the objects smoothly and clearly however you wish.

If cultivators wanted to control physical objects to a degree that surpassed the ordinary, they would need to use just the right amount of strength, and maintain stability. Of course, that increased the level of difficulty significantly.

“I get it now!” Bai Xiaochun thought excitedly. “Lightness-in-Heaviness is about more than the words ‘light’ and ‘heavy’. It's not just being able to control heavy objects as if they didn't weigh a lot. That’s just the surface meaning. The true, deeper meaning has to do, not with physical objects, but rather, with the way you manipulate spiritual energy!

“In the fifth level of Qi Condensation, your total reserve of spiritual energy is what makes the heaviness. When you take that spiritual energy and convert it into numerous tiny, unbreakable threads, that is the lightness. Doing it correctly is Lightness-in-Heaviness. Of course, with the surface meaning, the result is the speed with which you can effortlessly control physical objects!” After getting to the root of the problem, he waved his hand again, and the boulder began to tremble. Then it suddenly rose up into the air.

It was almost as if some enormous hand had simply grabbed it and pulled it up. Then, it began to whistle through the air toward Bai Xiaochun. However, before it could reach him, it suddenly fell down out of the air into his courtyard, where it kicked up a huge cloud of dust.

Bai Xiaochun felt no discouragement. He continued to practice for another half a month. Unfortunately, for that entire time, he was unable to maintain one continuously stable thread of spiritual energy.

Even when he was able to form a stable thread, the incredible heaviness of the rock ensured that the threads of spiritual energy always grew unstable and broke.

Of course, when it came to controlling the little wooden sword, he had no problems whatsoever. Because of the vast difference in weight between the boulder and the sword, Bai Xiaochun now felt that controlling the wooden sword was much, much easier. Furthermore, after the month or more of training, he could move it with much greater speed.

In actuality, he really had achieved Lightness-in-Heaviness. However, he wasn't satisfied. Eyes completely bloodshot, he gritted his teeth, and that vicious determination once again appeared.

“I refuse to believe I can't do it!” He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the boulder to fly over and hover directly above him.

Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead as he looked up nervously at the rock, exerting all the possible effort he could muster to preserve that invisible thread of spiritual energy. After all, if it broke, then the rock would fall. Although it wouldn’t kill him, it would definitely be very painful.

This time, he was clearly able to maintain the connection for a lot longer than before. However, after about an hour passed, rumbling sounds began to echo out, and then Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp as the stone smashed down. After a long moment, it trembled and fell off to the side as Bai Xiaochun crawled out from underneath it.

Thanks to his Undying Skin, he wasn’t hurt. However, the pain of what had just occurred left him grimacing.

Despite that, his resolve grew even more intense. Another month went by, and the rock smashed down onto him over and over again. Eventually, he reached the point where he could actually keep it afloat for an entire day without dropping it.

Furthermore, the height to which he could lift it grew greater and greater. Soon, he could hold it thirty meters high in the air. Of course, the pain that resulted when he dropped it from that height left Bai Xiaochun completely pale-faced.

However, that was the only way to refine himself to the pinnacle.

Gradually, his ability to achieve Lightness-in-Heaviness with his internal spiritual energy was growing more and more stable. Eventually, he reached the point where he almost never broke the connection. However, he still wasn’t satisfied. Next, he didn’t practice while sitting cross-legged, but instead, while exercising.

That made things even more difficult, and led to continuous booms ringing out in his courtyard.

Time passed, one day at a time. Soon the competition Li Qinghou had mentioned was now only three days away. The scene in Bai Xiaochun’s courtyard was that of a figure zipping around while a 1,500 kilogram boulder floated around up above. Despite how much Bai Xiaochun was moving around, the boulder remained motionless up in the air.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun stopped running around, and stood there in front of his log cabin, laughing heartily. Then, he waved his right hand, causing the boulder to fly out of the courtyard and settle back firmly into the ground.

Next, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing his little wooden sword to slash out in front of him.

It moved so quickly it was little more than a blur; clearly it was much more powerful than before.

Bai Xiaochun’s face lit up with delight, and his hand began to flash with incantation gestures.

The speed combined with the might of the sword, resulting in a shocking combination. All of a sudden, the courtyard almost seemed to be filled with innumerable little wooden swords, all flying about.

In the end, he flicked his sleeve, causing the sword projections to vanish. Only one wooden sword remained, which then shot back toward Bai Xiaochun and vanished into his bag of holding.

“Now I finally feel ready to get into the top 5.” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Although he didn’t feel one hundred percent confident, time was running out. All he could do was settle his qi and calm his mind, then sit down cross-legged to meditate and put himself in the proper state.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0029 awe-chapter-30

Three days later. Dawn.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened at sunrise. He took a deep breath, and a serious expression could be seen on his face. This was his first time taking part in a competition like this.

His fight early on with Xu Baocai actually didn't really count as much of a battle. However, now that he was going to participate in Fragrant Cloud Peak’s Outer Sect competition, he would be truly fighting against his fellow sect members.

He slowly rose to his feet, organized his bag of holding, and then somberly walked out of his residence. Moments later though, he came running back and started rummaging around under his bed until he found the leather coats he still had from back in his days at the Ovens. After donning several layers, he then placed his jade pendant somewhere he could access it easily.

Were it not for the fact that it would have led to too many questions, he would have put his turtle-wok on his back.

“Ah, why didn’t I think of this earlier!” he thought regretfully. “I can't believe I forgot about that big black wok of mine.” However, he was running out of time, and had no choice but to grit his teeth, turn, and leave. Taking a glance in the direction of the distant sun, his eyes filled with determination. Puffing his chest out, he began to climb toward the top of the mountain.

At the moment, he was wearing far too many layers of leather clothing. Even though he didn’t have the big black wok on, he still looked somewhat like a sticky rice dumpling.... He was bundled up so tightly that after walking for only a little bit, he was already starting to sweat.

However, even if he sweat more profusely, he wouldn’t shed even one item of clothing. The competition was too important, and he couldn't stop thinking about how brutal it would be. As he walked along the path, he suddenly realized that it was quite a foggy morning on the mountain, and he actually had no idea where exactly he was.

“Did I take a wrong turn...?” he thought, and instantly looked around for someone to ask directions from. At the same time, his heart began to thump from the fear of possibly being late.

**

At the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak was a fighting arena, which was where the competition was to take place. Quite a few people were already gathered there to watch the proceedings, and were chatting in hushed tones.

There were even some disciples in the audience who were in the fifth level of Qi Condensation, although most of them stood there with arms folded across their chests as they looked at their Junior Brothers and Sisters who would be participating in the competition. Of course, there were also people there to cheer on their friends.

This Outer Sect competition wasn’t very formal, but it was a place where the participants could stand out from the crowd. There were about twenty people who had come to join the competition, all of whom were sitting in the area cross-legged in meditation, preparing in earnest for the fighting to begin.

No one in the competition was in the third level of Qi Condensation. Although the rules allowed for that, most of the people who actually joined the competition were in the fifth level of Qi Condensation, although there were five or six who were in the fourth level.

There was one young woman among the group who stood out from everyone else. She was tall and beautiful, and her Outer Sect disciple uniform could not conceal her curvaceous form. Anyone who laid eyes on her wouldn’t be able to stop from slipping into a bit of a reverie.

Her skin was white like snow, and she had eyebrows that curved as gracefully as willow leaves. She really was spectacularly beautiful. As for the Daoist trousers she wore, although they were loose, they stretched tightly around her rear end in a way that made it virtually impossible for any man to look away.

There were quite a few Outer Sect disciples clustered around her, obviously her admirers.

Although she couldn’t quite compare to Zhou Xinqi, she was still one of the most famous of the Outer Sect disciples, Du Lingfei. [1. Du Lingfei’s name in Chinese is 杜凌菲 dù líng fēi. Du is a common surname. Ling means “to rise up.” Fei means “luxurious”]

“Elder Sister Du’s cultivation base is in the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation, so she’ll definitely take first place in this competition. There’s not even any suspense in the matter.”

“You can’t underestimate Elder Brother Chen Zi’ang, though. I heard that he had a cultivation base breakthrough last month. He might not be in the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation, but he's close.” Standing not too far away from Du Lingfei was an arrogant-looking young man, the same Chen Zi’ang who had been shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s bamboo outside the Missions Office that day.

Even as everyone was discussing the matter, Chen Zi’ang looked over at Du Lingfei with a strange gleam in his eyes. Although he wasn’t too confident in being able to take first place, he was pretty certain he could take second. Besides, he might also be able to take advantage of the situation to get to know Du Lingfei a bit better.

It was at about this point that two beams of light whistled through the air from off in the distance. It was none other than Li Qinghou, followed by an emaciated old man. The old man had swarthy skin, but his eyes shone brightly, and he seemed like a very strict person.

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples were completely shocked to find that Li Qinghou would be in attendance at the competition, and quickly clasped hands in greeting.

“Greeting, Peak Lord. Greetings, Elder Sun.” Everyone was flabbergasted that the peak lord would personally come to an event like this. Small competitions like this were almost always presided over by Elder Sun.

Du Lingfei and Chen Zi’ang were also shocked, and had very serious expressions on their faces as they bowed in greeting to Li Qinghou.

Li Qinghou looked around benevolently, nodding. As he scanned the crowd of disciples, however, he frowned when he realized that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t there.

When the surrounding Outer Sect disciple saw Li Qinghou frowning, their hearts began to thump. Du Lingfei instantly began to get nervous, unsure of why the peak lord might be displeased.

“Shall we begin, Peak Lord?” asked Elder Sun, who stood next to Li Qinghou.

Li Qinghou was just about to reply when, all of a sudden, a sweat-soaked spheroid shape could be seen speeding toward them from off in the distance.

“I got lost!” cried Bai Xiaochun as he ran along. “It was too foggy....” Not only was Bai Xiaochun very nervous, he also felt that the whole situation was very unfair. After all, he wasn’t very familiar with all the mountain paths, and considering how foggy it had been, he had simply gotten lost while thinking.

As soon as the words left his mouth, all of the Outer Sect disciple involuntarily looked over. There were quite a few of them who were familiar with Bai Xiaochun, and when they heard the words he called out, they began to snicker. As for those who didn't know him, they frowned, and gleams of derision could be seen in their eyes.

As far as they were concerned, the only reason he could have for getting lost on the way to the competition was that he rarely ventured up to the top of the mountain, and didn't care much about the competitions that the sect held. Most likely, he was only used to strolling around for pleasure.

Du Lingfei looked at him, and remembered him as one of the people who had been chasing after Zhou Xinqi recently. Supposedly, he had worked hard to catch the great chicken bandit. Du Lingfei immediately turned away in disdain, not willing to even look at him.

Chen Zi’ang looked at Bai Xiaochun in complete shock, and couldn't help but glance over at Li Qinghou. He hadn't forgotten what Bai Xiaochun had said at the Missions Office about Li Qinghou being his uncle. That would explain why Li Qinghou had been frowning right now, and after analyzing the matter, he realized that when fighting Bai Xiaochun, he would have to be careful not to beat him too badly.

Li Qinghou snorted coldly, glaring at Bai Xiaochun for a moment before nodding at Elder Sun.

Elder Sun looked thoughtfully at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, then laughed and waved his sleeve. “Very well. All disciples who wish to participate in the Outer Sect fighting competition, please step into the arena.”

Seeing Li Qinghou’s glare caused Bai Xiaochun to feel more than ever that the situation was completely unfair. However, he didn’t dare to give voice to his sentiments. As soon as the words left Elder Sun’s mouth, Bai Xiaochun was the first disciple to leap up onto the platform, chest puffed out proudly, looking as though mountains of daggers and seas of flames couldn’t impinge on his honor.

Soon, all the contestants were in the arena. Including Bai Xiaochun, there were twenty in total.

The rules for competitions like this one were fairly lax. Elder Sun looked at the contestants for a moment, then pulled out a small cloth sack, within which were a collection of marbles with numbers on them. One by one, the competitors filed over to take a marble, which would indicate the order in which they fought.

Bai Xiaochun didn't manage to get first in line. He got stuck in the middle, and when he pulled out his marble, it had the number 11 written on it.

“Very well,” Elder Sun said coolly. “Now, everyone step back so that the first match can begin. Fighters number one and two, prepare to begin!” Bai Xiaochun and the others quickly left the fighting arena, whereas the disciples with the number one and two marbles remained. As the two stared each other down, brilliant light began to shine in their eyes.

Soon they began to fight, and the booming sounds of battle rang out. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s mind was racing. He kept telling himself that, considering there were twenty people in this competition, all he had to do was win twice to make it into the top 5. He was also wondering who it was that got the number twelve marble, but no one was willing to reveal to everyone else which numbers they had, making it virtually impossible for him to determine who he would be fighting.

Even as his spirits began to fall, the first match ended, and the second began. Du Lingfei was one of the fighters in this match, and she immediately performed an incantation gesture, causing a banner to fly out, which then turned into a stream of mist that enveloped her opponent. After struggling a bit, the disciple couldn't escape, and conceded, filled with admiration for Du Lingfei.

The third and fourth matches went by quickly enough, and when it came time for the fifth match, Chen Zi’ang secured a quick and efficient victory over a disciple in the fourth level of Qi Condensation.

“Fighters number eleven and twelve, step forward and let the match begin,” Elder Sun called out. Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and walked forward, a very serious expression on his face. After setting foot into the arena, he found that his opponent was a tall, gaunt young man with a cold smile on his face.

His cultivation base was extraordinary, in the fifth level of Qi Condensation. His eyes flashed like lightning, and overall, he seemed like the type of person who was not to be trifled with.

“Well, Junior Brother,” the gaunt young man said, his voice cold, “you have the bad luck to have run into me in the first round. It's not too late to concede. If you don’t, you’ll have to take responsibility for yourself if you get injured.”

However, in the instant that the words left the young man’s mouth, Bai Xiaochun suddenly let out a powerful roar.

The roar was so intense that everything shook, and quite a few audience members were shocked. The gaunt young man was also taken aback, and even backed up a bit without even thinking about it, staring at Bai Xiaochun with wide eyes.

After roaring, Bai Xiaochun slapped his jade pendant, causing a green glow to surround him. That didn’t leave him feeling safe, though, so he pulled out a big stack of paper talismans, which he rapidly stuck all over himself. Each time he did, they would emit a powerful glow, until he was covered with no less than ten individual shields. Their combined power transformed into a protective wall nearly a meter-and-a-half thick. From a distance, the sight was completely shocking.

Because of all the protective shields, Bai Xiaochun’s subsequent shout was actually a bit muffled.

“Alright, bring it on!”

The gaunt young man was still staring blankly at Bai Xiaochun, and it wasn’t just him. The other Outer Sect disciples, including the other contestants, were all gaping in shock. In all the times they had observed competitions like this, they had never seen anyone use protective shields to such an extent.

Li Qinghou’s face twitched, but from the look in his eyes, it was clear he could do nothing about the situation.

Chen Zi’ang took a deep breath as he grew even more certain that Bai Xiaochun and Li Qinghou were actually relatives. However, Du Lingfei simply gave a cold harrumph, and her derision increased.

Everyone watched with wide eyes as the gaunt young man down in the arena let out his own roar, then performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a wooden sword to fly directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0030 awe-chapter-31

The gaunt young man’s wooden sword pulsed with a strange energy, streaking through the air in a prismatic beam, directly toward Bai Xiaochun. However, before it could even get close, a pinging sound rang out from the exterior of Bai Xiaochun’s thick meter-and-a-half shield as the wooden sword bounced off of it.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun’s protective shields flickered, his eyes glittered, and he breathed a sigh of relief. Clearing his throat, he actually just sat down cross-legged.

The audience exchanged confused glances. They weren’t really sure what to say in response to Bai Xiaochun and his extreme level of defense. They had seen people who focused on defense before, but... had never seen anyone who shielded himself this much.

As for his opponent, the young man’s face first flushed, then went pale. Gritting his teeth, he roared, sending his flying sword shooting toward the glowing shields, ratcheting up in power even as it shot through the air.

A pinging sound rang out as the flying sword flew in again and again, but each time, it was sent spinning away. Finally, the pale-faced young man’s spiritual energy was more than half depleted, and a look of despair appeared on his face.

He had been fighting in duels for years, but this was the first time he had encountered an opponent who hid like a turtle in a shell. However, he wasn’t willing to give in yet. He had joined the competition with the express purpose of taking

3rd place. Staring at Bai Xiaochun with bloodshot eyes, he furiously roared, “Get out from behind that shield!”

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t scared at all by this young man, so he didn’t have any reservations about staying behind the shield and shouting, “If you’re good enough, why don't you come on inside!”

Strange expressions appeared on the faces of everyone in the audience as they looked at Bai Xiaochun, not sure whether to laugh or cry. The gaunt young man was so angry that blue veins popped out on his forehead as he clenched his jaw. Finally, he bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. When it landed on his wooden sword, the entire thing turned the color of blood.

Discussion immediately broke out in the audience.

“Blood Spirit Magic!”

“For him to use that magical technique shows that he really has been driven to madness!”

The blood-colored wooden sword moved even faster than before, and emitted double the pressure. Blood-colored light spread out in all directions as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

A boom rang out as the wooden sword pierced a full three inches into the shield. Rumbling could be heard as it tried to pierce further, but failed. In fact, because too much force was being exerted, cracks began to spread out over the sword.

A moment later, a pop could be heard as the entire wooden sword... shattered into pieces, which slowly floated down to the ground.

The gaunt young man’s eyes went wide, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. His spiritual energy was vastly depleted, his magical item destroyed, and he was so furious he simply passed out.

As Li Qinghou watched the scene playing out, his face grew increasingly unsightly. Chuckling wryly, Elder Sun stepped forward, signalled for people to come carry the gaunt young man away, and then declared Bai Xiaochun the winner.

“Ah, he let me win!” Bai Xiaochun said as the shield light around him faded away. Looking very solemn, he puffed his chest out and clasped his hands behind his back, looking every bit like a Chosen. As for the gaunt young man, as he was being carried off, he apparently heard Bai Xiaochun's words, regained consciousness, coughed up another mouthful of blood, and then passed out again.

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun turned to Elder Sun and clasped hands. Then he flicked his sleeve and walked out of the arena.

The Outer Sect disciples who had come to watch the competition took everything in fairly well. At most, they had strange looks on their faces. As for the contestants, they were looking at Bai Xiaochun with very unsightly expressions.

That was especially true of the people who had already won their respective matches. When they compared the gaunt young man’s current condition with Bai Xiaochun, they couldn’t help but feel the need to be on guard.

The competition continued, and soon the rest of the matches were completed. Of the original twenty participants, half had been eliminated to produce the current top 10.

That included Du Lingfei, Chen Zi’ang, and Bai Xiaochun, who stood there, chin stuck up, looking around at his fellow top 10 competitors. Inwardly, he was saying, “All I have to do is win one more match and then I’ll have succeeded!”

Seeing hope right there in front of him, he felt quite excited.

Elder Sun looked over the ten contestants, his gaze lingering on Bai Xiaochun for a moment before saying, “The top 5 will now be selected. Would the ten of you please step forward to select your marbles.”

This time, Bai Xiaochun scrambled to be first in line, and pulled out a marble with the number two written on it. Afterward, he immediately turned to study his fellow competitors.

It didn’t take long for everyone to draw a marble, after which Elder Sun announced that the first two fighters were to begin their match. Bai Xiaochun was joined by a burly, muscular man who, upon seeing who he was fighting, began to laugh loudly.

“Other people might fear your defenses, but I don’t care at all about them. I'm also adept with defense, so let's just wait and see which of us two can hold out for longer!” Laughing, the man slapped his bag of holding to produce a small buckler. After imbuing it with some spiritual energy, the buckler grew larger and began to emit a yellow glow which completely surrounded the man.

The man wasn't done yet, though. Roaring, his flesh and muscles expanded, and he even grew a few inches taller. The entire scene was quite shocking.

“I can’t believe it's Body Forging Magic!”

“That buckler looks familiar. Don’t tell me it’s a Dawnlight Buckler! That things costs 9,000 merit points!” Everyone was shocked, and as for Bai Xiaochun, his brow was furrowed.

When Elder Sun saw what was happening, he nodded his head slightly, eyes shining with a look of praise. Turning to Li Qinghou, he said, “This kid is Li Shan, fifth level of Qi Condensation. He’ll be a difficult opponent, as he was born with godly power, plus cultivates the Body Forging Magic. Not only is he incredibly strong, he also excels in defense.”

Li Qinghou nodded slightly, then looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was studying the burly man’s transformed body, and the shield he had. He recognized the shield from his visit to the Treasure Pavilion, and although he wasn't sure exactly how many merit points it cost, his frown deepened.

Everyone watching the competition seemed very interested to find out what was going to happen, especially the other disciples in the competition, who were clearly pleased to gloat in the misfortune of others.

“That fair-skinned disciple sure got unlucky.”

“Well, he got super lucky before, that's all. Now that he's facing a powerful opponent like this, he’ll naturally get beaten back into place.”

As the audience discussed the developments, the burly man smiled viciously and then began to stride rapidly toward Bai Xiaochun.

“There’s nothing you can do. I beat the last disciple I fought without even drawing a weapon. My fist is the most powerful magical technique I have!”

The man sped up, causing a wind to blast out. As he closed in, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered and he suddenly waved his finger, causing his little wooden sword to fly out from his bag of holding.

Without the slightest pause, it shot out in front of Bai Xiaochun toward the burly man.

As it slashed toward him, sword qi built up for dozens of meters around the sword, causing rumbling sounds to echo out.

The burly man’s face fell, and his scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. His eyes widened as an intense sensation of crisis washed through him. Without the slightest hesitation, he fell into retreat. Roaring, he waved both hands, sending his buckler out to block the sword.

A boom rang out as the wooden sword and the little buckler slammed into each other. However, the buckler didn’t do anything to even slow down the wooden sword. It was blasted apart, and the wooden sword continued on toward the burly man.

The man’s face was filled with shock; even if he were capable of dodging faster, it would do no good. The flying sword was on him in the blink of an eye, causing an icy wind to buffet his face.

“I concede!” he shouted without hesitation, his voice rising by a few octaves as he fell to the ground.

A buzzing sound could be heard as the wooden sword stopped just in front of the man’s forehead, then turned and flew back into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

Bai Xiaochun blinked, also somewhat shocked by the wooden sword. Before, he had only practiced with it, and had no idea it was so powerful. And that was before he even began to utilize Lightness-in-Heaviness.

After looking up in thought for a moment, he stuck his chin up, clasped his hands behind his back, and looked coolly at the burly man.

The man’s face was pale white, and yet he still didn't seem to want to back down. Crawling to his feet, he glared at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Using the power of magical items doesn’t count as winning! I don’t accept this as being a defeat!”

With that, the man turned and stalked out of the arena.

Elder Sun looked over at Bai Xiaochun, also astonished by the power of the wooden sword. However, he didn’t say anything other to announce that Bai Xiaochun was the victor.

“Hahaha,” Bai Xiaochun laughed to himself. “In the next battle I’ll just instantly concede. I became a cultivator to live forever, right? All this killing and fighting is too barbaric. That’s not how Bai Xiaochun does things.” Bai Xiaochun left the arena, feeling wonderful at having complied with Li Qinghou’s requirement to get into the top 5.

Li Qinghou’s eyes had also come to rest on Bai Xiaochun. Although everyone else had been focused on how incredible the flying sword was, Li Qinghou hadn’t been paying attention to that at all. He had been watching the skill and ease with which Bai Xiaochun controlled the flying sword.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had won another match, the crowd began to sigh emotionally.

“Ah, this guy must be rich, that's why he has such an incredible wooden sword. Hmph. If he had any other weapon he definitely couldn't have won!”

“Magical devices have nothing to do with your cultivation. First he used those amulets, then that sword. What a waste! He’s definitely going to go broke eventually.”

The grumblings didn't last for long though. The next battle soon got underway. Du Lingfei was fighting an opponent with an extraordinary cultivation base. It was a fierce fight, but Du Lingfei didn't use her banner. Instead, she utilized a flying sword. They fought back and forth in dazzling fashion until suddenly, Du Lingfei’s flying sword shot forward with incredible speed to appear directly in front of her opponent.

Such speed vastly surpassed that which ordinary disciples could control, sending the audience into an uproar when people realized what they were seeing.

“I can’t believe it's Lightness-in-Heaviness!!”

“Du Lingfei has actually reached enlightenment of that stage....”

“It’s Lightness-in-Heaviness!” Deep within Elder Sun’s eyes, the glitter of approval could be seen as he looked at Du Lingfei.

Li Qinghou also nodded.

Chen Zi’ang was shocked, and most everyone else who had made it into the top 10 had similar reactions. As for her opponent, he chuckled bitterly and clasped hands to concede.

Du Lingfei stood there in the arena, looking around proudly. Clasping hands toward Li Qinghou and Elder Sun, she left the arena.

The crowd was still in an uproar.

However, Bai Xiaochun was left standing there, blinking.

“That level of speed counts as Lightness-in-Heaviness?” he thought, astonished.

As Du Lingfei proudly left the arena, slight drops of sweat could be seen running down her face. Despite being in the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation, fighting two successive battles was quite a drain on her spiritual energy. That was especially true of the battle just now, in which her opponent had possessed unusual battle prowess. In the end, she had been forced to unleash her magic of Lightness-in-Heaviness, which was an even bigger drain on her spiritual energy. That was how she had secured victory.

Her goal was 1st place, and she knew that subsequent opponents would only be more powerful. Because this particular sect competition wasn’t very strictly organized, she wouldn’t have much time to rest before the next fight. Therefore, she immediately pulled out a medicinal pill, which she consumed, then closed her eyes and began to take advantage of the time to recover.

The top 5 now consisted of Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei, as well as Chen Zi’ang. In the end, there were two other young men, both of whom had profound cultivation bases in the fifth level of Qi Condensation.

Currently, everyone was in the process of rotating their cultivation bases, taking advantage of every opportunity to replenish some spiritual energy.

Only Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem to have spent any spiritual energy at all. In fact, he even stood off to the side yawning. When everyone else who had been eliminated from the competition saw that, it left them with the urge to beat him.

Now that he had fulfilled Li Qinghou’s demand to get into the top 5, he didn’t care at all about the rest of the competition.

Trying to suppress his boredom, he looked over at the other four top 5 competitors, especially Du Lingfei, musing that if the speed she had just unleashed counted as Lightness-in-Heaviness, then he was surely far, far beyond that.

“It’s too bad she has such an extremely murderous aura. Why would a good girl like that be so into fighting and killing? Don’t tell me that all girls who practice Immortal cultivation are weirdos like this? Zhou Xinqi is super proud, and Hou Xiaomei is way too moody.” Bai Xiaochun shook his head. He was just about to look away from Du Lingfei when she seemed to sense that he was looking at her. Her eyes suddenly snapped open to stare at him coldly.

As far as Du Lingfei was concerned, Bai Xiaochun wasn't even worth thinking about. After watching his first two battles, she was of the opinion that he had pulled off lucky wins, which caused the derision in her heart to grow stronger.

“Well well, you dare to stare at me, do you?!” Bai Xiaochun immediately ceased any motion of looking away. Instead, his eyes went wide as he glared right back at Du Lingfei. Staring contests didn’t have anything to do with fighting and bloodshed, so from a young age, he had met few people who could overcome him.

Du Lingfei frowned. As for the admirers who clustered behind her, they were very irritated, and cast ferocious glares in his direction.

However, seeing so many eyes staring at him, and considering that quite a few of them were extremely fierce, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. He only had two eyes, so how could he possibly match up? “Well, they have numbers on their side, and besides, true men don’t fight with girls.”

With a harrumph, he looked away.

About that time, Elder Sun’s voice rang out across the arena.

“Very good, all of you. This competition has gone very well so far. And now, we will continue to narrow down the competitors. Would the five of you please step forward and select a marble. One of those marbles is a free pass into the top 3.” Smiling, Elder Sun produced the bag again.

This time, Chen Zi’ang was first. After pulling out the marble, he frowned; his marble had the number four written on it.

Du Lingfei was next, who got the number two marble. The other two Outer Sect disciple got numbers one and three respectively.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even need to draw a marble; the remaining marble was the free pass.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up, and he chuckled. He took his place outside of the fighting arena, arms folded, feeling completely relaxed as he prepared to watch Du Lingfei and all the others. He hadn’t even planned to continue on the with the competition, but now he didn’t have to do anything and he was already in the top 3.

“Luck is a big part of strength!” he thought, feeling quite pleased with himself.

That very luck caused quite a few audience members to stare at him with even stranger expressions on their faces. Most of them really couldn’t bear to accept the situation, especially the other disciples who had been eliminated, whose hearts were filled with jealousy and envy.

“This guy is totally shameless. Alright, fine, he used a magical item to get into the top five, but then he actually got a free pass into the top three!”

“How despicable. In fact, there’s never been someone as despicable as this to ever show up in the competitions.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0031 awe-chapter-32

It wasn’t just the audience. Even Du Lingfei was feeling a bit jealous of how lucky Bai Xiaochun had gotten. It was the same with Chen Zi’ang. The other four people who had reached the top 5 had all spend a lot of energy already. If they had managed to get the blank marble, it would have given them a bit of breathing room to rest, which would have been an immense advantage during the rest of the fighting.

Elder Sun looked at Bai Xiaochun and smiled, whereas Li Qinghou’s expression remained the same as before.

Bai Xiaochun looked on excitedly as the next round of fighting began. Du Lingfei’s opponent was a fierce disciple who frequently left the sect on missions to slay wild beasts, and was the type of person who was used to seeing a lot of bloodshed. On the other hand, Du Lingfei’s skill with Lightness-in-Heaviness was quite fear-inspiring. Not only did it provide her with powerful defensive capabilities, but she was also able to move with incredible speed.

The audience was completely focused on the match, and occasional ‘oohs’ and ‘ahs’ could be heard. Both fighters were clearly in danger of being injured, and yet… there happened to be a certain voice calling out, taking the lead in the cheering.

“Whoah! Nice sword move!

“Look at that reverse Dragon Tail attack! Oh no! Look behind you! Quick, look behind you!

“Rah rah rah!” Bai Xiaochun was really getting sucked into watching the fight, to the point where he even started applauding at key points. It wasn’t an act either; he really was impressed by Du Lingfei's performance, and by now, had forgotten that he was actually one of the competitors.

When Elder Sun saw what was happening, he coughed dryly. Li Qinghou’s face was completely expressionless, but inwardly all he could do was shrug his shoulders. After all, Bai Xiaochun had already accomplished the assigned task.

Facing such a powerful opponent, Du Lingfei had no time for distractions. She focused completely for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, and after using Lightness-in-Heaviness three times, she finally secured victory.

However, she ended up exhausting over half of her spiritual energy. Sweating, she was just about to walk out of the arena to rest up a bit, when she heard Bai Xiaochun cheering her on. Then she thought about how incredibly difficult it had been for her to get into the top 3, whereas Bai Xiaochun had done it without any effort at all. Irritation rose up in her heart, and she wished she could simply blast him with a powerful attack right then and there.

When Bai Xiaochun noticed that Du Lingfei was glaring at him angrily, he blinked a few times, feeling a bit offended. Then he glared back at her, which seemed to push Du Lingfei to the point where she almost couldn’t restrain herself from attacking.

Chen Zi’ang’s next fight went a bit smoother. However, he still fought for about the time it takes half an incense stick to burn, and wasted quite a bit of spiritual energy.

He was also feeling quite envious of Bai Xiaochun.

“We now have a top 3. All three of you are Outer Sect... celebrities.” Elder Sun cleared his throat. “Please come to determine the fighting order. This time, the number three marble counts as the blank marble. Whoever picks it will advance directly to the final match.” Elder Sun waved his hand, causing the bag to appear once again.

Chen Zi’ang was the first in line this time, and when he pulled out the marble and saw the number 'two’ written on it, he sighed and stepped off to the side.

Du Lingfei took a deep breath as she stepped forward. But then she stopped in place and turned icily to Bai Xiaochun.

“You go first!” she said coldly.

Bai Xiaochun, who had been watching the exciting fights this entire time, didn’t refuse. He reached into the bag as Du Lingfei looked on with an icy expression. It wasn’t just her that was waiting to see what would happen, all eyes in the audience were fixed upon Bai Xiaochun.

Even Elder Sun and Li Qinghou were craning their necks.

Being the focus of attention in this way caused Bai Xiaochun to feel a bit embarrassed. Actually, he didn’t even really care which marble he pulled out, and yet when he finally did remove his hand, his eyes went wide with shock.

Number three.

Bai Xiaochun looked back at Du Lingfei, coughed dryly, and said, “Um, hey, you asked me to go first.”

Eyes gleaming ferociously, Du Lingfei clenched her hands into fist and stared murderously at Bai Xiaochun. Her chest rose as she took a deep breath; she seemed to be on the verge of exploding.

Chen Zi’ang’s eyes went wide, and his jaw dropped. The idea of someone being so incredibly lucky simply exceeded his imagination. Yet again... Bai Xiaochun would skip an entire match.

When the surrounding disciples saw the marble in Bai Xiaochun’s hands, they couldn’t restrain themselves. Instantly, a huge commotion broke out.

“He advances automatically again! His name is Bai Xiaochun, right? How... how could he be so lucky!? He got the blank marble twice in a row!”

“How shameless of this guy! He hasn’t done anything, and yet has made it all the way to the final match....”

“How could a guy like that make it to the finals? Dammit, if I was as lucky as that, I could do the same thing!” Everyone was in an uproar, and the people who had been eliminated from the competition earlier seemed especially envious.

Elder Sun hesitated for a moment and then looked over at Li Qinghou. Li Qinghou let out a long sigh; he had to admit that Bai Xiaochun really had gotten lucky.

In Bai Xiaochun’s mind, there was no reason for the crowd to react in such a way. Smiling awkwardly, he hurried out of the arena, standing outside with an embarrassed look on his face.

“Ai. I was planning to concede anyway....” he thought, looking incredulously at the marble in his hand.

Du Lingfei took a deep breath to suppress her extreme irritation. Gritting her teeth, she looked at Chen Zi’ang, simultaneously settling her qi and clearing her mind. She had done her homework on Chen Zi’ang, and knew that he was a very powerful opponent.

Chen Zi’ang smiled bitterly, taking a deep breath as he gazed back at Du Lingfei.

After staring off for a few breaths of time, they sprang into action. Almost instantly, booms and bangs began to ring out. This was actually the most spectacular fight in the entire competition so far. Chen Zi’ang erupted with his full power, going to the lengths of throwing out some seeds, which he then catalyzed into full-grown plants with attack powers. When Bai Xiaochun saw him use his skill in plants and vegetation in such a way, his eyes glittered.

As for Du Lingfei, she used Lightness-in-Heaviness to send her flying sword whistling through the air. After they had fought for a bit, she then produced a wooden sword, which swirled about in conjunction with the ordinary flying sword, turning the battlefield into an even more spectacular scene than before.

The two of them couldn’t keep using their trump cards for very long, and were rapidly running out of spiritual energy. The fighting only continued to grow more bitter.

Bai Xiaochun was watching excitedly, whooping and hollering the entire time.

The battle went on for about an hour, until a massive boom rang out as Du Lingfei pushed the wooden sword so hard that it exploded. The resulting fragments were then propelled by Lightness-in-Heaviness in a huge attack that Chen Zi’ang simply couldn't dodge. He was forced into retreat and ended up drawing on all of his spiritual energy. Finally, he sighed and conceded.

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples were quite impressed by the intense battle, and their eyes gleamed with admiration as they gazed at Du Lingfei. They were now fully convinced of how amazing she was. As for Chen Zi’ang, his reputation also improved because of the fight.

Even though he had lost, he was sure to become even more famous in the days to come.

Elder Sun seemed quite pleased, and was even considering taking Du Lingfei on as a personal apprentice.

At the same time, no matter how the competition ended, Bai Xiaochun’s name was also sure to spread....

The moment Chen Zi’ang called out that he conceded, Du Lingfei slumped in place in the middle of the arena, her face pale. She was swaying back and forth in exhaustion, her spiritual energy almost completely depleted. Taking a deep breath, she produced some medicinal pills which she instantly consumed. However, she knew that the pills would only replenish so much, and she could only recover completely by sitting cross-legged in meditation for several hours. After all, she had just fought four battles in a row.

However, according to the rules of this type of competition, the disciples were not given very much time for rest. After all, it was only a small-scale competition.

“Bai Xiaochun, get out here!” Du Lingfei said through gritted teeth. Her eyes gleamed with a ferocious light as she looked at Bai Xiaochun standing outside of the arena. She wanted to take advantage of the little bit of spiritual energy she had to defeat this damnable Bai Xiaochun, who had gotten into the final match only by pure luck.

As soon as the words left Du Lingfei’s mouth, everyone in the audience turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, eager to gloat in his misfortune. In their minds, even if Du Lingfei was bone tired, Bai Xiaochun had only achieved victory by random chance, and she would be able to defeat him easily no matter the circumstances.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then looked at Du Lingfei standing there unsteadily, and suddenly realized that he... could actually take 1st place.

“This is the time for Bai Xiaochun to finally become super famous. Once I go out there and use my Lightness-in-Heaviness, then everyone is going to be completely shocked.” Puffing his chest out proudly, he strode into the arena, envisioning the scene of everyone reacting in shock to his win.

However, the instant his foot touched down, Du Lingfei’s eyes flickered coldly, and she suddenly performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. Instantly, her flying sword shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

A brutal air emanated off of the flying sword, sending intense coldness out in all directions. Clearly this one attack was backed by all of the spiritual energy Du Lingfei could muster, causing the sword to emanate incredible pressure.

Even more shocking was that Du Lingfei flew into the air behind the sword, almost as if she were about to merge with it and become one.

A boom rang out as the sword accelerated toward Bai Xiaochun with shocking speed, a speed that vastly exceeded the speed she had used when fighting Chen Zi’ang. A piercing whistling sound echoed out as it became a prismatic beam that bore down on Bai Xiaochun.

Everyone watching was completely shocked by the sword move, and began to cry out in shock.

“Solitary Sword, Flying Immortal!!”

“I can’t believe Elder Sister Du is actually using that sword incantation!!”

Elder Sun’s eyes gleamed brightly, and Li Qinghou nodded. Both of them could tell that Du Lingfei had actually never successfully pulled off this sword incantation. However, at this point in the battle, when her spiritual energy was virtually depleted, she managed to succeed. Using her last bit of energy, she just barely managed to unleash the sword incantation.

“By putting everything on the line, she gained enlightenment of the sword incantation,” Li Qinghou said, eyes gleaming with admiration. “This Du Lingfei isn’t bad. She actually seems more suited to the cultivation of Green Crest Peak.”

All of the Outer Sect disciples were completely shaken. Everything seemed to turn into a blur, except for Du Lingfei and her flying sword, which merged together into a picture of perfect clarity.

The sword whistled through the air, followed by the sword wielder, becoming a powerful attack. Du Lingfei looked exhausted, but her eyes gleamed with a sharp light. She was extremely confident that this sword move would secure her the victory.

In almost the exact same instant that the flying sword and Du Lingfei closed in on Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. Rumbling sounds then echoed out as all of his numerous defensive assets erupted out layer by layer, including the jade pendant and all the amulets. At the same time, he flew backward at top speed.

The flying sword was clearly not an ordinary object, and it quickly began to pierce through the shields. It stabbed through layer after layer, collapsing all the defensive shields until it actually reached Bai Xiaochun himself.

However, by that point, it didn't seem to have much energy left. Before it could actually stab into him, it got stuck. Even as he flew backward, the sword keeping pace, it was possible to see the layers of leather clothing he was wearing.

When the audience realized this, their jaws dropped, and they gasped.

“B-Bai Xiaochun... has so many defenses!!”

“How terrified of dying is this guy? Is it really worth it? He actually used magical items and talismans for a little competition like this? And on top of all that he wore leather armor!?!?”

Du Lingfei’s face was pale white as she watched Bai Xiaochun running away like a rabbit whose tail had just been stepped on. Not only was he moving with incredible speed, her sword was still stuck in his clothing. Gritting her teeth, she performed an incantation gesture and pointed out in an attempt to drag the flying sword back to her. However, she had so little spiritual energy that all she could do was make it tremble a bit.

She tried one last time, but even as she tried to circulate her spiritual energy, blood began to ooze out of the corners of her mouth, and she staggered backward several paces, where she stood unsteadily for a moment before dropping down to sit on the ground. Her face was deathly pale, and her spiritual energy was completely drained.

In her heart, she felt that it was a big injustice. She had struggled so hard to get into the top 2, whereas Bai Xiaochun had done almost nothing. In fact, he hadn't even used any of his spiritual energy. Her irritation quickly turned into rage; gritted her teeth, she stared murderously at Bai Xiaochun, wishing she could kill him several times over. In fact, if she had the energy, she would go over and bite him.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he sped backward in retreat; he had never imagined that Du Lingfei would actually use a move like the one she had.

Unexpectedly, all of his defenses had been pierced.

“Fudge, it's a good thing I was thinking straight and put on eight leather jackets.” He looked down at the flying sword sticking into his shoulder. It was now completely devoid of any energy, and was stuck fast within all the layers of leather. By the time it actually reached his skin, it had nothing left to push it any further.

Furthermore, thanks to his Undying Skin, when it actually touched him, it didn't even match up to a mosquito bite.

Fear lingering in his heart, Bai Xiaochun eyed the sword and then carefully pulled it out. Then he glanced over at Du Lingfei, who was sitting there gasping for breath.

“Elder Sister, you really shouldn't throw your treasures around like this. Do you want this sword or not? If you don't want it, then I’ll take it.” Looking extremely pleased, he put the flying sword into his bag of holding, then took out his own little wooden sword. Just as he was about to launch an attack, people in the crowd began to cry out in alarm.

Seeing Bai Xiaochun take her flying sword caused Du Lingfei’s eyes to be shot with blood.

“You....” she said. Just as she was about to flip out completely, she passed out.

She was the second person in the competition to faint because of Bai Xiaochun.

“Eee? What did you go and faint for?” Bai Xiaochun looked at the unconscious Du Lingfei, and then back at his little wooden sword. Finally, he shrugged.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0032 awe-chapter-33

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples, especially the ones who had been eliminated from the competition early on, glared at Bai Xiaochun angrily. Many people even began to shout out.

“Shameless! You're completely shameless, Bai Xiaochun!”

“Winning that way doesn't count and we all know it!!”

“Disqualify him!”

Everyone joined together in their rage, causing Bai Xiaochun to instantly grow jumpy with fear. He also realized that showing off his Lightness-in-Heaviness ability wouldn’t abate the crowd’s fury, and in fact, could potentially lead to worse consequences, and cause them to call him even more shameless.... Instead, he turned to look at Elder Sun.

“Elder Sun, I got 1st place, right? Could you go ahead and announce it?”

Elder Sun smiled wryly in response. As for Li Qinghou, he sighed; how could he ever have imagined that requiring Bai Xiaochun join the competition would result in him taking 1st place?

Elder Sun shook his head and chuckled. “Uh... well I guess I might as well. Bai Xiaochun has taken 1st place in the competition!”

In response, everyone stared furiously at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was of the opinion that he was actually pretty powerful, but considering how many people there were… his heart began to prickle with fear. Just when he was about step out of the arena and leave this dangerous location, Du Lingfei, with the help of some bystanders, regained consciousness and sat back up. Panting, she glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun, gritted her teeth, and then cried, “Bai Xiaochun, I refuse to admit defeat!

“You might have taken 1st place, but that's only because I let you have it. And that doesn’t change how much I hate you. Do you dare to have another fight!?”

Bai Xiaochun gave a sarcastic chuckle and kept walking. In his mind, he would be crazy to fight with this deranged woman again. Besides, what would happen if she passed out again?

“I won’t fight you with magic,” she continued. “Besides, as Outer Sect disciples, we’re both apprentice apothecaries of Fragrant Cloud Peak. Why don’t we compete in skill with plants and vegetation?!” Du Lingfei glared at Bai Xiaochun the entire time, and when she spoke, her words were spoken slowly and decisively.

“If you win, you can keep that Pinewood Sword of mine. But if you don’t agree, then you’ll regret it!”

Bai Xiaochun stopped walking. Having heard skill with plants and vegetation mentioned, he couldn't help but turn his head to look back at Du Lingfei.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had stopped and was apparently hesitating, she resisted the impulse to unleash a savage attack, and quickly continued, “Bai Xiaochun, if you can defeat me in terms of skill with plants and vegetation, then you can even have this Cloudsoaring Incense!” With that, she produced a stick of bluish-purple incense.

As soon as the incense appeared, it began to pulse with spiritual energy, and the surrounding Outer Sect disciples’ eyes instantly gleamed with envy.

“A tier-1 spirit medicine! Cloudsoaring Incense... it's a really remarkable tier-1 spirit medicine. Definitely very expensive, and useful for anyone under the seventh level of Qi Condensation!”

“Du Lingfei must have spent a lot of merit points on that in preparation for breaking out of the fifth level of Qi Condensation....”

“Elder Sister Du’s skill with plants and vegetation got her into the top 20 of the first three stone steles outside the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion. Bai Xiaochun is definitely going to lose!”

Bai Xiaochun instantly recognized the Cloudsoaring Incense, which he had read about when studying the introduction to cloudsoaring grass in the third volume of plants and vegetation. He was instantly moved, and that was even before he heard everyone mention that Du Lingfei was only in the top 20 on the stones steles, after which his eyes gleamed.

Taking a few steps back, he stammered, “Y-you’re... you’re really in the top 20 on the stone steles of plants and vegetation?”

He actually just wanted to confirm that what he had overheard just now was true.

“Are you going to compete or not!?” Du Lingfei said through gritted teeth.

“But I’ve only studied the first three volumes....” he said hesitantly.

“That’s what I’m talking about! Compete with me in the first three volumes! Come on, I dare you!” Du Lingfei was so angry she felt like she was about to explode.

“Fine… I’ll compete!” he said. “Happy?” Although he looked as though he wanted to cry, inwardly, his heart was blooming with flowers of joy. He couldn’t help but think that this girl really was a bit dim-witted.

As soon as the crowd heard Bai Xiaochun's words, they began to boo and heckle him. Du Lingfei took a deep breath, sucking in quite a bit of spiritual energy, which stabilized her a bit. Glaring angrily at Bai Xiaochun, she stalked forward to Elder Sun, then clasped hands and bowed.

“Elder, Disciple Du Lingfei requests that you bear official witness to a battle of plants and vegetation between myself and Bai Xiaochun.”

Elder Sun’s opinion of Du Lingfei was increasing by the moment. He stroked his beard for a moment before smiling and saying, “Very well. I shall bear witness. However, since we are speaking of skill with plants and vegetation, perhaps it would be better for the peak lord to decide the nature of the challenges.”

He looked over at Li Qinghou. Li Qinghou looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, then nodded.

The surrounding disciples were now quite excited, as was Du Lingfei, who turned to Li Qinghou, clasped hands and bowed.

Bai Xiaochun was also very pleased that he wouldn’t have to engage in any dangerous fighting to make a name for himself. He stood there, no longer looking like he was about to cry, but rather, chin stuck up, looking arrogantly out at the crowd in the same way a Chosen would. Du Lingfei snorted coldly.

At this point, Li Qinghou glanced at Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei, then began to speak, his voice cool, “The Dao of plants and vegetation is unpredictable. Although we will limit things to the first three volumes, those volumes contain numerous variables. Today I will present you with two challenges. We shall see which of the two of you can secure victory.” With that, he tapped his bag of holding and produced two seeds.

“These two flower seeds can be catalyzed with spiritual energy. The level of your skill with plants and vegetation will determine how many spirit flowers bloom. This is how we will decide the winner of the first round.” Li Qinghou waved his hand, sending the two seeds flying to Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei respectively.

Du Lingfei caught the seed without any hesitation. At the same time, Li Qinghou sent a medicinal pill flying her way, which she also caught, a look of shock appearing on her face.

“Take that pill to restore your cultivation base,” Li Qinghou said calmly. Du Lingfei’s face lit up. After expressing her thanks, she consumed the pill. After a few breaths of time passed, she trembled, and her eyes began to shine brightly; her cultivation base had been completely restored.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very happy with that, but he didn't dare to say anything. Instead, he looked down at the spirit seed lying in his palm, and began to study it closely.

“Don’t recognize it?” Du Lingfei said, sneering. “Well I can tell you that it’s a bluespirit thistle seed.” With that, she completely ignored Bai Xiaochun, closing her eyes and circulating her spiritual energy, which she then poured into the seed in her hand.

Almost immediately, an emerald green sprout climbed up from the seed. It grew rapidly until it was about one-third of a meter tall. Then, it bloomed with a blue spirit flower, and began to grow even taller.

Bai Xiaochun looked over at what was happening, and then turned his attention back to the seed, which he continued to study thoughtfully.

Li Qinghou was watching Bai Xiaochun the whole time, and soon, a virtually undetectable flicker of surprise could be seen deep in his eyes.

While Bai Xiaochun stood there thinking, all of the surrounding Outer Sect disciples were watching Du Lingfei. The plant in her hand was two thirds of a meter tall, and already had a second flower.

By the time Bai Xiaochun sent some spiritual energy into the seed, Du Lingfei’s spirit plant had already already sprouted with three flowers. Bai Xiaochun didn't maintain a steady flow of spiritual energy, but rather, sent it into the seed in fits and bursts. In fact, when the seed sprouted, he even blew the first few sprouts away with a breath of air.

After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, Du Lingfei’s face was ashen, and she was gritting her teeth.

With her final bit of energy, she caused a sixth blue flower to sprout, after which she breathed a sigh of relief. Placing the plant down next to her, she clasped hands and bowed to Li Qinghou.

Li Qinghou nodded. “Six spirit flowers, all of them superior-grade. Nice job.”

Feeling very pleased with herself, Du Lingfei looked over at Bai Xiaochun. When she saw that his spirit plant wasn’t even one third of a meter tall yet, her sneer widened.

The surrounding outer Sect disciples were getting very excited.

“Elder Sister Du definitely deserves her reputation. That bluespirit thistle bloomed with six flowers. That’s incredible! Bai Xiaochun hasn’t even caused one flower to bloom. He’s completely good for nothing.”

“A competition of plant catalysis first involves studying the seed, and then using unique catalysis methods to cause it to grow. In that regard, Elder Sister Du is really at the head of the pack.”

In the middle of all the conversations, Bai Xiaochun’s spirit plant gradually reached a height of one third of a meter. Next, a somewhat shrivelled blue flower appeared. Compared to Du Lingfei’s flowers, it looked rather malnourished, and even elicited some laughs from the crowd. But then, all of a sudden, a second blue flower appeared on the short plant. Next was a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth, and a seventh....

In the space of a few breaths, Bai Xiaochun’s spirit plant bloomed with nine flowers!!

This instantly led to widespread shock and disbelief.

Du Lingfei was staring at what to her was a completely unimaginable scene. “Bluespirit thistle blooms with one flower every third meter. How could this plant have nine flowers when it's only a third of a meter tall!”

However, things weren’t over yet. Even as the nine small blue flowers appeared, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and then suddenly exhaled sharply. That one breath contained spiritual energy which settled onto the nine flowers and, in the blink of an eye, caused them to begin to shiver and change colors. No longer were they blue, but rather, indigo!

Indigo starts out as blue, but its color is deeper and more profound!

As soon as people realized what was happening, their eyes went wide with astonishment.

“That’s... that’s not a bluespirit thistle!!”

“Indigospirit thistle! It’s indigospirit thistle, the seed of which is very difficult to distinguish from that of the bluespirit thistle! In fact, if you use the catalysis method for bluespirit thistle in indigospirit thistle, you’ll actually produce a bluespirit thistle, except you’ll have wasted the seed!”

Everyone was shocked, and were starting at Bai Xiaochun in disbelief.

Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, then placed the indigospirit thistle off to the side. Chuckling sarcastically, he clasped his hands behind his back and looked at Du Lingfei.

His skill with plants and vegetation had already reached an indescribable level. After studying the seed for a while, he had noticed the differences, and was easily able to tell what type of seed it was.

Du Lingfei’s face flickered; to her, it felt as if someone had just slapped her across the face. She staggered backward a few steps, looking first at her bluespirit thistle and then at Bai Xiaochun’s indigospirit thistle. Suddenly, her face flushed with heat. Earlier, she had berated Bai Xiaochun for his lack of knowledge, but then, moments later, he had proven definitively that she had wasted the seed.

“This Bai Xiaochun is definitely extremely lucky,” she thought, grinding her teeth. “I assumed it was a bluespirit thistle, and he guessed that it was an indigospirit thistle. Well, that was just a lucky chance on his part, not him actually identifying the seed!”

“Bai Xiaochun takes the first round,” Li Qinghou said coolly. “That truly was the seed of an indigospirit thistle, not a bluespirit thistle. They look similar, but some of the veins grow differently. Without studying it down to the finest detail, it's easy to confuse them.” Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he waved his hand again, causing a spirit plant to appear.

It was very unique, with four colors, and nine leaves of different shapes. It also had two flowers on it, one black and one white. The flowers almost seemed in sentient, as they were constantly struggling with each other, as if they wanted to suppress each other. Although the plant seemed like one single plant, if you looked closely you would see the signs that it had been grafted together.

“The first round was dedicated to catalysis. As for the second round, it will focus on identification. This particular spirit plant has been grafted together from numerous other plants. Whichever of you can correctly guess the greatest number of graft materials... will be the winner.”

Li Qinghou sent the grafted plant floating out in front of him, then looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Considering he had brought Bai Xiaochun into the sect, he was very curious to see what other surprising things he could do.

Du Lingfei gritted her teeth. In her mind, she had just been careless moments ago. Now, she was unprecedentedly focused. Taking out a jade slip, she walked up to the spirit plant.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gleamed with interest as he also stepped forward and began to examine the plant, occasionally making notations in a jade slip. A moment later, Du Lingfei stepped back, rubbing the bridge of her nose. Then she looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a grim expression on her face. She had identified eight types of plants. The others were types she didn’t recognize.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn't finished. His eyes were glowing even more brightly as he buzzed around the plant in circles. Occasionally he even cried out in surprise, as if he had just noticed something very interesting.

“Wow, you can do that!?

“Well this... this is very interesting!”

The crowd looked on silently. None of them believed that Bai Xiaochun could identify any of the plants, and in fact, most of them were convinced that the reason he had catalyzed the indigospirit thistle was simply luck.

“Faker!” Du Lingfei thought. “Yeah, you just keep on pretending!” Inwardly, she was starting to feel uneasy, and her hatred for Bai Xiaochun only continued to grow.

Enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, and Bai Xiaochun was still going. He really was completely absorbed in what he was doing, and had even forgotten that he was in a competition. Seeing a grafted plant like this had seemingly opened up a huge door in his mind regarding skill with plants and vegetation. All of a sudden, he realized that the tens of thousands of medicinal plants he was familiar with were not just useful on their own, but could actually be mixed together.

Eventually, he backed up reluctantly, eyes shining with fascination and admiration.

Li Qinghou and Elder Sun exchanged a glance, and then Li Qinghou said, “Very well. The time has come to reveal which spirit plants you’ve identified. Du Lingfei, you go first.”

Du Lingfei gritted her teeth, then pulled out her jade slip and began to speak.

“I saw eight types of plants, including waterheaven rhubarb, coldsole root, earthdragon fruit, dawnfog lichen....” She continued on until she reached the final medicinal plant. “Sealwort flower!” With that, Du Lingfei looked over at Bai Xiaochun, certain that he would never be able to surpass her. Of course, although eight didn’t seem like a lot, it was an incredibly difficult task to identify the various elements of a perfectly grafted medicinal plant like this. Eight was actually quite a bit.

“Hmph. If Bai Xiaochun is shameless enough to say the same eight plants,” she said coldly, “then we can can consult the jade slips as proof!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, looked around, then flicked his sleeve and pulled out the jade slip that held his notes.

“Let’s forget the eight plants that Elder Sister Du mentioned. Other than those, I saw a total of 67 types of medicinal plants. Unfortunately, there were 31 that I couldn't identify. That means that in the end, I identified 36.” His words instantly sent the surrounding disciples into an uproar.

“36? How is that possible!”

“7 or 8 should be the limit. How could he possibly have identified dozens?!”

Du Lingfei glared coldly at Bai Xiaochun. She simply didn't believe his words, and assumed that he was going to just randomly guess the types of plants.

“Junior Brother Bai,” she said sarcastically, “why don’t you just say there were 30,000 types of plants? That would cover everything in the third volume of plants and vegetation, so at least you would be certain of guessing a few right.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0033 awe-chapter-34

All of the Outer Sect disciples in the audience snickered in response to what Du Lingfei had just said. None of them believed that Bai Xiaochun’s skill with plants and vegetation could possibly match up to hers.

That was especially true after hearing the last thing he said, which seemed completely unbelievable. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun was just going to blindly guess at the grafted plants.

“If Bai Xiaochun really can identify all those types of plants, then his skill with the plants and vegetation of the first three volumes would put him on the same level as Elder Sister Zhou Xinqi! How could that be possible!?”

“Ah, he's just being cryptic to confuse everyone. This guy is so annoying! At least he’ll finally be exposed as a fraud!”

As everyone jeered and mocked Bai Xiaochun, he stood there, frowning slightly.

“Are you people finished yet?” he said, his expression ice cold, true anger finally burning in his heart. If this were a combat situation, he wouldn’t feel like that. But considering his grand aspiration of becoming a master apothecary, for people to doubt his abilities with plants and vegetation was a huge insult.

“You can say I’m just lucky, and you can say I won because of my magical items. But when it comes to the Dao of plants and vegetation, don't think that your superficial knowledge enables you to see the length and breadth of heaven and earth!”

When his voice echoed out, solemn and serious, his slight frame suddenly seemed more like a towering mountain. The cold way he looked at the Outer Sect disciples caused their laughter to turn into stares of shock.

Even Du Lingfei was taken aback. The Bai Xiaochun in front of her right now seemed like a completely different person than the one from before.

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and then flicked his sleeve. Abandoning his normally charming yet aggravating demeanor, he stood with his hands clasped behind his back, looked around coldly, and then began to speak, radiating a strange, indescribable energy. “This spirit plant, which I’ll tentatively refer to as a black-white orchid, contains goldsilver root, heavenyellow leaf, watery netgrass, ninelands fruit, spiral pulp, bordercloud bloom, searchwind stalk, yang-soaking fruit....”

As he continued to speak, that energy grew stronger and stronger, leading to strange expressions on the faces of the spectators.

That was especially true of Du Lingfei, whose frown deepened as she looked over at the spirit plant. She was familiar with all of the medicinal plants that Bai Xiaochun referenced, which were indeed from the first three volumes of plants and vegetation, and yet she couldn’t see any evidence whatsoever that they existed within the grafted plant.

Du Lingfei snorted, still completely unconvinced that Bai Xiaochun was actually identifying the grafted plants. “Seems like you really are just going to recite a bunch of random plants from the first three volumes of plants and vegetation. If you can actually recite all of those plants from memory, then I guess I'll have lost, and in fact, I'll admit defeat."

Everyone began to once again ridicule and mock Bai Xiaochun.

"Yeah, that's right. If you're good enough, then why don't you recite the entire first three volumes of plants and vegetation!? Then you'll definitely win!"

"Trying to seem cryptic, huh? Superficial knowledge? The length and breadth of heaven and earth? You're the one with the superficial knowledge. If you don't recognize the plants, just say so. There's no need to try to pull a fast one. How despicable!"

Bai Xiaochun looked coldly at Du Lingfei, then back at the crowd. Then he laughed, looked back and the plant, and continued, "Grow hundredgrass root for thirty years until it becomes fullgrown hundredgrass. Remove the stalks and veins, roast them, then soak them in spirit water. After that, graft them onto skybleak leaf, and you end up with this distinctive spotting pattern." Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing a slight gust of wind to lift up one of the leaves on the plant, revealing a distinctive spotting pattern.

"Nine skybleak leaves have been combined into a single leaf, and then fed whiteburn flowers as they grew. You can see that right here!

"Whiteburn flowers only bloom once they reach one hundred years of age. When they do, you have only one hundred breaths of time to graft them onto a clover ginseng, which you can use to feed the skybleak leaf. This white flower here is obviously a whiteburn flower!

“Clover ginseng, when roasted with spirit fire, eventually withers, infusing the ginseng with the essence of the leaves. That will then aid in the growth of flatshell seed, and the two can be combined!

“Then, that flatshell seed....” As Bai Xiaochun spoke, he gestured grandiosely, pointing out the various parts of the spirit plant which contained the evidence he referred to. His descriptions were very precise, and even included the various techniques involved. Soon, the looks of scorn faded away, and everyone began to breathe heavily. Faces fell, and eventually, all the Outer Sect disciple had looks of disbelief on their faces. There were even some people who cried out aloud with shock.

“This is impossible!!”

“Heavens, how could he be doing this!?”

Each and every statement uttered by Bai Xiaochun was like an invisible palm slapping these people. After all, all of them were apprentice apothecaries. Earlier, they hadn't been able to see through the secrets hidden in the spirit plant, but with Bai Xiaochun’s detailed explanation, all of a sudden, it seemed to make more sense.

Everything Bai Xiaochun said was correct, and complete. His performance was a like a huge slap in the face to all of the Outer Sect disciples.

“I can’t believe that this Bai Xiaochun... has such shocking skill with plants and vegetation!!” The Outer Sect disciples felt like explosions were going off in their hearts. Their previous ridicule and mockery now caused their faces to burn so hot it hurt.

Even more astonishing was that his explanations were obviously inferred in reverse. He was able to discern the grafting method merely by looking at the grafted plant; only someone with an unbelievably advanced skill with plants and vegetation could do something like that.

Even Elder Sun’s eyes were wide with disbelief. “He’s inferring everything in reverse! He... he understands plants and vegetation to an incredible degree....

“He’s only an apprentice apothecary, and yet he is able to analyze a spirit plant grafted by the peak lord himself. This... this....”

As for Li Qinghou, his eyes were shining brightly; he almost couldn’t believe he was looking at the same Bai Xiaochun he knew from before.

Du Lingfei’s face was ashen, and she staggered backward. Based on her skill with plants and vegetation, as soon as she heard Bai Xiaochun's explanation, she knew that he was right. In fact, at a few points during his speech, she didn’t even understand what he was saying. By this point, she was feeling completely and utterly embarrassed.

Currently, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t using any sort of magical technique. However, every statement he made was backed by his understanding of plants and vegetation, and became like divine abilities or magical items. Du Lingfei was simply incapable of processing what was happening. She felt like lightning was crashing around in her mind, and she backed further and further away, her face growing even more pale.

“Flaming crow-dipper and nineflames sky can be used to make the spirit bulblets impervious to strong sunlight. Merge them into crow-dipper fruit, and it will give birth to blackskull lily! That is the last of the spirit plants that I recognize.” It took Bai Xiaochun about half the time it takes an incense stick to burn to finish his explanation. His eyes flashed like lightning as he scanned the crowd and then eventually looked straight at Du Lingfei.

“Elder Sister Du. Ladies and gentlemen of the sect. The Dao of plants and vegetation is deep and profound, and contains no absolutes. Were that not the case, it would be impossible for you to make any progress with your skill with plants and vegetation. And yet, you actually want me to list out all of the plants in the first three volumes of plants and vegetation. What’s so hard about that?!” Setting his jaw, he flicked his sleeve and began to recite.

"Spiritwinter bamboo....

“Earthdragon fruit....

“Inkroot....” His voice was clear and his expression tranquil as he spoke. Complete silence filled the arena. As his words echoed out, they were like a huge invisible hand smacking everyone a second time.

Everyone present was filled with profound shame, and gasps could be heard. Some people even pulled out jade slips with information about plants and vegetation, which they compared with what Bai Xiaochun was saying. Soon, they began to tremble, and their shock increased.

Du Lingfei’s face was deathly pale as she backed up, looking at Bai Xiaochun as if he were a ghost.

The reason she had spoken such snide words earlier was because she had never seen anyone actually recite 30,000 different types of medicinal plants. To her, it seemed like an impossibility. If someone was actually able to do that, then they had to already possess completely heaven-defying skill with plants and vegetation.

As time passed, Bai Xiaochun spoke more and more quickly. With almost a single breath, he talked for two hours straight. To the audience, it almost seemed like no time had gone by at all, and virtually everyone had taken out jade slips to study along with Bai Xiaochun’s recitation.

After two hours, he finished reciting all of the medicinal plants. Then, there was deathly silence for a moment, followed by an explosive outburst that was audible even outside of the arena.

“Heavens.... Not a single mistake! He was completely correct.... I can’t believe I just witnessed this happen!!”

“All 30,000 medicinal plants.... Bai Xiaochun’s skill with plants and vegetation is simply shocking. Wait... what is his ranking on the stone steles of plants and vegetation?”

“For Du Lingfei to compete with Bai Xiaochun in skill with plants and vegetation is like throwing an egg at a rock!”

As the uproar went on, Du Lingfei looked at Bai Xiaochun with increasing bitterness. Her reaction to losing in the fight hadn’t lead to a feeling like this. But right now, in terms of skill with plants and vegetation, she had been utterly and thoroughly defeated.

How could she ever have imagined that Bai Xiaochun, with his incredible luck and multitude of magical items, would actually be so monumentally ahead of her in skill with plants and vegetation?

It was a huge blow to her, and she couldn’t help but laugh bitterly. She threw the Cloudsoaring Incense over, then turned and fled the arena. It was simply impossible for her to even consider staying, considering how embarrassed she was.

Now that Du Lingfei was gone, the other surrounding Outer Sect disciples started to feel even more embarrassed. They quickly clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun, then hurried off. It was easy to imagine how long the profound shock they felt would last.

Soon, the arena was virtually empty. Bai Xiaochun was the only one left behind, coughing dryly. He realized… that he had really done it this time. Putting the Cloudsoaring Incense away, he looked over cautiously at Li Qinghou.

“Disciple... will take off now,” he said, turning and leaving so fast that he almost left behind a dust cloud.

Elder Sun watched Bai Xiaochun leaving, and the shock in his eyes was still evident.

“Peak Lord, this kid... is outstanding!” he said softly.

Li Qinghou threw his head back and laughed loudly, then waved his sleeve and shot back up toward the top of the mountain.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0034 awe-chapter-35

It only took about half a month for the news about Bai Xiaochun crushing Du Lingfei in the competition to spread among virtually all the disciples, and cause a huge commotion throughout the entire sect.

Whenever Bai Xiaochun went out, the Outer Sect disciples he encountered would call out cheerful greetings. For the first time in his life, Bai Xiaochun felt famous. Now, he enjoyed leaving his residence. He would even approach random people and start to chat with them, all in the hopes that they would ask who he was, whereupon he would proudly reveal his name.

Bai Xiaochun really enjoyed living such a luxurious life. He also performed a threefold spirit enhancement on Du Lingfei’s incense. Utilizing that incense then pushed him from the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation all the way into the sixth level.

As far as his Lightness-in-Heaviness magic, the more he practiced with it, the more refined it became. In fact, he had even begun to probe the second level of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, which was Heaviness-in-Lightness.

Although it seemed incredibly difficult at first, after numerous attempts, he made a bit of progress.

On one particular day, he was seated cross-legged in his courtyard, practicing Heaviness-in-Lightness, when suddenly his expression flickered. Putting away his wooden sword, he looked up at the main gate of the courtyard. A moment later, someone knocked.

“Elder Brother Bai, are you home?” After hearing the familiar voice, Bai Xiaochun’s brow furrowed slightly. People didn't often come to visit him in his courtyard. He waved his finger toward the gate, which creaked open to slowly reveal a gaunt young man.

He wore the garments of an Outer Sect disciple, and his expression was very serious as he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Xu Baocai offers greetings, Elder Brother Bai.”

“What are you doing here?” Bai Xiaochun asked, looking shocked. This young man was the very same Xu Baocai with whom he had fought back in the Ovens, when he was in the third level of Qi Condensation. Apparently, Xu Baocai was now an Outer Sect disciple.

After seeing that Xu Baocai was still in the third level of Qi Condensation, however, he felt much more relaxed. Putting a very stern expression on his face, he said, “What, now that you’re an Outer Sect disciple you refuse to let bygones be bygones? You still want to fight me?”

Xu Baocai immediately shook his head. A wry smile on his face, he once again bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“I was ignorant and foolish back then. Please don’t ridicule me, Elder Brother Bai. I've come today to apologize for what happened. Let’s forget about all that.” Xu Baocai seemed very earnest about wanting to forget about everything that had gone on. After all, now that he was an Outer Sect disciple, past matters weren’t really very important.

The most important thing was that Bai Xiaochun was now very famous on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Now that Xu Baocai was an Outer Sect disciple on that very same mountain, he obviously wanted to avoid any complications that could arise because of the past.

Bai Xiaochun blinked, thinking back to everything that had happened back then in the Ovens. In some ways, Xu Baocai counted as an old friend. He quickly rose to his feet and invited Xu Baocai in, whereupon they sat down and began to reminisce.

Thinking back to that unforgettable blood notice, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but ask, “Now that you mention it, back then, I really didn’t understand why you would write the character ‘die’ so many times with blood. Eventually I got it, but even then, I was always curious; didn't it hurt to use so much blood to write so many characters?”

Xu Baocai’s face flushed with embarrassment when he thought back to his outlandish behavior back then, and he quickly changed the subject.

“Elder Brother Bai, you need to be careful about the people from the Supervisor's Department. I heard that Chen Fei and the others who you forced into the Outer Sect have been harboring a grudge this entire time.”

“Chen Fei?” Bai Xiaochun’s heart instantly filled with vigilance as he thought back to that burly, muscular man from the Supervisor's Department.

“What level is his cultivation base now?” he asked, looking very serious.

“I heard he’s in the great circle of the fourth level of Qi Condensation,” Xu Baocai replied immediately, hoping that revealing these matters to Bai Xiaochun would clear the air between them.

When Bai Xiaochun heard the fourth level of Qi Condensation mentioned, he felt a bit better, and actually looked even calmer than before.

Xu Baocai didn’t go into further explanations. He and Bai Xiaochun began to chat about the sect, and soon Bai Xiaochun realized that Xu Baocai actually knew a lot more than he did. He seemed to be in the know regarding just about everything that occurred on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect. He knew about the big events and the inconsequential matters, and had even heard about things that were supposed to be big secrets. Eventually they started talking about the latest gossip, and the discussion got even more lively.

“Elder Brother Bai, did you know there are five beauties here in the Spirit Stream Sect, each one of them astonishingly good-looking? Cultivators like us who could be with even one of them would be able to live life without regrets.”

Bai Xiaochun’s interest was piqued, so he asked Xu Baocai to explain further.

Bai Xiaochun wanted to hear, and this was a subject Xu Baocai loved talking about, so his eyebrows instantly shot up with excitement.

“The five beauties are virtually on equal footing when it comes to how pretty they are. However, their positions within the sect are all different. In first place is Xu Meixiang, Peak Lord Xu, who is truly ethereally beautiful and alluring.... Oh, right, she’s Big Fatty Zhang’s Master.”

“Really?” Bai Xiaochun was truly shocked to hear this news. Big Fatty Zhang had mentioned his Master on several occasions, and had always called her an old shrew. Then he thought back to how skinny Big Fatty Zhang had been when they reunited, and how it was because that old shrew hated fat people.

All of a sudden, things made more sense to Bai Xiaochun. Clearing his throat, and his mind, he decided not to think about the matter further. It was simply too dangerous.

“The next two in the rankings are actually from Fragrant Cloud Peak. The first is Zhou Xinqi, Elder Sister Zhou, and then Du Lingfei, Elder Sister Du.” Xu Baocai was explaining everything he knew, so when he brought up Zhou Xinqi, it also necessitated talking about Chosen.

“Elder Brother Bai, you probably already know that on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, there are three great Chosen. One of them is Zhou Xinqi from our Fragrant Cloud Peak. Another is Lu Tianlei from Violet Cauldron Peak, and the last is... Shangguan Tianyou from Green Crest Peak! All three of them are consummate geniuses!” Xu Baocai’s eyes gleamed with envy.

“If they’re so awesome, how come they’re in the Outer Sect like us?” asked Bai Xiaochun, his mouth twisted in a bit of a sneer. Although he didn't know much about Shangguan Tianyou and Lu Tianlei, he had already encountered Zhou Xinqi. In fact, the jade pendant in his bag of holding had been a gift from her.

Xu Baocai coughed dryly. Although he inwardly looked down on Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t dare to express that feeling, and instead chuckled wryly and said, “Elder Brother Bai, if it weren’t for the strict sect rules, those three would already have left the Outer Sect for the Inner Sect. Even still, they’re extremely famous, and fully deserve to be known as the number one figures in the Outer Sect. Even the Inner Sects fear them. Once their cultivation bases reach the proper level, they'll definitely become stars in the Inner Sect too! Although, for them, even the Inner Sect will just be a springboard to their eventual goal of joining the legacy echelon!"

Bai Xiaochun still wasn't very convinced.

"Take Zhou Xinqi for example. Because of her spirit meridian of plants and vegetation, she'll definitely inherit the mantle of Peak Lord Li, and will become a master apothecary of the Spirit Stream Sect. And then there's Lu Tianlei. He grew up in a very poor family, and started out as skinny as a piece of firewood. But he had a rare spirit meridian of lightning, and the magical techniques he cultivates are of the path of the Dao of lightning. In fact, the sect leader personally said that he'll have an extraordinary future."

"Really?" Bai Xiaochun asked, clearly surprised. He was no longer a newcomer to the cultivation world, and understood a lot about how things worked. When he heard about the spirit meridian of lightning, he couldn't help but feel a bit jealous. A spirit meridian like that would cause one's magical techniques to be explosively powerful, and would ensure that few bottlenecks came up within cultivation.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was finally reacting like people usually did when hearing about these things, he went on to talk about the third person: "Of course, there's also Shangguan Tianyou, who's even more amazing. He has a Sword Spirit Body, and some people even say that he's the reincarnation of an almighty sword cultivator. For some reason, it's like the heavens are guilty, and have blessed him with an entire life of good fortune. When he was three, he was walking down the road and happened to find an ancient sword; when he was seven, a baby crimson cloudbeast fell out of the sky and instantly accepted him as its master; when he was thirteen, he acquired a golden light shield. That is why his name is Tianyou, and as soon as he joined the sect, the prime elders were completely shaken.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were wide, and he looked somewhat perturbed. “The heavens are guilty!?!? Three years old…? What luck! What kind of... wait, he’s the reincarnation of some almighty ancient cultivator?”

In that moment, he decided that he would definitely not do anything to provoke Shangguan Tianyou, who even the Heavens catered to.

Xu Baocai was extremely pleased to see Bai Xiaochun so shocked, so he sighed and then decided to explain a bit about Foundation Establishment. “Those three will definitely reach Foundation Establishment. Elder Brother Bai, we cultivators start out as servants and then join the Outer Sect. We liken our promotion to the fish which leapt over the dragon gate. However, the truth of the matter is that only by breaking through from the Qi Condensation stage to Foundation Establishment can you truly be that fish who leapt over the dragon gate. It is only then that your life actually changes, and you truly shed that which is mortal. That is the true path of immortality, when your longevity is increased by a hundred years.”

Even as Xu Baocai sighed, Bai Xiaochun heard about an increase of one hundred years of longevity, and his eyes lit up with a light more intense than anything which had ever been seen before in his eyes. He even began to tremble, and his mind filled with rumbling sounds. He reached out and grabbed Xu Baocai by the arm.

“Did you just say that after you reach Foundation Establishment you get an extra hundred years of longevity?”

Xu Baocai stared at Bai Xiaochun’s bloodshot eyes in shock. Feeling a bit frightened, he nodded his head.

Bai Xiaochun inhaled sharply, and then began to pace back and forth within his courtyard, waving his arms around and gesticulating wildly. He almost looked like he had gone crazy, and was muttering to himself and laughing maniacally.

Xu Baocai was now really scared, and had no idea what was going on. A chill ran down his spine, and he said that he was going to leave. Bai Xiaochun didn’t even notice; it was almost as if he had been bedeviled.

Xu Baocai took a deep breath and sped away in fear.

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Bai Xiaochun looked up, his hair disheveled as he took a long, deep breath. Then he threw his head back and laughed loudly.

“One hundred years! Foundation Establishment! I'm definitely going to reach Foundation Establishment!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0035 awe-chapter-36

Xu Baocai had completely ignited Bai Xiaochun’s desire to reach Foundation Establishment. In the following days, he went to the Scripture Pavilion on numerous occasions, and eventually, even went to the Divine Might Hall.

The Divine Might Hall was a place where much general information about the cultivation world was gathered for the purposes of study. After studying the detailed explanation about Foundation Establishment, Bai Xiaochun confirmed that what Xu Baocai had said was accurate, and it was like a spark was lit within him.

In his view, only by reaching Foundation Establishment could he truly take his first step upon the road of eternal life.

What got him even more excited was the information about how there were three ways to reach Foundation Establishment, each of which affected longevity in a different way. At long last, he had a much clearer understanding.

“Heaven, Earth, and Mortal. Three types of Foundation Establishment....

“Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment requires a Foundation Establishment Pill. The probability of success is low, but if you succeed, you acquire a hundred years of longevity.

“Earth-Dao Foundation Establishment involves absorbing earthstring energy and transforming it into shocking power.

The probability of success is even lower, but the result is an addition of two hundred years of longevity!

“Last is the legendary... Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment! That’s very rare, and can only come via random chance. However, if you can succeed with that type of Foundation Establishment, then you get an extra five hundred years of longevity!” After more detailed study, Bai Xiaochun confirmed that Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment could not be specifically pursued. As for Earth-Dao Foundation Establishment, there were special requirements to be able to acquire earthstring energy.

Therefore, the simplest thing for him to do was aim for Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, which required a Foundation Establishment Pill.

Bai Xiaochun put down the jade slip he was holding and took a deep breath, his eyes shining brightly. “I need to start planning for the future, and make sure I’m completely prepared. And I have to get one of those Foundation Establishment Pills....

“Foundation Establishment Pills are expensive, and just to be prepared for all possibilities, I should definitely have more than one on hand. In that case... the best thing to do would be to concoct some myself!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered as his dream of becoming a master apothecary and concocting a Live-Forever Never-Die Pill became even stronger than ever.

“Apprentice apothecary, journeyman apothecary, master apothecary.... Right now I'm an apprentice apothecary. To become a journeyman apothecary, I have to concoct some medicinal pills and take the promotion test.... The minimum requirement for the test is that you master the fifth volume of plants and vegetation. But that alone is no guarantee. I also need to completely master all five volumes of spirit creatures.” Eyes gleaming with determination, he pulled out the jade slip that contained the third volume of plants and vegetation and went through it in detail one more time. After confirming that he had memorized everything, he immediately left his courtyard.

However, moments later, he came running back and quickly put on several layers of clothing, and also disguised himself a bit. Only then did he actually leave.

“Those fans of Zhou Xinqi are too frightening. Supposedly they've been telling people they’re going to cut me to pieces.... I really have no choice other than to keep a low profile.” He still felt a little bit uneasy.

After considering the difference between himself and Zhou Xinqi’s fans, he finally reached a decision. “Hmph. Just wait until I reach Foundation Establishment. Then I’ll make a big scene and tell everyone that I'm Lord Turtle. Then we’ll see who dares to try to cut me to pieces!”

As usual, the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion was completely packed. It wasn’t just Outer Sect disciples from Fragrant Cloud Peak in attendance, there were also disciples from Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak, who for various reasons were required to be proficient in plants and vegetation.

Currently, Bai Xiaochun was worming his way through the crowd, trying to make sure he didn’t attract any attention. After reaching the log cabin dedicated to the third volume of plants and vegetation, he snuck in, took the test, then melted back into the crowd.

Although he had originally planned to just leave, after a moment passed, he couldn’t hold back from popping his head up and looking around. It didn’t take long before a clamor rose up as people realized that on the stone stele of the third volume of plants and vegetation, the turtle design had overtaken the magic bottle.

Feeling quite pleased, he plastered a shocked look on his face and shouted out in astonishment. However, it only took a moment for Zhou Xinqi’s fiendish fans to appear, which caused Bai Xiaochun to ball his fists in frustration.

“It’s their fault that I have to keep such a low profile,” he thought angrily. He glared at them for a moment and then turned and hurried away.

In the following days, news about the little turtle once again spread like wildfire through Fragrant Cloud Peak’s Outer Sect. Everyone was talking about the little turtle design that was so prominently displayed on the stone steles.

However, another month later, just as the rumors were beginning to settle down, the disciples outside the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion suddenly noticed that the little turtle had appeared on the fourth stone stele, and it had once again passed the magic bottle to take 1st place.

The result was an instant uproar!

“The little turtle is going to completely surpass Elder Sister Zhou Xinqi soon! He has four 1st place spots!”

“He has four stone steles, and Elder Sister Zhou Xinqi has five. Just who is the little turtle...?”

Of course, it was Bai Xiaochun shouting these things out, and it made him feel quite good. However, when Zhou

Xinqi’s fans started devolving into a frenzy, he cleared his throat, lowered his head, and went on his way.

A few days later, Zhou Xinqi showed up in the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion and studied the four stone steles, a very serious expression on her face. Then she entered the tenth stone stele. When she emerged, her name now occupied the 1st place spot.

By that point, all of the Outer Sect disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak were paying close attention to the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion. Zhou Xinqi had her six stone steles, and the little turtle had four....

Everyone was speculating as to whether or not the little turtle would eventually take a fifth stone stele, which would put him on par with Zhou Xinqi.

In fact, some of the Outer Sect disciples were starting to place bets on whether or not the little turtle could actually take 1st place in five stone steles. It even reached the point that some of the Elders of Fragrant Cloud Peak were taking note.

Bai Xiaochun was going absolutely all out to try to take that next 1st place spot. After getting the relevant jade slip, he studied it day and night. Coupled with how much he hated Zhou Xinqi’s fans, whenever he made his monthly visit to the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion and got a first place spot, he would make a point of whipping up the crowd in favor of the little turtle.

Gradually, quite a few disciples began to admire the little turtle, and much of that had to do with Bai Xiaochun himself. He never passed up an opportunity to promote the little turtle to whomever he could speak to about it. For example, by this point, Hou Xiaomei was thoroughly obsessed.

Eventually, a month later on a bright and sunny day, the magic bottle on the fifth stone stele flickered and then dropped down by one spot, whereupon the little turtle appeared above it.

As of that moment, the Outer Sect disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak were thrown into pandemonium. Entire crowds came to check out the scene, and soon, all conversations on the mountain revolved around the little turtle.

“The little turtle’s skill with plants and vegetation is definitely at an indescribable level. How else could he be so shocking?”

“So awesome! The little turtle and Elder Sister Zhou are about the same now....”

It wasn’t that nobody in the crowd suspected that the little turtle might be Bai Xiaochun. In fact, some of Zhou Xinqi’s fans didn’t ignore any possibilities, and naturally were paying attention to him.

Feeling quite indignant, Bai Xiaochun decided that he needed to get rid of any doubts, so he made a big scene of reluctantly trying to take the test for the fourth stone stele. He remained inside for a bit, after which he stepped out and did his best to convince everyone that he had performed badly.

After doing this a few times, Zhou Xinqi’s fans started to shift their attention to others. Of course, there was no way to prove anything about anybody one way or another.

However, they continued to spread hateful gossip, telling people that if they found out who the little turtle was, they weren’t going to cut him into bits, they were going to cut him into teeny tiny bits!

When Bai Xiaochun heard about that, and thought about what he would look like in such a state, he began to tremble. Finally, he gritted his teeth, and his vicious determination once again bubbled up.

“Not happy, huh? Well I’ll make you even less happy when I take more 1st place spots!” Gritting his teeth, he decided that he was going to make that happen, and close the distance between himself and Zhou Xinqi.

A month later, the little turtle took 1st place on the sixth stone stele!

After another month, it took 1st place on the seventh!

Shouts of alarm and astonishment rang out around the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion at that point.

“Seven 1st place spots! Go, little turtle, go! Not even Elder Sister Zhou was able to get ten 1st place spots!”

“Hahaha, I like this little turtle. He’s definitely going to pull it off!”

Even as numerous disciples in the crowd were crying out such things, there were a dozen or so young men in the area, all of whom had very grim expressions on their faces. Some of them were even Inner Sect disciples, whose expressions were particularly icy. One of them was a young man with a pockmarked face, whose eyes glinted with particular ferocity.

“Ladies and gentlemen, fellow disciples,” he called out. “If anyone knows who the little turtle is, please tell me, and I’ll owe you a favor!” That pock-faced young man’s voice caused everyone to tremble, and instantly silenced all of the voices calling out about the little turtle.

People in the crowd immediately recognized who this young man was, and quickly averted their gazes. Others were incensed, but were too afraid to speak up.

“That’s Elder Brother Qian from the Hall of Justice, Qian Dajin....”

“I heard that he’s been chasing both Elder Sister Zhou and also Du Lingfei....”

Bai Xiaochun stood there in the crowd, glaring at the pock-faced Qian Dajin with righteous indignation. Finally, he stalked back to his courtyard, feeling very irritated.

“You can’t even find me, and yet you insist on fighting a duel with me!?” Setting his jaw, he focused on studying the five volumes of spirit creatures. As he learned more about how the various parts of spirit creatures could be used when concocting spirit medicines, his skill with plants and vegetation made further advancement.

In fact, because he was able to compare and contrast the two, and see how they worked together, his skill with plants and vegetation actually experienced significant growth.

The next month, the little turtle design replaced the magic bottle as the 1st place spot holder on the eighth stone stele!

After another month, he took 1st place in the ninth!

He now had nine 1st place spots!

The Outer Sect disciples around the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion were aboil. More and more people were loudly proclaiming that the little turtle was definitely going to take ten 1st place spots.

As for Zhou Xinqi's fans, there was nothing they could do to stop it at this point. All they could do was watch as the little turtle’s popularity gradually exceeded Zhou Xinqi's.

When the final month came, Bai Xiaochun went to the 10,000 Medicines pavilion when it was at its busiest. He went in disguise, but his expression was one of determination as he worked his way unnoticed through the line leading up to the log cabin beneath the tenth stone stele.

Once he entered, he sat down cross-legged, reached out, and placed his hand onto the stone altar. Rumbling filled his mind as he once again entered that familiar void.

In front of him were 1,000,000 flickering fragments of medicinal plants and spirit creatures. Eyes gleaming with focus, his hands began to fly about and reorganize the pieces.

1,000. 5,000. 10,000....

30,000. 50,000. 80,000

This was the most difficult of all the tests he had taken so far. Soon, sweat was dripping down his face, and his eyes were bloodshot. He looked crazed, as if he had forgotten about everything else. He was fully immersed in the process of reconstructing plants and vegetation, and spirit creatures. His hands hurt, and his mind reeled, and yet he kept going.

Before long, the test was over, and Bai Xiaochun sat here, his hands trembling as he put the last medicinal plant together. With that, his vision went blurry, then cleared, and he was back in the log cabin.

Breathing heavily, eyes shining with satisfaction, he wiped the sweat from his brow and clenched his fists.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0036 awe-chapter-37

Ten stone steles, ten 1st place spots!

The three peaks on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect were completely shaken.

Outside the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, a buzz of conversation could be heard. People were speeding over from all directions to catch a glimpse of the little turtle in 1st place on all ten stones steles. Gasps rang out.

“Ten 1st place spots! The little turtle actually did it!”

“The last time anyone in the Spirit Stream Sect ever took ten 1st place spots in the stone steles was a thousand years ago! How could I ever have imagined that I would see something like this in my life!?”

Everyone was clamoring in shock, and although many people had predicted that this would happen, it was still a shocking event. That was especially true considering the previous three months, in which one stone stele after another fell into the hands of the little turtle. When people thought about that, they simply couldn’t stay calm.

“Just who exactly is the little turtle…? In less than half a year, he started from the third stone stele and then swept through all his competition in the rest of them. This guy is totally famous!”

“His skill with plants and vegetation completely exceeds Zhou Xinqi’s. Maybe in the future, there will even be another master apothecary in addition to Zhou Xinqi!”

In the same moment that the little turtle secured 1st place on all ten stone steles, the steles began to vibrate, letting off intense rumbling noises that merged together, and then were joined by the sound of a clanging cauldron coming from further up the mountain.

It was as if someone were striking a medicine cauldron with an enormous log. The muffled booms spread out through all of Fragrant Cloud Peak, and then echoed out to fill the entire south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect. It was accompanied by a medicinal aroma that filled the area, and caused the mists that covered Fragrant Cloud Peak to grow even thicker.

At the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak was an immortal’s cave where Elder Zhou was in the middle of feeding some of his cherished five-colored spirit birds. When he heard the sound of the cauldron, his eyes lit up with surprise.

“The Fragrant Cloud Cauldron?” He sent his divine sense out and instantly detected what was happening among the ten stone steles outside the 10,000 Medicines pavilion. His expression immediately flickered, and he stepped out into the air.

Next, Elder Sun appeared, along with other Foundation Establishment cultivators. All of them had heard the sound of the cauldron, and were now proceeding in the direction of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, excited expressions on their faces.

The last to appear was Li Qinghou, who had been in the middle of meditation. When he heard the sound of the cauldron, his face flickered, and he looked outside. Then, he transformed into a beam of colorful light that shot toward the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

As the sound of the cauldron rang out, the crowd grew even more excited. Both the Outer Sect and Inner Sect disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak were completely shaken, and many began to rush in the direction of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

“That's... the sound of the precious treasure of Fragrant Cloud Peak, the Fragrant Cloud Cauldron!”

“Someone took ten 1st place spots at the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion! That hasn’t happened for a thousand years! This is unheard-of!”

Excitement even broke out on Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak. Big Fatty Zhang was hanging his head as a beautiful, alluring woman berated him. That woman was none other than the old shrew that Big Fatty Zhang had complained to Bai Xiaochun about. As soon as she heard the sound of the cauldron, her expression flickered, and she looked off into the distance. Big Fatty Zhang’s face fell in shock as he did the same thing.

“The sound of the Fragrant Cloud Cauldron. Could it be that some disciple on Fragrant Cloud Peak has actually gotten perfect results in all of the tests?”

Similar scenes played out on Green Crest Peak, causing the elders and the peak lord there to look over in astonishment.

More and more people were filling the area around the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

Bai Xiaochun was there in the crowd, and when he heard the uproar, he looked up at the ten stone steles. Although he didn’t join in with the shouting, his heart was filled with an indescribable feeling. He stood there, a smile growing on his face; not a complacent smile, or a lofty smile, a smile of pure happiness.

It had taken him more than a year to work this miracle. He had started from the first stone stele, then taken 1st place in all ten. However, having a bunch of 1st place spots didn’t mean much to him in the end. The most important thing was that he had gained a complete mastery over plants and vegetation, as well as the spirit creatures, something that apprentice apothecaries needed to be proficient in.

He had crafted an unprecedentedly deep foundation. As he thought back to the long days and endless nights he had spent obsessively studying plants and vegetation, and then spirit creatures, Bai Xiaochun sighed emotionally.

In the entire Spirit Stream Sect, there weren't even any Inner Sect disciples who had such a strong foundation in their skill with plants and vegetation. Currently, Bai Xiaochun was feeling very satisfied.

Soon, numerous beams of light could be seen flying through the air, all of them emanating powerful cultivation base fluctuations. Among them were Elder Zhou, Elder Sun... and of course Li Qinghou.

They looked over the ten stone steles, and the little turtle in the 1st place spot, and their eyes began to shine brightly. That was especially true of Li Qinghou. That little turtle design caused him to first start in shock, then begin to laugh loudly, a strange expression on his face. He looked out over the crowd, and caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, after which a glint of praise appeared in his eyes that no one could detect.

After a long moment passed, he flicked his sleeve and left, quite happy after having guessed that the little turtle belonged to none other than Bai Xiaochun.

Soon, the other members of the Senior generation left. However, more and more Inner Sect disciples were showing up to stare in shock at the little turtle. After all, they had all risen up from the Outer Sect, and knew very well that only Outer Sect disciples were allowed to challenge the stone steles. They also knew how difficult of a challenge that was.

“Any Outer Sect disciple who can do this is definitely a Chosen....”

“Hmph. We’re journeyman apothecaries, so all we care about is spirit medicines. Incredible skill with plants and vegetation is meaningless if you can’t concoct spirit medicine!”

Some of the Inner Sect disciples clearly admired the little turtle, and others disdained it. However, regardless of their feelings, a deep impression had been made, and in fact, most of them were actually a bit frightened.

None of them had any idea how skilled this person would be at medicine concocting, but with such a solid foundation, once that person became a journeyman apothecary, his path would certainly be much smoother.

The uproar continued until eventually Zhou Xinqi showed up. She stood there on her blue flying silk, examining the little turtle. Slowly, the crowd quieted down, and all eyes turned in her direction.

The sight of the little turtle in the 1st place spot on all of the stone steles caused an unyielding gleam to appear in her eyes. In the past, this was the sort of complicated expression that she caused to appear in the eyes of others, but now, the opposite had happened.

“Just who are you...?” she murmured through clenched teeth. Although she couldn’t bear to admit it, she had tried hard on numerous occasions to match the mysterious little turtle in terms of skill with plants and vegetation, but his ability was just too profound. As of this moment, she had no confidence whatsoever in being able to surpass him. By now, that little turtle was completely and utterly branded onto her heart.

“You might be stronger than me with plants and vegetation, but just wait until you become a journeyman apothecary. I refuse to believe that you’ll surpass me when it comes to medicine concocting!” She took a deep breath and calmed herself down. She had already taken the test and been promoted to journeyman apothecary, so after giving the stone steles one last look, she spun and vanished off into the distance.

After giving the ten stone steles one last look, Bai Xiaochun turned and left. “This is just the first stop along my path to becoming a grandmaster apothecary!”

The matter of the ten stone steles caused a commotion that lasted for months. People talked about it nonstop, especially when they went to the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion and actually saw the little turtle on the stone steles.

Meanwhile, Zhou Xinqi’s fans were combing the sect, employing all tactics possible to try to figure out who the little turtle was. That was especially true of the young man surnamed Qian, who was infuriated about the matter.

The entire south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect was affected. While people were constantly discussing the little turtle, Bai Xiaochun was in his courtyard, eyes bloodshot as he controlled a tree leaf that floated in front of him.

He was now studying the stage of Heaviness-in-Lightness. Actually, he had repeatedly attempted to do so throughout the past half year, but it wasn’t until now that he had been able to do anything with it.

Because of how things had ended at the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, Zhou Xinqi’s fans were constantly searching for him. A sensation of crisis slowly built up within him, so he decided to weather things out in his residence while he worked on Heaviness-in-Lightness.

“Lightness-in-Heaviness is about speed. Heaviness-in-Lightness... is about control methods!” A thoughtful expression appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as he pondered everything he had come to understand recently.

“Or perhaps you could say that such control is actually an eruption of one’s internal spiritual energy!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered. He was now in the sixth level of Qi Condensation, and his internal spiritual energy was like a huge river. When it came to Lightness-in-Heaviness, he could sustain it indefinitely, and unleash shocking speed.

He had long since come to understand that the so-called stage of Heaviness-in-Lightness was simply a way of utilizing one's internal spiritual energy. It was like how a flat leaf could be used to pull a small branch up into the air, but a rolled up leaf could hoist up a small rock. Likewise, if you cut a leaf into strips and then braided it into a rope, it would be able to lift even heavier objects.

Many materials were like that; in the end, the different weights that could be lifted depended simply on how one combined the various elements.

Heaviness-in-Lightness was just such a technique, and by mastering it, you could reach a new stage.

Bai Xiaochun thought about the matter for a bit longer, then waved his hand, causing another leaf to fly over, which he began to experiment with. Sometimes the leaf moved quickly, at other times it moved as slowly as if a mountain were crushing onto it. However, he wasn’t getting the result he wanted.

After one try didn't work, he tried ten times. After ten tries didn't work, he tried a hundred times. After a hundred tries didn’t work... he tried a thousand times.

He eventually lost track of how many times he had tried. Soon, his courtyard was filled with fragments of leaves which had been destroyed, and he even had to go out looking for new leaves. Eventually, nearly all of the spirit plants on Fragrant Cloud Peak were devoid of leaves, until, on one particular day, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. The leaf in front of him was floating there gently, but when it fell to the ground it sounded like a boulder.

A huge boom rang out, and the entire courtyard residence shook. It was as if that one leaf weighed hundreds of kilograms.

“It worked!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shot with blood, but his expression was one of excitement. He suddenly waved his hand, sending his little wooden sword flying out. It turned into a black streak that shot through the air with incredible speed. It was now even more incredible than before, and emanated a shrill whistling sound as it pierced through the air.

Then, a boom rang out as a huge boulder was shattered to pieces.

Such incredible power was no longer equivalent to the sixth level of Qi Condensation. Even someone in the seventh level of Qi Condensation would be completely shocked by what had just happened.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0037 awe-chapter-38

Bai Xiaochun looked very excited as he leaped to his feet and shook out his arms and legs, then sent the wooden sword flying around the courtyard dramatically. Sometimes it would speed through the air rapidly, other times it would hang ponderously in the air, motionless.

The wooden sword experienced a complete transformation there in the courtyard. Soon, sword qi swirled around the entire area, almost as if a huge wind had kicked up. Bai Xiaochun was even more excited than before.

A moment later, he waved his right hand, and the little wooden sword flew back into his hand. The gaudy sword didn't look very remarkable, but the truth of the matter was that thanks to the threefold spirit enhancement, it was completely beyond what it had been before.

“If I can master both Heaviness-in-Lightness and Lightness-in-Heaviness, then by using them together, I can perform... the only divine ability within the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with anticipation.

“Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning!” Bai Xiaochun put the wooden sword away, then closed his eyes for a long moment. Suddenly, he lifted his right hand and pointed up into the sky. Instantly, his previously invisible internal spiritual energy suddenly appeared in a dazzling flash, the thin strands of spiritual energy rapidly forming into the outline of a cauldron.

It was as if some mysterious power were guiding them, transforming them into that specific shape.

Pulses of incredible pressure began to radiate out from the cauldron, spirit pressure which was even more powerful than the pressure from the flying sword.

Bai Xiaochun’s face rapidly drained of blood as the spirit pressure within him was depleted by nearly eighty percent. At that point, the cauldron was fully formed, and was emanating an intense spirit pressure. Bai Xiaochun gestured with his fingers, sending the cauldron smashing down toward the ground.

When that happened, the cauldron shattered, and vast quantities of spiritual energy scattered about.

A powerful boom echoed out, and the ground for 300 meters in all directions emitted cracking sounds as fissures spread out.

Thankfully, Fragrant Cloud Peak’s protective spell formation almost instantly repaired the damage. Even still, quite a few Outer Sect disciples who were nearby heard the muffled boom, and were shocked.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He had never imagined that the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning would be so impressive. A single attack from it seemed almost unbeatable.

“Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning definitely deserves to be the only divine ability within the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. No wonder it can only be unleashed after both Heaviness-in-Lightness and Lightness-in-Heaviness are completely understood.” Bai Xiaochun eyes shone with a brilliant light, but almost in the same instant, he frowned.

Although this divine ability was strong, it took a lot of energy out of him.

Bai Xiaochun knew that the reason he had wasted only eighty percent of his spiritual power, and not more, was because it was so pure. Any other disciple who gained enlightenment of this divine ability before the eighth level of Qi Condensation would have had all of their internal spiritual energy drained. The only way to truly utilize the technique without incredible wastage was to wait until the ninth level of Qi Condensation.

“According to the description of the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, it can be divided into high-grade, mid-grade, and low-grade levels. The cauldron I just produced was low-grade. If I can reach the mid-grade level, I’ll be able to form two cauldrons. By reaching high-grade, I can have three cauldrons, then form them together into one big cauldron!” After standing there thoughtfully for a moment, Bai Xiaochun sat down cross-legged and began to perform breathing exercises. It was not until the moon hung high in the sky that he finally opened his eyes, revealing a bright spirit glow in his eyes. As of now, his cultivation base had almost fully recovered.

“A divine ability like this can be used as a trump card. If Zhou Xinqi’s fans ever mess with me, I can use it to crush them.” Although Bai Xiaochun felt a little bit better, when he thought about the Inner Sect disciple named Qian, his brow furrowed.

“You have to be at least in the eighth level of Qi Condensation to get into the Inner Sect....” When he thought about that, Bai Xiaochun felt just as worried as before. He glanced down thoughtfully at his skin for a moment, and his eyes glittered. With that, he rose to his feet and took a few steps forward, picking up speed as he reached out with his thumb and index finger. A black light flashed as the tips of those two fingers then touched each other.

Cracking sounds rang out in the air, along with an explosive aura. Bai Xiaochun looked at his two fingers in surprise for a moment before recovering his composure.

“This is a killing move... that I can use to save my own life.” After some more thought, he came to the conclusion that the more powerful the killing move, the better it would be for him. Now, the main thing he was worried about was the Undying Live Forever Technique.

After acquiring his Undying Iron Skin, he had attempted to continue cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique, but found that as soon as he began, he started feeling hungry again.

Furthermore, the spirit tail chickens on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect were no longer an option. He had only ordinary spirit food to rely on, which he was sure wouldn’t be enough to stave off his hunger.

He had searched the rest of the mountain high and low for other spirit creatures to eat, but ever since the Chicken-Thieving Fiend’s rise to fame, the three mountains on the south bank began to closely guard all the areas where spirit creature were raised.

The anxiety on his face grew as he contemplated the problem. Even as he pondered how to solve the problem of the intense hunger, he suddenly thought back to the Age-Prolonging Longevity-Enhancing Pill.

“Yeah, that's right....” he said, eyes beginning to shine brightly. Not only could that pill increase one’s cultivation base, it also replenished vital energy. After acquiring his Undying Iron Skin, he realized that cultivating it actually required vital energy, which was why he got so hungry.

“I’ve made huge strides in my skill with plants and vegetation, and although I haven’t been promoted yet, I can still concoct medicine on my own. Furthermore, although the cost of some spirit medicines is very high within the sect, the actual ingredients are relatively cheap.” Bai Xiaochun was becoming more and more convinced that he had come up with a solution.

“Basically, I can just concoct my own medicine. That way, when the time comes to take the promotion test, I’ll be much more confident. Also, it will be much easier to concoct a Foundation Establishment Pill in the future.” Having made his decision, he set his jaw thoughtfully to ponder the matter further. The next morning at dawn, he fairly leapt to his feet.

“Concocting medicines requires medicine formulas, and I can get those even without being promoted to journeyman apothecary. All I have to do is head to the market at the bottom of the mountain and I’ll be able to purchase whatever random medicine formulas are available.” Bai Xiaochun patted his bag of holding and thought about how he hadn’t really spent much money at all since arriving at Fragrant Cloud Peak. As an Outer Sect disciple, he was given a stipend of spirit stones every month, which meant he had quite a bit of savings built up.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun didn’t really care much about material possessions, though. He immediately flew out of his courtyard onto the path that led down the mountain.

During the entire time he had been on Fragrant Cloud Peak, this was only the second time he had left the mountain to go to the markets. The first time was when he had purchased the medicinal plant he needed to trade for that medicinal pill. Almost as soon as he stepped foot off of Fragrant Cloud Peak, two people suddenly flew toward a nearby courtyard residence.

“Elder Brother Chen, are you home?!”

“Elder Brother Chen, Bai Xiaochun left the mountain!” These two people were both quite powerful, with extraordinary cultivation bases in the fourth level of Qi Condensation. They burst excitedly into the courtyard, where a burly man could be seen sitting cross-legged in meditation.

The burly man was incredibly muscular, as broad-shouldered as a bear and a tough-looking as a lion, and as soon as he heard the words spoken by the two men, a bright gleam flickered in his eyes.

“Bai Xiaochun? So, he finally left the mountain, huh?!” The burly man laughed viciously, then suddenly shot to his feet. He looked as big as a mountain, and had profound energy, which came from a cultivation in the fifth level of Qi Condensation. As a result, he emanated a powerful spirit pressure.

This was none other than Chen Fei, who used to work in the Supervisor's Department.

These three had been friends since back in those days, and at that time had lacked for virtually nothing. Not only did they have other servants to wait on them back then, they had also been able to embezzle quite a sum of spirit stones. Of course, they had never expected to be literally pushed into the Outer Sect by Bai Xiaochun and his friends. The past two years had been hard on them, and their hatred for Bai Xiaochun had seeped deep into their bones.

However, they couldn’t afford to provoke Big Fatty Zhang, much less Third Fatty Hei. On the other hand, even though Bai Xiaochun seemed strong, they were of the opinion that he was actually relatively weak. Thus they had long since planned their revenge. Unfortunately for them, during that entire time, Bai Xiaochun never left the sect. And in the end, even though Chen Fei had some connections, he didn’t dare to violate sect rules.

Actually, his biggest connection in the sect was his older cousin, who was an Inner Sect disciple. However, his cousin didn’t pay much attention to him, and had only helped him to a limited degree, even in his days as a servant.

Therefore, they had been forced to wait for two whole years for Bai Xiaochun to leave the sect. Now, the moment they had been waiting for had arrived. Chen Fei was feeling completely confident thanks to his recent breakthrough into the fifth level of Qi Condensation. After asking around, he knew the level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation, and had also heard about him taking 1st place in the recent competition, although the news was that he had won that victory by pure chance.

“Back then he scared us all by tricking us into thinking he had mastered Lightness-in-Heaviness. Hmph! I can't believe he forced us into joining the Outer Sect. At long last, I’m going to give vent to this anger of mine!” A fierce gleam appeared in Chen Fei’s eyes. His plan wasn’t to kill Bai

Xiaochun, just crush his bones and sever his tendons, enough to keep him bedridden for at least a year.

Although the sect would surely investigate the matter afterwards, because there would be no eyewitnesses, because no death would be involved, and because Chen Fei had connections in the sect, the big matter would become a small one, and then that small matter would be easily resolved.

“You can’t blame us if he just doesn’t measure up!” Chen Fei flickered into motion, immediately heading down off the mountain, followed by his two friends. The three of them moved at top speed to a certain path they knew that Bai Xiaochun would pass on his way back from the market, and lay there in wait.

**

The market wasn’t huge, so it didn't take Bai Xiaochun long to find two random tier-1 formulas. One of them could be used to replenish spiritual energy, the other was to enrich vital energy. When it came to formulas for enriching vital energy, the high-tier versions were very expensive. However, the low-tier versions, despite being uncommon, were mostly used by mortals for health and exercise purposes.

Although most cultivators wouldn’t find them useful, to Bai Xiaochun, they were like precious treasures. After using his turtle-wok to perform a threefold spirit enhancement on the resulting medicinal pills, they would have completely different results.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even spend very many of his spirit stones to get the necessary medicinal plants he would need to concoct the spirit medicines. Patting his bag of holding in happiness, he began to hum a little tune as he left the market. As he walked along the little path back to the sect, he fantasized about what it would be like to concoct the medicines, and he was very happy.

However, before he had walked very far down the path, his expression suddenly flickered, and he stopped in place. After reaching the sixth level of Qi Condensation, his senses had grown much keener, and he could instantly detect the breathing of three people hiding in the nearby bushes. Their hearts were also racing as they watched him coming up the path.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had stopped in place, Chen Fei and his two friends burst out to stand in front of him.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he said viciously, “the day has come to end our grudge!” His friends wore equally ferocious grins on their faces as they spread out to flank Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0038 awe-chapter-39

“Chen Fei?” Bai Xiaochun blurted, blinking. He quickly scanned Chen Fei and his two friends, and after determining the level of their cultivation bases, immediately relaxed.

“Bai Xiaochun, even if you drop to the ground and beg for mercy, it's too late. It was your idea to force us into the Outer Sect, and you’re going to pay for that. I, Chen Fei, have been waiting for this day for a long, long time!” Laughing loudly, Chen Fei waved his right hand, unleashing the power of the fifth level of Qi Condensation. Numerous leaves were swept up into the air as a result, making for a very impressive scene.

“After joining the Outer Sect, I spent the entire time practicing cultivation, and now I'm in the fifth level of Qi Condensation. Let me tell you, Bai Xiaochun. Today you will truly understand what it means to be bullied. Your bones are going to be broken and your tendons severed!”

Laughing with complacent arrogance, Chen Fei performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing a green flying sword to appear. It was only about 15 centimeters long, but radiated a cold, ancient air.

As for Chen Fei’s two friends who had flanked Bai Xiaochun, they smiled viciously as they unleashed their cultivation bases and produced their own flying swords.

Considering they had him surrounded, and outnumbered him three to one, they were completely confident that they could crush Bai Xiaochun. That was especially true after their own analysis led them to the conclusion that Bai

Xiaochun had never fully mastered Lightness-in-Heaviness like they originally thought he had.

“You would have been safe if you had never left the mountain. But here you are, outside the sect. And now you will understand the great price to be paid for the error of your ways!” Chen Fei felt a little better after having vented in this way, although anger still burned within him.

“Aren’t the three of you afraid of violating sect rules by ambushing me here?” Bai Xiaochun asked, genuinely curious.

“Sect rules? Hahaha! We're outside the sect right now. Plus, you don’t measure up to us at all in skill. No one’s going to blame us for breaking a few bones and severing some tendons. At the worst, we’ll have to make some apologies, and then the whole matter will be over with.” Chen Fei laughed proudly, imagining the image of Bai Xiaochun smashing into the ground. He was even preparing some good taunts to use after beating him down.

However, when he noticed how calm Bai Xiaochun was acting, he suddenly realized that something wasn’t right. Despite being surrounded on three sides, Bai Xiaochun’s expression hadn’t changed at all, and in fact, he seemed to find the situation somewhat odd.

Looking like a master cultivator, Bai Xiaochun proudly said, “Oh, so that’s how it is. Well in that case I feel a lot better.”

Chen Fei’s pupils constricted, and he felt even more ill at ease. However, now was not the time for pondering the situation.

“Attack!” he barked, performing an incantation gesture to send his flying sword shooting toward Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, his two friends also performed incantation gestures and sent their flying swords into action.

Three flying swords were bearing down on Bai Xiaochun, who suddenly smiled. He didn’t even produce a magical item; he simply stepped backward. To the eyes of Chen Fei and his friends, Bai Xiaochun just seemed to vanish into thin air.

When he reappeared, he was right next to one of the burly men in the fourth level of Qi Condensation. The man’s eyes went wide, but before he could do anything, Bai Xiaochun clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out.

The fist moved with incredible speed, landing on the man’s neck with a boom. The man’s entire body was shaken, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood as he bent over backward. It was as if some massive object had slammed into him; he immediately flipped head over heels, slamming into a nearby tree.

The tree shuddered, and the man coughed up some more blood, then collapsed, unconscious.

This sudden development left the man’s companion staring at Bai Xiaochun in complete shock. His mind felt as if it were being struck by countless bolts of lightning. Even in his wildest dreams, he would never have imagined that Bai Xiaochun... could possibly move so fast, or unleash such astonishing power.

Chen Fei’s face fell, and he gasped. Without even thinking about it, he backed up, looking at Bai Xiaochun in disbelief.

“You....”

“Too weak,” Bai Xiaochun said, looking like a profound master, alone in the world, unable to find a worthy opponent. Sighing, he took a step forward, appearing directly in front of the other fourth level Qi Condensation cultivator.

The burly man let out a maddened shout, causing cultivation base power to surge wildly, sending the flying sword slashing toward Bai Xiaochun at top speed. However, because of the Undying Live Forever Technique, and his Undying Iron Skin, Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body had reached a shocking level. He easily sidestepped the sword, then once again punched out with his right fist.

A boom rang out, and the man let out a miserable shriek. Blood sprayed everywhere as he was sent spinning backward. There was no tree for him to run into, so he landed about thirty meters away, his internal organs vibrating painfully. He couldn’t even get back to his feet; he just lay there, seemingly struggling to hold on to life.

“Too weak,” Bai Xiaochun said, shaking his head. Then he looked back at the trembling Chen Fei.

“Y-you... you....” Chen Fei’s mind was spinning, and he suddenly felt like a complete fool. He had absolutely no confidence in being able to win now; Bai Xiaochun had suddenly transformed into something like a wild beast.

Two fist attacks had easily knocked out his two friends; that in itself required an incomprehensible amount of power. Subconsciously swallowing, Chen Fei backed away; he had no desire to keep fighting, and the only thing he could think about now was to flee.

Before he could get very far, though, Bai Xiaochun flew forward at top speed, hand clenched into a fist which sped toward Chen Fei. Before it could land, a flashing light appeared in front of Chen Fei, and a little buckler materialized, which met Bai Xiaochun’s fist.

The resulting boom caused Bai Xiaochun to sigh. He shivered slightly, but at the same time, the buckler trembled, and it was sent spinning off to the side, its spiritual energy fading rapidly.

Chen Fei was now scared out of his mind. He had spent quite a few merit points on that buckler, and it should have been able to hold out for a while even against the sixth level of Qi Condensation. And yet, Bai Xiaochun had severed his connection with it in a single blow.

“Bai Xiaochun, y-you... you push things too far!!” he shrieked.

“Hmph! Let me tell you, today you will truly understand what it means to be bullied. Your bones are going to be broken and your tendons severed!” Bai Xiaochun was happier than ever to see the terror in Chen Fei’s eyes. He would never give up an amazing chance like this. Furthermore, he didn’t just repeat Chen Fei’s words, he also unleashed his cultivation base, allowing the power of the sixth level of Qi Condensation to erupt out. A huge wind swept up, sending his hair flying about, and his energy soaring.

“Sixth level of Qi Condensation....” Chen Fei gasped, his eyes bulging and his scalp tingling in fear. He staggered backward as Bai Xiaochun closed in with another punch. This time, there was nothing he could do to block it, and the fist slammed into him.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he flew backward, his entire body vibrating. A miserable shriek rang out. It didn't matter that he was as broad-shouldered as a bear and a tough-looking as a lion, or that he was in the fifth level of Qi Condensation. He was now going all-out to escape, heart filled with intense bitterness, rueing his decision to try to ambush Bai Xiaochun... in a place so far away from the sect.

However, Bai Xiaochun was chasing after him like a wild beast, causing Chen Fei to shriek, “Bai Xiaochun, aren’t you afraid of violating sect rules!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, then repeated Chen Fei’s own words. “Sect rules? Hahaha! We're outside of the sect right now. Plus, you don’t measure up to me at all in skill. No one’s going to blame me for breaking a few bones and severing a few tendons. At the worst, I’ll have to make some apologies, and then the whole matter will be over with.” Then he kicked out with his foot.

That kick sent Chen Fei flying up into the air, where he once again coughed up a mouthful of blood. A look of despair appeared on his face, and he screamed. However, before he could even land on the ground, Bai Xiaochun began to batter him with more punches and kicks.

Chen Fei was terrified, and couldn’t stop screaming. Soon, he was completely swollen from head to toe, and his screams were weakening.

His bones were broken, his tendons severed, and his face ashen. He soon lay there, numb and staring at Bai Xiaochun in complete horror.

Although Bai Xiaochun was pure, fair and somewhat skinny, what Chen Fei saw was a vicious beast disguised in human skin. That was even more so the case when Chen Fei realized that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even used any magical items. He had only relied on the terrifying strength of his own body to crush him.

Off in the distance, the two burly men in the fourth level of Qi Condensation regained consciousness, and when they saw what was happening, their scalps went numb and their hearts began to pound. They immediately pretended to go unconscious again, not daring to move lest they attract the attention of Bai Xiaochun.

Seeing that Chen Fei was gasping for breath, Bai Xiaochun finally lost interest. He settled his spiritual energy, then emptied their bags of holding and also took the little shield. Humming a little tune, he continued on his way down the path.

As he watched Bai Xiaochun leaving, Chen Fei wanted to cry, but no tears would come. “Who the hell told me that Bai Xiaochun won the Fragrant Cloud Peak competition by pure chance!?!?”

If he had known all along that Bai Xiaochun was this terrifying, not even the threat of being beaten to death could have convinced him to stir up trouble.

As for the other two burly men, they were scowling miserably, hearts filled with terror as Bai Xiaochun made his way off.

“Elder Brother Chen, what do we do now...? Let’s just leave him alone, let bygones be bygones. I heard that's what Xu Baocai did.” The two men anxiously awaited Chen Fei’s response.

Chen Fei’s heart was filled with bitterness. After a moment of thought, he gritted his teeth.

“I want revenge, but can't get it myself. What should I do...? I need to think....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0039 awe-chapter-40

Bai Xiaochun returned to the sect humming a little tune and feeling secretly delighted. After reaching his courtyard, he sighed.

“I practice immortal cultivation to live forever. People like that who are always fighting and killing are complete lunatics.”

He sat down in his courtyard, and began to organize the various items he had taken from Chen Fei and his friends. They were by no means rich, which meant that Bai Xiaochun didn’t actually make off with very much, although he didn’t really care either way. When he was finished, he took out the medicinal plants he had just purchased and examined them carefully for a while.

Although he had a profound foundation in plants and vegetation, he actually didn’t have much experience dealing with the plants themselves. Now that he was able to examine these plants in person, his observations melded with the information that already existed in his mind. He even scratched the surfaces of some of the plants off to examine their internal structure.

After doing some tests, a thoughtful expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and he pulled out the two random formulas he had acquired. After glancing at the formula for replenishing spiritual energy, he focused on the other formula, designed for mortals who wished to strengthen their physical bodies.

“Longevity Incense....” he murmured. This particular medicine formula didn’t require the use of very many medicinal plants, only seven. Furthermore, there wasn't anything very special about the way they interacted. However, by using the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression, it was possible to draw up the power of those seven medicinal plants, crush them into a powder, and then turn that into incense.

Two of the plants were even toxic. If a cultivator consumed them, it would merely lead to two weeks of diarrhea. To mortals, however, they would be fatal.

“There are many types of spirit plants in heaven and earth. Some can be directly ingested, whereas others need to be concocted into pills to bring out their optimum effects. There are many which, because of their toxicity, can only be used to concoct incense.” Muttering to himself, Bai Xiaochun took out the medicinal plants needed for the Longevity Incense, whereupon he began to study them in minute detail.

“I'm still not totally confident in this,” he thought. “The most important thing to think about in concocting medicine is the success rate. Even the simplest tier-1 spirit medicines still have a high rate of potential failure.

“I have ten sets of each medicinal plant. I can’t waste them.” Bai Xiaochun was a cautious person, and prefered to be confident before doing anything. That was exactly how he had been back when he had absorbed himself in memorizing all the different types of plants and vegetation, and the current situation was the same. Instead of immediately trying to concoct the medicine, he preferred to pore over the medicine formula first.

Seven days passed. After fully absorbing the information from the medicine formula, he then closed his eyes and began to analyze the matter further. It was evening when he finally opened his eyes. Then, after a bit more thought, he produced the formula for the spiritual energy replenishing medicine and began to review it.

Two more weeks passed. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bloodshot, but by now, he felt that he completely understood all of the various medicinal plants that were part of these medicine formulas. After more thought, he rose to his feet and walked out of the courtyard.

Medicine concocting required a pill furnace, but those were quite expensive, more expensive than Bai Xiaochun could afford. Thankfully, in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, there were pill furnaces available for use by disciples in their medicine concocting, at the price of a few merit points.

The Medicine Concocting Pavilion was on the east side of Fragrant Cloud Peak, not too far from where Bai Xiaochun lived. It wasn’t like the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, which was always teeming with crowds of people. The Medicine Concocting Pavilion was a relatively quiet and peaceful place. After all, even on Fragrant Cloud Peak, people who qualified to concoct medicine were relatively few in number. Of that small number, quite a few already had their own personal pill furnaces, and didn’t need to come here to rent one.

Bai Xiaochun paid for the right to use the Medicine Concocting Pavilion facilities for an entire month. He was given a personal workshop, complete with a protective spell formation that prevented any interference from outside while he worked.

Clutching the wooden key he had been given, Bai Xiaochun quickly found workshop #13 and walked inside. It wasn’t very large, and was completely empty except for the pill furnace and the flame which burned beneath it.

After sitting down cross-legged, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, then examined the pill furnace closely. When he tried to manipulate the flame with some spiritual energy, he found that he could cause the flame to grow much hotter, filling the entire room with intense heat. At the same time, the pill furnace itself began to glow bright red.

Drawing upon his foundation in the Violet Qi Control Art, he performed some tests, and quickly got used to the intense heat. It didn’t take long before he became familiar with how to control the level of the flame. Finally, he slapped his bag of holding to produce the various types of plants and vegetation.

“The Longevity Incense is too important to put first on the list to concoct. First I’ll get familiar with the general concoction process, then I’ll try. I’ll start out with the Spirit Replenishing Pill. That's a tier-1 pill, useful for the fifth level of Qi Condensation and lower.” Bai Xiaochun was now completely determined. Expression very serious, he mentally reviewed the medicine formula for the Spirit Replenishing Pill, then began to concoct.

He produced the first medicinal plant, then waved his hand, causing the leaves to fall off. Eyes gleaming with concentration, he sent his internal spiritual energy out, forming a powerful yet gentle force that crushed the leaves together into nine beads of sap, which he then dropped into the pill furnace.

A plopping sound could be heard, and a green mist instantly rose up within the pill furnace. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gleamed brightly, and as soon as the mist actually appeared, his hands flew through the air as he extracted the stems and veins of the medicinal plant, which he then tossed into the furnace as well. Occasionally, he adjusted the flame, ensuring that more and more mist built up inside the furnace.

None of that mist escaped outside, though. It congealed together, swirling as Bai Xiaochun pulled out the second medicinal plant. After catalyzing it briefly, the medicinal plant bloomed with flowers, the petals of which he plucked and put into the pill furnace.

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun was completely focused on what he was doing as he pulled out one medicinal plant after another. Soon he was on the eighth plant, and his eyes were shining brightly as he stared at the pill furnace. As he continuously adjusted the temperature of the flame, sweat dripped down his face.

Two hours later, a muffled rumbling could be heard from inside the pill furnace. Black smoke poured out, to be absorbed by the room’s spell formation. Bai Xiaochun was choking and coughing, and a frown could be seen on his face as he stared at the charred slag inside of the pill furnace.

“Failure....” he murmured. Sitting down and placing his chin on his hand, he began to think. After reviewing everything he had done, he didn’t begin another batch immediately. After all, he was a cautious person, and whether it came to memorizing plants and vegetation or concocting medicine, he always wanted to do it in the most prudent way possible.

He contemplated the matter for three full days. During that time, he reviewed what he remembered regarding his first attempt at least a thousand times. That helped him to identify at least fifty problematic areas. Finally, he took a deep breath, rested for a moment, and then once again heated up the furnace.

The actual time it took to produce the pill wasn't very long. Four hours later, the pill furnace emitted rumbling sounds once again, and when the smoke cleared, the spoiled remnants of the pill once again became visible.

At this point, his stubborn determination once again rose up. Removing the slag from the pill furnace, he examined it closely, then compared it to the information he had gleaned so far about medicine concocting. He then spent ten more days further examining the medicine formula, as well as the plants and vegetation involved. Finally, eyes bloodshot, he began to try a third time.

The third batch seemed much more stable, but just in the moment when the pills were about to solidify, everything fell apart, accompanied by muffled booms. Bai Xiaochun leapt forward and stared at the slag again. After more thought, he sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes to ponder the matter further.

This time, he spent nearly half a month. His time in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion was almost up. Finally, his eyes opened, and he gritted his teeth as he began a fourth batch.

Eventually, his time was up, and the most recent batch was a failure.

If any journeyman apothecary could observe what was happening, he would find it hard to believe. Almost any other person would have attempted at least dozens of batches of medicine within a month’s time, and would have succeeded in at least some of them.

Even if they only came up with one pill in the end, it would still count as a success.

After all, most people viewed medicine concocting as something extremely difficult. If that weren’t the case, then there would be more than a mere two master apothecaries in all of the Eastwood Continent.

Even journeyman apothecaries were not very common, and most of them didn’t have any hope of ever becoming master apothecaries.

Of course, the real reason for that was... most people didn’t have access to the resources which were needed to truly develop as a journeyman apothecary.

In the end, though, if anyone worked long enough at it, their chances of eventually becoming a master apothecary would be much greater. Therefore, most people believed that the best way to increase one's success rate in medicine concocting was simply to practice a lot!

And that was why most people simply pursued practice.

After you got familiar enough with the process, your confidence in success would increase. Of course, simultaneously, journeyman apothecaries came to view failure as an ordinary thing. After a failure, one could just begin again, and thus slowly improve. That was especially true of the more ordinary medicinal pills. Ingredients for pills like that were not very expensive, and could be used as fuel for that hard work and practice.

However, Bai Xiaochun walked a different path than others. He went much slower, and after every failure, he would spend more time analyzing why he had failed than he had in the actual concocting process.

This had a lot to do with his caution. It would even be appropriate to call him scrupulous. Only a bit of that scrupulousness had come out during his time studying plants and vegetation. Now that he was making his first foray into medicine concocting, his scrupulous nature increased dramatically, becoming the most outstanding aspect.

Because of that scrupulousness, he was able to identify even more problem areas than the average person would. In fact, the number of problems that other people might identify couldn’t even compare. He thought and pondered the matter in ways that others wouldn’t even consider, and thus identified various fishy areas.

Because of his caution, even the slightest problem was something he would wish to control before he continued with any concocting. It was because of these reasons that he spent so much time thinking.

The month had passed; Bai Xiaochun’s hair was disheveled and his face was streaked with ash. Exhausted, he left the Medicine Concocting Pavilion and returned to his courtyard, where he sat there thinking and reviewing.

“There are still nine problem areas. Once I solve those problems, I should be able to continue with the medicine concocting.” Gritting his teeth, he sat there in his courtyard, eyes closed, analyzing the matter, occasionally taking a medicinal plant out to observe and study.

Half a month passed before he suddenly rushed out, spent the merit points, and entered the Medicine Concocting Pavilion again.

The fifth batch... was a failure!

After analyzing the matter for seven more days, he found more problems, solved them, and then tried again.

The sixth batch... was a failure!

His eyes were bright red. He spent twenty days contemplating the matter before trying a seventh batch.

Two hours into the process, no rumbling sounds could be heard. Instead, a medicinal aroma spread out, and Bai Xiaochun’s face lit up. There inside the pill furnace were two green medicinal pills. The seventh batch was a success!

He tried again, and the eighth batch... succeeded, producing three pills!

The ninth batch... succeed, producing five pills!

The tenth batch... also succeeded, However, in the end, only one pill appeared. It was not green, but rather, black. Furthermore, it emanated no medicinal aroma, but rather, different odd scent.

Even as Bai Xiaochun pondered the matter curiously, the entire Medicine Concocting Pavilion was thrown into an uproar.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0040 awe-chapter-41

There were no rats or mice on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Such things could not exist in a cultivation location such as this, not unless they were actually spirit creatures. However, ants were a common thing on the mountain.

Ants were an ordinary part of nature, and usually lived in the cracks and crevices of the boulders which could be all over the mountain. They didn't cause problems for the cultivators, and were essentially just an ordinary part of mountain life. As such, few people paid them much attention.

Today, however, the disciples on duty around the Medicine Concocting Pavilion were shocked to find that innumerable ants were filing across the ground toward the pavilion itself.

The disciples on duty gasped; there were so many ants it was impossible to determine how many they were. The sight itself was enough to make their scalps go numb. “What’s... what's going on!?”

At the same time, many of the disciples in the various pill-concocting workshops cried out in alarm, and the sound of explosions caused by failed batches of pills could be heard. Although the pill-concocting workshops were protected by spell formations, they were also built into the mountainside, which meant that the ants could easily get into them through the various tiny crevices that riddled the mountain.

All of them were heading toward one particular workshop.

That was of course the workshop occupied by Bai Xiaochun, who wore an expression of curiosity as he looked at a black medicinal pill. It was at about this time that he noticed the clamor outside, and suddenly realized that the workshop he was in happened to be filled with ants.

The ants almost seemed to have gone insane, and all of them were heading directly toward him.

“An ant apocalypse has struck Fragrant Cloud Peak!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked, leaping to his feet. Unexpectedly, even as Bai Xiaochun leaped to his feet, so did the ants, heading directly toward the black medicinal pill he held.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was completely numb, and the first thing he could think of to do was throw the medicinal pill away. Almost as soon as it left his hand, the ants changed directions, pouncing onto it.

The pill was instantly engulfed, transforming into a ball of ants, the sight of which caused the blood to drain from Bai Xiaochun’s face.

A moment later, the ant ball suddenly collapsed, and the ants scurried back into the cracks and crevices. No trace remained of the medicinal pill.

In fact, not an ant remained in the entire Medicine Concocting Pavilion. The ants had come quickly, and vanished just as quickly. Of course, many of the disciples who had lost the spirit medicines they were working on felt a bit depressed at what had happened, but there was nothing they could do about it. Furthermore, the disciples on duty, having determined that no major losses had occurred, decided not to report the strange incident.

Bai Xiaochun knew exactly why the ants had gone crazy, but as for everyone else, the only thing they saw was a mass of ants passing through.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was still thumping in fear. There hadn't seemed to be anything unusual with the pill he had just concocted. However, he had been very focused on doing a perfect job, a job even better than the previous attempt. Now that he thought about it, he realized that he had actually made some adjustments to the ratios in the last Spirit Replenishing Pill batch.

“Could it be that the final Spirit Replenishing Pill was something extremely beneficial to ants?” Bai Xiaochun shook his head as he thought about how incredible he was. Not only could he concoct shocking medicinal pills, he could concoct pills drove ants crazy.

Upon leaving the workshop, he heard the depressed mutterings of the other disciples, and felt a bit guilty. Ducking his head down, he quickly hurried away.

A few days passed, during which Bai Xiaochun confirmed that the incident in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion didn’t cause any waves in the sect. Finally, he went back, paid his merit points, then selected a different workshop within which to concoct medicine.

This time, he started working on the Longevity Incense.

Concocting incense and concocting pills were two different things, and required the use of different techniques. Pills were consumed, whereas incense was inhaled. Of course, the final form was different too, one being a pill, the other being a stick of incense.

Considering what happened last time, Bai Xiaochun was very careful in the way he went about working on the Longevity Incense. Two months passed, and after using ten batches of ingredients, he ended up with seven portions.

He left feeling quite satisfied, seven portions of Longevity Incense in hand. Back in his log cabin, he performed a threefold spirit enhancement, after which the Longevity Incense changed to a deep violet color. Although the threefold spirit designs were somewhat faint, they were still visible. Furthermore, the feeling he got when looking at the incense was completely different than before.

Bai Xiaochun looked thoughtfully at the Longevity Incense, and realized that he himself was also very different than he had been. Before, he didn't understand much at all about spirit medicine, but after concocting some on his own, he was much more knowledgeable. For example, he knew that any type of spirit medicine would have impurities, impurities that shouldn’t be absorbed into the body, and yet were difficult to separate out. Such impurities could build up inside the body and eventually become so-called medicinal toxins.

That was why many experienced members of the Inner Sect were hesitant to recommend that less experienced disciples consume medicinal pills. Theoretically speaking, much of the medicinal toxins could be expelled out of the body. However, if someone consumed too many medicinal pills and accumulated too much medicinal toxin, it could influence their future cultivation.

Therefore, depending on how many impurities existed within a given spirit medicine, it would be classified as one of six different levels.

“Low, mid, high, superior, premium, supreme....” he murmured, looking down at the Longevity Incense. If the medicine was more than ninety percent impure, it would be considered a toxic medicine, and wouldn’t be classified in the hierarchy. Furthermore, such medicines would never be consumed unless absolutely necessary.

If the medicine was around eighty percent impure, it would be considered low-grade, which was the most common type of spirit medicine. Sixty percent impurity was considered mid-grade, and such medicines were not common. In fact, only true master apothecaries were known to produce such medicines.

Medicines which were only forty percent impure were high-grade, and were rare. As for medicines that were twenty percent impure, they were considered superior-grade, and if they were only ten percent impure, they were premium-grade. Those were medicines that usually only appeared in large auctions.

Then there were the spirit medicines that had no impurities whatsoever, the legendary supreme-grade medicines.

Before, he hadn’t really understood what he was doing when he performed spirit enhancements on the spirit medicines. But after closely examining the Longevity Incense, he realized that it didn’t make it more powerful, the way it did with magical items. Instead... it actually improved the quality of the spirit medicine!

The Longevity Incense he held was now only forty percent impure, meaning that it was a high-grade medicine!

As soon as he realized this, Bai Xiaochun got very excited. Then he considered the matter a bit more, and decided to make a trip to Violet Cauldron Peak. His purpose was not to visit Big Fatty Zhang, but rather, to visit the only Spirit Enhancement Hall that existed on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect.

There, Outer Sect disciples could spend merit points to get help from the elders in the Spirit Enhancement Hall to perform spirit enhancements. Although there was still a chance of failure, many disciples frequented the place.

After looking around the Spirit Enhancement Hall, and also making some discreet inquiries, Bai Xiaochun was able to confirm that performing spirit enhancements on spirit medicine did indeed reduce the impurities and make them more effective.

After returning to Fragrant Cloud Peak, Bai Xiaochun looked excitedly at the incense he had made, then finally lit one stick and took a deep breath. Almost immediately, he felt as full as if he had eaten a big meal. Furthermore, as the aura of the incense spread out within him, he felt warm and comfortable. It was as if the flame of his life force had been fueled, and was now burning a bit hotter.

Continuing to inhale the incense, he went on to cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique. As soon as the feeling of hunger hit him, he took a deep breath, and the feeling quickly faded.

The seven sticks of Longevity Incense enabled Bai Xiaochun to cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique for half a month. During that time, he could sense his Undying Iron Skin growing tougher and stronger.

Feeling in very high spirits, he organized his bag of holding, then went down to the market and sold some of the things he had acquired from Chen Fei and his friends. Using the profits, he purchased ten more sets of ingredients for

Longevity Incense, and then once again began to concoct medicine.

Thanks to his constant caution and attention to detail, his success rate in concocting the Longevity Incense increased, rising from seventy percent to eighty, and eventually reaching one hundred percent.

However, he still wasn’t satisfied. Although his success rate had reached one hundred percent, the quality of the resulting spirit medicine was merely low-grade.

His skill was not something that could be changed in a short period of time, leaving him with only one option: use spirit enhancement to remove the impurities. When he used the Longevity Incense in cultivation, he would breathe in deeply and feel the true happiness that could be attained in Heaven and Earth.

His Undying Live Forever Technique improved with each day, as did his cultivation base, which was now nearing the great circle of the sixth level of Qi Condensation.

His greatest progress was with this Undying Live Forever Technique. With only a bit more work, he would be able to achieve a major success with his Undying Iron Skin. Bai Xiaochun’s body was far tougher and more durable than before, and when he used the Throat Crushing Grasp, his fingers were an even deeper black color than before.

By that time, though, the Longevity Incense was beginning to slowly lose its effectiveness. In the end, it did virtually nothing, causing Bai Xiaochun to sigh. He was aware that if you consumed enough of any given spirit medicine, the body would eventually adapt to it, and it would lose effectiveness.

If he wanted to continue his cultivation, he would need a spirit medicine that was even better than the Longevity Incense. Unfortunately, the formulas for spirit medicines like that were strictly controlled. It was impossible to purchase them at the market; they could only be acquired with merit points after being promoted to journeyman apothecary.

The only other option would be to go to a larger market, but places like that were some distance away from the sect. After considering the matter, Bai Xiaochun lit up with determination.

“I'm going to get promoted to journeyman apothecary!”

Considering his experience concocting medicines, as well as his skill with plants and vegetation, it shouldn’t be too much of a problem to qualify for promotion. However, just to be safe, he spent the following several days buying a few more random medicine formulas. After concocting each one a few times, then analyzing his failures, he felt much more confident, and went to sign up for the journeyman apothecary promotion test.

Of course, the promotion test wasn't something held for a single individual. Only when enough people had signed up would the test be held. After waiting for another month, even as he was pondering some matters regarding spirit medicines, his identity medallion inside of his bag of holding began to vibrate. When he pulled it out, an ancient voice filled his mind.

“Tomorrow at dawn, come to the Journeyman Apothecary Hall, where the test for journeyman apothecary promotion will be held.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0041 awe-chapter-42

The Journeyman Apothecary Hall was located on the south face of Fragrant Cloud Peak. It was surrounded by lush trees and vegetation, and could only be accessed by a narrow limestone path which snaked off of one of the main thoroughfares that ran up and down the mountain. Unless there was a promotion test underway, few people would walk along that path. However, when the time came for the test, it would be packed.

In addition to the disciples who had come to take the test, there were also friends who had come to support the test-takers, or even people who weren’t confident enough to take the test without first observing it being held a few times.

From a distance, the Journeyman Apothecary Hall actually looked like a person sitting cross-legged in meditation. In front of that person was a pill furnace, beneath which was a passageway that led into a main square.

Set up in that main square were twenty pill furnaces, all of which looked completely identical. Laid out next to each of the pill furnaces was a bag containing various types of plants and vegetation that could be used in medicine concocting.

It was dawn, and Bai Xiaochun, worried about getting lost, had come very early. However, when he arrived, he found that there were people who had arrived even earlier than him. There were dozens of people standing around in groups of two or three, chatting quietly, and even some people who stood apart from the others alone, waiting cross-legged in meditation.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the type of person to sit around like an idiot meditating. After glancing around, he caught sight of Xu Baocai and walked over. When Xu Baocai saw him approaching, he clasped hands in greeting, and the two of them began to chat. It quickly became apparent that virtually nothing went on in the sect without Xu Baocai finding out about it.

“Elder Brother Bai,” he said, “did you hear that about half a year ago, Chen Fei and his friends were mysteriously beaten into bloody pulps? They’ve been bed-ridden ever since, and for some reason, won’t talk at all about what happened.” Even as he spoke, he looked at Bai Xiaochun carefully to see his reaction.

Bai Xiaochun yawned dramatically, and was just about to start boasting about what had happened when all of a sudden, a buzz of conversation rose up in the crowd. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun felt as if someone had suddenly looked in his direction. When he turned his head, he saw a young woman walking toward him.

She wore the long garment of an Outer Sect disciple, but it did nothing to conceal her curvaceous figure. She had a waist as slender as a willow tree, which only served to accentuate the rest of her curves, and make her seem incredibly beautiful. She had long legs, and a perky rear end, and as she approached, people couldn’t stop from staring.

With her pretty face, and clear white skin that seemed so delicate it might be broken by a faint breeze, she oozed an attractiveness that could easily prove fatal to almost any man.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit disgusted to hear people gulping dramatically, even Xu Baocai.

Xu Baocai licked his lips, and his eyes shone with infatuation “That’s... Elder Sister Du, Du Lingfei!” he whispered excitedly. “She's one of the five hottest women on the south bank! She’s the immortal beauty of my heart.... Oh my goodness, she just looked at me!!”

“She’s looking at me!” Bai Xiaochun said derisively. He simply watched as Du Lingfei got closer. Suddenly, her phoenix-like eyes flickered with a murderous aura as she glared straight at Bai Xiaochun. She had long since come to admit that Bai Xiaochun’s skill with plants and vegetation exceeded hers. However, she was still filled with complete and utter revulsion for him. With a slight snort, she walked off to the side.

Xu Baocai stared at her in a daze, completely oblivious to Bai Xiaochun’s derision. In fact, he seemed more infatuated than ever.

“So Du Lingfei is going to take the test too....” Bai Xiaochun thought. After looking over the twenty pill furnaces, he calmed himself down and focused. “Ah, whatever, it doesn’t matter. I’m not here to compete with her. This is an exam administered by the sect, not a contest. Everybody has a chance to get promoted.”

Soon, Chen Zi’ang appeared, and when he noticed Bai Xiaochun, he hesitated for a moment, then grinned and called out a greeting. Bai Xiaochun smiled and clasped hands in response, after which Chen Zi’ang sat down off to the side to wait.

Eventually, even Zhao Yiduo showed up, whom Bai Xiaochun had first encountered outside the Missions Offices. Then, more and more people began to appear, and a good-sized crowd built up.

Before too much time passed, the main door of the Journeyman Apothecary Hall creaked open, and an old man walked out. He had a full head of white hair, and piercing eyes, and as soon as he appeared, everyone quieted down.

The old man's expression was calm as he strode forward with hands clasped behind his back. He came to a stop at the front of the square, looked around at all the Outer Sect disciples, then nodded his head and began to speak.

“I am surnamed Xu, and I shall preside over this test for promotion from apprentice apothecary to journeyman apothecary.

“The test will consist of one portion regarding plants and vegetation, and another regarding medicine concocting. To pass the portion regarding plants and vegetation, simply walk through the passageway.” Elder Xu didn't seem to want to offer any further explanations. After speaking only three sentences, he simply closed his eyes and ignored everyone.

Even as Bai Xiaochun blinked in response, a long-faced young man walked out from the crowd. After clasping hands and bowing to Elder Xu, he strode toward the passageway leading under the giant pill furnace.

As entered the doorway of the passageway, a beam of light appeared, which surrounded him, then vanished. A moment later, the pill furnace trembled, then let out a five muffled reverberations.

Xu Baocai leaned over and whispered, “Five reverberations means that his skill with plants and vegetation encompasses the fifth volume....” He definitely deserved his reputation of knowing about everything in the sect.

Bai Xiaochun blinked again. Before coming, he'd had no idea of how exactly the test would be carried out. Having heard Xu Baocai's explanation, he examined the huge stone pill furnace, and suddenly had the feeling that it must be connected to the stone steles outside the 10,000 Medicines pavilion.

“What do I do now...?” he thought hesitantly. “Zhou Xinqi’s fans are still combing the mountain for me.”

Soon, more people approached, most of whom received five reverberations. However, one of them only received four reverberations, upon which Elder Xu flicked his sleeve, sending that disciple spinning away.

“Elder Xu!” the disciple exclaimed, face flickering. “I thought volume four of plants and vegetation was the minimum requirement to be able to take the test!”

“The rules have changed. Now it's the fifth volume.”

“But....” The young man stared in shock, then bitterly clasped his hands and bowed. Not daring to say anything further, he left.

This turn of events caused the sound of whispered conversations to swell. Xu Baocai’s eyes flickered with surprise, and he suddenly produced a tiny notebook, within which he began to take notes. Bai Xiaochun looked over and saw a page filled with lines of handwriting, each character as small as the head of a fly. Apparently it was a record of all matters pertaining to the sect, large and small alike. Bai

Xiaochun couldn’t help but admire how seriously Xu Baocai took the whole matter.

It was at this point that Zhao Yiduo stood up and entered the passageway. The reverberations echoed out six times, after which Elder Xu opened his eyes and nodded slightly. Zhao Yiduo clasped hands and then stepped out of the passageway.

Chen Zi’ang’s eyes flickered. He and Zhao Yiduo had never gotten along, so he snorted coldly and walked into the passageway, after which six reverberations could be heard.

After giving Zhao Yiduo a meaningful stare, and sat back down cross-legged off to the side.

The fact that both Zhao Yiduo and Chen Zi’ang had received six reverberations caused a buzz of envious conversation to rise up. At the same time, Du Lingfei’s eyes flickered, and she walked through the passageway. As she did, six reverberations could be heard, which caused even more envious gleams to appear in the eyes of the onlookers.

Murmured conversations instantly broke out.

“Chen Zi’ang, Zhao Yiduo, and Du Lingfei are all persons of outstanding talent within the Outer Sect. Not only have they mastered five volumes of plants and vegetation, but they also have command of the first volume of spirit creatures. I would say that they have a seventy to eighty percent chance of passing the test and being promoted to journeyman apothecary.”

“Historically speaking, anyone who takes the journeyman apothecary test having already mastered six stone steles will pass, as long as that disciple’s performance in medicine concocting isn’t lacking.”

Even as everyone discussed the matter, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth. Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about Zhou Xinqi’s fans. Just as he was about to take a step forward, a figure suddenly appeared off in the distance, speeding along the mountain path. It was a middle-aged man, his hair completely disheveled, but his eyes sparkling with life. Even before he arrived, his voice echoed out to be heard by all.

“I, Han Jianye, having spent seven years in secluded meditation, and have finally made a huge breakthrough in my skill with plants and vegetation. Finally, I have emerged once again into the world, not just be promoted to journeyman apothecary, but to become the top journeyman apothecary in the entire test!” Looking very proud and lofty, he flickered through the air toward the giant pill furnace’s passageway.

Elder Xu didn’t pay the man any heed, not even deigning to open his eyes. However, everyone else in the crowd seemed astonished to have heard the name Han Jianye.

“Han Jianye? Who’s that? I’ve never heard of him before.”

“Considering how old he is, he must be an Outer Sect disciple from seven or eight years ago.... He wants to be the top journeyman apothecary, which isn’t a very easy thing to do.”

Even as everyone expressed their shock, Han Jianye stepped into the passageway, looking extremely proud and confident. Almost immediately, powerful reverberations began to echo out into the air.

One reverberation, two reverberations... five, six, seven... before anyone in the crowd could even react, eight reverberations echoed out from within the pill furnace.

Elder Xu’s eyes snapped open, and he looked over at the middle-aged man, a broad smile of praise on his face.

“Five volumes of plants and vegetation, and three volumes of spirit creatures,” he said. “Excellent!”

Looking very excited, Han Jianye clasped hands and bowed to Elder Xu. Then he turned, and when he looked at Du Lingfei and the others, the pride in his eyes was very clear. Swishing his sleeves, he sat down confidently in front of the center-most of the pill furnaces.

Finally, gasps could be heard from the crowd, as well as the clamor of conversation.

“Eight reverberations! Not only did he master everything about plants and vegetation, he even got through three volumes of spirit creatures!”

“It seems he might be able to do exactly as he said and become the top journeyman apothecary!”

When Bai Xiaochun witnessed what happened, he was left feeling quite underwhelmed. Therefore, when everyone in the crowd started getting excited, he almost couldn’t believe it.

“He only mastered three volumes of spirit creatures, right?” he asked of Xu Baocai. “Why is everyone making such a big fuss?” If he remembered correctly, when it came to the third stone stele of spirit creatures, over a thousand people were listed as having passed it. Even the tenth stone stele had been passed by hundreds of people.

Xu Baocai rolled his eyes, feeling more contemptuous than ever of Bai Xiaochun. Of course, he didn’t dare give voice to that contempt, and instead cleared his throat and said, “Elder Brother Bai, you just don’t understand. To master all five volumes of plants and vegetation is hard enough as it is. The volumes of spirit creatures are even harder! Even mastering one of them is enough to make you the subject of much envy. Obviously, to master three is even more shocking. Do you think everyone can be consummate Chosen like Zhou Xinqi or the little turtle? Look, just forget about those two. On all of Fragrant Cloud Peak, there are probably less than fifty people who have passed the stone steles of all five volumes of plants and vegetation plus all five volumes of spirit creatures!

“Each and every one of those people are dragons and phoenixes among mortals. Think about it! There are a lot of names on those stone steles, but those name lists are thousands of years old. Plus, many of those people have already moved on to the Inner Sect, leaving only their names behind here in the Outer Sect!

“Furthermore, you only need to master five volumes to take this test. This guy has eight! Just as he said, he’s definitely going to become the top journeyman apothecary, which will earn him the 5,000 merit point prize.”

Although Xu Baocai’s words were actually a bit contemptuous if you paid close attention, Bai Xiaochun didn’t really notice. Eyes gleaming with elation, he looked at Xu Baocai and said, “Did you just say that Zhou Xinqi and the little turtle are consummate Chosen? Are they really that awesome?”

“Of course! Especially the little turtle. He's completely shocking. He's the first person in a thousand years to get first place in all ten stone steles. Elder Brother Bai, I have to say, you really shouldn’t aim too high.” Even as the contempt in Xu Baocai’s heart rose to new heights, Bai

Xiaochun laughed heartily. The more he was around Xu Baocai, the more he liked him. Clapping him on the shoulder, he suddenly strode forward.

Xu Baocai gaped in shock as Bai Xiaochun walked toward the passageway. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was somewhat well-known for his skill with plants and vegetation, considering that he had defeated Du Lingfei. It was a given that he would eventually take this test.

However, what happened next caused Xu Baocai's eyes to bulge. Bai Xiaochun strode proudly into the passageway, after which a flash of light could be seen, and the muffled reverberations began.

One, two, three... six, seven, eight!

Everyone became deathly quiet. However, the reverberations didn't stop. A ninth reverberation echoed out and then... a tenth!

RUMBLE!

When the tenth reverberation echoed out, Elder Xu's eyes shot open, and they glowed with unprecedented brightness. He looked over at Bai Xiaochun, completely shocked.

It must be stated that it would be rare enough for one of the thousands of Outer Sect disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak to master all ten of the volumes, including the five for plants and vegetation, and the five for spirit creatures. Virtually all of them would have already taken this test. For someone to be so patient as to wait until they had mastered all ten was something that Elder Xu had never seen, not until this very day.

Even Zhou Xinqi had taken the test after having mastered only nine.

Du Lingfei’s eyes went wide as she stared at Bai Xiaochun standing there in the passageway. Although she had already known that he was far more advanced than her in his skill with plants and vegetation, she had never imagined that he would have reached such an astonishing level. Not only had he completely mastered plants and vegetation, he also had shocking skill with spirit creatures.

Her mind was spinning, and she could do nothing but gape blankly. She couldn’t help but recall how she had demanded to compete with him in skill with plants and vegetation, and how he had cautiously and even nervously asked about her ranking. Then she thought about how anxious he had looked when he had agreed to compete.

As of this moment she realized that Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness back then had been a front, concealing the wide smile that had blossomed in his heart.

“Bai. Xiao. CHUN!!” she thought, gnashing her teeth.

Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo also gasped and stared at Bai Xiaochun in astonishment.

As for Han Jianye, who had spent so many years in secluded meditation, he began to tremble. He was glaring at Bai Xiaochun, his mind spinning, waves of shock crashing into him as he realized that Bai Xiaochun was definitely his lifelong archenemy.

“The most important part of the journeyman apothecary test is medicine concocting!” he thought. “He might be strong, but I refuse to believe that he can outdo me in concocting medicine. I spent seven years in secluded meditation just to take the top spot in this test!!”

At the same time, the surrounding Outer Sect disciples were gasping and even crying out in shock.

“That was... ten reverberations! That means he mastered all five of the volumes of spirit creatures too! He passed all of the stone steles outside the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion! There aren’t even fifty disciples in the entire Outer Sect who can do that!”

“This guy has incredible patience! He waited to pass all ten of the stone steles before taking the promotion test!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0042 awe-chapter-43

“Don’t tell me... he's the little turtle!?!?” The crowd was in an uproar.

Of course, most flabbergasted of everyone was Xu Baocai, who was staring at Bai Xiaochun with eyes so wide they seemed to be on the verge of popping out of his head. Moments ago, he had despised Bai Xiaochun for not thinking much of having mastered three volumes of spirit creatures, but now, he clearly had every right to have that attitude....

“Mastery of plants and vegetation and mastery of spirit creatures.... Bai Xiaochun was clearly just messing with me!! But this is simply unbelievable. He's only been in the sect for a few years! Could it be... that he really is the little turtle?” Gasping, Xu Baocai pulled out his little notebook and began to write down the new developments. Inwardly, he was rejoicing that he had chosen to smooth things out with Bai Xiaochun, and was also rejoicing that he hadn’t said anything too derisive earlier.

Even as everyone was giving voice to their shock, Bai Xiaochun walked out of the passageway, sighing. Actually, if there had been a way to conceal his accomplishments regarding the ten stone steles, then he would have. After all, there were still Inner Sect disciples among Zhou Xinqi’s fans.

Unfortunately, there was nothing that could be done about it. He couldn’t just give up on the promotion. Despite the fact that he had been forced to reveal the truth, when he saw how excited the crowds were, and when he heard people calling out his name, he was actually quite moved.

“What wonderful fellow disciples. Ah, if only everyone were like that!” Sighing emotionally, and under the eyes of everyone in the audience, he selected a pill furnace and sat down.

Elder Xu looked thoughtfully at Bai Xiaochun. A smile flickered across his face, but quickly vanished. After recovered his composure, he calmly said, “The bag in front of you has ten sets of medicinal plants, which you can use to concoct ten tier-1 spirit medicines, specifically, Inkspirit Incense!

“You will be judged based on your success rate, with a minimum of two successes being the requirement to pass. Whoever has the most successes... will be awarded 5,000 merit points! You may begin immediately.”

The Outer Sect disciples in the audience instantly began to buzz with excitement in response to Elder Xu’s explanation.

“This time the test is to concoct Inkspirit Incense!”

“Inkspirit Incense isn't the most difficult tier-1 medicine to concoct, but it’s not easy.... It’s not like Spirit Condensation Incense or other spirit medicines like that, which many apprentice apothecaries have experience with.”

“Hmph. They’re only refining the ways to test one’s qualifications in medicine concocting. Can’t you see what’s happening? Before, they required four volumes of plants and vegetation, now it's five. They even increased the level of difficulty of the spirit medicine to be concocted. Presumably, things will only continue to get harder in the future.”

As everyone discussed the matter, the group sitting in front of the pill furnaces in the square had very serious expressions on their faces. Although some of them smiled bitterly when they heard that the test involved Inkspirit Incense, they didn't allow themselves to be distracted, but instead opened the bags and began to inspect the medicinal plants.

Xu Baocai had mentioned the matter of the 5,000 merit points earlier. Now that Bai Xiaochun heard confirmation from Elder Xu, his heart was thumping. He was already running low on merit points, which he needed to get medicine formulas and medicinal plants.

“If I can get those 5,000 merit points, it will save me a lot of time and effort.” With those thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun opened the bag, within which were the ten sets of medicinal plants, plus a jade slip, which was none other than the medicine formula for the Inkspirit Incense.

He didn't immediately begin to concoct the medicine, but instead settled his qi and cleared his mind, then began to study the formula.

He took his time, which was how he had grown accustomed to concocting medicine. Even the slightest question about anything needed to be analyzed completely until he felt completely confident.

His initial research alone took him two hours.

By that time, Du Lingfei and everyone else had already finished inspecting the plants, and were beginning to actually concoct the medicine. In fact, most of them were more than half finished with their first batch.

It didn’t take long before everyone except Bai Xiaochun was already in the middle of medicine concocting. Bai Xiaochun was the only one who was sitting there, looking thoughtfully at the jade slip. That sight left Xu Baocai somewhat shocked.

By now, the first batches of spirit medicine were coming out. Rumbling sounds began to emanate from the pill furnaces of everyone except Bai Xiaochun. Most of them had long faces as black smoke rose up, indicating that their first batches were failures.

Han Jianye, on the other hand, threw his head back and laughed loudly. His pill furnace was trembling, and a medicinal aroma began to spread out. Shockingly, a three-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense appeared.

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples all craned their necks to look.

“He succeeded with his first batch!”

“This Han Jianye sure has talent in medicine concocting!”

An excited expression appeared on Han Jianye’s face as he glanced around at the other test-takers. His gaze lingered for a moment on Bai Xiaochun, and when he realized that he was still studying the medicine formula, a look of disdain appeared in his eyes. Finally, he pulled out the second set of plants and began concocting a second batch.

Du Lingfei and everyone else all had unsightly expressions on their faces, and gritted their teeth as they began to work on a second batch.

Time passed. By the time the fourth hour of the test had passed, most of the group was finished with their second batch. Muffled rumbling could be heard as... not a single test-taker succeeded.

It was at about this time that Bai Xiaochun put the jade slip down. His mind was now permeated with the medicine formula for Inkspirit Incense. However, just when everyone thought he was about to begin, they were stunned to see him take out one of the medicinal plants and begin to study it closely.

“What is Bai Xiaochun doing? He already studied the medicine formula for four hours! What's the point of studying the plants?”

“I know this is a test, but does he really have to go so slow...?”

Xu Baocai’s eyes were wide with disbelief as he watched everyone else starting their third batches.

The audience waited in befuddlement as the sixth hour of the test arrived. By now, eighteen of the test-takers had all consistently failed. Soon eight hours had passed, then ten. Eventually, four people succeeded in concocting the Inkspirit Incense, including Du Lingfei, Chen Zi’ang, and Zhao Yiduo.

The aura of the incense spread out in all directions. Han Jianye was chuckling proudly at being the first person to concoct a second stick of Inkspirit Incense. Looking around proudly, his contempt for Bai Xiaochun grew.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun was studying the fourth of the medicinal plants. Occasionally he would even tear a perforation into the plant itself, which left the audience shocked. Even Elder Xu had noticed.

Time flew by. Soon, twelve hours had passed. Everyone failed in their sixth batch of spirit medicine, except for Han Jianye, who was the only person to succeed.

That caused quite an uproar, and even elicited a slight nod from Elder Xu.

“This Han Jianye has already concocted three sticks of incense! Nobody else even has more than one!”

“In tests past, two successes meant you passed the test, and four successes made you a Chosen. All Han Jianye has to do is concoct one more stick to become a Chosen!”

As everyone discussed the matter, a gleam of self-confidence could be seen flickering in Han Jianye’s eyes as he murmured, “I’ll definitely concoct a fourth stick of Inkspirit Incense. I'm going to be Chosen, and I'm going to be the top journeyman apothecary!"

Swishing his sleeve in grand style, he began to work on his seventh batch.

Du Lingfei’s face was ashen as she gritted her teeth and began working on her own seventh batch.

When the fourteenth hour arrived, Du Lingfei’s eyes shone with elation as a medicinal aroma began to spread out from her pill furnace. Even as black smoke rose up from everyone else's seventh batches, she produced the only success!

“I've met the minimum, but mere promotion is not enough!” Du Lingfei constrained her excitement, taking a deep breath as she, along with the ashen-faced Han Jianye, began work on another batch.

In the sixteenth hour, more rumbling sounds could be heard as yet again... everyone met with failure.

As of this moment, of the nineteen other people besides Bai Xiaochun who were taking the test, Han Jianye had three successes, Du Lingfei had two, Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo both had one, and everyone else... had nothing but failures.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was studying the last of the medicinal plants.

“This test is so hard....”

That was the thought running through the minds of the Outer Sect disciples in the audience. They could feel the anxious pressure building up. Most of the test-takers only had two sets of ingredients left. With the exception of Du Lingfei and Han Jianye, who had already met the minimum requirement, and Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo, who both had one success already, the other test-takers had to succeed with both sets of ingredients, otherwise they would fail completely.

Those remaining disciples were now extremely nervous. Essentially, this ninth batch was the most crucial batch; if they failed, then Elder Xu wouldn't allow them to waste the ingredients set aside for the tenth batch.

If that ninth batch failed, then... their test-taking effort would be a complete failure.

Filled with apprehension and nervousness, everyone focused completely on their ninth batches.... Each and every step received complete and utter attention; those who had already met the minimum requirement wanted to get a better final score, and for those who hadn't met the minimum, they had to do everything they could right now to pass.

Bai Xiaochun, on the other hand... was sitting there holding the final medicinal plant. Apparently, he was considering some important question about that plant, as his brow was furrowed thoughtfully. By now... few people were paying attention to him.

The eighteenth hour seemed to pass very slowly. This was the moment everyone had been waiting for. Soon, rumbling sounds echoed out. As for the disciples who had not succeeded at all, they rose to their feet, faces pale, chuckling bitterly. After clasping hands to Elder Xu, they dejectedly left the square.

One by one, the disciples left, until soon, only six people remained concocting medicine.

Soon, rumbling sounds echoed out from the six test-takers' pill furnaces, and yet a medicinal aroma emitted from only one of those furnaces, the one belonging to Zhao Yiduo.

Zhao Yiduo's hands were clenched tightly into fists, he was panting, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. He was more excited right now than he had ever been before; he had met the minimum requirements. With two successes, he passed!

Some people were excited, some were depressed. Five people had failed, two of them being disciples who hadn't succeeded a single time. Sighing, they rose to their feet and left.

Chen Zi'ang couldn't be more on edge. He was glaring at Zhao Yiduo, heart filled with bitterness and anxiety. Then he looked with bloodshot eyes at the final set of medicinal plants.

Du Lingfei frowned, then closed her eyes to think. Han Jianye felt the least pressure of all, and yet, he wasn't happy to be stuck with only three successes. He wanted to break through to become Chosen.

“The last batch!” People took deep breaths as they looked out at the square, and the five people left behind. Han Jianye. Du Lingfei. Zhao Yiduo. Chen Zi’ang. And of course... Bai Xiaochun.

Three of them had already met the minimum requirements. Chen Zi’ang had one chance left to do so. As for Bai Xiaochun... people weren’t even paying attention to him, and were actually beginning to wonder why he had even come. After eighteen hours, all he had done was study the medicine formula and the medicinal plants. Some people were even wondering... if he had just come to be a part of the excitement.

It was with unprecedented seriousness that Du Lingfei and the others began to focus completely on their tenth and last batch of spirit medicine. As everyone looked on with fixed gazes, the twentieth hour slowly passed.

Rumbling sounds could then be heard from Zhao Yiduo’s pill furnace, after which black smoke rose up. He sighed. He had failed in the final batch, but at least he still met the minimum requirements.

In almost the exact same instant that Zhao Yiduo failed, Chen Zi’ang’s pill furnace began to emit a medicinal aroma. His wasn’t the only one. Medicinal aromas were also spreading out from Du Lingfei’s and Han Jianye's!

In that instant, all three of their faces lit up with joy as they realized that they had succeeded!

“I did it! Four sticks of Inkspirit Incense! I took the top spot!!” Han Jianye shot to his feet and his excited laughter began to ring out in all directions. Du Lingfei sighed in relief. Although she hadn’t reached the level of a Chosen, three successes was still astonishing.

Chen Zi’ang felt almost as if he had been resurrected from the dead, and began to laugh heartily.

As of this moment, the feelings that the four of them had been suppressing for the last two hours finally erupted out.

“What a difficult test! The fact that Han Jianye could succeed four times despite this level of difficulty shows that he really is a Chosen!”

“Du Lingfei got three successes, Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo both got two.... They all met the requirements to be promoted. I bet if the test wasn’t so hard, they all would probably have been able to get four successes!”

Even as everyone began to discuss the matter, as the friends of the test-takers were cheering in support, as Elder Xu nodded approvingly at Han Jianye and was about to announce that the test was over... Bai Xiaochun moved.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0043 awe-chapter-44

After fully studying the final plant, and resolving all of the issues he had, Bai Xiaochun continued to completely ignore all of the clamor around him. He had focused hard on the information in the jade slip, had become completely immersed in the Dao of plants and vegetation, and had even entered a sort of trance.

Nothing short of the crash of thunder and lightning would be able to break his concentration, nor did he even glance at the results of the others’ concocting efforts.

Of course, that attracted the attention of some in the audience, including Xu Baocai. Curious expressions could be seen on their faces as they looked over, clearly wondering why Bai Xiaochun had spent so much longer in his initial observations.

“This Bai Xiaochun is just too slow. Everyone else is finished and he's just starting. Shouldn't the test be over by now?”

“Hmm. You know what, I don’t think I ever heard anything about the journeyman apothecary promotion test... having a time limit....” It wasn’t clear who exactly said that last sentence, but when people heard it, they began to turn toward Elder Xu, blank expressions on their faces.

Elder Xu hesitated for a moment, but the truth was that the journeyman apothecary promotion test really didn’t have any time limit. Therefore, he continued to stand there watching Bai Xiaochun concoct medicine.

Han Jianye wasn't worried at all, and was even chuckling coldly, eyes flashing with disdain. At first, he had been worried that Bai Xiaochun would be a formidable opponent, but after the way this part of the test had played out, he was convinced that there was no way Bai Xiaochun could surpass him.

Du Lingfei’s brow was furrowed; Bai Xiaochun rubbed her wrong no matter how she considered the matter.

Bai Xiaochun’s movements were blindingly fast, and his eyes glowed brightly. To him, the entire world consisted only of that pill furnace. The various medicinal plants rapidly changed form as he kneaded them into pastes, broke them down into powders, or made other preparations. Then, after putting all of the ingredients into the pill furnace, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed at the pill furnace, causing the earthflame underneath to burn brightly.

Two hours flew by, and soon a strong medicinal aroma emanated out from the pill furnace. Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing a four-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense to fly out. As soon as it landed in his palm, he examined it, and then frowned.

Everyone in the audience had very serious expressions on their faces, and Elder Xu’s eyes were flickering. However, just when everyone was expecting Bai Xiaochun to start his second batch, they realized that instead, he was simply... studying the incense.

“What is he doing??”

“He succeeded! Why hasn’t he started the second batch?”

Everyone was looking on, stunned.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was looking at the Inkspirit Incense, feeling quite unsatisfied. Although he had indeed succeeded, he knew that based on the ingredients he had used, the incense should have been seven inches long.

“What went wrong?” he thought. Then he contemplated the matter... for six hours.

Just when everyone was getting to the point where they were running out of patience, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, and he produced a second set of ingredients and began to concoct. Everyone in the audience anxiously watched him work.

Yet again, two hours passed. This time, the medicinal aroma was even stronger than before as a five-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense flew out.

Du Lingfei’s face flickered, and shocked expressions could be seen on the faces of both Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo. As for Han Jianye, his eyes flickered, but his expression remained calm. Only he knew that, inwardly, he was starting to get anxious.

Of course, what made him anxious was not just that Bai Xiaochun had succeeded two times, but that… he might continue to succeed!

Under the shocked gazes of all present, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve, sending the third set of medicinal plant ingredients out. His third batch was now beginning, and all of the Outer Sect disciples were watching closely.

Two hours passed in silence. Suddenly, the pill furnace shuddered, and a medicinal aroma even stronger than before filled the area as a six-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense appeared!

“Three times in a row! How... could this be happening!?!?”

“How is Bai Xiaochun doing this? Could it be that he has actually concocted Inkspirit Incense before?!” Cries of astonishment could be heard because of the successive successes; people could hardly believe what they were seeing.

Du Lingfei’s breath came in ragged pants as she glared at Bai Xiaochun, waves of shock battering her heart. Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo were both gaping dully.

“Three in a row....” Han Jianye thought, clenching his hands into fists. His eyes were now completely bloodshot. “He must already be familiar with Inkspirit Incense. Well, he got lucky with this batch, but the next batch will be a different story!”

Just when everyone was expecting Bai Xiaochun to start his fourth batch, he held up the six-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense, then frowned and rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

Then everyone waited... for ten hours.

If this sort of thing had happened with the first batch, everyone would have left. But after having seen Bai Xiaochun succeed three times in a row, they knew that a fourth success would push him past everyone else to the same level as Han Jianye. That was something everyone was itching to see happen.

“Bai Xiaochun takes way too long! It’s only a tier-1 spirit medicine! Why does he need so much time to think about it!?”

Of course, Du Lingfei and Han Jianye were the most invested of all, and were staring dead at Bai Xiaochun, completely unwilling to leave.

It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered brightly. His eyebrows shot up as he waved both hands, sending plants and vegetation flying out as he began his fourth batch. Everyone was now looking on in complete excitement.

Two hours later, rumbling sounds could be heard, but not the type that indicated a failure had been met. Instead, a powerful blast of medicinal aroma spread out, filling the entire area in the blink of an eye. Then, astonishingly, a seven-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense appeared!

The fourth batch was another success!

The audience went wild.

“Four in a row!”

“I can’t believe something like this actually happened.... Just how many times will Bai Xiaochun actually succeed!?”

“Two successes are the requirement to pass, and four makes you Chosen! If I remember correctly, Elder Sister Zhou Xinqi got seven successes back when she was promoted!” As the crowd clamored, Du Lingfei’s face turned very unsightly. Although she was aware that Bai Xiaochun’s skill with plants and vegetation far surpassed her own, to see that such a vast gap existed between them in terms of medicine concocting filled her with mixed emotions.

As for Han Jianye, he was grinding his teeth, and his hands were clenched tightly into balls. He was trembling, and couldn’t bear to believe what he was seeing. And yet, everything was happening right in front of him, making it impossible for him to deny it.

“Four successes! Four successes has to be his limit. The rest will definitely be failures!”

Everyone in the audience was now buzzing with speculation regarding how many total successes Bai Xiaochun would achieve. But then, they realized that Bai Xiaochun was simply staring at the Inkspirit Incense.

“What is this guy doing? He’s doing more studying?!” Although they were a bit chagrined, the audience members weren’t about to leave now. Instead, they sat there, waiting and watching, looking forward to seeing the results of Bai Xiaochun’s next study session.

Sixteen hours passed before Bai Xiaochun finally took a deep breath. His eyes were completely bloodshot. Although no one else realized it, the fourth batch he had just produced had come very close to failing.

“This Inkspirit Incense is much, much harder than any of the other spirit medicines I've concocted in the past.” Bai Xiaochun was prudent and meticulous. After thinking back to all the other batches he had produced so far, he identified what the problem was, and after confirming that he could prevent it from happening, began a fifth batch.

He was completely oblivious to any of the conversations around him; when he was concocting medicine, his level of focus exceeded imagination. It didn’t matter what anybody said, he wouldn’t begin to concoct unless he was absolutely confident in succeeding.

Everyone in the audience had been sitting here for so long that they were completely exhausted, and were having trouble staying focused, and yet they were now all craning their necks to see what was happening.

It didn't take long before more rumbling sounds could be heard, and a medicinal aroma spread out in all directions, a fragrant odor that sent shock into the hearts of everyone present.

The fifth batch was a success!

Han Jianye sat there dumbfounded, heart overwhelmed with bitterness. After a long moment, he simply sighed quietly.

This was the moment the crowd had been waiting for. Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve and began the sixth batch.

Before long, more rumbling could be heard, and smell of incense spread out. The sixth batch was a success!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered. Not pausing for even a moment, he pulled out more medicinal plants and started his seventh batch. However, in almost the exact same instant that he started the seventh batch, an acrid odor suddenly wafted out. It was very faint, and could only be detected by Bai Xiaochun, and yet it caused his heart to begin pounding.

He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed out, reducing the earthflame temperature. After manipulating the ingredients with the greatest care, he succeeded with the seventh batch!

However, this stick was only three inches long, and contained many impurities, leaving it on the verge of being low-grade, almost toxic. However, as far as the audience was concerned, that still counted as a success!

At this point, the audience was completely and utterly wrapped up in what was happening. Everyone was panting in excitement, especially Xu Baocai, whose eyes glowed with disbelief.

“Seven successes.... Heavens! Bai Xiaochun actually succeeded seven times!”

“He’s just as good as Elder Sister Zhou Xinqi! I remember hearing that the only person to ever exceed eight successes was a disciple from years ago named Wang Qingshan, an Elder Brother who is now in the supreme position of being in the legacy echelon!”

“Succeeding nine times... is completely unheard-of. Nobody has ever done it!”

The audience was in an uproar, but Bai Xiaochun was sitting there quietly, looking at the pill furnace. His eyes were bloodshot, and by this point, he wasn’t even thinking about the test. He was immersed in thoughts of concocting medicine, and was analyzing the near failure from all angles. Next, he pulled out the ingredients and began to examine them again to try to determine the cause.

“This spirit plant is called inkfruit, and the ink elements within each one are slightly different....” He held the inkfruit in his hand and continued to observe and analyze it.

Time passed, and more wry smiles could be seen on the faces of the audience as they realized what was happening. Although they were excited, Bai Xiaochun was so thoughtfully slow in medicine concocting that it could make one bristle with anger.

And yet, nobody was willing to leave. The Outer Sect disciples all sat there cross-legged, some of them meditating as they waited for Bai Xiaochun. Others were so exhausted that they leaned up against nearby boulders to sleep.

A strange expression could be seen on the face of Elder Xu. Coughing dryly, he sat there cross-legged, waiting.

Of course, Du Lingfei and Han Jianye weren’t going to leave. Although Bai Xiaochun left them physically and mentally exhausted, they had no choice but to sit there quietly.

Everything was very quiet, except for the occasional snores which echoed out. And yet, people were still waiting, and watching Bai Xiaochun. Xu Baocai was among their number.

Hours passed, during which some people awoke from their sleep to find Bai Xiaochun sitting there in contemplation. They couldn’t help but sigh.

“I can’t believe he’s still studying.”

“The sun is rising....”

Eventually, after more than twenty hours had passed, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, and his eyes were completely bloodshot.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0044 awe-chapter-45

Bai Xiaochun was panting. By this point, he was focused to the point of tuning everything else out. He wasn’t even worried about whether or not he would succeed. His eyes were bloodshot, and his mind was occupied with only one thing: how to be completely and utterly confident!

Unless he was totally confident, he wouldn't start the next batch!

When it came to concocting medicine, his cautious and prudent personality was fully on display.

However, even after all the thought he had put into it, he still couldn’t figure out how to solve the problem without first standardizing the ink elements within the Inkfruit. Although that wouldn't count as changing the medicine formula, it would be a slight adjustment to it. After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with determination.

“The only way is to adjust the formula on a case-by-case basis!” He quickly crushed the Inkfruit.

A squishing sound could be heard as juice flowed out, although Bai Xiaochun didn't send it into the pill furnace. Instead, he congealed it in the air in front of him, then began to make adjustments here and there.

Most people in the audience were surprised, but didn’t really understand what he was doing. Even Bai Xiaochun himself didn't really think that his actions were anything special; he just felt that this was the best course of action considering the circumstances.

However, Elder Xu had opened his eyes, and a gleam of shock flickered deep therein. Although he had been a bit surprised that Bai Xiaochun had succeeded seven times in a row, what he was doing now was far more shocking.

“This Bai Xiaochun is actually trying to adjust the medicine formula! Incredible! No wonder the peak lord told me to keep an eye on him while he was away from the mountain!” Elder Xu continued to observe Bai Xiaochun silently.

A moment later, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, flushing away the extra ink elements, leaving behind a drop about the size of a fingernail. After sending it into the pill furnace, he produced the rest of the medicinal plant ingredients and then began his eighth batch!

The pill furnace instantly turned bright red. This time, it didn’t take two hours. After enough time passed for two incense sticks to burn, the pill furnace trembled, and a medicinal aroma spread out. The eighth batch had succeeded!

Elder Xu looked at the pill furnace, and what he saw was a seven-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense that was black with violet specks!

“That’s almost mid-grade!” Elder Xu thought, his eyes shining brightly.

Bai Xiaochun could also tell that this stick of Inkspirit Incense was different than the others. Although he was initially confused, he suddenly realized why all of the other spirit medicines he had produced before were low-grade.

“The medicine formula isn’t standardized.... If you adjust things based on your current needs, you can concoct... mid-grade spirit medicines or higher!” Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt as if the world had been opened up to him. Feeling very excited, and before even waiting for the crowd to break out into an uproar, he started his ninth batch!

Everyone was panting, and nobody was talking. They were all completely and utterly shaken. They might have been excited before, but now that they had personally witnessed Bai Xiaochun succeed eight times in a row, they were in a state of complete and utter incredulity.

Not only had he surpassed Zhou Xinqi, he was now on almost the exact same level as the legacy echelon cultivator Wang Qingshan!

Before everyone could recover from their shock, Bai Xiaochun rapidly went about concocting the next batch. He only used the time it takes an incense stick to burn before rumbling sounds could be heard from the pill furnace, and a powerful blast of medicinal aroma spread out. The ninth batch... was a success!

“This is unheard-of!!”

“Nobody has ever succeeded nine times, and especially not with Inkspirit Incense! Bai Xiaochun spent an infuriatingly long time thinking, but... but his success rate is completely astonishing!!”

Xu Baocai’s mind was spinning, and his jaw hung wide open. Du Lingfei felt her heart being battered by waves of astonishment, and couldn’t help but think back to the competition, and how Bai Xiaochun had analyzed that grafted plant.

Han Jianye simply sighed bitterly. Although he was disappointed, he was no longer enraged. If Bai Xiaochun had surpassed him by a small amount, he might have continued to pursue a grudge, but now, he had to admit that he had lost....

“With only one more success, Elder Brother Bai will do something nobody has ever done, not even in ancient times! He... is going to pull off a miracle!”

“Boy was it worth it to come watch the test this time. We got stuck here for a few days, but it was definitely worth it!”

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was the center of all attention. Everyone was panting, and their eyes gleamed with intense anticipation. Even Elder Xu felt completely shocked, and was staring with wide eyes.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun moved. His eyes shone with focus as he produced the final set of ingredients. After organizing them into the order that he would use them, he began to feed them into the pill furnace, then performed a double-handed incantation gesture to stoke the earthflame.

Time passed in complete silence. The only thing the audience could hear was the beat of their own hearts as they waited for the time it takes an incense stick to burn....

An intense rumbling sound could be heard from within the pill furnace. No smoke of failure poured out, and yet, neither did a medicinal aroma. Everyone was shocked.

“Did he fail?” Xu Baocai thought, so nervous that his tongue was sticking to the roof of his mouth.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock, but then he suddenly realized what was most likely happening, and his eyes began to shine.

It was at this point that everyone watching could see a scintillating light shining out from the joints and cracks in the pill furnace. Elder Xu suddenly leapt forward to peer into the pill furnace, within which was a one-inch-long stick of Inkspirit Incense that was completely violet. His eyes danced with elation.

“Mid-grade!” he said, laughing loudly. Flicking his sleeve, he collected up all of the pill furnaces and sticks of Inkspirit Incense which had been concocted.

“The final round of the test is over. Bai Xiaochun, Han Jianye, Du Lingfei, Chen Zi’ang, Zhao Yiduo, you five have all been promoted to journeyman apothecary! Bai Xiaochun, you take the top spot and... are awarded 5,000 merit points!”

The crowd dissolved into wild commotion, the sound of which echoed out in all directions.

“Ten successes! He got ten successes!!”

“Plus, the final batch produced... a mid-grade product! He’s only a journeyman apothecary, but can already concoct mid-grade spirit medicine!!”

Xu Baocai, Du Lingfei, Han Jianye, and everyone else present were completely stunned.

It was somewhat grudgingly that Bai Xiaochun watched the only mid-grade spirit medicine he had ever concocted be whisked away by Elder Xu. He was of a mind to give voice to his discontent, but Elder Xu seemed too imposing, and was clearly not going to return the incense.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and left the square, exhausted. As he walked through the crowd, people looked at him with excitement and admiration. Obviously, the fact that he had succeeded ten times in a row was no fluke, and was something that an ordinary disciple could never do.

“Congratulations on pulling off a miracle, Elder Brother Bai! This is completely unprecedented!”

“Congratulations, Elder Brother Bai, I truly admire you!”

“Elder Brother Bai, I have some questions about plants and vegetation, do you think you could help a Junior Sister out....?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked. He had been so engrossed in medicine concocting that he had completely tuned everything else out. After seeing what a commotion he had caused, he quickly clasped hands and bowed to the audience.

At the moment, he felt nothing short of elated. Back when no one knew who the little turtle was, he had never been able to find the right opportunity to make a big debut. Now that he had, he was experiencing exactly the feeling he had hoped for.

As for the female disciples who were asking for his help, Bai Xiaochun instantly nodded in agreement. Furthermore, as for all of the disciples who were calling him Elder Brother Bai, he asked them to call him Bai Xiaochun, lest people be unaware of his full name.

Just as he was feeling exceptionally proud of himself, he suddenly caught sight of a young man in the crowd, glaring at him. Bai Xiaochun instantly recognized him as one of Zhou Xinqi’s devoted fans. Bai Xiaochun’s face flickered, and he quickly extricated himself from the crowd and sped off.

After hurrying all the way back to his log cabin, he realized that he was feeling a bit dizzy. Having spent days concocting medicine, he was completely drained, and instantly fell asleep on his bed.

He slept for two days straight.

In the afternoon of the third day, he opened his eyes, feeling completely refreshed. Then, he thought back to how he had personally concocted a mid-grade spirit medicine, and how Elder Xu had then taken it away. Sighing, he took a look at his identity medallion to confirm that 5,000 merit points had been added, and then felt a little bit better.

With those merit points, he could continue to work at concocting medicine, which would also help him cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique. Next, he made a quick trip out of his residence to retrieve seven or eight medicine formulas from the sect. After picking one for vital energy replenishment, he spent some merit points to get a large quantity of medicinal plants.

The entire process went quickly, but he was jumpy with fear the entire time. Wherever he went, it seemed people recognized him, and he even noticed some of Zhou Xinqi's fans, who glared at him with cold smiles, then produced jade slips to transmit messages to their cohorts.

Bai Xiaochun nervously got all the medicinal plants he needed, then headed, not to his courtyard residence, but to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. Using the remainder of his merit points, he bought an entire year's worth of time, and then holed up.

“I was a bit careless this time.... Hmph. Just wait ‘til I come out. I'm going to make a big breakthrough in my Undying Iron Skin, and if you people mess with me.... Well, if you come at me one at a time, I’ll take you out. If you gang up... then I’ll just call for the peak lord!” Snorting coldly, he began to concoct medicine there in the workshop.

He could well imagine how, during those two days in which he had slept, word of him being promoted to journeyman apothecary had spread. In fact, it wouldn’t take long before the entire Fragrant Cloud Peak was talking about it.

And of course, that was exactly what happened. Furthermore, many people were already speculating that Bai Xiaochun... was the little turtle!

There were too many coincidences for there to be any other explanation. Not only had he shown amazing talent with both plants and vegetation and spirit creatures, but Bai Xiaochun had concocted a mid-grade spirit medicine. He had even passed the journeyman apothecary test with ten successes in a row.

Zhou Xinqi’s fans immediately sprang into action, as did Du Lingfei’s fans. However, none of them realized how cautious Bai Xiaochun was, so much so that he would never return to his residence, but would instead stay at the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. Then they found out that he had purchased an entire year’s worth of time in one of the workshops, and they were instantly enraged.

However, the Medicine Concocting Pavilion wasn’t a place that they could just barge into. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun’s new status struck fear into their hearts. Although they couldn’t really do anything to him, if they roughed him up to teach him a lesson, the sect wouldn’t care. After all, people who provoked those above their skill level would get what they deserved.

However, there was nothing to be done now, so the group which had gathered to catch Bai Xiaochun dispersed begrudgingly. However, there was one of their number, a pock-faced young man, who looked at the Medicine Concocting Pavilion with a cold smile.

“You think that hiding in there will keep you safe from me? I couldn’t care less that you beat up my cousin Chen Fei. However, you bullied my beloved Junior Sister Zhou, and also my most cherished Junior Sister Du. Plus, my favorite of all, Junior Sister Hou, won’t stop talking about you. Bai Xiaochun, you might have talent in plants and vegetation, but killing you won’t be any trouble at all for me!” The young man laughed coldly. He was none other than the Inner Sect disciple surnamed Qian, Qian Dajin!

Bai Xiaochun spent one carefree day after another in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, either concocting medicines or cultivating his Undying Live Forever Technique. As the days went by, he truly did advance by leaps and bounds in the Undying Live Forever Technique.

His skin became tougher and more durable, and he could move even faster than before.

“Another two days, and my Undying Iron Skin will be complete!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his eyes gleamed with elation.

However, it was on that very night at dusk that, all of a sudden, a green beam of light shot from the Missions Offices toward the Medicine Pavilion. It completely bypassed the protective shields surrounding the pavilion, and appeared right there inside of Bai Xiaochun’s workshop.

Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock at the command medallion which was now hovering in front of him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0045 awe-chapter-46

The command medallion was pitch black, and in the very center was the character “Justice,” which emanated a bleak and somber air.

Even as Bai Xiaochun stared in at it shock, a cold voice echoed out into the workshop.

“Outer Sect disciple Bai Xiaochun. After an investigation carried out by the Hall of Justice, it has been confirmed that after being in the sect for several years, you have only accomplished a single mission, to raise a spirit plant. Because of this violation of sect rules, you must participate in a mandatory out-of-sect mission, which begins three days from now!”

From the cold and sinister nature of the voice, it seemed apparent that if Bai Xiaochun refused to comply, he would receive the strictest of punishments!

“The Hall of Justice!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes bulged, and his heart began to pound. At the same time, the command medallion transformed into a black glow, and then vanished.

Everything was dead quiet. Bai Xiaochun’s face flickered with various emotions as he pulled out his identity medallion. Sure enough, he found that a mandatory mission had been added.

He had completely forgotten about the rule about a minimum number of missions required for disciples on a yearly basis. However, the abrupt arrival of the command medallion from the Hall of Justice was something that Bai Xiaochun found very odd.

After a moment of thought, he left his workshop, walked out of the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, and headed toward the top of the mountain.

“Something’s not right here. Why do I feel like a cold wind is running down my back...? Well, I’ve been in the sect for years now, and have never taken the initiative to go see the peak lord. I might as well go pay my respects and see if I can figure out what’s going on.” Bai Xiaochun was wrapped up in very important thoughts the entire way up the mountain. Eventually, he found Li Qinghou’s Daoist assistant, only to discover that Li Qinghou had been out of the sect for several months.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very bitter, and very nervous. Instead of returning to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, he went to find Xu Baocai. After all, Xu Baocai knew everything that was going on in the sect, so perhaps he would have some clue about what was going on.

Xu Baocai was still an Outer Sect disciple, and lived on a different part of the mountain than Bai Xiaochun. By now it was evening, and not very many people were out and about. Soon, Bai Xiaochun had arrived outside Xu Baocai’s courtyard residence.

This residence was not as remote as Bai Xiaochun’s, and was clustered together with seven or eight others. Now that it was dark, firelight could be seen shining out from several of the courtyards.

Bai Xiaochun ducked his head down to make himself inconspicuous. Instead of knocking on the main gate, he flew over the wall, after which he caught sight of Xu Baocai bent over a little notebook, writing.

“Xu Baocai,” he whispered.

Xu Baocai was startled, but once he saw who had come, he said, “Oh, hey Elder Brother Bai.”

A bit confused, he rose to his feet and invited Bai Xiaochun into his room.

“Elder Brother Bai, weren’t you in secluded meditation in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion?” he asked curiously. “What are you doing out here?”

“Xu Baocai, what do you know about the Hall of Justice?” Bai Xiaochun asked immediately.

Seeing the grim expression on Bai Xiaochun's face, Xu Baocai could tell that something was wrong, and quickly responded, “The Hall of Justice? Well, there’s a southern hall and a northern hall, who administer the two different parts of the sect. They oversee the Outer Sect disciples and servants, but usually don’t do anything unless there’s been a serious violation of sect rules.

“If a violation does occur, they have a lot of power. There are all sorts of punishments they can enforce. In fact, they even have the power to execute traitors. Essentially, the Hall of Justice is like a sword hanging over the necks of the Outer Sect disciples, ensuring that none of us ever dare to violate sect rules.

“If someone does, and gets noticed by the Hall of Justice, they’ll receive swift and severe punishment....

“Of course, although the Hall of Justice has a lot of power, that power is limited. As long as you don’t violate sect rules, then you don’t really have to worry about them at all.” As usual, Xu Baocai went on to give a very detailed description of the Hall of Justice to Bai Xiaochun, based on everything that he knew.

He even went on to tell Bai Xiaochun the grisly fates of some of the disciples who had run afoul of the Hall of Justice.

“Five hundred years ago, a traitor rose up within the Spirit Stream Sect. The Hall of Justice tracked him down for seven days before finally killing him and wiping out his soul!

“Three hundred years ago, an Outer Sect disciple flagrantly violated sect rules. Although the Hall of Justice gave him a chance to repent, he ignored it. In the end, the Hall of Justice reported the matter to the sect, and the disciple was punished in the Blackwind Abyss, where to this very day, he is constantly scourged by biting winds.

“A hundred years ago, the Mount Zhou Society planned an armed rebellion. Despite warnings from the Hall of Justice, they refused to back down. When they finally made their move, the Hall of Justice executed all the cultivators from the Mount Zhou Society, sparing only the mortals.”

As Bai Xiaochun listened to all of this, his expression grew more unsightly than ever, and his heart began to pound.

“Are you telling me that normally the Hall of Justice gives a warning first, and resorts to serious punishment only if you don’t repent?”

“Yeah, exactly. That’s one of the limitations placed upon the Hall of Justice. Otherwise, they would have far too much power.” By this point, Xu Baocai had guessed that the Hall of Justice must have set their eyes on Bai Xiaochun. However, matters pertaining to the Hall of Justice were sensitive, and Xu Baocai was intelligent enough to look out for his own interests. Therefore, although he told Bai Xiaochun what he knew, he didn’t dare to get any more involved than that.

In the end, just before Bai Xiaochun was about to leave, Xu Baocai hesitated for a moment as he thought about Bai Xiaochun’s skill with plants and vegetation, and then suddenly lowered his voice and asked, “Elder Brother Bai, do you happen to know an Inner Sect disciple from Green Crest Peak named... Qian Dajin? He’s Chen Fei’s older cousin, and he also happens to be a member of the Hall of Justice.”

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Bai Xiaochun left. As he walked along the path in the sect, he looked up at the moon and thought about everything Xu Baocai had said, which only served to confirm what he had already surmised. In the end, he sighed.

“I didn't offend anyone in the sect!” he thought, clenching his jaw. “Other than Chen Fei, there’s only the fans of Zhou Xinqi.... Qian Dajin. Qian Dajin!” After returning to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, he sat down cross-legged in the workshop and looked at the pill furnace. Then his face twitched.

“It’s pretty obvious that me failing to complete a sect mission every year is just an excuse. Something like that wouldn’t be noticed unless someone specifically looked into it, and even still, it isn’t a very big deal. Besides, I couldn’t possibly be the only person in the sect who has done that. Since Qian Dajin is a member of the Hall of Justice, he’s using his public office to avenge private grudges!” After more thought, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were growing increasingly bloodshot.

“If I go on this mission, he’ll definitely make sure something happens to me at some point. Why else would he go through all the trouble of setting this up? However, he would still have to be careful to make sure the sect doesn’t find out. Overall, I still have the initiative.

“If I ignore the mission order, then I would be falling right into his hands. He would be able to take control of the initiative, using his status in the Hall of Justice to directly punish me!”

Bai Xiaochun thought about it from many directions, but there was no perfect solution. Eventually, he took out his identity medallion and examined the mission. It only took a moment before he realized there was a familiar name in the mission description.

“Hou Yunfei?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he thought back to when he had first become an Outer Sect disciple, and the detailed introduction to the sect Hou Yunfei had given him. Then, he closed his eyes to think more.

This mission didn't seem to be a difficult one. A few years ago, Hou Yunfei had accepted a mission outside of the sect, and would check back in every month with news. That was a common arrangement for disciples who took on long-term missions.

However, two months ago, contact was lost, and no news had come back.

Therefore, this new mission had been handed down. Three Outer Sect disciples would be sent to investigate, with no specific instructions regarding the clues they were to gather.

Search missions like this were common within the sect. All the disciples had to do was investigate a bit, turn up some clues, and then come back to the sect to let someone follow up further.

Furthermore, for an Outer Sect disciple to go missing wasn’t a very important matter as far as the sect was concerned. Of course, they were still disciples, so the matter had to be handled eventually.

That was why missions like this existed in the first place.

Bai Xiaochun thought about it further, and after weighing all the options and facts, clenched his teeth.

“Fine, I’ll take the mission.” Panting, eyes bloodshot, he immediately began to concoct more medicine. If he was going to go out of the sect on a mission, then he needed to have a major breakthrough with his Undying Iron Skin.

Two days later, Bai Xiaochun’s body was shaking, and his skin was vibrating. Suddenly, a wave of blackness spread out across him, which quickly vanished. However, if you looked closely, you could just barely see red streaks of light flashing across him.

“The black is iron, the red is bronze!”

When he pushed down on his skin, a sound like ringing metal echoed out. Next, he shot to his feet and confirmed that he was much faster than before.

After a few more tests, he leaped up into the air and pinched his thumb and index finger together. There were no cracking sounds this time, but rather muffled booms. They weren’t very loud, and yet Bai Xiaochun could tell that this move of his was at least twice as powerful as before.

“Breakthrough with my Undying Iron Skin!” he thought excitedly. As of this moment, he was a bit more confident regarding the mission.

“It's too bad I can only concoct tier-1 spirit medicine appropriate for the fifth level of Qi Condensation and lower.” Bai Xiaochun stood there in the workshop feeling a bit disappointed. However, time was limited, and he simply couldn't produce the type of tier-2 spirit medicine appropriate for the eighth level of Qi Condensation and lower.

Because of that, his cultivation base couldn't progress very much, and remained in the great circle of the sixth level of Qi Condensation.

“Tomorrow at dawn I leave the sect....” he thought anxiously. This would be his first time truly leaving the sect since he had joined, and he didn’t feel safe at all. In fact, he even took out the shield he had acquired from Chen Fei and performed a threefold spirit enhancement on it. That didn’t leave him feeling very safe, though. Next, he performed spirit enhancements on the leather coats he had worn in the competition.

After more thought, he went out in the middle of the night and found Big Fatty Zhang, to borrow his big black wok that supposedly had an earthflame spell formation built into it. Even still, he didn’t feel at ease. However, there was nothing more to be done. Looking very anxious, he returned, not to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, but his courtyard, where he waited for the sun to rise.

“Qian Dajin, you just wait until I get to Foundation Establishment. Then I’ll show you a thing or two!” Bai Xiaochun was more nervous than ever, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. He was scared of dying, after all, and now that he was no longer a newcomer to the sect, he was well aware of how the cultivation world worked.

For the entire night, his imagination went wild as he thought about all the bad things that could happen, until eventually... the sun rose.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0046 awe-chapter-47

At dawn, when the first ray of sunlight poked out into the sky, Bai Xiaochun felt his identity medallion vibrating. He stood there at the front of his courtyard, looked back at what had been his home for the past two years, and let out a long sigh.

“I'm definitely going to need to be very careful. I absolutely must not lose my poor little life....” Bai Xiaochun had a very anxious look on his face. He had eight layers of leather coats on, and was wearing Big Fatty Zhang’s huge black wok on his back. Although he was actually relatively skinny, having dressed up in this fashion made him look almost spherical.

With a very serious look, Bai Xiaochun left Fragrant Cloud Peak and headed toward the main gate that marked the border of the south bank. On the way, the numerous disciples who looked at him all stared in shock at his unusual getup.

He scowled miserably the entire time, and whenever he ran into people he knew, he would simply wave goodbye to them. Soon he was approaching the main gate, whereupon he saw two people who had arrived ahead of him. One of them was a young man sitting cross-legged in meditation. The other was a young woman who was pacing back and forth in front of the gate, but who currently had her back to him, and yet looked familiar.

“Du Lingfei?” he thought, a look of shock appearing on his face.

It was at this point that Du Lingfei also caught sight of him, and her jaw dropped. Then she noticed what he was wearing, and her brow furrowed.

“You’re the last person in the team going to investigate Elder Brother Hou’s whereabouts?” she asked.

“Yeah, what a coincidence....” he replied with a dry cough. Then he looked from Du Lingfei over toward the young man. Although his face was expressionless, a murderous aura rippled off of him, and as soon as Bai Xiaochun looked over at him, he opened his eyes and looked back, an enigmatic half-smile on his face.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart twitched. After analyzing the matter, he had come to the conclusion that the easiest way for Qian Dajin to do something to him was to place a friend within the mission group. Then, after they all left the sect, that friend could strike at him secretly.

At the moment, he found both Du Lingfei and this young man to be worthy of suspicion. And yet, he acted completely at ease, and even smiled widely at the young man.

“Bai Xiaochun at your service,” he said. “Elder Brother, you are…?”

The young man smiled back and replied, “Feng Yan of Green Crest Peak.”

Bai Xiaochun quickly clasped hands in respect. “Oh, Elder Brother Feng, I should have known it was you. At first glance you’re obviously an extraordinary individual. This is my first mission outside of the sect, so I really hope you can show me how it’s done, Elder Brother Feng.” It only took a moment for Bai Xiaochun to assess that Feng Yan’s cultivation base was at the seventh level of Qi Condensation.

“No problem. You flatter me.” A flicker of scorn passed through Feng Yan’s eyes. The only reason he’d agreed to take the mission was that Inner Sect disciple Qian Dajin had promised him a lucrative reward to secretly kill Bai Xiaochun.

As far as he was concerned, that wouldn't be difficult at all. All he had to do was be careful and make it look like an accident; Bai Xiaochun was as good as dead.

The only thing he had to be careful about was to make sure that Du Lingfei didn’t see. Of course, he was mostly convinced that Du Lingfei had taken the mission for the same reason he had, because of Qian Dajin.

As for Du Lingfei, she was currently frowning. She had never imagined that accepting a mission outside the sect would result in her being stuck with one of the people she despised the most. After all, no one had forced her to take this mission; she had selected it on her own. Although there might be some danger associated with it, it was a relatively simple mission with a hefty reward of merit points.

She had been stuck in the great circle of the fifth level of Qi Condensation for some time now, and needed some Cloudsoaring Incense to break through, which of course required merit points. As soon as she thought about Cloudsoaring Incense, her revulsion for Bai Xiaochun stirred.

“The lily-livered rat!” she thought, glaring at Bai Xiaochun in disgust. She especially despised his sphere-like appearance with all the clothes and the black wok, which made it more obvious than ever that he feared death.

Snorting coldly, she completely ignored Bai Xiaochun and turned toward Feng Yan to clasp hands and bow.

“Elder Brother Feng, now that we're all here, please produce the windskiff. The sooner we get this mission done, the sooner we can come back.”

Feng Yan gave a slight smile, then slapped his bag of holding, causing a white beam of light to fly out. A blast of wind could be felt as the beam transformed into a small white ship, about six meters long.

Fluctuations of spiritual power emanated off of the ship, transforming into an extraordinary pressure.

Bai Xiaochun looked it over and immediately blurted, “Elder Brother Feng, what’s that?”

This was his first time seeing anything like this. As the ship hovered there in midair, it was obvious that it was some type of vehicle. Even as Du Lingfei’s eyes flickered with scorn, Feng Yan smiled.

“This is a windskiff. When missions require us to go some distance away from the sect, we can rent ships like this from the sect to make things easier. We can save some of our own spiritual power, at the cost of some spirit stones.” With that, he leaped up into the air and settled down into the ship.

Du Lingfei quickly followed, as did Bai Xiaochun. The ship wasn't very big, and was somewhat cramped, but there was still plenty of room for the three of them. Bai Xiaochun sat down in the very back and began to study ship even more closely. The more he looked at it, the more he realized that it truly was an incredible item.

“One of these days,” he murmured, “I’m going to get one of these for myself.”

Seeing Bai Xiaochun looking like a complete country bumpkin, Du Lingfei couldn’t hold back from sarcastically remarking, “Even if you sold yourself into slavery you couldn't afford one!”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at Du Lingfei, measured her up, then nodded.

“True. But if I sold you, I could definitely afford one.”

“YOU!” Du Lingfei’s phoenix-like eyes went wide, and she was just about to say something more when Feng Yan sent the windskiff flying off into the distance in a beam of prismatic light.

As they sped along at top speed, whistling through the air, a shield sprang up around the ship, creating a barrier against the wind. Although they could hear the wind buffeting the shield, the inside of the ship was very calm.

Meanwhile, back on Fragrant Cloud Peak, in the Journeyman Apothecary Hall, Elder Xu, who had been in charge of the promotion test, was looking at a jade slip and frowning slightly.

“The Hall of Justice circumvented Fragrant Cloud Peak to force Bai Xiaochun into accepting an outside mission?” After examining the jade slip a bit further, his frown faded away. After examining the details of the mission, he realized that although there might be some danger involved, it was nothing deadly.

Then he thought about what Li Qinghou had mentioned about Bai Xiaochun’s personality. “If the kid’s a bit lazy, then some punishment isn’t uncalled for.”

Finally, he put the jade slip down and continued to concoct medicine.

At the same time, Qian Dajin stood outside his immortal’s cave in the Inner Sect, watching the ship flying off into the distance, and a cold smile appeared on his face.

“With Feng Yan’s cultivation base, secretly killing Bai Xiaochun should be as easy as flipping over his hand. Bai Xiaochun... you might have exceptional skill with plants and vegetation, but unfortunately, you’ll never have a chance to do anything with it. You’re dead!” A sinister gleam appeared deep within Qian Dajin’s eyes. Smiling, he turned and headed back into his immortal’s cave.

The azure sky stretched out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun sat there on the ship, feeling somewhat nervous, but at the same time looking out excitedly as the scenery changed.

Off in the distance he saw numerous mountain peaks that looked like swords sticking up into the sky, part of a mountain range that looked like a slumbering dragon. There was also... a massive, shocking river!

“The Heavenspan River....” he said, taking a deep breath. After becoming an Outer Sect disciple, he had done a lot of research, and had learned that the entire cultivation world relied on the Heavenspan River.

It was actually the source of all spiritual energy.

That was why all of the sects were located in areas near it. Furthermore, the further you went into the Upper Reaches of the river, the stronger the spiritual energy was.

Although the Spirit Stream Sect was technically in the Lower Reaches, even that position had allowed them to stand strong and tall for ten thousand years. According to what Bai Xiaochun had read, the Spirit Stream Sect hadn't always existed in its current position. It had previously been located in the delta region. But then an extraordinary patriarch had appeared among the countless sects and cultivator clans there. After distinguishing himself in intense fighting, he gained the approval of a higher ranking sect, and thus earned the qualifications to establish his own sect in the Lower Reaches.

“Supposedly, the sects in the Upper Reaches of the Heavenspan River are so powerful that the Spirit Stream Sect can't even compare to them. Furthermore, according to the legends... there are even more terrifying sects at the source of the river.” Bai Xiaochun forced himself to calm down, and reminded himself that he needed to be extra careful in this mission.

Off in the distance, the Heavenspan River looked golden, almost like a huge churning sea. Furthermore, hugging the river were four towering mountain peaks.

“That must be the north bank of the Spirit Stream Sect,” Bai Xiaochun thought. Also visible was the main peak of the Spirit Stream Sect, which arched over the Heavenspan River like a huge bridge!

“Mount Daoseed!” Bai Xiaochun had actually seen all of this when Li Qinghou had first brought him to the Spirit Stream Sect. However, at that time he had been a mere mortal. Now that he was an Outer Sect disciple, he got a completely different feeling when looking at it.

The ship shot away from the sect at top speed, following the rippling water beneath as they headed deeper into the Lower Reaches.

“Junior Sister Du, Junior Brother Bai, I presume both of you have already examined the details of the mission,” Feng Yan said coolly, his voice so light that it was almost hard to hear. “We're heading to an area in the Lower Reaches of the Heavenspan River called the Fallenstar Mountains. Junior Brother Hou’s last message came from that area. The Fallenstar Mountains mark the boundary of the Spirit Stream Sect’s sphere of influence. The rest of the mountains count as the territory of the Blood Stream Sect.

“We might find ourselves in some danger on this mission. However, by preparing ourselves mentally, and also being as cautious as possible, we will likely avoid any major problems.

“However, our final destination is quite a distance away, and will take quite a few spirit stones to get there. Most of our time on this mission will be spent traveling, but with our windskiff, we will be able to bypass some of the more difficult terrain.” With that, a cold gleam flickered in his eyes before he closed them in meditation.

Du Lingfei ignored Bai Xiaochun and began to perform breathing exercises.

Bai Xiaochun felt more vigilant than ever. Despite also sitting cross-legged and closing his eyes, he was really pondering which among these two had been sent by Qian Dajin.

“It’s unlikely to be Du Lingfei,” he thought. “Which means... there’s an eighty to ninety percent chance that it's Feng Yan!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0047 awe-chapter-48

A day later, when the first spirit stone was completely used up, Feng Yan put the windskiff away, and the three of them stood atop a mountain peak under the evening sky, watching the sun slowly set over the horizon. Soon, darkness blanketed the lands.

At the foot of the mountain, the dense jungle echoed with the roars of animals and wild beasts. The air was very humid.

“After we get past this jungle, we can rest,” Feng Yan said coolly. “What do you two think?” He looked at Du Lingfei and Bai Xiaochun.

“It's dark,” Bai Xiaochun pointed out. “That jungle might have some dangerous wild beasts in it; why don’t we just fly over it with the windskiff?”

“Take a break on your own, if you want,” Du Lingfei said with a cold snort. “It’s just some trees.” Not concealing her disdain for Bai Xiaochun’s fear of death, she flashed into motion, heading directly toward the jungle.

A glimmer of scorn stirred deep in Feng Yan’s eyes, but he smiled nonetheless and then shot down the mountain.

Bai Xiaochun frowned as he watched the two of them leaving. Finally he sighed, and followed them down the mountain toward the jungle, more vigilant than ever.

The humidity increased when they entered the jungle, and there were even some spots which were marshes or bogs.

Animals appeared occasionally, but these were three Qi Condensation cultivators. They didn't slow down at all as they proceeded along, gradually forging their way deeper and deeper into the jungle.

Time passed. Eventually, the night deepened. By the time the moon rose, they were already about halfway to the other side. So far they hadn't encountered any fierce beasts. The trip had gone very smoothly. Bai Xiaochun was in the rear position, and even the slightest sound or movement would cause him to leap in fright. Du Lingfei’s scorn grew stronger.

“Watch out!” Bai Xiaochun suddenly blurted, stopping in place with a very uneasy expression on his face.

Du Lingfei laughed coldly, and was just about to say something sarcastic when all of a sudden, a wild wind blasted toward them, along with an acrid odor. Du Lingfei’s face flickered, and she looked out into the jungle to see countless eyes staring back.

They were bright red, and in almost the exact same instant that she saw them, the sound of flapping wings could be heard. Numerous bats appeared, each one about the size of a hand, flying in their direction.

“Two-headed bats!” exclaimed Feng Yan. “Their venom dries up the blood and seals the throat! Split up and meet at the mountain peak on the other side of the jungle.” Face flickering, Feng Yan burst into motion, heading off at top speed.

Du Lingfei’s pupils constricted, and she waved her hand in front of her, throwing out a paper talisman. As it burned, a blue light spread out, covering her with a shield and also increasing her speed. She picked another direction and sped off. Looking over her shoulder as she left, she was shocked to find that Bai Xiaochun had long since disappeared.

Bai Xiaochun had begun fleeing as soon as the wind kicked up. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was very careful and perceptive, and was extremely attuned to danger.

Even as he fled, the bats approached, causing a droning sound to fill the air. They quickly split up into three groups, which began to pursue the three disciples.

A cold smile appeared on Feng Yan's face as he sped through the jungle, and he quickly put away the stick of incense that he had just been holding. That stick of incense was what had attracted the bats, and was also why he had chosen to pass through this jungle on the way to their mission. He had sensed that this would be a likely location to contain two-headed bats.

"The weakest of them are at the third level of Qi Condensation. Bai Xiaochun, don't blame me that someone wants you dead." Laughing coldly, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a wooden stick. After blowing a breath of air onto the stick, it ignited with black flames that caused the bats to let out piercing shrieks. Apparently, they hated those flames, and thus instantly dispersed.

Feng Yan smiled and then continued onward, feeling much more at ease.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was speeding along through the jungle being pursued by numerous bats. However, the bats couldn't match his speed, and before long, there was quite a distance between the two of them. Occasionally, a beam of sword light would flash out, and a bat would scream and fall out of the air.

Bai Xiaochun ran along, and after enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, he looked over his shoulder and frowned.

“It sure was strange for all those bats to suddenly show up,” he thought. He walked back a bit and found one of the bats he had killed with a flying sword, and after examining it closely, his eyes gleamed.

“These aren’t ordinary two-headed bats, they’re violetvein bats! They’re just as venomous, but they’re different from common two-headed bats in that their fangs are the main ingredient for the tier-2 spirit medicine Bloodburning Incense!

“Back in the sect, you can sell fangs like this for fifty merit points apiece.” Bai Xiaochun was immediately delighted. Not very many people would recognize that these bats were actually listed in the fifth volume of spirit creatures.

Feeling very excited, he began to collect the corpses of the bats. It didn’t take long before he had ten bats, from which he began to extract the fangs.

“These bats aren’t that strong after all....” he said, chuckling. Soon, a shield sprang up around him, and he began to search through the jungle. Before long, an entire group of violetvein bats was flying toward him.

He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, sending a flying sword bursting out toward the bats. Its speed was incredible, and before they could even get close to him, miserable shrieks filled the air, and numerous bats began to fall to the ground. The few that made it past the sword slammed into his shield and were sent spinning away.

Bai Xiaochun collected the dead bats. Realizing that he was actually in no danger, he felt more at ease than ever. Puffing his chest out proudly, he continued to search through the jungle.

It was in that fashion that he made his way along, collecting more and more fangs....

Four hours later, Feng Yan made his way out of the jungle to the appointed meeting spot on the mountain peak. There, he sat down cross-legged, a slight smile on his face as he waited.

Another two hours passed, and Du Lingfei shot out from the trees, looking very bedraggled. As she sped up the mountain, she looked back anxiously at the dark jungle. Eventually, she reached Feng Yan, and realized that Bai Xiaochun was nowhere to be seen.

“Bai Xiaochun hasn’t come out yet?” she asked.

Feng Yan sighed and shook his head. “I wish Junior Brother Bai all the best. Unfortunately, two-headed bats are most active at night. If we go back in looking for him, we would be in a lot of danger.” In order to make things look even more realistic, he didn't rest, but instead craned his neck anxiously toward the jungle, as if he were waiting for Bai Xiaochun to appear.

Du Lingfei maintained her silence. Although she hated Bai Xiaochun, she didn’t hate him so much that she wished him dead. After all, they were fellow members of the same sect. Finally, she sat down cross-legged and looked down at the jungle, sighing.

Time passed, and soon it was almost dawn.

After waiting through the entire night without seeing Bai Xiaochun, Du Lingfei was getting a very uneasy feeling.

Feng Yan rose to his feet. After having stayed up the entire night, his eyes were bloodshot as he looked dejectedly toward the jungle. “If he hasn’t appeared by now, I'm afraid it means that Bai Xiaochun... has met with disaster. It's all my fault. If I hadn’t suggested to go through the jungle, Junior Brother Bai wouldn’t have... ai.”

“Elder Brother Feng, don’t blame yourself,” Du Lingfei said. “Who would ever have thought that there would be two-headed bats in this place? Maybe Bai Xiaochun isn't dead yet. Besides, if he is dead, then as fellow disciples, we should go retrieve his corpse!” She was unsure of exactly what sort of emotions she was experiencing, which was a very strange sensation. Although Bai Xiaochun annoyed her, she somehow felt disturbed. After all, there was no deep grudge between the two of them.

Feng Yan sighed and nodded seriously. “You’re right, Junior Sister Du. No matter what has happened, we can’t give up on him.”

With that, the two of them prepared to head back down the mountain to begin the search.

However, it was only a moment later that they caught sight of Bai Xiaochun strolling out from within the trees, yawning. As soon as he was out of the jungle itself, he stretched lazily.

Du Lingfei’s eyes went wide, and Feng Yan almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing as Bai Xiaochun casually began to walk up the mountain path.

He almost looked like he had just woken up from a good night’s sleep. He seemed excited and energetic, as opposed to Feng Yan and Du Lingfei, who were weary from a night without rest.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun was at the top of the mountain. When he caught sight of Feng Yan and Du Lingfei, he hurried over and called out, “Good morning! Elder Brother Feng, Elder Sister Du, that jungle is way too scary! I almost lost my little life.”

Bai Xiaochun truly had rested well that night. After clearing the entire jungle of bats, not only had he profited handsomely, he'd found the bats’ cave, where he had experienced wonderful night of sleep.

An unsightly expression could be seen on Du Lingfei’s face as she glared at Bai Xiaochun. Snorting coldly, she thought back to the complicated feelings she had felt, and suddenly felt even more annoyed with Bai Xiaochun.

A cold glitter passed through Feng Yan’s eyes, although his expression was one of joy. “Junior Brother Bai! I'm so glad to see you safe. We worried about you the entire night.”

Bai Xiaochun chuckled, and although his expression seemed normal, deep within his eyes, a cold gleam flickered.

Soon, the three of them were on their way again, seated in the ship. Considering what had just happened, Bai Xiaochun suggested that they fly on the ship at night and proceed along on foot during the day. In rare fashion, Du Lingfei agreed, and as for Feng Yan, after a moment of thought, he nodded.

Thus, they proceeded along down the Heavenspan River as they headed through the Lower Reaches.

A month passed.

This was the farthest Bai Xiaochun had ever traveled in his entire life. He saw numerous mountains and jungles, places where there was no sign of human habitation at all, and everything was like a huge wilderness.

At one point in their travels, the ground began to quake, and Bai Xiaochun looked off into the distant mountains to see something completely astonishing. It was an enormous giant covered in thick fur, which caused the ground to shudder with each step it took.

The sight of the giant caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp.

One night when they were flying along, lightning crashed off in the distance, and Bai Xiaochun saw... an enormous bird that was just as large as Fragrant Cloud Peak. As it whistled along through the air, countless bolts of lightning danced across its body. The mere sight of such a creature flying along in the middle of the night was completely astonishing.

The most memorable thing Bai Xiaochun saw was during the daytime when he caught sight of a beast on the south bank of the river. It had four stumpy legs, and a head as huge as a mountain. Suddenly, a huge 30,000-meter golden crocodile burst out from within the Heavenspan River and gobbled up the first creature. As the crocodile sank back down into the water, it cast a cold glance at Bai Xiaochun and the others.

That single glance caused their minds to reel, and blood to ooze out of the corners of their mouths. Splitting pain tore at their eyes, and it took a long moment for them to recover.

Bai Xiaochun shivered and then muttered, “Terrifying. The outside is so terrifying!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0048 awe-chapter-49

Although Feng Yan had been on many missions outside the sect, this was his first time traveling so far away. Even his scalp numbed after what had just happened, let alone Du Lingfei, who was petrified.

Thankfully, none of the incredibly powerful creatures they encountered showed any interest in attacking them. At the most, they would look over curiously. Apparently, the auras cast off by the group of three caused such creatures steer clear of them.

Bai Xiaochun got the feeling that it was because they were disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect. Although this area was far away from the sect, it was still within their sphere of influence.

Despite the fear the group felt, they continued onward. After the first month of travel, they made contact with the sect on a pre-appointed day, informing them of their current location. The same thing happened after the second month. It was around that time that they reached the area in the Fallenstar Mountains which was the border of the Spirit Stream Sect’s territory.

Along the way, Feng Yan had considered making a secret strike against Bai Xiaochun, but the things he was seeing along the journey left him unnerved. He was in no mood for fighting, and when you coupled that with how cautious Bai Xiaochun was being, and how close he stuck to Du Lingfei, Feng Yan was simply too apprehensive, and couldn't find a chance to make his move. In the end, he was forced to simply bide his time.

When Feng Yan looked at Bai Xiaochun, an imperceptibly sinister flicker could be seen in his eyes.

“So, he's really determined to kill me, huh....” Bai Xiaochun thought, eyes narrowing. “Hates me that much....” Bai Xiaochun was getting worried. He was a perceptive person, and was now very sure of what was going on in Feng Yan’s head.

The Fallenstar Mountains formed a mountain range that swept from north to south. They looked endless, like an enormous sleeping dragon that split apart the lands.

In fact, even the sky looked different above the mountains, almost as if it were tinged with blood.

According to the legends, many years ago, a star had fallen from the skies and slammed into the earth, causing some of the lands to collapse, and other parts to rise up into the form of this mountain range.

The mountains were covered with dense jungle and filled with wild beasts. However, numerous rare types of plants and vegetation could be found there. Because of that, there were always cultivators willing to go in and brave the danger, however terrifying it might seem.

“These are the Fallenstar Mountains,” Du Lingfei said. The long journey had left her exhausted, so to catch sight of their final destination after all this time caused her to sigh with relief.

“The last messages sent to the sect by Junior Brother Hou came from this area,” Feng Yan said, producing a magical device from his bag of holding: a Feng Shui compass.

The Feng Shui compass had a silver needle on it, which was currently spinning around in circles.

“According to sect rules, disciples on outside missions are supposed to notify the sect of their location every month. This Spirit Stream Compass should help us locate Junior Brother Hou’s last known position.” Even as he spoke, the silver needle on the Feng Shui compass suddenly pointed off in one particular direction.

“Got it!” Feng Yan said, flashing into motion. Du Lingfei’s expression flickered as she followed along behind him.

Bai Xiaochun looked out over the Fallenstar Mountains, and the thick vegetation which covered them. It was like a sea of plants, within which could be heard the cries of various beasts. Even the occasional roar echoed out.

Bai Xiaochun had a very serious expression on his face as he activated the shield from his jade pendant. With that in place, not even the slightest breeze would get past him unnoticed. Only then did he cautiously follow after Feng Yan.

Feng Yan and Du Lingfei proceeded along without pausing for a moment, speeding along through the Fallenstar Mountains until they found themselves deep in a valley. The valley was filled with trees that had been growing together for so many years that their branches were all interlocked. The knotted and gnarled bark added to the effect; if it were nighttime, the entire scene would be extremely terrifying.

After proceeding along through the valley for two hours, they suddenly came to a stop. Feng Yan looked down at the Feng Shui compass, the needle of which was pointing toward a tree with a trunk so wide that ten people could circle around it with arms extended.

Feng Yan looked at Bai Xiaochun and then pointed toward the huge tree. “Junior Brother Bai, please go investigate.”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, then looked the tree over. Seeing nothing initially suspicious, he tapped the jade pendant hanging at his waist, causing the green shield to grow a bit stronger. He also placed some paper talismans onto his body before finally edging closer.

“So afraid of dying, and yet you still want to practice cultivation?!” Du Lingfei gave a cold harrumph. She have never liked Bai Xiaochun, so even though she herself was afraid of the dangers they had witnessed, to see him so incredibly terrified of dying made her look down on him even more.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t have the time to worry about Du Lingfei. Cautiously approaching the tree, he noticed a portion of bark that seemed to have grown recently. Taking out a flying sword, he cut away that portion of the tree and found that a jade slip was hidden inside.

After removing the jade slip from the tree, Bai Xiaochun scanned it with divine sense, whereupon his expression flickered, and he tossed the slip over to Feng Yan.

Within that jade slip was a single fragment of information.

I found some other clues, and I’m going to the Luochen Clan to get proof....

After looking at it for a moment, Feng Yan frowned, and then handed the jade slip to Du Lingfei. Du Lingfei looked at it, whereupon her expression turned grim.

“The Luochen Clan....” she murmured after a long moment. Then she turned to stare deeper into the Fallenstar

Mountains.

These mountains were very large, and filled with numerous natural resources. Considering that this place was on the very edge of Spirit Stream Sect territory, where it bordered with the territory of the Blood Stream Sect, it was only natural that the Spirit Stream Sect would have the area guarded. Those guards were none other than... the Luochen Clan.

The Luochen Clan was a relatively large clan, which had stood guard in the Fallenstar Mountains for a thousand years. Every generation of the clan had Foundation Establishment patriarchs. Generally speaking, the mere threat posed by such people was more than enough to help them in their duties of guardianship.

In fact, the mission instructions even said to make contact with the Luochen Clan if they ran into any danger.

However, Hou Yunfei’s jade slip seemed to indicate that the Luochen Clan... was where he had been heading to find some sort of evidence. After that was when he lost contact.

“What do you guys think?” Feng Yan asked. “Should we go check out the Luochen Clan?” Feng Yan glanced over casually at Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei.

Bai Xiaochun immediately said, “Elder Brother Feng, Elder Sister Du, having found this jade slip, our mission is complete.... We should put safety first. What’s the point in going on?” This entire place made Bai Xiaochun feel as if an invisible pressure was weighing down on him.

Du Lingfei hesitated for a moment. If they went back now, they would only be able to acquire the minimum amount of merit points. However, if they investigated further, they might be able to get more.

Feng Yan could see that Du Lingfei was hesitating, and he frowned, thinking about how going back now might reduce the chances he had to kill Bai Xiaochun.

After a moment, he said, “I think we should go to the Luochen Clan and look around. We've come all the way here, how could we simply go back now? After we find out exactly what befell Junior Brother Hou, we might even be able to get help from the Luochen Clan in finding him. If we do, we’ll be rewarded with many more merit points.

“Furthermore... as long as we don’t go into the depths of the Fallenstar Mountains, we should be relatively safe. Besides, if you’re worried about the Luochen Clan, don’t forget that all of the cultivator clans in Spirit Stream Sect territory have special seals placed into their blood, making it impossible for them to turn traitor. How could they possibly treat us with any disrespect?” After he finished speaking, Feng Yan looked over slowly at Du Lingfei.

She nodded. After all, what he said made sense. “Very well. We’ll go to the Luochen Clan to look around. Who knows, maybe Junior Brother Hou left the Luochen Clan, and then went missing.”

Seeing that she had agreed, Feng Yan smiled. Then he turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, and his gaze grew a bit colder.

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun asked: “We accomplished the mission, why let ourselves get dragged into side issues?”

“If you’re so scared, then just don’t come with us,” Du Lingfei said, turning a cold shoulder to Bai Xiaochun as she headed off.

“Junior Brother Bai,” Feng Yan said, “I'm responsible for evaluating our performance on this task. We're supposed to make our decisions unanimously. If you don’t come with us, it will make it hard to make my evaluation.” With an enigmatic smile, he began to follow Du Lingfei. In his opinion, Bai Xiaochun was sure to come along. If he didn’t, Du Lingfei would be able to corroborate the fact that the had committed dereliction of duty. When that happened, the Hall of Justice surely wouldn’t let things slide.

Bai Xiaochun’s face darkened, and his blood began to surge through his veins as he stared with bloodshot eyes at Feng Yan walking away. He might be afraid of death, but as of this point, he was coming to the conclusion that he needed to take control of the situation. Only by settling things with Feng Yan could he ensure that his own position was stable.

“Feng Yan, you’re forcing my hand!” he thought. After standing there reticently for a few breaths of time, he bowed his head for a moment, then strode forward to follow Du Lingfei and Feng Yan. Soon, they disappeared into the jungle.

Four hours later, they were still hurrying along. Evening was falling, and the sun was setting, ensuring that the jungle was slowly getting darker and darker.

“We’re here!” Feng Yan suddenly said. The three of them stopped walking and looked off into the jungle. Up ahead, the trees thinned out, and numerous limestone boulders could be seen protruding out of the ground.

A large number of courtyard houses were visible, which were organized into the larger form of a mansion that could apparently house hundreds of people. At this time of evening, a clan would normally be at its most active, but unexpectedly, the mansion was completely dark and quiet. Considering the darkness of the sky, the entire place seemed almost abandoned.

The only light provided was by two lanterns which hung at the main gate. Even though there was no wind, the two lanterns swayed back and forth, casting flickering shadows onto the guardian stone lions beneath them.

The scene caused Feng Yan and Du Lingfei’s faces to flicker.

As for Bai Xiaochun, as soon as he laid eyes on the mansion, a feeling of impending danger rose up in his heart. It felt like every inch of flesh on his body wanted to scream.

“Something’s off about--” Feng Yan said, his heart thumping. However, before he could even finish speaking, the main gate slammed open, and a vile wind blew out. At the same time, a figure emerged noiselessly through the gate.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0049 awe-chapter-50

The courtyard gate opened, and Du Lingfei, Feng Yan and Bai Xiaochun were completely on guard as they peered inside. Bai Xiaochun was so nervous that he started slapping paper talismans all over himself.

The figure which had just appeared held a lantern in its hand, and stood in the opened gate, wreathed in shadows as it gazed at the three of them.

“Why, might I ask, have the three of you come to the Luochen Clan on this dark evening?”

The flickering light of the lantern just barely revealed a young man, standing there looking at them calmly. He wore a long, green robe, and his face was pale and devoid of any color of blood.

After seeing that it was a person who had appeared, Feng Yan and Du Lingfei breathed sighs of relief. Somehow, the creepy feeling they had experienced moments ago had subsided a bit.

Feng Yan clasped hands and said, “Hello, Fellow Daoist. We are disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect, paying a visit to ask a few questions.”

By this point, Du Lingfei had noticed the numerous shields which were flickering around Bai Xiaochun, and her brow furrowed in response.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t notice Du Lingfei’s look. For some reason, the fact that a young man had appeared hadn’t caused his sensation of intense danger to lessen at all.

“Ah, Fellow Daoists from the Spirit Stream Sect,” the young man said. “Please, come in, and we can discuss matters....” The flickering of the lantern cast shadows on the young man’s face, making it difficult to see him clearly as he turned and walked off.

The courtyard gate then opened wide to allow the three disciples to enter.

Feng Yan hesitated for a moment, then walked through the gate. Du Lingfei followed along behind him. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked around for a moment before gritting his teeth and cautiously entering the courtyard.

Even as the large gate closed behind them, the two stone lions beneath the lanterns outside suddenly turned to look in the direction of the gate, their eyes flickering with a blood-colored light.

Inside the courtyard was a green limestone path that wound through various plants and decorative rocks. Faint moonlight shone down, casting everything into partial shadow. The only light came from the lantern, which swayed back and forth in the young man’s hand.

The four of them walked along the path, surrounded by gloomy silence. This place almost seemed like a different world than the one beyond the gate.

On the right-hand side of the path were several fruit trees, laden with red fruit. Strangely, despite a lack of any breeze within the courtyard, the leaves on those trees suddenly rustled.

Du Lingfei and Feng Yan seemed more on guard than ever, and Bai Xiaochun, who was last in line, looked around cautiously in all directions. For some reason, those rustling fruit trees seemed very bizarre.

Gradually, a smell like that of fresh blood rose up, faint, but simultaneously distinct.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to thump, and he was just about to say something when, all of a sudden, fruit began to fall off of the fruit trees, landing on the ground and rolling toward Bai Xiaochun and the others. Strangely, faces could be seen on the fruit, child-like faces with broad smiles that almost seemed to have been painted on.

“La la la! Hello!”

Arms and legs sprouted out of the fruit, and as they ran toward Bai Xiaochun and the others, they clasped hands and then began to skip in circles around the shocked group of three.

At the same time, the fruits began to cry out in excited voices: “Auntie said to be good and not cry! We can only laugh! Ripe fruit is the best fruit!”

Their voices were very charming and sweet as they danced around and began to sing children’s lullabies. Now that they were so close, it was possible to smell a sweet fragrance wafting about. It was so sickly sweet, in fact, that upon inhaling it, Bai Xiaochun and the others felt as if they were about to puke their guts out.

When the fruit got too close to the young man with the lantern, he completely ignored them, and even stepped on some of them, crushing them. However, the crushed fruits simply crawled back to their feet, smiling as they continued to dance and sing.

“What the hell are these things?!” Feng Yan exclaimed, eyes flickering. He waved his sleeve, causing a gust of wind to kick up and send some of the fruits flying away. After splatting onto the ground, they lurched back to their feet and re-joined the circle, laughing just as loudly as before.

Bai Xiaochun felt goosebumps rising up all over him, and by this point he was fully surrounded by flickering shields.

Du Lingfei looked at the fruits all holding hands and singing, and her facial expression flickered with fear. Pushing down the disgust in her heart, she gritted her teeth, and her phoenix-like eyes flashed with anger. She was just about to perform an incantation gesture when suddenly, the fruits’ faces fell in terror.

“Auntie’s coming!!” they cried, running pell-mell back to the tree and leaping up into their original positions. Soon, their laughter and singing had faded away, and they looked like nothing more than ordinary fruit.

The young man from the Luochen Clan didn't look back at them, but they could hear his voice as he said, “Those are some spirit fruits the patriarch brought back from the depths of the Fallenstar Mountains. What do you think of their singing, Fellow Daoists? They love to sing.”

Unsightly expressions appeared on the faces of Feng Yan and Du Lingfei as they followed along.

Bai Xiaochun was still in the very back. Suddenly, the cold feeling of fear rose up inside of him as he realized that... another set of footsteps could be heard!

Step, step, step....

It was impossible to determine when exactly this development had occurred, but as of this moment... there were clearly five people walking along the path!

Perhaps those footsteps had been mingled in with theirs from the moment they had entered the courtyard, and they hadn't noticed because of the strange fruits. But now, in the silence that followed the fruits' outburst, the sound of the additional footsteps was extremely conspicuous.

The echoing footfalls caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver. What was most frightening was that the footsteps were coming from right behind him. Suddenly, an icy breeze seemed to run down his back, as if someone were behind him, breathing on him.

“Hey guys...” he said, “did any of you realize... there's another set of footsteps!?” As the hairs on the back of Bai Xiaochun's neck rose up, Feng Yan's face flickered as he also detected the footsteps.

Du Lingfei's pupils constricted, and she began to pant.

The three of them suddenly stopped walking, and as they did, the sound of the other footsteps vanished.

Bai Xiaochun's heart was pounding. Gritting his teeth, he slowly turned his head to find himself staring into the eyes of a young woman wearing a red robe!

Her robes swayed gently, and her face was as ashen, as if she were dead. She smiled oddly at Bai Xiaochun for a moment before her lips twitched, and she said, “This fire won't do, help me.”

The suddenness of what had just occurred caused Bai Xiaochun to leap into the air and scream. The red-robed young woman suddenly transformed into a streak of light that vanished in the blink of an eye.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale white as he looked around, but nothing was there... except for the echoing sound of his own scream.

Du Lingfei and Feng Yan looked around in fright. Although they didn't see any unusual figure like Bai Xiaochun did, their hearts were still pounding.

Then, a woman’s voice suddenly rang out, singing a song. The lyrics drifted throughout the courtyard, strange and mysterious, almost like a lullaby being sung to soothe a baby. The mere sound of it caused the darkness to seem even more spine-tingling than before.

“Good little baby, it's time to sleep; the wind is blowing and the flames do leap; don’t you weep and don’t make a peep....”

“Enough with the parlor tricks!” Feng Yan blurted, clearly nervous. He instantly performed an incantation gesture, summoning a flying sword, which began to swirl around him.

Simultaneously, the young man with the lantern turned around to look at them. The flickering light from the lantern made him appear stranger than ever.

“What are you standing there for? Come on, let's keep going.” He smiled, a smile that was somehow very abnormal.

Feng Yan took a deep breath, and then his eyes glinted with a fierce light as he said, “No, we’re not going anywhere.

Look, we’re here to investigate the disappearance of one of our fellow disciples. Fellow Daoist, do you happen to remember anyone like us coming around here about five months ago?”

Du Lingfei had already pulled out a magical device, and her eyes were shining in concentration.

“No, I don’t think so,” replied the young man. His softly spoken words floated out into the air and seemed to harmonize with the woman’s singing voice.

“Fellow Daoist,” Du Lingfei suddenly said, “how come none of your fellow clan members are around?”

The young man’s smile widened to the point of looking unnatural. “Oh they're out on business. Are you done with your questions?”

“Yes, we’re done here,” said Feng Yan. “We’ll take our leave now.” With that, he turned to walk the other way back down the path. Du Lingfei followed suit, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he had long since taken to flight, and was further on ahead of them.

The young man’s smile was now so wide that the sides of his mouth began to rip open, almost as if his head were about to be torn in half! “If you don’t want to go any further, the least you could do is stay behind... stay behind to keep us company....”

The lantern suddenly turned a greenish color, making the entire courtyard even darker than before. Even as the words left the young man’s mouth, he began to float through the air toward Feng Yan.

Feng Yan’s face fell, and he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, sending his flying sword speeding toward the young man. A boom rang out as the young man let the sword stab through him. Then, his smile widened even further as he shot toward Feng Yan.

Panting, Feng Yan fell back, simultaneously pulling out a black medicinal pill, which he threw down onto the ground. A rattling boom echoed out as the pill then exploded.

The charging young man was hit by the blast and sent tumbling backward, his body riddled with wounds. However, he apparently didn’t feel any pain whatsoever. Smiling the same as ever, he arced through the air as fast as a kite on a windy day, to once again charge toward Feng Yan.

In the spot where the medicinal pill had exploded, numerous glowing lines were now visible, all of which emanated a strong aura of death as they began to form together, as if they were repairing themselves.

As soon as he saw the designs on the ground, Feng Yan cried out in alarm, “There’s a spell formation here! It's a Shadowhell Formation!!”

At the same time, the green limestone beneath Du Lingfei’s feet began to vibrate, and then eyes popped open upon them. Emaciated, corpse-like arms as skinny as twigs stretched out. Just beneath the surface of the skin of those arms were countless, worm-like creatures, wriggling and writhing. Those arms… grabbed Du Lingfei’s right leg.

Voices rose up from the green limestone, sinister, fear-inspiring voices.

“It hurts when you step on us....”

“Come. Come be with us....”

Du Lingfei’s face was ashen. She quickly performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing a flag to fly out from her bag of holding. It instantly transformed into two mist beasts, which swirled around her defensively. Simultaneously, a flying sword appeared, and the sword light that shimmered out severed the hands which had grabbed onto her leg, allowing her to fall back.

As for Bai Xiaochun, the woman’s singing suddenly grew louder in his ears.

“Don’t you weep and don’t make a peep....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0050 awe-chapter-51

Bai Xiaochun's scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it would explode. Eyes crimson, he let out a powerful shout as he slapped more and more paper talismans down onto his body, causing more and more shields to spring up. Soon, he was surrounded by a barrier almost two meters thick.

Almost in the same moment that all the shields sprang up, the red-robed woman suddenly lunged out of the darkness toward Bai Xiaochun.

A bang could be heard as she pierced roughly thirty percent into the shield barrier before being stopped in place. Then she screamed, a scream that was apparently capable of piercing through the shields. When the ear-splitting sound stabbed into Bai Xiaochun's ears, he began to lose consciousness.

Shocked, he bit his tongue hard, which made things clear just in time to see the woman transforming into a swarm of countless red beetles, which then began to batter against his shield.

However, the shield was too thick, and the red beetles were incapable of piercing through the seventy percent that remained. After bouncing back, they flew back and re-formed into the shape of the red-robed woman.

She stared at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, then began to laugh as she charged toward him once again.

Simultaneously, popping sounds could be heard as the ornamental rocks began to ripple and rise up, transforming into stone golems. The fruit trees also sprouted arms and legs, wrenched themselves out from the ground and began to walk forward toward Bai Xiaochun and the others. Especially bizarre was the fact that the fruit on the trees began to laugh and sing nursery rhymes again.

One of the trees joined the red-robed woman to specifically target Bai Xiaochun.

“Puppets!” Du Lingfei gasped.

Bai Xiaochun was trembling violently. In all the years in which he had lived, he had never experienced such a sensation of imminent danger. As the woman closed in on him, he quickly performed an incantation gesture, drawing upon all his spiritual energy as he waved his finger at her.

Instantly, his wooden sword flew out at top speed, a black streak that kicked up a huge blast of wind. Then, a boom echoed out as the sword stabbed into the woman’s head.

The woman let out a shrill scream, and her body suddenly dissolved into a mass of red beetles, which twitched and spasmed as they fell down onto the ground and then shattered into pieces.

The wooden sword didn’t vanish; after stabbing through the woman’s head, it continued to speed onward toward the fruit tree behind her.

It stabbed through the tree, which lurched to a stop and then suddenly exploded. Instantly, the fruit on the tree shriveled up, and yet continued to sing happily even as they died.

Everything that was happening caused the hair on Bai Xiaochun’s body to stand on end. Thankfully, his wooden sword was extremely powerful, and after stabbing through the tree, it continued to sail through the air and then blasted a hole into the nearby wall. As soon as the hole appeared, though, tentacle-like tendrils began to swirl out from the broken sides, as if the wall were preparing to re-form itself.

“Get out through that hole!” Du Lingfei cried, instantly flickering into motion. However, Feng Yan was the closest of all of them to the hole in the wall. Wincing at the pain of wasting such a valuable item, he produced another of the black medicinal pills and then threw it down in front of the young man with the lantern. A huge boom echoed out. Feng Yan then borrowed the force of the resulting explosion to fly toward the hole.

Just when he was on the verge of shooting out through the hole, though, his face fell, as two huge stone lions leapt in from outside. Roaring, they charged, one of them toward Feng Yan, the other toward Bai Xiaochun.

Astonishingly, these were the same two stone lions which had been standing guard outside the main gate!

“You can't escape,” said the young man with the lantern. “Everyone from the Spirit Stream Sect... shall *die*!” He began to laugh as he once again began to fight with Feng Yan.

When Feng Yan saw that the hole in the wall was already beginning to mend itself, he roared, hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture as he summoned a head-sized fireball. That fireball emanated blistering heat as it expanded, sending a wave of flames out in all directions.

The stone lions were shoved back, and the young Luochen Clan cultivator’s face flickered. There were also two treants who were caught up in the flames, one of which exploded.

The other treant tried to fall back, but was then directly hit by Du Lingfei’s deadly flying sword.

Rumbling booms echoed out as green sap exploded out from the destroyed treants. At the same time, it was revealed that inside of the two treants were emaciated, gasping figures, whose life force seemed to have been almost completely absorbed.

One of those figures collapsed, unconscious, whereas the other struggled to open his eyes, and then looked excitedly at Du Lingfei.

“Elder Brother Hou!” she cried, having instantly recognized Hou Yunfei. She immediately scooped him up into her arms.

At the same time, the weakened Hou Yunfei grabbed Du Lingfei’s arm and poured his last remaining bit of spiritual power into her. “The Luochen Clan has turned traitor. We have to get out of here and warn the sect!!”

Du Lingfei’s spiritual energy instantly swelled. Gritting her teeth, she held Hou Yunfei in her arms as she shot toward the hole in the wall with even greater speed.

When Bai Xiaochun looked over, he instantly recognized Hou Yunfei. Then, he flickered into motion as he dodged the stone lion and sped toward the hole in the wall.

As of this point, Du Lingfei was now closest to the breach in the wall, with Feng Yan and Bai Xiaochun close on her heels. The fastest of them all was Bai Xiaochun, who was quickly closing the distance between himself and Du Lingfei.

Feng Yan’s face was pale white. The fireball he had just unleashed had taken quite a toll on him. However, after noticing the speed with which Bai Xiaochun was moving, his eyes suddenly flickered with a cold glow, and he held up his hand, within which could be seen a black medicinal pill.

“Junior Sister Du, you have to get word back to the sect! I’ll give you a bit of extra power!” With that, he flung the black medicinal pill down into the space between Du Lingfei and Bai Xiaochun.

As the medicinal pill exploded, a powerful force blasted out, pushing Du Lingfei toward the hole even faster than before. Then, a plopping sound like splashing water could be heard as she burst out.

In contrast, Bai Xiaochun was blocked by the explosion, and was suddenly set upon by the stone lion. Instantly, his eyes turned bright red.

“Feng Yan!!” he bellowed. A wind blasted out as the stone lion pounced. Just as Bai Xiaochun was about to dodge, three treants closed in. There were now four puppets all attacking him simultaneously, making it impossible to evade.

A popping sound could be heard as his shields glittered brightly and then began to shatter. Even the green shield from the jade pendant faded and shattered. Although the majority of the force of the blow was dissipated, the stone lion was extraordinary, and its attack landed fully on Bai Xiaochun’s chest.

The massive force sent Bai Xiaochun flying, his entire body shaking.

“Junior Brother Bai!” Feng Yan cried said. Although a cold smile twisted his lips, his words sounded bitter and lamenting. And yet, he didn't slow down at all; in the blink of an eye, he passed into the rippling hole in the wall. Just when he was about to burst through to the other side, the young Luochen Clan cultivator let out a piercing shriek, then suddenly exploded into a mass of countless chunks of flesh, all devoid of blood, which then shot toward Feng Yan.

Before Feng Yan could pass through the gap in the wall, the chunks of flesh wrapped around him and began to drag him backward.

Feng Yan let out a roar of rage as he was pulled out. By this point, the hole in the wall was on the verge of closing up completely.

After gritting his teeth for a moment, he then bit down on his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood, which landed onto his flying sword. The flying sword instantly turned crimson. Instead of shooting out in attack, it then exploded, transforming into a cloud of shrapnel that shot back toward him.

Although it was injurious to himself, the hail of shrapnel also managed to slash away the chunks of flesh which had grabbed ahold of him!

He was now freed, but was also covered in a mass of cuts and wounds. The pain from his mangled flesh threatened to render him unconscious, but he was still able to clench his jaw and shoot back toward the hole in the wall.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun had been slammed by the lion’s paw, sending him tumbling backward, screaming. And yet, even as his scream was still echoing out into the air, Bai Xiaochun looked down in surprise at his chest to discover that, although his clothing was shredded, his skin hadn't been harmed at all. In fact... he didn’t even feel any pain.

After performing a quick inspection, he confirmed that... although the situation had seemed extremely dangerous... he hadn’t been hurt in the least.

The stone lion’s blow had sent him flying, but other than that, it had done virtually nothing.

Even as his elation grew, the treants closed in, and one of them punched him in the back. Although he was thrown forward, he felt no pain at all, whereupon he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“I can’t believe I'm actually so strong! Fudge! What do I have to be afraid of?!” Enlivened, and now fully confident, he shot into the air toward the gap in the wall, moving with even greater speed than before. In the blink of an eye, he was at the gap.

Feng Yan was now about halfway through the gap, and didn't even notice Bai Xiaochun and his sudden burst of speed. In his mind, Bai Xiaochun had probably already been killed by the numerous puppets.

Just as Feng Yan was about to free himself, a furious gleam appeared in Bai Xiaochun eyes, and he reached out toward Feng Yan’s shoulder, which was already outside of the hole.

“Free at last!” Feng Yan laughed. But then, he suddenly felt a huge force dragging him back through the hole.

“No!!” he howled. Before he could even see what was dragging him, he felt his bag of holding slip away, and then he was flung deep into the courtyard, away from the gap.

It was only at this point that he saw Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he howled, eyes bloodshot. However, he was now cut off by the two stone lions. Booms rang out, followed by a miserable scream.

“Elder Brother Feng!!” Bai Xiaochun screamed, simultaneously leaping through the hole in the wall.

Just as he emerged on the other side, the hole finished closing up.

He was now outside, no longer in the courtyard of the Luochen Clan. As for Du Lingfei, she had continued to run as soon as she had emerged, and was now waiting some distance off at the edge of the forest. When she saw Bai Xiaochun appear, she was just about to call out to him when he suddenly began to wail miserably.

“Elder Brother Feng!! Not only did you give me your bag of holding to help me escape, you also held off the puppets. Oh, Elder Brother Feng!”

After hearing Bai Xiaochun’s words, Du Lingfei felt horrible. However, the gap was closed, and Bai Xiaochun was just standing there in grief and indignation, so she quickly said, “Bai Xiaochun, come on, let's go!”

Not needing any further coercion, Bai Xiaochun began to run, tears streaming down his face. Helping Du Lingfei support Hou Yunfei, they vanished into the forest.

Looking over his shoulder, Bai Xiaochun frowned sadly and said, “Elder Brother Feng, such a good guy....”

Du Lingfei was very upset. She had never imagined that the mission would be this dangerous. Then she remembered Bai Xiaochun’s suggestion to not come to the Luochen Clan, and realized that if they had listened to him, Feng Yan might not have died.

And when she saw that Bai Xiaochun was in so much grief that he was on the verge of beating his own chest, she felt even worse. Finally, she sighed.

“Junior Brother Bai,” she said, looking at him bitterly, “let’s hurry up. If the Luochen Clan has turned traitor, they won’t want the sect getting wind of it. I just tried to send word back, but there’s interference in the area.... Transmission jade slips won’t work.”

Bai Xiaochun shivered, feeling more in danger than ever before.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0051 awe-chapter-52

Meanwhile, beneath the Luochen Clan mansion was a sprawling, underground necropolis. In one part of the necropolis was a lake of simmering blood, filled with countless floating skeletons.

The glitter of a spell formation could be seen surrounding the entire thing, and countless members of the Luochen Clan were prostrating themselves around the lake. There were men and women, youngsters and old-timers, all of whom knelt at key nexuses within the spell formation.

It was with utter solemnity that one by one, they would slice open their right hands and squeeze blood down onto the nexuses, which carried the blood into the central lake.

In the very middle of that lake of blood, an old man sat cross-legged. His hair was long and white, and he seemed threatening without being angry. With every breath he took, the lake of blood bubbled.

Suddenly, the man’s eyes opened, and they gleamed with a blood-colored glow.

“What’s going on!?” he demanded, his cold voice echoing throughout the necropolis.

One of the clan members closest to him was a young man, who looked exactly like the young man from up in the courtyard who had tried to kill Bai Xiaochun and the others. He leaned over and whispered, “Patriarch, three disciples from the Spirit Stream Sect showed up. It happened so quickly that I was caught unprepared. I was worried that it would influence the larger task at hand, so my puppet body on the outside, along with the spell formation and the other puppets, tried to kill them. Unfortunately... I'm so useless, Senior. I only managed to kill one. The other two escaped, and... they took the other disciple we caught last time with them.”

The young man was feeling quite discouraged. Normally speaking, if a disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect went missing, it would take at least half a year before the sect officially declared them as missing. Only then would other disciples be sent to investigate. Considering that, by the time such disciples arrived in the Fallenstar Mountains, at least nine months should have passed.

However, only four months had gone by, and yet disciples from the Spirit Stream Sect had already arrived. It wasn’t just this young man who was taken aback. No one in the entire Luochen Clan could have guessed that the disappearance of a mere Outer Sect disciple was anything to worry about. Logically speaking, no one should have been sent to investigate so quickly.

Furthermore, if Hou Yunfei hadn’t managed to uncover the secrets of the Luochen Clan, they would never have taken him captive. According to their original plan, they needed half a year to be completely prepared, then rise up and free themselves from the control of the Spirit Stream Sect!

However, that meant they still need a month of time....

“Two Outer Sect disciples…? Hmph! The defensive spell formation has already been activated. Seal the area and send people to track them down and kill them. We only need one more month... and then nothing will be able to stop us!” The old man didn’t seem to be worried at all about what had happened, and closed his eyes to continue meditating.

The young man sighed, bowing his head in compliance.

It didn’t take long before seven figures emerged from within the Luochen Clan. The one in the lead position was the same young man, whose cultivation base was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation.

Of the other six, the weakest were in the sixth level of Qi Condensation, with two being in the seventh.

“They won't be able to get far. Let’s go!” The seven cultivators shot into the jungle, eyes shining with killing intent.

Out in the jungle, Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei were moving along as fast as possible while simultaneously propping up Hou Yunfei. They tried to use their windskiff, but apparently the same interference from the spell formation that made transmission jade slips inoperable had the same effect on the ship.

The expressions on the faces of Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei grew even darker.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale, and the sensation of imminent crisis within him couldn’t be greater. Every inch of flesh and blood within him was screaming out at him to flee as fast as he could!

If he went any slower, he would surely die!

The sensation of danger was far greater than what he had felt from Feng Yan. After all, even though Feng Yan had tried to kill him, he had been nervous about it and tried to do it secretly.

Bai Xiaochun had known all along that as long as he was careful, he would most likely be able to avoid whatever move Feng Yan made against him, and could probably even strike back at him.

But now... the instant he thought about the information in their possession, he trembled, and sweat began to pour down his face. Considering that they knew about the Luochen Clan’s betrayal, it was obvious that they wouldn't hesitate to kill all of them.

They would no doubt go to any and all lengths to ensure their silence.

Furthermore, they wouldn’t strike out in secret, they would attack like a lightning bolt!

Nor would they allow much time for them to get very far away. In fact, there were almost certainly members of the Luochen Clan chasing after them already.

“Damn you, Hall of Justice. This mission... is not the type that Outer Sect disciples can handle!!” Then Bai Xiaochun remembered that the Luochen Clan had a Foundation Establishment patriarch, and he began to shake even harder.

“Foundation Establishment.... The difference between Qi Condensation and Foundation Establishment is like the difference between being mortal and being in Qi Condensation....” Bai Xiaochun was so nervous that his eyes were bloodshot.

“I practice cultivation... to live forever....” Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, but no tears would come. He looked over at Hou Yunfei, and knew that he would never be able to abandon him just to gain some speed. That was something he could never bring himself to do.

Du Lingfei’s face was pale; her cultivation base was the weakest of them all, and her internal spiritual energy was recovering very slowly. The more time passed, the worse she felt about the situation.

She knew that they were facing almost certain death. Perhaps someone in the seventh level of Qi Condensation might be able to fight back against a Foundation Establishment Patriarch. But now, Feng Yan was dead, and she was only in the fifth level of Qi Condensation, with no hope of being able to break through to the next level any time soon. As for Bai Xiaochun... considering how scared he was of dying, Du Lingfei would never place any hope in him.

“I never imagined I would die on my first mission outside of the sect,” she thought, laughing bitterly. However, things weren’t over yet, and it wasn’t the time to give up, so she gritted her teeth and produced a medicinal pill from within her bag of holding and popped it into her mouth. Then she looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who was pale-faced and shivering, and she sighed. At the moment, she no longer felt any scorn for him. Producing a medicinal pill bottle, she tossed it over to him.

“Junior Brother Bai, make sure to keep your internal spiritual energy up.”

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock at the medicinal pill bottle, then opened it and consumed one of the pills. It was at this point that he suddenly remembered something, and produced two medicinal pill bottles from Feng Yan’s bag of holding.

“Elder Brother Feng had some medicinal pills,” he said, handing one of the bottles to Du Lingfei.

She accepted it silently, and the two of them proceeded along as fast as possible. Before long, they were back in the location where they had discovered Hou Yunfei’s jade slip. When Du Lingfei saw that tree, she sighed inwardly.

By now, it was useless to have regrets, so without another word, they continued to speed along. Gradually, Du Lingfei began to slow down, which made Bai Xiaochun even more nervous. Finally, he then grabbed her by the arm and pulled her along, carrying Hou Yunfei at the same time.

Du Lingfei had long since noticed that Bai Xiaochun was much faster than her. When he grabbed her arm, she almost pulled away, but when she saw the look of terror on his face, she sighed and allowed him to pull her along.

It was at this point that Hou Yunfei shivered, and his eyes slowly opened. He looked exhausted.

After assessing his current position, he laughed bitterly and said, “Junior Brother Bai, I never thought that, after all these years, we would meet again like this.”

Seeing that Hou Yunfei was awake, Du Lingfei quickly offered him a medicinal pill.

Bai Xiaochun looked at Hou Yunfei and sighed. “Elder Brother Hou....”

“There’s still hope for us,” Hou Yunfei said. “For their own personal benefit, the Luochen Clan slaughtered people from the mortal world, extracting their blood and bones for use in a spell formation. Their Foundation Establishment patriarch is currently presiding over an Inverse Blood Grand Magic, so he can't personally come after us. Furthermore, the entire Luochen Clan is maintaining the spell formation. Therefore... they won't be able to send very many people after us!"

Hou Yunfei smiled, took the medicinal pill from Du Lingfei, and swallowed it. Then, his eyes began to shine as he said, "Although we can't get a message to the sect from this location, if we get far enough away, we'll definitely be able to!

"Something big like this, an entire cultivator clan rebelling, will definitely provoke a huge reaction from the sect!"

Thanks to the medicinal pill, he no longer needed help from Bai Xiaochun, and began to speed along on his own power.

Because of that, they managed to pick up speed. Soon, the borders of the Fallenstar Mountains became visible, and eventually, they shot out into the open, whereupon Du Lingfei pulled out a jade slip and tried to make contact with the sect. Moments later, her face drained of blood, and she shook her head.

"Still not working...?" muttered Bai Xiaochun, his heart pounding. Hou Yunfei merely stood there silently.

None of them spoke any further as they continued on dejectedly. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, a whistling sound could be heard from behind them. Their faces fell as seven figures burst out of the trees not too far away.

In the lead was the young man in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, who looked at Bai Xiaochun and the others, eyes flickering with killing intent.

“Like I said, you… can’t get away! Never forget that the person who killed you is named Chen Yue! Kill them!”

The Luochen Clan members immediately pulled out magical devices, and cold light appeared in their eyes as they closed in.

The faces of Bai Xiaochun, Du Lingfei, and Hou Yunfei flickered, and they gritted their teeth as they tried to pick up speed.

Chen Yue was laughing coldly as he flicked his sleeve, causing a violet skull to appear. As it sped through the air, it cackled madly, and within the blink of an eye, it was almost directly upon Bai Xiaochun and the others. At that point, Chen Yue waved his finger, and the skull exploded.

The resulting shockwave sent the three Spirit Stream Sect disciples spinning apart. Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei suddenly lost their momentum, and were almost instantly surrounded by the Luochen Clan members.

Bai Xiaochun, however, kept speeding along. Before, he had been somewhat held back by the other two, but now that he was on his own, he burst out with incredible speed, breaking free of the Luochen Clan members. It only took a moment for him to put dozens of meters between them, and from the look of it, he was only starting to pick up speed.

Even Chen Yue, the only member of the Luochen Clan present who was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, could do nothing but stare in shock.

“He’s fast,” Chen Yue said coolly. “First kill these two, then we’ll go after him!” Waving his sleeve, he turned to Du

Lingfei and Hou Yunfei, killing intent boiling.

Du Lingfei coughed up a mouthful of blood. Her body was already spattered in blood; she was surrounded and certain that she was going to die. As she looked at Bai Xiaochun fleeing off into the distance, she began to laugh bitterly.

She was well aware that Bai Xiaochun feared death, so although she wasn't very surprised, she couldn’t help but feel bitter and hopeless.

“Junior Brother Bai, I hope you manage to get away....” she thought. At the same time, she performed an incantation gesture, sending a flying sword out with the power of Lightness-in-Heaviness. Coughing up more blood, she continued to try to defend herself.

Hou Yunfei was also laughing bitterly, but his eyes shone with a cold light. He let out a roar, and although his spiritual energy was mostly depleted, he wasn’t ready to just give in. Gritting his teeth, he prepared to take some of the enemy with him as he died, if only to buy some more time for Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0052 awe-chapter-53

Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale and his heart was pounding. The sensation of danger left him so alarmed that he felt like he might die at any moment, leaving him shaking uncontrollably.

He had never been this frightened before in his entire life. Not when he had left his village to light the incense and brave the lightning, not when Li Qinghou had taken him to 10,000 Snakes Valley, not even when he had seen all those fantastic and powerful creatures while traveling.

In all those situations, he had been nervous, but he had also been confident that... he wouldn't die!

But today, he had the distinct sensation... that he was really going to die!!

As he flew along, he suddenly realized that he was alone. Then he looked back in shock to see that the seven members of the Luochen Clan had surrounded Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei, several hundred meters back.

He also saw that Du Lingfei was coughing up blood. Anyone in this situation would be able to tell that she and Hou Yunfei wouldn’t be able to hold on for very long before they were cut down.

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun as he stood there watching. He began to shake even harder, and his eyes were completely shot with blood. He could feel his very soul screaming at him to run away as quickly as possible.

In fact, Bai Xiaochun was quite sure that, considering the speed he could maintain, and given that Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei were preventing the enemy from giving chase, there was actually a good chance... that he could get away.

If he did, he could keep on living, he could continue to practice cultivation, and he could pursue what he really wanted: eternal life with no death. Not only would the sect not punish him if he survived, they would even reward him.

However... if he simply ran away, leaving Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei to their deaths, he would feel guilty for the rest of his life. He felt as if his entire body had been split in half, with one half telling him to flee at top speed, otherwise he would die. The other half was telling him that if he left his fellow sect members to die, that he would never be able to rest at ease for the rest of his life!

Panting, he let out a frustrated cry of anger. Blue veins bulged out on his forehead, and he was shaking as hard as a tumbling die. At the moment, he wasn’t thinking much about the specifics of the situation, or the potential consequences. His hands clenched into fists as a single thought ran through his head....

“I might be afraid of dying, but... I'm not gonna just run away!” He suddenly began to beat at his chest with his fists. His eyes were completely bloodshot, and he let out a thunderous roar as he suddenly... turned and shot back toward Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei!

He moved so quickly that whistling sounds echoed out in all directions. Hou Yunfei trembled at the sight of Bai Xiaochun’s sudden reversal in course, and his expression was hard to read. He looked astonished, thankful, and all of a sudden, he started laughing. Then, determination glimmered in his eyes, and without even thinking about defense, he charged toward the Luochen Clan members with everything he had.

Simultaneously, Du Lingfei, whose body was splattered with blood from where a flying sword had slashed across her, looked up to see Bai Xiaochun, eyes bloodshot, roaring as he charged in their direction.

She felt as if she had been struck by lightning, and her jaw dropped. Tears began to roll down her cheeks as numerous emotions flooded through her. She was touched, excited, and shaken.

She knew how much Bai Xiaochun was afraid of dying, so when she saw him flying toward them, physically trembling, eyes crimson, she could only imagine how much bravery he had summoned... to stop running away, turn around, and then come back for them.

“Get out of here, you idiot! Run! Don’t get yourself killed!!” Tears streamed down her face. As Bai Xiaochun ran toward them bellowing at the top of his lungs, she didn’t notice that one of the Luochen Clan disciples in the sixth level of Qi Condensation was unleashing a palm strike toward her back.

A boom rang out, and blood sprayed out of her mouth. Her vision swam as she tumbled to the ground. Then, one of the Luochen Clan cultivators’ flying swords began to speed through the air toward her head.

When Bai Xiaochun saw what was happening, he let out an even more violent roar, and pushed forward with another burst of speed, reaching his very limit. He streaked through the air, turning into a beam of light that shot toward Du Lingfei. Even as the flying sword bore down on her, Bai

Xiaochun landed at her side, scooped her up with one arm, then clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out toward the flying sword.

A boom echoed out as the flying sword was sent spinning away by the force of Bai Xiaochun's blow.

The Luochen Clan members were all greatly shocked. Chen Yue's eyes flickered with surprise, but then quickly began to radiate icy killing intent.

"Nice. An expert in disguise. I should have noticed you back when you were in the Shadowhell Formation! Listen up everyone, ignore the other two and kill this guy!" As soon as the words left his mouth, murderous looks appeared in the eyes of the other Luochen Clan members, and they began to close in on Bai Xiaochun.

Du Lingfei was in a bit of a daze as Bai Xiaochun held her in his arms. Before she could do anything, he put her down off to the side and then shot toward the incoming Luochen Clan cultivators.

His eyes were bright red, and it almost seemed that as of this moment, he wasn't thinking about dying at all. In fact, he wasn't thinking about anything except: *Save Hou Yunfei. Save Du Lingfei. Kill all enemies!*

The nearest of those opponents was in the sixth level of Qi Condensation, and as he closed in, his hands flickered in an incantation gesture. In response, a glowing awl suddenly appeared, which shot viciously toward Bai Xiaochun.

"Screw off!" Bai Xiaochun roared, unleashing a ferocious palm strike. The little awl began to wobble, and when Bai Xiaochun's palm slammed into it, the glowing light shattered, and the awl was sent spinning away.

The cultivator who had summoned the awl gasped, and an expression of shock flickered across his face. Just when he was about to fall back in retreat, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. His wooden sword appeared and shot out like lightning. It didn't matter that his opponent was in the sixth level of Qi Condensation; he was incapable of evading, and in fact, didn't even have time to react before the sword stabbed into his forehead.

A miserable shriek echoed out as the wooden sword stabbed all the way through him, coming out the other side in a spray of blood. Then, it circled through the air and headed toward the next enemy.

At the same time, one of the Luochen Clan members in the seventh level of Qi Condensation performed an incantation gesture, causing mist to roil up around him, making him look like an enormous mist giant. Even as he closed in, Bai Xiaochun's hand suddenly shot out, and his thumb and index fingers connected. Black light flickered, and the defenses provided by the mist could do nothing to stop the black light.

Throat Crushing Grasp!

Cracking sounds rang out as the mist dissipated. The cultivator's eyes went wide at the sight of the arm grabbing his neck. Then, his throat was completely crushed.

Everything happened with incredible speed. Only a few breaths of time had passed since Bai Xiaochun had begun his charge, and already, two members of the Luochen Clan had been killed!

Hou Yunfei, who had already fallen back to stand at Du Lingfei's side, gasped, and his eyes went wide with shock.

Du Lingfei was completely and utterly taken aback. The Bai Xiaochun she was seeing right now was completely different from the one she remembered, causing her to pant in disbelief. Was this really the same Bai Xiaochun who was so afraid of dying?

At this point, the remaining shocked members of the Luochen Clan finally unleashed their killing moves. These were their most powerful trump cards, one being a flying sword, another a pearl, and the last, a little cauldron, all of which shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Astonishingly, the three of them were joining forces to attack simultaneously!

Of that group of three, two were in the sixth level of Qi Condensation, and one was in the seventh. Their combined attack was completely vicious as they went all out with everything they had to try to strike down Bai Xiaochun when he couldn't dodge.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were glowing red as the three closed in on him. Even as their magical devices bore down on him, he curled his arms and legs up until he looked like a ball. Previously, Du Lingfei had mocked the big black wok he wore on his back, but now, it covered him up completely.

The little cauldron which had been unleashed by the seventh level cultivator slammed into the black wok, causing a boom to echo out that could shake heaven and earth. Cracks spread out across the wok, but it held strong against the cauldron.

Next was the pearl. Rumbling sounds echoed out as it slammed into the wok. The wok couldn’t hold up any longer, and exploded, transforming into countless black fragments that showered out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun shot out from the wreckage, flying toward the seventh level cultivator.

When the man saw Bai Xiaochun flying toward him, his face fell. He immediately fell back, but couldn’t move fast enough.

None of the magical protective items the man had could do anything to stop Bai Xiaochun, who slammed into him, causing the cracking sounds of breaking bones to ring out. Instantly, Bai Xiaochun went in for another attack, butting him with his head.

BOOOMMMM!

“No!!” screamed the man. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and a look of despair filled his eyes, but he couldn’t break free from Bai Xiaochun.

Off to the side, his fellow clan members in the sixth level of Qi Condensation were nearly scared out of their minds. Trembling, one of them sent a flying sword toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored it as he once again lunged toward the middle-aged man.

The flying sword slammed into Bai Xiaochun, and in a completely shocking twist, it didn’t stab into him, but rather, bounced off and was sent spinning away.

Bai Xiaochun let out a roar, striking the middle-aged man once more. A bloodcurdling scream echoed out as the man died.

To the other two clan members in the sixth level of Qi Condensation, Bai Xiaochun, with his bloodshot eyes and disheveled hair, looked like a wild beast. Their scalps began to tingle as he slowly turned to look at them. Without the slightest hesitation, they turned and fled.

Off in the distance, Chen Yue was completely shaken by what had just occurred, and he could scarcely even believe what he had just witnessed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0053 awe-chapter-54

Seeing that the two sixth level cultivators were fleeing, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture, then waved his finger. His little wooden sword instantly flew through the air, slashing across the neck of one of the cultivators.

His companion's eyes instantly shone with an unprecedented level of astonishment and terror.

They were the ones who were supposed to be doing the chasing and killing, but now... the tables had turned, and they were being cut down!

In a few short moments, Bai Xiaochun had already killed four people!

The remaining sixth level cultivator had an ashen face as he went all out to try to escape. His heart was pounding, and he was trembling all over. How could he ever have imagined that the slender, pure and fair Spirit Stream Sect disciple could... be so utterly terrifying?

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with a savage gleam, and he was just about to give chase when, all of a sudden, a sensation of danger welled up in his heart.

At the same time, Du Lingfei cried out urgently, “Watch out!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately leaped backward. In almost the exact same instant, a three-meter tall violet skull shot into the area where he had just been standing, then exploded.

A boom rang out as the power of explosion blasted out, slamming into Bai Xiaochun. For the first time, his Undying Iron Skin felt pain, and blood even oozed out of his mouth as he flew backward.

The person to attack him had been none other than Chen Yue, who was in the eighth level of Qi condensation.

His expression was unsightly, and a very serious look could be seen in his eyes. After saving his fellow clan member from danger, he flashed through the air toward Bai Xiaochun. Behind him were two other cultivators, who were in the sixth level of Qi Condensation. They gritted their teeth and followed along.

Three people were now charging toward Bai Xiaochun.

Hou Yunfei wanted to help, but was simply too weak. The attack he had made earlier drained him of the last scrap of spiritual energy he had, and blood was currently seeping out of the corners of his mouth. Unfortunately, he was in no state to fight.

Du Lingfei had been seriously injured, and as she anxiously watched Bai Xiaochun fighting, she realized that all of the previous hostility and prejudice she had felt toward him were gone.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen as more blood oozed out of his mouth. He appeared to be on the verge of collapsing, and had seemingly lost much of the speed he had been capable of earlier. Seeing that, Chen Yue and his companions closed in for the kill.

However, as they closed in, a brutal gleam appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. While it was true that his Undying Iron Skin couldn't completely block Chen Yue’s attack moments ago, the truth was that it had absorbed the majority of the force of the attack. His current weak state, and even the blood oozing out of his mouth, were all an act.

In the blink of an eye, he redoubled his speed. Furthermore, instead of retreating, he switched directions, passing Chen Yue toward his true target... the two sixth level Luochen Clan cultivators.

Chen Yue’s face flickered, and even as he made to block Bai Xiaochun’s path, Bai Xiaochun’s wooden sword shot toward him. Chen Yue performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, summoning the same skull from earlier. Rumbling sounds echoed out, but Chen Yue was incapable of stopping Bai Xiaochun.

A fierce gleam appeared in Chen Yue’s eyes, and he waved his sleeve, causing a lantern to materialize, which expanded out in a fireball that sped toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, the two weaker cultivators were crying out in shock and falling back in retreat. However, Bai Xiaochun moved as fast as lightning, and was almost instantly upon one of them, whereupon he reached out with his thumb and index finger, causing a flickering black glow to appear as he pinched his fingers together.

Throat Crushing Grasp!

The nearest Luochen Clan cultivator screamed, and then a cracking sound echoed out as his neck was crushed. At the same time, the blisteringly hot fireball was closing in on Bai Xiaochun from behind, and there was clearly no time for him to jump out of the way. Instantly, it slammed into him.

A sea of flames exploded out, surrounding Bai Xiaochun, and causing both Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei to shout out in alarm: “Bai Xiaochun!!”

Further off, the surviving cultivator among the duo seemed delighted at the sight of Bai Xiaochun being consumed by the fire, and even started laughing.

But then something barreled out from within the sea of flames to appear directly in front of that laughing cultivator. His eyes went wide, and before he could even retreat, Bai Xiaochun kicked down viciously, crushing the man’s head into his torso. He didn’t even have a chance to scream before he was completely dead.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was panting, and his eyes were even more shot with blood than before. Wounds riddled his body, and blood was oozing out of his mouth as he slowly looked up to glare at the last member of the Luochen Clan... Chen Yue!

Being stared at in such a way caused Chen Yue’s heart to prickle. His cultivation base was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and he could be considered one of the Chosen in his clan. Although he didn't quite have the status of crown prince, he had the approval of the patriarch and had experienced numerous deadly battles with beasts in the Fallenstar Mountains. Such deadly tempering had given him extraordinary battle prowess.

As such, he completely looked down upon disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect. Although they far exceed him in terms of status, to him, cultivators from the big sects were like flowers in a flowerpot. Although they had extraordinary divine abilities, when it came to battles of life and death, they couldn't possibly match up to him.

And yet now, Bai Xiaochun caused terror to well up inside of him. In fact, the moment that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes locked onto him, he felt more frightened than any time he had encountered a wild beast in the Fallenstar Mountains.

That gaze contained a ferocity that seemed to wish to consume him alive, and caused coldness to spread out in Chen Yue’s heart.

When he thought about the fact that this person had slaughtered six of his fellow clan members in quick succession, he was completely and utterly shaken. In fact, what was most unbelievable of all was that this person's cultivation base... was merely in the great circle of the sixth level of Qi Condensation.

“He’s way too powerful and fast! He obviously cultivates some sort of body refinement magic, and has cultivated it to the level that he can kill people in one blow!

“Furthermore, his defenses are terrifying!

“He doesn’t have any magical techniques, but his control over his flying sword is incredible. The sword not only moves with unimaginable speed, it’s backed with astonishing power. And that wooden sword is definitely no ordinary item. It’s obviously something so incredible it can kill someone in the sixth level of Qi Condensation!

“This guy must be a famous Chosen from the Spirit Stream Sect. How come I’ve never heard his name before? Bai Xiaochun!” In his shock, Chen Yue felt a desire to fight burning within him. He waved his hand, causing three fist-sized jade skulls to fly out.

His expression was very serious as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“I underestimated you, but that’s not going to happen again. Let’s see which is more powerful, the magical techniques of your Spirit Stream Sect, or the killer ghouls of my Luochen Clan!”

Even as his words continued to echo out, Chen Yue performed an incantation gesture, causing the three skulls to suddenly begin to scream in very lifelike fashion. They also rapidly grew larger, until each one was fully three meters tall. Then, they all shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s breath came in ragged pants. His mind was a blank, devoid of any thinking. He had forgotten about the possibility of dying, and the only thing he had was the impulse to cut down his opponent.

As the skulls closed in on him, he quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger, sending his little wooden sword screaming out, to be joined by two other ordinary flying swords. Instantly, massive amounts of sword light filled the area as Bai Xiaochun began his charge.

There was also a little shield which appeared and began to fly around him, radiating magical light.

A moment later, Bai Xiaochun and his flying swords slammed into the skulls, causing massive rumbling sounds to echo out. Instantly, fierce fighting broke out between Bai Xiaochun and Chen Yue.

Chen Yue was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, with a cultivation base much more profound that Bai Xiaochun’s. However, in terms of power and defense, as the two fought, it became obvious that they were about even.

Waves of shock battered Du Lingfei’s heart. She was so nervous that her hands were clenched into fists, and her fingernails dug painfully into her palms.

The annoying Bai Xiaochun she remembered from the competition was nowhere to be seen. He had been replaced by someone with veins of steel, someone who was able to fight with Chen Yue of the Luochen Clan!

“I misjudged him.... This is the real Bai Xiaochun....

“He really is afraid of dying, but to come back and fight to the death like he has done takes far more courage than that possessed by most ordinary people....” As she looked at Bai Xiaochun, Du Lingfei’s eyes glowed with increased vigor.

“Even though he fears death, his heart is strong, and he has principles. Even if he is afraid of getting killed, he won't give up on his companions....”

Ear-splitting booms rang out constantly. Before long, Bai Xiaochun’s two ordinary flying swords were destroyed. Only his wooden sword remained. However, the three skulls were much dimmer than before, and were clearly significantly damaged as they flew back to Chen Yue.

Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the opportunity that provided to launch another attack. Blood sprayed out of Chen Yue’s mouth as Bai Xiaochun’s Throat Crushing Grasp latched onto his arm. Cracking sounds rang out as the bones were shattered. However, Chen Yue still managed to spit a tiny sword out of his mouth, which shot toward Bai Xiaochun and stabbed a full inch into his shoulder!

Not even the Undying Iron Skin could stop it, and blood immediately began to flow. Chen Yue instantly shot backward, but before he could get very far, Bai Xiaochun, eyes bloodshot and completely disregarding his own injuries, gave chase at top speed.

Chen Yue’s face looked extremely unsightly as he clenched his jaw in the face of the deadly situation that was developing. He quickly performed an incantation gesture and then tapped his forehead, causing his entire body to tremble. Even as all of the qi and blood in his body began to surge violently, he slapped his hand down onto the crown of his head.

“Bai Xiaochun, someone is going to die today, and it will be either me or you!” On any other occasion, Chen Yue would have already ceased fighting. But this was a critical moment for his clan, and he knew that he had to kill Bai Xiaochun. He quickly spit out some of his life blood, which was voraciously consumed by the three skulls.

“Ghoul Bloodbath!” he howled as he unleashed his secret magic. The three skulls’ eyes began to glow with mysterious light as they shot toward Chen Yue and began to madly chew away at his flesh and blood as they tried to burrow into his body.

The bizarre sight caused Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei to gasp. Simultaneously, Chen Yue let out a miserable howl. His entire body was shaking, and his expression was completely vicious as a black fog roiled out from inside of him, transforming him into a three-meter-tall ghoul!

“Die!” he roared, shoving his hand out as he shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“You’ll be the one to die!” Bai Xiaochun howled. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and then he pointed up into the air. Spiritual energy roiled madly out of him, shooting up into the air to form the shocking image of a cauldron!

This was none other than...

Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0054 awe-chapter-55

“Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning!?” Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei were both shocked, and expressions of intense astonishment appeared on their faces.

That was especially true of Du Lingfei. Having mastered the art of Lightness-in-Heaviness, she knew how difficult Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning was, and that on all of the south bank, only a few people could do it.

Rumbling echoed out as the huge cauldron slammed into the ghoul. The ground quaked as it screamed and collapsed into numerous strands of black fog that roiled out in all directions, revealing Chen Yue.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he slammed down onto the ground. Looking up bitterly at the huge cauldron, he murmured, “Violet Qi... Cauldron Summoning....”

With that, he struggled to turn his head to look one more time at Bai Xiaochun before passing away into death. The secret magic he had unleashed inflicted serious damage on his internal organs. That, coupled with a blow from the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning that destroyed even the ghoul, ensured that he had no hope of surviving.

Even as he died, his eyes were still staring at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the dead Chen Yue, and then suddenly sagged in place. His internal spiritual energy had been vastly depleted, leaving him dizzy and as weak as a deflated balloon. He stood there, shivering, swaying back and forth, his face pale. He almost didn't dare to believe that he had actually killed all these people.

As he thought back to the events which had just played out, he suddenly noticed a sweet taste, which was the blood oozing out of his mouth.

“I'm bleeding...” he thought. “I... I almost got killed!!” Everywhere hurt, especially his shoulder. There were also numerous burns all over his body, which pulsed with pain. As Bai Xiaochun thought back to the fight, fear welled up within him, and he trembled.

“Why... why did I come back? That... was so dangerous. I might have lost my little life.... I, Bai Xiaochun, am always careful in everything I do. How could I have been so impulsive...?” Just as post-traumatic stress was about to hurl him into regret, something extremely soft and yet simultaneously firm leapt into his arms. He could feel curves, and could smell a delicate fragrance. It was none other than Du Lingfei.

At first, he was surprised, but his expression quickly turned serious. Holding Du Lingfei tight, he calmly said, “Elder Sister Du, fear not. With Bai Xiaochun here, no one will be able to harm a hair on your head!”

Even as he spoke, his hand suddenly found itself resting on a soft, curved surface....

“Thank you, thank you....” she gushed emotionally, tears streaming down her face. It took her a moment to realize that somehow she was in Bai Xiaochun’s arms. And then she realized what his hands were doing behind her, and her face reddened. She quickly backed up and looked at him angrily.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, savoring the sensation he had just experienced, and mused that Du Lingfei definitely deserved to be known as one of the top beauties on the south bank.

A strange expression could be seen on Hou Yunfei's face. Clearing his throat, he smiled at Bai Xiaochun. “Junior Brother Bai, we’ll have time later to think about everything that has happened here. The Luochen Clan is definitely going to send more people to kill us, and this time it will most likely be the most powerful experts they have under the level of Foundation Establishment. We need to get out of here as quickly as possible.”

Bai Xiaochun shivered. He had just used every trick he had at his disposal to beat these people. The mere thought of anyone showing up who was more powerful than Chen Yue caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to grow pale. Looking at the chaos around him, he instantly nodded.

“Yeah. Yeah, you’re right, let’s get out of here, as quickly as possible!” With that, he instantly began to run away. He cut a very different image than the vicious fighter with veins of steel. However, this time, Du Lingfei didn't find it annoying, but actually rather charming. As she followed along, she thought back to the vicious fight he had gone through to rescue her, and the glow in her eyes grew stronger.

Hou Yunfei shook his head. Quickly gathering up the Luochen Clan members’ bags of holding, he caught up with Bai Xiaochun and handed them over.

“Junior Brother Bai, these are your spoils of war.”

Bai Xiaochun threw them into his robe without even looking at them. As of this point, he couldn’t stop shaking, and could only think of one thing: fleeing.

**

A short time ago….

Back in the Fallenstar Mountains, in the Luochen Clan’s necropolis, the lake of blood was surrounded by the various nodes that formed the spell formation. When the first Luochen Clan member fell to Bai Xiaochun’s hand, one of those nodes collapsed, and the blood inside dried up.

This scene caused the Luochen Clan members to stare in shock. However, before any of them could react, the same thing happened to a second node, then a third, a fourth and a fifth....

Rumbling sounds echoed out continuously.

The Luochen Clan was completely in shock, and one face after another fell. Then, the patriarch in the middle of the lake of blood slowly opened his eyes.

In that exact moment, a boom rang out from the node which Chen Yue had recently occupied.

“I can’t believe that Chen Yue... was just killed!”

“They’re all dead. All seven people who were sent out have been killed!”

“How is this even possible? Weren’t they going after two lowly Outer Sect disciples? Could it be that the Spirit Stream Sect knows about us, and sent a Foundation Establishment cultivator?!” The Luochen Clan members couldn’t suppress their shock, and a huge commotion instantly broke out, along with looks of fear and terror.

“Pipe down!” said an icy voice, which cut through all of the clamor. It was none other than the Foundation Establishment patriarch. His voice echoed out like a thunderclap, causing the rest of the clan members to tremble and look nervously over at him.

“The heaven-defying chance to change our destiny, to expel the seal from within our blood, is a chance we will only come across once in a thousand years,” he said slowly. “Since the decision has been made, there is no need to let our imaginations run wild. If a Foundation Establishment cultivator had set foot into the security spell formation I have set up, I would have detected it. As of this moment... no Foundation Establishment cultivator has come, nor have any words been sent back. What are you people getting flustered for?” An unsightly expression could be seen on his face; were it not for the fact that he had to maintain the spell formation, he would have personally gone out to wipe out Bai Xiaochun and the others.

However, if he left, the Inverse Blood spell formation, which was the only way their clan could break free from the Spirit Stream Sect, would unleash a powerful backlash. Although he might be able to survive, the rest of the clan would find their blood flowing in reverse, and would die.

“It wouldn’t necessarily take a Foundation Establishment cultivator to kill Chen Yue and his group. Those two Outer Sect disciples were either concealing the level of their cultivation bases, or have some sort of rare magical items!

“Even if they were concealing their cultivation bases, at the most, they might be at the eighth level of Qi Condensation. As for magical items... the more powerful they are, the harder they will be for Qi Condensation cultivators to use.

“Heng'er!” The old man's eyes glittered brightly as he slapped his hand down onto the surface of the lake of blood. Immediately, the blood began to ripple as a young man rose up from within, clad in a blood-red robe.

He was exceedingly handsome, with chiseled features, and as soon as he opened his eyes, they glowed with the color of blood. Even as his energy surged up, nine blood-colored ghouls appeared around him, which emitted soundless howls.

When the surrounding members of the Luochen Clan saw the young man, excited expressions could be seen on their faces, and they clasped hands and bowed their heads.

When the patriarch looked at the young man, his eyes gleamed with kindness and praise. His voice was soft as he said, “Heng’er, you are the crown prince of the Luochen Clan, and with a cultivation base of the ninth level of Qi Condensation, you are our most powerful expert next to me.... You are well-qualified to handle this task. Take nine people with you... and kill all of the Outer Sect disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect!”

The young man nodded, then coldly responded, “I won’t return until they're dead.”

He leapt up, and the nine blood-colored ghouls transformed into a blood mist that lifted him up into the air. One by one, he nodded at nine other clan members, after which the ten of them left.

Soon, ten figures were speeding out of the Luochen Clan mansion. The young man named Chen Heng then waved his hand, causing blood mists to appear beneath all of their feet, after which they flew off at top speed.

They moved with incredible speed as they used a clan blood tracking technique to head toward the area where Chen Yue and the others had been killed.

Chen Heng was in the ninth level of Qi Condensation. As for the rest of the group, five were in the same level as Chen Yue had been, the eighth level of Qi Condensation. The rest were in the seventh level.

A squad like this was the most powerful force that the Luochen Clan could afford to send out at the moment.

After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, Chen Heng and his group burst out of the jungle of the Fallenstar Mountains to appear in the location where Chen Yue and his group of seven had died.

The shocking sight of all the corpses caused the faces of the other nine clan members to flicker.

However, Chen Heng looked coldly at the corpses, and especially at those whose necks had been crushed, and his eyes began to shine with a mysterious light.

“A body refinement cultivator!”

He suddenly flickered through the air to appear next to Chen Yue’s corpse. After studying it thoughtfully for a few breaths of time, he reached down, pushed his hand onto the ground and closed his eyes. After a moment, his eyes opened.

“Interesting. I can sense the lingering fluctuations of Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning....

“That means he simultaneously cultivates both magic and his body. With such shocking fleshly body power, and an impressive magical technique, it's no wonder he cut down Chen Yue and the others.

“He must be one of the Chosen of the Spirit Stream Sect. Shangguan Tianyou perhaps? Or is he Lu Tianlei?” A brutal gleam rose up in Chen Heng’s eyes, within which flickered a deep desire to do battle.

“All of you pick a different direction to search in,” he said, his voice as cold as ice. “Once you track them down, send me a message immediately!” With that, the others nodded in affirmation and then scattered in different directions.

With a cold snort, Chen Heng picked a direction to begin searching, and flew off. “The security spell formation is vast. You won’t be able to leave it for the next half month. You people... are dead!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0055 awe-chapter-56

At dusk on the following day, Bai Xiaochun and the others were still speeding along. Occasionally, they would make attempts to use their transmission jade slips, but never succeeded in making contact with the sect.

Thankfully, they had plenty of medicinal pills. The seven Luochen Clan cultivators Bai Xiaochun had killed had all had bags of holding. Although the resources inside weren’t at quite the same level as what was available in the Spirit Stream Sect, at a time like this, it was more than sufficient.

With medicinal pills to bolster them, Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei were in high spirits. With their injuries under control, they managed to continue on through the entire night.

Bai Xiaochun trembled in fear the entire time. The slightest breeze or rustling leaf would cause sweat to break out on his forehead. His heart felt tight, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. He was also still sore from the fighting, which often left him gritting his teeth from the pain.

It wasn't that the pain was unendurable. Actually, it didn't measure up at all to the pain he had felt while cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique. What bothered him was the actual sight of the blood and wounds, and the fear that they might worsen and eventually become life-threatening. He couldn’t help but grimace in anxiety at the thought of it.

Back before all of this had started, Du Lingfei would definitely have mocked him for that, and thought less of him than before. But now, everything was different, and a warm look could be seen in her eyes as she continuously comforted him.

“It’s okay. Don’t be scared, Junior Brother Bai. This wound looks bad, but it’s not life-threatening.

“Don't move, I’ll put some more medicinal ointment on it....”

Seeing Bai Xiaochun wince in pain despite the critical danger they were in caused Du Lingfei to secretly smile. Within that smile were numerous undefinable emotions.

She knew how much Bai Xiaochun feared death, and it was that knowledge that left her so moved and shaken that he had returned. In fact, she even felt as if there were a superlative bravery lurking somewhere inside of him.

That bravery could give birth to a figure with veins of steel, which was something she would never be able to forget.

With Du Lingfei constantly comforting him, Bai Xiaochun started to feel more and more pleased with himself, and was starting to get the feeling that taking such a deadly risk had definitely been the right thing to do. After all, it had resulted in the beautiful Du Lingfei treating him so warmly all of a sudden.

When Hou Yunfei saw what was happening, he looked on with smiling eyes. Considering that they were all fleeing for their lives together, it was only natural that warm feelings would develop between all of them, and that they would become closer.

“Junior Brother Bai, Junior Sister Du,” he said, his tone serious, “if we can make it back to the sect alive, then I’ll remember this kindness you’ve shown me, for the rest of my life!”

“If we can make it back...?” A look of longing appeared in Du Lingfei’s eyes, but she quickly sighed and looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Pain rose up in her heart as she realized that the chances of the three of them getting back alive... were miniscule.

Bai Xiaochun sank further into silence.

Time passed. Two days went by, during which the three of them continued along with almost no rest. Repeated attempts to use their jade slips all ended in failure.

Hou Yunfei’s injuries were becoming more serious, as were Du Lingfei’s, whose face was becoming more and more ashen. Gradually, even their mental faculties were degrading.

Hou Yunfei sighed, turned to Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei and said, “It’s too bad we can’t just hide somewhere and weather the storm, but we really need to get word back to the sect. Of course, if my calculations are correct, the Luochen Clan’s ceremony will be ending soon, and once that happens.... their Foundation Establishment expert will be coming after us. No matter how we try to hide from him, we would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt.”

It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun’s face suddenly flickered. Grabbing Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei, he leaped into a nearby ditch and squatted down.

Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei both had very serious expressions on their faces, and they immediately ceased any chatter.

Before much time had passed, a beam of light appeared in the air up above, which was actually a blood mist. Within the mist was a Luochen Clan member in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, who was looking around carefully in all directions. However, because Bai Xiaochun had led the group into hiding, they weren’t noticed, and the Luochen Clan member proceeded along into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as he watched the cultivator disappearing. His eyes were completely bloodshot, and he almost wanted to jump out and attack the man. However, he couldn’t do that unless he was certain that he could kill him. Otherwise, other members of the Luochen Clan might show up.

“They’ve caught up....” said Du Lingfei, sighing. She looked over at Bai Xiaochun and hesitated, as if there were something she wanted to say to him. However, before she could, he grabbed her hand and started running again.

The three of them said nothing as they proceeded along. They felt as if everything were weighing down on them, crushing down onto their hearts. The shadow of death loomed over them larger than ever, threatening to consume them completely.

“There’s still hope!” Hou Yunfei suddenly said. “Although the patriarch of the Luochen Clan is a Foundation Establishment cultivator, far beyond us in terms of cultivation, his spell formation has to have limits. One of the patriarchs of my Hou Clan is also a Foundation Establishment cultivator, and I was once lucky enough to see a security spell formation that he set up. It could cover a distance of 5,000 kilometers, and required sealing certain spell nodes ahead of time.”

Du Lingfei’s eyes gleamed as she responded, “Elder Brother Hou, do you mean that even though the spell formation was set up ahead of time by the Luochen Clan Patriarch, even if it exceeds 5,000 kilometers, it won’t be by much?!”

“Exactly!” Hou Yunfei declared. “Therefore, the further away we get from the Luochen Clan, the greater the chances that our jade slips will work. If we can just get word back to the sect, they’ll definitely send someone to save us!”

“5,000 kilometers,” Bai Xiaochun muttered, gritting his teeth. “At our current speed, that will take eight or nine more days to reach the border....”

As they proceeded along, they were forced to hide on numerous occasions when Luochen Clan members neared. However, each time, Bai Xiaochun’s uncanny ability to sense danger kept them safe.

Considering how on guard he was, and the fact that he was pulling Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei along with him as they fled, Bai Xiaochun was getting more and more exhausted, his face more and more ashen.

Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei’s injures continued to worsen, and as a result, their speed suffered. It eventually reached the point where Bai Xiaochun was virtually carrying both of them.

Bai Xiaochun was more cautious than ever as he led them along for three days straight.

Three days of running and hiding left Bai Xiaochun more and more drained. His face was gaunt as he led the group into a valley. However, after taking only a few steps inside, his face flickered, and he pulled Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei off to the side, where they hid behind a boulder. Unfortunately, they were a bit too slow, and moments later they could hear the sound of someone whistling through the air toward them.

A beam of white light descended from midair, slamming down into the rock they were hiding behind, completely shattering it. Hou Yunfei coughed up a mouthful of blood, and Du Lingfei couldn’t prevent blood from oozing out of the corners of her mouth. A cold snort rang out through the air.

“So, this is where you’ve been hiding!”

A Luochen Clan cultivator appeared, standing on a blood mist. He was in the seventh level of Qi Condensation, and held a mirror in his left hand. As soon as he saw them, he slapped his bag of holding and produced a jade slip. Just when he was about to transmit some information, Hou Yunfei cried out, “Don't let him make contact!”

The ashen-faced Du Lingfei was just about to unleash a flying sword when Bai Xiaochun, who had been slowly backing up, gritted his teeth and stopped in place. Eyes bloodshot, knees quivering, he focused his qi and blood, and then the ground beneath his feet shattered as he launched himself into the air, turning into a beam of light.

Even as the Luochen Clan cultivator was about to transmit the information, Bai Xiaochun burst toward him with incredible speed. The cultivator's face fell, and he fell back, unable to successfully make contact. Performing an incantation gesture, he swung the mirror with his left hand, causing a beam of light to shoot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered with a ferocious light; instead of dodging, he allowed the white light to slam into him. His charge carried him forward toward the shocked Luochen Clan cultivator, whereupon he reached out with his right hand, touching his thumb and index finger together. A black light shot out and latched onto the cultivator's throat.

Throat Crushing Grasp!

A cracking sound rang out, and the cultivator's eyes went wide. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and he toppled over dead, the message to his fellow clan members unsent.

Blood was also oozing out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he collected up the enemy’s bag of holding, then walked back over to Du Lingfei. There, he trembled and almost fell to the ground, but gritted his teeth and managed to stay on his feet.

“Let’s go!” he said, pulling Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei along.

“Let go of me!” Hou Yunfei said. “You two go. Without me, you’ll be a bit faster.”

His gaze was one of determination as he looked at Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei.

Du Lingfei looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun, and suddenly said something she had been contemplating saying for the past few days. “Junior Brother Bai, why don’t you go alone...?”

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun yelled. “I'm scared of dying, but I'm risking my life. There’s no way you two are going to make that sacrifice mean nothing! Come, let’s go! Together!” Not giving them any chance to speak further, he pulled the two of them along. Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei didn’t say anything further, but they were more moved than ever.

Bai Xiaochun was extremely cautious as he led them forward, constantly changing directions, and being careful to avoid the Luochen Clan cultivators when they got close. Three more days passed. It was evening, and the occasional bolt of lightning danced across the sky. Black clouds were forming, and rain began to fall, great bead-sized drops that caused splashing sounds to fill the air.

It started to get very cold, causing Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei to shiver; their faces were only getting more ashen. Nervousness clutched at Bai Xiaochun’s heart. Knowing that the other two wouldn't be able to survive in such bitter cold, he found a cave in a mountain, where he started a fire.

After sealing the entrance of the cave to make sure the light of the fire didn't seep out, he sat down cross-legged across from Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei.

The fire hissed and popped, and let off enough heat to gradually dispel the cold. A bit of color gradually returned to the faces of Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei, although they still looked very pale.

The three of them sat silently in the cave, watching the fire, and stewing in anxiety.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun chuckled and broke the silence, “In three more days, we should be able to pass that 5,000 kilometer mark. Hahaha! Just wait until we get back to the sect. This is definitely going to count as a big meritorious service. I wonder what reward we’ll get?”

Du Lingfei looked at him, her gaze soft.

Hou Yunfei was about to laugh, but as soon as he opened his mouth, he coughed up some blood, and his face paled as he swayed on the verge of collapse.

After all the days of running, they had long since run out of medicinal pills.

Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and was just about to go over and examine Hou Yunfei, when suddenly his face flickered. He waved his sleeve out to protect his two friends as the stone he had rolled into place to block the firelight suddenly exploded!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0056 awe-chapter-57

A huge boom echoed out as the rock shattered. As Bai Xiaochun waved the shrapnel aside, cold air came rushing in. The fire danced, its flickering light revealing a tall, sturdily built man standing outside.

He was muscular, with icy eyes, and a long spear in hand. He was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and seemed to be even stronger than Chen Yue had been.

“The crown prince was dead on,” he said. “With rain like this and injuries like yours, you couldn’t handle the cold, and were forced to find a place like this to hide. I had to search over a hundred mountains before I found you, but here you are.”

Even as the words were still leaving the man’s mouth, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes blazed with ferocity as he leaped into action. Although the burly man seemed like the impulsive type, he was actually quite cautious. Instead of charging into the cave to fight, he actually fell back.

In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun was out of the cave and in the pouring rain.

Clearly, the burly man didn’t intend to actually fight, and was focused completely on defense. That caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to begin to thump. He was getting a very bad feeling, and yet he gritted his teeth and ignored any possibility of injury as he charged forward in a mad attack.

A gust of frigid wind blew into the cave, extinguishing the fire. Hou Yunfei tried to struggle to his feet, but then coughed up another mouthful of blood. Du Lingfei gritted her teeth and hobbled to the mouth of the cave, where she performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, sending a flying sword shooting toward the burly man.

A moment later, a bloodcurdling scream echoed out into the stormy night. The burly man had been stabbed through the chest by a wooden sword, and yet, in the moment before dying, he hurled his spear out, which partially stabbed into Bai Xiaochun’s right thigh.

The burly man glared at Bai Xiaochun. Groaning, he said, “You won't get away! The crown prince will be here soon!”

Then he coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his head slumped over in death.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale, and he was trembling. In order to kill the man as quickly as possible, he had drawn upon so much energy that his injuries had worsened. Pain radiated up his right leg, and when he looked down, he saw the spear still embedded into his flesh. He was also soaked with rainwater, which intermixed with the blood to flow down onto the ground. He felt half frozen to death.

Du Lingfei staggered over, and when she saw his leg, she began to weep. She reached out, grabbed hold of the spear, and gingerly pulled it out of his leg.

To Bai Xiaochun, it felt as if his flesh and bones were being ripped apart. He trembled, but held back from shouting out. The dying words of his opponent, plus the fact that the man had obviously been trying to buy time, caused his heart to sink even lower than before.

He could even sense fluctuations in the wind that told him it wouldn’t be very long before more pursuing members of the

Luochen Clan showed up.

Du Lingfei threw his arm over her shoulder, and the two of them managed to get back into the cave. Bai Xiaochun kept the spear. Back in the cave, Bai Xiaochun began to pant. His right leg hurt, but thankfully the spear hadn't stabbed into the bone. After binding the wound, he could still feel it, but considering the mortal danger they were in, it wasn't a major issue.

"We need to go. The Luochen Clan could show up at any moment!" Taking a deep breath, Bai Xiaochun slowly rose to his feet.

He looked down at Hou Yunfei, and saw him laying there, struggling for breath. Their days of flight had been like a torment, and he was losing his ability to keep his injuries under control. Du Lingfei was sallow and wan. Her qi passageways had been severely injured, and some had even been severed. It had been an incredible struggle for her to emerge and help Bai Xiaochun in the fight earlier, and now all she could do was look up at him.

In the darkness of the stormy night, her eyes seemed especially beautiful.

"Junior Brother Bai...." she said softly. "Forget about us. You're much faster on your own.... *Go*!" Off to the side, Hou Yunfei struggled into a sitting position. Looking exhaustedly at Bai Xiaochun, he nodded in agreement.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes were bloodshot as he said, "We can get out of the 5,000 kilometer area in only three days, guys, shut your m--"

Before he could finish his sentence, Hou Yunfei cut him off. "Junior Brother Bai, you escaping and getting word to the sect is the best chance Junior Sister Du and I have....”

Bai Xiaochun chuckled bitterly. He was no three-year-old child to believe a lie like that. He knew that even if he did escape and get word to the sect, by the time anyone arrived to help... Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei would already be dead.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun seemed determined to stay, Hou Yunfei started laughing. “Fine. If I die, then you’ll leave, right?”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun as he realized that Hou Yunfei was stirring his last bit of spiritual energy as if to destroy his own qi passageways.

Hou Yunfei looked at him calmly and continued, “Junior Brother Bai, are you going to go, or not?!”

Bai Xiaochun was miserable and heartbroken. He took a few steps backward, mixed emotions on his face as he stared at Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei.

A gust of wind blew a strand of Du Lingfei’s hair across her face. She tucked it behind her ear and looked at Bai Xiaochun. Although her face was ashen, somehow, she looked even more beautiful than ever. Her voice soft, she murmured, “I hope... if there’s another life after this one... that I’ll have the chance to meet you again.... Junior Brother Bai... you have to stay alive!”

The instant Bai Xiaochun heard the words “stay alive,” a violent tremor ran through him, and he felt as if he had been struck in the chest by a hammer. Taking another long look at Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei, he finally turned and walked out of the cave, unsure of what exactly he was feeling inside. A moment later, he was speeding through the stormy night.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had finally chosen to leave, Hou Yunfei let out a soft sigh. Du Lingfei watched him leave, wishing him the best in her heart. She truly wished... that she could make time flow in reverse, that she could return back to the time... when she had first met Bai Xiaochun.

Everything was quiet for a moment, but then Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei suddenly looked out in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, and their faces flickered.

His cultivation base was erupting with power, his internal spiritual energy surging outward, even causing the rainwater to distort.

He was like a brightly burning torch on a dark night that not even the coldness brought by the rain could dispel. Even someone very far away would be able to sense it.

Lightning snaked across the sky as Luochen Clan cultivators from several different directions suddenly sensed Bai Xiaochun.

Chen Heng’s eyes glittered as he looked in the direction of the upsurge of power.

Bai Xiaochun flickered into motion, flying up the mountainside past the cave. As he flew by, Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei could hear him whispering something to them.

“I’ll get their attention. You two find a way to escape... Come on, go!”

Tears began to stream down Du Lingfei’s face as her heart was battered by incredible waves of emotion. Hou Yunfei was likewise shaken.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun burst out with incredible speed as he picked a different direction to flee in.

Bai Xiaochun sped along, cackling madly and crying out at the top of his lungs, “Dead! They’re dead! Luochen Clan, I can’t wipe all of you out, but the Spirit Stream Sect will definitely come and kill you all!”

He appeared to be heading in a direction which would quickly lead out of the 5,000 kilometer area. Furthermore, from the way he was yelling, it seemed obvious that his two compatriots were dead, and that he was hysterical. Even if he might die in the attempt, he would break out and pass word to the sect, to make sure that revenge was had.

Chen Heng instantly realized what was happening, and his face flickered. Although he couldn’t be sure whether or not Bai Xiaochun was putting on an act, he could tell that, based on his current speed, he could succeed. Chen Heng definitely didn’t dare to gamble with the fate of his sect by ignoring the threat.

He immediately transmitted a message to the other Luochen Clan cultivators. “Everyone kill him! Even if his friends aren’t dead, they're definitely seriously injured. We can track them down after we kill this one!”

All of the Luochen Clan cultivators shot through the rain at top speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Lightning crashed and rain fell. Back in the darkness of the cave in the mountain, Du Lingfei gritted her teeth and wiped the tears off of her cheeks. Then, her eyes began to glow with determination.

She knew that the only way to save Bai Xiaochun was to escape the 5,000 kilometer area and get word back to the sect.

She looked over at Hou Yunfei, whose eyes flickered with the same determination as hers.

“Don't worry about me,” he said. “Let’s split up. Whichever of us gets out first can bring help from the sect to save Junior Brother Bai!” Hou Yunfei was determined to use his last bit of energy to try to break out and get help for Bai Xiaochun, even if he died in the process.

The two of them took deep breaths and then ran out into the rain, splitting up and heading in two different directions, calling upon all the strength they could manage. They were already on the verge of collapsing, but by sheer force of willpower, they managed to exceed the limits of their bodies.

Thunder boomed and lightning fell. Bai Xiaochun was speeding along as fast as he could. He had already lost sensation in his right leg, and his eyes were crimson. A sensation of deadly crisis thrummed in every inch of his body.

He was scared, terrified of dying, certain that death was right on his heels, on the very brink of swallowing him up.

He wasn't sure if his actions just now had been impulsive or not, or whether or not he might regret his decision. After all, the purpose of immortal cultivation was to live forever.

In fact, there was still a voice in his head telling him... to run away on his own....

However, he couldn’t forget the feeling of what it was like to be struggling with his two friends to survive. That feeling of facing the danger as a team was something he couldn’t get rid of. He couldn't forget how Hou Yunfei had threatened to kill himself to get Bai Xiaochun to leave, nor the beautiful smile on Du Lingfei’s ashen face.

If he could only pick fear of death, or loyalty to friends, he would pick the latter!

“Elder Sister Du, Elder Brother Hou, you have to stay alive!” Gritting his teeth, he flew onward with reckless abandon. “You want to wipe us out, Luochen Clan? Alright, bring it on!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glowed with savage fury, like a caged animal ready to fight for its life.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0057 awe-chapter-58

Rain fell in sheets, thunder crashed, and lightning danced across the sky. The world was a mix of darkness and light, filled with rumbling booms and the sound of raindrops smacking onto the ground.

From a distance, everything seemed to be a haze of rain, completely somber and desolate.

Bai Xiaochun trembled as he sped forward with all the speed he could muster. He flew along, feet pounding the ground, occasionally leaping into the air over some obstacle. He was like an arrow loosed from the bowstring, whistling through the air.

“Have to stay alive,” he muttered. “You guys... have to stay alive!” That was what he kept repeating to himself as the images of Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei continued to flash in his mind.

The shadow of death loomed, fusing with the rain, making everything around him seem even colder than usual.

By this point, roughly nine figures were speeding toward him from various directions. The furthest person away from him was Chen Heng, but he was also the fastest. He was like a beam of light stabbing through the sheets of rain, moving faster and faster, causing rumbling sounds to echo out.

“You can’t escape! Nobody can escape from our patriarch’s spell formation!” Killing intent flickered in Chen Heng’s eyes.

He had never imagined that three Outer Sect disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect would manage to evade him for so many days, and in fact, even get close to the border of the spell formation set up by his Patriarch. As for the disciple they were currently closing in on, he had a profound cultivation base, sufficient to not only strike down Chen Yue, but numerous other members of the Luochen Clan.

He was now more convinced than ever that this person was one of the famous Chosen from the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, either Shangguan Tianyou or Lu Tianlei. After all, when it came to the affairs of the south bank, the north bank usually wouldn’t interfere.

“Spirit Stream Sect Chosen....” Chen Heng thought, eyes glittering with killing intent, and even a spark of amusement.

Rumbling thunder filled the air as Bai Xiaochun sped along with gritted teeth. He was panting, and his internal spiritual energy was fading quickly. Because of the rain, it was hard to see anything, and he almost felt as if some primordial ancient beast had swallowed up Heaven and Earth.

Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun looked up with bloodshot eyes, looking fiercely at certain fluctuations in the rainwater a few dozen meters up ahead. Popping sounds rang out as countless raindrops then exploded and shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Behind that sheet of rain was the first Luochen Clan member who had arrived to intercept Bai Xiaochun!

He was a middle-aged man, and the ugly scar which ran down his face made him look extremely ferocious. On top of that, he had a cultivation base in the great circle of the seventh level of Qi Condensation. He shot toward Bai

Xiaochun, hefting a gigantic battle-axe in his right hand. As he closed in, he gripped the haft of the axe with both hands, lifted it high into the air, and swung it down viciously toward Bai Xiaochun!

“You’re not going one step further!” the man barked, his voice booming like thunder.

Bai Xiaochun didn't hesitate for even a moment. As the axe descended, he sped forward, shooting his left hand out toward the axe itself!

The middle-aged man laughed coldly, pouring more cultivation base power into his hands, causing the axe to scream madly through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the instant that Bai Xiaochun extended his left hand, a black flicker of light could be seen as his Undying Iron Skin was unleashed. Even as his left hand made contact with the axe head, it turned completely pitch black.

A boom rang out as Bai Xiaochun’s left hand clamped onto the axe with such incredible force that the surrounding rainwater began to vibrate, and then exploded into a haze.

Pain exploded out within him, and blood flowed, and yet the power of his Undying Iron Skin kept his hand safe, albeit injured.

The middle-aged man frowned, then tried to jerk his axe away. However, Bai Xiaochun’s grip was like an iron vice that kept the giant axe completely locked down; no matter how the middle-aged man struggled, he couldn't move it even a teeny bit.

The man’s face flickered, and then he looked up and realized that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were blazing with flames of madness!

It was a madness that this man had only ever seen within the eyes of various wild beasts in the Fallenstar Mountains.

The man’s heart instantly began to pound, and in the blink of an eye, the glow of defensive shields sprang up around him. Without any hesitation, he let go of the axe and fell back.

He was fast, but... Bai Xiaochun was faster!

Even as his left hand maintained its grip on the axe, his right hand flared with black light, and simultaneously shot out toward the middle-aged man.

His hand pierced through the man’s defensive shields, causing cracking sounds to ring out as one layer after another was destroyed. Bai Xiaochun cut through them like a razor-sharp blade through bamboo. At the same time, because of the current state Bai Xiaochun was in, his Throat Crushing Grasp suddenly did something it had never done before.

Unexpectedly... a gravitational force appeared, causing the middle-aged man to lurch to a stop. Before he could even react, his entire world was completely superseded by Bai Xiaochun’s pitch-black hand!

A boom rang out as Bai Xiaochun’s hand clamped onto the man’s throat and then clenched down hard!

CRACK!

A flicker of disbelief passed through the man’s eyes, and then blood oozed out of his mouth. There was no time for him to scream as the bones in his neck were crushed. Then, his head sagged to the side. He was dead!

Disbelief could still be seen in his eyes. Although he had been aware that the person they were chasing was powerful, and had even been prepared going into the fight, the blow he had unleashed moments ago had not been a lethal one. He had only been trying to stop Bai Xiaochun and buy some time. How could he ever have imagined that this skinny Outer Sect disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect would be so utterly powerful?

In the moment that the man died, two more figures appeared off in the distance. Shockingly, one of them had a cultivation base in the eighth level of Qi Condensation!

Seeing their dead comrade in Bai Xiaochun’s hand, they let out roars of rage. “Chen Zhong!!”

“You people are forcing me to do this!” Bai Xiaochun growled. He tossed the corpse aside, then quickly changed directions and shot off at top speed. He was shaking, panting, and yet, his eyes gleamed with an even more intensely brutal light than before.

He knew that he couldn't afford to stop for even a moment. After all, the whole crux of his plan was to get the Luochen Clan members to follow him. As he changed directions, he could see a sprawling mountain range off in the distance.

Because that particular mountain range wasn’t a specific border region, it didn’t have a name. It was a separate mountain range than the Fallenstar Mountains, but was comparable in size, and in fact, perhaps even a bit larger. The rain there fell at a steep angle, and the entire area was crashing with lightning.

In fact, when Bai Xiaochun looked over, the lightning seemed to mass into a sphere which then exploded out into the rain.

Bai Xiaochun sped in the direction of the mountain range, the two Luochen Clan members hot on his trail. At the same time, more cultivators were closing in.

There was even a bright beam of light which was none other than Chen Heng, who was getting closer by the moment.

As the Luochen Clan cultivators closed the distance to Bai Xiaochun, he got closer and closer to the tree-covered mountains. He was now several dozen meters away, completely soaked as he ran along. As of this moment, he was on the verge of making it into the jungle itself.

“Stop him!” Chen Heng said grimly.

The cultivator closest to Bai Xiaochun was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation. He let out a roar, then reached out and grabbed the seventh level clan member next to him. They exchanged a glance, and were instantly thinking the same thing. The seventh level clan member curled up into a ball, and then the other clan member hurled him forward as hard as possible.

Rumbling sounds filled the air as he called upon all the power of his cultivation base to propel his companion through the air. The second cultivator shot through the rain with explosive speed, and in the blink of an eye, was right upon Bai Xiaochun.

As he closed in, he unleashed his cultivation base, causing thunderous rumbling sounds to echo out. Bai Xiaochun lurched to a stop, spun, and performed an incantation gesture. The wave of a finger sent his wooden sword flying out, and yet the Luochen Clan cultivator actually allowed it to stab into him. Even as he passed away into death, a bizarre smile appeared on his face.

Suddenly, he exploded into a cloud of blood and gore that then transformed into a rope of blood that began to entangle Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and he turned to flee. However, in that moment of distracted retreat, a screaming sound rose up from behind him, which was an arrow!

That arrow had been shot from none other than the cultivator in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, who currently held a quivering bow in his hand.

The sacrifice of the other cultivator led to a critical moment in which Bai Xiaochun was incapable of dodging!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. Stopping in place, he suddenly shot directly toward the speeding arrow.

A boom rang out as the arrow stabbed into Bai Xiaochun, causing an explosion of pain that left him pale-faced.

The arrow pierced the bone in his shoulder, shattering it. The arrow itself was made from extraordinary materials, and backed by the power of the eighth level of Qi Condensation, making it incredibly strong. After snapping the bone, it actually sent the skinny Bai Xiaochun flying through the air past the blood rope!

THUMP!

The arrow slammed into a nearby tree, simultaneously impaling Bai Xiaochun!

Delight flickered in the eyes of the eighth level cultivator as he flickered into motion, shooting forward and preparing to unleash a second arrow to cut down Bai Xiaochun!

The other Luochen Clan cultivators had brutal grins on their faces as they closed in. However, it was in this moment that Chen Heng’s expression suddenly flickered.

“Watch out!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0058 awe-chapter-59

In almost the same moment that Chen Heng’s voice echoed out, Bai Xiaochun, who was still pinned to the tree, looked up. A valiant gleam appeared in his eyes as he reached up, grabbed the arrow which was protruding from his shoulder, then viciously pulled it out, ignoring the stabbing pain that resulted.

Blood spurted out, and the arrow itself dragged out chunks of flesh. The pain itself was so intense that Bai Xiaochun trembled. And yet, without the slightest hesitation, he unleashed the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. Using Heaviness-in-Lightness, he flung the arrow back at the Luochen Clan cultivator.

A piercing scream echoed through the air as the arrow accelerated rapidly.

Because of the use of Heaviness-in-Lightness, the force of the arrow was like a towering mountain.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s hands flashed in an incantation gesture, sending his wooden sword flying out in a second deadly attack. A somber, bleak aura raged; his successive deadly encounters with the members of the Luochen Clan had provided Bai Xiaochun with incredible hands-on experience in battle. Furthermore, it showed that he seemed to have incredible talent as a fighter hidden deep in his bones, something he rarely revealed to the world. It was only on display now because of the numerous life-and-death situations he had faced.

The Luochen Clan cultivator who had been just about to fire a second arrow was taken aback. He had never imagined that Bai Xiaochun could be so vicious. In fact, now he realized that Bai Xiaochun might very well have intentionally let himself be struck with the arrow, all with the purpose of being able to make this almost instant counter-attack.

The man fell back instantly. He was in the great circle of the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and as someone who frequently fought various dangerous beasts in the Fallenstar Mountains, was very experienced. He knew that he had lost the initiative in the fighting, but even as he retreated, he chose not to activate any defenses. Instead, he took advantage of the brief moment he had... to finish drawing the bow!

“Are you gonna block this one?!” he roared, a vicious gleam in his eyes as he launched a second arrow.

In his estimation, Bai Xiaochun would definitely use his wooden sword to block the arrow, which would eliminate one of the two deadly threats which were heading his way, and would give him back the initiative.

However, it was in this very moment that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned bright red; he knew that he couldn’t give his opponent even the slightest opportunity to make a move. If he did, then he would most likely be killed.

Gritting his teeth, he decided not to use the wooden sword in defense, and instead allowed the arrow to close in and stab into his abdomen. At the same time, the arrow he had thrown rocketed forward and pierced into the man’s chest. Blood sprayed everywhere as the man screamed, his eyes shining with surprise as the force of the blow shoved him backward even faster.

That was when Bai Xiaochun’s wooden sword bore down on the man as though it demanded to end his life. With a swift slashing motion, it completely severed the man’s head, which toppled down to the ground.

Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood, and yet didn’t hesitate for a moment to race into the cover of the trees, whereupon he vanished.

After a few dozen breaths of time passed, numerous other Luochen Clan cultivators arrived on the scene. As they looked around, expressions of shock appeared on their faces as they realized that Bai Xiaochun was so vicious that he would even injure himself to slay his opponent.

A moment later, a flash of light could be seen as Crown Prince Chen Heng appeared.

He looked at the severed head of his fellow clan member, and then at the other traces of blood in the area. His expression turned grim, and fierce killing intent radiated out from him.

Also in the area were five other clan members, three of whom were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and two being in the seventh.

“Chen Feng, Chen Gu, the two of you go search for the others. We can’t let ourselves be drawn out of our territory. The rest of you... you’re coming with me. We're bringing back this guy's head!” With that, Chen Heng flicked his sleeve and headed into the trees.

The two who were in the seventh level of Qi Condensation complied with Chen Heng’s orders and resumed their searching. The other three followed Chen Heng into the trees, eyes flickering with the desire to kill.

Within the jungle that covered the nameless mountain range, Bai Xiaochun proceeded along, dizzy and vision blurred. His shoulder, his abdomen, and his right leg were all seriously injured. Because of the cold brought by the rain, he was shivering even more violently than he would have normally been.

“Am I gonna die...?” he thought, chuckling bitterly. The sight of all his injuries, and the bone-stabbing pain that came along with them, caused tears to well up in his eyes.

He suddenly recalled an image of his parents, lying sick on their deathbeds. Then he remembered how he had watched their bodies slowly growing colder in death.

Perhaps that was when he had started to especially fear the idea of dying.

“I want to live!” he thought. He wiped the tears off of his face with his left arm, then gritted his achingly cold teeth as he sped along through the jungle. He had no idea where exactly he was, nor did he have a plan about what to do. There was only one thought in his head. “I have to stay alive!”

It was actually his fear of death which seemed to give him unending power, and kept him going as he sped along through the stormy night.

Gradually, he came to realize that after all the fighting, his cultivation base was stirring, and he was actually not very far away from breaking through to the seventh level of Qi Condensation.

Eventually, the sun became visible off in the distance, and as the rays of light pierced through the leaves, they reflected off of the falling raindrops, creating a beautiful scene.

Chen Heng and the other three Luochen Clan cultivators were following him at top speed. Chen Heng’s face was growing increasingly unsightly as he realized that their quarry, despite being so seriously wounded, was moving so quickly through the jungle that they weren’t making any headway in catching up. After following him for an entire night, they still had no idea exactly where he was.

Furthermore, the rain ensured that the evidence of his passage was quickly washed away. Despite the fact that they were from a cultivator clan in the Fallenstar Mountains, who frequently hunted beasts in the jungle, they were still unable to track him.

“Alright, let’s split up,” Chen Heng said through gritted teeth. “He's wounded, so he won’t be able to run for long. The three of you, stay about three hundred meters apart. When you find him, don't engage! Send me a message immediately!” With that, the other three clan members nodded and headed off in different directions.

Time passed. The next day, Bai Xiaochun was completely worn out, and was reaching his limit. If it weren’t for the fact that he was running for his life, he would have long since collapsed.

His lips were parched and cracked, his face haggard, his pace slowing. After proceeding for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, his face suddenly flickered as he saw a blur of motion to the right. However, no one attacked him. Instead, the figure fell back immediately.

It was a long-faced young man, one of the three Luochen Clan members who had fanned out to search for him. Even as the young man fell back, he pulled out a jade slip which he pressed down onto to send a message.

Bai Xiaochun’s face sank, and he pushed onward into the jungle even faster than before.

The long-faced young man watched him go. Bai Xiaochun frightened him, and even as he debated whether or not to give chase immediately, he saw two figures speeding toward him from off in the distance, and his expression brightened.

Those were the two other clan members, and further off in the distance, he could even see Chen Heng.

Based on how fast they were moving, the two other clan members would arrive in about ten breaths of time. Chen Heng was a bit further away, and would need roughly twenty breaths to arrive.

The long-faced young man began to laugh heartily. Without any further hesitation, he powered up his cultivation base, simultaneously summoning numerous shield layers. He also slapped his bag of holding to produce a long sword.

It was a greatsword, over two meters long, with an ancient and crude appearance. The young man hefted it, and then swung it through the air, causing whistling sounds to ring out from the sharpness of the blade. Killing intent flickered in his eyes, and he smiled viciously as he shot after Bai Xiaochun at top speed.

“Killing a Chosen from the Spirit Stream Sect is definitely going to be fun! Much funner than killing random rogue cultivators!” Laughing, he slashed the sword through the air, causing a beam of sword light to fly out, accompanied by a sound like rushing wind. He then performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and pointed his finger out, causing a fist-sized fireball to shoot in Bai Xiaochun's direction.

Despite the falling rain, the fireball exploded with scorching heat as it shot through the air. A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and when he turned to look back, killing intent flickered in his eyes. He was well aware that if he didn't take out this opponent immediately, it would be impossible for him to escape.

However, in the moment that Bai Xiaochun turned, the long-faced young man suddenly fell back, eyes flickering with derision. There was absolutely no way he was going to give Bai Xiaochun the chance to get close to him. His only goal at the moment was simply to buy time.

Bai Xiaochun's hands clenched into fists, and he began to run again. However, the long-faced young man quickly interfered, delaying him again. A few breaths of time passed, and the other two clan members were closing in. When they saw Bai Xiaochun, their cultivation bases flared with power.

At the same time, the long-faced young man began to laugh. Instead of dancing around like he had been, he unleashed all the speed he could muster. Along with his two fellow clan members, he shot murderously toward Bai Xiaochun.

Three cultivation bases at the eighth level of Qi Condensation. When Chen Heng saw the killing attack being unleashed, he felt a bit more at ease. He was quite confident that, no matter what tricks Bai Xiaochun pulled, he would definitely be killed.

“What a pity,” he said coolly. “He won’t even have a chance to grow up.” However, before he could even blink his eyes, his expression flickered.

Even as the three figures closed in on Bai Xiaochun, unleashing various deadly divine abilities and magical techniques, Bai Xiaochun’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. His wooden sword flew out toward the middle opponent, and he threw out a punch toward another.

A boom rang out as the wooden sword was blocked. However, the fist strike landed, sending its target tumbling back, blood spraying out of his mouth. Bai Xiaochun also coughed up blood as his injuries worsened. However, before he could retreat, the long-faced youth closed in and slashed out with his long sword, sending a blast of sword light toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the moment of critical danger, Bai Xiaochun barely managed to twist his body to avoid a blow to the heart. The blade stabbed into him, instantly causing sweat to break out all over his body. He shivered, and at the same time, the long-faced young man began to laugh. Then, just when he was about to pull the sword back, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed the blade, then yanked himself forward down to the hilt.

It was a heavy price to pay, but it put him directly in front of the long-faced young man, whose scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. A sudden feeling of intense, deadly crisis washed over him. Just when he was about to drop the blade and jump backward, black light appeared on

Bai Xiaochun’s right hand as he grabbed the young man’s neck.

“You--” the young man said, eyes widening. Before he could say another word...

A cracking sound rang out!

His neck was crushed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0059 awe-chapter-60

The sudden development occurred too quickly. In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, the number of cultivators who were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation was reduced from three to two. The remaining two gasped, but had little time to ponder the matter, and continued to charge toward Bai Xiaochun.

Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he flew back, slamming into a tree and simultaneously pulling the greatsword out of his chest. He quickly slashed the sword out at one of the two remaining opponents. However, his target nimbly dodged to the side, allowing his companion to close in, whereupon his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and incredible power exploded out.

A boom echoed out as Bai Xiaochun was sent flying through the air, blood spraying everywhere. His clothes were now completely soaked with blood as the two Luochen Clan cultivators bore down on him. It seemed like a no-win situation, but Bai Xiaochun hadn't given in to despair yet; he desperately wanted to live. Roaring, he performed an incantation gesture, summoning a long spear, a huge axe, and two flying swords.

Using the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, he sent the weapons slashing viciously toward his enemies.

The faces of the two Luochen Clan cultivators fell. They quickly unleashed magical techniques, causing a boundless black fog to spring up. Booms rang out, and the magical devices Bai Xiaochun had just launched clattered to the ground. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun himself staggered backward, blood spilling out of his mouth.

“Time to end things!” For the third time, the two cultivators attacked. As the power of their cultivation bases erupted out, it seemed like they would strike Bai Xiaochun down at any moment.

“Stay alive!” he said in a hoarse voice, a gleam of madness in his eyes. “I've got to stay alive!”

His internal spiritual energy was flickering on the verge of sputtering out completely, but he let out a roar, and all of the power he had built up in his years of cultivation, power which had seeped into his qi passageways and bones, exploded out like hundreds of flowing streams.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Up to this point in the fighting, Bai Xiaochun had not called upon these scraps of spiritual energy, but now, in this moment of critical danger, he did. They poured into the main qi passageways, and in the blink of an eye, had transformed into a huge river. As it flowed through his body, a sound like pounding drums burst out within him.

At the same time, the cultivation base fluctuations of the seventh level of Qi Condensation suddenly erupted out.

When his two opponents, who were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, suddenly sensed those cultivation base fluctuations coming off of him, their faces flickered with shock and disbelief.

“Making a breakthrough in the middle of fighting!?!?”

“How... how is that even possible?!?!” As they reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun looked up, and his eyes were glowing brightly. The surge of spiritual power couldn’t heal his wounds, but it could revive him from his state of listlessness, and give him one more chance to make it out of the situation alive.

He sprang forward toward the two Luochen Clan cultivators, who cried out in alarm as black light covered his right hand, and the Throat Crushing Grasp was unleashed.

A cracking sound was heard as one of his opponents, unable to dodge, was pulled toward Bai Xiaochun’s right hand. It was almost as if some invisible force were dragging him to Bai Xiaochun, who summarily crushed his neck.

His companion looked on, scalp tingling in shock. When Bai Xiaochun turned to look at him, the man screamed, eyes shining with terror as he fell into retreat.

“Crown Prince, save me!!” This was the sole surviving clan member in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, screaming for help.

At the moment, Chen Heng was still ninety meters away. Seeing what was happening, he let out an enraged roar.

“Are you looking to die!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun didn't even look at him; he instantly flashed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed out. Immediately, the fallen magical devices in the area began to tremble, and then emitted droning sounds as they apparently sensed Bai Xiaochun calling to them.

Then they suddenly flew up into the air, moving far faster than they had before, speeding toward the approaching

Chen Heng to block his path.

Banging sounds rang out as Chen Heng was forced to deal with the weapons. He was in the ninth level of Qi Condensation, but even he couldn't instantly bypass them.

As Chen Heng was being delayed, Bai Xiaochun closed in on the remaining cultivator. Eyes flickering with killing intent, he unleashed a fist strike.

A boom echoed out, and blood sprayed from the man’s mouth. He was just about to continue to fall back, but didn't notice that Bai Xiaochun had just performed an incantation gesture with his left hand. A wooden sword appeared behind the man, closing in noiselessly and then stabbing through his head in a shower of blood.

The man’s eyes went wide as he toppled down to the ground, where he twitched a few times, blood flowing out of his mouth. Then his eyes faded, and he was dead.

Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun staggered to the side. Although he had just experienced a cultivation base breakthrough, the series of deadly moves he had just unleashed had almost completely drained him. Blood oozed constantly out of his mouth as he once again lurched off into the jungle.

He knew that his final opponent was the strongest of them all, and was already able to sense that he was in the ninth level of Qi Condensation.

“Ninth level of Qi Condensation....” he thought bitterly. His burning desire to live caused his blood to surge through his heart. He knew that this time, either he would die, or his opponent would.

There was no third option.

As he made his retreat, Chen Heng let out an enraged howl. He was surrounded by a blood mist, which caused the magical devices to tremble, and then begin to crack. Moments later, they exploded, and Chen Heng shot out from within the blood mist. When he looked around at his three dead compatriots, he roared in fury, then shot after Bai Xiaochun.

The two of them sped through the jungle of the nameless mountain range, heading deeper and deeper in. Thunder boomed, even though it was daytime. No lightning was visible, but the rain poured down harder and harder.

“Are you Shangguan Tianyou, or Lu Tianlei!?” Chen Heng yelled. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing nine streams of blood mist to shoot toward Bai Xiaochun, like nine blood-colored anacondas.

“I'm your grandpa!” Bai Xiaochun retorted, despite how ashen his face was. After evading the attacks, he glanced back at the crown prince, who was getting closer by the moment. Trembling, he crouched down, then shot forward with even greater speed. Even as Chen Heng prepared to do the same, Bai Xiaochun’s foot slammed into a tree, stopping him mid-flight.

Then, he twisted, borrowing the momentum of the tree as it snapped back to shoot toward Chen Heng.

“I don’t care who you are,” Chen Heng said, “today, you’re gonna die!” Killing intent flickered in his eyes, and his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Nine blood anacondas once again shot toward Bai Xiaochun with gaping maws.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bright red as he let out a howl. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as he drew upon what remained of his spiritual energy to form a violet cauldron. The cauldron instantly spread out to surround him, completely blocking the path of the nine blood anacondas as he smashed toward Chen Heng.

“Child's play!” Chen Heng said with a cold laugh. Another incantation gesture transformed the nine blood anacondas into a fog, which then re-formed around him in the shape of a blood-colored skull. Then the skull shot toward the violet cauldron.

Massive booms rang out as the violet cauldron cracked and then exploded. The blood fog skull was significantly damaged, but remained in one piece.

After the collision, the collapsed cauldron revealed Bai Xiaochun, who shot out of the fragmented remains toward the fog beneath him.

At the same time, Chen Heng’s eyes flickered. Then he leaped upward out of the fog, right hand flashing an incantation gesture to produce a vicious ghost face.

At the same time, he threw his head back and glared at Bai Xiaochun.

Their eyes met, and then they slammed into each other, one using a fist, the other a palm. Black light flashed as the Undying Iron Skin went into action to meet the bizarre magical technique that was the ghost face.

A deafening boom rang out. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and cracking sounds rang out from within him as he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, to slam into a nearby tree.

Chen Heng was shaken, and his face was ashen. His qi and blood were churning, and shock filled him regarding how powerful Bai Xiaochun was. However, he instantly shot back toward his opponent, raising his right hand, which caused all of the fog in the area to form together into a huge, blood-colored face which crushed down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with the ferocity that comes from being pushed into a corner. He twisted in mid air, pointing toward Chen Heng to unleash the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art.

He wasn’t using it to control random objects, but instead, Chen Heng’s body! It was a technique Chen Heng had never even heard of before. Suddenly, a powerful force wrapped around him, as though a gigantic hand had grabbed him.

He laughed coldly as his cultivation base erupted out, and the blood-colored face howled, causing Bai Xiaochun’s spiritual energy to shatter. At the same time, Chen Heng quivered.

It was in that moment that a wooden sword shot toward him, and Bai Xiaochun also charged forth, holding nothing back as he called upon the full power of his Undying Iron Skin.

“What a joke!” Chen Heng said, flicking his sleeve. The blood-colored face passed through him, crushing toward the wooden sword. When the two met, the wooden sword trembled, but didn’t break. Instead, it stabbed through the face, opening up a gap.

Bai Xiaochun dove in through that very gap, relying on his Undying Iron Skin to deal with the injuries. As he shot out, Chen Heng’s eyes flickered, and he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand.

The wave of a finger caused an arc of blood-colored light to appear, a curving blade that sliced toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the blink of an eye, the curving blood-colored light hit Bai Xiaochun, who coughed up a mouthful of blood. And yet, his fist, backed by the full power of his cultivation base, rocketed out.

A boom rang out as Chen Heng was shoved backward by several paces, his face draining of blood. However, Bai Xiaochun wasn't done yet. As of this moment, it seemed he was completely overdrawing on his strength and even his life force... to unleash an explosive attack.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0060 awe-chapter-61

Bai Xiaochun moved so incredibly fast that Chen Heng didn’t have time to react. Punches and kicks instantly turned into a maddening storm of attacks.

Chen Heng’s expression was extremely unsightly as he performed incantation gestures to summon protective shields. Rain pelted down in the jungle, and booms echoed out as he fought with Bai Xiaochun.

The battle so far left Chen Heng dumbfounded. Earlier, he had already acknowledged that this particular Outer Sect disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect was formidable, but it wasn’t until actually fighting that it became clear how much he had underestimated him.

To be able to slaughter over ten of his fellow clan members, including cultivators in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, with seeming ease, indicated he had a high level of skill. That was not something that an ordinary Qi Condensation disciple could do. The Spirit Stream Sect was one of the great sects, so it was expected that their disciples would surpass the local cultivator clans in terms of latent talent, but he had never imagined that the disparity would be like this.

“His fleshly body is too resilient. What body refinement technique does he use? Don’t tell me that his power and speed are both a result of body refinement?!” Chen Heng flicked his sleeve, sending a fog rolling out to defend against Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun ignored any potential injuries as he attacked again. At the same time, Chen Heng’s face grew more and more pale.

“Most terrifying are his powers of recovery! If his cultivation base were at the eighth level of Qi Condensation... I wouldn’t be a match for him at all!” Chen Heng couldn’t imagine how someone could receive so many injuries, and yet still be able to unleash such explosive power. Virtually anyone else who was on the receiving end of such punishment would have long since passed out.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was like an oil lamp running out of oil, just barely holding on.

“I need to get this battle done with and kill him,” Chen Heng thought, eyes glittering coldly. “That way no other complications will arise!” However, it was at this point that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes also glittered, and he suddenly fell back, performing a double-handed incantation gesture; Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning sent a huge cauldron rumbling toward Chen Heng.

Chen Heng’s eyes narrowed as the fog which surrounded him transformed into a huge hand that shot toward the cauldron. The two collided, and the cauldron instantly collapsed, as if it hadn’t been backed by even the smallest bit of power.

Chen Heng instantly realized that he had been fooled, but he didn’t seem fazed at all, and in fact his eyes glinted sharply.

“Red Devil Grand Magic!” he said coolly. Immediately, massive amounts of red light shone out, and his skin turned crimson.

Even as that happened, Bai Xiaochun leaped into the air and swung his left leg toward Chen Heng in a powerful arcing kick which kicked up a huge wind.

Chen Heng chuckled coldly, thrusting his right forearm out to block the kick.

BOOM!

A sound like thunder rang out, accompanied by cracking sounds. Tears streamed down Bai Xiaochun’s face as he staggered back, heart thumping.

“How did this guy get so strong so fast?” he thought. “Red Devil Grand Magic? His skin is red, and now he’s way more powerful!” Bai Xiaochun was in so much pain that his heart was shaking. His left leg was twisted at an odd angle, and although his skin remained intact, the flesh underneath was mangled, and bones were broken. His breathing was ragged, and he was exhausted. Each time his injuries worsened. Bai Xiaochun felt as if he couldn't go on any further. By this point he had come to the realization that his body was constantly fixing itself. The strange regenerative power ensured that even the most serious of injuries were slowly healed. He wasn't sure, but guessed that it might be an outworking of the Undying Live Forever Technique.

Chen Heng’s right arm seemed to be fine, but closer examination would reveal that it was shaking. His skin was even redder than before, and the bones inside were broken.

“You have your body refinement technique, and so does my Luochen Clan!” Chen Heng began to advance with speed that seemed even greater than Bai Xiaochun’s; it was almost like he was a different person, a person with boundless power at his disposal.

In the blink of an eye, fierce fighting was once again underway within the jungle.

Booms rang out constantly. Bai Xiaochun’s right leg was seriously hurt, and the bones of his left leg were broken. He could barely stand straight, and was suffering setback after setback. The sensation of imminent death grew stronger. This Chen Heng was by far the most powerful opponent Bai Xiaochun had ever fought.

Bai Xiaochun eyes were bloodshot as his right hand shot out. Black light shone as the Throat Crushing Grasp was unleashed, like a bolt of black lightning that shot toward Chen Heng’s throat.

Chen Heng’s eyes shone with an intense light when he realized that this was a move he had seen before, and was prepared to face. Red light flashed around him as Bai Xiaochun’s right hand closed in. Chen Heng reached out casually, grabbed Bai Xiaochun’s right hand, then crushed it hard. Cracking sounds rang out as Bai Xiaochun’s hand was completely shattered.

Chen Heng frowned; he hadn’t expected things to be this simple. But then his heart seized as he thought about the vicious tactics Bai Xiaochun had already used in the fighting, and how he would even allow himself to be injured in order to unleash a devastating attack. Chen Heng instantly pushed back, and especially tried to move his neck out of the way.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s left hand shone with black light, shooting past Chen Heng’s neck and latching onto his shoulder.

The power of the Throat Crushing Grasp erupted, and a cracking sound rang out!

Chen Heng’s face was ashen, and sweat was pouring down his face. The bones of his left shoulder instantly shattered, and the intense pain caused him to let out a bellow of rage.

Red light shimmered around him as he unleashed massive power, grabbing Bai Xiaochun’s left hand. Although Bai Xiaochun was inclined to pull his hand back, Chen Heng was too fast, and in an instant, his hand locked onto Bai Xiaochun’s.

“Die!” he howled, eyes bloodshot as he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and then reached out to tap Bai Xiaochun’s forehead.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with a vicious gleam as he suddenly leaned to the side, allowing the bones in his left hand to snap as his right leg shot through the air and slammed into Chen Heng’s body.

Blood sprayed out of Chen Heng’s mouth, and he was sent tumbling backward, with no choice other than to release his grip on Bai Xiaochun. That in turn allowed Bai Xiaochun to fall back at high speed.

Within an instant, roughly thirty meters of space opened up between the two of them. Bai Xiaochun’s hands were both crippled. His right arm was mangled, and although the left one was intact, his twisted fingers were incapable of unleashing the Throat Crushing Grasp.

Both of his legs were shaking. The left one was distorted into an odd shape, and blood soaked his right leg. The kick he had just unleashed had come with a terrible price.

He could barely stand up, and was in fact forced to lean back against one of the towering trees. He bit down on his tongue to force himself from lapsing into unconsciousness. He was now at his very limit. The only limb he could actually move was his left arm. Everything was numb. And yet, he still looked like he wanted to fight.

As for Chen Heng, his eyes were bright red. His left shoulder felt like it was on fire, and he couldn’t even lift his right hand. Several of his ribs were broken, and blood oozed constantly out of his mouth.

“I underestimated you!” he said hoarsely, glaring at Bai Xiaochun. He could never have imagined that with a cultivation base like his own, it would be so difficult to kill the injured Bai Xiaochun. From the look of it, Bai Xiaochun’s body refinement practices had led to some sort of undying secret magic that kept him alive despite such serious injuries.

In fact, to deal with him, Chen Heng had used almost every magical technique at his disposal, even the Red Devil Grand Magic.

“Alright, it's time to end this fight!” Chen Heng took a deep breath. Suddenly, all of the redness in his skin seemed to evaporate, transforming into a mist that rose up into the air. Normal color rapidly returned to Chen Heng’s skin, and he seemed to weaken dramatically. The fight had been a difficult one even for Chen Heng; his opponent’s tenacious desire to stay alive, his shocking restorative powers, and his willingness to sustain damage to inflict fatalities was completely shocking.

“Red Devil Secret Magic, Blood Saber... Attack!” Chen Heng bit down on his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. The blood merged into the blood mist from moments ago, which then roiled and, in the blink of an eye, transformed into a long, blood-colored saber!

The illusory saber was over three meters long and, shockingly, was covered with innumerable faces, all of which were emitting torturous screams. Chen Heng waved his finger, and the blood-colored saber began to move toward Bai Xiaochun!

Utilizing this secret magic caused Chen Heng to sag again in weakness, and he was forced to reach out and support himself on a nearby tree. His face was ashen, and some of his hair had even turned white.

“Die!” he growled, giving Bai Xiaochun an enraged stare.

An unprecedented sensation of crisis exploded up within Bai Xiaochun as he realized that no matter what he tried to do, he would not be able to dodge or evade this blow. He was stuck.

A crevice snaked toward him on the ground, and the tree behind him withered as the long, blood-colored saber rose up high... and then slashed down toward him!

Bai Xiaochun trembled, and his pupils constricted. He didn’t want to die, and in fact was terrified of it. Unfortunately, the regenerative properties of his Undying Live Forever Technique weren’t so heaven-defying that they could keep up with his current injuries. However, even as the blade descended, a sudden bit of inspiration flashed in his mind. Without the slightest hesitation, he waved his left hand, and a black beam of light shot out. In the blink of an eye, it grew larger, right there in front of him, forming into the shape of... a wok!

It was none other than the turtle-wok!

As soon as the wok appeared, the blood-colored blade slashed down onto it, and a deafening boom rang out. The blood-colored blade began to vibrate violently... and then shattered into countless pieces!

As for the turtle-wok, not even the slightest crack appeared on its surface, although the force of the attack transformed it into a black beam of light that shot back inside of Bai Xiaochun.

“Impossible!!” A tremor ran through Chen Heng, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood, an incredulous look on his face. He had already been in a weakened state when unleashing the magic, and now that it was broken, the backlash power slammed into him, instantly evaporating his spiritual power and turning his vision dim. “What... what is that thing!?!?”

“A turtle shell, you bastard!” Bai Xiaochun growled as he stood there, clinging onto life. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and he rocked back and forth as he stood there. He stepped back, sliding down the trunk of the tree into a sitting position, and began to laugh bitterly. “Too bad I don’t have any weapons....”

He could sense his life force fading away, and his vision was swimming. He thought of summoning his wooden sword, but simply didn't have the energy. Calling forth the turtle-wok had taken the last scrap of spiritual power he had. He couldn't even open his bag of holding.

“I don’t care what secrets you hold, once you’re dead, everything you have will belong to me.” Chen Heng said, breathing raggedly. He was also like an oil lamp on the verge of sputtering out, although he was in a slightly better position that Bai Xiaochun. After a few breaths of time passed, he struggled to his feet and produced a long sword from his bag of holding, hefted it, and began to walk toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked at him silently, eyes somewhat blank. He thought back to life in his village, and then he thought about Big Fatty Zhang. He recalled Li Qinghou, the Spirit Stream Sect, and the other amazing people he knew. Du Lingfei. Hou Yunfei. Hou Xiaomei....

Chen Heng slowly approached, then looked down at Bai Xiaochun, who was already emanating a powerful aura of death. He could see that Bai Xiaochun was riddled with wounds, and that he didn’t even have enough spiritual energy to open his bag of holding.

“Remember my name. I’m the person who killed you... Chen Heng of the Luochen Clan.” He raised the sword, which he normally could send flying out with the flick of a sleeve, but now seemed extraordinarily heavy. “It's a wonderful feeling being able to kill a Chosen.”

Chen Heng was so tired that he was on the verge of passing out, but his eyes glinted with cruelty as he stabbed the sword down toward Bai Xiaochun’s chest.

However, even as he did that, Bai Xiaochun suddenly swung his left arm, slamming it into the ground. The bones snapped, and one of them even pierced out through his skin by about three inches.

Then he lurched to his feet, propelling his left arm with the last bit of energy he had. Even as the sword stabbed into his chest, his arm slammed into Chen Heng’s neck, and the bone... pierced directly into his throat.

Then Bai Xiaochun fell to the ground and, energy completely spent, lapsed into total unconsciousness.

A tremor ran through Chen Heng. Everything had happened too quickly, giving him no time to prepare or react, and he had been too exhausted to dodge. Once the bone stabbed into his neck, blood began to pour out onto the ground. He tried to cover the wound, but it did no good. He stared down at his own blood on the jagged bones which protruded from Bai Xiaochun's arm, and couldn’t help but marvel at how ridiculous the situation was. It didn't even seem possible. Eyes flickering with an unyielding gleam, he thought about all of his goals and pursuits in life, and then laughed a bitter laugh.

“That was your dying blow, huh....” He staggered back and toppled to the ground, dead, his eyes staring up into the sky.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0061 awe-chapter-62

Deep within the jungle of the nameless mountain range, the rainfall eventually began to lighten. Around evening, it stopped, and the setting sun just managed to create a little bit of a rainbow.

However, as the sun set, the rainbow gradually faded away.

The jungle was quiet. Even the stench of blood had vanished. However, the corpse-lined path stretching backward bore testament to the deadly fighting which had played out.

As Chen Heng slipped away into death, his eyes continued to shine with an unyielding, incredulous expression.

Next to his corpse, Bai Xiaochun lay still and unmoving. The flame of his life force was roughly ninety percent extinguished, with only a little spark left behind, struggling to stay alive.

Eventually, footsteps could be heard from off in the distance. Someone was walking through the muddy rainwater and fallen leaves, to eventually come to a stop next to Chen Heng.

It was an old man wearing a long black robe. He had flowing white hair, and his face was covered with wrinkles, making him seem profoundly ancient. Apparently, he had lived for so long than an aura of death was already seeping out from him.

“Intense focus has bolstered his soul... he’s dead, and yet his soul hasn’t dispersed. But that won’t last for long.” The man’s voice was raspy, but also vague and bizarre as it echoed out into the jungle. Suddenly, the forehead of Chen Heng’s corpse split open, and a green wisp of qi floated out. It swirled together in midair, forming into the blurry image of a soul, about the size of the palm of a hand.

This was Chen Heng, although his eyes were blank and he was trembling, as if his mind and consciousness were gone.

The old man extended a finger, and Chen Heng’s soul flew toward him and disappeared inside.

After taking away Chen Heng’s soul, the mysterious old man looked over at Bai Xiaochun, mixed emotions playing out on his face. He even seemed to be reminiscing about the past.

“I never imagined that I would once again lay eyes on... the Undying Live Forever Technique....” He closed his eyes for a moment, and then sighed. That sound seemed to transform his surroundings. Time seemed to suddenly flow differently, as if the entire area were being separated from the rest of the world.

The innumerable plants in the area suddenly went still, as if in death, and then transformed into ash.

Chen Heng’s corpse instantly withered up, and within the space of a few breaths of time, was nothing more than a skeleton. Even that turned into dust, which crumbled down into the muddy ground.

Only Bai Xiaochun wasn't affected. In fact, vast amounts of life force poured into him, rapidly healing his various injuries.

The old man stood there with his eyes closed, as motionless as a statue. It almost looked... as if he possessed no aura whatsoever, nor any life force. It was like he didn’t exist at all within the world, a discarnate soul who refused to be reborn.

Meanwhile, in the same moment that Chen Heng died, Patriarch Luochen was back in the Luochen Clan in the Fallenstar Mountains. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and an uneasy feeling filled his heart. He looked around at the clan members around him, and could see that quite a few of the eleven cultivators sent out of the clan had been killed. However, when he saw that Chen Heng’s soul still existed, he felt slightly better.

“They’re only three Outer Sect disciples, how could they have lasted so long...?” he muttered. “So many clan members have been killed. Well, considering the level of Heng’er’s cultivation base, there’s no way they could kill him. Most likely, he’s already wiped them out and is on his way back.” The uneasy feeling still lurked there inside of him, though. Eyes flickering, he sent a few more clan members out to investigate, all of whom were in the seventh level of Qi Condensation.

Having done that, he took a deep breath.

“It doesn’t matter now. The Inverse Blood Grand Magic only needs one more day of work!” Gritting his teeth, he suppressed the uneasiness he felt. He knew that there was no backing out of the plan now, and really no other option than to hold on for another day... then everything would be worth it!

In that same moment, Hou Yunfei was in a valley a bit more than five kilometers away from the border of Patriarch

Luochen’s security spell formation. His face was ashen, and he had reached the point where he couldn’t take another step further. Coughing up a mouthful of blood, he collapsed to the ground, chuckling bitterly.

“Junior Brother Bai... I’m sorry, I can’t save you....” He clenched his hands in anguish and helplessness before passing into unconsciousness.

In another direction was Du Lingfei, her hair disheveled, her skin sallow. Her qi passageways were almost completely destroyed, and she cut a completely different picture than she had in the past, in her peak of beauty.

Her eyes were lustreless, and she looked almost like the walking dead. However, a shocking level of willpower kept her staggering forward, clutching a jade slip in her hand. There was only one thought in her head, a thought that wouldn't leave.

She had to break free and send word to the sect. She had to... save Bai Xiaochun.

She proceeded along, one step after another. When she fell to the ground, she would crawl back to her feet. Her clothing was torn, her veins were bleeding dry, and she could barely see clearly. And yet... she kept moving forward.

Time passed. Du Lingfei had long since forgotten about the injured state of her body. She wasn’t thinking about her own life, nor could she even remember how long she had been walking. She proceeded along until suddenly she experienced a sensation like passing through a sheet of water. In that moment, her eyes began to shine brightly.

“Am I out...?” she murmured through parched, cracked lips. Trembling, she looked at the jade slip clutched in her hands, the jade slip which hadn’t so much as vibrated once during the past half month. But now, it vibrated, as though an invisible connection had suddenly been established... linking her to the sect.

“The Luochen Clan has turned traitor. Elder Brother Feng died in battle. I'm not sure if Elder Brother Hou is still alive, and Junior Brother Bai... drew the enemy away so that we could escape. I am disciple Du Lingfei, and I beg of the sect... to send backup immediately.” As soon as she finished sending the message, Du Lingfei sagged down into a sitting position. Then she turned to look behind her, tears streaming down her face.

She would never forget how Bai Xiaochun had returned to fight, as if he had veins of steel. She would never forget the tragic and moving image of him running out to draw the attention of the Luochen Clan. She would never forget everything that had happened on their journey together.

“Junior Brother Bai, Elder Brother Hou... you have to stay alive....” Du Lingfei wept, her tears falling to the ground in front of her. Eventually, she couldn’t hold on any longer, and collapsed into unconsciousness.

As Du Lingfei was transmitting her message, the Missions Office back on the Fragrant Cloud Peak in the Spirit Stream Sect was as busy as ever. Outer Sect disciples were running back and forth handling various tasks, and deep within the Missions Office itself, there was a middle-aged man in a Daoist robe who was in the middle of maintaining the records about various missions. Arrayed in front of him was a collection of thousands of jade slips, which contained the information of all sect disciples with open missions.

Suddenly, one of the jade slips flickered with light. Expression the same as ever, the middle-aged man waved his hand, causing the jade slip to fly over into his hand. After scanning it with divine sense, his eyes went wide, and he shot to his feet.

“The Luochen Clan has turned traitor!!” he cried, panting. The enormity of such a matter could not be understated. Whether or not it was true or false, he absolutely had to report the matter to his superiors. Holding back such information was a crime punishable by execution, so he didn't dare to dally. He immediately produced a violet jade slip from his robe and transmitted the new intelligence.

The report was instantly sent to the Hall of Justice. Of course, Qian Dajin worked in the Hall of Justice, but he had a very lowly position, and an intelligence report like this was something he didn’t even qualify to look at. Almost as soon as the report arrived at the Hall of Justice, the entire organization sprang into immediate action. After all, the Hall of Justice was tasked with defending the entire Spirit Stream Sect, and the efficiency with which they went about it was shocking.

It only took the time it takes an incense stick to burn to verify the authenticity of the report.

Then, war drums began to sound through the entire south bank. All of the disciples looked around in shock. The Outer Sect disciples didn't know the significance of the war drums, but the Inner Sect disciples on the three mountain peaks all knew, and it caused their expressions to flicker as they looked up from whatever they were doing.

“What happened?”

“When the war drums beat, we can’t return to the Spirit Stream Sect until blood is shed and the enemy clan is exterminated!! Heavens....”

Even as everyone was reeling in shock, the voice of an old man suddenly filled the entire south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect.

“I am Ouyang Jie of the Hall of Justice. All Inner Sect disciples of the south bank’s three mountain peaks are to immediately cancel all previous missions, activities, and secluded meditation sessions. You have twenty breaths of time to gather at the main gate! Tardiness will not be tolerated!”

Even as the words left his mouth, the Inner Sect disciples on Green Crest Peak, Fragrant Cloud Peak, and Violet Cauldron Peak immediately dropped whatever tasks they had at hand. Trembling, but without the slightest hesitation, they sprang into motion.

Even people involved in important tasks didn’t dare to tarry for even a moment. Everyone knew that Ouyang Jie was an elder from the Hall of Justice, and that he was... cold-hearted and merciless!

He had a Daoist name in addition to his given name; he was known as Daoist Jackal. For him to take the lead in a sect affair meant that something completely infuriating had occurred. It meant... that people needed to die. It meant... that a clan needed to be exterminated!

Rumbling sounds filled the air as countless figures appeared, speeding toward the main gate. Soon it became clear that among the three mountains of the south bank, there were at least two thousand Inner Sect disciples. Normally, it was a difficult thing to catch sight of one or two, so the sight of so many left the Outer Sect disciples completely shaken.

There were also several hundred disciples from the Hall of Justice, clad in black robes and led by an old man with bright red hair. That old man radiated intense killing intent, and he was none other than Ouyang Jie.

Soon, over two thousand people were gathered around the main gate, all of whom wore grim and somber expressions.

“The Luochen Clan has turned traitor. The sect leader has ordered that their clan... be exterminated all the way down to the chickens and dogs. Activate the Daoseed Teleportation Portal!” Ouyang Jie waved his sleeve, instantly causing a huge pillar of light to rise up from Mount Daoseed, in the middle of the Spirit Stream Sect.

The light climbed up into the air, transforming into a huge teleportation portal, which instantly enveloped the two thousand disciples. Rumbling could be heard as the teleportation process began.

The Outer Sect disciples of the south bank gasped, and suddenly, they were filled with sensations of deep pride regarding their sect.

Compared to the Spirit Stream Sect, the Luochen Clan was small, with only one Foundation Establishment cultivator. And yet, for the sake of a few Outer Sect disciples, the Spirit Stream Sect had mobilized two thousand individuals. Then there was the violent and powerful Ouyang Jie. All of that... was a mighty threat!

It was a threat to all of the cultivator clans in the territory controlled by the Spirit Stream Sect. The old saying asks, “Why use a battle-axe to kill a chicken?” In this situation, the Spirit Stream Sect provided the answer: “How else do you kill chickens than with battle-axes?!”

This was a sect that wouldn’t hold back any resources, not even when it came to Outer Sect disciples. That in turn caused the Outer Sect disciples’ loyalty toward their sect to reach new heights.

The Spirit Stream Sect had stood strong for ten thousand years, growing from a tiny little organization to its current height. Naturally, there were aspects to it that others would find astonishing!

It was in this moment that, all of a sudden, there on the temple at the very top of Fragrant Cloud Peak, Li Qinghou flew out, face grim, aura murderous. That aura swept out explosively, creating a wild tempest as he shot toward the teleportation portal.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0062 awe-chapter-63

It only took Li Qinghou a moment to reach the teleportation portal, where he hovered like an unsheathed blade, radiating an intense murderous aura.

Ouyang Jie looked over at him, and his pupils constricted slightly. Among the three peak lords on the south bank, Ouyang Jie viewed Li Qinghou as the most important. In fact, he was actually one of the most important people in the entire Spirit Stream Sect.

Not only was he a master apothecary, his profound natural talents were extremely rare. For example, he had only practiced cultivation for about a hundred years, but had already reached late Foundation Establishment. In fact, it was even said that, within the entire sect, he was the most likely candidate to break through from Foundation Establishment and acquire a Gold Core.

“I heard that one of those four Outer Sect disciples is connected to Li Qinghou somehow....” Ouyang Jie thought. At the same time, rumbling could be heard from the spell formation, and countless dazzling beams of light rose up. Instantly, the group of two thousand cultivators, including Li Qinghou, became blurry, and then disappeared altogether.

The journey which had taken Bai Xiaochun and the others several months to complete, occurred in only a few seconds, thanks to the activation of the Spirit Stream Sect’s teleportation portal.

Rumbling like thunder filled the air over Du Lingfei’s unconscious form. The sky dimmed as something like an invisible hand ripped open a huge rift, revealing the image of an enormous spell formation.

It descended rapidly to the ground, causing everything to quake in a fifty kilometer area. Blazing, fiery lines appeared in the ground as the shape and design of the spell formation appeared on the surface of the land.

Within that 50 kilometer area, all grass, rocks, mountains, everything turned into ash, vanishing in an instant. This spell formation was incredibly domineering, and destroyed everything that got in its way.

Du Lingfei was in that area, and immediately fell under the protection of the spell formation, ensuring she wasn’t harmed at all. Even as the land shook, numerous figures came into view.

It took only a moment for the more than two thousand Inner Sect disciples from the south bank to appear. There was still enough teleportation power swirling around them for another teleportation to be carried out, but first, Ouyang Jie and Li Qinghou strode forward to the unconscious Du Lingfei. Several female disciples reached her ahead of them, covering her with a set of spare garments and also administering some medicinal pills. With the influx of spiritual energy, Du Lingfei gradually opened her eyes. Her expression was blank, but when she saw all of the forces from the sect surrounding her, she began to weep, and a feeling of excitement flooded through her.

Furthermore, considering she was an Outer Sect disciple of Fragrant Cloud Peak, when she noticed Peak Lord Li Qinghou standing there, even more tears welled up in her eyes. At the same time, disciples on either side of her helped her to rise to a sitting position.

“Peak Lord, please rescue Junior Brother Bai....” she implored, face ashen.

“What happened to him?!” Li Qinghou said, stepping forward to stand directly in front of Du Lingfei. His eyes burned with fury and deep anxiety.

“Junior Brother Bai... went out on his own to draw the Luochen Clan cultivators away, so that Elder Brother Hou and I could escape. They started chasing after him....” Weeping, she went on to explain the entire situation.

Few of the surrounding two thousand disciples knew Bai Xiaochun, but as they listened to Du Lingfei’s tale, they were visibly moved. The intense and tragic events even caused them to gasp.

They learned about how Feng Yan fell in battle to protect his fellow disciples, and how Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei risked almost certain death to try to escape. They heard about how the Luochen Clan sent out two waves of cultivators in pursuit, including several in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and one in the ninth....

Even these members of the Inner Sect would be hard pressed to make it out alive under such circumstances.

When Du Lingfei talked about Bai Xiaochun, they could sense how devoted and loyal he was. In fact, he was already the type of person who could be considered Chosen.

He had the option of fleeing on his own, but instead returned to save his fellow disciples. He fought enemies far more powerful than himself, then helped carry his two wounded companions for more than half a month, on a journey of nearly 5,000 kilometers.

In the end, he chose to sacrifice himself rather than his principles, all to give his fellow disciples a chance to make it out alive. The result was that Du Lingfei was able to send her message. Were it not for that, the sect might not have learned about the traitorous actions of the Luochen Clan until it was too late.

It didn’t take long before Bai Xiaochun's name had taken root deep within the hearts of the Inner Sect disciples. To them, he was profoundly devoted and loyal, an elegant and even heroic man, someone with veins of steel.

The people from the Hall of Justice were completely shaken. Among their number was Qian Dajin, whose jaw dropped as he heard Du Lingfei’s story. He almost couldn’t believe that the Bai Xiaochun she was talking about was the same person in his mind. His impulsive plotting earlier had left him nervous about possible investigations on the part of the sect. Although he hadn’t been absolutely sure that Bai Xiaochun was the little turtle, in his pettiness, he would rather kill the wrong person accidentally than risk the right person getting away. As of this moment, he breathed a sigh of relief. With Feng Yan being dead, there was no way word would get out.

Even the iron-hearted Ouyang Jie, Daoist Jackal, couldn't help but sigh in response to the tale, and a gleam of admiration appeared in his eyes. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he could tell at a glance that Du Lingfei wasn’t making the story up; everything she had said, although perhaps not completely accurate, was the truth.

“The Spirit Stream Sect cannot permit a disciple such as that to perish in this place!” Ouyang Jie flicked his sleeve and immediately sent several hundred disciples out to search for Hou Yunfei and Bai Xiaochun.

Li Qinghou slowly looked off into the distance, eyes completely bloodshot, heart aching bitterly. Considering what Bai Xiaochun had done here, Li Qinghou suddenly felt as if he had judged him incorrectly. At the same time, he knew that, considering the circumstances, Bai Xiaochun chances of getting out alive... were small, to say the least.

“And I was the one who brought you to this sect....” he thought. His murderous aura exploded out with even more intensity. Taking a step forward, he drew upon some of the remaining teleportation power to suddenly vanish in the direction of the Luochen Clan.

Ouyang Jie sighed. After hearing Du Lingfei’s tale, he knew that the situation did not bode well for Bai Xiaochun. Flickering into motion, he gathered the remaining forces and began another teleportation.

Rumbling echoed out in all directions as Li Qinghou and Ouyang Jie led nearly two thousand disciples to appear in midair above the Luochen Clan mansion in the Fallenstar Mountains.

The cloud layers were ripped apart as the teleportation portal became a powerful attack bearing down with intense energy of heaven and earth. Cries of alarm rang out within the mansion as the spell formation descended upon it.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The spell formation landed, instantly shattering the limestone flooring, transforming it into ash. The mansion itself collapsed into rubble.

Roars of rage echoed out as numerous figures flew out, expressions of fury and hopelessness on their faces.

The guardian stone lions and the fruit trees from the courtyard transformed into puppets that instantly went on the offensive. Li Qinghou was the first person to make a move. He waved his sleeve, causing the lions to explode loudly. As for the fruit trees, they trembled, and the fruit began to fall off their branches. However, even as the fruits fled, they were destroyed.

Rumbling echoed out as the Spirit Stream Sect disciples unleashed mass destruction.

Li Qinghou shot toward the center of the destroyed Luochen Clan mansion. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he waved his finger, summoning a green fireball. His hair flew wildly about him as he then sent the fireball blasting down into the ground.

Flames erupted, smashing into the rubble of the mansion and sweeping it away. The handful of enemy cultivators who had been attacking let out miserable shrieks as they were instantly incinerated.

Next, Li Qinghou lifted his right foot into the air and stamped it down hard. The land shattered, and a huge crevice was ripped open, revealing the necropolis down below.

At almost exactly the same time, a vortex of blood spiraled out, followed by the Luochen Clan’s patriarch.

When the man saw Li Qinghou, his face filled with an expression of despair. The Spirit Stream Sect had arrived too suddenly. The spell formation he was working on was on the cusp of being completed, and had anyone else arrived, he might have been able to delay them for long enough. But unexpectedly, the people who came were none other than Li Qinghou and Ouyang Jie!

The patriarch fell back, crying out miserably, “Flee! Anyone who can escape, get out of here!”

Trembling, the Luochen Clan cultivators in the necropolis scattered in all directions. However, Ouyang Jie’s face was expressionless as he waved his hand, sending the Inner Sect disciples after them in pursuit.

Li Qinghou’s eyes locked onto Patriarch Luochen, and the lake of blood that surrounded him. Ouyang Jie did the same, and then, flames of rage appeared in both mens’ eyes.

“You slaughtered innocent mortals?” Li Qinghou growled. “The heavens cannot tolerate the existence of a clan like yours!” With that, he waved his sleeve, sending a destructive sea of flames out.

At the same time, bloodcurdling screams began to rise up as the Spirit Stream Sect disciples began to slaughter and crush the Luochen Clan cultivators.

Two thousand people versus a few hundred.

Patriarch Luochen could only watch as everyone in his clan was killed, both descendants from his own bloodline, and members of other bloodlines. Screaming miserably, he fled at top speed in an attempt to escape.

However, in that instant, he was overwhelmed by Li Qinghou’s sea of flames. Face extremely grim, Li Qinghou clenched his hand into a fist.

RUMBLE!

Patriarch Luochen’s screams intensified as he erupted into flames. His flesh and blood were incinerated, and in the blink of an eye, he was reduced to nothing more than ash. Li Qinghou... killed him with one attack!

When the surrounding Inner Sect disciples saw that, they gasped in shock. Even Ouyang Jie’s eyes went wide in astonishment.

As Li Qinghou hovered there in midair, he waved his hand again, sending the sea of flames exploding out again. The entire Luochen Clan was engulfed, and everything began to burn. Li Qinghou looked off into the distance, his expression somewhat disconsolate.

Sighing, he said, “Bai Xiaochun, I, Li Qinghou... have let down your Bai Clan.” In his bitterness, he flew off into the distance. He wasn’t willing to entrust the search for Bai Xiaochun to others. If there was even the slightest hope that he was alive, he himself would search for him.

Li Qinghou left, flames rising high into the sky behind him. As for the Inner Sect disciples, expressions of excitement began to appear on their faces. Now more than ever, they realized how powerful and glorious their sect was.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0063 awe-chapter-64

As Ouyang Jie watched Li Qinghou leaving, his voice rang out to the surrounding disciples. “Split up and do everything you can to locate Bai Xiaochun. Whoever finds him will receive a reward of merit points from me personally. If you encounter any surviving Luochen Clan cultivators, kill them!”

Two thousand cultivators spent an entire month searching the 5,000 kilometer area.

They searched virtually every possible location, but no one ever found Bai Xiaochun. However, they did discover the corpses of the Luochen Clan cultivators he had killed. As corpses turned up one after another, the Inner Sect disciples grew more and more shocked.

Virtually all of the Luochen Clan cultivators had been killed with a single blow. The Inner Sect disciples could scarcely imagine how an Outer Sect disciple in the sixth level of Qi Condensation could possibly have done something like that.

Qian Dajin gasped over and over again, and suddenly realized it would actually be much better for him if Bai Xiaochun was dead. He himself was probably not a match for someone so violent and powerful. Li Qinghou’s fury caused him to grow more nervous, and he even began to wail inwardly.

“Dammit!" he thought. "Why didn’t you tell me you had such connections? If you had, I would never have provoked you!”

Eventually they found the corpses of the three disciples who were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and they could only imagine what that bitter, intense battle must have been like. It left them reeling.

Soon everyone came to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun... had most likely been killed in that nameless mountain range. That was a place rife with perilous beasts, and numerous other dangers that could kill a person and leave no corpse behind.

Eventually, they captured the two Luochen Clan disciples that Chen Heng had dispatched after Hou Yunfei and Du Lingfei. When they learned that one of the people chasing Bai Xiaochun had been none other than the Luochen Clan’s crown prince, who was in the ninth level of Qi Condensation, they all resigned themselves to the fact... that Bai Xiaochun really must be dead.

After the month of searching ended, everyone returned to the sect. Hou Yunfei had been found relatively early on, seriously injured, but alive. With the full power of the sect focused on healing him, he ended up being just fine.

Both he and Du Lingfei had performed significant meritorious service for the sect, but that left them with no feeling of excitement. Instead, they felt sadness, and couldn't stop thinking about the events which had occurred.

Both of them wanted to go back to join the search efforts when they were underway, but their injuries were too serious. The only person who refused to give up on searching for Bai Xiaochun was Li Qinghou. He journeyed alone into the nameless mountain range, where he searched for two full months. Other than a few places that even he couldn’t enter, he searched the length and breadth of the mountains. Strangely, even though it seemed clear that Bai Xiaochun had to be in these very mountains, he couldn't find a single trace of him. It was almost as if Bai Xiaochun were currently in some other world.

During the process of the search, he ended up fighting quite a few powerful beasts, and was even injured by some of them. Two months later, it was with great bitterness that he stood in front of a certain tree with a blood-stained scrap of cloth stuck to it.

“If I hadn’t brought you to the sect....” Li Qinghou thought. When he closed his eyes, he recalled the image of Bai Xiaochun there on Mount Hood, looking scared to death of the lightning and thunder. He thought about how frightened he had looked at 10,000 Snakes Valley, about what had happened during the sect competition, and about how he had taken first place in all the stone steles.

He sighed silently, seemingly growing older as he reached out and picked up the bloodstained cloth. He had already picked up seven or eight similar pieces of cloth just like this during his search.

In the end, he left the jungle, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Thus ended the rebellion of the Luochen Clan. The Spirit Stream Sect struck like lightning, completely wiping out the traitors. The matter caused quite a stir in the Eastwood Lower Reaches of the Heavenspan River. In the cultivation world of the Eastwood Continent, which was one of the four great continents, countless cultivator clans and sects learned of the matter. As a result, the awe felt toward the Spirit Stream Sect grew, a sect that was one of the Four Great Sects in the Eastwood Lower Reaches.

After an investigation by the Spirit Stream Sect, they found some clues as to why the Luochen Clan had turned traitor. The bloodline seal was one reason, but there was an even more profound motivation. After piecing together various clues, the vast ramifications left the Spirit Stream Sect shocked.

If they hadn't stopped the matter when they did, the resulting chain reaction would have led to numerous other cultivator clans hearing about the matter and then following along in the rebellion. It would have been almost the same as a powerful enemy invading Spirit Stream Sect territory, and would have led to grave repercussions, potentially even the destabilization of the sect.

The news about the deeds accomplished by Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei quickly spread, as did the stories of Bai Xiaochun nobly sacrificing himself.

The fact that he had refused to abandon his fellow disciples, and had even used himself as bait to lead the enemy away, left many people moved. The cultivation world was full of selfish people; individuals like Bai Xiaochun were not common. The loss of such a disciple left many people, even the Sect Leader and Elders, feeling very aggrieved.

There were other implications that came along with the whole event. However, as more clues came to light, the Spirit Stream Sect only grew more silent. For some unknown reason, they eventually stopped investigating. However, all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators in the sect increased their level of vigilance to a point far beyond normal.

Apparently... a storm was coming.

The south and north banks together had seven peak lords. In addition to that were the sect leader and other elders. After much discussion and research, they came to a unanimous decision.

Du Lingfei, Hou Yunfei, as well as the perished Feng Yan, had all performed meritorious service. As for Bai Xiaochun... he had accomplished a tremendous service beyond the ordinary!

The final decision was explained by Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong. “A storm is coming. The most important thing... is to lift everyone’s spirits. For ten thousand years, the morale of our sect has remained high. Considering the tremendous service Bai Xiaochun has performed, at the cost of his very life, we can only repay his kindness by having a grand funeral. Those who contribute to the sect shall never be forgotten.”

In the following days, although the Spirit Stream Sect didn’t investigate any further into the reasons for the betrayal of the Luochen Clan, they took every opportunity to spread the story of how Bai Xiaochun had sacrificed himself for his fellow disciples, and how he had nobly fought for the sect.

As the story was propagated, more and more disciples from the various mountain peaks on both the south and north banks learned of the name Bai Xiaochun, and what he had done to save his fellow disciples.

Of course, the sect itself wasn’t ambivalent to such a devoted and loyal disciple. Li Qinghou had eradicated an entire clan, and two thousand Inner Sect disciples had been mobilized. Sending such a powerful force to handle the situation was truly like killing a chicken with a battle-axe.

Not only did all the disciples in the sect remember Bai Xiaochun’s name, they were moved by how the sect reacted to the situation. Even though the sect had obviously reacted in such a way intentionally... that reaction was exactly what the disciples expected.

For ten thousand years, that was the unchanging tradition of the Spirit Stream Sect.

Touch one of our disciples, and you will die, no matter how far you run!

When a Spirit Stream Sect disciple went outside of the sect, they were never alone: they were backed by the entire Spirit Stream Sect. The sect was like a shield, eternally there for their protection.

Because of that, the disciples were devoted to their sect, and would expend any and all effort, even give up their lives, to defend it, their home.

That was the mighty Spirit Stream Sect, which had started out ten thousand years ago as a tiny sect with only a few dozen people in it.

In order to determine whether or not Bai Xiaochun was really dead, the Sect Leader asked for help from one of the sect's prime elders, who was adept at divining information from the heavens. Unfortunately, his divination magic did not reveal any hint that Bai Xiaochun was still alive in the world. The only thing he discovered was an aura of death, which seemed to prove that Bai Xiaochun... had died in battle, fighting for the sect.

On a rainy morning a few days later, the mournful tolling of bells could be heard throughout the Spirit Stream Sect. Countless disciples wearing black robes emerged silently from their residences, expressions grief on their faces as they gathered midway up Fragrant Cloud Peak.

There, a gravestone had been erected, with a portrait of Bai Xiaochun on it, smiling happily.

Big Fatty Zhang stood there in the crowd. He glanced at everyone around him, and then looked at the gravestone, and Bai Xiaochun's name. As the rain fell and soaked his clothing, he wept, recalling all of his memories of the past. He thought about how they had eaten the various pilfered spirit treasures, about how they had laughed and joked together, about how they had sold spots in the Outer Sect, and about stealing chickens....

“Ninth Fatty....” Big Fatty Zhang murmured, looking very sad. His heart felt empty, and the pain made the entire world seem dark.

The other fatties from the Ovens, Bai Xiaochun’s Elder Brothers, were all filled with grief, and couldn’t stop crying, including Third Fatty Hei.

Xu Baocai, Chen Zi’ang, Zhao Yiduo and Elders Xu and Zhou, as well as everyone else Bai Xiaochun had come to know since joining the sect, all stood in the crowd, faces filled with grief.

Zhou Xinqi came and stared silently at the gravestone. After hearing the story of what Bai Xiaochun had done, she couldn’t help but think of how zealously he had searched for the chicken thief.

Hou Yunfei came, propped up on the shoulder of Hou Xiaomei. He stood there, fists clenched, shaking in grief.

“Junior Brother Bai....” A bitter smile twisted his face. After returning to the sect, he began spending his days drinking. He just couldn’t forget that moment in which Bai Xiaochun had led all the enemies away, using himself as bait.

More and more people showed up, until the middle section of Fragrant Cloud Peak was densely packed with countless disciples, all silently looking at the gravestone.

At the front of the crowd was Du Lingfei. Her face was pale, and it was impossible to tell the difference between the tears that streaked down her cheeks, and the rainwater. She seemed to be in a daze, and while her face was as beautiful as it had always been, that beauty was now sad and poignant.

“You could have stayed alive... but here I am, and you’re gone....” Du Lingfei’s days had been spent in sorrow and misery recently. She had lost weight, and often dreamed about that moment in which Bai Xiaochun had returned, unshakeable and determined. And then he had left, a scene which left her weeping and wracked with pain.

As the mourning bells tolled, echoing about in all directions, beams of light shot toward the gravestone from all directions. Within them were the seven peak lords, all of the Spirit Stream Sect elders, and even the sect leader. They wore black robes, and as they gathered near the gravestone, their expressions were those of sorrow.

As for Li Qinghou, bitterness and self-reproach filled his heart.

A moment later, the sect leader began to speak, his voice calm and slow.

“Bai Xiaochun was an Outer Sect disciple of Fragrant Cloud Peak in the Spirit Stream Sect. He was a blazing sun in the Dao of medicine, a Chosen among disciples. In his battle against the Luochen Clan, he killed numerous Luochen traitors, and sacrificed himself to save his fellow disciples. He was loyal to his sect, and gave his life in the most tremendous display of meritorious service. Disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect will remember his name for all eternity!”

His voice was filled with grief, and as his voice echoed out, Du Lingfei’s tears flowed even harder. Hou Yunfei, Big Fatty Zhang, and countless other people were all weeping.

“On this day, I confer upon Bai Xiaochun the title of the Spirit Stream Sect Prestige disciple!” In response to the Sect Leader’s words, countless disciples were shaken. To hear the term Prestige disciple left everyone moved.

That position was a matchless honor within the Spirit Stream Sect, and there could only be one Prestige disciple within the sect within any generation. It was a position higher than the Inner Sect, and on equal standing with the Legacy Echelon. The status of Prestige disciple was given to the dead, whereas the Legacy Echelon was for the most powerful among the living.

Throughout the ten-thousand-year history of the Spirit Stream Sect, there had only ever been nine disciples with such a title, each and every one of whom had been conferred with it after dying in battle for the sect. As of this moment, there were now ten such disciples in the history of the sect.

Not a single person present felt the honor was inappropriate. Bai Xiaochun had earned it with his life.

“From the time he joined the sect until he sacrificed his life,” continued the sect leader, “Bai Xiaochun never had a Master. Having given his life for the sect, I refuse to allow him to wander alone in the underworld. Therefore, I shall represent my dead teacher, Daoist Master Spiritsieve, to accept Bai Xiaochun as his apprentice. Henceforth, he can continue to pursue the great Dao in the underworld.” In response to the sect leader’s words, Li Qinghou nodded, pain flickering in his eyes as he looked at the gravestone.

“And now everyone... shall observe a moment of silence!” With that, the sect leader closed his eyes and bowed his head, as did all of the other disciples present.

After a few breaths of time passed, the moment of silence ended. Du Lingfei couldn’t hold her feelings in any longer, and began to wail.

In the same moment that everyone was observing the moment of silence, back in the nameless mountain range, Bai Xiaochun slowly opened his eyes and sneezed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0064 awe-chapter-65

The moment of the sneeze was the same moment that Bai Xiaochun woke up. His mind was still in the same state it had been when he was seriously injured and fallen into a coma, so as soon as he woke up, he subconsciously cradled his left arm and let out a miserable cry. However, as soon as that cry left his lips, he looked down in surprise at his arm, and then at the rest of his body. He began to poke and prod himself, and even opened his garments and looked at his soft, white belly.

“Eee? No injuries?” Suddenly, his eyes flickered with fear as he recalled something that the old folks back in the village used to say. Supposedly, when someone died, their soul would enter the shadows of the underworld. At the moment, he obviously had no injuries, which meant that he must only be a soul.... Shivering, he looked around and realized that everything around him was dead. Even all the plants and grass were withered up. Chen Heng’s corpse was nowhere to be seen.

As he looked around, he also noticed fog everywhere. He couldn’t see much at all, and everything past a certain distance was a complete blur. A faint aura of death pulsed in the area, causing a cold sensation to wash through his body.

“That’s it. It's over.... I was so careful for most of my poor little life, only to end up losing it....” Bai Xiaochun was now even more certain that he was now a lost soul. His face twisted bitterly, and he let out an anguished moan.

“I never even got to give Du Lingfei a chance to pay me back with all her heart.... Elder Brother Hou still has his promise to keep.... People still don’t know that I'm Lord Turtle, and there are still lots of spirit tail chickens to eat in the world. I... I haven’t lived forever yet....” The more he thought about it, the more it hurt inside. Tears began to well up in his eyes.

However, even as he began to wail loudly... someone cleared their throat behind him.

The sound came so suddenly that it startled Bai Xiaochun.

“Who’s there?!” he shrieked, scrambling forward across the ground and then spinning around, a wooden sword appearing in his hand.

He saw an old man standing over by where he had just been laying. He wore a long black robe and looked almost like a corpse as he stared at Bai Xiaochun in a very ghastly manner.

His body radiated a strong aura of death. Coupled with the copious amounts of wrinkles which covered his pale face, he seemed like he had just climbed up out of the grave. He perfectly matched his surroundings, and looked utterly horrifying.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on him, all the hair on his body stood on end, and he suddenly recalled countless scary stories about murderous ghosts. But then he realized that if he himself was dead, then he didn’t have anything to worry about. Sticking his jaw out, he gave a cold harrumph and then slowly rose to his feet.

“Alright then. You’re a ghost. I’m a ghost. Since we’re both dead and both ghosts, then who’s afraid of who, huh?” He walked up to the old man, then circled around him with a low-pitched, quizzical whistle.

“You must be a ghost who lives in these nameless mountains. No need to be nervous. I was just passing through and happened to die. I’ll be on my way in a moment. Ai. I wonder if I can continue to live forever and practice cultivation now that I’ve become a ghost. Maybe I can become a ghost that lives forever.” Suddenly, grief rose up once again in Bai Xiaochun’s heart, and he sighed.

The black-robed old man looked at Bai Xiaochun and frowned. Then, he spoke in a raspy voice: “How come you’re not dead?”

Bai Xiaochun started in surprise, then suddenly seemed to think of something. He bit down hard on his tongue, and when the pain coursed through him, he almost couldn’t believe it. He bit down again, this time until tears poured down his cheeks. His expression lit with delight, and he literally began dancing up and down. He even threw his head back and laughed loudly.

“I'm not dead!! Hahaha! I, Bai Xiaochun, have a matchless cultivation base! I am invincible in heaven and earth. How could I possibly die!?” He was so excited that he reached out to grab the old man’s arm, except that his hand passed right through the man, and grabbed nothing but air. At the same time, his hand suddenly felt extremely cold.

“Uh....” Bai Xiaochun suddenly went stiff all over. He stared blankly at the old man, eyes wide, before screaming and leaping backward. “A ghost!!”

Back when he thought he was dead, he didn’t think much of seeing a ghost. But at the moment, he was terrified, as the stories of murderous ghosts once again began to flash through his mind.

Soon, he reached the area where the fog grew thick, where he encountered some sort of invisible barrier that he could not pass through. Backing up to the barrier, he gripped his little wooden sword and stared at the old man, countless thoughts fluttering through his mind. Finally, a miserable expression filled his face.

“Sir, do you have some unfinished business in life that I could help you take care of...?”

The black-robed old man had a strange expression on his face as he studied Bai Xiaochun. He couldn’t help but muse that the young man standing in front of him seemed a lot different from the steel-veined fighter from before. They almost seemed like two different people. Eventually, a thoughtful expression appeared in his eyes.

“Perhaps only people with personalities like this can truly cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique....” he murmured. Feeling much more at ease, he shook his head and smiled. Then he turned and began to float off into the distance.

“The Undying Live Forever Technique is divided into the Undying Codex and the Live Forever Codex. Each Codex has five volumes... what you are cultivating is the most commonly circulated first volume of the Undying Codex, the Undying Skin. You’ve mastered the Iron Skin, and have made headway with the Bronze Skin!” As the old man floated off, his voice echoed behind him into Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

“The Undying Codex breaks through the five shackles of mortality. The Live Forever Codex unravels the five seals of eternity!

“Work hard at your cultivation. If you can reach the level of Undying Gold Skin, you will make contact with the first shackle of mortality. Whether or not you can break through that shackle will depend on your own good fortune.

“Since we were brought together by fate, I will give you a medicinal pill. Furthermore, to help you make a breakthrough with your Undying Skin, and achieve mastery of the Bronze Skin, I will give you this jade slip. It contains... the second volume of the Undying Codex, the Undying Heavenly King!

"If you succeed with the Undying Live Forever Technique, you can... form a Core!” By this point, the old man was so far away he couldn’t be seen. However, as his voice echoed out, two beams of light shot through the air and came to hover in front of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun watched in shock as the old man left. At this point, he realized that the reason he hadn’t died, and had in fact completely recovered, was because the old man had saved him.

And the reason for that... was because Bai Xiaochun cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique.

Although Bai Xiaochun feared death, he took matters of favors and debts seriously. He knew that he had been injured so badly in the fight that he most likely should have died. A tremor ran through him, and, taking a deep breath, he clasped hands and bowed deeply in the direction the old man had disappeared.

“Senior,” he called out, “many thanks for the kindness you showed in saving my life. May I respectfully ask your name...?”

“I am... the gravekeeper,” the old man replied, his voice faint and ancient, almost as if it were floating through countless years of time.

It was in that exact same moment that cracking sounds could be heard from the fog as it suddenly vanished. The area which had been separated from the rest of the world was now unsealed, and returned to its place. The wind blew, lifting Bai Xiaochun’s long hair as he looked off into the distance.

After a moment passed, he murmured, “The Undying Live Forever Technique.... Five shackles of mortality and five seals of eternity?” This was his first time hearing of such things.

Finally, he took a deep breath and looked over at the medicinal pill and jade slip. He first took the jade slip, scanning it with divine sense. Inside was the second volume of the Undying Codex.

He put the jade slip away and then looked over at the medicinal pill. Although he was already a journeyman apothecary, he was unable to determine the pill’s quality. He took it in hand and began to examine it. He was a cautious person by nature, and he knew that if the old man in the black robe had wished to harm him, he could have done so in a variety of ways. As such, the medicinal pill would most likely bring only benefits, and would not harm him.

Muttering to himself, he looked around, then put the medicinal pill away and began to walk. As he proceeded along, he looked around at the jungle, and sighed emotionally. When he thought about the whole chase and battle with the Luochen Clan cultivators, and the danger that had been involved, he couldn't shake the feeling of fear that remained in his heart.

"I wonder how Elder Sister Du and Elder Brother Hou are doing.... Did they make their escape...?" At the moment, he didn't dare to use his jade slip to try to make contact with the sect. He was worried that the Luochen Clan cultivators might still be around, and would detect the fluctuations of an attempted transmission. That could lead to a big problem. Patting his bag of holding, he produced Feng Yan's windskiff, and after a quick test, confirmed that it was now functional.

His eyes flashed with joy. Although he had his speculations about the current situation, he wasn't anxious to leave the area, so he found a mountain cave where he could rest for a bit. There, he produced his turtle-wok, as well as the medicinal pill given to him by the black-robed old man.

Soon, silver light flashed on the medicinal pill, and three spirit designs could be seen on its surface. Bai Xiaochun picked up the pill, and his eyes gleamed with determination as he popped it into his mouth and swallowed it. Immediately, his body began to thrum, as though a burning fire were giving birth to an indescribable vital energy, which then coursed through him.

He began to shake, and he gritted his teeth, unleashing the Undying Live Forever Technique. Then, he slapped himself, revealing that his skin was no longer pitch black, but instead, now contained a bit of bronze. That bronze color was reaching the point where he almost looked like a statue made of the stuff.

The power inside of him grew more and more intense, and he felt stronger than ever.

However, the energy of the medicine had not been exhausted. After performing the threefold spirit enhancement, the medicinal pill had reached an incredible level of quality. Even in the moment in which his skin was completely bronze, cracking sounds rang out from within him, as if something were breaking.

Lines spread out rapidly across the surface of his skin, constantly increasing in number until they covered his entire body. An intense pain wracked him, but he endured, and soon, those lines began to turn silver!

The Undying Skin was broken up into the levels of Iron, Bronze, Silver, and Gold!

Even the black-robed old man could never have anticipated that the medicinal pill he gave to Bai Xiaochun would receive a spirit enhancement, and would thus enable him to break through not just into the Bronze Skin level, but past it.

Rumbling sounds echoed out from inside Bai Xiaochun for several days. More and more cracks appeared on his skin, and soon, pieces of skin began to fall off, almost as if he were molting. Furthermore, every falling piece revealed shining silver beneath it.

After ten days, the last bit of skin had fallen off. He was now completely silver, and although it was a dull silver color, when he opened his eyes, they shone with a bright silver glow.

He suddenly burst into motion, causing a shocking boom to ring out. He was now at least twice as fast as he had been before!

His eyes shone with joy as his right hand clenched into a fist and slammed into a nearby boulder. The boulder instantly shattered, not into large chunks, but into dust!

This level of power exceeded his previous level by several times!

Bai Xiaochun was panting excitedly. As of this moment, he was confident that if he fought Chen Heng again, the battle definitely wouldn’t be as bitter.

After some more tests, something even more shocking was revealed. His defensive levels with the Undying Silver Skin were such that even his wooden sword with the threefold spirit enhancement was incapable of even scratching it.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with excitement. After ceasing the operation of the Undying Live Forever Technique, his body returned to its normal pure and fair state. He changed his clothes, then began to speed off into the distance, looking very pleased with himself.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0065 awe-chapter-66

After traveling through the jungle for a bit, Bai Xiaochun started noticing clues that told the story of what had occurred. He quickly became convinced that his suppositions were correct. After emerging from the nameless mountains, he pushed on at top speed for several days until he was back in the Fallenstar Mountains, where he discovered the ruins of the Luochen Clan. “It seems Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei really did get word back to the sect.” When he thought back to the bitter events he had lived through, he sighed, then turned and leaped back up onto the windskiff. Sitting down cross-legged, he set it whooshing off into the distance.

“Back to the sect!” he declared, eyes shining with anticipation. Then he realized that he most certainly had performed meritorious service for the sect, and would surely be handsomely rewarded when he got back.

That got him even more excited. As he traveled along, he turned his attention to his bag of holding. As he sifted through and organized all of the other bags of holding he had collected from the Luochen Clan cultivators, he found quite a few random items inside, as well as spirit stones.

In one bag of holding, although he had forgotten who it had originally belonged to, he found the most valuable of all the items. It was a seed, roughly the size of a human fist. It pulsed, almost like a beating heart, as though it contained something alive. However, the beating was growing weaker and weaker.

After a bit of thought, Bai Xiaochun’s skill with plants and vegetation led him to a shocking conclusion. This was a valuable and legendary spirit seed, which had supposedly become extinct long ago. It was known as a Beastbirth Seed!

According to the legends, if it absorbed another spirit creature’s quintessence, it would be able to naturally reproduce that very same spirit creature. To those powerful beasts which had difficulty reproducing, Beastbirth Seeds like this were virtually priceless.

It was the same for cultivators who had powerful spirit creature pets. Cultivators like that all thirsted to possess successive generations of their powerful spirit creatures. Unfortunately, they were usually limited to a single pet, which meant that Beastbirth Seeds were incredibly valuable to them.

It was impossible to say how the enemy Luochen Clan cultivator had come to possess such a valuable item. Presumably, it was some type of good fortune that person had come across. After all, the Luochen Clan had been located in the Fallenstar Mountains, a place... of boundless mysteries.

After some more thought, Bai Xiaochun came to the conclusion that whichever Luochen Clan cultivator discovered the Beastbirth Seed likely didn’t know what it was, which would explain why it hadn’t been maintained properly.

Along the way, Bai Xiaochun picked up some wood which was infused with spiritual energy. After carving it into a little box, he carefully placed the Beastbirth Seed into it, where upon the seed’s life force fluctuations gradually stabilized.

Bai Xiaochun put the wooden box away and took a deep breath. Then, he sent the windskiff speeding over the horizon, following the same path they had originally taken, to make his way closer and closer to the Spirit Stream Sect.

A month passed by quickly enough. On the original trip, they hadn’t possessed very many spirit stones, and thus had only used the windskiff at night. But now, Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding was bulging with spirit stones, and he wasn't worried at all about wasting them. Therefore, it only took a month before the Spirit Stream Sect’s south bank gate came into view.

“It’s been more than half a year since I left. Finally, I'm back.” Bai Xiaochun stood atop the windskiff, hair whipping in the wind, looking every bit like a powerful master. However, he suddenly decided that it was the wrong image, and quickly changed back into the dilapidated, blood-stained Outer Sect disciple’s robe that he had worn during his desperate battle with the Luochen Clan.

Now he looked like someone who had been willing to fight to the death for the sect. Upon his return, the bloodstains on his garments, and the various places where the cloth had been ripped and punctured, would bear clear witness to the dangerous crises he had faced.

Feeling very pleased, he sent the windskiff even closer to the sect. However, just when he was about to cross the border, an invisible barrier appeared, sending the windskiff bouncing backward.

“Huh?” he thought. The force of the rebound almost knocked him off the Windskiff.

It was at this point that a beam of light suddenly shot toward him from the main gate. A young man appeared, expression placid as he looked at Bai Xiaochun.

“Unknown Fellow Daoist, what brings you to the Spirit Stream Sect?” Even as the words left his mouth, he looked at the windskiff, and then at Bai Xiaochun’s clothes, and his brow furrowed. “You have a Spirit Stream Sect windskiff, and you’re wearing the robes of an Outer Sect disciple? Plus the main gate of the Spirit Stream Sect prevented you from entering?! Who are you?!”

The young man’s eyes glittered coldly as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, his cultivation base surged with the fluctuations of the eighth level of Qi Condensation.

Bai Xiaochun backed up, looking at the shield in confusion.

“Elder Brother,” he said, “what’s going on? Why can’t I enter the sect? I'm Outer Sect disciple Bai Xiaochun from Fragrant Cloud Peak!”

The young man frowned, and just when he was about to say something, he started in surprise.

“Hold on, you’re Bai Xiaochun?” The more he studied Bai Xiaochun, the more familiar he looked. He had attended Bai Xiaochun’s funeral service, in which his portrait had been on display above his gravestone. A tremor ran through the young man, and when he realized that Bai Xiaochun’s garments were stained with blood, he gasped. “You’re... you’re not dead?!?!”

“I’m not dead at all!” Even as Bai Xiaochun stared in surprise, the young man excitedly pulled out a jade slip and sent a message back to the sect.

As the news about Bai Xiaochun was being sent back, Li Qinghou was in secluded meditation on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and a tremor ran through him.

At the same time, the news was passed to the sect leader, whose jaw dropped. He immediately sent a stream of divine sense out to the main gate of the south bank, and when he saw Bai Xiaochun, he was first shocked, then delighted. He immediately began to send notifications out into the sect.

It only took a few breaths of time for gasps of disbelief to begin to rise up. The collective sound was so loud that it was even faintly audible outside of the main gate. Furthermore, bells began to toll.

“Bai Xiaochun? Didn’t he die? How could he be alive?!?!”

Countless people began to fly out from within the sect. Somewhat surprisingly, the very first in line was Hou Yunfei. When he emerged from the main gate and saw Bai Xiaochun, an expression of disbelief appeared on his face. After the deadly chase they had both participated in, he never wanted to believe that Bai Xiaochun was actually dead. However, deep in his heart, he was sure that no disciple could have been made it out of such a bitter situation.

Now, he was so excited he began to cry.

“Junior Brother Bai!!” he cried. Laughing, he rushed forward and embraced Bai Xiaochun.

“Elder Brother Hou....” Bai Xiaochun replied, blinking. By this point, he realized that the sect had thought him to be dead. He looked at Hou Yunfei, eyes brimming with happiness.

“Come on, let's get back to the sect!” Hou Yunfei said excitedly. He grabbed Bai Xiaochun and immediately headed back through the main gate. With Hou Yunfei there, Bai Xiaochun could now enter the sect. As for the young man from earlier, he followed along, clearly shaken. He had personally participated in the extermination of the Luochen Clan, and had seen the evidence of the battle fought by Bai Xiaochun, including the mangled corpses of the Luochen Clan cultivators. To see that Bai Xiaochun had returned alive left him deeply astonished.

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun walked through the front gate, more people began to rush toward him from all directions.

“Ninth Fatty?!” Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, and the other Fatty Elder Brothers from the servants district were so happy they were shaking. That was especially true of Big Fatty Zhang, who gave Bai Xiaochun a big bear hug, tears streaming down his face.

Bai Xiaochun was moved. Seeing how many people were crowding around him, he suddenly felt as if everything he’d done really had been worth it.

Then, a beam of light flew over, which was Li Qinghou, who had an incredulous look on his face as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. In his hands was a bag, within which were all the bloodstained scraps of clothing he had gathered up when searching for Bai Xiaochun.

He more than anyone understood the grave and deadly peril Bai Xiaochun had faced.

Bai Xiaochun hurried forward, clasping hands and bowing to Li Qinghou. “Greetings, Peak Lord!”

Li Qinghou was normally a very calm person, but right now he couldn't stop himself from trembling. Reaching out, he placed his hand on Bai Xiaochun’s head and said, “I'm just glad you’re alive,” Li Qinghou said. “Just glad you’re alive.”

“This is my home!” Bai Xiaochun said, puffing his chest out. “I’m willing to go through hell or high water for the sect!” Then he waved his sleeve, deliberately revealing the numerous blood-stained holes in it.

People continued to stream over from all three of the south bank’s mountain peaks. Everyone wanted to see Bai Xiaochun, and when they saw his dilapidated, blood-stained clothing, they were shocked.

That was especially true when people began to spread the words he had just spoken. Everyone was shaken, and when they looked at Bai Xiaochun, in their hearts they felt... that he was a true Chosen of the sect.

As the crowd built, the weeping voice of a young woman could be heard. It was none other than Du Lingfei. She had spent the recent days awash with tears, to the point where she had even lost weight. When she heard people saying that Bai Xiaochun had returned, her mind began to thrum, and she instantly dropped everything and raced over.

When she actually laid eyes on Bai Xiaochun, even more tears began to flow. She hurried over and wrapped her arms around him, crying and laughing and the same time. She almost didn't seem to dare to believe that what she was seeing was true. In response, Bai Xiaochun felt a warm sensation in his heart.

His hands almost began to move in the direction of certain bulging areas of her clothing, but then he remembered that there were lots of people watching, and he held back.

“It’s like I said, Elder Sister Du,” he said coolly, lifting his chin, “if I, Bai Xiaochun, have only one breath of air left, I would never let anyone harm you.” As the sappy words left his mouth, he seemed like he was looking down on the entire world.

However, Du Lingfei went a bit limp, and deep within her eyes, the hidden emotions therein turned even sweeter than before.

People from the Hall of Justice were also there, led by Ouyang Jie. When he saw Bai Xiaochun, he looked shocked for a moment, but then profoundly pleased. That was especially true when he saw Bai Xiaochun’s tattered state, and then heard the words he had just spoken to Li Qinghou, upon which he nodded his head.

“Bai Xiaochun, I am Ouyang Jie from the Hall of Justice.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the words ‘Hall of Justice’, his heart thumped, but then he thought back to the incredible service he had performed. Chest puffed out just like before, he clasped hands respectfully to Ouyang Jie.

Ouyang Jie rarely smiled, but he was smiling now as he said, “Why don’t you come back with me to see the sect leader and talk about what happened with the Luochen Clan?”

He waved his finger in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, causing a spirit fog to appear beneath his feet, which sent him flying off into the distance with Ouyang Jie.

Li Qinghou looked profoundly glad as he transformed into a beam of light that also shot away with them.

As for all the other disciples, they watched Bai Xiaochun leave, and most heaved surprised sighs, and began to discuss the matter amongst themselves as they dispersed. Of course, the news about Bai Xiaochun being alive spread rapidly.

Eventually, virtually everyone in the Spirit Stream Sect came to know of the matter. Most people were very happy, but back in his immortal’s cave, Qian Dajin was shaking, and a look of terror could be seen on his face.

“Dammit, I can't believe he's not dead!! How could he have escaped from such deadly pursuit!?

“He probably doesn’t know that I’m the one who arranged for him to go on that mission though.... Right? There’s no way he could know....” Various expressions flashed across Qian Dajin’s face. Finally, he sighed, thinking about all the possible bad things that could happen.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0066 awe-chapter-67

The Spirit Stream Sect had eight mountain peaks. Four were on the north bank, three were on the south bank, and one was in the middle.... That was Mount Daoseed, which was the public seat of the sect’s power. Normally, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong would handle sect affairs from that very location.

Currently, bells were tolling as the Lords of the various mountain peaks of the north and south bank sat tall and straight in the main temple hall. The sect leader was also there, sitting in the center position.

Soon, Li Qinghou and Ouyang Jie arrived with Bai Xiaochun. They left Bai Xiaochun outside of the temple hall, telling him to wait there as they went in.

There were four disciples stationed as guards outside the temple, who cast curious glances Bai Xiaochun’s way.

Bai Xiaochun smiled back at them. This was his first time coming to this place; the spiritual energy was abundant, and the fragrant aroma of plants and flowers filled the air. There were no extraneous sounds in the air; everything was calm and quiet, much different than Fragrant Cloud Peak.

This was a very important place in the sect, and normally, any disciple who came here would act very cautious and discreet. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't seem to feel any pressure at all, and stood there looking very much at ease.

The four disciples couldn’t help but sigh at this, and muse that Bai Xiaochun really did deserve to be known as a big shot in the sect, someone who had performed an incredible service. After all, ordinary people could never act so casually in a place like this.

The truth was that although Bai Xiaochun feared death, after considering the meritorious service he had performed, he knew that he wouldn’t be dying here. Therefore, it was only natural that he wouldn't be afraid. He stuck out his chest, heart filled with anticipation over what his reward might be.

“Considering the level of service I provided for the sect, they’ll have to give me a medicinal pill to increase my longevity by a hundred years. They’ll most likely give me 1,000,000 merit points too, and probably an incredible immortal’s cave. I'm sure to be promoted to the Inner Sect as well. Hahaha.” The more he thought about it, the more excited he got. After a long moment passed, however, no word came calling him into the temple.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. He continued to wait until he was yawning before, finally, a voice spoke in a somewhat begrudging tone.

“Bai Xiaochun, come in.”

His spirits instantly lifted. Taking a deep breath, he tried to look like the picture of a disciple who would go through hell or high water for his sect. Striding into the main temple, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Disciple Bai Xiaochun from Fragrant Cloud Peak, at your service. Greetings, Sect Leader. Greetings, other Senior members of the sect.”

After offering formal greetings, Bai Xiaochun looked up. He immediately caught sight of an old man sitting in the middle of the group. He looked threatening without being angry, and wore a long white robe. His cultivation base was completely unreadable.

He was surrounded by eight others, a group of six men and two women. Li Qinghou and Ouyang Jie were among them, and all of them seemed to be measuring up this Bai Xiaochun who had somehow returned alive.

Their eyes lingered on his garments. Considering the power of their eyesight, it was instantly obvious to them that Bai Xiaochun’s clothing had not been intentionally torn, but that he had truly experienced a deadly battle.

They also noticed how pure and fair he seemed. He spoke courteously, and was neither haughty nor overly humble. From the expression on his face, he seemed completely at ease.

Although none of them reacted at all to what they were seeing, inwardly, their impressions of Bai Xiaochun improved even more. However, a few were still somewhat suspicious of exactly what had occurred.

Li Qinghou looked at Bai Xiaochun and then slowly said, “Bai Xiaochun, please explain in detail everything involved with the mission to the Luochen Clan, from start to finish.”

Looking very serious, Bai Xiaochun calmly recounted everything that had occurred, from beginning to end. He left out the incident with the black-robed old man; that was his secret to keep.

He wove Feng Yan sacrificing himself into the story, as well as the various difficulties they had faced. He was an intelligent person, so he didn’t mention anything at all of what he had done that was worthy of merit, but instead continued to praise Feng Yan, Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei.

“It’s all my fault for being useless,” he said. “Elder Brother Feng died trying to save me. It’s all my fault....”

The more he went on in this way, the more the sect leader and the others’ eyes shone with approval. Of course, these people had practiced cultivation for many years, and were as crafty as devils. From the moment Bai Xiaochun came back wearing that one particular set of clothing, they could tell what type of person he was. Even so, their praise only continued to grow.

“After he lost consciousness, he just woke up all healed?” the sect leader thought, smiling. He didn’t mind this version of Bai Xiaochun’s explanation. After all, disciples always had secrets to maintain. It was best for them to feel like they belonged in the sect, and exercising absolute control of every aspect of their lives would only serve to have the opposite effect.

After the story was finished, the sect leader said, “Bai Xiaochun, your reward was already announced several months ago. Back then, you became the Spirit Stream Sect's... Prestige disciple!”

When the Sect Leader actually spoke the words ‘Prestige disciple’, a strange feeling rose up in his heart. After all, this was the first time there had ever been a living Prestige disciple.

That was one of the reasons why the discussion had been so difficult earlier. The position of Prestige disciple was extremely important, and had previously only been conferred upon people who had died in battle, never living disciples. And yet, here Bai Xiaochun was right in front of them, healthy and no worse for wear....

That was one reason why all of them had been so shocked to hear the news that he was alive.

Furthermore, it was a status that could not just be stripped away. The funeral service had been carried out, and the meritorious service performed. The group had been somewhat perplexed about what to do, and thus had left Bai Xiaochun waiting outside for some time.

After much discussion, they decided that there was no way to change what had already been announced. In accordance with the sect rules, they would allow Bai Xiaochun to keep that position.

“Prestige disciple?” Bai Xiaochun asked, looking shocked. He had never heard of any such title before, so he simply stood there, looking blankly at the sect leader and the other Senior sect members. Although all of them had strange expressions on their faces, they didn't say anything else regarding a reward.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hold back from asking, “Uh... that’s it?”

“That’s it,” replied the Sect Leader, smiling.

Bai Xiaochun instantly started to get nervous, and then prepared to start explaining how difficult the journey had been, how many times he had almost died. Before he could start, Li Qinghou, who knew Bai Xiaochun better than anyone, cleared his throat and said, “Hurry up and thank the sect leader. The title of Prestige disciple has only been given out ten times throughout the history of the Spirit Stream

Sect. You are the only person to get it within the past thousand years.

“As the Prestige disciple, you rank higher than the Inner Sect, and have the most prestigious glory in the entire Spirit Stream Sect. Your descendants will all have special access to sect resources, and will be Inner Sect disciples from birth. The Spirit Stream Sect will protect your bloodline for all eternity!

“Currently, there are nine great clans who are part of the Spirit Stream Sect, and all of them are Prestige clans. It’s a truly glorious and honorable position.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the explanation, a somewhat sad expression appeared on his face. His spirits suddenly sank, and he looked miserably at Li Qinghou, then back at the sect leader.

He wasn’t sure what to say. Although the position of Prestige disciple seemed incredible, the truth was that it had been created for the descendants of people who had died. But he was still alive.... Sadly, Bai Xiaochun was now in the unfortunate position of being jealous of his own progeny.

“Thanks... Sect leader....” he said sadly, lacking the energy to even speak.

Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong cleared his throat awkwardly. “From this day on, you may address me as Elder Brother sect leader.”

The matter of having Bai Xiaochun become the apprentice of his own master had been made because he assumed Bai Xiaochun had sacrificed his life. But now that he was alive, it led to a very awkward situation. The sect leader, despite having many years of life under his belt, would now have a twenty-year-old kid calling him Elder Brother. He couldn’t help but sigh inwardly.

“Really?” Bai Xiaochun asked, his eyes widening. All of a sudden, he felt much, much better. He had entered the temple hall with high expectations, only to have them cruelly crushed. That led to him being in a horrible mood. But now, things had changed.

“Based on the meritorious service you performed, and considering that you had no formal Master, I took the responsibility to accept you as an apprentice of my own Master. Therefore, from now on you can call me Elder Brother.” The Sect Leader couldn’t feel more awkward.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his eyes filled with excitement. He suddenly was filled with the sensation that the sect truly had treated him well. The sect leader’s Master would most definitely be ranked as a prime elder in the sect, which caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to radiate with excitement.

“From now on,” he thought, “nobody will dare to bully me, not with an awesome Master like that! Hahaha!!” Heart leaping with joy, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Many thanks, Elder Brother sect leader,” he said, sounding elated. “Elder Brother sect leader, where exactly is our Master? I would love to go pay my respects.”

A strange expression could be seen on the sect leader’s face as he slowly said, “There’s no hurry in that. There was a portrait made of him before he passed away in meditation, which was enshrined on the back side of the mountain. I've already made arrangements for some people to escort you over there shortly.”

Bai Xiaochun felt as if he were being struck by lightning. “Passed away in meditation.... Enshrined on the back side of the mountain....”

His jaw dropped as the words he had just spoken echoed in his mind. After a long moment, he pulled himself together.... The Master he had become apprenticed to... had already passed away.

“I....” Bai Xiaochun was now starting to seethe with anger, and his mind was buzzing. Once again his heart sank, and he wanted to cry, although no tears would come. It was in a virtual daze that he allowed himself to be led to the rear of the mountain, where he paid formal respects to the portrait of his Master. Afterward, he left Mount Daoseed and returned to Fragrant Cloud Peak.

On Fragrant Cloud Peak, numerous disciples hurried over to offer greetings. Curious expressions could be seen in their eyes, and someone even kindly took him over to look at his own gravestone.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the gravestone, everything seemed to go black.

Eventually, he found himself back in his courtyard, sitting blankly in his log cabin, rage building up within him. “I... I became the apprentice of a painting....”

Several days later, he was still there, looking miserable. Half a month passed before he managed to collect himself.

Sighing miserably, he left his residence to look for Big Fatty Zhang, to reminisce about the past. However, as soon as he walked out, he ran into an Outer Sect disciple who instantly clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Greetings, Sect Uncle Bai.”

Bai Xiaochun took a few more steps, then stopped and turned around, eyes shining as he grabbed the Outer Sect disciple and pulled him forward.

“What did you just call me?”

“Sect Uncle Bai!” the Outer Sect disciple instantly replied. “Sir, you’re the Junior Brother of the sect leader. D-disciple would naturally call you Sect Uncle Bai!”

Bai Xiaochun’s fists loosened, and his eyes began to shine even more brightly. His heart also started pounding. This new status of his wasn’t all that bad after all. He had a terrifying level of seniority....

Licking his lips, he began to laugh, which frightened the Outer Sect disciple so much that he started to edge backward, unsure of what madness had struck Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly stopped laughing. Clearing his throat, he put on the air of a Senior sect member and nodded slightly at the Outer Sect disciple. Instead of going to look for Big Fatty Zhang, it was with keen anticipation that he headed toward the Missions Office.

Because... that was where the most people would be.

Meanwhile, Li Qinghou had returned to Fragrant Cloud Peak, and was in secluded meditation. After seating himself cross-legged, he thought for a bit, and then waved his sleeve. Expression serious, he began to concoct pills.

“Xiaochun is stubborn and mischievous. I need to prepare a life-saving magical item for him. Unfortunately, I'm not very good at equipment forging, but I can make a batch of Nine Ultimates Pills to trade with the Pill Stream Sect.... When they find out I'm preparing a magical item for a Qi Condensation disciple, and a younger relative at that, they’ll definitely rip me off.” Li Qinghou shook his head, but didn’t mind. In order to concoct Nine Ultimates Pills, he would have to use some of his own heart-blood, but when the thought about how close Bai Xiaochun had come to dying, he settled his qi, cleared his mind, and began preparations to start concocting.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0067 awe-chapter-68

Chapter 68: Sect Nephew, Don’t Rush Off!

Bai Xiaochun was the type of person who liked to find the fun in anything.... Now that he had discovered the joy in being the Junior Brother of the sect leader, he couldn't be more happy. He strutted along the mountain paths of the sect until he saw the Missions Office off in the distance.

Clearing his throat, he straightened his garments and assumed the air of a Senior member of the sect. Sticking his chin up, he clasped his hands behind his back and sauntered forward.

The Missions Office was one of the busiest places in the sect, and today it was as packed as usual. The clamor of Outer Sect disciples coming and going could be heard from quite a distance away.

When Bai Xiaochun arrived, he stood there with a benevolent smile on his face, looking around at all the Outer Sect disciples.

Almost as soon as he appeared, people noticed, and the disciples nearest to him, who were in the middle of discussing various mission-related topics, suddenly gaped.

“That’s... that’s Sect Uncle Bai! Greetings, Sect Uncle Bai!”

Clasping hands in his direction, they called out, “Greetings, Sect Uncle Bai!”

After hearing them, more people looked over, and soon, virtually all of the Outer Sect disciples in the area were clasping hands in greeting.

Bursting with joy at hearing everyone call him Sect Uncle Bai, he strode forward, smiling, hands clasped behind his back as he said, “Keep up the good work, everyone.”

The surrounding disciples looked at him enviously and began to murmur among themselves.

“Wow, Sect Uncle Bai is the sect leader’s Junior Brother....”

There were a few honor guards stationed at the Missions Office, and when they saw Bai Xiaochun walking up, they hastily rose to their feet and clasped hands in greeting. Virtually the entire Missions Office lurched to a halt as everyone turned to look. Bai Xiaochun was only getting more exciting.

“Carry on, everyone,” he said. “There’s no need to worry about me. I’m just here on behalf of Elder Brother sect leader to inspect the Outer Sect disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect.” Happiness blossomed in the depths of his heart. In response to his words, the surrounding disciples once again clasped hands, and even the elders from the Missions Office came out and nodded politely to him.

However... although Bai Xiaochun had clearly told them not to pay him any heed, he didn't leave. He strolled through the crowd, nodding to those he recognized and reveling in their calls of ‘Sect Uncle Bai.’ Some of the disciples even said it ten times....

Soon, strange looks appeared on their faces as they realized that apparently, Bai Xiaochun had actually come to hear them call him Sect Uncle Bai.... In the end, he decided not to push things too far. Waving at everyone, he swaggered away, and soon the Missions Office returned to its normal state of affairs.

“What an awesome status,” he thought, his eyes shining. Not only did he feel incredibly happy, most importantly, he could tell that his status was vastly removed from everyone else.

“Prestige disciple. Junior Brother of the sect leader. Might as well just say that nobody in the sect will ever dare to provoke me, right?” Having reached this point in his train of thoughts, Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily and hurried off in the direction of the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion.

The 10,000 Medicines Pavilion... was also packed.

It didn’t take long for him to get there, and when he did, he looked up at the ten stone steles and listened to everyone call him Sect Uncle Bai. He stood there for quite a while, sighing, until strange expressions began to appear on the faces of the disciples. Reluctantly, he left. By that time, evening was falling, but he didn't feel tired at all, and went over to one of the locations where a lot of Outer Sect disciples resided.

Xu Baocai had just stepped out, and when he saw Bai Xiaochun, he immediately clasped hands.

Bai Xiaochun thumped Xu Baocai on the shoulder and then spoke in a wise, reprimanding tone. “Ah, it’s you, Little Treasure! After all the time I’ve been gone, you haven’t made much progress with your cultivation base! We can’t have that! You need to work hard at your cultivation!”

Xu Baocai’s jaw dropped, and he blinked. His heart trembled a bit after hearing Bai Xiaochun call him ‘Little Treasure’. At this age, only his father would call him something like that, and even then, only in private. Despite feeling a bit odd, he didn't dare to say anything, and merely nodded in assent.

“I... um, I mean, as an important person like myself....” Bai Xiaochun suddenly realized that with a position like his, it would be improper to simply refer to himself as “I”, and so he decided to try to make himself sound like an important person, like Li Qinghou. He cleared his throat. Clasping his hands behind his back, he stuck his jaw out and said, “As an important person like myself, I'm not very familiar with this area. Could you show me around a bit?”

Xu Baocai had no choice but to immediately begin to show Bai Xiaochun around.

More and more disciples were returning home, and when they caught sight Bai Xiaochun, they looked a bit surprised. Many of them had already seen him earlier at the Missions Office and the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion. Seeing him here caused them to exchange quizzical glances. However, they had no other option than to clasp hands and offer greetings.

Bai Xiaochun once again revelled in the glory of this status. Joy surged in his heart at the sight of one Outer Sect disciple after another offering greetings. It was late at night before he finally left, feeling very pleased with himself.

As he walked along, he saw the spirit tail chicken farm, and decided to stop by. Before long, calls of ‘Sect Uncle Bai’ could be heard. When he left, he held two spirit tail chickens in his hands.

“Ah, the perks of having status. When I wanted to eat chickens before, I had to steal them. Now I can just take them openly. Who would dare to provoke me now, huh? My Elder Brother is the sect leader!” Bai Xiaochun hummed a little tune as he strolled back to his residence, emanating an air of pride and complacency.

Early the next morning, when the sun had just risen, Bai Xiaochun crawled out of bed, feeling in very high spirits. Straightening his clothes, he looked at himself in his copper mirror and selected the best pose he could come up with, then stepped out.

Then he went about doing things in a very serious way, as if it were... his job....

He didn't go to the Missions Office, but instead, visited many other locations on Fragrant Cloud Peak. He even went to watch the fighting competition....

Throughout the day, he heard countless people call him Sect Uncle Bai. To him, it was almost as if he had become an Immortal. His spirits were so high he nearly burst. And then... the third day arrived. Then the fourth, and the fifth....

He strolled around the sect for more than ten days in a row. By that point, virtually all of the Outer Sect disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak had called him Sect Uncle Bai, and were on the verge of going crazy. To call a kid like him Sect Uncle might be fine if it only happened once. But the more they had to call it out, the worse they felt.

Bai Xiaochun's days were long and fulfilling, and he especially liked it when he ran into people he knew. He would quickly hurry over and call out a greeting....

One day he saw Zhao Yiduo. Eyes shining, he hurried over and grabbed his arm and said, “Sect Nephew Yiduo, long time no see! Don’t rush off!”

When Zhao Yiduo heard the term ‘Sect Nephew’, his face twitched. “Sect Uncle Bai, we’ve... we’ve run into each other several times in the past few days....”

Bai Xiaochun blinked, then cleared his throat. It was at that point that he saw someone else nearby, someone who had noticed him and was just turning to leave.

“Eee?” he said. “Sect Nephew Zi'ang, long time no see!” He quickly released Zhao Yiduo and hurried over to stand in front of Chen Zi’ang, face beaming.

Chen Zi’ang seemed to be on the verge of going mad. He had run into Bai Xiaochun every day recently, usually at least three times.... From what he had heard, it was the same with everyone who personally knew Bai Xiaochun. The person who had it worst of all was an unlucky fellow who called himself Lord Wolf, who supposedly was visited by Bai Xiaochun dozens of times per day....

“Sect Uncle Bai, uh... I have something to take care of, I have to run.” Chen Zi’ang promptly fled as though his life depended on it.

Ten days later, the Outer Sect disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak had begun to pretend not to notice Bai Xiaochun. That of course left him less than pleased, and forced him to take the initiative more often.

Bai Xiaochun grabbed one of Zhou Xinqi’s former fans and said, “Aiya! You seem so familiar! Come, come, as an important person like myself, I sometimes forget things. Have we met already?”

The disciple looked downright wretched as Bai Xiaochun began to chat with him. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, and after the disciple had called him

Sect Uncle Bai more than thirty times, Bai Xiaochun finally seemed pleased, and allowed the miserable-looking disciple to leave.

However, such a strategy wasn't really viable long-term. After realizing that everyone was avoiding him, he decided that he needed to take more initiative. In the following days, he would frequently clear his throat to alert people to his presence.

The results were only average, leaving Bai Xiaochun feeling quite down. Thankfully, there was another girl besides Du Lingfei whom Bai Xiaochun found quite charming.

It was Hou Xiaomei, who would take the initiative to come find him every day. There was no need for him to clear his throat; she was so enthusiastic she could hardly stand still in front of him, and would follow him around fawningly and call him Sect Uncle.

The other Outer Sect disciples felt a bit sick when they saw that, but Bai Xiaochun was delighted. Some time ago, Bai Xiaochun had provided her with some education regarding the mysterious little turtle of Fragrant Cloud Peak. She still adored the little turtle, and on one occasion when she was walking around with Bai Xiaochun, she asked him what he thought of the little turtle.

“The little turtle? He’s mysterious and unfathomable. He is naturally talented, and in the 10,000 year history of the Spirit Stream Sect, he is a rarely-seen, grandiose figure. He’s like a white cloud in a clear sky, someone that everyone can look up to!” In the end, he coughed dryly. After uttering such grandiose words, Bai Xiaochun had to work hard not to just blurt out to Hou Xiaomei that he was the little turtle. However, he was still determined to find a time when he was the focus of all attention to tell Hou Xiaomei about his grand identity.

“I feel the same way,” Hou Xiaomei responded, eyes glittering brightly. “I've told a lot of people that the little turtle is oblivious to material rewards. He pursues the Dao of medicine, and does not worry himself with worldly matters. He’s definitely like a white cloud in a clear sky.”

For a while, there had been a lot of rumors that Bai Xiaochun was the little turtle. However, those rumors had eventually been refuted. Everyone had an idea of what they thought the little turtle looked like, and it definitely wasn’t Bai Xiaochun.

The fact that Hou Xiaomei responded in such a way didn’t really register to Bai Xiaochun. He was currently thinking about one of the top five beauties of the south bank, Zhou Xinqi.

“I wonder what it would be like to hear a proud Chosen like Zhou Xinqi call me Sect Uncle?” he thought. The mere idea got him excited, and from that day on, he began to search relentlessly for Zhou Xinqi.

As the saying goes, everything comes to him who waits. One day, he looked up and happened to see Zhou Xinqi soaring through the air on her blue flying silk.

“Sect Niece Xinqi!!” he shouted.

Zhou Xinqi’s face twisted into an unsightly expression. She had heard about what Bai Xiaochun had been doing during the past month, and knew that all of the Outer Sect disciples had been talking about the matter in fearful tones. When the words “Sect Niece Xinqi” entered her ears, goosebumps sprang up all over her body. She immediately pretended as if she hadn’t heard him and proceeded along her way. However, how could she have imagined... that Bai Xiaochun would stubbornly run along beneath her, crying out at the top of his lungs.

“Sect Niece Xinqi, come on, have a chat with your Sect Uncle about life!” He was actually bursting with excitement; he had been looking for Zhou Xinqi for quite some time, and having finally run into her, there was no way he would simply give up.

Zhou Xinqi gritted her teeth and picked up speed. It was only by leaving Fragrant Cloud Peak that she was finally able to shake him.

Bai Xiaochun watched as she flew away, and sighed with regret.

“Ah it doesn’t matter. You can fly, but I’ll be able to fly eventually too. One of these days, I’ll get you to call me Sect Uncle Bai.” Feeling a bit depressed, he looked up at the darkening sky and then went to look for Du Lingfei.

As soon as she saw him coming, she covered her mouth with her hand as she laughed. “Sect Uncle Bai, Sect Uncle Bai, Sect Uncle Bai....”

Bai Xiaochun’s spirits instantly soared because of Du Lingfei’s charmingness. A few days before, one of the sect elders had taken her as an apprentice because of the services she had rendered. Then she had been assigned to Eastwood City to serve as the Spirit Stream Sect’s emmisary there. It was a great opportunity for Du Lingfei; after spending a few years in Eastwood City, considering her past experience and meritorious service, she would be directly promoted into the Inner Sect.

Furthermore, she would have lot of authority in Eastwood City, and access to even more abundant cultivation resources than were available in the main sect.

Bai Xiaochun sighed with regret as he saw her off. Then he continued to wander around Fragrant Cloud Peak looking for interesting things to do.

Time passed. A month later, the words ‘Sect Uncle Bai’ had become somewhat taboo. Whenever anyone thought of them, they would laugh bitterly.

By that point, Bai Xiaochun finally came to the conclusion that it was time to call an end to the matter.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, am the Junior Brother of the Spirit Stream Sect’s sect leader. I am the Sect Uncle to all disciples, not just the disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak. I can’t discriminate against the other mountain peaks. I need to go visit them too.” After a bit of thought, he decided that it truly was the right thing to do. Thus, he headed toward Violet Cauldron Peak.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0068 awe-chapter-69

One month later, the Outer Sect disciples on Violet Cauldron Peak were about to go crazy. Bai Xiaochun had virtually made a career out of being a Sect Uncle, and everyone there knew it.

They quickly came to find that it didn’t matter where they went, they were likely to run into a very pure and fair young man, slender, with a certain proud look on his face that he tried to cover up, but was unable to. As he swaggered along, he would loudly clear his throat whenever he encountered another disciple, and if they pretended they didn’t recognize him, he would immediately introduce himself.

Their throats began to go hoarse from speaking the words ‘Sect Uncle Bai’, and yet... they had no choice but to continue doing so. After all, Bai Xiaochun was the Junior Brother of the sect leader, and in terms of seniority, he outranked everyone. Any disciple who dared to offend him was essentially violating sect rules.

Eventually, people went to Big Fatty Zhang to ask for help. In turn, he made a huge fanfare about seeing Bai Xiaochun off... to visit Green Crest Peak.

Another month passed, and the disciples of Green Crest Peak… were also driven crazy.

That was especially true of Chen Fei and his two friends, who were soon frightened out of their minds. Once Bai Xiaochun began to do the rounds at Green Crest Peak, he would frequently look for them. Despite the fact that they would instantly begin to blabber greetings to ‘Sect Uncle Bai’, that didn’t end things.

Bai Xiaochun was quick to nitpick, and if they showed even an iota of disrespect, he would imply that he would report them to the Hall of Justice. Chen Fei and his friends began to shake with fear, and were soon treading on thin ice no matter where they went. In the end, they finally ratted out Qian Dajin. After giving them another good thrashing, Bai Xiaochun finally let them off the hook. Sighing, he left Green Crest Peak, all the while blaming himself for what was going on.

“The Outer Sect disciples all know me, but I haven’t had a chance to meet any of the Inner Sect disciples. And then there's Qian Dajin. Does he really think I’ve forgotten about him?” After a long moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun nodded deeply at the prospect of the immense pleasure he was about to experience. With that, he hurried off to find some Inner Sect disciples.

In the following days, Bai Xiaochun made appearances on all three of the mountain peaks, most of the time in the areas occupied by the Inner Sect disciples. Considering his status, he could go almost anywhere in the Spirit Stream Sect.

However, he quickly lost interest. The Inner Sect disciples all happened to be in secluded meditation, and he hardly saw a single one even after a few months passed. That was especially true of Qian Dajin, whose immortal's cave was constantly under the protection of several spell formations.

“I refuse to believe this just a coincidence!” Bai Xiaochun thought as he stood there in front of Qian Dajin’s door. He tried to break through the spell formations, but considering they were there to protect the immortal's cave of an Inner

Sect disciple, they were simply too powerful. Seeing that it was impossible for him to succeed on his own, he decided that it would be best to go get some help in breaking them open.

However, it was at this point that two people appeared off in the distance, racing in his direction. They were Inner Sect disciples, one tall, one short, and as they closed in, they didn’t even make a show of clasping their hands in greeting.

The first one to speak was the tall one. Voice cool, he said, “Sect Uncle Bai, how about you give my clan’s Young Lord a bit of face and forget about what happened with Qian Dajin? Oh, by the way, that Young Lord is none other than Shangguan Tianyou.”

From the young man’s tone of voice, he made it clear what he expected Bai Xiaochun to do.

Shangguan Tianyou was the most respected among the three great Chosen of the three mountain peaks of the south bank!

Latent talent such as his had been rare for at least a thousand years on the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, and although he was only an Outer Sect disciple, there was no question that he would soon reach Foundation Establishment. Because of that, many of the elders in the sect viewed Shangguan Tianyou as being a bit different from everyone else. Many people even hoped that he would eventually be able to outdo the disciples of the north bank, and as such, a lot of resources were being put into his training.

That in turn caused Shangguan Tianyou to have a lot of fans, especially on Green Crest Peak.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was the same as ever. In the past, he might have started to get scared. However, his general fear of death did not indicate that he lacked courage. In fact, as long as a situation didn’t carry the threat of death, he was actually quite dauntless.

Because of his current status, there was virtually nothing and no one in the sect who could threaten his life, and therefore, he simply turned his nose up and stared at the two newcomers with a slight smile.

“When you meet an important person like me, but fail to offer formal greetings, it shows what great gall the two of you have, doesn’t it?” He flicked his sleeve. “Who might it be that egged you on into such impertinent disrespect? Might it have been Shangguan Tianyou?”

The two Inner Sect disciples’ expressions flickered, and the tall one’s gaze turned sharp as he stared at Bai Xiaochun.

“Sect Uncle Bai,” he said, “you’d do best to pick your words a bit more carefully.”

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, and before he could continue speaking, Bai Xiaochun suddenly vanished. A blast of wind swept across the Inner Sect disciple, who stared in shock as Bai Xiaochun appeared directly in front of him.

His speed was so incredible that the two Inner Sect disciples hadn’t even seen him move. Before they could react, Bai Xiaochun stretched his palm back and swept it toward the tall disciple's face, causing a sound like thunder to rumble out.

Almost instantly, a protective shield sprang up from within the young man’s robe, the result of a magical device given to all Inner Sect disciples. However, in almost the same instant that the shield appeared, Bai Xiaochun's palm landed, and it shattered into a thousand pieces. It was completely incapable of standing up to the incredible power of Bai Xiaochun's palm.

A massive slap rang out, and the tall disciple instantly saw stars. His mind thrummed, and he almost felt like he had been crushed by a mountain. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he slammed into the ground, tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut. After rolling along for several dozen meters, shrieking the entire way, he finally lapsed into unconsciousness.

Everything happened so quickly that the short disciple could do nothing more than stand there, mouth agape, mind spinning. After a moment, he began to edge backward, glancing first at his unconscious comrade and then back at Bai Xiaochun. Then he took a deep breath, and swallowed hard.

“Y-you... you....” he stammered, pointing shakily at Bai Xiaochun. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun's fleshly body power would be so shocking.

It seemed on par with the eighth level of Qi Condensation....

Bai Xiaochun turned slowly to look at the short disciple, and then said, “Can an Inner Sect disciple really gesture so rudely to someone of the elder generation?”

Then he began to walk forward.

Shrieking, the short disciple turned tail and fled. However, before he could get very far, the sound of a screaming wind filled the air as Bai Xiaochun bore down on him and once again unleashed a mighty slap.

It was at that very moment that a stern, sinister voice rang out from down below.

“Stay your hand!” Suddenly, a newcomer appeared on the scene.

However, Bai Xiaochun paid him no heed. His palm moved too quickly, and the short Inner Sect disciple was sent flying. Teeth spun through the air, and blood spattered. The disciple’s neck seemed to be on the verge of breaking as he flew off to the side, unconscious.

With that, Bai Xiaochun shook out his hand and looked at the person racing up from further down the mountain. It was a middle-aged man with a cultivation base in the ninth level of Qi Condensation, a level of power similar to Chen Heng.

The man glared furiously at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Didn't you hear what I just said, Bai Xiaochun? Dammit! You’re--”

Bai Xiaochun lifted his chin, smiled, and interrupted, “Sect Nephew, are you looking to get slapped as well?”

From the actions of the two disciples moments ago, as well as this man’s words, it was clear that they didn't have the least bit of respect for him, and furthermore, even disdained him to some degree, as though they felt that they completely outranked him. Inner Sect disciples like that were completely contemptible as far as he was concerned.

Bai Xiaochun’s words caused various expressions to flash across the man’s face, and he bit back his next words. Bai Xiaochun’s impressive display of fleshly body strength left him breathless and in complete shock. Now that the man thought about it, he realized that, considering Bai Xiaochun’s status, it didn't matter what he did here, the Hall of Justice wouldn’t care a bit.

The middle-aged man stared at Bai Xiaochun for a long moment, suppressed his fury, and then explained his purpose in coming. “Bai Xiaochun, my clan’s Young Lord wishes for you to go offer him formal greetings.”

He had actually been sent by Shangguan Tianyou to order Bai Xiaochun go offer formal greetings.

In his opinion, his clan’s Young Lord was making a mountain out of a molehill. Bai Xiaochun had lucked his way into being an important person, and was more of a clown than anything else. He had killed a few weak members of some cultivator clan, and it was only by chance that the sect ended up making a big deal about him. That certainly didn't earn him the right to be given face by a Young Lord who was already making his meteoric rise, and would certainly reach the Gold Core stage and forge a legend in the future.

In fact, this man actually felt that being sent to fetch Bai Xiaochun to come offer greetings was a bit below his status.

Bai Xiaochun could already see how arrogant of a person Shangguan Tianyou was. Considering his own status, if he didn't come in person, or if he chose to just send a message, it might be acceptable. But instead, he actually wanted Bai Xiaochun to go visit him! “Even if he’s a Chosen, do you really think an Outer Sect disciple can order me to offer him greetings? He should be the one coming to greet me!”

The middle-aged man flicked his sleeve, sending out a blast of wind. “Bai Xiaochun,” he grated furiously, “for my clan’s Young Lord to ask you to go visit him is a huge show of face.

Do you know how many people wish they could go offer formal greetings? You--”

Before he could finish speaking, his face flickered, and he leaped backward. However, he was just a bit too slow. Bai Xiaochun appeared directly in front of him and reached back his palm.

“How dare you!!” The man’s cultivation base was in the ninth level of Qi Condensation, and he unleashed all of its power, simultaneously performing an incantation gesture that summoned numerous wind blades. However, even as the wind blades appeared in front of him, Bai Xiaochun’s palm smashed into them, crushing them like twigs. They couldn’t provide even the slightest bit of protection.

The palm proceeded onward almost as if nothing had attempted to block its way, landing almost instantly on the man’s face.

A slapping sound echoed out, followed by a scream. The middle-aged man staggered backward thirty meters or more before finally lurching to a stop.

With that, Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve and snorted arrogantly. “You’re not even as powerful as Chen Heng. No wonder you’re such a lackey! Screw off!”

The man looked back at Bai Xiaochun in astonishment. He was shaking visibly, and his cheek was already swelling up. Blood oozing from between his teeth, he quickly fled.

After the man left, Bai Xiaochun looked back toward Qian Dajin’s immortal's cave with narrowed eyes. He was the type of person who feared death, and as such, if someone tried to kill him, he would seek revenge upon them no matter what.

It didn't matter if Qian Dajin asked for help from Shangguan Tianyou, there was no possible way Bai Xiaochun would let him off the hook. Although Bai Xiaochun’s actions in the sect recently had seemed somewhat casual, he had actually long since carried out a thorough investigation about Qian Dajin.

“You think you can hide away in there?” he thought. “You think I have no way of making you show your face?” With a cold snort, he turned to leave.

Based on his current status, what happened next was no surprise. A jade slip from the Hall of Justice appeared, a mission. It took only a moment for it to pass into Qian Dajin’s immortal’s cave, and hover in the air in front of him.

It was just like what had happened with Bai Xiaochun. Qian Dajin was being forced to accept a very dangerous mission outside the sect. A bitter smile appeared on his face, as he realized that he had no choice but to emerge from hiding to carry out the mission.... However, he still clung to the hope that being outside of the sect might help him avoid catastrophe.

Unfortunately, he had underestimated the lengths to which Bai Xiaochun would go to exact his revenge. He had already arranged for several such missions to be assigned to Qian Dajin. Furthermore, he’d asked for some help from Hou Yunfei. The Hou Clan had a Foundation Establishment patriarch, and access to other deep reserves. Considering how important Bai Xiaochun was to them, and coupled with the urgings of Hou Yunfei and Hou Xiaomei, they had become a powerful ally.

With the help of the Hou Clan, it was a foreordained certainty that Qian Dajin would be struck with misfortune during the course of trying to carry out the missions.

It wasn’t that the Hall of Justice was unaware of what had occurred with Qian Dajin, and how it led to Bai Xiaochun’s fall in combat. However, despite the fact that the news was never spread publically, internal records had been maintained.

Now that Bai Xiaochun was back and wanted to settle accounts, there was little they could do to stop him. In fact, it was almost as if they owed him, and were simply allowing him to do what he wanted. To top it off, there were even some people who had already come to view Qian Dajin as dead.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0069 awe-chapter-70

In a certain location near the summit of Green Crest Peak was a solitary little path. At the end of that path was a pool of water, within which swam several golden-colored fish.

Next to the pond was an immortal's cave. It was a somewhat remote and isolated place, very quiet, with abundant spiritual energy that clearly exceeded anything else nearby.

On the bank of the pond sat a young man. He wore the long robe of an Outer Sect disciple, and was exceedingly good-looking, with long black hair, fair skin, and a refined, intelligent air.

He was the type of young man that female disciples would sigh over constantly, whose phoenix-like eyes were delicate, and yet glistened with flickering light. Overall, he seemed completely unique.

He currently held a fishing rod, which he would occasionally cast out into the pond, whereupon the fish would voraciously compete to gobble up the food attached to the end of the line.

The middle-aged man who Bai Xiaochun had just slapped was hurrying up the path, face ashen. When he reached the end, he slowed down and respectfully clasped hands and bowed to the young man.

“Greetings, Young Lord,” he said through gritted teeth. “Young Lord, Bai Xiaochun doesn't know how to appreciate favors. I carefully relayed your message, but instead of coming to offer greetings, he acted bossy and domineering. He thinks he can simply throw his weight around with impunity!”

The young man looked over, his expression seemingly ambivalent. “Well,” he said coolly, “forget about it then. He’s a nobody. It was mostly just on a whim that I thought to have him come offer greetings.”

The man nodded. “I think I understand what you mean, Young Lord. The reason he’s a nobody is that the position of Prestige disciple is only given to dead people, right? Plus, being the Junior Brother of the Sect Leader is a complete joke. In fact, his Master is actually a corpse.” The man chuckled coldly for a moment, but then shivered as he realized that the young man was staring at him with an icy expression. All of a sudden, the middle-aged man was struck with fear. “Young... Young Lord....”

“It’s true that he’s a nobody,” the young man said, “not even worth paying attention to. However, the Sect Leader’s Master is a former patriarch of our sect. Do you really think you qualify to even mention him? Go to the Frigid Abyss and slap yourself for three months straight as punishment.” With that, the young man looked away and continued to feed his golden fish.

Trembling, the middle-aged man nodded in assent and quickly took his leave.

**

Having settled the issue of Qian Dajin, Bai Xiaochun returned to Fragrant Cloud Peak. He wasn't worried at all about Shangguan Tianyou. Considering the meritorious service he had performed for the sect, unless he turned traitor, his life wouldn’t be in danger at all.

As time passed, he lost some of his excitement over being called Sect Uncle, especially considering that most people avoided him at all costs. In fact, he actually came to feel a bit melancholy. However, one day he happened to wander into the scripture pavilion, whereupon his spirits were lifted almost instantly.

He found that as soon as he arrived, he was immediately granted a reading space alongside the lecturing elders, where he could look down upon the countless disciples in attendance.

He fell in love with the experience almost immediately, after which he came to frequent the mountaintop sermon pavilion.

There he would sit, occasionally giving a smile and a nod to disciples down below, eyes sparkling with satisfaction. He looked very much like the Foundation Establishment elders whom he sat next to.

The Foundation Establishment elders didn’t know whether to laugh or cry, and as for the disciples from the various mountain peaks, their spirits couldn’t be lower, but they had no choice but to simply stare up angrily at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had found a new way to flaunt his status as the Junior Brother of the sect leader.

When he came into the presence of the Foundation Establishment cultivators, he would immediately call them Elder Brother and Elder Sister. Although they didn't say anything in response, strange expressions could be seen on their faces, and any nearby disciples would eventually be forced to utter the words ‘Sect Uncle Bai’.

Things went on like that for some time until one day, Bai Xiaochun happened to run into Li Qinghou. Unable to restrain himself, Bai Xiaochun immediately cried out in an amiable tone, “Hey, Elder Brother Li.”

Li Qinghou looked a bit haggard. He had been working this entire time on concocting the Nine Ultimates Pill, and was currently on his way out of the sect. As soon as the words entered his ears, his jaw dropped, and he looked around until his gaze came to fall on Bai Xiaochun. Then, his cheek twitched. Although he had been spending all his time on pill-concocting lately, he had heard about Bai Xiaochun’s antics, which had turned into quite a headache. To hear Bai Xiaochun addressing him in such a fashion left Li Qinghou glaring in shock.

As soon as the words left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun regretted speaking them. Seeing Li Qinghou’s reaction then caused him to suck in a breath. After all, Li Qinghou was the person he feared most in the entire sect.

Grimacing, he shivered and quickly said, “Uncle Li... er... my mistake.”

However, there was really nothing Li Qinghou could do, and he knew it. Glaring even harder at Bai Xiaochun, he decided to rebuke him a bit for his recent behavior.

“I'm leaving the sect for a bit,” he said. “At the soonest, I’ll be back in a few months; at the most, a year. Don’t even think of fooling around while I'm gone. Work hard at your cultivation.” After a few more words of exhortation, he turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun let out a long sigh of relief as Li Qinghou made his way off into the distance. A glimmer of fear could be seen in his eyes, but at the same time, a bit of warmth and respect for one of his elders could also be seen. He couldn’t help but remember what Du Lingfei said about the time he had gone missing, and how Li Qinghou had spent two months searching for him on his own. Upon his return, Li Qinghou had been in quite a sorry state, and seemed to blame himself for what had happened.

After Bai Xiaochun’s father and mother fell sick and died, he hadn’t shown such warmth and respect to anyone. At some point, though, he had come to view Li Qinghou as one of his own relatives.

Because of Li Qinghou's admonition, Bai Xiaochun changed his ways for about half a month. During that time, he ceased clearing his throat to attract attention, and instead focused his attention on Zhou Xinqi’s immortal's cave. In all of the sect, she was the only person who knew him personally but refused to call him Sect Uncle Bai.

After a few months passed, he started to get a bit depressed. After all, he could only catch sight of Zhou Xinqi whizzing around on her blue flying silk. Considering that he was incapable of flight, it didn’t matter how much he chased after her, he could only watch in dismay as she flew away.

“There are probably only a few magical devices in the whole sect that Qi Condensation disciples can use to fly. Without a special technique like the one that Chen Heng used, the only way to fly is to get one of those magical devices.

“It's so unfair! My Master should have gifted me with such an item. My... my Master....” Sighing, he walked along for a bit more before suddenly stopping in his tracks. Looking up in thought for a moment, he suddenly turned and headed toward Mount Daoseed.

As the Junior Brother of the Sect Leader, he had unrestricted access to Mount Daoseed, and before long, there he was at the top of the mountain, where Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong’s grand hall was located.

Swaggering in, Bai Xiaochun called out, “Elder Brother Sect Leader, oh dear Elder Brother Sect Leader!! I want to go offer incense to my Master!”

Zheng Yuandong sat there in the hall cross-legged in meditation. As soon as he heard Bai Xiaochun's voice, he sighed.

In recent days, so many people had come to visit him that he had lost count. He had heard all about Bai Xiaochun’s doings, and had long since come to regret the situation. Unfortunately, as the old saying went, the timber had already been crafted into a boat, and there was little to be done. After all, despite Bai Xiaochun’s peculiar preoccupations, he wasn't doing anything to hurt anyone.

Hearing Bai Xiaochun continue to call out to him, Zheng Yuandong slowly rose to his feet, cleared his throat, and looked over solemnly.

“Calm down, I heard you.”

Looking very charming, Bai Xiaochun hurried over and clasped hands in greeting. “Junior Brother offers greetings, Elder Brother Sect Leader.”

Zheng Yuandong sighed inwardly. Although he knew what was going on, he couldn’t help but shake his head and smile wryly as he led Bai Xiaochun into the restricted area behind the mountain.

In the immortal's cave in that area, a portrait was hung on the wall depicting a middle-aged man. The man smiled faintly as he looked off into the distance, emanating a unique aura that made his image look quite lifelike.

Beneath the portrait was a small tribute altar, upon which could be seen some spirit fruits and spirit candles. The immortal's cave was simple but elegant, and filled one with a sense of incredible dignity.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun entered, he hurried over to the portrait and plopped down into a kneeling position. Then he began to kowtow deeply, touching the floor with his forehead nine times, his expression very solemn.

Finally, he looked up at the portrait, his eyes radiating pious sincerity. “Master, apprentice has come to pay respects.”

Zheng Yuandong stood off to the side looking on. Although he knew Bai Xiaochun was stubborn and mischievous, he also could tell that he had a filial heart. Considering Zheng Yuandong’s experience in life, he was able to tell from Bai Xiaochun’s expression that the pious sincerity was real, and not an act.

But then... Bai Xiaochun continued to speak.

“Master, your apprentice has been going through some tough times. I can’t even fly.... Other disciples’ Masters have all given them magical items to help them fly, as well as life-protecting treasures. Sadly, I don’t have anything....

“But that’s fine, Master. Your apprentice doesn’t care about material things anyway. As long as I can burn some incense for you, sir, then I'm happy. Who knows, maybe your spirit in heaven will hear me and somehow manage to bequeath me with something....”

When Zheng Yuandong heard this, his eyes went wide.

“Master, it wasn’t very long ago that your apprentice gave everything to protect the sect, to ensure that its 10,000-year legacy continued on. To protect the honor of the sect, I was chased down relentlessly, and during that time, all of my magical items were lost or ruined. I came back to the sect without anything to call my own. My bags are empty. I’m more impoverished than a servant....

“I don't want you to feel any pressure, though, Master. It’s fine. Your apprentice isn’t afraid of lacking defensive magical items. Even if I don’t have a magical flight device, I’ll still go through hell or high water for the sect. It’s my duty! However, if enough time goes by and I haven’t come to burn incense for you, Master, then that will just go to show that my lack of life-protecting magical items and magical flight devices has caused me to lose my poor little life.... At least then I will be able to personally go to reunite with you, sir.” Even as he spoke, Bai Xiaochun looked out at his dear Elder Brother Sect Leader out of the corner of his eye.

Zheng Yuandong’s face twitched. He was truly stupefied. In all the years he had practiced cultivation, this was the first time he had ever encountered a disciple as outlandish as Bai Xiaochun.

Chuckling bitterly in his heart, he looked up at the portrait of his Master, and then thought for a long moment. It was true that when he had first been apprenticed to his Master, he had been bequeathed with a protective magical device.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Zheng Yuandong looked over at Bai Xiaochun, his gaze softening.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun and Zheng Yuandong left the immortal's cave. The entire time, Bai Xiaochun was looking at Zheng Yuandong out of the corner of his eye. Eventually, they reached the grand hall on Mount Daoseed, whereupon Zheng Yuandong stopped walking. Turning to look at Bai Xiaochun, he waved his hand, causing two streams of light to fly out, one of them gold, the other white.

The golden light contained a palm-sized flying sword. However, its mere appearance caused the air around it to distort as it radiated waves of heat. It seemed completely extraordinary, and was covered with countless complicated magical symbols which glittered radiantly, and caused fluctuations to spill out in all directions.

The white light contained a small shield, also palm-sized. It was made of white jade, and carved with extremely life-like immortal cranes. It also radiated an intense warmth.

Bai Xiaochun could instantly tell that they were extraordinary items. Eyes shining, he began to pant as he realized that there was something even more outstanding to the two items; both of them were decorated with three unique flowing sets of lines.

Zheng Yuandong looked gently at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes gleaming with encouragement.

“Within the Golden Crow Sword is sealed a golden crow,” he said. “It contains the power of blazing fire, and can summon an illusory golden crow of the same cultivation base as the person summoning it. It can be used to fly, and can be used until the early Foundation Establishment stage. If it is destroyed, it will unleash incredible power.

“The Divine Crane Shield is a defensive magical device created from the soul of an immortal crane. It can protect you from any deadly crisis less powerful than Foundation Establishment.

“My Master performed threefold spirit enhancements on both of these items, but didn’t dare to proceed beyond that. Back when I joined the sect, my Master gave them to me, and I hereby represent him to bequeath them to you.”

Bai Xiaochun excitedly accepted the items and began to fondle them admiringly. “Thank you, Master. Thank you, dear Elder Brother Sect Leader!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0070 awe-chapter-71

Because of the turtle-wok, Bai Xiaochun understood quite a bit about spirit enhancement. He also was well aware that there was a Foundation Establishment elder from Violet Cauldron Peak who was a skilled spirit enhancer.

For a few merit points, that elder would help disciples perform spirit enhancements, usually no more than a one or twofold enhancement. Any higher than that, and the chances of failure mounted.

The fact that these two magical items had both received threefold enhancements meant that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t have to waste any fuel on his own three-colored flame, and would also be able to freely use them in the public eye.

After returning to Fragrant Cloud Peak, he immediately set to work familiarizing himself with the Golden Crow Sword and the Divine Crane Shield. As soon as he sent some spiritual power into them, they began to radiate intense heat.

“Now these are some treasures!” he exclaimed. Taking a deep breath, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. A thrumming sound filled the air as the Golden Crow Sword transformed into a golden beam of light that shot off, leaving behind a wake of burning heat that caused everything around it to ripple and distort.

With another incantation gesture, he sent more spiritual power pouring into the sword, whereupon the bright glow surrounding it expanded until the vague shape of a golden crow became visible.

It was little more than an outline, but the instant it appeared, incredible pressure began to weigh down, and the temperature in the area increased rapidly. All of that caused Bai Xiaochun's heart to thump excitedly.

Panting, he stared at the Golden Crow Sword, eyes shining more and more brightly. Soon, he began to laugh in excitement.

"This sword is way better than my little wooden sword! Wow, my Master is awesome!" With that, he dashed into motion, leaping up into the air and landing onto the back of the illusory golden crow.

Although the golden crow was blurry and vague, its back was as flat and sturdy as a board, and when Bai Xiaochun sent some spiritual power into it, he felt almost as if he had become a part of it.

After stepping onto the golden crow, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, which caused him to fly up into the air. Then he soared in a big circle around Fragrant Cloud Peak, whizzing through the air above the crowds. When people looked up in surprise, he would slow down, hold his head high, and puff his chest out. When cries of astonishment began to ring out, he would finally increase his speed again.

"I, Bai Xiaochun, can finally fly!" Spirits soaring, he laughed inwardly as his tour took him over the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion. However, it was only moments later, just as he was about to head toward one of the other mountain peaks, that the golden crow suddenly faded away, and the sword fell out of the sky. Bai Xiaochun screamed as he tumbled down along with it.

Thankfully, what lay below wasn’t a bottomless pit, but rather, one of the small paths that ran through the sect. He landed at a run, and only managed to gain control after several steps. Then he looked over and realized how high up this path was, and that if he had fallen off, even his Undying Skin wouldn’t have saved him....

His face went pale.

“That was way too dangerous!!” he thought, shivering. With that, he picked up the Golden Crow Sword. Probing his inner spiritual power, he realized that he had been almost completely drained, which was why he had ended up falling.

For a Qi Condensation cultivator, flying on a sword took a huge amount of energy. Most who were in the seventh level of Qi Condensation would only be able to last for a few breaths of time before they had to stop. Even Bai Xiaochun, with his unusually refined spiritual power, couldn’t even last a hundred breaths.

Fearful of falling to his death, he didn't dare to test the sword out anymore. Looking around furtively for a moment to see if anyone had seen what just occurred, he caught sight of a burly man off in the distance, who was staring at him, his jaw hanging open.

When Bai Xiaochun saw him, his eyes widened and he hurried over. “Whoah, aren’t you Sect Nephew Wolf?”

When the burly man heard the words ‘Sect Nephew Wolf’, he immediately shivered. Grimacing, he clasped hands and said, “I'm disciple Liu Ergou. Greetings, Sect Uncle Bai... I, um, I didn’t see anything happen just now.”

Bai Xiaochun had encountered Liu Ergou when he was selling spots in the Outer Sect. Back then, the man had called himself Lord Wolf.

Bai Xiaochun humphed a few times, then proceeded to frighten Liu Ergou a bit more to ensure that he wouldn’t spread news of what had happened. Then he patted him on the shoulder, gave some promises to help him out in the future, and finally left.

Liu Ergou wiped the sweat from his brow before hurrying off.

As he walked along, Bai Xiaochun rejoiced that it was only Liu Ergou who had seen his slight mishap. If it had happened when he was flying around by the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion, his name would have been ruined forever....

“Ai. People. You really can’t become too famous. Then things just become difficult.” Sighing to himself, he clasped his hands behind his back and strolled back to his courtyard residence.

After a bit of hesitation about what to do, his eyes flickered with determination. “No, I have to focus on cultivation. Only being able to fly a little bit isn’t inherently bad, but what would happen if I was fleeing for my life? What if I escaped my enemies only to fall to my death? That would be really pointless.”

With that, he once again began to study the Golden Crow Sword and the Divine Crane Shield.

“Just to be safe, I should paint these two magical items as well. That way, people will think it’s just a hobby of mine. Then if I pull out other spirit enhanced magical items in the future, they won’t think too much of it.” After some more thought, he prepared some dye from brightly colored plants and proceeded to paint the Golden Crow Sword and the Divine Crane Shield.

After covering up the faint spirit designs, he tested out the two items one more time. Finally, he looked pleased.

“One of these days when my skill in the Dao of medicine is high enough, I’ll enhance some plant-based dyeing materials, and then I can be completely confident.” Bai Xiaochun was an inherently cautious person. Although he had run amuck to some extent because of becoming the Junior Brother of the sect leader, he had a bottom line that he wouldn’t cross.

“What a pity my cultivation base still isn’t high enough. The last time I was following Zhou Xinqi around, it seemed that she was already in the eighth level of Qi Condensation. The only way to be able to use a flying sword for any length of time is to have a higher cultivation base.” Determination filled his heart. After the incident with the Luochen Clan, he had come to fully understand how brutal the cultivation world could be. He had also realized that the ability to flee at top speed was crucial when one’s life was on the line.

If he had been able to fly on a sword back then, he would have been able to escape with Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei no matter what the Luochen Clan tried to do.

“I need to concoct pills!” he thought, eyes gleaming. Considering his current status, although he couldn't get free ingredients from the sect, there were certain pill formulas that he could get for only a few merit points. In the following days, Fragrant Cloud Peak became a quiet place, and Bai Xiaochun was rarely seen.

He acquired large amounts of medicine formulas, and also used the spirit stones and other items he had acquired from the Luochen Clan members to go to the market and purchase a variety of medicinal plants. Then he made his way to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, where he went into seclusion to concoct medicine.

Time flew by. A few months later, it had been nearly half a year since Bai Xiaochun returned to the sect. At first, the sect had been thrown into an uproar because of him, but then things had suddenly gone very quiet. Many people found it hard to adapt.

At the same time, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had become a Prestige disciple gradually spread outside of the sect. Soon, people all over the Eastwood Continent came to hear of the matter.

Of course, there were countless cultivator clans in the Eastwood Continent, many of which were connected to the Spirit Stream Sect in various ways. The Luochen Clan had been only one among many such clans.

To the disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect, although the title of Prestige disciple was to be looked up to, being the Junior Brother of the sect leader was even more impressive.

However, to the cultivator clans at large, it was exactly the opposite. They would respect a Prestige disciple far more than they would the Junior Brother of the sect leader. In fact, they almost didn't care at all about the sect leader’s Junior Brother. In contrast, they would be driven to near madness by a Prestige disciple.

After hearing the news that Bai Xiaochun had become a Prestige disciple, many patriarchs of the various cultivator clans got very excited. In their eyes, he was a virtual gold mine. A living Prestige scion!

If they could bring Bai Xiaochun into their clan, then his descendants would have almost limitless possibilities for the future. As the number of such descendants grew, and considering that the clan would have the support of the Spirit Stream Sect, glory was guaranteed.

To vassal clans in the cultivation world, it would ensure a meteoric rise, like the fish who jumped the dragon gate.

After all, the Spirit Stream Sect had only ever had nine Prestige clans. Those nine clans could often influence the decision-making process of the sect as a whole. Although such influence wasn’t necessarily very vast, it was still worthy of consideration.

Such a clan would form a part of an enormously powerful entity, and would be the subject of intense envy from other cultivator clans. In the past, most clans couldn’t influence anything. They could only offer allegiance to the Spirit Stream Sect and then perform various services with the hope of gaining Prestige status.

But now... Bai Xiaochun had appeared.

Most wonderful of all was that he wasn’t a member of any cultivator clan. He came from the mortal world, and... he had no Daoist partner. He was a free ticket to becoming the tenth Prestige clan, and as such, all of the cultivator clans in the Eastwood Continent were thrown into a frenzy.

“Find the prettiest maiden in the entire Zhou Clan. She’ll be coming with me to offer greetings to Fellow Daoist Bai!”

“Fei’er, you’re the pearl of the Zhao Clan. You have to get on Bai Xiaochun’s good side. If he takes a liking to you, all of the problems of our clan will disappear!”

“Although the daughters of the Sun Clan aren’t particularly outstanding, we still qualify to compete. Prepare an amazing gift for me to give when I go offer greetings to Fellow Daoist Bai!”

Countless cultivator clans sprang into action, using all sorts of methods, including calling upon their clan members who were already within the sect to try to get in touch with Bai Xiaochun. Even the north bank was affected. Soon, the name of Bai Xiaochun could be heard in all parts of the Eastwood Continent.

The Hou Clan was no exception.

The middle-aged patriarch of the Hou Clan summoned Hou Yunfei and Hou Xiaomei, whereupon he expressed his sincere wishes: “Yunfei, you have an unusually close relationship with Bai Xiaochun. You... have to help out the clan in this matter. I can tell that your sister has taken a liking to Bai Xiaochun. Find a good chance to act as a matchmaker between them.”

Hou Xiaomei’s face reddened. Pouting coquettishly, she hurried off.

Hou Yunfei was a bit worried, but he put on a bold face and nodded in agreement.

A few days later, people from numerous cultivator clans began to show up, gathering on Fragrant Cloud Peak around Bai Xiaochun's residence. As news spread, some people even began to head toward the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, waiting anxiously for him to come out of seclusion.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0071 awe-chapter-72

A few days later, a boom echoed out from Bai Xiaochun’s pill-concocting workstation. Moments later, he appeared, frowning and looking anxious.

“Although I'm pretty familiar with tier-1 medicinal pills now,” he lamented, “ tier-2 pills are a lot harder....” Other than cultivation, his time recently had mostly been spent on concocting medicines. In his attempt to produce some tier-2 spirit medicines, he’d already used up most of the plants and vegetation in his bag. Unfortunately, the degree of difficulty he was working with was vastly greater than before, and despite being meticulously careful, he had failed consistently.

Each time he found that he had used too many materials, he would make adjustments. And yet even then, new problems would arise.

Sighing in despair, he walked out of the Medicine Concocting Pavilion and looked up to find a large host of people sitting there cross-legged. Most of them sat in groups of three to five, with a few groups of ten in sight. The majority were pretty young women, none of whom were familiar to Bai Xiaochun.

They were all different shapes and sizes, but each one was beautiful in her own way. The lot of them were clearly vying with each other to be the most glamorous, and as soon as they saw Bai Xiaochun emerge, their eyes shone brightly.

Most had older folks sitting next to them, who also seemed delighted to see Bai Xiaochun. In fact, they all rose to their feet and rushed over in a hubbub.

Taken aback, and a bit unsure of what was going on, Bai Xiaochun subconsciously stepped back a few paces. “Hey, hold on! What... what are you people doing?”

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I'm Zhao Tianhai. Zhao Yiduo is my nephew! Hahaha! Fellow Daoist Bai, you truly are a young hero, a man of striking appearance and talent!”

“Fellow Daoist Bai! What a dragon among men, heroic and extraordinary! A single glance reveals that he’s like a roc soaring among the clouds, someone with unlimited potential. Ahem. I am Sun Yunshan, and these young women are all beauties from my clan. Fellow Daoist, if I'm not mistaken, you’re lacking in terms of maidservants, correct?”

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I am Zhou Tian. A single glance at you, Fellow Daoist Bai, and I can clearly sense your heroic spirit. You are obviously the future overlord of the eastern cultivation world. We were destined to be friends at first sight. Look at these young women standing next to me. Every single one is a precious pearl of the Zhou Clan....”

A clamor of voices rang out, each one trying to speak first and loudest. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he retreated a few more steps. However, it only took a moment for him to realize that these people had come to offer their clan daughters to him....

He wasn’t sure exactly why it was happening, but upon looking the young women over, he could see that all of them were exceptionally beautiful. In fact, many of them could be counted as being his type. The way they were being offered up seemed to indicate that if he didn't accept, he would be refusing to give them face. Instantly, Bai Xiaochun was on guard.

Of course, he was adept at dealing with people, so he didn’t let any hint of that show on his face. A broad smile appeared, and after exchanging some meaningless pleasantries with the spokesmen from the various cultivator clans, he managed to extricate himself.

However, before he could reach his residence, he ran into others who had stationed themselves along the way. All of them had similar words to speak with him, and offered him their clan daughters as well as other gifts and promises.

“Something big must have happened, but what?” he thought. “Could it be that they found out one of my ancestors was an immortal? Maybe I'm not from the mortal world after all. I'm... I'm actually descended from some exalted, powerful individual? Heavens! How could I not have been aware?!” Mind spinning, he hurried along until his residence came in view. However, it was surrounded by a crowd of individuals from various cultivator clans, all of whose eyes glistened with hope. It was as if the mere nod of Bai Xiaochun’s head would cause them to do anything he wished!

That was especially true of the young women. They all clustered around Bai Xiaochun, glaring antagonistically at each other, pushing and shoving each other back and forth.

The sight of it all caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to go numb. He was completely surrounded, and no matter which way he tried to move, he ran into something soft and warm. They even began to tug at his clothing, causing his heart to pound. Finally, a cold snort rang out, and Hou Xiaomei appeared. Glaring angrily, cheeks puffed, she stormed up to him, shoving the other young women aside.

“Get out of my way! What do you people think you’re doing!? This is Fragrant Cloud Peak of the Spirit Stream Sect. Don’t you bunch of old coots know how to keep your cool? Get out of my way, all of you. Hey you! Look at you! You’re skinnier than a greenbean! What are you shoving people around for? And you! You’re fatter than a dairy cow! Get the hell out of my way!!” Hou Xiaomei sounded genuinely furious as she pushed aside all of the young women crowding around Bai Xiaochun.

She was small and delicate, but she was fuming, and seemed to be filled with boundless strength. Facing such opposition, the other young women immediately surrendered and opened a path, crying out in confusion. Hou Xiaomei stormed forward with her hands on her hips, looking like a chili pepper, the words she uttered incisive and damaging.

Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the moment to hurry into the courtyard. Once inside, he looked down to find that his garments had been tugged at so much that they were about to fall off.

“Absolutely terrifying!” he thought, gasping. Heart pounding with residual fear, he looked back out through the main gate and saw Hou Xiaomei standing there verbally sparring with the other young women, standing alone against a crowd of dozens.

Eventually, the responsible members of the cultivator clans couldn’t stand idly by. They finally intervened and suggested to the young women that they leave. Clasping hands respectfully in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, they promised to come back to visit at a later date.

Soon, it was evening. It was quiet outside of Bai Xiaochun’s gate, but off in the distance, people from various cultivator clans were sitting cross-legged in meditation, seemingly guarding the area.

All of these people had used various means and methods to come from afar, and also had ways to keep themselves from being driven away.

Bai Xiaochun was sure that something momentous had occurred. Looking at the quiet scene outside, he eventually dragged Hou Xiaomei into the courtyard.

To outsiders, Hou Xiaomei was as fiery as a hot pepper, but as soon as Bai Xiaochun’s hand made contact with her, her face turned bright red, and she felt dizzy. Her tiny frame almost went limp as Bai Xiaochun dragged her inside.

When she spoke, her voice was as soft as the drone of a mosquito. “Big... big bro Xiaochun, there are so many people around, what are you planning to do to me...?”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, staring in shock. Seeing Hou Xiaomei’s odd countenance, he could tell that something was wrong with her, and quickly slapped her cheek. When she didn't seem to recover, he slapped her again. Hou Xiaomei immediately regained her senses.

"What’s wrong with you!?” she snapped, stamping her foot. However, realizing she had been the one in the wrong, she tossed a jade slip to him, and then turned heel and fled.

As he watched Hou Xiaomei flee into the distance, Bai Xiaochun stood there wondering what was going on. Finally, he looked down at the jade slip and scanned it with spiritual power. As he did, his eyes went wide. After scanning it again, he stood there in the courtyard, breathing heavily.

“Prestige clan....”

The jade slip had been sent to Bai Xiaochun by Hou Yunfei, with Hou Xiaomei being the messenger. The words contained within were the type that almost couldn’t be uttered aloud. They explained why all of the cultivator clans were so interested in Bai Xiaochun’s status as a Prestige disciple, and what had occurred as a result. They also explained that the Hou Clan held an intense hope that Bai Xiaochun’s descendants... would also have the blood of the Hou Clan running in their veins.

Then Bai Xiaochun thought about how Hou Xiaomei had been acting just now, and he rubbed his chin thoughtfully. Eyes sparkling, he thought, not about Hou Xiaomei, but about his own words from moments ago. Something momentous *had* occurred!

“How could I have imagined...? And here I thought the reward for my meritorious service was basically useless. I thought that being the Junior Brother of the sect leader would make me a big hero in the sect, but I never thought that being a Prestige disciple would make me so important on the outside!” He licked his lips, and soon, his heart began to beat faster.

“I could pick any Daoist partner I wanted! All of their clan resources would be at my disposal.... Finally, I have some real hope to live forever!” Chuckling mischievously, his eyes began to shine. Previously, he had been worried about how to keep up his efforts to concoct tier-2 spirit medicine. But now, people were essentially fighting over the chance to give him gifts.

“What a pity I can’t accept them all....” he murmured. But then, he was struck with inspiration.

“Wait a second! Why can’t I accept them all?!” Clearing his throat, he entered his cabin to rest for the evening, thinking the whole time about what to do next. The following morning at dawn, he leapt out of bed, trembling with excitement. After pushing open the gate of the courtyard, he found a whole host of people from various cultivator clans waiting for him.

“Fellow Daoist Bai....”

“Greetings, Fellow Daoist Bai. Your humble servant has come upon the request of our clan patriarch to offer formal greetings....”

Everyone started talking at once, filling the air with a cacophony of sound. Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and flicked his sleeve.

“Alright, enough is enough,” he said, smiling so widely that his eyes became slits. “Everyone come close. Whatever requests you have, we can talk them all out.” With that, he randomly nodded in the direction of one of the clans. The responsible member of the clan rushed forward in delight, dragging a few young women with him.

The women approached, looking a bit nervous. As for all of the other observing clans, they also seemed nervous, although for different reasons; they quickly began to transmit messages back home.

Things went on like that for the next clan, and then the next. One by one, all day. Bai Xiaochun met with dozens of them.

He didn’t choose any of the clan daughters, and yet, neither did he refuse anyone. He merely told them that he needed some time to think, and that the matter was too weighty to decide on a whim. As for all of the ‘introductory gifts,’ he didn’t refuse a single one.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, always handle all matters in a just and fair manner. Considering that I haven’t yet chosen which honorable clan to ally with in marriage, I truly am unable to accept your gifts.” Those were the words he would speak to each and every clan.

Of course, the more he spoke in such a way, the more the cultivator clans insisted that he accept their gifts. In fact, they grew even more polite. Many of them went on to say that even if no marriage resulted, they still wished to be good friends. Only then did Bai Xiaochun reluctantly accept the gifts.

Although they might be fools, the people from these cultivator clans weren’t stupid. They knew that when Bai Xiaochun said he needed to think about the matter, he was most likely just waiting to see which clan would make the best offer.

That, of course, was within the purvey of expectation. Furthermore, all of them feared that if they didn’t offer their gifts, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t even consider their clan daughter to be his Daoist partner. The result was that the next day, the crowds hadn’t thinned at all, and in fact, had grown more numerous. Furthermore, some of the cultivator clans even went so far as to say that even if their clan daughter couldn’t become Bai Xiaochun’s Daoist partner, they were still willing for her to be a maidservant to warm his bed at night. As long as she could pass on his bloodline, and he acknowledged them formally, that would be sufficient.

All of the visiting clans continued to offer more and more gifts. In fact, it got to the point where Bai Xiaochun was getting a bit nervous. Eventually, he truly wanted to refuse, and yet wasn’t able to.

“Fine, I guess I’ll accept.... Not accepting isn’t really an option, huh?” For seven or eight days in a row, he continued to receive the clans and accept their gifts. Every morning at dawn, he would walk out to find a whole host of people waiting for him.

Three more days passed. When dawn broke, Bai Xiaochun pushed open the main gate, whereupon his jaw dropped. Shockingly... not a single person could be seen. Everything was peaceful and quiet; as far as the eye could see, the area was empty.

The only things he could see were some five-colored phoenixes, flying gracefully high above. The phoenixes were the beloved pets of Elder Zhou, and often soared above Fragrant Cloud Peak around dawn. They would usually fly together in a flock, and were especially beautiful. Many disciples were jealous of them.

Bai Xiaochun rubbed his eyes and looked around. Thinking that perhaps he had opened the gate incorrectly, he went back in, closed it, and then tried again. However, the result was the same.

“What’s going on?” he thought, shocked. He quickly went off to find Hou Yunfei to ask for an explanation.

Hou Yunfei sighed and looked at Bai Xiaochun. “Last night, the sect leader issued a Dharmic decree. As your Elder Brother, he notified the cultivator clans... that according to sect rules, you can’t accept a Daoist partner within the next hundred years. Therefore... everyone had no choice but to leave.”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. Feeling very wronged, he said, “No more income.... No more marriage....”

Hou Yunfei wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. A moment later, though, he thought of something, and said, “Xiaochun, a friend of mine from Green Crest Peak told me that you and Shangguan Tianyou have a beef with each other. Is that right? Well, just be aware that Qian Dajin isn’t important at all. However you choose to deal with him, the sect will tacitly agree. But things aren’t so simple when it comes to Shangguan Tianyou!”

“What do you mean ‘not so simple?’” Bai Xiaochun asked. “Is he more important than me or something?” Having been a member of the Spirit Stream Sect for so many years, Bai Xiaochun was well aware of how the sect tried to train its disciples. They pushed them toward greatness, prohibited deadly conflicts, and encouraged both cooperation and competition. Sect rules governed basic behavior. The elders of the various mountain peaks, as well as the Peak Lords themselves, provided assistance and training. And the Hall of Justice was a looming threat to deter bad behavior. The sect essentially had all aspects under control.

Of course, considering that between the north and south banks the Spirit Stream Sect had several hundred thousand disciples, it was obviously impossible to micromanage everything. Disciples would have conflicts and fights, and certain improper attitudes were impossible to control.

However, the rewards and punishments in place were clear, and anyone who violated them would be strictly dealt with!

Bai Xiaochun had performed an incredible service for the sect, possessed profound skill with plants and vegetation, and could unleash extraordinary battle prowess. The sect was naturally aware of that, and valued him greatly. Of course, they didn’t cater to his every whim like a servant. If people insulted or provoked him, they wouldn’t leap out to protect him.... No disciple enjoyed such treatment, neither Shangguan Tianyou nor Bai Xiaochun.

Because of that, Bai Xiaochun was of the belief that Shangguan Tianyou, an arrogant, famous Chosen who other Outer Sect disciple went so far as to call Young Lord, was still not worthy of his own attention.

After a moment of thought, Hou Yunfei responded, eyes shining as he told Bai Xiaochun everything he knew: “Shangguan Tianyou has great ambitions. He hopes that one day he will be able to enter the legendary Legacy Echelon. As such, he has continuously kept his cultivation base suppressed, keeping him between the Outer and Inner Sects. When the next trial by fire for Chosen from the north and south banks comes, he wants to take first place, and enter the Inner Sect at the top. That will earn him the chance to enter the Legacy Echelon. Were it not for that, he would have long since applied for an ordinary trial by fire to enter the Inner Sect. After all, anyone who reaches the eighth level of Qi Condensation may do so.”

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun asked, “How come everyone wants to get into the Legacy Echelon? Xu Baocai told me that Zhou Xinqi, Lu Tianlei, and everyone else wants to.”

“Members of the Legacy Echelon have a similar status to Prestige disciples. However, it's a different branch within the Spirit Stream Sect. You see, the Spirit Stream Sect is different from other sects. We have two branches, one of which focuses on protecting the sect, and one of which focuses on increasing its glory and power!

“Everyone from the servants to the disciples in the third level of Qi Condensation are lumped together in one lower group. Those from the fourth to the eighth level of Qi Condensation constitute the Outer Sect. At the eighth level, you can apply for a trial by fire to enter the Inner Sect.

“If you can reach Foundation Establishment... then you can become a Foundation Establishment elder, and maybe even a Peak Lord. After two sixty-year-cycles pass, if you break through to the Gold Core level, then you can become a Prime Elder, responsible for protecting and managing the sect. That is the first branch.

“The second branch is the Legacy Echelon!

“There is only one way to get in, and that is... to break through to the Gold Core level before two sixty-year-cycles pass. From then on, you will become a tool to ensure that our sect earns an even greater position in the cultivation world, that it acquires... even more powerful resources and wealth! Anyone who takes first place in the Chosen battles will be in line to enter the Legacy Echelon. I'm not really sure about the exact details, but I do know that there are rules about the whole thing!

“The only thing is, reaching the Gold Core level before two sixty-year-cycles pass is very, very difficult.... Of the members of the previous generation, the only person who has even come close is Peak Lord Li Qinghou. That's why the sect favors him so much!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. This was his first time hearing an explanation of the Legacy Echelon, which also gave him a much clearer understanding of the sect itself. Soon, he left, and as he made his way off, he continued to ponder the matter.

“Legacy Echelon...?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0072 awe-chapter-73

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun left Hou Yunfei’s residence and returned to his own courtyard. He looked up at the sky, then around at the surrounding scenery, and thought about the cultivator clans. In his opinion, his Elder Brother Sect Leader had acted a bit domineering, and yet... even though it was now impossible to collect any more gifts, at least there was no need to return the ones he had already taken.

“Yeah! It’s not my fault! It's the fault of Elder Brother Sect Leader’s Dharmic decree!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit better. After organizing all of the gifts, he went down to the market to buy a large quantity of medicinal plant ingredients for tier-2 spirit medicines. Then, he returned to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion to continue his cultivation and concocting work.

The truth was that originally, Zheng Yuandong didn’t want to get involved in the matter with Bai Xiaochun and the cultivator clans. However, the events had unfolded in shocking fashion. The previous nine Prestige disciples had all been conferred their titles posthumously, after being killed in battle. Furthermore, all of them had been members of various other cultivator clans. Although none of them had ever had any direct descendants, they all had relatives among their various clans. Because of that, no problems had ever arisen, and their clans had smoothly transitioned into being Prestige clans.

Of course, the sect highly valued and also protected such clans.

But now, Bai Xiaochun was a living Prestige disciple, a terrifying status to say the least. At first, it hadn’t been obvious, and time had simply passed by. Zheng Yuandong and many others never thought much about what it meant to have a living Prestige scion in their midst, and how enticing such a person would be to the cultivator clans.

But then, the cultivator clans began to show up in great numbers. At first, Zheng Yuandong had merely observed the goings-on. As far as he was concerned, it didn't really matter which clan Bai Xiaochun picked. How could he have ever imagined that with all the competition, the clans would have gone to the lengths of offering their clan daughters as handmaidens, just to acquire someone with Bai Xiaochun’s bloodline?

Zheng Yuandong could only imagine what would happen if Bai Xiaochun gave in to the temptation. If that happened... it wouldn’t be long before he could sire hundreds of descendants. According to the clan rules, all first generation descendants of a Prestige disciple were automatically allowed to enter the Inner Sect, and would receive special treatment and training. Furthermore.... after those descendants began to propagate, there would be hundreds of branches of the Prestige clan. Within a few hundred years, the entire Spirit Stream Sect would be filled with the Bai Clan.... The final results would be grave indeed.

In addition to all that... as long as Bai Xiaochun remained alive, all he had to do was continue to sire offspring, and the matter would never end. He would become a living nightmare for the sect.

Because of such considerations, Zheng Yuandong held an emergency meeting with the sect elders, including the prime elders. Their joint decision was that Bai Xiaochun could not accept a Daoist partner for a hundred years. Although it was a bit overbearing, Zheng Yuandong felt that there was no other option. He didn’t want to bet everything on Bai Xiaochun’s ability to resist temptation. He could only hope that after a hundred years, Bai Xiaochun would grow up and be a bit more mature.

Time passed. Soon, a year had gone by.

During that time, it was almost as if Bai Xiaochun had gone missing from the south bank. Few people ever saw him. He spent all of his time concocting medicine and practicing cultivation. He rarely left the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, where he worked hard at producing tier-2 spirit medicine.

His cultivation base had also slowly made progress. Soon, he was in the middle of the seventh level of Qi Condensation. Furthermore, he resolved one problem after another when it came to concocting tier-2 spirit medicine.

The truth was that most other journeyman apothecaries at his level would have long since concocted tier-2 medicines. But Bai Xiaochun was stubborn, and refused to start concocting another batch without first resolving each and every problem he found in the previous batch.

Eventually, after an entire year, he was finally convinced that he had resolved all of the issues regarding the concoction of tier-2 spirit medicine. With all the problems gone, he began yet another batch.

“Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills!” he exclaimed, eyes bloodshot. They were a tier-2 medicinal pill suitable for the eighth level of Qi Condensation and under. Following the recipe precisely, he selected numerous types of plants and vegetation, organized them carefully, and then began to feed them into the pill furnace.

After carefully adjusting the earthflame, he kept a close eye on the pill furnace, occasionally adjusting the spiritual energy he fed inside. After six hours passed, the pill furnace suddenly began to shake. A strong medicinal aroma wafted out, and Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to shine brightly. Leaning toward the pill furnace, he slapped it on the side, whereupon three red medicinal pills flew out.

"It worked!" he exclaimed excitedly. Grabbing the three pills, he looked them over. But then, his eyes went wide. "Eee? Hold on a second. Something's not right. According to the description, Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills are supposed to be violet. How come these ones are red?"

After scratching his head for a moment, he lifted the pills up to his nose and inhaled deeply. The medicinal aroma was strong, and contained plenty of spiritual energy. However, the smell was somewhat odd, and considering that they were the incorrect color, he didn't dare to consume them.

Sitting there thoughtfully, he thought back to all of the various steps he had taken during the concocting process. Two hours later, his eyes snapped open, and he laughed bitterly.

"I put in a bit too much superagate flower pollen. That tainted the rest of the medicinal plant ingredients, producing this strange side-effect." With that, he placed the three red medicinal pills off to the side, and once again began to concoct.

This time, when the pill furnace began to shake, and the medicinal aroma spread out, a single violet medicinal pill flew out. After examining it closely, an expression of deep satisfaction appeared on Bai Xiaochun's face.

He quickly began another batch. In the following days, he continued to produce more batches, until he had a few dozen Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills. That having been accomplished, he sat down off to the side, exhausted. After some rest, he produced the red pills and looked at them with some hesitation. As far as he was concerned, each and every one of the pills he had just concocted was very valuable, and furthermore, when it came to ingredients, he was already starting to run short.

“According to the concocting instructions, as long as the pill is formed, it counts as a success. These red Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills have a bit too much superagate flower pollen, which caused their color to change. However, all that means is that they will have lost some effectiveness.” After a moment of hesitation, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a green bamboo needle.

It was an item he had acquired from the sect for use in medicine concocting, which could be used to make a general assessment of whether any given medicinal pill was toxic or not. After carefully inserting the needle into one of the red medicinal pills, he waited for a moment, then pulled it back out. The bamboo needle looked exactly the same as before, as opposed to being black.

“Not toxic!” he said with a sigh of relief. However, out of caution, he still chose not to consume any of the red pills. Instead, he held them in hand as he left the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. Outside in the dawn air, he began to walk down one of the small paths that wound through the sect.

Up above, he could see a flock of five-colored phoenixes gliding elegantly through the air, occasionally making piercing cries that echoed out. Ignoring the phoenixes, he headed toward one of the local spirit tail chicken farms, where he acquired a spirit tail chicken. After returning to his courtyard, he put the chicken down and then tossed one of the red medicinal pills out in front of it.

The spirit tail chicken had originally been sitting there looking a bit tired. But then it caught sight of the red medicinal pill. A tremor ran through it, and it suddenly leapt to its feet, rushed forward and pecked down toward the pill.

However, it was at this exact moment that an intensely powerful cry rang out from up above. Then, a powerful wind gusted by, and before the spirit tail chicken could reach the pill, it was blown off of its feet.

A bit frightened, Bai Xiaochun leaped backward. At the same time, the five-colored phoenixes closed in from up above, eyes wide, fighting amongst themselves the entire way. Finally, one of the strongest among the group, a male, succeeded in shoving aside his companions, whereupon he snapped up the medicinal pill and swallowed it down.

Looking with contempt at the spirit tail chicken that had been blown off to the side, the phoenix then flew up gracefully into the air. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. Eyes wide, he could do nothing but watch as the phoenix ascended upward.

However, after flying only a short way, the elegant phoenix began to shake, and then let out a protracted wail. His eyes turned bright red as they filled with veins of blood. All of his feathers suddenly stood on end, making him look like a fireball that was about to explode.

Even more shocking was that the powerful male phoenix’s muscles began to swell and ripple. Cracking sounds emanated out as the entire phoenix grew larger. Most notable of all was how the feathered area between his two legs suddenly bulged with something hard and rod-like....

A very peculiar expression could be seen on the face of the male phoenix as he looked around at the other phoenixes.

The other phoenixes trembled, and were about to scatter, when the male phoenix charged madly toward them. Next, miserable shrieks began to ring out.

Bai Xiaochun stood there in his courtyard, looking on aghast as the bulging male phoenix... violated all of the other phoenixes. Moments later, unsated, the phoenix turned in his direction, his eyes burning just as red as before, his entire body seemingly bursting with flames.

Terrified, Bai Xiaochun fled, barely able to hold back from screaming.

Thankfully, the phoenix was actually targeting, not him, but the spirit tail chicken....

Soon after, he watched as the male phoenix flew back toward the top of the mountain, clamoring loudly the entire way. Only after that did Bai Xiaochun wipe the sweat off of his brow.

“Simply terrifying....” he thought, looking down at the remaining two medicinal pills he held in hand. “Just what kind of medicinal pills are these!?!?” His heart began to pound as he realized that they must be some type of aphrodisiac. Clearly... they were also very effective.

**

That day was a day that would never be forgotten by the disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak....

All birds on the mountain, regardless of what type they were, were ravaged by Elder Zhou’s maddened phoenix.... Countless disciples watched as one bird after another let out miserable shrieks. Although the birds tried as best they could to escape, none of them were a match for Elder Zhou’s phoenix. None managed to flee....

The villainous phoenix didn't even spare the spirit tail chickens, much less the other birds that Elder Zhou had raised. Anything on the mountain with wings... experienced a living nightmare that day.

All of the disciples were talking about the matter, and their hearts trembled. Soon, word spread to Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak. Some people even came over to see the miraculous events which were unfolding for themselves.

“Did you hear that over on Fragrant Cloud Peak, one of Elder Zhou's phoenixes went mad? It started pouncing on any bird it saw....”

“I saw it with my own eyes. What a savage phoenix! It didn’t even spare the passing magpies....”

“Just what was Elder Zhou doing, huh? How could he let his phoenix act like that...?”

“It was really infuriating, you know? That phoenix seemed really turned on! It pounced on some of those birds over and over again. It was brutal!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the talk going around the sect, he began to tremble, and even felt a bit guilty.

“It isn’t my fault....” he said to himself. “It’s really not my fault.... I was trying to give that pill to the spirit tail chicken.... That phoenix stole it!” Feeling wronged, he hurried back to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. After some thought, he came to the conclusion that there was no way anyone would figure out what had happened.

There he sat in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, sighing as he pulled out the remaining two red medicinal pills, which he then looked at thoughtfully.

“These medicinal pills are actually really powerful. Maybe I could use them as trump cards in a fight.... If I ever run into some wild beasts in the future, I'll have nothing to fear.

“Well, if I want to use them as trump cards, then I better create another pill which can incite intense desire in females. The two can complement each other.” Bai Xiaochun could well imagine how two such pills could work together. If he encountered some dangerous beast in the future, he would merely throw a pill in one direction and then run off in the other.

It was an exciting prospect, but the downside was that he had no medicinal formula to work with. After pondering the matter for a while, and considering all of the various types of plants and vegetation that he knew about, he mentally prepared his own medicine formula.

About the time that Bai Xiaochun was considering how to create his own medicine formula, Elder Zhou returned to his residence at the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak. There, he stared at the ravaged and listless phoenixes, and then turned his head to see the male phoenix off in the distance, pouncing on a spirit tail chicken. Miserable shrieks then began to ring out.

Elder Zhou’s mind almost exploded. Trembling violently, he stood there feeling as if the entire world were spinning around him. Enraged, he cried out, “Who did this!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0073 awe-chapter-74

Elder Zhou’s voice filled the entirety of Fragrant Cloud Peak, echoing out in all directions. Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of countless disciples as they heard his words. After all, the events of that day had shaken everyone....

The other elders on Fragrant Cloud Peak were also shocked by the ghastly events. The male phoenix was one of Elder Zhou’s beloved pets, and therefore, no one was willing to even get near it. If the maddened beast were to accidentally be harmed, Elder Zhou would certainly be incensed.

Most importantly... Elder Zhou was the only person on Fragrant Cloud Peak who enjoyed raising fine birds, and considering it was his personal affair, no one was willing to interfere.

As for the spirit tail chickens... Li Qinghou was away, and his apprentice Zhou Xinqi had little power to do anything. Besides, the male phoenix was especially powerful, leaving Zhou Xinqi with no other option than to observe from afar, her face flushed, not daring to even step forward.

When Elder Zhou saw what was happening, he couldn’t stop shaking. His heart twinged as he watched the clamoring phoenix, and when he looked around at the rest of the dispirited and listless birds, he wished to cry, and yet could find no tears.

Considering Elder Zhou’s skill in the Dao of medicine, he could tell at a glance that someone had given the phoenix some sort of medicine.

“I’ll definitely find out who was responsible for this!!”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was in his workstation in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. Although he was mostly cut off from the sounds outside, Elder Zhou’s enraged roar reached his ears, and his heart trembled. Then an outraged expression appeared on his face as he contemplated how he was truly being unfairly accused....

He could only hope that it would be impossible to connect the matter to him, and that Elder Zhou wouldn't come after him.... Scowling, he began to recall the exact steps he had gone through to create the aphrodisiac pill, and began to contemplate how to make it even more effective.

After several days of study and contemplation, he went out a few times to purchase medicinal plants, and even spent some merit points to acquire a few other rare ingredients. Finally, he returned to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion to attempt to concoct the pill.

Soon, explosions began to ring out. In some ways, it was true that Bai Xiaochun had already created his own medicine formula back in the trial by fire to become a journeyman apothecary. However, that was more a situation of enlightenment and adjustments to an existing formula.

It was different from the current situation, in which was truly inventing something new. The levels of difficulty couldn’t even be compared. In fact, based on Bai Xiaochun’s skill in the Dao of medicine at the time of his promotion to journeyman apothecary, he would never have been able to do something like this. But now, after a year of experience and further research into the Dao of medicine, he was more than ready to make such an attempt.

Although he wasn’t fully proficient, he had already begun to walk a path that other journeyman apothecaries couldn’t even imagine. It was a path that only master apothecaries could attempt to understand.

Time passed. Half a month later, Bai Xiaochun was still in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, immersed in his attempt to create a medicine formula. After numerous attempts, he was beginning to shape his ideas into one concise concept.

Even as he excitedly began to concoct another batch, Elder Zhou stood atop Fragrant Cloud Peak, a pained expression on his face as he fed a medicinal pill to a weak, listless phoenix.

“Relax and recover,” he said. “All those things you did weren’t in accord with your true desires. None of it was your fault. Just wait until you’ve recovered, and I’ll take you to find the person who fed that pill to you. I don’t care who it is, I will see to it that he pays the price!!” A brutal gleam appeared in Elder Zhou’s eyes. During the past half month, he had conducted a thorough investigation of Fragrant Cloud Peak, and had even made inquiries in the other mountain peaks of the south bank.

Unfortunately, he hadn’t turned up a single clue. The only option he had next was to wait until the phoenix recovered, and then take it to search for the culprit.

During the course of his investigation, he had come to find that Fragrant Cloud Peak... had become a place that winged birds avoided like the plague....

Because of the tragic events which had occurred half a month before, it was as if the air above the mountain had been filled with a shocking aroma. Any bird who smelled it wouldn't dare to draw near. Even the spirit tail chickens spent their days trembling and scared out of their minds. The disciples who cared for the chickens could only scowl miserably, not daring to give voice to their anger.

As the matter festered, a whole series of rumors began to spread....

“Do you remember what happened with the birds a few weeks ago? I heard that the bird in question ate some of Elder Zhou’s medicine. That’s why it changed so suddenly.... The only thing I don’t understand is that Elder Zhou is still pretty young. Why would he be concocting medicine like that...?”

“Shhh... keep your voice down! Do you know why Elder Zhou likes to raise birds...? There’s a very tragic secret involved. The truth is that for his entire life, Elder Zhou has never had a Daoist partner! Ahem... you know what I mean, right?”

“Heavens! How deranged! Could it be that because that bird couldn’t take any more of Elder Zhou’s torment, it finally went mad?!?!”

The more the rumors spread, the more exaggerated they became. Eventually, all of the disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak were spreading them. When each person passed the news along, they couldn’t help but add details from their own imagination, until countless versions of the story could be heard.

When Elder Zhou caught wind of it, he got so mad he very nearly coughed up a mouthful of blood. He was of a mind to put an end to the rumors, but no matter how he tried to explain things to people, they would just look at him oddly. Although they quickly put respectful expressions on their faces, his explanations did no good, and the rumors continued to fly....

Another half month passed. One day, Elder Zhou appeared, bristling with a murderous aura, his expression unprecedentedly ferocious. The wave of his hand sent the recovered male phoenix flying out. Surprisingly, it was just as large as it had been before, and was actually a bit stronger. Clearly, it had actually profited from its previous disaster....

When Elder Zhou saw that, he felt a bit better. However, the anger in his heart still needed an outlet. He had seen the fear in the eyes of countless disciples in the sect over the last month; even members of his own generation cleared their throats in his presence, and wore odd expressions on their faces. And then there were the rumors, which left him seething in fury. At long last, he was able to bring his phoenix out into the open.

“Find me the person who gave you that medicine!!” he said through gritted teeth.

The phoenix let out a piercing cry as it flew up into the air. Elder Zhou followed along, his murderous aura growing more and more intense. Quite a few disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak were paying attention to the goings-on, and some of them even began to follow from a distance.

Soon, it was obvious that the male phoenix was flying toward Bai Xiaochun’s residence. When it arrived, it began to fly in circles up above. Then it turned and glanced at Elder Zhou, looking very maligned as it let out whimpering calls. Apparently, it was telling Elder Zhou that this was the place where it had consumed the medicinal pill.

When the disciples who had followed along saw what was happening, their eyes went wide. But then they realized who the residence belonged to, and they blinked oddly.

“That looks like... Sect Uncle Bai’s residence.”

“Yeah, it’s definitely Sect Uncle Bai’s....”

“Hmm. If the matter were blamed on anyone else, I might not believe it. But considering we're talking about Sect Uncle Bai... it actually makes sense!”

Elder Zhou hovered there in midair, trembling, eyes crimson. Gnashing his teeth, he growled, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

Now that he had found the culprit of the disaster, he scanned the area with divine sense. Having found that the residence was empty, he waved his right hand, producing a jade slip that, based on his authority in the sect, could track Bai Xiaochun down wherever he was.

Soon, he found that Bai Xiaochun was in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion.

Normally, Elder Zhou was a calm person, but right now his face twisted with ferocious anger as he led his phoenix toward the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. The surrounding disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak were starting to get excited. They began to send messages to their friends, and soon word was spreading throughout the mountain.

“Hurry up! The culprit who drove that bird crazy has been found out!”

“Sect Uncle Bai did it!!”

Countless disciples, even some from the Inner Sect, all heard the news. Trembling with excitement, they hurried out to see what they could see.

The feelings of torment they had experienced because of Bai Xiaochun now turned into anticipation. In fact, the more torment they had experienced, the more excited they were now. Chen Zi’ang rushed out, looking thrilled. Zhao Yiduo raced out at about the same time. The two of them exchanged pleased glances, and then raced in Bai Xiaochun’s direction as quickly as possible.

Among the crowd was one particularly burly man, whose cheeks were wet with tears. It was none other than the self-proclaimed Lord Wolf, Liu Ergou. Throwing his head back, he roared, “Judgment comes!”

Even as all of Fragrant Cloud Peak was thrown into a commotion, Bai Xiaochun was there in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, looking excitedly at the pill furnace in front of him. It was trembling, and a strong medicinal aroma wafted out from it as several white medicinal pills appeared.

These pills currently had no names, and were not meant to be consumed by humans. In fact, if you pushed down on them too hard, they would collapse into dust. They had only one use... to make male animals incredibly attractive to whoever consumed the pill.

Bai Xiaochun had filled them with several powerful stimulants, and had even gone to the trouble of procuring some spirit creature ingredients from the north bank. The cost was high, but he had succeeded.

The pills were not weak by any means. Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure exactly how powerful they were, he could well guess, and was sure that they weren't inferior at all. Actually, to ensure that they were as powerful as possible, he had even performed spirit enhancements on all of the ingredients before using them.

Face bright with anticipation, he looked down at the white medicinal pills, trying to imagine the results of using the pills in concert with the aphrodisiac pills. He couldn’t hold back from laughing.

“This will be the Pheromone Pill. That sounds good. And the red one from before will be the Aphrodisiac Pill!” After a bit more thought, he performed threefold spirit enhancements on all of them.

In the briefest of moments, the medicinal pills completely changed. No longer were they low-grade, but instead, superior-grade!!

As for their medicinal efficacy... Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone at the mere thought of it.

“Hmph! Now it doesn’t matter what kind of beast I face, from now on, when I say jump, they’ll jump!” Coughing dryly, he put the medicinal pills away. Feeling very proud of himself, he was just about to go outside and take a walk when...

He heard an enraged roar echoing down from the sky.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0074 awe-chapter-75

The shocking roar of fury caused even the trees in the area to tremble. Leaves fell, to be picked up by the raging wind, which swept them to and fro.

When Bai Xiaochun heard the enraged cry, he was so scared he almost jumped straight up into the air. He looked up, and saw the white-haired Elder Zhou hovering up above, veins bulging out all over his neck and face.

Elder Zhou seemed like a wild beast, and in fact, actually looked quite similar to the way the phoenix had a month ago....

“Bai Xiaochun, it was you that harmed my phoenix. On this day, even if Li Qinghou tries to interfere, I will teach you a harsh and bitter lesson!” With another thunderous roar, he extended his right hand and made a vicious grasping gesture in Bai Xiaochun's direction.

That gesture caused the air around Bai Xiaochun to begin to solidify. Bai Xiaochun trembled inwardly and let out a miserable shriek. A silver glow sprang out from his skin, and at the same time, a white light appeared further out as he activated the Divine Crane Shield. From a distance, it almost looked like an eggshell.

“He’s trying to kill me! He’s trying to kill me!!” As soon as the light enveloped him, he ignored the pressure crushing down from Elder Zhou and unhesitatingly shot off at the highest speed possible.

“Eee?” murmured Elder Zhou. Although he hadn’t used his full strength, considering he was in the early Foundation Establishment stage, even a fraction of his power should have been enough to prevent any Qi Condensation cultivator from breaking free.

Looking at the light-wreathed Bai Xiaochun fleeing off into the distance, he roared, “Bai Xiaochun, do you really think I don’t know that you were out to harm me even when you were back in the Ovens? I know that the ginseng root that was meant for my soup was eaten by you, all the way down to the spirit rootlets! I also know that it was your idea to make the bowls shallower. And now you went and fed some medicine to my phoenix! On this very day, I will ensure that you come to understand the severe consequences of stirring up trouble in our sect!”

With that he gave chase.

The truth was that all of the elders in the sect knew about the things that went on in the Ovens.

“You can’t blame me!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked miserably. “That bird of yours stole my medicinal pill! I really had nothing to do with it!” Looking back over his shoulder, he saw the overly aggressive Elder Zhou, his cultivation base unfathomable. Bai Xiaochun immediately pushed forward with as much speed as possible, as if his life depended on it, rapidly transforming into nothing more than a set of afterimages.

Up in midair, the male phoenix heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, and his feathers immediately stood on end. Letting out a miserable squawk, he pointed his wings at Bai Xiaochun, and if he could talk, he would obviously be crying hysterically to everyone present that it was Bai Xiaochun who had given him the medicine. He most certainly hadn't stolen it!!

"Y-you...!" Seeing the phoenix falsely accuse him made Bai Xiaochun feel worse than before. How could he ever have imagined that, given how smart he was, he would one day be framed by a bird?

Hatred filled his heart. Looking at the bird, he decided firmly in his heart that once this matter was resolved, he would ensure that bird felt what it was like to be humiliated. The bird might be a male, but Bai Xiaochun would find an even manlier bird to teach it a lesson.

"How dare you quibble over meaningless details!" Elder Zhou said, picking up speed. As he shot toward Bai Xiaochun, he waved his sleeve, causing a massive power to shoot through the air. When it landed on Bai Xiaochun, however, he merely staggered a bit, and then picked up speed as if nothing had happened.

The scene caused Elder Zhou's eyes to widen. He had used enough power to send any other Outer Sect disciple tumbling to the ground, and yet Bai Xiaochun treated it as if it were nothing.

Bai Xiaochun was also shocked. The blow just now had shaken him down to his teeth, and left him trembling. Looking back at Elder Zhou, he quickly produced the Golden Crow Sword and poured some spiritual power into it. The golden crow materialized, and Bai Xiaochun transformed into a golden beam of light that shot up into the air.

Elder Zhou snorted coldly, and also flew up, joined by his phoenix.

All of the observing disciples in the area felt quite pleased at the ability to revel in Bai Xiaochun's misfortune. Seeing him flee madly for his life enabled them all to release a bit of the anger which had been festering inside of them.

Wide smiles blossomed on the faces of Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo, and Liu Ergou, the so-called Lord Wolf, was so happy that tears streamed down his face.

“The heavens do have eyes!!” he murmured.

Flying through the air over Fragrant Cloud Peak, Bai Xiaochun let out a miserable cry. Anyone who wasn’t watching what was happening but heard that scream would be completely shocked.

“Elder Zhou, your bird’s lying! I’m telling the truth, and he’s making stuff up!” Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, but no tears would come. He stood atop the golden crow, pushing forward with everything he could muster.

“Shut up!” Elder Zhou roared. It was bad enough that Bai Xiaochun was constantly saying all kinds of things about his bird, but even worse, there were plenty of people who could hear it, and all of them had odd expressions on their faces. Elder Zhou's right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, causing a blast of air to shoot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“But it’s true! Your bird is falsely accusing me!” Bai Xiaochun just wanted to resolve the situation, and yet, the blast of air continued to close in, leaving him trembling in fear. Somehow pushing forward with even more speed, he managed to avoid the blast, and it smashed a sizeable hole into a nearby boulder.

Bai Xiaochun looked over his shoulder at the hole, and his scalp went numb. Finally, he decided to call upon his most powerful backer, “I'm the Junior Brother of the Sect Leader! I'm the apprentice of Daoist Master Spiritsieve!”

“Nobody can help you now!” Elder Zhou said, glaring. The truth was that he was actually losing a bit of face by personally chasing after Bai Xiaochun. What was even worse was that he hadn’t even touched Bai Xiaochun, who was fleeing like a rabbit whose tail had been stepped on. It was truly a miserable sight.

Somewhere on Fragrant Cloud Peak, Xu Baocai looked up at what was happening, mixed emotions on his face. Of course, he wasn’t worried about Bai Xiaochun. Rather, he felt bad for Elder Zhou, and couldn’t help but think back to his own past.

“Stop running, Bai Xiaochun!!” Elder Zhou cried, closing in like a powerful roc. Next to him, his phoenix continued to let out piercing cries, and occasionally pointed at Bai Xiaochun with his wings.

“I'm a Prestige disciple!” Bai Xiaochun screamed. “I've shed blood for the sect! I’ve performed incredible service!!” As he fled for his life, his words echoed out even to Violet Cauldron Peak. Many people there looked up and saw Bai Xiaochun in full flight, and strange expressions quickly filled their faces. When they realized what was happening, they couldn’t hold back from laughing.

“That title is given to the dead,” Elder Zhou growled. “I'm going to make you into a true Prestige disciple!” The truth was that he didn’t really plan to kill Bai Xiaochun. He just wanted to teach him a very hard lesson. Hoping to scare him, he waved his hand again, sending out another blast of wind, which caused a vortex to spring up around Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun heard Elder Zhou’s words, and then saw the wind vortex appear, he screamed even harder than before. He poured all of the spiritual power he could muster into the Golden Crow Sword. Bai Xiaochun burst out from within the vortex, surrounded by golden light, shooting all the way to the midway point between Fragrant Cloud Peak and Mount Daoseed. It was only then that the light began to fade.

Silver light glittered around him as he charged onward, screaming. He was well aware that Li Qinghou wasn’t in the sect at the moment, and that the only person who could save him was his Elder Brother Sect Leader, which was why he was now heading toward Mount Daoseed.

Elder Zhou was inwardly shocked that Bai Xiaochun had been able to dodge his attacks so many times, and was now sure that this was one of the reasons he'd been able to make it out alive when being pursued by the Luochen Clan.

However, considering that there were so many people watching, it left Elder Zhou with little face, and only served to fuel his anger. Unleashing all of his cultivation base, he shot after Bai Xiaochun once again.

“Elder Brother Sect Leader, save me!” Bai Xiaochun wailed at the top of his lungs. Whistling through the air at top speed, he continued to evade Elder Zhou as he headed toward Mount Daoseed. His incredible agility made him very slippery.

Of course, if Elder Zhou truly unleashed all of his Foundation Establishment divine abilities and techniques, he would probably have been able to pin Bai Xiaochun down. However, all he wanted to do was teach him a lesson. If he started using magical techniques, and didn’t reign in their power perfectly, he could very well deliver a fatal blow.

However, at the moment, he couldn’t even hit Bai Xiaochun at all, and yet, Bai Xiaochun was screaming miserably, which caused Elder Zhou to get even more angry. He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing dark clouds to form in the sky above. Thunder crashed as lightning suddenly shot down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were as round as saucers. The terrifying power he sensed within the lightning left his mind somewhat blank. Eyes bloodshot, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then pointed out. Instantly, violet qi appeared above his head, which shot toward the lightning.

Elder Zhou was astonished. He’d set out to simply scare Bai Xiaochun, and although the lightning seemed like an attack, he’d aimed it to land next to Bai Xiaochun, not on him. But now, Bai Xiaochun was actually fighting back against it, causing Elder Zhou to suddenly try to reign the lightning in. Unfortunately, he couldn’t stop all of it.

Violet qi swirled up from Bai Xiaochun to meet the lightning, and as it did, the image of a cauldron appeared. When it slammed into the lightning, massive rumbling sounds echoed out, shaking everything in the area. The violet qi scattered, and as for the lightning, it dimmed by about half before slamming into the ground.

Bai Xiaochun’s face went pale, and he let out another plaintive scream.

“Save me, Elder Brother! Save me, Master! Oh that the spirit of my Master in the heavens would save me!!”

Elder Zhou stopped in place in midair, looking at Bai Xiaochun in surprise. Just now, he had managed to reduce the power of the lightning by about half, but even the remaining bit should have been enough to seriously injure any Qi Condensation cultivator. And yet, other than causing Bai Xiaochun's face to go pale, and sending his qi and blood into chaos, it had done little else.

"That was... Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning," Elder Zhou murmured to himself. "Du Lingfei and Hou Yunfei both said that Bai Xiaochun had gained enlightenment of Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, but that level of power exceeds the seventh level of Qi Condensation. The battle prowess this kid can unleash with that technique is incredible!"

A strange light gleamed in Elder Zhou's eyes. Now that he realized Bai Xiaochun was a Chosen of this caliber, some of his anger was mitigated. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun's ear-splitting screaming left him unsure of whether to laugh or cry. With a cold snort, he once again gave chase.

"I don't care if the phoenix was at fault, Bai Xiaochun was the main cause. This kid is stubborn and mischievous; I need to take the chance to scare him into restraint."

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0075 awe-chapter-76

Moments ago, the Foundation Establishment cultivators of the three mountain peaks had been looking on, smiling with the realization that Elder Zhou was simply trying to frighten Bai Xiaochun. But then Bai Xiaochun suddenly fought back against the lightning, and their expressions flickered. Many were about to intervene, but then they realized that the lightning didn’t harm him at all.

Strange gleams appeared in their eyes.

“This kid is extraordinary!”

“No wonder the Luochen Clan couldn’t chase him down and kill him! He has some very unique abilities!”

“This young scion of ours might just be on the same level as Shangguan Tianyou. He’s clearly surpassed Lu Tianlei and Zhou Xinqi already!”

As they looked on, nodding inwardly, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong stood atop Mount Daoseed, watching the situation unfold with a strange look in his eyes. Even as Bai Xiaochun cried out at the top of his lungs, Zheng Yuandong was using divine sense to watch everything.

He was shocked by what he saw Bai Xiaochun doing. Instead of immediately interfering, he waited, hoping to see Bai Xiaochun show off his full potential. Eventually, he began to nod with admiration. Finally, he flickered into motion, appearing directly in front of the madly-fleeing Bai Xiaochun.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw Zheng Yuandong, he cried out, “Dear Elder Brother Sect Leader, Elder Zhou is trying to kill me! My poor little life is on the line!!” Even as the words left his mouth, he dove behind Zheng Yuandong to hide.

Zheng Yuandong coughed dryly at Bai Xiaochun’s woeful appearance. Smiling wryly, he looked up at the incoming Elder Zhou, who was glaring fiercely at Bai Xiaochun. A moment later, Elder Zhou came to a stop in front of him, where he clasped hands in greeting.

These two men were wily old foxes, and as soon as their eyes met, they both knew what the other was thinking. Both of them were well aware that Bai Xiaochun’s presence meant that the sect had another fearfully talented person in its ranks. That was something far more important than the trifling incident with the phoenix.

If Li Qinghou were in the sect, things would have been easier to keep under control. But with him gone, no one in the sect could really control Bai Xiaochun. That was especially true considering his recent achievements, coupled with the fact that he was a Prestige disciple and the Junior Brother of the sect leader.

Zheng Yuandong was fairly certain that if he tried to punish Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun would simply go to the portrait of his Master to weep and complain.

“Sect Leader,” said Elder Zhou, “please pay no heed to this affair and hand Bai Xiaochun over to me immediately!” With that, Elder Zhou glared at Bai Xiaochun, chuckling cruelly.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp immediately went numb, and he began to explain, “Your bird--”

As soon as Elder Zhou heard the word ‘bird’, his face began to turn green. Bai Xiaochun immediately bit his tongue and turned his pleading gaze to Zheng Yuandong.

“Elder Brother,” he said, “I’ve shed my own blood for the sect, I’ve performed great services....”

Zheng Yuandong’s face twitched, and he coughed dryly.

“Elder Zhou,” he said, “let’s drop this matter. Xiaochun might be a bit naughty and mischievous, but he’s a good person. How about this. If anything like this happens again in the future, I won’t intervene at all, and you can handle the matter any way you see fit.”

Elder Zhou looked very torn, but eventually he nodded begrudgingly. Then he took his leave, casting one more glare at Bai Xiaochun as he did.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and slowly rose to his feet. He looked a bit suspicious; he was an intelligent person, and the way things had turned out seemed very sudden. Something seemed off.... However, he wasn’t completely sure of what it all meant, so he looked over at the sect leader.

Zheng Yuandong looked back at him. “Those phoenixes were raised by Elder Zhou’s former Daoist partner,” he said coolly. “There was a battle once outside the sect in which that Daoist partner died in the process of saving Elder Zhou’s life. Elder Zhou himself barely survived. The pain of losing his Daoist partner harmed his mind, and he nearly went insane.

“Most people think he’s merely obsessed with plants and vegetation. What they don't know is that without that obsession, he wouldn’t be able to suppress the insanity within. He uses that obsession to stave off the madness.

“In the future, don’t provoke him. If he really goes mad, I might not be able to save you in time.”

Hearing this, Bai Xiaochun’s spine tingled in fear, and yet, he couldn't help but feel a bit sorry for Elder Zhou. Nodding vigorously, he said, “I really didn't give it the medicine. His thing… er, his bird really did steal it from me.”

Zheng Yuandong patted Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder. “Karma exists everywhere. In this case, the Karma was sown by you, so there’s no need to think too much about the details.” With that, Zheng Yuandong turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun sighed at how unlucky he was, and began to contemplate ways to avoid Elder Zhou in the future. Then he cautiously returned to Fragrant Cloud Peak, where he went into seclusion in his residence.

As for the thieving bird, Bai Xiaochun decided that considering how he needed to avoid provoking Elder Zhou, it would be best to cast aside any thoughts of revenge.

“True men don’t fight with birds!” he told himself to make the decision easier to stomach. Sitting there in his log cabin, he produced several of the Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills he had concocted. Thinking back to how Elder Zhou had attacked him during the chase, his eyes gleamed with envy.

“Foundation Establishment cultivators are pretty incredible,” he thought, sighing. “He almost made me cough up some blood. Thankfully I have my Undying Skin.” With another glance at the Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills, he looked around furtively to make sure he was alone, and then produced the turtle-wok to perform some spirit enhancements.

Soon, all of the pills had received threefold enhancements, and contained faint silver designs on their surfaces. Bai Xiaochun sighed again.

“If only I had some fuel to make four-colored flame." Based on some discreet inquiries he'd made earlier, he knew that the sect did have fuel to make four-colored flame. However, it wasn’t very plentiful, and required an incredible amount of merit points to acquire. With the exception of certain unique medicines, or certain cultivation practices related to fire, it was rare to ever need four-colored flame.

It was generally impossible to procure such fuel from the market at the bottom of the mountain; the only place it usually appeared was at auction, and even then, it wasn’t commonly seen.

“I'm running low on spirit tails too,” he thought. After some more thought, he finally popped one of the Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills into his mouth and began to cultivate.

Days passed. Bai Xiaochun practiced cultivation the entire time, occasionally consuming Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills as he did. His cultivation rapidly progressed until eventually, he ran out of pills.

It happened late at night, when the clouds filled the sky obscuring the moon. Inside, rumbling could be heard, not within the cabin itself, but inside Bai Xiaochun’s body.

He began to shake as spiritual power built up inside of him, becoming a vast, dragon-like river that raged through all of his qi vessels.

After completing a full cycle within him, his overall spiritual power expanded, surpassing his previous limit significantly. Filth oozed out from the pores all over his body, and an invigorating sense of buoyancy filled him. Enlivened, his eyes snapped open, and they shone like beacons in the dark of night.

“The eighth level of Qi Condensation!” Laughing heartily, he rushed out of his courtyard to wash off.

He had been in the Spirit Stream Sect for years now, and although he was a lot tougher, he hadn’t grown much physically, which left him feeling a bit depressed. In terms of his overall appearance, he was still just as pure and fair, and just as skinny.

“Now that I'm in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, my controlling arts should be much more powerful.” He waved his finger at a nearby boulder, which subsequently flew up into the air. In accord with Bai Xiaochun’s will, it sped up, then slowed down as he experimented with both Lightness-in-Heaviness and Heaviness-in-Lightness.

“What I’m most interested in, however, is what I accidentally unleashed when fighting Chen Heng... the Human Controlling Grand Magic!” Eyes shining with a bright light, Bai Xiaochun experimented a bit more, but made little progress. After all, controlling inanimate objects and controlling people were two different things. Finally, he decided to abandon the idea for the time being.

Later, back in his courtyard, he stood there contemplating the matter.

“In the description of the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning art, it says that once you cultivate all the way to the eighth level, you can utilize a mid-grade version of Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning.”

With that, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and waved his finger. Violet qi swirled about, and after two breaths of time passed, a large violet cauldron appeared in front of him.

This time, it went much faster than before, at least twice as fast!

Furthermore, it was larger than before, and it was much more corporeal. It was so clear that various magical symbols could be seen engraved on the surface of the cauldron.

From the terrifying pressure that radiated from the large cauldron, Bai Xiaochun could tell that it was anything but ordinary.

“That pressure is far more powerful than before!”

He quickly probed his cultivation base; when he used Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning in the past, it drew significantly on his spiritual power, and would require a lot of cultivation to recover from afterward.

But now, he still retained about seventy percent of his internal spiritual energy.

“I can use it three times in a row!” Elated, he dispersed the violet cauldron and pulled out the Golden Crow Sword. As the golden light spread, he stepped onto the golden crow, and then flew out of the sect.

Soon he was in the jungle outside of the sect. Up above, the sky rumbled with thunder, as though a storm were brewing. Sensing the impending danger of the storm, Bai Xiaochun quickly stopped in place and performed an incantation gesture, once again summoning the violet cauldron. Waving his finger, he sent it smashing into a nearby boulder.

A boom echoed out, and the ground trembled, startling countless birds and animals. A crater appeared, with crevices snaking out from it for thirty meters in all directions.

“So powerful!!” he said with a gasp. After measuring himself up, he was sure that with his Undying Silver Skin and Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, if he had to fight Chen Heng again, it wouldn’t take much effort on his part to wipe him out.

“Or maybe not....” he thought after a bit of hesitation. After all, fighting Chen Heng would still be quite dangerous, and would be best avoided. He could still lose his poor little life. The best thing would be to fight only enemies in the seventh level of Qi Condensation.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, could easily turn anyone from the first to the seventh level of Qi Condensation into ash!” He flicked his sleeve proudly, but unfortunately, there was no nearby fence to stand on. He was forced to remain on the Golden Crow Sword, sticking his chin up, looking up at the clouds like a lonely hero. Finally, he turned the Golden Crow Sword around and headed back toward the sect.

However, it was at this point that... countless lightning bolts formed overhead. Attracted by the Golden Crow Sword, they began to descend toward Bai Xiaochun like silver snakes....

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and moments later, agonized screams could be heard amidst the crash of thunder.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0076 awe-chapter-77

Soon after, Bai Xiaochun hobbled back to Fragrant Cloud Peak, hair standing on end, face smudged with ash. Heart pounding with residual fear, he crawled back into his courtyard and thought back to the rain of lightning he had just passed through, and shivered. Then he swore an oath to never again fly on a sword through a thunderstorm.

That wasn't flying, that was risking one's life!

Back in his log cabin, he grimaced in pain for quite some time before composing himself. Sitting down cross-legged on his bed, he looked at the rain falling outside, and then slowly rotated his cultivation base.

“Tier-2 spirit medicines are appropriate for the eighth level of Qi Condensation and lower. If I want to raise my cultivation base any further, I really need to concoct some tier-3 spirit medicine.” Resting his chin on his hand, he pondered the matter.

“Tier-3 spirit medicines are even harder to concoct. The only way to do it with confidence is to first be very familiar with numerous tier-2 spirit medicines. Without a stable foundation, the chances of success are small.” With that, he opened his bag of holding and examined his current accumulation of resources. The result was a long sigh. Although he had collected quite a few gifts due to his status as a Prestige disciple, he had consumed a terrifying amount of ingredients in his pill-concocting efforts recently. The result was that his stores were running low.

“I can’t keep going on this way,” he said, bowing his head thoughtfully. “I’ll definitely run out! I'm already a pretty incredible journeyman apothecary. Maybe I should try to sell some medicine.”

That thought started to get him excited. By the next morning, the rain had stopped, and he left his residence to go to the market and ask some questions. After getting a clearer idea of the prices of various medicinal pills, he bought a huge batch of medicinal plants, and then went to the sect to buy more with merit points.

Finally, he took another trip to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion to begin working.

Although tier-2 medicinal pills would fetch a high price, they consumed a lot of ingredients. Furthermore, considering the way he concocted, they wouldn’t be the best use of his time.

Therefore, he chose to concoct some tier-1 medicines that he was more familiar with. Over the course of the following days, he produced three different types of spirit medicines, each batch of which produced eight or nine pills. He also made two sticks of spirit incense. With that accomplished, he headed back to the market.

The south bank market wasn’t very large. Other than a few shops set up by Inner Sect disciples and other senior members of the sect, most of the establishments were run by various cultivator clans from other parts of the Eastwood Continent.

It was like a little town, bustling mostly with Outer Sect disciples from the three mountain peaks. Having been there on numerous occasions, Bai Xiaochun was quite familiar with the place. After finding the shop he was looking for, he entered and cleared his throat, whereupon a salesperson approached.

“Call the shop owner out,” Bai Xiaochun said. “In addition to buying some ingredients, this time I want to sell some medicinal pills!” With that, he sat down in a chair, smiling so broadly that his eyes turned into slits.

A short time later, a middle-aged man wearing a long violet robe walked up. When he saw that it was Bai Xiaochun, he smiled.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I am your humble servant Sun Chen,” he said, clasping hands. “I’ve heard many stories about you, Fellow Daoist Bai, but was always worried about disturbing your peace, so I never went to offer formal greetings. I truly regret that now.” Beaming, Sun Chen sat down across from Bai Xiaochun. Well aware of Bai Xiaochun’s high position in the sect, he had no desire to offend him. Furthermore, the fact that he was a Prestige disciple meant that the Sun Clan still wanted to get on Bai Xiaochun’s good side, despite the hundred-year-prohibition set in place by the sect leader.

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily and then exchanged some pleasantries. Next, he pulled out three bottles of medicinal pills and two sticks of incense, which he placed on the table between them.

Sticking his chin up, he asked, “Fellow Daoist Sun, how much do you think these are worth?”

Sun Chen picked up the medicinal pills, and after examining them, seemed pleasantly surprised. Although they were low-grade tier-1 medicinal pills, they had an impurity level of only about eighty-one or eighty-two percent, placing them very close to the mid-grade level. The pills usually acquired by the shop tended to be low-grade pills with impurity levels of eighty-four or eighty-five percent.

Looking up at Bai Xiaochun with shining eyes, he said, “Brother Bai, your Dao of medicine is quite refined. We would love to purchase all of your spirit medicines. How about we offer you 120 spirit stones? What do you say?”

Bai Xiaochun was instantly delighted. That price was almost four spirit stones per medicinal pill, which was just about the highest price possible for low-grade tier-1 medicinal pills.

Actually, the production cost for such a pill was, on average, only about half a spirit stone.

Thrilled, the two of them completed the transaction and then continued to chat a bit. Eventually they came to an agreement; as long as Bai Xiaochun continued to supply the shop with medicinal pills, he could acquire ingredients without handing over any spirit stones. In the end, Bai Xiaochun left feeling very pleased.

More time passed. Months went by in a flash, during which time Bai Xiaochun continuously concocted tier-1 spirit medicines to sell in exchange for ingredients. He also spent time familiarizing himself with tier-2 spirit medicines.

Gradually, he grew more and more adept.

At the same time, his relationship with the Sun Clan’s medicine shop grew more stable. The Sun Clan bought virtually all of his medicinal pills. One day during the course of doing business, Sun Chen took a few bottles of medicinal pills and handed some plant ingredients over to Bai Xiaochun. As they chatted, Sun Clan sighed and said, “Brother Bai, considering your skill in medicine concocting, why don’t you concoct some tier-2 spirit medicine? Every few years a hundred clans auction is held, and as of today, it’s only about three months away. If you concocted some tier-2 spirit medicine, I could help you put some of it up for auction. I'm sure you’d get a great price.”

After their months of doing business together, Sun Chen had come to find that Bai Xiaochun was cheerful and charismatic, and quite the joy to interact with, which was why he was being so helpful.

Bai Xiaochun had also heard of the hundred clans auction, which was arranged by roughly a hundred of the cultivator clans from the Eastwood Continent. There were three locations where the auctions would be held. One was in the north bank market, the second was the south bank market, and the third was in the largest city of cultivators on the continent, Eastwood City.

Bai Xiaochun had been in the Spirit Stream Sect for several years already, and the last auction had been held around the time he had first joined the Outer Sect. Back then, he had been mostly focused on stealing spirit tail chickens, and hadn’t been interested in auctions.

His interest having been piqued, he asked a few questions about when exactly the south bank auction would be held, and then finally took his leave. After returning to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, he sat down cross-legged to think for a while before finally making a decision.

“What Sun Chen said makes sense. Instead of selling a little bit here and there, I might as well take advantage of the situation to sell something really expensive. Afterward, I can purchase a whole bunch of ingredients.” After considering things, he thought of some various tier-2 spirit medicines, and finally decided... to concoct the one he was most familiar with, the Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill.

Having made his decision, he went into seclusion at the Medicine Concocting Pavilion and began to work on concocting Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills. Two months went by. After exchanging all of the medicinal pills he could for ingredients, he was able to concoct three bottles of Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills, each one containing ten pills.

He also ended up with one pill whose color was different from the other light violet pills. This pill was dark violet, and didn't have a very strong medicinal aroma, as if it refused to let such an aroma waft out from within it.

When that particular medicinal pill had emerged, the pill furnace had shaken in a way that was clearly different than the previous times. It was even been accompanied by a burst of earthflame.

Upon closer examination of the pill, Bai Xiaochun's eyes gleamed with excitement.

“Mid-grade! I, Bai Xiaochun, have finally concocted a mid-grade spirit medicine!

“There probably won't be very many mid-grade spirit medicines at the auction. However, if I really want to cause a stir, I'll have to do better than this. After all... this auction only happens once every few years. There will surely be plenty of rare items up for sale.” After some thought, he gritted his teeth and then took out the turtle-wok to perform a spirit enhancement.

After the threefold enhancement was completed, silver light glittered, and the spirit medicine was no longer mid-grade.

It had broken all the way past superior-grade to be... premium-grade!

This type of premium-grade pill was quite shocking, with an impurity level of only ten percent or so.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased. The Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill resting in his hand was now so dark it was almost black. It had three spirit designs on its surface, which were faint but clearly visible; anyone who laid eyes on the pill would be able to tell that it was something extraordinary.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly had the feeling that this pill was another tool he could use to become famous. Laughing proudly, he pulled out a little knife and carved a picture onto it... a lovely little turtle.

“Lord Turtle will once again make an appearance!” Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet in excitement and anticipation.

He took his medicinal pills out of the sect, and returned two hours later in high spirits, looking very pleased with himself. He could still picture the shock on Sun Chen’s face the moment he saw the three bottles of Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills. The moment he noticed that there was also a premium-grade spirit medicine which had received a threefold spirit enhancement, his jaw had nearly dropped to the floor in astonishment.

“Only one more month to go until the auction,” Bai Xiaochun thought, looking at the jade slip he held, which was his ticket to the auction itself.

Throughout the following days, everyone was talking about the auction. Soon, the disciples of the three mountain peaks on the southern bank began to make various preparations, hoping to strike it lucky at the auction. The market also thrummed with activity.

“One of my clanmates from the north bank said that in the last auction, a Yellow Springs Flame went up for sale, a legendary item! It was only a spark, but could still be considered a unique treasure. One of the disciples from the north bank bought it at an exorbitant price.”

“There should be tons of unique treasures up for sale at this hundred clans auction, including a lot of shocking medicinal pills. That’s because the Outer Sect Chosen battles will be coming up. They only happen once every thirty years!”

“You’re probably right. The joint north and south bank Outer Sect Chosen battles are a grand occasion for the entire Spirit Stream Sect. It's too bad that the top ten from the south bank haven’t been able to match up to the north bank for years now! I wonder if one of the south bank's top ten will be able to get revenge this year!?”

Over the following month, talk of the auction grew more and more common throughout the sect. Bai Xiaochun heard much of the talk, and noticed a lot of people discussing the joint north and south bank Outer Sect Chosen battles. However, he didn’t pay much attention to such talk.

Soon, the month had passed. One morning at dawn when Bai Xiaochun was meditating, his eyes suddenly opened, and he pulled a glowing jade slip out of his bag of holding.

“The auction is going to start,” he thought, eyes shining with anticipation. He quickly hurried out of his courtyard and raced down the mountain. Along the way, he passed quite a few Outer Sect disciples, until he noticed a few beams of light speeding by over head.

He smacked his own forehead at the realization that he'd forgotten about being able to fly. Quickly performing an incantation gesture, he summoned the Golden Crow Sword. Stepping onto the golden crow, he transformed into a beam of golden light that shot off into the distance.

He soon reached the market. Head high and chest out, he entered the auction pavilion.

It was a huge structure, with several thousand seats set up on the auction floor, as well as an open area behind the seats where a crowd of people stood, packed together tightly. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was whisked away by Sun Chen, who took him to a private room on the second floor, and then left.

The room was relatively small, with a narrow balcony, beneath which was the main auction floor. The auction stage was also clearly visible.

This was not Bai Xiaochun’s first time being present for such a lively affair. Instead of behaving like the Foundation Establishment cultivators in the other private rooms, who stayed out of sight, Bai Xiaochun made sure to lean out of the balcony. Worried that people might not notice him, he began to clear his throat as loudly as possible.

Soon, some people down below saw him, casting odd glances at him before turning away.

Unfortunately, there were simply too many people present, so no matter how loudly he cleared his throat, the sound would only go so far. Off in the distance, he caught sight of Hou Xiaomei, as well as Zhou Xinqi and some of the other people he knew. However, they were too far away to notice him.

Even after yelling at the top of his lungs, they didn't turn his way, and he started to get a bit depressed. Finally, he lost interest. In any case, sticking himself out of the balcony was a bit tiring.... Furthermore, there was always the danger of accidentally falling.... If that happened, then it would only take a day for everyone on the entire south bank to hear about it.

Time passed, and more people showed up. After about an hour, the sound of a cauldron being struck rung out, and everything went quiet. Countless eyes were all fixed on the auction stage.

Soon, a middle-aged man in a green garment appeared. Smiling, he stood there and greeted everyone with clasped hands.

“I am your humble servant Qian Song. I presume many of you Fellow Daoists are already familiar with me. I will be presiding over the auction today. The rules are the same as ever, all lots go to the highest bidder.” Without any further ado, he waved his right hand, and a glowing door rose up on the auction stage.

A young woman emerged, holding a platter, atop which was an oddly shaped rock formed of various metals.

The rock glowed with garish, multicolored light that reflected within the excited, shocked eyes of the thousands of auction attendees.

Bai Xiaochun looked closely at the rock but couldn’t quite tell what it was. However, other people in the crowd seemed to know exactly what it was, and were already getting excited.

When Qian Song spoke, his voice was soft, but he boosted it with his Foundation Establishment cultivation base, ensuring that it spread out for all to hear. “Lot one is a piece of Auric Ore. Minimum bid, 300 spirit stones. Bid increment is a minimum of 50 spirit stones!”

“350 spirit stones!” someone cried out.

“400!” Almost as soon as the first bid came out, another topped it. Before long, the price reached 700 spirit stones, and the item was sold to a disciple from Violet Cauldron Peak.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the piece of ore with wide eyes, trying to figure out why it could possibly be worth 700 spirit stones. Another thing he'd noticed was that after the auction had begun, a spell formation had been activated which amplified the voices of anyone calling out bids.

“It’s just a piece of metal,” he thought a bit sourly as he sat there watching.

More items appeared and were sold. One of them was a green horn from a juvenile dragon, which had apparently been struck by lightning, leaving sparks of electricity coursing along its surface. It fetched a price of 8,000 spirit stones, which left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

After the auction had been going for about an hour, Qian Song’s voice rang out with the following words: “The next lot is a bottle of tier-2 spirit medicine. Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills, a total of ten. They are close to mid-grade, with an impurity level of eighty-one percent. Minimum price, 100 spirit stones. Bid increment is a minimum of 10 spirit stones.”

Bai Xiaochun instantly perked up, and stared out at the auction floor in anticipation. Thinking nervously about how much he might make, he waited for someone to call out a bid.

However, for some reason, the only thing that met his ears was silence. Even as his heart began to pound, someone called out an opening bid.

“110 spirit stones.” The bidder was an Outer Sect disciple, and the amount bid was apparently all of his savings. After calling out the bid he stared around nervously.

However, Bai Xiaochun was even more nervous than he was. That bottle of Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pills had cost him about 50 spirit stones to manufacture, and if he sold it at the market, would fetch a price of 150 or 160.

At the moment, all he could do was scowl at the audience in astonishment.

Just when Qian Song was about to strike down with the auction hammer, someone else called out another price. Then, more people jumped in. In the end, the price jumped all the way to 180 spirit stones.

“180 spirit stones isn’t bad. That’s about 20 higher than at the market.” Sighing in relief, he wiped the sweat from his brow. The truth was, the price the bottle had fetched earned him a tidy profit, although it didn’t come close to the value of some of the other precious items which had gone up for bid so far.

Soon, his second bottle went up, and ended up selling for a slightly higher price, 200 spirit stones. Bai Xiaochun was very pleased.

By the time the third bottle went up, the Qi Condensation disciples were getting very excited, and more people jumped in on the bidding. In the end, Bai Xiaochun was ecstatic; the final price reached 230 spirit stones.

“More than 700 spirit stones! Now this is what I call an auction! I already have enough spirit stones to concoct a tier-3 spirit medicine.” Bai Xiaochun was an easy person to please. His sour mood from before was completely gone, and he sat there happily waiting for the premium-grade spirit medicine to appear.

“Considering the price the other bottles fetched, I think the premium-grade might get... 300 spirit stones?” After a bit of hesitation, he changed his mind.

“200 would be fine!” He nodded confidently.

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun sat there waiting until it was afternoon. There on the auction stage, Qian Song’s expression suddenly turned a bit strange. Looking around at the audience, he cleared his throat.

“The next lot is something a bit interesting.... It’s a tier-2 spirit medicine, also a Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill. However... there’s something different about it.”

Bai Xiaochun sat there anxiously on the balcony, mind buzzing with nervousness.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0077 awe-chapter-78

People on the auction floor immediately got excited upon hearing Qian Song’s announcement.

The only ones who didn’t care were the Inner Sect disciples whose cultivation bases were above the eighth level of Qi Condensation, who began to chat among themselves about other topics, or simply closed their eyes to rest.

“Please take a moment to examine the pill first,” Qian Song said with a dry cough. “Afterward, I will reveal the price.” It was at this point that a pretty young woman emerged from the glowing door, holding a wooden box in her hands.

Excitement built as everyone craned their necks to try to get a look at exactly what type of Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill this was that would cause such a strange expression to appear on Qian Song’s face.

Bai Xiaochun was getting more and more nervous, and began to breathe heavily as he looked over at the auction stage. A moment later, the pretty young woman lifted the lid off the box and pulled out a dark violet pill.

The medicinal pill was especially conspicuous considering the fairness of her skin. It glowed with a soft light, and the three designs on its surface were especially noticeable. Also visible... was the little turtle etched next to the spirit designs.

At first, silence prevailed. But then, a huge commotion broke out.

“A threefold spirit enhancement! Heavens! Are my eyes deceiving me?!”

“That’s insane! It’s actually a tier-2 spirit medicine with a threefold spirit enhancement! I can’t believe somebody succeeded in doing such a thing!!”

“This is crazy! A spirit enhanced Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill!!”

The voices of the flabbergasted Outer Sect disciples rose up into a cacophony that filled the entire auction floor.

“Dammit! Who actually did something like that? What a waste!”

“A threefold spirit enhancement like that? What psycho had the inclination to do such a thing!?!?”

Even the Inner Sect disciples who had been ignoring things up to this point looked over in surprise. When they saw the spirit designs running across the surface of the medicinal pill, their eyes went wide, and they gasped. Many of them even shot to their feet.

It must be stated that the success rate of spirit enhancement was not very high. A onefold enhancement was difficult enough, and a twofold enhancement was even harder. As for a threefold enhancement... it all depended on luck. Even grandmasters wouldn't dare to claim the ability to succeed at a threefold enhancement.

In the Spirit Stream Sect, far too many people had destroyed magical items in the process of attempting threefold spirit enhancements, much to their heartache. Because of that, most people had a love-hate relationship with spirit enhancement; whenever people did manage to succeed, they would arouse the envy of their contemporaries.

For a magical item to successfully receive a threefold spirit enhancement would make it more powerful to a shocking degree, and would make many people desire to acquire it. But now... everyone was astonished to find themselves looking at a medicinal pill which had received a threefold spirit enhancement!

Furthermore, it was a tier-2 medicinal pill!

If a gorgeous pattern were to develop on the wings of a butterfly, everyone would marvel at the spectacular beauty. But if such a design were to appear on the back of a pig... it could only be described as a huge waste!!

Mixed emotions could be seen on the faces of the onlookers as numerous thoughts ran through their minds. Many of them even clenched their fists into balls, causing veins to bulge out on their hands and faces. The Inner Sect disciples from Violet Cauldron Peak were especially pained, considering that they studied spirit enhancement as part of their cultivation.

“What luck! Somebody actually managed to perform a spirit enhancement on a medicinal pill, and then brought it here to sell. Dammit! If I were that lucky, I would definitely have a spirit enhanced treasure!!”

Even the Foundation Establishment cultivators on the second floor were looking at the medicinal pill in front of them in shock.

Bai Xiaochun sat on the balcony watching all of this happening, somewhat surprised. He looked blankly at the enraged crowd below, some of whom were turning red in the face. He suddenly had the feeling... that he might have gone too far.... He immediately put a look of righteous indignation onto his face and then pointed at the medicinal pill angrily.

“Loser!” he shouted furiously. “What loser made that pill?!”

Off in the distance, Sun Chen was smiling wryly. When he first saw the medicinal pill, he had experienced the same feeling most people in the audience were feeling right now. But then he saw the way Bai Xiaochun was acting off in the distance, and his jaw dropped. A little bit of sweat even dripped down the side of his face.

However, it was at this point that someone in the crowd with sharp eyes happened to notice the little turtle etched into the side of the pill.

“Eee? Why does that little turtle seem so familiar...?” Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, others in the crowd began to look more closely at the pill. At first, they had all been so surprised by the three spirit designs that they didn't look at anything else. But now they all noticed the turtle etching.

“That little turtle.... Hey, I remember! Back on Fragrant Cloud Peak, the first place spot on all of the stone steles at the 10,000 Medicines Pavilion is occupied by a little turtle!!”

“This turtle looks just like that one. The style is exactly the same. That... was etched by a person!”

“The person who concocted that pill, and then went to the insane length of performing a threefold spirit enhancement, was none other than the mysterious and unfathomable Chosen of Fragrant Cloud Peak, the little turtle!”

Cries of excitement rang up. After all, many disciples in the audience were from Fragrant Cloud Peak, and once they saw the little turtle, they were struck with astonishment.

More and more people caught sight of the turtle, and gasps rang out. People even began to rise to their feet. Although not much news about Fragrant Cloud Peak’s little turtle had spread lately, he was incredibly famous. Everyone in the sect knew about him, and many people continued to speculate all the time about who exactly he was.

However, no one had been able to solve the mystery. The little turtle was simply too mysterious, so mysterious that apparently no one knew his true identity. He liked to keep an extremely low profile, and was indifferent to the outside world, paying virtually no attention to it at all.

But all of a sudden... he had made another appearance!

Furthermore, he had chosen to completely shake the entire auction, and shock everyone who attended.

Zhou Xinqi was there in the crowd, her eyes shining brightly as she looked at the medicinal pill. Her chest heaved, and various emotions coursed through her.

“So, you finally show your face,” she murmured to herself. “A Chosen like you cannot remain hidden forever within the sea of people. You may want to remain out of sight, but your incredible talents have doomed you to be revealed, no matter how much you try to hide. I *will* find out who you are, one day!” Zhou Xinqi had spent a lot of time secretly investigating the little turtle. For a time, she had suspected Bai Xiaochun, but soon decided that it couldn’t be him, and made up her own version of who the little turtle was. He was a cold, proud man who would never taint his own name because of a desire to be famous.

Zhou Xinqi actually wasn’t the only one who had come to such a conclusion. Most people felt the same, even Hou Xiaomei. Of course, much of that was because of how much Bai Xiaochun himself had propagated stories about the little turtle.

Many people had even analyzed why he used a turtle as his mark. The explanation was that he had a reserved personality, but also maintained lofty aspirations. Like turtles, his medicinal pills would survive for thousands of years into the future.

Hou Xiaomei stood not too far off in the distance, her eyes wide with adoration. Because of Bai Xiaochun’s urgings, she worshiped the little turtle more than anyone else in the sect. In fact, she’d even found other disciples like herself, and had formed something of a club, which they called the Little Turtle League.

“What?! The little turtle!” Hou Xiaomei nearly jumped up into the air in excitement as she pointed at the auction stage.

The entire auction floor had devolved into chaos. Now, people no longer said even a single comment in anger or skepticism. Instead, profound expressions appeared on their faces.

“He definitely pursues excellence to the extreme!”

“A proud Chosen such as the little turtle would never perform a spirit enhancement on a medicinal pill just to sell it at auction. He seeks the quintessence of the Dao of medicine. He did it as a means of research, because of his incredible focus!”

Even the Inner Sect disciples who had been in such pain earlier were now heaving sighs and looking at each other in dismay. All of them had to admit they were incapable of pulling off a threefold spirit enhancement.

“Now I understand what type of Chosen he is. He’s not insane, nor is he showing off. He has grand aspirations. He’s completely focused! He wants his medicinal pills to reach the ultimate pinnacle!”

“Incredible! Shocking! This level of focus, this level of willpower, this type of perfect pill... we can all strive to imitate him!”

“A threefold spirit enhancement can raise an object’s quality by three grades. That means... that this medicinal pill was originally mid-grade. The little turtle’s skill in medicine concocting has already far surpassed my own. He definitely deserves his reputation!”

“That medicinal pill should be kept as souvenir! I must have it!” The Inner Sect disciples’ eyes shone with a bright light. Although the pill wasn’t suitable for them to consume, it could fill them with inspiration.

Looking at a pill like that made them feel as if they were looking at a Chosen who cared not for fame or fortune, who was completely focused, who strove only after the Dao of medicine.

Seeing how quickly the conversation had changed, Bai Xiaochun, who had been joining along in the public outrage, suddenly stared around with wide eyes. After hearing what people were saying, his face began to turn red.

“Are they... are they talking about me...?” he thought, trembling. He had never before realized how superior he was. Now that he suddenly saw the light, he had the urge to yell at the top of his lungs, to tell everyone around him that he was the famous Lord Turtle!

However, it was at this point that Qian Song cleared his throat and smiled.

“As all of you can see, this pill has great symbolic meaning. Minimum bid, 500 spirit stones. Bid increment is a minimum of 50 spirit stones!”

Bai Xiaochun gasped when he heard the astronomical price. Most Outer Sect disciples couldn’t even afford that many spirit stones.

“600 spirit stones!”

“700 spirit stones! That pill contains the essence of the Dao of medicine! I must acquire it!”

“800! Who dares to top me!?” The Inner Sect disciples immediately began to call out prices, and soon everyone was in an uproar.

Bids continued to be called out, and soon the price reached 1,500 spirit stones. Bai Xiaochun’s throat was dry, and he was panting in disbelief.

“Crazy!” he mouthed in excitement. “They’re all crazy.... Wait, let’s get a bit more crazy, people.... Come on!! Everybody join in!”

“1,800 spirit stones.” That bid came from Zhou Xinqi, causing numerous people to look over in her direction. Bai Xiaochun even began to cheer her on.

The price had already reached the limit of what was possible for Inner Sect disciples to afford. Although none of them wished to let the pill go, they had no choice but to sigh. After all, Zhou Xinqi was already a Chosen in the Dao of medicine. Since she wanted the pill, none of the other disciples were willing to compete with her.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with the price, and had to hold himself back from running over to Qian Song, grabbing the auction hammer, and banging it down to end the bidding. However, it was at this point that the stubborn and determined voice of young woman rang out, fiery as a pepper.

“I am Hou Xiaomei of the Hou Clan. I bid 3,000 spirit stones!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0078 awe-chapter-79

Bai Xiaochun's eyes went wide as his mind filled with the thought of 3,000 spirit stones.... He looked over at Hou Xiaomei, eyes shining, and suddenly felt the desire to run over, hug her, give her three thousand thumbs up and tell her… “Great job!”

When the rest of the disciples on the auction floor heard that huge price coming out of Hou Xiaomei's mouth, the commotion instantly ceased, and jaws dropped. They looked over to find Hou Xiaomei standing there, hands on her hips, chest heaving, looking very fair and delicate. She was pretty, but had a proud look on her face, and looked like a blazing hot pepper.

Sticking her chin up, she looked over at Zhou Xinqi with a look that said, *I’m from the Hou Clan, and I'm not scared of anyone! Plus, I’m rich!*

The overall effect wasn’t off-putting, but rather, made her seem quite cute.

Quite a few people broke out into smiles at the sight, whereas others were even more shocked than before.

“3,100 spirit stones!” Zhou Xinqi said coolly, her expression growing a bit colder.

“The little turtle is very important to me!” Hou Xiaomei said. “I don't care how expensive it is, any pill made by him must belong to me. Hmph! 4,000 spirit stones! I'm from the Hou Clan, and I have plenty of money to go around!” She especially emphasized the last sentence. Next to her, Hou

Yunfei bowed his head in nervous embarrassment. He wasn't sure why his little sister worshipped the little turtle with such frenzied devotion....

Zhou Xinqi’s fans couldn't watch this go on, and many of them began to cry out that only a loser would spend so much money on a tier-2 spirit medicine.

Hou Xiaomei wasn’t too happy to hear such things. Sticking her chest out and planting her hands on her hips, she barked, “I've got a lot of spirit stones, so you can just bite me!”

As Bai Xiaochun watched the events unfold, he couldn’t help but muse that he had made the right decision to pull Hou Xiaomei off the crooked path and onto the way of righteousness.

Zhou Xinqi frowned. Unfortunately, she didn’t have that many spirit stones, and so finally, she had no choice but to give up.

Hou Xiaomei was delighted that Zhou Xinqi didn’t make any more bids. The truth was that she didn’t have as many spirit stones as she had implied. She had only said so in front of so many people in the hopes that it would force her clan’s patriarch to accommodate her.

In the end, Hou Xiaomei was very pleased to have won the threefold spirit enhanced medicinal pill.

Bai Xiaochun was also very pleased. Looking admiringly at Hou Xiaomei, he cleared his throat. In his opinion, considering how much she admired him, it would be improper not to tell her about his true identity.

Having reached this conclusion, and seeing that the first day of the auction was coming to an end, he decided that now was the time to go out and proclaim his identity to the public.

Meanwhile, backstage, various patriarchs from the cultivator clans were gathered, having been tasked with standing guard over the auction. One of them was a middle-aged man, who was currently coughing dryly as he looked around wryly at his fellow patriarchs.

“Well... my granddaughter sure is stubborn. I'm afraid she’s made a bit of a fool of herself in front of all of you.” With that, he bitterly produced a large sum of spirit stones which he put off to the side.

“What an innocent girl!” The other patriarchs all laughed good-naturedly.

The first day of the auction was over, and although there were more days to come, Bai Xiaochun had already sold his medicinal pills, so he didn’t plan to return. He walked over to the entrance of the auction and stood there watching everyone filing out of the auction house.

Virtually all of them were excitedly discussing the matter of the Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun caught sight of Zhou Xinqi. He wanted to go encourage her not to feel disheartened, but as soon as he took a step forward to head in her direction, she looked over and saw him coming. Without another word, she transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, feeling a bit depressed. But then he heard a voice coming from behind him.

“Big bro Xiaochun!” It was Hou Xiaomei, who came bouncing over happily through the crowd, followed by Hou Yunfei, who was also smiling.

Bai Xiaochun looked away from Zhou Xinqi and gave Hou Xiaomei a smile of praise. Looking very much like a member of the senior generation, he patted her on the head.

“Hey there, chaste little sister. I have to say, you did a great job. The way you won that final item in the auction was very domineering!”

Hou Xiaomei's face turned bright red. Seeming to recall something all of a sudden, she pulled out the Violet Qi Spirit Ascension Pill.

“Big bro Xiaochun, look! This medicinal pill was concocted by the little turtle. Would you like it? Here, take it. Didn’t you say before that you also adore the little turtle? I bought this pill just for you!” Anyone who saw the expression on her face would be moved. Holding out the pill to Bai Xiaochun, she looked at him with keen anticipation, as if he were the only thing that existed in the world.

When Hou Yunfei saw this, his gaze softened, and he smiled, but didn’t say anything.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. Never could he have imagined that Hou Xiaomei’s goal in winning the medicinal pill was to give it to him. It was very moving. Seeing that they were surrounded by quite a few people, he took a deep breath and put a solemn expression on his face.

Eyes filling with determination, he clasped his hands behind his back like a powerful hero, a posture he had long since become very familiar with adopting.

“Xiaomei,” he said, “I need to reveal a very big secret!”

Hou Xiaomei looked shocked, as did Hou Yunfei.

“What secret?” Hou Xiaomei asked curiously.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat loudly, stuck up his chin, and swished his sleeve.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, am he who shocks ghosts and gods, the preeminently famous, mysterious and unfathomable... the great and mighty... Lord Turtle!!” He then threw his head back and laughed uproariously. The words he had just uttered had been kept locked inside of him for far too long, and it felt wonderful to speak them out in the open, especially considering he was speaking them to the person who adored him the most, Hou Xiaomei, and in front of such a large audience of onlookers.

Most importantly, it wasn’t proper to allow the person who worshipped him the most fervently to be kept in the dark, especially when her idol was standing directly in front of her! Bai Xiaochun stared up at the clouds above, looking very lonely. However, his ears twitched a bit as he waited to hear the shocked reactions of Hou Xiaomei and the rest of the crowd.

He was already formulating the words he would use in response to the impending commotion.

However, after a very long moment passed, not a sound could be heard. Everything was completely silent. Surprised, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but look back from the clouds toward Hou Xiaomei and Hou Yunfei.

Hou Xiaomei stood there with wide eyes, and Hou Yunfei was similarly shocked. As they stared mutely at Bai

Xiaochun, the surrounding disciples looked on with strange expressions on their faces.

“The little turtle is indifferent to worldly affairs,” someone said, “like a cloud floating in the sky. Now Sect Uncle Bai is calling himself the little turtle? Yeah right.... Come on, let’s go.”

An unsightly expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and he took a deep breath in preparation to make an explanation.

“Xiaochun, are you alright?” Hou Yunfei asked. Worried, he patted Bai Xiaochun on the head.

“I really am the little turtle!” Bai Xiaochun said anxiously.

“Oh?” Hou Yunfei replied, a strange expression on his face. He quickly nodded. “Sure, sure. You’re the little turtle....”

At this point, Hou Xiaomei gazed at Big bro Xiaochun and softly said, “Big bro Xiaochun, you told me before that the little turtle is like a cloud in the sky, someone who doesn’t care at all about worldly matters.... Actually, in my heart, you’re just as important as he is. You don’t need to pretend to be him....”

“But I really am the--”

Before he could finish speaking, Hou Yunfei looked at him somberly and clasped his arm. “Xiaochun, we believe you!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. “I really--”

Before he could finish, Hou Yunfei’s expression turned more serious. “Xiaochun. We really believe you!”

“I--” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to glaze over as a feeling of disheartenment filled him. No matter how he tried to explain the situation, it wouldn’t do any good. Things were going completely different than he'd imagined. Dejected, he turned slowly and trudged away, somehow returning to the sect.

Back in his courtyard, he stared blankly up into the sky, an expression of grief on his face.

“But I really am Lord Turtle....” he murmured, feeling very maligned. He had long dreamed about proclaiming his identity publicly, but now that dream was in tatters.

After a while, he came to the conclusion that the problem lay in the fact that he had worked so hard over the years to inflate the image of the little turtle in the minds of the people.... To them, the little turtle was a completely proud and extraordinary individual.

More precisely, thanks to the tireless efforts of Hou Xiaomei, the little turtle had already been turned into something of a deity....

After a while, Bai Xiaochun begrudgingly went to find Xu Baocai to explain the truth. Afterward, Xu Baocai stared at him blankly for a moment... and then nodded repeatedly and said that he believed him.

Bai Xiaochun scowled miserably all the way back to his courtyard, where he once again stood there feeling empty.

A few days later, Sun Chen came to visit. Bai Xiaochun immediately perked up. Suddenly, he had hope, hope that Sun Chen would remember who it was that had delivered the medicinal pill up to be auctioned off.

However, before he could even say anything, Sun Chen handed over the spirit stones, then clasped hands and bowed deeply. Expression solemn, he said, “Brother Bai, I'm not sure which honored Chosen concocted that pill. The Sun Clan patriarch was quite shocked by the matter. We know that the only way to contact that Chosen is via you, Brother Bai. Otherwise, you wouldn't have been the one to deliver his medicinal pill.

“Brother Bai, could you please pass word to him that the Sun Clan hopes to have a longstanding friendship with him? If he needs any help selling medicinal pills in the future, we will use all our power to help him!

“Another thing, Brother Bai. Could you please pass word to the Chosen that I understand he doesn’t seek fame and fortune, and purposely avoids big commotions? He is like a cloud in the sky, seeking perfection in the Dao of medicine. A person like him will surely reach incredible heights in the future. Therefore, our Sun Clan would be happy to handle all matters relating to the outside world for him.” Sun Chen clasped hands and bowed deeply once again. When he looked up, he noticed that Bai Xiaochun’s expression was completely blank. When that expression didn’t change, Sun Chen once again clasped hands, bowed, and then took his leave.

Inwardly, he sighed as he thought about how high Bai Xiaochun’s position was in the Spirit Stream Sect, and how the mysterious, unfathomable figure that no one else knew, actually had dealings with him.

From the very beginning, he had never even considered that Bai Xiaochun might actually be the little turtle. Their personalities were too different. After all, it wasn’t just Spirit Stream Sect disciples who knew about the little turtle. The cultivator clans on the outside were also aware of him. All of them had performed their own investigations, and had come to similar conclusions as Zhou Xinqi.

By the time Bai Xiaochun regained his composure, the moon hung high in the sky. Sighing deeply, he leapt up onto the bamboo fence that surrounded his courtyard. Clasping his hands behind his back, he looked up at the starry sky, his long black hair swaying in the wind and his robes rustling.

“I never imagined that deep within me was the desire to shun worldly matters. I am like a cloud which floats in the sky. Ai. I shouldn’t have kept things hidden so well. Sometimes, being superior really is truly lonely.” As he stood there in the moonlight, he flicked his sleeve, and truly looked like a lonely hero.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0079 awe-chapter-80

Now that he had plenty of spirit stones, Bai Xiaochun didn't want to worry about the issue of the little turtle any more. His heart had already been pierced a thousand times over by what had occurred. Now, the only thing left to do was go to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion and heal by immersing himself in pill concocting.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s ability to concoct tier-2 spirit medicine had been refined to perfection. His success rate was shockingly high, and he was already beginning to work on tier-3 medicine.

Rumbling sounds filled his workstation as he went about his work. On one occasion, something completely unexpected occurred when the pill furnace rocketed into the air and slammed into the wall, causing a huge boom to echo out and leaving a small crater behind.

However, that was almost nothing compared to the time when a failed batch of pills exploded and sent out smoke that not even the workshop’s protective spell formation could stop. It filled nearly half of the Medicine Concocting Pavilion, causing everyone inside to run out, coughing and cursing the entire time.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun also ran out in similar fashion, and in the end, no one was completely sure who had caused the entire disaster.

Feeling quite frustrated, Bai Xiaochun carefully returned to his workstation and began to work on another batch of tier-3 spirit medicine. Gradually, a strange expression appeared on his face as he realized he often tended to produce bizarre spirit medicines. For example, there was the time he created the medicine which had attracted hordes of ants. And then there was his Aphrodisiac Pill....

The truth was, all of the mystery pills he concocted were all terrifying.

“Could it be because I refuse to use a set medicine formula in my concocting? Every time I do my work, I follow my instincts, and that’s what leads to the strange transformations? Or maybe I’m just so naturally talented that God is jealous and intentionally causes problems for me?” Currently, a few dozen brightly colored medicinal pills were laid out in front of Bai Xiaochun, which he looked down at, frowning.

None of them were spherical. Some were cube-shaped, and others looked like malformed lumps of clay. Clearly, they were not ordinary spirit medicines, and yet, each and every one let off a strong medicinal aroma....

Even if Bai Xiaochun were a hundred times braver than he was, he wouldn’t dare to personally consume any of them. It was impossible to say what unimaginable effects they might produce.

“I want to achieve the ultimate pinnacle in the Dao of medicine. I am like a cloud in the sky, floating about effortlessly, ignoring the material world. The Dao of medicine is a path strewn with obstacles, so I must not fear. I just have to endure. That is the new me, a new Bai Xiaochun.” With that, determination appeared on his face. Looking as if he were searching for the deeper truths in life, he put the pills away and once again began his concocting work.

He spent nearly half a day on the next batch. Unfortunately, he had reached the point where there were few types of medicine that he could continue to work on. It was simply too dangerous. His pill furnace would explode every time, leaving significant damage in its wake. Scowling, he paid some spirit stones in compensation, at which time he was politely asked to leave the Medicine Concocting Pavilion.

He was just about to call upon his status as the Junior Brother of the sect leader and demand to be allowed to stay, when he realized that Big Fatty Zhang had messaged him via jade slip. Apparently he'd come to Bai Xiaochun’s residence looking for him, and was wondering where he'd gone off to.

Seeing that Big Fatty Zhang had come to visit, Bai Xiaochun left the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. Sighing, he began to walk down one of the narrow mountain paths.

“If I want to pursue the Dao of medicine to the pinnacle, then I will surely face obstacles along the way. I, Bai Xiaochun, am like a floating cloud. I will not surrender!” Sticking his chest out and raising his head, he walked forward for a bit until he realized that something seemed off. At this time of day, the sect was usually a busy place. But right now, Fragrant Cloud Peak was very quiet. Looking around, he noticed that not a single disciple of the sixth level of Qi Condensation or higher could be seen. Everyone present was of the fifth level or lower.

Shocked, he hurried back to his residence. Even as he approached from a distance, he saw a tall, skinny young man pacing back and forth excitedly in front of the main gate.

That young man was none other than Big Fatty Zhang, who had lost a significant amount of weight.

“Eldest Brother,” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed in greeting, hurrying forward.

“Ninth Junior Brother!” Big Fatty Zhang replied, turning to look at Bai Xiaochun and laughing loudly. Big Fatty Zhang didn't care at all that Bai Xiaochun was now the Junior Brother of the sect leader. To Big Fatty Zhang, he was still his little Junior Brother.

Bai Xiaochun dragged him into the courtyard, where they sat down to chat. Curious, Bai Xiaochun said, “Eldest Brother, you hardly ever come to visit. What brought you over? Is there something you need my help with? Just say the word!”

Bai Xiaochun had long since come to view Big Fatty Zhang as a true older brother. Whenever he thought back to their days together in the Ovens, he was always left with a warm feeling.

Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat, but was unable to prevent the excitement and pride from showing on his face. Looking over, he slapped himself proudly on the chest. Back in the Ovens, it would have resulted in the sound of jiggling flesh, but now, only the creaking of bones could be heard. Even still, Big Fatty Zhang seemed enlivened.

“Ninth Junior Brother, I have a huge secret to tell you!”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard that a huge secret was involved, his eyes went wide, and he began to pay rapt attention.

Sounding very lofty, Big Fatty Zhang went on to say, “From now on, I, Big Fatty Zhang, am definitely going to be famous in the Spirit Stream Sect. Everyone will know my name. Tons of disciples will be trying to get on my good side. In fact, even the Foundation Establishment seniors will probably treat me with the utmost respect.”

“Oh?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking surprised. “What’s going on? Are you also the little turtle?”

Glowing with exuberation, Big Fatty Zhang took a deep breath and lowered his voice. “Little turtle? Pshh. Ninth Junior Brother, you know that my Master is the Peak Lord of Violet Cauldron Peak, Xu Meixiang, right?”

Bai Xiaochun nodded. He had known who Big Fatty Zhang’s master was for some time, and also knew that she was the reason he had lost so much weight. She didn’t like fat people, although that had also led Bai Xiaochun to consider some other strange possibilities regarding the situation.

“Do you know what my Master is best at?” Big Fatty Zhang continued. “Spirit enhancement! And do you know what I'm studying from my Master? Spirit enhancement!

“Hahaha! I, Big Fatty Zhang, happen to be blessed with incredible natural talent when it comes to spirit enhancement. My talent is so extraordinary that even my Master was completely shocked, and praised me to no end! Today, she actually said that it would only be a few more years before I’m the number one grandmaster of spirit enhancement in the entire Spirit Stream Sect!” Big Fatty Zhang rose to his feet, looking excitedly up into the sky, boiling with excitement. It was as if he were the most important being in existence.

Bai Xiaochun blinked. Seeing Big Fatty Zhang’s mighty pose, he quickly plastered an adoring expression on his face and exclaimed, “Spirit enhancement?!”

Bai Xiaochun’s reaction made Big Fatty Zhang even happier. Slapping his shoulder, he said, “Ninth Junior Brother, from here on out, lots of people are going to be asking me to do spirit enhancements. If I don't like them, I’ll refuse no matter what. If I do like them, then I’ll charge them an arm and a leg! But you and Third Fatty are both from the Ovens. For the rest of my life, I won’t charge you a single spirit stone. We’re family, so as long as you provide the ingredients, I’ll perform spirit enhancements for you for free!”

Big Fatty Zhang seemed high-spirited and full of mettle. From the moment he arrived at Violet Cauldron Peak, he had felt suppressed, but now that he knew he had a talent for spirit enhancement, he was elated. This was actually the first time he had ever come to visit Bai Xiaochun.

“Elder Brother, you’re incredible!!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed, looking ecstatic.

“Come, come,” said Big Fatty Zhang. “Give me something, anything. I’ll do a onefold enhancement right here. With one of my weapons, you’ll definitely get into the south bank’s top ten during the qualifying rounds a few months from now. Then you can represent the south bank to fight the north bank in the Chosen battles!”

“Uh....” Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. Seeing how excited Big Fatty Zhang was, he fished around in his bag of holding for a bit, and then pulled out one of the Spirit Stream Sect’s ordinary flying swords, of which he had a few. He quickly handed it over to Big Fatty Zhang.

Big Fatty Zhang took a deep breath and then slapped his bag of holding, causing a few pieces of ore to fly out, which then floated around the sword.

Then he closed his eyes, and unleashed the explosive power of his cultivation base. Although his cultivation base couldn’t quite match up to Bai Xiaochun’s, he was already in the great circle of the sixth level of Qi Condensation. His hair whipped about as he waved his left hand, causing silver light to shine out.

As soon as the light appeared, a wind sprang up, and the entire area seemed to fill with fluctuations of spiritual energy. The energy streamed toward the pieces of ore, which filtered the energy before it passed on toward Big Fatty Zhang’s left hand. At the same time, the pieces of ore began to melt. In a short time, they were already half gone.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. This was his first time ever watching as someone performed a spirit enhancement, and the process was very different than when he used the turtle-wok. Apparently, the spirit enhancer would communicate directly with heaven and earth, and then filter its explosive power through the ore to soften it.

Soon, Big Fatty Zhang began to shake. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he took a deep breath, and his eyes snapped open. Then, blinding silver light shot out from his hand to sweep over the sword.

“Spirit Actuation!”

The air seemed to vibrate as the silver light shooting out from Big Fatty Zhang’s hand bored into the flying sword. In the blink of an eye, the entire sword had turned silver.

The sight was shocking to say the least, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp.

Panting, Big Fatty Zhang handed the flying sword over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Take it,” he said, his voice brimming with confidence. “The sword’s spirit has already been actuated. If you pour some more spiritual power into it to do a spirit test, the silver designs should appear!” With that, he mopped the sweat off of his forehead.

Bai Xiaochun took the flying sword and then excitedly poured some spiritual power into it. Instantly, cracking sounds could be heard as silver lines appeared on the surface of the sword. Moments later though, they faded away, and then cracks began to spread out, as if the sword couldn’t contain the energy of heaven and earth which had been imbued into it. A moment later, it had transformed into nothing but a lump of slag.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking surprised. Big Fatty Zhang’s jaw dropped, and the two of them exchanged glances.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, and was just about to say that it had been a low quality sword to begin with, when Big Fatty Zhang grabbed it and looked it over with wide eyes. After a moment, he stamped his foot angrily.

“I made a mistake. I didn't control the fusion with the spirit iron. The energy of heaven and earth was a bit too volatile. Ah, it doesn’t matter. Alright Ninth Junior Brother, give me another flying sword, I’ll try again.” Big Fatty Zhang stared at Bai Xiaochun with bloodshot eyes.

Bai Xiaochun produced another flying sword, whereupon Big Fatty Zhang took a deep breath. Expression very serious, he went through the process again, until the sword glowed with silver light. Then he handed it back to Bai Xiaochun.

“Why don’t... why don’t you do the test, Eldest Brother?” Bai Xiaochun said hesitantly.

Voice solemn, Big Fatty Zhang said, “The first major rule of spirit enhancement is that unless the object belongs to the spirit enhancer, then he must not do the spirit test himself! It's a set rule that I can’t violate. If I break the taboo, it will lead to endless troubles.”

Seeing how determined Big Fatty Zhang was, Bai Xiaochun nervously took the sword. He truly wanted it to work this time, otherwise it would be a significant blow to Big Fatty Zhang.

After a moment of thought, he said, “Hm... Eldest Brother, why don’t you wait here for a moment. I'll go to into my room to do the test. I think I put too much thought into it before and got too nervous.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0080 awe-chapter-81

Big Fatty Zhang was already starting to get nervous. However, after hearing Bai Xiaochun’s suggestions, he realized that it made sense, and nodded in agreement.

Clearing his throat, he tried to pretend that he wasn’t nervous at all. “Of course. As my Master said, I shouldn’t be there to see whether the enhancement succeeds or not. Ninth Junior Brother, hurry inside and try out the spirit test.”

Bai Xiaochun turned and hurried inside. Frowning, he looked down at the flying sword. Worried about Big Fatty Zhang getting disappointed, he didn’t attempt any test, but instead, performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing the turtle-wok to appear.

“Ai. Eldest Brother has been under too much pressure from the very beginning. He's finally got some confidence back, so I can’t let him leave disappointed. I wonder if using the turtle-wok will make the enhancement of this flying sword a success.” Muttering to himself, he started a one-colored flame and then threw the untested flying sword into the wok.

Silver light glittered brightly, after which he put the turtle-wok away. Gritting his teeth, he poured some of his spiritual energy into the sword, whereupon the silver light condensed into a single silver design.

“It worked!” he thought, although he wasn't sure whether it was because of what Big Fatty Zhang had done, or whether it was because of his own work. He quickly pushed the door open and rushed out. “Eldest Brother! It worked. It worked! You’re so awesome, Eldest Brother!”

Big Fatty Zhang had been standing there nervously in the courtyard, wondering what the result would be. As soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun, a tremor ran through him. Then he saw the silver design on the flying sword. Slapping his thigh, he threw his head back and laughed loudly.

“Well, how did it turn out? It’s just like I said. I didn’t control the power last time. Back on Violet Cauldron Peak, I successfully enhanced three weapons already. Even my Master couldn’t help but praise my talent. And here I did it again, Ninth Junior Brother!” Big Fatty Zhang excitedly grabbed the sword from Bai Xiaochun to look at it.

Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, looking admiringly at Big Fatty Zhang. Seeing Big Fatty Zhang look so excited, he sighed in contentment.

“Alright, your Elder Brother is in a good mood now. I’m going to enhance it once more. This sword is going to have a twofold spirit enhancement!”

Bai Xiaochun had the feeling that such an attempt wasn’t a very good idea. If he recalled correctly, there were a lot of sect rules and taboos regarding spirit enhancement. “Eldest Brother, why don’t we try that some other time....”

“No, it’s fine!” Big Fatty Zhang said decisively. Holding the sword in hand, he began to concentrate and build up energy.

This second attempt at spirit enhancement was clearly much more difficult, and he had to use all of the ores he possessed. He began to tremble, and even consumed some medicinal pills before finally managing to draw upon enough of the energy of heaven and earth to begin the process. When he poured the energy into the sword, dazzling silver light shone out, after which Big Fatty Zhang sat down heavily onto the ground, panting.

However, his eyes shone with excitement as he handed the sword to Bai Xiaochun.

“Go ahead and test it!”

Bai Xiaochun frowned as he took the sword. However, before he could test it, Big Fatty Zhang reached out and grabbed his hand.

“Don’t test it here,” he said solemnly. “Remember, Ninth Junior Brother, the most important part of the spirit testing process is the feeling you have. When the moment feels right, it’s like having the assistance of the gods. Since you succeeded in your room last time, that’s where you should test it this time!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times at how much Big Fatty Zhang seemed to know about spirit enhancement. Nodding, he trotted back to his room thoughtfully.

“Eldest Brother might actually be really good at spirit enhancement. It’s hard to say. Just now, he seemed to have succeeded, even without any help from my turtle-wok.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he decided not to put the flying sword into the turtle-wok. Instead, he simply poured some spiritual power directly into the sword.

In the blink of an eye, silver light flashed. But then, it rapidly dimmed. Cracking sounds rang out, and the sword was reduced to useless slag.

Even as Bai Xiaochun frowned anxiously, he could hear Big Fatty Zhang talking outside.

“Ninth Junior Brother, I just saw some silver light. What happened. Did it succeed?”

“Um... I didn’t test it yet,” Bai Xiaochun replied quickly. “Let me do it now....”

Big Fatty Zhang stood there quietly outside, bitter nervousness written across his face. He was no idiot, and was quite certain that he'd seen silver light shining out of the window of Bai Xiaochun’s log cabin moments before.

Sighing, he assumed that Bai Xiaochun simply didn’t want to admit that it had been a failure. Taking a deep breath, he called out, “I know that you performed the test, Ninth Junior Brother. It's fine. I’ll... I’ll just take my leave now.”

Upon arriving, Big Fatty Zhang had been bursting with excitement, but the blow he had just received left him sinking into despondency.

He was aware that he had acted rashly. According to his Master, spirit enhancement was a very mysterious magical technique, and to achieve a perfect success rate with it was impossible. Furthermore, in the cultivation world, there was a strange phenomenon. Apparently... people who succeeded once would find it easier to succeed in the future, whereas people who failed would have the opposite experience.

It sounded strange, but the truth was that it came down to the power of will. It was a mysterious thing, and the more confidence one possessed, the more likely one was to succeed.

When it came to the world of spirit enhancement, there were two main techniques that could be cultivated. One was the orthodox method, in which the spirit enhancer was responsible for only the initial spirit enhancement. He would not personally perform the spirit test. Instead, the object would be given to the owner, who would perform the spirit test out of the spirit enhancer’s presence.

That way, success or failure wouldn't affect the mental state of the spirit enhancer. Without having been corrupted by the sight of the result, the spirit enhancer would be able to forget about the matter, and maintain a calm heart.

However, there was another, more extreme method that was cultivated. It was called the Will-Spirit Grand Magic. It focused on the profound and mysterious power of will. In that method, the spirit enhancer would take great care to watch the outcome of the spirit enhancement. That way, the more successes they experienced, the more shocking their spirit enhancement abilities would become. It was an extreme method, and failure could have a very extreme negative impact on the spirit enhancer, even to the point of ruining their talents altogether.

Even still, quite a few people attempted to use that method. Even Big Fatty Zhang’s Master Xu Meixiang had to admit that if someone cultivated such an extreme method of spirit enhancement, they could achieve heaven-defying results. Their power of will, and their self-confidence, would achieve monumentally spectacular results.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s sect-protecting treasure, the Heavenhorn Sword, which had received a tenfold spirit enhancement, had been produced by just such an eccentric spirit enhancer, thousands of years in the past.

Big Fatty Zhang smiled bitterly. He well understood that on Violet Cauldron Peak, the orthodox method of cultivation was preferred. By allowing himself to be overcome by excitement, he had made a huge mistake. The calmness in his heart had been disturbed, and it would take quite some time to recover.

Bai Xiaochun could see Big Fatty Zhang’s dejected posture through the window. Unwilling to allow him to be so disappointed, he gritted his teeth and produced an identical flying sword from within his bag of holding. Then he pulled out the turtle-wok and quickly performed a twofold spirit enhancement.

By that point, the bitter Big Fatty Zhang had placed his hand onto the gate of the courtyard and was about to leave. All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun’s elated voice rang out.

“Eldest Brother, it worked!!” The door of the log cabin slammed open as Bai Xiaochun rushed out, overjoyed, holding a flying sword with two silver designs visible on its surface.

“Really?!” A tremor ran through Big Fatty Zhang as he spun to look at the flying sword. Then he began to shake, a look of both excitement and disbelief growing in his eyes.

“Hahaha! I really am a Chosen among spirit enhancers. A twofold spirit enhancement! I can’t believe it! I succeeded!!’

He wrapped Bai Xiaochun up into a bear hug, tears of joy streaming down his face. The truth was that his latent talent was only average; if it weren’t for the deep connections between his family and his Master, he would never have been admitted into the Spirit Stream Sect.

It was only because of the precious materials back in the Ovens that he'd been able to cultivate to the great circle of the third level of Qi Condensation. After joining the Outer Sect, he had no such precious materials, and thus found cultivation to be very difficult. He could only watch as Third Fatty Hei and Bai Xiaochun both surpassed him, and although he was happy for them, he was very disappointed in himself.

Now that he turned out to be talented in spirit enhancement, the joy he felt was unimaginable. He suddenly felt useful. Filled with excitement, he threw his head back and laughed loudly, feeling the confidence wash through him. As it did, a strange power seemed to build up... which was none other than the intangible power of will.

Spirit enhancement was an extreme path to follow; the more you succeeded, the more confidence you had. The stronger your power of will, the more you would succeed!

Perhaps the mere belief that success was possible would help one to climb the steps of success, and breed that most mysterious power of will.

Big Fatty Zhang left excitedly, holding his head proudly. Bai Xiaochun watched him go, then stood there in his courtyard wondering if he'd done the right thing. In the end, he decided that as long as Big Fatty Zhang was happy, then he couldn't be in the wrong.

A few days after Big Fatty Zhang left, Bai Xiaochun got some new information from Xu Baocai. Apparently, the reason why fewer people could be seen on Fragrant Cloud Peak was that all of the disciples from the sixth level of Qi Condensation and higher had gone into secluded meditation, hoping to break through to the eighth level in preparation for the Chosen battles, which happened only once every thirty years!

The joint north and south bank Chosen battles were only about three months away, and would be the focus of attention of the entire Spirit Stream Sect. Throughout the Eastwood Continent, the cultivator clans and other small sects would also be paying close attention to the results.

During the Chosen battles, Outer Sect Chosen from both the north and south banks would fight each other in an attempt to claim the top ten spots. All of the top male and female disciples would rise up like dragons and phoenixes, hoping to be promoted into the Inner Sect. Whether in terms of personal fame or the approval of the sect, disciples who ascended to the Inner Sect in this fashion were viewed completely differently than other disciples.

Every thirty years, the top ten Chosen of the generation would always move on to greater glory. They were the outstanding talents, famous and revered far and near. Even other sects with status similar to the Spirit Stream Sect would acknowledge them.

Anyone who could be ranked in the top ten in the Chosen battles would also receive handsome compensation from the sect. Word had it that the prize in merit points reached into the tens of thousands, not to mention the other precious materials that would be given out. Furthermore, there was also the chance to enter the sect's arcane pocket realm.

Everyone was moved by the possibilities at hand.

Beyond all that, the best of the best would have the chance to pursue a spot in the legendary Legacy Echelon. One requirement was to be in the top ten of the Chosen battles, which was in turn another motivating factor to all disciples.

Before the Chosen battles, of course, were the qualifying rounds. Both the north and south banks would have their own qualifying rounds, during which they would select the ten best disciples to move on to the final Chosen battles.

The cultivation base requirement was set at the eighth level of Qi Condensation. Only disciples of that level could participate. There were two main requirements to enter the Inner Sect: first, to be in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and second, to pass a trial by fire. Normally speaking, there were a variety of trials by fire which could be attempted to get into the Inner Sect. However, the Chosen battles which occurred every thirty years were the most difficult of them all, and also the most watched in all the sect!

Of the numerous Outer Sect disciples who made the attempt, most would not be promoted. Only those who made it into the top hundred in the qualifying round would get into the Inner Sect. As for the top ten, they qualified to participate in the Chosen battles for the entire Spirit Stream Sect.

Shangguan Tianyou, Lu Tianlei, and Zhou Xinqi were all people who wanted to get into the south bank’s top ten, and then fight with the Chosen from the north bank. If they could become Inner Sect disciples in such a way, then they would have a shot at eventually reaching the Legacy Echelon.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0081 awe-chapter-82

During the past thousand years, the south bank had always been outdone by the north bank. In all of the Outer Sect Chosen battles which had been held, the majority of the final top ten were north bank disciples. The south bank had never been able to achieve dominance, much less take the first place spot, which went to the north bank each and every time.

One reason was that the north bank had four mountain peaks, while the south bank only had three. More than a thousand years ago, things had been different. Whether it was in terms of spirit enhancement or medicine concocting, the disciples of the south bank had been the pillars of the sect, and no one had ever dared to tangle with them. As for the sword cultivators of Green Crest Peak, they gave their mountain peak the reputation of being the strongest in the entire Spirit Stream Sect.

But now, for various reasons, everything had changed, and the north bank was the most dominant. They continuously secured victory in the Chosen battles, and as such, earned vast cultivation resources, which ensured that their battle prowess only continued to grow. Furthermore, their practice of cultivation differed somewhat from the south bank, so different that many of the outside cultivator clans had come to view the north bank as the dominant force within the Spirit Stream Sect, and its effective leader.

In the Spirit Stream Sect, the south bank used magic to control inanimate objects, while the north bank controlled living beasts!

For example, upon joining the sect, Bai Xiaochun had learned the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. In contrast, the introductory art for north bank disciples was the Heavenspan Elephant Control Art!

During the Chosen battles held over the past thousand years, the south bank had suffered defeat over and over again. That was especially true of the battles fought thirty years before, in which only one disciple from the south bank had ended up in the top ten. That, of course, infuriated the elders and peak lords of the three mountain peaks of the south bank. Afterward, they personally went out to look for new talented disciples, which was how Shangguan Tianyou and the other top Chosen came to join the sect.

Shangguan Tianyou, Lu Tianlei, and Zhou Xinqi were the trump cards of the south bank. They were the apprentices of the peak lords, and had been meticulously trained until their cultivation bases reached the pinnacle of the eighth level of Qi Condensation. In terms of battle prowess, they were already in a position to be able to defeat many disciples of the Inner Sect.

Shangguan Tianyou was the most impressive of them all, adept with void magic, and generally accepted as the number one Chosen of the south bank.

Lu Tianlei was skilled with the Dao of lightning, and was extraordinary in his own right. His lightning magic was shocking, and even his Master Xu Meixiang praised him ceaselessly, virtually guaranteeing him a spot in the top ten.

Then there was Zhou Xinqi, who showed incredible skill in the Dao of medicine. Of course, as Li Qinghou’s personal apprentice, she also had astonishing magical techniques at her disposal.

When Bai Xiaochun learned about the overall situation from Xu Baocai, he couldn’t help but feel indignant at the despotic way the north bank acted.

Filled with emotion, he swore to himself: “Just wait until I reach Foundation Establishment. I’ll definitely cut those north bank Outer Sect disciples down a notch or two!”

As far as the south bank qualifying matches, and the subsequent Chosen battles, he wasn’t the least bit interested in them.

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, fighting and killing weren’t his style. He was a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. He existed on a higher plane of seniority, and didn’t feel that it was appropriate for him to be competing with members of the junior generation.

“Besides, what would happen if I didn't win?” he thought with a dry cough. “Wouldn’t that lose a lot of face for elder Brother Sect Leader? Forget about it. I’m definitely not participating.” When he thought about how much he was sacrificing just for his Elder Brother Sect Leader, he decided that he should probably go burn some incense to his Master and complain a bit about the situation.

**

Life was great. Bai Xiaochun didn’t think much about the Chosen battles. Instead, he visited Big Fatty Zhang as often as he could. Every time Big Fatty Zhang would try a spirit enhancement, Bai Xiaochun would use his turtle-wok to turn it into a success, which led Big Fatty Zhang into new realms of excitement.

At a certain point, Big Fatty Zhang began to suspect that something was going on, but was so happy that he simply reveled in the feeling of success. Eventually, he got used to the situation, and came to be convinced that he really was a genius spirit enhancer.

Considering the incredible level of self-confidence that he was building, his spirit enhancement magic and power of will also began to grow much stronger.

Time passed. A month later, it was only three days until the qualifying round began. It was at that point that Bai Xiaochun got a notice from the sect informing him that attendance in the qualifying round was mandatory for all disciples in the eighth level of Qi Condensation. There were to be no exceptions.

After scanning the jade slip, Bai Xiaochun yawned. Assuming there must be some mistake with the message, he continued his pill concocting.

Three days later at dawn, bells filled the south bank, and Bai Xiaochun strolled out into the sect to see countless Outer Sect disciples hurrying along with very serious expressions. Spirits rising, he joined the crowd of moving people.

Soon, he reached a certain valley behind the three mountain peaks. It was a huge place, paved with white jade, in the middle of which was a huge, open square, with four awe-inspiring columns in the corners carved with coiling dragons.

Between each column was another statue depicting a fierce beast, extremely lifelike in appearance. The ferocious nature of it all made the entire valley seethe with a bleak and violent aura.

On one of the valley walls was a balcony, upon which numerous notable members of the sect could be seen. Li Qinghou was there, along with Xu Meixiang and the peak lord from the third mountain. Even Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong was present.

The qualifying matches for the north and south banks were not held concurrently. The south bank went first, followed by the north bank. That was to ensure that the sect leader didn't show partiality to one bank or the other. After observing the south bank's qualifying matches, he would go to the north bank to watch theirs.

Li Qinghou and the other peak lords sat near Zheng Yuandong, chatting amiably.

Behind them were the elders from the three mountain peaks, including Elder Zhou. Some sat quietly with their eyes closed, others conversed in low tones. A few were observing the disciples pouring into the valley.

Bai Xiaochun walked along lazily until he was in the valley itself. Looking around, he realized that he had never been here before. Curious about the statues, he walked over to examine one more closely.

As he neared the statue, he noticed that there was even fur on its surface, which rippled in the wind. “These creatures almost look alive. So interesting.”

It was at this point that the sound of voices suddenly rose up from within the audience.

“Elder Sister Zhou is on the way!”

“Elder Sister Zhou has been in the eighth level of Qi Condensation for a while now. She’s definitely going to get into the top ten. In fact, considering her status, she’ll most likely get into the top three!”

A blue swath of flying silk appeared off in the distance, upon which could be seen Zhou Xinqi. She first clasped hands and bowed to the balcony, then landed off to the side, where she closed her eyes and sat down quietly. The truth was that she was inwardly nervous; after all her years of cultivation, the qualifying round had finally arrived, and she had to perform well.

Up on the balcony, Li Qinghou gave her a faint smile of approval.

Smiling, Zheng Yuandong said, “Qinghou, not only is Zhou Xinqi extraordinary with plants and vegetation, she also has some shocking magical techniques. I have the feeling she’ll bring glory to the south bank.”

“There’s no need for such praise, sect leader,” Li Qinghou replied modestly. “My apprentice still needs some more tempering. However, her personality is of a type rarely seen among her contemporaries. She really has incredible potential.”

Most of the crowd looked over enviously at Zhou Xinqi, but as for Bai Xiaochun, he cleared his throat and looked at her with an expression similar to Li Qinghou’s. Clasping his hands behind his back, he gazed at her with praise and approval.

Before people could finish talking about Zhou Xinqi, another small uproar occurred in the crowd. People turned their heads up as the rumble of thunder echoed out. A bolt of lightning snaked out overhead, perched atop which was a young man wearing a long green robe and a haughty expression.

Countless lightning bolts spread out in his wake, and thunder boomed around him. He seemed even more impressive than Zhou Xinqi, and when he landed in the square, the area for thirty meters around him turned into a lake of dancing lightning.

Sparks of electricity even arced back and forth on his skin.

“It’s Lu Tianlei from Violet Cauldron Peak! Elder Brother Lu has a rare lightning meridian. He’s been in secluded meditation almost the entire time since joining the sect. Now he finally makes his extraordinary debut!”

“Lu Tianlei is incredible. He cultivates some sort of technique that gives him control of lightning!” As the conversations continued, Lu Tianlei proudly clasped hands in greeting toward the balcony. Then his gaze swept across the crowd. Among all the Outer Sect disciples gathered there, only Zhou Xinqi was someone he considered a worthy opponent. The others weren’t even worth looking at.

Up on the balcony, Xu Meixiang smiled, her eyes gleaming with satisfaction. “Sect leader, what do you think of the Extreme Dao Lightning Control Magic that my disciple cultivates?”

Zheng Yuandong smiled and looked a bit more closely at Lu Tianlei. “He already controls two types of lightning, and he’s only in the eighth level of Qi Condensation. With skill like that, he’s definitely a top Chosen among the disciples under Foundation Establishment.”

The peak lord of Green Crest Peak, the emaciated old man who seemed as sharp as a sword, suddenly looked up with a smile.

Zheng Yuandong’s face flickered, and he also turned to look in the same direction. The other elders did the same.

A beam of sword light... split through the clouds, rumbling along with incredible momentum. The clouds seethed as an ancient green sword appeared, a beam that cut through everything in its path, piercing through the air as it shot toward the ground.

The sword seemed primeval, forged from bronze, weathered with age and completely extraordinary.

An extremely handsome young man stood atop the sword, wearing the robes of an Outer Sect disciple. His black hair whipped about in the wind, and he held his hands clasped behind his back. A faint layer of golden light flickered around him, and behind him could be seen the images of numerous green lotuses.

In addition to the lotuses was a nine-meter-long fish with the head of a dragon, which swirled about, sending rainwater falling down everywhere around it.

Even before the young man arrived, the rain water was splashing down onto the square. Countless disciples looked up in awe, gasping at the incredible sight.

“It’s Eldest Brother Shangguan!”

“The number one Chosen in the Outer Sect on the south bank. Shangguan Tianyou!”

“According to the rumors, he has a powerful sword spirit body, and is the reincarnation of some almighty sword cultivator. For some reason, the heavens are guilty, and showered him with countless blessings. When he was three, he was walking down the road and happened to find an ancient sword; when he was seven, a baby Crimson Cloudbeast fell out of the sky and instantly accepted him as its master; when he was thirteen, he acquired a golden light shield. That is why his name is Tianyou!”

Zhou Xinqi looked over with a grave expression.

As for Lu Tianlei, he looked up, lightning dancing in his eyes, sparks surging around him. From the look in his eyes, he was itching to fight.

As the green beam of light closed in, Shanguan Tianyou clasped hands toward the balcony and called out, “I, Shangguan Tianyou, offer greetings to the sect leader, my Master, the two peak lords, and all of the various elders.”

As he floated down toward the square, he looked around at all the disciples and nodded.

His amiable gaze and friendly nod caused countless disciples to clasp hands in greeting. Many of the female disciples batted their eyes bashfully.

Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong gave a hearty laugh and looked over at the peak lord of Green Crest Peak. “Wonderful. Simply wonderful!” he said. “At only the eighth level of Qi Condensation, he can already transform sword qi into lotuses. Regardless of whether this Shangguan Tianyou really is the reincarnation of an almighty cultivator, he definitely has a sword spirit body. To accomplish what he has before Foundation Establishment is truly a rarity!

“I have to say that I'm shocked by the south bank's performance so far!”

Li Qinghou and the other peak lords smiled, and the other elders chuckled. All of them clearly wished to have their revenge on the north bank.

Zheng Yuandong was about to continue speaking when suddenly he looked down at the square and saw Bai Xiaochun standing there next to the statue, hands clasped behind his back, looking like a member of the senior generation.

Chuckling dryly, he said, “This Bai Xiaochun... really loves to indulge in his histrionics.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0082 awe-chapter-83

Zheng Yuandong wasn’t the only one who noticed Bai Xiaochun. Everyone else was in a huge commotion, but Bai Xiaochun was simply standing there like a member of the senior generation. He couldn’t have stuck out more from everyone else.

One of the elders on the balcony smiled and said, “Young Bai Xiaochun is already in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and fought his way out of certain death at the hands of the Luochen Clan. He’ll definitely make it into the top ten. In fact, he probably has a shot at the top five.”

“That’s right,” said another elder. “Not only does he have extraordinary skill with plants and vegetation, he also cultivates a shocking type of body refinement. I'd say he’s a definite dark horse in the qualifying round today.”

Hearing these comments caused the faces of Li Qinghou and Zheng Yuandong to beam. Exchanging a glance, they laughed heartily.

“He's different from the rest of them,” Li Qinghou said. “He has much stronger convictions than his contemporaries. When I brought him here to the sect all those years ago, I asked him why he wanted to practice cultivation, and he said it’s because he wants to live forever.” He looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a warm gaze. He’d finally finished preparing a defensive magical item that he planned to give Bai Xiaochun after the qualifying matches were over.

“Alright, enough with the praise,” Zheng Yuandong said. “Although he’s my Junior Brother, as Qinghou is well aware, he’s stubborn and mischievous. He still needs much tempering. However, he’s a pure and genuine person who doesn’t seek the limelight, which is laudable.” Despite the words he uttered, everyone could tell that Zheng Yuandong’s eyes gleamed with anticipation.

As the group on the balcony continued to exchange words, Bai Xiaochun stood there next to the statue, proud and aloof as he looked over at Lu Tianlei, and the crowd favorite that was Shangguan Tianyou. Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun was a bit apprehensive.

Lu Tianlei had electricity writhing around him, which left Bai Xiaochun’s scalp numb as he thought back to what it had been like to ride his sword through the thunderstorm. And then there was Shangguan Tianyou, with his incredible good fortune and a sword from ancient times. He also had a shocking energy which left Bai Xiaochun breathless.

As far as he could tell, both of them were incredibly strong.

But then he thought about his own status, and coughed dryly before once again plastering an approving smile onto his face.

“There are plenty of Chosen to go around,” he thought, “which simply goes to show how powerful the Spirit Stream Sect is. But I'm a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. I shouldn't be comparing myself to my juniors. They are the future of the sect, and bullying them would be wrong. Yeah. Any comparisons should wait until after they’re part of the Inner Sect!” Having made his decision, he continued to stand there looking around approvingly.

More and more people crowded into the valley. All of the disciples who were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation were cracking their knuckles in preparation for the fighting. As for those whose cultivation bases were lower, they were naturally coming to act as the audience.

Among the three mountain peaks of the south bank, there were roughly a thousand disciples in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and all of them were present in the valley. Bai Xiaochun was familiar with some of them. However, not all were the type of people who liked crowds and excitement. Many prefered to practice their cultivation in secret, waiting for just such an occasion as this to finally show off.

The countless other Outer Sect disciples who didn’t qualify to participate were waiting eagerly to see how the qualifying round would turn out. Everyone was itching to find out who would make it into the top hundred, and of course, the top ten.

As for who would be the top three, there didn't seem to be much suspense about that. Presumably, those spots would go to Shangguan Tianyou, Lu Tianlei, and Zhou Xinqi.

Gradually, the thousand or so eighth level disciples quieted down, as did the other surrounding disciples. A sense of pressure began to fill the air, and gradually, a foreboding sense of impending violence.

A stifling, suffocating feeling weighed down on everyone, and people started to get nervous.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked to find that he was also getting nervous, although he wasn’t sure why. Reminding himself that he wouldn’t be participating, he looked around and forced himself to relax.

It was at this time that Li Qinghou’s voice rang out from the balcony above. “The grand competition between the south and north banks is about to begin!

“Some among you have practiced your cultivation in secret, leaving your true level of power unknown to the public. Now is your chance to shine. You should not harbor any fear that your rapid progress or unique good fortune will be the subject of avarice among members of the senior generation. Cultivation is a personal matter, and everyone has a right to their secrets. The Spirit Stream Sect has a ten thousand year history. It is no accident that we grew from a small sect all the way to our current level of glory. All of that is because of the good fortune of our disciples. Whatever good fortune you have acquired is your personal destiny!

“Some of you have come to be called Chosen by others. However, that is only because of your natural talents. Talented people can be found everywhere among the defeated. Today is the day to prove yourselves. Today is the day to show whether or not you truly deserve the title which has been bestowed upon you by others. Today you can prove whether or not you truly deserve to be... Chosen!” Li Qinghou’s voice was deep and filled with pride, and seemed to form a resonance with the somber pressure that filled the area. Those who listened began to pant nervously.

The disciples who had various secrets to keep all looked on with shining eyes.

As for Lu Tianlei and the other famous disciples, from the expressions on their faces, they clearly were itching to fight.

“The top one hundred competitors in the qualifying round will be promoted to the Inner Sect. The top ten will go on to represent the south bank in the grand finale competition, which is only held once every thirty years. This time, we have a chance to make sure that our compatriots on the north bank remember who we are!” With that, Li Qinghou flicked his sleeve, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air as columns of light shot up from all three of the south banks’ mountain peaks.

Everything shook violently; it was as if a pair of invisible hands were ripping apart the air above the valley, causing a huge bridge to appear!

It was an ancient, primitive bridge, like something which had been pulled out of primeval times. It was constructed of stone, and was covered with ancient magical symbols that shone with flickering light.

The bridge was fully 300 meters wide, and so long that it couldn’t be taken in with a single glance. It was so grand and majestic that compared to it, the valley they were in seemed like nothing more than a stepping stone.

The next person to speak was not Li Qinghou, but rather, Xu Meixiang. “This is the Spirit Stream Bridge, a precious treasure of our sect. It has been summoned to act as your path in this trial by fire. After the ninth bell toll, all disciples in the eighth level of Qi Condensation will step onto the bridge!” Xu Meixiang stood there, beautiful and somber, her gown fluttering in the wind, her hair floating around her. She looked less like a woman and more like an immortal.

“Whoever reaches the end of the bridge first will take first place. The same method will be used to determine who is in the top hundred, and the top ten!” As Xu Meixiang’s voice continued to echo out in the valley, the disciples looked eagerly at the bridge up above.

This format of competition was a comprehensive way to test the disciples. The rules didn’t prohibit fighting; as long as no lethal attacks were made, anything was permitted. Whoever reached the end first would be the winner!

Of course, there would be obstacles along the way, and even luck would play a part.

The audience panted as they waited, eyes glittering, cultivation bases stirring. Bai Xiaochun stood there yawning as the bells began to toll.

Once, twice, thrice.... Four tolls, five tolls, six....

The sound of the bells struck the minds of the disciples, causing their hearts to pound. They began to rotate their cultivation bases faster and faster as they gathered together the energy they had built up.

Soon the bells had rung seven times, and then eight.... Finally, when the ninth tolling of the bell could be heard, rumbling sounds filled the air as the cultivation bases of all of the eighth level disciples exploded out with full force. Like arrows loosed from a bow, all of the disciples shot into action!

Over a thousand people flew into motion toward the ancient bridge. In the blink of an eye, everyone was on its surface, speeding along. Shangguan Tianyou was the fastest, standing on his flying sword, a green beam of light that instantly took the lead!

Right behind him was Lu Tianlei, surrounded by crackling lightning. His energy only seemed to grow, and his speed was incredible as he attempted to close the gap between himself and Shangguan Tianyou, eyes bloodshot, howling.

In third place was Zhou Xinqi, her blue flying silk rippling as she advanced at top speed.

There were a few people directly behind them, none of them very well-known. Just as Li Qinghou had said, there were disciples who had concealed their true cultivation bases, waiting just for this opportunity to explode out with full force. That group almost immediately pulled out ahead of the pack, and from the look of it, they still had energy to go faster.

The surrounding audience of disciples looked on with wide eyes, hearts pounding at the scene which was unfolding in front of them.

However, as wind blasted out from the sudden acceleration of the eighth level disciples, Bai Xiaochun was left standing alone in the square.

After the ninth bell toll, the wind buffeted his face, and he blinked. He stood there alone, looking up at the thousand disciples racing along, sighing in admiration.

“Keep it up guys!” he shouted. A moment later, he leaped into motion, landing on the bridge and running along. In the end, he decided that he might as well participate in the qualifying match, but that he wouldn’t even try to get into the top ten or hundred.

“I heard the north bank is full of fiends. I’d be an idiot to try to fight with them.” He moved along lazily, clearly having no desire or intention of being promoted to the Inner Sect. In his view, he was already a Prestige disciple and the Junior Brother of the sect leader, and therefore had no need to become an Inner Sect disciple.

Therefore, he simply enjoyed the scenery, cheering the other disciples on. He made quite a contrast with the other competitors.

The audience members looked on with wide eyes and strange expressions.

Meanwhile, on the balcony, veins bulged out on Li Qinghou’s face as he glared at Bai Xiaochun, feeling like his head was about to explode.

Xu Meixiang and the peak lord from Green Crest Peak exchanged an incredulous glance and then smiled wryly. The other elders’ eyes went wide. Never could they possibly have imagined that something like this would take place in the qualifying matches.

Were it any other disciple, they would quickly go teach him a lesson. But Bai Xiaochun had a special status, so all the elders could do was look over at Li Qinghou and Zheng Yuandong.

Zheng Yuandong felt a headache coming on from the embarrassing loss of face.... Clearing his throat, he glanced over at Elder Zhou.

“Elder Zhou, whatever happens next, I’ll pretend I didn’t see. You know, that phoenix of yours really suffered a lot.”

Elder Zhou instantly understood. Face darkening, he flew up into the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he roared, “nobody can save you today! Once I get my hands on you, I’ll make sure you understand exactly how my phoenix suffered!!” With that, he shot toward the bridge like a bird of prey.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0083 awe-chapter-84

Bai Xiaochun was so startled by the sudden enraged roar that he leapt up into the air. When he turned to look over his shoulder and saw Elder Zhou charging aggressively toward him, his eyes went wide, and he almost fainted from fright.

Elder Zhou looked like a fiendish, murderous monster, and although he wasn’t shouting that he intended to take Bai Xiaochun’s life, only that he was going to make him experience the same suffering the phoenix had, Bai Xiaochun thought about what the phoenix had looked like after a full day of pouncing on the other birds of Fragrant Cloud Peak. The mere idea left his hair standing on end.

He couldn’t help but imagine what it would be like to be in the place of that phoenix, and his eyes went wide. Shaking, he looked forward again and began to pick up speed.

He didn’t lack courage; he simply feared death. However... what was happening now had occurred too suddenly. Furthermore, there were things in this world to be feared more than death, such as, being transformed into a phoenix....

When he thought about that, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but scream: “Elder Brother, save me! I don’t want to get transformed into a bird!”

Up on the balcony, Zheng Yuandong cleared his throat and pretended not to hear.

Because of the sudden and intense provocation, Bai Xiaochun let out one blood-curdling scream after another. At the same time, he increased his speed explosively. In the blink of an eye, he transformed into a series of afterimages as he shot toward the disciples who were running along in last place. Those disciples felt something like a wind bearing down on them from behind, then stared in shock as Bai Xiaochun shot past them at high speed.

“How... how fast is he going?!?!” Everyone was shocked enough as it was, but then Elder Zhou came racing by in hot pursuit of Bai Xiaochun. That caused countless disciples to all gasp.

The Outer Sect disciples in the audience all stared at what was happening, eyes wide with shock.

“I can’t believe Bai Xiaochun is going so fast!”

“It seems that being chased makes him go a lot faster than usual....”

The audience was in an uproar, and Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, although no tears came. He felt completely maligned as he fled for his life, passing one disciple after another, all of whom gasped in shock. There was one of them who wasn't willing to be overtaken. Gritting his teeth, he pushed forward with all the speed he could muster, and yet in the end, he could only watch as Bai Xiaochun sped past him into the distance ahead.

“Dammit, he's running faster than a mouse whose tail got stepped on!”

By now, disciples both on and off the bridge were completely shaken by the terrifying display of speed put on by Bai Xiaochun. Even the sect leader and the others on the balcony could only look on with jaws wide open, totally shocked by the speed they were witnessing.

Smiling wryly, Li Qinghou looked over at Zheng Yuandong and said, “Well... you really know how to handle things, sect leader!”

Xu Meixiang and the old man from Green Crest Peak had strange expressions on their faces, and the other surrounding elders couldn't hold back from chuckling.

Zheng Yuandong cleared his throat. “For a stubborn, mischievous kid like him... there really isn’t any other option.”

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun was picking up more speed, throwing the audience into even further commotion.

“He’s already passed up half of the other disciples! At this rate, he’ll definitely make it into the top hundred!”

Some of the audience instantly devolved into cheering.

“Go, Sect Uncle Bai, go...!”

However, it was at this point that the stones on the bridge suddenly trembled, and began to transform into numerous puppets. Eyes glittering, the puppets roared and lunged toward the charging disciples.

In the lead position was Shangguan Tianyou, whose expression was the same as ever as he waved a sword through the air, causing several puppets to explode. He didn’t even slow down by a bit, maintaining his first place position.

Close behind were Lu Tianlei and Zhou Xinqi, as well as the handful of other disciples who had kept their cultivation and identities secret. The entire group easily dispatched the puppets and continued onward at full speed.

Puppets appeared around Bai Xiaochun as well. He watched anxiously as they closed in on him, and was just about to attack when suddenly, a screaming wind could be heard behind him as Elder Zhou approached.

“I've changed my mind, Bai Xiaochun! After I catch you, I won’t make you experience what my phoenix did. I’ll make you feel the pain that the other birds felt!” With that, he cackled cruelly. By this point, he was pulling out all the stops in his attempt to incite Bai Xiaochun....

When Bai Xiaochun heard Elder Zhou’s words, all of the blood in his body rushed to his brain, and his vision began to fade. He thought about the miserable fates of the birds, the anguished calls of the spirit tail chickens, and the powerful body of the phoenix. Then... he let out the most piercing, agonized scream of his entire life.

“Help me! I don't want to be pounced on....”

He was now even more scared than he had been when being chased down by the Luochen Clan. Never before in his life had he been incited in such a matter. As he screamed and trembled, silver light began to shine from his skin, covering him to the point where he almost seemed to be made from silver.

At that point, he broke through to another level of speed. Even as Elder Zhou bore down on him, he bolted off like a startled wild boar.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

He was now moving so fast that any puppets who got near him were instantly bashed away and sent flying through the air. He was like a streak of light that shot forward at blinding speed.

From a distance, it wasn’t even possible to see Bai Xiaochun, only the countless puppets being tossed up into the air after being hit.

He was now moving far, far faster than he had been before, and quickly passed up the top four hundred to reach the top three hundred. Then two hundred. Until finally... he was in the top hundred!

He was moving too fast!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as he passed countless disciples, who were left staring in shock at the maddened Bai Xiaochun. He screamed as he flew along, eyes wide and bloodshot, swearing to himself that he must never, ever allow himself to be caught by Elder Zhou.

He’d already forgotten about the trial by fire, or about the rankings. All he was thinking was that he needed to run, run, run... off of the bridge!

The other disciples in his path became obstacles that he would grab and send flying off to the side.

The audience simply watched in amazement.

“Is he... even human!?!?”

“No way! He’s like a mix between a wild boar and a dragon!!”

Elder Zhou stared in amazement as Bai Xiaochun proceeded along without avoiding anything in his path, and instead just slammed everything out of his way. Elder Zhou couldn't help but wonder... if he had pushed Bai Xiaochun a bit too far.

Nothing seemed capable of holding him back. His speed defied description, and yet, he continued to accelerate. Then, rumbling sounds echoed out as a new obstacle appeared. Instead of puppets, numerous webs popped up, stretching out in front of the disciples to impede their progress.

However, the instant a web appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun, he blasted right through it, leaving behind nothing more than a hole. Popping sounds rang out as the nets didn’t hinder him for even a moment.

It was as if his incredible speed had transformed him into a razor-sharp blade!

Next, the ground began to ripple as it transformed into a quagmire, complete with occasional whirlpools. The sudden change slowed many people down, but not Bai Xiaochun.... He didn’t even notice what had happened. A whooshing sound could be heard as he shot forward. Not even the spinning whirlpools could slow him down.

Soon, he was in the top eighty. Then the top fifty, thirty, and finally, the top ten....

Upon seeing this, Elder Zhou gasped. Considering his reaction, there was almost no need to mention the disciples in the audience. All eyes were fixed on Bai Xiaochun; not a single person was even looking at Shangguan Tianyou and the other front runners.

A bald young man with cold, sinister eyes appeared up in front of Bai Xiaochun. He had been concealing his true battle prowess for years, and rarely had any contact with anyone. His entire purpose on this day was to make sure the so-called top three Chosen knew that there were always more powerful people out there in the world.

His entire person radiated flickering light, and three pearls swirled around him, allowing him to slash through all obstacles like a sharp knife through bamboo. As he sped forward, a dozen or so vortexes sprang up around him. However, he knew that as long as he kept his momentum going through the current area, they would soon disappear.

“The stronger you are, the more vortexes appear. I wonder how many vortexes appeared for the people who passed through this area ahead of me. It must have been a shocking scene.” Even as the bald-headed disciple murmured to himself, he heard something whooshing through the air behind him. Surprised, he assumed that he must be hearing things. After all, there was nothing that could possibly speed through the air like that, not here....

However, before he could even turn his head, a blast of wind overtook him, and a figure blurred past him at top speed. Surrounding that person were over a hundred vortexes!

The bald disciple’s eyes went wide as the figure sped past him without slowing down at all. The disciple rubbed his eyes, thinking he must have been seeing things. By that point, he could just barely make out the person speeding away in the distance.

“Impossible!!” he mouthed.

Trembling, Bai Xiaochun screamed, shooting forward with over a hundred vortexes surrounding him. However, after passing through the current region, they vanished. Picking up speed, he passed more disciples. All of these people were in the top ten, and for years had been concealing their good fortune and strength, hoping to reveal it in shocking fashion now. But then Bai Xiaochun showed up, and all they could do was stare in astonishment at his freakish performance.

Zhou Xinqi gritted her teeth as she entered a new area. Intense pressure weighed down as if to lock her in place, forcing her to slow down.

However, even as she struggled forward, she heard cracking sounds from behind her. Jaw dropping, she looked around, whereupon her pupils constricted in disbelief.

A boom rang out as Bai Xiaochun shot past her. He was moving so fast that the pressure which attempted to slow him down did nothing. Cracking sounds could be heard, and fissures opened up in the air... which then shattered!

“Bai Xiaochun? Impossible!” She could only watch as Bai Xiaochun shattered the solidifying pressure and then shot onward like a bolt of lightning.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0084 awe-chapter-85

Even as Zhou Xinqi reeled in shock, another blast of wind swept over her, and Elder Zhou appeared. As he passed, he looked over and smiled, and she nodded in return.

Despite the faint smile on his face, when he spoke, the voice of a fiendish monster echoed out from his mouth.

“I’ve changed my mind again, Bai Xiaochun. After I catch you, I’m going to starve you for a month, then put you in with a flock of phoenixes and a horde of wild beasts!”

Zhou Xinqi’s eyes went wide, and at the same time, a miserable scream could be heard coming from Bai Xiaochun.

“Help me, Uncle Li! Save me, dear Elder Brother Sect Leader! I don’t want to starve! I don't want to get locked up with phoenixes and wild beasts....” Bai Xiaochun was trembling in fear as he conjured mental images of the scenes described by Elder Zhou. Screaming, he shot forward with incredible speed, transforming into nothing more than a shadow.

Up ahead, Lu Tianlei sped along in lightning form. Although the early stages of the path had been easy for him, things had slowly grown more and more difficult. The area he currently faced was filled with razor-sharp wind blades, and if he proceeded too quickly, it would cause them to fly toward him.

He had summoned a puppet moments before, and sent it ahead as a test, but because it moved too quickly, it was instantly slashed to pieces by the wind blades. Because of that, Lu Tianlei knew that he had no other option than to slow down. Only after finding the proper equilibrium would he be able to continue moving forward.

Shangguan Tianyou was so far ahead he wasn't even visible. Given his consummate level of talent, he had been able to transform into emptiness and then pass through the area effortlessly. The wind blades didn't so much as touch him. Lu Tianlei, who had previously believed himself to be on an equal level with Shangguan Tianyou, was left with hatred seething in his heart.

"So what if you possess void magic?" Lu Tianlei thought. "What's so amazing about that? Just wait till I get past this area... I'll definitely catch up and take first place!" By this point, Lu Tianlei didn't even think of Zhou Xinqi as being worthy of note. The only thing he cared about was overtaking Shangguan Tianyou and winning first place.

Taking a deep breath, he stepped out into the wind blade zone and prepared to pick up speed. But then, a blast of wind could be heard behind him.

The deafening sound caused all of the flying wind blades to tremble. When Lu Tianlei saw that, he smiled in delight.

"Hah! It's definitely Zhou Xinqi. What a moron. If she enters this area going that fast, all the wind blades will head in her direction. I should take advantage of that moment to charge forward!" Looking back, he saw someone skinny racing toward him as fast as lightning. As soon as the person entered the area with the wind blades, he was already a third of the way through, placing him only about 3,000 meters away from Lu Tianlei.

Because of his incredible speed, it only took the blink of an eye for countless wind blades to swirl together into an enormous cyclone.

At first, he gasped, shocked by Bai Xiaochun's speed. But then, he began to chuckle inwardly. "It's not Zhou Xinqi? Well, it doesn't matter. He's moving way too fast. Is he looking to get killed?! When practicing cultivation, one should rely on one's wits!"

Laughing, Lu Tianlei watched as the wind blades grouped together. At the same time, he gathered the lightning which surrounded him, preparing to make a break for the exit.

Before he could pick up any speed, the screaming Bai Xiaochun continued onward without slowing down at all. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he actually picked up speed.

There were so many wind blades it was impossible to tell how many there were. And yet, when they slammed into Bai Xiaochun, silver light flashed, and to Lu Tianlei's shock, they all shattered.

Countless wind blades fell to pieces, and by the time they reformed, Bai Xiaochun had flown past Lu Tianlei.

Of course, the wind blades wouldn't let him by so easily, and began to race to catch up.

Lu Tianlei's jaw dropped and his eyes went wide. Then, his scalp went numb and his mind began to spin.

"Impossible!!" he said in a hoarse voice. Before the countless wind blades could catch up to Bai Xiaochun… he was gone.

The wind blades shuddered to a stop angrily, then slowly turned toward Lu Tianlei....

Heart pounding, Lu Tianlei immediately slowed down. However, having been completely frustrated by Bai Xiaochun, the wind blades didn’t hesitate for a moment to pounce on him.

“No... NO!!”

Moments later, miserable shrieks began to ring out.

As he ran on up ahead, Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised to hear the bloodcurdling screams behind him. However, there was no time for him to look back. Elder Zhou seemed to be right behind him, bellowing in rage, leaving Bai Xiaochun with no choice but to charge onward, jaw clenched, expression pained.

Thankfully, Elder Zhou was able to rescue Lu Tianlei from the countless swirling wind blades. If he had come a moment later, Lu Tianlei, whose clothing was now ripped to shreds, would most likely have been left with no other choice than to forfeit.

Eyes bloodshot, Lu Tianlei finally realized who Bai Xiaochun was. Voice filled with rage, he bellowed, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

Unaware that he had unwittingly caused yet another person to hate him, Bai Xiaochun moved on at top speed, passing through numerous empty areas. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he caught sight of the end of the bridge up ahead.

“I'm finally near the end!” he thought excitedly. What he didn’t notice was that there was someone else near the end, trodding forward one step at a time.

Shangguan Tianyou was panting. Most of the path had been very easy for him, with the difficulty rising only at the very end.

“I can’t believe this place suppresses spiritual power and also has such crushing pressure!” A brutal gleam appeared in his eyes as he proceeded forward. The spiritual power in the area was locked down tight, and there was also huge pressure. He felt like there was a mountain resting on his shoulders, and even more shocking was that with every step he took, it felt like an entire additional mountain was added. Although there were only a total of a hundred steps to take, the difficulty was intense, and he was left trembling physically. He was already quickly approaching his limit.

The closer he got to the end, the greater the pressure grew, and the more mountains he felt building up on him. Eventually, he reached the point where he had only ten more steps to take. However, those ten steps seemed almost insurmountable.

Shangguan Tianyou took a deep breath, and determination flickered in his eyes.

“The first place spot in the qualifying round belongs to me. I'm going to get into the Chosen battles, and I'm going to take first place there, too! After I get into the Inner Sect, then my future will be in the Spirit Stream Sect’s Legacy Echelon!” Gritting his teeth, he was just about to take another step when he sensed something behind him, and turned to see Bai Xiaochun.

“It’s him....” There were few people on the south bank who didn’t know Bai Xiaochun. Although Shangguan Tianyou had never met him personally, he had attended his funeral and seen his portrait. The fact that Bai Xiaochun was directly behind him was somewhat of a surprise; he had assumed it would be Lu Tianlei.

“It seems I thought a bit too much of Lu Tianlei. What a useless fool.” Looking away, Shangguan Tianyou completely ignored Bai Xiaochun. As far as he was concerned, he was on a completely different level than Bai Xiaochun. Lifting his foot and stepping forward, he heard creaking sounds emanating from his bones.

However, even as he took that single step. Bai Xiaochun also took a step forward. When he felt nothing, he took a second step, and then a third and a fourth....

Soon he had taken fifty steps, whereupon he stopped and looked up into the air.

“What’s going on? Why do I feel heavier?”

It was at this point that Shangguan Tianyou trembled and put his foot down, having completed one single step. Having taken over ninety steps, he felt like he was on the verge of collapse. He was out of breath, but his expression was one of satisfaction. Then he looked back and saw Bai Xiaochun standing there, having taken fifty steps.

His eyes went wide.

“How... how is he moving so fast!?” Looking shocked, he quickly gritted his teeth. “He must be a body refinement cultivator. That will help him move more quickly at the beginning. But toward the end, things will get more difficult for him. He--” Before Shangguan Tianyou could finish his train of thought, a tremor ran through him, and he looked on in shock as Bai Xiaochun suddenly began to run.

“Run... he’s... he’s running?” Shangguan Tianyou watched wide-eyed as Bai Xiaochun trotted up to him.

“Hey, why are you going so slow?” Bai Xiaochun asked. Looking over his shoulder, he saw no sign of Elder Zhou, and finally breathed a sigh of relief.

“You... don’t feel like there are mountains on your back?” Shangguan Tianyou asked without even thinking about it, his eyelids twitching.

“Mountains?” Bai Xiaochun jumped up and down a few times. “Eee? Hm, yeah a few, but I can hardly feel them.” Shangguan Tianyou gasped in disbelief.

Bai Xiaochun continued to jump up and down a few times, but then suddenly, he saw Elder Zhou off in the distance. With a shriek, he suddenly shot forward through the final nine steps, taking him off of the bridge.... Then his speed increased dramatically, and he was gone from sight.

When that happened, Elder Zhou finally slowed down and then began to chuckle wryly.

“Bai Xiaochun... actually took first place?”

Simultaneously, back on the balcony, Zheng Yuandong, Li Qinghou, and everyone else shot to their feet, strange expressions on their faces. The elders almost couldn’t believe their eyes. Although they had been prepared for a surprising outcome when they saw Bai Xiaochun overtake Zhou Xinqi and Lu Tianlei, the ease with which Bai Xiaochun passed the final section was flabbergasting.

“He... took first?” Li Qinghou murmured.

A moment later, a huge uproar could be heard coming from the disciples who had gathered to watch the qualifying round.

“Bai Xiaochun... passed up Zhou Xinqi, Lu Tianlei and Shangguan Tianyou! He took first!”

“Heavens! Bai Xiaochun actually took first!”

“The only reason he took first was because of Elder Zhou. Anyone would have fled for their life with him chasing them!”

Shangguan Tianyou’s face was pale white, and his mind was spinning. His vision began to go dark, as though lightning were crashing in his mind.

He could only watch as Bai Xiaochun simply walked off of the bridge ahead of him. He began to tremble violently.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes were completely bloodshot. His pride, his self-respect, everything about him had just been trampled by Bai Xiaochun. Worst of all was how Bai Xiaochun had actually asked him why he was going so slow.

All of the blood in his body began to rush toward his head, and the sword qi inside of him boiled on the verge of exploding. Eyes crimson, he threw caution to the wind and lurched forward nine steps, after which he coughed up a mouthful of blood.

“Bai Xiaochun, I, Shangguan Tianyou, did not lose this day. I... refuse to admit defeat. In the Chosen battles, I’ll make sure you realize well and good that among the Outer Sect disciples... nobody can beat me!” Grinding his teeth, he looked off in the direction Bai Xiaochun had disappeared in, eyes bursting with the desire to do battle.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0085 awe-chapter-86

Terrified out of his mind, Bai Xiaochun flew off of the mountain and out of the sect. It wasn’t until he reached the market that he actually stopped and looked behind him.

“What do I do now?” Scowling miserably, heart aching from how much he was being wronged, he couldn’t stop thinking about the fact that the bird really had stolen the medicinal pill from him. How was he supposed to explain it? Elder Zhou was so unreasonable....

Even as he began to descend into despondency, he suddenly thought of something. “Wait a second, did I just... get first place?

“Aiya. As the Junior Brother of the sect leader, I didn't want to compete with all of my juniors.” Coughing dryly, he couldn’t help but feel a bit pleased with himself. But then he remembered that, having taken first place, he now had no choice but to participate in the Chosen battles with the north bank, and his heart sank.

He moped around the market until night fell. Worried that it still wasn't safe to go back, he finally pulled out a transmission jade slip and sent a message to Xu Baocai, asking him to go check if Elder Zhou was lurking about his courtyard.

After getting word back that the coast was clear, he cautiously returned to the sect. From a distance, he could see Xu Baocai waiting outside of his courtyard, so after looking around carefully one more time, he hurried over.

Xu Baocai looked excitedly at him, and was about to say something when Bai Xiaochun dragged him into the courtyard.

After the door closed, Xu Baocai said, “Sect Uncle Bai, don't worry. Elder Zhou was sent away by the sect earlier....”

His eyes burned with zeal as he stared at Bai Xiaochun. “Back in the Ovens he stayed completely hidden,” he thought. “He even sold spots into the Outer Sect. Afterward, he took place in that minor competition, which caused a bit of a stir. After that came the incident with the Luochen Clan. After he came back alive, he became a Prestige disciple, and even the Junior Brother of the sect leader. Now he took first place in the qualifying match. Bai Xiaochun... is definitely going to be super famous in the future!”

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had exceeded everyone to become the number one disciple had long since shaken Xu Baocai. By now, he viewed him as a breathtaking figure of legend. Thinking back to everything he had done, Xu Baocai couldn’t hold back from clasping hands and bowing very deeply.

“Sect Uncle Bai,” he said, “congratulations on taking first place in the qualifying round!”

Bai Xiaochun looked around the courtyard for a moment before heaving a sigh of relief. Peering in the direction of Elder Zhou’s immortal's cave for a moment, he swore an oath that once he reached Foundation Establishment, he would feast on phoenix stew!

In response to Xu Baocai’s words, he cleared his throat. Looking very much like a member of the senior generation, he said, “I'm really not that amazing. I’m more like a cloud in the sky. Originally, I didn’t want to compete with all of those junior disciples, but then Elder Zhou came along. What else was I supposed to do?”

Before, Xu Baocai wouldn’t have been able to prevent a look of scorn from appearing on his face in response to Bai Xiaochun’s words. But now, Bai Xiaochun was a Chosen among Chosen.

“You always kept a low profile, Sect Uncle Bai,” he responded quickly. “However, a Chosen can only stay hidden for so long. Even without intending to, you would have made a big scene one way or another!”

Xu Baocai’s words filled Bai Xiaochun with elation. However, he maintained an aloof expression, although his eyes sparkled with approval.

Xu Baocai could sense that Bai Xiaochun was encouraging him, so he continued on excitedly: “Sect Uncle Bai, when it comes time for the Chosen battles with the north bank, the south bank will no longer have the reputation of being weak. All thanks to you! You're going to rock the north bank!

“Supposedly, the five great Chosen of the north bank are the strongest disciples under Foundation Establishment. They’re all fiendish monsters! Thankfully, you’re going to show them that the top Chosen of the sect is here on the south bank, on Fragrant Cloud Peak!”

“Five great Chosen?” Bai Xiaochun said. His expression was the same as ever, but his heart was beginning to pound.

“Yeah! The north bank has five great Chosen. There’s Beihan Lie from Sunset Peak. He’s cold and arrogant, and cultivates one of the Spirit Stream Sect’s ten great secret magics, the Sunset Incantation. He also has a Nighstalker Beast, a horrifying and powerful creature that rips people to shreds. Together, they’ve slaughtered their way to becoming the most powerful fighters under the ninth level of Qi Condensation! In fact, he’s known as the number one disciple on Sunset Peak!”

“Rips people to shreds?” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes widening.

“That’s nothing. There’s also Xu Song from Archway Peak, who was born with a Godchanneling body. The peak lord of Archway Peak paid a huge price to get him to join as a disciple. He's a complete expert in controlling wild beasts. According to the rumors, he can actually control five beasts at the same time. One time when a rogue Qi Condensation cultivator pissed him off, he chased the guy down for three months and then fed him to his battle beasts. The only thing left behind was the guy’s skeleton!”

“Only the skeleton?” Bai Xiaochun said, mind reeling.

“Even more ferocious than him are the third and fourth Chosen, a brother and sister team from Irispetal Peak. The sister’s name is Gongsun Wan’er. She’s spectacularly beautiful and an expert with birds of prey. One time she had a fight with Zhou Xinqi, and nobody could tell who came out on top!

“The brother is Gongsun Yun, who excels in the Dao of bugs. He always wears a black robe, which is filled with all sorts of bugs. People even say that his body is filled with bug eggs. What a freak! He usually covers his enemies with bugs, and then has them bore into their bodies and drink their blood. The pain is so horrible that people usually just want to die. If you don’t escape quickly enough, you’ll be completely eaten up, with only your bones left behind!”

“Only your bones?!” Bai Xiaochun said, gasping. Visualizing the scene, his scalp began to tingle.

“The last of the five great Chosen of the north bank... is a mysterious and legendary figure who has no known name. Twenty years ago, the peak lord of Ghostfang Peak brought him back to the sect from some unknown location. People just call him Ghostfang, and he’s an expert in magics relating to the Dao of ghosts. He also practices one of the legendary ten secret magics of the Spirit Stream Sect, a magic equally as difficult to cultivate as the Waterswamp Kingdom... Ghosts Haunt the Night! Rumor has it that he can already summon a hundred ghosts! People say that he's the number one Chosen on the north bank....” Having heard the complete explanation of what Xu Baocai knew, Bai Xiaochun was left trembling in fear.

Terrifyingly, the Chosen from the north bank were far more ferocious than the Chosen from the south bank. Although the north bank focused on controlling animals, and it made sense that they would be slightly more violent, the actual disparity with the south bank was enormous.

“We’ve been outdone by the north bank for years now,” Xu Baocai went on to say. “Every time the Chosen battles come around, we always lose. In fact, last time, nine of the top ten were all from the north bank. What a humiliation. We--” At this point, Xu Baocai noticed that Bai Xiaochun had a very odd expression on his face.

“Sect Uncle Bai, are you okay?”

Bai Xiaochun quickly stuck his chin up and sternly said, “As a member of the south bank, hearing things like this makes me very angry!”

“Sect Uncle Bai, you don’t need to get angry. With you fighting, the north bank will finally be able to see how awesome the south bank is!” Xu Baocai clenched his fists in excitement.

Now that Bai Xiaochun had been thrust onto the stage, he found it hard to get off. Standing straight, he lifted his chin, flicked his sleeve, and said, “What does the north bank count for? With the wave of a hand, I can turn them all into ashes!”

Xu Baocai chatted excitedly for a few more minutes before taking his leave.

By that time, it was late into the night. Bai Xiaochun stood there alone in his courtyard, thinking about the five people Xu Baocai had just told him about. Then, the wind began to blow, and he felt a chill creeping up his back.

“What kind of people are they over on the north bank? They raise beasts and bugs and ghosts... It's spine-chilling....” Walking back to his log cabin, the things Xu Baocai had told him continued to rattle around in his mind.

The more he thought about the situation, the more fishy it seemed. Finally, he came to a conclusion. “Elder Zhou must have done this on purpose!

“The thing I hate most in life is all the fighting and killing!” After more thought, he decided that nothing in the world would be able to get him to participate in the Chosen battles.

The next morning at dawn, before he could even come up with a plan of how to avoid the Chosen Battles, a command jade slip flew down from the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak in a black beam of light. After it arrived, Li Qinghou’s voice could be heard.

“Bai Xiaochun, you took first place in the qualifying round on the south bank. In half a month, you will join nine others to participate in the joint south and north bank Chosen battles! If you don’t participate, you will be thrown into 10,000 Snakes Valley!”

“That again....” Bai Xiaochun said with a scowl. He suddenly had the feeling that he had been completely conned by Elder Zhou....

As Li Qinghou’s voice faded away, the jade slip vanished, whereupon a bracelet became visible, which floated down in front of Bai Xiaochun.

Surprised, he looked at the bracelet, and then poured some spiritual power into it. The bracelet immediately melted into a black liquid, which then circled around Bai Xiaochun’s wrist and then covered his entire body.

Moments later, Bai Xiaochun heard Li Qinghou’s voice again, explaining how to use the magic of the item. Apparently, this bracelet could defend against the full-power attack of an early Foundation Establishment cultivator!

Bai Xiaochun shivered. He was no newcomer to the sect, so he knew exactly how much an item like this was worth. It was no less valuable than the Divine Crane Shield given to him by the sect leader. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but look up toward the top of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Although Li Qinghou hadn't said much about the item other than give a brief introduction, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but feel a warm feeling when he looked at it. Then he thought back to when he had participated in the smaller competition years before, and the look of anticipation he'd seen on Li Qinghou’s face.

After a while, he gritted his teeth and made his decision.

“Fine. I'm going to fight in the Chosen battles!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0086 awe-chapter-87

Days passed. Bai Xiaochun spent his time in secluded meditation, not taking even a single step outdoors. Ten days later, the sound of bells filled the sect, and Bai Xiaochun’s jade slip began to vibrate.

The Chosen battles between the south and north banks were about to begin!

Like they did every thirty years, the matches would be held on Mount Daoseed. As the sound of bells rang out to fill the sect, countless Outer Sect disciples flooded toward that very mountain.

Normally, the north and south banks had few dealings with each other. Only Inner Sect disciples qualified to travel back and forth between them. Now that Mount Daoseed had been opened up, Outer Sect disciples from both banks excitedly rushed over to watch the Chosen battles.

“This time our south bank is definitely going to wash away the disgrace of past times!”

“We're going to make sure the north bank knows that we’ve risen to new heights of glory!”

The south bank Outer Sect disciples were all very excited. At the same time, the Outer Sect disciples from the north bank were also rushing toward Mount Daoseed, boasting amongst themselves the entire way.

“The south bank is so weak! They’ve lost to us for a thousand years, and this time will be no different!”

“The south bank is destined to lose. In the Spirit Stream Sect, the north bank rules and the south bank drools!!”

The buzz of conversation filled the air as countless Outer Sect disciples streamed toward Mount Daoseed. On Green Crest Peak, Shangguan Tianyou stood there with a cold expression on his face, his gaze as sharp as daggers as he suddenly flew out into the air.

Meanwhile, on Violet Cauldron Peak, Lu Tianlei threw his head back and bellowed. Electricity danced around him as he burst into motion, accompanied by the cheers of numerous disciples.

Zhou Xinqi also flew out into the air. The three great Chosen of the south bank all had very serious looks on their faces.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was still in his residence, his eyes bloodshot as he took a deep breath. Looking very serious, he said, “The time has come.... When the warrior goes to battle, he must don his combat uniform!” Rising slowly to his feet, he slapped his bag of holding, producing eight leather jackets. The jackets he’d worn during his fight with the Luochen Clan had all been destroyed. These were new jackets, of higher quality and much more durable.

After somberly donning all of the leather clothing, he waved his arm.

“When the warrior goes to battle, he must have his armor!” With that, a large wok flew out of his bag of holding. Big Fatty Zhang’s wok had also been destroyed in the fighting with the Luochen Clan. This was a new wok that he'd acquired after his return. Looking very serious, he strapped the black wok to his back.

“When the warrior goes to battle, he must have a magical weapon!” Even as the words left his mouth, he waved his hand, causing a little wooden sword to fly out, which he strapped to his left side. Next came the Golden Crow Sword, which he placed on his other side. After that came three more flying swords, which he strapped to his back. Finally was the Divine Crane Shield, which he attached to his forearm.

However, he still didn't feel at ease. After putting on the bracelet from Li Qinghou, he stuck his chin up and began to walk forward solemnly. Clanging and clattering, he walked out of his log cabin.

Outside, he could hear the sound of bells ringing. After taking a few steps, he suddenly remembered something, and quickly slapped his bag of holding to produce a long spear, which he held in hand.

The wind blowing his hair up, he left his courtyard.

From a distance, he almost looked like a ball. He had a huge wok on his back, a long spear in his hand, and had flying swords strapped here and there. It was quite a sight.

As he walked along, countless Outer Sect disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak saw him and were shocked.

The ringing of bells grew more intense, causing the hearts of countless Outer Sect disciples to begin to pound. There were even some Inner Sect disciples who made their way to Mount Daoseed to watch the proceedings.

As Bai Xiaochun made his way along, more and more Outer Sect disciples joined him. Xu Baocai was among their number, and he took the lead in the cheering.

“Sect Uncle Bai is beyond amazing! He’s a hero of the ages!”

“He’s definitely gonna win! Definitely!” Quite a large group of Outer Sect disciples crowded around him, fans who took it upon themselves to escort him along his way. One of the most prominent was Hou Xiaomei, whose voice rose up above the others as she cheered.

Bai Xiaochun was quite moved, and nodded magnanimously to the surrounding disciples. Considering how much everyone was cheering him on, he figured he really did need to do something to be worthy of it all....

Chin jutting out, he strutted proudly all the way to Mount Daoseed. The first thing he saw when he got there was the huge battle arena which had been set up, which glittered with the light of an enormous spell formation.

Further off in the distance were the various peaks of Mount Daoseed. From within the buildings that dotted their surfaces, quite a few sect elders were emerging and flying over toward the arena.

On either side of the arena floor were the stands, which were being filled with numerous Outer Sect disciples. From the look of things, there were tens of thousand of them.

On the north side of the arena were the disciples from the north bank, who, generally speaking, seemed a lot more impressive than the south bank disciples. Almost every single one of them had some sort of fierce beast accompanying them.

The beasts were all different, but each one had a brutal gleam in its eyes, and none seemed like the type it would be wise to provoke. At the very front of all the north bank disciples was a smaller group consisting of both young men and women. Their expressions were cold, and all seemed to burst with energy.

Most conspicuous of the group was a beautiful young woman wearing a long violet gown. Standing next to her was a seven-colored phoenix that seemed even more elegant than Elder Zhou's phoenixes. It had lightning-like eyes that seemed to look down upon all creation.

Next to the young woman was a young man in a long blue robe. He was extremely handsome, and shockingly, had the mark of a red sun on his forehead.

Lounging at his feet was an enormous dog, with thick black fur and razor-sharp claws. It even seemed to emanate a golden light.

Its long, sharp teeth looked particularly ferocious, and it was large enough to ride as a mount. If it rose to its feet, it would probably be as tall as two people, and seemed shockingly powerful. Clearly, its fleshly body strength was unimaginable.

The young man with the mark of the red sun was none other than one of the north bank's five great Chosen, Beihan Lie. The huge dog laying at his feet was the famous... Nightstalker Beast!

Near the young man and young woman was another disciple who wore a black robe that covered his face. Only his coldly glittering eyes could be seen, and if one looked closely enough, it was possible to see venomous insects squirming around inside of them!

The mere sight of these Chosen caused the disciples of the south bank to tremble in fear.

As for all the north bank disciples... they looked across the battle arena scornfully at the south bank disciples!

“The south bank always loses. The only people worth paying attention to are Shangguan Tianyou, Lu Tianlei, and Zhou Xinqi.”

“I heard someone else has become famous on the south bank recently. He took first place in the qualifying round. Supposedly he's a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader?”

“It doesn’t matter who he is. He’ll be useless against the north bank. We're the most powerful by far!”

The Outer Sect disciples from the south bank were mostly assembled, and their numbers were clearly fewer than the disciples from the north bank.

“They’re nothing but a bunch of animal trainers and bug lovers. The south bank is going to get revenge this time around for sure!”

“We're definitely going to make them lose some face!”

Standing in front of all the south bank disciples were nine disciples, with Shangguan Tianyou, Lu Tianlei, and Zhou Xinqi being the most prominent among them. There were six others with somber expressions, who seemed to seethe with violence. This group was made up of the Chosen from the south bank, and they were currently staring fiercely at the people from the north bank.

It was in the middle of this fierce staring contest that Bai Xiaochun showed up.

Shangguan Tianyou instantly looked over at him, as did all of the south bank disciples in the audience. Thoughtful expressions appeared in their eyes, and the conversations immediately died down.

Mixed emotions could be seen in Shangguan Tianyou’s icy eyes as looked at Bai Xiaochun, and his heart filled with begrudging defiance.

Lu Tianlei looked equally defiant as he glared hatefully at Bai Xiaochun, electricity dancing around him.

Zhou Xinqi stood there silently, eyes shining with a strange light, as if she were measuring Bai Xiaochun carefully, trying to determine exactly how much power was contained within his slight frame.

People from the north bank also couldn’t help but look over at him. However, he was a stranger to them, and the way he was dressed provoked instant scorn.

The north bank Chosen didn’t even deign to pay him any attention.

Finding himself to be the center of so much attention made Bai Xiaochun feel a bit embarrassed. Clearing his throat, he stuck his chest out, hefted his spear, and strutted over to stand next to Zhou Xinqi.

When he realized that both sides were staring threateningly at each other, his spirits instantly rose.

“A staring contest! I’m great at those!” He immediately looked over at the north bank disciples, a very serious expression on his face.

In that moment, a breeze picked up, lifting his long hair off of his back. Coupled with the fact that he held a long spear in his hand, he cut quite an impressive figure.

As time passed, more people began to fill the stands on either side. A huge sea of people was growing, separated only by the arena floor.

Soon, all of the north bank Chosen had arrived. The last one to show up was a young man in a long black robe. He was handsome, but his face was so pale that it seemed to be completely devoid of blood. He came to stand in front of all the other Chosen, where he closed his eyes, an expression of seeming complete disinterest on his face. In the same moment that he closed his eyes, the air around him seemed to twist and distort, as if he were surrounded by countless fierce ghosts, arisen from the shadows of hell.

About this time, beams of light flew toward the battle arena from both the north and south banks. Among them were the seven peak lords from the seven mountain peaks.

Elder Zhou was also there, accompanied by an arrogant phoenix which flew around him. When the phoenix saw Bai Xiaochun, it looked at him with a very supercilious glare.

Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong was also in the group. After everyone had gathered, he looked at the disciples from the north and south banks, then said, “The joint south and north bank Outer Sect Chosen battles were last won by the north bank. As such, they may send twelve disciples into battle.

“As the previous loser, the south bank may only send ten people into battle.

“There will be a total of twenty-two competitors. Opponents will be chosen by drawing lots. The goal of the competition is to select the top ten disciples, as well as... the number one disciple!

“We are here to help each other learn and grow, so killing is not permitted. After every round, you will be given three incense sticks’ worth of time to recover. If your opponent concedes, you must immediately cease fighting. The competition will be presided over by Ouyang Jie from the Hall of Justice.

“Perform well. Four prime elders will be observing the battle with divine sense.... And now, let the Outer Sect Chosen battles... begin!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0087 awe-chapter-88

In response to Zheng Yuandong’s words, the disciples from the north and south banks felt their hearts starting to pound, and subconsciously looked up at a terrace on the snow-capped top of Mount Daoseed.

At the same time, four streams of shockingly powerful divine sense flowed out and swept over everyone present.

The streams of divine sense covered all of the disciples, including Bai Xiaochun, causing them to feel as if incredible pressure were weighing down on them. These people seemed powerful enough to kill everyone present in body and soul with little more than a glance. Everyone felt that way, including Bai Xiaochun, Shangguan Tianyou, and even the Chosen from the north bank. All of them trembled under the pressure, and yet at the same time, their eye shone with excitement.

The fact that there would be prime elders observing the battle with divine sense caused all of the competitors’ eyes to shine brightly.

“If I can attract the attention of a prime elder, maybe I could be accepted as an apprentice....”

“I definitely need to put everything on the line in this battle!” Almost immediately, murderous auras sprang up from the disciples on both sides.

Bai Xiaochun was the only one who simply stood there blinking.

“Prime elders. That’s the same rank as my Master, right? So they’re my Sect Uncles....” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but feel proud of himself. His ranking in the sect really was a bit too high. After a moment of thought, he resolved to go visit his Sect Uncles after the Chosen battles were over.

It was at this point that Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong swished his sleeve, causing a sphere of light to fly out into the middle of the battle arena. It quickly split up into twenty-two pearls, which then flew out to Bai Xiaochun and all of the other competitors.

Bai Xiaochun looked down at the pearl in his hand. “Eleven?”

He peered out of the corner of his eye to see if he could spot what number Shangguan Tianyou and the others had gotten, only to find that they were keeping them hidden.

At this point, a cold voice suddenly rang out from the balcony above. It was not Zheng Yuandong, but rather, Ouyang Jie from the Hall of Justice. “The first battle will take place between the disciples holding pearls number one and two. Please step forward!”

In immediate response, a gaunt young man flew out from among the north bank disciples. His expression was cold and arrogant, and his appearance provoked a cheer from the north bank disciples. Although he wasn’t one of the five great Chosen, he was still quite famous.

As soon as he stepped onto the battle arena, he called out, “Liu Yun of the north bank!”

In response, Shangguan Tianyou suddenly flew out. “Shangguan Tianyou of the south bank!”

He stood there, expression icy, looking like an unsheathed sword. Even the words he spoke seemed to make everything colder.

Of course, as soon as Shangguan Tianyou stepped forth, the Outer Sect disciples from the south bank exploded into loud cheering.

The gaunt young man’s face flickered; he had never imagined that the first person he would face would be the most famous Chosen from the south bank. Expression unsightly, he took a deep breath and then waved his hand, causing the air around him to distort. At the same time, a huge python appeared, accompanied by an acrid blast of wind. After the python coiled up, it rose nearly three meters into the air.

However, in almost the exact same moment that the young man’s wild beast appeared, and before he had time to do anything else, Shangguan Tianyou took a single step forward, his face completely expressionless. Suddenly, he vanished, and when he reappeared, he was right next to the gaunt young man, a sword in his hand, which he placed against the young man’s throat.

“You lose,” he said.

A cold feeling washed over the gaunt young man, and an expression of shocked disbelief filled his face as he turned slowly to look at Shangguan Tianyou. He knew instantly that he was no match for this opponent. How could he ever have imagined that he would lose so quickly? Head bowed, he collected his giant python and left the arena.

“We already won the first battle! Hahaha! The south bank is definitely going to win this time around!”

“Elder Brother Shangguan can definitely contend for first place!”

The south bank side of the arena was in an excited uproar. As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there blinking. He hadn’t been able to see exactly what Shangguan Tianyou had done, but he could see that he was definitely beyond ordinary when it came to power.

Furthermore, two of the streams of divine sense from the prime elders began to pay closer attention to Shangguan Tianyou.

The north bank disciples were dumbfounded.

“Was that a minor teleportation? Impossible!! What cultivation base does he have? That couldn't possibly have been teleportation!”

“It was void magic. This guy... definitely deserves to be known as the south bank’s number one Chosen. Even with a Qi Condensation cultivation base, he can actually use void magic!”

The other competitors from the north bank looked on with flickering expressions. Beihan Lie’s eyes flickered somberly. The Gongsun siblings and Xu Song all had thoughtful expressions.

Only the black-robed Ghostfang simply remained in place, his eyes closed.

Before the crowd could calm down, Ouyang Jie’s cold voice once again cut through the noise. “Second battle!”

From among the north bank Chosen, a rather pudgy young man stepped out. Smiling broadly, he seemed completely innocent and harmless.

“Xu Song of the north bank,” he said to the disciple emerging from the ranks of the south bank.

His opponent was not Lu Tianlei or one of the other famous Chosen. He was from the group of secretive disciples who had only unleashed his power in the qualifying round. He had a long face, and wasn’t very good-looking, but he was aware that the person he was facing was one of the north banks’ five great Chosen.

“Zhou Feng of the south bank,” he said. Taking a deep breath, he began to rotate his cultivation base. Performing an incantation gesture, he summoned a flying sword. However, before he could send it flying out, a derisive gleam appeared in Xu Song’s eye, and he pushed his hand out in front of him.

Rumbling could be heard as a rift opened up directly above Zhou Feng. Then, cracking sounds could be heard as a gigantic crocodilian beast lunged out with lightning speed and gobbled him up in a single bite.

His flying sword lost its connection to spiritual power, and clattered down onto the ground.

“Fighting against Archway Peak disciples and ignoring the air above your head? How very disappointing.” Chuckling, Xu Song turned and walked out of the arena. When he waved his hand behind him, his beast opened its mouth and spat the unconscious Zhou Feng out in front of the stunned disciples of the south bank.

Unsightly expressions could be seen, and a few gasps rang out. As for Lu Tianlei and the other Chosen, their hearts trembled.

In sharp contrast, the north bank disciples were cheering loudly.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken at how terrifying the north bank people were. Their control over beasts was horrifyingly advanced.

Soon, the third battle began. The competitor from the north bank was one of their five great Chosen, Gongsun Wan’er. When she saw that her opponent from the south bank wasn’t Zhou Xinqi, but rather one of the other random disciples, she looked a bit disappointed. Waving her hand, she had her seven-colored phoenix spit out a seven-colored mist.

When the seven-colored mist enveloped the south bank disciple, he suddenly seemed to go insane. Howling in rage, he began to strike wildly around him, as if fighting an invisible opponent. A moment later, he simply passed out.

From beginning to end, all Gongsun Wan’er did was wave her delicate hand. Afterward, she floated off out of the arena. The crowds from the south bank looked fearfully over at the north bank disciples, clearly shaken.

“The only people who can fight Chosen are other true Chosen.” The south bank disciples looked over at Shangguan Tianyou, hope shining in their eyes. Quite a few also looked at Bai Xiaochun the same way.

Bai Xiaochun immediately lifted his head high and stuck his chest out. Inwardly, though, he was terrified by what Gongsun Wan’er had just done.

“That wench is even more incredible than Zhou Xinqi,” he thought, his mouth going dry.

Next, the fourth battle began. Lu Tianlei flew out into the arena, surrounded by flickering lightning. His opponent from the north bank was the young man in the black robe who hadn’t opened his eyes the entire time. At long last, his eyes opened, and he walked calmly out into the arena.

Strangely, no one from the north bank cheered for him at all. Strange expressions could be seen on the disciples’ faces, and as for the other Chosen, they simply took in deep breaths.

The crowd from the south bank was a bit shocked by this. As for Lu Tianlei, he kept his eyes glued on the young man.

The young man stood there quietly, face absolutely expressionless. When he spoke, his voice didn't seem to contain even a hint of emotion. “Ghostfang of the north bank.”

“Lu Tianlei of the south bank!” Lu Tianlei took a deep breath. Well aware that he was facing the number one Chosen from the north bank, his eyes began to shine with the desire to do battle. “I'm not going to hold anything back. Even if I tire myself out so much I can’t keep fighting, it will be worth it!”

Eyes burning with fighting spirit, he let out a powerful shout, causing the sparks around him to explode into a lake of lightning that expanded thirty meters in all directions.

At the same time, Ghostfang calmly pointed up into the sky. Instantly, black clouds began to seethe overhead. When the disciples from the north bank saw that, their expressions flickered, some with fear.

Howling, Lu Tianlei charged toward Ghostfang, surrounded by lightning.

Ghostfang, however, didn't even respond. He simply stood there, and even went so far as to close his eyes.

"Are you looking to die?!" Lu Tianlei roared, feeling somewhat humiliated. After all, self-respect was critical to Chosen. With another roar, he caused the lake of lightning to redouble in size, and burst with even more power than before.

However, before he could even get close to Ghostfang, the black clouds up above were seemingly ripped apart, and a claw-like ghost hand reached out. It was enormous, like a huge column stretching down from the clouds, rushing toward Lu Tianlei with incredible speed and shocking pressure.

Even before it reached him, Lu Tianlei began to tremble, and then coughed up a mouthful of blood. The lightning around him shattered, and his feet sank into the ground, sending cracks ripping out in all directions.

Blood spurted out as wounds opened up all over him, and blood also oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. He tried to struggle, but it seemed useless. Soon, his vision began to fade.

"No!!"

The terrifying clawed ghost hand caused the disciples of both the north and south bank to be filled with terror. Their internal spiritual energy seemed to have been removed from their control, and their souls felt like they would be ripped out from their bodies.

Up on the balcony, the sect leader and the others looked on with flickering expressions.

“For thousand of years, no one has been able to successfully cultivate Ghosts Haunt the Night. I can’t believe this kid's cultivation has reached this level!”

Xu Meixiang’s face suddenly fell. “Not good!”

Without another word, she flew down toward the arena floor at top speed. She arrived in the blink of an eye, whereupon she waved her finger at the clawed ghost hand. Massive rumbling sounds echoed out as the hand was pushed back. However, it didn't collapse.

Blood sprayed out of Lu Tianlei’s mouth, and he collapsed into unconsciousness. Had Xu Meixiang been any slower, he would have been crushed into a bloody pulp, killed in body and soul.

Face darkening, Xu Meixiang looked over at Ghostfang.

“You little delinquent. You might have outstanding talent, but you’re far too ruthless. Trying to kill a fellow sect member right in front of us? Are you looking to die or something?!”

Ghostfang stood there silently for a moment, an odd expression developing on his face, almost as if he weren’t sure exactly how he should react.

“I just didn’t realize he would be so weak,” he said, sounding very sincere. With that, he turned to leave the arena floor.

Xu Meixiang frowned and looked back up at the balcony above, seemingly a bit apprehensive. Finally, she gave a cold snort, picked up Lu Tianlei, and left. Lu Tianlei would not be able to continue fighting, and in fact, his injuries would take quite some time to recover from.

The north bank looked on silently, just as the south bank did.

Ghostfang walked back to the same spot he had been standing in, looking very lonely as he closed his eyes again.

After a long moment, the disciples of the north bank recovered their composure and began to cheer a bit.

“Nobody from the south bank is a match for us at all. We're definitely going to win!”

“They lost three battles already. The first one was just a fluke. I bet they’ll lose all the rest of the battles too.”

In response to the taunting of the north bank, the south bank disciples could only stare furiously. The north bank... was simply too strong.

The south bank had won the first battle, but lost the following three. The top Chosen Lu Tianlei had almost been killed, and by now, the south bank disciples no longer harbored any thoughts of securing their revenge.

Shangguan Tianyou glared angrily at Ghostfang. Inwardly, he was trembling, and even felt profound terror rising up in his heart.

He wasn’t the only one. The other Chosen from the south bank, even Zhou Xinqi, were deeply shaken. Even if the only person the north bank had on their team was Ghostfang… they would still wipe the south bank away.

“That was beyond the power of Qi Condensation.... Not even a peak lord could wipe out that ghost hand. Wasn’t that... one of the ten secret magics of the Spirit Stream Sect, one of only two that can be considered rare to the extreme... Ghosts Haunt the Night?”

“The only thing that can compare to Ghosts Haunt the Night is... the Waterswamp Kingdom!”

Bai Xiaochun had a very serious expression on his face, and his heart was pounding. Ghostfang’s power left him jumpy to the extreme.

Eventually, the fifth battle began. The competitor from the north bank left the south bank disciples feeling as bitter as ever. He was one of the five great Chosen, a person who struck most others cold in the heart... Gongsun Yun.

Within his black robe, only his yellow eyes were visible, with insects crawling in and out of them. As he walked out, one of the south bank disciples steeled himself and prepared to fight. Before he could even introduce himself, though, Gongsun Yun’s eyes flickered coldly, and he waved his sleeve. Instantly, a buzzing sound could be heard as innumerable black bugs flew out toward the south bank disciple.

No matter how the south bank disciple fought, it was useless. He was soon covered with insects; none of his defenses could protect him at all. Soon, they began to bite into him as if to bore into his flesh. It was a shocking sight that not even the crowds from the north bank were used to seeing.

“I concede!!’ cried the south bank disciple. He had the feeling that a single thought on the part of his opponent would cause the insects to devour him.

Gongsun Yun’s eyes flickered scornfully as he turned to leave. The black bugs receded like tidewaters, landing on

Gongsun Yun and crawling up into his sleeves.

When Bai Xiaochun saw all of that, his scalp went numb. Even Zhou Xinqi and Shangguan Tianyou felt their hearts sinking.

The rest of the south bank disciples couldn’t help but ponder that the north bank seemed too powerful to even contend with. In their minds, the Chosen battles were already over.

“We’re really going to lose...?”

“The north bank... is so strong!”

At the same time, the north bank disciples were elated.

“It’s like I said before. They won the first battle, but will lose the rest!”

“South bank? What a joke. They’ll always be beneath the north bank.”

“Thirty years ago the south bank only got one disciple into the top ten, and it looks... like it’ll be the same this time!”

When the south bank disciples heard such talk, they wanted to offer retorts, but couldn’t think of anything to say. The humiliation they felt was overwhelming.

After Gongsun Yun left the arena, Ouyang Jie’s voice could once again be heard. “Sixth battle. Would the disciples with marbles eleven and twelve please step into the arena!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he looked down at the number eleven marble he held in his hand.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0088 awe-chapter-89

As Bai Xiaochun looked up, one of the north bank's five great Chosen, Beihan Lie, suddenly smiled. He was handsome to begin with, but his smile made him even more attractive to the countless female disciples who adored him.

Patting the ferocious Nightstalker Beast which lounged next to him, he took a step forward. The Nightstalker Beast slowly rose to its feet, eyes shining with mysterious light.

Almost as soon as the huge dog began to move, numerous north bank disciples began to cheer.

The Nightstalker Beast was roughly three meters tall, heavily muscled, and brimming with seemingly endless power. Its head was huge, and the enormous fangs which protruded from its mouth dripped with saliva. Its long black fur made it seem even more fierce.

Its legs were about as thick as an entire person, and had bone spurs sticking out all over them. It crouched down for a moment, then leaped out into the arena, where it threw its head back and roared.

The roar became a sound wave that rolled out in all directions. Many beasts belonging to other north bank disciples began to tremble and bow their heads, as if they were in the presence of royalty.

All smiles, Beihan Lie walked out and scanned the crowd from the south bank.

“Beihan Lie of the north bank. I wonder which fellow disciple I’ll be fighting today?”

At the same time, the huge dog’s saliva splashed down onto the ground, and it looked around with cold, brutal eyes. Its fangs even seemed to grow longer all of a sudden. Anyone who faced such a dog would surely lose their fighting spirit instantly, especially when it licked its lips, which made it look even more ferocious than before.

The crowd from the south bank was completely silent as they looked at the group up front, waiting for someone to step out and fight. Bai Xiaochun glanced at Beihan Lie and then the huge dog. After looking up thoughtfully for a moment, an odd expression appeared on his face. Clearing his throat, he proudly took a step forward.

Almost immediately, the eyes of numerous south bank disciples came to be fixed on him, and they shone with anticipation. The huge Nightstalker Beast’s shining green eyes also locked onto him.

Looking like a powerful hero, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and strode out into the arena. Up above, Elder Zhou’s bird looked down attentively.

“Bai Xiaochun of the south bank!” As soon as Bai Xiaochun announced himself, the Nightstalker Beast threw its head back and howled, the brutal gleam in its eyes transforming into a murderous aura directed solely at Bai Xiaochun.

Beihan Lie took one look at Bai Xiaochun’s getup, and did nothing to conceal the derision in his eyes. “Bai Xiaochun? I heard you took first place in the south bank qualifying round, is that right?”

Although Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled under the murderous gaze of the huge dog, he continued to hold himself like a powerful master, as lofty as a cloud floating in the sky. “You’re Beihan Lie, right? I’ll give you one chance to concede!”

Beihan Lie’s jaw dropped. “Concede?”

He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, as if he had just heard the funniest joke in the world. However, a murderous gleam could be seen in his eyes.

“Very funny. In all the years, you’re the first Outer Sect disciple who has ever dared to utter such words to me.” Next, he extended his right hand and performed an incantation gesture, taking control of his Nightstalker Beast.

Bai Xiaochun sighed. Looking like a lonely hero, he gazed sadly at Beihan Lie and said, “Beihan Lie, this is your last chance to concede. When I attack, I frighten even myself. I'm telling you... the best thing would be to not force my hand.”

The crowd from the south bank was struck mute. They stared, first at Bai Xiaochun, then at Beihan Lie, and then at the huge, ferocious dog. No matter which way they looked at the situation, Beihan Lie seemed to be far more powerful.

However, Bai Xiaochun’s words at least put a seed of hope into the hearts of the south bank disciples. And yet, they couldn’t help but remember the unsavory record of his past dealings, which filled their hearts with consternation.

As for the north bank audience, they roared with laughter and made all sorts of taunting statements.

“Is this guy a moron or what? Elder Brother Beihan is one of the five great Chosen. Although he might not be on the same level as Ghostfang, even Elder Brother Ghostfang has to admit that he’s strong. Who does this Bai Xiaochun think he is? How arrogant!”

“Not only is Elder Brother Beihan strong, his Nightstalker Beast has been praised by the elders. It’s the king of beasts, with a powerful fleshly body and boundless energy. Even its howl is enough to shock most people into a daze. Look at this Bai Xiaochun... he’s so dainty the Nightstalker Beast will probably bite his leg off with a single bite!”

“Elder Brother Beihan will definitely win this one!”

Beihan Lie appeared to be highly amused by Bai Xiaochun. Eyes flashing coldly, he decided that he would teach him a hard, painful lesson. If he didn’t kill him, he would shred his skin off. With that, he performed an incantation gesture to begin the fight.

“I’m serious, my attacks frighten even me,” Bai Xiaochun said. Sighing, he slapped his bag of holding to produce two medicinal pills.

As that happened, Beihan Lie smiled viciously and finished his incantation gesture. Instantly, the eager Nightstalker Beast howled and began to charge toward Bai Xiaochun.

Beihan Lie also burst into motion, flying along, the sun mark on his forehead radiating bright light as he flew toward Bai Xiaochun.

However, even as the man and the dog flew toward him, Bai Xiaochun jumped up into the air and sent one of the medicinal pills flying toward the Nightstalker Beast.

The Nightstalker Beast’s eyes gleamed as it roared through the air. It obviously could have avoided the medicinal pill, but instead, its expression flickered, and it grabbed the pill and swallowed it down.

Instantly, a tremor ran through the huge dog, and its eyes went bloodshot. Rumbling sounds echoed out as it began to grow larger and more muscular.

Shockingly, its bone spurs and fangs also grew longer!

It began to salivate, and also, something rod-like... bulged out between its legs!

Overall, it looked so ferocious and terrifying that it was difficult to put into words.

Its eyes became violet, and it began to pant. Mind muddled, it dug its claws into the ground, threw its head back, and let out a shocking howl, the sound of which caused the south bank disciples in the audience to gasp.

“What... what kind of medicinal pill was that!?!?”

“Hold on, why does that dog’s posture seem so familiar...?”

The disciples on the north bank were looking on with wide eyes. The changes in the Nightstalker Beast were obvious, and somehow, it now seemed even more terrifying than before. Not only was it stronger in terms of its fleshly body, it also seemed even more maddened than before. The north bank disciples were greatly shocked.

“That medicinal pill is so effective!”

“It can actually make wild beasts even more wild!!”

The audience was astonished, and so was Beihan Lie, who was unsure of exactly what was happening. Although the Nightstalker Beast was obviously a lot more powerful than before, he had the sinking feeling that something was wrong.

“I’ll warn you one more time,” Bai Xiaochun said coolly, sticking his jaw out. “Concede.”

Beihan Lie’s eyes shone with murderous light. “I’d only planned to break one of your arms, but since you’re trying to act so mysterious, I think I’ll break all of your limbs instead!”

Although taking lives was prohibited in the Chosen battles, serious injuries were often unavoidable. Even as the words left his mouth, he continued his charge toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and waved his right hand, sending one of his Pheromone Pills out toward Beihan Lie.

Afterward, he fell back at top speed until he was at the edge of the arena, where he stood nervously, looking at Beihan Lie.

Beihan Lie’s pupils constricted, and just when he was about to dodge out of the way, the pill detonated, transforming into a powder that filled the area. Even though he tried to avoid it, some of it happened to get on him.

His expression flickered. Assuming it was a poison pill, he fell back and quickly examined himself. However, he found nothing out of the ordinary except for a somewhat pleasant aroma.

A frown appeared on his face. The situation only seemed to be getting stranger and stranger. Just when he was going to attempt to end the battle once and for all, a howl split the air.

It was none other than the Nightstalker Beast, which turned toward Beihan Lie, panting, its eyes shining bright red.

Beihan Lie’s heart began to pound, and just when he was about to try to exert control over the dog, a terrifying roar shook everything, and the Nightstalker Beast began to charge in his direction. Its speed was incredible, giving Beihan Lie absolutely no time to dodge. Instantly, the Nightstalker Beast pounced on him.

“Dammit, are you crazy!?!? What are you doing?!” Beihan Lie’s face darkened, and he roared in fury, but the huge dog had him pinned tight. Because of the maddened Nightstalker Beast, Beihan Lie couldn’t move a muscle. Furthermore, he suddenly had a very terrifying premonition, and his face went pale.

At the same time, the Outer Sect disciples in the audience couldn’t help but crane their necks to see what was happening. Even the peak lords and elders were watching closely, and the divine sense belonging to the prime elders was focused intently on the scene.

Next, everyone gasped as... Beihan Lie began to let out miserable shrieks!

“No... NO... YOU!! AIIIEEE!!!” Beihan Lie’s bloodcurdling screams could shake heaven and earth. His expression was that of pain and confusion, as though he couldn't believe what was happening. Trembling, he could do nothing but scream.

The north bank disciples were in an uproar, and could hardly believe what they were seeing. Panting, their eyes filled with unprecedented fear and terror.

“Heavens!! What medicinal pill is that? It isn’t turning the dog crazy, it’s turning the dog... on!”

“Th-this... this....”

“Elder Brother Beihan is... being done by his battle beast?!”

Beihan Lie struggled frantically, and let out constant, desperate screams. What was happening now would become a legend the likes of which had never existed in the Spirit Stream Sect.

Even Ghostfang was watching with wide eyes, trembling in utter disbelief.

As for the south bank disciples, their minds were spinning, and they could hardly think straight. Shangguan Tianyou stared blankly, suddenly feeling as if the world were a much darker place than before. Zhou Xinqi, on the other hand, was blushing fiercely.

Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, just as shaken as everyone else. This was his first time using his Aphrodisiac Pill in battle, and he had never imagined that the results would be so astonishing.... As he watched the screaming Beihan Lie, he couldn’t hold back from sighing.

Sounding very innocent, he said, “Like I said, even I am frightened by my attacks. I told you several times, but you... just insisted on doing things your way.”

It was at this point that an enraged roar filled the air as Beihan Lie’s Master finally intervened. “Bai Xiaochun!!”

Murderous aura raging, he leaped forward, flicking his sleeve to send the Nightstalker Beast spinning away off into the distance. Then he picked up Beihan Lie, who by this point had absolutely no face left. The Master almost felt as if what had just occurred wasn't even real. Too embarrassed to stay, he glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun and then departed.

As for Beihan Lie, the mental and physical injuries he had sustained caused him to close his eyes and lapse into a coma. It was impossible to say when he would have the face to appear in public again. The pain he was in was like a living nightmare.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0089 awe-chapter-90

As Beihan Lie and his Master left, the disciples of both the south and north bank looked on with wide eyes, their minds spinning, completely speechless. The only thing they could think about was what had just occurred with Beihan Lie and his huge dog....

They weren’t the only flabbergasted ones; the sect leader, peak lords, and other elders were all struck mute. All they could do was stare down into the arena at the innocent-looking Bai Xiaochun.

Elder Zhou sat there trembling, his eyes bulging, mixed emotions written on his face.... As for the phoenix soaring in the air above, it let out a few piercing cries, as if to point out to everyone that it hadn't falsely accused Bai Xiaochun in the past.

Eventually, the sound of breathing could be heard, and the south bank Outer Sect disciples began to turn and look at Bai Xiaochun with strange expressions on their faces.

The female disciples were all blushing, and some even spat in contempt at him.

However, the male disciples were even more profoundly affected. Without exception, they all edged away from Bai Xiaochun, sweat popping out on their foreheads as sympathy for Beihan Lie rose up in their hearts.

Eventually, the crowd devolved into a hubbub.

“Sect... Sect Uncle Bai... is a god!! That Beihan Lie... will probably never recover from this injury....”

“Never, EVER provoke Sect Uncle Bai. He’s... he’s a complete menace!”

“Isn’t that the same medicinal pill he fed to Elder Zhou’s phoenix? It’s basically an aphrodisiac for beasts.... I can’t think of any possible reason why Sect Uncle Bai... would concoct something like that!”

Regardless of the methods used, Bai Xiaochun had won a victory for the south bank, only the second one so far. Although the south bank disciples weren’t really sure how to feel at the moment, they began to cheer for Bai Xiaochun.

Shangguan Tianyou wiped the sweat off his brow. He might have looked down on Bai Xiaochun with contempt before, but now he couldn’t help but gasp. When he thought back to Beihan Lie’s cruel fate, he couldn’t help but imagine what it would have been like if he had been in the same position.... After a moment, he cast such thoughts aside.

Zhou Xinqi was tongue-tied, her mind spinning.

Moments later, though, an even greater commotion could be heard, something like the rumble of thunder. The north bank disciples erupted in unprecedented fashion; it didn’t matter that they had won so many battles in the competition so far, and in such amazing fashion. Now, everything had changed.

All of the north bank disciples, even the Inner Sect disciples who had come to observe the battles, were all incensed. Eyes bloodshot, they shouted out at the tops of their lungs.

“Demented!! What medicinal pill is that? Dammit! How can a pill like that even exist in the world? I'm gonna exterminate Bai Xiaochun and destroy that pill!!”

“Heavens! Elder Brother Beihan's own beast pounced on him! This... this....”

“Take Bai Xiaochun down! Nobody has insulted the north bank like this in countless years!! That medicinal pill should be banned! Any of them that exist should be completely destroyed!!”

It was impossible for them not to be enraged. Even the male disciples from the south bank sympathized with Beihan Lie, much less those from the north bank, who felt his pain even more.... After all, every north bank disciple had a battle beast of some sort. Even as they shouted out in range, they subconsciously glanced down at their various respective battle beasts, and thought of Beihan Lie. They couldn’t help but feel uneasy as a result.

Soon, their maddened shouts grew even more extreme.

“Bai Xiaochun is the archenemy of the north bank!!”

“Down with Bai Xiaochun! The north bank will endure eternal humiliation as long as he lives!!”

“Dammit! I'm gonna kill him! I'm gonna exterminate him! He’s stained the north bank for all eternity!!” It was easy to imagine how in the future, every time the north bank disciples looked at their own battle beasts, they would think about the tragedy of Beihan Lie.

The Gongsun siblings’ breath came in ragged pants as they looked at Bai Xiaochun, their eyes shining with unprecedented fear, as well as rage. Although Beihan Lie had been the one to receive the injury, the entire north bank was hurt.

As for Xu Song, all the fat on his body trembled, and his expression was one of fury. Although he never got along with Beihan Lie, he couldn’t help but feel sorry for him. Deep inside, he felt sympathy, and even more so, terror.

“Beihan Lie could only control one battle beast.... I... I have five....” When he thought about that, Xu Song almost cried. Gnashing his teeth, he glared at Bai Xiaochun with furious, bloodshot eyes.

Even the black-robed Ghostfang trembled, a look of intense seriousness in his eyes as he stared at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked around innocently at the hornet’s nest he had stirred up. When he saw how mad the north bank disciples were getting, he quickly tried to offer an explanation.

“Hey, don't blame me. Before the fighting even started, I told Beihan Lie to concede. He didn't listen. I made it clear... that even I'm afraid of my own attacks!” Bai Xiaochun really felt that he was being given the short end of the stick. However, his explanations did nothing except pour fuel onto the fire.

“Bai Xiaochun!? I can’t believe you have a name like that! Dammit! You're not pure at all!!”

“Completely shameless! Despicable! How dare you continue to humiliate us!!”

“Take Bai Xiaochun down!!”

The enraged north bank disciples began to edge forward, eyes bloodshot. From the look of it, tens of thousands of disciples were all about to charge onto the arena floor to take Bai Xiaochun out.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to thump, and he quickly retreated a few steps closer to the south bank audience. Sighing, he stuck his chin up, waved his sleeve, and stood there like a lonely hero.

“I am pure and good, no matter how anybody tries to smear me,” he said. Sighing, he finally left the arena floor. Behind him, countless north bank disciples were shouting in fury and staring daggers. If looks could kill, Bai Xiaochun would be dead many, many times over already.

He coughed dryly as he returned to the south bank side. Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the disciples there; by this point, they could sense the intense anger the north bank felt toward him, and it was terrifying.

As of this moment, the true enemy of the north bank wasn’t the south bank, it was a single person. Bai Xiaochun!

It was easy to imagine how, even if the north bank won the competition, because of Beihan Lie, they would consider it a loss....

The sect leader sat awkwardly up on the balcony, glaring down at Bai Xiaochun, his heart pounding with helplessness. He couldn’t help but muse that whenever Bai Xiaochun showed up, it didn't matter how solemn the occasion was, the atmosphere would quickly devolve.... As for the three peak lords from the south bank, none of them were quite sure what expression was appropriate. They had never encountered a situation like this in their entire lives....

Li Qinghou’s complexion flickered between green and red, and his eyes were blank. He had been completely shaken by what just occurred. Even the four prime elders on the peak of Mount Daoseed felt their divine sense shaking, and they weren’t sure exactly what to think or feel.

Seeing that the anger of the north bank disciples was almost beyond control, Ouyang Jie suddenly spoke out in a voice which swept out and physically pushed the north bank disciples back.

“Let the seventh battle begin!” Instantly, a burly man flew out from among the north bank forces. His eyes were bright red as he landed on the arena floor, where he let out a roar of rage.

“Bai Xiaochun, I challenge you to fight!”

“Let’s wait and see if you can get into the top ten,” Bai Xiaochun replied, sticking his chin out like a lonely hero. “Then maybe you’ll qualify to fight me.” The burly man howled in fury, his eyes completely bloodshot. At the same time, the disciple standing next to Shangguan Tianyou braced himself and walked out onto the arena floor.

Booms echoed out. The north bank disciples had gone mad... and this burly man, the first to fight after Bai Xiaochun’s performance, was clearly venting his anger by fighting. The south bank disciple was pushed backward over and over again until he finally conceded.

Next were the eighth and ninth battles.... The north bank disciples might as well have been slaughtering chickens. They fought with enraged madness, their hearts bursting with anger. All of them wanted to get into the top ten to have a chance to fight Bai Xiaochun and cleanse the stain of humiliation!

“I have to win! Once I'm in the top ten, I’ll take Bai Xiaochun down. Then we’ll see how he likes to get pounced on by a wild beast!”

“Fudge! Even if I have to break the damn sect rules, I'm going to cripple him!”

“Even if I kill him, my Master won’t punish me too badly. Anybody that kills Bai Xiaochun will be a hero to the north bank!” The north bank disciples used every means at their disposal in the fighting.

Because the north bank had two more people on their team than the south bank, the tenth battle was fought between two north bank disciples. However, they didn't go easy on each other.

Soon, the final battle of the first round had arrived. Zhou Xinqi took a deep breath and walked out onto the arena floor, violet light flickering around her feet. Moments later, she began to fight the final north bank disciple.

The battle was not shocking or amazing. Zhou Xinqi was a Chosen, and although the north bank disciple she fought was extraordinary, he couldn’t compare to her at all. After only ten breaths of time passed, the north bank disciple coughed up a mouthful of blood and begrudgingly conceded.

As Zhou Xinqi walked back to the team, the south bank disciples erupted into cheering. When Bai Xiaochun heard it, he felt a bit sour inwardly. The cheering for Zhou Xinqi was clearly much louder than the cheering had been for him.

As of this moment, the first round of the Chosen battles was over. Eleven disciples remained; eight from the north bank, and three from the south bank!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0090 awe-chapter-91

Now that the first round was over, a rest period began that would last for three incense sticks worth of time. As everyone sat there, the north bank disciples bristled, glaring angrily... at Bai Xiaochun!

The contestants were all itching to begin the second round, in which they would do anything possible to take Bai Xiaochun out. By now, none of them cared whether or not the north bank won in the end; they merely wanted to shed his blood to wash away their humiliation!

“Bai Xiaochun, in the second round, I'm going to make you pay a horrifying price for humiliating the north bank!”

“He should be given to an entire pack of beasts to ease our hatred. This second round will be the most painful experience of his life!”

“Take Bai Xiaochun down! Take this shameless bastard down!”

The north bank cared about nothing but taking out Bai Xiaochun, and that responsibility was given to the eight people who had made it through the first round. Although Ghostfang simply sat there with his eyes closed, the other seven glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun with clenched fists.

They represented all of the other disciples of the north bank, and were now analyzing what they had learned about him from his previous performance. All of them were coming up with their own ways of dealing with him.

“All Bai Xiaochun has are some medicinal pills. As long as he doesn’t have a chance to use them, he can be dealt with easily!”

“He only won because of those medicinal pills. Without them, exterminating him will be as easy as turning over your hand. He’ll definitely be defeated in the second round. Defeated, and defeated ruthlessly!”

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, the north bank disciples were acting like bullies. He’d won, hadn’t he? As for the brutality of that victory... he wanted to say something in his defense, but was worried that if he said the wrong thing, it would only make things worse. Much worse.

“This is ridiculous!” he thought.

As the north bank stewed in their anger, the south bank disciples didn’t say much either. They simply sat there bristling until Ouyang Jie finally spoke.

“Three incense sticks have burned. The second round of the Chosen battles will now begin, and the top six will be selected!

“Of the eleven of you, one will sit out of the fighting and directly enter the top six. The other ten will draw lots and fight each other in twos to proceed!” Accompanying Ouyang Jie’s words, a beam of light shot out over the arena floor, which transformed into a glowing sphere, roughly three meters in diameter. In turn, the pearls in the hands of Bai Xiaochun and the other remaining contestants were tugged toward it. Upon releasing the pearls, they flew directly toward the glowing sphere.

Once inside, new numbers appeared on their surfaces, from one to ten, with one of the pearls being blank.

The eleven pearls began to rotate inside the sphere, moving faster and faster until they were nothing more than a blur.

“A secret magic is at work here to ensure complete and utter fairness,” explained Ouyang Jie. “Not even I can interfere with the pearls. Rest at ease as you take the marbles back to decide the order of fighting.”

Xu Song glared at Bai Xiaochun and then chuckled coldly. “Bai Xiaochun, you’d better pray that you don’t fight me. I’ll crush you like a twig!”

With that, he waved his hand, causing a pearl to fly out into his hand.

One of the other north bank Chosen gritted his teeth and coldly said, “It doesn’t matter who you face, you’re definitely going to lose painfully in the second round!”

With that, he and everyone else, Bai Xiaochun included, made grasping motions to secure their pearls.

Instantly, ten pearls flew out toward the group of contestants.

“I have number three!”

“I'm number seven!”

“I got number one!” When the north bank disciples got their pearls, they announced the numbers. Soon, the order of fighting was becoming clear. After they announced their numbers, they looked ferociously toward Bai Xiaochun.

Eventually, Ghostfang got his pearl and coolly said, “Number nine!”

The north bank disciples soon found that not a single one of their number had acquired the blank pearl. As of this moment, the only pearls left were numbers four and ten, as well as the blank pearl. The north bank disciples began to look nervously over at the south bank.

“I’m number four!” Shangguan Tianyou announced coolly.

“Number ten!” Zhou Xinqi said, her face somewhat unsightly. As soon as the words left her mouth, she looked over at Ghostfang.

By now, everyone’s fighting spot had been determined, with the exception of Bai Xiaochun. Strange expressions appeared on the faces of the south bank audience, especially the Fragrant Cloud Peak disciples, who had been there to watch Bai Xiaochun fight in the smaller competition. Their eyes went as wide as saucers.

“No way....” they thought incredulously.

Even more incredulous than them were the north bank disciples, who so badly wanted to teach him a lesson. Fists clenched, the entire group stared blankly at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t keep from looking a bit proud. The pearl in his hand had no number on it whatsoever. At first, he'd thought that he might have seen incorrectly. However, after closer examination, he confirmed that it was indeed blank. Then he looked around and realized that everyone was staring at him, and suddenly, he realized how lonely life could be sometimes.... Flicking his sleeve, he assumed the manner of a lonely hero, staring up into the clouds. Voice cool, he said, “My apologies. I’ll be sitting this round out. If you want to fight me, you’ll have to work hard to get to the next round.”

His words were met with a moment of silence. A few breaths’ worth of time passed, and then the north bank audience erupted into enraged shouting.

“Impossible! Dammit, he’s sitting the round out!? Why did it have to be him, the shameless Bai Xiaochun. Why?!?!”

“How could he be so lucky!? Out of eleven people, I can’t believe that he gets to sit the round out!! How could someone like him have luck like this!? It’s preposterous!”

“I can’t take this. What an absolute show-off! I HAVE to take him down!!”

The north bank disciples had intended to wash their humiliation clean with violence, but now that Bai Xiaochun was sitting the round out, they very nearly coughed up mouthfuls of blood. It was almost like they had just tried to punch Bai Xiaochun in the face, but ended up striking nothing but air. Frustration fermenting inside of them, Xu Song and the others stared at Bai Xiaochun as if they wished they could rip him to pieces right then and there.

Even the south bank disciples looked on with odd expressions, unsure of what to say. It was already obvious that the north bank disciples wanted to fight Bai Xiaochun more than anything else, so it wasn't even necessary to ponder how they felt regarding this sudden development.

“That’s nothing!” blurted out a random Fragrant Cloud Peak disciple. “Back in the minor competition, Sect Uncle Bai... sat out for two rounds in a row!” When the people sitting around him heard that, their eyes went wide with disbelief.

“This happened to him before? Sect Uncle Bai’s luck... is unbelievable!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, and yet again assumed the posture of a lonely hero. Looking over at the north bank side, he slowly shook his head. That, of course, made the north bank even angrier.

However, getting angrier didn't change the situation at all. They had no option but to stifle their feelings as the second round of the Chosen battles began.

Unfortunately, without Bai Xiaochun fighting, the entire affair was a lot less interesting. Furthermore, the south bank only had two disciples in the mix, which meant that three of the battles would involve disciples from the north bank fighting each other.

The first battle was just such a situation. Gongsun Wan'er fought one of the other north bank disciples, and defeated him effortlessly. The defeated disciple trudged off of the arena floor, looking over his shoulder at the south bank side, mixed emotions playing across his face.

The second battle saw Shangguan Tianyou take the field. Luckily for him, he didn't face one of the top Chosen, but another random disciple, whom he defeated as easily as blowing some dust off of his shoulder. The south bank audience breathed sighs of relief. At least... they had secured victory in one fight.

Next, the north bank again fought itself in the third and fourth battles. Although the fighting was intense, the fact that the south bank wasn't involved at all ensured that the disciples that were from there simply looked on silently.

In the final battle, Zhou Xinqi walked out with a serious expression on her face. Although the south bank disciples cheered, they weren't too optimistic about the outcome of the battle.

After all, Zhou Xinqi’s opponent... was the terrifying Ghostfang, who had almost killed Lu Tianlei with the single wave of a finger.

After stepping out onto the arena floor, Ghostfang curiously asked, “Between you and that lightning guy, who’s stronger?”

Sensing that his intention was not to humiliate her, Zhou Xinqi answered honestly: “Elder Brother Lu is a bit stronger.”

“How about this....” Ghost replied quietly. “I used seventy percent power last time. This time, I’ll only use forty percent. You probably won’t get killed by that.” Those who could hear him looked on with bitter smiles, convinced that Ghostfang was being honest.

Zhou Xinqi took a deep breath and then performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, countless blue sparks appeared around her, forming numerous blue flying silks. The flying silks then merged together into something that resembled a huge flower, that pulsed with a powerful gravitational force!

“Plant Transformation Incantation!” When the crowd from the south bank saw the Plant Transformation Incantation being used, their eyes glittered. Although it wasn’t quite on the same level as Ghosts Haunt the Night or the Waterswamp Kingdom, it was one of the ten secret magics of the sect.

It was a unique magic that used plants against the enemy, with numerous variations that made it enigmatic and unpredictable. When Li Qinghou used it, he could create a world of plants and vegetation 50 kilometers wide. The final upgraded version of the secret magic had another name... Magic Plant Arsenal!

Using the magic was such a drain on Zhou Xinqi’s energy that her face went pale. She knew that she wasn’t a match for this opponent, but in her world, it wasn’t an option to just concede without trying.

The wave of her hand caused the blue flower to tremble, and then grow larger at a rapid rate, simultaneously shooting toward Ghostfang. It almost looked like the flower was opening wide to consume him.

It was a spectacular sight that instantly attracted the attention of Bai Xiaochun, who found the magical technique particularly interesting. However, it was at this point that Ghostfang looked up calmly and then waved his finger.

This time, he didn't wave his finger at the sky, but at Zhou Xinqi. The air next to him began to vibrate, and a huge black clawed ghost hand appeared, which quickly clenched into a fist!

The huge fist filled half of the arena floor, and was so big people couldn’t see anything else. It smashed into the blue flower, which trembled and then collapsed into ashes. The clawed ghost hand, however, didn't stop. It continued on as if nothing had happened, smashing directly into Zhou Xinqi.

A massive boom echoed out, and blood sprayed out of Zhou Xinqi’s mouth as she tumbled backward. She was knocked out of the arena floor, and when she finally ground to a halt, she coughed up eight mouthfuls of blood. Face pale, she looked up with a stubborn gleam in her eyes to see Ghostfang turning and walking away.

Everything was silent except for the gasps that echoed out....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0091 awe-chapter-92

After a protracted moment of silence, both the south and north bank audiences broke out into hushed discussions.

“S-so... so strong!”

“Ghostfang could probably crush Inner Sect disciples with ease! He must be the strongest disciple under Foundation Establishment!”

“That’s the ultimate battle prowess of the Qi Condensation stage! He’s definitely reached the realm of will. Only by possessing a mysterious and unfathomable will can someone produce such terrifying power!”

It was almost as if no one dared to speak in a loud voice. The north bank Chosen looked on with mixed emotions. After all, no one would be happy to have someone so powerful appear among their generation. On the south bank side, Shangguan Tianyou stood there silently, his heart anything but calm. Watching Ghostfang defeat the other Chosen was just like watching a Chosen defeat ordinary disciples.

It was more than clear that Ghostfang existed on a totally different plane than even the other Chosen.

Bai Xiaochun was left trembling. He had only seen Ghostfang make two attacks, and yet each one had been completely astonishing.

By this point, the top six had been selected. The north bank had four, and the south bank had two. They were

Shangguan Tianyou, Bai Xiaochun, Ghostfang, the Gongsun siblings, and Xu Song.

Those disciples who were familiar with the Chosen battles knew that the next round, round three, would be the final round. The matches to follow, and the resulting victories and defeats, would determine the final ranking of the top six disciples!

Anyone who could secure five victories would naturally take first place!

During the past thousand years, the north bank had always swept the south bank and taken the top spots. Furthermore, the south bank disciples all knew that Ghostfang... was exactly the type of person who could defeat everyone else. He was simply too powerful.

The south bank audience sat there quietly. If Ghostfang weren’t in the picture, they might hold hope that Shangguan Tianyou could take first place.

“Second place isn’t bad though....” That was what many of the south bank disciples were thinking as they sat there sighing. Some of them looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Many had a hard time determining exactly what they thought of him, but regardless of the specifics, he hadn’t given any of them the impression that he was a fighter. In fact, he hadn’t fought anyone since joining the sect.

The only thing they did know for certain was that he had come back alive after the Luochen Clan tried to chase him down and kill him....

Many of the south bank disciples had already resigned themselves to the fact that the south bank had lost, both in terms of the number of disciples who made it into the top ten, and also the first place spot.

In contrast, the north bank disciples were getting excited. Their eyes shone with anticipation and ferocity as they glared at Bai Xiaochun.

“The rules for the top six probably haven’t changed. This time, Bai Xiaochun is definitely going to be hurting!”

“That’s right. According to the rules, everyone will fight once with all the other disciples. That means... that four blazing suns from the north bank will all have a chance to pummel him. Finally, the humiliation our north bank has endured will be avenged!”

It wasn't just the ordinary north bank disciples who were musing in such a way. Xu Song and the Gongsun siblings were all chuckling coldly as they stared at Bai Xiaochun, determined to come out victorious.

Bai Xiaochun shrunk back a bit. Looking over at the furious north bank disciples, he shook his head a bit helplessly. “Immortal cultivation is supposed to be about living forever. What's the point of all the fighting and killing…?”

It was at this point that Ouyang Jie’s voice finally rang out. “The third round of the Chosen battles will follow the same rules as before. Victory will be given to whoever takes the most wins. The first set of matches will be Shangguan Tianyou versus Xu Song, Ghostfang versus Gongsun Yun, and Bai Xiaochun versus Gongsun Wan’er. These fights will be carried out simultaneously!”

With that, a beam of light descended from the balcony onto the arena floor, dividing it into three areas. Sealing barriers immediately sprang up to separate them.

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes flickered brightly as he dashed out into the first battle zone. At the same time, Xu Song also flew out. The two of them locked eyes, both of their expressions grave.

They wasted no time on words. Xu Song waved his hand, and three fierce beasts materialized around him. Each one was unique, but they were all incredibly ferocious in appearance. Even as they began to charge Shangguan Tianyou, a huge crocodilian mouth appeared above him, which closed in to consume him.

In addition to all that, the ground beneath his feet cracked as numerous tentacles burst out.

Meanwhile, Ghostfang strode forward into the second battle zone. Off to the side, Gongsun Yun stood there quietly. Although the bugs which writhed in his eyes were powerful, he knew that he was no match for Ghostfang. Despite that, he wasn’t willing to simply concede.

“Even if you were more powerful than you already are, I'd still want to fight you!” Taking a deep breath, he joined Ghostfang in the second battle zone.

Gongsun Wan’er snorted coldly as she stepped forward, glaring at Bai Xiaochun.

Of all the disciples present, Bai Xiaochun feared her the least, so he tromped forward to the third battle zone, meeting her gaze with his own glare.

As Bai Xiaochun walked out, the north bank disciples heckled him furiously. Completely ignoring the other two battle zones, their attention and fury was directed solely upon Bai Xiaochun.

“Elder Sister Gongsun, eradicate that damned Bai Xiaochun!”

“Kill him!”

Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes flickered with cold light. Instead of summoning her seven-colored phoenix, she performed an incantation gesture and then tapped down on her forehead. Seven-colored light immediately sprang out from within her, accompanied by a frigid blast of cold air which covered the ground in frost.

“Why don’t you concede?” Bai Xiaochun said, blinking. “When I attack, I frighten even myself.”

Almost immediately, an image popped up in Gongsun Wan’er’s mind of Beihan Lie’s tragic fate, and her face flushed. At the same time, a murderous aura rose up within her.

“Shut up, you perv. I'm gonna make you pay a heavy price for what you’ve done!” With the wave of a hand, she summoned an ice blade which then shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun shrugged helplessly. He had merely been telling the truth, and wasn’t sure why he’d been called a perv. Sighing, he slapped his bag of holding, causing countless talismans to appear, which he began to slap down all over his body.

Rumbling sounds could then be heard as numerous shields sprang up. Soon, they were nearly three meters thick, glittering with multicolored light. It was a shocking sight, and yet, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t finished yet. Next, he produced the Divine Crane Shield, which glittered brightly as it produced yet another shield layer.

Then there was the bracelet Li Qinghou had given him. As soon as he activated it, it spread out to cover his entire body, turning him pitch black.

Considering he was also wearing a big black wok on his back, Bai Xiaochun looked... completely eye-catching.

Furthermore, the speed and ease with which he activated all of his defenses made it obvious that he was very familiar with doing so....

The north bank disciples’ eyes widened, and they watched blankly as the ice blades slammed into Bai Xiaochun's shields, breaking some of them, but eventually shattering.

Bai Xiaochun remained inside, completely unharmed.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but what was most infuriating was that Bai Xiaochun merely stood there, hands clasped behind his back, chin sticking out, looking up at the clouds like a hero.

“Too weak,” he said, flicking his sleeve and then placing his hands behind his back again. “But then again, I’ve never met anyone who could break through all of my shields.”

Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes seemed to be on the verge of popping out of her skull. She had fought many people in her life, but had never met anyone so adept in using defensive shields. Bai Xiaochun was the first.

She could see that he had dozens of ordinary shields protecting him, plus the Divine Crane Shield, the black substance covering his skin, the huge wok on his back, and numerous leather jackets. She was left feeling annoyed, uneasy, and even a bit taken aback.

The north bank audience wasn’t happy either.

“Completely shameless!! I can’t believe he has so many defensive talismans and magical items. Dammit! These are the Chosen battles, not the resource battles!”

“Elder Sister Gongsun has to wipe him out. I'm about to explode! Just looking at him makes me want to walk over and beat the crap out of him!”

The north bank audience was incensed, and the south bank audience simply looked on in a daze. Of course, there were some disciples from Fragrant Cloud Peak who sighed inwardly. That was especially true of one burly man. When he saw what was happening, tears welled up in his eyes. He knew exactly how the north bank disciples felt. Back in the minor competition years before, Bai Xiaochun had tormented him in exactly this same way.

Up on the balcony, the sect leader and the others almost couldn’t believe their eyes, and quickly began to exchange wry grins.

Gongsun Wan’er gritted her teeth and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Immediately, a vast quantity of ice blades appeared, transforming into a vortex that shot toward Bai Xiaochun. Booms echoed out over and over again as the razor-sharp blades sliced into Bai Xiaochun’s shields. Although many of the shields were destroyed, the flickering Divine Crane Shield eventually made short work of the ice blades.

“Still too weak,” Bai Xiaochun said loftily. Inwardly, happiness blossomed in his heart like a flower as he realized what it felt like to be a powerful expert.

The north bank disciples were in a frenzy. If it weren’t for the fact that they didn’t dare to break sect rules, they would surely have charged over en masse to slaughter Bai Xiaochun.

Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes were bloodshot. Gritting her teeth, she continued to unleash attacks, using even more ice blades than before. The sheer number involved was shocking, to the point where even Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to tremble in fear. After some time passed, his shields finally gave out completely, whereupon he drew upon the full power of the Divine Crane Shield. In the blink of an eye, his defenses were shored up, and he breathed a sigh of relief. He stuck his chin up, and just when he was about say something, the bedraggled Gongsun Wan’er let out a piercing scream. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth. Astonishingly, a blood-colored ice flower appeared on her forehead, which caused the energy of heaven and earth to flow toward her in shocking fashion.

As this happened, the north bank disciples began to cheer at the top of their lungs.

“It’s Elder Sister Gongsun’s Bloodfrost Orchid!”

“The Bloodfrost Orchid is Elder Sister Gongsun’s trump card. Not even someone in the ninth level of Qi Condensation could block it. Bai Xiaochun’s defenses are definitely going to be broken through this time!”

As the freezing flower flew out, radiating a terrifying aura, it caused the surrounding temperature to drop rapidly. It shot toward Bai Xiaochun at top speed, cutting through his defenses like a hot knife through butter. His shields shattered, and just when he was about to use the Divine

Crane Shield, the Bloodfrost Orchid split into two parts. One part was successfully blocked, but the other twisted past to slam violently into Bai Xiaochun's chest.

A banging sound could be heard, and Bai Xiaochun looked down in surprise. To him, it felt like getting hit with a fluffy snowball. Shivering slightly, he looked up at Gongsun Wan'er, whose hair was by now completely disheveled.

"Take your time," he said. "I'm going to watch some of the other matches." With that, he turned in the direction of the first and second battle zones, which he began to casually watch, even occasionally cheering for one side or the other. No matter your perspective, he looked like he was asking for a beating.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0092 awe-chapter-93

In the second battle zone, Ghostfang was just on the verge of waving his finger through the air a second time. He could defeat most people with the single wave of a finger, but not Gongsun Yun.

As for Gongsun Yun, he dashed backward at top speed and barked that he conceded. He had been able to stand up to one of Ghostfang's finger attacks, but any more, and he would suffer serious injuries. Knowing that he had no chance of taking first place, he decided that contending for second place would be the best thing to do.

Clasping his hands to Ghostfang, he left the arena floor. As he did, he glanced over in the direction of Gongsun Wan’er, and frowned.

Ghostfang’s expression was placid as he left the arena floor and returned to where he had been standing all along. When he looked over at Bai Xiaochun and all of his defenses, a strange gleam appeared in his eyes.

The audience members from the south bank were all looking down, averting their gazes from the scene playing out on the arena floor.... Embarrassed, they actually felt sorry for the north bank.

The north bank disciples were going crazy....

Gongsun Wan’er was frantic, screaming as she launched one attack after another at Bai Xiaochun, using every technique she could think of. She unleashed countless divine abilities and magical techniques, and yet, nothing could break Bai Xiaochun's defenses.

After all, his final line of defense was the black bracelet, a life-saving magic that could protect him from a blow by a Foundation Establishment cultivator. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Gongsun Wan’er coughed up a mouthful of blood and collapsed onto the ground, staring at Bai Xiaochun with listless despair.

She was about to summon her phoenix when Bai Xiaochun looked over at her and suddenly produced a medicinal pill, which he began to toss up and down in his palm....

Furious, Gongsun Wan’er clenched her hands into fists.

“I concede!!’ she said begrudgingly, eyes flickering with defiance.

Clasping hands and looking as superior as possible, he said, “You let me win. It seems you know what's best, and didn’t force me to attack!”

In response to his words, tears leaked out of the eyes of the south bank disciples. Gongsun Wan’er was so mad she was shaking. Gritting her teeth, she stalked off of the arena floor.

It was at this point that the battle between Shangguan Tianyou and Xu Song reached its conclusion. Shangguan Tianyou’s sword descended, and intense light shone out in all directions. Xu Song’s five beasts were all in bad shape, and he himself staggered backward several paces, looking at Shangguan Tianyou in admiration.

“It turns out sword spirit bodies really are pretty incredible!” he said, blood oozing out of his mouth. Finally, he turned and walked off of the arena floor.

Shangguan Tianyou didn't respond. Instead, he looked over at Ghostfang, his eyes glittering, completely convinced of who his only true opponent was!

“Presumably, he feels the same way I do," he thought, "that fighting against these other people is simply boring.” Shangguan Tianyou retrieved his flying sword and looked over at Bai Xiaochun. When he saw all of his defenses, a gleam of scorn appeared in his eyes. Finally, he walked off of the arena floor, accompanied by the cheers of the south bank disciples.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun walked proudly back to his spot.

The first set of matches of the third round was over. The victors were Ghostfang, Shangguan Tianyou, and Bai Xiaochun, with the losers being Xu Song and the Gongsun siblings.

Of course, not many people had paid much attention to the victories won by Shangguan Tianyou and Ghostfang. Most people had been focused on Bai Xiaochun’s repeated shamelessness.

Bai Xiaochun had succeeded... in completely altering the atmosphere of the competition. In fact, it was hard to say exactly how much he had influenced the sect as a whole....

The north bank disciples’ eyes were bright red, their hands clenched into fists as they glared at Bai Xiaochun. As tens of thousands of eyes stared at him, he scratched his nose, pretending not to notice.

Gongsun Wan’er was so angry she was shaking. Her brother, Gongsun Yun, murmured something to her, after which she clenched her teeth and sat down cross-legged to restore her energy. Everyone else soon followed suit.

The rest period lasted for the time it takes three incense sticks to burn. After that, the second match of the third round formally began!

In the first battle region, Ghostfang was up against Gongsun Wan’er. As soon as she stepped into the battle region and faced the expressionless Ghostfang, she conceded. She couldn’t afford to be injured, lest it affect her subsequent matches.

With Gongsun Wan’er having conceded, Ghostfang took another victory.

Meanwhile, in the second battle region, booms echoed out as Shangguan Tianyou fought Gongsun Yun, who had managed to stand up to Ghostfang for one finger attack. Bugs poured out of Gongsun Yun’s sleeves, blotting out the sky as they rushed toward Shangguan Tianyou.

Shangguan Tianyou’s expression turned slightly more somber as he waved his right hand, sending a flying sword buzzing out, bursting with sword qi.

It should have been a battle that everyone watched closely. However... audiences from both the south bank and the north bank were all staring at the third battle zone.

That was where Bai Xiaochun had loftily taken the stage to fight against Xu Song!

Xu Song looked over at him with a cold smile.

“You might be good with medicinal pills and defenses. But now that you’ve met me, you’re doomed to meet a painful end!” With that, Xu Song waved his hand violently through the air, causing cracking sounds to ring out as three beasts appeared out of thin air. One of them was a three-meter-tall gorilla, another was a huge tiger, and the last... was a gigantic bat.

As soon as they appeared, they radiated powerful energy that would crush even someone in the ninth level of Qi Condensation.

“Alright, Bai Xiaochun, let’s see if your defenses can stand up to a sustained volley by my three battle beasts!” Smiling viciously, he prepared to attack.

“Why don’t you concede?” Bai Xiaochun said. Sighing, he produced an Aphrodisiac Pill and looked sympathetically over at Xu Song.

The north bank disciples were thrown into fits of rage.

“He said it again!”

“Eradicate Bai Xiaochun!”

When Xu Song saw the medicinal pill, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Face filled with derision and even complacency, he said, “I knew all along that you would try to use that shameless medicinal pill. Did you really think I would come unprepared? I set these three battle beast aside just for you. They’re all female!”

It was because of this that Xu Song was so confident, convinced that he would be able to give the north bank a chance to get revenge.

When the north bank disciples heard his words, they instantly got excited, and began to cheer for Xu Song.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart thumped, and his eyes turned up in thought. After a moment, he looked back at Xu Song, eyes filled with sympathy as he said, “This medicinal pill is effective on humans too, not just animals.”

With that, he looked meaningfully at Xu Song’s three female battle beasts.

His words sent the north bank disciples into complete silence. They stared in shock, subconsciously visualizing certain scenes in their mind, cruel scenes that caused them to gasp.

Xu Song’s eyes went wide, and his mind filled with thunderous rumbling. His face drained of blood as he contemplated how both Beihan Lie and Gongsun Wan’er had both lost. He suddenly realized that if what Bai Xiaochun said was true, and the medicinal pill’s aphrodisiac effects worked on people.... He swallowed nervously. Without even thinking about it, he edged away from his three battle beasts, trembling. In turn, the three battle beasts, intelligent as they were, looked over at Xu Song and also began to tremble.

Without the slightest hesitation, Xu Song quickly put them away, not daring to bet that Bai Xiaochun was bluffing. Even though he had the feeling that Bai Xiaochun was most likely lying, he didn’t want to risk it.

Even as the trembling Xu Song put away his battle beasts, Bai Xiaochun strode forward. Light flickered as his defenses went up, and as he closed in on Xu Song, he reached his right hand back and then waved it out in front of him.

A blast of power surged out. Xu Song’s strength lay in his control of beasts, and at the moment, he didn’t dare to use even a single one. That cut his effective power in half, and made it impossible for him to stand up to Bai Xiaochun. He was instantly sent flying, blood spraying out of his mouth. When he staggered to a stop, rage and humiliation filled his eyes as he shrieked that he conceded.

Bai Xiaochun blinked and then cleared his throat. Clasping hands and bowing, he strutted off the arena floor amidst the countless enraged curses from the north bank disciples.

“Bai Xiaochun, y-y-you...”

“That damned medicinal pill ought to be destroyed!”

“Heavens! I’ll pay ten spirit stones to anyone who can take down Bai Xiaochun!”

“I’ll put in fifty spirit stones! Take him out!” The north bank was going crazy, and countless people began to shout out that they would add spirit stones as well. Soon the total was over 10,000. The shocked south bank disciples looked at Bai Xiaochun, their admiration for him growing by leaps and bounds.

The huge bounty caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to flicker, and he hurried to escape the arena floor. It felt like a cold wind was blowing up his back, especially when the total bounty passed 20,000 spirit stones. His heart began to thump.

“You people are so unreasonable!” he said loudly, hoping to explain. “Every single time I go out there, I always give them a chance to concede!”

His explanation only further enraged the north bank disciples, and soon the spirit stone bounty reached 30,000. Up overhead, the phoenix reveled in Bai Xiaochun’s misfortune, and let out continuous piercing cries.

The elders on the balcony were getting more and more amused.

“I'm a Prestige disciple!” Bai Xiaochun cried threateningly. “I'm the Junior Brother of the sect leader. If anybody tries to put a bounty on me, I’ll have my Master kick them out of the sect!”

Then... the north bank disciples went even crazier. It was hard to say who lost control first, but a flying sword appeared and shot toward the arena floor. Countless north bank disciples all produced various magical items, and their battle beasts roared as if they were preparing to fight a bloody war.

Bai Xiaochun fled in terror. Thankfully, the sect elders on the balcony couldn't let matters go any further. With a single glance, they held back the north bank disciples.

It was around this time that the battle between Shangguan Tianyou and Gongsun Yun ended. Shangguan Tianyou had used three flying swords, and Gongsun Yun had gone all out with everything he possessed. In the end, Gongsun Yun conceded, ending the fight.

Shangguan Tianyou was slightly out of breath. Gongsun Yun had been strong enough that he had been forced to really start fighting hard. When he left the arena floor and noticed how enraged the north bank disciples were, he frowned and looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Although his eyes flickered with contempt, his heart twinged with jealousy.

“Relying only on medicinal pills and defenses? I can’t believe we’ve reached the same stage! Hmph!” With that, Shangguan Tianyou sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes to do breathing exercises.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0093 awe-chapter-94

“The Chosen battles this time around... ai.” Up on the balcony, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong shook his head helplessly. The peak lords sitting around him smiled wryly.

The Chosen battles were supposed to be a solemn occasion, but not this time around, and everyone knew it.... Things had begun normally, but the simple addition of Bai Xiaochun into the mix turned everything sour.

“Bai Xiaochun... his name sounds good, but he isn't the least bit pure in any sense of the word.” Elder Zhou chuckled wryly, looking down at Bai Xiaochun hiding in the crowd, and then over at the countless enraged north bank disciples.

It was at this point that the peak lord from Irispetal Peak, the old woman, smiled darkly and said, “It's fine. Bai Xiaochun might be naughty and mischievous, but he’s made himself the archenemy of the entire north bank. We just need to find an opportunity to transfer him to the north bank; that would calm him down quite a bit.”

The eyes of the others present flickered thoughtfully. The only one who reacted differently was Li Qinghou, who looked over at the old woman sympathetically. Based on how well he knew Bai Xiaochun, he was fairly certain that if Bai Xiaochun was transferred to the north bank, the unlucky party wouldn’t be him....

As the group continued to ponder the situation, the third match began.

Ghostfang fought Xu Song, and Shangguan Tianyou took on Gongsun Wan’er, but neither battle was even worth watching. Both Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou were so strong that they won easily.

The disciples of both banks, as well as the sect leader and the others, were all watching the third battle zone. Gongsun Yun was the first to enter the area, pulsing with energy and icy coldness. Moments later, Bai Xiaochun strolled up, looking like a powerful hero.

Instead of yelling in rage, the north bank disciples glared murderously. To have so many eyes glaring at him like that left Bai Xiaochun more than a little jumpy.

Taking a deep breath, he looked over at Gongsun Yun. Aphrodisiac Pill in hand, he said, “Why don’t you concede?”

Gongsun Yun looked coldly back at him, eyes shining with hatred. Waving his sleeve, he sent countless black beetles flying out from within his clothes. There were also red centipedes that scurried across the ground at top speed.

The sight of so many bugs was completely shocking.

Voice cool, Gongsun Yun gave Bai Xiaochun no chance to say anything further. “My bugs might be classified as male and female, but they’re not beasts. Your medicinal pill won’t work on them.”

The bugs caused an ear-splitting droning sound to fill the air. They were like a sea, surging directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Every bug that made up the sea possessed a certain level of attack power. Although defensive shields could resist them, when their power was combined, they would be quite formidable. Bai Xiaochun was even fairly certain that in this situation, Gongsun Yun actually had a bit of an advantage.

“Don’t force my hand, Gongsun Yun,” Bai Xiaochun shouted, backing up at top speed, his face paling. “Concede immediately. I really don’t want to attack, you know. Once I do... you’re done for!”

Gongsun Yun chuckled coldly. “Let’s see which happens first, your flesh getting eaten off your bones, or me being done for.” Looking even more scornful than before, he waved his hand, sending even more bugs surging forth.

The crowd from the south bank looked on in fear and astonishment. Everyone watching had already been convinced of how powerful Gongsun Yun was. Not only was he adept at using bugs, he also had powerful magical techniques. He was able to defend against one of Ghostfang’s finger attacks, and even forced Shangguan Tianyou to attack three times with his sword, tiring him out significantly.

The north bank audience looked on, their excitement building.

“Nice job, Elder Brother Gongsun! Take Bai Xiaochun down!”

“Hahaha! Let’s see how you fight back this time, Bai Xiaochun! You just wait! Those bugs are going to burrow into your flesh and eat you alive!”

“Your comeuppance is at hand, Bai Xiaochun!” The countless north bank disciples were extremely excited. Furthermore, their battle beasts could sense their masters’ excitement, and began to howl in response.

In the blink of an eye, the black beetles were right in front of Bai Xiaochun, slamming into his defensive shields, ripping and tearing at them with their mandibles. The shields quickly began to fade and grow dim.

Then the red centipedes arrived, causing his defenses to weaken even more quickly. Some of them even managed to gnaw their way past the shields.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp tingled with fright, and his eyes went bloodshot.

“Gongsun Yun, you’re forcing my hand!” Bai Xiaochun was reaching the point of having no choice but to use his trump card, something he’d hoped to avoid. Taking a deep breath, heart pounding, he sent a surge of energy into the shields, blasting away a significant portion of the bugs. Even as they turned to charge back toward him, an Aphrodisiac Pill appeared in his hand, which he threw in the direction of the north bank audience.

The pill shot through the air with a whooshing sound, and before anyone could react, was in the air above the stands on the north side of the arena. The disciples gaped in shock, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Detonate!”

A boom rang out as the Aphrodisiac Pill exploded, transforming into ash which drifted down in all directions, covering nearly half of the north bank disciples.

Gongsun Yun’s eyes went wide with shock.

Bai Xiaochun actually wasn’t sure whether or not the pill would have an effect on humans; he had never dared to personally test out any of the mystery pills he'd concocted. However, he was certain that the pill was effective on animals, and would stimulate them to a shocking degree.

In the blink of an eye, the ash that was the remains of the Aphrodisiac Pill had fallen down onto the battle beasts below, which began to throw their heads back and howl. Their bodies grew larger, their eyes turned red, and they began to pant heavily. In turn, their masters cried out in alarm and began to back up.

It took only a moment for the north bank disciples to devolve into a stampede, quickly clearing the entire area of people. The only thing that remained were the howling beasts, sitting there looking around for a target.

The north bank disciples all began to shriek at the tops of their lungs. “Bai Xiaochun!!”

At the same time, beads of sweat popped out on Gongsun Yun’s forehead, which was shocking considering that after beginning to cultivate the Dao of bugs, he had never sweat.

Now, though, he was panting heavily as Bai Xiaochun slowly pulled out another medicinal pill. As soon as he did, the stimulated battle beasts began to tremble in excitement. Gongsun Yun couldn’t help but think about what had occurred when a pill just like that had been shattered and then spread onto Beihan Lie.

“You....”

An intense feeling of foreboding rose up in his heart, and he began to tremble. Images flashed through his mind, and he began to back up. Even his legs were shaking. He could well imagine what would happen if Bai Xiaochun crushed that pill on him... and then the battle beasts pounced.

“You forced my hand,” Bai Xiaochun said with a despairing scowl. “I didn’t want to do this.” With that, he pulled his hand back in preparation to throw the pill.

“I concede!!” shrieked Gongsun Yun in the most high-pitched voice that had left his mouth in his entire life. His face was ashen as he raced off of the arena floor. Only when he was safe amongst the crowd did he look back in fright at Bai Xiaochun.

“Uhhh...” Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped at the sight of the terrified Gongsun Yun hiding in the crowd. Then he looked at the trembling battle beasts, and suddenly had a very bad feeling.

Many of them were howling at the tops of their lungs, eyes fixed directly on the medicinal pill he held in his hand. They were already started to edge toward him. Drops of sweat broke out on his forehead, and he suddenly turned to look at the crowd of north bank disciples.

That simple turn of his head caused the north bank disciples’ hearts to seize with fear.

Bai Xiaochun turned to look in another direction, but quickly found that any place he looked at would quickly become devoid of people. Everyone would scramble away at top speed, screaming in desperation.

Finally, his gaze came to rest on the south bank disciples.

Instantly... their scalps went numb, and they began to back up. In the blink of an eye, everyone had retreated by thirty meters.

“We’re on the same side, Sect Uncle Bai!” people began to cry out. “The same side!”

Even Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou were backing up, their faces flickering with shock.

ROAR! More of the stimulated battle beasts began to walk forward, their eyes crimson, salivating as they eyed Bai Xiaochun.

“What do I do?” he thought. “What do I do?! Didn’t I warn you people to concede? Didn’t I say that I fear my own attacks!?”

Feeling that he was completely innocent in the matter, he gritted his teeth and looked over at the north bank audience. “Didn’t you people just say something about putting a bounty on my head?!”

None of the trembling north bank disciples dared to even look Bai Xiaochun in the eye.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was also trembling. In his heart, he believed himself to be a good person, and wasn’t willing to simply throw the pill out in a random direction. Anxiety building up within him, he looked at the increasingly stimulated battle beasts, and then finally happened to glance up into the sky above him and notice the proud, arrogant phoenix of Elder Zhou's.

Eyes shining, and having no time to consider the matter, he launched the medicinal pill at top speed toward the phoenix; it transformed into a beam of light shooting through the air.

The phoenix was in the middle of gloating over Bai Xiaochun’s misfortune, and didn’t even notice the pill flying toward him at first. When he did, his feathers all stood on end, and he let out a miserable shriek. Just when he was about to dodge, the pill exploded, covering him with a fine powder.

The phoenix stared in shock as the battle beasts below began to howl. Eyes burning as if with fire, they began to leap up into the air as if to chase down the phoenix.

The sect leader and the others gasped, crowding around the edge of the balcony to look down at what was happening.

At one point, one of the random elders asked, “Is attacking the audience... against the rules?”

However, nobody seemed to care about that at the moment. All of them were staring down into the north stands, at the area devoid of people but filled with battle beasts. The remaining three peak lords from the north bank all had strange looks in their eyes as they stared at one particular beast among the crowd.

It looked like a deer, and was currently howling up into the air under the effects of the Aphrodisiac Pill.

“Before, I assumed that pill’s effectiveness was limited to beasts with third order bloodlines.... I never imagined that it would also be effective on second order bloodlines!”

“That pill... would be incredibly useful to us on the north bank!” The three peak lords from the north bank were trembling in excitement. The old woman among their number then waved her right finger through the air toward the phoenix.

Instantly, the phoenix trembled as a powerful force wrapped around it and dragged it down toward the balcony. At the same time, the battle beasts roared and flew in the same direction.

The old woman snorted coldly and looked down at the beasts, which then began to howl mournfully. Another powerful force swept them up, sending them spinning toward her. As they approached, they shrank down and disappeared into her sleeve.

The old woman looked over at the miserable, shrieking phoenix, eyes shining as she turned to confer with the other peak lords.

Off to the side, Elder Zhou’s face had turned green....

Bai Xiaochun seemed no worse for the wear. Heaving a sigh of relief, he was just about to walk off the arena floor when the north banks disciples recovered from the fear of the threat which had been levied against them, and began to roar in anger.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!”

“Bai Xiaochun, the north bank will never rest until you’re dead!!”

“Exterminate Bai Xiaochun!!” The north bank disciples had veins bulging out on their necks and faces as they howled in fury. In response, Bai Xiaochun turned back to look at them, and raised an ordinary medicinal pill up into the air as he stuck his jaw out.

Instantly... the entire crowd trembled and went completely silent.

Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve and chuckled darkly. Popping the medicinal pill into his mouth, he left the arena floor.... Behind him, the north bank disciples erupted in rage yet again.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0094 awe-chapter-95

The disciples of the south bank looked at Bai Xiaochun in admiration, and even began to give voice to their feelings.

“Sect Uncle Bai... is a god!”

“Sect Uncle Bai has become the archenemy of the north bank, a path that cannot be returned from. But how far will he go...?”

Many of them were even rejoicing at the fact that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t from the north bank. If he were, it was impossible to imagine how much the south bank would have suffered.

“Sect Uncle Bai is enough for our south bank. He alone can drive the north bank crazy.”

Xu Baocai had already been struck speechless numerous times on this day, but it was only now that he realized... that Bai Xiaochun’s power seemed limitless.

Regardless, the atmosphere of the Chosen battles had been completely changed. And yet, the matches would continue. The south bank side was filled with admiration, and the north bank stewed in their madness as the fourth set of matches began.

Shangguan Tianyou, Ghostfang, and Bai Xiaochun all had three victories to their names, so their presence wasn’t even needed to finish the final rankings for the fourth, fifth, and sixth place spots.

The Gongsun siblings and Xu Song took the floor to finish things. In the end, Gongsun Yun defeated Gongsun Wan’er, as well as Xu Song. No more battles were necessary to determine the rankings.

Xu Song was not a match for Gongsun Yun, and even if he fought Gongsun Wan’er and lost, that one battle wouldn’t change the final rankings. As such, Xu Song took fifth place.

With five defeats, Gongsun Wan’er lost a bit of glory and took sixth place. Fourth place went to Gongsun Yun.

Next to be determined were the final rankings for the top three disciples! Everyone was watching with keen anticipation to see how Bai Xiaochun, Shangguan Tianyou and Ghostfang would end up in the final standings.

Of course, the north bank disciples glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun the entire time. They approved of Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou, but their opinion of Bai Xiaochun was that he was completely shameless and despicable.

The north bank’s hopes all rested on Ghostfang. As far as they were concerned, it wouldn’t matter what plots Bai Xiaochun hatched, he was no match for Ghostfang in terms of power, and would be crushed like a twig.

“First battle. Bai Xiaochun versus Shangguan Tianyou!” Apparently due to Bai Xiaochun’s antics, Ouyang Jie’s voice was no longer as cold and sinister as it had been, and in fact, it almost seemed like he was sighing.

Shangguan Tianyou looked up, a powerful gleam in his eye as he thought about how he’d been outdone by Bai Xiaochun in the qualifying round. As he walked out onto the arena floor, the breeze lifted his hair, making him look even more handsome than usual, like a precious sword that would cause countless disciples’ eyes to glitter.

Of course, none of the south bank disciples dared to cheer. After all, Bai Xiaochun was also from the south bank, and had many tricks up his sleeve. They feared that if they cheered for his opponent, he would remember, and hold it against them. Therefore, they had no choice but to bite their tongues.

The north bank, on the other hand, actually did start to cheer for Shangguan Tianyou. In response, Shangguan Tianyou frowned, aware that they weren't really cheering for him, but against Bai Xiaochun. The north bank would cheer for any opponent of Bai Xiaochun’s, even if it were a pig. The thought left Shangguan Tianyou even more displeased than before.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and walked out onto the arena floor. Looking over at Shangguan Tianyou, he flicked his sleeve and smiled. “Listen, there’s no need for all this. We're both--”

Before he could finish speaking, however, Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes blazed, and he waved his finger. Instantly, his flying sword pierced through the air as fast as a bolt of lightning. It moved so quickly that before Bai Xiaochun could even react, it was right there, a few inches in front of his face!

Pupils constricting, mind bursting with a sensation of imminent crisis, he ducked down. A blast of wind from the sword buffeted him from above, and one of his hairs was severed, which then floated down in front of him.

“When cultivators fight, we seize every opportunity,” Shangguan Tianyou said coolly. “Even if you hadn’t avoided that sword, it wouldn’t have killed you. You are naughty and mischievous, and severely lacking in good family values. Since your father and mother didn't discipline you, I guess I’ll step in to provide you with a bit of education. However, you’d better not use any vile or treacherous methods, and lose face for the south bank.” As he spoke, his flying sword circled back around and came to rest floating in front of him.

The north bank went quiet for a moment, then broke out into cheering. The south bank maintained their silence. None of them seemed very happy with Shangguan Tianyou, and even some of the people who considered themselves his fans were frowning.

After all, the south bank disciples generally didn’t hate Bai Xiaochun. Although he was somewhat naughty and mischievous, it wasn’t excessive. He left them feeling a bit helpless sometimes, but they actually liked him. The north bank hated him, but to the south bank, he represented their hope for glory.

Furthermore, it was obvious to everyone that Bai Xiaochun had been on the verge of conceding. Clearly, he’d hoped to keep from getting into a fierce fight with Shangguan Tianyou, thus sparing Shangguan Tianyou some spiritual power to use in his final battle with Ghostfang.

Shangguan Tianyou had been aware of that too, and yet had attacked anyway, and in an underhanded way at that. Then he talked about educating Bai Xiaochun, and even dishonored his family. Behavior like that left many south bank disciples quite uncomfortable!

Bai Xiaochun knelt there, watching his hair float down in front of him. Slowly, his smile faded, and he looked up at

Shangguan Tianyou, the word “education” ringing in his ears.

“You’re a Chosen, so if you want to look down on me, fine. I don’t really care what other people think about me anyway.” For some reason, something seemed different about Bai Xiaochun all of a sudden.

“You want to use underhanded attacks? That’s your business. I practice cultivation so that I can live forever. I don't like fighting and killing.” He waved his right hand off to the side, tossing the defensive amulets away. All of a sudden, it seemed as if his veins were filled with, not blood, but steel.

In the south bank audience, Hou Yunfei’s eyes glittered, and he couldn’t stop himself from shaking. All of a sudden, he was looking at the same Bai Xiaochun who had saved him from the Luochen Clan.

“But what gives you the right... to step in for my dad and mom and educate me!?!?” Bai Xiaochun eyes were completely bloodshot. His parents had both passed away when he was young, an event which had influenced him in profound ways. It was one of the biggest reasons why he began to wish to live forever.

He was a generally optimistic person, an attitude he had intentionally fostered since a young age. There had been no other option. He had personally watched his parents die of illness. He remembered sitting with their corpses for days, weeping, refusing to believe that they were gone, even calling their names. Eventually, the corpses began to stink, and relatives came to bury them. Bai Xiaochun had been left in a daze, and at one point even took to talking to himself....

If a child grew up in such a manner, his entire life would be one of darkness.

So Bai Xiaochun replaced the crying with laughter. He began to think about the idea of living forever. He would never forget how his parents had died, and although he missed them, it only made him want to keep living.

He was stubborn and mischievous, but not to an excessive degree. Many of the things he did were even accidents. Deep down, he was a good person.

He feared death, and seemed weak on the outside, but when his friends were in danger, he would fight to the death to protect them. If he needed to, he could bellow in rage and risk his life on the field of battle.

He liked to joke, but was also deeply emotional. Big Fatty Zhang, Li Qinghou, Hou Yunfei, Du Lingfei, Hou Xiaomei, the sect leader, and all the other people who treated him well, were people he would never, ever forget.

“What gives you the right?!” He suddenly burst into action, moving so quickly that he was instantly in front of Shangguan Tianyou. Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes widened, and his hair stood on end, but before he could do a single thing in response, Bai Xiaochun’s fist struck out, glittering with silver light.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Shangguan Tianyou’s personal shield sprang up, but it was absolutely incapable of providing any defense. Bai Xiaochun’s fist pierced through it like a hammer crushing ice. Just as it was about to land on Shangguan Tianyou, a tiny buckler appeared, which subsequently trembled and was sent flying off to the side. Bai Xiaochun’s fist landed on Shangguan Tianyou’s chest, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. Shangguan Tianyou felt as if a huge force had slammed into him, and he staggered backward ten paces, coughing up more blood, an expression of utter incredulity on his face.

“Are you really Chosen?” Bai Xiaochun asked coolly. He didn't stick his jaw out. He didn’t put on the air of a lonely hero. But everyone looking at him in that moment felt like they were looking at a blazing sun. Gasps could be heard among the south bank disciples, and the north bank audience was completely stunned.

Ghostfang’s eyes began to shine, and up on the balcony, the sect leader and the others had very serious expression on their faces.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Shangguan Tianyou growled. Feeling completely humiliated, he roared and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Five flying swords appeared, all of which emanated terrifying sword qi. Taking control of them with his spirit sword body, Shangguan Tianyou sent them flying toward Bai Xiaochun.

Rumbling could be heard as the swords blurred into motion, becoming five sword dragons, each one of them about two meters wide and thirty meters long. As they arced through the air, everything shook, and even the surface of the arena floor began to crumble. Based on the shocking level of energy they displayed, any one of the swords would be able to kill an ordinary disciple. Two would definitely take out other elite disciples. As for Chosen like Gongsun Yun, three would be enough to force him to concede. But now five appeared, filling the entire arena floor with a shocking sword aura.

“I don’t know anything about sword techniques,” Bai Xiaochun said coolly. “Nor do I have a sword spirit body. But from what I know... that’s not how you use swords!” With that, he waved his finger, and the Golden Crow Sword appeared, a golden beam of light that slashed toward the first of Shangguan Tianyou’s swords!

I don’t care if you use three swords or five, I only need one!

That one sword caused the sky to shake, and became an explosive stream of sword qi!

That one sword used Heaviness-in-Lightness and Lightness-in-Heaviness!

That one sword was backed by the perfect amount of spiritual power, without the slightest bit of wastage!

It was true that Bai Xiaochun didn’t really know anything about sword techniques. But he knew the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, Heaviness-in-Lightness, and Lightness-in-Heaviness. He knew that, although a leaf could not be used to lift a log, if you rolled it up, it could lift a small rock. Furthermore, if you tore the leaf into strips and wove them together, it could lift an even heavier rock!

He knew the proper way to manipulate spiritual power!

Sometimes, mastering one technique was superior to knowing tens of thousands of them. In the Qi Condensation stage... his skill combined with his Undying Silver Skin made him invincible!

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

An ear-splitting explosion rocked the entire area, and countless chunks of rubble were thrown into the air. Bai Xiaochun’s single sword strike became a tempest that slammed into Shangguan Tianyou’s five sword dragons. The sword dragons twisted and distorted, and then exploded into countless fragments. Then the blast of wind continued on, slamming directly into Shangguan Tianyou’s face.

Bai Xiaochun stood there, his hair whipping in the wind, his expression placid. He didn’t clasp his hands behind his back, and didn't flick his sleeve. He simply stood there, as calm as ice. It was a scene that would forever be etched into the minds of all disciples of the north and south banks.

“Is that really... Bai Xiaochun?” Everyone felt as if their minds were about to explode.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0095 awe-chapter-96

The south bank was shaken. All of the disciples who actually knew Bai Xiaochun felt like they suddenly didn't recognize the person standing there in front of them. He seemed like a stranger. The Bai Xiaochun they remembered loved to make people call him Sect Uncle Bai. He was a somewhat annoying person who made everyone feel like giving him a good beating. This person was completely different.

Gasps could be heard coming from the north bank audience. The disciples there stared blankly, and their minds spun. Although they hadn’t known Bai Xiaochun for very long, he had already given them the impression that he was completely shameless. In sharp contrast, the person they were looking at now left them shaken to the core.

Up on the balcony, Zheng Yuandong’s eyes shone with an extraordinary gleam. The other peak lords had very serious expressions on their faces, and Li Qinghou looked on with a slight smile. A warm feeling filled his heart, along with a sensation of pride.

All the other elders were also looking on with serious looks in their eyes.

Shangguan Tianyou flew through the air a bit above the arena floor, coughing up blood, a blank look in his eyes. He couldn’t believe that he was losing, and of all people, to Bai Xiaochun, whom he held in complete contempt. He had been injured, but the humiliation he felt exceeded the pain of his wounds. Just as he was about to fly off of the arena floor, he let out a powerful shout.

“This battle isn’t over yet, Bai Xiaochun!” With that, he bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. His hair instantly withered, and at the same time, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. A moment later, he trembled as a blood-colored light shot out from the top of his head!

The light surged up high above him, where it transformed into a blood sword!

Numerous disciples in the audience instantly recognized what they were looking at. “One of the ten secret magics! True Self Sword!”

“Hellfiend Formation!” Shangguan Tianyou’s hands blurred as he performed another incantation gesture, then waved his finger toward Bai Xiaochun. Instantly, the blood sword transformed into countless strands of blood that swirled out to become a net of swords, which then shot toward Bai Xiaochun with an ear-piercing whistling sound.

Bai Xiaochun simply extended his right hand and pointed out with his index finger.

Up ahead of him, the air distorted as an enormous cauldron appeared. Although it was illusory, it seemed close to being corporeal. The complex designs which covered its surface were clearly visible, making it seem very realistic.

“Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning!? Heavens!”

“It's so realistic! That’s not an ordinary Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, that’s the second level!” Cries of astonishment could be heard coming from the south bank audience, especially the disciples from Violet Cauldron Peak.

Gasps could also be heard from the north bank audience as the violet cauldron and the blood-colored sword formation slammed into each other, causing a deafening boom to fill the air. Shangguan Tianyou let out a miserable shriek as he was sent spinning backward, blood spraying out of his mouth.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was the same as ever as he stood there on the arena floor, watching the enormous cauldron fade away. At the same time, Ghostfang’s eyes suddenly began to gleam, and without another word, he flew over to stand across from Bai Xiaochun.

“Shangguan Tianyou is too weak to fight any longer,” he said. “Let’s make things simple... and fight right now!” Even as the words left his mouth, black mist began to pulse out around him, swirling into the form of numerous vicious ghosts who let out soundless shrieks.

The ghosts were completely vicious in appearance. Some had disheveled hair, some had green skin, and some looked like rotting corpses. There were even some that carried their own heads in their arms. They were terrifying to the extreme.

The entire arena floor began to fill with an aura of death, causing hearts to grow cold among the disciples of both banks.

As that happened, numerous figures flew out of the crowd on both sides, people with very serious expressions on their faces. They weren’t Outer Sect disciples, but rather, Inner Sect disciples from both the south and north banks who were extremely interested in the final match of the Chosen battles!

Even the divine sense of the prime elders atop Mount Daoseed was completely focused on the arena floor.

All eyes were glued on Bai Xiaochun and Ghostfang!

Bai Xiaochun slowly turned to face Ghostfang, his expression serious. He had seen Ghostfang fight several times during the Chosen battles, and each time had been astonishing. A single wave of his finger had almost killed Lu Tianlei, and that had been only seventy percent of his power.

It was hard to imagine what it would be like if he unleashed all of his battle prowess.

In the moment that Bai Xiaochun looked over at Ghostfang, Ghostfang’s eyes flickered with a mysterious light. Then he waved his finger at Bai Xiaochun, causing rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth. A gigantic clawed ghost hand appeared next to Ghostfang, filling half of the arena floor. Surging with astonishing levels of power, it rocketed toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the blink of an eye, it was upon him. Bai Xiaochun clenched his right hand into a fist, and silver light flashed, making him look like a silver statue. Then he struck out toward the incoming clawed ghost hand.

From a distance, Bai Xiaochun’s slight frame seemed completely insignificant compared to the shocking clawed ghost hand. And yet, as soon as his fist made contact with it, an ear-splitting blast exploded out.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The thunderous explosion caused disciples on both sides of the arena to tumble backward, astonished expressions on their faces. Some of them even saw stars swimming in their eyes.

As the shockwave spread out from the contact point, the clawed ghost hand trembled. Cracking sounds rang out, and fissures spread out to fill its entire surface. One breath of time passed, and then the gigantic clawed ghost hand shattered into countless pieces.

Black mist exploded out in all directions, and the entire arena floor shook violently. Ghostfang’s eyes shone brightly as he fell back a single pace before slamming his foot down to stop himself.

Cracks spread out in the ground from the foot he stomped down. As for Bai Xiaochun, he also fell back a single pace, his face flushed, his hand glittering with silver light. If you looked closely at that hand, it was possible to see it trembling slightly.

The surrounding disciples gasped, and both sides of the arena immediately burst forth with cries of shock and astonishment.

“I can’t believe... Bai Xiaochun is... so strong!!”

“He’s actually at the same level as Elder Brother Ghostfang! Back when the Luochen Clan turned traitor, I heard that he barely escaped with his life, but killed a bunch of them in the process. I thought those stories were exaggerations, but now....”

“That’s the first time I’ve ever seen anyone destroy Ghostfang’s clawed ghost hand!”

The Inner Sect disciples were equally astonished, and all of them felt their hearts pounding with bitter astonishment as they looked at Bai Xiaochun and Ghostfang. As far as they were concerned, these two weren’t even Outer Sect disciples any more. Oftentimes, years would pass without a single inhuman disciple rising up from within the ranks. And yet now... two had appeared at the same time.

Up on the balcony, the sect leader’s eyes shone with joy, and the other elders’ eyebrows were raised in shock.

Bai Xiaochun frowned at the tingling sensation he felt in his hand, but the feeling soon went away. Looking over at Ghostfang, he realized that he was facing a formidable opponent.

Ghostfang’s eyes shone with what appeared to be happiness. “I only used fifty percent power, but you still destroyed my finger attack. That means you’re a lot stronger than anyone else I’ve faced. Well, in that case... I can safely use eighty percent power.”

Right hand flashing with an incantation gesture, he waved his finger again at Bai Xiaochun.

Instantly, black mist swirled into being above Bai Xiaochun. The air was ripped apart as, unexpectedly, another huge ghost hand appeared.

This one was even more massive than the one which had nearly killed Lu Tianlei, and caused rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions as it descended toward Bai Xiaochun like a mountain.

Bai Xiaochun looked up, clenched his right hand into a fist, and then launched into the air, turning into a bright beam of light that shot directly toward the clawed ghost hand.

Silver light spread out in all directions as the power of his fist caused heaven and earth to shake. Bai Xiaochun's Undying Skin erupted with power, causing the ghost hand to tremble, and then begin to break apart just like the previous one!

Ghostfang's face flickered as he performed more incantation gestures, sending a third, a fourth, and a fifth finger attack out in quick succession.

In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun was facing four enormous clawed ghost hands.

Although all of this takes some time to describe, it happened in the briefest of instants. As the four ghost hands bore down on Bai Xiaochun, the Outer Sect disciples cried out in alarm, and even the Inner Sect disciples were left completely shaken.

On the balcony, the sect leader and the others shot to their feet, and Li Qinghou's eyes glittered. However, a moment later, they all realized that there was no need to intervene and rescue Bai Xiaochun.

In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, a huge boom echoed out as the ghost hands all landed on Bai Xiaochun, and the arena floor was reduced to nothing more than dust. The resultant cloud of dust that filled the air obscured Bai Xiaochun.

However, a moment later, a flicker like that of lightning could be seen in the dust as a figure shot out at top speed toward Ghostfang.

"Throat Crushing Grasp!" The only thing that could be seen see was flickering, silver light. Then, two fingers appeared directly in front of Ghostfang, filling him with an intense sensation of deadly crisis, the likes of which he had never felt before. He let out a hoarse shout, causing mist to surge up around him in the form of a defensive shield. At the same time, he fell back in retreat.

However, at that very moment, a powerful gravitational force erupted from Bai Xiaochun's two fingers. Not only was Ghostfang prevented from retreating, he was actually pulled toward the fingers.

When his defensive shield made contact with the fingers, it was crushed in the briefest of moments. None of his subsequent defensive measures did anything, not even the three bucklers he summoned. The first was instantly shattered, the second cracked into two pieces, and the third, despite remaining whole, was sent spinning away.

None of them could stop Bai Xiaochun!

The two fingers crushed anything in their path as easily as a hammer destroying ice. Ghostfang let out a miserable shriek, and shockingly, more than thirty percent of his hair turned white as he paid a shocking price to suddenly become transparent and disappear! Bai Xiaochun's two fingers passed directly through him, clasping down onto nothing but air.

A boom rang out as the air was crushed and shattered. A moment later, Ghostfang appeared some distance away from Bai Xiaochun, coughing up blood, his face wrinkled as if with age.

Panting, he said, "You forced me to use one of my life-saving magics, Bai Xiaochun.... I underestimated you!"

Instead of retreating, he actually seemed like he wanted to continue fighting. However, he was unsure of what divine ability had just been used against him, something that seemed to vastly exceed the battle prowess of the Qi Condensation stage.

Blood oozed out of the corners of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he stood there, wok cracked, skin covered with lacerations; even his aura was in chaos.

He had managed to stand up to five of the clawed ghost hands, but it had been very difficult. Without his Undying Skin being at the silver level, he would surely have been defeated.

Sadly, his last powerful attack had been avoided.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0096 awe-chapter-97

As of this moment, all of the disciples in the audience were staring blankly at the arena floor, their minds spinning, tsunamis of shock battering their hearts.

The south bank audience were thunderstruck. It was only in this moment that they finally realized why it was that Bai Xiaochun had managed to survive his fight with the Luochen Clan, and why he had been named a Prestige disciple!

“He’s actually... so strong!!” That was what all of the shocked disciples were thinking.

As for the north bank audience, their minds were in shambles.

Up on the balcony, the various elders all had bright gleams in their eyes as they mentally replayed the moment in which Bai Xiaochun struck that incredible blow, and the silver light which covered him.

“That’s the Undying Live Forever Technique! He’s reached the silver level!”

“That final blow was... the Throat Crushing Grasp!”

“I can’t believe that someone actually succeeded in cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique! It's virtually impossible! It’s an extraordinary technique, but sadly, its origins are a complete mystery, and furthermore, our version is incomplete....”

“I very much look forward to seeing if one of these two end up in the Legacy Echelon years from now!” The sect leader sighed. Such an event would only come after many years had passed. Reaching the Legacy Echelon was a very, very difficult matter. Even the mere thought of it caused him to look over at Li Qinghou. “Reach the Gold Core stage within two sixty-year-cycles, and that puts you in the Legacy Echelon,” he thought. “Our only hope for this generation... is Li Qinghou.”

Back on the arena floor, Ghostfang waved his hand, causing a green light to flow out, which transformed into an enormous greenwood banner, which he stuck into the ground next to him.

Then he sat down cross-legged, his eyes shining with the desire to fight.

“Bai Xiaochun, you are worthy. I will now open my seals!

“First level seal, open!” With that, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he pushed his finger down onto his forehead. A droning sound could be heard, and he trembled visibly as numerous streams of black light exploded out from inside of him. As they swirled around, he grew slightly larger, and a powerful aura erupted out, an aura which reached well into the Foundation Establishment stage.

“Sixth finger! Seventh! Eighth! Ninth! Tenth!”

Roaring, he waved his finger at Bai Xiaochun five times in a row, each time unleashing greater power than before. Heaven and earth trembled as five gigantic ghost hands began to descend from above, radiating shocking levels of energy.

Gasps could be heard from the audience.

“Is that... still a Qi Condensation magical technique? It looks like something from Foundation Establishment!!”

“This is the first time I've seen a Qi Condensation disciple unleash magic as shocking as that!”

“Only some type of secret magic could do such a thing! All secret magics in the Spirit Stream Sect can be used to some extent in the Qi Condensation stage!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. The pressure he felt from Ghostfang now felt even greater than before, and even beyond what he had faced in his fight with the crown prince of the Luochen Clan.

Of course, this was not a battle to the death. Back in his fight with the Luochen Clan... his life had been on the line!

Although he wasn’t fighting for his life right now, he still didn't want to lose. If there was no chance for him to take first place, then he wouldn’t even try, but now that first place was in sight... he wanted it!

Not for the supposed reputation it would earn him, but because of the approval he knew he would see in Li Qinghou’s eyes.

That was enough of a reason for him!

Eyes bloodshot, he waved his sleeve and performed an incantation gesture. Spiritual power surged within him, and a violet cauldron appeared. Then a second, a third... until five cauldrons hovered around him!

In the blink of an eye, five violet cauldrons materialized and shot toward the five clawed ghost hands. Simultaneously, the Golden Crow Sword appeared in a streak of golden light, summoning the golden crow, which let out a piercing cry as it shot toward Ghostfang!

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun shot forward, ignoring the ghost hands as he closed in on Ghostfang himself.

A boom rang out as the five violet cauldrons slammed into the five ghost hands. The cauldrons shattered. As for the clawed ghost hands, they faded a bit, but continued to close in on Bai Xiaochun at top speed. Then rumbling could be heard as the Divine Crane Shield appeared, and an enormous crane materialized around Bai Xiaochun.

When the ghost hands slammed into it, cracking sounds could be heard as they faded even more. The crane let out a piercing shriek, vanishing and returning to the shield itself, incapable of providing any further defense.

The five ghost hands proceeded unhindered to slam into Bai Xiaochun. However, just before they touched him, black light spread out and covered him, the result of the life-saving magic given to him by Li Qinghou.

When the clawed ghost hands hit the black light, they couldn’t stand up to its power. Deafening booms rang out as they were destroyed. Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood, and yet, suffered no other injuries. The black light faded, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered as he closed in on Ghostfang with the Golden Crow Sword. By this point, he was a mere fifteen meters away, and the Golden Crow Sword was only three meters from Ghostfang.

Ghostfang’s face flickered as he grabbed his greenwood banner and leaped backward. The Golden Crow Sword sped past his shoulder, slicing a wound open as it passed. Blood sprayed out, but Ghostfang ignored the pain. Hair disheveled and eyes bloodshot, he waved the banner and said, “Second level seal, open! Ten Ghosts… Haunt the Night!”

Terrifying howling noises rose up from the greenwood banner as two scaled ghost arms ripped the banner open. Out stepped a vicious green ghost with a long horn sticking out of its head and a ferocious grin on its face.

The sky suddenly darkened as sinister black clouds roiled into existence, almost as if night had fallen.

More vicious ghosts emerged from within the banner, a total of ten. Each one was bursting with energy equivalent to the great circle of Qi Condensation. As they began to charge Bai Xiaochun, his face flickered, and his heart began to pound. Even if he were stronger than his current level, there was no way he could fight ten ghosts who had battle prowess equivalent to the great circle of Qi Condensation.

Ghostfang breathed a sigh of relief. He couldn’t keep his second seal open for too long, and knew that all of his hopes for victory rested with these ten ghosts.

He stood there behind them, eying Bai Xiaochun coldly.

The battle between these two had been like a fight between a dragon and a tiger, and provoked cries of alarm and surprise from the audience. Now everyone could see exactly how powerful Ghostfang was, and the north bank audience was in high spirits. As for the south bank disciples, they were starting to get very nervous.

Bai Xiaochun was in full retreat as the ten ghosts spread out to surround him. Their cultivation bases were shocking, so powerful that not even the Golden Crow Sword could defend against them.

“Ten Ghosts Haunt the Night....” Suddenly, he looked up into the sky at the black clouds that made everything seem like night. Eyes flickering thoughtfully, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the Golden Crow Sword shot up toward the clouds. Apparently, Bai Xiaochun wanted to slash the clouds open so that the arena floor was no longer covered in night.

Ghostfang frowned slightly in response to Bai Xiaochun’s quick reaction. The best time to use this divine ability of his was at night, when it was virtually invincible. During the daytime, it was definitely possible to break it... unless he unleashed the Hundred Ghosts level.

“That cloud cover is beyond ordinary,” Ghostfang thought with a cold smile. “Only spirit enhanced treasures could possibly break it. Even if Bai Xiaochun finds a weakness, he's definitely not strong enough to pierce it open!”

It was at that point that the Golden Crow Sword pierced into the clouds, and rumbling echoed out. The clouds seemed to weaken, but strangely, sucked in the Golden Crow Sword, making it impossible to use again.

Getting nervous, Bai Xiaochun fell back again and pulled out two spirit enhanced flying swords. After sending them shooting up, they were also sucked into the clouds, although the clouds weakened further in the process.

Ghostfang’s jaw dropped. “Spirit enhanced treasures...?”

Next, before Ghostfang could even react, Bai Xiaochun suddenly produced eight more flying swords, all of which glittered with silver light as they shot up into the sky. Each and every one had a twofold spirit enhancement, and when they pierced into the cloud cover, it was weakened so much that rays of sunlight began to shine down, which caused the ten ghosts to shriek and dodge to the side.

Ghostfang's eyes went wide, and despite his level of willpower, couldn't help but let out a cry of shock. "S-so... so many!! Dammit, he can't have more than that, can he?!"

He wasn't the only person to react in such a way. The Outer Sect disciples from both the south and north banks all looked on with disbelieving eyes, and began to shout aloud.

"Heavens! How many spirit enhanced items does Bai Xiaochun have?!"

"Most disciples have trouble getting their hands on a single one. But he... has so many? Who enhanced them for him!?"

As people shouted out in surprise, Big Fatty Zhang was there in the crowd. However, he was more toward the back, and although he had been cheering for Bai Xiaochun, nobody had really paid any attention to him.

Now that he saw Bai Xiaochun using all of the flying swords, he lifted his chin loftily and said, "All of them were enhanced by me, Big Fatty Zhang!"

Even as Ghostfang tried to convince himself that Bai Xiaochun couldn't possibly have any more spirit enhanced items, Bai Xiaochun was delighted to discover that his swords were actually affecting the cloud cover. Immediately, he began to laugh out loud, and then produced two more flying swords. Silver light flashed as the spirit enhanced swords shot toward the clouds.

"Impossible!!" Ghostfang shouted in shock.

Rumbling sounds emanated from the clouds, which could not stand up to so many attacks by spirit enhanced swords. As sunlight spilled down, the ten ghosts screamed shrilly as they retreated back into the banner.

As that happened, Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily and began to close in on Ghostfang, building up power to unleash the Throat Crushing Grasp again.

An extremely unsightly expression appeared on Ghostfang’s face. Just as he was about to fight back, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he trembled. The side-effects of opening his second seal were now beginning to affect him. An unyielding expression on his face, he began to fall back as fast as possible.

“I concede!” he said through gritted teeth. He knew that in his current state, he wasn’t a match for Bai Xiaochun. Even still, he refused to acknowledge that he had truly been defeated. If Bai Xiaochun hadn’t possessed so many spirit enhanced treasures, he would never have been able to defeat Ghosts Haunt the Night.

Furthermore, if they had actually been fighting at night, he would have been defeated even more handily.

In the moment that Ghostfang conceded, the shocked disciples of the south bank immediately broke out into excited cheering.

“We won! The south bank won!!”

“Hahaha! We took first place! We got two people into the top three!!”

“We've gotten our revenge! Sect Uncle Bai is invincible!!” The south bank disciples were cheering up a storm, while the north bank disciples looked on bitterly. They could all see that the problem wasn’t Ghostfang being weak, it was Bai Xiaochun... having too many treasures.

“How come you have so many spirit enhanced treasures, Bai Xiaochun!?” Ghostfang asked, wanting to know why he had been defeated in such a way.

“My Elder Brother Big Fatty Zhang is a spirit enhancement genius,” Bai Xiaochun responded proudly. “The kind you only see once in a thousand... no, once in ten thousand years! All of those treasures I used were gifts from him. If you want to assign blame, blame the fact that my Elder Brother is a genius of spirit enhancement.” The south bank disciples cried out in shock, with the commotion being especially loud among the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples.

“Big Fatty Zhang? Who is this god-like individual?”

“Big Fatty Zhang. He’s... he’s a Violet Cauldron Peak disciple!”

“He's the apprentice of the peak lord.... Heavens, he usually keeps such a low profile. Who could ever have guessed that he was so incredible!?!?”

Excited, Big Fatty Zhang threw his head back and roared at the top of his lungs, “I am Big Fatty Zhang!! All of the flying swords used by Bai Xiaochun were enhanced by me!!”

Big Fatty Zhang's excited words echoed out for everyone to hear. Even the sect leader and the others on the balcony turned to look at him curiously.

As pandemonium continued to grip the crowd, Bai Xiaochun stood there blinking. Finally, he lifted his chin and waved his sleeve, looking like the ultimate hero. Turning slowly, he walked off of the arena floor.

“Ai. Life is a lonely thing. With the snap of a finger, I reduced all the Chosen to ashes ....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0097 awe-chapter-98

The Chosen battles... had caused many eyes to be focused on Big Fatty Zhang, even those of the sect leader.

“The power of will!!” he said, expression very serious. The other peak lords looked surprised, and their eyes began to shine.

Xu Meixiang had taken Lu Tianlei away to begin treating his injuries, but if she were present, she would have been incredulous.

Sounding very happy, the sect leader said, “Junior Sister Meixiang rarely takes this chubby kid out in public. But now his future prospects are clear. His spirit enhancement has developed his will. With a strong will and a strong spirit, this kid is the kind that must be trained well!”

The peak lord from Green Crest Peak smiled and said, “Now that you mention it, his friend, that girl who also came from the Ovens, Qingrou, is actually quite impressive. She might not measure up to Tianyou, but she has her own special destiny. She seems connected to Green Crest Peak’s mountain defense sword. She’s currently seeking enlightenment in Green Crest Cave, and if things go well, Green Crest Peak will soon have another spirit sword guardian!”

As the south bank audience went wild, the north bank disciples simply sat there silently while the sect leader formally announced the results.

Bai Xiaochun had taken first place in the joint south and north bank Chosen battles! He would now join the Inner Sect!

As a reward, he could visit Heavenhorn Pavilion on Mount Daoseed to select a precious treasure of the Qi Condensation level!

Furthermore, he would be given the chance to enter the Spirit Stream Sect’s arcane pocket realm, where he could gain enlightenment of a divine ability! Of course, to take advantage of such an opportunity in the Qi Condensation stage would be a bit of a waste. Any disciple who took first place in the Chosen battles would almost certainly reach Foundation Establishment. That would be the time to use such a chance.

The final reward was a prize of 10,000 spirit stones!

Next, Zheng Yuandong formally bestowed the top ten disciples with the title of Chosen, and promoted them into the Inner Sect. Gradually, the crowds began to depart.

The north bank disciples weren’t very happy, but the south bank disciples were bursting with excitement. As for the Chosen, they had mixed expressions on their faces. Ghostfang watched Bai Xiaochun walk off, and sighed. Deep in his heart, he still didn’t believe himself to have truly lost.

As for the other north bank Chosen such as the Gongsun siblings and Xu Song, they left with clenched fists, all of them intent on returning to their respective mountain peaks and going into secluded meditation!

Zhou Xinqi still had a hard time believing what she had seen, and looked a bit puzzled as she watched Bai Xiaochun leaving. Even more incredulous than her was Shangguan Tianyou.

He stood there despondently, ignored by virtually everyone. His underhanded attack on Bai Xiaochun was something that would forever be etched into the hearts of the south bank disciples.

Chuckling bitterly, he clenched his hands into fists.

“We're only in Qi Condensation. Just wait until Foundation Establishment.... I’ll definitely be number one in that stage. I’ll outdo Bai Xiaochun and Ghostfang both!” Filled with determination, he held his head high with pride as he shot off in a beam of light.

Gradually, everyone left the arena. The Chosen battles were over. However, the true fight between all the Chosen had only just begun.

Everyone on both the south and north bank knew Bai Xiaochun’s name, although on the north bank, it became a taboo word!

He was the archenemy of the north bank, a shameless villain who had brought humiliation to all the disciples there!

That was especially true of Beihan Lie. After being taken away by his master, he immediately went into secluded meditation, not daring to show his face in public. As for his huge dog, he released it somewhere on the north bank, relinquishing ownership of it for all time.

Although the Nightstalker Beast was extraordinary, nobody could control it, and soon it became like a wild dog. Occasionally, people would catch glimpses of it roaming around near the four mountain peaks of the north bank....

Countless north bank disciples went back and madly devoted themselves to cultivation. All of them swore oaths that one day, they would take the stain of humiliation inflicted by Bai Xiaochun and wash it clean with blood!

The disciples even formed an organization called the Slay Xiaochun Society, which was devoted to eradicating Bai Xiaochun!

Because of what had occurred in the Chosen battles, Big Fatty Zhang became incredibly famous. Everyone was completely shocked by the sheer number of spirit enhanced treasures of his that Bai Xiaochun had used in his final fight with Ghostfang.

Big Fatty Zhang became a Chosen on Violet Cauldron Peak, and soon, countless disciples began to visit him, hoping to become friends and thus have access to spirit enhanced items.

Big Fatty Zhang was very pleased by this, but didn’t let it show. He wouldn't perform spirit enhancements for just anyone. Of course, the more he acted like that, the more people fawned over him. Eventually Xu Meixiang called him over to make a detailed inquiry. She almost couldn’t believe what she heard, and was even more shocked to sense the power of will within him!

In the end, she forbade him from performing spirit enhancements for anyone else, at least not until he could perform a fivefold spirit enhancement for Bai Xiaochun.

Big Fatty Zhang found that a bit odd, but nodded in agreement nonetheless.

“Spirit enhancement is the most mysterious of arts,” she thought. “Perhaps Bai Xiaochun and Big Fatty Zhang have some special connection.... If they help each other, the results could be shocking.” Xu Meixiang watched thoughtfully as Big Fatty Zhang left. She didn’t look into the matter any further. In the Spirit Stream Sect, everyone had their own destiny, and greedily attempting to take advantage of others could harm the foundation of the sect. Such actions were strictly forbidden. Besides, Bai Xiaochun had a unique status that made him especially difficult to deal with.

The Spirit Stream Sect had remained strong for ten thousand years, and one of the reasons was that hard and fast rule.

A few days later, Bai Xiaochun got his Inner Sect uniform and command medallion. Furthermore, he received orders from Elder Xu, who led the Inner Sect on Fragrant Cloud Peak, to pack his bags and leave the courtyard residence that had been his home for the past few years.

Inner Sect disciples all received immortal's caves filled with strong spiritual energy!

The so-called immortal's caves were like heavenly abodes that were worlds unto their own. Having taken first place in the Chosen battles, Bai Xiaochun had his pick of the available immortal's caves, and naturally, he picked the best one. It was on the rear side of Fragrant Cloud Peak, at the end of a narrow little path, a quiet place filled with strong spiritual energy.

The cave itself had five rooms, with nightpearls inlaid in the ceilings that filled the place with soft light. There was a large main hall with a little hot spring in the middle. Warm water bubbled up, forming a small pond, within which a few hot spring fish swam lazily about.

The immortal's cave was simple but impressive. It had a medicine concocting workshop, secluded meditation facilities, a spirit plant nursery, and a place set aside for practicing magics.

Also included were two puppets with cultivation bases equivalent to the fifth level of Qi Condensation, who cared for day-to-day affairs for Bai Xiaochun. Every room in the immortal's cave had a spell formation, as did the main hall. Once activated, the stone walls and ceilings would vanish to reveal an image of the sky above. At night, it was even possible to see the moon and the stars. There was a larger spell formation that covered the entire immortal's cave, and once activated, not even an early Foundation Establishment cultivator would be able to break in.

This immortal's cave would even be suitable for a Foundation Establishment cultivator, and in fact, it was one of the nicest in all of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Bai Xiaochun looked very pleased, and his heart nearly burst with joy. Now that he thought about it, his previous courtyard residence had been far too simple and crude. As he saw Elder Xu off, Elder Xu repeatedly reminded him to go to the Inner Sect Spirit Pavilion to find the technique Li Qinghou had suggested for him. Finally, Elder Xu left.

After he was sure Elder Xu was gone, Bai Xiaochun stripped naked and jumped into the pond, where he floated there, sighing contentedly. Occasionally a fish would float by and nibble a bit on his skin. It was a feeling the likes of which he had never experienced before in his life.

“It’s too bad Du Lingfei isn’t here in the sect. Having her here to bathe with would be great.” Sighing, he thought of Hou Xiaomei, and then smiled radiantly. As of that moment, he vowed to find an opportunity to get her to come over and join him in the hot spring to look at the stars.

After some deep thought, he came to the conclusion that his previous way of thinking had been far too limited. “As a man of ambition, I should get Hou Xiaomei and Du Lingfei to come join me in the hot spring at the same time.”

The next morning, Bai Xiaochun woke early and left his immortal’s cave. Strolling along the little mountain path, he noticed another immortal's cave not too far off.

It was only a few meters away, located almost directly across from his own. It had its spell formation activated, and appeared to be occupied. Bai Xiaochun studied it curiously for a few minutes before looking away.

As he strolled along, he realized that there weren’t any Outer Sect disciples to be seen, only a few Inner Sect disciples.

Most people weren’t out and about, but rather, secluded in meditation. The only time they would come out would be to go on sect missions. Of course, whenever Bai Xiaochun did see someone, he would clear his throat and strike a pose. After looking shocked for a moment, the Inner Sect disciple would inevitably greet him as Sect Uncle Bai.

Being addressed in such a manner as he went along lifted his spirits. He swaggered along through Fragrant Cloud Peak until he reached the Inner Sect's Spirit Pavilion. That was a location where the Inner Sect disciples practiced their various techniques and abilities.

Whenever a disciple was promoted to the Inner Sect, they would be able to acquire one of the sect’s techniques at no cost. As soon as Bai Xiaochun arrived, the disciple in charge clasped hands in greeting. Feeling more pleased than ever, Bai Xiaochun clapped his shoulder and then went to look at the options he had in terms of techniques.

“Sever Heaven and Earth?

“Waterflame Theorem!

“Nine Heavens Earth Destruction Incantation?”

After examining the options available, the techniques started to blur together, and he had no idea which one he should pick. They all seemed incredible. Eventually, he found the technique Li Qinghou had suggested that he cultivate.

“Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture?” He picked up the jade slip and sent some spiritual power into it. After examining the introduction, his eyes went wide, and his scalp began to tingle.

“Everyone is bound by shackles. Whether in terms of cultivation base or the fleshly body, there are life essence shackles which cannot be broken.... I have created this technique, suitable for cultivation in the Qi Condensation stage, not to break through the shackles, but to gain enlightenment of them!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and thought back to the black-robed man who had saved his life, the one who called himself the gravekeeper. The words in the introduction of this scripture reminded him of the words that man had spoken.

“The five volumes of the Undying Codex. Break through the five shackles of mortality. The five volumes of the Live Forever Codex. Break through the five seals of eternity!”

He suddenly had the feeling that this Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture was anything but ordinary. However, after further examination, he frowned. Based on the description, there didn’t seem to be anything particularly astonishing about it. In fact, it didn't even seem to measure up to some of the other powerful magical techniques he’d just looked at. After a moment though, his expression brightened as he realized that it dovetailed perfectly with the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, and also increased the chances of reaching Foundation Establishment!

Bai Xiaochun had been dreaming of reaching Foundation Establishment for years now, and merely thinking about it would leave his heart pounding.

The Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture only had three levels. The first led to the ninth level of Qi Condensation, the second led to the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation. The final level led to... Foundation Establishment!

At the pinnacle, the fleshly body would have the strength of dragons and mammoths, and one’s spiritual power would form a huge sea. Best of all was that after creating such a matchless foundation, once one reached Foundation Establishment, it would be much easier to learn just about any divine ability, without worrying about an incompatibility problem.

It was something extraordinary within the ordinary!

“This is the one for me!” Whether because of the fact that the introduction mentioned shackles, or that the scripture could help him reach Foundation Establishment, it left Bai Xiaochun’s heart pounding. Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming

Scripture in hand, he left the Inner Sect Spirit Pavilion and headed back toward his immortal's cave.

Just when he was almost there, the gate of the immortal's cave across from him opened, and a young woman walked out. As soon as she saw him, her jaw dropped, and she tried to duck back inside, but wasn’t fast enough.

“Eee? Sect Niece Xinqi!” He was immediately elated. Ever since the Chosen battles, Zhou Xinqi had kept her distance from him. He’d wanted to get her to address him as Sect Uncle, but had never found the chance. Who would have thought that he was now living right across from her!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0098 awe-chapter-99

An unsightly expression appeared on Zhou Xinqi’s face. Never had she imagined that she would pick the immortal's cave right across from Bai Xiaochun’s. She was well aware that back in the Outer Sect, Bai Xiaochun had loved to go around making everyone call him Sect Uncle. Unable to stomach the thought, she’d always avoided him.

But now here he was, standing right in her path.

Taking a deep breath, she coolly said, “Sect... Sect Uncle Bai!” Then, without so much as looking at him, she leapt onto her blue flying silk and flew up into the air. Her beauty made her seem almost like a female immortal, and so she often flew around in this fashion to avoid the toadies and sycophants. It was because such behavior that she seemed relatively distant and unapproachable.

Bai Xiaochun happily tucked his hands behind his back like a member of the senior generation as he watched Zhou Xinqi fly away. He didn’t mind her attitude; all he wanted was to be called Sect Uncle Bai.

After she left, he returned to his own immortal's cave, feeling very much like he had reached a milestone on this day. Back inside, he pulled out the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture and began to take a closer look. As he did, he thought back to how powerful Ghostfang had been in their fight, and suddenly his expression turned very serious.

“How does Ghostfang practice cultivation anyway? He’s so incredible.... Especially those ghosts of his. He controls them almost like battle beasts. It sure would be great if I could have a beast of my own.” Thinking back to the fight, the lingering fear caused his heart to tremble. Suddenly, he remembered something, and slapped his bag of holding to produce a wooden box.

“The Beastbirth Seed.... If I ever have a chance to go to the north bank, then maybe... I could get a beast of my very own. Furthermore, such a beast would have been created by me and me alone!” After thinking about the miraculous Beastbirth Seed, his heart began to pound in excitement. A long moment passed, and then he shook his head. Suppressing his excitement, he put the box away.

“I hate fighting and killing more than anything else. I need to focus on getting to the great circle of Qi Condensation as soon as possible. That way I can step into Foundation Establishment.” With those thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun set to work cultivating the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture.

Although the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture could be used to perfect the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, their cultivation techniques were completely different. Instead of depicting various postures to assume, the description in the scripture had three illustrations. The first depicted an enormous, primeval mammoth. It seemed preeminently powerful, strong enough to crush a mountain. The idea of such incredible fleshly body power left Bai Xiaochun immediately shaken. All of his flesh and blood seemed to thrum just from the picture alone, as if it possessed a strange power of its own....

The second illustration depicted an azure dragon, twisting and turning among the clouds, which partially obscured it. When Bai Xiaochun looked at it, it seemed to brand itself into his mind. All of a sudden, he could picture the image mentally. And yet, as soon as that happened, the image faded away, and his mind filled with rumbling sounds. At the same time, the spiritual power in his body seemed to surge out of control, swirling through him painfully. He took back control, and a cold sweat broke out all over him.

“What kind of cultivation technique is this!?” Taking a deep breath, he declined to look at the third illustration. Instead, he went back to reexamine the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture mnemonic.

After a bit of time, he looked up, his eyes flickering with enlightenment.

“Cultivation via visualization!” he murmured.

It was a very mysterious form of cultivation. According to the level one had reached, one would observe various illustrations, and thus cultivate oneself. Presumably, the three illustrations contained some mysterious energy of heaven and earth that would affect the body upon observing them.

To a disciple who had just joined the sect, such a method would not be very suitable for cultivation. Furthermore, attempting it would surely be harmful to the body. But after reaching the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and having built up a significant amount of spiritual power, it would then be possible to cultivate it.

After pondering for a bit, Bai Xiaochun decided not to set his aims too high. He started with the first illustration, looking at it until he began to tremble visibly, and his qi and blood were flowing at top speed. As he did, his skin began to shine with silver light because of his Undying Skin. Gradually, Bai Xiaochun got the feeling… that when combined with his

Undying Skin, the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture could make him significantly stronger.

Time went by. During the half month which passed, Bai Xiaochun occasionally concocted some medicine while simultaneously cultivating the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture. Slowly but surely, his cultivation grew. Furthermore, the silver color of his Undying Skin grew deeper. Clearly, he was making progress with both.

Soon, he realized that because of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture, he didn’t even need to cultivate his Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art to improve his Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning. It was naturally advancing by leaps and bounds.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked by this, but after thinking about it for a while, came to a conclusion about what was happening.

“The Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture is a utility technique. With its help, all other divine abilities and magical techniques can become much more formidable. As for the shackles that the introduction mentioned....” After some more thought, he waved his finger, causing an illusory violet cauldron to appear.

It looked very realistic, was larger than the cauldrons from before, and exerted formidable pressure. Bai Xiaochun could even sense that if he wished, he could disperse the cauldron and draw the resulting spiritual power back into his body.

With a thought, he did just that, and the spiritual energy rushed back inside of him, replenishing most of what he had wasted to use the divine ability.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted. Being able to easily unleash and retract the cauldron was a hallmark of making significant progress with Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning.

“With the help of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture, I actually might be able to develop that Human Controlling Grand Magic I thought of before!” Even in his moment of joy, his expression suddenly flickered. Looking over at the main gate of his immortal's cave, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. The door faded away, becoming invisible from his perspective, allowing him to see outside.

It was evening, and he could see over a hundred people flying in his direction from off in the distance. There were a few dozen who were faster than the others that reached his immortal's cave first.

Among the group was a young man with handsome features. Unfortunately, his face was somewhat pale, and his eyes were bloodshot, as if with madness. He seemed unstable, as if the slightest poke might cause him to rave dementedly.

Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized the young man. He was none other than... Beihan Lie from the north bank!

The few dozen people next to him all had cultivation bases which exceeded that of the ordinary ninth level of Qi Condensation. There were even ten or so who were in the great circle of Qi Condensation. Shockingly, the rest of the large group which was currently catching up all were in the ninth level of Qi Condensation!

Next to Beihan Lie was a tall, muscular man who looked like a miniature mountain. His features were very similar to Beihan Lie’s, and he had long, flowing hair. He stood there next to Beihan Lie, unmoving, bursting with an energy that shocked even Bai Xiaochun.

His aura seemed like something past the Qi Condensation stage, and he was surrounded by an invisible vortex that constantly gathered the surrounding energy of heaven and earth.

“Over a hundred Inner Sect disciples... all in the ninth and tenth levels of Qi Condensation!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he felt his scalp tingling. Without a moment of hesitation, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, fully activating the cave’s spell formation.

Every person in this group of over a hundred were Inner Sect disciples. More precisely, they were from Sunset Peak, and had come here to get revenge for their Junior Brother Beihan Lie.

The actions of this large group had attracted the attention of the Inner Sect disciples from Fragrant Cloud Peak. Zhou Xinqi was the first to emerge from her own immortal's cave, and soon, large numbers of Inner Sect disciples were flying over from different locations. As they surrounded the group of a hundred, people soon recognized the burly man standing next to Beihan Lie.

“Spiritual energy transformed into a vortex. That’s... that’s an energy which exceeds Qi Condensation. That’s close to Foundation Establishment! He’s half a step into Foundation Establishment!”

“That’s the number one Inner Sect disciple from Sunset Peak, Beihan Feng!”

As everyone cried out in surprise and alarm, Bai Xiaochun sat there inside his immortal's cave, listening in with the aid of the spell formation. Soon, his eyes widened even further.

“Fellow disciples,” Beihan Feng said, “I can’t blame the south bank for winning the Chosen battles. In fact, I offer my congratulations. My purpose in coming here today has nothing to do with matters between the south and north banks. This is a private matter of the Beihan Clan. The shameless and despicable Bai Xiaochun inflicted a wound upon my clan’s Junior Brother that will never be healed. As his Elder Brother, how could I simply sit and do nothing!?

“I have come here today to take compensation for my Junior Brother!” Before any of the Fragrant Cloud Peak Inner Sect disciples could even respond, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave.

“Bai Xiaochun, get the hell out here right now!”

Off to the side, tears appeared to be willing up in Beihan Lie’s bloodshot eyes. Staring at Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, he screamed hysterically, “Bai Xiaochun, get your ass out here!”

After the Beihan brothers’ words faded away, Bai Xiaochun spoke, sounding very wronged. “You people are so unreasonable! I gave you a chance to concede, didn’t I? You can’t blame me. When that big dog pounced on you, I even thought of trying to separate you two....”

“Shut UP, Bai Xiaochun!” Beihan Lie shrieked. “Get out here right now! My differences with you are irreconcilable!!” It was as if Bai Xiaochun had just opened up old wounds. Beihan Lie looked insane as he charged forward and slammed into the immortal's cave spell formation, seemingly intent on venting all of his pent up anger right then and there.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled in fear, but when he saw that the surface of the spell formation simply rippled a bit, and clearly wasn’t even close to breaking, he calmed down a bit. Vowing not to go out, he looked at the maddened Beihan Lie and sighed.

“Beihan Lie,” he called out. “Listen, it’s really not that big of a deal. Think about it. Now that you and that big dog have a much closer relationship, you could say that you’ve profited from disaster. Your beast controlling magic will probably be much more incredible from here on out....” Bai Xiaochun really did want to comfort Beihan Lie, and yet, before he could even finish speaking, Beihan Lie exploded in fury.

Beihan Feng’s face turned grim, and he took a step forward and smashed his palm into the spell formation. The formation trembled, and Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound.

By this point, the Fragrant Cloud Peak Inner Sect disciples couldn't stand idly by any longer. Although they weren’t very familiar with Bai Xiaochun, if they just stood around while a bunch of Sunset Peak disciples came and did whatever they wanted, the reputation of the Fragrant Cloud Peak Inner Sect would reach rock bottom.

“Stay your hand!” people began to shout.

The Fragrant Cloud Peak Inner Sect disciples flew forward to interfere, but before they could reach the immortal's cave, the Sunset Peak disciples blocked their paths. No deadly combat broke out; all the Sunset Peak disciples had to do was block the paths of the Fragrant Cloud Peak disciples long enough to give Beihan Feng some time.

The situation had already reached the point where open conflict was breaking out between the disciples of two mountain peaks, which was a violation of sect rules. However, Beihan Feng didn't care. The Beihan Clan was also a Prestige clan, so as long as he didn't actually kill anyone, he wouldn’t be punished very severely.

Rumbling could be heard as the spell formation began to twist and distort, and the ripples became more intense. However, this was not an ordinary immortal's cave. At first, Bai Xiaochun was worried, but soon he realized that nothing more was happening, and he relaxed.

However, being a good person, he really felt bad, and therefore decided to offer more advice about how to resolve the situation.

“You really can’t blame me.... How about you make dog stew out of that dog? That way everyone will know that Beihan Lie is manly and tough, and that he’ll eat anyone who pounces on him....” By that point, he realized that maybe he’d gone a bit too far, and was about to rein things back in when Beihan Lie coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. Hair completely disheveled, and almost completely out of his mind, he head-butted the spell formation.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart continued to pound in terror.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0099 awe-chapter-100

Bai Xiaochun felt more wronged than ever. Of course, he had long since come to the realization that whenever he needed to explain himself the most, he would go overboard and end up with egg on his face.

That wasn’t his intention nor his desire....

Bai Xiaochun’s explanation enraged Beihan Feng even further. He took a deep breath and waved his hand, causing pulses of black light to instantly form in his palm, which rapidly took the shape of a black crescent moon!

It was like the moon on the darkest of nights, and pulsed with a terrifying power that caused the heart to pound. Beihan Feng immediately shoved the moon toward the cave’s spell formation.

A boom echoed out, and the entire immortal's cave trembled. The spell formation shield outside distorted madly, and even seemed to be on the verge of cracking open in several places. However, in the end... it didn't break. In the blink of an eye, it was back to normal.

Even Beihan Feng gasped. The strength of this spell formation was giving him quite a headache. Gritting his teeth in fury, he was just about to continue attacking, when all of a sudden a cold snort could be heard from off in the distance.

“Beihan Feng, what are you doing? Stay your hand immediately!” The voice echoed like thunder, causing everything to shake, especially around Beihan Feng.

Trembling, even Beihan Lie ceased his ravings and fell back, heart pounding with fear.

The other Inner Sect disciples from Sunset Peak all retreated, faces falling. Looking up, they saw six beams of light flying through the air toward them, coming from Mount Daoseed.

The person who had just spoken was a middle-aged man, clad in a black robe. Fury filled his face, and he emanated a terrifyingly destructive aura.

Beihan Lie and Beihan Feng both murmured, “Master...”

Trembling, they clasped hands in greeting, and as for all the other Inner Sect disciples from Sunset Peak, they trembled and bowed their heads.

“Greetings, peak lord.”

The middle-aged man was none other than Beihan Lie’s Master, and the peak lord of Sunset Peak, who had glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun when he took Beihan Lie away from the Chosen battles.

“You ill-mannered curs!” he shouted. “Could you lose any more face than this? Get your asses off to the side, I’ll deal with you later! Everyone else, when you get back to the mountain, go into secluded meditation for three years as punishment!”

The Beihan siblings were trembling inwardly, unsure of exactly what was happening. They knew that their actions were a violation of sect rules, but they couldn’t imagine what had riled up their normally kind and gentle master. After all, back when the original incident had occurred, their Master had also been furious with Bai Xiaochun.

The Beihan siblings both assumed that something else must have happened that they weren’t aware of, and it left their hearts simmering with fear. Stepping back anxiously, they looked up at their Master floating there in midair, and their scalps began to tingle. Next to the peak lord of Sunset Peak were the three peak lords from the north bank. The peak lord from Irispetal Peak, the old woman, looked especially displeased as she stared down coldly at the Sunset Peak disciples.

In addition to the four peak lords from the north bank, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong was also present, as was another individual. That final individual wore a cool expression on his face, as if he didn’t care at all about the dispute playing out down below. He was... peak lord of Fragrant Cloud Peak, Li Qinghou.

Sinking feelings rose up in the hearts of the Sunset Peak disciples, and as for the Inner Sect disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak, they were completely taken aback. Everyone suddenly felt as if something completely odd were taking place.... The truth was that the north bank usually acted in domineering fashion. When situations similar to this had arisen in the past, and they had, the north bank would usually put the south bank in place quickly, even with big issues.

For them to be as enraged as they were today was a rare thing.

Sitting there in his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun was also shocked as he stared at the crowd outside.

Up in midair, the four north bank peak lords looked around at the scene down below. Then the old woman from Irispetal Peak cleared her throat and looked over at Li Qinghou.

“Peak Lord Li, about what we were discussing earlier, do you think...?”

Li Qinghou shook his head slightly and said, “Were it not for this little mishap, I would have agreed. But this complicates matters. You’re on your own now.”

With that he looked down at Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, a faint smile on his face.

“Er....” The old woman glanced over at the peak lord from Sunset Peak, looking a bit frustrated. The peak lord from Sunset Peak sighed, well aware that the trouble had been caused by disciples from his own mountain peak. That meant that he had to resolve the situation. Plastering a smile onto his face, he looked down at Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave.

“Junior Brother Xiaochun....” The words almost stuck in his mouth on the way out, but he managed to utter them. There was really no other choice. After some discussion, the north bank leadership had come to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun’s Aphrodisiac Pill was of critical importance to them. After some further study of the battle beasts which had been affected, they realized that the pill could even affect first order bloodlines.

That virtually drove them crazy. To the north bank, Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pill was almost like a holy relic. For various reasons, it was often difficult for some of the most powerful battle beasts to breed. There were even some first order bloodline beasts that would only go into heat once every few dozen years, or even once in a hundred years. That had been one of the most frustrating problems for the north bank for years on end.

A perfect example was the blue-eyed nethermoon ape, one of Sunset Peak’s two holy beasts. It was reaching the end of its lifespan, and still had not produced any offspring. It was a very critical situation.

But then Bai Xiaochun came along with his heaven-defying medicinal pill, which the four peak lords of the north bank were determined to acquire. Unfortunately for them, no amount of research led them to any description of the pill, and eventually they had no choice but to acknowledge that the pill... had been invented by Bai Xiaochun.

Afterward, they went to the sect leader and Li Qinghou to ask for it.

If it were any other disciple, even an Inner Sect disciple, all they would have to do was express their desire, and it would be fulfilled. There were many ways to force such a disciple to obediently hand over the pill formula. But Bai Xiaochun was different.... He was a Prestige disciple, and with that status, they had no choice but to offer him compensation of some sort.

Furthermore, without Bai Xiaochun’s consent, they would never be able to get the pill; forcing him to hand it over wasn’t an option.... The peak lords had all discussed the matter. and even agreed to some demands put forth by Li Qinghou, but before they could formalize the agreement, they got news that the Sunset Peak disciples had gone to cause trouble for Bai Xiaochun. The four peak lords from the north bank were instantly enraged.

Their biggest fear was that the Sunset Peak disciples wouldn’t control themselves, and end up offending Bai Xiaochun, thus making it even harder for them to acquire his medicinal pill.

And that was what had led to the current scene.

“Junior Brother Xiaochun, would you mind coming out to discuss something?” The peak lord from Sunset Peak did his best to seem as friendly as possible, keeping his voice calm and mild. The surrounding Sunset Peak disciples were shaking, and the Beihan siblings stood there wide-eyed, as mute as wooden chickens.

Inside his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun looked up for a moment in thought. What was happening outside seemed odd, to say the least, especially considering the look in Li Qinghou’s eyes. After a bit of thought, he couldn’t pinpoint exactly what was happening, but he had some speculations.

Finally, he spoke out in a bemoaning voice. “Those disciples of yours are too fierce. I just about lost my poor little life right now. I really don’t dare to go out....”

The heartrending way he spoke caused a cold wind to creep up the backs of the Beihan siblings. As for the other Sunset Peak disciples, their faces flickered with various emotions. They could all see how seriously the four peak lords seemed to take Bai Xiaochun, and how ingratiating they were being. After hearing Bai Xiaochun’s response, they could only imagine what fate was in store for them later.

The faces of Li Qinghou and Zheng Yuandong twitched slightly, and the peak lord from Sunset Peak turned to glare angrily at his disciples before shouting, “Apologize to your Sect Uncle Bai immediately!”

Looking like they were about to cry, the Sunset Peak disciples immediately clasped hands in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave and apologized.

In his grief and indignation, Beihan Lie was about to argue, but when he saw the fierce gleam in his Master’s eyes, he bowed his head and clasped his hands toward the immortal's cave.

“Sect Uncle Bai... I... I... I apologize!!”

Beihan Feng looked up sullenly at his Master, only to find the look in the man’s eyes growing sharper by the second. Heart trembling, veins bulging out on his forehead, he had no choice but to clasp hands and apologize.

Everyone was left shaking and staring in anger at the immortal's cave.

Trying very much to seem pleasant, the peak lord from Sunset Peak said, “Junior Brother Xiaochun, how was that?”

After a moment passed, an opening appeared in the spell formation, and Bai Xiaochun poked his head out. After looking around, he coughed dryly, then swaggered out, chin stuck up, looking as arrogant as ever.

“Let bygones be bygones. As a member of the senior generation, I won’t lower myself to bickering with these Sect Nephews.” With that, he swished his sleeve.

Beihan Lie stood there, eyes bloodshot, trembling violently. It looked as if he almost couldn’t restrain himself from leaping forward and punching Bai Xiaochun in the face. However, he didn’t dare to do such a thing. His Elder Brother Beihan Feng felt as if the world were spinning around him, as if he were about to go mad.

The looks in their eyes angered Bai Xiaochun, who glared over at them fiercely. *Now who’s afraid?* he thought. *Not me! I'm not afraid of anybody!*

The peak lord from Sunset Peak took a deep breath. Voice calm, he said, “Xiaochun, that aph... aphrodisiac pill of yours. Did you create it yourself?”

As the words left his mouth, the other peak lords from the north bank all looked down with anticipation gleaming in their eyes. The Beihan siblings’ minds reeled as they suddenly realized what was happening. In their bitterness, their hatred for Bai Xiaochun grew even stronger.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as he also came to realize what was happening. Sticking his chest out, he nodded grandly.

“That's right. That mighty medicinal pill was created using a secret formula that I myself created. No one except for me can concoct it!”

The four peak lords’ hearts swelled with joy, but they did their best to keep it from showing it on their faces. The peak lord from Sunset Peak smiled and nodded.

“Junior Brother Xiaochun,” he said in the most charming fashion possible, “the fact that you were able to create a pill formula like that at such a young age shows that you truly deserve to be called Chosen. That pill formula is of vital importance to the Spirit Stream Sect. How about I offer you 100,000 merit points for it? What do you say? Junior Brother Xiaochun, if you give that pill formula to the sect, it would be a great service. As a Prestige disciple, our sect is your home, you know.”

“Very well!” Bai Xiaochun replied, looking as though he’d just gone through hell and high water for the sect. With that, he began to explain the pill formula to the four delighted peak lords.

“The ingredients are Brightburst Seed, Paradise Wood Flower, spiritwinter bamboo, and... eee? What else? How come I can’t think of it? Could it be that I was so frightened just now that I forgot it?” Bai Xiaochun stood there frowning in thought.

Li Qinghou’s mouth twisted into a smile, and Zheng Yuandong shrugged helplessly. The four peak lords immediately realized what was happening, and smiled bitterly. The peak lord from Sunset Peak gritted his teeth and glared angrily over at his disciples.

As his gaze passed over them, the Sunset Peak disciples, including the Beihan siblings, all shivered.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0100 awe-chapter-101

The peak lord from Sunset Peak let out a cold harrumph and waved his right sleeve. Instantly, a powerful force descended onto the trembling Sunset Peak disciples. To them, it felt like mountains were crushing down on them, provoking miserable shrieks of pain.

The Beihan siblings felt even more pressure than the others. Their faces twisted in pain as their cultivation bases shook. Although their hatred for Bai Xiaochun surged, they couldn’t let any of it show on their faces.

“The lot of you had better get the hell back to the north bank this instant! Go into secluded meditation and don’t come out for ten years!” Although the peak lord of Sunset Peak was the one to take action, these were disciples from his mountain peak, so he was actually protecting them to some extent. Although he seemed to be acting harshly, he actually was sympathetic to their cause. With a wave of a sleeve, he caused a powerful wind to spring up that swept the Sunset Peak disciples off into the distance.

Looking back at Bai Xiaochun, he plastered another smile onto his face and slowly said, “Xiaochun, can you remember now?”

Bai Xiaochun knew that he shouldn’t push things too far. Things had already worked out quite well for him, so he cleared his throat in satisfaction.

“Hahaha! There’s no need for all of this, Elder Brother. As a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader, how could I lower myself to the same level as those raucous

Sect Nephews? What a bunch of naughty and mischievous kids.” The way Bai Xiaochun was acting as if he really were of the same generation as him caused the peak lord of Sunset Peak to grimace inwardly. Off to the side, Zheng Yuandong cleared his throat, and yet again wished he could take back his impulsive decision from years before.

Bai Xiaochun ignored the strange looks and puffed his chest out. Suppressing his feeling of pride, he prepared to finish explaining the pill formula.

At that point, Li Qinghou cleared his throat.

“Self-created pill formulas are precious to apothecaries,” he said coolly. “I wonder what else the north bank has prepared to offer in exchange for the formula.”

Bai Xiaochun blinked, and then stood there looking up at the four north bank peak lords.

The peak lords exchanged glances. Then the old woman from Irispetal Peak pulled out a green pearl filled with swirling mist. The magnetic pulses it emitted caused everything in the area to fill with ripples.

“This is a Protomagnetic Pearl,” she explained, “extracted from the heart of a Protomagnetic Giant. It even contains a bit of pure protomagnetic power. Used on its own, it can exert influence on all magical items within a certain area. Even to Foundation Establishment cultivators, it could be considered an extraordinary treasure. It would be difficult to use directly with only a Qi Condensation cultivation base. However, the Heavenhorn Pavilion happens to have a pair of magnetic spirit wings which, if used with the Protomagnetic Pearl, can be a powerful trump card for the Qi Condensation stage. With those wings, you could move so fast that even a

Foundation Establishment cultivator would have a hard time keeping up with you!

“Bai Xiaochun, having taken first place in the Chosen battles, you have the right to go select any treasure you want from the Chosen Pavilion. I’ve already taken the liberty of bringing the magnetic spirit wings to give you, along with the pearl, in exchange for the pill formula!” Even as the words left her mouth, the old woman waved her right hand, causing a set of green wings to appear. They, along with the pearl, flew over to float in front of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine. He could already move with incredible quickness, but if a Foundation Establishment cultivator really wanted to chase him down, he wouldn’t be able to outrun them. However, with the Protomagnetic Pearl and the magnetic spirit wings in combination with his speed, he could move unbelievably quickly. A life-saving object such as that was something that left his heart pounding.

“Furthermore,” the old woman continued with a stiff smile, “if luck is on your side, you might even be able to sense the manifestation of protomagnetic power. With that, you might be able to gain enlightenment of one of the top ten secret magics of the Spirit Stream Sect, Arcane Gravitational Repulsion!”

Bai Xiaochun licked his lips, and was just about to agree, when he suddenly stopped and looked over at Li Qinghou to see whether or not he approved. He had long since come to view Li Qinghou as one of his own relatives, and as such, would follow his lead. If Li Qinghou asked him to hand over the pill formula, then Bai Xiaochun would do so without hesitation.

To him, it was just a pill formula. To the north bank, it was like a holy relic. The truth was that Bai Xiaochun had lots of mystery pills in his bag of holding. In fact, he was already coming to the conclusion that he should start testing some of them out to see what wondrous effects they might have.

Li Qinghou glanced at the Protomagnetic Pearl and the magnetic spirit wings, then looked over at the four north bank peak lords. Eventually, his gaze came to rest on the old woman. Eyes glittering, he suddenly said, “Add in one of the other ten secret magics, the legacy of the north bank... the Waterswamp Kingdom!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong’s eyelids twitched.

“Impossible!” barked the peak lord of Sunset Peak angrily. He wasn’t the only one to disagree so vehemently. The peak lord of Archway Peak, the old man, glared at Li Qinghou with wide eyes.

“Li the Swindler appears again!” he sneered. “This is preposterous! The Waterswamp Kingdom is a legacy of the north bank, one of the top ten secret magics of the Spirit Stream Sect! It’s a top-rated technique on the same level as Ghosts Haunt the Night. There is absolutely no way we’ll give it to someone from the south bank!”

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the commotion above, and when he heard the peak lord from Archway Peak call Li Qinghou ‘Li the Swindler’, his jaw dropped.

“Is that supposed to be a joke?” Li Qinghou said coldly, flicking his sleeve. “A thousand years ago, Ghosts Haunt the Night was the legacy of Violet Cauldron Peak! You north bank people were happy to take it away in trade, but now that the south bank wants to trade for one of your legacy secret magics, you refuse? Ludicrous!”

The north bank’s peak lords were at a loss for words.

The peak lord of Ghostfang Peak was a partially translucent figure whose features couldn't be seen clearly. Sighing, he said, “Ghosts Haunt the Night is a perfect match for Ghostfang Peak. Besides, all that happened years ago. It’s not worth bringing up now. As far as the Waterswamp Kingdom goes, only a handful of people have ever successfully cultivated it, such as Patriarch Heavenwing, eight thousand years ago. Nobody else did anything with it other than produce some useless spirits. It's far too difficult. Peak Lord Li, why are you making things hard for us?”

"No Waterswamp Kingdom? No pill formula,” Li Qinghou said with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

Bai Xiaochun looked up in wonderment as the peak lords argued about the Waterswamp Kingdom. He had been under the impression that the offer was good enough already, although the Waterswamp Kingdom had always sounded interesting to him. At the same time, he had a new understanding of Li Qinghou. He was truly providing a shining example of how to rip people off. Could that be why he had been called ‘Li the Swindler’?

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun looked up at Li Qinghou, his eyes shining with admiration.

The north bank peak lords grumbled a bit, but in the end, agreed to the demands. Although their legacy secret magic was important, the medicinal pill was even more precious to them.

Moments later, Li Qinghou directed Bai Xiaochun to explain the complete formula for the Aphrodisiac Pill. Considering how important the pill was, the peak lords had long since sealed the area tight so that no one would be able to eavesdrop.

After Bai Xiaochun finished, the four peak lords took some time to examine the complete formula. Then they nodded, and the old woman from Irispetal Peak tossed a blue jade slip out toward Bai Xiaochun.

“The Waterswamp Kingdom is one of the most powerful of the ten secret magics. It is a divine ability which requires that you observe all types of beasts, and use that knowledge to create your own life essence spirit. Creating something from nothing, use the waterswamp to give it form, and summon a physical kingdom.

“For the past ten thousand years, everyone in the Spirit Stream Sect who has attempted to form a life essence spirit have produced simple, ordinary creatures. The only exceptions are Patriarch Heavenwing, who formed a domineering Heavenwing Gargoyle, as well as a few others like him.

“As for what type of life essence spirit is formed, that depends on the cultivator's understanding of spirit creatures. If a hundred people cultivated the Waterswamp Kingdom, a hundred different life essence spirits would result, some powerful, some weak. Some, like the Heavenwing Gargoyle, were shockingly powerful. Others produced nothing more than a bunny or a snake.

“Bai Xiaochun, you are a south bank disciple, and although there is competition between the north and south banks, we are all one family. I truly hope that you can succeed in cultivating your own life essence spirit.” Of course, despite her words, neither she nor any of the other three peak lords truly believed that Bai Xiaochun would have any measure of success in his cultivation of the Waterswamp Kingdom.

One reason for that, of course, was that the Waterswamp Kingdom required one to carefully observe and study a large number of spirit creatures, something that was virtually impossible to do on the south bank.

The transaction having been completed, the four peak lords from the north bank left along with Zheng Yuandong. Li Qinghou stayed behind. There was warmth in his eyes, but it was hidden beneath the sharp look that suddenly appeared.

He began by reprimanding Bai Xiaochun, telling him not to get arrogant over having taken first place in the Chosen battles. He then gave him some tips regarding his cultivation base, and finally gave him some more detailed information regarding the bracelet he’d given him, as well as the Protomagnetic Pearl.

“The Protomagnetic Pearl and the magnetic spirit wings will be of great use to you. Take the time to get familiar with how to use them. As for the Waterswamp Kingdom, it’s even more profound than the Magic Plant Arsenal we have here on Fragrant Cloud Peak. By the way, the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture was created by the founding patriarch of the sect, who led the campaign from the Heavenspan delta into the Lower Reaches. Make sure to study it well. It will make things much smoother for you when I teach you the Magic Plant Arsenal technique.” After giving some more exhortation, he turned to leave.

Profoundly moved, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and bowed deeply. However, he couldn’t hold back from curiously asking, “Uncle Li, um... why did they call you Li the Swindler? That was ridiculous!”

Li Qinghou stopped in mid-stride. Face darkening, he glared back at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Stop prying into the affairs of adults! Just remember that we apothecaries treasure the Dao of medicine. We don’t just give things out for free!”

With that, Li Qinghou left.

The more Bai Xiaochun thought about the matter, the more his eyes began to shine with praise. He was now almost completely convinced that acquiring medicinal pills from Li Qinghou must be quite a pain for most people....

After Li Qinghou left, Bai Xiaochun went back into his immortal's cave. Now that he knew the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture was created by the founding patriarch of the sect, his heart swelled with admiration.

“In the introduction to the scripture, the founding patriarch talked about shackles. I wonder what exactly those shackles are?” After some more thought, he came up with some ideas, but had no way to confirm whether or not they were correct. Shaking his head, he pulled out the Protomagnetic Pearl and, following the instructions given by Li Qinghou, put it into his mouth and swallowed it.

The pearl dissolved into mist which flowed through his body and came to rest in his dantian region. There was nothing uncomfortable about the sensation, and in fact, he even felt a bit lighter. After moving around a bit, he realized that he could move even more quickly than before. It was almost as if some strange connection now existed between him and his surroundings.

Filled with a sense of wonder, he produced the magnetic spirit wings. They were green, and as diaphanous as the wings of a cicada, almost transparent. After a moment, Bai Xiaochun exhaled some spiritual energy onto the wings, and they began to melt. It took the time it takes an incense stick to burn, and during the process, his eyes glittered. Eventually, the wings melted into his palm, and then appeared on his back.

Like blood dissolving in water, they became a part of him, and were as easy to control as his own arms. Expression brightening, he exercised a single thought, and the wings fluttered.

He instantly transformed into nothing more than afterimages, shooting at high speed toward the wall of the immortal’s cave. He let out a shriek as he tried to stop, but was unfamiliar with controlling the wings and slammed into the wall.

A boom rang out, and the entire immortal's cave shook. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body was quite tough, and nothing happened other than him ending up being embedded in the stone wall. After a long moment passed, he flopped down onto the ground and let out a groan.

Gritting his teeth, he struggled to his feet and glanced up at the spot where he'd run into the wall. Not daring to perform any more tests indoors, he walked outside, summoned his courage, and then flapped the wings again. In the blink of an eye, he was far off in the distance.

A few days later, he was much more familiar with how to control the speed of the wings, and it was a wonderful sensation. He almost felt invincible.

“Hahaha! I'm so fast that not even Elder Zhou could catch me!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously as he flew a few circles in the air before returning to his immortal's cave.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0101 awe-chapter-102

Months flew by. Bai Xiaochun quickly became very familiar with the areas on Fragrant Cloud Peak set aside for the Inner Sect. Eventually, the novelty of being an Inner Sect disciple began to wear off.

He spent most of his time in his immortal's cave, either practicing cultivation or concocting medicine in his personal medicine concocting workshop. By this point, he had created quite a few Aphrodisiac Pills.

He was happy. His purpose in practicing cultivation was to live forever, and the higher his cultivation base grew, the greater his longevity became.

His main interest was concocting spirit medicines. After all, he still dreamed of concocting a pill that could help him live forever. In order to make that dream come true, he constantly worked with spirit medicine. However, the cruel reality of the situation was that after a few months passed, he found that, to his bitterness, he had run out of medicinal plants.

Even though the prize for taking first place in the Chosen battles had been 10,000 spirit stones, the ingredients for tier-3 spirit medicines weren’t sold in the market outside the sect. He could only rely on people from the cultivator clans to find them for him, and the prices were exorbitant.

The best thing to do was build up enough merit points to be able to acquire the ingredients from the sect.

“Merit points....” he thought as he sat there in his immortal's cave, frowning. What he lacked most was merit points. After some hesitation, he left his immortal's cave and went to the Mission Stele set aside for Inner Sect disciples.

Back in the Outer Sect, the Missions Office had always been packed, but the Inner Sect was different. Inner Sect disciples were all very busy, and viewed their time as precious. Only a few people could be seen in the area. Bai Xiaochun strolled up and stood in front of the stele, trying to pick a mission.

“That one's way too dangerous!” he muttered. “That one doesn’t give enough merit points! I don’t want any long-term missions....”

Eventually, his eyes came to rest on a mission assigned by one of the sect elders, which called for Lifestealer cores. For every core provided, 1,000 merit points would be rewarded.

It even provided the most common location to find Lifestealers, which was in the Wildweed Mountains a short distance from the Spirit Stream Sect. Muttering to himself in thought, Bai Xiaochun recalled the description of Lifestealers from the fourth volume of spirit creatures. Actually, they weren’t wild beasts, but rather, a miraculous parasitic life form.

They would select a host, a wild beast of some sort, which they would then cause to grow a second head. When the second head was fully formed, the beast would then wither up and die, and the matured Lifestealer would transform into a Ninedays Finch.

During the parasitic phase of its life, it was extremely useful as an ingredient in various types of medicines. However, once it matured and exploded out from the second head, becoming a Ninedays Finch, it was completely useless. Furthermore, Ninedays Finches only lived for nine days, after which they would die, producing a new Lifestealer. The Lifestealer would then select a new host, and the process would begin again.

It was almost like the cycle of reincarnation....

Lifestealers were very rare, and in some ways, they lived forever, eternally reincarnating over and over again.

Bai Xiaochun clearly remembered how impressed he had been the first time he read about Lifestealers in the fourth volume of spirit creatures.

“The hard part of this mission is actually finding the Lifestealers. The Wildweed Mountains are too vast. It would be way too annoying to try to find them one by one. Accumulating merit points that way would be a waste of time.”

After doing some more research into the Wildweed Mountains, he confirmed that despite how vast they were, most animals were under the Foundation Establishment level.

Eventually, he decided to accept the mission. However, he didn’t immediately set forth from the sect. First, he returned to his immortal's cave to make a few preparations. Finally, he hopped onto the Golden Crow Sword and shot off into the distance.

The Wildweed Mountains weren’t very far from the Spirit Stream Sect. Considering his speed when using the Golden Crow Sword, it would only take a day of travel to reach them. Unfortunately, due to the fact that his current cultivation base was too low to be able to fly for a long time, he had to alternate between flying and running. Four days later, he finally reached the Wildweed Mountains.

A majestic scene spread out in front of him, with lushly vegetated mountains rising up in all directions. It was like a never-ending jungle, from within which rose the cries of various birds and beasts.

Instead of going to search for Lifestealers, he explored the mountains for about half a month until he found a valley which acted as a natural pathway between two main parts of the jungle. There, he settled down in the branches of a tall tree and peered down into the valley below.

“Using normal search methods would be a waste of time, and would rely on blind luck. Even with fortune on my side, I might only find one. If I don’t get lucky, I might not be able to find a single one in a month.

“It’s time to show off how smart I am.” Sticking his chin up, he blurred into motion, shooting off into the distance.

The next day, he stood at the top of a mountain, feeling the direction of the wind. Just as he was about to produce an Aphrodisiac Pill, he suddenly thought of something, and called out at the top of his lungs, “Is anyone around?! Are there any disciples from the Spirit Stream Sect here?!” From the high-pitched tone of his cry, it almost sounded like he was crying out for help.

Some distance away, a figure could be seen in the jungle, fighting with a wild beast. It was an icily arrogant young man wearing the robe of an Inner Sect disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect. When he heard Bai Xiaochun’s cry, a look of scorn appeared in his eyes.

“Another disciple with a weak cultivation base who’s overestimated himself and is now crying out for help. Only the strong should come out into the Wildweed Mountains.” He arrogantly chose not to even attempt to help out. Although the sect emphasized teamwork, some people were naturally unsociable, and that couldn’t be avoided.

After crying out a few times but getting no response, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit more at ease. With that, he tossed out the Aphrodisiac Pill. Moments later, a popping sound could be heard as the pill exploded, transforming into a fine powder which was carried off by the wind.

Soon, the animals some distance away, regardless of what they were doing, caught the scent of the powder in the wind and began to tremble. Eyes bloodshot, they began to howl at the tops of their lungs.

As soon as the howling sounds rose up, two wings popped out behind Bai Xiaochun, and he sped away.

The arrogant disciple from earlier suddenly noticed that the beast he was fighting had begun trembling. Its eyes turned red, and, howling, it pounced toward him. Badly frightened, the young man took to flight.

Unfortunately, no matter what he did, the beast only continued to howl and chase him down. Its eyes were bright red, and it seemed to have gone mad. Shocked, the young man fled for his life until he had no choice but to cry out for help.

By that time, Bai Xiaochun was too far away to hear....

Six hours later in another windy area, Bai Xiaochun cried out a few times, waited for a bit, and seeing that no one responded, threw out another Aphrodisiac Pill.

Soon, the howls of beasts rose up.

For the following two days, he ceaselessly traveled in a set perimeter around the valley he’d picked, throwing out Aphrodisiac Pills. He quickly covered a large area, within which all of the animals were going mad, howling at the tops of their lungs and lunging around violently.

Seeing that he’d reached a point where things were almost beyond his control, Bai Xiaochun flew back to the valley he’d selected. Eyes shining, he waved the Golden Crow Sword to cut open a small path in the trees, then pulled out a bunch of Pheromone Pills and crushed them. Soon, a fragrant aroma began to spread out.

He was very careful not to get any of the powder on himself, and even as he backed away, changed into a new set of clothes just to be safe. Then he perched above the valley and looked down toward the path he’d created.

“Alright, lovely beasts... hurry up,” he said, humming a little tune as he waited eagerly.

Time passed. The aroma of the Pheromone Pill slowly spread out, and the beasts which had been affected by the Aphrodisiac Pill slowly began to go more and more crazy. Howling, they began to charge toward the valley at top speed, more and more of them, like a surging tide that caused the ground to quake.

Soon, the first wave of beasts was closing in, and Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and looked down with rapt attention at the valley below. In the blink of an eye, a vast group of strange beasts could be seen charging down the path he'd created. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide at the sight of so many creatures. But then, his eyes glittered, and his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Instantly, the Golden Crow Sword flew out toward a fierce-looking tiger.

Shockingly, a second head was growing out of the tiger’s back. Golden light flickered, and the second head exploded. A core flew out, which Bai Xiaochun expertly grabbed ahold of and then threw into his bag of holding. Next, the golden light flashed toward another two-headed creature.

The flood of beasts lasted for about two hours, and the valley was almost completely destroyed in the process. Bai Xiaochun was radiant with delight. His sword flashed over and over again, and by the time the flood of beasts had dispersed, he was delighted to find that he had collected ten Lifestealer cores.

“Bai Xiaochun’s wits come out on top again!” Looking very pleased, he stored the cores safely in his bag of holding and then blurred into motion, heading off to another part of the Wildweed Mountains.

Not very long after he left, a young man could be seen in the jungle. His clothes were tattered, and he seemed to be in a very sorry state. He was shaking, and even had trouble walking. A blank look could be seen in his eyes that very closely resembled the look which had appeared in Beihan Lie’s eyes not so long ago....

Tears streamed down his cheeks as he muttered, “What's going on in the Wildweed Mountains...? What’s going on with the world...? The beasts here don’t eat people, they... I... I...”

Days flew by. Bai Xiaochun used the Aphrodisiac Pill to throw the Wildweed Mountains into complete chaos. Everywhere he went, the beasts would go mad. Of course, before throwing the pills out into the air, he would always call out to make sure he was alone.

Occasionally disciples would respond, and when they did, he would carefully explain his plan, ask them to leave, and give them a Lifestealer core as compensation. He would also ask them to spread word to other disciples to stay away. Most of the disciples that saw him recognized him, and would flee, trembling in fear.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0102 awe-chapter-103

There weren’t many Spirit Stream Sect disciples in the Wildweed Mountains, only a few dozen. The area didn’t have many Foundation Establishment-level beasts, but it still had its dangers, even for Inner Sect disciples.

Only people who considered themselves to be especially powerful would go there.

When Bai Xiaochun cried out his warnings, some disciples would respond and heed his advice. They would take his apology gift and leave. However, a few bull-headed individuals would arrogantly assume that he was crying out for help, and would pretend they couldn’t hear him. Some of them even hoped to collect his bag of holding after he died.

They would continue whatever it was they were doing, and think little more of the matter. But it wouldn’t take long before they realized the beasts were acting strange, impulsive and maddened.

Shangguan Tianyou was in the Wildweed Mountains, and as soon as he heard Bai Xiaochun calling out, his eyes flickered, and he ignored him. He was on the same mission as Bai Xiaochun, looking for Lifestealers, but at the moment, he was shocked by the sight of a huge bear in the sixth level of Qi Condensation, who was wrapped around a tree, banging into it over and over again....

It wasn’t his first time seeing something like that. He’d seen a rabbit earlier that had ambushed him with raving madness. When he realized that the situation seemed familiar, his scalp suddenly went numb.

“Something’s off here. What’s changed in the Wildweed Mountains?!” Then he thought back to Bai Xiaochun’s Aphrodisiac Pill, and his heart seized.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun had over thirty Lifestealer cores in his bag of holding, and was continuing his work with the Aphrodisiac Pills. About half a month later, he was overjoyed to discover a V-shaped valley located deep within the mountains, a place that had a strong wind....

The valley would suck in the wind and then vent it out to fill a large portion of the Wildweed Mountains. Based on Bai Xiaochun’s calculations, it would only take three days for the wind from the valley to fill nearly half of the Wildweed Mountains. Even standing there in the wind, he would only last for about one breath of time before losing his footing. He immediately felt connected to the place, as if by destiny.

Hair whipping about, he looked down at the spot where the wind shot out and said, “This is definitely the best place to disseminate powder throughout the mountains!! There shouldn't be any fellow disciples here either. I can safely harvest to my heart’s content!” Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very excited. In order to ensure nothing bad happened to his fellow disciples, he'd already given out about ten cores. However, he didn’t regret that at all. He was sure that he could get more. He could even visualize the merit points flowing in.

Taking a deep breath, he brought out all of the rest of the Aphrodisiac Pills and crushed them. The rushing wind immediately carried the powder out into the rest of the Wildweed Mountains.

Bai Xiaochun stood on a nearby mountain peak, looking out proudly at the jungle below, feeling very heroic.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, have worked tirelessly to benefit the Wildweed Mountains. One can only imagine how many animals will be born in the coming years.... What a wonderful meritorious service.”

He sighed emotionally as howls began to rise from within the forest. More and more howls could be heard, until they filled the air ceaselessly. In one day, twenty percent of the Wildweed Mountains had been covered.... The roars reached a shocking level. Three days later... half of the Wildweed Mountains were going mad!

At that point, Bai Xiaochun flew along, dispersing Pheromone Pills every so often to attract the nearby beasts. At the same time, he collected more and more Lifestealer cores.

He was very pleased with everything. Not only was he collecting plenty of cores, he was also bringing happiness to all the creatures in the Wildweed Mountains. When he saw so many animals pouncing on each other, he couldn’t help but marvel at how he was benefiting the environment.

“What a good person I am,” he thought to himself. “The beasts in these mountains are definitely going to thank me later.” And so he continued along, throwing out Pheromone Pills all the way.

Of course, there were some disciples in the mountains who had ignored his earlier cries. Their eyes soon went wide at the maddened state of the animals. The sight of all the animals pouncing on one another... left the disciples gasping.

“What’s... what's going on!?”

“Why... why does this scene seem so familiar....” Shocked, the disciples all began to flee in terror.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Shangguan Tianyou was going all out to kill the nearby beasts and fly away. His heart filled with terror when he recalled what had occurred to Beihan Lie, and he began to shiver.

Unfortunately for this handful of people, they were deep within the Wildweed Mountains, and getting out was no easy task. That was especially the case considering that all of the beasts in the area were going completely mad....

Bai Xiaochun flew along, happily tossing Pheromone Pills around. He attracted large numbers of beasts, and collected numerous Lifestealer cores. By the time he left the Wildweed Mountains half a month later, he had two hundred cores in his bag of holding.

Completely satisfied, he headed back toward the sect.

Some days after he left, Shangguan Tianyou and the other disciples finally emerged. Their faces were pale and filled with bitterness, and their hair disheveled. They were all in bad condition, with blank looks on their faces. After finally emerging, they would throw their heads back and howl bitterly.

As for what exactly had occurred within those mountains... it was a complete mystery to them.

After returning to the sect, Bai Xiaochun raced directly to the Missions Office. When the disciples there saw that he was turning in two hundred Lifestealer cores, their eyes nearly popped out of their sockets. After incredulously examining the cores, they looked back at Bai Xiaochun in shock.

Throughout the years, Lifestealer core missions would pop up occasionally, although usually only one at a time. Generally speaking, it would take a whole year for a disciple to collect a mere ten of them.

But within a few months, Bai Xiaochun had managed to collect an unthinkable amount.

“He definitely deserves to be the Junior Brother of the sect leader, a Prestige disciple, and the first place winner of the Chosen battles....” The other Inner Sect disciples looked enviously at Bai Xiaochun. After clearing his inventory, he racked up 200,000 merit points. Although he tried to put on a show of looking indifferent, it was impossible for him to completely conceal how proud of himself he was.

The matter shook the entire south bank. Anyone who heard that someone had collected 200,000 merit points in one shot almost couldn’t believe it. But then word began to spread from the disciples Bai Xiaochun had advised to leave the Wildweed Mountains, and soon, the three mountain peaks of the south bank were buzzing with the news.

“What a monster!!”

“Crazy! He filled half of the Wildweed Mountains with Aphrodisiac Pills!!”

“We won't be able to go there for a long time now....”

Even as the discussions raged, Shangguan Tianyou and the other bedraggled disciples began to filter back into the sect. Shangguan Tianyou was aware that Bai Xiaochun was the cause of what had happened, so he wasn’t so surprised at the results. But when the other disciples realized the situation, they howled at the tops of their lungs. However, there was nothing they could do about Bai Xiaochun. After all... he had warned them repeatedly, and they had heard, but chosen to ignore him. Now they regretted what they had done; a mere response on their part, and they could have avoided such a tragic fate.

Bai Xiaochun was extremely pleased with the results. In subsequent days, he would often appear at the Missions Office, whereupon he would select missions involving collecting things from beasts.

He almost seemed addicted. After each mission, he would concoct batches of medicinal pills and head out again.... Each time, he drove more disciples mad. Whether those disciples were out on missions or not, it didn’t matter. After all, any location Bai Xiaochun went to on his own missions had to be avoided for significant periods of time afterward.

They were far too dangerous....

The Cloudpeak Mountains, Frostforest Mountains, Brightsummit Mountains, Lasteast Mountains....

For an entire year, Bai Xiaochun was a mission-accomplishing maniac. He swept through all of the missions that involved beasts, and his harvests were always incredible. Each and every time, the Missions Office was left completely shaken. At the same time, countless Inner Sect disciples were driven to madness.

Eventually, he cleared all of the beast-related missions on Fragrant Cloud Peak, after which he went to Green Crest Peak, and then Violet Cauldron Peak. He took all of the missions there, and soon helped the disciples there realize what a true missions fiend was.

In the end, the Inner Sect disciples of the south bank were driven to complete despair. None of the mountain ranges near the sect were safe to enter, as they were filled with countless sexually charged beasts....

Having no other option, hundreds of Inner Sect disciples from the three mountain peaks signed a petition to the sect, requesting that Bai Xiaochun be exempted from mission service....

Li Qinghou didn't want to interfere; it was a rare occasion when Bai Xiaochun was so enthused about serving the sect. The matter turned into a huge headache for the sect leader. He was coming to find that after Bai Xiaochun joined the sect, he would frequently be struck with such headaches. Every time he heard Bai Xiaochun’s name mentioned, he would subconsciously sigh.

“It's almost better when he's not working hard. As soon as he gets serious... it’s really... ai, Bai Xiaochun causes a disaster no matter which mission he picks!

“Doesn’t he want to work at pill concocting? Go concoct pills then! The sect will provide the merit points, as long things calm down....”

When the signatures on the petition rose from a few hundred to over a thousand, the sect leader gritted his teeth and went to discuss the matter with Li Qinghou. Finally, they exempted Bai Xiaochun from mission service for the following ten years.

He was the only disciple in the sect who didn’t have to do missions, but would still get a huge amount of merit points from the sect.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very happy about the situation. He had been browsing missions at the Missions Office, and had just found one he wanted to take, when he got the notification. He was stunned.

“What the hell?” he exclaimed loudly. “I want to serve the sect! I want to work hard! This is ridiculous!” Under the solemn gazes of the Missions Office disciples, he sighed, then stuck his chin up and swished his sleeve.

“With the snap of a finger, I reduced the Missions Office... to ashes.” Shaking his head, he sighed. Looking very lonely, he made his way off into the distance.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0103 awe-chapter-104

Bai Xiaochun trudged back to his immortal's cave, where he sat stewing in melancholy.

Finally, he sighed. “It’s not a good thing for someone to be too outstanding. I'm the perfect example. The sect leadership was so worried about how outstanding I am that they exempted me from doing missions for ten years, but will still send me merit points every month.” He sat there, reveling a bit in being able to worry about things like this, and wondering what he was supposed to do considering that he was so outstanding....

“Ah well, I guess it doesn’t matter. Since I can’t go out on missions, I might as well concoct medicine. After all, the reason I was doing the missions in the first place was to get merit points.” With such thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun resigned himself to sacrificing his own benefit for the betterment of the sect, and walked over to his medicine concocting workstation.

“I need to master all of the concocting methods for tier-3 spirit medicines!” With that, his expression turned somber.

Time passed. Half a year.

Other than his routine cultivation, he spent all of his time concocting medicine. When he lacked ingredients, he cashed in merit points. As time went on, he grew more frenzied, apparently unwilling to slow down until he had mastered everything to do with tier-3 spirit medicines.

Because he wasn’t out doing missions, the sect slowly returned to normal. Many people sighed in relief, especially Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong, who was finally able to feel at ease inwardly. By now, he was sure that exempting Bai Xiaochun from mission duty had been the right thing to do.

He wasn’t the only one. Li Qinghou, as well as the other south bank peak lords and elders, all felt much more at ease. In fact, at one of the regular south bank council meetings, the Foundation Establishment cultivators happened to bring up the matter.

“Bai Xiaochun has been focused on concocting medicine lately. The sect has really calmed down.”

“Medicine concocting is a good thing. Have him keep practicing. It's the safest option, anyway. With him focused on that, he won’t be causing problems for people outside.” The entire group was all smiles; the past half year of peace and quiet left them all sighing happily.

And yet, just days after their meeting, a massive explosion echoed out on Fragrant Cloud Peak. It came from the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, and caused everything in the area to tremble violently. Numerous Inner Sect disciples were badly startled, and the Outer Sect disciples were left trembling in fear.

“What just happened?!?!”

“Heavens! Could the Spirit Stream Sect be under attack!?!?”

As everyone devolved into a commotion, Bai Xiaochun lurched out of his medicine concocting workstation, coughing, face tinged with ash, nose running and tears streaming down his face. He quickly washed off in the hot spring, and then frowned.

“Why did it explode?” he thought. The pill furnaces provided to Inner Sect disciples were all standard issue, exactly the same as the ones in the Medicine Concocting Pavilion. Generally speaking, even if the spirit medicine was concocted incorrectly, they wouldn’t just explode.

And yet, that was exactly what had just happened. It had even activated the cave’s defensive spell formations.

After pondering the matter at length, he couldn't come up with an explanation. Sighing, he went back to cultivating the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture for a few days. By this point, his cultivation was only a sliver away from a breakthrough.

However, he wasn’t in any hurry. After finishing his cultivation, he consumed some spirit medicine to replenish his vital energy, then set to work on the Undying Live Forever Technique. The silver light which rose up from his skin was now so dark that it bordered on golden.

That afternoon, Bai Xiaochun went on to the next task at hand. Standing there in his immortal's cave, he slowly lifted his hands up into the air as he practiced the Waterswamp Kingdom mnemonic. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he opened his eyes and let out a powerful shout.

An intense energy exploded out from inside him, causing everything around him to suddenly change. A field of water vapor appeared, which lasted for only a single breath of time before vanishing.

Bai Xiaochun sagged in place, wiping the sweat from his brow. Despite practicing the Waterswamp Kingdom every day since he’d acquired it, that was all that he could accomplish.

“I need to keep working harder!” he thought. After resting for a moment, he ended his daily cultivation routine and once again pondered the problem of the exploding pill furnace. During the past half a year of practice, he had succeeded with a few tier-3 spirit medicines, but for the most part, his attempts had ended in failure.

He sat there in frustration for some time before finally coming up with a theory.

“Maybe after the medicinal strength intensified to a certain point, it became unstable, which caused the explosion?” Immediately afterward, he hurried out and exchanged some merit points for another pill furnace, then went back to concocting.

Gradually, word spread that the explosion earlier had come from Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave. Strange expressions appeared on the faces of the disciples. Although they weren’t sure exactly what had caused the explosion, at least they now knew Bai Xiaochun was the cause.

Then.... A few days later, Bai Xiaochun was there in his medicine concocting workstation, completely and utterly focused on controlling the spirit medicine inside the pill furnace. Unfortunately, tier-3 spirit medicines were extremely difficult to work with. Most other people, with enough experience and luck, would succeed three times out of ten and consider it a high rate of success. But Bai Xiaochun wanted things to be perfect. He wouldn’t rest until he’d solved each and every problem. Because he wanted even the tiniest details to be perfect, it meant he had to test all those details multiple times before finally resolving every issue.

This time, his eyes went wide as he realized that he was losing control of the spirit medicine. Then the pill furnace began to issue cracking sounds. Bai Xiaochun gasped, and two wings suddenly appeared behind him as he bolted out of the medicine concocting workshop.

Moments after he emerged, a huge explosion shook the immortal’s cave.

Fragrant Cloud Peak was once again thrown into an uproar for some time before everyone managed to calm down. Three days later, Bai Xiaochun ran screaming out of his medicine concocting workstation, and a third shocking explosion ripped through the air.

After seven days, he emerged yet again, flustered, fleeing at top speed as a fourth deafening explosion nearly destroyed his medicine concocting workstation.

Fragrant Cloud Peak was in utter chaos, and countless disciples’ eyes were completely bloodshot. After inquiries were made, people learned that Bai Xiaochun was concocting medicine. However, no one could figure out exactly why such huge explosions would be occurring.

“I asked the Spirit Medicine Pharmacy, and they said that he recently purchased eight pill furnaces!”

“That sound must be an exploding pill furnace. Just what is Bai Xiaochun concocting? Dammit! Isn’t he worried about blowing himself up!?” Anger was building, and yet the explosions... weren’t over. They continued.

Over the course of the following month, seven explosions rocked Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, each one more intense than the last. The final explosion actually caused all of Fragrant Cloud Peak to tremble, and Bai Xiaochun’s entire immortal's cave was nearly destroyed.

As Bai Xiaochun fled outside, trembling in fear, the Outer and Inner Sect disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak were driven to near madness. During the past month, none of them had been able to safely focus on practicing cultivation. Constantly being startled by the explosions had left them jumpy with fear. Now, they were thoroughly distracted, their eyes bloodshot as they struggled to control their anger.

Apparently, even sound-muffling spell formations couldn’t stop the sound of the explosions. The disciples’ rage grew, and even the elders were shocked and could hardly believe what Bai Xiaochun was doing.

“What is Bai Xiaochun concocting to cause the pill furnaces to explode like that? What... what medicine is he working on?!”

Things didn't end. Over the next month, the frequency of the explosions increased. More than a dozen occurred, almost every other day. Eventually, the Fragrant Cloud Peak disciples couldn’t take it any longer, and stormed to Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave en masse to vent their fury.

Feeling very wronged, Bai Xiaochun hurried out to offer an explanation. When he saw a mob of over a thousand disciples, his face paled a bit, and eventually he resorted to slapping his chest and guaranteeing that there would be no more explosions. Only then did the crowd begin to calm down.

After seeing everyone off, Bai Xiaochun went back into his immortal's cave, scowling the entire time. Looking over his mostly-destroyed medicine concocting workstation, he sighed, pulled out another pill furnace, and looked at it blankly.

A few days later, he slapped his thigh, and his eyes began to shine.

“Right! It’s definitely because I didn’t pre-heat the pill furnace properly!” Excited, he started concocting again.... Three days later, in the middle of the night, everyone on Fragrant Cloud Peak... heard a massive explosion.

One Inner Sect disciple was so badly frightened that he almost fainted. Hair in complete disarray, he screamed, “Bai Xiaochun!! I don't care if you’re Chosen, I'm going to beat you black and blue!”

He wasn’t the only one. Soon, all of the Inner Sect disciples had emerged from their immortal's caves, even the exhausted Zhou Xinqi. Bai Xiaochun hurried out, smiling apologetically as he guaranteed that it wouldn’t happen again. The gathered disciples calmed down a bit in response. They couldn’t find any fault with his attitude, and as such, had no other recourse. If he had been even a bit defiant, they definitely would have given him a good thrashing. But at the moment... they could only grit their teeth and accept his promise.

Exhausted, Bai Xiaochun returned to his immortal's cave, wishing to cry but finding no tears. He was coming to find that it was a difficult thing to pursue his dreams.

“I'm not the kind of person who gives up!” he thought. Gritting his teeth, he produced another pill furnace, which he studied for half a month straight. Finally, after analyzing all aspects of the situation, he was sure that he had identified the problem.

“Earthflame. It’s definitely the earthflame!” Eyes bloodshot, he once again began to concoct.... Five days later at dawn, an explosion could be heard that was so loud it startled Li Qinghou, and could even be heard on Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak.

The Inner Sect disciples who lived near Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave were dumbstruck, especially Zhou Xinqi. All of them felt like they were going crazy. Elder Zhou’s birds let out high-pitched shrieks, and were so frightened that their feathers fell out. The spirit tail chickens were trembling and frothing at the mouth, and numerous Inner Sect disciples struggled to remain conscious....

All of the spell formations in Bai Xiaochun’s cave activated as the earthflame erupted, and even Fragrant Cloud Peak’s grand spell formation was affected. When Bai Xiaochun crawled out of the rubble, he was pitch black, and yet clearly excited. He was now sure that he had finally found the source of the problem.

“It wasn’t the earthflame, it was the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression! They cause an unforeseeable variable. Tier-3 spirit medicines... must be concocted with mutual augmentation and suppression in mind!”

Everyone on Fragrant Cloud Peak, from the elders to the Outer Sect disciples, rushed over toward Bai Xiaochun’s cave, enraged, rocks in hand to pelt him if necessary. When faced with such a furious mob, Bai Xiaochun vigorously slapped his chest.

“I guarantee--” However, before he could finish, the crowd began to hurl their rocks. After all, fighting with magic against a fellow sect member was prohibited, but throwing rocks wasn’t....

“Guarantee your ass!” Countless rocks closed in, fueled by burning rage.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0104 awe-chapter-105

Seeing the sky obscured by rocks struck fear into Bai Xiaochun’s heart. He dove back into his immortal's cave and quickly activated the spell formation, looking like he was about to cry. He knew that he had aroused public fury, but truly felt wronged; he hadn’t done it on purpose!

“I guarantee that this is the last time!” he blurted. “I'm absolutely certain!”

After the mob vented some of their anger, Bai Xiaochun continued to offer explanations, and eventually, the people left.

Sighing wistfully, Bai Xiaochun cleared the rubble from his immortal's cave and then returned to his medicine concocting workstation. There he sat, pondering everything that had occurred. Finally, he gritted his teeth and gingerly produced another pill furnace. Based on his most recent analysis, he once again began to concoct medicine.

This time, he focused heavily on the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression. A few days later, a fragrant aroma filled the air, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes brimmed with tears of excitement. He let out a whoop of delight at having finally solved the problem of the exploding pill furnaces. Furthermore, he'd gained a deeper understanding of the variables which can occur because of mutual augmentation and suppression.

“I'm just around the corner from mastering tier-3 spirit medicines!” Spirits soaring, he spent the next several days completely lost in his medicine concocting.

Gradually, the disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak realized that there were no more explosions. They sighed with relief, and as the days passed, the mountain slowly returned to normal.

And yet... Bai Xiaochun had come to find that although he'd solved the problem of the explosions, his success rate with tier-3 spirit medicine was still fairly low. Furthermore, he ended up concocting quite a few mystery pills.

When such mystery pills emerged from the pill furnace, he would look at them suspiciously. Although he knew that they surely contained wondrous secrets, it was hard to say whether they were as miraculous as his Aphrodisiac Pill.

“I need to test them out to see what they do....” he murmured to himself. Emerging from his immortal's cave, he headed down to the market and bought some random animals. He even spent some merit points to get some from the sect.

Back in his immortal's cave, he prepared, for the second time in his life, to perform some animal testing. He even produced a blank jade slip to record the data.

After all the preparations were complete, he took a deep breath and pulled out a rabbit, then selected a black pill from his collection of mystery pills.

The rabbit sniffed it, then gobbled it up. A moment later, it began to tremble. Then its legs twitched, and it flopped over and lay unmoving on the ground.

“Dead?” Bai Xiaochun thought, eyes going wide. After looking closer, he breathed a sigh of relief when he realized that the rabbit wasn’t dead, but rather, had simply fallen unconscious because of the rush of spiritual energy from the powerful medicinal pill.

A few hours later, it woke up. This time, it stood up on two legs, almost like a person, and stared fixedly at Bai Xiaochun.

“Eee?” Bai Xiaochun said. Moments later, the rabbit made the same sound, startling Bai Xiaochun. “You can talk?”

Looking startled, the rabbit said, “You can talk?”

Bai Xiaochun immediately got very excited, and began to walk around the rabbit to examine it. In turn, the rabbit got excited and began to walk around Bai Xiaochun. A strange scene was now playing out in the immortal's cave.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun began to laugh heartily.

“Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!”

The rabbit laughed heartily and repeated the exact same words he had just spoken. A quizzical look on his face, Bai Xiaochun opened the door of one of the side rooms and tossed the rabbit inside.

“Whatever. You’re obviously not intelligent. If you make some cultivation advancement, don’t forget to come back and thank me in the future. I’ll put you in here for now, and in a few days I’ll set you free outside the sect.”

After putting the rabbit in the other room, Bai Xiaochun paid it no further heed as he proceeded with his testing. The next subject was a monkey, for which he selected a yellow medicinal pill. At first, the monkey pretended not to see it, but eventually got interested and grabbed the pill up. After sniffing it, it crushed some of the pill, and then popped the pill and the fragments into its mouth and swallowed it down.

Afterward, nothing much happened except that an odd wind rose up out of nowhere, which quickly faded away. Bai Xiaochun looked curiously at the monkey, which was simply sitting there with a vacant expression on its face. Unsure if anything had occurred, Bai Xiaochun sighed and put the monkey into the same room as the rabbit.

A few days later, one of the tests he performed was on a group of rabbits. After eating the medicinal pills, their eyes turned red, and they began to howl and leap up to nibble Bai Xiaochun’s legs.

Shocked, he made a notation in his records, then threw them into a side room. There, they started biting each other, although they drew no blood.

There was also a handful of ducks. After consuming the mystery pills, they trembled, and suddenly, their wings grew larger, and they began to fly around inside the immortal's cave, looking particularly elegant. Bai Xiaochun stared in shock, and at the same time, his excitement regarding his mystery pills grew.

Time flowed by. During the following half month, Bai Xiaochun performed tests with his mystery pills, keeping meticulous records of everything. Occasionally, his wild laughter would ring out from within the immortal's cave.

A few days later, when he fed some pills to some ordinary chickens, they rapidly grew larger until they were the size of elephants. Bai Xiaochun’s understanding of the Dao of medicine was growing more profound. Shaking with excitement, he continued his experiments.

Gradually, the rooms he had set aside for the animal subjects included quite a variety of strange beasts. There was a group of toads with eyes all over their bodies. Those eyes would all blink every time the toads croaked.

There was a tiger that Bai Xiaochun had bought for a handful of spirit stones. After consuming one of his pills, it grew eight more heads, giving it a total of nine. When it roared with all of its heads, the sound was very impressive.

There was also a group of ordinary pigeons who experienced no major change other than constantly relieving themselves as they flew along....

Time passed, the experiments continued, and the bizarre and extraordinary results of the mystery pills became more evident. There was a group of monkeys who, after eating some strange pills, began to twitch constantly.

There was a bunch of cats who let out burps as loud as thunder. Bai Xiaochun was struck with awe, and couldn’t help but wonder exactly how he had concocted all of these mystery pills. The most exaggerated situation was the flock of geese. After eating the medicinal pills, their eyes turned pure white. Although they looked a bit sickly, they turned out to be extremely loyal, and even took to watching over Bai Xiaochun’s cave as if they were guarding it.

Toward the end, he gave the hot spring fish some pills to eat. They immediately went crazy, struggling with each other to leap out of the water. There, they grew legs and began to walk around the immortal's cave.

After examining the fish, he threw them into another side room. By this point, the side rooms were filling up, and his immortal’s cave was turning into a bizarre menagerie.

There was a monkey who simply sat in place, chin resting in its palm, apparently lost in thought. There was the group of spasmodically twitching monkeys. The red-eyed rabbits were currently play fighting with the elephant-sized chickens....

Off to the side were the toads who blinked and croaked noisily. Finally, there was the rabbit, who was practicing all sorts of poses. Occasionally it would say, “Eee? You can talk? Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!” It was only able to recite those three passages.

Up in the air, ducks flew about gracefully. The pigeons also flapped about, excrement plopping down below them wherever they went.... The nine-headed tiger was covered in it, and roared constantly. Off to the side were the legged fish, who were constantly on the run from the burping cats....

At the door were the large geese, who eyed everything coldly, as though they were guarding against something.

Bai Xiaochun stared around at everything, musing that he had only tested a small portion of his mystery pills. Unfortunately, he had no more animals to test them on.

“The Dao of medicine is truly miraculous...” he murmured. With that, he decided that he definitely had to test out all of his mystery pills. Therefore, he left the immortal's cave to go purchase more animals to experiment with.

However, almost as soon as he left, his second test subject, the thoughtful monkey who had done nothing except stare off into space, suddenly looked up thoughtfully. Then it turned its gaze to the door in the side room, and its eyes seemed just as intelligent as a person’s! Suddenly, it burst into motion, running over... to open the door!

Next, the main gate of the immortal's cave... was flung wide open!

The sun shone outside as the thoughtful monkey leaped out into the open. The other animals stared in shock, but a moment later, all of them... made their escape.

By chance, Zhou Xinqi happened to be walking out of her immortal's cave at that same moment. She saw a flock of quacking ducks flying gracefully out into the open, and her jaw dropped. She had long since mastered all five volumes of spirit creatures, but she had never seen anything like these flying ducks.

“What are those things?” she murmured. Next, she was shocked to see several elephant-sized chickens racing out. Perched atop one of them was a rabbit.

“Eee? You can talk? Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!”

Zhou Xinqi stood there blinking in shock, wondering if she was hallucinating.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0105 awe-chapter-106

Around that time, Xu Baocai and some other Outer Sect disciples were in the middle of their journeyman apothecary promotion test. Elder Xu was off to the side, a somber look on his face as he presided over the occasion. Suddenly, a flock of pigeons appeared, and plopping sounds began to echo out as... endless amounts of bird excrement showered down. It was like rain, covering Xu Baocai, the other test-takers, and the audience. Even Elder Xu’s hair was peppered with excrement....

Everyone looked up in shock as the flock of pigeons flew off into the distance, excrement showering down below them....

“Those pigeons... I've never seen them before....”

“Dammit! What’s going on? I can’t believe... I can’t believe they’re crapping non-stop!!” The disciples were in an uproar, and Elder Xu stood there blankly for a moment before his face began to twitch.

Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo stood on a mountain path, glowering at each other.

The two of them had been at odds since they were servants, and their conflict was only growing more intense. Usually they just glared at each other, but now things were getting more serious. “Today, we're finally going to resolve our--”

However, before the words could be spoken completely, a group of legged fish ran by, kicking up a cloud of dust as they did.

Before Chen Zi’ang and Zhao Yiduo could react, a group of cats approached at top speed, emitting thunderous burps as they ran after the fish. Chen Zi'ang and Zhao Yiduo gasped in shock, their hostilities completely forgotten.

“Did... did we just see a bunch of legged fish?” Zhao Yiduo blurted, wondering if he was seeing things.

“Those cats’ burps were as loud as thunder....” Chen Zi’ang said, eyes wide.

Further down the mountain, cries of alarm rose up from numerous Outer Sect disciples as a horde of red-eyed rabbits began to nibble at their legs. Although the rabbits were relatively easy to grab, the chattering sounds of their biting teeth were fear-inspiring.

Most shocking of all was one particular rabbit which sat on the back of an elephant-sized chicken.

“Eee? You can talk? Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!”

Everyone on Fragrant Cloud Peak was going crazy.... Countless people heard the words spoken by the rabbit, and quickly realized that the instigator of the entire affair was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

In the Inner Sect district, a group of toads hopped along. Any Inner Sect disciple who caught sight of them would gasp in shock. The sight of such eye-covered toads was enough to terrify anyone.

There was even a nine-headed tiger running amok. Fragrant Cloud Peak was thrown into complete chaos.

And there was one particular monkey… which had climbed all the way up to the roof of Li Qinghou’s residence. There it sat, on the highest point of Fragrant Cloud Peak, chin rested in its palm, looking on thoughtfully as Xu Meixiang made her way off into the distance, having just finished chatting with Li Qinghou....

Li Qinghou’s face was ashen as he stood there outside his residence, looking up at the monkey. He was just about to start yelling when, all of a sudden, plopping sounds could be heard, and a rain of bird excrement descended. Li Qinghou’s jaw dropped.

It had been quite some time... since there had been a commotion on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Outer and Inner Sect disciples alike were all in an uproar. For the most part, the animals didn’t really affect them. However, no one could figure out how such tiny pigeons could unleash such a torrent of bird excrement....

Gradually, the rabbit, which originally could only recite three passages, learned to speak some more. Gradually, it also learned how to cry out at the top of its lungs.

“Heavens! What's that?!

“Did you see that? That rabbit can talk!

“This is definitely the handiwork of Bai Xiaochun!

“Keep this on the down low, but yesterday I saw Elder Zhou go into a room with those phoenixes of his. Afterward, I heard some really strange noises....

“Elder Sister Zhou Xinqi, Elder Sister Du Lingfei, I don’t care if Bai Xiaochun tries to stop me, the two of you will definitely end up with me, Xu Baocai!

“Elder Brother Hou Yunfei, you’re so naughty! What are you doing...? Uh... what’s that? Why are those monkeys twitching like that?!

“Junior Sister Meixiang, I, Li Qinghou, am not fickle in love. After I break through into the Gold Core stage, I’ll definitely take you as my Daoist partner!

“Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!”

As the rabbit ran to and fro, its repertoire of passages grew. It had very sensitive ears, and would repeat anything it heard. Many people were affected, much to their chagrin. The sharp-eared rabbit soon began to spread what had been well-kept secrets, even naming names.

Some of the stories the rabbit spread were almost impossible to believe. That was especially true of the one about Li Qinghou.... It was something the likes of which had never been talked about publicly, and many people were left completely shocked, even many elders.

Xu Baocai was stunned, Hou Yunfei’s eyes went wide, and Li Qinghou began to tremble in rage.

Right about then, Bai Xiaochun was returning from the market, numerous small animals in tow, brimming with anticipation regarding his next set of experiments. However, as soon as he stepped onto Fragrant Cloud Peak, bird excrement rained down. Jumping to the side, he looked up with a frown to see a flock of pigeons flying by.

“Eee? Why do they look so familiar...?” Suddenly, a rustling sound could be heard from the nearby bushes, and a school of legged fish burst out. Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped as he watched a bunch of burping cats fly out after the fish.

Moments later, his eyes went wide as a troupe of twitching monkeys ran by, frothing at the mouth as they sped along.

Bai Xiaochun began to tremble, and all the hair on his body stood on end.

“This... this is... impossible!” He quickly pulled out the Golden Crow Sword and flew up into the air. Wings sprouted out behind him as he shot up the mountain at top speed.

As he flew along, he saw animals everywhere. He also got quite a few odd stares from the people he passed. By the time he reached his immortal's cave, his heart was pounding. Then he saw that the door was open, and the cave was completely empty except for the geese standing guard.

“How did they get out?!” he thought, standing there in a daze. It didn’t seem possible. Suddenly, he looked to the side to see a rabbit running along, spewing a whole bunch of words that ended with....

“Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and at the same time, the rabbit caught sight of him, and its eyes went wide too. It immediately turned tail and fled. Well aware that a disaster was underway, Bai Xiaochun lunged at the rabbit. Unfortunately, the rabbit’s speed was explosive, and in the blink of an eye, not even its shadow could be seen. Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. And that was when he heard the roaring voice of Li Qinghou.

“Bai Xiaochun! Get this mess cleaned up immediately! If I see one animal or one speck of bird crap, you’re going directly to 10,000 Snakes Valley! And make that damned rabbit shut up!!”

It didn’t matter that Bai Xiaochun had taken first place in the Chosen battles, or that he had made such incredible progress with his Undying Silver Skin. As soon as he heard ‘10,000 Snakes Valley’, he shivered. The mere thought of the place filled him with fear. Looking like he was about to cry, he subconsciously glanced further up the mountain, whereupon his eyes went wide.

Sitting there on the roof of Li Qinghou’s residence was a monkey, its chin resting on its palm, apparently lost in thought.

On the verge of tears, Bai Xiaochun raced up the mountain toward the monkey. As he closed in, the monkey looked over, a seemingly emotional look in its eyes, as if it were thinking about how wonderful it had been to enjoy freedom. Although Bai Xiaochun was a bit shocked, he quickly grabbed the monkey and threw it into his bag of holding.

With that, he raced off nervously to scour the rest of Fragrant Cloud Peak. Wherever he went, the disciples looked at him with strange expressions. The next beast he caught was the nine-headed tiger, and after that, the eye-covered toads.

Soon he had the elephant-sized chickens, and then the legged fish. Not long after that, the burping cats were in custody. The ducks were the easiest of all to apprehend.

It was nearing the end of the day by the time he rounded up the twitching monkeys and threw them into his bag of holding. The hardest to catch were the defecating pigeons, which took a lot of effort. By the time he caught the last one, it was late at night. After taking stock, he realized that the only animal left was the talking rabbit.

Unfortunately, despite much searching, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t find it. The rabbit was an expert at hiding.

“Ai.” Sighing, he looked at the bird excrement covering Fragrant Cloud Peak and got to work cleaning it up. It took the whole night. By the time he returned to his immortal's cave, exhausted, it was dawn.

As the sun rose, the disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak emerged to find the mountain peak squeaky clean. When they thought back to the events of the previous day, they suddenly had a much deeper understanding of Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pills. Of course, those disciples who had been showered with bird excrement were furious about the matter, but there was little they could do. After all, they knew Bai Xiaochun hadn’t done any of it on purpose.

Even still, the hijinks he caused were happening over and over again. As such, terror regarding Bai Xiaochun was growing in the hearts of all.

Bai Xiaochun slept until afternoon. Upon waking up, he decided that he didn’t dare perform any more strange pill experiments. Leaving the sect, he went far out into the wilderness, where he found a safe place to release all of the animals from his bag of holding.

“You’re all free now....” he said with a bitter smile.

The animals who hadn’t eaten any of his medicinal pills quickly scurried away. However, the other animals simply stood there looking at Bai Xiaochun. He looked back at them for a moment before producing some more medicinal pills from his bag of holding.

“If you eat some of these pills, maybe you can start building up your own cultivation. Be good, alright? You really caused me a lot of trouble yesterday.” He gave a medicinal pill to each animal, then waved and turned to leave. It was at that point that nine-headed tiger let out a powerful roar.

Bai Xiaochun looked over his shoulder to find the nine-headed tiger looking at him with a strange gleam in its eyes, as if it were committing his features to memory. With that, it turned and sped off into the distance.

All the other animals had similar reactions as the tiger, including the ducks, the pigeons, the walking fish, the burping cats, the guardian geese, the eye-covered toads, and the twitching monkeys. With a final look at Bai Xiaochun, they scattered.

The last to leave was the thoughtful monkey, which looked at Bai Xiaochun with what seemed to be a gleam of intelligence. For some reason, Bai Xiaochun felt that there was something profound about that monkey.

After giving Bai Xiaochun a very deep look, it turned and headed off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun was left gaping. For some reason, he'd gotten the feeling that the monkey was just as intelligent as a human. The profound look in its eyes had been clear.

Thoughtfully pulling out a jade slip, he found the information about the pill he’d fed to that monkey.

“There’s something about that pill... that I don’t understand!” He looked thoughtfully at the departing animals, wishing them well. Their lives had changed because of him, and he truly hoped that they would be happy.

Eventually, wings sprouted from Bai Xiaochun's back, and he shot back toward the sect.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0106 awe-chapter-107

After returning to Fragrant Cloud Peak, Bai Xiaochun started getting a bit emotional. He still had a lot of mystery pills in his bag of holding, but he didn’t dare to test any of them out. When he walked along the mountain paths of the sect, the other disciples would either give him odd looks, or stare at him with hatred and anger.

“Why is it so hard to pursue my dreams?” he thought. “It’s not like it’s my fault. Uncle Li is the one who told me to focus on my research....” Sighing, he walked along until he reached his immortal's cave, where he sat staring off into space.

Earlier that year, Bai Xiaochun had frequently gone to Li Qinghou to ask questions about problems that popped up in his medicine concocting. Li Qinghou was often surprised by the questions. The depths to which Bai Xiaochun was delving in the Dao of medicine were unusual for ordinary apothecaries.

When combined with Bai Xiaochun’s incredible achievements with the stone steles, Li Qinghou couldn’t help but be filled with anticipation. However, every person had a different understanding of the Dao of medicine, so Li Qinghou wouldn’t answer any of Bai Xiaochun’s questions. Instead, he encouraged him to do his own tests. Only by doing so would he be able to develop a Dao of medicine that was his own. If he simply followed along with the crowd, he would never be able to make a name for himself as a grandmaster of the Dao of medicine. Besides, the origins of most pill formulas were the results of generations upon generations of experimentation.

“No. My dreams haven’t changed. What Uncle Li said was right. The only things which truly belong to you are the things you get on your own. Even if it gets harder, I still won’t give up!” Gritting his teeth, he decided that even if he couldn’t test out the mystery pills he’d made, he could still stay devoted to the Dao of medicine.

“I’m definitely going to become an amazing master apothecary!” Taking a deep breath, he headed back to his medicine concocting workstation, where he devoted himself completely to pill concocting.

Time passed. In the blink of an eye, several months had gone by. Bai Xiaochun was getting a lot more confident and skilled when it came to tier-3 spirit medicine. He solved one problem after another, and soon found that tier-3 spirit medicine weren’t really that difficult after all.

However...an even bigger problem was looming.

Despite his best efforts, and despite the fact that he was getting much more proficient with tier-3 spirit medicines, it was very difficult to raise his success rate. Generally speaking, out of ten batches of pills, five would succeed. Of the other five, one would produce an unidentifiable mystery pill, and four would be so impure as to be considered toxic.

He was starting to go a bit crazy. Even spirit enhancement did nothing to the toxic pills. Only low-grade pills could be raised to a higher level by spirit enhancement.

Although he wasn’t aware of it, his focus on medicine concocting had reached an obsessive-compulsive level. Unless he could reach the perfection he sought, he would feel uneasy.

“Impurities! How am I supposed to get rid of those impurities!?” His eyes were completely bloodshot as he stared down at his large collection of toxic pills. After some more thought, he considered going to ask Li Qinghou. But when he thought about how Li Qinghou had encouraged him to do his own observation and experimentation, he gritted his teeth and devoted himself even more madly to solving the problem.

Days went by. Eventually, people began to take note that Bai Xiaochun had grown quiet again. There were no explosions, and no animals running around. Everything was calm, although for some people, the newfound quiet was difficult to get used to.

Unfortunately, good things never last forever.... A month later, in the middle of the night, Bai Xiaochun sat in front of his pill furnace, hair disheveled, madly performing incantation gestures to control the earthflame. As he fed more medicinal plants into the furnace, his eyes grew more and more bloodshot.

“This is it. Almost done. I'm definitely going to solve all the problems this time. This is what I call creativity! I added thunder god vine, lightning rod flower, withertree rose and yin yang thistle, and invented a new technique. This is definitely going to be able to cleanse the impurities. It's definitely going to work. This is Bai Xiaochun’s one and only... Lightning Detox Grand Magic!” As his excitement built, the pill furnace began to tremble, and a medicinal aroma wafted out. Outside, the moon hung high in the cloudless night sky above Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Suddenly, a cloud layer formed, and a bolt of lightning descended toward Fragrant Cloud Peak. When it slammed into Bai Xiaochun’s cave, the cave’s spell formation trembled, and some of the lightning even pierced the spell formation and the stone of his immortal’s cave to land on the pill furnace.

Lightning crackled inside the immortal's cave, accompanied by Bai Xiaochun’s wild laughter. After the lightning faded away, he rushed excitedly over to the pill furnace.

Unfortunately, the only thing that remained inside was some soot and a bit of swirling smoke.

“Too much lightning rod flower!” he thought, tugging at his disheveled hair and looking every bit the mad scientist. With that, he produced more medicinal plants and began to prepare the ingredients.

Quite a few Fragrant Cloud Peak disciples had seen the lightning, and had noticed that it appeared to have fallen on Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave.

“So... even god is getting tired of Bai Xiaochun?”

“That must be it. The heavens do have eyes! Lightning is being sent to put an end to him....”

People had various ideas about what was happening, with many people rejoicing in Bai Xiaochun’s apparent misfortune. Some of the elders even noticed the lightning, and were quite surprised.

“Not even Peak Lord Li attracts thunder and lightning when concocting medicine. According to the legends, only tier-7 spirit medicines and higher provoke Tribulation Lightning. Just what is Bai Xiaochun doing?”

Three days later in the afternoon, laughter rang out from within Bai Xiaochun’s cave. Staring at the pill furnace, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture. Spiritual power erupted, and earthflame raged. With a roar, Bai Xiaochun slapped both hands down onto the surface of the pill furnace.

“Lightning Detox Grand Magic!”

As the pill furnace rumbled, clouds gathered above the summit of Fragrant Cloud Peak, and a single bolt of lightning shot down toward Bai Xiaochun’s cave.

This time, large numbers of disciples saw the shocking sight. Deafening thunder boomed as the lightning bolt slammed into his immortal's cave.

Inside, Bai Xiaochun excitedly inspected the pill furnace, only to find that it contained no pill, only some medicinal dregs and a bit of smoke. After taking a whiff, his head spun and his vision swam. Taking a few steps back, he even realized that a bit of froth had seeped out of the edges of his mouth.

“Too much thunder god vine...” he murmured. With that, he flopped down unconscious. Three days later he woke up, cleaned his face, and consumed a few medicinal pills. After clearing his head, he went back to concocting.

In the following days, more and more thunder boomed over Fragrant Cloud Peak. As the disciples witnessed lightning striking Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave with such frequency, they were struck speechless. Even the elders were shocked.

They began to suspect... that Bai Xiaochun really would be struck dead eventually.

Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun feared death so much, he was so bedeviled by his desire to concoct medicine that he completely forgot about the concept of death. He was fully immersed in the Dao of medicine, constantly adjusting the medicine formula he was working with, continually trying to perfect his Lightning Detox Grand Magic.

“Lightning Detox Grand Magic!”

BOOM!

“Dammit! Lightning Detox Grand Magic!”

BOOM!

By this point, the cave’s defensive spell formations had been rendered entirely useless, and anyone within earshot could hear Bai Xiaochun yelling at the top of his lungs. Gradually, word spread that the thunder and lightning had come because Bai Xiaochun was working on a method to detoxify spirit medicines.

This piqued the attention of quite a few sect elders, and they began to observe even more closely. Although the lightning continued to fall, strangely, nobody did anything to interfere.

Even Li Qinghou approved of Bai Xiaochun’s attempt at creativity, and would occasionally observe.

Unfortunately... good things never last forever. Even after a hundred attempts, Bai Xiaochun still couldn’t find the perfect ingredient ratio. He even began to add other medicinal plants, hoping that some of them would have an effect. One evening, Bai Xiaochun let out a roar, and lightning danced in the sky above. This time, it wasn’t a single bolt that fell down, it was ten.

Strangely, only one lightning bolt struck Bai Xiaochun’s area. The rest happened to fall in other locations on Fragrant Cloud Peak

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Considering how many bolts of lightning fell, it was no surprise that miserable shrieks could be heard all over the mountain. Fragrant Cloud Peak was once again thrown into a commotion. Zhou Xinqi’s immortal's cave was struck, but thankfully the spell formation shielded it from damage. Zhou Xinqi glared angrily over in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, barely able to hold back from cursing him aloud.

Li Qinghou and the Fragrant Cloud Peak elders placated the disciples; after all, they couldn’t help but approve of Bai Xiaochun’s devotion to the Dao of medicine.

However... Bai Xiaochun had truly gone mad. Two hours later, clouds filled the sky, and this time, nearly a hundred lightning bolts descended onto Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Booms rang out in all directions, and even more disciples looked up into the sky, shocked to the core. People ran back into their residences, unwilling to even set foot outside. Li Qinghou and the elders were struck speechless.

The sight of nearly a hundred lightning bolts crashing down into various areas of Fragrant Cloud Peak was completely shocking. Perhaps because Zhou Xinqi’s immortal's cave was so close to Bai Xiaochun’s, it ended up being struck by about six or seven of them. Her entire immortal's cave shook violently, and the spell formation shield distorted visibly.

Things weren’t over, though. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, everyone was thrown into a commotion again as more clouds appeared in the sky. This time, hundreds of lightning bolts could be seen forming.

When they slammed down onto Fragrant Cloud Peak, all of the immortal's caves trembled, and many other areas were badly damaged. Bai Xiaochun’s cave was almost destroyed.

Even more shocking... Zhou Xinqi’s cave attracted over fifty bolts of lightning. They slammed into the cave over and over again like Heavenly Tribulation, breaking open the cave itself until Zhou Xinqi tumbled out.

Her face pale, she fled off into the distance. Looking back at the flattened rubble that had been her immortal's cave, she screamed, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

There were a few other Inner Sect disciples who met similar fates. Their immortal's caves destroyed, they stormed over toward Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, vowing to settle accounts immediately, no matter what happened.... However, in that same moment, clouds roiled up above, even thicker than before, and an intense pressure weighed down on everything below. Zhou Xinqi’s heart began to pound, and her face fell. The disciples who had come to pick a fight with Bai Xiaochun gasped and began to shake visibly.

Even the peak lords of Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak noticed the clouds, and their eyes went wide. Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong saw it from afar, and his scalp began to tingle.

Shockingly, over a thousand lightning bolts could be seen within the clouds!!

“Th-that... that will destroy Fragrant Cloud Peak!!”

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Heavens! What is he doing over there? I can’t believe... I can’t believe there are so many lightning bolts!!”

“We’re under attack! We’re under attack!!” Countless cries of shock and alarm rose up in and around Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Everyone from Outer to Inner Sect disciples were trembling as an intense fear filled them.

Bai Xiaochun had tuned everything out, and didn't even realize what was happening. Eyes crimson, he stared at the pill furnace for a moment, then bellowed and slapped it with both hands.

“Lightning Detox Grand Magic!”

BOOM!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0107 awe-chapter-108

Even Li Qinghou gasped in response to what was happening. Having no time to actually dispel the lightning, he quickly performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger toward the sky. In response, a resplendent, multi-colored shield sprang into existence above Fragrant Cloud Peak.

At the same time, the more than one thousand lightning bolts began to descend from the clouds. Their target was Fragrant Cloud Peak, but the shield blocked their progress. Massive rumbling sounds echoed out, and ripples spread out across the shield as it began to neutralize the lightning bolts.

After thirty breaths of time, the final lightning bolt was neutralized, and the multi-colored shield faded away. The disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak were left trembling, the intense feeling of danger still lingering in their hearts. After a moment, they turned with bloodshot eyes to look in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s cave.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” countless disciples howled. It was hard to say who made the first move, but soon, a huge mob was rushing toward his immortal's cave. Elders joined the crowd, and even Li Qinghou flew in the same direction in a bright beam of light.

Within his crumbling immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun was staring anxiously at the pill furnace, surprised that no lightning had come. Distracted, he suddenly realized that a deafening rumble could be heard outside, a sound which far exceeded the thunder from earlier.

Face draining of blood, he leaped to his feet, which was when he realized that the immortal's cave was on the verge of collapsing. Without another moment of hesitation, he ran outside. Moments later, the rumbling caused by countless running people pushed the immortal's cave past the point where it could hold together, and it collapsed.

Bai Xiaochun gaped mutely as the dust billowed out in all directions. That was when he realized that he was surrounded by a sea of furious Fragrant Cloud Peak disciples.

“That--”

Before he could begin his explanation, Zhou Xinqi’s shrill cry pierced through the crowd. “Bai Xiaochun, you owe me an immortal's cave!!”

“Take Bai Xiaochun down!!”

“Dammit! You destroyed my immortal's cave!!”

“This is over the top! You weren’t really concocting medicine, were you? First were the exploding pill furnaces, then all those weird animals, and finally this lightning. Y-y-you....” The crowd was completely enraged after having been tormented for two years in a row by Bai Xiaochun....

Bai Xiaochun felt more wronged than ever, considering that he really had been concocting pills. But then he noticed that Zhou Xinqi’s immortal's cave had been reduced to rubble, and suddenly felt an apologetic twinge in his heart.

Hou Xiaomei and Hou Yunfei were there in the crowd, but even they looked a bit helpless. Hou Xiaomei looked over at Bai Xiaochun, gritted her teeth, and was just about to start defending him to the crowd when Hou Yunfei fearfully clamped his hand over her mouth. It was a delicate moment, given how incensed the crowd was....

The disciples of Fragrant Cloud Peak had all determined that letting Bai Xiaochun continue to concoct pills was unacceptable. As long as he was working at pill concocting, none of them would feel safe. When they thought about what had just occurred with the lightning, their shouts of fury grew even more intense.

Even as the crowd teetered on the version of losing control, the elders arrived, along with Li Qinghou. The disciples instantly quieted down, looking over woefully at Li Qinghou, clearly imploring him to take action.

Li Qinghou felt a huge headache coming on as he glared at Bai Xiaochun. Inciting lightning wasn’t something that was incredibly difficult to do. Lightning was a yang element, so the only thing one had to do was provoke the proper transformations in plants and vegetation to create a yang aura, and thus attract lightning. However, even Li Qinghou was shocked by the sheer amount of lightning that had descended. Furthermore, Li Qinghou was also fairly certain that the exaggerated nature of the event had something to do with Fragrant Cloud Peak itself, which fundamentally possessed a yin aura.

Of course, the ordinary disciples wouldn’t know that, and thus wouldn't know that Bai Xiaochun had only been one instigating factor.

Bai Xiaochun truly felt sorry for everyone, but also felt that he was getting the short end of the stick. Lacking any other options, he simply look anxiously at Li Qinghou.

With a slight shake of his head, Li Qinghou said, “Bai Xiaochun, from here on out, you’re not allowed to concoct medicine on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Leave the mountain to do any concocting!”

The disciples started to get excited at Li Qinghou’s brilliance.

“Yeah! Leave the mountain to do your concocting. Stay away from Fragrant Cloud Peak!”

“He's not concocting medicine, he's trying to kill us!!”

“That’s right! If you keep concocting medicine the way you have been, you’re going to destroy Fragrant Cloud Peak! There’s nothing strange about being asked to leave!!”

“But I--”

Before Bai Xiaochun could even begin to explain, Li Qinghou waved his sleeve. “The matter’s been decided. Alright, everyone, take your leave.”

Having finished speaking, Li Qinghou glared harshly at Bai Xiaochun, who immediately bit his tongue. He almost looked like he was going to cry. He truly felt horrible for disappointing Li Qinghou so badly.

The disciples in the crowd gave their final glares to Bai Xiaochun and then gradually dispersed. After everyone was gone, Li Qinghou stood there with Bai Xiaochun and let out a long sigh.

“Okay, explain your Lightning Detox Grand Magic to me.”

Bai Xiaochun looked up. Eyes glittering, he smiled broadly, and began to explain all of the details of his grand magic. Upon finishing, he stood there looking at Li Qinghou in anticipation.

Li Qinghou thought for a moment, and then nodded his head.

“The Dao of medicine is boundless, and no one could ever dare to say that it has a limit. Anything can happen during the journey upon that long path. The method you attempted has been tried and tested by others in the past, and they all failed. Lightning is powerful, and very difficult to control. Although some degree of success is possible, you can only go so far.

“You should wait until your cultivation base is a bit higher before trying again. At the very least, Foundation Establishment. Right now, any more attempts would be useless.” Seeing how obsessed Bai Xiaochun was with the Dao of medicine, he did his best to explain things gently. After finishing, he patted Bai Xiaochun encouragingly on the shoulder, then turned to leave.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and sat down blankly. He really felt bad for causing so many immortal's caves to be destroyed. After thinking about what Li Qinghou had told him, he decided that, for the moment, he would stop working on the Lightning Detox Grand Magic.

“I need to take my research in a different direction,” he thought. “I need to find another way to cleanse the impurities, something that doesn’t use lightning, and that doesn’t affect other people. But how do I do that?” After some more thought, he looked toward Violet Cauldron Peak, and his eyes began to shine.

Night hadn’t fallen yet, so Bai Xiaochun straightened up a bit, then looked back at his destroyed immortal's cave, his eyes shining with determination.

“For the Dao of medicine, and for my eternal life pill!” With that, he walked down Fragrant Cloud Peak and headed toward Violet Cauldron Peak.

Bai Xiaochun was already very familiar with Violet Cauldron Peak. Back in the day, he and Big Fatty Zhang had covered nearly half the mountain in their search for spirit tail chickens. Later on, when he became so entranced with being called Sect Uncle, he had come to stroll around the mountain on numerous occasions.

Setting foot on Violet Cauldron Peak, he suddenly felt very calm. The disciples here weren’t as irritable as those on Fragrant Cloud Peak, and in fact, many of them called out to him in greeting. Bai Xiaochun quickly began to sigh happily.

All smiles, he walked along the familiar path toward Big Fatty Zhang’s residence. Big Fatty Zhang still hadn’t reached the Inner Sect yet, so he still lived in the same place as before. It was evening by the time Bai Xiaochun reached the front gate.

When Big Fatty Zhang saw that it was Bai Xiaochun, he immediately broke into a wide smile. Once they were both inside his courtyard, Big Fatty Zhang proudly showed off his amazing spirit enhancement abilities, and explained that he was now renowned as a miraculous spirit enhancer here on Violet Cauldron Peak.

Bai Xiaochun immediately offered words of congratulations, which of course made Big Fatty Zhang even happier than before. Finally, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat.

“Eldest Brother, there’s something I wanted to discuss with you.”

“Say the word!” Big Fatty Zhang said, waving his hand in grandiose fashion.

“Could you help me find a place to stay on Violet Cauldron Peak? I want to do some medicine concocting here.” With that, he looked pleadingly at Big Fatty Zhang.

“Concoct medicine? You’re already an Inner Sect disciple! Your immortal's cave should have a medicine concocting workstation. Oh, by the way, I was in secluded meditation for a while. I heard Fragrant Cloud Peak had an incident with some lightning. What happened exactly?” Having been out of the public eye for most of the year so far, Big Fatty Zhang wasn’t too familiar with events beyond the borders of Violet Cauldron Peak. After all, Fragrant Cloud Peak was a different mountain altogether, so naturally he wouldn’t know as much.

Bai Xiaochun frowned bleakly. “Um... I was a bit careless in my pill concocting and attracted some lightning. My immortal's cave was actually destroyed.”

“Huh?” Big Fatty Zhang said, his eyes going wide.

“Listen, Eldest Brother, you don’t have to worry,” Bai Xiaochun said, slapping his chest proudly. “I hereby swear that if I concoct medicine on Violet Cauldron Peak, I won’t attract any lightning. Seriously, I’m the kind of person who keeps my word. Besides, I can concoct tier-3 spirit medicine now. I’ll give you a whole bottle when I'm finished!”

When Big Fatty Zhang heard Bai Xiaochun talk about tier-3 spirit medicine, his heart began to thump. Tier-3 spirit medicines were available in the local market, but their prices were astronomical. Considering what Bai Xiaochun was offering him, there was no way he would refuse.

Coupled with his pledge, Big Fatty Zhang only had to think for a moment before laughing heartily.

“No problem at all. I don’t have anywhere to concoct pills here, but I'm friends with the Elder Brother who manages the immortal's caves. If we grease the wheels a bit, he can secretly get you into an Inner Sect disciple’s cave. Of course, it can’t be a long-term thing.”

“Not long-term!” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes shining with excitement. “Not long at all. Half a year at the most!”

Big Fatty Zhang nodded. Leaving Bai Xiaochun behind, he went away for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, then returned proudly with a command medallion.

“Done,” he announced. “It’s not a very good immortal's cave, but it has a medicine concocting workstation. It’s pretty close, I’ll walk you over.”

Bai Xiaochun let out a cheer, then flattered Big Fatty Zhang a bit more. Bursting with happiness, Big Fatty Zhang led Bai Xiaochun off to the immortal's cave.

It was relatively simple and crude for an immortal’s cave, and very small, nothing like his cave back on Fragrant Cloud Peak. However, it had a medicine concocting workstation, which was enough for Bai Xiaochun.

Sitting there looking very satisfied, he took a deep breath and said, “Eldest Brother truly is a loyal friend!”

Moved, he reiterated to himself that he must not attempt any experiments with the Lightning Detox Grand Magic. Nor could he test mystery pills on animals. As far as exploding pill furnaces, he was sure he could avoid that. Considering all that, he was convinced that no problems would arise because of his medicine concocting.

“It’s time to research more ways to cleanse impurities!” Calming himself, he produced a handful of spirit plants, which he began to analyze in detail. Slowly, he immersed himself in the Dao of medicine.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0108 awe-chapter-109

During his first month on Violet Cauldron Peak, Bai Xiaochun worked quietly in the immortal's cave. None of the disciples around him even noticed that he was there. Big Fatty Zhang started to relax. At first, he had come to visit Bai Xiaochun fairly frequently to watch him at his concocting work, but eventually stopped visiting so often.

But then... another month passed.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he looked at the medicinal pills in front of him. After some detailed examination, he began to laugh loudly. During that month of work, he had made four major efforts to try to come up with a new method for cleansing impurities, and now, he had finally found his new direction.

“Using lightning to purge the pills with outside force is one method. But another method is to purge the spirit medicine from the inside!

“Bai Xiaochun, you really are a genius. Hahaha! I know exactly what to do. By using the principles of mutual augmentation and suppression, I can create a burning power even as I concoct the pills, something that will expunge the impurities. After the impurities are forced out, the final medicinal pill will no longer be toxic!” Getting more excited, he took a deep breath and got to work.

After organizing all of the medicinal plant and then beginning to feed them into the pill furnace, he started adding even more plants that weren’t part of the pill formula, keeping careful records about everything he did.

Four days later, he once again slipped into a state of bedeviled focus. Circling continuously around the pill furnace, he made occasional adjustments to the earthflame, sometimes adding in other spirit medicines, following his instincts to either dilute or strengthen the mixture.

As night fell, Bai Xiaochun's excitement grew as popping sounds began to ring out from the pill furnace. Soon, the furnace began to shake, and then a noxious black smoke billowed out. Bai Xiaochun quickly waved his sleeve to blow the smoke outside of the immortal's cave, where it floated up into the air. Some of it ended up being absorbed by the clouds above Violet Cauldron Peak, and some was carried by the wind in the direction of Green Crest Peak.

After the immortal's cave was cleared of smoke, Bai Xiaochun hurried over to the pill furnace and peered inside. It contained a single medicinal pill which he picked up and examined. It was clearly a toxic pill; however, whereas the previous version had been one hundred percent impure, this one was only about ninety-eight or ninety-nine percent impure.

He was quite pleased, and was now sure that he was on the right track. All he had to do was keep working toward a method to find the perfect combination of elements.

“Hahaha! This concocting method is much more low-profile. No lightning. No thunder. I'm not affecting anyone else at all!” He was very happy. After all, he really didn't want to arouse the anger of the other disciples because of his concocting work.

Feeling very satisfied, he sat down cross-legged to meditate for a while. After finishing his daily work with the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture, the Undying Live Forever

Technique, and the Waterswamp Kingdom, he headed over to the pill furnace to begin concocting again.

He devoted himself completely to his work. Every day, he would concoct four or five batches, and each time, black smoke would billow out, which he would subsequently blow out of the immortal's cave, where it rose up into the sky.

Ten days later, he was delighted to discover that while out of every ten batches, four were toxic pills, the levels of impurity were steadily dropping. Lately, they had dipped to about ninety-seven percent. It was clearly a reduction from the previous level of one hundred percent.

That wasn’t the only progress he had made either. The pills that came out successfully also had fewer impurities. If he continued on down this path, he would be able to consistently produce mid-grade tier-3 spirit medicine.

Eyes burning with passion, he completely tuned out the outside world and went crazy with concocting medicine. It was almost like being in secluded meditation. He kept careful records, and constantly made adjustments as required. Soon, he increased his productivity to the point where he was producing seven or eight batches per day. Black smoke was rising up into the sky almost constantly. Half a month later, he was delighted to find that the impurity levels in the toxic pills had dropped to ninety-five percent.

By the time Bai Xiaochun had been on Violet Cauldron Peak for two months, many disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak were beginning to breathe sighs of relief. They weren’t sure where exactly Bai Xiaochun had gone off to, but they could sense that peace had been restored.

Other than Big Fatty Zhang, no one else on Violet Cauldron Peak knew that Bai Xiaochun had come there to concoct medicine. However, word had been spreading about all the things that had occurred on Fragrant Cloud Peak because of him. As Big Fatty Zhang heard more of the stories, he began to tremble.

He could never have imagined that Bai Xiaochun could cause such a huge stir on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Although he was a bit nervous, Bai Xiaochun had been very quiet, and hadn’t drawn any attention at all. Gradually, Big Fatty Zhang began to relax again.

Time passed. By this point, Bai Xiaochun had been at his concocting work for three months straight. Black smoke poured continuously out of the immortal's cave, to the point where it was finally starting to attract some attention from nearby Violet Cauldron Peak disciples. However, none of them gave it much thought.

Big Fatty Zhang was calmer than ever. However, he had noticed something annoying lately, which was that it had started raining on Violet Cauldron Peak. It was a very strange rain, considering that it only fell on Violet Cauldron Peak, and nowhere else.

Furthermore, the rain was dirty; if it fell on you, it would leave dark streaks behind. Gradually, other disciples on Violet Cauldron Peak started to notice, and people began wondering what exactly was going on. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was madly focused on pill concocting.... By this point, he was up to about fifteen batches per day.

He almost never took breaks, and was starting to look a bit sallow and thin. As for the toxic pills, their impurity levels continued to drop. They were now at about ninety-two to ninety-three percent.

“Only a few more months, and I’ll be able to get the toxicity levels below ninety percent. Then they’ll count as low-grade spirit medicines!” With a whoop of excitement, Bai Xiaochun immersed himself even further in concocting. Meanwhile, the sound of an uproar was building outside.

Big Fatty Zhang was walking along on one of the paths that wound through Violet Cauldron Peak when suddenly, the rain began to fall even harder than before. At the same time, an acrid odor began to fill the air. Then, Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes went wide as he realized that the rain splashing down onto him actually hurt. Furthermore, his clothing... was beginning to melt.

Big Fatty Zhang gaped in shock, then let out a cry of alarm when he realized that it would only be moments before his clothes were completely melted. He immediately dashed back in the direction of his residence.

Along the way, more cries of alarm rang out. As he ran along, Big Fatty Zhang saw other Violet Cauldron Peak disciples speeding along, their clothing in ruins. The more the rainwater soaked them, the more the fabric melted. There were even a few unlucky disciples who were already completely naked.

“Heavens! What's... what’s happening!?!?”

“My clothes!!”

“What kind of rain is this? It stinks, and even hurts! It's actually melting my clothes!!”

“Dammit! Even magical shields can’t stop it!” Violet Cauldron Peak was in a complete uproar. Anyone who didn’t get out of the rain immediately would quickly find their clothing melting off of their bodies.

Violet Cauldron Peak was devolving into chaos. Even some of the long-time Inner Sect disciples were going crazy. In all of their lives, they had never experienced anything like this. The screams of the female disciples were especially piercing.

The elders of Violet Cauldron Peak stared in shock. There were even some elders who were outside lecturing about magical techniques. When the rain fell on them, they trembled....

At the same time, many people looked over at Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, from which masses of black smoke billowed. As it rose up into the sky, the noxious black rain fell harder.

There was one particular Inner Sect disciple who did his best to cover up his clothing. Alarmed, he flew along until he happened to run directly into a cloud of black smoke.

Instantly, his clothing was gone.... Letting out a shriek of alarm, he unleashed the power of lightning, and was soon wreathed in electricity. Moments later, he donned a new robe, only to find that it was already melting.

“What’s going on? Whoever’s in that immortal's cave, get out here!” That Inner Sect disciple... was none other than Lu Tianlei.

When other people noticed the source of the problem, the began to roar in rage.

“Dammit! It's coming from there! I knew something was off. Nobody was living in that immortal's cave before, but for the past few months I’ve seen black smoke coming out of it!”

“That black smoke is what's causing this disaster! It's been rising up into the air for months now. It’s affected the climate! That’s why this acid rain is falling!!”

As people cried out in rage, Big Fatty Zhang was holed up in his residence, staring out blankly at what was happening outside. His mind was spinning as he looked at the falling rain, and suddenly, he understood how the disciples back on Fragrant Cloud Peak had felt....

At the top of the mountain, the peak lord of Violet Cauldron Peak, Xu Meixiang, was looking around in stupefaction. Not daring to set foot outside her mansion, she waved her finger toward the sky, activating Violet Cauldron Peak’s spell formation. A shield of light appeared, which temporarily stopped the rain from falling onto the mountain.

However, the shield was visibly being eaten away by the destructive rain.

The disciples of Violet Cauldron Peak took advantage of the brief respite to put on new clothing. Incensed, and bursting with killing intent, they rushed in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave.

Soon, the disciples on Fragrant Cloud Peak noticed that the Violet Cauldron Peak spell formation shield had been activated, and noticed that rain was falling over it.

“What’s happening over on Violet Cauldron Peak?”

Even as they pondered the situation, the voices of countless individuals joined together to cause a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering roar of rage to rise up from the direction of Violet Cauldron Peak.

“Bai. Xiao. CHUN!!”

The sound echoed out in all directions, shaking even Violet Cauldron Peak itself. The disciples from Fragrant Cloud Peak looked around, shaken. Then, the image of a certain individual appeared in their minds, and they understood everything.

“Bai Xiaochun went to Violet Cauldron Peak to concoct medicine!”

“That’s definitely the reason. The peak lord said he couldn't concoct medicine here, so he went to Violet Cauldron Peak!!”

The roaring of the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples caused Bai Xiaochun to scream in terror. He had just been about to excitedly start another batch when he heard the sound of countless magical techniques battering the immortal's cave. Gaping in shock, he looked out to see a mob of enraged disciples surrounding the cave.

Lu Tianlei was there, electricity dancing around him as he charged forward.

Wings popped out of the terrified Bai Xiaochun’s back, and he took to flight. Enraged shouts echoed out behind him as the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples gave chase.

Big Fatty Zhang watched from a distance, swallowing hard and quickly pretending as if he hadn’t seen anything. Under no circumstances did he wish anyone to know that he was the one who had arranged for Bai Xiaochun to get an immortal's cave.

Even as the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples began to chase Bai Xiaochun down, all of a sudden....

Cries of alarm rang up from the direction of Green Crest Peak.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0109 awe-chapter-110

Something had happened which not a single person had been aware of. Partially due to monsoon winds, only some of the black smoke had made it into the clouds above Violet Cauldron Peak. The rest had been carried by the wind to Green Crest Peak.

If it had only been a tiny bit, it would eventually have just faded away without doing anything. But considering the daily buildup, it was no surprise that when rain began to fall on Violet Cauldron Peak, the effects eventually spread to Green Crest Peak....

Originally, the disciples from Green Crest Peak had simply watched the events playing out on Fragrant Cloud Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak, shocked, but at the same time, gloating in the misfortune of the other disciples. Furthermore, they had all taken steps to prevent Bai Xiaochun from ever coming to Green Crest Peak.

Third Fatty Hei's friends had even warned her against taking him in.

But then, the raindrops began to fall. Shocked expressions appeared as people looked up to find that the sky above Green Crest Peak was filled with black clouds.

Although they weren't as dense as those above Violet Cauldron Peak, once the acid rain began to fall, and the disciples' clothes began to melt, cries of alarm rose up.

As the screams intensified, numerous beams of sword light shot out from Green Crest Peak toward Violet Cauldron Peak, joining the group of disciples from there who were chasing down Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Dammit! Don’t tell me that Bai Xiaochun secretly came to Green Crest Peak too!”

“He must have! That vile fiend! He definitely snuck over here to concoct medicine!!”

The Green Crest Peak disciples were going mad. Quite a few were already on the verge of losing all of their clothing. Putting on new clothing didn’t do any good. Green Crest Peak devolved into enraged chaos, and the disciples quickly became allies with the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples in their desire to catch Bai Xiaochun.

Shangguan Tianyou was among them. Although his robes were still in one piece, his murderous rage burned hot. At long last, he had found an opportunity to pay Bai Xiaochun back for the events in the Wildweed Mountains.

Rumbling sounds filled the air, along with Bai Xiaochun’s screams. It was bad enough that the disciples of Violet Cauldron Peak were chasing him down, but then Green Crest Peak joined in.

Then he heard what the Green Crest Peak disciples were saying, and he felt more deeply maligned than ever.

“I never went to Green Crest Peak. Really!!”

All of the more than 10,000 disciples from Green Crest Peak were in motion now, speeding along on their flying swords. When they heard Bai Xiaochun’s explanation, though, they only became angrier. “Liar!”

As the sword light bore down on Bai Xiaochun, the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples unleashed countless magical techniques. Bai Xiaochun was so scared he was screaming at the top of his lungs.

“I've shed my own blood for the sect--”

BOOM! The attacks of the Violet Cauldron Peak disciples were driving Bai Xiaochun to near madness.

“AIIIIEEEE! I’m a Prestige disciple!!”

BOOOOOOM! As the countless beams of sword light closed in, Bai Xiaochun fluttered the wings on his back, and sweat poured down his face.

“I’m the Junior Brother of the sect leader!”

“Even if you were the son of the sect leader, we’d still beat the daylights out of you!!” The disciples of two mountain peaks joined together in their anger as they chased after Bai Xiaochun with deadly intent.

“You people... you people are so unreasonable! They’re trying to kill me! They’re gonna kill me!!” Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was entirely numb. He had done nothing more than concoct some pills, and these people had gone completely mad.

Looking like he was about to cry, he pushed forward with as much speed as possible as he shot toward Fragrant Cloud Peak. Now, he suddenly felt as if the disciples from there were a lot more easy-going. After all, Fragrant Cloud Peak was his home.

A huge mob was chasing him back toward Fragrant Cloud Peak. He looked like a mouse whose tail had been stepped on as he shot up the mountain, the other disciples in hot pursuit.

Just as the disciples from the other mountains were about to step foot on Fragrant Cloud Peak, an enraged, thunderous snort echoed out from the summit of the mountain.

“Turn your asses around this instant!”

The voice sounded like the boom of thunder. All of the disciples preparing to charge up Fragrant Cloud Peak coughed up mouthfuls of blood and tumbled backward. A massive power roiled out, pushing all of them away. When the shock left their faces, they exchanged glances and quickly realized how impulsive they had been. Bowing their heads, they clasped hands in apology and retreated.

The commotion quickly died down.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw what had just happened, he was deeply moved. He almost felt like a young child who had been fighting, and losing, only to have a parent step in to the rescue and wallop the opponent.

“Yeah, that’s right!” he shouted, gesticulating wildly. “Turn your asses around! Especially you people from Green Crest Peak, you--” He was just about to explain how he really hadn’t concocted any medicine on Green Crest Peak when all of a sudden, pressure weighed down on him as Li Qinghou materialized up ahead. Face grim, he waved his sleeve, causing Bai Xiaochun to fly through the air toward him. A moment later, he had Bai Xiaochun by the neck.

“Uncle Li, I-I-I really didn't go to Green Crest-- AIIIIIEEEE!!” It didn’t matter how fast he blurted the words, he couldn’t finish speaking before Li Qinghou flew up into the air.

The countless disciples from the other two mountain peaks watched in utter joy as the scene played out. As for the Fragrant Cloud Peak disciples, they looked on with odd expressions before letting out long sighs.

“Bai Xiaochun really got unlucky this time!”

“He pissed off the peak lord. He’s really in for it now.”

“He didn’t just piss off the peak Lord, he drove the entire south bank crazy.” As countless disciples looked on in delight, the blood drained from Bai Xiaochun’s face. He had just noticed which direction Li Qinghou was heading. It was none other than....

“10,000.... 10,000 Snakes Valley!!” Shrieking, he said, “I'm sorry, Uncle Li!”

It didn’t take long for Li Qinghou to take the wailing Bai Xiaochun behind Fragrant Cloud Peak to 10,000 Snakes Valley. As soon as they set foot inside, countless vipers looked up and hissed loudly. It was even possible to see the venom dripping from their fangs.

Bai Xiaochun was so scared he started shaking. Most terrifying of all was that Li Qinghou continued toward the cave in the middle of the valley.

“I just wanted to concoct medicine! I didn’t do it on purpose.... Uncle Li, you have to listen to me! I was just doing what you told me. I didn’t concoct medicine on Fragrant Cloud Peak! I---”

All his frantic explanation did, however, was cause Li Qinghou’s expression to grow even darker. He even sped up as he headed deep into the cave.

At first, everything was black, but soon, one pair of cold eyes after another snapped open to stare icily at Bai Xiaochun and Li Qinghou. Because Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base had advanced so much, he was able to see their auras much more clearly now.

He was petrified to find that this place was far, far more terrifying than he had previously imagined.

That was even more the case now that he had mastered all five volumes of spirit creatures. Even though they were surrounded by darkness, when he circulated his spiritual power, he quickly identified many of the snakes, and recalled the information about them.

"A three steps viper!

"A morningeye anaconda!!

"That's... a goldsilver verminsnake!" To his shock, Bai Xiaochun found that all of the snakes were venomous, and according to the five volumes of spirit creatures, they were incredibly powerful. In fact, even Foundation Establishment cultivators who didn't deal with them quickly enough would be killed.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Li Qinghou had dragged Bai Xiaochun to the depths of the cave, into a huge subterranean cavern filled with countless hissing snakes. There were even nine that exuded the power of a cultivation base equivalent to the eighth level of Qi Condensation. Their eyes were bright red, and their fangs constantly dripped with shocking venom.

A certain distance into the cavern was a stone hut surrounded by a spell formation that kept everything within thirty meters clear of snakes. That was where the snakes piled up en masse. Despite their distance from the hut itself, Bai Xiaochun still felt an intense sensation of deadly crisis.

A thump could be heard as Li Qinghou waved his sleeve, sending Bai Xiaochun tumbling down next to the stone hut.

“Want to concoct medicine? Do it here. There’s earthflame and a pill furnace. And take this. At least here you won't disturb any of the other disciples!” Snorting coldly, Li Qinghou tossed a bag of holding over to Bai Xiaochun. “You’ll find plenty of medicinal plants and food in there. Stay here and stay out of trouble. After you’ve had some time to think, I’ll come take you out.” With a final glare at Bai Xiaochun, he did a final check to make sure the spell formation was working, then flew away. Having no other choice, he had finally resorted to using this place to try to grind away some of Bai Xiaochun’s mischievousness.

Of course, deep down, he truly cared for him, and was careful to make sure the spell formation was in good order. Based on his understanding of Bai Xiaochun, he was certain that he wouldn’t step out of the spell formation.

Bai Xiaochun appeared to be on the verge of tears as he watched Li Qinghou leave. Moments later, without the pressure from Li Qinghou to suppress them, the snakes started to slither about here and there. They bared their fangs, and even tried to break through the spell formation shield, sending venom splattering about in all directions.

Further off in the distance were some snakes in the eighth level of Qi Condensation who eyed Bai Xiaochun coldly, almost as if they wished to swallow him up. Bai Xiaochun began to pant.

“Those are bloodgod cobras! I can’t believe they're in the eighth level of Qi Condensation. One drop of their venom could kill ten thousand people!”

Heart pounding with fear, he looked around a bit more, and realized that there were three snakes who were comparable to the ninth level of Qi Condensation, and there were even two in the great circle.

The fluctuations that emanated from them were not the same as those from cultivators. These were deadly venomous snakes!

Most heart-pounding of all was that there was one set of fluctuations that seemed even more powerful than the rest. And all of them seemed to be staring at him.

Soon, the sky outside grew dark, and Bai Xiaochun sat there, sighing miserably.

“What do I do now...?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0110 awe-chapter-111

It was deep in the night, and the moon hung bright in the sky. It was very dark inside the cave, but Bai Xiaochun could hear a cacophony of slithering and hissing outside. It was hair-raisingly terrifying.

The stone hut was small, and other than the earthflame formation and the pill furnace, was completely empty.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and activated the earthflame formation, causing the light of flames to flicker out around him. That made him feel a bit better. He was the type of person who tended to get used to new environments easily. Although he was scared, he knew he had to adapt. A moment later, he peered into the bag of holding Li Qinghou had left him, whereupon his eyes went wide.

It was filled with a massive quantity of medicinal plants, some of which cost a huge amount of merit points to acquire from the sect. There were even a few that he recognized from the five volumes of plants and vegetation as types that the sect didn't offer.

There was a huge variety of all types of medicinal plants, too many to count. If he used them carefully, he would be able to concoct not only tier-3 spirit medicines, but possibly even tier-4 spirit medicines.

Getting excited, he heated up the pill furnace and then began concocting some medicine. As long as he could distract himself from the sounds coming from outside, he could still continue his research. This time, he was sure that he would be able to reduce the impurities in the tier-3 medicine below ninety percent.

Time passed. Three months later, Bai Xiaochun’s hair was disheveled, and he had completely forgotten where he was. He was utterly focused on medicine concocting, and as for the black smoke which resulted in acid rain on the outside, it was actually refreshingly nourishing to the vipers in the cave. The snakes struggled to be the first to breathe it in, after which they emitted deafening hisses.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay any attention to that, though. He was at a critical point in his concocting, and had reduced the impurities in the toxic pills all the way down to ninety-one or ninety-two percent. Just a bit further, and he would have succeeded in reaching his goal.

His eyes were bloodshot as he madly concocted medicine. In the blink of an eye, three more months passed.

He had now been living in the snake cave for half a year. In addition to his concocting, he practiced cultivation. He was now able to fully unleash the Waterswamp Kingdom, which resulted in incredible pressure. Unfortunately, he was completely incapable of summoning his life essence spirit.

He’d also grown accustomed to the snakes. He would even take the occasional walk outside of the stone hut. The snakes would eye him coldly, ready to pounce the instant he set foot outside of the spell formation shield.

Li Qinghou occasionally came to check in on Bai Xiaochun in secret. After coming to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun was safe, he breathed a sigh of relief.

Because Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been seen for half a year, the south bank quieted back down. There was no thunder or lightning, no noxious clouds, no acid rain. Everyone enjoyed the peace and tranquility.

Occasionally, people would think about Bai Xiaochun, but most people had heard that Li Qinghou took him to 10,000 Snakes Valley. Furthermore, whenever people considering breaking sect rules, they would think of Bai Xiaochun and say to themselves, “I can't pull a Bai Xiaochun! This is wrong. If Bai Xiaochun did something like that, he would definitely be punished. I should rethink things.”

Time passed. Another six months. It had now been a full year since Bai Xiaochun had disappeared from the public eye. Even Zheng Yuandong was sighing.

“Sending Bai Xiaochun to 10,000 Snakes Valley was definitely the right thing to do,” he thought. “The only things there are snakes. He won’t be able to cause problems for anyone.”

However, whether it was Zheng Yuandong, Li Qinghou, or the disciples of the three mountain peaks, all of them... had clearly underestimated Bai Xiaochun....

On one particular day, Bai Xiaochun was there in his stone hut, having just finished concocting a batch of medicinal pills. There was no black smoke. The pill inside the furnace was no longer a toxic pill, but rather, an eighty-nine percent impure low-grade medicinal pill!

Although it would be considered low-grade even among other low-grade pills, it was still completely different than a toxic pill.

Excited, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. After trying another batch, he confirmed his success. At long last, when it came to tier-3 spirit medicine... he could succeed one hundred percent of the time!

With this level of mastery of tier-3 spirit medicine, even pill formulas he hadn’t encountered before would have a perfect success rate after he solved any minor problems which cropped up.

Thoroughly stirred up, he rushed out of the stone hut, laughing proudly. He had paid a very heavy price, and spent a huge amount of time, to reach this point.

Actually, now that he thought about it, even being thrown into the snake cave was worth it!

He took a deep breath, swished his sleeve, and looked with disdain... at the snakes surrounding him.

“Next comes cultivation. I need to reach the ninth level of Qi Condensation, and get my Undying Gold Skin!!” Feeling very proud of himself, he returned to the stone hut, where he once again began to concoct medicine.

Pulling out his turtle-wok, he performed spirit enhancements on all of the medicinal pills he had produced, then consumed them.

His cultivation base increased steadily. He had already been in the great circle of the eighth level of Qi Condensation, just a sliver away from breaking through to the next level. A month later, as he sat there cross-legged meditating, visualizing an enormous war mammoth, his cultivation base exploded with power. The spiritual power within him thrummed like a hundred rivers flowing together into a sea.

After closer inspection, the sea actually looked like a dragon, as though a dragon had actually come to exist inside of him.

As it circulated through his qi vessels, his fleshly body emitted cracking sounds, and the image of a mammoth appeared behind him.

It was a huge beast with long fur, rising up on its hind legs to let out a powerful roar. When it slammed its feet down onto the ground, ripples spread out through the air, causing the nearby snakes to tremble. The eight bloodgod cobras' eyes shone with piercing light, their scales stood on end, and the hoods on their heads opened wide.

Bai Xiaochun had been observing the image of the mammoth from the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture. The resulting surge of spiritual power pushed his cultivation base all the way from the eighth level of Qi Condensation into the ninth!

The power of his fleshly body rocketed up, and his qi and blood flowed rapidly. He actually seemed to grow a bit larger as every bit of flesh and muscle flourished.

Apparently because of his Undying Live Forever Technique, his silver skin flickered, and something strange happened. It was as if his fleshly body had come into contact with a type of shackle, a barrier that someone with an ordinary body couldn't break through!

Rumbling filled his mind, and everything felt like it was spinning. It was like he was a bottle which, after being filled with water, had more water forced into it, causing the bottle to begin to shake and crack.

A tremor ran through him, and his eyes snapped open to reveal an astonishing, piercing light.

If any ordinary disciple in the Qi Condensation stage could see Bai Xiaochun right now, that person would be shaken to the core. Although the pressure he exuded was not that of a Foundation Establishment cultivator it would still cause anyone to tremble in capitulation.

It was like a pressure which could crush down on all living things!

“Everyone has shackles,” he murmured. “Regardless of the level of cultivation base or fleshly body, there are shackles which people cannot break through.... So, the shackles mentioned in the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture... are the same shackles I heard about before!

“In the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture... the power of the mammoth represents the body, and can push a person’s fleshly body to the very pinnacle. The power of the dragon represents the spirit, and can push a person’s cultivation base to the limit of Qi Condensation. That is the purpose of the first and second levels, to reach the pinnacle, not to make contact with the shackle. When cultivating the third level, the dragon and the mammoth combine and rise even higher, and that is when contact with the shackle can be made. By borrowing power from the meridians of heaven and earth, as well as a Foundation Establishment Pill, one can break through, form a sea of qi, and... reach Foundation Establishment!

“Obviously, not just anyone can cultivate the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture. Only people who have cultivated both their spirit and their body all the way the eighth level of Qi Condensation can successfully do so.

“My Undying Live Forever Technique might be incomplete, and only contain the Undying Skin. But as that mysterious senior said when he saved me, if I reach the level of Undying Gold Skin, I can make contact with the first shackle.

When that happens, if I can break through it, it will be good fortune for me.

“What I’ve sensed today must be that so-called... shackle!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone so brightly that they were like lamps inside the dark stone hut.

“The founding patriarch created the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture. By cultivating it to the very end, you can combine the dragon and the mammoth, and make contact with the shackle. However, making contact is the limit.

“In the first volume of the Undying Codex, the Undying Gold Skin can also make contact with the shackle, but that is the limit there as well. Only by breaking through the shackle after making contact can you go on to cultivate the second volume, the Undying Heavenly King!

“Right now, though, I've only successfully cultivated the first level of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture, and my Undying Skin is only at the peak of silver. Once I experience a breakthrough, I should meet the requirements... to make contact with the shackle!” Bai Xiaochun was panting by this point.

“Actually, making a breakthrough with either technique... should enable me to make contact with the first shackle!” Excited, Bai Xiaochun thought the matter over again, and realized something even more exciting.

“If this analysis is correct, I wonder what level my fleshly body will be at if I break through with both the Undying Gold Skin and the Dragon and Mammoth?”

Although he couldn’t be sure of the answer, he was filled with intense anticipation. Taking a deep breath, he produced some medicinal pills to restore his vital energy, then began to cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique.

The flickering silver light inside of him was gradually filling with strands of gold. They were faint at first, but they indicated that his Undying Live Forever Technique was on the threshold of the Undying Gold Skin.

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he finished his session of cultivation and excitedly emerged from the stone hut. Looking around the cave, he subconsciously adopted the posture of a hero, flicking his sleeve and murmuring, “I'm already in the ninth level of Qi Condensation. Just wait until I break through that first shackle. When that happens, not a single person in the eighth level of Qi Condensation will be a match for me!”

Sighing to himself, he suddenly noticed the masses of snakes around him, and how they were slithering and hissing, some of them even spitting venom.

Off in the distance were the bloodgod cobras, who were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation. One of them suddenly shot forward, only to bounce off of the spell formation’s shield.

Stunned, Bai Xiaochun glared around at the hissing snakes, angry at how they were constantly spitting out venom.

“You really think Lord Bai has no way to deal with you? Don’t push me, you bunch of--”

Before he could finish speaking, a whole group of snakes launched themselves into the air and then slammed into the shield right in front of him.

“That’s it, you pushed me!” he howled, rushing back into the stone hut.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0111 awe-chapter-112

Bai Xiaochun sat cross-legged in front of his pill furnace, simmering with anger.

“These snakes are totally evil!” he said with a cold harrumph. “Not cute at all!

“Now that I’ve mastered tier-3 spirit medicine, you think I can't teach you a lesson, you stupid little snakes?!

“You like spitting venom and hissing all the time, right? Hmph! Well I'm gonna concoct a medicinal pill to make you all shut your mouths!” Bursting with confidence, he flicked his sleeve and began to contemplate what medicine formula to use.

“If I want to shut these snakes up, I need a really tough medicinal pill, something that will really keep their mouths stuck shut....” Chuckling darkly, he began to select the ingredients he would use.

Time passed. Seven days later, Bai Xiaochun had already descended into bedevilled madness. One after another, he had removed the medicinal plants from his bag of holding and examined them carefully to make his selections. In the end, he selected a total of thirty-seven medicinal plants.

After brewing them together in a special way, they would make an extremely sticky substance, but that wasn’t enough for Bai Xiaochun. After drawing upon the principles of mutual augmentation and suppression, he began to make adjustments to make the medicinal pill even stickier.

A month later, his hair was completely disheveled. Thick black smoke roiled out of the pill furnace, within which could be seen a heavy buildup of medicinal dregs. This was his tenth failure of the month. Outside, the hissing of the snakes was as loud as ever. Frowning, his desire to teach them a lesson grew stronger than ever.

“Maybe I’m thinking about it the wrong way. I've been trying to use an outside force to make the mixture more sticky. Although I used some of the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression, perhaps studying how these snakes tick could give me some inspiration to improve the medicinal efficacy!” After a bit more thought, he walked out of the stone hut and began pacing along the border of the spell formation. When he found the perfect opportunity, his hand shot out like lightning toward a five-eyed adder. Before the target snake could react, it had been grabbed and pulled into the spell formation.

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun’s hand pulled back into the spell formation, countless blasts of venom hit the shield’s surface, followed by innumerable snakes.

However, Bai Xiaochun was immersed in the Dao of medicine, and completely disregarded them. Hand clamped tightly onto the five-eyed adder, he turned and walked back to the stone hut. Soon afterward, the hair-raising sound of mad cackling echoed out from inside.

The five-eyed adder was as strong as the third level of Qi Condensation, but in Bai Xiaochun’s hands, that was weaker than a spirit tail chicken. The snake’s body was soon peeled open, allowing Bai Xiaochun to examine everything about it in minute detail, even its bones and blood.

After thoughtful contemplation, he adjusted the combination of medicinal plants and began to concoct.

The next day, the pill furnace trembled, and black smoke poured out. Bai Xiaochun was left coughing, but less forcefully than before. After racking his brains for a bit, he went out to get another snake to study. Soon, he had another flash of inspiration.

Three days later, more black smoke poured out of the pill furnace. Maddened, Bai Xiaochun let out a roar and went out to do more research, his eyes completely bloodshot.

Another month passed, and by this point, Bai Xiaochun had already forgotten why he had come to be so focused on creating this medicine formula. All he did was work on his creation, occasionally launching a hand out through the spell formation shield to grab another snake. He got especially good at that part.

During the month that had passed, he’d caught and studied dozens of snakes. The snakes outside eyed him as coldly, as if he were a mortal enemy. The sound of their hissing, and the flow of their venom, never ceased. The snakes in the eighth level of Qi Condensation continued to occasionally attack the spell formation, looking for a weakness, hoping to consume Bai Xiaochun.

“Nope. That's not it. Not good enough!” By now, two months had passed since he began working on a medicinal pill to shut the mouths of the venomous snakes. He had failed over a hundred times, without even one success.

Creating medicine formulas was not an easy thing, something he was now acutely aware of. However, he didn’t give up. In fact, he descended deeper into the madness of his experimentation. Another two months passed, and he had experienced hundreds of failures, but managed to succeed once. When that happened, he looked discontentedly at the black spirit medicine he held in his hand.

“How come there’s only one pill...

“There are so many snakes here! If I only get one to shut its mouth, that won’t help at all....” Eyes bloodshot, he tugged angrily at his hair and stared at the pill.

“I need a way to spread the effects. The best pill would be one that, once consumed by a snake, caused it to emit some sort of aura that infected all the other snakes.... Hmm... Infection? Right! Infection! I need to create a medicine formula that starts an epidemic!!” Eyes shining brightly, breath coming in ragged pants, Bai Xiaochun was now convinced that he was aimed in the right direction.

Soon after, he suddenly started laughing. Considering the madness of the laughter, anyone who might have been able to see Bai Xiaochun at that moment would have gasped and sworn an oath to never disturb him in the middle of medicine concocting.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun emanated a vile aura.

With new inspiration, he once again descended into medicine concocting. He mixed and matched the medicines, he adjusted the augmentation and suppression, he made small changes here and there. He grabbed snakes with increasing frequency. On a few dangerous occasions, he almost seemed soulless, as though he didn’t even notice or care what was happening around him. He was completely and utterly focused on creating a new medicine formula.

Time passed. One month. Two months. Three months. Four months....

Before long, it had been six months since Bai Xiaochun started his work on creating a medicine formula. During that half year, he had failed too many times to count. He was in a complete mess, clothes rumpled, hair disheveled, face smudged with ash. And yet, his crimson eyes glowed with excitement as he stared at the pill furnace.

“It’s gonna work. Hahaha! I'm going to do it this time!” As he howled in excitement, the pill furnace began to tremble. He had poured his heart and soul into this medicinal pill, and now that it was on the verge of finally appearing in the world, Bai Xiaochun’s excitement only grew.

“Li the Snake! Li the Swindler! When you tossed Lord Bai into this place, did you really think he couldn’t handle some measly snakes? You just wait until this treasured pill is finished being concocted, then I’ll teach your stupid little snakes a lesson. Humph! Who knows, after this, I might even be able to lead these snakes to conquer the world!” In the middle of his bragging and maniacal laughter, Bai Xiaochun’s expression suddenly flickered, and then he stared out of the stone hut.

Instantly, his jaw dropped.

He wasn't sure exactly when, but a visitor had arrived, and was now standing there at his door. It wasn’t very tall, had two white paws, and two long ears sticking straight up. It even had a fluffy little tail which twitched back and forth as it stood there.

It had red eyes, and a cute little mouth with two teeth sticking out the front. Currently, it was standing there staring at Bai Xiaochun.

Time suddenly seemed to slow to a crawl. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened.

“What are you doing here!?” he shouted. When Fragrant Cloud Peak had been thrown into chaos, Bai Xiaochun had searched high and low, but had been unable to find this very... talking rabbit!

As soon as Bai Xiaochun started yelling, the rabbit suddenly imitated his appearance and then yelled, “What are you doing here!?”

Eyes wide, the rabbit turned and fled at top speed, simultaneously letting loose a stream of words.

“Heavens! What's that?!

“Did you see that? That rabbit can talk!

“Keep this on the down low, but yesterday I saw Elder Zhou go into a room with those phoenixes of his. Afterward, I heard some really strange noises....

“Elder Brother Hou Yunfei, you’re so naughty! What are you doing...? Uh... what’s that? Why are those monkeys twitching like that?!

“Junior Sister Meixiang, I, Li Qinghou, am not fickle in love. After I break through to the Gold Core stage, I’ll definitely take you as my Daoist partner!

“Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!

“Li the Snake! Li the Swindler! When you tossed Lord Bai into this place, did you really think he couldn’t handle some measly snakes? You just wait until this treasured pill is finished being concocted, then I’ll teach your stupid little snakes a lesson. Humph! Who knows, after this, I might even be able to lead these snakes to conquer the world! Hahahahahaha!”

Even as the words echoed out, the rabbit sped out of the stone hut. When Bai Xiaochun heard the final passage, his face completely fell, and then he let out a howl of fury.

He tried to catch the rabbit, but it was too fast. Bai Xiaochun burst out of the stone hut, but his shouting caused the countless snakes in the cave to hiss and spray venom. As for the rabbit, it was unimaginably dextrous, and evaded all the snakes with ease. When they tried to bite down onto it, all they bit was air, and the rabbit... vanished, leaving behind nothing but a puff of smoke.

Off in the distance, it was possible to hear it reciting all of the passages it knew, which echoed back and forth in the subterranean cavern.

Bai Xiaochun tottered on the verge of collapse. He wanted to chase after it, but clearly, he was no match for it in terms of dexterity. He could only stare off in the direction it had fled, looking like he was about to cry. When he thought of that rabbit’s proclivities, and how loud its voice was, he began to sweat profusely. If the rabbit escaped to spread word, and Li Qinghou caught wind of it, Bai Xiaochun could only imagine the catastrophe that would result.

“Dammit!” he thought, grinding his teeth. “What kind of a rabbit is that?!?!” However, the truth was that nobody knew the answer. After all, he was the one who had created the thing.

The feeling that he had screwed himself over caused Bai Xiaochun’s madness to grow. Clearing his throat anxiously, he howled, “Peak Lord Li is brilliant and mighty! He’s invincible wherever he goes! He’s my most beloved relative!

“Uncle Li, I, Bai Xiaochun, will definitely work hard in the future, and promise that I’ll never disappoint you!”

“I, Bai Xiaochun, am inherently naughty and mischievous, and should definitely have been sent here for punishment. I spend all my days in contemplation. Many, many thanks to you, exalted peak lord....” On the verge of tears, he continued to let loose words non stop, hoping that the rabbit might hear some of them and remember them.

Not long after, a rumbling sound could be heard coming from the pill furnace in the stone hut, and a medicinal aroma spread out. Looking miserable, Bai Xiaochun cursed the rabbit inwardly, and then sighed and turned around. Upon opening the pill furnace, he saw a black and white pill that glowed with a strange light.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0112 awe-chapter-113

There was something strange about this particular tier-3 spirit medicine. As for its overall quality, shockingly, it had surpassed the low-grade to reach mid-grade. Bai Xiaochun was ecstatic, and immediately forgot about how depressed he was because of the rabbit.

Holding the pill in his hand, his excitement grew until he was panting, and his eyes glittering.

“This pill is a spirit medicine that can change the fate of 10,000 Snakes Valley.... It will teach all of these snakes... how to shut their mouths!” Even as a proud smile spread across his face, he suddenly remembered the rabbit, and his heart thumped. But then the violent hisses of the snakes reached his ears, as well as the sound of snakes slamming into the spell formation shield.

“Pipe down!” he growled, glaring over at them. With that, he produced the turtle-wok and performed a spirit enhancement.... Furthermore, he didn't stop at a twofold enhancement; he drew upon his few remaining spirit tails to perform a threefold enhancement.

Silver light glittered, and many of the impurities in the medicinal pill were removed; shockingly, it rose from mid-grade to premium-grade!

Medicinal pill in hand, Bai Xiaochun strode out of the stone hut to stand at the edge of the spell formation, where he looked at the countless snakes spraying venom and slamming into the shield.

“Half a year ago, Lord Bai told you that I would show you how awesome I am. Don’t forget. You forced me to do this!” With that, he waved his hand, sending the medicinal pill shooting out of the spell formation to land in the middle of all the snakes.

He had added a drop of his own blood to the mixture, so as soon as the pill flew out, countless snakes pounced, struggling amongst each other to be the one to swallow it down. The snake to win out in the end was in the fourth level of Qi Condensation, a cloudy-eyed death viper. As soon as it swallowed the pill, a tremor ran through it, and its eyes began to shine with a strange light.

Bai Xiaochun looked over excitedly, but before anything else could happen, one of the bloodgod cobras charged forth. Considering it was in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, it crushed numerous other snakes that got in its path, reducing them to nothing more than a gory paste. Then, it swallowed the cloudy-eyed death viper in a single gulp.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he looked over at the bloodgod cobra, which looked back at him with cold eyes before slithering to a rocky outcropping, where it coiled up.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get nervous, but had no choice other than to wait and see what else happened. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the bloodgod cobra suddenly shivered. Apparently, it wanted to open its mouth, but there was something very sticky keeping it shut. It struggled mightily, and managed to open its mouth a crack, revealing sticky strands stretching between its lips and fangs.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted to see that his work was a success, and eagerly awaited the second effect of the spirit medicine to start working.

Yet again, enough time passed for an incense stick to burn. The bloodgod cobra’s mouth was now completely sealed shut. Its eyes were bulging out of its head, and instead of being cold and vicious, they now looked like the eyes of a goldfish. The snake seemed confused, and instead of being fierce like before, it seemed slightly cute....

Soon, poofing sounds could be heard from the bloodgod cobra, like that of flatulence. A pink gaseous substance appeared, which rapidly transformed into a fog that spread out in all directions.

More poofing sounds could be heard; apparently the bloodgod cobra was not yet finished expelling gas. Bai Xiaochun looked on excitedly as the process continued for the rest of the day.

Other than the area within the spell formation, the entire cave was now filled with a pink haze, which the other snakes inhaled. Gradually, a sticky substance began to build up in their mouths, and their eyes began to bulge. Soon, the next set of snakes began to pass gas.

Eventually, the poofing sounds rang out like muffled thunder, echoing out about the cave constantly. As the haze filled the subterranean chamber, all the of the snakes came to be affected.

Even the snakes deepest within the chamber, whose glittering eyes Bai Xiaochun found the most frightening, began to emit poofing sounds.

A few days later, the haze faded away. Bai Xiaochun stood there in the spell formation, looking around at the silent snake cave. There was no hissing, no venom spraying around. The mouths of all the snakes were shut tight, and their blank eyes bulged with confusion.

Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Sticking his chin up proudly, he naturally assumed the sullen manner of a lonely hero and swished his sleeve.

“With the snap of a finger, I shut the mouths of all the snakes in 10,000 Snakes Valley. As for that profoundly consummate pill of mine, I shall hereby name it... the Shut Your Trap Pill!”

The lonely hero strode out from within the spell formation into the hordes of lovely little snakes. As he looked around, he smiled happily and felt like even more of a hero. But then he noticed a one-step viper off in the distance who was glowing red, almost as if its body were heating up. Then, in the strangest of developments, it suddenly started thrashing around violently.

Now that the one-step viper’s mouth was stopped up, it couldn’t hiss, and even seemed impervious to pain. Soon, its skin was lacerated and bleeding, and yet it didn't stop thrashing around.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun had a mind to intervene, but the one-step viper truly seemed to have gone mad. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as more snakes in the vicinity all started turning red and thrashing around. The heat emanating from them even caused the air to ripple and distort.

Most conspicuous of all was the bloodgod cobra, which had grown much larger since consuming the medicinal pill, and was thrashing about with particular violence.

In the depths of the cave, rumbling sounds began to echo out, and soon all of the snakes were thrashing around with maddened violence. Some of them even launched themselves into the air and slammed into the stone walls.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes were wide as saucers as he dove back into the spell formation. Instantly, the countless surrounding snakes began to batter against the spell formation shield as if they were insane. The mere sight of it caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to grow numb.

“Oh man, this is bad. These snakes are going crazy. If they keep thrashing around, something really bad is going to happen!” Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very nervous. His original intention had simply been to get the snakes to close their mouths; he had never imagined that something like this would result. As soon as he thought about how angry Li Qinghou would be when he saw the current state of the snakes, he began to tremble.

He ran anxiously back into the stone hut and began to concoct a medicinal pill. He produced vast amounts of medicinal plants, hoping to concoct some remedy to solve the problem. No longer was he proudly complacent like before. Instead, he looked like he was about to cry, and frightened out of his mind. A few days later, he charged out of the stone hut, hair disheveled, eyes bloodshot.

He had three medicinal pills in his hand, which he had concocted over the past three sleepless days and nights. What he hoped was that these pills would calm the snakes down, and at least buy him some time to concoct a true antidote.

The scene which met his eyes as he emerged was shocking. All of the snakes were writhing and thrashing in complete madness. The stone walls were cracked and smashed, and many of the snakes were covered in bloody wounds.

Bai Xiaochun really was about ready to cry. He quickly tossed out the medicinal pills, which exploded in midair, causing a mist to spread out over the snakes. Almost immediately, they calmed down, and their wounds even began to heal....

A few days later, the snakes were still calm, and the thrashing behaviour hadn't returned. Finally, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief.

"You nearly scared Lord Bai to death! I thought something bad was going to happen. Humph! Well, with my skill in the Dao of medicine, this was pretty much a non-event!" Feeling very proud of himself, Bai Xiaochun was about to go about working on an antidote when he suddenly stopped in place and swallowed hard, looking at one particular snake off in the distance.

It was a cloudy-eyed death viper, and now that it had recovered completely, it began to emanate a shocking aura. The fluctuations were not that of the cultivation base, but rather, its fleshly body. It suddenly twitched, hitting a nearby boulder and smashing it to pieces.

Bai Xiaochun's widened. There were quite a few cloudy-eyed death vipers in the cave, and although their venom was deadly to the extreme, their bodies were relatively weak. They definitely shouldn't be this strong physically, and yet, his eyes weren't deceiving him.

Panting, he looked around at the other snakes, and sweat began to drip down his forehead.

"How is this possible?" he muttered hoarsely.

More snakes began to twitch, and then erupt with fleshly body power. They weren't thrashing about, and yet, even their slightest movement caused the ground to tremble. Boulders were shattered as if the snakes were whips in the hands of almighty beings, whips that could smash any obstacle to pieces.

They all possessed seemingly unlimited fleshly body power, and even worse, some of them were starting to head in his direction.

Before, the spell formation could stop them easily, but now it began to tremble and emanate cracking sounds. If that spell formation broke, Bai Xiaochun couldn't even imagine how he would possibly deal with so many infinitely powerful snakes.

It was then that the bloodgod cobra, which had an even stronger fleshly body than the other snakes, slammed into the spell formation. At the same time, the head of another snake appeared from the very depths of the cave. The snake stared at Bai Xiaochun with bulging eyes.

The head was enormous, roughly three meters long; as such, it was only possible to imagine how long the rest of the snake was. Terrified, Bai Xiaochun screamed and ran back into the stone hut to start concocting another temporary remedy.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0113 awe-chapter-114

“Why is this happening...?” On the verge of tears, he wiped the sweat off his forehead, gritted his teeth, and continued concocting, surrounded by the rumbling sounds from outside.

His goal had never been to cause a big disaster! He’d only wanted the snakes to close their mouths. He felt more wronged than ever....

He thought he'd come up with a very simple way to solve the problem; how could he ever have imagined that closing the snakes’ mouths would come with such violent side-effects?

Seeing that the situation was rapidly devolving, his first reaction was to create a temporary remedy to buy time so that he could then come up with an antidote. He’d solved the problem with the thrashing, but could never have imagined that as a result, the snakes’ fleshly bodies would become infinitely more powerful. From the look of things, the spell formation wouldn’t be able to hold out for much longer.

His heart pounded with fear, and his eyes were completely bloodshot; he simply wanted to get things back to the way they were, even if that meant having all the snakes hissing all the time.

Two days later, the cracking sounds from the spell formation were getting more intense under the constant bombardment of the snakes. Fissures were even starting to spread out across the shield. It was at that point that Bai

Xiaochun ran out of the stone hut, panting, holding two medicinal pills in his hands.

“This time I'm definitely going to remedy the situation!” he shouted. “10,000 Snakes Valley, it’s time to get back to normal!” The mental pressure recently had really begun to build, and he almost looked like he was in a trance as he hurled the medicinal pills out of the spell formation. High in the air, they exploded, transforming into a green mist that spread out in all directions.

As soon as the mist made contact with the snakes, they shivered, and then plopping sounds could be heard as they collapsed onto the ground, the power of their fleshly bodies rapidly decreasing.

The mist slowly spread throughout the entire cave, reaching even the bloodgod cobras. As they sagged listlessly, Bai Xiaochun heaved a sigh of relief. By this point, he felt the utmost respect for the Dao of medicine, and yet at the same time, immense pride over his level of control with it.

Taking a deep breath, he murmured, “Just like always, I--”

However, before he could finish speaking, he nearly jumped into the air when he saw what was happening to a nearby tri-recluse viper.

“Th-this... this....” he muttered, his eyes going wide with disbelief.

Unexpectedly, the tri-recluse viper began to writhe as a long horn suddenly grew out from the top of its head.

“The snakes are growing horns!?!?” he cried in alarm. His mind rumbled as it was battered by massive waves of shock. All of the snakes were now writhing, and if they could hiss, the sound would surely be shocking to the soul.

Soon, all of the snakes had grown horns out from the tops of their heads! Furthermore, their bodies also seemed to be getting stronger.

In addition to the wondrous addition of the horn, they all began to thrash around again, as though the violence which had been suppressed earlier was finally able to explode out. As they smashed back and forth, they began to punch holes into the walls and burrow out of the cave itself.

Even the bloodgod cobra was acting the same way. As for the huge snake with the three-meter-long head, it was shaking violently as a huge horn grew out of its head. Although the horns didn’t appear to be very sharp, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp at the sight of them. They snakes were all starting to go mad, and before long, Bai Xiaochun realized that their skin was now virtually impenetrable.

All of the snakes were thrashing about violently, causing a mighty rumbling sound to explode out. Any of them who saw even the slightest hole in the wall would unleash all the mysterious power contained in their horns to try to burrow their way out of 10,000 Snakes Valley to freedom!

Although 10,000 Snakes Valley was located behind Fragrant Cloud Peak, the snakes actually had no specific destinations in mind, and began burrowing subterranean passages in all directions, even toward Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak.

Only about thirty percent were actually heading in the direction of Fragrant Cloud Peak.

It was easy to imagine the scene which would result in the three mountains when innumerable snakes with sealed mouths burst out into the tunnels and began to charge about madly.

FLOP!

Bai Xiaochun dropped down to sit on the ground and look around at the empty cave.

“I'm... done for....”

It didn’t take long before the snakes made their way through the cracks and fissures in the ground, all the way to the three mountains. Countless horned snakes with bulging eyes burrowed through any hole they could find, shocking countless disciples of the south bank. For years, things had been peaceful and quiet, but now, a massive commotion once again engulfed all the disciples.

On Green Crest Peak, outside of Spirit Sword Hall, more than a thousand disciples were cheering on two of their fellows who were fighting in a minor competition. Just when one of them secured the upper hand and was about to win the match, a horn burst out from the ground beneath his feet, with a cloudy-eyed death viper following close behind. Everyone stared in shock as the snake instantly began to slither up the leg of the disciple who had been just about to win.

The disciple screamed and leaped up into the air. Next, more screams could be heard as more horned snakes burrowed up from the ground.

“What’s going on!?!? Why did they stop fighting?!”

“Heavens! Look at all the snakes.... What are all these snakes doing here? And look, they have horns!!”

“Dammit! What’s happening? What’s happening!?!? Not even my magical item can block these snakes!”

At the same time, on the summit of Green Crest Peak, where the Inner Sect disciples lived, an long time Inner Sect disciple was sitting in his immortal's cave, cross-legged in meditation. Suddenly, the ground trembled, and the disciple’s eyes widened in disbelief. Then... he let out a bloodcurdling shriek.

“AIIEEEE! What is that thing?!?!

“A snake! A snake just burrowed out of the ground!!”

Similar cries echoed out from other immortal's caves. It was the same with Shangguan Tianyou’s immortal's cave, although the maddened scream which emanated out from him seemed to come from an inner wound which had been reopened.

The situation was the same with the Outer Sect disciples. Countless snakes burrowed up out of the ground, to the profound shock and terror of all. Even the elders of Green Crest Peak were flabbergasted. The old peak lord flew up into the air, looking down in astonishment at the countless horned snakes which covered Green Crest Peak.

It was the same with Violet Cauldron Peak. Innumerable disciples shouted in fury, unleashing magical techniques in all directions. However, they didn’t affect the snakes at all....

Lu Tianlei was surrounded by flashing electricity as he roared, pulling a horned snake out of his trousers. He tried to crush it, only to find that he couldn’t.

“What happened? Dammit! Why are there so many snakes!?”

“Wait a second, something seems fishy here!!”

As the bellows of rage rose up from Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak, Xu Meixiang bristled with fury.

“Investigate!” she bellowed. “Investigate immediately and find out what exactly is happening!!”

On Fragrant Cloud Peak, enraged shouting rose up into the sky. Xu Baocai was screaming at the top of his lungs, and Zhou Xinqi’s eyes were wide with astonishment as she flew up into the air.

Hou Xiaomei and Hou Yunfei also took to flight. Many disciples there were whipped into an unbelievable fury, and although some began to unleash powerful magical techniques, Fragrant Cloud Peak was known for its skill with plants and vegetation. It was no surprise, therefore, that quite a few disciples whipped out medicinal pills, and quickly found that although the effects were rather ordinary, the snakes would immediately flee at the sight of them.

Many of the fleeing horned snakes then headed toward Green Crest Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak....

“What’s happening here? Dammit! What could have caused this!?!?”

“Is this a natural disaster or was it caused by humans? Bai Xiaochun was sentenced to stay in 10,000 Snakes Valley, and since then everything has been so peaceful. How could... wait a second! 10,000 Snakes Valley!?!? Bai Xiaochun is supposed to be *in* 10,000 Snakes Valley!!”

As people began to react, a long-eared rabbit suddenly appeared from out of nowhere. Apparently, it had been listening in for some time. All of a sudden, it began to run through the three mountains, bellowing at the top of its lungs.

“Oh god, my butt!

“Dammit! I’m gonna kill this snake!!

“AIIIIEEEE! From now on people are gonna laugh themselves to death at the name Xu Baocai!!

“Get lost, you evil snakes! I am Shangguan Tianyou, Inner Sect disciple and Chosen of Green Crest Peak. From this day forth, our enmity is irreconcilable....

“What an incredible snake. If I, Lu Tianlei, could become a snake, I would definitely go... heh heh....

“Li the Snake! Li the Swindler! When you tossed Lord Bai into this place, did you really think he couldn’t handle some measly snakes? You just wait until this treasured pill is finished being concocted, then I’ll teach your stupid little snakes a lesson. Humph! Who knows, after this, I might even be able to lead these snakes to conquer the world! Hahahahahaha!”

Soon, the rabbit’s words could be heard within all three of the mountains, and the disciples erupted into a fury.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Exterminate Bai Xiaochun!!”

“So, *he* did this! He sent the snakes against us in revenge!!”

The howls coming out of the mouths of Shangguan Tianyou and Lu Tianlei were especially barbaric. The disciples of the three mountains were in a complete fury; this disaster far exceeded the matter with the acid rain....

Li Qinghou looked around blankly at the events playing out. Then, he starting thinking about everything that had occurred after Bai Xiaochun first joined the sect.

As a servant, he had sold spots into the Outer Sect, arousing public wrath. He had thrown the entire servants' district into chaos.

When he was an Outer Sect disciple, there was the tragedy of the spirit tail chickens, and the terrible incident with Elder Zhou’s phoenix. Countless disciples were affected, and the entire mountain had been thrown into chaos.

After becoming an Inner Sect disciple, he had provoked lightning, sent crazy animals running around the entire mountain, and had even caused acid rain.... By then, he had thrown all three mountains into chaos.

However, no matter how Li Qinghou thought about the matter, he could never have imagined that throwing Bai Xiaochun into 10,000 Snakes Valley would result in something so preposterous.... He didn’t even hold back when it came to snakes. 10,000 Snakes Valley had been thrown into chaos, which then spread to cover all of the south bank.

As of that moment, Li Qinghou suddenly remembered how, when he had first met Bai Xiaochun, all of the villagers at the bottom of the mountain had cheered and thrown a party upon his departure....

Finally, he understood how those villagers felt....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0114 awe-chapter-115

Not a single snake was left in 10,000 Snakes Valley. Bai Xiaochun stood there inside the spell formation, looking around at the surrounding emptiness. Suddenly, a tremor ran through him as everything around him began to quake violently. Screaming, he shot out at top speed through the mouth of the cave.

His scalp was numb, and he was shaking; he knew that this time... the chaos he had unleashed was too severe. All of the snakes in 10,000 Snakes Valley had escaped, and the mere thought shook him to his core.

“I’m done for. Finished. Kaput....” On the verge of tears, he raced out of 10,000 Snakes Valley, where he instantly caught wind of the countless enraged shouts coming from the three mountain peaks. Furthermore, he heard numerous people calling his name.

Tugging at his hair, he couldn’t stop thinking that he really was innocent in the whole affair, maligned to the extreme.

“I really didn’t do it on purpose.... I was just... I was just trying to make the snakes a bit cuter, that’s all.” He was sniffling a bit, and his heart was pounding. If he had the power, he would instantly change his appearance so that no one could recognize him.

“What do I do?” he murmured to himself. “What do I do...? There’s nothing left to do. I can only go to Master’s cave and hide. Nobody will think to look for me there....” With that, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a new set of clothes.

After changing, wings sprouted from his back, and he sped as fast as he could move toward Mount Daoseed.

The three mountains were in the grip of pandemonium. Howls and roars echoed out constantly. Bai Xiaochun deeply regretted having become so famous recently. Virtually everyone knew him, so all he could do was duck his head down and speed along as quickly as possible. As he moved along, if the wind even moved a branch, he would avoid it for fear it was someone about to pop out and see him.

Of course, because of the general chaos, nobody noticed him passing. Everyone was in the middle of fleeing from the horned snakes. When Bai Xiaochun saw how maddened everyone was, his heart began to pound. However, he managed to take advantage of the chaos to speed to Mount Daoseed without being noticed. He arrived out of breath, fear lingering in his heart. Moments later, he was approaching the cave in which his Master had passed away into meditation.

To other people, it was a restricted area, but Bai Xiaochun could come and go as he wished. A cloud of dust rose up into the air behind him as he raced into the cave and dropped to the ground in front of his master’s portrait.

“I really didn’t do it on purpose….” he said, sniffing. “Master, you know I'm a good person, right?” Bai Xiaochun looked up miserably at the image of his Master, a smiling man who had the demeanor of a transcendent being.

By this point, the elders of the three mountains had sprung into action. Li Qinghou, Xu Meixiang, the sect leader, and even the peak lord of Green Crest Peak all appeared. Under their leadership, they managed to capture all of the horned snakes. Soon, the three mountains began to calm down.

After the Foundation Establishment cultivators ended the snakepocalypse, the disciples of the three mountains, a massive mob of tens of thousands of people, all charged toward 10,000 Snakes Valley, bursting with anger. Seeing how the valley had been almost completely destroyed, and unable to find any traces of Bai Xiaochun, they quickly expanded the search to cover the rest of the south bank.

There was no organization of the affair; everyone instinctively took to action. Thankfully for Bai Xiaochun, he had reacted quickly, otherwise he would quickly have been apprehended.

“Take Bai Xiaochun down!!”

“And that talking rabbit too! That thing has to die!”

“Take Bai Xiaochun down! Take the talking rabbit down!”

After several hours passed, the entire area had been turned upside down, and yet nobody had seen a single trace of Bai Xiaochun. The disciples’ eyes were turning bright red, and some of them even left the sect to search outside, their anger building.

“We're going to find you, Bai Xiaochun!”

“Even if you run to the ends of the earth, we’ll track you down!”

“Dammit! Where could he possibly be hiding!?” Countless roars echoed out in all directions, gradually reaching the ears of Bai Xiaochun on Mount Daoseed, who shivered constantly.

“Hey, I got screwed here too! It's all that damn rabbit’s fault. I-I-I... I didn’t want any of this!” Bai Xiaochun sat there nervously, sighing constantly. After waiting for some time, and having noticed that the uproar outside seemed to have died down a bit, he looked at the portrait of his Master, heart pounding. Then he began to kowtow.

“Master, sir, please bless and protect me, and prevent those villains from finding me....” After some time passed, he crept up to the mouth of the cave, and after ensuring the shouting outside had indeed died down, breathed a sigh of relief.

“Bai Xiaochun’s wits come out on top again!” he said with a chuckle. “Nobody will ever think to come looking for me in my master’s cave.

“But this isn’t really a solution. I’ll have to leave eventually.... What do I do, what do I do...?” Suddenly, he had the feeling that someone was watching him. He looked back toward the mouth of the cave, and saw... the talking rabbit, its ears swiveled to point directly at him.

In the instant that he saw the rabbit, his eyes went wide. How could he ever have imagined that the thing could move with such unbelievable stealth? It had actually managed to enter even this restricted area. All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun thought back to what he had just been saying to himself, and all his hair stood on end. Shrieking miserably, he cried out, “No! Don’t spread that....”

But then, a whooshing sound could be heard as the rabbit vanished. An instant later, it was far off in the distance, crying out its usual repertoire of passages. However, a new one had been added onto the end.

“Master, sir, please bless and protect me, and prevent those villains from finding me....

“Bai Xiaochun’s wits come out on top again! Nobody will ever think to come looking for me in my master’s cave.

“But this isn’t really a solution. I’ll have to leave eventually.... What do I do, what do I do...?

“No! Don’t spread that....”

Bai Xiaochun felt as if he had just been struck by lightning. He stood there mutely, watching the rabbit vanish into the distance, shouting as it ran along. His mind began to spin.

“Damn that rabbit!” he raged. “I'm gonna skin it alive!!”

By this point, the disciples of the south bank had searched just about everywhere, but hadn’t found a single trace of Bai Xiaochun. Eventually, they began to suppress their wrath and speculate about where exactly he might be.

“Where could Bai Xiaochun be hiding? The whole sect has been searching, and there’s not even a record of him leaving the area. That means he definitely has to be on the south bank.

“Fragrant Cloud Peak. Green Crest Peak. Violet Cauldron Peak. We’ve searched every nook and cranny, every mansion and immortal's cave!!”

“We even turned the servants district inside out. Don't tell me Bai Xiaochun burrowed underground somewhere?!?!”

However, even as their wrath burned hot, a rabbit suddenly appeared, running along at top speed and calling out at the top of its lungs. When it got to the last line, it sounded particularly despairing.

“No! Don’t spread that....”

When people heard it, their jaws dropped, and their heads turned to look in the direction of the rabbit. As for the people like Shangguan Tianyou and Lu Tianlei, they clenched their fists and burst into motion. Other disciples threw their heads back and laughed uproariously.

“Good rabbit!!”

“That rabbit is a real mischief-maker, but it’s finally gone and done something good!”

“Fine, I won’t kill that rabbit today. Instead, I’ll kill Bai Xiaochun....”

Soon, tens of thousands of disciples were streaming toward Mount Daoseed, fists clenched tightly, murderous auras raging.

Bai Xiaochun sat there in the cave, burning with hatred toward the talking rabbit. He hated it even more than he hated Elder Zhou’s phoenix. Trembling, he was just about to set to flight, when he heard a huge commotion further down the mountain. Looking down, he saw countless figures speeding in his direction. Scalp tingling, he backed up to hide as deep as he could in the cave.

“I’m done for. Finished. Kaput....” As he sat there in front of his Master’s portrait, he suddenly started to get very angry.

“Master, can’t you help me, sir? Send your soul down, otherwise... I, a Prestige disciple who has shed my own blood for the sect will be beaten to-- what?” In his moment of despair, he glanced up at the portrait, and suddenly, his eyes began to shine. He slapped his thigh.

“Hahaha! Many thanks for your reminder, Master. Disciple understands!”

It was at around this time that Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong was presiding over a meeting in the great hall atop Mount Daoseed. The peak lords of the south bank and all the elders were all there, and all of them had serious looks on their faces.

They had already been there for two hours, during which time Zheng Yuandong had been explaining his thoughts regarding Bai Xiaochun.

“Sect leader, please reconsider carefully. J-Junior... Junior Brother Bai has astounding innate talent. Assigning him to the south bank is a real waste!”

“That’s right. Junior Brother Bai might have you as his Senior Brother, sect leader, but we’re all a big family. We know that you aren’t taking sides. A genius cultivator like that should definitely be placed in a position with greater prospects, like the north bank. That’s where Junior Brother Bai can truly unleash his heavenly talent!”

It wasn’t just the three peak lords who were going on in this manner, the elders joined in as well.

The headache Zheng Yuandong was experiencing couldn't be more bitter. The Spirit Stream Sect had been quiet for two years; how could he ever have imagined the Bai Xiaochun would be the source of so much turmoil? This time, the disaster of 10,000 Snakes Valley left him thoroughly convinced of how good Bai Xiaochun was at causing disasters.

He had the feeling that since Bai Xiaochun was a disciple of the south bank, and had already caused the trouble he had, things probably couldn’t get much worse. On the other hand, if he reassigned him to the north bank... it was likely that the next time he had a meeting like this, it would be with the peak lords and elders of both banks together.

Clearing his throat, he said, “Junior Brother Bai might be naughty and mischievous, but he is a Prestige disciple. Ahem. He’s also very young. Let’s leave him on the south bank. I have a lot of faith in you south bank people.”

Eyes bloodshot, Elder Zhou looked over and said, “Sect leader, we beg of you....”

Li Qinghou clasped hands toward Zheng Yuandong. Sighing, he said, “Sect leader, Xiaochun has been practicing the Waterswamp Kingdom. To truly understand that technique, he really should go to the north bank to observe many different types of beasts. In the past 10,000 years, not many people have succeeded in it. Furthermore, after joining the sect, Bai Xiaochun now only lacks a life essence spirit. I think... going to the north bank would be for the best.”

“That’s right!” said the peak lord from Green Crest Peak. “Sect leader, Bai Xiaochun cultivates the Waterswamp Kingdom, and he’s an official Chosen, on the verge of true enlightenment. Looking back at the history of the Spirit Stream Sect, he’s truly in a unique position!”

“Sect leader,” Elder Zhou said, “please don’t interfere with Junior Brother Bai’s progress. It could be a loss the likes of which the sect hasn’t sustained in 10,000 years!” All of the other elders joined in to express their agreement.

Seeing how intent everyone was, Zheng Yuandong knew that clinging to his original idea wouldn’t be easy. After a moment of hesitation, he smiled wryly and prepared to come up with another way to refuse them. However, it was at that point that a disciple called out from outside the hall.

“Sect leader, something bad is happening.... Sect Uncle Bai is in the patriarch’s cave.... He’s... he’s....”

Jaws dropped within the hall, and numerous streams of divine sense flew out toward the cave. When they saw the situation, strange expressions appeared on their faces. Zheng Yuandong immediately had a bad feeling. When his divine sense entered the cave, his eyes went so wide they almost bulged out of his skull. Then, a tremor of rage erupted within him.

“That little brat! Fine. I accept your proposal. Send him to the north bank!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0115 awe-chapter-116

On Mount Daoseed, the cave where Bai Xiaochun’s Master had been interred was surrounded by tens of thousands of disciples, all of whom were glaring daggers. It was a restricted area, but the fact that they came as part of such a huge mob gave them the courage to enter.

“Bai Xiaochun, get the hell out here right now!”

“Show your face!!”

“Bai Xiaochun, you villainous scoundrel, god will punish you this day! We will punish you this day!”

However, even as the sound of their voices rang out, someone inside the cave itself bellowed, “Pipe down!”

The powerful shout was backed by the full power of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, causing it to echo out like thunder, completely crushing the sound of all other voices.

Simultaneously, the slender Bai Xiaochun appeared, striding solemnly out of the cave.

When the congregated disciples of the three mountain peaks saw him, they immediately hefted the rocks they held in their hands, angrily preparing to pelt him. But then, Bai Xiaochun let out a powerful shout and thrust a portrait out in front of him.

It was the portrait of his Master.... It was also Zheng Yuandong’s Master, a Spirit Stream Sect patriarch from the previous generation.

Although somewhat nervous, Bai Xiaochun bellowed, “What gall! If anyone dares to harm the portrait of my Master, Elder Brother Sect Leader and I will fight you to the death!”

When the mob saw Bai Xiaochun crouching behind the portrait of his master, they went stiff, and many of them gasped. Not a single one dared to hurl a rock.

That portrait depicted a patriarch of the sect, the Master of the sect leader himself. If any of them dared to harm it, it could only be imagined how wrathfully Zheng Yuandong would respond. Furthermore, it was certain that not a single peak lord would interfere.

The disciples were so enraged they were about to blow their tops, and yet, they didn't dare to do a thing. “Completely shameless!!”

Seeing that his tactic was working, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. Holding the portrait high, he glared around at the mob.

“You people listen and listen well. I really didn't do it on purpose, I--”

If Bai Xiaochun hadn’t tried to explain the situation, things would have gone much smoother. But as soon as he opened his mouth, the crowd started to lose control.

“Y-y-you, you always say you didn’t do it on purpose! Fragrant Cloud Peak got attacked by lightning, and you said it wasn't on purpose. Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak got drenched with acid rain, and it wasn’t on purpose. And now you’re saying the same thing again!”

“This is ridiculous!!”

Bai Xiaochun quickly waved around the portrait of his master. Sounding genuinely apologetic, he continued, “My Master just visited me in a dream and told me he forgives me! I guarantee, this is the last time. There absolutely, positively won’t be another--”

To hear Bai Xiaochun shamelessly claim that his deceased Master had visited him in his dreams enraged the crowd even further.

“I can't take this anymore! I'm gonna beat him black and blue!”

“Even if he was the sect leader’s son, I’d still beat the crap out of him!”

“Take Bai Xiaochun down!!”

It was at this point that numerous streams of Foundation Establishment divine sense suddenly swept across the area.

Moments later, several dozen people flew down from the summit of Mount Daoseed. There were elders of the various mountains, peak lords, and even Zheng Yuandong.

Seeing what was happening, Zheng Yuandong shouted in a rage-filled voice that echoed like thunder: "Leave this place immediately!!”

The ear-splitting sound of his voice struck fear into the hearts of everyone present, even Shangguan Tianyou and the other Chosen. Trembling in fear, they withdrew.

Bai Xiaochun’s spirits were rising rapidly. He was just about to say something when Zheng Yuandong looked over at him with a ferocious glare.

“Bai Xiaochun, as your Elder Brother, I won’t let anyone else beat you, but I can certainly give you a thrashing!” With that, he shot in Bai Xiaochun’s direction. Bai Xiaochun’s scalp began to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode. He was just about to brandish the portrait of his master when Zheng Yuandong swished his sleeve, causing the portrait to fly over to him.

Bai Xiaochun let out a shriek, and a pair of wings sprouted out behind him as he prepared to flee. However, before he could get very far, a powerful smacking sound rang out, which was Zheng Yuandong’s palm making contact with his rear end.

Searing pain swept through him, and he screamed. Looking like he was about to cry, he shrieked, “Save me, Uncle Li! My Elder Brother’s trying to kill me!!”

Li Qinghou’s eyelid twitched, and he pretended not to have heard. Zheng Yuandong's fury had not been sated in the least; seeing Bai Xiaochun waving around the portrait of his master had him fuming, so next, he unleashed a kick.

Bai Xiaochun screamed again, sounding even more anguished than before.

“Save me, Master! Save me!!”

Seeing Zheng Yuandong beating Bai Xiaochun caused the anger among the onlookers to slowly fade. Soon, strange expressions appeared on the faces of the elders, and they began to cough dryly.

“This is a personal matter with the sect leader and his family....”

“Right, right. Oh, I have some medicinal pills in the furnace, I’ll take my leave now.” Hiding their smiles, the elders began to disperse.

Soon, only Li Qinghou and Xu Meixiang were left hovering in midair. As Li Qinghou watched Bai Xiaochun off in the distance, he seemed a bit emotional. After all, he had high expectations for Bai Xiaochun.

Xu Meixiang looked over at Li Qinghou, her gaze soft. “In his heart, he views you as his father,” she said softly. “Are you really willing to abandon him to the north bank?”

Li Qinghou shifted his gaze from Bai Xiaochun to Xu Meixiang. Shaking his head slightly, he said, “All the things Xiaochun did don’t really matter. Deep down, he’s a good person. Furthermore, I can tell that he really is sorry for everything.... Sending him to the north bank as punishment isn’t really necessary.

“But I was being honest with what I said to the sect leader earlier. Ever since he got the Waterswamp Kingdom from the north bank, I’ve been thinking about the matter. Bai Xiaochun’s latent talent is superb. The ideal situation would be for him to combine the best aspects of both banks. Besides, if he can successfully cultivate the Waterswamp Kingdom, and reach the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation within a few years, well... then maybe we can accelerate the opening of the Fallen Sword Abyss. In that case, he might be able to forge a new path for himself.”

“The Fallen Sword Abyss?” Xu Meixiang replied, looking shocked. “One of the three Holy Lands of the Four Great Sects in the eastern Lower Reaches of the Heavenspan River.... Supposedly, there are even traces of heavenstring energy there. Whenever we open it, all of the Four Great

Sects of the eastern reaches, the Blood Stream Sect, the Pill Stream Sect, the Profound Stream Sect, and our Spirit Stream Sect, will send in disciples from the tenth level of Qi Condensation to participate in a bloody struggle....”

“That bloody struggle is necessary....” Li Qinghou said with a light sigh. “If he doesn’t master the Waterswamp Kingdom, I won’t let him go. But if he does, then he absolutely must go. Cultivation is a long, blood-soaked path. Only the fit survive and prosper. He needs to learn to deal with that, not shirk from it.” With that, the two of them turned and left.

That day, Bai Xiaochun’s screams filled the sect. Zheng Yuandong was dead set on teaching him a lesson, not as the sect leader, but as his Elder Brother.

Late that night, Bai Xiaochun, his nose bloodied and his face swollen, trudged along behind Zheng Yuandong as they returned to their Master’s cave.

“On your knees!” Zheng Yuandong said, glaring. “Apologize to Master!” Bai Xiaochun was so frightened that he immediately plopped down to his knees in front of the portrait.

“Master, I apologize....” Bai Xiaochun felt so swollen he thought he might burst at any moment, especially his buttocks. “Master,” he continued, on the verge of tears, “when all of those disciples came to beat me up, you felt sorry for me, and visited me in a dream. Sir, I tried to tell Elder Brother, but he didn't believe me....

“Master, why don’t you visit Elder Brother in his dreams tonight, and tell him the truth...?” Zheng Yuandong stood off to the side, unsure of whether to laugh or cry. He had a mind to beat him, but when he thought about how terrifyingly tough Bai Xiaochun’s skin was, his hand ached a bit, and he held back.

“Kneel here for three months,” he said. “That’s your punishment for the disaster of 10,000 Snakes Valley!” He had no other choice but to do this, for the sake of the disciples of the three mountain peaks. With that, he gave a cold harrumph, and then swished his sleeve, causing a medicinal pill to tumble out. Pretending he hadn’t noticed the pill, he turned and left.

Seeing that Zheng Yuandong was leaving, Bai Xiaochun immediately let out an anguished cry. He was about to start complaining to his Master about everything, but first, he looked around to make sure that the miraculously stealthy rabbit wasn’t around.

“Oh, woe is me, Master....

“Elder Brother beat me so hard... my butt hurts so bad. Look. Look! I'm swollen all over!

“This is so unfair! I really didn’t do any of it on purpose.... I didn’t... huh?” It was at this point that he noticed a medicinal pill on the ground, which was none other than the pill Zheng Yuandong had just left behind.

“A high-grade tier-three Energy Building Pill!”

Eyes shining, he quickly looked around outside the cave, then sat down off to the side. Feeling a bit bored, he consumed the pill and then began to focus on cultivation.

About that time, something happened that none of the disciples or even the peak lords in the sect noticed. Behind Mount Daoseed, in a wide-open, empty area, everything suddenly began to distort.

Moments later, the distortions vanished. However, what was now faintly visible, right there behind Mount Daoseed, was... another mountain peak!

It was... the ninth mountain peak of the Spirit Stream Sect. Although the sect leader was aware of its existence, even he hadn’t noticed the strange distortions from moments before.

The ninth mountain peak of the Spirit Stream Sect was incomparably quiet and peaceful, and all of the plants and vegetation that covered it were pitch black. At the summit of the mountain, atop a black peach tree, was a monkey, sitting there quietly, mixed emotions visible in its eyes.

If Bai Xiaochun were there, he would recognize it instantly. Astonishingly... it was the same thoughtful monkey that had eaten one of his mystery pills, and that he had released into the wild some time ago.

Eventually, the monkey sighed.

“I know you’re there,” he said. “Might as well stop hiding.”

As soon as the monkey spoke, the air behind him distorted, and an old man appeared, tall, wearing a long violet robe. He stepped out of thin air, looking almost like an ordinary mortal, with seemingly no cultivation base power whatsoever emanating off of him. At the same time, however, he almost looked like a Paragon, standing right there!

A strange expression appeared on the old man’s face as he came to stand off to the side. A moment later, a third eye opened on his forehead, and he looked down at the monkey. “You are...?”

The monkey turned to look at the old man, eyes gleaming with profound light. “You don’t recognize me, my apprentice? Or perhaps I should call you the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect?”

Astonishingly, this old man was the same person who had led the Spirit Stream Sect to its position as one of the Four Great Sects, its founding patriarch! Currently, he seemed to be in a state of shock. Pupils constricting, he took a deep breath, disbelief flashing across his face.

“Impossible. You... you died! What are you doing back?!?!?!”

Despite his status in the sect, his cultivation base, and his level of willpower, he couldn’t help but gasp. Deep down inside, in the depths of his soul, he was sure that this was indeed his enigmatic Master who had passed away 10,000 years ago.

The monkey said nothing. He looked over at Mount Daoseed, and his gaze passed through the mountain into a cave, where Bai Xiaochun sat meditating. Although no one would ever be able to tell, within the monkey’s eyes could be seen... a rare trace of reverence.

“I'm not sure how I came to be here. Perhaps it was young Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pill. Or perhaps... some other mysterious force guided his hand... to bring me back. In any case, I am not the only one to have returned.”

The violet-robed old man followed the monkey’s line of sight to Mount Daoseed, and saw Bai Xiaochun sitting there.

“A Qi Condensation disciple? How could he have done this!?” The old man still couldn't quite believe what was happening.

“Frigidsect!" the monkey barked. "Do you remember why I gave you that name?! Do you remember why your Master gave you such a heaven-defying mission? Why I ensured that you could exist for 10,000 years?! Answer me!” The monkey’s eyes shone with a piercing, menacing light. It even seemed as though thunder were rumbling in the area. However, the effects were apparently confined to a thirty meter area around them. Not even the other patriarchs on the ninth mountain peak were aware of anything strange.

The violet-robed old man, the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect, shivered slightly as he recalled memories from 10,000 years ago. Despite how many years had passed, he remembered things clearly. He was old, but with his Master here in front of him, he suddenly felt like a young man again. He stood straight and tall, his face flushed a bit, looking almost like a soldier as he responded, “Sir, I remember. My mission is to guard the true spirit, to ensure that the Spirit Stream Sect becomes one of the sects in the Middle Reaches of the eastern Heavenspan River, and then, a sect of the Upper Reaches. After that, we must invade the northern Heavenspan River, fight our way through its Upper Reaches, and eradicate the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. Return to our ancestral home, restore the glory of the Frigid School!”

“So, you do remember our ancestral home, and the true spirit,” the monkey said, a strange look in its eyes. “Well then, take a look at the magical symbol beneath Fragrant Cloud Peak!”

Frigidsect looked over at Fragrant Cloud Peak and immediately frowned. Hidden within each of the eight mountain peaks of the Spirit Stream Sect was a complex magical symbol, which collectively were the lifeblood of the

Spirit Stream Sect. The extreme importance of those magical symbols was difficult to describe with words.

However, Frigidsect didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary about Fragrant Cloud Peak’s magical symbol.

The monkey sighed softly, and the profound look in his eyes grew even stronger.

“You can't see it, huh...? It seems I came back a bit too late. Someone else returned before me and sent their dark disciple to use the variations of plants and vegetation... to alter the spell formation.

"The primeval magical symbol beneath Fragrant Cloud Peak was tampered with, and reversing the situation with my current power wasn’t really possible. The only thing I could do was use what little strength I have left at my disposal to guide Bai Xiaochun into inciting the spirit snakes. Then things can recover naturally.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0116 awe-chapter-117

“The hard part about damaging the Fragrant Cloud Peak symbol would be finding a way to do it without you noticing,” the monkey said grimly. “Using the right method, even a Qi Condensation disciple could do it, given enough time. The south bank has been infiltrated!”

Frigidsect’s eyes shone with a cold light. He well knew that damaging the spell formation could be done easily, but that repairing it was the opposite. It was like a flower vase. Even a child could smash it, but only a professional, a grandmaster, would be able to put it back together!

“Infiltrated....” Frigidsect thought for a moment, then reached out toward Mount Daoseed and made a grasping motion. A moment later, a jade slip flew toward him and came to rest in his hand. Within were well-kept records of everything that had occurred in the sect during the past thirty years. That included all of the information about Bai Xiaochun, complete with accounts detailing the lightning, the acid rain, and the pill concocting incident in 10,000 Snakes Valley.

After examining it, a strange expression appeared on his face. From the look of things, Bai Xiaochun seemed like a walking disaster.... However, it only took a moment for Frigidsect’s eyes to glitter.

“This kid’s pill concocting... it’s vile....”

“The Dao of medicine has myriad paths,” the monkey murmured in response, “a different version for everyone. Perhaps this Bai Xiaochun can.... Fine. Give him the pill formula for the River-Defying Pill, as well as the Frigid School Medicine Manual. Perhaps he actually has a chance to concoct... the River-Defying Pill....”

Frigidsect’s eyes widened. The River-Defying Pill hadn’t been successfully concocted by anyone in the Spirit Stream Sect during the past 10,000 years. The Spirit Stream Sect had even sought aid from the Pill Stream Sect, and paid handsomely, but to no avail.

The River-Defying Pill was nothing more than a legend at this point. If it weren’t for the fact that the Spirit Stream Sect still happened to possess a single River-Defying Pill, Frigidsect might not even believe it was possible to concoct it. It was a medicine that had only one function... to awaken the true spirit! Awaken the true spirit for ten breaths of time!

As for the Frigid School Medicine Manual, it was one of the three great foundation legacies of the Frigid School Spirit Society, which contained a great Dao of medicine that supposedly came from an outside world.

After a moment of silence, Frigidsect nodded. “His pill concocting methods are vile, and the River-Defying Pill is a vile medicinal pill. Perhaps... he has a shot at concocting it! Master, what about your cultivation base...?”

“It won't be recovered easily. I need time. Now that I’m back, I have to continue to endure for a few more years. I want to personally see... the destruction of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect!” The monkey’s eyes flickered with animosity. Many years ago, he had watched his entire sect wiped out, with him being the only survivor. After passing through numerous areas forbidden to spirits, he barely managed to make it to the eastern river delta.

“Apprentice, I am not the only one to have returned. Other old-timers might also be back. I'm not sure why, but I have the feeling... that a new age might be upon us.”

The monkey sighed, and Frigidsect stood there silently. Although they were both ancient, their spirits burned hot, and they were completely focused.

Time passed. A month later, Bai Xiaochun had just finished a cultivation session in the cave. He wanted to go out, but knew that he couldn’t. Sighing, he continued to do breathing exercises.

Suddenly, he opened his eyes, and before he could take another breath, realized that a jade slip and a bamboo scroll were laying there in front of him.

They looked extremely ancient, as though they had existed for countless years. They almost seemed to radiate a primeval air.

“Eee?” After looking a bit closer, he picked up the jade slip and poured some spiritual power into it. After a moment, his eyes went wide.

“River-Defying Pill? It doesn’t need any plants or vegetation, only water from the Heavenspan River? What.. what kind of medicinal pill is this? It looks pretty incredible. Who ever thought that you could concoct medicinal pills from Heavenspan River water?” After examining the concoction method a bit further, he gasped.

“How vile! You actually have to use your body as a pill furnace....” Next, he looked over at the bamboo scroll, and his eyes went even wider.

“Frigid School Medicine Manual?

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and opened the bamboo scroll. None of it made any sense to him. Only the first line of text was clear, and yet, even that little bit was enough to drive Bai Xiaochun mad. “Immortality begins with the Frigid School; Eternal life ends the cycle of reincarnation!

“Don’t tell me... don’t tell me that this medicine manual can be used to concoct a Live-Forever Never-Die Pill!? AHHHHHHHH!” He couldn’t hold back the shriek that echoed out of his mouth. His eyes were as bloodshot as if he had just obtained the most precious of treasures.

“Elder Brother Sect Leader must have noticed how hard I've been working at my cultivation, and decided to give me a reward. You're so awesome, Elder Brother Sect Leader. This River-Defying Pill is a mere trifle. Once I’m a bit stronger, I’ll concoct a thousand of them for you.” Looking very excited, he continued to study the Frigid School Medicine Manual. Although he couldn’t see any of the other information inside, he was already obsessed with it.

After studying it for a while, he realized that the bamboo which had been used to make the scroll emanated an ancient aura which had to be over 10,000 years old.

He wasn’t even sure how bamboo could survive for so long. On top of that, it contained a sweet aroma that caused his cultivation base to rotate rapidly after inhaling it.

Bai Xiaochun only continued to get more excited, and was even more certain that this was a very precious item. In fact, he even started to wonder if his diligent cultivation really had attracted the attention of the sect leader, or whether it was the spirit of his Master, bestowing gifts upon him from the underworld.

“That’s not very likely....” he thought. Gritting his teeth, he stopped thinking about it. After all, the treasure was in his hands now, so it belonged to him.

What he didn’t notice was that behind him, deeper in the cave, was a monkey, standing there looking at him with reverence in its eyes.

“Just how did he do it...?” thought the monkey. “Did some mysterious entity really guide his hands to bring me back...?”

After some time passed, the monkey turned and merged into the stone wall of the cave. There, he sank down through the mountain... until he was deep beneath the bank of the river.

He found himself in an enormous subterranean cavern. Down below flowed the golden waters of the Heavenspan River, and an enormous spell formation filled the entire cavern. This spell formation was the nucleus of the entire Spirit Stream Sect.

It wasn’t an offensive spell formation, it was solely... defensive.

In the middle of the golden river water was a coffin.

It had no cover, and visible inside of it... was the corpse of a baby girl.

Despite being a corpse, the girl seemed to contain signs of life, as well as a profoundly ancient air....

Two months flashed by.

Although Bai Xiaochun was frustrated that he couldn’t understand any of the Frigid School Medicine Manual, he refused to give up, and was sure that once his medicine concocting skill improved, he would understand.

Now that his punishment was over, he emerged from the cave in high spirits. His cultivation base had even advanced a bit. Soon, he received notice that he would be sent to the north bank to observe a host of beasts and improve his Waterswamp Kingdom.

“The north bank....” Shocked, he looked north and thought about the Chosen battles, and how he had been named the archenemy of the north bank. After a moment of hesitation, he murmured, “Ah, it's been so long, everybody probably forgot about that already.”

Although he didn’t seem very confident in that analysis, there was nothing he could do about the matter. After thinking about it a bit longer, his eyes began to shine with anticipation. After all, his bag of holding still contained that Beastbirth Seed, and the thought of being able to finally have his own beast made the idea of going to the north bank more tolerable.

After returning to Fragrant Cloud Peak, he went to his destroyed immortal's cave to pack his bags. Three days later, he stood there on Mount Daoseed, surrounded by the elders, peak lords, Inner Sect disciples, and quite a group of Outer Sect disciples, all of whom were there to see him off.

They had all come of their own volition. Only by personally witnessing Bai Xiaochun go to the north bank could they finally rest at ease.

Bai Xiaochun was moved to see that so many people had come to see them off. As he stood there next to the sect leader, he waved his hand in farewell.

“Ladies and gentlemen, fellow disciples, I’m going to the north bank, and I shall miss all of you! I shall miss the south bank, and I shall miss all of the plants and vegetation.”

Strange looks appeared on the faces of those present. After all, this was a somber farewell. Even the sect leader and the peak lords were present. Although most of the disciples were still angry with Bai Xiaochun, they still tried to look as though they didn’t want him to go.

The only people who truly felt bad were Big Fatty Zhang, Hou Xiaomei, and Hou Yunfei, along with a few other people he was truly close to. However, the south and north banks were both part of the Spirit Stream Sect, so the feelings weren’t overwhelming.

Elder Zhou walked out from the crowd and looked warmly at Bai Xiaochun. “Junior Brother Bai, you have spectacular talent, and are just beginning to make headway with the Waterswamp Kingdom. Don’t try to convince us you aren’t set on pulling off a miracle, and succeed in cultivating it. The north bank has better resources than we do here on the south bank. Continuing your cultivation there will be much better for you in the long run. In fact, you’ll have an even greater chance of reaching Foundation Establishment there. When that happens, your longevity will increase.”

Bai Xiaochun shivered, and his eyes shone with delight at the idea of reaching Foundation Establishment and increasing his longevity.

Soon, others began to call out.

“It’s time to leave. Turn, and walk over to the north bank. We cultivators are always moving forward, never going backward. There’s no need to look behind. Simply strive onward!”

“That’s right, Sect Uncle Bai. It’s time to leave. With dreams as big as yours, the north bank really is the only place where you can spread your wings and soar!”

“Sect Uncle Bai, there’s no need for you to miss us here, and once you get to the north bank, there’s no need to come back. Your path is always in front of you!” Upon hearing such words, Bai Xiaochun felt even more moved.

Taking a breath, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to everyone. The sect leader looked on with an odd expression until Bai Xiaochun turned, and the two of them headed toward the north bank....

After he was gone, the warm expression on Elder Zhou’s face turned into one of excitement, and it was the same with the surrounding disciples. Many people were so happy they started crying.

“The heavens do have eyes! Bai Xiaochun is finally gone!!”

“Hahahahahaha! The sect leader has bestowed favor upon us! The peak lords are wise and magnanimous! The Dao of the heavens truly is just! Spring has finally arrived for the south bank!!”

“Is this real? Is Bai Xiaochun finally gone!? Do I dare to believe that it's true?” Everyone began to cheer, and some people even took out drums and cymbals and began banging and clashing them loudly.

On the north side of Mount Daoseed, Bai Xiaochun trailed behind the sect leader as they walked along. When he heard the racket behind him, he cleared his throat, and a strange expression appeared on his face. Something about the whole situation seemed familiar. He sighed.

“Can you hear that, Elder Brother Sect Leader? The south bank misses me so much that my departure has sent them wild with grief.”

Zheng Yuandong’s jaw dropped, and he looked up quietly into the sky....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0117 awe-chapter-118

The Spirit Stream Sect consisted of eight mountain peaks. Other than Mount Daoseed in the middle, there were three mountain peaks on the south bank and four on the north bank. Those four were Sunset Peak, Archway Peak, Irispetal Peak, and Ghostfang Peak.

The number of disciples on the north bank vastly exceeded that on the south bank. Any one of the north bank mountain peaks’ Outer Sects would have tens of thousands of disciples. As for their Inner Sects, they usually had over a thousand.

Overall, the north bank was about twice as powerful as the south bank. It was for that reason that the north bank had long since come to be the leading force in the sect.

Of course, the foundation of north bank’s power came in the form of the battle beasts that all disciples there raised. The vast numbers of beasts there ensured that animal calls rose up into the air constantly.

The north bank seemed more savage and barbaric, its disciples more fierce than their southern counterparts. Flying creatures could be seen in the air all the time, and it was even possible to occasionally catch sight of the special beasts assigned to protect the mountain peaks themselves. They were shocking to behold.

As Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong escorted Bai Xiaochun to the north bank, the disciples there quickly took notice. Quite a few even realized that this was the archenemy of the north bank who had risen up in the Chosen battles.

The four peak lords of the north bank emerged to offer greetings to the sect leader, leading him to the grand hall on Ghostfang Peak to discuss certain matters. Bai Xiaochun was left outside the hall. Of course, word of his arrival spread rapidly. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, virtually everyone in both the Outer and Inner sects on the north bank all knew what was happening.

“Did you hear? That villain Bai Xiaochun has come to the north bank!!”

“Bai Xiaochun? He's the archenemy of the north bank! I can’t believe he dared to come here. Hahaha! This is actually a good thing. A wonderful thing!!”

“I heard the reason he’s being transferred here is that he caused a huge disaster with the snakes in 10,000 Snakes Valley. Supposedly he has some mystical ability to drive everyone crazy no matter where he goes. I’m not sure if it’s true or not, though.”

“Even if he really does have an ability like that, it won’t do any good. He’s on the north bank now. If he thinks he’s a dragon, we’ll show him that he’s nothing but a worm. If he thinks he’s a tiger, we’ll show him that he's a mere housecat. He inflicted unprecedented humiliation on the north bank in the Chosen battles, but the heavens have eyes! The sect leader must have brought him here so that Bai Xiaochun can finally learn the consequences of provoking the north bank!”

As word spread, all the disciples from the four mountain peaks of the north bank began to cheer in excitement. Clenching their fists tightly, they gazed menacingly toward the summit of Ghostfang Peak.

They were already preparing to make life a living hell for Bai Xiaochun.

That was especially true of the disciples who had actually fought in the Chosen battles. The Gongsun siblings, Xu Song, and others were all extremely excited. They had been in secluded meditation ever since returning, and had all experienced significant progress in their cultivation.

Bai Xiaochun stood outside of the grand hall on Ghostfang Peak, looking up at the beasts flying about in the air. One of them was a seven-colored phoenix, shocking in appearance, which caused all other birds to prostrate in worship when it neared. It soared in a wide circle around the north bank a few times before flying over to Irispetal Peak, where it vanished.

Bai Xiaochun continued to look around curiously. Currently, there were four Ghostfang Peak disciples in the area, all eyeing him coldly.

Their hostility and anger was palpable; clearly, they did not want Bai Xiaochun there.

Bai Xiaochun yawned and rubbed his eyes. Considering how long the Ghostfang Peak disciples had been staring at him, he finally decided to break the ice. After all, this was going to be his home in the future. Clearing his throat, he said, “Er, if you keep staring at me like that, Sect Nephews, I'm going to get embarrassed.”

The only response to his words on the part of the Ghostfang Peak disciples was that their glares grew even sharper, like flying swords whooshing toward Bai Xiaochun’s heart.

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit awkward, but he knew that he was their senior, so he laughed and said, “Uh... we’re all fellow disciples. Don’t be like that! Come, come, I’ll tell you a funny story. One time--”

Before he could finish speaking, though, their gazes turned even more frightening.

He had already tried his best to start out on the right foot, but all they did was keep glaring at him. He was starting to wonder if he’d done something wrong.

As time passed, and all the disciples on Ghostfang Peak heard that the archenemy of the north bank, Bai Xiaochun, had arrived, more and more people began to fly over in his direction. As they did, hatred seemed to pile upon hatred, and they began to yell angrily.

“Bai Xiaochun, how dare you come to the north bank! We're gonna show you what happens to people who dare to offend us!”

“Dammit! A single look at him and I can’t help but think of the tragic fate of Elder Brother Beihan Lie!”

“Take him down!”

As the angered shouting grew louder, Bai Xiaochun edged backward nervously. In his mind, they were acting a bit excessively; he was nothing impressive. Even as he backed away, a cold snort suddenly echoed out from within the hall.

“What's with the racket? Bai Xiaochun, come in.”

The disciples immediately suppressed their anger, but their glares remained as icy as ever. Bai Xiaochun’s hair was standing on end, and yet, he didn't feel that it was proper to allow himself to be cowed so easily. Glaring fiercely back at the crowd, he put on a proud posture as he strode into the hall.

Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong occupied the seat of honor, with the four peak lords sitting on either side of him. They had strange expressions on their faces, and as for Zheng Yuandong, he was sighing inwardly. He almost couldn’t believe... that Bai Xiaochun had caused such a scene after just having arrived.

“Bai Xiaochun, I’ve discussed matters with the four peak lords of the north bank. We’ve arranged for you to serve as the honor guard of the Beast Conservatory. In addition to caring for the beasts, you can observe them as part of your cultivation of the Waterswamp Kingdom. Hopefully, you can create your life essence spirit quickly.

“The Beast Conservatory is not part of any of the mountain peaks; it’s on the other side of the mountains, with the Ancient Beast Chasm. You must not be naughty and mischievous there! You have to work diligently at cultivation, and treasure this opportunity!” Giving Bai Xiaochun a meaningful look, he turned his attention to the four peak lords.

“My Junior Brother is a bit naughty and mischievous. If he does anything offensive, Fellow Daoists, please punish him as you see fit.”

The four peak lords smiled, and then exchanged some more pleasantries with the sect leader. Finally, Zheng Yuandong departed the north bank and returned to Mount Daoseed. Bai Xiaochun was left behind in the grand hall with the four peak lords.

After studying him for a moment, the old woman from Irispetal Peak spoke in a harsh tone of voice.

“Bai Xiaochun, the north bank is different from the south bank. We have rules here, and if you break them, you’ll be severely punished! If the incident of 10,000 Snakes Valley happened here on the north bank, we’d string you up above the Heavenspan River on the cliffs of Mount Daoseed, for ten years. And that would be considered a light punishment.” With that, she tossed a jade pendant over to him, which contained all the information about the sect rules.

Feeling a bit nervous, Bai Xiaochun merely nodded his head and tried to look as charming as possible.

The four peak lords exchanged glances, then paid Bai Xiaochun no further heed. An Inner Sect disciple from Ghostfang Peak was assigned to escort him to the Beast Conservatory, whereupon everyone dispersed.

The Inner Sect disciple who led him along was a long-faced young man with pockmarked cheeks. He had a very terrifying appearance, and glared coldly at Bai Xiaochun the entire way, not speaking even a single word.

Blinking at the way the young man treated him, Bai Xiaochun followed as they walked through the north bank. Quite a few people stared at him along the way, and none of them seemed friendly. Even some of the Outer Sect disciples looked at him with open hostility.

To them, he was clearly an outsider. Because of that, and because of what the old woman had said in the grand hall, Bai Xiaochun was feeling very apprehensive. He already missed his days on the south bank. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the long-faced disciple hurried him to a valley behind the mountain peaks of the north bank.

It was a large area covered by a spell formation. Lush vegetation abounded, and the occasional cries of various beasts could be heard. Even more shocking was the chasm in the middle of the jungled area, which emanated terrifying fluctuations that distorted everything around it.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide at the sight of it all. Then he turned to look at a building not too far off in the distance, which was the honor guard station. It had a stone stele erected in front of it, beneath which stood a gaunt Inner Sect disciple, clearly waiting there to meet them.

The long-faced young man hadn’t said a single word to Bai Xiaochun the entire time. After approaching the gaunt disciple, he briefly explained what Bai Xiaochun was doing there. The gaunt disciple looked frostily at Bai Xiaochun, then pulled out a jade slip and handed it over to him.

“I'm Sun Wen,” he said. “This jade slip has details about all of the nine hundred and eighty-one beasts that live here. Each and every one is a precious treasure of the north bank. If any of them go missing, you will take responsibility.” With that, Sun Wen left with the long-faced young man.

Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly at the hostile interaction, but didn't take it to heart. He looked around the honor guard station and found that it didn't even compare to his destroyed immortal's cave back on Fragrant Cloud Peak. However, it was better than the quarters of an Outer Sect disciple, so he couldn’t complain.

“That old lady said that the north bank pays a lot of attention to sect rules. Could it be that the rules here are different than the south bank’s? Wow. I need to take a good look at them. I definitely don’t want to break any on accident.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0118 awe-chapter-119

After a moment of silence, he made his decision. “I've come to the north bank to study. I have to keep a low profile!”

With that, he poured some spiritual power into the jade slip Sun Wen had given him. Soon afterward, nearly a thousand glowing lights appeared in his mind, each one of which was one of the beasts located in the area.

“So, I'm supposed to take care of these beasts....” Soon, his eyes began to shine. Whether it was because of his knowledge of the five volumes of spirit creatures, or his wondrous battles with the other Chosen from the north bank, he was very interested in the beasts here.

Seeing that the blue sky was beginning to turn into the amber of evening, he hurried outside. The calls of beasts could be heard within the jungle. It was spring, and everything was alive and full of energy. A gentle breeze blew past, carrying the fragrance of flowers. Using the jade slip, Bai Xiaochun began to explore the jungle and look for beasts.

“Highbrow beast!!

“Waterspout dragon?!?! Their organs can be used to as the base of tier-4 spirit medicines!

“Is that... a cloudmist mink? Not only are they incredibly quick, their fur can be turned into defensive magical devices.” The more Bai Xiaochun looked around, the more excited he got. He was finally getting a chance to personally see some of the animals he had only studied in the five volumes of spirit creatures. Seeing pictures and seeing them in real life were completely different experiences. Already, his mastery of the five volumes of spirit creatures was growing.

He saw a six-meter-tall monkey, a huge bear that could blend into its surroundings, a fierce winged tiger, and even a thirty-meter-long pangolin which sped by right in front of him.

The beasts were all wild in nature, and initially treated him with hostility. But when they sensed the aura on his jade slip, they stopped paying him any attention.

Bai Xiaochun looked around excitedly at all of the wild beasts. Soon, he realized that the jade slip made it so that the animals didn’t care about him, not even the most vicious of them. That was when he started trying to approach them. However, they reacted with irritation when he got too close.

After a moment of thought, he decided that he wouldn’t try to push things too far. When night fell, he returned to the honor guard station.

The following morning at dawn, he got up early. Using the jade slip as his guide, he flew here and there in the jungle, observing the animals. Time passed. Soon, Bai Xiaochun had been on the north bank for half a month.

During that time, he never left the Beast Conservatory, and as such, no matter how much the other disciples wanted to cause problems for him, they were unable to.

That half month was a wonderful time for Bai Xiaochun. Every day, he would excitedly go out to personally observe animals that he had learned of in the five volumes of spirit creatures. He was already coming to realize how certain aspects of his medicine concocting were lacking.

“Before, I focused only on plants and vegetation. I never even thought about the spirit creature ingredients. By adding them in, I can create even more transformations in my medicine. Couple that with the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression, and my concocting will be much better than before.” Currently, he was flying excitedly through the jungle when he caught sight of a flying tiger, laying on the ground panting. One of its legs was wounded and bleeding, apparently having been injured while hunting.

When Bai Xiaochun hurried over, the flying tiger let out a powerful roar. However, Bai Xiaochun managed to push his hand down onto its back, ensuring that it couldn't move even if it wanted to. After all, his fleshly body strength was terrifying, even compared to the flying tiger’s.

“Don't move, I’ll help you with that wound.” Bai Xiaochun quickly cleaned the wound, and then put some medicinal powder on it. Finally, he released the tiger.

It flew up into the air, and then roared at Bai Xiaochun. A moment later, though, it looked in shock at its previously wounded leg. With a final glance at Bai Xiaochun, it flew off into the distance.

Smiling, Bai Xiaochun watched it fly off.

After finishing his day of observing the beasts, he returned to his residence. Up above, the sky was starting to grow dark. Standing there, he retrieved a wooden box from his bag of holding.

After opening it, he produced a fist-sized seed which pulsed with a strong life force, almost like a heartbeat. It was even possible to see something squirming around inside.

“Beastbirth Seed!” he murmured, eyes shining brightly. He had acquired this item back when the Luochen Clan had turned traitor. It had been inside the bag of holding of one of the Luochen Clan cultivators. Of course, it was a legendary item within the cultivation world.

In the years that followed, Bai Xiaochun had done some research into the item, and had learned from the five volumes of spirit creatures that if it absorbed the quintessence of one or more beasts, it could naturally give birth to a bloodline descendent of those very beasts.

Back on the south bank, Bai Xiaochun had considered what it would be like to have his own battle beast, but had never been able to meet all the requirements. Now that he was here on the north bank, however, he did.

“A Beastbirth Seed can give birth to a baby beast. However, an ordinary beast wouldn’t be fitting for me as a Prestige disciple and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. I need to tend to this Beastbirth Seed very carefully. After it blooms, I’ll collect the quintessence of all the most powerful beasts. That way, it will give birth... to a beast that has the inherited the strong suits of all beasts! It will be unprecedented since ancient times, and something no one will ever see in the future.... It will be the ultimate battle beast!” Eyes shining with brilliant light, and feeling in higher spirits than ever, he took a deep breath and took the wooden box back to the rear courtyard of the honor guard station.

There, he had set up a small garden to grow spirit plants, which was located within the protective spell formation of the honor guard station. He had even performed a threefold spirit enhancement on the spirit soil, just to be safe.

He carefully buried the Beastbirth Seed in the ground, eyes shining with anticipation.

“According to the information in the five volumes of spirit creatures, it won’t take too long for the Beastbirth Seed to grow....” He stayed in the garden looking at the spot where he'd planted the seed until night fell. When it was dark, he left. Moments later though, he returned. Only after checking that the spell formation’s defenses were all in order did he finally go back inside.

He didn’t rest well that night, and went out frequently to check on the spot where he'd planted the seed.

Another half month passed before he finally managed to get his excitement and anticipation under control, and devote himself fully to observing the beasts. Other than that, he had his daily cultivation routine, and his study of the sect rules.

Occasionally, other north bank disciples would show up in the Beast Conservatory. They would pay some merit points at the stone stele for an opportunity to observe the beasts, or to attempt to bond them as battle beasts.

However, Bai Xiaochun kept the rear courtyard under tight guard. He had even made some adjustments to the spell formation nodes to ensure that no one could trample the garden.

Time passed. Half a year went by in complete peace and quiet.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun never stepped out of the Beast Conservatory even once. He spent all day in the jungle, with the beasts as his companions. He treated injuries among quite a few of them, and even created some simple medicinal pills for them that got their qi and blood pumping healthily.

Because of Bai Xiaochun’s constant care, and his medicinal pills, the beasts soon began to develop a good relationship with him. As they grew more accepting, it became easier to approach them more closely and observe them in more detail. Although he didn't bond any of them, they became very similar to battle beasts, and would listen to every word he spoke.

One day as he was strolling along through the jungle, three north bank disciples approached the stone stele outside the honor guard station. After purchasing three days’ worth of time in the Beast Conservatory, they entered the jungle.

One of them was the previous honor guard, Inner Sect disciple Sun Wen, who had handed his duties over to Bai Xiaochun half a year before.

He was flanked by two Outer Sect disciples, one male and one female. The male disciple was short and babyfaced, while the female disciple was young, with a curvaceous body and a beautiful face.

Looking around excitedly, the young woman said, “Thanks, Elder Brother Sun. With you here, I'm much more confident in getting my own battle beast.” She looked over at Sun Wen with open admiration.

“Yeah, that’s right,” said the short male disciple, equally excited. “Elder Brother Sun is an Inner Sect disciple, and served as honor guard in the Beast Conservatory for several years. He’s adept at controlling the beasts here. I'm sure they all remember exactly who he is.”

“I think you’re exaggerating a bit,” Sun Wen replied, although he seemed very pleased. “Although it is true that I can command many of the beasts here. If you see one you like, I’ll see what I can do. I'm sure I can at least spare you some effort.

“However, you have to remember that there are ten particular battle beasts here with fiery tempers. For example, there’s the skyflame bear, the nightstalker ape, the scarlet flying tiger, and worse of all, the plated mountain juggernaut. Sometimes, people need to be careful even when they come here with protection. Remember not to provoke any of the beasts.” When Sun Wen looked at the female disciple, his heart surged a bit, but inwardly, he sighed.

There was a lot of under-the-table profit to be made in the Beast Conservatory, especially if you were posted there. You could help people find the right beasts using the jade slip, and could even make it easier for them to bond them.

If he’d had his way, he would never have left his post. However, the sect had given him no other choice than to hand it over to Bai Xiaochun, a decision which he resented. Thinking about these things, he led the other two disciples into the jungle, and before long, they had seen quite a few beasts. Many of them came to Sun Wen when he called out to them; clearly, they still remembered him.

“How about this kiwi-deer?

“What about that flying cloudmouse? That’s considered one of the top six hundred beasts here. Want it?

“You two have pretty good luck. This saber-toothed mustang ranks in the top three hundred. When I first saw it, years ago, it wasn’t even close to being this big.

“Eee? It’s a dancing flame butterfly! Hahaha! It’s in the top three hundred, and can cast hallucination magic. Do you want that one?” As they walked along, the two disciples looked at Sun Wen with admiration bordering on worship. Many of the beasts in the area, upon catching sight of him, would stop what they were doing, as if they were simply waiting to be bonded.

The male disciple excitedly picked the saber-toothed mustang, but the female disciple hesitated a bit before abandoning the dancing flame butterfly. She turned to Sun Wen, clearly hoping to get a better beast.

“Elder Brother Sun, are there any that are in the top two hundred?”

“Don’t aim too high,” Sun Wen said in a serious tone. “Battle beasts in the top two hundred are very difficult to tame. Even after serving as the honor guard here for years, I was never able to successfully command them. I bet the new honor guard hasn’t even been a third as successful as me. In all of the sect, not a single Qi Condensation disciple could tame such an animal. The two of you should be careful about which beasts you try to control. It can be a very dangerous thing. You--” Before he could finish speaking, the young woman’s eyes went wide, and she pointed excitedly toward a nearby boulder.

“Elder Brother Sun, quick, look over there. It’s a flying tiger!!” Assuming that since Sun Wen was with her, she didn’t have anything to worry about, she began to perform an incantation gesture without even thinking about it. Instantly, the shamanic powers of the north bank were unleashed, and began to shoot toward the flying tiger.

When Sun Wen turned, he saw a winged tiger lounging on the nearby boulder, looking at the three of them with ruthless coldness.

“Scarlet flying tiger!! Dammit! It usually doesn’t show up here. It’s one of the top ten battle beasts!” His eyes widened, and then he realized that the female disciple was trying to cast shamanic magic on it, and his heart trembled. Grabbing the two Outer Sect disciples, he fell back at top speed. He had only been leading the two Outer Sect disciples into areas where the beasts were relatively docile. The sect wanted the beasts to maintain their wild nature, and because of that, the Beast Conservatory could be a very dangerous place, especially for Outer Sect disciples. Normally, they would only come in when escorted by someone from the Inner Sect.

The flying tiger leapt to its feet and let out a roar as powerful as thunder. When the shamanic power hit it, the power instantly dispersed. However, the tiger’s eyes turned bright red as it shot toward the group of three.

“Not good!!” Shocked, Sun Wen could only watch as the tiger flew up into the air, causing wind to blast out in all directions as power equivalent to the ninth level of Qi Condensation rose up. The two Outer Sect disciples were shocked, and were already shaking in terror. Sun Wen gritted his teeth and pulled out a jade slip to call for help.

However, it was at that moment that a surprised voice could be heard from off in the distance.

“Eee? Tigger, stop being so naughty. Down, boy!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0119 awe-chapter-120

As soon as his voice echoed out, the aggressive flying tiger shuddered, and then immediately dropped down to the ground, kicking up a significant cloud of dust. There it lay, tail swishing back and forth, its tongue stuck out of its mouth, looking over at an enormous figure approaching from the distance.

It was a gigantic, thirty-meter-long pangolin, with cold green eyes and a brutally murderous aura.

These developments occurred so quickly that Sun Wen simply gaped in shock, and the two Outer Sect disciples behind him gasped.

The female disciple was completely dumbstruck; to have seen the flying tiger suddenly become so docile, only to have the huge pangolin arrive, left her wondering if all of these things were really happening. She simply couldn’t imagine how the flying tiger which had caused her Elder Brother Sun to flee at top speed could be ordered down with a single sentence. Its current charming appearance was a complete contrast with the brutal ferocity it had exhibited moments before.

“One of the ten great battle beasts?” murmured the male Outer Sect disciple. Looking at the enormous pangolin, he couldn’t help but gasp in shock.

“Plated... mountain... juggernaut....” Sun Wen was also shocked by the sight of the enormous pangolin. Even the mere pressure which radiated off of it was shocking.

However, what struck him with even more shock was the person he saw sitting on the pangolin’s back.

“It’s you!” he choked.

Perched on the pangolin’s back was Bai Xiaochun. As the pangolin neared, he rose to his feet and leaped into the air, landing next to the flying tiger and bopping it on the head.

“Are you going around scaring people again!?” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding cross. The flying tiger blinked, then lowered its head and licked Bai Xiaochun's leg. Sun Wen felt as though his brain were being struck by lightning, and the two Outer Sect disciples behind him were flabbergasted.

“Sorry, guys,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Tigger isn’t really that bad. He’s just a bit naughty and likes to scare people. Tigger, you apologize this instant!” With that, he gave the flying tiger’s paw a soft kick.

Looking a bit annoyed, the flying tiger turned its head toward Sun Wen and let out a roar. Although it didn’t roar at the top of its lungs, it still sounded like thunder, and caused Sun Wen and the others to tremble inwardly.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the group of three, and pretended that he didn't recognize Sun Wen, even though he did. Smiling, he said, “Are you guys here to select battle beasts?”

“Yeah, we're... we’re here to select battle beasts....” the female disciple said, swallowing hard, fear flickering in her eyes as she looked at Bai Xiaochun. The fact that battle beasts which frightened her Elder Brother Sun could become as charming as little puppies was completely terrifying.

“Ah, I see,” Bai Xiaochun replied. “Well maybe we were destined to meet here. I might as well give you a hand.” Clearing his throat, and looking very enthusiastic, he threw his head back and let out a powerful roar.

As the roar echoed out into the jungle, the ground began to tremble. Moments later, an enormous ape crashed into view, coming to a stop directly in front of Bai Xiaochun. Grinning at him, it beat its chest with its fist and howled at the top of its lungs.

“You go stand over there, Apie,” Bai Xiaochun said, waving his hand, “you’re not their type.” The huge ape moped off to the side, face downcast.

Sun Wen was left shaking. He immediately recognized the ape as one of the ten great battle beasts, the fierce nightstalker ape. He had once personally witnessed this very nightstalker ape crush the head of a waterwood lion. It was an explosively violent creature.

And yet, in front of Bai Xiaochun, it was docile and charming, something that Sun Wen would never have dreamed could be possible.

A moment later, a huge bear tromped up, stood on its hind legs in front of Bai Xiaochun and then started dancing back and forth.

“Teddy, we have guests!” Bai Xiaochun said, starting to get a bit frustrated. “Settle down!” The bear looked over at Sun Wen and the others, and let out a powerful roar.

“Sky... skyflame bear. I can’t believe it’s dancing....” Sun Wen’s vision was swimming, and his mind reeled from the massive waves of shock that battered it. As for the two Outer Sect disciples, however shaken they were before, they were now ten times more so, and were filled with unprecedented terror.

Then, the ground started to shake even harder as one beast after another appeared. A huge horde of hundreds of beasts assembled, none of them the docile type that Sun Wen had found before. These beasts were all fierce and terrifying.

Sun Wen and the Outer Sect disciples instantly went weak at the knees. As for the Outer Sect disciples, their faces were ashen as sensations of imminent crisis filled them from head to toe.

“Very well,” Bai Xiaochun said, trying to sound profound. “Take your pick.” He coughed lightly.

Sun Wen was at a complete loss. He simply couldn’t imagine what Bai Xiaochun might have done to make all of these beasts follow his orders, and in a mere half a year at that.

The fact that Sun Wen had been stationed here for years left him feeling bitter inside. The sharp contrast between himself and Bai Xiaochun was bad enough for him, there was no need to even mention the deep regret felt by the male Outer Sect disciple.

He admired all of the beasts present, and was filled with bitterness that he had carelessly selected one already. If he had merely waited a bit longer, he might have met this miraculous Elder Brother, and stumbled into incredible good fortune. But now... he had no such chance.

The female disciple was trembling in disbelief. She quickly pointed at a huge black condor, which let out a piercing cry. Normally, it was fierce to the extreme, but around Bai Xiaochun, that changed. It allowed the young woman’s shamanic magic to pour into it, slowly bonding it to her.

After that, it took to flight, soaring above them through the air.

Bai Xiaochun laughed, and then waved his hand. Instantly, the rest of the beasts dispersed, and he jumped back up onto the pangolin’s back. The pangolin let out a roar and turned to carry Bai Xiaochun off into the distance.

Almost unwilling to believe that she had succeeded, the young woman called out, “Elder Brother, what’s your name?”

Bai Xiaochun immediately felt quite proud of himself. Sticking his chin up, he naturally assumed the melancholy posture of a lonely hero. Swishing his sleeve, he said, “Call me... Bai Xiaochun.”

Clasping his hands behind his back, he stood there atop the pangolin, hair swaying in the wind, looking a bit depressed. After all of his years of practice, he had become very good at assuming this look.

The image she was seeing was instantly branded deep into the female disciple’s mind.

“Bai Xiaochun? Why does that name sound so familiar...?” The male disciple’s jaw dropped, and his eyes went wide with incredulity. “The archenemy of the north bank!!”

The female disciple gasped, suddenly remembering why Bai Xiaochun’s name was so familiar. However, it seemed completely impossible to correlate the archenemy of the north bank with this lonely, melancholy figure in front of her.

Finally, Sun Wen led them out of the Beast Conservatory.

Back in the jungle, Bai Xiaochun sat down on the pangolin’s back. With no one there to look at him, he sloughed off the lonely hero look and began to proudly hum a little tune. At the same time, he tossed out medicinal pills to the nearby creatures.

In addition to how he dutifully cared for them, one of the reasons the beasts had become so docile around him during the past half year was his medicinal pills.

Because of the pills, the beasts felt stronger and more energetic than ever, causing them to like him and grow closer to him on a daily basis.

Of course, not all of the beasts had the same reaction. There were some that were extremely cautious. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t care. All in all, his half year in the Beast Conservatory had been one of complete happiness.

Recently, his Beastbirth Seed had even sprouted, filling him with intense excitement.

Good things just kept happening one after another. He had also come to find that his Waterswamp Kingdom was progressing, and although his life essence spirit hadn’t appeared yet, the technique itself was growing more ferocious.

The way things were going, Bai Xiaochun had the feeling that his cultivation of the Waterswamp Kingdom would definitely lead to the appearance of a life essence spirit. The main thing he was curious about was what type of beast it would be.

He couldn't stop thinking about what it would be like to have a complete Waterswamp Kingdom, a top secret magic that was of the same caliber as Ghostfang’s Ghosts Haunt the Night. He also wondered what his battle prowess would be.

Filled with anticipation, he focused on cultivation for another month. By this time, he had been on the north bank for the better part of a year. Although he never left the Beast Conservatory and kept a low profile, stories about him taming the beasts began to spread among the disciples outside.

That news, as well as stories about Bai Xiaochun’s past deeds, became one of the most common conversation topics among the north bank disciples. The scene that had played out during the Chosen battles caused countless disciples to gnash their teeth. The thought of what had occurred with Beihan Lie left them feeling as if they were being stabbed in the heart. Then they would look at their own battle beasts, and the pain would become indelible shadows across their hearts.

One day, Beihan Lie finally emerged from secluded meditation. There he stood in his immortal's cave, his eyes wide as he looked at a jade slip which had arrived half a year ago, informing him that Bai Xiaochun had come to the north bank. Baring his teeth, he crushed the jade slip.

“Bai Xiaochun, the humiliation you heaped upon me will be cleansed today! You might be strong, but I’ve made a lot of progress in the years since then. Unheard-of progress!! I've finally pushed my Sunset Incantation to the third level! I'm invincible under Foundation Establishment!” His cultivation base erupted, and it was at the great circle of the ninth level of Qi Condensation. After the intense provocation from years ago, he had gone mad with his cultivation, until he was in a state of frenzied hysteria.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Beihan Lie threw his head back and roared, bursting out from his immortal's cave. Many people noticed what was happening, especially the Gongsun siblings and Xu Song.

“So powerful!! He actually pushed the Sunset Incantation all the way to the third level! Nobody's done that for the past thousand years! He’s grown, but then again, so have we. It's hard to say how much more powerful he is compared to back then!”

“Anybody who experienced such a tragedy would surely relive it every day and go mad, just like he did.”

Even as the Chosen observed Beihan Lie with trembling hearts, he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward one of the most popular locations on the north bank, the centrally located trial platform.

The trial platform was actually a clawed stone hand attached to the statue of an enormous, ferocious beast. The statue itself was thirty meters tall, vicious to the extreme, and even seemed to emanate the air of battle. It looked something like an upright crocodile, covered with scales, with three rows of sharp spikes running down its back. Even more shocking was that the clawed hand made up more than half of its entire body.

Its left hand was somewhat eroded from the wind and rain, but its right hand stretched up as if to rip apart the heavens!

The trial platform was the palm of that right hand!

The statue had been discovered four thousand years ago in the Spirit Stream Sect’s Ancient Beast Chasm. It had taken quite a bit of work to extract it and set it up in its current location, where it became the north bank’s popular trial platform.

Currently, Beihan Lie stood on the trial platform, eyes shining with the desire to fight. Throwing his head back, he howled, “I'm putting up all of the merit points I have. 37,000! I hereby challenge Bai Xiaochun!” As the words left his mouth, the trial platform began to tremble, and the air distorted as a paper crane materialized! Without the slightest delay, it shot at top speed in the direction of the Beast Conservatory!

The north bank trail platform was a very famous place in the Spirit Stream Sect. Even the disciples in the south bank had heard of it. According to the rules of the trial platform, anyone could pay some merit points to issue a challenge to anyone else on the north bank. Once they did so, a paper crane would appear, which would fly to notify the other party of the challenge.

The challenge would remain in effect for half a year. If the challenged party accepted, the fight would begin immediately. If the challenged party won the fight, they got to keep the merit points. If they lost, there was no merit point penalty.

It was also possible to refuse the challenge. If that happened, then half a year later, the challenge would be nullified, and the merit points would be returned to the challenger. However, during that half year time period, the challenger could not retract the challenge.

Because of those rules, the challengers ended up being in a very passive position. However, that made things fair.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0120 awe-chapter-121

The news that Beihan Lie had made such incredible progress with his divine ability and then issued a challenge to Bai Xiaochun on the trial platform swept rapidly through the north bank. Disciples flocked to the trial platform, where they waited eagerly to see the outcome.

Beihan Lie stood there, his blood boiling with the desire for revenge. He wanted to cleanse the humiliation which he had felt, and prove to all on the north bank that Beihan Lie was the same Chosen he was before!

“However far I fall down, that’s how far I’ll climb up, and even higher! Bai Xiaochun, you’re nothing but a stepping stone to me!” Beihan Lie’s eyes burned with madness. He had been waiting for this day for a long, long time, and was completely confident that his Sunset Incantation would secure him victory against Bai Xiaochun!

Of course, he had heard the stories about Bai Xiaochun’s final match with Ghostfang. However, he was still confident that his mad struggles over the past years put him in a position to fight first Bai Xiaochun, and then Ghostfang.

“Bai Xiaochun, get out here!” Beihan Lie roared, shaking inside and out, thrumming with energy that caused intense shock among the spectators. His unleashed cultivation base was like a vortex, spinning around him in all directions.

“Good job, Elder Brother Beihan! Take Bai Xiaochun down!”

“Hahaha! We’ve been waiting for a long time for this day to arrive!”

As crowd was cheering, Bai Xiaochun was in the jungle, sitting on top of the pangolin, humming a little tune as they went on a little walk. Suddenly, a beam of light appeared off in the distance. It sent a blood-colored glow out in all directions, and radiated a murderous aura that seemed permeated with the desire to do battle. Bai Xiaochun looked up as the blood-colored light appeared in front of him, taking the shape of a paper crane.

An emotionless voice spoke from the crane to echo out in the jungle. “Inner Sect disciple Bai Xiaochun: Beihan Lie of the north bank, in the ninth level of Qi Condensation, has put up 37,000 merit points to challenge you to a fight. The challenge remains open for the following half year. If you win, you may keep the merit points. If you lose, then according to the rules of the trial platform, you will not be penalized.”

The voice itself seemed to contain something that caused one's blood to boil and one's impulses to surge.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his heart began to beat rapidly. Something about the voice seemed to be intentionally driving him toward madness.

Fight! Fight! FIGHT!

“Fight, my ass!” Bai Xiaochun said, smacking his chest to dispel the effects of the voice. After all of his time spent researching the sect rules of the north bank, he was not unfamiliar with the trial platform, and knew the rules well.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, am a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. By no means will I participate in any fighting and killing.” Glancing once more at the paper crane, he coughed dryly and then waved his sleeve.... A wind sprang up, sending the paper crane flying off to the side.

Humming a little tune, he sent the pangolin onward through the jungle as though nothing had ever happened.

Time passed. About an hour later, the crowd around the trial platform was completely shocked, and the cheering had died down quite a bit.

After two hours, people were starting to whisper back and forth to each other. Beihan Lie still stood there on the trial platform, trembling and twitching.

“Bai Xiaochun isn’t going to avoid the fight, is he? No way.... He took first place in the Chosen battles. He, he... he couldn’t possibly not care about his reputation, could he?”

“I doubt that’s possible. It doesn’t matter who the Chosen is, when they get challenged, they either fight right then and there, or schedule another time to fight. Why hasn’t Bai Xiaochun even responded?”

Four hours later, the sun was setting. However, Bai Xiaochun still hadn’t responded. The north bank disciples were stunned.

“Dammit! I should have known! I can't believe the shameless Bai Xiaochun is avoiding the fight!!”

“This is preposterous! He came here as a representative of the south bank. What a loss of face for them!!”

As the discussions raged, Beihan Lie glared off in the direction of the Beast Conservatory. He could never have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would actually avoid the fight. He couldn't accept it. Bai Xiaochun had taken first place in the Chosen battles; if Beihan Lie had taken first place, and then someone challenged him, he wouldn't avoid the fight.

“He's definitely going to come out and fight!” Beihan Lie said through gritted teeth. The way he stood there, completely focused, caused the observing north bank disciples to be shaken inwardly.

A few moments later, another beam of light appeared from within the crowd as someone flew up onto the trial platform. As people looked over, the newcomer was immediately identified. He was also a Chosen like Beihan Lie. Xu Song!

A grave expression could be seen on his face as he stood there on the trial platform. When he thought back to the fight he had witnessed between Bai Xiaochun and Ghostfang, he knew that Ghostfang hadn’t been truly defeated. He had handed Bai Xiaochun the victory by tiring himself out. Bai Xiaochun was strong, Xu Song had to admit that. However, in the past years, he had grown significantly, and was far, far stronger than he had been during the Chosen battles. After much consideration, he had come to believe that he definitely qualified to fight with Bai Xiaochun.

“Today, I, Xu Song, will join Beihan Lie to challenge Bai Xiaochun to a fight!” he said loudly. “Xu Song of the north bank! I'm putting up 20,000 merit points to issue the challenge!” After a moment of protracted silence, a deafening cheer rose up from the crowd.

“Elder Brother Xu Song is actually challenging Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Good job, Elder Brother Xu Song!”

Glittering light rose up as a second paper crane formed and then shot toward the Beast Conservatory.

Beihan Lie trembled as he looked over at Xu Song. Their gazes met, and both could see how much the other was determined to fight Bai Xiaochun. After a moment, they both began to laugh at the tops of their lungs.

At about this time, another beam of light shot out toward the trial platform. It was a young woman, none other than Gongsun Wan’er.

“I, Gongsun Wan’er, put up 20,000 merit points to issue a challenge to Bai Xiaochun!”

Before the crowd could cheer any louder, a fourth beam of light shot toward the trial platform.

“I, Gongsun Yun, put up 20,000 merit points to issue a challenge to Bai Xiaochun!”

The Gongsun siblings had experienced significant progress in recent years, and were also challenging Bai Xiaochun to a fight.

As their voices echoed out, light glittered, and two paper cranes formed and then shot out through the air toward the Beast Conservatory.

“Look how fired up they are! Now that's what north bank Chosen are like!!”

“Those Chosen are invincible!!”

“Hahaha! Bai Xiaochun must be scared out of his pants. You know what, even if I lose, it’s only a few merit points. I'm gonna challenge him too! He needs to know that the north bank sticks together!”

A fifth, a sixth, and even a seventh disciple emerged from the crowd to fly over and stand on the trial platform.

“I, Chen Ao, will share trials and tribulations with Elder Brother Gongsun Yun. I put up 700 merit points to challenge Bai Xiaochun!”

“Elder Brother Xu Song has always treated me well. I, Sun Chenglong, will stand by his side! I put up 500 merit points to challenge Bai Xiaochun to a fight!”

“I, Zhou Fang, put up 400 merit points to challenge Bai Xiaochun to a fight!”

The north bank was being completely shaken. Meanwhile, back in the Beast Conservatory, Bai Xiaochun watched in shock as one paper crane after another flew toward him. As they did, they spoke with the same emotionless voice.

“So many....” Bai Xiaochun thought, blinking. He had already tossed three paper cranes off to the side, only to see five or six more flying toward him, one after another.

All of them exerted influence on him to try to get him to fight, making it hard to stay calm. Suddenly, wings sprouted from his back as he shot through the forest at top speed back toward the honor guard station.

Along the way, another dozen or so paper cranes reached him, all of them speaking the same type of words.

The stimulating sensation caused by the words made Bai Xiaochun let out an enraged roar.

“You people are such bullies! How can you challenge me with so many people, and each one in the eighth level of Qi Condensation or higher. What are you trying to accomplish? No! I want to keep a low profile!” After arriving back at the honor guard station, he activated the spell formation, trapping the paper cranes outside. Finally, he sat down cross-legged, looking very lofty.

“I'm definitely going to keep a low profile here on the north bank. There’s no way I’m going to give in to your demands. Humph!” Sighing emotionally, he put the matter aside and began to meditate.

As the night passed, more and more people leaped up to join Beihan Lie on the trial platform and issued challenges to Bai Xiaochun. The whole sect was set astir. Many of them were there to ingratiate themselves to the Chosen, and of course, a large number of them were fans of Gongsun Wan’er. It was quite an exhilarating scene to see so many people putting up so many merit points.

Around daybreak, Bai Xiaochun finished his cultivation session and pushed the door open to find a cacophony of voices shaking everything in the area. He stared in shock, and worked hard just to suppress the desire to fight which rose up in his heart at the instigation of the voices. Astonishingly, there were over a hundred paper cranes waiting outside for him.

“You north bank people are crazy,” he said. Scalp tingling, he closed the door and didn’t take even a single step outside.

The following morning, he assumed that the north bank people would have finally called it quits. However, upon opening the door, a sound like thunder could be heard coming from the more than 300 paper cranes piled up like a mountain outside of the honor guard station.

Each and every one of those paper cranes represented a challenge to fight....

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and quickly closed the door, more convinced than ever that the north bank people were lunatics.

“Ai. Sometimes it’s a real mistake to be so superior to everyone. Bai Xiaochun. Ah, Bai Xiaochun. If you made a mistake anywhere, it was in being so superior.” Face downcast, he sat down in the honor guard station, where he thought for some time before deciding to simply work on cultivating the Waterswamp Kingdom.

Time passed. During the following week, every time Bai Xiaochun pushed open his door, he would find that hundreds more cranes had arrived. Eventually, he simply got used to it, until around two thousand of them were piled up outside.

Whenever disciples came to visit the Beast Conservatory, the first thing they noticed upon entering was the huge pile of paper cranes....

The entire north bank had sprung into motion because of Beihan Lie issuing a fight challenge. The Chosen were whipped up into a storm, and it only continued to grow more intense. Eventually, roughly forty percent of the Inner Sect disciples had issued a challenge to Bai Xiaochun. Most of them offered up a small portion of their merit points, not all of them like Beihan Lie had. Eventually, word spread to the elders and the peak lords, and even they were shocked by what was happening.

During the four thousand year history of the north bank trial platform, this was the first time... that anything like this had ever happened.

Nearly two thousand Inner Sect disciples had issued challenges, and all to a single person....

It was impossible to control the situation, which was like a flowing tide that dragged all the north bank into madness.

“Did you hear the latest news? Today, three hundred Inner Sect disciples challenged Bai Xiaochun at the trial platform!”

“Hahaha! Bai Xiaochun is definitely scared to death. By now he definitely realizes how strong the north bank is, and how much we stick together!”

“Hold on. I’m gonna go challenge him too! Right now!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0121 awe-chapter-122

The north bank disciples viewed challenging Bai Xiaochun as a sort of heroic accomplishment. It was causing such a stir that word even spread to the south bank. The disciples there exchanged glances of sympathy. Of course, that sympathy was not for Bai Xiaochun; it was for the disciples of the north bank.

“They really don’t know him at all....”

“Just wait. It won't be long before they realize how terrifying Bai Xiaochun is.”

Time passed. On the tenth day, the number of Inner Sect disciples who had challenged Bai Xiaochun had reached about 2,300 in total. That number increased every day.

It reached the point that any Inner Sect disciple who didn’t go to challenge Bai Xiaochun was considered to have lost face. Not going to the trial platform to send out a paper crane was considered to be contemptible.

Once that became the norm... even more people challenged him.

“Hahaha! On this day, I, Xu Dabao, put up 10 merit points to challenge Bai Xiaochun!”

“Humph! I, Zhou Yuncong, challenged the archenemy of the north bank three days ago. Too bad that numskull didn’t dare to fight!”

On the thirteenth day, the number of disciples who had challenged Bai Xiaochun passed the 3,000 mark. The north bank was completely and utterly in a frenzy. No matter where you went, the only thing people talked about were the challenges to Bai Xiaochun.

For such a massive storm to have been caused by a single person was unheard-of. New challenges flew out every day, and tens of thousands of Outer Sect disciples were gathered around the trial platform, there to watch the proud Inner Sect disciples in their glory. Every paper crane that flew off was accompanied by cheers, regardless of how many merit points had been put up as the stakes.

Beihan Lie had never imagined that his actions would give birth to such pandemonium. He was now far more famous than before, especially considering that he had come back from an injury to his current height.

On the seventeenth day, the number of disciples who had challenged Bai Xiaochun broke past 4,000. The storm which had overtaken the north bank was filling the entire sect.

By this point, what was happening was no longer a simple challenge to fight. It was a symbol. The number of merit points offered up didn’t matter. Some people offered less than ten. However, the event was so exciting that everybody had to participate.

“Bai Xiaochun is scared! He doesn’t dare to fight with the north bank!”

“Hahaha! Even if he were stronger than he is, he would still have to kneel before the combined might of the north bank!”

“The spirit of the north bank can never be surpassed!!”

The four peak lords of the north bank were tongue-tied, and Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong looked on with wide eyes. Even the prime elders took notice. After all, this sort of thing had never occurred before.

The north bank disciples were so excited about the matter that virtually every day after the challenges were issued, people would rush over to the Beast Conservatory to look at the paper cranes flying to join the pile. Loud cheering would always accompany the scene.

By the twentieth day, eighty to ninety percent of the Inner Sect disciples had issued challenges to fight. It was only then that the pandemonium began to die down. That morning, a burly Outer Sect disciple appeared near the trial platform, seemingly bursting with eagerness. In his mind, considering the fact that over four thousand people had already challenged Bai Xiaochun ahead of him, even if Bai Xiaochun did choose to fight someone, he surely wouldn’t pick people who had offered low amounts of merit points. After all, Bai Xiaochun had taken first place in the Chosen battles.

To be able to challenge someone like that, even if he was avoiding the fighting, left the burly disciple bursting with joy. Later on, he could brag that he had challenged Bai Xiaochun, but that Bai Xiaochun had run from the fight.

More excited than ever, the burly disciple unleashed the power of the fourth level of Qi Condensation and leaped up onto the trial platform, the first person of the day to issue a challenge, and also the first Outer Sect to ever do so. After landing on the trial, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“I, Liu Dabiao, put up 200 merit points to challenge the archenemy of the north bank, Bai Xiaochun!” Laughing at the top of his lungs, Liu Dabiao clasped his hands behind his back and stared off in the direction of the Beast Conservatory. “Bai Xiaochun, once you receive Lord Tiger’s challenge, will you, an Inner Sect disciple, dare to fight me?”

This man’s actions stunned everyone present. The first reaction was that this Liu Dabiao was clearly a fool. No matter how detestable Bai Xiaochun was, he had taken first place in the Chosen battles. He was not the type of person that could be challenged by an Outer Sect disciple. But then people realized that Liu Dabiao was obviously using this chance to try to earn a name for himself, and their eyes began to shine brightly.

For an Outer Sect disciple to challenge an Inner Sect disciple, who then fled from the match, was an amazing situation that got everyone’s blood burning.

Liu Dabiao had clearly issued his challenge to fight because he wished to join the grand occasion of opposing the archenemy of the north bank.

Even as Liu Dabiao stood there proudly on the trial platform, Bai Xiaochun was just getting up from a session of meditation in the honor guard station of the Beast Conservatory. Sighing, he pushed open the door.

Over the past twenty days, he had gotten a headache every time he opened the door. However, he had no other choice. If too many paper cranes built up, the desire to fight would grow too strong, and he wouldn’t be able to handle it. Therefore, the first thing he did every morning was open the door.

Every time he did so, he would see hundreds of paper cranes, and hear countless voices issuing challenges. Yesterday, he had even taken the time to count them all, and found that there were over four thousand. By now, they were piled up everywhere.

This time when he opened the door, he was surprised to find only a few dozen new paper cranes. But then, only a moment later, a huge cloud of over a thousand cranes, bursting with a desire to do battle that could topple mountains and drain seas, flew toward him from off in the distance. Bai Xiaochun’s mind and heart were instantly engulfed by a powerful urge to fight.

As the more than one thousand paper cranes descended, overwhelming him with the desire to do battle, he was literally buried by the cranes.

A moment later, his head popped into view, and he crawled out from within the pile of cranes. A shocked expression could be seen on his face as he looked around. He was so surprised that he could barely move.

He reached out and grabbed the first crane he saw, to hear an emotionless voice speaking in his ear.

“Inner Sect disciple Bai Xiaochun: Outer Sect disciple Liu Dabiao of the north bank, fourth level of Qi Condensation, has put up 200 merit points to challenge you to a fight.”

Bai Xiaochun stared at the paper crane, shocked. When he heard that the challenger was in the fourth level of Qi Condensation, his eyes flashed with anger.

“What a bunch of bullies, these north bank people. I've been trying hard to keep a low profile, but it’s simply impossible. Sheesh! If Beihan Lie doesn’t want to admit he lost, and feels like emerging after ten years in secluded meditation, well that’s understandable. The Inner Sect disciples want to challenge me? I can endure. But now Outer Sect disciples are challenging me? Enough! *Enough!* I can accept a challenge! Liu Dabiao? Fourth level of Qi Condensation? He’s the one!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and sighed inwardly. It was too bad that the beasts in the Beast Conservatory couldn’t be taken out easily unless they were bonded. Plus, he didn’t know the Heavenspan Shamanic Control Incantation. Otherwise, he would take the hundreds of beasts here out with him and crush the fighting arena!

Filled with regret, he stuck his chin up and looked at the paper crane.

“I accept this challenge!”

Meanwhile, back on the trial platform, Liu Dabiao stood there with his hands clasped behind his back, basking in the feeling of being the center of attention. It was almost overwhelming on an emotional level.

“Bai Xiaochun, Lord Tiger will wait for you for ten breaths of time. You noob! You numskull! Do you dare to accept Lord Tiger’s challenge, or not?! Bai Xiaochun, get the hell out here right now!”

As he got more and more excited, his voice continued to get louder and louder, causing the crowd to cheer even more.

Liu Dabiao’s was getting really worked up, and had never even stopped to consider that Bai Xiaochun might actually accept his challenge. From his perspective, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had been avoiding the fights for the past twenty days meant that even if he did start to accept some, he would definitely pick the Inner Sect disciples. He would never be so shameless as to fight with someone from the

Outer Sect. After all... he had taken first place in the Chosen battles!

Liu Dabiao was feeling more proud of himself than ever, and was congratulating himself on picking the perfect situation to make a name for himself. He could even imagine what it would be like in a few days. Everyone in the Outer Sect would know who he was, and his newfound fame might even cause some of the Junior Sisters he liked to take an interest in him.

“Bai Xiaochun, you have three breaths of time left!” he roared. “Hurry up! Do you dare to fight with Lord Tiger!?” Laughing with extreme contentment, he prepared to remove himself from the platform.

But then....

Suddenly, a screen of light rose up in front of him, making it impossible for him to leave. The surrounding disciples stared in shock.

Next, a completely emotionless voice rang out to fill the trial platform.

“Inner Sect disciple Bai Xiaochun has accepted the challenge issued by Outer Sect disciple Liu Dabiao. Let the fighting begin!”

The glittering light of teleportation could be seen as Bai Xiaochun slowly materialized on the trial platform, thanks to the powers of the paper crane. There he was in front of tens of thousands of north bank disciples, all of whom stared in complete shock.

A deathly silence filled the air. Among the crowd of tens of thousands were both Outer Sect disciples and Inner Sect disciples, and yet all of them were struck as mute as wooden chickens as they stared at Bai Xiaochun.

None of them could ever have possibly imagined that Bai Xiaochun... would actually accept a challenge. Although it was within the realm of possibility, it was still completely unbelievable that... he would accept a challenge from an Outer Sect disciple in the fourth level of Qi Condensation....

Such shamelessness defied the imaginations of everyone present, and left their minds completely blank.

“You're Liu Dabiao?” Bai Xiaochun asked, clasping his hands behind his back and looking very serious.

Liu Dabiao’s knees began to wobble, and tears started rolling down his cheeks. He looked like he was on the verge of fainting. His eyes were blank, and for a moment, he wondered if he were dreaming. He had simply wanted to take advantage of the situation to make a name for himself. How could he ever have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would actually accept his challenge!?!?

“I... I....” He was shaking so hard that he could hardly speak straight.

Before he could even say anything, Bai Xiaochun said, “Why don’t you concede? When I attack, I frighten even myself.”

The words hit Liu Dabiao’s ears like crashing thunder. Visualizing all of the stories he had heard about Bai Xiaochun, especially the tragedy of Beihan Lie, his knees went stiff. Terrified, he almost began to weep.

“I concede!!”

As the words left his mouth, he vanished, and Bai Xiaochun stood there proudly on the trial platform, watching as 200 merit points were added to his command medallion.

“Life can be so lonely...” he said, flicking his sleeve and sighing. The spectators began to howl in rage, so loudly that it echoed out from the north bank to be heard by the disciples on the south bank.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0122 awe-chapter-123

“Completely shameless!! I can’t believe the world has someone as shameless as him in it!!”

“Heavens! In all my years, I’ve never seen a guy as shameless as that. I can’t deal with this. Can't deal with it, I tell you! I’m gonna go strangle him to death!”

“Get out of my way! This villain Bai Xiaochun’s shameless is incomprehensible!!”

Everyone was going mad and shouting at the tops of their lungs. Eyes were shot with blood. Liu Dabiao reappeared after having conceded, his legs wobbling and tears streaming down his face. Everyone present felt sorry for him.

“This is too much! Instead of accepting the challenge of an Inner Sect disciple, he fights an Outer Sect disciple? If he wants to pick someone weak to fight, fine, but did he have to pick someone that weak?!?!”

“Hey, fight me, Chen Ao! I challenged you on the first day. Come on, I dare ya!!” The Inner Sect disciples were going mad, unleashing anger upon Bai Xiaochun that could shake heaven and earth.

The Gongsun siblings and Xu Song were speeding toward the trial platform from off in the distance. After learning what had happened, they were shaken, but also enraged.

That was especially true of Beihan Lie, who threw his head back and roared.

“Bai Xiaochun, I challenge you to fight!!”

His words caused everything to shake as if with thunder, and filled all four peaks of the north bank. Countless disciples of both the Outer and Inner sects were shocked. Eyes wide, they began to race toward the trial platform.

So many people were calling out that they wanted to fight that several hundred paper cranes formed and shot toward Bai Xiaochun, almost inundating him.

This was a scene which had never, ever played out before on the north bank. The disciples were going crazy, and even the four peak lords were left gasping. A huge group of elders appeared, hovering up in the air and looking down at the scene playing out.

However, no matter which way they analyzed the situation, they couldn’t think of any way in which Bai Xiaochun had violated any sect rules. The old woman from Irispetal Peak looked down at him with wide eyes, aware that everything he had done was in compliance with all regulations....

Seeing all the paper cranes, and seeing how angry everyone was, Bai Xiaochun started getting mad. He hadn’t done anything to deserve this, and was convinced that he was in the right. He hadn’t violated a single sect rule. He hadn’t challenged a single person; they kept challenging him!

All he had done was accept the challenge....

Hearing how everyone was shouting out challenges at him, his eyes widened into a glare, and he roared, “You bunch of bullies! Fine. Fine! You forced me into this!”

Sweeping his furious gaze across the crowd, he waved his hand, and a sound like rushing water could be heard as more than 5,000 paper cranes emerged from his bag of holding. Those were all of the paper cranes he had collected recently, a thousand of which had just come in that morning....

The crowd instantly went quiet. The Inner Sect disciples were all cracking their knuckles, ready to fight at any moment. As for the Outer Sect disciples, they were burning with rage. However, some of them, the impulsive thousand or so who had joined Liu Dabiao to issue challenges, were also a bit nervous.

Bai Xiaochun, heart pulsing with fury, looked over at the paper cranes and then selected one from an Outer Sect disciple in the fifth level of Qi Condensation.

“You!” he said loftily. “I accept your challenge!”

As his voice echoed out, one of the Outer Sect disciples in the crowd, a teenager, vanished as he was teleported onto the trial platform. Trembling, tears welling up in his eyes and leaking out the corners, he edged backward.

“I... I concede!!”

The audience gaped, and some people’s vision started to turn black as they realized they had underestimated the true depth of Bai Xiaochun’s shamelessness....

“ARRGHHHH! I'm gonna kill him! Bai Xiaochun, you’re not gonna escape this time! Not unless you fight everybody here! Until that happens, this matter will never be over!”

“This level of shamelessness... I... I don’t even know what to say!”

“Heavens! I hope some immortal lightning falls from the sky and strikes him dead!”

That only got Bai Xiaochun more angry. Looking around at the maddened crowd, he said, “I, Bai Xiaochun, came here from the south bank, alone and impoverished. I've kept my tail between my legs up to now because I didn't want to offend anyone. But since you’ve forced me, then fine, I’m gonna go all out!”

Eyes bright red, he clenched his jaw and pulled out a paper crane from a disciple in the fifth level of Qi Condensation.

A moment later, the Outer Sect disciple appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun, so terrified he was on the verge of collapsing. He immediately shouted that he conceded. Bai Xiaochun let out a cold harrumph and then produced another paper crane.

To the increasing rage of the crowd, Bai Xiaochun produced one challenge crane after another belonging to Outer Sect disciples. Each and every one was so terrified their legs felt like jelly. However, challenges could not be canceled by the challenger, so they had no choice but to tearfully concede and watch as their merit points were transferred to Bai Xiaochun.

After conceding, they would return to the crowd, their fury even stronger than before, and yet also feeling pained because of the loss of merit points.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun’s merit points were increasing rapidly, to the point where even he was shocked. That day was a huge catastrophe for all of the impulsive Outer Sect disciples....

To them, Bai Xiaochun had become a pernicious devil who consumed merit points with extreme prejudice. As for Bai Xiaochun, he ruthlessly swept through the entire group of Outer Sect disciples, the process of which took three days.

He didn’t fight a single time, although taking out all the paper cranes left his arm a bit sore.

The north bank disciples were apoplectic, their voices hoarse and sore from all the shouting. And yet, they didn’t calm down in the least bit. Eventually, the Hall of Justice had to intervene to keep things under control. But even they could only watch Bai Xiaochun at work, remaining vigilant against a possible uprising on the part of the north bank disciples.

The four peak lords looked on in absolute astonishment. Glancing at each other, they could see the helplessness and shock in each other’s eyes.

“No wonder the south bank sent Bai Xiaochun over here!”

“This guy could run the sect into the ground!!”

“And yet, he hasn’t broken any sect rules....”

Three days later, Bai Xiaochun stretched his right arm to loosen it up, then let out a cold harrumph. Having cleared all of the Outer Sect disciples’ fight challenges, he looked around at the tens of thousand of people surrounding him, and could tell that they wouldn't let him leave.

After a moment of silence, he chuckled. “Well, since you’re going to be like that, don't blame me for what happens next.”

It was at that moment that his normal cautiousness faded, and the same veins of steel appeared that had been present in the fight with the Luochen Clan!

Even as the crowd looked on with bloodshot eyes, he selected a fight challenge from an Inner Sect disciple.

All eyes were completely focused on the trial platform as a figure materialized. It was a gaunt young man who, the moment he appeared, threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Bai Xiaochun, today I will--”

BOOM!

Before he could even finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun was right in front of him, unleashing a fist strike. The gaunt young man’s eyes went wide as he sailed through the air and then slammed into the shield surrounding the trial platform, where he slumped down, unconscious.

The audience gasped, and their eyes went wide. Bai Xiaochun stood there with a placid expression on his face as he pulled out a second paper crane from an Inner Sect disciple. Moments later, the second Inner Sect disciple appeared on the platform. In the blink of an eye, a fist flashed, and he was unconscious. Then, Bai Xiaochun pulled out a third challenge....

It took one day for him to accept the challenge cranes from a hundred Inner Sect disciples. All of them were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and yet none of them could stand up to a single punch from Bai Xiaochun.

When evening fell, Bai Xiaochun chose to rest. He sat down cross-legged on the trial platform, surrounded by a furious crowd bent on preventing him from leaving if he tried.

The next day at dawn, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes. Expression the same as ever, he selected a paper crane, and then once again set to work. Yet again, a hundred people couldn’t stand up to a single punch!

Day three. Day four. Day five....

Twenty days passed in which Bai Xiaochun accepted two thousand challenges from Inner Sect disciples. All of them were in the eighth level of Qi Condensation, and not a single one could stand up to his fist strike.

None of them even came close to qualifying.

Although it was certainly an impressive scene, the north bank disciples weren’t silenced yet, nor was their rage lessened.

It was on the twentieth day that Bai Xiaochun calmly produced a challenge letter belonging to someone in the ninth level of Qi Condensation. Soon, people were shocked to find out that Bai Xiaochun was so strong... that the disciples in the ninth level of Qi Condensation could only withstand two fist strikes before being knocked unconscious.

Some of them even coughed up mouthfuls of blood.

The north bank disciples were staggered, and many of them finally lapsed into silence. Even the four great Chosen, the Gongsun siblings, Xu Song, and finally Beihan Lie, couldn’t endure more than ten successive fist strikes.

Beihan Lie was utterly shocked to find that his Sunset Incantation couldn’t stand up to Bai Xiaochun at all!

The Gongsun siblings were astonished. They had been under the belief that they had experienced rapid advancement since the Chosen battles, but now they realized that Bai Xiaochun had advanced far, far more quickly than they had!

Xu Song faced Bai Xiaochun bitterly, and to him, it felt like standing in front of Ghostfang. The terror he felt was something he had never felt before in his life.

Ten fist strikes ended everything. Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body was already in a position to make contact with the first shackle. After he reached the Undying Gold Skin level, he would be at the peak of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming scripture, and would be on the verge of ascending to a higher level.

Such strength made him truly invincible to anyone under Foundation Establishment.

After seeing the four great Chosen fall, the other north bank disciples sat there silently, looking at Bai Xiaochun with complicated expressions. Although rage still burned in their hearts, at long last... they had to admit to his superiority!

In the cultivation world, respect was given to the strong and powerful. Bai Xiaochun had struck terror into the depths of their hearts, and as of this moment, had truly defeated the north bank disciples.

He was still their archenemy, but now, people wanted to work as hard as possible to surpass that archenemy!

It was hard to say who moved first, but soon, the crowd had parted to open a pathway leading toward the Beast Conservatory.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0123 awe-chapter-124

Bai Xiaochun was done fighting. When the north bank disciples opened up a path for him, he shook his head and, looking somewhat melancholy, slowly began to walk away.

Mixed emotions could be seen in the eyes of the disciples as they watched him go. Off in the distance, he sighed and swished his sleeve.

“It’s my fault,” he said. “I should have kept a lower profile. Ai.” Inwardly, he was feeling very pleased with himself, even excited. And yet, he maintained the melancholy, lonely look. He made a very bleak silhouette....

The disciples of the north bank were torn, and none of them were really sure what they were feeling. The Gongsun siblings, Xu Song and Beihan Lie didn't want to give up so easily, and yet, they felt powerless.

They had worked hard to catch up to Bai Xiaochun, and even believed that they had surpassed him, only to find out that they had been left far behind. That feeling left them feeling very down.

Xu Song sighed. “Perhaps, years from now, it will be him or Ghostfang... who reaches the Legacy Echelon!”

The Gongsun siblings were thinking similar thoughts.

The only one who reacted differently was Beihan Lie, who stood there trembling, his hands clenched into fists. He would not give up. Could not give up. The memory of the

Chosen battles was like an invisible whip that constantly lashed at him.

Even as he gritted his teeth, a hand came to rest on his shoulder. It was none other than his Elder Brother Beihan Feng, the number one Chosen of Sunset Peak. He had long since arrived on the scene, and one of the paper cranes Bai Xiaochun had abandoned belonged to him.

After personally witnessing what Bai Xiaochun had accomplished over the past month or so, Beihan Feng knew very well that he himself... was not a match for Bai Xiaochun. And he was in the tenth level of Qi Condensation.

Because of Bai Xiaochun’s terrifying fleshly body power and indescribable speed, he knew that he would be crushed as easily as a dried twig.

“Big bro....” Beihan Lie said.

“Your latent talent exceeds mine,” Beihan Feng said encouragingly. “Work hard at your cultivation. Temporary setbacks don’t mean anything. Some members of the senior generation who are now in the Legacy Echelon were nobodies back when they were in Qi Condensation or Foundation Establishment. They worked for years to prepare themselves to become the ultimate Chosen of their generation.” Although those words had been spoken to his Junior Brother, they were meant for himself.

Beihan Lie stood there quietly for a long moment before nodding.

“In the future, don’t provoke Bai Xiaochun,” Beihan Feng said softly. “It doesn’t matter how vile he was in the past, as of this moment, he has earned the respect of the north bank. Furthermore, you could learn a bit from how he does things. He knows what to say and how to say it. Knows when to advance and when to retreat. Doesn't get caught up in his imagination. Doesn’t get entranced by wealth. Stays focused and perseveres. This guy... is terrifying.”

Beihan Feng wasn’t the only one who harbored such thoughts. Of the more than two thousand Inner Sect disciples Bai Xiaochun had defeated, most were thinking the same thing.

Sometimes, Bai Xiaochun was a smooth operator. The north bank had taken the initiative to challenge him to fight, but he hadn’t pushed things too far. It was a decision he had made for the benefit of the north bank, and the more than two thousand disciples he hadn’t beaten, to leave them some face.

Continuing to accept the fight challenges would have been meaningless. Furthermore, he had already accumulated a terrifying number of merit points. For now, the best thing was to simply let matters drop, and allow the remaining challenges to expire half a year later.

Not only would that give some face to the north bank, it would reduce a bit of the hostility the disciples there felt towards him.

No one said a word. The north bank disciples stood there quietly, and many of them understood what was happening. Even more of them sighed inwardly as respect for Bai Xiaochun bloomed in their hearts.

The four peak lords hovered there, looking down with serious expressions.

“This Bai Xiaochun is actually far more powerful than he was during the Chosen battles....”

“Young Ghostfang has been in secluded meditation this whole time in preparation for Foundation Establishment. Of the two of them, I wonder who is stronger. Years from now, perhaps one of them will enter the Legacy Echelon and become one of the Spirit Stream Sect’s most powerful resources.”

“It’s a very, very difficult thing to enter the Legacy Echelon. The only way to do it is to reach the Gold Core level within two sixty-year cycles. If you exceed two sixty-year cycles, then even reaching Gold Core will only make you a prime elder. Both Ghostfang and Bai Xiaochun have a long road ahead of them.... If one of them really does manage to reach the Legacy Echelon and surpass us peak lords, they may be able to enter the location where the most profound of the Spirit Stream Sect’s reserve powers are located, the Spirit Stream Pocket Realm. Not only are the legacy magics of the prime elders located there, if one is lucky, it’s even possible to meet... Patriarch Spirit Stream!!”

“To date, only about twenty Legacy Echelon members have entered the Spirit Stream Pocket Realm.... They are the true indestructible legacy seeds of the Spirit Stream Sect. Each of them... provide the true power and support for the Spirit Stream Sect.... None of us have any chance of being anything other than peak lords who protect the mountains. Only Li Qinghou... has a real chance!”

The four peak lords exchanged glances and sighed as they recalled Bai Xiaochun’s relationship with Li Qinghou.

Eventually, the crowds dispersed. In the following days, the north bank quieted down and returned to normal. It was the same in the both the Outer and Inner Sects. The fear that had been instilled into the hearts of the disciples manifested in the form of diligent cultivation.

Perhaps they no longer viewed Bai Xiaochun as a true enemy, but they most certainly viewed him as an opponent to surpass. The explosive increase in cultivation activity left the four north bank peak lords very pleased.

Time passed. Half a year.

Bai Xiaochun remained within the Beast Conservatory, the same as ever. Every day, he cultivated the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture and worked with the Waterswamp Kingdom. He also spent time carefully observing all of the beasts in the Beast Conservatory.

He worked hard to care for all of the animals, both the docile ones and the violent ones. As a result, the beasts continued to grow more fond of him. Plus, the more time he spent exploring the jungle, the more familiar he grew with it.

That was especially true of one location deep in the jungle, where a pitch-black cave existed. Boundless streams of black mist roiled out of that cave, which was a famous place on the north bank. The Ancient Beast Chasm.

Supposedly, that cave led straight down to the Nine Serenities Underworld, and was also connected to an arcane pocket realm. Countless vicious beasts lived in the cave, sealed in place by patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect countless years ago. They were now a reserve force for the sect, and one of the main reasons why the north bank disciples cultivated their shamanic beast control arts.

However, the arcane pocket realm had a very mysterious origin. Throughout the 10,000 year history of the Spirit Stream Sect, only one small portion of it had been explored. Every few hundred years, the power of the seals would need to be strengthened, which required a significant cost to be paid by the sect. Even still, the vast resources within the arcane pocket realm ensured that it was one of the most important places on the north bank.

In addition to all that, the Ancient Beast Chasm was also the abode of the Spirit Stream Sect’s holy beast guardian, the Heavenhorn ink dragon. In fact, it was even part of the seal itself.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s most powerful offensive weapon, the Heavenhorn Sword, which had received a tenfold spirit enhancement, had been forged from the shed horn of that very dragon.

The Heavenhorn ink dragon’s cultivation base was so terrifying that even Zheng Yuandong had no choice but to call it Senior. Back when the Spirit Stream Sect fought its way from the delta into the Lower Reaches, the Heavenhorn ink dragon had been a follower of Patriarch Spirit Stream, and its contributions to the sect could not be understated.

One day, Bai Xiaochun stood at the edge of the waterfall that led down into the Ancient Beast Chasm. He had visited the location a few times, and had read about the history of the place, and the Heavenhorn ink dragon.

Just like he always did, he tossed one of his medicinal pills down the waterfall, then cleared his throat.

“Senior Heavenhorn,” he called out, “It’s me again, Bai Xiaochun of the Junior generation. I just want to use the earthflame here. Uh... the price is the same as usual, right? I’ll pay with a medicinal pill like I usually do.” Not waiting for a response, he hurried over to a cave he’d opened up a short distance away.

After becoming familiar with the Beast Conservatory jungle, he’d almost immediately noticed the traces of a vein of earthflame in the area. This small cave he'd excavated connected to that vein, and had become his pill-concocting workstation on the north bank. All of the pills he made for the beasts were concocted here.

However, after reading about the history of this place in the jade slip, he decided to play it safe. Therefore, every time he came to use it, he would toss some spirit medicine down the waterfall, which he viewed as paying the rent in a way.

Although he never got a response when he tossed the medicine down, verbally or otherwise, he'd gotten used to the practice, and therefore continued to do it.

A month later, Bai Xiaochun emerged from the little cave, eyes glittering brightly, his expression one of excitement.

His concocting had gone very smoothly. By now, his results with tier-3 spirit medicine were superb, to say the least. Furthermore, his cultivation base was no longer creeping along slowly. Instead, it had rocketed up to the great circle of the ninth level of Qi Condensation.

“Hahaha! It won't be long now before I can step into the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Then I can get ready for Foundation Establishment!” During the past half year, his Undying Silver Skin had also become even more refined.

Certain that his cultivation base was now even more extraordinary than before, he decided to test out his Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning. To his delight, several cauldrons appeared. By now, he was extremely adept at unleashing and recalling the divine ability.

In his delight, he thought back to a certain magical technique he had used long ago, a magic that, technically, he had created.

“Human Controlling Grand Magic!” Back in his fight with the Luochen Clan, he had unwittingly used the magic on Chen Heng, and it had left a deep impression on him. Over the years, his desire to perfect it had only grown.

He had no cultivators to practice it on, but there were plenty of beasts in the Beast Conservatory. After a bit more thought, his excitement grew as he ran out to find some beasts to test out his Human Controlling Grand Magic on.

During the following days, the jungle was quite a chaotic place. Bai Xiaochun soon found that his Human Controlling Grand Magic didn't work on anything with a very large frame, or a high cultivation base. However, when it came to small beasts with cultivation bases in the fifth level of Qi Condensation or lower, he did have some limited success.

Feeling a bit depressed, but not willing to admit defeat, he thought more about his Human Controlling Grand Magic. Eventually, he came to the conclusion that this technique of using spiritual power to control an opponent’s body and mind... was missing something.

If he could just find what it was missing... he could make it work!

Even as Bai Xiaochun worked with his Human Controlling Grand Magic, deep in the Ancient Beast Chasm was a blue eye that had opened at some point recently. It was staring out of the Ancient Beast Chasm at Bai Xiaochun, and a strange gleam could be seen deep within.

Suddenly, a profoundly ancient voice murmured, “Human Controlling.... Years ago, Eccentric Frigidsect had the same idea.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0124 awe-chapter-125

The divine ability which Bai Xiaochun had named the Human Controlling Grand Magic turned into a sort of game for the beasts. They would often find themselves mysteriously floating up into the air, only to fall down moments later.

Occasionally, they would even stand up on two legs. The beasts weren’t frightened by what was happening, and actually found it rather amusing. It even reached the point where some of the smaller beasts would run up to Bai Xiaochun as soon as they saw him, hoping to have some fun playing the new game.

Some of the larger beasts like the flying tigers would sometimes see Bai Xiaochun waving his finger at them and muttering to himself. Soon, he would sigh and walk away looking depressed. Such beasts were confused about what exactly Bai Xiaochun was doing.

A month later, he decided to temporarily abandon his work with the Human Controlling Grand Magic.

“I can definitely get this magic to work,” he thought. “When it does, it will shake heaven and earth. However, I need to take things slow. Once I get a bit stronger, I can cultivate it to perfection!” He didn’t really want to give up, but after a month without the slightest bit of progress, he had to admit that it was time to move on. He was about to start cultivating the Waterswamp Kingdom again when he suddenly thought of the spirit wings he possessed.

“When the old granny gave me the Protomagnetic Pearl and these spirit wings, she said something about Arcane Gravitational Repulsion....” Eyes shining, he pulled the wings out to examine them. After a few days of study, he realized that he was yet again dealing with something that would have to wait until the future.

At long last, he buried his ambitions and started cultivating the Waterswamp Kingdom.

Time passed, and before long Bai Xiaochun had been on the north bank for two years. As for the Beastbirth Seed, it had already grown into a three-meter-tall Beastbirth Flower, although it hadn’t bloomed yet. According to Bai Xiaochun’s calculations, it wouldn’t be too long before the flower opened up.

As for his Waterswamp Kingdom, he cultivated it constantly, and it grew more and more impressive. Whenever he unleashed it, rumbling sounds could be heard, and a strange power appeared that didn’t come from the world around him.

By this point, he had spent time observing all of the more than nine hundred animals in the Beast Conservatory. He knew them like the back of his own hand, and yet, his life essence spirit still hadn’t taken shape.

“Don’t tell me my observations have been insufficient? I should probably go observe some even more powerful beasts.” He thought about the matter for some time, and finally, looked over in the direction of the Ancient Beast Chasm. After a moment of hesitation, he decided that going there was too dangerous. With that, his eyes began to shine, and he turned to look at the four mountain peaks of the north bank.

“Each of the four mountain peaks has a spirit beast guardian!”

On the summit of each of the mountain peaks was an extremely powerful beast assigned to protect that mountain. Although none of them could compare to the Heavenhorn ink dragon, they were all extraordinary in their own way.

Every few days, they would appear in the open, either flying in the sky, or roaring at the tops of their lungs to shake the entire area. When that happened, large numbers of disciples would look on in awe and envy.

In his time on the north bank, Bai Xiaochun had noticed this phenomenon. That was especially true of the seven-colored phoenix from Irispetal Peak, which left a particularly profound impression on him.

After making up his mind, he hurried out of the Beast Conservatory. Eventually, was on the path leading past the trial platform. It wasn’t the first time he had laid eyes on the huge beast statue beneath it. Every time he did so, he got a very strange feeling, which was the same thing that happened to many other disciples who studied the statue.

His observations of it in the past had brought him no gains, so eventually, he paid it no attention. As he was walking by it this time, he happened to glance over for a moment before turning to fix his gaze on Irispetal Peak.

Even as he prepared to hurry along in that direction, his heart seized, as if something dangerous were about to occur. The Protomagnetic Wings appeared behind him, and he sped forward several dozen meters.

Even as he moved, a black blur sped past the spot he had just been standing in, and a terrifying clashing sound rang out, like that of two rows of sharp teeth making contact.

The shocking volume of the sound caused the surroundings to shake; it would be difficult to imagine the level of power behind it, or the hatred that could cause teeth to snap shut in such a fashion.

The black blur turned out to be a huge black dog, roughly three meters tall. It was like a young bull, albeit somewhat emaciated, with scraggly fur that made it look like a wild dog.

It was currently staring at Bai Xiaochun with a ferocious expression on its face. Saliva dripped off of its sharp fangs, and its eyes glowed red, as if with insanity.

Bai Xiaochun was so shocked that sweat popped out on his forehead. However, as soon as he laid eyes on the big black dog, he recognized it.

“Hey, aren’t you Beihan Lie’s Nightstalker Beast? You--” Before he could finish speaking, the black dog shivered and then ran off into the distance. Apparently, if it didn’t strike true on the first blow, it would retreat at all costs.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. Of course, he wasn’t alone in the area. There were other north bank disciples around, and they recognized the dog immediately. Gasps could be heard, and soon people were discussing the matter amongst themselves.

“That was Elder Brother Beihan’s Nightstalker Beast. What a poor little dog. Elder Brother Beihan refuses to take care of it now, and nobody else dares to approach it. Even the elders feel bad about it....”

“Yeah, that’s right. Ever since that one day, the Nightstalker Beast can occasionally be seen lurking around the north bank. Once I saw it standing on a hill, looking up into the night. It seemed sad.”

“What a pity. Apparently it was trying to ambush Bai Xiaochun....”

Bai Xiaochun blinked. After hearing some of the things people were saying, he felt bad. Looking off into the direction the dog had fled, he resolved to look into the issue of why it wanted to ambush him.

“What else could I have done in that situation?” he thought, sighing. “I told Beihan Lie he should concede. I even told him that even I fear my own attacks.” Sighing again, he turned and headed toward Irispetal Peak.

As a Prestige disciple, he had almost unlimited access to various locations in the sect, even on the north bank. After cautiously climbing up to the summit of Irispetal Peak, he neared the cave at the top, but didn’t enter. Instead, he settled cross-legged onto a nearby boulder, then waited quietly.

The wait lasted for three days. Finally, a sharp cry rang out into the dawn sky, piercing through the clouds as a seven-colored light began to shine out from within the cave. Then, a seven-colored phoenix flew out, stretching its wings wide as it soared elegantly up into the air. When the sunlight hit its body, the seven-colored reflections it cast were dazzling. Bai Xiaochun was shaken as he realized the terrifying level of power that was contained within the phoenix. Even with his amazing Undying Silver Skin, he was far from a match for the thing.

As he watched, he committed the image of the phoenix to memory, branding it on his heart. He observed it for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, whereupon the phoenix circled back around into its cave, completely ignoring him in the process.

Taking a deep breath, he closed his eyes and mentally recalled the image of the seven-colored phoenix, then continued to wait. Another five days passed, and at dawn, the phoenix reappeared.

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun stayed on Irispetal Peak for several months to observe the phoenix, only occasionally returning to the Beast Conservatory to handle various affairs before hurrying back.

The disciples of Irispetal Peak soon learned of the matter, and were a bit confused. Most people didn’t pay much attention to it, but there were some Inner Sect disciples who began to speculate about what he was doing.

Another month passed, and Bai Xiaochun felt that his observation of the phoenix was complete. Next, he headed toward Sunset Peak.

The spirit beast guardian of Sunset Peak was a black, three-eyed raven. It was fully six meters long, surrounded by swirling blackness that distorted the air. It didn’t come out very often; Bai Xiaochun only saw it twice in an entire month.

Whenever it flew out, lightning would crackle in the area. The raven always appeared in the darkness of night, never during the light of day.

Because of that, Bai Xiaochun got used to remaining focused during the night. Three months passed, and he saw the raven five times. Every time it appeared, he would pay close attention, and would devote himself fully to observation. Gradually, he felt as if his life essence spirit were showing signs of appearing.

The spirit beast guardian of Archway Peak was not a flying creature, but rather, an enormous lizard. It moved slowly, but radiated incredible energy. It was much easier for Bai Xiaochun to observe; whenever it emerged from its cave, it would perch on the highest boulder at the top of Archway Peak, where it would gaze off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun spent several months there, and was able to observe it in much more detail than the seven-colored phoenix and the three-eyed raven.

The spirit beast guardian of Ghostfang Peak was quite strange. It almost wasn't even appropriate to call it a spirit beast. It was a mountain ghost. It looked like an amalgamation of countless other beasts, formed together like a mountain. After gaining consciousness, it called itself a mountain ghost.

It was humanoid in shape, with long black fur and human-like eyes which were located below its wolf-like maw. It also had two curling horns at the top of its head. Its lower torso was scaled like a snake, and it had a tiger's head on its chest. Stretching out behind it was a long tail.

It carried a ghastly bone trident in its hand wherever it went, and every time it came out into the open, clouds formed up above in the sky, covering both the sun and the moon. In the darkness which resulted, its eyes would glow with mysterious light.

The mere sight of it left Bai Xiaochun trembling in fear. He could sense that the thing was aware of his existence, but that it was so far above him that it didn’t deign to even notice him. Whenever it appeared on the summit of the mountain, it would throw its head back and let out a soundless howl.

That howl would cause countless stones on Ghostfang Peak to tremble, and they would only go still when the mountain ghost returned to its cave.

Time flowed by, and Bai Xiaochun went back and forth between the mountains to carry out his observations. Gradually, it felt more and more like his life essence spirit was forming. However, he was getting the increasing sense that he had reached some barrier that had yet to be broken through.

The disciples of the north bank gradually realized that he was observing the spirit beast guardians. Most didn’t understand why, but Xu Song, Beihan Lie, and a few other Inner Sect disciples were fairly certain what was going on, and it caused their hearts to pound.

“He’s cultivating the Waterswamp Kingdom!” Quite a few Inner Sect disciples came to that conclusion. After all, cultivating the Waterswamp Kingdom involved long-term observation of numerous beasts.

“The Waterswamp Kingdom is a secret magic on the same level as Ghosts Haunt the Night... However, the results differ for every person who cultivates it. Some can unleash incredible power, others are very weak.”

“The fact that Bai Xiaochun is observing those beasts implies that his life essence spirit hasn’t been born yet....”

“I wonder what his life essence spirit will be like...?”

Discussions raged among the Inner Sect disciples, and Bai Xiaochun continued his observations. The process lasted for a year.

During that time, others besides the Inner Sect disciples came to pay close attention to what was happening. The peak lords of the four mountains, the sect leader, and even Li Qinghou were all secretly observing Bai Xiaochun's progress with the Waterswamp Kingdom.

All of them were surprised. Generally speaking, observing beasts in the Beast Conservatory should have been enough to form the life essence spirit of the Waterswamp Kingdom. But it didn't seem enough for Bai Xiaochun. He went on to observe the spirit beast guardians of the four mountain peaks. And yet... that wasn't enough either.

“Bai Xiaochun's life essence spirit seems very difficult to form!”

“Life essence spirits vary from person to person. They form based on the hidden world which exists inside each person, and create a mysterious and unfathomable illusory spirit....”

“What will Bai Xiaochun's life essence spirit be...?”

Everyone watched as Bai Xiaochun concluded his observations of the four spirit beast guardians. With that, he trudged through the north bank, thinking about how he had nothing left to observe. He had the strong feeling that he was only a step away from breaking through the barrier and giving birth to the Waterswamp Kingdom life essence spirit.

However, that one step seemed infinitely vast.

Bai Xiaochun was confused, and unsure of what to do next. As he walked along through the north bank, he headed past the trial platform, and subconsciously looked over at the statue beneath the platform.

He had walked past this location many times, and every time he did, he had the feeling that there was something strange about the statue. This time, he stopped in place and looked over. Then, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes shone with incredulity.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0125 awe-chapter-126

Before, he had felt something strange when looking at the statue, something that seemed to make him wish to fight. However, there was something deeper to it than that, something that he couldn’t quite put his finger on.

Now, perhaps because of having observed the four spirit beast guardians, or perhaps because of his nearness to a life essence spirit breakthrough, he suddenly found himself observing, not the battle beast as a whole, but rather, its scales!

They seemed like nothing more than scales on a statue, but as soon as he focused on them, it felt as if the Waterswamp Kingdom life essence spirit inside of him were suddenly writhing with increased power.

At the same time, he could almost hear something primeval and ancient roaring in his ears.

He was wondering if it was an illusion or not, and was just about to focus further, when the sensation vanished. At the same time, the life essence spirit inside of him suddenly went still.

Taking a deep breath, he walked up to the statue and sat down cross-legged in front of it. Then he looked up, certain that the feeling he had just experienced was no illusion.

“This statue... is very, very odd!” With that, he focused on looking, not at the statue as a whole, but at the countless individual scales.

Although they seemed like nothing more than simple scales, Bai Xiaochun had only just now realized that they were very, very difficult to commit to memory. He could see them there right in front of him, but simply could not memorize their shape and image.

That did not serve to discourage him, though; it caused him to grow more focused. Eyes flashing, he looked more closely at the scales.

Time flew by, and soon it was evening. Considering that the trial platform was a central location on the north bank, disciples would often pass by, and soon people noticed Bai Xiaochun sitting there staring at the statue. Although it was a peculiar sight, nobody really stopped to pay him much attention.

The next morning at dawn, the disciples who had seen Bai Xiaochun there the day before once again noticed him as they went past the trial platform. Apparently he hadn’t moved the entire night, but had remained sitting there staring with bloodshot eyes at the statue in front of him. The astonishment of the north bank disciples grew.

Bai Xiaochun was now certain that he could only make his breakthrough by means of this statue. He had already done everything else possible with regards to the life essence spirit. He had observed everything in the Beast Conservatory, as well as the four spirit beast guardians. He had even secretly observed many of the ordinary battle beasts of the north bank disciples.

The life essence spirit of the Waterswamp Kingdom still had not appeared, and if he had not received any indication that it would, he might have decided to stop wasting his time with it. But he could sense that the life essence spirit was on the verge of coming to life; he just didn’t know how to make it happen. So close, yet so far!

That uneasy sensation was something he couldn’t accept easily. Therefore, he was grasping hard to this opportunity, and his persevering personality was in full effect.

He sat there with the same focus he called upon when he concocted medicine. It didn't matter that night came and went, or that his eyes were bloodshot. It didn’t matter if a second day began to pass. Bai Xiaochun didn't stop.

In fact, he even had the feeling that if he gave up at this moment, his Waterswamp Kingdom... might never be able to give birth to a life essence spirit. The opportunity he had now must be seized, and the life essence spirit had to break out of its cocoon!

“I refuse to believe that I’ll fail!” he thought, grinding his teeth. With that, he continued to observe the scales and try to commit their shape and image to memory.

Without even thinking about it, he sealed himself off from the world. He abandoned all of his other senses and focused completely on his sight. Days began to pass. On the fourth day at dawn, the north bank disciples were more surprised than ever by his presence, and soon word began to spread.

“Bai Xiaochun has been sitting by the trial platform statue for four days now.... What is he doing? Observing the statue?”

“That trial platform statue is pretty strange. I've heard of people observing it in the past, hoping to gain something from it. However, to this day, nobody has ever succeeded except for Eldest Brother Ghostfang!”

As word spread further and further, the north bank Inner Sect disciples began to pay closer attention. People even began to gather nearby to watch Bai Xiaochun. His completely bedeviled state caused many people to gasp.

“So, he’s only trying to observe it and commit it to memory, not gain full enlightenment. Well, it’s like I said. The trial platform statue has some profound secrets buried deep inside. Not just anybody can gain enlightenment of it.”

“I've read some ancient records that said the statue was pulled out of the Ancient Beast Chasm four thousand years ago. It’s hard to say whether or not some members of the Senior generation ever gained enlightenment, but as for ordinary disciples.... before Ghostfang, nobody has ever succeeded.”

“I tried once, believe it or not. In the end, I had no choice but to give up. I never felt a single thing. Only people like Ghostfang can reach that legendary state of deep enlightenment via observation. Some people have lasted for ten days, or even fifteen. The limit is twenty, though. After that, people simply pass out.”

When Beihan Lie, the Gongsun siblings, Xu Song, and other Inner Sect Chosen realized that Bai Xiaochun was simply observing the statue, they breathed sighs of relief.

As for the four peak lords, when they saw him beneath the statue, their eyes shone with anticipation.

“I wonder if Bai Xiaochun will be like Ghostfang, and actually benefit from the statue.”

“It requires the right circumstances, the right personality, and the right amount of hard work. This kind of observation is like looking at a canvas randomly splashed with paint.

Some people see nothing but chaos, but others see order. Some people see another image beneath the splash of paint. And some people, a vast minority, might be able to see... something completely different from everyone else.”

Bai Xiaochun truly was just observing, and not seeking deep enlightenment. His eyes were bloodshot as he stared at the scales, which seemed to grow larger and larger until they replaced the world around him. He saw a heaven and earth filled with floating objects that he couldn't quite see. It was like a blurry illusion, impossible to make out clearly. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't care. The only thing he wanted to do was memorize the shape and image of the scales.

He wasn't even sure how many attempts he had made. A thousand? Ten thousand? Maybe more? He was completely and utterly absorbed in the process, despite the fact that he was failing over and over again.

Time passed. Five days. Six days. Seven days.... Soon, ten days had gone by. His observation of the statue was drawing on his vital energy, and his body was beginning to suffer, but he persisted.

On the nineteenth day, Beihan Lie and the other Chosen were completely convinced that Bai Xiaochun would only last for another day. After his vital energy grew weak enough, he would lapse into unconsciousness.

“It took fifteen days for Ghostfang to enter into a state of deep enlightenment, and he awoke from his trance after twenty-seven days. His later progress with Ghosts Haunt the Night had a lot to do with that session of enlightenment!”

“Bai Xiaochun has already wasted nineteen days and hasn’t reached deep enlightenment. Regardless of the level of his cultivation base, he can’t match up to Ghostfang in this situation.”

“The statue is completely enigmatic and unfathomable. Lots of people have tested it out, and if you don’t succeed the first time, it’s only harder after that. Tomorrow, he’ll pass out. After he wakes up and restores his vital energy, though, it will be too late.”

Beihan Lie and the other Chosen felt that way, and so did the four peak lords, all of whom were sighing regretfully.

Gradually, Bai Xiaochun’s nineteenth day observing the statue passed. The sun set, and then dawn broke upon the twentieth day. As sunlight filled the sky, virtually everyone assumed that Bai Xiaochun would lose consciousness. But then, looks of shock filled their eyes as the twentieth day ended and the twenty-first began.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pass out. Although he was looking a bit gaunt, he still managed to hang on.

Twenty-one days. Twenty-two days. Twenty-three days.... As time passed, astonishment grew. By the time the thirtieth day passed, the peak lords were completely astonished.

“I can’t believe how much vital energy Bai Xiaochun has!”

“At the most, ordinary disciples would last for ten days. Body refinement disciples might last for fifteen. Chosen like Ghostfang could last for twenty days at the most. Without entering a state of deep enlightenment, one’s vital energy will waste away, and they will lapse into unconsciousness. But Bai Xiaochun... has lasted for so long!”

“But what’s the point? Even if he lasts longer, if he doesn’t reach deep enlightenment, it will all have been a waste.”

Beihan Lie and the others were completely shocked, and were finally starting to understand how powerful Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body was. And yet, they all sighed; without achieving deep enlightenment, simply lasting for a long time would do no good.

Soon, another ten days had passed, and Bai Xiaochun was still completely immersed in his attempts to commit the scales to memory. It was impossible to say how many actual attempts he had made. Perhaps 50,000, perhaps 100,000. Every single time was a failure.

The fiftieth day passed, and then the sixtieth day. Countless disciples were profoundly shaken by what Bai Xiaochun was doing. They almost couldn’t believe the deep reserves of vital energy he possessed. Never could they have imagined that he would hang on for so long. Without incredible fleshly body power, it would have been impossible.

Eventually, the seventieth day arrived, and Bai Xiaochun trembled. He was clearly much thinner than before, and it appeared as if his vital energy and fleshly body were reaching their limits.

The audience which had gathered noticed him shaking, and immediately began to comment.

“He must be about to finish. Only a few more days now, and he’ll pass out.”

“He never reached deep enlightenment. What a waste.”

Although most people in the audience felt that way, by the time the amber light of evening began to spread out....

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes revealed... blankness.

And then, a moment later, his eyes slowly closed!

Upon closing his eyes, his mind was filled with the complete image of a scale... after countless failed attempts, he had finally succeeded!

In the instant the scale appeared, a rumbling like that of thunder filled his mind, and he gasped. His aura winked out, seemingly leaving behind nothing except his body. He had finally slipped into... the legendary state of deep enlightenment!

As of that moment, the eyes of the audience widened. This was such an unexpected development that most people almost couldn’t believe it.

Bai Xiaochun had entered deep enlightenment, not by a coincidence or destiny, but simply by hard work!

This chance regarding the life essence spirit of the Waterswamp Kingdom also came with a measure of enlightenment. Furthermore, his display of hard work vastly exceeded that of anyone else!

Although his powers of understanding might not be on par with Ghostfang’s, he had worked for five times as long to do what Ghostfang did, and that was because of his fleshly body and his vital energy. Because of his cultivation of the Undying Live Forever Technique, his strength gave him incredible reserves of energy!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0126 awe-chapter-127

Deep enlightenment was a state in which one's soul essentially merged with heaven and earth, connecting with the world to understand and be enlightened regarding natural and magical laws.

Mortals could accidentally slip into deep enlightenment, although the likelihood was incredibly small to the point of almost being impossible. Even Qi Condensation cultivators would have a very difficult time entering such a state, and if they did, it would cause a huge stir among anyone who found out about it.

Almighty beings with incredible cultivation bases would occasionally enter that state to comprehend the profound transformations of the world, and the great Daos of heaven and earth.

For the last thousand years in the Spirit Stream Sect, only two people had ever slipped into deep enlightenment. One of them was Ghostfang, with his spectacular natural talent. Not even Shangguan Tianyou had been able to match up to him in this regard.

The other person to succeed was now sitting beneath the statue, having observed it for seventy days in a row. Bai Xiaochun!

The surrounding north bank disciples were left gasping at the astounding scene.

“Bai Xiaochun... he... is in deep enlightenment?!?! He's the only person to have done it other than Eldest Brother

Ghostfang!”

“Hmph. How could this deep enlightenment even compare to Eldest Brother Ghostfang’s? He did it in fifteen days, but Bai Xiaochun took seventy!”

“That’s not the way to look at it. It just means that if we could hang on for seventy days, then we could reach deep enlightenment too. Except we can’t! Look how hard Bai Xiaochun worked!”

In addition to the cries of shock, there were other mixed feelings among the crowd. Some people seemed indignant, others jealous, and some contemptuous. Regardless of the specifics, everyone could sense how hard Bai Xiaochun had worked, and how much he had struggled to endure. Furthermore, all of them were envious to some degree.

At the same time, six beams of light appeared up in the air. The fastest among them were not the four peak lords of the north bank, but rather... Li Qinghou from the south bank!

In almost the moment that Bai Xiaochun slipped into a trance, he appeared. Waving his finger in the direction of the trial platform, he caused a screen of light to descend, surrounding Bai Xiaochun so that no one could disturb him.

It was at around this time that the four peak lords arrived, as well as Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong.

The old woman from Irispetal Peak peak looked over at Li Qinghou, and then the surrounding crowd. Suppressing her surprise at the fact that Bai Xiaochun had entered deep enlightenment, she barked, “Seal the entire area surrounding the trial platform. Don’t open it until Bai Xiaochun awakens.”

“If anyone disturbs Bai Xiaochun, it will be considered treason, and punished accordingly!” Zheng Yuandong added. “Get the Hall of Justice over here immediately to stand guard!” In response, the Outer Sect disciples bowed their heads and clasped hands respectfully.

Soon, several dozen disciples from the Hall of Justice arrived and stationed themselves in various positions around the statue, where they sat down cross-legged to act as Dharma Protectors.

By this time, word had spread from the Outer Sect disciples. Everyone on the north bank knew that Bai Xiaochun had entered deep enlightenment. Beihan Lie and the other Chosen emerged from their immortal's caves, shocked, and began to hurry toward the trial platform.

When they saw that Bai Xiaochun was being guarded by the Hall of Justice, they weren’t sure what to think.

“He’s... actually in deep enlightenment...?”

“Seventy days! He endured for seventy days!”

“There’s no way he’s that far ahead of us. I refuse to believe it!” Beihan Lie, the Gongsun siblings, Xu Song, and the other Inner Sect Chosen were filled with incredibly complex thoughts and feelings.

Up in midair, the four peak lords looked down at Bai Xiaochun as he sat there cross-legged, eyes closed and aura dispersed. All of them were sighing.

“I never thought he would actually pull it off.”

“The kid prepared long and hard. His success was no fluke.”

“I wonder how many days he’ll remain in deep enlightenment. Ghostfang lasted for twenty-seven days.”

As the peak lords sighed, Zheng Yuandong’s eyes shone with anticipation, and he started laughing heartily. As of this point, he had the feeling that his Master would surely be glad to have an apprentice like Bai Xiaochun.

Li Qinghou’s face was covered with a smile, and his eyes shone with approval and praise.

Considering that Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of the Spirit Stream Sect, with the Hall of Justice protecting him, and surrounded by a spell formation personally set up by Li Qinghou, nobody under the Gold Core stage could possibly be able to disturb his deep enlightenment.

Even if a Gold Core expert dared to show up, they would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt.

After looking on for a bit longer, the peak lords, the sect leader, and Li Qinghou all left.

The north bank disciples looked on, sighing. Their main speculations were regarding why the Hall of Justice had been called, and also... they wondered how long Bai Xiaochun would stay in deep enlightenment.

“He used five times as long as to succeed. I bet he’ll last for twenty percent as long as Eldest Brother Ghostfang. Five or six days at the most.”

“I bet he’ll pass seven days!”

Numerous cold snorts could be heard echoing out within the crowd. There were many disciples on the north bank, and none of them had forgotten that Bai had been named their archenemy. Although they had been impressed by his strength, deep down, there were still quite a few who harbored animosity. There were also many who were jealous of him.

Time passed. Three days later, Bai Xiaochun still hadn’t stirred. However, the vital energy which he had spent in his efforts to gain enlightenment was slowly building back up.

Furthermore, now that he had entered deep enlightenment, his aura was gone, as if his soul had left his body to merge with heaven, earth and the void itself.

During that time, the blankness within his closed eyes spread to fill his entire person. He had no concept of time, no idea of how long he had been in this state. He only knew the image of the scales. The statue in front of him almost seemed alive, bursting with a savage aura that seemed to be dragging him into the world that existed in its right clawed hand.

It was almost as if the void were truly being torn apart, and his consciousness were being sucked through the rift into an illusory world. His mind was a complete blank. He had forgotten who he was, or why he had come here. He only knew the illusory world around him.

He saw an enormous creature, so large it was difficult to put into words. It was so huge that Bai Xiaochun felt like a mere scale on the thing’s back.

Shockingly, the creature was none other than the giant crocodilian beast that formed the statue on the north bank.

It lived in this illusory world, looking up into the sky, into the heavens, staring at a seemingly invisible figure, something that didn’t even exist. Suddenly, it reached up into the sky and made a grasping motion.

A sound like booming thunder echoed out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun watched mutely as its clawed hand tore open a hole in the sky. Rumbling sounds filled the sky, and all that Bai Xiaochun could think about was that hand.

In fact, if Bai Xiaochun were able to remember who he was, he would immediately realize that the clawed hand... closely resembled the clawed hand that Ghostfang could unleash with Ghosts Haunt the Night.

While Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of the illusory world, time flew by outside. Already, far more time had passed than the five or six days that many of the disciples had assumed would be the limit. Ten days had passed.

Every day, more north bank disciples came to congregate around the trial platform to watch Bai Xiaochun. Some of the Inner Sect disciples even chose to meditate in the area.

Beihan Lie and the other Chosen were also present.

They watched as Bai Xiaochun’s deep enlightenment lasted for ten days, and mixed emotions could be seen in their eyes. While the Inner Sect disciples sat there quietly, the Outer Sect disciples were in an uproar.

“I can’t believe he lasted ten days!”

“Yeah, but I really doubt that he could possibly last twenty-seven days like Eldest Brother Ghostfang did!”

The Outer Sect disciples continue to discuss the matter as time marched on. Eleven days. Twelve days. Thirteen days.... Eventually, the twentieth day arrived!

The north bank was completely shaken by this point. All of the Outer Sect disciples were flabbergasted, and were paying close attention to find out... if Bai Xiaochun would surpass Ghostfang’s record of twenty-seven days.

“There’s no way!!”

“He took five times as long as Eldest Brother Ghostfang to enter deep enlightenment. His latent talent clearly doesn’t measure up. There’s absolutely no way he’ll surpass the record!”

Words such as this were common among the disciples. Even many of the Inner Sect disciples felt the same. Gradually, the twenty-second day arrived, and the twenty-fifth. By that time, the voices were silenced, and shock began to fill the hearts of everyone present.

On the evening of the twenty-sixth day, a new figure appeared in midair above the trial platform, a young man wearing a long black robe.

It was none other than Ghostfang himself!

He had been in secluded meditation preparing for Foundation Establishment, but had received a message from a fellow disciple notifying him about what was going on with Bai Xiaochun, and had thus emerged.

Bai Xiaochun was the only disciple in the Spirit Stream Sect who could attract his attention. As soon as he appeared above the trial platform, countless disciples of both the Inner and Outer sects looked up with sober, respectful expressions, even fear. One after another, they clasped hands in greeting.

“Greetings, Eldest Brother Ghostfang.”

Even Beihan Lie and the other Chosen did the same. As the voices echoed out, Ghostfang seemed to not even have heard them. His entire attention appeared to be focused on Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes were shining with a strange light.

“I began my observation with the beast’s sharp claws. After forming the image in my mind, I entered deep enlightenment, and found myself in an illusory world. I lost myself within the ancient beast's heaven-shaking, earth-shattering claws, and found it hard to emerge. After completing my deep enlightenment, I didn't see if anything had changed about the ancient beast.

“Bai Xiaochun, now that you are in deep enlightenment, I wonder if you will be able to emerge from within the clawed hand....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0127 awe-chapter-128

Within the illusory world, everything was crumbling and shattering. As the ancient beast's clawed hand ripped everything to shreds, even Bai Xiaochun’s mind seemed to be affected.

His consciousness began to shatter and disperse, and he looked around blankly. To see those claws ripping apart the heavens was completely and utterly shocking.

Such power was unimaginable, and yet, he also desired to possess such power himself. He wanted to be able to rip apart heaven and earth. Now that the rubble was beginning to disperse, he suddenly wanted to do everything he could to absorb the power, to understand it, to make it his own.

The more such thoughts filled him, the more his awareness of himself faded. This process went on for a short time until a tremor ran through him, and he realized that something odd was happening. He suddenly remembered that his purpose in coming to this place didn’t have anything to do with becoming engrossed with the clawed hand.

The thought grew more and more intense until it superseded the enticing power of the claws. The shattered remnants of his consciousness slowly stopped moving, and then began to move in reverse, returning to him and becoming whole once again.

Within the illusion, the enormous beast once again appeared; however, this time, what moved was not its clawed hand, but its tail. It was like a whip, smashing the earth to pieces and destroying the heavens. A massive rumbling boom exploded out into the world.

Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness once again shattered, and he began to sink into blankness.

In the outside world, he had been sitting there in a state of deep enlightenment for twenty-six days. Night fell, and the sun rose. The twenty-seventh day. Soon, it was night again.

Among the countless north bank disciples who had gathered near Bai Xiaochun and the trial platform, faces flickered with shock, and eyes went wide.

Everyone, including Beihan Lie, the Gongsun siblings, Xu Song, and the other Chosen of the Inner Sect were being crushed by waves of shock.

After a long period of oppressive silence, countless disciples suddenly burst into a huge commotion.

“He passed... twenty-seven days? He surpassed Eldest Brother Ghostfang!”

“Heavens! How deeply will Bai Xiaochun sink into this enlightenment?!”

“How long will he last? Thirty days? Thirty-five days? Or maybe even... forty days?!?!”

Everyone was completely and utterly shocked by the motionless and aura-less Bai Xiaochun.

And yet, they had allowed themselves to be shocked a bit too early.

Time continued to pass. Thirty days. Thirty-three days. Thirty-seven days.... By the time the fortieth day arrived, the north bank disciples were completely dumbstruck.

They weren't the only ones. The four peaks lords were breathless. Each additional day spent in deep enlightenment was significant to the extreme. After all, a single day of deep enlightenment was like years spent in normal meditation.

Ghostfang said nothing, but his eyes shone with a shocking light as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. He wanted to know... exactly what it was that Bai Xiaochun was seeing!

"He must not have lost himself in the claw like me," he thought. "In that case, what came next?"

Back in the illusory world, Bai Xiaochun's consciousness was trembling. He wasn't sure how long he had been lost within the tail of the ancient beast. However, as his consciousness began to dissipate, the same thought arose once again... the power of the tail was not what he had come here for.

"That's not it!" he murmured quietly.

In that moment, his consciousness ceased to disperse. Simultaneously, the ancient beast opened its mouth to reveal something far more terrifying than its claws or tail... razor sharp fangs!

Row upon row of sharp teeth, emanating a murderous aura that made them seem capable of destroying anything and everything. It was as if a single bite from those teeth could cause the entire world to go dark and end in destruction.

"No," Bai Xiaochun murmured. "This is not why I came here!" His voice echoed back and forth around him, growing louder and louder.

“I came here to observe the ancient beast, for the purpose of... bringing life to my Waterswamp Kingdom life essence spirit!

“I don't want the claws or tail or teeth of this ancient beast. I want... the whole thing. I need to observe it in its entirety. I need to fix its image into my mind. That will form the basis of my Waterswamp Kingdom life essence spirit!

“Furthermore, the beast itself will not become my life essence spirit, it will be absorbed as a mere portion of it!

“That is why I came here. That... is my purpose!” By the end, Bai Xiaochun’s voice was not a murmur, but a roar. The illusory world rumbled violently as Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness tumbled back together from all parts of the world, then shot toward the enormous beast in a beam of light.

It moved with incredible speed; in the blink of an eye, it closed in on the beast and then slammed into it. As the light spread out through the beast, Bai Xiaochun’s mind shook, and he suddenly felt as if... he was becoming the enormous beast!

During the process of the transformation, he came to understand everything about it. There could be no better observation method... than this. In fact, this was not even really observation, it was a merging. He was... becoming one with the beast.

Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness spread out through the entirety of the beast, understanding it, analyzing it, observing it... controlling it!

From the flesh and blood, he moved on to the scales, the spikes, the claws, the teeth, the bones, even the heart....

Time meant nothing to him as his consciousness filled the beast, coming to a deep understanding of it.

At a certain point, Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness trembled as it completely filled the ancient creature, and he... became the beast.

He threw his head back and roared, causing the entire world around him to tremble. Next, the beast distorted, and by some profound and unfathomable means, it rapidly changed shape, transforming into a black, three-eyed raven!

The enormous black raven began to fly through the world at top speed, its eyes shining as though they belonged to Bai Xiaochun. In the blink of an eye, the raven rippled, transforming into a seven-colored phoenix.

Then it became a huge lizard, and then the mountain ghost from Ghostfang Peak. Under the control of Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness, the transformations continued. One after another, nearly a thousand beasts from the Beast Conservatory appeared.

Flying tigers, pangolins, huge bears, spirit deer. All sorts of beasts flickered in and out, without end. Even the north bank disciples’ beasts that Bai Xiaochun had secretly observed could be seen.

Eventually, rumbling sounds echoed out as the beasts vanished, and Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness became a swirling mist, which pulsed and writhed as though some terrifying spirit were being born inside.

It was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom life essence spirit.

It was impossible to see exactly what kind of spirit it was; not even Bai Xiaochun's consciousness could make it out. It was as if... its spirit body wasn't complete yet.

Even incomplete, it emanated a terrifying energy. There was some enormous figure inside that mist, covered with terrifying bone spurs, radiating an indescribable pressure. The mist seethed and churned as it slowly condensed upon itself.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun's consciousness was starting to unravel. Ten percent. Twenty percent. Thirty percent.... In the blink of an eye, it was fifty percent dispersed!

As that happened, the illusory world trembled and shook. Unexpectedly, the life essence spirit inside of the mist began to show signs that it was also going to disperse.

"Faster!" Bai Xiaochun's consciousness howled amidst the massive rumbling sounds. "Faster! My consciousness is dispersing. Life essence spirit... you must awaken!"

And yet, it continued to disperse even more quickly. Sixty percent. Seventy percent. Eighty percent.... Ninety percent!

Rifts spread out through the illusory world as it began to collapse. A massive wind sprang up, sweeping across everything, attempting to disperse the mist. However, it was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun's last scraps of consciousness let out an urgent shout.

RUMBLE!

Even as the world crumbled into bits, within the dispersing mist, two red eyes... snapped open!

The life essence spirit had awakened!

**

In the outside world, Bai Xiaochun's deep enlightenment went past forty days. It continued on and on. Fifty days. Sixty days. Seventy days. Eighty days. Ninety days.... One hundred days!

The number of days which had passed left the north bank disciples in complete terror.

“A hundred days! More than three months! Bai Xiaochun... is still in deep enlightenment!!”

“He's not gonna die, is he...?”

“This is shocking! I've never seen anything like this in my entire life!”

The Outer Sect disciples were terrified, and the Inner Sect disciples were shaken. Beihan Lie and the other Chosen felt as if their minds were being struck by lightning. But things weren't over. 101 days. 120 days. 130 days. It was at that point, sometime in the afternoon, that Bai Xiaochun began to tremble.

People immediately noticed. They rubbed their eyes, looked again, and when it was certain that Bai Xiaochun was shaking, people began to cry out in surprise.

It was in that very moment that... Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0128 awe-chapter-129

A blank look could still be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. Although his consciousness had returned, he still hadn’t completely recovered from the experience of being in the illusory world of deep enlightenment. The real world around him almost didn’t seem real at first.

Soon the disciples from the Hall of Justice noticed what was happening, and looked over at him. As for the Outer Sect disciples in the audience, their eyes went wide, and they began to cry out in shock.

“130 days!”

“He took five times as long as Eldest Brother Ghostfang to enter deep enlightenment, and spent five times as long inside!”

The clamoring Outer Sect disciples quickly produced jade slips to send word to their friends that Bai Xiaochun had awakened. Soon, a tempest raged in the north bank as countless disciples got the messages and began to race over to the trial platform.

As he sat there beneath the trial platform statue, his eyes blank, he slowly lifted his right hand and then pushed it out in front of him.

“Waterswamp...” he whispered.

Few people could hear him, but as soon as the word left his mouth, massive rumbling sounds echoed out that could shake heaven and earth. They were like peals of heavenly thunder crashing in everyone’s ears.

BOOOOOM! BOOOOOM! BOOOOOM!

Three massive crashing sounds shocked everyone to the core. At the same time, a boundless field of water vapor spread out in all directions.

9 meters. 30 meters. 150 meters. 300 meters.... All the way to 600 meters!

Bai Xiaochun was surrounded by a boundless field of water vapor 600 meters wide. The water vapor instantly reduced visibility, making it difficult to see anything clearly. Furthermore, all of the disciples within the vapor suddenly gasped as a powerful force suddenly pushed against them.

The pushing force was so powerful that none of the disciples could fight against it. In the blink of an eye, they were pushed away until not a single person remained within 300 meters of Bai Xiaochun.

The haze created by the water vapor rose up high into the sky, even altering the energy of heaven and earth in the area. A huge vortex began to spin, completely shaking all the observing disciples, who couldn’t help but think about the clawed ghost hand which appeared when Ghostfang unleashed Ghosts Haunt the Night.

That was a secret magic that didn't seem possible for Qi Condensation disciples to unleash, and left the north bank disciples not only with a feeling of deep respect for Ghostfang, but also, fear. Furthermore... they were experiencing exactly the same thing with Bai Xiaochun right now!

Gasps could be heard as more and more disciples rushed over to the scene. Many of them were Inner Sect disciples, including Beihan Lie, the Gongsun siblings, and Xu Song.

As soon as they saw the vortex, and Bai Xiaochun, their faces flickered with astonishment.

“Waterswamp Kingdom!”

“He must have succeeded in cultivating it! But what kind of life essence spirit did he get...?”

Ghostfang hovered there, staring down at Bai Xiaochun. The desire to fight sprang up in his eyes, but he quickly suppressed it.

As the disciples watched, trembling, the four peak lords of the north bank arrived, as well as Li Qinghou.

“I really look forward to seeing Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit!”

“He’s only unleashed the waterswamp, and yet the energy is astounding. I wonder what’s inside....”

Li Qinghou’s eyes shone with delight; he keenly anticipated what would result now that Bai Xiaochun had awoken from deep enlightenment.

As everyone looked on, Bai Xiaochun slowly lifted his head. His eyes were still blank as he suddenly... lowered his right hand!

“.... Kingdom!” he murmured.

In that very instant, a series of gasps rang out among the audience as an indescribable aura erupted out from within

Bai Xiaochun to fill the entire area.

Within that 600-meter-area, everything was hazy, making it difficult to see anything clearly. But now... the dense water vapor transformed into... a swamp!

The roar of a beast could be heard from within the waterswamp, bizarre and seemingly filled with the voices of countless other beasts.

ROAR!!

The sky trembled and the ground shook. Everyone who heard the sound, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, was left shaken. At the same time, varying levels of pressure began to push down on everyone.

As the roar echoed out, the battle beasts belonging to the various disciples of the north bank all reacted by throwing their heads back and howling aggressively. All of them were instantly thrown into chaos.

In the Beast Conservatory, the nearly one thousand beasts all began to howl. It didn’t take long before all of the beasts on the north bank had joined together, sending deafening howls out in all directions. The north bank disciples were trembling.

“Just what kind of life essence spirit does Bai Xiaochun have in his Waterswamp Kingdom!?!?”

“Heavens, how is he doing this!?” The disciples, faces flashing with shock, struggled to keep their battle beasts under control. That was especially true of the Inner Sect disciples, whose battle beasts were of a different blood order, making their reactions even stronger and more violent, to the point where they seemed crazed.

The crowd struggled with their beasts, and the sound of roaring filled the air.

The 600-meter-wide waterswamp twisted and distorted, as if it were being projected from some outside world. Furthermore, there seemed to be some unseen beast struggling to break through a barrier from another world to burst out into this one.

Suddenly, the waterswamp shook violently, and a huge mountain peak rose up from the very middle of it!

It was enormous, but upon closer inspection, it seemed obvious that... because the waterswamp was only 600 meters across, this was only the very tip of the mountain!!

But then, further examination revealed a spine-tingling truth. It wasn’t a mountain peak, it was... the tip of a bone spur!!

“A bone spur! Heavens! That’s the tip of a bone spur!”

“The tip of that bone spur is 600 meters wide. How big is the beast itself? This life essence spirit... what exactly does it look like?!”

Energy that could shake heaven and earth exploded from the Waterswamp Kingdom. As the blast spread out in all directions, the battle beasts went completely out of control. Howling at the tops of their lungs, they began to throw themselves down to the ground in prostration!

“Impossible!!”

“How could this be happening?!?!” The disciples were completely shocked as, one after another, each and every battle beast on the north bank dropped down in worship. At the same time, threatening howls began to emanate from the four mountain peaks of the north bank.

The seven-colored phoenix shot out into the air, where it stared vigilantly at the mountain peak rising from Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom. A moment later, the phoenix was joined by the black, three-eyed raven.

Simultaneously, the huge lizard appeared and let out a powerful roar in the direction of the mountain peak.

The Ghostfang Peak mountain ghost also appeared, clutching its bone trident, surrounded by black mist. Although it seemed nervous, if you looked closely, it and the other of the four spirit beast guardians all had gleams of respect deep in their eyes.

Meanwhile, in the depths of the Beast Conservatory, down in the Ancient Beast Chasm, two eyes suddenly opened. They were huge, and shone with a piercing light that seemed to reach all the way through the stone walls to gaze upon Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom.

Those eyes belonged to none other than the sect's holy beast guardian, the Heavenhorn ink dragon!

Even it looked with profound solemnity at Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom life essence spirit.

The entire north bank was completely and utterly shaken. The elders of the four mountain peaks were astonished as they emerged to watch the scene play out. Atop Mount Daoseed, several profoundly powerful gazes also turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

The four peak lords were panting, their scalps tingling in shock.

“Just what type of life essence spirit is that!?”

“This is unheard-of!!”

“That type of power can’t be controlled by a Qi Condensation cultivator. This is similar to Ghostfang! No, wait, it exceeds Ghostfang!”

Under the shocked gazes of all present, the Waterswamp Kingdom mountain peak slowly sank back down. The 600-meter-wide Waterswamp Kingdom was too small, making it impossible for Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit to appear in full. As it sank down, the waterswamp around it gradually faded away.

Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged, his face pale, his eyes wide. He was now fully awake; even he seemed to be astonished at the bone spur which had emerged from the Waterswamp Kingdom.

As the Waterswamp Kingdom vanished, the surrounding battle beasts gradually calmed down. However, their masters, the disciples of the north bank, were left with minds spinning. After a moment of protracted silence, everyone burst into a pandemonium.

“Was I... was I just seeing things...?”

“That was the Waterswamp Kingdom?!?!”

“Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit only revealed the tip of a single bone spur...?”

“That energy just now could shake heaven and earth! Did that really come from... a Qi Condensation disciple like me? Ai. It's too bad he’s not a north peak disciple.”

Amidst the hubbub, the four peak lords exchanged glances, and then looked over at the equally shocked Li Qinghou.

“The younger generation will surpass us in time.... I really am dying to find out what that life essence spirit looks like.”

“You can only imagine what it will be like to see Bai Xiaochun fully unleash the power of the Waterswamp Kingdom!”

“His cultivation base is insufficient, and the waterswamp was only 600 meters wide, so his life essence spirit only revealed the tip of a single bone spur. If he’s ever able to reach the Gold Core stage... and unleash a 500-kilometer Waterswamp Kingdom, I can only guess what his life essence spirit will be like when it appears.”

“If he eventually uses that Waterswamp Kingdom against people at the same level as himself... one can only imagine how powerful he’ll be!”

Li Qinghou felt very proud of Bai Xiaochun, although he didn’t show it. Keeping his excitement and happiness to himself, he turned and left the north bank. After all, he had his own preparations to make. He needed to attempt to break through into the Gold Core stage within ten years.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0129 awe-chapter-130

Even Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure exactly what his life essence spirit looked like. He could also tell that his cultivation base was insufficient at the moment. 600 meters wasn’t enough to accommodate the entirety of the life essence spirit.

He didn’t mind, though. The fact that his life essence spirit appeared at all indicated that his years of cultivating the Waterswamp Kingdom had not been wasted. Furthermore, he was now filled with anticipation about what exactly the life essence spirit would be like in the end.

Hearing the hubbub of voices around him, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, feeling very pleased with himself.

“Ai. What a headache! No matter where I go, people are always cheering. I actually prefer to keep a low profile. Ah well. I guess I can just forget about how much the north bank disciples bullied me in the past.” Just as he was about to rise to his feet, a wave of vertigo swept over him, and intense pangs of hunger stabbed through him. At that point he realized that he was so weak he couldn’t even stand.

He immediately pulled out a medicinal pill. After consuming it, he felt a bit better, and managed to rise to his feet.

The north bank disciples looked on with mixed emotions. Despite being so weak, Bai Xiaochun didn't forget to make himself look like a melancholy hero. His ashen complexion added to the effect as he slowly made his way off.

After he was some distance off, the north bank disciples began to sigh. It was hard for them to decide how they felt about Bai Xiaochun. At first he had been their archenemy, and then he had fought them on the trial platform, one disciple after another, for an entire month. After that, he had surpassed Ghostfang in deep enlightenment, and then showed off a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering Waterswamp Kingdom.

All of them had to admit that Bai Xiaochun was truly a Chosen. Furthermore, he was different from the other Chosen. He was the kind of person who always looked like he deserved a beating, which was something that had nothing to do with his strength. It was something innate about him.

Ever since he had arrived on the north bank, things never let up. One development after another occurred, all revolving around him. It left the crowd sighing in their hearts.

The Inner Sect disciples were even more moved than the others. From the fact that Bai Xiaochun took twice as long to enter deep enlightenment, it was clear to them that his understanding of enlightenment couldn’t compare to Ghostfang’s.

In fact, he might not even measure up to some of the other Chosen in that regard. However, he spent seventy maddened days in observation, something that clearly displayed his level of focus, and how much preparation and hard work he could put into enlightenment.

Beihan Lie had nothing to say as he watched Bai Xiaochun disappearing off into the distance. He turned and went back to his immortal's cave, where he went into secluded meditation, determined to break through to the tenth level of Qi Condensation, and after that, prepare for Foundation Establishment.

“I need to improve in terms of focus and hard work,” he thought. “Bai Xiaochun, one of these days, I'm definitely going to surpass you!”

The Gongsun siblings, Xu Song, and the other Inner Sect Chosen all took deep breaths as they contemplated how much more powerful Bai Xiaochun was. Even still, they were not willing to be constantly battered by such pressure. Filled with determination, they made similar decisions as Beihan Lie.

“Inadequacies can be remedied by diligence. If Bai Xiaochun can do something like that, then so can I!” That was what each and every one of them was thinking.

Soon, the crowds had dispersed. Ghostfang watched Bai Xiaochun leave, still wondering what Bai Xiaochun had seen after the beast’s clawed hand.

Hearing an explanation would do no good. He needed to see with his own eyes. That would be the only way to achieve a breakthrough with his Ghosts Haunt the Night.

“What if I entered his memories? Then I could see what I wished to see.” After some deep thought about the matter, he shook his head. “I can’t be completely confident in succeeding, not right now. But after I reach Foundation Establishment....” His eyes began to shine with a profound light.

“Now that I think about, the appointed time Master talked about is approaching. The three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands controlled by the great sects of the eastern Lower Reaches of the Heavenspan River will be opened. One of them is the Fallen Sword Abyss.... Once inside, when the Tideflow of the earthstring Foundation Establishment begins, my secret magic should enable me to achieve an eight Tideflows Foundation Establishment. At that time, things will be much simpler.” Nodding his head, Ghostfang turned and headed off.

Bai Xiaochun strutted like a hero all the way back to the Beast Conservatory. Once inside, he looked around and found himself alone, whereupon he slumped down and trudged back into the honor guard station, where he immediately fell asleep.

He slept for three days straight before finally waking up. Even then, he was only partially recovered. A half month passed before he returned to his previous peak. When that happened, he was delighted to discover that his cultivation base had made some progress. He was now at the very limit of the ninth level of Qi Condensation, and would only need about half a month of meditation, as well as some medicinal pills, to break into the tenth level.

In addition to that, he found that his ability to control spiritual power had changed. He was now more flexible in his control, and could manipulate it without the slightest lag in speed.

What left him even more ecstatic was that his qi passageways were thicker than before. Plus, his Undying Silver Skin had even more golden light in it than it had months before.

“I've made progress in every aspect!” he thought, excited. First he took a trip around the jungle to visit all the beasts he hadn’t seen during the past months. Then he went to the garden in the back courtyard, where the six-meter-tall plant which had sprouted up out of the Beastbirth Seed now sported an enormous flower bud at the top.

The Beastbirth Seed had been growing for quite some time, and within spirit soil with a threefold spirit enhancement at that. Bai Xiaochun had also taken time to sprinkle some special spirit fertilizer onto the soil every once in awhile to help it grow.

Because of the spell formation he'd put in place, nobody had ever noticed its existence.

After looking at it closely, he was delighted to discover that the flower bud was almost completely mature.

“I bet it will only be a month or so before it’s ready!” Laughing heartily, he sat down in place to begin some breathing exercises and cultivation, simultaneously watching over the Beastbirth Flower bud.

Ten days flew by. Bai Xiaochun’s imminent breakthrough, and the Beastbirth Flower, had him all smiles. During the time that passed, the Beastbirth Flower’s stalk didn't grow any taller, but the flower bud grew larger and larger, until it was almost two meters tall.

It was so heavy that the entire thing began to bend over. The multiple layers making up the flower bud were so numerous that it was hardly possible to imagine what it would look like when it opened up.

There was also a fragrant aroma which spread out from it.

Bai Xiaochun was very excited. He sat there meditating for three more days. Around evening, cracking sounds could be heard, and black filth oozed from his pores. At the same time, the spiritual power inside of him surged like thousands of galloping horses.

The power grew more intense, eventually coalescing into something like a huge raging river that resembled a roaring dragon.

Bai Xiaochun shook visibly as the image of a dragon and a mammoth appeared behind him. His eyes snapped open, and they flashed like lightning. Shocking, thunderous rumbling filled him, sounds that only he could hear.

“Second level of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture!

“Tenth level of Qi Condensation!”

He took a deep breath as he probed the spiritual power inside of him, which was more than double the amount of the ninth level of Qi Condensation. Rising to his feet, he performed an incantation gesture, summoning a violet cauldron.

Excited, he waved his finger, causing another violet cauldron to appear next to the first one. After that, he summoned another. Three cauldrons were now circling around him. Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Flashing into motion, he waved the Golden Crow Sword, causing a raging nine-meter-wide inferno of fire to spring up around him.

There was also a fiery golden crow, a creature birthed from flame, which caused incredible pressure to spread out.

Bai Xiaochun’s smile grew wider. Waving his hand, he retracted all of the magic, and then took a deep breath. By this point, he truly felt himself to be a heroic master.

“Foundation Establishment.... It’s so close. Once I get to the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation, I’ll be able to give it a shot!” As soon as Bai Xiaochun thought about the additional longevity he would gain upon reaching Foundation Establishment, he got more excited.

After cleaning himself up, he used half a day to get used to the changes in his cultivation base, and his increased amount of spiritual power. With that work done, he returned to the rear courtyard, where he sat down cross-legged in front of the Beastbirth Flower.

“My cultivation base has broken through. Now I'm just waiting for this flower.

“Hahaha! My dreams are truly about to become a reality!

“My life essence spirit might be illusory, and born from a secret magic, but this Beastbirth Flower is different. This will be a true battle beast belonging to me!

“I'm going to raise... a battle beast that has the best parts of all of the other battle beasts. When that happens, my purpose in coming to the north bank will have been accomplished!” Bai Xiaochun had been waiting for a long time for this day, and now all he could do was wait and stand guard.

More than ten days went by in a flash. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gradually widened as the stalk of the plant gradually vanished, to be replaced by nothing more than a gigantic Beastbirth Flower. Although he had known from his research that this would happen, it was still a shocking thing to see with his own eyes.

The flower and the stalk had begun the merging process seven days before, but already, it was over 18 meters tall, like a gigantic steamed bun....

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard and backed up a few paces to stand guard. Three days later, a fragrant aroma spread out from the enormous, 27-meter-tall “bun” sitting there in front of him.

At the very top of the “bun,” a small, mouth-like opening could be seen, which was where the fragrant aroma came from.

“When the spirit aroma grows strong, the Beastbirth Flower will bloom, and the beast will be born. That’s what the information said!” Bai Xiaochun began to walk slowly around the Beastbirth Flower, his eyes shining. After some more thought, he left, then came back followed by a flying tiger.

The flying tiger looked around curiously as it entered the rear courtyard, but then a tremor suddenly ran through it, and its eyes began to shine as brightly as if it had seen a female of its own species. With a powerful roar, it suddenly launched itself toward the Beastbirth Flower.

As it closed in, the Beastbirth Flower opened its mouth-like aperture and, in the blink of an eye, swallowed up the flying tiger.

The scene playing out caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to widen. Hurrying forward, he realized that although he couldn’t actually see the flying tiger, he could tell that it was moving inside of the flower. When he was sure about that, he calmed down a bit and moved off to the side to wait.

After about two hours passed, the flower slowly opened up, and the flying tiger crawled out. It was trembling, and almost seemed drunk with pleasure. Although it seemed to want more, Bai Xiaochun grabbed it and took it back out into the Beast Conservatory.

When he returned, he was followed by a huge bear. Moments later, the bear saw the flower, roared, and lunged forward....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0130 awe-chapter-131

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back as he stood there in the courtyard watching the intoxicated bear trundling off into the distance. It looked back three times, seemingly reluctant to leave. Bai Xiaochun sighed, musing about the goodness of his deeds.

During the following half month, he continued to go out into the Beast Conservatory and return with specially selected beasts. The Beastbirth Flower would swallow them up, and when they emerged, they looked drunk with pleasure, and would make their way off into the distance on unsteady legs.

Bai Xiaochun kept his selection very limited, choosing only from two hundred of the most special beasts.

He wanted the flower to give birth to the ultimate battle beast, and therefore, he selected either the strongest or the largest of the beasts in the jungle.

Eventually, all of the beasts which had offered contributions began to gather outside of the spell formation. Whenever Bai Xiaochun appeared, they would howl at the tops of their lungs, as if to ask for another chance.

“Absolutely not,” Bai Xiaochun replied firmly. “One contribution is enough. I don’t want to harm you!” Eventually, Bai Xiaochun brought the huge pangolin over to contribute, and that was when he realized he'd run out of good beasts to chose from.

Furthermore, he was well aware that the blooming period of the Beastbirth Flower didn't last for very long. Eventually, it would give birth to whatever was inside, no matter what it was. That was when he started to get nervous.

“This won’t do. These beasts aren't enough to create the ultimate battle beast.” Having reached this point in his train of thoughts, Bai Xiaochun left the Beast Conservatory to take a walk through the north bank. After observing all of the animals, he had come to be quite familiar with the disciples’ battle beasts. He even knew which ones had the greatest potential for future growth, and which ones were the strongest.

“I remember one female Outer Sect disciple who had a peacock. It had great potential. That peacock should do nicely, shouldn’t it?” He quickly hurried over to the residence of that very female disciple.

After waiting outside for a while, the young woman approached. She was quite well-known in the Outer Sect, and was very beautiful. As soon as she neared, Bai Xiaochun put a warm smile onto his face, and tactfully offered some merit points if she would allow her peacock to make an important contribution. Although he didn’t mention the Beastbirth Flower itself, he did explain other matters in detail.

Worried that she would reject the offer, he decided to add in one more bit of explanation.

“Don't worry. The contribution itself won’t hurt the beast. You know, afterward, all of the beasts who've done it have looked drunk with pleasure. They all want a second round, as a matter of fact, but I was worried it would harm their vital energy, so I refused.”

The female disciple’s expression slowly went blank. Although she wasn’t exactly sure what he meant by “contribution,” after hearing his further explanation, her eyes went wide with fear.

“You... you pervert!” she huffed. A bit tongue-tied, she stamped her foot and walked off.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and he felt a bit wronged.

“I just wanted to borrow your peacock! If you don’t agree, that’s fine, but there’s no need to start cursing me. Bai Xiaochun is no pervert!” Feeling a bit down, he went to the next person on his list. During the following days, he visited over a hundred disciples, and yet, not a single one agreed. In fact, many of them looked at him with very odd expressions.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and decided that since everyone was refusing, he might as well forget the idea. Having no other option, he would have to settle for second best and try out some of the other beasts in the Beast Conservatory.

However, just when he was about to give up, something like a wind blew through the sect. Numerous disciples looked over at Bai Xiaochun with strange expressions on their faces, and began to whisper amongst themselves.

“Did you hear? Bai Xiaochun has a very unique hobby....”

“For the past few days, he's been going around asking to borrow battle beasts from people. He talks about some sort of contribution, and if you don't know what that means, well, come here, I’ll explain it!”

“Oh, so that’s what it means! Heavens! I can’t believe that Bai Xiaochun uses the beasts for.... Heavens! Is it really true?”

The rumors began to fly completely spontaneously. Apparently, after the north bank disciples realized they couldn’t do anything about Bai Xiaochun, their malice toward him had gradually transformed into intrigue. As such, it only took a few days for everyone to have caught wind of the rumors.

“Do you know why Bai Xiaochun came to the north bank? It’s the beasts! He has a special sort of love for them!”

“Now I get it! No wonder he made that Aphrodisiac Pill. It all makes sense now. He needed it for himself to begin with....”

“Chosen always have their eccentric hobbies. I'm just curious as to whether he prefers female beasts or male beasts?”

“Heavens! I can’t believe you’re wondering about something like that! Shh... keep your voice down. Look, I think I know the answer to your question....”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the rumors, he was dumbstruck. The most extreme thing to happen was one evening at dusk when he happened to catch sight of a female disciple with a blue-eyed black cat. A bit curious, he looked over, whereupon the female disciple screamed at the top of her lungs and ran off at top speed.

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe it all, and felt very wronged. He tried to explain things to people, and although they seemed to understand, the rumors only raged hotter.

“What a bunch of bullies!” he fumed. “It wasn’t easy for me, Bai Xiaochun, to come to the north bank, completely impoverished. I minded my own business and tried not to offend anyone. I walked around with my tail between my legs, and yet, you people push things this far!? Slanderers!”

Eyes bloodshot, he gnashed his teeth.

“You’re going overboard, people! If all you’re going to do is slander me, then I’ll go get the beasts myself!” Even as he burned with rage, he suddenly felt a wind blowing against his back. Looking over his shoulder, he didn't see anyone, but did notice a tree off to the side which was swaying back and forth.

Next, a black blur sped toward him, openings its mouth to bite at his belly... the ferocious jaws instantly began to snap shut with terrifying power.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun was in the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Furthermore, after awakening from his deep enlightenment, his senses had become heightened. As such, he recognized what was happening and quickly fell back.

Even as he did, a mouthful of razor-sharp teeth smashed onto the air a little more than a meter in front of him. The power of the bite was such that even the sound of it was shocking. It seemed to be filled with hatred.

The black blur was none other than the Nightstalker Beast, the huge black dog. It was currently nighttime, which meant that it was much faster than it was during the day. Seeing that its second attempt to ambush Bai Xiaochun had failed, the dog quickly turned to flee.

“You again!!” Bai Xiaochun said, scalp numb, sweat dripping down his neck. He felt chills running up his spine; if he had been even a bit slower to react, then the dog would surely have bitten him.

When he thought of what might have resulted, he shivered. He couldn’t bet his life on his Undying Live Forever Technique....

“Damned black dog! It almost put an end to an entire Prestige clan!!” He glared in fury as the dog ran off into the distance.

“Intolerable bullying!” he raged. “If the north bank disciples want to bully me, that's one matter, but now a big dog is trying to do the same thing?! Last time I felt sorry for you, but this time, you’re not getting off the hook!” With that, wings sprouted from his back, and he flickered into motion.

One man, one dog, they raced through the north bank at incredible speed.

The dog was also very fast, and was very familiar with the area. Bai Xiaochun chased after it for almost an hour, until the sky was completely dark. He never was able to catch up, and yet his fury was not abated. The fact that he had been ambushed, and then completely left in the dust by the perpetrator, made him more angry than ever.

As of this moment, the big black dog occupied the number two slot on Bai Xiaochun’s list of hatreds. The number three spot was held by Elder Zhou’s phoenix, and the number one spot... belonged to the abnormally stealthy talking rabbit. Nothing could ever take that first place spot away from the rabbit.

“I’ll chase you to the ends of the earth if I have to!” Silver light flickered around him as the Undying Live Forever Technique was unleashed to its maximum effect, and his wings fluttered with protomagnetic power. In that moment, his speed instantly doubled.

He transformed into a series of afterimages that quickly closed in toward the dog. In that moment, the dog silently attempted to duck into a cave, but before it could, Bai Xiaochun was there, reaching out toward it.

As the hand neared, the black dog's eyes turned crimson, and it madly turned its head. Unexpectedly, it was completely disregarding its own safety to lunge toward Bai Xiaochun’s belly and take out a bite.

The dog had failed in its ambush before, so there was no need to even wonder if it could succeed when Bai Xiaochun was enraged and chasing after it. Before the dog’s jaws could even bite down, a gurgling sound could be heard as Bai Xiaochun’s hand clamped down onto its throat.

His hand was like an iron vice that completely prevented the black dog from escaping.

“Hmph! Now we're going to see how awesome you are!” Gritting his teeth, he headed back to the Beast Conservatory, and soon arrived at the honor guard station. After thinking for a moment about how to punish the dog, he suddenly looked over at the Beastbirth Flower.

His heart twitched, and he chuckled darkly. With that, he tossed the dog toward the Beastbirth Flower, which swallowed it up in an instant.

Two hours later, the flower opened, and the big black dog crawled out. Although its eyes shone with hatred and madness, there was something else in them as well. Before another moment could pass, it lunged at Bai Xiaochun, who grabbed it and threw it back into the flower.

Another two hours passed, and the dog appeared again, just as maddened as before. Bai Xiaochun threw it back into the flower.

After four times, the dog emerged, legs wobbly. It flopped onto the ground, panting.

“Scared now?” Bai Xiaochun said, snorting coldly. “Provoke me again, and I’ll--”

Before he could even finish, the black dog looked up at him and tried its best to reach out and bite him. Enraged, Bai Xiaochun grabbed the dog and threw it back into the Beastbirth Flower for another go. After five more times, it made a total of nine.

After nine times, the dog was gaunt and listless. Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun picked it up, and it let out a miserable howl. Bai Xiaochun felt bad.

“Now do you understand what you have to be afraid of? Just don't provoke me any more. I had no choice but to do what I did in the Chosen battles.” With this admonishment, he tossed the big black dog out of the honor guard station. The dog used what little energy it had left to flee off into the distance. When it got far enough, though, it turned to look back, and seemed like it was savoring sweet memories....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0131 awe-chapter-132

Bai Xiaochun watched the dog disappearing off into the distance, a thoughtful expression on his face. The way it had slowly grown more thin and gaunt was very telling, and gave him a much better understanding of the Beastbirth Flower's growing process. He suddenly thought of the fragrant aroma the flower exuded.

“The Beastbirth Flower exudes a sort of hallucinogenic aura. Once other animals get caught up in it, their qi and blood are stirred, and some of their life essence ancestral blood is extracted by the flower. That's why the dog gradually grew thinner.... Wild beasts are slightly different, so when their qi and blood is stimulated, the illusions they experience are also different. Either way, the point of the hallucination is to stop them from resisting.

“No wonder this Beastbirth Seed is virtually extinct.... In some ways, it's completely superior to all wild beasts!” Bai Xiaochun trembled at this new realization.

When mosquitos suck blood, they numb the vicinity of the bite so that they can feast surreptitiously. Likewise, when the Beastbirth Flower absorbed the life essence ancestral awakening blood, it was done in secret.

Seven days passed. Considering how soon the Beastbirth Flower would be blooming, Bai Xiaochun felt that if he couldn't get any more superior beasts' life essence ancestral awakening blood, it would be a huge waste of the flower.

Then he thought about how the north bank disciples had been slandering him, and he ground his teeth. At that point, he slipped out of the Beast Conservatory into the dark and windswept night.

“I haven’t done something like this for a while. It’s a bit of a loss of face considering my status... but I don’t have any other choice.” Eyes shining brightly, he drifted undetected through the north bank until he arrived outside of a certain residence. Inside was a beautiful peacock, currently asleep and completely oblivious to any dangers. Suddenly, a hand snaked out and clasped it by the neck.

The peacock struggled as a powerful force dragged it through the night, but it couldn’t make even a single sound. Complete unable to free itself, it was quickly taken away by Bai Xiaochun.

Glancing around vigilantly to ensure that no one was watching him, he quickly made his way to another location. It didn’t take long before he had green python in hand as well as a peacock. And yet, things weren’t over.

Over the course of the next hour, Bai Xiaochun toiled away. When he returned to the Beast Conservatory, he had a peacock in his left hand, a night leopard in his right, a white monkey pinned against his side, and a green python wrapped around him.

“What a goldmine!” he thought excitedly. With that, he hurried back to the rear courtyard and bound up the battle beasts. Then he tossed the peacock into the Beastbirth Flower.

After the peacock was swallowed up by the flower, Bai Xiaochun waited in excitement off to the side. Before long, the peacock was spat out, and although it didn’t look drunk with pleasure, it seemed to be relishing some wonderful memory. Apparently, the illusion it had experienced was different from the other animals. Before it could recover, Bai Xiaochun grabbed it and then threw the green python into the flower. Then he hurried away with the peacock to return it to where he'd acquired it from.

The peacock didn’t cry out or struggle. In fact, when Bai Xiaochun turned to leave, it even gazed at him fawningly, almost with anticipation, as if it hoped he would take it away again.

Sounding very serious, Bai Xiaochun said, “Having a bit of your life essence ancestral awakening blood extracted won’t hurt you. But too much won’t be good. Be a good little peacock, alright? Oh... don’t tell your master about me, okay?” With that, he left.

Bai Xiaochun worked hard that night. After returning the green python, he had the white monkey and the night leopard to deal with. The entire affair left him quite exhausted. However, when he thought about how content the animals looked, and how they clearly didn't wish to leave the flower behind, he knew that he was doing a good thing.

Most importantly of all, the Beastbirth Flower was looking stronger and more healthy than ever.

“One simple act pleases the battle beasts, pleases the Beastbirth Flower, and pleases me! It only goes to show what a good deed I'm performing!” Overall, he was very happy. The following night when the moon began to rise, he strode out of the Beast Conservatory, chin stuck up, hair blowing in the wind.

For the following several days, he went about the same routine. He picked the best battle beasts, regardless of whether they belonged to Outer or Inner Sect disciples. At the most, he chose four per night. Any more, and he wouldn’t be able to return them before dawn.

Because of his stealth, and the profundity of his cultivation base, not a single problem arose. The only difference was that the battle beasts which had provided contributions during the night would act very differently if they encountered Bai Xiaochun during the day. They would leap about excitedly as if they wished to please him.

The masters of the various beasts were shocked; in the past, their battle beasts had never liked Bai Xiaochun very much, but now they fawned all over him. Even more strange was that not a single battle beast provided any sort of explanation, not even when asked to do so.

Half a month passed, and it was with great pride that Bai Xiaochun looked at the continuously maturing Beastbirth Flower. Thanks to all of the constant additions of life essence ancestral awakening blood from the most powerful of the battle beasts, his night-time efforts were all worth it.

On this particular night, thick clouds covered the moon, casting everything into pitch darkness. Bai Xiaochun had a hedgehog in one hand and a fierce bull slung over his shoulder, both of them trussed up to keep them quiet as he approached another residence.

“Black, blue-eyed cat....” he murmured, his eyes shining with a strange light. He had never forgotten this particular battle beast. Just as he was about to take action, two pairs of blue eyes snapped open within the courtyard up ahead, and the low-pitched yowl of a cat echoed out into the silence of night.

“So alert!” he thought, shocked. The yowl of the cat roused quite a few nearby disciples, so Bai Xiaochun quickly retreated. However, even as he did, the black, blue-eyed cat shot out to block his path.

Shockingly, human-level intelligence gleamed in its eyes, as well as something like a sneer.

Bai Xiaochun was instantly infuriated. On any other occasion, he could have handled this black cat easily, but now his hands were full, making this more difficult. Suddenly, wings sprouted out behind him, and he vanished before anyone could emerge to see him.

Thanks to the powerful yowl of the cat, Bai Xiaochun had a very hard time making it back to the Beast Conservatory while avoiding the notice of the north bank disciples. When he finally arrived, he gritted his teeth and mentally cursed the black cat.

“How am I going to handle that cat? It’s simply too vigilant!” It was a real headache. Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, and he lunged to the side, just as a black blur flashed passed him, accompanied by the sound of clashing teeth.

“You again!!” Bai Xiaochun had been angry to begin with, but when he saw the big black dog, he got even angrier.

The dog had already ambushed him twice, and normally, it would flee as soon as it failed. This time, though, it came back for a second round, brimming with madness, ferocity, and especially, hatred.

Considering its agility and speed, if it tried to get away, Bai Xiaochun would normally have to use all the power he had, and also spend a significant amount of time, to be able to catch it. But it wasn't fleeing now, so Bai Xiaochun made short work of it.

“I'm short on beasts tonight!” Bai Xiaochun growled. “You’re in!” Holding the struggling dog by the neck, he returned to the rear courtyard. The hedgehog and the fierce bull were the first to make contributions. The last was the fiercely struggling black dog.

After returning the bull and the hedgehog, Bai Xiaochun returned, bursting with rage. He had decided that the time had come to treat the black dog to an unforgettable lesson. He would make it offer contributions fifteen times in a row!

The black dog was gasping for breath by the time Bai Xiaochun tossed it out of the Beast Conservatory.

“If you dare to ambush me ever again,” Bai Xiaochun shouted, “I’ll turn you into dog jerky!” The dog struggled to its feet and then slunk out into the jungle. When it finally reached a spot where Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see it, it flopped down onto the ground and stuck its tongue out to lick its lips. Unexpectedly, an intoxicated gleam appeared in its eyes.

Several more days passed, and Bai Xiaochun’s nighttime activities continued. However, the vigilant cat continued to be a big headache. Eventually, he prepared to attack it outright, but was shocked to find that the cat had hidden away in its master’s room.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure what to do, but wasn’t willing to give up. He continued to work on the other beasts as he pondered the situation. One night, when he was heading back to the Beast Conservatory with a huge toad, he suddenly stopped in place as a black blur shot past him, accompanied by a familiar sound.

It was the big black dog again, which was now standing there in front of him, trembling with eagerness, its teeth bared as if in preparation to attack.

At first, Bai Xiaochun was stunned by the dog’s persistence, but then he realized that there was something strange going on. During the dog’s third ambush, he hadn’t thought too much about the fact that it didn't flee immediately. But now the dog was here again, and again, refrained from fleeing. Furthermore, the way it went about the ambush itself seemed a bit perfunctory. In addition to all that, its biting seemed far slower and far less ferocious than the previous occasions.

“Are you doing this on purpose?” he asked, shocked.

The dog had just been on the verge of lunging forward, but after hearing Bai Xiaochun’s question, it stopped in place and looked at him. It didn’t growl, it didn't bare its teeth, it didn’t leap forward in attack. It just stood there staring at him.

A strange expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Ignoring the dog, he continued on his way. As he sped along, the dog followed, all the way back to the honor guard station.

As soon as it entered the rear courtyard, its tail began to wag furiously, and it... shot toward the Beastbirth Flower, completely of its own volition.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock, and the expression on his face grew even more odd. After the dog finished its contribution and emerged from the flower, it didn't leave, but rather, jumped right back in. It continued to do the same thing over and over again. By the following evening, it had offered a total of seven or eight contributions.

“That’s... that’s... so much life essence ancestral awakening blood! Are you trying to kill yourself? Dammit! Just what kind of fantasy are you experiencing in there?” In the end, he grabbed the crazed dog and threw it out the door. As the dog hobbled off, Bai Xiaochun prepared to start threatening it, but then his heart thumped as an idea occurred to him, and he changed tactics.

“I know you can understand me,” he said. “Listen up. If you want back in here, stop ambushing me! Furthermore, bring me that black, blue-eyed cat, if you can. Then I’ll let you make another contribution!”

The dog looked back for a moment before turning and running off into the distance.

A few days later, just when Bai Xiaochun was about to go out and procure some more beasts, he suddenly heard a familiar barking outside his door....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0132 awe-chapter-133

Bai Xiaochun stuck his head out and saw that there outside of the spell formation shield was the big black dog. It stood there proudly, paw on the back of the vigilant black cat. The blue-eyed cat seemed very listless and in somewhat sore straits.

The black dog looked at Bai Xiaochun and then let out a proud howl. Bai Xiaochun immediately opened the spell formation, whereupon the dog charged in and leapt toward the Beastbirth Flower.

Bai Xiaochun was completely taken aback, and mused that whatever illusion the black dog experienced must be extraordinary.

“Is it really trying to kill itself?” he thought. With that he approached the blue-eyed cat. After a quick examination, he confirmed that it was only exhausted, and not injured in any way. Grabbing it, he walked back into the courtyard.

Sometime later.... After ten contributions to the Beastbirth Flower, Bai Xiaochun finally kicked the black dog out. He was actually starting to get worried that the dog’s frequent contributions of life essence ancestral awakening blood might interfere with his plan to create the most powerful of all battle beasts. What would happen if the Beastbirth Flower ended up giving birth to... a big black dog?

The mere idea left him quite nervous, so he decided to accept no further contributions from the black dog. Without any further hesitation, he tossed the blue-eyed cat into the Beastbirth Flower.

During the following half month, the black dog acted quite obediently. It would often come with a subdued battle beast, cry out until Bai Xiaochun opened the door, then wait eagerly to be allowed in.

Bai Xiaochun wanted to refuse, but every battle beast that the dog brought left him shocked.

“This dog is a god! All of these beasts are ones I had my eye on, but couldn’t get. Their masters either keep them in their bags of beast raising, or in their immortal's caves.” Bai Xiaochun just couldn’t bring himself to refuse. The black dog had captured his heart, and every battle beast it brought left Bai Xiaochun shaken. In fact, one time it even managed to bring the battle beast of one of the Sunset Peak elders.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun realized the implications, and it left him with only a single question. “Dammit, how long was this black dog stalking me...?”

Sighing, he looked over at the dog lying quietly next to the Beastbirth Flower, and realized that it really was intelligent, powerful, and very fast. Were it not those things, it would have been impossible to get all of these battle beasts.

“Fine, fine. Poor guy. Considering how much I tired it out before, and how it always brings me these battle beasts, I guess letting it contribute a few more times wouldn’t hurt. I can’t let things go too far, though. For its own good.” With that, he shook his head and turned his attention to the four mountain peaks.

“I need some even more powerful battle beasts.... The spirit beast guardians of the four mountain peaks are probably the best choice.” Licking his lips, he left the honor guard station and headed toward his cave by the Ancient Beast Chasm to concoct some pills.

By this point, many of the north bank disciples were starting to get suspicious. Many battle beasts were starting to behave very oddly, sometimes crying out in the middle of the night.

That was especially true of the black, blue-eyed cat, whose cries seemed especially loud. Sometimes, it appeared to be reminiscing about the past, dreaming of being the king of all beasts. It started to sound even more domineering when it yowled, to the point where people in the area couldn’t sleep well. Its master was the most anxious of all, unsure of what exactly was happening with her own battle beast....

Such situations grew increasingly common throughout the sect....

Gradually, the north bank disciples began to run their own investigations into the matter....

A few days later, Bai Xiaochun emerged from his medicine concocting cave, loaded down with medicinal pills designed to attract wild beasts. When night fell, he hurried out toward Irispetal Peak. After reaching the summit, he looked anxiously at the cave, and then, eager to find out if his idea would work, threw a tier-3 spirit medicine inside.

Almost as soon as the medicinal pill entered the cave, it shot back out at high speed, slamming into his chest with such force that, without his incredibly tough skin, it would have crushed him. His face fell as he staggered backward a few paces. At the same time, the seven-colored phoenix stretched its head out of the cave and looked at him with a derisive sneer.

Of course, it was sneering, not at Bai Xiaochun himself, but at his action of throwing the medicinal pill.

Apparently, it was telling him that it didn’t consume medicinal pills given to it by strangers.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he coughed dryly.

Trying to look as charming as possible, he said, “Senior phoenix, that medicinal pill is really delicious.... If you don’t like it, that's fine. But if you just come with me, I’ll show you a place where all your dreams can come true.” However, the phoenix merely flapped its wings, shoving Bai Xiaochun back so far he almost toppled off the nearby cliff. Heart pounding, he just managed to avoid falling.

The seven-colored phoenix glared at him threateningly, then slowly retreated back into its cave.

“Fine, fine. This seven-colored phoenix is too grouchy. I’ll head over to Sunset Peak to see the three-eyed raven. It has a much better temper.” Feeling a headache coming on, he made up his mind, and immediately headed over to Sunset Peak, where he attempted to use the same tactics at the three-eyed raven’s cave.

However, after enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Bai Xiaochun’s scalp tingled in fear as he took to flight. A black flash of light could be seen behind him as the three-eyed raven gave chase, driving him all the way down the mountain before proudly returning to its cave.

“I hate birds! Hmph! They have such bad tempers. And Elder Zhou’s bird even maligned me openly that one time!” He felt deeply wronged at how the birds had bullied him despite the fact that he had given them medicinal pills in good faith.

However, he couldn’t give up on his dream of raising the ultimate battle beast. Therefore, he turned his gaze toward

Archway Peak.

“That big lizard seems pretty well-behaved. It’s pretty fat too, so that means it probably has a good appetite.... Maybe I’ll have a chance there.” Enlivened, he hurried over to Archway Peak. However, it didn’t take long before he returned, scowling. He even had some rips and tears in his garments.

The lizard had completely ignored him when he threw it some medicinal pills. After getting anxious, he’d tossed in a few more, whereupon the lizard slashed at him with its claws.

He was forced to flee in terror, uninjured, but his clothing destroyed, leaving him looking very dilapidated.

The final spirit beast guardian was the mountain ghost of Ghostfang Peak. Bai Xiaochun hesitated all the way until the following night. Finally, he stamped his foot angrily and hurried over to Ghostfang Peak. What he found was that the mountain ghost had the best temper of all. It ignored Bai Xiaochun as if he didn’t even exist, and didn’t pay the least bit of attention to the medicinal pills.

After waiting half the night without any response, he left. The next night, he came back, and even a third night, before he finally gave up, virtually on the verge of tears.

“All four spirit beast guardians hold me in complete contempt!” As he sat stewing in the honor guard station, the whole north bank was astir. The only exception were people who Bai Xiaochun was incapable of provoking, for example the people who kept their battle beasts inside their bags of beast raising. All the other valuable beasts had already made contributions. Even most of the elders’ beasts had been brought over by the black dog.

However, Bai Xiaochun met with only failure when it came to the spirit beast guardians, leaving him scowling in grief. That was especially true considering that the Beastbirth Flower was on the verge of blooming.

“I want my battle beast to be unprecedentedly powerful, but the four spirit beast guardians refuse to cooperate. I guess I need a battle beast even more powerful than them. What in the sect is more powerful than... wait a second.” Even as he murmured to himself about the subject, he suddenly shivered and looked toward the Ancient Beast Chasm, his eyes shining.

“The only thing more powerful than the spirit beast guardians... is the sect’s holy beast guardian!

“The Heavenhorn ink dragon.... If I could get that dragon to contribute, it would definitely be enough!!” Panting excitedly, he began to gather his thoughts.

“Now that I think about it, I’m on good terms with the holy beast guardian. I've been giving it medicinal pills ever since I got here.... Although I've never seen the old Heavenhorn ink dragon, it never stopped me from concocting medicine nearby. That means... it actually approves of me!” The more he thought about it, the more sense it made. Getting even more excited, he organized his bag of holding, took a deep breath, and flicked his sleeve, heading in the direction of the Ancient Beast Chasm.

He sped along in high spirits, ready to take a risk for his dream of raising the ultimate battle beast. Soon, he was standing at the edge of the waterfall which poured down into the Ancient Beast Chasm. Down below, it was impenetrably dark, with swirling black mists everywhere. As he stood at the edge, his arms and legs prickled with coldness that seemed to come from the depths of the chasm itself.

He shivered a bit. Fearful that he might fall, he backed up a few steps, then gritted its teeth and threw a medicinal pill down inside.

“Senior Heavenhorn, it’s me, Bai Xiaochun of the Junior generation. Remember me? I've been giving you medicinal pills for years now. Well, um, why don’t you try this new flavor I came up with?” After waiting for a while and getting no response, he started wondering if perhaps the Heavenhorn ink dragon might like a different flavor. Finally, he threw in a different tier-3 spirit medicine.

It didn’t take long before he’d thrown seven or eight pills in. Starting to feel a bit dismayed, he finally threw in a bunch of Aphrodisiac Pills. However, there was no reaction.

“Perhaps the heavens have doomed Bai Xiaochun to fail in raising the ultimate battle beast....” Sighing dejectedly, he was about to turn and leave when, all of a sudden, the mist inside the cave churned, and a profoundly ancient voice spoke out from within.

“It's not worth trying, kiddo.... I appreciate your kindness, but my fate was sealed three thousand years ago..... However, if you can find a way to get my life essence surging again, even for a moment, then I can do anything you want me to!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. Panting, he turned back around and said, “Really?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0133 awe-chapter-134

Within the swirling mists of the chasm, two eyes appeared that constantly flickered with different colors. The most frequent to appear was magenta.

Just those eyes were as large as Bai Xiaochun’s entire body, leaving him panting at the thought of how large the entire Heavenhorn ink dragon was. When he looked closer, he could just barely make out a horn.

After looking closely at the horn for a moment, he was convinced that it really was the Heavenhorn ink dragon speaking, and he started to get excited. After a moment of thought, he gritted his teeth.

“Senior, fear not. I’ll work very hard to do just that!” With that, Bai Xiaochun turned, his eyes shining with focus and hope. If he could simply get the Heavenhorn ink dragon to contribute a single time, then his hopes of raising the ultimate battle beast would surely be fulfilled.

“Life essence exhausted. Wants it to surge. That will require some serious stimulation. When it comes to stimulation... what could possibly compare to the effectiveness of my Aphrodisiac Pill!?” Eyes bloodshot, he flew out of the Beast Conservatory toward Mount Daoseed. Considering his status, and the vast amount of merit points he had saved up, he had no trouble procuring the medicinal plants he needed.

By the time he was finished, he had spent more than half of his merit points. He bought so many ingredients that he couldn’t even fit them into one bag of holding. It took seven bags, all of them stuffed to the brim. The disciple in charge of selling medicinal plants stared in shock. In all the years he had been in charge, he had never seen anyone spend merit points in such shocking fashion.

Naturally, the disciple recognized him. After he left, that disciple took a deep breath and mused about how god-like Bai Xiaochun was.

After purchasing such a huge collection of medicinal plants, he returned to the vicinity of the Ancient Beast Chasm to begin concocting medicine. Soon his eyes were bloodshot, and he was in a state of frenzy.

“I have to concoct... a Super Aphrodisiac Pill!” he said through gritted teeth. Determined to drastically increase the medicinal efficacy, he adjusted the pill formula to raise the potency by hundreds if not thousands of times.

Seven days flew by. Bai Xiaochun didn’t rest at all, and soon, his hair was in complete disarray. He was completely immersed in his concocting. Occasionally the black dog would come with battle beasts, whereupon Bai Xiaochun would impatiently give it a jade slip so that it could temporarily open the spell formation.

The dog was very intelligent, and would use the jade slip to take the battle beast back to the honor guard station and carefully carry out the mission assigned to it by Bai Xiaochun. Apparently it was worried that if it didn’t carry things out properly, it would have no more chances to return in the future. Of course, without Bai Xiaochun there to supervise it, the dog didn’t exercise much control over how many times it contributed....

Over time, the north bank disciples gradually went mad. Each battle beast that went missing would return with a strange expression on its face, somehow prideful, as if it were the king of the world. It would act manic, murderous, intoxicated, and seemed to constantly be thinking about the past. Furthermore, no matter how the masters of such beasts tried to pry information out of them, it did no good.

More and more battle beasts exhibited such behavior. Some of the beasts had been strictly disciplined by their masters in the past, and would never have dreamed of acting out. But after disappearing and experiencing the illusory life of being the ruler of the world, they became uncontrollable.... The north bank was in chaos.

“What’s happening!?!?”

“There’s something fishy going on. We have to figure out what!!”

Eventually, even the battle beasts belonging to the elders began to act similarly. Before long, all of the disciples on the north bank were investigating the situation.

Three days later, Bai Xiaochun was completely immersed in his madness. It was with complete and utter fearlessness that he hurried over to the edge of the chasm and asked for a drop of blood from the Heavenhorn ink dragon.

On any other occasion, Bai Xiaochun would never have done anything so dangerous, but considering the bedeviled state he was in, he completely suppressed any urge to consider the potential consequences.

After a long moment of silence from within the chasm, Bai Xiaochun impatiently said that he didn’t have time to waste. A moment later, a golden drop of blood flew out, which Bai Xiaochun quickly put into a bottle. Then, he hurried back into his cave to continue his concocting work.

Five days later, he had been at work for half a month, with no rest. It was at that point that the Super Aphrodisiac Pill finally appeared in the world.

That evening, rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun stared at the head-sized medicinal pill, then threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Not only was the pill physically large, it was extremely heavy.

As soon as is appeared in the pill furnace, a strong medicinal aroma spread out in all directions. As the aroma wafted out from the cave, the black dog, which had been carrying along a battle beast, suddenly got a whiff. A tremor ran through it, and its eyes turned bright red. Howling, it ran out of the Beast Conservatory to parts unknown....

At the same time, countless excited howls could be heard throughout the jungle of the Beast Conservatory.

Seeing how effective the pill was already, Bai Xiaochun began to laugh even more loudly. He was trembling with excitement, but was still worried that the pill wasn’t good enough.

Hurrying off to a location where he could be certain of his privacy, he produced his wok and began to perform a spirit enhancement. After the threefold spirit enhancement was completed, his Super Aphrodisiac Pill had reached a level that was virtually unheard-of in the cultivation world. A superior-grade pill!

“This pill will definitely work. If it doesn’t, then Bai Xiaochun will give up on pill concocting!” Spirits soaring, and bursting with self-confidence, he carried the medicinal pill over to the waterfall entrance of the Ancient Beast Chasm. Without any hesitation, he threw the pill down.

The pill disappeared soundlessly into the darkness. Bai Xiaochun stood there on the edge of the chasm, waiting. Time passed. After a full hour had gone by, he was starting to get nervous, despite his confidence.

“No way! I increased the medicinal efficacy by over a thousand-fold!” Another hour passed, and Bai Xiaochun was starting to sweat anxiously. Suddenly, the mist in the chasm began to swirl, and a roar echoed out that could shake heaven and earth. As it blasted out from within the mist, accompanied by a gale force wind, Bai Xiaochun backed up a few paces.

Then, an enormous column of swirling black mist rocketed up into the air, twisting and turning. At the same time, an exultant voice echoed out in all directions.

“At long last... I can sense my life essence surging!!” Then, the column of mist began to collapse, and a huge clawed hand reached out from within the chasm. When it grabbed onto the mountain cliff off to the side, the ground quaked.

The hand was pitch black and covered with scales the size of people. The claws were razor-sharp, and glowed faintly, radiating an energy that left one trembling.

An enormous, mountain-like head then emerged from within the chasm, pitch black, with a shocking horn stretching out from its forehead. The mere appearance of that horn seemed to make everything in the area blurry.

One might expect a dragon’s eyes to be nine meters wide, but this dragon’s eyes were even larger. It radiated a profoundly ancient aura, and its head was crisscrossed with scars of all types. One could only imagine the fierce battles the dragon had fought in the past.

Although it was ancient, it still radiated incredible energy and power. When it threw its head back and roared, all of the beasts in the jungle prostrated themselves and remained on the ground, completely unmoving.

Bai Xiaochun forced himself to swallow. This dragon was unimaginably large, and what was most frightening was that less than half of its body had emerged from the chasm. Bai Xiaochun’s knees began to go weak, and his mind was spinning.

It was about then that the huge dragon glanced down at Bai Xiaochun, and then lowered its head down to his level.

Bai Xiaochun immediately felt incredible pressure weighing down on him. The head in front of him filled his field of vision, obscuring everything else.

More anxious than ever, he blurted, “Senior Heavenhorn, it’s me, Bai Xiaochun! Remember me? I concocted that medicinal pill. It took me half a month! I very nearly worked myself to death in the process.”

The Heavenhorn ink dragon looked at him for a moment, and then smiled. Of course, from Bai Xiaochun’s perspective, that smile was hair-raisingly terrifying. Before he could say anything further, the gigantic dragon shrank down right there in front of him. Within the blink of an eye, it was a nine-meter-long black lizard.

It actually looked very similar to the lizard from Archway Peak.

The lizard landed in front of Bai Xiaochun, and as soon as its claws touched the ground, everything in the area distorted. When things grew clear again, Bai Xiaochun was shocked to find that they were back in the rear courtyard of the honor guard station.

“Somehow you got your hands on a Beastbirth Seed,” the dragon said. “I could sense it the moment you brought it here.... It pulls you into a hallucination, extract your life force, then uses it to condense ancestral awakening blood. With this seed, my bloodline can finally be passed on.” The Heavenhorn ink dragon sighed. Completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun, it approached the Beastbirth Flower, which began to tremble, and then slowly opened.

The Heavenhorn ink dragon didn’t resist as the flower swallowed it up. In fact, it even seemed to have an expression of anticipation on its face.

Bai Xiaochun waited nervously off to the side, watching the Beastbirth Flower, wondering what sort of illusion the Heavenhorn ink dragon was experiencing. Unlike the other beasts, which were relatively quiet, this time, roars echoed out. Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to cry. He suddenly had the feeling that maybe he'd pushed things too far, that maybe his Beastbirth Flower couldn’t handle the terrifying Heavenhorn ink dragon.

Praying nervously, he waited for four hours. Finally, the Heavenhorn ink dragon flew out, expression somber. After a moment, it flew right back into the flower.

Time passed. For the following nine days, Bai Xiaochun watched in shock as the Heavenhorn ink dragon surpassed the black dog’s accomplishments. It contributed more than fifty times before flying away.

“Illusions are nice, but they’re merely the past.... I like you, kiddo. If you ever need help with anything in the future, I’ll do my best to accommodate, as long as it’s not too outrageous.” The voice of the sect’s holy beast guardian rang like a huge bell as it expressed its appreciation toward Bai Xiaochun. Just as it was turning to leave, Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment. From his perspective, he had just provided a great service to the sect, and had done a very good deed.

Face filled with anticipation, he said, “Senior Heavenhorn, do you think you could get the spirit beast guardians from the four mountain peaks of the north bank to come contribute a bit? Maybe even the beasts belonging to the peak lords...?”

“Those runts? No problem!” The Heavenhorn ink dragon grinned and then took a deep breath. Bai Xiaochun sensed heaven and earth distorting for a moment, and then, the seven-colored phoenix, the three-eyed raven, the mountain ghost and the Archway Peak lizard all appeared in front of the Heavenhorn ink dragon. Also present were the battle beasts belonging to the peak lords.

The instant they appeared, they began to tremble, their eyes shining with fear. Even the three-eyed raven and the seven-colored phoenix were shivering, and the mountain ghost knelt down on the ground.

The Archway Peak lizard seemed even more frightened as it prostrated itself. The peak lords’ beasts were the most terrified of all.

Bai Xiaochun looked on ecstatically as all of these insufferably arrogant beasts obediently complied with the instructions given by the Heavenhorn ink dragon. One by one, they entered the Beastbirth Flower to offer contributions. The following morning, they left, looking somewhat dazed. The Heavenhorn ink dragon also departed, giving Bai Xiaochun a final look of praise.

Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously. By this point, the Beastbirth Flower was beginning to close in on itself. It was no longer emitting any aura or fragrance, and was clearly about to give birth to the battle beast inside, to Bai Xiaochun’s delight and pride. Recently, he had heard about how the disciples of the north bank were investigating the situation regarding the battle beasts, and couldn’t help but chuckle proudly.

“Bai Xiaochun is about to have the ultimate battle beast. Hmph! You north bank disciples should be shaking in fear! I already thought of a name for him. Bruiser!

“Not only did you refuse to lend me your battle beasts, you even slandered my name! Just wait until you realize what happened. Once you figure out your beasts contributed their own life force essence at my behest, then I’ll slip back to the south bank and you won’t be able to do anything about it. Hahahahahahahahaha!” Sticking his chin up, he waved his sleeve and assumed the pose of a lonely hero, doing nothing to cover up the look of pride on his face.

However, in that very moment of beauty, he suddenly felt as if someone were watching him. Shocked, he turned around and saw that there next to the honor guard station, a newcomer had arrived at some point. It was none other than... the miraculously stealthy, long-eared rabbit!

After gaping in shock for a moment, he shrieked, “Y-y-you... you damned talking rabbit! What are you doing here!?!?”

The rabbit gaped in shock and then shrieked, “Y-y-you... you damned talking rabbit! What are you doing here!?!?”

With that, it turned tail and vanished in a blur, moving faster than the black dog ever could.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0134 awe-chapter-135

“Aghhhh! Don’t spread that!!” he shouted. Well aware of the rabbit’s proclivities, he burst into motion, wings popping out behind him as he gave chase at top speed.

However, the rabbit was far too fast. Soon, only its voice could be heard, echoing out in the distance.

“Aghhhh! Don’t spread that!!”

After chasing the rabbit in vain for some time, Bai Xiaochun found to his despair that, despite being in the tenth level of Qi Condensation... he wasn’t even close to being as fast as the rabbit. Its god-like speed was completely beyond belief.

“I'm finished. Kaput....” he muttered, staring blankly at the disappearing rabbit. He stood there trembling, mind spinning. Even in his wildest dreams, he would never have imagined that the talking rabbit would somehow show up on the north bank. It was like a nightmare come true.

“What did I just say?” he muttered, tugging at his hair. “How much did the rabbit hear...?” He felt like crying. The incredibly stealthy talking rabbit had pushed him to the brink of madness. If things like this kept happening, he was certain that it would start affecting him mentally. Maybe he should just stop talking from now on.

He already regretted creating the mystery pill which had led to the creation of this incredibly annoying talking rabbit.

“That damned rabbit probably didn’t hear anything. Definitely nothing. If it did, it would have started repeating it immediately!” Still jittery, he sniffled a bit as he tried to comfort himself, and yet, it did little good. The talking rabbit was like a pill furnace that could explode at any moment, shaking heaven and earth.

He returned nervously to the honor guard station, where he straightened things up in case he needed to make a sudden break for the south bank. Then, he looked nervously at his Beastbirth Flower.

“Three days. My ultimate battle beast will appear in three days!!” Eyes bloodshot, he could do little more that wait nervously. The black dog dragged over another battle beast, but Bai Xiaochun staunchly turned it away and explained that in the future, there would be no need for any further contributions or any other battle beasts.

The black dog didn't look very happy, and immediately bared its teeth in ferocious fashion. Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to thump, and he coughed dryly.

“Well, it’s not that set in stone....” he said. “Look, there’s a super stealthy rabbit that’s been lurking around the north bank. It loves to chatter constantly. Why don’t you go catch that for me!?”

The dog looked back suspiciously at Bai Xiaochun, who continued to gesticulate wildly and offer further explanations. Finally, the dog understood, and it turned and vanished in a black blur.

Bai Xiaochun watched it go, eyes sparkling with anticipation.

“Good luck, buddy. If you can get that rabbit for me, I’ll do everything I can to find another Beastbirth Seed for you!” The mere thought of the terrifying talking rabbit caused Bai

Xiaochun to sigh. Heading back into the rear courtyard, he continued to wait anxiously.

Another day passed.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun kept his ears focused on any possible sounds coming from outside. All of the north bank disciples were in a stir as they searched for the reason why their battle beasts had suddenly changed. Of course, people already suspected Bai Xiaochun, and even came to look around the honor guard station. However, he had done a good job of making sure that no one saw the Beastbirth Flower.

Furthermore, he had carried out all his activities at night, and had been very careful not to leave behind any clues. Therefore, although people suspected him, there was no incriminating evidence, so eventually, the disciples left him alone.

Bai Xiaochun only got more nervous, though. Another day passed, and the investigation grew more serious. That was especially true among the disciples whose battle beasts had become a lot harder to control. They were constantly breaking out into fits of rage.

“What exactly is going on here!?”

“Maybe it’s some sort of plague? But it doesn’t seem like a plague. That can’t be the reason!”

“Something fishy is going on. Something very very fishy!”

The north bank was in a frenzy, and was bubbling on the point of an eruption. Massive amounts of Outer Sect disciples were involved in the investigation, as were Inner Sect disciples. Even the peak lords got involved. Soon, it was only half a day before the Beastbirth Flower was due to bloom. That was when a clue was finally unturned.

“Beihan Lie’s old Nightstalker Beast!”

“It took away a battle beast recently, and when the beast returned, it had a very strange expression on its face!”

“Find that dog!”

Enraged, the north bank disciples spread out everywhere on the north bank. Soon, they found the black dog, and at the same time, they found a rabbit.

The rabbit was flying along helter skelter as it was chased by the black dog.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, it wasn’t long before the faces of the disciples flickered in shock as they realized that the rabbit was talking.

“Junior Sister Meixiang, considering my status as the peak lord of Ghostfang Peak, I hereby swear that I will never allow Li Qinghou to win your hand!

“Ooh, you’re so naughty, Elder Sun....

“Hahaha! This medicinal pill is incredible. I, Bai Xiaochun, am clearly super awesome. This rabbit can actually talk!

“Bai Xiaochun is about to have the ultimate battle beast. Hmph! You north bank disciples should be shaking in fear!

“Not only did you refuse to lend me your battle beasts, you even slandered my name! Just wait until you realize what happened. Once you figure out your beasts contributed their own life force essence at my behest, then I'll slip back to the south bank and you won't be able to do anything about it. Hahahahahahahahaha!"

As the rabbit sped along spewing its vivid and realistic lines of dialogue, the north bank disciples stared mutely. However, when it reached the end of the passages, they realized that this strange and marvelous rabbit had been created by Bai Xiaochun, and that it loved to talk!

The north bank disciples were trembling, their eyes wide, their breath coming in ragged pants. They watched as the black dog chased after the rabbit, and the two disappeared off into the distance.

"Contributed life force essence?"

"When we realize what happened with our beasts, Bai Xiaochun plans to slip back to the south bank?"

"Bai Xiaochun!!!" Countless north bank disciples howled in rage, especially the ones whose battle beasts had been affected. All of them began to fly at top speed in the direction of the Beast Conservatory, causing heaven and earth to shake violently.

As the rabbit ran along, it continued to talk, until eventually, all of the north bank disciples heard it. Eyes wide, they bellowed in rage, causing all of the north bank to quake.

"Bai Xiaochun!!"

"So, you were the one who did this!! You want to slip back to the south bank?"

"Take Bai Xiaochun down!!"

The north bank disciples were maddened. The Outer Sect, the Inner Sect, and even many of the elders appeared and began to rush in the direction of the Beast Conservatory.

As the stealthy rabbit fled from the black dog, it suddenly stopped in place, as it realized that an old monkey had appeared in front of it out of nowhere. The monkey’s expression was serious as it stared at the rabbit for a moment, and then spoke in a profoundly ancient and threatening voice.

“Who exactly are you, rabbit?!”

The rabbit looked back with an expression as ancient and threatening as the monkey’s.

“Who exactly are you, rabbit?!” it said.

The monkey eyes flickered sharply, and it suddenly launched itself toward the rabbit. The same look appeared in the rabbit’s eyes as it turned and fled. A moment later, the monkey and the rabbit were nowhere to be seen.

Meanwhile, back in the Beast Conservatory, Bai Xiaochun was waiting anxiously. In only four more hours, the ultimate battle beast would appear. It was at that point that an intense rumbling sound rose up outside, and soon, figures appeared, rushing in his direction.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Enraged north bank disciples closed in, not even pausing before they slammed into the spell formation shield surrounding the honor guard station. Incredible rumbling sounds echoed out, and the spell formation trembled. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound.

“What are you people doing?!?! I’m a Prestige disciple! I'm the Junior Brother of the sect leader. I've spilled--”

“It doesn’t matter who you are!” shouted the mob. Soon, cracking sounds were emanating from the spell formation under the combined bombardment of the crowd. It was already on the verge of breaking.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling with fear as he realized how truly ferocious the north bank disciples were. The south bank disciples usually resorted to throwing rocks, but the north bank disciples were actually unleashing full attacks. All of a sudden, he realized that if the spell formation broke, he would quickly be reduced to a bloody paste.

“Help! They’re trying to kill me!!” he screamed, backing up. He felt utterly wronged by these bullying north bank disciples. First they provoked him, then they slandered him, and when he simply borrowed their beasts for some contributions, they tried to kill him.

In the instant that he began to back up, the spell formation shattered, and countless north bank disciples prepared to charge in. It was at that point that a cold snort echoed out from the sky above, and the four peak lords of the north bank descended to intervene.

The old woman from Irispetal Peak looked out at the north bank disciples.

Unwilling to accept that Bai Xiaochun was being protected, some of the disciples spoke out. “Peak lord, we’re--”

“Shut up!” said the old lady, her voice booming like thunder. “How dare you attack the Beast Conservatory! What shocking behavior!”

The surrounding disciples fidgeted in place apprehensively.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Bai Xiaochun solemnly added, “That’s right! How dare you attack the Beast Conservatory! What shocking behavior!”

“You shut up too!” the old woman said, turning to glare at Bai Xiaochun. Just when she was about to continue speaking, her eyes went wide as she noticed the Beastbirth Flower in the rear courtyard. Even as she gasped, the other peak lords began to tremble.

“A Beastbirth Flower!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0135 awe-chapter-136

The four peak lords shot toward the Beastbirth Flower, panting, trembling inwardly. It was as if they had just caught sight of the most precious treasure in the world. The old woman from Irispetal Peak suddenly looked as if her face had even more wrinkles than before....

The other three peak lords were equally excited as they reached out to actually touch the Beastbirth Flower. To them, it was something holy, something that completely filled their field of vision, obscuring everything else in existence.

The surrounding disciples were struck mute. Most of them didn’t even know what a Beastbirth Seed was, and were struck with fear by the actions of the four peak lords.

However, a few of the Inner Sect disciples knew what they were looking at. That was especially the case considering the words the peak lords had just uttered. Those disciples were completely shaken, their hearts battered by enormous waves of astonishment.

“Beastbirth Flower!?!? Heavens! Is that really the flower of a Beastbirth Seed?!”

“That’s a legendary holy object, rarely seen in the world!!”

“I've only read about it in the ancient records. Supposedly, they went extinct in ancient times. I can’t believe there’s one sitting right here!!”

The voices grew louder and louder. The tens of thousands of people present soon realized that the seemingly ordinary, although rather large plant, was actually an indescribably valuable object. Everyone was clamoring about the Beastbirth Flower, and soon forgot that they had come to cause trouble for Bai Xiaochun.

It only took a few moments for the area to get extremely noisy, until finally, the old man from Ghostfang Peak turned and gave a harsh look to the crowd. Almost instantly, the voices died down.

Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, his chin stuck up into the air, looking very much like a lonely hero.

“Humph. Now do you people understand why I, Bai Xiaochun, needed contributions from so many battle beasts? It was all for my Beastbirth Flower!” Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding with excitement and pride, but he kept the lonely expression on his face. At the same time, the four peak lords stood there, their expressions going back and forth between enchantment and frustration. In the end though, they were gritting their teeth, and then gnashing them. That was especially true of the old woman from Irispetal Peak, whose eyes were completely bloodshot.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” she cried, sounding both furious and filled with grief. “Don’t you know how valuable this Beastbirth Flower is? Don’t you know that these things are extinct!? Don’t you know what this Beastbirth Flower represents?!?!” The old woman was raving as if mad, her heart figuratively dripping with blood, convinced that if she were the one to have come to possess the Beastbirth Seed, things would have been completely different.

“Of course I do,” Bai Xiaochun answered, surprised. He wouldn’t have riled up the entire north bank if he hadn't been aware of how valuable it was.

In the moment of the old woman’s sorrow, the other three peak lords looked over at Bai Xiaochun, their gazes as sharp as blades. They knew how indescribably valuable a Beastbirth Seed was. It was like a precious treasure, and from the way they were looking at Bai Xiaochun right now, they were completely and utterly disappointed.

“I can’t believe you planted such a precious seed right here!” the old woman raged. “And now the process is almost complete. It’s going to give birth to a beast soon!

“Y-y-you.... Bai Xiaochun, it’s obvious that your actions led to all the battle beasts in the sect going crazy. But what use was that? All of those beasts had low order bloodlines!!

“Don’t you realize that we could have used that Beastbirth Seed with Elder Sun’s jasper seamonster to give birth to another beast with a third order bloodline?!?! But now, it’s too late! Too, too late....”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then cleared his throat. “Elder Sun’s jasper seamonster also contributed.”

“You... wait, what?” The old woman was about to continue her tirade, but instead, her jaw dropped. The other three peak lord’s had similar reactions as they looked out into the crowd to find Elder Sun looking back at them with a shocked expression on his face. He had come, not because he had noticed any abnormality in his battle beast, but because of the problem with the disciples’ beasts. It was only in this moment that he suddenly heard that his own jasper sea monster had come to “contribute.”

After a moment of hesitation, the old woman’s fury returned.

“Even Elder Sun’s jasper sea monster would have been a waste of the Beastbirth Seed. Take Elder Chen’s blue sky boa. It only has a third order bloodline, but it might be able to transform into a dragon one day. Furthermore, that clear sky boa is the only one that can--”

Before she could finish, Bai Xiaochun gingerly interrupted. “The blue sky boa also came to contribute.”

The old woman’s eyes went wide. Out in the crowd, Elder Chen gasped and looked down at this bag of beast raising. In that moment, a blue snake stuck its head out and looked in the direction of the Beastbirth Flower, seemingly drunk with passion.

“Elder Chen’s blue sky boa is still strong and young,” said the peak lord from Ghostfang Peak, his voice quavering with rage. “We can breed it even without a Beastbirth Seed. Bai Xiaochun, my own yaksha beast is perfectly suited for a Beastbirth Seed. If only you--”

“Um... Peak Lord Wu, your yaksha beast... also came to contribute.”

Peak Lord Wu wasn’t the only one to gasp. All of the surrounding disciples were completely shocked by what they were hearing.

The other peak lords were about to say more, when Bai Xiaochun edged back a few steps and then carefully said, “All of your beasts came to contribute....”

The four peak lords felt as if they were being struck by lightning. How could they have been completely unaware that their own battle beasts secretly came here? Simultaneously, the surrounding disciples were left gasping to the point where they couldn't remain silent any longer.

“Heavens, how many beasts came to contribute!?!?”

“This Bai Xiaochun, he... he didn’t even let the peak lords’ beasts off the hook!”

“How deranged!!”

As the shouting of the crowd grew louder, Bai Xiaochun started to get nervous, and backed up a bit more, keeping his eyes on the four peak lords the entire time. After a moment passed, the old woman from Irispetal Peak intensified her glare.

“Well, it seems I underestimated you, Bai Xiaochun. You even managed to sneak all of the peak lords’ battle beasts over here. Well then, why did you stop there? Why didn’t you bring over the seven-colored phoenix from Irispetal Peak? Our battle beasts have third order bloodlines, but the seven-colored phoenix’s is fourth order. A fourth order bloodline would definitely not be a waste of....” Before she could finish speaking, she noticed the cautious expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and her heart flip-flopped. “You... you didn’t....”

“The seven-colored phoenix also came to contribute,” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding a bit wronged.

“What about the three-eyed raven from Archway Peak...?”

“Also contributed,” Bai Xiaochun said, steeling himself. “Plus the lizard from Archway Peak, and the mountain ghost from Ghostfang Peak..... They all came to contribute.”

The peak lords’ eyes went wide, and they gasped in disbelief. Moments later, they produced jade slips, and used some unknown method to communicate with the spirit beast guardians. A moment later, the information was confirmed, although the spirit beast guardians didn’t dare to mention the Heavenhorn ink dragon. Afterward, the peak lords stared at Bai Xiaochun with wide eyes, looking completely incredulous.

The surrounding north bank disciples were also left gasping in shock. Beihan Lie shivered, more convinced than ever of how strong Bai Xiaochun was. Xu Song’s mind was spinning; he was well aware of how terrifying the four spirit beast guardians were, and couldn’t imagine how Bai Xiaochun could possibly have convinced them to offer contributions.

The old woman from Irispetal Peak felt like she was going crazy. She had started out with the intention of teaching Bai Xiaochun a lesson, but the more she spoke, the more she realized she had nothing to say. Bai Xiaochun knew how valuable a Beastbirth Seed was, and had even managed to get the most powerful beasts on the north bank to contribute. Even if she had tried to do such a thing, she might not have been able to pull it off.

However, considering that there were so many disciples watching, all of them completely speechless because of Bai Xiaochun’s explanations, the old woman's anger grew. Flicking her sleeve, she said, “Still a waste! Bai Xiaochun, don’t you know that if you had given that Beastbirth Seed to one of the prime elders, even the patriarchs would have been shocked? They could have issued a Dharmic decree to arrange for the sect’s holy beast guardian, the Heavenhorn ink dragon, to use that seed to give birth to a new generation! Now that would most certainly have not been a waste. That....” At first, she started getting more and more worked up into a rage, but eventually realized that Bai Xiaochun appeared to be trying to cut in, and stopped talking. Then her heart began to pound....

She wasn’t the only one. The expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face caused the other three peak lords to suck in deep breaths.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then quietly said, “Well... I don’t think we need to bother the patriarchs to get a Dharmic decree. Senior Heavenhorn ink dragon came over three days ago. He was more than happy to help, and even contributed more than fifty times....”

The entire area was as silent as death.

The four peak lords were dumbstruck, as were the elders and the disciples. Everyone was staring at Bai Xiaochun, their hearts pounding with astonishment that could shake the heavens and topple the earth.

It was at that point that the Beastbirth Flower suddenly began to wither, and one after another, petals began to fall off. A powerful life force essence appeared within the flower, which grew stronger and stronger by the moment. It didn't take long before the peak lords, the elders, and the ordinary disciples were all paying rapt attention to the flower.

The spirit beast guardians of the four mountain peaks were all trembling, as if they could sense their own progeny, and countless ordinary battle beasts were all trembling with a similar sensation.

Deep within the Ancient Beast Chasm, the Heavenhorn ink dragon opened its eyes and looked out into the Beast Conservatory with an expression of keen anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side nervously, wondering how things would turn out. The peak lords were close by him, breathing in ragged pants.

Slowly, the Beastbirth Flower continued to wither, and the life force aura grew stronger, as if something were about to burst out from inside. At this point, a vortex appeared up above, slowly spinning round and round, almost as if there were eyes above in the heavens, looking down at the scene playing out below.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0136 awe-chapter-137

By this point, virtually everyone on the north bank was paying close attention to the events playing out in the Beast Conservatory. Numerous eyes from Mount Daoseed were also watching.

“That’s... huh?”

Even as expressions of surprise rang out, suddenly, the vortex up above turned crimson, causing the entire sky to turn red.

A bloodcurdling shriek then emanated from within the withered Beastbirth Flower. Simultaneously, the powerful aura suddenly began to decline. If that process was completed, it would indicate that whatever was inside the flower had died.

It would expire prematurely, never even having a chance to be born. Bai Xiaochun began to tremble, and the four peak lords were all astonished.

“It has a heterogeneous bloodline! Its mind is having trouble keeping its body in one piece!”

“Dammit! I knew this was going to happen!”

“That beast will never see the light of day....”

Even as the four peak lords expressed their shock, Bai Xiaochun trembled and stared at the Beastbirth Flower. He could sense that the life inside wished to emerge, but that it wasn’t able to. It was now hovering on the brink of dying, and even exuded a powerful aura of death.

Suddenly, a blurry figure appeared in the air above the Beastbirth Flower. It was impossible to see him clearly, but he seemed to be an old man in a white robe. He hovered there calmly, completely devoid of any aura whatsoever.

His cultivation base was... completely unreadable!

Everyone was shaken mentally. The numerous disciples present had never seen this old man before, but the peak lords had, and they were left completely astonished. Their eyes went wide, and they dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Third Generation Patriarch....”

When the disciples heard that, their minds spun, and they also dropped down and kowtowed.

Bai Xiaochun was somewhat in a daze, and didn’t even notice the newcomer. His attention was completely focused on the life inside the withered Beastbirth Flower, his heart trembling, tears welling up in his eyes.

The white-robed old man looked over at the flower, and then his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture as he sent life force pouring inside. However, a moment later, the aura of death became even stronger than before.

Muttering something inaudible, the white-robed old man turned to look in the direction of the Ancient Beast Chasm.

There, the Heavenhorn ink dragon opened its mouth, and a golden drop of blood flew out, causing the dragon to age visibly. At the same time, Heavenhorn looked at the Beastbirth Flower with anxious anticipation.

The golden drop of blood streaked through the air like a golden beam of light, all the way to the Beastbirth Flower.

The white-robed old man sighed. Eyes shining brightly, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the clouds in the sky to churn and form together into a magical symbol, which merged with the golden drop of blood as it entered the Beastbirth Flower.

“With a heterogenous bloodline, its chances of survival are minimal,” the old man said. “This will sustain it for nine days at the most. Whether or not it lives and manages to fight its way out of the Beastbirth Flower is up to the willpower of the beast itself. What a pity.... After all, it would appear that it’s a spirit creature with a fifth order bloodline.” Even this old man couldn’t completely defy the heavens and alter fate. The beast’s fate rested completely on its own fortune.

He glanced over at Bai Xiaochun, a look of pity in his eyes, then swished his sleeve and faded away into motes of glittering light.

After he left, the four peak lords slowly rose to their feet. After staring reverently at the spot where the old man had disappeared, they turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, who was still standing there blankly next to the Beastbirth Flower.

All of them seemed somewhat disturbed. Anyone who had worked as hard as Bai Xiaochun had, only to find that the battle beast might not be born, would be upset. That was especially true considering how rare Beastbirth Seeds were in the cultivation world.

The four peak lords sighed. Their anger toward Bai Xiaochun had vanished, and they slowly began to make their way off into the distance. Neither could the north bank disciples cause problems for Bai Xiaochun considering the sudden turn of events. Although many of them were still angry, they simply turned and quietly left.

Soon, evening had fallen, and Bai Xiaochun was the only person left in the Beast Conservatory. He stood there staring blankly at the withered Beastbirth Flower, and the tiny figure struggling inside. The creature seemed to be fighting an epic battle for its life.

Tears began to roll down Bai Xiaochun’s cheeks as he slowly took a step forward and sat down next to the Beastbirth Flower, then reached out to place his hand on its surface.

The grief he was feeling was plainly visible on his face; he just couldn’t quite make himself accept that this was happening. At the moment, he felt no desire to see the ultimate battle beast. He just wanted the little life form inside of the flower to live, even if it wasn’t powerful at all.

He had given life to this creature, and the idea of watching it die was as painful as having a sword stab into his heart. Even worse was that there was nothing he could do. He was in the tenth level of Qi Condensation, and yet was powerless. That feeling left him feeling suffocated and helpless.

Night fell. The helplessness of watching the life of the creature fading away left Bai Xiaochun trembling in fear. He couldn’t help but think back to life in the village, when his parents were sick and ailing. They had clasped him by the hand and told him... to keep on living.

Those three words would exist eternally within Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

“Keep on living....” he said softly, tears glistening on his cheeks. “You have to keep on living....

“Don’t die, Bruiser....” He gently rubbed the spot on the flower where the little creature's body bulged out slightly.

When he called it by name, the tiny thing seemed to recognize his aura, and moved slightly.

“Hang in there. You haven’t even seen the world yet! I’ve never even had a chance to see you. I want to take you to see everything in the cultivation world....

“Keep hanging in here!” Bai Xiaochun’s softly spoken words were filled with determination. He kept talking throughout the night, continuing to rub the bulge that was the little creature. He was doing the only thing he could; staying by the creature’s side, encouraging it, praying.

Dawn broke. Then it was noon, and evening. Eventually, the moon was shining up above....

The first day passed, and the struggling of the little creature in the Beastbirth Flower was getting weaker. However, it hadn’t given up. Its heterogeneous bloodline made it difficult to keep its body from falling to pieces, but it was trying hard.

Bai Xiaochun forgot about everything else. The only thing he cared about was the little creature in the Beastbirth Flower. He whispered to it, caressed it softly, and poured his heart and soul into encouraging it. He never stopped talking, and even began to send his own spiritual power into the flower. He wasn’t sure if it would do any good, but he tried anyway.

Gradually, the second day came and went. Then the third day, and the fourth....

Bai Xiaochun never rested. His eyes were soon completely bloodshot, and his spiritual power had long since begun to run dry. Every time the least bit of spiritual power built up within him, he would send it into the Beastbirth Flower.

That spiritual power was filled with his blessings, his sorrows, and with comfort. He never stopped talking, never stopped offering encouragement. Whenever the little creature started struggling, and began to wail in pain, Bai Xiaochun's soothing voice would cause it to calm down. However, despite all that, Bai Xiaochun was devastated to find that the tiny creature's aura was growing weaker and weaker, while the aura of death grew stronger and stronger.

"Bruiser," he murmured, "you know, back when I was young, when my dad and mom were still around, I wasn't very scared of dying.... In fact, I didn't even really know what death was….

"Once you're feeling better, I'll take you to see Uncle Li. He treats me really well, just like a father...." He began to tell stories about himself, about his past, about life in the village, and things about the sect.

Late into the night of the fourth day, the spirit beast guardians of the four mountains, and even Heavenhorn deep in the chasm, all sighed and looked away from Bai Xiaochun and the Beastbirth Flower. However, in the darkness of that night, there was a big black dog that appeared outside the honor guard station. It walked into the rear courtyard and sat down next to Bai Xiaochun. Expression one of grief, it looked at the little life inside the Beastbirth Flower, then reached out and licked the flower.

Another day passed. On evening of the fifth day, Bai Xiaochun was exhausted. To him, the past five days had left him feeling as tired as if he had ceaselessly concocted medicine for five months. And yet, he had no intention of giving up. He continued to offer comfort and encouragement. He never stopped talking. Unfortunately, the little creature only continued to weaken. Deep in the night of the fifth day, it suddenly struggled fiercely for a few moments, then started twitching. After a moment, it stopped moving, and the aura of death spread out to completely cover Bai Xiaochun and the black dog.

Bai Xiaochun placed his hand onto the spot where the tiny creature bulged out of the flower. Tears streaming down his face, he shouted, “Live! You have to live!

“When the Luochen Clan was trying to chase me down, ten people tried to kill me, but I kept on living. They tried to kill me, so I killed them! I even broke my own arm for a chance to stay alive! You have to do the same thing. Live! Keep on living!!!”

Even as he shouted, he poured spiritual power into the flower. A moment later, the motionless little creature trembled, and began to struggle again. As the moments passed, the struggling grew more intense, as if its desire to live were growing even stronger because of Bai Xiaochun’s encouragement.

Bai Xiaochun wiped the tears off of his face and shouted, “If you want to live, you have to fight for it! Take control of your body. Break out of that flower!”

The little creature began to struggle even harder, letting out little whimpering sounds as it did. Every time it struggled, it felt pain, and was left trembling. And yet, it didn’t give up. It was as if an intense willpower was supporting it, a willpower that continued to grow stronger, something that exceeded its desire merely to live. That power was the most important thing in its life.

“You’re the ultimate battle beast! We're gonna be partners for life. I made you, I raised you, and I'm not gonna let you die!!” By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s voice was hoarse from the yelling, and he almost seemed to have gone mad.

For the past five days, he had been offering encouragement to this little creature, and finally, it stopped whimpering. Instead, it let out a little roar. Although the sound of it was weak, it was still a roar. Simultaneously, its fading life force suddenly burned as hot as fire. It exploded majestically, and up above, clouds began to churn and seethe. It was as if the little creature’s willpower was allowing it to finally fight for its life again.

The fluctuations emanating out attracted the attention of others on the north bank. Numerous disciples were shocked, and the four astonished peak lords began to rush in the direction of the Beast Conservatory. It was the same with the ordinary disciples. Faces flickering, they raced over toward the Beast Conservatory as the life force in the Beastbirth Flower began to surge with power. As for the cloud cover up above, it was growing thicker by the moment.

The spirit beast guardians, Heavenhorn, and even many eyes from Mount Daoseed were watching. Even the shadowy, white-robed old man looked on, although no one could see him.

The fifth day passed, and the sixth day arrived. By this point, the roars of the creature in the Beastbirth Flower had reached a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering level. The energy surging out from the flower caused the exhausted Bai Xiaochun to stagger backward until he was leaning up against the wall of the courtyard. Even the big black dog was pushed back.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the side of the Beastbirth Flower was ripped open by razor-sharp claws that seemed capable of shredding even the air itself. Flames flickered around the claws, and anyone who was able to see them was completely shocked.

Then, the claws ripped the flower open even more, and finally... a little beast appeared!

He looked like a horse, a dog, a lizard, a crocodile, and a dragon!

His head had a long horn, and his back had a crest of white hair running down it. His body was covered with black scales, and he had sharp teeth. Currently, his eyes were tightly closed.

“That’s....” the white-robed old man up in midair looked on with a strange gleam in his eyes, his heart trembling. He had never imagined that the scrappy little creature would actually manage to stay alive. From the look of it, the creature had unlimited potential, and even the chance to increase its bloodline order!

Deep in the Ancient Beast Chasm, the Heavenhorn ink dragon suddenly opened its eyes, and the four spirit beast guardians trembled. All of the battle beasts on the north bank were shaking.

Everyone looking on was left gasping. Anyone with eyes could tell at a glance that this little beast... was far beyond ordinary!!

The four peak lords all gasped, and their eyes shone with strange light.

“It can unleash a magical technique from birth, and its claws emanate flames. That means... it has a sixth order bloodline! Heavens! A spirit creature with a sixth order bloodline has actually appeared in the Spirit Stream Sect!!”

“It's a future holy beast guardian of the north bank!!”

“Hahaha! The north bank has finally produced a spirit creature that surpasses the Heavenhorn ink dragon. A sixth order bloodline!”

People involuntarily rushed forward to get a closer look, blocking Bai Xiaochun’s view, as he was still leaning up against the wall. He didn’t care. He was just happy that Bruiser had made it through his ordeal. He chuckled.

“As long as you’re alive....”

The little beast’s eyes suddenly opened, and he glared around. They were charming eyes, filled with intelligence, as well as flickering black flames. Clearly, the creature was looking for something.

The first action he took after opening his eyes very significant, and although none of the disciples understood, the white-robed old man was mentally shaken.

“It’s looking for....”

Because of the crowd, the little beast was apparently unable to find what he was looking for, and started to get anxious. Seemingly angry, he began to let out little roars.

It was at that moment....

Bai Xiaochun pushed himself off the wall. Exhausted, but excited and happy, he threaded through the crowd toward the little beast.

“Bruiser....” he called softly.

Instantly, the little beast shivered, and then turned his glittering eyes toward the place where Bai Xiaochun was pushing through the crowd. The little beast's gaze softened, and a gleam of joy could be seen therein, as if he were looking at his closest relative.

He had found what he was looking for!

Apparently... the willpower which had sustained his final struggle to break out of the Beastbirth Flower, had been born from the desire to open his eyes and gaze upon the person who had warmly comforted him, who had soothed him during his difficult struggle! That was enough!

Such emotions, such willpower, exceeded the desire to simply live!

As of this moment, it was clear that to Bruiser, the only thing that mattered in this strange new world was Bai Xiaochun. No matter how many people were in between them, all Bai Xiaochun had to do was speak, and all those other people would disappear. To Bruiser, Bai Xiaochun was everything.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0137 awe-chapter-138

Up in midair, the white-robed old man sighed. He knew that this creature would never accept any other master, not for its entire life. Even if someone tried to force it to do so, its dependence on Bai Xiaochun was part of its blood, and would always be a powerful hindrance.

In this world, it would only have one master, for all eternity... Bai Xiaochun.

Even if Bai Xiaochun perished one day, the beast would never, ever forget him.

There was no bonding magic at work; the two of them had a deep relationship that surpassed any such bond. The white-robed old man shook his head and looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun, musing to himself that he deserved to have such a relationship. He had created this battle beast, and during the most dangerous period of its life, had stayed by its side, constantly encouraging it.

“Perhaps the only thing that could truly move a sixth order bloodline battle beast to accept someone is the kind of pure-hearted sincerity this kid has. He didn’t have any schemes, just a strong desire that the beast keep on living.

“I hope... that this kid can remain pure-hearted like this for the rest of his life. Hopefully no unexpected event changes that heart of his, years down the line.” The man turned to leave, looking somewhat melancholy as he thought back to how pure and inexperienced he had been when he took his first steps into the world of cultivation.

Eventually, the crowds began to depart. The female disciples were reluctant to leave; the little beast's wide, charming eyes were completely captivating. However, the beast didn’t spare a single glance for the female disciples.

The peak lords looked enviously at the newborn little beast, and then reluctantly left. Soon, the Beast Conservatory was quiet. Bai Xiaochun was left alone with the newly born beast and the big black dog, which had also been shoved off to the side by the crowd earlier.

Bai Xiaochun was grinning from ear to ear as he petted the little creature’s head. It had the body of a horse, the head of a dragon, black reptilian scales, the clawed feet of a pangolin, and even more shocking, its teeth emanated a seven-colored glow.

As for its solitary horn, it looked just like the Heavenhorn ink dragon’s, long and sharp.

If you looked closely, you could find things about it that were similar to other animals. Apparently, things had ended up exactly as Bai Xiaochun wanted; the best parts of countless battle beasts had formed together... into a completely unique and unheard-of living being.

“From now on, you are Bai Xiaochun’s battle beast! Don’t worry, I'm going to take you everywhere in the cultivation world!” Laughing, he petted Bruiser’s head, who lay there next to him, looking up at him with wide, charming eyes.

The black dog hurried over as well. It always had its guard up, and would never forget its hatred for Bai Xiaochun, but with Bruiser here, its expression was both protective and fearful at the same time.

Bruiser looked over curiously at the dog, and after a moment, seemed to accept it.

Time passed. During the following month, Bai Xiaochun frequently took Bruiser out of the Beast Conservatory on walks around the north bank. He would lead the way, and Bruiser would follow along, looking around curiously at his surroundings.

The black dog would trail behind in secret, watching protectively over Bruiser.

When passing disciples caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, and then Bruiser, their expression were those of amazement, jealousy, and other mixed emotions. Many of the female disciples were immediately taken in by Bruiser’s charming appearance.

Bruiser was a little nervous at first, and stuck very closely to Bai Xiaochun, who walked along with his hands clasped proudly behind his back.

“My little Bruiser is beloved by all,” he thought. “He gets that from me.” Clearing his throat, he took Bruiser to many of the crowded places on the north bank. The eyes of so many disciples on him caused his heart to swell with pride and happiness. Sticking his chin up, he took Bruiser here and there, until he was familiar with the whole north bank.

Gradually, Bruiser’s fear and nervousness faded away, and he began to frolic along happily when they went on their walks. However, he tried to keep his chin stuck up in the air, apparently in imitation of Bai Xiaochun. Even the look in his eye was one of loftiness and pride. He almost seemed to be showing off, as if he wasn’t afraid of anything in the world as long as Bai Xiaochun was there.

The sight of it left passing disciples quite shocked. Soon, it became apparent that Bruiser had a strange personality. When he realized people were looking at him, and if he was in a good mood, he would simply start stamping back and forth in irritation. If he was in a bad mood, he would bare his teeth and let out a fierce roar.

During the month that passed, Bruiser grew relatively slowly. However, in terms of his speed, power, and the strength of his bite, whenever he had a chance to show them off, people were completely shocked.

Actually, his speed was on equal footing with the black dog, and he was powerful enough to knock the 30-meter-long pangolin from the Beast Conservatory back a few meters. In terms of intelligence, he had already reached a shocking level. He was now as smart as a teenaged human, and in many ways, even smarter than that.

To Bai Xiaochun’s delight, Bruiser was adept at controlling fire. Furthermore, the flames which emanated from his feet grew more intense, especially when he was moving quickly. The flames were currently black, like the fires of the underworld.

Because of his fantastic nature, and his charming appearance and wide eyes, even the elders and peak lords doted on Bruiser. They would often send over gifts of spirit medicines and foods suitable for battle beasts.

However, as Bruiser grew older, Bai Xiaochun discovered something very odd. There was... an eccentric strangeness to his personality....

Currently, Xu Song was standing on the path up ahead of Bai Xiaochun, looking at Bruiser, who was roaring at him, all the scales on his body standing on end, black flames surging out beneath his feet. Xu Song was shocked; all he had done was look over at Bruiser, who had almost instantly lost his temper and seemed to be on the verge of biting him.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he said, annoyed, “your battle beast is....” But then he thought about how much the elders and peak lord doted upon Bruiser, and he backed up a few steps. Before he could even finish speaking, Gongsun Wan’er appeared, coming from the other direction. Bruiser, who had just been baring his fangs and brandishing his claws, looked over at Gongsun Wan’er, and his eyes glittered. Looking more charming than ever, he eagerly rushed over toward her.

He began to follow alongside her as she walked, yipping meekly and wagging his tail like a dog. When he brushed up against her leg, she smiled, then knelt down and picked him up in her arms. Bruiser’s eyes shone brightly as he buried himself in Gongsun Wan’er’s chest and wriggled around back and forth. Gongsun Wan’er laughed, and from the expression on Bruiser’s little face, he was clearly enjoying himself.

Xu Song’s eyes went wide, and Bai Xiaochun chuckled wryly. During the past half month or so, he had noticed that Bruiser would always bare his fangs at the male disciples, seemingly ready to bite them without hesitation if they touched him. However, when it came to the female disciples, he would always act very charming and couldn’t wait to be held in their embrace.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure why this was, and could only attribute it to Bruiser’s bloodline. The only explanation that made sense was that he had inherited this hobby somehow.

This behavior only continued to intensify, to the point where it was a bit preposterous. Bruiser would treat the male and female disciples completely differently. The male disciples were left speechless, and many of them even began to envy Bruiser. As for the female disciples, he had already rubbed up against more than half of them....

If that were all there were to the matter, it might not have been a big deal. But soon, Bai Xiaochun went into secluded meditation to break through to the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation. During that time, Bruiser's hobbies changed. The black dog would often take it to the places on the north bank where the female disciples would bathe, and they would look on in secret.

The black dog only found it mildly interesting, but Bruiser quickly grew addicted. Eventually, he became familiar with the bathing routines of the female disciples, and would excitedly rush out of the Beast Conservatory in the morning, and wouldn't return until the sky was dark.

It was hard to say how many female disciples he could see bathing during a full day....

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was focused on his secluded meditation, and the advancement of his cultivation base, so he didn't pay much attention to what was happening.

Another month passed, and Bruiser's habits changed yet again. In addition to being held in the close embrace of the female disciples, and secretly watching them bathe, he developed a new taste.... When watching the female disciples bathe, he would secretly take away their bras... and then hide them in a safe location.

Eventually, the female disciples realized that a lot of their bras were going missing, and it reached the point where virtually all of them had experienced such a thing.

Of course, Bruiser was very fast, and the black dog was also there to keep watch. Therefore, during its month of bra-stealing activities, not a single clue was left behind. Considering how cute Bruiser was, not a single female disciple ever suspected him.

“A sex maniac has appeared on the north bank! He specializes in stealing the female disciples’ bras!!”

“Dammit! It’s definitely some sex fiend. Junior Sister Sun has already lost ten bras!!”

“I already did some looking into the matter, and according to my calculations, several thousand bras have already gone missing. This person really has some unique taste. He isn’t destroying them, he's collecting them! Find him! We definitely have to find him!”

The situation with the missing bras got worse and worse. Eventually, the female disciples joined forces in their anger, and began to scour the entire north bank for clues. They even got assistance from the battle squirrel of one of the elders from Archway Peak, who was adept at performing searches. The entire north bank was under intense scrutiny, and even many male disciples joined the effort, filled with righteous indignation.

They searched all four mountain peaks, as well as many other locations. Eventually, someone suggested going to the Beast Conservatory.

Before long, a horde of disciples was making their way in that very direction.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was in the honor guard station, fully focused on his meditation, reveling in the wonderful feeling of his cultivation base rising.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0138 awe-chapter-139

It was at about this time that a hubbub of voices rose up outside the honor guard station. Confused, Bai Xiaochun pushed open the door, and saw a host of north bank disciples congregated outside of the spell formation.

He edged backward, his face flickering as he tried to figure out what he might have done to cause something like this. However, even after a long moment of thought, he had no clue what might have gotten the north bank into such a commotion.

Despite not being sure what was going on, he started to get nervous, and immediately called out “What are you people doing?!”

Instantly, the disciples locked their gazes on him standing there on the other side of the spell formation.

“Sect Uncle Bai, please open the spell formation so we can come inside and perform a search!”

“We’re not just searching here, we're searching everywhere on the north bank.”

“During the past month, a lot of female disciples have had their bras go missing. A sex maniac is on the loose! If you’re innocent, then there’s no reason not to open the spell formation and let us perform a search!”

“Hmph. Even if they’re hidden in a bag of holding, we have our ways of finding them!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed, and immediately felt a lot better. In fact, he even started to get a bit angry. Clasping his hands behind his back, he looked out at the north bank disciples.

For once, he knew that was on the side of right, and there was no way he would just give in to their demands so easily. Looking out with righteous anger, he said, “Quit making such a scene! I'm a Prestige disciple, the Junior Brother of the sect leader, I would never do something like that!”

“It was definitely you! In all the north bank, you’re the only person who could do something like this!”

“That’s right! Bai Xiaochun is the most suspicious of all. He already secretly took other disciples’ battle beasts away for contributions. That’s the perfect example to show how skilled he is! The Junior and Elder Sisters’ bras were all stolen without anyone detecting a single thing!”

Looking at the clamoring crowd, Bai Xiaochun chuckled coldly and then waved his sleeve, opening the spell formation.

“Very well, then. You may enter and perform your search. When you come up empty-handed in a few moments, I'll be very curious to see how you’ll compensate me for this little charade!” Bai Xiaochun felt utterly calm, and completely in the right.

His pure and unwavering confidence got many in the crowd to doubt their suspicious. After all, they had absolutely no evidence to support their claim; then, Bai Xiaochun suddenly opened the spell formation. At first they just stood there exchanging awkward glances, but then the female disciples whose bras had been stolen gritted their teeth and stepped inside. First they clasped hands toward Bai Xiaochun, then began to search around. One of the female disciples even procured a crimson squirrel from her bag of beast raising.

The instant the squirrel appeared, it let out a high-pitched shriek and burst into motion. Everyone in the crowd was taken aback. During the past several days of searching for the missing bras, they had relied on this special squirrel to help them. It had a very acute sense of smell, and would be able to detect even the slightest whiff of its target, even if it were in a bag of holding.

Moments ago, many in the crowd had been wavering in their determination, but now their eyes went wide, and they rushed into the area protected by the spell formation. Bai Xiaochun looked on blankly, truly confused by what was happening. He also followed along with the crowd, until the squirrel reached one of the side rooms in the honor guard station. When the door was pushed open, a whooshing sound could be heard as a cascade of brightly colored bras of all types spilled out, thousands of them....

“Bai Xiaochun!! Are you still gonna try to convince us you didn’t do it!?”

“So, it was you after all!!”

“Bai Xiaochun, y-y-you... you are so completely shameless!!”

As for the male disciples in the crowd, their rage burned particularly hot.

Bai Xiaochun gasped, and instantly began to shiver.

“Impossible!!” he shrieked.

Even as the words left his mouth, the female disciples' gazes came to fall upon him, and they seemed to contain bloody murder. Bai Xiaochun's scalp went numb, and he immediately tried to offer an explanation.

"I really didn't do it! I had no idea those were there...." Swallowing hard, he began to back up, feeling more wronged than ever. He really wasn't sure how to explain the situation. The female disciples were glaring at him furiously, and some of them were even starting to perform incantation gestures, as if they were going to attack him right on the spot.

"Dammit, what's going on!?" he thought, feeling like he was going mad. He had spent all his recent time in secluded meditation, focused completely on cultivation. He hadn't even left the honor guard station, nor had he even opened the door to the side room. It was at that point that he looked out and noticed Bruiser running along, holding a red bra between his teeth, looking intoxicated.

However, before he reached the spell formation, Bruiser suddenly stopped in his tracks. When he saw the mob that had formed, he quickly dropped the red bra.

At that same moment, countless eyes turned to look in his direction.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he immediately felt a headache coming on. After all, no other disciple could go in and out of the spell formation while Bai Xiaochun was in secluded meditation.

Not even the big black dog could do that. The only one who could freely enter or exit the spell formation was... Bruiser!

Bruiser began to tremble, not out of fear of the anger of the other disciples, but because he feared getting Bai Xiaochun mad. Bruiser seemed to be on the verge of tears as he prostrated himself on the ground and began to whimper.

Strange expressions appeared on the faces of the disciples in the mob. As for the female disciples, they almost couldn’t believe their eyes. Inside and outside the honor guard station, everything was completely silent.

After a long moment passed, one of the female disciples murmured, “Bruiser wouldn’t do something like this. He’s so cute! Someone must have put him up to it!”

Immediately, people began to echo her words.

“Yeah! Bruiser is way too charming and pure. Someone must have put a spell on him and forced him to do it!”

“It was Bai Xiaochun! He’s Bruiser's master!”

It didn’t take long before almost all of the female disciples were convinced, and looked over angrily at Bai Xiaochun. Although some people knew the truth, Bruiser was normally so cute, and currently looked so scared, that he had won over the hearts of all present.

However, the situation was simply too odd, so those disciples didn’t say anything. Instead of causing any further trouble, the disciples glared at Bai Xiaochun, then made their way off.

Soon, things quieted down again, and Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and stared up into the sky, looking like he was about to cry. Considering the blank look in his eyes, Bruiser knew that he had made a mistake; he quietly slunk over to Bai Xiaochun and started rubbing up against his legs.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and knelt down to pat his head. “Bruiser... you’re usually so smart. How could you have been so dumb this time? You, you... you can steal bras if you want, but you can’t screw me over in the process. I created you! I'm kind of like your father. You definitely can’t screw your father over!

“Okay, remember, don’t screw over the people who are close to you.... As for all those bras, hiding them in that room isn’t gonna work. You can’t hide stuff like that in your own home! Silly Bruiser! You have to be a bit smarter! Think things out ahead of time, and make sure you don’t get caught.” Bruiser bowed his head and whimpered a bit, aware of his mistake.

Seeing him act in such a way softened Bai Xiaochun's heart, and he decided not to reprimand him any further. With that, he returned to the honor guard station, a bit down, but just as focused on meditation and cultivation.

Outside in the courtyard, Bruiser lay there whimpering for a bit. But then, a fierce look appeared in his eyes as he glared off in the direction of the north bank disciples.

When the night was dark, he crawled to his feet and then vanished, headed out to the north bank.

The following morning, as the first rays of dawn were just beginning to spread out, a miserable shrieks could be heard coming from one of the disciples’ residences.

“Dammit! Who was it? Who stole my Beast Spirit Pill!? I had a hard time getting my hands on that pill! I was gonna give it to my battle beast to advance his level!!”

As soon as the cry rang out, more similar cries could be heard.

“Aghhh! My Myriad Spirit Grass! I’ve been growing it for five years, and now the only things left are the roots! Gone. All gone.... Somebody ate it up!”

“A thief! This is unbelievable! All of the battle beast food in my immortal's cave is gone! That was three years’ worth of food!”

“Heavens! It was just yesterday that I finally got that third order bloodline beast bone from Elder Li! I was going to extract the bloodline power from it, but now it’s gone. Gone!!”

Similar cries could be heard in both the Outer and Inner Sects. In the end, several hundred people were crying out in anger. Without exception, all of them were male, and all of them had been to the honor guard station the day before.

As they cried out in pain and anger, they suddenly caught sight of Bruiser, running along with a blood-colored bone in his mouth, crushing it to pieces.

A miserable scream rose up from one disciple. His hair was disheveled, and his eyes bloodshot as he wept, seemingly crazed.

“Noooo! I borrowed that third order bloodline beast bone from an Elder! Agghhhh. Don’t eat it....”

Crunch crunch.

Holding his head proudly, Bruiser was a blur that none of the disciples could even come close to catching. Speeding off into the distance, he continued to munch on the bone until it was gone. The disciple with the disheveled hair started to grow faint at the thought of Elder Li’s rage when he didn’t return the bone. With a howl of fury, he shot off after Bruiser.

He wasn’t the only one. Hundreds of enraged disciples began to chase Bruiser, and yet, none of them were fast enough. They could only watch with wide eyes as he sped toward Irispetal Peak. Even as the crowd chased after him, a cold snort suddenly echoed out like thunder.

The peak lord of Irispetal Peak, the old woman, appeared. Coldly staring at the hundreds of disciples, she said, “What shocking behavior! Look at all of you, scaring poor little Bruiser half to death! Seems to me you people need something better to do to occupy your time!”

The disciples shivered and clasped hands in greeting. As for Bruiser, he cowered behind the old lady, looking very charming with his wide eyes as he rubbed against her leg.

The disciples raged inwardly, but none of them dared to say a single thing. Their hatred for Bruiser continued to rise to new heights.

“So what if he ate a few things here and there?” the old woman continued. “Big deal! Whatever he ate, I’ll compensate for. Now get out of here and stop bullying Bruiser!” After giving the disciples a final glare, the old woman looked down kindly at Bruiser and pet him on the head. Bruiser responded by looking even more charming than usual. He even licked her hand like a puppy might.

The disciples could only grit their teeth in their anger. In their minds, they weren’t bullying Bruiser, he was bullying them!

However, considering that a peak lord was siding with him, there was nothing they could do. They could only swallow their anger and give up any thoughts of causing any trouble. Of course, their fury was quickly transplanted onto Bai Xiaochun.

“It’s all Bai Xiaochun’s fault. He’s the one who created this abominable battle beast!”

“This battle beast is repulsive! Fine. Steal bras. Pilfer our food. The female disciples are the same as the elders and the peak lords. They spoil that thing to death!”

In the middle of his meditation, Bai Xiaochun suddenly sneezed. Opening his eyes, he looked around for a moment before going back to his breathing exercises. As for his cultivation base, it was inching ever closer to the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0139 awe-chapter-140

Another month passed, and Bruiser's behavior only continued to get worse. The male disciples that had provoked Bai Xiaochun in the past were all going crazy, and yet, were completely incapable of doing anything about the situation.

That was around the time that Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base eventually entered the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Apparently, he had reached a barrier that would be very difficult to pass.

"The only thing left is Foundation Establishment!" he thought, taking a deep breath, his eyes shining with anticipation. Foundation Establishment was divided into a few different types: Mortalstring, Earthstring, and the legendary Heavenstring, all of which added different amounts of longevity, to be specific, 100 years, 200 years, and 500 years respectively.

Bai Xiaochun had never even considered the possibility of reaching Heavenstring Foundation Establishment, considering there was almost no chance of it happening. In the entire 10,000 year history of the Spirit Stream Sect, only a handful of people had ever reached Heavenstring Foundation Establishment, and had only done so by randomly acquiring some heavenstring energy.

"Generally speaking, most people reach Mortalstring, which requires a Foundation Establishment Pill. Earthstring Foundation Establishment requires earthstring energy.... Of course, even Earthstring Foundation Establishment is divided up into strong and weak. It all depends on the very moment of reaching Foundation Establishment, and how many Tideflows occur within one’s spiritual sea! At the very least there will be one, and at the most, nine!

“And then there’s my fleshly body power. I’m already at the point of being able to make contact with the first shackle. Whether I make a breakthrough with my Undying Gold Skin, or use the power of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture, I should be able to break through that shackle. If I break through with both of those methods, who knows how powerful I’ll be!?” From what Bai Xiaochun remembered, Foundation Establishment Pills could be purchased with merit points from the sect. They came at a hefty price, but considering how much he had saved up, he could afford them if he wanted. But he wasn’t willing to do such a thing. After all, Mortalstring Foundation Establishment, also known as Mortal-Dao, only added 100 years of longevity.

After some more thought, Bai Xiaochun produced a transmission jade slip and then sent a message to Li Qinghou asking for some more information about earthstring energy.

It didn’t take long before the jade slip lit up with soft light as Li Qinghou returned his message. Bai Xiaochun immediately sent some spiritual power into the jade slip, whereupon Li Qinghou’s voice began to echo in his mind.

“I’d originally planned to wait a bit longer before telling you this, but in three months, 150 people from the north bank and 100 people from the south bank, all of them Inner Sect disciples in the tenth level of Qi Condensation, will gather at the grand hall on Mount Daoseed.

“The reason is that the three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands will be opened. As for you, you will be going to the

Fallen Sword Abyss, where you will compete with everyone else to acquire earthstring energy, and then use it to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment. If you succeed, you will acquire an additional 200 years of longevity. That will be a major step for you as you pursue your dream of living forever!”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun as he looked at the jade slip, panting.

“Earthstring Foundation Establishment can add 200 years of longevity!!” His eyes glittered with longing for a moment, but then he hesitated. “Competing with everyone else will definitely involve fierce fighting....

“But that’s 200 years we're talking about!” He continued to struggle with the matter, his obsession with being able to live forever causing his eyes to rapidly become bloodshot.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only Chosen to be given advance notice about what was to come, so soon, the news about the three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands being opened spread throughout the north and south banks.

The three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands were the Fallen Sword Abyss, the Lone Hell Pocket Realm, and the Primordial Spirit Hollow. Once per sixty-year-cycle, they would be simultaneously opened, and that time was now at hand.

Of course, the Spirit Stream Sect wasn’t the only sect qualified to send people into the three Holy Lands. All four of the strongest sects in the cultivation world of the eastern Lower Reaches would send disciples. The Spirit Stream Sect was only one of those four major sects.

The Fallen Sword Abyss was considered the best of the three Holy Lands, with the Lone Hell Pocket Realm and the Primordial Spirit Hollow being secondary. The reason for the Holy Lands being ranked in that way was that, according to the legends, the Fallen Sword Abyss contained a strand of heavenstring energy.

These legends had been around for a long time, but on all the occasions in which the Fallen Sword Abyss had been opened, never once had anyone acquired any heavenstring energy.

The competition for earthstring energy would be a blood-soaked fight in which only the fittest survived!

The discussions about the three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands spread far and wide on both the north and south banks. All of the Inner Sect disciples in the tenth level of Qi Condensation were talking about it with complete and utter excitement.

“It’s definitely going to be bloody carnage in there. Of the people who qualify to compete for Earthstring Foundation Establishment, quite a few die.... By the way, I heard that for the first time, the four sects are all going to be formally competing against each other. The number of people from a given sect who succeed in reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment will affect how many people get sent in the next time.”

“Ah, this isn’t fair! The difference between Mortalstring and Earthstring is huge. Earthstring Foundation Establishment can totally crush Mortalstring. They’re on completely different levels.”

Of course, there were some who got nervous because of the stories about the violent and bloody fighting which went on inside. Some of them prefered the safety of Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment over the additional hundreds of years of longevity, and the glory of being able to crush people below them.

Three months later at dawn, the solemn tolling of bells could be heard on Mount Daoseed. The seven peak lords of the mountain peaks flew through the air with dignified expressions on their faces, each one of them followed by dozens of disciples.

Everywhere else in the sect, disciples looked up to watch the people flying through the air toward Mount Daoseed. All of those people were so well-known that the other disciples could identify them by name.

From the north bank came Beihan Lie, Xu Song, Gongsun Wan'er, Beihan Feng, Gongsun Yun, and in the lead position, surrounded by swirling black mist, Ghostfang....

A similar scene could be seen on the south bank, as the disciples of Green Crest Peak, Fragrant Cloud Peak, and Violet Cauldron Peak all looked excitedly up into the air. Xu Baocai was among them, eagerly clutching a notebook to record everything that was happening.

Shangguan Tianyou was clearly more powerful than he had been in the past. He looked like an unsheathed sword, glittering with blinding light as he flew along. Zhou Xinqi was surrounded by a swirling blue glow and a powerful life force.

There was also Lu Tianlei, who was like a thunderbolt that could rip apart the heavens. In addition to them were other long time Inner Sect disciples, all of whom wore solemn expressions as they followed the three south bank peak lords.

The elders of both banks, as well as other qualified disciples, were all discussing the matter.

“The north bank gets 150 people and the south bank gets 100. I wonder how many of them will rise to the top in the fighting with the other three sects, and eventually reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment? Of course, some of them will never return.... The path of cultivation is soaked with blood, and is ruled by the law of the jungle.”

“I heard one of the Senior members of my clan say that whenever the three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands are opened, there’s always blood and carnage. To some people, the main point isn’t reaching Foundation Establishment, it's killing the members of the other three sects. It’s like a war between the Four Great Sects that comes around once every sixty-year-cycle!”

“But why are we just sending our Chosen to be killed? I know that earthstring energy can’t be stored up and used later, but Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment is so much safer. It might be weaker, but at least there wouldn’t be so many deaths....”

“Hmph. If you have one generation filled with weaklings, then everyone after them will also be weaklings. If that happened, the Spirit Stream Sect would definitely be wiped out sooner or later!”

“None of the Four Great Sects will avoid the fighting, not as long as they have even one disciple who they think can reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment. If one generation of disciples is weak, then the sect's power in the area will weaken, and outer forces would become a big threat. It would cause a huge headache!”

“A perfect example is the Pill Stream Sect. Long ago, they avoided the fighting three times in a row. But then their overall battle prowess dropped. After that, powerful warlords rose up in the sect’s territory and started establishing their own little fiefdoms. Our Spirit Stream Sect even managed to occupy about twenty percent of their former territory. Their hand was forced, and after joining the fighting again, they managed to get some Earthstring Foundation Establishment disciples. Of course, a lot of other disciples died in the process, but at least they were able to get things back to the status quo.”

Soon, the disciples from both banks were landing outside the grand hall on Mount Daoseed, led by their respective peak lords. Everyone had very solemn expressions on their faces.

All of the disciples were aware that their next destination would be one filled with both opportunity, and bloodshed!

They looked around at each other, measuring each other up. Soon, everyone was shocked to find that one certain person was missing.

“Bai Xiaochun isn't coming?”

They weren’t the only ones to be surprised. The seven peak lords stood there thoughtfully, looking in the direction of the Beast Conservatory on the north bank. Li Qinghou’s expression was the same as ever. He was confident in his analysis of Bai Xiaochun, and was sure that although he was naughty, mischievous, and fearful of death, his obsession with living forever would win out in the end.

In the Beast Conservatory, Bai Xiaochun sat there listening to the bells ringing. After a long moment of thought, he gritted his teeth and rose to his feet. During the past three months, he had focused completely on cultivation. He had spent massive amounts of merit points to get over a thousand paper amulets, leaving him armed to the teeth. He had also worked hard to achieve a breakthrough with his Undying Silver Skin; unfortunately, although he made some progress, he never achieved the breakthrough.

His bags were packed, and he was ready to go. He refused to allow Bruiser to come along, as he wasn’t ready for such an event. Stepping onto the Golden Crow Sword, he shot through the air toward Mount Daoseed. On the way, he stopped by the Spirit Stone Pavilion, where he spent some more merit points on earthflame crystals, which he could use as a substitute for actual earthflame, and be able to concoct medicine anywhere he wanted.

At the moment, his eyes were completely bloodshot. Although he had made his decision quite some time ago, he always liked to be absolutely prepared. Therefore, he had spent a lot of time pouring through the ancient records, and had learned about how brutal and bloody the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands were. He also knew that it was a chance for the sects to show off their might to the others.

The more he came to understand the whole thing, the more his heart trembled. That was especially true when he read about how 800 years ago, only about ten disciples returned to the Spirit Stream Sect from the Fallen Sword Abyss. The brutality of that event left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

Of course, that was an isolated incident. According to the records, the barbarity of that instance 800 years in the past was because a terrifying Chosen rose up from the Blood Stream Sect. He was known as Master Limitless, and he crushed everything in his path. It wasn’t just the Spirit Stream Sect who suffered heavy casualties; all of the other three sects did. Virtually all of the disciples of that generation in the other three sects were wiped out, and that was how the Blood Stream Sect had surpassed the Profound Stream Sect to become the top force among the Four Great Sects.

As for that Master Limitless, he was now known as Patriarch Limitless of the Blood Stream Sect.

On the other occasions in which the three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands were opened, the casualties weren’t so horrific. At the very most, half of the disciples might die. Even for those who didn’t reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment, as long as they were careful, it was possible to make it out alive.

Even still, a casualty rate of fifty percent left Bai Xiaochun shaking in fear. He really wanted to pass up the opportunity, and simply settle for the safe bet of Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment and its extra hundred years of longevity.

However, his dream was not to live for an extra hundred years. He wanted... to live forever!!

“I want more than a hundred years. I want forever!” After looking through the ancient records, he left with bloodshot eyes, even more clear about how Foundation Establishment worked. The most telling factor was that from ancient times until now, not a single Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator had ever reached the Gold Core stage!

If he wanted to cultivate all the way to Gold Core, he had to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment!

Even the lowest level of the Gold Core stage added far more longevity than Foundation Establishment. Obviously, the higher one’s cultivation base, the greater one’s chances of living forever.

“I could avoid this situation, but a hundred years later... how could I possibly avoid dying? At that time, wouldn’t I regret not taking the chance to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment?” During the past three months, Bai Xiaochun had wrestled with the problem over and over again. In the end, he reached a state of bedeviled madness. Gritting his teeth, he finally made his decision.

“I’ll do anything to be able to live forever!!” he shouted as he stepped onto the Golden Crow Sword and shot toward Mount Daoseed. Shortly after the other disciples converged, he appeared.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0140 awe-chapter-141

Bai Xiaochun's arrival attracted quite a bit of attention. Everyone looked over at him, including Shangguan Tianyou, Zhou Xinqi, Lu Tianlei, Beihan Lie, Xu Song, Gongsun Wan’er, Gongsun Yun, Hou Yunfei... and Ghostfang!

An encouraging look slowly appeared in Li Qinghou’s eyes.

Bai Xiaochun hurried up to Li Qinghou, then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Li Qinghou could see how bloodshot his eyes were, and knew it must have been quite a struggle to convince himself to come.

“Stand behind me,” he said.

Bai Xiaochun straightened up and hurried over to stand behind Li Qinghou. Looking around, he caught sight of Hou Yunfei, whom he hadn’t seen since being transferred to the north bank. During the time they had been apart, Hou Yunfei participated in an Inner Sect trial by fire. After becoming an Inner Sect disciple, he benefited from the assistance of his clan, soaring all the way to the tenth level of Qi Condensation.

Their eyes met, and Hou Yunfei nodded encouragingly. Bai Xiaochun nodded back. There was no time for chatting, though, as the main doors of the grand hall were already opening.

As they did, Zheng Yuandong’s voice echoed out from inside.

“The origins of the Primordial Spirit Hollow are unknown. Long ago, before the existence of the Lone Hell Pocket Realm, it was the only location in the eastern Lower Reaches where earthstring energy gathered. Countless wars were fought outside the spirit hollow, until three powerful sects controlled it. When the Spirit Stream Sect rose to power, it came to be under the control of the Four Great Sects!

“The Lone Hell Pocket Realm suddenly appeared 10,000 years ago in the Hellwood Continent. It’s a barren wasteland without a single living thing inside other than the earthstring banebeasts. Many wars were fought over that location as well, until the Four Great Sects occupied it and chose to share it as the second of the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands.

“The Fallen Sword Abyss traces its origins back to 5,000 years ago, when an indescribably enormous sword fell from beyond the heavens. It is huge, larger than a hundred Spirit Stream Sects put together, and contains terrifying power. It pierced through the canopy above, plummeting down to stab into the ground near Mount Flamecrane, sending sword qi all the way down into the underworld. As for the body of the sword itself, it is permeated with earthstring energy. [1. This “Flamecrane” is a type of bird from Chinese mythology. I couldn’t find any good articles about in in English. According to the Baidu article I found, it represents an omen of imminent destruction. The name of the bird in Chinese “bi fang” supposedly comes from the sound of burning wood or bamboo. The bird somewhat resembles a red-crowned crane, except that it has one leg, blue feathers, red spots, and a white bill. Whenever it appears, it means that fiery destruction will soon occur.]

“Because of that, the inside of the sword is much like the other two Foundation Establishment Holy Lands; it is filled with countless earthstring banebeasts. Kill them to collect earthstring energy, and when you have enough, you can form it into an earthstring capture crystal, to summon the latent earthstring energy present within the Fallen Sword Abyss!

“According to the investigations and analyses of the Four Great Sects, when the sword fell from beyond the heavens, it absorbed a bit of Heaven-Dao aura, which means that there may be a bit of heavenstring energy within it!

“Of course, Heavenstring Foundation Establishment is also called Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!” At this point, Zheng Yuandong paused for a moment, and looked out at the crowd, his eyes sparkling as if with lightning.

“The path of cultivation is cramped and narrow; the only way to walk it is to tread upon countless corpses. Only then can you have a chance to make contact with... a supreme great Dao!

“During this Foundation Establishment trial by fire.... all of you must do your best to kill the disciples of the other three sects. After all, it is a trial by fire, but also a war between the four sects, and even more importantly, directly related to the destiny of the Spirit Stream Sect. I will reveal more to you about that upon your return!

“I have no doubt in my mind that the disciples of the other three sects will do their best to kill you. In the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands, the chance to reach Foundation Establishment is not presented to everyone! Resources are limited; this is a competition for a great Dao!” Zheng Yuandong swished his sleeve as his thunderous voice echoed out in all directions. All of the more than 200 Inner Sect disciples present responded with a confident cheer.

“This Foundation Establishment trial by fire will be presided over by the peak lord from Irispetal Peak, the peak lord from Violet Cauldron Peak, and Ouyang Jie from the Hall of Justice. They have already made all the necessary arrangements. 100 disciples will enter the Fallen Sword Abyss, while two groups of 75 will go to the Lone Hell Pocket Realm and the Primordial Spirit Hollow. And now, activate the grand spell formation which leads to the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands!”

Soon, intense rumbling sounds could be heard as a huge spell formation opened up, and the group of over 200 disciples slowly faded away. Outside of the spell formation, Li Qinghou stood there with an expression of anticipation and anxiety on his face. He felt like he was looking at a young eagle spreading its wings. Down below was a bottomless pit, and off in the distance, the sun was just beginning to rise.

Mount Flamecrane was located on the Righteouscraft Continent, and long ago, had risen as high as the heavens. Back then, it had been taller than any of the mountain peaks in the Spirit Stream Sect, and in fact, bigger than the entire Spirit Stream Sect in general.

But now, things were different. More than half of the mountain had been destroyed, and the lands stretching far and wide around it had all been reduced to a barren wasteland that filled nearly half of the Righteouscraft Continent.

Neither mortals nor beasts could survive in such conditions, and even cultivators who spent too much time there would eventually experience shocking deaths. They would spontaneously explode, whereupon streams of scattered sword qi would billow out from their destroyed corpses.

The reason for all of that was the enormous sword which had fallen from the heavens. It was an ancient sword, its surface carved with countless magical symbols, which were in varying states of erosion. The sword was stabbed halfway into the ground directly in front of Mount Flamecrane. Crevices spread out from the sword in all directions, the narrowest being a few meters wide, the largest being thirty or more meters across. The crevices themselves were pitch black, and pulsed with intense coldness.

The entire surface of the ground around the sword was covered by a glittering shield, which prevented anyone from entering.

The sword was enormous; even the portion of the blade that was visible, along with the hilt, rose up far higher than Mount Flamecrane. If the sword were compared to the size of a hand, then the mountain would be like an ant.

Of course, when you compared the cultivators to the mountain, the mountain was like the hand and the cultivators standing at its summit were like ants.

Two sects had already assembled at the top of Mount Flamecrane. One group contained 80 disciples, and the other, 100. Both were led by Foundation Establishment cultivators, who were currently engaged in idle chatting. The two groups of disciples, on the other hand, were staring at each other with open hostility.

On the left-hand side was the group of 80 disciples. They all wore white robes, the sleeves of which were embroidered with the image of a medicinal pill. Furthermore, the entire group emanated a medicinal aroma.

They were none other than the Pill Stream Sect!

Opposite them was the group of 100 disciples. They wore deep blue robes, and emanated profound cultivation base fluctuations. If you looked closely at some of the disciples, it was possible to see that certain parts of their bodies rippled and blurred in strange ways.

They were none other than the Profound Stream Sect!

Even as the two parties measured each other up, the clouds up above began to churn, and countless magical symbols appeared. At first, they flickered back and forth between the shape of a cauldron and the shape of a sword, but in the end, they resembled an enormous ink dragon, roaring at the top of its lungs.

The leader of the group from the Pill Stream Sect was a middle-aged woman. Looking up with glittering eyes, she murmured, “The Spirit Stream Sect is here.”

The cultivator leading the Profound Stream Sect was an old man with numerous oddly bulging protrusions on his face that gave him a very sinister appearance. The pupils of his eyes were vertical like a cat’s, and every time he blinked, anyone who was looking him would be filled with a very bizarre sensation. Currently, he was looking at the Spirit Stream Sect’s spell formation forming up above.

Before long, a beam of light shot down and landed in another area of Mount Flamecrane. More than a hundred people slowly materialized, with Ouyang Jie at the front. When the woman from the Pill Stream Sect and the old man from the Profound Stream Sect saw him, their faces flickered with surprise.

“Daoist Jackal!”

Ouyang Jie chuckled in a grating voice and then said, “Fellow Daoist Hai. Fellow Daoist Lin. Long time no see.”

After all of the disciples materialized, he waved his hand, dispelling the protective shield created by the spell formation. With that, he stepped forward.

As the Foundation Establishment cultivators began to confer, Bai Xiaochun rubbed his eyes and looked around, feeling a bit dazed. The sight of the enormous sword left him gasping. Looking up, he realized that he couldn't even see the end of the hilt; it disappeared into the clouds above. It was a very shocking sight indeed.

Light gasps could be heard around him as other Spirit Stream Sect disciples also looked up in shock at the huge sword.

It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun noticed that there were a lot fewer people around him. Two hundred had been gathered upon their departure, but now there were only a hundred people with him.

Zhou Xinqi was nowhere to be seen, nor was Lu Tianlei. However, Shangguan Tianyou, Ghostfang, Beihan Lie, Gongsun Wan’er, and Hou Yunfei were all present in the crowd, all of whom were currently studying the shocking sword in front of them.

It didn’t take long, though, before they all started to sit down cross-legged and produce jade slips. After pouring some spiritual power into the slips, they then began to study the disciples from the Pill Stream Sect and the Profound Stream Sect.

Likewise, the disciples from the other sects turned to look at the newcomers. Quite a few disciples were looking at Bai

Xiaochun. The expressions of the faces of the disciples differed from group to group when they saw Bai Xiaochun. Those from the Pill Stream Sect seemed skeptical, as if they didn't quite believe what they had heard about him. As for the Profound Stream Sect, they wore looks of derision.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised by all this. Moments later, Hou Yunfei approached and handed him a jade slip.

"You showed up late," he said quietly. "Before you came, the peak lords and Ouyang Jie explained the bitter struggle we'll face in more detail. They said that the best way to stay safe was to kill as many disciples from the other sects as possible. They also gave us jade slips with information about the Fallen Sword Abyss, as well as the disciples of the other sects. Presumably, the other sects have information about us too."

Bai Xiaochun took the jade slip and poured some spiritual power into it. The first thing he saw was a detailed introduction to the Fallen Sword Abyss.

The Fallen Sword Abyss was also called the Fallen Sword World, and had descended from above several thousand years in the past. More than half of the sword was buried deep in the earth. The sword itself formed a tilted world, the depths of which were filled with increasingly powerful earthstring beasts, whose bodies contained large amounts of earthstring energy.

The entrances to the Fallen Sword World were the numerous subterranean holes which had been punctured into the body of the sword during its fall.

Within the world of the sword, there were not only earthstring banebeasts formed from earthstring energy, there were also banesouls. Many people believed that they were the souls of people slain by the sword, who materialized due to the presence of the earthstring energy. Although they did not possess the same battle prowess they had before death, they were still dangerous. Thankfully, they weren’t intelligent, and wouldn’t take the initiative to attack.

When Bai Xiaochun read about that, he took a deep breath and resolved to pay close attention to the banesouls. As far as he was concerned, they were basically the same thing as evil ghosts.

The jade slip also provided detailed information about earthstring energy. Essentially, there were two types of earthstring energy. One was the type in the banebeasts. When a banebeast was killed, it would release some faint earthstring energy, which could be collected into a Dao bottle and transformed into an earthstring capture crystal. That crystal was like a key which could unlock the method to collecting the second type of earthstring energy. The truth was that ninety-nine percent of the earthstring energy was fused with the world itself, and couldn't be collected directly. It had to be summoned!

The amount of earthstring energy in the world was limited. Upon reaching Foundation Establishment, a certain number of spiritual sea Tideflows would occur depending on the latent talent possessed by a given individual. Because of that, the earlier one reached Foundation Establishment, the better. Every person who actually reached Foundation Establishment would reduce the total amount of earthstring energy within the Fallen Sword World. Generally speaking, unless some incredible disciple came along who achieved eight Tideflows, there would be enough earthstring energy for thirty people to reach Foundation Establishment.

Those who reached Foundation Establishment sooner rather than later had a huge advantage. If someone was too slow, it would become difficult to absorb enough earthstring energy to cause a Tideflow, thus making it impossible to reach Foundation Establishment.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0141 awe-chapter-142

After finishing with the introduction of the Fallen Sword Abyss, Bai Xiaochun felt more than ever that the place was profoundly dangerous. Frowning, he went on to peruse the numerous images of the various disciples from the other three sects. As he did, he would occasionally look up to identify that disciple within the crowd and make a quick comparison.

The more he learned about the disciples of these sects, the more jumpy he got.

“Zhao Rou from the Pill Stream Sect, adept with illusion forms. She once simultaneously fought three disciples in the same cultivation stage, and slaughtered them all! Wow, so incredible! Her abilities seem on par with Gongsun Wan’er’s illusion magic.” Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then looked furtively over at a young woman in the Pill Stream Sect group. She was incredibly beautiful, with soft, supple skin. Currently, she was staring into the eyes of Gongsun Wan’er; clearly, the two of them were already measuring each other up.

“Lei Shan from the Profound Stream Sect, a body refinement cultivator with a Lightningflame Profound Clone. Incomparably powerful, with exquisite magical techniques. He was once chased down by a Foundation Establishment cultivator, but survived for seven days without being killed. Is suspected to possess a Firespirit body, and has extraordinary healing abilities.” After reading the description, he looked over at the Profound Stream Sect disciples and quickly spotted Lei Shan. He was a burly, muscular young man, who was sitting there cross-legged, lightning and flame swirling around him. He looked impressive to the extreme. Seemingly sensing Bai Xiaochun’s gaze upon him, he looked over and smiled viciously, his eyes flickering with killing intent.

“He’d be a good opponent for Lu Tianlei,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “They both love their lightning.” Looking away, Bai Xiaochun continued on with the information in the jade slip.

“Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect, their number one Chosen of the current generation. Relatively unknown half a year ago, whereupon he suddenly rose to fame. Adept with the Dao of poison, and a decisive killer. Successfully cultivated the Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron, and has power that exceeds the peak of Qi Condensation. Very difficult to match. Has only fought two true battles. In one, he slaughtered eight rebel cultivators, all of them in the great circle of Qi Condensation. He wasn’t even harmed during the fighting. In the other battle, he destroyed a defensive treasure comparable to the Foundation Establishment level, and killed a spy sent by the Spirit Stream Sect.” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he quickly identified Fang Lin in the crowd, a young man with an expressionless face.

“Nine-Isles from the Profound Stream Sect. The first Chosen in the Profound Stream Sect in the last 3,000 years to successfully cultivate the Exterminating Obliteration Technique. Supposedly, that technique can obliterate all life forms, and leaves nothing behind in its wake. It creates obliteration threads that not even Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivators can match up to!” Scalp tingling, Bai Xiaochun looked over and caught sight of a cold-faced young man sitting there in the crowd. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure if he was seeing things or not, but it seemed like he had faintly visible magical symbols surrounding him that formed something like chains.

Just looking at him for a few moments caused Bai Xiaochun's eyes to hurt, and his vision to begin to fade. He quickly looked away from the terrifying young man. It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun realized that there were descriptions of almost all of the disciples from the Pill Stream Sect and the Profound Stream Sect. However, the information on the Blood Stream Sect disciples only had two entries.

"Xu Xiaoshan from the Blood Stream Sect. Ordinary talent, but a direct descendant of the founding patriarch of the Blood Stream Sect. Incredibly high position, silkpants personality. Possesses endless magical items!

"Song Que from the Blood Stream Sect. Number one Chosen, sometimes called Ascendant Limitless. Closely resembles Master Limitless. No details about his techniques, but in one heaven-defying battle, he killed a Foundation Establishment cultivator while he was only in Qi Condensation. An unprecedentedly dangerous threat to all Qi Condensation disciples. Special reward for killing him!" The first entry among the Blood Stream Sect disciples wasn't very impressive, but the second caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp, and his eyes to open as wide as saucers.

"Killed... killed a Foundation Establishment cultivator?" Bai Xiaochun's heart trembled with disbelief. After some thought, he decided that Song Que would be the perfect opponent for Ghostfang. As for his own poor little life, he most certainly wouldn't throw it away by taking him on.

The terrifying nature of the disciples from the other sects was difficult to accept. Then, his heart suddenly trembled.

“Do the other three sects’ jade slips have information about me? I wonder what they say?” As his curiosity grew, he was just considering trying to find a friendly disciple from one of the other sects to trade jade slips with when suddenly, a wave of pressure descended from above.

The sky turned completely blood red as… the Blood Stream Sect arrived!

Their spell formation was very different from the Spirit Stream Sect’s. A shocking, blood-red severed hand appeared up above, blotting out the sky and obscuring the sun. Everything up above became completely crimson.

Shockingly, in the palm of the severed hand was a huge eye, completely bloodshot, and coldly bizarre to behold. The eye blinked, and all of Mount Flamecrane trembled. Moments later, a group of over a hundred figures began to materialize in a fourth location at the top of the mountain.

As they became visible, more pressure weighed down from above. Apparently, if anyone dared to launch a sneak attack at this moment, the enormous severed hand would descend with destructive power to destroy the ambushers.

Heaven and earth shook violently as the Blood Stream Sect appeared. They had the largest group of any of the three sects, a total of 121. Without the Foundation Establishment expert who was their leader, they had brought a total of 120 disciples.

They all wore long red robes, and had icy expressions on their faces. They all seemed ready to kill at any moment, and looked at the disciples of the other sects the way that wolves will look at sheep.

Each and every one of the Blood Stream Sect disciples seemed fierce to the extreme, with intensely murderous auras. None of them seemed to trust each other, either. As soon as they materialized, they edged away from each other and then sat down cross-legged to meditate.

The disciples of the Pill Stream Sect seemed shaken, except for Zhao Rou and Fang Lin, whose eyes glittered with interest and vigilance.

The Profound Stream Sect disciples had a similar reaction. Other than the Chosen disciples, everyone trembled at the intimidating sight of the Blood Stream Sect.

Gasps could also be heard among the Spirit Stream Sect disciples. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he instantly thought back to the introductions he had just read.

The Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect couldn’t be more opposed in their philosophies. The Blood Stream Sect was ruled by the law of the jungle, and the threat of brutal violence and even death constantly hung over the heads of their disciples. They were almost a devilish sect, and the disciples who rose through the ranks were all brutal and merciless.

“What a bunch of devils....” Bai Xiaochun thought, swallowing hard. “They even allow disciples to kill each other. How terrifying! The Spirit Stream Sect is definitely way better!” Resolving to be very careful around the Blood Stream Sect, he began to look for the two faces he recognized from the descriptions.

Obviously, the person to watch out for most was the heaven-defying Chosen named Song Que, who had killed a Foundation Establishment cultivator. It didn’t matter how he’d accomplished such a task, the mere fact that he’d succeeded showed how terrifying he was.

It didn’t take long to find him. He was a young man with ordinary features, but who radiated intense coldness. He wore different garments than his fellow disciples. His were not pure crimson, but instead, a darker magenta color. When he sat down cross-legged to meditate, not a single disciple dared to sit within three meters of him.

His murderous aura was intense to the extreme, and vastly surpassed all of the disciples around him. It even seemed to physically distort the air around him.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun spotted Song Que, Song Que looked back at him, as if he had been waiting to lay eyes on him. Their gazes met, and Bai Xiaochun was instantly filled with such terror that he almost wanted to flee in the opposite direction. It was the same feeling he had experienced when he was being chased through that nameless jungle by the murderous Chen Heng.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0142 awe-chapter-143

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and looked away to try to find Xu Xiaoshan.

He was actually the easiest to identify. He was extremely handsome, and had a very proud expression. He seemed to the be type of person whose chin was perpetually stuck up into the air, as if there were not a person in the world who was worthy to look him in the eyes. His silkpants personality couldn’t be more obvious.

There were even two beautiful female disciples who attended to him.

One of them was currently massaging his shoulders, and another was peeling fruit which she then placed in his mouth.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but feel a little bit envious. Around this time, Bai Xiaochun noticed that a lot of the Blood Stream Sect disciples were doing the same thing that Song Que had done; they were staring at him with cold gazes.

Unlike the skepticism of the Pill Stream Sect or the arrogance of the Profound Stream Sect, the looks given by the Blood Stream Sect were fear-inspiring and filled with killing intent.

Bai Xiaochun felt his mouth and throat going dry. There seemed to be something odd about the gazes of the Blood Stream Sect disciples, and Bai Xiaochun continued to grow more and more curious about what the other disciples’ jade slips said about him.

The cultivator leading the Blood Stream Sect was an old man in a long red robe with crimson hair. His face was white, and he had a bit of a hunchback. His eyes were sinister to the extreme, and as he glanced over the crowd present, he licked his lips.

Shockingly, his tongue was not the tongue of an ordinary person. It was forked like a snake’s, and caused all the disciples who saw it to shiver in fear.

Ouyang Jie and the two cultivators named Hai and Lin ceased their chatting and looked over at the Blood Stream Sect. When they saw the snake-tongued old man, Hai and Lin gasped. As for Ouyang Jie, his expression turned very serious.

“Master Snakescale,” Ouyang Jie said in a somewhat unfriendly tone of voice. “The Blood Stream Sect is late.”

The snake-tongued old man blinked, then forced an insincere smile onto his face. Eyes glittering with murder, he looked at Ouyang Jie and said, “Heh heh. I'm not late. You people just got here early.”

Apparently the gazes of both men contained some vision-related divine ability, which caused an odd, soundless rumbling to build up between the two of them. A moment later it shattered, and Ouyang Jie let out a grunt. Face a bit pale, he swished his sleeve and walked back to stand in front of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

As for the snake-tongued old man, his eyes glittered, and his qi and blood surged within him. He also fell back a few paces, and when he looked up, his eyes shone with a strange light.

“Ouyang, you old codger, after all these years, you’ve made quite an improvement with your cultivation base. Well, there will be time for reminiscing later. Now that the Blood Stream Sect has arrived, let’s open the Fallen Sword Abyss. It's time for the trial by fire!” With that, he waved his hand, causing a fragment of jade to appear that seemed to have come from a pendant. The fragment instantly flew out and hovered in the air between the forces from the four sects.

Hai and Lin exchanged a glance, and then produced similar jade pendant fragments. Ouyang Jie did the same. Instantly, the four fragments flew together and formed a whole jade pendant.

Glittering light filled the air, and moments later, the glowing shield sealing the area around the giant sword began to open up. From the look of things, after enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, it would be possible to enter the area.

All of the Qi Condensation disciples were paying close attention to the goings-on. Even as Bai Xiaochun studied the situation, Ouyang Jie’s voice was transmitted into the ears of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

“There are more than forty entrances to the world of the sword. Each one can accommodate no more than ten people. The first battle you will fight will be to enter the sword itself. Ambushes on the inside have been known to occur, so do your best to stick together!

“Remember what I told you before. If you meet disciples from other sects, don’t be soft-hearted! To protect yourself, kill them if you can. Collect the earthstring energy into your

Dao bottles and form the earthstring capture crystal as quickly as possible. Then begin to summon the surrounding earthstring energy from the rest of the Fallen Sword World!”

Even as Ouyang Jie gave his final explanations to the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, the Foundation Establishment cultivators from the other three sects were doing the same thing.

Ouyang Jie waved his right hand, and a hundred little blue bottles flew out into the hands of the disciples.

“These are your Dao bottles!” By this time, rumbling sounds were echoing out as the shield preventing access to the crevices in the ground opened fully, leaving a gap of roughly nine meters through which the disciples could enter.

By entering that gap, it was possible to go into the underground passages and into the depths of abyss, where one could find entrances leading into the world of the sword itself.

“This whole area is under the control of the Four Great Sects. That, coupled with the oversight of the sects’ patriarchs, means that no Foundation Establishment cultivators will be able to enter the world of the sword. Remember, you cannot stay inside for very long. The Holy Land will only remain opened for three months. After that time period expires, whether or not you have succeeded, you will have to leave. I will pull you out from the outside if I have to.

“Another thing. Although nothing extreme will happen that is outside of the purvey of expectation, for generations now, the patriarchs of the Four Great Sects have maintained four teleportation formations to evacuate you in case any emergency occurs. Based on the types of techniques you cultivate, the formations will identify you and teleport you back to the sect, or at least to the same continent.

“Of course, no amount of fighting and killing between disciples will trigger the teleportation formations! Finally, whether or not you succeed in reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment, I truly hope that all of you… make it back alive!” As he looked out over the disciples, Ouyang Jie’s usual cold demeanor softened a bit, and his expression even looked a bit encouraging. That was especially true when he looked at Bai Xiaochun and Ghostfang. When he looked at them, his eyes glowed with keen anticipation.

Seeing that the entrance was now open, the Blood Stream Sect immediately began to fly in that direction.

Among the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, Ghostfang was the first to leap into action, followed by Shangguan Tianyou and the other Chosen.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and then rapidly produced eight leather coats from his bag of holding. As he flew along, he also pulled out a big black wok, which he put on his back. Eyes shining with determination, he gritted his teeth and flew through the entrance. Of course, he didn’t go alone; he made sure to follow along at the back of the group of Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

Soon, the disciples of the Four Great Sects had vanished into the crevices. Ouyang Jie, the snake-tongued old man, and the cultivators named Hai and Lin all exchanged glances, and then sat down cross-legged around the entrance, looking around vigilantly as they stood guard.

There were many crevices leading underground, some large, some small, and the Spirit Stream Sect disciples didn’t all stick together. Ghostfang, Beihan Lie, Gongsun Wan’er, and some of the other Chosen chose to go alone.

The rest of the disciples split up into two groups, one made up of north bank disciples, and the other made up of south bank disciples. The forces from the Pill Stream Sect and the Profound Stream Sect acted similarly. However, the disciples from the Blood Stream Sect didn’t seem to have much trust amongst themselves, and either acted alone, or split up into groups of two or three.

Bai Xiaochun looked around cautiously as he followed the south bank disciples into the depths. As soon as he was underground, he could sense the pulsing coldness rising up from below. It seemed to want to pierce into his body, to freeze his qi and blood. However, he was wearing too much clothing, making it impossible for the cold to reach him....

The further down they got, the colder it became. Thankfully, they weren’t very far from the surface. Combined with the level of their cultivation bases, they weren’t in any harm.

Soon, the south bank disciples noticed that Bai Xiaochun was in the very back, and strange expressions appeared on their faces. However, those expression quickly transformed into smiles of joy. After all, with Bai Xiaochun there, they felt a lot safer. Although they were all in the tenth level of Qi Condensation, and very proud of that fact, they knew that Bai Xiaochun was far more powerful than them in every way.

Soon, they began to make room for him, stepping off to the side and clasping hands in greeting.

“Greetings Sect Uncle Bai!”

“It’s the just and righteous Sect Uncle Bai! He’s not like Shangguan Tianyou and those others who went off on their own. He’s sticking with us!”

“Now that's what the south bank Chosen should be like! Sect Uncle Bai, it’s me, Zhou Youdao! Do you still remember me? You really got me good in that acid rain incident....”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the group parting way to let him up to the front, and was initially shocked. Actually, he had hoped to find a bit of safety by remaining in the back of the crowd. But after hearing how everyone was talking to him, he blinked and then cleared his throat. Sticking his chin up, he assumed the posture of someone of the Senior generation.

“Hahaha! None of you have a thing to worry about. With an important person like myself here, no one will dare to cause any problems for you!”

Delighted, the other disciples clustered around Bai Xiaochun, especially Zhou Youdao from Violet Cauldron Peak, who was all smiles.

Hou Yunfei ended up next to Bai Xiaochun. Considering his current getup, the fact that he was acting like someone from the Senior generation left Hou Yunfei chuckling. However, he couldn’t forget everything that had occurred with the Luochen Clan.

“Good luck, Xiaochun,” he said quietly. “You’re definitely going to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment!”

“I hope so too,” Bai Xiaochun replied. Looking around to make sure no one was listening, he leaned over with a scowl and said, “Hey, do you think the other disciples did this on purpose...? I originally wanted to stay in the back. How come I ended up in the front all of a sudden?”

A strange expression appeared on Hou Yunfei’s face, and he coughed lightly. For some reason, he felt that whenever Bai Xiaochun was around, no matter how solemn or dangerous the situation was, it would somehow become bizarre and amusing....

“Ah well, I can let it go.” Bai Xiaochun continued. “After all, I'm a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. Back on the south bank, I did drag these disciples into some bad situations with my pill concocting, so for now, I’ll just cut them some slack!” Sticking his chest out and looking very much the hero, he proceeded along as quickly as his cautious and nervous heart would let him.

Elsewhere in the subterranean crevices, disciples from the other sects went along alone, or in groups of between three to five. Any of them who saw the larger group of a few dozen would immediately avoid it. Even those who considered themselves to be superior would look at them coldly and then move on as quickly as possible.

Soon, the group caught sight of the body of the sword, and one of the gaps that led inside. However, there were already two beams of light shooting toward the gap.

Bai Xiaochun immediately decided to move on, but before he could, the surrounding Spirit Stream Sect disciples excitedly began to perform incantation gestures. In the blink of an eye, numerous magical techniques were bearing down on the two disciples from the other sects.

Both of them were from the Blood Stream Sect, and as soon as they saw the incoming magical techniques, their faces flickered, and they tried to dodge out of the way. Unfortunately, they weren’t quite quick enough, and were sent tumbling backward, blood spraying out of their mouths.

Then they fled, glaring hatefully at the Spirit Stream Sect the whole time.

Bai Xiaochun was pleasantly surprised that they'd managed to secure one of the gaps by means of superior numbers. Of course, considering his status, he simply cleared his throat and let the other disciples enter the gap ahead of him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0143 awe-chapter-144

There was no way to ensure that you wouldn’t be ambushed after entering. One could only rely on one’s skills and abilities to stay safe. Jade slips could not be used to send messages to those on the outside either. However, if several people from one sect all entered at the same time, they would be safe from anything except a brutal, large-scale ambush.

After four disciples entered the opening, Hou Yunfei chose to go in. Just before stepping inside, he asked a favor of Bai Xiaochun.

“If anything unexpected happens to me inside, please take care of my clan Junior Brother, Hou Yunqing.” Hou Yunqing was one of the most important younger clan members, although he wasn’t a member of the Spirit Stream Sect, but rather, had stayed in the clan to further his cultivation.

Bai Xiaochun quickly comforted Hou Yunfei and told him not to be so depressing. Then he furtively handed him a paper talisman. Hou Yunfei was initially startled, but after looking at the talisman for a moment, was quite moved. With a final nod to Bai Xiaochun, he stepped into the entrance.

As soon as he disappeared, the gap went dark, indicating that it was no longer possible to use it as an entrance. Bai Xiaochun was a bit worried about Hou Yunfei, but considering the entrance had closed, there was little more to be done. With that, he led the group onward.

They proceeded along for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, chatting and laughing about Bai Xiaochun’s antics on the south bank. They also talked about their hopes and ambitions for the future. When Bai Xiaochun slapped his chest and told them that his dream was to live forever, they all chuckled. Zhou Youdao loudly declared that his dream was to become a patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect.

They were on the brutal and deadly path to Foundation Establishment, but as of this moment, they were able to relax slightly. With Bai Xiaochun in the lead, they didn’t suffer any setbacks. Any gap they caught sight of was quickly taken over.

“Get him, boys!” Bai Xiaochun would cry.

“Hey, this place belongs to us!”

“Buzz off, this place is ours!”

“Well, what’s this? How dare you glare at me? Get him, boys!”

Booms rang out constantly. At the same time, the number of Spirit Stream Sect disciples grew smaller and smaller. Every time one of them entered one of the gaps, they would express deep gratitude toward Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, the fact that the disciples would leap into action at the simple wave of his hand left Bai Xiaochun feeling very moved.

“So, this is what it feels like to be Chosen. No wonder so many people want to be one.” Even as he sighed about the matter, they approached another area with gaps in the sword. Unexpectedly, there was a large group of people fighting each other in the area. Even more shocking, there were a total of three gaps visible, and six powerful Blood Stream Sect disciples were holding them against nine disciples from the other two sects.

At the moment, the fighting had reached a deadlock. When Bai Xiaochun saw what was happening, his eyes glittered, and the remaining dozen or so Spirit Stream Sect disciples behind him all started to get excited. Without any further hesitation, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Hey, this place belongs to us!”

The Blood Stream Sect disciples had been carrying out a mission for their sect to guard this location for as long as they could. They were already exhausted, so when they saw so many people from the Spirit Stream Sect arriving, their expressions flickered, and yet they didn’t flee. Instead, they vanished into the gaps.

The surrounding disciples from the Pill Stream Sect and the Profound Stream Sect were just about to charge into the entrances when they were bombarded by magical techniques and divine abilities, shoving them back. A moment later, Bai Xiaochun and the other Spirit Stream Sect disciples were blocking the way.

Aware that they had the advantage of numbers, Bai Xiaochun proudly said, “Humph! Be good little disciples and buzz off! Lord Bai is in a good mood today, so he won’t cause you any further trouble!”

The faces of the disciples from the other sects twitched.

“It’s him again!!”

“His name is Bai Xiaochun. What a villain! This is the third time he’s snatched an entrance from me!”

“Dammit! This is the second time for me. If it weren’t for him, I’d already be in the world of the sword!”

Because the group consisted of people from different sects, they were reluctant to join forces. Besides, even if they did, they would still be outnumbered by the Spirit Stream Sect. Eyes blazing with rage and helplessness, they watched as the Spirit Stream Sect disciples vanished into the three gaps.

Feeling very pleased, Bai Xiaochun watched five disciples enter the first gap before it went dark. Three people vanished into the second gap. As far as he was concerned, he was performing a great service for the sect.

As of this point, his mission was accomplished. Clearing his throat, he joined the final five Spirit Stream Sect disciples as they approached the third entrance. The surrounding disciples from the Pill Stream Sect and the Profound Stream Sect looked on, aware that by this point, it was too late to do anything about the situation.

Besides, even if the gap didn't go dark after the Spirit Stream Sect entered, they still wouldn't dare to enter for fear of an ambush on the other side.

Just as they were about to depart to look for another gap, their eyes widened, and their jaws dropped in shock. Then, cold, murderous smiles appeared on their faces.

Just now, when the fifth Spirit Stream Sect disciple entered the passageway, and Bai Xiaochun attempted to step in... it went dark.

“No way!!” Bai Xiaochun said, astonished. As he was shoved roughly out of the entrance, he swallowed and looked over his shoulder. There stood the group of disciples from the other sects, eyes flashing menacingly as they slowly walked toward him.

Each and every one was in the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation, and in their own sects, they were Chosen who everyone looked up to. Although they weren’t the type who other disciples despaired of ever surpassing, they were still far beyond ordinary in terms of their natural talent.

“Why don’t you go in, Bai Xiaochun? Hurry up, step into the entrance.”

“Yeah. If you don’t, we’ll help you. Maybe if we cut you into pieces, then you’ll fit in.”

“Hahaha! You’re finally gonna get what you paid for. You and your gang robbed me of three entrances. Now what are you gonna do?!” Cold laughter and murderous auras spread out to fill the area. By this point, Bai Xiaochun was a common enemy that all the disciples hated.

He took a deep breath, and as the group prepared to attack, he smacked his bag of holding, producing a fistful of paper talismans which he slapped down all over himself. Instantly, blinding light radiated out as Bai Xiaochun created a 60-meter-wide world of brightness!

The popping sounds of shields being summoned turned into a deafening cacophony that filled the entire area.

The other disciples’ eyes went wide, and their minds reeled. They almost couldn’t believe what they were seeing. Bright, multicolored light filled a 60-meter-wide area as more than a hundred shields appeared. All of the disciples’ scalps were tingling in shock; this was something the likes of which they had never seen in their entire young lives.

“How... how many talisman shields is that?”

“Heavens! How rich is this guy? Dammit! Even if we had ten times as many people here, we wouldn’t be able to break through those shields!” Trembling on the verge of madness, the disciples stared at Bai Xiaochun with increasing astonishment.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there, chest puffed out, hands clasped behind his back, chin stuck up, expression somewhat melancholy, like a lonely hero....

“Very well, you bunch of bullies, bring it on!” he said loudly. “Lord Bai is gonna fight you to the death!” From his tone of voice, it really seemed like he was ready to fight to the death.

Even as the words left his mouth, the Protomagnetic Wings popped out of the big black wok on his back, and he blurred into motion, slamming into the closest disciple, a long-faced young man from the Profound Stream Sect.

More precisely, Bai Xiaochun didn't slam into the young man; his shields did. A full 60 meters away from Bai Xiaochun, a miserable shriek echoed out, and the young man was sent flying backward for some distance before he managed to grind to a halt. Wiping the blood from his mouth, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun’s shields, then sighed and left sullenly.

There was really no other option... even he knew that he couldn't single-handedly break through Bai Xiaochun’s shields. Draining his energy in such a way would be pointless, and would only delay his ability to enter the world of the sword.

Everyone else was completely shaken by what they saw. Feeling completely helpless when it came to Bai Xiaochun, they began to disperse, fleeing in every direction at top speed.

Considering that there wasn’t even an entrance to struggle over, none of them were inclined to fight Bai Xiaochun to the death.

“Hey, don’t run! I'm ready to fight till the bitter end! You bunch of bullies! Get back here!” Bai Xiaochun continued to call out at the top of his lungs, but it only caused the other disciples to move more quickly.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun was alone, standing there blinking. Although surviving the combined attack of the enemy disciples had wasted some time, staying on track toward Earthstring Foundation Establishment was the most important thing.

With that, he began to pull the paper talismans off and put them back into his bag of holding. Most of them had only burned through half of their charge, and thus, could still be used later.

Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and swished his sleeve like a lonely hero.

“Bai Xiaochun is not to be trifled with!”

With that, he flickered into motion, making his way down through the cracks and crevices as he tried to find another gap leading into the huge sword.

Of course, when it came to entering the sword world earlier or later, there were pros and cons to both.

Those who entered sooner would be able to start killing the earthstring banebeasts sooner, and begin collecting the earthstring energy. However, those people would find themselves higher up in the world of the sword, where the banebeasts didn’t have much earthstring energy in them. The banebeasts further down in the world of the sword could have ten times as much earthstring energy or even more.

It required a large collection of earthstring energy to form the earthstring capture crystal.

Another thing to consider was that the world of the sword was enormous, and also contained banesouls. Because banesouls had to be avoided, it was actually possible to proceed downward with greater speed if one was outside the sword.

The downside to being outside of the sword was that the cold became increasingly intense the further down you went. Eventually, it became so cold that Qi Condensation disciples couldn’t survive. At a certain point, there was no other option than to enter the world of the sword, for one’s own safety. In the end, the decision of when exactly to enter the sword was up to each individual's power and strength, and their own determination of what was best for them.

Bai Xiaochun already had a rather high level of cold resistance, and now that he thought about it, it made sense to go down as far as he could before choosing an entrance. That would actually put him ahead of many of the people who were already in the sword.

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun moved at top speed, almost a blur. He wasn’t even aware of it, but he had already passed almost all of the other Qi Condensation disciples who had already entered the sword. The cold grew more and more intense, until he was starting to get stiff. Eventually, he reached the point where going too much further might end up injuring him.

He took a deep breath as he looked down into the pitch black below.

“I think I can go another 300 meters....” He tried to use some paper talismans to stave off the cold, but they did little good. Shaking his head, he started looking around for a gap. All of a sudden, he noticed a spot roughly 90 meters down, where a young man was standing next to the body of the sword.

As soon as the young man sensed Bai Xiaochun, he looked over, and their gazes locked. Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized who this cold and vicious young man was.

“Blood Stream Sect. Song Que!”

“Spirit Stream Sect. Bai Xiaochun!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0144 awe-chapter-145

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. The person standing in front of him was capable of killing Foundation Establishment cultivators, and had already forged an unprecedented legend of heaven-defying ferocity. From what Bai Xiaochun knew, he should have been able to enter the world of the sword much earlier on. What could he possibly be doing so far down outside the sword?

As soon as Song Que’s eyes locked onto him, Bai Xiaochun felt a sensation of deadly crisis, and a brewing killing intent that seemed as if it might explode if Bai Xiaochun made even the slightest move.

Song Que was equally shocked. He had never imagined that a second person other than himself would reach this level. Considering the coldness, this place was clearly beyond the limit for the Qi Condensation stage, and even most other Chosen wouldn’t be able to reach it. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem to have any trouble here at all.

As he stared at Bai Xiaochun, Song Que recalled the information that he had read about him in the jade slip given him by the sect.

The two of them looked at each other, remaining completely motionless. To Song Que, Bai Xiaochun was a mysterious and unfathomable individual. Although he didn't seem to possess any killing intent, Song Que’s intuition told him that if he tried to attack... one of the two of them would most likely die. Furthermore, he wasn’t completely confident that he would be the one to make it out alive.

After a long moment, Song Que took the initiative to speak.

“60 meters below this point is an entrance.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and despite the pounding of his heart, he slowly resumed his downward movement. Of course, he had no way of knowing it, but that caused Song Que’s heart to beat faster and faster, as he prepared himself to counterattack the moment Bai Xiaochun made a move.

When the two of them were only a few meters apart, Song Que suddenly shifted to the side as if to cover an area of the sword behind him, his eyes shining with a threatening light.

“Sneaky little punk,” Bai Xiaochun murmured to himself. “He’s definitely up to no good!” He continued downward until he reached the 60-meter mark that Song Que had referred to. Sure enough, there was an opening there. After a bit of inspection, Bai Xiaochun relaxed a bit and then stepped inside.

After he disappeared, Song Que breathed a sigh of relief. Considering what the sect’s introduction had explained about Bai Xiaochun, Song Que knew that he wasn’t someone to be taken lightly. Finally, a vicious gleam appeared in Song Que’s eyes. After reaching the sixth level of Qi Condensation, he had never needed to act so cautiously around anyone. He'd even gone to the length of telling Bai Xiaochun about the location of the entrance down below.

“This Bai Xiaochun might be extraordinary, but once my plan is carried out, I’ll kill him as easily as stepping on an ant!” Eyes burning with killing intent and fervor, he turned to study the surface of the sword.

“The report from Senior Limitless was accurate. Here’s the energy node!”

**

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was passing through a sheet of water. Moments later, he was inside the world of the sword. Everything around him was black and white.

The sky was white, and the land was black. Everything looked like an ink wash painting....

Mountains rose and fell, black river water swirled along, and up above he could see countless stars whose twinkling seemed like the blinking of eyes.

Most shocking of all was how the entire world was tilted. Bai Xiaochun almost felt like he was standing on the side of a hill.

It was a strange sensation that would take some time to get used to.

“Just what kind of sword is this? It has a whole world inside of it? It’s a lot smaller than the real world outside, but it’s still completely shocking.” As he looked around, he realized that he was completely alone. Based on his calculations, he wasn’t in the deepest parts of the sword world, but he was definitely much further in than most of the other disciples.

After a bit of thought, he proceeded downward, leaving the entrance behind. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he reached the crest of a small mountain, whereupon his expression flickered. His right hand shot out, shining with silver light as he snapped his two fingers in the air off to the side.

Ripples spread out as a black snake appeared next to him, only as wide as a finger. Before it could do anything, it flew into his hand, and he grabbed it behind the jaw.

The snake let out a piercing cry that instantly broke the silence, simultaneously wrapping around Bai Xiaochun’s forearm and squeezing down tightly.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked by the snake’s strength. Were it not for the fact that his fleshly body could already make contact with the first shackle, the snake would most likely have been able to break free.

He pressed down with both fingers, and a cracking sound rang out as the snake’s head was crushed. The snake went limp, and then simply dissolved into a strand of gray energy roughly as wide as a stick of incense, which instantly began to float away.

“So that’s earthstring energy, huh?” He quickly pulled out his Dao bottle to collect it. After shaking the bottle a bit, he watched the earthstring energy materialize into a gray drop of liquid.

“I’d need something like a thousand of these drops to fill the bottle....” Taken aback, he looked back in the direction he'd come from. If he needed to kill a thousand banebeasts in this area to fill the bottle, who knew how many it would be necessary to kill further back.

“I need to go more quickly. I have to form that earthstring capture crystal as soon as possible.” With that, he hurried onward at top speed, searching for banebeasts the entire way. Three days later, he had about thirty drops worth of gray fluid in his Dao bottle.

During those three days, he'd killed dozens of banebeasts just to get that small amount. He felt like he was moving at a snail's pace.

"At this speed, it's going to take more than two months to get that earthstring capture crystal." He stood there with gritted teeth as he realized that the best thing to do was go even deeper. With that, he proceeded onward at top speed. After about two hours, he suddenly stopped in place as he caught sight of two corpses up ahead.

These were the first people Bai Xiaochun had seen inside the world of the sword. Clearly, they had proceeded at top speed to get here so quickly, or perhaps had some other means of reaching this point.

One of them wore the clothing of the Spirit Stream Sect, and was an Inner Sect disciple from the south bank. The other wore the uniform of the Pill Stream Sect. Apparently, the two of them had fought each other to the death here. The Pill Stream Sect disciple had a Dao bottle in his hand.

Even from a distance, Bai Xiaochun recognized the south bank disciple. It was Zhou Youdao from the Inner Sect on Violet Cauldron Peak. He was one of the group of five who had entered the last of the three entrances. He had been very enthusiastic about addressing Bai Xiaochun as Sect Uncle Bai, and on the underground journey outside the sword, had fought well against the disciples from the other sects. Bai Xiaochun would never have thought that he would end up dead.

A strange, indescribable feeling rose up in Bai Xiaochun's heart. Only a few days ago, he had been laughing and joking with Zhou Youdao. The next time he saw him, they were eternally separated by death. It almost felt as if this entire world were permeated by ruination and mortality, creating a crushing pressure that instantly reminded Bai Xiaochun of the danger around him. The slightest misstep could leave him dead. It was even possible that people might use his corpse to set traps for other disciples as well.

Fury began to burn in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and his fists clenched into balls. Other than Feng Yan from years ago, this was the first fellow disciple Bai Xiaochun personally knew who had died, and it caused sorrow to grip his heart. He couldn't forget how Zhou Youdao had talked about his dream of becoming a patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect.

“Immortal cultivation is supposed to be about living a better life. It's about achieving your dreams. Why? Why... does there have to be all this fighting and killing...? Is it worth it?” It only took a glance for him to realize that the two corpses were a trap. Despite that, he chose... to proceed forward.

As soon as he neared the corpses, rumbling sounds echoed out from the ground. Apparently, some medicinal pills had been hidden in the area which were now exploding, sending plumes of toxic gas up toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, a flying sword shot like lightning toward him, a sword surrounded by an illusory scorpion, which emitted high-pitched shrieks!

At exactly the same moment, a frighteningly powerful explosion ripped through the air from the other side, the result of more detonated medicinal pills.

On one side was a flying sword, on the other was an explosion, and he was surrounded by a toxic spell formation. Anyone who casually stepped into a situation like this would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt.

A cold snort echoed out through the toxic gas, and someone shouted, “Die!”

Bai Xiaochun settled his qi. His face was extremely grim as the volcanic rage that had been building up in his chest suddenly erupted.

“You’ll be the one to die!” he said, his voice booming like thunder, spreading out in all directions like a gale-force wind that could topple mountains and drain seas.

His hair whipped about, his eyes shone with killing intent. It was an awesome spectacle!

His thunderous voice swept out, filled with sorrow and fury. It became a powerful attack that instantly smashed into the toxic smoke.

In the blink of an eye, the smoke was blasted away, revealing the flying sword and the explosion, as well as the two shocked disciples who had unleashed them, a young man and a young woman from the Pill Stream Sect.

The scorpion surrounding the sword let out a bloodcurdling shriek as it was crushed out of existence as if by a gigantic hand. Cracking sounds rang out from the sword as it was drained of spiritual power, then sent spinning off to the side.

As for the explosions, even their terrifying force was redirected by Bai Xiaochun, sent to land in a completely different direction.

Suddenly, everything seemed to go blurry. Shocking energy radiated out from Bai Xiaochun, who seemed to grow taller as he spoke out in a powerful voice.

“Anyone who kills a disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect will be sentenced to death!”

His words echoed like thunder, and carried the threat of extermination!

They added additional force to the blast in the area, which was no longer like a strong wind. It contained Bai Xiaochun’s killing intent, and more than that, the power of the life essence spirit of his Waterswamp Kingdom!

That was power that could easily shatter mountains and dry up seas!

Suddenly, water vapor became visible in the area. The Waterswamp Kingdom... was coming!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0145 awe-chapter-146

The two Pill Stream Sect disciples’ hair flew about wildly, and their robes whipped about. Their faces were ashen, and even their skin seemed to be pressed down from the force. They were terrified to the extreme as the wild wind battered them, turning them into rowboats in a hurricane as the mountain-toppling, sea-draining force inundated them, sending them staggering stagger back, blood spraying out of their mouths.

The female disciple was trembling violently, blood oozing out her eyes, ears, and nose. As she lurched away from Bai Xiaochun, it quickly became apparent that she couldn’t endure the force that was pushing against her. She let out a bloodcurdling scream as first her eyes exploded, then her head, and then her entire body!

She instantly transformed into a haze of blood that was swept away by the wind.

“No!!” screamed the male disciple. Blood began to pour out of his mouth, and he was shaking violently. His world began to turn black, and he let out an agonized shriek. Never in his darkest nightmares could he have imagined that he would provoke... someone as indescribably heaven-defying as this.

The energy and pressure felt like something from an elder in his sect. It was something that a Qi Condensation disciple should never have to endure, something that not even the most powerful Chosen he knew, Fang Lin, could stand up to!

“It was wrong. The information the sect gave us was totally wrong!! Don’t kill me! I....” The blood-soaked male disciple was breaking down mentally, and began to plead and weep. He didn’t want to die, and could hardly bear the terror he felt. However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun stepped forward and grabbed him by the throat.

“My Sect Nephew Zhou didn't want to die,” he growled. “And you know what? I didn’t want to kill anyone, either.” Bai Xiaochun was not the type of person to be friends with just anybody. His heart belonged to the Spirit Stream Sect.

It didn't matter how that had come to be; to him, the Spirit Stream Sect was home!

He tightened his grip, and a cracking sound could be heard as the Pill Stream Sect disciple’s neck was crushed. His eyes bulged, and his legs twitched a few times. Then he was dead!

Things gradually went quiet. Bai Xiaochun released his grip and then walked back to Zhou Youdao’s corpse. He sighed.

“Zhou Youdao,” he said softly, “allow me to bring you back to the sect.” With that, he put Zhou Youdao’s corpse into his bag of holding, taking his Dao bottle but leaving his bag of holding untouched.

As for the people from the Pill Stream Sect, he searched them thoroughly. Before leaving, he put the contents of the four Dao bottles he had collected into his own. Altogether, they hadn’t even collected half as much as he had on his own.

At long last, he had a chance to see what the Pill Stream Sect disciples’ jade slips said about him.

“Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect. A genius in the Dao of medicine, suspected to be the so-called little turtle of the sect. Unknown techniques, unclear battle prowess. Sometimes weak, sometimes strong, has a large collection of magical objects. Took first place in the sect's Chosen battles, likely due to negligence on the part of Ghostfang. If you encounter him, worry about his Dao of medicine, not his battle prowess. Attack him two-to-one.”

Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure where the Pill Stream Sect got their information, but now he was even more curious about what the information from the Profound Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect said. With that, he left.

Four hours later, an expressionless young man approached the scene. It was none other than Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect. Eyes glittering, he looked around the area to determine what had occurred.

Before long, he was standing in the spot where Bai Xiaochun had let out that powerful roar. He closed his eyes as if he were seeking enlightenment. Soon, his expression flickered, and his eyes snapped open.

“So strong! Who did this...? Song Que? Ghostfang? Nine-Isles?” Fang Lin took a deep breath as the desire to fight rose up in his heart. Looking around, he identified the path Bai Xiaochun had taken when he left, and then picked a different direction, unwilling to make contact at the moment.

Four hours later, another person appeared. He was a tall, burly man surrounded by flame lightning. After looking around, his eyes began to shine, and he started panting.

"It wasn’t Song Que, nor was it Nine-Isles. Could it have been Ghostfang? Dammit. I don’t want to provoke any one of those three!” This man was none other than Lei Shan. After looking around, he hesitated, unable to determine exactly which direction the terrifying figure responsible for the scene had taken. Gritting his teeth, he randomly picked a direction, which just so happened to be the same direction Bai Xiaochun had taken.

Time sped by. Over the following three days, quite a few people passed by the area. Some picked up on the clues, others didn’t.

On evening of the third day, Song Que approached. Although the traces of the battle were mostly gone by that time, he could sense that there was something odd about the area. Squatting down, he put his right hand onto the surface of the ground. A moment later, his eyes shone brightly.

“Such energy.... This was neither Nine-Isles nor Fang Lin. Not Ghostfang either. In that case, it must have been... Bai Xiaochun!”

Narrowing his eyes, he turned and sped off into the distance.

Around that same time, Bai Xiaochun was also speeding along through the world of the sword. Whenever he encountered an earthstring banebeast, he would kill it and collect its earthstring energy.

More gray liquid was building up in his Dao bottle, but he was still quite a ways away from being able to form the earthstring capture crystal. In the current area, the banebeasts provided a lot more earthstring energy than those from further back, but unfortunately, they were harder to find. Much of his time was wasted traveling to and fro.

Apparently, the earthstring banebeasts were partly illusory and partly corporeal, making it possible for them to merge into the air itself. They were very difficult to track down, and sometimes even randomly disappeared in the middle of a fight. Were it not for Bai Xiaochun's exceptional senses, he might not even have been able to detect them.

They would only materialize if you got very close to their hiding spot. Otherwise, they would remain hidden.

“I need to figure out a better method. The best way would be to get a bunch of earthstring banebeast in the same area. My current method is too slow. Even attacking disciples from other sects wouldn't be fast enough.” Even as he pondered the matter, he suddenly stopped in place. A whooshing sound could then be heard as a scaled hand reached out as if to grab him. When it grabbed nothing but air, it began to pull back, but before it could, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed it.

Then, he jerked his hand back, and a thunderous crash rang out like that of a giant mirror shattering. At the same time, a three-meter-tall ape-like earthstring banebeast was dragged out of thin air.

It had no hair, only black scales, and as Bai Xiaochun dragged it out, it let out a powerful roar. Its eyes shone with ferocity, but very little intelligence. Almost immediately, it attempted to pounce on Bai Xiaochun, whose eyes flickered as he extended his left hand and grabbed the ape by the neck. Instead of crushing it, though, he pulled it a bit closer and began to examine it closely. Soon, his eyes began to shine with a strange light.

“If I could concoct a spirit medicine that could attract these banebeasts... that would definitely solve the problem. Then I could form that earthstring capture crystal even faster. At the very least... it would be faster than trying to kill and rob other disciples.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun made his way off to the distance, eyes glittering, ape in tow.

His destination was a valley up ahead, where he found a secluded place to hide and study the banebeast. His powerful gaze left the thing shivering, as though by merely looking at it he could see everything about its internal structure.

Of course, the truth was he couldn’t do that. At the moment, this banebeast was simply a subject for research, much the way some of the snakes had been to him years ago in 10,000 Snakes Valley. If he wanted to make a spirit medicine that would specifically target this kind of beast, then he obviously would need to study them on many levels.

Eyes burning with passion, he reached into his bag of holding and pulled out a flying sword. Soon after, he was slicing open the banebeast’s chest.

The next day, his eyes were bloodshot as he left the valley.

“There isn’t much difference between them and ordinary beasts. They have the same organs, and even have blood.... However, as soon as they die, all of that vanishes and transforms into earthstring energy.

“Another strange thing is that the earthstring banebeasts don’t have any food inside their stomachs.... Is it that they don’t need to eat food?” With that, he captured another banebeast to perform further experiments.

A few days later, more and more disciples were showing up in the area, which could be considered to be the middle section of the sword world. Some of them attacked other disciples to steal their Dao bottles, others went after the banebeasts. By this time, Bai Xiaochun had studied more than ten different banebeasts, and his eyes were more bloodshot than ever. His hair was disheveled, and he almost looked as if he had gone mad.

“Poor eyesight, and a bad sense of smell, and yet they seem very perceptive.... How do they merge into the air? How are they formed from earthstring energy? And why do they attack cultivators?” Bai Xiaochun was now fully immersed in the Dao of medicine by this point. Continuing to mutter questions to himself, he confirmed that the banebeasts would always take the initiative to attack him, and did so with bloodthirsty ferocity.

“Wait a second....” His heart began to pound as he realized that he might be onto something. Looking up suddenly, he hurried forward to find a banebeast to confirm his new theory.

Before long, a nine-meter-long earthstring bear appeared in front of him. It was covered with black scales, and was currently being besieged by five disciples in long, blood-red robes.

Obviously, they were Blood Stream Sect disciples. Their killing intent was raging, and they didn’t seem to care about anything except the kill. They didn’t even care when one of their fellow disciples was suddenly killed.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the area. Even as the four Blood Stream Sect disciples were preparing to launch another salvo, a blur appeared and someone reached out and grabbed the huge bear.

The Blood Stream Sect disciples’ eyes went wide. None of them immediately recognized Bai Xiaochun, but they could tell that he was wearing the clothing of the Spirit Stream Sect. Soon, cold smiles appeared on their faces, as well as derision. During their fight with the bear, they had come to realize that it had certain special qualities, including a terrifying fleshly body power.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0146 awe-chapter-147

“He’s gonna get himself killed!”

“The Spirit Stream Sect people are all so arrogant! That’s a mid-level banebeast, not a low-level banebeast. Is he looking to die?!” The Blood Stream Sect disciples chuckled coldly as they imagined the banebeast ripping the Spirit Stream Sect disciple to shreds.

However, even as the cold smiles appeared on their faces, they suddenly trembled, and their eyes went wide with disbelief and shock.

What they saw was Bai Xiaochun, his hair in complete disarray, grabbing onto the bear, which let out a terrifying roar. It then bared its teeth as if to rip Bai Xiaochun’s arm off of his body and shred it to pieces.

However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun’s hand latched down onto it, the bear acted as though a mountain of pressure had just crushed down onto it. Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun pushed the bear down into the ground.

The ground trembled, and the four Blood Stream Sect disciples all gasped, hardly able to believe their eyes.

“This....”

“How is this possible?!?!”

“Such incredible strength!”

The four of them swallowed hard, and yet, weren’t willing to simply leave. Even as they eyed Bai Xiaochun, he once again did something that left them trembling.

Immersed as he was in his research, he completely ignored the Blood Stream Sect disciples. A flying sword appeared in his left hand, and in front of the eyes of all of the Blood Stream Sect disciples, he began to slice open the banebeast’s arm.

Blood sprayed everywhere, along with earthstring energy. The banebeast howled, and Bai Xiaochun, apparently annoyed by the sound, slit its throat. The Blood Stream Sect disciples’ eyes went wide, and they began to tremble and back up, eyes radiating reverence toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t notice. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he managed to completely dissect the banebeast. Although the pieces were already starting to fade away, the mere sight of the sliced up bear left the Blood Stream Sect disciples feeling as though their heads were about to explode.

“Did he... did he have a grudge with that particular banebeast? Or does he always do that to them? Heavens! That’s the most terrifying thing I’ve ever seen, even in the Blood Stream Sect!”

“It must be some twisted hobby of his....”

One of the disciples pulled out a jade slip, checked it, and then said, “That’s... that’s Bai Xiaochun!!”

The other three disciples gasped at the mention of the name. Without even the slightest hesitation, they began to back up, doing everything possible to get as far away as they could.

Some time later, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining with excitement. Taking a deep breath, he rose to his feet and began to pace back and forth, occasionally gesticulating with one hand or the other.

“I get it now. The banebeasts look like ordinary beasts, but there's something different about them. Spiritual energy is as useful to them as earthstring energy is to cultivators trying to reach Foundation Establishment! That’s why any disciples who get eaten by them instantly disappear into nothing. They get totally absorbed....

“Hahaha! I can definitely concoct the pill I need!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, then looked around, somewhat surprised to find that everyone had left.

Shaking his head, he blurred into motion, heading off into the distance to find a cave. Once he found a suitable location, he produced some earthflame crystals and began to concoct. He had the pill formula in mind, which he followed based on his understanding of the banebeasts.

In addition to the medicinal plants, he added in some of his own blood. Worried that that might not be enough, he called upon the principles of mutual augmentation and suppression to adjust things perfectly.

He spent four hours concocting, after which the pill furnace began to rumble. When the sound died down, a medicinal pill appeared. Bai Xiaochun grabbed it and set off to look for banebeasts. After finding one, he threw out the medicinal pill, but was disappointed to find that it didn’t have any effect whatsoever.

“This can’t be right! What went wrong!?” The next few days, he spent more time researching the banebeasts. By that time, it had been twenty days since the opening of the Fallen Sword Abyss.

Most of the disciples of the four sects had reached the depths of the world, and were in different areas fighting and killing banebeasts.

The Blood Stream Sect was truly strong, and incredibly vicious. The Profound Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect were about evenly matched, with the Pill Stream Sect being the weakest of them all.

There were even fights that broke out between some of the top Chosen from the various sects. The most noteworthy fight was when Ghostfang fought Nine-Isles from the Profound Stream Sect. It lasted an entire day, and shook everything in the area. In the end, Nine-Isles was seriously injured and fled. Having come out victorious, Ghostfang came to be known as the one person who was qualified to fight Song Que.

Gongsun Wan’er and Zhao Rou fought a few times, and although there were always clear winners and losers, neither managed to kill the other.

Shangguan Tianyou put on quite a show. In the middle of killing a banebeast, he saw Fang Lin, the number one Chosen from the Pill Stream Sect, and the two of them fought a fierce battle. In the end, it was hard to say who came out on top.

Song Que from the Blood Stream Sect was like a shadowy specter. He never attacked anyone, and few people even saw him.

As for the other person listed in the information about the Blood Stream Sect, Xu Xiaoshan, he also began to make a name for himself. People bristled with anger at the sheer amount of magical items he had at his disposal. When he unleashed them in battle, any opponent he fought was left shocked.

One disciple who quickly came to be known as a dark horse in the competition was... Beihan Lie from the Spirit Stream Sect. Not much information about him had been made available to the other three sects, and therefore, people took him to be an ordinary Chosen. Who could ever have imagined that when he encountered Lei Shan from the Profound Stream Sect, a massive battle would ensue?

In the end, Beihan Lie seemed to be on the same level as Lei Shan, which was shocking considering that other than Nine-Isles, he was considered to be the top Chosen of his generation in the Profound Stream Sect. Very few people could hold their own in a fight against him.

Before, he was simply a Chosen from the Spirit Stream Sect. For him to be able to do such a thing left many people shocked.

In addition to the friction and fighting between the famous Chosen, there were many fierce battles between the other disciples. People died on a daily basis, and some unlucky people were eaten by the banebeasts.

As for the disciples who survived all of the fighting, their collections of earthstring energy grew. Soon, it was getting harder and harder to find the banebeasts, which meant that the fighting between disciples started to grow fiercer!

People ganged up on others. People set traps. Some people simply overwhelmed others with direct force. All sorts of tactics were unleashed, until the Fallen Sword Abyss began to devolve into chaos.

Eyes were bloodshot as people fought back and forth in the struggles for earthstring energy. Nobody wanted to be the last person to collect the energy they needed, and everyone wanted to be first!

Bai Xiaochun was aware of the murderous atmosphere around him. However, he didn't go out much. He spent most of his time doing research or concocting medicine. Even still, he ran into the corpses of seventeen Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

Whenever he did, he would carefully store the corpses in his bag of holding to take them back to the sect.

When he went out looking for banebeasts, he went about his work as quickly as possible. He would strike like lightning, grab the banebeast, and then take it away to study. Afterward, he would go back to concocting.

Before he even realized it, his Dao bottle of gray liquid was about a third full. However, he didn't pay much attention to that. He focused mostly on concocting.

By this point, he had failed dozens of times. On a few occasions, he failed five or six times in one day. However, he didn't give up. As he grew more familiar with the anatomy of the banebeasts, he slowly slipped into a frenzy. At one point, he even personally went to observe how a banebeast would go about killing a cultivator.

At that point, he realized that the attacks weren't physical, but rather, an absorption of life force. Suddenly, all of his experiences and research up to that point coalesced into an epiphany. He quickly selected a remote mountain cave and set about concocting, his eyes completely bloodshot.

This session lasted for five days, during which time he didn’t set a single foot outside. He failed dozens of times. However, on evening of the fifth day, as the sky grew dark and fighting filled the lands around him, intense rumbling sounds began to emanate from his pill furnace, spreading out to fill half of the entire Fallen Sword World.

BOOOOOOOOOM!

It was like heaven-rending, earth-crushing thunder that spread out in all directions. Shockingly, black clouds appeared above the cave, which pulsed with strands of white energy!

All of the disciples of the four sects who were in that part of the Fallen Sword World looked in the direction where Bai Xiaochun was concocting medicine. Everyone was completely shocked.

Ghostfang had been in the middle of speeding along on a task when he suddenly heard the rumbling sound, and his eyes glittered.

In another location, Song Que was in front of a nondescript stone wall, studying it carefully. When he heard the sound, his eyes widened. “What’s that sound?”

Xu Xiaoshan from the Blood Stream Sect felt his heart began to pound. “Is a precious treasure appearing in the world?!?!”

Eyes widening, he picked up speed, heading in the direction of the sound.

Lei Shan from the Profound Stream Sect was relatively close to the source of the sounds, and was just as intrigued as Xu

Xiaoshan. Eyes shining with excitement and curiosity, he sped off toward the sound.

The bizarre thunderous rumbling didn’t just attract the attention of the cultivators. It also attracted... banebeasts!

And also... in some mysterious location within the Fallen Sword World, it caught the attention of... banesouls!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0147 awe-chapter-148

In the half of the Fallen Sword World that was affected, countless areas began to distort and twist. It seemed as though countless slumbering banebeasts within the air itself were suddenly being awoken by the crashing of thunder. Somehow, they could sense Bai Xiaochun’s spirit medicine, and trembled, slowly opening their eyes.

Although there were disciples from the four sects in some of the areas where the banebeasts began to wake up, most of the areas were devoid of cultivators. As soon as the banebeasts opened their vicious eyes, they looked in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, radiating greed and madness. Moments later, countless howls ripped through the air.

Ripples spread out through the Fallen Sword World like waves on water, stirring the banebeasts, which began to rush at top speed through the air.

However, what was more shocking than the banebeasts was what happened in certain locations where the banebeasts didn’t dare to enter. There, numerous shadowy figures began to appear out of thin air.

There were men and women, old and young. The youngest of them all was a little girl in a white dress. Clutched in her arms was a skinless, blood-colored bear. They floated there with blank looks in their eyes, accompanied by various strange beasts that were not native to the lands of Heavenspan.

They were banesouls!

All of the living things which had been killed by this enormous sword during its existence beyond the heavens were affected by earthstrings and transformed into these lifeless souls!

They were bizarre and enigmatic to the extreme, and apparently, were not people of the lands of Heavenspan. They had come from the legendary region beyond the heavens, the location of that which was eternal!

Now they were scattered about through the various remote regions of the Fallen Sword World, in places where the banebeasts didn’t dare to even approach.

As of this moment, numerous such figures were stepping out of thin air to appear in the open. Some of them wore ancient robes, some wore battle armor, and some had skin made of scales instead of flesh. They looked strange; most of them badly mutilated, as if from combat wounds. Some had missing arms, some were partially decapitated, some had gaping wounds in their torsos. As they appeared, black mist pulsed out from them in all directions.

All of the banesouls had blank expressions. They had no consciousness, nor any memories. Anywhere they passed, the banebeasts would be left trembling, and would simply cower as they went by. Any banebeast which was unlucky enough to actually be touched by one of the banesouls would instantly be destroyed and vanish into nothing.

The banesouls that had the shape of beasts were particularly bizarre, as if they had been pieced together from parts of different creatures!

The banesouls began to float through the air, picking up speed until they were moving unbelievably quickly. Nothing could block their path as they headed straight toward Bai Xiaochun!

Vast numbers of them were converging upon him from all directions!

As they passed along, some of the disciples from the four sects realized that something strange was happening. They saw the air rippling as countless banebeasts appeared, and at first, many of the ecstatic disciples rushed forward to try to kill them. But soon, their scalps began to tingle as they realized that there were far too many, hordes of them, like a tide of banebeasts!

“What’s going on?!”

“Heavens! The banebeasts are usually so hard to find. Why are there so many of them all of a sudden!?”

“Something must have happened. Dammit! That’s not a banebeast, that’s a banesoul!” Cries of astonishment began to ring out all over the Fallen Sword World. As soon as the disciples realized that there were banesouls flying among the banebeasts, they began to flee.

The banesouls were terrifying, and the elders of the Four Great Sects had repeatedly warned all of their disciples about their existence within the Fallen Sword Abyss. Under no circumstances were the banesouls to be provoked! They were to be avoided at all costs!

“Even the banesouls are attracted to whatever is in that direction. Just what exactly is happening over there!?”

“Let’s follow from a distance and check it out!” The disciples began to follow the tide of banebeasts and banesouls, either alone or in groups of between three to five.

By this point, half of the entire Fallen Sword World was being utterly shaken by the nine volleys of thunder created by Bai Xiaochun's spirit medicine.

Within the mountain cave, Bai Xiaochun sat there looking a bit gaunt, his hair disheveled as he stared at the pill furnace. With every rumbling boom, more cracks would spread out across the surface of the furnace.

After the ninth boom, the pill furnace suddenly trembled violently and then exploded, sending fragments shooting out in all directions. At the same time, four beams of mysterious black light emerged.

Bai Xiaochun had been prepared for just such a thing to occur. He instantly unleashed the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, creating an invisible field of control in the area that enabled him to quickly secure the four spirit medicines which had been trying to escape.

"Think you can get away?" he said with a proud harumph. Looking down at the four medicinal pills with shining eyes, he hurried toward the mouth of cave to see if they would work on the banebeasts.

However, the instant he emerged, his expression flickered, and he took a step back, just avoiding a black scorpion tail which slashed through the air in the spot where he had just been standing.

A moment later, a three-meter-long black scorpion materialized out of thin air, its eyes burning with madness and greed as it stared at the four medicinal pills in Bai Xiaochun's hand. Then, it lunged forward.

Considering the ferocity of its movements, it didn't appear to be a low-level banebeast. It was a mid-level beast, much like the bear from earlier.

Eyes glittering, Bai Xiaochun reached out with this left hand, moving like lightning as he grabbed the scorpion’s tail. Then he smashed it against the stone wall of the cave. At the same time, he sent some spiritual power into the scorpion’s body, to its weakest spot, which he crushed. The scorpion twitched, and then went limp and began to fade away, transforming into earthstring energy that Bai Xiaochun quickly collected up.

An ordinary cultivator would never be able to deal with a mid-level banebeast so easily, which was why the Senior members of the sect had warned the disciples about them. Bai Xiaochun was different, though. After studying nearly a hundred banebeasts, he was very familiar with their weaknesses, and could kill them easily.

“The pills just came out of the furnace and they’re already attracting the attention of banebeasts. Hahaha! Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pills are a success!” Bai Xiaochun was excitedly contemplating whether or not to perform a spirit enhancement on the pills, when suddenly, numerous ripples began to spread out in the area as one banebeast after another appeared.

“So many! Alright, that's more than enough. Hahaha! At this rate, Bai Xiaochun is definitely going to be the first to reach Foundation Establishment!”

Bai Xiaochun was so excited he almost started dancing in place. Just as he was about to reap his bountiful harvest, his expression flickered, and his eyes went wide as he noticed a partially decapitated figure off in the distance. He wore a long gray robe, and the one eye that remained on his face had a blank expression. He floated along through the air, his head twitching a bit. Eventually, he laid eyes on Bai Xiaochun, and suddenly, his expression changed.

He suddenly seemed to be filled with longing. Eyes locked onto Bai Xiaochun, or more specifically, the medicinal pills in his hand, he began to speed forward.

The banebeasts in the area all trembled at the sight of him, and didn't dare to even move. As the figure sped along, he hit seven or eight banebeasts in the process, causing them to shriek and then explode.

"A banesoul?! The pills even attract them? Well, at least it's only one of-- huh?" Before he could finish speaking, another banesoul appeared further off in the distance. This one was missing its arms, and had wildly disheveled hair. It wore a set of dilapidated armor, and was also staring longingly at Bai Xiaochun as it sped toward him.

Things weren't over yet. An old man appeared off in the distance, with a huge, gaping wound in his abdomen. He too began to head directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun's scalp began to tingle with fear. Taking a deep breath, he took a step as if to flee, only to find to his shock that there weren't just three or four or five banesouls in the area, there was an entire horde!!

Ripples filled the area as numerous banesouls appeared in quick succession, their eyes gleaming with longing. Bai Xiaochun's face drained of blood as he contemplated what it would feel like to be ripped to pieces.

"How could this be happening?!" He wanted to cry, but no tears would come at the moment. His first thought was to flee. He had no desire to face so many banesouls. Even members of the Senior generation of the four sects would likely perish at the hands of these banesouls, much less the Qi Condensation disciples.

However, in the moment that Bai Xiaochun made to flee, the banesouls all looked at him and screamed. The power within their voices caused the banebeasts to tremble even harder. A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and he teetered on the verge of unconsciousness as he staggered backward. It felt like he had just been hit with a hammer; blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he began to tremble in fear. Screaming, he bit his tongue, using the pain to stay awake as he took to flight.

Cold sweat broke out all over him as wings appeared behind the black wok on his back. With that, he unleashed all the speed he could muster, transforming into a series of afterimages that shot off into the distance. However, the flying banesouls also increased their speed.

In the blink of an eye, the dozens of nearby banesouls all took to flight in pursuit of Bai Xiaochun.

One of the fastest banesouls was the partially decapitated one that had appeared first. However, in addition to that one, there was a girl in a white dress. Although she didn’t scream like the others, her face was especially cold and sinister, and her blank eyes glimmered with intense longing.

When the disciples of the four sects who had been following along saw what was happening, their scalps tingled with shock. That was especially true of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples. Some of them anxiously tried to get the banesouls to stop chasing Bai Xiaochun, but the banesouls were completely and utterly focused, and ignored everything else but him.

“Help! They’re trying to kill me!!” Bai Xiaochun fled for his life, screaming at the top of his lungs. Tears leaked out of the corners of his eyes; never could he have imagined that the medicinal pills he had concocted to attract banebeasts would, for some unknown reason, drag banesouls into the picture. “Dammit! I must have made a mistake in my concocting and produced another mystery pill!”

The banesouls were getting closer and closer, and seemed to be devolving further into madness as they chased him. Bai Xiaochun finally gritted his teeth and, heart aching, tossed one of the four medicinal pills far off into the distance.

In that instant, the banesouls shivered, and their heads swiveled. Then, most of them shot off after the medicinal pill he'd just thrown. Bai Xiaochun was finally able to truly flee. Some distance away, he looked over his shoulder, shivering.

Behind him, the banesouls were fighting over the medicinal pill. Shockingly, the one who ended up getting the pill in the end was the girl in the white dress, who tossed the pill into her mouth as soon as she wrested control of it.

In that instant, the blankness in the girl’s eyes faded a bit. A strange glow appeared, and her expression turned even more icy. For some reason, she suddenly seemed to possess intelligence!

Slowly, the girl turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

When their eyes met, Bai Xiaochun’s scalp started tingling so hard it felt like it was going to explode. At the same moment, a faint, bizarre voice was transmitted into his ear.

“Come play with me, sweetie.” All the hair on Bai Xiaochun’s body stood on end. Turning around, he fled as fast as he could.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0148 awe-chapter-149

“That’s not a banesoul, that’s an evil ghost!” Heart pounding with fear, Bai Xiaochun fled at top speed. Moments ago, when his gaze met the young girl’s, he had instantly been filled with a sensation of deadly crisis. The feeling had been so intense that it felt like every inch of his flesh and every drop of his blood was screaming in terror.

He was filled with the premonition that if he ran any slower, he would die!

That deathly feeling left him shaking visibly, panting, his eyes bloodshot as he pushed forward faster and faster, flying ever deeper into the depths of the Fallen Sword World.

The next day, he looked over his shoulder to confirm that he wasn’t being chased by any banesouls, especially the little girl. When he saw that he was alone, he let out a long sigh of relief. However, fear still lingered in his heart regarding the events of the previous day.

“Something was really fishy about that girl in the white dress!” he thought, scowling miserably. “At first she looked like all the other banesouls, but after she ate that mystery pill, her aura completely changed! Just where exactly did I go wrong with that batch of pills?”

He thought about giving up on the idea, but the truth was that his medicinal pill had attracted the banebeasts. In the end, he couldn’t just give up that easily. Gritting his teeth, he went out to find more banebeasts to research. At the same time, he studied the medicine formula he had used. Three days later, after making some adjustments, he steeled himself and once again pulled out a pill furnace to start concocting.

This time, there wasn’t any thunder, nor any other strange signs. Four violet medicinal pills appeared, which he carefully took outside to test, preparing ahead of time for what to do if banesouls showed up.

Soon, ripples filled the area as one banebeast after another appeared. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't dare to make a move on them. He flew away at top speed, and then studied the area carefully.

Before long, the medicinal pill had attracted over twenty banebeasts, and not a single banesoul had appeared. Finally, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, and even started to get excited.

“It worked!” he exclaimed, laughing loudly. As he removed the paper talismans he had stuck all over himself, the glow of the shields faded, and he hurried over to the banebeasts. Soon, his wooden sword transformed into flashing beams of light as the fighting began.

One banebeast after another fell in death, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with wild delight as the streams of earthstring energy flew into his Dao bottle.

After slaughtering the entire group, he looked in satisfaction at the gray liquid inside the bottle. In a very short moment, he had added more liquid into the bottle than he had in the past several days.

Taking a deep breath, he headed to another area. There, he threw out another medicinal pill and sure enough, banebeasts began to flock to the area. Laughing heartily, Bai Xiaochun immediately began to cut them down.

Time passed. Because of the medicinal pills, the gray liquid in Bai Xiaochun’s Dao bottle continued to build up at a shocking rate. Now he was collecting earthstring energy far more quickly than anyone else. A few days later, it had been a full month since Bai Xiaochun entered the Fallen Sword World. As for his Dao bottle, it was now eighty percent full of earthstring energy.

“Only twenty percent to go!” he thought, more excited than ever. He wasn’t sure how others were faring in their collection efforts, but he doubted many of them had surpassed him.

However, being the perfectionist that he was, he decided that the best thing would be to fill ten percent in a single shot!

“I need more banebeasts!” Licking his lips, he headed further down into the Fallen Sword World until he found a wide-open plain. There, he took a deep breath and then pulled out two medicinal pills. Hoping to attract even more banebeasts than before, he crushed the pills and then scattered them around.

It didn't take long before the air rippled as numerous banebeasts appeared. Bai Xiaochun immediately began to attack them, causing rumbling booms to fill the area. Every banebeast he slew caused earthstring energy to stream into his Dao bottle.

Because of how he had crushed the pills, and also because of the favorable position he had chosen, which was close to the deepest parts of the Fallen Sword World, there were plenty of slumbering banebeasts in the area.

Soon, it wasn’t a group of dozens that was converging on the area, it was closer to a hundred. Almost all of them were mid-level, with a few here and there that were high-level, the type that would normally require an entire group of Chosen to take down.

Bai Xiaochun’s speed in killing the banebeasts couldn’t match the speed with which new ones appeared on the scene. Soon, there were two hundred gathered in the area, and their numbers only continued to grow. Any cultivator who managed to catch sight of such a huge number of banebeasts would go wild with joy.

In fact, some of the disciples of the four sects did notice what was happening, and gathered on the periphery to snag whatever beasts they could. One of them was a young man who attacked with utter ruthlessness, and immediately caused quite a stir among the nearby Pill Stream Sect disciples. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun noticed him, and recognized him as the number one Chosen from the Pill Stream Sect, Fang Lin!

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too happy that he had drawn all these banebeasts here only to have other people slaughter and take them. However, considering that he couldn’t even keep up with the growing numbers, he simply gave a cold harrumph and then ignored them.

Gradually, a group of over forty cultivators had gathered in the area. It was only at that point that they managed to get on equal footing with the banebeasts. Elated, they began to join forces to make things go even faster.

That was especially true of some of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples. When they got close to Bai Xiaochun, he made sure to take care of them, ensuring that their harvest was even greater than before.

Bai Xiaochun excitedly watched the earthstring liquid building up in his Dao bottle. Soon, it was ninety percent full. However, it was at that exact moment that more than ten beams of light suddenly appeared up in the air.

They wore matching robes, those of the Profound Stream Sect, and leading them was a burly man surrounded by swirling electricity.

The surrounding disciples' faces flickered, except for Fang Lin's. He simply continued to slaughter the banebeasts, not even bothering to look over.

"Lei Shan!"

"The number two Chosen of the Profound Stream Sect! Dammit! If he came by himself it might not be a big deal, but look at how many people he has with him!"

Even as everyone looked on with mixed expressions, Lei Shan glanced out over all the banebeasts, and his eyes lit up with joy. He'd heard from some fellow Profound Stream Sect disciples that a strange tide of banebeasts had appeared, which was why he had hurried over in this direction.

"Only forty percent of my bottle is empty. When it's full, I can form the earthstring capture crystal. I can probably do that by killing all of these banebeasts here!" Lei Shan threw his head back and laughed uproariously. When the Profound Stream Sect disciples at his side realized what he intended to do, one of them, a long-faced young man, chuckled darkly and stepped forward.

"Listen up!" he bellowed to the disciples in the area. "If you're not from the Profound Stream Sect, beat it immediately! This place is our territory now!" The disciples from the other three sects bristled with rage, while the Profound Stream Sect disciples began to laugh as they joined Lei Shan's group. By that point, they were roughly thirty strong.

Under Lei Shan's leadership, the group of thirty prepared drive everyone away, and fight with deadly force against any who resisted. Chaos quickly ensued.

"You have ten breaths of time of time to get the hell out of here, and leave your Dao bottles behind!"

"If you don't want to go, then be prepared to lose your life!" As the Profound Stream Sect disciples glared around them, the Blood Stream Sect disciples exchanged glances and then began to fall back.

Most of the Blood Stream Sect were on their own, like lone wolves, and didn't want to provoke Lei Shan.

The Pill Stream Sect disciples were at a bit of a loss, and had no other choice than to fall back. Lei Shan hesitated for a moment when he realized that Fang Lin was in the crowd. He still suspected that the terrifying magical massacre which had been carried out a month before had been enacted by Fang Lin, and thus, didn't wish to provoke him.

Because of the terrifying nature of the battlefield he had come across, he decided to simply let the Pill Stream Sect disciples leave. As for Fang Lin, he resolved not to do anything to offend him personally.

As the Blood Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect disciples fled, the Spirit Stream Sect disciples turned to see what Bai Xiaochun would do.

Bai Xiaochun was incensed, but the group led by Lei Shan was simply too large. He only had about ten people on his side, and if they got into a fight, he knew that while he might be able to make it out unscathed, they would have a harder time. There would likely be many serious injuries and even deaths.

“Alright, let’s go,” he said. “It's just a flood of beasts, after all. Your Sect Uncle will go start another one for you!” Gritting his teeth, he was just about to leave when Lei Shan looked over and suddenly laughed.

The Blood Stream Sect disciples were ferocious, and he didn't have any wish to tangle with them. As for Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect, he also preferred to steer clear of him. But when it came to the Spirit Stream Sect, once he realized it was Bai Xiaochun he was dealing with, as well as a few ordinary disciples, he recalled the information from his sect about Bai Xiaochun, and his expression became one of derision.

“You people from the Spirit Stream Sect can leave,” he said, his eyes flickering with killing intent, “but your Dao bottles stay behind! Comply, or don't even think about leaving!” The Spirit Stream Sect disciples’ faces fell, and Bai Xiaochun’s anger grew.

“You wanna steal my animals and then rob my Dao bottle? You people are nothing but bullies!”

With a cold snort, Lei Shan began to fly toward the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, joined by the rest of the Profound Stream Sect, who were cackling viciously. “If you're being bullied, you should blame the fact that you don't have any powerful experts on your side!”

“Sect Uncle Bai!”

“Sect Uncle Bai, what do we do now?!” The Spirit Stream Sect disciples were trembling in anxiety, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot. Suddenly, he lifted his right hand, within which could be seen a black medicinal pill, the very same pill which could attract banesouls.

Expression somber, eyes bloodshot, he turned to the Spirit Stream Sect disciples and said, “Just wait until I throw out this medicinal pill, and then you guys--”

However, before he could finish speaking, the surrounding Spirit Stream Sect disciples gasped, the terror on their faces vastly exceeding their terror at seeing the Profound Stream Sect closing in. They immediately began to flee at top speed.

“Is that the legendary Aphrodisiac Pill!?”

“Heavens! No wonder he can control the banebeasts!”

“Sect Uncle Bai is a god! The only thing that determines whether that pill works on the banebeasts is whether Sect Uncle Bai wants it to or not! Let’s get out of here! If we're too slow, we’re dead!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0149 awe-chapter-150

The Spirit Stream Sect fled in abject terror. The Profound Stream Sect wanted to block their path, but no threat could cause them to tremble like Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pills could.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped at the sight of his fellow disciples fleeing in such a fashion. Worried that he had pulled out the wrong pill, he looked down to confirm which pill he was holding. Clearing his throat, he then gave a mighty shout as he launched the pill into the air. It shot up and then exploded, becoming swirling black mist that spread out in all directions.

Lei Shan frowned, and the Profound Stream Sect disciples scattered, worried that the mist might be toxic. As for the banebeasts in the area, as soon as they caught a whiff of the destroyed medicinal pill, their eyes lit up with madness, and they began to howl.

At the same time, Lei Shan’s eyes flickered as if with lightning as he watched Bai Xiaochun attempting to flee at high speed.

Snorting coldly, he said, “Think you can leave just like that? Leave your Dao bottle behind!”

With that, he flicked his sleeve, causing thunder to boom, shoving the black mist away from him.

Then he shot after Bai Xiaochun, moving with incredible speed. Lightning danced around him, and flames burned beneath his feet. As he closed in, he waved his right finger through the air. Rumbling could be heard as a sea of flames appeared, which then rose up into a huge wall that blocked Bai Xiaochun's path. Within the wall of flames, bolts of lightning appeared which then shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

When the Profound Stream Sect disciples saw this, their eyes glittered with derision. As far as they were concerned, Bai Xiaochun was dreaming if he thought he could escape from Lei Shan.

"A rogue Foundation Establishment cultivator once chased Elder Brother Lei Shan for seven days but never caught him. Even Eldest Brother Nine-Isles praised his speed before."

"And then there's his flame lightning magic. Elder Brother Lei Shan has already reached the pinnacle. Nobody in this generation could possibly match up to him. Bai Xiaochun is courting death!"

Even as the Profound Stream Sect mocked him, Bai Xiaochun's anxiety increased. He knew that the banesouls could show up at any moment, and that the best thing to do was leave this place as quickly as possible. Seeing that his path was blocked, his eyes flickered, and he slammed into the incoming bolts of lightning.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

As soon as the lightning bolts made contact with him, they shattered into countless sparks of electricity that scattered in all directions. Bai Xiaochun, on the other hand, didn't seem to have even a mark on him. He continued on to the wall of flames, and when he hit that, it exploded too, and he passed right through.

"Impossible!" Lei Shan said, his eyes widening with disbelief and shock. He was very familiar with his own magical techniques, and was confident that other than Nine-Isles, Ghostfang, Song Que and Fang Lin, there were no Qi Condensation disciples who could pass through his flame lightning unharmed.

And yet, unexpectedly, Bai Xiaochun had done exactly that.

“This guy is--” Before he could finish speaking, an indescribable sensation of deadly crisis washed over him. Looking over his shoulder, he saw the air rippling off in the distance as numerous banesouls appeared, rushing in his direction with expressions of longing.

“Banesouls!!” he gasped. Just as he was preparing to flee, his heart was struck with deathly terror.

“There are so many!! Heavens!!” There weren't just three or four banesouls approaching. The air rippled with constant fluctuations as dozens of them closed in, with even more behind them. From the look of it, there might be a hundred in total.

Among the banesouls was a sinister young girl in a white dress, holding a bear. Her eyes swirled with underworldly light, and although her face was expressionless, Lei Shan and the dozens of Profound Stream Sect disciples with him could hear chuckling in their ears.

It was a bizarre, sinister laughter that instantly set their hearts pounding. Further off among the crowd of banebeasts, Fang Lin’s eyes went wide, and he began to flee, panting.

Bai Xiaochun was further off, running for his life. He could also hear the chuckling, and it left his scalp numb with fear. Wings appeared behind the black wok on his back, and he blasted off at top speed.

“Hmph! You think you can just steal my banebeasts? Those are Lord Bai’s banebeasts! Nobody can just take them away!” With a cold snort, he pushed forward even faster.

Lei Shan swallowed hard, and his face was totally ashen. Having no time to pay any heed to his fellow disciples in the horde of beasts, he fled.

About this time, the girl in the white dress shot out ahead of the horde of banesouls to be the first to arrive in the area where the medicinal pill had exploded. There, she took a deep breath, causing the surrounding black mist to be sucked in through her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

At the same time, the surrounding banebeasts began to tremble and then explode, transforming into ash. As for the few dozen Profound Stream Sect disciples, their bodies were completely beyond their own control. White mist began to seep out of their own eyes, ears, noses, and mouths, and was sucked away with the black mist by the girl.

“Come back and play with me, sweetie....” she said. No longer was her face expressionless. Her lips twitched into something like a smile, a terrifying smile that would cause any cultivator who saw it to tremble.

Her voice reverberated through the air, matchlessly sinister, echoing out in all directions. The disciples of the Profound Stream Sect felt as if their souls were being ripped out of their bodies. Their flesh and blood withered, and they became like stiff corpses which hopped over to the girl’s side, where they began to lurch and dance as if they were playing with her.

Their withered bodies and stiff limbs provided a bizarre scene, and from a distance, Lei Shan and Fang Lin looked on with ashen faces. Hearts trembling, they began to flee in terror.

“What kind of banesoul is that?!”

“The sect’s information didn't list anything about banesouls like that. It can even talk! That’s impossible!”

Lei Shan and Fang Lin were both shaking as they fled in different directions, resorting to life-saving magics to flee as fast as possible.

The other banesouls around the little girl weren't able to absorb any of the black mist, and soon they calmed down, and began to float aimlessly with blank expressions on their faces.

The little girl stood there in their midst, looking completely bizarre. By now, her eyes were pitch black. Momentarily ignoring the fleeing Lei Shan and Fang Lin, she slowly turned in the direction Bai Xiaochun had fled in. Then her lips twitched into something that almost looked like a smile, and she flew after Lei Shan.

Deep in the Fallen Sword World, Bai Xiaochun flew along at top speed for two days before finally slowing down. That little girl in the white dress left him shivering in fear. However, as soon as he thought about how he had filled his Dao bottle by more than ninety percent, he realized that he only needed a bit more earthstring energy to form the earthstring capture crystal. Therefore, he began to carefully use his medicinal pills to attract more banebeasts to collect the last bit of earthstring energy he needed.

Two days later, he had gathered a few dozen banebeasts in a remote location. After slaughtering the entire group, his Dao bottle was completely filled with earthstring energy.

The gray liquid began to bubble and boil, and then solidify. Soon, cracking sounds could be heard, and the bottle shattered.

A gray crystal was revealed, which Bai Xiaochun grabbed. Almost instantly, he felt a connection between himself and the world around him, a resonance that he hadn’t felt before. This crystal was like a key that unlocked the barrier between himself and the world.

“It worked!” he exclaimed. He now felt more confident than ever that if he absorbed enough energy, he would be able to reach Foundation Establishment. However, he knew that he shouldn’t go about it carelessly; he needed to find a safe place to go through the process. After all, if someone interfered with the process, causing it to fail, he would regret it for the rest of his life.

“Foundation Establishment. Foundation Establishment! Hahaha!” Suppressing his excitement, he was about to begin his search for a safe location when suddenly, he felt a chill run down his back and up his neck. Without even thinking about it, he looked over his shoulder, and saw a face directly behind him!

It was a little girl’s face, her lips twisted into a bizarre smile!

Everything around him was deathly quiet. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, and his hair began to stand on end. The flame of his life force flickered a bit, as his intuition told him that this girl was extremely dangerous!

“Come play with me, sweetie,” she said in a sinister voice. In that same instant, a cold wind blew past, and Bai Xiaochun suddenly realized that the girl wasn’t holding the skinless, blood-colored bear any more.

She was holding something else, and when Bai Xiaochun realized what it was, his heart began to pound. It was a tiny cultivator, skinned like the bear had been. Although it wasn’t easy to tell at first, it was none other than Lei Shan!

The majestic number two Chosen from the Profound Stream Sect was being held in the arms of this little girl. Clearly, he wasn’t dead either! He was trembling from the pain, and his tongue had been removed, making it impossible for him to speak.

Bai Xiaochun’s mouth and throat went dry, and he began to back away, shaking physically. All of a sudden, he realized that he had no idea how long the girl had been following him.

“Um, your sweetie has something else to do right now,” he said, feeling like he was about to cry. “Why don’t you go find somebody else to play with? There’s a guy named Song Que, and another called Nine-Isles. Oh right. There’s also Fang Lin. Y-y-you can go play with them, alright?” However, the girl continued to advance on him, chuckling. As she neared, she suddenly began to breathe in deeply.

Instantly, Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to spin, and he felt his life force stirring, as though it were about to be ripped out of him. At that moment, any other person really would have lost their life force.

But Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body was powerful. The silver light of the Undying Live Forever Technique flickered in resistance. Bai Xiaochun let out a piercing shriek as the sensation of imminent death washed over him. Without any hesitation, he pulled out his third mystery pill and threw it off into the distance.

In that instant, the girl's eyes flickered with mysterious light. Happily ignoring Bai Xiaochun, she went off after the medicinal pill.

Face ashen, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the moment to flee as fast as he could.

The girl didn't chase him. After retrieving the medicinal pill, she put it in her mouth, and her eyes grew even blacker than before. A bizarre smile appeared on her face as she turned her head to look in the direction Bai Xiaochun had fled.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0150 awe-chapter-151

Two hours later, Bai Xiaochun was still fleeing, and simultaneously wallowing in self-pity. He already had his earthstring capture crystal, and all he needed was a chance to hole up somewhere and use it, but the little girl wouldn’t stop chasing him.

When he thought back to the terror and danger he had just faced, his heart trembled. Around nightfall, he looked around and didn’t see anyone in the area. Huffing and puffing, he finally found a cave in a mountain, where he sat down cross-legged. Looking around vigilantly, he was trying to decide if this really was the best place to make his attempt at Foundation Establishment, when suddenly the air in front of him began to ripple.

It lasted only a moment, and almost didn't seem to be something happening with the world around him, but rather, his own eyes. When things returned to normal, someone was standing right there in front of him.

It was none other than the girl in the white dress, staring at him with her black eyes.

“Don't go, sweetie. Come play with me....”

Bai Xiaochun nearly collapsed. Eyes crimson, he performed an incantation gesture, unleashing spiritual power to form a large violet cauldron which rumbled forward.

Even as the ground quaked, he shot up into the air. When he looked down below, he found that the girl was nowhere to be seen. Apparently, everything from moments ago had been an illusion.

“Dammit!” he growled, expression unsightly. Something about the whole situation seemed strange, and Bai Xiaochun was starting to speculate that perhaps the bizarre little girl had used some sort of magical technique on him.

No longer in the mood to stay in place, he gritted his teeth and continued onward. After going along for about two hours, he saw three cultivators up ahead, engaged in fierce fighting. Suddenly, he stopped in place.

A moment ago, when he'd caught sight of them, they had been alone. But now, he saw the girl in the white dress. She was staring at him with a slight smile, a smile that grew wider and wider until her mouth opened into a gaping maw as she shot toward him.

Scalp going numb, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base. His right hand clenched into a fist, and the Undying Live Forever Technique erupted out. His fist strike caused everything to shake. However, the girl suddenly vanished, and the three cultivators off in the distance looked on in astonishment as Bai Xiaochun madly punched a nearby boulder.

When they saw the boulder collapse into rubble, they gasped and took to flight.

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly for a moment before gritting his teeth and proceeding along.

During the following two days, he saw the girl in the white dress over and over again. Even when he closed his eyes to meditate, he would see her. He was reaching a point of complete exhaustion.

The situation only continued to grow worse. At first, he would see her every two hours or so. But now, it happened every three hundred breaths of time. At this rate, he would never be able to reach Foundation Establishment.

During the two days which passed, he ran into other disciples, even ones from the Spirit Stream Sect. However, the girl in the white dress would always show up, although no one else saw her.

On evening of the second day, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and he could sense that he was reaching his limit. He even felt as if his life force were beyond his own control, and might float away at any time. He was light-headed, and was so dizzy he felt like he might fall over.

“It’s gonna happen again at any moment....” he murmured. Forgetting about fleeing, he sat down on a boulder and clenched his hands into fists. He had one more mystery pill left, and yet he didn’t dare to use it on the girl. For some reason, he had the feeling that the reason he wasn't dead yet was because of that very medicinal pill.

If he threw it out and the girl got it, he might meet the same fate as Lei Shan. The mere thought of that seemed to be a powerful warning to him to not casually concoct pills any more.

“It’s like I’m drifting between reality and illusion,” he thought. “I guess I could treat it as if I’ve been poisoned. In that case, maybe I should make an antidote to heal myself!”

Even as he sat thinking about the matter, a beam of light appeared off in the distance. As it drew close to Bai Xiaochun, it slowed to halt, and a young man appeared.

“Eee?” He was from the Blood Stream Sect, and looked very much like a silkpants. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun with an excited expression, he looked down at the Feng Shui compass he held in his hand, the needle of which was pointing toward Bai Xiaochun and glowing with a bright light.

“I can’t believe you already collected enough earthstring energy to form an earthstring crystal!!

“Hahaha! I guess it’s destiny that I, Xu Xiaoshan, will be the first to reach Foundation Establishment!” This young man was none other than Xu Xiaoshan from the Blood Stream Sect, and he was looking at Bai Xiaochun with visible excitement.

Bai Xiaochun was already irritated, and based on his calculations, he knew it would only be about ten breaths of time before the girl appeared again. “Mind your own business, asshole!”

“I know you! You’re Bai Xiaochun, the supposed trump card of the Spirit Stream Sect. Well, you're obviously pretty weak right now. The flame of your life force looks like it might flicker out at any moment. That means Xu Xiaoshan has had a good opportunity handed right to him!

“Bai Xiaochun, I know you have an earthstring capture crystal. How about we work out a deal? Let me use that crystal for a bit, okay? What do you say?” Eyes flickering with greed, Xu Xiaoshan threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Speeding toward Bai Xiaochun, he performed an incantation gesture, causing eight magical devices to appear around him. Glittering light radiated out as Xu Xiaoshan waved his hand, sending them shooting toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked up coldly at Xu Xiaoshan, and was just about to make a move when, all of a sudden, his eyes swam, and the girl in the white dress appeared, standing right next to Xu Xiaoshan. There she was, her smile widening into a gaping maw.

It was at that very moment that Xu Xiaoshan suddenly screamed and backed up as fast as he could. Terror filled his eyes, and he began to tremble violently.

“A sentient banesoul! Heavens! How could there possibly be sentient banesouls here? Weren’t they all exterminated? Dammit! That banesoul’s got its eye on you. No wonder you look so weak. You’ve been cursed! You're dead!” Taking a deep breath, he backed up even more, simultaneously lifting his right hand to produce an ancient jade pendant that had an orange spot on it, which almost looked like a blood stain. As soon as Xu Xiaoshan pulled it out, he breathed a sigh of relief and then fell back further.

Down below, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he cried out, “You can see her too?! Hey, what’s that thing in your hand!?”

Bai Xiaochun had just witnessed the girl in the white dress turning to look at Xu Xiaoshan. However, as soon as Xu Xiaoshan took out the jade piece, the girl’s expression flickered, and she fled in the opposite direction.

Xu Xiaoshan didn’t bother to respond to Bai Xiaochun, and instead focused on fleeing as quickly as possible. However, before he could get very far, Bai Xiaochun snapped into motion. His wings appeared behind him, and he shot forward to appear directly in front of Xu Xiaoshan, where he clenched his fist as if to unleash a punch.

“Xu Xiaoshan! How about we work out a deal? Why don’t you let me use that jade piece for a bit? What do you say?”

Hands flashing with an incantation gesture, Xu Xiaoshan summoned eight magical items, which he sent to defend himself. “You’re lucky I didn’t take your stuff. How dare you try to rob me! You're cursed, hanging on death’s door! What gives you the guts to make a move?!”

Silver light flickered around Bai Xiaochun as his fist made contact with Xu Xiaoshan’s magical items.

A huge boom echoed out, and the magical items cracked into pieces. Bai Xiaochun was like a gale force wind speeding directly toward the shocked Xu Xiaoshan. Xu Xiaoshan viciously waved his hand, sending his beaded bracelet off of his wrist. Instantly, it transformed into eighteen corpses, each one of which emanated power equivalent to the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Bursting with auras of death, they simultaneously attacked.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time seeing corpse manipulation magic like this. Shockingly, all of these corpses had long gray hair that was black at the roots, as though the hair were slowly turning black. [1. In Chinese stories that have zombies or animated corpses, its relatively common to identify their power level based on the color of their hair.]

Each and every one seemed completely extraordinary.

A massive boom echoed out as the big wok on Bai Xiaochun’s back shattered. However, he received no injuries whatsoever. Instead, his hands waved through the air as a shocking control power appeared, filling the area, grabbing ahold of the corpses and making it impossible for them to move. They even began to tremble and emit cracking sounds.

Xu Xiaoshan made a hissing sound as both of his hands waved through the air.

His left hand summoned nine bronze coffins. As they flew out, they grew large and larger, emanating intense pressure onto Bai Xiaochun.

His right hand caused a bottle gourd to appear, which spit out a huge blast of gravel toward Bai Xiaochun.

Next, he swung his head, causing his hair to flip out. Several small bells flew into the air, which transformed into shadowy figures that sped toward Bai Xiaochun.

Most shocking of all was that he next opened his mouth and spat out a blood-colored fan. The fan waved through the air, causing a 300-meter wide blood mist to spring up. It instantly transformed into a spell formation, which emanated intense roaring sounds as countless razor-sharp talons appeared and headed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“I have magical items and refined corpses! You wanna fight me, Bai Xiaochun?!” Laughing complacently, Xu Xiaoshan slapped his bag of holding to produce more than twenty bottles of high quality medicinal pills, which he swallowed in rapid succession, instantly restoring all of the spiritual energy he had just spent. If there had been a third person present to witness what was happening, that person would have been completely flabbergasted.

However, it was at this point that the divine crane materialized around Bai Xiaochun, transforming into a buckler that swirled around him. Then, a black flash could be seen as black light spread out all over his body.

He smacked his bag of holding, causing hundreds of paper talismans to appear, which he slapped all over himself. In the blink of an eye, over a hundred shield layers had sprung up, creating a 150-meter-thick defense.

“I have plenty of defensive talismans,” he said proudly. “You dare to fight me with those crappy magical items of yours?” The corpses were sent tumbling away. The blast of gravel couldn’t even come close to penetrating the shields, and most of the gravel was sent rebounding away. The nine bronze coffins were also sent crashing to the ground, completely incapable of causing any damage.

Xu Xiaoshan’s eyes went wide as he stared in complete astonishment. When he fought people, he always relied on the large numbers of magical items and refined corpses at his disposal. This was his first time ever meeting someone like Bai Xiaochun, someone who was actually on the same level as himself.

Although he wasn't using magical items, when Xu Xiaoshan thought about how valuable those hundreds of paper talismans were, his heart trembled.

“The information said Bai Xiaochun was mysterious and powerful, but it never said he was rich!!” Xu Xiaoshan chuckled bitterly. He knew exactly how terrifying of a figure he himself was, so he naturally realized how terrifying Bai Xiaochun was. In fact, the sight of so many paper talismans left his eyes glowing with envy. After all, magical items required spiritual power to operate, whereas paper talismans required almost none at all. The power they needed was stored inside the talismans themselves.

They were expensive, and only worked for a limited time; even Xu Xiaoshan regarded them as a bit of a luxury.

Blinking, he suddenly realized that Bai Xiaochun was truly formidable. In fact, he was even worthy of admiration to some degree. After a moment of thought, he tossed the jade pendant over to Bai Xiaochun. “Dammit, Xu Xiaoshan has never given in to anyone. You’re the first, Bai Xiaochun. I know you need this thing, so go ahead and take it. But it's not a gift! You have to give it back when you’re done!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0151 awe-chapter-152

After throwing over the jade piece, Xu Xiaoshan turned to leave. He had already made up his mind that, after he got back to the sect, he would ask his father and mother for more capital with which to acquire paper talismans. In the future, that was how he would make a name for himself, not magical items. Using paper talismans would be far more awe-inspiring.

Xu Xiaoshan was a natural-born silkpants. He didn’t really care what his sect thought about what he did; if he liked someone, he made friends with them. If he didn’t like them, he would beat them up. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, he was reluctant to admit it, but he actually liked him.

Of course, if he had overcome Bai Xiaochun in a fight, he wouldn’t have hesitated for even a moment to rob him of his earthstring capture crystal. However, since he couldn’t defeat him in combat, he decided that the next best thing was to try to con him.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun grabbed the jade piece, a wonderful feeling swept through him. His exhaustion vanished, and he could see everything clearly. It was almost like he had been trapped underwater, unable to breathe, and had just burst out into the open air.

However, it seemed odd that Xu Xiaoshan would simply give him the jade piece so casually. After a moment of thought, he realized that he might have been cheated in some way. Before Xu Xiaoshan could get very far away, Bai Xiaochun called out, “Hold on. I don’t like taking advantage of people. Let me give you these two little treasures in exchange.”

Slapping his bag of holding, he produced two flying swords that both had twofold spirit enhancements. Secretly spreading some of the aura of the final mystery pill onto them, he tossed them over.

“They’re not worth much, but hey, have fun with them.”

The twofold spirit enhanced swords flew over to Xu Xiaoshan, whose eyes went wide as soon as he grabbed them.

“Twofold spirit enhancements?” he thought, swallowing hard. “And he hands them over just like that? Have fun with them?!” Although he didn’t view twofold spirit enhanced magical items as something completely priceless, they were still relatively rare among Qi Condensation cultivators. The most telling thing was how casually Bai Xiaochun had tossed them over to him, which made it very obvious how deep his pockets were.

Suddenly Xu Xiaoshan realized he had even more to learn from Bai Xiaochun than he had initially realized. To casually hand out spirit enhanced magical items was a truly impressive way to make a name for oneself. Having reached this point in his train of thought, he looked more closely at Bai Xiaochun, and realized that he liked him even more. He sighed.

“Alright, look, Bai Xiaochun. Considering how nice you’ve been, I feel bad for trying to con you. If you use that jade pendant by itself, it's pretty much useless. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, it will simply stop working, and even have a backlash effect.” With another sigh, he tossed a second jade pendant to Bai Xiaochun. “Use them together and you’ll have a long term solution to that banesoul’s curse.”

Catching the second jade pendant, Bai Xiaochun narrowed his eyes at how devious and cunning Xu Xiaoshan was. As he watched him turn to leave, Bai Xiaochun suddenly thought to himself that despite everything that had just occurred, Xu Xiaoshan didn’t really seem to be a bad person. Gritting his teeth, he called out, “Hey, hold on. Alright, listen, Xu Xiaoshan. Since you’ve been so nice, I feel bad for conning you. Give me back those two flying swords.”

Xu Xiaoshan stopped in his tracks, his eyes widening. Pulling out the two flying swords, he examined them carefully, but couldn’t find anything about them that seemed out of the ordinary. However, not daring to hold on to them for any longer, he threw them back to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and then produced another set of two swords, which he threw back to Xu Xiaoshan.

Xu Xiaoshan had an odd expression on his face as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun. He wasn’t sure exactly what was wrong with the first set of swords, but he could well imagine that, if Bai Xiaochun hadn't said anything, he might have ended up walking into a disaster.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as he and Xu Xiaoshan looked at each other.

After another long moment passed, Xu Xiaoshan sighed, eyes shining brightly. Earlier, he had only been pretending to like Bai Xiaochun, but by this point, he really did like him.

“It's not very often that I get along with someone as well as I do with you. Alright, listen, Bai Xiaochun. There’s actually a mnemonic that goes along with those two jade pendants, which is the only way to use them properly. Without the mnemonic, they'll create a field of light that will protect you from that banesoul, but after a while, the light will fade away and leave a sealing mark on your cultivation base that will prevent you from using it for a whole month." With a wry smile, Xu Xiaoshan tossed a jade slip over to Bai Xiaochun.

"You scoundrel!!" Bai Xiaochun said with a gasp. If he had used the jade pendants in the middle of trying to reach Foundation Establishment, only to have his cultivation base sealed, he would have lost an entire month of time. He might even have lost his chance at Foundation Establishment.

"You're just as bad!" Xu Xiaoshan replied. Then he coughed dryly. "Well, I'm from the Blood Stream Sect and you're from the Spirit Stream Sect. We're supposed to be against each other." By this point, he was being completely honest, which was a rare thing for him. The truth was that he had never encountered anyone like Bai Xiaochun before.

"Alright," Bai Xiaochun said. "Since you're being so honest, then I'll stop conning you. You know those magical items you used against me in the fight? I stained them all with a medicinal aroma that will attract banesouls." Feeling a bit awkward, he lowered his voice and concluded, "You should probably change your clothes too."

Xu Xiaoshan's eyes went wide; after quickly checking his bag of holding and his clothing, he looked back at Bai Xiaochun with gritted teeth. "Y-y-you!! You're completely shameless!"

"You're just as bad!" Bai Xiaochun said, glaring back at him.

The two of them looked at each other for a moment, then both of them burst out laughing.

“I hope we meet again soon,” Xu Xiaoshan said with sincerity. Then he turned and sped off into the distance.

Once he was out of sight, he changed clothes, his heart thumping with lingering fear. As far as he was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was as much of a scoundrel as himself, which meant that he had to be very careful dealing with him in the future.

Bai Xiaochun was also sighing. Although Xu Xiaoshan was from the Blood Stream Sect, he still seemed like a good person to be friends with.

“Except, he's profoundly crafty, definitely not as honest as me. I really have to be careful dealing with him in the future. Ai. I guess I’m just too honest.” Shaking his head, he swished his sleeve and sped off.

After inspecting the jade pendants thoroughly, he used the mnemonic from the jade slip to unleash their power. Moments later, a shimmering field of light appeared around him.

The field of light soon became invisible, and could only be detected via divine sense. However, as far as banesouls were concerned, it made it completely impossible to approach Bai Xiaochun.

Over the course of the following six hours, the girl in the white dress appeared several times. However, every time she got close, she was repelled. Her face distorted with rage, and she screamed shrilly, but it was still impossible to get close to Bai Xiaochun.

After so many failures, she begrudgingly faded away and didn’t return. At that point, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. Convinced that the jade pendants had actually worked, he sank to the bottom of a remote lake and dug out a temporary immortal's cave. There, he sat down cross-legged to meditate.

After performing one final test to make sure that the jade pendants would drive away the banesouls, his eyes flickered with anticipation, and he pulled out the gray earthstring capture crystal.

“Although I’m starting a few days later than I’d planned, I can still be the first person to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment!” With that, he unleashed the spiritual power of the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation, circulated it once, and then sent it surging into the gray crystal.

The crystal was like a bottomless pit that sucked in all of his spiritual power. Then, it began to emit a gray glow which grew more intense by the moment, and soon caused powerful rumbling sounds to emanate out.

The crystal began to slowly burn, transforming into a gray mist that Bai Xiaochun absorbed through his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. After more than thirty breaths of time, the crystal shook slightly and then vanished, causing massive amounts of gray mist to surge into Bai Xiaochun’s body.

His eyes were beginning to grow bloodshot as the gray mist poured into him, permeating his qi vessels, swirling throughout his entire body. At the same time, pain ripped through him; the gray mist almost seemed to be taking shape, like iron chains that scraped against his flesh and blood.

The pain caused him to shudder, but compared to the pain he had endured when cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique, it wasn’t worth mentioning. Bai Xiaochun didn’t so much as let out a cold snort. Gritting his teeth, he waited until the final bit of mist bored into him. When the tail end of the mist connected with the mist which had first entered him, it created something like a circle.

The moment that circle formed, rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun’s mind, shaking him down to his soul.

The spiritual river that was his cultivation base began to churn, blasting through all parts of his body, seemingly chaotic and without shape. However, closer examination revealed that the spiritual power was actually transforming into a whirlpool.

That whirlpool was none other than the beginning of a Tideflow!

This was the most critical aspect of Earthstring Foundation Establishment!

Spiritual power flowed, transforming into a Tideflow. The mist became liquid, the Earthstring Dao Foundation was formed, and mortality was severed away!

Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, blue veins bulging out on his neck and face. Trembling, he hoarsely shouted, “Tideflow!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Instantly, the whirlpool began to rotate with more intensity, transforming into something like a black hole that sucked away all of the earthstring energy inside of him. Of course, that little bit wasn’t even one one-thousandth of what was required.

However, as long as that whirlpool was formed, it would automatically absorb the earthstring energy which had built up over the past sixty-year-cycle in the Fallen Sword World!

Instantly, streams of earthstring energy began to emerge from the walls of the immortal's cave and rush toward Bai Xiaochun.

Soon, the lake above him was bubbling and boiling as massive amounts of earthstring energy began to surge into motion. The sky of the Fallen Sword World trembled as earthstring energy flowed toward Bai Xiaochun from all directions.

The disciples of the four sects who were in various locations in the Fallen Sword World all looked up. Some were confused, others shocked, other shaken. All sorts of mixed emotions could be seen, even disbelief.

“A Tideflow! Heavens! That’s an Earthstring Foundation Establishment Tideflow!!”

“Who is it? It's barely been a month, and someone’s already formed an earthstring capture crystal and begun Foundation Establishment?!”

“Is it Song Que? Ghostfang? Nine-Isles? Or is it Fang Lin!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0152 awe-chapter-153

The lake above Bai Xiaochun seethed and churned as it became a huge whirlpool, tugging relentlessly at the energy in the sky and the land of the world around him. Endless quantities of earthstring energy poured into it, causing the whirlpool to grow larger and larger until it was like a massive tornado rising all the way up into the heavens!

From a distance, the tornado looked so awe-inspiring that anyone who caught sight of it gasped in astonishment.

In the moment that the tornado connected with the sky above, a spinning vortex formed that was the tell-tale sign of a Tideflow!

“Bai Xiaochun!” Not too far away from where Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of reaching Foundation Establishment, Xu Xiaoshan stopped in midair and looked at the surging earthstring energy. Only a Tideflow could cause heaven and earth to react in such a way. Xu Xiaoshan took a deep breath, and his eyes began to glitter brightly. “So, he is the first one who actually completed his earthstring capture crystal.”

Deep within the Fallen Sword World, Shangguan Tianyou stood there, nine flying swords swirling around him in a sword formation. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the nine swords pierced through the air, delivering a powerful killing blow that instantly cut down a high-level banebeast. Ignoring the finger-thick stream of earthstring energy that flew into his Dao bottle, he stared off into the distance at the churning streams of earthstring energy.

“Who is it?!” he thought. “Dammit! If Fang Lin and I hadn’t fought each other and both ended up injured, I definitely could have been faster!” Eyes bloodshot, he looked down at his Dao bottle, which was now eighty percent full. Gritting his teeth, he gave up on searching for banebeasts and instead began to hunt disciples from the other three sects.

The provocation of someone reaching Foundation Establishment before him left Shangguan Tianyou in a killing mood!

At the same time, in another area, Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect noiselessly appeared in front of a Profound Stream Sect disciple. The disciple's eyes went wide for only a moment before his head exploded. Fang Lin took his Dao bottle, then looked over at the conglomeration of earthstring energy. His eyes shone with a bright light.

“I got Lei Shan’s Dao bottle after he was taken by the banesouls, as well as the bottles of everyone I've ambushed. And yet, this guy beat me to it....” He looked down at his Dao bottle, which was almost full, and his eyes glittered. With that, he sped off into the distance, preparing to select a place for his own Foundation Establishment.

In another area was the number one Chosen from the Profound Stream Sect, Nine-Isles. His hands were dripping with blood, and he was surrounded by seven or eight corpses, all of whom were other disciples that he had personally slain. “These should be enough!”

Other than those handful of Chosen who everyone despaired of ever surpassing, there were a few other disciples within the Fallen Sword World who were also motivated enough to pick up their speed.

And the only way to do that was by killing other disciples!

It only took a moment for Bai Xiaochun’s Tideflow to transform the entire Fallen Sword World into a battleground. Almost instantly, fierce fighting broke out everywhere.

The death toll grew, and bloodcurdling screams echoed out everywhere.

Originally, there had been about four hundred people present, but by now that number had already been reduced by about half.

Hou Yunfei was spattered in blood, his hair in complete disarray. In the Fallen Sword World, he was not considered to be one of the spectacular Chosen, but rather, just an ordinary disciple. However, that didn’t mean he was any less vicious than anyone else. During the course of the past month, he had cut down over ten enemy disciples.

Working with other Spirit Stream Sect disciples, he had killed many banebeasts as well. As a result, his Dao bottle was more than seventy percent full. When he saw the earthstring energy surging in the distance, he took a deep breath.

“Is that you, Xiaochun? You’re definitely going to succeed in your Foundation Establishment. I have to work harder!” With that, he turned and sped off into the distance.

Beihan Lie was in the middle region of the Fallen Sword World, where he was fighting like a fiend. His battle with Lei Shan had caused his name to rise in shocking fashion, until almost everyone knew who he was.

Although he hadn’t been able to secure a clear victory, the battle ensured that his name was sent rocketing to new heights. He was the new black horse among the four sects, just like certain other rising stars from the other three sects.

They were quickly becoming the type that ordinary disciples had no hope of ever catching up to.

Of course, no one knew how bitterly Beihan Lie had toiled to acquire such glory. The truth was that without Bai Xiaochun, he wouldn’t be what he was now.

“I'm definitely going to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment, and wipe away all the humiliation!” Howling inwardly, he selected another target and began to fight fiercely.

By this point in the trial by fire, there were no weaklings among the surviving disciples. All of them had various powerful techniques and tactics to use, and soon, the fighting grew even more intense.

Within the depths of the Fallen Sword World, in an area filled with swirling mists and countless banebeasts, as well as numerous cultivators, two figures could be seen locked in combat.

A closer look revealed that they were both young women. One was Gongsun Wan’er, and the other was Zhao Rou from the Pill Stream Sect. Both of them were exquisite beauties, but right now, both of them were in bad shape. Murderous auras surrounded them as they fought what was already their seventh battle.

During the past month, they had fought each other every time they met, almost as if they had a personal grudge with each other. Although neither could gain the upper hand, they weren’t willing to see the other capture any more earthstring energy, which had resulted in the current deadlock.

Eyes flashing with killing intent, Zhao Rou said, “Gongsun Wan’er, both of us have half-filled Dao bottles. This time, only one of us is going to come out alive, and with a full bottle at that!” With that, she launched another attack.

Gongsun Wan’er’s face was pale white, and her phoenix was seriously injured. However, she gritted her beautiful teeth and counterattacked. Although their battle seemed ordinary in nature, both of them were unleashing powerful illusion magics against each other.

The slightest misstep by either of them would result in death.

The sky shook and the ground quaked. Even as everyone was driven to new heights of madness by Bai Xiaochun’s Earthstring Foundation Establishment, he was under the lake, shivering in fear. Although he couldn’t see what was happening to the lake up above, he was sure that the rumbling flow of earthstring energy had surely created a massive, funnel-like vortex.

“What do I do if people try to interfere...?” Instantly, beads of sweat popped out on his forehead. In his preparations for Foundation Establishment, he had arranged some defensive measures, but now he wasn’t sure they would be enough.

Gritting his teeth as the inner whirlpool sucked in massive amounts of earthstring energy, he managed to reach over with his right hand and slap his bag of holding, producing a stack of over a thousand paper talismans, which he sent flying out around him.

He didn’t activate them, but all it would take to do so was a thought on his part.

The Divine Crane Shield flew out, ready to be used at a moment’s notice. At the same time, he activated the defensive treasure Li Qinghou had given him, which spread out, covering his Undying Silver Skin.

There was little he could do aside from that. Gritting his teeth, he gave an inward shout, causing the whirlpool inside of him to spin even faster. Earthstring energy was sucked relentlessly inward, not merging with the spiritual power inside of him, but tangling together with it. As it flowed through him, the whirlpool grew stronger and stronger, leaving him trembling violently.

The so-called Tideflow consisted of capturing earthstring energy and then combining it with spiritual power to explosive effect. It would temper the flesh and blood, the qi passageways, and the soul. It would temper everything!

For every one part of spiritual power, a hundred parts of earthstring energy were required!

That explosive combination created a liquid which changed the mist of the earthstring energy into a spiritual sea!

That spiritual sea had another name: the Dao foundation!

Every full Tideflow would create one spiritual sea, and one Dao foundation! Nine Tideflows meant nine spiritual seas and nine Dao foundations! Each additional level would be many times larger than the previous level, like an inverted pagoda!

Time passed. Two hours later, and the vortex in the lake above Bai Xiaochun was even larger than before. As heaven and earth shook, Bai Xiaochun let out a powerful roar, causing the vortex to increase in size yet again. Rumbling like thunder echoed out as the whirlpool inside of him reached its capacity. Everything that he had built up over the past two hours was what would shape his first Tideflow.

As soon as the first Tideflow was ready to complete, the whirlpool inside of him began to shrink down in size.

As the earthstring energy and spiritual power which formed the whirlpool flowed through his qi passageways, the whirlpool shrank, and cracking sounds echoed out from within him. The whirlpool was soon nothing more than a black dot which caused his qi passageways, his flesh and blood, and even his soul, to shake violently.

“Tideflow!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

His mind filled with rumbling sounds as the combination of earthstring energy and spiritual power spread out. As he roared, his qi passageways grew larger, and his flesh and blood stronger. His bones, his soul, everything about him grew more powerful.

Also in that moment, with the aid of the Tideflow, the earthstring energy and spiritual power finally merged together to form a spiritual liquid that raced through him, entering the misty sea in his dantian region. It was like a drop of water that, upon landing, exploded with heaven-rending, earth-crushing force!

Bai Xiaochun shuddered violently as his dantian region exploded into countless fragments, which then re-formed into a sea!

His Dao foundation had been established, and his spiritual sea had been formed!

At the same time, his qi passageways, and especially his soul, were violently shaken and ripped away from that which was mortal!

However, the sea was very small, seemingly only about 300 meters wide. Within it could be seen a violet cauldron, covered with countless magical symbols. As it rose up out of the sea, it unleashed a shocking energy which caused Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base to rise rapidly. However, he had not finished his ascension to Foundation Establishment; all of the preparation and hard work he had put into this moment had yet to be drawn upon.

There were two main factors which determined how many Tideflows a person could achieve: first, latent talent, and second, the techniques they had cultivated in the Qi Condensation stage!

Techniques provoked the Tideflow, and latent talent provided the power to actually withstand the force of it. With strong latent talent, one could endure multiple Tideflows. With weaker latent talent, it would be difficult to do the same, even if one had cultivated numerous techniques. In fact, attempting to force too many Tideflows could shatter the Dao foundation and result in death.

At the same time, someone with ordinary techniques and high latent talent would be equally confounded.

As such, it was only the combination of techniques and latent talent that could lead to success. Both were required.

Bai Xiaochun’s first spiritual sea contained a cauldron, which represented the first technique he had cultivated, the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0153 awe-chapter-154

There were few limitations when it came to the techniques which could be used to create a Tideflow. In all the years which had passed since ancient times, only three rules had come to be identified in that regard. The first rule was that the techniques used for the Tideflow had to be completely mastered down to the tiniest detail. Without that level of success, the Tideflow would be a failure.

It wasn’t easy to master a technique to that level; it required a significant expenditure of both physical resources and mental energy.

The second rule was that with every Tideflow, only one technique of any given level of power could be used effectively. Adding in extra techniques would not help successfully achieve the Tideflow.

The third rule was that each successive Tideflow was more difficult, and the requirements for success were thus more stringent.

In most sects, there were few techniques that could propel a disciple past the fifth Tideflow and into the sixth. Such techniques were essentially secret magics, and the foundation of the true power of the sect.

Therefore, the real test was how the sect distributed its techniques, and how deep their resources went. For example, in the Spirit Stream Sect, the south bank’s Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art and the north bank’s Heavenspan Elephant Control Art had to be cultivated to the point of mastering Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning or the

Heavenspan Elephant Body respectively, otherwise only the first Tideflow would be successful.

Only Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning and the Heavenspan Elephant Body would suffice for the second Tideflow. At the same time, because Violet Cauldron Peak on the south bank and Sunset Peak on the north bank were the home to those two techniques, as long as disciples from there had other powerful techniques to call upon, they could reach the third through fifth Tideflows. However, after that point, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find ordinary techniques which could help. At that point, only secret magics could be called upon.

As for the disciples from the other mountain peaks, after reaching the eighth level of Qi Condensation and joining the Inner Sect, they would have access to a second, more powerful technique that they could use to prepare for further Tideflows.

Whichever technique the disciple chose to branch out into was extremely important, and was one of the key factors determining how many Tideflows they could achieve.

Generally speaking, the very minimum was two Tideflows, although three was also possible. Depending on the circumstances, four wasn’t out of the question.

Even the weakest of disciples were usually able to reach three Tideflows during Earthstring Foundation Establishment. In some extreme circumstances, some powerful disciples would reach six. However, from ancient times until the present, only nine disciples from the Spirit Stream Sect had ever reached six tideflows by cultivating a second technique. Of course, those nine disciples all went on to be unique and stunning figures during their time.

Unfortunately, after cultivating that second technique, there was nothing else that could be used for further Tideflows. Only secret magics could be used, which was how the ten great secret magics of the Spirit Stream Sect came to be.

The ten secret magics could be used for the fifth Tideflow on. There were even some secret magics, such as Ghosts Haunt the Night and the Waterswamp Kingdom, which on rare occasions could actually form more than one Tideflow.

As a result, Spirit Stream Sect disciples with outstanding latent talent all had the chance to reach eight Tideflows! Even the weakest disciples could get four!

That showed the power and resources of the Spirit Stream Sect! Of course, the other three sects were similar. In the end, the true question was which of the disciples of the various generations would be able to reach the absolute pinnacle.

As for nine Tideflows, that was the legendary peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. Among all of the Four Great Sects, there had only been one person in the last 10,000 years who had done such a thing.

That person was Master Limitless from the Blood Stream Sect, who succeeded 800 years ago.

The peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment was a realm of incredible power that was incredibly difficult to reach, but not impossible. Although Heavenstring Foundation Establishment surpassed Earthstring Foundation Establishment, it was something that could only be acquired by random chance and luck. No path existed which could be followed to that end.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with bright light. He had studied up on the Tideflows already, and could sense that the sea of mist had collapsed and formed his first spiritual sea. If he wanted to, he could abandon further Tideflows, and instantly end his Earthstring Foundation Establishment as a success.

He would get his 200 years of longevity, but unfortunately, would be incredibly weak among Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators. Bai Xiaochun had no desire whatsoever to be weak. In the cultivation world, the law of the jungle prevailed. Regardless of whether or not he liked it, he knew that it was unavoidable.

He didn’t like fighting and killing, but sometimes, there was no other option!

“Because I mastered the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, I can use that for my second Tideflow!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and suddenly, his spiritual sea began to rotate rapidly. The surrounding earthstring energy instantly began to rumble in his direction once again, shaking everything around him as a second whirlpool formed inside of him.

The lake up above crashed and seethed as a second vortex appeared up above. It was merely an outline at first, but it was clearly larger than the first vortex, ensuring that numerous disciples looked up to watch.

“The second Tideflow. Presumably, all of the people here should be able to reach at least three or four Tideflows. Each one will be bigger than the one before, and will require even more earthstring energy!”

“Dammit! This guy is reaching Foundation Establishment too quickly. That means there’s going to be less earthstring energy, maybe not even enough for me to reach Foundation Establishment!”

Even as everyone else in the Fallen Sword World grew more and more anxious, another massive rumbling sound echoed out from another direction. There, in the middle of a distant mountain range, another tornado rose up into the sky to connect with the heavens. Another vortex was forming!

As the vortex expanded, the earthstring energy in the world began to rush toward it. Now Bai Xiaochun was sharing the earthstring energy with a second person.

In that distant mountain range was an immortal's cave, where Fang Lin sat, an expression of extreme focus on his face.

Everyone was shocked by this new development. None of them could ever have imagined that a second person would begin a Tideflow within only two hours or so of the first.

Bloodshot eyes could be seen as everyone began to fight even more fiercely for earthstring energy.

It wasn’t that none of them had considered trying to kill the two who were in the middle of Foundation Establishment; at the moment, the others hadn’t reached a state of despair, and simply didn’t want to waste time on such an effort.

Two hours later, powerful rumbling sounds echoed out from Fang Lin’s region as his first Tideflow ended, and the second began. Another two hours after that, the lake above Bai Xiaochun exploded as his second Tideflow ended.

As that happened, a second spiritual sea appeared above the first one, and his energy skyrocketed, making him like a burning fire on a dark night.

He took a deep breath as he realized that he had reached the limits of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art; it would not be enough for a third Tideflow. Closing his eyes, he cast his senses inward, and saw a towering violet cauldron within each of his two spiritual seas. Both of them emanated powerful pressure.

“For my third Tideflow, I’ll have to use the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture!” His eyes flickered as the roars of a dragon and a mammoth could be heard echoing out from the lake to fill the area. His third Tideflow had begun!

A third whirlpool appeared inside of him, which exerted even stronger force than the first two. As that force spread out into the world, massive amounts of earthstring energy were sucked toward him.

Gradually, a third vortex appeared in the sky, within which a swirling dragon could be seen. When the disciples in the other parts of the world looked over, they instantly caught sight of the dragon.

“What technique is that?”

“That's the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture! The first person to reach Foundation Establishment is from the Spirit Stream Sect!!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe it’s the Spirit Stream Sect. Who is it? Ghostfang maybe? Shangguan Tianyou?”

“Is it Bai Xiaochun?” The disciples from all four of the sects were shocked, but among the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, there was a stir of excitement.

Shangguan Tianyou looked up with bloodshot eyes and let out a maddened roar as he stared at the huge dragon in the vortex connecting to the heavens. “That’s not Ghostfang. It's Bai Xiaochun!!”

Gnashing his teeth, he turned to find more enemy disciples to slaughter.

Another two hours passed, and Fang Lin finished his second Tideflow. Another vortex appeared above him, within which was a huge cauldron. It was bronze, and covered with carvings of suns, moons, and stars. It seemed profoundly ancient, as if it were capable of melting all of heaven and earth.

It was none other than the Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron!

As soon as the cauldron became visible, everyone knew who it was that had reached Foundation Establishment second.

“It’s Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect!!”

It was at that very moment that a third tornado suddenly shot up into the sky to connect to the heavens.

A third person was reaching Foundation Establishment!

Almost immediately, the vortex turned the color of blood. From the look of things, it had to be Song Que!

“Heavens! Song Que from the Blood Stream Sect!!”

“He can kill Foundation Establishment cultivators, and is the first person to provoke a strange sign with his first Tideflow. I heard that Master Limitless did the same thing 800 years ago!”

“Maybe Song Que is going to follow the example of Master Limitless, and reach the peak of Earthstring Foundation

Establishment, nine Tideflows!”

Now, three vortexes were vying for the earthstring energy, sending it surging in three different directions. But then... a fourth tornado sprang up in the depths of the Fallen Sword World.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0154 awe-chapter-155

The fourth tornado sprang up in a plain, where a grand spell formation had been set up. Glittering light spread out in all directions from the formation, in the middle of which sat a lone Qi Condensation disciple.

He was a handsome young man wearing the robes of the Profound Stream Sect. As he performed his breathing exercises, magical symbols flowed back and forth across his body, each one of which seemed to carry incredible destructive power. Occasionally they would converge into something that looked like an iron chain wrapped around him.

The pulsing energy of destruction that seemed to radiate from the young man was none other than a sign of the Exterminating Obliteration Technique!

That young man was none other than the number one Chosen from the Profound Stream Sect, the first person in the past 3,000 years to successfully cultivate the Exterminating Obliteration Technique, Nine-Isles. He was able to unleash a force of obliteration that could exterminate all living things. It could wipe out anything and everything, and could even form obliteration threads; according to the information compiled by the other sects, such threads were as powerful as Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment.

“In that battle with Ghostfang, neither of us came out on top. Just wait until after Foundation Establishment! I’ll fight with you again, and then I’ll completely destroy one of the number one Chosen in the Spirit Stream Sect!” Killing intent flickered in Nine-Isles’s eyes as he took a deep breath and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, a whirlpool formed inside of him, exploding with gravitational force as a tornado shot up into the heavens. There, an enormous vortex appeared.

Rumbling sounds filled the air as enormous quantities of earthstring energy flowed toward it.

As of this moment, four enormous vortexes could be seen in four different areas, splitting the Fallen Sword World into four parts.

The rest of the disciples in the Fallen Sword World were getting very anxious. Four people were in the middle of Foundation Establishment, and vast quantities of earthstring energy was being gobbled up. Everyone knew that the earthstring energy was limited, and if they didn’t hurry, their own chances at Foundation Establishment would be dashed, and they would be nothing but minor players compared to those who had succeeded.

The fighting grew more brutal, and almost instantly, casualties mounted.

Even as the disciples fell upon each other with bloodshot eyes, the lake above Bai Xiaochun exploded with a crashing sound as he concluded his third Tideflow.

Up in the heavens, the dragon roared, and inside Bai Xiaochun, a third spiritual sea appeared above his second. This spiritual sea was even larger than the previous one.

“The power of the dragon has ended. Now it’s time for the power of the mammoth!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Eyes crimson, he let out a powerful roar as an enormous mammoth appeared around him. It lifted its front feet up, and then slammed them back down into the ground.

BOOM!

A fourth whirlpool appeared inside of him, even larger and more shocking than the third. Up above in the sky, the third vortex had grown still, but now a fourth, even larger vortex could be seen!

Within that vortex was the image of an enormous mammoth, bellowing as the surrounding vortex spun rapidly.

Two hours later, Fang Li followed closely behind with his own fourth Tideflow vortex. As for Song Que and Nine-Isles, they were approaching the conclusion of their own third Tideflows. After two more hours passed, they began their fourth!

Song Que was putting on a particularly stunning performance. An enormous face could be seen in the vortex of his fourth Tideflow, a face with a blood moon on its forehead. Clearly, the speed with which he was absorbing the earthstring energy surpassed everyone else.

“Song Que is already on his fourth Tideflow. I can’t believe how quickly he’s absorbing the earthstring energy. It’s terrifying!”

“Dammit! Is he really going to try to do the same thing as Master Limitless? Is he going to reach the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment with nine Tideflows?”

“This is bad. If someone reaches eight Tideflows, they’ll absorb so much earthstring energy that it will be difficult for anyone else to succeed! I have to get more earthstring energy as quickly as possible!”

Deep anxiety filled all hearts. As of this point, twenty hours had passed since Bai Xiaochun began stepping into Foundation Establishment. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, a fifth tornado shot up into the heavens!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

As it grew larger, it formed a vortex, beneath which was a mass of black mist. Within that mist was none other than Ghostfang.

The sight of five vortexes spinning in the sky caused all necks to crane as the disciples looked up at them. Time passed. It didn't take long before Ghostfang's first and second Tideflows were finished. When his third Tideflow vortex appeared, a huge mountain ghost appeared, revealing his identity to all.

“Ghostfang! It's Ghostfang from the Spirit Stream Sect!”

“He obviously cultivates the Mountain Ghost God-Dazing Magic!”

“Bai Xiaochun. Fang Lin. Song Que. Nine-Isles. Ghostfang!”

As of this moment, five inhuman cultivators had risen up from the crowd of cultivators from the four sects! They were definitely the first wave who would reach Foundation Establishment!

Bai Xiaochun was in the lead. His fourth Tideflow was almost half completed. Next was Fang Lin, who was only about two hours behind Bai Xiaochun. Song Que and Nine-Isles were next, being about four hours behind Bai Xiaochun.

In last place was Ghostfang, who was slower by twenty hours!

Currently, Bai Xiaochun's fourth whirlpool was spinning rapidly, absorbing massive amounts of earthstring energy. The power of the mammoth was pushing his fleshly body inexorably toward the first of the five shackles of mortality.

With every blast of power, he would shake visibly. He had already cultivated the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture to the point where he could make contact with the first shackle. But now, because of his Undying Live Forever Technique, he was not just at the point of making contact with it, he could break through it!

He was about to break through the first shackle!

“By borrowing the might of the mammoth and the earthstring energy, I can break through the first shackle during my fourth Tideflow!” Eyes crimson, he let out a shout and once again unleashed a surge of power.

Thunderous crashing resounded in his mind as he battered away at the shackle over and over again. His body hovered on the brink of crumbling, but he hung on. After a few more hours passed, there were only about eight hours left before the fourth Tideflow would end. By now, massive amounts of Tideflow power were exploding out inside of him.

BOOOMMMM!

Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and cracks appeared all over his skin. His attack on the first shackle was actually proving to be much more difficult than he'd imagined. Even by borrowing the earthstring energy in the form of the Tideflow, he still hadn’t succeeded in breaking through it, not even after thousands upon thousands of attempts.

Using earthstring energy to try to break through the first shackle of mortality was completely unheard of. In fact, nobody other than Bai Xiaochun had ever attempted to do such a thing.

“I can definitely break through!” he thought. Gritting his teeth, he took a deep breath and then drew in more earthstring energy. However, he didn’t use it to blast the shackle, but instead began building it up inside of him.

Eight hours later, and the fourth Tideflow was almost complete. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining with lightning-like brightness.

“Break! Come on, break!” Roaring, he unleashed the Tideflow he had been building up for the past eight hours. Massive rumbling sounds echoed out as it turned into something like an enormous battering ram. His body was like a wall, which the battering ram then slammed into.

Once. Twice. Three times. One blast after another came in quick succession. Soon, cracks spread out in that wall, until at last, the power of the fourth Tideflow, crushed the wall. Cracking sounds filled the air, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun shook visibly. All of a sudden, he felt something like five enormous mountains resting on his shoulders!

Those five mountains began inside of him, but stretched out high above him. They emitted intense pressure that made him gasp, and it was only at this moment that he could sense them clearly.

All of a sudden, he had the urge to destroy those five mountains, to remove the pressure that was weighing down on him!

“Those five mountains are the five shackles of mortality!” Roaring, he sent heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy to slam into the first of the five mountains. Under the explosive barrage, the shackle suddenly crumbled!

In that moment, blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth. His qi passageways, his flesh and blood, and every other part of him crumbled, and then instantly reformed.

He was left trembling as an aura began to spread out from him that surpassed anything from the mortal world. It thrived within his flesh and blood, filled his body, and made the entire world suddenly seem completely different.

There seemed to be more colors, more lustre, and at the same time, he felt lighter and more free.

Moments before, he had been shouldering the weight of five enormous mountains, but now, one of them had been destroyed.

He had broken through the first shackle of mortality!

When it happened, his fleshly body power erupted with explosive force. He instantly surpassed the fleshly body limit of Qi Condensation cultivators, and entered Foundation Establishment!

His flesh and blood, his qi passageways, his bones, all of it surpassed what was mortal.

He threw his head back and let loose a long cry which echoed out in all directions. The lake churned, and the fourth vortex up above went still. Moments later... a fifth vortex appeared!

Within that fifth vortex was a crumbling mountain!

This fifth Tideflow was not provoked by the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture. This mountain had nothing to do with that. It was a natural result of Bai Xiaochun breaking through the first shackle of mortality!

By this point, Fang Lin, Song Que, and Nine-Isles had all reached the end of their own fourth Tideflows. At the same time, Ghostfang completed his third.

Meanwhile, hours upon hours of intense fighting had passed for the other disciples of the four sects. It was then that the second wave of disciples managed to form their earthstring capture crystals.

The first of that second wave was Shangguan Tianyou. Virtually simultaneously, Xu Xiaoshan’s vortex also appeared in the sky.

The next was none other than Beihan Lie, the dark horse of the Fallen Sword World!

Last was Zhao Rou from the Pill Stream Sect!

She sat cross-legged in a valley, and standing protectively in front of her was Gongsun Wan’er, whose face was dripping with blood. Shockingly, Gongsun Wan’er didn’t have a single scrap of life force upon her!

She was dead, and yet, her corpse could still move. Although she was a bit stiff, toxic mist pulsed out from inside of her, and countless poisonous centipedes squirmed in and out of her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. If some powerful expert were to come along, they would be able to tell that Gongsun Wan’er’s brain was gone, and inside of her head was a spider with a human face, controlling her corpse!

Gongsun Wan’er had been transformed into a poison puppet!

“Gongsun Wan’er, you are the first poison puppet I’ve created. Don’t worry, soon I’ll turn your brother into the second!” Eyes sparkling with vicious enmity, Zhao Rou began to meditate, and the vortex up above her rumbled into motion.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0155 awe-chapter-156

Nine enormous vortexes swirled in the sky of the Fallen Sword World, slowly eating away at any hope which remained in the hearts of the disciples down below. In any Foundation Establishment Holy Land, earthstring energy was limited, and could only be used by so many cultivators to reach Foundation Establishment.

Furthermore, the number of cultivators who could succeed was not fixed. If someone reached eight Tideflows, they would absorb even more earthstring energy than usual, significantly reducing the overall amount in the world, and would force some people to end their own Tideflows prematurely.

Of course, someone reaching eight Tideflows wasn't the most terrifying scenario.... The worst was if some prodigy came along among the Chosen who managed to reach nine Tideflows. Once someone reached the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, they would most certainly slaughter the people from the other sects who had tried to interfere, and prevent them from succeeding. In fact, even people from that person's own sect who had interfered might also be killed!

Such a thing had only ever occurred once, 800 years before with Master Limitless. A scene of madness had played out at that time, in which the Pill Stream Sect was completely wiped out, and only a few people from the Profound Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect escaped with their lives. Even many people from the Blood Stream Sect were slaughtered by the enraged Master Limitless.

For the disciples from the four sects who hadn’t formed their earthstring capture crystals yet, they either had to resign themselves to their fates, or go on a killing rampage, resorting to any tactics possible to succeed. Sometimes that would even mean ambushing fellow disciples.

It was all for the chance to get the earthstring capture crystal and then reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment.

Time passed. The second wave, which consisted of Shangguan Tianyou, Xu Xiaoshan, Beihan Lie and Zhao Rou, had all completed their first three Tideflows. As for Ghostfang, he had already completed his fourth, and was moving on to his fifth.

Song Que and Nine-Isles were already halfway through their fifth.

Bai Xiaochun... was the fastest of them all. He was almost finished with his fifth Tideflow. Earthstring energy was rushing into the vortex, and a fifth spiritual sea was forming inside of him.

Four hours later, a tremor ran through him as the fifth whirlpool inside of him expanded. Tideflow power erupted, and his fifth spirit sea was completed in his dantian region. His fifth Tideflow was over!

“Now for the sixth!” he said, his eyes glimmering with intense focus. Having reached this point in the process, he had no desire to give up. He wanted to know what his limit was. He wanted to know how far he could go. He wanted to know... how many Tideflows he was capable of!

“The Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art was the basis of my first Tideflow. Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning was the second. As for my third and fourth, that came from the power of the dragon and mammoth!

“The fifth Tideflow should have been from the magic of sea-forming. However, because I broke through the first shackle of mortality, that turned into my fifth Tideflow. Therefore, it’s now time to continue on with sea-forming magic and start my sixth Tideflow!” Taking a deep breath, he again called upon the explosive power of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture. Having already used the power of the dragon and the mammoth, it was now time to use the power of sea-forming!

The so-called sea-forming was actually a method of creating a spiritual sea, of forming a Dao foundation!

Almost immediately, a sixth vortex formed up in the sky, within which was a majestic, roiling sea.

Although the vortex was a spectacular sight, it was somewhat unstable, and didn’t absorb energy very quickly. Bai Xiaochun had the Waterswamp Kingdom, but didn't want to use that yet. Since he could use the power of sea-forming, he didn’t want to waste his powerful secret magic.

When the other cultivators saw what was happening, they began to sigh with relief.

“Bai Xiaochun’s sixth Tideflow is unstable. From the look of it, he’s already reached his limit, and won’t be able to last much longer. That crumbling mountain in the fifth Tideflow must have been his only secret magic.”

“Six Tideflows is already pretty amazing. More than that would be spectacular!”

It was at this point that Fang Lin and Nine-Isles also breathed sighs of relief. They were completely on guard, and keeping close track of everyone else's progress.

“Bai Xiaochun’s already reached the end, so there’s no need to worry about him anymore.” That was what both of them were thinking.

Ghostfang frowned. Considering that he knew Bai Xiaochun hadn’t used his secret magic yet, he could tell that something strange was going on. As for Song Que, he looked on, eyes glittering thoughtfully.

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun’s sixth Tideflow slowly sucked in earthstring energy, and although the vortex wasn’t stable, it didn't collapse.

Gradually, there were a few other disciples who managed to form their earthstring capture crystals and begin their Tideflows. One of them was Hou Yunfei.

It was after the sixty-hour mark passed that Bai Xiaochun’s sixth Tideflow finished. Most people present assumed that he was finished....

In the little immortal's cave he’d carved out beneath the lake, his eyes glittered as his sixth spiritual sea formed inside of him. Then, he took a deep breath and suddenly stretched both arms out in front of him.

“Secret magic... Waterswamp Kingdom!”

Water vapor filled the immortal's cave, growing more and more dense until it began to seep out into the lake water itself. The lake began to seethe, and in the blink of an eye, expanded rapidly.

Within a few breaths of time, it grew so rapidly that it became less like a lake and more like a sea.

Up above in the sky, Bai Xiaochun's sixth vortex had stopped moving. However, instead of vanishing, it seemed to be building up energy.

Then... a faint pressure began to weigh down in the Fallen Sword World, to the surprise and shock of everyone. Even Nine-Isles and the other top Chosen were all astonished....

Bai Xiaochun raised his hands up above him, then shoved them back down. Instantly, huge waves roiled out across the surface of the lake up above, along with intense rumbling sounds. The sixth vortex began to ripple and distort, then spin like mad. Gasps rang out in the Fallen Sword World as... a seventh vortex appeared!

However, that wasn't the end of it! In the same instant that the seventh vortex appeared, the air above it began to twist and turn. Countless clouds seethed as an eighth vortex appeared!

The seventh and eighth vortexes appeared at the same time, accompanied by thunderous rumbling that struck shock into the hearts of all the cultivators present.

“Impossible!! He clearly used a secret magic for his fifth Tideflow!”

“Secret magic! That's a secret magic! Heavens! What he used before wasn't actually a secret magic!?!?”

“I can't believe two vortexes appeared at the same time. Is that... is that the Spirit Stream Sect's spectacular secret magic, the Waterswamp Kingdom? Or is it Ghosts Haunt the Night?!?!”

Soon, the cries of shock turned into bellows of rage.

“Eight Tideflows! He’s reached eight Tideflows! If he succeeds, a vast amount of earthstring energy will be sucked away!”

“Stop him!”

The entire sky shook as the seventh and eighth vortexes began to spin rapidly. The power of the Tideflow that erupted out to absorb earthstring energy was vastly stronger than anything before, greater by dozens of times over. It was like the power of an enormous black hole, reaching out into the entire world and tugging at all the earthstring energy in it.

The vortexes belonging to the other disciples began to twist and distort, and even slow down their own absorption.

It was at this point that Fang Lin opened his eyes, then spoke in a voice that rose up into the vortex above him and spread out to fill the entire area. “Pill Stream Sect disciples, heed my command: kill Bai Xiaochun. Stop him from completing his eighth Tideflow!! All who comply will receive special compensation from me upon returning to the sect. I’ll acquire Foundation Establishment Pills for all of you, and take care of you for your whole life!”

At the same time, Nine-Isles sat in his spell formation, his eyes flickering with killing intent. “Profound Stream Sect disciples, heed my command: exterminate Bai Xiaochun. Kill him, and his earthstring energy will disperse back into the world. That will benefit me, you, and everyone!”

Even as Nine-Isles’ words echoed out, Song Que opened his eyes. After a moment of thought, he said, “Blood Stream

Sect, heed my command: kill Bai Xiaochun and put an end to his Tideflow!”

Hou Yunfei was starting to get nervous, but being in the middle of his own Foundation Establishment, could do nothing to help.

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes flickered, and a cold smile appeared on his face. He had been shaken by the fact that Bai Xiaochun started his seventh and eighth Tideflows simultaneously, but now he wasn’t so nervous.

“You’re simply courting death,” he murmured. “You can't blame us for that.” With that, he closed his eyes and proceeded with his own Tideflow.

Ghostfang's eyes glittered. Although he felt no ill will toward Bai Xiaochun, at the moment, he couldn’t help him even if he wanted to.

Beihan Lie hesitated for a moment. By this point, he wasn’t sure how he felt about Bai Xiaochun. He hated him, and even wanted to kill him. But as more time passed, he had reached a point where he didn’t want Bai Xiaochun to die at the hands of anyone except himself.

“Despicable wretches!” he shouted. However, he was powerless to offer any assistance at the moment.

As the number one Chosen from the various sects issued their orders, the other disciples in the Fallen Sword World looked on with bloodshot eyes.

“Kill Bai Xiaochun. If he dies, then his earthstring energy will disperse, and we’ll have a chance to succeed!”

“That’s right. Song Que, Nine-Isles and even Fang Lin are people we can’t risk provoking. But according to the sect’s information, Bai Xiaochun isn’t the strongest here. We can definitely take him down!”

“I think each sect has different information about Bai Xiaochun.... But now's not the time to worry about that. Kill him, and we’ll all have a chance to reach Foundation Establishment!”

“He doesn't qualify to reach eight Tideflows!”

Eyes crimson, disciples sped from all directions toward Bai Xiaochun’s lake. The Spirit Stream Sect disciples were starting to get nervous, but considering that all of the disciples from the other three sects were joining forces, they were completely outnumbered.

They were able to stop some of them, but not all. Soon, disciples from all three sects were closing in on Bai Xiaochun.

It was at that point that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open.

“Wanna kill me?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0156 awe-chapter-157

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with piercing light, and yet, inside, his heart was pounding. He had known all along that his attempt at Foundation Establishment couldn’t be made without interference. Unless he immediately ended his seventh and eighth Tideflows, people would definitely try to kill him.

“Song Que. Nine-Isles. Fang Lin. You’re all despicable!

“I'm not taking away your earthstring energy, yet you send your fellow disciples to try to stop me?!

“Just wait until I’m in Foundation Establishment, then you’ll know how awesome I am!” Gritting his teeth, he temporarily suppressed the hatred in his heart. He knew that he was in a moment of deep crisis, and that the slightest carelessness could result in utter catastrophe. The people coming at him weren’t just trying to prevent him from proceeding with his Foundation Establishment, they were trying to kill him and steal the earthstring energy that existed in his spiritual seas.

Because of the life-or-death danger, a vicious, maddened look appeared on his face. All of a sudden, he felt like he was back in mountains being chased by the Luochen clan.

Rumbling sounds echoed out above the lake as dozens of disciples from the three sects closed in. However, even as they neared his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun activated two hundred of the more than one thousand paper talismans he'd set up at the entrance of the cave.

As they ignited, an enormous shield dozens of meters thick appeared, causing the lake water to churn violently. As for the incoming disciples, they were completely blocked by the glittering shield.

“Each one of those defensive paper talismans is extremely expensive. Bai Xiaochun is down to his last line of defense. Destroy these shields, and we’ll be able to get into his immortal's cave!”

“Kill Bai Xiaochun, and the earthstring energy inside of him will return to the world around us. We’ll finally get a chance at Foundation Establishment!”

The dozens of disciples that had arrived viciously unleashed numerous powerful attacks onto the shields. One by one, the shields began to distort and then shatter.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. The seventh and eighth vortexes spun rapidly, filling heaven and earth with rumbling sounds, causing massive amounts of earthstring energy to rush toward him.

When about half of the two hundred paper talisman shields had been destroyed, Fang Lin of the Pill Stream Sect completed his Tideflow, despite the pressure which had been weighing down on his vortex. Without hesitating, he began his seventh Tideflow.

Next was Nine-Isles.

After that, Song Que. Soon, all of them were in the middle of their seventh Tideflow.

Ghostfang had begun twenty hours later than Bai Xiaochun, and was now about half finished with his sixth Tideflow.

Even still, it took all of them added together to match the speed with which Bai Xiaochun was absorbing earthstring energy.

The earthstring energy in the Fallen Sword World was rapidly diminishing, causing the disciples of the three sects to grow even more anxious. More and more of them chose to try to kill Bai Xiaochun. After all, the overall earthstring energy that remained was now almost half gone, and the only way to reverse the situation was to kill Bai Xiaochun.

More and more disciples showed up to attack him. By this point, the lake was destroyed, and Bai Xiaochun's defensive shields were almost gone. The nearly one hundred disciples who had gathered in the area were starting to get very excited.

"Come one. One big blast should destroy those shields!"

"Hurry up. Bai Xiaochun's shields are almost gone!"

However, even as hope flickered in their eyes, Bai Xiaochun ignited another four hundred paper talismans.

Instantly, the shields were hundreds of meters thick, a dazzling display that provoked cries of shock among the attacking disciples.

"Dammit! He had more!?!?"

"How many paper talismans does Bai Xiaochun have?!"

"I refuse to believe this! This has definitely got to be his final line of defense!"

Booms echoed out as nearly one hundred disciples attacked with bloodshot eyes and even greater killing intent. As one shield layer after another shattered, Bai Xiaochun pushed the vortexes even harder, madly absorbing as much earthstring energy as he could.

“Faster,” he growled. “Must go faster!” Time passed, and soon the active paper talismans had been whittled down from four hundred to one hundred.

At that point, hissing sounds could be heard as the seventh vortex transformed into a full Tideflow, and a seventh spiritual sea appeared in his dantian region.

Bai Xiaochun could clearly sense how much more powerful he was with that boundless seventh spiritual sea. At the same time, his eighth vortex began to spin even faster.

It was at this point that Fang Lin trembled and finished his seventh Tideflow. However, he was incapable of beginning an eighth and, in fact, anyone who could have examined him closely would have been able to tell that his seventh Tideflow wasn’t complete.

Bai Xiaochun was essentially in control of half of the earthstring energy in the world, and Fang Lin simply wasn't as well prepared as everyone else. Lower level Tideflows didn't require as much earthstring energy, but in the seventh, it was quite the opposite, and Fang Lin simply couldn’t compete with everyone else. He was totally spent.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Eyes raging with killing intent, he had no choice but to end his Foundation Establishment with a partially completed seventh spiritual sea.

When the vortex above Fang Lin faded away, less of the earthstring energy was being absorbed, and the overall tension in the Fallen Sword World eased up a bit.

Not long after that, Song Que and Nine-Isles completed their seventh Tideflows. Then, it was with great difficulty but no hesitation that they called upon the power of their secret magics to begin their eighth Tideflows.

Rumbling filled the entire world as unstable vortexes appeared above each of them.

It seemed that for both of them, the Eighth Tideflow could fail at any moment. Apparently, the earthstring energy in the world was barely enough to sustain two such vortexes.

However, both of them struggled to hang on even longer!

“I can definitely reach eight Tideflows!” Nine-Isles howled.

“My goal isn’t eight, it’s nine!” Song Que’s eyes were completely bloodshot as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing his chest to wither up, and yet simultaneously unleashing a bizarre power that poured into the eighth Tideflow vortex, resulting in it accelerating rapidly.

The acceleration of Song Que’s vortex seemed to exert incredible pressure onto Nine-Isles’s vortex. Nine-Isles began to tremble as his vortex slowly withered.

“There’s still hope!” Nine-Isles bit the tip of his tongue and then spit out a mouthful of blood, which transformed into a magical symbol that settled down onto him. As it did, the chain of magical symbols that surrounded him began to emit dazzling light, causing the whirlpool inside of him to speed up. Soon, he was catching up to Song Que.

However, it was at this point that Ghostfang completed his seventh Tideflow and began his eighth. Instantly, Nine-Isles, who had already been teetering unstably, let loose a cry of despair.

Moments later, Nine-Isles’ vortex shuddered, and then ground to a halt.

“No!!” Nine-Isles howled, his eyes shining with madness. However, there was nothing he could do. His eighth Tideflow was a failure.

Now that both he and Fang Lin had ceased to absorb earthstring energy, the pressure in the Fallen Sword World had eased significantly. With two less Tideflow vortexes in the picture, Song Que’s eighth Tideflow stabilized even further.

As for Ghostfang, he also had a better chance than before, and was catching up relentlessly. Although he was also teetering on the verge of failure, he was still hanging on, and the question was how long he could continue to do so.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun also benefited, and began to advance even more rapidly.

It was a dazzling scene as three people proceeded through their eighth Tideflow: Bai Xiaochun, Song Que, and Ghostfang!

Two people had failed so far: Fang Lin and Nine-Isles!

As for Shangguan Tianyou, Beihan Lie, Zhao Rou and Xu Xiaoshan, they were in the second wave. Because so much earthstring energy had been absorbed by the disciples in the first wave, their speed was significantly slower. All of them had just begun their fourth Tideflows.

Hou Yunfei and some of the other miscellaneous Chosen were in the third wave, and had just begun their second Tideflows. As far as Hou Yunfei was concerned, considering his latent talent and expectations, even reaching one Tideflow in Earthstring Foundation Establishment was a significant accomplishment.

By this point, the rest of the disciples had no hope whatsoever of finishing their earthstring capture crystals, and therefore, no chance to even achieve a single Tideflow.

In their despair, such disciples’ killing intent soared, and their eyes came focus on the three vortexes up above that represented the disciples in their eighth Tideflows.

“Ghostfang just started his eighth Tideflow, and isn’t completely stabilized. He has a lot of earthstring energy, but not as much as Song Que and Bai Xiaochun!”

“Song Que is super famous, and has a shocking murderous aura. Plus, it’s never a good idea to provoke people from the Blood Stream Sect. Furthermore, he probably doesn’t have as much earthstring energy as Bai Xiaochun....”

“Bai Xiaochun is already being besieged by quite a few people. We should take advantage of the moment to kill him. If he dies, his earthstring energy will disperse back into the world!” After analyzing the situation, most of the disciples chose to target Bai Xiaochun.

In that same moment, Fang Lin finalized his Foundation Establishment and solidified his spiritual seas. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he flew up into the air, emanating the crushing pressure of Foundation Establishment.

His hair whipped about as a mighty wind swirled around him. At the same time, the image of the Heaven-Earth

Furnace Cauldron appeared behind him. Clearly, he was far superior to any Qi Condensation cultivator.

He was the first person to reach Foundation Establishment, and was now the most powerful person in the Fallen Sword World!

“Since I got seven Tideflows, the rest of you better not even dream of finishing your eighth!” Eyes flickering with killing intent, he looked around at Song Que, Ghostfang, and Bai Xiaochun. Then, he shot toward Bai Xiaochun like a bolt of lightning.

“I’ll kill you first, and absorb your earthstring energy. Maybe I can still reach eight Tideflows after all!!”

When using Tideflow power to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment, it was possible for someone to interrupt any of their first eight Tideflows and prematurely reach Foundation Establishment. Furthermore, because the Dao foundation wasn’t complete in such a situation, it was possible to continue after the interruption, as long as too much time didn't go by. However, because of the huge amount of earthstring energy required, it was usually too difficult to do such a thing.

In contrast, once a ninth Tideflow began, one had to choose to either complete it, or die trying.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0157 awe-chapter-158

Almost in the same moment that Fang Lin headed toward Bai Xiaochun, rumbling sounds could be heard as Nine-Isles rose up into the air like a bedeviled god.

His hair whipped about him as the magical symbols which were wrapped around him loosened, creating a band of magical symbols 30 meters wide. They were black, and pulsed with the power of the Exterminating Obliteration Technique, causing a will of extermination to fill the entire area.

From the energy radiating off of him, he seemed even more powerful than Fang Lin!

“Since Fang Lin is taking out Bai Xiaochun, I'm going to kill Ghostfang. Ghostfang, if it weren’t for the delay caused by your interference, I wouldn’t have been the fourth in line to begin Foundation Establishment. Because I started so late, I wasn’t able to complete my eighth Tideflow. But I still have a chance if I kill you and absorb your earthstring energy!” Nine-Isles threw his head back and roared, radiating hatred. He hated Bai Xiaochun, but he hated Ghostfang even more. In the end, he attributed his failure to the sudden rise of Ghostfang.

Of course, he hated Song Que just as much, and planned to get revenge on him as well. However, his plan was to first take out Ghostfang.

Radiating the might of Foundation Establishment, he blurred into motion as he shot through the air toward Ghostfang.

With an inward sigh of relief, Song Que focused fully on his eighth vortex. “Nine-Isles and Fang Lin don’t qualify to tangle with me. Only Bai Xiaochun and Ghostfang do.... However, if they get interrupted, that will be my greatest chance to succeed!”

There was nothing left of the lake above Bai Xiaochun; there was only a huge crater, at the bottom of which was the immortal's cave he had created. There, glittering shields were being constantly bombarded by disciples from the three sects. At the moment, there were only a hundred shield layers left, which was when Fang Lin appeared like a bolt of lightning.

He was a blur of motion that sped toward the shields and then waved his hand, causing the Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron to rapidly grow larger and then smash downward.

“Break!” he shouted in a deafening roar that caused the other disciples to back up in astonishment. Many of them even coughed up mouthfuls of blood due to Fang Lin’s Foundation Establishment might.

The stunning power of the Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron was such that all hundred shields shattered from a single blow.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Fang Lin’s eyes flickered with killing intent as he prepared to enter the immortal's cave. However, it was at that moment that Bai Xiaochun looked up, his eyes completely bloodshot.

“Fang Lin!” he growled, and then his final 600 paper talismans all ignited.

Popping sounds filled the air as 600 shields appeared to block Fang Lin’s path.

“Dammit, I can’t believe he still has paper talismans left!!” Fang Lin frowned. He had just stepped into Foundation Establishment, and had not yet fully acclimated, and was thus unable to unleash the full potential of his battle prowess.

The other disciples from the three sects all stared with wide eyes at what they were seeing. Gasps could be heard as they were shaken by the incredible display of wealth put on by Bai Xiaochun. They all knew how expensive paper talismans were, and a quick calculation revealed that he had just used over a thousand of them. Instantly, exclamations of shock could be heard.

“How... how many paper talismans does he actually have?”

“Dammit! Most people use spell formations or magical techniques to defend themselves during Foundation Establishment. I can’t believe he's relying entirely on paper talismans!”

“Even if he has more of them, it won’t do him any good. He might as well forget about succeeding with his eighth Tideflow!” Fang Lin’s eyes flickered as he let loose another attack.

The booming sounds caused Bai Xiaochun to grow even more nervous, but at the same time, furious.

Without Fang Lin, the situation wouldn’t have been so nerve-wracking. But considering the power of Foundation Establishment was now in the mix, Bai Xiaochun knew that his defenses couldn't hold out for very long.

“He just entered Foundation Establishment, and probably isn’t completely used to it yet. I still have a chance!”

Gritting his teeth, he ignored the booming sounds and focused fully on rotating the whirlpool inside of him.

As it spun faster and faster, the shields were broken away layer by layer. Fang Lin and the other disciples continued to unleash attacks, and time ticked away. Soon, half of the shields were gone, and yet Fang Lin was starting to get very nervous.

“Not good!”

It was at that very moment that Bai Xiaochun’s eighth vortex suddenly stopped moving.

His eighth Tideflow... was a success!

An eighth spiritual sea appeared within him, just above the seventh. At the same time, it seemed like a ninth vortex was about to appear up above in the sky.

“My ninth Tideflow will be... my Undying Live Forever Technique!” Bai Xiaochun’s expression was one of madness as he put everything on the line. As he called upon the Undying Live Forever Technique, silver light spread out, within which faint traces of gold were already visible.

As he did... a ninth vortex appeared overhead!

His eyes were clamped shut, as though he didn't even have the power to open them. He almost seemed like he was on the verge of exploding.

As for everyone else in the Fallen Sword World, it didn’t matter what they were doing, their hearts trembled, and their jaws dropped.

“A ninth... Tideflow....”

“I can’t believe... that nine Tideflows have appeared!”

“The last time this happened was 800 years ago. Heavens....”

Outside Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, Fang Lin’s eyes went wide, and he shivered. He couldn’t even complete seven Tideflows, and yet here someone was working on their ninth.

In the middle of unleashing an attack on Ghostfang’s location, Nine-Isles trembled and turned to look in Bai Xiaochun’s direction. Panting, he said, “The Spirit Stream Sect... has started a ninth Tideflow. We can’t let that ninth Tideflow succeed!” Abandoning his enmity with Ghostfang, he began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, Song Que was panting, his eyes gleaming with the desire to do battle. Because Bai Xiaochun had begun his ninth Tideflow, Song Que’s eighth Tideflow now seemed to be on the verge of falling apart. Expression one of utter determination, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then slapped his hands down onto the ground, causing a boom to echo out. Moments later, cracking sounds could be heard from nine locations within the Fallen Sword World, as earthstring energy was apparently forcibly extracted using some special technique. Moments later, Song Que’s eighth Tideflow stabilized.

Ghostfang observed silently as Nine-Isles sped off into the distance. His expression was one of disappointment. He didn’t want to admit it, but he could sense that his eighth Tideflow was rapidly destabilizing. Because of the appearance of a ninth Tideflow, it would soon shatter.

Shangguan Tianyou was in the middle of his fifth Tideflow, and as soon as he sensed that Bai Xiaochun had started a ninth Tideflow, all of his confidence and pride was shattered.

“Never educated by his parents, and always pulling off freakish stunts. The shameless son of a bitch! I can’t believe he got to nine Tideflows! What a massive joke!” All of a sudden, Shangguan Tianyou let loose a stream of shrill laughter.

Beihan Lie bitterly clenched his fists. Despite the endless frustrations caused by Bai Xiaochun, he had never given up hope that he could surpass him. As of this moment, he gritted his teeth, and felt more strongly than ever that he had to do just that.

Everyone in the Fallen Sword World experienced a short moment of reflective silence. But then, the voices of Fang Lin and Nine-Isles echoed out in all directions.

“Our three sects will never tolerate the appearance of nine Tideflows! You people know what we have to do!”

“Kill Bai Xiaochun! Stop the ninth Tideflow, and return the earthstring energy to the world around us. Profound Stream Sect! Blood Stream Sect! Pill Stream Sect! If we don't attack him together now, when will we?!?!”

A moment later, Song Que’s voice rang out, grim and sinister. “Kill Bai Xiaochun!”

The truth was that the three of them didn’t even need to say anything. All of the non-Foundation Establishment cultivators in the Fallen Sword Abyss were terrified, and began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun, killing intent raging.

Hou Yunfei had completed his third Tideflow, and was in the middle of his fourth. Suddenly, he smiled happily and said, “Xiaochun, you defended me from the Luochen Clan, and now, I'm going to defend you!”

His fourth Tideflow began to fade as he chose to enter Foundation Establishment at that very moment.

He knew that Bai Xiaochun would be in a very weak state, and was about to be attacked by a whole horde of enemies. Therefore, he would... defend Bai Xiaochun!

Even as his Tideflow ended, he cried out, “Spirit Stream Sect disciples, it’s me, Hou Yunfei. I just finished my own Foundation Establishment, and I'm going to defend Bai Xiaochun. Who’s with me?!”

After a moment of silence, the voices of numerous Spirit Stream Sect disciples could be heard shouting in response.

“Sect Uncle Bai had our backs when we entered this place. I'm going to stand as his Dharma protector!”

“Bai Xiaochun might be naughty and mischievous, but he’s one of us!”

“Nine Tideflows! That's a sign that the Spirit Stream Sect is going to rise to prominence! You people want to kill Sect Uncle Bai? I don’t think so!” Virtually all of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples gritted their teeth and began to speed in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Ghostfang couldn’t hold on any longer. As his eighth Tideflow faded away in failure, he thought for a moment, and then completely ignored Bai Xiaochun in favor of... going to interfere with Song Que. Apparently, he viewed Bai Xiaochun's success or failure as having nothing to do with himself.

Beihan Lie let out a powerful roar. Suppressing the rage he felt toward Bai Xiaochun, he ended his fifth Tideflow and chose to enter Foundation Establishment immediately. Then, he stepped out to act as Dharma Protector for Bai Xiaochun.

“This isn’t for you, Bai Xiaochun, it's for the Spirit Stream Sect!”

There were a few other Spirit Stream Sect disciples who similarly gritted their teeth and then ended their Tideflows to join their fellows.

Soon, in the entire Spirit Stream Sect, the only person other than Bai Xiaochun who was still continuing with a Tideflow... was Shangguan Tianyou!

Eyes bloodshot, he was completely ignoring everything else other than his own wavering fifth Tideflow.

Fierce fighting instantly broke out as the disciples charged in the direction of Bai Xiaochun. Soon, the area outside of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave was the scene of a bitter battle as only a few dozen Spirit Stream Sect stood against a crowd of over a hundred.

Time passed, and the fighting only grew more intense. Under the combined attacks of Fang Lin and Nine-Isles, Hou Yunfei was already seriously injured, as was Beihan Lie. The Spirit Stream Sect disciples were shoved back over and over again, and Bai Xiaochun’s shields continued to be whittled away.

Bai Xiaochun could sense what was happening outside, and he was left trembling. He wanted to end the Tideflow, but quickly realized that he had no control over it. It was impossible to end it himself, and in fact, he wasn’t even capable of opening his eyes.

After all, the ninth Tideflow represented the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment!

Unless the process were somehow interfered with, there were only three ways it could be ended. One was to succeed, which would naturally end the Tideflow. The second way it might end was if the Fallen Sword World ran out of earthstring energy, causing the Tideflow to fade away. The final method was if the person undergoing their ninth Tideflow was killed.

Although his eyes were closed, they were completely bloodshot. He could sense that his fellow disciples were fighting for him, and he could tell that they were bleeding and injured, maybe even dying. His mind felt like it was being torn apart; he wanted to open his eyes, to end the Tideflow. But he couldn’t.

“This ninth Tideflow either needs to fail, or hurry up and finish... ARGHHHHH!!” Trembling physically, he let out a protracted inner howl.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0158 awe-chapter-159

To everyone else, this was a rare occasion to see the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, something that, in the past several thousand years, had only occurred once, 800 years ago with Master Limitless of the Blood Stream Sect.

However, to Bai Xiaochun, it was more than that. It was also a chance to make incredible progress with his Undying Live Forever Technique.

It was an opportunity to advance from Undying Silver Skin to Undying Gold Skin!

With the life-saving magical item given to him by Li Qinghou, his entire body was covered by a layer of blackness, and yet not even that could prevent a faint gold light from glittering around him.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun had successfully cultivated the full first level of the Undying Codex!

He had successfully broken through the first shackle of mortality, something no one else had been able to accomplish for countless years. Of course, a few people had accomplished that task in the past. After all, the point of the first volume of the Undying Codex was to break through that first shackle.

But Bai Xiaochun was the first person to ever make additional progress even after breaking through the shackle!

Generally speaking, there wasn’t much in between the different layers that were the five shackles of mortality. They were like circles with a fixed size and shape. However, with Bai Xiaochun, that fixed circle appeared to be expanding rapidly!

It was completely and utterly shocking!

Rumbling sounds filled his body as the golden color of his skin grew more and more intense. The Undying Live Forever Technique was in full operation, and because he had broken through the first shackle, the ninth vortex up above began to spin even more quickly, causing his ninth Tideflow to absorb earthstring energy at a shocking rate.

It was a harmonious cycle. The more earthstring energy that came to form his ninth spiritual sea, the more golden light shone from his Undying Skin. That in turn caused the ninth Tideflow to speed up even more.

It was a seemingly unending cycle that only continued to accelerate as the moments passed.

At the same time, Song Que was calling upon everything he had at his disposal, including secret magics of the Blood Stream Sect and the energy nodes he had connected to earlier, to also absorb earthstring energy at a shocking rate.

For most people, the time it took to complete a Tideflow was set, but Bai Xiaochun and Song Que were completely breaking that trend. Both of them were sucking in as much earthstring energy as other people might take a month to absorb.

As for Song Que, massive rumbling sounds filled the area surrounding him as Ghostfang did everything he could to interfere. And yet, Song Que still managed to succeed with his eighth Tideflow!

As the power of the eighth Tideflow surged through him, Song Que's eyes shone with madness and excitement.

"Ninth Tideflow!" he howled. Outside, Ghostfang's face flickered as he saw a ninth vortex spring into being in the sky above.

According to an old saying, there can never be two suns in the sky at the same time. However, as of this moment, the two vortexes which could be seen in the Fallen Sword World were both that of the ninth Tideflow, and everyone who could see them was shocked to the core.

Even Shangguan Tianyou felt completely shaken. As for the disciples who were still trying to hang on to their own Tideflows, their faces went ashen with despair. They could only watch helplessly as their Tideflows faded away into nothing.

There was simply no way to compete with the two king-like disciples who were in the middle of their ninth Tideflows. No one could absorb any earthstring energy with those vortexes in existence.

"I refuse to accept this!" Shangguan Tianyou said through gritted teeth. However, his fifth Tideflow was halted, and he had no other choice but to enter Foundation Establishment. Killing intent surging in his eyes, he exploded into motion, not in Bai Xiaochun's direction, but to join Ghostfang in resisting Song Que.

Inwardly, he howled, "Bai Xiaochun, I hope you die, and I hope you do too, Song Que!"

Zhao Rou also had no choice but to give up in the middle of her fifth Tideflow, and it was the same with Xu Xiaoshan.

As for everyone else, they were in their second or third Tideflows.

As of this moment, the only people still in the middle of reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment in the Fallen Sword World were Bai Xiaochun and Song Que!

The other disciples who had been interrupted wrathfully chose to either attack Bai Xiaochun or Song Que. Considering that Bai Xiaochun had been the biggest hindrance to everyone, it was no surprise that most people chose to attack him. As such, the disciples who were defending Bai Xiaochun were already in imminent danger.

Just as Zhao Rou was about to go attack Bai Xiaochun, she noticed that, somehow, the poison puppet she had created to defend herself, Gongsun Wan’er, was nowhere to be found.

There wasn’t a single trace left behind to indicate where she might have gone. Zhao Rou’s heart trembled, but there was no time to ponder the matter carefully. Without any further hesitation, she shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were closed, but they were more bloodshot than ever.

“Must go faster!” he murmured. Anxiety filled him; he didn’t have any desire for the fellow disciples outside his immortal's cave to die trying to defend him.

It was at this moment that the entire immortal's cave suddenly trembled violently as the final paper talisman shields outside were destroyed.

Bai Xiaochun had used so many paper talismans that his defenses far exceeded those of the spell formations used by the other Chosen. But now, they had been completely destroyed.

As soon as that happened, the disciples of the other three sects unleashed all of their divine abilities in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Thankfully, Fang Lin and Nine-Isles were being held off by Hou Yunfei, Beihan Lie, and two other Spirit Stream Sect disciples who had reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment, making it temporarily impossible for them to join in. Therefore, most of the people attacking Bai Xiaochun were Qi Condensation disciples.

Numerous cultivators unleashed magical techniques, all of which were blocked by Bai Xiaochun’s Divine Crane Shield.

In the Qi Condensation stage, neither Hou Yunfei nor Beihan Lie had been on the same level as Fang Lin and Nine-Isles. Now that they were in Foundation Establishment, it was no different. Despite having the advantage of numbers, they were still in extreme danger, and were being injured repeatedly. Blood sprayed out of Hou Yunfei’s mouth, and yet he continued to block the way, seemingly maddened.

Beihan Lie hesitated for a moment. He was soaked with blood and covered with wounds, and as such, began to back up. He had come to help Bai Xiaochun, but wouldn't give his life for him. Seeing that the immortal's cave was on the verge of being destroyed, he decided that now was the time to retreat.

Fang Lin didn’t chase him. Instead, he shot toward Bai Xiaochun, joining the Qi Condensation disciples to try and destroy the Divine Crane Shield.

“Are you looking to die?!” Nine-Isles barked, eyes flickering with killing intent. Considering he had just stepped into Foundation Establishment, he didn’t dare to unleash too much of his cultivation base, for fear that his Dao foundation was not stable. However, Hou Yunfei didn't seem to care at all about his Dao foundation, and was fighting like a madman, making it very difficult to keep him under control.

Roaring in fury, Nine-Isles launched an attack with the power of obliteration, which instantly slammed into Hou Yunfei, who didn’t even have a chance to dodge.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was sent tumbling backward, bones snapping left and right inside of him. After he landed hard on the ground, he struggled to rise to his feet, but couldn't. All he could do was lay there helplessly as over a hundred cultivators unleashed countless attacks onto Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun,” he murmured, “this is my fault for being so useless.”

The other Spirit Stream Sect disciples were all seriously injured. Thankfully, the disciples from the other three sects were focused on killing Bai Xiaochun, and weren’t trying to kill them.

Of course, each and every enemy disciple wanted to be the one to land the killing blow. After all, whoever was closest to Bai Xiaochun when he died would benefit the most from the resulting blast of earthstring energy that would spread out.

By now, none of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples had any energy left to fight, and could only bitterly watch Bai Xiaochun being bombarded.

Massive booms echoed out constantly. Fang Lin and Nine-Isles were already top Chosen, and were now seven Tideflows Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators. Under their leadership, the bombardment of all the Qi Condensation disciples caused cracks to spread out all over Bai Xiaochun’s Divine Crane Shield.

“Time to die, Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Return your earthstring energy to the world around you,” Fang Lin said. “Maybe I can't continue with my Tideflow, but at least some of my fellow Pill Stream Sect disciples will reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment!”

“Bai Xiaochun, there’s no way we’ll let you succeed!” As the crowd roared, the Divine Crane Shield finally exploded.

The magical item which Bai Xiaochun’s Elder Brother Sect Leader had given him shattered. As it did, the soul of the divine crane flew out and settled down around Bai Xiaochun, providing one last measure of defense.

However, it only took moments for it to begin to fade away. In that instant, the entire group of disciples from the other three sects stormed in. It was also at that point that the final wave of disciples who had reached Foundation Establishment joined the crowd. The most powerful among them had reached five Tideflows, and the weakest, one. However, they were still Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators, and their attacks caused the divine crane to let out a piercing cry as it disappeared.

Zhao Rou from the Pill Stream Sect attacked with particular viciousness, and as soon as the crane vanished, she reached out to touch Bai Xiaochun’s forehead.

“It doesn’t matter that you’re an eight Tideflows Foundation Establishment expert, you won’t be able to escape death this time. All Spirit Stream Sect disciples must die!” Zhao Rou’s beauty was twisted by venomous rage as her finger made contact with Bai Xiaochun’s forehead.

Just as she was expecting his head to explode, a powerful force slammed back into her, shoving her backward several meters. At the same time, the attacks from the other disciples also rebounded.

Booms rang out, but a black glow emanated from Bai Xiaochun, defending against everything.

“Dammit! He still has more defenses!?”

“This Bai Xiaochun has profound defensive preparations. He must have known that reaching nine Tideflows would provoke widespread rage. That was why he prepared so well ahead of time!”

“It doesn’t matter how many defensive layers he has. However much earthstring energy he's absorbed, that’s how much he's going to spit back out!”

The glow of magical techniques rose high into the air as seven or eight Foundation Establishment cultivators and more than a hundred Qi Condensation disciples unleashed attacks. The life-saving magical item from Li Qinghou began to distort, and after a few moments, a popping sound could be heard as it reverted into a bracelet, which was now covered with cracks. If it weren’t for the fact that the new Foundation Establishment cultivators didn’t dare to fully call upon all their power, it would have already been destroyed.

When the black glow vanished, Bai Xiaochun was revealed, shining with boundless golden light!!

“Die!” Zhao Rou said excitedly. She once again reached out with her index finger, and yet, before she could get close, Bai Xiaochun's eyes snapped open.

They looked like the eyes of a wild beast, filled with boundless madness and infinitely burning rage. The entire world seemed to suddenly freeze in place!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0159 awe-chapter-160

When Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, he saw Nine-Isles’ vicious expression, Fang Lin’s cruel smile, and other Foundation Establishment cultivators, including Zhao Rou, whose beautiful face was twisted with venomous rage as she reached out toward his forehead.

Everything around him was moving incredibly slowly, as if time had suddenly been locked in place.

He could sense that his ninth Tideflow had ended, and that a ninth spiritual sea existed in his dantian region.

He now had a total of nine spiritual seas, each one larger and more magnificent than the one beneath it. Boundless spiritual power surged inside of him, pouring through his body. As his spiritual seas grew more and more stable, his Dao foundation was formed!

He also realized something that none of the other disciples would be aware of; the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, nine Tideflows, didn't require a long period of stabilization like the other levels did.

It stabilized almost instantly, filling him with a sensation of unprecedented power. He had never experienced this level of spiritual power, this much vital energy. He could clearly sense the terrifying life force that radiated out from him, as well as the signs that his longevity was increasing.

In addition to all that, his Undying Skin had already broken through to the next level. Instead of Undying Silver Skin, he now had Undying Gold Skin!

He had advanced by leaps and bounds, had become more powerful in all aspects. He had reached a new level of life that was completely different from before. As of this moment, he was no longer a part of the mortal world, but was a true cultivator who had shed his mortality!

However, the price he had to pay was immense, and he was well aware of that. He understood that only the fit survived, and he understood the law of the jungle. He knew that on the path to living forever, it didn’t matter if he hated fighting and killing. The path was narrow and cramped, and although he was willing to walk it along with others, there were many who didn’t share such sentiments.

He knew now more than ever that sometimes, even if he didn’t feel like killing someone, that person might want to kill him. In that case, he could either close his eyes and die, or unleash his rage and fight!

He saw the shattered battleground that was the area outside his immortal's cave. He saw the injured Spirit Stream Sect disciples, and he saw the bloodied and unconscious Hou Yunfei.

He was so moved that tears welled up in his eyes. These were his own fellow disciples, like his family. Each and every Spirit Stream Sect disciple was a person he would never be able to forget.

He saw some of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples who were now nothing more than corpses, and it filled his heart with pain. Their end came much like Zhou Youdao's, and that idea filled Bai Xiaochun with so much rage that his eyes turned red.

How his fury burned!

He was furious that he had been besieged, and furious that Spirit Stream Sect disciples had died defending him. He was furious that, despite not having provoked any of these other sects, they had come to take his life!

“I practice cultivation because I want to live forever. I don’t like fighting and killing. But... I can if I have to!” To Bai Xiaochun, the world had turned as crimson as blood. Everything had slowed down to the point where it wasn’t moving.

“My fellow Spirit Stream Sect disciples died protecting me. So now, I’ll make sure the survivors reach Foundation Establishment!

“Each and every Spirit Stream Sect disciple here is going to get to Earthstring Foundation Establishment!”

Rage burning in his heart, he spoke the words like an oath, and then, everything seemed to return to normal. Zhao Rou looked just as ferocious as she had moments ago. As her index finger closed in on his forehead, it suddenly lurched to a stop. At some unknown point, Bai Xiaochun had raised his own right hand, and before Zhao Rou even realized what had happened, he clamped his hand down onto her wrist.

“No!!” she screamed. She was about to attempt to sever her own arm to get away, but Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with killing intent, and he squeezed his hand down. A popping sound could be heard, along with a bitter scream as Zhao Rou’s entire arm exploded. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and took a step forward, slamming bodily into her. Her chest caved in and blood sprayed out of her mouth, along with a choked shriek. Even as she attempted to turn and flee, her entire body exploded.

At the same time, her Dao foundation was destroyed. She had just stepped into Foundation Establishment, and the earthstring energy inside of her hadn’t completely solidified. As she died, massive quantities of earthstring energy erupted out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun quickly waved his sleeve, sending it in the direction of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

Everything happened in the briefest of moments. Bai Xiaochun’s hair flew around him as he took another step forward, appearing in front of a disciple from the Profound Stream Sect who had experienced two Tideflows. Before the disciple even realized what was happening, Bai Xiaochun grabbed his neck and squeezed his hand down.

CRACK!

Bai Xiaochun threw the body toward the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, and as it exploded, large quantities of earthstring energy surged out.

He took another step forward, ending up in front of a disciple from the Blood Stream Sect who had experienced three Tideflows. A single fist strike, and the disciple exploded.

One more step put him in front of a disciple from the Pill Stream Sect with a single Tideflow cultivation base. Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, and the aura of the Waterswamp Kingdom appeared. It was merely the aura, nothing more, and yet the Pill Stream Sect disciple’s eyes went bloodshot, and exploded into bits!

Just like before, earthstring energy flowed out toward the Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun stopped in place. Only a brief moment had elapsed since he had stepped forward to kill Zhao Rou.

As he stood there, surrounded by rumbling sounds, the crowds of attacking disciples from the other sects were shocked to find that the person who had been sitting cross-legged in meditation had vanished, and now stood right in front of them.

Zhao Rou had been killed, and Foundation Establishment cultivators from the Pill Stream Sect, Profound Stream Sect, and Blood Stream Sect had all been cut down. At the same time, a huge amount of earthstring energy was swirling toward the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, who were just as shocked as everyone else.

Voice booming like thunder, Bai Xiaochun roared, “Friends from the Spirit Stream Sect, the time has come to reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment, and I will be your Dharma protector!” Trembling, the Spirit Stream Sect disciples quickly sat down cross-legged and began to absorb the earthstring energy.

Because this earthstring energy came directly from slaughtered Foundation Establishment cultivators, there was no need for an earthstring capture crystal to be able to absorb it!

Everything happened so quickly that the minds of the onlookers were left reeling, and their scalps went numb. Gasps could be heard as all of them were filled with intense sensations of deadly crisis.

Nine-Isles’ eyes were wide with disbelief. Fang Lin was shaking visibly, and felt as if every drop of blood inside of him were screaming at him that Bai Xiaochun was more terrifying than he could possibly imagine.

“Impossible!”

Even as everyone reeled in shock, killing intent flickered in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and he took another step forward, placing him in front of Nine-Isles.

A single punch caused blood to spray out of Nine-Isles’s mouth. Screaming, he called upon all of the power of the Exterminating Obliteration Technique to defend himself. Then, face ashen, he fled without the slightest hesitation.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. He had sensed a strange power in Nine-Isles just now, something that protected his life force. Even though it wasn’t a full match for Bai Xiaochun, it was still powerful!

Bai Xiaochun let Nine-Isles flee, and flickered into motion, appearing in front of Fang Lin. Instantly, two fingers shot out toward Fang Lin’s throat.

It didn’t matter how Fang Lin tried to defend himself. It didn't matter what magical techniques or magical items he called up. Everything was crushed by Bai Xiaochun’s fingers. They destroyed everything like a hammer crushing an ice cube, speeding forward to latch onto Fang Lin’s throat.

Throat Crushing Grasp!

A cracking sound rang out, and Fang Lin’s eyes went wide. Blood oozed out of his mouth as his seven-layered Dao foundation collapsed. He wasn’t even able to scream. Bai Xiaochun tossed his body off to the side, releasing earthstring energy ten times stronger than anything before.

The Spirit Stream Sect disciples trembled as they madly absorbed it.

“I never thought you’d be so much weaker than Nine-Isles,” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes flashing.

It was at that very moment that a black soul fire flew out from Fang Lin’s body, but before it could get very far, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward and grabbed it.

A face was visible inside of the soul fire, but it wasn’t Fang Lin’s. It was a sinister face which was half covered by a black birthmark, making it almost look like a yin-yang symbol. It stared at Bai Xiaochun, and then began to chuckle.

“I'm only a soul seed, but considering I found someone interesting like you among all these people makes dying worth it. I'm sure we’ll meet again someday!”

With that, the soul fire faded away. Although no one else was able to observe what had happened, Bai Xiaochun could hear the voice clearly in his head.

“Parlor tricks!” Bai Xiaochun said, snorting coldly.

It was only at around this time that the other disciples in the area began to react. Miserable screams rang out as the terrified disciples attempted to flee in all directions.

As far as they were concerned, Bai Xiaochun had turned into a devil!

“Zhao Rou’s dead! Fang Lin’s dead! Nine-Isles has fled!”

“Heavens! Is this the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment?!”

“800 years ago, Master Limitless of the Blood Stream Sect reached the peak, and almost all of the disciples from the other three sects were wiped out.”

Screaming, the more than one hundred disciples in the area began to flee as if they had gone mad. Their minds were trembling, and they were completely and utterly shaken by the terror that was Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, the Spirit Stream Sect disciples were shivering in excitement. Beihan Lie was panting as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, his feelings even more complicated than before. However, his determination to surpass him only continued to grow stronger.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t chase any of the fleeing disciples. He quickly went over to Hou Yunfei and placed his palm onto his chest. Earthstring energy poured into him, restoring his Dao foundation. A moment later, the signs of a Tideflow once again appeared.

Hou Yunfei slowly opened his eyes, and when he saw Bai Xiaochun, he smiled.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the other Spirit Stream Sect disciples as they reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment. None of them would be able to achieve three Tideflows, only two at the most. After all, even with Bai Xiaochun helping them, there still wasn’t much earthstring energy left to split between everyone.

Despite that, everyone was profoundly shaken.

“Not enough earthstring energy....” Bai Xiaochun thought as he watched Hou Yunfei absorbing the energy. Then he looked up toward the lone remaining vortex up in the sky.

It was none other than Song Que, in the middle of his ninth Tideflow!

“You sent people to kill me and stop my nine Tideflows. Well, Bai Xiaochun isn’t the type of person who gets hit and doesn’t hit back! If I stop your Tideflow, Big Bro Hou will have more earthstring energy for himself!” His eyes flashed with cold light, but then he hesitated, as he remembered that there were many disciples here who needed someone to stand for them as Dharma protector.

Beihan Lie took a deep breath as he sensed that his own faded Tideflow was on the verge of resuming. “Bai Xiaochun, you go. We might have a beef with each other, but I have no desire for a second Master Limitless to arise in the Blood Stream Sect. You go stop Song Que. I’ll defend everyone here!”

Bai Xiaochun gave him a deep look, his heart filled with regret. After clasping hands and bowing deeply, he transformed into a beam of light that shot up toward Song Que!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0160 awe-chapter-161

Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou were already in the process of bombarding Song Que’s spell formation. Although the spell formation was cracked and crumbling, it still held.

Song Que’s ninth vortex spun rapidly overhead, sucking in earthstring energy from all over the Fallen Sword World.

His eyes were closed, but they were still completely bloodshot. As he sat there cross-legged, he went all out with every resource at his disposal, which included absorbing earthstring energy via the energy nodes throughout the Fallen Sword World, which he had linked together as a spell formation.

Although no one could see those nodes, cracks were now starting form on them, especially the node in the location where Bai Xiaochun had first met Song Que outside the body of the sword. As the cracks spread out, the surface of the enormous, otherworldly sword began to destabilize to the point where it was starting to crumble.

However, the signs of the potential destruction of the sword were impossible to detect, even by Ouyang Jie outside on Mount Flamecrane.

“Must go faster!” Song Que howled inwardly. His hands were splayed on the ground in front of him, and his hair whipped about his head as he absorbed huge quantities of earthstring energy. As the vortex spun, he got closer and closer to completing his ninth Tideflow, and the world around him trembled. Even the sky seemed to be weakening.

In fact, there was another trend that could not be detected except by someone sitting exactly where Song Que was sitting. In the very middle of the vortex up above in the weakening sky, there was... a strand of energy... that was so faint nobody would ever notice it!

It was completely different than earthstring energy, something that existed on a higher level... a completely shocking type of energy!

Only someone sitting exactly where Song Que was sitting would be able to detect it, the reason being that he was sitting on the last energy node in the Fallen Sword World! Song Que had selected this location to reach Foundation Establishment for a very specific reason!

As soon as Song Que sensed the energy, his heart began to beat with excitement. He had been waiting for this day for a very long time.

“The peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment doesn't count for anything. That’s just the first step. What I'm really here for is... Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment! Only then will I have the power to crush anyone in my path after I get back to the sect. Then I can finally compete with aunt Song Junwan and that damned Xuemei to be the blood master of Middle Peak! As one of the four great blood masters, I would rank even higher than the grand elders in the Blood Stream Sect!” Song Que was already starting to get excited.

In terms of seniority, the blood masters of the Blood Stream Sect were on equal footing with the sect leader. From that peak level of power, all they had to do was take one more step to reach Ancestor Peak, which was an incredibly high position.

However, just as Song Que was about to complete his ninth Tideflow, a beam of light shot up toward him, which was none other than Bai Xiaochun. His eyes were completely bloodshot, and he radiated a murderous aura. A pair of wings could be seen behind him, every flap of which propelled him forward with incredible speed.

Combined with the power of nine Tideflows, he could move infinitely faster than anyone in the Qi Condensation stage, and it only took him a moment to reach Song Que’s spell formation.

Almost instantly, incredible pressure exploded out from Bai Xiaochun, becoming a crushing force that caused Ghostfang’s pupils to constrict. Worried that his own Dao foundation might be destabilized, he gave a cold harrumph and then backed up.

Shangguan Tianyou didn't even measure up to Ghostfang, and with the power of only five Tideflows, had no choice but to back up begrudgingly, chuckling bitterly.

As Bai Xiaochun approached like a blazing sun, Shanguan Tianyou felt himself trembling from the pressure that naturally weighed down from the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment.

“Song Que!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Inside the spell formation, a tremor ran through Song Que, but he wasn’t capable of opening his eyes. He felt a sensation of imminent danger, and his heart began to pound. Filled with a sensation of madness, he tried to get his Tideflow to end as quickly as possible.

But Bai Xiaochun’s voice was like thunder from the heavens. As it stepped into the perimeter of the spell formation, everything trembled. Then, he lifted his foot and stepped down onto the spell formation itself.

The ground quaked, and more than half of the spell formation shattered. Off to the side, Shangguan Tianyou’s heart was pounding, and Ghostfang had to work hard to suppress his desire to fight.

“Considering you tried to interrupt my ninth Tideflow, did you really think I would let you succeed in yours?!” He lifted his right hand, and golden light glittered as his fleshly body power erupted. Calling upon all the force of his Undying Gold Skin, he unleashed a fist strike.

The spell formation trembled, clearly on the verge of shattering. Bai Xiaochun took another step forward, and unleashed another fist strike. Then another, and another!

All four fist strikes were backed by the full power of his Undying Gold Skin. Each punch was filled with force which came from breaking through the first shackle of mortality, and burned with Bai Xiaochun’s rage and fury. After four such fist strikes, the spell formation protecting Song Que collapsed.

Finally, Song Que was revealed, sitting there cross-legged in meditation, completely unable to move even a muscle.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t stop. He strode forward and then swished his sleeve, causing violet qi to stream out and form the shape of a huge violet cauldron. It seemed almost completely corporeal, its surface covered with magical symbols and designs of birds and beasts. Under Bai Xiaochun’s control, the magical symbols began to swirl around the cauldron, and the birds and beasts began to move as if they were alive. At the same time....

The violet cauldron smashed downward toward Song Que.

“Since you can’t end the ninth Tideflow on your own, I’ll help you!” Massive rumbling sounds echoed out as the violet cauldron descended with tens of thousands of kilograms of force.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Song Que’s personal defenses attempted to protect him. When the cauldron hit the light of his defenses, they shattered. Then, streams of magical items flew out, but they were just as easily crushed. Finally, the cauldron actually slammed into Song Que.

A bloodcurdling scream echoed out of his mouth, and his eyes opened. He had just been on the verge of finishing his ninth Tideflow, but had been ripped away from it by Bai Xiaochun’s interference. The partially complete ninth Dao foundation in his dantian region shattered into pieces.

At the same time, the earthstring energy that had been brought together by the ninth Tideflow began to flow away from Song Que, rapidly spreading out and merging back into the world around it.

However, for some unknown reason, Song Que managed to force the escaping earthstring energy into a column of light that shot up into the clouds, making it merge back into the world even more quickly than before.

At the same time, the ninth vortex up above him not only ceased moving, it actually shattered into pieces.

All of the rest of the disciples throughout the Fallen Sword World were completely shocked and began to cry out in surprise.

“Song Que failed!!”

“Bai Xiaochun interrupted his ninth Tideflow!”

“Heavens! Bai Xiaochun couldn’t get Song Que to hate him more even if he killed him! He’s destroyed his Dao!”

Everyone was so shocked that they were going mad. Xu Xiaoshan had been rushing over from off in the distance, but as soon as he saw what was happening, he stopped in place and didn’t dare to get any closer.

Further off in the distance, Nine-Isles was wiping the blood off of his mouth and rotating his cultivation base. When he sensed what was happening, his eyes shone with terror.

“Bai Xiaochun... is invincible!!”

Ghostfang clenched his fists tightly. He wasn’t a person who was easily affected by emotions, but as of the moment, he was filled with countless indecipherable feelings.

Shangguan Tianyou was left gasping. He felt like his heart had been bitten by a poisonous viper, and madness and envy filled him completely. “Bai Xiaochun! If it weren’t for you, all of that would be mine!!”

As everyone was shaken, Song Que fell back at top speed, blood spraying out of his mouth. His eyes were crimson, and his hair was in disarray. Looking like he wanted to eat Bai Xiaochun alive, he let out a miserable howl.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

His ninth Tideflow was a failure, leaving him with only eight Tideflows. As his Dao foundation stabilized, his cultivation base became that of the Foundation Establishment stage. Even as he retreated, his power increased far beyond what it had been before.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he blurred into motion, appearing a moment later directly in front of Song Que. Then, his two fingers shot out like lightning.

Throat Crushing Grasp!

Just before they landed on Song Que, Song Que performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Then he opened his mouth and spit out a finger-nail sized blood sphere.

Despite being at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, Bai Xiaochun instantly sensed that he was in incredible danger.

The spiritual power within that blood sphere was terrifying!

For some reason, there was something familiar about this crisis, although Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure exactly what it was.

When his two fingers made contact with the blood sphere, a shockwave blasted out in all directions, along with a deafening boom.

As the force of the shockwave spread out in all directions, Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou were forced backward, and the lands down below were crushed.

Blood oozed out of the corners of Bai Xiaochun's mouth as he staggered backward several steps, reeling in shock. Despite the fact that he had his Undying Gold Skin, the blast from the blood sphere had actually injured him. Although the injuries weren’t serious, they were shocking nonetheless.

The sense of familiarity he had experienced moments ago had grown even more intense when he made contact with the blood sphere. And yet, he still couldn’t figure out why that was.

“Why does this seem so familiar!?!? Just what exactly is that blood sphere!?”

Bai Xiaochun looked up to see Song Que flying backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying out of his mouth, his chest caved in. Clearly, his injuries were much more serious than Bai Xiaochun’s.

Because he had been interrupted in the middle of his ninth Tideflow, his cultivation base was still in the process of stabilizing. He was definitely less powerful than Bai Xiaochun, and furthermore, he had suffered a backlash injury because of the blood sphere.

Even still, he looked up with maddened viciousness at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was just about to launch another attack when Song Que turned and fled. Even as he sped away, he produced a priceless teleportation jade amulet, which he crushed. A moment later, teleportation power snatched him up, and he vanished.

When he reappeared, he was hundreds of kilometers away, fleeing at top speed.

“I hope he didn’t notice,” Song Que murmured through gritted teeth. “Dammit, he showed up just a moment too soon. One step away, just one step.... Oh well, it doesn’t matter. Even if I didn't reach the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, I can still surpass Bai Xiaochun. And once I do, he’s dead!” With that, he produced a Feng Shui compass which featured nine glowing dots of light.

Those were none other than the energy nodes he had activated throughout the Fallen Sword World!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0161 awe-chapter-162

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered at the sight of Song Que’s precious jade amulet of teleportation. Just when he was about to give chase, he suddenly paused and looked down.

The ground down below had been completely flattened by the exploding blood sphere....

“Hold on a second....” Bai Xiaochun said, looking more than a little suspicious. “If Song Que had a jade amulet of teleportation, then it would have made more sense for him to use it the moment I interrupted his ninth Tideflow. After the collapse of the vortex, he was in the worst position possible!

“But instead of using the jade amulet, he used that blood sphere to fight me. He even got injured in the process. Although it seemed like he was really pissed off, now that I think about it, it seems more like... he was trying to erase evidence down below.” After analyzing the matter a bit more, his eyes glittered.

“After I interrupted him, two things happened. The first was that his ninth Tideflow was destroyed, and the earthstring energy scattered. That was normal. But what was abnormal was how his earthstring energy formed a column of light that shot up into the sky and dispersed even more rapidly than before.

“Although it might seem innocuous at first, those two things together... are very suspicious!

“He’s hiding something!

“He’s hiding something that has to do with the sky, and with his spell formation on the ground. To figure out what it is he’s hiding, I should compare things now with how they were before. Maybe then I can deduce the answer.” Looking up into the sky, he confirmed that the Tideflow vortex had indeed dissipated. Because of how Song Que had directly returned the earthstring energy, some smaller, residual vortexes remained, but they were nothing like the larger vortex from before.

“Because of the ninth Tideflow vortex, and the waning earthstring energy, the sky grew weak....” After confirming this by observing a few different locations up above, he looked back down at the ground.

Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou were still there off to the side. Ghostfang looked suspiciously at what Bai Xiaochun was doing, whereas Shangguan Tianyou laughed coldly in his heart, then turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun ignored Shangguan Tianyou as he studied the ground below.

“This normally wouldn’t be a good place for Foundation Establishment. But Song Que selected this location for a reason. Then he wiped out the evidence when he left.” Frowning, Bai Xiaochun began to walk along, taking time to look up into the sky with every step.

Soon, he was standing in the exact spot where Song Que had been sitting cross-legged. There, he looked up into the sky again, and was just about to take another step, when suddenly his expression flickered. He stopped and stood there, staring up into the sky.

At first, everything seemed normal, even calm compared to before. But then, he sensed something. He couldn't be sure if it was real or not, but based on his nine Tideflows cultivation base, the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, he suddenly got the feeling... that there was something up there so powerful that it was terrifying even to himself!

It was a pressure that filled him with intense desire, something that seemed connected to his nine spiritual seas.

“That’s....” At first he couldn't believe it, but then he began to tremble and even pant. Without another thought, he leaped up into the air and flew off into the distance.

Ghostfang frowned as he watched Bai Xiaochun leaving. Then he headed over to the same spot where Bai Xiaochun had just been standing, and looked up into the sky. However, he didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary. Only someone like Song Que, with a special magical item, and who had activated numerous energy nodes, would be able to do so. Or... someone at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, with the power of nine Tideflows.

In fact, the latter would find it even easier to sense what was above, and with more clarity.

Eventually, Ghostfang shook his head and left.

Not too much time passed before Bai Xiaochun returned, looking very excited, Hou Yunfei in tow. Hou Yunfei was just beginning to resume his Tideflow.

“Big Bro Hou, start your Tideflow here. I’ll help you speed things along. I suspect that the sky above this point has a unique aura!!”

Hou Yunfei smiled. Considering the utter faith he had in Bai Xiaochun, he didn't feel the need to ask any further questions, and quickly sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes.

Standing behind him, Bai Xiaochun reached out and placed his palm onto his back. His nine spiritual seas began to rotate as he poured power into Hou Yunfei to help speed up his Tideflow.

Before long, his fourth Tideflow appeared, creating a vortex that connected with the sky above. Soon, earthstring energy was surging toward him from all directions.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t happy with the speed, though, so he continued to rotate his cultivation base and use the Tideflow power of the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment to push Hou Yunfei faster and faster. Soon a fifth and sixth Tideflow also appeared.

Bai Xiaochun was the only person who could do something like this, using the special power of nine Tideflows. He also had to pay a steep price for it. Considering he was only helping one person, it was a price he could pay. If he were helping two people, he would slip from his spot at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. In any case, he had planned to help Hou Yunfei all along.

Hou Yunfei’s heart trembled. He knew that what he was experiencing now was unimaginable good fortune, as three Tideflows simultaneously sucked in earthstring energy from everywhere.

“Xiaochun....” Hou Yunfei said, his heart filled with warmth.

Bai Xiaochun smiled. Worried that Hou Yunfei would read too much into the situation, he quickly said, “Bros like us always help each other. Besides, I need this earthstring energy cleared away so I can see things clearly.”

However, Hou Yunfei knew that even if that were true, Bai Xiaochun still could have chosen to take advantage of the situation for himself in some way. It was definitely not in vain that Hou Yunfei had chosen to defend Bai Xiaochun earlier.

Bai Xiaochun wanted to help Hou Yunfei form a seventh Tideflow, but Hou Yunfei had reached his limit. Furthermore, his three combined Tideflows had caused the sky to once again grow weak!

As it did, Bai Xiaochun could clearly sense... a very faint aura which was quickly becoming more clear.

It was an aura that seemed holy, as if a great Dao were opening its eyes, causing all of the world, all of this heaven and earth, to prostrate in worship!

After double and then triple-checking, Bai Xiaochun began to tremble, and his eyes shone with madness.

“Heaven... Heavenstring energy!!

“The sect leader was right. The Fallen Sword World really does have a strand of heavenstring energy! That means that Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment is possible!

“Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment... can add five hundred years of longevity!!!” Bai Xiaochun almost looked as if he had been struck by lightning; his flesh and blood were trembling with excitement.

At the same time, a few hundred kilometers away, Song Que had sat down cross-legged in a mountainous valley, where he was fiddling with his Feng Shui compass. After a moment, his expression flickered, and he looked over in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, and the rapidly weakening sky.

His eyes went wide, and his mind began to spin.

“Not good!!” he said, suddenly feeling wracked with anxiety. The Blood Stream Sect had spent years investigating that strand of heavenstring energy. Generation after generation of disciples had provided information, all the way down until Master Limitless reached the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. Only then was the information completed. Overall, the sect had spent several thousand years performing auguries and other calculations to ascertain the method to reveal the heavenstring energy!

Because of that, Song Que’s generation was one of the most important in recent history, and he was one of the most important disciples of that generation. He had paid an unimaginable price to win this chance from Master Limitless.

He had made countless preparations, including activating all of the energy nodes, which had taken a huge amount of time. All of that was to ensure that he could collect that strand of heavenstring energy.

The previous plan had been to reach Foundation Establishment on the energy node where he had begun his Tideflows. After the ninth Tideflow ended, he would use its power along with the support of the Feng Shui compass to capture the heavenstring energy, absorb it, and then reach Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment.

But then Bai Xiaochun interrupted him, and he’d been forced to wipe away the evidence and head to a slightly inferior energy node. The new plan was to rely completely on the Feng Shui compass to slowly capture the heavenstring energy.

How could he ever have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would piece together the clues and provoke the descent of the strand of heavenstring energy? Although Bai Xiaochun was the only one who could sense it at the moment, as the energy continued to descend, all of the cultivators in the Fallen Sword World would be able to detect it.

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!” he raged, his hair flying around in disarray.

“I can’t mess with any more advanced preparations, and I can’t wait any longer. By the time that strand of heavenstring energy fixes onto a landing spot down below, it will be too late!

“I don’t care if everybody notices, I need to capture that heavenstring energy before it descends completely!!” Seemingly teetering on the edge of insanity, Song Que bit the tip of his tongue and spat some blood onto the Feng Shui compass. Then his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as he pushed down onto the compass and howled.

“Heavenstring energy, descend here!” As soon as the blood splashed onto the Feng Shui compass, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power erupted out, piercing through the air as it shot up into the sky. There, it connected with the heavenstring energy, and began to pull it down!

Moments ago, the heavenstring energy had been slowly descending, but now... it appeared in the open and began to drop down!

The entire sky immediately turned golden, and shafts of dazzling light shot down from the location of the energy strand. It almost looked like a sun descending.

That strand of energy existed above all other things; it radiated the might of a heavenly Dao, and instantly caught the attention of everyone present.

It was completely and utterly unique within the Fallen Sword World!

It was something uncharacteristically rare in the world of cultivation, something stunning and breathtaking that few people would ever have a chance to lay eyes on.

It was... five hundred years of longevity, something above earthstring energy, and the ultimate peak of all Foundation Establishment!

As it took corporeal form, it became something like a wisp of golden smoke that radiated the will of a heavenly Dao, which spread out to fill all of the Fallen Sword World.

All cultivators began to tremble violently as they were filled with an instinctive hunger, something which vastly surpassed that which was mortal. It was something... that came from deep within their blood!

It was a hope that surpassed reason. It was insanity!

“Heaven... heavenstring energy!”

“That’s... heavenstring energy!”

“It's mine!” In the blink of an eye, virtually all of the cultivators began to howl with unprecedented excitement and madness!

The wounded Nine-Isles began to tremble as he threw his head back and roared.

“Heavenstring energy!”

Ghostfang, Shangguan Tianyou, and all of the other Foundation Establishment cultivators were going completely mad, and the Qi Condensation cultivators were the same!

All of them sprang into action, converging from all directions!

As of this moment, sects didn’t matter; everyone devolved into chaotic fighting.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0162 awe-chapter-163

For most cultivators, when it came to heavenstring energy, there was no such thing as cooperation with fellow disciples. There was only competition.

Regardless of whether someone had already reached Foundation Establishment or not, as long as you got heavenstring energy, you could use it to reach Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!

Even the weakest level of Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment was above the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. To cultivators, reaching that stage was like entering the heavens with a single bound!

If Song Que acquired it, then considering he already had an eight Tideflows earthstring cultivation base, then when he reached Heaven-Dao, then he would be nearly at the peak of power.

On the other hand, if Bai Xiaochun acquired it, then he... would become something that hadn’t appeared in the eastern Lower Reaches of the Heavenspan River in thousands of years.... A nine Tideflows Earthstring Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert!

He would be the most powerful type of Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator there could be!

However, what mattered most to Bai Xiaochun was not how powerful he would become, it was the 500 years of longevity. Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment came with 100 years. Earthstring Foundation Establishment came with

200 years. Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment... came with 500 years!

In the cultivation world, which had a history that stretched back tens of thousands of years into the past, 500 years didn't seem like very much. But to mortals, that was equivalent to ten generations. Furthermore, it was exactly what Bai Xiaochun constantly dreamed about!

How could he not go crazy about it!?

He wasn't the only one. Most people present were driven mad. There were only a few cultivators who were in the middle of Tideflows, or who perhaps had other reasons, suppressed their excitement. Hou Yunfei was one of them, as well as the other Spirit Stream Sect disciples whom Bai Xiaochun had helped to acquire earthstring energy. They chose to stand aside.

But everyone else didn't harbor even a single thought of giving up!

Instantly, the hundred or so remaining survivors in the Fallen Sword World all sprang into actions. Hoarse shouts rose up as they flew into the sky toward the descending strand of golden heavenstring energy.

Bai Xiaochun was the fastest to react. Just before taking to flight, he slapped his chest, causing a black light to flash off of his wrist and gather near his chest. It transformed into a black pearl, which was the life-saving magical item Li Qinghou had given him. After pushing the pearl down onto Hou Yunfei's back, it melted, and spread out to cover him, which would protect him as he completed his Foundation Establishment. With that, Bai Xiaochun flew up into the air.

“That heavenstring energy is mine!” he howled. He seemed to have gone just as mad as everyone else, and he only had one thought in his mind.... He had to get that heavenstring energy, no matter who he had to fight to do so!

That heavenstring energy was essentially his own life!

“If you steal that heavenstring energy, you’re stealing my longevity!” he growled. He flew at top speed up into the sky, moving so quickly that he was the first to close in on the heavenstring energy and reach out to grab it.

However, just when he was about to grab it, Song Que emerged from the immortal's cave he had carved out. Blinding light shot out from his Feng Shui compass, which altered the course of the heavenstring energy.

Just as Bai Xiaochun’s hand was about close down onto it, it split apart into two pieces and slipped through his fingers. One part, the smaller half, changed directions and headed toward Song Que, while the larger part sped off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bright red as he ignored the smaller strand of energy and focused on the larger one. Rushing after it, he was just about to reach out and grab it when Ghostfang threw his head back and roared, causing ghost qi to surge around him. Disregarding any potential negative ramifications to his cultivation base, he caused a powerful mist to rise up around him, within which echoed ghostly weeping and howling. At the same time, a ghostly hand stretched out from the mist, radiating an intense, murderous aura.

Back when he had been opposing Song Que and trying to destroy his spell formation, he had been worried about the instability of his Dao foundation, and hadn’t resorted to going all out. But now he didn't seem to care about that. He drew upon all the power he was capable of, causing his battle prowess to rise dramatically.

“Beat it!” he howled, shooting up into the air to fight with Bai Xiaochun over the heavenstring energy.

In the blink of an eye, they slammed into each other. Ghostfang attacked with deadly force, causing rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth. Shockingly, ten enormous ghost hands could be seen within the mist, each one of which radiated the power of Foundation Establishment as they bore down on Bai Xiaochun.

“You think I’ll just back down like that?!” Bai Xiaochun retorted. Waving his sleeve, he caused violet qi to swirl out and form a huge cauldron that shot toward the ten ghost hands. Bolstered by the power of nine Tideflows, the enormous violet cauldron was more powerful than ever, to a terrifying level.

Rumbling sounds rose up as Ghostfang’s ten ghost hands collapsed into pieces. Blood sprayed out of Ghostfang’s mouth as he was shoved backward by a powerful force. Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Gold Skin glittered with radiant light, making him look like a celestial warrior. Although he seemed unfazed by the encounter just now, the truth was that his qi and blood were in chaos.

Ghostfang had reached seven Tideflows, only two less than him. Plus, they had been relatively evenly matched in Qi Condensation. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had broken through the first shackle of mortality, and was thus able to crush him.

After forcing Ghostfang away, Bai Xiaochun sped forward and reached out toward the strand of heavenstring energy.

However, it was at that moment that a howl of fury tore through the air.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” A beam of shocking sword light shot through the air heading directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Within the light was Shangguan Tianyou, who was ignoring any potential danger to his Dao foundation, and was even calling upon a secret magic to loosen a reincarnation seal inside of him. A murderous sword appeared which seemed capable of slicing apart the heavens, and it was stabbing directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s face flickered from the sense of danger he felt because of Shangguan Tianyou’s sword. As the sword qi closed in, his eyes began to shine, and he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Waving both hands out to either side, he summoned the image of an enormous dragon, which howled as it charged toward the sword qi.

At the same time, a gigantic mammoth appeared behind him, which reared up on its hind legs before smashing its feet down toward Shangguan Tianyou.

It was none other than the manifestation of the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture, which had become a divine ability after he had fully mastered it.

When the divine ability slammed into Shangguan Tianyou, ear-splitting rumbling sounds spread out. Bai Xiaochun stopped in place as the dragon and the mammoth collapsed, and a powerful force slammed into him. However, golden light flickered, and the power was suppressed.

As for Shangguan Tianyou, he coughed up mouthful after mouthful of blood as he staggered backward. At the same time, his body withered visibly; obviously, the sword attack he had just unleashed had come at a hefty price.

Because of the delays, the heavenstring energy was now far off in the distance, where a dozen or so disciples from the other three sects were already starting to fight over it.

Ghostfang gritted his teeth and abandoned any attempts to attack Bai Xiaochun, opting instead to pursue the heavenstring energy. Shangguan Tianyou did the same.

Eyes bloodshot, Bai Xiaochun flapped his wings and pierced through the air, easily passing them up. As he blasted into the group of fighting cultivators, he waved his sleeve, sending power bursting out, which transformed into an attack that sent everyone in the area tumbling backward. Finally, Bai Xiaochun's hand... closed around the strand of heavenstring energy.

This time, he was ready, and as soon as he grabbed the heavenstring energy, he began absorbing it into his right index finger.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had taken the heavenstring energy caused killing intent to surge among everyone present.

“He can't absorb it immediately. Cut off his finger and take the energy away!”

“Kill him!”

There were a dozen or so cultivators from the other three sects, and all of them attacked like mad. Quite a few were in the Foundation Establishment stage, which ensured that their attacks shook everything in the area. The Blood Stream Sect disciples unleashed particularly bizarre magical techniques. One of them even summoned a gargoyle, which lunged toward Bai Xiaochun as if it wanted to consume him.

Another of the Blood Stream Sect disciples who seemed particularly strong attacked by summoning the illusory image of a huge hand. It seemed very familiar to Bai Xiaochun, but he had no time to think about it at the moment. Being besieged by a dozen or so people, all of them attacking from different directions, caused his eyes to erupt with killing intent.

Although he feared death, the events with the Luochen Clan had long since impressed upon Bai Xiaochun the fact that sometimes the only way to make sure he didn't die was to kill the people who were a threat!

On this day, if these people didn't die, then he would. When it came to heavenstring energy, there were no reasonable discussions, only the seizing of opportunities!

"All of you... are seeking your own deaths!" he growled. Other than the people he'd killed upon first stepping into Foundation Establishment, he hadn't harbored any desire to kill anyone else in the Fallen Sword Abyss, not even the disciples of the other three sects.

But now... it was time to unleash a slaughter!!

Even as his voice echoed out, he pushed his Undying Gold Skin to its limit.

A boom echoed out as he sloughed off the divine abilities they had launched against him. His qi and blood were roiling, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. However, he moved so quickly that he only left afterimages behind as he unleashed a fist strike against each of the people besieging him!

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Each fist strike was backed with killing intent. He had already broken through the first shackle of mortality, and was at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. His blows were like a deadly wind that slammed into the surrounding disciples of the three sects. All of them trembled, and then dissolved into mists of blood.

Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou had no other option than to retreat in the face of such ferocity.

One of the Blood Stream Sect disciples, in the moment before he exploded, unleashed some unknown divine ability that allowed his soul to flee his body, leaving behind nothing but a husk. As his body died, his face rippled, and a mask was revealed. The soul entered the mask, and instantly attempted to flee, but Bai Xiaochun noticed and grabbed it. After squeezing the mask hard, he realized he couldn’t destroy it, so he poured some cultivation base power into it to seal it, then threw it into his bag of holding.

By this point, all of the dozen or so disciples who had attacked him were dead. And yet, more disciples were closing in from off in the distance. One among their number shot out in front of the pack.

"Leave that heavenstring energy and get out of here, Bai Xiaochun!” It was none other than Xu Xiaoshan. Mixed emotions could be seen on his face as he waved his hand, causing nine huge coffins to appear. Based on the sealing marks on the coffins, they could only be opened by someone in the Foundation Establishment stage. Moments later, Xu Xiaoshan’s Foundation Establishment cultivation base erupted with power, and the stone coffins began to open. An aura of death spread out, and nine zombies appeared, all of them sporting long, black hair!

Each and every one had the aura of Foundation Establishment!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0163 awe-chapter-164

Bai Xiaochun had tangled with the Blood Stream Sect before, and even back then, he could tell that their magical techniques were like the name of their sect: something akin to a devilish Dao. Assuming that the Spirit Stream Sect’s information about the Blood Stream Sect was correct and not an exaggeration, then their magical techniques really were bizarre to the extreme!

Whether it was the huge hand that appeared behind the body refinement cultivator, which Bai Xiaochun found so strangely familiar, or the gargoyles, or the corpse-refining magic of Xu Xiaoshan, all of them seemed to abound with intensely murderous auras.

As Xu Xiaoshan closed in, he waved his finger at Bai Xiaochun, and the nine black-haired zombies shot toward Bai Xiaochun like nine meteors.

The aura of death they exuded rose high into the air, and they let out piercing cries that locked down the entire area around Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes glittered as he sprang into motion, golden light shining around him. His two fingers flickered like lightning as they shot out and crushed down onto the neck of one of the black-haired zombies.

A cracking sound could be heard, and the zombie’s head tilted to the side, but it wasn’t dead. It punched out at Bai Xiaochun, who leapt to the side, hair flying around him as he shoved out with his palm.

That motion was backed by the explosive power of nine Tideflows, creating a gale-force wind that swept out in all directions. The power of the dragon and mammoth also appeared, becoming a powerful attack which shoved all of the black-haired zombies away. Then, Bai Xiaochun launched himself toward Xu Xiaoshan.

Xu Xiaoshan’s pupils constricted as Bai Xiaochun unleashed a fist strike.

A boom rang out, and Xu Xiaoshan coughed up a mouthful of blood, simultaneously unleashing a host of defensive magical items. Despite all of his defenses, he was still seriously injured and thrown back several hundred meters by the power of the fist.

At the same time, Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou unleashed a combined attack.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pause for even a moment. Turning, he unleashed all possible speed to escape. He knew he couldn’t easily defeat Ghostfang, Xu Xiaoshan, and Shangguan Tianyou at the same time, and also didn’t want to let them fire off any truly deadly attacks.

Even as he fled, the disciples from the other three sects closed in. Although they all coveted the heavenstring energy, considering that Bai Xiaochun had it, they didn’t dare to try to attack him on their own. However, as a group, they were confident enough to try to slow him down and give Ghostfang, Xu Xiaoshan and Shangguan Tianyou a chance go at him.

If that happened, it wouldn’t necessarily be impossible for them to get the heavenstring energy in the end!

Many of the Profound Stream Sect disciples also possessed shadow projections. They could unleash illusory images, some weak, some strong, that allowed them to attack Bai Xiaochun from a distance.

The Pill Stream Sect disciples also had their own unique methods of attack, including poisons, exploding pills, and the like.

The glow of magical techniques surrounded Bai Xiaochun constantly, and booms filled the air. A grave expression could be seen on his face. Even with his Undying Gold Skin, the bombardment was a big headache.

“You people really are looking to die!” Killing intent flickered in his eyes as he suddenly transformed into a long streak of light that shot toward the surrounding disciples. In the blink of an eye, he slammed into one of the Profound Stream Sect disciples, who spun off to the side and then exploded.

With that, Bai Xiaochun emerged from the blockade, but even as he did, a voice could be heard coming from up ahead.

“Bai Xiaochun, we might be from the same sect, but that doesn’t mean we can't fight over heavenstring energy!” It was Beihan Lie, striding forward with a burning sun held in his outstretched hand, a sun which was rapidly turning black. Apparently, this was his Sunset Incantation.

“Beihan Lie!” Bai Xiaochun said, frowning. Almost at the same moment that Beihan Lie attacked, a beam of light appeared off in the distance, sending a screaming wind blasting out in all directions, which was filled with the power of the Exterminating Obliteration Technique. It was none other than Nine-Isles.

He didn’t care that he was injured, or that Bai Xiaochun was unnaturally powerful. He still was ready to fight.

He unleashed his attack in almost perfect unison with Beihan Lie. Magical symbols of obliteration exploded out, joining the pitch black sun to race toward Bai Xiaochun.

The massive explosion made it impossible for Bai Xiaochun to proceed forward. Moments later, Ghostfang, Xu Xiaoshan, and Shangguan Tianyou arrived, and soon he was dealing with five besiegers.

Each and every one of those five people was a spectacular Chosen among Chosen, and when they joined forces, their power was beyond description.

The other disciples in the area now felt a bit of hope. More than a hundred people closed in from all sides, joining forces to try to kill Bai Xiaochun and snatch the heavenstring energy.

“Bai Xiaochun, you might be strong, but you can’t beat all of us together. Hand over that heavenstring energy!”

“Bai Xiaochun, Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment is too important. We’d fight anybody who had that energy. There is no such thing as a fellow disciple in this situation. It’s survival of the fittest!”

“Give up that heavenstring energy!”

Even as people shouted out, Ghostfang blurred into motion, exploding with energy as he unleashed the power of his cultivation base. Shockingly, he transformed into a ghost finger! Although it was only a finger, it was huge compared to the ghost hand from before. It filled half the sky, and caused everything to shake violently as it crushed down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes flickered with intense killing intent. After taking a deep breath, he sent sword qi streaming out of all of the pores on his body. It was almost as if his own qi, blood, soul, and cultivation base were manifesting externally, transforming into an enormous heavenly sword that slashed down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Xu Xiaoshan let out a powerful roar as his forehead split open. Unexpectedly, a beam of blood-colored light shot out, which transformed into a black-haired zombie. It seemed ancient, and as soon as it appeared, an aura of death spread out that distorted the entire area. Brandishing its long, claw-like fingernails and razor-sharp fangs, it leaped toward Bai Xiaochun.

Things weren’t over yet, though. Beihan Lie gritted his teeth and closed his eyes, causing black flames to erupt off of him. They covered his body, spreading wider and wider as he transformed into a black sun which soared up into the air and then dropped down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Then there was Nine-Isles. A piercing whistling sound could be heard as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Magical symbols streamed out, each one of which burst with the power of the Exterminating Obliteration Technique. The magical symbols then rapidly formed together into a single thread that seemed capable of slicing through anything and everything. Nine-Isles was left ashen-faced and coughing up blood. He even seemed to age visibly.

Five top Chosen were all attacking simultaneously!

In addition to them were a host of Qi Condensation disciples, all of whom launched their most powerful magical techniques. The entire area lit up with colorful lights as countless divine abilities bore down on Bai Xiaochun.

The intense danger of the situation caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp. By this point, he had already assimilated about half of the heavenstring energy, and it was coursing through his qi passageways into his nine spiritual seas. If he tried to stop the process at this point, it could have serious negative ramifications.

Besides, he wasn’t willing to give up the heavenstring energy after just having acquired it. Furthermore, when it came to five top Chosen attacking him at the same time, he had one reaction:

So what?!

Eyes glittering, he took a deep breath and closed his eyes. Even as the countless divine abilities and magical techniques rumbled toward him, he lifted both hands into the air and then murmured two words!

“Waterswamp... Kingdom!”

This would be his first time unleashing the complete Waterswamp Kingdom with a Foundation Establishment cultivation base!

As soon as the words left his mouth, everything in the area turned hazy. In the blink of an eye, heaven and earth vanished, and the area became a huge watery swamp. Water vapor filled the area, to the point where hair and clothes alike dripped with moisture.

An indescribably powerful aura roiled out, something that far exceeded early Foundation Establishment. This was more like mid Foundation Establishment!

A magical technique like this, which seemingly broke past the level of one’s cultivation base... was a secret magic!

Of course, there were weak secret magics and strong ones. And although the Waterswamp Kingdom and Ghosts Haunt the Night were equally famous, Bai Xiaochun was at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. He had already gained enlightenment of his life essence spirit, and had even broken through the first shackle of mortality. Because of all those reasons, his Waterswamp Kingdom vastly exceeded Ghostfang’s Ghosts Haunt the Night!

When he unleashed it, it could destroy the heavens and crush the earth!

The faces of the five great Chosen all fell, and the reaction of the other cultivators was exactly the same. In that very instant, all of their magics were locked down and began to tremble on the verge of destruction.

“We can’t let him keep this up!”

“Attack!!” Everyone was crying out in alarm. At the same time, the magical techniques of the five great Chosen sped up. Rumbling sounds could be heard as they descended upon Bai Xiaochun. However, that was when Bai Xiaochun’s eyes suddenly snapped open!

Instantly, an enormous mountain peak appeared that could shake heaven and earth. It rose up from the 30,000-meter-wide waterswamp, superseding the world, rising high up into the sky!

The mountain peak was vastly enormous, and erupted with a shocking aura that could topple mountains and drain seas. Indescribable pressure pushed down onto everything, crushing everything in its path!

It was as if it wished to flatten everything in existence!

The magical techniques of the five great Chosen were destroyed like dried weeds!

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of the five Chosen, and expressions of astonishment could be seen on their faces. They were sent flying away, their bodies completely beyond their own control. As for the Qi Condensation cultivators, they let out bloodcurdling screams as the pressure crushed down onto them. One by one, they began to explode, blood spraying out like blooming flowers!

They were being crushed out of existence, destroyed in body and soul!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0164 awe-chapter-165

That mountain was actually an indescribably gigantic beast!

In fact, it was so large that no one could even see what it looked like. All they could make out in the 30,000-meter waterswamp was a gigantic bone spur!

Even more terrifying was that the base of the spur wasn’t even visible. 30,000 meters wasn't big enough for the entirety of the spur to be revealed.

It was difficult to imagine... exactly how large that beast was!

“Th-this... this is the Waterswamp Kingdom?!?!”

“Impossible!!!”

“The Waterswamp Kingdom is a secret magic of the Spirit Stream Sect, but Bai Xiaochun’s version is completely shocking!!” The five Chosen were completely shaken. Ghostfang and Beihan Lie had it a bit better off than the others; they had been prepared for something like this. Even still, they were astonished by what was happening.

As for Nine-Isles and Xu Xiaoshan, they had never seen anything like the Waterswamp Kingdom before, and were so terrified that their scalps were numb.

Most shocked of all was Shangguan Tianyou. His hair was completely disheveled, and blood was oozing out of his mouth. He was so scared he looked like a wooden chicken; never in 10,000 years would he be willing to admit that Bai

Xiaochun was stronger than him. And yet, he had no choice. Bai Xiaochun... was far, far more powerful than he was.

“Back in the Chosen battles, we weren’t that far apart from each other. But now, things are so different....”

As of this moment, the sky was going dark, and the lands were quaking.

Within the 30,000-meter waterswamp, there was only the enormous bone spur. Compared to that spur, the cultivators were like bugs, whereas Bai Xiaochun was like an immortal being with the world in his hands!

Massive rumbling stretched from the highest heavens to the deepest depths of the earth!

Not too far away, Song Que was in the middle of absorbing the bit of heavenstring energy that he'd snatched. But now, his mind was trembling. Earlier, he had intentionally split the heavenstring energy, hoping that while Bai Xiaochun and the others fought over the larger strand, he would be free to make away with the bit he had. But now, the fluctuations speeding out from Bai Xiaochun’s location left him gasping.

“Dammit. Those fluctuations....” Shocked, he tried to speed up the absorption process.

Bai Xiaochun was slaughtering everyone near him!

He had never slaughtered people like this before. His eyes shone with a fierce light, and he was trembling a bit, both visibly and mentally. His reaction had been instinctive; despite being at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment with nine Tideflows, he still feared death.

Therefore, he had no choice but to resort to fighting and killing in this situation.

That was especially true considering that so many people had been trying to rob him of his heavenstring energy. To him, that was the same as robbing him of his life, leaving him no choice other than to go all out.

The shocking Waterswamp Kingdom caused the five great Chosen to fall back, blood spraying out of their mouths, their expressions those of shock and astonishment. Virtually all of the Qi Condensation disciples exploded, creating haunting flowers of blood that filled the area.

There were a dozen or so people off in the distance who were outside of the range of Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom. Their faces were ashen as they observed the devilish spectacle playing out in front of them. As of this moment, they were left gasping, and the frenzy they had felt because of the heavenstring energy faded away. Cold sweat popped out all over their bodies as they backed up.

“He’s so brutal! Is he really from the Spirit Stream Sect? He’s even more violent than the Blood Stream Sect people!”

“How vicious! That attack... wounded the five great Chosen, and killed dozens and dozens of Qi Condensation disciples!!"

Finally, Bai Xiaochun took to motion, speeding off into the distance. Ghostfang and the other Chosen had faces as pale as death as they watched him leave. None of them dared to chase him.

As they thought back to what had just occurred, they were sure that they had just had a brush with the aura of Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, leaving them no choice but to quash any desire they had to try to steal the heavenstring energy. The lingering fear they felt in their hearts forced them to admit that even if they tried to defeat him, they would fail....

Bai Xiaochun sped along for a bit, trembling and coughing up blood. His face was also pale; despite being at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, crushing five Chosen and a host of Qi Condensation disciples couldn't be accomplished without being injured himself.

Without his Undying Gold Skin, those injuries would have been even more serious. Thankfully, the Undying Live Forever Technique gave him regenerative capabilities that far exceeded any ordinary disciple, and his body was already repairing itself.

“Last but not least, Song Que!

“He grabbed the smaller strand of heavenstring energy... and went in this direction!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot; by this point, he had already absorbed quite a bit of the heavenstring energy into his spiritual seas, and his aura was already beginning to change.

However, he could tell that the amount he had wasn’t enough to fuel a full Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. Furthermore, he could clearly sense the smaller strand of heavenstring energy up ahead; it was like a bright fire burning on a moonless night.

“Song Que was prepared for the heavenstring energy to split apart; maybe he even made it happen!”

Without pausing for even a moment. Bai Xiaochun sped along.

In the beginning, about 400 people had entered the Fallen Sword Abyss. Now, there weren’t even sixty people left, and the majority of them were Spirit Stream Sect disciples.

The Pill Stream Sect forces had virtually been wiped out, having only five disciples remaining. The Profound Stream Sect only had about ten disciples left, and the Blood Stream Sect, a bit more than that.

Although the Spirit Stream Sect disciples had sustained severe casualties, after Bai Xiaochun completed his Tideflows, few died. Even those who had besieged him earlier because of the heavenstring energy only ended up getting injured, not killed. At the moment, there were more than thirty Spirit Stream Sect disciples left.

By this point, the brutality in the Fallen Sword World could only be exceeded by the events 800 years ago with Master Limitless of the Blood Stream Sect.

Now, Bai Xiaochun was getting close to matching that event!

Rumbling filled the sky as he sped toward Song Que. As for Song Que, he was in his temporary immortal's cave, hair disheveled, hands pushed down onto his Feng Shui compass. Strands of heavenstring energy were rising up from the compass and entering his ears, nose, and mouth, to stream toward his eight spiritual seas.

Song Que knew that the heavenstring energy was not stabilized inside of him; if he were to be seriously injured, it would spill back out. The only way to stabilize it was through the passage of time, or by adding more heavenstring energy.

Furthermore, he had to absorb another portion to reach Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” When the last bit of heavenstring energy entered into him, he looked up, eyes radiating with madness. Some distance away, a beam of light approached, getting closer and closer until suddenly, an enormous violet cauldron appeared up above, which then shot down toward Song Que.

A deafening boom echoed out as the immortal's cave was destroyed. Howling at the top of his lungs, Song Que burst out into the air, slamming into Bai Xiaochun.

Neither of them could run from this battle. Each of them needed the portion of heavenstring energy that was contained within the other’s body. As of this point, they had to call on their trump cards.

“This guy’s definitely fully prepared,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “I have to find an opportunity to get that heavenstring energy out of him. If the fight drags on for too long, too many things could go wrong!” Without any hesitation, he attacked with even greater speed than before.

Song Que’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he stabbed his finger toward Bai Xiaochun. Instantly, a blood seal appeared beneath Bai Xiaochun, which then exploded upward in an attack. Simultaneously, strands of blood qi swirled out of Song Que, forming together in front of him into a blood-colored sword tip.

Bai Xiaochun performed another incantation gesture, summoning a violet cauldron, as well as projections of a dragon and a mammoth. Closing in on Song Que, he unleashed the power of his fleshly body in the form of punches and kicks that contained mountain-toppling, sea-draining power.

Both the Golden Crow Sword and his little wooden sword appeared, whistling through the air with incredible power.

He also unleashed two swords with threefold spirit enhancement designs. Sword qi raged. Black mist roiled out of the little wooden sword, and as for the Golden Crow Sword, because Bai Xiaochun was now in Foundation Establishment, the golden crow that materialized raged with flames far exceeding the previous version.

Within a few short moments, the two of them exchanged hundreds of volleys, and the fight only grew more and more brutal. Song Que had the power of eight Tideflows, so when he attacked, it resulted in terrifying, thunderous booms.

Bai Xiaochun was equally extraordinary. He had his Undying Gold Skin, and had broken through the first shackle of mortality. He had the power of nine Tideflows, which placed him on a higher level than Song Que. But he was injured, which put him in a worse position. Of course, Song Que had also been injured. Each blow struck by one would result in some heavenstring energy leaking out of the other, which would then be quickly absorbed by their opponent.

Overall, Song Que seemed to be losing more heavenstring energy. He had already lost about fifty percent of his original amount, while Bai Xiaochun had only lost thirty!

As they fought back and forth, Bai Xiaochun only continued to absorb more and more.

Divine ability after divine ability was unleashed. Although Song Que was at a disadvantage, he had a huge reserve of blood qi. Soon, he was summoning an enormous blood sword that filled Bai Xiaochun with a sensation of deadly crisis. Furthermore, his Undying Gold Skin was starting to grow dim, as if he couldn’t sustain its use for much longer.

Bai Xiaochun could already tell what Song Que was doing. He knew that he wasn’t a match for Bai Xiaochun, and yet took him on anyway. That meant that, in addition to the maddened way he was fighting, he definitely had another trump card up his sleeve.

After all... Song Que was one of the most powerful Chosen from the Blood Stream Sect, a sect which shook all three other sects. Although there might be other more powerful Chosen from his sect, none of them were here now, and now that he was forced into fighting, he would definitely surpass any ordinary cultivator.

Song Que didn't seem to be in a good position. However, it was at this point that he opened his mouth and spat out a blood sphere. Bai Xiaochun had been waiting for this to happen, and immediately fell back. As he did, the blood sphere exploded, unleashing devastating force in all directions.

The sky shook, and a gale force wind ripped over the lands below. A huge, 300-meter-area was completely flattened down below, and at the same time, blood oozed out of the corners of Bai Xiaochun's mouth. Song Que also coughed up some blood, but then he took a deep breath, and his body withered visibly. That in turn restored his power levels; expression vicious, he began to advance toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Die!!” he cried, reaching back and grabbing the blood qi sword, which he slashed viciously toward Bai Xiaochun. The sword arced through the air, making it look like a blood-colored crescent moon!

This was his trump card!

The secret magic from Middle Peak in the Blood Stream Sect, the Blood Annihilation World!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0165 awe-chapter-166

The Blood Annihilation World was a legacy magic from the Blood Stream Sect’s Middle Peak, and could only be fully unleashed by a Foundation Establishment cultivator. However, even when Song Que was only a Qi Condensation disciple, he had still been able to use some of its might. Now that he had reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment, he was able to fully unleash it.

Even the first form was terrifying. The sword slashed down, and the beam of blood-colored sword light seemed to surpass everything around it, becoming the only thing in heaven and earth as it slashed down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Close examination would reveal that the blood sword was a stream of sword qi, bright and scintillating, seemingly capable of slicing through anything and everything. When Bai Xiaochun’s little wooden sword blocked its path, it shattered into pieces. It didn’t matter that the little wooden sword had a threefold spirit enhancement, completely transforming its base material; it was destroyed in an instant.

The Golden Crow Sword was of higher quality, and had also benefited from the fundamental transformation of a threefold spirit enhancement. When the blood sword hit it, it was flung off to the side.

Song Que howled, madness filling his eyes, as well as supreme self-confidence. Back in his first fight with Bai Xiaochun, he hadn't resorted to using this Inverse Blood Sword Form, mostly because his cultivation base was insufficient. But now he could use it!

This was his most powerful trump card, and in order to ensure that it was successful, he had even used his final precious blood sphere to injure Bai Xiaochun. Only then did he resort to the Inverse Blood Sword Form.

Only then was he absolutely certain he would succeed!

“Give me that heavenstring energy or die!”

When cultivators fought, it was often important to resort to scheming and tricks. But sometimes, it wasn’t necessary to put too much thought into such things. Sometimes, you just needed to find the right moment to weaken your opponent, and then unleash your most powerful attack!

Song Que was also supremely confident that his secret magic of restoration would heal his wounds in a very short time. Once he returned to his full battle prowess, he was sure that he would have no trouble seizing victory.

However, even as his sword descended, a strange look flickered through Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. There was something very strange about this blood sword, and yet, there was no time to ponder the matter at the moment. Suddenly, the fading golden light that emanated from him increased in intensity as he reached his two fingers out toward Song Que’s throat.

Apparently, he was willing to end the battle in mutual defeat!

Song Que’s face flickered, but then twisted with vicious ferocity. Instead of evading, he sped up! The blood sword slashed down onto Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s two fingers closed in on Song Que’s throat.

A cracking sound rang out. Song Que’s neck suddenly turned blurry, and an afterimage appeared. As a result, Bai Xiaochun’s attack hit nothing but thin air. At the same time, as Song Que’s sword lashed into Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder, golden light exploded up. All of the power of his Undying Gold Skin focused on fighting back against the sword. Apparently... the sword was completely neutralized. Apparently... the power of the sword couldn’t match Bai Xiaochun’s defensive power!

Both Song Que and Bai Xiaochun were stunned. However, neither hesitated. Both of them were aware that the other was certainly fully prepared, and as such, unleashed their follow-up techniques.

“Inverse Blood Seal!” Song Que howled. His blood qi sword collapsed, transforming into countless blood-colored sealing marks, which then flew out toward Bai Xiaochun and then exploded.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s Throat Crushing Grasp transformed into an incantation gesture. Waving his finger at Song Que, he unleashed the might of the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art. He didn’t utilize Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, nor Lightness-in-Heaviness. Instead... he used something that he had failed at over and over again, but had never abandoned... the Human Controlling Grand Magic!

Back on the north bank, he had never been able to perfect his Human Controlling Grand Magic. He had never been able to exert full control even over the small animals; at best, he had produced some random effects on their limbs.

However, at this moment, he didn’t need full control; he *wanted* a random effect!

As the control magic was unleashed, Song Que's arms and legs suddenly didn't seem to be coordinating with each other. He felt like someone had pushed him hard from behind, and he staggered and almost fell over. His expression flickered as he realized that his body was under the influence of something else. Furthermore, the next attack was heading, not toward his throat, but... his dantian region!

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually occurred in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Rumbling sounds filled the air as the blood seals exploded around Bai Xiaochun, causing him to cough up several mouthfuls of blood. At the same time, he unleashed the Throat Crushing Grasp in the direction of Song Que's abdomen, where his dantian region was.

Song Que was scared out of his mind. The dantian region was extremely important. Although a blow there wouldn't necessarily be fatal, it was the location of his spiritual seas, as well as the heavenstring energy. He tried to spin to the side, but Bai Xiaochun's Throat Crushing Grasp suddenly erupted with a powerful gravitational force.

Instantly, Bai Xiaochun's right hand, backed by the power of the Throat Crushing Grasp, stabbed into Song Que's abdomen, piercing deep into the flesh and blood, all the way into the spiritual seas in his dantian.

Song Que let out an agonized shriek. If Bai Xiaochun squeezed his fingers down with the power of the Throat Crushing Grasp, then the Song Que's spiritual seas could be destroyed.

Any ordinary person in such circumstances wouldn't have the clarity of mind to defend themselves. They would be unable to escape the fate of having their spiritual seas destroyed. But Song Que... was widely regarded as the number one Chosen of the Blood Stream Sect. He was anything but ordinary!

It was a moment of profound crisis, and yet he was profoundly decisive. Therefore, he immediately flushed all of the heavenstring energy in his body directly toward his dantian region and Bai Xiaochun’s right hand.

He was using the heavenstring energy as an attack! Intense power battered his dantian region, causing cracking sounds to emanate out as fractures spread out through all of his eight spiritual seas. However, at the same time, massive force exploded onto Bai Xiaochun’s right hand!

Song Que was abandoning the heavenstring energy and even damaging his spiritual seas, all to shove Bai Xiaochun’s hand away. Thankfully for him, his spiritual seas weren’t destroyed. Face ashen, coughing up blood, he didn’t hesitate to flee at top speed.

Despite his pain and how weak he was, he produced a jade slip which he then viciously crushed. Instantly, all of the energy nodes he had linked together through the Fallen Sword World... began to crack apart!

Those cracks rapidly began to spread across the surface of the entire sword! Originally, Song Que would never have been able to do such a thing. However, the reason why the enormous sword had remained intact for so long was because of the heavenstring energy. Now that the heavenstring energy was gone, its powers were fading. The sword had already been tilted on its side, but now that the strange spell formation created by the Blood Stream Sect had been activated, the entire sword was collapsing!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered as he examined the complete strand of heavenstring energy in his hand. Without any further hesitation, he began to absorb it through his palm. As it coursed into his dantian region and combined with the previous portion of heavenstring energy, a heaven-shaking, earth-toppling energy surged out inside of him.

A Heaven-Dao aura erupted out, something profoundly holy, something that could destroy mountains and dry up seas. It filled the world, causing the scattered remnants of the disciples of the four sects to be completely and utterly shaken. Shockingly, an enormous face had appeared up in midair, in the same direction the aura was coming from.

That face... belonged to Bai Xiaochun!

“Bai Xiaochun... reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!”

Off in the distance, Song Que spit more blood out of his mouth as he sped along. When he saw what was happening, he looked up hatefully at the enormous version of Bai Xiaochun’s face. Eyes bloodshot, he clenched his hands into fists so hard that his fingernails dug into his own skin. Blood started dripping down, and yet, he didn’t notice.

“Bai! Xiao! CHUN!”

Even as everyone watched, shaken, filled with mixed emotions, the aura of Heaven-Dao in Bai Xiaochun’s dantian region grew stronger and stronger. His nine spiritual seas were rapidly turning golden, although the process would clearly take a few days to complete. Once that happened, and they were completely gold, that would mean... that Bai Xiaochun had truly reached...

Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!!

As of this moment, his cultivation base, his latent power, his longevity, were all rising rapidly. At the same time, he could sense that something momentous was occurring within the Fallen Sword World. Even more astonishing was that, for some reason, he had the feeling that further up beyond the current sky, there was... an even more ancient heaven and earth, something profoundly primordial!

The feeling vanished only a moment later. At first, Bai Xiaochun had been on the verge of chasing after Song Que, to take advantage of his moment of weakness to kill him. But once Song Que smashed the jade slip, destroying the energy nodes, everything in the entire Fallen Sword World changed!

Intense cracking sounds rang out, as loud as claps of thunder. Huge crevices appeared, spreading out across sky and land alike. Mountains began to crumble, and plains split apart. Everything started crumbling.

The disciples present were completely shaken.

The whole world was falling apart!

“This is bad! What’s happening!?”

“Heavens! Don’t tell me the Fallen Sword World is going to collapse!?!?”

Meanwhile, outside of the Fallen Sword Abyss, Master Snakescale, Ouyang Jie, and the elders from the Profound Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect were all sitting there cross-legged in meditation. There was still one more month left before the Holy Land was to be opened up. Suddenly, all of their faces flickered as they looked over toward the huge sword.

Already, massive cracks could be seen spreading out over its surface!

“What happened?!”

“The fallen sword is breaking apart!!”

“Dammit, not even we can get inside!” All of them were shocked, and almost couldn’t believe that the enormous sword would really collapse!

They even tried to enter, but it was impossible.

All four of them were thinking the same thing: “Back when the sword was discovered, the patriarchs of the four sects set up teleportation formations. If the world collapses, they’ll be activated. However, we have no way of knowing if the disciples will be sent back to the sect, or somewhere else in the vicinity....”

Back in the Fallen Sword World, the ground continued to crumble. At the same time, four enormous spell formations appeared, and the power of teleportation exploded out, spreading to touch all of the disciples.

Because the disciples of the different sects cultivated different techniques, their auras were different, and as such, they were teleported out by different formations!

One by one, the disciples were enveloped by teleportation power and whisked away. Bai Xiaochun was among them. As he looked around at the shocking catastrophe, he thought back to what Ouyang Jie had said, and did nothing to resist the power.

In the blink of an eye, his vision went dark, and the power of teleportation was pulling him away. However, at that very moment, a little hand reached out, as if to prevent him from leaving.

“Why don’t you stay and play with me, sweetie...?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0166 awe-chapter-167

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp tingled in fear, and his eyes went wide. A pale hand reached out, belonging to a young girl in a white dress. She wore a ferocious, enigmatic smile on her face.

Her face was half covered by her long black hair, making her look even more terrifying than she might have normally. An aura of death pulsed off of her, transforming into something that looked like vipers seeking to bore into Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and even his pores.

However, just when the hand was about to touch him, his nine spiritual seas erupted with a Heaven-Dao aura, and the aura of death collapsed. The hissing snakes were wiped away, and the girl’s hand withered, revealing dead skin and sticky, dripping blood. It was terrifying to the extreme.

The girl let out a begrudging howl that echoed out into the air.

At the same time, the teleportation power surrounding Bai Xiaochun exploded out with full force, and he vanished from the Fallen Sword World.

After all of the disciples from the four sects were gone, the Fallen Sword World continued to collapse. But then, something else happened. Massive amounts of hazy gray mist billowed out and began to fill the world. It was rife with an aura of death, and smelled like rot. Even the four powerful teleportation formations crumbled into ruins because of the rotting aura.

In the blink of an eye, the entire world... became a domain of ghosts. Howls rose up from within the mists. Apparently, all of the banesouls which had existed in the world were now beginning to awaken.

Strangely, the huge sword stopped crumbling!

In the outside world, Ouyang Jie and the others saw the sword cease crumbling, and watched as black mist begin to pulse out of it. They exchanged dismayed glances. However, a moment later, they tried once again to enter the sword, and this time had no problem doing so.

As they entered, they could still sense a fading holy aura.

“That aura....”

“Heavenstring energy!!! That’s heavenstring energy!!” Even as their faces flickered with shock, the sinister voice of a young girl rose up from the mists below.... It sounded bizarre and cruel, and filled the entire world.

“The heavenstring energy hath been harvested by your disciples. Henceforth, this place shall be called... the Nine Serenities Ghost Domain. In the future, do not set foot in this place. Any who violate this prescript will have their entire sect exterminated!”

As soon as the voice rang out, Ouyang Jie and the others coughed up mouthfuls of blood. The voice crashed in their ears like thunder as they were forcefully ejected from the world.

“Banespirit!!” they cried in alarm. The pressure they felt was something that exceeded the Nascent Soul stage. Trembling, hearts battered by waves of shock, they retreated at full speed, simultaneously sending word back to their sects.

“The Fallen Sword World has been transformed into the Nine Serenities Ghost Domain. Furthermore... one of the banesouls awakened and became a banespirit!!”

“The heavenstring energy was taken away? Who? Which disciple of which sect got it? Does that mean... someone reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!?!?”

Even as they fled, the former Fallen Sword World, which was now the Nine Serenties Ghost Domain, filled up with mist. Standing in the mist was a girl in a white dress, holding a skinless, shrunken version of Lei Shan. At first she was looking up into the sky, but then she lowered her eyes to gaze at the tens of thousands of banesouls in the area. All of them... were prostrating themselves to her!

Not a single sound could be heard.

As for Lei Shan, his eyes were filled with incredible terror and pain.

Standing next to the girl in the white dress was a pretty young woman with expressionless eyes, a puppet. She was none other than... Gongsun Wan’er.

There was no poison upon her any more, nor any centipedes. The human-faced spider had transformed into mist and vanished. She was now completely clean and empty, inside and out....

“Aw, you don’t want to stay and play with me, sweetie...?” the girl said, her voice sinister and bizarre. “Well, that's fine. I’ll be able to leave this place soon, then I can come find you. I’ll show you how pretty this new dress of mine is.” The girl chuckled and looked over at Gongsun Wan’er.

The fact that the Fallen Sword World had been transformed into the Nine Serenities Ghost Domain was a major event in the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world. What had once been a Foundation Establishment Holy Land was now a domain of terror!

Furthermore, one of the banesouls had awakened and turned into a terrifying, sentient banespirit. Even the elders of the four sects were left jumpy at the thought of it.

However, there was nothing that could be done about the matter. Although the matter would influence the four sects to some degree, it wasn’t a huge loss. Furthermore, it was a joint loss to all four sects. What was most astonishing of all was the information confirmed by the voice of the girl... the heavenstring energy had been taken.

That meant someone must have reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment.

“Who was it.... Which sect and which disciple got the heavenstring energy!?”

“Dammit! If it was one of the other three sects, that means they’ll have a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment disciple. We need to kill that person when they’re weak. If they reach Core Formation, they’ll be a force not easily stopped!”

“It was definitely our Blood Stream Sect. Hahaha! Now we have both Patriarch Limitless... and another top-level cultivator!”

The four elders immediately used transmission jade slips to get the information back to their sects as quickly as possible.

At the same time, they tried to make contact with the disciples who had been teleported out of the Fallen Sword World. Unfortunately, they soon found that the fluctuations caused by the teleportation made communication impossible.

Soon, the Blood Stream Sect, Profound Stream Sect, Spirit Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect were sent a huge commotion. Even the patriarchs of the sect were shaken. Large numbers of Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors and elders were dispatched. Even prime elders were sent out. No effort was spared to track down the disciples who had been teleported out to random locations.

All they had to do was find one disciple, and they should be able to get information about what had occurred in the Fallen Sword World. Most importantly, everyone wanted to know... who got the heavenstring energy!

In the Spirit Stream Sect, the founding patriarch personally passed down orders which sent countless Inner Sect disciples and Foundation Establishment elders into action. Even Outer Sect disciple were called upon. They flew out from both the south bank and the north bank, spreading out with one mission: find the disciples who had been teleported out of the Fallen Sword Abyss.

As soon as a single one was located, they were to report back to the sect immediately.

The first person to be located was not one of the numerous disciples from the Spirit Stream Sect, but rather, one of the five remaining Pill Stream Sect disciples!

The Pill Stream Sect had sent 80 disciples into the Fallen Sword World, and more than ninety percent of them had been killed. Luckily for the Pill Stream Sect, one of the five disciples who made it out alive happened to be teleported to a location just outside of the Pill Stream Sect itself.

When the Pill Stream Sect elders and sect leader arrived, they found an extremely weak disciple, his energy almost completely drained. Fellow disciples immediately supported him, pouring their own spiritual power into him so that he could speak. Trembling, eyes flickering with fear, he weakly explained, “Dead. They’re all dead. Eldest Brother Fang Lin was killed. Zhao Rou is also dead. All of them were exterminated by Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect!!

“Bai Xiaochun... completed nine Tideflows. He and Song Que fought over the heavenstring energy, and... he reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!!”

The disciples’ words left the Pill Stream Sect cultivators, and even the elders and the sect leader, completely shaken. Gasps could be heard, and eyes went wide with disbelief.

“Heaven-Dao... Foundation Establishment!?”

“Bai Xiaochun? Spirit Stream Sect?!”

The sect leader’s eyes flickered, and he grimly said, “Immediately send word to all of our spies in the Spirit Stream Sect. Tell them to find Bai Xiaochun and kill him. Spare no effort whatsoever!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0167 awe-chapter-168

The Pill Stream Sect ordered all of their spies into action, hoping to be the first to find Bai Xiaochun. If they did, they would spare no cost whatsoever to kill him. As for the other three sects, they mobilized large forces to search for the disciples who were currently missing.

As all that was happening, something else occurred on the Eastwood Continent, in a jungle-covered mountain range not too far from Eastwood City. Next to one particularly large tree, the air rippled with teleportation fluctuations, and then Bai Xiaochun appeared, staggering out at a near run.

As soon as he was out in the open, he leaned over and vomited noisily.

“What kind of teleportation was that supposed to be!? Nearly lost my poor little life in the process....” Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen, and he was panting. What he didn’t know was that past teleportations he had experienced had been performed with weakened teleportation power in order to make them as comfortable as possible. In contrast, the teleportation which had pulled him out of the Fallen Sword Abyss was fully powered. All of the portals set up by the four sects were like that. In a moment of grave crisis, the most important thing was to teleport the targets out as quickly as possible.

A forcible teleportation like that would actually knock most people unconscious.

After emptying his stomach, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit better, although he was still so dizzy that he was seeing stars.

Leaning up against the tree, he looked around and realized he had no idea where he was. From what Elder Ouyang Jie had explained, he knew that he could be just about anywhere.

“I should be back on the Eastwood Continent though,” he thought, massaging his temples. Then he recalled the little hand and the strange voice he had heard just before being teleported away, and his heart filled with fear. Trembling, he resolved to never, ever go back to the Fallen Sword Abyss.

Still trying to catch his breath, he sat down on a nearby log and looked down at his tattered garments. By this point, they were so damaged and blood-stained it wasn’t even possible to identify them as the robes of the Spirit Stream Sect. He wanted to change them, but unfortunately, didn’t have a spare set in his bag of holding.

“The Fallen Sword Abyss was so brutal....” As he thought back to everything that had occurred, his scalp began to tingle. What was especially frightening was how everyone had almost gone insane in their desire to kill him. And then there was the vicious, savage battle with Song Que. In the end, he sighed.

“Why do cultivators always end up fighting and killing...?” Sighing, he probed his cultivation base, and found that his roiling spiritual seas were gradually turning golden. By this point, the process was about thirty percent complete.

“Hahaha! Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!” In his excitement, he forgot about the brutality of the Fallen Sword World. The idea of 500 years of longevity caused his eyes to shine. Flicking his sleeve and sticking his chin up, he proudly said, “I, Bai Xiaochun, am truly a consummate Chosen. Hahaha! Hahahahaha!” After laughing loudly for a while, he cleared his throat. “I guess I should probably go figure out where I am.”

Something else he found interesting was that although his cultivation base was getting stronger and stronger, the aura it emitted was getting weaker and weaker. It was almost as if, because his spiritual seas were climbing to the Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment level, all of the pressure and energy they would normally radiate was now focusing inward.

At the moment, anyone who sensed his aura would place him at the ninth level of Qi Condensation. As the process continued, he had the feeling that his cultivation base aura would eventually disappear altogether, and he would seem like a mortal. Only when the process was complete would he experience a heaven-rending, earth-crushing explosion of power.

“It should be finished in two days or so,” he thought excitedly. With that, he put the matters of his cultivation base aside. Next, he produced a jade slip to try to transmit a message to the sect. Unfortunately, the jade slip had been damaged during the teleportation process. Although the teleportation energy had already faded away, it seemed that he would temporarily be unable to make contact with the sect.

Feeling a bit annoyed, he put the jade slip away and then transformed into a beam of light that shot up into the sky and then off into the distance.

It didn’t take long for him to realize that with his current cultivation base power, he could fly much more quickly than before. He was soon out of the mountain range, whereupon he caught sight of an enormous city off in the distance.

The city walls were very imposing, and were constructed from greenish-colored bricks. Furthermore, each and every brick seemed to be inscribed with magical symbols that formed a spell formation.

The spell formation sent light streaming up high into the sky, seemingly connecting the city to the heavens themselves. A huge green vortex could be seen up above, with lightning occasionally dancing back and forth within it.

There was also pressure weighing down which restricted the cultivation bases of any cultivators that entered the city, making it impossible for them to fly.

The city was huge, enough to house at least 10,000,000 people, and had four main gates which were constantly packed with floods of people going in and out.

In front of each of the city gates were enormous stone steles, inscribed with calligraphy as flamboyant as dancing dragons and swirling phoenixes.

“Eastwood City!” Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock for a moment, and then his eyes lit up.

This was the biggest city in the territory controlled by the Spirit Stream Sect.

It was actually considered part of the Spirit Stream Sect, and was operated by the ten most powerful cultivator clans on the Eastwood Continent. It had a history stretching back 10,000 years, and was home to not only hosts of cultivators, but mortals as well.

In addition to the ten great cultivator clans, there was also a disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect stationed there as an official emissary, responsible for keeping the peace among the clans.

That was the exact position Du Lingfei had been sent here years ago to fill. Although she only had a Qi Condensation cultivation base, she represented the Foundation Establishment elder who was also stationed there. The elder rarely made public appearances, leaving most of the duties to Du Lingfei to handle.

Her primary task was to keep the ten great clans in check.

“Elder Sister Du was sent here a while back as an emissary. I haven’t seen her in such a long time....” Bai Xiaochun’s heart warmed at the thought of Du Lingfei, and he couldn’t help but picture her looking shy and angry at the same time. “Hm. I can’t just walk straight in. I’ll sneak in incognito and check things out first. After all these years, I wonder if my boo stepped out on me and found another man.” Eyebrow cocked craftily, he shot through the air toward Eastwood City. [1. In Chinese, Bai Xiaochun gives Du Lingfei a nickname that is a play on words based on her surname. It actually sounds very cute in Chinese, the type of nickname that you would give to your lover/wife. I’m using “boo” since it rhymes with “Du” and is also a cutesy nickname]

As he neared, he could sense that flying was restricted.

“How annoying! I'm a Prestige disciple! I'm the Junior Brother of the sect leader. Eastwood City belongs to the Spirit Stream Sect, so therefore, it’s mine by right! I can’t believe I’m not allowed to fly!” Grumbling all the way, he landed on the ground and headed toward the city gate. There was quite a line, and he didn’t feel right cutting in front, so he went to the back. Before long, he worked his way up to the gate itself, where he paid a small spirit stone tax to enter.

No one paid much attention to him. All they cared about was the spirit stones. Apparently, they were confident that no one would cause any trouble.

“Eastwood City is so big! I can’t believe they still charge a spirit stone tax to get in!” Bai Xiaochun was not very pleased about what was happening. Considering his status, it was really a loss of face. Coughing dryly, he clasped his hands behind his back and strutted through the gate.

Once inside, the sight of the countless towering buildings caused him to gasp.

Everything was huge! The roads were paved with limestone, every slab of which emanated spiritual energy. The buildings were decorated with gold and jade, carved with dragons and phoenixes, and were completely extraordinary to behold.

Everything was festooned with beautiful pearls and spirit stones. The glow of magic rose up everywhere, creating an air of luxury that almost physically buffeted Bai Xiaochun in the face.

“This... this place....” He swallowed as he took in the beauty and luxury. Vehicles trundled back and forth in the streets, and people could be seen everywhere. He almost felt like he was in a different world.

As for the residents of the city, they dressed in silks and satins, and looked very impressive as they walked to and fro. Regardless of the level of their cultivation base, they seemed very proud and lofty. Unlike the mortals in smaller cities and villages, the mortals here didn’t seem scared or impressed at all by the cultivators around them.

As he walked along, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp in shock at all the things he was seeing. After all, he had been raised in a village, and after that, spent all his time in the sect. He had never been to a big city like this before.

Of course, considering how he was looking around, he stuck out from the crowd, and the passing cultivators looked over with disdainful expressions, taking him to be a country bumpkin. Some of them noticed how his clothing was ripped and torn, and even stained with blood. Realizing that he was probably someone that shouldn’t be provoked, they quickly got out of his way.

“I never could have imagined how incredible this place is!” The more he saw, the more excited he got. The sheer luxury of the place caused him to sigh, and he was already trying to figure out how to get the sect to transfer him here.

Continuing to sigh, he passed one certain shop, and was suddenly riveted in place. It was a clothing shop, filled with garments of every color and style possible, all of them beautifully tailored and embroidered. Even the lowest quality garments were amazingly crafted.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but muse that the clothing here was far, far better looking than anything from back in the sect. Eyes shining, he walked into the shop.

There were a few people inside, browsing through the selection of clothing. As soon as Bai Xiaochun entered, a couple of them looked over, and when they saw his dilapidated robes, looks of derision appeared on their faces. However, they could sense the aura of the seventh level of Qi Condensation on him, so they quickly looked away.

There was one young man, dressed in luxurious garments, whose eyes went wide as soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun. For a brief moment, a strange gleam could be seen in his eyes before he averted his gaze.

Meanwhile, a smiling salesperson approached Bai Xiaochun and began to show him around.

“This heavenly dragon robe is made from heavenwater anaconda skin. After being cured with eighty-one types of medicinal plants, it was decorated by a grandmaster of embroidery. There’s a spell formation hidden inside that provides resistance against all water-type magical techniques!

“Oh, that thousand leaves coat is crafted from a thousand different types of spirit leaves. A secret magic was used to tailor it, and when you wear it, you’ll be surrounded by the fragrance of plants and vegetation. After wearing it for some time, you’ll naturally exude the fragrance of spirit medicine.

“Oh, this piece....”

Bai Xiaochun nodded, feeling a garment here and there, falling in love with everything he looked at. At the same time, the young man in the luxurious garments finally looked up. Smiling, he walked over to Bai Xiaochun, clasped hands and bowed.

“Salutations, Brother.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0168 awe-chapter-169

Surprised, Bai Xiaochun turned to look at the young man.

“I am your humble servant, Hou Yunqing,” the young man said politely, a broad smile covering his face. “I happen to be the owner of this little shop. Brother, I can see that you’re an extraordinary person, a dragon amongst men. If you see something you like, Brother, just take it, on the house. Think of it as a gift between friends.” [1. Back in chapter 144, Hou Yunfei mentioned Hou Yunqing, a close relative in his clan]

“Are you serious?!” Bai Xiaochun looked at Hou Yunqing, blinking.

“Of course I'm serious! Hou Yunqing never lies.”

Bai Xiaochun responded with a sarcastic chuckle. Having no reason to refuse a free gift, he casually pointed at the heavenly dragon robe.

The salesperson looked at Hou Yunqing, who smiled and nodded. The salesperson shrugged in disbelief as he handed the heavenly dragon robe over to Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun threw it on, and immediately looked completely different than before.

Hou Yunqing laughed heartily and said, “Brother, the heavenly dragon robe definitely suits you perfectly. It almost looks as if it was custom tailored just for you! You really know how to pick clothes for yourself!”

“You think so too?” Bai Xiaochun replied, smoothing out the robe. He was very pleased, and couldn’t help but think that the clothes they wore back at the sect were far too shabby. He had already fallen in love with this new world of luxury and sensual pleasure.

Hou Yunqing was so taken aback by Bai Xiaochun’s response that he didn't know what to say next. Finally, he cleared his throat and changed the subject.

“Brother, there’s a banquet tonight here in Eastwood City. Emissary Du Lingfei from the Spirit Stream Sect has reached the end of her commission and will be returning to her sect, so a big banquet is being held in her honor. If you don’t have anything else to do, Brother, why don’t you come along? It’ll be a lot of fun.”

Bai Xiaochun looked at Hou Yunqing with an enigmatic smile for a moment and then voiced his agreement.

Hou Yunqing knew that he was being a bit presumptuous, but also wanted to take advantage of the golden opportunity which had presented itself, and didn’t have time to come up with any better tactics. Smiling, he led Bai Xiaochun out of the shop and onto the street.

As soon as they stepped out, Bai Xiaochun noticed that they were being followed by eight bodyguards, all of whom were in the fifth level of Qi Condensation. They were rogue cultivators, but they clearly were adept killers, as they radiated powerful murderous auras.

Hou Yunqing looked at Bai Xiaochun out of the corner of his eye and said, “You know, Emissary Du Lingfei from the Spirit Stream Sect is as beautiful as an immortal. Not only is her cultivation base very high, she’s spectacularly good-looking. In fact, she’s one of the top ten goddesses in the Eastwood

Continent. With her as emissary here, the ten clans maintained completely harmonious relations. Not a single problem ever cropped up. She handled her duties with great finesse.”

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing about Du Lingfei’s affairs in Eastwood City, and he was immediately intrigued. “She sounds incredible!”

“Oh, she’s incredible, alright. Very incredible! Famous young men from cultivator clans all over the Eastwood Continent have tried to earn her favor. In my opinion, though, there isn’t a single clan that’s worthy of her. Only few people in the Spirit Stream Sect itself could be counted deserving. To be honest, there’s really only one person good enough for her!” Hou Yunqing sighed.

“Who’s that?!” Bai Xiaochun asked, blinking.

“Oh, he’s a rare Chosen in the Spirit Stream Sect, the type that only comes along once every 10,000 years. He's a Prestige disciple, and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. His name has rocked both the north and south banks of the Spirit Stream Sect, and he’s popular among countless disciples. His name is... Bai Xiaochun!” Hou Yunqing’s expression was one of reverence, although he seemed to be working hard to suppress his zeal. As for the bodyguards, they all had strange expressions on their faces. They had worked for Hou Yunqing for many years, but this was their first time hearing him speak like this. They couldn’t help but look over at Bai Xiaochun, curiosity gnawing at their hearts.

Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly. Looking very thoughtful, he said, “You’re right, Bai Xiaochun truly is extraordinary.”

Then he gave Hou Yunqing another enigmatic smile.

Either Hou Yunqing didn’t notice Bai Xiaochun’s thoughtful look, or he did notice and pretended not to.

“Extraordinary?” he continued excitedly. “He’s more than that. He’s a true Chosen, a superstar, the type of person all the female disciples in the Spirit Stream Sect want as a Daoist partner. As for the male disciples, they all want to be his friend. He’s the jewel of the Spirit Stream Sect. I’ve even heard some people say that after coming back from the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands, he’s reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment.

“A person like that is like a full moon on a dark night. All people can do is look up at him in amazement. What a pity that my own latent talent is just average. Otherwise, I’d go looking for him myself and offer to be his follower for life, to be at his beck and call at all hours of the day.”

Bai Xiaochun was almost blushing by this point. However, Hou Yunqing seemed really caught up in his excitement, and Bai Xiaochun didn't want to interrupt him. Therefore, he allowed him to keep speaking in this vein for quite some time, even giving him an encouraging look now and then.

Hou Yunqing kept it up all the way to the banquet, coming up with new and flowery ways to praise Bai Xiaochun the entire time. At one point, he ran out of things to say, but Bai Xiaochun gave him an encouraging look, and he gritted his teeth and racked his brains to come up with more. The nonstop talking was rather exhausting....

As Bai Xiaochun and Hou Yunqing were heading toward the banquet, large numbers of disciples and elders from the Spirit Stream Sect were out scouring the Eastwood Continent. Their main goal was to track down the disciples who had been teleported out of the Fallen Sword Abyss, and find out what exactly had occurred.

A group of Inner Sect disciples was making their way along the edge of a jungle when they happened to find a disciple who had been knocked unconscious during the teleportation process. They quickly revived him.

The first words that came out of his mouth were enough to shock all of the rescuers.

“Sect Uncle Bai Xiaochun reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!!”

The words struck the hearts of the listeners like bolts of lightning. All of them gasped. It was earth-shattering news, so without the slightest hesitation, they sent messages back to the sect.

Soon, more and more disciples who had been teleported out of the Fallen Sword Abyss turned up. Furthermore, the news that was getting sent back to the sect was all the same.

Bai Xiaochun had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!

He had struck despair into the hearts of the disciples of the other three sects. He had slaughtered Zhao Rou and Fang Lin of the Pill Stream Sect, had seriously injured Nine-Isles, had successfully wrested all the heavenstring energy from Song Que, and had risen to Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!

Some people were even saying that he had killed Lei Shan from the Profound Stream Sect.

As the information trickled back, the Spirit Stream Sect was thrown into a huge commotion. The elders, the seven peak lords, the sect leader... all of them were both stunned and, at the same time, wildly elated. Earlier, they had been nervous, unsure of which disciple from which sect had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. In fact, many had been convinced that it would be someone from the Blood Stream Sect.

Word had even been sent to the spies in the Blood Stream Sect to try to kill certain disciples there.

But now, everyone was shaken to find that the person who had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment... actually came from the Spirit Stream Sect. And it was... Bai Xiaochun!

Li Qinghou and the sect leader were beside themselves with joy. The prime elders were completely shaken. Next, the entire sect was mobilized, with one mission.

“Find Bai Xiaochun. Immediately send word back to the sect if you do. Protect him and escort him home!”

At the same time, the Spirit Stream Sect locked down all disciples who were suspected of being spies. They were well aware that once the other three sects got word of what had occurred, they would do anything to try to kill Bai Xiaochun!

The cultivator clans in the area were closely connected to the Spirit Stream Sect, and as such, it was essentially impossible to keep word from spreading. Soon, everyone had caught wind of what was going on. The patriarchs of the various clans were completely shaken. Eyes bloodshot, they sent the members of their clans out in all directions to try to find Bai Xiaochun.

After all, they knew that he could have been teleported anywhere on the Eastwood Continent.

If they got lucky and he was teleported into their territory, and they found him first, they would be able to invite him to visit their clan personally. That would be a huge honor in and of itself, considering he was a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator now.

There would also be the possibility of some of their clan members striking up friendships with him, which would also be of enormous benefit to the clan.

Even more enticing than that, though, was the possibility that Bai Xiaochun might take a liking to one of the female clan members, and take her as a Daoist partner. If that happened, not even the sect leader would be able to do anything about it.

“Dispatch everyone. Find him! Bai Xiaochun might have been teleported into our territory!”

As the cultivator clans were dispatching people to search, Bai Xiaochun and Hou Yunqing finally arrived at the banquet.

It was being hosted in a sprawling mansion that covered over ten acres of land. The walls were magnificently decorated, and the grounds were filled with pine trees and decorative rock formations. In one area near the center, pavilions had been set up, as well as a three-story pagoda that looked almost like a palace. Decorated with dragons and phoenixes, it was tasteful and elegant, yet clearly wildly expensive.

A din of voices could be heard, and servants bustled back and forth carrying all sorts of fine liquor and fresh fruit to the elegantly attired guests.

There were well over a hundred guests present, men and women, young and old. Some sat alone, others in groups of three to five.

Guards were posted at the main entrance, where a valet cheerfully greeted the new arrivals. For those he didn’t recognize, he would accept their invitation cards, make a record of their arrival, and then show them inside.

As soon as Hou Yunqing appeared, the valet greeted him respectfully and escorted him inside. Bai Xiaochun walked along by his side, looking around curiously at the banquet. This was his first time attending such an affair.

One of the first things he saw was a muscular man off in the distance, chatting and laughing with a pretty young woman as they all walked along toward Hou Yunqing. The man wore a long violet robe that was clearly very expensive. His face had a healthy glow to it, and he wore rings of holding on all of his fingers. Seven or eight jade pendants could be seen on his person, and he looked every bit like a rich playboy.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0169 awe-chapter-170

The young woman wore makeup that made her seem young and pure. However, there was something about her that made it obvious she was a paid courtesan, which lessened her appeal. Overall, though, she was quite beautiful.

Smiling, the burly man hurried over to lead Hou Yunqing to a nearby table. “Brother Yunqing, I’ve been waiting for you. Come, come. Have a seat with me.”

Only when Hou Yunqing gave an apologetic look to Bai Xiaochun did the burly man finally notice him.

“You must be new around here,” he said with a smile. “But you’re a guest nonetheless. Any friend of Yunqing’s is a friend of mine. I'm Li Youdao. This banquet is being held by my Li Clan in honor of Emissary Lingfei. It was a bit rushed, so things aren’t as well planned out as they should have been. Please, forgive me for any inadequacies.” Looking very pleased with himself, he pulled Hou Yunqing and Bai Xiaochun over to the tables, where they all sat down. The young woman sat down quietly next to Li Youdao, looking very lovely and demure.

“Things really were far too rushed,” Li Youdao said. “The only beverage I could get my hands on was this spirit alcohol brewed from tier-1 high-grade spirit medicine. If I’d had more time, I could definitely have procured some product made from tier-2 high-grade spirit medicine.” He sighed, and yet, it was impossible for him to cover up the look of pride on his face. He and Hou Yunqing had been secretly competing with each other for years, and at long last he had this chance to put him in his place.

It was at this point that the young woman sitting next to Li Youdao spoke up.

“Youdao,” she said flirtatiously, “don’t be so modest! It would be hard to find another clan in the Eastwood Continent that would entertain so many people with spirit alcohol brewed from tier-1 high-grade spirit medicine. Even a small glass could be sold for several hundred spirit stones!”

Her flattery was like music to Li Youdao’s ears.

“Ah, what are a few hundred spirit stones?” he said. “It's just spirit alcohol. Come, come, Yunqing. You and your friend have to try this stuff. It’s really hard to find it anywhere in Eastwood City.” With that, he waved a servant over to fill glasses for Hou Yunqing and Bai Xiaochun.

Hou Yunqing looked a bit embarrassed. Despite the fact that his clan was quite well-off, he had only ever once tried spirit alcohol brewed from tier-1 high-grade spirit medicine. After hesitating for a moment, he smiled wryly and took a sip.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the alcohol curiously. After sniffing it, he couldn’t help but be disappointed; clearly, the impurity levels were quite high.

Li Youdao seemed very satisfied to see Hou Yunqing’s reaction, but when he saw the expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face, he was less than pleased. After looking him up and down, he decided that, not only would he put Hou Yunqing in his place, he would crush his friend at the same time.

“Brother, are you not satisfied? Ah, don’t worry. This banquet we’re throwing for Goddess Lingfei is a bit rushed, but we still managed to get some rare foods to serve. I've heard that Goddess Lingfei always talks about how much she misses the Spirit Stream Sect. Therefore, the Li Clan has spent a lot of money to get some spirit tail chickens to remind her of her home.

“Men! Serve the spirit tail chicken!” Laughing heartily, he waved his hand, and a servant rushed over carrying a golden platter. There on the platter was a fully roasted spirit tail chicken!

The platter itself looked quite expensive, and as for the three-colored spirit tails, they were arranged very artistically. The chicken had been roasted to a deep amber color, and looked extraordinary. Apparently, it had just come out of the oven, causing a wonderful aroma to fill the area. Quite a few other guests looked over in shock.

“A spirit tail chicken!? Wow, the Li Clan is so rich!”

“Every table gets a spirit tail chicken? Look, those clearly weren’t raised around here. Where did they come from!?”

Hearing the reactions of those sitting in the area, Bai Xiaochun blinked in surprise. “Isn’t that just a spirit tail chicken?”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the beautiful young woman sitting next to Li Youdao scornfully said, “Prince Yunqing, your friend here really knows how to run his mouth. *Isn’t that just a spirit tail chicken?* It makes it seem like he’s eaten a lot of them.”

Li Youdao looked gravely at the young woman, as if he didn’t approve of her tone. However, the truth was that he also felt that Bai Xiaochun was trying to be a big showoff. Inwardly, he was starting to get irritated, but outwardly, he made a polite explanation.

“Friend, I'm afraid you don’t understand. These spirit tail chickens aren’t ordinary in any way. They weren’t raised by my Li Clan, they're from the Spirit Stream Sect!

“More specifically, they’re from the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect!” Even though his words were spoken softly, many people in the area heard them, and soon, gasps rang out.

Even Hou Yunqing couldn’t hold back from gasping at Li Youdao’s display of wealth.

Li Youdao was very pleased at the reaction he was getting from Hou Yunqing and the crowd. Looking very proud of himself, he continued to offer further explanation.

“The spirit tail chickens from the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect were rare enough to begin with. However, a few years ago, a bandit known as the Chicken-Thieving Fiend caused a sharp decline in production. Nowadays, spirit tail chickens from the south bank can only be acquired at auction, and for an extraordinary price at that. They’re very easy to identify. They have green bones and beautiful tail feathers. They look completely different from other types of chickens.

“However,” he lamented, “thanks to that despicable Chicken-Thieving Fiend and his demented crime spree, the south bank spirit tail chickens nearly went extinct!” With that, he proceeded to curse and revile the Chicken-Thieving Fiend. His female companion joined in, until all of the surrounding guests were echoing their sentiments.

In response to everyone rebuking the Chicken-Thieving Fiend, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat awkwardly.

It was at this point that a new group of people arrived, a group of handsome elite clan members from the cultivator clans, who were clustered around a young woman. She wore a long white gown that resembled a blooming lotus, had the fairest of skin, and had her long hair coiled up and bound with a silver hairpin. She wore pearls and jewelry, and walked with a gentle grace. The starlight which reflected in her eyes made her look even more beautiful.

Unfortunately, her exquisite beauty was somewhat marred because of her furrowed brow; apparently she was concerned with some important matter. And yet, she did her best to put a smile on her face as she conversed in a low tone with one of the young men escorting her.

Although the young man did his best to conceal it, it was possible to see the passion in his eyes as he listened to her.

That young woman was none other than Du Lingfei.

She immediately became the focus of all attention. Furthermore, there was something about her, some energy or power that made everyone in her presence feel the urge to bow their heads.

Despite how many people were clustered around her, Bai Xiaochun instantly caught sight of her. At first, he almost looked like he was in a daze. They hadn’t seen each other for years, but she somehow seemed more familiar to him than ever. And yet, she was more beautiful than before. There was also something a bit more noble about her, perhaps something that had come from holding a position of power for so long.

She definitely seemed different from the rude and unreasonable beauty she had been when they’d first met. And yet, as the moments ticked by, that old version of Du

Lingfei and this newer, more beautiful one slowly merged together.

Bai Xiaochun had grown in their time apart, and so had she. Thanks to her subtle control of affairs in Eastwood City, the cultivator clans were in harmony, something that most outsiders found unbelievable.

“Goddess Lingfei....” Li Youdao said, his eyes flickering with infatuation. Back when he'd first laid eyes on her, he had been somewhat attracted to her. However, it was only thanks to her deft manipulation of the cultivator clans that he came to be fully infatuated.

The courtesan sitting next to him paled in comparison, and she clearly knew that. In the face of the powerful Du Lingfei, she had no choice other than to lower her head.

At this point, Hou Yunqing leaned over to Bai Xiaochun and quietly said, “Goddess Lingfei came to Eastwood City with nothing. I remember her often gazing back in the direction of the Spirit Stream Sect, thinking about something. Who would have ever thought that she would do so well for herself? None of the past emissaries ever accomplished what she has. She kept the peace between the clans, bringing about a harmony the likes of which has never been seen before.

“Supposedly, some of the clan patriarchs were so impressed that they convinced the Spirit Stream Sect to renew her emissary commission several times over.”

Even as Li Youdao stared at her with glittering eyes, and Hou Yunqing was murmuring to Bai Xiaochun, Du Lingfei finished speaking to the young man next to her. Just as she was about to take a step forward, her gaze pierced through the crowd to land on Li Youdao’s table.

Her eyes went wide, and a tremor of disbelief ran through her. All of a sudden, it seemed as if everyone around her had vanished, leaving only one person behind in her world.

Breathing heavily, she started walking in the direction of the table. Everyone was shocked to see her acting this way, especially Li Youdao, who shot to his feet, trembling.

“Sh-she's actually coming over to see me!!!” His mind began to spin, and his heart began to pump wildly. Unable to prevent the joy from filling his face, he immediately began to walk toward her.

“Goddess Lingfei....” he said. Even as he prepared more words to say, Du Lingfei walked right by without even sparing him a passing glance. His jaw dropped, and he looked stiffly over his shoulder to see Du Lingfei stop in front of the table and look at one person in particular.

“Bai Xiaochun, you’re here....” Even the way she stood there was enticing. Her eyes were beautiful, like shining moons, and everyone who looked at her couldn’t prevent their hearts from surging with passion.

The instant she spoke Bai Xiaochun’s name, the clamor of the banquet transformed into utter silence. Trembling, people began to turn to look at Bai Xiaochun.

Everyone knew that Bai Xiaochun was a Prestige disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect and the Junior Brother of the sect leader. The latest news was that he had recently gone to one of the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands.

“Yeah, I'm here,” he said, smiling. All of a sudden, he recalled that moment in the cave when they were fleeing from the Luochen, how she had sat next to the fire, her face ashen and yet oh so beautiful.

Hou Yunqing plastered a look of surprise on his face. Taking several dramatic steps backward, and stumbling down to his knees in the process, he pointed his finger and raised his voice as loud as possible. “Y-y-you're... you’re Bai Xiaochun!?!?”

It was at that exact same moment that people from the various cultivator clans began to pull jade slips out of their holding items, as news came in from their clans.

Within moments, the surprise which had just gripped their heart turned into massive waves of shock. People began to gasp and look over at Bai Xiaochun, their minds reeling.

All of the various jade slips contained similar information.

“Bai Xiaochun reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment! Any clan member who meets him should treat him with utter respect. Immediately notify the clan for a hefty reward!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0170 awe-chapter-171

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the flabbergasted crowd of cultivator clan members, and mused about how glorious the situation was. From the expression of utter shock on Hou Yunqing's face, it seemed as if he had only just now realized the shocking identity of the person he had befriended. Although Bai Xiaochun found his behavior a bit servile, it still felt good receive such treatment.

Coughing dryly, he patted Hou Yunqing on the shoulder and said, "Alright, enough with the act. Your big bro Hou Yunfei told me about you a while ago."

Hou Yunqing rose to his feet, looking a bit embarrassed. The truth was that because of his place in the Hou Clan, he had recognized Bai Xiaochun the instant he set foot in his shop. The Hou Clan had long since passed out information throughout the clan about Bai Xiaochun.

Hou Yunqing knew that his clan brother and sister were both on good terms with Bai Xiaochun, and he himself had hoped to somehow make friends with him, but had never been able to. When the chance suddenly arose to get close to an important person like Bai Xiaochun, he had to strike while the iron was hot. Of course, when flattering someone, the best thing was not to be too direct. That way, the target of the flattery would feel more comfortable, as would the flatterer.

And that was why things had played out the way they did on the way to the banquet.... Actually, Hou Yunqing had been prepared for the possibility that Bai Xiaochun would see through his ruse. In fact, Bai Xiaochun's enigmatic smiles along the way caused Hou Yunqing to come to that very conclusion. However, that didn’t prevent him from continuing to lay on the flattery as thick as possible.

Bai Xiaochun looked at Du Lingfei, and she looked back at him. However, there was no time to sit around and reminisce. People from the cultivator clans immediately began to flock around Bai Xiaochun, offering formal greetings in extremely respectful tones, each one more enthusiastic than the one before.

When Du Lingfei saw so many people jumping at the chance to meet Bai Xiaochun, and how he stood there proudly with his hands clasped behind his back, she couldn’t help but smile and think back to everything that had happened when they were being chased by the Luochen Clan.

Mixed emotions soon swirled within her eyes, and she sighed. However, even in the middle of her sigh, her expression suddenly flickered, and she walked over to stand next to Bai Xiaochun.

The moment she stepped forward, Bai Xiaochun sensed something, and looked up. There in the air not too far away, three beams of light were approaching at breakneck speed.

Three cultivators came into view, two men and a woman. All of them were bursting with killing intent, and shockingly, all of them were Foundation Establishment cultivators.

“Prepare to die, Bai Xiaochun!” As they closed in on the area, they fell into a triangular formation, and then unleashed a powerful attack that not only erupted with extermination power, but also contained a noxious black mist.

A black cloud formed, within which could be seen a flying sword, a drum, and a battle-axe. All three of them were powerful magical items that were aimed directly at Bai Xiaochun.

The surrounding cultivators from the various clans were shocked, and began to tremble in fear. When they sensed three Foundation Establishment cultivation bases, they cried out in alarm.

“Foundation Establishment!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered. His hair stood up on end as a sensation of deadly crisis swept over him. His eyes went wide, and his pupils constricted as he mentally recalled the Fallen Sword World, and his flight from the Luochen Clan. The feeling of proud complacency from moments before had been replaced by veins of steel.

“You people... want to kill me?” His eyes began to shine brightly. It would have been possible to simply dodge the attack unleashed by these three assassins, but there were countless innocent bystanders present, as well as Du Lingfei. Furthermore, everyone around him was in Qi Condensation, whereas the three assassins were...

Foundation Establishment experts!!

They were only in the Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment stage, but their cultivation bases appeared to be near the great circle of early Foundation Establishment!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were already bloodshot as he stood there in front of Du Lingfei, and he looked just like he had when facing the Luochen Clan. He didn’t dodge, nor did he flee. He raised his right hand, and blinding golden light emanated from his entire body. The power of nine spiritual seas and Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment erupted out, causing Bai Xiaochun to seem much larger than he actually was!

All of a sudden, a huge illusory palm materialized in front of him, golden in color, which shot forward to block the incoming attack!

Shockingly, he was single-handedly blocking the combined attack of three Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivators!

Du Lingfei stood there in a daze, looking at Bai Xiaochun’s back. It was almost like the world around her had vanished, and she was once again being chased by the Luochen Clan.

She seemed conflicted, and it was in that moment that her right hand, which was inside of her sleeve, suddenly turned a bit blurry. A moment later, it was back to normal, looking fair and fine like usual.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. As soon as Bai Xiaochun let loose his counterattack, massive rumbling sounds echoed out, and black cloud unleashed by the three assassins was crushed as if by an enormous mountain.

As the boom echoed out, the ground beneath Bai Xiaochun’s feet cracked and crumbled. Everyone within about thirty meters of him staggered, and some of them coughed up blood. However, none were killed.

Being directly protected by Bai Xiaochun, Du Lingfei wasn’t hurt at all. However, all of the tables, the decorative rocks, and the pine trees in the area were completely destroyed.

The black cloud collapsed, and the flying sword, the drum and the battle-axe were sent spinning off to the side.

The three assassins were clearly shocked that Bai Xiaochun had blocked their attack with a single palm strike. Just as they were about to unleash another attack, Bai Xiaochun’s voice echoed out, filled with rage, “You people are courting death!”

Without a moment’s hesitation, he shot through the air toward the group of three.

One of the men tried to fall back, but was too slow. With the help of his wings, Bai Xiaochun appeared in front of him at almost the same moment that he took off, two fingers lashing out with the power of the Throat Crushing Grasp. Instantly, his fingers were on the man’s neck.

A cracking sound rang out, and the man’s eyes went wide. Blood sprayed out of his torn throat as Bai Xiaochun tossed him off to the side to block the other two from retrieving the flying sword and the battle-axe.

A boom echoed out as the man's corpse exploded into bits, sending blood and gore flying out in all directions. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun turned, piercing through the cloud of gore, his expression matchlessly vicious.

The murderous aura which was now exploding out from him had appeared before thanks to the Luochen Clan, and had also been seen when he slaughtered countless enemies in the Fallen Sword Abyss. He... was out to kill!

The surviving man and woman were both Foundation Establishment cultivators, but at the moment, their scalps were tingling in fear. The power on display by Bai Xiaochun completely exceeded their expectations.

“So this is Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment....” Exchanging a bitter glance, they turned to flee. Since they couldn’t kill Bai Xiaochun, then the only thing they had a mind left to do was get away. However, there was no way Bai Xiaochun would let that happen.

Almost at the exact moment that they took to flight, Bai Xiaochun, his eyes even more bloodshot than before, sped into motion. The full power of his Foundation Establishment cultivation base erupted, along with the Waterswamp Kingdom. The sky went dark, and a shocking pressure descended, causing the two fleeing assassins to cry out in alarm.

Then, Bai Xiaochun's wings flapped, and he left after images behind as he sped toward the man. The man’s face fell as he tried to defend himself, but there was no way he could move faster than a fist strike unleashed by someone who had broken through the first shackle of mortality.

That fist exploded like thunder, slamming into the man’s chest and unleashing unspeakable force. His eyes exploded, and then his organs, his bones, his flesh, and his blood all burst out in chunks in all directions.

The last assassin was the woman. Screaming in terror, she tried to flee, and even managed to get about 300 meters away. But then, Bai Xiaochun turned and waved his right index finger through the air.

“Violet Qi... Cauldron Summoning!”

Boundless violet qi swirled in the air above the woman, rapidly transforming into an enormous violet cauldron.

Then, Bai Xiaochun clenched his hand into a fist!

The violet cauldron shattered, creating a huge explosion that instantly overwhelmed the woman.

In the blink of an eye, she was killed in body and soul!

Silence reigned. Everyone in the area was staring in shock and awe at Bai Xiaochun. Although they all had heard that Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment was powerful, none of them could ever have imagined that not only would the Foundation Establishment assassins be unable to defeat him, but that he would kill them as easily as turning over his hand!

Even as everyone stood there gasping, Du Lingfei’s expression turned very grim, and she said, “How did those three get in here? I can’t believe the Eastwood City’s grand spell formation isn’t active. Immediately investigate the records to see which clan is responsible. As the official emissary to this city, I demand an explanation for this matter!

“The cultivator clans will conduct a thorough search of the entire city: interrogate anyone who seems suspicious. It’s likely that those three aren’t the only assassins here!”

Around the same time, numerous beams of light appeared up above. Now that the cultivator clans knew that Bai Xiaochun was in the city, the patriarchs and other leaders were all showing up.

When the patriarchs saw the bloody scene down below, their expressions flickered. Then they heard Du Lingfei's words, and their own killing intent began to roil. One of the patriarchs suddenly looked sick as he realized that his clan had been responsible for maintaining the spell formation for the past few months.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, Goddess Du: the Li Clan will definitely investigate this matter to the bitter end. Let the sun and moon bear witness to the fact that we are faithful and true to the Spirit Stream Sect!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0171 awe-chapter-172

That night, martial law was imposed on Eastwood City. All of the cultivator clans sprang into action, carrying out a thorough investigation in the entire city. As for Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei, they disappeared into the night.

Du Lingfei explained to Bai Xiaochun that her commission was almost over, and there would be no harm in returning to the sect early. As such, she would accompany him on his way back.

**

It was late at night. Stars twinkled in the sky, and the moon hung high and bright. Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei sat on a mountaintop looking out at the stars. Du Lingfei looked even more beautiful than usual under the starlight. Smiling, she looked over at Bai Xiaochun as he recounted the events which had occurred during their years apart.

“You wouldn’t believe it, boo. On the south bank, they actually pelted me with stones. Man, that hurt so much....

“I didn’t mean for things in 10,000 Snakes Valley to turn out that way! I just wanted the snakes to look a little cuter....

“After you get back to the sect, boo, you definitely have to tell me if you see that damned rabbit!

“Those guys on the north bank are complete bullies. I got sent to the north bank, alone and impoverished. I scuttled around with my tail between my legs, scared of offending anyone, but they still didn't let me off the hook....” As he told his stories of the Spirit Stream Sect, Du Lingfei occasionally comforted him and occasionally chuckled. The looks of praise and surprise she gave him got Bai Xiaochun even more worked up.

She protested his use of the nickname 'boo', and did so more than once, but it didn’t do any good. In fact, the more she protested, the more he used it.

“Boo, boo, boo....”

Finally, she simply shook her head and sighed in resignation.

Eventually, they found a mountain cave where they settled down for the night. Bai Xiaochun sat down cross-legged to meditate, and after a bit of time passed, a gentle breeze picked up. Strangely, Bai Xiaochun didn’t notice the breeze at all.

Du Lingfei opened her eyes and looked over at Bai Xiaochun, mixed emotions swirling in her eyes. After a moment, she stood and walked out of the cave to look up at the bright moon up overhead. A gust of wind blew a strand of her hair out of place, and she reached up to tuck it behind her ear.

However, when her finger reached the hair, it passed directly through it. Du Lingfei looked at her shimmering index finger, and the complexity in her eyes deepened. Clenching her hand into a fist caused the finger to become solid again, after which she tucked the stray hair into place.

“Not much time left....”

Some more time passed. Looking very melancholy, Du Lingfei walked back into the cave and looked at Bai

Xiaochun sitting there quietly. Being careful not to jostle him, she sat down by his side and rested her head on his shoulder. After she closed her eyes, a smile appeared on her face.

Time passed as they traveled along. Three days went by, which didn’t seem like a very long time for Bai Xiaochun. He fantasized a bit about what it would be like to return to the sect as a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert, and how he would be the center of all attention. Every time he thought about it, he got more excited.

Du Lingfei wanted to slow the trip down, but when she saw how excited he was, she simply smiled and held her tongue. On the third day, Bai Xiaochun’s Foundation Establishment cultivation base stabilized, and they were getting very close to the Spirit Stream Sect.

Deep in the night of the third day, when they were only about a day’s journey from the Spirit Stream Sect, Du Lingfei suggested that they rest for a bit. They found a mountain cave, where Bai Xiaochun began to recount his terrifying experiences in the Fallen Sword World. As he spoke, he began to feel tired, and before he realized what was happening, was asleep.

Everything was very quiet, with the only sound being the popping and hissing of the little fire they’d built. Inside the cave, the flames cast dancing shadows, and outside, it was pitch black. Everything was very peaceful.

Du Lingfei gazed into the fire for a while, then looked over at the sleeping Bai Xiaochun, a soft look in her eyes as she thought back to the past. By this point, she wasn’t paying any attention to her physical body, which was starting to shimmer and turn translucent.

After a long moment passed, she sighed. Giving Bai Xiaochun a deep look, she rose to her feet, trembling a bit. At this point, she noticed his mouth curve up into a smile as he slept. Apparently he was having a wonderful dream of some sort.

Leaning down, she kissed him softly on the lips, then turned and walked out of the cave, a look of determination spreading across her face.

As she emerged, the air rippled and distorted as nine shadowy figures appeared. They were all mysterious and enigmatic, even bizarre, and as they stood there, the air around them shimmered and flickered.

Unexpectedly, all nine of the figures clasped hands and bowed deeply to Du Lingfei. From the respect they showed, they almost seemed like servants.

One of the shadowy figures stepped forward and spoke in a raspy voice that almost seemed to emanate from the ancient past. “Junior Matriarch, the task you assigned us has been accomplished. All eleven individuals are right here.”

With that, he waved his hand, causing eleven severed heads to tumble out. The faces of each and every head were twisted into expressions of terror and disbelief.

Shockingly, these were all the spies that had infiltrated Eastwood City with the intention of killing Bai Xiaochun.

Du Lingfei ignored the severed heads and the nine shadowy figures. Turning around, she looked at the slumbering Bai Xiaochun.

“Everything about me in the Spirit Stream Sect was a sham,” she murmured, her eyes glistening as if tears were welling up. “The only real thing was that time when the Luochen Clan was chasing us.

“My mission is accomplished, but for some reason, I’m not happy. I hope you can forgive me.... I'm sorry, Bai Xiaochun.” As the tears spilled out onto her cheeks, they rolled down her face and transformed into ash which drifted away into the wind.

One of the shadowy figures clasped hands and respectfully said, “Junior Matriarch, this mortal body the patriarch crafted for you won’t last for much longer. He sent us here to escort you back. Will you be coming, ma’am?”

Du Lingfei continued to look at Bai Xiaochun for a long moment, then nodded lightly. She looked exhausted. Finally, she turned to leave. As she did, her body slowly vanished, transforming into nothing more than smoke. The nine shadowy figures also vanished....

As for the eleven severed heads, they dissolved into ash.

The following morning at dawn, as the first rays of sunlight reached into the cave, Bai Xiaochun squinted as he slowly opened his eyes.

“I’m thirsty, boo....” he said, yawning. He was a bit surprised; after beginning to practice cultivation, he'd found that he didn’t need to sleep as often, but just now, he'd slept for quite a long time. Rubbing his eyes, he stood up and looked around for Du Lingfei.

When he didn't see her, he didn’t think too much of it. Walking out of the cave, he looked over at the rising sun and then stretched lazily.

“I must have tired myself out too much recently. Man, what a good night’s sleep.” At the moment, he felt more energetic than ever, as though a boundless life force were pulsing inside of him. His nine spiritual seas were golden through and through, and he was completely and fully in the Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment stage.

His aura had ceased to focus inward, and with every breath he took, he could almost hear waves crashing in his spiritual seas.

He felt better now than he ever had before, and decided to meditate for a bit, both to familiarize himself with his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment and its Heaven-Dao aura, and also to wait for Du Lingfei.

After two hours passed, and Du Lingfei hadn’t returned, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, feeling somewhat nervous.

“Still not back yet?” he thought. He pulled out a transmission jade slip and sent a message to her, but it did as much good as throwing a rock into the sea. There wasn’t any response at all.

“What’s going on?!” He shot to his feet and immediately began to search the area. By the time evening fell, he’d looked everywhere, but hadn't found a single trace.... Du Lingfei... had disappeared!

By this point, he was wracked with anxiety, and had the feeling that something bad had happened. Face ashen, eyes bloodshot, he expanded his search.

“Where are you, boo!?

“Du Lingfei, where are you!?!?

“Du Lingfei....” He searched for four days in a row, looking everywhere he could think of. Soon his hair was disheveled, and he looked like he was losing weight. However, Du Lingfei was nowhere to be found.

“Did I say something wrong, boo? Why are you hiding from me? Tell me!

“Du Lingfei, come out, wherever you are!

“What happened!?”

He was going mad with anxiety by this point. Eventually, he went back to the cave where he had last seen her, and searched the entire place with a fine toothed comb. Unfortunately, the result was the same as before.

He wasn't sure why, but his heart hurt. It felt like someone was ripping it into pieces, and was a feeling the likes of which he had never experienced before. Clutching his hands tightly at the pit of his stomach, he thought back to how he had fallen asleep for no apparent reason, and then his heart sank. Eventually, a blank look appeared in his eyes.

**

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had been away for so long without returning caused the sect to send out even more people to find him. Hou Yunfei led a team, as did other key disciples from the south and north banks. Even Li Qinghou helped.

When they finally found him, he was sitting outside of that cave, his eyes bloodshot, his face gaunt. He looked bedeviled.

When Li Qinghou saw him, he felt a twinge of pain at the sight, and asked, “Xiaochun, what's wrong?!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered. Eyes blank, he turned to look at Li Qinghou and murmured, “Uncle Li, Du Lingfei... is gone.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0172 awe-chapter-173

As he was escorted back to the Spirit Stream Sect, Bai Xiaochun maintained his silence. Occasionally he would look over his shoulder in the direction of the cave where Du Lingfei had gone missing.

Li Qinghou issued orders for the Spirit Stream Sect and the cultivator clans to search for Du Lingfei. However, not a single clue turned up. It was as if she had vanished into thin air.

This strange turn of events was taken seriously even by the higher echelons of the Spirit Stream Sect’s leadership.

Because of the disappearance of Du Lingfei, Bai Xiaochun lost all excitement at having reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment.

The sect held a grand ceremony, and Bai Xiaochun's name gradually came to be known throughout the entire cultivation world of the eastern Lower Reaches. News spread about the fierce fighting over heavenstring energy in the Fallen Sword World, and soon, people were saying that Bai Xiaochun had surpassed Master Limitless.

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t really care much about all of that.

He received a hefty reward from the sect, and when the other disciples looked at him, their eyes shone with respect. Even the prime elders and the patriarchs gazed upon him with admiration. And yet, his heart was filled with disappointment.

During the grand ceremony thrown by the sect, Bai Xiaochun revealed the corpses of the disciples who had lost their lives in the Fallen Sword World. Everything went quiet. The peak lords and the sect leader looked on sadly, as did the prime elders from Mount Daoseed.

After the ceremony was over, many people realized that Bai Xiaochun seemed a lot quieter than before. It was as if he had forgotten about things such as glory and the pride. People would often see him alone on Fragrant Cloud Peak, looking lost.

He was like a different person, and many of the disciples who were close to him felt horrible.

Bruiser ran over from the north bank. Apparently he could sense Bai Xiaochun’s dark mood, and simply sat next to him to keep him company.

Big Fatty Zhang came a few times, but was never sure what to say, and simply sat there sighing. Hou Yunfei also visited to keep him silent company.

Hou Xiaomei came to comfort him, as if to remind him that even though Du Lingfei was gone, she was still there.

“Big bro Xiaochun, I won’t go missing....”

Xu Baocai came with lots of rumors. For instance, Gongsun Wan’er had gone missing, but her soul lamp hadn’t burned out. Her brother Gongsun Yun had gone crazy looking for her, but hadn’t been able to find her.

Xu Baocai had talked to all of the disciples who came back from the three Foundation Establishment Holy Lands, and had compiled all of the information into a comprehensive report. He also had information about all of the Chosen from the other sects.

“Sect Uncle Bai, you probably didn’t hear that while you were in the Fallen Sword World, a Chosen unexpectedly rose up in the Primordial Spirit Hollow. He’s an amazing disciple from the Pill Stream Sect!

“His name is Lin Mu, and he turned out to be a real dark horse in the competition. That ‘Mu’ character in his name is the same character from the word ‘tomb’! He actually mastered the Pill Stream Sect’s most powerful grand magic, the Primeval Medicinal Daoseed Incantation! It was only later on that a lot of the Pill Stream Sect disciples realized that he had secretly planted Daoseeds in them. Eventually, he reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment with eight Tideflows!

“In the Lone Hell Pocket Realm, another shocking Chosen rose up. Her name is second only to yours, Sect Uncle Bai. She’s from the Blood Stream Sect, and wears a mask with a plum blossom on it. She completely stomped on everyone else in the Holy Land, and became the second person from the Blood Stream Sect after Master Limitless to reach the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, nine Tideflows! She slaughtered countless other disciples. It was completely brutal. They call her Devilwitch Xuemei! [1. You may recall that Song Que from the Blood Stream Sect mentioned Xuemei in chapter 161. The name literally means “blood plum”]

“Now that I think about it, it seems like there was something really strange going on in the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands. Dark horses popped up everywhere! Although, you were obviously the most shocking dark horse, Sect

Uncle Bai, and the strongest of them all. You reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!

“This time around, the Spirit Stream Sect really took the glory!

“Oh, by the way, before Ghostfang went into secluded meditation, he picked his legacy at the Ancestral Darktunnel, and twenty legacy shafts lit up! The entire sect was thrown into an uproar!” Thanks to Xu Baocai’s detailed information, Bai Xiaochun gradually came to learn about everything that had happened in the Lone Hell Pocket Realm and the Arcane Spirit Hollow.

Although none of the events in the other two Holy Lands were as brutal as the Fallen Sword World, there were still many deaths and casualties.

In addition to the information about the other sects, Xu Baocai also told him about the other Spirit Stream Sect disciples from the other two Holy Lands. Zhou Xinqi, Lu Tianlei, Gongsun Yun, Xu Song, and several other disciples had all reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment. However, none of them had gotten more than six Tideflows. After returning, all of them were assigned to various positions in the sect, then went into secluded meditation to strive toward the Legacy Echelon.

According to Xu Baocai, Ghostfang and Shangguan Tianyou had also chosen to go into secluded meditation. Furthermore, Beihan Lie had become even more famous and important in the sect. As for Hou Yunfei, he had been taken in as an apprentice by one of the prime elders.

Everyone had acquired their own good fortune. As for the disciples from the north and south banks who had received help from Bai Xiaochun to reach Earthstring Foundation

Establishment, none of them were taken as apprentices by prime elders. However, all of them were promoted, becoming elders who took the lead in administering sect affairs.

The number of disciples who reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment from the Spirit Stream Sect vastly outnumbered those from the other sects, giving them much more power and influence within that stage of cultivation.

As for Bai Xiaochun, because he had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, he was named Legacy Echelon-designate.

However, he didn’t get much feeling from that. He was really having a hard time pulling himself out of his depression. Time passed. Half a month later, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong walked over to the forlorn Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave and sat down in front of him.

“Xiaochun, when you were in the Fallen Sword Abyss, the founding patriarch issued a Dharmic decree. Fragrant Cloud Peak has been infiltrated by a spy!” Zheng Yuandong’s words caused a tremor to run through Bai Xiaochun. The truth was that Bai Xiaochun was no fool; his mind was quick and sharp. During the half month that had passed, he had put a lot of thought into what had occurred during his time with Du Lingfei recently. Although nothing seemed out of the ordinary about her on the surface, how could Bai Xiaochun not have noticed the mixed emotions in her eyes?

He also remembered that on the night she went missing, she had been the one to suggest resting, after which he had slept the whole night through.

All of that told him that, most likely, Du Lingfei had left of her own volition.

As for why she had left, he had the feeling there was some secret reason for it. In the end, he didn’t want to think about the matter too much; he already had some guesses as to what was going on.

Zheng Yuandong didn’t go into any further detail about the spy. There were some things that simply needed to be mentioned to Bai Xiaochun. Talking about them too much might not be a good thing.

He was fairly certain Bai Xiaochun understood the implication behind his words.

After a long moment of silence, Zheng Yuandong changed the subject, and in doing so, unwittingly touched on something that had come to be a sensitive subject for Bai Xiaochun because of the events of recent weeks.

“Bai Xiaochun, do you know why the Luochen Clan turned traitor?!”

Because of what had occurred with Du Lingfei, and Bai Xiaochun’s reluctance to ponder the matter, the events concerning the Luochen Clan had become a bit hazy. However, after hearing Zheng Yuandong’s words, he looked up. Although he didn’t want to think about Du Lingfei right now, the deadly events with the Luochen Clan were something that he would never be able to forget.

Subconsciously, he reached down and rubbed the place on his arm where the jagged edge of his broken arm bone had poked out of the flesh. The wound had long since healed, but every time he touched that spot, he thought about how he'd stabbed Crown Prince Chen Heng in the neck with his own shattered bone.

Originally, it had seemed that the Luochen Clan turned traitor because they wanted to break free from the control of the Spirit Stream Sect. They had even gone to the lengths of killing mortals to reverse the flow of their own blood for that very purpose. However, there were multiple layers to the events that had occurred. Without something deeper motivating them, they would never have done such a thing. After all, while the eastern Lower Reaches was a vast place, in some ways, it was a very small world.

After betraying the Spirit Stream Sect, the Luochen Clan would have had a very difficult time surviving, even if they had successfully reversed their bloodlines.

Bai Xiaochun had pondered the matter some in the past, but the sect had actively suppressed information about the incident, essentially sweeping the news under the rug.

However, Bai Xiaochun was an observant person, and had taken note of the frequency with which the sect dispatched Foundation Establishment cultivators to the outside. Clearly, something bigger was going on. Considering his previous speculations, the fact that Zheng Yuandong was bringing up the subject now was a bit of a shock. [1. It was hinted in chapter 64 that the sect was suppressing information about the Luochen Clan incident. The activity of the Foundation Establishment cultivators was also touched on]

“You’re a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator now, and also the legacy echelon-designate. You are the pride and joy of the sect, and as such, you qualify to be privy to certain secrets that ordinary disciples are unaware of. I have four important questions to pose to you.” Zheng Yuandong’s solemn expression caused the atmosphere in the immortal’s cave to instantly turn serious.

“First of all, are you aware of the nature of the world in which we live?” As he spoke the words, Zheng Yuandong’s eyes seemed to focus on something far in the distance, and even his voice quavered a bit.

Bai Xiaochun shivered. He understood a bit about the world thanks to his own research into the sect’s ancient records. However, even those explanations weren’t very clear.

“The world in which we live is huge,” Zheng Yuandong continued. “In the very middle of it, there exists a vast sea, which is golden in color, and is filled with enormous rolling waves. According to the legends, there is an island in the middle of that sea, which is the location of the passage that spans the gap between heaven and earth.

“That is why the sea is called the Heavenspan Sea. Furthermore, the world we live in is called the Heavenspan Realm, or sometimes, the lands of Heavenspan! For years and years on end, countless almighty beings have sought to cross the sea and set foot onto that island. Unfortunately, no one has ever succeeded.

“There are four mighty rivers which connect to the Heavenspan Sea. They stretch out to the east, west, south and north. It’s hard to say whether the rivers exist because of the sea, or vice versa. In any case, those four rivers are known as the eastern, northern, southern, and western Heavenspan Rivers.

“The four great rivers that connect to the sea are known as the Upper Reaches. Each and every one of them eventually splits into four smaller branches which are known as the Middle Reaches. Further down the line, those branches also split into four smaller branches, which are known as the Lower Reaches.

“Beyond that, the branches split up into even smaller branches, which are the delta regions.

“The Heavenspan Sea and the various rivers are sort of like a tree. That is the nature of the world we live in.” Zheng Yuandong looked over at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining with sharp light.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Zheng Yuandong’s words crashed in his mind like thunder. Slowly, his old understanding of the world shattered and dispersed, to be replaced by the new version which had just been described by Zheng Yuandong.

“Second. Do you know why the four most powerful sects of the eastern Lower Reaches have the word ‘stream’ in their name? Spirit Stream Sect, Blood Stream Sect, Profound Stream Sect, Pill Stream Sect!” Zheng Yuandong smiled faintly as he thought back to the first time he had been told about the world. He had been just as shaken as Bai Xiaochun was right now.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0173 awe-chapter-174

“The location where the four rivers flow into the sea from the east, west, south and north is known as the Upper Reaches. In that same location, there are four ancient and powerful sects that have existed there for tens upon tens of thousands of years. Perhaps they are as old as the world itself. They are the four most powerful entities in the world.

“Those four powerful ancient sects control the four major rivers, as well as all of the subsequent branches of those rivers, all the way down to the delta regions.

“The ancient sect that controls the eastern cultivation world is called the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

“The headquarters of the sect is far, far away. A Foundation Establishment cultivator could spend an entire lifetime flying toward it without reaching it.

“Subsidiary to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect are four powerful courts that control each of the four branches of the river. They are the Starry River Court, the Sky River Court, the Dao River Court, and the Polarity River Court!

“Those four powerful courts each control four branches that break off from the larger rivers. The Spirit Stream Sect is on the second stream controlled by the Sky River Court. The Blood Stream Sect is on the first stream, the Pill Stream Sect is on the third stream, and the Profound Stream Sect is on the fourth. The Sky River Court is the parent sect to all of our four sects, and above it is the ancient Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.” Zheng Yuandong’s words struck Bai Xiaochun like lightning. This revelation regarding the world around him left him shocked and panting.

“The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect....” he murmured, feeling a bit dizzy.

“Third. Do you know why all of the sects in the world are built on the Heavenspan River? Even down in the delta, they try to get as close to the river as possible.” This third question made Bai Xiaochun feel like a third lightning bolt was about to slam down into him.

“The Heavenspan Realm is enormous. Gargantuan in size. Although it wouldn’t be correct to say that it has no end, the truth is that few people have ever reached the farthest borders of our world. One strange thing about our world is that she has no spiritual energy!”

“No spiritual energy? That’s impossible!” Bai Xiaochun again felt himself being completely and utterly shaken.

“There isn’t a bit of spiritual energy in the entire world. Well, perhaps it’s more accurate to say that heaven and earth have no inherent spiritual energy. All it produces is a chaotic power that is toxic to cultivators, but provides nourishments to beasts.

“For as long as there has been a written history in our world, it’s always been this way. The only reason cultivators are able to practice cultivation is due to the Heavenspan Sea!

“The Heavenspan Sea is the location of a shocking amount of spiritual energy. Apparently, every drop of seawater there contains boundless spiritual energy, and as the water flows down the four great rivers, into the branches and streams and even the delta regions, it brings spiritual energy with it!

“The spiritual energy is strongest near the Heavenspan Sea itself. And of course, the closer you get to the rivers, the stronger the local spiritual energy. The Upper Reaches have the strongest spiritual energy, with the Middle Reaches being a bit weaker, and the Lower Reaches even weaker than that. The delta regions are the weakest.

“The further you get away from the Heavenspan River, the weaker the spiritual energy gets. Eventually, you would reach a point where there is no spiritual energy at all. Almost half of the entire world we live in is made up of such areas. In fact, the areas between the rivers are all like that, devoid of spiritual energy.

“This actually serves as somewhat of a safeguard. After all, if any two of the ancient sects wished to go to war, it would be a very difficult thing to do. Because of that, most wars are fought along the branches of the rivers, not between the larger sects.”

Zheng Yuandong looked at the reeling Bai Xiaochun and continued on. “Fourth. Why did the Luochen Clan turn traitor!?

“The Blood Stream Sect, Spirit Stream Sect, Profound Stream Sect, and Pill Stream Sect are all subsidiaries of the Sky River Court. Of course, each and every one of our sects hopes to elevate their status and become the main sect controlling this branch of the river!

“That is our patriarch’s dream, and what the Spirit Stream Sect has been working toward for the past 10,000 years. That is also the entire purpose of the Legacy Echelon!

“A few years ago, an extremely rare opportunity presented itself!

“The Sky River Court did something to arouse the wrath of the ancient Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Punishment was doled out, and the court was nearly completely wiped out. The patriarch was killed, and their power structures destroyed. They are unprecedentedly weak, which means that it is now possible to supplant them!

“A spot has opened to become the sect controlling the other streams of the river, and the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect doesn’t care who it is. The Blood, Spirit, Profound, and Pill Stream Sects all have a chance. Naturally, all four sects have begun fighting over that spot. Whichever of us manages to defeat the other three sects will eventually rise up to command everything downstream!

“At this point, it’s not important who was backing the Luochen Clan. Maybe it was the Blood Stream Sect, maybe it was the Profound Stream Sect, or maybe even the Pill Stream Sect. Again, it doesn’t matter. They are all our opponents, and at the same time, potential allies!

“Other sects have been casting their fishing lines into our territory, so to speak, hoping to snag some advantage. We’ve done the same thing as well.” Zheng Yuandong smiled, and there was something cold and sinister about it that almost seemed out of character. The truth was that to members of his own sect, Zheng Yuandong was a wise old man who seemed as gentle as a spring breeze. But when it came to fighting people outside the sect, he was even more cold and vicious than Daoist Jackal Ouyang Jie.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was being crushed by waves of shock because of the four questions that had just been asked and answered.

Eyeing Bai Xiaochun, he slowly continued, “Bai Xiaochun, do you want to know why that island in the Heavenspan Sea, which leads to the path that spans the heavens, has been the goal of so many almighty beings?” This was the first time that Zheng Yuandong had seen Bai Xiaochun look somewhat alive after the incident with Du Lingfei. Thankfully, he had saved his most powerful words for last!

“The legends say that if you walk the passage that spans the heavens, you can acquire that which is eternal! In other words, you can live forever!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that last part, his scalp started tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. He began to tremble visibly, and pant. He had never felt so shaken in his entire life. His entire mind was suddenly filled with the idea of being able to live forever.

“If you want to live forever, you have to be powerful enough to walk out into the heavens. That’s a very long road, and you can’t let yourself get distracted by the scenery along the way. You have to walk the path and live life without any regrets!

“Here are four jade slips. The first will serve as your command medallion, identifying you as a sect elder. The second will open your new immortal's cave on Mount Daoseed. The third will allow you to enter the Ancestral Darktunnel to select the legacy that is yours right now that you’ve reached Foundation Establishment. The last is the key to the arcane pocket realm that you won entry to after taking first place in the Chosen battles.” Zheng Yuandong placed four jade slips down onto the ground. Seeing how excited Bai Xiaochun looked, he was finally able to relax a bit. After emerging from Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave moments later, he saw Li Qinghou off in the distance, waiting for news. As he walked over, he gave him a slight nod.

A smile broke out on Li Qinghou’s face, and he sighed. “Many thanks, sect leader. Now I can finally rest at ease when I go into secluded meditation!”

“You shouldn’t worry so much, Qinghou. He’s my Junior Brother, so of course I’ll take care of him. I hope that after you emerge from your secluded meditation, the Spirit Stream Sect will have another legacy echelon cultivator!” Zheng Yuandong was actually a bit envious. However, there was no way he could ever reach the legacy echelon. At most, he might end his life as a prime elder in the future.

Li Qinghou clasped hands and bowed. Giving Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave a final look, he departed along with Zheng Yuandong.

Inside the immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun was panting in excitement. In fact, he didn't even notice that Zheng Yuandong had left. He remained in a bit of a daze deep into the night. Finally, he looked up, and his eyes were shining brightly.

“I'm going to live forever!!" He buried the matter of Du Lingfei deep in his heart and walked out of his immortal’s cave, thinking about the wider world he lived in, and also about his desire to live forever!

After looking over the four jade slips he held in his hand, his eyes shone with anticipation.

Thinking back to the second volume of the Undying Codex that the gravekeeper had given him, he murmured, “Now I can start to cultivate the second volume of the Undying Codex, the Undying Heavenly King.”

He had looked over the second volume before, and already knew that it was divided into four levels that were much more powerful than the Undying Skin. Furthermore, even just cultivating the first level would allow him access to a secret magic that was even more formidable than the Throat Crushing Grasp!

“The Mountain Shaking Bash!” The night passed quickly. At dawn, he stepped outside again and looked at the rising sun. As of this point, he had put the matter of Du Lingfei’s disappearance clearly out of mind.

“Bai Xiaochun is back!” Flicking his sleeve, he stuck his chin up and transformed into a beam of light that shot toward Mount Daoseed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0174 awe-chapter-175

Finally in high spirits again, Bai Xiaochun shot away from Fragrant Cloud Peak toward Mount Daoseed. In accordance with the sect rules of the Spirit Stream Sect, now that he had reached Foundation Establishment, he was no longer a disciple, but rather, an elder.

Elders were people with exceptional latent talent who were given special duties by the sect. Oftentimes, the seven peak lords would assign them certain important tasks or matters. Back when Bai Xiaochun had been in the Inner Sect, Elder Zhou had been one of the Foundation Establishment elders on Fragrant Cloud Peak.

Such people were fundamentally Chosen, and all of them strove to reach the Legacy Echelon. They were not people who could be taken lightly. Generally speaking, they did not live on the various mountain peaks, but rather, on Mount Daoseed.

Occasionally, some of them would reach the Legacy Echelon, but for the most part, after a hundred or more years passed and it became clear that they couldn’t reach the Gold Core stage, they would settle for being peak lords. For those who did manage to reach Gold Core, but took longer than two sixty-year cycles to do so, they would become prime elders.

There were some outstanding individuals such as Li Qinghou who would be promoted to peak lord early. They would simultaneously focus on both cultivation and the administration of the mountain peak. Then, at some point before two sixty-year cycles had passed, they would go into secluded meditation to try to break through to the Gold Core stage.

Although it looked on the surface as if the Spirit Stream Sect only had a bit over a hundred Foundation Establishment cultivators, the truth was that there were more than that on Mount Daoseed.

Only by reaching Foundation Establishment would one qualify to have an immortal's cave on Mount Daoseed, which also served as a symbol of power for such people.

Most of the immortal's caves were on the lower half of the mountain, but even they had stronger spiritual energy than could be found outside on the seven mountain peaks.

The immortal’s caves on the top half of the mountain were reserved for the prime elders and the sect leader.

Having reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, Bai Xiaochun had a very high position within the Spirit Stream Sect, almost like that of a patriarch. His immortal's cave was located halfway up the mountain, in the same location as many of the higher ranking Foundation Establishment cultivators.

Although some people weren’t too happy about that, there was nothing they could do. Now that he had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, Bai Xiaochun was definitely a rising star in the sect, someone who was the center of all attention.

Mount Daoseed was huge. Back when he became the Junior Brother of the sect leader, and an Inner Sect disciple, he had been able to visit the place, but most locations had been restricted, and impossible for him to enter. As such, it had seemed like a vast and majestic place.

Now, he was back as a Foundation Establishment expert. To him, the sight of Mount Daoseed rising up among the seven other mountain peaks looked like an adult standing amidst a group of children.

As he made his way along, any Spirit Stream Sect disciple who saw him would look at him with reverence, and would call out to him in greeting. At first, he had planned to rocket through the air, but when he realized what was happening, he slowed down. Clasping his hands behind his back, he looked around like a member of the Senior generation, nodding here and there with a look of praise in his eyes.

Strange expressions appeared on the faces of the disciples, and many began to think back to events of the past.

On Green Crest Peak, an elder was leading a group of a few dozen Outer Sect disciples as they trained in sword techniques. When he looked up and saw Bai Xiaochun, he sighed and said, “All of you, look up there. See that cultivator strolling along surrounded by golden light? That’s who I was telling you about earlier, the greatest Chosen in the Spirit Stream Sect, Bai Xiaochun!”

The surrounding Outer Sect disciples looked up in awe, their eyes shining with enthusiasm.

“That’s Sect Uncle Bai?!”

“Sect Uncle Bai is a mighty warrior, and a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert. I heard that he outshone all of the other disciples in his generation!”

“Everyone in Sect Uncle Bai’s generation is extraordinary. I heard that Sect Uncle Ghostfang, Sect Aunt Zhou Xinqi, Sect Uncle Shangguan Tianyou, and Sect Uncle Beihan Lie were all monstrously talented Chosen. It's too bad for them that they were born in the same generation as Sect Uncle Bai.”

These Outer Sect disciples had just recently joined the sect, and had cultivation bases scattered between the third and fifth levels of Qi Condensation. They had heard a lot of stories about Bai Xiaochun; for example, the acid rain incident, the story of lightning striking the sect, and the disaster of 10,000 Snakes Valley. Of course, they took such stories to be mere exaggerations. As for him reaching Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, that was recent news that seemed much more believable.

As Bai Xiaochun flew along, he could see the reactions of the disciples down on Green Crest Peak, and felt all the burning gazes fixed upon him. Moved, he decided that he definitely couldn’t treat these young disciples coldly, nor could he allow them to think that he was some distant cloud floating high above their heads.

Coughing lightly, he changed directions and flew down toward the group of Outer Sect disciples.

The Green Crest Peak elder quickly rose to his feet and clasped hands in greeting. The surrounding Outer Sect disciple followed suit, looking very excited.

“Greetings, Sect Uncle Bai!”

“Sect Uncle Bai, you’re my biggest role model!”

“I love you, Sect Uncle Bai!” The female disciples looked particularly smitten, and stared at him with flushed cheeks and eyes burning with excitement.

Bai Xiaochun was very moved, and couldn’t help but think that everything he had done for the sect really had been worth it. The adoring gazes of these youngsters was already a huge motivating force to him, and as such, he smiled warmly, and proceeded to give them a bit of encouragement.

“Focus well on your cultivation.”

“Keep up the good work, you guys are great!”

“You love your Sect Uncle Bai? Ahem. Work hard at your cultivation, and remember, anything is possible.”

Bai Xiaochun patiently stood there and exchanged a few words with all of the disciples present. Considering how excited they all were, he gave them a bit of advice about matters, and then, feeling increasingly moved, gave them some more advice.

After giving ten rounds of advice, and repeating himself on more than one occasion, the Outer Sect disciples’ eyes began to go blank. They had all addressed him as Sect Uncle Bai at least a few dozen times, to the point where they were starting to wonder what exactly was going on.

The elder wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry, and couldn’t help but think about what it had been like back when Bai Xiaochun was promoted to the Inner Sect, and went around forcing people to address him as Sect Uncle.

Sometime in the afternoon, Bai Xiaochun finally felt satisfied, but instead of going to Mount Daoseed, he headed to Violet Cauldron Peak and Fragrant Cloud Peak, where he was received with great enthusiasm. More excited than ever, he proceeded along to the four mountain peaks of the north bank.

Eventually, it was late in the night, and the Outer Sect disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect were really starting to form a strange opinion of Bai Xiaochun. It was at this point that he recalled something important. Clearing his throat, he headed toward Mount Daoseed.

His immortal's cave on Mount Daoseed was very large. In terms of the spell formation and the décor, it vastly exceeded the immortal's cave from his Qi Condensation days. As for the spiritual energy within it, it was shockingly strong to say the least.

There was no hot spring. However, it had a lake inside, upon which swirled mist and fog that made the entire place seem like a celestial paradise.

The area outside the immortal's cave was alive with the singing of birds and the fragrance of flowers. If he wanted to, he could ask for Outer Sect disciples to wait on him and take care of the cave itself. Both outside and inside, the place belonged to him, and was his own personal domain. At the moment, he was sitting at the edge of the lake, looking around in satisfaction.

“I’ve finally reached Foundation Establishment!” He was also thinking about a bit of information he’d gleaned from a jade slip. Considering his current status, he now qualified to accept an apprentice, and was thinking of doing just that. It would probably be a lot of fun.

Soon, word spread that he had arrived on Mount Daoseed, and his immortal's cave was virtually trampled by the crowd of Foundation Establishment cultivators who came to offer greetings and see exactly what Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment looked like.

Of course, people would never come to offer formal greetings without bearing gifts. Bai Xiaochun was shocked over and over again, and eventually, his hands started to twinge with pain from accepting so many gifts. However, the smile never left his face, and he always took time to chat with his visitors.

As for the cultivators who had reached Foundation Establishment in the Fallen Sword Abyss with his help, they were especially grateful.

Half a month later, things finally calmed down. After the visits stopped, Bai Xiaochun decided that it was time to stop fooling around. He couldn’t stop thinking about what his Elder Brother, Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong, had told him about the island in the middle of the Heavenspan Sea. From there, it was possible to step out into the heavens and live forever.

“If I want to get to the Heavenspan Sea, I’ll definitely have to have a powerful cultivation base. That means I need to work hard at cultivation!” He got up early the next morning. Taking a deep breath, and eyes shining with determination, he headed in the direction of the Ancestral Darktunnel, where he would be able to select the technique he would cultivate in the Foundation Establishment stage.

The Ancestral Darktunnel was a long tunnel in the middle of Mount Daoseed. Upon entering the tunnel, one would find over a hundred shafts leading off in different directions, each one of which represented a different legacy.

Generally speaking, one would bring an authentication device into the tunnel, then activate it, whereupon some of the legacy shafts would light up.

It was a very miraculous thing, and word had it that although the cultivators came to select legacies, sometimes a legacy would select a cultivator!

Of course, things like that were rare. Bai Xiaochun remembered Xu Baocai telling him that when Ghostfang came to select his technique, more than twenty of the legacy shafts had lit up to select him.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very impressed by that. “What’s so amazing about that? So what if twenty legacies selected him? I've reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!”

According to the sect rules, only someone with an authentication device could enter the Ancestral Darktunnel. Anyone who didn’t have such a device, but tried to enter anyway, would be instantly killed by the spell formation inside.

Because of that, there wasn’t anyone assigned to guard the location. When Bai Xiaochun arrived, nobody was there. After looking around hesitantly for a moment, he walked into the cave-like entrance. A moment later, he was in the beautiful tunnel entrance, facing over a hundred tunnel-like shafts.

Although the shafts didn’t look like anything special, Bai Xiaochun knew that once he activated the authentication device, then at least one of the shafts would emit a bright light, which would indicate that he could enter.

He looked around for a moment, and was just about to activate the device when suddenly, a young woman emerged from one of the shafts up ahead.

It was none other than Zhou Xinqi, who had come to acquire her Foundation Establishment technique. Almost as soon as she emerged, she saw Bai Xiaochun.

“Eee? Sect Niece Xinqi!” he said, blinking.

Zhou Xinqi frowned and took a deep breath. Then she gave Bai Xiaochun a level look.

“Greetings, Elder Brother Bai. Please behave yourself here.”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking at her in shock. Then he realized that since they were both in the Foundation Establishment stage, they had equal seniority. He suddenly felt as though he had lost out on something very important. After all, despite how many years had passed, he had almost never gotten her to call him Sect Uncle....

Feeling very disappointed, he pushed his finger down onto the authentication device, and the shafts up ahead began to flicker with light!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0175 awe-chapter-176

The instant that Bai Xiaochun sent some spiritual power into the authentication device, each and every one of the hundred shafts lit up with scintillating light.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the blinding beams shot out, completely illuminating the paradisaical scene inside the cave.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and Zhou Xinqi’s eyes wide with disbelief and astonishment.

“How is this possible?!?!” Zhou Xinqi exclaimed.

Each one of those more than one hundred shafts represented a legacy, and apparently, all of them were making themselves available to Bai Xiaochun. Essentially, Bai Xiaochun could pick any legacy he wanted.

The shocking scene left Zhou Xinqi dumbstruck. Earlier, only one of the shafts lit up for her, and when Ghostfang caused more than twenty to light up, the entire sect had been shaken.

But then Bai Xiaochun came along and caused more than a hundred to light up....

Even as Zhou Xinqi reeled in shock, she suddenly realized that in addition to lighting up, each shaft began to pulse with gravitational force, as if they were vying for Bai Xiaochun’s attention.

Zhou Xinqi’s mind reeled at the astonishing sight of more than a hundred legacy shafts all struggling to impress Bai

Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was equally stunned. At the same time, all of the prime elders on Mount Daoseed could sense what was happening, and were shocked. Even the handful of patriarchs in the Spirit Stream Sect looked over with wide eyes.

“Not even the last Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator that came along did anything like this....”

“This indicates one thing: Bai Xiaochun reached unfathomable heights in the Qi Condensation stage!”

Outside on Mount Daoseed, more than a hundred pillars of light shot up into the clouds above, causing a big stir among the disciples. After all, they had seen something similar occur a month before, when twenty pillars of light shot up for Ghostfang.

Of course, the fact that there were now a hundred pillars of light left the Spirit Stream Sect disciples completely tongue-tied.

Ghostfang was currently sitting in meditation. A tremor ran through him, and he looked up into the sky. He didn’t even need to ponder the matter for a single moment.

“Bai Xiaochun....”

Shangguan Tianyou, Beihan Lie, Lu Tianlei, and all of the other Chosen were equally shaken.

Back in the Ancestral Darktunnel, Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard and then blinked, his heart thumping. Zhou Xinqi stood next to him, as mute as a wooden chicken. Finally, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and swished his sleeve.

“Ai,” he muttered. “With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, caused more than a hundred legacies to accept me. Truly outstanding. And a real headache too. How am I supposed to pick?”

Of course, he spoke loud enough for Zhou Xinqi to hear. Her face darkened, and her heart filled with numerous conflicting emotions.

All of a sudden, in one location that had initially appeared to be just a blank part of the wall, a fissure opened up, causing blinding, sun-like light to spill out into the cave.

Incredible pressure accompanied it, completely surpassing the other hundred legacies. Clearly, the legacy in this shaft was far more powerful and domineering than any of the others!

An intense gravitational force wrapped around Bai Xiaochun, and in the blink of an eye, he was being dragged toward the shaft opening. To his shock, he was almost instantly pulled inside.

The other legacies didn’t seem willing to give up, and sent out their own pulses of blinding light. However, there was nothing they could do to change to situation, so they soon calmed down.

The only eye-witness was Zhou Xinqi, who was so stunned she didn’t even remember leaving. All she remembered was how the more than one hundred legacies had seemed so anxious and eager, and how the final shaft which had opened didn’t seem to be one of the original group.

The instant that Bai Xiaochun was sucked into the shaft with the powerful and domineering legacy, there were five patriarchs on the ninth mountain peak of the Spirit Stream Sect who were all shaken.

Originally, they had been paying close attention to Bai Xiaochun, even before the shocking developments from moments before. In fact, they had even been prepared to prod him with divine will to help him select the best technique.

After all, he was a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator, someone highly valued by the sect.

But then, a shaft appeared that was not part of the original group, and whisked him away before they could even unleash their divine will.

“That was....”

“Just what kind of destiny does this Bai Xiaochun have!?!?”

“That legacy hasn’t appeared for countless years! It's the only hidden legacy there!”

Even as they reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun was sucked in by the gravitational force, and eventually found himself inside a stone chamber.

Moments before, it had been pitch black, darker than the darkest night, but as soon as he arrived, it filled with brilliant light.

He hesitated for a moment, unsure of what the sudden turn of events indicated. After all, he hadn’t selected any legacy; this legacy had selected him. However, it only took a moment for him to recover and look around.

The stone chamber wasn’t very large, and in the very middle of it was a stone book!

“What’s that?” he muttered, walking forward. Almost immediately, he noticed five characters written on the book, characters which were completely eye-catching.

“Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened. The name itself sounded very impressive, and he could only imagine how extraordinary it was.

“The south bank has the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art, and the north bank has its Heavenspan Shamanic Control Incantation. Could this Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation possibly be a combination of those two?”

Bai Xiaochun continued to examine the stone book, and soon was left gasping by the technique's introduction. Although it was only a general overview, it was still shocking. “Is it really cultivated using water from of the Heavenspan River?”

According to the description, the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation involved absorbing water from the Heavenspan River into one’s body, using it to nourish oneself and grow stronger. It was divided into four levels, one for the early, mid, and late Foundation Establishment stages, and one for the quasi-Core stage!

Furthermore, cultivating the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation gave access to a Daoist magic called the Heavenspan Dharma Eye!

This technique could also unleash control power, but was on a completely different level than anything from the Qi Condensation stage. In the Qi Condensation stage, control could be exerted through the use of qi, but in the

Foundation Establishment, a mere glance with an eye could exert control of all things!

Bai Xiaochun continued to examine the information, and eventually, the stone book blurred, and four magical symbols appeared, each one of which contained volumes of information. As Bai Xiaochun looked them over, he was left more and more shaken.

“Cultivate with the water of the Heavenspan River. In the first level, condense a drop of water. In the second level, a goblet. In the third level, a stone, and in the fourth... a cauldron!” Bai Xiaochun was so shocked that his tongue stuck to the top of his mouth. He couldn’t help but think about how Zheng Yuandong had told him that the Heavenspan Sea was the source of all the spiritual energy in the world.

The Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation was so domineering that you actually had to absorb water from the Heavenspan River....

It was probably a good thing it was only usable in the Foundation Establishment stage. If it went beyond that, Bai Xiaochun could only imagine how powerful it could be.

He could suddenly see himself waving his hand, and sucking dry all four of the great branches of the Heavenspan River.

Then, he saw himself hovering in the air, with the Heavenspan Sea transforming into his spiritual sea.

“So powerful!!” he gasped, trembling. He was even more shaken by the Daoist magic of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye. With one glance, one could exercise control over anything and everything.

“That’s just like the Human Controlling Grand Magic I’ve been working on!!” Even though the technique wasn’t useful past Foundation Establishment, he immediately decided that the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation was for him!

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun didn’t eat or sleep. He remained in the stone chamber, seeking enlightenment of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation. After a month, he hadn’t succeeded, but had the technique imprinted on his mind. Reluctantly, he decided to leave.

“If I want to cultivate it properly, I’ll need to get a drop of water from the Heavenspan River!” Gritting his teeth, he pulled out his authentication device and vanished from the stone chamber. When he appeared, he was in the cave that was the entrance of the Ancestral Darktunnel. Without a moment’s hesitation, he left.

Although he didn’t notice it, in the moment of his departure, several streams of divine will were there, trembling in shock and anticipation.

During the following days, Bai Xiaochun remained on the bank of the Heavenspan River below Mount Daoseed. He sat there cross-legged, watching the golden water rush past. He could sense the spiritual power in that water, which emanated terrifying fluctuations as it rumbled past. Occasionally, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as he attempted to extract a drop of the water for himself.

Never once did he succeed, though. No matter what he did, he couldn’t affect the water at all. The water was clearly so terrifyingly powerful that if any of it touched him, his fleshly body would melt instantly.

A few more days passed, but he never met with success. After a while, he decided to go consult his Elder Brother the sect leader. He left with a jade bottle that contained a drop of water from the Heavenspan River. Every so often, the patriarchs of the sect would collect some of the water through various means, which would be used as a reward for Foundation Establishment cultivators, who could use the water for various purposes.

It was only after speaking with his Elder Brother that Bai Xiaochun came to realize that Heavenspan River water was a critical ingredient to cultivation in the Foundation Establishment stage. He wasn’t the only person who needed such water; all of the legacies required water from the Heavenspan River.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s legacies were rather mixed. There were legacies regarding beasts, swords, and spirit enhancement. Actually, the Blood Stream Sect, Profound Stream Sect, and Pill Stream Sect were all different in various ways, but also used Heavenspan River water. For example, the Blood Stream Sect could use it to make spirit blood. The cultivators of the Profound Stream Sect used it to make second spirit bodies for themselves, or to forge weapons. The Pill Stream Sect, of course, focused on pill concocting.

In the final analysis, however, all of the legacies just used a bit of the water temporarily. As for Bai Xiaochun’s technique, the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, it was far more domineering. It didn’t just use it temporarily, it plundered it permanently!

The difference between borrowing and taking was like the difference between heaven and earth!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0176 awe-chapter-177

Instead of taking the jade bottle back to his immortal's cave, he spent a moment of thought before deciding to take advantage of his access to the arcane pocket realm, which he had earned during the Chosen battles.

In the arcane pocket realm, he could seek enlightenment of secret magics, as well as his own personal techniques. There was something profound and mysterious about the arcane pocket realm that made enlightenment much easier, although Bai Xiaochun didn’t quite understand the mechanics of it all.

In the Qi Condensation stage, techniques were somewhat limited, so it was best to wait until Foundation Establishment to go into the arcane pocket realm. Furthermore, no one would dare to state with utmost certainty that they would be able to reach the Gold Core stage. Even Bai Xiaochun with his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment had, at best, a high likelihood of succeeding.

Therefore, it wasn’t very practical to wait until the Gold Core stage.

The entrance to the arcane pocket realm was in a secret location on Mount Daoseed. When Bai Xiaochun handed the jade slip to the prime elder in charge of the entrance, the white-haired old man looked at him with a profound gaze.

Bai Xiaochun felt incredible pressure accompanying that gaze, almost the same type of pressure he remembered feeling as a Qi Condensation cultivator when a Foundation

Establishment expert looked at him. He immediately put on his most charming front.

“You took first place in the Chosen battles,” the old man said. “That gets you one day of enlightenment. Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment gets you three days. Peak Lord Li Qinghou from Fragrant Cloud Peak previously accumulated two days of time, which he has passed on to you. The sect leader has also gifted you with two days.” Upon hearing these things, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide.

He had never been told that Li Qinghou and Zheng Yuandong had gifted him time in the arcane pocket realm. However, he hadn’t even been aware that there was a time limitation to begin with. A few days certainly didn’t seem like enough time to gain enlightenment.

“A total of eight days!” The old man’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then he waved his finger at a nearby boulder. The boulder began to blur, and then rumbling sounds echoed out that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to tremble. Shockingly, the boulder transformed into a huge stone golem more than 30 meters tall. It threw his head back and howled, then reached out with both hands and began to rip the air apart.

An instant later, a huge fissure could be seen.

“What are you waiting for?!” the prime elder said. Although he spoke in a cool voice, it still echoed like thunder. Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, then clasped hands and bowed before flying toward the fissure and disappearing inside.

A moment later, the fissure closed up, and the stone golem transformed back into a boulder. Then the prime elder closed his eyes to meditate.

When Bai Xiaochun reappeared, he was in a strange world of complete grayness. As he looked around, he realized that he was standing in the exact spot he had been standing in moments before.

He could see the boulder, although the prime elder was gone. The entire Spirit Stream Sect was visible around him, but he couldn’t sense even a trace of life within it. After a moment, he flew up into the air to get a better look around.

“This....” The Spirit Stream Sect looked exactly the same as he remembered. However, not a single person could be seen in any of the buildings.

The desolate feeling he got caused Bai Xiaochun to grow very nervous. Then he looked over and realized that the Heavenspan River was completely dried up, and his scalp began to tingle.

“What kind of arcane pocket realm is this?” He felt extremely uneasy, although he wasn’t exactly sure why. With that, he headed to the very peak of Mount Daoseed, a place where he would normally never be able to go.

From that vantage point, he could look out on the entire world around him. However, everything was filled with gray mist, making it difficult to see very far.

“I don't even want to think about what this means. I guess I’ll just see if it’s really easier to gain enlightenment of techniques here.” Suppressing his uneasy feeling, he sat down cross-legged, closed his eyes, and visualized the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation.

A moment later, his eyes snapped open, and they shone with delight. For some reason, there were many aspects to cultivation that he found confusing in the outside world, but suddenly made sense here. For some reason, it was as if his mind had expanded, and any thought that passed through his head was instantly made a reality!

It was very strange. It was almost as if all he had to do was imagine some new world, and that world would appear right in front of him. He almost couldn't believe it.

Excitedly closing his eyes again, he immersed himself in seeing enlightenment of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation.

Time passed. Soon, night fell. Before Bai Xiaochun knew it, a second day had come and gone. Then a third.

Deep in the night of the third day, Bai Xiaochun's eyes opened, and they shone with the glow of enlightenment. In fact, if you looked closely, you would be able to see a magical symbol flickering deep in each pupil.

"The most difficult part of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation is the first step," he murmured. "*Water from the spirit river descends like a meteor falling into the mortal world. Flesh and blood become threads that hold up the stars. The body becomes the heavens, and the stars exist inside of it, never to descend!*" He waved his right hand, causing a jade bottle to fly out of his bag of holding.

The bottle opened, and a drop of golden water from the Heavenspan River floated out, the only bit of color to exist in the world of gray that surrounded him.

He looked hesitantly at the drop of water for a moment, then gritted his teeth.

"Anything to be able to live forever! Anything to be able to go to the Heavenspan Sea!" He took a deep breath, and the drop of golden river water shot toward his forehead.

As soon as it made contact with his skin, intense pain exploded out. His flesh and blood felt like they were melting, and he shivered violently. Gritting his teeth, he rotated his cultivation base and drew upon all nine of his spiritual seas, using the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation to attempt to absorb the power of the water.

Rumbling sounds filled his ears, and the golden liquid slowly merged into his forehead. After an indeterminable period of time, he let out a powerful roar. Inside of him, the golden liquid completely ignored his qi passageways, flesh, and blood as it sank down inside of him.

That was *water from the spirit river descends like a meteor falling into the mortal world*.

As it passed through him, all of his qi passageways, flesh and blood melted, and even his internal organs were injured. His bones screamed in pain, causing his face to turn ashen, and blood to ooze out of his mouth.

And yet, he simply gritted his teeth, ignoring his melting and destroyed qi passageways, flesh and blood. Instead, he sent internal spiritual energy coursing through them, spreading out into his body to wrap like threads around the golden river water. This was none other than *flesh and blood become threads that hold up the stars*.

Most of the threads were destroyed, but as they continued to spread out, many of them managed to wrap madly around the golden river water.

As the golden river water reached Bai Xiaochun’s dantian region, his eyes suddenly glittered.

"*The body becomes the heavens, and the stars exist inside of it, never to descend!*"

Rumbling sounds could be heard as his nine spiritual seas erupted with the power of nine Tideflows, which battered against the golden liquid as if to destroy it. However, the liquid quickly pierced into the ninth spiritual sea, then the eighth, and the seventh....

As that happened, the spiritual seas rapidly transformed into innumerable spirit threads which wrapped around the golden river water.

After piercing through eight of the spiritual seas, the golden liquid was completely bound by the spirit threads, whereupon it slowly ground to a halt, to hang above the first spiritual sea!

In that moment, it began to emanate boundless golden light which exploded out to fill Bai Xiaochun's entire body. Everywhere it went, it healed what it passed over, including his spiritual seas, qi passageways, flesh and blood, bones, and everything else. At the same time, everything began to transform.

Bai Xiaochun's aura erupted out, and although it was still in the early Foundation Establishment stage, it was completely different than before. Before, he had seemed impressive from the outside, but the truth was that his Foundation Establishment power was in a state of disorder, like an army without a general. But now, after having gained enlightenment of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, that general had appeared, and all of his spiritual power was now in unison. As such, his battle prowess was now completely different than before.

His eyes opened, and the magical symbols in his pupils were even clearer than before. Gradually, they faded away, and at the same time, the golden liquid inside of him began to merge into his first spiritual sea.

At some point in the future, when the golden liquid was fully and completely absorbed, he would have successfully completed cultivating the first level of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation.

It was at this point that splitting pain suddenly radiated from Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. There was also an itching sensation, as an eye gradually formed in that very position, an eye that seemed to be on the verge of opening.

It was none other than his Heavenspan Dharma Eye!

“It worked!” he exclaimed jubilantly. He reached up to rub his forehead, and the itchiness grew more pronounced. However, he wasn't alarmed, but rather, overjoyed.

“Hahaha!” he laughed, nearly jumping up and down. “From now on I’m going to have three eyes. Even just saying it sounds awesome!” Then he looked off into the distance and took a deep breath.

“It’s still growing, but I could probably test it out a bit.” After a moment of hesitation, he closed his eyes. His first spiritual sea then began to churn, and the drop of golden river water emanated flickering golden light, which streamed through his qi passageways to converge on his forehead.

In that moment, the rapidly stabilizing crack which had just appeared suddenly opened, and a violet eye appeared. Instantly, his gaze pierced through mists to see what was beyond.

A tremor ran through him as he realized that beyond the mists were not lands, but rather, an almost completely dried-up sea. The Spirit Stream Sect was a floating island in the air, and further off in the distance were countless other islands!

Bolts of lightning crackled within the sea and between the various islands.

He wanted to examine the scene further, but the pain in his forehead was too great. Blood began to ooze down, and the fissure on his forehead closed. With that, his two eyes snapped open, and a tremor ran through him. His spiritual power had been drained by more than half.

“What kind of arcane pocket realm is this?” he thought, panting in astonishment.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0177 awe-chapter-178

Bai Xiaochun found it completely bizarre, and simply couldn’t imagine what type of place he was in.

After a while, he decided to stop thinking about the mists and what lay beyond. Taking a deep breath, he slowly calmed down.

“I guess it doesn’t matter. One thing’s for sure: my speed of enlightenment here is incredible. I can really benefit a lot.” Shaking his head, he completely stilled the shock within him.

“No wonder they allocate time in here by the day. Even allocating it by the hour would make sense. Every day here counts as an opportunity for major gains by any cultivator.” All of a sudden, he felt overtaken by a sense of urgency. He had spent three days on the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, which meant he had five days left.

“I can’t waste any time!” He quickly pulled a jade slip out of his bag of holding and poured some spiritual power into it. Soon, a mnemonic appeared in his mind.

“Undying Heavenly King!” he said, eyes shining with excitement. That jade slip had been given to him years ago by the man known as the gravekeeper. It was the second volume of the Undying Codex! The Undying Heavenly King!

In the first volume of the Undying Codex, one cultivated the power of the skin, which was called the Undying Skin. The second volume focused on fleshly body power, and was called the Undying Heavenly King!

Similar to the Undying Skin, the Undying Heavenly King was divided into four levels. However, they were not divided into iron, bronze, silver, and gold. Instead, they were four fleshly body types. The first level was the ten mammoths Berserk Ghost Body. The second was the ten ghosts Heavenly Demon Body. The third level was the ten demons Asura Body. The final level was the Undying Heavenly King Body!

Each of those four fleshly body types was more powerful than the one before it, with the most powerful being the Undying Heavenly King Body. It was actually thousands of times more powerful than the first level, the Berserk Ghost Body!

Bai Xiaochun had actually known about this some time ago, but because he had never mastered the Undying Skin, he had been unable to proceed with the higher levels of cultivation. Now that he was examining it again, the Undying Heavenly King was completely shocking.

“The so-called mammoths referenced in the ten mammoths Berserk Ghost Body were not ordinary creatures. They were gargantuan mammoths from primeval times, who emanated incredible pressure all around them. Even their fleshly body strength alone was comparable to an early Foundation Establishment cultivator!

“The mammoth power from the Dragon Mammoth Sea-Forming Scripture is similar. After reaching Foundation Establishment, my fleshly body power is actually similar to one of those gigantic mammoths.

“As for the berserk ghost, the Undying Heavenly King information says that in the legends, there was a terrifying entity that could rip mammoths to shreds. It was actually a ghost-like beast with a terrifying fleshly body!” Considering the current level of his cultivation base, he found the information about the Undying Heavenly King even more shocking than before.

“Basically, if I cultivate the first level of the Undying Heavenly King, then in the end, my fleshly body power will be ten times what it is now, which will be the power of a single ghost of the second level. The power of ten such berserk ghosts will put me at the level of the heavenly demon.

“According to the information, heavenly demons were also legendary creatures with terrifying fleshly body power, who hunted and consumed berserk ghosts!

“Asuras have ten times the power of heavenly demons, and according to the legends, would easily crush heavenly demons. I guess that means that the Undying Heavenly King has ten times the power of an asura?”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining brightly. He was already deeply familiar with the benefits of his Undying Skin, and as such, was even more excited about the Undying Heavenly King. He could already imagine what it would be like one day to combine the power of the Undying Heavenly King with the Undying Gold Skin. Although he wouldn’t literally be undying, he would definitely be very difficult to kill!

“This volume of the Undying Heavenly King can lead to explosive fleshly body growth! If I cultivate it successfully, it would be hard to find a Foundation Establishment cultivator under heaven who could kill me!” With that, he quickly closed his eyes and began to work on the first level of the Undying Heavenly King.

It was not an easy task, and the difficulty lay in the vast amount of vital energy that was required. The requirements of the first volume of the Undying Codex were like nothing compared to this. After cultivating it for a bit, Bai Xiaochun was already looking withered, and he quickly stopped.

“What a terrifying waste of vital energy. If you're not careful, you’ll turn yourself into human jerky....” When he thought of what he would look like as a slab of human jerky, he couldn’t help but shiver in fear. However, he wasn’t willing to give up. That was especially true because of the divine ability he would have access to if he successfully cultivated the first level.

“The Mountain Shaking Bash....” he thought, taking a deep breath. He immediately decided that after leaving the arcane pocket realm, he would concoct pills and even stock up on precious materials that could replenish vital energy. Regardless of how difficult it was, he had to cultivate the Undying Heavenly King.

After some brief calculations, he realized he had three days left. Without any further hesitation, he took the Protomagnetic Wings off of his back and examined them closely. In the very middle of the wings was a pearl, which he'd acquired from the north bank in trade for the pill formula for the Aphrodisiac Pill. It was known as the Protomagnetic Pearl.

According to the peak lord from Irispetal Peak, if it was his destiny, he might be able to gain enlightenment of a divine ability that had to do with gravitational repulsion.

Although he had looked into the matter before, he had never made much headway. With three days left in this place, he decided that maybe it was a good time to take another look.

Time flew by, and before he knew it, there were only about eight hours of time left in the arcane pocket realm. However, he didn’t give up. Even though he hadn’t gained complete enlightenment of the powers of gravity and repulsion, he did have a much deeper understanding of the magnetic powers of the pearl.

Now he was able to unleash a strange power that contained both pulling and pushing forces, which, when combined, caused the air to distort into the form of a pearl.

The pearl seemed illusory, but affected the air around it, causing it to twist and distort. When Bai Xiaochun poured spiritual power into it, the power vanished like a rock thrown into the deep sea. However, as soon as he ceased the flow, the power which he had poured into the crystal rumbled back out. Shocked, he realized that the pearl apparently maintained balance in the form of a cycle, making it a vessel of sorts.

Even still, he was unable to unleash the powers of gravity and repulsion. If he managed to succeed in the future, he would finally be able to make contact with true protomagnetic power.

“What a pity. If I could only spend some more time in here, I would definitely be able to unravel the mystery.” Sighing, he put the wings back, and then used the remaining eight hours working on his Waterswamp Kingdom.

When the eight hours were up, the air around him began to ripple, and before he could do anything further, everything around him collapsed. Rumbling sounds echoed out as a vortex formed, which sucked Bai Xiaochun inside.

After vanishing, he reappeared back on Mount Daoseed, outside the entrance of the arcane pocket realm. He immediately felt disoriented. Inside the arcane pocket realm, his mind had been unprecedentedly clear. His thoughts seemed to roam free without restraint. But now he was back to normal, and it felt almost like he had been submerged in water. He felt very muddleheaded.

The prime elder opened his eyes and looked at him, and was immediately shaken. Bai Xiaochun seemed completely different than he had eight days ago. All aspects of his energy seemed far stronger than before.

The old man nodded in admiration, then said, “People usually have a hard time adjusting after their first time in the arcane pocket realm. Go meditate for a few days and you’ll be fine.”

With that, he closed his eyes.

It took Bai Xiaochun a moment to even recover to the point where he could move. Ashen-faced, he clasped hands and bowed to the prime elder, then left.

After returning to his immortal's cave, he sat down next to the lake, working at readjusting himself, and simultaneously recalling his experiences in the pocket realm. Finally, he sighed.

“If only I could have sought enlightenment in there for a few more days. Cultivating in there is pure joy. Just what kind of place is it? It's so weird.” He shook his head. It was actually possible to pay merit points to enter the arcane pocket realm, but with Bai Xiaochun’s current savings, he could only afford a few hours.

Considering how uncomfortable he felt, it was impossible to clear his mind enough to practice cultivation. After some thought, he unstrapped his bag of holding.

It was filled with all sorts of miscellaneous items, including many things that he'd acquired in the Fallen Sword World. Up to this point, he hadn’t taken the time to organize them all. Upon opening it up, he saw countless objects, including spirit stones and even some magical items.

After organizing everything, he found he had a dozen or so bottles and cases, some of which contained medicinal pills, and some of which held items he wasn’t familiar with. The other sects all had different areas of specialty, so it made sense that his understanding of the items gained from them would be limited.

“Is this a spirit medicine from the Pill Stream Sect? The Pill Stream Sect’s pill concocting methods seem really interesting....

“This is from the Profound Stream Sect, right? It looks like a fingernail!

“What’s this thing? It’s so sticky....” Shaking his head, he moved on to a blood-colored jade box. As soon as he opened the box, a burst of fiery power exploded out.

At first, he wasn’t very impressed, but then he looked a bit closer, and his eyes went wide. Panting, he looked even closer at the small tongue of fire inside the jade box.

That fire was no ordinary fire, but rather, was coming out of an object located at the bottom of the box, a type of immortal grass with four different colors on its leaves. Because of the four colors on its leaves, the fire coming off of the plant itself had four different colors, making it look very strange.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his heart began to pound. After some closer examination, he confirmed his original assumption. “Four-leaved immortal grass! A rare item that creates four-colored flame!!”

“This is a variation that only appears once in 100,000 stalks of three-leaved immortal grass. Four-leaved immortal grass can create four-colored flame....” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine. How could he ever have imagined that his bag of holding would contain an item like this?

To the disciples of the other three sects, it might just be an object useful for concocting medicine or practicing cultivation. But to Bai Xiaochun, it was like a precious treasure.

He hadn’t used his turtle-wok for quite a while, not because he didn’t want to, but because fuel for four-colored flames was very rare in the sect, and he hadn't been able to acquire any.

Even as he looked at the four-leaved immortal grass, he suddenly remembered something that he had acquired from one of the disciples from the Blood Stream Sect. Back in the Fallen Sword World, so many disciples had besieged him because of the heavenstring energy that he couldn’t remember them all clearly. However, there was one disciple who had made somewhat of an impression; after being killed, he had seemingly transformed into a mask and then tried to flee.

“Yeah, I remember him!” Bai Xiaochun thought, eyes flashing. He clearly remembered grabbing the mask and trying to crush it, but being unable to do so. In his hurry, he'd simply sealed it and tossed it into his bag of holding. [1. The incident with the mask happened in chapter 163]

However, after searching for quite some time, he was shocked to realize that the mask was nowhere to be found.

“Impossible!” Ignoring the discomfort he felt from having just returned from the pocket realm, he drew upon the power of his cultivation base to once again search, this time even more thoroughly.

“There’s no way I'm misremembering this. I definitely threw it into my bag of holding. That mask must be some sort of magical treasure that's actually trying to hide from me!” His eyes began to shine with intrigue.

Sticking his chin up, he said, “How dare you try to play hide-and-seek with Lord Bai, you little mask. Lord Bai can reduce you to ash with the snap of a finger!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0178 awe-chapter-179

The interior of his bag of holding was so quiet you could hear a pin drop. There wasn’t a single reply from inside. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he let out a threatening roar. And yet, nothing moved inside the bag.

Furious, he sealed it. Then, he chuckled coldly and closed his eyes to meditate. A few days later, after he'd fully recovered, he rotated his cultivation base and sent golden light streaming toward the Heavenspan Dharma Eye on his forehead.

“Alright little mask, let’s see if you can hide from me this time!” With a cold snort, he confirmed that he could force open his Heavenspan Dharma Eye again. With that, he unsealed his bag of holding, and then opened his third eye just a crack. A violet eye could just barely be seen as he looked into the bag of holding.

In that instant, his mind trembled, and everything vanished. His bag of holding and everything else in it turned transparent, revealing a crumpled up mask off in the corner.

It had concealed itself in the lining of the bag of holding, slowly merging into the side. Clearly, if it had been given enough time, it would have been able to fully merge into the material of the bag of holding, then secretly escape out the other side.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of it with his third eye, the mask trembled and unleashed a blinding light as it attempted to break out of the bag of holding. Before it could though, Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly, and sent spiritual power streaming into the bag of holding to grab onto the mask.

After dragging it out from within the lining of the bag, he pulled it out and held it in his hand to examine it with his third eye. Strangely, only his third eye could see it. His other senses, including his normal eyes, couldn't detect its existence at all.

“Weird,” he thought. “How come I could see it back in the Fallen Sword World?” He couldn’t sustain the use of his third eye for too long, so after closing it, he drew upon his nine spiritual seas, unleashing some Heaven-Dao aura. Immediately, the air above his palm began to distort, and soon, the mask became visible in front of him.

It was now a flesh-colored mask!

This was the mask he had tried to crush back in the Fallen Sword World. It seemed as delicate as the wings of a cicada, and also contained some strange aura that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t clearly analyze. “Could it be cultivated using the waters of the Heavenspan River?”.

It was an aura that came from whatever material the mask had been constructed from, and Bai Xiaochun found it quite shocking. Then he thought back to how the soul of that Blood Stream Sect disciple entered the mask and then tried to flee.

“I know you’re in there!” he growled. “Show your face to Lord Bai!” However, there was no reaction from the mask. Eyes shining with viciousness, he tried to crush the mask, and yet no matter how much power he exerted, nothing happened.

“Not gonna come out? You really think I have no way of dealing with you?” With that, he shot down the mountain to the bank of the Heavenspan River, where he cocked his hand back, as if to throw the mask in the water.

That river water was the only thing Bai Xiaochun could think of that could melt just about anything. However, before he could actually throw the mask, it trembled and suddenly cried out, “Senior, let me say something!”

“Ah, so you can talk now, huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes gleaming ferociously. “Get out of that mask and tell me who you are!”

A mist suddenly flowed out from the crumpled up mask, which rapidly took shape into a tiny person. Although he didn’t look exactly like the person he had killed in the Fallen Sword World, he looked similar. Looking completely terrified, and trembling physically, he clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Please grace me with your favor, Senior,” he blubbered. “Your humble servant made a mistake, I know it. I'm an Inner Sect disciple from the Blood Stream Sect. My name is Nightcrypt....” After the catastrophe of the Fallen Sword World, he had remained in Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. His plan had been to slowly make his escape, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun had found him.

Originally, he hadn’t been too worried, assuming that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t be able to hurt him. He had never imagined that he would threaten to melt him in the Heavenspan River.

The spiritual power of the waters of the Heavenspan River was difficult to put into words, and even some of the most powerful defensive treasures could be destroyed by it.

When Bai Xiaochun heard the name ‘Nightcrypt’, he was a bit taken aback, and even felt a bit nervous. The name really was very intimidating. Whether the meaning of the name meant burying people at night, or entombing the night itself, it definitely felt profoundly murderous. [1. Generally speaking, I transliterate the names of characters, and translate Daoist names or nicknames. For Nightcrypt, I'm making a bit of an exception. This is supposed to be his actual name, not a Daoist name. So if I transliterated it, it would be Ye Zang. However, it's a completely ridiculous name in Chinese, the kind of name nobody would have in real life. It's supposed to sound cool/creepy/badass, except, sort of "made up" a.k.a. not a real name. To keep the outrageous flavor of the name, I'm going to translate it out instead of transliterating it. P.S. My apologies if anyone in the audience is actually named Nightcrypt, and is offended by me calling it a ridiculous name.]

Looking askance at the trembling soul, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. “Well, your name could use some work. Doesn’t sound very good, you know. Definitely not as good as mine.”

Nightcrypt gaped for a moment, the subserviently voiced his agreement. However, he didn’t dare to say anything else. The truth was he was feeling very sorry for himself. The Blood Stream Sect had never paid much attention to him, and he had worked very hard to reach the great circle of Qi Condensation.

Originally, he hadn’t qualified to enter the Fallen Sword Abyss. The truth was that he had studied a strange mix of things in the Blood Stream Sect. In addition to a bit of knowledge of medicine concocting, he had also studied the sect's divination magic. He would often divine his own future, and although the results weren’t always accurate, they had provided some benefits to his cultivation.

Before the Fallen Sword Abyss was opened, his divination had revealed that he would come across some incredible good fortune if he went along.

Although he didn't quite believe it at first, he got the same results after numerous divinations. Finally, he gritted his teeth and paid a huge price, even undergoing significant humiliation, to get himself a spot. Who would ever have thought that, not only did he not get any good fortune, he would end up the captive of the brutal Bai Xiaochun.

“Lord Bai,” he said, bowing continuously, “considering your incredible might, sir, why don’t you just let me go? I can be a spy for you! I’ll go back to the Blood Stream Sect and report back to you here at the Spirit Stream Sect. I-I-I can even swear an oath!”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at him, then snorted coldly.

“Spy? Presumably this is your true appearance, right? The Nightcrypt I killed is a different person than you! I can’t believe you’re trying to trick me! Bai Xiaochun hates it when people try to trick him! Prepare to die!” Glaring as fiercely as possible, he knelt down and prepared to drop the mask into the river.

A wave rolled by that seemed just about to hit Nightcrypt, who screamed and trembled in fear. The sensation of imminent death he was experiencing surpassed anything he had felt in his life. Then he thought about all the humiliation he had endured in the sect, and he felt like crying.

“Don’t kill me! I’ll tell you a huge secret!!”

Bai Xiaochun sneered, even more distrustful than before. With that, he loosened his grip, and the mask began to fall.

Nightcrypt was scared out of his mind as the waters of the river rushed up toward him. “No! I’m serious about this secret! It has to do with eternal indestructibility!!”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun. As far as he was concerned, the terms ‘eternal’ and ‘indestructible’ were essentially synonymous of 'undying’ and ‘live forever.’ Without a moment of hesitation, his hand shot out with lightning-like speed to grab the mask.

“You’d better not try to trick me,” he said gravely. “You already know how much I hate it when people try to trick me!”

“I’m telling the truth,” Nightcrypt gushed. “There's a big secret about the Blood Stream Sect. They have a relic of eternity! Nobody else knows about it except me. Not even the patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect are aware that such a heaven-defying object is hidden inside of their sect!!

“According to the legends, whoever gets that relic and unlocks it will be able to grasp the secrets of being eternally indestructible!!

“I’m not tricking you. I'm completely and utterly serious about this!!” From what Nightcrypt could tell, Bai Xiaochun was a very moody person, which was the most terrifying type of person there was.

Glaring angrily, Bai Xiaochun prepared the throw the mask back into the river. “What a load of crap. The patriarchs of the sect don’t know about that thing, but you do?”

On the verge of tears, Nightcrypt finally blurted out everything. “I-I-I'm not really a disciple from the Blood Stream Sect. I'm an imposter....”

As imposter Nightcrypt continued to explain the details, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. It turned out that this imposter was someone who the real Nightcrypt hadn’t even been aware of!

He had started out as rogue cultivator in the third level of Qi Condensation, with relatively good latent talent. After being chased down by an enemy, he was on the verge of being killed when an enigmatic savior from a mysterious sect appeared. His savior had been in a bit of a rush, so after a moment of thought, gave him a mask and told him to find an Outer Sect disciple in the Blood Stream Sect named Nightcrypt. His mission was to take his place and carry out a certain task. The savior had even hexed the imposter’s soul.

The real Nightcrypt was actually dead by now. However, he had occupied a relatively stable position in the Blood Stream Sect. One of his ancestors had performed a great service for the Blood Stream Sect, and because of that, Nightcrypt had been guaranteed a place in the Inner Sect.

The imposter’s mysterious savior had visited him a second time to explain further details of his mission, which was to secretly acquire the relic of eternal indestructibility. His savior had described its appearance, and even told him where it was located. Apparently, there was a huge door guarding the way, the key to which was a unique medicinal pill.

The pill wasn’t difficult to concoct; even an ordinary apothecary could do it. Unfortunately, no matter who concocted it, the success rate would be fifty-fifty. Furthermore, the ingredients were very rare. Collecting them all would be a very difficult task.

Thankfully, his mysterious savior’s sect was very rich, and had already collected most of the ingredients. The only thing lacking was some beastbirth blood.

After replacing Nightcrypt and becoming a Blood Stream Sect disciple, everything went smoothly at first. He soon became an Inner Sect disciple, but quickly came to find that he had difficulty cultivating the techniques of the Blood Stream Sect. Although he had good latent talent, he wasn’t suited for blood cultivation. This problem grew worse and worse until he got stuck in the eighth level of Qi Condensation.

Gradually, the sect lost interest in him, and even his mysterious savior didn’t provide any help. For several miserable years, he had continued to cultivate alone in painstaking fashion....

His mysterious savior’s sect was a very, very long way away from the Blood Stream Sect, and there were other things that made it difficult to go back and forth between the two. Furthermore, he wasn’t able to directly plunder the relic of eternal indestructibility himself. Because of that, he only appeared three times, and those three times had all been by means of a projection, and apparently came at great cost.

The first time was when he arranged for Nightcrypt’s soul replacement. The second time was when imposter Nightcrypt became an Inner Sect disciple. The fanfare surrounding that event didn’t seem to please his mysterious savior, but didn’t stop him from explaining the details of the relic of eternal indestructibility. That was also when he gave imposter Nightcrypt the ingredients to concoct the medicinal pill, and explained that his mysterious sect would continue to search for the final ingredient.

The third time he appeared was right before imposter Nightcrypt entered the Fallen Sword World. He’d explained that if he couldn’t reach Foundation Establishment, that he would have to give up the mask and abandon his spy work.

Imposter Nightcrypt had been left with no choice but to rely on his divination skills to illuminate the correct path ahead. Everything after that was history....

“Is that sect full of idiots?” Bai Xiaochun blurted. “Why would they possibly pick you to be their spy? Furthermore, how could the Blood Stream Sect never have suspected you?!” In his opinion, either Nightcrypt was lying, or the mysterious sect was full of fools. Of course, perhaps there was some other factor that Bai Xiaochun was unaware of, something that gave the mysterious sect no other choice than to rely on the Nightcrypt soul replacement plan.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0179 awe-chapter-180

There was another possibility, which was that, as Nightcrypt had said, the mysterious sect was too far away from the Blood Stream Sect, so far that even a projection was difficult to accomplish. That would explain their lack of both confidence and options, which led to their less than perfect decision.

Suspicious, Bai Xiaochun continued to pry Nightcrypt with questions, until even Nightcrypt seemed to be getting confused. Finally, Bai Xiaochun frowned, and then once again resorted to threatening to dunk him in the Heavenspan River. He then asked more questions, even down to the details of the formula to the pill that was needed to open the door. Slowly, he was coming to be convinced that Nightcrypt was telling the truth. Although his answers sometimes conflicted with each other, the overall bigger picture was consistent.

There even seemed to be certain things that Nightcrypt himself didn’t understand. All he knew was that he was a spy, and that his soul had been bound with a restrictive spell. If he didn't follow his orders, he would die. He wasn’t even sure what to do with the relic of eternal indestructibility if he managed to get his hands on it.

To Bai Xiaochun, it didn’t make much sense that the mysterious sect would just hand the medicinal pill ingredients over to a stranger. The most likely explanation was that Nightcrypt’s mysterious savior truly approved of his soul, although another possibility was that the sect really was too far away, and they had no other option than to hand over the ingredients when they could.

Either way, it didn’t seem logical. It almost seemed like the mysterious sect hadn’t considered what to do after Nightcrypt acquired the relic of eternal indestructibility. Perhaps they didn’t really care about the relic at all, and simply wanted him to open the door. Or was it that they didn’t believe Nightcrypt to be capable of actually acquiring the relic after opening the door?

But if the latter were the case, why wouldn’t they just select another spy...?

“What a weird sect. Why do I get the feeling that they’re only going through the motions? It’s almost like they want certain people to think that they’re working hard at reaching some goal, but in reality, they don’t care.” The more Bai Xiaochun thought about it, the more strange he found the whole scenario.

Another odd thing was that the Blood Stream Sect never got suspicious of Nightcrypt. Although, based on Nightcrypt’s explanation, that was a question which could be answered.

“It's all thanks to this mask, huh....” he thought. He looked over the mask in more detail, and was shocked to find that he had no idea what it was made of. However, its aura was shocking, and no matter how he looked at it, it seemed like a precious treasure.

According to Nightcrypt, putting on the mask didn’t just change your physical appearance. It actually transformed your flesh and blood. That transformation would reverse upon removing the mask, but as long as you wore it, no one would ever be able to detect any clues that you were a different person. Your cultivation base fluctuations would be concealed, and according to the representative of the mysterious sect, no one under the Mahayana Realm would be able to see them. Unfortunately, Nightcrypt didn’t know what the Mahayana Realm was....

Of course, Bai Xiaochun didn’t know what the Mahayana Realm was either, although it sounded pretty incredible. Looking down at the imposter Nightcrypt there in the mask, he suddenly said, “Spiritwinter grass, waterink lily, cloud-dragon leaf, heavensieve root. What are the medicinal properties of those four medicinal plants?”

Imposter Nightcrypt gaped for a moment, then without even thinking about it started to rattle off the medicinal properties. As Bai Xiaochun listened, his frown deepened.

His answer wasn’t complete, but it wasn’t incorrect. Generally speaking, his description was accurate. The four medicinal plants Bai Xiaochun had asked about weren’t selected randomly. Based on the answers imposter Nightcrypt gave, Bai Xiaochun was able to determine that he really could concoct medicine....

“So, he actually is capable of concocting the pill. He only has a rough foundation in the Dao of medicine, but it’s enough to produce the door-opening pill.”

Bai Xiaochun was really torn about what to think. However, his desire to acquire that relic of eternal indestructibility only continued to grow.

“If it was called anything else, I could have ignored it. Why did it have to be called eternally indestructible!?” He glared down at imposter Nightcrypt’s soul in the mask, who immediately began to tremble and plead for his life.

“I'm telling the truth. I swear it! I've told you everything. I didn’t leave anything out!” And he really was telling the truth.

“Fine, fine,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Hurry up and get out of that mask. I want to study it a bit!”

Imposter Nightcrypt hesitated, clearly not pleased with the idea of leaving the mask. However, as soon as he thought of how ferocious Bai Xiaochun had been in the Fallen Sword World, and how he had just about thrown the mask into the Heavenspan River, he shivered, gritted his teeth, and floated out into the open. After all, if Bai Xiaochun wanted to exterminate him, he could do so without the trouble of asking him to come out of the mask.

As soon as he was out in the open, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve. Imposter Nightcrypt let out a shriek as he was thrown into a jade box, which then went into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. With that, Bai Xiaochun returned to his immortal's cave to study the mask more.

The process took an entire month.

Bai Xiaochun barely ate or slept during that time. He was completely focused on studying the mask. He even performed a few different tests. No matter what he did, he was unable to damage the mask in any way. At one point, he carefully dipped the mask into the waters of the Heavenspan River. Although he could tell that any soul inside of the mask would have been destroyed, the mask itself wasn’t hurt at all. At one point, Bai Xiaochun suddenly wondered why the discarnate soul of imposter Nightcrypt, with a mere Qi Condensation cultivation base, would be able to survive after being killed in the Fallen Sword World. Presumably the answer had to do with the mask itself, which prevented his soul from dispersing.

He even bought some animals at the market and then put the mask on them. As soon as he did, the mask vanished, and the animals’ faces turned into Nightcrypt’s.

The result was terrifying to look at, but upon closer examination, Bai Xiaochun confirmed that the little animals weren’t hurt at all. In fact, they didn’t even seem to notice that anything had changed. It was almost as if they had always looked that way.

After removing the mask, they would return to normal. Bai Xiaochun kept the animals around a while, and performed even more tests. In the end, he confirmed that the mask didn’t have any side-effects or harmful secrets. Still not completely convinced, he kept the animals under close observation.

The mask was truly a precious treasure, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t imagine why that mysterious sect would possibly have just given it to a random spy.

Eventually, he used his Heavenspan Dharma Eye to observe the mask. Combined with his Heaven-Dao aura, he came to the conclusion that there was something eternal about the mask's aura.

It was as if this mask would exist for all eternity!

Bai Xiaochun was left in a state of near madness, with bloodshot eyes and disheveled hair. At the same time, an audacious speculation rose up in his mind.

“What if the true purpose of the mask isn’t just to change one’s appearance and cultivation base? What if an authentication device, the medicinal pill, and the mask itself are all needed to open that door!?

“Perhaps the mysterious sect merely wanted to put on a show of trying to open the door and release the relic of eternal indestructibility. Perhaps the truth is that they don’t want to do that.

“Therefore, they recruited a spy and gave him the mask, but intentionally withheld one of the medicine concocting ingredients. It would seem like they were doing their best, but the truth was that they didn’t care. Because they were only putting on a show, they weren’t too happy that imposter Nightcrypt made a bit of a splash in the beginning. Perhaps that even had something to do with why imposter Nightcrypt didn't do well at his blood cultivation, and had problems improving his cultivation base!”

Another reason why Bai Xiaochun was so torn about what to do was that the missing ingredient to the medicinal pill was beastbirth blood. Beastbirth blood was blood that came from a creature born out of a Beastbirth Flower. Although most people would view beastbirth blood as something that didn’t even exist, and was virtually impossible to acquire, Bai Xiaochun’s own battle beast Bruiser had been born in just such a fashion....

As such, he already had everything he needed to concoct that pill, and thus, also had everything he needed to open the door.

After much thought, he finally sighed and put the mask away.

“Forget about it. All that other stuff doesn’t really matter now. First I should see if I can actually concoct the door-opening pill. If I can, then the will of the Heavens will be revealed. If I can’t, then that will be the end of the matter.” Gritting his teeth, he went over to the north bank to find Bruiser. After playing with him for a bit, he got a drop of blood, then gave him a huge pile of delicious medicinal pills to eat.

After returning to his immortal's cave, he began to concoct.

Considering that he could already concoct tier-3 spirit medicines, producing the simplistic door-opening pill was a simple task. However, he still spent plenty of time studying the pill formula, and came to be convinced that the success rate would only be fifty percent, no matter who concocted it.

The strange pill formula was another reason why Bai Xiaochun was interested in the relic of eternal indestructibility.

He settled his qi and cleared his mind, then pulled out the ingredients from imposter Nightcrypt’s bag of holding. Most Blood Stream Sect disciples kept all of their belongings with them at all times, for safety purposes.

Then he followed the pill formula exactly, taking three days in his concocting. When he was finished, the pill furnace began to rumble, and white smoke billowed out of it. Unexpectedly, nine magical symbols could be seen within the white smoke. After the smoke dissipated, the same aura he had sensed on the mask emanated out from the pill furnace.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and opened the pill furnace, whereupon a medicinal pill emerged that could only be fully examined with a Heaven-Dao aura and nine spiritual seas!

“It’s very similar to the mask....” Bai Xiaochun thought, frowning as he looked at it.

“Is this really the will of the Heavens?” He thought some more. “No. No way. The Blood Stream Sect is too dangerous.

“The cultivators there are all devils. They kill people without batting an eye. Way too ferocious....

“Song Que is from the Blood Stream Sect, and that guy hates me with all his guts.

“It’s a place where the law of the jungle prevails....” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t stop thinking about the terrors of the Blood Stream Sect, and it sent chills down his back. And yet, his thirst for the relic of eternal indestructibility wouldn’t go away. It was almost like he had a person on each shoulder arguing back and forth about what to do.

One of them was telling him to go the Blood Stream Sect, the other was telling him to stay away.

All he had to do was put on the mask, and he could become Nightcrypt. Considering the power of the mask, not even the Blood Stream Sect Patriarchs would notice that anything was amiss. As Nightcrypt, he would be perfectly safe.

Furthermore, he already had the door-opening pill. All he had to do was get to the location of the relic of eternal indestructibility, and it would be his. Then he would be one step closer to accomplishing his dreams.

However, all of that had to be done in the Blood Stream Sect, which was a savage place that completely differed from the Spirit Stream Sect.

“What should I do...?” he thought, scowling as he stared at the medicinal pill.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0180 awe-chapter-181

After thinking the matter over for some time, he finally sighed and said, “Nah, it's not worth even thinking about it. Things are great here in the Spirit Stream Sect....” Suppressing the pain he felt in his heart, he put the medicinal pill away in his bag of holding.

If he left, he would miss the Spirit Stream Sect too much. Now that he was in Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, everyone from the patriarchs to the servants treated him with the warmth of family.

Most importantly, there were plenty of new Outer Sect disciples who didn’t know him very well. Nor had he spent sufficient time in public on the north bank. He would really be missing out on a lot if he left the sect now.

In the days to follow, Bai Xiaochun spent time every day practicing cultivation. However, when he wasn’t cultivating, he would clasp his hands behind his back and stroll through both the north and south banks, smiling like someone from the Senior generation.

He would often mysteriously appear in areas where the Outer Sect disciples gathered. At first, cries of excitement would fill the air, but soon, strange expressions would begin to appear on the faces of the Outer Sect disciples. Eventually, they realized that they were seeing Bai Xiaochun more than a dozen times every day.

It didn’t matter what they were doing, they would often look up to find Bai Xiaochun standing there, a faint smile of praise on his face. Eventually, they grew numb to what was happening, and the strange expressions grew even more common.

The Outer Sect disciples weren’t the only ones to experience such a thing. Inner Sect disciples and even the elders were all annoyed to find that Bai Xiaochun, instead of tending to important affairs, would often stroll around and wait to be called Sect Uncle Bai. It was just like what had happened years ago.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun was much more restrained than he had been before. After once again experiencing the sensation of being the center of attention, he decided to stay in his immortal's cave on Mount Daoseed and concoct medicine.

“To cultivate the Undying Heavenly King, I need vital energy. Therefore, I need to concoct a tier-4 medicinal pill!” Bai Xiaochun’s grand aspiration of becoming a master apothecary was what kept him so focused on medicine concocting.

Furthermore, he had never forgotten what Li Qinghou had told him, that after he reached Foundation Establishment, he should once again try to perfect his Lightning Detox Grand Magic. In the following days, lightning and thunder became common on Mount Daoseed, much to the astonishment of the Foundation Establishment elders there.

Disciples from the other mountain peaks saw the countless bolts of lightning descending upon the mountain, and were also shocked. People began to ask around, and before long, stories about Bai Xiaochun’s previous antics began to spread again. Soon, everyone was talking about it, leading to gasps and expressions of shock.

“Sect Uncle Bai did something like that? I don’t believe it!”

“Heavens, did that really happen?”

Many of the disciples who weren’t familiar with Bai Xiaochun had a hard time believing the stories. However, the frequency of the lightning didn’t reduce by even a little bit. In fact, it increased. At the same time, black smoke began to rise from Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, and before long, the legendary acid raid began to fall.

Acid rain ran in rivulets down almost half of Mount Daoseed. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was concocting tier-4 medicinal pills, to which tier-3 pills couldn’t even compare. Soon, the area affected by the acid rain grew, reaching both the south and north banks. Eventually, all seven of the mountain peaks were affected.

A nightmare had descended once again. Countless disciples looked around in shock as their garments slowly dissolved.

“Bai Xiaochun is concocting pills again!!”

“Can't he just let people live in peace!?!?!?” The south bank had already gone through something like this before, so as soon as they realized the acid rain was coming, there was a bit of an uproar, but nothing too dramatic.

However, the people from the north bank had never experienced anything quite like it. Soon, howls of rage rose up, and the north bank mountain peaks began to go mad.

“What’s going on!? What’s happening!?”

“Heavens! I can’t believe acid rain is falling! Wait a second, didn’t I hear a story recently about acid rain...?”

Screams and howls filled the north bank as the disciples there descended into madness. The four peak lords and the elders were also furious, and soon found that the culprit was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

Before Bai Xiaochun reached Foundation Establishment, the disciples of both banks would most surely have formed a mob to go pelt him with stones.

But now, all they could do was exchange dismayed glances. Despite their rage, Bai Xiaochun was not the same Bai Xiaochun that he had been before. He was now a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert, legacy echelon-designate, and a Foundation Establishment elder. A person like that was not someone who ordinary disciples could casually provoke. Even the elders could only stew in their frustration. As for the peak lords, they knew how much the prime elders valued Bai Xiaochun, and thus, could do nothing other than go to the sect leader and hope that he would see reason.

When Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong heard their complaints, he smiled wryly. After all, the legacy echelon-designate was someone very important. Sadly, Li Qinghou had already gone into secluded meditation, otherwise he might have been able to set Bai Xiaochun straight.

Zheng Yuandong tried to persuade Bai Xiaochun that there was more to life than cultivation, and that he should go out of the sect to get some experience in life. After all, without tempering, not even immortal steel could be forged into an immortal sword.

He even explained that as long as he stayed in the Eastwood Continent, he would never be in much danger, but would still be able to gain experience.

However, Bai Xiaochun merely shook his head and said that he really enjoyed life in the sect.

With that, he immersed himself in his research, and the same madness that had once gripped the south bank soon began to spread through the entire sect. However, just when it reached a boiling point, Bai Xiaochun suddenly stopped concocting pills.

There he sat in his immortal's cave, sighing. His efforts at tier-4 medicinal pills were all failures. No matter how he persisted, problems always cropped up.

“Maybe my skill in the Dao of medicine is too low. Trying to force the matter now won’t do any good. If I want to concoct tier-4 medicinal pills, I have to improve my skill in the Dao of medicine!” Feeling enlightened, he went to visit Li Qinghou, but unfortunately, Li Qinghou was still trying to reach the Gold Core stage, and couldn't emerge from secluded meditation.

Bai Xiaochun took out the Frigid School Medicine Manual, but no matter how he examined it, it didn't make sense. It was as if he could understand the characters themselves, but the words and sentences they formed were completely unintelligible.

“If my skill in the Dao of medicine could be considered low-level, then the Frigid School Medicine Manual must be high-level. I'm missing some fundamental understanding regarding the Dao of medicine.” Although Bai Xiaochun was left scowling, the disciples of both the south and north banks, the elders and peak lords and the Foundation Establishment elders on Mount Daoseed were all sighing in relief.

As usual, they had underestimated Bai Xiaochun....

For the moment, he couldn’t work on tier-4 spirit medicine, but he could cultivate the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation.

Furthermore, at a certain point, the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, in combination with the protomagnetic powers of gravity and repulsion, delivered a burst of inspiration regarding his dream technique: the Human Controlling Grand Magic.

“I'm such an idiot!

“The Human Controlling Grand Magic doesn’t actually need to directly control the opponent! If I figured out a way to control their clothing, I could control the movements of their body!

“Furthermore, I could rely on the protomagnetic powers of gravity and repulsion to do that instead of pure control power!” The more he thought about it, the more excited he got. Eyes shining brightly, he rushed out of his immortal's cave.

As he walked along, he ran into a lot of people, but none of them were appropriate to help confirm whether his theory was correct or not. Eventually, he left Mount Daoseed and headed toward Green Crest Peak. Suddenly, he saw a familiar face.

“Chen Fei?” he said, eyes shining.

**

Chen Fei was walking proudly down a path on Green Crest Peak, followed by two burly men who were fawning over him and showering him with flattery.

“Congratulations on completing the trial by fire to enter the Inner Sect, Elder Brother Chen! You’re finally going to be an Inner Sect disciple!”

“Hahaha! From now on, Elder Brother Chen, you’re in Green Crest Peak’s Inner Sect! The whole world is at your fingertips! Next step, the heavens!”

Chen Fei’s stuck his chin up as he walked along, reveling in his pride. After all the years that had gone by, he had finally advanced from the Outer Sect to the Inner Sect. As he strutted along smugly, he was about to respond to the two men when he suddenly heard someone calling out his name.

A twinge of displeasure ran through his heart. Snorting coldly, he looked around and said, “Everybody on Green Crest Peak calls me Elder Brother Chen! What blind fool dares to disrespect me by using my full name!?”

Seeing no one in the immediate vicinity, he subconsciously looked up into the air, and saw Bai Xiaochun flying toward him.

“It’s Bai Xiaochun!! Sect Uncle Bai!!” Chen Fei’s scalp began tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. A piercing shriek escaped his lips, and all of his smugness and pride collapsed. The two burly men on either side of him also began to shake in anxiety and fear.

Those two men were the same men who had ambushed Bai Xiaochun with Chen Fei all those years ago, only to be taught a harsh lesson in return [1. Chen Fei and his friends tried to fight Bai Xiaochun in chapter 39]. Of course, as Bai Xiaochun’s status in the sect grew, their fear of him also increased.

That had been compounded by the fact that Qian Dajin ended up being suddenly sent out on a dangerous mission. He had never returned, and rumor had it that he had died outside the sect. The presumption, of course, was that Bai

Xiaochun was behind it all, which left them even more terrified than before.

Eventually, though, they came to believe that Bai Xiaochun had forgotten about them. Gradually, they relaxed, convinced that there would be no further negative ramifications. But now, Bai Xiaochun had come seeking them out, and the result was that their hearts were pounding in terror.

Trembling, Chen Fei quickly clasped hand and bowed deeply. “Disciple Chen Fei offers greetings, Sect Uncle Bai. Sect Uncle Bai, you are the most powerful person in the sect, a cultivator whose legend will be passed down through the ages, someone who will live as long as the heavens, invincible in the whole world!”

The two burly men also shouted similar words until their voices grew hoarse.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked to find that Chen Fei really was so gifted at speaking. Looking very serious, he said, “Cut the crap! Do you really think Bai Xiaochun is the type of person who likes to be brown-nosed!?”

However, despite the words coming out of his mouth, a gleam of approval could be seen in his eyes, and even a bit of encouragement.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0181 awe-chapter-182

Chen Fei hesitated for a moment, but seeing that Bai Xiaochun seemed to be encouraging him to keep going, he proceeded, “Sect Uncle Bai, I’m not flattering you, I'm just telling you how I really feel! Sect Uncle Bai, you’re a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert, and the legacy echelon-designate. You’re a future patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect! You’ll naturally live as long as the heavens, and in the future will surely prove to be invincible in the world!”

“Quit your jabbering!” Bai Xiaochun said, waving his hand and looking very displeased.

Chen Fei felt a bit sick to his stomach, but continued on with the flattery. “Sect Uncle Bai, it’s not just me who thinks this. All of the disciples are talking about it! Everyone is saying that Sect Uncle Bai is as righteous as the heavens. He’s a genius among Chosen, someone who crushes all others in his generation. He’s a qilin incarnate, and one of the most handsome people in existence!”

Bai Xiaochun listened on and felt wonderful. After a while, he felt bad about trying to test out the Human Controlling Grand Magic on Chen Fei, so he simply stuck his chin up in the air, flicked his sleeve, and flew away.

Chen Fei and his two friends breathed sighs of relief. As for the burly men, they looked at Chen Fei with more admiration than ever.

“Elder Brother Chen, you definitely deserve to be regarded as brilliantly divine. If it weren’t for you, we would have faced calamity this day….”

Wiping away the cold sweat on his brow, Chen Fei had to admit that he really had been thinking on his feet. “Humph! You’d have a hard time finding anyone in the sect that understands Sect Uncle Bai better than me!”

Proud of himself, he led his two friends off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun scoured the south bank, but couldn't find anyone else to practice the Human Controlling Grand Magic on. Next he went to the north bank. By that time it was late into the night. Unfortunately, he still hadn’t found a suitable subject. Sighing to himself about how good-natured he was, he returned to Mount Daoseed. Then, as he was walking along a mountain path, he looked up and saw Shangguan Tianyou flying through the air, wearing the Daoist robe of an elder. As he flew along, he noticed Bai Xiaochun, but simply snorted inwardly and pretended not to see him. The bad feelings between the two caused a cold, arrogant glint to appear in his eyes as he prepared to fly on his way.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the arrogant Shangguan Tianyou, old grievances rose up in his heart. Chuckling, he extended his right hand and mumbled something under his breath as he pointed his finger at Shangguan Tianyou.

A tremor ran through Shangguan Tianyou as his Daoist elder’s robe suddenly constricted around him.

His face fell, and his cultivation base exploded with power as he attempted to stop the clothing from affecting his movements. As for Bai Xiaochun, he poured more power into his efforts. In the blink of an eye, Shangguan Tianyou’s clothing became a battlefield.

Then a boom echoed out, and Shangguan Tianyou staggered backward a few steps. As he did, his robe was shredded into pieces, drifting away in the wind to reveal his naked body.

His jaw dropped.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw also dropped.

The jaws of nearby Foundation Establishment elders… also dropped.

Shangguan Tianyou let out a piercing howl as he threw another robe on. Eyes bloodshot, hair in disarray, he raved, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

With that, he shot toward Bai Xiaochun, mind filled with only one thought: no matter what happened, he would take Bai Xiaochun down. He didn’t even think about whether or not he was strong enough to do such a thing.

In his mind, Bai Xiaochun was a walking disaster, and if he were left alive, the Spirit Stream Sect would definitely be brought to ruin.

Bai Xiaochun immediately fled. “What’s going on? How come it didn't work?”

When he saw how enraged Shangguan Tianyou was, he actually felt a bit bad, but before he could even explain, Shangguan Tianyou was bearing down on him with murderous intent.

“Sect Nephew Shangguan, this was a misunderstanding!” he shrieked as he sped along. “A misunderstanding, I tell you…!” By that point, he was already back in his immortal's cave. However, when Shangguan Tianyou heard the term ‘sect nephew,’ his rage burned even hotter. He stood outside the immortal's cave, completely livid, howling in rage. Eventually, though, he could do nothing but grit his teeth and leave.

Bai Xiaochun sat in his immortal's cave racking his brains. A few days later, he slapped his thigh.

“I was thinking about it the wrong way!

“Controlling the clothing is definitely not a good idea. Clothing is weak, and can’t withstand the force. Not unless it was made from jewels or something! The true Human Controlling Grand Magic is about controlling the smaller components of a person’s body. For example, their skin, flesh, blood, and bones. When all of that is accomplished, then I’ll truly have control power over my opponent!

“Unfortunately, my cultivation base isn’t high enough yet. I need a much stronger foundation in control power. For now, I need to make some sort of device that has inherent control power built into it!” His eyes began to shine brightly. The more he thought about the idea, the more it made sense. The next day, he scoured the sect for just such a device, but unfortunately, found nothing that worked. Just when he was starting to despair, he suddenly pulled out his Protomagnetic Wings. After studying them for a moment, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“In the arcane pocket realm, I gained some enlightenment of protomagnetic power. Now I can use a bit of repulsion power, as well as a slight gravitational force, to produce that illusory pearl….” After some more thought, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he pointed out. Instantly, a stream of qi emerged from within the wings, which flowed out onto Bai Xiaochun’s palm and transformed into an illusory pearl.

Upon closer examination, it was possible to see two types of auras inside the pearl, one of them pushing away, and the other pulling in. Their balance formed a cycle that acted as a vessel.

After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun’s expression filled with determination.

“Spiritual power is the foundation for all cultivators. Control power comes when the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation takes spiritual power and fuses it into one’s will.” Bai Xiaochun attempted to do just that. Pouring his spiritual power into the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation caused its fluctuations to change. When those fluctuations entered his own will, it became control power, which he infused into the pearl.

Time passed. A day later, Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale, but his expression was one of excitement. Retracting his hand, he sat down to perform some breathing exercises.

A month later, the result of Bai Xiaochun’s madness was that a terrifying amount of control power had built up in the pearl. Only then did he finally stop.

Looking at the pearl excitedly, he said, “This is definitely going to work. There’s a shocking amount of control power built up in the pearl. Once it erupts out, that power will definitely be enough to drive my Human Controlling Grand Magic!”

Just when he was about to go test it out, he stopped in his tracks, thought for a moment, and suddenly didn’t feel as confident.

“No, it's not ready yet. I need to add some more control power!” Gritting his teeth, he sat down cross-legged. After spending three more months pouring power into it, the amount of control power contained in the pearl was hair-raisingly terrifying. There was so much that it spilled out of the pearl, distorting the air in shocking fashion.

All of the objects within 30 meters of Bai Xiaochun were floating up into the air and emanating cracking sounds. Even the pebbles in the walls of the immortal's cave were affected.

Eyes crimson, Bai Xiaochun cackled madly as he emerged from his immortal's cave.

“Bai Xiaochun’s Human Controlling Grand Magic will finally make its debut in the world!” Laughing uproariously, he searched the area around his immortal's cave, only to find that nobody was around. Even as he was looking around in confusion, he noticed several beams of light shooting through the air toward the summit of Mount Daoseed. Apparently, the sect leader had called a meeting of the Foundation Establishment elders, for reasons unknown.

Puzzled, Bai Xiaochun flew up into the air.

Soon he caught sight of the square outside of the sect leader’s personal hall. A large number of Foundation Establishment elders were gathered there, and all of them were conversing with each other in hushed tones. Somber expressions could be seen on their faces; apparently, something big had occurred.

“What happened?” Bai Xiaochun thought. He had been so focused on his Human Controlling Grand Magic that he hadn’t paid much attention to his jade slips. Flying over to the group, he was just about to start asking questions, when three of the Foundation Establishment cultivators about thirty meters away from him, one of whom was Lu Tianlei, suddenly looked over at him in shock!

They had noticed Bai Xiaochun earlier, as well as his disheveled hair and strange appearance. As soon as he got close enough to them, tremors ran through their bodies, and they completely lost control of their cultivation base power. Energy surged out explosively, causing crushing pressure to weigh down, and simultaneously shredding their robes into pieces.

Shivering, eyes bloodshot, they quickly put on new garments and simultaneously fell back. Enraged, they looked over at Bai Xiaochun, convinced that he was up to more shenanigans!

“What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!”

However, even as the words left their mouths, Bai Xiaochun continued forward obliviously. At the same time, all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators within thirty meters of him looked on with wide eyes as their clothing was also shredded.

Before Bai Xiaochun could even react, dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators were robe-less, including Shangguan Tianyou.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Dammit, what’s he doing!?” The Foundation Establishment cultivators burned with rage. Throwing new clothes on, they were about to storm over to Bai Xiaochun to teach him a lesson, when they realized that anyone who got within thirty meters of him would have their clothing destroyed. Terrified, they all backed up.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun retreated to the main gate of the hall, scalp tingling and heart thumping. He already knew that he had caused a major catastrophe again.

“Don’t blame me!” he said. “It's this pearl!” He nervously held the pearl up into the air, which caused rippling distortions to spread out for thirty meters in all directions. Bai Xiaochun appeared to be the only one unaffected.

It was at this point that Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong heard the commotion outside, and stormed out through the gate with some of the prime elders. As soon as they appeared out in the open, they stepped into the danger zone surrounding Bai Xiaochun.

“No!!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked. “Elder Brother Sect Leader, prime elders! Get back!” Eyes wide, he tried to throw the pearl in the opposite direction, but it was too late.

Zheng Yuandong’s clothing was instantly shredded to pieces and blown away by the breeze, leaving him standing there as shocked as a wooden chicken.

The prime elders’ once solemn faces completely changed when their clothing was destroyed. They tried to unleash power to stop it, but it did no good, and soon they were all standing there naked.

Of course, it had nothing to do with the power of Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base, only the strange properties of the pearl. The clothing was not destroyed directly by Bai Xiaochun, but by the pearl. It wasn’t his fault!

As soon as the naked bodies of the sect leader and the prime elders were revealed, everything went deathly quiet.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0182 awe-chapter-183

In the blink of an eye, Zheng Yuandong waved his hand, and a new robe appeared. However, the moment it settled down onto him, it was also shredded to pieces.

Shrieking, Bai Xiaochun flew into the air to flee. He was already soaked with cold sweat at the thought of the calamity he had wrought. If he had only destroyed the clothing of his Elder Brother sect leader, it might not have been such a huge deal. After all, he was his Junior Brother. But the prime elders had also been affected.

The blank looks in the eyes of those prime elders caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to tingle on the verge of exploding.

“Bai. Xiao. CHUN!!” Zheng Yuandong howled, throwing on another set of clothing. As his voice boomed like thunder, rage burned in the eyes of the prime elders, and their cultivation bases erupted like volcanoes.

All of them immediately flew toward Bai Xiaochun.

Screaming, Bai Xiaochun prepared to flee at top speed.

“It wasn’t on purpose....”

“Shut up!” raged the prime elders, their voices deafeningly loud.

“They’re trying to kill me! They’re trying to kill me!!” This time, Bai Xiaochun really was afraid. He immediately pulled out the Protomagnetic Wings and his Golden Crow Sword, then unleashed all the power of his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base to flee.

All of the Foundation Establishment cultivators were furious. Their anger had been building for some time thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s torments, and to see the prime elders going after him left them laughing out loud.

Shangguan Tianyou seemed especially worked up. “Now the sect finally realizes what Bai Xiaochun is like! If this walking disaster stays in the sect, we’ll all be driven to destruction!”

Hou Yunfei was in the crowd, sighing and smiling bitterly.

Bai Xiaochun was scared out of his mind, and tears were welling up in his eyes. This time, he didn’t feel wronged; he knew that he had been responsible for a major disaster, and now had no choice but to flee for his life. In the blink of an eye, he was off in the distance, heading toward the north bank, with the prime elders hot on his tail. Almost as soon as he arrived, the north bank disciples heard his miserable shriek. Gloating smiles appeared on their faces as they flew up into the air to see what was happening.

However, as soon as they did, Bai Xiaochun whizzed by, and their clothing was shredded away.

Their first reaction was shock, but then the screams rose up.

Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of weeping. “Prime elders, I’m sorry. Please don’t kill me...! I'm a Prestige disciple, I have a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base, I'm the legacy echelon-designate...!”

As for the prime elders, they were so mad they were a bit numb, and at the same time, astonished by Bai Xiaochun’s speed.

The north bank instantly devolved into chaos. Wherever Bai Xiaochun went, anyone within thirty meters of him had their clothes completely destroyed in shocking fashion.

Around this time, Bruiser was frolicking around when he looked up and suddenly got very anxious. He even threw his head back and howled, and from the sound of it, it was backed by power equivalent to the ninth or tenth level of Qi Condensation. Countless battle beasts on the north bank responded by also throwing their heads back and howling.

Their masters tried to stop them, but all of the affected battle beasts seemed to have been influenced by Bruiser. The entire group apparently wanted to fly up into the air and defend Bai Xiaochun from the prime elders.

Before Bruiser could actually rally the battle beasts, a violet rope shot out from thin air and wrapped around the screaming Bai Xiaochun. Instantly, he was bound up, caught by one of the prime elders.

Another of the prime elders carefully managed to take the pearl away, somehow keeping his clothes intact in the process. Then he kicked Bai Xiaochun hard on the rear end.

“I've shed my own blood for the sect!” Bai Xiaochun screamed. “I've performed meritorious service....”

“How dare you fight back, you little brat!” Although the prime elder’s expression was one of pure rage, Bai Xiaochun’s terrified appearance had him almost laughing.

Bai Xiaochun looked like he was about to cry. However, even as he shrieked miserably, he glanced down at the enraged Bruiser and gave him a look that indicated he shouldn’t interfere.

Bruiser seemed surprised, but he understood the look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and lowered his head.

The prime elders noticed this, and were surprised. Then they recalled how even the patriarchs had taken a liking to this particular battle beast, and their eyes began to gleam with admiration at how it had attempted to protect its master.

“Now that’s how Spirit Stream Sect battle beasts are supposed to act!” The prime elders kicked Bai Xiaochun a few more times, then hauled him wailing back to Mount Daoseed.

Upon their departure, silence reigned on the north bank, followed by a resounding cheer. However, the cheering faded away quickly as people recalled Bai Xiaochun’s status in the sect. They knew that even though he would probably be punished, it wouldn’t be too severely. Then they wondered what would happen in the future. As Bai Xiaochun grew more and more important, it was impossible to imagine what terrifying events might occur.

“When is Bai Xiaochun gonna grow up...?”

“Ai. What a fiendish devil!!”

Soon, word spread that Bai Xiaochun’s punishment was to sweep the pathways on Mount Daoseed every day for three months. During that time, he could often be seen with a broom, keeping Mount Daoseed completely free from dust.

To him, it was pure torture....

“Hey, this is a mountain! It's supposed to have dirt on it! How am I supposed to keep it clean!?” Scowling on the verge of tears, he endured through the three months, then returned to his immortal's cave, where he sat next to his lake, staring up into the sky, looking completely miserable.

“I didn’t do it on purpose! I'm a Prestige disciple. I'm the legacy echelon-designate. I'm a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert! I'm the Junior Brother of the sect leader! I’ve performed meritorious service for the sect! I've shed my own blood....

“This is ridiculous! They even took my pearl away and won't give it back....” Sighing, he patted his bag of holding and gritted his teeth.

“Ah, whatever. I can’t stay in the Spirit Stream Sect for the time being. I might as well go to the Blood Stream Sect and try to get that relic of eternal indestructibility. The Blood Stream Sect is the enemy of the Spirit Stream Sect anyway, so I can spend some time there concocting pills and working on my Human Controlling Grand Magic!” Having made his mind up, he went to talk to Zheng Yuandong the next morning.

When Zheng Yuandong saw Bai Xiaochun approaching, his expression was grim. However, after hearing what he had to say, that he wanted to leave the sect to get some experience, his eyes went wide with disbelief.

“Did you just say you want to leave the sect to get some experience?”

“Yeah! You were right all along, Elder Brother sect leader. Maybe I am a piece of immortal steel. Without tempering, I’ll never become an immortal sword. After some thought, I've decided to go out and get some experience!” Bai Xiaochun even smacked his chest proudly to emphasize his words. “Elder Brother, I know you don't want me to leave, but don’t even try to persuade me to stay. I, Bai Xiaochun, have already decided--”

Before he could even finish speaking, Zheng Yuandong stepped forward and gripped him by the shoulders. “Excellent idea!” he said excitedly. “I'm very proud of you, Junior Brother. If you want to go out and get some experience, you have my blessing!! Are you leaving now?”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun responded, a bit taken aback. “Well I'm not really ready yet, I still need some--”

“What do you need, Xiaochun?” Zheng Yuandong interrupted, sounding very serious. “Just say the word! Spirit stones? Medicinal pills? Life-saving magical items? You’re a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert, and also the legacy echelon-designate. I can make a special exception to open the treasure storehouses and give you whatever you want!

“However, you have to remember that you can’t leave the Eastwood Continent. Of course, the Eastwood Continent is a very big place, so there are plenty of places you can go!” Having made his decision, he took Bai Xiaochun to the treasure storehouses to let him select some life-saving magical items.

He also gave him plenty of spirit stones and medicinal pills. At the same time, he enthusiastically announced the matter to the rest of the sect....

Later that afternoon, Bai Xiaochun stood outside the main gate, looking a bit dazed. It was only that morning that he had gone to talk to Zheng Yuandong about leaving to get experience. All of the preparations and formalities that needed to be handled had been quickly taken care of by Zheng Yuandong and the other elders.

Currently, he was standing there with the sect leader and the six peak lords, as well as a large group of elders and

Inner Sect disciples. It was quite a big affair. It almost seemed as if everyone from both the south and north banks were there, anxiously awaiting the moment when Bai Xiaochun actually left.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. For some reason, the situation seemed familiar. Without even thinking about it, he said, “Ladies and gentlemen, Junior Brothers and Sisters, Sect Nephews and Nieces, I shall miss all of you....”

The people in the crowd exchanged glances, and moments later, looks of sorrow appeared in their eyes. Clearly, they didn’t want to part with Bai Xiaochun.

Zheng Yuandong stepped forward, a kind look on his face as he said, “Xiaochun, you’re the most outstanding disciple in the Spirit Stream Sect. Your path lies ahead of you! Keep going forward. Step out into your future. Don’t tell me you've forgotten what I told you about the Heavenspan Sea? You haven’t forgotten about your path to living forever, have you?!

“We cultivators can’t be wishy-washy. Since you’ve decided to go out and get experience, you can’t change your mind. Xiaochun, your Elder Brother will always support you!” With that, he clasped Bai Xiaochun encouragingly on the shoulder.

Soon, more voices rang out.

“Yeah, that’s right. Junior Brother Bai, getting experience is a part of life! Just keep on going, and don’t look back!”

“Elder Brother Bai, the reason cultivators can rebuke the heavens is because our hearts are large enough to hold all the lands within them. As soon as you go out, you’ll be able to see the world for yourself. How could you not develop a heart big enough to contain all the lands? I'm certain that your heart will be able to hold the whole world!”

“I really am gonna live forever....” Bai Xiaochun thought, trembling. Eyes filling with determination, he looked around at everyone he knew and nodded. Then he turned and walked off into the distance.

As soon as he disappeared over the horizon, the sorrow in the eyes of the crowd was replaced by joy. Zheng Yuandong was so excited he was trembling.

“This time, he's really gone. He’s not just moved from the south bank to the north bank, he's actually left the sect. The heavens do have eyes! He's actually left to get experience!!”

“Is the devil really gone? I almost can’t believe it! Is this real?!?!”

“Hahaha! I've been praying every day for this miracle, and now it’s happened. The north bank will finally have peace and quiet!!”

“The south bank will no longer live a life of fear!”

“A new age has begun!!” As their expressions of joy rose up, some people from the south bank produced gongs and drums, and began to bang them loudly.

Not willing to be outdone, the people from the north bank did the same. That day was a day of happiness and rejoicing for the entire Spirit Stream Sect....

Off in the distance, Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly at the sound of the banging gongs and drums. A wistful look appeared in his eyes as he stuck his chin in the air and swished his sleeve. Looking more melancholy than ever, he said, “You still miss me, huh? Don’t feel too bad, fellow Daoists, I’ll be back soon!” He took a deep breath, and the determination in his eyes grew stronger.

“Blood Stream Sect, I'm sorry to say that Bai Xiaochun is coming, and he’s infiltrating you as a spy!” With that, he sped off into the distance.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0183 awe-chapter-184

Book 2: The Legend of Nightcrypt!

Chapter 184: How Is This Possible!?!?

The Blood Stream Sect occupied the first branch among the four branches controlled by the Sky River Court. It was next to the Spirit Stream Sect, with the actual border between the two being the mountains that had been occupied by the Luochen Clan, which was colloquially known as the Luochen Mountains.

After passing through the Luochen Mountains, one would be within the territory controlled by the Blood Stream Sect.

Bai Xiaochun hurried along, sighing the whole way. It was with mixed feelings that he passed through the area. On the one hand, he couldn’t stop thinking about the dangers he had faced all those years ago, but on the other hand, he also kept thinking about Du Lingfei.

If it weren’t for the incident with the Luochen Clan, he and Du Lingfei would never have gotten close. Du Lingfei would have continued to dislike him, much the way Zhou Xinqi still did.

Likewise, Bai Xiaochun himself wouldn’t have expressed himself to her the way he had. The betrayal of the Luochen Clan had changed everything.

Sighing, he passed the exact spot in the mountains where the Luochen Clan had actually been located. By now, the place had mostly been swallowed up by the jungle, and there were almost no signs that the clan had even existed there to begin with.

Some distance away was another clan that the Spirit Stream Sect had raised up to replace the Luochen Clan to guard the mountains. They had no idea that Bai Xiaochun was passing through the area.

Of course, despite being a Foundation Establishment cultivator, there were still some beasts in the area that even Bai Xiaochun didn’t dare to provoke.

As he travelled along, he once again was able to witness the wonders of the larger world around him including some chaotic, primeval beasts.

He also encountered some of the local cultivator clans, and came to understand why his Elder Brother the sect leader had called a meeting of the Foundation Establishment cultivators some months before.

“The Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect have gone to war....” As he looked off toward the distant location where the Profound and Pill Stream Sects were fighting, he recalled what Zheng Yuandong had told him about the war that had begun because of the Sky River Court.

The war was certainly causing heaven and earth to shake violently. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but wonder if hostilities would soon break out between the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect.

Half a month later, he left the Luochen Mountains and arrived at the border of the Blood Continent. Taking a deep breath, he produced the mask from his bag of holding and slowly put it onto his face.

The instant it made contact with his skin, it melted into him, and his face twisted and distorted as it transformed into the face of a stranger.

He looked quite handsome, albeit cold and arrogant. With the mask on, he didn't look warm and friendly like he usually did, but rather, fierce and sinister.

Prodding his face here and there, he confirmed that he truly had transformed, then took off his Spirit Stream Sect robes and produced some of Nightcrypt's clothes from his bag of holding. After donning them, he truly became Nightcrypt.

Even the techniques he cultivated were hidden by the mask, as well as his cultivation base. He was really in early Foundation Establishment, but anyone who assessed him would place him at the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation.

He had completely and utterly assumed the identity of the original Nightcrypt. Taking a deep breath, he strode forward into Blood Stream Sect territory. Being in no hurry, he made his way slowly and cautiously through the Blood Continent.

As he did, he chatted some more with the soul of imposter Nightcrypt, and learned a lot more about the Blood Stream Sect. For one thing, the law of the jungle truly prevailed; disciples were actually encouraged to fight amongst each other.

It was the same outside of the sect, too. The entire Blood Continent was a violent and deadly place.

For Bai Xiaochun to return to the Blood Stream Sect as Nightcrypt would be very simple. According to what imposter Nightcrypt told him, of the disciples of the sect who were teleported out of the Fallen Sword World to random locations on the Blood Continent, some would have returned directly to the sect, but others would have holed up to recover from their injuries before going back.

After all, returning to the sect in an injured state would likely be more dangerous than just staying outside.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, even more fear rose up in his heart. The Blood Stream Sect seemed like a truly terrifying place. However, the enticement of the relic of eternal indestructibility, as well as the safety provided by the mask, ensured that he simply gritted his teeth and continued on with his plan.

As he traveled, he took in the sights on the Blood Continent. Everything was a reddish brown color, as though it had been stained with blood. Not even imposter Nightcrypt was sure why that was. Apparently, it had always looked like that.

Even the plants were very aggressive in nature. Bai Xiaochun encountered quite a few such aggressive plants along the way. Some of them he simply destroyed, others he fled from.

It took two months before he actually reached the Blood Stream Sect itself. Much like the Spirit Stream Sect, the Blood Stream Sect was located right on the Heavenspan River.

Although imposter Nightcrypt had explained what the sect looked like, now that Bai Xiaochun could actually see it with his own eyes, his jaw dropped, and he even began to tremble.

He was completely and utterly shaken.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s Mount Daoseed stretched across the entire river like a bridge, connecting the seven mountain peaks of the south and north banks. The Blood Stream Sect was very different.

Shockingly, it took the shape of an enormous, blood-colored hand!

The gargantuan blood hand stretched right up out of the Heavenspan River, palm down, as if it were clawing up toward the heavens. The size of it was difficult to describe with words; the five fingers of the hand were like enormous mountain peaks, each one of them roughly the same size as Mount Daoseed.

As for the rugged thumb, it was surrounded by a blood mist that made it impossible to see clearly.

It was impossible to say how long the hand had existed, its dusty, rubble-strewn surface battered by the winds. Close up, it was only possible to see the five enormous mountain peaks stretching up.

However, from a distance, it was also possible to see that beneath the hand was a shocking, blood-colored arm!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were as wide as saucers. Anyone who saw a sight like this would likely come to the conclusion that some shocking giant existed within the Heavenspan River, a giant who, in the moments before its death, reached up begrudgingly to try to rip apart the heavens.

And yet, even as it had done so, its arm solidified, and never moved again. As long as the hand remained, a towering mountain peak, then the will of that giant would remain.

The mountain peaks were covered with blood-colored vegetation, as well as numerous buildings. Beams of light could be seen flying back and forth; clearly, the mountain peaks were home to countless individuals, whose murderous auras caused the sky above to darken.

This was the home of the Blood Stream Sect!

“The Blood Stream Sect!” Bai Xiaochun said, taking a deep breath. “So powerful!” Seeing it all with his own eyes only further impressed upon him the power and resources at the disposal of the Blood Stream Sect.

“No wonder the Blood Stream Sect people are so brutal. Their sect is actually built on the arm of a corpse! In fact, imposter Nightcrypt even said that the Blood Stream Sect techniques are almost all derived from the arm itself!” Bai Xiaochun’s mind reeled as he got closer to the enormous arm. As he neared, he could see that the mountain peaks even had waterfalls of blood streaming down from various locations.

Closer examination revealed that the hand apparently absorbed water from the Heavenspan River, which then seeped out of various cracks and crevices within the arm. As it did, the golden water was transformed into a bright red color.

That red liquid was also a fundamental element of the cultivation of the Blood Stream Sect.

“Spirit blood!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his heart thumping. He immediately thought back to the first introduction imposter Nightcrypt had given him regarding the Blood Stream Sect.

The Blood Stream Sect was structured in a way similar to the Spirit Stream Sect. However, there were also some fundamental differences. They had servants, Outer Sect disciples, and Inner Sect disciples. However, instead of legacy echelon cultivators, the Blood Stream Sect had blood masters.

Generally speaking, the sect rankings were very strictly enforced. Servants weren’t allowed onto the upper forearm; they lived on lower forearm, which was considered to be outside of the Blood Stream Sect itself.

That was where the population was greatest, and the area was packed tightly with buildings that were organized in concentric rings.

Only Outer Sect disciples could leave that area and step onto the upper forearm, and only Inner Sect disciples qualified to live on the back of the hand itself.

With the exception of the thumb, the mountain peaks that were the fingers of the hand were divided into the lower finger and the upper finger. The lower finger was occupied by Foundation Establishment cultivators. Those in the Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment stage were called Dharma protectors, and those in the Earthstring Foundation Establishment stage were the elders.

Only one person qualified to live on the upper finger, and that was the grand elder of that peak. Grand elders were the equivalent of the Spirit Stream Sect’s peak lords. Of course, considering that there were fewer mountain peaks than in the Spirit Stream Sect, it was a position reserved for only the most extraordinary of individuals.

After the upper finger was the fingertip. From the moment the Blood Stream Sect had been founded in ancient times, each mountain peak had a blood master. That was the only person who qualified to occupy the finger tip.

The blood masters were the focus of the entire sect, and were among the most powerful people in the entire sect, excluding certain people who resided on the thumb. They were as powerful as the sect leader, and qualified to give orders to the elders of the mountain peaks.

All Blood Stream Sect disciples dreamed of becoming the blood master of a mountain peak. Each successive generation only had one blood master per mountain peak at any given time.

The thumb was the only place with no blood master. The blood mist which surrounded it ensured that it was a restricted area. That was where the Blood Stream Sect's patriarchs and prime elders resided. Only people in the Gold Core stage could go there.

When a blood master advanced to the Gold Core stage, he or she would become a blood ripper, and move to the enormous thumb. The blood rippers occupied a position higher than prime elders, with power second only to the patriarchs.

The lowest position on the thumb was occupied by the sect leader, who was responsible for the general administration of the sect.

As he got closer and closer to the Blood Stream Sect, Bai Xiaochun once again reviewed the information he knew.

"Five mountain peaks. The thumb is called Ancestor Peak! The first finger is called Corpse Peak, the middle finger is Middle Peak, the ring finger was called Nameless Peak, and the smallest finger, the pinky finger, is called Lesser Marsh Peak! [1. A quick note about the names, because there is some minor word play involved. The word for corpse sounds similar to the word describing the index finger. Both are pronounced “shi.” In Chinese, the ring finger is called the “nameless finger,” so I chose to keep the Chinese version of that name for the mountain. The “Lesser Marsh” is an acupuncture point on the tip of the pinky finger. As far as the thumb and “Ancestor” goes, I don’t think there is any wordplay, although the word ‘ancestor’ does sort of rhyme with the character for ‘thumb’]

“Corpse Peak is known for refining corpses, Middle Peak focuses on blood swords, Nameless Peak is famous for gargoyles, and Lesser Marsh Peak is devoted to devilblood body refinement!”

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but recall the Blood Stream Sect disciples he'd encountered in the Fallen Sword World. He had seen them control the vicious gargoyles. Xu Xiaoshan had worked with various corpses, and Song Que had fought him with a blood sword. He had even seen some of the devilblood body refinement of disciples who were obviously from Lesser Marsh Peak.

As of this moment, the Blood Stream Sect had already left a deep impression on Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

However, what happened next left him completely and utterly shaken. As he neared the enormous hand, he stepped past a certain point, and his face flickered as his Undying Live Forever Technique suddenly stirred with intense desire.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun could sense that the enormous hand was somehow calling out to him!

That summoning seemed unprecedentedly intimate!

“How is this possible?!” he thought, his mind reeling. As of this moment, all of his hesitation and anxiety vanished, and an extremely familiar sensation filled his mind and heart.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0184 awe-chapter-185

It took some time for Bai Xiaochun to calm himself down. After he did, he continued on toward the sect itself. Soon, beams of light could be seen flying around near him, all of them Blood Stream Sect disciples, as well as Foundation Establishment elders and Dharma protectors.

The Foundation Establishment cultivators all radiated powerful murderous auras, and flew with incredible speed. They seemed domineering, rude, and completely headstrong. Everywhere they went, the Inner Sect disciples bowed their heads and clasped hands respectfully, not daring to show the least bit of disrespect.

One Foundation Establishment cultivator apparently thought Bai Xiaochun was in his way, so he waved his sleeve, sending a powerful gust of wind against him. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun was very quick on the uptake, and immediately pretended to be blasted off to the side. He even managed to cause some blood to ooze out of the corners of his mouth.

The Foundation Establishment cultivator completely ignored him as he passed on by.

Other Inner Sect disciples in the area barely seemed to notice. Further down on the arm, where the servants lived, the servants would occasionally look up into the air at the Inner Sect disciples and Foundation Establishment cultivators, their expressions those of complete awe.

“So overbearing!” Bai Xiaochun thought. At first, it didn’t seem possible that the entire sect could be this way, but he quickly reminded himself that he was in the Blood Stream Sect, and flew along toward the hand itself.

As he neared, he saw a shimmering, blood-colored light that was clearly a spell formation. When he passed through it, it flickered, but did nothing to block his way. A moment later, he was inside the spell formation and on the hand.

“Passed the first test!” he thought, taking a deep breath. The light he had just passed through was the Blood Stream Sect’s defensive spell formation, which would immediately detect anyone who wasn’t a disciple of the sect.

The back of the hand was huge. Bai Xiaochun quickly realized that it was actually about as large as the south and north banks of the Spirit Stream Sect put together. That only served to further his understanding of how powerful the Blood Stream Sect was.

Only Inner Sect disciples were allowed onto the back of the hand. Outer Sect disciples could not enter without an authentication device. If they tried to, they would be severely punished. The lightest punishment for such an offense was a flogging, with more serious violators having a limb severed. The punishments were brutal, but that was how the twisted Blood Stream Sect operated. The differences between the levels were strictly enforced.

Bai Xiaochun had been nervous at first, but after reaching the hand itself, and feeling the intimate connection between it and his Undying Live Forever Technique, he felt increasingly shaken.

“How could this be possible...?” He still almost couldn’t believe what he was feeling. However, he soon had to acknowledge a shocking truth.

“This hand cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique!!” More precisely, beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River was a giant who had indeed cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique!

Clearly, that giant had reached an extremely high level, which meant that the skin on the hand and arm was actually Undying Skin!

From the cracks and crevices that now existed in that Undying Skin, it was possible to see what appeared to be soil, which was the giant’s Undying Flesh. Even further down, in a location it was not possible to see, were the bones, which were Undying Bones!

However, what was most shocking to Bai Xiaochun was that the blood waterfalls which poured down from the five mountain peaks represented the highest realm of the Undying Codex, Undying Blood!

“Heavens! The Blood Stream Sect is built on the arm of a giant who cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique! Furthermore, the techniques they cultivate were obviously passed down by the earliest members of the Blood Stream Sect, and were based on the arm itself. That means that their techniques all stem from the same Undying Live Forever Technique that I cultivate!!”

Based on what he knew, the first volume of the Undying Live Forever Technique was not very rare. Many sects had it. However, because it was so difficult to cultivate, few people ever succeeded with the Undying Gold Skin.

Fewer people, if any, could have gone beyond that to accomplish what Bai Xiaochun had in breaking the first shackle of mortality. In fact, it was highly likely that nobody in the entire Blood Stream Sect actually knew about the relationship between the blood hand and the Undying Live Forever Technique.

Bai Xiaochun felt completely confident that only someone who had Undying Gold Skin and had also broken through the first shackle of mortality would be able to sense the call of the hand.

He knew that his conjectures might not be completely accurate, but he was confident that as he came to understand more about the Blood Stream Sect, he would be able to get answers to his questions, perhaps even first-hand verification.

“No wonder the blood sphere that Song Que used in the Fallen Sword World felt so familiar....” The reason why the exploding blood sphere Song Que had used against him felt so familiar was because it was actually made from Undying Blood. It was only after reaching Foundation Establishment that Song Que had been able to forcibly unleash that special magic of the Blood Stream Sect.

“That’s also why all of the Blood Stream Sect disciples in general seemed so familiar. Now it all makes sense....” Mind reeling with shock, he followed imposter Nightcrypt’s instructions, going to the Internal Affairs Bureau to get an identity jade pendant, and record his return to the Blood Stream Sect. As he approached, a beam of light shot toward him, which transformed into an old man.

He had a Foundation Establishment cultivation base, and when he looked Bai Xiaochun up and down with cold eyes, Bai Xiaochun immediately got nervous. Clasping hands respectfully, he quickly inquired of imposter Nightcrypt, and learned that this old man was the elder in charge of the Internal Affairs Bureau.

“Disciple Nightcrypt offers greetings, Elder Han!”

“What took you so long to get back!?” Elder Han asked coolly.

“Disciple was seriously injured,” he replied cautiously. “I found a place to hole up and recuperate, and only just recently felt up to returning.” After a moment of thought, he slapped his bag of holding and produced a rather large collection of spirit stones, which he placed in front of Elder Han.

“Elder Han, I got these in the Fallen Sword World. Please, take them. I hope you can be a bit flexible with me for returning late....” Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times.

Elder Han’s eyes went wide, but a moment later he waved his sleeve, and the spirit stones disappeared. Looking at Bai Xiaochun again for a moment, he nodded.

“A few of you took your time coming back. Well, now that you’re here, focus on your cultivation. You’ll get another chance to reach Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, eventually. Very well, be off now.”

Bai Xiaochun immediately took his leave. Elder Han watched him leave, musing to himself that this Nightcrypt seemed to have learned a thing or two in the Fallen Sword Abyss.

“Alright, since he’s gotten a bit smarter, I won’t make things harder for him. He really should receive ten lashes for coming back late!” Turning, Elder Han vanished.

Imposter Nightcrypt was also taken aback. The way Bai Xiaochun so casually bribed Elder Han caused him to gasp. All of a sudden, he realized that Bai Xiaochun seemed very well suited to life in the Blood Stream Sect.

Bai Xiaochun walked along in the sect, marveling at everything he saw around him. Unfortunately, everyone was very cold and indifferent, and stuck to themselves as they hurried along. Many had vigilant looks on their faces, as if they were always on guard.

On four or five occasions along the way, he saw two disciples engaged in fierce fighting, apparently struggling over medicinal pills. Murderous auras raged as they seemed intent on taking each others' lives.

Audiences often gathered to watch such conflicts, but everyone also kept an eye out in case someone attacked them.

He saw one person coughing up blood so badly it seemed shattered internal organs might come out.

"The Spirit Stream Sect really is way better than this," Bai Xiaochun thought. "Everyone gets along there. It's so wonderful. The Blood Stream Sect is so dangerous! One slip of the tongue and you might get attacked...."

He walked along feeling very nervous. Thankfully, Nightcrypt wasn't very well-known in the sect, and his cultivation base was only in the great circle of the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Nobody took the initiative to attack him, a trend he encouraged by looking as fierce as possible.

Just as he was almost at Nightcrypt's immortal's cave, he passed a group of five female disciples. One of them, a tough-looking big-boned girl, caught sight of him and then hurried over, accompanied by the giggling of her companions.

"Nightcrypt!" the girl said in a loud, hoarse voice.

Bai Xiaochun turned in shock to look at the unfamiliar young woman. She was stocky, with a pockmarked face, and was walking toward him with swaying hips, and eyes that gleamed with what appeared to be deep desire.

“Do I know you?” Bai Xiaochun asked.

“You naughty devil!” she said, glaring. “Don't pretend you don’t know who I am! Come here and give me a smile!” Chuckling, she reached out and stroked Bai Xiaochun’s cheek.

Her action and her chuckle caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp and take a step back.

“Well well,” the girl continued, “a little trip to the Fallen Sword Abyss and you already forgot about me? Hurry up and get back to my immortal's cave. I have plenty of medicinal pills for you.” The stocky girl licked her lips and took a step forward as if she planned to drag him to her immortal's cave.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. Flicking his sleeve, he blocked her path.

“Don’t you touch me!” he cried.

“I see how it is, Nightcrypt. How dare you! Hpmh. Just wait and see what happens when you come crawling back to me!” Giving him an angry glare, she turned and stalked off.

Bai Xiaochun finally breathed a sigh of relief, simultaneously asking imposter Nightcrypt who the girl was.

“Senior, please don’t be angry,” was the hasty reply. “She’s just a girlfriend of mine in the sect....”

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn't believe it. “Girlfriend? Uh, you have really strange taste.”

Nightcrypt was actually very good-looking, albeit somewhat cold. Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe that he would be in a relationship with the husky girl.

“Senior, there’s something I never mentioned,” imposter Nightcrypt said, sounding like he was about to cry. “After I became an Inner Sect disciple, my cultivation went really slowly, and I needed a lot of medicinal pills. I really had no other choice. Elder Sister Sun is from one of the cultivator clans, and has access to lots of pills. I didn't have any other option than to get on her good side....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0185 awe-chapter-186

Bai Xiaochun sighed, both sympathizing with Nightcrypt and admiring his readiness to give and take.

“No wonder he became a spy. He’s really quite extraordinary.” Even just thinking about that girl’s face left him sighing.

Before long, he was in Nightcrypt’s immortal's cave, which was located alongside several other Inner Sect disciples’ immortal's caves. It was a simple cave, which led Bai Xiaochun to understand even more clearly how rough a life Nightcrypt had in the sect.

It was only about ten percent as large as Bai Xiaochun’s cave in the Spirit Stream Sect, and didn’t even have an antechamber, let alone a lake or a pill concocting workstation. It was nothing more than a stone chamber with a bed and a meditation mat.

“How did he survive such misery?!” he thought. Shaking his head, he sat down cross-legged to meditate. Outside, the sun was setting. Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, the sect would begin to quiet down at around this time, as disciples settled down to rest for the night.

But the Blood Stream Sect was different. As evening fell, Bai Xiaochun could hear screams echoing out in the air. Apparently, disciples took advantage of the darkness to fight each other with renewed vigor.

According to sect rules, disciples weren’t supposed to kill each other, but other than that, anything was permitted. As such, the darkness of night was when the true brutality of the sect shone through.

Bai Xiaochun was having a hard time adjusting to an environment that was so different from the Spirit Stream Sect. Taking a deep breath, he refrained from stepping outside, and even carefully set up some traps at the entrance of the immortal's cave. Only then did he settle down cross-legged again to ponder his next step.

On the way to the Blood Stream Sect, he'd made more inquiries of imposter Nightcrypt, and came to learn that the relic of eternal indestructibility was located on the middle finger of the huge hand, which was called Middle Peak.

The upper finger of Middle Peak was where the grand elder resided, and was a place forbidden to Inner Sect disciples. After all, all four of the mountain peaks were set aside for Foundation Establishment experts only.

Inner Sect disciples like Nightcrypt were restricted to the area on the back of the hand.

As for the upper finger area, it couldn't even be accessed by the ordinary elders and Dharma protectors.

That was one reason why imposter Nightcrypt had never been able to even get close to the relic, and also why he wanted to reach Foundation Establishment. Only then would he be able to pick one of the four mountain peaks to reside upon.

"Foundation Establishment is the first step," Bai Xiaochun thought. "I'll pick Middle Peak and then proceed to step two, which is becoming a Dharma protector. It's too bad I can only pretend to be at Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment.

Reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment would be too much of a stretch. Otherwise I could become an elder.

“After becoming a Dharma protector, I need to become the grand elder. That’s step three, and also the final step. At that point I’ll be able to get access to the relic of eternal indestructibility, which is beneath the immortal's cave of Middle Peak’s grand elder.” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He knew that reaching his goals was going to take some time. To rise up from being an ordinary Inner Sect disciple all the way to the position of Middle Peak grand elder would be a long path to walk. However, there was nothing impossible about it.

Having set his goals firmly in mind, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and began to practice cultivation. Ignoring the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation for the time being, he focused on the Undying Live Forever Technique’s volume of the Undying Heavenly King.

He was very curious to see if cultivating the technique here would be any different than doing so in the Spirit Stream Sect.

The instant he unleashed the Undying Heavenly King, his body shivered. Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, practicing the Undying Heavenly King led to a terrifying wastage of vital energy. Without precious materials and a vast supply of medicinal pills on hand, it was almost impossible.

But when he cultivated it here, blood qi rose up from the ground and poured into his body, rapidly replenishing his vital energy and enabling him to cultivate the technique even more quickly.

The next day, a tremor ran through him, along with a pulsing sensation. He could already tell that he was stronger than before.

His eyes snapped open, and they shone with delight.

“This place is like a paradise!” He ran his hand along the ground, which was like running it along the Undying Skin of the giant. His heart swelled with excitement.

“The Undying Live Forever Technique really is extraordinary. This giant didn’t cultivate it to the absolute peak, which was why he died. Even after dying, though, his fleshly body has remained behind for countless years after his death. It didn’t rot or anything, and actually ended up becoming the foundation of a sect.

“That just goes to show you how incredible the Undying Live Forever Technique is!” With that, he continued his cultivation.

Time passed. Four days went by, in which Bai Xiaochun would go out when it was light to familiarize himself with the Blood Stream Sect. As he did, he would get more information from imposter Nightcrypt, and began to commit the faces of the Inner Sect disciples to memory.

He also worked on his own facial expression, getting it to look more and more ferocious. Soon he realized that emanating a murderous aura required a bit of talent, which he immediately began to work on. He also rehearsed his laugh until it sounded far more sinister and terrifying than before.

However, Nightcrypt had already progressed as high as an Inner Sect disciple could go, and was only a step away from Foundation Establishment. As far as most people were concerned, he was almost as powerful as a Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator, and was someone none of the other Inner Sect disciples would dare to provoke.

Days passed, and no incidents occurred.

One day, Bai Xiaochun was cultivating the Undying Heavenly King in his immortal's cave, when his expression suddenly flickered. Looking up, he put on the most ferocious and sinister look he was capable of. Eyes shining with piercing light, he looked out of the entrance of the immortal's cave.

Before long, a voice could be heard outside.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, it’s me, Zhao Wuchang. Please come out for a moment.”

Bai Xiaochun immediately asked imposter Nightcrypt about Zhao Wuchang, and learned that he was one of the other disciples who had gone to the Fallen Sword World. Continuing to look as cold and sinister as possible, he emerged from the immortal's cave radiating a murderous aura. A few meters away from the entrance was a middle-aged man.

“What do you want?” Bai Xiaochun said coolly. He vaguely remembered Zhao Wuchang as being one of a group of Blood Stream Sect disciples who had ambushed him, then had been scared off after he started killing them.

Zhao Wuchang’s face was deathly pale, and at the same time, fierce and sinister. He very much resembled a wolf that was ready to pounce at any moment. He looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, then gave a perfunctory smile and said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, I trust you've been well since the last time we saw each other.

“I'm not here for anything particularly important. Those of us who failed in the Fallen Sword World are getting together to exchange information and discuss how to reach Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Since you’re back too, Junior Brother Nightcrypt, I figured I might as well invite you to come as well.” Zhao Wuchang, as well as everyone else who had failed in the Fallen Sword Word, were all in a very awkward position. They were stuck between the Inner Sect and Foundation Establishment, and had no hope of reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment. As such, they were left with no other option than to pursue Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment.

Unfortunately, Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment required a Foundation Establishment Pill, and to get a pill like that in the Blood Stream Sect required a disciple to pay a bitter price. Therefore, the survivors of the Fallen Sword World had formed an alliance, and Zhao Wuchang had come here with the express purpose of asking Nightcrypt to join them.

“Oh really?” Bai Xiaochun replied. After a moment of thought, he nodded. Getting into this group would get him access to more information, which would surely be of help in the days to come.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had agreed, Zhao Wuchang laughed, and then led him through the sect to the location of the gathering. As they walked along, he looked over occasionally at Bai Xiaochun, and mused that this Nightcrypt seemed quite different from the Nightcrypt he remembered. His murderous aura was more powerful, and the sinister look in his eyes even more profound.

“Nightcrypt might not have succeeded with Earthstring Foundation Establishment,” Zhao Wuchang thought, “but escaping Bai Xiaochun alive was no easy task.” Although they kept a healthy distance between them as they walked along, they chatted a bit about some random matters.

When they were about halfway to the gathering, all of a sudden, the sky began to rumble as if with thunder!

A blood-colored mist pulsed out into the area, surging like waves on the ocean. Up above, several Foundation Establishment cultivators who had been flying past stopped in place and cleared a path, expressions of respect on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun looked up in shock. Not too far off in the distance, within the blood mist, a blood-colored palanquin appeared. It was fully thirty meters tall, and was surrounded by a host of vengeful spirits who emitted soundless screams.

Carrying the palanquin on their shoulders were eight three-meter-tall gargoyle-like ghosts who emanated black mist. Their skin was green, and they radiated fluctuations similar to a Foundation Establishment cultivator, along with sinister coldness.

On either side of the blood palanquin were rows of palace maids wearing blood-colored gowns. They were beautiful, but completely expressionless, and carried burning lanterns in their beautiful hands. They almost seemed to be clearing a path for the blood palanquin as it made its way through the mists.

It was really an astonishing sight.

Even Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken, and his immediate reaction was to assume that a patriarch was coming. However, he quickly realized that seated inside of the blood palanquin was a young woman.

She wore a crimson gown, and her long hair rustled in the breeze. It was impossible to see her face because she wore a blood-colored mask, which was decorated with a plum blossom!

Her chin rested on her hand as she gazed off into the distance.

As for her cultivation base, it was in the Foundation Establishment stage, and the pressure from the spiritual power that emanated off of her contained traces of multiple Tideflows, which caused the blood mist to seethe and churn.

That meant that this young woman had reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide with envy. He hadn’t been able to go around in such style in the Spirit Stream Sect! The fact that Blood Stream Sect Foundation Establishment cultivators got such treatment left him gasping.

When Zhao Wuchang saw Bai Xiaochun staring at the blood palanquin, his heart flip-flopped.

“Hey! Do you have a death wish?” he whispered. “Bow your head! If you’re not careful, Young Lady Xuemei will dig your eyes out!! She reached nine Tideflows in the Lone Hell Pocket Realm!”

If he wasn’t interested in Bai Xiaochun joining his alliance, he would never have said anything.

“Young Lady Xuemeii?” Bai Xiaochun suddenly recalled Xu Baocai mentioning a Chosen from the Blood Stream Sect with that very name. Bowing his head, he looked around to see all the other Inner Sect disciples in the area doing the same.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0186 awe-chapter-187

“A trifling Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivator gets to be called Young Lady? I'm a Heavenstring Foundation Establishment cultivator, and I don't get to be called Young Lord in the Spirit Stream Sect!” Irritated and envious, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the moment to ask imposter Nightcrypt what he knew about Xuemei.

Imposter Nightcrypt was trembling in fear because of Xuemei, but once he heard Bai Xiaochun’s question, he immediately launched into an explanation.

“Young Lady Xuemei has a very impressive background. She’s the only daughter of the most recently promoted of the Blood Stream Sect’s eight patriarchs, Patriarch Limitless. She has shocking latent talent, and is even more famous than Song Que!

“When she was in Qi Condensation, she spent most of her time cultivating on Ancestor Peak, and rarely came outside. She must be out and about in the sect now because she's reached Foundation Establishment.

“Patriarch Limitless originally came from Middle Peak, so word has it that Young Lady Xuemei was always supposed to be an elder there. Presumably, she’s going to try to fight for the position of Middle Peak blood master!”

Bai Xiaochun was already struck somewhat speechless by what he was being told.

“In every generation,” imposter Nightcrypt continued, “the Blood Stream Sect has four blood masters, one for each mountain peak. The fighting over the position on the other three peaks has already ended, but the position on Middle Peak is still open. Now that Young Lady Xuemei has reached Foundation Establishment, her next step will be to vie with the Middle Peak grand elder to take the status of blood master.

“If Song Que had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, he would have qualified for the position, but since he's only at the Earthstring level, the Song Clan won't let him go up against his aunt.”

“His aunt?” Bai Xiaochun asked, shocked.

“Yeah,” replied imposter Nightcrypt. “Middle Peak Grand Elder Song Junwan is Song Que’s aunt!” Suddenly, his tone turned even more enigmatic than before. “Senior Bai, since we're talking about blood masters, there’s a secret I need to tell you. Did you know that there’s a position even higher than blood master? Well, of course there’s the blood ripper level, but there’s something even higher than that. I’m pretty sure it’s even above the patriarch level. Have you heard of it?”

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but be intrigued by the imposter Nightcrypt’s mysterious tone of voice. “What is it?” he asked.

Imposter Nightcrypt cleared his throat and then proudly went on to say, “According to the legends, above the patriarch level is the Blood Devil!”

“Blood Devil?” Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound. It was a title that seemed completely domineering. Even just hearing it mentioned caused his skin to crawl, almost as if he had seen a real devil.

“Hmph. See how powerful the Blood Stream Sect is? Let me tell you, anyone who can get a blood crystal from one of the mountain peaks of the Blood Stream Sect can become a blood master. The exception is Ancestor Peak, of course. As for the blood crystals, they come from the body of the Blood Ancestor, in the Heavenspan River, whose holy hand serves as the foundation of the entire sect!

“According to the legend, the body of the Blood Ancestor doesn’t just contain blood crystals, it also contains a secret legacy!

“Whoever takes that legacy will become the Blood Devil, and will lead the Blood Stream Sect into founding a new legend!

“Of course, it’s just a legend. Don’t take it too seriously. A lot of people in the sect think it’s just a story.” Imposter Nightcrypt sighed.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his heart thumped with excitement. Most other people might think that the legend was nothing more than a story, but he didn’t believe that. As far as he was concerned, it was entirely likely that the giant Blood Ancestor beneath the Heavenspan River might have an extraordinary legacy waiting to be taken.

By this point, the blood palanquin had made its way off into the distance in the direction of Ancestor Peak. The Foundation Establishment cultivators gradually dispersed, and everyone down on the ground breathed sighs of relief.

Zhao Wuchang’s eyes glittered with envy.

“You’ve really got guts,” he said. “It’s a good thing Young Lady Xuemei didn’t see you looking at her. She definitely would have dug your eyes out if she had, and maybe even beaten you to death.”

“So overbearing!” Bai Xiaochun said with a nod. Inwardly, he couldn’t help but feel a bit of disdain, but he didn’t let it show on his face. With that, Zhao Wuchang led the way to the meeting.

Near the border of the back of the hand was an immortal's cave belonging to a disciple who had gone to the Lone Hell Pocket Realm but failed to gather enough earthstring energy to form even a single Tideflow.

Although he had failed, his cultivation base had improved some, and he ended up being known as one of the top disciples among those who had failed.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun entered the immortal's cave, he saw a dozen or so other disciples in the great circle of Qi Condensation, all of them angrily complaining to each other.

“If ever get a chance, I'm definitely going to kill that Lin Mu from the Pill Stream Sect. The only reason I failed was because he took so much earthstring energy!”

“ Lin Mu really is vicious. I heard that, to advance his cultivation, he actually planted Dao seeds in other Pill Stream Sect disciples. He brought a whole generation of disciples to ruin for his own benefit!”

“Lin Mu might be bad, and Shui Fang from the Profound Stream Sect is pretty vicious, but they’re basically ants compared to the most infuriating person of all. Bai Xiaochun from the Fallen Sword Abyss!!”

“That Bai Xiaochun is a true devil. He’s fiercer than anyone in the Blood Stream Sect! Only a few people came back alive from the Fallen Sword Abyss. Can the other two Holy Lands compare to that?!"

"I heard that Bai Xiaochun cuts people down as casually as scything wheat! He's so overbearing he even drinks their blood after he kills them! All he has to do is bump you, and you explode!"

When Bai Xiaochun walked in to hear people talking about him, his heart thumped, but after reminding himself that he was there as Nightcrypt, he calmed himself and joined the group.

The other disciples nodded in greeting, and continued to tell stories about Bai Xiaochun.

"Bai Xiaochun is my mortal enemy for life!" Zhao Wuchang said, clenching his hands into fists so hard that veins popped out on them. Even as he gritted his teeth in anger, lingering fear could be seen in his eyes.

"Don't worry, Elder Brother Zhao," one of the disciples said comfortingly. "I heard the sect leader has already put an official bounty out on Bai Xiaochun. Whoever brings in his head will be rewarded with a precious treasure, and will also get a Gold Core fruit!" The other disciples seemed excited at the prospect, but Bai Xiaochun's eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound even harder.

"Gold Core fruit?" he thought. "That can significantly increase the chances of reaching Core Formation! This Blood Stream Sect is too vicious!!"

Even as he gasped inwardly, another of the Blood Stream Sect disciples chuckled coldly and said, "That's nothing. A few days ago I heard that the three great blood masters were dispatched to hunt down Bai Xiaochun. If he dares to step out of the Spirit Stream Sect, he’ll be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

Even as everyone in the immortal's cave was grinding their teeth and cursing, people realized that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t said anything. Zhao Wuchang looked over in surprise.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, why haven’t you chimed in? You almost got killed by Bai Xiaochun. What do you think about him?” Everyone turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had been trembling inwardly with fear, but as soon as he heard Zhao Wuchang address him, he stuck his chest out and smacked it with his palm. Expression fierce to the extreme, and eyes completely bloodshot, he said, “I’ll tell you how things stand between me and Bai Xiaochun. In the end, either he’ll be dead, or I will! Don’t even talk about Bai Xiaochun in front of me! My entire purpose in life is to put him to an untimely end!”

He then continued to express his determination to kill Bai Xiaochun, his wording growing more and more vicious. The other disciples started to nod, and some of them, including Zhao Wuchang, felt like he was expressing their sentiments perfectly.

The conversation continued, and soon the topic changed, whereupon Bai Xiaochun breathed an inward sigh of relief. The Blood Stream Sect really was proving to be a dangerous place, and he had already begun to miss the Spirit Stream Sect.

At one point, there was a lull in the conversation, whereupon the owner of the immortal's cave, the most powerful of the disciples present, looked around and then said, “There’s something important I need to tell you all. I've made some inquiries, and learned that the sect has already decided what to do with those of us who failed in the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands. Apparently, they’re going to give us another chance!”

Instantly, the other disciples looked at him with serious expressions.

“Assuming it's a chance to reach Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment,” he continued, “then that means we would need a Foundation Establishment Pill. Most likely, this opportunity will come in the form of a trial by fire in which we compete for that pill!

“I was also told that not everyone will get a chance to participate in the trial by fire. Before it starts, we will be given missions by the sect, and only those who complete their mission will be qualified to join the competition.”

Bai Xiaochun blinked, and then pretended to look both thoughtful and sinister at the same time.

The owner of the immortal's cave looked around at everyone, eyes flashing, then continued, “Friends, don't forget that we aren’t the only ones who failed in the Holy Lands. There are some loners out there who refused to join our team. We need to join forces to eliminate them, and make sure that one of us gets the Foundation Establishment Pill!”

It was impossible to say what people were actually thinking, but on the surface, everyone seemed to support the idea. After voicing their assent, they chatted some more about sect news before dispersing.

Bai Xiaochun walked along through the sect, the sky above him slowly growing dark. As he thought about the matter of the trial by fire, he realized that he should try to figure out a way to prevent the others from successfully reaching Foundation Establishment. For all intents and purposes, the Blood Stream Sect was the enemy of the Spirit Stream Sect.

As he strolled along thinking, his eyes suddenly flashed, and he spun around, right hand shooting out to grab a person who had been walking behind him. That person hadn’t anticipated that he would be so quick, and failed to evade his hand. However, what Bai Xiaochun ended up grabbing was that person's chest.

“You naughty devil! What, you want to do it right here?” It was a middle-aged woman, her face crisscrossed with scars. One of the scars even ran from the top of her forehead all the way through both of her lips. Standing there with the moonlight spilling down onto her, she almost looked like a poltergeist.

Her cultivation base was in the tenth level of Qi Condensation, and a flirtatious look could be seen in her eyes.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock, and then quickly pulled his hand back.

“Well, that’s fine,” the woman said. “If you want things like that, I'll follow your lead....” She cocked her eyebrow coquettishly, and was just about to remove her garments when Bai Xiaochun fled in the opposite direction.

“Dammit, Nightcrypt,” he said, “how many girlfriends do you have in this sect!?” The woman called out for him to come back, but Bai Xiaochun didn’t even stop running.

“I'm not really sure,” imposter Nightcrypt replied in a fearful tone. “Surviving in the Blood Stream Sect isn’t an easy thing. Over the years, I hooked up with anyone who could give me medicinal pills....”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went blank.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0187 awe-chapter-188

Back in his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun sat there scowling and sighing. He wasn’t sure exactly what to think about imposter Nightcrypt. On the one hand, he felt a bit sorry for him. However, having taken over his identity, he had to deal with the possibility that he might have some sort of relationship with any female disciples he ran into. If they were pretty, he might even think about acknowledging their affections.

Unfortunately, none of the female disciples who would willingly hand medicinal pills over to Nightcrypt were very good-looking at all.

“It’s a good thing nobody knows who I really am. Otherwise my true reputation might be irreparably stained.” Sighing, he decided that in the future, he would do his best to stay indoors.

With that, he began to practice cultivation. Normally speaking, he wouldn't work so hard at cultivation, but the benefits of working with the Undying Heavenly King in this place were too good to not take advantage of. He knew that he had an unprecedented opportunity here, and it couldn’t be abandoned.

After some thought, he even tried to use the Undying Live Forever Technique to produce a drop of true Undying Blood. Unfortunately, Undying Blood came from the final volume, and at this point, all he could do was absorb blood qi from the area. It was impossible to form it into Undying Blood at this point.

Even still, he was very excited at the prospects laid out in front of him. He also surreptitiously cultivated the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, continuing to melt the Heavenspan River water that was in his spiritual sea.

His true cultivation base was making constant progress. Furthermore, his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, which was hidden by the powers of the mask, was also becoming more powerful.

What he anticipated most, though, was the Mountain Shaking Bash.

“After reaching the power of ten mammoths, I can form the Berserk Ghost Body. Then I’ll have completed the first level of the Undying Heavenly King!” As he continued to work with the Undying Heavenly King volume and absorb blood qi, he felt his power growing, and it filled his heart with anticipation.

“In a few days, I should have the power of two of those primeval mammoths. I'm already getting close to the power of ten! And I'm only on the back of the hand. Once I get onto one of the fingers, I should progress even more quickly!” In his excitement, he thought about how the five mountain peaks of the Blood Stream Sect all had blood waterfalls. Presumably, if he practiced cultivation near a blood waterfall, his progress would be incredible.

Sighing, he couldn’t stop thinking about how the Blood Stream Sect really was his own personal Holy Land.

He hadn’t abandoned his work with protomagnetic power and the Human Controlling Grand Magic. Although he hadn’t performed any experiments recently, he had spent a lot of time thinking about and analyzing the subject.

A month flew by.

During that time, he never left his immortal's cave. However, he was able to observe the area outside, and frequently saw Blood Stream Sect disciples fighting each other. At one point, he even saw a disciple get killed not too far away from his immortal's cave.

If that had happened in the Spirit Stream Sect, it would have been a huge deal. But in the Blood Stream Sect, it didn’t cause much of a commotion. However, he did hear from someone passing by that the person who had killed the other disciple had been summarily executed. After all, the Blood Stream Sect allowed fighting, but not killing, and they strictly enforced their rules. Anyone who crossed the line would meet a brutal end.

“It’s like they’re raising scorpions....” Bai Xiaochun thought. Although the Blood Stream Sect seemed chaotic and without rules, the truth was that there was an order to it.

A few more days passed, and word was passed down that an arrangement had been made for those who failed in the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands. Just as the disciple had said in the meeting, they would have a chance to join a trial by fire to reach Foundation Establishment.

To qualify for the trial by fire, they had to accomplish a mission set forth by the sect. Each person received a different mission, and Bai Xiaochun’s was to go to Corpse Peak and refine a corpse!

Bai Xiaochun found the nature of the mission somewhat revolting. However, despite the fact that the mere idea of working with corpses was disgusting, he couldn’t change the task. If he wanted to eventually get to that relic of eternal indestructibility, he would have to grit his teeth and accept the mission.

That was the only way he could get into the trial by fire, get the Foundation Establishment Pill, and “reach” Foundation Establishment. Then he could choose to become a Dharma protector on Middle Peak.

On his way to the Blood Stream Sect, he had often thought about showing up as an Earthstring Foundation Establishment expert. Although some of the disciples who escaped from the Fallen Sword World might have seen Nightcrypt be killed, there were ways to explain how he was now alive. After all, everyone had life-saving magics. However, if he showed up with an Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivation base, that would be a different matter. Despite the chaos in the Fallen Sword World toward the end, everyone had been paying very close attention to the earthstring energy and who was absorbing it.

Returning to the sect as an Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivator would have been too suspicious, so in the end, he abandoned the idea.

The next day at sunrise, Bai Xiaochun left his immortal's cave in high spirits. Carrying the mission jade slip with him, he headed toward Corpse Peak. It was only with that jade slip that he could actually enter Corpse Peak.

There were lots of corpse refineries on Corpse Peak, even some at the base of the mountain.

That was exactly where Bai Xiaochun needed to go to accept his assigned mission. Even from a distance, he could see the corpse refinery that was his destination. It was a huge building, cylindrical and pitch black. Noxious black smoke belched out of the top of the building to rise up into the sky.

There were numerous entrances and exits to the building, with Inner Sect disciples going in and out of them constantly. Grave expressions could be seen on the faces of the disciples who left the building, and their skin was pale, as if they hadn't seen the light of day in years. They were people who, unlike Bai Xiaochun, had taken the initiative to accept corpse-refining missions from the sect for the purposes of cultivation and study.

As he walked up to the corpse refinery, he suddenly caught sight of someone familiar. It was Xu Xiaoshan, who stood there at the main gate leading to the refinery, his hands clasped behind his back. His cultivation base emanated the fluctuations of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, and he had three grim-looking bodyguards standing behind him as he reprimanded several of the Inner Sect disciples. [1. Bai Xiaochun befriended Xu Xiaoshan in chapter 152]

“Do you know how much I paid to buy this corpse refinery from the sect, fools?

“This place is mine! I had to sell all of my other properties to afford it. If I don't make enough profit to buy paper talismans, you people are going to be sorry!

“I can't believe you destroyed one of my corpses! It might have been nothing more than an ordinary corpse, but it was still worth something. I'm warning you, the lot of you had better pay me back, otherwise I'll turn you into corpses to be refined!” The Inner Sect disciples were trembling, their faces pale as they immediately admitted their failures. Finally, Xu Xiaoshan waved his hand in irritation to dismiss them.

A dark expression on his face, he glanced around the area and caught sight of Bai Xiaochun.

“What are you doing here? You can’t just come and go as you please around here!”

Bai Xiaochun took a moment to compose himself. If Xu Xiaoshan had dared to talk to him in such a way in the Fallen Sword Abyss, he would have made short work of him. But now, all he did was wave his right hand, sending the mission jade slip flying toward him.

Xu Xiaoshan frowned as he examined the jade slip. Then he looked back at Bai Xiaochun.

“I remember you. You were there when we were all fighting Bai Xiaochun. So, you made it out alive after all!” His expression softened a bit. He had mixed feelings about everything that had happened in the Fallen Sword Abyss. He still admired Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect, and when he thought about how they had fought and conned each other, he couldn’t help but sigh.

“That guy is definitely the jewel of the Spirit Stream Sect now,” he thought, shaking his head.

“Alright, come on inside. Considering we're both veterans of the Fallen Sword Abyss, I’ll give you a few tips about corpse refining.” As Xu Xiaoshan led the way, Bai Xiaochun put a sinister expression onto his face and followed.

Before long, they were in one of the private rooms inside the corpse refinery, which was usually referred to as a corpse cave.

The cylindrical chamber wasn't very large. Nine oil lamps emanated a mysterious light that nevertheless failed to dispel the grim darkness. In the middle of the room was a deep cistern.

The water was the color of blood, and looked bizarre and fantastic. Floating there in the water was a dead person!

The corpse belonged to a burly man with a vicious expression on his face. He didn't look like a kind person in any way, and there was a fatal wound on his forehead. The skin around the wound had withered significantly, transforming into a pattern that resembled a plum blossom.

Xu Xiaoshan wasn't familiar with all of the corpses in all of the corpse caves, but as soon as he saw this one, he whispered, "This guy got killed by that shrew Xuemei. The fact that he died fighting her indicates that he must have had an extraordinary cultivation base when he was alive."

Bai Xiaochun peered over at the corpse, and the mark on its forehead. Immediately, his heart went cold.

"Obviously, on Corpse Peak, we focus on corpses," Xu Xiaoshan continued. "Generally speaking, the corpses start out ordinary and slowly advance through the levels until they reach the pinnacle. The levels are as follows: pallid zombie, shadow zombie, flying ghoul, grand lich!

"Your mission is to get this corpse to grow white hair. Then it will turn from an ordinary corpse into a pallid zombie!

"The method to do so is explained in this jade slip. Considering you're in the tenth level of Qi Condensation, and have been around for awhile, you've probably heard a bit about how it works. Use your cultivation base to catalyze the blood cistern, and then sink the corpse down inside. Of course, there are a lot of other details you have to master.

“If you work quickly, you can accomplish the task in half a year.” With that, he handed Bai Xiaochun two jade slips. One of them contained information about the corpse refining methods, and the other could be used to control the corpse itself. Then, he turned to leave.

Bai Xiaochun didn't want to waste that much time, though. Looking over at the corpse, he asked, “Is there any way to get it to go faster?”

Xu Xiaoshan chuckled coldly. “Faster? Of course! If you give the corpse enough spirit medicine, then naturally the process will go faster. In fact, if you're good enough, maybe you could make a Nine Serenities Blood Pill. With one of those, you could finish within ten days. Plus, the corpse would be a grand lich, about as powerful as a patriarch!

“I forgot that you can actually do a bit of medicine concocting. Maybe you should give it a shot.” He chuckled again. Blood Stream Sect disciples usually spent their time fighting, and most viewed medicine concocting as a waste of time. Xu Xiaoshan flicked his sleeve and left Bai Xiaochun alone in the corpse cave.

Bai Xiaochun looked down thoughtfully at the corpse floating in the cistern, and soon, his eyes lit up.

“They didn't like me concocting pills in the Spirit Stream Sect, but now I’m in the Blood Stream Sect. I can finally do some pill concocting again....” Becoming a grand apothecary really was proving to be a big headache. He sighed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0188 awe-chapter-189

“Years from now, I can proudly tell my descendants that Bai Xiaochun walked a long, winding path. He raised beasts in the Spirit Stream Sect, and concocted medicine in the Blood Stream Sect!” Bai Xiaochun really felt proud of himself. Considering how hard he was working, if he didn’t become a grandmaster apothecary and concoct a Live-Forever Never-Die pill, it would be really unfair.

“However, I need to be careful. This isn’t the Spirit Stream Sect. These people are brutal. If I provoke them because of my medicine concocting, they probably won’t just throw rocks, they’ll attack with magical items.” That thought got him so nervous that he began to hesitate.

After more thought, he gritted his teeth, and his eye shone with determination.

“If I want to become the greatest apothecary in the world, if I want to live forever and exist for all eternity, then how could I let this trifling Blood Stream Sect stop me? I'm definitely gonna concoct some pills!

“Bring it on! When the Dao of medicine is involved, Bai Xiaochun isn’t afraid of anyone!” Although his expression seemed cold and sinister, he was really gritting his teeth and throwing caution to the wind.

He didn’t want to be stuck in the corpse cave staring at a corpse for any longer than he had to. He had no interest in such things. Therefore, he would use his abilities with spirit medicine to reduce the time it took to accomplish the mission. Then he could leave Corpse Peak once and for all.

After studying the mission jade slip for a while, he began to chuckle darkly. “All I have to do is get the corpse to grow white hair, right? Simple! I just need to concoct a medicinal incense that grows hair!”

In the Blood Stream Sect, any corpse that grew white hair was a pallid zombie. That was common knowledge. Never before had there been an ordinary zombie with white hair.

Bai Xiaochun rubbed his chin thoughtfully as he looked at the blood-colored water in the cistern, and the corpse. Then he sat down cross-legged and began to mentally review all of the medicine formulas he knew.

It was essentially impossible to use medicinal pills to solve the problem with the corpse. He had to concoct medicinal incense. Upon burning it, a smoke would appear which would merge into the corpse and transform it.

A few days later, his eyes were already completely bloodshot. He was pacing back and forth in the corpse cave, coming up with one idea after another. Some ideas he immediately discarded, others he spent time analyzing in detail.

He even asked Nightcrypt about the types of medicinal ingredients they had in the Blood Stream Sect, and was surprised to find that many of them weren’t known in the Spirit Stream Sect. Using some of Nightcrypt’s few merit points, he went and purchased some ingredients, especially the ones that were unique to the Blood Stream Sect. He was pleasantly surprised to find that prices for ingredients were much lower here.

Apparently, the Blood Stream Sect did that to encourage disciples to work on medicine concocting, although it did little good. To Blood Stream Sect disciples, medicine concocting would only take away time from all the fighting they did, and would waste a lot of resources. Why do so much work when they could simply go out and rob other people?

Seven days passed. After doing plenty of research to understand how to use Blood Stream Sect medicinal plants together with Spirit Stream Sect medicinal plants, he finally came up with his unique medicinal formula.

It had only one function: grow white hair!

His idea was simple. It didn’t matter whether the corpse was fundamentally strong or weak; his mission was simply to get it to grow white hair. Although he wasn’t sure how strong the corpse would be afterward, that didn’t really matter to him.

He did two more days of mental work to ensure that the medicine formula was perfect. Then, just after evening fell, he opened his eyes and excitedly produced a pill furnace. Taking out two earthflame crystals, he started working on a batch of tier-3 medicinal incense.

Two months went by. Other people who were working on corpses were already seeing transformations begin. However, Bai Xiaochun's corpse hadn’t made any progress at all. Of course, he didn’t care about that; he was completely engrossed in his medicine concocting.

In the Blood Stream Sect, people didn't generally spend a lot of time interacting with each other. During the more than two months that he'd been in the corpse cave, not a single person had come in to speak with him, which was fine as far as he was concerned. He had failed numerous times to produce a single batch of tier-3 medicinal incense, and every time he did, he would analyze everything carefully and then start over.

Occasionally, rumbling sounds would echo out, but considering Bai Xiaochun’s current skill in the Dao of medicine, he was very comfortable with tier-3 spirit medicines. Although he failed, there were no catastrophic side-effects that would cause chaos in the area.

Three more days passed. Bai Xiaochun excitedly slapped the pill furnace, and rumbling sounds echoed out as it opened to reveal a palm-sized chunk of black incense. After pulling it out, he held it in his hand and looked at it suspiciously.

The black incense didn’t emit any medicinal aroma, and seemed ordinary in nature. Bai Xiaochun scratched his head. After all the adjustments he'd made to the formula, this was the final result, but he wasn’t sure exactly what kind of medicinal incense it was.

“It should work. I put plenty of corpsefriend flower in, as well as some rottenroot grass. I used all kinds of medicinal plants that are good for upgrading corpses.” He looked at the incense, then glanced at the corpse in the blood cistern. If he were in the Spirit Stream Sect, he wouldn’t dare to test it out, but considering he was just working with a corpse, he wasn’t too worried about anything happening.

“It will definitely work!” Taking a deep breath, he pushed his hands together and then unleashed some spiritual power, creating an invisible fire which lit the incense. As the smoke rose up, he waved his hand, sending the incense over to the corpse. It immediately fused into it, causing smoke to roil out and fill the entire cistern. When he saw all the smoke, Bai Xiaochun sprinted out of the corpse cave, and out of the entire corpse refinery in general.

He didn't dare to remain behind and accidentally breathe in some of the incense, which could have led to a bigger disaster.

He spent the rest of the day strolling through the sect, until he was sure enough time had passed. Under the cover of night, he snuck back to the corpse cave. Only after confirming that there was no more smoke present did he edge forward toward the cistern.

The first thing he saw was that the smoke was indeed all gone. The red color of the water had faded a bit, and red hair could be seen on the corpse’s head. It was really a frightening sight, and made the corpse look even more murderous than before.

“Red hair?” Eyes wide, he stepped a bit closer to the corpse. Suddenly, he felt like he wasn’t alone in the room. At the same time, the corpse’s eyes snapped open, and they were as red as blood. There was no life in those eyes; they were ice cold, almost as if death itself were looking at him. Radiating an intensely cold aura, the corpse began to rise to its feet.

Scalp tingling in shock, Bai Xiaochun backed up and pulled out the jade slip that could be used to control the corpse. After pushing his finger down onto it, the zombie slowly went still.

After making sure that it really wasn’t moving, he edged closer again to look at the red hair. Scowling, he said, “Xu Xiaoshan talked about zombies with white hair and black hair. He didn’t say anything about red hair. Does red hair count?”

Feeling a bit of a headache coming on, he gritted his teeth.

“Ah, it doesn’t matter. There’s obviously a problem with my medicine formula. A few changes will definitely get this zombie's hair to turn white!” Sitting down cross-legged, he began to think about the problem in detail. A few days later, he looked tired, but slapped his thigh in excitement.

“It must be a problem with the water in the cistern. The water changed color because the zombie absorbed the redness!” The more he thought about it, the more it made sense. Without any further hesitation, he began concocting.

He changed the formula this time, adding in quite a few different medicinal plants. This time, he didn’t just create medicinal incense, but a medicinal pill as well. A few days later, it was with great excitement and anticipation that he threw a medicinal pill into the blood cistern.

As soon as the medicinal pill entered the cistern, it sank down into the water. Moments later, the water began to bubble and churn, and huge bubbles popped up everywhere. As it did, Bai Xiaochun tossed out the piece of incense, which landed onto the red-haired zombie.

This time, he didn’t leave, although he did back up a bit. Smoke filled the cistern, and gurgling sounds began to emanate from within. Then an inhuman howl echoed out, something that sounded almost like it came out of the mouth of an evil ghost or vile fiend.

A few hours later, the smoke began to clear, and Bai Xiaochun peered over to try to see into the cistern.

“Change to white hair! Come on, change! Change!”

Even as he murmured, the smoke cleared, and he hurried over to the edge of the cistern. As soon as he laid eyes on the zombie, a blank look appeared in his eyes.

“Violet hair?”

The zombie in the cistern no longer had red hair, but violet. Its murderous aura was even stronger, and much of the water in the cistern had been drained. Moments later, more blood-colored water rushed in to fill the cistern back up.

Most shocking of all was that the violet hair was fully three inches long, much longer than the red hair had been. Furthermore, the zombie’s fingers now sported long, sharp claws….

“What is this thing?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, eyes wide. The zombie certainly looked a lot more impressive, so he asked imposter Nightcrypt about it. However, imposter Nightcrypt had never heard of any zombie like this either.

He hesitated for a bit, and even though about going to ask Xu Xiaoshan to come take a look. But then he thought about the mystery pills that had often emerged when he concocted medicine, and his expression flickered.

“Could it be something to do with the incense?” He thought for a moment about all of the bizarre animals he'd let loose in the Spirit Stream Sect, and shivered.

“I can definitely turn its hair white!” Taking a deep breath, he gritted his teeth and began concocting.

Bai Xiaochun continued to produce one type of incense after another. The zombie’s hair went from violet to pink, then from pink to orange. At one point it even turned blue. But never white. Furthermore, the hair grew longer and longer with each transformation. By the time it turned blue, it was a third of a meter long….

Simultaneously, the zombie's murderous aura grew stronger and stronger, and its claws became even sharper. Two dangerous-looking fangs appeared in its mouth, and its skin changed color along with its hair. The water in the cistern was drained over and over again, whereupon it would naturally refill.

Half a year went by, and Bai Xiaochun stood at the edge of the cistern. He had stared at the zombie so many times that he was starting to go crazy.

“I refuse to believe that I’ll fail!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0189 awe-chapter-190

Bai Xiaochun was getting really mad. He stood there facing off with the zombie, filled with frustration that it just wouldn’t turn white.

Spinning around, he began to throw medicinal plants into the pill furnace, including special Blood Stream Sect plants. Changing the pill formula once more, he began to madly devote himself to concocting.

His hair was in complete disarray, and he had already forgotten that he wasn’t in the Spirit Stream Sect. He was completely immersed in concocting medicine to the point of bedeviled madness. His eyes burned red, and even imposter Nightcrypt’s soul was trembling. He almost felt like he was back in the Fallen Sword World, and didn't dare to interrupt Bai Xiaochun in even the smallest way.

“This Bai Xiaochun is crazy!” he thought.

As Bai Xiaochun worked on his new spirit medicine, Xu Xiaoshan was in another location in the corpse refinery, dejectedly pondering a certain issue that had cropped up over the past half year or so. For some reason, the corpse-refining blood serum in his corpse refinery was draining away much more quickly than usual.

“What’s going on?” he thought. It was quite a headache to investigate the matter, considering that there were over a thousand corpses being refined at any given time. In any case, the blood serum drainage rate was still within acceptable limits.

“Ah, whatever. I guess it just means that I’ll be able to upgrade my corpse refinery sooner than expected.” With that, he put the matter aside.

A month later, Bai Xiaochun was there in the corpse cave, looking at the pill furnace and cackling. He had even poured his own blood into the mixture to make this batch of medicinal incense. Hopefully, his blood would incite the blood qi of the enormous hand to produce shocking transformations!

He slapped the side of the pill furnace, and a pungent smoke poured out, which he waved to the side. When he saw the finger-nail-sized chunk of white incense inside, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“This time it will definitely turn white!” He carefully picked the incense up to examine it closely. Although it was very small, it was actually more powerful than any of the other types of incense he had produced up to this point.

In fact, not even the strength of all the previous chunks of incense added together could equal this one.

“At long last, I will produce my pallid zombie!” he roared. Waving his hand, he sent the finger-nail-sized chunk of incense flying toward the corpse. It instantly shot through all the hair to land on the zombie’s forehead, where it began to burn, releasing a dense white smoke.

The smoke spread out rapidly, and in response, Bai Xiaochun shot backward. At a certain point, it stopped expanding, but was so thick that nothing was visible inside of it. However, indescribably terrifying howls could be heard echoing out.

Somehow, there even seemed to be a bit of joy within the howls.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get even more excited than before. Meanwhile, Xu Xiaoshan was in his room in the corpse refinery, looking very anxious as he stood in front of an old man, who was sitting there on one of the chairs in the room, staring at him coldly.

The old man wore a voluminous gray robe that was embroidered with the image of a mountain peak. If you looked closely, it was none other than Corpse Peak. A vicious zombie face could be seen on the sleeve of the old man’s robe, which looked extremely realistic as he flicked his sleeve.

The old man had disheveled hair, and his face was covered with scars, but he radiated an intense life force. Apparently, his true age was different than his appearance made him out to be.

His cultivation base wasn't in the Gold Core stage, but he was at the very peak of Foundation Establishment, and in fact, was already in the quasi-Core stage. He was only a sliver away from reaching Core Formation.

Xu Xiaoshan cleared his throat and hurriedly explained, “Grand elder, don’t I still have some time left? Don’t worry. I, Xu Xiaoshan, have been taking care of this corpse refinery for almost a year now. How could I not pay the spirit stones I owe? In three months, the first batch of zombies will be ready, and I’ll pay you back, both principal and interest!”

He had never imagined that the grand elder of Corpse Peak would personally come to ask him about the expenses related to the corpse refinery.

“Elder Xu,” the grand elder said, “I truly hope that you will do as you say. If the time comes and you don’t pay what you owe, it won’t matter that you have a patriarch backing you. I’ll still hold you accountable for the losses!”

With that, Corpse Peak’s grand elder turned to leave.

But then, the door suddenly slammed open, and a flustered young man burst in.

“What gall!” Xu Xiaoshan barked, looking over with a grim face. Just when he'd managed to get the grand elder off his back, this flunky barged in to cause problems.

However, even as his killing intent raged, he noticed how terrified the young man looked.

“Young Lord, something really bad is happening!! Almost thirty percent of the corpse-refining blood serum has vanished, all at once!!” The ashen-faced young man seemed to on the verge of tears. He was responsible for keeping the records regarding the corpse-refining blood serum, and when he saw such a massive reduction, he wasn’t sure what to do. It was only when he finished speaking that he noticed that Young Lord Xu Xiaoshan wasn’t alone. The old man in the room seemed a bit familiar, and when he looked at him more closely, his mind suddenly began to reel.

“G-g-grand Elder....”

When Xu Xiaoshan heard what was happening, his scalp began to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode.

“Thirty percent?!?!” he asked, eyes turning bloodshot. He immediately raced out to check the blood serum altar. As for the grand elder, he looked completely taken aback. Even at a critical point in the corpse-refining process, there would never be such a drastic loss in blood serum, not unless an incredibly powerful zombie were being produced.

“A thirty percent loss?” he thought. Without hesitation, he burst into motion.

Soon, Xu Xiaoshan was at the blood serum altar. There, a huge blood cistern could be seen with over a thousand channels leading out into different corpse caves. As soon as Xu Xiaoshan appeared, the disciples in charge of the altar looked over. Ashen-faced, they clasped hands in greeting.

Xu Xiaoshan didn't even hear them talking. He stared down into the huge cistern, thinking back to the day before, when it had been mostly full. But now, half of that amount was gone....

“How is this possible?!?!” he thought, beginning to tremble. The blood serum had to be purchased at significant cost, and what he was seeing in front of his own eyes caused his vision to begin to fade. But then, he watched as almost all of the remaining serum drained away, revealing the bottom of the cistern and leaving it completely empty....

All of the blood serum could be seen flowing into one particular channel....

“That leads to Nightcrypt’s corpse cave!!” Bursting with a murderous aura, he let out a howl of rage and sped away from the blood serum altar and toward Bai Xiaochun’s corpse cave.

In that very corpse cave, Bai Xiaochun was watching as the white smoke began to clear. Heart bursting with joy, he was just about to take a step forward when suddenly, his face fell, and his eyes went wide with disbelief.

“What’s going on!?!?” he said. He rubbed his eyes, not daring to believe what he was seeing. There within the white smoke were numerous green hairs, twisting and turning as they floated in the air.

Some of them were actually boring into the walls of the cave.

Bai Xiaochun felt his scalp tingling. He quickly opened his third eye and looked into the smoke. As of this moment, the cistern wasn’t even visible any more, nor was the corpse. All he saw was a huge, green hairball!

The hair wasn’t just spreading out to fill the corpse cave; some of it had pierced into the walls, and was spreading out to who-knew-where.

“Is that hair?” Bai Xiaochun thought, backing up as fast as possible, his mind spinning.

In that very moment, cries of shock and alarm began to ring out from the more than one thousand other corpse caves.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“Heavens! What happened? What are these green strands!?!?”

“Dammit! What are these green strands doing in my corpse cave!?!?”

It was then that a massive rumbling sound rose up that could shake heaven and earth, filling the entire corpse refinery.

The corpse caves began to collapse as green strands of hair raced in. Next, the green hair pierced into the bodies of the zombies that were still in the middle of being produced. Then, the hair on those zombies’ heads began to turn green, even the ones that already had white hair.

But that was nothing. Some of the hair stabbed into the ground. It couldn’t go very deep though, so it would pop out of the ground some distance away before stabbing back in.

Xu Xiaoshan watched in shock as the corpse refinery began to fall to pieces. Furthermore, the trees in the area were all starting to grow green hair as well, as were the rocks, plants, flowers, and other buildings. Everything was turning green.

As the corpse refinery collapsed, more green hair appeared and spread out in all directions. Countless disciples appeared, fleeing with looks of shock and terror on their faces.

“What is this stuff?! My refined corpse! I worked for two years on that thing! Now those green strands showed up and turned it green!!”

“Who did this!?!?” As people began to cry out in madness, a look of terror appeared on Bai Xiaochun face. He flew out of the corpse cave, leaving behind an exploding mass of green hair.

“Nightcrypt, what did you do!?” Xu Xiaoshan bellowed, shaking in anger.

As soon as the words left his mouth, everyone in the area turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun knew that, yet again, he had provoked a catastrophe. Heart pounding with fear, he let out a miserable shriek and then said, “What is that stuff? Dammit!

Who did this? My refined corpse! I’ve been working hard on it for half a year!”

Everyone around him stared at him in shock.

“How dare you try to trick an elder like me! You’re dead!” Xu Xiaoshan’s eyes flickered with killing intent as he cackled in rage. Waving his hand, he sent the power of his Earthstring spiritual seas into motion. Tideflow power erupted out, along with a raging murderous aura. In the blink of an eye, deadly fluctuations were racing toward Bai Xiaochun.

Not a single person did anything to prevent what was happening. As for the grand elder of Corpse Peak, he merely frowned.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. He couldn’t simply reveal his true cultivation base, but if he didn’t, then based on Nightcrypt’s current level of power, this attack should kill him beyond the shadow of a doubt.

However, even in Bai Xiaochun’s moment of terror, countless howls began to rise up from the corpse caves!

Something very strange was happening!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0190 awe-chapter-191

Green hair burst out from the corpse caves, from the ground, from the plants and trees, even from the rocks, swirling through the air to form a huge barrier in front of Bai Xiaochun, which blocked Xu Xiaoshan's attack.

A huge boom echoed out, and countless green hairs were destroyed. However, Xu Xiaoshan’s attack was weakened significantly.

Everyone in the area gasped, but then, before any cries of shock could ring out....

Numerous figures shot out from the rubble of the corpse caves, howling as they flew to stand in front of Bai Xiaochun.

One zombie after another appeared. They all looked different, and had different levels of power and different types of auras. However, there was one similarity between all of them, and that was that they had green hair!

“Dammit! That’s *my* refined corpse!! Nightcrypt, I'm gonna kill you!”

“Impossible! Why is my zombie protecting Nightcrypt?!?!”

“What’s going on here!?!? Nightcrypt, are you looking to die?!?!” The crowd was in a complete rage. Many of them even pulled out their corpse-controlling jade slips, but they quickly found that they couldn’t exert any control over their corpses whatsoever.

Xu Xiaoshan’s face was a mass of shock. His attack had been powerful, but there were now over a hundred refined corpses standing in front of Bai Xiaochun. Even if he had attacked with more power than he did, it still wouldn't have done any good.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as a few dozen corpses exploded. Then, the deadly fluctuations faded away. Bai Xiaochun stood there stock still, as he had been the entire time, looking around blankly.

More refined corpses were crawling out of the rubble of the corpse refinery. Soon, more than a thousand had gathered, clustered around Bai Xiaochun, all of them looking at Xu Xiaoshan and howling at the tops of their lungs.

Earlier, everyone in the area had been crying out in shock, but now, they weren’t uttering even a single peep. As the disciples stared at the strange scene, they began to slowly back up, their scalps tingling with fear. The raging, murderous aura that erupted from the ranks of zombies left them completely and utterly shocked.

Xu Xiaoshan almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing.

As for the grand elder of Corpse Peak, he looked on with glaring eyes. After reaching Foundation Establishment, he had fought and struggled for years before finally becoming the grand elder of Corpse Peak, which he had presided over for more than a hundred years now. Considering how many refined corpses he had seen over the years, he believed himself to understand more about them than even some Core Formation cultivators.

However, what he was seeing now, more than a thousand zombies all protecting Bai Xiaochun, caused his eyes to shine with intense light.

“How is he doing this?!?!” he thought

As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there on the verge of tears.

“I'm finished,” he thought. “Kaput. I destroyed the corpse refinery, and then for some reason all these corpses decided to ignore their own masters and protect me. It only took a moment for me to offend more than a thousand disciples. Is this gonna force me to abandon the sect? What do I do? What do I do...?”

Bai Xiaochun was well aware that this was not the Spirit Stream Sect. This was the Blood Stream Sect, and he could only imagine what his punishment for this catastrophe would be. Maybe they would beat him to death!

He could also sense the killing intent in the eyes of the surrounding disciples. However, it was at this point that, all of a sudden, the corpses behind him all howled, and then cleared a path.

A tall, green figure appeared in the depths of the destroyed corpse refinery. As it strode forward, sharp claws could be seen, which glinted like razor-sharp blades. The bizarre-looking figure had green skin and protruding fangs which were terrifying to behold.

It had a mass of green hair that was so long it was impossible to judge its length. Many of the hairs actually connected to other corpses, whereas some of it simply floated around in the area.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock as the green zombie walked forward to stand behind him, where it remained motionless, radiating a powerful, murderous aura.

The surrounding disciples gasped yet again.

“That green zombie is controlling the other zombies! I can’t believe it!!”

“Heavens! How come I never knew about green zombies before? This is completely unprecedented!”

“That green zombie is incredible! It’s only as strong as the seventh or eighth level of Qi Condensation, but look at how it can control all the other zombies! Simply terrifying!”

Xu Xiaoshan was left gasping at the sight, and soon, his eyes were shining brightly. However, before he could say anything, laughter filled the air, and its source was none other than Corpse Peak’s grand elder.

“Wonderful,” he said, sounding very excited. “Simply wonderful!” He blurred into motion, and a moment later, was standing right in front of the green zombie.

Instantly, incredible pressure spilled out from him, causing all the surrounding zombies to tremble. However, they didn’t stop their howling. The grand elder didn’t seem to mind. He couldn’t stop looking at the green zombie, almost as if it were a gem. He seemed to be getting more and more excited.

“You’re called Nightcrypt?” he asked, turning to look at Bai Xiaochun, the same look in his eye as when he had been looking at the zombie.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t know who this person was, but he quickly put on a very serious expression. Clasping hands and bowing, he said, “Disciple Nightcrypt at your service. Greetings, Senior!”

“Let’s call this an emerald zombie. Did you refine it? And how?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. The truth was that he really didn't know exactly why the zombie refining process led to the zombie looking or acting this way. But he quickly recorded the formula he had used onto a jade slip, which he then handed over.

After a moment of consideration, he performed a quick, secret test to see if he could connect mentally with the emerald zombie. Presumably, because the medicine contained some of his own blood, he could.

In the hopes of reducing whatever his punishment might be, he also handed over the jade slip that could control the emerald zombie.

Of course, he had already noticed the reactions of the other disciples upon seeing this old man, and how respectful their expressions became. Obviously, he was someone very important.

The grand elder took the jade slips and looked them over. Eyes burning with passion, he laughed heartily, and then gazed at Bai Xiaochun with admiration.

“Nightcrypt, I am the grand elder of Corpse Peak. You did a great job here. Splendid, really. You created a brand new type of zombie. I need to go back to study the method for some time to determine how to reproduce it. You have performed a great service for Corpse Peak!

“So what if you destroyed a measly corpse refinery? They’re easily replaceable. Besides, you didn’t do it on purpose, and in the end, nobody was killed. Actually, even if you had accidentally killed some people, it would all have been in the service of the sect, and wouldn’t have mattered at all!

“Elders, award him with 5,000 spirit stones and 30,000 merit points. Also, spread the word that anyone who dares to steal spirit stones from him will be considered my personal enemy!” Laughing excitedly, and eyes shining with praise, the grand elder turned and left with the emerald zombie.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun stood there watching as the grand elder left. The surrounding disciples were all enraged, but could do nothing more than grit their teeth and disperse. They had all seen the encouraging look in the eyes of the grand elder. One of the Corpse Peak elders walked over to give Bai Xiaochun 5,000 spirit stones, and also transferred 30,000 merit points to his identification medallion.

Although Xu Xiaoshan wasn’t very happy, he plastered a smile onto his face and hurried over to chat. From his wording, it was obvious that he hoped to get a copy of the formulas, so Bai Xiaochun magnanimously gifted him with one. After all, the formula was only in the early stages of development, and wasn’t really worth much.

Xu Xiaoshan was delighted, and immediately gave Bai Xiaochun high marks on his mission assignment. Looking like he had just acquired a precious treasure, he hurried away.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the emptiness around him, and the wreckage of the corpse refinery, and took a deep breath. He had been completely braced to be punished, only to have everything happen opposite of his expectations. All of a sudden, he realized that this place really was very different from the Spirit Stream Sect.

“The Blood Stream Sect is great! The giant’s hand is connected to my cultivation, I can work on the Undying

Heavenly King much more quickly here than anywhere else, and if I cause problems because of pill concocting, the sect doesn’t punish me, it rewards me!” He sighed. Obviously, if he had done this same thing and not produced that zombie, then the grand elder of Corpse Peak would have been incensed. Most likely, not even death would have been able to wipe away the offense.

All the grand elder cared about was the result. As for what happened along the way, he didn’t care at all, not even what happened to bystanders!

However, there was one thing Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure about, and that was whether or not the attitude of the grand elder of Corpse Peak reflected the attitude of the entire leadership of the Blood Stream Sect. Or were there people who wouldn't tolerate him tormenting other disciples, regardless of the potential gains?

Either way, the Blood Stream Sect was essentially a devilish sect that valued being straightforward and merciless!

They didn’t believe that a person achieving their Dao could benefit everyone. They believed that success came only after climbing a mountain of bones!

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun headed back toward his immortal's cave. Now that he had accomplished his mission, he simply had to wait for all the other disciples to do the same, and then he would be able to participate in the Foundation Establishment trial by fire.

It was currently evening, and as he strolled through the sect, he happened to notice a huge stone stele off in the distance, roughly as tall as three people put together. A young woman was sitting cross-legged at the base of the stele, her hair and garments fluttering gently in the wind.

There was something oddly appealing about her as she sat there.

She wore a blood-colored mask, decorated with a plum blossom. As she looked off into the distance, a wistful, even melancholic expression could be seen in her eyes.

Bai Xiaochun recognized her immediately. Lots of people in the sect gossiped about this very young woman, who was Young Lady Xuemei.

As for the huge stone stele, it was oddly misshapen, as though it weren’t complete. The more he looked at it, the more he realized that it looked like a section of a wall. It was actually a place where disciples of the Blood Stream Sect would sometimes go to seek enlightenment, a location as famous as the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood. It was the Holy Pill Wall Fragment!

Supposedly, people who sought enlightenment here could see a projection of someone concocting medicine. If they gained enlightenment, they would acquire a deeper understanding of the Dao of medicine. According to the story, the Blood Stream Sect had looted the wall from the Pill Stream Sect 10,000 years ago.

Although the Blood Stream Sect didn’t have many apothecaries, 8,000 years ago, a genius arose within the sect. He created a mystical medicine called the Undying Blood Pill, which shook the entire sect. Of course, he accomplished all of that thanks to the wall fragment.

Few people ever gained enlightenment from the Holy Pill Wall Fragment. Even imposter Nightcrypt had tried his hand at it, only to fail. As Bai Xiaochun walked by, he couldn’t help but glance at Xuemei and the wall.

Xuemei seemed to sense him looking at her, and her eyes flashed beneath her mask. She looked over at Bai Xiaochun, radiating coldness and arrogance, as if she were a higher being, an immortal or a devil looking at an ant. Without saying a word, she turned and transformed into a beam of blood-colored light that shot toward Ancestor Peak.

Being looked at in such a condescending fashion left Bai Xiaochun very angry. Xuemei was clearly far too arrogant for her own good.

“What's so special about you, huh? Lord Bai is already at Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. If I showed my true face, you’d be scared to death!” Grumbling to himself, he stuck his chin up and flicked his sleeve. “One of these days, Bai Xiaochun will snap his finger and reduce you to ash!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0191 awe-chapter-192

Months flew by. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only person to have already qualified to participate in the Foundation Establishment trial by fire. However, the appointed time for the trial hadn’t arrived yet, so those who accomplished their missions early were forced to bide their time.

Bai Xiaochun didn't sit idly by during those months. He excitedly cultivated the Undying Heavenly King. From the time he had begun to practice cultivation until now, he had never felt like this before; he was under no pressure whatsoever, and was able to diligently focus on his cultivation.

When he cultivated the Undying Heavenly King, his body was filled with a sensation of tingling pain. At first it was very uncomfortable, but by now he’d gotten used to it, and even found it somewhat pleasurable.

Every day, he would spend some time shadowboxing in his immortal's cave to test out his power, and the result was always the same. “Hahaha! I'm getting stronger and stronger. Bring on the pain!”

The sight of the blood qi rising up from the ground always caused his heart to pound with excitement.

“This place is my personal Holy Land. When I cause disasters, I don’t get punished, I get rewarded! Plus, my cultivation progresses faster than ever....” Sighing, he couldn’t help but muse that the Blood Stream Sect really was a good fit for him. However, after more consideration, he realized that his way of thinking was getting a bit twisted, and he needed to correct it.

“I'm from the Spirit Stream Sect!” he reminded himself. Then he sank down into the tingling pain.

Eventually, he had completed 999 cycles of the Undying Heavenly King, whereupon rumbling sounds filled him, and the images of three huge mammoths appeared behind him.

At that point, his eyes snapped open, and they shone brightly with enthusiasm. He unleashed a punch into the air, and a boom could be heard. He gasped.

“I've already reached the power level of three mammoths. This cultivation speed is crazy! Plus, I'm only on the back of the giant’s hand. If I could get onto the fingers, maybe near one of those blood waterfalls, I could probably progress even faster!” Laughing heartily, he rose to his feet to go out for a stroll. However, at that moment, his face flickered, and he slapped his bag of holding, producing his identity medallion.

The medallion was glowing slightly, and when he poured some spiritual power into it, a cold, sinister voice rang out in his mind.

“Inner Sect disciple Nightcrypt, you have earned the right to participate in a second Foundation Establishment trial by fire. Three days from now at high noon, present yourself at the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood to begin the trial!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes immediately began to shine with anticipation. “It’s at the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood? Don’t tell me the Foundation Establishment Trial by Fire is going to be inside the Pit of Never-Ending Blood?”

The Precipice of Never-Ending Blood and the Pit of Never-Ending Blood were essentially the same place. Back when Bai Xiaochun asked imposter Nightcrypt about where to get sparks for four-colored flame, he'd said that he should look for four-leaf clovers in the Pit of Never-Ending Blood.

Of course, of all the people who were waiting for the Foundation Establishment trial by fire, he was the one who actually cared the absolute least about it.

The only thing he cared about was that afterward, he would finally be able to call himself a Foundation Establishment cultivator of the Blood Stream Sect, and would finally become a Dharma protector of Middle Peak. That would be his first major step toward getting the relic of eternal indestructibility.

The reason he didn't care about the trial by fire, of course, was because he was already a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert.

Considering he was a disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect, he knew that it was his responsibility to stand for justice and righteousness. Swishing his sleeve, he stuck his chin up. Looking very somber, he said, "This time, I can't let any of them succeed in Foundation Establishment. Unfortunately for them, I'm a spy!"

After all, he was a loyal servant of the Spirit Stream Sect, and as such, should take every opportunity to perform some meritorious service for his own sect.

Feeling better than ever, he sat back down cross-legged to meditate.

Three days later, he made his final preparations, and then stepped out of his immortal's cave, attempting to look as cold and ruthless as ever. He had been working on his gaze recently, trying to make it look more murderous, and felt pleased with the progress he had made.

The Precipice of Never-Ending Blood was one of the most mysterious places in the Blood Stream Sect, the other being the Holy Pill Wall Fragment.

It was a deep pit filled with blood-colored light that many people thought was an arcane pocket realm.

The truth was that it was a wound which had been inflicted upon the hand of the giant, which had eventually transformed into a world of its own.

Four-leaf clovers came from there, and could be used to spark four-colored flame. Considering that they were unique to the Blood Stream Sect, disciples often used them to trade for expensive items with people outside the sect.

However, actually acquiring them required a bit of luck. The deep pit that they grew in was also occupied by bloodbeasts. Although the bloodbeasts weren’t intelligent, they were driven by an insane desire to kill. Apparently, the enormous hand that the Blood Stream Sect was built on innately bred a desire to destroy life.

Therefore, any life form which entered that deep pit and encountered a bloodbeast would come under attack.

When Bai Xiaochun arrived, he saw about eight other disciples present. A few were sitting silently in meditation, and the others were conversing in hushed tones.

Zhao Wuchang was there, and when he saw Bai Xiaochun, his eyes flickered with cold light. Although everyone present was a competitor, he smiled and beckoned Bai Xiaochun over.

At the moment, everyone present was from the group that had failed in the Fallen Sword World.

“I heard more than thirty people qualified to join this trial by fire. However, there are only a few Foundation Establishment Pills. There’s definitely going to be some fierce fighting in the pit, not only with the bloodbeasts, but also with fellow disciples.”

“Yeah, but we have to stick to our earlier agreement. We’ll wipe everyone else out first before we decide among ourselves who gets the Foundation Establishment Pills.”

As others chatted, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the Pit of Never-Ending Blood. The entrance was a narrow gap, only about 30 meters wide. Blood-colored light spilled out, and based on the aura that pulsed out, it was clear that terrifying entities existed deep therein. The entrance almost looked like a mouth ready to swallow up anyone who got close.

There were even faint roars audible from deep inside.

“I heard that there are some bloodbeasts comparable to the Foundation Establishment stage,” Zhao Wuchang said. “This place won’t be any less dangerous than the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded in response.

More people arrived and joined the waiting group, looking around coldly at their fellow disciples.

Soon it was noon, and everyone who qualified to join the trial by fire had arrived, a total of 37 people.

About that time, bright beams of light rose up into the air from each of the four mountain peaks, which then shot toward the location of the trial by fire.

Coming from Lesser Marsh Peak was a tall, middle-aged man who radiated an aura of blood that caused everything around him to ripple and distort. The faint image of a hand could be seen behind him, a hand that looked very similar to the hand the Blood Stream Sect was built on. Most shocking of all was that the skin of the man’s own right hand was covered with what appeared to be faint cracks and crevices. This man was none other than the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak.

The grand elder from Nameless Peak was a dwarf with short hair and a scarred face. He stood on what appeared to be a black cloud, but was actually a vicious-looking gargoyle that radiated shocking pressure.

Bai Xiaochun had met the grand elder from Corpse Peak, the seemingly wrinkle-faced old man who actually radiated the life force of a youngster.

Last was the grand elder of Middle Peak, who was the most eye-catching to Bai Xiaochun. She was an attractive young woman who somehow seemed incredibly mature.

There was only one way to describe her attire: sexy and extraordinarily enticing. She had long, fair legs, and her rear end was so plump and curvaceous that anyone who saw it would do a double-take. Her Daoist robe was so tight on her voluptuous figure that it seemed as if it might pop off at any moment. In addition to all that, she had long, bright-red hair that made her seem like she was on fire.

Although her oval face couldn’t be described as beautiful, it was inherently charming, and her eyes almost seemed to be reaching out to seduce anyone who looked into them. Bai Xiaochun subconsciously sucked in a deep breath, and felt his heart beating rapidly. He quickly looked away and tried not to stare.

“She’s the grand elder of Middle Peak? Song Que’s aunt, Song Junwan?” Unfortunately, he couldn’t hold back from looking at her again, and to his shock, found her staring at him seductively.

She smiled, and Bai Xiaochun instantly felt his scalp tingling explosively. For some reason, her gaze actually filled him with a sensation of profound danger. He quickly bowed his head.

As soon as he looked down, Song Junwan’s eyes flashed. Inwardly, she was actually quite surprised. Of all the people on the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood, Bai Xiaochun was the only one who had dared to look at her twice. Just as she had been about to punish him for it, he had apparently detected the look in her eye and lowered his head.

As the four grand elders arrived, the disciples all clasped hands in formal greeting.

“Greetings, grand elders!”

Bai Xiaochun followed along with them, although inwardly he was sighing. Who would have guessed that the grand elder of Middle Peak would be a vixen like her? And to think that he had to get into her immortal's cave to get the relic of eternal indestructibility. It almost seemed impossible at this point.

“According to my plan,” he thought, “I eventually have to take her position as grand elder of Middle Peak.”

Even as he sighed inwardly, Grand Elder Song Junwan said, “You are all people who failed in the Foundation Establishment Holy Lands. According to sect rules, you should have been punished, but after some discussion with the sect leader, we grand elders agreed to allow you another trial by fire.

“Foundation Establishment Pills can be used to reach Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. As for the success rate, it varies. Some people only need one pill, others might need two or three. There was even once when a disciple needed six of them to succeed!” With that, she pulled out a medicinal pill bottle, and then smiled in an extremely enticing fashion. It was a somewhat wicked smile, but that didn’t make it any less beautiful. In fact, in some ways it made her even more attractive. After all, even roses have thorns. “Within this pill bottle are ten Foundation Establishment Pills.”

As soon as the words left her mouth, she threw the pill bottle into the Pit of Never-Ending Blood.

“Let the fighting begin. You have one month, after which you will be extracted from the pit. Those who succeed in reaching Foundation Establishment will become Dharma protectors of whichever mountain peak you wish!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0192 awe-chapter-193

All eyes were locked onto the pill bottle as it disappeared into the depths. Without the slightest hesitation, the entire group instantly transformed into beams of light that shot after it.

“I’m definitely going to earn the right to reach Foundation Establishment!”

“I failed once, but I’m not going to fail again. I'm going to reach Foundation Establishment!”

“We’re allowed to kill people in this trial by fire, so anybody who tries to stop me from reaching Foundation Establishment will die!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Within the blink of an eye, all of the disciples disappeared into the pit, eyes bloodshot, ready to fight to the death.

Bai Xiaochun was in the group, his eyes glued to the falling pill bottle. Once inside the pit, the blood qi inside of him surged, and he picked up speed. Almost instantly, he was in the front of the pack, along with three other disciples. Moments later, they had already reached the location of the pill bottle.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun still couldn’t use his Foundation Establishment cultivation base. If he did, a mere thought on his part could crush everyone else. But in the Blood Stream Sect, he had learned to exercise the utmost caution at all times, so he only used the power of the Qi Condensation stage. He also avoided using any of his magical techniques, to further avoid poking any holes in his disguise.

In fact, due to his cultivation of the Undying Heavenly King, he had plenty of blood qi inside of him, making him seem no different from any of the other disciples.

Bai Xiaochun roared as he waved his right hand, unleashing blood qi in a powerful attack that spread out in all directions. The other three disciples in the area were forced to defend themselves, and as a result, slowed down significantly.

“Nightcrypt!!”

“You got some good fortune in the Foundation Establishment Holy Land and hid it from us, didn’t you!? You didn’t reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment, but you still have power that exceeds the tenth level of Qi Condensation!”

Seeing that Nightcrypt hadn’t slowed down at all, the other three immediately joined forces to attack him. The disciples further back didn’t seem to have expected this to happen, and yet weren’t surprised.

Zhao Wuchang’s eyes flashed as he came to the same conclusion as the other disciples, that Nightcrypt had come across some good fortune that gave him access to greater power than before.

Even as Bai Xiaochun sped toward the pill bottle, he forced some blood to ooze out his mouth to make it looked like he was injured. At the same time, he put a crazed expression on his face. With one final burst, he closed the distance and grabbed the pill bottle. Any of the other disciples in this situation would have broken the bottle open, taken a few pills, then thrown the other ones off to the side to distract the rest of the disciples.

In fact, that was what all of the other disciples assumed would happen.

Even the four grand elders up on the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood also expected the same outcome. None of them were at all surprised to see Bai Xiaochun break ahead of the pack and grab the bottle. After all, most disciples of the Blood Stream Sect had various trump cards to call upon, so a burst of speed was nothing beyond expectation.

As for the grand elder from Corpse Peak, he had met Nightcrypt before, and currently, his eyes shone with admiration. Of course, were it not for the events of a few months before, he wouldn’t have paid much attention to Bai Xiaochun.

However, what happened next left all four grand elders completely shocked.

Instead of breaking the pill bottle open, Bai Xiaochun picked up speed and headed further into the depths of the pit.

“What are you doing, Nightcrypt?!?!”

“Dammit! I can’t believe he’s doing this!!”

“Nightcrypt, are you looking to die?!?!” Rumbling sounds could be heard as the enraged crowd chased Bai Xiaochun down into the depths.

Even as the other disciples’ killing intent soared, the four grand elders on the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood exchanged surprised looks. Then, their eyes began to gleam with keen interest.

“He's hogging the pills?” said the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak, a burly man with a booming voice. His expression was rather ferocious, and yet his eyes gleamed with admiration. “How bold! That’s just the type of personality Blood Stream Sect disciples should have. I never paid much attention to this kid before. What a pity he didn’t reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment, otherwise he would have become a major Chosen!”

Song Junwan covered her mouth as she laughed, suddenly much more deeply impressed by Nightcrypt. “Very interesting. Presumably, many of that group of thirty would love to hog the pills, but he’s the first one to actually attempt to pull it off!”

The grand elder from Nameless Peak, the dwarf, chuckled darkly. “He's called Nightcrypt, right? What a good name, and what potential in a disciple. If he really manages to cut off the Foundation Establishment path for the rest of them, then I definitely want him for Nameless Peak.”

The grand elder from Corpse Peak laughed heartily. “I remember this kid. He's a pure genius when it comes to refining corpses!”

He completely approved of Bai Xiaochun’s actions.

After the disciples disappeared into the depths, everyone turned to leave.

“I wonder if that hogger Nightcrypt will still be alive a month from now.”

“Hey, I already said that if he reaches Foundation Establishment, I want him for Nameless Peak!” Laughing and chatting, the four grand elders left.

Down in the pit, Bai Xiaochun was racing along at top speed, intentionally causing blood to spray out of his mouth every once in awhile to remind everyone that he was injured. However, he didn't slow down even a bit. Soon he was down near the bottom of the pit, and upon looking around, he found that it really was like a tiny little world. There were mountains rising up in all directions, all of which were covered with blood-colored vegetation.

Off in the distance were some volcanoes that radiated intense heat and powerful rumbling noises.

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun could sense numerous dangerous and brutal auras rising up from various locations.

Even as he hovered there feeling proud of himself, the other disciples began to arrive, bursting with murderous auras.

“You want to fight me over these Foundation Establishment Pills?” he shouted. “Dream on!”

“Nightcrypt, it's not right to be so vicious! You can't cut off our path to Foundation Establishment!”

“How dare you do such a thing. You're dead!”

“Humph! Offending this many people has earned you a death sentence! And don't even think about trying to hole up somewhere and reach Foundation Establishment! This place isn't very big, and I've been here before, so I can definitely track you down!”

Bai Xiaochun didn't even look at them. As numerous magical techniques rumbled through the air toward him, he sped toward the region with the volcanoes. The Pit of Never-Ending Blood wasn't just used for Foundation Establishment trials by fire. Disciples would also come here on missions to harvest four-leaf clovers.

However, when going out on missions, the sect would make sure that the area wasn’t too dangerous. As long as one was careful, one wouldn’t face any mortal danger. In fact, imposter Nightcrypt had even come here, and was relatively familiar with the area.

“The four-leaf clovers are in the volcano region....” Eyes glittering, Bai Xiaochun sped toward the nearest volcano and vanished into a tunnel without even pausing.

Even as he did, the other disciples closed in, enraged, roiling with murderous auras as they chased after him.

Bai Xiaochun picked up speed as he flew through the countless passages and tunnels that riddled the ground underneath the volcano region. The area was almost like a huge maze.

Because of that, none of the pursuers had any idea where exactly he was, which enraged them even more.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0193 awe-chapter-194

They only had one month to track down Bai Xiaochun and get the Foundation Establishment Pills, otherwise they would be failures yet again. The mere thought of it was already driving them crazy.

Their hatred of Bai Xiaochun had already reached indescribably towering heights.

“Don’t be so selfish, Nightcrypt!!”

“In the Blood Stream Sect, the law of the jungle prevails, and we succeed by climbing a mountain of corpses. But you can’t be this selfish!”

“There are ten Foundation Establishment Pills. Can’t you at least spare one for somebody else!?!?”

“Hiding in the volcano region won’t do you any good. The maze isn’t that big. We’ll find you eventually!”

Even as everyone’s killing intent raged, Bai Xiaochun was searching left and right through the tunnels. Suddenly, he stopped in his tracks and looked at a crack in the wall up ahead, where a big patch of three-leaf clovers could be seen.

There in the middle of them all was a single four-leaf clover!

He immediately walked forward and picked it. Examining it closely, his face lit up with excitement.

“There really are four-leaf clovers here! Hahaha! I can finally perform fourfold spirit enhancements!” After putting the four-leaf clover into his bag of holding, he excitedly proceeded along through the maze. By this point, he'd forgotten completely about the Foundation Establishment Pills and was completely focused on finding four-leaf clovers.

Four days passed in the blink of an eye. Bai Xiaochun would occasionally run into someone in the maze, but was always able to lose them easily, and would then continue hunting for four-leaf clovers.

He also ran into some bloodbeasts. He spent a bit of time observing them, and quickly realized that they were fascinating. However, they were easy to avoid as he searched for four-leaf clovers.

Another three days went by. Eventually, he found a place where a large number of passages all converged. It was a huge chasm, several kilometers wide and filled with enormous mushrooms. The smallest mushrooms were as tall as a person, and the largest were fully 30 meters tall.

The mushrooms were a very strange color, and almost translucent. They were also gently swaying in unison. Blood-colored three-leaf clovers could be seen on the ground below the mushrooms. Upon closer examination, Bai Xiaochun found that interspersed among them were occasional four-leaf clovers.

“Whoa!” he said, his eyes shining brightly. It seemed like a wonderful place, and yet, he hesitated for a moment. Just when he was about to take a step in, his eyes went wide with disbelief, and he began to tremble.

Not too far off in the distance, in the middle of a cluster of mushrooms, chomping on some three-leaf clovers and looking around innocently, was a white rabbit.

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing. There was no way he could misidentify this particular rabbit. It was none other than the talking rabbit he had created back in the Spirit Stream Sect!!

Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt like the world had become a very strange place. Never in his wildest dreams would he have imagined that he would see the talking rabbit here. When he went to the north bank, the rabbit appeared there. Then he came here to the Blood Stream Sect, and the rabbit showed up here too.

“I came all the way here, and you're, you’re, you’re... you’re still following me around!?” There was something very, very strange about this rabbit. Thankfully, the rabbit hadn’t noticed Bai Xiaochun. Ignoring all of the countless four-leaf clovers, Bai Xiaochun carefully backed up toward one of the passages, his heart pounding in fear.

“I must not under any circumstances allow it to see me,” he murmured. “I can’t let it know I'm here. Well, it shouldn’t be able to see through my Nightcrypt disguise anyway.” Even as Bai Xiaochun prepared to make his silent escape, a roar echoed out as a huge blood-colored earthworm burst out from further in the depths of the pit and headed directly toward the rabbit.

The rabbit leaped into the air and sped away from the earthworm with unmatchable speed. However, even as it took to flight, the ground exploded as more giant earthworms appeared, all of whom began to chase the rabbit.

The rabbit’s ears stuck straight up as it fled, and at the same time, it began to make huffing sounds that apparently were an imitation of the sound of the earthworms burrowing through the ground. Just as the rabbit was about to jump into one of the tunnels, it looked over in surprise at Bai Xiaochun. Apparently, it recognized him....

When Bai Xiaochun saw the rabbit looking at him almost like a friend, he felt like his head was going to explode. Without any hesitation, he picked a tunnel and fled in the opposite direction.

“What is going on with that damned rabbit!?!?” he thought, nearly crying. He truly was afraid of the rabbit.

However, this time, Bai Xiaochun was overjoyed that he had noticed the rabbit when he did. Otherwise, a slip of the tongue could have led to the entire Blood Stream Sect knowing that he was Bai Xiaochun. The thought of that left him trembling.

“If they found out, they’d probably cut me into a million little pieces and send me back to the Spirit Stream Sect in a box....” Heart pounding, he reminded himself again that the rabbit was behind him, and that he must not under any circumstances say too much out loud.

“I can’t just wander around in the open. With the rabbit in the area, it’s too dangerous.” He quickly dug a hole into the wall of a nearby tunnel, then crawled inside to hide.

“Ah well, I might as well ‘reach Foundation Establishment’ now. That will make things much easier.” Sighing, he crossed his legs and thought for a moment. Then he pulled out some other random medicinal pills, which he began to compare to the Foundation Establishment Pills. After a moment, his eyes shone with bright light as a new idea occurred to him.

Meanwhile, in other locations in the maze, the other disciples were going mad.

Their eyes were bloodshot as they scoured the tunnels. Ten days had already passed, and they had searched virtually the entire place.

Actually, some of them were very close to where Bai Xiaochun was located, and were just on the verge of stumbling into him. However, it was at that point that he suddenly burst into the open, speeding away as quickly as possible, and simultaneously releasing a slight Foundation Establishment aura.

All of the disciples were immediately enraged!

“He’s breaking through to Foundation Establishment. Get him!”

“No wonder we couldn’t find him for the past ten days. He was actually trying to break through. We can’t let him succeed!”

Even as they converged to chase him, Bai Xiaochun sighed and then waved his hand, sending several medicinal pills flying out, all of which emitted the aura of Foundation Establishment Pills. As he tossed them in different directions, he shouted, “Fine, take the Foundation Establishment Pills. If anybody dares to cause problems for me, I’ll wipe out your whole clan after I reach Foundation Establishment!” Bursting with a murderous aura, he then sped off into the distance.

Shocked, the disciples in the area sensed the Foundation Establishment aura on the pills, and quickly scattered to try to get them. Fierce fighting broke out instantly.

The result was that the five strongest disciples got the medicinal pills, and immediately began to flee. Other disciples gave chase, and yet, it only took a moment before howls and curses rose up into the sky.

“Fake! This isn’t a Foundation Establishment Pill! Damn that Nightcrypt!! I forgot he could concoct pills!!”

“This is fake! It’s a real fake!!”

“This isn’t a Foundation Establishment Pill! It’s another pill coated with some dust from a real Foundation Establishment Pill!!”

Of course, none of the other disciples were convinced. They continued to fight over the pills that had been abandoned, until everyone saw for themselves that they really were nothing more than ordinary tier-2 pills. At that point, their hatred for Nightcrypt reached indescribable levels. Obviously, only an apothecary could accomplish something like that, and there were few apothecaries in the Blood Stream Sect.

“Nightcrypt!! I'm gonna kill you!!” Furious, the disciples searched for another ten days, until everyone was growing gaunt and disheveled.

By now, there were only ten days left, and everyone was nearly collapsing with anxiety. They were fighting amongst themselves, and also fighting the bloodbeasts, and feeling worse as time went by.

Eventually, they found Bai Xiaochun.

However, to their despair, he emanated a powerful aura of Foundation Establishment!

Sticking his chin up, he waved his sleeve and loftily said, “What gall! How dare you fail to offer greetings to an important Dharma protector like me!”

In the Blood Stream Sect, rankings were strictly adhered to. After reaching Foundation Establishment, one was no longer a disciple. One could select one of the four mountain peaks to live on, and would also be named a Dharma protector. Those who reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment were even more powerful, and became elders.

Of course, both elders and Dharma protectors were people who the Inner Sect disciples feared. In fact, their lives were completely in the control of such people.

The Blood Stream Sect disciples looked like they might cry at any moment. Despairing, they looked at Bai Xiaochun flicking his sleeve, and their hearts surged with hatred. Moments ago they had been clamoring about how they wanted to kill him, but now they had no other choice but to bow their heads deferentially.

“Greetings, Dharma Protector Nightcrypt! Greetings!”

“Greetings, Dharma Protector Nightcrypt!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0194 awe-chapter-195

Everyone gritted their teeth and bowed their heads as they offered greetings. Bai Xiaochun was extremely proud of himself, but his expression was solemn. Chuckling darkly, he looked over the group.

Suddenly, Zhao Wuchang gritted his teeth and said, “Dharma Protector Nightcrypt, disciple is willing to give you everything I own in exchange for a single Foundation Establishment Pill....”

Soon, everyone was echoing his words. No fighting broke out; they simply tried to ingratiate themselves to Bai Xiaochun to get one of the pills for themselves.

To them, Foundation Establishment Pills were indescribably rare. If they lost out on this opportunity, it could be a very long time before they got another chance.

All they needed was one of those pills, and they would be qualified to make an enormous leap upwards. The mere thought of it had them all quivering with anxiety.

A decisive gleam could be seen in Zhao Wuchang’s bloodshot eyes. His clan was on the decline, and there were enemy clans who had recently acquired new Foundation Establishment cultivators.

If he didn’t reach Foundation Establishment soon, his entire clan could be wiped out, and likely him with it!

With those thoughts on his mind, Zhao Wuchang gritted his teeth, dropped down and kowtowed to Bai Xiaochun. Then he pushed his finger down onto his forehead, causing blood-colored light to flicker as a drop of blood appeared. Shockingly, that blood actually contained a sliver of his soul!

He was using a secret magic that he had happened upon long ago. Considering the current level of his cultivation base, using it caused a major backlash. Even as the soul blood appeared, his face went pale, and he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. Then he looked up at Bai Xiaochun, voice hoarse and filled with madness as he said, “Dharma Protector Nightcrypt. If you let me reach Foundation Establishment, I’ll be your slave for a sixty-year-cycle!”

All the other disciples gasped, and they looked at Zhao Wuchang with mixed emotions. Although all of them deeply desired a Foundation Establishment Pill, none of them were as decisive as he was.

Their faces sank. None of them had any sort of magic that would let them produce soul blood, but even if they did, they wouldn’t use it like this.

Foundation Establishment Pills were rare, but there was no saying that they wouldn’t get another opportunity to acquire one on another occasion.

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun gave Zhao Wuchang a long look, and then glanced at the soul blood. He was no newcomer to the world of cultivation, and had heard of things like this before. After muttering to himself for a moment, he waved his hand, and the soul blood blew over and vanished into the tip of his finger.

A very strange sensation suddenly filled him. He could tell that as of this moment, a mere thought on this part could end Zhao Wuchang’s life. It was a terrifying level of control that was actually somewhat similar to his Human Controlling Grand Magic.

After a moment of silence, he somberly said, “Zhao Wuchang!”

His grave expression caused the hearts of all the other disciples to tremble.

Zhao Wuchang looked up, his eyes filled with respect.

“I shall give you one Foundation Establishment Pill, and no more!” Bai Xiaochun had his principles. He waved his hand, and a Foundation Establishment Pill flew out to Zhao Wuchang. All the other disciples looked on enviously.

No one would dare to start fighting in front of a Foundation Establishment cultivator. Trembling, Zhao Wuchang grabbed the pill and then clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun. Then he walked forward, sat down cross-legged next to Bai Xiaochun and consumed the pill.

As soon as it entered his mouth, he began to shake visibly, as if something volcanic were about to erupt inside of him.

Bai Xiaochun looked at him for a moment, then retracted his gaze. Inwardly, he sighed. Even in the Spirit Stream Sect, Foundation Establishment Pills were hard to get. However, in the Blood Stream Sect, they were even more valuable.

Suddenly, he realized that there were many aspects of the cultivation world that were like that.

There was a reason why the Blood Stream Sect was so powerful. Disciples who grew up in an environment like that would end up far stronger than disciples from other sects.

Some people might worry about the disciples’ sense of belonging. However, as long as the sect was powerful enough, and did most things in the interest of the sect as a whole, anyone who threatened the rules of the sect would be crushed.

The best thing was not to fight the trend; blend in, and use the rules to your advantage!

Time passed. Just around the time that the one month time limit was over, rumbling sounds emanated out from Zhao Wuchang, and then the aura of Foundation Establishment erupted out. His eyes snapped open, and they shone brightly. His cultivation base was now a spiritual sea, and although it couldn’t compare to an Earthstring Foundation Establishment, he did have a strong foundation in the Mortal-Dao level.

The surrounding disciples had complicated expressions on their faces as Zhao Wuchang rose to his feet. Clasping hands and bowing deeply to Bai Xiaochun, he said, “Many thanks, master!”

Bai Xiaochun nodded. At that point, numerous beams of light descended from above to surround all of the cultivators. Then a powerful gravitational force appeared, and they were hauled upward.

RUMBLE!

They flew up through the air, passing through the blood mist toward the outside. After the light vanished, they unleashed their cultivation bases and flew out of the pit toward the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood, where the four grand elders were waiting. Their gazes swept across the disciples, and came to rest on Bai Xiaochun and Zhao Wuchang.

Zhao Wuchang stood behind Bai Xiaochun, looking at him respectfully. At the same time, the four grand elders also focused their attention on Bai Xiaochun.

Very serious expressions could be seen on their faces. After all, they also had Foundation Establishment cultivation bases, although they were at the peak of the stage. At a single glance, they could see that something strange had happened.

“Nightcrypt enslaved another Foundation Establishment cultivator?” That was what they were all thinking as they exchanged glances. They had been impressed by Bai Xiaochun last month, and now that feeling was growing.

If he had simply reached Foundation Establishment by himself, that would have been deserving of praise. But he had enslaved another Foundation Establishment cultivator as well. That went to show that although he had selfishly hogged the pills, such behavior wasn’t fixed. He could be flexible, to get the best outcome that benefited him.

Such an attitude and such actions fit exactly in line with the principles of the Blood Stream Sect.

The dwarf from Nameless Peak suddenly asked, “Dharma Protector Nightcrypt, how many Foundation Establishment Pills did you consume?”

“Two!” Bai Xiaochun replied without even a moment of hesitation.

The burly grand elder from Lesser Marsh Peak looked at Bai Xiaochun, eyes shining with praise. “What do you plan to do with the other Foundation Establishment Pills?”

“Oh, that....” Bai Xiaochun’s heart thumped, and he considered the matter briefly before continuing proudly: “My dream is to become an amazing apothecary. I plan to study the extra Foundation Establishment Pills and see if I can replicate them. One of these days, I’ll definitely produce my own Foundation Establishment Pills. Right now, all I can make are tier-2 spirit medicines.”

The other disciples looked on with bitter expressions, and the four grand elder seemed shocked. It had been a simple question, but the answer was filled with profound meaning that immediately solidified all of their opinions of Nightcrypt. The four grand elders’ hearts began to pound with anticipation.

A Dharma protector who could concoct medicine would be a very important figure, someone that Earthstring Foundation Establishment elders might not even be able to surpass. There were always Earthstring Foundation Establishment elders, but it was very difficult to get a Foundation Establishment expert of any sort who could concoct medicine.

The grand elder from Corpse Peak immediately regretted being so open with his praise before. At the same time, Song Junwan’s heart was pounding as she smiled at Bai Xiaochun.

“Excellent,” said the Corpse Peak grand elder, eyes burning passionately. “Nightcrypt, your work with the emerald zombie shows that you have skill in the Dao of medicine. Why not come over to Corpse Peak!? You are clearly connected to us by destiny!” He had already been shaken by Bai Xiaochun, but now that he was in the Foundation Establishment stage, he was even more impressive.

“Ah, cut the crap!” said the burly grand elder from Lesser Marsh Peak. “Nightcrypt managed to fight off a whole group of opponents while only in the Qi Condensation stage. Clearly he’s gifted in body refinement. Nightcrypt, come to Lesser Marsh Peak. We cultivate devilblood body refinement! With us, you can truly step onto the path of becoming a powerful expert!”

But then the dwarf from Nameless Peak screeched: “Hey, don’t even think of trying to steal him from me. Didn’t I say from the beginning that Nightcrypt was coming to Nameless Peak!?”

Song Junwan from Middle Peak tucked a stray strand of hair behind her ear. Eyes glistening, she said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, why don’t you come to Middle Peak...?”

To see the grand elders fighting over Bai Xiaochun caused the other disciples to fume bitterly, and sigh in their hearts.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but think about how outstanding he was. No matter how hard he tried to keep a low profile in both the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, he always managed to have people chasing after him.

Vexed at the amazement of his own accomplishments, his eyes suddenly went cloudy, as if with infatuation. Staring at Song Junwan, and blushing slightly, he said, “I... I pick Big Sis Song’s Middle Peak!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0195 awe-chapter-196

Bai Xiaochun’s reply immediately caused Zhao Wuchang’s heart to tremble. How could this master of his speak with such shocking forwardness…?

All of the other disciples gasped, and then pretended that they hadn’t even heard the Middle Peak grand elder be addressed in such a saucy fashion.

Song Junwan’s eyes went wide. Her first impression was that Nightcrypt was intentionally being disrespectful, but then she saw the gleam of infatuation in his eyes, and smiled flirtatiously. For some reason, he suddenly seemed even more charming than before.

“Big Sis?!” Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the grand elders from the three other peaks. They looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then at Song Junwan. Finally, they shook their heads and turned to leave. As for Zhao Wuchang, he chose to go to Lesser Marsh Peak.

Before making his way off, the grand elder from Corpse Peak sighed lamentingly.

He truly felt regret that Bai Xiaochun had picked Middle Peak, and also wasn’t quite willing to lose such an exquisite disciple who was clearly connected to Corpse Peak by destiny. Stepping forward, he produced a jade slip, which he handed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Nightcrypt, this is my command medallion. If you ever change your mind, bring it to Corpse Peak. We’ll always have a Dharma protector spot open for you!”

Bai Xiaochun took the command medallion graciously, thinking about how wonderfully the Blood Stream Sect was treating him. Although they did things a bit brutally, they truly took good care of him.

“When I cause disasters, they don’t punish me, they reward me!” he thought. “The four grand elders even fought over me, and in the end, the Corpse Peak grand elder still has his sights set on me.” He sighed again.

As everyone left, Song Junwan of Middle Peak looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, smiling the entire time. She had a smoking hot body, and as soon as she took a step forward, her milky white thigh was revealed. It was incredibly enticing, and despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun felt himself to be a person with iron resolve, he couldn’t keep from staring. His heart also began to thump in his chest.

Steamily, Song Junwan swayed up to Bai Xiaochun and reached her fair finger out to stroke his chin. Her crimson lips turned up in a slight smile, and she sighed. “What did you just call me, you little rascal?”

“Big Sis Song....” he replied shyly, his face flushing a bit as her delicate fragrance wafted into his nose.

When she saw him acting in such a way, Song Junwan laughed softly. Lifting her eyebrow slightly, she reached out and put a jade pendant in his hand. Then, she turned sensuously and floated away.

Bai Xiaochun stood there alone on the Precipice of Never-Ending Blood, holding the jade pendant in his hand, sighing at the lengths to which he had to go to get the relic of eternal indestructibility. He couldn’t help but admire himself. Then he thought about the matter of calling Song Junwan

Big Sis; next time he met Song Que, he would obviously have the greater seniority.

Even more excited than before, he proudly returned to his immortal's cave. By then it was evening. After arriving, he began to pack his bags in preparation for reporting in to Middle Peak the following morning.

Late in the night, as Bai Xiaochun was sitting there meditating, moonlight suddenly spilled in through the window, casting a shadow right in front of him. As it did, an unspeakable feeling of dread filled him; it was almost as if an invisible figure were about to take shape in front of him.

His eyes went wide, and his scalp went numb. Even as he watched, his shadow rippled and distorted, almost as if it were made from mist. In the blink of an eye, it filled the immortal's cave, which went pitch black. It was as if even the moonlight were infected, and had been cut away!

As soon as he saw what was happening, Bai Xiaochun thought of the mysterious sect that imposter Nightcrypt had mentioned. Bai Xiaochun had never forgotten the stories of that sect, and at the moment, although his expression remained the same, inwardly he was getting very nervous. He quickly rose to his feet and began to look around the area carefully.

“Imposter Nightcrypt said that over the decades, the mysterious sect only appeared three times. It’s been quite some time since their last appearance. Why didn’t they ever show up again....?” His heart began to thump in fear; if that mysterious sect saw through his mask, who knew what could happen....

He soon found that within the shadow-wreathed immortal's cave, the ground was rippling, almost as if it were water.

Soon, it turned translucent, and Bai Xiaochun was suddenly out in an illusory world.

At first, it seemed like the world existed underground, but upon closer inspection, Bai Xiaochun was shocked to realize that it was actually a projection. It was almost as if he were on the other side of a mirror, looking into another location.

That world had mountains and bodies of water, as well as a blue sky dotted with white clouds. Gradually, a white-robed figure appeared, radiating a profoundly ancient aura; for some reason, Bai Xiaochun immediately knew that this was a powerful expert from that mysterious sect. In that instant, he gained a much deeper understanding of how powerful that mysterious sect was.

“Nightcrypt!” When the white-robed figure spoke into his mind, it was impossible to determine if the voice belonged to a man or a woman. Bai Xiaochun was already getting nervous, but apparently, the white-robed figure didn't notice that anything was amiss. The figure waved a sleeve, and three medicinal pill bottles appeared, all of them decorated with the mark of a shining moon. They immediately flew toward the translucent ground, as if they were going to pierce through and appear inside the immortal's cave.

The ripples in the floor grew more intense as the pill bottles grew close.

“I sensed the fluctuations of Foundation Establishment coming from you,” the figure said. “You succeeded. Excellent. These are the medicinal pills you need. They should get you all the way to mid Foundation Establishment. The cost of sending these pills to you far exceeds the value of the pills themselves.

“Remember, the relic of eternal indestructibility is located beneath the immortal's cave of the grand elder of Middle Peak. It doesn’t matter how long it takes; you have to figure out a way to get it.” The pill bottles finally pierced their way through the ground and into the immortal's cave. At the same time, the white-robed figure faded away. The floor returned to normal, and the shadows vanished. Once again, moonlight spilled down through the window.

Only a few moments had passed, and Bai Xiaochun hadn’t spoken a single word. However, he was already covered with sweat. Taking a deep breath, he calmed himself down. The strange behavior of this mysterious sect far exceeded anything he could have imagined.

“Just what kind of sect are they?” he thought. From what he could tell, they were so much more powerful than the Blood Stream Sect that the two were beyond compare. Obviously, despite their power, they were located very, very far away.

“Over there, it's actually daytime....” he thought. He reached up and touched the mask he was wearing. The fact that his secret identity remained a secret left him feeling a lot better than before.

“So not even the white-robed emissary noticed that I took the imposter’s place? Or did the emissary notice and just not say anything?” After a moment of hesitation, he decided to try to get confirmation from imposter Nightcrypt.

Imposter Nightcrypt felt truly bitter at what had just happened. He had requested these medicinal pills several times, and only now had they finally been delivered. Except, now they belonged to Bai Xiaochun. After a long moment, he sighed. Not daring to complain, he began to answer Bai Xiaochun’s questions.

In the end, Bai Xiaochun was left frowning. There really was no way to determine if the white-robed figure had seen through his disguise or not.

“Whatever. There’s no use in thinking about it too much. Even if he did notice, he didn’t say anything. In that case, we have a mutual understanding. Based on my previous analysis, it seems more likely than ever that they’re just putting on a show. Or who knows, maybe he really didn't notice.” Bai Xiaochun shook his head and looked down at the three pill bottles with the shining moon marks. One by one, he opened them all.

Within the medicinal pill bottles were a total of thirty medicinal pills. Upon closer examination, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide.

“They’re all superior-grade!!! Tier-4 spirit medicine!

“What sect is this? They’re terrifying!

“I don’t even recognize what type of spirit medicine it is! And the medicinal plant ingredients....” After analyzing what he could smell, he was sure that there were dozens of ingredients in the medicine, and yet, he could only identify about half of them.

However, he could assess their efficacy, and was certain that it was just as the white-robed figure had said; these three pill bottles were enough to get a Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator from the early level to the mid level. Of course, they wouldn't be of much use at all to Bai Xiaochun. After all, he was already in the Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment stage.

Although medicinal pills could help him to some degree, what he needed more was refined Heavenspan River water.

However, these pills would definitely help him significantly in his concocting.

Bai Xiaochun spent the whole night in thought. The following morning at dawn, he yawned and put his thoughts regarding the mysterious sect to rest for the moment. Emerging from his immortal's cave, he looked back at the floor for a moment, then flew at top speed toward Middle Peak.

Upon arriving, he looked at the upper half of Middle Peak, stretching at an angle up into the sky. Thinking about how it was really the finger of a giant, he sighed inwardly.

Almost as soon as he arrived at Middle Peak, he ran into a shimmering field of light. Once it sensed the jade pendant he held, it dispersed, allowing him to enter Middle Peak.

Without that jade pendant, he would receive severe punishment for trying to charge onto the mountain. The ranking system of the Blood Stream Sect was strictly enforced, and only Foundation Establishment cultivators were allowed onto the four peaks.

As he proceeded along, he could sense how majestic the mountain was. All of the plants and vegetation were crimson, and there were even blood-colored rivers and streams visible. His Undying Live Forever Technique stirred, and when he looked over at one of the blood-colored waterfalls off in the distance, the sensation of being summoned by the hand grew even stronger.

That summons was stirring his Undying Live Forever Technique, calling out to him, making him feel almost as if he were becoming the giant.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0196 awe-chapter-197

“Holy Land!” Without even realizing what he was doing, Bai Xiaochun walked over to the edge of the blood waterfall he’d just spotted, and could immediately sense the powerful blood qi. To him, blood qi was very important to replenish his vital energy.

Taking in a deep breath, he felt his spirits lifting, and just when he was about to begin to absorb the blood qi, a sensation of crisis filled him. He immediately backed up, whereupon a boom echoed out from the spot where he had been standing.

A beam of blood-colored light, almost like sword qi, had slashed into that very spot. The surrounding plants and vegetation whipped back and forth from the blast, and a huge furrow was hewn out in the ground.

“Eee?” someone said. Then, a young man strode out from within the blood waterfall. He wore all red, and had an icily cold arrogance to him as he stared at Bai Xiaochun. “Screw off. You’re not allowed in this area!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized the young man. It was Song Que. Immediately after issuing his command, he turned and walked back into the blood waterfall, where he sat back down cross-legged.

“So, this moron is here,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “Humph. What makes you think you’re so special? Back in the Fallen Sword World, you were crying for your mommy and daddy when I beat you up. Just wait until I get famous in the Blood Stream Sect, I’ll show you a thing or two. Humph!” Glaring hatefully, Bai Xiaochun decided that he would definitely find an opportunity to call Song Junwan ‘Big Sis’ in front of Song Que. That would definitely heap humiliation onto his head! [1. In this passage, the word Bai Xiaochun uses to insult Song Que is a common word for “lacks intelligence” that also contains the same character ‘que’ from his name, making for some clever wordplay.]

Eyes flickering coldly, he left. He walked along to visit some of the places he noticed that had especially strong blood qi, but every time he got close, someone would attack him and drive him away.

None of them were very polite at all, three of them even attacked him with completely murderous auras. If he hadn’t fled fast enough, it seemed likely that he would have been killed.

Bai Xiaochun grumbled to himself louder and louder at how overbearing these people were. All he wanted to do was breathe in some blood qi, not stake a claim to their territory.

Eventually, he arrived at Middle Peak Pavilion, where newly promoted Dharma protectors were supposed to check in. Waiting there for him was an old man in the late Foundation Establishment stage. After sizing Bai Xiaochun up, and realizing that he was at Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, a condescending expression appeared on his face, and he took the jade pendant from Bai Xiaochun. Then he handed him a new identity medallion, along with a crimson jade slip.

“That jade slip contains Middle Peak’s secret magic, the Blood Annihilation World. If you don’t understand the cultivation method, you can attend one of the monthly training sessions administered by a prime elder. It costs merit points to ask questions about the Dao, but if you lack merit points, you could always request a personal audience with a prime elder.

“As for your immortal's cave, we have 37 vacancies for Dharma protectors at the moment. Pick any one that you want. If you don't like what you see, and you think you’re strong enough, you can simply take an immortal's cave from someone else. Alright, that’s it, you can go now.” Waving his hand, he closed his eyes to meditate.

It all seemed overly simple to Bai Xiaochun, who took the two pieces of jade. After sending some divine sense into the medallion, he saw a map of Middle Peak, as well as notations on all the immortal's caves.

Considering it was morning, he decided to simply walk around and take in the sights. By the time evening fell, he’d had a chance to examine all of the immortal's caves in the Dharma protector district. Taken on their own, they were actually pretty nice, but compared to the other occupied caves, they were quite deficient in terms of blood qi.

However, he had no choice at the moment other than to select the best one he could find, and move in.

Looking around at his new immortal's cave, he had to admit that it was much better than the cave in the Inner Sect. However, he still didn’t think it measured up to the Spirit Stream Sect. Having no other options, he sighed and produced the blood-colored jade slip, which he scanned with spiritual power.

“Eee? Use blood qi to form a sword, transform it into a world of annihilation? Whether you're injured or you injure someone else, the blood qi that spills out will make the blood sword stronger. Now this is a secret magic!” Feeling a bit shocked, he studied the information in more detail, causing his face to flicker with various reactions. In the end, he was even more shocked than he had been at first, and thought back to when Song Que had attacked him with a blood sword in the Fallen Sword World.

“This blood sword is a secret legacy of Middle Peak. On Corpse peak, they refine corpses, on Nameless Peak they raise gargoyles, on Lesser Marsh Peak they have devilblood body refinement, and on Middle Peak, they have this blood sword Annihilation World!” Bai Xiaochun was shaken, and had to admit that in this regard, the Blood Stream Sect was a bit better than the Spirit Stream Sect. Here, the secret legacy techniques were given out to all qualified disciples to cultivate.

Clearly, the Blood Annihilation World was completely beyond ordinary. After further study, Bai Xiaochun came across a description of the origin of the blood sword.

“Long ago, one of the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs was studying the enormous hand when he suddenly received some inspiration. He created the blood sword Annihilation World, which was then amended and perfected by further generations. In the end, it became the secret magic of Middle Peak!”

After some more thought and study, he waved his right hand, causing all of his blood to suddenly stop flowing. Blood qi rose up from the ground around him, then began to form together into a shape in front of his finger. However, there was clearly not enough blood qi, and even after letting some time pass, there was no clear result.

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun dispersed the blood qi.

After some more thought, he studied the jade slip a bit more, and performed another test. However, the result was the same. There seemed to be some obstructions of some sort which were preventing a steady flow of blood qi.

“According to this jade slip, the first step in the blood sword is to extract all of the blood qi from your body, then transform it into sword qi, right in front of your finger. Then, you use the secret magic to change that foundation of sword qi into a blood sword....” He tried one more time, yet failed again.

“Why isn’t it working?” After thinking the matter through even more, he abandoned the method described in the jade slip and instead called upon the Undying Live Forever Technique. Instantly, the swirling blood qi in the area began to stream toward him and merge into his body.

In the space of a single breath, he then sent that blood qi toward the tip of his finger. There, it transformed into sword qi, one-third of a meter long.

It all happened very naturally and without any hindrance whatsoever. If any observer had been able to watch what was happening, they would have been struck mute. In the entire history of the Blood Stream Sect, there had never been a single Chosen who could form blood qi into sword qi in less than a day. Bai Xiaochun, despite having used an unorthodox method, had accomplished it in only a few breaths of time.

Bai Xiaochun examined the sword qi at the tip of his finger, and knew that he had succeeded by doing something outside of the box.

“The Blood Annihilation World is incredible, and is obviously a magic designed to control Undying Blood. However, nobody in the Blood Stream Sect has true Undying Blood, so they have to rely on blood qi, which they use to transform their own blood. Obviously, the result is an impure product. That’s why it requires extra blood qi, either by injuring someone else, or harming your own body. That’s the only way to increase the power.

“Perhaps after a very long period in which your blood is mixed with the blood qi, you might be able to eventually reach the final level of the Undying Codex, which is Undying Blood!

“However, that would be a very, very difficult method. The best thing to do would be to use one’s own Undying Blood to produce blood qi, then use that to form the sword qi. With that foundation, the strike of the blood sword would be strong enough to shake heaven and earth!

“Actually, my outside-the-box method wasn’t really correct either.” Taking a deep breath, he dispersed the sword qi, transforming it back into blood qi, which he absorbed into his body, then fused into his own flesh and blood. A tingling sensation washed through him. Then, instead of going on to practice the Undying Heavenly King, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and used the Blood Annihilation World mnemonic to try to extract the blood qi.

In that instant, his flesh and blood shrank down slightly, and at the same time, blood qi emerged!

That blood qi came from his Undying Gold Skin and his Undying Heavenly King, which he had carefully developed over time. Now, it was being used to produce blood qi that counted as Bai Xiaochun’s personal Undying Blood.

Based on his current cultivation base, it was impossible for Bai Xiaochun to actually create his own Undying Blood.

However, by means of this secret magic, he was actually able to forcibly produce some blood qi.

It was scant, and yet, the summons from the enormous hand seemed to grow more intense as a result. Bai Xiaochun began to pant as he sent the stream of blood qi to the tip of his finger, where it transformed into sword qi!

This was the true Blood Annihilation World, or perhaps, the true Undying Blood sword!

Although it was only a sliver of the real thing, and perhaps couldn't even compare to other Foundation Establishment cultivators, this strand of Undying Blood qi was crafted from countless ordinary bits of blood qi that had been refined into a state that could crush anything else as easily as dried weeds!

In the instant that sword qi appeared, all of the blood qi on Middle Peak began to seethe. Countless Foundation Establishment cultivators were shocked, and yet, had no idea what was causing the phenomenon.

Bai Xiaochun was panting with excitement, never having believed that he would actually succeed.

"This isn't just a trump card, this is something I can use to form Undying Blood! With this, I should be able to make early contact with the Undying Blood level!!" Filled with excitement, he retracted his Undying Blood qi.

As he continued to practice, the days passed by.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0197 awe-chapter-198

The days went by, and Bai Xiaochun settled in as a Dharma protector of Middle Peak. He now learned more of certain matters that had been unclear to him before. For example, the war between the Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect had expanded from small-scale fighting into large-scale warfare.

As for the Blood Stream Sect, they were already making their own preparations for war, and a murderous aura was slowly building up in the entire sect.

“What’s with all this fighting and killing?” Bai thought. “Why don’t we all just get along and be happy? Wouldn’t it be better to just join forces and go to the Middle Reaches together?” Sighing, he continued with his cultivation, and the absorption of blood qi.

When he absorbed blood qi, it wouldn’t merely rise up from the ground, but would rush toward him from the entire area outside his immortal's cave.

Unfortunately, he didn’t have a top quality immortal's cave, but on the upside, he was in a relatively remote location where nobody else lived. Considering the overbearing way he was taking all the blood qi, nobody else would have been able to properly cultivate nearby.

There were plenty of things to keep him busy. In addition to practicing the blood sword, he worked on his Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, and observed as the Heavenspan River water was gradually absorbed by his first spiritual sea. And then there was his research into the Human Controlling

Grand Magic and protomagnetic power. Finally, he was gaining even greater control over his Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

He felt himself getting stronger and stronger every day, and couldn’t help but get excited.

“I'm on the verge of reaching the first level of the Undying Heavenly King! Plus, this blood sword completely suits me! This place is my own Holy Land! I don’t ever want to leave!!” His cultivation was going along luxuriously. As he absorbed the massive quantities of blood qi, his progress in the first level of the Undying Heavenly King continued rapidly.

However, as he grew more and more powerful with the Undying Heavenly King, and built up more and more Undying Blood qi, the amount of blood qi he needed to absorb from his surroundings increased as well.

Before long, the blood qi in the area wasn't sufficient for his cultivation. Eventually, it reached the point where after excitedly absorbing all blood qi he could, there wasn’t enough left to work with. He was forced to wait until the following day for it to build up again.

“This won't work!” he thought. He spent about half a day absorbing the blood qi that had built up, but there simply wasn’t enough....

Bai Xiaochun looked around anxiously, then thought about the other areas with stronger blood qi. But then he remembered how vicious the Blood Stream Sect people were, and he started to get angry.

“All the best places are already occupied. Unfortunately, I can’t just go over and beat them up. I have to keep a low profile!” Bai Xiaochun sighed. Seeing how slow his cultivation was going now got him very nervous.

“Well, I don’t really have any options. Since I can’t cultivate in my own immortal's cave, I’ll just have to go outside.” Rubbing his forehead, he thought about it a bit more, then decided it was the right thing to do. After waiting until nightfall, he snuck out and picked an immortal's cave not too far away in the forest. After sitting down cross-legged some distance away from it, he closed his eyes and breathed in deeply.

The area twisted and distorted, and then blood qi rose up from the ground. He quickly absorbed it into his body, which of course felt wonderful. He quickly unleashed the Undying Heavenly King, and when the Undying Blood qi felt strong enough, he took in another deep breath. Blood qi poured into him, and every part of his body felt like it was rejoicing.

However, with Bai Xiaochun absorbing the blood qi, the levels in the area dropped noticeably. When it reached about thirty percent of its former level, the Foundation Establishment cultivators in the area noticed, and were both shocked and alarmed.

“What’s going on?”

“Why did so much blood qi vanish?!”

“Did the area suddenly get haunted or something?”

The seven or eight Foundation Establishment cultivators in the area all rushed out of their immortal's caves’ to investigate, bristling with murderous rage.

When Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, he quickly ceased any work with the technique and surreptitiously made his exit. The Foundation Establishment cultivators searched the whole area, but couldn’t find anything amiss. Then they sensed the blood qi in the area slowly being restored, and they dispersed, suspicious as ever.

Off in the distance, Bai Xiaochun stood there looking irritated. The people in the Blood Stream Sect really were far too overbearing. He had barely been able to take two breaths before they had burst out of their immortal's caves to investigate.

“So,” he said, sighing, “it seems I can’t stay in place for very long. At the most, I can take two breaths before leaving!” But then, he suddenly remembered something, and looked around the area vigilantly. After making sure he didn't see any rabbit ears, he breathed a sigh of relief at the bitterness of the life he led. In the future, he would have to be sure to whisper very quietly, and also be very careful.

In any case, he made his decision.

As of this moment, he looked just like he had back in his spirit tail chicken-thieving days in the Spirit Stream Sect.

But then, he realized something didn't seem right. After some more thinking, he started to get mad. “No, no. I'm related to this giant. Therefore, this stuff belongs to me! They’re stealing my blood qi!

“Shameless! How dare they steal my blood qi! Well, I’ll just have to endure the humiliation. I refuse to butt heads with idiots!” Fuming, he made his way off into the distance to another area. After sensing the levels of blood qi in the area, he rotated his cultivation base and turned himself into something like a black hole.

Noiseless rumbling rose up that no one but Bai Xiaochun could hear. To him, it was like thunder in his brain. The black hole instantly caused all of the blood qi in the area to rush toward him. He quickly absorbed it, then hurried off.

Behind him, cries of alarm rose up....

And that was how he spent the entire night....

The Foundation Establishment cultivators on Middle Peak were all left frowning that night. Many of them had been practicing cultivation late into the night, but were then interrupted by a sudden lack of blood qi. Some of them were even hit by backlashes because of being interrupted at critical junctures. Enraged, they rushed out into the night to investigate, but by that time, Bai Xiaochun was long gone.

Most tragic of all was one particular Foundation Establishment cultivator of some fame, who other people had come to call Master God-Diviner. He had a rather luxurious immortal's cave which was surrounded by blood trees, and also occupied a relatively high position within the sect. That night, he was in the middle of performing a secret magic of augury, something that was dangerous to interrupt, and required a large intake of blood qi.

When he was interrupted, and the intake of blood qi ceased, he coughed up a mouthful of blood and instantly withered visibly. His mind was then struck with such intense pain that he screamed and fainted.

When the sun began to rise, Bai Xiaochun hurried back to this immortal's cave, filled with excitement. He had absorbed so much blood qi that not only was he able to resume cultivation, but he could do so even more quickly than before. Once he was back inside, he looked around proudly, and then stuck his chin up. Expression somber, he checked around to make sure the area was rabbit-free, then finally relaxed.

“Hahaha! My wits prevail again! I don’t need to go robbing anybody, nor cause any fights. I just take two breaths wherever I go, and nobody's the wiser.” Bai Xiaochun was very pleased. During the day, he worked with the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, the Human Controlling Grand Magic, and protomagnetic power, and when night fell, he snuck out into the shadows, as stealthily as a cat.

This time, he picked a different route. Every place he stopped, he would breathe in deeply two times, then flee to another location, where he would do the same thing.

His speed wasn’t that of Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. Despite the powers of disguise provided by the mask, which masked the fluctuations of his cultivation base, he was doing everything else he could think of to avoid being identified as a fraud.

That night, astonished cries of rage rose up all over Middle Peak.

“Dammit! Where did all the blood qi go!?”

“What’s going on? This is the second night in a row!”

“Something’s wrong here!!”

The most miserable of all was Master God-Diviner.... He had remained a slight coma for the entire day. When he finally woke up the following night, he looked around, ashen-faced and with bloodshot eyes, his rage burning.

“Who’s plotting against me!?!?” A murderous aura erupted from within him, and his eyes burned with fury. “Whoever you are, plotter, you’re dead!”

Taking a deep breath, he suppressed the injuries from the previous night's backlash, then performed an incantation gesture. Instantly, his eyes shone with bright light.

“It's time to divine who exactly you are!” Master God-Diviner was the type of person who would seek revenge over the smallest grievance. He immediately performed auguries and divinations, causing vortexes to appear within his eyes. They spun faster and faster, sucking in a steady flow of blood qi from the area.

At that point, a blurry figure appeared in his eyes. Just when Master God-Diviner was about to try to force the figure into focus, the thieving Bai Xiaochun snuck into the area.

It only took him a moment to breathe in deeply two times, whereupon howls of rage rose up. A tremor ran through Master God-Diviner as the blood qi in the area suddenly vanished. The injury he had suppressed earlier flared out of control, and he coughed up another huge mouthful of blood before passing out.

On the evening of the third day, he finally forced his eyes opened. His body was weak, and blood was still oozing out of the corners of his mouth. He knew that he had been seriously injured, and couldn't perform any more auguries for at least a month.

Brimming with rage, he screamed, “I can’t believe someone’s really plotting against me. I'm gonna tear you to shreds!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0198 awe-chapter-199

Gritting his teeth, Master God-Diviner left his immortal’s cave and traded with some fellow sect members to acquire medicinal pills to help his recovery. After hearing the grumblings regarding recent events, he realized that nobody was plotting against him specifically. However, his hatred still simmered. He told the other cultivators that he had divined that this was no natural disaster, but rather, was being perpetrated by a person, who was using some unknown method to absorb the local blood qi.

Master God-Diviner was relatively famous on Middle Peak, so people trusted his explanation. Therefore, the cultivators who had been most adversely affected during the events of the past two nights went out to look for the culprit.

Another two nights passed, but nobody turned up any clues. And yet, the blood qi seemed to be constantly draining away. Killing intent rose up, and soon word began to spread.

“Did you hear about that mysterious cultivator on Middle Peak? Every night he sucks away all of the blood qi from the whole mountain peak!”

“What a psycho! A lot of people have been injured in the middle of their cultivation. Lately, nobody even dares to practice any cultivation at all.”

“Who is this guy? Does he have a suicide wish? If people figure out who he is, not even the sect could stop him from getting killed!”

Bai Xiaochun heard a lot of talk like that during the day, and it scared him so much he decided to rest for a few days. But when his cultivation speed slowed, he got anxious and once again ventured outside.

However, many of the Foundation Establishment cultivators had sworn oaths to catch the culprit. On one occasion, Bai Xiaochun even joined one of those groups, and joined in on the cursing, trying to look as angry as possible. Because of that, no one suspected him.

Three more days passed, during which Bai Xiaochun spent his nights trying to find places to absorb blood qi. However, too many Foundation Establishment cultivators were out searching, and he never found a single opportunity.

He spent some more time thinking, and decided that he shouldn’t act rashly. A few more days passed, and eventually, the temporary unity of the Foundation Establishment cultivators began to fade. At that point, Bai Xiaochun set out, humming a little tune as he went about absorbing blood qi.

Sticking his chin up, he waved his sleeve and loftily said, “Hmph! You wanna compete with Bai Xiaochun? I've got more experience at this kind of thing than anyone!”

He reaped a great harvest that night. At one point, he passed an area that clearly had much stronger blood qi than the other areas. Delighted, he absorbed some of it, but didn't dare to stay long.

And that was how things went for about half a month. When lots of people were out and about, he would stop. When the numbers thinned, he would go out to absorb some blood qi. His blood sword was becoming more and more solid, and the power of his Undying Heavenly King had already reached that of seven mammoths.

“I’m going to hit ten mammoths soon. The first level of my Undying Heavenly King will be finished, and I’ll be able to unleash the Mountain Shaking Bash!!

“Plus, I can feel that the blood sword is almost completely cultivated!!” Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very excited.

As for the cultivators of Middle Peak, they were going mad. They were already vicious people to begin with, but with the half a month of torment provided by Bai Xiaochun, their killing intent grew even more pronounced.

Their nights of cultivation during that time were never stable. That was especially true considering that Bai Xiaochun didn’t have a set schedule or route....

The Foundation Establishment cultivators were getting to the point where they couldn’t take it anymore. That was especially true of the cultivators who had been tormented by backlashes that left them coughing up blood.

“Who is it?!”

“I’m gonna kill this guy! Dammit! I'm gonna kill him!”

“Is this guy looking to die? Even if my cultivation base is unstable, I'll still skin him alive!!”

All of Middle Peak was in an uproar. Never before in their lives had these Foundation Establishment cultivators experienced anything like this, and during the day, everyone walked around with bloodshot, murderous eyes.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked by what he was seeing. In fact, before he stepped out of his immortal's cave during the day, he would always rub his eyes hard until they turned red. Then, he would make sure to loudly curse the Blood Qi-Thieving Fiend.

Time passed, and none of the Foundation Establishment cultivators gave up on searching for the culprit. Those who were adept at divination and augury did their best to use their powers to uncover who was responsible. But few people were truly skilled in such arts. Master God-Diviner was actually the most famous and skilled, but his injuries made it impossible for him to use his arts. Therefore, all of the lower finger of Middle Peak could do nothing more than stew in fury.

Bai Xiaochun immediately ceased any activities for a few days. When he came back out, he found that there were actually Foundation Establishment cultivators patrolling all of the major areas. Apparently, everyone had truly united in rare fashion to deal with the common problem.

Bai Xiaochun was completely shocked. After walking around for a bit, he finally sighed in resignation. Even as he was dejectedly trying to decide what to do next, he passed a certain area that seemed very quiet, and stopped to look around.

“Nobody’s patrolling here?” Blinking, he studied the area cautiously to confirm that no one was in the area. Only then did he remember that this was the location he had passed some time before that had stronger blood qi than usual.

After poking around, he found a seemingly ordinary immortal's cave. He then pulled out a jade slip to check some information, after which his eyes shone brightly.

“How come I never paid attention to this place before? All the immortal's caves in this area are supposed to be empty. I wonder who this place belongs to? Oh well, it won’t hurt to take a couple breaths.” Licking his lips, he took a deep breath, causing the blood qi in the area to rush toward him. In fact, a huge blast came from the immortal's cave itself. In the end, he got as much blood qi as he would normally get from two or three of the other areas.

“This place is awesome!” Not daring to stay in one place for too long, he quickly left. However, the next night he came back and took two more breaths. He did the same on the third night, and the fourth. To his delight, he found that nothing ever happened, and nobody even went by this particular immortal's cave. Eventually, on the fifth day, he worked up the gumption to take ten breaths.

At long last he was certain that there were no problems, and that nobody was in the immortal's cave. Furthermore, during the day, nobody seemed to care what was happening. And it was the same at night time!

“Hahaha! The heavens do have eyes!” During the night of the sixth day, Bai Xiaochun showed up early and sat down to do his usual breathing. As of this moment, he was ready to complete the first level of the Undying Heavenly King!

As soon as the technique stirred, the blood qi in the area began to rush toward him. Bai Xiaochun waved his hand in grand fashion, quickly absorbing the flow of blood qi. Inside the immortal's cave, everything began to rumble noiselessly. Massive amounts of blood qi surged out, pouring into Bai Xiaochun to fuel the cultivation of the Undying Live Forever Technique. His entire body was sore and tingling, and the buildup of power was very obvious.

Bai Xiaochun got more excited than ever, and suddenly, he was consumed with the desire to simply absorb as much blood qi as he could, without any regard for safety. It was a huge river flowing into him, making him feel almost like he was becoming an immortal.

The truth was that there really wasn’t anybody in the immortal's cave behind Bai Xiaochun. It wasn’t a very large cave, and seemed temporarily unoccupied. The only thing inside of it was a small, blood-colored bottle.

Sticking out of the top of the bottle was a blood-colored plum blossom. It would only take a glance at it to tell that it was a precious treasure. Beneath the bottle itself was a glowing red spell formation, with the bottle being located at the very center of it.

Closer examination would reveal that there was a small aperture in the very center of the formation, which the bottle fit into perfectly!

The blood bottle contained boundless blood qi, so much that it had formed a liquid, which now filled most of the little bottle.

As Bai Xiaochun absorbed the blood qi, the liquid in the bottle was rapidly draining.

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, thirty percent of the liquid in the bottle drained away. Even as Bai Xiaochun excitedly absorbed the blood qi, something else happened in another location in the Blood Stream Sect. Somewhere on Ancestor Peak, there was a blood lake that was surrounded by plum blossoms. It looked like a celestial paradise.

Next to the lake was an immortal's cave with a large, green door that emanated powerful pressure. Engraved on the surface of the door was a single, blood-colored plum blossom.

Inside, the immortal's cave was lavishly decorated. Glowing pearls served as lamps, and everything was adorned with spirit stones. In the middle of the immortal's cave, a young woman sat cross-legged in meditation, wearing a blood-colored mask. This young woman was none other than Xuemei!

Suddenly, she opened her eyes and frowned.

“What happened? Why has there been such a shocking reduction in the blood qi in my blood bottle on Middle Peak?!”

The immortal's cave where Bai Xiaochun was absorbing blood qi was Xuemei’s official residence on Middle Peak, although she rarely went there. She normally resided on Ancestor Peak. As for the Middle Peak immortal's cave, it was a strange place; her father, Patriarch Limitless, had noticed the place’s uniqueness years ago, and had set up a spell formation that made the blood qi there even stronger, far stronger than anywhere else on the lower finger of Middle Peak.

Because of that, she had left a treasured blood bottle there which would slowly absorb the blood qi. Ten years had already passed, and it was almost full. When it was, she could begin to cultivate a certain secret magic of the sect.

Because the blood bottle was connected to her mind, she could sense what was happening to it. Occasionally, it would naturally lose a bit of its blood qi, so she hadn’t paid much attention to what had happened over the past few days. But the shocking reduction from just now was occurring much too quickly. In almost the blink of an eye, forty percent of the liquid which had built up was gone.

Xuemei instantly started to get anxious. Her phoenix-like eyes flashing with anger, she rose to her feet and transformed into a beam of light that rumbled through the night, heading from Ancestor Peak toward Middle Peak!

“I need to see for myself what’s causing this sudden reduction!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0199 awe-chapter-200

Xuemei became a beam of light that shot through the night at astonishing speed, whistling through the air toward Middle Peak. Almost instantly, Middle Peak filled with echoing rumbles.

Xuemei had always been a very domineering figure in the sect. That was simply how she acted, and others had always accepted that since her father was Patriarch Limitless.

Xuemei had come to realize that years ago, and thus, always did everything in intentionally overbearing fashion. As she arrived, the rumbling in the lower finger of Middle Peak caused all of the Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors and elders to emerge from their immortal's caves. Shocked, they looked up to see Xuemei flying through the air.

She whistled along, just barely visible within the blood-colored light that surrounded her. Anyone who looked closely might be able to see her eyes beneath her blood-colored mask, flickering with cold arrogance!

Everyone was instantly shaken.

“I can’t believe Young Lady Xuemei has returned to Middle Peak!”

“Technically, she’s an elder of Middle Peak, but she doesn’t get along with Grand Elder Song Junwan, so she almost never appears here!”

“Eee? Where is she headed...?”

As people turned to look in the direction she was flying, they realized that there was a large accumulation of blood qi there. In fact, much of the blood qi on the mountain peak seemed to be slowly moving in that direction, causing a blood-colored light to illuminate the sky.

All of the Foundation Establishment cultivators’ eyes flickered.

“That’s where Young Lady Xuemei’s immortal's cave is. The blood qi....”

“Could it be that Young Lady Xuemei has produced some valuable treasure?!”

Everyone had their own speculations as they flew up into the air and headed toward the immortal's cave.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of absorbing the blood qi from inside the immortal's cave. As he did, his Undying Live Forever Technique rapidly built up power. His fleshly body grew stronger, and although he looked the same physically, he was getting more powerful by the moment.

“The first level of the Undying Heavenly King, ten mammoths Berserk Ghost Body!” Bai Xiaochun excitedly focused on the sensation of his physical body getting explosively more powerful.

Eight mammoths. Nine mammoths. Soon, he had reached the power level of ten mammoths!

Bai Xiaochun’s mind filled with rumbling sounds, and cracking sounds rose up that only he could hear.

At the same time, his flesh and blood exploded with tingling pain, almost as if freezing water were rushing through him. His body shook as the feeling spread out, filling him completely. He subconsciously took in another breath, and the tingling pain began to retract, slowly concentrating on one location in the pit of his stomach!

There, it transformed into a boundless energy!

That energy was formed from the intense trembling which wracked his entire body. At the same time, his flesh and blood became a vortex which madly sucked in all of the blood qi in the immortal's cave!

The blood qi raced toward him like stampeding horses; even the blood qi outside of the immortal's cave began to rumble toward him!

Bai Xiaochun was shaken, and even as he felt himself getting more and more powerful, a sensation of foreboding suddenly rose up in his heart.

In the past, he had always controlled himself, and only absorbed a small amount of local blood qi. Moments ago, he had been attempting to absorb only the blood qi in the immortal's cave, which would have prevented any blood-colored light from rising into the air, thus making it very difficult for anyone to detect him.

But now, the ten mammoths Berserk Ghost Body of the Undying Heavenly King had formed, and he had lost control. His body became a vortex, sucking in all of the blood qi, and causing blood-colored light to shine up visibly into the sky.

He tried to stop it from happening, but was too late. As his body transformed, blood qi poured into him, and rumbling sounds echoed out in his mind. His body continued to tremble harder and harder, and his strength rose explosively.

Soon, the power solidified. The strength of ten mammoths formed the Berserk Ghost Body!!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened wide, and the image of a berserk ghost appeared behind him. Although it was blurry, that was only because it was still in the process of taking shape. Within a few months, it would be incredibly clear.

A sense of limitless power filled every inch of him, and yet, there was no time for him to revel in any excitement. He knew that the blood-colored light shining up into the air would surely attract attention.

“The Blood Stream Sect people are too domineering! You even have to walk on eggshells when simply practicing cultivation!” He was really starting to get nervous, and was well aware that plenty of people in the Blood Stream Sect hated him already. If they found him here, they would be murderously enraged, and the consequences were too horrible to even contemplate.

Just when he was about to flee, a beam of blood-colored light appeared, shooting down toward his location like lightning.

In the blink of an eye, a young woman appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun. She wore a blood-colored gown and a mask of the same color, decorated with the image of a plum blossom.

Xuemei looked into the immortal's cave with a blank expression. Never could she have imagined that someone in the Blood Stream Sect would dare to trifle with her.

The mere idea of someone practicing cultivation right at the doorstep of her immortal's cave was completely outrageous, and she didn't know how to react. She couldn’t even think of anyone in the Lower Reaches of the cultivation world who would have the gall to do such a thing....

She could sense that the blood bottle in her immortal's cave was already empty, and in fact, the blood qi had been drained from it so completely that the bottle was on the verge of shattering.

That bottle had been at work for more than ten years, but had been completely drained in a single night. Even as she stood there, trembling and panting, the last bit of blood qi left the immortal's cave and entered Bai Xiaochun.

Xuemei’s phoenix-like eyes radiated murderous coldness as she turned to look at him.

“Young Lady Xuemei, what a coincidence....” Bai Xiaochun said, feeling a bit guilty. Seeing how furious she was, his first thought was to say that he was just passing by. However, all of the blood qi in the area was still rushing toward him because of his effort to reach the first level of the Undying Heavenly King, and there was nothing he could do to stop that. On the verge of tears, he could think of nothing else to do but change the topic.

“This is your immortal's cave? Why don't we talk things over, I can compensate you....” Before he could say anything else, numerous figures appeared, which were the Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors and elders of Middle Peak’s lower finger. It only took a moment for them to sense the lowered levels of blood qi in the area, and see the strands of blood qi streaming into Bai Xiaochun.

As they realized the implications of what they were seeing, they looked at Bai Xiaochun with murderous glares.

“It was Nightcrypt! He's the reason why the blood qi has been in decline for the past few days....”

“You’re the reason why I got hit by so many backlashes recently!!”

“So this guy did it! Dammit, it was definitely him!”

As their murderous gazes fell onto Bai Xiaochun, he began to shiver.

“Um, hey there Brothers and Sisters. We're all on the same side here, how about I provide some compensation...?” Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead as he prepared to offer an explanation. Before he could, Xuemei lifted her chin, waved her sleeve, and pointed directly at Bai Xiaochun.

“Kill him,” she said, her voice as cold as ice. She only spoke two words, but from those words it was possible to tell how coldly arrogant she was. It was almost like she had just ordered the death of an ant.

When the surrounding Foundation Establishment cultivators heard her words, their killing intent spiked. Part of that was because of their trust in Xuemei’s ability to protect them, and part of it was because they had been driven mad because of the blood qi recently.

Now that they knew who was responsible, how could they not want to kill him? In fact, even if Bai Xiaochun wasn’t actually responsible, he had to be connected to the matter in some way.

Almost as soon as the words left Xuemei’s mouth, the entire group attacked at the same time. In the blink of an eye, numerous divine abilities and magical techniques appeared. Countless streams of blood-colored sword qi all shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Seeing himself being attacked by a whole group of Foundation Establishment cultivators left Bai Xiaochun’s scalp tingling so hard it felt like it would explode. Even with the first level of the Undying Heavenly King, he could do nothing but flee in the face of such an attack.

“You people are all bullies!” he shouted defiantly. “If you think you’re tough, why don’t you fight me one-on-one!?”

Bai Xiaochun was already scared witless; clearly these people really were trying to kill him!

“Outrageous! It's just a bit of blood qi, isn’t it? I'm a Foundation Establishment cultivator of the Blood Stream Sect! I can’t believe you people are trying to kill me! Are you trying to force me out of the sect!?” Trembling and screaming, he sped away from the countless divine abilities and magical techniques. In his mind, Xuemei really was being too domineering; he'd even offered compensation, but all she did was wave her sleeve and stick her chin up into the air. That was his trademark!

Booms filled the darkness of night as the entire lower finger of Middle Peak erupted into chaos. Numerous Foundation Establishment cultivators all flew after Bai Xiaochun, killing intent raging.

However, Bai Xiaochun sped along as fast as a rabbit whose tail had been stepped on.

“They’re trying to kill me! Help....” Feeling completely maligned, he picked up speed as more and more people joined the chase.

The only one who didn't was Xuemei. Gritting her teeth, she walked into her immortal's cave to examine the blood bottle. After a moment, she suppressed her killing intent and adjusted the spell formation to make sure that the bottle wouldn’t break because of the lack of blood qi.

Meanwhile, the entire lower finger was in an uproar, and Bai Xiaochun’s screams rose up into the air, joined by shouts of rage.

“How can this guy run so fast!?”

“I'm going to cut him into a million pieces!!”

“Nightcrypt, I, Master God-Diviner, won’t stop until you’re dead!”

Despite how the Foundation Establishment cultivators gave chase, Bai Xiaochun was too fast, and Middle Peak was too big. He raced back and forth for a full two hours, until he finally managed to shake all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators.

“He’s hiding somewhere!”

“Yeah, but he can't hide forever....”

“Don’t worry, I, Master God-Diviner, might be injured, but I can still take the risk to divine his location!” Gritting his teeth, Master God-Diviner snorted coldly and began the process of divining Bai Xiaochun’s location.

After a moment passed, his eyes turned even more bloodshot than before, and he suddenly pointed off into the distance. As he did, a blood-colored butterfly flew out of the tip of his finger, which the enraged crowd began to follow.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was hiding in a relatively remote immortal's cave, scowling and sighing.

“I didn’t know that was Xuemei’s immortal's cave! I thought it was vacant, and just didn't want it to go to waste. I didn't do it on purpose.” He wanted to fight back, but considering how many people were angry at him, he knew he couldn’t. It was at that point that a blood-colored butterfly suddenly appeared in front of him. Without any hesitation, he burst off at top speed.

As he did, the space where he had just been standing was blasted by countless magical techniques and divine abilities. If he had been even a bit slower, he would definitely have been injured.

Numerous Foundation Establishment cultivators were in the area, and although some of them were of a mind to block his path, he was too quick, and sped away.

Once again, another big chase ensued on Middle Peak.

An hour later, and the crowd had once again lost him. Master God-Diviner’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and a blood-colored butterfly once again sought out Bai Xiaochun.

“Nightcrypt won’t escape. How could he possibly evade my divination magic!”

Over and over again, Bai Xiaochun came to find that no matter where he hid, the blood-colored butterfly would find him, and the enraged Foundation Establishment cultivators would be close behind.

Eventually, he heard Master God-Diviner speaking, and realized that it was his auguries that were revealing his location. That left Bai Xiaochun grumbling in frustration, and yet, there was nothing he could do about it. Although imposter Nightcrypt had studied some divination magic before, he was a novice, and had no idea how to deal with Master God-Diviner.

“These people are all villains! The Spirit Stream Sect is way better. Even with lightning and acid raid, all they did was throw some rocks. But here, the tiniest things gets them all fighting and killing! What bullies!” Sighing, Bai Xiaochun thought about how much he missed the Spirit Stream Sect.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0200 awe-chapter-201

Dawn was approaching, and even as Bai Xiaochun crept along cautiously, thinking about possibly leaving Middle Peak, a blood-colored butterfly appeared right in front of him.

His eyelids twitched, and without any hesitation, he leapt off in another direction. Booms rang out, along with numerous cold snorts.

“You think you can flee Middle Peak!? Impossible!”

“Nightcrypt, Young Lady Xuemei ordered you dead! Since she's going to take responsibility, there’s no way you’ll escape!”

The Foundation Establishment cultivators’ killing intent surged, and the light of magical items rose into the sky as everyone attacked Bai Xiaochun.

Seeing that he was surrounded and incapable of fleeing, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth; by now his eyes were completely bloodshot.

“You people push things too far!” he said, letting out a powerful roar. At the same time, the Mountain Shaking Bash appeared in his mind, a divine ability that could be unleashed after reaching the first level of the Undying Heavenly King. Before, he hadn’t been able to use it, but considering his recent accomplishments, he decided he might as well utilize it.

“I can’t use techniques from the Spirit Stream Sect. But since these people are trying to kill me, I can try to kill them! Unfortunately, I’m all alone, which puts me at a pretty big disadvantage....” Despite how he was roaring at the top of his lungs, he was actually thinking of how to escape. Suddenly, his flesh and blood quivered, and he unleashed explosive power.

That explosion was a convergence of all the power he had at his disposal, transformed into a bashing attack that could crush anything in its path.

Blood-colored light emanated from Bai Xiaochun, and rumbling sounds could be heard as he barrelled forward. He vanished into a blur, and then, one of the Foundation Establishment cultivators who had just been about to launch a divine ability let out a miserable shriek. Bai Xiaochun bashed into him, along with three other nearby Foundation Establishment cultivators. It almost looked as if the group of four was one person.

Bai Xiaochun’s bashing attack caused them all to cough up mouthfuls of blood. They tumbled backward through the air, looks of shock and fear appearing on their faces. They landed 300 meters away, where they coughed up more blood and forcibly shook off the power of the attack that had just hit them.

Everyone else in the area gasped at the way Bai Xiaochun had opened a path for himself. In the blink of an eye, he was off of Middle Peak, much to the shock of everyone present.

“I can’t believe this Nightcrypt is so strong!!”

“Is he really in early Foundation Establishment?”

“He just bashed Elder Brother Zhou, and he’s in mid Foundation Establishment!”

“Who would have thought we would offend someone like that? Well, we can’t let him escape. Young Lady Xuemei said that he must die!”

Everyone exchanged glances, and then Master God-Diviner gritted his teeth and gave chase. A moment later, the rest of the dozens of cultivators joined him.

A whole line of people raced after Bai Xiaochun as he sped through the Blood Stream Sect. When he looked back and saw them, he got even angrier than before, and finally gritted his teeth.

“I’ll go to Corpse Peak! The grand elder there likes me, and according to sect rules, the people from Middle Peak don’t have any authority on another mountain peak!” Eyes flashing with determination, he turned his head and then pointed at the Middle Peak Foundation Establishment cultivators.

“If you people think you’re tough, you’d better keep chasing your Lord Nightcrypt! Anybody that doesn’t chase me is a wuss!” His words caused the killing intent in their eyes to grow even more focused, and they chased him with greater speed than before.

However, none of them were a match for Bai Xiaochun’s speed as he headed toward Corpse Peak.

As soon as he arrived, he waved his hand and produced a jade pendant, which emanated fluctuations that let him pass right through the protective spell formation and onto Corpse Peak itself. The people from Middle Peak didn’t have such qualifications, and were prevented from entering.

“Nightcrypt!!” Gritting their teeth, they could only glare in rage at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, stuck his chin up and then looked at the group standing outside of Corpse Peak.

“Come on! I’m standing right here waiting for you. Bring it on! Let’s fight to the death!” His wording was very domineering and arrogant, causing the Foundation Establishment cultivators’ killing intent to intensify. However, there was nothing they could do. Unless they had a special command medallion, they couldn’t enter Corpse Peak without requesting special permission.

“Ai. Well if you don’t dare to fight me to the death, I guess there’s nothing left to do.” Shaking his head, he flicked his sleeve, ignoring them as he headed up Corpse Peak.

Of course, the higher ranking leaders of the Blood Stream Sect saw what was happening, but didn’t interfere. In fact, some of the prime elders on Ancestor Peak found the whole thing very amusing.

“It’s been a long time since we’ve had a good commotion in the sect. That bashing attack looks similar to the things they do on Lesser Marsh Peak.”

“That kid Nightcrypt is pretty amusing. I can’t believe he got so many people to chase him!”

“Not bad, not bad. I'm a bit surprised he fled to Corpse Peak. If the kid stays alive, he might become another Chosen in the Blood Stream Sect.”

Bai Xiaochun sped along on Corpse Peak. Whenever he encountered local Dharma protectors, he would show them his jade pendant. After looking at it for a moment, they would ignore him.

Eventually, he reached the upper finger, passing quite a few corpse refineries on the way. Overall, Corpse Peak was filled with quite a sinister air.

Thankfully, he had his jade pendant, otherwise it would have been a very dangerous situation. Soon he was standing outside of the immortal's cave belonging to Corpse Peak's grand elder.

“Nightcrypt seeks an audience with the grand elder of Corpse Peak,” he said loudly, clasping hands and bowing. A moment later, the door opened and two attendants appeared.

After seeing it was Bai Xiaochun, they motioned for him to follow.

It only took a moment for Bai Xiaochun to identify the two young servants as refined corpses. Heart pounding with nervousness, he took a deep breath and momentarily considered fleeing. But then, he put a respectful expression onto his face and entered the immortal's cave. Before long, he was standing in front of the cross-legged grand elder.

He looked at Bai Xiaochun, smiling, a thoughtful expression in his eyes. He had also been watching the case play out earlier.

“What do you think? Corpse Peak is far superior, don’t you think? Didn’t I say before that you should pick us? We have everything you could need. Besides, Middle Peak is completely out of control.”

Standing behind the grand elder was a pretty young woman with an expressionless face, who was currently massaging his shoulders. Bai Xiaochun instantly identified her as another refined corpse, and a high-level one at that.

Strangely, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see a single hair on her head, making him wonder if perhaps she had hair growing elsewhere. Although he was curious to know the truth, he didn’t dare to ask any questions.

“Those people are outrageous,” he said in response to the grand elder’s words. “I was just working on one of my techniques, and they wanted to stop me. They even tried to kill me! If I hadn't run fast enough, I might have lost my poor little life!”

The grand elder laughed heartily. “That’s just how we do things in the Blood Stream Sect. They wouldn’t really have killed you, just severely injured you. Although, I have to say, it’s not very often you see someone in the Blood Stream Sect get so many people to chase them.

“You little brat! A single glance is all I need to see what a little devil you are. Well, in any case, just stay here on Corpse Peak. There’s no need to even go back to Middle Peak.” The more the grand elder saw of Bai Xiaochun, the more he liked him.

Bai Xiaochun was very moved by how well the grand elder of Corpse Peak treated him. He didn’t even need to ask for what he wanted: the grand elder took the initiative to give it to him! Taking a deep breath, he quickly nodded.

After a moment of thought, the grand elder looked at Bai Xiaochun and in a very serious tone said, “By the way, those Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors don’t matter. But you can’t provoke Xuemei. She has a powerful background. Just stay out of her way and do not aggravate her under any circumstances.”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit irritated about that. If he didn’t have to keep a low profile and conceal his true identity, he would point out that he was a Prestige disciple of the Spirit Stream Sect, the legacy echelon-designate, and a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert. Any one of those would be enough to shock the wench Xuemei so badly her mask would fall off.

“Hmph. She has a powerful background?” he grumbled inwardly. “My background is terrifying even to me!” With that he stood up a bit straighter, making himself look even more haughty than before.

The grand elder could see that Bai Xiaochun was a bit irritated. Chuckling, he went on to explain to Bai Xiaochun about some of the medicinal incense that was used in corpse refining. It was only when night fell that he let him go and told him to go do some research of his own, after which one of the attendants took him to an immortal's cave on the lower finger. Bai Xiaochun was very moved. Life on Corpse Peak was already much better than Middle Peak.

Two months went by, and Bai Xiaochun never left Corpse Peak. He continued to practice his cultivation and absorb blood qi.

As he became more and more familiar with the practice of converging blood qi, he built up more and more Undying Sword Qi. Now, when the blood qi spread outside of him, it would form the outline of a large sword, and quite rapidly at that.

Of course, the amount of blood qi he required only grew. By this point, though, he didn’t need to go out and about to get what he needed. He could simply remain in his immortal's cave and draw the blood qi toward him.

Eventually, the Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors on the lower finger frowned as they realized what was happening. Although there was no sudden reduction, the gradual reduction of blood qi in the area reduced their cultivation speed.

Soon, their patience began to grow thin, and their killing intent began to increase. Such feelings spread until even Bai Xiaochun became aware of it. Whenever he went out, his heart would pound because of the malevolent glares leveled at him. He suddenly had the feeling that if he did even the slightest thing wrong, their killing intent would explode in the form of action.

“These people are terrifying! Even saying a wrong word will cause them all to attack. They have no patience at all....

“I should probably just leave....” He spent two more nervous months on Corpse Peak before coming to the conclusion that matters on Middle Peak had most likely calmed down. One night when no one was paying attention, he slipped away from Corpse Peak and headed back to his immortal's cave on Middle Peak.

There, he carefully began to practice cultivation. He was careful not to absorb too much blood qi, which caused his progress to slow. However, considering that he was on the verge of a major breakthrough with the blood sword, he could deal with the slight reduction in speed.

Another half month passed. One day, Bai Xiaochun was sitting there with eyes closed as he cultivated the blood sword, when all of a sudden, he made a breakthrough with the Blood Annihilation World!

His eyes snapped open, and he took a deep breath. Eyes shining brightly, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and he waved his finger out in front of him!

“Blood Annihilation World!” As his voice echoed out, the blood qi around him seethed. Blood qi also erupted out from inside of him, transforming into a blood mist that filled the immortal's cave.

As it swirled, Bai Xiaochun’s double handed incantation transformed, and a piercing wind swept through the room, accompanied by cracking sounds.

Soon, the mist began to converge together, transforming into the tip of a sword. Blood qi swirled from the tip down, quickly forming the blade, and then the hilt!

In the end, it was a complete, blood-colored sword!

It was bright red, and seemed strong enough to cut anything in its path. It radiated an ancient pressure that shook the soul; anyone who looked at it would feel like they were wading in a sea of blood. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, its power exceeded that of early Foundation Establishment.

In fact, he was sure that if he fueled it with Heaven-Dao power, even mid Foundation Establishments cultivators would be shocked at the sight.

“It worked!” he said, laughing out loud. The sight of the enormous blood sword filled him with excitement, and convinced him that his months of hard work were worth it.

“I, Bai Xiaochun--” He instantly closed his mouth. Slowly turning his head, his eyes went wide as he looked at something in the corner of the immortal's cave.

Then, he began to sweat.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0201 awe-chapter-202

Bai Xiaochun was certain that he had just looked over at that corner and seen nothing, but now, there was a rabbit standing there....

Even more frightening was that the rabbit's ears were clearly pointed directly at Bai Xiaochun as if it had been listening to him just now. Most terrifying of all was that the rabbit was staring directly at him.

From the look in its eyes, it was waiting for him to finish his sentence....

He and the rabbit stared at each other for a moment, and then the rabbit burst into motion, speeding toward the main entrance of the immortal's cave. Bai Xiaochun shouted and leaped to block its path, but the rabbit was too fast.

Bai Xiaochun could only stare with wide eyes as it vanished out the door.

By this point he felt like he was about to go crazy. He knew that he could very well lose his head over this. If the talking rabbit said the wrong thing, and people found out he was Bai Xiaochun, he would definitely be killed....

Although he'd only spoken half of a sentence, that half sentence was very dangerous, and he didn’t even dare to think of what the consequences might be. Sweat began to drip down his face and neck. He almost considered staying inside and just letting the rabbit say what it wanted. He could scarcely believe that, despite how careful he had been, and how often he had checked his surroundings, the rabbit would manage to show up so unexpectedly. He wasn’t even sure how much of what he'd said it had heard.

“I'm gonna kill you!!” he cried, bursting out of his immortal's cave. However, even as he emerged, he saw the talking rabbit standing on top of a nearby tree, speaking.

“Nightcrypt, you two-timer. Did you forget our pledge of undying love? Did you forget our affection for each other? Why did you change so much…?”

The talking rabbit’s voice was quite loud, and echoed out in all directions, causing quite a few Foundation Establishment cultivators to look over in shock.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. He wasn’t sure who might have said such a thing, but he was now certain that the rabbit had been following him around for quite a while. Spine tingling in fear, he howled, throwing all caution to the wind. Instantly, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he pointed out, causing blood qi to transform into sword qi that sped toward the rabbit.

It was no ordinary sword qi, it was Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Sword Qi, and as soon as he unleashed it, the blood qi in the area was thrown into chaos. At the same time, the sword qi sped through the air, slashing into the tree and completely destroying it. In the nick of time, the rabbit flew out of the tree and sped off in the opposite direction.

“Outrageous!” the rabbit bellowed as it raced along. “It's just a bit of blood qi, isn’t it? I'm a Foundation Establishment cultivator of the Blood Stream Sect! I can’t believe you people are trying to kill me! Are you trying to get me to leave the sect!?”

Bellowing, Bai Xiaochun flew after it, unleashing another blast of sword qi, which slammed into a blood cistern that the rabbit was passing, destroying it.

“Hmmmphhh! If I absorb this blood qi secretly, nobody will ever realize it was me....

“Eee? It looks like this immortal's cave is vacant....

“They’re trying to kill me. They’re trying to kill me!!”

The rabbit continued to spit out lines of dialogue as it ran along. At the same time, rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun chased after it, unleashing one blast of sword qi after another, destroying everything around the rabbit.

The plants and trees were slashed to pieces, and even buildings were destroyed. Middle Peak was instantly thrown into chaos. Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors poured out, to find Bai Xiaochun chasing a rabbit and unleashing countless blasts of sword qi.

Some of them were slow to react, and when the rabbit ran by them, were hit by the blasts, causing blood to spray from their mouths.

“What are you doing, Nightcrypt?!?!”

“Dammit! Do you have a death wish, Nightcrypt!?”

“I let you get away alive all those months ago, and now you dare to show your face!?”

The Foundation Establishment cultivators were enraged, and yet, so was Bai Xiaochun.

“Shut the hell up, all of you!” he bellowed, his eyes bloodshot. By this point, he had decided that he must kill the rabbit no matter what happened. Hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture, he unleashed more blasts of sword qi.

The rabbit dodged back and forth, scurrying about in such a fashion that not a single bit of sword qi touched it. As for the Foundation Establishment cultivators, they flew up into the air to attack Bai Xiaochun. Master God-Diviner was in the crowd, smiling coldly. As far as he was concerned, Nightcrypt was obviously a fool to have gotten so worked up over a mere rabbit.

“I like this rabbit,” he murmured to himself. “It’s very interesting. I wonder whose pet it is?”

Some distance away, Song Que was in secluded meditation beneath the blood waterfall. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and he frowned. A moment later, though, he simply closed his eyes again and continued meditating.

At this point, the rabbit suddenly stopped next to a random immortal’s cave and yelled out in a voice even louder than before.

“I, Bai Xiaochun--” It almost seemed to roar the words at the top of its lungs. The surrounding Foundation Establishment cultivators looked on in shock, and their pupils constricted. Bai Xiaochun was quite famous in the Blood Stream Sect, and virtually anyone would try to kill him if they got the chance. Killing a Chosen from the Spirit Stream Sect, especially one who had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, would count as a huge service to the sect.

To hear this rabbit suddenly talking about Bai Xiaochun caused everyone to look at it eagerly, hoping to hear what it would say next about him.

However, the rabbit simply stood there with a blank look on its face, not saying another word.

Trembling inwardly, Bai Xiaochun bellowed, “I, Nightcrypt, cannot stand to live under the same sky as Bai Xiaochun. How dare you mention him in front of me! Tell me this instant where Bai Xiaochun is!!”

With that, he waved his right hand, causing another blast of sword qi to shoot out. This one was even more powerful than before. As it closed in on the rabbit in a beam of bright light, the rabbit blurred into motion to dodge it. As a result, the immortal's cave behind it was struck by the sword qi and immediately began to collapse. Inside the immortal's cave was a blood bottle and a spell formation. Thanks to the massive blow, the blood bottle immediately shattered.

Of course, that immortal's cave belonged to Xuemei, and was the location where everyone had recently attacked Bai Xiaochun. Afterward, Xuemei had stabilized the blood bottle to keep it safe, but now it had been destroyed.

“I, Bai Xiaochun--” the rabbit bellowed. However, it didn’t say anything beyond those three words.

Blinking, Bai Xiaochun’s mind raced to come up with an idea of what to do. Trying to look as furious as possible, he shouted, “Keep talking! What comes after that!?”

Then he continued to chase the rabbit, unleashing sword qi that slashed into the ground, destroying immortal's caves, but not harming the rabbit.

“I, Bai Xiaochun--” The rabbit was starting to get anxious, and yet, it had nothing else to say.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to relax.

“Dammit! Why won’t you finish that sentence!” he shouted. All of a sudden, he realized that he had pulled a fast one on the rabbit, who was now unable to say anything other than the first three words of the sentence.

“I, Bai Xiaochun--” howled the rabbit, its eyes bright red.

“Tell me immediately!” Bai Xiaochun raged. “Is Bai Xiaochun in Blood Stream Sect territory!? My grudge with him goes all the way back to the Fallen Sword World! I can’t live under the same sky as him! Bai Xiaochun must die!”

Inwardly, he was feeling very proud of himself, and he couldn’t help but be pleased at how smart he was. With that, he unleashed another blast of sword qi, destroying another immortal's cave.

“Tell me! Tell me right now! What comes after the first part of that sentence!”

Bai Xiaochun had thrown all of Middle Peak into complete chaos. As for the rabbit, it was getting very anxious, and had even started trembling. Finally, it started to say more than the three words.

“I, Bai Xiaochun.... Xuemei, I dreamed of you last night. One of these days, I, Master God-Diviner, will definitely make you mine!”

“I, Bai Xiaochun.... Elder Fang, stop it! People might see us....”

“I, Bai Xiaochun.... I, Song Que, am in charge here, aunt! The position of blood master belongs to *me*. And I’m in charge of you too, Xuemei!”

The words being spoken by the rabbit caused all of Middle Peak to be rocked with astonishment. The Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors and elders looked on with odd expressions, and soon, everyone went completely quiet....

Only the voice of the rabbit could be heard, echoing about.

Bai Xiaochun also looked shocked, and suddenly he worried that he had pushed the rabbit too far.

Master God-Diviner was there in the crowd, and to him, it felt like a cold chill was running up his spine. Suddenly, he also wanted to exterminate the rabbit.

“Shut up!! That’s complete nonsense!!”

As soon as Master God-Diviner lunged forward, Bai Xiaochun looked over at him with a strange expression, surprised at the information that the rabbit had just revealed. Did Master God-Diviner really fancy the masked shrew Xuemei?

“That’s right,” he cried, “this rabbit is full of crap!”

Master God-Diviner wasn’t the only one to leap into action. Everyone who the rabbit mentioned began to tremble, and then flew out to kill it.

Even Song Que came speeding out from the blood waterfall, howling at the top of his lungs, looking like a blood-colored god as he unleashed deadly power.

“Shut up!!” When Song Que thought about the fact that everyone on Middle Peak had heard what the rabbit just said, he was filled with the desire to rip the thing to pieces.

The rabbit actually took advantage of the frenzy to vanish. Even after searching for it for some time, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t find it. Although he was feeling much better than before, he made sure that his expression turned grimmer and grimmer.

“That rabbit is an abomination!” he said loudly. “I can’t believe it never finished that sentence!” Relieved, he was just about to head back to his immortal’s cave when he suddenly got a very uneasy feeling. That was when he realized that all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators who had been chasing the rabbit were now staring at him.

Song Que’s eyes brimmed with murderous intentions. Although he hated the mysterious rabbit, the person he hated more was the one who had obviously forced the rabbit into unleashing a torrent of dialogue: Nightcrypt!

Master God-Diviner had a similar look on his face. Many of the other cultivators present had either been injured or had their immortal's caves destroyed by Bai Xiaochun’s sword qi. As of this moment, their desire to kill Nightcrypt was raging out of control.

“Nightcrypt, you destroyed my immortal's cave! It’s about time we settle accounts.”

“You escaped last time, but now, you’re gonna die!”

“Nightcrypt!!”

New grievances piled onto old ones. The surrounding Foundation Establishment cultivators unleashed the power of their cultivation bases and prepared to eradicate Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0202 awe-chapter-203

There weren’t even a hundred Foundation Establishment cultivators surrounding him, only a few dozen. Furthermore, most of them were in early Foundation Establishment, although a handful were in mid Foundation Establishment.

Thankfully, the mid Foundation Establishment cultivators only had grim looks on their faces, and didn’t actually attack. They had a different status than the early Foundation Establishment crowd, and for them to join everyone else in trying to attack Bai Xiaochun would be too much of a loss of face.

Even without them, though, there were still dozens of Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors and elders, who were powerful enough to shake heaven and earth. Furthermore, in the Blood Stream Sect, there was no such thing as debate and discussion; there was only the law of the jungle!

Provoke me, and die!

It was completely different from the Spirit Stream Sect. Here, the only thing that mattered was strength!

Bai Xiaochun’s actions had enraged the people from Middle Peak, and now they were attacking him with deadly force that far surpassed anything from the Qi Condensation stage. Divine abilities burst out, blood qi surged, and blood swords unique to Middle Peak all appeared. In the blink of an eye, more than ten blasts of sword qi descended directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was just calming down from the incident with the rabbit, but now, he began to shiver uncontrollably. It was as if every part of his body were screaming at him that he was in deadly peril.

Booms echoed out, shaking everything in the area. The dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators all attacked at once, making it very difficult for Bai Xiaochun to dodge. In the blink of an eye, more than ten blasts of sword qi slammed into him.

“Let me explain....” he said, staggering backward. Because of the blood qi he had absorbed, his Undying Gold Skin emanated blood-colored light. In combination with the Undying Heavenly King, he was stronger than ever, and his defenses were even more ridiculously strong than before.

The Foundation Establishment cultivators gaped in shock, and many eyes went wide.

“This Nightcrypt has been secretly cultivating a body refinement technique!”

“No wonder he was able to survive the Fallen Sword Abyss. It was all thanks to that body refinement technique!”

“His fleshly body defenses are so strong! Even our combined attack couldn’t shake him!”

Their expressions turned very serious, and yet, they showed no signs that they would cease attacking Bai Xiaochun. The stronger he seemed, the more they wanted to kill him to stave off any problems from cropping up in the future.

Cold gleams flickered in their eyes as they once again unleashed a combined attack.

More than ten beams of sword qi slammed into Bai Xiaochun. No matter how he tried to evade or dodge, the dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators stayed hot on his tail, unleashing constant attacks.

Booms rang out. Some people even went and destroyed his immortal's cave.

“Run if you want, Nightcrypt, you won’t escape this time!”

Rumbling sounds filled the air as divine abilities and magical techniques slammed down. By this point, Bai Xiaochun was in a sorry state, having been repeatedly hit by numerous blasts of sword qi.

Even with his Undying Live Forever Technique, blood still sprayed out of his mouth, until finally, he looked up, eyes bloodshot, expression vicious and even murderous.

What people saw was Nightcrypt, awe-inspiring, bloodthirsty, merciless, and completely enraged.

As of this moment, his blood qi was bursting, and his killing intent surging.

“Enough running!” he said, wiping the blood from his mouth. “You buffoons have tried to kill me three times already. Things have gone too far!! Do you really think I’m scared of you people?!” His hair was in disarray, and his clothing ripped nearly to shreds. From the moment he had arrived in the Blood Stream Sect, he had been on edge and nervous, and now, all of that anxiety had reached a bursting point.

He was tired of being wound so tight. These people wanted to kill him, and weren’t holding anything back. Their intentions were clear. Murder. The intense sensation of deadly crisis caused Bai Xiaochun to throw his head back and roar at the top of his lungs. Then he took a step forward, appearing directly in front of a young man in the early Foundation Establishment stage.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was vicious as he unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash. Blood sprayed out of the Foundation Establishment cultivator’s mouth, along with a miserable shriek as he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut.

At the same time, seven or eight blasts of sword qi shot toward Bai Xiaochun. However, his own blood qi erupted out, shoving them away. Rumbling sounds could be heard as he blurred into motion toward two Middle Peak Dharma protectors. In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, he was right in front of them, his arms outstretched.

The two Dharma protectors’ eyes widened, and they immediately unleashed their reserves of blood qi. Their hands flashed with incantations gestures, causing their qi to take form and rush forward to block Bai Xiaochun. However, his hands were filled with boundless power, and blasted through the blood qi as easily as a hammer smashes through ice. As the qi shattered, Bai Xiaochun’s hands latched onto the arm of each Dharma protector.

“Screw the hell off!” he shouted. Then he jerked his hands to the side, and the two arms exploded into a cloud of blood. Agonized shrieks rang out as the two Dharma Protectors flew through the air to slam into a nearby immortal's cave.

Middle Peak was descending into chaos. Meanwhile, the disturbance to the blood qi in the sect caused quite a few

Foundation Establishment cultivators from Nameless Peak, Corpse Peak, and Lesser Marsh Peak to look over in surprise.

Even the grand elders turned their heads to see what was happening, as did the blood masters, who looked toward Middle Peak from within their temples.

On Ancestor Peak, the prime elders sent out streams of divine sense to observe Bai Xiaochun fighting against the crowd on Middle Peak.

“Who is that kid?”

“What a devilish personality! Look at how many people he got to attack him.”

“Hahaha! Now that’s how we do things in the Blood Stream Sect! It doesn’t matter how young you are, when people try to kill you, you have to fight back!”

As the cultivators from the other mountain peaks watched the excitement, Bai Xiaochun crushed one Foundation Establishment cultivator after another. All of them were completely shaken, and left coughing up blood.

“Nightcrypt!” At that point, a cold snort echoed out as Song Que transformed into a blood-colored mountain peak, complete with three 30-meter-long blood-colored streams of sword qi that caused the entire area to shake.

“Sword qi? I have some too!” Eyes bloodshot, Bai Xiaochun waved his right hand, unleashing the Blood Annihilation World technique. A stream of Undying Blood qi poured out from him, which he sent speeding toward Song Que with the wave of a finger.

This was no ordinary stream of blood qi. Close examination would reveal that it was laced with a golden color. As soon as it appeared, an indescribable aura erupted out.

Massive rumbling sounds filled the air, and all of the blood qi in the area trembled as though a king had appeared, and even raced toward it at top speed.

As the local blood qi was sucked into the sword qi, the image of the sword grew larger. In the blink of an eye, it became like a 30-meter-long mountain shooting up into the sky.

Compared to this sword qi, all other sword qi was like filth. Only Bai Xiaochun’s sword qi was the true and proper type!

A domineering air seemed to fill it, like it was the ruler of all swords in the world. The sky shook, and everyone present felt their hearts pounding in their chests. The sword qi almost seemed impossible to control, as if it could shake everything in existence, even their cultivation bases!

Everyone was completely and utterly shocked.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“What kind of sword qi is that!?!?”

“Heavens! This Nightcrypt has also been cultivating the Blood Annihilation World!?!?”

When the sword qi appeared, even the mid Foundation Establishment elders were shocked. Under the astonished gazes of all the onlookers, the spectacular sword qi shot toward Song Que.

Song Que’s face fell, but he had no time to react. Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds echoed out as his three blasts of sword qi were completely destroyed. Even his mountain peak form was destroyed, and he was revealed, blood spraying out of his mouth, a look of astonishment on his face as he was sent tumbling backward.

“Impossible! You--” Song Que’s scalp was tingling in astonishment. Bai Xiaochun’s sword qi left him completely and utterly shaken. He had never even seen sword qi like this. It was so mighty that it exceeded anything he could imagine. Even the sword qi he had developed by cultivation in the blood waterfall was completely cowed by it!

He wasn’t the only one who was shaken. Everyone in the area felt their minds reeling. Bai Xiaochun’s domineering use of sword qi left their eyes wide and their scalps numb from the shock.

The crowds on Lesser Marsh Peak, Nameless Peak, and Corpse Peak were also looking on with wide eyes. The grand elders of the three peaks were left gasping, and the blood masters’ eyes shone with intense light.

Cries of astonishment could even be heard on Ancestor Peak!

“The level of that sword qi… it’s Blood Qi Plasma!”

“That kid’s name is Nightcrypt? What a genius! I can’t believe he reached such a level completely under the radar!”

“In the Blood Annihilation World, everything comes down to refining the blood. The four levels are Refined Blood Qi, Blood Qi Plasma, Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening, and

Blood Qi Tribulation!” Even more streams of divine sense arrived on Middle Peak to observe the chaotic fighting.

The highest echelons of the Blood Stream Sect leadership were now observing Bai Xiaochun’s sword qi!

It was at this point that Master God-Diviner suddenly cried out, “Kill Nightcrypt! If he doesn’t die, he’ll definitely try to get revenge on us in the future!”

With that, he performed an incantation gesture and attacked. Everyone else seemed to agree, as they all joined forces to attack Bai Xiaochun.

“Something’s off about this guy!” Song Que shouted, glaring murderously at Bai Xiaochun. “That’s not the Middle Peak’s Blood Annihilation World!” He wasn’t sure why, but after exchanging blows with this Nightcrypt, his heart was filled with deep, profound hatred for him, hatred that seemed completely irreconcilable.

It was a sudden and inexplicable feeling, but there it was in his heart.

Bai Xiaochun dodged the attacks, and then looked around at the brutal, vicious expressions on the faces of the people surrounding him. Suddenly, he began to laugh with rage, and his eyes burned with murderous coldness.

“You think this isn’t the Blood Annihilation World? Well, I think I need to show you people what the Blood Annihilation World really looks like!” With that, he leaped high up into the air. Even as the Foundation Establishment cultivators turned into beams of light to follow him, he waved his hand in the direction of Middle Peak!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0203 awe-chapter-204

“Blood qi, gather!” Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared. As his hand waved through the air, something completely and utterly shocking occurred in the midst of the Foundation Establishment cultivators!

Throughout the entire lower finger of Middle Peak, countless strands of blood qi seemed to answer Bai Xiaochun’s call, almost as if they were related to him. They almost seemed to possess intelligence as they sped through the air, radiating something like joy.

Countless strands of blood qi shot toward Bai Xiaochun, merging into him. Every plant, every immortal's cave, every blood cistern, every blood waterfall, every inch of the ground emitted blood qi, which then raced toward Bai Xiaochun.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

It was a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering scene of shocking nature. Everything turned bright red as matchlessly strong blood qi blotted out the sky. A blood mist rapidly formed around Bai Xiaochun, a mist that rose high into the air above him.

It was as if Bai Xiaochun had become the king of all the blood qi in the area, as if a single word from his mouth would cause it all to rush to his side. All of the blood qi in all of the lower finger of Middle Peak was churning in response to his words.

However, the effect wasn't limited to the lower finger area. Even the blood qi in the upper finger was stirring into motion. A massive column of blood-colored light surrounded Bai Xiaochun, shaking everything around it as it shot into the sky.

All of Middle Peak was devolving into complete and utter chaos.

When the surrounding dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators saw what was happening, they were flabbergasted, and began to shake in terror as they realized that the blood qi in their own bodies was on the verge of bursting out into the open.

Even the mid Foundation Establishment cultivators had looks of utter disbelief on their faces. At the same time, beams of light shot up from the upper finger as numerous late Foundation Establishment experts appeared. Each and every one seemed completely and utterly taken aback.

“What kind of freak is this guy!?!?”

“I can't believe the blood qi is heeding his commands!!”

“Dammit! How could Nightcrypt be so powerful? Why didn't he reach Earthstring Foundation Establishment?!”

The cultivators on Lesser Marsh Peak, Nameless Peak, and Corpse Peak were all struck speechless. Even the grand elders of the three other mountain peaks all had looks of complete awe on their faces as they watched events playing out on Middle Peak.

“This is....”

“The mere sight of it....”

The blood masters from the three other mountains had all emerged from their temples to watch what was happening. They were all young men, each of whom radiated enigmatic auras. Serious expressions could be seen on their faces, and their hearts trembled because of the waves of shock which battered them inwardly.

On the upper finger of Middle Peak, Grand Elder Song Junwan was in the middle of an important meeting with the mountain’s nine bloodstreak elders. Although they had been aware of the fierce fighting going on in the lower finger area, they hadn’t been paying too much attention. But now, the sudden eruption of blood qi left them all completely shocked.

That was especially true when the blood qi in the upper finger began to stir into motion. A look of complete incredulity appeared on Song Junwan’s face. Without even formally adjourning the meeting, she flew out, followed by the nine astonished bloodstreak elders.

The ten of them saw all of the blood qi on Middle Peak erupting in an unheard-of fashion, and then saw Bai Xiaochun hovering in midair, hair flying around him, eyes shining with coldness, surrounded by a boundlessly somber and desolate air. He looked like a blood devil!

“This....”

“Heavens! All of the blood qi on the whole mountain peak is gathering around him!!” The bloodstreak elders were completely shaken, and Song Junwan was beginning to pant.

At the same time, even more divine sense converged on the area from the prime elders on Ancestor Peak. None of them could remain even the least bit calm.

“Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening? How is this even possible!?!?”

“I can’t believe young Nightcrypt has such destiny. He’s reached Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening!!”

“Dammit! Who tested this kid’s latent talent in the beginning? If we’d known he could pull off Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening with his blood sword cultivation, we would have definitely made sure he reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment!”

As the prime elders reeled in shock, an even stronger stream of divine sense appeared, something which completely surpassed the prime elders. It was so powerful that all heaven and earth seemed to distort because of its mere presence.

An ancient voice suddenly echoed out into the minds of the prime elders: “Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening can be stumbled upon by chance, but can never be pursued directly. Among 100,000 cultivators who practice Blood Stream Sect techniques, it would be difficult to find even one person who can build up the reserves necessary to have such a unique Ancestral Awakening. An opportunity like this has only presented itself twice in the past. Few people could ever have detected this within him ahead of time.”

As everyone watched in shock, blood qi surged like mad into the trembling Bai Xiaochun, who let out a long, piercing cry.

The amount of blood qi visible was shocking. Bai Xiaochun was like a black hole, sucking it all in, and as he did, his Undying Skin shone with dazzling light. As of this moment, there was nothing golden about that light; it was utterly and thoroughly the color of blood!

That blood color was a symbol that anyone could identify as the hallmark of the Blood Stream Sect. There was no better way for someone to show that they were using the techniques of the Blood Stream Sect than to do exactly what Bai Xiaochun was doing.

As the blood-colored light spread out in all directions, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and bellowed, and an enormous figure appeared behind him, a creature with green skin, vicious-looking facial features, and long, protruding tusks!

It had claws sharp enough to tear down all walls, a pointed horn that could rip open the heavens, and a long, scale-covered tail that could sweep across anything and everything.

That creature was none other than the legendary berserk ghost!!

The sudden appearance of the berserk ghost indicated that Bai Xiaochun had finally completed the first level of the Undying Heavenly King!

The instant the image of the berserk ghost appeared, the eyes of Lesser Marsh Peak’s grand elder went wide. As for the blood master from Lesser Marsh Peak, he was shaking visibly, and his eyes were glowing with bright light.

“Lesser Marsh Peak must have this Nightcrypt!!” shouted the blood master.

The grand elder from Lesser Marsh Peak had the same reaction, and simply couldn’t contain his excitement. On Lesser Marsh Peak, they had a secret magic that had come from years of research into the hand of the Blood Ancestor, a secret magic that was based on a totem tattoo that depicted the berserk ghost!

Shockingly, Bai Xiaochun's Ancestral Awakening caused an actual projection of the berserk ghost to appear. Everyone on Lesser Marsh Peak was being driven to complete madness.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun hovered in midair, roaring at the top of his lungs, absorbing all of the blood qi in the area. After flowing into him, the blood qi then emerged behind him to form the shape of an enormous blood sword. At first, only the tip was fully formed.

But as he absorbed more blood qi, the blade began to form, and then the hilt!

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it was accomplished in only a few breaths' worth of time. In the end, an enormous, blood-colored sword appeared!

Everyone gasped as Bai Xiaochun raised both hands and grasped the hilt of the sword.

"*This* is my Blood Annihilation World!" he shouted. "You people want to kill me? Well, what if I kill you first!?" Then, he slashed the sword down, sending an arc of blood-colored light shooting toward the dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators below.

As the massive sword descended, more blood qi in the area rushed toward it, merging into it, causing it to grow larger and larger. In the blink of an eye, it was over 30 meters long, radiating an explosive aura of extermination.

The Foundation Establishment cultivators' faces went pale. Howling, they joined forces, unleashing all of the power at their disposal to defend themselves, even their trump cards!

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

When the sword hit the cultivators in the front line, they screamed, and their bodies began to tremble on the verge of collapse. Apparently, it started a chain reaction which quickly spread to the cultivators behind them. The blood sword attack which they had just sustained was now threatening to destroy them all. Song Que was in the group, and a vicious look appeared on his face for the second time as he prepared to put his life on the line to counterattack!

However, it was at this point that a cold snort echoed out.

“Enough is enough! Blood qi, disperse!”

The words echoed out like thunder, causing the blood sword in Bai Xiaochun’s hands to tremble, and then rapidly begin to fall apart and disperse.

All of Middle Peak trembled as a powerful force swept over it. At the same time, countless spell formations and magical symbols appeared on the surface of the ground, which had been placed on the hand specifically to control the blood qi!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened as he sensed the blood qi responding to the voice which had just spoken. It was no longer under his control, almost as if that voice were its true master, and had a much higher level of control over it than he did.

However, moments later, he realized that the truth of the matter was that this person’s control over the blood qi was being exerted by outside force, in sharp contrast to himself. After all, he was related to the blood qi!

Rage filled Bai Xiaochun’s heart. At the moment, he didn’t care who that voice belonged to, he couldn’t hold back from saying, “No, enough is *not* enough! When they tried to kill me, how come you didn’t intervene then? Now I’m trying to kill them, and suddenly you say ‘enough is enough’? I refuse to accept this!”

From the moment he'd arrived in the Blood Stream Sect, he’d been running around with his tail stuck between his legs. Now he was finally taking some action, only to receive the short end of the stick. At the moment, his desire to kill these Foundation Establishment cultivators only continued to grow.

“This is their fault!” he cried, eyes bright red. Although he knew what he was doing might not be the best choice, he exerted all his power to call out to the huge hand, all with the intention of throwing the Blood Stream Sect into chaos. Even if he had to flee the sect afterward, this was his choice. As the blood qi dispersed, as intense pressure weighed down, as the Foundation Establishment cultivators gasped, he burst into motion. In the blink of an eye, he was in front of one of the Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors, whereupon he clenched his hand into a fist and punched out.

That cultivator had just been breathing a sigh of relief. Too slow to react to what was happening, he was struck directly by the fist strike, causing blood to spray out of his mouth as his heart and blood vessels began to explode.

“You--” His eyes went wide, and before he could say anything more, he was dead.

Everyone devolved into chaos and began to flee. Bai Xiaochun was tired of being wronged, and had thrown caution to the wind. His expression was grim, and his eyes radiated killing intent as he attacked once again.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0204 awe-chapter-205

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bright red. He had already dealt with people who wanted to kill him back when he was being chased by the Luochen Clan. That was when he came to realize that the only option in such a situation was to be more vicious than his opponents. Furthermore, he had to kill them before they killed him!

That was the only way to stay alive!

He transformed into a beam of light, causing heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling to fill the area as he appeared next to another of the Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors who had attacked him moments ago, and directly bashed into him.

A boom echoed out, and the Dharma protector screamed miserably as his body shattered into pieces. Bai Xiaochun shot through the blood and gore, then suddenly sped backward and grabbed ahold of the neck off another cultivator who had been preparing to launch a sneak attack. The man screamed as he was subsequently ripped to shreds.

Bai Xiaochun was already soaked in blood, his breath coming in ragged pants, and his eyes bright red.

“Come on!” he bellowed. “What are you running for? Didn’t you want to kill me?! Bring it on!”

He blurred into motion, appearing behind a terrified, fleeing Foundation Establishment cultivator. In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun’s hand clasped onto the man’s shoulder.

Howling, the man tried to perform an incantation gesture, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun’s other hand grabbed his neck and squeezed down hard!

A cracking sound echoed out, and the man was dead.

As Bai Xiaochun turned back around, the other Foundation Establishment cultivators fled like mad, faces filled with terror. Some dove into their immortal's caves and activated the defensive spell formations, others simply tried to get as far away as possible.

Some of them had banded together and were erecting a giant defensive spell formation to prevent Bai Xiaochun from getting to them. Song Que and Master God-Diviner were in that group.

“You’re not even human!!”

“I've never seen a fiendish devil like this before!!”

“Heavens! Nightcrypt is terrifying!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s explosive burst of violence left them completely shaken. To them, he seemed like a fiend, a monster, his clothes soaked in blood, his expression vicious and filled with murder.

Such brutality, such madness, left the minds of all cultivators present completely reeling. Even Song Que was gasping, and as for Master God-Diviner, he was completely scared out of his mind.

These were all Blood Stream Sect disciples, people who disciples from the other sects viewed as wildly brutal. However, as of this moment, those very disciples were looking at Bai Xiaochun and thinking that his brutality was beyond description.

Surprisingly, whoever had just spoken out to stop Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything further.

Even the prime elders and the others were simply watching, clearly moved, and yet doing nothing to intervene. In fact, some of them even approached in person to watch the slaughter unfold.

Breathing heavily, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the group in the spell formation, then grinned coldly as he shot toward a nearby immortal's cave. In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he used his fleshly body power alone to batter to cave open. Moments later, he emerged from the cave dragging the corpse of the Foundation Establishment cultivator who had been hiding within. He tossed the corpse out in front of the spell formation, then sat down off to the side, exhausted. Wiping the blood off of his face, he looked up at the onlookers hovering in midair.

Suddenly, he blinked. Waves of exhaustion spread out through him, wrapping around his muscles and causing them to go slack. At the same time, he felt fear and regret. Although his outburst had allowed him to give vent to his anger, he was now getting nervous.

“I didn't use any Spirit Stream Sect techniques,” he thought, trembling inwardly, “only stuff from the Blood Stream Sect. Technically speaking, my body refinement magic is connected to the Blood Stream Sect. Maybe they’ll punish me, but they won’t kill me. Will they?” Although he thought calling out to the giant hand to try to destroy the Blood Stream Sect, he wasn’t confident at all in being able to succeed.

Middle Peak was completely silent....

Even in the Blood Stream Sect, slaughter like this was a rarity. To see such a fight left everyone completely shocked, and at the same time, changed their understanding of Nightcrypt.

The silence was broken by the ancient voice. “Finished killing people?!”

At the same time, a blurry figure slowly materialized in front of Bai Xiaochun.

It was a middle-aged man wearing a long, blood-colored robe. He had his hands clasped behind his back as he hovered there, looking coldly at Bai Xiaochun. He radiated a sensation of terrifying blood qi, something that seemed to resonate with heaven and earth, to connect with Middle Peak itself!

That blood qi became a mighty pressure that caused even Bai Xiaochun’s spiritual seas to vibrate.

When the man looked at Bai Xiaochun, it felt like he could see right through him, peer into his very depths, see past all illusions. Bai Xiaochun shivered.

Thankfully, the mask he was wearing was a precious treasure from the mysterious sect, and still managed to conceal him. After a moment, the man muttered to himself and retracted his vision. With that, he waved his right hand, sending a small bottle flying toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Exceptional innate talent. Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening. Even better than that, a devilish personality. Sadly, you’re only at Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment....

“There are three Spirit Blood Pills in that bottle. They should heal your injuries and also make you more sensitive toward blood qi.” With that, the man sighed, turned, and took a step forward. A wind blew past, and he was gone.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun looked around in shock. He had been fully prepared to be punished, but instead, the man had gifted him with a bottle of medicinal pills.

Up in midair, the grand elders of the mountain peaks looked down with shining eyes. The reason none of them had spoken up earlier was because of the arrival of the patriarch. Nightcrypt's transformation had been so monumental that the patriarch had personally come to inspect the situation. Considering he had found no problems, the grand elders’ passions now burned even hotter than before.

Not only did Nightcrypt have incredible natural talent, he had killed several people in very rare fashion. Even the patriarch said he had a devilish personality. All of the grand elders were impressed by Nightcrypt’s genius. Then they thought back to how domineering he had been in the fight over the Foundation Establishment Pills, and their admiration grew stronger.

Although killing was against sect rules, they didn't really care. In the Blood Stream Sect, the law of the jungle prevailed. Not a single one of them could claim to have hands free of blood. When people didn’t know what was best for them, and provoked powerful experts, then the fault for their deaths lay at their own hands. When it came to low-level cultivators, the sect rules were more strictly enforced, but that was for their own protection. Foundation Establishment cultivators and the powerful experts above them respected strength and strength alone!

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun's ability to piss people off was quite moving. There was a big difference between making everyone like you, and making everyone hate you, but in the end, the result was the same as far as the leaders of the sect were concerned.

When it came to success in those matters, the former would be champions of justice, the latter, devils.

Considering he had such a devilish personality, if Nightcrypt could stay alive, then once his cultivation base improved, he would be a champion of the ages. Either he would conquer everything under the heavens, or the heavens would conquer him.

The grand elder from Lesser Marsh Peak, the tall, burly cultivator, flew out with a smile on his face.

"Junior Brother Nightcrypt, come with me to Lesser Marsh Peak! With that body refinement technique of yours, it would be a huge waste for you to not come to Lesser Marsh Peak! If you agree, I'll let you reside on the upper finger! Come! I guarantee you'll make incredible, unheard-of achievements in body refinement!!"

Bai Xiaochun was a bit stunned by the sudden outpouring of words from the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak. Before he could even react, though, the grand elder from Corpse Peak stepped forward. "Ignore him, Nightcrypt. Join us on Corpse Peak. Corpse Peak will be your home for all eternity! Come! You can have your pick of all the colorful corpses we have!"

"Junior Brother Nightcrypt, they're not being sincere," cried the dwarf from Nameless Peak, who was ready to go all out to win over Bai Xiaochun with his Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening. "Come to Nameless Peak. I'll let you join the Circle of Bloodstreak Elders. With the power of Nameless

Peak behind you, no one will ever dare to provoke you again!”

Bai Xiaochun was at a loss for words. He had caused a huge disaster, killed seven or eight Foundation Establishment cultivators in a row, caused chaos to Middle Peak’s blood qi, and had completely ignored that middle-aged man. Although he didn’t know who that man was, he assumed he was a prime elder, or maybe even a patriarch.

If he had defied someone like that back in the Spirit Stream Sect, and also been responsible for such a disaster, according to the sect rules, he would have been sent to the Hall of Justice to be skinned alive, bereft of his cultivation base, and then destroyed in body and soul.

However, in the Blood Stream Sect, everything was the opposite.

As he stood there stupefied, a flirtatious laugh echoed out as the bewitchingly beautiful Song Junwan appeared. A fragrant breeze accompanied her arrival, and a gleam of deep praise could be seen in her eyes as she looked at Bai Xiaochun as though he were a priceless gem. She came to a stop right in front of him, then turned to face everyone else.

“This is Middle Peak! Are you people here to openly undermine me?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked at the sight of Song Junwan standing in front of him. She was dressed as audaciously as usual; her skirt had a long slit up the side, revealing her milky white legs, a sight which caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to go wide. Before he realized what was happening, he was staring.

The other three grand elders could see exactly what Song Junwan was doing, and they also noticed how Bai Xiaochun was staring at her. They sighed at Song Junwan’s trickery, but could do nothing about it. Sighing longingly at Bai Xiaochun, they turned and left.

After they were gone, Song Junwan’s smile vanished, and her face became very grim as she looked around at the Foundation Establishment cultivators of Middle Peak. As her gaze passed over them, they trembled and bowed their heads silently.

Song Que seemed more scared than anyone, and didn’t even dare to look up. From a young age, he had always feared his aunt....

“You're all dismissed,” Song Junwan said coolly. “Don’t forget to come back later and clean this place up.” Everyone breathed sighs of relief, and then left respectfully. Soon, the area was silent once again.

Song Junwan turned her attention back toward Bai Xiaochun, an enigmatic smile on her face as she leaned forward and lifted his chin with her fair, jade-like hand, forcing him to look her in the eye. “Seen enough, Little Bro Nightcrypt?”

Blushing, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and stood up straight, then clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Big Sis Song.”

“You need to be a bit more careful in the future. The Blood Stream Sect is a chaotic place, and it always has been. Maybe if things were different, we would be stronger in some ways, but there is nothing that can be done about it. All you can do is continue to find powerful enemies to defeat to impress people. As long as the patriarchs are around, the sect will remain whole. They can suppress the chaos when necessary.

“For now, stay on Middle Peak. You’ll be safe here, and the stronger you get, the more respect you will be shown.” She smiled, and it was a smile like a blooming rose, making her somehow more indescribably beautiful than ever.

After a moment of hesitation, Bai Xiaochun asked, “Big Sis Song, was that a patriarch just now?”

“That was Patriarch Limitless!” she replied softly. Seeing Bai Xiaochun’s shocked reaction, she covered her smile with her hand and then left in a gust of fragrant wind.

Bai Xiaochun stood there for a long moment before taking a deep breath.

“So, that was the consummate Chosen from 800 years ago, Master Limitless!” Bai Xiaochun looked around again, shaken. The more time that passed, the more he marveled at how well the Blood Stream Sect treated him. Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, he was always punished for causing disasters. Here, they not only withheld punishment, they actually rewarded him.

All of the mountain peaks were fighting over him, and to top it off, Grand Elder Song Junwan was a smoking hot babe.

This place was the perfect location to cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique. It was his own personal Holy Land, filled with blood qi.

“What a great sect!” Shaking his head, he realized he had to adjust his way of thinking. He was from the Spirit Stream Sect, an enemy of the Blood Stream Sect!

And yet, he couldn’t shake the feeling that the Blood Stream Sect was really great.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0205 awe-chapter-206

By now, evening had fallen, and the moon hung high in the sky. Outside the Blood Stream Sect, that moon appeared as white as ever, but looking at it from inside the sect, it was crimson.

Blood-colored light bathed the sect, making it look even more grim and sinister than before.

Disciples from other sects would shake in fear at such a sight, but Bai Xiaochun had been in the Blood Stream Sect for long enough that he’d grown used to it.

He was currently walking along a moonlit mountain path. Everything around him lay in waste. The ground and trees were destroyed, the immortal's caves collapsed. However, it was very quiet. News about Bai Xiaochun’s battle during the day on Middle Peak had already begun to spread like wildfire through the rest of the sect.

In the Blood Stream Sect, the law of the jungle prevailed, and people only showed respect to the powerful.

During that spectacular fight, Bai Xiaochun had showed a brutal strength, a madness, a bloodthirstiness that struck everyone deep into their hearts. He alone had stood up to dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators, and had even killed seven or eight of them. It was a rare thing even in the Blood Stream Sect, and to many people, Bai Xiaochun had already become the stuff of nightmares.

Not a single person suspected that he wasn’t a Blood Stream Sect disciple, and if anyone had dared to make such an accusation, no one would have believed them....

“I really don’t like fighting and killing....” Bai Xiaochun thought, sighing. After returning to his immortal's cave and finding that it had been completely destroyed, he sat down off to the side and decided that tomorrow, he would go pick a new immortal's cave.

The night passed uneventfully....

However, the cultivators of Middle Peak sat in the darkness, hearts pounding with fear. The events during the day were truly like a nightmare, and all of them feared that Bai Xiaochun would come for retribution. They sat restlessly in their immortal's caves, spell formations active. There were even some who fled Middle Peak altogether.

Of course, word rapidly spread about the madness on Middle Peak, and Bai Xiaochun’s violent outburst. Some of the Foundation Establishment cultivators on Lesser Marsh Peak, Nameless Peak, and Corpse Peak had personally witnessed the event, whereas others only heard about it after the fact. All of them were shocked.

“He personally fought back against dozens of Foundation Establishment cultivators?”

“He actually defied the orders of a patriarch?”

“Everyone just stood by and watched while he killed eight people?!?! The survivors were forced to hide together behind a spell formation?!”

Word spread like mad through the four mountain peaks of the Blood Stream Sect.

Even the Inner Sect disciples on the back of the hand soon caught wind of Bai Xiaochun's actions. All of them were astonished. People had already come to view him as a bloodthirsty fiend, and now, the Inner Sect disciples could only imagine a variety of terrifying images regarding what had occurred.

“Nightcrypt is incredible! He ripped people apart, then drank their blood as he killed the other bystanders!!”

“I heard he's not even a cultivator. He's actually an evil, green-skinned hobgoblin in disguise!”

“He has superhuman strength! A single bump from him can shake an entire mountain!”

All sorts of rumors began to spread. It only took a single night before countless people in the Blood Stream Sect learned about a new person that nobody could provoke, a person named Nightcrypt!

At dawn, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and went to take a walk. By that time, word about him had spread throughout the sect. Even the Outer Sect disciples had heard the stories. In fact, the disciples used various methods to spread the word, and it wasn't long before the cultivator clans in the area had heard the tales.

It was easy to imagine how quickly the other major sects would learn of Nightcrypt's name....

It went without saying that the news spread faster in the Blood Stream Sect than it would have in the Spirit Stream Sect. After all, the Blood Stream Sect disciples always walked around on edge to begin with, and never had much entertainment. Coupled with the fervor they felt toward powerful experts, it ensured that they were always very interested in newly risen Chosen.

Bai Xiaochun almost immediately came to experience that himself. Whenever Foundation Establishment cultivators saw him coming, their expressions would flicker. Those who hadn’t participated in the fighting the day before would smile broadly and clasp hands in greeting.

Bai Xiaochun was moved. Now that he had proven himself, he finally got the same feeling he did when he walked around in the Spirit Stream Sect. His initial reaction was to smile and nod back to them in greeting.

However, in response to his smile, the other Foundation Establishment cultivators’ eyes would go wide with disbelief. Many of them would even subconsciously take a few steps back, hesitant expressions on their faces.

At first, Bai Xiaochun was shocked. But then he put on a cold demeanor and stared icily at them, and the Foundation Establishment cultivators would sigh in relief. To them, that expression seemed much more befitting of Nightcrypt.

“I’m such a good person....” Bai Xiaochun thought to himself, sighing inwardly. Having no other option, he maintained a cold, indifferent expression, glaring here and there. That earned him much more respect.

As he walked along, his eyes started to get tired from all the glaring. Eventually, he reached the pavilion where he could select a new immortal's cave. The old man who had previously treated him with cool indifference suddenly rushed out and offered greetings.

When he realized that Bai Xiaochun had come to choose an immortal's cave, he was at first shocked, but then quickly changed his attitude. Eyes burning with passion, he produced a scroll map and opened it to show Bai Xiaochun.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, what do you think about this one? This immortal's cave has wonderful surroundings, and the blood qi there is incredible!

“Or what about this one? A prime elder once lived there! I usually don’t point that out to anyone....

“There’s also this place? If I remember, there are a few puppets that come with that one.”

Although Bai Xiaochun was moved by the old man’s passionate introduction to the immortal’s cave, his face remained icy and ruthless. Eventually, he frowned. Although the open immortal's caves were better than his old destroyed one, they still weren’t as good as the ones with a lot of blood qi.

Seeing Bai Xiaochun frowning, the old man seemed like he wanted to say something, then hesitated. He looked at Bai Xiaochun for another moment, then thought about the fight from the day before.

Finally, he gritted his teeth and lowered his voice. “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, you don't need to come here to select an immortal's cave.”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun blinked thoughtfully.

Deciding to make things more clear, the old man lowered his voice further. “Remember, in the Blood Stream Sect, we respect the strong and powerful. Many people don’t officially select immortal's caves, they just take them. If you see one you like, kick the old owner out, and it becomes yours.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine brightly. The truth was that he had lived for so long in the Spirit Stream Sect that, deep inside, he wasn’t at all like the Blood Stream Sect people. Sometimes it was hard to think the way they did. Otherwise, he wouldn't have needed the old man to remind him.

Clearing his throat, he maintained his icy exterior, and nodded coolly to the old man. Then he swished his sleeve and turned to leave. Inside, he was filled with the excitement that came from being able to violate a taboo.

The old man watched Bai Xiaochun leaving, and sighed. As far as he was concerned, it was a big pity that Nightcrypt was only in Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Otherwise, he might have had an extraordinary future. Of course, even though he was merely in Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, he was still a brutal fiend who couldn’t be provoked.

Bai Xiaochun walked along, feeling more and more excited, his heart pounding as he looked around.

“What a feeling. I can just take whatever I like? Nothing matters except that I'm stronger, so I can have whatever I want....” He licked his lips in anticipation. This was something that could never happen in the Spirit Stream Sect. It was like finally being able to eat forbidden fruit. He scoured Middle Peak for half a day, and around noontime identified an immortal's cave he liked. It was rather large, and the grounds around it were covered with blood trees. It was almost like a whole world unto itself.

The blood trees all had faces on them, and although their eyes were closed, they seemed completely sinister and bizarre, the type that would strike fear into the hearts of anyone who got near them.

In fact, the only path leading to the door had been overrun by the sinister blood trees. Even from a distance, it was possible to see the faint blood mist that filled the area.

Just barely visible through the blood trees was a blood cistern with dense blood qi. The area was paved with limestone, and there were some refined corpses wearing suits of armor who stood guard.

Next to the cistern was the entrance to the immortal's cave, a huge white door that was carved with intricate spell formations. The spell formations were currently active, flickering with bright light that ensured that the entire area was shielded.

Looking at the scene, Bai Xiaochun licked his lips, and his eyes began to shine.

“What a great location....”

He had secretly absorbed blood qi from this location in the past, and vaguely remembered that it was Master God-Diviner’s immortal's cave. He had asked imposter Nightcrypt, and learned that Master God-Diviner was only in the early Foundation Establishment stage, but as he was very adept at divination and augury, he was very important to the sect.

In the Lone Hell Pocket Realm, he had reached Earthstring Foundation Establishment, but had only achieved a few Tideflows. Even still, it was enough to set him on the path to fame in the Blood Stream Sect.

Therefore, it was no surprise that he had occupied such a nice immortal's cave for such a long time.

Eyes shining, Bai Xiaochun sped forward toward the immortal's cave. As he neared, faces on the blood trees opened their eyes, which shone with killing intent.

However, as soon as they recognized Bai Xiaochun, they began to scream in high pitched voices.

“Nightdevil is here!!”

“It’s Nightdevil!!”

“Heavens! Nightdevil is here for revenge. Master, save me!!”

Inside the immortal's cave, Master God-Diviner gritted his teeth. He both hated and feared Bai Xiaochun, and when he thought about the brutal events from the previous day, he was sure that Bai Xiaochun had come to get revenge. Then he heard the voices crying out from the outside, and his eyes went wide.

“Sure enough, he’s here!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0206 awe-chapter-207

“Nightdevil?” When Bai Xiaochun heard what the blood trees were screaming, his jaw dropped. He had no way of knowing, but because of the brutality of the previous day’s events, quite a few people had taken to calling him Nightdevil.

Annoyed by the shrieking trees, he snorted coldly and said, “Shut up!”

His voice was accompanied by a brutally murderous air that scared the blood trees so much that they started trembling and lapsed into silence. Terrified, the trees that had planted themselves onto the path leading to the immortal’s cave pulled up their roots and cleared the way.

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back, stuck his chin up, and coolly said, “Master God-Diviner, get out here!”

Everyone who heard him was completely shocked.

Inside the immortal's cave, Master God-Diviner’s face when ashen, and a crazed look appeared in his eyes. Gritting his teeth, sweat popping out on his forehead, he cried, “Nightcrypt, don’t push things too far!!”

Bai Xiaochun didn't step into the forest of blood trees. The pressure from the spell formation was too threatening. However, in response to Master God-Diviner’s words, he smiled grimly and then unleashed some blood qi. In the blink of an eye, all of the blood qi in the area began to churn, transforming into a dense mist.

The faces on the blood trees began to quiver, but they didn't dare to scream. They simply began to huddle together in shock.

The Foundation Establishment cultivators in the area could sense what was happening, and saw the shocking blood qi building up around Bai Xiaochun. Inside the immortal's cave, Master God-Diviner sat there with ashen face, chuckling bitterly. The madness in his eyes grew, and just when he was about to jump out and fight to the death, Bai Xiaochun’s cruel voice once again filled the area.

“I’ll give you three breaths’ of time to get the hell out of there,” he said proudly. “I want this immortal's cave.” With that he flicked his sleeve.

Master God-Diviner had been ready to unleash the power of the spell formation to fight to the death with Bai Xiaochun. But when he heard his words, his eyes went wide with surprise. He almost couldn’t believe it. “You think I’ll risk my life based on your kindness, Nightcrypt? What makes you think I’ll believe you?!?!”

Sticking his chin up, Bai Xiaochun replied, “Calm down. I’m a man of my word. If I say I’m going to take your immortal's cave, then I’m going to take your immortal's cave!”

Even as the words left his mouth, the door to the immortal’s cave opened, and Master God-Diviner flew out at top speed, flying off into the air. As he did, his voice echoed out, “Nightcrypt, the Blood Stream Sect is a devilish sect, but we keep our promises. If you go back on your word in front of all these Fellow Daoists, you’ll be hated by everyone! No one will ever believe you again!”

Master God-Diviner was truly afraid. He feared that Bai Xiaochun was intentionally drawing him out of his immortal’s cave to attack him. Even as he flew off, he tossed down the jade pendant to the immortal's cave.

Never could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun really had just come for the immortal's cave, and not his life. In fact, he still couldn’t believe it, and his heart pounded with the feeling of having nearly escaped a deadly catastrophe.

As he caught the jade pendant, Bai Xiaochun stared at the fleeing Master God-Diviner. Only then did he understand what was going on. Sighing, he ignored Master God-Diviner and then stepped into the blood tree forest.

As soon as the blood trees realized they had a new master, they were all smiles, and even began to lavish him with praise.

“Master Nightdevil is mighty and extraordinary, invincible under the heavens.”

“Master Nightdevil is a master strategist! He can succeed with even the most difficult tasks!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the fawning blood trees with a somber, cold expression, and yet, a gleam of encouragement could be seen in his eyes. At first, the blood trees had been very nervous, but when they saw the encouraging look, they mustered their courage and heaped more flattery upon him. Bai Xiaochun sighed and shook his head.

“I really am quite outstanding,” he murmured. “No matter where I go, people are always trying to flatter me. It's annoying, and yet, I can’t really stop them either.” His sighs caused the blood trees’ flattery to increase.

“Compared to Nightdevil, no other devils exist in the world!”

“With a single glance, Nightdevil causes all the female cultivators to swoon....”

“When Nightdevil sighs, the heavens turn dim!”

As the blood trees went all out with their praise, Bai Xiaochun happily stepped into Master God-Diviner’s immortal's cave. The blood qi here didn't seem any less strong than that near Song Que’s blood waterfall. Bai Xiaochun felt even more satisfied than before.

There were seven or eight puppets present which all offered formal greetings. He quickly sent them over to his old collapsed immortal's cave to bring his belongings over.

Soon, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had occupied Master God-Diviner’s immortal's cave spread through all of Middle Peak. Yet again, a whole new set of stories regarding Nightcrypt’s brutality were told.

Half a month went by, during which time the stories of Nightcrypt grew more and more wild. All of the cultivator clans in the area already knew about him.

Soon, everyone was aware that a new, savage figure had appeared in the Blood Stream Sect. He had single-handedly fought an entire group of Foundation Establishment experts, and even killed seven or eight of them. He had drawn upon all the blood qi of Middle Peak to form an enormous, shocking blood sword.

And then there was his Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening, which left everyone completely astonished.

“He has a strange personality, and is completely unpredictable. One second he’ll be slaughtering people left and right, the next, he’s calm and lets everyone off the hook. It’s impossible to figure him out....”

“I heard that, according to Patriarch Limitless, it was Nightcrypt’s devilish personality that enabled him to escape alive from the Spirit Stream Sect's Bai Xiaochun. Nightcrypt has obviously been extraordinary for some time!”

“Not even Song Que is a match for him! It’s too bad he’s only at Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Otherwise, he'd be even stronger than he is now!”

“That’s nothing. I heard that the grand elders of all four mountain peaks fought over him. In the end, he chose Grand Elder Song Junwan of Middle Peak. What a pity....”

Of course, news leaked from Blood Stream Sect territory into the territory of other sects. Eventually, even the warring Profound Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect had heard of Nightcrypt.

The Spirit Stream Sect was closer than they were to the Blood Stream Sect, so they were privy to more details. Eventually, both the north and south banks of the Spirit Stream Sect were abuzz with the topic.

Ghostfang was in secluded meditation, but even he heard some of the stories. Frowning, he thought back to the Fallen Sword Abyss, but couldn’t recall a Blood Stream Sect disciple with that name. “Nightcrypt? I don’t remember him....”

Shangguan Tianyou was also in secluded meditation. After thinking the matter over, he couldn’t recall any information about the person in question. But that didn’t matter. He wasn’t happy about anyone being stronger than him. When it came to the Chosen of any generation, they knew that the only way to maintain their place was to keep getting stronger and stronger.

“Nightcrypt....” Zhou Xinqi took a deep breath. The Spirit Stream Sect paid very close attention to the affairs of the Blood Stream Sect. Zhou Xinqi was very shocked by the news, especially when she heard that he had fought a battle with an entire group of Foundation Establishment experts. Gritting her teeth, she focused even harder on her cultivation.

It was the same with Beihan Lie, Lu Tianlei, Xu Song, Gongsun Yun and many other Chosen. The stories about Nightcrypt spurred them into even greater focus. As for the sect leader and the other high level leaders, they also took note, but what interested them more was the Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening.

“If this Nightcrypt keeps getting stronger, he could turn into quite the calamity....”

“Put more resources into the search for Bai Xiaochun. Ever since the kid left, not even a shadow of him has turned up. Even the people we sent to watch over him haven’t been able to turn up any clues.”

The Spirit Stream Sect Chosen and leadership figures were shaken. As for the ordinary Inner Sect disciples, most of them weren’t very impressed with the stories they heard.

“What the hell is a Nightcrypt? Can he even come close to Sect Uncle Bai?”

“Yeah, exactly. If Sect Uncle Bai fought him, this Nightcrypt would be turned to ash in a second!” That was what many people were saying, especially Hou Xiaomei and Big Fatty

Zhang. Xu Baocai was especially fervent in his opinions as well.

In fact, to confirm her theory that the newly famous Nightcrypt would be completely destroyed by the simple wave of Bai Xiaochun’s finger, Hou Xiaomei went to consult with Hou Yunfei, who was in secluded meditation.

After a long moment of thought, Hou Yunfei smiled and said, “Nightcrypt? There were too many people attacking Xiaochun at the same time. I don't really remember them all.”

“I *knew* that guy was a nobody! Big Bro Xiaochun is the *awesomest*.” At first, Hou Xiaomei was very happy. However, her mood quickly soured. “Where do you think Xiaochun is now anyway? How come nobody can find him? I hope he’s not in trouble.”

Hou Yunfei tousled her hair and looked off into the distance.

“Don’t worry about him,” he said with a slight smile. “No matter where he ends up, the people who’ll end up in trouble are the unlucky folks around him. Who knows how many folks he’s driven crazy so far?”

Hou Xiaomei thought back to all of the past events Bai Xiaochun had been involved with, and smiled. Finally, she took a deep breath. Eyes filled with determination, and cheeks flushed, she decided that she had to work hard at her cultivation. Without doing that, there wasn't any hope at all of anything happening between her and Bai Xiaochun.

As stories of Nightcrypt spread, Bai Xiaochun was sitting by the blood cistern, working on his cultivation. With the help of the strong blood qi in the area, he was already working on the second level of the Undying Heavenly King.

By now, more than half of the Heavenspan River water had merged into his first spiritual sea. Before long, the process would be complete.

That would signify that he had begun to break through from early Foundation Establishment. It would also represent another step of progress with his Human Controlling Grand Magic. At that point, he would be able to experiment in ways that he had only been able to dream about before.

Although he hadn’t come across an opportunity to use his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, he was confident that when he opened it, it would be even more powerful than before.

Then there was his Mountain Shaking Bash. He continued to practice with it, which caused booming sounds to echo around his immortal's cave as he grew more and more familiar with it.

He didn’t give up on his work with protomagnetic power either. Although he hadn’t mastered it, he was convinced that it was an extraordinary magic, and his heart thumped with anticipation at being able to use the powers of gravity and repulsion.

“If I could completely come to understand it, then if someone stronger than me was chasing me, I could just wave my finger, and they wouldn't be able to get close. As for anyone weaker than me, I could just wave my hand, and they would fly toward me.” When he thought about that, his eyes glittered like diamonds.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0207 awe-chapter-208

“Being able to force people to come and go as I wish. Now that is a level unto itself.” The more Bai Xiaochun thought about it, the more he looked forward to it. He could almost imagine what it would be like when he mastered protomagnetic power, and could reduce things to ash with the wave of his hand. The swish of a sleeve could send enemies far off into the distance, and simultaneously bring friends closeby to protect them.

It was such an entrancing idea that Bai Xiaochun looked at his sleeve for a moment, and then decided to perform some more tests.

He worked hard for more than half a month.

One night, in the middle of his protomagnetic power research, a blood-colored palanquin trundled along toward the sect, carried on the shoulders of eight gargoyles.

On either side of the palanquin were hosts of palace maids carrying blood-colored lanterns that caused blood-colored light to spill out in all directions. Inside the palanquin was Xuemei, wearing her mask, staring grimly at a jade slip she held in her hand.

She had left the sect a few months ago on a mission. After killing some Profound Stream Sect spies in one of the local cultivator clans, she was now on her way back to the sect.

“Nightcrypt....” Looking over at the sect, her eyes flickered with killing intent. About a month ago, when she was still in the middle of her mission, she had heard some of the other disciples talking about Nightcrypt. She knew about the chaos on Middle Peak, and also knew that her immortal's cave had been destroyed....

Now, more killing intent roiled in her eyes than before. In the past, she hadn’t thought much about Nightcrypt. To her, he was like an ant, someone who could be killed at the drop of a hat.

If it weren’t for the fact that she had been out on a mission, she would have arranged to have him exterminated. Even the fact that he had been hiding on Corpse Peak wouldn’t have mattered. Of course, she wouldn’t have done the deed herself.

But then Nightcrypt had the gall to actually destroy her immortal's cave. After that came the news that he had fought with a whole group of Foundation Establishment cultivators, and had even drawn upon the blood qi of all of Middle Peak for his Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening. It was truly a spectacular accomplishment.

However, if Xuemei wanted him killed, she could still do it!

Waving her hand, she said, “To Middle Peak!”

In response to her words, the palace maids and gargoyles changed direction. Instead of heading toward Ancestor Peak, they were now moving through the darkness of night toward Middle Peak.

Her arrival caused pressure to spread out that many of the Foundation Establishment cultivators could detect, whereupon they saw the blood palanquin. As for the cultivators who had teamed up to fight Bai Xiaochun, their eyes shone with delight.

That was especially true of Master God-Diviner. He was now living in a relatively simple and crude immortal's cave, and when he saw Xuemei’s palanquin flying through the air, he began to tremble with excitement.

“Let’s see how you hide this time, Nightcrypt! Everyone else is too scared to attack you. Even Patriarch Limitless approved of you. But Young Lady Xuemei reached nine Tideflows, and she’s Patriarch Limitless’ beloved daughter! If she wants to kill you, not even the patriarch would stop her! You're *dead*, Nightcrypt!”

Although it was very quiet on Middle Peak, if you listened carefully, you would be able to hear numerous cultivators doing their best to stifle their breathing. It was like the calm before a storm.

Soon the blood palanquin was hovering in the air above Xuemei’s immortal's cave. When Xuemei saw the rubble down below, she began to breathe heavily. Transforming into a beam of blood-colored light, she shot down toward the immortal's cave.

The wave of her sleeve sent countless rocks and bits of rubble flying away to reveal a destroyed spell formation, and the shattered remnants of her blood bottle.

As she stared at her bottle, her murderous aura grew more and more intense, until it formed an explosive energy around her. Astonishingly, nine vortexes could be seen surrounding her.

Those were the manifestations of the nine Tideflows of her Earthstring Foundation Establishment. They spun rapidly until they were like nine enormous tornadoes, causing widespread shock among the cultivators in the area. A moment later, Xuemei's voice echoed out, filled with boundless killing intent.

“Where is Nightcrypt!?”

Master God-Diviner had been paying close attention to what was happening, and as soon as he heard her words, he burst out into the open and flew over. Clasping hands and bowing deeply, he excitedly said, “Young Lady Xuemei, please take charge here. Nightcrypt is matchlessly vicious, a thug who commits every imaginable misdeed. Not only did he destroy your immortal's cave, he killed many fellow members of the sect. Then he stole my immortal's cave! That’s exactly where you can find him right now. I’ll lead the way, Young Lady!”

Xuemei looked at Master God-Diviner, and her gaze caused his heart to pound. Averting his gaze, he quickly led her toward Bai Xiaochun.

Quite a few other Foundation Establishment cultivators were in the area secretly watching, and they began to follow along. Cruel looks could be seen in their eyes as they anticipated the scene of Young Lady Xuemei slaughtering Bai Xiaochun.

“Nightcrypt is dead!”

“Hmph! Let’s see him be arrogant and aggressive this time! He can bully us, but he’ll be like a bug in front of Young Lady Xuemei!”

“Young Lady Xuemei reached nine Tideflows, shaking the entire eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world. Other than the legendary Bai Xiaochun, who could possibly be a match for her?”

They followed along excitedly until they were outside of Bai Xiaochun’s new immortal's cave.

“Young Lady Xuemei,” Master God-Diviner said through gritted teeth, “the hoodlum is right here!” After everything that had occurred, Master God-Diviner hated Bai Xiaochun down to his very bones.

Xuemei looked at the immortal's cave and the blood trees with the vicious faces. The blood trees opened their eyes, and immediately began to tremble. None of them dared to even speak; apparently they could sense how much more terrifying Young Lady Xuemei was than Nightcrypt.

Not only did they not say a word, they uprooted themselves and moved off to the side, revealing the blood cistern and the immortal's cave.

Xuemei’s killing intent slowly transformed into blood qi, which swirled around her as she began to stride forward. It only took a moment for her to be hovering directly above the immortal's cave. There, she lifted her right hand, which turned blood-red before she then shoved it downward.

All of Middle Peak trembled in response, and the same spell formation appeared that had appeared when the patriarch made a move not too many days before. Massive amounts of blood qi swirled together, converging beneath Xuemei in the form of an enormous, blood-colored plum blossom.

Then, the plum blossom began to drop down toward the immortal's cave!

The cave’s spell formation was activated, and attempted to fight back, but the blood-colored plum blossom was too shockingly powerful. It had been converged from all of the blood qi in the area, and seemed capable of completely dominating the spell formation. The spell formation only managed to hold out for a few breaths’ worth of time before it faded away. Then Xuemei’s attack continued to descend.

Incredible rumbling echoed out in all directions. The crowd looked on excitedly as Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave began to collapse, sending rocks and rubble tumbling in all directions.

“Young Lady Xue is almighty!”

“Hahaha! Nightcrypt, you’re....” Although everyone was cheering at first, they quickly discovered that, unexpectedly, the immortal's cave was empty....

Xuemei snorted coldly, then waved her finger toward the blood cistern. Instantly, blood qi erupted out, slamming into the cistern, which collapsed with a boom. At the same time, someone shot out from inside the cistern, that person being Bai Xiaochun himself.

He had been practicing cultivation happily at the bottom of the cistern when he suddenly heard the commotion up above. Before he could even take the time to check what was happening, the top of the cistern had been destroyed. He wasn’t injured, but he was certainly shocked. He also wasn’t sure what type of mysterious treasure she was using to create such an overpowering aura. That was the only explanation why he hadn’t detected her earlier. “Listen, we’re all Chosen, so please just listen to what I--”

Xuemei looked over at him calmly. There were some people in life that she didn’t view as insects, but Nightcrypt wasn't one of those people.

She waved her finger again, and Bai Xiaochun immediately felt a sensation of imminent crisis. It was the explosive power of nine Tideflows!

She only waved her finger once, but it contained layer upon layer of power, all of which was bearing down on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was angry; in his opinion, they were all Chosen, so there was no reason they couldn’t sit down and discuss things reasonably. Why did they have to instantly resort to deadly fighting? However, at the moment, he had no choice but to unleash his own blood qi. Raising his hand up over his head, he grabbed the blood sword that formed, and then slashed it out in front of him.

A boom echoed out, shaking everything in the area. As the shockwave spread out, Bai Xiaochun’s hair flew about wildly. For the first time, a brilliant light shone in Xuemei’s eyes, and she snorted coldly.

“Not bad after all,” she said coolly. “But external power is nothing more than external power. Blood Qi Seal!” Her right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then she pointed her finger out, and the same thing that had occurred when the patriarch appeared happened again.

All of the blood qi around Bai Xiaochun began to tremble and disperse. Bai Xiaochun looked around, and immediately realized that there were the signs of a spell formation in the ground.

Although she couldn’t control all of Middle Peak like Patriarch Limitless could, she could control a smaller area.

“As of this moment,” she said placidly, “you are nothing more than an ant.” Then she began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. The blood qi in the area had been suppressed, but if he wanted to, he could seize control back, just like he had done before. Unfortunately, if he did that now, it would reveal some secrets that he didn't want other people to know about.

A boom rang out as they slammed into each other. Bai Xiaochun staggered back, his rage growing. As for Xuemei, intense killing intent could be seen in her eyes. She once again performed another incantation gesture, summoning a blood-colored plum blossom which shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

A fierce look could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. Xuemei was far stronger than Song Que, and was in fact the most powerful enemy he had encountered since reaching Foundation Establishment. Even as he was trying to decide how to deal with her, a flirtatious laugh suddenly echoed out in the area.

“What foul wind blew Young Lady Xuemei over here? What’s wrong? You don’t like my Junior Brother Nightcrypt?” Another casual laugh floated through the area as Middle Peak Grand Elder Song Junwan appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun. She was wearing a different outfit than before, but it was just as incapable of containing her voluptuous physique as the other, almost as if she had to breath out just to fit into it. Curves were visible everywhere, along with milky white skin. She was truly explosively sexy....

As soon as the words left her mouth, the blood-colored plum blossom stopped in place in midair. Song Junwan’s hair floated around her, and a fragrant aroma spread out. She was like a ripe peach that caused all of the other Foundation Establishment cultivators to gasp with desire. Tongues sticking to the roofs of their mouths, they bowed their heads to avoid looking at the fatally attractive image in front of them.

Only Bai Xiaochun dared to stare. Then, he spoke up, sounding wronged and bullied.

“Big Sis Song, if you’d been even a bit later, I would have lost my poor little life.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0208 awe-chapter-209

“You’re always looking at me like that, you lecherous little rascal,” Song Junwan said with a flirtatious smile. “What exactly do you think you’re going to do?” Although she didn’t seem to technically be flirting, her spectacular beauty and sparkling eyes would stir the emotions of anyone who saw them.

In his heart, Bai Xiaochun wanted to tell her that she was a vixen. However, if he didn't somehow manage to become grand elder himself, then the only way to get the relic of eternal indestructibility would be to sneak in through her bedchamber. Therefore, he looked down shyly, lowered his voice and said, “Big Sis Song, you’re peerless and sublime. I don’t know why, but I just can’t stop myself from staring....”

With that, he stared at her a bit more. The way he treated her differently was exactly what Song Junwan found so amusing.

Their flirtatious exchange caused all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators to grumble bitterly inside. In addition to the hatred they felt for Bai Xiaochun, there was also a bit of envy....

That was especially true of Master God-Diviner, whose eyes widened into a near glare. Panting, he suddenly wished he could switch places with Bai Xiaochun. He wanted to be the one standing in front of Song Junwan, the Middle Peak grand elder who was in fact a rare beauty. He wanted to be the one flirting back and forth with her!

Xuemei looked at the two of them, and the coldness in her eyes grew more intense. Snorting coldly, she said, “I'm also curious about something. What foul wind was it that brought Song Junwan over here? Get out of my way!”

With that, she waved her hand, and the blood-colored plum blossom suddenly began to move again.

Song Junwan’s smile suddenly turned icy. “Du Xuemei, this is Middle Peak. Don’t let your presumptuousness get the better of you!” [1. At this point you can now see why it’s Xuemei and not Xue Mei, because Xuemei is her given name, with her surname being Du. Since I’m sure people will ask, yes, it’s the same Du character as Du Lingfei. Don't forget that a shared surname doesn't necessarily confirm a relation or connection. For example, Xu Xiaoshan and Xu Baocai share the same surname, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're from the same family.]

She waved her right hand, and the spell formation that covered the area suddenly flared to life. Earlier, Xuemei had just barely forced some of it to work, but now, the entire thing was in motion. The blood-colored plum blossom shattered, transforming into massive amounts of blood qi. Most of it scattered, although some of it was absorbed back by Xuemei.

Xuemei stuck her chin up and arrogantly said, “I'm in the middle of something here, why don’t you mind your own business?”

The expression on her face when she looked at Song Junwan was different than when she looked at others; it was one of derision, and even intentional provocation.

“This *is* my business. I dare you to do something to Nightcrypt! Try it, and see what happens!” Laughing coldly, Song Junwan’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and she waved her finger toward the ground. Instantly, the spell formation expanded, and in the blink of an eye, all of the lower finger was lit up. Song Junwan’s eyes shone with just as much derision and provocation as Xuemei's.

Moved, Bai Xiaochun remained behind Song Junwan, glaring hatefully at Xuemei.

Xuemei took a step forward, and her cultivation base erupted with power, becoming a tornado of nine vortexes that stretched high up into the sky. This was the awe-inspiring power of Earthstring Foundation Establishment and nine Tideflows. “I’d originally planned to simply sever his hands to teach him a lesson. But since you're protecting him now, I think I’ll end his life!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and inwardly, he despised Xuemei even more. If he could reveal his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, then the snap of his finger would leave her shocked into a daze.

“Other people might fear your status, but not Song Junwan. I couldn't care less. If you harm a single hair on Nightcrypt’s head, I’ll cut off one of your fingers!” Song Junwan also took a step forward and unleashed the power of her cultivation base. Although she didn’t have the vortexes of nine Tideflows, she was in the great circle of late Foundation Establishment; the quality of the power at her disposal couldn’t match up to Xuemei’s, but the sheer volume was overwhelming!

Cracking sounds emanated out as the power from the two slammed into each other. Plants and trees in the area were shredded to pieces, and as the shockwave spread out, the Foundation Establishment cultivators’ hearts trembled.

Xuemei was clearly not a match, and after their initial clash, she staggered backward.

Bai Xiaochun was so shaken than he didn’t know what to do or say. He almost couldn’t believe that the beautiful grand elder was treating him so well. For him, she had offended Xuemei and even put herself on the line. Although Bai Xiaochun was of the opinion that one of his hairs was worth a lot more than a finger, he was still very moved by the grand elder’s goodwill.

“She’s really treating me too well,” he thought. “What am I supposed to do...?” Feeling a headache coming on, he hovered behind Song Junwan and stared somberly at Xuemei.

Xuemei gave a cold harrumph. Eyes burning with fury and killing intent, she waved her right index finger, causing a white beam of light to shoot out from her bag of holding. It transformed into a little white bell which had a smiling face engraved on its surface. Upon closer examination, however, the face almost seemed to be crying. If you started at it for too long, your scalp would begin to tingle, and your heart would fill with fear.

As soon as the bell appeared, a bizarre aura spread out in all directions. As it merged into the nine Tideflow vortexes, the Tideflow power erupted, and massive rumbling sounds filled the area. Strangely, the power from the bell seemed to be combining with the nine Tideflow vortexes.

Instantly, the energy in the area skyrocketed, and the bell began to grow larger until it was fully 30 meters tall. As it hovered there in midair, it radiated boundless might and pressure.

Xuemei’s eyes flickered. Thanks to the assistance of this magical item, her cultivation base power was rising until it was on the same level as Song Junwan’s!

Apparently, the ringing sound of the bell could influence the emotions of those who heard it. The faces of the onlookers flickered, and even Song Junwan’s pupils constricted.

This was clearly not a magical item designed for Foundation Establishment cultivators. Considering Xuemei’s status, it was obvious to everyone that this was a precious treasure which had been gifted to her by her father Patriarch Limitless.

It was only possible to imagine how powerful of a precious treasure a patriarch would give to his beloved daughter.

Song Junwan gritted her teeth. She had never gotten along with Xuemei, and both of them were currently engaged in a broader struggle for power. Although their mutual dislike had festered for years, Song Junwan currently had a far more powerful cultivation base than Xuemei. And yet, a precious treasure provided by Patriarch Limitless was enough to fill her heart with fear.

However, Xuemei’s heart also trembled in fear. She might have her precious treasure, but in terms of cultivation base, she wasn’t a match for Song Junwan. Furthermore, when it came to official status in the sect, she couldn’t really compete.

The two of them stared at each other, both of them scared, and neither one willing to make the first move.

Bai Xiaochun remained off to the side, shocked, staring in amazement at the precious magical item.

The two women stared at each other for a while before Song Junwan finally chuckled coldly. Smiling a beautiful smile, she spoke words that cut as deeply as a razor-sharp blade.

“You wear a mask all day, and a mask carved with a plum flower at that. You might as well carve your own ass on that mask, Xuemei. You’re obviously so ugly you don’t dare to show your face in public!” Everyone in the area gasped. It was almost as if they were listening to a stranger, and not the grand elder.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and he looked over at Xuemei, wondering how she would counterattack.

Xuemei snorted coldly. Completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun, she glared at Song Junwan and said, “Oh yeah? Well your good looks are probably why you're so easy! The only way you got to be grand elder of Middle Peak was by losing your virtue in 10,000 affairs! Everybody in the sect knows it! I wouldn’t be surprised if you’d sleep with 100,000 people to become a blood master! Wouldn’t you?!”

Countless gasps echoed out, and the cultivators of Middle Peak stared with wide eyes. As of this moment, Xuemei also seemed like a complete stranger.

Xuemei’s counterattack struck Bai Xiaochun mute. Gasping, he couldn’t decide which one of them was superior. They actually seemed to be evenly matched....

However, something seemed odd about the situation, and suddenly, he wondered if he had felt moved for no reason. By now, the two shrews seemed to be completely ignoring him, and were consumed by hatred for each other....

“Hey, hold on!” he thought. “I’m supposed to be the center of attention. Did they forget about me?” Blinking, he decided to remind them of what was going on.

“Listen, ladies--”

However, before he could finish, both Xuemei and Song Junwan snapped, “Shut up!”

Bai Xiaochun was initially frightened, but then enraged. However, before he could say anything else, Song Junwan laughed coldly. “Shut your ass up, Du Xuemei. I'm not the easy one. The easy one was your mother. She had to do a blood test just to figure out that Patriarch Limitless was your father. That’s the truth, and everybody knows it! Other people might not dare to say it out loud, but go ask any of your father’s friends. They all know!”

Song Junwan laughed coldly. This time, there were no gasps. Everyone was completely dumbstruck. Considering that a patriarch had just been mentioned, they felt almost like they had been struck by thunder. There were even some who started to slowly edge away.

Obviously, in a brutal organization like the Blood Stream Sect, a secret the likes of which had just been mentioned was the kind that people got killed for hearing. Song Junwan might not be afraid, but that was because one of the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs was from her clan. Nobody else present had such a background!

Not willing to be outdone, Xuemei spat, “Slanderer! You think I don’t know the truth about you? Song Que is your love child! And Nightcrypt is your secret lover! If that weren’t the case, you never would have showed up so quickly. You probably stepped out the back door and then just hurried back, didn’t you!? You disgusting slut-bucket!”

This second batch of unverifiable news caused the scalps of all onlookers to tingler in fear. Moments ago, people had been edging away quietly, but at this point, they didn't dare to hear anything more. Hearts pounding, they fled, convinced that if they listened any further, they would end up dead.

Bai Xiaochun was also trembling in terror, and was wondering if he would also be silenced in death to keep the news from spreading.

He began to carefully sneak away, hoping to put as much distance between himself and these two women as possible. The truth was that, in this moment, he was just as scared as he had been back in the Luochen Mountains.

Even as he prepared to flee at top speed, Song Junwan and Xuemei continued to curse each other, revealing even more explosive bits of information. Bai Xiaochun's skin crawled as he heard all sorts of sordid history regarding the Blood Stream Sect.

By this point, the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs were aware of what was happening. Eventually, it seemed they weren't interested in hearing any more, and one of the patriarchs cleared his throat. The sound transformed into rumbling thunder, and a lightning bolt even split the sky overhead.

Song Junwan and Xuemei knew what that meant. Neither of them wanted to back down, but they had no choice. With a final vicious glare at each other, they snorted coldly and parted ways. One flew up to the upper finger, the other left Middle Peak.

Unexpectedly, neither of them spared a second glance for Bai Xiaochun....

Soon, everything was quiet. Bai Xiaochun hovered there in shock for a moment before looking around and sighed. There were few things in life as terrifying as two women who hated each other....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0209 awe-chapter-210

Bai Xiaochun sighed and looked down at his immortal's cave, pondering his miserable existence. Since arriving in the Blood Stream Sect, he’d had two immortal's caves destroyed.

“These people are savages! One slip of the tongue and they destroy your immortal's cave!” Shaking his head, he looked over furiously at the blood trees.

The blood trees had been completely useless; they’d been so scared that they didn’t even offer a warning. Now that he was glaring at them, they were shivering and attempting to look as ingratiating as possible.

Bai Xiaochun was not in a good mood. After glaring at the trees well and good, he warned them that if something like this happened again, he would tear them up by the roots once and for all. After the trembling trees promised that they would behave better in the future, Bai Xiaochun finally let them off the hook.

It took the rest of the night to clean up the mess that was the remains of his immortal's cave. Around dawn, he used spiritual power to repair some of the damage, and then used the rest of the day to recover.

As he sat there cross-legged in the immortal's cave, he thought about the situation, and came to the conclusion that Xuemei probably wouldn't come back for him any time soon. As long as he stayed on the mountain, he shouldn’t have any trouble.

“Just wait until I get that relic of eternal indestructibility!” he said, snorting coldly. “Then I’ll show that hussy Xuemei how awesome I really am!” Then he thought about all the secrets he'd heard, and was suddenly worried again.

“It should be fine, right...?” he thought, trying to comfort himself. However, three days later, he happened to hear that a random disciple had been summoned by the grand elder, and had been punished severely for no apparent reason. Bai Xiaochun immediately started to get more nervous.

From what he remembered, that disciple had been one of the group who heard all of the secrets.

Another day went by, and Bai Xiaochun heard about a disciple who had somehow provoked Xuemei. Apparently, she had punished him by tossing him into Blood Prison. Bai Xiaochun began to pant in shock.

“I'm finished. Kaput. The shrews are starting to tie up all the loose ends!” Bai Xiaochun anxiously tried to get more information about what was happening. During that time, he heard plenty of rumors about cultivators being imprisoned by Xuemei or dispatched by the grand elder to the Profound Stream Sect or Pill Stream Sect on spy missions....

Most unbelievable was a tale about one of the cultivators who was summoned to the upper finger for an audience with the grand elder, and then was suddenly killed.

“That cultivator must have been a complete idiot,” Bai Xiaochun thought. After hearing everything that was happening with the cultivators who had heard the secrets, Bai Xiaochun trembled with fear. He even thought about simply fleeing, but couldn’t bring himself to do so.

“It wasn’t my fault that I heard that stuff! Ai.” He didn’t want to hear the secrets of Xuemei’s past, or know how many people Song Junwan had been in relationships with!

After a few more days passed, no more stories popped up about people being punished, and Bai Xiaochun started to relax.

The next day, as he was in the middle of cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique, his expression flickered, and he suddenly turned his head. Outside of his immortal's cave, a cold voice suddenly rang out, “Nightcrypt, the grand elder has requested your presence.”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard that, his heart seized. Trembling in fear, he opened the door a crack to look at the person outside.

Beyond the trembling blood trees stood an old man wearing a blood-colored robe decorated with complex golden designs. He had his hands clasped behind his back, and from the fluctuations of his cultivation base, he was in the late Foundation Establishment stage.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the blood-colored robe and the golden designs, he knew exactly who this person was. He occupied a position second only to the grand elder, and definitely much higher than Dharma protectors or regular elders. He was a bloodstreak elder! “A bloodstreak elder! C-could he be here to silence me?!”

Usually there were ten or so bloodstreak elders on every mountain, and they cooperated with the grand elder to maintain order.

Bai Xiaochun looked like he was about to cry. His mind replayed all of the stories he'd heard about the cultivators who had been punished over the past weeks, and he got so nervous that his face went pale.

“What do I do? What do I do!?”

The bloodstreak elder was starting to get impatient, and called out, “Nightcrypt, what's with the dillydallying? I’ll give you three breaths of time to get out here!”

Grimacing, Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, but finally realized there was nothing he could do. Gritting his teeth, he walked out of the immortal’s cave. The bloodstreak elder glared at him, clearly displeased with Bai Xiaochun’s slowness. With a cold snort, he led the way toward the upper finger.

Bai Xiaochun followed along, mind racing with plans for how to deal with the situation. His nervousness only continued to mount as he followed the bloodstreak elder to Song Junwan’s immortal's cave.

The grounds were expansive, and covered with blood-red roses that filled the air with a fragrant aroma. Nine blood waterfalls could be seen in the area, which poured into a blood lake. A stone path led across the lake to the area behind the waterfalls, where a mysterious immortal's cave was located.

Only after passing through the waterfalls would one be able to actually see the door of the immortal's cave, which was pitch black. Four young attendants stood there silently on guard. Within the waters of the blood lake, it was possible to see strange fish swimming about. When they occasionally leaped out of the water, vicious teeth and spined fins could be seen before they splashed down out of sight.

“Go in, the grand elder is waiting for you,” the bloodstreak elder said coolly. Then he sat down cross-legged off to the side.

Bai Xiaochun looked around nervously. Of course, it wasn’t lost on him that this location was his ultimate goal in the Blood Stream Sect. The relic of eternal indestructibility was located beneath this very immortal's cave.

Sighing, he walked carefully along the path, his heart pounding in his chest. Eventually, he passed through the waterfalls, and was in front of the door.

The four young attendants looked at him coldly, but didn’t say anything.

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth, and tried to convince himself that the patriarchs knew who he was, so if Song Junwan wanted to make a move against him, they would surely intervene. After all, he had already accomplished an Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening!

Clearing his throat, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Nightcrypt is here to offer greetings, Big Sis Song.”

Song Junwan’s voice drifted out from the immortal's cave in response. “Come in.”

Her voice sounded as lovely as ever to Bai Xiaochun, but there also seemed something vaguely sinister about it. Having no other choice, he braced himself, pushed open the door, and entered.

A delicate fragrance met him as he stepped into the luxuriously decorated immortal's cave. Glowing pearls were inlaid in the ceiling, while the floor was green and scintillated like a gem. There was strong blood qi, as well as abundant spiritual energy, so much so that it made everything a bit hazy.

It was impossible to say how many side rooms there were, but the grand hall in the middle had a hot spring, from which steam rose up into the air. Floating there in the water was a woman, her body just barely visible underneath the surface. She almost looked like a mermaid as she swayed back and forth, her curves so prominent that Bai Xiaochun’s tongue immediately stuck to the roof of his mouth.

“Vixen!” he thought. “Don’t even think of making a pass at Bai Xiaochun! You can't fool me. This is obviously a trap. If I stare at you, you’ll accuse me of offending you!” Gritting his teeth, he forced his gaze down, refusing to look at her.

“Come on in!” Song Junwan said. Bai Xiaochun walked forward, head bowed, until he was at the edge of the water. At that point, it became impossible to look down, so instead, he looked up to study the glowing pearls overhead. Expression somber, he could just barely see her body out of the corner of his eyes. Heart trembling, he yet again cursed the vixen....

Song Junwan could see what he was doing, and chuckled flirtatiously. Then, the sound of rippling water could be heard as she swam to the edge of the hot spring and stepped out. Draping a blood-red bathrobe over herself, she walked over to Bai Xiaochun, then reached out with her jade-like finger and tugged his chin down.

“What's wrong, Little Bro Nightcrypt? No lewd stare for me today?” Her breath smelled like an orchid, and considering how close she was, it was impossible for him not to see her milky white skin. It was a very enticing scene, something almost impossible to describe with words. Anyone who laid eyes on her in this situation would surely be struck mute.

Her eyes sparkled like spring rain, and were both profoundly deep and endlessly charming. It almost seemed like looking into them would leave a man eternally lost within their depths, unable to think, unable to free himself.

Song Junwan slowly leaned over and blew gently into Bai Xiaochun’s ear, and her hot breath made him shiver all the way down to his bones and even his soul.

He almost couldn’t take it. He shivered under the intense stimulation, and even started to pant. By this point his eyes were completely bloodshot. Song Junwan appeared to be smiling, and yet, there was something disdainful and cold in her eyes. Just when she seemed to be on the verge of saying something else....

Bai Xiaochun took a few steps back. Instead of looking up at the ceiling, he stared directly into her eyes. His own eyes were bloodshot, his face distorted almost as if with pain.

“Grand elder,” he said, almost growling, “please behave yourself!” A look of disappointment appeared in his eyes, something like bitter heartbreak. He almost seemed like he couldn’t believe what he was seeing. Song Junwan, who had been on the verge of speaking, suddenly stared back at him in shock, and the coldness in her eyes vanished.

“Grand elder, in my heart, you are holy, like the moon in the sky, eternally sacred, so beautiful that even someone who spotted you from afar would be envious.” He looked hurt, and although his words were spoken softly, they filled the whole immortal's cave.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0210 awe-chapter-211

“Grand elder, I refuse to believe the things that Xuemei said. Not one little bit. In my heart, you are as holy as a lotus, something the filth of the world can’t even come close to touching. You are as beautiful as a sea immortal, completely beyond the sordid dirtiness of the world around you!” As he got more emotional, the pain in his eyes grew more intense.

“Grand elder, allow me to tell you what kind of person you are in my heart. I dream of you night and day. You are an eternal safe haven for my soul, the ideal immortal goddess, something pure and sacred that I must protect for my whole life.” Bai Xiaochun’s sorrow and despair was making him shake, and the disappointment he felt in his heart was turning into a madness that was exploding out as if it had been suppressed for far too long.

He swished his sleeve, and a bit of a murderous aura began to emanate off of him, as if he couldn’t suppress it any longer. It was as if he had climbed a mountain of corpses and waded through a sea of blood to get where he was. Even his veins of steel began to show through. “I, Nightcrypt, can't even count how many people I've killed in my life. I am as vicious as they get. I’ve lost touch with my humanity, with my feelings, with my passion. I am like an empty shell filled with nothing but the coldness of slaughter and brutality. However, in the emptiness, there is a spark of light. And that light sparked into being when I first laid eyes on you, grand elder.”

A tremor ran through Song Junwan’s beautiful frame. She almost seemed to be in a daze as she stared at the disappointment in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. There was pain and grief there, as if something beautiful and holy which he had been completely attached to... had collapsed. It was as if his entire world had fallen apart, and he was now descending into hysteria.

“I didn’t choose Middle Peak, Grand Elder, I chose... you!

“You talk about my lewd stare, but you are mistaken. I have never looked at you in such a way. Every time I look at you, I just want to protect you....”

By this point, his bloodshot eyes overflowed with pain as he shouted, “Grand elder, the person standing in front of me right now is not you!!

“Put on your clothes! Get that look off your face! Enough with the flirting. I want to see the pure and unsullied Song Junwan that exists in my heart, the person that I, Nightcrypt, wish to protect for my whole life. Return to me that which is the light of my life....” From Bai Xiaochun’s twisted expression, he almost seemed to be going insane. His roaring voice echoed about in the immortal's cave, causing the hot spring waters to vibrate. It almost seemed as if he were giving vent to his deepest emotions.

Imposter Nightcrypt’s soul was shaken as he observed the actions of Bai Xiaochun, stupefied by how realistic his wording was, and how his emotions seemed so real.

The immortal's cave was quiet for a moment, but then Bai Xiaochun began to chuckle hoarsely. Sounding disappointed and hurt, he quietly turned away so that he wasn’t looking at Song Junwan.

He was trembling, although the truth was that it was from fear. As soon as he had stepped into the immortal's cave, he had sensed the intangible coldness inside, and he realized that nothing he had planned on the way over would work.

He could only improvise. As soon as Song Junwan emerged from the water, he knew that he had to exercise utmost caution, lest he be finished.

“This stinking shrew is completely nefarious!” Bai Xiaochun really felt as if he’d gotten the short end of the stick. How could he ever have imagined that Song Junwan would be so vicious? Clearly she knew that the patriarchs liked him, and that he was also very famous in the sect. That was why she had chosen to use such tactics on him.

“It's a good thing Bai Xiaochun is no fool!” he thought. “Let’s see what trick she pulls next!” Remaining completely vigilant, he waited for Song Junwan to make her next move.

Song Junwan’s mind was spinning, and she was trembling visibly. Bai Xiaochun’s words had stabbed deep into her heart, like the sharpest of blades. Now that she stood there looking at his back, he seemed taller than ever, as though he could support heaven and earth on his shoulders.

She wasn’t even sure what to say. Nightcrypt had completely shaken her to the core. It felt like a mountain had fallen onto her, something that broke down all the barriers in her mind and left her soul exposed.

She could only stand there quietly trying to calm the chaos in her heart. Her original intention had been to call Nightcrypt over to try to find a reason to punish him. If she could lock him up in Blood Prison, then she could definitely stop any gossip from spreading. Furthermore, it would make it impossible for Xuemei to kill him, which would mean that she would have won the competition between the two of them.

Who would have ever thought that the seemingly lewd Nightcrypt would fall to pieces because of her clothing and her actions? She was especially moved by his last words, when he asked her to bring back the real Song Junwan. That left her thoroughly moved, and suddenly caused something different to appear in her eyes when she looked at him.

Song Junwan took a deep breath. Slowly, the flirtatious expression she usually wore faded away. She waved her hand, and a more conservative garment flew over and settled onto her. She adjusted her hair and straightened up a bit, and suddenly seemed very different. Instead of looking seductive, she seemed truly dignified and beautiful.

She wasn’t very old to begin with, but with this attire, she seemed completely different than before. Inside and out, she radiated a natural grace and charm that made her seem dazzling.

Her skin was fair and white, and without all the makeup, she seemed like clouds reflected on snow. Her hair was now coiled together into a beautiful bun, and as she looked at Bai Xiaochun, her eyes glistened like deep pools of pure water.

Her teeth were smooth and white, her lips plump and red. Anyone who looked at her would think they were seeing the beauty of humanity personified.

“You can turn around now,” she said softly.

Remaining ever vigilant, Bai Xiaochun slowly turned around, making sure to keep the disappointed expression on his face. At the same time, his veins of steel were visible as he laid eyes on Song Junwan.

Almost immediately, he was shaken to the core. He had seen beautiful women before, such as Hou Xiaomei, Zhou Xinqi, or the missing Du Lingfei. They were all exquisitely good-looking. However, there was something graceful and elegant to Song Junwan that few women could compare to.

Her previous flirtatious look had turned into something very dignified, and the change left Bai Xiaochun completely taken aback.

It was a pure, clean beauty, like a hibiscus flower glistening in the morning dew. Completely and utterly astonishing.

Despite being completely tongue-tied and anxious, Bai Xiaochun’s vigilance didn’t reduce in the slightest. On the contrary, it grew stronger. “This Song Junwan, she’s... she's the ultimate vixen!!”

Seeing Bai Xiaochun’s reaction, Song Junwan covered her smile with her hand. There was nothing coquettish about it this time. It was actually very charming, and the look in her eyes caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to leap.

“What's she doing now!?!” he thought, so nervous that his heart was pounding in his chest. For some reason, this latest tactic of hers seemed far more powerful than her opening move. Presumably, she would be making her counterattack at any moment. Was she moving in for the kill?

She smiled charmingly, and before he could respond, she continued on in a serious voice, “Very well, I’m giving you back the Song Junwan that exists in your heart. Happy now?

“The reason I asked you here was to tell you something. Go back and pack your bags. We’ll meet tomorrow at dawn, at the base of Middle Peak. You’ll be joining me as I go with one of my Song Clan's patriarchs to visit the Spirit Stream Sect!

“That Song Clan patriarch is also one of the eight patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and when he heard her mention the Spirit Stream Sect, his heart trembled.

“A diplomatic mission to the Spirit Stream Sect?” Bai Xiaochun was taken aback. The idea of going back to the Spirit Stream Sect as Nightcrypt was strange to say the least.

Song Junwan looked at him and smiled. “What’s wrong. You don’t want to go? I didn’t originally plan to take you. However, if I leave you behind, that slut Xuemei might cause problems. Since I can’t stay to protect you, then I’d prefer to take you with me.

“You need to be very careful whenever you see that whore. She’s ruthless, and also reached nine Earthstring Tideflows. Her father is Patriarch Limitless, and she herself is a potential future matriarch of the sect. There’s nothing she won't do to reach her goals.

“She and I have never gotten along. The slut thinks that she can rely on her status to steal my rightful spot as blood master of Middle Peak. But how could I possibly let her do such a thing!?” Almost as soon as Song Junwan mentioned Xuemei, her eyes flickered with cold light. However, seemingly worried that such a look wouldn’t conform with Bai Xiaochun’s image of her, she suddenly felt the need to explain further.

“From generation to generation, there have always been four blood masters. By now, the blood masters of the other three mountain peaks have already been selected. Only Middle Peak has none. Blood master is a very high position, similar to that of prime elder. After reaching Core Formation, blood masters become blood rippers, which are second only to the patriarchs. Of course, in order to become a blood ripper, you have to first become a blood master!

“The position of Middle Peak blood master has belonged to the Song Clan for many, many years. But this time, Xuemei reached nine Tideflows, and thinks she can steal it away.

“If I fail, then the Song Clan’s power will weaken in the sect, and I can't let that happen.” Having finished her explanation, Song Junwan looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Then, after a moment of thought, he asked, “Why exactly are we going to the Spirit Stream Sect?”

Song Junwan hesitated for a moment. Before what had just happened, she would never have divulged the secret. But now, after a moment of thought, she waved her hand, activating her cave’s spell formation, and sealing the two of them in alone. Then she began to explain.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0211 awe-chapter-212

Song Junwan looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “You and I won’t be the only ones going with the patriarch on the diplomatic mission to the Spirit Stream Sect. There will be others. However, Middle Peak will be in charge.

“There are two purposes to the mission, one primary and one secondary. Let's start with the secondary purpose. We want to get a firsthand look at Bai Xiaochun!” When Song Junwan spoke Bai Xiaochun’s name, her eyes flickered with intense coldness.

Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness mounted, especially when he saw that cold look. From the way she was looking at him, it seemed as if her killing intent were rising to explosive levels.

He gritted his teeth. Killing intent overflowing, he said, “Back in the Fallen Sword Abyss, Bai Xiaochun and I sparked the greatest of enmities! My hatred for him runs as deep as the sea! I refuse to live under the same sky as him. You had better not, under *any* circumstances, allow me to run into him, otherwise I’ll do everything in my power to kill him!”

Of course, he really felt that he was getting the short end of the stick in this situation, and hoped that Song Junwan wouldn’t be offended.

Song Junwan nodded. Sighing, she said, “Bai Xiaochun stole Que’er’s Heavenstring Foundation Establishment, and destroyed all of the Song Clan’s plans. The clan paid a very heavy price to get that chance. We bought the secrets of the Heaven-Dao cultivation base from Patriarch Limitless, all for the purpose of Que’er becoming Middle Peak’s blood master!

“But now, it’s too late for that. Que’er only reached eight Tideflows, and can’t possibly fight Xuemei. Now I'm the only one who has a chance at the blood master spot!” As of this moment, she seemed more than ever like she wanted to kill the Spirit Stream Sect’s Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then began to nod deeply as if he approved of what she was saying.

“Yeah, that’s right,” he said, feeling quite proud of himself. “If it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun, Que’er would definitely have reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!” He couldn’t help but imagine the glorious expression Song Que would have on his face if he were present to hear himself called Que’er.

Song Junwan continued in a soft voice: “The main reason for the diplomatic mission, though, is to see if war is really going to break out between the Blood Stream Sect and Spirit Stream Sect!”

As she spoke, it almost seemed as if she could see the future war playing out.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. Although he had always known that war was likely to break out between the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect, he didn't want that to happen. War was a brutal thing, and if it truly occurred, many people would die.

“The Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect have already been fighting for some time. The Pill Stream Sect is weak, and have already begged the Blood Stream Sect for help.... However, at the same time, it is highly likely that the

Profound Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect have been in secret negotiations regarding an alliance.... If they’re doing that, then so can we!

“The most interesting thing of all is that the Profound Stream Sect also hinted to us about an alliance in the past.... However, that seemed a last-minute thing, something doomed from the beginning to collapse. From all of this, we can see how much scheming and plotting is going on. In the end, the sects can only trust and rely on themselves.” Although Song Junwan’s eyes seemed to contain a bit of cynicism, there was an icy coldness deep within that.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything at first. This wasn’t the first time he'd heard about the war between the Profound and Pill Stream Sects. From the rumors he had caught wind of in the sect, the war had already reached a very brutal level, with countless casualties on both sides.

“It’s hard to see where the true battlefield lies. Although the Profound and Pill Stream Sects are fighting each other, for all we know, they might end up as allies in the end. It’s always difficult to tell who your true enemies are. Determining the identity of your true foe is the most critical aspect of war. Considering the importance of what is at stake, the Stream Sects are going crazy. Nightcrypt... war is not too far off. It could break out at any moment.

“Furthermore, biding time and waiting for the outbreak, waiting until the battlelines are drawn, is not necessarily the best decision. If too much time goes by, it’s possible that two of the other sects could form an alliance. Maybe even all three of them. They might all join forces to defeat the Blood Stream Sect. After all, we are the strongest sect! As the saying goes, once you start riding a tiger, it's hard to get off, so we need to take advantage of the moment before true war breaks out to seize the advantage!” Song Junwan sighed and looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun smiled wryly. From the perspective of the Blood Stream Sect, this was exactly the right move. If they let things progress too far along without making a move, the other three sects might form an alliance. In that case, the Blood Stream Sect would be at a distinct disadvantage, and might even suffer a bitter loss.

“This time, there will be a war! And the Blood Stream Sect must rise up to become a Middle Reaches sect!” At this point, Song Junwan went on to explain matters regarding the Sky River Court in the Middle Reaches. For the most part, her explanation matched the explanation give by Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong of the Spirit Stream Sect.

Bai Xiaochun listened quietly and didn’t ask any questions.

“If war breaks out,” she continued, “we really have only one option, and that is to fight the Spirit Stream Sect. After all, the four great sects are located on the tributaries in the following order: Blood, Spirit, Profound, Pill. The closest to us is the Spirit Stream Sect.

“If we do start fighting, the Blood Stream Sect is confident of winning. But that doesn’t mean the Spirit Stream Sect can be underestimated. They are adept at hiding their resources, and have profound reserves built up. Although we would suffer heavy losses, the Spirit Stream Sect would be destroyed in the end. But then we would have to face the advance of the Profound Stream Sect!

“Even if we came out victorious against them, there wouldn't be many survivors. If all of the sects ended up suffering heavy casualties, there would be no hope of being powerful enough to take out the Sky River Court. Any chance of rising up to a higher position would be dashed.” Song Junwan frowned. By now, she was divulging information that an ordinary Dharma protector would never have access to. Only the higher echelons in the leadership of the Blood Stream Sect would be privy to such matters.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled. After coming to the Blood Stream Sect, he had become very familiar with how powerful and savage they were, and was certain that if war erupted, the Spirit Stream Sect wouldn’t be a match for them. He could only imagine what it would be like to see so many faces he knew awash with blood, never to open their eyes again.

“The war would be one in which the Spirit Stream Sect was wiped out, and the Blood Stream Sect suffered severe losses. The truth is, we don't actually want such a war to happen. If we could prevent it, and maintain the full strength of the Blood Stream Sect, then the Profound Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect could be easily wiped out. Then, we would be much more confident in maintaining the strength necessary to defeat the Sky River Court!” At this point, Song Junwan’s eyes shone with a mysterious light.

“Our biggest concern is this: when the Blood Stream Sect finally moves to take out the Sky River Court, what would happen if the Spirit Stream Sect suddenly allied with the Sky River Court? Then we would be wiped out for sure!

“No amount of promises, not even oaths sworn to the Dao of the heavens, can be trusted when it comes to matters affecting the entire sect!

“Therefore, after much discussion, the patriarchs have chosen to send a diplomatic mission. If the Spirit Stream

Sect agrees, then we will promise not to fight them. The Spirit Stream Sect will not be exterminated, nor will the Blood Stream Sect suffer heavy casualties!” To hear such words coming from Song Junwan’s mouth caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to tremble. As far as he was concerned, the best outcome would be no war at all between the two sects.

“However, that agreement would involve the Blood Stream Sect setting up an enormous spell formation on the Spirit Stream Sect’s portion of the Heavenspan River. That spell formation would seal their sect for a thousand years!

“During those thousand years, anyone would be able to enter, but no one would be able to leave. Disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect would be unable to go out into the Eastwood Continent, and the Spirit Stream Sect’s portion of the Heavenspan River would waste away to some degree. Their spiritual energy would grow weaker. However, it would only be for a short thousand year period. Afterward, the Blood Stream Sect would be in a stable position in the Middle Reaches, and would undo the seal.

“That is the only circumstance in which we could trust the Spirit Stream Sect, and the only way to prevent war between the two of us. Not a single person from the Spirit Stream Sect would die, and the Blood Stream Sect would definitely succeed in rising up to a new level!” By the time Song Junwan finished explaining everything to Bai Xiaochun, she was almost panting.

As for Bai Xiaochun, great waves of shock filled his heart. From what he knew, it seemed unlikely that the Spirit Stream Sect would agree to such terms. To be sealed for a thousand years was basically a prison sentence. Most frustrating of all would be the situation after the thousand-year-period ended....

However, from the standpoint of the Blood Stream Sect, there seemed to be no other options. They didn’t want to go to war, but there was no way they could put faith in simple promises or agreements. They could only trust a powerful magical seal!

Bai Xiaochun was a bit at a loss. It was a weighty matter, so much so that he felt almost as if he were being suffocated. He wasn't sure what choice the Spirit Stream Sect patriarchs would make. Would they go to war?

Song Junwan smiled. “Very well, there’s no need to think too much into the deep things. The patriarchs will handle everything. In the end, there will be war, the question is only who we’ll fight.”

After chatting a bit longer about trivialities, she could tell that Bai Xiaochun was a bit stunned. She didn’t seem upset. After all, it was only natural to react in such a way to news like this.

In fact, when she had heard the information a few days ago, and realized that bitter war would be coming, she had also been shaken for some time.

With that, she dismissed him.

However, even as he turned to leave, Song Junwan suddenly seemed to remember something, and said, “Xuemei was lying. For the entire time I've practiced cultivation, I’ve never had any Daoist partners to pick from. In fact, I’ve never even had a Daoist partner!”

She wasn’t really sure why she felt the need to explain such a thing, and after the words came out of her mouth, she found them to be so outrageous that her face immediately turned bright red.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, stopping in place and looking back at her. When he saw her flushed cheeks and lovely dimples, she looked even more charming than before.

“Another deadly move!” he thought, gasping inwardly. Ducking his head, he hurried out of the immortal's cave. The whole time, he was thinking that the two moves she had used after her transformation were quite formidable. In fact, he had felt almost powerless to resist them.

Some time later, he was back in his immortal's cave, where he sat down cross-legged to think about everything that Song Junwan had told him. Finally, he sighed.

“Is there really no other way?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0212 awe-chapter-213

Three days later at dawn....

Bai Xiaochun was not in a very good mood. The more he thought about war breaking out between the two sects, the worse he felt. On top of that, he now realized that the only reason he was going along on the diplomatic mission was because of his own stellar performance to the grand elder.

Were it not for that, he could have taken advantage of her absence to sneak into her immortal's cave and search for the relic of eternal indestructibility. However, after reminding himself about how strictly guarded it was, he shook his head.

Inwardly, he was scowling miserably, but to everyone who looked at him, he simply looked cold and sinister.

After leaving his immortal's cave, he went down to the bottom of Middle Peak, where a few cultivators were already gathered. There were a dozen or so there, many of whose faces went grim as soon as they laid eyes on him. A few had no reaction, though.

Master God-Diviner was one of the cultivators in the group. As soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun, his expression flickered. Suddenly seeming to remember something, his eyes turned icy, and he gave a disdainful snort. Before, he had been scared of Bai Xiaochun, but considering the Dao oath he had made to Young Lady Xuemei, making him one of her subordinates, his fear had been significantly reduced.

“Everybody is backed by someone powerful,” he thought, chuckling coldly. “Let’s see you try to cause trouble for me now!”

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t paying attention to the various looks given him by the other cultivators. He chose a spot near the back of the group to sit down cross-legged. There had been a couple others sitting in the area, but as soon as he arrived, they respectfully made room. Nightcrypt’s name had already spread near and far.

Before much time passed, more beams of light appeared. There were people in all levels of the Foundation Establishment stage, and after enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Grand Elder Song Junwan appeared, escorted by two bloodstreak elders. Everyone rose to their feet and clasped hands in greeting. However, it was to the shock of everyone present that the previously smoking hot Grand Elder Song Junwan was wearing different clothing than usual.

She no longer seemed overtly sexy, but rather, somewhat conservative. Of course, her fundamental good looks hadn’t changed, and in fact, her new style made her seem, not less beautiful, but more so.

All of the cultivators present were surprised, and many of them looked at her with wide eyes.

Song Junwan smiled faintly, her eyes glistening. Many people were dazzled, and as for Bai Xiaochun, his heart began to beat faster.

Song Junwan looked over the group, and when her gaze came to rest on Bai Xiaochun for a moment, her eyes suddenly widened into an angry glare.

“Another tricky move!” he thought, even more nervous than before. He immediately upped his level of vigilance. He was coming to find that Song Junwan was really hard to figure out. Three days before, she had been smiling like a flower, but now she was glaring at him. Even before he could begin to analyze the situation, Song Junwan’s voice echoed out for all to hear.

“All of you will be accompanying the patriarch on a diplomatic mission to the Spirit Stream Sect. Be on your best behavior, and don't lose face for the Blood Stream Sect!” She was no longer smiling, and her serious tone provoked nods of response among the crowd.

It was at about this time that a blood cloud appeared near Ancestor Peak. Thunderous rumbling sounds could be heard as the cloud rapidly grew to 300 meters in size. Then it began to float down in their direction. Standing atop the cloud was an old man wearing a violet robe. He had a tall crown on his head, and despite his age, stood ramrod straight. He seemed threatening without being angry, and had a shocking aura that filled everyone with a sensation of madness and profundity.

“The Song Clan patriarch!” Bai Xiaochun thought, a tremor running through him. He immediately bowed his head. The old man seemed completely impossible to judge, as though a single strand of divine will from him could cause unending torment.

The other cultivators in the area were also shocked, and clasped hands respectfully. “Greetings, Patriarch!”

“Everyone has assembled, I see,” the Song Clan patriarch said. “Very well. It’s about time to leave for the Spirit Stream Sect!” As his voice echoed out from the cloud, he looked down at the group. That simple gaze caused everyone to feel as if winter were raging inside their bodies, as intense coldness seeped into the depths of their hearts.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit shocked. Including this old man, he had now seen two patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect, the first one being Patriarch Limitless. Of the two of them, Bai Xiaochun was of the opinion that Patriarch Limitless was not quite as frightening as the Song Clan patriarch.

“Oh, that’s right,” he thought. “Patriarch Limitless just recently became a patriarch. He’s not as strong, and is also younger than the Song Clan patriarch. This guy is an old hand; his cultivation base must be terrifyingly powerful. He’s probably lived for years and years.” Suddenly, he gasped as he realized that his body had been grabbed by some invisible force, and was now flying through the air. Up he went, and in the blink of an eye, was on top of the blood cloud.

To his surprise, although the surface of the cloud was fluffy, it was resilient. Looking down, he could see all of the Blood Stream Sect below him. A moment later, the blood cloud shot off into the distance.

Soon, the ground was speeding along down below. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, even if he went all out, he couldn’t even go a third as fast as this.

“So, this is a patriarch....” he thought, swallowing hard. Looking around, he saw all of the other Middle Peak cultivators around him, including Master God-Diviner. None of them seemed to be taking things in stride as well as Bai Xiaochun; their faces were ashen, and they were clearly shocked.

Only Song Junwan and the two bloodstreak elders seemed calm. Sitting cross-legged at the very front, surrounded by a spinning vortex, was the shocking and enigmatic Song Clan patriarch.

He was close enough now that they could see his flowing white hair and wrinkled face. There were even some brown age-spots on his face.

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Bai Xiaochun became accustomed to the speed, and examined his surroundings more closely. There was a defensive spell formation set up that protected the surface of the cloud, ensuring that only a bit of a breeze lifted his hair, and nothing more.

For some reason, he felt a very mysterious excitement at the idea of being able to go back to the Spirit Stream Sect as Nightcrypt. He suddenly started thinking about everyone he knew.

“I wonder if I’ll see Big Fatty Zhang," he thought. "Will he recognize me? Heh heh. And what about Hou Xiaomei? What if I went and called her Little Sis as Nightcrypt? And there’s Zhou Xinqi, Xu Baocai, and Ghostfang....” The more he thought about everyone, the more he smiled.

Even as he reveled in his excitement, a cold snort broke his train of thought, and he looked over to see Master God-Diviner sitting not too far away, a disdainful and cold expression on his face.

“What are you looking at, Master Snortlaugh?!” Bai Xiaochun said coldly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, everyone’s ears perked up. They had been feeling a lot of pressure because of the patriarch and the grand elder, and hadn’t dared to do anything other that sit quietly. Now that they saw something going on between Nightcrypt and Master God-Diviner, they instantly started to get excited.

That was especially true considering the sarcastic words Bai Xiaochun had just uttered. Many of them gaped in shock, temporarily unsure of how to react to hearing the words ‘Master Snortlaugh’.

“What did you just say!?” Master God-Diviner snapped, rage burning in his heart as he glowered at Bai Xiaochun.

“You don't like that name?” Bai Xiaochun replied coolly, his expression indifferent. “Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you liked to snort. You've already snorted a bunch of times at me so far. If you snort one more time, I’m going to call you Master Snortsnort.”

Of course, his words were just bait. Master God-Diviner ground his teeth, and as for the other cultivators, some of them actually started laughing out loud.

A moment later, Master God-Diviner chuckled coldly. “You.... Hmph! So what if you have some sword qi? You and your clowning around make it impossible for anyone else to practice cultivation. You piece of garbage! It’s only a matter of time before you get killed by Young Lady Xuemei!”

Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up proudly. “You claim you have skill in divining things, you charlatan? You’re nothing but a scam artist! Divining my ass! Let me tell you what. Nightcrypt knows everything about the starry sky and the Yellow Springs! With one glance, I can figure out everything there is to know! With one flick of my sleeve, I could turn Master Snortsnort into dust!”

With a patriarch present, no one would dare to start fighting. Bai Xiaochun loved it when talking was allowed but fighting was not, and in such situations, feared no one.

As soon as the biting words left his mouth, eyes went wide among the onlookers. Only now did they understand how gifted Bai Xiaochun was with the tongue, although they couldn’t help but look down on his bragging. As for Master God-Diviner, everyone could see that, despite his rage, he was no match for Bai Xiaochun in a war of words.

“How shameless of you! Hmph!” Gritting his teeth, Master God-Diviner snorted coldly, but before he could say anything else, he was interrupted by Bai Xiaochun.

“See! You snorted again, didn’t you, Master Snortsnort!? Listen, we need to talk this through. Stop with the snorting, okay? If you’re snorting all the time at the Spirit Stream Sect, people might think you're a pig transformed into human shape. That would be a big loss of face!” He sighed.

“You!!” Master God-Diviner wasn’t sure why, but every time he ran into this person, his rage burned almost beyond control. The fact that he was tongue-tied in front of so many people got him so mad that he leapt to his feet.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed coldly, and he waved his right index finger, already starting to converge blood qi.

When Master God-Diviner saw that, his heart seized with shock; he had only stood up, he never imagined that his opponent would attack just because of that.

It was in that instant Grand Elder Song Junwan’s cold gaze flashed over toward them. “Enough!” she said coolly. “Master God-Diviner, sit down over there! Nightcrypt, you sit next to me!”

Taking advantage of the moment, Master God-Diviner sat down. He was just about to snort coldly when he thought back to Bai Xiaochun’s words from just now, and held back. Inwardly, his hatred grew.

Everyone else sat straight and tall, inwardly envious of Bai Xiaochun. Not only did he get to sit next to the grand elder, that got him closer to the patriarch. As of this point, all of them realized that they should try to seize opportunities more often in the future.

“Grand Elder, I'm fine right here!” Bai Xiaochun said, shrinking back a bit. “Why don’t I just--”

Before he could finish, Song Junwan stared at him icily and interrupted, “Get over here!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0213 awe-chapter-214

Bai Xiaochun could do nothing more than glare one final time at Master God-Diviner, and then begrudgingly stand up and walk over to the grand elder. Further up ahead, the Song Clan patriarch sat there, his back straight, radiating the sensation of a vicious wild beast. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but sweat and get even more nervous than before.

“Big Sis Song, you look really pretty today!” he said quickly. The two bloodstreak elders sitting nearby looked over with strange expressions on their faces. Even the Song Clan patriarch seemed surprised, and frowned.

Song Junwan blushed slightly, then glared at Bai Xiaochun. “Enough with the smooth talk. Sit down and be quiet.”

Bai Xiaochun was growing increasingly confused by Song Junwan’s odd behavior. It was very different than how she had acted three days ago. After much thought, he still couldn't come up with any reasons why she would be behaving in such a way. Finally, he just sat there looking around, and occasionally glancing down at the ground.

Soon, he saw a boundless mountain range down below. From this vantage point, the towering mountain peaks seemed to make up a spell formation.

“The Luochen Mountains....” he thought. This was the area that lay between the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect. More accurately, it was the border of Spirit Stream Sect territory. “I can't believe we got here so quickly.”

Shocked, he looked down at the blood cloud. As it sped through the Luochen Mountains, powerful fluctuations seemed to rise up from the mountains, surrounding the blood cloud, locking down onto it, and following it as it proceeded along.

Clearly, the Spirit Stream Sect was in control of the Blood Stream Sect’s movements now. The Song Clan patriarch’s expression was the same as ever as he sat there meditating. Bai Xiaochun thought about it for a moment, and came to the realization that the Blood Stream Sect’s diplomatic mission must have come about only after initial communications with the Spirit Stream Sect.

As the blood cloud sped along, Bai Xiaochun watched the familiar scenery speeding past. He saw a huge giant, a roc-like bird, and an enormous crocodile splashing in the Heavenspan River, only half of its gigantic body visible.

When the gigantic creatures saw the blood mist, they shied away from it, as though it contained some powerful entity that terrified them.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the Song Clan patriarch. However, he didn't say anything. The familiar scenery whizzed by, and soon they were closing in on the Spirit Stream Sect. Bai Xiaochun’s heart instantly leapt.

Even as Bai Xiaochun reveled in his excitement, Song Junwan’s voice drifted into his ears. “I heard that you had quite a few girlfriends in the Blood Stream Sect over the years. Is that true?”

Her voice was cold enough to pierce his bones, like a chill air that left Bai Xiaochun shivering. He looked over in shock at Song Junwan, who simply snorted coldly. Rising to her feet, she ignored Bai Xiaochun as she walked over to confer with the Song Clan patriarch.

The bloodstreak elders did the same thing, and suddenly, Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety increased. Feeling more wronged than ever, he now realized why Song Junwan had treated him so coldly.

“It’s only been three days, and that shrew actually did a background check on me!?” Sighing in his heart, he thought back to the romantic escapades of imposter Nightcrypt, who hadn't even been able to accurately recount how many there had been....

Before long, the blood cloud began to slow down, and the Spirit Stream Sect spread out in front of their eyes. The Blood Stream Sect disciples rose to their feet, radiating brutality and power as they looked coldly at the Spirit Stream Sect.

At the same time, pillars of light shot up from the eight mountain peaks of the Spirit Stream Sect, creating an enormous vortex in the sky. Deafening rumbles echoed out as heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy surged. The south and north banks of the Spirit Stream Sect both erupted with power, making heaven and earth seem like a raging sea filled with towering waves.

Within the vortex, an eye appeared, which radiated boundless pressure as it stared at the Song Clan patriarch on the blood cloud.

The people from the Blood Stream Sect became like rowboats on a stormy sea, hovering on the verge of collapse because of the surge of energy of heaven and earth. Their faces flickered, except for that of the Song Clan patriarch, whose expression remained calm the entire time.

Slowly, his eyes opened, and in that instant, two beams of explosive light shot out. Mountain-toppling, sea-draining power spread out, and as the patriarch rose to his feet, he flicked his sleeve and took a step out into midair.

When his foot landed, he was in front of the heavenly vortex up above. Apparently, he was single-handedly resisting the boundless power therein!

A white-robed, middle-aged man stepped out from the turbid eye in the middle of the vortex. Clasping hands, he smiled and said, “Fellow Daoist Song Yunwen!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized him. It was the same man who had appeared to offer assistance on the day Bruiser had come to life. He was one of the patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect, a man with unfathomable energy that seemed roughly equivalent to the Song Clan patriarch’s.

“Fellow Daoist Li Zimo!” The Song Clan patriarch smiled as he clasped hands in greeting. The two of them exchanged a glance, and then stepped into the vortex.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Although he’d always taken the Song Clan patriarch to be amazing, it was now extremely clear how incredible he was. Obviously, he wouldn’t have come to the Spirit Stream Sect alone if he weren’t completely confident in his own strength.

As the patriarchs entered the vortex, beams of light shot out from both the south and north banks of the Spirit Stream Sect as numerous figures gathered in front of the blood cloud.

The person in the lead was not Zheng Yuandong, but rather, Xu Meixiang. Next to her was the old woman from Irispetal

Peak, who was flanked by Beihan Lie and some other young woman that Bai Xiaochun had never seen before.

Next to Xu Meixiang were Big Fatty Zhang and Lu Tianlei.

Further back were several dozen Foundation Establishment cultivators from the south and north banks. Virtually all of them were familiar to Bai Xiaochun, especially those whom he had assisted in the Fallen Sword Abyss.

“Middle Peak grand elder, you have come from afar to visit,” Xu Meixiang said with a smile. “The sect leader is in secluded meditation, so I’ve come to receive you. Please, follow me!” Xu Meixiang's gaze swept over the crowd and seemed to linger on a few particular individuals, Bai Xiaochun included.

Song Junwan smiled slightly and replied. “Peak Lord Xu, there’s no need for such courtesy. Please lead the way!”

With that, she stepped off the blood cloud. Bai Xiaochun and the other cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect followed close behind. The gazes of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators were not welcoming. Although the Blood Stream Sect cultivators had their murderous auras, the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators’ eyes flickered with killing intent.

Clearly, this generation of Foundation Establishment experts from the Spirit Stream Sect had all experienced fighting and bloodshed. They had a large number of Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators, and although Song Junwan had been aware of this fact, the sight of it caused her eyes to widen.

Song Junwan and Xu Meixiang took the lead, chatting conversationally, but simultaneously probing each other for information. As for the two bloodstreak elders, they were accompanied by the old woman from Irispetal Peak.

The other cultivators were all escorted by various people from the Spirit Stream Sect, who seemed to be forcibly restraining themselves.

Bai Xiaochun was joined by no ordinary cultivator, but rather, by north bank Chosen Beihan Lie. His expression was somber, his gaze penetrating, and he seemed to be constantly on guard as he proceeded along next to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun sighed. For some reason, he suddenly felt the intense urge to call out greetings to everyone he knew.

The group flew into the Spirit Stream Sect to Mount Daoseed. After landing, the people from the south and north banks stared icily at the group from the Blood Stream Sect. A somber, murderous aura was slowly building up.

“Ah, it's so great to be home. Especially when nobody can recognize you!” Bai Xiaochun looked around excitedly, and his gaze was drawn repeatedly back to the unfamiliar young woman who accompanied the old woman from Irispetal Peak.

She was strikingly beautiful, and Bai Xiaochun was surprised that he had never seen her before.

“Looks like the north bank must have some new blood,” he thought, feeling more than ever like a member of the Senior generation. Sighing in satisfaction, he looked over at Big Fatty Zhang.

“I can’t believe Big Fatty Zhang is in the tenth level of Qi Condensation....” he thought, sighing emotionally. However, every time Bai Xiaochun turned his attention to a different person, Beihan Lie would get very nervous, and would tense up vigilantly, and seem to radiate a brutal, bloodthirsty air. He couldn’t help but be shaken by the various stories he'd heard about this Nightcrypt.

“According to the rumors, this Nightcrypt is particularly vicious,” he thought. “He cuts people down like scything wheat! He’s quite the womanizer, and apparently has very low standards. People say he loves the taste of human blood, and demands to drink it every day. Furthermore, he won't rest until he’s sated his desire for women. On a daily basis! This guy is a complete and utter devil! Not only does he have a multifarious personality, he’s completely and utterly brutal. Dammit! He’s looking at Junior Sister Fang and Big Fatty Zhang! Just what is he planning...?” Even as Beihan Lie’s anxiety grew, Bai Xiaochun looked over at him and smiled.

To Beihan Lie, Nightcrypt’s smile seemed cruel and ferocious. But then he realized that even as Nightcrypt smiled at him, he raised his eyebrow, almost as if he were flirting! Beihan Lie gasped, and his expression flickered.

“No need to get nervous,” Bai Xiaochun quickly said. If he hadn’t said anything, nothing would have happened, but since he did, Beihan Lie’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and a magical item shimmered into being.

He wasn't the only one to react in such a way. Other Spirit Stream Sect cultivators could detect what was happening, and looked over menacingly at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun frowned. As far as he was concerned, he had just been saying hello to an old friend. However, even Song

Junwan and Xu Meixiang could sense what was happening. When they looked back, Xu Meixiang’s eyes widened. Big Fatty Zhang and Lu Tianlei looked over with grim expressions, and even the old woman from Irispetal Peak reacted similarly.

Everyone from the Spirit Stream Sect had heard information about the infamous Nightcrypt, and had even seen pictures of him, so they immediately recognized him. That was especially true of Lu Tianlei. With a challenging gleam in his eyes, he flew over toward Bai Xiaochun, whereupon he took his place next to Beihan Lie. Clearly, Nightcrypt’s reputation in the Spirit Stream Sect was one of complete and utter ferocity.

Bai Xiaochun glared at Lu Tianlei. Things weren’t like they had been long ago in the Spirit Stream Sect, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t believe that Lu Tianlei would actually have the gall to challenge him openly.

“Who might that be…?” Xu Meixiang said, pretending not to know.

“That’s my Junior Brother Nightcrypt,” Song Junwan replied with a smile. Then she changed the subject. “I've heard that the Spirit Stream Sect’s legacy echelon-designate reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment? Would it be possible to pay Bai Xiaochun a visit?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0214 awe-chapter-215

Even as Bai Xiaochun was staring in shock at Lu Tianlei, he heard Song Junwan mention his name, and his ears twitched.

He wasn’t the only one. The other cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect went completely silent and looked over at Song Junwan. Bai Xiaochun was completely infamous in the Blood Stream Sect. Not only had he stolen heavenstring energy from Song Que, he had slaughtered countless of their fellow disciples in the Fallen Sword Abyss. For these and other reasons, he was a very important figure who was quite well-known.

“Grand Elder Song, your timing is a bit off,” Xu Meixiang said sadly. “Junior Brother Bai is currently in secluded meditation.”

Song Junwan smiled. Shaking her head, she sighed wistfully and said, “I heard Bai Xiaochun is a mysterious and enigmatic figure, a unique genius. What a pity that I won’t be able to meet him.”

Her good looks combined with her display of emotion made her seem extraordinarily attractive. Although Xu Meixiang was gorgeous in her own way, she seemed almost average in comparison to Song Junwan.

The crowd from the Blood Stream Sect were well aware of how terrifying Song Junwan could be, so they quickly bowed their heads. However, the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators hadn’t been prepared for Song Junwan’s beauty, and couldn't help but look over at her, somewhat dazed. Lu Tianlei's eyes shone especially brightly.

Xu Meixiang's eyes glittered as she said, "Grand Elder Song, with a natural born charmer like you in the sect, how do Blood Stream Sect disciples on Middle Peak ever focus on cultivation?"

Her words instantly shook the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators out of their reveries.

Bai Xiaochun sighed. Feeling more proud than ever, he suddenly wished he could rip off his mask and tell the vixen Song Junwan, "Enough with your scheming, Song Junwan! Lord Bai is right here!"

He looked over a bit contemptuously at Lu Tianlei, who still seemed to be partially in a daze. Then he congratulated himself on his wisdom of getting Song Junwan to change clothes. If she had worn the smoking hot outfit she used to wear, Lu Tianlei would likely have coughed up mouthfuls of blood.

Even as Bai Xiaochun sighed inwardly, Song Junwan covered her mouth with her hand and laughed lightly. Seemingly unaware of the sarcasm in Xu Meixiang's words, she looked over at the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect and said, "I heard that Bai Xiaochun started out on Fragrant Cloud Peak. Peak Lord Xu, do you think it would be possible to go take a quick tour?"

Xu Meixiang had no reason to refuse. In fact, her mission was to show the Blood Stream Sect people around. With a nod, she led them toward Fragrant Cloud Peak.

As they neared, a beam of light flew toward them, within which was a young woman. She wore a long blue gown, and was exceptionally good-looking. She almost looked like a celestial goddess. She was none other than Zhou Xinqi.

Many of the Blood Stream Sect disciples recognized her, and their expressions turned very serious.

“Greetings, peak lord,” she said calmly, hands clasped respectfully. Then she looked over at the people from the Blood Stream Sect.

Xu Meixiang smiled and said, “Xinqi, this is Grand Elder Song Junwan from Middle Peak in the Blood Stream Sect. Would you mind showing us around Fragrant Cloud Peak?”

Zhou Xinqi nodded, then led the group onward.

They started at the foot of the mountain, taking a route that had already been planned out in advance by the sect. Everything that the Blood Stream Sect was able to see had been specially arranged by the Spirit Stream Sect for certain reasons.

Even the disciples who they encountered along the way had been placed there by special arrangement.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at Fragrant Cloud Peak, at all the plants and trees, at Zhou Xinqi as she led them along, and sighed inwardly.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, really have become too famous. Everybody has heard about me. Even Song Junwan came from far, far away just to meet me. Ai. I really need to keep a lower profile. Being famous is really annoying.”

He sighed the whole way. Eventually, about halfway through the tour, Song Junwan frowned slightly and said, “Peak Lord Xu, Fellow Daoist Zhou, since Heaven-Dao Foundation

Establishment expert Bai Xiaochun started out on Fragrant Cloud Peak, do you think it would possible for us to take a look at his old immortal's cave?”

Zhou Xinqi frowned and looked at Xu Meixiang. Xu Meixiang’s eyes glittered, and she returned Song Junwan’s gaze with a smile.

“I've heard of someone from Middle Peak in the Blood Stream Sect,” she said, “someone called Master God-Diviner, an expert in consulting the heavens. Considering the excellent reputation of this Fellow Daoist, what do you say we let him perform some divinations to locate the immortal's cave of my Junior Brother Bai?”

Xu Meixiang looked over at Master God-Diviner.

Master God-Diviner’s expression was cold and aloof, and inwardly he was feeling very proud of himself.

Song Junwan’s eyes narrowed slightly, but after some thought she turned to Master God-Diviner and nodded.

Master God-Diviner cleared his throat, reminding himself that this was his chance to shine, and that he had to take advantage of it. He had to show off his abilities to the fullest extent.

“I might not have powerful combat magic, but when it comes to divining things from the heavens, I'm the best there is, and nobody even dares to call themselves second in line to me!” Glancing contemptuously over at Bai Xiaochun, Master God-Diviner took a few steps forward. As everyone from both the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect looked on, he lifted his right hand and performed an incantation gesture.

At the same time, his eyes seemed to flicker with the shining light of augury. Muttering to himself, his hand flashed faster and faster, and images seemed to be flickering through his eyes. But then a mist seemed to cover his eyes, making it impossible for him to see clearly.

“So, it’s protected by a spell formation!” Master God-Diviner said, chuckling coldly. Apparently he was prepared for this. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a gray chunk of bone that radiated the power of Time. Pressing down hard onto the piece of bone, he performed more auguries.

Gray wisps of smoke rose up from the bone, which Master God-Diviner breathed in. Off to the side, Xu Meixiang and everyone else was watching with bated breath.

Master God-Diviner’s face slowly turned very pale, and beads of sweat popped out on his forehead. Moments later, his eyes opened wide; to his surprise, none of his efforts so far had produced any results. Not even his ancient chunk of bone was capable of penetrating the Spirit Stream Sect’s terrifyingly powerful spell formation. It was so strong that it resisted all intrusive augury magics.

In fact, he could tell that if he performed any further auguries, he would be hit with a backlash that would severely drain him mentally, and potentially even wither him to the point of death. Not daring to continue any further, he gave up. Eyes flashing, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who seemed to be enjoying the show.

Killing intent rose up inside of Master God-Diviner. Stepping back, he turned to Song Junwan and clasped hands formally. “Along the way here, Junior Brother Nightcrypt said that he knows everything about the starry sky and the Yellow Springs. He said that he could wave his sleeve and figure out everything there is to know. Although I, Master God-Diviner, cannot determine the location of Bai Xiaochun's immortal's cave here on Fragrant Cloud Peak, perhaps Junior Brother Nightcrypt can divine its location. With his immortal divination magic, he will surely be able to succeed with little effort. Isn't that right, *Junior Brother Nightcrypt*?"

With that, he stared coldly at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. He had merely been enjoying the show, and had never imagined that the shameless Master God-Diviner would pull him into the matter after his own failure. Master God-Diviner's pale, sweaty face made it clear how difficult, and even dangerous, it would be to perform auguries here.

Xu Meixiang looked over curiously at Bai Xiaochun. Zhou Xinqi's gaze was ice cold, and the others from the Spirit Stream Sect had very serious looks on their faces. As for the group from the Blood Stream Sect, all of them seemed very interested in what would happen next.

Song Junwan frowned, and was about to say something when Master God-Diviner laughed coldly and said, "Junior Brother Nightcrypt, on the way here you said you knew everything about everything. What's wrong? Too scared to perform auguries now? Could it be that everything you said before was mere boasting? If you can divine the location of Bai Xiaochun's immortal's cave, then I, Master God-Diviner, will gracefully concede defeat. In fact, I'll even bow to you as an inferior!"

In response to Master God-Diviner's words, silence reigned.

The Spirit Stream Sect seemed pleased to see the infighting between members of the Blood Stream Sect, especially between two famous individuals like Nightcrypt and Master

God-Diviner. As far as they were concerned, it was a good thing.

On the Blood Stream Sect side, they were just as willing to see Nightcrypt make a fool of himself. That was especially true considering how Master God-Diviner had worded things, which ensured that none of them would say a single word to intervene.

Song Junwan’s eyes narrowed further. She was not happy at all about what Master God-Diviner was doing, and it caused her eyes to shine with cold light.

Seeing everyone looking at him, Bai Xiaochun blinked. How could he not know the location of his own immortal's cave? Furthermore, it wouldn’t hurt at all to take everyone over to see it; there was nothing inside to look at anyway, considering it had long since been reduced to ruins.

Therefore, he proudly stuck his chin up and looked contemptuously over at Master God-Diviner. Clearing his throat, he took a few steps forward and coolly said, “Fine. I, Nightcrypt, have always preferred to keep a low profile. I was never interested in revealing my true skills and abilities here in the Spirit Stream Sect. After all, once I do, it will surely lead to countless headaches.

“However, since Master God-Diviner is taking things so seriously, then I guess I have no choice than to perform some divination!” Waving his sleeve, his eyes began to show with a profound light, and he seemed to seethe with explosive energy.

His hair suddenly whipped about in the air, but instead of performing incantation gestures or muttering to himself, he simply closed his eyes and raised his hands into the air. It almost seemed as if he were communing with heaven and earth, becoming one with the world around him.

The sight caused Master God-Diviner to chuckle coldly under the belief that Bai Xiaochun was simply trying to dazzle everyone with meaningless tricks.

“I couldn’t detect even the slightest fluctuations,” he thought. “What makes you think you can divine anything?!”

One breath of time after another passed. After about twenty, Master God-Diviner’s smile grew even colder, and the surrounding cultivators were starting to feel a bit skeptical. But then, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open, and they shone with bright, mysterious light. Without any hesitation, he pointed off into the distance. “There! Follow me!”

Striding forward, he led the crowd through Fragrant Cloud Peak until they reached a location that seemed to be nothing more than a pile of rubble.

“This is Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave!” he declared proudly, his voice so decisive that it could sever nails and chop iron.

“Are you joking!?” Master God-Diviner said in a bitingly cynical voice. “This pile of rocks is Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave?” Even as he began to laugh coldly, he suddenly felt as if something were off. Looking around at the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators, his eyes widened.

Zhou Xinqi’s jaw had dropped, and Xu Meixiang was gasping. Big Fatty Zhang trembled visibly, and the other Spirit Stream Sect cultivators seemed equally taken aback. All of them were looking at Bai Xiaochun, their eyes shining with indescribably bright light. Obviously, they were surprised, shaken even, by the enigmatic performance of Nightcrypt.

That was especially true of Zhou Xinqi and Xu Meixiang. They were familiar with the workings of the spell formation, and couldn’t imagine how powerful a divination magic would have to be to penetrate it.

When the Blood Stream Sect people saw the expressions on the faces of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators, they realized that Nightcrypt had correctly divined the location of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave. Instantly, their hearts swelled with shock. Although most Blood Stream Sect cultivators could perform a bit of divination magic, most of them were complete novices. It was rare for someone like Master God-Diviner to come along who could master the arts. And yet, Nightcrypt had just completely crushed Master God-Diviner. It was a completely shocking turn of events.

Song Junwan was equally stunned. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, her expression grew more complex than before. Never could she have imagined that he would actually successfully perform the divination.

Master God-Diviner was flabbergasted, and began to tremble in disbelief. “Impossible. This is impossible....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0215 awe-chapter-216

Off to the side were Beihan Lie and Lu Tianlei, who had taken responsibility for keeping an eye on Nightcrypt. Their pupils constricted from the pure shock they felt at seeing the power of his divination magic.

The area went deathly quiet, and all eyes were riveted on Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up proudly, reveling in the astonishment.

Master God-Diviner seemed nearly shocked to death, and was trembling on the verge of collapse. His discomfort and incredulity was like music to Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

“How dare you try to compete with me, puny Master Snortsnort!” he thought. “Hmph! In any other sect it would have been impossible, but the Spirit Stream Sect is my home! Don’t tell me you're going to try to get me to do some more divinations? I could walk around with my eyes closed and not get lost!” Bai Xiaochun felt more wonderful than ever. His dream of always being the center of attention was being realized now more than ever.

Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to step down from his pedestal of triumph, Master God-Diviner’s face twisted into a vicious expression, and he shrieked, “Hold on a second! Nightcrypt got lucky just now! Anybody can see that the violet qi rising from this immortal’s cave is beyond ordinary. I refuse to believe that he found it by divination!” All of a sudden, Song Junwan frowned, and the group from the Spirit Stream Sect hesitated, and began to wonder if a divination had truly been performed.

Bai Xiaochun immediately stopped in place and glared at Master God-Diviner.

“Don’t believe me, huh? Fine! I’ll just have to convince you!” Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes. This time, he took even longer than before, and even as people’s suspicions deepened, he suddenly opened his eyes, which overflowed with bizarre, swirling light. His expression seemed even more solemn than before, and he even radiated a deathly, somber aura.

His gaze settled onto a nearby immortal's cave, which he pointed at and said, “That immortal's cave was struck by lightning in the past!”

Zhou Xinqi’s pupils constricted; the immortal's cave that he was pointing at had been hers when she was in the Inner Sect, and had been destroyed by lightning because of Bai Xiaochun’s pill concocting.

She wasn’t the only one that realized this. The other cultivators from Fragrant Cloud Peak all remembered what had occurred, and their expressions flickered. The Blood Stream Sect cultivators were once again shocked. They couldn’t see any signs that lightning had struck the area, and yet clearly, the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators’ silence spoke volumes. Shockingly, Nightcrypt had yet again performed a successful divination.

Master God-Diviner gritted his teeth and was about to offer a response, but Bai Xiaochun wasn’t finished. Expression flickering with odd light, he looked more closely at the immortal's cave and then took a deep breath in through his nose.

“I can sense the lingering aroma of makeup! If my divinations are correct, this immortal's cave was not only struck by lightning, it belonged to a female disciple!”

He swished his sleeve proudly. Then, to the shock of the surrounding cultivators, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and declared, “Furthermore, my divinations reveal that the female disciple was a top beauty in the sect! Hold on. Let me divine her name! She… she was a young woman surnamed Zhou!” He abruptly spun in place to look at the shocked Zhou Xinqi. After examining her closely, he pointed at her.

“You! This was your immortal's cave!”

The Spirit Stream Sect cultivators immediately cried out in shock and disbelief. Beihan Lie and Lu Tianlei gasped, and Big Fatty Zhang trembled even harder than before.

Xu Meixiang’s eyes flickered with cold light. She wasn’t sure whether this Blood Stream Sect cultivator had actually performed a divination, or whether he had access to inside information. Either option was shocking in its own way, and killing intent toward Nightcrypt suddenly rose up inside of her.

After a moment of silence. Zhou Xinqi’s gaze turned icy, and she nodded.

That nod caused the Blood Stream Sect cultivators’ eyes to widen even further. As for Master God-Diviner, he felt like his mind was being struck by lightning, to the point where he didn't know what to say.

“How could this be possible...?” he thought, trembling, mind reeling. He still couldn’t believe that what he was seeing was the truth. After all, he hadn’t sensed even a trace of a divination aura, and yet, Nightcrypt had obviously divined the information correctly.

Song Junwan looked more enlivened than ever. Her background check into Nightcrypt had revealed that he occasionally performed divinations as an Inner Sect disciple, and yet, she could never have imagined that he would be even more powerful than Master God-Diviner.

Bai Xiaochun felt more proud of himself than ever at the reactions he was getting. Enlivened, he stepped forward and took the initiative to lead the group through Fragrant Cloud Peak. That role should have been taken by Xu Meixiang or Zhou Xinqi, but now, Bai Xiaochun would close his eyes, take a few steps, then open them and explain matters that left the Spirit Stream Sect in shock. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was careful to only reveal appropriate information, and nothing confidential.

Stopping near a crack in a boulder, his expression turned serious, and he said, “And here... Eee!? The cracks in these stones seem odd. Hold on, let me perform a divination. Hmm, yes. It seems that snakes once emerged from these rocks. Lots of them! Tons in fact!

“This place over here was also struck by lightning. Heavens! How many areas on Fragrant Cloud Peak got hit by lightning!?” He led the group along, stopping here and there to point out various locations.

Eventually he reached 10,000 Medicines Pavilion. Looking around with a sigh of admiration and utmost respect, he said, “I can sense a powerful aura here. Apparently, some consummately powerful individual once stood in this exact spot, looking down upon all creation! He must have been the number one master of plants and vegetation!”

Soon, they were at the Missions Office, where Bai Xiaochun let out an exclamation of shock. “Aha! This must be the

Missions Office. At some point in the near past, a domineering individual swept through the missions here!

“Eee? I can sense the aura of a bird here, some sort of a huge bird!

“Something seems very odd here. According to my divinations, many chickens went missing from this location!!”

As he led the group through Fragrant Cloud Peak, offering commentary here and there, the group from the Spirit Stream Sect was left more and more stunned. Everything he said was correct, without even a single mistake. It was almost as if Nightcrypt had once lived in the Spirit Stream Sect.

Zhou Xinqi was left panting. Lu Tianlei and Beihan Lie saw the expression on her face, and were more shocked than before. As for Xu Meixiang, the coldness in her eyes grew more intense.

The old woman from Irispetal Peak was equally shaken. The things that Nightcrypt were describing were all trivial matters, and yet it was still shocking that he knew so much information. People began to guess how he was doing it, and some of them even speculated that he might have infiltrated the Spirit Stream Sect at some point in the past!

However, the Blood Stream Sect cultivators were aware that Nightcrypt had never been to the Spirit Stream Sect, which left them all completely shaken. Master God-Diviner felt like he was being inundated by lightning; he was completely taken aback. He could tell that the Spirit Stream Sect’s grand spell formation was activated, and would prevent even the slightest bit of augury magic. Even when he tried to release a bit of it, he felt like he was being suffocated.

And yet Nightcrypt was so powerful that he could walk along performing auguries the entire way. Furthermore, he was using some sort of magic that Master God-Diviner couldn’t even detect. The casual way he went about it was completely and utterly shocking.

Master God-Diviner even started to doubt his own abilities. To the people from the Blood Stream Sect, there was only one explanation; Nightcrypt had skill in divination that could shake heaven and earth.

After touring the length and breadth of Fragrant Cloud Peak, Bai Xiaochun felt more pleased than ever. Everyone else seemed to be in a daze, even unsettled. It was at that point that Big Fatty Zhang looked over at Xu Meixiang and noticed a certain look in her eyes. Without any further hesitation, he stepped forward and pointed at Bai Xiaochun.

“Senior Nightcrypt,” he growled. “Since you're so good at divination, why don’t you reveal some information about me!?”

Everything went completely silent. The Blood Stream Sect cultivators looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and Master God-Diviner’s eyes suddenly began to shine.

“Divining information about inanimate objects is easy.” Master God-Diviner chuckled inwardly. “Divining information about people is much more difficult. I refuse to believe that Nightcrypt could be so ridiculously powerful when it comes to divining information about people!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at Big Fatty Zhang, a strange expression on his face. Realizing that he couldn’t just back down now, he closed his eyes, and his expression turned solemn.

Big Fatty Zhang was inwardly very nervous. However, Xu Meixiang had clearly indicated that he needed to test out Nightcrypt. As he looked at Nightcrypt there with his eyes closed, Big Fatty Zhang's heart began to pound.

After about ten breaths of time passed, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, and looked over at Big Fatty Zhang. Voice cool, he said, "You have a good life, young man. You come from a rich family, and will have incredible good fortune in the future."

Big Fatty Zhang was a bit taken aback. Bai Xiaochun hadn't said much, and actually, there was no way to refute any of his words. Big Fatty Zhang looked over anxiously at Xu Meixiang.

Although Xu Meixiang seemed to be smiling, her wariness of Nightcrypt was only growing. Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators. The words spoken by Nightcrypt just now had been pleasing to the ear, and were virtually impossible to criticize.

Gritting his teeth, Big Fatty Zhang said, "Your divination is--"

"You used to be fat," Bai Xiaochun interrupted. "Very fat. You started out in the Ovens, and then by chance you became an Outer Sect disciple. Hmm. Let me divine some more information. Yes.... You faced many twists and turns along the way, and came to be an Outer Sect disciple because of matters pertaining to profit!"

Big Fatty Zhang gasped, and his hair stood on end as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. Almost all of his secrets had been instantly seen through.

Everyone else from the Spirit Stream Sect stood there in shocked silence.

Seeing how Nightcrypt had single-handedly astonished all of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators, Song Junwan covered her mouth and laughed charmingly.

“Everyone says that Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect is breathtaking and peerless with his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment,” she said. “However, from what I can see, Nightcrypt from the Blood Stream Sect, with a mere Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base, seems a complete match. Regardless of whether it’s his shrewdness, his cultivation base, or his latent talent, he seems just as stunning as Bai Xiaochun. What a pity that Bai Xiaochun is in secluded meditation, otherwise they could have a bit of a competition to see who is more spectacular.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound. How could he possibly have a competition with himself? Have his left hand fight his right hand...?

Looking down at his hands, he blinked a few times....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0216 awe-chapter-217

The Spirit Stream Sect cultivators’ expressions were the same as ever, but inwardly they were laughing derisively. As far as they were concerned, what made Bai Xiaochun the most powerful was not his cultivation base or his battle prowess, but his disastrous medicinal pills!

Big Fatty Zhang looked over contemptuously at Nightcrypt and thought, “You can tell at a glance that this monster Nightcrypt is good at nothing more than fighting and augury. How could he possibly compare with Bai Xiaochun? If they competed, Bai Xiaochun would toy with him like a cat toys with a mouse! Bai Xiaochun would just toss out some medicinal pill, and Nightcrypt would be wiped out of existence so cleanly you couldn’t bury him!”

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit embarrassed as he looked around at the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators. There was no need for him to even speculate what all of them were thinking, and it made him sigh sadly.

“Having two identities is a real headache. I guess you can only blame my outstanding nature.” Bai Xiaochun shook his head and sighed.

Xu Meixiang smiled slightly, but didn’t take the bait. Instead, she led the Blood Stream Sect cultivators on a simple tour of Violet Cauldron Peak and Green Crest Peak. No matter what anybody said, Bai Xiaochun refused to perform any more divinations. He followed along at the end of the line, allowing these two mountain peaks to impress the Blood Stream Sect people with their might. By this point, the Blood

Stream Sect was starting to understand how powerful the Spirit Stream Sect was.

After completing the tour of the south bank, they headed toward the north bank.

At that point, Xu Meixiang relinquished the lead to the old woman from Irispetal Peak.

The old woman was relatively reticent, and didn't say much as she led the way. However, before Song Junwan and the Blood Stream Sect cultivators could even step onto the north bank, the battle beasts threw their heads back and roared. Heaven and earth trembled as an enormous shockwave rolled out. Expressions of shock appeared on the faces of the Blood Stream Sect disciples, and Song Junwan’s eyes widened. To have so many countless battle beasts releasing such explosive auras was something none of them took lightly.

Although the battle beasts didn’t actually appear in the open, their aura was so powerful that it created an intense pressure that weighed down on the Blood Stream Sect forces. It actually made it impossible for them to proceed on to the north bank, leaving them stuck between it and Mount Daoseed.

“My apologies,” the old woman said coolly, her eyes flashing with cold light. “The north bank of the Spirit Stream Sect is a bit lacking in manners. Diplomatic missions usually go to the south bank. Your request to visit the north bank caught me a bit off guard, Grand Elder Song.”

Bai Xiaochun felt somewhat shocked. Looking at things from the perspective of an outsider, the Spirit Stream Sect clearly seemed to be soft on the outside, but as hard as steel on the inside!

That dichotomy was epitomized by the south and north banks. The south bank seemed soft and warm, but the north bank was hard and tough. They complemented each other, using different methods to threaten and unnerve the enemy.

Song Junwan’s face was a bit pale. She knew the Spirit Stream Sect was strong, but had never imagined that they would be this powerful. Back on the south bank, the spell formation seemed to pulse with soft warmth, and yet, was filled with biting power. It had been very shocking.

In contrast, the north bank was impossible to even enter. The strength emanating from the battle beasts made it such that any person who desired to go to war with the Spirit Stream Sect would clearly need to be prepared to pay a heavy price.

And that was only what the Spirit Stream Sect was allowing the Blood Stream Sect to see....

“They are gentle and reserved, but also powerful and unyielding,” Song Junwan thought. “Clearly they are capable of being merciless. How threatening! Plus, they certainly have unfathomable powers held in reserve....” Behind her, the others from the Blood Stream Sect were speechless, their hearts filled with pounding waves of astonishment.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt proud of the Spirit Stream Sect, including both the south and north banks. Furthermore, he couldn’t help but grin inwardly when he looked over at the north bank and began to search among the various auras for Bruiser's.

“Please don’t take offense,” the old woman said. “Fellow Daoists from the Blood Stream Sect, I'm afraid we really can’t continue on with a tour of the north bank. The north bank is a bit crude, and it would be horrible if the battle beasts got out of control and started eating people.” She smiled, although to the people from the Blood Stream Sect, it seemed quite intimidating.

After a moment of thought, Song Junwan said, “That’s fine....”

However, even as she smiled, a howl rose up from the north bank that instantly caught the attention of everyone present.

It seemed to crush the auras of most of the other battle beasts, and as it spread out, the north bank disciples were shocked to discover that their own battle beasts began to tremble in response. The beasts looked up, seemingly more violently agitated than before, more brutal, and more energetic.

It was as if they were being incited as a group, their spirits rising as they howled. A powerful energy caused a mountain-toppling, sea-draining force to rumble toward the Blood Stream Sect forces.

The massive blast caused the faces of the Blood Stream Sect cultivators to fall. As they edged backward, Song Junwan’s pupils constricted, and she also fell back. The old woman from Irispetal Peak also seemed shocked as she looked over at the north bank.

From the jungle beneath the four mountain peaks, a violet beam of light shot up into the air at high speed.

A moment later, an enormous beast appeared in midair. It was fully 30 meters long, with the body of a horse, the head of a dragon, the scales of a lizard, and the feet of a pangolin. More shocking of all was that its teeth radiated a seven-colored glow.

As for its solitary horn, it looked just like the Heavenhorn ink dragon’s, long and sharp.

Even more astonishingly, violet flames roiled out from its four clawed feet. A single glance at the flames would shake one down to the soul. They roiled out in all directions, covering an area of 300 meters, creating a huge violet sea of flames.

Anyone who looked at the beast within that sea of flames would be shaken to the core, and would most likely gasp in alarm.

It seemed like the king of battle beasts, and its appearance caused all of the other battle beasts on the north bank to howl at full force. It seemed almost as if they would heed the call of this king of beasts to charge into battle at any moment, regardless of what their masters ordered. They seemed to be hovering on the brink of losing control!

This beast who had just appeared was none other than Bruiser!

Bai Xiaochun’s Bruiser!

The instant Bruiser appeared, the cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect felt their minds reeling. Gasps could be heard, and expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces. That was especially true of Song Junwan, whose face fell. One of the bloodstreak elders gasped, “Beast king!!”

“How could this be happening? I can’t believe a beast king has appeared!”

“Heavens! In the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world, there are only two beast kings. One sleeps beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River, the Heavenspan

Divine Crocodile. The other is a death beetle that lives in the depths of the earth!”

“That's not a beast king. It’s only a juvenile. But once it grows up, it will definitely be a beast king!!”

“I never heard of any sect raising its own beast king....”

The group from the Blood Stream Sect felt their scalps going numb. Even Bai Xiaochun was shocked. Rubbing his eyes, he looked at Bruiser, whose cultivation base was unexpectedly comparable to the early Foundation Establishment stage.

He remembered that when he’d left the Spirit Stream Sect, Bruiser had been roughly in the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Clearly, he had made a lot of progress since then.

Furthermore, all of the battle beasts of the north bank seemed willing to take orders from him. Although Bai Xiaochun had sensed something to that effect was possible, now it was more clear than ever.

Even the old woman from Irispetal Peak hadn’t been prepared for Bruiser to make an appearance.

The truth was that Bruiser’s current state was only a sign of what was to come for the north bank. Back before he had reached the Foundation Establishment level of power, he had been incredible. And yet, he had completely surpassed all expectations, and reached Foundation Establishment smoothly and naturally!

He hadn’t required any assistance, be it a Foundation Establishment Pill or earthstring energy. He just naturally progressed to an energy and battle prowess comparable to

Foundation Establishment. Even the patriarchs had been shocked, and realized that they had underestimated Bruiser from the beginning.

At that point, they realized that he didn’t have a sixth order bloodline, he actually had a seventh order bloodline! In the lands of Heavenspan, such creatures were called beast kings!

If Bruiser kept maturing, there was a high likelihood that he would become a true beast king in the future!

The matter had shaken the entire Spirit Stream Sect, and they had even arranged for a new place for Bruiser to live. However, he refused to move out of the Beast Conservatory. That was his home, and that was where he enjoyed romping about and playing. However, he would often stare off into the distance. All the Spirit Stream Sect disciples knew that he was waiting for someone to return....

The woman from Irispetal Peak was shocked, but couldn’t bring herself to scold Bruiser. Normally, Bruiser would stick to the Beast Conservatory, caring for it like a watchdog. Even when he emerged to play, he wouldn’t erupt with such fearsome energy, and he definitely wouldn't fly up into the air like a king.

Before the shock in the hearts of the cultivators could fade, Bruiser threw his head back and roared. The flame beneath his feet flared, and it was with a wild joy than none could detect that he charged toward the group from the Blood Stream Sect.

As he closed in, flames surging around him, the countless battle beasts from the north bank burst into motion, flying up into the air to join Bruiser as he charged the group from the Blood Stream Sect.

From a distance, they were so numerous that they blotted out everything beneath them. The Blood Stream Sect cultivators’ scalps began to tingle as intense sensations of deadly crisis rose up in their hearts.

Song Junwan began panting. Even though she was in the late Foundation Establishment stage, seeing a beast king like Bruiser left her completely shocked.

“The Spirit Stream Sect really does have a beast king!!” The truth was that the matter wasn't a huge secret. Word of the Spirit Stream Sect’s beast king had spread to some degree. Because of Song Junwan's status, she had long since received reports on the matter. However, to see it in person gave her a completely different feeling of threatening danger.

The old woman from Irispetal Peak seemed shocked, and immediately attempted to intervene. “Bruiser, what are you doing? Back down!”

However, her words seemed to do no good. There was only one person in Bruiser’s eyes.

His father!

Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was masked and in disguise, there was something inside of Bruiser than enabled him to instinctively identify his father.

There was no person more dear to him in the world!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0217 awe-chapter-218

Bai Xiaochun looked at Bruiser in shock. Beneath his mask, he was smiling warmly; the fact that Bruiser was so powerful left him elated.

Furthermore, the exclamations of shock around him got him even more excited. As of this moment, he wished that he could loudly announce: “That’s my Bruiser!”

However, Bai Xiaochun knew that such a thing wasn’t possible. He remained within the group of Blood Stream Sect cultivators, giving Bruiser a look that only the two of them would be able to understand.

Be a good boy and go back. Dad has a few matters to handle, then he’ll come for you.

Bruiser suddenly halted in place. He was smart, and had been well trained by Bai Xiaochun. It only took a moment of thought for him to understand what Bai Xiaochun wanted. He bared his teeth at the Blood Stream Sect people, radiating an air of incredible ferocity. Then, his gaze shifted to Song Junwan’s chest, where it lingered for a long moment....

Although few people present knew what that look meant, Bai Xiaochun understood, and he couldn’t help but sigh one more time and then glare at Bruiser.

Growling, Bruiser bowed his head and then turned and left. In the blink of an eye, he was gone. The other battle beasts let out powerful howls and then returned to their masters’ sides.

The mountain-toppling, sea-draining energy from moments ago faded away until it couldn’t even be detected. In that moment, something else happened that no one else detected. Someone in the crowd on Irispetal Peak was looking up at Bai Xiaochun in the Blood Stream Sect forces.

It was a pretty young woman in plain and simple clothing. A very strange look could be seen in her eyes, and her face was very pale. However, none of that lessened her beauty; it only made her seem more worthy of pity.

The young woman smiled, but covered it with her hand as she murmured to herself, “So, sweetie, you’re in the Blood Stream Sect....”

A strange flicker of light passed through her eyes. That girl was none other than Gongsun Wan’er, who had gone missing in the Fallen Sword Abyss. During the time that Bai Xiaochun had been spending in the Blood Stream Sect, she had returned to the Spirit Stream Sect!

In the moment that Gongsun Wan’er looked at Bai Xiaochun, the Heaven-Dao aura within him stirred. Sensing that someone was looking at him, he glanced down to try to determine who it was. At the same time, the old woman from Irispetal Peak smiled, thinking to herself that all of her years of spoiling Bruiser had finally paid off. A single order from her had sent him away.

“My apologies,” she said. “Ladies and gentlemen, I think it would be best if we stayed away from the north bank.” Although her expression was somber, she was inwardly delighted.

Song Junwan took a deep breath to calm herself. Although she had been aware that the Spirit Stream Sect possessed a beast king, seeing it with her own eyes left her shaken in a completely different way than before.

“According to the secret reports, the beast king was raised by Bai Xiaochun,” she mused to herself. “He reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, and gained enlightenment of the Waterswamp Kingdom. Who exactly is this guy?! If only he were a cultivator of the Blood Stream Sect!”

Song Junwan wasn’t in the mood for any more touring. Just when she was about to respond to the old woman from Irispetal Peak, a cold snort echoed out from the sky above. An enormous vortex appeared, out of which strode the Song Clan patriarch, surrounded by flickering flames.

He was followed closely behind by Li Zimo, who had a look of regret on his face.

Expression grim, the Song Clan patriarch looked back into the vortex, and then at Li Zimo. “Make no mistake, Fellow Daoists from the Spirit Stream Sect. If war breaks out, the fighting will not stop until the bitter end!”

The person to respond to the Song Clan patriarch wasn’t Li Zimo. An ancient, somber face appeared within the vortex, a face that seemed to radiate boundless years of time. When he spoke, the mere sound of his voice caused ripples to spread out in all directions. “Your demands are too harsh, Fellow Daoist Song. The Spirit Stream Sect would rather go to war than be slowly strangled for a thousand years!”

This man was none other than the first generation patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect, Frigidsect!

The Song Clan patriarch snorted coldly and looked away. Swishing his sleeve, he summoned a blood cloud, and then waved his hand at the Blood Stream Sect cultivators.

“We’re leaving!” he said. Bai Xiaochun and all the others flew up into the air and landed onto the blood cloud, which seethed as it shot off into the distance.

A moment later, not a trace of it could be seen!

Everything happened so quickly that the people from the Spirit Stream Sect were completely taken aback. The face which had just appeared in the vortex watched as the blood cloud shot away, and his expression turned grimmer by the second.

“Should we stop old man Song?” Li Zimo asked slowly.

A moment later, the first generation patriarch replied, “Old man Song has an extraordinary cultivation base. Among the eight patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect, his battle prowess rates in the top three. The fact that he visited us alone indicates that he came prepared, especially for tricks. If we provoke him, he certainly won’t be bound by morality in his counterstrike.”

Whether the most important factor was the first or the second, no one could tell.

Li Zimo hesitated for a moment. Unable to bear the thought of how many casualties war would bring, he softly said, “Brother Frigidsect, the Blood Stream Sect doesn’t want to go to war either. You can see that from their demands. They’ve already backed down as far as they can. Why don’t we--”

“Zimo, you’re being too softhearted. At the moment, softheartedness won’t benefit anybody. I know that many lives will be lost if we go to war. The Spirit Stream Sect doesn't want such a catastrophic event to occur. That was why I initially agreed to Song Yunwen’s demands that we not go to war. Even if it means missing out on a huge opportunity, we could avoid the destruction of our sect, and the loss of many lives among the younger generation....” Frigidsect’s ancient voice seemed tired, although no one could hear his words other than Li Zimo and the other patriarchs.

“We agreed not to attack the Blood Stream Sect, nor to join forces with the Sky River Court. Those are demands we could meet. However, there is no way we could agree to the erection of a spell formation on the Heavenspan River!

“If we allowed the Heavenspan River to dry up in our area, all in order to prevent a catastrophe, the spiritual energy here would grow scarce. Over the course of a thousand years of being sealed, the cultivation bases of everyone inside the seal would stagnate. Progress would be impossible, and it would only take a few hundred years out of that thousand year period for the Spirit Stream Sect to wither away into death. Even if the sect still existed a thousand years later, we would be weak beyond compare. We would simply be giving up our own right to decide our fate, and allowing anyone to come along and destroy us!

“Fate would be like a sword hanging over our necks. Besides, in a thousand years, the Blood Stream Sect would be completely different than they are today. They would be a great sect in the Middle Reaches, far more powerful than they are now. At that time, they might feel pity on us, and honor their agreement from before. But if they didn’t feel like it, they could destroy us as easily as turning over their hand!” Within the eyes of the founding patriarch, it was almost possible to see all those future deaths. His voice sounded very grim.

“Being sealed for a thousand years would avoid deaths in the moment, but the truth is, it would only be delaying our inevitable destruction. We’re actually in a much better situation now, with all the different variables at play. If we do go to war, we might not to be able to defeat the Blood Stream Sect on our own, but with the cooperation of other forces, we would have a chance.

“Zimo, sometimes we patriarchs have to look at the bigger picture, not just the events playing out right in front of us. We have to take the future into consideration!

“It would be better for the Spirit Stream Sect to go out fighting in battle, than to gasp and wheeze our way into death a thousand years from now. Clearly, there is only one path for us!” The founding patriarch seemed very tired. After he was finished speaking, he faded back into the vortex. Soon, the vortex itself dissipated. Li Zimo hovered there silently for a moment, the desire to do battle slowly building up in his eyes. Just as the founding patriarch had said, standing and fighting held the hope of survival, whereas hiding away only ensured a tragic end later on!

Eventually, orders from Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong were sent to both the south and north banks.

“The sect’s grand spell formation will be activated, along with all the formations in the Luochen Mountains. All disciples must return to the sect immediately to begin preparing for war!!’

Meanwhile, the blood cloud shot along at top speed in the air between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect. The cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect were scared witless; even the Song Clan patriarch’s face seemed ashen as he sat at the front of the cloud, frowning in thought.

When everyone pondered the words spoken by the Song Clan patriarch when he left the vortex, they realized that the discussions with the Spirit Stream Sect had not ended well.

Apparently, war between the two sects could break out at any moment. That in turn made the return trip to their own sect seem that much more fraught with danger.

Master God-Diviner’s face was pale as he looked down into his lap and performed auguries. Bai Xiaochun also maintained his silence. He knew the big picture, and he knew why the Spirit Stream Sect had made their choice. He sighed inwardly. Huge matters that affected the entire sect were things that he didn’t qualify to participate in or interfere with. He could only turn his head and look back at the Spirit Stream Sect, his heart aching with worry.

Song Junwan sat next to the Song Clan patriarch at the front of the cloud, her face a mask of vigilance as she scanned the road ahead for potential danger. Everyone else on the cloud simply sat there silently.

Time passed. Eventually, the cloud passed through the Luochen Mountains to arrive in Blood Stream Sect territory. At that point, the Song Clan patriarch’s eyes snapped open, and they shone with profound coldness.

Not a single ambush had occurred, and in fact, the instant they left Spirit Stream Sect territory, the Luochen Mountains began to rumble, and a cascade of light shot up into the sky. A huge barrier now existed, clearly demarcating the boundary between the two sects.

After a moment, the Song Clan patriarch murmured, “Well played, Spirit Stream Sect....”

Deep in his eyes could be seen both regret and respect. He suddenly waved his sleeve, and three motes of light flew out, which transformed into three shadowy figures. There was one that Bai Xiaochun recognized immediately. It was none other than Patriarch Limitless.

“So they didn’t intercept us?” Those three figures were illusory projections of patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect. As soon as they appeared, the cultivators on the cloud clasped hands in formal greeting, Bai Xiaochun included. Then he looked up, shocked at the strange fluctuations emanating from the shadowy figures.

“I put myself up as bait,” the Song Clan patriarch said softly. “Whether because of their righteousness or their suspicions, they allowed me to leave. That in itself is a type of domineering fearlessness. The Spirit Stream Sect is indeed a worthy adversary!”

The other three patriarchs maintained their silence. As for Patriarch Limitless, he looked off in the direction of the Spirit Stream Sect and shook his head. Sighing softly, he said, “It’s too bad. We can't trust them, nor can they trust us.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0218 awe-chapter-219

The blood cloud seethed and churned as it shot back to the Blood Stream Sect. Everyone was wrapped up in their own thoughts, and no one spoke. Bai Xiaochun was most taciturn of all, although he would occasionally turn to look back in the direction of the Spirit Stream Sect.

By the time he got back to his immortal's cave on Middle Peak, it was evening. He sat there quietly until it was late in the night and the moon hung high. Unfortunately, the matter of war between the two sects was something he had no say in. It was a game being played between the patriarchs of the two sects.

He felt tired. He didn’t even like to think about fighting and killing, but he also knew that sometimes, certain things couldn’t be avoided, no matter how much you wanted to.

He shook his head in frustration. The only thing he could do now was get to the relic of eternal indestructibility before the war started, and then get back to the Spirit Stream Sect.

He took a deep breath and calmed himself down, then began breathing exercises. Blood qi began to rise up and flow toward him as he continued to advance through the first level of the Undying Heavenly King.

That first level was the ten mammoths Berserk Ghost Body, and because of his constant cultivation, he was growing more and more powerful. By now, he had the power of two berserk ghosts.

After the power of ten, he would break past the first level and transform his Berserk Ghost Body into the Heavenly Demon Body!

At the same time, the Heavenspan River water in his first spiritual sea was continuously being absorbed. By now, less than half remained, and from the look of it, it wouldn’t take much longer before that portion was fully absorbed.

Time passed. In the blink of an eye, two months went by. During that time, the Blood Stream Sect continued to make preparations for war. Of course, war was no laughing matter. Once it started, it would be difficult to stop, and everyone knew that the future of the two sects were involved.

The Blood Stream Sect wasn’t completely united in its desire to wage war. There were eight patriarchs, and of that group, four were of the mindset that war should be avoided if possible. That group consisted of the Song Clan patriarch, Patriarch Limitless, and two other patriarchs.

However, one faction, made up of three patriarchs, were staunchly for the war. One of the patriarchs, Daoist Sage Droughtflame, had similar standing to the Song Clan patriarch, being one of the most powerful experts of the older generation. His words carried much weight.

Daoist Sage Droughtflame and the other two patriarchs in his faction were very much for declaring war. The fact that the Song Clan patriarch and his faction had so many problems with the war led to friction between the two groups.

The person who had the final say in the Blood Stream Sect was the arch-patriarch of the generation, and he hadn’t said a word on the subject. His opinion on the matter was of vital importance, but even he seemed to be hesitating.

As the discussions and friction between the patriarchs persisted, the Blood Stream Sect as a whole continued to prepare for war.

Eventually, the day arrived in which the final bit of Heavenspan River water merged into Bai Xiaochun’s first spiritual sea.

Rumbling sounds filled him that only he could hear. He began to shake, and could sense that his first spiritual sea was shining with boundless golden light. Cracking sounds emanated out, and a moment later, his first spiritual sea began to crystalize!

Crystallized spiritual sea!

Bai Xiaochun shivered. Panting, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then pushed his hands down onto his dantian region. Instantly, the crystallization process sped up, and the cracking sounds grew more intense. Moments later, his entire first spiritual sea had become solid.

Instead of liquid, it now was a mirror-like crystal!

In the instant that it completely crystallized, it erupted with a power ten times the level of the original spiritual sea. That power filled Bai Xiaochun, causing him to tremble, and making him feel completely different than before!

In Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, there was only one spiritual sea. In fact, there was so little water in it that it was more like a spiritual lake.

Only Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators could use Tideflows to form multiple spiritual seas.

The difference between spiritual lakes and spiritual seas was one reason for the huge disparity between Mortal-Dao and Earthstring Foundation Establishment.

When it came to advancing through the Foundation Establishment stage, the crystallization of the spiritual seas was the hallmark of mid Foundation Establishment. The crystallization was a major transformation that caused the basic foundation to become ten times stronger. Because Earthstring spiritual seas were already vastly more powerful than Mortal-Dao spiritual lakes, the disparity between the two levels of Foundation Establishment only grew greater from that point on.

At the same time, the number of Earthstring Tideflows affected the number of spiritual seas, and that in turn made the difference between those different levels even more clear. When it came to Earthstring Foundation Establishment, three crystallized spiritual seas marked the mid level!

To reach late Foundation Establishment, one had to reach six crystallized spiritual seas. The great circle of Foundation Establishment was nine!

Of course, people with nine spiritual seas were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns, so the above standard would apply only to them. The same general principles applied to the other levels of Foundation Establishment.

For example, in Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, the great circle was a single crystallized spiritual sea. However, that level of power was, at best, the same as a single crystallized spiritual sea of Earthstring Foundation Establishment! That was one of the main reasons why it was virtually impossible for any Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator to reach Core Formation.

It was the same with Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators who only completed a single Tideflow. However, because they had a true spiritual sea, it was theoretically possible for them to crystallize it and break through to the next cultivation stage. However, the likelihood was very small.

When it came to two spiritual seas, that likelihood increased. Five spiritual seas was considered the standard, and anyone with seven was deemed highly likely to succeed. Eight spiritual seas was very rare, and even more likely to break through, and those with nine were considered ninety percent likely to break through.

However, all of that pertained to Mortal-Dao and Earthstring. When it came to the extremely rare peak of Foundation Establishment, those cultivators who used heavenstring energy to create a Heaven-Dao aura were not only ten times as powerful, but their crystallized spiritual seas could crush Earthstring Foundation Establishment. That was especially true of Bai Xiaochun, who had achieved nine Tideflows. Essentially, he could crush any and all fellow Foundation Establishment cultivators!

In early Foundation Establishment, the disparity wasn’t as obvious. However, mid Foundation Establishment involved an explosive increase in power, and once in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, he could be called invincible.

“Crystallizing the sea is the sign of stepping into mid Foundation Establishment!” Excited, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath; the crystallization didn't stop with the first spiritual sea! It continued on into the second spiritual sea, which immediately began to show signs of solidifying.

Intense cracking sounds filled his mind for the following several hours. His cultivation base grew explosively, and soon, his second spiritual sea was crystallized, and the process progressed to the third!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The process continued until the following morning. As the first rays of sunlight landed on the earth below, rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes snapped open.

At that point, he could feel a level of spiritual power coursing through him that vastly exceeded what it had been before. Now that he had three crystallized spiritual seas, every breath he took seemed to fill his surroundings with thunderous booms.

He now felt like the simple wave of his hand could crush everything around him. Furthermore, his forehead tingled with pain, as though his Heavenspan Dharma Eye wished to open.

Bai Xiaochun had the intense premonition that if he did open that eye, it would erupt with shocking fluctuations.

Eyes glittering, he burst into motion. Spiritual power surged through him, and rumbling sounds could be heard as he turned into nothing more than afterimages. A moment later, he was outside in front of one of the blood trees.

The blood tree shivered and began to rattle off fawning praise. Unlike usual, Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay any attention to the tree. Instead, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he pointed out, causing streams of blood qi to converge into a blood sword.

“I can form blood swords way faster than before!” Excited, he mentally recalled Middle Peak’s secret magic, the Blood Annihilation World. After performing another incantation gesture, he waved his hand, and even more blood qi converged in the area, and another blood sword appeared.

Things weren’t over yet, though. A third blood sword appeared, swirling around him, causing the entire area to surge with a bloody, murderous aura.

Intense pressure also weighed down in the area, causing all of the blood trees to tremble.

“In mid Foundation Establishment, I'm not limited to one blood sword. I can summon three. And furthermore, I can even combine them together into one larger sword!” Eyes flashing, he performed another incantation gesture with his right hand, and the three blood swords merged together into a gigantic blood-colored greatsword.

Even when the blade was still forming, its energy fluctuations were filled with brutality and madness. Everything in the area trembled, and even before it could finish forming, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand to dispel the sword and the pressure.

“According to the description of the secret magic, if I can summon six swords, I’ll be able to step into late Foundation Establishment.... Although I cultivate the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, because of the Undying Live Forever Technique, once I reach late Foundation Establishment, I can use the Blood Annihilation World along with it!” Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with how quickly had progressed from early Foundation Establishment to mid

Foundation Establishment. Some of that was because of the medicinal pills the mysterious sect had given him, but another reason was the blood qi in the Blood Stream Sect.

Not only could he rapidly cultivate the Undying Heavenly King, it also provided benefits to his cultivation base.

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and stuck his chin up. Looking very proud of himself, he thought about how incredible he was with his three crystallized spiritual seas. Of course, if he could reach six, or nine, then he would be even more powerful.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0219 awe-chapter-220

Taking advantage of the darkness of night, Bai Xiaochun left Middle Peak. Going down to the bottom of the giant’s hand, he actually left the Blood Stream Sect and went to the bank of the Heavenspan River. Considering his current status and level, getting some Heavenspan River water wasn’t very difficult. All he had to do was make up a random reason, and the cultivators guarding the way would let him pass. After arriving, he collected ten drops of water.

Soon, he had a small cup full, which he carefully took back to his immortal's cave and then began to absorb.

A few days later, the water was inside of him, above his fourth spiritual sea. At that point, he ended this session of cultivation.

“Next, I need to fully merge the Heavenspan River water into my spiritual sea. Once that happens, I can step into late Foundation Establishment!” Excited, he left his immortal’s cave, hands clasped behind his back as he soliloquized proudly to himself.

“Now that I'm in mid Foundation Establishment, I’m even more awesome than before!

“Becoming a grand elder doesn't seem so impossible now....” He looked up at the upper finger of Middle Peak. It was really depressing to know exactly where the relic of eternal indestructibility was, but be unable to reach it.

He had long since given up any aspirations of somehow sneaking in to get the relic of eternal indestructibility. Song

Junwan’s immortal's cave was too well-guarded, and he had no confidence in being able to succeed.

“How can I actually become the grand elder? Challenge Song Junwan?” Bai Xiaochun rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

“The challenge would only be secondary, though. First I'd have to win over the masses. Plus I need to convince the leadership that I’m important, that I'm a crucial member of the sect. That’s the only way that I could successfully challenge Song Junwan and then take over her position.” Nodding to himself, he decided that this was definitely the right track to follow. With that, he stuck his chin up proudly.

“I’m already halfway there. If I want people to think I’m important, though, I need to do something that leaves everybody completely shaken....” As far as he was concerned, it wouldn’t be too difficult to do such a thing. He had already been in the Blood Stream Sect for some time, and knew quite well that apothecaries were few and far between. The leadership of the sect placed a high value on them, and had even established certain sect rules to encourage disciples to walk that path.

However, the very nature of the Blood Stream Sect essentially doomed such efforts from the beginning. The Blood Stream Sect was fundamentally a devilish sect, and most disciples viewed concocting medicine as a waste of time. They would much rather study techniques to increase their battle prowess. If they needed medicinal pills, they could simply go rob people from the Pill Stream Sect. If they needed magical items, they could take them from Profound Stream Sect disciples. If they needed spirit beasts, they could get them from the Spirit Stream Sect.

Therefore, few people focused on concocting medicine. There were some who could, such as imposter Nightcrypt back in the day, but in a huge sect like this, they were completely insufficient to meet the needs of the sect as a whole.

“It’s been a long time since I've concocted any medicine....” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he began to chuckle. As his laughter drifted out into the night, the blood trees began to tremble, apparently because of the sinister nature of the laughter.

“However, before I actually concoct any medicine, I need to solve one problem. I did a bit of medicine concocting earlier, but if I suddenly do something too incredible, people will get suspicious. I need the right opportunity....” With that, his eyes narrowed.

“Supposedly, the Holy Pill Wall Fragment here was actually robbed from the Pill Stream Sect 10,000 years ago, for the express purpose of allowing disciples to seek enlightenment of the Dao of medicine....

“Hmph. I can just pretend to gain enlightenment there, and then start concocting some medicine. Then nobody will be suspicious at all....” Once again, he laughed out loud proudly. He'd actually planned to do this for quite a while, and now, the timing seemed perfect. The following morning, he left his immortal's cave without the slightest hesitation. Leaving Middle Peak, he headed toward the area in the Inner Sect district where the Holy Pill Wall Fragment was located.

Soon he arrived in front of the enormous stone stele that was as tall as three people put together. This was his second time coming here, the first being when he'd seen Xuemei. At that time, Xuemei had looked at him as if she were eyeing a bug.

This was his second time, and even from a distance, he could see a few Inner Sect disciples sitting below the stele, looking at it thoughtfully.

His appearance caused the Inner Sect disciples’ expressions to flicker. They quickly rose to their feet and offered formal greetings. Not daring to be near him, they left, and by the time he was actually in front of the stone stele, he was completely alone.

Rubbing his chin, he coughed dryly and sat down cross-legged. Feeling very comfortable with this sort of situation, he looked up at the wall fragment, and reviewed what imposter Nightcrypt had told him. 8,000 years ago, a genius rose up in the Blood Stream Sect who was very adept in the Dao of medicine. After seeking enlightenment from this wall fragment, his ability to concoct medicine improved significantly.

“I guess that means the shrew Xuemei was here to try to get some enlightenment, huh?” He couldn’t help but feel a bit disdainful of the idea. He was of the belief that although certain degrees of enlightenment were required when it came to medicine concocting techniques, it wasn't something that could come overnight. Constant practice was required, along with gradual progress. That was the way to achieve mastery.

Although it was possible that enlightenment could be gained from this wall fragment, Bai Xiaochun was certain that it would be useless to a disciple who didn't have a basic understanding of medicine concocting to begin with.

“It should be enough to just put on a bit of a show so that people think I’m gaining enlightenment.” Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and then focused on the wall fragment, trying to reach the same mental state he’d stumbled into when he’d gained enlightenment from the beast statue in the Spirit Stream Sect.

“I just need to imitate what happened back then....” He thought. With that, he did his best to imitate his past facial expression. He opened his eyes wide, staring at the wall. Strangely, as he stared at the wall, it felt as if his mind were being drained. Although he was surprised, he did nothing to stop it from happening.

Three days went by. Quite a few Inner Sect disciples passed the wall fragment, and when they saw Bai Xiaochun, they noticed that his eyes were bloodshot, and his hands seemed to be moving. His expression was completely blank, which created quite an odd picture.

“Senior Nightcrypt, are you....”

“Is he really gaining enlightenment!?!?”

“Heavens! It's been a really long time since anybody actually gained enlightenment here. Is Senior Nightcrypt really pulling it off?” The Inner Sect disciples were shocked, and soon, word began to spread. Foundation Establishment cultivators from all of the four peaks heard the news, and many went over to see for themselves.

Another seven days passed, during which time Bai Xiaochun’s vision began to swim. In order to make sure everything looked as real as possible, he continued to stare at the wall for ten days and ten nights. Soon, he started to look as if he were in a daze, and actually, it was no farce. He really was zoning out.

It was a deep and profound daze that actually looked like enlightenment, to the point where no outsider would be able to tell the difference....

His mind was weakening. After all, he had just broken through into mid Foundation Establishment, and had no way to quickly recover at the moment. The time he spent in a daze increased, until eventually he realized that he had spent almost half the day in such a state. By this point, he decided that he'd probably put on enough of a show....

Just when he was about to finish up and put on a show of reaping some amazing reward from his efforts, a tremor ran through him. Before he could look away, his eyes went wide, and he suddenly stared fixedly at the wall fragment.

He began to pant heavily, and his pupils constricted. He wasn't sure if he was hallucinating or not, but moments ago, just as he had been about to look away from the wall, he'd seen a blurry figure that appeared to be concocting medicine. From what he'd seen, the method was different from what he'd learned about the Dao of medicine.

“Whoah!” A tremor ran through him. Settling down, he once again stared at the wall fragment, focusing all of his attention, which drained him even more rapidly than before. Moments later, his soul seemed to leave his body and enter the wall, to appear right next to that blurry figure.

Upon closer inspection, Bai Xiaochun was certain that he was looking at someone concocting medicine. He wasn't sure of the exact type of spirit medicine that was being concocted, but the apothecary's methods were fantastic.

Apparently, he wasn't even using a pill formula. He casually selected two types of medicinal plants, and then called upon the principles of mutual augmentation and suppression, not to force out the impurities, but cause transformations. A new type of medicinal strength appeared, a power which he imbued into other medicinal plants to alter them.

He did everything in a completely smooth and natural way. Occasionally, the ingredients in the pill furnace would explode with force, at other times they were calm. Sometimes they seethed, sometimes they were as quiet as death. Regardless of the transformations or the eruptions of power, the apothecary maintained full control the entire time.

He controlled every aspect with skill and deftness!

This Dao of medicine was very different from what Bai Xiaochun had learned in the Spirit Stream Sect. The apothecary in the wall fragment was on a completely different level.

It almost seemed like the Spirit Stream Sect’s Dao of medicine was for amateurs, whereas what this apothecary was using were the methods of an expert.

“He’s not concocting medicine, he's actually creating plants and vegetation!!” Bai Xiaochun forgot about the passage of time. He was completely focused on watching the shadowy figure in the wall fragment. Eventually, the figure finished concocting the batch of medicine, and opened the pill furnace. What appeared in his hands was a green medicinal pill that actually looked like a plant. Bai Xiaochun’s mind filled with rumbling, along with faint comprehension.

“Before concocting medicine, you have to refine the plants and vegetation! Depending on the medicinal strength you seek, you search through countless medicinal plants. If you can't find what you're looking for, you make your own!

“The limits of the Dao of medicine rely only on the limits of your imagination, and your skill in concocting medicinal plants and vegetation!” Bai Xiaochun felt like his mind was being struck by lightning, and he even began to shake physically. It was with deep and utter excitement that he immersed himself within the images in the wall fragment.

At the same time, the Holy Pill Wall Fragment began to emit a green light. As the light grew more and more intense, it transformed into a green pillar that shot high up into the sky. The entire Blood Stream Sect was being shaken to the core!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0220 awe-chapter-221

The green pillar of light shot up into the heavens, causing everything to tremble. Even the blood qi in the area was blasted away. Instantly, the whole Blood Stream Sect was shaken.

Middle Peak Grand Elder Song Junwan was in the middle of meditating when suddenly, her eyes opened. Shocked, she rushed out of her immortal's cave to look at the green light, and quickly realized that it was coming from the Holy Pill Wall Fragment.

“Nightcrypt is over there seeking enlightenment. Don’t tell me....” Heart trembling, she flew into the air. It wasn’t just her; numerous beams of light sped from the various mountain peaks toward the Holy Pill Wall Fragment.

There were even streams of divine sense that flowed out from Ancestor Peak. Instantly, everyone saw Bai Xiaochun, in a deep trance, expression blank. He even seemed to be somewhat intoxicated. Anybody who looked at him could tell that he was in the middle of being enlightened by the wall fragment!

“Every few hundred years, someone succeeds in gaining enlightenment. But nobody has ever caused green light to shoot up from the wall fragment!”

“I remember reading in the ancient records about how the Daoist Blood Sage received enlightenment 8,000 years ago. Green light appeared back then.... Could it be that this is the same kind of enlightenment?”

“I can’t believe Nightcrypt is so gifted in the Dao of medicine!”

“I remember him concocting medicine a few times in the past. If he can gain enlightenment from the wall fragment, then in the future, the Blood Stream Sect might have another grandmaster apothecary!!”

It wasn’t just the prime elders who took note of what was happening. Two pairs of eyes flashed like lightning as they looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

One of them belonged to Patriarch Limitless, the other, to the Song Clan patriarch!

Strange light could be seen in those eyes, and they seemed moved. Soon, it became apparent that countless figures were converging on the wall fragment, so the Song Clan patriarch quickly said, “Song Junwan, stand as Dharma protector for Nightcrypt. If anyone tries to interfere, kill them immediately!”

The Song Clan patriarch’s voice was as cold as ice, and rang out for all to hear. Immediately, the cultivators near Bai Xiaochun backed up, hearts pounding in fear. Some of them had actually been contemplating whether or not they should interfere, but now they pushed such thoughts aside.

Song Junwan took a deep breath. Clasping hands in respect toward Ancestor Peak, she took a few steps forward and sat down cross-legged next to Bai Xiaochun to serve as Dharma protector.

Other cultivators who were under the personal command of Song Junwan also sat down cross-legged, forming a wider perimeter, staring coldly at the other surrounding cultivators.

With Song Junwan serving as Dharma protector, and a warning having been uttered by a patriarch, the crowd began to thin. Soon, the area was very quiet.

Word spread about Nightcrypt gaining enlightenment from the wall fragment. During the following month, cultivators would come on a daily basis to observe what was happening. As for Song Junwan, her eyes were increasingly bloodshot, and she also seemed in a daze, as if the only thing that existed were Bai Xiaochun and the wall fragment.

“Nightcrypt reached Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening,” she thought, “and also has terrifying abilities in divination. Now it seems he’s a genius in the Dao of medicine. Lots of disciples study this wall fragment, but very few people can succeed, and even fewer provoke a reaction from the wall! Just what Dao of medicine is Nightcrypt gaining enlightenment of?” Her eyes glittered even more profoundly than before as she realized that yet again, her earlier assumptions about Nightcrypt had been incorrect.

He seemed simple enough, as if he could be judged at a single glance. However, Song Junwan had to admit that what she had seen, and what she knew, was just the tip of the iceberg.

“How could a person like this slip through Qi Condensation completely unnoticed? Did he really spend all that time building up and preparing?” No matter how she considered the matter, she couldn't come up with an answer. At the same time, the gleam in her eyes as she looked at Bai Xiaochun continued to deepen.

Time passed. Another month went by, and Bai Xiaochun had forgotten about himself. He was completely focused on the apothecary, and his process of concocting medicine.

He watched him over and over again, and the closer he examined him, the clearer the figure became. Eventually, the image turned into a different person, and soon, the concocting methods were different again.

Generally speaking, theories regarding the Dao of medicine were the same. However, when it came to the plant and vegetation pills, or the pill concocting methods, they changed from person to person. The people changed, the methods changed, but the foundation was the same.

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun as he saw one figure after another concocting medicine. Each one used the same general principles to form the exact type of medicinal strength they needed.

It was as if a huge door were opening in Bai Xiaochun's mind. At a certain point, he subconsciously extended his hands and began to mimic what he was seeing inside the wall.

As his hands moved, a green field of light appeared around him, which attracted the green light shining from the stone wall. Soon, the two were connected.

Bai Xiaochun's mind filled with rumbling sounds as countless bodies of knowledge regarding the Dao of medicine flowed into his mind through the light.

The group on Ancestor Peak was shaken, and based on the levels of their cultivation bases, they could actually sense what was happening.

"A legacy!"

"No wonder the Pill Stream Sect has tried so hard over the years to get that wall fragment back. If the Daoist Blood

Sage hadn’t expressed his dying order to never return the wall for all eternity, it would probably have been sent back long ago.”

“So this wall contains a legacy of the Pill Stream Sect’s Dao of medicine. Now that I think about, doesn’t the Pill Stream Sect also have a wall fragment?” The Blood Stream Sect patriarchs exchanged glances, and all of them could see how deeply moved the others were.

Bai Xiaochun’s mind was wracked with pain as he accepted the legacy. He was left trembling, his eyes completely bloodshot, and he even cried out at the top of his lungs.

However, he wasn’t willing to give up. Even a glimpse at the knowledge of the Dao of medicine he was receiving was completely shocking.

“Use heaven and earth as the pill cauldron. Use all creation as the plants and vegetation. Bequeath soul seeds. Create medicines of good fortune!”

Bai Xiaochun’s mind was battered by towering waves of shock. Suddenly, he thought back to the Pill Stream Sect disciple he’d killed, Fang Lin. The Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron he’d used was obviously what was referred to in the first line of the wall fragment legacy!

He also thought back to what had occurred when Fang Lin died, and the face of the young man he’d seen, which resembled a yin-yang symbol. Apparently, Fang Lin had unknowingly been infected with a soul seed! [1. Fang Lin died in chapter 160.]

Back in the heat of the moment, Bai Xiaochun had mostly ignored that young man with the yin-yang face. However, he hadn’t forgotten the incident, and had always remained suspicious about it. Now, he realized that what he had seen was a manifestation of Soul Seed Bequeathal!

Furthermore, the legacy he was receiving now was the technique of All-Creation Plants and Vegetation!

Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron, All-Creation Plants and Vegetation, Soul Seed Bequeathal! These three divine abilities were the fundamental Dao which served as the foundation of the Pill Stream Sect!

Unfortunately, the Blood Stream Sect had robbed them of half of their wall fragment. Perhaps the lack of the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation technique was why the Pill Stream Sect had been in a state of gradual decline for so long.

“By using all creation as plants and vegetation, the transformations of the plants and vegetation can be used to form any type of medicinal effect! A Dao of medicine like this is unimaginable!” Bai Xiaochun was panting. Never could he possibly have guessed that his attempt to pretend to get enlightenment would result in him actually receiving a legacy magic.

As the legacy was passed on, the light shining up from the wall fragment grew weaker and weaker, and the green glow around him grew stronger and stronger. A few days later, the light around the wall faded, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open. The intense green light around him caused rumbling like that of thunder to echo out. At the same time, the images of countless plants and vegetation swirled around him, continuously merging with each other, continuously transforming.

The bizarre signs that the disciples of the Blood Stream Sect were seeing left them shocked. It was easy to imagine how, even as soon as the following day, Nightcrypt’s name would once again rock the Blood Stream Sect. Even the other sects would surely hear about what was happening, and Nightcrypt would become even more famous in the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world.

“Nightcrypt....” Song Junwan murmured, rising to her feet. An expression of concern could be seen in her eyes as she looked at Bai Xiaochun. He was much thinner than he had been before, his face sunken in a bit, seemingly little more than flesh and bones. And yet, his eyes shone with brilliant light.

He looked over at Song Junwan and nodded. Before she could say anything, he said, “I need to concoct some medicine!”

He needed to take the information that was sinking into his mind and apply it to medicine concocting as soon as possible, to firmly fix the sensation of the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation technique into his heart. Under the eyes of all present, he flew into the air toward Middle Peak. Even the patriarchs on Ancestor Peak had expressions of anticipation on their faces as they watched him go.

Back in his immortal's cave, he immediately went into secluded meditation. He didn’t have a lot of plants and vegetation on him at the moment, but it was without hesitation that he produced a pill furnace and began to concoct, not spirit medicine, but plants and vegetation pills.

Through this process of concocting, he became much more confident in manipulating the plants and vegetation to produce specific levels of medicinal strength. The legacy branding in his mind grew deeper. He was so focused that he completely ignored matters like sleep and eating. At the same time, the exact effect he had hoped to produce within the sect could be seen. The Song Clan patriarch arranged for large quantities of plants and vegetation to be delivered to him, along with piles of bloodflame stones.

All of the resources of the Blood Stream Sect were being called upon to ensure that Bai Xiaochun quickly mastered the legacy he had received. Many of the medicinal plants he was given were very rare, and would fetch exorbitant prices on the outside, or even be the subject of fierce fighting.

But now, it was without hesitation that the sect handed them over.

They even sent over an apothecary attendant, who respectfully said, “Grandmaster, the patriarch sent me to explain that this is only the first set of ingredients. More medicinal plants are on the way!”

Because of the steady flow of medicinal plants, Bai Xiaochun experienced no delays in his mastery of the legacy. As he concocted more plant and vegetation pills, his eyes shone with more intense light. At the same time, his skill in the Dao of medicine advanced by leaps and bounds.

Bai Xiaochun was even delighted to discover that there were aspects of the Frigid School Medicine Manual that he didn’t understand before, but were now clear. In fact, there was an entire section on the first page that now made complete sense!

“I have the feeling that I can finally concoct a tier-4 medicinal pill! Maybe even tier-5!”

Tier-4 medicinal pills were a dividing mark between journeyman apothecaries and master apothecaries!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0221 awe-chapter-222

“I must concoct medicine!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with intense focus. The enlightenment he had gained from the Holy Pill Wall Fragment, and the abstruse information from the Frigid School Medicine Manual, caused his skill in the Dao of medicine to break through from the point of being able to concoct tier-3 medicines. He was now fairly certain he could concoct tier-4 medicines!

In the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world, tier-4 spirit medicines were virtually priceless. Foundation Establishment cultivators absolutely required them, the most obvious example being Foundation Establishment Pills!

Foundation Establishment Pills were tier-4 spirit medicines, and were very difficult to concoct. In fact, anyone who could successfully concoct them would be viewed as a master apothecary!

Master apothecaries were rare. The Blood Stream Sect had been home to a few in the past, but not anymore. It was the same with the Profound Stream Sect. Obviously, the Pill Stream Sect had them, and in fact, they even had grandmaster apothecaries, who were on a similar level as prime elders.

Other than the master apothecaries in the Pill Stream Sect, the only other one was in the Spirit Stream Sect, and that was Li Qinghou!

But now, Bai Xiaochun was at the peak of the tier-3 level, and was on the verge of breaking through to the tier-4 level. Theoretically, the knowledge he possessed already gave him what he needed to break through. Taking a deep breath, he extended his right hand and opened the bag of holding that the sect had provided, which contained all sorts of plants and vegetation. Almost immediately, he gasped, and the more he studied the contents of the bag, the more shaken he was.

“Is this dragonspirit root? I can’t believe it’s over 700 years old...

“This is peacedevil leaf!! More than 400 years old....

“Revelation fruit. Dao-immortal blossom....” It seemed like each of the medicinal plants he'd been given was more valuable than the one before it, and more rare. From the plants and vegetation he was being given, it was obvious how important the Blood Stream Sect viewed him to be. It actually exceeded his expectations.

He couldn’t help but feel a bit conflicted. On the one hand, the Blood Stream Sect really had treated him amazingly. On the other hand, he couldn’t forget that he was from the Spirit Stream Sect....

Even as he wavered back and forth about what to do, he looked at the most recent delivery, which included two bags of holding.

One of them contained pill furnaces, the other contained the Blood Stream Sect’s unique bloodflame stones!

Bloodflame stones were similar to the earthflame crystals from the Spirit Stream Sect, except even more domineering. The intense heat they emitted was a necessity for medicine concocting, and although they were unique to the Blood Stream Sect, after some examination, Bai Xiaochun confirmed that they could produce three-colored flame.

Although he would have preferred fuel for four-colored flame, three-colored flame was still satisfactory. Finally, he made his decision. He would concoct pills, and secretly keep some of them for himself.

As for the four-leaf clovers he had harvested some time back, he still had them in his bag of holding. However, he didn’t dare to use the turtle-wok in the Blood Stream Sect, for fear of mishaps.

After looking closer at the bag with the pill furnaces, Bai Xiaochun was even more shocked than he had been by all of the valuable medicinal plants. Eyes wide, he said, “How many pill furnaces are in here?”

Mind reeling, he counted over 100 pill furnaces. There were large ones and small ones, new ones and old ones. The mere sight of them left Bai Xiaochun's vision swimming.

There were even a few dozen pill furnaces which were clearly magical devices, and others contained strong medicinal aromas that indicated they had been frequently used by apothecaries in the past.

“Did they rob all of these?” he thought, rubbing his eyes. After further examination, he realized that almost all of the pill furnaces were marked with a symbol like a cauldron, which was the sign of the Pill Stream Sect.

Obviously, these were pill furnaces that the Blood Stream Sect had robbed from Pill Stream Sect disciples over the years....

In addition to the pill furnaces, there were some jade slips in the bag of holding. After examining them, Bai Xiaochun’s mind was yet again sent spinning. It actually took quite a while for him to recover. Those jade slips were clearly incredibly valuable.

They were inscribed with countless medicine formulas!

Some of them were even tier-5 formulas....

Bai Xiaochun sighed emotionally, and his eyes shone with intense light. To have so many medicinal plants and so many pill furnaces right there in front of him left him completely excited. Rubbing his hands together, he immediately pulled out a pill furnace and some bloodflame stones. After igniting the stones with some spiritual power, a blood-colored flame lit the room.

“Concoct medicine. Must concoct medicine!” He didn’t start with the Foundation Establishment Pill. Instead, he studied the formula for something called a Spirit-Tempering Crystallizing Pill, after which he began to concoct it.

Time passed. In the blink of an eye, half a month went by. Bai Xiaochun never went outside even once, and soon his hair was completely disheveled. He was completely immersed within his medicine concocting. He failed over and over again as he built up experience and performed experiments. He pursued new trains of thought, and every time he came up with a new idea, he would laugh out loud with joy.

As his laughter echoed out of the immortal's cave, the blood trees shivered, and any Middle Peak cultivators who happened to be passing by would be surprised, but mostly dismissive.

Most of the cultivators on Middle Peak had some sort of beef with Bai Xiaochun, although none of them would ever dare to reveal that publically. However, as time passed, all sorts of gossip spread.

“So what if he gained enlightenment of the wall fragment? Does he really think he's going to concoct some sort of amazing spirit medicine?”

“Hmph. I heard that all of the plant and vegetation resources in the whole sect were sent over to Nightcrypt. He’s just digging his own grave. He’s going to fail completely, or at best concoct some ordinary spirit medicine. Either way, he’s screwed!”

“Who cares about medicine concocting? I don’t even understand why the sect thinks it's important!”

However, Song Junwan and the three other grand elders, as well as the prime elders on Ancestor Peak, were filled with anticipation. Even the Song Clan patriarch felt the same way, and was constantly looking over toward Middle Peak.

Ten days passed. Bai Xiaochun’s extended time in seclusion was being viewed with increasing derision by the Middle Peak cultivators. Of course, most of that was jealously. They were jealous of his relationship with the grand elder, jealous that the sect cared so much about him, and jealous that he was being gifted with so many plant and vegetation resources.

However, his overall level of power was extraordinary, and everyone knew it. Because of the Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening, he had already surpassed the power of a Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment Dharma protector. The Earthstring Foundation Establishment elders were starting to feel threatened, and even the late Foundation Establishment experts were worried.

Another three days passed....

Bai Xiaochun had been working at medicine concocting for a full month straight. Inside his immortal's cave, he was working like mad, his eyes bloodshot as he paced back and forth around the pill furnace. He never stopped concocting. He would draw upon the plants and vegetation he had access to as he aimed for the medical strength he desired. Each time he failed, he would see new hope for success.

“This time I'm definitely going to succeed!” he said hoarsely, licking his lips and staring at the pill furnace. Several more hours passed, and then the pill furnace began to tremble. A medicinal aroma spread out, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with anticipation. Moments later, though, his excitement turned into fear.

“What’s going on!?” he said, eyes widening. In the instant that the spirit medicine was supposed to emerge, the pill furnace suddenly began to heat up. Apparently, the strength of the pill was causing instability, which was affecting the pill furnace itself. Even the bloodflame stones were being influenced, which was causing the heat spike. Instantly, a sensation of intense danger filled Bai Xiaochun’s heart.

Cracking sounds rang out, and the pill furnace began to shake violently. Fissures spread out across its surface, which were filled with shining, blood-colored fire. From the look of things, the pill furnace was about to explode.

A shocking force was building up inside, causing the pill furnace to bulge dramatically....

“It’s gonna blow!!” he gasped, his scalp tingling. This was a tier-4 spirit medicine, something far beyond tier-2 or tier-3 medicines.

Even an exploding tier-3 spirit medicine was completely shocking, but the idea of how much force the detonation of a tier-4 spirit medicine would release caused Bai Xiaochun’s pupils to constrict. From the aura that was emanating from the pill furnace, Bai Xiaochun could tell that it had force comparable to a Foundation Establishment cultivator.

There was no time to sit around thinking about what to do. Shrieking, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed the bulging furnace, then drew upon the full power of his cultivation base to burst outside and hurl it up into the air.

“Everybody watch out!” he cried at the top of his lungs. The pill furnace sailed up above Middle Peak, and then exploded, releasing a thunderous boom that shook heaven and earth. A shockwave also blasted out, sweeping over everything in sight.

As the pill furnace exploded, medicinal dregs shot out in all directions. Even more terrifying was that the burning shrapnel created by the exploding furnace rained down in all directions.

Countless Middle Peak disciples were badly frightened, and rushed out to see what was happening.

“What’s wrong?!”

“What happened?!”

“Is the Spirit Stream Sect attacking us?!”

In their shock, they looked up and saw flames streaking through sky like falling stars to land in various locations around Middle Peak. As each bit slammed into the ground, booms echoed out.

Soon, cries of alarm rose up into the air. Wherever the destroyed remnants of the pill furnace landed, flames rose up. There were even some unfortunate cultivators who caught on fire and began to scream at the tops of their lungs.

All of Middle Peak was thrown into chaos. Song Junwan was shaken, and when she rushed out, she saw Middle Peak engulfed in flames. She could smell the acrid odor of a destroyed medicinal pill, and could also see the chunks of the pill furnace raining down.

“Is this what happens when you concoct medicine?” she thought with a gasp. “I can’t believe medicine concocting is so terrifying!” In her mind, medicine concocting should be a calm, peaceful activity, and even if something went wrong, there shouldn’t be a huge disaster like this.

If disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect were present, they would definitely understand what was happening, and would probably even feel bad for the Blood Stream Sect and say, “Disaster strikes once Sect Uncle Bai starts concocting medicine.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0222 awe-chapter-223

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding with nervousness. The exploding pill furnace had not only been shocking, but also a very close call....

“If I had been just a bit slower, it would have blown up my immortal's cave! But that’s not the scariest part. I might have lost my poor little life! That would have been a tragedy.” Bai Xiaochun ducked his head down, trying to look apologetic to the furious crowd around him. He quickly made some adjustments to the cave’s spell formation, and then hurried back inside.

There, he braced himself to face a mob, but after an entire day passed, nothing happened. Surprised, he waited even longer, but no one ever showed up.

“Weird.... Oh well. I guess it doesn’t matter. I’ll just keep concocting. Now why did that pill furnace explode?” Sitting down cross-legged, he rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

What he didn’t know was that the reason nobody came looking for him was because of how people called him Nightdevil. He was already completely infamous, and although people wanted to go call him to account, the way he had slaughtered people with the blood sword left them no choice but to grit their teeth and endure.

Another reason was that, although the explosion had been a powerful one, and caused a lot of fires, other than that, it didn’t really influence anyone negatively....

Three days later, Bai Xiaochun slapped his thigh.

"In the past, my tier-3 medicines also exploded. But this time, the explosion happened for a different reason. When tier-4 spirit medicines are in the final stages of condensing into a pill, they absorb qi from their surroundings, which leads to instability!

"It doesn't have anything to do with the bloodflame stones. The pill is being destroyed from the inside out!" Panting, hair in disarray, eyes shining with enlightenment, he quickly rolled up his sleeves and produced a new pill furnace to work with.

The concocting process went much more quickly this time. A day later, and the spirit medicine was already taking form. As it did, he paid close attention, and was also fully prepared for any outcome. Suddenly, the pill furnace began to turn bright red, and cracks started to spread out across its surface. A violent eruption was obviously building up, and the pill furnace even began to bulge in shocking fashion, even more dramatically than last time.

Bai Xiaochun gasped. Waving his sleeve, he collected up the pill furnace and then raced outside, where he threw it high up into the air. Unfortunately, he didn't have time to call out a warning this time....

A deafening boom echoed out as the pill furnace exploded, sending shrapnel in all directions, along with waves of violet-colored flames....

Booming thuds then rose up as the pieces landed on the ground. At the same time, enraged roars could be heard.

"Again?! What are you doing, Nightcrypt?!?!"

"Nightcrypt, are you really concocting medicine? If you want to kill us, why not just fight us!?!?"

“What pill is he trying to concoct?!?!”

There were about ten cultivators who were directly affected, and despite their rage, they didn't do anything other than gnash their teeth. They didn’t dare to cause any problems for Nightcrypt.

Bai Xiaochun remained in his immortal's cave, terrified. However, after some time passed and nobody came to complain, he sighed and looked off into the distance.

“You people understand the situation, and choose not to cause problems for me. Don’t worry. I promise this will be the last time.” Taking a deep breath at how sincere he was in his efforts, he once again began to concoct.

Three days later....

“Dammit, what’s wrong!?” Feeling like he was going insane, he rushed outside and threw the pill furnace up into the air.

BOOM!

Five days later… *boom!* Seven days later… *boom!* Ten days later….

“How could this be happening?!” He felt like he was going completely mad. This time, he threw an especially large pill furnace up into the air!

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

During the ten days that passed, Middle Peak was driven insane. Every day or two, another pill furnace would explode, raining down shrapnel and fire. Many places on Middle Peak were scorched to the ground.

Many newly erected immortal's caves were burned to ash, and one cultivator after another was left screaming in rage. Eventually, not a single blade of grass or plant on Middle Peak was left unscorched.

Although Master God-Diviner’s immortal's cave wasn’t harmed, he did catch on fire at least once....

The killing intent of the Middle Peak cultivators continued to build until it seemed like it might explode.

The situation was a bit better on the upper finger. However, the fires eventually spread that far too, and the mid and late Foundation Establishment cultivators there were slowly building up into a rage. All of Middle Peak was turning into a ticking timebomb.

“Nightcrypt, are you looking to die?!?!”

“If I don’t kill Nightcrypt, then I’m not human!!”

“Dammit! Does Nightcrypt want to burn Middle Peak to the ground? He’s not concocting medicine, he’s trying to kill us!”

The unusually large pill furnace that he threw up into the air didn’t actually explode in until it landed. After it smashed into one of the blood waterfalls, a huge boom rang out, and masses of blood and water surged out in all directions. A miserable shriek rang out from Song Que’s mouth as he emerged, engulfed in flames. His hair and eyebrows were almost immediately burned away.

“Nightcrypt!!!” he howled, shooting toward Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave. His actions caused the suppressed emotions of the other cultivators to erupt, and they joined him in shouting at the tops of their lungs.

“Kill Nightcrypt!”

“If Nightcrypt doesn’t die, then we’ll all be killed!”

“First he messed with the blood qi, then he chased that rabbit, and now he has these exploding furnaces. Nightcrypt is a walking disaster!”

“You’re dead, Nightcrypt! You destroyed my immortal's cave during the blood qi incident, then again because of the rabbit, and now again with a pill furnace!!”

Never before had the cultivators of Middle Peak been united in such a way. Ninety percent of the cultivators, from early to late Foundation Establishment, raged with murderous auras as they shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, intent on joining hands to destroy it.

Even if the sect prohibited such action, they didn’t care. They were convinced that the sect wouldn’t cause problems for all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators on Middle Peak because of a single person.

When Bai Xiaochun saw what was happening, his scalp began to tingle with fear. Even though he was already in the mid Foundation Establishment stage, and was sure he could easily crush even a large group of opponents, it was a shock to see so many Foundation Establishment cultivators racing toward him, including both Mortal-Dao and Earthstring types, from the early to the late stage, all of them bristling with killing intent, and many without any hair or eyebrows.

Song Que was leading them all, a pack of hornets whose howls shook the mountain peak like thunder.

“Listen to me, people!” Bai Xiaochun cried, face ashen from fear. Backing up, he tried to offer explanations, but his voice was drowned out by the howls of rage. As the people closed in, their cultivation bases surging with shocking power, they became like a wave of rage, upon which the rowboat which was Bai Xiaochun teetered on the verge of death.

That was when a cold snort echoed from Ancestor Peak, a snort filled with frigid iciness. It pierced into the maddened minds of the mob, and all the cultivators who had been planning to attack Bai Xiaochun were instantly shaken to their souls.

Only a prime elder or a patriarch would be able to calm down such a large group of people so quickly. It didn't matter who it was that had just snorted, it left everyone shaking.

Simultaneously, Grand Elder Song Junwan appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun. Looking around coldly at the group of cultivators, she frowned and said, “Enough is enough. Nightcrypt didn’t do any of this on purpose. It's hard to avoid accidents when concocting medicine!”

The surrounding Foundation Establishment cultivators could say nothing in response. However, despite the fact that they feared and respected the grand elder, they were haughty and arrogant people by nature, and inwardly, were still just as angry as before. Even their eyes radiated a brutal coldness.

“The patriarch agrees on this point!” Song Junwan continued coolly, her eyes radiating cold light. When the Foundation Establishment cultivators heard that, they had no choice but to sigh bitterly. Biting their tongues, they turned to leave. Of course, their hatred for Bai Xiaochun still burned hot inside of them.

All of them were thinking the same thing: “You can’t keep this up. The patriarch’s patience has a limit, and sooner or later, you’ll meet a bitter end!”

Inwardly, they chuckled coldly, filled with expectation for the day that Nightcrypt would be punished by the sect.

After the crowd dispersed, fear still lingered in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. Looking over at Song Junwan, he slapped his chest and said, “Those people were being so unreasonable! I'm concocting medicine for the sect!”

Song Junwan, who had already been turning to leave, looked back at Bai Xiaochun with a strange expression on her face. Then she shook her head. Even she would never have been able to imagine that pill concocting could prove to be so dangerous....

After a moment of hesitation, she said, “Nightcrypt, you had better end up concocting a pill that pleases the patriarch.”

With that, she gave him a deep look, and then left.

She didn’t want to go into any more detail than that. She was sure that Nightcrypt would understand her meaning; the leadership of the Blood Stream Sect cared about the result, not the process. If, in the end, Nightcrypt was able to concoct a pill that pleased the patriarch, then everything that happened along the way wouldn’t matter. As long as he didn’t go too far, they wouldn’t just ignore the mishaps; they would shield him from the consequences.

However, if he failed to produce a satisfactory medicinal pill, then he would be viewed as useless, and the sect would demand restitution.

Essentially, the more useful he was, the more they would use him, and the more powerful he would be in the sect!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. Naturally, he understood what was going on. He had come to understand the way the Blood Stream Sect did things way back on Corpse Peak....

“They look at the result, not the process.” He sighed. “What a great sect!” Coughing dryly, he returned to his immortal's cave and continued concocting.

Back on Ancestor Peak, the Song Clan patriarch was sitting in a large hall. Looking away from Middle Peak, he smiled at the two prime elders who were there to accompany him. All of them seemed quite pleased.

“Aren’t Nightcrypt’s concocting methods a bit excessive?” one of the prime elders said with the shake of a head.

The other prime elder chuckled. Sounding a bit sarcastic, he said, “That’s what Blood Stream Sect disciples are supposed to be like. Don't concoct pills like everyone else! You can see at a single glance that he walks a devilish path. Everyone else concocts pills as if they’re drinking warm water. He concocts them with explosive flair!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0223 awe-chapter-224

Ten days passed. On two occasions, pill furnaces exploded, but there was nothing Bai Xiaochun could do about it. Reducing the medicinal strength seemed to be the only option. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, these pill furnaces were simply too weak....

After reducing the medicinal strength, and utilizing the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation technique, he was gradually able to stabilize things, and in the end, managed to successfully concoct a batch of tier-4 Spirit-Tempering Crystallizing Pills.

Although only five pills came out, and they were all low-grade, they still contained far more spiritual energy than any other spirit medicine that Bai Xiaochun had concocted in the past. He could even feel the spiritual energy pulsing inside of them when he held them in his hand.

They almost seemed intelligent....

That was one of the unique characteristics of tier-4 medicinal pills. After examining them closely for a bit, Bai Xiaochun started to get even more excited than before. Although he was confident that a pill like this would please a prime elder, it probably wouldn’t be good enough for the Song Clan patriarch.

“I need to increase my success rate significantly. Then the Song Clan patriarch will definitely be convinced!” Sticking his chin up proudly, he continued concocting with the techniques he had already perfected to some degree.

He wanted more control over tier-4 spirit medicine, and a higher success rate, similar to what he had with tier-3 spirit medicines. It was with complete focus that Bai Xiaochun proceeded to ignore the outside world, and immerse himself in the Dao of medicine. Next, he selected another classic tier-4 spirit medicine formula, Misty Spirit Incense.

A few days later, a fragrant aroma rose up from the new batch of spirit medicine, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes immediately began to shine. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the pill furnace opened, causing a stream of green smoke to rise up into the air.

“Huh?” What shocked Bai Xiaochun most wasn’t the green smoke, it was the fact that no spirit medicine could be seen inside!

“What went wrong?’ he thought, shocked. He inspected the pill furnace carefully, but there was nothing inside, not even any medicinal dregs. It was almost as if the spirit medicine in the pill furnace had vanished into thin air.

Thinking about the smoke, he looked around the immortal’s cave, but didn’t see anything out of the ordinary. Frowning, he started working on another batch, determined to identify the source of the problem.

The same thing happened with the next batch. “It turned into green smoke again?”

Green smoke rose up, and within a few breaths of time, had completely vanished. No matter how he tried to capture it or prevent it from dissipating, it faded away.

“Interesting. Every tier-4 spirit medicine seems to have a unique property to it.” He wasn’t discouraged. Quite the contrary. For the following month, he tried numerous methods to solve the problem. However, the dozen or so batches he completed during that time all resulted in a green smoke which quickly faded away.

As Bai Xiaochun continued his research and study into the Misty Spirit Incense, the cultivators of Middle Peak were finally awakening from the nightmare that had been the exploding pill furnaces. However, before they even had a chance to rejoice, they found themselves sinking into another nightmare.

The first cultivator to be struck with misfortune was Master God-Diviner. About ten days before, in the middle of the night, he had been performing an augury for someone when suddenly his face fell. To the surprise of the cultivator sitting in front of him, Master God-Diviner rushed out of the room, face bright red. That night, he felt like he was about to fall to pieces. The following morning at dawn, his face was ashen.

“What's going on? I haven’t eaten food for more than ten years. How could I be having diarrhea...?” Clutching his abdomen, he tried to perform a divination, but before he could finish, a growling sound echoed out from inside of him....

Soon, one cultivator after another was affected. Regardless of whether they were in their immortal's caves or not, anyone on Middle Peak who breathed in the aura caused by the green smoke would be stricken with diarrhea. It didn’t matter when or where they were....

If it were an ordinary case of diarrhea, it might not have been a big deal. However, days passed, and the situation only continued to worsen. The ones who had it best off only ended up visiting the restroom ten or more times per day, but for others, it was over a hundred.

The cultivators of Middle Peak were starting to go crazy, and couldn’t even imagine what sort of poison could be causing the situation. Some of the Foundation Establishment cultivators couldn’t handle it, and began to collapse unconscious.

“Someone’s poisoned us!!”

“Dammit! What exactly is going on? This couldn’t be Nightcrypt, could it?!”

A plague of diarrhea had struck the lower finger of Middle Peak. There was an invisible poison mist that seemed to affect any cultivator who encountered it, regardless of the level of their cultivation base. Soon, Middle Peak was virtually a ghost town. Everyone was on the verge of going completely insane, and yet barely had the energy to move.

Unfortunately, it wasn’t a problem that simply went away after a short time passed. Song Que lay prone, listless and weak. He had visited the restroom so many times that by this point, he almost felt like a mortal.

“What’s happening!?” people moaned.

“It must be Nightcrypt! He’s concocting medicine, and the aura is spreading out and doing this to us!”

More and more people began to come to the same conclusion. However, no one could even go to investigate; the diarrhea had gotten so bad that most people couldn’t even leave their immortal's caves.

Soon, the upper finger was being affected. Song Junwan simply left, shaking in fear at the thought of medicine concocting.

“Just what kind of concocting is he doing?” she sighed, looking down sympathetically at Middle Peak. “How could it be so terrifying!?”

Eventually, word spread to the other three mountain peaks, and the cultivators there began to laugh and joke about the matter. Some of them went over to the vicinity of Middle Peak to investigate for themselves, but they quickly returned and went into secluded meditation.

Eventually, the cultivators of Middle Peak began to leave. Unfortunately, they could only crawl, so that was how they made their escape. They crawled slowly away, unwilling to remain behind any longer. Sadly, they had been severely poisoned, so even after leaving, the symptoms lingered. Everyone teetered on the verge of collapse, glaring in terror at Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave. If they had to choose between this and exploding furnaces, they would pick the furnaces....

“Nightcrypt is so vicious! He’s definitely getting revenge on us!”

“Dammit! We shouldn't call him Nightdevil, we should call him Plaguedevil!!”

“Nightcrypt the Plaguedevil!!”

As time passed, and the Foundation Establishment cultivators simmered in suffering, their hatred for Bai Xiaochun dissipated. Most of them resolved that in the future, they would do anything possible to avoid provoking him....

He was truly a terrifying figure, and his tactics of cutting down his enemies with invisible medicinal pills was truly mind-numbing.

Furthermore, quite a few cultivators changed their mind about the Dao of medicine, and decided that they should spend more time studying it....

Even Ancestor Peak took note of what was happening. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no idea what was going on. Because he cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique, he wasn’t affected at all, and was completely consumed in the Dao of medicine. A month later, he finally solved the problem of the green smoke, and succeeded in concocting the Misty Spirit Incense.

Then he went on to concoct some other tier-4 spirit medicines. Eventually, he raised his success rate to seventy percent. By that point, he had run out of medicinal plants, and was forced to take a break. Spirit medicine in hand, he sighed and walked out of the Immortal's cave.

It was a bright, sunny morning, but for some reason, everything seemed unusually quiet. Bai Xiaochun looked around and found that Middle Peak was completely empty.

At first he was shocked, but then he was pleased. He had finally managed to concoct some medicine without affecting people in the area. Sighing again, he began to walk along through Middle Peak. Before long though, he started to get nervous.

“Why is it so quiet?” he thought. Something seemed off. By the time he reached the bottom of the mountain, he hadn’t seen a single person, or even detected any signs of life. All of the immortal's caves seemed empty.

“Where is everyone?” Blinking, he started to get even more nervous, and then picked up his pace. Soon, he caught sight of one of the Middle Peak Foundation Establishment cultivators, hobbling along with the help of two Inner Sect disciples. When the cultivator looked up and saw Bai Xiaochun, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes widened as if with fear as he raised a trembling finger to point at Bai Xiaochun..

“Are… are you finished concocting?” he asked.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun replied, a bit confused.”Um, yeah I’m finished!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the cultivator shivered, then turned toward the Inner Sect district and yelled as loud as he could: “You can all come out now! Let’s go back to our immortal's caves. Plaguedevil is finished concocting medicine!!”

Soon, cries of relief rang out from numerous immortal's caves in the Inner Sect as countless figures appeared, supported by Inner Sect disciples. They all looked gaunt and sallow, their expressions simultaneously listless and excited.

“Are you serious?! Plaguedevil finally finished with his medicine concocting?”

“The heavens do have eyes!!”

“We can finally go back to Middle Peak....”

Song Que was in the crowd, his legs trembling as he glared at Bai Xiaochun. He was unlike the rest of the crowd; he had not been cowed into fear, and still wanted to kill Nightcrypt.

Bai Xiaochun scratched his head guiltily as the crowds of Inner Sect disciples helped the Foundation Establishment cultivators on their way back to Middle Peak.

For the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he watched hundreds of people passing him. Then Song Junwan flew by overhead, and then circled around to land in front of him, mixed emotions on her face.

“Big Sis Song....” he said carefully.

“Finished concocting?” she asked with a wry smile. “Give me the spirit medicine, I’ll take it to the patriarch.”

Bai Xiaochun quickly pulled five tier-4 spirit medicines out of his bag of holding. They were only a portion of what he had concocted. The rest he kept to himself, naturally.

Song Junwan accepted them, and after examining them briefly, was clearly moved. She gave Bai Xiaochun a deep look, then smiled. Telling him to wait for her, she flew toward the top of Middle Peak.

Bai Xiaochun was already feeling very nervous. He knew the rules in the Blood Stream Sect. Although he was confident that he had done enough to impress the leadership of the Blood Stream Sect, he was still a bit anxious.

He waited for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, whereupon Song Junwan returned. A strange look could be seen in her eyes as she handed him a command medallion, then lifted his chin with her finger. Her breath smelled like orchids as she said, “The patriarch wanted me to tell you that from now, as long as you don’t betray the sect, you will be treated like a direct descendant of the Song Clan!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes sparkled at the thought of being to do virtually anything he wished in the sect. Feeling extremely proud of himself, he looked back at the lovely grand elder, and then reached out and lifted her chin with his finger.

“Does this count as betraying the sect?” he said with a chuckle. Song Junwan’s eyes went wide. In all her life, she had never encountered anyone who dared to flirt with her in such a way. She instantly blushed, but then her eyes flickered with cold light.

“It seems I need to teach a bit about why grand elders are supposed to be respected!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0224 awe-chapter-225

The command medallion was a gift from the Song Clan patriarch, and was a guarantee that as long as he didn’t betray the sect, he could do virtually anything he wanted in the sect.

He could even kill people with impunity!

Unfortunately, it was useless when dealing with Song Junwan. It didn’t matter that he was in mid Foundation Establishment, there was no way he was a match for someone like her, a top expert who was on the verge of reaching Core Formation. Of course, Song Junwan didn't attack him, she merely glared at him for a moment before turning and leaving.

Over the course of the following days, news about Nightcrypt successfully concocting a tier-4 spirit medicine spread throughout the entire Blood Stream Sect. Everyone, prime elders included, heard about the matter.

Even the blood rippers, who were almost always in secluded meditation, caught wind of the name of Nightcrypt. It was the same with the rest of the patriarchs.

The Song Clan patriarch seemed to take him especially seriously, and his attitude determined the attitude of the Song Clan. Of course, the Song Clan was a major force in the Blood Stream Sect, with roots that ran very deep.

Eventually, news about Nightcrypt and his medicine concocting leaked out of the sect to the cultivator clans. Word even reached the Spirit Stream Sect. Hou Yunfei and

Bai Xiaochun’s other friends were all struck speechless. Some of them couldn’t help but think of Bai Xiaochun, but the idea that the two of them were connected seemed so preposterous that they quickly dismissed such notions.

Either way, the stories about Nightcrypt caused the other sects to view him as an even more important person in the Blood Stream Sect. Some people even placed him on the same level as Song Que.

Of course, in the Blood Stream Sect, things were different. A lot of people already viewed Song Que as being inferior to Nightcrypt. Not only did Nightcrypt have terrifying battle prowess, he was also brutal, vicious, and had a devilish way of concocting medicine. Few people dared to even approach him.

The fact that a pestilence of diarrhea had struck an entire mountain caused countless hearts to be struck with even more fear than before.

His nickname soon changed from Nightdevil to Plaguedevil. The mere idea of how he would cut people down without even shedding blood was terrifying.

Bai Xiaochun actually enjoyed the change in attitude. Most of the cultivators on Middle Peak were dead set on avoiding him at all costs.

None were willing to provoke him, and although some still resented him, no major issues arose.

As for the Inner Sect disciples, they thought of him as some sort of vicious wild beast. The mere thought of him would cause their legs to go weak, and based on the stories that circulated among them, he was the type of person who could wipe out an entire mountain peak if he wanted.

However, Bai Xiaochun’s life only went smoothly for a few days. Calling upon her authority as the grand elder of Middle Peak, Song Junwan issued a whole series of orders to him. She had him sweep all of the paths on Middle Peak, had him go repair all of the destroyed Immortal's caves, and told him to do other similar things. She found plenty of ways to control Bai Xiaochun, to the point where he was left scowling on the verge of tears.

“So I slipped up one little time...!” Bai Xiaochun huffed. Just when he was finishing sweeping Middle Peak, he got another order from Song Junwan. He was now to scrub all garbage receptacles on Middle Peak.

“I can’t believe she’s being such a bully! How come she can make a pass at me, but I can’t do the same thing back!?” Bai Xiaochun was brimming with anger. How could he go around scrubbing garbage receptacles, considering his status in the sect? It was at around that moment that a beam of light appeared off in the distance, which circled around and headed toward Bai Xiaochun.

When he looked up, he realized it was the grand elder of Corpse Peak.

“Hey there, Nightcrypt, old boy,” the grand elder said, laughing heartily. Landing near Bai Xiaochun, he walked over and saw the broom in Bai Xiaochun was holding. Eyes glittering, he said, “Being punished? I can’t believe you actually dared to make a pass at Song Junwan!”

Although he was the grand elder of Corpse Peak, he knew that Nightcrypt was an extraordinary person who would likely become a patriarch. He had virtually limitless potential, and was also haughty and arrogant. Therefore, the grand elder had long since come to view him as a cultivator of the same generation as himself.

“Yeah, so what?” Bai Xiaochun replied, glaring and sticking his chin up. “She made a pass at me first!!”

The grand elder looked around carefully, then lowered his voice and said, “Nightcrypt, old boy, you listen to me. Do you know what kind of person Song Junwan is? She's a damned scorpion, that’s what! Of all the guys who have dared to provoke her over the years, not a single one met a good end. In fact, years ago, when she was in the Qi Condensation stage, I personally witnessed how she dealt with someone who treated her improperly. She gutted him alive....”

“Gutted him alive?!” Bai Xiaochun asked, gasping.

The grand elder looked around furtively for a moment before continuing, “Did you ever hear about Blood Master Situ Hao from Lesser Marsh Peak? A few years ago, he harbored malicious intentions toward Song Junwan. She chased him all the way to Nameless Peak, and almost managed to gut him too!”

“She guts blood masters?!” Bai Xiaochun felt his scalp tingling like mad. He knew that in the Blood Stream Sect, blood masters occupied a very high position, similar to the sect leader. In fact, in some ways, they were even more powerful than the sect leader. The sect leader couldn’t directly issue orders to the cultivators of a mountain peak, but a blood master could!

Furthermore, only by reaching Core Formation and becoming a blood master could someone ever have a chance of becoming a blood ripper! Blood rippers were the most important force in the sect next to the patriarchs!

For various reasons, blood masters were people who could drive countless other members of the sect into madness.

Bai Xiaochun was more nervous than ever. After glancing up at the upper finger, he looked back at the Corpse Peak grand elder and said, “What are you doing here anyway? Trying to scare me?”

“Why would I want to scare you, Nightcrypt, old boy?” he replied, smiling broadly. “I'm just telling you the facts! Hey, we’ve been friends since your days in the Inner Sect, haven’t we? Such good friends.... In fact, I even went to the sect leader and asked if it would be alright to invite you to Corpse Peak to concoct some medicine. If you do, then you won’t have to follow any orders from that ogress Song Junwan, right?

“How about this: take as much time to think it over as you need. Don’t worry, I’ll provide you with all the medicinal ingredients. Actually, they’ve already been prepared. After you’re finished, you’ll have my profound thanks! Oh, right. The Corpse Peak blood master said that if you agree to concoct medicine for us, he’ll give you that emerald zombie you refined as a gift!” The Corpse Peak grand elder slapped his bag of holding and produced a command medallion, which was none other than the device to control the emerald zombie.

Bai Xiaochun looked at it and confirmed that it was the very control device which he had handed over, the one that controlled the emerald zombie. Of course, if he wanted to, he could invalidate the command medallion with a mere thought at any time.

However, the idea of concocting medicine at Corpse Peak to evade the punishments of Song Junwan seemed like a wonderful idea. He didn’t agree right away though. Instead, he put a hesitant expression onto his face.

“You know,” he said with a wince, “whenever I concoct medicine, fellow sect members often suffer....”

“I’ll personally kill anyone who complains,” the grand elder responded immediately. “Nightcrypt, old boy, rest at ease and concoct to your heart's content! As long as you can make me a tier-4 Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill, then anything goes!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. He was about to continue to play hard to get when suddenly, a cold snort echoed out from the upper finger.

“Nightcrypt, why haven’t you started scrubbing yet!?

“And then there’s you, old fogey. What are you doing off of Corpse Peak!? Why are you always interfering in my business on Middle Peak!” It was none other than Song Junwan. As soon as her voice rang out, Bai Xiaochun grabbed the arm of the Corpse Peak grand elder.

“I agree! When do we leave!?”

“Now!” replied the grand elder, elated. Throwing his head back and laughing uproariously, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base, taking Bai Xiaochun with him as he shot toward Corpse Peak in a beam of light.

At first, Song Junwan’s jaw dropped in shock. But then a strange fire began to rage in her heart, and she flew out to block the path of the Corpse Peak grand elder. “Where do you think you’re going, Nightcrypt!?”

However, it was at that very moment that a blood-colored beam of light shot out from Corpse Peak. It was a middle-aged man with a mane of blood-colored hair, wearing a long, blood-colored robe. Even his skin was the color of blood, and eyes shone with piercing light. Clearly, he had a Foundation Establishment cultivation base, and yet he emanated an energy that was no weaker than that of a prime elder. A single step put him directly in front of Song Junwan.

“Junwan, Junior Brother Nightcrypt is a famous person in the sect. Even the patriarchs like him. It’s fundamentally wrong to force him to do such menial, humiliating tasks. Junior Brother Nightcrypt has agreed to come to Corpse Peak to concoct medicine, so just calm down, we won’t treat him badly!” The man waved his right hand, and Corpse Peak trembled, as though it were resonating with him. At the same time, incredible pressure weighed down in all directions.

“Windcliff, I don’t care if you’re the blood master of Corpse Peak, what gives you the right to interfere in Middle Peak’s affairs!?” Song Junwan’s eyes flickered with killing intent as she stared at the blood-colored figure, who was none other than Blood Master Windcliff from Corpse Peak!

“I'm not a useless piece of crap like Situ Hao! You’re not getting past me!” Windcliff took another step forward to block her path while the grand elder sped along toward Corpse Peak with Bai Xiaochun in tow.

“Nightcrypt, come back home this instant!” Song Junwan shouted lividly.

Seeing that Song Junwan’s path had been obstructed, and knowing that he was now safe, Bai Xiaochun shook his head vigorously and shot back, “I’m not going back, no matter what you say!”

“Are you coming or not!?” she cried, stamping her foot in fury.

“Not!” he retorted with another shake of the head.

“Oh, look at you, Nightcrypt. Think you’re tough stuff now, huh? If you don’t come back this instant, then you can forget about *ever* coming back!” With that, she turned angrily and headed back toward Middle Peak.

“Fine!” Bai Xiaochun said with an angry snort. “I’m *never* going back!” Then he turned and headed toward Corpse Peak.

By this point, the grand elder was sweating as he looked first at Bai Xiaochun, and then back at the equally furious Song Junwan.

“You two…?” he said hesitantly, starting to wonder exactly what had gone on between them....

The exchange that had just gone on left the Corpse Peak grand elder, as well as Blood Master Windcliff, blinking in shock. Something about the whole conversation seemed a bit off.

They weren’t the only ones to have such a reaction. Any other cultivator who heard their argument couldn’t shake the feeling that they were hearing a fight between a husband and wife. It was like a husband angrily storming out of the house and the wife cursing him the entire way....

Note from Deathblade: Since I always tend to get confusion when I include the notes from Er Gen, I want to make clear that the following note is from Er Gen, when the chapter was originally released:

Note from Er Gen: This chapter is coming out on Chinese Valentine's Day. I hope that all Fellow Daoists have someone who will say: "Dear, come back home with me...."

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0225 awe-chapter-226

Song Junwan returned to the upper finger of Middle Peak, her face a mask of rage as she flew over her blood lake and toward her immortal's cave. Before the door could even swing open like it usually did, she kicked it as hard as she could.

A huge boom echoed out, and the door trembled as cracks spread out across its surface.

“That lousy Nightcrypt! Thinks he’s all grown up now, does he? How dare he say he won’t come back home with me!” She kicked the door again, and it collapsed into pieces, whereupon she stormed into her immortal's cave.

The four attendants outside were shivering in shock. They had never seen the grand elder this angry; she had actually destroyed the door to her own immortal's cave.

Soon, more bangs and crashes could be heard from inside as Song Junwan threw things to the ground and smashed them into the walls. However, she was only partially done venting her anger. She sat down where she was, her face flickering with a certain hidden bitterness that even she didn't realize was there.

“Nightcrypt, you ignoramus! I had you sweep the paths on Middle Peak and repair the immortal's caves so that people wouldn’t hate you so much! When someone makes a big scene like you did, people are bound to get jealous. Okay, so maybe asking you to scrub the garbage receptacles was a bit excessive, but all you had to do was come ask me, come *beg* me, and I would have let you off the hook!” Song Junwan was only getting more and more mad.

“But then you decided to collude with outsiders! I can’t believe you ran away! You say you’re not gonna come back? Fine! Don’t come back for the rest of your life!” She grabbed a nearby jug of alcohol and smashed it on the ground.

The attendants outside exchanged embarrassed looks, then simply looked down at their toes and pretended they hadn’t heard anything.

Meanwhile, in Corpse Peak’s Blood Master Temple, Bai Xiaochun was sitting there stewing in fury. In his opinion, Song Junwan was being far too overbearing. What right did she have to ask him to do all those things? Was she in charge of whether or not he concocted pills for people?

“That shrew’s temper is ridiculous!” he grumbled.

Blood Master Windcliff was sitting there in front of him, a strange half-smile on his face. The grand elder was also nearby, an equally odd expression on his face. The two of them exchanged a glance; by now, both of them were convinced that something was going on between Nightcrypt and Song Junwan.

“Take a deep breath, Junior Brother Nightcrypt,” said Blood Master Windcliff, smiling. “Why don’t we talk about the medicine concocting situation?”

Bai Xiaochun looked up. This was his first time actually getting a look at Windcliff. After examining him for a moment, he nodded.

Recently, he had realized that, considering how famous he was, he should act a bit more arrogantly.

“First things first,” he said, sticking his chin up. “If anything bad happens while I'm concocting the pill, you people have to take responsibility!”

“Don’t worry about anything!” Windcliff said. Smiling, he handed a bag of holding to Bai Xiaochun. Not only was he not put off by Bai Xiaochun’s show of arrogance, he actually approved of it. What he cared about was the tier-4 spirit medicine. As long as Nightcrypt could concoct it, then it meant his own refined corpses could become more powerful.

The grand elder laughed heartily. “Come, come, Nightcrypt, old boy,” he said. “Let me show you to the immortal's cave we’ve prepared for you. If it’s missing anything, just say the word.”

With that, the grand elder gave a look to the blood master and then led Bai Xiaochun out of Blood Master Temple.

Corpse Peak viewed Nightcrypt as someone very important, and had arranged a special location just for him on the border between the lower and upper fingers. It was in a wide-open area that had already been cleared of other cultivators.

Of course, news that Nightcrypt had come to concoct medicine had already begun to spread through Corpse Peak. Upon hearing the news, many of the Corpse Peak cultivators blanched in response. After thinking about the tragic fate of Middle Peak, they decided to be more vigilant than ever.

“I heard that the blood master and the grand elder personally invited Nightcrypt over to concoct medicine. We definitely need to watch out.”

“Nightcrypt is also called Plaguedevil. The terrifying way he concocts medicine is the talk of Middle Peak....”

There were some cultivators who didn’t take the matter too seriously, assuming that the stories were mere exaggerations.

“Who cares about medicine concocting? Could it really affect us that much? That whole diarrhea thing only happened because they got careless. As long as we're on guard, nothing bad could possibly happen.”

“Hmph! Let’s see what heaven-shaking, earth-shattering things happen when this Nightcrypt concocts medicine!”

Regardless of the various reactions on Corpse Peak, the blood master and the grand elder issued orders that the area around Bai Xiaochun’s concoction cave was forbidden. No one was allowed to get close.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with all the preparations, especially the immortal's cave they had prepared just for him. After the grand elder left, he sat down cross-legged in front of another hulking cross-legged figure, a green-haired corpse. Surprisingly, its hair wasn’t incredibly long anymore. However, its fangs were just as razor-sharp as before, and it also had bone spurs sticking out of its skin. It had long, wicked-looking claws, and radiated a murderous aura that was completely shocking.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s emerald zombie!

Clearly, the zombie was much stronger than it had been when he had first created it. Its skin looked tougher, and overall, it seemed more brawny and powerful.

It had green eyes, and emanated an aura that made it seem strangely intelligent.

Just looking at it caused Bai Xiaochun’s hair to stand on end. Although he had personally created the emerald zombie, he still found it terrifying.

“Not cute at all....” he said, glaring. “Put those fangs and claws away, and shorten that hair a bit.” As soon as the words left his mouth, the emerald zombie shivered. Its fangs and claws, as well as the bone spurs, all vanished. As for its hair, it shrank down until it was almost invisible.

Its murderous aura also faded a bit. It was still green, but now it looked a lot more normal. After a moment, it looked over at Bai Xiaochun, seemingly a bit sluggish.

“That’s better,” Bai Xiaochun said, pleased. With one last glance at the area outside of the immortal's cave, he opened the bag of holding the blood master had given him, which was filled with a large amount of medicinal plants. Although there weren’t as many as the Song Clan patriarch had given him, they were equally valuable. There were even some plants which were more valuable than the ones the Song Clan patriarch had provided, and of higher quality.

“It seems that Corpse Peak’s blood master has quite a bit of resources on his hands!” There were also plenty of bloodflame stones and pill furnaces in the bag of holding, as well as a jade slip that had the medicine formula for the Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill.

Bai Xiaochun took the medicine formula and began to study it. Soon his eyes widened. The medicine formula was actually not very easy to understand, and there were many areas where the explanations were quite vague. Without true knowledge of how to concoct tier-4 spirit medicine, it would be impossible to understand.

In fact, even with such skill, the formula was still difficult. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun’s skill in the Dao of medicine had already reached the point where he could concoct tier-5 spirit medicine. Therefore, after studying the formula in detail, he started to understand it. Eventually, he took a deep breath.

“This Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill uses corpses as furnaces to brew corpse pills. Forty-nine corpses have to be withered into the form of corpse pills. Then, the forty-nine corpse pills are combined together to make the Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill!

“This is not a pill designed to be consumed by the living. It’s meant to be fed to a refined corpse. With this pill, a shadow zombie could be upgraded to a Core Formation-level flying ghoul!!” Strange light gleamed in his eyes as he looked at the medicine formula.

“This isn’t a tier-4 spirit medicine, this is more like tier-6 medicine which has been simplified to some extent by some almighty practitioner of the Dao of medicine. Only by splitting it up into forty-nine smaller processes can it be successfully concocted by someone at the tier-4 level!

“A simplified spirit medicine like this would be much weaker than the original, and would have a limited success rate. However, in combination with certain other techniques, the success rate could be pushed a bit higher.

“So, spirit medicines can be concocted in this way too, huh?” Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe it, so he decided to continue to study the formula. Muttering to himself, he would occasionally look up at the emerald zombie.

After years of refinement performed by the grand elder of Corpse Peak, the emerald zombie had reached a battle prowess equivalent to the great circle of Qi Condensation. If it could make a breakthrough, it would be like a shadow zombie, equal to the Foundation Establishment stage.

“It would be a big waste to give a spirit medicine like this to the blood master. It would be way better to concoct it and use it on my own zombie..... But in that case, how would I explain things to Corpse Peak? I can only imagine what bad things might happen then....” Rubbing his chin, he looked at the medicine formula. Eyes shining, he continued to do more research.

Time passed. Half a month later, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, panting. Eyes shining, he began to cackle maniacally.

“If I keep the first steps the same, but make some alterations to the final steps, I should be able to make a synchronization Blood Corpse Refining Pill!

“After refining the forty-nine corpses into pills, I can use my emerald zombie to serve as an enormous pill cauldron, and in the end reverse its blood flow. After the pill is finished, it will produce a secondary pill, a synchronization pill. I could give the synchronization pill to the blood master, and if he used it to successfully refine his corpse and break through, then my emerald zombie would be able to control it!”

Bai Xiaochun slapped his thigh, then threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Hair in disarray, expression one of excitement, he simply couldn’t wait to try out this concoction method. After looking around, he began to chuckle derisively.

“So, this part was just a test, huh? You can’t even create Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pills with a pill furnace.” After some thought, he decided that the medicine formula really was a test. If he couldn’t understand it, then naturally, he wouldn’t be able to concoct it.

Only after truly understanding the formula would he be able to truly concoct the medicine.

With that, he rose to his feet and called over Corpse Peak’s grand elder. When he arrived, he said that he needed forty-nine corpses, as well as more bloodflame stones. The grand elder didn’t seem surprised at all, but rather, began to laugh excitedly. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, and then waved his finger at the immortal's cave. Rumbling sounds echoed out as a passageway appeared.

Shockingly, the passageway led to an underground necropolis!

Inside the necropolis was a lake of blood, surrounded by forty-nine zombies, all of which radiated murderous auras.

Bai Xiaochun looked around. Hands clasped behind his back, he stuck his chin up and tried to look displeased.

The grand elder clasped hands respectfully and said, “Nightcrypt, old boy, this is the true place to concoct the medicine!”

By this point, he was completely convinced of Bai Xiaochun’s skill in the Dao of medicine. The truth was that the blood master had given that very same medicine formula to many other apothecaries, and yet none of them had truly understood it. It was only because he and the grand elder had access to certain ancient records that they were aware of the true concocting method.

And yet, Nightcrypt had only used half a month to see through to the critical aspects. The grand elder was very excited. Seeing that Bai Xiaochun didn’t look very happy, he politely clasped hands again. After offering an explanation, he handed over a large collection of medicinal plants, whereupon Bai Xiaochun’s expression softened.

“Please leave,” he said coolly. “Without my permission, no one is to enter!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0226 awe-chapter-227

Corpse Peak’s grand elder clasped hands and then hurried away, more confident than before that Nightcrypt might be able to concoct the Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill. However, after leaving, he hesitated for a moment, and then sat down cross-legged nearby.

“I should stand guard myself to make sure there are no accidents!” Having made up his mind, he even summoned Corpse Peak’s ten bloodstreak elders over to stand guard with him.

This was treatment that normally only a blood master would receive....

Bai Xiaochun ignored what was happening on the outside. Deep in the necropolis, he paced about excitedly. In all his years concocting medicine, he had never concocted a major pill like this before!

“Anything tier-6 and higher is a high-level medicine!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Ignoring the murderous auras emanating from the forty-nine corpses, he took some time to examine the lake of blood.

The blood-water in the lake contained a mixture of Heavenspan River water and with powerful blood qi.

As for the forty-nine corpses, all of them had been specially selected, and even though they were only pallid zombies, they were all at the peak of Qi Condensation. Not a wound could be seen on any of them, and they possessed powerful corpse auras.

After some observation, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased. He sat down cross-legged, and then used an entire day to meditate and get himself in the optimal mental state. When his eyes opened, he waved his right hand, sending medicinal plants flying out of his bag of holding. As they floated in front of them, he made grasping gestures, causing the plants to break apart and turn into liquid.

More and more plants were added to the liquid, and as Bai Xiaochun observed the process, he called upon the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation techniques to analyze and adjust matters. Then he sent the liquid into the corpses around him.

The medicinal liquid almost seemed to possess intelligence as it poured into the bodies of the zombies.

“The corpse pills created by each of the forty-nine zombies might seem identical, but actually, they all have minute variations. Generally speaking, the pills all need to be intentionally incomplete, with a tiny gap left.

“The most difficult part of the concocting process is using the gaps in all of the forty-nine corpse pills to bind them together. Then, their complementary aspects will merge together to form the final major pill.” Sweat began to drip down Bai Xiaochun’s forehead, but he didn’t notice, as he was completely immersed in the concocting process.

Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by. Things were quiet on Corpse Peak, and soon, the cultivators there started to relax. Many of them were starting to think that the cultivators of Middle Peak had really made a mountain out of a molehill when it came to Nightcrypt’s pill concocting. There didn’t seem to be anything terrifying about it at all....

An entire month went by, and nothing at all happened on Corpse Peak. By this point, the cultivators there were all very relaxed. As for the cultivators from Middle Peak, they were all shocked.

After hearing that Nightcrypt had gone to Corpse Peak, they had been prepared for a great spectacle. However, after two months passed, and Corpse Peak seemed the same as ever, the Middle Peak cultivators were starting to feel a bit resentful.

“How come we’re the unlucky ones? I can’t believe it! Nothing has happened at all now that Plaguedevil is on Corpse Peak!!”

“Why are there no exploding furnaces? Why is there no diarrhea outbreak? This isn’t fair!”

“Don’t tell me that Plaguedevil has had a change of character?”

Another half month passed. The cultivators of Corpse Peak were completely at ease, and some of them had even forgotten about the fact that Nightcrypt was there concocting pills. But not the Middle Peak cultivators. They continued to stare at Corpse Peak, as if they refused to rest until they saw the place descend into misfortune.

It was around that time that Bai Xiaochun finally finished with the first step of the Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill. The forty-nine corpses had been sufficiently imbued with the proper medicinal plants, and now he began to use the bloodflame stones to increase the temperature of the blood lake. Soon the medicinal liquid inside of the forty-nine corpses began to seethe.

Another month passed, and the Middle Peak cultivators felt dead inside. They were furious at the unfairness of the situation, and were starting to think that Nightcrypt didn't deserve to be called Plaguedevil.

But then, something happened!

The forty-nine corpses began to slowly wither. As they did, Bai Xiaochun’s expression brightened, and he performed constant incantation gestures, which, in turn, caused one gray corpse pill after another to rise up out of the lake of blood.

“The critical moment has arrived!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, then sent out a stream of thought, which caused the emerald zombie to open its eyes. Suddenly, forty-nine green hairs emerged from the emerald zombie, which spread out and pierced into the forty-nine corpse pills, then began to absorb them.

The corpse pills rapidly withered, and soon transformed into nothing more than ash. All of their essence had been absorbed by the emerald zombie, and was transformed into forty-nine streams of flowing energy.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression turned very serious as he hurried over to the emerald zombie, where he waved his right hand back and forth through the air. Almost immediately, the emerald zombie became like a pill furnace, and the forty-nine streams of energy inside it began to form together into the Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill.

As he waved his hand, the emerald zombie trembled, and its expression twisted and distorted as violent bursts of energy began to pulse out of it. Bai Xiaochun’s hair was in disarray, and he looked very nervous. He waved his right hand, and the emerald zombie suddenly flew into the air and then descended into the lake of blood.

The blood lake almost immediately began to bubble and boil. Bai Xiaochun also flew up into the air, where he settled down cross-legged and began to perform double-handed incantation gestures. With every movement of his fingers, the lake of blood would erupt with blood qi, which poured into the emerald zombie.

Three days passed by in a flash. During that time, the forty-nine streams of energy inside of the emerald zombie seemed incapable of fusing together. Every time they were about to, they would spontaneously separate. The emerald zombie’s body was beginning to shrivel, and some parts of it even seemed to be hovering on the verge of collapse. As it struggled, its fangs, claws, bone spurs, and green hair all appeared in full, and began to distort. However, it seemed impossible to restore them to their original condition.

“How could this be happening?!” Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very nervous. It seemed that if he kept going, the emerald zombie might be destroyed. However, he wasn’t willing to allow this concoction to fail. He suddenly reached up with his hand and pushed down onto his forehead, causing his forehead to split open, and his Heavenspan Dharma Eye to appear. As soon as it did, he could clearly see the forty-nine streams of energy inside the emerald zombie, and how they were completely mixed and jumbled.

The jumbled energy streams were apparently a result of the blood-water in the lake of blood. Although the blood-water was a precious material on Corpse Peak, Bai Xiaochun could now see how mixed and impure it was.

At this critical juncture, the jumbled energy streams were polluting the emerald zombie and making it impossible for the corpse auras to merge together.

“Dammit! How come the blood-water medicinal liquid is so impure!?” Bai Xiaochun was getting very nervous. He knew that, to most other people, the medicinal liquid in the blood lake could be considered unusually pure. Actually, the type of liquid most cultivators used in corpse refining was much less pure.

But Bai Xiaochun cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique, and his Undying Blood qi was the most authentic. That was why the blood lake seemed so impure to him.

“I need to figure out a way to purify it as quickly as possible. There’s no time to waste here. I'm going to have to use drastic methods!” Seeing that the emerald zombie wouldn’t be able to hold on for much longer, he gritted his teeth and waved his right hand. Instantly, a hundred different types of medicinal plants appeared. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he made various mental calculations, and then began to fuse the medicinal plants together. By calling upon the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation techniques, he fused the plants, ignited them, and then sent them flying into the lake of blood.

As they flew through the air, they transformed into a medicinal liquid. When that entered the blood lake, a powerful expulsion force erupted out, and the burning caused a black smoke to rise up and fill the area.

The fire wasn’t on the surface of the lake, but down inside. As it burned, vast quantities of black smoke roiled up, which merged into the walls. At the same time, the blood-water in the lake was significantly reduced.

It was a dangerous, crude method, and the black smoke was not only difficult to get rid of, but also extremely filthy.

However, Bai Xiaochun didn't have any time for other considerations. It didn’t take long for the burning fire to release more and more black smoke, which fused into the walls and spread out through all of Corpse Peak.

As it did, the flame inside of the lake transformed from black to violet, and finally, red. More than ninety percent of the blood-water was gone, and yet, the bit that remained had absolutely no impurities whatsoever. Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, and the remaining blood-water flowed toward the emerald zombie. As it merged into it, Bai Xiaochun howled. The forty-nine streams of energy finally fused together, and the corpse auras began to combine.

As they did, they formed a vortex in the emerald zombie’s dantian region, whereupon the shape of a major pill could be seen!

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get excited, and he was staring directly at the pill. He had resolved all of the issues that seemed like they might lead to a failure. It was at that point that he suddenly remembered the black smoke....

“Ah, probably shouldn’t be a big deal....” he thought, looking over at the walls. The smoke had contained many impurities, and he felt a bit bad about that. He actually wasn't sure what might happen as a result....

However, after reminding himself that he had repeatedly warned the blood master and the grand elder, who had subsequently guaranteed that there would be no problems, he felt a bit more at ease.

He even rubbed his bag of holding, which contained the Song Clan patriarch’s command medallion, and felt even better. “I haven’t betrayed the sect,” he thought.

With that, he continued to focus on the concocting process.

And that was when the strange things started happening on Corpse Peak....

The first odd event to play out occurred with a young cultivator who was currently intently focused on his work refining a corpse. At the moment, the corpse was floating in a blood cistern in front of the young man....

He didn’t notice it, but a strange aura suddenly emerged from the wall and began to fill the area. Before long, the young cultivator began to tremble, and he ceased with his incantation gestures. Rising to his feet with a look of unprecedented seriousness on his face, he rushed out of his immortal's cave and then blasted a hole in the ground.

After leaping into the hole, he began to bury himself with mud, all the way up to his waist. Raising both hands up above his head, he began to slowly sway back and forth....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0227 awe-chapter-228

Strange incidents like this soon began to occur in other locations on Corpse Peak. Cultivators emerged from their immortal's caves, some of them with serious expressions, some of them howling out loud, some of them seemingly enraptured. A few even waved their arms around and laughed uproariously.

One cultivator stood in front of a large tree, expression twisted with rage as he gesticulated wildly and howled, “Halt! If you make a move, I’ll kill you instantly!”

Off in the distance, another cultivator with disheveled hair threw his head back and laughed uproariously. “Hahaha! I've finally reached Core Formation. From now on, call me prime elder!”

There was another cultivator who stood stiffly in front of one of his own refined corpse, howling. Apparently, he thought that he was the refined corpse, and that his refined corpse was the master.

Strange scenes like these played out everywhere. As for the cultivators who weren’t affected, they looked around, expressions of shock and terror filling their faces.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“Heavens! What’s happening!?!?”

“Dammit! What happened!?” The unaffected cultivators almost felt like they themselves were going crazy. The shocking scenes playing out around them soon caused blank expressions to appear on their faces.

Xu Xiaoshan was in the crowd, flying along in terror until he happened to reach a large boulder. Looking around fearfully, he turned to the boulder and said, “Did you see? Something big is happening! All of the disciples are hallucinating! This is bad, we have to go tell the grand elder!” After a moment of silence, Xu Xiaoshan glared at the boulder. “Eee? Why aren’t you talking?”

Another moment passed. “Y-y-you’re a hallucination?!” Looking terrified, Xu Xiaoshan flew off in a different direction until he found a refined corpse.

A tremor ran through him and he said, “Patriarch!! Sir, you have to hurry. Something big is happening. Everyone is hallucinating!”

Even as Xu Xiaoshan cried out in alarm, another Corpse Peak cultivator off in the distance suddenly threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Looking around with contempt and arrogance, he said, “Trifling Blood Stream Sect! How dare you challenge me, Bai Xiaochun! Listen up everyone. I am Bai Xiaochun, Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert. Yes. Bai Xiaochun!” He then proceeded to strut along arrogantly through the crowd, telling everyone he saw that he was Bai Xiaochun....

All of Corpse Peak was descending into complete chaos. The grand elder and the bloodstreak elders all rushed outside in shock, and when they saw what was happening, they gasped.

“What’s going on!?!?”

Even as the grand elder began to rotate his cultivation base, the Corpse Peak blood master appeared up above, staring around in complete confusion.

“They're all hallucinating!!” the blood master murmured incredulously. As for the bloodstreak elders, they strode out to take control, but then their expressions turned blank.

One of them clutched the sides of his head and began to weep loudly. Another squatted down, put his hands on either side of his head, and stuck his index fingers up like rabbit ears. After looking around quizzically, he began hopping around like a rabbit....

Another of them ran off at top speed toward a certain immortal's cave where a young cultivator had buried himself up to the waist. The bloodstreak elder quickly squatted down next to the young cultivator and stared at him with a serious expression.

The blood master and the grand elder felt their scalps tingling in fear. Then they looked over in the direction where Bai Xiaochun was concocting medicine, expressions of shock on their faces.

“Could all this be caused by Nightcrypt’s concocting!?!?”

“Even concocting medicine shouldn’t cause something as terrifying as this to occur!!” The grand elder gasped, and just when he was about to say something, his expression suddenly went blank. Letting out a piercing cry, he stretched his arms out like wings and flew up into the air. Occasionally, he would swoop down and grab a cultivator, let out an odd cry, and then toss them back to the ground.

Apparently, he thought he was an eagle. As he soared through the air, he would use his sharp eyes to spot cultivators down below, and then swoop down and grab them.

The blood master’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. He immediately flew high up into the air, unwilling to be anywhere near Corpse Peak, his eyes shining with terror.

“How could this be happening!?!?!?”

The people paying the closest attention to Corpse Peak were the cultivators of Middle Peak. As soon as things started to unravel, they flew over to take a look. When they saw the bizarre spectacle playing out, they began to gasp and back up, not daring to get too close.

“Plaguedevil finally unleashed the whirlwind!”

“This is horrifying! What’s wrong with them? Don’t tell me they’re hallucinating?!?!”

“Hallucinations like that must draw upon their deepest desires....”

“Heavens! I can’t believe one of them keeps saying he’s Bai Xiaochun! What does he want, deep down inside? To become Bai Xiaochun?”

Song Que flew up into the air and looked over at Corpse Peak, gasping. The first person he saw was Xu Xiaoshan, who was prostrating himself in front of a refined corpse, calling it patriarch. Shortly afterward, Xu Xiaoshan flew off in a different direction, reaching a relatively wide-open section of Corpse Peak, where he suddenly flopped to the ground and stopped moving.

The Middle Peak cultivators weren’t the only ones to notice that something strange was going on. Soon, people from Nameless Peak and Lesser Marsh Peak realized that something odd was happening, and flew over to check out the situation. When they saw what was playing out, they all gasped.

“Who is that one lunatic over there? He’s actually making a pass at his own refined corpse!!”

“Isn’t that the grand elder of Corpse Peak? Why is he screeching like a bird? Does he really think he’s an eagle? Heavens! He’s swooping down toward one of the bloodstreak elders! Eee? He missed him!”

“Does that bloodstreak elder think he’s a rabbit or something?”

“And look at that guy who buried himself up to the waist. What is he doing? And what is that bloodstreak elder doing next to him? He’s not even moving at all!”

The cultivators from the three other mountain peaks were flabbergasted. Eventually Song Junwan appeared, and when she looked over at Corpse Peak, she gasped.

As of this moment, the cultivators of Middle Peak felt mixed emotions regarding Nightcrypt. For some reason, they got the feeling that he had actually treated them quite well. The worst they had dealt with was some exploding furnaces and a bit of diarrhea. The situation with Corpse Peak was simply terrifying....

The Corpse Peak blood master felt like crying, but no tears would come. He looked around blankly at everything that was happening, and felt like he might go crazy at any moment too.

Even as everyone was shaking in terror, Ancestor Peak finally took note of the situation. Meanwhile, the young cultivator who had first been affected, the one who had stuck his hands into the air and started swaying back and forth, suddenly looked at the bloodstreak elder who was squatting next to him, unmoving.

The young cultivator was actually very curious about this. He had noticed the bloodstreak elder arrive earlier, but after much thought, couldn’t identify him. Finally, he decided to ask directly, to dispel his confusion. After a moment of hesitation, the young cultivator asked, “Excuse me, are you immortal grass?”

“No, of course not,” the bloodstreak elder replied solemnly. “I'm an immortal chicken egg!”

Even as Corpse Peak was filled with pandemonium, Bai Xiaochun was down in the necropolis, howling at the top of his lungs. At the same time, his emerald zombie shivered as two medicinal pills appeared in its dantian region.

One of them was the Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill, and the other was a smaller synchronization version.

An excited expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the synchronization pill flew out. Capturing it in a medicinal pill bottle, Bai Xiaochun examined it closely, and then got even more excited than before.

“It worked!” Feeling very proud of his work, he collected up his emerald zombie and then pushed open the door of the necropolis.

As soon as he walked out of the immortal's cave, he heard the clamor off in the distance. However, considering that nobody had gathered near his immortal's cave, he felt very much at ease.

“Seems the black smoke wasn’t a big deal after all, huh?” Sighing, he began to walk along the path, but then suddenly stopped in place. Some distance off was a bloodstreak elder hopping along in his direction.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock, and even wondered if he was seeing things. Heart pounding, he rubbed his eyes and looked over to see a Foundation Establishment cultivator laughing maniacally as he attacked a nearby tree. Then he saw a younger cultivator walking along on his hands....

There was even one cultivator who he had never seen before, laughing proudly as he declared that he was Bai Xiaochun. Strolling over with hands clasped behind his back, the man glared at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Recognize me? I'm Bai Xiaochun!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his scalp began to tingle. As he looked around, he realized that almost all of the cultivators on Corpse Peak were behaving very strangely.

“Why are they all acting so crazy?” Fear rising up inside of him, he was just about to flee when suddenly, he saw Xu Xiaoshan lying off in the distance, still and unmoving.

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, Xu Xiaoshan was a friend, so he hurried over to see if he could help. Just as he reached him, and was preparing to investigate, Xu Xiaoshan’s eyes snapped open.

“Don’t move!" he whispered. "Everyone on Corpse Peak is crazy. They’re hallucinating! I almost can’t believe it, but I was just talking to a boulder a few minutes ago. I even thought a refined corpse was one of the patriarchs!

“Thankfully, I, Xu Xiaoshan, have exceptional latent talent, as well as tons of magical items. That’s how I recovered so quickly.”

“You’re not crazy?!” Bai Xiaochun asked jubilantly.

“Get out of here!” Xu Xiaoshan replied immediately. “Forget about me. I'm pretty sure all of this is happening because of that eagle up there. I'm trying to lure it down here, and then I’ll kill it. Everything will be fine after that.” With that, he peered up into the sky.

Bai Xiaochun subconsciously looked up into the sky, his mind spinning. Soon, he saw the grand elder, arms spread wide as he soared to and fro, occasionally letting out a piercing cry.

Bai Xiaochun looked around blankly. Meanwhile, everyone outside of Corpse Peak saw Bai Xiaochun, and their eyes began to widen.

That was especially true of Corpse Peak’s blood master. He began to seethe with killing intent as he roared, “Nightcrypt!!”

As the blood master’s cry echoed out, blood-colored light surged out around him, and he shot toward Bai Xiaochun like a beam of light. Within the blink of an eye, he was only about 150 meters away.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound, and just when he was about to run away at top speed, Xu Xiaoshan threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Eyes shining, he leapt up into the air.

“The eagle didn’t come, but a blood chicken did! It was all worth it!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0228 awe-chapter-229

Howling, Xu Xiaoshan flew up into the air and slammed into Blood Master Windcliff. Bai Xiaochun used that opportunity to flee, although by this point he was getting a bit angry.

“Windcliff,” he shouted, “before I started concocting, I told you that there could be problems. You personally said not to worry at all! What do you think you’re doing? You might be a blood master, but don’t think that Nightcrypt is afraid of you!”

He was actually very nervous, but he pretended to be simply furious, and even intentionally erupted with a murderous aura. At the same time, he raised his right hand up into the air, within which was a medicinal pill bottle.

“This is the tier-4 Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill you wanted me to make!” In the middle of grappling with Xu Xiaoshan, Blood Master Windcliff looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and was forced to suppress the rage he felt.

The truth was that he really had uttered such words. Although he had never imagined that the current situation would have resulted, he was a blood master, and was capable of being cold and callous. A moment later, his anger faded, and he smiled so broadly his eyes narrowed.

“I was being a bit rash,” he said. “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, none of this is a big deal. As long as the spirit medicine came out alright, then I’ll keep my promise.”

Ignoring the implied threat in his words, Bai Xiaochun threw the medicinal pill bottle toward Windcliff. Windcliff grabbed it and opened it, and was immediately moved. A look of joy even appeared on his face. Although Corpse Peak was in chaos, which was a bit annoying, the fact that the medicinal pill had been successfully concocted negated all other minor problems.

“Many thanks!” he said with a smile. Then, his eyes flashed with cold light as he shot toward Ancestor Peak, where he conferred with the prime elders about a solution to the problem on Corpse Peak.

Bai Xiaochun watched the blood master leave, and laughed coldly in his heart at how unreasonable the man was. Despite how Bai Xiaochun had been helping him with his medicinal pill, the coldness in his eyes had been more than clear moments ago.

“Hmph!" he thought. "It’s a good thing that despite being so honest, I'm very intelligent. If he doesn’t use that Inverse Blood Corpse Refining Pill, then it won’t matter. But if he does use it, then I’ll be able to take command of his refined corpse!” Bai Xiaochun was very proud of himself. With the snap of a finger, he had reduced the Corpse Peak blood master to ashes. Sticking his chin up, he looked around at the crowds. The cultivators from the other three mountain peaks trembled as his gaze passed over them, and they quickly backed up and clasped their hands respectfully toward him.

By now, everyone was terrified of Nightcrypt. His medicine concocting techniques had long since exceeded the realm of divine abilities; he could cut down his enemies without even touching them....

“Aiya. Outstanding people are always the center of attention no matter where they go. What a headache.” Even as he was feeling very proud of himself, and sighing inwardly, he suddenly found himself looking into the eyes of Song Junwan. The cold smile he saw on her face sent chills up his spine.

“Um... hey, Big Sis Song....”

Her eyes went wide. “Oh, back to calling me Big Sis, huh?”

Snorting coldly, she spun around and headed back to Middle Peak. Everyone else in the area exchanged awkward glances and then began to leave.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun was left alone, hovering there in midair. He was starting to get worried. Song Junwan had clearly intended for him to see the look in her eyes, and all of a sudden, he was wondering what new tactics she might resort to in her desire to torment him. He sighed.

However, he now had no choice but to go back to Middle Peak. He did his best to sneak back into his immortal's cave, where he sat down quietly, stewing in his anxiety.

“What am I supposed to do...? This Song Junwan really knows how to harbor a grudge! All I did was leave the mountain for a little bit, right...?” Rubbing his forehead, he continued to try to think of ways to smooth things out with her. Over the following days, he continued to ponder the issue.

The situation with the hallucinations struck Corpse Peak quickly, but ended just as quickly. As the cultivators there recovered, they looked around blankly. Then they began to think back to everything that had occurred, and soon, angry shouts rang up.

“Nightcrypt! Our enmity is irreconcilable!!”

“ARRGGHH! Nightcrypt! I'm gonna kill you!!”

The fury of the bloodstreak elders burned especially hot, and all of them went directly into secluded meditation. As for the grand elder, as soon as he recovered, he threw his head back and let out an anguished howl. From that day forward, no one would ever dare to mention the word ‘eagle’ in front of him ever again. He also chose to go into secluded meditation....

However, there were even more extreme cases which had cropped up. For example, one young man had been under the belief that he was a corpse, and had tried to refine himself. Upon awakening, he let out miserable screams that echoed out near and far.

Many of them wanted to kill Nightcrypt, and yet nobody dared to step onto Middle Peak. All they could do was angrily gnash their teeth. Of course, at the same time, Nightcrypt’s nickname ‘Plaguedevil’ filled the entire sect.

Eventually, word of Plaguedevil spread far and wide....

When Bai Xiaochun caught wind of it all, he was actually moved. Although his impression of the Blood Stream Sect cultivators as being violent and short-tempered only deepened, he was also deeply grateful for how well the leadership treated him. Whenever he caused huge problems, he never had to deal with any consequences.

As far as Song Junwan was concerned, he had finally come up with an idea of how to handle her.

“The only option is to give her a gift....” he thought, sighing. After much thought, he began to concoct some medicine. A few days later, he had produced a single green medicinal pill, which he placed in a pink medicinal pill bottle. Then he left his immortal's cave and began to nervously make his way toward the upper finger.

Along the way, any Middle Peak cultivators who he encountered would respectfully clasp hands in greeting. However, he completely ignored them as he made his way along.

Of course, the more coldly he treated them, the more it seemed to them that things were back to normal. Had he turned and smiled at them, their hair would have stood on end from fear.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun was at Song Junwan’s blood lake. After making his way across the path to the area behind the blood waterfalls, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Nightcrypt requests an audience with Big Sis Song.”

The four attendants standing guard outside the door exchanged glances, and then one of them went inside to report the situation. Another hurried forward to attend to Bai Xiaochun. By now, there were all sorts of rumors in the sect about the exact nature of Nightcrypt’s relationship with Song Junwan. However, no one wanted to offend Nightcrypt and get on his bad side.

Bai Xiaochun waited for two hours, during which time the anger and anxiety in his heart built. It was evening before Song Junwan finally agreed to let him in. The door slowly opened, and Bai Xiaochun strode inside, trying look ice cold and filled with veins of steel.

As soon as he entered, he looked over at the huge hot spring, and yet, Song Junwan was not inside. Instead, she was sitting behind a table in an adjacent hall, staring at Bai

Xiaochun with an expressionless face. Apparently, she was still angry.

“Didn't you say you would never come back?” she asked coolly. “And yet, here you are, back again. What are you doing in my immortal’s cave?” She wore a long, violet gown, with her long hair coiled on top of her head and bound with a phoenix hairpin. Her garment was embroidered with black designs that made her seem particularly dignified. However, tiny droplets of water could be seen on her pearly neck, indicating that she had just bathed. Overall, anyone who looked at her would be hard pressed to not want to ravish her on the spot.

Bai Xiaochun blinked for a moment, then stuck his chest out and waved his sleeve. Expression cold, he frowned and said, “Enough!”

Song Junwan’s eyes widened. Never could she have imagined that Nightcrypt would speak to her in such a tone. She slapped the arm of her chair, trembling in rage. However, that only made her seem more entrancing....

She seemed on the verge of exploding. Her eyes were icy, and just as she was about to start cursing him, Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and waved his right arm, sending a medicinal pill bottle flying toward her.

Her rage did not lessen. With a cold laugh, she waved her hand, causing the pill bottle to shatter, and sending the medicinal pill flying out into the air.

Bai Xiaochun looked her calmly in the eye as the pill landed on the ground and rolled off to the side. Slowly, his eyes seemed to fade self-deprecatingly.

“I, Nightcrypt, returned for one reason only, and that was to give you this pill bottle. I am completely destitute. All of the medicinal plants given to me by the patriarch went into the pills I concocted for the sect. Because of that, I had no choice but to go to Corpse Peak to concoct medicine for Windcliff. Only then was I able to build up enough medicinal plants to make this single medicinal pill. It is a special spirit medicine that I concocted for the sole purpose of giving it to a special person!

“The medicine has been given, so I shall take my leave. Henceforth, you are the grand elder, and I am Nightcrypt!” His voice seemed bitter and filled with pain, as if the shattered medicinal pill bottle was a reflection of the state of his heart, and the fallen medicinal pill had transformed his kind feelings into nothing more than ashes.

Clasping hands, he bowed deeply, then turned and strode toward the door, looking completely and utterly lonesome.

Song Junwan looked on in shock. She had assumed that Nightcrypt would come to fawn ingratiatingly. In fact, the reason she had made him wait outside for so long, other than to give her time to bathe and dress, was to make sure he realized that it didn’t matter if the patriarchs liked him. On Middle Peak, she was the grand elder, and was not someone to be brazenly defied.

To her surprise, however, he had started out by chiding her. Considering her pride and lofty position, it was impossible for her not to have been angered. When he tossed her the medicinal pill bottle, that anger erupted, and she destroyed the bottle. Of course she had noticed the medicinal pill rolling off to the side. But how could she ever have predicted the next set of words that would come out of his mouth?

Song Junwan looked down at the pill, and then looked at Bai Xiaochun bleakly walking out the door. For some reason, her heart suddenly seemed empty, which was a feeling that she had never experienced before.

“Wait!” she blurted.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, then turned and calmly clasped his hands in formal fashion.

“You have orders for me, Grand Elder?” His wording was very polite, without the slightest hint of passion or emotion. His expression was cold and grim, almost as if he had severed away his memories and buried them deep in his heart. Even more telling was that he had addressed her as ‘Grand Elder’ instead of ‘Big Sis Song’.

“You....” Her face was ashen, and for some reason, her heart felt like it was in complete shambles.

“If you have no pressing matter, then I shall take my leave.” Expression the same as ever, Bai Xiaochun turned and left the immortal's cave. It was only after he was some distance away, and off the upper finger, that he let out a long sigh. His heart was still pounding.

“This move should work....” he thought. “If not, then I don't know what else to do.” He hurried nervously back to his immortal's cave, sighing to himself about how annoying women were, especially powerful women, who were far more domineering than the regular type.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0229 awe-chapter-230

After Bai Xiaochun left, Song Junwan was left alone in the immortal's cave, somehow feeling irritated and depressed, all at the same time. And yet somehow, she didn't know how to give vent to her feelings. All she could think about was the image of him walking away, then turning and looking at her with that cold expression.

“Nightcrypt, you ignoramus!” she growled through gritted teeth. Then she looked down at the medicinal pill on the ground and made a grasping motion, causing it to fly through the air into her palm.

Upon closer examination of it, she was moved. It was a tier-4 spirit medicine, not designed to improve the cultivation base or heal injuries. Instead, it contained a delicate, sweet odor that was quite pleasing to the senses.

“A tier-4 Spirit Perfume Pill....” she muttered, shocked. Although she couldn’t concoct medicine herself, she was an experienced and knowledgeable person, and could instantly tell that this spirit medicine was a Spirit Perfume Pill, designed for use by female cultivators.

Upon consuming the pill, one’s entire body would emit a wonderful fragrance. It also caused one’s skin to become more fair, and would remove old scars. As for versions which were tier-4 and higher, they would even purify the bones. Although the end results were common in nature, and could not lead to immortal transformations, it was enough to make any woman even more beautiful than she already was.

A tier-4 spirit medicine like this, even one that was relatively useless to male cultivators, would fetch an exorbitant price if it went up for auction. Despite the fact that she was from the Song Clan, even Song Junwan wouldn't be able to get her hands on one easily.

As she looked down at the medicinal pill, her face softened, and she thought back to what Nightcrypt had just said. As she stood there quietly, she realized that her heart was trembling. After a while, the sensation passed, and an enigmatic smile appeared on her face.

“You little rascal. You’re just making a complicated pass at me, aren’t you? That’s what you’ve been doing from the beginning! Hmph. I’ve seen everything there is to see, you impudent little child. You really think I can't see through your plan?!” With a cold snort, she examined the medicinal pill again to ensure that it was pure. After confirming that it was safe, she consumed it.

Over the course of the following days, Bai Xiaochun waited nervously in his immortal's cave, unsure of whether his manly show had been effective. One day, Song Junwan arrived outside. He immediately rose to his feet to go out and receive her. He was just getting ready to put on a cold, manly front, and step out of the door, when she said, “That pill of yours got dirty, so I threw it away. I'm giving you a task. Concoct me something with sex appeal.”

Without another word, she turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. From the time she had arrived until the moment she left, it seemed like barely a moment had passed. Apparently, she’d only come to say one sentence.

“What is that vixen up to? What’s the meaning of this latest move?” After a moment, his eyes widened with shock. Then he sniffed the air, and his brows rose in amusement.

“That’s obviously the fragrance of my Spirit Perfume Pill! I put extra jasmine oil in it. Anyone who ate it would naturally smell that way.” He immediately felt relieved. The fact that she had consumed the medicinal pill and then come asking for him to concoct more pills indicated that their previous conflict had been resolved.

“Man, this vixen really has a lot of demands. What does she want a sex appeal pill for, isn't she sexy enough as it is? I guess she wants more sexiness.” Even as he shook his head, his heart suddenly flip-flopped, and his eyes went wide with a look of terror.

“Hold on. What does she plan to do with a sex appeal spirit medicine? Is she planning to consume it and then try to make another pass at me? Heavens! This vixen is terrifying....” At first he got even more nervous, but after thinking about it for a while he realized that this way, he might not have to actually become the grand elder to get access to the relic of eternal indestructibility. If he had free access to Song Junwan’s immortal's cave, he would surely get a chance to secretly find the relic.

Although the thought excited him, it also caused his heart to pound....

“What a sacrifice, though,” he thought. “She's a deadly vixen. I have to be very careful not to cause her to flip out. If I really mess up, then what would I do? I can’t beat her in a fight, and if she tried to force herself on me, it would be absolutely terrifying.” He blinked a few times, then put the matter to some more thought. Finally, he stuck his chin up. Expression one of pure righteousness, he flicked his sleeve.

“Fine. It’s all for the chance to live forever. I’ll just have to endure. If Song Junwan turns out to be a true predator, I’ll... I’ll just have to endure!” Grieving at how he was willing to sacrifice everything for the chance to live forever, he settled down to concoct medicine for Song Junwan.

He put a lot of effort into this batch. A few days later, a new Spirit Perfume Pill came out of the pill furnace. This one was actually a mid-grade medicinal pill.

It was specifically designed for female cultivators. Not only would it make the skin more fair and purify the bones, it would make the woman more attractive. Furthermore, she would emit a fragrant aroma that males would find fatally attractive.

Holding the spirit medicine in hand, Bai Xiaochun sniffed it, and a fragrant aroma buffeted his face. Instantly, he could tell that it was an aroma a man might lose himself in, never to awaken.

“It worked!” he said, seemingly drunk with passion. It took him a bit of time to recover, after which he took another whiff of the pill’s aroma. By doing so repeatedly, he got used to the fragrance, and even managed to create another spirit medicine specifically designed to counteract the effects. After confirming that he had a powerful resistance built up, he looked at the pill in satisfaction, and he stared up into the sky. Looking profoundly melancholy, he said, “It’s all for the chance to live forever!”

He emerged from his immortal's cave to find that the sky was already turning dark. As he began to make his way toward the upper finger of the peak, he continued to ponder whether or not he would submit if Song Junwan went truly crazy. He was really torn about what to do.

After he had been walking along for a while, teeth gritted as he agonized over what decision to make, his expression suddenly flickered as he saw a bald-headed figure on another nearby mountain path.

It was none other than Song Que. He had absolutely no hair visible on him, not even eyebrows, and was somewhat gaunt. He was just now coming back from a visit to his aunt. Although he had gone to her with some questions about cultivation, he had been criticized and taught a lesson. As such, he was in a foul mood. Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of him, he also noticed Bai Xiaochun.

Their gazes locked, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. He hadn’t seen Song Que for quite a few days, and almost did a double take.

He couldn’t help but curiously blurt, “Eee? What’s with the new look? You’re skinnier and hairless too?”

Only then did he suddenly realize why Song Que looked like this, and then he saw the murderous look rising up in his eyes. Without any hesitation, he said, “You look great, by the way. Much better than before. Really....”

Song Que’s eyes widened, and he subconsciously ran his head along his bald scalp as the hatred in his heart surged. All of the hair on his body had been scorched clean off during the recent incident with the exploding furnaces. Apparently because of the medicines that were part of the explosion, his hair still hadn’t returned despite the passage of several months.

Because of that, every time he examined himself in his copper mirror, his mood would sink dangerously. If that were the only thing he had to worry about, he might have been able to endure it. But then there was the half month of diarrhea. On one occasion, he had visited the restroom more than a hundred times in a single day, so the words Bai Xiaochun had just spoken seemed like naked provocation!

In the Blood Stream Sect, Song Que had always been the type of person no one dared to provoke. Considering that he had met disaster three times because of Nightcrypt, he suddenly snapped.

“That's it, Nightcrypt!!” he shouted, stepping forward to block Bai Xiaochun’s path. “Ever since you came to Middle Peak, not even the animals can sleep easy. Everybody hates you! I'm gonna--”

Song Que’s rage actually sparked Bai Xiaochun's anger. He had just spoken quite conciliatory words. Besides, everything that occurred had been an accident. Therefore, he was forced to interrupt Song Que.

“Quiet down, boy! Get out of my way and go play or something.”

Song Que almost exploded. Nightcrypt was talking to him the way someone of the Senior generation might talk to a child. Throwing his head back, he howled and unleashed the power of his cultivation base. Eyes bloodshot, he reached out toward Bai Xiaochun with his right hand.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed with cold light. If he were dealing with anyone else, he might have been a bit nervous. However, he had already become familiar with Song Que in the Fallen Sword Abyss, and even more so after having come to the Blood Stream Sect. The instant that Song Que’s hand began to move, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, reached out, and grabbed his forearm, then threw him headlong down the path leading to the foot of the mountain.

When the explosive fleshly body power of the Undying Heavenly King exploded out, Song Que felt like he couldn’t even control his own body. The air screamed past in his ears, and his mind reeled as he slammed into the ground and then tumbled head over heels down the mountain.

“Nightcrypt!!” he screamed. He wanted to stop moving and right himself, but the force which had been unleashed was something he couldn’t fight against.

Bai Xiaochun straightened up his garments, then ignored Song Que and once again began to ponder what to do if Song Junwan tried to force herself on him. Such thoughts preoccupied him all the way to her immortal's cave.

It didn’t take too long for Song Que to finally grind to a halt. Without a moment’s pause, he shot madly back up the mountain, face ashen with rage and heart bursting with the desire to do murder. Although the terrifying force Bai Xiaochun had unleashed filled him with a sensation of deadly crisis, there was no way he would let someone of his own generation treat him that way inside the Blood Stream Sect!

“This Nightcrypt is wily and cunning. He’s brought disaster to the sect, and is the subject of universal complaint on Middle Peak. He dares to curse people, but doesn’t dare to talk reason? I don’t care if the patriarchs favor him or if my aunt likes him. He’s nothing more than an outsider, with no connections in the sect. I’m the firstborn son of this generation of the Song Clan! I don’t care what happens, I’m going to find my aunt and make an appeal to justice! She’ll definitely drive this guy off. And even if she doesn’t, she’ll at least make him kowtow to me. Then he’ll know who’s boss!!” Gritting his teeth and fuming with anger, Song Que raced at top speed toward the upper finger.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0230 awe-chapter-231

Song Que sped along at top speed, radiating killing intent, completely confident that his aunt would take the lead in presiding over justice. She would either kill Nightcrypt or force him to submit to Song Que.

“I'm the firstborn of the Song Clan! If it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect, I would have definitely reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. Then I wouldn’t have to help Aunt Junwan become blood master; I would have been able to take the spot myself!” He was like a streak of light speeding toward the upper finger.

“Well, I can’t do anything about that now. Besides, Aunt Junwan only wants to become the blood master for strategic purposes, to make sure that Xuemei doesn’t take the spot. Just wait until I'm in late Foundation Establishment, then I can fight for the position of blood master on my own. This piddling Nightcrypt! If I can make use of him in the future, I will, but if he refuses to accept my good graces, I’ll kill him and make sure he never gets a proper burial!” More confident than ever, he rumbled along through the upper finger toward Grand Elder Song Junwan’s immortal's cave behind the blood lake.

Once he was behind the waterfalls, he saw the four young guards. Instantly, their eyes snapped open, glowing brightly as they observed him approaching.

Song Que didn’t even pause. Just as he was about to enter the immortal's cave itself, the four young attendants threw themselves in his path.

One of those young guards was very well aware of the high position Song Que occupied. Even still, he didn’t dare do anything other than try to block his path. Bracing himself, he said, “Elder Song, please wait a moment for--”

The fact that the young attendants were blocking his path caused Song Que to frown. Then his rage and killing intent soared, and he roared, "Get the hell out of my way! I have something to talk about with the grand elder!”

Usually, he never had any problems entering Song Junwan’s immortal’s cave. Considering his status, he didn’t technically have free reign to come and go as he pleased, but for all intents and purposes, could. After all, Song Junwan was quite fond of her nephew.

But now the young attendants actually dared to stand in his way. Song Que snorted coldly, then pushed them aside and proceeded forward.

The four young attendants’ faces flickered, and they were of a mind to try to stop him. After all, they were fairly certain that it was important to keep the identity of the other person inside the cave a secret. However, they were not really capable of stopping Song Que.

Before they could even react, Song Que was inside the door.

Usually, Song Que wouldn’t act so impulsively. However, this was his aunt, and he was also consumed by rage. Because of that, he had completely lost his usual cool. Besides, as far as he was concerned, he wasn’t asking for anything outrageous.

In the instant that he set foot inside the immortal's cave, and before he could even get into the main hall, he heard his aunt laughing, a strange laughter that seemed both cheerful and chiding at the same time.

Looking surprised, Song Que hurried forward. When he brushed the door curtain aside, a sight met his eyes that left him completely and utterly thunderstruck. As his mind spun, his jaw dropped. He almost couldn’t believe the incredulous scene which was playing out right in front of him.

There was his aunt, Song Junwan, sitting on a chair, laughing lightly, her left hand covering her mouth the way a woman would in front of her lover. Nightcrypt sat next to her, clasping her right hand, studying it closely. He even seemed to be sniffing it delicately as he leaned over.

Song Que was virtually struck mute. He felt like he might fall over from the shock, and even wondered if he was hallucinating....

However, the scandalous image which was now burned into his mind couldn’t be mistaken for anything else, and left Song Que stunned.

The moment Song Que entered the room, Song Junwan pulled her hand out of Bai Xiaochun’s. Her smile vanished, and she coughed dryly. Expression somber, and looking very much like someone from the Senior generation, she turned her gaze toward Song Que.

“How rude of you to barge in like that,” she said. “What’s the matter?” Although she was trying to look like someone from the Senior generation, her cheeks were still flushed. That combination of flirtatiousness and somberness made her unbelievably attractive.

At the same time, she felt somewhat humiliated and angry. If any other person had burst in the way Song Que had, she would have punished that person severely. But Song Que was her nephew, so there was little she could do.

Startled by Song Que’s sudden entrance, Bai Xiaochun quickly sat up straight and proper. He actually felt a bit guilty for having been caught in the act. After giving Song Junwan the spirit medicine he’d concocted, he had taken advantage of the moment to offer to read her palm.

Song Junwan had never forgotten his amazing performance in the Spirit Stream Sect, and had immediately allowed him to take hold of her hand. Then he had showered her with praise and complements, causing her to laugh in delight.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and sat in place, looking at Song Que just as somberly as Song Junwan was.

Song Que stood there panting for a long moment before he pulled himself together. Even still, he almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing. In his eyes, his aunt was a lofty and magnificent figure, and yet here she was allowing a virtual stranger to grab her hand. Then she even laughed flirtatiously.

Although all of that was completely beyond anything Song Que could ever have anticipated, he might have been able to accept it if the person who had just been holding his aunt's hand was someone other than the infuriating Nightcrypt.

Song Que’s anger began to rise to explosive levels, until he could hardly breathe. His eyes burned bright red as he glared at Bai Xiaochun and madly howled, “Nightcrypt!!”

Taking a step forward, he looked over at his aunt, Grand Elder Song Junwan.

Mind spinning with rage, he cried, “Aunt Junwan, ever since Nightcrypt came to Middle Peak, he’s caused one disaster after another. All the disciples here hate his guts because of how he's screwed them over. I actually suspect that he’s a spy, sent to sow chaos in the Blood Stream Sect! Aunt Junwan, please make an example of him and expel him from the sect!!”

As his cries echoed about in the immortal’s cave, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, and anger began to rise in his heart as he realized that Song Que had come here to complain about him. Unfortunately, Song Que was actually right about some of his accusations, which caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to leap in fright. Just when he was about to speak up to defend himself, Song Junwan’s face turned grim, and she slapped her hand down onto the table.

The resounding smacking sound that rang out instantly drowned out Song Que’s voice.

“Shut up!” she said, her expression grim and murderous. As her voice echoed out, the immortal's cave suddenly turned, very, very cold, causing Song Que to shiver. From a very young age, he had always feared this aunt of his, and to see her so mad caused him to subconsciously look down at his toes.

Seeing Song Que react in such a way sated a bit of Song Junwan’s anger. He was her nephew, whom she loved dearly. Looking both sincere and also profoundly disappointed, she slowly said, “Que’er, you’re the firstborn of the Song Clan. There are no limits to what you could do in the future. How could you be so muddle-headed and short-sighted? Nightcrypt has a clean background, and has performed great services for the sect. It's true he’s annoyed some of the other members of the sect, but none of that was intentional! Neither you nor I know the full extent of the humiliation he endured on the path of pursuing the Dao of medicine for the sect!” From the tone of her voice, she seemed to truly lament her nephew’s unreasonable behavior.

As he sat there off to the side, Bai Xiaochun felt deeply moved. He gazed softly over at Song Junwan, and mused that everything she said was correct. He never intentionally did things to annoy or harm others.

He suddenly felt as if Song Junwan understood him on a deep and even intimate level. In fact, he really had nothing bad to say about how the Blood Stream Sect had treated him.

Even as Bai Xiaochun sighed inwardly, Song Que stood there trembling. From the time he was young, he had often been rebuked by his aunt, and he had rarely ever talked back to her. But the situation right now was something he just couldn’t accept. That was especially true considering the emotional look on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Song Que couldn’t help but think about how Nightcrypt had been holding his aunt's hand, and how the two of them clearly seemed to be involved in some illicit affair. Song Que’s breath came in ragged pants as he looked up and said, “Nightcrypt, you--”

When Song Junwan saw that Song Que was refusing to acknowledge his mistakes, her expression turned even grimmer, and she angrily yelled, “Que’er! Back down!” Then she looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, please don’t take offense. Que’er just doesn’t understand adult matters, the little brat.”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. Looking like the picture of someone from the Senior generation, he nodded and smiled bitterly.

“There’s no harm in it,” he said. “Que’er is young and full of energy, which is normal at his age. Members of the Senior generation like us can only do our best to educate him a bit more.”

When Song Que heard Bai Xiaochun call him Que’er, he felt like he was about to go insane. His cultivation base immediately surged with power, and a murderous aura spread out from him.

“Nightcrypt, I'm gonna kill you!” he howled, and then charged toward Bai Xiaochun. Because he was so close, there was no time for Song Junwan to interfere.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Song Que performed an incantation gesture, summoning a huge blood-colored hand almost directly in front of Bai Xiaochun’s face. The hand surged with energy, destroying the chair and table. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed up in thought for the briefest of moments, and he decided not to dodge or evade. The hand slammed into him, causing his face to go pale. Coughing up a mouthful of blood, he staggered backward.

Seeing that, Song Junwan was both worried and angry. She waved her hand, causing a wave of power to surge out and suppress Song Que. Incapable of moving forward, Song Que stood there, eyes bloodshot, trembling physically. He knew that Nightcrypt had intentionally spit out some blood; even if he had been injured somehow, there was no way he should have coughed up any blood.

“Song Que, what gall you have!” Song Junwan yelled at the top of her lungs. Just when she was about to start reprimanding Song Que, Bai Xiaochun raised his right hand to stop her.

Wiping the blood off of his chin, he looked over at Song Junwan and said, “Que’er did nothing wrong. I might be of the Senior generation, but I’m not perfect. I make mistakes too. It’s my fault that Que’er is now hairless. Therefore, I will immediately go into seclusion to concoct some spirit medicine to help him grow some more hair.”

He even reached out and squeezed her hand to show how sincere he was.

Song Junwan’s cheeks immediately flushed bright red. To have her hand squeezed right in front of her own nephew was something that instantly caused her heart to start racing. It was a very odd sensation.

Pulling her hand back, she looked over at Song Que and angrily said, “Que’er, apologize immediately to your Sect Uncle!”

Song Que stood there trembling, blue veins bulging out on his neck and face. Laughing shrilly, he said, “You two fornica--”

Before he could finish speaking, Song Junwan’s eyes flashed with cold light, and she waved her hand. A huge wind swept over Song Que, carrying him out of the immortal's cave.

“Song Que, your impertinence has earned you three months in secluded meditation! Don't step a foot outside of your immortal’s cave during that time!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0231 awe-chapter-232

Bai Xiaochun didn't feel that it was appropriate to stay in the immortal's cave any longer. Looking over at the grim-faced Song Junwan, he gave a soft sigh, then bid her farewell. Song Junwan hesitated for a moment, and then nodded. After offering some more apologies for Song Que’s behavior, she said, “We have a few more months before the war. Middle Peak is going to have its trial by fire for the position of blood master. When the time comes, I hope you’ll be able to help me.”

Her eyes shone with keen anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun looked back at her, his own eyes flashing. After a moment passed, he nodded, then left.

Once outside of the immortal's cave, his heart swelled with pride. Taking a deep breath, he reveled in his satisfaction at having mopped the floor with Song Que.

“Hmmmphh! From now on, Que’er, I'm your Clan Uncle!” Feeling wonderful, but expression pale and grim, he returned thoughtfully to his immortal's cave on the lower finger.

Once inside, he stretched lazily, thinking about how he now outranked Song Que. Then he waved his wide sleeve.

“Ah, whatever. As a member of the Senior generation, it’s my job to help educate the youngsters.” Sitting down cross-legged, he put aside the matters of the day and began to practice cultivation.

At the same time, he was continuously analyzing the methods of concocting tier-4 spirit medicines. Although his recent concocting efforts had been a success, he still didn’t feel completely content with the results.

“Must have been problems with the pill furnaces....” he thought with a sigh. The more he thought about it, the more he realized that his ideas regarding concocting medicine would cause virtually any pill furnace to explode.

The only thing he could do to prevent that from happening was to try to make the medicine less powerful. However, that would limit him to making the medicine about half as strong as he could, which left him feeling somewhat apathetic.

“What a pity,” he thought with a sigh. “I guess my medicine concocting will be limited in this way for now.” Considering there was nothing to be done about the matter, he decided that he would just have to wait until he got back to the Spirit Stream Sect. Then he could ask Li Qinghou about the situation.

When it came to cultivation, he didn't waste any time. During the following days, he spent all day absorbing blood qi and working on the second volume of the Undying Live Forever Technique, the Undying Heavenly King.

The first level of the Undying Heavenly King was the ten mammoths Berserk Ghost Body, which he had already completed perfectly. The second level was the ten ghosts Heavenly Demon Body. Because of his diligent hard work, and also the fact that the Blood Stream Sect was a Holy Land for the Undying Live Forever Technique, his continuous absorption of blood qi soon helped him break through to the power level of four ghosts!

Although he had no way to test out how strong he actually was, based on some basic calculations, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he was terrifyingly powerful.

In fact, he was sure that he was strong enough to beat almost anything that might cross his path. He was so strong in terms of his flesh and blood that he was nearly invincible. Not only were his offensive capabilities enough to rock mountains and rivers, he had colossal defenses as well.

Song Que’s all-out attack earlier had felt like nothing more than a scratch to Bai Xiaochun, and the blood he had coughed up had been forcibly pushed out by drawing upon the power of his own spiritual seas.

And then there was the divine ability which came with the Undying Heavenly King, the Mountain Shaking Bash. Although he hadn’t come across many chances to practice it, on the few occasions when he had, he could sense how shockingly powerful it was.

In fact, he was convinced that if he unleashed it to full effect, he really could bash a hole into a gigantic mountain! When it came to bashing into people, well, it was obvious what fate they would meet.

“At this point, I think I'm actually more powerful than one of those heavenly demons!” He suddenly scooped his hand down into the stone floor, and it felt like he was scooping up some tofu. There was almost no sensation at all as he pulled out a chunk of rock and then crushed it into ash.

When he thought about how much more powerful he was than before, his excitement rose. Every time he absorbed blood qi, he felt indescribably wonderful. He also worked on his Blood Annihilation World, and although he didn’t actually notice, he was getting much quicker at forming blood swords. The blood swords he formed were also more powerful.

When he absorbed blood qi, he almost felt like he was at one with Middle Peak, as if he himself could shake the mountain itself.

Of course, he didn’t dare an actual attempt, for fear that things could quickly get out of control.

As for his Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, his fundamental technique, and the only truly hidden Daoist magic in the Spirit Stream Sect, it was as the saying went: everything is difficult at the beginning, but gets easier as time progresses. Originally, he had needed help with the Heavenspan River water, but after passing into the middle level of the technique, and having successfully absorbed a drop into his spiritual seas, he now had some measure of control over the Heavenspan River water. Directly absorbing water from the Heavenspan River was something completely and utterly domineering, a trait which was now showing through in Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation.

Now that he was in mid Foundation Establishment, he could actually absorb a full cup of Heavenspan River water. It was there above his fourth spiritual sea, rapidly being absorbed. With the help of some medicinal pills, Bai Xiaochun helped the process along, and could sense that his aura was becoming more and more like the Heavenspan River’s.

Bai Xiaochun had the strange feeling that his current level of power didn’t quite make him invincible within Foundation Establishment, but would surely allow him to crush almost any opponents who came his way.

After coming to the Blood Stream Sect, he had not unleashed his Heavenspan Dharma Eye on many occasions.

However, he continued to cultivate it, making it grow more and more itchy, and at the same time, more powerful. Bai Xiaochun had the feeling that once he opened that eye and revealed its power, it would shake heaven and earth.

The only things Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very satisfied with were his Human Controlling Grand Magic and protomagnetic power. After beginning to cultivate the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, his strength in control power had grown, but was still relatively limited.

He had spent a lot of time studying protomagnetic power, and had never given up on his plans to develop it. However, he seemed to have reached a barrier that he couldn’t pass.

It was very frustrating, but there was nothing he could do about it other than spend some time every day on study and contemplation regarding how to progress.

There was one other thing that he spent time thinking about, and that was the Middle Peak blood master trial by fire that Song Junwan had mentioned, and how she wanted his help.

“If Song Junwan becomes blood master, then it stands to reason that the grand elder position will open up. Usually, someone would be promoted from among the bloodstreak elders. However, I bet that if someone was famous enough, they might be considered even if they weren’t a bloodstreak elder already!”

By this point in time, Bai Xiaochun had suffered enough at the hands of the talking rabbit that he only delivered internal monologues. However, his eyes still shone brightly at the thought of the grand elder position opening up.

That would be his greatest chance to successfully acquire the relic of eternal indestructibility, and then finally be able to leave the Blood Stream Sect.

“I'm already just as famous in the Blood Stream Sect as Song Que is, which means I'm already above the bloodstreak elders. I'm probably not famous enough to directly become grand elder, though. In the next few months, I need to do something to make myself even more famous. Whether it’s good or bad, I need to convince people that, despite only being in Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, I'm still a shocking and incredible expert!” His eyes began to shine even more brightly than before.

And that was how the days passed. The war between the Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect had already reached the point where both sects had mobilized all of their forces.

Rumors about the war swirled. Some stories were true, some were false, but they all left the Blood Stream Sect disciples in shock. At the same time, the war preparations in the Blood Stream Sect were nearing completion, and disciples were already being dispatched from the sect to parts unknown.

Bai Xiaochun could see the blood clouds which hovered over the sect growing larger, and building up pressure to a terrifying degree. Even the blood qi within the sect seemed to be growing stronger.

Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was in secluded meditation and rarely emerged, stories about Nightcrypt continued to spread, and they only grew more fantastic as time went on.

For some reason, a lot of people knew why Song Que had been punished by being sent into secluded meditation. There even seemed to be some hidden force trying to get people riled up against Nightcrypt. As time progressed, the cultivators of Middle Peak continued to grow both more hateful of him, and more fearful.

People even began to talk about how Nightcrypt and Young Lady Xuemei didn’t get along, and many people hoped that she would eventually put him in his place.

“Young Lady Xuemei, please come out and teach Nightcrypt a lesson!”

“Nightcrypt is so terrifying! Everyone on Middle Peak and Corpse Peak is miserable because of him....”

“Middle Peak’s grand elder always takes Nightcrypt’s side. Young Lady Xuemei, please come out and cut him down!”

Xuemei got requests like that just about every day. At the same time, stories about Nightcrypt continued to spread. Eventually, it reached the point where many people viewed him as something on the level of a devil king.

However, there wasn’t much Xuemei could do. Nightcrypt was favored by the patriarchs, skilled in the Dao of medicine, extremely famous, and had a reputation that put him on the same level as Song Que.

A person like that wasn't somebody that Xuemei could openly make a move against. Furthermore, she could sense that he possessed extraordinary battle prowess, and knew that if she fought him, she wouldn’t be able to beat him quickly.

So she sat down cross-legged in her immortal's cave, eyes flashing coldly as she contemplated the matter. It wasn’t lost on her that someone was trying to provoke her into killing Nightcrypt.

In the end, she didn’t care who it was that was doing such a thing. After all, she already wanted to kill Nightcrypt.

“It won’t be long now before the blood master trial by fire begins, and that slut Song Junwan and I will finally face off. Song Junwan is probably counting on Nightcrypt to help her, so getting rid of him would be a boon for me.” Xuemei chuckled coldly, the killing intent in her eyes growing more intense.

“Nightcrypt never made much of a name for himself before. But after he came back from the Fallen Sword Abyss, he suddenly rose to the top. It's almost like he's a different person. So very strange!

“There’s definitely something fishy going on with him. Definitely! I just need to find out what it is!” Since she knew she wasn’t a match for him openly, it was time to start plotting. At a point when the sect was just on the verge of going to war, the potential for destructive consequences was even greater.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0232 awe-chapter-233

As Xuemei investigated Nightcrypt's background, a rumor began to spread through the Blood Stream Sect. Supposedly, after getting medicinal pills from Nightcrypt, the blood master of Corpse Peak had immediately gone into secluded meditation, and still hadn’t emerged. However, powerful ripples had begun to emanate from Corpse Peak’s Blood Master Temple.

Quite a few people noticed those fluctuations, especially the blood masters from Lesser Marsh Peak and Nameless Peak. All three of the current blood masters were relatively evenly matched, but now it seemed as if the Corpse Peak blood master was experiencing a breakthrough.

It wasn’t likely that he would reach Gold Core, but to Corpse Peak, a breakthrough in corpse refining techniques would lead to a rapid and significant increase in battle prowess.

Because of that, the blood masters of Lesser Marsh Peak and Nameless Peak started to get nervous. A few days later, the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak shot through the air in a beam of light to appear outside of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave.

He was a tall and well-built man, with a mighty look and a powerful aura of qi and blood. As a body refinement cultivator, he almost seemed like a mountain standing there, emanating powerful pressure. Even his voice was deep and resounding as he said, “It’s me, Grand Elder Han Chundong of Lesser Marsh Peak. Junior Brother Nightcrypt, are you home?”

The blood trees outside Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave were trembling, but didn’t dare to flee. No matter how scared they were of outsiders, Nightcrypt was far more terrifying. All they could do was grit their teeth and remain in place, glaring at the Lesser Marsh Peak grand elder.

Bai Xiaochun was currently meditating in his immortal's cave. He had been a bit surprised when he sensed the grand elder’s arrival moments ago. However, he could already guess why he might be here. After a moment of silence, he waved his right hand, causing the cave door to open. Then he ordered the blood trees to clear a path.

The Lesser Marsh Peak grand elder strode into the courtyard outside Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, even as Bai Xiaochun emerged. As soon as they saw each other, the grand elder laughed heartily and clasped hands in formal greeting.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, the moment you stepped off of the Blood Precipice back then, I knew that you were destined for extraordinary things. It's too bad you chose to go to Middle Peak. I would have loved for you to have come to Lesser Marsh Peak.”

Bai Xiaochun smiled, although considering that he was wearing the mask, it was a very sinister and cold smile. Clasping hands, he said, “Grand elder, your presence brings honor to my humble dwelling. Please, come in!”

Abandoning any other formalities, the grand elder followed as Bai Xiaochun led the way into the immortal's cave. Once inside, they sat down across from each other, and the grand elder said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, you have an extraordinary cultivation base, and shocking latent talent. You prepared long and hard, and then made an incredible rise to the top. Middle Peak is truly blessed to have you, Junior Brother Nightcrypt!”

Although Bai Xiaochun was very pleased to hear such words, he maintained a somber expression, and didn’t even respond to the grand elder's words.

“Even more amazing is that the patriarchs have taken a liking to you. There are virtually no limits to what you can accomplish in the future, Junior Brother Nightcrypt....” The grand elder sighed, and then went on to talk about the war between the Profound and Pill Stream Sects, as well as various other Blood Stream Sect matters, both big and small. He also used a variety of different methods to heap praise upon Bai Xiaochun.

From his facial expression, Bai Xiaochun didn't seem to be very impressed, but he was actually savoring the moment. He felt very proud to be the subject of such flattery. Occasionally he nodded, occasionally he shook his head, and occasionally he laughed heartily.

After about an hour passed, the grand elder apparently felt Bai Xiaochun had been sufficiently warmed up. He was just about to launch into the true reason for his visit, when he suddenly realized that Bai Xiaochun was looking at him with an encouraging gleam in his eyes. He hesitated for a moment, then launched into another round of praise.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, you are a man of striking appearance and talent, like a mighty dragon among men....

“In fact, you can count on one hand the number of people in the Blood Stream Sect who can compare to you in terms of reputation....” After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, the grand elder's mouth was starting to dry up. At this point, he figured it was probably time to move on to more important matters. However, a quick look at Bai Xiaochun confirmed that he seemed to be completely immersed in the sensation of being praised.

The grand elder hesitated for a moment. However, he had come here to ask for help, and therefore, he gritted his teeth and wracked his brain to come up with new methods of offering praise. Another hour passed, and the grand elder finally ran out of words. However, Bai Xiaochun seemed more caught up in the moment than ever.

“Eee? Why did you stop talking?” He looked over curiously at the grand elder.

Lesser Marsh Peak’s grand elder was taken aback, but he gritted his teeth and forced out a few more sentences. In the end, he sighed at the realization that Nightcrypt was profoundly enigmatic, and definitely could never be viewed as an ordinary cultivator. Finally, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, you are truly brilliant and stupendous. I deeply admire you. Truly. Since that’s the case, I won’t beat around the bush anymore. The reason I've come here today is because I'm simply incapable of allowing injustice in the world. Junior Brother Nightcrypt, your Dao of medicine is shocking. However, despite the fact that you concocted medicine for Corpse Peak, the conscienceless Corpse Peak cultivators not only refused to be thankful, they actually chose to hate you!”

When Bai Xiaochun thought back to the things that had happened in the past, his expression turned grim, and he let out a cold harrumph.

“The grand elder and blood master of Corpse Peak are the worst of them all,” the grand elder continued, eyes smoldering with righteous indignation. “You actually went to concoct medicine for them personally, but they repaid you by venting their anger on you. Completely preposterous! However, you can rest at ease about the matter, Junior Brother Nightcrypt. The blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak has already petitioned to the sect to publically clear your name!”

Bai Xiaochun shook his head and sighed. “I offer you profound thanks, grand elder. And the same goes to the blood master. However, the matter has ended. Besides, I actually learned quite a bit from that event.”

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, there’s no need to be so polite. You reached Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening, and are exceptionally talented in body refinement. You have a berserk ghost defense! You’re like family to us on Lesser Marsh Peak!” The grand elder laughed loudly. “Corpse Peak doesn’t know the difference between good and bad, so we might as well just ignore them. However, considering that we’re basically family, how about this: Junior Brother Nightcrypt, why don’t you concoct some spirit medicine for Lesser Marsh Peak? I guarantee that even if you destroy the mountain, the blood master and I won’t even frown in response!” The grand elder even slapped his chest to emphasize his honesty.

“Um....” Bai Xiaochun said, feeling a bit hesitant.

“Don’t worry, Junior Brother Nightcrypt, I know the protocol.” He pulled a bag of holding out from his robe and placed it down in front of Bai Xiaochun.

After picking it up and looking inside, Bai Xiaochun found a large quantity of medicinal plants and a sizeable collection of spirit stones. Feeling very pleased, he was about to agree, when suddenly his expression flickered. The grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak also frowned, and the two of them looked out of the immortal's cave.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, are you home? It’s me, Grand Elder Geng Qiankun of Nameless Peak.” The grand elder of Nameless Peak, the dwarf, was right outside. His expression was the same as ever, but inwardly he was very nervous. For quite some time, both he and the blood master of Nameless Peak had wavered back and forth about Bai Xiaochun’s pill concocting.

However, after hearing that the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak had shown upon on Middle Peak, they knew that they couldn’t just sit around and do nothing. That was especially true of the Nameless Peak blood master. Therefore, he sent the grand elder hurrying over, worried the whole time about whether or not he could convince Nightcrypt to concoct medicine for Nameless Peak.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then rose to his feet and went out to receive the grand elder from Nameless Peak and lead him inside.

As soon as the grand elder from Nameless Peak entered, he saw Han Chundong. When their eyes met, they blazed with a competitive flare.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt,” the dwarf said, “I'm not the kind of person to waste words. If you concoct a special tier-4 spirit medicine for Nameless Peak, then we will double whatever Lesser Marsh Peak has offered you. Our only condition is that you concoct medicine for us first!” The dwarf spoke in a very domineering fashion. However, before Bai Xiaochun could respond, Han Chundong snorted and shot to his feet, radiating a murderous aura.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, that bag of holding only contains the initial deposit! If you concoct medicine for us first, then we’ll give you full access to our secret body refinement techniques. You can even cultivate the secret magic of Lesser Marsh Peak!” The grand elder from Lesser Marsh Peak gritted his teeth. He wasn’t sure how much free time Bai Xiaochun had, but he knew that it often took many days for him to concoct medicine. Considering that war was looming, he was desperate to get this medicine concocted.

Because of that, he would do everything he could to make sure the blood master from his mountain peak was first in line.

Bai Xiaochun was moved. The truth was that he did want to do some research into Lesser Marsh Peak’s body refinement techniques. After all, they seemed connected to the Undying Codex.

Off to the side, the dwarf seemed shocked by the other grand elder’s words. However, as soon as he saw the expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face, he gritted his teeth and said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, Nameless Peak has prepared a gargoyle just for you! We can teach you Nameless Peak’s gargoyle refining magics!” In response to his words, Han Chundong glared at him angrily.

Bai Xiaochun was quivering in eagerness. The gargoyle magics of Nameless Peak were top secret, and cultivators from outside of that mountain peak had to spend a huge amount of merit points to study them.

Their incredible value was difficult to put into words.

Han Chundong looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, the best rule to follow is *first come first served*. Lesser Marsh Peak was the first to come here to request medicine concocting, so please take that into careful consideration!”

The dwarf looked over and said, “Junior Brother Nightcrypt, Nameless Peak is willing to double their offer!”

Bai Xiaochun rubbed his forehead, then looked back and forth between the two. Chuckling, he said, “It’s true. *First come first served* is the most fair. I’ll start at Lesser Marsh Peak. I hope that grand elder and blood master from Nameless Peak won’t take offense. Also, there’s no need to offer double. I understand that both of you are here to represent your respective blood masters. How about this: I’ll promise that no matter who I concoct medicine for, I’ll get it done before the war starts. For both of you! I guarantee it!”

The two grand elders were visibly moved. The truth was that neither of them wanted to get into a bidding war. Seeing how smoothly Bai Xiaochun had handled the situation, the felt even better about him than before. Nodding, they proceeded to chat a bit longer before clasping hands and leaving.

After seeing them off, Bai Xiaochun returned to his immortal's cave and sat down cross-legged. After a moment of thought, he chuckled to himself.

“I have the emerald zombie from Corpse Peak, and I've gotten the grand elder from Middle Peak to fall for me. If I get a gargoyle from Nameless Peak and cultivate body refinement on Lesser Marsh Peak, then I’ll be more important in the Blood Stream Sect than ever. I’ll be similar to a bloodstreak elder. By the time Song Junwan becomes blood master, I’ll be far more likely to snag the spot of grand elder for myself!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0233 awe-chapter-234

Bai Xiaochun had made up his mind, and there was no time to waste. The next morning at the crack of dawn, he left Middle Peak for Lesser Marsh Peak.

Lesser Marsh Peak was the pinky finger on the enormous hand that housed the Blood Stream Sect. Although it was smaller than the other fingers, the cultivators there all practiced body refinement, and were far more powerful and ferocious than their contemporaries in the sect.

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun arrived on the mountain, he could see how much taller and burlier the cultivators there were. They exuded an aura of qi and blood that filled all of Lesser Marsh Peak.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit shocked to be surrounded by so many mighty individuals. All of the cultivators were like that, regardless of whether they were male or female. Although he was a bit nervous, he refused to be intimidated.

“You people think you’re as strong as me? Hmph! What good is there in being big and burly? I have the power of four berserk ghosts!” Blinking a few times, he hurried up one of the mountain paths. All of the cultivators he passed had wary expressions on their faces, as well as cold gleams in their eyes.

Obviously, the reputation of Plaguedevil had reached all ears on Lesser Marsh Peak, and the people there recognized him immediately.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun was on the upper finger of Lesser Marsh Peak, where Grand Elder Han Chundong was waiting for him. After some pleasantries were exchanged, Han Chundong led him to Lesser Marsh Peak’s Blood Master Temple.

Inside the temple, Lesser Marsh Peak’s blood master was sitting cross-legged. As soon as Bai Xiaochun stepped inside, he rose to his feet and smiled broadly.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt!”

The blood master was a powerfully built middle-aged man who radiated a power and energy that seemed to surpass Han Chundong. Bai Xiaochun felt almost like he was looking at a giant whose aura caused all of the blood qi in the area to surge into motion.

The sudden pressure that Bai Xiaochun felt caused him to pause in mid stride and look in shock at the blood master, who was currently hurrying over to meet him.

Bai Xiaochun paid close attention, and immediately picked up on some clues regarding his body refinement technique.

“It’s similar to the second level of the Undying Heavenly King?” Despite being shaken inwardly, his expression remained the same as ever. Smiling broadly, he clasped hands and bowed in greeting.

“Nightcrypt offers greetings, Blood Master.”

The blood master looked at Bai Xiaochun with shining eyes, and then spoke in a booming voice. “There’s no need for such formality, Junior Brother Nightcrypt. I'm a straightforward person, and hate beating around the bush. I need you to concoct me a batch of tier-4 Blood Body Pills!

“Such pills only serve one function: to rapidly propel you to the next level in Lesser Marsh Peak’s secret body refinement technique!

“War is upon us, and everyone is working hard to prepare. Unfortunately, this pill won’t be hugely effective unless it’s tier-5, and tier-4 versions are unavailable for purchase inside the sect. Therefore, what I need is not a single pill; I need at least a hundred tier-4 Blood Body Pills!

“Nightcrypt, are you confident enough to concoct me a hundred tier-4 Blood Body Pills?!” The blood master’s eyes glittered as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, his words echoing back and forth in Blood Master Temple.

Bai Xiaochun’s ears hurt a bit from the blood master’s booming voice. Not willing to accept that, he raised his own voice into a virtual roar and replied, “If I have enough medicinal plants and pill furnaces, then a hundred pills should be no problem!”

At first, the blood master was surprised by Bai Xiaochun’s roaring voice. He was used to using a booming voice when talking with others, but wasn’t used to the opposite happening. After looking Bai Xiaochun up and down for a moment, he started laughing.

“Oh I have plenty of medicinal plants,” he said. “As far as pill furnaces are concerned, come, Junior Brother Nightcrypt. I want to show you the one-of-a-kind pill furnace we’ve prepared for you!” The blood master’s subsequent laughter shook the entire mountain peak. Waving his sleeve, he swept up both Bai Xiaochun and the grand elder, who had been standing respectfully off to the side. All three of them then flew through the air toward a wide-open space which had been set aside on the upper finger.

It was protected by a powerful spell formation, the fluctuations and aura of which were so intense that even the hallucinatory mist that had appeared on Corpse Peak would not be able to escape it.

Clearly, Lesser Marsh Peak had taken many precautions before inviting him over to concoct pills. Seeing all of that, Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly, but didn't say anything. Following the blood master, he entered an immortal's cave inside of the spell formation.

It was a newly built immortal's cave, in the depths of which was a vast hall set aside for a single object!

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on it, he gasped, and his eyes glittered with bright light. He immediately began to circle around the object, and was unable to hold back his gasps as he did.

It was a pill furnace of enormous size. It was fully 90 meters in diameter, green in color, and engraved with countless magical symbols. There was something majestic about it that made it seem profoundly and shockingly sturdy.

“This pill furnace....” Bai Xiaochun reached out and touched it, and the awe-inspiring feeling he got left him even more excited than before. One of his main problems had always been exploding pill furnaces, leaving him no option other than to reduce the medicinal strength of his concoctions, and preventing him from unleashing his full skill in the Dao of medicine.

The moment he saw this pill furnace, however, he was deeply shaken.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, many generations ago, a blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak robbed this precious treasure from the Pill Stream Sect. The truth is that it isn’t the original precious treasure, only a replica. However it's a replica of none other than the Heaven-Earth Furnace Cauldron!

“I personally arranged for you to be able to use it today. With this furnace, you can be as bold as you wish in your medicine concocting. Don’t worry, a precious treasure like this won’t explode under any circumstances!” The blood master threw his head back and laughed proudly. He was a body refinement cultivator, but that didn’t mean he wasn’t a cautious person. He was very familiar with the moniker Plaguedevil, and had prepared a pill furnace that couldn’t explode, placed inside of a spell formation so impenetrable that not even the slightest scrap of an aura could escape from it. Only after having made these preparations was he confident that no mishaps would occur.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he walked around the pill furnace a few more times, examining it. He was already itching with the desire to go all out, to experiment with medicinal strength that, up to this point, had been impossible for him.

And yet, he was still a bit nervous. Looking over at the blood master, he said, “Are you sure that this pill furnace will never explode!?”

“Of course I'm sure!” the blood master replied, smiling proudly.

Patting the pill furnace gently, Bai Xiaochun laughed and said, “Fine. If you’re absolutely sure, then Nightcrypt will concoct your medicine for you!”

The blood master joined him in his laughter, then gazed at him deeply for a moment before throwing over a bag of holding.

Then he turned and left. The grand elder clasped hands formally, then also left.

Bai Xiaochun was now alone in the immortal's cave, looking at the enormous pill furnace, his excitement building. After a moment passed, he examined the bag of holding, which was full of medicinal plants and bloodflame stones. It also contained a jade slip.

In addition to the pill formula for the Blood Body Pill, the jade slip also contained Lesser Marsh Peak’s secret body refinement technique!

“Way of the Blood Fiend Body!” Bai Xiaochun immediately set about studying it. By the time he finished, it was nighttime, whereupon he closed his eyes to think.

After a long moment passed, his eyes opened, and they shone with enlightenment.

The Way of the Blood Fiend Body had been studied by generation after generation of cultivators on Lesser Marsh Peak, and was derived from the huge hand that the sect rested on. It was essentially an inferior version of the Undying Codex, an imitation.

It derived power based on totem tattoos, and was divided into power levels of the ancient mammoth, the berserk ghost, the heavenly demon, and the blood fiend!

By absorbing blood qi into one’s own flesh and blood, then catalyzing it with the secret technique, the body’s basic structure would transform, and eventually be capable of unleashing powerful fleshly body power.

Although it seemed to have a lot in common with the Undying Codex that Bai Xiaochun cultivated, the truth was that it was extremely counterproductive. The Undying Codex didn’t change one's basic body structure, it directly unleashed inner power to create a powerful combination of offense and defense!

“However, the Way of the Blood Fiend Body does have some redeeming qualities. Maybe I can even use them to make an early breakthrough in the second level of the Undying Heavenly King!” After a bit of further examination, Bai Xiaochun’s spirits rose, and he even tested out some of the cultivation practices. When he did, rumbling sounds could be heard as blood qi rushed toward him. By using the secret techniques of the Way of the Blood Fiend Body, he stimulated his flesh and blood, but instead of allowing his basic body structure to be changed, he used the power to drive the Undying Heavenly King.

The night passed. The next morning at dawn, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open, and they shone with delight.

"That one night of cultivation was like three days of ordinary cultivation!

“So it does work! Hahaha!” Excited, Bai Xiaochun mused that the Blood Stream Sect truly was his personal Holy Land. Looking over at the enormous pill furnace, his eyes shone with a strange light, and he suddenly smacked his hand down onto the furnace. A bang could be heard as the furnace's lid opened up. Without any hesitation, he flew up to stand on the edge of the furnace and looked down inside, which left him even more shocked than before.

“If this furnace really can’t explode, then I think I need to test the limits of the medicinal strength I'm capable of producing!” Just when he was about to start, he suddenly paused for a moment.

“It really won’t explode?” he thought, hesitating.

“Ah whatever. The blood master guaranteed that it wouldn’t explode. It probably won’t.” Taking a deep breath, he tossed caution to the wind. A look of madness appeared in his eyes as prepared to concoct a huge batch of pills.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0234 awe-chapter-235

“The last time I used dragonchimp grass, I could only use one blade, but this time I’m gonna put in ten!

“Firecloud pears, huh? Let’s put in twenty of them!

“So, it calls for starlight leaf? It says half a leaf should do, but with an incredible pill furnace like this, that’s definitely not enough. I'm putting in ten.” Murmuring to himself, he continued to circle the edge of the pill furnace, tossing in one type of medicinal plant after another. After making minor adjustments here and there, he would add more plants.

Bloodflame stones poured out of his bag of holding to land underneath the pill furnace, providing intense heat. However, this was no ordinary pill furnace. Other pill furnaces would have turned bright red from the heat, but this one hardly seemed to be getting hot at all.

Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun got even more excited than before. He was slowly immersing himself in his medicine concocting, tossing more and more medicinal plants into the mix, doing nothing to prevent the medicinal strength from growing rapidly. At the same time, he was completely engrossed in making calculations regarding the medicine formula.

He felt completely and utterly satisfied. He didn’t have to worry about the cost of the materials he was using, didn’t have to worry about the medicinal strength increasing to unsafe levels, and didn’t need to worry about losing control of the pill furnace. The only thing he worried about was how to concoct the pill.

His hair was disheveled and his eyes were bloodshot, but he felt wonderful, and more excited than he ever had been before. For seven days, he continued to add more medicinal plants to the mix. Eventually, more than half of the bag of holding had been emptied. By using the principles of mutual augmentation and suppression, Bai Xiaochun had pushed the medicinal strength to an explosive level.

Rumbling sounds began to emanate from the pill furnace, which by this point was changing from green to bright red. By now, it seemed that the furnace really wouldn’t explode.

Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“A precious furnace!” he exclaimed. With that, he descended back into the medicine concocting. Based on his calculations regarding the medicine formula, he continued to add medicinal plants. As inspiration hit him, and as his train of thought proceeded, he made changes as he saw fit. Combined with the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation technique, he was gradually reaching the medicinal strength he sought.

Another five days passed, and the rumbling sounds inside of the pill furnace grew more intense. By now, the furnace was bright red, and Bai Xiaochun had added all of the medicinal plants he wanted to. He was sitting off to the side looking very content when he suddenly thought of something. Hurrying forward, he produced a drop of his own Undying Blood and added it into the furnace.

With that, he put the lid back on the furnace and locked it tight.

In that instant, any outlet for the medicinal strength was cut off, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out, The pill furnace began to shake, and the temperature inside began to rise rapidly.

Bai Xiaochun was so impressed with the miraculous pill furnace that he didn’t even think about any potential problems. As far as he was concerned, it wouldn’t explode. Therefore, he decided to practice some cultivation off to the side. Occasionally, he would look over and make a few adjustments as the medicinal strength inside the pill furnace changed.

A few days later, he started to get worried. The pill furnace was now bright red, and radiating such intense heat that the area for three meters around the furnace was rippling and distorting. Cracks were even visible on the ground, snaking out from the furnace.

Bai Xiaochun swallowed, and edged away. The waves of heat battering his face caused his heart to begin to pound with fear.

“If a pill furnace this big exploded, I would lose my poor little life for sure....” Blinking, he thought back to what the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master had said. *This furnace won’t explode under any circumstances*. Only then did he calm down a bit.

“There shouldn’t be any problems, right...?” He was already starting to regret putting in so many medicinal plants. Lack of control was definitely one of his downsides. However, the pill furnace currently didn’t seem to be in danger of exploding.

He waited for four more days. The furnace was still trembling, and the area of distortion had increased from three meters to thirty. The intense heat was even causing some of the nearby rock walls to slowly melt. The heat seemed to be building up with every passing moment. Bai Xiaochun was sweating up a storm, and his eyes were already wide with terror.

He thought about trying to stop the concoction process, but wasn’t able to interfere. The spirit medicine inside the pill furnace was already beginning to take shape. He could only imagine how the temperature might increase now that the medicine was actually forming.

Bai Xiaochun took a long, nervous breath. He felt like he was sitting on top of a volcano that might erupt at any moment. He nervously edged backward until he was outside of the immortal's cave. Finally, he put on a lofty, enigmatic expression and walked out of the spell formation as he prepared to leave Lesser Marsh Peak.

In his opinion, Lesser Marsh Peak was now far too dangerous of a place to remain in....

On his way out, the grand elder detected him and flew over to stop him from leaving.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt,” he said politely, “where might you be headed now? Are you finished concocting our medicine?”

Bai Xiaochun was very nervous, but his expression didn’t show it at all. Clasping his hands behind his back, he coolly said, “Don’t worry. The concocting process is done. However, the hundred Blood Body Pills need more time to develop. In three months I’ll come back personally to extract the pills from the furnace.

“In the meantime, I’ll head to Nameless Peak. After all, I promised to concoct medicine for them too.” Despite having been forced to scramble to come up with an excuse, Bai Xiaochun’s expression was the same as ever. Lesser Marsh Peak’s grand elder was still a bit suspicious, but couldn’t find any fault with Bai Xiaochun’s reasoning.

“Well in that case, Junior Brother Nightcrypt,” he said, “I’ll personally escort you all the way to Nameless Peak!” He still felt that something was off, but nevertheless, gestured for Bai Xiaochun to follow him to Nameless Peak.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then nodded and followed along. Soon he had reached the border of Nameless Peak, where the dwarf grand elder came out to meet him. Only then did Bai Xiaochun finally breathe a sigh of relief. Even as he proceeded on to Nameless Peak, he turned to look back at the grand elder from Lesser Marsh Peak.

“By the way,” he said, “during the next three months, no one is permitted to enter that immortal's cave. And definitely do not let anyone touch the pill furnace. The pill furnace might burst open, and if it does, you’ll be responsible!” With that, he looked away and followed the dwarf onto Nameless Peak. He also made a decision to never, ever go back to Lesser Marsh Peak....

“If what the blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak said is true, then the pill furnace won’t explode. The medicinal pills will eventually be completed. If that pill furnace explodes, it’s not my fault!” The more he thought about it, the more he believed himself to be in the right. Feeling much better, he followed the Nameless Peak grand elder to meet the local blood master.

In accordance with the previous agreement, the blood master gave Bai Xiaochun a gargoyle. Furthermore, they had set aside an immortal’s cave on the lower finger where he could concoct medicine.

By the time he went in to begin his work, word was already spreading through Nameless Peak about his arrival, leading to gasps among the cultivators there. They already felt like they were going to go mad in the coming days.

They knew about Bai Xiaochun’s nickname, Plaguedevil, and had heard that the terrors which came along with his pill concocting were like tribulations wrought by patriarchs. All of them felt as though they were heading into a life or death crisis....

The Nameless Peak cultivators began to think about everything that had occurred on Middle Peak and Corpse Peak. They weren’t as confident as the cultivators from Lesser Marsh Peak, and were thus soon shaking in their boots.

“Plaguedevil’s here!! The terror he causes with his medicine concocting is unimaginable. Remember Zhao Shuimu from Corpse Peak? He hallucinated that he was a tuft of spirit grass! Even down to this day, he sometimes goes into a daze if he sees spirit grass....”

“That’s nothing. You know Zhou Yibiao? When he sleeps at night, he sometimes yells out that he is Bai Xiaochun....”

“Actually, there are quite a few cultivators from Middle Peak who have recovered, but still haven’t grown back hair, and still have occasional bouts of diarrhea. In fact, it’s been on more than one occasion that I saw someone from Middle Peak get the upper hand in a fight, only to suddenly look very uncomfortable. You know what I mean, right...?”

Discussions such as these spread like wildfire. As for the cultivators who actually resided near the location where Bai Xiaochun was doing his concocting work, their scalps tingled like mad, and many of them simply left. Before long, more than half of the cultivators who normally occupied Nameless Peak had abandoned their immortal's caves and gone to stay with people they knew in the Inner Sect.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit shocked at how quiet Nameless Peak became. Not a trace of a living person could be seen anywhere near his immortal’s cave. Clearing his throat, he thought to himself, “I haven’t even done anything yet! What are these people being so jumpy for?

“I concocted medicine on Lesser Marsh Peak and nothing happened!” A bit annoyed, he sat down cross-legged and looked around the immortal’s cave for a moment until his gaze came to rest on something in the far corner.

A black shadow floated there, emanating a cold and sinister aura.

It was one of the Nameless Peak gargoyles, which were somewhat akin to the evil ghosts that could be found on Ghostfang Peak in the Spirit Stream Sect. The main difference was that the evil ghosts weren’t intelligent, and didn’t grow very large either.

In contrast, gargoyles became more intelligent as they grew, and could also practice their own form of cultivation. In terms of power and strength, they were no weaker than evil ghosts, and yet, were vastly more cunning and sly.

After they reached a certain level of power, they would develop a bizarre divine ability that allowed them to possess humans and even control them. By becoming something like an inner devil, they could kill people without leaving a single mark, whereupon they would viciously drain them of their blood.

Different methods could be used to raise different types of gargoyles. One of the reasons why the Blood Stream Sect was known as a devilish sect was because of the devilish gargoyles that they raised.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too sure about the origins of the gargoyles. That was one of the big secrets of the Blood Stream Sect. As for the gargoyle in the immortal's cave with him, it was completely ordinary, with low intelligence. It was even frightened of Bai Xiaochun’s murderous aura, and didn’t dare to approach him. Instead, it cowered in the corner, trembling.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0235 awe-chapter-236

Bai Xiaochun looked at the trembling black shadow, and then pulled out a violet jade pendant and said, “Get over here!”

The shadow trembled again, then slowly floated over to Bai Xiaochun. Now that it was in front of him, he could just make out a face inside the black mist.

With that, he reached out to grab it, only to find that his hand passed through the mist. Apparently, the gargoyle didn’t actually have a physical body. Bai Xiaochun was now more intrigued than ever.

“The Blood Stream Sect’s gargoyles and the Spirit Stream Sect’s evil ghosts are similar in some ways. Ghost come from the souls of people who have died, but what about gargoyles? Where do they come from?” After pondering the issue for some time, he couldn’t come up with any theories. However, there seemed to be some connection between him and the gargoyle, something other than the jade plaque of control that had been given to him by Nameless Peak.

Eventually, he came to the conclusion that the gargoyle must have something to do with the giant hand and the Undying Live Forever Technique....

Even as Bai Xiaochun sat there in thought, the face in the mist suddenly twisted into a ferocious expression, and the mist pounced on Bai Xiaochun.

Icy coldness spread out, a coldness filled with intense ferocity. It was almost as if it wanted to consume Bai

Xiaochun’s soul. The gargoyle’s sudden outburst startled him so much that he unleashed the power of his cultivation base and flicked the thing.

The gargoyle let out a miserable shriek, and the mist faded a bit. Having no other options, it hastily retreated to the corner where it remained, trembling.

“What gall you have!” Bai Xiaochun said angrily. Stomping forward, he aimed a kick at the shadow, which promptly dodged out of the way. Bai Xiaochun gave a cold harrumph and looked down at the jade pendant. Not only could the pendant be used to control the gargoyle, it also contained descriptions of the various punishments and rewards that were usually used to train them.

The most common method was to feed the gargoyle one’s own blood, which would strengthen the connection and also improve the gargoyle’s ability to understand orders.

As the gargoyle grew, and its own cultivation base improved, it was also common to allow it to kill other things and drink their blood, which also would help the gargoyle grow stronger.

The description also mentioned that if the gargoyle showed any signs of misbehaving, it was important to crush such behavior as quickly as possible. Attempts at rebellion would only grow more intense until the gargoyle became impossible to control.

“You trifling, newborn gargoyle!” he said angrily. “How dare you try to bite the hand that feeds you!” With that, he used the jade pendant to lock the gargoyle in place, then walked over and kicked him a few times. The gargoyle’s mist faded even more, until only a bit was left, whereupon he began letting out plaintive shrieks.

“You remember this,” Bai Xiaochun said sternly. “I'm the top dog here. If you dare to provoke me, I won’t hesitate to put you in your place. Hmph. Now, what should we call you? How about Shadow?” After giving him a name, he ignored him, and focused on the medicine formula that the blood master of Nameless Peak had given him.

“Undying Blood Pill....” he murmured thoughtfully. He had heard of this pill before. It had been created years ago by a patriarch who had gained enlightenment of the Holy Pill Wall Fragment. It had come to be one of the most useful spirit medicines in the entire Blood Stream Sect.

Not only could it lead to spectacular results when raising gargoyles, it could help with refining corpses, as well as with the body refinement techniques of Lesser Marsh Peak. Because it had so many varied uses, the Undying Blood Pill had been in high demand in the sect from the moment it was first invented.

Unfortunately, it was very difficult to concoct. The tier-3 version was relatively easy, but the tier-4 version wasn’t easy at all. When it came to tier-5 Undying Blood Pills, they were far beyond the ordinary, and could be used to summon some of the deepest reserve powers available in the Blood Stream Sect. Even tier-4 versions could be used to try to awaken some of the most ancient gargoyles.

The more Bai Xiaochun studied the medicine formula, the more shocked he was. It required 97 types of medicinal plants, each one of which contained numerous transformations that had to be suppressed with Heavenspan River water. It even needed spirit blood from the enormous hand. Only after all of that could the Undying Blood Pill be produced.

“Even the slightest mistake in the ratios of the medicinal plants will result in a failure. Furthermore, when it comes to combining the plants, some aspects of the connections need to be neutralized, whereas some aspects need to be fused together. The result is that nine different streams of blood qi will be created!

“One stream of blood qi is a tier-1 version, and so on. The Nameless Peak blood master wants me to concoct a tier-4 Undying Blood Pill, which would contain four streams of blood qi!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he continued to study the formula. As he did, his admiration for the person who had created it grew and grew.

“No wonder this pill is so difficult to concoct. One stream of blood qi is a simple matter, but even just two requires vast amounts of augury and other calculations, along with incredible skill in the Dao of medicine. Working with three streams of blood qi is even more complicated, about ten times more so than two streams. And then four streams. That’s almost ridiculous. Clearly, the only way to succeed is to use the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation technique to simplify matters!” Bai Xiaochun eyes shone with a strange light. Obviously, concocting the Undying Blood Pill in the usual fashion was far too difficult. The only option was to do things backwards!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun pulled out a pill furnace and some medicinal plants, and started to familiarize himself with the concoction process. Instead of trying to succeed the first time around, he decided to do a bit of testing first.

Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by. Bai Xiaochun never stepped out of the immortal's cave even once. He was completely immersed in his medicine concocting. He would concoct multiple batches per day, and whenever he ran out of bloodflame stones, he would simply ask for more. It was the same with medicinal plants.

It got to the point where medicinal plants were being sent over every day. Thankfully, the mountain peak had deep reserves. Bai Xiaochun became more and more familiar with the Undying Blood Pill, and yet, as he did, he ruined one batch of spirit medicine after another.

In the past, he would have simply discarded such ruined spirit medicine, but this time, he hesitated, and looked over at the cowering gargoyle over in the corner.

“I wonder if gargoyles eat spirit medicine? They’re ruined, but they still have some power left in them.” After some thought, he tossed one of the pills over to the gargoyle.

“Eat it,” he said, looking on in anticipation. The gargoyle’s intelligence was only starting to develop, but he understood what was being said, and pounced on the medicinal pill. Within a moment, the pill had turned into black smoke which the gargoyle quickly absorbed.

“Wow, he does eat them!” Bai Xiaochun was quite pleased. From then on, he tossed all of the ruined pills over to the gargoyle. After absorbing the smoke from each pill, the gargoyle would burp loudly, and then laze off to the side with an intoxicated look on his face. Eventually, he would fall asleep.

“Hahaha! So smart of me! These ruined pills have a use after all.” After ensuring that the gargoyle wasn’t suffering any ill side-effects, he felt more than ever that he'd done something great. With that, he continued to concoct pills, looking over at the gargoyle every once in awhile and tossing him a ruined pill. He wasn’t stingy at all.

Time passed. Gradually, another half a month went by.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun concocted many batches of pills, but every single one was a failure. Although he had gained enlightenment of the All-Creation Plants and Vegetation technique, he wasn’t familiar enough with it to use it consistently. Problems continued to crop up. However, Bai Xiaochun always came up with ways to overcome such problems. Furthermore, he didn't waste any of the ruined pills, but instead, fed them all to the gargoyle.

“I don’t have anything else to give you, just these ruined pills.” Bai Xiaochun was actually quite pleased with the situation. Cultivators couldn't consume ruined pills, but they seemed harmless to gargoyles. In fact, the gargoyle had grown quite a bit in the last month. Instead of looking like a tiny imp, he was now about as large as a seven- or eight-year-old child. Of course, he was pitch black, and surrounded by pulsing black mist.

Most noteworthy of all was that the gargoyle seemed a lot more intelligent already. Instead of being completely useless, he was now able to assist Bai Xiaochun a bit when given simple orders.

There were a few times when he seemed reluctant to consume the ruined pills, and yet he didn’t dare to defy Bai Xiaochun’s orders....

On one occasion, Bai Xiaochun made a mistake, and could tell that the pill furnace was about to explode. He immediately backed up and called out, “You handle it, Shadow!”

Shadow raced over and passed through the outside of the pill furnace. Once inside, he took a deep breath, absorbing all of the spirit medicine. Afterward, he lay down on the ground off to the side, twitching, a glazed look in his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun made a clicking sound with his tongue, very impressed by the gargoyle's behavior.

“Not bad, Shadow, not bad.” Excited, he continued with his concocting. At one point, the pill furnace began to emit pulsing black smoke, which Bai Xiaochun knew would cause some sort of disaster, either acid rain, diarrhea, hallucinations, or something else.

Yet again, he called upon Shadow.

“You handle it, Shadow!”

Shadow pounced, breathing in deeply and sucking away all of the smoke. Then he lay off to the side while the smoke wreaked havoc on his insides. If he had saliva, he would definitely have been frothing at the mouth.

Bai Xiaochun was moved.

“Great job, Shadow. You’re awesome!” Bai Xiaochun was very excited, and had already determined that he needed to bring Shadow with him whenever he concocted medicine. Shadow was truly outstanding. Whether it was ruined pills, noxious smoke, or exploding pill furnaces, he could solve all of the problems that cropped up when dealing with the impurities in the pills....

Bai Xiaochun was so immersed in his medicine concocting that he didn’t notice the rising spark of intelligence in little Shadow’s eyes, that was apparently a result of consuming all of the impurities. Normally, he kept it well-hidden, and always tried to seem dazed and foolish in front of Bai Xiaochun.

At one point, Bai Xiaochun eyed a failed batch that had resulted in a mystery pill. He had no idea what the pill did, and was just about to put it into his bag of holding, when he looked over at Shadow.

Blinking, he said, “You handle it, Shadow.”

A tremor ran through Shadow, but then he flew over and took the pill. After consuming it, he flopped over onto his side.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0236 awe-chapter-237

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. Just when he was going to go over to examine Shadow closer, Shadow suddenly leapt to his feet, howling as he transformed into a mist. Screaming, he burst out of the immortal's cave. Bai Xiaochun hurried out after him to find that the gargoyle had seemingly gone mad. He was running around, jumping up and down, sometimes collapsing into a shapeless mist, other times coalescing back into form. After a bit of time, he once again collapsed on the ground.

From that moment on, whenever he looked at Bai Xiaochun, profound fear could be seen mixed in with the intelligence in his eyes....

Things progressed like that for about half a month. Bai Xiaochun worked hard, and the tier-4 Undying Blood Pill slowly began to take form. He was already able to make pills with three streams of blood qi, and was on the very cusp of being able to produce four.

During that time, Shadow continued to consume medicinal pills. Although the quality of the pills improved, they were still ruined pills, and occasionally even toxic, but Shadow generally enjoyed them all.

Shadow also enjoyed leaving the immortal’s cave occasionally and flying around above Nameless Peak. When he encountered other gargoyles belonging to other cultivators, it was clear that Shadow’s murderous aura was much less pronounced than theirs.

The law of the jungle prevailed in the Blood Stream Sect, and it was even more brutal when it came to life among the gargoyles. The cultivators had to strictly control the gargoyles under their control, lest major issues crop up. However, there was something strange about Shadow. He got along with all of the other gargoyles on Nameless Peak, and never got into fights with them....

Bai Xiaochun was quite surprised about that, but didn't put too much thought into it. He focused on concocting medicine. Another half a month passed, and he finally made a breakthrough and concocted a tier-4 Undying Blood Pill.

When the four streams of blood qi finally combined, Bai Xiaochun began to laugh at the top of his lungs. Of course, his excitement came not from the fact that he had concocted the tier-4 Undying Blood Pill, but rather, because nobody had been affected during the concocting process.

There had been no acid rain, no exploding furnaces, no toxic smoke, no diarrhea, nothing. Most exciting of all was that Bai Xiaochun finally felt as if he understood what it was like to be a grandmaster apothecary.

“Hahaha! Now people definitely can’t call me Plaguedevil! I concocted medicine for Nameless Peak, and not a single problem cropped up!” Of course, he was just as surprised as he was happy. Also surprised were all the other cultivators in the Blood Stream Sect, especially those on Nameless Peak. Although they were still a bit leery, there didn't seem to be any signs of disasters. Apparently, Nightcrypt's medicine concocting truly had proceeded in complete safety.

“Has Plaguedevil really changed his ways?”

“I can’t believe that nothing happened during his medicine concocting!!”

There was one thing that happened which no one noticed, however. Bai Xiaochun’s gargoyle Shadow had been making the rounds on Nameless Peak, getting to know all of the gargoyles there....

The blood master and grand elder of Nameless Peak were delighted that the tier-4 Undying Blood Pill had been successfully concocted. Just as they’d promised, they provided generous compensation, along with a ceremony filled with pomp and splendor. They even decided that they would work more with Nightcrypt in the future.

Although the ceremony was held on Nameless Peak, Grand Elder Song Junwan was invited to attend. It was held in Nameless Peak’s Blood Master Temple, where Nightcrypt was lavished with endless praise. Bai Xiaochun felt that it wasn’t the time to call attention to himself, so he simply stuck his chin up and smiled coolly.

Off to the side, Song Junwan watched the proceedings with a smile, and whenever she looked at Nightcrypt, her eyes would shine. Before long, the ceremony had been going for about an hour. At that point, Nameless Peak’s blood master laughed loudly and walked over to Nightcrypt.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, you are a real genius in the Dao of medicine, a true rarity in the world. In the future, your name is sure to rock the entire eastern cultivation world. If you ever concoct a tier-5 Undying Blood Pill, you will surely shake the entire sect! I'm sure that day isn’t very far off!

Nameless Peak’s grand elder then chimed in, “Anyone who concocts a tier-5 Undying Blood Pill will receive a big reward from the sect, and will be credited as having performed a major service!”

As everyone clustered around Bai Xiaochun, chatting and laughing, he listened to their words with great pleasure. Just when he was about to do a bit of bragging, a deafening boom could be heard from outside.

It was like thunder from heaven, and came so suddenly that everyone was startled. All of Nameless Peak shook violently, and cracks even appeared in the ground. There was also a blast of heat that swept over everything. The entire crowd in Nameless Peak’s Blood Master Temple looked out the door, their faces flickering with shock.

Outside, the sky had turned gray, and everything was still shaking. It wasn’t Nameless Peak alone; Corpse Peak and Middle Peak were also physically rocking back and forth.

The Inner Sect district was thrown into complete chaos, as was the Outer Sect district. People were screaming and shouting, and almost immediately, beams of light could be seen as people flew up into the air.

Even the Blood Stream Sect’s grand spell formation activated.

“What just happened?!?!”

“Don’t tell me someone is attacking the Blood Stream Sect!!”

“The war’s starting!!”

Even Ancestor Peak was completely shaken. As the blast of heat passed over it, the shocked prime elders sent divine sense out to scan the entire sect.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he raced out of Blood Master Temple along with everyone else. The entire group was shaken, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he was panting. Moments later, he was outside. Song Junwan took her place by his side, looking around vigilantly.

Cultivators were flying up from all of the other mountain peaks, looks of shock on their faces.

Before long, all gazes shifted in the direction of Lesser Marsh Peak!

Clouds of shocking black smoke were pouring up into the air from that direction.

The source of the smoke was a location right between the lower and upper finger, where massive fissures spread out in all directions from a huge hole.

Because of the belching black smoke, everyone soon realized where that huge boom had originated.

“Lesser Marsh Peak?!”

“What happened over there...?”

Bai Xiaochun squinted his eyes as he looked over at the masses of black smoke. After a moment, his eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound.

The big boom from moments ago had somehow seemed vaguely familiar, and after taking a look at the source of the black smoke, he realized that it was where he had been concocting medicine on Lesser Marsh Peak. Clearly, the sound from moments ago had come from an exploding pill furnace.

In that moment, he suddenly recalled that he had left a batch of medicinal pills brewing on Lesser Marsh Peak....

Beads of sweat appeared on his forehead, and his heart began to pound even harder. That was when the wails of anguish began to rise up from Lesser Marsh Peak, and Bai Xiaochun’s scalp began to tingle.

“I'm finished. Kaput....”

Even as Bai Xiaochun began to tremble in fear, and the rest of the Blood Stream Sect looked on in shock, several beams of light flew out from Lesser Marsh Peak. In the lead was the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master. He was shaking visibly, and his eyes were bloodshot. As he looked down at the chaos on Lesser Marsh Peak, he seemed like he wanted to cry. After a moment, he threw his head back and let out a howl of grief.

He knew that everything that was happening was because of Nightcrypt. With that, he prepared to call out by name the person who was at fault, then, to track him down and kill him.

However, before the name ‘Nightcrypt’ could escape his lips, Bai Xiaochun took action. Forcing his eyes to instantly become bloodshot, he strode forward toward the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master and shouted out in a voice that could shake heaven and earth: “My treasured pill!!!”

Beating his chest with his fists and tugging at his hair, he howled like a lunatic as he then shot at top speed toward Lesser Marsh Peak.

“Why is this happening? Dear heavens! What happened? My treasured pill!!” He seemed to be going mad as he flew in a beam of light toward the source of the smoke on Lesser Marsh Peak, which was the center of all the chaos.

Lesser Marsh Peak was now completely scorched black, and more than half of the buildings and immortal's caves were completely destroyed. The cultivators all seemed to be in very bad shape, and flames of rage burned in their eyes. However, as soon as they saw Bai Xiaochun, expressions of fear filled their faces.

Bai Xiaochun ignored them as he raced in the direction of where he had been concocting medicine on Lesser Marsh Peak. The entire area was a crater. There was no spell formation, no immortal's cave. The only things left behind were the shattered chunks of the pill furnace, and intense heat.

In the air above the mountain peak were the blood master, the grand elder, and the bloodstreak elders. Many of them had blood oozing out of their mouths, and all of them looked astonished. The entire lot had been aware that Nightcrypt could be annoying, but none of them could ever have imagined that he could produce tragic results like this.

“Nightcrypt!!” growled the blood master, a shocking level of killing intent burning in his eyes as he flew toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the same moment that the blood master started moving toward him, Bai Xiaochun began to tremble. Spinning around, he howled madly: “Lesser Marsh Peak blood master!!

“I spent three months on that treasured pill! I poured my own blood, sweat, and tears into it! It was almost a tier-5 medicine!!” Bai Xiaochun’s face was twisted as if with grief and madness, and an increasingly murderous aura was building up around him.

“Dammit, Blood Master, didn’t you tell me that pill furnace couldn't explode? Didn’t you tell me it was a precious treasure?!?! Why did you lie to me!?” Bai Xiaochun seemed insane, even more maddened than the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master. At first, it seemed like he was simply making wild accusations in his madness.

“You....” The Lesser Marsh Peak blood master was incensed, but after he began to speak, realized there was little that he could say.

“Why? Why did you lie to me? All of my hard work, all of my effort concocting that pill, was based on a lie! You said it was a precious treasure taken from the Pill Stream Sect, that it wouldn’t explode under any circumstances! If you had told me ahead of time that the pill furnace could blow up, then I would never have wasted so many precious medicinal plants! I could have just used ordinary concocting methods! Oh, my treasured pill!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0237 awe-chapter-238

“Do you know how much of my own blood, sweat and tears I poured into this treasured pill?!” Bai Xiaochun shouted hoarsely. “Dammit! Why didn’t you tell me the truth instead of lying to me!?!?” Crowds of Blood Stream Sect cultivators were converging on the scene to watch, and the streams of divine sense from Ancestor Peak were focused on the area.

“I told you not to get close to the pill furnace. Tell me, did you get close? Did you?!” Bai Xiaochun finally began to chuckle bitterly, his face a mask of disappointment and sadness.

There was no way for the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master and grand elder to offer a retort to Bai Xiaochun’s words. The blood master truly had told Bai Xiaochun that the pill furnace couldn’t explode, and had also promised to take responsibility for any situations which arose. Bai Xiaochun last words hit especially close to home.

The truth was that because the heat radiating from the pill furnace had continued to increase, slowly scorching everything on Lesser Marsh Peak, they actually had felt they had no other choice than to approach the furnace to take a look.

They were in the wrong, and yet, the losses sustained by Lesser Marsh Peak were so vast that they couldn’t restrain their rage. The blood master gritted his teeth and said, “You jabbering troublemaker! Lesser Marsh Peak trusted you! We asked you to concoct medicine for us, and if you had, I would have taken responsibility. But I don’t see any spirit medicine! You destroyed Lesser Marsh Peak, Nightcrypt. I demand an explanation!”

Snorting coldly, the blood master took a step forward as if to grab Bai Xiaochun, and hopefully gain something from this disaster....

“Hold on!!!” Bai Xiaochun said. Looking very serious, he took a step forward and breathed in deeply through his nose. “Something’s off here. That smell.... Do you sense that medicinal aroma...?”

The Lesser Marsh Peak blood master frowned. Snorting coldly, he proceeded toward Bai Xiaochun, but even as he did, Bai Xiaochun flickered into motion, appearing a moment later next to a chunk that had once made up the wall of the pill furnace. Looking shaken and incredulous, he pulled the chunk off to the side, revealing a medicinal pill underneath, which glowed with five-colored light!

It also emanated a strong medicinal aroma which, combined with the five-colored light, caused the eyes of everyone who could see it to go wide. Their minds began to spin, and many people even gasped or cried out in shock!

“Is that a tier-5 spirit medicine!?”

“I've never even seen a tier-5 spirit medicine before. Even the Pill Stream Sect only has a few people who can concoct them. Tier-5 spirit medicines are all priceless treasures!”

“A five-colored glow is one of the signs that appears when a tier-5 spirit medicine is concocted!!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe it's actually a tier-5 spirit medicine!”

As the crowd erupted into pandemonium, Bai Xiaochun mustered his courage, reached out, and grabbed the pill. He had never imagined that he would end up concocting a tier-5 spirit medicine, and wanted to simply take it and run. However, with so many people present, that wasn’t possible.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only shocked one. The Lesser Marsh Peak blood master stood off to the side, along with the grand elder and bloodstreak elders, and all of them were gasping.

When he saw Bai Xiaochun pick up the spirit medicine, the blood master suddenly started laughing good-naturedly, and his murderous aura vanished.

“A misunderstanding, that’s all. A misunderstanding. Hahaha.... I was pulling your leg just now, Grandmaster Nightcrypt.” The blood master hurried forward, his face filled with a sincere smile.

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly. However, he couldn't think of anything to say in response, and was already wracking his brains as he tried to figure out what to do next.

“How about this, Grandmaster Nightcrypt: Lesser Marsh Peak would like to triple our previous offer of compensation!” The blood master, the grand elder, and the bloodstreak elders all hurried forward to cluster around Bai Xiaochun.

That was when Song Junwan, who had been standing off to the side the entire time, stepped forward and coolly said, “How dare you threaten one of my Middle Peak cultivators right in front of me.”

The hearts of the elders began to pound, and an extremely unsightly expression appeared on the blood master's face.

As the two parties faced off, an ancient voice suddenly rumbled out from Ancestor Peak.

“Nightcrypt has concocted a tier-5 spirit medicine, and is a true Chosen of the Blood Stream Sect. Let him be appointed as a bloodstreak elder of Middle Peak!

At the same time, a blurry figure appeared in midair, an old man wearing a blood-colored robe. The incredible pressure radiating off of him caused everyone in the area to feel shaken, and they spontaneously bowed their heads and clasped hands in formal greetings.

“Regarding the pill, it belongs to Lesser Marsh Peak. However, Lesser Marsh Peak shall prepare the materials necessary, and personally craft the bloodstreak battlerobe for Nighcrypt!!”

That old man was none other than the Song Clan patriarch. As soon as Bai Xiaochun realized who he was, he took a deep breath, then clasped hands and bowed.

No one would dare to defy the orders of the Song Clan patriarch.

However, the Song Clan patriarch wasn't finished speaking. His placid voice continued to echo out through the sect. “It's good that everyone is gathered here, as I have three important announcements to make!

“First. In eight days, the cultivators of the four mountain peaks will all sacrifice some of their blood qi to summon the Blood Stream Sect's grand lich!

“Second. In a month, the trial by fire for the position of Middle Peak blood master will begin!

“Third. We *will* be going to war soon!”

As the Song Clan patriarch looked around at the gathered cultivators, gasps could be heard, and murderous auras began to build up.

“War!!”

“War!!!” Everyone began howling at the tops of their lungs, causing the entire Blood Stream Sect to shake. Although Bai Xiaochun was yelling just like everyone else in the crowd, he was actually feeling very anxious inside.

“Very well, you’re all dismissed!” The Song Clan patriarch looked at Nightcrypt, smiled, and then turned and vanished.

Excited at the prospect of the coming war, everyone returned to their various mountain peaks. Although Bai Xiaochun was reluctant to give up the tier-5 spirit medicine, he had no choice but to hand it over to the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master. Then, he left with Song Junwan to go back to Middle Peak.

Song Junwan didn't say much on the way back to Middle Peak, but her eyes flashed with cold light. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was wrapped up in his own thoughts, and didn’t feel like saying anything either. When they finally arrived, Song Junwan looked over at him and said, “Nightcrypt, in the trial by fire for the position of Middle Peak blood master, I want you to stand as Dharma protector for me, to help me win the title!

“The trial by fire will be dangerous, so you don’t need to give me an answer right now. I’ll be going into secluded meditation to prepare. You can inform me of your decision after I come out.” She gave him a deep look and then headed toward the upper finger.

Bai Xiaochun watched her leave, complex feelings twisting his heart. Eventually, he found himself back in his immortal's cave, sitting there cross-legged, more worried than ever.

Based on what the Song Clan patriarch had just said, Bai Xiaochun realized that all of the discussion amongst the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs had led to a decision. The war with the Spirit Stream Sect would happen, and in only a few months.

The next seven days passed relatively uneventfully.

Early in the morning of the eighth day, the sound of tolling bells filled the Blood Stream Sect. Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and strode out of his immortal's cave to find that virtually all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators from the four mountain peaks were flying through the air toward the upper fingers of each of their respective mountains.

Then, eight figures appeared, flying out from Ancestor Peak. They were like giants that caused rumbling sounds to fill the area, and shone with dazzling light that made it impossible to see anything more than their outlines.

As soon as those eight figures appeared, the cultivators all dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, patriarchs!”

Bai Xiaochun was immediately shaken. Those eight figures were none other than the eight patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect!

Patriarch Limitless and the Song Clan patriarch were among them. There was another among the group who wore a violet robe. He seemed to surpass all of the other patriarchs as he hovered there in midair like a brilliantly shining sun.

Intense pressure immediately weighed down on the entire area.

“Everyone, release your blood qi, open the blood portal!” The voice rang out to fill the entire hand that the Blood Stream Sect rested on, shaking everything as a huge spell formation appeared.

Blood qi exploded out, starting from Lesser Marsh Peak. As the blood qi streamed from the tip of the finger, it formed a blood-colored pillar of light that shot up into the sky. Next, the same thing happened on Nameless Peak, Middle Peak, Corpse Peak, and finally, Ancestor Peak!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Five beams of blood-colored light shot up, staining the entire sky the color of blood, and creating an enormous vortex. The cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect were shaken, and could feel their blood qi seething as they unleashed the power of their cultivation bases.

At that point, one of the patriarchs stepped forward, a middle-aged man who was strikingly handsome. There was something entrancing about him that made anyone who looked at him want to admire and trust him.

“I am Droughtflame, and I will take the lead in summoning the reserve powers of the Blood Stream Sect. I need the help of nine disciples to help refine the qi and blood!

“Xu Xiaoshan, Song Que, Xuemei, Han Dong, Zhou Zhengfeng....” Although he was speaking in a calm tone, he was a patriarch, which caused even ordinary words spoken by him to carry vast pressure. Every time he called out a name, that person would fly up into the air to stand in front of him.

Soon, eight individuals had been called forth, and the sight of the assembled group caused the other Blood Stream Sect disciples to gasp. Every single one of the group of eight were Earthstring Foundation Establishment cultivators with the power of multiple Tideflows! All of them were top Chosen in the Blood Stream Sect!

Then, Patriarch Droughtflame’s eyes came to rest on Middle Peak, and he uttered the last of the nine names.

“Nightcrypt!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0238 awe-chapter-239

Although Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback, he quickly put a somber expression on his face and made sure his murderous aura was on full display. Then he shot up into the air to appear in front of Patriarch Droughtflame along with the other eight.

Not a single Blood Stream Sect disciple was shocked that Nightcrypt would be part of the group. In fact, for Patriarch Droughtflame to call him out was exactly what many people had expected would happen.

Not a single person even felt like commenting on the matter. Obviously, Plaguedevil was one of the most famous people in the Blood Stream Sect, and everyone recognized that he was a powerful Chosen!

Not only did the crowds of disciples on the mountain peaks feel that way, Song Que and the other Chosen didn’t dispute his qualifications at all, although brutal gleams did appear in their eyes.

Bai Xiaochun had already been in the Blood Stream Sect for a few years now. To mortals, that might be considered quite a while, but for cultivators, that amount of time would flash by very quickly. Even still, it couldn’t be considered a very short period of time. Bai Xiaochun had worked hard, and step by step, reached this day in which he was the focus of all attention, and had secured the approval of the entire sect.

Bai Xiaochun could sense that fact, and although he had been prepared for this day to come, even he couldn’t help but gasp inwardly at the status he had attained. It filled his heart with contentment and pride.

“Hmmmmphhh! Wherever Lord Bai goes, he ends up shining as brightly as the sun or moon. Ai... who made me this outstanding...?” Although he felt wonderful inside, not a trace of those feelings showed on the outside. He looked as cold and dangerous as ever, with a powerful murderous aura that rivaled all of the other eight Chosen.

The eight patriarchs were all blurry and difficult to make out clearly, but when they looked at Nightcrypt, it was clear that they were nodding in approval. Some of the patriarchs even studied him more closely than the other Chosen.

The fact that a Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator could rise up in the fashion Nightcrypt had was so strange that some of the patriarchs had grown suspicious, and had secretly investigated him. However, because the mask he wore was a true precious treasure, throughout the years, not a single clue had ever slipped out that might reveal his secret.

Furthermore, his skill in the Dao of medicine was so important to the Blood Stream Sect that none of the patriarchs took their own suspicions too seriously.

“The nine of you will sit in meditation in front of these blood altars,” Patriarch Droughtflame said. He waved his hand, sending nine beams of blood-colored light flying out, which transformed into nine blood-colored altars. “Transform qi into blood to help me open the portal and summon the grand lich!”

Bai Xiaochun and the others all settled down in front of their respective blood altars.

In truth, there was no need for special help from these nine cultivators to summon the grand lich. However, after some discussion, the patriarchs had decided that because of the upcoming war, they should get a first-hand look at the power at the sect’s disposal.

Among the eight patriarchs, Patriarch Droughtflame was the one most insistent on going to war, and therefore, he took charge of summoning the reserve powers of the sect, as well as looking over the nine cultivators who were being tested in the process.

His gaze seemed to contain intense pressure that left Bai Xiaochun shaken inwardly. It was almost as if he could see the secrets of everyone he looked at; even the other eight cultivators surrounding Bai Xiaochun averted their gazes humbly.

Eventually, Patriarch Droughtflame looked away from them, turning his gaze up into the sky. He then lifted his right hand and waved it through the air. In response, the blood-colored beams of light shooting up from the five mountain peaks all rumbled and began to grow larger. Simultaneously, the blood-colored vortex grew larger, and in the very center of it, a huge blood-colored eye became visible!

As the eye opened, the sky dimmed, and a massive wind kicked up. Intense pressure filled the world, and a blood mist spread out in all directions. All of the Blood Stream Sect disciples down below were shaken, and prostrated themselves toward the eye.

“Look up, and see the power which lets the Blood Stream Sect dominate the other three sects!” Patriarch Droughtflame’s voice seemed to contain a bizarre power that forced everyone who heard it to look up into the blood eye in the sky.

Bai Xiaochun was deeply shaken. However, it was at that point that his Undying Live Forever Technique stirred, and gradually seemed to form a resonance with the blood eye.

Song Que, Xuemei and the others were all mentally shaken, and yet none of them dared to look down. They forced their heads up to look at the blood eye in the vortex above.

Many people cried out in shock. Even Song Que and the other Chosen, despite their high position and deeper understanding of the secrets of the sect, couldn’t help but gasp in astonishment.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his mind felt like it was filled with crashing lightning.

Within that blood-colored eye, just outside of the very pupil, were four shadowy figures, one of them being an enormous, violet-colored skeleton!

The skeleton was covered with crackling lightning, as well as a swirling aura of death. Although it wasn’t moving at all, it emanated a powerful pressure that left anyone who could see it completely shaken.

Bai Xiaochun knew a bit about Corpse Peak, and based on that, he quickly came to the conclusion that this was a grand lich! On Corpse Peak, there was nothing more powerful than grand liches, which surpassed even flying ghouls!

“Flying ghouls are comparable to Core Formation cultivators, but grand liches are like Nascent Soul patriarchs!”

The second blurry figure within the eye was a black mist that seemed to be filled with tens of millions of faces. All of those faces seemed to belong to old men, and radiated a powerful sensation of Time. Within that mist was a gargoyle, and from the powerful pressure it radiated, it didn't seem to be any less powerful than the grand lich!

The third shadowy figure was nothing more than a pile of dried-up skin that was so old it was impossible to determine its age. It radiated a terrifying aura that was even stronger than that of the grand lich or the gargoyle. Just looking at it filled one with a sense of wonderment. Many of the Blood Stream Sect cultivators who saw it were left gasping.

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the fourth shadowy figure, which was actually a sword!

It was a blood-colored sword, upon which sat a crimson imp. The imp had no hair on its head, and although it was only about as big as person’s hand, it radiated an intense murderous aura that surpassed the other three shadowy figures!

“Corpse Peak’s grand lich, Nameless Peak’s million-faced gargoyle, Lesser Marsh Peak’s totem canvas, Middle Peak’s ancestral sword! These are the signature relics of the Blood Stream Sect, and they are actually defending what exists in the pupil of the blood eye, another of the Blood Ancestor’s powerful reserve forces!

“Behold the complete Sacrificial Blood Dao Formation!” Patriarch Droughtflame waved his right hand, and the pupil in the blood eye began to expand to slowly reveal a fifth shadowy figure!

Clearly, it was being protected by the four figures outside of the pupil. The sight of the precious fifth resource of the sect caused Bai Xiaochun to begin panting, and his eyes to widen as he slowly came to see...

A scarecrow!

It was bizarre in appearance, with a patch of human skin held in one hand, and a steelyard balance in the other. A monstrous smile covered its face that made it seem as if it were sneering at the world.... When Bai Xiaochun looked into the scarecrow’s eyes, that smile seemed to fill his entire heart and mind.

Within moments, though, the Heaven-Dao aura within Bai Xiaochun spread out, driving the image of the scarecrow out from inside of him. As he sat there panting in recovery, he noticed that Patriarch Droughtflame seemed to be looking at him with approval.

The other eight Chosen around him were in all still in a daze. Xuemei was the next to recover, followed by Song Que. One by one, they drove out the image from within their minds.

“These are the reserve powers of the Blood Stream Sect,” Patriarch Droughtflame said, speaking to the sect as a whole. "Unleash your blood qi. As for the nine of you Chosen, begin the refinement process. Help me summon the grand lich!

“After summoning the grand lich, the other spirits will eventually awaken of their own volition. After they have all woken, the Sacrificial Blood Dao Formation can emerge from within the world of the blood eye!” Immediately, the innumerable cultivators in the Blood Stream Sect who were below the Core Formation stage all began to rotate their cultivation bases.

Foundation Establishment cultivators, Inner Sect disciples, Outer Sect disciples. Tens of thousands of cultivators all called upon the power of their cultivation bases to send blood qi streaming out. A blood mist formed, rising up into the air toward the nine blood altars, into which it merged.

Bai Xiaochun was seated in front of the fifth of the blood altars, and a tremor ran through him as the powerful blood qi began to merge into the altar, and through it, into him.

Before he even had time to think about what was happening, his Undying Live Forever Technique sprang into operation, absorbing the blood qi. He looked around, and saw that Xuemei, Song Que, and the others were all absorbing the blood qi. Apparently, they were using their own bodies as vessels; combined with a Blood Stream Sect secret magic, they were transforming the qi into blood.

Xuemei was the first to succeed. A drop of blood emerged from the top of her head and floated up to rest above her. Song Que was next.... Bai Xiaochun quickly followed suit, using his special Undying Blood refinement technique to transform the blood qi inside of him into a drop of blood, which then floated up out of the top of his head.

Soon, blood had emerged from all nine of the Chosen. Time passed, and the drops of blood grew larger. After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, Xuemei’s eyes snapped open. The blood above her head, which was already the size of a fist, flew over toward Patriarch Droughtflame.

Patriarch Droughtflame’s eyes flickered, and then he nodded his head slightly. The blood then transformed into a red beam of light that shot up toward the grand lich in the blood eye. A moment later, it touched the bones of the lich, which caused it to shake slightly, and a faint aura of life force began to emanate out from it.

“Eight more drops of blood!” Patriarch Droughtflame said coolly.

As massive amounts of blood qi continued to pour into the blood altars, Bai Xiaochun looked on with a somber expression. However, inwardly, he was shaken.

“So much blood qi,” he thought. “Should I help myself to a bit of it?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0239 awe-chapter-240

At first, Bai Xiaochun was a bit hesitant. He looked around at the other Chosen in front of their blood altars and saw that, other than Xuemei, who had already succeeded, everyone else was still working with the blood qi.

After confirming the situation, Bai Xiaochun was actually starting to get a bit angry at the excessive actions of the others. Take Song Que, for example. He had a foundation of eight Tideflows, and although it seemed reasonable that he would be slower than Xuemei, he shouldn’t be *that* much slower! However, he was clearly only about seventy percent finished.

Everyone else was in a similar situation, with the slowest of the group being only thirty percent complete.

“Apparently I’m just too honest!” he thought. “I can’t believe I’m still trying to figure out what to do, while those other jerks are already helping themselves to the blood qi to further their own cultivation!” Feeling more righteous than ever, he looked over at Xuemei and mused that she really was a fool. Apparently, her honesty was almost at the same level as his own.

“Ah whatever. I guess I’ll just give in to the peer pressure. Since I’m undercover here, I don’t want to do anything to stand out too much. I need to fit in, that’s for sure.... Ai, I really don’t want to do this.” Sighing inwardly, he took a deep breath, and then began to siphon away about ninety percent of the blood qi....

Because of the suddenness of his action, the blood sphere above his head, which was already about half formed, suddenly withered. Although nobody down below noticed, Song Que and the others did, and their eyes burned with rage as they cursed him inwardly.

Patriarch Droughtflame hesitated for a moment, and gave Bai Xiaochun a closer look. Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the other patriarchs. Actually, in addition to calling upon these nine Chosen to help summon the grand lich, the patriarchs had also intended for them to take advantage of the opportunity to increase their cultivation bases.

As for exactly how much they could improve their cultivation bases while simultaneously not drawing too much attention, that would be up to each individual.

Because Xuemei was focused on becoming blood master, she disdained such actions, and the patriarchs ignored that. But then Nightcrypt, despite being half finished, suddenly began to siphon away most of the blood qi for himself.

If Nightcrypt were the only one to do such a thing, it might not have mattered. However, a few moments later, Song Que, Xu Xiaoshan, and the others all followed suit. The patriarchs couldn’t allow such a thing to go on.

After all, an underworldly fire had begun to burn around the grand lich in the blood eye....

“Whoever delays the summoning of the grand lich by not completing their blood sphere in the time it takes an incense stick to burn will be personally transformed into a lich by me!” The Song Clan patriarch snorted coldly and then spoke out in a voice that could only be heard by Bai Xiaochun and the others.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled. The blood qi he had just absorbed had already helped him significantly. His Undying Heavenly King had already climbed up to the power of five ghosts.

“So stingy!” he muttered to himself. However, he didn’t dare to defy the patriarchs, and immediately restrained himself. Everyone else bowed their heads, and soon, the allotted deadline approached.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun and the others all had blood spheres that were about ninety percent complete. The final ten percent would require full concentration all the way down to the last second. After all, no one wanted to complete their spheres early. The best thing to do was wait until the last possible moment, and thus take advantage of the unbelievable opportunity that had been presented to further their cultivation with the help of the entire Blood Stream Sect.

In the short amount of time it takes an incense stick to burn, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Heavenly King made another breakthrough. His fleshly body power now was equivalent to six berserk ghosts. He was tingling all over, and had to resist the urge to look up and howl at the top of his lungs.

“Can’t keep this up, unfortunately. Time’s almost up....” Although he was reluctant to stop, there was nothing else to do. Sighing inwardly, he was just about to take advantage of the final few dozen breaths of time to complete the blood sphere, when suddenly his heart thumped....

“I wonder... if I put a bit of my own Undying Blood into the mix, would I be able to control the grand lich?”

The thought excited him, and if it actually worked, could be considered an incredible service for the Spirit Stream Sect.

But then he thought about how well the Blood Stream Sect had treated him, and was torn.

“Song Junwan, the Song Clan patriarch, as well as the other grand elders, have all treated me pretty well. Although they’re a bit brutal, overall, they’re not bad.” Sighing, he also considered the fact that with his current cultivation base, it didn’t seem very likely that he would be able to control a grand lich. And yet, he still couldn’t make a decision.

“Well, I might as well try. Whether I succeed or not will be up to the will of the heavens.” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he looked down. As everyone continued to transform the qi into blood, he did the same. And yet, he also extracted a bit of blood qi from his Undying Blood, and mixed it into the blood qi being provided by everyone else.

A few dozen breaths of time passed, and Patriarch Droughtflame’s eyes flickered as he announced that the process was now ending. At that point, a blood sphere flew over from Song Que, Xu Xiaoshan, and everyone else. Bai Xiaochun nervously opened his eyes as his blood sphere also flew over.

His blood sphere looked exactly like everyone else’s, but also contained some authentic Undying Blood within it.

“They shouldn’t notice,” he thought. “After all, my Undying Blood is true and authentic. Any other kind of Undying Blood is only a replica. Even if they do notice, they’ll just think it's because I'm stronger than everyone else. After all, I did perform an Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening...” As the eight blood spheres flew over, Patriarch Droughtflame studied them briefly, then waved his hand, sending them flying up to the grand lich in the blood eye.

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief as the blood spheres merged into the grand lich. Moments later, a powerful life force erupted out, and the underworldly fire in the grand lich’s eyes began to burn even more brightly than before.

Then, the grand lich slowly rose to its feet, threw his head back and roared. That roar shook heaven and earth, and caused all light to dim as a shocking energy radiated out.

A gale force wind sprang up, sweeping across everything, casting everything into murky darkness.

As the grand lich awoke, the million-faced gargoyle, the withered patch of skin, and the blood sword all trembled. Apparently, they were now heading toward the point of awakening....

Cracking sounds echoed out in all directions as fissures began to fill the pupil of the blood eye, as if a magical seal were being broken!

Before Bai Xiaochun had time to assess whether or not his idea had worked, Patriarch Droughtflame waved his sleeve, as did all of the other patriarchs. Eyes glittering, they all flew toward the blood eye. The last to reach it was the Song Clan patriarch. Turning to look at everyone down below, he said, “In a month, the trial by fire for the position of Middle Peak blood master will begin!”

Even as his thunderous voice continued to echo back and forth through the sect, he stepped into the blood eye. In that instant, the million-faced gargoyle awoke. The patch of withered skin suddenly began to radiate life force, and the imp on the blood sword opened its eyes.

At the same time, more and more fissures spread out over the pupil, and it began to collapse. It was as if a door were being opened, that the eight patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect were now entering.

RUMBLE!

The sky suddenly seemed to fade, and the blood eye vanished. Down below, the cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect looked up from their meditation. The sect leader and the grand elders then dismissed the crowds. However, many questions remained in the minds of all present.

They had all seen the reserve powers, and yet, were unsure why the patriarchs had entered the blood eye. For some reason, no matter how they considered the matter, they couldn’t help but assume it had something to do with the war.

Bai Xiaochun was more nervous than ever. In the end, he’d been unable to determine whether or not his idea had worked. He pondered the matter as he headed back to his immortal's cave, where he stabilized the increase in power of his fleshly body. In the blink of an eye, nearly an entire month passed. Soon, it was only three days before the appointed day mentioned by the Song Clan patriarch, the trial by fire for the position of Middle Peak blood master.

By that point, everyone in the Blood Stream Sect was talking about the trial by fire. Every generation of the Blood Stream Sect always had four blood masters, who would eventually become blood rippers, a position higher than the prime elder.

In this generation, the Middle Peak blood master was the last spot that needed to be filled. Now that war was looming on the horizon, the trial by fire would finally be held to select the individual to become blood master. After the blood master was selected, the battle prowess of Middle Peak as a whole would be increased.

It was an important matter for the entire Blood Stream Sect, and even more so for the cultivators from Middle Peak. After all, in theory, any Foundation Establishment cultivator from Middle Peak could eventually become blood master.

Of course, it was common knowledge that this generation's blood master would be one of two people. Either it would be Xuemei, or it would be Grand Elder Song Junwan!

Discussions raged as the trial by fire neared.

“It will definitely be Young Lady Xuemei. She’s at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment with nine Tideflows. If she doesn't become blood master, that would be a big loss for us here on Middle Peak!”

“I think the grand elder also has a good chance of succeeding. After all, she’s in the great circle of Foundation Establishment. Xuemei might be at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, but that’s still only mid Foundation Establishment. She’s not quite on the same level as the grand elder!”

“The blood master trial by fire doesn’t just come down to cultivation base power. There are other factors, such as the strength of the Dharma protectors they bring along.”

The night before the trial by fire was to begin, Bai Xiaochun was meditating in his immortal's cave, when suddenly, Grand Elder Song Junwan appeared outside. She was cloaked in moonlight as she came to stand outside the door, and when she smiled, she looked more beautiful than ever.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, are you well-rested?” she asked softly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0240 awe-chapter-241

In the days preceding Song Junwan’s arrival outside his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun had pondered what to do regarding her request. He knew that after she emerged from seclusion, she would come looking for him, to ask for his help during the trial by fire for the position of blood master. For many days, she hadn’t come.

Just when he was trying to decide whether or not to take the initiative to go see her, he heard her voice. At that point, his eyes glittered, and he cleared his throat. Instead of immediately opening the door of the immortal's cave, he decided to take advantage of the situation to make her wait outside, thus increasing his own perceived value.

In truth, he wasn’t sure which decision was correct. After all, if he didn’t join her, he could take advantage of her absence to attempt to sneak into her immortal's cave and acquire the relic of eternal indestructibility. If he succeeded, then it would definitely be unnecessary for him to participate in the trial by fire.

However, that option was also inherently dangerous, so dangerous that it was hard to decide if it was a better choice than the trial by fire.

Even as he sat there thinking, the door of his immortal's cave swished open quietly, and Song Junwan stepped inside.

“You!!” Bai Xiaochun was so startled he jumped up and walked backward a few steps. His immortal's cave was protected by a defensive spell formation, and yet Song Junwan had somehow entered despite it.

She smiled enigmatically as she looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, almost as if her gaze could pierce into his heart. “I'm the grand elder of Middle Peak, and I currently stand in for the blood master here. I control every blade of grass and every rock. If I want to go into an immortal's cave, nobody can do a thing to stop me.

“Besides, why would Junior Brother Nightcrypt refuse to let me into his immortal's cave? Instead of making you say the words, I just decided to take the initiative.” With that, she sat down in a stone chair and rested her chin on her palm.

Although her gaze wasn’t seductive, there was something enticing about it, something that tugged at Bai Xiaochun’s heart in shocking fashion. His expression turned somber, and he growled, “Is becoming the blood master really that important to you?”

Song Junwan looked back at him quietly for a moment, then nodded.

“For many years, the Song Clan has administered Middle Peak, and generations of blood masters have all been Chosen from our clan. But this time around, things changed.

“Our patriarch made a deal with Patriarch Limitless, and one of the conditions was that the slut Xuemei would have a chance to compete for the position of blood master. In exchange, we got information about Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment.

“Unfortunately, Song Que failed to live up to expectations, and didn’t reach Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. Even worse was that the slut Xuemei unexpectedly reached nine Tideflows. As of this point, Que’er is no match for her. Therefore, I am the only person left who has a chance at becoming blood master!

“And that is why I need your help. With you as one of my Dharma protectors, I think I have a hope of actually succeeding!” With that, Song Junwan waited for Bai Xiaochun’s response.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything at first. After hearing about the details of Xuemei’s involvement, everything made a lot more sense. However, he still felt that the competition for the position would be very dangerous. A long moment passed, and Song Junwan continued, “I wouldn’t ask you to help me if it wouldn’t benefit you as well. Considering that you’re already a bloodstreak elder, if I succeed, I will strongly recommend you to be the next grand elder!”

For some reason, she blushed slightly, and the charming seductiveness in her eyes seemed to intensify. It was almost like she were casting her vixen-like claws into Bai Xiaochun in an attempt to drag him in.

Bai Xiaochun coughed lightly and averted his gaze. Inside, he was still trying to decide what would be best. If he didn’t participate in the trial by fire, there was always the chance that he could secretly acquire the relic of eternal indestructibility. Although making that attempt would be a big risk, participating in the trial by fire would be equally risky.

In one situation, he would have almost no control over how things played out. In the other, he would have a bit of control. In one scenario, here was a high chance of success despite the danger. In the other, the chances of success weren’t as high, but were still good.

It took some time, but he made his choice. Gritting his teeth inwardly, he looked at Song Junwan and said, “If you want to become blood master, then of course I’ll help you. However, I’d like to know a bit about the trial by fire. How exactly does the process work? How do you become a blood master?”

He had already decided that, even though he would attempt to help Song Junwan, his own safety was paramount. Perhaps by being careful, he could reduce the dangerous elements.

Song Junwan was already glowing with excitement. Eyes shining, she looked at Bai Xiaochun, a smile growing on her face that she covered with her hand. Expression softening, she said, “To many people, the details of this trial by fire are a big secret. But I won’t hide anything from you. To begin with, I have to be clear: in every trial by fire, death is a common thing.” Although Bai Xiaochun had been prepared for news like this, it didn’t stop his heart from suddenly beginning to pound. Every time he heard the word 'death,’ he would get anxious.

“One reason for that is that the trial by fire isn’t held in the outside world, but rather, in the world beneath our feet....” Although she was speaking quietly, he words struck Bai Xiaochun like lightning.

“Beneath our feet?” Stunned, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the ground. It only took a moment for it to dawn on him what she meant, whereupon his eyes widened, and he gasped.

Song Junwan smiled at his reaction. “Back when you first arrived at the Blood Stream Sect, you noticed how the sect itself resembles an enormous hand, right?

“The Blood Stream Sect really is built on top of a huge hand. That hand belongs to a giant that is submerged beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River. Over the years, the various techniques of the Blood Stream Sect were all created after studying the hand.

“We also came to call the giant our Blood Ancestor!” A passionate, worshipful gleam appeared in Song Junwan’s eyes, as if the matter she was discussing was the most important thing in the world. She wasn’t the only person who would view the subject in this way; virtually everyone in the Blood Stream Sect did.

Bai Xiaochun blinked, but didn’t say anything in response.

“The Blood Ancestor was a giant, but just like us, possessed flesh and blood, a skeleton, as well as the five yin organs and six yang organs....

“Anyone who wants to become a blood master must gain the approval of the Blood Ancestor. That approval comes in the form of crystals, which grow in the organs of the Blood Ancestor. On Middle Peak’s Blood Master Temple, there is an entrance that leads to the interior of Middle Peak itself. By following the blood vessels inside the finger, we can enter the body of the Blood Ancestor.

“Each of the mountain peaks corresponds with one of the five yin organs, with Middle Peak connecting to the heart. The blood crystals there are the goal. The first person to get the blood crystal wins the approval of Middle Peak, and can call upon the power of the blood qi of the entire peak. They will gain the ability to suppress the cultivation bases of all cultivators there, and even more impressive, raise all cultivators’ battle prowess! That is a blood master!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He was more shocked than ever by what he was learning. Although he had understood a bit about blood masters, as of now, he realized how truly high of a position they occupied.

The difference between a mountain peak with a blood master and a mountain peak without one was so vast that it couldn’t be put into words!

“I heard a story once....” Bai Xiaochun said.

“You mean the legend of the Blood Devil?” Song Junwan replied immediately, smiling. Bai Xiaochun nodded.

“That legend stems from conclusions reached over generations of research by the patriarchs. They all believe that somewhere in the Blood Ancestor’s body is a legacy blood crystal!

“Whoever gets that legacy won’t become a blood master, but rather, the Blood Devil, a position far higher than the blood masters. In fact, that position is even above the patriarchs. Because the Blood Stream Sect practices spirit blood cultivation, if the Blood Devil appears, speculation states that a single thought on his part could reduce the cultivation bases of the entire sect by fifty percent, from the Outer Sect all the way to the patriarchs!

“At the same time, a single thought on his part could increase the battle prowess of the entire sect by thirty percent! Simply describing a person like that as the Blood Devil isn't quite sufficient, so another term exists, a term known only to a select few in the sect. In fact, only the patriarchs of the top clans in the sect are aware of it....

“Blood Lord!” She spoke the words softly, but they seemed to contain great power.

“But legends are just that. Legends. Throughout the years, generations of patriarchs have searched through the body of the Blood Ancestor. Despite having searched most of the locations, they haven’t found any legacy.

“I hope that one day while I'm still alive, I’ll be able to see the Blood Lord rise up. Even the patriarchs are well aware that once the Blood Lord comes, he will either lead the Blood Stream Sect to unheard-of glory, or drag it down into ruin.... Because of that, some of the patriarchs hope the Blood Lord never comes. As for my Song Clan patriarch, he is not among that group.”

Song Junwan smiled. “But enough about legends. Let’s talk about the trial by fire itself.

“Your main purpose in coming along is to help me get the blood crystal. The most important factors leading up to that point are battle prowess and speed. Along with the other Dharma protectors, you must protect me, and help me beat Xuemei to the heart cavity!

“As long as I can get to the heart cavity first, that blood crystal will be mine!” Song Junwan’s eyes gleamed with self-confidence.

“How many Dharma protectors will there be?” Bai Xiaochun asked.

“Both Xuemei and I can bring up to twenty Dharma protectors.” Song Junwan replied placidly.

“That many!?” Bai Xiaochun said, a bit shocked. “What if one of the Dharma protectors gets to the heart cavity before you?”

“Theoretically speaking, any of the Dharma protectors could become a blood master. All they would have to do would be to get to the heart cavity first, take the blood crystal, and absorb it.”

Bai Xiaochun blinked. If what Song Junwan said was true, then how could she prevent that very scenario from playing out? Presumably, she would have some method of retaining control other than being very particular about which Dharma protectors she selected.

Song Junwan chuckled lightly, but didn’t offer any further detailed explanation. Much as Bai Xiaochun had suspected, both she and Xuemei both had methods of retaining control, special command medallions given them by their respective patriarchs.

Only someone with the command medallion would actually be able to enter the heart cavity.

After a moment of contemplation, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and looked down at the ground. He wasn't interested in fighting to get the blood master title. After all, he wasn’t even a real disciple of the Blood Stream Sect.

He just wanted to get into the grand elder’s immortal's cave. Therefore, he needed to help Song Junwan become blood master, so that he could become grand elder. That would solve all the problems perfectly.

Bai Xiaochun had already been in the Blood Stream Sect for years now, and at long last, his goal was in sight!

With that, he looked up and said, “I’ll be there tomorrow morning at Blood Master Temple!”

Song Junwan took a deep breath and looked at Bai Xiaochun, her eyes glittering. Covering a smile with her hand, she took a step forward, then leaned forward and spoke into his ear, her lips nearly touching him, her warm breath caressing the side of his face.

“If you become grand elder, there are many things that could happen between us....”

Suddenly, her face flushed, as if she weren’t sure why she had suddenly spoken those words. With a final piercing look at Bai Xiaochun, she glided away.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0241 awe-chapter-242

“The vixen makes another move!” A fragrant, silky aroma entered Bai Xiaochun’s nose, causing a mysterious sensation to pulse through him. Anxious and more on guard than ever, he watched Song Junwan leave.

“This isn’t gonna work,” he thought, sighing. “One of these days, that vixen is going to go in for the kill. I might have incredible willpower, I might be an amazing fighter, I might have numerous, uncountable outstanding qualities, but this vixen is just too dangerous.” After taking some time to calm down, he sighed again.

“Ah whatever. Once I get the relic of eternal indestructibility, I’ll go back to the Spirit Stream Sect, and then things will be fine. Besides, I've been missing Xiaomei lately.” Settling down cross-legged, he meditated until the following morning. Then, his eyes snapped open. His cultivation base was at its peak, and he was full of energy as he emerged from his immortal's cave. [1. By Xiaomei he’s referring to Hou Xiaomei]

“Everything comes down to this!” Chin stuck up, he proceeded along proudly. As he did, many cultivators saw him, and bowed their heads deferentially. This was his first time appearing in public with his bloodstreak battlerobe, which had been sent over a few days earlier from Lesser Marsh Peak.

Only bloodstreak elders could wear bloodstreak battlerobes, which had built-in magical devices that could defend against an attack from a Core Formation expert. Such robes could only be produced at significant cost.

Nightcrypt's handsome face combined with the bloodstreak battlerobe created quite an eye-catching scene. Many people looked over with awe and reverence on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun enjoyed being treated in such a way, and even slowed down a bit as he flew through the air toward the upper finger. Eventually, he landed in front of Blood Master Temple, where a large group of people had already gathered.

Song Junwan and Xuemei's groups were clearly separated, and the two women were staring at each other coldly. Xuemei had twenty cultivators backing her, all of whom were awe-inspiring late Foundation Establishment experts. Their expressions were placid, but they radiated intense, murderous auras.

Not every person in the group was considered Chosen, but they were all practiced killers who were famous even outside the sect. The reason why people like this would be Dharma protectors for Xuemei actually had a lot to do with the fact that her father was Patriarch Limitless.

Song Junwan also had a formidable group gathered behind her, including Song Que. Most were direct bloodline clan members of the Song Clan.

All of Middle Peak's bloodstreak elders were gathered, as were many other ordinary cultivators. Once the trial by fire began, they would all be waiting for the new blood master to come out.

Several blurry figures could be seen floating up above, and from the pressure that weighed down from them, it was obvious that they were patriarchs of the sect.

There were four of them, two of whom Bai Xiaochun had only seen once before, during the grand lich summoning ritual. The other two were more familiar; the Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Limitless.

When Bai Xiaochun arrived, the Song Clan patriarch saw him and gave him a glare. Shivering, Bai Xiaochun ducked his head and hurried over to Song Junwan.

As he did, Song Que looked at him and chuckled coldly. “You can’t do anything right, can you? You even managed to show up late for the trial by fire. If you're scared of dying, why don’t you just stay home!”

Yawning, Bai Xiaochun looked over, making sure to drag his eyes slowly over Song Que’s recently re-grown hair and eyebrows. “As naughty as ever, aren’t we, Que’er?”

“YOU!” Song Que growled through gritted teeth. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he was about to say more when Song Junwan intervened with a cold snort.

“Enough!” she said. “Both of you shut your mouths. If you want to argue, I’ll personally arrange for it to happen, *after* the trial by fire!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. Considering the somewhat oppressive atmosphere at the moment, he decided not to say anything else.

Up in midair, the Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Limitless exchanged a bemused glance. Then, Patriarch Limitless looked over the crowd and said, “Let the trial by fire for the position of Middle Peak blood master... begin!”

Patriarch Limitless then performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and waved his finger toward Blood

Master Temple.

Blood Master Temple began to rumble, and then a huge crevice opened up in the square outside the temple. Strong blood qi erupted out, along with intense, pulsing coldness and blinding blood-colored light. It almost looked like an enormous mouth ready to consume anything that came near.

However, closer inspection would reveal that the blood-colored light was anything but ordinary. It was possible to see other worlds inside of that light; apparently, if you stepped inside of it, you would be sucked into one of those blood-colored worlds.

The instant the crevice opened, one of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors stepped forward, his cold eyes radiating killing intent. After looking over derisively at the people gathered behind Song Junwan, he stepped into the crevice and vanished.

One after another, all of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors stepped forward and entered the crevice. Last to enter was Xuemei, who cast a cold glare at Song Junwan and her group before vanishing.

As the others were stepping into the crevice, Song Junwan lowered her voice and gave her Dharma protectors more information about the Endless World of Blood.

“The first stage of the blood master trial by fire is called the Endless World of Blood!

“Xuemei and I will not be able to pass through the first stage. It is only for you Dharma protectors....

“The body of the Blood Ancestor is a place that not just anyone can enter. The first stage tests the qualifications of the Dharma protectors that the two of us have selected. It will also determine exactly how many Dharma protectors will be able to proceed to the second stage!

“In order to enter the body of the Blood Ancestor, you have to become one with him. Although he is dead, there are still parts of him which contain life force. You must convince those living systems within the Blood Ancestor that you are one of them. Only then can you avoid being expelled.

“Within that crevice are numerous worlds, each one of which can only be entered by two people at a time. Xuemei’s Dharma protectors have taken the initiative to select which worlds they will go into. As for you all, when you enter the crevice, you will automatically be dragged into one of those worlds with them!

“Once inside, you and the other Dharma protector will vie for the approval of the world. Those who succeed will be able to proceed to the second stage. Those who fail will be ejected. Not only must you be on guard against Xuemei’s Dharma protectors, you must also watch out for the bloodbeasts within the world. They aren’t intelligent, but they are completely and utterly bloodthirsty!

“I’ll be waiting for you at the entrance to the second stage!” With that, she clasped hands and bowed to the assembled group. Song Que nodded back at her, his expression somber. Then he looked at Nightcrypt, snorted coldly, and strode over to the crevice. Moments later, he was gone, and the rest of the group began to enter.

After a brief moment of hesitation, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and leapt into the crevice.

Almost instant, a beam of blood-colored light swept over him, and he felt a massive force tugging at him. He completely lost control of his own body as he was sucked into the light.

Although the light didn’t necessarily seem impressive from the outside, once it wrapped around him, he felt as if he were floating in a huge sea. As he was sucked along, he moved toward the end of that sea, where he saw an enormous, blood-colored sphere.

There were other spheres visible, all of which had people floating toward them. As the people neared the spheres, they were swallowed up.

Bai Xiaochun was frightened, and looked away from the all the spheres. However, it was in that moment that something strange occurred. All of the blood spheres suddenly trembled, and then sent out even more blood-colored light, all of which shone onto Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure if he was mistaken or not, but it almost seemed as if the blood spheres all wanted to be able to select him in particular.

There were even some blood spheres which were empty, having not been selected by any of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors, which were also quivering, as if with anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun felt his nervousness mounting, but before he could react, the first blood sphere to have reached out to him seemed to go mad. Before he could get close, it actually flew toward him, then slammed into him, seemingly delighted.

Bai Xiaochun’s vision went black, and he was sucked into the body of the sphere. When things began to clear up, he found himself in a strange world.

The sky was the color of the blood, the ground was the color of blood, everything was the color of blood, even the mountains and the plants.

“So weird,” he thought, looking around vigilantly. The more he considered what had occurred, the stranger it seemed. After some thought, he decided it must have had something to do with his Undying Live Forever Technique.

“Could it be that I’m like a god in this place, and that's why all the blood spheres seemed to go crazy?” His eyes turned up in thought, and he cleared his throat. Then he cast his senses about, and was sure that he could sense the presence of a powerful will, a will that seemed filled with desire, something that was calling out to him.

“One of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors is also in this place. I need to be careful. All of them are in late Foundation Establishment.” He looked around again, vigilance mounting as he flew up into the air.

The more he flew along, the stranger things seemed. It was almost like he didn't need to use any cultivation base power to fly. The wind simply carried him along....

He didn’t even see any bloodbeasts, to the point where he started wondering if they even existed here.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0242 awe-chapter-243

The entire world, including the sky and the land, was the color of blood. Plants, trees, mountains; everything was crimson as far as the eye could see.

Off in the distance was a blood-colored desert, and the very end of which was an oasis which was also the color of blood, that led to an ocean.

In the middle of that ocean was a mountain, the peak of which pierced the clouds.

That mountain was where the will of the world was located, and whichever cultivator climbed it first would win the approval and blessing of the world. That person would then be able to leave, with the approval of the Blood Ancestor, and qualified to enter the second stage.

There were countless worlds inside of the Blood Ancestor, but Xuemei and Song Junwan had both brought twenty Dharma protectors. Of the total of forty Dharma protectors, in the end, only twenty would be qualified to proceed.

Obviously, the number of Dharma protectors who Xuemei and Song Junwan ended up with would determine who had the advantage in the second stage.

Xuemei’s Dharma protectors had entered the crevice first, and the one who had selected this particular world was a gaunt, middle-aged man with cold eyes. His cultivation base fluctuations were those of late Foundation Establishment, and overall, he looked like a viper ready to strike at any moment. Clearly, whoever ended up in his sights would likely end up dead.

This man was Jia Lie, and in terms of battle prowess, he could be considered among the top three in Xuemei's group of Dharma protectors. He was completely and utterly confident of being able to dominate any of Song Junwan's Dharma protectors, with the exception of one or two.

Although he appeared to be middle-aged, he was actually over a hundred years old. However, because of the unique techniques he cultivated, his fleshly body was at the ultimate peak. Furthermore, he'd been able to add a full sixty-year-cycle to his longevity during his Foundation Establishment trial by fire. He had reached five Tideflows, had an incredibly powerful cultivation base, and was an adept killer.

"This world is like a Blessed Land for me!" he thought, looking off into the distance. He was currently gripping a blood-colored sea snake by the head. No matter how it struggled, it couldn't free himself, and if Jia Lie wanted to, he could crush it to death in an instant.

Jia Lie completely ignored the snake as he looked at the towering mountain not too far off in the distance. He already felt somewhat amused by this first stage of the trial by fire for blood master. He'd only just arrived in the huge world, and yet, he was already relatively close to the location of the world's will.

The reflection of the vast ocean and the towering mountain could be seen in his eyes, as well as the pulsing fluctuations which spread out from the mountain.

"Even if Song Junwan's Dharma protector gets lucky, there's no way he could get as close as I am. I might as well just take control of the will of this world right now. I won’t even need to kill the other Dharma protector. I wonder who it is. Nightcrypt maybe...?” He chuckled coldly. Originally, he had planned to kill Song Junwan’s Dharma protector and then earn the approval of the will of the world. But now it seemed that might not be necessary.

Blurring into motion, he sped out over the blood-colored ocean, quickly closing in on the cloud-wreathed mountain. He proceeded along with caution, and as such, wasn’t taken by surprise when an intense roaring sound shook everything in the area. A moment later, a huge blood-colored dragon sped out from the other side of the mountain, fixed its eyes on Jia Lie, and then sped toward him rapidly.

It was more than 30 meters long, and bristled with a murderous aura.

A sense of intense crisis gripped Jia Lie, and beads of sweat popped out on his forehead. Eyes widening, he exclaimed, “Impossible! How could a bloodbeast like that be in this place? Foundation Establishment cultivators can’t fight something like that!!”

Even as he gasped in shock, more roars could be heard, and the auras of more bloodbeasts exploded from the vicinity of the mountain. Something like a powerful wind blasted out, causing the blood ocean to churn and seethe. Moments later, countless murderous eyes appeared beneath the surface of the water. There were so many that anyone who saw them would be shocked.

Before Jia Lie could proceed any further, the bloodbeasts beneath the surface of the water joined the bloodbeasts from the mountain to attack him.

The sheer number of bloodbeasts Jia Lie saw caused his scalp to tingle in shock and fear. Not daring to proceed, he actually fell back. After he retreated by about 3,000 meters, the enormous dragon slowly turned around, the auras of the other bloodbeasts slowly faded, and even the creatures beneath the surface of the water disappeared.

Jia Lie's face was covered with sweat, and his breath came in ragged pants. Despite the supreme confidence he had in his cultivation base, to be stared at by so many bloodbeasts left him scared out of his mind. After a bit of time passed, he frowned anxiously.

"With so many bloodbeasts here, it won't be easy to go any further. I guess I'll just need to wait for the right opportunity to present itself before I move onward...." Gritting his teeth, he backed up a bit more, and then found a place to conceal himself and let time pass.

During the seven days which followed, he saw quite a few bloodbeasts coming and going. Finally, the killing intent in his eyes flared.

"Forget it. Things aren't going to change here any time soon. Instead of waiting around, I might as well go find Song Junwan's Dharma protector and kill him. Then I'll have plenty of time to wait around. Maybe if I'm lucky, my opponent will be Nightcrypt, and I can save a bit of effort by getting rid of him now!" Looking at the ocean of blood which stretched out behind him, he chuckled coldly.

Being an adept killer, he was naturally a skilled hunter as well. He had keen senses, and although the world he was in was large, he was confident that with his cultivation base, it would be no difficult task for him to track down the other Dharma protector.

Blurring into motion, he flew off to begin the search.

Before he got very far, though, the sea down below seethed, and a huge bloodbeast burst out from the depths. It had the torso of a human and the tail of a fish, and as soon as it appeared, it attacked Jia Lie with bloodthirsty violence.

After a short battle, Jia Lie killed the bloodbeast and proceeded along. However, before he could get very far, two more bloodbeasts burst out from the water to attack him....

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was flying through the air, marveling at how strange and quiet the world was. Despite having been flying along for a few days, he hadn’t seen a single bloodbeast. Everything around him seemed to be completely empty.

He didn't even need to use his cultivation base. The wind simply pushed him along. Of course, the strangeness of the situation put him more on guard than ever.

“Something really weird is going on with this place,” he thought. “And where is Xuemei’s Dharma protector? I wonder if he set up an ambush for me since he got here first.” He continued to look around vigilantly as he proceeded. Eventually, he reached the desert.

By that time, Jia Lie was fleeing in terror across the blood ocean, chased by several thousand maddened bloodbeasts. His face was pale white, and his expression was that of terror.

“Dammit! Why are there so many bloodbeasts? I didn’t provoke them, and yet they’re showing up one after another! They’re like a flood!!”

Before long, the tenth day passed. The more time that passed, the more Bai Xiaochun felt as if something really strange were going on. He still hadn't even seen the slightest trace of a bloodbeast, but distinctly recalled Song Junwan saying such bloodthirsty creatures existed here. At this point, he was starting to wonder what exactly was going on.

Eventually, he caught sight of the end of the desert, with the blood-colored oasis and the blood-colored ocean. His astonishment grew, as did his caution.

By now, Jia Lie’s hair was disheveled, his skin sallow, and his eyes bloodshot. At long last, he burst out of the ocean region and into the oasis. After numerous dangerous encounters, he had finally made it out alive.

When he thought back to everything that had occurred in the ocean, he was filled with a sense of awe and dread regarding the world around him.

“It’s a good thing I had all those life-saving magics and items, otherwise I probably would have died. However, if things were that difficult for me, then it’s probably the same with Song Junwan’s Dharma protector. In fact, maybe he already got eaten by the bloodbeasts.” He looked back out at the ocean, heart still thumping with fear. Just when he was about to sit down and rest, his heart trembled, and he looked off into the distance, where a beam of light could be seen flying lazily through the air.

“Hmm?” A cold light flashed through Jia Lie’s eyes, and he quickly reigned in the power of his cultivation base. At the same time, he produced a pearl, which let out a soft, warm light that completely concealed his aura.

Unless he suddenly unleashed the power of his cultivation base, that pearl would make it almost impossible to detect him. It was one of the life-saving items that had enabled him to make it out of the ocean of blood alive. After activating it, he stood there unmoving, looking up into the sky.

“Nightcrypt? Hahaha! It’s really him!” Eyes flashing with killing intent, he began to chuckle. Although Nightcrypt was very famous, Jia Lie felt nothing but disdain for him. “So what if you can concoct some medicine and please the patriarchs? You really think you’re a Chosen? Even with your Inverse Blood Ancestral Awakening, you’re only in mid Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. I can kill you as easily as flipping over my hand. By cutting you down, I can accomplish the mission assigned to me by the blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak!”

Completely calm and confident, he pulled in his murderous aura and decided to wait for the right moment to attack.

Bai Xiaochun proceeded along cautiously. He didn't move very fast, and kept his divine sense spread out in all directions. As he got close to the blood-colored oasis, he was about to fly over it, when he looked down. Although he hadn’t opened his third eye, his intuition told him that the place harbored danger. Without the slightest hesitation, he backed up.

“Hmm?” Jia Lie was surprised that Nightcrypt would have such acute senses. He gave a cold laugh. Considering how powerful his own cultivation base was, he decided that there was no need to hide any longer. He leaped up into the air, shooting directly toward Nightcrypt, his murderous aura exploding around him.

“Nightcrypt, I'm Jia Lie, and you’re dead!” Laughing loudly, he shot forth accompanied by rumbles like that of thunder. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he waved his finger, causing a huge blood-colored hand to appear, which sped directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0243 awe-chapter-244

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened. Jia Lie had stuck out among Xuemei’s Dharma protectors earlier, so he recognized him. His attack burst with powerful energy, and it only took a moment for Bai Xiaochun to realize that this was a formidable opponent.

“Your cultivation base is higher than mine, but you were lying in wait to ambush me!?” he exclaimed loudly. “How shameless! Despicable! I hate your type! People like you should be struck by lightning!” Bai Xiaochun was very angry, and was just about to unleash an attack, when suddenly his eyes widened with disbelief. Jia Lie likewise was completely astonished by what happened next.

Almost as soon as the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, Jia Lie had laughed in response, and sent his blood-colored hand shooting forward.

But then, without any warning whatsoever, a deafening boom filled the sky, and a bolt of lightning appeared, as thick as a bucket. Before Jia Lie even had a chance to react, it slammed into him.

As the boom echoed out, Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. Jia Lie cried out in alarm, and the blood-colored hand was destroyed. Before Bai Xiaochun could do anything, a second lightning bolt appeared, then a third and a fourth, all of which shot directly toward Jia Lie.

Jia Lie screamed at the top of his lungs as the lightning smashed into him, causing blood to spray out of his mouth.

At the same time, a look of utter incredulity could be seen on his face.

“What’s going on!?!?” he bellowed in rage, simultaneously backing up as fast as possible. “What divine ability is this, Nightcrypt?!?!” Then he glanced up into the sky, and his scalp almost exploded from shock when he realized that a whole string of lightning bolts had appeared, over a hundred of them, and they were all beginning to descend toward him.

“No!!” Jia Lie screamed miserably and abandoned any thoughts of tangling with Bai Xiaochun at the moment. He slapped the top of his head, causing an ancient, dilapidated buckler to pop out of his mouth, which provided a modicum of protection as he fled.

However, the more than one hundred lightning bolts continued to slam down, and although the buckler managed to block them, Jia Lie was still left coughing up blood. The last dozen or so lightning bolts were too much for the shield, which shattered. Coughing up more blood, Jia Lie withered visibly. At that point, he pulled out a paper talisman, which he ignited, increasing his speed dramatically. With that, he sped off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun hovered there, jaw hanging open. He hadn’t even had a chance to unleash an attack. All he’d done was say something.

It was a completely shocking and unfathomable scene. In the mere moments in which Jia Lie closed in on him, he was struck by over a hundred bolts of lightning, and then fled with his tail between his legs. Despite that, Bai Xiaochun chose to do the cautious thing and just let him run.

Taking a deep breath, he looked up into the sky, and then looked at Jia Lie fleeing into the distance. Blinking, he suddenly started to get excited.

“Could it be... could it be that, without even my knowledge, my cultivation base has reached the point where I can kill someone with a mere word?!?!” The idea excited him, but the more he thought about it, the more he realized it wasn’t very likely. After some more thought, he decided that it was either a coincidence, or something to do with the Undying Live Forever Technique. In fact, he was actually hoping Jia Lie would show up again so that he could analyze the matter further.

Filled with curiosity and anticipation, he slowly flew out over the ocean of blood.

Meanwhile, some distance away from Bai Xiaochun, Jia Lie finally came to a stop in an area close to the ocean. He had blood dripping down his chin, and his eyes burned with madness. However, within that madness could be seen fear, and even terror. As of this moment, he was absolutely convinced that the lightning which had struck him was not one of Nightcrypt’s divine abilities.

“How did he do it? Dammit! How exactly did he do it? How did he get so much lightning to strike me!?

“Wait, I know. Nightcrypt is also known as Plaguedevil. He’s vicious and merciless, as well as a profound schemer. He must have realized that I planned to ambush him, then figured out a way to cause anyone who neared him to get struck by lightning!” Even after more thought, he decided that this was the only possible theory that made sense. Although he wasn’t absolutely convinced, he was having a hard time coming up with other ideas.

“Maybe it had something to do with that oasis. The area where it borders the desert had some unstable fluctuations. Maybe my sudden appearance and the unleashing of my cultivation base disturbed some natural law. As an apothecary, Nightcrypt knows a lot more about those kinds of things than me. Maybe he took advantage of that to cause the lightning....” Jia Lie gritted his teeth, and his killing intent began to rise even higher than before.

“I refuse to believe that if I prepare well enough, you’ll escape my next attack. I'm going to hack you to pieces! You’ll die in complete and utter torment!” Jia Lie had never suffered in such unlucky fashion, and it took him quite a bit of time to calm down.

“I'm going to sacrifice a bit of my cultivation base to completely conceal my life force and aura. With that level of concealment, nobody in the Foundation Establishment stage will be able to detect me without getting within 300 meters of me!” He gritted his teeth, and suddenly his face turned red and his body withered. Then he began to slink forward stealthily.

It took him about three days to track down Bai Xiaochun, who was currently flying around over the ocean. As he flew, his passage kicked up gentle waves, and yet, not a single bloodbeast could be seen anywhere. Bai Xiaochun was actually very interested in what the bloodbeasts looked like, and yet, still hadn’t had a chance to see one.

As he flew along, bored out of his mind, he suddenly noticed the air rippling and distorting about 300 meters to his left. Even as he turned his head, he saw Jia Lie suddenly materialize.

Jia Lie threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Eyes bloodshot, he summoned a blood mist that completely covered him and then transformed into a gigantic, vicious head that lunged toward Bai Xiaochun as if to consume him.

“Time to die, Nightcrypt!!” Considering how close he was, it only took a moment for the blood mist head to be just up ahead of Bai Xiaochun.

Before Bai Xiaochun could react, and before the blood mist head could actually reach him, brightly colored light flashed through heaven and earth, wind screamed, and rain began to pour down. Then, an indescribably powerful gale sprang up right in front of Bai Xiaochun!

The wind even caused the ocean water to rise up in shocking fashion. It smashed into the blood mist head, which shuddered for a moment before exploding to reveal the screaming Jia Lie.

“Impossible! How are you doing this, Nightcrypt...?”

He was completely helpless as the mighty wind swept him away, shredding his clothing, ripping at his skin until blood flowed. In that critical moment, Jia Lie pulled out a life-saving magical item which teleported him away just before he was torn to pieces.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Moments ago, he had only been about 60 meters away from Jia Lie, and yet the mighty wind and the surging ocean hadn’t even moved a single hair on his head.

That 60-meter distance was like the gap between heaven and earth....

Bai Xiaochun watched mutely as Jia Lie was swept away in terrifying fashion. If he didn’t understand what was happening by this point, he wouldn’t be Bai Xiaochun.

“This world is protecting me? We’re related because of the Undying Live Forever Technique, so it's helping me?” Moved, he looked around at the world, and was more convinced than ever that this was the case. Excited, he stuck his chin up and then swished his sleeve.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, can reduce measly Foundation Establishment cultivators to ashes!”

The pride he felt cleansed him of any nervousness. With that, he flew in grand fashion up into the air, sighing emotionally. Meanwhile, quite a distance away, Jia Lie was coughing up mouthfuls of blood. By this point, he was on the verge of going crazy.

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!” Enraged to the point of trembling, he simply couldn’t accept the situation.

“First there was the lightning, and then that wind. Just how is Nightcrypt doing it all? Don't tell me this world is actually taking care of him?! I refuse to believe it! I refuse to accept it!” Then he coughed up another mouthful of blood. Eyes completely bloodshot, he looked down at his injured and damaged body, and was relieved to see that his bag of holding was still clutched tight in his right hand.

He put on a new set of clothing, killing intent surging. His hatred for Bai Xiaochun had reached the point where he couldn’t bear to live under the same sky as him. Gritting his teeth, he pulled a small statue out of his bag of holding.

The statue depicted an evil ghost, completely vicious in appearance. After a moment of hesitation, Jia Lie bit the tip of his tongue and spit some blood onto the statue. The statue immediately melted, transforming into a black liquid that then took the shape of a magical symbol, which flew up and branded itself onto Jia Lie’s forehead.

Jia Lie shuddered, then let out a piercing cry as the magical symbol spread out from his forehead, transforming into a black suit of armor. In the blink of an eye, the armor covered his entire body, healing his wounds, and causing his gaunt figure to suddenly ripple with muscles. Closer inspection would reveal that the transformation was partly corporeal and partly illusory.

“The Lesser Marsh Peak blood master gave me this Ghost Body. It will temporarily restore my cultivation base, and even advance it a bit! Nightcrypt's bizarre abilities won’t do any good against the Ghost Body. I already understand his lightning, and although I don’t really get that wind, I can now attack him from under the water! Plus, the Ghost Body can pass right through the wind!

“Nightcrypt, I refuse to believe that this world is taking care of you. And even if it is, I can defy the heavens and kill you!” Gritting his teeth, he reigned in his cultivation base and then dove down into the water, where he sped along at top speed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0244 awe-chapter-245

Three days later, Bai Xiaochun was still flying around over the blood ocean. He could sense that, off in the distance, there were strange fluctuations which were obviously coming from the location of the world’s will.

“I wonder why that Jia Lie hasn’t shown up over the past few days?” Bai Xiaochun actually missed him a bit. Every time he showed up, it was a chance to see how the world would protect him.

Because of his anticipation, he made sure to fly along even more slowly than usual. On the evening of the third day, when the blood-colored sky was starting to grow dark, the sea water beneath Bai Xiaochun suddenly exploded with a shocking aura. Water showered up into the air, along with raging killing intent and a powerful roar.

“Prepare to die, Nightcrypt!!” It was a voice filled with indescribable hatred, and along with it, a black-armored figure appeared. It was Jia Lie, who seemed to flicker between corporeal and illusory. As he flew out of the water, he rapidly increased his speed, shooting directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

All of the power of Jia Lie’s late Foundation Establishment cultivation base exploded out. That, coupled with the boost provided by the Ghost Body armor, put him incomparably close to the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and caused intense pressure to weigh down in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted, and as Jia Lie closed in, he stuck his chin up and waved his sleeve. Pointing at Jia Lie, he said, “Back off!”

To see Bai Xiaochun posing in such a way enraged Jia Lie even more, and caused him to accelerate even more rapidly. By this point, he was already about 9 meters away from Bai Xiaochun, and not even a lightning bolt could intervene quickly enough to stop him. As far as he was concerned, Nightcrypt was going to die, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Mouth twisting into a vicious smile, he cried, “Like hell I’ll--”

However, before he could even finish his sentence, a blood-colored hand suddenly shot up from the sea down below. It moved with indescribable quickness, forming a palm that slapped Jia Lie like a human would a mosquito.

A resounding smack could be heard. Jia Lie’s black armor shattered, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. The bitterness of his scream would shock to the core anyone who could have heard it.

“No!!” Despairing, Jia Lie coughed up a mouthful of blood as he tumbled away. His body was already on the verge of exploding, and his recently recovered cultivation base power was instantly damaged. He was now weaker than ever....

Bai Xiaochun gasped and blinked a few times as the enormous blood hand sank back down into the water. As Jia Lie spun away off into the distance, Bai Xiaochun’s expression turned into one of admiration.

“You’re really persistent, aren’t you?” Sighing, he proceeded along, looking forward to the next time Jia Lie showed up....

Off in the distance, Jia Lie hovered above the ocean water, looking confused, tears of frustration welling up in his eyes.

Throughout all his years of cultivation, he had always shed blood, never tears. And yet, here he was, crying.

In his perspective, this world was completely and utterly evil. All he wanted to do was kill Nightcrypt! As a result, he had been struck by lightning, flayed by wind, and then slapped by some terrifying bloodbeast.

By this point, he was starting to think that it would take a miracle for him to get out of this place alive.

“My cultivation base is higher than his! I’ve been in the Blood Stream Sect for much longer! Why is this world treating me like this!?!?” Tears continued to flow down his cheeks. From the moment he had entered this world, he had felt like he was in a living nightmare.

By this point, he was completely and utterly terrified of Nightcrypt, and couldn't have been convinced by anybody to try to provoke him. Furthermore, he completely hated the blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak, as well as Xuemei. The only reason he was here was because of Xuemei. Otherwise, he would never have been forced to tangle with Nightcrypt, nor would he have accepted the mission from the Lesser Marsh Peak blood master. He wouldn’t have attempted to kill Nightcrypt so many times, and wouldn’t have ended up in this state, targeted by the very world around him.

“This isn't fair!!” Jia Lie was actually quite close to the mountain peak, and the will of the world. However, there were so many bloodbeasts on the mountain that he obviously had no hope of even getting near it.

As Jia Lie despaired, Bai Xiaochun was flying casually through the air some distance away. Looking at the mountain in front of him, he felt the strong sensation that all he had to do was head up to the top of the mountain, and he would be able to pass the first stage of the trial by fire.

However, even as he closed in, the same huge dragon from before stuck its head out from behind the mountain and stared at Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, countless terrifying auras surged out from the mountain itself, locking down onto Bai Xiaochun. Apparently, if he got any closer, all of those bloodbeasts would charge into action.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place. Earlier, he'd only caught a glimpse of that huge hand, but now that he could actually see the bloodbeasts face to face, he realized that they looked very much like the kind of wild beasts you might see in the outside world. The only difference was that they were completely the color of blood. Actually, they seemed similar to banebeasts in certain ways.

Unexpectedly, the bloodbeasts were looking at Bai Xiaochun with animosity, which caused the despairing Jia Lie to suddenly go wild with joy. Panting, his eyes widened, and hope gleamed therein.

"He can't get onto the mountain either!!" Jia Lie exclaimed excitedly. At last, his chance had arrived. Quickly covering up his aura, he fixed his eyes on Bai Xiaochun and began to search for another opportunity to snatch victory.

Bai Xiaochun felt a headache coming on as he looked at the mountain full of bloodbeasts. After a moment of hesitation, he decided that the best thing to do would be to test out how much the world would protect him. Having made his decision, he carefully proceeded forward. If the bloodbeasts reacted too violently, then he could always retreat.

He slowly got closer and closer, until he actually stepped onto the mountain itself. That was when he really started to get nervous. However, the nervousness quickly began to fade as he realized that the bloodbeasts were just looking at him, and none of them were moving to block his path.

Joy rising, he began to stroll forward, completely unhindered. Meanwhile, Jia Lie hovered over the ocean, eyes wide with shock.

Moments later, a thoughtful expression appeared in his eyes, and then hesitation, and finally, an intense glowing light.

“I get it now! Although there are a lot of bloodbeasts here, as long as you don't exude any killing intent, the bloodbeasts won’t interfere. That's definitely how to do it!

“For example, here I am floating on the surface of the ocean, right next to the mountain, and yet none of the bloodbeasts under the water are attacking me. It's obviously because I have no killing intent!” Jia Lie still felt a bit hesitant and unconvinced. However, if he gave up at this point, his newfound hope would be dashed. Therefore, he clenched his jaw and flew up into the air with an expression of determination. Making sure he had no killing intent, he proceeded forward with the utmost caution.

Soon he was nearing the mountain, and the numerous bloodbeasts turned their gazes upon him. Jia Lie stopped in place, scalp tingling, limbs trembling. However, he forced a smile onto his face.

“No ill will here!” he said. “I'm just passing through....”

However, in the instant he opened his mouth, the enormous, blood-colored dragon suddenly howled, flying up into the air and then charging down toward Jia Lie. At the same time, the countless other bloodbeasts erupted with murderous auras and flew toward Jia Lie.

Eyes snapped open down in the ocean water, and countless blood-colored giants rose up from the depths, howling as they surrounded Jia Lie.

Jia Lie let out a bloodcurdling scream, and tears streamed down his face.

“This isn't fair! You’re cheating!!” Jia Lie wept at how the world around him was toying with him. As the bloodbeasts pounced, his screams echoed out far and wide.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was trembling. The sudden outburst among the bloodbeasts had startled him so much that he almost took to flight. But then he realized that the bloodbeasts were merely attacking Jia Lie.

He had been worried about Jia Lie in the beginning, but after realizing his own importance to the world around him, he stopped paying much attention to him. However, as of this moment, he started to feel a bit bad.

When he heard Jia Lie accusing him of cheating, he coughed dryly, but didn’t attempt to make any explanations. After all, Jia Lie was actually right.... After arriving in this world, he hadn’t done a single thing except fly around.

Even on the mountain, the bloodbeasts just let him pass by....

Bai Xiaochun really felt that the world had treated him well. Looking back down at Jia Lie amidst the bloodbeasts, he considered throwing an Aphrodisiac Pill down....

“Ah, I shouldn’t. I'm a good person, after all.” Sighing, he proceeded on toward the peak of the mountain, where he found a stone stele, which emanated pulsing light that seemed to be calling to him.

After some thought, he approached the stele and placed his hand onto its surface. Instantly, his divine sense seemed to spread out to fill the entire world....

It was as if the world had somehow become a part of him....

In that moment, the blood ocean began to seethe, the sands of the desert floated up into the air, the sky trembled, and the lands quaked. Plants, mountains, everything in the world began to shake with joy, with approval, with worship!!

The bloodbeasts kowtowed, roaring as they acknowledged allegiance to Bai Xiaochun standing there on the mountain....

His life having been spared, Jia Lie trembled and looked up at Bai Xiaochun, and knew that he would never, ever be able to forget this experience, nor the image of Nightcrypt standing there like the emperor of the entire world!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0245 awe-chapter-246

This was Jia Lie’s first time serving as a Dharma protector in a trial by fire for blood master. As such, he was completely unaware of what others who were participating in the trial might have encountered in the worlds they entered.

However, he was convinced that his experience was completely unlike the experiences of anyone else. In fact, he had the feeling that throughout all the trials by fire the Blood Stream Sect had held from ancient times until now, no one had ever done what Nightcrypt was doing.

He had no way to confirm whether his theory was correct, but when he looked around at the world trembling, and all the livings things prostrating in worship to Bai Xiaochun, he impulsively followed suit.

As Bai Xiaochun stood there on the mountain top, he was suddenly struck by the strange sensation that he could actually destroy the entire world with a single thought.

As of this moment, his Undying Live Forever Technique was in full operation, and after a moment passed, he realized there was a voice whispering in his ear.

“Come... come... come....”

Snapping out of his reverie, his eyes shone, and he took a deep breath. Then he pulled his hand back from the stone stele. Everything in the world began to shine with bright, blood-colored light, which all shot toward Bai Xiaochun, surrounding him.

The crimson light transformed into a door, which slowly opened right in front of him.

He looked at the door hesitantly for a moment, aware that if he stepped through it, he would be able to enter the second stage. Looking around at the world one more time, he stepped forward and vanished into the blood-colored light.

At some unknown location within the body of the Blood Ancestor, there was an open space that seemed to have no beginning or end, and was as quiet as death. The only thing visible were numerous cone-shaped pillars which rose up from the darkness below.

At the top of each pillar was a platform.

Two of those platforms were much taller than the others, but not very far away from each other. Xuemei was on one, and Song Junwan the other. Both of them sat cross-legged, staring at each other.

They had been sitting there for less than two hours. Because of the command medallion each of them possessed, they didn't need to acquire the approval of the Blood Ancestor the way the Dharma protectors did. They had come directly to this place to wait.

Time flowed differently in the Endless World of Blood. In the two hours that had passed for Xuemei and Song Junwan, an entire month had gone by inside.

Based on the analyses of both women, they would need to wait several more hours before any of the Dharma protectors began to emerge. In any case, the second stage of the trial by fire could not begin until both women used their command medallions to open it. Neither of them would be willing to do that until their Dharma protectors were all accounted for.

The two of them had been exchanging barbs back and forth the entire time, and after a short respite, it was Xuemei who resumed the conversation. Chuckling coldly, she said, “Song Junwan, why fight with me over the blood master position, considering how old you are? Is it really true that the Song Clan couldn't find anyone better, and was forced to let an old woman champion their cause?”

Song Junwan frowned, and she was just about to respond in kind when suddenly, her expression flickered, and she looked up into the air. Xuemei also looked up, her pupils constricting.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the shape of a huge door slowly took form.

“Someone got the approval of the world will so quickly!?” Xuemei thought. “It’s only been two hours! That’s about a month in the Endless World of Blood!” Xuemei’s eyes widened, and her heart filled with shock. She was very familiar with how the blood master trial by fire worked. Supposedly, the most quickly a Dharma protector had ever obtained approval in the past was three hours, which was a month and a half on the inside.

“Who is it...?” Song Junwan thought, equally shaken. “Who overcame the other Dharma protector in the Endless World of Blood, dealt with the countless bloodbeasts, and still managed to get the approval of the will of the world? The fighting must have been intense for this person to have finished so quickly!” Whoever this person was, if it ended up being one of her own Dharma protectors, she would obviously be thrilled. However, if it was one of Xuemei’s

Dharma protectors, that would pose a big obstacle in her attempt to win the position of blood master.

After mentally reviewing all of her Dharma protectors, she couldn’t think of any who could pull off such a feat. As such, her expression began to darken.

And yet, Xuemei had the same reaction. As she reviewed her own list of Dharma protectors, she wasn't confident that any of them could do something like this. Along with Song Junwan, she stared up at the illusory door.

A moment later, a blurry figure appeared within the door. It only took a few breaths of time for both women to see exactly who it was, and they both cried out in surprise.

“Nightcrypt!!”

“Nightcrypt!?”

Xuemei’s eyes flickered with killing intent, and her heart trembled with shock. She couldn’t imagine how Nightcrypt had possibly acquired the approval of the world will so quickly.

After her initial shock, Song Junwan’s heart swelled with delight, and her beautiful eyes were glued to Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun first stepped out of the door, his vision was swimming, and he couldn’t see clearly. It only lasted for a moment, though, and then he saw all of the countless platforms around him, as well as Xuemei and Song Junwan.

“Junior Brother Nightcrypt, come on over here,” Song Junwan said, smiling. Her voice was full of both tenderness and joy.

Xuemei snorted coldly, clenching her hands into fists.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then headed over to Song Junwan. As soon as he touched down onto the platform, he walked over to her side.

“Um... I'm the first?” he asked quizzically.

“Of course you are,” Song Junwan said, smiling sweetly. “How did you do it? Who was your opponent?”

To Bai Xiaochun, her smile only seemed to reveal her inner vixen. However, he didn’t allow his true feelings to show. He stuck his chin up, clasped his hands behind his back, and tried to look as proud and murderous as possible.

“Oh, it was simple,” he said in a calm, deep voice. “I just walked through the world. As for my opponent, I never asked his name.” From his wording and posture, he seemed completely proud and aloof. As for how he called the Endless World of Blood “simple,” both Xuemei and Song Junwan could well imagine him summoning his blood sword and slashing his way through the world....

He likely ignored the countless attacking bloodbeasts, not even deigning to look at the world around him as he slaughtered his way to gain the approval of the world will.

Song Junwan’s eyes glowed even more brightly before when she looked at Bai Xiaochun, and as for Xuemei, she couldn’t help but stare at him. Moments later, both women realized that he wasn't wounded at all, and their expressions flickered.

Just when Song Junwan was about to ask about it, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve and coolly said, “I'm tired. Please let me know when the second stage is about to begin.” With that, he walked off to the side, where he sat down cross-legged, looking as arrogant as a wizened pine tree on top of a mountain. When he closed his eyes, his cold, cruel face and murderous aura caused Song Junwan's words to stick in her throat.

Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun was laughing, and felt very proud of himself. As far as he was concerned, he was completely outstanding and utterly superior to everyone.

"Wait, I need to do something to make it seem a bit more realistic," he thought. With that, he slowly lifted his head and looked off into the distance, eyes filling with a look of melancholy and introspection.

That left Song Junwan and Xuemei even more shaken, although they weren't sure exactly what it meant.

Time passed. Two hours later, the air up above once again began to ripple and distort, and the door appeared again. A burly, dangerous-looking man appeared, seemingly out of breath as he emerged into the open. As soon as Xuemei saw him, she broke out into a smile. The burly man clasped hands and bowed to her in greeting, then approached the platform and sat down next to her. When he saw Bai Xiaochun over on the other platform, his heart filled with shock.

He had assumed that he would be the first to emerge, and would never have even guessed that Nightcrypt would be faster.

As the hours passed, more and more Dharma protectors appeared. Song Que was one of them, although he looked exhausted, and his body was riddled with wounds. Clearly, it had been a difficult task for him to win the approval of the world will.

Ten hours later, the final Dharma protector appeared, and the first stage was officially over.

Both Song Junwan and Xuemei had selected their Dharma protectors carefully, and all of them were extraordinary in some way. Unexpectedly, the two groups had been quite evenly matched, as there were now exactly ten Dharma protectors on either side.

The two women exchanged a frosty glance, and then both of them snorted coldly. Turning to their Dharma protectors, they began to explain the second stage.

“During the first stage,” Song Junwan began, “you Dharma protectors fought for the approval of the world, and I did not participate. In the second stage, the fighting will be more brutal, and I will participate!

“The second stage is called the Blood Wasteland. It is a road without end, over which a deathly wind blows every fourteen hours. Once that wind blows, every living thing within the Blood Wasteland will be killed, reduced to nothing more than a skeleton.

“That is the path that leads to the heart cavity. Put simply, we have exactly fourteen hours to search the Blood Wasteland for the keys which lead to the heart cavity!” Off in the distance, Xuemei was making a similar explanation to her Dharma protectors.

“Every two hours, a key will appear at a random location within the wasteland. Anyone who gets one of the keys, and holds onto it until the fourteen hours have passed, will be teleported to the Ancient Blood Path which leads to the heart cavity. Of course, Xuemei and I don't need keys to enter the Ancient Blood Path.

“There are a total of seven keys, which means that only seven Dharma protectors can enter the Ancient Blood Path with Xuemei and myself!”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, as did the expressions of everyone else except for Song Que. One of them, a middle-aged cultivator, lowered his voice and asked, “What about the people who don’t get a key?”

Song Junwan looked at the man for a moment, and then replied, “We are fighting as a team, and whichever party gets the most keys will be the winner. The disciples on the winning team who don’t get keys will be not be teleported to the Ancient Blood Path, but neither will they be killed. They will simply be ejected.

“As for the losing team, whoever among them don’t get keys will all be killed after the fourteen hours are up! Those are the rules, and not even the patriarchs can interfere to save the losers!

“Therefore, this is not the time for infighting! If a key falls into the hands of one of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors, feel free to attack them. If your own teammates get them, however, you are prohibited from competing amongst yourselves!

“Infighting will not only increase our chances of losing, it could also lead to your deaths....

“The lot of you are either members of the Song Clan, or here because of certain promises I made. If I become blood master, your future prospects will be limitless. Everything that I have promised you, I will see done. If I lose, and Xuemei succeeds, then all of us will meet a grisly fate!” With that, Song Junwan clasped hands and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun and the other Dharma protectors.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0246 awe-chapter-247

The ten Dharma protectors, Bai Xiaochun included, all had different reactions to Song Junwan’s words. As for Song Que, his expression darkened slightly, but other than that, didn't change much. Because of his position in the Song Clan, he actually knew more about the blood master trial by fire than most did.

After all, if he hadn’t failed to reach Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, he would have been the one taking the lead in this trial by fire. However, because he wasn’t a match for Xuemei, the Song Clan had chosen Song Junwan as the one to vie for the Middle Peak blood master position which the clan had held for generations.

Because of how things had played out, Song Que was on the bad side of many of the older generation of the Song Clan. In turn, the rise of Nightcrypt had put even more pressure on him. That was especially true considering that Song Junwan had come to favor Nightcrypt. Song Que was left with few options.

The Song Clan had deep roots in the Blood Stream Sect, and had many direct bloodline clan members. Song Que was the face of the current generation of direct bloodline descendants, but that only meant that there were plenty of people hoping to see him fail miserably so that they could then replace him.

He needed to blaze a path for himself, to go all out with everything he had, to try to make sure his aunt succeeded. Only in that way would he be able to prove how valuable he was. That was also the only hope he had of eventually succeeding his aunt as blood master in the future.

Suppressing his revulsion for Nightcrypt, he was the first one to speak up after Song Junwan finished talking.

“I will do everything in my power to gain victory in the Blood Wasteland, and I will definitely not allow any infighting to occur. Grand Elder, please rest at ease. If anyone dares to cause problems, then if we get out alive, and that person also survives, then I’ll teach him what it means to live a life worse than death!” Song Que’s eyes shone with intense light, and were filled with killing intent.

As for the other Dharma protectors, they were left with little choice of what to do. In the Blood Stream Sect, cultivators loved to fight each other. But in this case, if they lost, they would all die. Therefore, they had to band together as a team to fight and defeat their opponents.

After a moment of silence, the Dharma protectors began to speak out.

“Grand Elder, as long as you can fulfill your promise, then I won’t hesitate to put my life on the line!”

“The Song Clan has treated me well, and I’ll definitely repay the favor!”

Already, they were less on guard against the people standing next to them.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get anxious, and couldn’t help but feel that Song Junwan had conned him.... He had been aware that the trial by fire would be dangerous, but never could he have imagined that the danger would be completely out of his own control. If the entire team failed, he could end up dead....

Even as he was sighing inwardly, he suddenly realized that the whole group was looking at him. Without any hesitation he tilted his head back arrogantly, a cold look in his eyes as he said, “For Junwan, I would go through hell or high water! It's my duty!”

Strange looks could be seen on the faces of the other Dharma protectors, and Song Que gritted his teeth. However, he knew that he had no choice but to let go of his hatred for Nightcrypt. Snorting coldly, he looked away.

Song Junwan glanced at Bai Xiaochun apologetically, but didn't offer any words of consolation. Instead, she offered one final warning.

“There are three people you need to be especially careful of. They are Yang Hongwu, Xiao Qing and Zhang Yunshan! Of those three, Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan likely possess powerful magical items. As for Xiao Qing....” Her expression suddenly flickered with dread. “He should have reached Core Formation long ago, but hasn’t.... In the past, he served as Patriarch Limitless’ personal attendant!”

With that, she went on to give more details about the group of three cultivators.

Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness was mounting. About the same time that Song Junwan finished speaking, Xuemei also finished explaining matters to her Dharma protectors, who all seemed to be bursting with killing intent and murderous auras, and were looking over menacingly at Bai Xiaochun and those around him.

Of course, Song Que took the lead in doing the same, and Bai Xiaochun was more than happy to join in. Even back in the Spirit Stream Sect, he had participated in such staring contests.

“Hmmmph! I’m not afraid of anybody in competitions like these!” Although his eyes widened into a glare, he couldn’t stop thinking about the three people Song Junwan had just described, and after finding them in the group, he fixed their facial features in his mind.

He would well imagine that he might run into them in the Blood Wasteland, and end up fighting bloody battles over the keys.

Only a total of seven people would be able to enter the third level, the Ancient Blood Path. Whoever those people ended up being, they would have a profound influence on who became blood master in the end.

At this point, Xuemei took a deep breath and said, “Shall we open the door, Song Junwan?”

She waved her right hand through the air, and a bright red light appeared in her palm, which flew out into the air in the form of a blood-colored command medallion.

That command medallion instantly became the center of all attention. Even Bai Xiaochun took a closer look. Both Xuemei and Song Junwan possessed such medallions, which not only let them bypass the first level, but ensured that they didn’t need to get a key to enter the Ancient Blood Path.

“It’s like all the decisions about this trial by fire were made behind closed doors, and everybody knows it....” Sighing, he looked over at Song Junwan. Song Junwan’s eyes flashed as she also extended her right hand, causing the second blood-colored command medallion to appear in her palm.

Blood-colored light spread out from the two command medallions, flying up into the air above the platforms. As the light spread out, everything was bathed in crimson, and at the same time, the outline of a huge door appeared. As the door opened, pulses of heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy rolled out. Two beams of blood-colored light then shot toward Song Junwan and Xuemei, connecting with their command medallions and merging into their bodies.

“The second stage is starting. Follow me!” With that, Song Junwan flew into the air, followed closely behind by Song Que. The other Dharma protectors flew out into formation around Song Junwan, Bai Xiaochun included, and the entire group shot toward the blood-colored door.

They managed to beat Xuemei into motion, and even as the eleven of them flew into the door, Xuemei and her group sped into motion behind them, transforming into beams of light that also shot toward the door.

Soon, not a single person could be seen on the platforms. The blood door slowly faded away, and within a few breaths of time, was gone.

The Blood Wasteland looked exactly as its name implied. It was a huge desert, filled with crimson sand and grit. Just looking around, it seemed like a completely barren wasteland.

Hot, screaming winds gusted, sending sand flying around everywhere. It seemed bleak and destructive, a place devoid of life.

Within the swirling deadliness of the desert sands, bleached bones were occasionally revealed, the remains of people who had died in previous trials by fire for the Middle Peak blood master position.

Bai Xiaochun instantly sensed the aura of death which pervaded the entire area. Then he saw a nearby skeleton, and his pupils constricted.

He wasn't the only one who had such a reaction.

“After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the first key will appear,” Song Junwan said. “Whenever a key appears, it will send a huge pillar of light up into the sky, a pillar of light that will not disappear, not even when the key is attained....

“Everyone split up. When that first pillar of light appears, head in that direction.... Remember, fighting each other over the keys is not allowed. Whoever gets it first must be offered protection by everyone else!

“I plan to offer myself up as bait to Xuemei. Knowing her deviousness, she won't wait until the Ancient Blood Path opens up before trying to kill some of you. She'll definitely start here, and will probably ask for help from her Dharma protectors to kill me!

“Even if she wasn't planning to do that, I'll try to goad her into it. If she did have that plan all along... well then, I think she'll be surprised at how things turn out. For the next fourteen hours, everything is up to you Dharma protectors!” With that, she flew off by herself.

Some distance away, she called out in a powerful voice that spread out in all directions, “Xuemei, do you dare to come out and fight me!?”

Not too far away from Bai Xiaochun and his group, Xuemei and her team were just now appearing. When she heard Song Junwan's voice, her eyes flickered coldly.

“Don't worry about me,” she said to her people. “You go get the keys. I'll handle Song Junwan!” With that, she flew in Song Junwan's direction.

It only took a moment before they were closing in on each other, eyes bursting with killing intent. Apparently, Patriarch Limitless and the Song Clan patriarch had reached an agreement. Song Junwan had a higher cultivation base, but didn't possess any spectacular precious treasures. As for Xuemei, her cultivation base wasn't quite as high, but she had many precious magical items, and was at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. As such, they were relatively evenly matched. In the blink of an eye, explosive combat was already underway.

As the two began to fight, booms filled the sky, rumbling out in all directions.

Everyone else looked on with serious expressions. Song Que was actually shocked that Song Junwan would be so daring. However, after only a moment of hesitation, he picked a direction and started flying. Everyone else followed suit, their admiration for Song Junwan growing.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as he watched Song Junwan, then quickly picked a direction and sped into motion.

“I never would have thought Song Junwan would put herself up as bait to get Xuemei to fight.... She must be well prepared for this. But then again, so must Xuemei. Presumably, it won't be easy to secure a complete victory in the second stage. I bet the two shrews are just trying to feel each other out.” Shaking his head, he sped along, already having decided that no matter what happened, he would not try to fight for the first key.

“Let them fight over the first key, I don’t care. Whoever gets it will have a bitter struggle keeping it until the end.” Although this trial by fire didn’t seem as intense as the Fallen Sword World, there was a time limit. Furthermore, the threat of death hung over everyone’s heads. The fighting to come would surely result in bloody carnage.

“Hmmmmph! Whoever runs into one of those keys first is going to have some bad, bad luck. No... no wait, bad, *horrific* luck!” As he sped along, he pondered the best way to hide safely off in the distance. Occasionally, he would look around, sighing. That was when... all of sudden, right up ahead of him... a blood-colored light appeared.

“What’s that?” he said, taken aback. Within the space of a few breaths of time, the light grew so intense it hurt his eyes to look at it. Then, it turned into a pillar that shot up into the sky.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0247 awe-chapter-248

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped at the sight of the pillar of light, especially considering that floating right there in the middle of it was a key, right within arm’s reach.

He took a deep breath. How could he ever have imagined that the random direction he picked to run in would turn out to be the exact location where the first key appeared?

Simultaneously, the appearance of the pillar of light caused Xuemei and Song Junwan to stop fighting for a moment and look over. Also, the Dharma protectors from both sides, regardless of where they were, all stopped in place and looked over.

The people who had been selected as Dharma protector for this trial by fire were all outstanding individuals; obviously, they all knew that the first person to get one of the keys would automatically be put in a very difficult position. Every single one of them seemed to hesitate for a moment, but then they all started flying at top speed toward the light, bristling with murderous auras.

“Anybody who fights with me over that key had better not blame me for killing them!” Song Que howled, the battle prowess of eight Earthstring Tideflows surging around him.

“Everybody else might be afraid of you, but not me, Zhou Hua!”

“Snatch that blood key!” As the voices of the Dharma protectors rang out, it heralded the beginning of the fierce fighting that was destined to take place in the Blood Wasteland.

When Bai Xiaochun heard the voices rising up, he shivered and said, “Dammit! I gotta get out of here!”

By that point, more than a dozen figures were already heading in his direction. Bai Xiaochun gasped and quickly began to back up.

However, the instant he began to move... to his complete and utter disbelief, the blood-colored key... began to move... straight toward him.

“Heavens, how could a key move!?” Bai Xiaochun was about to cry. Currently, one of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors was closing in, and as soon as he caught sight of the blood-colored key, his killing intent surged. Clearly, his first goal was not to get the key, it was to kill Bai Xiaochun.

He was in the late Foundation Establishment stage, and held a blood-colored greatsword in his hand.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the man’s deadly-looking blood sword, and his violent killing intent, it was obvious that the man wanted to kill him. Bai Xiaochun immediately got angry. “Y-y-you’re... you're pushing things too far! I just saw the key and didn’t even touch it, and yet you’re gonna try and kill me?!”

His eyes narrowed, flickering coldly. Although he hadn’t fought much in the Blood Stream Sect, his battle prowess had increased to a dramatically terrifying level. Even as the sword slashed down toward him, he planted his right foot down onto the ground and then sprang forward with all the power he could muster. He instantly blurred into motion, leaving nothing for the sword to slash through other than afterimages. In the blink of an eye, he had bashed directly into Xuemei’s Dharma protector.

It was none other than... the Mountain Shaking Bash!

It was backed by the power of Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment and three crystallized spiritual seas, which meant he was in mid Foundation Establishment. It was powered by the second level of the Undying Heavenly King, the fleshly body strength of six berserk ghosts. The Mountain Shaking Bash was a secret magic of the Undying Codex, and when fueled by such multiple levels of incredible power, it ensured that Bai Xiaochun was now like a vicious beast!

A bang rang out in all directions, low-pitched but shocking to the extreme. It was hard to imagine that a collision between two people would produce a sound as tragic as this.

Xuemei’s Dharma protector screamed, and then blood spurted out of his mouth. Much of his body was already shattering, but that wasn’t the end of things. His back bulged out, and his face turned violet as cracking sounds rang out from inside of him.

He began to spin backward through the air, his expression blank, his mind rapidly emptying.

At the same time, the dozens of other cultivators who were converging on the area looked on with tingling scalps as the Dharma protector who had just been bashed by Bai Xiaochun... exploded!

Bones, flesh, and blood spattered in all directions, and the man’s soul was transformed into ash!

Even as his scream continued to echo about, he was killed in body and soul!

In any other sect, what had just happened would have left everyone too stunned to do anything. But this was the Blood Stream Sect, and its cultivators were cruel and merciless. Xuemei’s other Dharma protectors quickly overcame their shock, and three of their number were the first to fly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Two of them were in late Foundation Establishment, and one of them was in the great circle. As they flew forward, three blood swords appeared, causing everything in the area to rumble. Most shocking among the group was one of the late Foundation Establishment cultivators, a middle-aged man with a long beard. Shockingly, he held an illusory stick of incense in his hand!

The incense was already burning, creating an aura that filled Bai Xiaochun with an intense sensation of deadly crisis. It was like every inch of his flesh and blood were screaming at him that this incense was completely and utterly dangerous.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to have such a reaction. The faces of the others in the area instantly fell....

“That’s Yang Hongwu! He's the one Song Junwan said to look out for!!” Bai Xiaochun gasped, but what happened next caused his scalp to almost explode. There were about four or five people who... apparently because of the stimulation of the mysterious incense, began to emit auras, either from within their own bodies, or their bags of holding... that were all terrifyingly dangerous! Apparently, they were on the verge of joining the attack on him!

Bai Xiaochun had a profound cultivation base that enabled him to kill a late Foundation Establishment cultivator with a single bashing attack. However, to face three at the same time, one of them being in the great circle, and in possession of a shocking magical treasure, left him shocked and terrified. More than ever, he felt that the older generation in the Blood Stream Sect were all fear-inspiring individuals.

All of the Foundation Establishment cultivators who Xuemei and Song Junwan had called upon to act as Dharma protectors were either Chosen of their generation, or other famous individuals from the past.

That was especially true of the one terrifying cultivator Song Junwan had mentioned, Xiao Qing, who, for some mysterious reason, hadn't broken through into the Core Formation stage.

Regarding magical treasures, the fact that Blood Stream Sect cultivators were fond of robbing and pillaging meant that they tended to have a bit more of them than disciples from other sects.

Considering the danger he was facing, it was no surprise that Bai Xiaochun's scalp crawled with terror. However, none of that showed on his face. Backing up, expression cold, he said, “Nightcrypt doesn't have time to fool around with you people. I'm warning you, don't provoke me!” Combined with his icy, cruel expression, Bai Xiaochun was under the impression that his words were completely domineering. Turning, he pushed forward with a burst of speed and vanished.

Even as he sped off, the three blood swords descended in a net of death. They missed him, but the smoke from the incense swirled around, filling the area with terrifying fluctuations.

Even the mere sensation of those fluctuations caused Bai Xiaochun to pick up speed. Even as he left the first key behind, intense fighting broke out in his wake.

However, not everyone joined the attack. Some stood off to the side, and some merely left, clearly thinking the same thing that Bai Xiaochun had, that fighting over the first key was too dangerous.

Bai Xiaochun flew off into the distance, looking over his shoulder occasionally. Considering that everyone was in the late Foundation Establishment stage or even more powerful than that, the fighting was clearly a life-or-death matter. Nobody was holding back, and some people were already resorting to their life-saving magical items. Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering explosions rocked the area, and fluctuations that bordered on Core Formation could be felt, leaving Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

“With the Undying Heavenly King, I might be able to take them on one by one, but fighting so many people at the same time, I might lose my poor little life....” Picking up speed, he sighed emotionally as he thought about how coincidental it was that the key had appeared right in front of him moments ago. Assuming he kept on flying as he was now, there shouldn't be any more such incidents.

As far as the fighting went, Bai Xiaochun felt that maybe after the fourth key showed up, it would be a bit safer to start participating. After flying along for the better part of two hours, he had put quite a bit of distance between himself and the last location, and finally decided to look around for a place to meditate for a while.

“I’ve flown far enough away that I shouldn’t run into anyone else,” he thought. “As for the keys, whoever wants to fight over them can have at it.” He was quite pleased at his own insightfulness, and was just musing about how bright and intelligent he was when the third hour in the Blood Wasteland arrived.

In that very moment.... Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he let out an exclamation of shock. There, right in front of him, was a bright red dot of light.

Within the space of a few breaths of time, it began to grow so brightly that it turned into a pillar of light that shot up into the sky. Anyone in the Blood Wasteland would be able to see it.

It was a very strange thing, and all of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun thought back to what had happened in the Endless World of Blood.

“No way....” he thought. “I'm not the one trying to become blood master. How could this be happening...?” Staring at the key in the pillar of light, he sighed, and then turned to leave, only to find that the key was flying toward him.

“Get away from me! Stop following me....”

Thinking about how the group of people had been fighting earlier, he wanted to cry. The terrifying ripples that had spread out from that fight were enough to send him running in the opposite direction.

However, the key behind him picked up speed, chasing Bai Xiaochun relentlessly through the Blood Wasteland....

Soon, cultivators on both sides of the conflict realized what was happening, and their eyes went wide with disbelief.

The first key... appeared right in front of Bai Xiaochun. That could have been chalked up to chance.

But for the second key to do the same.... They gritted their teeth and told themselves that it was another coincidence. And yet... they were completely dumbfounded at the sight of the key chasing Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0248 awe-chapter-249

“What’s going on...?”

“Am I seeing things...? That blood-colored key is actually chasing Nightcrypt?!”

“This... this....” Although people were shocked, it didn’t take long before them to react, and they began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun to start fighting for the key.

Meanwhile, up in midair, Xuemei and Song Junwan saw what was happening. Song Junwan looked angry; she had seen what had happened with Bai Xiaochun earlier, and felt it was a true pity that he had passed up the first key. Now here he was flying along while the key chased him, refusing to grab it. Song Junwan was furious.

“Nightcrypt!” she yelled. “The key is right behind you! Take it immediately! Everybody else, protect Nightcrypt!”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, but when he considered that if he wanted to become a grand elder eventually, he would need Song Junwan’s recommendation, and that she had just openly given him an order, he gritted his teeth, stopped in place and reached out to solemnly grab the key.

In that instant, the second blood-colored key suddenly erupted with dazzling light and shot into his hand. For some reason, Bai Xiaochun was certain that, as it did, he heard something like a cry of joy.

“Come help me!” he cried. There was no time to think. He immediately began to back up as Song Junwan’s other Dharma protectors arrived to intercept the enemy. A moment later, magical combat erupted all around him, causing resounding booming sounds to shake heaven and earth.

Not everyone was present; in fact, not even ten people were here. However, magical items were unleashed, and terrifying fluctuations spread out. It was in that moment, that someone shouted out in alarm.

“Wait a second, why is the blood-colored light so faint?!?!” The person to shout out was one of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors, and currently, his face was a mask of incredulity as he stared at Bai Xiaochun.

As his voice echoed out, everyone else looked over, and soon, all of their minds were reeling.

Bai Xiaochun had actually noticed what was happening before anyone else. As soon as his fingers closed around the blood-colored key, the light that had been bursting out of it began to flow into his mouth. Once inside of him, it surged through his body, causing his Undying Heavenly King to operate at full function.

The blood-colored light emanating out from the key immediately began to grow dim.... It almost looked to everyone else as if Bai Xiaochun were eating the key....

The effect was so pronounced that everyone could clearly sense the key growing weak....

“He... he’s actually drawing on the power of the key?!”

“That’s not just drawing on some of its power, he’s obviously eating it! Nightcrypt, stop that immediately!!”

“Heavens! I’ve never heard of anybody doing such a thing. If... if he completely eats it, will its teleportation powers still work?” People were so taken aback all they could do was stare in shock.

Even Song Junwan and Xuemei, who were still locked in combat in midair, were staring at the blood-colored light fading away. Within the space of a few breaths of time, the light was completely gone.

What was left in Bai Xiaochun’s hand... didn't look anything like a key anymore.... Even as everyone stared at Bai Xiaochun, his aura surged, and the power of the Undying Heavenly King exploded ferociously inside of him. He was about to try to explain, but when he opened his mouth, a burp echoed out loud and clear.

“I... *burp*... I didn’t... *burp*... do it on purpose... *burp*....” Bai Xiaochun was so scared he was about to cry. Clasping his hands over his mouth, he looked around at the incredulous stares being leveled at him, which rapidly began to fill with killing intent. More nervous than ever, he began to back up.

“He actually ate that key!!”

“The key’s gone! That’s one spot out of seven... gone! Kill Nightcrypt! This is his fault!!”

“Kill him! The first and second keys both showed up near him. If the third one does the same and he eats that too, we’ll lose another spot!!”

“What if he eats all the keys? If that happens... we’ll all be losers....” As their minds spun with the thought of what could happen, they howled and charged toward Bai Xiaochun. As for Song Junwan’s Dharma protectors, they hesitated for a moment, but then refrained from interfering. The scene which had just played out was simply too bizarre.

Another of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors was a bit further off in the distance. After watching the depressing scene play out, and then hearing everyone crying out, his own anger surged, and he shot after Bai Xiaochun.

By now, eight or nine people were chasing him, the weakest of them being in the late Foundation Establishment stage, with more than one being in the great circle. Most shocking of all was that several of them were clutching powerful magical treasures. Bai Xiaochun was trembling in fear, but thankfully, was fast enough to evade them as he fled for his life.

Before Song Junwan and Xuemei could even react, a whole group was after Bai Xiaochun. They were completely taken aback.

“You can eat those keys?” Song Junwan murmured. Xuemei was equally stunned.

Bai Xiaochun flew through the Blood Wasteland at top speed. Some among the pursuers were faster than the others, but all were slower than Bai Xiaochun, and before long, there was quite a distance between chaser and chased.

“Nightcrypt, you will die beyond the shadow of a doubt this day!”

“Dammit, I can’t believe you completely absorbed that key! Y-y-you....”

Various divine abilities and magical techniques were unleashed, leaving Bai Xiaochun so frightened he felt like his scalp would explode from terror. He felt completely wronged, and even more so, angered. He almost thought about turning around and fighting, but there were just too many opponents, all of them with higher cultivation bases than him, and many with powerful magical treasures. Although Xiao Qing wasn't among their number, Bai Xiaochun had the feeling he might show up at any moment, and thus devoted himself fully to fleeing.

Before long, the third and fourth hours had passed, and the fifth hour was approaching....

In that very instant, the group of pursuers were shocked to find that the third dot of red light had appeared directly above Bai Xiaochun's head. Even as he moved along, a blinding beam of blood-colored light shot up, which continued to float along with Bai Xiaochun as he flew along....

"What exactly is going on here!?!? Dammit! Why is this happening?!"

"I can't believe the third key... appeared right above him!!"

"Nightcrypt, you will die this day!!"

Xuemei's Dharma protectors were going mad. Were Jia Lie here, he would tearfully tell them that... this was nothing. Had they been by his side in the Endless World of Blood, they would have been driven to complete despair.

Bai Xiaochun was really starting to get pissed off. Looking around at everyone, he gritted his teeth, reached up, and grabbed the third blood-colored key.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as massive amounts of blood-colored light poured into his mouth. Yet again, Bai Xiaochun seemed to be gobbling it up....

“He... he ate another one!!”

“There are only seven keys, and he already ate two!”

“If he keeps this up, then he’ll end up eating all the keys. We have to kill him!” Everyone was starting to get anxious. Song Junwan’s Dharma protectors were starting to hesitate, unsure of whether they should help Nightcrypt, or try to kill him.

Up in midair, Xuemei’s eyes glittered with cold light, and she suddenly waved her right hand, causing the bracelet wrapped around her wrist to flash with blue light. Instantly, a blue beam shot out, and even as she was about to send it flying toward Bai Xiaochun, Song Junwan swished her sleeve, sending out a blast of power to block the way.

Xuemei glared at Song Junwan. “Song Junwan! Something weird is going on with him. I refuse to believe that you can’t see it!”

Song Junwan refused to respond, and simply launched another attack.

Xuemei grinned malevolently. Since she was being prevented from doing anything about Bai Xiaochun, she unleashed her full power upon Song Junwan. By this point, the two of them weren’t simply feeling each other out, they were fighting with everything they had, including their secret weapons.

At the same time, just as murderous auras were beginning to rise up, the mad absorption of the blood-colored light by

Bai Xiaochun caused cracking sounds to ring out from inside of him. The Undying Heavenly King was operating at full speed with the nourishment that was being provided. Fleshly body power was rapidly building up, and clearly, Bai Xiaochun was rapidly reaching the point of breaking through from the level of six berserk ghosts to seven.

Although he was being chased with murderous intent, the fact that his fleshly body was powering up so rapidly elated Bai Xiaochun. He could sense his power rapidly growing, and his battle prowess increasing.

“If I could complete the second level of the Undying Heavenly King, and form the Heavenly Demon Body, then even if I run into one of those cultivators with the powerful magical treasures, I could still fight them!

“It’s too bad I can’t reveal my identity, otherwise I could definitely beat those old Foundation Establishment experts!

“Considering how things are at the moment, what should I do...?” Moments ago, he had sensed that Xuemei had been about to unleash something incredibly dangerous on him, and as a result, was only getting more nervous.

He looked over at Xuemei and Song Junwan briefly, then looked away. His head was starting to ache. Even as he tried to think of a way to resolve the situation, another sensation of imminent crisis filled him. This time, it didn’t come from Xuemei, it came from behind him. One of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors had been quietly closing in on him. It was none other than... Yang Hongwu!

His eyes flickered with cold, merciless light, and his hand clutched a burning stick of incense!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0249 awe-chapter-250

Song Junwan had said to pay special attention to three of Xuemei’s Dharma protectors. One of them was Xiao Qing, who was on the very cusp of Core Formation. Perhaps because of certain conditions in the Blood Wasteland itself, it was difficult for him to break through here. However, one could imagine that even after half of a breakthrough, he would still be powerful enough to dominate anyone else.

The second person Song Junwan had mentioned was Zhang Yunshan. The third was the very person who was closing in on Bai Xiaochun at this very moment... Yang Hongwu!

Yang Hongwu’s cultivation base was in the late Foundation Establishment stage, and he had a powerful magical treasure. It was essentially a precious relic that could unleash terrifying power that exceeded his current cultivation base realm. With that item, he was virtually invincible to anyone in the same realm as him.

Up to this point in his cultivation, Bai Xiaochun had never possessed any powerful magical treasures other than the turtle-wok. Had he remained in the Spirit Stream Sect, he would definitely have been bequeathed one by the sect itself when he reached late Foundation Establishment. However, he had left when he was still in early Foundation Establishment, before he qualified for such a reward.

After all, such powerful magical treasures were generally not given to anyone under late Foundation Establishment. Not only would such a person have difficulty unleashing the full potential of the item, there was also the risk that it could be robbed from them.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted; almost as soon as the smoke began to spread out from Yang Hongwu’s incense, it filled his mind with a sense of imminent crisis. His fleshly body power was incredibly high, which lessened the sensation of danger, and yet, he was still jumpy with fear.

From what he could sense, if that power continued to build up, then it could seriously affect him in a negative way. By this point, his eyes were completely bloodshot.

“There are too many people and too many eyes in this place. So many techniques that I just can’t use....” Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth, and then began to draw upon the Undying Heavenly King. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and moments later, a bizarre power surged out from the palms of his hands.

It was the power of gravity and repulsion, which he could just barely unleash. He had only ever scraped the surface of protomagnetic power, but was still able to call upon it when needed.

Bai Xiaochun let out a hoarse shout as the two streams of power burst out, then converged together to form a powerful force of repulsion. He was immediately pushed backward at top speed, and in the blink of an eye, was speeding off into the distance.

Even as he did, the smoke coming from Yang Hongwu’s incense sliced through the air into the spot he had just occupied. Considering how it seemed to slash rifts everywhere it went, it was obvious that if Bai Xiaochun had been even a bit slower, he would have been cut to pieces.

Xuemei’s Dharma protectors frowned, and killing intent flickered in Yang Hongwu’s eyes. Bai Xiaochun had already evaded him twice, even with his powerful magical treasure. That was something he found to be highly unusual.

“Measly Mortal-Dao mid Foundation Establishment. I can’t believe he actually evaded me twice.... Seems like he’s harboring a lot of secrets.” Yang Hongwu took a deep breath, and then his chest caved in. Suddenly, his speed skyrocketed, pushing him past all of the other cultivators, transforming him into a beam of light that shot directly after Bai Xiaochun.

He breathed in, but never exhaled, and then, a few moments later, he took another deep breath. Yet again, his chest caved in, and his speed increased, closing the distance between himself and Bai Xiaochun.

Seeing Yang Hongwu speed up toward him, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes grew even more bloodshot than before.

“You think I’m so easy to pick on?!” he shouted. Suddenly he spun in place, and instead of fleeing, barreled toward Yang Hongwu.

He shot faster than a bolt of lightning, appearing directly in front of Yang Hongwu and unleashing a punch with his right hand.

Killing intent flickered in Yang Hongwu’s eyes as he extended his own right hand. The incense burned, and smoke swirled out toward Bai Xiaochun.

“So, you wanted to lure me out to fight alone? Fine, take your shot!” Yang Hongwu laughed coldly as his powerful magical treasure spewed out even more smoke, creating a web of death that caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode. And yet, he didn’t dodge to the side. As the smoke bore down on him, he poured even more power into his fist strike.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the energy of the second level of Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Heavenly King erupted out. The power of seven berserk ghosts could shake mountains, and at this moment, it caused sonic booms to echo out. The massive outpouring of power even caused a massive wind to spring up.

From a distance, the scene playing out was completely shocking. As Bai Xiaochun punched out, the image of a berserk ghost appeared behind him. This was no ordinary berserk ghost; it was like the king of all berserk ghosts, and it howled at the top of its lungs as Bai Xiaochun punched out.

Shockingly, the smoke which filled the area immediately began to shrink back as if it were about to be destroyed!

Although all of this takes some time to describe, it actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the massive blast slammed into Yang Hongwu. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he was shoved backward. His eyes suddenly shone with intense fear. Obviously, he had been aware that Nightcrypt possessed shocking battle prowess, but had still been confident enough to fight him alone. As of this moment, though, he could see that Nightcrypt was even more terrifying than he had realized before.

Blood also sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and he felt like his body was about to be torn to pieces by the web of death. The power of Yang Hongwu’s magical treasure slashed into the image of the berserk ghost, and yet, the power of Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Heavenly King ensured that he wasn’t seriously injured, much less ripped to shreds. It took some effort, but he managed to wrench free from the smoke, destroying it in the process.

Even as the wisps of smoke dissipated, the air not too far away from Bai Xiaochun distorted, and someone materialized. It was a young man with a fan in his hand. His expression was dark and somber, and his eyes flickered with killing intent. Without any hesitation, he waved his fan in Bai Xiaochun's direction.

Wind screamed, transforming into a tornado that connected the sky and the land as it raced toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Zhang Yunshan!” Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted from the sensation of imminent crisis. Throwing his head back, he roared, and his energy began to rise as another berserk ghost appeared behind him, then a third, and a fourth....

In the blink of an eye, seven berserk ghosts had appeared, causing heaven and earth to shake violently. All of them threw their heads back and bellowed. Although the terrifying energy they were releasing wasn't quite enough to form the Heavenly Demon Body, it was enough to create.... a giant hand!

It was a giant, pale white hand, not the clawed hand of a ghost, but rather a heavenly demon hand!

It was as pale as death, and the outlines of scales could just barely be seen on its surface, as well as vicious-looking bone spurs. As soon as the hand appeared, it smashed out toward Zhang Yunshan!

The first thing it hit was the tornado. A huge boom echoed out as the tornado shattered, and at the same time, the heavenly demon hand flickered and faded a bit. However, it wasn't destroyed.

Another boom could be heard, and blood oozed out of the corners of Zhang Yunshan’s mouth. Even as he flew back at top speed, the heavenly demon hand faded away. Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen, and he coughed up another mouthful of blood. His eyes were crimson, making him look cruel and vicious to the extreme. With a quick glance at Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan, he turned and sped off into the distance.

Yang Hongwu hesitated for a moment, wiping the blood from his mouth. At the moment, he was too shaken to chase after Bai Xiaochun. The power that had just been unleashed, especially in that last attack, left him with the sinking feeling that Nightcrypt... hadn’t even called upon his full battle prowess.

Even Zhang Yunshan’s sneak attack had done nothing more than cause Nightcrypt to unleash even more power.

“Just how many secrets does this guy have...?!” Yang Hongwu took a deep breath. As for the youthful-looking Zhang Yunshan, his face was equally grim as he watched Bai Xiaochun flee.

The rest of the pursuers were completely shocked, and all hesitated. After a moment passed, though, Zhang Yunshan and Yang Hongwu exchanged a glance, and then their eyes flickered as they led the group in pursuit.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen as he sped along. On the outside, he seemed vicious and cruel, with his clothes stained with blood. However, inside, he was listless and panting.

“What a bunch of bullies. If I didn’t have to be careful to keep my secret identity, I could wipe the floor with them.... Dammit. There are still six more hours left before this thing is over....” His anxiety increased as the seventh hour neared.

This time, he was mentally prepared. At the top of the hour, when the key was just about to appear, and he was just about to flee, he heard one of Song Junwan’s other Dharma protectors crying out.

“Nightcrypt, don’t absorb any more keys! Give them to us!”

“Nightcrypt, stop it!” Song Que howled.

It was at that exact moment that the fourth key popped out, and immediately began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun. It was almost as if he were a magnet, and no matter what he wanted, the keys would fly in his direction, transform into blood qi, and incite his Undying Heavenly King.

“Nightcrypt, are you... are you looking to die?!?!” Song Que was furious, and the other Dharma protectors felt like they were going insane. Once they saw Bai Xiaochun starting to absorb the fourth key, they couldn’t hold back any longer.

After all... they weren’t sure if the keys still counted as being won by their team if Bai Xiaochun absorbed them. If they did, then things were fine. But if they didn’t, then when the wind of extermination swept through the wasteland... well, Song Que and the others didn’t dare to gamble on the outcome.

“I don’t want this either....” Bai Xiaochun wailed. His original plan had been to hide somewhere in the Blood Wasteland and let everyone fight it out, then snatch one of the keys toward the end. But now, all of his plans were laid to ruin.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0250 awe-chapter-251

Thanks to Bai Xiaochun, the trial by fire for blood master had been thrown into utter chaos....

In the Endless World of Blood, only poor Jia Lie had been struck with such ill luck... but now, in the Blood Wasteland, even Song Junwan and Xuemei were shocked by what was happening.

Everyone was going mad, and all of it was because of Bai Xiaochun....

It wasn’t that Bai Xiaochun wanted it that way. He was just as nervous as everyone else. But his Undying Live Forever Technique was in full operation, and because of the rapid growth of his fleshly body power, Bai Xiaochun’s berserk ghosts... increased in number yet again!

The power of eight berserk ghosts caused cracking sounds to ring out from inside of him. Even as his energy surged, Song Que and the others gritted their teeth and joined the group that was chasing Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun was getting more nervous than ever, and his mind was racing as he tried to decide what to do. Finally, he howled, “Song Que, go attack the person who got the first key! If you get that one, and I consume the rest, then Xuemei will never get onto the Ancient Blood Path!

“It’s called divide and conquer! If you’re focused on attacking them, they’ll have to focus on defending, and I can just eat the keys. If you guys get your hands on the first key, I’ll consume all the others. If you don’t get it, then I’ll make sure to leave the last two. That way, we’ll definitely come out on top, and they’ll be exterminated!

“That’s my plan! Hahaha! We’ll definitely win that way!” The more Bai Xiaochun spoke, the more he made sense.

Song Que and the others were shaken. They were no fools, and as soon as they heard Bai Xiaochun's plan, their eyes glittered.

As for Xuemei’s Dharma protectors, their faces fell, especially the one who had acquired the first key, a middle-aged man whose complexion was now as pale as death.

Xuemei, who was completely tangled up in her fight with Song Junwan, was now getting more nervous.

“Nightcrypt, are you looking to die?!?!” she shouted. As for Song Junwan, she chuckled charmingly.

“We do things Nightcrypt’s way!” she declared. Although her smile was lovely, her attacks were incisive, and she immediately began to push Xuemei back across the battlefield, who could do nothing to stop her. In fact, she couldn’t even come up with a plan to deal with Bai Xiaochun.

It was an anxious moment. Song Que and the others gritted their teeth, ceased chasing Bai Xiaochun, and shot toward the Dharma protector with the first key. Xuemei’s other Dharma protectors were then forced to cease chasing Bai Xiaochun and offer defense. Immediately, chaotic fighting broke out.

Booms echoed out, and the brilliant light of divine abilities and magical techniques rose up into the air.

At long last, Bai Xiaochun was able to breathe a sigh of relief.

“It’s a good thing I reacted so quickly, otherwise I would have been in way too much danger.... There are people with higher cultivation bases and powerful magical treasures, and some of them are secret experts. If they gang up on me, how am I supposed to fight them?” Bai Xiaochun immediately began to flee, and yet, in that very moment, his pupils constricted. Although no one was visible in the area, he unhesitatingly unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash, gathering a huge amount of power and unleashing it in an explosive burst that pushed him forward at top speed.

Even as he shot forward, a blood-colored hand suddenly appeared out of thin air and unleashed a stream of 30-meter-long sword qi.

“Eee?” someone said. An old man stepped out of thin air, a man with a long violet robe and age spots on his face.

Sweat was pouring down Bai Xiaochun’s face. The sensation of imminent danger he had just experienced was one of the most intense he had felt so far. If he hadn’t dodged at just the right time, that attack would have stabbed into his forehead.

“Xiao Qing!” he said, eyes shining with vigilance. This old man was another of the three people Song Junwan had mentioned, the same old man who could supposedly break through from Foundation Establishment at any time!

Xiao Qing smiled and said, “I've been in secluded meditation for many years, and just came out. Even still, I've heard a lot of stories about you.”

Although he was indeed a Foundation Establishment cultivator, he was unlike the others. If he reached Core Formation, he would definitely become a prime elder. When he looked at Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun felt more on guard than ever; the man’s gaze felt like two sharp swords.

“His spiritual seas are just a hair away from reaching full crystallization.... If I used everything in my repertoire, I could probably fight him. But considering how limited I am right now... I'm no match for him!” Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun began to flee.

“Why are you in such a hurry to leave, Junior Brother Nightcrypt?” Xiao Qing smiled and took a step forward with speed that matched Bai Xiaochun’s. Then he waved his sleeve, and a stream of blood-colored sword qi appeared and slashed down toward Bai Xiaochun.

“What crap are you spewing?!” Bai Xiaochun asked. “If I don't leave, then what else am I supposed to do? Sit around and wait for you to kill me? Did your cultivation cause you brain damage or something?” With that, he blurred into motion, avoiding the blood sword.

Xiao Qing’s smile went stiff. Throughout all the times he had fought people in his life, no one had ever spoken to him like this before. Expression turning grim, he let out a cold harrumph and said, “Ill-mannered cur! When I get my hands on you, I’m going to rip out your tongue! Let’s see what quips you come up with then!”

Chuckling coldly, he took another step forward in pursuit. At the same time, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, summoning a stream of blood qi that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Despite his anxiety, Bai Xiaochun was still trying to come up with a plan as he flew along. “Seems you really did suffer from brain damage while you were cultivating. If I had no tongue, I might not be able to speak, but I could still use divine will to say something!”

As they sped through the Blood Wasteland, Xiao Qing attacked multiple times. On a few occasions, his magical techniques actually hit home, and yet, Bai Xiaochun’s terrifyingly powerful fleshly body defenses left Xiao Qing in shock.

With Xiao Qing’s current battle prowess, he could dominate any other Foundation Establishment cultivator. And yet, Bai Xiaochun was incredibly fast and abnormally tough. In fact, as the chase went on, he kept going even faster. His reserves of spiritual power were simply unbelievable.

“How could mid Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment possibly unleash such power!?” Xiao Qing’s eyes flickered. The battle prowess being put on display by Bai Xiaochun in the Blood Wasteland was completely and utterly shocking to him. Even more bizarre than that, though, was the situation with the blood-colored keys.

If there was only one strange oddity with Bai Xiaochun, then it would be much easier to determine the cause, and then ascertain a method to deal with the situation. But with so many strange things happening, it was hard to decide where to start, and very easy to get going in the wrong direction.

Xiao Qing’s eyes narrowed as he once again gave chase. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was grumbling and complaining to himself. It felt like Xiao Qing was stuck to him with glue; no matter how Bai Xiaochun tried to shake him, he would continue to pursue him. Were it not for the fact that Bai

Xiaochun had an incredible fleshly body, and was actually at Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, he would never have been able to sustain the speed he had been keeping up so far.

“Just wait until I make a major breakthrough with my fleshly body. Then I’ll definitely show that old fogey how awesome I am!” Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth. By now, he actually looked forward to the arrival of the tenth hour. Now that he already had the power of eight berserk ghosts, for some reason, it didn’t feel good enough. He actually wanted to consume that key and solidify the power of his berserk ghosts.

Time passed. Eventually, the seventh and eighth hours passed, and the ninth hour approached. As expected, a dot of blood-colored light appeared, which shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. In the blink of an eye, it was only a few inches away from him.

He didn’t pause for even a moment as he sped on, and the red dot instantly sank into his forehead. Although bright red light initially filled the area, it rapidly dimmed. At the same time, the second level of the Undying Heavenly King was in full operation.

Rumbling sounds exploded out from within his body as the energy of nine berserk ghosts formed. Xiao Qing’s eyes widened as he sensed the growing power within Bai Xiaochun.

“There are many strange things about him. Now that he's absorbed that key, he’s probably even more confident in fighting me.” Xiao Qing closed in at top speed, and yet, before he could get close, Bai Xiaochun looked back, eyes flickering with the desire to do battle. At almost the exact same instant, his fleshly body power skyrocketed.

“Xiao Qing, you old fogey, do you dare to fight with me, Nightcrypt?!” Bai Xiaochun waved his right sleeve and pointed at Xiao Qing, as if challenging him to a duel!

“So, you’re finally confident that you can fight me? Fine. I’ll give you a chance!” Xiao Qing took a step forward, and the power of his cultivation base erupted.

“Alright, Xiao Qing, here I come!” Bai Xiaochun roared, eyes bursting with the will to fight. However, even as he faced Xiao Qing, he began to speed backward. Drawing upon the incredible power of his fleshly body, he unleashed even greater speed than he had in the past.

Xiao Qing’s jaw dropped, and his eyes went wide. Bai Xiaochun was letting out a battle cry, and yet simultaneously fleeing off into the distance.

“Completely shameless!!” Xiao Qing howled. His eyes burned with flames of rage, and yet the slight delay had put a huge distance between him and Bai Xiaochun. At that point, Bai Xiaochun stopped backing up. Turning his back on Xiao Qing, he fled at even greater speed than before.

“I want to fight you,” he called out, “but can't at the moment. Just wait a bit. Once the eleventh hour arrives, and I've completed nine berserk ghosts, then I’ll wipe the floor with you, you old fart!” Bai Xiaochun didn’t feel that he was being shameless at all. Instead, he felt that he had just out-strategized Xiao Qing.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0251 awe-chapter-252

“Not even the least bit confident in being able to fight me? What kind of Dao do you cultivate, Nightcrypt?! I can't believe that someone as useless as you exists in the Blood Stream Sect. I think I need to step in for the sect and do some housecleaning!” Xiao Qing was incensed. First, he had been ridiculed, then challenged to fight, and then, his opponent had simply run away. More killing intent than ever could be seen in Xiao Qing’s eyes, and as he gave chase, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base, pushing himself forward with greater speed than ever.

However, Bai Xiaochun was simply too fast. With the explosive acceleration provided by his fleshly body power, he managed to stay in the lead all the way through the ninth and tenth hours. Soon, the eleventh hour was rapidly approaching.

When it came, the sixth key appeared in the form of a red dot, right in front of Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. It only took the briefest of moments for it to fly into him.

Rumbling sounds echoed out from within Bai Xiaochun’s body, and he began to tremble visibly. His Undying Heavenly King was in full operation, and under the seemingly boundless addition provided by the blood-colored key, his fleshly body continued to increase in power. The expression provided by his mask was one of complete and utter ferocity as he threw his head back and howled at the top of his lungs.

As he did, eight berserk ghosts appeared behind him, and then... a ninth!

The appearance of the ninth berserk ghost caused Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body strength to be completely incited, sending matchlessly powerful qi and blood power surging heavenward.

ROAR!

Blue veins bulged out on Bai Xiaochun’s face. In only a handful of hours, his fleshly body power had undergone a dramatic increase, so much so that it was difficult for him to endure. The nine berserk ghosts behind him were howling, and even as Xiao Qing closed in, Bai Xiaochun prodded them with the power of his will, and they merged together!

That new berserk ghost was vastly larger than the others, almost as if it were a new form of life!

It was now pure white, with vicious-looking bone spurs sticking out all over it. It had sharp claws, and radiated a power that seemed capable of crushing heaven and earth. Strangely, though, it had no head!

It was a headless Heavenly Demon Body, incomplete, but shockingly powerful nonetheless. When it formed, Bai Xiaochun howled, and seemingly infinite fleshly body power caused a tempest to spring out all around him. Within moments, it was a tornado connecting heaven and earth, an enormous, spinning vortex.

Xiao Qing stopped in place, his eyes widening. For the first time, a very serious expression could be seen on his face. Not only was Bai Xiaochun stronger, but the image of the headless heavenly demon made him seem completely different than before.

“Alright Xiao Qing, come on, let's fight!” Although Bai Xiaochun didn't look any different physically, the sensation he gave off was that he was growing rapidly. Having absorbed the blood qi from five of the keys, he suddenly felt that if he didn't unleash some of the power immediately, he would explode.

No such sensation had come from the previous four keys. But with the fifth key, he suddenly felt explosively powerful. Even as he called out, he took a step forward, and massive rumbling sounds could be heard as he shot toward Xiao Qing in a bashing motion.

The heavenly demon image behind him made the same bashing attack, except with power exponentially greater than Bai Xiaochun's. It was such an explosive outburst that it seemed capable of bashing anything and everything to bits. Even the air twisted and distorted as he bore down on Xiao Qing.

Just when Xiao Qing was about to dodge out of the way, the charging Bai Xiaochun suddenly extended his right hand, and a powerful gravitational force sprang out from his palm and seemed to latch onto Xiao Qing's neck.

Then the hand transformed into a fist. The air vibrated as powerful fluctuations spread out, locking down the entire area and making it impossible for Xiao Qing to even move.

Xiao Qing's eyes widened, and he roared as his hands flashed with an incantation gesture. Blinding, blood-colored light instantly spread out, transforming into a huge, crimson greatsword which slashed out toward Bai Xiaochun!

Although all of this takes some time to describe, it happened in the blink of an eye. A deafening boom echoed out in all directions as Bai Xiaochun's blow landed on Xiao Qing. Instantly, the two of them flew apart until they were 3,000 meters away from each other. The ground was shattered and destroyed, and a huge blast of wind rippled out, shaking everything.

The blood sword shattered, and the Heavenly Demon Body was split in two. Xiao Qing tumbled through the air, and blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth.

When the dust settled, Xiao Qing was off in the distance, his face ashen, his eyes shining brightly as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, who was currently wiping the blood from his mouth. Bai Xiaochun had vented more than half of the energy he had built up, and no longer felt like he was going to explode. At the same time, his fleshly body power seemed to be growing even greater as he stood there staring at Xiao Qing.

“Happy with the fight so far, Xiao Qing?!” Bai Xiaochun said with a twisted smile, his eyes completely bloodshot.

Xiao Qing didn’t respond. The sensation of danger he’d just felt from Bai Xiaochun’s explosive attack came partly because of his fleshly body power, and partly because there was something else about Bai Xiaochun that he found completely disconcerting.

“He’s definitely still hiding something!” he thought. Although he was still confident that he could kill Bai Xiaochun, he knew that he would most likely end up seriously injured in the process. By this point in the trial by fire, most of the others had reached the point where they felt it was necessary to fight to the death. However, Xiao Qing knew about Xuemei’s secret plan, and that everything that was happening now was just a smokescreen. Therefore, he wasn’t ready to risk his life.

There was also another reason to make such a decision. Xiao Qing glanced over at an area some distance away from

Bai Xiaochun, and then turned to leave without uttering even another word.

Bai Xiaochun did nothing to stop him, and in fact, felt a bit more relaxed to see him leaving. With that, he turned and looked off in the same direction Xiao Qing just had, his eyes shining with piercing light.

“You’ve been shadowing me for quite a while, Elder Brother. Why don’t you show your face?”

Laughter echoed out as the air distorted, as if someone were using a magical item to distort space itself. A gaunt, middle-aged man appeared, a hunchback who, from the moment Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on him, gave off the sensation that he was no less powerful than Xiao Qing.

Bai Xiaochun had seen this man before among Song Junwan’s Dharma protectors. However, nobody, not even Song Que, had seemed to notice that he was concealing the true power of his cultivation base. He was one of the aces Song Junwan had up her sleeve, someone similar to Xiao Qing.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened a bit. From what he could tell, this man was a big reason why Xiao Qing had fled just now.

“I am your humble servant Song Zhen....” the man said in a raspy voice. He looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, still a bit unconvinced that he was worthy of being one of Song Junwan’s Dharma protectors. From what he could tell, there was something else going on between Song Junwan and Nightcrypt. That was the only explanation for why she would bring him along....

“I'm no gambler,” he said slowly and calmly. “Nor do I wish to be exterminated by the wind in this place. I like things to be all sewn up. Soon, the thirteenth hour will be upon us. Let me have the seventh blood-colored key, and I won’t make a move on you.”

Bai Xiaochun thought about it for a moment, then nodded. “Sure. As soon as the seventh key appears, I’ll back up. But don't forget, those villainous keys love to chase me. Whether or not you can grab it will be up to you. If you’re slow, then I don’t want to hear any complaints.”

Song Zhen gave him an empty smile, and then said, “Don’t worry, Junior Brother Nightcrypt. As long as you don’t intentionally try to absorb the key, then as soon as it appears, I’ll grab it. However, if you do make a move on it, don’t blame me for flipping out.

“Why don’t you sit off to the side and meditate while we wait for the thirteenth hour?”

Bai Xiaochun felt good about the idea. Although the keys were very helpful for his cultivation, the Blood Stream Sect in general was a Holy Land for his Undying Codex. As far as he was concerned, there was no need to get in a dangerous fight with this person over one single key.

In terms of the threat of being the losing team and getting exterminated, Bai Xiaochun actually wasn’t worried about it at all. After all the strange things that had been going on inside the body of the Blood Ancestor, he was quite certain that, regardless of who else was killed, he definitely wouldn’t be....

Feeling very much at ease, he sat down cross-legged to meditate. Keeping his guard up in case Song Zhen did something unexpected, he made some adjustments to his cultivation base, slowly recovering and, at the same time, increasing his fleshly body power.

Song Zhen also sat down to meditate and wait for time to pass.

Song Zhen didn’t seem too worried that a fight might break out between the two of them, and Bai Xiaochun was too preoccupied to worry about it either. Time passed. Soon, the eleventh and twelfth hours had passed, and the thirteenth hour was upon them.

Song Zhen’s eyes opened. Rising to his feet, he edged a bit closer to Bai Xiaochun, and his right hand began to flicker with light. He stared at the air in front of Bai Xiaochun, completely and utterly confident that when the seventh key appeared, he would be able to grab it.

Even if Nightcrypt tried to back out on their deal and tried to absorb the key, considering how close he was, Song Zhen was supremely confident that, with his own profound cultivation base, along with his innate speed that even the prime elders had praised, he would definitely be able to grab it.

Time inched along. There were ten breaths of time left. Six. Three. Finally, the thirteenth hour arrived.

Song Zhen threw his head back and laughed loudly as his right hand blurred into motion, leaving behind afterimages as it shot forward. A huge blast of power erupted out which he didn't even bother to shield Bai Xiaochun from.

However, at that exact moment, a bright red light suddenly shot out from inside Bai Xiaochun!

The seventh key had appeared, but not in front of him. Contrary to what anyone might have imagined, it appeared inside of him!!

Even Bai Xiaochun was completely taken aback. Before he could do anything, the key was inside of him, and the blood qi was coursing through his body.

Song Zhen’s jaw dropped.

“This....”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide.

“You really can’t blame me this time. It appeared right inside my stomach!!” he shrieked. Song Zhen’s face flickered, and he suddenly let out an intense howl of rage.

“Nightcrypt!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0252 awe-chapter-253

As Bai Xiaochun backed up, his Undying Live Forever Technique exploded into action, absorbing all of the blood qi from the blood-colored key and causing intense, thunderous rumbling to fill him.

Meanwhile, as the nine berserk ghosts behind him roared and howled, a tenth berserk ghost began to take shape, causing Bai Xiaochun's fleshly body power to skyrocket.

Of the seven keys to be had in the Blood Wasteland, six had been absorbed by Bai Xiaochun. By now, Bai Xiaochun could clearly sense the fluctuations emanating from the first of those keys, some distance away.

It almost seemed as if all seven keys were required to form a whole.

However, there was little time for Bai Xiaochun to think about that as he sped backward.

Song Zhen's rage had reached an indescribable level. With a completely ferocious expression, he howled and shot toward Bai Xiaochun in a beam of light. At the same time, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, summoning a blood-colored greatsword, which he hefted as he closed in.

Then he slashed the sword out in an attack, backing it with the full cultivation base power of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. The sword rapidly grew as it cut through the air, until it was fully thirty meters long. The air distorted, and the sky filled with rumbling sounds as the sword light slashed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. There was no time to ponder the situation. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and he called upon both his fleshly body and the power of his cultivation base, three crystallized spiritual seas. Intense ripples spread out as the Undying Live Forever Technique flew into motion, and true Undying Blood swirled out into the open!

That Undying Blood almost instantly expanded into the shape of a huge sword, which Bai Xiaochun grabbed with both hands and raised up to meet Song Zhen’s sword.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he was flung backward. Song Zhen was also shaken, and his qi and blood vibrated inside of him. Just as he was about to make another attack, though, Bai Xiaochun wiped the blood off of his lips, grinned viciously, and then waved his right finger at Song Zhen.

Human Controlling Grand Magic!

Even in this critical moment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t call upon any of the magical techniques of the Spirit Stream Sect. He had created the Human Controlling Grand Magic himself, and despite the fact that it was incomplete, it was still freakish in many ways. As soon as he unleashed it, Song Zhen lurched to a stop amidst creaking sounds. Without even thinking about it, he unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, whereupon all of his clothing... was ripped to shreds!

Every scrap of cloth covering his body was destroyed, leaving him completely exposed to the breeze....

Song Zhen’s jaw dropped, and his eyes widened. Looking down at himself, he suddenly let out a shrill scream that filled almost the entire Blood Wasteland.

“Nightcrypt, I'm gonna kill you!!” Trembling with madness, he threw another set of clothing on and prepared to attack again. However, in the brief moment that had passed, Bai Xiaochun had unleashed explosive speed, and was now quite a distance away.

Bai Xiaochun looked anxious and miserable. For some reason, this blood master trial by fire did not seem to be going at all the way a trial by fire should. It was like everyone was out to get him!

“Two more hours. I only have to last for two more hours!” Gritting his teeth, he took a deep breath. It was at that point that he realized that the first blood-colored key was actually getting closer to him.

“Oh come on, no....” he thought, his scalp tingling. It hadn't been easy to get everyone else to go after that key. Although Song Zhen was chasing him, everyone else was now in a killing mood as they fought over that one key.

“Go away. Don’t even get near me....” Tears were welling up in his eyes. Even if he could advance his Undying Heavenly King by absorbing that key, he wasn’t willing to put his life on the line, especially considering that everyone would try to kill him if he did. Shivering, he changed directions and sped away from the key.

However, even as he did, the key suddenly sped up dramatically, to the point where Bai Xiaochun was sure he could hear it whizzing through the air.

“Don't get near me....” He pushed forward with even more speed. Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn as he shot through the Blood Wasteland, Song Zhen hot on his tail. Then, up ahead, a blood-colored pillar of light appeared, heading directly toward him.

It was none other than the blood-colored key.

“No!!” he wailed.

It was the very key which had first appeared, and following it were a dozen or so Dharma protectors, all moving at top speed.

The key had originally been acquired by one of the Xuemei’s Dharma protectors. However, just as Bai Xiaochun had planned, the rest of the people in the trial by fire had been fighting over it, and it had changed hands numerous times since.

As the end of the trial by fire approached, Song Que acquired it. And yet, for some odd reason, just after he grabbed it, it surged with power and flew out of his hand, then shot off into the distance.

The other Dharma protectors were shocked, but there was little time to consider the matter. They all stopped fighting amongst themselves and shot after the key.

That was when they saw Bai Xiaochun being chased by the enraged Song Zhen. The key sped up, heading rapidly toward Bai Xiaochun; within the blink of an eye, and before he could do anything, the key shot into his forehead.

“Nightcrypt!!” Song Que howled, his eyes completely bloodshot.

“Nightcrypt, don’t do it....”

“Dammit, Nightcrypt, y-y-you....”

All of the Dharma protectors were going mad, both those on Xuemei’s team and Song Junwan’s. Moments ago, they had been fighting each other, but now their eyes were completely bloodshot as murderous auras erupted because of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was trembling on the verge of tears. This was not how trials by fire were supposed to go!

That was exactly how Song Junwan and Xuemei felt as well. Although they were both still fighting up in the air, their hearts were filled with amazement at the absurdity of the situation. They almost weren’t sure what to do now that Bai Xiaochun had absorbed the final key. A moment passed, and they stopped fighting, then turned and began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“This isn’t a trial by fire for blood master, this is a trial by fire to kill me....” Gritting his teeth, he immediately began to flee.

The last bit of hope for everyone in the Blood Wasteland had just been absorbed by Bai Xiaochun. There were now no keys left....

According to the laws of this world, none of the Dharma protectors should be able to step onto the Ancient Blood Path. However, what was most terrifying of all... was the possibility that both teams would be classified as having lost.

If that were true, then when the fourteenth hour ended, all of them would be wiped out of existence....

The culprit who had caused the catastrophe... was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

The hatred both sides felt for him was completely indescribable, and many of them were so maddened that the only thing they wanted to do was kill Bai Xiaochun before they were exterminated by the world.

At the moment, nothing mattered. Not the sect, not their future, not the potential punishments they might face. They disregarded all of that and embraced the desire to kill. Rumbling could be heard as three cultivators immediately drew upon powerful magical treasures. Multi-colored light rose up from magical techniques, and booms could be heard as divine abilities were unleashed. All forms of rage and madness were poured out upon Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun bolted into motion like a rabbit whose tail had been stepped on. As he fled, some people got the strange feeling that Nightcrypt... was used to doing this. Every move he made seemed designed to avoid the divine abilities and magical techniques, and in fact, he only seemed to move faster and faster.

Of course, the reason why Bai Xiaochun seemed so familiar with what was happening was that back in the Spirit Stream Sect, he had often ended up in such situations because of the catastrophes he had wrought. By now, he was very familiar with what it was like to be chased, and in fact, reacted to it on an instinctive level....

Even as he fled, rumbling sounds filled him as the Undying Live Forever Technique continued to operate. The blood qi from the keys caused ten berserk ghosts to appear, which rapidly merged together.

As they fused and grew clear, his aura grew more powerful. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he suddenly stopped in place as an intense rumbling sound echoed out from within him.

In that very moment, the ten berserk ghosts... completely merged together!

Intense howling could be heard as the ghosts became one....

“It’s the ten ghosts Heavenly Demon Body!” he murmured, a strange light gleaming in his eyes as a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy erupted from inside of him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0253 awe-chapter-254

The volume of the Undying Heavenly King was divided into five different body types, and four levels. The body types were the Mammoth Body, Berserk Ghost Body, Heavenly Demon Body, Asura Body, and finally the Heavenly King Body!

In terms of the levels, ten mammoths became one berserk ghost, ten berserk ghosts became one heavenly demon, ten demons became one asura, and ten asuras became one heavenly king!

Very few people in the cultivation world could fully cultivate the Undying Heavenly King. The resources required were incredible, such that most sects could never dream of sustaining it.

If Bai Xiaochun had stayed behind in the Spirit Stream Sect, it might not have been impossible for him to cultivate to the level of the Heavenly Demon Body, but at the very least, it would have taken him a sixty-year-cycle, and would have required much in terms of luck and fortune.

But... because of how things had played out in the Blood Stream Sect, that time had been significantly reduced. Furthermore, because of the seven blood-colored keys, he was now already at the peak of the second level of the Undying Heavenly King!

At that level, ten berserk ghosts merged together to form... the Heavenly Demon Body!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Each breath that Bai Xiaochun took as he stood there seemed to fill the entire world with intense rumbling sounds. Behind him appeared a pure white heavenly demon, its head thrown back as it roared. Ripples spread out that could topple mountains and drain seas, and the power radiating from Bai Xiaochun swept out in all directions, creating a tornado that stretched high up into the heavens.

Massive wind battered the other cultivators, all of whom were forced to stop in place, their expressions flickering with shock. Dread could be seen in the eyes of Song Zhen and Xiao Qing.

“Don’t tell me that’s the body refinement magic of Lesser Marsh Peak...?”

“Heavens! That energy... can Foundation Establishment cultivators even produce something like that?”

“Just how many secrets does Nightcrypt have buried inside of him!?!?” Even as gasps rang out, killing intent flickered in Song Zhen’s eyes, and he took a step forward, his right hand flashing in an incantation gesture. In response, blood qi surged out to form a stream of crimson sword qi that shot directly toward the tornado.

In almost the same instant that he made his move, Song Que and the other cultivators gritted their teeth and attacked as well. In the blink of an eye, numerous divine abilities and magical items caused multicolored light to blast toward the tornado.

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out, and the ground quaked. The sky trembled, and the tornado distorted momentarily before exploding. Bai Xiaochun was revealed, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth as the heavenly demon roared. At the same time, killing intent flickered in his eyes.

“We're all in the same sect together, so I didn’t want to start fighting and killing. I didn’t absorb those keys on purpose! You people are pushing things too far!

“We still have an incense stick’s worth of time before the fourteenth hour is up. Let's see whether you people can wipe me out in that amount of time, or whether... I can wipe you out!” Bai Xiaochun seemed like he was on the verge of unleashing complete carnage. He had been in the Blood Stream Sect for years now, and after mingling with such ferocious cultivators for so long, he had come to understand a truth about them.

The only way to get them to listen to reason was to be more brutal than they were!

Even as the words left his mouth, he burst into motion, appearing directly in front of Song Zhen. Song Zhen’s pupils constricted, and his hands turned bright red as he struck out at Bai Xiaochun.

“Back off!” Bai Xiaochun growled, unleashing the Mountain Shaking Bash. Song Zhen’s face fell as Bai Xiaochun bashed into him; a boom rang out, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he was shoved out of the way. Bai Xiaochun flew past him to the rest of the dozen or so Dharma protectors, where his right hand clenched into a fist. When he struck out, the full power of the Heavenly Demon Body was unleashed.

That was the power of ten berserk ghosts, and a hundred giant mammoths. It was a level of fleshly body power that any Foundation Establishment cultivator would find unbelievable. A sonic boom echoed out as the fist slammed into a late Foundation Establishment cultivator. His eyes immediately went wide as he realized he was powerless to defend himself. In the blink of an eye, his bones were completely shattered, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut.

Even as a scream rang out from the man, Bai Xiaochun took another step forward. By this point, the magical techniques and divine abilities from the surrounding cultivators were closing in. There were six blood swords, a blood dragon, and three ordinary flying swords.

As they neared, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and then stepped forward to appear in front of another Foundation Establishment cultivator. His hand snaked out and latched onto the man, whose eyes widened with terror as Bai Xiaochun viciously head-butted him.

A boom could be heard, and then the Foundation Establishment cultivator screamed as he was lifted up into the air to block three blood swords and two flying swords. As for the other incoming swords, they all hit Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun trembled slightly, but otherwise seemed unaffected. In fact, his left hand even shot out to grab the magical blood dragon.

When his fingers crushed down onto it, it shattered. However, at almost the exact same instant, the besiegers attacked again. This time, Yang Hongwu unleashed his incense, and Zhang Yunshan called upon his powerful magical treasure. Song Que was in the group as well.

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly, and once again used the Mountain Shaking Bash. He was like an ancient wild beast that dodged the incoming attacks and closed in on Song Que. Blood sprayed out of Song Que’s mouth, along with a choked cry. He was at the peak of eight Earthstring Tideflows, and had life-saving magical items, and it was only because of those things that he managed to come out relatively unharmed. Then he looked on in shock as Bai Xiaochun borrowed the momentum of the Mountain Shaking Bash to speed past him.

“Trying to run?!” Xiao Qing said, eyes flickering with killing intent. Just when he was about to follow, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked over his shoulder and chuckled coldly.

“Who said anything about running?” Without any hesitation, he yet again called upon the Mountain Shaking Bash. The image of the heavenly demon roared as Bai Xiaochun shot toward Xiao Qing, whose face instantly fell. He was rather frightened of this particular move of Bai Xiaochun’s, especially considering how he was able to use it repeatedly. Gritting his teeth, he considered fleeing, but there were too many people blocking his path.

A boom rang out as more than half of the group of pursuing Dharma protectors were sent staggering backward as they jointly diffused the energy of the attack. Even as that energy faded away, Bai Xiaochun was upon them, and miserable shrieks began to ring out. By the time Bai Xiaochun was fleeing again, another Foundation Establishment cultivator had been killed.

There Bai Xiaochun was, off in the distance, covered with blood, none of which was his own. Although a bit of blood was oozing out of the corners of his mouth, any injuries he had sustained were already healing.

Although he was slightly out of breath, his two successive attacks in which no one could do anything to stop him, combined with his intense murderous aura and the fact that he was now soaked in blood, caused everyone who could see him to gasp in shock.

None of them were even sure of how many divine abilities and magical techniques had hit him, and none of them had even slowed him down. His defenses were unimaginable. Not only had the combined efforts of everyone present failed to force him into retreat, he'd actually started attacking with even more power than before!

Of course, this group of cultivators wasn't accustomed to fighting together, so their combined attacks weren't as powerful as one might imagine. However, it was still something that ordinary Foundation Establishment cultivators shouldn't be able to fight back against.

And yet, not only could Bai Xiaochun hold his own, he was bringing the fight to them. The fear in the hearts of the other Dharma protectors only continued to mount.

Xiao Qing's eyes narrowed, and yet they still flickered with killing intent. Even as he snorted coldly in his heart, he looked over at Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan. All three of them were clearly holding back, as if they were waiting for something.

Even as the three of them exchanged a glance, two beams of light suddenly appeared off in the distance.

Bai Xiaochun looked up silently, and dispersed the power of another Mountain Shaking Bash that he had been planning to unleash.

It was Song Junwan and Xuemei, both of whom looked like devilish gods as they glared at Bai Xiaochun. Song Junwan's face was ashen, and blood still caked the corners of her lips from the fighting with Xuemei. Currently, the look on her face was one of confusion and mixed emotions.

Next to her was Xuemei, whose face was also caked with blood beneath her mask. A wound could be seen on the back of her right hand, from which blood qi leaked. Song Junwan had inflicted that wound with her blood sword, and although the injury seemed small, it had destabilized Xuemei’s cultivation base. Clearly, the fighting had taken its toll on Xuemei, and yet her eyes still glittered with cold sinisterness as she stared at Bai Xiaochun. But then, she gritted her teeth for a moment and started laughing.

As her laughter rang out, the fourteenth hour ran to a close, whereupon... an indescribable feeling rose up in the world, as if a huge hand were pressing down on everything.

Everything went still. Bai Xiaochun shivered. The other Dharma protectors were locked in place, unable to even think. They were now as motionless as statues.

Only Song Junwan and Xuemei seemed unaffected, apparently because of their glittering command medallions.

A boundless will seemed to be comparing the two parties to determine who had won and who had lost. After a few breaths of time passed, the will seemed incapable of making a decision, and faded away. At the same time, something like a force of expulsion wrapped around the immobilized cultivators. Apparently, they were about to be expelled from the body of the Blood Ancestor.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0254 awe-chapter-255

“The time has come,” Xuemei declared. “Thank you, Song Junwan, for bringing Nightcrypt along. If it weren’t for him, then I wouldn’t be completely confident in being able to get the title of blood master, not even with my trump card.

“But now, with the keys gone, the position of blood master can go to no one except me!” As her laughter echoed about, she looked over at Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan, and her smile was even visible on the surface of her mask!

The power of expulsion which had gripped the three of them vanished, and they began to regain mobility. Although their movements were a bit stiff, all of them managed to produce... something that only Song Junwan and Xuemei should have... blood master command medallions!

The blood master command medallions they had seemed somewhat faded, as if they couldn’t quite match up to the command medallions possessed by Song Junwan and Xuemei. However, the expressions on the faces of the three men were the same as before, as if they had been expecting this to happen.

“I’d originally planned for these three to join my group after the fighting for the keys concluded. That way, I could crush all of your Dharma protectors in one fell swoop. However, the current situation will result in the same outcome.” Xuemei laughed again, her eyes radiating coldness.

Song Junwan almost couldn’t believe what was happening.

“What gall you have, Xuemei!” she cried. “Not only are you cheating, you're violating the most precious rules of the Blood Stream Sect!!”

She felt a bitterness that bordered on despair; clearly, she had lost the struggle for the blood master position.

The truth was, even if Nightcrypt hadn’t absorbed all of the keys, Xuemei still would have cheated, still would have been able to delay Song Junwan on the Ancient Blood Path, and still would have been the first person to reach the heart cavity.

“Once I’m the blood master, nobody will care about what happened in here! Besides, those three command medallions can be used to get onto the Ancient Blood Path, but not the heart cavity!” Xuemei smiled as she looked up into the sky, where a vortex appeared. Rumbling could be heard as it opened up to reveal an ancient, blood-colored path....

The heart cavity lay at the end of that very path.

Xuemei blurred into motion as she headed toward the vortex. As for Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan, they also flew up into the air. Each one glanced over at Bai Xiaochun as they flew past, killing intent flickering within their eyes. Knowing that he wasn’t important now, they snorted coldly as they closed in on the vortex.

Song Junwan stood there quietly, her hands clenched into bitter fists of anger. She had lost. She hadn’t even entered the Ancient Blood Path yet, but if she did, Xiao Qing and the others would be able to pin her down. Xuemei had everything under her control.

Song Junwan simply couldn't accept the situation, and also flew up into the air. Even as she closed in on the vortex, a voice suddenly echoed into her ears.

“There’s no need to despair, Junwan.” A tremor ran through Song Junwan, and her eyes shone with disbelief. Looking down at all of the figures who were fading away as they were expelled from the world, she saw Nightcrypt open his eyes. They looked like lightning flashing in the dark of night, lightning that could rip the heavens apart. Nightcrypt took a step forward, and then he was right next to her.

“You…?” she said, panting. This sudden development was almost unbelievable.

Voice cool, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and said, “Like I said, I’m going to make sure you become the blood master.” He was also surprised at what was happening. When the will had descended earlier, he immediately began to regain his senses, and was soon back to normal and able to see everything which had just occurred. Now, he flicked his sleeve and grabbed Song Junwan’s arm as he shot toward the vortex.

Song Junwan shivered, but did nothing to resist, and in fact, her eyes shone more brightly than ever. Although she had the feeling there was something very strange about Nightcrypt, she followed along, and the two of them became beams of bright light that shot toward the vortex.

As soon as they entered, their vision swam, and everything vanished. Back in the Blood Wasteland, the vortex vanished, and the Dharma protectors all faded away.

The third stage of the trial by fire was called the Ancient Blood Path. It was a long, cramped road, at the end of which was the heart cavity. Whoever entered that heart cavity first, of either Xuemei or Song Junwan, would be the first to have a chance to acquire the blood crystal and become the blood master.

Currently, Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan were materializing on the Ancient Blood Path. When they solidified and looked around, Xuemei was nowhere in sight, causing their eyes to widen. From what they remembered, Xuemei had been right in front of them upon entering the vortex.

Even as they looked around in surprise, the air up ahead of them began to twist and distort, and a figure materialized up ahead, a figure wearing a mask with a plum blossom on it.

At first, Xuemei seemed a bit out of sorts, but quickly recovered. After looking around, her eyes glittered, and she started making her way up the path. However, it was at that moment that Bai Xiaochun and Song Junwan appeared off to the side. Song Junwan quickly stepped forward to block Xuemei's way.

When Xuemei realized that Song Junwan wasn't alone, her eyes widened. As for Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan, they also were taken aback.

"Nightcrypt!!"

Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and looked around through narrowed eyes. "Hello, everyone. We meet again."

When he noticed that Xuemei's aura had stabilized, and her other wounds were gone, he was quite surprised. Even the wound on her right hand was nowhere to be seen, as if she had used some special healing method.

“What divine ability did she use to recover so quickly?” he thought. “Even the injury caused by Song Junwan’s blood sword is gone! Amazing!” Even as Bai Xiaochun stared in surprise, Xuemei’s eyes flickered with cold light.

“Xiao Qing, you handle Nightcrypt. You other two, stop Song Junwan!” With that, Xuemei ignored Song Junwan and shot up the Ancient Blood Path. Song Junwan was just about to try to stop her when Zhang Yunshan and Yang Hongwu pulled out powerful magical treasures and attacked, holding her back. Considering they had used counterfeit command medallions to enter the Ancient Blood Path, if Xuemei didn't become the blood master, and the sect leadership found out, they would likely be executed. Therefore, everything was on the line for them at the moment.

“Do you people have a death wish!?!?” Song Junwan said, her expression flickering. She considered trying to break away from them to pursue Xuemei, but Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan were unleashing the full power of their cultivation bases and magical treasures. The truth was, they weren’t trying to kill her, they were simply trying to delay her, and their tactics were working.

If they could hold her back for ten breaths of time, the position of blood master would be secured!

Xuemei was already about thirty meters up the path, heading toward the end. Song Junwan was getting anxious, but even more anxious than her was Bai Xiaochun.

“I can’t let Xuemei win!” he thought. “If she becomes blood master, not only will I lose the relic of eternal indestructibility, considering what's happened between us, she’ll definitely use her power to get revenge on me.”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun howled at the top of his lungs. The power of the Heavenly Demon Body erupted out, and his aura surged. Bursting into motion, he unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash, launching himself in the direction of Song Junwan, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan. As he closed in, he reached out and shoved Song Junwan.

“Get out of here, Junwan. Leave these guys to me!!” As his howl echoed out through the Ancient Blood Path, he waved both hands into the air in front of him, unleashing a blast of power. The effects of the magical treasures slammed into him, and yet his momentum only seemed to build.

Apparently, he was going to hold the line all by himself!

It was a spectacular sight. The heavenly demon body roared, and fleshly body power erupted out. A wave of his hands caused Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan’s qi and blood to roil, and they staggered backward.

“Nightcrypt, are you looking to die?!?!” Xiao Qing’s eyes shone with piercing light, and as for Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan, they were enraged. All three of them instantly pounced back for another attack. However, even as they were about to join forces, a strange light appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and he suddenly punched the ground.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The Ancient Blood Path trembled as mountain-toppling, sea-draining force rippled out, forcing Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan backward. Only Xiao Qing managed to close in on Bai Xiaochun, his expression grimly ferocious.

“There were a lot of witnesses in the Blood Wasteland, so killing you might have caused some problems. But here, it’s a different story. Since you’re looking to die, Nightcrypt, I’ll just help you fulfill your wish!” Xiao Qing laughed coldly as he closed in. He had been privy to Xuemei’s plan, and therefore, had never been very worried about the blood-colored keys. Back then, he hadn’t been very focused on killing Nightcrypt. It had been more of an impulse in the moment. But now there were no witnesses, and Nightcrypt seemed to be asking to die. Therefore, Xiao Qing’s killing intent surged.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, his eyes bloodshot, his veins of steel pulsing. “You know, that’s the same thing I was just gonna say.”

“It doesn’t matter what tricks you have up your sleeve, you’re going to die, beyond the shadow of a doubt!” Xiao Qing extended his right hand, and his two fingers made the shape of a sword. Blinding, blood-colored light spilled out, creating sword qi that shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead.

Powerful cultivation base fluctuations erupted out, creating something like burning fire that could consume anything in its path.

However, even as he closed in, Bai Xiaochun raised his right hand with indescribable speed. He made a grasping motion in the direction of Xiao Qing’s throat, and a gravitational force grabbed ahold of the man. It was none other than … something that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t used even once since arriving at the Blood Stream Sect. It was… the Throat Crushing Grasp!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0255 awe-chapter-256

The Throat Crushing Grasp had accompanied Bai Xiaochun from Qi Condensation into Foundation Establishment. He had used it in the Luochen Mountains and the Fallen Sword World, and had perfected it to the finest degree. Although it was a divine ability that came with the first volume of the Undying Codex, as he had proceeded with his cultivation of the Undying Heavenly King, it had become more and more explosive.

It had taken some effort on his part to hold back from using it. Back in the Blood Wasteland, there had been too many people watching him, so even during critical moments, he had suppressed the urge to use it, or other things like Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning or his Human Controlling Grand Magic.

After all, everyone knew that the Spirit Stream Sect focused on control magic, and if he used techniques or divine abilities based on such powers, his identity would likely have been exposed. It was the same with his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, which had, up to this point, remained closed.

There were even other things.... His turtle-wok and his wooden sword, as well as his other treasures which had received threefold spirit enhancements, had all remained hidden. But now... Bai Xiaochun was out of patience.

As he shouted out, the Throat Crushing Grasp appeared, and a truly bloodthirsty aura erupted out of Bai Xiaochun. In combination with the power of the Heavenly Demon Body, the Throat Crushing Grasp was at the level of being able to shake heaven and earth.

Rumbling sounds erupted as his right hand appeared in front of Xiao Qing, allowing the man’s two-fingered blood sword to close in. The gravitational force which suddenly appeared caused Xiao Qing’s face to fall.

He was convinced he must be mistaken, but for some reason, it seemed like Nightcrypt had suddenly changed into someone else.

Nightcrypt’s claw-like right hand emanated a terrifying aura that filled his heart with fear. Gasping at the sensation of deadly crisis, he lurched back, changing the direction of his blood sword to slash at Bai Xiaochun’s hand. His body twisted in bizarre fashion to avoid the attack.

In that instant, the blood sword formed by his two fingers made contact with Bai Xiaochun’s Throat Crushing Grasp. A sound rang out like metal scraping on metal, and Bai Xiaochun’s hand clamped down hard onto Xiao Qing’s fingers.

CRACK!

A shockwave spread out, and Xiao Qing let out a muffled grunt. As he spun backward, his entire right arm trembled. As for his two fingers, they were crushed into nonexistence!

Face flickering, Xiao Qing barked, “Something’s off with Nightcrypt! Yang Hongwu, Zhang Yunshan, join forces and kill him!”

Instantly, Yang Hongwu and Zhang Yunshan took deep breaths, gritted their teeth, and attacked. Smoke swirled off of the burning incense, forming a blade! A treasured fan swished, creating an explosive wind that resembled a dragon!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t slow down for even a moment. Howling like a wild beast, he charged onward after Xiao Qing, his right hand clenching into a fist. As he punched out, the heavenly demon appeared, and thunderous rumbling filled the air.

As that happened, Bai Xiaochun’s left hand flickered with an incantation gesture, and he waved his finger at Yang Hongwu. Instantly, more than a dozen flying swords shot out of his bag of holding. Although they were garishly painted with different colors, it was still possible to see that each one had three silver designs on its surface.

All of them were treasures that Bai Xiaochun had performed spirit enhancements on, backed by the power of a Foundation Establishment cultivation base, and controlled by the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation. As soon as they appeared, Yang Hongwu’s expression flickered.

Even as rumbling sounds echoed out, Bai Xiaochun continued on without pause, turning his head in the other direction and uttering a single word!

“Cauldron!”

A violet cauldron suddenly appeared in front of Zhang Yunshan. It was covered with engravings of magical symbols, and emanated a violet glow and a majestic aura that seemed capable of shaking the heavens!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Booms rang out as Bai Xiaochun single-handedly fought all three opponents. Even as Xiao Qing’s face fell, Yang Hongwu’s smoke was pierced by the flying swords, and he himself let out a bloodcurdling scream as he flew backward, blood splashing out from numerous wounds.

Shockingly, even as he fell back, Bai Xiaochun advanced. Clearly, Yang Hongwu was the first person he planned to kill. Protomagnetic Wings sprouted out behind him, and with a single flutter, he flew forward with speed that vastly exceeded anything from before. It was almost like a teleportation, placing him right in front of Yang Hongwu. Then, his hand shot out as fast as lightning as he unleashed the Throat Crushing Grasp onto Yang Hongwu's neck.

Screaming, Yang Hongwu went all out in an attempt to defend himself. However, he had lost the initiative. First was the flurry of flying swords, and then the burst of speed, and finally the Throat Crushing Grasp. His mind was in chaos, and despite all the experience he had engaging in magical combat, he simply couldn't recover from his shock.

A cracking sound rang out as the thumb and index finger of Bai Xiaochun's right hand smashed down onto Yang Hongwu's neck, crushing it!

Yang Hongwu's scream was cut short, and a look of complete incredulity could be seen in his eyes as they bulged in death.

Off to the side, Zhang Yunshan shrieked, "Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning. You're... you're not Nightcrypt!!"

Expression one of complete disbelief, he watched as Bai Xiaochun grabbed Yang Hongwu's incense and then turned to face him.

Xiao Qing's expression flickered, and his cultivation base surged as he prepared to block Bai Xiaochun. However, it was then that a large wok suddenly appeared in front of him. No matter what attacks Xiao Qing unleashed, the wok wouldn't budge, and he was blocked before he could even take a half step.

That short period of time was a moment of critical danger for Zhang Yunshan. Now that Bai Xiaochun had revealed himself, how could he possibly leave witnesses? He took another step, and the Protomagnetic Wings fluttered, giving him another burst of speed. He added to the momentum with the Mountain Shaking Bash, which also caused his fleshly body power to skyrocket past its previous levels.

Not only was he moving at incredible speed, he was drawing upon unimaginable power. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but in addition to all that... he yet again used the Throat Crushing Grasp!

Two divine abilities from the Undying Codex were being used in unison, unleashing power so terrifying it was difficult to put into words. As he pierced through the air, his thumb and index finger began to slam together. Zhang Yunshan had no time to dodge, or even react. One second, Bai Xiaochun was some distance away, the next second he was right in front of him, his fingers clamping down onto his neck.

There wasn’t even a need for Bai Xiaochun to crush his fingers down violently. As soon as they touched Zhang Yunshan’s neck, his momentum and the power backing him sent Zhang Yunshan flying backward into the wall of the Ancient Blood Path.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The entire path trembled as Bai Xiaochun’s hand crushed Zhang Yunshan’s neck and slammed him into the wall, sending cracks snaking out in all directions. As for Zhang Yunshan, his corpse was now crushed permanently into the wall!

At this point, Xiao Qing finally showed up, his hair disheveled, his eyes radiating madness.

“You’re Bai Xiaochun, aren’t you?!”

If by this point he couldn’t identify Bai Xiaochun by the techniques he was using, then he didn’t deserve to have lived this long. The Blood Stream Sect had long since performed a thorough investigation into Bai Xiaochun, and virtually all of the Foundation Establishment cultivators had heard stories about him.

Everyone knew about Bai Xiaochun’s signature magical techniques.... Of course... even if Xiao Qing couldn’t put the pieces together because of the Throat Crushing Grasp, Bai Xiaochun had used the Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning together with it! That made it more than obvious!

“Killing you will count as a big service for the sect!!” Xiao Qing now knew that Nightcrypt was Bai Xiaochun, but without evidence, simply reporting the matter would be pointless. Even if he tried to notify Xuemei and Song Junwan, it wouldn’t do any good. It was a moment of deadly crisis, and therefore, Xiao Qing didn’t hesitate to begin to crystallize his final spiritual sea. Shockingly, he was... attempting to reach Core Formation right here and now! If he succeeded, then he could kill Bai Xiaochun as easily as flipping over his hand.

Although there were certain risks involved, there was no time for delay. Bai Xiaochun filled him with a sense of complete and utter deadly crisis. After all, if Bai Xiaochun hit him with the same attack he had just used on Zhang Yunshan, then his chances of coming out alive were only about forty percent!

However, in the very moment that his spiritual sea began to crystallize, Bai Xiaochun’s Heaven-Dao aura erupted out, an aura which could suppress any and all types of Earthstring

Foundation Establishment. Although Bai Xiaochun was only in mid Foundation Establishment, and couldn’t completely prevent Xiao Qing’s spiritual sea from crystallizing, he could cause waves to spring up in his spiritual sea, and reduce his Core Formation energy by thirty percent!

Even as he put pressure on Xiao Qing’s rising energy, a third eye opened on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. It was none other than his Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

The violet eye opened, releasing indescribable power. It was as if... everything from the most majestic heavens to the deepest hells were nothing more than insects!

At the same time, the control power that Bai Xiaochun had been working on for years surged out from within his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, creating... something that couldn’t be defended against!

Even if Xiao Qing suddenly wanted to resort to calling out to Song Junwan and Xuemei, to tell them about Bai Xiaochun, the Heavenspan Dharma Eye dashed all such hopes to pieces!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Xiao Qing felt as though lightning were striking his mind. He began to shake visibly, his expression twisting, his tongue lagging out of his mouth. A muffled howl erupted from his mouth, and blue veins bulged out on his face and neck. Shockingly, he watched as his right hand suddenly began to move, completely beyond his own control. Terror shone in his eyes as his hand reached high up into the air and then rocketed down toward the top of his head!

“No...!”

Smash!

His palm crushed his head, sending blood and brain matter showering out in all directions. Xiao Qing died instantly, and his partially crystallized spiritual sea immediately collapsed.

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. Blood leaked out of his third eye, which began to close. A wave of exhaustion spread through him, and he even began to feel dizzy. Panting, he pulled his hand out of the wall, and out of Zhang Yunshan's corpse.

A blank look could still be seen in Zhang Yunshan's eyes as his head separated from his body and toppled to the ground!

Bai Xiaochun had used only a few dozen breaths of time to kill all three of his opponents.

However, it had taken a lot out of him. His face was ashen, but thankfully, he had spirit medicine that he could use to recover. He immediately consumed some pills, and yet, there was no time to sit down and meditate. Retrieving the turtle-wok, and taking the three bags of holding from the corpses of his enemies, he turned to look toward the end of the path. The wings on his back fluttered, and shot forward, leaving behind nothing but afterimages and sonic booms.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0256 awe-chapter-257

While Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of fighting Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan, Song Junwan was barreling down the Ancient Blood Path thanks to the help provided by Bai Xiaochun. She even burned some of her own life blood to speed up as she pursued Xuemei.

Up ahead, Xuemei frowned as she also accelerated. However, the fact that Song Junwan was burning her life blood ensured that she only got closer and closer. Soon, she was close enough to launch an attack, and the two of them started fighting.

As the fighting began, Song Junwan’s face was paler than ever. Surprisingly, not only were Xuemei’s injuries completely healed, her cultivation base also seemed to have made some progress, putting her on almost exactly the same level as Song Junwan. Because of their fierce fighting, the two women slowed down, and soon they could hear booms and explosions coming from behind them. There were also words being spoken, but because of the intense rumbling sounds, it was impossible to hear them clearly.

Song Junwan’s expression flickered. Although she cared about the blood master title, she was also worried about Nightcrypt. After all, for him to simultaneously fight Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan would put him in great danger.

The fact that he was putting his life on the line to help her become the blood master filled her heart with stabs of pain. She was also confused, unsure of whether or not she was doing the right thing. However, there was little time to ponder the matter. Chuckling bitterly, she attacked Xuemei with all the power she could muster.

Xuemei didn’t say much, and from the look in her eye, she was getting very anxious. However, Song Junwan had a profound cultivation base, and couldn’t be taken care of quickly. Even as they continued to fight, the sounds behind them suddenly ceased. At the same time, the two women gradually got closer and closer to the end of the Ancient Blood Path.

Now visible was an arched doorway that was emanating intense blood-colored light. Clearly, beyond that door existed blood qi so powerful that it was difficult to put into words.

That place... was the heart cavity, and also the location of the blood crystal. Whoever got inside first would have the first chance to get the blood crystal and become Middle Peak’s blood master.

In the moment that the end of the path became visible, the two women heard a sound from behind them that resembled sonic booms, as though some powerful expert were unleashing all the power at his disposal to race toward them.

Also, it was obvious that whoever this person was, it would only take them about five or six breaths of time to reach them.

Xuemei knew that the chances of that person being Nightcrypt were not large, but she wasn’t willing to bet on that fact. As she and Song Junwan got closer to the arched doorway, fighting the entire way, she suddenly smiled.

“Song Junwan, the title of blood master doesn’t belong to you.”

Although her smile wasn't visible because of the mask, her arrogance was audible in her voice. At this point, she extended her hand, and visible there on her wrist was a violet, triangular mark.

Almost as soon as the mark became visible, it flew off of her skin and transformed into three diamond-shaped sealing marks which immediately shot toward Song Junwan, emanating powerful pressure!

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and Song Junwan shivered. Blood sprayed out of her mouth as she was shoved away from the arched doorway. The three diamond-shaped sealing marks were swirling around her, emanating sealing power that Song Junwan simply couldn’t break free from.

Song Junwan trembled as she looked around at the sealing marks. The sealing method that was being used was almost beyond comprehension, and Song Junwan quickly came to the conclusion that it was the work of Patriarch Limitless. “Xuemei, you cheap slut! Not only did you cheat, Patriarch Limitless also ignored the rules and gave you a sealing treasure! Even if you do become the blood master, the Song Clan won’t let this stand!!”

“Be a good girl, now. The blood master title doesn’t belong to you anyway.” Xuemei laughed lightly as she took a stop toward the blood-colored door.

Bitterness and despair could be seen in Song Junwan’s eyes, and her hatred for Xuemei had reached the pinnacle. It was at that moment, when Xuemei was just about to step into the door, that deafening rumbling filled the area.

Bai Xiaochun appeared, right next to Song Junwan. When he saw the three violet sealing marks, his expression flickered, and he punched out with his right hand.

That blow was backed by the power of a heavenly demon, but when it landed on the three violet diamonds, the sealing marks weren't affected at all. In fact, the force of his blow was directed back at him in a backlash. Bai Xiaochun gasped.

"Is that a patriarch-level seal?"

Song Junwan had no time to ponder how Nightcrypt had managed to get past Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan. Taking a deep breath, her eyes flickered with determination, and she lifted her right hand up. Laying there in the palm of her hand was a blood-colored command medallion.

There was something very strange about the medallion, and as soon as it appeared, the sealing marks around her began to twist and distort. Although they didn't shatter, it was clear that they would collapse within the time it takes an incense stick to burn.

Unfortunately, Song Junwan didn't have that much time on her hands.

"Nightcrypt, take my blood master command medallion. I don't care how you do it, become the blood master! You can't let that slut succeed!!!" Song Junwan was throwing caution to the wind. Without any more hesitation, she hurled the command medallion toward Bai Xiaochun. Because of the strange properties of the medallion itself, it passed directly through the seal, to be snatched out of the air by Bai Xiaochun. Almost immediately, he could feel it vibrating as if with joy, as if it viewed Bai Xiaochun with ultimate approval.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, but this wasn’t the time for consideration. If Xuemei succeeded, he would be in grave danger, and he couldn’t let that happen. Gritting his teeth, he shot toward the blood-colored archway with blinding speed!

As Song Junwan watched this happen, her entire body seemed to weaken, and yet, a smile broke out on her face.

“Nightcrypt, if you succeed, I’ll do everything I can to make sure your position as blood master is stable!” Suddenly, she was struck with the feeling that this was definitely the right decision. If Nightcrypt did manage to become the blood master, that was something the Song Clan could probably accept!

Bai Xiaochun disappeared into the doorway, her words echoing in his ears.

The world of the heart cavity was filled with blood-colored light. In the very middle, a gigantic heart was visible, and although it was still and unmoving, it radiated an intense pressure that could shake heaven and earth.

Enormous blood vessels stretched out in all directions, making the entire place something like a maze.

Resting on top of the heart itself was a blood crystal which emanated both radiant light and intense pressure. From the feeling it let off, it seemed that anyone who acquired it would have control over part of a legacy. They would control.... one of the Blood Ancestor’s fingers!

That blood crystal was required of anyone who wished to become the Middle Peak blood master!

Xuemei was currently speeding in the direction of the blood crystal, her eyes shining with a strange light. Oddly, a head-sized crystal was currently floating along next to her, within which was a blurry figure that was screaming at the top of its lungs.

“It’s there! Right there...!”

“Shut up!” Xuemei growled, pushing forward with even more speed. However, it was at that moment that her eyes narrowed, and she looked back to see Nightcrypt stepping through the entrance.

Xuemei’s jaw dropped, and her killing intent immediately spiked. However, all she did was look back at the heart and push forward with greater speed than before.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he looked around. As soon as he caught sight of Xuemei, his wings fluttered, and he shot in her direction. By calling upon all of the protomagnetic powers of gravity and repulsion, he was capable of speed that far surpassed Xuemei’s. At the very moment that she reached the heart, he caught up with her.

Bai Xiaochun was actually feeling a bit depressed. His goal had been to become the grand elder, but thanks to a freak combination of factors, he was now fighting to become the blood master. There was no time to ponder the situation; he absolutely could not let Xuemei succeed, and therefore, he was left with few options.

“I guess I underestimated Song Junwan’s boldness,” Xuemei said, chuckling, and then her right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Instantly, a golden arc of electricity shot out from her finger toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was about to counterattack, but then his face flickered. That golden arc of electricity seemed even more terrifying than anything which Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, or Zhang Yunshan had unleashed. Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun used the Mountain Shaking Bash to evade the electricity and charge directly toward Xuemei.

As soon as he appeared in front of her, he unleashed a fist strike, causing her pupils to constrict. Her lovely left hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and she slapped at his fist. As soon as their hands made contact, her hand turned golden, and Bai Xiaochun gasped at the sensation of intense power, which seemed no weaker than his own fleshly body power. As he staggered backward, he looked up to see shock in Xuemei’s eyes as she also lurched backward.

Just as she was about to unleash another attack... the blood crystal seemed to respond to Bai Xiaochun’s presence. Vibrating, it suddenly flew up into the air and shot toward him.

The shocking scene caused Xuemei’s eyes to fill with astonishment. At the same time, the blurry figure in the crystal hovering next to her screamed, “Stop him! Don't let him get it!!”

“Shut up!” Xuemei said, grinding her teeth. Suddenly, her eyes turned bright gold, and the blood-colored light which surrounded her vanished. Golden light sprang up around her, and she grew visibly gaunt as she used a divine ability that gave her great strength at the cost of some of her life force. With that, she extended her right hand and pointed at Bai Xiaochun.

This was none other than her most powerful trump card!

A hand materialized behind her that looked just like her own right hand, with finger extended. It was huge, and radiated an intense power that filled Bai Xiaochun with an keen sensation of deadly crisis. Prickling stabs of pain filled him, as though the basic structure of his body were being altered!

The sensation of danger that washed through him exceeded anything he had felt when fighting Xiao Qing, Yang Hongwu, and Zhang Yunshan, and even surpassed the feelings he had experienced when he was being chased by the Luochen Clan. The only thing it could compare to was the feeling he'd experienced because of the girl in the white dress, back in the Fallen Sword World.

Rumbling sounds filled his mind, and he knew that he could not simply sit out this crisis and wait until it ended. Nor could he try to flee. If he did, he would die. His intuition was telling him that the only way to deal with this divine ability... was to attack it head-on!

Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base erupted with power, and his wings flickered as the powers of gravity and repulsion erupted out, imbuing the Mountain Shaking Bash with even more power than before, and sending him shooting at top speed toward Xuemei!

“Golden Touch!” As the words left Xuemei’s mouth, they rumbled like thunder. At the same time, she waved her finger down, and the huge hand behind her rumbled forth, emanating pressure like that of the heavens.

As they closed in on each other, Xuemei’s finger stabbed toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. At the same time, his thumb and forefinger began to snap shut as he unleashed the Throat Crushing Grasp.

As of this moment, he was holding nothing back. He... was going all out with every bit of power he possessed! The turtle-wok appeared, shielding him as he reached out toward Xuemei's neck.

Just when they were about to make contact, Xuemei's body suddenly blurred as she tried to dodge to the side. And yet, Bai Xiaochun had been prepared for that possibility, and gravitational force erupted out of his palm with unprecedented power. It locked down onto Xuemei, making it impossible for her to move out of the way. A look of panic rose up in her eyes, and in that moment... her mask... fell off.

Now it was possible to see... a spectacularly beautiful face, with pure, fair skin!

The instant Bai Xiaochun saw her facial features, he felt like 100,000 lightning bolts were striking his mind, as if his brain were about to explode. He couldn’t believe what he was seeing, and instinctively blurted, “Boo!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0257 awe-chapter-258

Unexpectedly... this young woman... was Du Lingfei!!!

Bai Xiaochun would never forget that face. He *couldn’t* forget it. This was the very same person who had gone missing all those years ago... Du Lingfei!

Bai Xiaochun felt like his mind was spinning, as if his heart were being battered by massive waves of shock. Never could he possibly have imagined that such a familiar face would be beneath that mask.

At the same time, when Bai Xiaochun said “boo”, the unmasked Xuemei was equally shaken. An indescribable expression gripped her face, as though she had just been struck by lightning from heaven. She also felt as if waves of shock were battering her heart and mind.

There was only one person who would ever call her such a thing, and that was... Bai Xiaochun from the Spirit Stream Sect!

“Bai Xiaochun!?!?” she blurted.

She had long since come to believe that she would never see Bai Xiaochun again. Back when they had parted, she had wished that she could sever her own thoughts, erase her memories of him. However, when she heard him call her “boo”, it caused her to shake visibly. At that moment, she knew... that she would never be able to forget the Spirit Stream Sect, or the events in the Luochen Mountains. She would never be able to forget... Bai Xiaochun.

Time seemed to slow to a crawl in the world of the heart cavity as Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei looked at each other.

Bai Xiaochun had been in the middle of unleashing the Throat Crushing Grasp with all the power of his cultivation base, but now, he did everything he could to alter the trajectory of the attack. A backlash hit him, and cracking sounds rang out from the bones in his arm as they shattered. Intense pain surged through him, but he still managed to twist the Throat Crushing Grasp so that it passed by Du Lingfei.

Unfortunately... although Bai Xiaochun was able to call upon his incredible battle prowess to change the direction of the Throat Crushing Grasp... Du Lingfei’s Golden Touch magic had been fueled by her own life force. Because of that, it surpassed the limits of her own Dao. In much the same way that a child could never control a raging tiger, she could do nothing to stop the magic once it had been unleashed.

“No!!” she screamed, thrusting her trembling left hand out in an attempt to change the direction of the divine ability. Cracking sounds rang out as her arm twisted sickeningly. Although she managed to slightly change the trajectory of the huge hand, she couldn’t slow it down at all, and it continued on directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Although all of this takes some time to describe, it all happened within the briefest of moments. Within the blink of an eye, the huge hand was directly in front of Bai Xiaochun. A huge boom filled the air, and blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut.

The Heavenly Demon Body was destroyed as Bai Xiaochun was simultaneously hit with his own backlash and Du

Lingfei’s mysterious divine ability!

His body was now being turned into gold. This was not the golden light of the Undying Gold Skin, but rather, the fundamental structure of his body was rapidly changing, transforming him into a statue of golden metal.

Tears began to stream down Du Lingfei’s cheeks. Terrified, she flew toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun....”

Although it was shining with golden light, Bai Xiaochun’s face was deathly pale as he looked over at Du Lingfei. There were many questions he wished to ask her, and many things he wanted to say. The complex emotions could be seen in his eyes, but as he opened his mouth to speak, blood sprayed out. His body was currently beyond his own control. His cultivation base was in chaos, and his vision was growing dim.

In her anxiety, Du Lingfei completely forgot about the trial by fire. Her mission was now the last thing on her mind. The only thing she was thinking about was Bai Xiaochun as she sped toward him. However, at that very moment... the blood crystal apparently sensed that Bai Xiaochun was coughing up blood. The crystal suddenly began to burn, emitting thunderous rumbling sounds as it moved toward him so quickly it was almost a teleportation. The air shattered as the blood crystal... appeared directly in front of Bai Xiaochun.

The crystal seemed to thrum with excitement and joy as, without pausing for a moment, it shot toward his chest. As it neared, blood qi spread out and stabbed into him, fusing with his heart!

Bai Xiaochun trembled visibly as intense pain spread out from his heart. He let out a hoarse shout as he was thrown backward, slamming into one of the huge blood vessels. Just before he hit the withered blood vessel, it erupted with life force, a soft power that simultaneously grabbed ahold of Bai Xiaochun and pulled him toward it....

Bai Xiaochun was sucked into the blood vessel. Blood-colored light flared, spreading out in all directions as the blood vessel seemed to be restored to its original condition.

Things didn’t stop there, though. As the light filled the world of the heart cavity, all of the other blood vessels were enveloped in it, and began to emanate strong life force as well. Within moments, the blood vessels began to twitch, sending bursts of power... toward the heart itself!

Thump-thump!

The withered heart moved, emitting thunderous pounding that echoed out throughout the entire body of the Blood Ancestor.

At the same time, that movement seemed to suddenly shove Bai Xiaochun along through the blood vessel, propelling him along toward some unknown destination.

That having been accomplished, the heart once again withered up, as did the surrounding blood vessels. An incredibly powerful force of expulsion then appeared, wrapping around Du Lingfei. No matter how much she might have wanted to stay behind, she was completely incapable. Mixed emotions could be seen in her eyes as she looked at the spot where Bai Xiaochun had disappeared, and sighed. Although Bai Xiaochun was injured, she knew that the other legacy which had taken hold of him would not fail.

She slowly reached down and picked up her mask as her body faded away, and she was expelled from the body of the Blood Ancestor.

Song Junwan, who was still outside the heart cavity on the Ancient Blood Road, also began to fade away as she was removed.

As of this moment, the only people who remained inside the world of the Blood Ancestor’s body were the dead, and... Bai Xiaochun!

As for the beating of the heart which had thundered out moments ago, although it only happened once, the sound echoed out into the outside world. The sky went dim, and the lands quaked. Waves even appeared on the surface of the Heavenspan River!

Countless cultivators in the blood Stream Sect felt their hearts begin to pound, and their cultivation bases suddenly freeze up.

From the Outer Sect disciples to the patriarchs, everyone was affected!

“What’s going on!?!?”

“Something's wrong! My heart is beating out of control!”

“My cultivation base stopped working! It's destabilizing! How could this be happening?!? And what was that sound just now!?” On Lesser Marsh Peak, Nameless Peak, Middle Peak and Corpse Peak, all cultivators, grand elders and blood masters flew out, their expressions flickering. On Ancestor Peak, the prime elders were shocked, and the blood rippers were all shaken from their trances in secluded meditation. Even the patriarchs were astonished.

The Song Clan patriarch was in the middle of meditating, but his eyes snapped open, and his expression flickered. Patriarch Limitless emerged from his immortal's cave and looked off into the distance, his eyes shining brightly.

“Has the Middle Peak blood master been selected?”

“Even if the blood master was selected, something extreme like this shouldn’t be happening....”

Even as everyone looked around in shock, Xuemei and Song Junwan appeared in midair, alongside Song Que and all of the other surviving Dharma protectors.

Song Junwan was panting as she looked over in Xuemei’s direction. However, Nightcrypt was nowhere to be seen. Assuming that Nightcrypt had failed, Song Junwan’s heart began to pound. But then, she realized that Xuemei didn’t seem to have reached the blood master level.

Behind her mask, her eyes seemed filled with confusion, almost as if she had lost control of her soul.

The arrival of the group from within the Blood Ancestor, as well as the sudden deafening sound from moments ago, left the cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect initially confused. But then, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering beam of blood-colored light shot up from Middle Peak, rising up into the air to form the image of a face.

It was none other than Nightcrypt!

“Blood-colored light from Middle Peak! That's the sign of the blood master!!”

“That... that means that somebody succeeded in becoming the new blood master. But that face, it's Nightcrypt! Did he... become the new blood master? How is this possible?!?!”

“The Middle Peak blood master isn’t Xuemei *or* Song Junwan! How could it possibly be... Nightcrypt!?!?”

Eyes went wide, and mind spun. People cried out in shock. Everyone was completely and utterly astonished.

That was especially true of the people on Ancestor Peak. Numerous streams of divine sense exploded out, even from the stunned patriarchs.

Despite the widespread shock, the cultivators of Middle Peak were all deeply moved. To them, it was a moment of profound solemnity. No matter whether they wished it or not, they felt a sudden uncontrollable impulse that caused them to drop down and kowtow to the face of Nightcrypt.

Song Que, Song Zhen, Song Junwan, Xuemei, Master God-Diviner... they all dropped to their knees. Everyone who cultivated the secret magics of Middle Peak had no choice but to give obeisance. They even felt as if their blood qi were on the verge of collapsing.

That was the power of a blood master! A person who could control the entire mountain peak!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0258 awe-chapter-259

The face floating in the blood-colored light above Middle Peak told everyone that the blood master of Middle Peak had been determined, and it was none other than... Nightcrypt!

Everyone who was familiar with Nightcrypt’s face was shaken. Xu Xiaoshan gasped and rubbed his eyes. Although it seemed somewhat improbable, it actually made sense for this to have happened.

Nightcrypt had risen to prominence over the course of only a few years, but had come to influence the entire sect. He was even famous on the outside.

For him to become the blood master was within the realm of predictability. In fact... it was a logical outcome!

The grand elder of Corpse Peak looked on with wide eyes. Next to him, the Corpse Peak blood master seemed equally dazed. However, it only took a moment for him to smile. Then, his eyes began to shine, as though he were looking at an equal.

Blood masters were a proud lot, and as far as they were concerned, the only people who were worthy of being adversaries... were the other blood masters!

“Interesting....” he murmured to himself. “Other mountain peaks have had blood masters who didn’t come from the major cultivator clans. Up to now, Middle Peak has been the only one who hasn’t.

“How did Nightcrypt manage to turn things around and become blood master when all the cards were stacked against him...? Considering how important he is with his skill in the Dao of medicine, he’ll definitely be a formidable opponent in the future!”

The blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak, the tall, burly man, looked on with a strange light shining in his eyes. He knew that, as of this moment, he would not be able to treat Nightcrypt the way he had in the past. After a moment, he looked over at the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak and said, “Prepare a really nice gift to send over and ease some of the previous tension.”

Shaken, the grand elder nodded. He also knew that... from now on, Nightcrypt was on a different level. Before, the patriarchs had liked him, and yet, held his fate in their hands. A mere thought on their part could lead to his rise, and also his fall. But now... things were different.

Now that he was a blood master, he had his own solid foundation. He was one of the true powers of the Blood Stream Sect. He had the power of an entire mountain peak at his disposal, and had been approved by the Blood Ancestor. Not even the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs would casually make a move against him.

If Nightcrypt eventually reached Core Formation, he would become a blood ripper, which was a position superior to that of a prime elder. That would make him a core element among the core elements of the sect!

A person like that was someone nobody could afford to provoke.

The blood master and grand elder of Nameless Peak were feeling much the same way as their counterparts from

Lesser Marsh Peak. They quickly made arrangements to bring an impressive gift along for their next visit to Nightcrypt.

Many thoughts and feelings could be found within the Blood Stream Sect now that Nightcrypt had become a blood master. As for Xuemei, she hovered there in midair, a blank look in her eyes. She opened her mouth as if to speak, but then simply coughed up some blood. Eyes flickering dully, she turned and headed toward Ancestor Peak in a beam of light.

Upon arrival, the first thing she did was confer with her father, Patriarch Limitless. Then she went to her immortal's cave on Ancestor Peak and went into secluded meditation.

People took note of Xuemei’s attitude, but didn’t ponder it too deeply. After all, anyone who failed to succeed in a fight for the position of blood master would find the situation hard to accept. Xuemei was acting just as it would be expected for her to act.

Although Song Junwan had mixed feelings, she gritted her teeth and flew toward Ancestor Peak to find the Song Clan patriarch. The new blood master was not from the Song Clan, and that was a very important matter. It was now a fact that could not be changed, so the Song Clan Patriarch would surely have questions and direction for her.

“Nightcrypt,” she thought, “I promised that if you stopped Xuemei from succeeding, even if you became blood master yourself, that I would help persuade the patriarch to accept and support you!” Taking a deep breath, her eyes shone with determination as she arrived at Ancestor Peak and offered greetings to the Song Clan patriarch.

Everyone was shaken by the events which were playing out. However, the cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect soon realized that something was odd about the situation....

“Weird, Nightcrypt is now the blood master. But... why hasn’t he come out from the trial by fire yet?”

“In the past, the new blood master would be teleported out immediately. But Nightcrypt... is still inside the Blood Ancestor's body?”

Soon, more and more people began to wonder the same thing. By that time, Bai Xiaochun had appeared in a region inside the Blood Ancestor’s body that no Blood Stream Sect cultivator had ever entered before!

It was a world that seemed to be formed from shattered ruins, from countless fragmented chunks of land that made up a larger continent. On first sight, it actually resembled an enormous, shattered mirror.

It was so large that its ends weren’t even visible. The broken fragments stretched as far as the eye could see, emanating an aura of death that cast everything in a gray light.

There were no signs of life anywhere. Everything was gray, and the pressure that weighed down on the area mounted continuously.

Bai Xiaochun looked around blankly, unsure of where he was. He remembered aborting his Throat Crushing Grasp. He remembered Xuemei’s mask falling off. He remembered seeing Du Lingfei’s face. However, everything had occurred too quickly. Not only could he never have been prepared for any of it to happen, it completely exceeded anything he could have imagined.

As he thought about what had just occurred, his mind trembled as though it were being rocked by thunder. There were so many questions he wanted to ask Du Lingfei, and yet before he could open his mouth to ask them, he was sucked into the blood vessel. The next thing he remembered was looking around at the gray world around him.

As he hovered in the air above the shattered world, he took a deep breath and looked down to examine himself. All of his wounds were gone, even the effects of Xuemei's Golden Touch. He was healed and restored to his absolute peak.

A powerful blood qi swirled inside of him, and his Undying Live Forever Technique was pulsing, seemingly forming a resonance with the world around him....

Ripples spread out from him that caused the world to fluctuate. As the two sets of fluctuations merged, the ripples grew more and more powerful, to a shocking degree.

At the same time, rays of light began to shine up from within the cracks that separated the shattered fragments of the world. Bai Xiaochun began to pant as he slowly formed speculations about where exactly he was.

Back when he'd first entered the Blood Stream Sect, he had felt a resonance very much like this, the source being something below the surface of the sect!

Apparently, all such resonances that he felt in the Blood Stream Sect originated... from this very location!!

This was their origin.

Heart pounding, he decided to try to take a step forward.

As he did, intense rumbling sounds filled the entire world around him. At the same time, the resonance between his Undying Live Forever Technique and the world grew more intense, more powerful. It was like the whole world was roaring.

It was a roar of complete excitement and anticipation!

The glow that filled the world began to flicker rapidly, and the beams of light shooting up from between the gaps began to link together. Soon, channels of electricity pulsed through the world, all of them connected.

The electricity flickered more and more quickly, and the rumbling sounds grew more intense. It was almost as if a life force were awakening that had been asleep for many years, something that was struggling to emerge from death because of the resonance which had formed!!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

Heaven and earth shook violently, and lightning crackled with unprecedented intensity. The entire world seemed to be waking up. The blinding beams of light were fully connected, filling the world with multi-colored light as a powerful life force erupted out.

It came from nowhere, as if it had been waiting for countless years to emerge. Although it was only a moment of recovered youth, it was enough to fulfill the dying wishes of the giant that was the Blood Ancestor!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Deafening rumbling sounds echoed out, and the countless shattered fragments that made up the world began to tremble. Innumerable bolts of lightning were stirring, and then, they all simultaneously shot out toward Bai Xiaochun!

In the blink of an eye, they were upon him, flooding over him, boring into his skin through his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, even through the pores of his skin.

Shaking violently, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and let loose a long cry. More lightning poured into him, as if the accumulated life force of the whole world were using its last bit of power... to deliver a legacy!

This was the ultimate legacy, something above the blood master level. The lightning bolts all contained memories, countless memories which bored into Bai Xiaochun, filling his mind, forming a complete tableau... of memories!

A legacy is memories!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0259 awe-chapter-260

They were not memories revealing the origins of the Blood Ancestor, nor were they recollections of his life. They did not include visions of what had occurred upon his death. Apparently, all aspects of the will of the Blood Ancestor had vanished completely.

Perhaps, in the moments before his death, the Blood Ancestor wasn’t worried about trying to possess someone to return to life years later. He only wanted one thing.... To pass on his legacy!

His legacy... of the Undying Live Forever Technique!!

Apparently, the Blood Ancestor felt that the legacy of the Undying Live Forever Technique was even more important than his own life!

Insane rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun’s mind as the countless lightning bolts from the world poured into him. Soon, the life force he had felt began to fade and dissipate.

As for the lightning bolts, they bored relentlessly into Bai Xiaochun, causing the fragmented memories to gradually solidify into the first portion of the legacy!

That was... the Undying Skin!

The first volume of the Undying Codex was the cultivation method for the Undying Skin, which now rapidly grew clear in his mind.

In fact, he even came to notice some areas where his own cultivation methods were slightly different. Apparently, this portion of the legacy was even more ancient than what he had studied!

Before Bai Xiaochun could analyze it in much detail, rumbling filled his mind as the second portion of the legacy appeared. It was... the second volume, that of the Undying Heavenly King. Strangely, his version of the legacy was exactly the same as what Bai Xiaochun had acquired from the gravekeeper!

There were absolutely no differences!

Bai Xiaochun was already panting. Now, the third portion of the legacy appeared inside of him, and as soon as he saw it, he was completely shaken, and his eyes shone with excitement.

Shockingly, it was... the Undying Tendons!

The first sentence within the legacy of the Undying Tendons was...

Grow the tendons by one portion, extend longevity by ten years!

Bit by bit, the complete mnemonic to cultivate the Undying Tendons appeared within his mind. Bai Xiaochun was breathing hard; he knew that, with this legacy, even if he didn’t eventually acquire the relic of eternal indestructibility, everything he had done had been worth it, just to acquire the cultivation method of the Undying Tendons!!

But of course, the legacy wasn’t over yet! Even as the Undying Tendons technique floated in his mind, the fourth portion of the legacy bored into him.

Floating there in his mind could be seen... the Undying Bones!!

The resilience of power comes from the bones, and can support limitless strength!

Bai Xiaochun trembled. His eyes seemed to burn with fire as the cultivation technique of the Undying Bones swirled in his mind. His heart was pounding as, for the first time, he took the initiative to absorb the lightning surrounding him.

“The next volume is definitely... the ultimate portion of the Undying Codex, the Undying Blood!!” He howled inwardly, and his mind trembled as...

The Undying Blood appeared!

Blood is the ultimate foundation of the physical body!

As of this point, all five volumes of the Undying Codex had been passed on to Bai Xiaochun, and existed in his mind, full and complete!

To Bai Xiaochun, the complete Undying Codex was indescribably precious. Without this bit of good fortune, after he mastered the Undying Heavenly King, he would have been forced to find the Undying Tendons volume on his own. Unfortunately, the lands of Heavenspan were huge, and Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t even have known where to begin looking for it. Furthermore, he would have been forced to expend significant resources to do so.

It would have been like searching for a needle in the ocean. Even if by some random chance he happened to acquire the cultivation method for the Undying Tendons, he would have next been forced to look for the Undying Bones method, and finally, the Undying Blood.

But now, he had the full and complete Undying Codex there in his mind. On Bai Xiaochun's path of cultivation, this type of good fortune could only be described as remarkable!

The complete five volumes formed something cyclical, meaning that Bai Xiaochun now understood the Undying Codex as a whole much better.

The skin was an external protection. The Heavenly King flesh provided power. The tendons increased speed. The bones provided the structure. The blood was the essence!

These five aspects together formed the Undying Codex, and if someone cultivated all of them to completion, then it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could kill them. That person would essentially be undying!

Because of the unification of the Undying Codex within Bai Xiaochun, his Heavenly Demon Body erupted with power. Blood qi surged inside of him, and when it combined with the lightning, it caused a second heavenly demon to appear behind him!

His fleshly body power increased exponentially. Trembling, he threw his head back and howled. And yet... the transmission of the legacy wasn't over yet.

The lightning which crackled around him began to coalesce into... a lightning crystal!

The crystal was glittering brilliantly, filled with innumerable magical symbols that flickered and glowed, almost as if they were thoughts. When Bai Xiaochun looked closer, he realized that within those symbols, he could see faces.

After looking even more closely at the faces, his heart shivered, and he gasped. Most of those faces were people he recognized, cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect.

He saw Song Junwan, Song Que, the Song Clan patriarch, Patriarch Limitless, Xu Xiaoshan, the blood masters.... There were many, many people, including quite a few that he didn’t recognize.

“This....” His eyes went wide. The matter didn’t take much thought to comprehend; he quickly guessed who these faces were....

“These are all of the people who have drawn upon on the hand of the Blood Ancestor to further their cultivation.... They borrowed the Blood Ancestor’s power for their cultivation, and thus... they established invisible connections with him!”

Bai Xiaochun felt like his mind was being struck by thunder. In the moment that the lightning crystal formed, the countless fragments that made up the world around him faded and went dark. All of the life force which had been present was now gone, and yet, the lightning crystal flickered with boundless light.

The appearance of the lightning crystal didn’t just cause the surrounding fragments to grow dark. Everything inside of the Blood Ancestor’s body seemed to fade. It was as if... the lightning crystal surpassed everything else present.

“This legacy has two main parts!

“The first part is the legacy of the Undying Codex. The second part... is the Blood Ancestor’s personal legacy!!

“Throughout the years, everyone who has cultivated with the help of the Blood Ancestor has become connected to him. That connection is part of the legacy!

“In addition to the blood master legacies inside the Blood Ancestor, there is also the legendary... the one and only... Blood Devil legacy!!

“That’s what I'm receiving right now…. This is… the Blood Devil legacy!” Bai Xiaochun’s mind spun as he understood everything. The lightning crystal shot toward his forehead and pierced inside of him. Instantly, pain washed through him, and he howled.

Shaking from the agony, he suddenly seemed to leave his body. His consciousness floated up and out of his head, spreading out... to fill the entire body of the Blood Ancestor!

From the head, it raced out, reaching all the way to the feet and the hands....

Millions of strands of his consciousness filled the Blood Ancestor.... He could sense the waters of the Heavenspan River surrounding him, soaking him. His right hand was reaching out of the river, stretching toward the heavens, and yet, he had no energy left.

At the same time, he realized that a sect was located on his hand... and everyone in that sect relied on his help to practice cultivation.

From the patriarchs to the Outer Sect disciples, everyone had a blood-colored gleam in their eyes. The sensation was very strange, but Bai Xiaochun didn’t have time to analyze it before everything suddenly ended.

His consciousness dispersed, and when he opened his eyes, he was back where he had been inside the body of the Blood Ancestor. It was almost as if everything which had just occurred was nothing more than a dream.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and a blank look could be seen in his eyes. It almost felt as if... he had just become the Blood Ancestor!

Although the sensation had ended quickly, he still felt countless thoughts swirling around in his mind, thoughts that weren’t his own. They were thoughts from countless years in the past, the thoughts of everyone who had ever called upon the Blood Ancestor for help in cultivation.

Now that the countless fragments of the world around him had faded into darkness, the legacy transmission was over. Although that ending came without any fanfare, Bai Xiaochun felt different.

From what he could feel inside of him, he had the power... to suppress the cultivation bases of anyone who had cultivated the path of the Blood Ancestor. Whether they were people or animals, corpses or gargoyles.... Whether they were Outer Sect disciples or Inner Sect disciples, Dharma protectors or elders, blood masters or prime elders, blood rippers... or even patriarchs!

Although he couldn’t completely suppress them, he knew that a single thought on his part could reduce their cultivation bases by at least half!

Of course, the person truly doing the suppressing wouldn’t be him, it would be the Blood Ancestor. Now that Bai Xiaochun had acquired the legacy of the Blood Ancestor, for all intents and purposes, he was the new Blood Ancestor!

Although his cultivation base was currently too low, not nearly as fearsome and terrifying as the original Blood Ancestor’s, it was still correct to say... that after obtaining the thoughts of the legacy, he... was the living, second Blood Ancestor!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0260 awe-chapter-261

Bai Xiaochun also had the premonition that a single thought on his part could unleash blood qi to bolster anyone who cultivated with the help of the Blood Ancestor, and lead to an explosive rise in battle prowess.

The mere idea left Bai Xiaochun's heart pounding. After blinking a few times, he couldn't help but imagine what it would be like to shock the entire Blood Stream Sect with the wave of a hand.

But then he imagined another scene in which, after raising his hand, the Blood Stream Sect went crazy trying to kill him....

Of course, imposter Nightcrypt could see everything that Bai Xiaochun was seeing, and couldn't help but tremble and let out an incredulous shriek. "Blood... Blood Devil!! Heavens! I can't believe... that you've become the Blood Devil!!"

The Blood Devil was a legend in the Blood Stream Sect. Supposedly, he would either lead the Blood Stream Sect to glory, or completely destroy it!

As soon as imposter Nightcrypt's voice rang out in Bai Xiaochun's mind, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his expression turned very serious.

"Quiet down!" he said, patting his bag of holding and looking around, heart pulsing with both excitement and anxiety.

“My original purpose was to become the grand elder.... Then I became a blood master, a development I could handle. Who could have imagined that I would become the Blood Devil...?” Although he couldn’t help but feel wonderful, he was also scowling.

After all, some people in the sect would happily welcome the Blood Devil, whereas others... wouldn’t permit him to exist, and would do anything to kill him!

“I definitely can’t let anyone in the Blood Stream Sect know what’s happened.... Ai. Being too outstanding is really annoying sometimes.” Sighing, he stuck his chin up and waved his sleeve, looking very much like a lonely hero.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, reduced the Blood Stream Sect to ashes....” He sighed, thinking about how he had accomplished something in the Blood Stream Sect... that he would never have been able to accomplish in the Spirit Stream Sect.

As he thought back to everything he had done here, he sighed even more. Then he remembered that beneath Xuemei’s mask was Du Lingfei’s face, and a profound gleam appeared in his eyes.

“Xuemei... Du Lingfei!” Taking a deep breath, he took a step forward and drew upon the legacy within him. Instantly, a vortex appeared in front of him, which he stepped into and vanished.

When he rematerialized, he was outside of the Blood Ancestor’s body, hovering in midair above the Blood Stream Sect, within the convergence of the blood qi that resembled his face.

Numerous people were wrapped up in their speculations about what was happening, and as soon as they caught sight of him, cries of surprise rang out.

“He’s come out!!”

“He stayed inside the Blood Ancestor’s body for much longer than any of the other blood masters. Could it be that he found some other sort of good fortune?”

“Hmm. Nightcrypt definitely seems a lot more powerful than he was before....”

Song Que grumbled bitterly. Xu Xiaoshan sighed. Master God-Diviner stood there trembling. Numerous gazes were all focused on Bai Xiaochun. Everyone was wrapped up in their own thoughts. However, the cultivators from Middle Peak were shaking, and the pressure that radiated out from Bai Xiaochun caused them to involuntarily bow their heads and then drop down to kowtow.

The entire Blood Stream Sect was shaken. Bai Xiaochun hovered in midair, looking down at all the disciples and their reactions. He enjoyed being the center of attention, and on any other occasion would have assumed the pose of a member of the Senior generation. But at the moment, he was somewhat distracted. In fact, his attention was soon drawn to Ancestor Peak.

There, he could sense Xuemei’s aura.

Whether it was because of becoming a blood master, or the Blood Devil, Bai Xiaochun was pleased to some extent, but not as much as he might have been, and the reason for that was Du Lingfei.

“So, Du Lingfei is Xuemei....” he murmured to himself. “And Xuemei is Patriarch Limitless’s only daughter, with a very high position in the Blood Stream Sect....”

Although Bai Xiaochun could never have predicted that Xuemei would be Du Lingfei, now that he thought about it, it did make sense.

After another moment of thought, his eyes flashed, and he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward Ancestor Peak. As he neared, numerous streams of divine sense appeared to examine him, but none blocked his path.

Without the slightest hesitation, he stepped onto the mountain and then began to follow Xuemei's aura to her immortal's cave.

It was surrounded by a grove of plum trees, and was closed tight. Apparently, Xuemei didn’t want to see anyone at the moment.

Bai Xiaochun stood at the border of the plum tree grove, looking at the large door. He wanted to see Xuemei, and ask her a question!

From the moment that Du Lingfei had disappeared, all the way until Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong had identified her as the spy in the sect, that question had been burning in Bai Xiaochun’s heart.

He wanted to know whether the things that had occurred back in the Spirit Stream Sect, especially the connection that had appeared between them when they were being chased by the Luochen Clan... were real or not!

“Xuemei, come out and see me!!” he said loudly, his voice echoing among the plum trees. The people on Ancestor

Peak who were watching him all heard what he said.

Inside the immortal's cave, Xuemei also heard. However, even after waiting for some time, Bai Xiaochun got no response.

“Du Xuemei, come out and see me!!” he said again. This time, he spoke even more loudly. By this point, all of the patriarchs on Ancestor Peak were watching the scene, as were the prime elders, and the blood rippers in their secluded meditation facilities.

They weren’t sure exactly what had occurred between Xuemei and Nightcrypt, but they could well imagine what sorts of things might have happened in the struggle between her and Song Junwan, a struggle that ended with Nightcrypt becoming the blood master.

Time passed. Several hours later, there was still no response from within Xuemei’s immortal's cave. Bai Xiaochun stood outside of the plum tree grove, surrounded by silence, his expression gradually turning grimmer and grimmer.

Shaking his head bitterly, he gave one last look at the immortal's cave within the grove of plum trees, then slowly turned and left. If she didn't want to see him, then he didn’t want to stand around uselessly.

Before he could leave Ancestor Peak, though, a beam of light flew down to meet him. A figure soon became visible, and it was none other than Song Junwan.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place and looked up at her. When their gazes met, he could see the mixed emotions in her eyes. Although she had thrown her command medallion to him, and had also said she would support him if he stopped Xuemei and became blood master himself, it was still impossible for her to cover up the complex emotions that she felt.

“I....” he began nervously. However, before he could say anything else, Song Junwan clasped hands and bowed.

“Song Junwan offers greetings, Blood Master. Please tarry a moment, the Song Clan patriarch wishes to see you!”

Bai Xiaochun stood there thoughtfully for a moment, then buried the matter of Du Lingfei deep in his heart; he didn't feel like thinking about it any longer. Instead, he considered the situation at hand. Even though he had technically become the blood master, if the sect itself didn’t approve of the situation, anything could happen.

“My goal here is to get the relic of eternal indestructibility....” he thought. “I can’t stop Du Lingfei if she wishes to reveal my identity. If she doesn’t, though, then I have to pass the next test, which means seeing the Song Clan patriarch!” His thoughts were in chaos, but he managed to pull himself together and nod in response to Song Junwan. Then the two of them headed toward the Song Clan patriarch’s immortal's cave on Ancestor Peak.

Song Junwan maintained her silence along the way, and Bai Xiaochun wasn’t really sure what to say. When they reached the entrance to the immortal's cave, Song Junwan stopped and looked over at him.

“I don’t regret what I promised,” she said. “I've already explained everything to the patriarch. In my heart, you are the blood master. As for how the patriarch views the matter, I’ve done everything I can to convince him to agree with me.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded. Then, taking a deep breath, he gritted his teeth and walked into the immortal's cave. As he passed her, Song Junwan hesitated for a moment, and then added one more thought.

“There have been times in the past when outsiders acquired the position of blood master. You… can take a hard stance with him.” With that, she turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun watched her leave, then continued on into the immortal's cave. Before long, he was in the cave’s main hall. The first thing he saw was the Song Clan Patriarch, sitting cross-legged on a stone dais!

The patriarch seemed to emanate a feeling of profound age, and was surrounded by intangible fluctuations. As soon as Bai Xiaochun neared, he felt incredible pressure weighing down on him.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The pressure from the patriarch’s cultivation base caused Bai Xiaochun to stop in his tracks, trembling. It felt as though countless mountains were crushing down onto him, and forced him to push back with all the might his cultivation base could muster.

After a moment, the pressure suddenly vanished, causing Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base power to suddenly run wild inside of him. The heavenly demon appeared behind him, and his mid Foundation Establishment cultivation base erupted.

In that moment, the Song Clan patriarch opened his eyes, and his shining gaze came to settle on Bai Xiaochun, seemingly piercing into the deepest layers of his heart.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had his heaven-defying mask. Despite the fact that he had lost control of his cultivation base, the mask still concealed his true level. The Song Clan patriarch looked him up and down, and apparently didn't notice anything out of the ordinary.

The entire process only lasted for a few breaths' worth of time, but to Bai Xiaochun, it seemed much longer than that. Sweat was rolling down his face by the time the Song Clan patriarch retracted his piercing gaze. At that point, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Nightcrypt offers greetings, Patriarch.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0261 awe-chapter-262

As soon as the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, the Song Clan patriarch snorted coldly, and then spoke words that echoed as deafeningly as thunder. “Admit to your crimes, Nightcrypt!”

Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was trembling, and the intensity of the patriarch's voice caused his face to drain of blood. He felt like he was a tiny rowboat being tossed about by the raging sea that was the patriarch’s fury, a rowboat that could capsize and sink at any moment.

He almost felt like he couldn’t endure, and was even considering using his newfound powers to suppress the patriarch’s cultivation base. But then Song Junwan’s words echoed in his mind. Although he couldn’t be sure if what she’d said was true, after considering everything that had occurred between the two of them, he made his choice. Gritting his teeth, he pushed back against the pressure, lifted his head up and looked directly at the Song Clan patriarch.

“What crimes did Nightcrypt commit!?” he said coldly and slowly, his veins of steel pulsing, blood qi surging.

“The position of Middle Peak blood master belongs to either Song Junwan or Xuemei,” the Song Clan patriarch said coolly. “No matter what occurred, any person other than them who acquires the title will have no choice other than to return it! You took a position that doesn’t belong to you! I will have that title back, and you *will* submit.”

“I, Nightcrypt, am loyal and faithful to the sect. I've performed countless meritorious services. If I'm not allowed to have the trifling blood master title, then so be it. You want to take it back? Well, I can’t stop you, but... don’t even think that I’ll submit to you!” Although Bai Xiaochun was nervous, he could read between the lines. If the patriarch wanted to strip him of his blood master title, there wouldn’t be a need to waste so many words. The patriarch could simply kill him.

However, the fact that he was spending so much time talking indicated that the Song Clan patriarch didn't actually want to remove the title from him. The truth was that such a title couldn’t simply be given or taken. Bai Xiaochun would have to die first, and then a certain amount of time would have to pass before another blood master could be raised up.

In fact, that was why Middle Peak had been bereft of a blood master for so many years.

With all these thoughts in mind, Bai Xiaochun stood there, a look of unswerving determination on his face.

The Song Clan patriarch looked at Bai Xiaochun and then let out a cold harrumph. “That girl Junwan knows me quite well, and has clearly taught you a thing or two. Am I right?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked, but didn’t utter a word in response.

The Song Clan patriarch flicked his sleeve and rose to his feet on the stone dais. “Nightcrypt, are you willing to accept me as your adoptive father, to become my adopted son?!”

Despite the fact that he spoke with a cool voice, the sound was so loud that the immortal's cave seemed like it might explode.

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken by the patriarch’s words. Despite the vast difference in age between them, Bai Xiaochun could tell that the patriarch harbored no ill will towards him, and actually viewed him as extremely important.

His heart filled with many complicated emotions as he stood there silently. After a long moment passed, he looked the Patriarch in the eye, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Nightcrypt offers greetings, Father!”

The hint of a smile broke out on the Song Clan patriarch’s somber face, and within it could be seen his approval of Bai Xiaochun. The truth was that it didn’t matter very much to him who exactly became the blood master, as long as that person... was close to the Song Clan, and had strong character.

The blood masters were the face of the Blood Stream Sect, and embodied the might of the mountain peaks. In the coming war, they would be very important figures to the sect as a whole.

The patriarch had long since been paying attention to Nightcrypt’s doings. Although he still had some suspicions about how he had accomplished everything he did, he was still very pleased. That was especially true of his shocking skill in the Dao of medicine.

The only thing he wasn't very happy about was Nightcrypt’s cultivation base. He was only in Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment, and that seeming weakness would make future growth difficult.

“We are on the cusp of war. If you fight well, then I’ll discuss matters with the other patriarchs. Perhaps we can pull off a heaven-defying act and remold your spiritual sea. Although such a thing couldn't be done overnight, we might be able to push you from Mortal-Dao into Core Formation.

“If you reach Core Formation, you will become a blood ripper. As for where you would end up in the end, it would all depend on your own good fortune. I can't say for sure what will happen, but considering your luck, you may be able to walk a path of your own.” With that, he waved his right hand, and a fist-sized violet-colored lamp flew out to float in front of Bai Xiaochun. Voice softening a bit, the Song Clan patriarch said, “Since you’re my adopted son now, I'm giving you this to keep you safe. It’s a magical device that I used years ago. It can release a bloodflame that can burn anything and everything. It’s comparable to the attack of a Core Formation cultivator.”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the violet lamp, and could immediately tell that it was something the Song Clan patriarch deeply valued. When he reached out to hold it, he could sense warmth flowing into him. The lamp also emitted a soft light that made it seem anything but ordinary. At the same time, it radiated a sense of intense danger that made Bai Xiaochun feel like he was looking at a raging fire.

The fact that the patriarch was giving him something like this showed that he truly did view him as a son.

Although Bai Xiaochun was delighted to have been given such a gift, it filled him with even more mixed emotions than before.

“Many thanks, Father!” he said softly, bowing his head.

With that, the Song Clan patriarch smiled broadly and said, “As a blood master, you may take an immortal's cave on Ancestor Peak, and may come and go as you wish.

Furthermore, as my son, you may come to visit me anytime you wish. If you have any questions about your cultivation base, feel free to come to me to get an answer.

“Very well, take your leave. In seven days, a grand ceremony will be held to tell everyone under heaven that Nightcrypt... has become the blood master of the Middle Peak of the Blood Stream Sect!”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. He had never imagined that he would pass this test so easily. In fact, from the things the Song Clan patriarch had said, it was obvious how important he felt Nightcrypt to be. After making his way back to Middle Peak, he sat down in his immortal's cave, wondering if everything was a dream.

So many things had happened. First was the revelation that Xuemei was actually Du Lingfei. Then he became the blood master, and then the Blood Devil. And after all that, the Song Clan patriarch took him as an adopted son. In the end... Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but think that the Blood Stream Sect really had treated him well. He was already starting to feel very bad about all of his decisions.

Even as he sat there sighing to himself, night fell. Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, and he looked up. Outside of his immortal's cave, a voice could be heard, soft and respectful.

“Nightcrypt, my lord, may I seek an audience? It's me, Master God-Diviner.”

Master God-Diviner stood outside the immortal's cave, a fawning expression on his face, looking both nervous and respectful. The moment he found out that Nightcrypt had become the blood master, he started getting very nervous. After thinking about everything that had gone on between them, he got the sensation that a cold wind was creeping up his back.

Not wanting to delay matters, he had braced himself and immediately headed over to Bai Xiaochun, a valuable gift in hand.

The fact that Master God-Diviner had interrupted his ruminating left Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit irritated.

“What do you want?” he said coldly. As soon as Master God-Diviner heard the words, his heart seized, and he cursed bitterly to himself. Based on Nightcrypt’s tone, it seemed like he wanted to settle accounts. Master God-Diviner could think of plenty of ways in which that might happen. Nightcrypt could throw him into the blood prison, or send him to the front lines in the coming war. There were many ways that he could be sent to his death.

Considering that Master God-Diviner was an elder of Middle Peak, there was no way he could extricate himself from the situation. Flustered at how he was teetering on the edge of death, he gritted his teeth and flopped down onto his knees.

“Blood Master, I beg for your favor. A person of great moral stature such as yourself will surely overlook the crimes of a scoundrel like me. In the past, I acted in ignorance. Blood Master, please be lenient. I implore you, take this ancient Godpower Talisman that I came across years ago. Surely it can sate your anger.” Suppressing the pain he felt at losing such a powerful object, he held out a green paper talisman.

The talisman emanated fluctuations that Bai Xiaochun could feel even inside his immortal's cave, fluctuations that seemed to have originated in ancient times. Heart trembling, he emerged from his immortal's cave to stand in front of Master God-Diviner and examine the talisman for a moment.

The arts used to create this ancient Godpower Talisman were long since lost to the world. It could provide a temporary but incredible boost to one’s fleshly body, making one vastly more powerful.

To Bai Xiaochun, it meant that he could power up to an incredible and shocking level.

Looking over at Master God-Diviner, he put the talisman into his bag of holding, then cleared his throat.

“We’re all fellow disciples,” he said. “There’s no need to act like that. I've long since forgotten what happened before.” With that, he patted Master God-Diviner on the shoulder.

Master God-Diviner had been incredibly nervous, and had even been wondering if he would make it out of this situation alive. Therefore, once he heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, relief flooded his heart. Feeling like he had unexpectedly been pulled away from death's door, and had even been treated magnanimously, he was now more grateful than ever.

Bowing his head over and over again, he repeatedly swore to follow Nightcrypt to the ends of the earth. Seeing the encouraging smile on Bai Xiaochun’s face, he felt even more moved. Finally, he left.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as he realized that, considering his current position, all he had to do was show people a bit of favor, and he would reap enormous benefits as a result.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0262 awe-chapter-263

Time passed quickly. Seven days. During that time, many cultivators from Middle Peak came for formal visits. Obviously, they all brought gifts with them, hoping to resolve any past differences they’d had with Nightcrypt.

Bai Xiaochun dealt with most of the people in the same way he'd dealt with Master God-Diviner. As a result, not only did his reputation in the Blood Stream Sect improve, but quite a few people were so thankful that they also implied that they wanted to become his followers.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased, and couldn’t help but muse that he had handled everything perfectly. In fact, he decided that he would continue to use such methods in the future.

Eventually, it came time for the official ceremony to install Nightcrypt as the blood master. On that day, all cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect were present. Prime elders, blood rippers, and even four of the patriarchs showed up to bear witness to Nightcrypt taking his position!

As the grand elder of Middle Peak, Song Junwan formally presented the blood master robe to Bai Xiaochun. As soon as the garments settled onto his shoulders, Nightcrypt’s somber features grew even more solemn.

All of the cultivators of Middle Peak, including Song Junwan, dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Blood Master!”

Their voices echoed out for all to hear, accompanied by a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering eruption of blood qi from the mountain peak itself, which rose up like a pillar into the sky.

As of this moment, Nightcrypt’s name had become formally inscribed into the historical canons of the Blood Stream Sect. It was official. He was... Middle Peak’s blood master.

The cultivators from the other mountain peaks didn't kowtow, but they did clasp hands and bow. Although Nightcrypt wasn’t the blood master of those other mountain peaks, he was still a blood master, and was thus a figure deserving of respect, someone that no one in the sect could possibly dare to offend.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the kowtowing cultivators, and inside, sighed a thousand sighs as countless thoughts raced about in his mind.

It had been many years since anyone had occupied Middle Peak’s Blood Master Temple, but from this day forth, it would be called Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave. Without his express invitation, no one would be able to set even a foot inside.

Not even Grand Elder Song Junwan could do so.

The ceremony lasted for most of the day. Toward the end, the blood masters and grand elders from the three other mountain peaks came to offer formal greetings, and then a feast was held in Blood Master Temple.

The atmosphere was jovial, and no one got the impression that Nightcrypt wasn’t fit for the position. Song Junwan sat next to him to attend him, and when she looked over at him occasionally, although mixed emotions could be seen in her eyes, they also glowed brightly.

Throughout the entire occasion, Bai Xiaochun never saw Xuemei, nor Patriarch Limitless. Eventually, the feast ended, and the guests departed. Bai Xiaochun sat alone in Blood Master Temple, looking off into the distance, relishing the feeling... of power.

“The lives of everyone on Middle Peak... are in my hands.” he murmured to himself. As he watched the setting sun, he could sense the fluctuations emanating out of Middle Peak, and the resonance it formed with him.

That was one of the unique abilities of a blood master. Furthermore, his powers weren’t necessarily limited to Middle Peak. If required, he could step in for the blood masters of the other peaks to suppress people on those mountains.

“Du Lingfei doesn't want to see me,” he murmured to himself. “However, I already have the answer to my question.” He shook his head. The fact that he had been formally installed as blood master indicated that no one in the Blood Stream Sect was aware of his true identity.

That much was clear, much to Bai Xiaochun’s relief.

“Everyone has the right to make their own choices. I guess this is your choice.” After a bit more thought, he finally put the matter to rest.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t want to stay in the Blood Stream Sect any longer than necessary. Whether it was for his own personal reasons, or for the fact that war would soon break out, he wanted to leave as soon as possible.

“It’s almost time to say goodbye....” He sighed and looked down the mountain toward Grand Elder Song Junwan’s immortal's cave.

As the blood master, there were many methods he could employ to get into Song Junwan’s immortal's cave. As far as her restrictive spells, and the attendants outside the cave, he could deal with them all as easily as flipping over his hand.

However, he couldn’t go about the task casually. In the end, he called upon his authority as the blood master to assign Song Junwan a special mission.

She would be sent to a legacy pocket realm within the Blood Stream Sect. Normally, it was a place where the blood masters would go to reach Core Formation when they reached the great circle of Foundation Establishment. As for Song Junwan, she was reaching the point of breaking through to Core Formation, so being able to enter that pocket realm would be of incredible benefit.

Normally, it was a place that only blood masters could enter. Not even the patriarchs could easily arrange for others to go in. Only the blood masters themselves could hand that right over to another person.

When Song Junwan heard about the arrangement, she looked at Bai Xiaochun with shining eyes. Apparently, this act resolved even the slightest remaining reservations she had in her heart. As for Bai Xiaochun, he could hardly stand the look in her eyes, and inwardly cursed her vixen ways.

After handling Song Junwan, he also arranged for the attendants who guarded her immortal's cave to be sent off on a task. The result was a rare occasion: Song Junwan’s immortal's cave was left completely unguarded.

It wasn’t anything very noteworthy as far as the sect went. No one would ever dare to try to break into a grand elder’s immortal’s cave. Besides, there would be little point to doing such a thing.

After everything was arranged and taken care of, Bai Xiaochun strolled out of Blood Master Temple and walked along the paths of the Middle Peak. The sky above was a muted orange color, and a gentle wind caressed his cheeks. No one else could be seen as Bai Xiaochun slowly approached Song Junwan’s immortal's cave.

After crossing the lake of blood, he found himself in front of the main door. Reaching out, he placed his hand onto the surface of the door. He could now control all spell formations on Middle Peak, so all it took was a slight push to send it swinging quietly open.

As the door opened, his heart began to beat faster, and his eyes shone with keen anticipation. He had been in the Blood Stream Sect for quite some time now, and from the time he had been a completely nobody all the way to his current situation, he had done everything in order to acquire the relic of eternal indestructibility.

As of this moment, his goal was at hand!

“I wonder... what exactly the relic of eternal indestructibility is?” Taking a deep breath, he strode into Song Junwan's immortal's cave. He was familiar with the place, and quickly walked into the inner sections of the cave, where Song Junwan’s bedchamber was located.

Looking around, he saw decorations which clearly identified it as a woman’s room. He almost felt like he was doing something a bit perverted. He cleared his throat.

Calming himself, he performed an incantation gesture and then waved his finger, causing blood qi to form into a sword, which he sent stabbing down into the ground.

He began to dig a large hole, going deeper and deeper until he hit something that seemed to be made of metal, something so tough that when the sword qi hit it, the qi collapsed.

In fact, even though he could see the item with his naked eye, it was completely invisible to divine sense.

“Eee?” Leaping down into the bottom of the hole, he found himself standing on what appeared to be a black sheet of iron.

“This is the place!” Reaching down, he rubbed the iron sheet, which caused a cold sensation to pierce him down to his bones. After trying several different ways to dispel the stabbing cold, he drew upon the Undying Live Forever Technique and finally blotted it out.

Once again, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, forming a sword with blood qi, which he used to hew out more space along the edges of the iron sheet. Gradually, more of the metal was revealed.

Furthermore, a magical symbol became visible. It was very complicated and ornate, and Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure how to read it. However, in the very center of the symbol was an indentation that seemed to be the exact shape of a medicinal pill.

Instead of pulling out the medicinal pill he had concocted back in the Spirit Stream Sect, he studied the iron sheet a bit more. Suddenly, he gasped.

“This is Middle Peak, which is actually the middle finger of the Blood Ancestor.... I wonder if this iron sheet is actually a ring on the giant's finger? A ring belonging to the Blood Ancestor!”

With that, he thought back to the moment when he had accepted the legacy, and had momentarily become the Blood Ancestor. Now that he thought about it, he was certain that a ring had indeed existed on the middle finger!

“There are all types of magical devices of holding. I wonder... if this ring is actually a ring of holding?” After a bit more thought, he slapped his bag of holding and produced the medicinal pill, which he carefully placed into the indentation in the magical symbol.

In the instant that it clicked into place, it melted, and the magical symbol lit up, causing blinding light to shine out. Thankfully, the light was contained by the immortal's cave, otherwise it would have been visible from quite a distance.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as he backed up and looked at the magical symbol. Gradually, the light began to fade away, and cracking sounds could be heard. Bai Xiaochun watched as the magical symbol changed shape, as though a sealing were being undone. Soon, it transformed into the shape of a door.

Bai Xiaochun stood there, staring at the door for a long moment before finally gritting his teeth.

“I've come this far, I can't stop now. Let’s see what exactly this relic of eternal indestructibility really is!!” Taking a deep breath, he stepped forward and vanished into the door.

When he reappeared, he was in another location, surrounded by blurry darkness. He wasn’t sure how large of a space he was in, but he could see that right in front of him was a palm-sized turtle shell.

On top of the shell was a golden leaf!

Other than those two items, nothing else was visible.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0263 awe-chapter-264

Bai Xiaochun's eyes widened as he stepped forward and grabbed the golden leaf. Other than its unusual color, there didn't seem to be anything special about it.

As for the turtle shell, it was deathly still, and radiated an air of complete and utter ancientness. However, it didn't seem at all like the eternal and indestructible relic that Bai Xiaochun had been expecting.

“Where's the relic of eternal indestructibility?” he exclaimed. Then he began to search around madly for anything else in the area. However, other than the turtle shell and the golden leaf, there was nothing present.

At one point, he bit down on the golden leaf, but it was so hard his teeth almost broke. Obviously, it wasn't intended to be eaten. Bai Xiaochun was starting to go crazy. His eyes were bloodshot, and he was starting to wonder if he had been played. He quickly produced the soul of imposter Nightcrypt.

“Dammit, tell me the secret of eternal indestructibility!!” Bai Xiaochun raged. “The only things here are this leaf and this turtle shell. They're completely useless!!”

Imposter Nightcrypt's soul stared around blankly, clearly flummoxed. “This is impossible! The mysterious sect definitely said it was here....”

Bai Xiaochun was feeling more and more like he had been played. When he thought about all the toil and suffering he had put into this mission, even risking his own life, only to come here and find nothing, he felt more wronged than he ever had in his entire life.

He searched around a bit more, but to his increasing despair, found nothing. In the end, he stared down at the turtle shell. Of course, he loved turtles, but this turtle shell was tiny, much tinier than even his turtle-wok.

“Don't tell me the relic of eternal indestructibility is this turtle shell? But what is it supposed to do...?” Bai Xiaochun was about ready to cry. Sighing and scowling, he finally put the turtle shell and the golden leaf into his bag of holding, and then walked out through the glowing door. Looking down at the hole he had excavated in the floor of the immortal's cave, he scowled, and then began to fill it in. Some time later, after making sure everything looked exactly as it had before he arrived, he trudged away.

Outside the immortal's cave, he sighed, then looked up into the sky. To him, it felt as if the world had just played a huge trick on him.

“All of my toil and suffering....

“Things got so dangerous I almost died....

“I... I...” Feeling incensed, he returned to Blood Master Temple, then pulled out the golden leaf and the turtle shell and studied them a bit. Eventually, he realized that the golden leaf was extremely durable, and apparently, impossible to tear apart.

However, other than that, it didn't seem special. He suspected that the leaf must contain some technique hidden inside of it, but even after opening his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, he couldn’t see anything.

As for the turtle shell, it seemed dead, completely dried out, albeit relatively sturdy. Once upon a time, a living turtle had existed inside the shell, but now, that turtle was nothing more than a corpse.

Bai Xiaochun didn't rest that night. By the next morning, his eyes were bloodshot, and he finally decided to give up on his research. He let out a sigh filled with grief and discontentment.

Imposter Nightcrypt’s soul was so scared that he didn’t dare to utter a peep, fearful that Bai Xiaochun might flip out and kill him. However, he couldn’t help but feel wronged in the whole matter; he hadn’t been telling lies!

As he sank into despair, Bai Xiaochun realized that he had no desire to remain in the Blood Stream Sect any longer. Sighing continuously, he began to think of a reason to leave. However, even as he did, a beam of light shot up from each of the other three mountain peaks.

Within those three beams of light were the three other blood masters. When they arrived on Middle Peak, their expressions were casual and relaxed, and apparently they had come simply to chat. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but wonder what their real purpose was, but he humored them. For a bit of time, they simply talked about random things.

Finally, the blood master from Lesser Marsh Peak couldn’t restrain himself from getting to the point.

“Nightcrypt,” he said. “The three of us have been given some top-secret information. Bai Xiaochun, the Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert from the Spirit Stream Sect, has not been in secluded meditation for the past few years. He actually left the sect some years ago to gain experience. Some people even suspect that he entered

Blood Stream Sect territory! Whether or not that information is correct, we can’t be completely sure. However, even the chance that it might be true means that we could have an opportunity to kill Bai Xiaochun!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding, but he didn’t let any of that emotion show on his face.

Tone solemn, the blood master continued, “All of us blood masters swore an oath to the patriarchs that we would hunt down and kill Bai Xiaochun. We would exterminate the young successor of the Spirit Stream Sect, their Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert!

“In our cultivation, we have to cut down Chosen like that. Kill them, steal their good fortune, and use that to realize our own Dao!

“We swore a formal oath as blood masters, and since you’re a blood master now too, we all need to stand as one! Since the oath has our names on it, then naturally, it should have yours as well!”

The blood masters from Corpse Peak and Nameless Peak nodded solemnly. From the way they were looking at him, it seemed they wouldn’t leave until he agreed.

Bai Xiaochun was already trembling in fear because of what he'd heard. Obviously, these people had sworn an oath, and yet failed to live up to it, and now they were trying to drag him into their little cabal....

He thought about refusing, but could tell that they wouldn’t let him off the hook easily. Even as he hesitated, the Corpse Peak blood master produced a jade slip from his bag of holding.

“This is the oath we swore to the patriarchs. We had to make a special request to bring it here today. All you have to do is place your mark upon it, that’s all.” With that, he handed the jade slip over to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun eyes widened when he realized how well-prepared the group was. Inwardly, he cursed about how outrageous these blood masters were, forcing him to swear an oath to kill himself....

The more he thought about it, the worse it sounded. That was especially true when he examined the jade slip and saw that, in addition to the substantial reward that was being offered upon Bai Xiaochun’s death, there was also a punishment for failure. That punishment involved being confined to the sect's Abysmal Defile.

Bai Xiaochun had heard of the Abysmal Defile before. It was a deep ravine filled with wind and fire, a place where cultivation felt like pure torture. Ordinary people couldn’t even survive the place.

When he saw that, he felt more nervous than ever. As Bai Xiaochun, he hadn’t done anything to these three blood masters. What right did they have to make things so hard for him, to risk such incredible punishment in their attempt to kill him?

Seeing the fierce looks in their eyes, he gritted his teeth and put his mark onto the jade slip. Inwardly, he was chuckling coldly. “You people might as well abandon any hope of ever succeeding. Even with me in your little cabal, you’ll be waiting forever!”

When they saw Bai Xiaochun put his name on the oath, they all smiled and relaxed a bit. The truth was that this agreement had been a huge headache for them. Back when they had first sworn the oath, they had been attempting to take the lead among the other cultivators in the sect. However, after all the years that had passed, they still hadn't accomplished their mission. Now that Middle Peak had its blood master, they all agreed that they had to get the fourth blood master into their group no matter the cost. After all, an addition person to help would be the ideal situation.

“I might only have been promoted to blood master recently,” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding very serious, “but this is a serious matter. We need to turn up some clues immediately. Since Bai Xiaochun is supposedly in Blood Stream Sect territory, then how about this... I’ll go search for him right away! If I turn anything up, I’ll send you three a message instantly. Then we can all attack together to take Bai Xiaochun down!”

As soon as the other three blood masters heard his suggestion, their expressions brightened, and they exchanged meaningful glances. Then, all of them declared their own intentions of going out to search for Bai Xiaochun. As soon as anyone found new information, they would notify the others. Feeling very pleased, they all left.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled coldly inside, then began to pack his things in preparation for departure.

Some time later, he left the gates of the sect, and then turned to look back, his eyes filled with sighs and other mixed emotions.

The truth was that even he wasn't sure exactly how he felt about the Blood Stream Sect.

“It would be great if this war could be avoided somehow....” he murmured to himself. With that, he turned to look in the direction of Xuemei’s immortal's cave on Ancestor Peak.

“The choice is yours,” he said with a sigh. Then he turned and flew off in a beam of light.

Before he had gone very far, he suddenly realized that he already missed the Blood Stream Sect. He thought back to everything which had occurred there, and couldn’t help but look over his shoulder one more time at the sect.

“I might not ever come back here again in my entire life....” Even as he hovered there looking back at the sect, his eyes suddenly went wide with shock.

Something was happening on Nameless Peak! A black cloud was rising up into the air, a huge mist filled with countless gargoyles. The gargoyles were exploding into action, howling at the tops of their lungs in voices that could shake heaven and earth.

“Down with the Blood Stream Sect! We will be free! We will be our own masters!”

“Cultivators of Nameless Peak, you have oppressed us gargoyles for too long! We refuse to submit to you! Today is the day we rebel against the Blood Stream Sect!”

The shrill cries of the gargoyles erupted out to shake the entire Blood Stream Sect. That was especially true of the cultivators on Nameless Peak, who were utterly shocked. The gargoyles which had previously been under their command were suddenly completely ignoring their orders.

Even some of the oldest gargoyles were joining in, and they seemed the most enraged of all. There was one gargoyle who appeared to be their leader, and was located in the very center of the army.

That particular gargoyle suddenly launched into a speech, his voice loud and piercing.

“Fellow Gargoyles, the time has come to attack! Fear not, my master has already become a blood master, someone powerful enough to shake the world. Today is the day that we gargoyles rise to prominence! We will shake off the manacles placed upon us by Nameless Peak! Today, we fight for our freedom!!”

Bai Xiaochun gasped as he realized who the leader of the gargoyles was. It was none other than Shadow, the gargoyle he had fed medicinal dregs to when he had been concocting medicine on Nameless Peak. Back then, the gargoyle had been meek and subservient, but now, it seemed completely arrogant and despotic. His words immediately caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver.

Swallowing hard, beads of sweat popping out on his forehead, Bai Xiaochun quickly turned and made his way off into the distance, fearful that after the gargoyle insurrection was put down, the Blood Stream Sect would look for him to settle accounts.

“Dammit! I was wondering why nothing strange happened when I concocted medicine on Nameless Peak.... It turns out the disaster was brewing this entire time....” Looking like he might cry at any moment, he left behind the raging howls of the gargoyles and the cold snorts of the patriarchs. He fled for his life.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0264 awe-chapter-265

After leaving the Blood Stream Sect, Bai Xiaochun shot through the air in a beam of light. The sky stretched out in all directions, peppered with occasional clouds. Flying along as he was, Bai Xiaochun felt as free as a bird.

The jungle which filled the Blood Stream Sect’s territory was the color of blood, and in many areas, radiated a dangerous and brutal aura.

However, whatever deadly entities existed therein quickly shrank down into the shadows as soon as they sensed Bai Xiaochun’s blood qi.

Virtually everything in the area was connected in some way to the Blood Stream Sect, and Bai Xiaochun soon found that it could all be suppressed by his aura.

As far as the cultivator clans in the area went, Bai Xiaochun’s high status in the Blood Stream Sect ensured that he could completely ignore them. When blood masters went out of the sect, even if they went out alone, they had numerous ways to suppress anyone or anything they came across. They could travel about completely unobstructed.

Even the most powerful beasts Bai Xiaochun encountered would retreat once they sensed his aura. None of them dared to provoke him.

Bai Xiaochun flew along enjoying the scenery, feeling very relaxed. Along the way, he spent some time to practice cultivation. Now that he was away from the Blood Stream

Sect, he could tell that his Undying Live Forever Technique was working a bit more sluggishly.

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about that. Thankfully, he had the legacy of the Blood Ancestor, and could now be considered a true master of the Undying Codex. Although his cultivation of it had slowed some, he was practicing the true method, and was thus able to compensate for the decrease in speed.

As for the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, Bai Xiaochun decided it was best not to cultivate it in Blood Stream Sect territory. A signature magical technique like that would be best practiced after he passed over the Luochen Mountains.

However, he was itching to try out his Human Controlling Grand Magic, and managed to find a few chances to practice with it. He hadn't spent much time working on it, but now that his cultivation base was at the mid Foundation Establishment stage, the spiritual power he could wield ensured that the Human Controlling Grand Magic was quite marvelous.

By now, he had been studying the powers of gravity and repulsion for years, and yet, wasn't willing to give up on them, and continued to spend time analyzing them.

When he got tired because of all the traveling, he would impose on one of the local cultivator clans. Whenever he left such clans, they would always throw a big fanfare out of respect for him.

As time went on, his sighs grew heavier. He was going to miss being a blood master. As far as he was concerned, giving up that title was worse than losing a fortune.

“Ai. I really am simply too righteous. Too principled! I'm giving up so much for the sake of the Spirit Stream Sect.” The more Bai Xiaochun thought about it, the more he felt like he was really making a huge sacrifice.

“And then there’s Song Junwan....” Whenever he thought about her, he remembered her beautiful features, and would feel his heart growing hot. He sighed.

“Wan'er, good and evil just can’t mix....” he said, trying to look as righteous as possible. However, the disappointment he felt forced him to turn back and look longingly in the direction of the Blood Stream Sect.

The further away he got, the more he thought about everything that he had done there. Eventually, he just had to grit his teeth and fly onward.

One day, an enormous mountain range rose up in front of him, stretching out along the horizon like a dragon.

Although it seemed close, from what Bai Xiaochun could tell it was at least half a day away even if he flew at top speed.

“Once I get over those mountains, I’ll be in Spirit Stream Sect territory....” Determination flickered in his eyes, and he was just about to fly onward when, all of a sudden, he caught sight of three beams of light flying through the air toward him.

Soon, an old man became visible, along with two younger men. The old man had a Foundation Establishment cultivation base, whereas the younger men were in the seventh or eighth level of Qi Condensation, and were flying with the aid of magical devices. As they all flew along, the old man frowned and rebuked the younger men.

“War is on the horizon! You two are the future of the Shuiyue Clan! If you fly with speed like that, how do you think you’ll manage to stay alive in the fighting!?

“To fly with magical items requires control of your cultivation base! However, skill is only one of the things that will enable you to fly!” The two young men gritted their teeth and worked harder to control their magical devices. And yet, no matter what they did, they still wobbled unstably. One of them even managed to get so out of control that he fell off.

“Imbecile!” the old man spat. “The clan has spent a lot of resources on training you, and yet you’re as dumb as an ox!” He swished his sleeve, catching the young man before he fell. He was about to continue with his tirade when he suddenly sensed Bai Xiaochun.

Irritated, the man looked over and said, “Hmph! What are you blind? Don’t you know this is Shuiyue Clan territory? You’re not allowed to fly around here. Screw the hell off!”

Bai Xiaochun had originally planned to ignore the group of three and simply fly along. But then the old man had the nerve to curse him.

“What did you just say!?” Bai Xiaochun said, glaring back at the old man.

The old man’s eyes went wide, and then he gasped and began to tremble visibly.

“That’s the blood master of Middle Peak,” he thought, “Nightcrypt the Plaguedevil!!”

The old man’s face drained of blood as he thought back to what he had just said. Heart pounding, he bitterly clasped hands and bowed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“The Shuiyue Clan offers greetings, exalted Blood Master!”

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and then approached the group of three.

“How did you people know where to find me?” he asked icily.

The sight of Bai Xiaochun looking them up and down caused the two young Qi Condensation cultivators to bow their heads in terror. Even the old Foundation Establishment cultivator felt his scalp tingling in anxiety as he thought of all of the blood-curdling stories he'd heard about the blood master of Middle Peak.

“W-we didn't know you were in the area, oh exalted Blood Master. The Shuiyue Clan is based in this region, so we pay attention to all the passing cultivators. When we realized you had come, we immediately came out to offer greetings, and invite you to our humble clan to rest for a bit....”

Bai Xiaochun nodded arrogantly. Considering he was a blood master, he figured it would be best to act much more brazenly than normal.

“Very well,” he said. “Take me to this clan of yours.”

The old man shivered. Plastering a smile onto his face, he immediately led Bai Xiaochun back to his clan.

The Shuiyue Clan was located in Blood Stream Sect territory, and although it wasn’t one of the larger cultivator clans, they were more powerful than the smaller clans. A middle-sized clan, they occupied three mountains that were covered with emerald green fruit trees, forming quite a contrast with the surrounding crimson-colored vegetation.

The fruit on the trees was pitch black, and emanated a strange, fragrant aroma which filled the entire Shuiyue Clan, giving it a somewhat otherworldly air.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun got near, he noticed the strangeness of the clan, and couldn’t help but exclaim, “Eee?!”

“Exalted Blood Master, these fruits aren’t a product of the Shuiyue Clan. They grow here naturally. In the past, the Blood Stream Sect came to harvest some of the fruits, and determined that they were toxic. Because of that, they’re inedible, and are only good for making poison. However, the aroma of the fruit can be used to drive away certain wild beasts. It also has certain hallucinogenic properties....”

The old man didn't seem very surprised at all by Bai Xiaochun’s reaction. Whenever anyone visited the Shuiyue Clan for the first time, they would be somewhat entranced by the fruits. However, despite many years of research, no one had ever found a use for the fruits by cultivators.

When Bai Xiaochun flew into the Shuiyue Clan and stepped onto their first mountain, the clan members there were all shocked, and immediately began to bow in formal greeting. Bai Xiaochun ignored them and walked up to one of the fruit trees. After plucking one of the fruits off of the tree, he looked at it closely, and quickly confirmed that the information he'd been given was true.

“The world of plants and vegetation is filled with all sorts of fantastic oddities.... This fruit's aroma truly can cause hallucinations....” As he looked around at the trees, he could tell that they were very old. After looking around for a bit, he was even able to find one tree on the third mountain that was so old he couldn’t identify its age.

That tree was so large that ten people could wrap their arms around its trunk. It was somewhat withered, with more than half of the tree showing no signs of life.

The aroma emitted by the fruits on that tree were particularly strong. After sniffing one of the fruits, Bai Xiaochun felt somewhat lightheaded, and was forced to rotate his cultivation base to dispel the effects.

“What a pity. You can dispel the effects within a breath of time with your cultivation base. If the effects lasted longer, maybe these fruits might be worth something.” Shaking his head, he turned to leave. However, it was at that moment that his expression flickered, and he looked down at his bag of holding.

A moment before, he had sensed a certain aura inside the bag suddenly change. After scanning the bag of holding with divine sense, a strange expression appeared on his face. Waving away the surrounding members of the Shuiyue Clan, he pulled out a little palm-sized turtle shell, which was the potential relic of eternal indestructibility he’d acquired from Song Junwan’s immortal's cave. Before, the turtle shell had seemed as hard as a rock. After all, whatever was inside the shell was long since dead. However, because of the fragrant aroma of the old fruit tree, the shell had changed, and whatever was inside now seemed different, somehow soft and pliable.

Suddenly, a green little tail popped out of the back of the shell. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as four little limbs emerged, and then an emerald green head....

“It's alive?” Gasping, he looked closer. Closer examination revealed that the head and limbs were all limp and lifeless. They almost just looked like mere decorations.

Something about it seemed strange, but Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure what. After a moment of thought, he shook the turtle shell back and forth a bit. When the head and limbs smacked into the shell, knocking sounds rang out....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0265 awe-chapter-266

He didn't stay very long in the Shuiyue Clan. As evening fell, the cautious and respectful clan members threw a big ceremony. Later, Bai Xiaochun strutted out of the clan, then flew up into the air. A few hours later, he was getting close to the Luochen Mountains.

By now, the idea of finally going home surged strong in his heart. Taking a deep breath, he sped toward the mountains, carefully sending divine sense ahead of him to scan the path. Soon, he realized that there was something different about the mountains.

There was a strange aura lurking within them, something that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to jitter fearfully.

“What’s going on...?” he thought. More cautious than ever, he proceeded along until it was late in the night. At that point, he was nearing a ravine that led into the mountain range, and that was when he saw something completely shocking.

A faintly glowing screen of light was visible, stretching high up into the heavens, almost like a gigantic wall!

That wall of light rose up from the mountains, climbing as far as the eye could see, completely separating the territory of the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect. There was no need for Bai Xiaochun to perform any tests to determine how powerful that wall was. He was sure that if he tried to force his way through it, he would instantly be destroyed in body and soul.

Face flickering, he confirmed that the shield wall contained the fluctuations of Spirit Stream Sect magic.

“The Luochen Mountains are the Spirit Stream Sect’s strongest defense against the Blood Stream Sect!” Heart trembling, he thought back to some of the rumors he'd heard about the Luochen Mountains when he was in the Spirit Stream Sect.

Supposedly, the mountains formed the main line of defense that had been erected by the Spirit Stream Sect 10,000 years ago.

“Back in the Blood Stream Sect, I didn't get the sense that much was happening in the outside world. But the truth is that the war has reached the point that this shocking shield has already been put up. That’s very telling.” After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun approached the ravine, then turned back and looked in the direction of the Blood Stream Sect.

A long moment passed. Finally, he checked the area to make sure he was alone, then took a deep breath and slowly reached up and put his hand on his face. After a pause, he removed the mask, revealing his true facial features!

He put the mask away and waved his sleeve to dispel the bloody aura of the Blood Stream Sect. Then he pulled in all the fluctuations of his Undying Live Forever Technique. A moment later, the aura of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation erupted from his spiritual seas, and he began to walk toward the light shield.

When he made contact with the shield, a shocking presence gripped him, something that left him feeling icy and numb. From the feeling he got, he could be wiped out at any moment. He immediately stopped in place, unmoving, his anxiety mounting.

After a few breaths worth of time passed, the icy presence slowly faded away, and he could move again. Taking a step forward, he passed through the shield.

“I doubt that was the divine sense of one of the patriarchs,” he thought. “It was probably the formation automaton of this spell formation!” Fear lingered in his heart as he looked back at the shield. Taking a deep breath, he looked around at vegetation that was no longer crimson, but rather, lush and emerald green.

The feeling he got was completely different than the Blood Stream Sect. Here, he could sense the aura of the Spirit Stream Sect!

“Bai Xiaochun is back!” he murmured. With that, he blurred into motion, flying through the air and simultaneously unleashing the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation. As he did, violet light shone out around him, filling the area with the same color.

His third eye opened on his forehead, and his view of the world suddenly became brighter and more colorful. Now that he didn’t need to conceal his techniques, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, drawing on Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning. Heaven and earth shook as he waved his sleeve, causing water vapor to roil about, which was the Waterswamp Kingdom.

He threw his head back and laughed uproariously. The feeling of not having to be worried about anything filled him with joy. The pressure and mixed emotions he had felt in the Blood Stream Sect were now gone, and he began to think about everyone he knew in the Spirit Stream Sect.

“Uncle Li, Big Fatty Zhang, Hou Xiaomei, Hou Yunfei, Xu Baocai, Elder Brother sect leader, Bruiser. I'm back!!” Spirits high, he shot through the air at top speed.

Eventually he stopped to rest a bit, and pulled out the turtle-wok. The mere sight of it left him sighing deeply.

“I didn't dare to use it in the Blood Stream Sect. But now, I can finally perform fourfold spirit enhancements!!” Bai Xiaochun was very excited about the prospect. He had already collected plenty of material to create four-colored flame, and therefore, didn't waste any time.

Without any hesitation, he took out all of his magical items and began to perform spirit enhancements. He was especially excited to enhance his signature little wooden sword. After the enhancement, it didn’t look like wood anymore, but rather, gold!

As for the Golden Crow Sword, it didn’t change very much, but the light that shone off of it was more dazzling than before. Before long, almost all of his magical items had been enhanced.

As for the lamp that the Song Clan patriarch had given him, he enhanced that too. As the silver designs glittered on its surface, he held it in his hand, and his soul trembled. The fluctuations coming off of the lamp were terrifying to the extreme.

“I'm so powerful I even frighten myself!” he thought, eyebrows dancing up and down. After carefully putting the lamp away, he savored the experience of proceeding along back to the Spirit Stream Sect.

At one point, he suddenly recalled the little turtle, which he pulled out of his bag of holding, then shook back and forth a bit to produce the usual knocking sounds.

After playing around with it for a bit, he found to his surprise that he could actually grab the tail and stretch it out. When he let go, it would snap back into place with a twang.

“Wow, you can do that!? he said, shocked. He tried the same thing with the turtle’s limbs, and even the head, and they all did the same thing.

He even tried throwing it down, and found that the little turtle could actually be used like a weapon. After finding some boulders, he threw the turtle at them, and they shattered. The little turtle, however, wasn’t even scratched in the process.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get the feeling that this was no simple turtle. As he made his way back to the Spirit Stream Sect, he would often shake it, stretch it, and throw it around. A few days later, he suddenly realized that a faint aroma was emanating out from the turtle.

It was hard to detect, but after inhaling it, Bai Xiaochun found that his cultivation base suddenly stirred. Then he rotated it, and large amounts of spiritual energy from the area rushed toward him, causing his spiritual seas to emanate shocking fluctuations.

“Whoa!” he exclaimed. He tried to reproduce the effect, but failed. However, after examination, he realized that brief rotation of his cultivation base had resulted in the same progress it would normally take him a month of meditation to produce.

Gasping, he looked closer at the little turtle.

“Don’t tell me this really is the relic of eternal indestructibility...?” he thought, heart thumping in his chest. After thinking about all the marvelous aspects of the little turtle, he once again gently shook it back and forth in his hand.

However, no matter which way he shook it, he couldn’t reproduce that fragrant aroma. Not wanting to give up, he kept shaking it in his hand as he went along. Finally, three days later, the turtle once again emitted a fragrant aroma.

Bai Xiaochun immediately sucked it in, causing his cultivation base to surge, and the surrounding energy of heaven and earth to rush toward him. He was almost like a vortex, sucking in all the local spiritual power.

There were some cultivator clans in the area, and when people saw what was happening, their eyes went wide, and their hearts trembled.

Elated, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Hahaha! Yet again, Bai Xiaochun’s wits come out on top. This little turtle is great. I don’t have to expend any effort at all, and can increase the speed of my cultivation.” At that point, he decided that he would spend time every day shaking the little turtle.

A few more days went by, and he finally caught sight of the Spirit Stream Sect. The three mountain peaks of the south bank rose high into the air, as did the four mountain peaks of the north bank, and Mount Daoseed, which hung high over the Heavenspan River. Scintillating light rose up from all of the mountain peaks, as if they were building up energy....

Powerful pressure and fluctuations rolled out in all directions, with the Spirit Stream Sect being in the middle of it all.

Excited, Bai Xiaochun shook the little turtle back and forth a few times.

“I'm finally back.... I can still remember how everyone could hardly stand to part with me....

“Considering I've been gone so long, everyone definitely misses me.... I wonder if Uncle Li has come out of secluded meditation yet...?” The more he thought about it, the more he was nervous for Li Qinghou.

Giving the turtle a few good shakes, he picked up speed and shot toward the entrance of the sect.

When he got close, four beams of light shot out from the sect, accompanied by a hoarse shout.

“Halt! Who goes there!?”

Four cultivators appeared, one of them in the great circle of Qi Condensation, and the other three in the fifth or sixth level. Even as the words rang out, the glow of magical techniques sprang out of their hands. However, when they caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, their eyes widened.

That was especially true of the cultivator in the great circle, who immediately began to tremble. It was none other than Chen Fei....

“Bai Xiao-- er, Sect Uncle Bai!” Thankfully, he was quick to change his wording. Without any hesitation, he clasped hands and bowed. The other three disciples’ jaws dropped, and then they also clasped hands in greeting.

It felt wonderful to finally be home. Striking the pose of someone of the Senior generation, Bai Xiaochun nodded magnanimously and said, “Excellent, all of you. Remember to always work hard at cultivation.”

With that, he proceeded along into the sect, bringing the group with him.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s grand spell formation didn’t hinder his path at all. As soon as he entered, he saw the south bank stretched out in front of him, bustling with activity. There was Green Crest Peak, Violet Cauldron Peak, and Fragrant Cloud Peak, as well as the servants district at the bottoms of the mountains. A few phoenixes were flying in the air, along with numerous cultivators. To Bai Xiaochun, nothing could have been more familiar. He suddenly felt the urge to make sure that everyone who missed him knew that he was back.

Hovering there in midair, he threw his head back and roared, “Ladies and gentlemen of the sect, I, Bai Xiaochun, am back!!”

His voice echoed about like thunder.

Chen Fei stood off to the side, feeling bad for the south bank.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0266 awe-chapter-267

"Brothers and sisters of the Spirit Stream Sect, Bai Xiaochun is back!”

Bai Xiaochun’s voice echoed like thunder throughout the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, and could even be heard on the north bank....

Moments before, the sect had been buzzing with activity, filled with a din of voices. But a moment later, everything went completely quiet. Even the phoenixes flying in the air above the sect shivered and forgot to keep flying.

Because Li Qinghou had gone into extended secluded meditation, Elder Zhou had taken over as the peak lord of Fragrant Cloud Peak. When the thunderous voice interrupted his own meditation, his eyes opened and his jaw dropped.

Zhou Xinqi had been practicing cultivation on Mount Daoseed, and had just finished a session of meditation and was preparing to leave. When she heard the voice echoing back and forth like thunder, her face fell.

Xu Baocai had just been preparing to go visit some friends on Green Crest Peak to flaunt some new exclusive information he’d come across, when he was suddenly interrupted by the booming voice, and his eyes went wide.

Big Fatty Zhang was standing miserably in front of Xu Meixiang as she berated him. Then they heard his voice, and they both looked up.

All of the cultivators and disciples on the south bank who had been dragged into Bai Xiaochun’s antics were struck mute by the words they had just heard....

On Fragrant Cloud Peak, one elder had been in the middle of giving a lecture about cultivation to a group of disciples who seemed to be hanging onto his every last word. When he was interrupted by Bai Xiaochun’s booming voice, his face fell. As for the disciples, they didn’t seem as shocked, but were clearly moved.

On Mount Daoseed, Zheng Yuandong stood there reading a jade slip, his expression grim. The news in the jade slip was anything but good, and he was just about to go to the Missions Office to announce an important mission, when suddenly, a booming voice interrupted his train of thought. Immediately, he stopped in his tracks, his expression flickering.

Also on Mount Daoseed were two prime elders whose faces fell. They had been among the group whose clothes were ripped to shreds by Bai Xiaochun’s gravitational repulsion pearl years ago.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the south bank, at how quiet it was, at how the birds couldn’t even fly, and how even the cultivators who had been speeding through the air had suddenly stopped in place. He was visibly moved.

“Does everyone still remember me...? You guys definitely miss me. Without me around, your cultivation must have been very, very boring....” Sighing, he looked over at Chen Fei and the other three cultivators. “Don’t you agree, Chen Fei?”

At first, Chen Fei wasn't sure what to say. Bracing himself, he chose to offer some praise.

“Sect Uncle Bai, you have unrivalled magical powers. You’re completely and utterly famous. Upon returning, your solitary shout raised the spirits of everyone inside and outside of the Spirit Stream Sect!” Chen Fei’s three companions were shocked to hear him say such things. They had already been surprised to see the reaction caused by Bai Xiaochun’s words from moments ago. But then they heard their Elder Brother Chen Fei, who they always took to be cold and distant, suddenly speaking in such a flattering tone. They couldn’t help but gasp.

These three hadn't been around in the days in which Bai Xiaochun came to be well-known. They had joined the sect in the later days, and had only heard stories about the things he had done. As of this moment, they were exchanging awkward glances.

Bai Xiaochun gave a long chuckle. “Hahaha! You’re right, of course. Everyone misses me to death. Look, a single shout on my part and everyone is at a loss for words.

“Don’t worry, everyone. I’m back. And I won't ever be leaving again....” Sighing, Bai Xiaochun was just about to shout out again at the top of his lungs, when suddenly countless, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering screams rose up from the three mountain peaks of the south bank.

“The heavens don’t have eyes! Bai Xiaochun is back!!”

“Dammit! Didn’t he go out to get experience? It's only been a few years, how come he's back so soon?!?!”

“Not good! The spirit tail chicken population is just getting back to normal....”

“The Apothecary Fiend is back!!”

As the screams echoed out, the phoenixes up in the air let out miserable shrieks and quickly flew away. The cultivators who had stopped flying gasped. Obviously, most of the cultivators who were capable of flying were in the Foundation Establishment stage. When they thought about the terrifying scene in the square when Bai Xiaochun ripped everyone's clothing to shreds, leaving them stark naked, their scalps went numb with fear, and they fled.

As for the ordinary disciples from the three mountain peaks, when they thought of the miserable scenes from the past, their hearts were filled with grief and indignation.

Zhou Xinqi gritted her teeth, her heart smoldering with hatred because of the words he had just spoken. With a cold snort, she decided to simply continue her session of secluded meditation....

Xu Baocai was scowling on the verge of tears, and had lost any mood to go out. However, as soon as he thought about Bai Xiaochun’s status in the sect, he flew out to go meet him.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times in response to all the screams. Coughing dryly, he rubbed his nose, and then looked over at Chen Fei and his companions.

“Hahaha! What a passionate group, eh...?”

Sweat dripped down Chen Fei’s forehead, but even after racking his brains, he couldn’t think of what to say next. His three companions looked over at Bai Xiaochun as reverently as if he were a god. They almost couldn't believe that a single sentence from a single person could cause the entire south bank to virtually collapse....

Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel a bit awkward, and even a bit irritated. Back in the Blood Stream Sect, he had been a blood master, and wherever he went, people treated him with the utmost courtesy. All he had to do was speak half a word, or glare, and people would be so scared they would start shaking.

Even as he grumbled inwardly about how unfair it was, a beam of light shot out from Violet Cauldron Peak, which was none other than Big Fatty Zhang, who threw his head back and let loose a long cry.

Hou Xiaomei had been in secluded meditation, but now she burst with excitement as she flew out into the open....

Then there was Third Fatty Hei and Hou Yunfei. The people who had deep connections with Bai Xiaochun felt differently than everyone else, and flew out, delighted.

Zheng Yuandong cleared his throat. Refusing to make an appearance wasn’t really an option. As he stood there on Mount Daoseed, looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he thought back to all the mischief he had caused in the past, and chuckled to himself.

It was in that very moment that a roar of delight echoed out from the north bank. Bruiser appeared, fully thirty meters tall, like a little mountain shooting through the air. His heaven-shaking, earth-shattering cry caused all of the countless beasts on the north bank to howl at the tops of their lungs.

The roaring of the beasts shocked the north bank into silence. Many disciples didn’t understand what was happening and flew into the air. But then they saw Bai Xiaochun off in the distance on the south bank, and immediately, their jaws dropped. Gasps began to ring out, along with cries of shock.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“He’s back!!”

Many of the north bank disciples were screaming and backing up; word began to spread like wildfire, sending the entire north bank into a commotion....

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily, stepping forward to meet Bruiser. Bruiser came to a stop in front of Bai Xiaochun, his eyes wide and his face a mask of joy. Without any hesitation, he shrank back down into the shape he had been when he was born. Then he latched his teeth onto Bai Xiaochun’s pant legs and refused to let go, apparently worried that Bai Xiaochun might leave him again to go on adventures alone.

Face beaming with joy, Bai Xiaochun reached down and scooped Bruiser up into his arms. Then he embraced Big Fatty Zhang, who seemed to be bursting with information to tell Bai Xiaochun. Before he could, Hou Xiaomei arrived, eyes fluttering as she looked at Bai Xiaochun. Big Fatty Zhang immediately stepped to the side.

Bai Xiaochun laughed happily again as he looked at Hou Xiaomei. He wasn’t the ignorant youth he had been in the past. After everything which had occurred in the Blood Stream Sect, he had matured quite a bit. Suddenly, he was struck by impulse to lean forward and hug Hou Xiaomei.

Hou Xiaomei’s face turned scarlet, and she pouted playfully as she pushed him away.

Before long, Hou Yunfei arrived, along with Xu Baocai. There were also many of the disciples whom Bai Xiaochun had helped in the Fallen Sword Abyss. More than a hundred people clustered around him, filled with excitement. After a bit of time, they headed toward Mount Daoseed, chatting and laughing, telling Bai Xiaochun about everything that had occurred in the sect in the years he had been gone.

One of the first things Bai Xiaochun asked about was Li Qinghou. Nobody was very sure about the details, but no one had heard any bad news. Bai Xiaochun felt a bit better hearing that.

Many people were surprised to see such a large group emerge to receive Bai Xiaochun. That was especially true of the people who had suffered at his hands, who were completely incredulous at what they were seeing.

Never could they imagine that a person like that, a person who had annoyed and frustrated so many people in the sect, would have so many friends who truly liked him.

Chen Fei’s three companions began to murmur among themselves.

“I've heard a lot of stories about Sect Uncle Bai....”

“Just what kind of person is he anyway?”

“For some reason, now that Sect Uncle Bai is back, the Spirit Stream Sect seems different than before. Things are usually busy, and the fact that war could break out at any time is a pressure that constantly weighs down over our heads. But now... how come that pressure seems to have lifted a bit?”

Chen Fei didn't follow Bai Xiaochun and the others. He watched them leave, feeling a bit conflicted inside. After hearing the comments of his companions, he fell silent for a moment, then softly said, “He's Bai Xiaochun. Legacy echelon-designate. Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert. Nobody can compare to him. The light which shines from him can cast everyone else into shadow. Most people have a love-hate relationship with him, and yet, everyone believes in him! That's Bai Xiaochun!”

The three companions said nothing further, but their eyes seemed to flicker with understanding. As Bai Xiaochun made his way off into the distance, their expressions filled with even more reverence than before.

As the entire Spirit Stream Sect was shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s return, a certain person emerged from an immortal's cave on Irispetal Peak.

It was a young woman, and as she looked over at the south bank, the wind lifted her hair, revealing fair, delicate skin. Her eyes glistened like pools of deep water, and although she wore conservative clothing, it was impossible to conceal her attractive, curvaceous figure. The alluring look in her eyes, though, made it such that any person who got close to her would feel the fires of desire rising up in their hearts....

Covering a smile with her hand, she said in a melodious voice, “So, you’re finally back, sweetie....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0267 awe-chapter-268

On the south bank of the Spirit Stream Sect, numerous eyes followed Bai Xiaochun as he flew like the wind toward Mount Daoseed, surrounded by more than a hundred friends.

Occasionally, his laughter could be heard, along with various boasting words.

“Listen, guys, I really experienced some heaven-shaking, earth-shattering things in the past few years. A bunch of people fought me for a Foundation Establishment Pill, and I almost destroyed an entire mountain! One of my flying swords cut down a whole group of Foundation Establishment cultivators! It was completely shocking! My scheming was god-like, and my magic unmatchable!

“Numerous powerful experts stood before me, trembling, their heads bowed. In fact, countless Qi Condensation disciples would look at me with wide eyes, their faces draining of blood as they begged for mercy....” His voice echoed out in all directions, loud and proud.

His friends didn't believe a word of what he was saying. They laughed and even poked fun at him because of his boasting. However, their faces were all covered with smiles, smiles of affection, wistfulness, and anticipation.

To these people, Bai Xiaochun was both a fellow disciple, and a friend who they would trust with their lives!

He was naughty and mischievous, but in critical moments, he could reverse fate. Although he often caused trouble, when lives were on the line, they would unhesitatingly put all trust in him!

He was a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment expert, the legacy echelon-designate, and to them, he didn't seem wildly arrogant. Although he annoyed people in countless ways, that simply made him less lofty and distant to those close to him. In their hearts, he was always and forever their friend.

That was especially true of Hou Yunfei. Such feelings of friendship were especially strong in him. He looked at Bai Xiaochun, then looked over at Hou Xiaomei, and he smiled broadly, wishing them well in his heart.

Hou Xiaomei’s face was bright red, and her heart was pounding. All she could think about was how Bai Xiaochun had hugged her, and as she looked over at him, her eyes glittered brightly.

In fact, they glittered in much the same way Song Junwan’s had....

Bai Xiaochun was extremely moved to be surrounded by so many familiar faces. One by one, various memories about the Spirit Stream Sect began to flood into his mind.

He truly felt as if he had come home, and had already forgotten about the screams which he had heard moments ago.

Slapping his chest proudly, he said, “You guys don't believe me? You listen to me. I, Bai Xiaochun, am totally awesome! One time, a Nascent Soul eccentric even praised me! And then guess what happened? He even took me as his adopted son!”

“Oh, we believe you....” Hou Yunfei said, chuckling. Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of Big Fatty Zhang and the others, but they also looked over and assured Bai Xiaochun that they believed him.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit depressed to see them chuckling in such a way. He very much wanted to tell them the truth. He had concocted medicine in the Blood Stream Sect! He had fought to the pinnacle inside the body of the Blood Ancestor! He was the illustrious and infamous blood master of Middle Peak!

But he couldn’t do that. It was very frustrating to not be able to bask in his own glory.

“I'm telling the truth, guys! When I went out to get experience, I got a super impressive title! There was also this super beautiful vixen--” Even as he spoke the words, he looked over and saw Hou Xiaomei’s eyes narrow into slits. “Um, but I didn’t marry her....”

“Which beautiful vixen was that? Please, tell me the details, big bro Xiaochun.”

“Uh....” Bai Xiaochun instantly went on guard. He was almost sure he could sense killing intent rising up in Hou Xiaomei. After all, he had become very sensitive to killing intent due to his experiences in the Blood Stream Sect.

He was just trying to figure out how to change the topic when, all of a sudden, a huge beam of light shot up into the air from Mount Daoseed, fully thirty meters wide.

Lands shook, mountains were rocked, and even the sky vibrated. The countless layers of clouds overhead began to spin into the form of a huge vortex. Rumbling sounds echoed out as something like a white sun appeared!

As the sun became visible within the vortex, something else took form within it: a huge black raven!

The raven’s eyes were closed, and yet, it radiated an energy that could shake heaven and earth. As that energy spread out in all directions, it became a powerful pressure which weighed down on everyone present.

Both the south and north banks of the Spirit Stream Sect went completely quiet.

Even Bai Xiaochun’s face flickered. Apparently, he had his own ideas about what was happening, and his expression became very serious as he looked at the pillar of light. His heart began to pound as he peered at the white sun, and the raven, wondering what exactly would happen.

“I know I have a high position in the sect,” he muttered hesitantly, “but there was really no need to go to such lengths to welcome me back....”

Xu Baocai swallowed hard, looking very nervous. Then he heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, and couldn’t help but quietly say, “I heard the first wave was supposed to leave in a few days. From the look of things, they’re leaving now.”

Bai Xiaochun still didn't understand what was happening, so he grabbed Xu Baocai’s arm and asked, “What’s going on? What first wave? Where are they going?”

“To the Luochen Mountains!” Xu Baocai replied, his expression grave.

Hou Yunfei’s eyes began to shine brightly. After reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment, his status in the sect was different than before, and he had even become the apprentice of one of the prime elders. As such, he had access to more privileged information than before. “Xiaochun, you've been gone for a while, but surely you’ve heard about the war between the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect. It’s on the verge of erupting at any moment. However, we can’t let the war be fought within the immediate vicinity of the Spirit Stream Sect. So, the sect has long since made arrangements for a huge spell formation to be erected in the Luochen Mountains, all for the purpose of fighting the Blood Stream Sect!”

Bai Xiaochun was shaken. For some reason, he had felt as if the war were even further away than before.

“After all the initial preparations are complete, they’ll teleport the first wave of cultivators over to the Luochen Mountains!” At almost the same moment that Hou Yunfei finished speaking, a profound and archaic voice echoed out from Mount Daoseed to fill the entire Spirit Stream Sect.

“First wave disciples, step forward immediately!”

Even as the voice rumbled out like thunder, Bai Xiaochun looked around and saw beams of light flying from both the south and north banks toward Mount Daoseed.

Some of them were Foundation Establishment cultivators, others were in the great circle of Qi Condensation. Some of the disciples weren’t capable of flight, and sped along on the ground.

Among the beams of light, Bai Xiaochun spotted Ghostfang and Beihan Lie. Their energy clearly surpassed that of ordinary cultivators, and they flew along like shooting stars toward Mount Daoseed.

Among the more than two thousand cultivators who made up the first wave, a few were prime elders, whose auras erupted out with particular intensity.

Last was a blurry figure who emerged from the vortex up above. He materialized into a middle-aged man, whose cultivation base fluctuations vastly exceeded those of the prime elders, and caused all light to dim.

Bai Xiaochun almost immediately recognized the man. He was the same patriarch who had emerged to help Bruiser, and was also the same person who received the Song Clan patriarch. He was one of the five great patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect, Li Zimo!

People around Bai Xiaochun immediately began to cry out in surprise. “The third generation patriarch!!”

It didn’t take long for the cultivators of the first wave to gather behind the peak of Mount Daoseed. Li Zimo waved his right hand, and the pillar of light erupted, causing a blinding glow to spread out and cover the gathered cultivators. Next, the light flickered, and more than two thousand cultivators vanished.

Moments later, everything went back to normal. However, the pillar of light connecting Mount Daoseed to the heavens remained in place, causing faint rumbling sounds to echo out continuously. As for the other mountain peaks, although no light shot up from them, Bai Xiaochun got the sense that they were pulsing with intense energy that could spill out in the form of light at any moment.

Everyone else in the Spirit Stream Sect was shaken. It was at that point that Bai Xiaochun heard Hou Yunfei’s voice again.

“That’s the first wave. It will only be a few days now until the second wave is teleported out. There are a lot more people assigned to the second wave. I’m among them, actually.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding. Looking over at Hou Yunfei, he saw him smiling warmly. At the same time, many of Bai Xiaochun’s other surrounding friends began to chime in to explain which wave they had been assigned to.

Bai Xiaochun quickly realized that every single person present, even the Qi Condensation cultivators, and even Hou Xiaomei, were all going to be fighting in the war.

It was obvious that this war was going to be the last stand for the Spirit Stream Sect!

Big Fatty Zhang could sense the atmosphere turning serious, and quickly said, “I heard my master say that the Spirit Stream Sect has been building a spell formation in the Luochen Mountains for years now, all for the purpose of defending against a Blood Stream Sect invasion. The power of that spell formation has been built up over generations, and is beyond extraordinary. The Blood Stream Sect might be strong, but it’s impossible to say how the fighting will turn out!”

Others began to chime in.

“That’s right! The Blood Stream Sect has pushed things too far. If we had agreed to their demands, we would have been forced to live a life of servitude, just waiting around for them to come back and kill us later!”

“The Spirit Stream Sect has been my home from the moment I joined it. Live for the Spirit Stream Sect, die for the Spirit Stream Sect!”

“We can't avoid this war. Whether or not we win, we’ll fight to the bitter end!”

Soon, everyone’s eyes began to shine with flickers of killing intent.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0268 awe-chapter-269

They weren't the only ones to be having such a reaction. Throughout the Spirit Stream Sect, virtually all hearts were pulsing with killing intent. Some chose to hold it in, some gave voice to it. Either way, a spirit rose up that could shake heaven and earth, filling all of the mountain peaks that made up the sect.

Bai Xiaochun had just returned, and hadn't been present for all of the Spirit Stream Sect's war preparations. However, he could well imagine what had gone on. As of this moment, everyone in the sect was completely united in their desire to fight!

Hou Yunfei turned to Bai Xiaochun and said, "Xiaochun, considering you've been gone for a while, you might not have heard the news from the Blood Stream Sect. A terrifying Chosen rose up there, someone named Nightcrypt. He was even promoted to be the blood master of their Middle Peak!"

"What?" Bai Xiaochun had been in the middle of worrying about the war between the two sects when Hou Yunfei's words struck his ears, causing him to narrow his eyes.

"That's right. Beihan Lie, Ghostfang, Shangguan Tianyou, and I all made an agreement. If we catch sight of this Nightcrypt, we'll all join forces to kill him immediately. Xiaochun, when the time comes, you have to help too, alright?!" Hou Yunfei's eyes flickered with the desire to kill. After reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment, he had changed in fundamental ways. He was now his own man.

However, in the end, he continued to value his friendships more than anything else.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding. Licking his lips, he was just about to reply, when the killing intent around him erupted at the mention of Nightcrypt’s name. Even Xu Baocai was gritting his teeth in anger.

Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes burned as if with fire, and of the group, only Hou Xiaomei seemed to look a little frightened.

“That Nightcrypt is completely vicious,” someone said, snorting coldly, “and has killed too many people to count. Based on the news I heard, he loves to drink human blood. In fact, if he doesn’t drink blood on a daily basis, he goes on a rampage. I heard it has something to do with the techniques he cultivates.”

“He drinks human blood?” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes going wide. It seemed completely incredulous. As far as he could remember, he had never done anything even similar to that.

“I heard that Nightcrypt has a completely twisted personality,” someone else said. “He’s a total pervert! He even has a bad reputation in the Blood Stream Sect. However, he’s so ferocious that nobody there even dares to stand up to him.”

“He’s a pervert? He has a twisted personality...?” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. For some reason, these descriptions didn't seem like him at all....

“That’s nothing,” Xu Baocai said with a growl of hatred. “I heard that he’s addicted to refining corpses. How terrifying!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went even wider.

Everyone seemed to want to top the others in terms of what they knew about Nightcrypt.

“In the end, though, he’s truly a Chosen. At first nobody knew who he was, and he was only in Mortal-Dao Foundation Establishment. Despite that, he actually defeated Xuemei and the Middle Peak grand elder. He even crushed Song Que! That's how he became the blood master!”

“I even heard that one of the Blood Stream Sect’s patriarchs took him as an adopted son....”

“Nightcrypt’s Dao of medicine is completely devilish. That's why they call him Plaguedevil....”

As soon as people brought up the Dao of medicine and the Plaguedevil moniker, people began to look over at Bai Xiaochun. His heart was now racing.

“Is this Nightcrypt really so bad?” Bai Xiaochun blurted subconsciously. “Those are all probably just rumors....” However, as soon as he finished speaking, Big Fatty Zhang clenched his hands into fists.

Worried that Bai Xiaochun might not take the matter seriously, he said, “Xiaochun, you have no way of knowing this, but Nightcrypt’s most terrifying aspect isn’t his brutality, but his augury magic. There’s nothing he can’t figure out! With the snap of his fingers, he can come to know anything in the heavens or on earth. In fact, he divined everything there was to know about you! We absolutely have to wipe this guy out of existence!”

Everyone around him nodded gravely.

Bai Xiaochun looked at Big Fatty Zhang with wide eyes, thinking back to everything that had occurred when he came back as Nightcrypt....

Xu Baocai gritted his teeth and said, “That’s right. We can’t let that bastard live. Dammit! If I could have divine abilities like his, I could die without regret. Based on what I've heard, there are already about ten different cliques in the sect which have formed, all devoted solely to killing Nightcrypt.

“The legacy echelon cultivators released a statement that they vowed to kill him, and even the prime elders have plans in place. I also heard that the sect leader offered a big reward for his head!

“Once the fighting starts, Nightcrypt is going to be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

The closer Bai Xiaochun and his friends got to Mount Daoseed, the more beads of sweat could be seen on his forehead. He felt wronged, of course. During his time as Nightcrypt, he hadn't done anything to offend so many people to the point where they should want to kill him.

That was especially true when he heard that the legacy echelon and the prime elders were planning to kill him, and that his own Elder Brother sect leader was offering a reward for him. Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and even as he prepared to say something, a voice suddenly echoed out from Mount Daoseed. It was none other than Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong.

“Bai Xiaochun, come see me immediately!”

“What?!” Bai Xiaochun immediately got nervous and jumpy, and even reached up to rub his own face and make sure he wasn’t wearing the Nightcrypt mask. To the surprise of all his friends, he nervously bid them farewell and then flew toward the hall where Zheng Yuandong awaited him.

After arriving, he hesitated outside for a moment before taking a deep breath and then entering the hall. After looking around, he saw Zheng Yuandong standing with his back to him, hands clasped at his waist.

Flickering lamplight lit the hall, which also seemed to be filled with a pulsating pressure. Bai Xiaochun had been a bit guilty before, but now started to get more nervous.

“Sect Leader, Elder Brother....”

“Bai Xiaochun, what gall you have!” Zheng Yuandong said, spinning in place, his eyes flashing like lightning. His voice boomed like thunder, and his cultivation base flared, emitting the pressure of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. He was only a hair away from the Core Formation stage!

If it had been a mere matter of cultivation base pressure, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t have been worried at all. But he already feared both Zheng Yuandong and Li Qinghou, and to hear his Elder Brother berating him angrily caused Bai Xiaochun to immediately leap to the conclusion that he knew about the Nightcrypt situation....

“Elder Brother sect leader, I know I made a mistake....” he said, looking like he was on the verge of tears. In his mind, if the sect leader knew that he was Nightcrypt, then the best thing to do was admit fault.

“You’re quite the daredevil aren’t you?” Zheng Yuandong said furiously. “Do you even think before causing so much trouble? You asked to go out and gain experience, and that was fine, but then you went so far as to hide your aura? Do you know how many villains are out there looking for you? Did you know that the four blood masters of the Blood Stream Sect swore an oath to kill you? If they found you, you would never have been able to escape!!

“The only thing the sect could do was spread word that you were in secluded meditation, and secretly search for you. We turned the whole Eastwood Continent upside down trying to find you!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then breathed a sigh of relief. Moved, he bowed his head meekly and admitted the error of his ways.

Zheng Yuandong scolded him a bit more, and when he was satisfied with Bai Xiaochun’s expression, he snorted coldly. By this point, he could see that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was already in the mid Foundation Establishment stage, and his eyes softened a bit. However, he still seemed angry.

“Fine. I'm not going to ask about why you concealed your aura, or where you went. You’re not a kid anymore, and you know how to behave yourself.... The real reason I called you here was to assign you a mission!”

Bai Xiaochun could tell from the sect leader’s body language that he’d gone a bit too far by leaving and concealing his aura. Trying to look stalwart, he slapped his chest and growled, “Elder Brother, just say the word. Even if it involves climbing mountains of blades and swimming through seas of burning oil, I won’t even frown, no matter what you say!”

Bai Xiaochun wanted to put on an impressive show, but he also didn’t want to commit to anything specific. Although his words were impressive-sounding, he hadn’t actually said that he would accept the mission.

Zheng Yuandong swished his sleeve dramatically and said, “The Spirit Stream Sect is about to go to war with the Blood Stream Sect. Your mission is, should you encounter the chance on the battlefield, you are to cut down the weakest of the Blood Stream Sect’s four blood masters, Nightcrypt!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun thought. He felt like he was about to go crazy. The Blood Stream Sect wanted him to kill Bai Xiaochun, and the Spirit Stream Sect wanted him to kill Nightcrypt....

The idea of trying to figure out a way to kill himself was so puzzling that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but frown.

Zheng Yuandong could see the odd expression on his face, and looked at him suspiciously.

“What’s wrong? All of the Blood Stream Sect blood masters deserve to die!”

More nervous than ever, Bai Xiaochun thumped himself on the again and said, “Elder Brother sect leader, don't worry. This Nightcrypt has a twisted personality, and loves to drink human blood. He is vile beyond description. Completely deranged, and deserving of punishment by all living beings. I heard that he seduced the grand elder of Middle Peak, and somehow won the favor of most of the patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect. A person like that is someone I definitely must exterminate!” Although he looked like the picture of righteous fury, inside, he was more anxious than ever.

“So, it turns out you know quite a bit about this Nightcrypt.” Zheng Yuandong looked a bit surprised.

Bai Xiaochun howled inwardly. It seemed that nothing he said today was coming out right. More nervous than ever, he continued, “I, Bai Xiaochun, am devoted to righteousness. During my wanderings outside the sect, I heard of this maniac Nightcrypt. Elder Brother sect leader, don’t worry. I, Bai Xiaochun, guarantee that I will accomplish the mission!”

Zheng Yuandong’s gaze slowly softened.

“With your Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base, and the fact that you’re already in mid Foundation Establishment, you shouldn’t have any trouble cutting down Nightcrypt on the battlefield. I’ll assign some people to work with you, some of the prime elders and legacy echelon cultivators. They’ll make sure you get your chance!

“Remember, you must accomplish this mission and kill Blood Master Nightcrypt. If you do, then you’ll be able to join the legacy echelon even without reaching Core Formation!

“The legacy echelon is the true foundation of the Spirit Stream Sect. No matter how bad things get, all of the sect’s resources will be focused on preserving the echelon!" The implication behind those words spoken caused Bai Xiaochun to feel shaken, and yet, also caused warmth to rise up in his heart.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0269 awe-chapter-270

The way he heard it, his Elder Brother sect leader was saying that even if the Spirit Stream Sect lost the war, there was still a way for him to keep on living.

Perhaps because of his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base, he was already part of a select group of people who would remain safe. However, if he managed to cut down blood masters in battle, then it would ensure that his rank in the sect rose even higher!

“You just got back,” Zheng Yuandong said slowly, “so go pay your respects to our Master. Then rest a bit. As for the arrangements for the battlefield, you’ve been placed into the fourth wave....”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Clasping hands formally to Zheng Yuandong, he didn’t immediately leave, but instead asked about Li Qinghou. Li Qinghou hadn’t offered him much of an explanation before going into seclusion, and back then, Bai Xiaochun had assumed it was nothing more than an ordinary session of meditation. Never could he have imagined that he was actually trying to break through to Core Formation. That was no simple task.

“Your Uncle Li has already reached Core Formation,” Zheng Yuandong said with a smile. “He’s now in the legacy echelon. He's currently in recovery, and should come out any day now.”

Eyes flashing with excitement, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and then rushed away.

After leaving the hall, Bai Xiaochun went to pay his respects to the portrait of his Master. Then he returned to his own immortal's cave on Mount Daoseed. Bruiser was waiting there for him, and immediately ran up and started tumbling around at his feet.

“Did you recognize me last time I was here?” Bai Xiaochun asked, petting Bruiser a few times.

Bruiser nodded and then let out a few yips.

“So, what did you think? Is your dad awesome or what? I went completely wild in the Blood Stream Sect. Nobody there ever dared to provoke me.” Bai Xiaochun was feeling very pleased with himself as he bragged about his accomplishments. However, it was then that he realized that Bruiser had matured even more. Shockingly, his cultivation base was on the verge of reaching late Foundation Establishment. Bai Xiaochun immediately felt sour inside.

“Your cultivation is going a bit too quickly, isn’t it?” he said. It didn’t seem fair. He had worked long and hard to reach mid Foundation Establishment, and had even risked his own life. All Bruiser had to do was fool around all day, and he got the same result.

Bruiser appeared to be very proud of himself. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, he made some barking sounds that no one else would be able to comprehend, but Bai Xiaochun, having raised him, could understand. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he gasped.

“The peak lord of Irispetal Peak fed you medicinal pills every day!? The founding patriarch frequently came to adjust your qi passageways? The old dragon came and let you drink his life blood?

“What? You went to the arcane pocket realm? Y-y-you....” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he glared jealously at Bruiser.

“Okay, tell me the truth. Did you go steal any bras while I was gone?”

Bruiser howled softly in response. The two of them chatted back and forth until evening fell. However, worried that Bruiser’s cultivation base might eventually exceed his own, Bai Xiaochun finally called an end to the chatting and sat down to meditate and work on his Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation.

Over the course of the following days, quite a few people came to visit, but after that, things quieted down.

After spending time reminiscing with so many acquaintances, Bai Xiaochun came to realize that the Spirit Stream Sect had changed while he’d been gone.

Back before he’d left, everyone was focused primarily on their cultivation. Although there were some conflicts and rivalries, it was always possible to hear people chatting happily. Everyone had always seemed relaxed. But now, silence seemed to prevail, and pressure seemed to constantly weigh down on the sect.

A storm was coming, the war, and all of the disciples were wrapped up in preparing for it.

Thankfully, because of that pressure and seriousness, the killing intent of the cultivators grew more intense. The survival of their sect was on the line, and however deep the cultivators sank into the pressure, that was how explosive their performance would be on the battlefield.

The Spirit Stream Sect was stronger now than it had ever been!

Virtually all of the items in the market outside the sect had been purchased. Furthermore, because so many disciples were buying things, prices had climbed.

That was especially true of spirit medicine, paper talismans, and other items designed for warfare. As far as magical items went, they eventually sold out completely. And when it came to the disciples from Violet Cauldron Peak who could perform spirit enhancements, they were constantly busy, and the lines only continued to grow longer.

Quite a few people started coming to Bai Xiaochun to ask for medicine concocting services. Even though they knew that terrifying things could result, they still wanted his help.

The more Bai Xiaochun came to understand the situation in the Spirit Stream Sect, the more his mood sank, and the more often he frowned. Currently, he was sitting on a boulder near his immortal's cave, a vantagepoint that allowed him to see the entire sect.

He could see all of the familiar mountains, the rushing Heavenspan River, and couldn’t stop wondering what the result of all the fighting would be....

“The Middle Reaches, and the Sky River Court....” he murmured. The chance to take over the position occupied by the Sky River Court was something that could arouse an indescribable thirst among sects of the Lower Reaches.

“Is it really worth it...?” he said, sighing. From the bottom of his heart, he truly hoped that the two sects wouldn't actually go to war. Perhaps other people thought of the Blood Stream Sect as a vicious, brutal, and devilish sect. But as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, they had treated him well.

Even as Bai Xiaochun sighed, a soft voice spoke out behind him.

“Maybe the Sky River Court isn’t worth it in and of itself. But the patriarchs’ hope of breaking through to the next level is involved. Plus, the sect itself would then have a chance to grow even stronger. Once all of the other current disciples have access to the spiritual energy of the Middle Reaches, it would only take a few dozen years or so for them to rapidly increase their cultivation bases. When you consider all that, it changes the story, doesn’t it?”

Taken by surprise, Bai Xiaochun turned to look over his shoulder, and saw someone standing there in a long green robe, pulsing with powerful energy, and smiling. It was Li Qinghou.

Li Qinghou looked very different from how Bai Xiaochun remembered him. He seemed more reserved and more dignified, and as Bai Xiaochun looked at him, he got the sense that there was an enormous vortex inside of him, something that, if it were unleashed, could shake heaven and earth in enigmatic ways.

Bai Xiaochun had never even sensed such fluctuations from the prime elders. Eyes widening, he shouted, “Uncle Li!!”

With that, he leapt to his feet and rushed over to hug Li Qinghou.

Li Qinghou laughed and tousled his hair.

“Yeah, you've grown up quite a bit, haven’t you?” In Li Qinghou’s eyes, Bai Xiaochun would always be that young boy who had lit an incense stick thirteen times on top of a mountain.

Li Qinghou’s words almost caused tears to well up in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. Back in the Blood Stream Sect, he had been forced to hide his identity, but had never forgotten about Li Qinghou and his kindness.

After returning to the Spirit Stream Sect, he had been worried that something went wrong in Li Qinghou’s secluded meditation. However, now that he could see that he truly had reached Core Formation, it filled him with incredible excitement, even more excitement than if he had just concocted a high-level medicinal pill.

“Xiaochun, the war is not as simple as you might imagine.” Li Qinghou sat down, and Bai Xiaochun sat down next to him. “In addition to everything I just mentioned, don’t forget about the reserve powers at the sect's command. When it comes to having control over the Lower Reaches, and the glory that would come with it, there are many factors involved.

“The war between the Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect is reaching a conclusion. The Pill Stream Sect has suffered major losses, and more than half of their disciples have already defected to the Profound Stream Sect. Although the Profound Stream Sect has also suffered significant losses, they're already in the process of recovering. The Pill Stream Sect has retreated to their sect headquarters, and it won’t be long now before the two sects become one, and they’ll be even more powerful than before.

“At this point, the Profound Stream Sect has two problems. One, they have to completely defeat the Pill Stream Sect. Two, they have to reorganize their sect and smooth out any internal conflicts. At the moment, the Profound Stream Sect is at its weakest, and has no choice but to press the Pill Stream Sect hard to defeat it. As for the Blood Stream Sect, they have been delaying in the hopes that the Spirit Stream Sect will meet their demands and allow the sect to be sealed.”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, trying to decide if he should bring up a certain topic. “Do we really have to fight? Isn’t there some other way?”

“Don't think too deeply into things,” Li Qinghou replied softly. “This war is really unavoidable. Any sect that aspires to get to the Middle Reaches will have to go to war eventually. If we don’t fight now, if we compromise, we will be bringing certain disaster down on ourselves in the future. We will wheeze and gasp our way to death over a thousand years. Does that really compare to going out in a blaze of glory in battle?!

“We can’t prevent the war from happening, and neither can the Blood Stream Sect. There is no other option. If we claim to have given up on the opportunity to better our own sect, people won’t believe us. Even oaths sworn between the sects will be worth little.

“The only way to end things without war would be for both sects to somehow come to trust each other in this moment of deadly crisis.

“However, it doesn’t seem likely that such a thing could occur.” Li Qinghou shook his head and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“Don’t think too much into it. Remember, you stay behind me when the time comes to fight. I fear that many people are going to die....” Li Qinghou sighed softly, then rose to his feet. Seeing that Bai Xiaochun seemed to be lost in thought, he reached down and clasped his shoulder.

“Come on, let’s go. I want to take you to see someone from the Senior generation. My own Master!”

Bai Xiaochun looked up in surprise. This was his first time hearing anything about Li Qinghou having a Master. From what he knew, the only person who could be a Master to Li Qinghou would have to at least be a prime elder, or perhaps even one of the five patriarchs.

After taking a moment to compose himself, he followed Li Qinghou off of Mount Daoseed. As they rose higher, Bai Xiaochun was surprised to find that Li Qinghou was actually flying up into the air behind Mount Daoseed.

There didn’t seem to be anything behind Mount Daoseed except the flowing waters of the Heavenspan River.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0270 awe-chapter-271

Bai Xiaochun was shaken by the words. Clearly, they contained profound meaning, and yet, he had no idea what that meaning was. However, Li Qinghou only seemed more impressive because of it.

Before long, they were in the air behind Mount Daoseed. Even as they neared their apparent destination, Bai Xiaochun still didn’t see anything out of the ordinary. After a moment of thought, he opened his third eye. Li Qinghou sensed what he was doing, and looked back at him, eyes shining with praise. Then, he stopped in place, hovering there while he waited to see what would happen.

As Bai Xiaochun examined the area with the Heavenspan Dharma Eye, he saw nothing. Therefore, he decided he might as well unleash some of the power of his three spiritual seas. Pouring their power into his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, and adding in some of his Heaven-Dao aura, he once again looked around.

Pain stabbed into his third eye, but at the same time, his view of the world changed. Just barely, he could now see the vague image of a majestic mountain floating in the air behind Mount Daoseed.

“A mountain....” he blurted in shock. Unable to sustain the use of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye any longer, he closed it. Panting, he looked over at Li Qinghou, an expression of complete incredulity on his face.

Suddenly, an ancient voice spoke out of nowhere. “What you just saw is something that only the sect leader, the legacy echelon, and the prime elders know about. The Spirit Stream Sect's ninth mountain peak!”

Along with the voice, an old man emerged out of thin air. He had long white hair, and wore a flowing blue robe.

His face was ruddy, and on his forehead was a red, fingernail sized birthmark. Despite his white hair, his face wasn’t very wrinkled, and his eyes shone with a piercing light. Clutched in his right hand was a four-colored jade pendant that glowed with dazzling light.

The air around him immediately began to ripple and distort, and the clouds in the sky began to churn. Shocking fluctuations flowed out from him, fluctuations which seemed to Bai Xiaochun to be like pressure from heaven. Even more shocking was the murderous aura which surrounded him, making him seem less like an old man and more like an ancient wild beast!

“Greetings, Master,” Li Qinghou said softly, clasping hands in formal greeting.

Despite having never seen the old man before, from his energy and murderous aura, Bai Xiaochun instantly guessed who he was. Taking a deep breath, he clasped hands and bowed. “Bai Xiaochun offers greetings, Patriarch!”

The old man looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, a smile on his face that, because of his murderous aura, seemed particularly ferocious.

“You’re not in the legacy echelon, and thus, have seen things you have no right to see. Admit to your crimes immediately, child!” The man’s murderous aura almost immediately seemed to wrap around Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun shivered, and his face drained of blood. To him, it felt as if he were surrounded by death and destruction, leaving him scared witless.

“Master, you've frightened Xiaochun,” Li Qinghou said, sounding a bit embarrassed.

Bai Xiaochun really was frightened. The combination of the old man’s smile and his murderous aura caused all of the hair on Bai Xiaochun’s body to stand on end. He felt like he was in the grip of death, and it even felt as if his blood qi wanted to explode out of him to compare itself to the old man’s murderous aura.

The old man chuckled darkly, waving his hand so that a field of mist sprang up, surrounding him and ensuring that only a vague outline of his form was visible.

“Very well,” he said from within the mist. “But I’m going to remember this, child. If you make any mistakes in the future, punishment will be waiting for you!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then stuck his chin up and tried to look as obedient as possible. Inwardly, though, he couldn’t help but feel a bit of disdain. From what he could tell, the old man was just trying to scare him and teach him a lesson. Bai Xiaochun himself had used such methods back when he was acting as blood master in the Blood Stream Sect.

“Sir, since you’re my uncle’s Master, then that makes you my Sect Grandfather. Sect Grandfather, please accept the formal greetings of the younger generation!” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very impressed, but still bowed deeply. Looking up, he patted his bag of holding to produce a medicinal pill bottle, which he held up above his head with both hands.

“Sect Grandfather, since this is our first meeting, sir, I would like to present you with the most precious spirit medicine I possess. Everyone who has consumed it has praised it to no end. The wonderful uses for this spirit medicine are virtually endless. Sect Grandfather, this gift is the sincerest expression of my familial piety, and I sincerely hope that you will accept it....” As he spoke, he kept his eyes fixed on the old man in the mist, and especially the four-colored jade pendant he held, which was obviously some sort of precious item.

Li Qinghou already felt a headache coming on. For any other person to offer a gift to someone of the older generation would be something relatively commonplace. However, when it came to Bai Xiaochun, Li Qinghou could already tell that something different was going on. Then he realized what Bai Xiaochun was looking at, and smiled wryly.

This was clearly not a situation of offering a gift to the older generation, it was obviously him asking for a gift to be given to him....

As Li Qinghou smiled wryly, the old man’s jaw dropped. After looking at Bai Xiaochun for another long moment, he was fairly certain he understood what Bai Xiaochun was thinking, and suddenly laughed.

“Ah, so you want a gift from me? Very well, I accept the medicinal pills, and will give you this jade pendant!” With that, the four-colored jade pendant flew out from the mist to hover in front of Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, the spirit medicine flew from Bai Xiaochun’s hand into the mist.

Bai Xiaochun was actually surprised. This wasn’t at all what he had intended. In fact, the unexpected gift of the jade pendant left him feeling a bit embarrassed. However, he didn’t hesitate at all to reach out and grab it, his heart swelling with excitement. After examining it closely, he realized that it was anything but ordinary. Furthermore, the power inside of it reminded him very much of the lamp that the Song Clan patriarch had given him.

“That’s a spirit treasure that can be used by a Core Formation cultivator,” the old man said, smiling. “Your cultivation base is a bit low, but if you catalyze the treasure with your Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment aura, you should be able to use it.” With one more look at Bai Xiaochun, the old man turned to leave.

“Qinghou, this kid isn’t bad at all. Why don’t you go ahead and pass on the Magic Plant Arsenal incantation to him?”

“Many thanks, Master!” Li Qinghou clasped hands and bowed. His entire purpose in coming here had been to gain his Master’s approval to pass on the Magic Plant Arsenal to Bai Xiaochun.

After all, Bai Xiaochun was not his apprentice, but rather, the apprentice of another Master in the sect.

Having gained the patriarch’s approval, Li Qinghou shot a glare at Bai Xiaochun, then led him back to Mount Daoseed. Outside of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, Li Qinghou gave him a jade slip that contained the secret magic of the Magic Plant Arsenal.

“The Magic Plant Arsenal isn't a type of control magic. Instead, you will be able use the power of plants and vegetation to create battle prowess. Every type of plant and vegetation has innate spiritual qualities that you can incite, thus creating a certain level of power!

“Of course, that’s only the first step. By combining different types of medicinal plants, you can create something like a spell formation, unleashing even greater power. With the Magic Plant Arsenal, you can create weapons almost instantly!

“The truth is that the spell formation I just mentioned isn’t really a spell formation, but rather, a pill formula. Not the type of pill formula that you use with a pill furnace, but rather a formula to create weapons that can unleash the deadly power of plants and vegetation!”

It was a technique that required a certain level of skill with plants and vegetation. Considering the level of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao of medicine, he almost immediately understood what Li Qinghou was talking about, and in fact, didn’t need any further instruction. With the jade slip Li Qinghou had just given him, he only needed the most important parts explained, and could cultivate the rest of it on his own.

Most important of all was that the jade slip contained the weapon formula, which had been pieced together over successive experiments performed by eighteen past cultivators of the Spirit Stream Sect!

Around the time evening fell, Li Qinghou prepared to leave. Before he did, he thought back to the medicinal pill Bai Xiaochun had given to his Master, and asked, “What kind of spirit medicine did you give to Patriarch Ironwood?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked guiltily, but having no other option than to tell the truth, he stuck his chin up and proudly said, “Patriarch Ironwood? Oh, I gave him the most precious type of medicinal pill I have in my bag of holding! It’s the most famous pill in the Spirit Stream Sect, which I myself created!”

As soon as Li Qinghou heard this, his expression flickered with disbelief. A moment passed, and then he hesitantly asked, “Aphrodisiac Pills?”

Bai Xiaochun nodded, feeling a bit guilty, and when he saw Li Qinghou’s ashen face, he suddenly started to get nervous.

“Hey, that pill is great,” he said, “and that’s no lie. Really, everybody loves it. Even the old dragon from the north bank praised it incessantly. After all, the patriarch is already getting pretty old, isn’t he...?”

Mind spinning, Li Qinghou glared at Bai Xiaochun one last time and then flew at top speed toward the ninth mountain peak....

Bai Xiaochun still felt a bit guilty, and continued to mutter to himself after Li Qinghou left. “I didn't say anything that wasn’t true! That pill really is the most precious one I have! What gives that old fogey the right to go scaring people! I didn’t do anything to him!”

Bai Xiaochun was actually a bit scared, and after some thought, decided it wasn’t a good idea to stay in one place. Calling Bruiser over, he left his immortal's cave and headed toward the north bank.

By this point it was dark. Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser slipped noiselessly into the north bank, and were soon in the Beast Conservatory. At that point, he started to relax.

“With Bruiser and the old dragon here, even if Patriarch Ironwood tries to come teach me a lesson, I’ll at least have some backup to help me!” Sighing, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but muse that life had been much better in the Blood Stream Sect. As the Blood Devil, all he had to do was snap his finger, and any patriarch who came to teach him a lesson would have his cultivation base instantly reduced by half.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0271 awe-chapter-272

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun pushed away his memories of the Blood Stream Sect, then sat down cross-legged in one of the rooms in the honor guard station in the Beast Conservatory. He wanted to call Bruiser over to keep him company, but soon realized that after returning to the north bank, Bruiser was suddenly nowhere to be found.

“Bruiser’s definitely up to no good again!” When he thought about all the things that Bruiser had done in the past, and the fact that they now had almost equal cultivation bases, not only did he feel it to be unfair, it also made him nervous.

“This won’t do! I have to spend as much time as I can cultivating. I have to break out of mid Foundation Establishment and into late Foundation Establishment!” Taking a deep breath, he produced the little turtle and began shaking it back and forth.

The turtle’s head, limbs, and tail flapped and flopped against its shell as Bai Xiaochun shook it. It almost looked like a rag doll.

After shaking it for quite a while, though, no fragrant aroma appeared. Bai Xiaochun was not happy.

“I suffered untold trials and tribulations, experienced untold danger, all to get this little turtle. So what if I got tricked into thinking it was a relic of eternal indestructibility? At least this fragrant aroma can benefit me!” Glaring at the turtle shell, he shook it even harder, causing more knocking sounds to ring out. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, some streams of fragrant aroma wafted out from inside.

Bai Xiaochun’s spirits were instantly lifted. Taking a deep breath, he absorbed the fragrance into himself through his mouth and nose, then began to work with the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation. Almost immediately, the energy of heaven and earth in the area began to rush toward him, creating an invisible vortex. At the same time, a sound like a roaring wave could be heard, as something very similar to a Tideflow began.

Because of the explosive influx of energy, the fourth of his nine spiritual seas began to show signs of crystallization.

Simultaneously, the cup of Heavenspan River water that he’d absorbed continued to melt and fuse into his fourth spiritual sea. Bai Xiaochun was more excited than ever.

“It's working! Hahaha! This little turtle isn't completely useless after all!” Bai Xiaochun settled his qi and cleared his mind, then immersed himself in the process of crystallizing his fourth spiritual sea. As time progressed, it grew more and more stable.

After an entire night passed, it was only about twenty percent complete, and he was starting to get a bit anxious. However, there was nothing else he could do. Patience was required when it came to provoking changes in the fourth spiritual sea.

Three days passed by in a flash. Bruiser had returned, mouth overflowing with a pile of multi-colored bras. He’d been about to jump on Bai Xiaochun to wrestle with him, but when he realized that he was in the middle of cultivation, a serious expression gleamed in his eyes, and he placed himself outside the door to stand guard.

To Bruiser, none of the people or beasts in the Spirit Stream Sect, nothing in heaven and earth, was more important than Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun was his own heaven!

If anyone attempted to interrupt Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation, or do anything else harmful to him, Bruiser would protect him with his life!

All of the battle beasts on the north bank could sense how serious Bruiser had gotten, and as a result, the north bank became very quiet. The beasts’ masters were shocked to find that the beasts began to, of their own initiative, fly over to the Beast Conservatory, seemingly to stand guard at its borders.

That was especially true of the beasts which resided in the Beast Conservatory itself.

One evening, when Bai Xiaochun’s fourth spiritual sea was about ninety percent crystallized, Ghostfang Peak on the north bank and Green Crest Peak on the south bank apparently reached their highest level of energy buildup, and glowing light shot up from them into the air, just like it had with Mount Daoseed. Within moments, rumbling that could shake heaven and earth filled the air, and two pillars of light appeared in the sky.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Deafening rumbling could be heard as the ground quaked. The sky trembled as the two pillars of light shot through the clouds, causing the vortex up above to grow even more massive.

All of the disciples in the sect detected what was happening and looked up, eyes shining. Almost immediately, conversations broke out.

“The second wave is going to leave soon!”

As the pillars of light continue to cause everything to shake and rumble, quite a few people headed toward Green Crest Peak and Ghostfang Peak! Numerous beams of light could be seen racing through the air as the Spirit Stream Sect’s second wave of teleportations began!

The first wave, which had left only a few days before, had been led by Patriarch Li Zimo, and had been made up of around 2,000 people. That group was already stationed in the Luochen Mountains. As for the second wave, it contained far more people than the first wave, nearly 5,000.

They included Xu Song, Gongsun Yun and Hou Yunfei, as well as some of the other Chosen. There were also quite a number of Inner Sect disciples, and even Outer Sect disciples.

All of them had very serious expressions on their faces, and were clearly ready to fight for the Spirit Stream Sect. As the light on the two mountains grew brighter, Foundation Establishment cultivators appeared, along with some of the prime elders.

After the prime elders, a few figures appeared who shone with golden light. Although it was impossible to make out their features clearly, they emanated fluctuations which far surpassed the prime elders. They couldn’t quite match up to the patriarchs, but the boundless sensation they gave off caused the cultivators of the Spirit Stream Sect to feel completely shaken.

“Those golden figures. Could they be...?”

“Legacy echelon cultivators!!”

It only took a few moments for the golden figures to become the focus of all attention. Soon, people realized that the golden figures seemed to stir the qi flow of the entire Spirit Stream Sect.

Their every move and action caused the cultivators to tremble, and filled their hearts with boundless veneration and passion.

They were none other than legacy echelon cultivators, not the entire contingent, only a few of the whole force. Each of them was a Chosen among Chosen in their generation, the focus of all attention.

Along with the legacy echelon cultivators, one of the five patriarchs also appeared. He looked like a young man, but his eyes radiated something profoundly ancient. From the feeling he gave off, he had existed for innumerable years.

“I am Patriarch Redmoon!” he said, his expression hard and cold.

“For the Spirit Stream Sect, we will all...” Before he could finish speaking, the voices of countless Spirit Stream Sect disciple joined together to complete the sentence.

“Fight!!”

Seeing the fighting spirit of the disciples caused Patriarch Redmoon to throw his head back and laugh. Flicking his sleeve, he caused the light shining up from the two mountain peaks to explode, and the power of teleportation to erupt out. It only took a moment for all of the 5,000 cultivators to vanish.

As for the cultivators who remained behind, it wasn’t possible for them to give vent to their desire to fight.

Instead, they looked around at the remaining five mountain peaks, which were glowing brighter and brighter.

They all knew that the next time one of the mountain peaks erupted with light, it would mean that the third wave was leaving.

As the teleportation of the second wave concluded, Bai Xiaochun was in secluded meditation in the Beast Conservatory, his fourth spiritual sea already ninety-seven percent crystallized.

Two hours later, his eyes snapped open, and they flickered with dazzling light. Rumbling sounds filled him as his fourth spiritual sea became completely crystallized!

Bruiser immediately detected that Bai Xiaochun had opened his eyes, and burst into the room. When he laid eyes on Bai Xiaochun, he threw his head back and let out a joyful howl.

A broad smile could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and he was just about to say something when all of the beasts in the Beast Conservatory responded to Bruiser’s howl, and joined in.

That wasn’t the end of it. All of the beasts who had arrayed themselves outside of the Beast Conservatory also joined the howl. Apparently, Bruiser’s actions had a powerful inciting effect on the emotions of all the other beasts.

The sound of countless howls filled the entire north bank, as if all the beasts were congratulating him. The cultivators there were completely shaken. However, the howls didn’t last for long before they faded away. Even still, Bai Xiaochun was deeply moved.

Eyebrows raised, he looked at Bruiser and murmured, “I... I just made a little breakthrough, there’s no need to make such a ruckus....”

Bruiser dipped his head in embarrassment.

Heart beginning to pound, Bai Xiaochun asked, “Bruiser, can you really control all of those battle beasts?”

When he saw Bruiser nod in response, his mind began to spin, and his eyes went wide. Even back when he had visited the Spirit Stream Sect as Nightcrypt, he’d gotten the feeling that the battle beasts took orders from Bruiser.

However, he’d been unable to look into the matter more closely at the time. That memory, plus what he had seen after returning, led him to a very shocking conclusion.

Now that he had confirmed his suspicion, it left him reeling. However, after a bit of time passed, he came to accept the situation.

“So that's what a beast king can do, huh?” he murmured enviously. Suddenly, he felt very pleased with himself, and his eyes began to shine brightly. With Bruiser on his side, he controlled nearly half of the Spirit Stream Sect.

That thought got him more excited than ever. Throwing his head back, he laughed uproariously. Finally, he was starting to feel the same way he had back in the Blood Stream Sect.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0272 awe-chapter-273

Although he felt wonderful for a moment, his feelings soon changed. On the one hand, he was happy that Bruiser was so powerful, but on the other hand, he was worried that he was falling behind.

“If my Bruiser is strong, then I have to be strong too!” Gritting his teeth, he pulled out the little turtle and started shaking it back and forth violently in the hopes of continuing his cultivation.

Despite shaking it for an entire hour, until his entire arm was sore, the floppy little turtle didn't emit any fragrant aroma whatsoever.

There was nothing Bai Xiaochun could do, and he was starting to feel like the little turtle was completely useless. Eventually, he decided to give up. Sitting there with his chin resting on his palm, he began to think.

Despite how intelligent Bruiser was, he couldn't figure out why Bai Xiaochun seemed to be in such conflict. However, seeing that he was being ignored, he decided to go out and play for a bit.

Having been so busy guarding Bai Xiaochun over the past few days, he'd lost many opportunities to go run around, so now that he had a chance, he flew out of the door, howling....

Bai Xiaochun watched Bruiser speed away, and sighed. Frowning, he continued to think.

“I have to come up with a way to increase my cultivation base. I have to get some inspiration regarding spirit medicine.... Just what spirit medicine could help me do what I want...?” After reviewing all of the medicine formulas he'd mastered, he still couldn’t think of anything suitable to increase his cultivation base.

Just when he was about to admit defeat, his head shot up, and he smacked his thigh. Eyes shining, he said, “The River-Defying Pill!!

“Yeah! I forgot about the River-Defying Pill!!” Excited, he quickly smacked his bag of holding to produce the jade slip that contained the formula for the River-Defying Pill. He also began to flip through the Frigid School Medicine Manual. Before the enlightenment from the Holy Pill Wall Fragment, he didn’t understand much of the Frigid School Medicine Manual, but now that wasn’t the case.

After studying the medicine manual for a bit, and then looking over the River-Defying Pill jade slip, he continued to ponder the matter.

“You don’t need any types of plants or vegetation,” he murmured, “only water from the Heavenspan River. Furthermore, you don’t need a pill furnace. You use your own body as the pill furnace....” Back when he originally saw the formula, he thought it was very strange, to say the least. However, as his skill in the Dao of medicine increased, and he absorbed more Heavenspan River water with the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, his understanding grew.

Although he didn’t completely comprehend all aspects of the formula, he definitely understood more than before.

After some more thought, his eyes flickered, and he walked to the actual north bank of the Heavenspan River.

The banks of the river were a restricted area in the sect. Not even Inner Sect disciples were permitted access to them. Only Foundation Establishment cultivators, who were also elders of the sect, were allowed to go there, and only a few times per year at that. By nearing the Heavenspan River itself, they were able to absorb some of its shocking spiritual energy to improve their cultivation.

However, the spiritual energy there was so powerful there that even Foundation Establishment cultivator weren’t permitted to stay very long. If they did, the spiritual energy in their bodies could be thrown into utter chaos.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun arrived, he noticed two cultivators sitting cross-legged not too far away, practicing cultivation with the spiritual energy from the Heavenspan River. It was a man and a woman. The woman wore a sea-blue robe, and was very beautiful, with delicate, fair skin and eyelashes that fluttered slightly as she meditated. As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw her, he smiled.

“I was just wondering why something seemed missing after I got back. I haven't seen Sect Niece Xinqi this entire time! So, it turns out she's been hiding over here.”

The young woman was none other than Zhou Xinqi.

After examining Zhou Xinqi for a moment, he looked at the man sitting next to her, and frowned. For some reason, he almost couldn’t believe his eyes when he saw that it was Shangguan Tianyou!

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure what technique Shangguan Tianyou had been cultivating, but his previously flowing black hair was now golden. He'd already been so attractive that he made other men jealous, but his new hair color, in combination with his exquisite facial features, made him even more handsome.

Furthermore, his energy was different. In fact, he was so eye-catching that most people would likely forget all about Bai Xiaochun in his presence, and take Shangguan Tianyou to be the ultimate Chosen.

Even more annoying to Bai Xiaochun was that Shangguan Tianyou had a mark on his forehead that looked very similar to Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenspan Dharma Eye. However, instead of forming the shape of an eye, it looked like a sword!

Sword qi emanated from the mark, causing Shangguan Tianyou to look very much like a sharp, unsheathed sword!

“I remember hearing that Shangguan Tianyou always benefited from good fortune. Not only does he have shocking latent talent, people always said that he’s the reincarnation of some sword immortal. It seems those weren’t just rumors after all.” Even as he pondered the matter, it struck him that, considering how close Shangguan Tianyou and Zhou Xinqi were sitting to each other, it seemed that feelings must have developed between them while he was away.

That thought left Bai Xiaochun even more annoyed than before. Sticking his chin up, he gave a cold harrumph, and decided that in the future, he would have to find an opportunity to show Zhou Xinqi exactly what kind of person Shangguan Tianyou really was.

Looking away from the two, he ignored them and picked a different area of the river bank to collect some Heavenspan River water.

Before cultivating the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, the only way Bai Xiaochun would have been able to take away some of the golden water would have been to use some sort of magical device.

But now that he had the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, he simply calmed himself, and then prepared to use some of the water to try to refine a River-Defying Pill.

Off in the distance, Shangguan Tianyou's eyes slowly opened, and as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, they flickered with venomous animosity. Bai Xiaochun had always been a thorn in his side. Whether it was in the Chosen battles before they all reached Foundation Establishment, or in the Fallen Sword Abyss, or in the robe-shredding incident, it all caused Shangguan Tianyou to feel deep hatred for Bai Xiaochun.

Next to him sat Zhou Xinqi. Although it looked like she was in the middle of meditating, she hadn't completely retracted her divine sense, and had become aware of Bai Xiaochun the moment he showed up. Frowning, she also opened her eyes and looked in his direction.

Her feelings regarding Bai Xiaochun had changed over time. Originally, she had viewed him as a zealous and enthusiastic disciple. However, his terrifying talents in medicine concocting, plus the truth about the Chicken-Thieving Fiend, made it so that she wasn't really sure exactly how she felt about him.

Of even greater significance was that, after all the years that had passed, she had long since come to the realization that Fragrant Cloud Peak's mysterious little turtle was none other than Bai Xiaochun.

There was no other explanation for how Bai Xiaochun had made his rise in the Dao of medicine. That answer made her heart felt like it was being twisted in two directions, and the collision between her perceptions and reality was a heavy blow to her.

Then there was how Bai Xiaochun loved to get people to call him Sect Uncle, which was even more annoying to Zhou Xinqi. Seeing that he had simply come to the Heavenspan River to collect some river water, she decided to just ignore him. However, even as her eyes were closing, they suddenly went wide.

Unexpectedly, Bai Xiaochun wasn't using any magical device to collect the water. Instead, he had reached his right hand out and was about to plunge it directly into the river.

Regardless of how she felt about him, they were fellow members of the same sect, and she didn’t want to see him hurt.

“Bai Xiaochun, what are you doing!?” she cried. “You can't touch the Heavenspan River water! If that water touches Foundation Establishment cultivators like us, don’t you know what will happen!? You’ll--”

Shangguan Tianyou looked on, chuckling coldly in his heart, his eyes flashing with derision. He was actually looking forward to seeing Bai Xiaochun’s arm dissolved by the river water, and wasn’t very pleased that Zhou Xinqi was interfering.

However, even as his displeasure rose, and Zhou Xinqi called out, Bai Xiaochun’s hand entered the river water, and then emerged with about a cup’s worth of golden water in his hand. He looked over at Zhou Xinqi.

Looking at her expectantly, he said, “I’ll what?”

It felt wonderful to be able to make such a scene right in front of Shangguan Tianyou.

Zhou Xinqi’s jaw dropped as she looked at the Heavenspan River water cupped in Bai Xiaochun’s right hand. Some of it was even dripping back down into the river itself.

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes were as wide as saucers, and his mind was reeling. He was very well aware of how terrifying the water of the Heavenspan River was, and yet, Bai Xiaochun had just reached his hand in and scooped some out.

“You...” Zhou Xinqi said incredulously.

Bai Xiaochun examined the expressions on their faces, and his heart swelled with joy, especially when he looked at Shangguan Tianyou. With that, he lifted his hand up to his mouth and sipped some of the water. Then he stuck his chin up into the air and coolly said, “Existence without existence is the most wonderful existence. Emptiness without emptiness is the true emptiness....”

It was the same expression he had heard from Li Qinghou a few days before. Back then, it had sounded completely and utterly profound, and the truth was, he still didn't know what it meant. However, considering how shaken he had been when he’d heard it, he had decided that he should use it on someone else. Now that he finally had the chance, he suddenly felt completely abstruse and philosophical.

A tremor ran through Zhou Xinqi. At first, she thought she understood what he meant, but the more she thought about it, the more confused she was. Either way, Bai Xiaochun suddenly seemed even more marvelous to her than he had before.

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes flashed brightly as he glared in disbelief at Bai Xiaochun. Even though he didn’t understand what Bai Xiaochun had just said, he was sure that the words contained deep and profound meaning.

However, he simply couldn’t believe that such a profound statement about the Dao could possibly come out of the mouth of someone like Bai Xiaochun, and so naturally at that.

Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve. “Zhou Xinqi, you have a good heart. It was destiny that you should offer me such a heartfelt warning. Likewise, the words I have spoken to you this day are another destiny, if you can understand them....”

Giving her an aloof smile, he strolled away, his voice seemingly resonating with ancient profundity as he said, “Existence without existence is the most wonderful existence. Emptiness without emptiness is the true emptiness... therefore... emptiness is the most wonderful existence.”

As Zhou Xinqi watched Bai Xiaochun walking away, her inner vision of him suddenly changed completely....

Although none of the three of them noticed, there was a monkey standing next to the riverbank some distance away, accompanied by an old man, who was none other than the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect.

“The little punk doesn’t even know what that sentence means,” the founding patriarch said with a chuckle. “And yet he throws it around anyway.”

The look in the monkey’s eyes was different from the look in the founding patriarch’s eyes. Somewhere deep within them was hidden a profound, mysterious gleam.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0273 awe-chapter-274

After leaving the bank of the Heavenspan River, Bai Xiaochun was in very high spirits. He decided that he needed to remember that saying; it was definitely very useful.

“Hmmmmph! In the future, whenever I see things I don’t like, I can use that phrase to scare people. It will definitely put people in their place!” After returning to the Beast Conservatory, he thought some more about how to refine the River-Defying Pill, and after hesitating a bit, he gritted his teeth and started working.

To make the River-Defying Pill, he needed to use his own body as the furnace. On the second day of his efforts, he screamed, and then poofing sounds could be heard, after which he flew out of his room.

Even after emerging out into the open, more poofing sounds could be heard coming from behind him.

“How could this be happening...?” he said. His insides felt like they were completely filled with swirling gas. The process of expelling it frightened Bruiser so much that he fled. Before long, the entire honor guard station was filled with a noxious odor.

Bai Xiaochun was scowling on the verge of tears. The effects of the gas continued for almost the entire day before fading away. Bai Xiaochun was so frightened that he didn’t dare to perform any more tests.

“That thing is definitely not meant to be concocted by people. Terrifying! I always blow up furnaces when I concoct medicine. But if I use myself as the furnace to concoct a River-Defying Pill, then what happens if there’s an explosion...?” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun felt more terrified than before. Worried that he might lose his poor little life, he decided to give up.

“I'm definitely not going to concoct that pill!” When he thought about the day of misery he had just endured, he suddenly had an inkling of what it must feel like to be a bystander to his own pill concocting.

Even as he stood there sighing, several beams of light appeared outside of the Beast Conservatory. It was Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, and Xu Baocai. Almost Immediately, they detected the noxious odor filling the honor guard station.

“What’s that smell?” Big Fatty Zhang said, eyes wide.

“Is that...?” Xu Baocai looked shocked. Then he seemed to think of something so outrageous that he immediately dismissed the notion.

Third Fatty Hei was actually a slender young woman. Her skin wasn’t very fair, but she was tall and heroic-looking. At the moment, even she was frowning.

Bai Xiaochun started to blush, and then cleared his throat.

“Oh, that’s Bruiser. He ate some bad meat the other day.”

Bruiser was currently standing off in the distance, and when he heard what Bai Xiaochun was saying, he was about to howl. However, a glare from Bai Xiaochun caused him to sit down dejectedly and stare at the group.

Seeing that Big Fatty Zhang and the others were still suspicious, Bai Xiaochun quickly changed the subject.

“So anyway, what are you guys doing here?”

Declining to press Bai Xiaochun about the noxious odor, Big Fatty Zhang looked over and said, “We came to bid you farewell. Tomorrow, the third wave will teleport away, and we three are part of it.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his heart trembled. Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, and Xu Baocai had all experienced significant advances in their cultivation base while he was in the Blood Stream Sect. As of this point, all of them were Inner Sect disciples.

None of them had reached Foundation Establishment yet, only the great circle of Qi Condensation. People like that wouldn't be of much use on the battlefield. However, a large group of them together would be able to power a spell formation, something that could unleash terrifying energy.

Unsure of what to say, Bai Xiaochun maintained his silence. The entire group felt as if a great weight were settling onto their shoulders.

“We might not necessarily lose this war,” Third Fatty Hei said. “Since we have to fight, then we might as well work together to cut down the enemy!” Her words seemed to lift the spirits of Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at his friends, and then thought about the comrades who had died in the Fallen Sword Abyss. He simply couldn’t imagine what it would be like to see Big Fatty Zhang and his other close friends falling in battle. He didn't want to see anybody die in the fighting. He didn’t want any war. He just wanted everyone to keep living together happily.

“Don’t look like that, Xiaochun,” Big Fatty Zhang said. “We're not necessarily going to die. Come, come. We haven’t had a drink together in a long time. Let’s get drunk!” Laughing heartily, he produced a flagon of alcohol from his bag of holding. Everyone sat down and began to drink.

Time passed, and as they chatted, the heavy mood from before lifted. Laughing the whole time, Big Fatty Zhang talked about all of Bai Xiaochun’s misadventures when he had joined the sect. Eventually, he reached the subject of the spirit tail chickens.

“Now hold on,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Those spirit tail chickens are just delicious.... Man, I miss them.”

“I blame you two for dragging me into that!” Third Fatty Hei said, her face flushing. She had also participated in the Chicken-Thieving Fiend scandal, and had been severely berated by her Master because of it.

Xu Baocai beat his chest in lamentation regarding the matter of the blood notice he’d given to Bai Xiaochun. At some point, somebody suggested that they actually go steal a chicken, and before they knew it, they had rushed over to the south bank. A short while later, they had a few chickens in hand, which they began to roast over an open flame.

As evening fell, Big Fatty Zhang suggested that they go back to the Ovens. The Ovens crew was delighted to see everyone, especially the fatties from years before who were still working there. Without any hesitation, large amounts of food and alcohol were produced.

As the sound of laughter and chatting rose up into the air, Hou Xiaomei arrived. Bai Xiaochun pulled her over to sit next to him, and as she drank, her lovely face grew more flushed, and as a result, more attractive.

Chen Fei even showed up, albeit uninvited. The night wore on, and soon, Bai Xiaochun was drunk.

Feeling more relaxed than ever, he pointed at Third Fatty Hei and yelled, “Third Girly, you bastard, I always thought you were a dude! I can’t believe you turned out to be a girl!”

Third Fatty Hei glared at him, then snorted coldly and took a drink.

“Hey, Big Fatty, do you remember that Elder Sister with the pock-marked face? You know, the one who brought me here to the Ovens? You said something about the magpies singing. You had a huge crush on her. Remember? Well, what happened? Come on, tell us the truth!”

“Xu Baocai, that blood notice of yours scared your Sect Uncle Bai half to death!”

“Chen Fei, you momma’s boy, I can’t believe you tried to ambush me. Hummmphh!”

“Bai Xiaochun, whenever we split the food loot, you always ate the most!”

“Yeah, that’s right! By the way, did you know that the story about making the bowl bottoms thicker has become a legend here in the Ovens!?”

“Hahaha! Remember when we blocked the paths to the finish line...?”

“I'm sorry for what I did, Sect Uncle Bai...”

Everyone was jumping into the conversation.

Eventually, Big Fatty Zhang pulled out his wok, placed it down next to him, and excitedly yelled, “I would rather starve to death in the Ovens--”

“--than go climb the ladder in the Outer Sect!!” Bai Xiaochun finished at the top of his lungs. Third Fatty Hei and the other fatties all howled in response.

Although Xu Baocai wasn’t from the Ovens crew, he also joined in. Even Chen Fei was moved, and soon, everyone was yelling at the tops of their lungs.

At one point, Bai Xiaochun raised his flagon of alcohol and said, “*Fruits and herbs of a magical nature; Nibble the edges but spare the stem; Slice the meat thin when there’s some to butcher; As for the bones, leave some flesh on them; Spirit congee? Water it down until it’s thin; Fine wine? Half a cup will do you in!*”

“Wait, hold on, hold on!” Big Fatty Zhang said. “We can’t just have six lines of truth. We need to add two more lines. Let’s see. *Make the bowl bottoms thicker by a thumb. Give all the chickens to Bai Xiaochun!*”

Big Fatty Zhang roared with laughter and slapped Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder. Then he staggered off to the side and slumped down to the ground, completely drunk.

It was rare to have a situation where everyone completely enjoyed themselves. However, a war was coming, and nobody was sure whether or not they would live to see the end of it. Therefore, they spent the night forgetting about their worries, drinking and yelling and laughing.

The sound of the commotion drew more attention, and people rushed over to see what was happening. Before long, a raucous party was underway in the Ovens.

Hou Xiaomei remained glued to Bai Xiaochun’s side. Of course, the effects of the spirit alcohol were something that even cultivators couldn’t ignore, and slowly, she was getting drunk too.

By the time the third watch came, the Ovens was getting quiet, but Bai Xiaochun forced his eyes to remain open. Looking around at the quiet scene around him, his eyes began to shine.

Picking up a flagon of alcohol, he guzzled down a mouthful, then slowly looked at all the unconscious figures around him. It was almost as if he were trying to commit their faces to memory. His grip on the alcohol flagon grew tighter, as if he were trying to forever brand this one moment of time into his heart. Or perhaps it was because there was a burgeoning determination inside of him to change the world around him into something else....

Eventually, his legs wobbled, and he slumped down into sleep. However, he continued to grip the flagon so hard that veins bulged out on the back of his hand.

At dawn, brilliant pillars of light climbed up from Irispetal Peak and Violet Cauldron Peak. Rumbling filled the air as numerous figures flew toward the mountain peaks.

Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, Xu Baocai, and Chen Fei were among them. There were also legacy echelon cultivators and patriarchs. The third wave of nearly 30,000 cultivators was soon gone, teleported away.

Bai Xiaochun lay there in the Ovens, watching as Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends left. An intense determination burned deep in his eyes.

Hou Xiaomei was still by his side. “Big bro Xiaochun…” she said softly. “I'm in the fourth wave.”

Bai Xiaochun clasped her hand in his. Voice soft but determined, he said, “I’ll always be here for you!”

Now that the third wave had left, the Spirit Stream Sect was almost half empty. At the same time, the sect’s spell formations were almost completely activated.

A few days later, Sunset Peak, Archway Peak, and Fragrant Cloud Peak, the final three mountain peaks, all erupted with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering pillars of light.

As of this point, all of the spell formations in the Spirit Stream Sect had been fully activated, and the sect was completely locked down tight.

Patriarch Ironwood appeared, along with the remaining legacy echelon cultivators and prime elders. Zheng Yuandong was there, along with Li Qinghou, Xu Meixiang, and the other peak lords.

Most of the elders, Inner Sect disciples, and Outer Sect disciples also appeared. This was the fourth wave.

There would be a fifth wave, with the most powerful reserves of the sect, but this fourth wave was the largest so far. There were nearly 50,000 people present.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the pillars of light and took a deep breath. As he emerged from the Beast Conservatory, Bruiser followed him, and he didn’t look as frisky as usual. Apparently, he realized that war was coming. He and Bai Xiaochun then shot toward the nearest pillar of light.

A large crowd was present. When Bai Xiaochun showed up, and people recognized him, many of them edged closer to him. Although he was naughty and mischievous, the stories about what he had done in the Fallen Sword Abyss proved that when danger came, he was the person to trust!

The Spirit Stream Sect had chosen the Luochen Mountains as the battlefield, where they could rely on their spell formation. In the region between the sect and the mountains, eight lines of defense had been set up to fall back on in case the Luochen Mountains were lost.

This war would not be one of schemes and plots. It was a battle in which veins of steel were a necessity. People would be fighting to the death, and they would make it hard for the Blood Stream Sect to push them into retreat. They would show that picking on the Spirit Stream Sect was something that could not be done lightly!

Soon, everyone was present, and the teleportation began!

Brilliant light shot up into the air. It was as if a huge hand had grabbed everyone from the three mountain peaks and then carried them to the border with the Blood Stream Sect. The destination was...

The Luochen Mountains!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0274 awe-chapter-275

The Luochen Mountains marked the boundary between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, and they stretched so far that it was impossible to see either end of the mountain range. When the spell formation built into the mountains was first activated, it wasn’t possible to see the actual shield with the naked eye. But now, it was completely eye-catching, rising all the way up to connect with the heavens, an imposing sight that would shake anyone who looked at it.

Occasional ripples of power would spread out across the shield, as well as loud cracking sounds. Clearly, the destructive power of the shield had everything in the area completely locked down.

This was the Luochen Grand Spell Formation that the Spirit Stream Sect had set in place thousands of years in the past!

Numerous figures could be seen hovering in the air above the mountains, radiating cultivation base power that exceeded Foundation Establishment. All of them had their divine sense spread out to stand watch over the direction leading to the Blood Stream Sect.

The three initial waves of disciples had set up camp on the ground, a camp which spread out far and wide. The Outer Sect disciples were the most numerous of the bunch, and had been assigned to run drills with various spell formation arrangements. Occasionally, the rumbling caused by their activities would send powerful ripples out in all directions.

At a glance, it was possible to see dozens of spell formations run by Outer Sect disciples. The first three waves had brought quite a number of people to the mountains, but that only made it easier to imagine how many more formations would spring up after the fourth wave arrived.

The Inner Sect disciples were arranged according to the mountain peaks from whence they originated. They were also powering spell formations, formations which were vastly more powerful than those of the Outer Sect disciples. Such Inner Sect spell formations emanated powerful ripples which distorted everything in the area.

In addition to all of that, there were ranks upon ranks of war chariots. The chariots were crafted from the hardest metals, and each one featured a huge spike jutting out the front, thirty meters long and a meter wide at the base!

The chariots were also inlaid with countless spirit stones; not the low-grade type, but rather, high-grade spirit stones! The chariots were so large and powerful that they required several cultivators just to operate.

The sight of hundreds of such war chariots was fear-inspiring, to say the least.

In another location, numerous enormous boulders were being magically formed together to create gigantic puppets fully 300 meters tall!

There were already over a hundred such puppets fully formed, and every step they took caused the Luochen Mountains to tremble. Also present were countless enormous battle beasts from the north bank, many of whom soared about in the air, emitting occasional roars.

The secret forces which had long since been sent out into Blood Stream Sect territory were active, looking for new information to send back to the Spirit Stream Sect. Even the spies in the Blood Stream Sect itself had been mobilized. Although such spies couldn’t accomplish very much, they were successful in some of their efforts.

There were also enormous stone tower shields rising up from various boulders throughout the mountains. Although the layout of the tower shields seemed random, it was possible to imagine how, once they were all connected, they could defend against an incredibly powerful attack.

Everyone was very busy with all of their preparations. There was another area within the Luochen Mountains, a district large enough to fit tens of thousands of individuals. There, a huge spell formation had been carved into the ground, which was being guarded by over a thousand cultivators. Moments ago, it had begun to glow with bright light.

The ground began to quake, causing all of the various Spirit Stream Sect disciples in the mountains to look up. Then, three massive pillars of light shot up from within the spell formation, reaching high up into the heavens.

The Luochen Mountains were shaking as the pillars of light distorted the air around them. Moments later, the light faded away, and tens of thousands of people became visible on the spell formation!

Bai Xiaochun was among them!

This was the fourth wave of cultivators to be teleported into the mountains!

Teleportation was often an uncomfortable thing, and as soon as the group of people appeared, various reactions could be seen on their faces. Bai Xiaochun’s face went a bit pale, but other than that, he didn’t seem affected. Instead of gaping around at the mountains around him, he located Hou Xiaomei in the crowd and hurried over to her.

Because of his status, it was easy to make his way through the throngs of people. No one got in his way. Soon, he was in front of Hou Xiaomei, whose face was ashen as she swayed back and forth unsteadily. Zhou Xinqi was there, holding her arm. As soon as Bai Xiaochun reached her, he poured some spiritual power into her to help her acclimate.

“You’ll be fine,” he said. “Teleportations are usually like this.” When he saw her pale face, he felt hurt inside. For some reason, his time in the Blood Stream Sect had made him a lot more sensitive on an emotional level....

Zhou Xinqi looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then stepped back to let him take over. Shangguan Tianyou was also nearby. Eying Bai Xiaochun coldly, he snorted.

Hou Xiaomei breathed in and out a few times, and soon recovered. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, she suddenly felt a bit disquieted. She had been working very hard at her cultivation, worried that she might not be able to keep up with Bai Xiaochun. However, he only seemed to get further and further away. She feared that if she let up even the slightest bit, that he might get so far away she would be forever separated from him.

She reached out, grabbed his hand, and squeezed it tightly.

Now that Hou Xiaomei had recovered, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the Luochen Mountains. Clearly, they had changed. On his way back to the sect, he had sensed that things were different, but hadn’t been able to pierce through to see the true details of the matter. However, now it was very clear.

Everything looked different!

He saw the powerful figures hovering high up in the air. He saw the glittering shield. He saw all of the spell formations powered by disciples of the sect. He saw the war chariots, the stone puppets, the tower shields. He saw familiar faces everywhere, even Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends.

Other disciples began to guide the fourth wave cultivators to their places in the various spell formations. Everyone had an assignment.

Of course, the fourth wave consisted of tens of thousands of disciples, so the arrangements took time. Most of the new arrivals had to wait patiently until they were told what to do. It was the same with Bai Xiaochun, who simply stood there looking at everything, shaken.

Clearly, the preparations for the battle were not yet complete, and he could only imagine how awe-inspiring it would be when they were!

The sight of everything caused his heart to tremble, especially considering that there were many things that the Spirit Stream Sect normally kept secret, which were now out in the open for everyone to see.

For example, when Bai Xiaochun looked at the Outer Sect disciples drilling in their spell formations, he could easily see the similarities between their formations and the Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art and Heavenspan Elephant Control Art. Clearly, anyone who cultivated either of those two techniques would have no problem participating in the spell formation.

The only thing they would need to work on would be cooperating with the others who were part of the formation. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun could tell that the Outer Sect spell formations weren’t simple, and that they contained the potential for numerous transformations and variations.

As for the Inner Sect disciples, it was similar with them. Although the Spirit Stream Sect might seem soft on the outside, they were really a sect born for battle!

Only a battle sect would have the fortitude to defy the Blood Stream Sect, despite being weaker than them. They would rather go out in a bloody battle than yield!

As for the Luochen Mountains, they were even more marvelous than he’d realized. In addition to increasing the battle prowess of the Spirit Stream Sect, there also seemed to be something else lurking within them, something shocking. Bai Xiaochun opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, and was instantly taken aback.

Inside of the mountains themselves existed a spell formation that caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to tingle. It was a self-destruct spell formation!

It was a trap, designed to send a message to the Blood Stream Sect in the event that they won: *You may be able to defeat us, but you will feel the pain down into your bones, an agony that you will never be able to forget!*

Bai Xiaochun took a deep, alarmed breath. Meanwhile, Hou Xiaomei stood next to him, trembling, clearly shaken by what she was seeing. She looked over in the direction of the Blood Stream Sect, but from her vantagepoint, could see nothing but the crimson lands stretching out as far as the eye could see.

“Big bro Xiaochun,” she said softly, “I heard that everyone in the Blood Stream Sect is like that Blood Master Nightcrypt from Middle Peak. They’re brutal, and kill people like scything wheat! They usually spend their time in their sect fighting and killing each other. If you’re not careful, you’ll get cut down in an instant. You have to be careful when you fight them.” According to her understanding, the Blood Stream Sect was a place rife with an aura of death. That was especially true considering the shocking tales of Nightcrypt which had been circulating recently. It was only natural for her to point to him as an example of what the sect as a whole was like.

Bai Xiaochun’s astonishment from before was giving way to more negative feelings now. Slapping his chest, he stuck up his chin and said, “Don't worry, Xiaomei. When Bai Xiaochun is around, Nightcrypt wouldn’t dare to show his face!”

As far as he was concerned, that was no exaggeration. In fact, it couldn’t be closer to the truth.

Hou Xiaomei smiled in response, and although she didn’t quite believe him, she pretended that she did. As always, her eyes were filled with an adoration that left Bai Xiaochun feeling quite comfortable.

Even as he reveled in the lovely feeling, he looked over at Zhou Xinqi and said, “Sect Niece Xinqi, fear not. I’ll protect you.”

Zhou Xinqi almost couldn’t reconcile this version of Bai Xiaochun with the one she'd seen on the bank of the Heavenspan River. Sighing, she said, “You still have it in you to brag, even here? What’s the point?”

Shangguan Tianyou gave a cold harrumph. Eyeing Bai Xiaochun, he slowly said, “Bai Xiaochun, Nightcrypt belongs to me! I'm going to cut his head clean off of his shoulders!”

That soured Bai Xiaochun’s mood immediately. Glaring at Shangguan Tianyou, he was just about to respond when suddenly, his heart trembled as an icy sensation filled him from head to toe. Turning, he saw a young woman looking at him through the crowd.

She was cloaked by her long, black hair, and was actually quite pretty. She was none other than Gongsun Wan’er.

As soon as she realized Bai Xiaochun was looking at her, she turned to look back at him. Their eyes met, and she reached up to cover her mouth as she laughed. Although they were some distance apart, for some reason, the sound of her laughter filled Bai Xiaochun with an incredible sense of danger. Something inside was screaming at him that this young woman was deadly!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0275 awe-chapter-276

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. This was his first time seeing Gongsun Wan’er after returning to the Spirit Stream Sect, and for some reason, she seemed completely different than he remembered!

The previous Gongsun Wan’er had been pretty, but not charming. The young woman he was looking at now, though, seemed to be charming down to her bones, charming in a way that would make you shiver inside.

Her facial features were the same as before, but she seemed completely different, so different that Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling on the verge of explosion.

Her cultivation base fluctuations were being concealed, but something about her caused his eyes to narrow. Even his blood qi seemed to become sluggish inside of him.

“Something's off!!” Even as Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound, Gongsun Wan’er turned and vanished into the crowd. Despite craning his neck and looking around, he was unable to find her again.

Slowly, the alarm he had felt began to fade away. However, he was still very certain about what had just occurred.

“How could Gongsun Wan’er have changed so much!?” Panting, Bai Xiaochun thought back to when he'd looked into her eyes, and how he’d heard her melodious laughter. For some reason, that laughter seemed familiar to him.

Of course, he had known Gongsun Wan’er for quite some time. However, there was something about the familiarity of the laughter that seemed very different.

Apparently, Hou Xiaomei could sense Bai Xiaochun’s astonishment. She followed his gaze into the crowd, but didn’t see Gongsun Wan’er.

“What’s wrong, big bro Xiaochun?” she asked.

Bai Xiaochun shook his head and declined to offer any explanation. Instead, he simply stood there thoughtfully. Slowly but surely, the tens of thousands of cultivators in the spell formation were being led to the spots that had been arranged for them. Soon, it was Shangguan Tianyou’s turn.

One of the Inner Sect disciples from the north bank approached him, clasped hands formally, and said, “Sect Uncle Shangguan, as set forth by sect decree, you will take command of the third of Green Crest Peak’s Foundation Establishment spell formations. Your will shall preside over the third spell formation. Please, Senior, accompany me, and I will show you the ins and outs of the formation.”

With that, he began to lead Shangguan Tianyou away, under the eyes of many observers.

Most of the people who had just arrived were being sent to spell formations belonging to whichever mountain peak they had come from. It was a bit different with Shangguan Tianyou, though. He was proclaimed as the leader of a spell formation, which led to quite a lot of hushed discussion.

“Sect Uncle Shangguan really does live up to his reputation. The sect obviously has high hopes for his future. They even made him the leader of Green Crest Peak's third spell formation....”

“I was just looking around, and realized that each area in the Luochen Mountains is set aside for one of the mountain peaks. Each mountain peak has several dozen Outer Sect spell formations, a dozen or so Inner Sect spell formations, plus spell formations for the peak lord and elders. Presumably, Shangguan Tianyou is going to the spell formation for Chosen....”

“After coming back from the Fallen Sword Abyss, Sect Uncle Shangguan spent most of his time in secluded meditation, except for that time he went to challenge Ghostfang. Nobody is sure who won or lost, though....”

Bai Xiaochun’s lips twitched a bit in response to what was happening, unconvinced that Shangguan Tianyou was as amazing as people made him out to be.

Despite the buzz of conversation, Shangguan Tianyou’s expression was the same as ever as he strode along. He was used to being the focus of so many gazes. Turning to the north bank Inner Sect disciple who was leading the way, he coolly asked, “Who might be the leaders of the second and first spell formations?”

“Sect Uncle Shangguan,” the disciple replied respectfully, “from what I’ve heard, the second spell formation will be led by the elder of Green Crest Peak, and the first spell formation will be controlled by none other than the peak lord.” Shangguan Tianyou nodded, then turned to look at Bai Xiaochun and snorted coldly.

Moments later, a different disciple approached Zhou Xinqi, clasped hands, and bowed.

“Sect Aunt Zhou, I’ve come to lead the way, ma’am. You are to be the leader of Fragrant Cloud Peak’s third spell formation.”

Zhou Xinqi nodded silently. She and Shangguan Tianyou both left the teleportation spell formation, and Bai Xiaochun watched them go. Zhou Xinqi didn’t bother him much, but for some reason, he found Shangguan Tianyou very grating.

“I can’t believe that guy gets to be one of the leaders. I guess that in addition to the Inner Sect and Outer Sect spell formations, all of the mountain peaks have spell formations for the Foundation Establishment cultivators, huh? Well what about me? Where am I supposed to go?” Even as he pondered the question curiously, one of the Inner Sect disciples from the south bank approached in a beam of light.

Before he even got close, he yelled, “Is Sect Uncle Bai here...?”

He was actually sweating, and his voice was so loud that everyone in the area heard him, even Shangguan Tianyou and Zhou Xinqi, who both stopped in their tracks and looked over.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine, and he took a few steps forward, waving to the Inner Sect disciple.

The disciple saw him and flew over, and before he even landed, was clasping hands and bowing, his eyes shining with reverence and worship.

“Greetings Sect Uncle Bai! The sect leader has commanded that you will not be a part of any of the spell formations from the south or north banks. Instead, you will lead the Mount Daoseed Foundation Establishment formation!” Quite a few people heard the words spoken by the Inner Sect disciple, and conversations sprang up almost immediately as people looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“He’s going to lead the Mount Daoseed Foundation Establishment formation?”

“Ah, that's how it should be. Sect Uncle Bai has a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base. Putting him with any of the other seven mountain peaks would be a complete waste of talent. Only Mount Daoseed is suitable for Sect Uncle Bai!”

The gazes which fell upon Bai Xiaochun were those of respect and envy. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun was very important, so important that the sect valued him far more than people like Shangguan Tianyou and Zhou Xinqi.

Zhou Xinqi looked at Bai Xiaochun, then looked away and walked off. Although Shangguan Tianyou’s expression was the same as ever, his hands were clenched into fists. To be so blatantly compared to someone else caused him to grit his teeth, swish his sleeve, and then fly away.

Bai Xiaochun felt wonderful. Although Hou Xiaomei was sent to a location with other south bank Outer Sect disciples, Bai Xiaochun and Hou Yunfei arranged for her to be sent to a central location, and also be protected at all times.

With that, Bai Xiaochun followed the south bank Inner Sect disciple away. Soon they were in the middle of the ranks of the Spirit Stream Sect forces, where nine large spell formations had been burned into the ground. Each of the spell formations was fully 3,000 meters across, and emanated intense ripples and blinding light. They even seemed to be in sync with the grand spell formation that filled the entire mountain range.

Hundreds of disciples were working away busily at the spell formations, making adjustments and preparing them in various ways. The auras of the spell formations only continued to grow more and more shocking with every moment.

There were already quite a few people seated cross-legged in most of the spell formations. As for where everyone sat, those positions had already been decreed by the sect leadership, and couldn’t be altered.

Closer examination revealed that within each spell formation, eight positions for cultivators were arrayed in an eight trigrams formation. In the middle were three other positions for the leaders.

Bai Xiaochun recognized most of the cultivators in the various spell formations. They were all Foundation Establishment elders, and many of them nodded in greeting when they saw Bai Xiaochun look their way.

Bai Xiaochun was assigned to the ninth formation. The one difference between that spell formation and the other eight, was that it only had one leadership position.

“According to the orders of the sect leader, Sect Uncle Bai, you are the sole leader of the ninth spell formation, the Mount Daoseed formation!” The disciple who had been leading Bai Xiaochun clasped hands respectfully and then left. Bai Xiaochun made his way into the ninth formation and sat down in the spot in the center set aside for the leader.

At the moment, no other Foundation Establishment elders had arrived to fill in the other spots of the ninth formation. As such, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and opened his cultivation base to begin getting used to the spell formation.

Almost immediately, the spell formation formed a resonance with Bai Xiaochun’s Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation.

Because of that, he instantly felt as if he had become one with the formation.

His mind began to vibrate, and he was suddenly filled with the sensation that all he had to do was stand up, and he would transform into an enormous giant.

The feeling caused his mind to spin. Simultaneously, an intense light shot up from the ninth formation.

Quite a few of the Foundation Establishment elders in the other surrounding spell formations noticed what was happening, as did other cultivators in the area. The tens of thousands of cultivators from the fourth wave who were still being sent out to the various formations were all shaken, and looked over.

Soon, gasps could be heard. The light shining from Bai Xiaochun’s location in the ninth formation was creating the image of a 600-meter-tall giant. As it took shape, it was gradually possible to make out the facial features of the giant. They belonged to none other than Bai Xiaochun!

Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, Xu Baocai, Hou Yunfei, and all of his other friends in the different locations in the Luochen Mountains looked over in shock at the giant.

Ghostfang was sitting in position in the third formation of Ghostfang Peak, meditating. Then, his eyes snapped open, and he looked over at the giant.

Beihan Lie, Xu Song, and the recently arrived Shangguan Tianyou and Zhou Xinqi were all looking in the same direction.

As for Gongsun Wan’er, her eyes shone with a strange light.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit dazed at first. He clearly felt as if he had become a giant, as if his thoughts were the giant's thoughts. Apparently, this giant was an external incarnation of himself!

The feeling of incredible power that coursed through him caused him to throw his head back and let loose a long, piercing cry. The heavens shook as if they had been struck by lightning, and everything in the area began to shake and tremble.

He tried to wave his arms, but his unfamiliarity with this form caused the giant to destabilize and then slowly collapse. Even still, the scene which had just played out left everyone who had seen it shocked.

Even the prime elders and legacy echelon cultivators up in the sky had been paying attention.

“So that’s Bai Xiaochun...”

“He only just stepped into the spell formation, yet can already unleash its power in an external incarnation....”

“It seems Bai Xiaochun’s techniques can form a direct resonance with Spirit Stream Sect spell formations!”

“No wonder the sect leader arranged for him to have sole leadership of the ninth formation. Normally, three cultivators are required to create the spell formation incarnation. He can do it by himself!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0276 awe-chapter-277

After Bai Xiaochun’s giant incarnation faded away, a brief silence followed, and then, a massive uproar filled the Luochen Mountains.

“That was Sect Uncle Bai!!”

“Heavens! Didn’t Sect Uncle Bai just get here? I can’t believe he can already unleash the power of the spell formation....”

Everyone was shaken. Some felt enthusiasm, but others weren’t very happy. Quite a few were jealous!

Shangguan Tianyou’s hands were clenched painfully tight. Gritting his teeth, he forced himself to calm down, then sent his cultivation base power out to familiarize himself with his own spell formation.

He wasn’t the only one that was paying close attention. Ghostfang, Beihan Lie, Xu Song, Gongsun Yun, and many others had already been outdone. During the following days, they did further research and experimentation, and began to follow Bai Xiaochun’s example. Soon, more and more giants began to appear.

Eventually, the tens of thousands of people from the fourth wave were all sent to their spots in the various spell formations. The other eight formations in Bai Xiaochun’s area were now almost completely full. As for his own ninth formation, the other eight people had all shown up one after another. None of them were strangers to Bai Xiaochun; they were all disciples whom he had helped greatly in the Fallen Sword Abyss.

After realizing that they had been assigned to work with Bai Xiaochun, they excitedly went about helping him with the giant incarnation, which grew more and more powerful.

As all of the groups worked together and grew more familiar with powering the spell formation giants, the Luochen Mountains filled with increasingly shocking energy.

As the giants appeared, they roared and moved about, sometimes even unleashing magical techniques. All light in heaven and earth dimmed. Even the Outer Sect formations with over a hundred people in them also formed giants which unleashed battle prowess similar to the great circle of Qi Condensation.

The Inner Sect spell formation incarnations surpassed Qi Condensation, and were similar to Foundation Establishment cultivators. And then there were the formations with the Chosen like Shangguan Tianyou, who radiated the power of the great circle of Foundation Establishment.

As for the first and second spell formations from each mountain peak, they were the strongest, and brimmed with power equivalent to Core Formation!

The three mountain peaks from the south bank and the four mountain peaks from the north bank were all on equal footing!

The smallest of the giants was roughly 150 meters in height. At first, many of them had semi-translucent bodies, making it possible to see the cultivators sitting cross-legged inside.

Toward the end, though, the giants became so solid that it was almost impossible to see anyone inside. The sight of so many giants in the Luochen Mountains was shocking to the extreme!

Already, the central ninth spell formation, the Mount Daoseed formation, was far more powerful than the formations of any of the other mountains.

Every time it appeared, the power of the Foundation Establishment cultivators within it caused the battle prowess of the giant incarnation to emanate fluctuations that, despite not being of the Core Formation level, were strong enough to fight a Core Formation cultivator!

Furthermore, when Bai Xiaochun’s giant incarnation appeared, it released a Heaven-Dao aura that caused thunderous rumbling to fill the air. Sparks of electricity even showered about in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun was located in the giant’s dantian region, with the other eight cultivators being located in other fixed positions within the body. On a few occasions after forming the giant incarnation, Bai Xiaochun sent it flying up into the air to unleash a fist strike that would shake everything in the area. Sometimes the giant would perform an incantation gesture, drawing upon the combined cultivation base power of eight people to summon an enormous violet cauldron. Based on the terrifying power, it was obvious that this giant could fight toe to toe with the Core Formation stage.

Bai Xiaochun had never experienced anything like this before, and he could only throw his head back and let out a piercing howl.

Another three days passed.....

At high noon, the sky vibrated, and a column of light shot up into the air that far surpassed the light which had accompanied the cultivators of the fourth wave.

As the ground quaked, all cultivators of the sect looked up into the sky.

Everyone, even Bai Xiaochun, watched as the blinding pillar of light slowly shrank into the form... of an enormous... white sun!!

The instant the white sun formed, all of the surrounding air twisted and distorted, filling with fissures and rifts.

Within the sun could be seen the image of a raven, which apparently formed the core of the sun. Although its eyes were closed, it radiated a sense of intense might!!

Beneath the raven floated... a mountain!

It was none other than... the ninth mountain peak of the Spirit Stream Sect!!

The pressure weighing down from that mountain caused all of the Luochen Mountains to tremble.

A handful of legacy echelon cultivators flew out, as well as prime elders. Then, an old man appeared who, despite not being physically imposing, emanated the loftiest of airs.

He was none other than... the Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch!

Countless voices joined together in a thunderous roar as all cultivators in the mountains clasped their hands and offered formal greetings.

“Greetings, Patriarch!”

“Greetings, Patriarch!!”

The earsplitting sound of their calls shook everything like thunder from the heavens.

Four other figures floated up from the mountains to join him, which were the other patriarchs that had led the previous four waves of cultivators out of the sect.

The founding patriarch looked over the forces of the Spirit Stream Sect, and then spoke in words that echoed out into every corner of the mountains, to reach every cultivator present. “The Blood Stream Sect... has already fully mobilized. They will be here soon!”

Everyone, including Bai Xiaochun, felt shaken upon hearing those words.

“There will be deaths in this war. Even I may perish. However, any of us who fall in battle will be heroes of the Spirit Stream Sect for all eternity!

“This war is a fight for the survival of the Spirit Stream Sect!

“This war will determine the peace and security of our sect for the next 1,000 years!

“This war is something the entire world of cultivation is paying attention to. The Spirit Stream Sect... may go out fighting, but we will never live a life of humiliation!!

“Power up the final formation!

“Let’s show the Blood Stream Sect exactly how strong and decisive the Spirit Stream Sect is!!”

The cultivators felt their blood boiling in response to the founding patriarch’s words, and joined together to shout, “Fight!!”

Now that the founding patriarch had officially declared the war to have begun, the spell formation which filled the Luochen Mountains sprang to life, sending boundless light shining up into the sky.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Up in the sky, the ninth mountain peak towered high, seemingly capable of propping up the heavens. It was surrounded by nine shining magical symbols, each of them different, but all of them fully 3,000 meters tall. Lightning danced back and forth across the symbols, casting out light that filled the sky. At the same time, countless fist-sized magical symbols also appeared, spreading out like waves to cover the sky above the mountains.

Amidst the lightning and the magical symbols were nearly a hundred ancient figures, all of whom emanated shocking auras. These were all of the Spirit Stream Sect’s prime elders!

The prime elders all had serious expressions on their faces. They looked like transcendent beings, their cultivation base fluctuations causing heaven and earth to dim, and causing a powerful wind to kick up.

However, even more eye-catching than them was a group whose numbers had slowly been filled over the past 10,000 years.... The seventeen legacy echelon cultivators, Li Qinghou among them.

Those seventeen cultivators hovered above in the sky, shining with light that, from a distance, made them seem like seventeen stars that emanated heaven-shaking, earth-shattering pressure!

Above the seventeen star-like legacy echelon cultivators were... the five patriarchs who lived on the ninth mountain peak. Each of them possessed a Dharma Idol of incredible stature, something that could easily suppress prime elders or legacy echelon cultivators. The power they exuded seemed capable of crushing the heavens and shaking the earth. It was godlike!

The founding patriarch’s Dharma Idol was clearly visible. It had three heads and six arms, and seemed as tall as the sky. The founding patriarch alone seemed far more glorious than all of the other four patriarchs combined.

Now that the spell formation had been fully activated, the shield of light that rose up to protect the Luochen Mountains began to crackle with lightning. As the lightning spread out to fill the shield, it transformed into an enormous wall of lightning!

On the surface of the lightning wall could be seen nine faces, each one of them 300 meters tall. Their eyes were closed as if in meditation, and they seemed to radiate solemnity and power. If you looked closely... you would see that, unexpectedly, one of those faces... was Bai Xiaochun’s!

Bai Xiaochun almost stopped breathing when he saw that. Now that the Luochen Mountains Grand Spell Formation was fully activated, Bai Xiaochun could sense that his ninth formation was somehow fused with the mountains as a whole.

The sight of his own face on the wall left him shaken and completely shocked.

The ranks of war chariots were now complete. There were hundreds of them, and the black spikes which jutted out from them emanated terrifying power that seemed capable of exploding out at a moment's notice.

Also present were numerous stone puppets that all seemed poised on the brink of unleashing their power. With a single command, they would leap onto the battlefield and wreak havoc.

As for the countless battle beasts of the north bank, they were everywhere, filling sky and land, with the four spirit beast guardians of the four mountains leading them.

Then there were the enormous tower shields, which were now completely arrayed, creating an impenetrable defense for the Spirit Stream Sect disciples who remained behind them.

As for the spell formations, the disciples poured power into them, causing rumbling to echo out as giants appeared, coming from seven different directions.

Each of the seven mountains had dozens of spell formations for the Outer Sect disciples. As a result, hundreds of figures began to gather; some were human giants, others looked like giant beasts. Roars filled the air as ripples spread out in all directions.

The Inner Sect disciples’ spell formations were all activated. Although they didn’t have as many as the Outer Sect disciples, theirs were far more powerful. That was especially true of the spell formations set aside for the Chosen, which were even more shocking.

Just as the south and north banks were different, the incarnations of the spell formations were different, some taking the form of human giants, others of giant beasts.

The nine centrally located spell formations also erupted with terrifying fluctuations as they were powered by Foundation Establishment cultivators.

There were also hundreds of Foundation Establishment cultivators not assigned to spell formations, who were prepared to either fight or join the spell formations as their comrades fell.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be very impressive. But now that the Luochen Mountains spell formations were all activated, a shockingly bright light began to shine out above the ninth mountain peak!

Two beams of light appeared, both of which were magical items!

The first beam of light was a profoundly ancient violet cauldron!! As soon as the cauldron appeared, intense pressure weighed down on the entire area, causing everything to tremble.

Within the second beam of light was... a sword! It glittered with silver light that indicated that it had benefited from a tenfold spirit enhancement. It was... the Heavenhorn Sword!

Ten silver designs covered the body of the sword, making it dazzlingly shocking. The mere sight left everyone shaken, and it was obvious that once this sword was unleashed in attack, it could shatter the heavens and decimate the earth!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0277 awe-chapter-278

A roar echoed through the air as an enormous dragon appeared. It was pitch black, with protruding scales and blood-red eyes. It seemed completely and utterly ferocious and deadly.

It was none other than... the Heavenhorn ink dragon!

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken by what he was seeing, and all of the other disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect felt their minds reeling. Whether it was the ninth mountain peak, the white sun, the legacy echelon cultivators, or the spell formation giants, all of them were things no one had ever seen before.

These were... the true reserve powers of the sect.

This was what the power of a sect truly looked like!

Even as everyone was trembling mentally, the black raven that sat within the white sun suddenly emitted a deafening cry.

Waaahhh!

It almost sounded like a crying baby, and was so loud that rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth. An arc-shaped shockwave shot through the Luochen Mountains, speeding across heaven and earth toward the territory of the Blood Stream Sect.

The shockwave was like an invisible blast of fury that swept across everything in its path. It flew onward for about 30,000 meters until it seemed to hit an invisible obstacle, whereupon cracking sounds filled the air. Suddenly visible was a mirror-like object which shattered into countless pieces.

In response, enormous blood clouds billowed out in all directions. Even the air collapsed as the true world beyond that 30,000-meter mark was revealed.

Blood clouds churned relentlessly, connecting heaven with earth, and within them, countless howling sounds could be heard.

Vicious faces were visible within the blood cloud, faces of both men and women. As the blood cloud neared the Spirit Stream Sect, the howling reached a thunderous level, and blood-colored light spread out near and far, staining all creation with the color of blood.

A rain of blood began to fall, and lightning crashed. Where the rain fell, seas of blood rose up, like a massive flood. Soon, rumbling sounds could be heard as blood-colored battleships became visible on the seas of blood, sending blood splashing about as they surged forward.

At the same time, an army became visible, an army filled with refined corpses and gargoyles.

The Blood Stream Sect... had arrived!!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed slightly as he peered at the world of blood outside the Luochen Mountains. Within the swirling blood clouds and boundless blood sea were, not only battleships, but endless numbers of blood-colored war chariots!

The Blood Stream Sect’s war chariots were different than the Spirit Stream Sect’s. They were made from bones, and were terrifying and bizarre in appearance!

The blood-colored war chariots were manned by countless Outer Sect disciples, all of whom abounded with killing intent. Madness flickered in their eyes, and as they closed in, they stared at the Spirit Stream Sect disciples, whose hearts trembled in response.

The bloodthirsty gazes of the Blood Stream Sect disciples were filled with such brutality and murder that anyone who saw them would be shocked.

In addition to the war chariots and the battleships, the sea of blood also contained numerous blood giants. They were completely hairless, and were apparently formed from nothing but blood. Each step they took caused the seas beneath their feet to howl. Clustered around the blood giants were countless other disciples of the sect.

A seemingly endless army filled heaven and earth. It was a spectacular sight.

Up above were the blood clouds, and down below were the blood seas. Between them was endless darkness that seethed and churned as if it were alive.

It was only when lightning shot down from the clouds that the darkness was illuminated, to reveal dozens of ancient and barbaric giants, clad in battle armor, faces expressionless. Atop the heads of the giants sat cold-faced cultivators who emanated the fluctuations of Core Formation!

Furthermore, the feeling they gave off was not that of ordinary Core Formation. The blood qi that rippled off of them was especially intense, and at a single glance, Bai Xiaochun was able to tell that they surpassed the level of the blood masters. And yet, each and every one of them showed signs that in the past... they *had* been blood masters!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he realized that these were cultivators whose position in the sect surpassed prime elders. They occupied the highest position under the patriarchs. They were... the blood rippers!!

When blood masters reached Core Formation, they became blood rippers!

The dozens of blood rippers traveled along within the boundless darkness. However, on either side of the darkness were the hundreds of prime elders of the Blood Stream Sect, who bristled with divine abilities as they flew along.

Beyond them were more than a thousand Foundation Establishment cultivators, who flew along in beams of light, clustered around the boundless darkness. The presence of so many powerful cultivators only made the blood rippers seem more majestic.

In the vanguard position ahead of the boundless darkness were four major forces. One of them was made up of countless gargoyles formed into the shape of a gigantic black head. Sitting atop the head were none other than the Nameless Peak blood master and grand elder!

The second major force was an enormous coffin, surrounded by countless refined corpses. Atop the coffin could be seen the blood master and grand elder of Corpse Peak, who sat there cross-legged, looking around with expressionless eyes.

The third major force was an enormous hand formed from blood and flesh that emanated shocking fluctuations of power. Sitting cross-legged in the palm of the hand were the grand elder and blood master of Lesser Marsh Peak.

The final major force was made up of an enormous blood sword. Matchlessly sharp, it emanated a blood-colored glow, and seemed capable of slashing rifts into the air itself. Atop that blood sword... could be seen a single person.

It was none other than Song Junwan, dressed in battle garb, an unsightly expression on her cold, elegant face. Clearly, the disappearance of Nightcrypt made it so that the forces of Middle Peak couldn’t match up to the other mountain peaks. Considering that they were going to war, that effect was even more pronounced.

Down below, within the blood sea, were countless Outer and Inner Sect disciples. As they neared the Luochen Mountains, they ceased their war cries, and instead shot forward in silence, radiating intense, murderous auras.

Up above, the Foundation Establishment elders would occasionally flick their sleeves as they flew along, causing gale force winds to spring up and send the Outer and Inner Sect disciples flying along. The disciples didn’t show any alarm or fear. As they flew into the air, they gathered into special formations that looked like blood-colored spheres of flesh.

When they landed back down, they would bash huge craters into the ground, after which the spheres would break apart into hundreds of disciples who would then continue to speed along.

The blood-colored spheres of flesh were shocking to the extreme, especially considering that the disciples who made them up seemed to be completely fearless, not even afraid of dying. They were like locusts, sweeping across the land in breathtaking fashion!

These blood spheres were one of the Blood Stream Sect's powerful battle magics!

Bai Xiaochun's scalp was tingling. As the blood master of Middle Peak, he knew a lot about the Blood Stream Sect, and yet he was shocked to discover that the sect had many secrets even he was unaware of.

When he looked at Song Junwan sitting proud and alone atop the huge blood sword, mixed emotions filled his heart, and he felt anxiety rising up within him.

Clearly, the Blood Stream Sect was already more impressive than the Spirit Stream Sect, and yet that was only their ordinary disciples and cultivators. Their true power reserves, and the patriarchs, were within the blood clouds up above!

Vicious faces were concealed within those clouds, including eight figures who could shake heaven and earth. They were breathtaking people who no one would ever think to look down upon!

Each of those eight people had vortexes spinning around them, causing anyone who looked in their direction to see nothing but terrifying distortions.

Within one of the eight vortexes was a gargantuan, pitch-black gargoyle, atop whose head sat an old man with eyes like lightning.

In another of the vortexes was a grand lich, the same terrifying corpse which had been awoken recently. On the shoulder of the grand lich was none other than the Blood Stream Sect's Patriarch Droughtflame.

Patriarch Limitless was in another vortex, his body surrounded by 100,000 blood swords that could slash forests and destroy moons.

The Song Clan patriarch could be seen in another of the vortexes, standing atop a blood-colored banner. The banner was inscribed with golden magical symbols that pulsed with an electric, blood-colored light that spread out to fill the blood cloud and the blood sea.

All eight of the Blood Stream Sect’s patriarchs were present. One of them, the one in the lead position, had taken the form of a blood-colored giant. Most noteworthy of all was that the giant’s right hand clearly resembled the hand that the Blood Stream Sect was built upon.

That patriarch was none other than the Blood Stream Sect's... current arch-patriarch!

The Blood Stream Sect had eight patriarchs, but the Spirit Stream Sect only had five!

And yet, the terrifying strength of the Blood Stream Sect had yet to be fully revealed. Surrounding the arch-patriarch was an enormous, blood-colored tree, which radiated boundless ancientness. That tree was one of the Blood Stream Sect’s most precious treasures!

There was also a blood-colored mirror, fully 300 meters across. Countless images could be seen within the mirror, and all of them seemed to be emitting soundless howls, and were on the verge of bursting out into the open. Then there was the Blood Stream Sect’s third precious treasure, two blood-colored lodestones which had been linked together into pair of blood-colored manacles!

The Blood Stream Sect’s precious treasures also surpassed the Spirit Stream Sect’s!

However, their ultimate reserve power was even more bizarre and fantastic. Perched high above the army, above the patriarchs and above the blood clouds, was... a shocking scarecrow!

At first, the scarecrow looked ordinary in nature, but closer examination revealed that it held a patch of human skin in its right hand, and had a steelyard balance in its other hand. A twisted smile could be seen on its face, and anyone who saw it would feel their heart pulsing with fear.

The arrival of the Blood Stream Sect included blood clouds in the sky, blood seas on the ground, and a swath of mysterious darkness. It was a terrifying sight to behold. It was as if a fiendish devil were looming over the Luochen Mountains, emitting intense pressure that could crush anything it encountered. Anyone who got in the way of the Blood Stream Sect would be destroyed in body and soul!

The cultivators of the Spirit Stream Sect felt their minds spinning, and yet, there was no time to unleash any emotion other than their explosive desire to fight!

Their will seemed to fuse with the Luochen Mountains, exploding out to join the magical symbols and lightning in the air, causing intense rumbling sounds to instantly fight back against the terrifying aura of the Blood Stream Sect.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0278 awe-chapter-279

Bai Xiaochun looked out at the Blood Stream Sect, at all of the familiar faces. Song Que was there, as were Song Junwan, Xu Xiaoshan, Jia Lie, Master God-Diviner, the three blood masters, and others.... There was also the Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Limitless, within the blood clouds.

The only person he didn’t see in the crowd was Xuemei.

However, there was no time to think about her right now. At the moment, the sea of blood was only about 15,000 meters away from the Luochen Mountains.

At this distance, he could see the murderous expressions on the faces of all the Blood Stream Sect cultivators. He saw the killing intent in Song Junwan’s eyes, and he saw how the gazes of the Song Clan patriarch and the others in the blood cloud flashed like lightning. Clearly, all of them were ready to kill and ready to die.

It was in that moment that the light of spell formations rose up from the Spirit Stream Sect. The giants roared, and the hundreds of war chariots emitted blinding light as they vibrated on the verge of springing into motion.

Bai Xiaochun looked over and spotted Big Fatty Zhang in one of the giants, and although he couldn't quite see his face, based on what he knew of him, he knew that it was covered with a ferocious expression.

Lightning danced in the air above the Spirit Stream Sect forces, and the magical symbols glowed with dazzling light. The seventeen stars that were the legacy echelon cultivators floated there majestically, and the prime elders were already preparing their divine abilities.

The founding patriarch slowly raised his right hand. When it fell... they would attack in full force!

The host of cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect was just as prepared. Within the blood cloud, the arch-patriarch, the old man in giant form, stared at the Luochen Mountains, his eyes glinting with ferocious light. Clearly, he was on the verge of giving the final order to attack!

The distance between the two armies grew shorter and shorter. 15,000 meters. 9,000 meters... 6,000 meters... 3,000 meters!

The fighting would break out at any moment!!

The founding patriarch’s arm was just about to fall. The arch-patriarch’s mouth opened to speak.... And within the dantian region of the ninth formation’s giant incarnation, Bai Xiaochun could be seen, his eyes completely bloodshot, his heart twisting with anxiety.

He did not want these two sects to go to war, nor did he wish to see people die. From a young age until now, all he cared about was living forever. He wanted to keep on living, and he wanted all the people he knew to keep on living with him.

His anxiety began to turn into madness, and in that moment of deep apprehension, he howled a howl that could shake heaven and earth. He had already decided it was time to put his life on the line. Just as the two sides were about to clash... he shot out alone from within the ninth formation giant!

Nobody could ever have anticipated that he would fly out alone in such away. In the heat of the moment, when everyone was focused completely on the fighting which was about to take place, no one could have imagined that they would see Bai Xiaochun flying out of the ninth formation in a beam of light, a pair of wings fluttering at his back as he sped out of the Luochen Mountains!!

The glowing shield that protected the Luochen Mountains was designed to defend against the Blood Stream Sect, and would do nothing to members of the Spirit Stream Sect!

Before anyone could react, Bai Xiaochun was hovering in the air outside of the Luochen Mountains!

Everyone in the Spirit Stream Sect was completely and utterly shocked, and immediately began to cry out in alarm.

Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes went wide, and his mind spun. He simply couldn’t imagine what Bai Xiaochun was doing flying out alone.

“Xiaochun, what are you doing?! Get back here!!!”

Hou Xiaomei was in one of the giants, and as soon as she saw what was happening, a tremor ran through her, and she screamed, “Big bro Xiaochun, you....”

Third Fatty Hei and Xu Baocai both gasped, and their eyes went wide. They almost felt like their minds were being struck by lightning. Zhou Xinqi was in control of one of the spell formation giants, and although she almost couldn’t believe what was happening, she cried, “Bai Xiaochun....”

Li Qinghou was one of the legacy echelon cultivators high up in the air, shining like a star. However, when he saw Bai

Xiaochun fly out into the open, his eyes went wide as if with madness. “What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

He wasn't the only one who almost went crazy. Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong reacted with a similar shout of anger, and even the founding patriarch gasped in disbelief.

Ghostfang, Beihan Lie, Xu Song and all the other Chosen were dumbstruck. A tremor ran through Shangguan Tianyou, and at the same time, a spark of joy flickered in his heart as he realized that Bai Xiaochun would almost certainly be killed.

All of this takes some time to describe, but from the instant that Bai Xiaochun flew out until the crowd reacted, only a moment passed. Even as everyone gaped in shock, Li Qinghou and the patriarchs prepared to fly out and retrieve Bai Xiaochun.

Out beyond the border of the mountains, right between the two sects, Bai Xiaochun roared, “Stop! No fighting, everyone! Listen to me!!”

Despite his words, no one seemed inclined to stop. Furthermore, it only took a moment for the shocked members of the Blood Stream Sect to realize who they were looking at.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Song Que was the first. Madness rose up in his eyes, and threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Without any hesitation, he launched into motion. “Have a death wish, huh? Allow me to make your wish come true!!”

Song Que wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. More Blood Stream Sect disciples recognized Bai Xiaochun, and were instantly delighted. Roaring with laughter, they all charged in his direction.

“Is this Bai Xiaochun a complete moron, or what? I can’t believe he flew out alone!”

“It doesn’t matter why, and it doesn’t matter if it’s a trap, I'm gonna kill him!”

“Hahaha! Bai Xiaochun’s in the open now, and he’s not gonna make it back alive!” Numerous figures flew out from the Blood Stream Sect. As for the blood masters near the boundless darkness, they had already discussed among themselves how to kill Bai Xiaochun during the fighting. However, they knew that, considering how important he was to the Spirit Stream Sect, it wasn’t likely they would have a chance to fight him alone.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun had just foolishly flown out by himself, only to shout infantile words about stopping and not fighting. Laughing at the tops of their lungs, the three blood masters flew out as quickly as bolts of lightning.

Even Song Junwan was spurred into action. Master God-Diviner, Jia Lie, and numerous others were all striving to be the first to attack Bai Xiaochun.

“Kill Bai Xiaochun!!”

The two armies weren’t very far away from each other to begin with, placing all the people who wanted to kill Bai Xiaochun very close. As that happened, the Song Clan patriarch laughed.

“Very amusing,” he said, taking a step forward. Just as he was about to attack and kill Bai Xiaochun, the Spirit Stream Sect’s Patriarch Ironwood teleported out to block his path.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Patriarch Limitless flew out, and yet, Patriarch Li Zimo gave a cold snort and rushed to block him.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch flew out with a grim face and a murderous aura. His intention was to grab Bai Xiaochun and bring him back behind the shield, but before he could get close, a teleportation interrupted him as the Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch appeared in front of him!

No words were spoken. Everyone immediately unleashed attacks. Countless giants sprang out from the Luochen Mountains, driven by Hou Yunfei and other friends of Bai Xiaochun. They along with Li Qinghou all had one goal: *save Bai Xiaochun!*

“Bai Xiaochun, get back here!!”

Bai Xiaochun could see that his words were being completely ignored. The patriarchs were already starting to fight, and the Blood Stream Sect army was moment away.

There he was in the middle of the battlefield, watching as both sides prepared to slam into each other. As for the cultivators who were coming to try to kill him, they were only about 300 meters away. Jia Lie was using some unknown method to fly at incredible speed, putting him among the closest of the group.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very nervous. Eyes shining madly, and clearly throwing caution to the wind, he roared at the Blood Stream Sect cultivators, “Back down, all of you!!”

In response the Blood Stream Sect cultivators laughed at the tops of the lungs.

“Bai Xiaochun, I was under the mistaken belief that you were a true Chosen, but it turns out that you’re just a lunatic!”

“Hahaha! I can’t believe you think we're going to retreat! Who do you think you are?”

“Bai Xiaochun, you might be the Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator of the Spirit Stream Sect, but on this battlefield, you’re going to be a corpse in a matter of moments!”

After hearing Bai Xiaochun’s words, the three blood masters were convinced that he was a complete madman....

Jia Lie threw his head back and laughed uproariously, pushing forward with even greater speed. He didn't necessarily want to be the person to kill Bai Xiaochun; he just wanted to be the first to land an attack on him. What a great story that would make in the future!

“Are you kidding me?” Jia Lie cried. “You Spirit Stream Sect scoundrel! What gives you the right to tell us what to do?”

Bai Xiaochun’s face was grim as he stared at the incoming Blood Stream Sect cultivators. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced his Nightcrypt mask. Flicking his sleeve, he said, “What gives me the right? I'm the blood master of Middle Peak!”

Those words brimmed with murderous intentions, with veins of steel, with madness, with devilishness. As he placed the mask onto his face, a shocking aura erupted out to fill the world!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0279 awe-chapter-280

“What gives me the right? I'm the blood master of Middle Peak!”

Two sects were on the verge of war, and were literally moments away from fierce fighting. But then, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out loud and clear for everyone to hear. His words were backed by a towering blood qi that erupted out in all directions, making his voice indescribably awe-inspiring!

He wasn’t attempting to be sinister, but because he was wearing his Nightcrypt mask, he naturally reverted to the way he had been in the Blood Stream Sect. His voice was cold and ghastly, and a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering murderous aura raged around him, causing everything to go silent.

The implication behind the words he had just spoken was something no one could ever have predicted. Both sects were immediately shaken, their hearts battered by great waves of shock that threatened to overwhelm them.

From a distance, the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect looked like two enormous clouds, one white and one red. Parts of those clouds were already starting to intersect, and yet... they now ceased moving. Everyone slowly looked over... at the spot between the two sects, the spot where numerous Spirit Stream Sect cultivators were rushing to provide defense, and numerous Blood Stream Sect cultivators were speeding with murderous intentions. Everyone was now looking at... Bai Xiaochun!

Jia Lie, who as one of the closest to Bai Xiaochun, felt as if his mind were being struck by lightning. Eyes widening, he began to tremble, and forgot to breathe. He was completely struck mute. Echoing in his mind were the words Bai Xiaochun had just spoken... and his eyes were now faced with... the blood master of Middle Peak, Nightcrypt!

“You're... Nightcrypt...?” he said, trembling. Ever since the trial by fire for blood master, Jia Lie’s fear of Nightcrypt had fermented, and now, he was completely dumbstruck.

The blood qi and murderous aura swirling around Bai Xiaochun made it so that he didn’t need to offer any proof. Jia Lie was immediately convinced... beyond the shadow of a doubt... that this was Middle Peak’s Blood Master Nightcrypt!

He wasn’t the only one to give voice to his shock. Not too far away from him was Master God-Diviner, who had just been bubbling with excitement at the thought of killing Bai Xiaochun and growing his reputation. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun put that mask on, he turned into something that haunted Master God-Diviner’s nightmares: Nightcrypt.

“Night... Nightcrypt!” he shrieked. “This is... impossible!!”

Those two weren’t the only ones among the charging Blood Stream Sect disciples. Moments ago, vicious, murderous grins had covered their faces, but now they were gasping. Their eyes were as wide as if they had been struck across the face with a piece of wood.

“Y-y-you....”

“How... how is this even possible?!?!”

“Heavens! Nightcrypt the Plaguedevil... is Bai Xiaochun...?”

“I can’t believe they're the same person!!”

Xu Xiaoshan was so surprised he almost bit off his tongue. Never before in his entire life had he witnessed anything this outrageous. It almost seemed more unbelievable than the hallucinations he’d experienced on Corpse Peak. In fact, he was nearly convinced that he was seeing things.

Then there was Song Que, whose killing intent had previously been raging. Now, everything was reversed. His mind almost couldn’t keep up with what was happening, and he hovered there, mouth gaping, trembling, eyes blanker than they had ever been in his life.

It was a difficult thing for him to accept. As far as Song Que was concerned, Nightcrypt was an enemy, and Bai Xiaochun was an even more so an enemy. Unexpectedly, those two enemies were actually one and the same....

The battlefield instantly went silent. Even the patriarchs of the two sects forgot to fight, and simply looked down at Bai Xiaochun.

The Song Clan patriarch’s expression was that of shock and other mixed emotions. Patriarch Limitless seemed surprised and suspicious. The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch, as well as Patriarch Ironwood, seemed incapable of believing the preposterous scene which was playing out in front of their eyes.

The legacy echelon cultivators and the blood rippers were just as shocked as everyone else. As for the three blood masters who Bai Xiaochun had previously sworn an oath with, they felt like their minds were about to explode.

“Nightcrypt... is Bai Xiaochun?” murmured the blood master from Lesser Marsh Peak. He suddenly felt as if his world had been turned upside down.

The Blood Stream Sect cultivators weren’t the only ones to be shaken. Once Bai Xiaochun put on the mask and turned into Nightcrypt, the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators felt as if lightning and thunder were bashing their minds. Gasps rose up within the Luochen Mountains, along with countless cries of surprise, alarm, disbelief, and incredulity!

Shangguan Tianyou had been laughing coldly as he waited in anticipation for Bai Xiaochun to be killed. But now, his eyes were on the verge of popping out of his skull. As he panted, his mind devolved into a complete blank.

Ghostfang, Gongsun Yun, Beihan Lie, and the other Chosen of the Spirit Stream Sect were all profoundly shaken. That was especially true of Zhou Xinqi, whose eyes couldn’t have been wider. To her, it seemed as if the world of this moment was a completely preposterous place.

She suddenly remembered what Bai Xiaochun had said to Hou Xiaomei, that when Bai Xiaochun was around, Nightcrypt wouldn’t dare to show his face.

“This... this....” Zhou Xinqi felt as if everything around her was devolving into chaos.

Some distance away, Hou Xiaomei was gaping in shock. She almost couldn’t reconcile that the grand and lofty Bai Xiaochun that existed in her heart was also the most terrifying of all cultivators, Nightcrypt.

She wasn’t the only one who had such a reaction. Hou Yunfei, Big Fatty Zhang, and Third Fatty Hei were all left completely speechless.

As for Li Qinghou... he suddenly felt as if he didn't even know Bai Xiaochun, and could do nothing more than stare in shock.

Even as everyone reeled, Bai Xiaochun looked at the hosts from the Blood Stream Sect, swished his sleeve, and then spoke in an infinitely cold and raspy voice, “How dare you fail to offer greetings to a blood master!”

Even as the words left his mouth, he drew upon his Undying Live Forever Technique, causing the energy of a blood master to ripple out. All cultivators from Middle Peak instantly felt an unstoppable pressure weighing down upon them!

It was a profound and dignified pressure that instantly changed the feeling of the battlefield for them.

Trembling, Jia Lie was the first to fall to his knees to kowtow. Then came Master God-Diviner. As the moments ticked by, the previously maddened disciples of Middle Peak began to drop to their knees. As the shocked Spirit Stream Sect cultivators looked on, even Song Que was forced by Bai Xiaochun’s blood master pressure to drop down and kowtow.

“Greetings, Middle Peak Blood Master!”

More and more such cries rang out, until all of the Middle Peak cultivators were on their knees, trembling, even the ones further back within the army.

At a broad glance, it was possible to tell that the number of people who were prostrating themselves to Bai Xiaochun... made up a full twenty percent of the army. That was all of Middle Peak!

There was only one person that Bai Xiaochun didn’t cause any pressure to weigh down upon. That person was about 30 meters away from him, trembling, eyes filled with disbelief, pain, and other mixed emotions.

She was the grand elder of Middle Peak, Song Junwan!

Her reaction was different from the reactions of the others. Mostly, she felt pain. After Nightcrypt had gone missing, she had barely been able to sleep. She had poured all the resources at her disposal into searching for him. She had even implored the Song Clan patriarch to help. Just when the war was about to be fought, she had sat alone atop the huge blood sword, thinking about Nightcrypt, and wondering where he was. From the moment he had gone missing, her heart had been filled with a bitter melancholy.

Never could she possibly have imagined that it would be on this very battlefield, under these circumstances, that she would once again lay eyes on him.

Everything was quiet as Song Junwan looked at Nightcrypt. After a long moment, she spoke, her voice laced with bitterness and pain. “Just... who are you? Are you Nightcrypt, or Bai Xiaochun? Who... who *are* you?!?!”

She was trembling, her eyes were bloodshot, and it was impossible to prevent the emotions she felt from ringing out in her words.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t respond immediately. Even he wasn’t completely sure how he felt about Song Junwan. However, when he saw the tears welling up in her eyes, he softly replied, “I'm... I’m both!”

Song Junwan’s tears flowed down her cheeks... then dropped slowly down to the ground below.

“You’re both…? So everything was a sham….” She felt like a fool. As she thought back to everything that had occurred between herself and Nightcrypt, her heart filled with stabs of pain. Weakness flooded through her, and she began to weep like a helpless child.

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and looked up at the patriarchs of the two sects. Raising his voice, he said, “I am Bai Xiaochun, legacy echelon-designate of the Spirit Stream Sect. I'm also the blood master of Middle Peak, Nightcrypt. Patriarchs, stop this war. Fighting isn’t the only way to solve the problems we face!

“Both sides need something that can be a basis for trust between the two sects. Well... can't I be the basis of that trust!?!?” His words spread across most of the battlefield, and the cultivators who heard them said nothing in response.

The Song Clan patriarch hovered in mid-air, hesitating. Although he couldn’t quickly accept the fact that Nightcrypt was Bai Xiaochun, one thing was for certain: it didn’t matter who Nightcrypt was, he was still the blood master of Middle Peak, and he cultivated Middle Peak’s magics. However, despite how much the sect cared about Blood Master Nightcrypt, they wouldn’t allow a blood master to interfere with matters that could affect the survival of the sect as a whole.

The Song Clan patriarch was just about to say something when Patriarch Droughtflame suddenly began to laugh coldly.

Eyes glittering, he cried out in a sinister voice, “Blood Master Nightcrypt has been captured by the Spirit Stream Sect. What a vile and shameless act, Spirit Stream Sect!

How dare you attempt to use our own blood master against us! Today, I will eradicate you, destroy your legacies, and exterminate every member of your sect!! Men, bring the blood master back into the blood clouds!”

With that, he waved his sleeve. The fighting... was now about to break out again!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0280 awe-chapter-281

Patriarch Droughtflame’s reaction came very quickly, and almost immediately reversed the unfavorable situation which had just sprung up because of Bai Xiaochun.

By defaming the Spirit Stream Sect, he gave the Blood Stream Sect cultivators a reason to sink back into rage.

The three blood masters’ eyes glittered, and it was the same with Song Que and the other important figures in the sect. Three of the blood rippers, as well as some of the prime elders, unhesitatingly shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch laughed coldly. “Complete hogwash! Bai Xiaochun is a Heaven-Dao cultivator of the Spirit Stream Sect. However, he is young and naïve, and was clearly bewitched by your demonic magic! How dare you try to kidnap him right in front of me! Men, get Bai Xiaochun back to the mountains! I’ll personally expel the Blood Stream Sect’s demonic magic from within him!”

Almost immediately, cultivators from the Spirit Stream Sect side sprang into action, including Li Qinghou, who shot forward at top speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Legacy echelon cultivators closed in, along with prime elders, barreling toward the Blood Stream Sect forces, preparing to unleash powerful attacks to fight over Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was again the focus of the entire battlefield. Although he wasn’t of supreme importance to either sect, neither was willing to give him up easily.

The Blood Stream Sect wanted to fight for Nightcrypt, to dispel the disadvantage that had appeared. As for the Spirit Stream Sect, they wanted Bai Xiaochun back, and to cause the Blood Stream Sect’s disadvantage to worsen.

Rumbling echoed out through heaven and earth as the fighting once again broke out.

Up in the sky, the patriarchs were unleashing attacks. The legacy echelon cultivators were fighting with the blood rippers. Prime elders from both sides were unleashing magical techniques and items, causing bright light to fill the sky.

The Blood Stream Sect’s grand lich let loose a terrifying howl, and numerous refined corpses raced into motion. As they moved along, corpse auras spread out everywhere. Among those corpses, Bai Xiaochun could see some that belonged to him, and knew that he could force them to stand down. However... a few corpses among an army like that didn’t count for much. They were like a few grains of sand in a sea.

When it came to the gargoyles, they cackled madly as they swept out from the Blood Stream Sect forces in preparation to attack.

Then there were the countless blood swords. As a blood master, Bai Xiaochun could suppress Middle Peak, but... there were multiple past blood masters who were now blood rippers. Although their level of control of the mountain peak couldn’t match up to the current blood master, by combining forces and drawing upon the support of the patriarchs, they quickly suppressed Bai Xiaochun’s blood master powers, allowing the Middle Peak cultivators to fight once more.

Rumbling filled heaven and earth as the body cultivators from Lesser Marsh Peak sprang into action.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s spell formation giants roared into action as they charged toward the Blood Stream Sect. Killing intent erupted from Shangguan Tianyou’s giant, and it was the same with those controlled by Ghostfang, Gongsun Yun, Beihan Lie, Xu Song and Zhou Xinqi.

Countless battle beasts from the north bank howled as they flew out, a tide of beasts that was shocking to behold. The Heavenhorn ink dragon roared, black flames erupting from his mouth, filling the sky and creating a sea of fire.

Down below, more spell formation giants pounded across the ground toward the Blood Stream Sect army. As they closed in on each other, magical battle equipment was unleashed, causing everything to shake and tremble.

Higher up in the sky, the Spirit Stream Sect’s white sun and the Blood Stream Sect’s scarecrow both began to emanate shocking fluctuations.

A bitter look could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. Even revealing his status as blood master wasn’t enough to prevent the war from being fought. He looked around at all of the familiar faces fighting, and it made him feel like he was being torn apart inside.

“Why do we have to fight...?” he murmured. “This war obviously doesn’t have to happen! Am I just not strong enough...? Is that why nobody will listen to me?” As he looked around, he realized the truth of the matter. Although both sects cared deeply about him, he simply wasn’t strong enough, and definitely not important enough, to influence a massive, deadly war like this.

However, as far as he was concerned, if one sect wiped the other out, he would definitely see many familiar faces cut down, regardless of who came out victorious.

As he stood there trembling, he realized there was no backing down now. Nor did he need to. His cultivation base erupted as he flew up into the air, to once again stand between the two sides and roar, “I said... you people aren’t allowed to keep fighting!”

His voice echoed out like thunder, and caused a few people to hesitate. However, the majority ignored him. As for Song Que, his smile grew even colder, and inside, he was mocking Bai Xiaochun.

Master God-Diviner, Jia Lie and everyone else from Middle Peak were now freed from Bai Xiaochun’s blood master powers. Thanks to the blood rippers, they were now free to fight. Eyes flickering, hearts filled with all sorts of thoughts and feelings, they sprang into motion.

Only Song Junwan maintained her silence, and didn’t attack. Because of the tears which still filled her eyes, her grief seemed even more profound than before.

Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve, brushing away the first round of attacks levied against him. Bloodshot eyes filled with madness, he roared, “Didn’t you people hear me!? I said... you’re not allowed to keep fighting!!”

Unfortunately, his words were like a pebble tossed into a well, which would cause a few ripples on the surface of the water, but nothing more.

The Song Clan patriarch sighed and said, “Nightcrypt, my son, don't waste your words. Your position makes you overly sensitive, so just leave the battlefield. There’s no need for you to fight in this war. You... can’t control what’s happening here.”

Meanwhile, Patriarch Ironwood was fighting him with utter ferocity.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch sighed inwardly, then said, “Xiaochun, since the Blood Stream Sect is determined to fight, then any words you speak are useless. I understand how you feel, so just go back to the Luochen Mountains. There’s no need for you to join in the fighting.”

The Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch attacked with greater force than before, even drawing upon some of his magical items.

Booms rose up into the air, and shockwaves spread out across the battlefield. Bai Xiaochun was shaking visibly as he looked around at the fighting. Finally, he lifted his right hand. He knew what he had to do now, and that it would likely be a disaster for the Blood Stream Sect. Memories from the Blood Stream Sect flitted through his mind, and yet, he had no other choice.

Filled with resolve, he threw his head back and let out a piercing howl.

That howl contained the fluctuations of his cultivation base, the power of his Undying Live Forever Technique, and even more importantly, the accumulation of all the madness he felt in his heart.

His blood qi erupted, rumbling out to form a gigantic blood-colored column of light that shot up into the air. Voice resonating with matchless dignity and splendor, he roared, “Blood Stream Sect, stand down this instant!!”

With that, he shoved his right hand out in the direction of the Blood Stream Sect.

Instantly, rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and the blood-colored light which surrounded him began to spread out rapidly. The heavens shook and the earth quaked as, in the blink of an eye, the light covered everything on the entire battlefield!!

The sky shook as a huge blood-colored vortex sprang into being, which then transformed into an indescribably large blood-colored arm. The arm filled the sky, and mirrored Bai Xiaochun’s own gesture, shoving toward the army from the Blood Stream Sect!

A matchless and awe-inspiring power immediately emanated out from the arm, causing intense pressure to instantly spring out.

Many people had already taken note of the huge hand. When the patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect saw it, and especially the taciturn arch-patriarch, their faces immediately fell.

The shoving motion of the hand instantly caused the cultivators of Lesser Marsh Peak to tremble. Their faces went pale and filled with expressions of astonishment as they realized that all of the techniques they cultivated were being thrown into utter chaos. It was like some unheard-of sealing mark were suddenly crushing down onto them!

In the blink of an eye, the battle prowess of all Lesser Marsh Peak cultivators was unexpectedly reduced by half!!

It wasn’t just the Lesser Marsh Peak cultivators that were affected. Corpse Peak, Middle Peak, and Nameless Peak cultivators were all shocked, and began to cry out in alarm.

“What’s going on...?”

“My cultivation base is destabilizing!!”

“How is this possible!? My... my cultivation base is actually being sealed!!”

It wasn’t just the cultivators on the battlefield who were affected. The refined corpses, the gargoyles, the blood swords, everything suffered from the crushing pressure. Screams of terror rang out. Even the blood clouds began to dim, and the blood swords began to dry up.

As for the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs, their hearts and minds were spinning. To their shock, they found that even their cultivation bases were being suppressed!

Their very essences were being affected, making it impossible to fight back against the pressure!

Anyone who practiced any cultivation that was connected to the Blood Ancestor... could not avoid this curse!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0281 awe-chapter-282

The blood masters of Lesser Marsh Peak, Corpse Peak, and Nameless Peak were shaking visibly, and blue veins were bulging out on their necks and faces. They could instantly sense an indescribable pressure crushing down onto them, wresting away their blood master powers!

Their ability to control the cultivators of their own mountain peaks was being taken away, and there was nothing they could do to stop it. In the briefest of instants, they went from occupying a high and lofty position, to being nothing more than ordinary cultivators.

The grand elders of the same three mountain peaks were equally cowed.

Song Junwan’s face paled, and her eyes shone with disbelief. The fact that Bai Xiaochun and Nightcrypt were one and the same was a development that had shaken countless people, but that shock was like nothing compared to what they were experiencing now.

“Impossible!!”

“I'm the blood master of Corpse Peak!!”

“What exactly is going on? I can’t believe a simple gesture on his part can suppress all of us!!”

Considering the blood masters and grand elders were reacting in that way, there was no need to even considering how the other cultivators felt. Master God-Diviner, Jia Lie, Song Que, Xu Xiaoshan, and everyone else in the Blood

Stream Sect were completely rocked. It didn't matter what they wanted to happen; they had all cultivated based on the Blood Ancestor, and as such, were now being crushed by Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing a vortex to spring up and an enormous blood-colored arm to appear, and that one act changed the entire situation on the battlefield!

Boundless and shocking rumbling sounds echoed out as everyone from the Blood Stream Sect, including Outer Sect disciples, Inner Sect disciples, the cultivators who inhabited the four mountain peaks, the prime elders, and even the blood rippers and patriarchs, were affected.

All of them were shaken, and their faces fell. It would be an understatement to say that in their world, the sun and moon had gone dark!

All of the Blood Stream Sect’s glory and power was fading. No longer did they have the advantage in any sense of the word. They were weakening, and because of the sudden turnaround, countless disciples’ minds began to collapse. Chaos instantly gripped the Blood Stream Sect.

As the chaos spread, it quickly became apparent that the Blood Stream Sect was on the verge of collapsing.

It was in that moment that someone, it was impossible to say who, suddenly let out a cry of terror that echoed in all directions.

“The Blood Lord!! This is the power of the legendary Blood Lord!!”

“Heavens! Nightcrypt.... Bai Xiaochun.... I can’t believe he's actually become the Blood Lord!!”

“Blood Devil....” Such cries began to echo out one after another. Everyone was shaking inwardly, and those who hadn’t been quick to realize what was happening were dumbstruck as they heard what the others were saying. The patriarchs up the sky felt their strength fading away, and their faces flickered as they began to cry out.

“I can’t believe the Blood Devil is real!!”

“The Blood Lord has come! Nightcrypt acquired the Blood Lord legacy!!”

“How... how can we keep fighting now?!?!”

Amidst the chaos, the cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect all began to look up into the sky at the person who was single-handedly suppressing all of them: Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun’s hair was whipping about in the wind as he hovered there. Although he looked slightly more impressive than a blood master, he still didn’t seem capable of altering the tide of a deadly battle such as the one which was about to be fought.

And yet....

Everything had already changed. Someone who could single-handedly suppress an entire sect was not a person who could be disregarded. He was not a person who could be ignored!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. With the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators behind him, he stared out at the Blood Stream Sect, and although his raspy voice wasn’t very loud, it somehow filled the entire battlefield.

“Now will you people listen to me...? Blood Stream Sect, if you really want to exterminate the Spirit Stream Sect, then you’ll have to do so over my dead body!” Bai Xiaochun’s energy erupted, causing blood-colored light to shoot high into the sky. At the same time, the pressure weighing down on the Blood Stream Sect increased, and his words seemed to crash like thunder in their ears.

The refined corpses were trembling, and one by one, began to bow their heads. The grand lich’s eyes seemed to burn with sparks of flame as it threw its head back and roared, flying through the air to stand in front of Bai Xiaochun.

His emerald zombie let out a similar howl, causing countless green hairs to shoot out into the surrounding zombies. In response, the other zombies’ pupils dilated, and they suddenly turned on their masters in the Blood Stream Sect!

Things weren’t over yet. Among the cloud of gargoyles was one seemingly ordinary gargoyle who suddenly let out an ear-piercing cry, causing all of the other gargoyles to similarly turn on the Blood Stream Sect and bare their fangs!!

Now, not only had the Blood Stream Sect’s cultivators been suppressed, more than half of the power at their disposal had been taken away from them!

The Blood Stream Sect patriarchs looked at Bai Xiaochun with ashen faces and unprecedentedly complex expressions.

“He's the Blood Lord!”

Whether it was the arch-patriarch, Patriarch Limitless or even the Song Clan patriarch, the complex emotions in their eyes were completely beyond description. Had they known earlier that Nightcrypt was the Blood Lord, then the war definitely wouldn’t have ended up like this.

There were mixed attitudes in the Blood Stream Sect regarding the legendary Blood Devil. Some people longed for him to appear, others did not. If the Blood Lord turned out to be an ordinary disciple, then he could be easily controlled and restricted, and could be forced to only do things that would benefit the Blood Stream Sect.... But now, contrary to all expectations, Bai Xiaochun turned out to be the Blood Lord.

The Song Clan patriarch maintained bitter silence. The arch-patriarch seemed to be in a daze. Nobody knew what to think. As for Patriarch Limitless, he said nothing, and yet a bizarre light flickered in his eyes. Off to the side, Patriarch Droughtflame had his head bowed low, making it impossible for anyone to read his expression.

Song Junwan was in the crowd, looking at Bai Xiaochun with a smile that was vastly more bitter than the bitterness in the hearts of anyone around her. As she looked up at Bai Xiaochun, she was struck with the sensation that the gap between them was only continuing to grow wider.

She slowly bowed her head. She wanted to be able to hide, to be able to flee; as of this moment, she had no desire whatsoever to even see Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the silence of the Blood Stream Sect, the mixed expressions on the faces of the patriarchs, and the gloominess of Song Junwan, his heart prickled with pain. However, there was nothing else he could do.

He had been nervous from the very beginning until now. Finally, from what he could tell, there was no way that the fighting could continue.

“There isn't any need to fight each other,” he said softly. “I can represent the Spirit Stream Sect on your behalf to--”

However, before he could finish speaking, a droning sound rose up into the air from the Spirit Stream Sect side of the battlefield as intense fluctuations sprang up from the grand spell formation in the Luochen Mountains!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he looked over his shoulder to see that all of the patriarchs had strange expressions on their faces!

That was especially true of the founding patriarch, whose eyes glittered with brilliant light. He had been shaken by everything which had occurred; never could he possibly have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would not only be a blood master, but would also have become the Blood Stream Sect’s legendary Blood Lord!!

The importance of someone like that couldn’t be understated. Not only could he suppress the Blood Stream Sect and reverse the tide of battle, he could provide them with an opportunity the likes of which could rarely be come across!!

To see that opportunity right in front of them caused the five patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect to be completely shaken. Of course they cared about Bai Xiaochun, but at the same time, this was a matter that pertained to the survival of their sect. In a moment like this, they were willing to betray their consciences for the benefit of the sect! After exchanging glances with the other patriarchs, the founding patriarch threw his head back and laughed.

“Excellent! Bai Xiaochun, you have performed a great service for the sect today. Henceforth, you are a member of the legacy echelon, and are also the junior patriarch!

“Spirit Stream Sect, attack! Exterminate the Blood Stream Sect!!” The founding patriarch immediately waved his hand, and the four other patriarchs shot in the direction of the Blood Stream Sect’s patriarchs. At the same time, the spell formation in the Luochen Mountains began to shine with glittering light, and the giant incarnations, after a brief pause, charged forth, roaring. Countless battle beasts from the north bank howled. That group of battle beasts comprised roughly thirty percent of the prowess of the Spirit Stream Sect, and they were currently pouring out to cover heaven and earth.

This was an opportunity to mobilize the entire sect to inflict heavy losses on the Blood Stream Sect, and create a foundation for the Spirit Stream Sect that would last for 10,000 years.

The Blood Stream Sect was completely shaken. Almost simultaneously, all of them let out unyielding roars. However, there was nowhere to retreat to, and their hearts were all filled with grief, as well as profound hatred for Bai Xiaochun.

“I despise you, Nightcrypt!!”

“Who cares about blood masters and Blood Lords? You say you represent the Spirit Stream Sect? Hahaha! Nightcrypt... you’re *nothing*!”

“Nightcrypt, even if I die in battle today, my ghost will haunt you for generations to come!!”

As their bitter laughter rang out, the three blood masters, the prime elders, and the blood rippers drew upon all the battle prowess they could muster. As for the patriarchs, they gritted their teeth and let out anguished howls.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock at the Spirit Stream Sect patriarchs. Never could he have imagined that the Spirit Stream Sect would choose to attack in this moment. Staggering backward, he suddenly began to laugh, a laughter that almost seemed to be weeping.

“How naïve of me. I thought that suppressing one side would end the war. How wrong I was....

“I get it now... I really, truly get it.... I overestimated my position. I misjudged my own status. Well then, Spirit Stream Sect, you’re my family, but as of this moment, I need to show you the true limits of my power!”

Looking up, his hair whipping about him, he waved his right hand in the direction of the Spirit Stream Sect....

He was calling someone!

“Bruiser!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0282 awe-chapter-283

In almost the same instant that the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, Bruiser raised his head from amidst the boundless cloud of battle beasts in the Spirit Stream Sect army, and then let out a roar that could shake heaven and earth.

As his roar echoed out, he began to grow larger. 9 meters. 30 meters. 60 meters. 90 meters!!

In the blink of an eye, he transformed into something like a small mountain, bristling with intense energy, with black flames roiling out from beneath his feet. He had the head of a dragon and the body of a horse, and as of this moment, was bursting with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power!!

That was power that only a beast king could possess!!

This was none other than beast king energy!

Incredible rumbling echoed out as Bruiser shot forward with lightning speed, then spun to a halt in front of Bai Xiaochun and let out a deafening howl.

Although there were mixed emotions in his eyes, he didn’t hesitate. Regardless of the circumstances, he would do anything that Bai Xiaochun asked of him, even if that meant fighting against the Spirit Stream Sect. As long as he was with Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t care!

There was only one important person in his life, and that was his father. Back when he’d lacked the power to even live, that person had offered soft, warm comfort, and that was something that Bruiser would never forget for his entire life.

His roar contained the power of a beast king, and caused all of the Spirit Stream Sect's battle beasts to shiver, and then turn toward their masters and howl.

The cry of countless battle beasts caused brightly colored light to flash in heaven and earth. Everyone in the Spirit Stream Sect was completely, utterly shocked, and began to cry out in astonishment.

“This....”

“What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

“Heavens! Bruiser, you....”

The Spirit Stream Sect was struck by chaos. Their ranks began to dissolve, and the sudden change on the part of the battle beasts ensured that the forces of the north bank were completely thrown out of order. Even more shocking was that, after a brief moment of hesitation, the Heavenhorn ink dragon looked down at Bruiser, and then sped into motion. A moment later, he was right next to Bruiser, staring out at the Spirit Stream Sect.

Countless shouts of alarm rose up. The patriarchs, the prime elders and the legacy echelon cultivators all felt like they were going mad, and their eyes shone with intense disbelief.

To them, Bai Xiaochun was a Heaven-Dao expert and the legacy echelon-designate. If he reached Core Formation, it would be virtually impossible to find anyone who could be a match for him.

However, at a single word from him, Bruiser caused all of the north banks’ battle beasts to change sides. This sudden turn of events was something that, regardless of Bai Xiaochun’s status or position, no one could ever have possibly predicted would happen!

As of this moment, the Spirit Stream Sect as a whole was just as shaken as the Blood Stream Sect had been moments ago.

Shangguan Tianyou’s hands were clenched into fists, and rage burned in his eyes. Mixed emotions could be seen on the faces of Ghostfang, Beihan Lie, Gongsun Yun, Xu Song, and all of the other Chosen.

Zhou Xinqi was struck mute, and Hou Yunfei’s eyes were wide. As for Hou Xiaomei, her jaw dropped, and her heart began to pound rapidly.

Big Fatty Zhang, Third Fatty Hei, Chen Fei, and Bai Xiaochun’s other friends were all dumbstruck, completely and utterly shaken, even left reeling, by Bai Xiaochun’s actions.

Mixed feelings could also be seen in Li Qinghou’s eyes. However, as he continued to look at Bai Xiaochun, those feelings coalesced into a gleam of approval.

“Xiaochun has grown up,” he murmured.

As the Spirit Stream Sect was shaken, and as the founding patriarch and other leaders looked in astonishment at Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. The Blood Stream Sect was at his back now as he looked up at the patriarchs.

His heart burned with grief; he didn't want these two sets to go to war! After a moment of silence, he said, “If you want to exterminate the Blood Stream Sect, then just like I said before, you’ll have to do it over Bai Xiaochun’s dead body!”

Although his voice sounded sad, the determination therein was plain for all to see, and left everyone shaken.

The patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect were trembling. The blood rippers, prime elders, and the three blood masters were all shaking, strange and indescribable emotions rising up in them as they looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Xu Xiaoshan, Song Que, and Jia Lie had similar reactions. In this most critical of moments, Bai Xiaochun was stepping forward bravely on their behalf, causing warm feelings to suddenly rise up in their hearts.

As they looked at Bai Xiaochun standing there, his back to them as he faced the Spirit Stream Sect, using his own life to protect theirs, he once again became Nightcrypt from Middle Peak!

A tremor ran through Song Junwan as she looked up at Bai Xiaochun; once again, a bright glow appeared in her eyes.

As of this moment, all eyes on the battlefield were fixed solely on Bai Xiaochun!!

No one could afford to ignore his words now. Now, they had to pay attention!

He had single-handedly changed the course of the battle. He alone had suppressed the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect alike!

“Now will you people listen to me...?” he asked quietly, looking at the patriarchs of both the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect. Although his words seemed laced with sadness, they also contained something that made it impossible for anyone to refuse him.

He suddenly seemed far more powerful and glorious than anyone could have imagined, someone who could force everyone else to stay their hands.

“Why are we doing all this fighting and killing? What is the point of all this death? We're all cultivators of the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world, right? Is the point of our cultivation really just to kill people?!?!?!” In response to his words, the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators sank into further silence, as did the Blood Stream Sect.

The only sound on the battlefield was Bai Xiaochun’s voice.

“Cultivation is supposed to be about living forever, right? Magical techniques are supposed to be used to protect ourselves, aren’t they? If we can avoid all the death and killing, then couldn’t we find some better solutions to our problems? Why don’t we at least give it a try?!?!” Although he started out speaking quietly, his voice continued to grow louder and louder until he was yelling. Pain stabbed at his heart, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. He looked around at all the familiar faces, and could see people who were bleeding and wounded from the little bit of fighting which had already taken place.

The pain he felt grew stronger.

“I'm just a cowardly cultivator who’s scared of death. But you know what? It’s not just the idea of *my* death that scares me! I don’t want to see my family die! I don't want my fellow sect members to die, and I don't want my friends to die!!

“I don't want anybody to die, not in the Spirit Stream Sect, and not in the Blood Stream Sect either!!” As his voice grew louder and louder, the cultivators from the Spirit Stream Sect bowed their heads. In the Blood Stream Sect, numerous clenched fists slowly relaxed.

The patriarchs of both sects heard Bai Xiaochun's words, and it gave rise to complex feelings within their hearts.

“I didn’t have to jump out in the middle of you two. I could have just stood by and watched you kill each other. Whether the Blood Stream Sect or the Spirit Stream Sect won in the end, I would have survived. After all, I'm a blood master of the Blood Stream Sect, and I’m essentially in the legacy echelon of the Spirit Stream Sect!

“But I didn’t want that! If all of you hate me and blame me, that’s fine, as long as I can stop you from killing each other!” As he yelled, tears welled up in his eyes.

His words shook many people down to their hearts. The look in Song Junwan’s eyes grew softer. Hou Xiaomei, Zhou Xinqi, Hou Yunfei, Big Fatty Zhang, Song Que, Xu Xiaoshan....

Many cultivators on both sides had to agree that what Bai Xiaochun was saying made sense, and their gazes also softened.

“Spirit Stream Sect, you know that this war will likely end with ninety percent of the disciples dying. Maybe the sect wouldn’t be destroyed, but it would be a disastrous setback. The sect might even lose the qualifications to remain in the Lower Reaches.” Turning his head, he looked at the Blood Stream Sect.

“Blood Stream Sect, even if you won, it would be a brutal fight. Afterward, you would have to face the Profound Stream Sect, and then the Sky River Court. Do you really think you could win? What will your chances be? Even if you do win, what good will it do to be one of the weakest sects in the Middle Reaches? It wouldn’t be long before you were wiped out!” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t being polite in anything he said. He was simply stating the objective truth of the situation. Nor was he giving anyone a chance to try to refute his arguments. More and more cultivators were lowering their heads thoughtfully.

“I know for a fact that the Spirit Stream Sect doesn’t really want this war, and neither does the Blood Stream Sect. You just feel that you have no other options. You have to fight for the chance to become a Middle Reaches sect.

“But why don’t we just join forces? Why don't we become one big sect? That would make us even more powerful! We can wipe out the Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect, or maybe even absorb them to become stronger than ever. Then we can go wipe out the Sky River Court, and earn our spot in the Middle Reaches.”

He clenched his hands into fists, getting more excited as he shouted, “There are plenty of resources available for Middle Reaches sects. There’s more than enough for us all. Cooperate, and everyone benefits! Fight together! Share victories and losses! Why won't that work?!

“Spirit Stream Sect, Blood Stream Sect, let’s form a new sect! We can make a sect the likes of which has never been seen before! We can be the most powerful of all sects, a sect that can shake all other sects!!”

As his words echoed out into the hearts of the cultivators of the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, it led to profound thoughts within their minds.

The patriarchs of the two sects maintained their silence. Everything Bai Xiaochun was saying made sense. In the past, there had been no common ground that would ensure that they could trust each other. Even if they merged together into a larger sect, each side would always be suspicious of the other, and the possibility of a betrayal would always loom in their hearts.

But now, they had that common ground in Bai Xiaochun. With him, their two sects were now inextricably linked.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0283 awe-chapter-284

Only when Bai Xiaochun had unleashed all his threatening methods was everyone finally left with no choice but to listen to each and every word that came out of his mouth.

To the Spirit Stream Sect, he was a Heaven-Dao expert, a legacy echelon cultivator that could control all of the north bank’s battle beasts. Because of that, he was someone the sect could not and would not take lightly. In fact, he surpassed everyone in a way that had nothing to do with his cultivation base. He had the potential to eventually become the backbone of the entire sect.

As far as the Blood Stream Sect was concerned, as soon as Bai Xiaochun revealed his Blood Lord powers, that made him more important than anyone else in the sect.

A mere thought on his part could either increase the Blood Stream Sect’s battle prowess by thirty percent, or reduce it by half.

When the Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch looked at Bai Xiaochun, he couldn’t help but think of the shocking Blood Ancestor who lay beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River.

“I wonder if the Blood Lord can actually control the body of the Blood Ancestor?” he thought. Hesitation gripped his heart; he didn't dare to try to suppress the Blood Lord or take any unnecessary risks. The slightest slip could send the entire Blood Stream Sect into destruction!

“If we form a new sect, where will the headquarters be?” asked Patriarch Ironwood of the Spirit Stream Sect.

Bai Xiaochun’s idea was becoming clearer in his own mind, and his eyes shone with bright light, a light that appeared to be the desire to do battle!! “If we make a new sect, the headquarters won’t be located in any of the old sects’ locations. The river branch occupied by the Sky River Court will be our new headquarters!”

Now that the identities of Bai Xiaochun and Nightcrypt were merging together, everyone saw him in a much different light than they had before!

“With my Blood Lord powers, I can increase the battle prowess of the Blood Stream Sect by thirty percent. With my control over the battle beasts of the Spirit Stream Sect, I can unify their powers to make them even more formidable!

“With our two sects joined together, we will be like two infinitely sharp blades! We can absorb the Profound Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect, and then we’ll be even stronger! We can dominate the Sky River Court and take over the Middle Reaches!!

“The Middle Reaches will be an unfamiliar place to all of us, but if we put our roots down there together, we will always be able to trust each other!” As Bai Xiaochun spoke, the patriarchs of the two sects looked on, sighing occasionally, thoughtful expressions on their faces.

As of this moment, they both knew that fighting wasn’t an option. Bai Xiaochun was too important to both the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect. Only a person like him had the potential to be the link between the two sects, an opportunity for them to truly join together.

After all, not only did the Blood Stream Sect have full faith in Bai Xiaochun, but so did the Spirit Stream Sect.

Silence prevailed as countless individuals stood there in thought. Slowly, people began to whisper among themselves and discuss the matter in low tones. Moments ago, the two sides had been facing off with proverbial swords drawn, but now, that mood began to fade.

At long last, Bai Xiaochun was starting to relax.

But then...

Patriarch Droughtflame, one of the eight Blood Stream Sect patriarchs, the very same patriarch who had presided over the summoning of the grand lich, suddenly looked at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes flickering with profound killing intent.

“Complete and utter nonsense!” he said, his voice as cold as ice. “You obviously killed Nightcrypt and took his place! You’re trying to deceive us all. Prepare to die!”

Even as his words rang out, he sprang into motion, shooting at incredible speed toward Bai Xiaochun. As he did, he extended his right hand, and his Nascent Soul cultivation base erupted with heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing power. Everything began to shake violently as an enormous vortex sprang up around him.

As the vortex spun, a massive and deadly aura erupted, transforming into sword qi which instantly shot toward Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun was locked in place, immobilized and incapable of even struggling. At the same time, an intense, unprecedented sensation of deadly crisis rose up inside of him.

He had never felt as if he were closer to death. He was being attacked by a Nascent Soul patriarch, whereas his cultivation base was in mid Foundation Establishment....

The difference between the two was like the difference between an ocean and a puddle!

However, the killing move had not been unleashed yet. That came in the form of Patriarch Droughtflame's outstretched palm!

His palm caused everything to shake violently as intense flames raged out, scorching everything in the vicinity as they formed into the shape of a huge hand. The flaming hand radiated a power of extermination that could kill anything in body and soul. It could eradicate souls!

Patriarch Droughtflame's attack on Bai Xiaochun came without any warning whatsoever. Not only did the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators not expect it, but even the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs were completely unprepared. Faces fell on both sides.

“Droughtflame, stay your hand!!” cried the Blood Stream Sect's arch-patriarch, his voice filled with urgency and rage. He instantly reached out with his right hand to try to stop Patriarch Droughtflame.

However, his cultivation base was currently suppressed, and although he could reach Patriarch Droughtflame, he couldn't stop him, only slow him down a bit.

The arch-patriarch's eyes flickered with cold light; Bai Xiaochun was too important. If he died, the two sects would most certainly be forced to fight each other!! They would be bereft of anything that could mitigate their conflict!

Their connection would have been severed!

The Song Clan patriarch’s eyes widened, and his killing intent flared. Regardless of anything, Bai Xiaochun was his adopted son, and for someone to try to kill him right out in the open was something he couldn’t tolerate. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, summoning a raging beam of sword qi that slashed toward Droughtflame.

Unfortunately, his cultivation base was also suppressed by half, and his sword qi quickly collapsed. Patriarch Droughtflame’s hand of flame dimmed slightly, but continued to rumble toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect let out a roar of rage and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, an enormous iron manacle appeared, which grew to 300 meters in size as it shot to intercept Droughtflame’s attack.

When it hit the flame hand, it did far more damage than the arch-patriarch or the Song Clan patriarch. The gigantic hand collapsed by half. And yet, because Patriarch Droughtflame had attacked so quickly, and thus gained the initiative, even all of those successive attacks couldn’t stop him completely!

Even as cultivators from both sides howled in alarm and rage, the half-destroyed flaming hand bore down on Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun!!”

“Nightcrypt!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s face drained of blood as he watched the fire closing in on him. As the sensation of imminent death filled him, he let out a roar that could shake heaven and earth.

Blue veins bulged out on his head, and cracking sounds filled him. It felt like his bones were about to shatter because of the intense pressure weighing down on him. As of this moment, he was sure that the chances of him making it out of this alive were very, very small!

However, he wasn’t willing to resign himself to such a fate. His eyes suddenly flickered with red light. Roaring, he managed to perform a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a violet lamp to appear in his hands, which he brandished in the direction of the flames.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Violet flames shot out from the lamp, spreading out in all directions and forming the shape of an enormous face which rushed to meet the flames. That violet lamp was the gift that the Song Clan patriarch had given to Bai Xiaochun. Despite how powerful it was, though, it couldn’t match up to an old eccentric like Patriarch Droughtflame!

When the sea of flames formed by the violet lamp hit the incoming flaming palm, more of the palm was destroyed, and yet it continued on toward Bai Xiaochun!

Blood sprayed out of his mouth from the force of the incoming attack, which sent him tumbling backward. He started to cough up more blood, but then gritted his teeth and swallowed it back down. With that, he extended his right hand, which held a four-colored jade pendant. Four-colored light glittered out in all directions, creating a four-layered shield.

In that instant, the broken hand of flames slammed into the shield, causing numerous cracking and popping sounds to echo in the air as the four shield layers were destroyed.

With each shield layer, the flame hand's power was reduced, and yet, they couldn’t stop it completely. In the blink of an eye, the shields were gone. In response, the patriarchs of both sects, as well as countless other friends of Bai Xiaochun, all shouted out in fury!

The flaming hand destroyed everything in its path as easily as a hot knife cutting through butter. However, in the very moment before impact, Bai Xiaochun extended his right hand to reveal a paper talisman.

It was none other than....

The Godpower Talisman! [1. Bai Xiaochun got the Godpower Talisman from Master God-Diviner in chapter 262]

He slapped the talisman down onto his chest, and let out a roar that echoed out in all directions. His hair flew around wildly as his Undying Live Forever Technique erupted. Rumbling could be heard that shook heaven and earth as two enormous heavenly demons appeared behind him. They threw their heads back and roared as, thanks to the power of the Godpower Talisman, Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body power skyrocketed, reaching a level more than twice that of before!!

And that was when the mostly-destroyed hand of fire slammed into him.

If the image could be turned into a painting, it would be the type that people would gasp upon seeing. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t even visible beneath the raging flames; the only thing that could be seen were two unbelievably shocking heavenly demons!!

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Intense rumbling sounds filled the air. The hand of flames had been repeatedly weakened and reduced, and now, it finally exploded. Flames shot out in all directions, and at the same time, cracks spread out across Bai Xiaochun’s two heavenly demons. Moments later, they collapsed into pieces.

Bai Xiaochun was sent hurtling toward the ground like a meteor. When he landed, a huge boom could be heard, and a 30-meter-wide crater opened up!

At the bottom of the crater, Bai Xiaochun lay there, his face as ashen as death, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. The force of the blow had knocked him unconscious. Furthermore, there was something else no one noticed, which was that a bit of black light could be seen on his right hand, that was currently fading away.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun lost consciousness, the suppression of the cultivation bases of the Blood Stream Sect immediately ended!

There was one other thing that no one noticed. In the moment that Droughtflame attacked Bai Xiaochun, a monkey could be seen somewhere in the Luochen Mountains, its eyes shining with incisive light. At the same time, within the clouds that made up the Blood Stream Sect, a pair of bright red eyes flickered.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0284 awe-chapter-285

Rumbling echoed out as two figures appeared just outside of the crater. One of them was the Song Clan patriarch, and the other was Li Qinghou’s Master, Patriarch Ironwood.

A moment later, they were next to Bai Xiaochun. The two patriarchs’ eyes met, and instantly, both could see that the other was vigilant and on guard!

Now that the Blood Stream Sect’s cultivation bases were unsealed, their energy surged. The blood clouds billowed out, and at the same time, the refined corpses and gargoyles trembled and then began to howl.

Bruiser hadn’t been fast enough to intervene and help Bai Xiaochun, and now he was glaring at Patriarch Droughtflame with hatred that erupted from his very bones!

The three blood masters were shaking. The blood rippers, the prime elders, the Inner and Outer Sect disciples, and also the patriarchs, were all so shocked that they could barely move!

At the same time, the cultivators of the Spirit Stream Sect were panting, and their eyes were glittering angrily as they stared at the Blood Stream Sect. Moments ago, the tension had been fading, but now, the proverbial swords were once again being drawn.

Everyone understood that based on the friction which existed, the fighting which had just seemed to be an impossibility could now break out at any moment!

Up in midair, Patriarch Droughtflame frowned slightly as he looked down at Bai Xiaochun. Inside, he was sighing regretfully that he had only wounded him, and not killed him. Despite such a surprising outcome, there wasn't any need for him to keep fighting.

"He's only unconscious," he thought, "but that should suffice...." Eyes glittering, his murderous aura spiked as he looked over at the Spirit Stream Sect and said, "The seals have been lifted. Spirit Stream Sect, your despicable actions this day have ensured that you will be cleansed with blood! Children of the Blood Ancestor, join me in attacking the Luochen Mountains and eradicating the Spirit Stream Sect!!" With that, he threw his head back and laughed long and hard, his killing intent pulsing around him. Quite a few disciples of the Blood Stream Sect flew up into the air, eyes shining with murderous gleams as they prepared to start fighting.

The Spirit Stream Sect cultivators clenched their fists, and the sharp looks in their eyes grew more intense.

However, just when Patriarch Droughtflame was about to fly into motion, a cold snort echoed through the air.

"Since when did you become the one to give orders to the Blood Stream Sect?" The words were accompanied by intense pressure, and a sealing force that caused all of the Blood Stream Sect disciples who had been about to attack to suddenly shiver and stop in place. Patriarch Droughtflame's expression flickered as he turned to look at the person who had just spoken, and was now striding toward him.

It was none other than the Blood Stream Sect's arch-patriarch, the most powerful cultivator in the Blood Stream

Sect!

Earlier, his cultivation base had been reduced by half, but now those effects were gone, and his energy was surging. It was like the might of the heavens as he walked forward, everything around him twisting and distorting.

“What’s the meaning of this, Master Godwind!?” Patriarch Droughtflame grated angrily, his expression turning grim.

“What’s the meaning?” replied the arch-patriarch. “I just ordered you to stay your hand. Why did you attack anyway? I refuse to believe that Bai Xiaochun is impersonating Nightcrypt. He is most definitely a blood master of the Blood Stream Sect, and even more importantly, the Blood Lord!” A cold light flickered in the eyes of the arch-patriarch, and as he spoke, his words rumbled like thunder.

The Spirit Stream Sect cultivators’ hearts were starting to pound, and as for the founding patriarch, a strange light could be seen in his eyes. The entire Spirit Stream Sect went completely silent as they watched events unfold.

Facing the intense pressure of the arch-patriarch, Patriarch Droughtflame began to edge backward. Then he turned to the other patriarchs and cried, “Of course I know he’s a blood master. But do you people really believe that a nobody like him should be able to suppress the cultivation bases of everyone in the sect?! He has to die! His death will not harm the Blood Stream Sect in any way! In fact, it would be a blessing! I just did what you people were hesitating to do yourselves! That's all!”

Many people in the Blood Stream Sect began to wonder what they should think. As for the patriarchs, their expressions were grim, but it was impossible to tell what they were thinking.

As the arch-patriarch listened to Patriarch Droughtflame speak, a cold, grim smile spread out on his face. Then he said, “I can also suppress the cultivation bases of everyone in the sect. Don’t tell me you think I should be killed too? Also, I’m very curious to know why *your* cultivation base wasn’t suppressed just now!”

In response to his words, numerous Blood Stream Sect cultivators’ mouths dropped. Cries of shock could be heard as people thought back to the events which had just played out. Although they hadn’t noticed at the time, now that they thought about it, what had occurred was very clear.

The reactions were the same on the Spirit Stream Sect side, with the exception of the founding patriarch, whose eyes glittered faintly. He had noticed the clues earlier.

Patriarch Droughtflame’s expression flickered, and beads of sweat could be seen on his forehead. There was no way for him to answer the arch-patriarch’s question. His original plan had simply been to take the risk and try to kill Bai Xiaochun. If Bai Xiaochun died, there was no way the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect would join forces. They would definitely start fighting.

“Dammit!” he thought. “This Bai Xiaochun is too lucky. I can’t believe he survived my attack!” Patriarch Droughtflame gritted his teeth as his body suddenly began to turn blurry, as he prepared to flee.

“Think you can leave just like that?” the arch-patriarch said, eyes flickering with killing intent. Without any hesitation, he waved his right finger at Patriarch Droughtflame.

At the same time, the other patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect shot forward to surround Droughtflame, preventing him from fleeing. Clearly, they had already come to the conclusion that he might try to do such a thing.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the arch-patriarch’s finger caused ripples of extermination to spread out. Patriarch Droughtflame, seeing that he couldn’t escape, threw his head back and bellowed. A quick incantation gesture caused flames to shoot out and battle against the ripples of extermination.

A deafening boom filled the air, and blood oozed out of the corners of Patriarch Droughtflame’s mouth. However, he used the force of the blast to fall backward. Even still, he was no match for an attack by the combined efforts of all of the Blood Stream Sect’s patriarchs.

Six patriarchs attacked at the same time, unleashing magical techniques, magical items, and divine abilities.

A huge blood sword materialized and slashed down, controlled by none other than Patriarch Limitless.

Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds filled the air as the other patriarchs attacked one after another, unleashing power that seemed capable of destroying everything. A vicious, roaring dragon appeared, next to which was a patriarch who had once been a lowly disciple of Lesser Marsh Peak. As he advanced, the fist strike he unleashed shattered the sky and turned into a massive tempest.

The deadliest attack came from the arch-patriarch. The wave of his hand summoned a huge banner, which unleashed a black wind. That wind became a black phoenix, the roar of which was enough to shake anyone down to the soul. The phoenix moved so quickly as it bore down on

Patriarch Droughtflame that there was no way he could avoid it.

In that moment of crisis, Patriarch Droughtflame suddenly started laughing. Face twisting, he reached both hands out and then slapped them down onto his body. Instantly, his hair turned completely white!

Simultaneously, innumerable faces appeared all over his skin. There were the faces of men and women, young people and old people, and all of them seemed to be distorting as they screamed.

“Dao of a Thousand Faces; Merciless Infiltration!” Patriarch Droughtflame laughed loudly as the divine abilities and magical techniques of the other patriarchs slammed into him, causing him to explode!

The resulting boom sent bright colors flashing through the sky, and gave rise to a huge wind. At the same time, the exploding body of Patriarch Droughtflame transformed into countless faces which rushed out in all directions.

Patriarch Limitless’ eyes went wide, and he cried, “Master Thousand-Faces from the Profound Stream Sect!!”

The arch-patriarch and the other patriarchs were clearly shocked as they too realized who it was that could unleash a cloning magic like this!

They weren’t the only ones. The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch, as well as the other patriarchs, were obviously astonished. This was a secret magic used by one of the most mysterious patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect!

The blast of countless faces was so powerful that not even the combined efforts of all of the patriarchs could contain them all. Although ninety percent were caught up by the web of destruction, a few escaped.

One of the faces was that of a young man. Borrowing the force of the initial blast, he shot out to a position 30,000-meters away. There, the face wriggled, transforming into a white-haired young man. Although his face was ashen from exertion, he didn't hesitate for a moment to flee at top speed.

“Master Thousand-Faces!!” Killing intent raged in Patriarch Limitless's eyes as he shot forward in a blur to pursue the white-haired young man. In the blink of an eye, both of them had disappeared over the horizon.

Everyone in the Blood Stream Sect was shaken, and many people gasped. Nobody could possibly have anticipated that events such as these would play out; one of their own patriarchs, Daoist Sage Droughtflame, had actually been replaced by Master Thousand-Faces from the Profound Stream Sect!

Obviously, the real Droughtflame had been secretly assassinated at some point in the past, and his flesh used by Master Thousand-Faces to replace him via a secret magic!

Everyone thought back to how Master Thousand-Faces had just attacked Bai Xiaochun, and realized that it was all to prevent the two sects from joining together.

If Bai Xiaochun had died, it would have led to mass destruction!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0285 awe-chapter-286

Conversations erupted on the Blood Stream Sect side. One shocking event after another had played out on this day, leaving the entire sect completely shaken.

The Blood Devil had appeared, and one of the patriarchs turned out to be a spy. Such things could not simply be swept under the rug, and the whole sect was left feeling blank, and even humiliated.

The arch-patriarch had a bitter look on his face. Gritting his teeth, he looked over at the Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch, and then at the unconscious Bai Xiaochun. Within moments, the two sects would either be fighting, or joining forces. The arch-patriarch was silent for a moment, but then suddenly, his ears suddenly twitched, almost as if some other being were speaking directly to him. His expression flickered, and then became one of complete determination.

“The Profound Stream Sect tried to sow disharmony between our sects, with the goal of getting us to slaughter each other. Not only did they murder Fellow Daoist Droughtflame, they tried to kill one of our blood masters. We cannot tolerate such things! When the Blood Stream Sect goes to war, we don't return home until blood has been spilled. Therefore, the best thing to do is go wipe out the Profound Stream Sect!!” As his words reached the hearts and minds of the Blood Stream Sect disciples, their confusion was quickly replaced with fury.

“I vow to wipe out the Profound Stream Sect!”

“Let’s get revenge for Patriarch Droughtflame!!” As their new goals came to be fixed in their hearts, their eyes shone, and they even swore oaths. The words of the arch-patriarch instantly caused their blood to boil, and their killing intent to seethe.

The blood clouds began to churn, and the blood seas grew even mightier as the Blood Stream Sect army began to fly off into the distance. The blood giants howled, and the blood-colored battleships sprang into motion. The ground rumbled as countless Outer Sect disciples flew into the air like locusts to become enormous spheres.

The Blood Stream Sect patriarchs spun and flew up into the blood clouds.

After a moment of silence, the Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch looked around at the other members of the sect, and could see the determination in their eyes. With a glance at a certain location in the Luochen Mountains that no one had been paying attention to, he listened to a voice speaking in his head for a moment, after which he gritted his teeth.

“The Profound Stream Sect interfered with the affairs of our two clans, and even tried to kill our junior patriarch! For that, they must die!” With that, he waved his right hand. “Spirit Stream Sect, the time has come to wipe out the Profound Stream Sect!!”

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth. Killing intent surged, and the light of spell formations climbed into the sky. The giants began to speed off into the distance, and the white sun overhead caused the sky to shake!

Many people couldn’t help but take a moment to look over at Bai Xiaochun, the founding patriarch included. After gazing for a moment at him lying unconscious in the crater, they shot off to join the Blood Stream Sect on the continent that was the location of the Profound Stream Sect!

A war was about to be fought the likes of which had not been seen in the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world for 10,000 years!

Apparently, a new sect was on the rise, like the dawn sun, shining with countless beams of glorious light, interspersed with blood and death!

The main forces left, but a small contingent from each sect remained in the Luochen Mountains, including Patriarch Ironwood and the Song Clan patriarch.

Of course, their reason for staying behind was Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun was of vast importance to both sects, and neither would feel comfortable leaving him in the care of the other sect. As Master Thousand-Faces had made clear, Bai Xiaochun was also a major weakness for the two sects. As long as he lived, everything could proceed smoothly. But if he died, the connection between the two sects would be lost, and too many bad things could happen.

Naturally, Hou Xiaomei refused to leave Bai Xiaochun's side. She had long since noticed Song Junwan, and her intuition immediately told her that something was going on between her and Bai Xiaochun.

Song Junwan also refused to leave. The sight of the unconscious Bai Xiaochun filled her with pain, as well as other indescribable emotions.

And thus, time passed. The Luochen Mountains became quiet once again. The Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit

Stream Sect set up two camps right next to each other in the Luochen Mountains.

Directly in the middle of the two camps was an immortal's cave, which was kept under tight guard. Even the two patriarchs watched over the area to make sure that no accidents occurred.

Inside the immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun lay unconscious. Every day, Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan would appear to accompany him. As time went by, Hou Xiaomei became increasingly convinced that something was going on between Bai Xiaochun and Song Junwan. As for Song Junwan, she could obviously tell that Hou Xiaomei had a relationship of some kind with Bai Xiaochun.

Soon, the cultivators from both sects came to sense the killing spirit that existed between the two women. Eventually, they even came to hear the two of them arguing loudly over the unconscious Bai Xiaochun. When that happened, sympathy rose up in the hearts of all of the cultivators.

More time passed. A month later, Bai Xiaochun’s breathing had grown steady. Thanks to the inner workings of the Undying Live Forever Technique, he was slowly recovering. Coupled with the constant treatment of spirit medicines provided by the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect, he was rapidly getting better.

One afternoon, his cultivation base suddenly spun, and his eyes fluttered open. When he realized that he was alive, excitement surged in his heart.

He thought back to everything that had occurred before he passed out, and his heart continued to pound with fear. If he hadn’t pulled out his turtle-wok at the last moment to defend himself, he would surely have been destroyed in body and soul.

“That Droughtflame is too vicious! Dammit, once I get strong enough, I’ll definitely have to get revenge!!” Gnashing his teeth inwardly, he was just about to sit up when he suddenly realized that something seemed wrong. Turning his head slowly to the side, he saw Hou Xiaomei standing close by, her hands on her hips, looking very much like a hot chili pepper as she glared at Song Junwan, who stood opposite her, casual and yet confident.

Perhaps because they were too focused on each other, they didn’t notice that Bai Xiaochun had opened his eyes.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. Something about the scene seemed very odd, so he quickly closed his eyes and then opened them again a moment later. When he confirmed that he wasn’t hallucinating, his heart suddenly thumped, and he began to feel very nervous. That was when Hou Xiaomei began to speak.

“What are you doing here again, old aunt Song?” she said, glaring. “You’re getting pretty old, shouldn’t you be in a retirement home or something? Why don’t you hobble off and take a nap!? I can take care of big bro Xiaochun by myself!”

Song Junwan’s phoenix-like eyes widened into a glare. Looking more regal than ever, she decided to put Hou Xiaomei in her place. “Look girl, I know that you’re too young to understand the relationship between me and your uncle Xiaochun. Considering that you’re Nightcrypt’s niece, I probably ought to give you a good slap upside the face.”

Hou Xiaomei snorted. “*You’re* the niece! Your whole family are all nieces! Me and big bro Xiaochun are the perfect match! We're childhood friends, and we liked each other from the moment we joined the sect. In fact, it was only with big bro Xiaochun’s help that I was able to get into the Outer Sect.”

This was not the first time the two of them had argued with each other. Such heated interchanges occurred on almost a daily basis. Even despite Song Junwan’s control over her own temper, she had almost killed Hou Xiaomei on multiple occasions.

However, considering the plans to join the two sects together, and Bai Xiaochun’s role in that, she managed to hold back.

Bai Xiaochun licked his lips, and then, considering how murderous the two women looked, quickly closed his eyes and pretended to be unconscious. However, he soon realized that something seemed even more wrong than before. Everything was too quiet.

The quiet got him even more nervous, and when he listened carefully, it caused his scalp to tingle; in addition to his own breathing, he could clearly hear two other people breathing, and very close to him at that!

Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead. Pretending as if he were just waking up, he slowly opened his eyes and looked around in confusion. The first thing he saw were two faces as beautiful as flowers.

One seemed mature, the other young and inexperienced. One was spectacularly elegant, the other was sweet and pure.

“Good morning....” he said nervously, blinking a few times.

Song Junwan suddenly smiled, and her gaze softened. Reaching out, she placed her hand onto his forehead to feel his temperature. Eyes as deep as pools of water, she softly said, “Don’t be scared. You were just pretending to be unconscious, that’s all. Now tell your big sis how many days you were faking.”

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard and then said, “I....”

However, before he could finish speaking, Hou Xiaomei swatted Song Junwan’s hand aside and stepped forward to stand next to Bai Xiaochun. Glaring angrily at Song Junwan, she said, “What do you think you’re doing?!?! Big bro Xiaochun is very pure and innocent! How could he possibly have been pretending to be unconscious?!” Almost as soon as the words left her mouth, she looked suspiciously over at Bai Xiaochun, lowered her voice, and said, “Big bro Xiaochun, you’ve been corrupted! Pretending to be unconscious is wrong!”

More sweat popped out on his forehead. Being around these two women made it feel like needles were pricking into his back. “I....”

After rolling her eyes, Song Junwan coolly said, “Nightcrypt, I’d like to speak with you alone. You owe me an explanation.”

“Big bro Xiaochun, I also want to speak with you alone!” Hou Xiaomei said, not willing to be outdone by Song Junwan in any way.

Bai Xiaochun was struck speechless. The two women glared at each other angrily, then turned to him to see what decision he would make. Taking a deep breath, he put a very somber expression on his face.

“Very well!” he said, deepening his voice. Hou Xiaomei had never seen Bai Xiaochun speak in such a way, or seen such an expression on his face. She was shocked, and suddenly realized that this version of her big bro Xiaochun was even more attractive than the old version.

As for Song Junwan, her expression brightened; this was the Nightcrypt she remembered.

“Tell me what happened between the two sects after I fell unconscious. And where are we now? In the Luochen Mountains, or somewhere else?” Bai Xiaochun’s new tactic seemed to work. Continuing to try to look as serious as possible, he listened to the events which had played out after he fell unconscious.

The Blood Stream Sect would never have agreed to let him go back to Fragrant Cloud Peak, and the Spirit Stream Sect would never have agreed to let him return to Middle Peak.

Therefore, the two sects had arranged for a contingent of cultivators to stand guard over him in the Luochen Mountains. The Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood had even stayed behind to stand as Dharma protectors. Bai Xiaochun was moved.

Then Song Junwan went on to explain what was happening on the front lines of the war. The Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect were currently attacking the Profound Stream Sect. The Profound Stream Sect was no match for such a huge army, and had suffered setback after setback. They had already lost about half of their territory.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken by how seriously the two sects took him. Even if he had wanted to go to the fighting, the patriarchs wouldn’t have agreed.

“I guess it's my fault for being so outstanding.... Ai.” Fretting luxuriously, he decided that the best thing to do at the moment was refrain from requesting to be sent to the battlefield. That way, he could avoid giving them any pressure, and could also avoid a situation where they suddenly went crazy and... agreed to let him fight.

“Ah, whatever. I should probably give the patriarchs a good excuse to refuse to let me go to the battlefield. My... my stomach suddenly hurts.... I guess my wounds haven’t healed all the way yet. Well... I’ll just continue to recuperate for a bit longer.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that he was a very considerate person. Clutching his stomach, he continued to pretend to feel ill.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0286 awe-chapter-287

For the next several days, Bai Xiaochun continued to pretend to be unwell. Every so often, he would leave the immortal's cave, look around at the world, and sigh deeply in his heart.

“I doubt there are many disciples such as myself who understand how things work. The patriarchs don’t want me going off to war, so I’ve taken the initiative to pretend to be injured.” He shook his head slowly. In his mind, he really had grown up and come to understand the world a lot better.

“If Uncle Li and my Elder Brother sect leader knew about this, they would definitely praise me.” After some more thought, he realized that he shouldn’t stay outside for too long, otherwise it might make his act seem unrealistic. Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan hadn’t come yet, so the best thing to do was go back inside to sleep. If they showed up, he would definitely get the short end of the stick.

Every time he thought about Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan, his heart trembled.

“Terrifying,” he thought. “The way they look at me, it’s like they want to cut me in two pieces to share with each other.” With that, he turned to hurry back inside. However, that was when Song Junwan came floating over.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound.

“This isn’t right. They never show up at this time....” Turning his head nervously, he saw that Hou Xiaomei had also come.

Taking a deep breath, he put a somber expression on his face and then, before they could get too close, loudly said, “I have to go see the patriarchs!”

Even as the words left his mouth, he blurred into motion, flying toward the patriarchs at top speed. About halfway there, he suddenly realized that he was being careless. He quickly began to weave back and forth as wobbly as possible, as if he were having problems flying. Finally, he landed on the ground with a thud, then walked the rest of the way, panting as he went.

In this part of the Luochen Mountains was a mountain with two peaks that jutted up, not very high, and not very far away from each other. This was where the Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood were staying.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, both patriarchs looked down at him from the mountain peaks above.

“Bai Xiaochun offers greetings, patriarch!” he said, clasping hands and bowing.

“Are your injuries getting any better?” Patriarch Ironwood asked with an enigmatic smile.

Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to respond, a cold snort echoed out from the Song Clan patriarch on the other mountain peak.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard it, his heart trembled, and he sighed. Without hesitation, he offered formal greetings again.

“Nightcrypt offers greetings, Father!”

The Song Clan patriarch smiled and said, “I saw that you had some trouble flying on your way over here. You still haven’t recovered yet?”

“I'm better,” he replied, feeling a bit guilty. He knew that he couldn’t truly deceive the patriarchs, so after some hesitation, he decided to push the envelope a bit and added, “But.... I think there’s still a bit that’s not better?”

Patriarch Ironwood laughed and said, “Ah, it doesn’t matter. Since you’re not fully recovered, just take some more time to rest.”

With that, he waved his hand, sending a medicinal pill bottle flying toward Bai Xiaochun

Bai Xiaochun caught it and blinked a few times. After opening it, he was instantly moved; inside were tier-4 medicinal pills with excellent medicinal efficacy. However, they weren’t designed for treating injuries, but rather, to help increase one’s cultivation base.

The Song Clan patriarch’s eyebrows shot up, and then he waved his hand, sending two medicinal pill bottles flying out. Licking his lips, Bai Xiaochun grabbed them, then opened them. His eyes went wide.

These bottles also contained tier-4 medicines, but they were supreme-grade, bordering on tier-5. They were fairly bursting with blood qi, and would be of significant benefit to his Undying Live Forever Technique.

Bai Xiaochun looked excitedly at the two patriarchs. They were definitely treating him very well. Obviously, they knew that his injuries had recovered, and in response, gave him spirit medicine to help improve his cultivation base.

“It seems I really have grown up,” he thought. “I was worried about the patriarchs, and here they are hinting for me to continue to pretend to feel unwell.” Sighing, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Patriarch, Father, don’t worry, you've done the right thing to trust me!” Giving them a meaningful look, he turned and left.

The Song Clan patriarch chuckled, and Patriarch Ironwood smiled and shook his head. Although they wanted Bai Xiaochun to go to war, they were worried about his safety. Therefore, they wouldn’t force him to make any decision he didn't want to.

After returning to his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun found that Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan had left. Sighing in relief, he sat down cross-legged and began to work on his cultivation.

He soon discovered that his cultivation base had already improved some compared to before he lost consciousness. Furthermore, his Undying Live Forever Technique had grown stronger.

“If things keep going like this,” he thought excitedly, “then late Foundation Establishment is right around the corner!” Then he thought about how he had single-handedly stopped his two sects from going to war, and he felt very proud. However, just when he was about to pop one of the medicinal pills into his mouth, he suddenly heard Hou Xiaomei's voice coming from outside the immortal's cave.

“Big bro Xiaochun, I cooked up some medicine for you....” With that, the door of the immortal's cave opened, and Hou Xiaomei entered, her face a bit flushed, a bowl of medicine held in her hands.

The steam from the medicine caused Hou Xiaomei’s face to be even more flushed than it might have been, and as soon as Bai Xiaochun saw her fair, pure features, his heart began to pound.

But then, Song Junwan appeared right behind her, smiling broadly as she also brought in a bowl of medicine. The clothes she wore were different than what she usually wore back in the Blood Stream Sect. They were more conservative, and yet, couldn’t conceal her curvaceous form.

“Little bro Nightcrypt, I cooked up some medicine for you....”

The two women approached Bai Xiaochun, each one holding out a bowl of medicine. Song Junwan had a faint smile on her face, whereas Hou Xiaomei looked a bit shy.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound, and even as he was cursing their treacherous ways, he realized that Song Junwan had uttered the exact same words as Hou Xiaomei. He couldn’t stop his eyes from going wide.

He looked left. He looked right. He hesitated. Finally, he decided that since Hou Xiaomei had come in first, that he might as well take her medicine first. With that he reached his hand out toward Hou Xiaomei’s bowl.

Hou Xiaomei’s eyes instantly brightened with excitement, and she glanced furtively over at Song Junwan, looking very pleased with herself.

When Song Junwan saw what was happening, she glared at Bai Xiaochun, and then gave a cold harrumph. Instantly, an intense killing aura sprang up around her. Bai Xiaochun gasped, and quickly changed the direction his hand was moving, sending it toward Song Junwan’s bowl.

Before his hand could even touch the bowl, Hou Xiaomei’s eyes turned red as if from grief. Trembling, tears welling up in her eyes, she said, “Big bro Xiaochun, I spent all day cooking up that medicine.”

Bai Xiaochun felt bad, and without even thinking about it, yet again changed the direction his hand was moving.

“Nightcrypt, do you remember all the things you said to me on Middle Peak?” Song Junwan said softly. “Drink my bowl of medicine first. I believe that everything you said to me was true.” Unswerving determination could be seen in her eyes. Apparently, if he didn't drink her medicine first, then she would instantly leave, and henceforth refuse to believe anything he told her.

“I....” Bai Xiaochun’s hand stopped in place, and he looked at the two bowls of medicine, feeling almost like he was going insane.

“Did they plan to come at the same time or something?” he thought. “ARRGGHHH!!” He felt like he was about to collapse. Despite how much he’d grown up, he had never been in a situation like this, where no decision he made was the right one....

Eyes bloodshot, he gritted his teeth, and then reached out and grabbed one bowl with each hand. Weeping inwardly, he somehow managed to start drinking from both bowls, being careful not to spill any of the burning hot medicine on himself.

To drink from two medicine bowls at the same time felt very odd, but inside, Bai Xiaochun was sighing with relief, and couldn’t help but marvel at how quickly he had adapted to the situation. This way, neither Hou Xiaomei nor Song Junwan would be able to find fault with him.

However, after finishing the medicine, he realized that Song Junwan’s killing aura was pulsing even more explosively than before. Glaring at him angrily, she spun and walked off. Hou Xiaomei looked completely heartbroken. Eyes flashing with bitter grief, she turned slowly and walked out of the immortal's cave.

Bai Xiaochun watched in shock as the two women left. Grabbing his hair in both hands, he cried, “What... what did I do wrong? I drank them both! I didn’t drink either one before the other....”

Scowling on the verge of tears, he stared at the closed door of the immortal's cave.

“If things keep going like this I’m gonna go crazy! I'm... I’m just gonna go into secluded meditation!!” Having made his decision, he gritted his teeth and sealed the door of his immortal's cave as tightly as was possible. Taking a deep breath, he sat down cross-legged and took some time to calm himself down. Then he opened the bottles of medicinal pills given to him by Patriarch Ironwood and the Song Clan patriarch and began to meditate.

Days passed. In the blink of an eye, half a month went by. During that time, Bai Xiaochun made constant progress in his cultivation. Bit by bit, he got closer to late Foundation Establishment.

His fifth spiritual sea was now fully crystallized, and his sixth sea was halfway there. Once his sixth spiritual sea crystallized, then he would officially break through the peak of mid Foundation Establishment and into the late stage.

Furthermore, during his meditation session, the power of the medicines he'd consumed for the purpose of treating his injuries also helped push his cultivation base higher.

Then there was the little turtle. Bai Xiaochun would take it out every day and give it a thorough shaking. The fragrant aroma emitted by the turtle would cause boundless streams of spiritual power to flow into him, further hastening the crystallization of his sixth spiritual sea!

Sixty percent. Seventy percent. Eighty percent....

Another half a month passed. One morning at dawn, rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun as his sixth spiritual sea fully crystallized. Spiritual power that vastly surpassed anything from before flowed unceasingly through him, causing cracking sounds to fill the air around him. It was almost like a baptism.

His Heaven-Dao aura grew stronger, such that strange colors flashed in the sky. Patriarch Ironwood and the Song Clan patriarch noticed, as did other cultivators in the Luochen Mountains. All of them looked over in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, where a boundless Heaven-Dao aura seemed to be connecting in the heavens above!

Thunder rumbled, and a vortex appeared up above, spinning rapidly. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened, and they glowed with brilliant, lightning-like light. His sixth spiritual sea was fully crystallized!

Late Foundation Establishment!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0287 awe-chapter-288

Bai Xiaochun's open eyes flashed with scintillating light, illuminating the darkness of the immortal's cave like flickering lightning.

Intense cultivation base power surged through his body, not only causing a reaction in the sky overhead, but also causing fluctuations to pulse through his qi passageways.

The energy flowed through him, making a complete cycle before fusing into his spiritual seas, vanishing into the sixth, crystallized sea. It was like a convergence of massive weight and power that propelled his cultivation base higher.

Rumbling sounds filled him that only he could hear, shaking his mind and heart. It was almost like the Tideflows he had experienced in the Fallen Sword Abyss. Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, reveling in the feeling of intense power that vastly exceeded anything from before.

“Late Foundation Establishment!” Bai Xiaochun looked up and started laughing, excitement written across his face. As of this moment, all of his hard work in the Foundation Establishment stage had come to fruition.

“From now on, I, Bai Xiaochun, can easily crush anyone in early Foundation Establishment! If any early Foundation Establishment cultivator dares to provoke me, a slap from me will leave them screaming in pain!” Trembling in excitement, he rose to his feet, and as he did, cracking sounds rang out as a third heavenly demon appeared behind him!!

Outside in the sky, the clouds swirled rapidly, and thunder crackled. Within the vortex up above, a heavenly demon appeared, and then a second, and a finally, a third!

Three enormous heavenly demons were right out in the open for everyone to see, and it instantly caused the cultivators of the Spirit Stream Sect who were garrisoned in the area to cry out in shock.

“What’s that!?”

“Those... those look like Dharma Idols!!”

“Heavens! What technique is Sect Uncle Bai cultivating!?”

Similar cries could be heard coming from the Blood Stream Sect. Because of the techniques cultivated by Lesser Marsh Peak, the cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect already had speculations about what they were seeing.

“That's a Lesser Marsh Peak body refinement technique!! That's the Heavenly Demon Body!”

“Nightcrypt definitely deserves to be the Blood Lord. Now that he's reached this level in his body refinement, he’ll definitely proceed to the blood fiend level!”

On the two mountain peaks, the Song Clan patriarch’s eyes shone brightly, and Patriarch Ironwood’s eyes glittered with mysterious light. Both of them were shaken by the heavenly demon incarnations they saw in the sky.

After a moment passed, the Song Clan patriarch said, “My boy Nightcrypt’s Heavenly Demon Body is already quite different from Lesser Marsh Peak's....”

A thoughtful look appeared on Patriarch Ironwood’s face. The two of them exchanged a glance, but didn't say anything else.

Inside the immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun’s excited laughter rang out as he felt his fleshly body power rising. He felt more blessed than ever.

“How could this be happening? The medicinal pills that Father and Patriarch Ironwood gave me shouldn’t have pushed my cultivation all the way to this point. Unless....

“Unless my injuries stimulated some latent power inside of me! Hahaha! That must be it!” Bai Xiaochun almost felt like dancing with joy. In his current state, he really felt incredibly powerful.

“Wait, hold on. I can’t be arrogant, and I definitely have to keep working hard. Now that I'm in late Foundation Establishment, I have to crystallize my seventh through ninth spiritual seas, and reach the great circle of Foundation Establishment. Then I can break through to the Gold Core stage!!!” As he thought about the Gold Core stage, he began to pant, and his eyes shone with bright light.

“I heard that if you can reach the Gold Core stage, you’ll get at least five hundred additional years of longevity.... Five hundred years...! If I succeed, that means I’ll be able to live for at least a thousand years!!” His hands clenched into fists, and his eyes shone as if with madness. The idea of being able to live for a thousand years filled him with so much excitement that he almost couldn’t control himself.

“I also have the second volume of the Undying Codex. I've finished the steps with the ancient mammoths and the berserk ghosts. Next is the Heavenly Demon Body. Once I make enough heavenly demons, I can proceed to the Asura

Body. Once I'm finished with the Asura Body, I can take the second volume of the Undying Codex to the highest level, the Undying Heavenly King Body!!” Slapping his chest confidently, he laughed loudly and prepared to leave his immortal's cave to perform some tests and see exactly how powerful he had become.

However, after having only taken a few steps toward the door, his face suddenly fell. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he was able to clearly detect that two beams of light were flying in his direction. They were none other than Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei.

Obviously, they had sensed Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base breakthrough, and realized that his session of secluded meditation was over.

As soon as he thought about the terrifying things that happened when those two women showed up together, his face went pale, and his heart began to tremble. He suddenly slapped his chest, causing his face to turn ashen. He swayed in place a bit, pretending to be weak as he trudged out of his immortal's cave. Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei approached, and they were clearly preparing to say some sarcastic things, but then they saw his weak demeanor, and their faces fell. Forgetting all about their desire to get into a row, they flew over.

“What’s wrong, big bro Xiaochun!?”

“Nightcrypt, what’s wrong? Weren’t things going well just now?” Looking very worried, both women reached out to support Bai Xiaochun by the elbow as they led him back into the immortal's cave to lay down on the stone bed.

As they comforted him with soft, gentle words, he was reminded of how tender they had been in past times. Now that they weren’t fighting or arguing, he could breathe a sigh of relief.

He coughed a few times and then weakly said, “Perhaps toward the end my qi flow was interrupted. I just need some rest, and then I’ll be fine.”

As the two women waited on him, he lay back and closed his eyes to rest.

Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan knew that Bai Xiaochun needed some peace and quiet, so they left silently. After they were gone, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and breathed a sigh of relief. Not much remained of the elation he had felt because of his cultivation base breakthrough, and now, his expression was twinged with anxiety.

“What do I do now...?” he thought, scowling at the seemingly unbearable situation.... After a bit of consideration, he decided that the best thing to do was to continue to pretend to feel unwell.

Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by. He couldn’t continue to pretend to be weak that entire time, so he gradually started to pretend to look better. As time passed, Song Junwan caught on to the fact that he was pretending to feel unwell. As for Hou Xiaomei, she was a simple girl, but she wasn’t stupid. Even she started to suspect.

When Bai Xiaochun realized that, he was so scared he started shaking. This kind of life was a torture, and by now, he was considering trying to go join the war effort. However, the thought of the deadly dangers of the battlefield caused him to hesitate.

“Ah, whatever. I can hang on for a bit longer. Maybe I can think of some other way to deal with this....” Tugging on his hair in frustration, he continued to ponder the situation. Finally, his expression suddenly changed, and he looked very depressed.

Maintaining that look, he shuffled out of his immortal's cave, whereupon Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan arrived....

Gaze soft and voice gentle, Hou Xiaomei said, “Big bro Xiaochun, it’s not good to stay cooped up in your immortal's cave. Let’s go for a walk together, okay?”

“Um....” he replied hesitatingly.

Smiling enigmatically, Song Junwan reached out to support Bai Xiaochun’s left arm. “Nightcrypt, to cultivators like us, that type of injury is really nothing. Come on, let’s go out into the Luochen Mountains for a bit. If you get your qi and blood moving, it will definitely speed your recovery.”

In turn, Hou Xiaomei glared and reached out to support his right arm.

Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock. He didn’t even get a chance to respond to either of them before they were leading him out of the immortal's cave.

After only a few steps, his feet actually left the ground. He felt like a death row inmate being dragged to his own execution as the two women stared daggers at each other across him. Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead, and he almost felt like crying.

It was currently dawn, and a faint fog covered most of the Luochen Mountains. As the morning light grew stronger, the fog began to dissipate; it was a very beautiful scene. After being carried out of his immortal's cave, quite a few cultivators from the two sects saw him, and looks of compassion appeared in their eyes as they hurried past the group of three.

Bai Xiaochun opened his mouth to speak, but then closed it just as quickly. It didn't seem like a good time to talk. If he did, it would definitely lead to more headaches. Therefore, he gritted his teeth and decided that going for a bit of a walk wouldn’t be so bad.

Even as such thoughts passed through his head, a bird flew by overhead. It was bright red, and quite beautiful, and as it flew along, it let out a melodious cry.

Song Junwan saw the bird, and looked surprised. “Look, Nightcrypt! A bloodspirit heron! I never thought I would see one of the Blood Stream Sect’s bloodspirit herons here. I used to love watching them flying around back on Middle Peak.”

Even as Bai Xiaochun looked up at the bird, Hou Xiaomei bristled with a killing aura and loudly said, “Bloodspirit heron? What are you talking about? That’s obviously an irispetal ibis from the Spirit Stream Sect!”

Song Junwan looked over angrily at Hou Xiaomei, who, unwilling to be outdone, stuck her chest out and glared back defiantly.

Bai Xiaochun was stuck between them, sweating profusely. Things were reaching a point where he almost couldn't deal with the headache. That was when Song Junwan laughed charmingly, and looked at Bai Xiaochun with sparkling, mesmerizing eyes.

“Nightcrypt, what do you think? Is that bird a bloodspirit heron or an irispetal ibis?”

Not willing to be outdone, Hou Xiaomei grabbed Bai Xiaochun’s arm. Looking completely heartbroken, she softly asked, “Big bro Xiaochun, tell that old auntie that it’s an irispetal ibis.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0288 awe-chapter-289

Bai Xiaochun felt like his head was about to explode. Eyes widening, he looked up at the bird, feeling like he was about to go insane.... The truth was that this bird actually had two names. In the Blood Stream Sect, it was called a bloodspirit heron, but in the Spirit Stream Sect, it was known as an irispetal ibis.

However, he wasn't sure which name to call it. That was especially true considering that killing intent was surging on both sides of him. He could almost feel the tears welling up in his eyes. How he hated that bird....

“Damn you, bird!” he thought. “Why? Why why why did you have to show up here!?!?” Trembling, he looked at Song Junwan on his left, and Hou Xiaomei on his right. Both of them were staring at him with looks of anticipation on their faces. He could well imagine that whoever he sided with, the other would be deeply and profoundly grieved.

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and prepared to make up a new name. However, that was when Song Junwan suddenly said, “Nightcrypt, don’t you dare try to pull a fast one by making up a new name!”

“Big bro Xiaochun,” Hou Xiaomei chimed in, “you can’t say you don’t recognize it. I know you’ve seen those birds in the Spirit Stream Sect before!”

It was a rare occasion: Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan were siding with each other as they stared at Bai Xiaochun, deep emotions flickering in their eyes....

“I... I....” Sweat dripped down Bai Xiaochun’s face. By this point, he was in a state of complete despair. Back when they’d brought him medicine, he’d managed to pull a fast one, but as of this moment, that didn’t seem possible.

“What do I do...?” he thought, his eyes glistening with tears. Based on how Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei were pushing him, it was obvious that they didn’t care at all what the bird was called, they just wanted him to choose between the two of them.

Eyes bloodshot, he pointed up at the bird and howled, “Fine! I’ll tell you. That bird is a... it’s a....”

Suddenly, he bit down on his tongue, and then unleashed his cultivation base power, allowing it to run wild within him. As it burst into his qi passageways, a sweet taste filled his mouth, and then he spat out a mouthful of blood. Then his vision started going dark, and he began to lapse into unconsciousness.

In the last moment before he passed out, he sighed deeply.

Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei were completely shocked. Not only did they see Bai Xiaochun coughing up blood, considering that they were holding him up by the arms, they could sense that his cultivation base was in chaos. Hou Xiaomei looked like she was about to cry as she carried Bai Xiaochun back into the immortal's cave. As for Song Junwan, she pulled out a huge collection of spirit medicines, which she began to push into his mouth.

Some distance away on the two mountain peaks, the Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood watched the scene play out, their eyes flickering with sympathy.

The Song Clan patriarch sighed and said, “Did the little brat really think getting involved with women could be so simple? I learned the truth of it years ago. With the flick of a sleeve, I detached myself from all impurities.”

In rare fashion, Patriarch Ironwood seemed to completely agree with him. Nodding, he said, “Love is tribulation. Years ago, I severed such tribulation. Actually, now that I think about it, I can’t even remember the faces of those old flames from years ago.”

The two old men exchanged a look. For the first time, they were in unison on something. Shaking their heads, they began to think back to their own pasts.

A few days later, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and hurried over to the copper mirror hanging on the wall in his immortal's cave. When he looked into the mirror, he saw a gaunt, pale figure. As far as he was concerned, his world was now a world of darkness....

After a long moment, he sighed and prepared to go outside and get some fresh air. He needed to calm down and think of an idea of how to deal with the situation.

“It won’t work for things to keep going on in this way. Their games are going to drive me to an early grave....” Sighing, he pushed open the door of the immortal's cave, and was just about to step outside, when he suddenly went completely stiff.

“You two....” Sweat broke out on his forehead as he realized that standing right outside the door of the immortal's cave were Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei. It was impossible to say when they had arrived, but there they stood, right next to each other, smiling at him.

“Nightcrypt, let’s go for a walk!” Song Junwan said, her eyes glittering charmingly.

“Big bro Xiaochun, I won’t make you name the birds this time.” Hou Xiaomei said, blushing a bit and seeming more pure and charming than ever.

And yet, the eyes of both women seemed to have inadvertently come to rest on his feet.

Bai Xiaochun felt all the hair on his body stand up on end. By now, he realized the truth. These two demonesses had become addicted to toying with him. Their games had reached the point where even which foot stepped out of his immortal's cave first was a point of contention....

This was ridiculous. These two demonesses weren’t even human.... Trembling visibly, he didn’t dare to step outside.

“Um, so... fancy meeting you two here, huh? I’m... I'm feeling a bit tired, I think I’ll stay inside today....” Forcing a smile onto his face, he began to back up. However, in that instant, a killing aura sprang up from Song Junwan, and as for Hou Xiaomei, her eyes began to fill with tears as she looked piteously at him.

One seemed murderously angry, the other, wronged and maligned....

Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of going mad. He was in such pain that he suddenly unleashed all of the spiritual power that he had carefully built up inside of himself. The chaotic power swept through him, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. Yet again, his vision went dark, and he collapsed.

Before losing consciousness, he didn’t sigh, but tears filled his eyes.

Two days later in the middle of the night, Bai Xiaochun lay on the stone bed, and his eyes slowly opened. Then, he lay there staring up at the ceiling, tears flowing down his temples.

“Back when it was Hou Xiaomei by herself, it was so great. She believed anything I said. But now....

“Back when it was Song Junwan by herself, everything went my way. All I had to do was lose my temper a bit, and she would do anything I asked. But now....

“With both of them together, it’s simply terrifying....” As he thought back to how wonderful it had been to simply deal with them alone, more tears flowed.

“No. If things keep going on this way, I'm gonna end up dead!!

“They're going to toy with me all the way to the grave, torment me to death! I'm already on the verge of going crazy. First was the medicine, then that bird. Next, they’re trying to decide which foot I walk with. Before you know it, they’re going to be watching to see which eye opens first, or which hand twitches....

“I can’t stay around here any longer. These two demonesses are too terrifying. I’ve already coughed up blood twice. If this keep up, I could lose my poor little life.” Trembling, face a mask of terror, he gritted his teeth!

“I need to join the war effort!!

“On the battlefield, there’s a chance I might get killed, but here, I’ll definitely go crazy sooner or later....” He suddenly felt more than ever like he truly wanted to join the war. In fact, his heart had already left the Luochen Mountains; he had no desire whatsoever to stay.

He rose to his feet, his expression that of unswerving determination. He seemed different than he had moments ago; his veins of steel were pulsing, and his eyes shone with intense light. He quickly packed his bags, then quietly opened the door of the immortal's cave. Sending his divine sense out first, he looked around the area.

It was currently the middle of the night, and the moon was obscured by the clouds. Everything was pitch black, and silent except for the sounds of various night creatures and birds.

He looked around vigilantly to make sure that Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei weren’t lying in wait. Then, he burst into motion, drawing upon all the speed he could muster, even using his wings. He became a beam of light that shot at top speed toward the two mountain peaks occupied by the Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood.

Fearful of attracting the attention of Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei, he moved as fast as he could without actually making any noise in the process. Soon, he reached the two mountains, where he stopped in place and took a deep breath. His eye shone with determination, and his expression was that of ultimate decisiveness. He suddenly seemed like a combination of both Bai Xiaochun and Nightcrypt, heroic, extraordinary, and at the same time, formidable and ruthless!

He seemed taller than before as he strode forward to the base of the twin peaks. Eyes shining with cold ferocity, he clasped hands and bowed.

“I am legacy echelon disciple Bai Xiaochun of the Spirit Stream Sect, and blood master Nightcrypt of the Blood Stream Sect. Greetings, Patriarchs!”

The Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood slowly opened their eyes, and looked down in surprise at Bai Xiaochun.

A murderous aura sprang up around Bai Xiaochun as he said, “Stepfather, Patriarch, as the blood master of Middle Peak, and as a legacy echelon cultivator of the Spirit Stream Sect, I must perform meritorious services! I must go to the battlefield to face the enemy!”

The Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood had strange expressions on their faces. After a moment, the Song Clan patriarch said, “I thought you hadn’t recovered yet?”

“Stepfather, a few injures are like nothing when compared to the greater good of both sects!” He smiled broadly, as if he didn’t care at all about his injuries. At the same time, the determination in his eyes grew more intense. “What cultivator can go through life without being injured? The important thing is the value of that injury. As for me, I was injured trying to protect our sects!”

He looked very heroic as he stood there uttering such words. Anyone who might have been able to see him would have been shocked. He seemed boundlessly righteous, a manly man as strong as iron and completely unafraid of dying!

“The battlefield is a dangerous place, and death is a common thing there. Aren’t you afraid of that?” Patriarch Ironwood asked softly.

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily. Smacking his chest casually, he said, “I’m a true man! Blood will be spilled on the battlefield, that’s true. But how could I simply stand by and watch my fellow sect members fighting in battle while I relax in comfort? That... is not Bai Xiaochun’s way of doing things, and it is definitely not Nightcrypt’s style!

“Patriarchs, there’s no need for further discussion. I... I definitely want to join the war effort!!” His sonorous words were spoken with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

“Very well,” the Song Clan patriarch said. “That’s exactly how a son of mine should act.” He and Patriarch Ironwood exchanged a glance, then nodded. “Tomorrow morning, you can take this teleportation medallion to the teleportation portal. It will take you to our garrison in the Profound Stream Sect region!” Laughing heartily, the Song Clan patriarch waved his hand, sending a command medallion flying toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun grabbed the medallion and flashed a carefree smile.

“What's the point in waiting until tomorrow? My heart burns with the desire to kill the enemy! I can’t sleep like that! I’ll head to the teleportation portal immediately, and wade directly into battle. The time has come to put my life on the line for the sects!” Flicking his sleeve, he transformed into a beam of light that shot directly toward the teleportation portal. Moments later, the light of teleportation shot up into the sky, illuminating the darkness of night. A single figure could be seen in the light, his hair whipping around him, radiating determination, righteousness, and at the same time, bloody murder....

The Song Clan patriarch and Patriarch Ironwood laughed and looked at each other. Seeing the smiles on each other's faces, they realized at some point, they had come to admire each other a bit.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0289 awe-chapter-290

The Profound Stream Sect was located on the Heavencraft Continent, and bordered the Pill Stream Sect. Because of the years of warfare, the Heavencraft Continent was in a very sorry state. Magical combat had left the land riddled with craters, and the explosions of spell formations left the spiritual power of the region in chaos. The entire place was a very dangerous location.

Earlier on, the Profound Stream Sect had managed to gain the upper hand over the Pill Stream Sect, and had even absorbed more than half of the other sect. However, because of the alliance between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, the tide of the war had turned. At this point, internal conflict wracked the Profound Stream Sect.

That was especially true of the portion of the sect that had once belonged to the Pill Stream Sect. In despair over the imminent destruction of their sect, they had defected. But now they hoped to become an auxiliary member of the Spirit Stream and Blood Stream Sects, and as such, were resisting the Profound Stream Sect!

Numerous mountains were in a state of collapse. Rivers had vanished off the face of the earth. Entire mountain ranges were gone. Countless cultivators and even entire clans were now nothing more than corpses and bones strewn about on smoking battlefields.

Even the sky had been affected; it was now choked with smoke and ash. Then the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect arrived, and the sky filled with blood clouds and dazzling white light. These two sects were only in the initial stages of joining forces, and even with Bai Xiaochun connecting them, it was still a very difficult process. After all, they had been enemies for many years, and the distrust between them was still very intense.

Without the eruption of this war, the act of combining their sects would have been nothing more than a joke. Eventually, things would have fallen apart. However, with this war, they had a chance to truly unite.

Fighting against a common enemy gave the disciples of the two sects a chance to slowly get used to each other....

The Profound Stream Sect hadn’t really been prepared for a joint assault by the Blood Stream and Spirit Stream Sects. What was happening was truly a nightmare. Before they even had time to smooth things out with the recently-absorbed factions of the Pill Stream Sect, two new enemies had arrived, like razor-sharp blades slashing at the exposed back of the Profound Stream Sect!

In a few short months, the Profound Stream Sect suffered heavy losses. More than sixty percent of the Heavencraft Continent had already been occupied, and 17 of their temple headquarters had been sacked!

Unlike most sects, the Profound Stream Sect didn’t have just one headquarters. They had a total of 29, spread out like a net throughout the Heavencraft Continent. That was how they maintained their power on the continent.

The initial invasion was now over, and every day, minor battles were fought all over the continent. Booms rang out everywhere, and the land quaked violently.

Faced with the combined assault of the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, the Profound Stream Sect could hardly even defend itself. They could only hide in their various temple headquarters and make their final stand.

During the course of the fighting, one Chosen after another gained valuable battle experience. They were like swords being sharpened into deadly weapons.

Ghostfang, Shangguan Tianyou, Zhou Xinqi, Gongsun Yun, Hou Yunfei... Lu Tianlei, Song Que, Xu Xiaoshan, Jia Lie, Master God-Diviner, and numerous other cultivators all made names for themselves on the battlefield.

Although Xuemei had not been present for the fight with the Spirit Stream Sect, she was there on the Heavencraft Continent. Considering that she was at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, she had power that could shake the world.

There was another person who made an unexpected name on the battlefield, taking down numerous enemies. Even other members of the sect came to fear her. She was none other than Gongsun Wan’er!

Not a single cultivator in the same stage as her could match her in combat. She even won some battles against prime elders of the Profound Stream Sect, striking awe into the hearts of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect alike.

There were also Chosen of the Profound Stream Sect who made names for themselves. Nine-Isles was one of them. He was much more mature than he had been years ago in the Fallen Sword Abyss. Considering how bitter the fighting was, his name became an inspiration to many Profound Stream Sect disciples.

There were Chosen from the Pill Stream Sect as well. One of them was named Lin Mu, who cultivated the Primeval Medicinal Daoseed Incantation. He had long since betrayed the Pill Stream Sect, though, and had been accepted as an apprentice by Patriarch Nine-Heavens of the Profound Stream Sect.

He and Nine-Isles were the shining stars of the Profound Stream Sect, whose glory in battle dazzled anyone who saw them.

Among the bedraggled remnants of the actual Pill Stream Sect was a young woman named Chen Manyao, whose skill with poison exceeded even the late Fang Lin’s, and whose abilities with illusion forms surpassed Zhao Rou’s. She even managed to have a protracted battle with a prime elder, and performed other great services for her sect in battle.

The Chosen were like stars glittering in the night sky, each one of whom had their own chance to shine in battle. However, there was one star that was only just now teleporting onto the battlefield.

Everyone knew the name of that star; it was a name that couldn’t be forgotten or overlooked. It was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

Although he had yet to make a showing in the fighting itself, although he hadn’t fought brilliantly in battle, although he hadn’t killed numerous enemies or shed rivers of blood, he was a dazzling star that could not be compared to. His accomplishments were such that anyone who heard of them was completely shaken.

The blood master of Middle Peak and Blood Lord of the Blood Stream Sect!

Legacy echelon cultivator and junior patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect!

He had single-handedly stopped a huge war between two sects. He alone connected those two sects and convinced them to join forces. In fact, it was he alone who had unleashed the war of destruction upon the Profound Stream Sect.

Everyone had heard of him, and he existed in a spot above all other Chosen. While the other Chosen were still vying to make their name, he existed in a lofty position. The wave of his hand could completely change the tide of the war.

Everyone who heard his story was completely shaken. Nine-Isles roared in rage, his hatred for Bai Xiaochun burning bright and hot. As for Lin Mu, he went into secluded meditation for a few days after hearing the stories. When he emerged, he said that he had prepared a huge surprise for Bai Xiaochun!

Although Bai Xiaochun hadn't been present for any of the fighting so far, his name still rang loud and clear in the ears of everyone on the battlefield. Somewhere on the border of the Heavencraft Continent, in a location that had already been taken over by the Blood Stream Sect and Spirit Stream Sect, in one of the former temple headquarters of the Profound Stream Sect, the glittering light of a teleportation rose up into the sky.

The cultivators stationed on duty by the teleportation portal looked at the light with vigilant eyes, ready to instantly attack if the wrong person appeared.

Among the group were Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie. Considering that the three of them were grouped together separately from the other cultivators, it was obvious that they had a higher position. Given the levels of their cultivation bases, as well as their reputation, they should have been on the front lines of battle. However, after receiving grievous injuries in the fighting, all three had been reassigned to this location.

None of them really liked each other, and it wasn't limited to Beihan Lie disliking the Blood Stream Sect cultivators. Master God-Diviner and Jia Lie also had a bit of a rivalry between them. Of course, such situations were common among frontline veterans.

As the light of teleportation grew more intense, the eyes of the three cultivators glittered brightly. Master God-Diviner was already performing a divination. Beihan Lie's eyes shone with cold light, whereas Jia Lie's eyes were narrowed, and the fluctuations of the great circle of Foundation Establishment rolled off of him. Despite having been injured fairly seriously, he still commanded shocking power.

Although people frequently teleported into this particular portal, the cultivators who guarded the area always reacted in this way. A month before, a group of Profound Stream Sect cultivators had managed to teleport into the middle of Blood Stream Sect territory and launch a surprise attack.

As the light began to fade away, they realized that it was only a single individual who had teleported in. As his features became visible, the eyes of the surrounding cultivators went wide.

“Sect Uncle Bai!!”

“Blood Master Nightcrypt!!”

Everyone was crying out in shock. Jia Lie began to shake, Master God-Diviner's jaw dropped, and Beihan Lie let out a cold harrumph.

After materializing, Bai Xiaochun stepped out of the teleportation portal and then looked around as the cultivators from the two sects offered formal greetings.

“Greetings, Junior Patriarch!”

“Greetings, Blood Lord!”

At first, Bai Xiaochun looked a bit apprehensive. Glancing up into the blood-colored sky, he inhaled, and detected the stench of blood in the air, confirming that he was indeed on the battlefield. Finally, he breathed a sigh of relief. At long last, he felt free again, as if he had finally extricated himself from a nightmare.

Taking a deep breath, and putting a somber expression onto his face, he looked around at the surrounding cultivators, his eyes flashing like lightning.

“What’s the situation with the war?!” he asked. His energy surged, and the surrounding disciples of the two sects looked at him with eyes that burned with zeal. Then, they began to report what had occurred recently in the fighting.

Bai Xiaochun listened as they spoke, and soon had a basic understanding of the situation. It was at that point that a bright beam of light suddenly shot in their direction. It was one of the prime elders of the Spirit Stream Sect; he moved with such incredible speed that, within the blink of an eye, he was right in front of Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun had seen this particular prime elder before.

“The patriarchs have issued orders. Junior Patriarch Bai Xiaochun is to lead a contingent of cultivators to sweep previously conquered territory and root out any stragglers from the Profound Stream Sect. Any other matters which come up along the way can be handled as you see fit, as long as you don’t waste any time!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately understood that he was being given a relatively safe and easy mission, not an assignment to the front lines of battle.

Obviously, most clans in the conquered territories would be friendly, and any stragglers from the Profound Stream Sect would be weak and unimportant. Clearly, this mission had been specifically created just for him.

Although Bai Xiaochun felt very appreciative, his expression was solemn and respectful, and his eyes shone with intense light as he said, “I'm afraid I can't comply!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0290 awe-chapter-291

“I came here to kill the enemy on the front lines! How could I possibly stoop to handling trifling errands!?” Bai Xiaochun’s energy surged, and as his sonorous voice rang out, everyone who heard him was shaken. All eyes burned with even greater fervor than before, with the exception of Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie. Those three were inwardly cursing him; they were far more familiar with his true nature than the ordinary disciples were.

The prime elder hesitated for a moment. Then, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Junior Patriarch, these are the orders of the patriarchs. Stabilizing the conquered territory behind the battle lines is also very important.”

Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun was snickering, but outwardly, he put on a show of refusing again. The prime elder could do nothing more than continue to cajole him. It reached the point where the prime elder was getting ready to give up and back down. Then, to his surprise, Bai Xiaochun suddenly agreed.

Gritting his teeth and looking very displeased, he said, “Alright, fine. I don’t want to make trouble for you. I accept the mission!”

With that, he flew up into the air.

“Who is with me? Who is willing to join me as I stabilize the conquered territory and make a name for our two sects!?”

Virtually all of the cultivators began to cry out.

“I'm willing to follow you, Blood Lord!”

“Count me in, Junior Patriarch!”

“I'm coming too, Sect Uncle Bai!!”

In the blink of an eye, more than half of the group of several hundred cultivators stepped forward. Among them were a contingent from the Blood Stream Sect’s Middle Peak, who summoned an enormous blood sword, which they sent flying up into the air. It was hundreds of meters long, and radiated shocking energy.

Beihan Lie immediately shrank back. Master God-Diviner edged away. As for Jia Lie, after the trial by fire for blood master, he had come to deeply fear Bai Xiaochun, and didn't hesitate to go in the opposite direction, worried that he might be spotted.

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily as he stepped onto the huge blood sword. Then he waved his hand, and numerous gargoyles flew over, along with a large number of flying ghouls. At the same time, all of the volunteers from the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect flew up to hover around the sword.

Bai Xiaochun stood there, an enigmatic smile on his face as he looked down at the ground below.

“Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, Jia Lie. What are you three hiding from me for? Come, come! Join me in setting out on this mission!”

Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie were all shaking and cursing inwardly. None of them wanted to go, and yet the orders from their respective patriarchs had been clear.

Bai Xiaochun was leading the mission, and he had the right to pick anyone he wanted to go with him.

“I--” Beihan Lie wanted to argue, but he only got one word out of his mouth before Bai Xiaochun glared at him.

“I've been given a Dharmic decree by the patriarchs!”

Beihan Lie gritted his teeth and then flew over to the sword, depression gripping his heart. Master God-Diviner and Jia Lie were howling inwardly, but they knew they couldn't escape. Having no other choice available, they flew over and joined the team.

“That’s more like it! Alright, let’s go!” Bai Xiaochun laughed again, then flicked his sleeve, sending the enormous sword, and the several hundred cultivators with it, flying off in grand fashion.

Bai Xiaochun had never felt so impressive. He sat cross-legged at the tip of the huge sword, looking around at the countless gargoyles and refined corpses, and then at the surrounding cultivators. That, coupled with the sight of Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie looking so depressed, left Bai Xiaochun feeling very proud of himself.

“It seems that joining the war effort really was the right decision,” he thought. “Even back in the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, I never got to show off like this. Who would ever have thought that I could do so right here?!” With that, he pointed his finger straight out in front of him.

“Sect Nieces and Nephews, come with me as we dominate the Profound Stream Sect!”

One of the Blood Stream Sect disciples was particularly clever. When he saw how Bai Xiaochun was in such high spirits, he edged a bit closer to the sword and yelled at the top of his lungs, “The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers!!”

Quite a few of the other surrounding cultivators were shocked, and even Bai Xiaochun looked over at the young man in astonishment. The young man seemed a bit embarrassed to have so many people staring at him, and he even started to blush. Just as he was thinking that he had gone a bit too far with his flattery, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Don’t say like things like that in the future. I'm an upright and frank person, and definitely not a big fan of flattery. Now, take this medicinal pill!” Bai Xiaochun was actually very pleased, and his facial expression didn’t match his words at all. In fact, he seemed to be encouraging such behavior as he threw over a tier-3 spirit medicine.

The young disciple was very excited, and seeing that Bai Xiaochun was encouraging him, he raised his voice even louder and said, “That’s how we truly feel! It’s no flattery! The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers!!”

The other Blood Stream Sect disciples’ eyes went wide, especially when they saw Bai Xiaochun give a reward of some spirit medicine. Their eyes began to burn with passion, and they too joined in to call out, “The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers!!”

Over a hundred people were calling out the same thing, and it made Bai Xiaochun feel wonderful. Coughing dryly, he handed out quite a few medicinal pills as a reward....

Of course, the hundred or so cultivators from the Spirit Stream Sect weren’t very happy about what was going on. Glaring at the Blood Stream Sect cultivators, they also began to cry out.

“The Spirit Stream Heaven-Dao expert can shake the whole world!!”

Bai Xiaochun was so excited that he was shaking. His eyes shone, and his heart surged. Slapping his bag of holding, he sent large quantities of spirit medicine flying out. The disciples of the two sects all understood what was happening, and they clustered around Bai Xiaochun, yelling at the tops of their lungs as they flew along.

“The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers! The Spirit Stream Heaven-Dao expert can shake the whole world!”

Only Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie simply gritted their teeth. They held Bai Xiaochun in complete contempt, and refused to resort to fawning flattery. Not even if they died!

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased, but also felt that he should be a bit more humble. Waving his hand, he said, “Alright, keep it down, guys, keep it down!”

And it was in this grandiose fashion that he proceeded along through the Profound Stream Sect territory that the two sects had already conquered.

Before long, the group reached a valley that housed a cultivator clan which had once been a part of the Profound Stream Sect. Once the invasion began, they surrendered, and yet, many in the clan were still loyal to the Profound Stream Sect. Although they put on a show of complying, they secretly hated the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect.

As of this moment, the patriarch and other clan members were currently discussing their next move.

“The Spirit Stream Sect has pushed things too far. They used to be allies of the Profound Stream Sect, but then they betrayed them!!”

“Hmphh! And then there’s the Blood Stream Sect. They’re all a bunch of devilish cultivators, killers by nature! Sooner or later they’re going to be punished by the heavens!!” Even as they sat in the hall, cursing in righteous indignation, a shocking pressure suddenly began to weigh down on them.

Then, a cold voice rang out into their ears. “Everyone come out immediately to offer greetings to our blood master!”

Immediately, all of the cultivators’ faces fell.

The clan’s patriarch was in the mid Foundation Establishment stage. Face twitching, he strode out of the hall, followed by his fellow clan members.

Moments later, an enormous, blood-colored sword appeared up above, surrounded by more than two hundred cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect.

Standing on the sword itself was Bai Xiaochun, surrounded by roaring shouts that echoed like thunder.

“The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers!! The Spirit Stream Heaven-Dao expert can shake the whole world!!”

The people from the cultivator clan were shaken as they stared up in shock. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun's gaze swept over the valley.

His mission was to scour the regions behind the front lines to find any stragglers from the Profound Stream Sect. Furthermore, he wasn't to just randomly travel around looking for such stragglers. He had a jade slip that identified 37 cultivator clans who were suspected loyalists, and might be harboring such individuals.

According to the initial investigation carried out by the Spirit Stream Sect, there were suspicious aspects to all 37 of those clans that needed to be examined further. As for whether they ended up being spared, or wiped out, that was up to Bai Xiaochun's judgment. Thankfully, the jade slip had a marvelous function that allowed the person holding it to detect fluctuations that would point directly toward any member of the Profound Stream Sect.

Seeing the grand display of glory and power in front of them left the cultivator clan shaken. After taking a deep breath, the clan's patriarch clasped hands, bowed, and said, "Greetings, Blood Master!"

Bai Xiaochun didn't respond. The Heavenspan Dharma Eye on his forehead opened, and it was as if a curtain had been swept aside. He saw through all barriers within the valley, and quickly noticed that there was a necropolis hidden underground.

Within that necropolis were eight people seated cross-legged as they healed themselves. Although Bai Xiaochun had never seen them before, based on their wounds, their clothing, and the fluctuations of Profound Stream Sect magic on them, he was sure who they were. Instantly, the jade slip in his hand began to glow brightly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0291 awe-chapter-292

Bai Xiaochun looked down silently at the valley. After the tempering he had undergone in the Blood Stream Sect, he had become capable of acting ruthlessly, of cutting people down like grass. There weren’t very many cultivators in this clan, and as for the people in the necropolis, they were all injured. With a simple order, he could wipe out the whole clan and the stragglers from the Profound Stream Sect.

After a moment of silence, he said, “You people already agreed to surrender and offer allegiance to the sect alliance. Why are you doing this...?”

His Heavenspan Dharma Eye began to shine as brightly as a sun, unleashing intense control power which instantly pierced all the way into the necropolis underneath the valley.

The eight injured Profound Stream Sect cultivators in the necropolis all began to tremble, and blue veins bulged out on their faces and necks. Hoarse shouts erupted from their mouths, and yet, their bodies weren’t under their own control. Struggling the entire time, they reached up and then smashed their hands down onto the tops of their heads.

Popping sounds rang out as seven of them coughed up blood and then toppled over, dead. However, one of them, and old man, struggled free. Blood oozing out of his mouth, he shot out of the necropolis, an expression of shock on his face as he sped off in the opposite direction.

In response to the sudden development, expressions of shock and terror appeared on the faces of the cultivator clan members. As for the patriarch, his face went ashen, and he began to sway back and forth unsteadily as if he were about to pass out.

Before the old man from the Profound Stream Sect could get very far, Jia Lie shot after him in pursuit. Before long, a miserable shriek rang out, and then Jia Lie returned with the man’s head. Murderous aura bristling, he hovered next to Bai Xiaochun, looking down at the group in the valley and licking his lips as if he was imagining drinking their blood.

Jia Lie wasn’t the only one; cultivators from both of the sects were doing similar things.

Silence filled the valley, and the bitter cultivators’ despair grew more intense.

“This is war,” Bai Xiaochun said, “and there is no right or wrong. There are only different positions.... Take this as a warning. Follow our sect alliance. At the moment, there is no better option for you.” With that, he waved his sleeve, and the blood sword began to fly off into the distance. The cultivators of the two sects cast cold glances at the cultivator clan before flying away.

After Bai Xiaochun left, the cultivator clan stood there, feeling like they were in a dream. They had just been on the threshold of the gates of hell, and had somehow survived. Their hearts were still pounding with fear. After a long silence, the blank look in the eyes of the patriarch transformed into determination.

After looking around at his fellow clan members, he saw that many of them wore expressions of gratefulness. “That man,” he thought, “must have been... the legendary Bai

Xiaochun. He truly is a Chosen. A single look from him killed all those people from the Profound Stream Sect.... He could have crushed us, but instead, let us go.... He threatened us, but at the same time, treated us well. Instead of causing us to hate him, we ended up feeling grateful....”

“Heh heh. If he keeps doing things that way, he’ll reach amazing heights!” The old man gritted his teeth, and suddenly waved his right hand. Sword light erupted out, instantly slashing off the heads of three of his fellow clansmen!

It happened so quickly that the three victims didn't even have a chance to react.

“Henceforth,” he announced, “the Hanyun Clan will follow the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect. Those three were inextricably linked to the Profound Stream Sect. By killing them, we sever all the old ties. Let that serve as a warning to any other Profound Stream Sect sympathizers!”

**

“If I hadn’t stopped the war between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, then it wouldn’t have been long before the Profound Stream Sect was hunting for stragglers just like I am now.” Bai Xiaochun sighed and looked around at the cultivators from the two sects. He suddenly realized that they were looking at him in a different way than before.

They seemed more passionate, and even more respectful. The way he'd killed the Profound Stream Sect stragglers, and then dealt with the Hanyun Clan, caused quite a few of the cultivators to approve of him even more than before.

Even Beihan Lie’s attitude seem to have changed somewhat. There was something strange in his eyes when he looked at Bai Xiaochun. As for Jia Lie and Master God-Diviner, they also glanced over at Bai Xiaochun with odd looks.

Bai Xiaochun smiled. He was aware that he had grown up quite a bit, and understood certain things much better than he had before. In some situations, he would do things that he didn’t necessarily want to do, as long as it meant protecting his family, his friends, and his sect.

“My shoulders aren’t broad enough to hold up the heavens. But I can certainly support my sect, my family, and my friends....”

Eyes shining brightly, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base, sending the blood sword rumbling through the air even faster than before. As it whistled along, they passed one cultivator clan after another that had surrendered. Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and countless heads turned to look at them as they passed.

When they found Profound Stream Sect cultivators, Bai Xiaochun didn't actually have to do anything. The cultivators of the two sects would fly out to handle the situation. When it came to the cultivator clans involved, he didn’t treat them all the same. Based on the observations he made, and his own judgment, some got the same treatment as the Hanyun Clan, but others ended up being wiped out.

That was the best way to cow the local populace and stabilize the conquered territory. It was also the only way that their forces on the front lines could continue to advance safely.

Soon, word spread about what Bai Xiaochun was doing, and the cultivator clans began to prepare for his arrival. Slowly, the search for the Profound Stream Sect stragglers started to get more difficult. One option was to just destroy every clan on his list. However, that could destabilize the entire region behind the front lines. After all, the cultivator clans in question were not to be underestimated; there was a reason why the armies of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect hadn’t tangled with them during the initial invasion.

Furthermore, the complete and utter defeat of the Profound Stream Sect and their subsidiary clans was not the ultimate goal. The Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect wanted to absorb their power to strengthen themselves.

Three times in a row, they encountered cultivator clans who had completely sealed off their clan headquarters. No matter what Bai Xiaochun said, or how angry he got, they refused to even respond to him. Thankfully, some of them offered up gifts to him, which he begrudgingly accepted.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel very down. Looking at the mission jade slip, he frowned. The jade slip mentioned six particular cultivator clans regarding whom concrete evidence had been gathered, proving that they were not only harboring Profound Stream Sect cultivators, but were also planning insurrections.

“I don’t get it. If the patriarchs have definite proof, why don’t they just send people to wipe them out?” After thinking about the matter for a while, his eyes lit up, and he slapped his thigh.

“Ah, now I understand. Dammit! How come I’m so slow on the uptake? Obviously the patriarchs are rewarding me by giving me a chance to extort some loot.... After I'm finished extorting them, the sect will send people over to destroy them!

“Hahaha! That’s definitely what's going on!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun was more convinced than ever that he had just been muddle-headed before. He even decided that the blackmail aspect was an important part of his mission.

“The patriarchs are really great. Of course they want to reward me! Although, they could have just said so! There was no reason to be so vague about it.” Feeling pleased, and looking forward to what was coming, he led his group of two hundred or so cultivators toward the next cultivator clan.

The following day, an emerald green mountain rose up in front of them. Glittering lights surrounded the mountain peak, which was obviously a powerful defensive spell formation.

He could immediately tell that this clan had done the same thing as the previous few clans, and had completely locked themselves down. Standing there on the huge blood sword, Bai Xiaochun said, “Xuanguang Clan, I, Bai Xiaochun, have come on official business--”

Before he could even finish speaking, rumbling sounds echoed out, and an enormous figure rose up above the mountain, a giant made of pure light.

The giant’s eyes were closed, as if it were sleeping. However, moments later, a rumbling voice filled the air.

“Bai Xiaochun, the Xuanguang Clan has sealed itself off to the world. You’re not welcome here!”

Immediately after the thunderous words echoed out, the giant slowly faded away, and the mountain went quiet. Obviously, they really had sealed themselves away.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very happy about being interrupted, but when he thought about the gift that would surely be coming moments later, he brightened a bit. Clearing his throat, he said, “I know you’re completely sealed. But I can’t just leave empty-handed. How about this: why don’t you--”

Before he could finish, he was interrupted again. “Screw off!”

“Huh?” This was not the reaction he'd gotten from the other clans. Furthermore, he'd been interrupted a second time. He was really starting to get mad now.

“Are you really cursing at me? I never said anything unreasonable, did I? Look, I have a lot of people here with me, and we traveled a long way to get here. Why don’t you--”

“Screw off!!” The voice sounded even more enraged than before, and echoed out like thunder from the heavens.

“Fudge!!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed. He had been interrupted three times in a row, and by this point, his fury was burning hot. How could this clan be so vile? Not only did they refuse to allow him to inspect their clan, they also refused to give him gifts, and even cursed him!

Looking around angrily, he said, “Sect Nieces and Nephews, this enemy is a crafty one, so we have to be even craftier. If we don't, how else will we accomplish our mission?!”

Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie all chuckled coldly inside.

“The Xuanguang Clan’s spell formation draws upon all the spiritual energy in that mountain,” Beihan Lie said coolly. “Even if we all attack it together, we wouldn’t be able to break it open any time soon. If we rush things, it could destabilize the area behind the front lines. What exactly are we supposed to do?”

Everyone else looked over bleakly at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was angrier than ever that the reward handed to him by the patriarchs was turning out to be so frustrating. After a moment of silence, he gritted his teeth.

“Since they’re being such bullies. I... I think I’ll have to concoct some medicine!” The surrounding cultivators immediately began to tremble, and some of them even cried out in alarm. Within the blink of an eye, all two hundred of them backed up by 30 meters or so.

Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie were the fastest among the group. As soon as they heard Bai Xiaochun mention concocting medicine, their faces fell, and they backed up as quickly as possible.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0292 awe-chapter-293

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and he looked back and forth disappointedly.

“What are you guys doing...?” Coughing dryly, he continued, “It's for the sake of the mission! Besides, I'm really awesome at concocting medicine....”

People were already calling out advice.

“Sect Uncle Bai, there’s no need to concoct any medicine, alright...?”

“Exalted Blood Master, let’s just let this cultivator clan off the hook, okay...?”

Everyone all started talking at once, even Master God-Diviner.

Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand to produce a pill furnace. “No way. I refuse to believe that they’ll keep their doors closed to me!”

As soon as the pill furnace appeared, the surrounding cultivators of the two sects backed up even further. Bai Xiaochun looked at the Xuanguang Clan, then chuckled darkly. Slapping the pill furnace, he produced a large quantity of medicinal plants and began concocting!

The disciples of the two sects were still backing up, panting, looks of fear flickering in their eyes. And yet, at the same time, they seemed to be looking forward to the outcome.

“What a tragedy for the Xuanguang Clan....”

“I can't believe they dared to provoke the Plaguedevil!!”

“Did you guys know that back when Bai Xiaochun concocted medicine in the Spirit Stream Sect, he invoked lightning from the heavens, and even acid rain...?”

“How could we not know? Back in the Blood Stream Sect, he almost blew up Lesser Marsh Peak!”

Bai Xiaochun had a pill furnace, a bag full of flame crystals, and plenty of plants and vegetation. Considering his skill in the Dao of medicine, he quickly produced a batch of spirit medicine.

Based on what he recalled, this particular type of spirit medicine was one that he had first concocted on Corpse Peak, and could cause hallucinations. It only took a day before the pill furnace was trembling, and wisps of black smoke began to spread out from it.

When the disciples of the two sects saw the black smoke, they gasped and backed further away.

Even people in the Xuanguang Clan itself were starting to get nervous. They had heard of Bai Xiaochun’s nickname ‘Plaguedevil,’ and as such, were completely on guard. Although they had never faced an assault such as this one, they were ready.

Another half a day went by, and then Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared as he slapped the pill furnace with both hands. A huge cloud of black smoke rose up, whereupon he waved his sleeve, sending it toward the Xuanguang Clan’s mountain.

When the black smoke touched the glittering shield of light, the shield vibrated, but only blocked about half of the smoke. The rest passed right through. However, such a small amount of smoke was negligible considering the size of the mountain, and nothing much happened.

Bai Xiaochun felt more down than ever, especially when he heard the jeering calls coming from the Xuanguang Clan.

“I always thought the Plaguedevil moniker sounded really impressive. But it turns out to be just for show. Bai Xiaochun, our Xuanguang Clan might have surrendered to the Blood Stream Sect, but that doesn’t mean you can come extort us any old time you want. You think we’ll open our doors wide just because of your title? Screw off, and don’t come back until you reach Core Formation!”

Bai Xiaochun was now more irritated than ever. After glaring at the Xuanguang Clan’s mountain for a moment, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“If one stream of smoke isn’t enough, then I’ll make a hundred! No, *hundreds*!” Considering how many people were watching him, Bai Xiaochun felt as if he had really lost some face. With that, he waved his right hand and began to concoct more medicine. This time, he produced even more black smoke. However, he didn't send it swirling toward the spell formation shield. Instead, he performed an incantation gesture, and at the same time, used his powers of gravity and repulsion to produce a glowing sphere.

Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base had reached the point where he could prevent the sphere’s power from shredding clothing to pieces. By inverting the power inward, it created a flowing cycle that made the sphere very suitable as a vessel to hold things.

Now, he poured smoke into it until it was completely full. Having accomplished that, Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve, sending the sphere shooting back toward Jia Lie.

“Take it!” he said, not even turning his head. Trembling with fear, Jia Lie caught the sphere. Then, Bai Xiaochun continued to concoct. Astonishingly, five days passed in which he produced hundreds of the glowing spheres, all of them packed with hallucinatory smoke. Every sphere produced was tossed back to the group of two hundred cultivators.

When everyone was well armed, Bai Xiaochun looked up at the Xuanguang Clan mountain, eyes bloodshot. Then he extended his right hand and pointed at the mountain.

“Xuanguang Clan,” he yelled, “if you’re that tough, then don’t even think about coming out from behind your shield! Unleash the spheres!” Immediately, the cultivators launched the spheres with all the force they could muster, happy to be rid of the terrifying objects.

In the blink of an eye, hundreds of beams of light were shooting toward the Xuanguang Clan’s spell formation. As soon as they made contact, rumbling booms echoed out. The spheres shattered, and the powers of gravity and repulsion within them caused the shield to distort and ripple, breaking open numerous rifts.

Although the rifts quickly mended themselves, the hallucinatory smoke that belched out of the exploding spheres had plenty of time to pour into the spell formation.

Before long, cries of alarm began to rise up from the mountain, reaching a cacophony. Then, the mountain suddenly went silent. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he looked over at the Xuanguang Clan. All of the two hundred or so cultivators at his back, including Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie, were nervously doing the same thing, their eyes shining. This was their first time cooperating with Bai Xiaochun in the act of concocting medicine, and considering they had personally unleashed the glowing spheres, they were eager to see the results.

After a protracted moment of silence, cackling laughter suddenly rose up from the mountain. Then the sound of weeping. And then roaring. All sorts of strange and unthinkable sounds could be heard.

The mere sounds were enough to cause Beihan Lie’s skin to crawl. Gasps could be heard from the other cultivators, especially those from the Blood Stream Sect who had witnessed the tragedy of Corpse Peak.

The cultivators who had actually come from Corpse Peak had complicated expressions on their faces as they thought back to past events.

Three days later, the Xuanguang Clan surrendered. They didn't offer any stipulations; they simply opened up the mountain and received Bai Xiaochun. In addition, they offered copious amounts of gifts. The fear and dread in the eyes of the their cultivators as they looked at Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more clear. Those three days had been a nightmare that they wouldn't forget for the rest of their lives....

The name Plaguedevil had now been established in the Heavencraft Continent, and the stories were already spreading....

Surprisingly, the cultivators of the two sects soon fell in love with this magic that only Bai Xiaochun seemed capable of providing.

That was especially true of Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie.

Bai Xiaochun was an honest and straightforward person, so he split up the extortion profits among all of his followers. Of course, he was quite pleased at how everyone seemed to approve of his tactics. As a result, he spent some time making more glowing spheres, for defensive purposes of course, until everyone had at least four or five....

There were different types of glowing spheres. Some had acid rain in them, some had hallucinatory smoke, some could summon lightning, and some would strike the victims with instant diarrhea....

Gradually, the general attitude of the entire team was influenced by Bai Xiaochun. Even Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie were all subconsciously being corrupted....

Time passed. Two more months went by. During that time, there were a few injuries and casualties among the team. At one point during an inspection of one of the cultivator clans, they ran into a large group of Profound Stream Sect disciples who were just about to complete a large teleportation portal.

If that teleportation portal were completed, Profound Stream Sect cultivators from the front lines would be able to teleport into the area and cause major problems.

During the battle, the team tossed out a large number of his glowing spheres, then took advantage of the enemy’s weakness to follow Bai Xiaochun into battle. The result was an astonishing and shocking victory!

Although Bai Xiaochun didn’t go to the front lines to fight, his name spread far and wide throughout the conquered territories.

Furthermore, it wasn’t just his glory that increased. The other cultivators in his team also benefited. Their ability to use long-range poison spheres, and the terrifying things that resulted, ensured that they gained much the same reputation. They fairly radiated fiendish, murderous auras as they dominated the enemy.

That caused them to grow even more fervently supportive of Bai Xiaochun. They had truly fallen in love with this new style of battle that he had created.

Before they realized it, they had finished their mission, and their long path of destruction had led them very close to the front lines.

Bai Xiaochun was surrounded by a completely transformed group of cultivators. The two months of fighting alongside him had changed them significantly.

Their bags of holding were packed with the spoils of war, and in addition, they had all grown very close to each other. Cultivators of both sects could often be seen laughing and chatting with each other, discussing which of the various poison spheres was the best. They even cooperated well with each other in battle.

A few months ago, no one in either sect would ever have believed that such a level of cooperation was possible.

However, it was a reality in Bai Xiaochun’s team.

Although Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie often had cold smirks on their faces, in their hearts, they viewed him differently than before, although none of them were quite sure exactly how.

That was especially true of Beihan Lie. As he looked around at the disciples, some of whom were in the Qi Condensation stage, and some of whom were in Foundation Establishment, he was somewhat surprised to find that the previously injured and disorganized group now brimmed with battle prowess.

It was a battle prowess that surpassed that of some of the elite cultivators that he had seen on the front lines. Considering how much they loved this fighting style, he was sure that if they did go to the front lines, they would make a huge scene!

And all of that was because of Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0293 awe-chapter-294

The war had reached a fever pitch on the Heavencraft Continent. Of the Profound Stream Sect’s 29 temple headquarters, 28 had already been captured!

The last temple existed on what had once been the border of Pill Stream Sect territory. There it stood, tall and mighty, the final point of resistance.

It was located right in the middle of a sprawling mountain range that was even more majestic than the Luochen Mountains.

The mountain range was split in half, almost as if a giant as tall as the sky itself had cleaved it into two halves with the stroke of an axe. In the resulting gap, past generations of Profound Stream Sect patriarchs had paid an enormous price to erect a massive city!

That city was the final remaining temple headquarters of the Profound Stream Sect, and it was large enough to house millions of people. It was also protected by a vast number of spell formations. Virtually all of the surviving Profound Stream Sect cultivators were holed up in the city, which everyone knew would be the location of the final battle.

The army of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect had been pushing the fight toward the city for a month already. They had attacked with incredible force, but this was the Profound Stream Sect’s last stand. Even with the bedraggled remnants of the Pill Stream Sect attacking the city from the other side of the mountain range, it had not fallen. The Profound Stream Sect was holding out until the bitter end, hoping that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would lose patience and intervene!

After all, the longer things dragged out in the Lower Reaches, the longer the Sky River Court would have to prepare in the Middle Reaches!

Because of that, the patriarchs of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects had initially intended to use a blitzkrieg strategy to end the war as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, their momentum had stalled just outside of this final enormous city.

Around the time that the two sides reached a deadlock, Bai Xiaochun completed his mission. The majority of the Profound Stream Sect stragglers had been rooted out. In the process, Bai Xiaochun and his two hundred followers had packed their bags of holding full of cultivation resources.

By this point, the entire group radiated the air of riches, and made a spectacular sight wherever they went. Eventually, they found themselves on a vast plain that was the final stretch before reaching the front line itself.

Even from this distance, they could detect the fluctuations of battle, and could hear the rumble of magic being unleashed.

The wind carried with it the reek of blood, and across the plain in front of them were strewn numerous corpses and patches of gore.

Bai Xiaochun stood at the edge of the plain, vigilantly studying the scene spread out in front of him. There were no subversive cultivator clans here, and in fact, there were even squads of Blood Stream Sect cultivators moving about here and there. However, Bai Xiaochun had developed a keen sense for danger, and could tell that by crossing this plain and heading to the front lines, there would definitely be danger.

The sense of danger weighed down on him heavily, especially when he saw the distortions in the air off in the distance, evidence of the fierce fighting that was going on. He couldn’t help but think of his past experiences with the Luochen Clan, in the Fallen Sword Abyss, and in the trial by fire for blood master.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one who was on guard. The other cultivators around him felt the same, especially Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie. Those three had been to the front lines before, and knew that fighting with the Profound Stream Sect was a very dangerous affair. If one wasn't careful, one could end up dead.

After all, this was a war in which whole sects faced the threat of extermination. In the fighting, no quarter was given, and one side or the other would end up dead.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun had two choices. He could head back into the conquered territory, or proceed onward to the front line to fight with the Profound Stream Sect cultivators.

“What should we do now?” he asked aloud. As far as he was concerned, taking risks wasn’t the best thing to do. If he wasn’t careful, he could lose his poor little life. Clearing his throat, he continued, “If we go back....”

Before he could finish speaking, his heart skipped a beat as intense murderous auras sprang up from the cultivators around him. Clearly, they were itching to fight.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as everyone turned to look at him with strange looks on their faces, as if they couldn't believe what he had just said. “If we go back into the conquered territory....”

Beihan Lie frowned. Master God-Diviner and Jia Lie’s jaws dropped.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart skipped another beat, and regret began to rise up inside of him. However, he plastered a proud smile onto his face and stirred his cultivation base, causing his energy to soar. Looking more steel-veined than ever, he swished his sleeve dramatically and said, “If we go back into the conquered territory, how could we live with ourselves? We're cultivators, right? What are we afraid of, dying? Let’s go to the front lines and fight the Profound Stream Sect to the death!”

Then he laughed bravely. The murderous auras of the surrounding cultivators erupted.

“Starting this day, we will fly *our* banner on the battlefield!” Laughing uproariously, he stepped out onto the plain.

Beihan Lie’s heart trembled. Taking a deep breath, he also began to laugh heartily as he followed Bai Xiaochun. Jia Lie and Master God-Diviner didn't suspect anything at all. Based on their experiences, Blood Master Nightcrypt was a violent and ruthless individual.

The other cultivators of the two sects also began to laugh vigorously, and soon, the entire group was moving across the plain toward the front lines.

With everyone clustered around him, Bai Xiaochun looked completely extraordinary. However, inside, he was crying. He had no desire at all to go to the front-line battlefield.

Unfortunately, he felt as if he had no other choice. His hand was being forced. Thus, he led his team across the plain, gnashing his teeth the entire way.

They went along for a few days, and Bai Xiaochun's nervousness mounted. It reached the point where even the slightest stirring of a branch or blade of grass would cause his heart to leap with fear. One afternoon, a group of a few dozen beams of light suddenly appeared off in the distance.

It was a squad of Profound Stream Sect cultivators, and as soon as they noticed Bai Xiaochun, their expressions flickered. However, instead of retreating, their faces filled with the desire to do battle. Roaring in rage and hatred, they closed it at top speed.

“People from the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects! Fight them to the death!!’

“Die!!” Among the dozens of cultivators were eight in the Foundation Establishment stage. The entire group was clearly dead set on fighting.

Bai Xiaochun was startled, but before he could even open his mouth to say anything, more than half of the cultivators surrounding him threw out glowing spheres. Upon reaching the Profound Stream Sect cultivators, the spheres exploded.

The Profound Stream Sect cultivators all had different reactions. Some of them suddenly looked around blankly. Some of them howled madly at the tops of their lungs. Some of them clutched at their throats. Some of them were clearly hallucinating, and started lurching about.

As they were thrown into chaos, the cultivators surrounding Bai Xiaochun shot forward with flashing eyes and vicious grins. Booms rang out as the slaughter commenced.

The entire process lasted for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. Bai Xiaochun watched as his zealous followers then tidied up the battlefield, sweeping up the bags of holding and distributing their contents to the rest of the team. Bai Xiaochun was suddenly struck with the sensation that the group he led was as fierce as a pack of wolves or tigers.

Bai Xiaochun took his share, and then declared, “Excellent. This is how we cultivators should be. This place is newly conquered territory! Let’s clean things up here and make a name for ourselves on the Heavencraft Continent!”

The surrounding cultivators’ expressions brightened, and within moments, they were speeding away off into the distance.

Half a month flew by, during which time Bai Xiaochun and his team encountered groups of Profound Stream Sect disciples on four or five occasions. Their numbers ranged from dozens to hundreds.

At first, they seemed ferocious, but after the glowing spheres were unleashed, their ranks scattered. Bai Xiaochun and his people met success in every encounter, and their killing auras grew stronger.

By now, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t nervous at all. He spent most of his time replenishing the glowing spheres. As they proceeded along, the fighting grew more intense. At one point, they encountered a group of nearly 300 Profound Stream Sect cultivators. Although the fighting was fierce, Bai Xiaochun’s side easily attained victory.

The glowing spheres were so effective that very few cultivators could escape their effects.

News spread until the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects as a whole had heard, and even the Profound Stream Sect forces knew of what was happening. However, because of the critical state of the war, they couldn’t pay it much attention.

Bai Xiaochun felt extremely relaxed. Currently, he was reclining comfortably on the huge blood sword, surrounded by shouting cultivators.

“The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers! The Spirit Stream Heaven-Dao expert can shake the whole world!”

At one point, a beam of light appeared off in the distance. It was a young man who held a stack of paper talismans in his hand. He was coughing up blood, and his face was ashen. Clearly, he was in a bad situation. Every few seconds, he would toss one of the paper talismans out to block the people that were chasing him. Those paper talismans were the only reason he was able to keep some distance between him and his pursuers.

Hot on his tail was a group of about 200 enemy cultivators.

At the head of that large group was another young man with bristling killing intent. He was only in mid Foundation Establishment, but his murderous aura made him seem as strong as late Foundation Establishment.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw him, his eyes widened. "Nine-Isles!”

Then his eyes flashed as he realized that the cultivator being chased was none other than Xu Xiaoshan!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0294 awe-chapter-295

Xu Xiaoshan was so far away that he couldn’t quite make out who was in the group up ahead of him. However, he could see the enormous blood sword, and sensed the unique blood auras of Blood Stream Sect cultivators. Without any hesitation, he shot toward them.

When he made out Bai Xiaochun, he looked like he was about to weep with joy.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he shouted.

At almost the same time, Nine-Isles also spotted Bai Xiaochun. At first his eyes widened, but then they shone with joy!

“I can’t believe Bai Xiaochun’s here!! I thought I would capture Xu Xiaoshan today, but who could have guessed that we would also run into Bai Xiaochun? He’s dead!” Nine-Isles laughed loudly as he led his group of roughly 200 cultivators forward. If they had encountered some of the elite forces of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, it might have been a different story. However, he could tell that Bai Xiaochun’s group was filled with cultivators of all different levels. Other than Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie, the rest of them were obviously disciples of no note in their sects.

Nine-Isles was completely confident in being able to wipe such a group out. Laughing loudly, he continued to chase Xu Xiaoshan toward Bai Xiaochun.

Quite a few among Nine-Isles’ group of cultivators recognized Bai Xiaochun, and although they were shocked, their desire to kill him burned bright.

All of them knew that this was a war of sect extermination, and they were aware that one of the main reasons why the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects had struck an alliance was because of Bai Xiaochun!

Xu Xiaoshan also realized this, and it caused him to hesitate for a moment. However, he had no other options. If he didn’t join Bai Xiaochun, he would die. Indecision flickered in his eyes, and he cursed himself for getting into this situation. But then he realized that Bai Xiaochun’s expression was the same as always, and that the cultivators in his group didn't seem scared at all. In fact, many of them were even looking at Nine-Isles and his cultivators with contempt and derision.

“Huh?” Xu Xiaoshan muttered, confused.

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back. Looking very proud of himself, he said, “Fear not, Xiaoshan! The Blood Lord is here to save you!”

Clearing his throat, he looked at the cultivators surrounding him, then waved his hand outward. To Xu Xiaoshan’s shock, all the cultivators on Bai Xiaochun’s team began to produce glowing spheres.

“Attack!” Bai Xiaochun roared. The cultivators of the two sects roared in response, and began to throw the glowing spheres. In the blink of an eye, hundreds of them were flying through the air like shooting stars.

Nine-Isles’ jaw dropped, and the group behind him hesitated for a moment. Some in the group unleashed attacks to block the glowing sphere, but the spheres seemed to be impervious to magical techniques. They began to explode, sending vast quantities of smoke out to cover Nine-Isles and everyone around him.

The smoke instantly reduced the visibility in the area, but it didn’t stop the miserable shrieks and howls from echoing out.

“My stomach....”

“Heavens! I've become an immortal....”

“Stay away everyone! Get away from me! What is this place...?”

Xu Xiaoshan’s expression flickered, and he cried out, “Corpse Peak Plague Smoke!!”

Trembling visibly, he screamed and used all the power he could muster to fly away from the smoke, his face as white as a sheet of paper. He more than anyone was intimately familiar with that smoke, and his experiences had been especially memorable.

The scene which had played out because of that smoke was like a nightmare that would haunt him for the rest of his life. To see it showing up again here filled his heart with terror.

However, even as he fled from the smoke, the air began to clear. The 200 Profound Stream Sect disciples became visible, and it was a bizarre scene. Some of them were waving their arms, some seemed drunk, some looked as ashen as death, and some were surrounded by noxious odors.

Some were even hugging each other. As for Nine-Isles, he hovered there trembling, surrounded by a rippling shield of light that somehow protected him from the smoke. He almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing around him.

“What divine ability is this? Impossible! It’s impossible! How could there be a magic like this!?!?” Profound fear of Bai Xiaochun rose up in his heart. He suddenly thought back to the Fallen Sword Abyss, and it provoked a hoarse scream. Before Bai Xiaochun could even attack, he pulled out a jade pendant and pushed down to activate it.

Seven-colored light spread out, along with cracking sounds. Teleportation power surged, wrapping Nine-Isles up to teleport him away.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. He was well aware that jade pendants which could teleport Foundation Establishment cultivators off of the battlefield were extremely valuable to any sect. Virtually priceless. He quickly opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, sending a golden beam of light shooting toward the departing Nine-Isles.

As soon as the golden beam of light slammed into Nine-Isles, he let out a bloodcurdling scream. Although he was still teleported away, the control power exerted by Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenspan Dharma Eye managed to grab onto his arm and rip it clean off of his shoulder.

Even as Nine-Isles was whisked away, Bai Xiaochun’s followers began to attack the cultivators who had remained behind.

Beihan Lie looked over at one of the Foundation Establishment cultivators who was clutching at his stomach, a noxious odor surrounding him. “I remember you! You were one of the people who ganged up on me on the front lines!”

Grinning viciously, he closed in for the kill.

Jia Lie and Master God-Diviner unleashed magical techniques with murderous intent.

It was the same with all the other cultivators, and furthermore, by cooperating, they ensured that their own group sustained virtually no injuries.

Bai Xiaochun’s team had become intimately familiar with combat and fighting. Before long, the miserable shrieks faded away, and the fighting was over.

The only thing Bai Xiaochun regretted was that Nine-Isles had escaped. As for Xu Xiaoshan, he was so completely shaken by what he had just seen that he forgot to breathe. Then he noticed that the cultivators of the two sects were all cooperating in the fighting. He even saw Beihan Lie and Master God-Diviner working together to fight an enemy.

“How is this even possible...?” he gasped, rubbing his eyes to clear them.

An hour later, the battlefield had been cleared of loot, and the group was on their way again. Xu Xiaoshan joined them, flying along next to Bai Xiaochun and offering numerous fawning words of praise.

“Blood Lord Nightcrypt? Junior Patriarch Bai Xiaochun? Sect Uncle Bai? Um, what do you think about giving me some of those glowing spheres everyone used back there...?”

Bai Xiaochun looked very pleased with himself. He felt quite a sense of accomplishment at how his team was fighting so hard and well together.

“It’s all a big meritorious service on my part....” he sighed to himself. Looking over at Xu Xiaoshan, he waved his sleeve and threw him a few glowing spheres.

“Take them and have fun!”

Xu Xiaoshan gingerly took the glowing spheres, heart pounding with anticipation. He couldn't wait to run into some Profound Stream Sect cultivators to use them on. He would show those Profound Stream Sect cultivators how awesome the Plaguedevil’s poison smoke was!

Time flew by. Another two months passed. The war had been going on for half a year already, but the deadlock still hadn’t been broken. Furthermore, more and more small-scale battles were being fought throughout the Heavencraft Continent. Most of those battles were between groups that numbered in the dozens or hundreds.

Bai Xiaochun’s name spread far and wide during that time. Every single battle he fought ended in victory. Eventually, his glowing poison spheres were also becoming famous. Profound Stream Sect cultivators on all fronts of the battle knew of the terrifying name of the Plaguedevil.

Beihan Lie, Master God-Diviner, and Jia Lie also earned their own glory. As for Xu Xiaoshan, he joined the group a bit late, but also rose to fame. He fell in love with Bai Xiaochun’s glowing spheres, and used them more enthusiastically than anyone else, especially the ones that induced hallucinations....

As for the Profound Stream Sect’s patriarchs, and the other leaders holed up in their final headquarters, they also heard of the glowing spheres. However, all they could do was gnash their teeth; none of them dared to go out and fight.

Not even the Profound Stream Sect's prime elders and legacy echelon cultivators could shake their fear of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects. All of them were waiting for the final decisive battle to show their faces.

Everything was reaching a boiling point. Bai Xiaochun's fame grew, and his group of followers grew more and more zealous as they wiped out the teams of Profound Stream Sect cultivators who still lurked about. Even the patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect were shocked by how things were playing out.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0295 awe-chapter-296

Dusk was falling, but it couldn’t darken the excitement that surged in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. Looking very pleased with himself, he sat cross-legged atop the blood sword, pointing out as he said, “Get ‘em, boys!”

He felt wonderful inside and out, and powerful too. He couldn’t help but think back to the events of the Fallen Sword Abyss, in which he’d led the Spirit Stream Sect disciples to grab all the entrances into the sword.

“What a wonderful memory!” he thought, sighing. But then he remembered how, after he helped all the disciples enter the sword, he ended up being caught alone outside. “I shouldn’t jinx myself! But then again, things are different in this situation. I have two hundred fierce, powerful cultivators with me.”

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the people around him. Xu Xiaoshan was especially impressive, with glowing poison spheres hanging all over him, ready to be thrown out at a moment’s notice. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but approve.

Beihan Lie had changed too.... Although he looked the same, he had learned to smile. As for Jia Lie and Master God-Diviner, they were cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect, and had been scary to begin with. However, as the months passed, they had become even scarier.

If those four had experienced such changes, there was no need to even mention everyone else. Most of them had come to resemble Bai Xiaochun in many ways. Normally, they spent their time laughing and smiling, and although they feared death to some extent, when they needed to fight, they unleashed their poison smoke and fought ferociously.

The mere sight of everyone around him caused Bai Xiaochun to sigh emotionally.

“Thanks to my leadership, these brothers and sisters finally realize that cultivators should cherish life. As long as you have your life, you have everything.” Sighing again, he slapped his bag of holding and pulled out the little turtle to shake around like he usually did. Over the course of the preceding months, he had taken time every day to shake the turtle like a rag doll. He had even come to find that the sound of the turtle’s limbs and head knocking against its shell was very pleasing to the ears.

Occasionally, a fragrant aroma would waft out after a bit of knocking, which would cause massive amounts of spiritual energy to flow toward him. Because of that, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation improved on a daily basis. His followers also benefited from the influxes of spiritual energy.

“This damned turtle does have some use after all.” He looked down at the turtle, at its protruding head and limbs, and its stumpy tail, and gave it another vigorous shake. That was when he realized that something seemed off about it. The knocking sounds were different from before, and the turtle’s extremities all seemed to be stiffer than before.

“Huh?” Surprised, Bai Xiaochun shook the turtle even harder. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the stiffened extremities went loose once again, and the knocking sounds went back to normal. Pleased, Bai Xiaochun went on to finish his cultivation session.

The next afternoon, he led his group flying along through the front lines region. It was a vast area, and that, coupled with his illustrious fame, made it so that they often went days without encountering any Profound Stream Sect cultivators.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get bored. One day, he noticed Xu Xiaoshan and Beihan Lie bragging to each other about their achievements in battle. Bai Xiaochun was interested in jumping into the conversation, but then he realized that they were actually looking at him furtively and intentionally ignoring him.

Not very happy, he snorted and considered reducing their glowing sphere supply by seventy percent. At the same time, he subconsciously shook the little turtle back and forth like usually. Suddenly, he frowned.

“Hey, why is the sound different?” Looking down at the turtle, he poked its extremities a few times with his finger and found that, yet again, they had turned stiff.

“Who knows how long this little turtle has been dead. Poor thing. Its limbs are even starting to stiffen up now.” After some thought, he decided that he should try to help the turtle. After all, despite being dead, it had been of much assistance to his cultivation over the past half year or so.

Gripping the shell tightly, he started shaking it as hard as possible. He used quite a bit of force and shook it far more quickly than he usually did. Within the space of a few breaths of time, the fragrant aroma once again appeared, and the spiritual energy of heaven and earth began to rush over.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn't finished yet. He kept shaking the turtle as hard as he could, determined to get its body to loosen up again.

The process lasted for the time it takes three incense sticks to burn. Finally, the little turtle’s body once again went loose, and a smile broke out on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

“If your spirit exists in the heavens somewhere, there’s no need for you to thank me. I’ll help you stay loose for as long as possible. I’ll make sure that your fleshly body doesn’t decay, not for all eterni--” Before he could finish speaking, the turtle suddenly lifted its head and opened its eyes. Its pupils seemed to be spinning, and yet, it was possible to see hatred and madness in its eyes as it suddenly opened its mouth and snapped at Bai Xiaochun’s hand!

Startled, Bai Xiaochun immediately dropped the turtle and pulled his hand back.

The turtle’s bite seemed to be fueled by indescribable hatred. When its jaws closed onto the air, a snapping sound rang out that shocked all of the cultivators in the area.

Bai Xiaochun felt like his scalp was about to explode. If the turtle had successfully bitten one of his fingers, it would surely have shattered the bones. Not even his Heavenly Demon Body could stand up to snapping power like that.

“Y-y-y… you’re alive!?!? You’re not dead?!?!” Bai Xiaochun edged backward, disbelief playing out on his face. He had studied that turtle for a very long time, and had never detected any life force in it at all. It had definitely been a corpse before, but as of this moment, it was alive.

Bai Xiaochun’s head was spinning, and his eyes were wide with incredulity.

The turtle wobbled a bit as it flew up into the air to float in front of Bai Xiaochun. Its limbs were trembling, and its eyes were bloodshot. Apparently, it was working hard just not to pass out. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, it howled, “You’re the dead one! Your whole family’s dead! Your whole sect is dead! Everybody named Bai is dead! I hate you, you jerk!!”

The cultivators of the two sects all looked over in shock. They were familiar with that little turtle; they all remembered seeing Bai Xiaochun shake it around over the past few months, causing the energy of heaven and earth to rush over.

But now, the little turtle was actually alive!!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and was about to say something, but then he noticed what appeared to be tears welling up in the turtle’s eyes. The turtle had looked charming to begin with, with big, round eyes. Now, it seemed to be teetering on the verge of hysteria as it screamed, “Lord Turtle woke up five months ago! Why did you have to go around shaking me every single day!? There was one day when you shook me a thousand times! Don’t you ever get tired? Lord Turtle almost threw up that day before he passed out again!”

The little turtle was shaking, and was so enraged that heatwaves were rising up from his body. It looked almost like he was about to explode.

Bai Xiaochun already felt bad, so he quickly tried to explain. “Uh, I... I didn't do it on purpose! I thought you were dead! If you weren’t dead, why didn’t you say something earlier? Also, what was that fragrant aroma...?”

“Oh, you just had to bring up the fragrant aroma, didn’t you!?!? AAARRRGHHHH! That’s the spiritual energy Lord

Turtle has been building up for years and years! You shook out tons of it! That was my collection! I spent tens of thousands of years building it up! ARGH! I hate you! I can’t live under the same sky as you!” The enraged little turtle once again lunged toward Bai Xiaochun to try and bite him. “I'm gonna bite you to death!”

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun dodged to the side, but the turtle kept chasing him, snapping at him over and over again. Xu Xiaoshan, Beihan Lie, Jia Lie, and Master God-Diviner were all completely shocked, as were the other cultivators.

At first, Bai Xiaochun was terrified at being attacked in such away. But then his expression flickered, and he spun in place. Murderous aura erupting, he shouted, “Enough!”

“No, it’s not enough! Dammit! Lord Turtle is gonna slap you so black and blue you’ll never recover!”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. This turtle’s language was definitely unique. Clearly, he wasn’t about to let the matter drop. Backing up, Bai Xiaochun quickly said, “Wait, let me explain!”

The little turtle rolled its eyes contemptuously and then said, “Oh no, you stay away from me. I have germophobia!”

“Huh? Germophobia?” Bai Xiaochun was once again shocked, and the other onlookers were similarly stunned. But then, their expressions slowly began to turn into awe. For someone to be able to say something so profoundly insulting, but not use any obscenities, was something that none of them could ever hope to do.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0296 awe-chapter-297

“Y-y-you....” Despite wracking his brain, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t think of any comeback. This turtle was simply too hurtful. Virtually every word out of his mouth was an insult.

That was especially true of what he had just said. To say he was germophobic and didn't want to talk to Bai Xiaochun was an obvious insult to Bai Xiaochun himself.

Rage burned in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and just when he was about to offer a response, the little turtle suddenly looked at him sympathetically. Shaking his head, he said, “Ah, some people have to be insulted really blatantly, otherwise they don’t realize they’re being insulted. Make things even slightly cerebral, and it takes them forever to realize they’re being taunted.”

Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of exploding.

“Sharp-tongued blowhard!!” he howled. “Bastard of a turtle! Y-y-you....”

However, the look of sympathy in the turtle’s eyes grew even deeper. Sighing, he casually said, “Finished with your self-introduction?”

The words crushed down onto Bai Xiaochun with the weight of Mount Tai, like lightning on a sunny day. Trembling as if he had been struck physically, he was literally at a loss for words. All of a sudden, he realized that in terms of ability to insult people, this little turtle existed on a different plane than him. It was like the difference between heaven and earth, or the difference between mortals and cultivators....

They were different worlds....

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one who felt like that. The other cultivators of the two sects were all left gasping. They had never encountered someone who could speak so bitingly. Xu Xiaoshan’s eyes went wide as he stared at the little turtle. To him, it seemed almost godlike.

Beihan Lie felt the same way. He had never before seen Bai Xiaochun in such a predicament. Jia Lie was going wild with joy, and although Master God-Diviner looked shocked, inwardly, he was getting very excited.

Regardless, everyone had already decided that they would avoid talking to the little turtle at all costs....

Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing blood qi to explode out toward the little turtle. However, before the blood qi even reached it, the turtle suddenly shrank back into his shell. A bang rang out as the blood qi hit the shell, then faded away, leaving behind not even the tiniest scratch.

However, the turtle’s muffled voice could still be heard from inside the shell.

“Bursting with rage, yet empty inside. If you don’t vent a bit, you’ll end up dead. Listen up Bai, you little whippersnapper, Lord Turtle has some advice. Why don’t you go build a crystal wall for yourself? If you keep going down this path, it’s not healthy....” [1. Even after doing a bunch of research, I couldn’t determine exactly what the “build a crystal wall” is referring to. I think it’s referencing the magical crystal walls that you see in animated shows sometimes. It’s either that, or supposed to be something incomprehensible. I’m not going to bug Er Gen about something minor like this, so I’ll leave it up to your imagination]

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. He actually had no idea what the little turtle was talking about, but he was sure that it wasn’t anything good. The fact that he didn’t even understand how he was being insulted got him even more mad than before. Suddenly, he thought back to how the little turtle had just talked about people not understanding how they were being insulted.

“I’m gonna concoct you into a pill!!” Bai Xiaochun raged. Waving his right hand, he summoned a pill furnace, grabbed the turtle, and then threw it inside. Eyes bloodshot, he pulled out a pile of earthflame stones and immediately began to try to concoct the little turtle into a pill, right there on top of the blood sword.

Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the surrounding cultivators. Considering how Bai Xiaochun almost seemed to have gone mad, though, none of them dared to interrupt him. Everyone edged back until they were about 300 meters away.

For the following few days, Bai Xiaochun concocted like mad. Soon, his hair was in disarray, and he felt like he was on the verge of exploding. However, no matter what methods he used, he couldn’t get the little turtle to melt. Occasionally, the little turtle would even hurl insults out from inside the furnace.

“You call this pill concocting? If you think this heat can melt Lord Turtle, you might as well stop dreaming. Look, whippersnapper, why don’t you try again after practicing cultivation for 10,000 years or so?!”

“Hey hey. Not bad! Not bad at all! You realized Lord Turtle was hungry, so you threw some spirit plants in for me to eat. Keep it up, whippersnapper. I'm starting to like you!”

“Add some heat! Come on, Lord Turtle is freezing here! Heat, man, I need heat!!”

Bai Xiaochun was descending into complete madness. He felt like he was about to collapse, and had a mind to simply throw the little turtle away. However, it was a valuable treasure that he had only acquired after suffering untold hardships. He couldn’t just give it up....

And yet, he couldn’t just allow things to go on the way they were. He continued to stew over the matter for two days, until he suddenly realized that the little turtle hadn’t said anything for quite some time.

“Hmm?” he muttered, looking surprised. Everyone else in the area was also astonished. They had actually gotten used to the little turtle’s voice recently, so the sudden silence seemed odd.

Feeling a bit suspicious, Bai Xiaochun cooled down the earthflame and opened the pill furnace to find that it was completely empty....

Well, it wasn’t completely empty. There were some turtle droppings inside....

However, the little turtle was nowhere to be seen. By means of some unknowable method, he had somehow disappeared into thin air.

A very unsightly expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face, especially when he looked at the turtle droppings. He really wanted to beat that turtle flat into the ground....

“Hmmph! Well, I'm glad he’s gone. I’ll just pretend I never even picked him up to begin with!” His heart was filled with many mixed emotions as he gritted his teeth and put his pill furnace away. Finally, the other cultivators felt comfortable enough to get a bit closer to the blood sword.

Another five days passed. Bai Xiaochun hadn’t seen a single trace of the little turtle, and had dismissed his disappearance from his mind. Although he was a bit disappointed at losing it, when he thought about his maddening way of talking, he realized that overall, the fact that he had fled was a good thing.

His mood gradually got better, and his spirits lifted. One afternoon, just when he was getting everyone ready to continue along through the front lines territory, a golden beam of light suddenly shot up into the air off in the distance.

At the same time, the aura of Heavenspan River water also exploded out in all directions. Heaven and earth began to tremble, and the sky distorted. Many of the blood clouds on the battlefield were swept away, and the Spirit Stream Sect’s white sun twisted, causing the black raven inside to tremble.

The Blood Stream Sect’s reserve power, the ghastly scarecrow, also began to tremble. The same thing happened to the Profound Stream Sect’s enormous city headquarters.

All patriarchs of the three sects who were currently in the Heavencraft Continent all turned their heads at the same time to see what was happening.

Bai Xiaochun was quite close to the golden light, and felt the vibrations even more acutely. That was especially true considering that he cultivated the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, which was built upon the foundation of absorbing Heavenspan River water. Because of that, he was more in tune with the Heavenspan River than ordinary cultivators.

“That’s....” Bai Xiaochun gasped. The other cultivators around him were so shocked they were trembling. And that was when all of them, Bai Xiaochun included, saw...

Another beam shooting toward Bai Xiaochun from the expanding golden light.

As the beam of light got closer, a voice suddenly echoed out, “Dammit! You trifling little creature. Last time Lord Turtle took a nap, you were a wimp, and the nap before that, your dad was also a wimp!”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard that voice, he was shaken to the core, and his mind began to spin. It was obviously the voice of the damned little turtle.

Furthermore, it was now possible to see that within the majestic golden light was a gargantuan crocodile!!

It was at least 30,000 meters long, and completely golden. Its majesty was virtually impossible to describe, and it was clearly enraged, its roar echoing out louder than thunder from the heavens. [1. The golden crocodile appeared earlier in chapters 48 and 217]

It was so angry that Bai Xiaochun could see how bloodshot its eyes were. He gasped, his scalp tingling so hard it felt like it would explode. This was the very same crocodile he had seen back when he was in the Qi Condensation stage, a terrifying entity that lived within the water of the Heavenspan River.

Before Bai Xiaochun could even react, the little turtle shot toward him with explosive speed. As he closed in, he sucked his extremities in, becoming a turtle shell that then disappeared into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

“Uhh....”

Bai Xiaochun looked up with wide eyes at the distant crocodile, which was currently staring at him angrily. Clearly, it recognized him.... When it realized that Bai Xiaochun was the master of the little turtle, it let out a shocking roar that caused the sky to dim, and a huge wind to kick up.

“Senior Goldcroc, I... I'm not the turtle’s master! Really, I’m not....”

He wanted to drag the turtle out of his bag of holding, but when he looked inside, he couldn't find a single trace of him. There was no more time to think, as the terrifying crocodile was currently heading in his direction. A pair of wings popped out behind Bai Xiaochun as he fled at top speed.

On the verge of tears, he screamed, “Heaven-damned little turtle, I hate you!!”

The other cultivators had long since fled, and were sympathetically watching Bai Xiaochun from a distance....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0297 awe-chapter-298

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot as he fled for his life. With his Protomagnetic Wings and the strength of his Heavenly Demon Body, he was capable of incredible speed.

In fact, he moved so quickly that he turned into a blur, a beam of light that was almost instantly far off into the distance.

“It’s really not me....” he howled. Unfortunately, the golden crocodile was just as fast. In the blink of an eye, it was right on top of Bai Xiaochun, filling the entire area with golden light.

Bai Xiaochun felt like his scalp was about to explode, and he was trembling in fear. “Senior Goldcroc, listen to me, sir! I also hate that little turtle, alright!? You and me, we’re not enemies! Our... our enemy is that damned turtle!”

At that point, the golden crocodile let out a powerful roar.

It sounded like thunder from the heavens, causing everything to shake violently. Bai Xiaochun’s eardrums were on the verge of popping, and with a miserable shriek, he shot onward with increased speed.

However, before he could get very far, the enraged crocodile’s eyes flashed with cold light, and its mouth snapped open. That mouth seemed to become heaven and earth as it loomed over Bai Xiaochun, casting everything below into darkness.

A powerful, fishy aroma blasted over Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes went wide as he slowly looked up. Then he screamed.

From a distance, it was possible to see the enormous, 30,000-meter-long golden crocodile with its mouth open, and Bai Xiaochun right in the middle!

Compared to the gargantuan crocodile, Bai Xiaochun was like a tiny bug....

In the blink of an eye, the golden crocodile’s mouth began to close as it prepared to consume Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun was screaming, his eyes completely bloodshot. In this moment of critical danger, he resorted to his Mountain Shaking Bash to break free, risking everything to try to get out of the crocodile’s closing mouth.

Bai Xiaochun felt like his heart was about to explode, and he really was about to start crying. A massive crashing sound echoed out behind him as the crocodile’s jaws slammed shut.

Deep in his bones, he hated the little turtle for setting him up and getting this crocodile to come after him. Were it not for the fact that the turtle was nowhere to be found in his bag of holding, he would definitely have pulled it out and tossed it into the crocodile’s mouth.

“We really aren’t enemies! I... I... oh right, I've absorbed water from the Heavenspan River! Look! I have the aura of the Heavenspan River on me!” Trembling, Bai Xiaochun unleashed the aura of the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, hoping to convince the crocodile that they were on the same team....

It was hard to say for sure, but it seemed that the aura of the Heavenspan River worked. In almost the same moment that he unleashed it, the golden crocodile’s eyes flickered with a strange light, and it stopped in place.

Bai Xiaochun took advantage of that brief pause to blast forward, putting a bit of distance between himself and the golden crocodile. By this point, he was panting for breath, but before he could do anything else, a cold light flashed in the crocodile’s eyes, and it lunged forward again with gaping maw.

The fishy aroma washed over Bai Xiaochun once more. Screaming, he decided to throw caution to the wind, and opened his third eye. With the power of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye in full force, he looked back at the golden crocodile.

In that instant, his jaw dropped. Shockingly, the crocodile was actually not a crocodile! It had been formed from water from the Heavenspan River, and emanated the same fluctuations as the river!

A moment later, though, the images in front of him changed again, and it transformed back into the golden crocodile.

There was little time for thought. He unleashed the control power of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye against the crocodile. It was in that moment that the crocodile’s mouth snapped shut a second time, barely missing Bai Xiaochun.

However, the resulting blast of air sent Bai Xiaochun tumbling head over heels, face pale.

Time passed. Two hours later, the golden crocodile was still chasing Bai Xiaochun. It was hard to determine what exactly it was thinking. Despite how it was pursuing Bai Xiaochun, it didn't seem to actually want to kill him. However, every time it opened its huge mouth, cold sweat broke out on Bai Xiaochun's forehead.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun realized that the crocodile didn't seem to be trying to kill him, more just mess with him. Every time it closed its mouth, the blast of air would send him spinning off into the distance.

However, despite the fact that it wasn't trying to kill him, Bai Xiaochun could also tell that if he didn't evade quickly enough, he really would be swallowed up.... He felt very wronged. Compared to this gigantic crocodile, he was like a baby. If the giant thing wasn't careful, it could definitely end his poor little life.

"Stop messing around...." he howled. He really was afraid that the crocodile's messing around would end up killing him.

He was scowling on the verge of tears as the golden crocodile once again opened its mouth. Bai Xiaochun was virtually scared witless, and was just about to flee when something new happened. A long water dragon burst out from inside the crocodile's throat, charging toward Bai Xiaochun and then crashing into him.

This wasn't ordinary water, it was Heavenspan River water. Any other person would have been killed in body and soul. But because Bai Xiaochun cultivated the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, he was much more used to Heavenspan River water. In the blink of an eye, most of his clothing was dissolved. Thankfully, his bag of holding was made from high-quality materials, so it ended up only being damaged a little bit.

It was still painful though. Screaming, he fled from the crocodile's mouth again, heart filled with grief and indignation. He quickly put on a new set of clothing, and yet, even as he did, another water dragon burst forth.

Because of the intense pressure he was under, he was able to draw upon levels of power that had previously been hidden. That was especially true when it came to his Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, which was constantly absorbing the Heavenspan River water as it splashed into him.

Also because of the pressure, his seventh spiritual sea was beginning to crystallize.

The chase didn’t last for very long, only about a day or so. Because of the incredible speed involved, Bai Xiaochun was getting very close to the location where the three sects were preparing for the final battle.

The next morning at dawn, he actually caught sight of the enormous Profound Stream Sect city in the middle of the vast mountain range.

He saw the army of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, which was currently leveling attacks that shook heaven and earth. The fluctuations of magical techniques caused dazzling, multicolored light to shine out in all directions.

The golden crocodile finally stopped chasing him. However, cries of astonishment could be heard as people on the battlefield caught sight of it. The patriarchs were fighting up in the sky, but even they were completely shocked by the sight of the crocodile, and then Bai Xiaochun.

The golden crocodile hovered in midair, looking around coldly. Apparently, it didn’t find anything in the area worth looking at. Casting a meaningful glance at Bai Xiaochun, it turned and vanished.

Bai Xiaochun was so excited to see the crocodile leaving that tears were streaming down his face. The past day had been an incredible torment. The way the crocodile had messed with him left him feeling almost violated....

His hatred toward both the little turtle and the crocodile had sunk deep into the depths of his heart. However, it was in that moment that his eyes flickered with surprise.

“Eee?” Looking down at himself, he was suddenly overjoyed. His Undying Live Forever Technique had made significant progress, and his Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation was becoming more refined. As for his seventh spiritual sea, it was more than half crystallized.

Although he felt a bit better, the price he had paid for these benefits was something he would never want to pay again. Sighing, he looked over at the huge city and the battle playing out around it.

The Profound Stream Sect was fighting back against the invaders with complete madness. They had enormous puppets fighting on their side that looked like mechanical marionettes clad in green armor. Each one required multiple Profound Stream Sect disciples to operate.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s spell formation giants roared as they advanced across the battlefield. Small and large, they unleashed powerful attacks that caused the earth to quake.

As for the Blood Stream Sect, they used their locust-like spell formations to send huge sphere-like groups of cultivators bashing into the Profound Stream Sect’s green-armored puppets. They were like blood-colored mountains that erupted with blood qi and auras of death.

Up above in the air were legacy echelon cultivators from both sides of the conflict, as well as prime elders. Even higher were the patriarchs, whose attacks caused the sky to shake and the world to tremble.

The Profound Stream Sect had a huge spell formation protecting it, as well as countless smaller spell formations to provide auxiliary support. In addition to that, there were countless flickering greatswords floating in the air around the city, arranged into a large sword formation.

Atop each sword sat disciples of their sect. Even two such swords together in formation would be incredibly destructive, but there were far more than that.

Ten of them would be even more awe-inspiring, and when it came to a formation with hundreds, it could cut down Foundation Establishment cultivators and even cause prime elders to tremble.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0298 awe-chapter-299

There were some puppets higher up with golden armor, whose shocking power was comparable to the legacy echelon cultivators or the blood rippers. There weren’t many such puppets, but those few that were engaged in the fighting shone like brilliant stars.

There weren’t just Profound Stream Sect cultivators involved in the fighting. Their forces were bolstered by Pill Stream Sect cultivators who had surrendered. Because of that, the Profound Stream Sect was still strong.

The actual battlefield was so wide it was difficult to see one end from the other. It was large enough to accommodate hundreds of thousands of cultivators. In each and every place where people were fighting, deadly struggles played out.

Clearly, the Profound Stream Sect was at a disadvantage, and were suffering setback after setback. If it weren’t for the grand spell formation protecting the city, they would long since have been defeated.

What was most shocking to Bai Xiaochun wasn’t any of that, though. Visible within the spell formation were numerous wooden-faced Pill Stream Sect cultivators, who were fueling the formations with their own cultivation bases.

Most of the Pill Stream Sect cultivators had essentially been enslaved by the Profound Stream Sect. Originally, the goal had been to assimilate them into the sect, but the suddenness of the invasion forced the Profound Stream Sect to abandon such plans. Now, the cultivators were little more than human-shaped spirit stones used to support the grand spell formation.

All-in-all, it was a shocking scene. This was the first time that Bai Xiaochun had ever seen a truly large-scale war being fought.

There was no wind on the battlefield, only the stench of blood that spread out in all directions, seeped down into the ground, and even seemed to pervade the insides of the cultivators who were fighting.

Rivers of blood flowed on the ground, and corpses could be seen everywhere. Some were mutilated beyond recognition, while others were intact. Either way, the blank eyes which stared out seemed to contain a longing for life that would never be fulfilled.

Bai Xiaochun panted at the sight of the blood and death. Although he was no stranger to killing, to see fighting on such a large scale left him completely conflicted inside.

One half was screaming and urging him to flee this danger as quickly as possible.

The other half caused his heart to start pounding, and his mind to fill with the desire to wade into battle and fight with complete and utter madness.

He took a deep breath as the reality of the situation sank in. He knew that many of his friends were on this battlefield, and after seeing what it was like, there was no way he could flee.

A tremor ran through him as a sensation of utter determination rose up inside his heart. Then, he shot forward at top speed. Few people took note that he’d stepped out into the field of battle. However, Bruiser, who was in the middle of fighting one of the Profound Stream Sect's enormous battle beasts, suddenly shivered and let out a long cry.

It was a cry of joy, and as it rang out, the rest of the Spirit Stream Sect's battle beasts suddenly found their cultivation base and battle prowess slowly rising.

Because of that, both their fighting ability and their healing ability improved. Despite being somewhat surprised by this, the battle beasts were delighted.

At the same time, on the periphery of the battlefield, two Qi Condensation disciples, one from the Spirit Stream Sect and one from the Blood Stream Sect, were in the midst of despair. Over and over again, they were being pushed back across the battlefield by four raving and bloodthirsty Profound Stream Sect disciples.

The two Qi Condensation disciples chuckled bitterly and exchanged a glance. After working together in recent days, they had struck up somewhat of a friendship. But now, death loomed over them, and there didn't seem to be any hope.

“I didn't like you people much at first, but if there's another life after this one, I hope that we can fight together again!”

“Hahaha! It's a deal!” Originally, they had been on two different squads, but the rest of their comrades had already died in battle. Now they stood shoulder to shoulder, laughing as they prepared to fight to the death.

It was in that very moment that a figure appeared, glowing with violet-tinged, blood-colored light. Before the four vicious Profound Stream Sect disciples could do anything, the light flashed by them, and their eyes went wide as their heads flew off of their bodies.

Bai Xiaochun had arrived!

The two cultivators he'd just saved stared at him in shock for a moment before crying out in surprise.

“Exalted Blood Master....”

“Sect Uncle Bai!”

Bai Xiaochun turned and looked at the pair. He had seen from a distance that they had obviously become friends during the deadly fighting.

Such friendships would be very important as the two sects merged. Bai Xiaochun nodded at them, then flickered back into motion, heading to another part of the battlefield. Wherever he went, no one could stand up to him.

His Undying Live Forever Technique had reached the point where his fleshly body power was beyond description. At the same time, his defensive abilities were shocking.

Few people could withstand a blow from him, and every fist strike he launched contained deadly power. That was especially true of his Throat Crushing Grasp, which took down one enemy after another.

His Mountain Shaking Bash made it difficult to even see him on the battlefield. Even when Profound Stream Sect cultivators managed to surround him, he would unleash fury like that of a wild beast. Booms rang out, and bones were crushed. Not a single enemy could keep Bai Xiaochun locked down!

“The Undying Live Forever Technique is obviously a technique designed to be unleashed in battle!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and retracted all of the power of his magical techniques. He had already learned to use them only at the right moment in the fight, which enabled him to maximize their effectiveness.

Using only his fleshly body power, he bashed into a Profound Stream Sect Foundation Establishment cultivator. Even as the blood was still raining down, he spun and sent a fist strike toward someone trying to stab him in the back.

A look of profound shock appeared on the face of that cultivator in the moment before his arm exploded. Screaming, he fell back, and yet Bai Xiaochun’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, sending blood-colored light shooting out of his finger to form a blood sword. Moments later, the enemy was stabbed dead.

Not pausing for even a moment, Bai Xiaochun sped off into the distance. Relying on his speed, agility, and fleshly body power, he was like a fish in water.

Everywhere he went, if there were any Blood Steam Sect cultivators fighting, they would tremble as their cultivation base and battle prowess increased. As a result, their impassioned battle cries grew even louder.

Eventually, he reached an area in the middle of the battlefield where cultivators from Fragrant Cloud Peak were operating an enormous spell formation giant.

Another nearby giant looked particularly familiar; it was the ninth spell formation incarnation from Mount Daoseed. Originally, that spell formation had been meant for Bai Xiaochun to control.

Without him, the giant’s battle prowess had been significantly weakened, even more so than the other giants in the area. As of this moment, it was locked in combat with a black-armored puppet.

There were three types of puppets on the battlefield; green, black, and gold. The green puppets were the ordinary type. Black puppets were more powerful, and less common. The gold ones were the rarest. As for the black puppets, they came in various sizes, and the ones that were 300 meters tall had traces of gold visible in them.

In terms of battle prowess, those gold-fringed black puppets vastly surpassed the other black puppets.

This particular black puppet wielded a greatsword as it strode forward. Because the spell formation giant was relatively unprepared, it made it easy for the black puppet to stab the sword clear through it.

The giant distorted, and the people inside of it coughed up blood. Their eyes flickered with madness, and yet there was nothing they could do except watch the sword viciously slashing at the giant.

Rumbling sounds echoed out; it appeared as if the giant were on the verge of collapsing.

Suddenly, a voice spoke out scornfully from within the black puppet. “The Spirit Stream Sect spell formation incarnations are famous everywhere under heaven, especially the ninth formation from Mount Daoseed. How disappointing to see it in action today.”

The puppet twisted its sword, and the spell formation giant teetered closer toward collapse. Everyone inside of it was laughing bitterly. Without Bai Xiaochun, they were like a dragon with no head. Many of the incarnation's abilities were rendered useless, and at the moment, it seemed they would simply have to let the formation collapse and then fight to the death.

However, in that moment, a cold snort echoed out.

"Break formation!" A sealing mark shot out and landed onto the spell formation incarnation. The people inside trembled, and then their eyes flashed with joy as they looked at the person flying toward them.

It was Bai Xiaochun. The group inside the spell formation began to laugh loudly, simultaneously performing double-handed incantation gestures. As Bai Xiaochun's sealing mark fused into the giant, the incarnation suddenly began to dissolve.

Rumbling could be heard as it grew dim and faded away, and the people inside immediately scattered and then shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

"Re-form!" Bai Xiaochun roared, his hands flashing in an incantation gesture.

In the blink of an eye, they formed back up in midair, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun's hands blurred with incantation gestures, unleashing the power of the original formation!

Rumbling echoed out as a new spell formation giant took form. It was much taller than any of the other giants, and was completely corporeal. It looked exactly like a primeval giant, although its facial features closely resembled Bai Xiaochun's.

Its eyes opened, and Bai Xiaochun looked out, his gaze as piercing as a razor-sharp sword.

“You really wanna see how powerful the ninth Mount Daoseed formation is? I’ll give you a good look!” Bai Xiaochun’s energy spiked, and he took a step forward, causing all the lands to shake.

The black puppet looked at him in shock, but then its eyes gleamed with the desire to do battle.

“Bai Xiaochun?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0299 awe-chapter-300

The ninth formation from Mount Daoseed had been specially put together by the sect leader just for Bai Xiaochun. Because he was a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator, he was the only one who could unleash the true battle prowess of the formation. That was also why, moments ago, the formation had seemed so weak.

When fully powered up, it could unleash might similar to the Gold Core stage!

Before Bai Xiaochun had appeared on the scene, the ninth formation had only been able to approach somewhat close to the Gold Core stage. But now, the enormous giant’s energy was soaring, and it was completely different from before.

In the very instant that the black puppet uttered Bai Xiaochun’s name, the spell formation giant took a step forward, causing everything to shake as a domineering aura shot out in all directions.

Unexpectedly, the giant incarnation was using the Mountain Shaking Bash!

A string of sonic booms echoed out as the giant blurred into motion. An instant later, it was right in front of the black puppet. No matter how much the puppet had been prepared for an incoming attack, it simply couldn’t dodge.

A massive boom echoed out in all directions.

The bashing power Bai Xiaochun unleashed on the black puppet was enough to shatter the heavens. Trembling, the puppet flew backward through the air amidst loud cracking sounds. Although the expression on the face of the puppet never changed, the faces of the Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside of it completely fell as their cultivation bases were thrown into chaos. Their qi and blood instantly destabilized, and blood sprayed out of their mouths.

“Can't stand up to a single blow!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice as cold as ice. He took another step forward, yet again utilizing incredible speed to appear right above the black puppet, where he stamped his foot down viciously.

The resulting boom seemed capable of shattering the air. The black puppet couldn’t fight back in the least, and was sent plummeting down toward the ground.

Before it could land, Bai Xiaochun flickered into motion and appeared next to it, grabbing it by the arm and swinging it around violently.

The puppet was thrown back upward, only to meet Bai Xiaochun again, who unleashed one punch into it after another, after another!

The black puppet attempted to dodge and evade, but was completely incapable. Battered by one terrifying fist strike after another, its external shields were distorted to the point of shattering.

“Despicable!” howled the black puppet. “How dare you attack in such a devious fashion!!” The Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside the puppet could never have imagined that the giant would be so powerful after being reformed by Bai Xiaochun. After failing to seize the initiative, they were completely suppressed, left totally incapable of defending themselves.

As the shield twisted on the verge of breaking, the black puppet howled again. Black light surged from its surface, a destructive power that sped toward Bai Xiaochun even as the shield shattered.

When the black light appeared, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he backed up. However, simultaneously, he spun his left foot around in an arc to smash into the black puppet’s waist. Cracking sounds rang out, and rifts snaked out across the surface of the puppet as it hurtled down toward the ground.

The destructive black light sailed right past Bai Xiaochun, who now hovered there looking down coldly at the black puppet. Snorting, he said, “That's all you've got? You don’t even qualify to experience the full power of Mount Daoseed’s ninth spell formation.”

The defiant roars of the Profound Stream Sect echoed out from inside the black puppet. In the moment before it was about to slam into the ground, it twisted, slamming its right hand down to change its momentum. After barely forcing itself under control, the puppet immediately performed an incantation gesture with its left hand, converging all of the power of everyone in the puppet to summon a shadowy clone with a long sword. Without even the slightest hesitation, the clone slashed its sword at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared, causing golden light to spread out from his body. In turn, that light caused the giant incarnation to also begin to shine like gold!

Shockingly, it was the power of the Undying Gold Skin. The image of a heavenly demon appeared in the same position as the giant incarnation, almost as if the two were one.

Everyone in the area suddenly felt as if they weren’t looking at the spell formation giant, but instead, a heavenly demon howling up into the heavens!

Bai Xiaochun’s heavenly demon incarnation clenched its fist and punched out toward the incoming shadowy clone.

Cyclonic ripples spread out as the fist slammed into its target. The clone instantly exploded like a shattered mirror.

“The Profound Stream Sect’s magical puppets are famous everywhere under heaven,” Bai Xiaochun said calmly. “Especially the gold-tinged black versions. How disappointing to see it in action today.” His words were almost exactly the same as the words uttered earlier by the cultivator in the black puppet.

The arrogant cultivator who had spoken those words let out an angry roar and sent the puppet flying toward Bai Xiaochun, its hands flashing in an incantation gesture as it unleashed a magical technique.

However, before the magical technique could even fully form, an enormous 3,000-meter-tall violet cauldron appeared over the head of the black puppet and smashed down onto it, interrupting it.

“Game over!” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes flickering. At the same time, the heavenly demon strode forward and reached out toward the puppet.

The puppet’s eyes flashed, and it opened its mouth, spitting out a stream of seven-colored toxic gas. Simultaneously, the puppet’s body decayed significantly. As for the toxic gas, even the air was destroyed as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Time to die!!” the puppet said, laughing with anticipation. The group of Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside of the puppet had been waiting for just this opportunity to spit out the toxic gas. At the same time, the puppet’s hands flashed in an incantation gesture, causing countless greatswords to materialize up above. More than 50 of them could be seen, and buzzing sounds emanated out as they gathered into a sword formation. Then, dazzling, lightning-like beams of light shot from it toward Bai Xiaochun.

The sword formation and the toxic gas together were a deadly combination!

“Child's play!” Bai Xiaochun said coolly. His Heavenspan Dharma Eye snapped open, causing exactly the same thing to happen with the Heavenly Demon Body! A third eye appeared on the forehead of the 300-meter-tall heavenly demon!

Instantly, the heavens began to tremble as the eye focused, not on the toxic gas, but on the enormous sword formation.

The more than fifty greatswords suddenly ground to a halt in midair!

Although the pause only lasted for a moment, that was all the time Bai Xiaochun needed. Without the slightest hesitation, he pierced through the toxic gas to appear right in front of the black puppet.

“Impossible!!” Numerous cries of shock and disbelief echoed out from within the puppet. The toxic gas was one of the puppet’s trump cards, something that could shake even a powerful Gold Core cultivator. The Profound Stream Sect cultivators had been completely and utterly confident that it would destroy the giant incarnation!

However, what they were truly dealing with was not so much a spell formation giant, but rather, Bai Xiaochun’s heavenly demon! To it, a toxic gas like this counted for almost nothing!

In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, Bai Xiaochun grabbed the black puppet’s shoulder and ripped its arm completely off of its body. Four shocked Profound Stream Sect cultivators flew out from the shattered stump, and before they could even begin to flee, they were set upon by the nearby cultivators of the Blood and Spirit Stream Sects.

Even as their agonized shrieks rang out, Bai Xiaochun’s right thumb and forefinger snapped together as he unleashed the Throat Crushing Grasp onto the black puppet's throat.

A vicious cracking sound could be heard as the puppet’s entire neck shattered, and its head flew up into the air. More Profound Stream Sect cultivators were ejected out. Despite losing an arm and a head, the black puppet wasn’t completely destroyed, and the cultivators inside of it instantly sent it backward in retreat, their hearts pounding in fear because of Bai Xiaochun.

But how could Bai Xiaochun let the puppet escape? He took a deep breath, causing a vortex to spring up around him. A gale-force wind appeared, and his eyes flickered as his Heavenly Demon Body once again unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash!

BOOM!

It moved so quickly it was hard to track with the naked eye. Only a blur of afterimages could be seen as it blasted completely through the black puppet....

The puppet literally exploded into pieces, critically injuring the dozens of Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside of it, and sending some to their deaths instantly. Those who survived were still coughing up blood as the cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect closed in on them for the kill.

Bai Xiaochun hovered in midair, breathing heavily. Although he had put on a powerful show, he was actually trembling. And yet, despite how he didn’t truly wish to fight in such a way, in critical moments like this, he had no other choice.

Sighing, he was just about to proceed to another location when suddenly, a tremor ran through him as his gaze fell upon a location a few thousand meters away.

Standing right there was Xuemei, complete with her mask!

She seemed to be in bad condition, weak, with blood dripping out from underneath her mask as she fell back over and over again across the battlefield....

Surrounding her were four late Foundation Establishment cultivators from the Profound Stream Sect, all of whom surged with killing intent!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0300 awe-chapter-301

“I don’t care how this war ends, Du Xuemei. You’re gonna die!”

“Du Xuemei is at the peak of Earthstring Foundation Establishment. Killing her would be like ridding the earth of the next Master Limitless!!”

“Du Xuemei, I’ve been thinking about this day from the moment you killed my Junior Brother!” Of the four Foundation Establishment cultivators, some wanted to kill her for revenge, and some wanted to earn merit in battle.

Normally speaking, they would have been worried about Patriarch Limitless showing up. But with the sects all at war, all bets were off, and they had their chance!

As such, they attacked with full force, resorting to any means, fair or foul.

More blood oozed down Xuemei’s chin, and it was laced with blackness; clearly, she had been poisoned. More than half of the Pill Stream Sect had been absorbed by the Profound Stream Sect, and they used poison as a powerful weapon!

Xuemei chuckled bitterly, and her expression flickered with despair. Looking up, she saw her father in the middle of fighting one of the Profound Stream Sect patriarchs; clearly, he didn’t have time to try to help her. The blood rippers and prime elders were all engaged in life-or-death struggles, and besides, the battlefield was so large that it would be impossible for them spare her any attention. Even if they did notice her situation, they were so tangled up with

Profound Stream Sect cultivators that they would never be able to come save her.

Besides, she didn't want to distract her father. Unfortunately, she had virtually no life-saving precious treasures left after the months of battle. To her bitterness, she could only stagger backward, blood oozing out of her mouth, her vision fading.

“Am I really going to die here...?” she thought. Gritting her teeth, she performed an incantation gesture to unleash a magical technique. As she did, the faint scar on the back of her hand was clearly visible....

Intense, murderous gleams could be seen in the eyes of the four Profound Stream Sect cultivators. As they closed in, chaotic fighting broke out, and Xuemei was sent staggering backward over and over again. Clearly, she was weakening, and more wounds could be seen on her body.

The shadow of death loomed.

It was in that exact same moment that Bai Xiaochun looked over from his position 3,000 meters away....

The instant he saw her, his mind trembled. Clearly, she was in mortal danger, and there was absolutely no time for him to ponder the situation. The only thing he could think of was...

He had to save Xuemei!!

However, the four Foundation Establishment cultivators were of secondary importance in the situation: the 3,000-meter-distance between himself and Xuemei was filled with numerous Profound Stream Sect puppets, making it impossible for him to draw upon the full potential of his speed!

His only option was to smash his way through!

Eyes turning bloodshot, he yelled out at the top of his voice:

“Middle Peak cultivators, to me!” With that, the heavenly demon leaped up into the air, letting out a roar that echoed like thunder from heaven.

Powerful blood qi erupted out of Bai Xiaochun, forming a pillar of blood-colored light that shot high up into the sky. Everything began to tremble, and even the patriarchs looked over in shock.

The first people to feel the effects of the sudden eruption of blood qi were the cultivators from Middle Peak. That was because, in addition to being the Blood Lord, Bai Xiaochun was also their blood master!

All of the Middle Peak cultivators on the battlefield trembled as their blood qi seemed to resonate with Bai Xiaochun’s shout. Almost immediately, they were filled with the impulse to get as close to him as they could!

The impulse was impossible to suppress; if they tried, it would destabilize their cultivation base. Furthermore, by not suppressing it, they found to their delight that their cultivation base power was rapidly increasing!

It only took the blink of an eye for all of the Middle Peak cultivators to be flashing through the sky toward Bai Xiaochun.

As they gathered around him, their blood qi spread out to swirl around the heavenly demon, gradually forming into the shape of an enormous blood sword!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he burst into motion, joined by the increasing numbers of Middle Peak cultivators as he charged toward Xuemei.

From a distance, the hordes of Middle Peak cultivators and the sword-wielding heavenly demon looked like a sea of blood!

Further off on the battlefield, Bruiser let out a piercing cry as he led a huge group of battle beasts along, causing the earth to quake and the sky to distort.

There were also cultivators from the Spirit Stream Sect who, when they saw what was happening, felt their blood beginning to boil. In a very short period of time, there were already thousands of cultivators surrounding Bai Xiaochun, slashing across the battlefield like a sharp blade!

Considering the battlefield as a whole, this was a shocking development that left even the patriarchs gasping.

The Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect were only in the initial stages of joining forces. Although many of the disciples had already become friends, overall, the two sects were still clearly divided, and mostly fought their own fights.

The truth was that only about fifty percent of the full fighting potential of the two sects was being unleashed on the battlefield.

That was also one of the reasons why the Profound Stream Sect had been able to struggle along up to this point. The Spirit and Blood Stream Sects were aware of this situation, but there was nothing they could do to change it at the moment. After all, they had only been allies for a short period of time.

However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, he let out a long cry and sent blood qi raging up into the sky, and it completely changed the situation!!

Wherever he went, the Blood Stream Sect’s battle prowess increased, and the Spirit Stream Sect’s battle beasts gathered around him and fought proudly with all the power they could muster.

Furthermore, the increase to the Blood Stream Sect cultivators’ battle prowess was not limited to any particular cultivation base. Everyone from the Outer Sect to the patriarchs benefited!

Almost instantly, the battle prowess of the Blood Stream Sect as a whole increased by about thirty percent. The Blood Stream Sect gasped in shock, and as for the Spirit Stream Sect, although they received no such boost, when they saw the elation of the Blood Stream Sect cultivators, they fought even harder than they had before. When the two sides joined forces, they could unleash incredible crushing power!

Bai Xiaochun was the center of it all, and cultivators were grouping around him rapidly, increasing the force from thousands to over ten thousand!

Most were from the Blood Stream Sect, and the closer they got to Bai Xiaochun, the better and more powerful their techniques worked!

On the battlefield, there were many things that could be relied upon to stay alive, but one’s own strength was one of the most important!

Bai Xiaochun was like the glue between the blood qi and the Blood Stream Sect, and was also the force which bound the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect together. That was now more apparent than ever before.

The patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect, the Blood Stream Sect, and even the embattled Profound Stream Sect were all shaken. Even the patriarchs who were still holed up inside the city were astonished.

“So, he’s Bai Xiaochun?!”

“He’s the one responsible for this war?!?!”

“Patriarch Thousand-Faces said that if Bai Xiaochun died, the alliance between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect would collapse!!”

As all eyes were turning to look at Bai Xiaochun as he led the surrounding 10,000 cultivators in a charge across the battlefield. All Profound Stream Sect disciples who saw what was happening were left completely shaken, and without even thinking about it, began to back up. Within the space of a few breaths of time, the 3,000-meter distance leading up to Xuemei was being closed!

As more people arrived to join the charge, more blood qi fueled the enormous blood sword, which was almost completely formed!

Xuemei heard the rumbling sounds, and could sense her cultivation base recovering. She even felt her battle prowess rising, enabling her to fight back against the Profound Stream Sect’s Foundation Establishment cultivators. As for her four opponents, they were stunned. Although they weren’t sure of the relationship between Xuemei and Bai Xiaochun, they exchanged glances, and then gritted their teeth and called upon their ultimate trump cards. As of this point, they had to kill Xuemei as quickly as possible so that they could flee from Bai Xiaochun.

One of the cultivators performed an incantation gesture to summon a black dragon. Another of them suddenly blurred as he produced a clone. The other two pulled out powerful magical treasures, one of them a long rope, the other, a black candle!

“Du Xuemei, prepare to die!!”

The black dragon roared as it shot toward her, followed by the clone, which wielded a long, sharp sword. The rope twirled through the air, emitting a powerful aura, followed by the candle, the smoke of which seemed as sharp as blades.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as more blood spilled from Xuemei’s mouth. The black dragon slammed into her, shoving her backward. As the clone closed in, she performed an incantation gesture, waving her right finger to summon a plum blossom symbol. The symbol destroyed the clone, and yet, she was sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut.

Then came the rope and the candle, two deadly forces that quickly reached a position nine meters away from her!

Xuemei chuckled bitterly as her vision began to fade. Time even seemed to slow down. As her thoughts began to descend into past memories, she suddenly heard an anxious, enraged roar.

That roar came from none other than Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenly Demon Body. Seeing Xuemei in such a deadly situation, he sent the heavenly demon’s hand shooting out with the gigantic blood-colored greatsword. Then, the sword slashed out toward the four Foundation Establishment cultivators!!

“Die!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0301 awe-chapter-302

The 300-meter-long sword seemed capable of slashing open the heavens. It was a dazzling arc of light that sliced through everything in its path, causing an intense screaming sound to fly across the battlefield.

It almost sounded like the howling of armies of ghosts, a sound which struck down to the very soul. The four Profound Stream Sect cultivators who had just been about to kill Xuemei were completely shaken. They almost felt as if a huge hand had reached into their minds and crushed their brains into paste.

They felt pain that ordinary people would never be able to withstand. It was only because of their powerful cultivation bases that they survived, and yet, blood oozed out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths. Looks of terror appeared in their eyes as they fell back at top speed.

Without any consideration for what would happen as a result, they drew upon every drop of power their cultivation bases could provide, even drawing upon their life force!

The greatsword which bore down on them filled them with a threatening sensation of deadly crisis that bordered on complete catastrophe!

Time seemed to slow as the blood-colored greatsword descended. The first Profound Stream Sect cultivator it hit screamed, throwing all of the power of his cultivation base into his defense, along with a host of defensive treasures. However, the sword destroyed his treasures with ease, shattering them without pause. A moment later, the man’s head was sailing through the air.

As for the rest of his body, the sword was so large that, instead of cutting him in half, it completely destroyed him, transforming him into nothing more than a mist of blood!

His body, his soul, even his bag of holding and everything in it, were all completely destroyed!

The second and third cultivators let out more bloodcurdling screams as they too were reduced to nothing more than clouds of blood.

The last of the Foundation Establishment cultivators had the most powerful cultivation base, and was higher ranked than the others. Currently, his eyes were completely bloodshot, and he was trembling with madness. As the greatsword closed in on him, he produced a jade slip, which glowed with flickering light as the power of teleportation appeared.

All of this is lengthy in word, but happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s blood-colored greatsword slashed down toward the man.

The sight of the sword slicing through the air was so dazzling that even the blood rippers, legacy echelon cultivators, prime elders, and patriarchs of the three sects were all taken aback.

They had just seen three Foundation Establishment cultivators from the Profound Stream Sect killed in body and soul, and now the last one was trying to teleport away from the very same blade which had killed his fellows.

The man vanished, and the greatsword slammed into the ground beneath the spot he had just occupied. Everything shook, and cracking sounds could be heard as rifts snaked out for 300 meters in every direction.

The final cultivator had vanished without a trace....

Bai Xiaochun heaved a sigh of relief. Ignoring the man who had escaped, he turned to look at Xuemei. Blood dripped down from behind her mask as she looked back at him, mixed emotions in her eyes. A moment later, she collapsed into unconsciousness.

Immediately, Blood Stream Sect disciples rushed over to catch her, then led her off.

Bai Xiaochun could see that she had been seriously injured, but not mortally so. Considering how important she was in the sect, she would definitely get the best spirit medicine the Blood Stream Sect had to offer.

He had a million things he wanted to say to her, but he knew that they would have to wait until the war was over. However, he was still excited by one fact. “This time, you’re not going to get to just go into secluded meditation to hide from me!”

Relishing the thought, he turned and looked in the direction of the huge city.

In the moment that he did so, the cultivator who had just teleported away suddenly materialized on the city wall. Fear lingered in his eyes, and he was out of breath, but his expression was vicious.

“Bai Xiaochun, I’ll never forget this!” he roared. “You can't kill me that easily!! One day when you’re not expecting it, I’ll be there to kill you!!” Only by shouting something like that could he suppress the terror he felt because of the sword he had just faced, and Bai Xiaochun.

Taking a deep breath, he was just about to head down into the city when he realized that the other cultivators in the area were all looking at him with strange, shocked expressions.

“What are you....” To the man’s surprise, he suddenly felt a piercing pain in his forehead. He reached up and touched his face, and his hand came a way wet with blood. A look of terror appeared in his eyes as a tremor ran through him. Before he could even finish speaking, his forehead began to split apart. Within the blink of an eye, his entire body collapsed onto the ground, cut in half!

He had been just a bit too slow to teleport away, and the greatsword really had slashed through him in the moment before he fled....

Blood splashed about in all directions, causing the surrounding Profound Stream Sect cultivators to shake madly with fear.

As for the 10,000 cultivators surrounding Bai Xiaochun, after a moment of silence, they erupted into wild cheering.

“Junior Patriarch!!”

“Blood Lord!!”

Their cries echoed out loud and clear. Even the cultivators off in the distance could hear them, and then they began to join in. Soon, all members of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect on the battlefield were shouting at the tops of their lungs.

The bedraggled Profound Stream Sect had already been suffering setbacks. Then Bai Xiaochun showed up and killed four of their most powerful cultivators in quick succession. Almost immediately, large portions of the battlefield were affected....

It was a key opportunity, and the patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect immediately waved their sleeves and issued orders.

“Bring the final battle to the Profound Stream Sect!!”

“Everyone, on the offensive!!”

In response, the prime elders, blood rippers, and legacy echelon cultivators took the lead, transforming into bright beams of light that shot forth into the fighting. Tens of thousands of cultivators down below advanced. It was like a sea of blood filled with the giants of the Spirit Stream Sect, surging forward, an unstoppable force that crushed anything in its path as easily as a boulder crushing a drinking glass!

The ground quaked, and intense, fierce fighting instantly broke out everywhere. The Profound Stream Sect army trembled and fought back madly. Higher up in the air, the Profound Stream Sect patriarchs instantly realized that the reason all of this was happening was Bai Xiaochun!

“If Bai Xiaochun dies, we can turn things around!!”

“We have to kill Bai Xiaochun!!” Unfortunately for the Profound Stream Sect patriarchs, they couldn’t do anything against the combined Spirit and Blood Stream Sects. Their Core Formation cultivators were being locked down, and could not get anywhere close to Bai Xiaochun.

“Pay any price to take down Bai Xiaochun. Even sacrifice Foundation Establishment disciples if we have to!” As the orders went out from the patriarchs, the Profound Stream Sect cultivators on the battlefield had different reactions. Some hesitated, some shrank back. However, a good portion of the Foundation Establishment cultivators immediately charged toward Bai Xiaochun’s location.

There were also several black puppets which roared and began to stride toward him. Meanwhile, there were sword formations up above that the Core Formation cultivators of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects had mostly disregarded because of how easy they were to destroy. Now, those sword formations began to rotate and speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Scalp tingling, Bai Xiaochun sprang into motion, barely dodging dozens of greatswords.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He had known that the battlefield was a dangerous place, but now he was even more convinced of that fact. Although he had avoided the first volley of greatswords, more sword formations were flickering up above, and vast numbers of Profound Stream Sect cultivators were charging toward him. Eyes turning bright red, he threw his head back and roared, “Die!!”

He felt like he was back being chased by the Luochen Clan, or even in the Fallen Sword Abyss. A murderous aura spun around him as he launched himself toward one of the nearest black puppets. After slamming into it, he called up Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning, and then the Throat Crushing Grasp, which shot like lightning toward the puppet’s throat.

A cracking sound could be heard as a tremor ran through the puppet. Its head was destroyed, and it staggered backward. However, Bai Xiaochun lunged forward, calling upon his fleshly body strength to grab it and hoist it over his head like a shield.

In that instant, dozens of greatswords screamed down from above, stabbing into the black puppet in numerous locations. The black puppet exploded, and the Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside of it were all killed instantly.

Panting, Bai Xiaochun burst into motion again, heading toward the city, followed by tens of thousands of cultivators.

Enraged, he cried, “Follow me. Let’s take this city down!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0302 awe-chapter-303

For the Profound Stream Sect to attack with their spell formations twice in a row was quite an insult to the prime elders, blood rippers, and legacy echelon cultivators of the Blood Stream Sect and Spirit Stream Sect!

That was especially true for the Blood Stream Sect. Bai Xiaochun's importance to them had become even more evident as the war went on. The entire sect had experienced an increase in battle prowess and cultivation base. If Bai Xiaochun died, the Blood Stream Sect would be returned to their original state, which was something they couldn't possibly agree to. Therefore, the prime elders and blood rippers all began resorting to their trump cards to try to take out the sword formations belonging to the other powerful Profound Stream Sect cultivators.

The Core Formation cultivators from the Spirit Stream Sect were doing the same thing, including Li Qinghou, who was already feeling very anxious due to the two deadly situations Bai Xiaochun had just faced. The killing intent in his eyes flickered, and magical images of plants and vegetation appeared around him as he attacked one of the spell formations.

Because of the intense efforts of the Core Formation cultivators from the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, their contemporaries from the Profound Stream Sect were incapable of using their sword formations to try to pin Bai Xiaochun down, and were slowly being pushed back across the battlefield.

Bai Xiaochun was under less pressure, but he hadn’t forgotten the danger he had just been in, and it caused his anger to burn. He knew that in war, there was no right or wrong, just life or death. But that knowledge didn’t help him shake his fear of dying.

“You people tried to kill me first.... Bunch of bullies. Even your patriarchs attacked me? And your grand spell formation?!” Roaring, he advanced across the battlefield, surrounded by tens of thousands of other cultivators. They crushed anything in their path, making it impossible for the Profound Stream Sect to stand against them. Slowly but surely, the Profound Stream Sect was being pushed back toward the mountains.

Other front-line areas of the battle weren't experiencing such dramatic turns of events, but the Profound Stream Sect was still being pushed back everywhere, and there didn’t seem to be any hope for them to reverse the situation.

Many of the Profound Stream Sect cultivators were even starting to hesitate about whether to keep fighting. As could be imagined, the only reason they hadn’t surrendered already was that their sect headquarters still stood. Were that not the case, the resolve of most such cultivators would have long since crumbled.

In a situation like that, they would have been faced with two options: surrender, or be wiped out!

The fact that people were hesitating to fight back was extremely telling. In fact, many of them were hoping that the war would simply end as soon as possible, and that the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects would just take the sect headquarters....

There were even some who, in the face of such certain defeat, chose to intentionally die in the fighting!

As booms shook the battlefield, Bai Xiaochun looked up into the mountains at the enormous city to which the Profound Stream Sect cultivators were retreating. Just when he was about to start fighting his way toward the city itself, rumbling sounds echoed out from within the city’s glowing shield of light. Moments later, a large number of Profound Stream Sect cultivators charged out.

These were backup forces that the Profound Stream Sect had prepared. The war was reaching a deadly, critical level, so there was no reason to keep such cultivators out of the fighting any longer. There were only a few tens of thousands of them, and yet they blotted out the sky as they flew toward Bai Xiaochun. Interspersed among the cultivators was a sizeable force of black puppets.

When the new force slammed into the battle lines, the boom of magical techniques could be heard, and the glow of magical items rose into the air.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bloodshot as he called upon the power of his Heavenly Demon Body to fight back against two black puppets. He used the Mountain Shaking Bash and the Throat Crushing Grasp, along with enormous violet cauldrons and deadly blood swords. He then grabbed one of the black puppet and smashed it headlong into the opposing forces.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The black puppet trembled, and the Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside of it screamed miserably. Cracking sounds rang out loud and clear.

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored the other puppet as it peppered him with attacks. After seven or eight breaths’ worth of time passed, the black puppet he held collapsed into pieces, and he spun in place to face the other puppet. As for the heavenly demon, its eyes shone with bloodthirsty light.

The puppet behind him shivered as the heavenly demon’s gaze locked onto it. Then it began to fall back. Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly as he gave chase, opening his Heavenspan Dharma Eye and sending control power shooting out. However, instead of trying to control the entire black puppet, he focused on one of its legs!

The leg suddenly jerked to a stop, and although the effect only lasted for a moment, that was all the time Bai Xiaochun needed. Flashing through the air, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash to shoot like lightning toward the puppet.

When he bashed into it, countless agonized shrieks rang out from inside, and nearly half of the thing was destroyed. Bai Xiaochun also suffered some superficial wounds, but his right hand shot up nonetheless, to viciously grasp the puppet’s neck.

It was in that exact moment that a cold laugh reached Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

“Remember me, Bai Xiaochun? I'm Lin Mu!”

As the words echoed out, a violet puppet flew out from the city. It was clearly different from the black puppets; countless faces were inlaid into the surface of the puppet, vivid and lifelike. Although their eyes were closed, their expressions were those of pain and suffering.

The puppet wasn’t very large, only about 150 meters tall. It was being operated by nine people, and the person who had just spoken was a young man with black hair!

He was handsome, but a bizarre birthmark on his face left it looking like a yin-yang symbol. At the moment, he was staring at Bai Xiaochun with an icy look!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered as he looked at the young man. He recognized him almost immediately; it was the same young man who had appeared in a vortex after Fang Lin from the Pill Stream Sect had been killed, back in the Fallen Sword Abyss! [1. The scene in the Fallen Sword World where Bai Xiaochun first saw Lin Mu was in chapter 160]

Back then, Bai Xiaochun had wondered who he was. It was only after going to the Blood Stream Sect that news about the fighting between the Profound Stream Sect and Pill Stream Sect spread, and that person rose to prominence.

He was none other than the consummate Chosen of the Pill Stream Sect, Lin Mu. He had betrayed the Pill Stream Sect and joined the Profound Stream Sect, becoming an apprentice to one of the patriarchs there. As such, he had a complicated status in the sect. Some people even said that he had always been a disciple of the Profound Stream Sect, and that he'd been sent to the Pill Stream Sect as a spy.

Whether or not that was true didn't matter. What mattered was that at the moment, he fought for the Profound Stream Sect!

Even as Lin Mu’s eyes locked with Bai Xiaochun’s, the violet puppet shot through the air at top speed.

As it closed in on Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittered, and his right hand snapped out in a grasping motion toward the black puppet’s neck. He poured cultivation base power into the puppet, exterminating everyone who was inside of it, and then ripped its head off and hurled it toward the incoming violet puppet.

The black puppet’s head whistled through the air toward Lin Mu’s violet puppet. As it neared, a brilliant light shone off of the violet puppet, instantly turning the flying head into nothing more than ash.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked. Lin Mu actually seemed to be a bit more powerful than Nine-Isles. However, there was no time to think about the matter at the moment. Without any hesitation, he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

Instantly, he could see nine shields surrounding the puppet, each one a different color!

Red. Orange. Yellow. Green. Cyan. Blue. Violet. Black. White!

The shields were already beginning to fall apart, and yet, they insured that his Heavenspan Dharma Eye couldn't affect the violet puppet at all. In fact, the collapse of the shield sent pain stabbing back into Bai Xiaochun’s third eye.

“I was waiting for you to do that!” Lin Mu said from within the shield. As the puppet closed in, it performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a bright crimson light to appear between its hands that resembled a sun. Scorching heat rippled out as the puppet lifted the sun above its hand and then threw it toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Yang-Sun Art!” Lin Mu howled. The sun grew larger as it flew through the air, until it was fully 300 meters in diameter, and radiated matchless power.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened. Lin Mu seemed very, very strong, and Bai Xiaochun could already tell that if he made the slightest mistake, he would end up dead!

It felt as if he were truly fighting an equal, something he hadn't experienced fighting anybody since he reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, not even any of the other Chosen!

As he faced this powerful adversary, his left hand flashed in an incantation gesture, and his right hand slapped his bag of holding, causing a large number of medicinal plants to fly out. As the plants swirled through the air, his incantation gesture sped up, and his eyes shone with a strange light.

“Magic Plant... Arsenal!” In coordination with his words, the plants began to grow larger, and transform into various types of weapons. Soon, they had created something like a net, hundreds of meters wide, which shot toward the incoming crimson sun.

“Destroy that thing!” Bai Xiaochun howled. Instantly, the enormous weapon-filled net made of plants and vegetation wrapped around the sun, simultaneously emanating incredible destructive power!

Lin Mu’s expression flickered. Snorting coldly, he performed another incantation gesture.

“Yin-Moon Tribulation!”

Behind him on the left, a moon appeared, which rapidly grew until it was several hundred meters tall, and radiated such intense coldness that it made it seem as if winter were coming! Then, the moon shot toward Bai Xiaochun!

The intense fight between Bai Xiaochun and Lin Mu was already causing widespread shock, especially among Chosen such as Song Que and Ghostfang.

Never could they have imagined that someone in their own generation could actually stand toe to toe with Bai Xiaochun!

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes were especially bloodshot, and his heart surged with defiance!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0303 awe-chapter-304

As Lin Mu sent the violet puppet’s left hand waving through the air, the moon shot out like tribulation, radiating frigid coldness. Snowflakes even began to flutter in the air as it sped toward Bai Xiaochun.

The violet puppet had unleashed a sun with its right hand and a moon with its left. Now it hovered there in the air like a god, radiating intense energy. Although the sun had been bound up by Bai Xiaochun’s Magic Plant Arsenal, the moon bearing down on the other side radiated a killing aura that caused everyone who felt it to tremble.

“Time to die, Bai Xiaochun!!” Lin Mu shouted hoarsely.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened at the extraordinary display of power. Although he could sense the danger he was in, it also drove him to a state of maddened rage.

“You’ll be the one to die!” he roared. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, causing the Undying Live Forever Technique to erupt with power. Blood qi surged out of him, and in the blink of an eye, it became a huge blood-colored greatsword, which he grasped and then swung toward the incoming moon.

By calling upon the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation, he was able to summon a drop of Heavenspan River water from within his spiritual seas, which he fused into some blood qi, causing a fist-sized blood sphere to shoot out and join the blood sword.

The blood sphere caused the cultivators who saw it to feel completely shaken. Sensations of profound danger even rose up in their hearts.

“Is that…?”

“The aura of Heavenspan River water?!”

Even as astonished cries rang out, Bai Xiaochun’s blood-colored greatsword caused rumbling sounds to echo out as it slammed into Lin Mu’s moon.

Everything began to shake violently, and a huge wind blasted out in all directions. At the same time, the blood sphere continued on toward Lin Mu.

The dazzling light shining from the sphere could be seen by people far away on the battlefield. Even the prime elders and legacy echelon cultivators were watching with wide eyes!

Even though they were currently in the Core Formation stage, back when they had been in Foundation Establishment, they couldn’t have competed with Bai Xiaochun or Lin Mu. The fight going on was completely and utterly shocking. Although Bai Xiaochun and Lin Mu were relying on a spell formation and a puppet respectively, what they were doing proved that they were far beyond ordinary. They were clearly at the ultimate peak of Foundation Establishment.

A huge shockwave spread out. Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenly Demon Body twisted and distorted, and he fell back by several paces. Lin Mu’s violet puppet emitted cracking sounds, and fissures could be seen on its surface as it, too, fell back.

Both of them were breathing heavily. As for Lin Mu, he also felt as if he were facing a powerful adversary. Eyes shining brightly, he threw his head back and laughed maniacally.

“So, it turns out you’re even stronger than Nine-Isles. What a pity, though, Bai Xiaochun. You’re going to die here anyway!” The violet puppet leaped high into the air, raising its arms high as if to touch the heavens.

Then, a strange light appeared in its eyes as its right and left hands touched right in front of its forehead. At the same time, the puppet’s voice thundered, “Sun and moon shine together!”

Almost immediately, both the sun and the moon reappeared within the violet puppet’s hands. They superimposed, and it was like fire and water mixing. An intense tearing force shone out, becoming bright beams of light that caused everything to rumble and shake!

In the blink of an eye, everything within 300 meters was enveloped with light. First, it was freezing, then burning hot, and then those forces combined, creating a bizarre power capable of melting anything and everything!

All cultivators within that area, even the cultivators from the Profound Stream Sect, began to scream in bloodcurdling fashion as they were wiped out of existence.

Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenly Demon Body was already showing signs of instability. Within the bright, shining light, it was like a snowball facing a raging fire, and instantly began to melt. Based on Bai Xiaochun’s calculations, it would only take a few breaths of time for both the Heavenly Demon Body and the spell formation giant to be transformed into ash.

In that critical moment, Bai Xiaochun's eyes became completely bloodshot. The fact that dozens of fellow disciples had just been killed made him feel like his heart was being torn apart. Without any hesitation, he slapped his bag of holding, producing more than a hundred glowing spheres!

Those glowing spheres had been created by drawing upon the cyclical powers of gravity and repulsion, and then infused with vast amounts of toxic gas!

Bai Xiaochun immediately flung the spheres as hard as he could in the direction of the violet puppet.

They became beams of light that shot toward Lin Mu at incredible speed, completely impervious to the effects of the bright light shining down in the area. None of them even showed a single sign of melting as they shot toward the puppet.

Then booms began to ring out as the glowing spheres exploded, sending large amounts of gas into the interior of the violet puppet!

All of this takes quite some time to describe, but happened extremely quickly. Bai Xiaochun let out a howl as the light from the sun and the moon caused the Heavenly Demon Body to melt completely, revealing the half-destroyed spell formation giant beneath it.

Just when the giant was about to vanish, Bai Xiaochun called upon the last bits of power remaining and yelled, "Break formation!"

Instantly, the spell formation incarnation shattered, ejecting the Spirit Stream Sect disciples out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun himself leapt high up into the air, his Undying Live

Forever Technique erupting with power. He had golden skin, and fleshly body defenses provided by the Heavenly Demon Body. Drawing upon his shocking speed, he quickly escaped from the destructive perimeter of light!

Meanwhile, the violet puppet was beginning to tremble, and screams were starting to echo out from inside, as well as cackling laughter. After shaking for a moment, the puppet exploded, and an entire group of maddened Profound Stream Sect disciples poured out. Among them was Lin Mu, his face pale as he shouted, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

Lin Mu’s hair was completely disheveled as he hovered there in midair. Moments ago, he had been completely convinced that his techniques would either kill Bai Xiaochun or destroy his spell formation, leaving him completely vulnerable to the power of the violet puppet.

Never could he have imagined that everything would backfire. Just when the spell formation had been on the verge of melting completely, his own violet puppet was suddenly infected by a damnable toxic gas, and rendered completely useless!

Now, the two evenly matched opponents were bereft of any spell formations or puppets. When their eyes met across the battlefield, Bai Xiaochun could see the killing intent in Lin Mu’s eyes, and Lin Mu could see the madness flickering in Bai Xiaochun's.

Inside, Lin Mu was trembling. He knew that Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body power was beyond ordinary, and that his own superiority came in the form of magical techniques. Just as he was considering fleeing, Bai Xiaochun shot forward, a murderous aura raging around him as he unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash. He began as nothing more than a blur of afterimages, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as he closed in on Lin Mu, his hand clenched into a fist!

“The time for magical techniques is over. Let’s see whose fleshly body is stronger!”

Lin Mu wanted to evade, but quickly realized that he was slower than Bai Xiaochun. He couldn’t match up at all with someone who had cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique; Bai Xiaochun was like a wild animal pouncing on prey. Lin Mu quickly bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood.

The blood formed a blood-colored buckler, which shot out to meet Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike.

Although the blood buckler wasn't destroyed by the punch, it was sent spinning backward, where it slammed into Lin Mu’s chest, causing him to cough up a mouthful of blood. Shocked, he began to back up.

“Think you can just run away?” Bai Xiaochun said, chasing after him. Lifting his right leg up, he kicked Lin Mu hard in the shoulder. Lin Mu gritted his teeth as he was shoved backward, blood soaking through his clothes.

He felt humiliated, and yet, there was nothing he could do. In terms of cultivation base, he didn’t fear Bai Xiaochun, nor was there any disparity between them when it came to magical techniques. But as for fleshly body power, he simply had no way of competing with Bai Xiaochun.

He had no violet puppet, and wasn't strong enough to fight back physically. “Dammit! Cultivators like us practice divine abilities! We search for great Daos, and work hard to live forever! Y-y-you’re... y-y-you’re just cultivating your physical body!!”

“The only way to live forever is to not die!” Bai Xiaochun replied confidently. “So of course I cultivate an undying body!” Lin Mu was unable to offer a response. Another blow hit him, and he coughed up more blood as he was knocked across the battlefield.

Killing intent swirled in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as he bore down again on Lin Mu, within whose eyes flickered an unyielding gleam, and even madness. Lin Mu waved his arms, causing a pill furnace to fly out from his sleeve and shoot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and didn’t even pause for a moment. In fact, he slammed directly into the pill furnace. It was a powerful magical treasure, and yet, could do nothing to Bai Xiaochun. It was instantly sent flying off to the side as he arced through the air toward Lin Mu, looking like a blade of death!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0304 awe-chapter-305

To be faced with such a deadly crisis caused Lin Mu's hair to stand on end. He waved his right hand, causing a command medallion to fly out. Drawing deeply upon himself, he spat some blood out onto the medallion.

Instantly, seven-colored light emerged from the medallion, shooting high up into the sky.

“Sword formations, protect me!!” Even as the words left his mouth. Bai Xiaochun appeared directly in front of him, right hand speeding forth in attack. However, before his blow could land, Bai Xiaochun's expression flickered. Although the vast majority of the sword formations up above were being pinned down by the Core Formation cultivators from the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, there were still a dozen or so that suddenly shot toward Bai Xiaochun, as fast as lightning.

Lin Mu breathed a sigh of relief. Continuing to speed backward, he produced eight magical bucklers, as well as a jade slip, which he crushed. Instantly, the power of teleportation surged out around him.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes flashed with brilliant light. “Another teleportation jade slip? I know the Profound Stream Sect is adept at equipment forging, but I think you've gone a bit overboard with the teleportation stuff!

“Although, did you really think that a dozen measly sword formations could slow me down?!”

Instead of evading the sword formations, he sped forward.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as four-colored light shone out to protect him, as well as a violet lamp. The dozen or so greatswords were blocked, and Bai Xiaochun began to close in on Lin Mu.

Lin Mu's expression flickered, but before he could even react, Bai Xiaochun used the Mountain Shaking Bash. At the same time, wings sprouted out behind him, propelling him at explosive speed. Almost instantly, the distance between him and Lin Mu was closed, and he encountered the first of the bucklers.

A huge boom filled the air, along with numerous cracking sounds. More than half of the defensive bucklers were shattered, and although that slowed Bai Xiaochun down a bit, killing intent still flickered in his eyes. Next, he extended his right hand, and golden light shone out from his thumb and index finger. It was...

The Throat Crushing Grasp!

A gravitational force also appeared, causing the retreating Lin Mu to suddenly lurch to a stop. That was when Bai Xiaochun smashed through the last of the bucklers, to appear directly in front of Lin Mu....

“Die!!” he howled

Lin Mu was already starting to blur away because of the power of teleportation. Face twisting with madness, he shrieked and extended his right hand, which began to glow with a black light, along with the fluctuations of self-detonation.

He was detonating, not his body, but his right hand!

Even as Bai Xiaochun closed in, Lin Mu’s right hand exploded. As the force of the blow began to spread, Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, and his Throat Crushing Grasp latched down on nothing but air. As for Lin Mu, his right arm had been destroyed from the shoulder on down!

It had been wiped away, not just from his fleshly body, but from his soul!

His expression was twisted with madness, and he was soaked in blood. By this point, he was ninety percent faded away, and based on the teleportation power swirling around him, Bai Xiaochun could tell that there was something different about this teleportation. It was not like the teleportation he had seen Nine-Isles use, or the teleportation of the Foundation Establishment cultivator he had fought earlier!

Apparently, this teleportation was leading to somewhere much further away!

Heart thumping, he decided to try to probe for information. Voice cold, he said, “Even if you escape to that city, you’ll still die in the war!”

Lin Mu threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“You don’t really think I'm going back to the Profound Stream Sect, do you? Don’t try to trick me into revealing any information, Bai Xiaochun. You won’t be killing me in this war!!

“I might have failed here, and lost my arm in the process, but next time we meet, I’ll be prepared for all your tricks. Then I’ll make you pay for what you’ve done, principal and interest!!”

As Lin Mu continued to fade, and the power of teleportation grew stronger, Bai Xiaochun looked at him and chuckled.

“Do you really think there’ll be a next time?” he said coolly, his eyes shining mysteriously.

When Lin Mu saw the look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, his heart suddenly began to pound.

“That was a nice trick, controlling those sword formations. But guess what? I still have more tricks up my sleeve. Grand lich, kill him!!” Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Live Forever Technique surged to life as he called upon the incredible power of the drop of Undying Blood he had used to connect himself to one of the most powerful entities in the Blood Stream Sect. Then, he pointed at Lin Mu!

Instantly, the grand lich, which was currently battling one of the enemy patriarchs, suddenly shivered. Its right hand, which had just been in the middle of unleashing a deadly attack, suddenly vanished, and when it reappeared, it was right behind Lin Mu!

Lin Mu let out an incredulous, miserable shriek as the hand pierced into the teleportation light and stabbed right into him, closing in around his heart!

RUMBLE!

Teleportation power erupted, and Lin Mu vanished. A moment later, he was gone. However, there in midair, gripped in the grand lich’s hand, was a wriggling human heart!!

It was bright red, but that color rapidly turned to gray. At the same time, an archaic aura spread out in all directions. Then the heart turned into ash. Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted.

However, there was no time to ponder the matter now, not in the middle of battle. Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to lead another charge toward the city, he heard cheering off in the distance. Looking over, he saw a group of about two hundred cultivators flying through the air at top speed, throwing out glowing spheres left and right. As the toxic smoke in the spheres spread out, the group would then charge in and unleash carnage!

Xu Xiaoshan was in the group, and he was shouting battle cries at the top of his lungs. Also present were Beihan Lie, Jia Lie and Master God-Diviner. That group of four led the rest of the cultivators along as they fought toward Bai Xiaochun.

This was the first time Bai Xiaochun had noticed them, but they had spotted him some time ago. Although they had scattered during the incident with the giant crocodile, the sight of Bai Xiaochun fighting spurred them into action. After grouping back together, they began to make their way across the field of battle to reunite with Bai Xiaochun.

Although Beihan Lie would never admit it, he actually missed the months of battling alongside Bai Xiaochun. When their eyes met, he snorted coldly, but at the same time, he started fighting even harder than before.

Then, Xu Xiaoshan looked over at Bai Xiaochun and shouted, “Bai Xiaochun, we’re here!”

Immediately following his call, two hundred voices rang out, “The Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers! The Spirit Stream Heaven-Dao expert can shake the whole world!”

Strange expressions appeared on the faces of the surrounding cultivators from all three sects.

Bai Xiaochun was almost moved to tears. Swishing his sleeve, he called out, “Come, brothers! Let’s go storm this city!”

The orders issued by the patriarchs moments ago had pushed the front line closer and closer to the city. The Profound Stream Sect’s morale was crumbling, and they were in full retreat. Finally, one of the Profound Stream Sect patriarchs cried out, “Back to the city! Defend it with our lives!!”

Immediately, the Profound Stream Sect cultivators outside the city all retreated at top speed. From Outer and Inner Sect disciples to the Core Formation and Foundation Establishment experts, every single one of them took to flight. As for the cultivators from the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, they shot after them in pursuit.

Even the patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect retreated, taking heavy injuries in the process. No counter-attacks were made. The entire sect fled back into the grand spell formation!

Everyone inside the city felt as if a huge weight were crushing down onto them. Outside, the cultivators of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects were filled with pride, and the desire to do battle! Without any hesitation, they launched a major offensive against the spell formation shield.

Light flashed in the sky, and thunder crackled.

Sword formations flew through the air. Spirit Stream Sect war chariots attacked like roaring dragons. Enormous javelins were launched. The spell formation shield that was the last line of defense for the Profound Stream Sect began to ripple and distort. However, it did not fall.

The army on the ground charged forward, unleashing powerful attacks into the mountains.

There was even fighting on the other side of the mountains, and although the scale there wasn't as grand as the main offensive, it was still brutal. Shockingly, the scattered remnants of the Pill Stream Sect were helping the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects lay siege to the Profound Stream Sect!

Their numbers were small, only a few tens of thousands. However, their hatred for the Profound Stream Sect vastly exceeded anything that the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects felt. Much of that was because, in addition to the actual cultivators from the Profound Stream Sect, there were also former Pill Stream Sect turncoats defending the city!

The fighting was fierce, and the reek of blood filled the area. Among the army of the Pill Stream Sect that assaulted the Profound Stream Sect from the rear was a young woman. She wore a white, gauzy veil, and was quite voluptuous. She radiated a bewitching power, and through her veil, it was possible to see that she was spectacularly beautiful!

That young woman had risen to prominence in this very war. She was Chen Manyao!

In addition to her poison skills, she was also a skilled strategist. Furthermore, some people said that her good looks made her the number one beauty in all of the Lower Reaches of the cultivation world!

Lin Mu, Nine-Isles, and virtually all other male cultivators were completely infatuated with her. Even the patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect were shaken by her beauty, and desired to take her as a concubine to use as a cultivation vessel.

However, she had a strong personality, and would rather die than submit to such an arrangement!

Currently, her eyes shone with profound light as she led the charge among the remnants of the Pill Stream Sect, sending out orders one after another. The charge of the Pill Stream Sect cultivators, combined with the assault of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, ensured that the Profound Stream Sect suffered nothing but defeat after defeat!

“The Profound Stream Sect still hasn't used the power of their precious treasure,” she said softly. “Once they do, their defeat will be certain!” Next to her were two patriarchs, whose eyes glittered as they nodded in response.

Suddenly, one of them looked up. “They just used it!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0305 awe-chapter-306

In the Profound Stream Mountains, the spell formation protecting the city was gradually being worn down. Every time it was damaged, it would repair itself, but was clearly teetering on the verge of complete destruction. The newly returned Profound Stream Sect cultivators, as well as the Pill Stream Sect cultivators who had surrendered and were now bound by restrictive spells, were constantly feeding spiritual power into the formation to keep it operational.

Despite that, most of the Profound Stream Sect cultivators had sunk into reticent silence, wrapped up in numerous thoughts.

Although they were still capable of fighting, and were confident in being able to drag the war out a bit longer, they were all wrapped up in uncertainty regarding the future.

If they did drag things out, what good would it do...?

In the front, they faced the combined forces of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, and from the rear, they were being attacked by the remnants of the Pill Stream Sect. The Profound Stream Sect cultivators knew that, in truth, there was no hope for them.

The only thing that kept them going now was either loyalty to their sect, or fear of what would happen if they were defeated....

The patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect were all seriously injured. It was with great bitterness that they realized that their opponents would never give up in the fight.

“Even if we made a huge sacrifice to somehow kill Bai Xiaochun, we still wouldn’t be able to recover.”

“They can't wipe us out like this. The Spirit and Blood Stream Sects... might be working together for now, but that won’t last forever. We just need to hold out for a little bit longer.... Either their alliance will fall apart, or the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will lose patience, and forbid them from trying to take on the Sky River Court.... The hope for all of that rests in killing Bai Xiaochun!”

The patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect were not all in unison. Because of how the war had played out, they had different ideas about what exactly should be done. One of the patriarchs was an old man with a ruddy face and flowing red hair. Suddenly, he gave a cold harrumph and said, “What’s the point of arguing about things now? Even if we surrender in the end, we can hurt the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects in the process, and even break their alliance. The vital intelligence that Thousand-Faces sent to us before he died is something we can’t let go to waste!”

No one dared to speak up in opposition to him. This old man was the most powerful patriarch in the current generation of the Profound Stream Sect, Patriarch Crimsonsoul!

Cold light flickered in Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s eyes, and before anyone could say anything else, he pointed outside of the city and said, “Release the precious treasure. Prepare the Heaven Bow!”

In response, the lands outside the city began to quake, and crevices opened up. Wider and wider they grew, until they were fully 300 meters wide.

The land almost looked like oceanwater, undulated wildly, much to the shock of the countless cultivators of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, who scrambled to get to safety. Then, a shocking roar issued forth from beneath the ground.

The roar was so astonishing that everyone who heard it couldn’t prevent shock from filling their faces, and they even staggered backward. Some began to bleed out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths. A few people who were closest to the origin of the roar simply couldn’t withstand the sound, and their heads exploded.

Because of that roar, brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth!

Even the Gold Core cultivators and the patriarchs were astonished, and looked over in the direction of what sounded like explosive thunder from the heavens.

The lands collapsed, sending dirt and rocks exploding up into the air. An area of land hundreds of meters wide completely caved in, and everyone nearby staggered in place as another roar echoed out.

ROAR!

Then, something burst out from under the surface. It was an enormous black star beetle, with a carapace that resembled powerful armor, and long antennae with sharp pincers at the ends. It also emanated a shocking black glow. [1. In Chinese, this bug is literally a “heavenly ox.” It's also known as a long-horned beetle.]

As soon as it appeared, the black-armored star beetle charged into the battle lines, causing numerous Spirit and Blood Stream Sect cultivators to scream as they were crushed. Shockingly, this bug had battle prowess equivalent to a Nascent Soul patriarch!

In fact, in some ways, it was even more powerful than that. Furthermore, black mist roiled off of its body that dissolved everything it touched.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked by the sight of the enormous black beetle. He had seen all sorts of gigantic wild beasts, but this was his first time seeing a bug this large.

Cries of shock rang out from the Gold Core cultivators among the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects as they recognized what it was.

“A black-armored star beetle!!”

“One of the Profound Stream Sect’s two precious treasures. They’ve finally unleashed their black-armored star beetle!”

The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch snorted coldly and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Waving his finger toward the sky, he said, “I summon the Spirit Stream Sect’s... Heavenhorn Sword!”

Suddenly, the sky began to tremble, and a screaming sound echoed out. It sounded, not like the screaming of a person, but rather, the screaming caused by something ripping through the air at incredible speed!

In the blink of an eye, dazzling silver light shone out from above as a black sword appeared!!

It looked like an ordinary sword, except that it was slightly curved. It had been forged from the shed horn of an inkdragon, and despite its relatively humble appearance, it was anything but ordinary. Visible on its surface were ten shocking silver designs!!

That indicated that this sword had benefited from a tenfold spirit enhancement! Even a piece of scrap iron that had received a tenfold spirit enhancement would be called a rare and powerful weapon. But the Heavenhorn Sword was much more than that. With a spirit enhancement the likes of which it had received, it could be considered something above a precious treasure. It was halfway to being a spirit treasure!

When it came to magical devices, they were usually referred to in terms of three levels; magical treasures, precious treasures, and spirit treasures. In terms of quality, each level was broken up using the descriptions of mortal, earth, and heaven. For example, only heaven-tier precious treasures would be the kind that could protect an entire sect!

In terms of spirit treasures, even the most inferior type, the mortal-tier, would still be enough to be used as a reserve power for an entire sect. Furthermore, they would never be unleashed lightly. Only if the sect faced imminent destruction would they be called upon.

The Heavenhorn Sword’s arrival caused a great commotion among all of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators on the battlefield. They immediately began to cheer loudly.

“That's our sect’s Heavenhorn Sword!! Hahaha! When the Heavenhorn Sword appears, it can slash forests and destroy moons!!”

“The Heavenhorn Sword is so powerful it can shake mountains and dry up rivers!!”

“It has a tenfold spirit enhancement. Nothing can compare to that!!” As their cries rolled out, it wasn't just the Profound Stream Sect cultivators whose faces darkened. Even the Blood Stream Sect disciples had unsightly expressions on their faces; they weren’t exactly happy to see the Spirit Stream Sect stealing the spotlight.

Among the patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect, only light snorts could be heard. Even they were shocked by the sight of the Heavenhorn Sword and its ten shocking silver designs. They had done much research into the precious treasures of the Spirit Stream Sect, but had never been able to uncover what incredible luck the sect had encountered to be able to perform a tenfold spirit enhancement without destroying the sword in the process.

The arch-patriarch sighed. “That’s probably the only item in all of the eastern Lower Reaches that has a tenfold spirit enhancement.”

Bai Xiaochun looked up excitedly at the Heavenhorn Sword, and especially at the ten silver designs on it. Those designs instantly reminded him of his turtle-wok.

Although he didn't use the wok all the time, he knew that it was his most important secret. To this day, he still dreamed about using it to produce a magical item with a hundredfold spirit enhancement. He couldn’t help but get excited about how shocked everyone would be if he succeeded at that.

“I'm definitely going to do that one day!” Even as Bai Xiaochun’s heart stirred with excitement, Bruiser was on another part of the battlefield. He had just been prepared to make another offensive charge when a tremor ran through him, and he looked up, not at the Heavenhorn Sword, but at the black beetle. Within his eyes gleamed a flicker of desire, and he had to suppress the urge to try to eat the beetle immediately. After all, he was aware of the vast difference in power between the two of them.

After looking up in thought for a moment, he began to creep across the battlefield toward the black beetle.

Meanwhile, the Heavenhorn Sword descended in flickering light, like a black lightning bolt filled with silver. It sliced through the power of beetle’s roar like a hot knife through butter, a dazzling arc of light, a waterfall hundreds of meters tall, a silver rainbow!

Trembling, the black-armored star beetle looked up, and then roared as though it knew it was facing a powerful opponent. Black mist erupted from its body, forming into an even larger figure!

It was fully 3,000 meters tall, and although it wasn’t fully solid, it was rapidly taking shape. The energy that erupted off of it left everyone gasping. Roaring, the black-armored star beetle shot directly toward the Heavenhorn Sword!

Rumbling sounds shook the whole world. The blinding light shining off of the Heavenhorn Sword became the most dazzling thing on the battlefield.

However, the Heavenhorn Sword simply tapped the beetle. When it did, the silver lines on its surface pulsed, and the black-armored star beetle let out a bloodcurdling scream. The outer layer of its body collapsed, and its true form was revealed. The expression on its face was one of terror, and it was about to flee, but to the utter shock of everyone observing, it was sliced into two pieces!

Blood exploded out from the two pieces of the corpse, revealing that the beetle itself was something like a puppet, within the middle of which was a bizarre, black crystal!

What delivered the killing blow wasn’t the sword itself, it was the power of the tenfold spirit enhancement designs!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0306 awe-chapter-307

“So, this is the terrifying level of a tenfold spirit enhancement!!” The patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect almost couldn’t believe their eyes, and were completely shaken. If people like them had such a reaction, then there was no need to even mention the Profound Stream Sect’s Gold Core cultivators, whose scalps were tingling in astonishment.

Even the Blood Stream Sect cultivators felt their minds reeling. As for the patriarchs, they had known in the past that the Heavenhorn Sword was something to take very seriously, but to see with their own eyes how domineering it was forced them to admit that they had underestimated the signature sword of the Spirit Stream Sect!

“It seems the legends of the tenfold spirit enhancement were true,” the Blood Stream Sect arch-patriarch said. “A tenfold spirit enhancement will produce shocking transformations.... In fact, it’s just short of being a true spirit treasure!”

After joining forces with the Spirit Stream Sect, it was becoming increasingly clear to the Blood Stream Sect that they were adept at concealing their true strength. Although they still didn't quite match up to the Blood Stream Sect, if war had truly broken out, even if the Blood Stream Sect won in the end, they would have been forced to pay a severe price. In fact, they would most likely have lost any qualification to enter the Middle Reaches.

Furthermore, before they would even have had a chance to do that, the Profound Stream Sect would have come for them, and the current situation would likely have been reversed.

Everyone had been watching the clash between the Heavenhorn Sword and the black-armored star beetle. That was especially true of the people on the city walls. Actually, there was a stirring of spiritual energy originating from those walls that was locked down on the area around the black-armored star beetle....

As the Heavenhorn Sword rose back up into the air, the two halves of the black-armored star beetle toppled down to either side, and the battlefield went completely silent. But then, all of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators broke out into thunderous cheering.

In sharp contrast, the Profound Stream Sect cultivators were forced to watch their sect’s precious treasure, the black-armored star beetle, be cut in half. As its black blood oozed out in all directions, the shaken Profound Stream Sect cultivators slowly bowed their heads. Many of them looked more thoughtful than ever.

It was then that people started to realize that within the corpse of the black-armored star beetle, there was a very strange-looking crystal. Soon, more and more people were staring at it.

However, even more attracted to the crystal were the numerous battle beasts, who were staring at it wide-eyed.

“A beast king crystal!” the Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch said. But then his eyes flickered, and his face fell. “Wait, no, it's a fake!”

However, even as the words left his mouth, a tiny figure leapt out in front of everyone. It was Bruiser, who had shrunk down to the size of a hand, and was flying toward the corpse of the black-armored star beetle with shocking speed.

His eyes shone with longing, almost madness, and he was moving so quickly that he was nothing more than a colorful blur. Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and suddenly, he was stricken with the realization that something about the situation seemed off. Before he could react though...

A droning sound filled the air, and it was coming from the city walls of the Profound Stream Sect. The sound instantly grew in volume until it was earsplitting, and caused all hearts to tremble.

Next, a black arrow became visible. In the blink of an eye, it shot forth from the city, flying at unbelievable speed toward the direction of the black-armored star beetle!

Its target was none other than Bruiser!!

A tremor ran through Bruiser, a sudden, intense sensation of deadly crisis. He let out a howl as he tried to flee, or perhaps fight back. And yet all such efforts were useless; the arrow was only half a moment away from stabbing into his forehead!

Bai Xiaochun instantly devolved into madness. Shouting out in a hoarse voice, he flew out into the air and opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye. All the control power of his third eye erupted, almost like an invisible hand which wrapped around the arrow in an attempt to halt its momentum.

Bai Xiaochun shot toward the beetle corpse with all the power he could muster, blood oozing out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. As a result of all of his efforts, the arrow suddenly lurched to a halt!

In that moment, Bruiser shivered, and then leapt to the side. Just as Bai Xiaochun was breathing a sigh of relief, the arrow swiveled in place. Instead of aiming at Bruiser, or even at Bai Xiaochun, it was now pointing directly toward the black crystal!

It moved with speed just as incredible as before, and the sudden acceleration instantly shattered Bai Xiaochun’s control power....

All of this takes quite some time to describe, but happened with exceeding quickness. Few people on the battlefield were capable of even reacting. However, one of them was the Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch, whose scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode.

“Nightcrypt, get back!” he shouted. “The target is you!!”

The other patriarchs’ faces fell as they realized what was happening, and although they wanted to do something to save Bai Xiaochun, there was no time.

Although the previous situations he had encountered on the battlefield seemed dangerous, the truth was that the patriarchs had always been close by, and could have intervened if the situation got out of hand.

But now, things were developing too quickly, and the Profound Stream Sect had seized an opportunity with vicious determination. Bai Xiaochun had flown out of his own accord because of the danger Bruiser had been in. Because of that, the ability of the patriarchs of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects to protect him had suddenly faltered!

Although few other people might have noticed the opportunity which had developed, how could Patriarch

Crimsonsoul of the Profound Stream Sect not notice? This was a situation that he had personally manipulated!

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted, but he didn't have any time to ponder his next action. A sensation of mortal crisis filled him, and he was left with few ways to defend himself. Shouting, he grabbed Bruiser, and then a black light shone out as the turtle-wok appeared. Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun curled up into the smallest ball possible inside of the wok.

Just as he did that, the arrow struck the black crystal that was inside the corpse of the beetle. Instantly, a huge boom shook the area, and a black shockwave spread out for 90 meters in every direction. Everywhere the shockwave passed, it obliterated any living thing it touched, even the grass. Everything was wiped away; the cultivators it hit didn’t even have a chance to scream.

The corpse of the black-armored star beetle was completely eradicated, and a huge crater was hewn out of the ground!

Soon the boundless black light faded away, revealing the only thing to have been left behind: a black wok on the edge of the crater, sitting there motionless.

As everyone peered over to look, the wok trembled, and then slowly lifted up to reveal Bai Xiaochun’s face. He appeared to be so terrified that he was shaking. The sensation of having just escaped with his life left tears running down his cheeks.

“Profound Stream Sect,” he shrieked, “things aren’t finished between us. Y-y-you... you people actually tried to ambush me *again*!?!?” Fear still throbbed in his heart. Despite having been saved by the turtle-wok, he was still convinced that he was about to die.

However, when used by Bai Xiaochun, the spirit enhancement wok was extremely powerful. Without it, his poor little life would have been lost. His heart was pounding, and the residual fear that flowed through him caused his knees to wobble.

Crawling out from underneath the wok, and cradling Bruiser in his arms, he said, “Bruiser, you almost got your dad killed, did you know that!?!?”

Bruiser looked like he was about to cry; he knew that he had slipped up.

Seeing Bruiser’s reaction, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t bear to criticize him any further. Then, flames of rage began to rise up in his eyes as he looked over at the city walls, and the old man standing atop them with a huge bow in his hands.

“You just wait for Lord Bai, you old fart!” he shouted at the top of his lungs. “I... I want that bow of yours!!”

“I can’t believe he’s not dead!!” Patriarch Crimsonsoul said, lowering the enormous green bow. The bow itself emanated a profoundly ancient Heaven-Dao aura. It was none other than the Profound Stream Sect’s second precious treasure, the Heaven Bow!

The arrow from moments ago had been loosed by that very bow!

The Profound Stream Sect had long since come to realize that it would be impossible for any of them to directly kill Bai Xiaochun, not even the Gold Core cultivators. One of the enemy patriarchs would definitely step in to save him. The Spirit and Blood Stream Sects were simply too protective of Bai Xiaochun.

The entire time, Patriarch Crimsonsoul had never been able to find a chance to kill Bai Xiaochun, and had eventually come up with the plan from moments ago, to sacrifice the black-armored star beetle, and then use a crystal infused with the aura of a beast king to attract Bruiser. If Bai Xiaochun didn't make a move to save Bruiser, then the plan would have been for naught. However, as long as Bai Xiaochun appeared... then he could detonate the black crystal and destroy everything in the area, including Bai Xiaochun!

If Bai Xiaochun died, it would be a fatal blow to the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, and would have made a split between the two even more likely. Even if the Profound Stream Sect eventually surrendered, they would have a chance to rise up again in the future!

However, after everything was said and done, Bai Xiaochun didn't end up dead. A very unsightly expression could be seen on Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s face, and his heart was filled with bitter sullenness.

When the Spirit and Blood Stream Sect patriarchs realized that Bai Xiaochun had survived, they breathed sighs of relief. Li Qinghou was shaking; moments ago, he had been struck mute with fear. It was the same with all of Bai Xiaochun’s other friends on the battlefield.

As the fury of the two sects burned hotter than ever, they attacked. The Heavenhorn Sword slashed into the spell formation, and the other precious treasures of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects were unleashed.

A huge blood-colored tree appeared, as well as a blood mirror. Numerous powerful objects sent heaven-rending, earth-crushing power toward the Profound Stream Sect!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0307 awe-chapter-308

Powerful tremors ran across the surface of the spell formation shield. When the Heavenhorn Sword struck it, dazzling silver light shot out, and the shield distorted visibly. The entire spell formation teetered, and although it didn’t collapse, it clearly experienced a significant drainage of spiritual power.

At the same time, the patriarchs of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, as well as the Gold Core cultivators, were joined by large numbers of Foundation Establishment experts to unleash powerful attacks.

The enraged Bai Xiaochun also charged forth, continuously unleashing his blood qi to keep the Blood Stream Sect cultivators at their peak. Bruiser was at his side, equally furious. Howling, he released his beast king aura, causing countless battle beasts to go mad as they attacked the spell formation.

Gargoyles, refined corpses, blood swords and violet cauldrons could be seen everywhere. Then the Spirit Stream Sect’s ninth mountain peak appeared, causing everything to shake violently.... The mountains themselves began to crack and crumble!

Blood clouds spread out, instantly staining the mountains and the city red. On the other side of the mountain range, the remnants of the Pill Stream Sect were attacking with full force, battering the rear portion of the spell formation to the point of destruction!

From the look of it, the spell formation couldn’t hold on for much longer, and in fact, the only way to prevent it from collapsing was to reduce its range.

The Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch had a very grim look on his face. The deadly crisis that had just befallen Bai Xiaochun left him feeling both anxious and furious. “Profound Stream Sect.... I'm not interested in waiting around for you to unleash your true reserve powers. Let’s see if you still dare to hold back under the force of the Blood Stream Sect’s reserve powers!”

The arch-patriarch was the Blood Stream Sect’s only cultivator in the great circle of the Nascent Soul. His fury was something that could only be stood up to by the Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch and patriarch Crimsonsoul of the Profound Stream Sect.

Those three were all in the great circle, and thus, vastly more powerful than any of the other Nascent Soul cultivators.

The arch-patriarch performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then pointed his finger up into the sky. Voice resounding like heavenly thunder, he shouted, “Blood Stream Night Effigy!”

As the words left his mouth, the sky began to vibrate, and a red bolt of lightning suddenly appeared. As it streaked through the sky, it slashed open a huge rift, within which appeared a bizarre scarecrow with glowing red eyes!

Cruel cackling echoed out from the mouth of the wicked-looking scarecrow. In one hand it held a patch of human skin, and in the other, a steelyard balance. As soon as it appeared, intense and shocking pressure roiled out to fill heaven and earth.

That pressure alone caused the spell formation to begin to tremble on the verge of collapse.

The Blood Stream Sect cultivators gasped, and then their eyes shone with strange light. This was none other than the true reserve power of the Blood Stream Sect.

The reserve powers were the foundation of any sect!

Countless red lightning bolts crashed in the sky above as the scarecrow suddenly vanished. When it reappeared, it was right outside of the spell formation shield, where it lifted its right hand up. As it did, the steelyard balance grew immeasurably large, and then, within the weighing tray, an image appeared.

Upon closer examination, that image proved to be the entire mountain range that the Profound Stream Sect’s city was built into!

Then, the steelyard balance began to move, as though it were weighing the importance of the mountain range and the city!

The ground quaked and the mountains trembled. The city began to sway back and forth. Cracks appeared in the spell formation shield, almost as though heaven and earth were weighing the city!

Once the weighing process was over, the mountain range and the city would be reduced to ashes!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. To see the bizarre image of the scarecrow, and the quaking mountains and city, made him realize that reserve powers of this level were something that not even patriarchs could deal with.

“I wonder what the true reserve power of the Spirit Stream Sect is like?” he thought, his mind reeling. The patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect had very serious expressions on their faces. Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s eyes flickered, and then he suddenly extended his right hand and slammed it down onto the ground.

The resulting boom caused everything to tremble. Countless rocks and rubble suddenly leapt up into the air as an altar rose up from a square in the middle of the city.

“Exalted Celestial Incense!” Patriarch Crimsonsoul roared. At the same time, a thumb-sized chunk of black incense appeared on the surface of the altar!

It radiated an incredibly ancient air, as though it had existed for countless years. Furthermore, it had obviously been lit on many occasions in the past; now, only a small bit remained....

As soon as it appeared, it began to burn, sending delicate streams of green smoke out through the spell formation, where they began to form into an image!

Instantly, the scarecrow’s red eyes began to glow even more brightly than before. It only took a brief moment for the image of green smoke to coalesce into the form of a cultivator!

He appeared to be a middle-aged man wearing a Daoist robe and Daoist headgear. He bore the demeanor of a transcendent being, and seemed graceful in a way that surpassed the mortal world. From the aura and energy that exploded out from him, he almost seemed to be fused with heaven and earth. Instantly, the blood clouds in the sky began to churn, and the ninth mountain peak began to tremble.

Then the middle-aged cultivator waved his finger, and everything began to distort. The steelyard balance in the hand of the scarecrow exploded violently, making it impossible to continue the weighing process. Everyone was completely and utterly astounded.

The eyes of the Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch gleamed with bright light. He knew that the Profound Stream Sect’s reserve power was extraordinary, and now that he was able to witness it with his own eyes, he thought back to some of the stories he'd heard, and instantly realized the truth. “The power of the Deva Realm!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was shaken. He looked at the man made from smoke, and could feel the terrifying pressure radiating off of him. A moment later, he realized that just looking at him filled his eyes with pain, and caused his mind to reel.

To him, it seemed as this man had replaced the heavens, and was he himself heavenly might!

The scarecrow’s eyes began to glow with increasingly intense redness. Letting loose a powerful shriek, it took the patch of human skin it held in its left hand and then swung it around to cover its own body! In the blink of an eye, the scarecrow transformed into a child, which opened its mouth in terrifying fashion as it lunged at the middle-aged man. The conflict between these two ultimate reserve powers was causing everything under the sky to shake violently!

Lights flashed in the sky, and a huge wind kicked up, accompanied by thunderous booms. The founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect didn't hesitate at all to also perform an incantation gesture, then wave his hand upward!

“Spirit Stream Yang Raven!”

The founding patriarch’s words were accompanied by cacophonous rumbling sounds. It was as if two hands were ripping open the heavens to reveal a bright, clear sky beyond. There, the shocking image of a white sun could be seen!

Within the white sun was a black raven. The raven’s eyes opened, and they emitted blinding light. Then it cawed in deafening fashion!

Even as ripples flowed out from the raven, it took a deep breath, completely absorbing the white sun. Then it became a streak of light like a shooting star that headed in the direction of the spell formation shield.

“Pill Stream Sect, produce your reserve power!!” shouted Patriarch Crimsonsoul, his expression vicious. Instantly, one of the sealed Pill Stream Sect cultivators in the city, a former patriarch of the Pill Stream Sect, gritted his teeth and then waved his hand.

Rumbling filled all creation as the sky once again opened up in the exact same position where the white sun had appeared. However, this time, what appeared was something completely different: a black sun!

The instant the black sun appeared, it cast darkness everywhere below. Most strangely of all, within the black sun was a bird that looked almost exactly the same as the Spirit Stream Sect’s raven!

However, this raven was actually white!

All cultivators who could see what was happening were gasping in shock. Many of them had eyes as wide as saucers. The fact that the reserve powers of the Spirit

Stream Sect and the Pill Stream Sect were so similar made it obvious that the two sects were connected somehow!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he watched the white raven open its mouth and suck in the black sun. Then, eyes gleaming as if with hatred for an archenemy, it shot toward the Spirit Stream Sect’s black raven. When the two collided, a massive boom shook everything in the area.

The Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch suddenly thought back to a rumor he’d heard. “Yin-Yang Ravens!”

Supposedly, when the Spirit Stream Sect made its foray into the Lower Reaches 10,000 years ago, they had possessed no reserve power. Later, they had joined forces with the Pill Stream Sect, which was when they suddenly came to have a spirit treasure!

“Either way, this battle is almost over,” thought the arch-patriarch. “There’s no way the Profound Stream Sect has a third reserve treasure.” The Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch exchanged a glance with the Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch, and they nodded to each other. The truth was that they could have made a massive attack like this earlier on. However, they had drawn things out to give the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects a chance to fight together. At the same time, they were able to chip away at the morale of the Profound Stream Sect. After all, their goal was not to wipe out the Profound Stream Sect, but rather, to absorb it!

Now that the Profound Stream Sect had revealed their reserve power, there was no suspense at all left in the war.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch waved his sleeve, and then spoke in a voice as cold as ice: “Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0308 awe-chapter-309

“Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!” The words of the Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch echoed out in all directions. Simultaneously, orders were passed down to the disciples. The giants powered by the Outer Sect disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect roared as they battered the spell formation, joined by the enormous blood spheres composed of Outer Sect disciples from the Blood Stream Sect.

A huge boom rippled out from this first major attack. The cultivators inside the Profound Stream Sect’s city were having a difficult time continuing to power the spell formation, and were left trembling. And that was only from an attack by the Outer Sect disciples! The sheer numbers involved left the Profound Stream Sect cultivators’ cultivation bases in chaos.

At the same time, the Outer Sect disciples shouted in unison: “Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!”

Their voices were like thunder that rattled the hearts and minds of the Profound Stream Sect cultivators. Before they could even begin to do some breathing exercises to recover, a wave of refined corpses, gargoyles, war chariots and battle beasts charged forth in a second major attack.

That attack was even more intense than the previous attack, and released even greater pressure than the previous one. The Profound Stream Sect cultivators felt as if their cultivation bases were about to be torn to pieces. Even the patriarchs were included. Everyone was well aware that the attacks leveled by the two sects would only continue to get stronger!

Before they even had time to react, and almost concurrent with the second attack, the Inner Sect disciples of the two sects launched a third attack! The spell formation incarnations of the Spirit Stream Sect and the locust-like magic of the Blood Stream Sect formed together into something like a sharp sword which slashed toward the spell formation!

“Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!”

Their cry caused the entire city to shake. The spell formation shield distorted, and the Profound Stream Sect cultivators shook violently. Their cultivation bases couldn’t take much more. This third attack was even more powerful than the others, and many of the pale-faced cultivators inside the formation were even beginning to wither up.

There was no chance for any of them to rest or recuperate for even a moment. Things weren’t over yet. Next came the Chosen and peak lords from the seven mountain peaks of the south and north banks of the Spirit Stream Sect, in the form of enormous spell formation giants. At their side were their contemporaries from the four mountain peaks of the Blood Stream Sect. A fourth powerful attack!

This attack was completely different from the first three. It was like stabbing a dagger into the heart of a dying person. The spell formation trembled, and the cultivators supporting it from within all began to cough up blood. Yet again, there was no other choice for them but to allow the spell formation to shrink.

Next came the spell formation giants from Mount Daoseed, including Bai Xiaochun’s. Joining them were the blood masters and elders from the Blood Stream Sect. Terrifying roars echoed out as they unleashed the fifth major attack!

That attack unleashed power even greater than all of the previous attacks put together. Bai Xiaochun joined in the thunderous battle cry as the spell formation distorted, and then shrank down again. Mountains in the area crumbled, and the city seemed in grave danger of simply collapsing!

More blood spilled out of the mouths of the cultivators powering the spell formation, whose Qi passageways were already significantly injured. Some of them were so withered that they had to be replaced. As that happened, the thunderous shout of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects reached their ears.

“Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!”

The Profound Stream Sect cultivators’ hearts were pounding in their chests, but before they could pull themselves back together, a sixth major attack headed their way!

That attack came from the well over 100 prime elders from both sects. They held nothing back as they unleashed the most powerful attack yet onto the spell formation!

The spell formation rumbled as cracks spread out. It shrank down again, exposing the outer areas of the city. More cultivators inside coughed up blood, and many of them lapsed into unconsciousness.

The main emotion in the minds of most cultivators in the city was despair! And yet, another attack was already incoming. The cultivation bases of the blood rippers and legacy echelon cultivators erupted. Trump cards were unleashed without hesitation. Visually, the seventh major attack looked like shooting stars slamming into the spell formation shield.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The damage to the spell formation spread out even further. The walls of the city began to fall, revealing the exhausted, bitter Profound Stream Sect cultivators inside. Some of the cultivators who had been powering the spell formation were instantly destroyed in body and soul.

The area covered by the spell formation shrank yet again, leaving many cultivators outside of its protection.

Some of those cultivators had once been members of the Pill Stream Sect. They could only sit there silently with gritted teeth; they had no desire to be considered part of the Profound Stream Sect anymore.

Then, the eighth major attack closed in!

Six patriarchs of the Blood Stream Sect and four from the Spirit Stream Sect joined together for the eighth attack! They were like ten gods, and the mere sound of them unleashing their battle prowess was like thunder from the heavens.

“Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!” The air shattered, and the ground quaked violently. As the attacks of ten patriarchs slammed into the spell formation, the patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect roared and held nothing back to resist.

Booms rang out constantly. More than half of the city was destroyed now, and all of the patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect were left coughing up blood. Their faces were ashen, and their bodies withered. They looked older than before, and even Patriarch Crimsonsoul was staggering backward, blood spraying out of his mouth.

It was in that moment that the remnants of the Pill Stream Sect unleashed their own powerful attack. A huge pill furnace smashed into the spell formation shield, and the tens of thousands of cultivators behind it attacked with suicidal abandon. Another powerful shout filled the air.

“Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!”

One of the cultivators within the Pill Stream Sect was a young woman with a gauzy white veil. Her facial features were obscured, but her eyes were visible, and they were spectacularly beautiful. Virtually all of the cultivators in the Pill Stream Sect were obsessed with her. Within that sea of people, she was like a pearl on a beach, resplendent and beautiful!

Booms echoed out as the spell formation trembled. When the pill furnace slammed into it, a huge gap ripped open. Patriarch Crimsonsoul spread his arms wide, and the power of a great circle Nascent Soul cultivation base exploded out as he joined the scattered remnants of the Profound Stream Sect cultivators who were powering the spell formation.

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun noticed something up in the air above the spell formation. His eyes went wide when he realized that he was looking at a very familiar monkey.

The old monkey was holding an enormous staff raised overhead. Eyes flickering with an archaic light, as well as a dignity that could shake heaven and earth, he smashed the staff downward.

“Profound Stream Sect, do you surrender?!” roared an ancient-sounding voice. The spell formation shook violently, and finally, exploded!

A shockwave blasted out in all directions. Patriarch Crimsonsoul coughed up an enormous mouthful of blood.

The other cultivators of the Profound Stream Sect were all soaked in blood from various wounds. At the same time, something shot into the city, something that moved so quickly it was impossible for anyone to see it clearly at first. Only when it landed on the altar in the middle of the city was it possible to tell that it was a rabbit!

The rabbit’s eyes glittered with a mysterious light as it snatched the incense off of the altar and extinguished it!

When that happened, the middle-aged man fighting the scarecrow suddenly vanished. Then the scarecrow looked down, radiating the terrifying energy that only the deepest reserve powers of a sect could. That energy locked down onto the wounded patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect, making it impossible for them to even move.

Everything happened almost too quickly to process. The monkey appeared, broke open the spell formation, then the rabbit extinguished the incense, and finally the scarecrow sent energy crushing down. It all happened within the space of a few breaths of time.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were wide as he stared at the rabbit on the altar. Suddenly, he got a very bad feeling....

That was when Bai Xiaochun suddenly realized that numerous cultivators from the two sects were all vying with each other to enter the city. That was even true of the scattered remnants of the Pill Stream Sect on the other side, led by the young woman in the white veil. Bai Xiaochun slapped his thigh.

“Battle merit! Whoever gets into the city first will get a big reward!” Suddenly inspired, he roared and shot off at top speed. Bruiser seemed to understand exactly what he was thinking, and gave him a push off. Bai Xiaochun flew forward, wings flapping, blasting across the battlefield like a meteor. He immediately passed everyone else, and then quickly stepped onto the shattered city wall.

“Profound Stream Sect, are you going to surrender?!” The echo of his shout caused Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s heart to fill with bitterness. He looked around at the Profound Stream Sect cultivators, and then over at Bai Xiaochun. He knew that after surrendering, he would have to come up with a method of resolving the differences between the two of them. Even as his eyes flickered, the other patriarchs clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“We surrender!”

Everything went quiet for a moment, and then cheering erupted from the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects. The Profound Stream Sect cultivators sighed, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyebrows shot up and down in excitement. Sticking his chin up, he waved his sleeve and proudly said, “With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun reduced the Profound Stream--”

Before he could finish speaking, a little turtle head popped out of his bag of holding and looked up at him. The turtle sighed.

“Ah, it’s been a long time since I've heard someone blow their own horn so loudly.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0309 awe-chapter-310

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. For years now, his moments of sleeve-flicking monologue had always been one of great pride. Never before had anyone interrupted him. Eyes wide, he stared down at the green little turtle head sticking out of his bag of holding.

“Dammit, you’re still in my bag of holding!?” Just as he reached his hand over to grab the turtle, the turtle rolled its eyes, stuck its head back inside, and vanished.

Bai Xiaochun was fuming with rage. The little turtle was really a disaster for him. Whenever he thought about how it had provoked that enormous golden crocodile, his head started to ache.

However, despite his simmering rage, he couldn't find the turtle no matter how he looked. Gritting his teeth, he decided to start using a new bag of holding. After switching the contents, he hurled the old one outside of the city.

“If you’re so awesome,” he said angrily, “let's see you pop your head out of this one!” As soon as the words left his mouth, the little turtle’s head popped out of the new bag of holding and looked contemptuously at Bai Xiaochun.

“Considering you just gave Lord Turtle a new house, I’ll play along. Go ahead and bow down in worship!”

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to start crying. After a long moment, he sighed and resigned himself to the fact that he couldn't do anything about the little turtle. With that, he looked around dejectedly at the other cultivators of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects as they poured into the city and started taking the Profound Stream Sect cultivators into custody.

As for the monkey and the rabbit, Bai Xiaochun looked around for quite a while, but couldn’t find any clues as to where they’d gone off to. Even Bruiser had disappeared now that the city had fallen....

“I was the one who made that monkey and that rabbit....” he thought sadly. It was really a strange situation, and suddenly he couldn’t help but think back to all of the other little animals from back in the Spirit Stream Sect.

Soon, the remnants of the Pill Stream Sect were pouring in from the other side. Mixed emotions could be seen as they looked at their compatriots who had given into the Profound Stream Sect. At the same time, they complied with the instructions of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects as their own sect was absorbed into the alliance.

The patriarchs of the Profound Stream Sect, especially Patriarch Crimsonsoul, were not magically sealed. Instead, the arch-patriarch and the founding patriarch calmly accepted their surrender.

When it came to the lower ranking cultivators, the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects had their ways of ensuring that they were taken in by the alliance.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to help with anything. He simply watched as the excited and enthusiastic cultivators of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects cheered and went about their work. Now that the war was over, it was possible to say that the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world had truly been united!

All that was needed now was a bit of time for the Lower Reaches to build up strength, and then they could march to challenge the Sky River Court!

Bai Xiaochun had been the center of all attention during the fighting, and now, he was like a sun shining down on the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects. Everyone looked at him with passion and respect. As for the female disciples, strange gleams could be seen in their eyes, which made Bai Xiaochun feel wonderful. He quickly set aside the matter of the little turtle, and simply savored the moment. Assuming the pose of an important person from the Senior generation, he began to stroll through the city.

Whenever he encountered cultivators he knew, he would smile and nod. As he passed, an endless stream of “Greetings, Junior Patriarch” could be heard

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun was displeased to discover that he actually wasn’t the only person to have become extremely famous during the war. There was another person from the Pill Stream Sect who everyone was talking about....

She was none other than the beautiful Chosen Chen Manyao!

Although she had a powerful cultivation base, and was skilled in both strategy and tactics, what most people noticed was her spectacular beauty. Because of the semi-transparent veil she wore, it was impossible to tell the true extent of her good looks, but even still, countless people would stare at her with beating hearts.

At one point, Bai Xiaochun looked over, annoyed, to see a whole group of disciples clustered around her. Suddenly, she looked up at him, her eyes cold and icy.

The look she was giving him left him feeling even more annoyed than before.

“Her cultivation base isn’t as profound as mine, and her position isn’t as high as mine either. Her techniques don’t measure up, and her background can’t compare. What’s so amazing about her!?” After some thought, he was also convinced that she wasn't as good-looking as he was either. He widened his eyes into a glare, and she looked away. Laughing and chatting, she led the group of cultivators away.

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly. By this time, evening was falling, and he began to ask around about his friends, such as Xu Baocai, Big Fatty Zhang, Hou Yunfei, and Third Fatty Hei. He learned that some had been injured, or even collapsed from exhaustion, but none had perished. Breathing a sigh of relief, he offered sincere thanks to all of the other disciples who had been with his friends in the various spell formations.

Bai Xiaochun could be a diplomatic person when necessary, and was well aware that the likely reason why all of his best friends had survived the war was because people had been watching out for them for his sake.

The other disciples from the various spell formations were very moved by his expression of thanks, and their respect for him grew.

Eventually he found some prime elders of the two sects who were sighing over how brutal the fighting had been. When Bai Xiaochun appeared, they smiled and began to chat. After some pleasantries, he asked about where Xuemei had been taken.

One of the Blood Stream Sect's prime elders winked knowingly and said, "Xuemei was seriously injured during the fighting. Although she'll recover, she needs to spend some time in secluded meditation. Since she's an important disciple of the Blood Stream Sect, she'll definitely be in the eastern section of the city, where the least damage was sustained. Head over there, you should be able to find her."

Having determined Xuemei's location, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and continued to engage in some idle chatter before taking his leave and heading toward the eastern section of the city.

Along the way, he looked around at the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects taking control of the remnants of the city, and felt very pleased. The more he thought about it, the more he realized that his decision back in the Luochen Mountains had been the correct one.

It was already possible to see that the disciples of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects were starting to get comfortable with each other. Bai Xiaochun was very pleased. Eventually, he passed through the center of the city, where the Profound Stream Sect's treasure store was located. Although the sky was dark, there were still quite a number of cultivators there, busily clearing out the treasures. Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun's expression flickered.

"I remember hearing that the Holy Pill Wall Fragment back in the Blood Stream Sect had been robbed from the Pill Stream Sect. Presumably, the other half remained with the Pill Stream Sect. Since the Pill Stream Sect was conquered by the Profound Stream Sect, I wonder if that wall fragment is in the Profound Stream Sect's treasure storehouse...." Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai

Xiaochun hurried over to find the disciple in charge of clearing out the treasure storehouse.

If any other person had asked about the matter, they would have been rebuffed immediately. But Bai Xiaochun was different. The disciple in charge only hesitated for a moment before nodding and helping Bai Xiaochun search for the wall fragment. He even escorted him into the storehouse itself and handed over the wall fragment personally.

The only stipulation was that records had to be kept that Bai Xiaochun had taken the wall fragment. Bai Xiaochun didn't mind that at all. Excitedly accepting the wall fragment, he began to study it.

Of course, he didn't enter into a trance, but only made a cursory examination. Almost immediately, he could tell that this wall fragment would help him to advance by leaps and bounds with his skill in the Dao of medicine.

“I wonder if I could eventually try to concoct the River-Defying Pill?” Shaking his head, he put the wall fragment away, bowed deeply to the disciple in charge, and then continued on his way to the eastern section of the city.

By the time he arrived, the moon was climbing high into the sky. This area of the city hadn’t received nearly as much damage as the other parts, and was also much quieter. Only the occasional cultivator could be seen, most of them on guard duty. Any of them who spotted Bai Xiaochun would immediately clasp hands in greeting.

After asking around, Bai Xiaochun determined where Xuemei was staying. His heart had already begun beating a bit faster. Without any hesitation, he headed in that direction, and soon found himself in front of a type of residence referred to as a spirit abode.

It wasn’t very large, but was surrounded by flickering spell formations. Some of them were Blood Stream Sect formations that absorbed blood qi from the area, which would allow the cultivator inside the spirit abode to heal more quickly.

Stopping in front of the door, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. There were many things he wanted to ask Du Lingfei, and yet suddenly, he felt himself hesitating.

After a moment of thought, he chuckled calmly.

“Regardless of anything,” he thought, “she's my boo. Before, we were enemies, but now the two sects have become one.” With those thoughts on his mind, he stepped forward and reached his hand in the direction of the door.

Soft rumblings could be heard as he sent power toward the spirit abode. He was just about to say something when the door swung open. There appeared Xuemei, her mask on as usual. After looking at him for a moment, she softly said, “Du Xuemei offers greetings, Blood Master.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0310 awe-chapter-311

The moon cast shafts of white light down onto the earth below, creating a scene of both biting coldness and gentle softness. Overall, it was breathtakingly beautiful.

Xuemei looked very striking as she stood there in front of the door to the spirit abode. She wore a voluminous robe, but the curves of her body were still visible beneath the fabric. She looked very beautiful.

Her voice was soft, but at the same time, slightly raspy in a way that almost made Bai Xiaochun’s ears itch....

Last time, it didn’t matter what Bai Xiaochun said when he tried to get her to come out of her immortal's cave, she had remained inside. To see her suddenly appear right out in the open caused him to smile.

“Last time you refused to see me. This time, there’s nowhere for you to escape to.”

The familiar way in which he spoke to her, not even bothering to address her, caused her to look deeply at him, a strange light gleaming in her eyes. Although she wore a mask, making it impossible to see her facial features, there was something about her that seemed very weak.

“Many thanks for your kindness in saving my life, Blood Master. When you came to my immortal's cave last time, I was injured, and had just lost the struggle to become blood master. I felt blank inside, and didn’t feel up to facing you. Please forgive me.” With that, she clasped hands and bowed deeply. As she did, her sleeve slipped down, revealing a scar on her hand that had clearly been there for some time. As she bent over, some of her curves became even more prominent than before, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but take a look.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and said, “Why are you being so polite, boo? Take off that mask so I can see you.”

Excitement building in his heart, he took a step toward the door.

Xuemei’s eyes widened. Never could she have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would say something like that, nor that he would start walking toward her. Without even thinking about it, she stepped backward.

Suddenly, her knees went weak, and she staggered a bit. Eyes flashing with anger, she said, “Blood Master, please behave yourself. You showed great kindness by saving me, but that doesn’t give you the right to dishonor me! I'm Xuemei, not some ‘boo’.”

“Cut the crap!” Bai Xiaochun said, feeling less than pleased. He took another step forward, unleashing the power of his cultivation base to flash forward with incredible speed. In the briefest of instants, he was right in front of Xuemei.

At any other time, Xuemei’s cultivation base would have been strong enough to resist him. But she was still recovering from a grievous injury, and wasn’t a match for him in any way. In the blink of an eye, he reached out, grabbed her mask, and pulled it off!

As her mask was plucked off of her face, black hair spilled down her shoulders like a waterfall. Bai Xiaochun threw the mask off to the side, and her face was revealed, ashen, with starkly cold beauty. She was clearly angry, but was so weak that her anger didn't burn as hot as it might have.

Although she wasn’t soul-shakingly beautiful, her classic good looks were enough to put her on the same level as Song Junwan!

However, this person was not Du Lingfei!

Xuemei backed away further. Her face was pale, and her hair was disheveled. She was even trembling. Eyes flaring with coldness, she pointed at Bai Xiaochun and said, “What do you think you’re doing, Nightcrypt!?!?”

Because of her overall weakness, the coldness in her eyes seemed more like humiliation.

When Bai Xiaochun saw her face, his expression flickered wildly, and a murderous aura sprang up around him. His eyes were instantly shot with blood.

“If you’re not my boo,” he said, “then who are you?!?!” His mind was spinning with shock and anxiety.

Xuemei’s expression became even more icily angry than before. She almost couldn’t believe the way Bai Xiaochun was acting. She had emerged to thank him for saving her life. But unexpectedly, he had ripped off her mask, and then started talking like a madman. Backing up again, a fierce look appeared in her eyes.

“Have you gone crazy, Nightcrypt? I'll say it again. I’m not your boo! I'm Xuemei!”

“You’re not Xuemei!!” Bai Xiaochun’s heart and mind were in chaos, and he felt like he was going insane. As he stared at Xuemei’s face, he thought back to what he had occurred inside the Blood Ancestor. The last time that mask had fallen off her face, a very different face had been revealed!

“What do you mean I'm not Xuemei? What are you talking about?!” Xuemei continued to edge away nervously. She suddenly got the feeling that this version of Bai Xiaochun was very, very dangerous, like a bolt of lightning just waiting to strike.

“Who are you?” Bai Xiaochun shouted at the retreating Xuemei. “Why are you pretending to be Xuemei? Where’s the real Xuemei!?!?” He needed answers. He couldn't accept a situation in which he walked away without an explanation. Flying forward, he reached out and, to Xuemei’s horror, attempted to grab her arm.

However, it was in that moment that a light cough suddenly filled the spirit abode. To Bai Xiaochun, that light cough felt like thunder rumbling in his ears.

He staggered in place, and Xuemei managed to duck out of reach of the hand he had been reaching out toward her. She quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the flickering image of a plum blossom to appear in front of her. She was now radiating a prickly killing intent, her mind seething with rage toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun shook his head violently, but the rumbling sound inside of him didn't stop. Face pale, he stopped in place and looked at the middle-aged man who was walking out of the room behind Xuemei.

He had stern features, and looked as dangerous as an unsheathed sword. Shocking pressure rolled into the room with him, making it impossible for Bai Xiaochun to even take a step.

“Patriarch Limitless!” Bai Xiaochun said, his pupils constricting. At any other moment, he would have been trembling in fear to face the pressure of a Nascent Soul patriarch, but at the moment he didn’t care.

Patriarch Limitless had a very serious look on his face as he walked forward and patted Xuemei on the shoulder. Xuemei didn't seem pleased, but didn’t dare to defy her father, and reigned in her killing aura.

“Father,” she said by way of greeting. Settling her qi and blood, she dissipated the blood-colored plum blossom.

“Patriarch Limitless, look at your daughter!” Bai Xiaochun said, glaring at him. “She's not Xuemei!”

Clearly, he was so enraged that, despite the pressure weighing down on him, he wasn't willing to back down.

Patriarch Limitless looked coldly at Bai Xiaochun and said nothing. However, the longer he went without talking, the more pressure roiled out. Bai Xiaochun began to tremble, until finally, he let out a roar, causing streams of blood qi to erupt out. That was blood qi from the Blood Ancestor, and when it fused with Bai Xiaochun, his energy grew even more powerful. It rose up higher and higher, until he was on a similar level as Patriarch Limitless!

Xuemei’s heart trembled as she looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then her father. There was a strange light in her father’s eyes that she recognized. When that light appeared, it meant that the person he was looking at was very important.

“I only have one daughter, and this is her!” Patriarch Limitless swished his sleeve, causing his own energy to dissipate.

In response to Patriarch Limitless’s words, Bai Xiaochun’s face drained of blood. However, he still wasn't willing to give in, and said, “I saw Xuemei's face in the heart cavity, and she didn’t look like that!”

“Take a close look at my daughter’s face,” Patriarch Limitless said. Although he spoke calmly, it was in a voice that could clearly tolerate no arguments. It was like heavenly thunder pounding in Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

Heart quivering, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and looked closely at Xuemei. Then he looked back at Patriarch Limitless. Finally, he took a few steps back, a look of confusion building up on his face.

The facial features of Patriarch Limitless and Xuemei were very similar. Most likely, even mortals would be able to notice the similarities, much less cultivators, who had much keener senses. Obviously, this was a father and a daughter!

The look on Bai Xiaochun’s face grew even more blank. He thought back to what Du Lingfei looked like, and then compared it to Patriarch Limitless, and realized that the two of them didn’t look anything alike.

“Then who did I see back in the heart cavity?” He staggered backward again, almost as if he had been struck physically. The confusion in his eyes grew more intense. He simply couldn’t believe how everything was playing out. He suddenly started wondering if he was remembering things wrong....

If the woman in front of him really was Xuemei, then how could he have seen Du Lingfei in the heart cavity? Who exactly was Du Lingfei?!

Bai Xiaochun bitterly recalled everything which had occurred in the trial by fire for blood master. Gradually, he began to tremble as he thought back to the events which had played out in the Blood Wasteland. In the moment before the teleportation, he remembered seeing a wound on Xuemei’s hand, and also remembered that blood had been dripping down from behind her mask. Clearly, she had been wounded!

However, once they reached the tunnel beyond, Xuemei’s wound had disappeared, and there was no blood on her face. In fact, all of her injuries had been healed!

Back then, he had assumed that she had used some special technique to heal herself, and hadn't paid much attention to the situation. But now, he realized that there was something very strange about the whole thing!!

Heart pounding, he looked up at Xuemei’s hand, and then, began to shake. Right there on her hand was a scar, plainly visible for anyone to see!!

The sight of that scar caused incredible waves of shock to batter Bai Xiaochun’s heart!

At that point, Patriarch Limitless’s face turned somber, and he slowly said, “So, it seems you saw the mysterious person in question....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0311 awe-chapter-312

Bai Xiaochun understood. That scar explained everything. The person he had encountered in that tunnel in the blood master trial by fire had not been Xuemei.

“Mei’er doesn’t remember anything that happened after she entered the tunnel that day,” Patriarch Limitless said slowly, his expression serious. “That includes everything involving you becoming the blood master. She only remembers waking up outside of the Blood Ancestor.

“After realizing she had no memories of the events in the tunnel, her heart was filled with confusion and panic. She immediately came to report everything to me, and even I was shocked. I used all the power at my disposal to investigate the matter, but couldn’t come up with any explanation. If you know the person in question, tell me who it is!”

Bai Xiaochun opened his mouth to speak, but in the end, didn’t reveal Du Lingfei’s name. He suddenly realized that, considering he didn’t know who she really was, he also didn’t know if her name was even really Du Lingfei....

Everything about her was a big mystery. As he sank further into silence, he also realized that all the clues he had pieced together so far were useless.

Finally, he shook his head and clasped hands formally to Patriarch Limitless and Xuemei. Then he turned and left. Xuemei sighed. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun had some sort of connection to whoever it was that had replaced her in the tunnel. She could also see that Bai Xiaochun had been struck with deep sadness.

Patriarch Limitless watched Bai Xiaochun leave, and did nothing to stop him. Bai Xiaochun had a very special position, and if there was something he didn't want to talk about, Patriarch Limitless couldn't force him to do so.

Bai Xiaochun walked down the street for some distance, then randomly selected an empty spirit abode to enter. Once inside, he looked up at the moonlit sky and thought back to everything he remembered about Du Lingfei. Then he reviewed what he had learned from Patriarch Limitless and his daughter. After a while, he sighed.

“Du Lingfei, just who exactly are you...?”

A month went by, during which time the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects slowly absorbed the Profound and Pill Stream sects. The enormous city became their new sect headquarters. As for the cultivators of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, the time they had spent fighting together left many of them with close friendships.

Although the two sects were not yet fully united, there was much less friction than before. Occasional conflicts would break out, but overall, things were getting very calm.

Everyone seemed to be keeping themselves under control. After all, the war wasn’t over yet. Although there were no opponents to fight in the Lower Reaches, everyone knew their true goal was the Middle Reaches!

Only by becoming a Middle Reaches sect could the war truly be considered over!

That shared goal was like glue binding the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects together. As for the patriarchs and the Gold Core cultivators, they knew more than anyone that if the two sects worked together, they could be like a powerful weapon. However, any disunity could lead to mutual destruction!

Because of those realities, and because of Bai Xiaochun, the two sects’ alliance continued to grow firm and strong.

After reaching an agreement with the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, Patriarch Crimsonsoul and the rest of the Profound Stream Sect did their best to join in the efforts. They wanted to be a part of the future Middle Reaches sect, and to have a chance to continue to pass down their traditions.

The Profound Stream Sect cultivators were very sincere in their desire to cooperate. They had been well and truly beaten, and now that a new sect was being founded by the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, they wanted to be a part of it. They also wanted to go to the Middle Reaches and have access to the abundant resources there. Because of that, they didn’t refuse any of the demands made of them, and worked hard in every aspect that was required.

It was the same with the Pill Stream Sect. As for those who had betrayed their sect in the past, mercy and understanding were shown, and they were allowed to return to their previous positions.

Those two sects had previously been bitter enemies, but now, in this new sect, they had no choice but to be subservient to the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects. If they wanted to have a say in the future affairs of the sect, they had to maintain good relations with the other sects, including the Profound Stream Sect. That was the only way to ensure that they got their share of the resources to be had in the Middle Reaches.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay much attention to the goings-on between the sects. He knew that the patriarchs would handle affairs in the best way. Having little else to do, he went into secluded meditation. After burying the matter of Du Lingfei in his heart, he emerged refreshed. Just when he was about to go find Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends, the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect sent him a Dharmic decree, calling him to the grand hall in the middle of the city.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested in attending any meetings, but he didn’t really have any choice. Sighing, he headed in the direction of the grand hall. Along the way, any disciples who caught sight of him would clasp hands and bow, expressions of respect and awe on their faces. Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately swelled with pleasure.

As he walked along, he would wave and call out greetings.

“Your hard work is much appreciated, Sect Nieces and Nephews!”

“Keep up the good work! Well done!”

“You have my support, all of you!”

Slowly but surely, his sour mood faded. Eventually, he reached the grand hall, and the disciples on guard duty clasped hands and cried, “Greetings, Junior Patriarch!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart soared into the heavens.

Assuming the posture of someone of the Senior Generation, he clasped his hands behind his back and said, “Keep working as hard as you are, and one of these days, you might become junior patriarchs too!”

With that, he chuckled and strode into the grand hall.

As soon as he entered, he sucked in a deep breath. The pressure within the hall was so immense that the air was rippling. Right there up ahead of him was an entire group of patriarchs!

Patriarch Ironwood and the Song Clan patriarch had not come to join the main force. Without them present, that left four patriarchs from the Spirit Stream Sect and six from the Blood Stream Sect.

Four patriarchs were present to represent the Profound Stream Sect, including Crimsonsoul. Finally, there were three patriarchs from the Pill Stream Sect. In total, there were seventeen Nascent Soul Daoist masters, whose soul fluctuations completely filled the enormous hall.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun entered, the eyes of all seventeen individuals focused on him. Different expressions could be seen in those gazes. The patriarchs from the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect were calm. The Profound Stream Sect patriarchs had conflicted expressions, especially Patriarch Crimsonsoul, whose heart trembled with a certain sense of powerlessness.

As for the three Nascent Soul patriarchs from the Pill Stream Sect, their eyes shone with strange gleams of interest.

It all made sense, of course. The entire situation in the cultivation world of the Lower Reaches had been changed because of Bai Xiaochun!

To see so many Nascent Soul experts staring at him caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver. Suddenly, he was struck with the fear that the patriarchs might have decided to dispose of him now that his usefulness was over, or that they wished to settle accounts based on his past mistakes. His face turned pale, and his eyes widened. Looking around nervously, he became more convinced that he was right.

“Um, good morning, patriarchs....” he said cautiously. With the exception of the Spirit Stream Sect patriarchs, all of the other Nascent Soul experts gaped in surprise. However, none of them spoke. Instead, their gazes grew more profound as they stared at him, making it impossible to tell what they were thinking.

The Spirit Stream Sect’s founding patriarch looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Bai Xiaochun, there’s something you must--”

The looks on the faces of the patriarchs’ faces caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to tremble. As soon as the founding patriarch started speaking, he was convinced that he was going to say something bad. It would definitely be some sort of dangerous mission or assignment. Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and his heart began to beat rapidly.

He suddenly realized that he couldn’t allow the founding patriarch to finish that sentence. If he did, it would be very hard to refuse the request. Before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun clutched at his chest and screamed, then coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. Staggering backward, his face turned a sickly pale color, and he gasped, “Patriarchs, I was seriously injured in the fighting, which opened up previously healed wounds! I need to go into secluded meditation to recover. Alright, I won’t disturb you any longer. Bye now!”

With that, he hurried toward the door.

Before he could take more than a few steps, the founding patriarch glared at him and said, “Stop right there!”

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, looking like he might cry at any moment. Coughing up another mouthful of blood, he looked piteously over his shoulder at the founding patriarch.

“Patriarch, I really am injured. It's bad. Really bad. Besides, I’ve gotten too famous recently. If I go out on my own, tons of people are going to be after my head. Why don’t you give the mission to someone else? I really can’t be going out into battle....”

The founding patriarch looked like he was being struck by a sudden headache, and was unsure of whether to laugh or cry. The other patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect were all smiling wryly. They had heard of Bai Xiaochun’s personality, but this was their first time seeing it firsthand, and they were struck speechless.

The patriarchs from the Blood Stream Sect were even more astonished. Patriarch Limitless almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing, and the arch-patriarch was shocked. It was hardly necessary to mention the Profound Stream Sect or the Pill Stream Sect. Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s eyes were wide as saucers, and his expression was one of complete incredulity, as if he had just seen a ghost. He almost couldn’t believe that the Bai Xiaochun he had seen on the battlefield was the same person as the one standing in front of him.

He even started to wonder if was hallucinating, or if Bai Xiaochun had somehow been replaced.

The three patriarchs from the Pill Stream Sect were completely taken aback. The words Bai Xiaochun had just spoken were echoing in their minds, and they had a hard time reconciling that this was the person who had brought about such momentous changes to the eastern Lower Reaches.

“We don’t want you to go out on another mission!” said the founding patriarch, shaking his head.

Bai Xiaochun blinked, then asked for confirmation a few times.

“I already said, we don’t want you to go out on a mission. Just as you suggested before all of this started, we are discussing the founding of the new sect. We need a name for it, and were wondering if you had any suggestions.”

“Oh?” Bai Xiaochun said. Nervous, he began to blabber: “A sect name, huh? Hm. What about the Undying Sect? Or the Live Forever Sect? No, no, those won’t do. We’re going to the Middle Reaches of the river, right? We need something with the word ‘river’ in it. How about the River-Defying Sect? Or we could go with the Turtle River Sect. Hey, that’s a good name! Turtle River Sect! There’s some deep meaning in that one. Wait. Let me think some more. What about the Bastards of--”

“We’ll go with River-Defying Sect,” the founding patriarch interrupted, worried about where Bai Xiaochun would go next, and that he might say even more unseemly sect names. “There’s another matter to discuss. During the ceremonies, we need to officially name the junior patriarch of the sect. In addition to the name of the sect itself, we also wanted to ask your opinion on who to pick!”

“Officially name the junior patriarch?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, and finally, his heart eased up with the realization that they really hadn’t called him here to give him a dangerous mission. Breathing a sigh of relief, his expression turned from nervousness to solemnity. The blood disappeared from his lips, and the paleness of his expression turned into dignity. Suddenly, he looked like a mountain peak, standing there tall, reticent, and heroic.

Veins of steel pulsing and eyes flashing like lightning, he said, “No one can handle that responsibility except for me!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0312 awe-chapter-313

The sudden change in Bai Xiaochun’s demeanor caused more eyes to widen among the patriarchs who sat in the grand hall. That was especially true of Patriarch Crimsonsoul of the Profound Stream Sect, who couldn’t help but rub his eyes a bit, and then look back at Bai Xiaochun in confusion.

It was the same with the Pill Stream Sect, and even the Blood Stream Sect patriarchs were shocked.

The patriarchs from the Spirit Stream Sect were smiling wryly in embarrassment. The founding patriarch glared at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, then rubbed his forehead. Sounding a bit displeased, he said, “It might be good for you to think about it for a while, don’t you think...?”

“Patriarch, I don’t think anyone else but me is suitable to become the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect. What's there to think about? I agree!” Bai Xiaochun stood there, looking off into the distance, fairly radiating energy. His hair swirled around him, and his eyes seemed to shine like the stars. He seemed like something beyond a Chosen, almost like a deity!

The Blood Stream Sect’s arch-patriarch cleared his throat and said, “You’re already completely famous. Why don’t you give some of the other disciples a chance...?”

Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve and gazed up into the air, looking completely stern and awe-inspiring. It was as if his righteousness could shake everything in heaven and earth. “Patriarchs, the reason I’m so famous is because I take my responsibilities seriously! That's an important quality! I, Bai

Xiaochun, am a person who loves my sect. How could I force other disciples to sacrifice themselves to handle my responsibilities? I could never treat them so unfairly! That’s not how Bai Xiaochun operates. Not ever! Fate has selected me for this role, and if the sect picks me, then I won’t frown even if I have to go through hell or high water!”

“But you’ve been wounded,” Patriarch Crimsonsoul suddenly said, “and as the junior patriarch, you would likely encounter even more situations in which you could end up wounded.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, and for the first time, he actually took a moment to think. After a moment of indecision, he gritted his teeth and then chuckled casually. “As cultivators, which of us haven’t shed some blood? I, Bai Xiaochun, have a dream. I dream that for the rest of my life, the day will never come that I am forced to shed even a single tear for my sect. Even if I have to shed a lifetime of blood, I will make that dream become a reality. And that is because I... am the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect!”

Although Bai Xiaochun was smiling, it was a smile of utmost sincerity and solemnity. It contained his hopes for the sect, and his determination to stride into the future. As he spoke, his energy surged, and everyone in the grand hall was shaken inwardly.

Were it not for the fact that all of the patriarchs had witnessed Bai Xiaochun’s performance from earlier, they would all be convinced that he was the epitome of righteousness and loyalty!

The hall fell into silence. Strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the patriarchs. A long moment passed, and finally the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect chuckled.

“Very well then. In a month, we’ll hold the ceremony. The River-Defying Sect shall be founded in the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world! Furthermore, we will send a petition to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect in the Upper Reaches, asking for permission to replace the Sky River Court!”

Laughing Loudly, Bai Xiaochun said, “I’ve been waiting for this war for a long time!”

After conferring a bit more with the patriarchs, he turned and left, heart swelling with pride.

Upon leaving the hall, his spirits did not fall. Everywhere he went, people looked over, at first in shock, and then with expressions of fervor and respect.

Upon arriving back at the spirit abode, he sighed comfortably, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

“Those old fogeys scared the daylights out of me. I thought they were going to give me a dangerous mission or something. Why didn't they bring up the junior patriarch thing earlier?!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he shook his head and settled down cross-legged.

“As the junior patriarch, I'm definitely going to be completely and utterly famous. Hahaha! Soon I’m going to need to change the rallying cry. I can’t use *the Middle Peak blood master has infinite magical powers, the Spirit Stream Heaven-Dao expert can shake the whole world* anymore! It’ll have to be *the River-Defying junior patriarch is unparalleled under heaven*!” Such thoughts got him even more excited than before.

“In terms of safety... hmph! Being the junior patriarch is definitely the safest of all. They’re not going to be sending me out on missions, that’s for sure. And I’ll definitely have lots of other disciples to guard me whenever I leave the sect.” Bai Xiaochun felt wonderful, and could hardly wait for the ceremony the following month.

The official founding of the River-Defying Sect became the hottest topic of conversation among the disciples of the four sects. Furthermore, word spread until the entire eastern Lower Reaches was abuzz!

All of the smaller sects, as well as countless cultivator clans and numerous rogue cultivators, were all completely shaken. To them, even a single one of the four great sects was a vast and important organization, but now, all of the four great sects had joined into one!

A powerful organization like that hadn’t ever appeared in the history of the eastern Lower Reaches. Before long, word spread to the cultivator clans and smaller sects in the delta region. However, there was even more news that started to circulate, news that got everyone shaking with madness and astonishment!

The goal of the River-Defying Sect wasn’t just to join together into one large sect. They wanted to fight their way into the Middle Reaches and take over the Sky River Court as the dominant sect there!

That news virtually drove people crazy. After all, if the River-Defying Sect succeeded, then it would mean that four slots would open up for new sects in the Lower Reaches!

The River-Defying Sect’s thirst to become a Middle Reaches sect only continued to grow stronger. Likewise, the thirst of the delta sects and cultivator clans to establish their place in the Lower Reaches was just as strong!

And thus, disputes arose, as well as secret treaties. The entire eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world was shaken. As the commotion grew, everyone was focused on the grand ceremony to come!

The River-Defying Sect did not establish an official sect headquarters. As for the city in the mountains, it was only a temporary base. According to the River-Defying Sect, the only suitable headquarters was currently occupied by the Sky River Court!

Despite being only a temporary headquarters, it didn’t take long for the more than 1,000,000 cultivators of the four sects to renovate the entire city. They even expanded it, making it look more glorious than before. The reserve powers of all four sects were present, marked by enormous vortexes up in the sky, which emanated shocking pressure at all times.

As the ceremony approached, the sects and clans of the Lower Reaches used any and all means necessary to arrange for emissaries from their various organizations to hurry toward the city. As for those who weren’t powerful enough to send people such a long distance in such a short time, they were simply out of luck.

Of course, the eastern Lower Reaches was a huge place, and most sects had connections to other cultivator clans, as well as forces in the delta regions. Because of that, a vast number of people converged on the city to attend the ceremony, so much so that the city itself couldn’t contain them, forcing them to set up camp in the surrounding area.

More people arrived every day. Soon, the time for the ceremony arrived.

On that day, the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect decorated the entire city. They all wore new Daoist robes, and looked completely spectacular. The vortex above rumbled with power, and the seventeen patriarchs hovered in the air like seventeen gods. Beneath them were more than a hundred legacy echelon cultivators in the Gold Core stage, who were precious gems in the sect, and the hope for future glory.

Further down were the hundreds of prime elders, who shone like glittering stars. Then were the even larger numbers of Foundation Establishment cultivators, whose energy caused brightly colored lights to flash in heaven and earth. The people outside the city who had come to observe the ceremony were completely shocked, and couldn’t help but cry out in shock.

Suddenly, an archaic voice echoed out in all directions, a voice that boomed like thunder and caused the hearts of all cultivators who heard it to tremble on the verge of exploding. “Let heaven and earth bear witness! Let an oath be sworn to Time itself! This day is the day the River-Defying Sect is founded!”

“We, the Spirit Stream Sect, henceforth abandon the name of our sect, and join the River-Defying Sect!”

“We, the Blood Stream Sect, henceforth abandon the name of our sect, and join the River-Defying Sect!”

“We, the Profound Stream Sect....”

“We, the Pill Stream Sect....”

The voices of the patriarchs of the four sects began to ring out, one after another.

Their voices filled the entire world with intense rumbling sounds. As their oaths echoed out, it proved that in the eastern Lower Reaches, a sect was rising up the likes of which had never been seen before!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart pounded with excitement as he hovered in midair, looking up at the ceremony going on.

It was then that a strange sign suddenly appeared in the sky!

Golden light flooded out, flickering, scintillating, as if a bolt of golden lightning had appeared. Then, a huge vortex appeared higher up in the sky, a vortex fully 30,000 meters wide!

It was as if the sky itself were collapsing. Intense pressure weighed down that affected even the patriarchs, the Gold Core cultivators, and the River-Defying Sect’s reserve powers. This energy made them seem like fireflies looking up at the bright moon!

The pressure didn’t just affect the River-Defying Sect. The entire city began to tremble, and the cultivators who had come to observe the ceremony started to shake. They felt as if heavenly might were crushing down on them, and they dropped to their knees, trembling, to kowtow.

Not a sound could be heard in all creation.

The River-Defying Sect’s patriarchs were all trembling as they struggled to raise their heads. In the huge vortex up above, an enormous eye slowly opened. It was several thousand meters wide, and as it looked down, everyone who saw it was shaken.

It was as if the entire world were a bottle, and someone outside of the bottle were looking into it through the bottleneck!

Bai Xiaochun's heart was pounding in shock; he could hardly believe what he was seeing.

The eye slowly took in the sights below, and then a powerful voice erupted out from the vortex to fill heaven and earth.

“River-Defying Sect, hear the decree of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0313 awe-chapter-314

The patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect exchanged enthusiastic glances. Then the arch-patriarch of the Blood Stream Division clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“We will comply with any decree!”

The ancient voice then continued: “The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect approves your petition to go to war, and permits you to destroy the Sky River Court and take over its position.”

Each word spoken by the voice boomed like thunder, echoing out in all directions. When the last words were spoken, a golden beam of light shot toward the arch-patriarch, coming to a stop in front of him in the form of a jade slip!

Simultaneously, the vortex vanished. It was as if the giant figure from before had never been there. After a brief moment of silence, the arch-patriarch lifted the golden jade slip high above his head!

As he did, all of the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect, as well as all of the other cultivators who had come to observe the ceremony, broke out into uproarious cheering!

“Victory belongs to the River-Defying Sect!”

“Victory belongs to the River-Defying Sect!!”

“Victory belongs to the River-Defying Sect!!!”

The cacophony of their cheers echoed out to fill the entire world around them. The cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were extremely excited, especially those from the Spirit Stream Division and the Blood Stream Division. Of course, their enthusiasm quickly rubbed off on the disciples of the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions. Soon, all eyes were filled with confidence and anticipation.

After all, the best way for new allies to get used to each other was to fight side by side in war!

Under the bloody grindstone that was war, the four sects would truly become one, would truly transform, and would truly achieve glory!

Even as everyone was cheering at the tops of their lungs, the arch-patriarch’s gaze swept across the crowd and came to rest on Bai Xiaochun. Then he spoke out in a voice that instantly suppressed all other noise, becoming the only thing people heard! “Bai Xiaochun, step forward for the official conferring ceremony!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered. The atmosphere already had his blood boiling, so he took a deep breath to calm himself, then strode out in front of the seventeen Nascent Soul patriarchs.

“Disciple Bai Xiaochun offers greetings, Patriarchs!” As he clasped hands and bowed, his expression was somber, and a murderous aura slowly began to build up around him. He seemed as firm and unyielding as iron, like a celestial warrior who had seen hundreds of battles, a person possessing unmatchable energy.

His features were somehow chiseled and grim, and deep in his eyes, stars, moons, and other heavenly bodies swirled about. The power of his blood qi flowed out, creating a blood-colored suit of armor around him, complete with a blood-colored cape!

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun did not seem timid or cowardly, nor even the least bit naughty or mischievous. He stood as straight and tall as a mountain peak, and seemed as profound and deep as the ocean!

Everyone watching the scene was shaken, especially the cultivators who were just seeing him for the first time. They gasped, and looks of profound respect appeared in their eyes. They had all heard of Bai Xiaochun, and knew that he was the person responsible for all the momentous changes in the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world!

Now that they could see him for the first time in person, he looked exactly like the cool, collected Chosen that they had imagined. The same thing was going through all of their minds: he was obviously a person who lived up to his reputation!

“So that’s Bai Xiaochun?! He’s the ultimate Chosen!”

“I’ve only heard some stories about this Bai Xiaochun. Some people say that he’s wise, intelligent, and courageous, a natural-born prodigy, a star who shines with boundless light! However, I've also heard more than a few people say that he’s a greedy coward, completely despicable and shameless....”

“People like him are bound to be the subject of plenty of jealousy. Now that I think about it, I also heard some bad stories about him. But those stories are probably just made-up.”

The people who knew him best were the cultivators from the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect. Many of those cultivators were looking at him with wide eyes, almost as if they didn’t even recognize him. Big Fatty Zhang gasped, and Hou Yunfei shook his head with a smile. Xu Baocai and many of Bai Xiaochun’s other friends were all simply sighing at how skilled he had become at striking the right pose at the right time.

Bai Xiaochun felt very proud of himself, and was completely filled with anticipation at the glorious scene which would play out when he officially became the junior patriarch. However, none of those emotions showed on his face. His expression was somber, and his veins of steel were pulsing. He stood there coolly, looking just like he had when he was Nightcrypt. People immediately began to cheer. All the while, strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the seventeen patriarchs. However, inwardly, they were relieved. Many of them had been worried that Bai Xiaochun might act the way he had when he’d met with them earlier, and ruin the ceremony.

“Bai Xiaochun, as the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, you must shoulder a weighty responsibility. Henceforth, you are a core element of our sect. Your life, your honor, and everything else about you are all inextricably linked with the sect.

“The glory of the sect is also your glory! The shame of the sect is also your shame! Likewise, your glory and shame will belong to the sect!

“No matter where you go, no matter how much time passes, your home, your roots, and your everything… are the sect!

“If the day ever comes that the sect falls, it will be your responsibility to restore it! If the day ever comes that the sect basks in unheard-of glory, it will be your responsibility to defend it! You must ensure that the River-Defying Sect never becomes divided, and never loses its heart and soul!

“Bai Xiaochun, are you prepared to shoulder such responsibility? Your answer please!” The arch-patriarch’s expression was unprecedentedly calm as he spoke in a voice as explosive as thunder, a voice which caused all hearts to tremble.

Bai Xiaochun shivered, and suddenly, all of his pride and complacency vanished. His desire to bask in glory faded away, and he stood there quietly, looking, in rare fashion, truly solemn and respectful.

He suddenly realized that the position of junior patriarch wasn’t just about glory and fame. It was a serious responsibility. For the rest of his life, he would never able to separate himself from or part ways with the River-Defying Sect.

It would be his home, and also, the most precious thing in his life. Bai Xiaochun suddenly found himself in a bit of a reverie. He thought back to Mount Hood in the Eastwood Mountains. He thought about his relatives in the village he had grown up in. He thought about how he had held his parents’ hands as they passed away. He thought about all the times he’d lit that stick of incense. He thought about everything he'd done in the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect.

Without even thinking about it, he looked over at Li Qinghou among the legacy echelon cultivators. Li Qinghou’s heart was filled with pride, pride that the same Bai Xiaochun he had brought to the sect was now grown up. To see Bai Xiaochun where he was now, and to see him looking over at him, caused Li Qinghou’s face to fill with a smile of deep gratification.

When Bai Xiaochun saw Li Qinghou smile, he took a deep breath, and an expression of determination filled his face. Looking back at the Blood Stream Division’s arch-patriarch, he clasped hands formally.

“Yes. I'm prepared.” He spoke the words slowly, because they were words of utmost importance. After speaking them, the gazes fixed upon him didn't make him feel grand and impressive. Instead, he felt as if a very heavy responsibility had just come to rest on his shoulders!

The arch-patriarch gave Bai Xiaochun a profound look. Because of his age and his cultivation base, he could see that Bai Xiaochun had spoken from the bottom of his heart, with complete sincerity. The arch-patriarch nodded, and then looked over at the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Division. Both patriarchs could see the looks of determination in each other’s eyes.

Without any hesitation, the arch-patriarch said, “On this day, Bai Xiaochun is conferred with the title of junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect!”

Trembling, the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, Junior Patriarch!”

It wasn’t just the Outer and Inner Sect disciples who bowed. The Foundation Establishment cultivators and the Gold Core experts also joined in. The junior patriarch of the sect occupied a position second only to the patriarchs themselves. It was even higher than the legacy echelon!

Song Que and the other Chosen all had no choice other than to bow their heads. Shangguan Tianyou’s hands were clenched tightly, and bitterness gripped his heart, but he had no other options available.

Then, a thunderous rumbling filled the air as the countless other cultivators in the audience also offered formal greetings.

“Greetings, Junior Patriarch of the River-Defying Sect!”

The deafening sound flowed out to fill heaven and earth, causing everything to tremble. Bai Xiaochun looked around, his heart surging. From the look on his face, he had many things he wished to say, and yet, wasn’t sure how to express them.

A moment passed, and his thoughts slowly coalesced into a single sentence. Although he didn’t speak it out loud, it settled down onto his heart, like an indelible mark that would be there for the rest of his life.

“I live for the sect!”

He only spoke the words in his heart, but from the expression on his face, the River-Defying Sect’s Nascent Soul patriarchs could tell what he was thinking. As they looked back at him, their eyes were filled with reminiscence, encouragement, and deep sighs.

Meanwhile, on the roof of a certain spirit abode within the city, a monkey could be seen, sitting there, looking up at the goings-on with a faint smile on his face.

“The sect isn’t going to let you down, kid!” the monkey murmured. Sitting next to the monkey was a rabbit, who was also staring up into the sky.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0314 awe-chapter-315

The grand ceremony to commemorate the founding of the River-Defying Sect was now over. However, the events which had just occurred became a daily topic of conversation among the countless people who inhabited the eastern Lower Reaches of the cultivation world.

Whether it was the Dharmic decree of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, or the fact that Bai Xiaochun had been conferred the title of junior patriarch, it all left an indelible impression upon the minds of the people regarding the power of the River-Defying Sect.

Soon, the bustle in the temporary headquarters began to die down as the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect departed.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s response to the River-Defying Sect’s request indicated that a new war was on the horizon. The four divisions of the River-Defying Sect took that war very seriously, and for many people in those sects, it was the culmination of their life’s work!

They would be fighting to establish a new sect headquarters, to rise from the Lower Reaches into the Middle Reaches. It was a war of utmost importance!

There were many preparations to be made, and all of the various patriarchs agreed that they needed to go all out, to hold nothing back!

The Pill Stream Division and the Profound Stream Division returned to their former territories to prepare everything for departure, including their reserve powers....

According to the agreement that had been reached by the patriarchs, they would head to the Blood Stream Division in two months' time. From there, they would set out onto the Heavenspan River, and head upstream toward the Sky River Court!

As the divisions left their temporary headquarters, Bai Xiaochun had various sect matters to attend to due to his status as the junior patriarch. On one particular evening, the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Division had a long discussion with him.

The discussion was held in a grand hall, along with Patriarch Ironwood and the other Nascent Soul patriarchs. Also present were Zheng Yuandong and Li Qinghou.

Before beginning to speak, the founding patriarch waved his hand, sealing the entire area so that their words would remain private. Even more surprising to Bai Xiaochun was that the other patriarchs all lent their power to the sealing. Clearly, they were being very cautious.

In a final display of caution, the founding patriarch produced a Feng Shui compass, which, upon activation, sent black and white light streaming out to form yet another sealing layer.

Bai Xiaochun could sense terrifying pressure coming from that Feng Shui compass. Although it looked ordinary, and even a bit worn, he could tell that it contained a level of power similar to the reserve powers of the sects.

However, the compass was so dilapidated that it apparently only had the strength left to seal down an area, and nothing more.

When the sealing was done, the founding patriarch sighed and looked over at Bai Xiaochun, a very serious expression on his face. “This Immortal-Executing Compass was passed down by the ancestors. With it here, not even a Deva Realm expert would be able to eavesdrop on us, at least not without expending significant effort.

“Xiaochun, the information I’m about to tell you must be kept completely confidential. If word spread, it could lead to a complete and utter disaster!”

Bai Xiaochun was already starting to get anxious, and was actually wondering if it would be better to not hear this information. After all, it meant that in the future, the mere slip of the tongue on his part could result in him losing his poor little life. Even as he hesitated over the matter, the founding patriarch continued.

“We didn't originally intend to reveal these matters to you, but since you are now the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, there are some things that can’t be kept secret. If certain events played out in the future, and you weren’t aware of the truth, it could cause problems for you.”

Bai Xiaochun could only focus, take a deep breath, and look intently at the founding patriarch.

“Our Spirit Stream Division's origins do not lie in the eastern cultivation world!” Not even paying attention to Bai Xiaochun’s reaction, the founding patriarch looked up, a gleam of reminiscence flickering in his eyes. “We come from the northern cultivation world, from a riversource sect that was called the Frigid School!”

“What?” Bai Xiaochun said, immediately shaken. Never could he have imagined that the founding patriarch would have something like this to say. To find out such information about the origins of the Spirit Stream Sect came completely out of the blue, leaving Bai Xiaochun a bit taken aback. Furthermore, when the founding patriarch mentioned the Frigid School, it instantly caused him to think about the Frigid School Medicine Manual.

“Long ago, the Frigid School was the dominant sect at the mouth of the river in the north. It was just as prominent as the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. However, because of an unexpected rebellion, the Frigid School collapsed and was supplanted. The survivors had no other choice but to swallow their humiliation and flee for their lives. Eventually, they came to the eastern cultivation world, where they set down new roots!

“Only two survivors actually made it here. One of them was my Master, and the other was the true spirit of the Frigid School!

“My Master secretly helped the Spirit Stream Sect become one of the four major sects in the Lower Reaches. As for that true spirit, she is the true reserve power within the Spirit Stream Division!” The other patriarchs in the hall maintained silence. As for Zheng Yuandong and Li Qinghou, both of them had looks of solemnity and shock; apparently, this was also their first time hearing this information.

“However, the true spirit was gravely injured, and could do little more than sleep in the form of a frigid corpse. In all the years that have passed, she has never awakened. The only method to awaken her is to use something called the River-Defying Pill. With that medicinal pill, the true spirit can be temporarily awakened to resolve virtually any crisis.

“The truth is that back when we were about to go to war with the Blood Stream Sect, our final hope rested in the true spirit. Unfortunately, we only have one River-Defying Pill, and can use it only in the absolutely direst of circumstances!” As the founding patriarch spoke, his words seemed to contain a profound level of ancientness.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already reeling from the waves of shock that pounded against it. He could hardly even breathe steadily.

“Over the years, we have tried every possible method to concoct another River-Defying Pill. Unfortunately, all such efforts have failed. After we get back to the headquarters, I need you to go offer formal greetings to the true spirit, and also, think of a way to concoct a River-Defying Pill, *before* we get to the Middle Reaches!

“If you can, then the Spirit Stream Division will be able to provide crucial assistance to the River-Defying Sect as a whole!!” Anticipation shone in the eyes of the founding patriarch as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. As for Bai Xiaochun, he took a deep breath; his mind was spinning, and he almost couldn’t believe what he was hearing. After a moment, he thought back to the formula for the River-Defying Pill.

His research into the pill had led him to the conclusion that it was very, very strange. It was only now that he realized that it was specifically intended to help a true spirit.

“The River-Defying Pill and the Frigid School Medicine Manual,” he murmured.

The founding patriarch nodded. “A Senior member of the sect gave those two items to you.”

“It was that monkey, wasn’t it?” Bai Xiaochun asked suddenly.

After a moment of hesitation, the founding patriarch nodded. Suddenly, numerous puzzle pieces clicked into place in Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

The matter at hand was a weighty one, and he needed more time to digest all the information. After leaving the hall, he returned to his spirit abode, still marveling in disbelief at everything he’d heard. Settling down, he pulled out the Frigid School Medicine Manual, as well as the formula for the River-Defying Pill, which he began to study closely.

“River-Defying Pill….” he murmured softly. He was suddenly extremely curious about the true spirit the patriarch had mentioned, and very much wanted to see what she looked like.

The following day, the last of the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions left. As for the Blood Stream Division cultivators, they were still making preparations for departure. They had something very important to do back in the former location of their sect.

Before leaving, the arch-patriarch came to find Bai Xiaochun, who was still ruminating over the information about the origin of the Spirit Stream Division. As Bai Xiaochun would soon find out, the information the arch-patriarch had to share was just as shocking as the information he had learned from the Spirit Stream Division.

The arch-patriarch quickly set up a spell formation seal, then looked over at Bai Xiaochun, his expression very serious as he said, “Xiaochun, do you know where our Blood Ancestor came from?”

“Huh? Where the Blood Ancestor came from?” Bai Xiaochun was taken aback, and couldn’t help but wonder why these two sects had so many secrets. Both of them had impressive backgrounds, the truth of which left him reeling.... He was almost in a daze as he looked at the arch-patriarch.

The arch-patriarch sighed disappointedly. “Oh, so you don’t know. I’d assumed you would have learned something when you accepted the legacy....”

All Bai Xiaochun could do was smile wryly in response.

“Well, the truth is that none of us know the true origins of the Blood Ancestor, so let’s not worry about that for now. The Blood Stream Sect researched the Blood Ancestor for many years. Eventually, that research led to our theory regarding the legacy of the Blood Lord. Now we know that we were correct. All of those years of research paid off.

“However, there was more to the theory. Based on all of the research, we are fairly certain that the body of the Blood Ancestor can still move!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were getting wider and wider. Never could he have imagined that the body of the Blood Ancestor could be controlled and moved. Then he thought back to how he had temporarily felt himself take over the body of the Blood Ancestor back when he had received the legacy, and he began to pant.

“The body of the Blood Ancestor is enormous, and exists mostly beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River. You are aware of the grand spell formation set up on the five mountain peaks that are the five fingers of the Blood Ancestor, correct? The true function of that spell formation is to allow the Blood Stream Division to control the body of the Blood Ancestor!” Bai Xiaochun immediately thought back to when Patriarch Limitless and Xuemei had tapped into the spell formation on Middle Peak to influence the blood qi in the area.

After becoming a blood master, Bai Xiaochun had been able to directly sense the spell formation; it almost seemed like a set of clothing that existed on the surface of the Blood Ancestor.

By this point, he was starting to understand what the Blood Stream Division was planning to do.

“Succeeding at such a task will be extremely difficult, and the Blood Stream Sect prepared years to do just that. We have even set up spell formations inside of the Blood Ancestor’s body. However, up til now, we have been missing a core element!

“We need someone who can take all of the blood qi from all of the cultivators of the Blood Stream Division and focus it together. That is the power that can be used to control the body of the Blood Ancestor. According to our research and speculations, only the Blood Lord can do such a thing!

“My hope is that you will return to our headquarters, enter the body of the Blood Ancestor with us, and take control of it! Then we will head up the river and launch our assault on the Sky River Court!

“With the help of the Blood Ancestor, the River-Defying Sect’s chances of successfully defeating the Sky River Court will be greatly increased!” The arch-patriarch’s eyes were glowing with a profound light; after all, this was everything he had worked toward throughout his entire life.

After a long moment of silence, Bai Xiaochun nodded. He was also filled with anticipation at the thought of controlling the body of the Blood Ancestor. The arch-patriarch smiled, then made arrangements for exactly when to take Bai Xiaochun inside the Blood Ancestor. Afterward, he left with the rest of the Blood Stream Division to go back and make the necessary preparations.

A few days later, the Spirit Stream Division forces began to depart. Bai Xiaochun joined them as they left the city, and it was only then that he was certain that no one else was going to come reveal more secrets to him.

“So many secrets....” he thought, sighing. He was a bit proud of himself. Obviously, he was the type of person who people trusted enough to share secrets with.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0315 awe-chapter-316

Now that the four divisions had made their departure, the city was mostly empty, occupied only by a small garrison of cultivators that had been left behind.

The forces of the Spirit Stream Division were the last to leave, mostly because of the vast number of people they had to transport. Furthermore, they weren’t in Spirit Stream Division territory anymore, so moving the ninth mountain peak involved a huge effort. In fact, it would take several teleportations to get it all the way back to the sect headquarters on the Eastwood Continent.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have to get involved with the actual movement of the army, nor did the patriarchs have to waste energy on it. Zheng Yuandong was the sect leader, and it was in times like this that his authority was in full swing.

Some prime elders and even a patriarch stayed behind with the main force to escort them, but the founding patriarch took Bai Xiaochun and the other legacy echelon cultivators away ahead of them.

To use the teleportation powers of the ninth mountain peak required a significant wastage of power. However, as long as too many people weren’t on the mountain, the sect could pay the price. It didn't take long before the light of teleportation was rising up into the sky. Countless cultivators looked up into the sky with respectful adoration at Bai Xiaochun and the other legacy echelon cultivators.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the earth far below. He wished he could take Big Fatty Zhang with him, as well as Hou Yunfei and his other friends. Even Zhou Xinqi. However, he didn't bother annoying the patriarchs with such a request. After all, with each additional person to be teleported, even more resources would have to be wasted.

"It's not that I don't want to help you out, brothers and sisters," he murmured, waving at his friends down below. "I just can't...." Even as Shangguan Tianyou looked on with gritted teeth, and Ghostfang gazed up somewhat blankly, Bai Xiaochun vanished.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and Bai Xiaochun's vision swam. The power of teleportation gripped his mind for a while, and when things became clear, he found himself in midair above Mount Daoseed in the middle of the Spirit Stream Division.

The discomfort that came from teleportation didn't affect Gold Core cultivators, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he had a powerful fleshly body and a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base. Although his face went a bit pale, and his cultivation base trembled unstably for a moment, after taking a few deep breaths, he felt fine. That caused the surrounding legacy echelon cultivators to look twice at him.

That was especially true of Li Qinghou, who seemed particularly pleased. It was on more than one occasion that, when in private with Xu Meixiang, he had brought up how proud he was of Bai Xiaochun.

"Come with me, Xiaochun!" said the founding patriarch, his expression serious as he strode forward. As for the other legacy echelon cultivators, they went back to the sect with the other patriarchs to begin making various important preparations. One of the reasons they had been teleported across continents to return was their status in the sect, but another reason was that they had an important task ahead of them.

They needed to create a fleet of ships, enormous vessels that could carry the divisions up the Heavenspan River. They would create a small fleet of Heavenspan Battleships!!

To make the trip to the Middle Reaches over land would be virtually impossible, and also incredibly dangerous. There were even some areas of the land that would be virtually impassable. The resources involved in making such a trip were difficult to imagine, and such wastage would put them in a bad position in the fighting to come. Therefore, after much discussion, the more than ten patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect reached their decision.

They would travel up the river!

Obviously, any ship that could go against the current in the Heavenspan River would be something completely beyond ordinary. The materials used to construct it would have to be meticulously selected. Obviously, neither the Pill Stream Division nor the Profound Stream Division was in a position to make such a vessel. Therefore, this vitally important task had come to rest on the shoulders of the Spirit Stream Division.

Although the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions had provided many of the materials necessary to make the ships, they still lacked material to make the keels!

The best thing to use for the keels would be the spine of some gigantic beast, and after much discussion, the Spirit Stream Division made a decision on what to use. What was now necessary was for the legacy echelon cultivators and the patriarchs to procure that beast spine, and then craft the battleships as quickly as possible. Then, they would have their Heavenspan Battleships, which would be able to carry the more than 1,000,000 cultivators of the four great sects!

Everyone immediately got to work without taking even a moment to rest. As for Bai Xiaochun, he followed the founding patriarch toward a restricted area behind Mount Daoseed.

“Xiaochun, your task is to do your best to concoct a River-Defying Pill. First, I’ll take you to where the true spirit rests in slumber. Perhaps that will be of some assistance to you in your concocting work.” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but be nervous at the founding patriarch’s serious tone. However, he was very curious about this most profound of the sect’s reserve powers. At the same time, his heart was filled with respect.

“True spirit....” he murmured to himself. He followed the founding patriarch into the restricted area, and after having taken only a few steps, everything around him started to turn blurry, almost as if it were an illusion. Bai Xiaochun’s heart skipped a beat, and he hurried along nervously behind the founding patriarch. For some reason, he had the feeling that they were now somewhere deep underground, even beneath the Heavenspan River itself!

Soon, things became clear, and Bai Xiaochun saw an enormous karst cave up ahead!

Four cave entrances could be seen leading into the cave, with Bai Xiaochun and the founding patriarch standing in one of them. Down below, golden water could be seen. The glow of spell formations lit the entire area, which Bai Xiaochun quickly realized were connected to both the mountain peaks of the south and north banks, but also to the Heavenspan River itself! Furthermore, the spell formations seemed to be siphoning water from the river!

It wasn’t an offensive spell formation, it was solely defensive.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp at the sight of it. After looking around, his gaze came to rest in the middle of the karst cave, where he saw a coffin.

The coffin had no lid, and from his current vantage point, he could see that inside of it rested the corpse of a baby girl.

Despite being a corpse, the girl seemed to contain signs of life, as well as a profoundly ancient air....

Bai Xiaochun’s mind instantly began to spin, as though something were sucking away at his consciousness. Suddenly, he felt as if he could see a supremely elegant woman walking toward him.

He felt like his soul and his body were suddenly beyond his own control. He forgot everything, even life and death. Even as he gazed blankly out at nothing, shivering, the founding patriarch whispered, “This is the true spirit of the Frigid School!”

Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to recover, and he took a few steps back. His face was ashen, and his body was covered with cold sweat. The fear which he had felt moments ago continued to grip his heart.

The founding patriarch reached out and placed his right hand on Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder.“Your cultivation base is too low, so you can’t look at her for too long. However, with my assistance, you should be able to last for about ten breaths of time. Hopefully that will be of some assistance in your concocting of the River-Defying Pill.”

With that, he sent boundless cultivation base power into Bai Xiaochun, causing him to shiver as he once again looked over at the corpse of the baby girl.

This time, his mind didn't feel so much like it was being sucked away. He looked at the corpse as closely as possible, trying to commit every detail to memory.

Soon, the ten breaths of time were almost up. After a brief moment of hesitation, Bai Xiaochun decided that simply looking with his naked eye wouldn’t provide much help to him in concocting the River-Defying Pill. Gritting his teeth, he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

The instant his third eye opened, what he saw was no longer the corpse of the baby girl. Instead, it was a supremely elegant woman lying there. Her eyes were closed, and she was completely unmoving. She was surrounded by writhing black mist that resembled countless maggots, which constantly attempted to chew their way into her body. Clearly, it was the spell formation and the water of the Heavenspan River that slowed their progress.

Inside of the woman’s chest was a cauldron that emanated deep blue light. Apparently, the black mist maggots were terrified of the cauldron, and the light which shone out of it; they avoided it at all costs.

Unfortunately, the glow of the cauldron was very faint, as though it only contained the slightest scrap of power left within it....

Then, to Bai Xiaochun great surprise, something happened that he almost suspected was an illusion. The woman’s eyes opened, revealing complete and utter blackness as she looked at Bai Xiaochun. “The River-Defying Pill draws life from the Heavenspan River water. Converge the energy of heaven and earth to stir the might of the frigid cauldron and suppress the power of the nine devils....”

Bai Xiaochun shivered and impulsively cried out, “She opened her eyes and said--”

Before he could finish speaking, the founding patriarch’s face turned ashen, and blood began to ooze out of his mouth. Even still, a look of delight filled his face and he looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“You saw the true spirit open her eyes? She spoke?!”

Bai Xiaochun nodded incredulously. The founding patriarch excitedly clasped hands and bowed to the baby girl, then led Bai Xiaochun away, peppering him with questions the entire time.

Even after stepping back onto Mount Daoseed, his eyes still flashed with excitement.

“The fact that the true spirit opened her eyes indicates that she also believes you have the potential to concoct the River-Defying Pill. Come. I’ll take you to look at the one River-Defying Pill we have in the sect. After studying it, you can try to concoct your own!” He clasped Bai Xiaochun by the arm, and the two of them vanished. When they reappeared, they were outside an immortal's cave on the ninth mountain peak, a place heavily sealed by numerous spell formations. The founding patriarch immediately waved his hand, causing a box to fly out of the cave. When the box landed in front of Bai Xiaochun, the lid opened, revealing a violet medicinal pill.

It seemed completely ancient, as though it had been concocted countless years in the past. As soon as it appeared, strange colors flashed, and a huge wind kicked up. Bai Xiaochun could immediately sense an indescribable life force power within the pill.

“River-Defying Pill....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0316 awe-chapter-317

The life force was so incredible that grass and plants sprouted up beneath Bai Xiaochun’s feet. It spread out rapidly, until everything within 300 meters was a world of lush vegetation, complete with blooming flowers.

The power of the life force only continued to explode out, but before too much time could pass, the founding patriarch waved his sleeve, sealing the River-Defying Pill back into the little wooden box. As soon as the lid of the box closed, the life force vanished.

The plants and vegetation in the area rapidly withered up, and within the space of a few breaths of time, they had vanished, almost as if they had never existed to begin with.

Bai Xiaochun looked around with wide eyes.

He had never seen any medicinal pill like this one. The power of the life force he had just felt was almost unbelievable, and was also terrifying to the extreme.

“The River-Defying Pill can’t be brought out into the open for too long. Every moment that this box is opened, some of the medicinal strength fades away....” The founding patriarch obviously didn't want to waste even the slightest bit of the pill that wasn’t necessary, and as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, a look of pain could be seen in his eyes.

“This medicinal pill is a Ten Breaths River-Defying Pill. According to the legends, if the pill is created perfectly, the result will be an Eternal River-Defying Pill, which would permanently awaken the true spirit.

“Xiaochun, whatever you need to concoct the River-Defying Pill, just say it. The sect will support you in any way possible!”

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything at first. He thought back to the moment he had looked at the true spirit, and also the terrifying power of the medicinal pill from moments ago. He didn’t feel confident at all in being able to succeed, and had to force himself to nod in agreement. Then, he made his way off slowly.

After returning to his immortal's cave on Mount Daoseed, he sat down cross-legged to think. On the one hand, the River-Defying Pill was very important to the sect, and on the other hand, the mere sight of the terrifying power of the pill was very enticing.

“How do you make a pill with such terrifying life force power? Furthermore, I didn't get the sense that there were any plants and vegetation in that pill. Apparently, it really doesn’t use plant ingredients.” He had attempted to concoct the River-Defying Pill in the past, and knew that it involved absorbing Heavenspan River water and then using one's own body as the pill furnace.

“But if there are no plant ingredients, only Heavenspan River water, how can you produce such intense life force power?” Frowning, he sat there and continued to ponder the situation.

The next day, he looked very tired. However, he took out the formula for the River-Defying Pill to study it a bit further, as well as the Frigid School Medicine Manual. After some time, he gritted his teeth and put them away, then produced the Holy Pill Wall Fragment he'd acquired in the Profound Stream Sect city.

“I really don’t think my current skill in the Dao of medicine is high enough to concoct a River-Defying Pill....” he thought, sighing. With that, he peered at the Holy Pill Wall Fragment, doing the best he could to try to gain further enlightenment of the Dao of medicine which was contained inside. Soon, his gaze began to empty as he sank into his pursuit of enlightenment.

Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by. During that time, Bai Xiaochun remained in seclusion, seeking enlightenment. As for the legacy echelon cultivators and the patriarch, they were busy working on the Heavenspan Battleships. Slowly but surely, the cultivators from the army were returning to their headquarters. Patriarch Ironwood came back, and so did Hou Xiaomei.

The Spirit Stream Division once again began to bustle with activity. Everyone was involved in the preparations for the campaign to the Middle Reaches, and the Sky River Court.

One day, a tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and the blankness in his eyes faded away. Now, they were glowing brightly. He immediately opened the Frigid School Medicine Manual, and sure enough, it looked different than before.

There were many areas he couldn’t understand before, places that looked like a blur. But now, he understood the deeper meaning. His eyes began to shine even brighter. A few days later, he put the Frigid School Medicine Manual away, and then closed his eyes for a long moment. After some time passed, his eyes opened again.

“I need Heavenspan River water!” he murmured. With that, he pulled out a jade slip to send a message to the sect leadership.

The patriarchs had appeared to be completely engrossed in working on the Heavenspan Battleships, but they had been secretly looking over at Bai Xiaochun the entire time. As soon as they heard that he needed Heavenspan River water, Patriarch Ironwood personally went to deliver a bucketful to him.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the Heavenspan River water with rising anticipation. Waving his right finger, he caused a drop to fly up in front of him, whereupon he opened his mouth and sucked it in. Instantly, the Heavenspan River water entered him, and caused intense rumbling sounds to echo out throughout his body.

“Use my body as the pill furnace, merge life force into the Heavenspan River water, cause the life force to flourish, transform it into a spirit medicine!” Eyes closed, he continued to manipulate the Heavenspan River water inside of his body, attempting to fuse it with his own life force.

The following day, rumbling sounds filled the immortal's cave. Bai Xiaochun’s hair was in complete disarray, and his immortal's cave was filled with a completely noxious odor. However, he wasn’t ready to give up yet. Taking out another drop of Heavenspan River water, he decided to try again.

Before long, another half a month had gone by. During that time, rumbling sounds echoed out constantly from Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, along with a noxious stench that soon filled all of Mount Daoseed. However, no one complained. The founding patriarch had long since personally spread word that Bai Xiaochun was working on a very important medicinal pill for the sect!

“Not enough life force. Just not enough!!” After spending half a month without any sleep or rest, Bai Xiaochun was looking a bit gaunt. His hair was completely disheveled, and his eyes were bright red. He looked like he was going crazy. He had used more than half of the bucket of Heavenspan River water, and had failed every time time.

The main reason for that was that he lacked enough life force. After some calculations, he realized that his own life force wasn’t enough to fill 1/100,000th of the required amount of life force to finish a single River-Defying Pill.

“I think that even if the other cultivators in the sect sacrificed life force to help, it would take 100,000 Foundation Establishment cultivators to make even a Ten Breaths River-Defying Pill....

“Either 100,000 Foundation Establishment cultivators or 10,000 Gold Core cultivators. Maybe 1,000 patriarchs. How is this pill even possible to concoct...?” He shook his head. Although it was theoretically possible to make such a pill, it just didn’t seem realistic. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect probably couldn’t succeed, let alone the Spirit Stream Division of the River-Defying Sect.

“Maybe I’ve been going about it the wrong way....” he thought, frowning. However, no amount of thought provided any additional ideas. Finally, he had no choice but to find the founding patriarch and declare sadly that he was giving up.

Although the founding patriarch sighed inwardly in disappointment, he felt bad at how exhausted Bai Xiaochun looked. He also knew that the River-Defying Pill was something that could not be concocted casually; after all, one generation after another in the Spirit Stream Sect had failed to produce one.

“It doesn’t matter,” he said consolingly. “You can’t force success in this matter, Xiaochun. In three days, myself and the other patriarchs will take the legacy echelon cultivators into the chasm on the north bank. Why don’t you come along? Within the chasm is an arcane pocket realm that we discovered in the past. Years ago, I saw the skeleton of a deva beast there, although I was unable to take it away at the time.

“There are many places inside that no one has ever explored. Although there are certain to be some dangers, there will also be opportunities to seize destiny. Who knows, perhaps you might be able to come across some good fortune before the war begins.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded tiredly. It was quite a blow to him to have failed, so it was with great disappointment that he trudged back to his immortal's cave. There, he sat down to meditate and ponder everything he had done with the River-Defying Pill.

Hou Xiaomei was back, but she could tell that it wasn't a good time to disturb Bai Xiaochun, so she stayed away. Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends did the same. Three days went by quickly, and Bai Xiaochun slowly recovered. Soon, his cultivation base was back at the peak, and his disappointment at failing to concoct the River-Defying Pill had temporarily vanished.

That was when the jade slip in his bag of holding began to vibrate, and he opened his eyes. When he took out the jade slip, the words of the founding patriarch echoed into his ear, summoning him to the meeting place in the Beast Conservatory.

“I did my best,” he murmured, “and can’t concoct the River-Defying Pill at the moment.” Taking a deep breath, he looked around at the sect he knew so well, then shot forward in a beam of light toward the north bank.

Along the way, the Spirit Stream Division cultivators who spotted him had very respectful looks on their faces as they bowed in greeting. Such reception brightened Bai Xiaochun’s mood, and he subconsciously clasped his hands behind his back and assumed the posture of someone of the Senior generation. Smiling, he nodded back at those who greeted him.

He was especially happy to see so many of the exuberant and youthful female disciples blushing when they looked at him out of the corners of their eyes. Soon, his mood was fully restored. Clearing his throat, he stopped trying to look like someone from the Senior generation and tried to seem a bit more dashing and energetic. Smiling broadly, he flew through the air in dramatic fashion, reveling in the excited cries which echoed out behind him.

“Hahaha! It turns out that I really am quite the dashing fellow! Ai. I guess it's just my fault. I’m simply too attractive.” Feeling more wonderful than ever, he continued to fly along until he happened to spot Zhou Xinqi. When their eyes met, Bai Xiaochun smiled, and she frowned and made to pass him by.

Bai Xiaochun narrowed his eyes. From what he could tell, there had been some misunderstandings between himself and Zhou Xinqi, so it was with great solemnity that he suddenly said, “Sect Niece Xinqi, please wait a moment.”

Zhou Xinqi stopped and looked over at him calmly.

“Do you have orders for me, Junior Patriarch?”

Clasping his hands behind his back, he tried to look as melancholy as possible as he stuck his chin up into the air. “There’s something I’ve been wanted to tell you for quite some time now, but I never found the right opportunity. Today, I’m going to boldly tell you the truth. And that is... that I'm the little turtle!”

With that, he pondered what to say after Zhou Xinqi expressed her shock.

“Oh, I know,” Zhou Xinqi said, her expression the same as ever. With that, she flew off in a beam of light.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, jaw dropping as he looked at Zhou Xinqi making her way off into the distance. Her reaction had been completely and utterly calm, which was not at all what he had been expecting.

Before he could react, raucous laughter exploded out from his bag of holding.

“You're the little turtle? Hahaha! Ohhhhhh, I get it. Well, since you love Lord Turtle so much, I won’t insult you as much in the future.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0317 awe-chapter-318

Bai Xiaochun smacked his bag of holding in frustration. The little turtle had become quite the headache for him, but there was nothing he could do about the situation. Sighing, he watched Zhou Xinqi leaving, then slowly shook his head and turned to head in the direction of the Beast Conservatory on the north bank.

It was impossible to say where exactly Bruiser was. When Bai Xiaochun arrived on the north bank, the only thing that met him was a distant howl. Even Bruiser was ignoring him. Bai Xiaochun felt more depressed than ever.

“The child has grown up,” he said with a sigh, “and now he just ignores his father!” With that, he headed into the Beast Conservatory.

The Beast Conservatory was like a second home to Bai Xiaochun. As soon as he arrived, the battle beasts looked over and let out happy roars of greeting.

“Come on, be a good boy, Blackie. Don’t bully poor Daisy!”

“What are you doing, Mr. Blackbear? Fighting again? What did I tell you last time? Alright, you’re in time out for the next two hours!”

Bai Xiaochun greeted the battle beasts as he went along, and soon he had a whole group clustered around him as he headed toward the chasm where the Heavenhorn ink dragon lived. The patriarchs were already gathering at the edge of the chasm, as well as the legacy echelon cultivators. All of them had very serious expressions on their faces.

When Bai Xiaochun was reminded that his cultivation base was the weakest of the group, he waved the battle beasts away. Then he sidled up to the edge of the chasm and looked inside. Deep down, he was just able to make out a shadowy form that was the Heavenhorn ink dragon.

Soon, everyone had gathered, and the founding patriarch looked over the group and said, “Many years ago, I saw the skeleton of a deva-level beast inside the chasm. However, no amount of effort on my part was enough to bring it back with me. Now, we are on the verge of marching to war, and are in the middle of constructing the Heavenspan Battleships. The spine of that beast would be perfect to use as ship keels!

“We five patriarchs will do our best to retrieve the remains of the beast. As for the rest of you, feel free to join us, or to explore the depths of the chasm. Perhaps you can find some good fortune therein!

“The pocket realm inside the chasm is a land of treasures, and contains things from the ancient era. There are many places that even I haven't visited. There are places of destiny, and places of danger. Remember not to stray too far. If anything untoward happens, crush this jade slip of retreat to be returned to us immediately!” With that, he waved his sleeve, sending jade slips flying out to everyone present.

Bai Xiaochun took the jade slip and examined it. He could immediately sense the teleportation power of the ninth mountain peak on it, and felt a bit more at ease. After all, this pocket realm was part of the Spirit Stream Sect, and was covered by numerous sect spell formations. As such, it should be a relatively safe place.

After all the explanations were made, the founding patriarch looked down into the chasm, his eyes shining brightly.

“Heavenhorn, open the arcane pocket realm!”

The Heavenhorn ink dragon gave a thunderous roar in response, and then raised its head. Eyes shining with mysterious light, it shot downward into the chasm.

Intense rumbling sounds spread out through the ground. All of the battle beasts in the Beast Conservatory went silent, and the rest of the beasts throughout the north bank began to tremble. Bruiser had been in the middle of pacing in circles around a female battle beast that resembled a qilin, when suddenly, he shivered and looked up.

At the same time, an enormous vortex appeared at the very bottom of the chasm. A wild wind belched out from within it, causing everyone’s clothing to whip about wildly. Black mist erupted up, filling the area with a sensation of profound ancientness.

Even at their current distance from the vortex, it was obvious that another world existed on the other side. They could just barely see numerous lushly vegetated mountains, as well as an enormous dragon-like creature with leathery wings flying about in the air. As soon as the vortex appeared, the creature looked over and then began to fly in their direction.

However, the Heavenhorn ink dragon was even bigger than the winged dragon. It stuck its head out of the vortex, and then a crunching sound could be heard, along with an agonized shriek, as the winged dragon was gobbled up.

The ink dragon’s enormous frame slid through the vortex to appear within the arcane pocket realm, where it let out a roar that could shake heaven and earth. Instantly, the entire world went quiet....

The confidence shown by the Heavenhorn ink dragon showed that it was familiar with the arcane pocket realm. That made sense considering that it had originally come from that place!

Even as Bai Xiaochun gasped, the founding patriarch spoke once more.

“Heavenhorn will stand guard. The entrance will remain open for a month, after which time you must return!” With that, the founding patriarch and the other four patriarchs flickered into motion, turning into five beams of light that shot into the vortex and then disappeared over the horizon.

The legacy echelon cultivators were all proud people, and although they had a measure of respect for Bai Xiaochun, he was still only in the Foundation Establishment stage, while they were all in the Gold Core stage. After nodding curtly to Bai Xiaochun, they all shot toward the vortex.

“Xiaochun, don't go very far in,” Li Qinghou said. “If anything bad happens, crush that jade slip immediately!” With that, he offered a few more warnings. By this point, the other legacy echelon cultivators were getting impatient, so he flew down to meet them. They were planning to go to a place that would be too dangerous for Foundation Establishment cultivators, making it inappropriate to bring Bai Xiaochun along.

Besides, opportunities for good fortune like this were not easy to come by.

Bai Xiaochun watched Li Qinghou making his way off into the distance, and then stood at the edge of the chasm, looking down hesitantly as he tried to decide whether or not to go in.

“Come, come, child,” the Heavenhorn ink dragon said, smiling. “It’s quite safe in here. Just stay within 500 kilometers of the entrance, and I can protect you personally!”

Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly as he thought the matter over again. Finally, he decided that since this place was a pocket realm belonging to the sect, and he also had a teleportation jade slip, it couldn’t be *too* dangerous. He was also curious to see what the pocket realm looked like. Finally, he flew out into the air and then shot down toward the vortex. A moment later, he was in another world.

The first thing he noticed was the wild wind that screamed through the entire world. It was different from the wind on the outside, stronger, seemingly mad as it attempted to freeze everything it touched.

He took a deep breath and looked up at the sky, where an enormous vortex could be seen, beyond which was the Spirit Stream Sect. The Heavenhorn ink dragon was swirling through the air near the vortex. It looked down at him and smiled.

“Don’t worry. I know this place well. Other than a few terrifying entities that you shouldn’t provoke, everything else in here should be safe. Besides, those terrifying entities are all sleeping. Fear not! Here, take some of my aura to protect you as you go along!” Laughing, the Heavenhorn ink dragon spat out a stream of black mist, which coalesced into the form of a dragon scale that floated down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Elated, Bai Xiaochun grabbed the scale, and then clasped hands and bowed to the Heavenhorn ink dragon. “Many thanks, Senior!”

With that, he flew further into the world, reminding himself not to go further than 500 kilometers away from the entrance.

The cold wind buffeted him as he flew along. Down below, the lands were covered with green vegetation, as well as seemingly endless rolling mountains that seemed rife with secrets and mystery. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, this place seemed like a completely wild and savage land.

The sky was dark. There were no clouds, and no sun, but it wasn’t completely black. After flying along for some time, Bai Xiaochun finally spotted the horizon, where the sun lurked and cast a bit of light out into the world.

Strange odors reached his nose, something like the aroma of animals and their droppings. Although it was faint, it immediately got him feeling a bit nervous.

There were no signs of human life, but the auras of countless wild beasts could be detected. After having traveled only about 50 kilometers away from the entrance, he could sense that there were eyes looking up at him from the jungle below, eyes belonging to vicious and terrifying creatures.

However, he had the Heavenhorn ink dragon scale, which cast fear into the hearts of such creatures. Even those who seemed comparable to the Gold Core stage weren’t willing to get near him.

At one point, he spotted a leopard-like beast which suddenly grew to 300 meters in length before gobbling down an ox-like creature that was several dozen meters long. It even swallowed the creature's’ bones! Then it shrank back down to its original size, looked coldly at Bai Xiaochun, and disappeared into the jungle.

“This place is so dangerous....” he thought, shivering. Looking over his shoulder, he spotted the vortex up in the sky behind him, and breathed a sigh of relief. Then he proceeded on for another 50 kilometers or so. Eventually, he sat down on a boulder at the top of a mountain, looking around at the majestic terrain rolling out in all directions.

“So boring,” he said, picking up a pebble. “This place isn't fun at all....” With that, he tossed the pebble down into the forest. A moment later, the vegetation rustled, and then several two-headed bird-like creatures appeared. They were about half as big as an average human, and let out deafening cries as they glared at Bai Xiaochun, who shivered in response. The birds soared around in the air for a bit before diving back down into the jungle.

“Forget this! I'm going back. None of these beasts are friendly at all.” Swallowing, he turned to head back in the direction of the Heavenhorn ink dragon.

However, in the same moment that he flew up into the air, an enraged roar echoed out from one of the distant mountain peaks.

It was only a single roar, but it caused the entire world to shake. Countless mountain peaks trembled, and numerous beasts cried out in anguish, not daring to even lift their heads.

Bai Xiaochun felt like his scalp was about to explode. His mind was reeling, and his ears twinged with pain as looked over at a familiar figure flying toward him from off in the distance.

“Aren’t you just a little tadpole? What’s so special about you? How dare you threaten me! Last time Lord Turtle awoke, I saw your dad! You’re a tadpole and so was he! Everyone in your whole family is a tadpole....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0318 awe-chapter-319

The figure flying toward him looked very familiar. The beam of light it created as it shot through the air was dazzling, and its voice echoed about in grand fashion.

It was none other than the little turtle.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and his hair began to stand on end. He felt like his mind was being struck by 100,000 bolts of lightning, with accompanying thunder pounding into his ears. He immediately let out a shout of alarm.

“When did you get out of my bag of hold--”

Before he could finish speaking, he saw what was happening behind the little turtle. The mountain peak was exploding into a cascade of rocks and rubble. The ground trembled, and numerous birds and beasts fled in terror as a gargantuan toad emerged from under the surface of the earth.

The toad was huge, more than 30,000-meters long.... As it flew up into the air, it blotted out the sun, and cast an enormous shadow down onto the ground. At the same time, an aura of indescribable madness and brutality echoed out!

The toad’s eyes were crimson with fury as it glared down at the flea-sized little turtle. Then it let out a howl that caused the grounds to shake violently and the sky to distort!

AAOOOWWW!

The air was torn to shreds as a sonic boom rolled out in all directions.

As the little turtle barreled along, it also seemed enraged, and let loose a torrent of abuse.

“What are you screaming for? I know you’re male! You’re not even worthy of your own parents, you degenerate! Last time Lord Turtle was around, you were just a tadpole, and I could have crushed you to death in a second! No wait. I could have crushed your dad to death! No wait. Crushed your grandpa!!”

The toad’s eyes burned with bright red light as it slammed down onto the ground, causing everything within 3,000 meters of it to collapse. Crevices snaked out like spiderwebs as the toad then launched itself back up into the air, flying madly toward the little turtle.

Bai Xiaochun’s hair whipped around him madly, and he was sent staggering backward, screaming the entire time.

“Damn you, you bastard turtle! I hate you!!” Bai Xiaochun appeared to be on the verge of tears. The toad seemed ferocious and brutal to the extreme. Although it wasn’t as terrifying as the golden crocodile, it definitely was the type of creature to avoid provoking. And yet, the little turtle had managed to completely enrage it. Bai Xiaochun wanted to kill the little turtle, especially for the fact that he was flying straight toward him. Feeling very much like he was going crazy, he unleashed all the speed he could muster to flee in the opposite direction.

He used his Heavenly Demon Body, his wings, and what little of the powers of gravity and repulsion he could control. Then he added the Mountain Shaking Bash, going all out to become nothing more than a blur of afterimages.

Although the speed he was capable of couldn’t be described as slow, the little turtle was faster. In the blink of an eye, he was right next to Bai Xiaochun.

Looking over at him, he stuck his bottom lip out mockingly and said, “What are you scared of? Lord Turtle’s here! Years ago, I crushed tons of those tadpoles. Aiya. Lord Turtle is tired now. I need to rest for a bit. Don’t disturb me, or else I’ll insult you to death!” The little turtle yawned, then became a blur of light that vanished into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

In the moment before disappearing, he hollered, “Hey little tadpole! If you think you’ve got what it takes, go ahead and fight with my master! Don’t come looking for me until you can beat him!”

Bai Xiaochun howled in rage, and was just going to start cursing the little turtle when an even more intense roar echoed out behind him, and he looked back to see the huge toad glaring at him with utter madness!

Looking back down at his bag of holding, tears welled up in his eyes. “I'm sorry!” he said. “Lord Turtle, please, let me off the hook! I actually really like turtles....” However, the little turtle didn’t respond at all.

Bai Xiaochun was wracked with grief. He thought back to the golden crocodile, and realized that if things kept going on like they were, the little turtle might cost him his poor little life....

“You’ll get what you deserve one of these days!!” he howled as he sped into motion again. “Senior Heavenhorn, save me!!”

Off in the distance, the Heavenhorn ink dragon was still soaring about in the air. As soon as it heard the cry of the toad, it looked over in surprise, and its eyes widened.

Then it heard Bai Xiaochun, and saw him fleeing at top speed, and all of the scales on its body stood on end.

“Dammit!” it roared. “How did you manage to get the old toad so pissed off!?!?” The Heavenhorn ink dragon was actually trembling inwardly. Although it seemed like a powerful creature, there were some older beasts within this world that even it didn’t dare to provoke. As it turned out, this toad was one of them.

“Stay away!” the dragon cried. “Don’t come over here!” Of course, Bai Xiaochun wasn't listening, and sped in the direction of the dragon as quickly as he could.

Even as the Heavenhorn ink dragon trembled, the toad let out another roar. Then, the terrified dragon’s eyes turned bright red, almost as if it were on the verge of unleashing its fury.

Bai Xiaochun was instantly moved at how well the old dragon was treating him, and pushed forward with greater speed.

“Senior Heavenhorn, how kind and virtuous of you! I, Bai Xiaochun, will always remember this, and I’ll definitely pay you back once I get to the sect....”

Bai Xiaochun’s gratitude seemingly knew no ends. From what he could tell, the dragon still must be grateful for how much he’d helped it all those years back. Suddenly, the toad roared again, but this time, it also shot out its tongue, which was indescribably long, and moved with a speed that was difficult to put into words.

In the blink of an eye, the Heavenhorn ink dragon had become the target. Clearly, the toad wanted to wipe out the dragon first, and then take care of Bai Xiaochun afterward.

The dragon’s eyes went wide as an intense sensation of deadly crisis surged through it.

“Fellow Daoist Toad, did this punk provoke you? I’ll take care of him for you! Kiddo, how dare you provoke my big bro. Do you have a death wish!?” Although the Heavenhorn ink dragon’s words echoed out in dramatic fashion, inwardly, it was trembling. As for the old toad, it seemed taken aback. Its tongue stopped moving, and instead of continuing to attack the Heavenhorn ink dragon, it suddenly shot toward Bai Xiaochun. Before he could react, it wrapped around him and hauled him off of his feet.

Bai Xiaochun screamed. Although he wanted to weep, the tears wouldn’t come. Before he could do anything else, the sound of rushing wind blasted past his ears, and everything turned dark.

All the Heavenhorn ink dragon could see was the huge tongue wrap around Bai Xiaochun and then, in the blink of an eye, roll back up into the toad’s mouth.

The Heavenhorn ink dragon was trembling, but it put an ingratiating smile on its face as the toad glared at it, then turned and hopped off into the distance.

After confirming that the toad was gone, the Heavenhorn ink dragon took a deep breath.

“That's it. Game over. Young Bai Xiaochun was eaten by the old toad. Although, now that I think about it, the toad takes a long time digesting things. Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body is pretty tough. He should be safe for a while.” The dragon quickly reached out to make contact with the patriarchs in the hopes of rescuing Bai Xiaochun as quickly as possible.

**

Bai Xiaochun was now inside the toad. Everything around him was black at first, but slowly his vision adjusted, whereupon his face drained of blood. He was surrounded by mucus and other fluids. Everything was wriggling. It was too terrifying to even describe with words, and furthermore, a horrifically acidic odor filled the air that caused Bai Xiaochun to nearly throw up.

He was currently plastered down against a swath of flesh, and when he tried to lift his arm, numerous strings of mucus spread out and drooped down.

“Heaven-damned little turtle, I hate you!!” To his horror, he realized that his clothing was slowly dissolving. Thankfully, his Undying Live Forever Technique and powerful fleshy body ensured that he was not harmed.

It took a lot of effort, but he managed to struggle into a sitting position. Then he rose to his feet and looked around, frowning.

“That toad definitely swallowed me up. I must be inside of it now....” Sighing in despair, he was just about to try to walk out, when he realized that the way ahead was completely sealed shut. Anger surging, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and summoned a blood qi sword. Without any hesitation he slashed it down in front of him.

“Open up!”

A sound rang out like metal scraping on metal, and not a single scratch was visible.

“This won’t work. I need to figure out some other way to open the toad's mouth. I guess I should go further in. Maybe... dammit! Could it be that the world-famous cultivator Bai Xiaochun... will have to use the back door?!”

Scowling on the verge of tears, he kept struggling to make a decision. He tried using the teleportation jade slip, but found that it didn't work in this location. Sighing piteously, he began to make his way further into the depths.

His clothing continued to melt. Thankfully, his fleshly body was strong enough that he could hold on for the moment. As he walked along, his feet stuck to the sticky ground, causing him to almost throw up on multiple occasions.

“I'm gonna kill you, little turtle!!” Enraged, he rifled through his bag of holding several times, but wasn’t able to find even a trace of the little turtle.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0319 awe-chapter-320

Feeling like he had no other choices at hand, Bai Xiaochun proceeded onward, step by step. Eventually, he lost track of exactly how many steps he’d taken. Thankfully, his cultivation base was in late Foundation Establishment, and his seventh spiritual sea was on the very cusp of being fully crystallized. Because of that, his spiritual power reserves were deep, allowing him to hold his breath for very long periods of time.

Most important of all was his powerful fleshly body. Despite the stinging sensation and the acrid odor, he was able to grit his teeth and proceed onward.

“Worst case scenario, I just wait to be saved. That old dragon might fear death, but he’ll definitely inform the patriarchs of what happened....” He couldn’t believe he was so unlucky, and at the same time, his hatred for the little turtle grew even stronger.

Cursing the entire way, he proceeded deeper. Every once in awhile, he saw the corpses of various animals that were apparently difficult for the toad to digest. Some of the bones had been dissolved down until they were pitch black, but still refused to melt completely. Bai Xiaochun shuddered.

“I don’t want to become a skeleton....” he murmured, hurrying forward. He didn’t want to stay in this place for even a moment longer than necessary.

As he walked along, the little turtle suddenly stuck his head out of his bag of holding. Looking around, he blurted, “Wow, you really ended up inside here!”

Bai Xiaochun's eyes bulged with madness, and his hand shot down to grab him. However, the little turtle ducked his head back into the bag of holding, and Bai Xiaochun grabbed nothing but air.

"Get out from inside there!" Bai Xiaochun roared, shoving his hand into his bag of holding.

The turtle chuckled coldly. "You think I'll come out just because you tell me to? What do you take Lord Turtle to be, a complete blockhead? I'm not going anywhere!"

"Y-y-you...." Bai Xiaochun rifled angrily through his bag of holding, but was unable to find a trace of him.

Tears began to well up in his eyes. He truly couldn't handle this situation anymore. The little turtle was just too good at causing disasters. Every time he provoked terrifying entities, Bai Xiaochun ended up feeling like he was going to get killed. "I'm sorry.... Lord Turtle... if things keep going like this, I'm going to end up dead thanks to your games."

"Well, considering you're being so well-behaved, Lord Turtle will give you some good fortune. You do what I tell you, and you might find something very interesting in this place." The turtle slowly stuck its head out of the bag of holding, but only by a little bit. Bai Xiaochun almost tried to grab him, but knew that the little turtle was always completely on guard, making it difficult to succeed. Sighing, he decided to follow the little turtle's directions. After going back and forth for awhile, they reached a wall of flesh in a very remote location.

"This is the place. Alright, come on, hurry up! This is one of the weakest spots here. Use as much strength as you can to break open a hole. This is the place I remember noticing when I was strolling around before. There’s a treasure buried here!” The little turtle immediately got excited.

“Buried treasure?” Bai Xiaochun said, a look of shock appearing on his face.

“You heard me!” the turtle said, sighing. “It's a good thing Lord Turtle had nothing better to do than get you swallowed by this big toad. It’s just too bad that you didn’t get swallowed by that golden crocodile. It had a treasure inside of it too.”

Bai Xiaochun looked dejectedly at the wall of flesh in front of him, then gritted his teeth and began to rotate his cultivation base. The power of his spiritual seas surged, and the image of a heavenly demon appeared behind him. When his cultivation base was at its highest level, he howled and then lashed his right hand out with lightning-like speed. At the same time, his thumb and index finger closed in on each other as he used the Throat Crushing Grasp.

A boom rumbled out, and a crack opened up in the spot the little turtle had indicated. The body of the toad trembled, and then twitched, causing a rain of acid to splash about inside of it.

The acid was very powerful, and the bits that landed onto Bai Xiaochun caused white smoke to rise up into the air. It actually hurt quite a bit. The acid started to build up to the point where Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure how much longer he could hold on. Soon it was up to his ankles, like a rising tide. Screaming, he continued to unleash powerful attacks.

“Faster, faster,” the turtle urged. “Come on!”

“You’re doing great, Bai Xiaochun. You can do it!”

“I support you!”

The little turtle continued to shout out encouragement until Bai Xiaochun couldn’t take it anymore and yelled, “Shut up...!”

After unleashing quite a few attacks, the crack opened up wide enough that he was able to grab the sides with his hands and rip it open even further.

A crevice was torn open wide enough for Bai Xiaochun to fit through. There was no time for contemplation. The acid was rising dangerously high, and his entire body hurt. Without any hesitation, he dove into the crack.

He was now in a tunnel, and surprisingly, the walls were made, not from flesh, but rather, stone. Even more surprising was that there was no acidic aroma anymore, but instead, a delicate fragrance that felt quite refreshing.

Even as he looked around in surprise, the little turtle flew out of his bag of holding, an excited expression on his face.

“Hahaha! Lord Turtle has finally dusted off the old tools of the trade. This is incredible. Come on, let’s see what treasure there is to be had....” Eyes shining, the little turtle shot down toward the end of the tunnel, which opened up into a small stone chamber!

Bai Xiaochun hurried along. After entering the stone chamber, he looked around in astonishment. It was roughly 300 meters in diameter, and was surrounded by what appeared to be countless red and green vines that bored into and out of the stone itself.

The red and green vines were very thick, and were all wriggling and writhing. Closer examination revealed that they were most likely part of the toad’s body.

“This place....” Bai Xiaochun murmured. He looked down toward the middle of the stone chamber, and noticed a stone dais, upon which was a jade slip and a black parasol. He quickly realized that the fragrant aroma was coming from the parasol.

“There really is treasure hidden here!”

Before he could examine the area any further, the little turtle’s eyes began to shine, and he said, “Now this is impressive. Someone used a powerful divine ability to get this giant toad under control right before it reached the level of a beast king. Not only did that person manage to slow its progress toward becoming a beast king, he converged all of the toad’s nerves into this location. It's not quite a magical sealing, but it's almost the same. It brought the toad under control, and basically turned it into a mobile immortal's cave!!

“Unfortunately, that parasol is only half-completed. Some accident must have befallen the owner of this immortal's cave before he finished his work. Otherwise the toad would have eventually become a beast king. Hm, methods like these, controlling a beast king, turning it into an immortal's cave, using its life force to extend one’s own.... Those are all the methods of the ancient cultivators of the Dao of the devils!”

As the little turtle flew excitedly around the immortal's cave looking around, Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound. Although he didn’t quite understand everything the little turtle was talking about, his final words were completely astonishing.

“A cultivator from ancient times? That could control a beast king...?” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t completely unfamiliar with beast kings. Bruiser was a battle beast who had the potential to become a beast king in the future. Although he wasn’t fully in the beast king level, he could already control countless other battle beasts, enough to shake an entire sect.

As Bai Xiaochun took a breath to calm himself, the little turtle landed in front of the stone dais in the middle of the immortal's cave. As he looked at the jade slip and the black parasol, his eyes shone with an intense glow.

“Hurry up and see what's written on that jade slip, kid. It’s definitely going to explain who did all of this. Maybe there’s even a teleportation technique in there to get us out of here. If so, we can leave right now.”

Bai Xiaochun walked nervously over to the jade slip. After a bit of hesitation, he leaned over to look at it more closely, and when he was sure it was safe, he picked it up and poured some spiritual power inside. Instantly, an ancient voice spoke in his mind.

“The ancestor wisheth to wage war, and assist I shall. I will likely meet my downfall. This parasol doth be named Eternal. Were the parasol to be completed, it would be a heaven-tier spirit weapon.

“This beast is named Blueland, and it doth be a natural-born traitor. Only if thee possess the power of a Deva can thee control it. If thy cultivation base doth not suffice, use my technique to absorb the beast’s life force, and raise thine own!”

The voice faded away, and then the technique for absorbing the beast's life force appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s mind. He put the jade slip down. Feeling a bit dazed, he looked over at the parasol, and then his eyes began to shine brightly.

“After it's complete, it will be a heaven-tier spirit weapon? A spirit weapon!? The treasures which make up the reserve powers of entire sects are called heaven-tier!?” Panting, he stepped forward and picked up the black parasol.

The instant he touched it, the parasol began to glow with flickering light, and a blast of cold air spread out from it. Bai Xiaochun felt almost like he was being frozen in place, as though his blood were solidifying. A sensation of deadly crisis filled him, and yet, he fought it under control. However, he was unable to open the parasol. Eyes shining, he looked at it and then started laughing.

However, picking up the parasol had apparently opened a magical seal. Suddenly, the entire immortal's cave began to tremble, and a muffled roar could be heard outside the immortal's cave. At the same time, intense pressure began to weigh down.

Apparently, the huge toad had detected what was going on, and was doing everything it could to crush the immortal's cave into dust!

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out, along with cracking sounds. The tunnel outside of the immortal's cave collapsed, and massive amounts of acid flooded in, along with a noxious odor. The immortal's cave couldn’t hold on much longer, and began to collapse. Bai Xiaochun was trembling, and the pressure weighing down on him caused his knees to tremble, and blood to ooze out of the corners of his mouth.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0320 awe-chapter-321

Bai Xiaochun's face fell. Even as he recalled the words spoken to him from within the jade slip, the little turtle shrieked and flew back into his bag of holding.

"If you die, kid, I'll burn some incense for you! It's too bad that Lord Turtle just escaped the clutches of evil, only to get stuck in this place...."

Bai Xiaochun was completely infuriated. Gritting his teeth, he howled, "Shut your mouth!"

However, now was not the time to worry about the little turtle. "Listen up, you big toad! I know you can hear me! Let me go, and I won't hurt you!

"I agree that the cultivator from ancient times pushed things too far with you. That doesn't have anything to do with me. I'm innocent, alright!? Let me go! We don't have any grudges with each other.... Let's talk things over! There's no need to hurt each other, okay? When I really attack, I frighten even myself!"

Even as his words were still echoing about, rumbling sounds filled the inside of the huge toad, and intense pressure exploded out. Bai Xiaochun trembled, coughing up a mouthful of blood as his bones creaked ominously.

Within the intense pressure, he could sense a raging malice, as though the hatred the toad felt for the ancient cultivator was now being transferred to Bai Xiaochun. Apparently, no matter what Bai Xiaochun said, it wouldn't listen at all.

“You....” he said, trembling, a sensation of deadly crisis rising up within him. However, before he could say anything else, the pressure mounted, and the immortal's cave began to collapse even more quickly. The little turtle was screaming, and Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of going mad.

“You big bully!!” he cried, wounds opening up all over him, soaking his robes with blood. There was no time for rumination. The toad was clearly attempting to kill him. Gritting his teeth, he followed the instructions within the jade slip, reaching out with his right hand to grab the black parasol. Then, he stabbed it viciously down into the ground.

The razor-sharp tip of the parasol slid smoothly into the ground, and then down into the flesh and blood of the toad!

As blood spurted out, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gleamed, and he tightened his grip on the parasol. With the other hand, he performed an incantation gesture and simultaneously muttered some incomprehensible words of enchantment. Then, just in the moment that the immortal's cave was about to completely fall to pieces, he roared, “Eternal!”

In response, black light exploded out from the Eternal Parasol. In the blink of an eye, it filled the immortal's cave, and then began to spread out to cover other parts of the toad’s body.

As the black light spread, it stimulated various restrictive spells which had been placed throughout the toad. The spells began to rumble, and yet, apparently because of the vast amount of time which had passed, most of them were weakened and in complete disrepair. In the end, only a few thousand activated fully. However, each one of that small group alone managed to create a massive gravitational force, something like a black hole!

The thousand or so restrictive spells were like a thousand black holes inside the huge toad, with the Eternal Parasol forming the nucleus of them all.

As the gravitational force spread out, the toad began to tremble, and emit increasingly intense roars. Bai Xiaochun was shaking as, all of a sudden, the black holes began to gobble up the life force of the toad and send it toward the Eternal Parasol!

An indescribably boundless power of qi and blood then began to flow through the parasol into Bai Xiaochun’s right hand!

RUMBLE!

Bai Xiaochun’s mind was spinning. His gaze was vacant, and his hair whipped around him. It felt like his soul was about to fly out of his body. His mind slowly became a blank as the seemingly endless power of qi and blood flowed into him!

Qi and blood could also be considered life force, and as it flowed madly into him, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Live Forever Technique began to spin of its own accord. It was almost like immortal nectar being poured down onto cracked, parched ground. The technique rapidly advanced until Bai Xiaochun was shaking where he stood. His fleshly body began to grow stronger at an incredible, explosive rate!

A third heavenly demon appeared!

A fourth heavenly demon appeared!

Almost immediately, four heavenly demons appeared behind him, their heads thrown back as they howled, sending boundless might out in all directions. However, the struggling of the toad only intensified.

Unceasing rumbling sounds echoed out as the more than one thousand restrictive spells began to collapse, causing miserable shrieking sounds to echo out inside of the toad’s body.

However, the gravitational force persisted. With every breath of time that passed, boundless life force flowed through the restrictive spells and into the Eternal Parasol, to be absorbed by Bai Xiaochun. As it did, more heavenly demons formed!

A fifth!

A sixth!

The little turtle cautiously peeped out of the bag of holding, and then his jaw dropped. He even started to feel a little jealous.

“Dammit, what kind of luck is this!?!?” Finally, he simply rolled his eyes in a rare moment of speechlessness. By this point, he could tell that, in truth, not even 10,000 Bai Xiaochuns put together would be a match for the huge toad. However, the toad was filled with countless restrictive spells, all of which were focused onto the parasol.

More accurately, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the one absorbing the toad’s life force, it was the parasol. All Bai Xiaochun had to do was recite the correct enchantment.

“Who exactly put this immortal's cave here?” the turtle thought. “This kind of thing is really rare!”

Meanwhile, in the wild mountains outside, the huge toad was roaring so loudly that brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth. A huge wind screamed in all directions, and mountains in the area were collapsing into pieces as the toad flailed back and forth, withering visibly the entire time.

Birds and beasts alike were shaking in fear, and many were killed in the quaking. The entire 5,000-kilometer area was being turned into nothing more than ruins as the toad descended into madness. Beyond that region, the five patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Sect were closing in at top speed, along with the legacy echelon cultivators.

The Heavenhorn ink dragon was with them, leading the way. The founding patriarch’s expression was grave; they had been at a critical juncture in extracting the beast skeleton when the news came in from the dragon. Although they couldn’t stop the process in the middle, they had been able to speed up their work. After successfully collecting the beast skeleton, they summoned the legacy echelon, and then used the Heavenhorn ink dragon scales they all possessed to head over to rescue Bai Xiaochun.

“That toad probably has battle prowess in the late Nascent Soul stage,” the founding patriarch said through gritted teeth. “If it dares to hurt our junior patriarch, I'm going to sever its tendons and skin it alive!!” Patriarch Ironwood, Li Zimo, and the other two patriarchs were all extremely anxious; if something bad happened to Bai Xiaochun, it would be a disaster for the River-Defying Sect.

Although they would still be just as powerful as before, there would surely be schisms and divisions in the near future.

Li Qinghou’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and he radiated icy killing intent as he shot through the air.

The Heavenhorn ink dragon was feeling very nervous, and didn’t dare to say much. All it could do was lead the way as quickly as possible. Soon, they were within the 5,000-kilometer area that was affected by the toad’s rampage. Before the Heavenhorn ink dragon could even comment, intense booms could be heard, and mountains could be seen collapsing. The ground was shaking violently, and countless birds and beasts were dying. The patriarchs and legacy echelon cultivators all gasped.

“What’s going on!?!?”

Shocked, and even more nervous than before, the group headed forward at top speed.

It was around that time that Bai Xiaochun’s seventh heavenly demon roared into existence.

After that was the eighth, and then the ninth!

Nine heavenly demons all appeared behind him, causing his fleshly body to rocket to unprecedented heights. The cultivation of the Undying Live Forever Technique required life force; with enough of it, the potential for progress was virtually limitless.

Back in the Blood Stream Sect, he had been able to use the blood qi of the Blood Ancestor to quicken his progress. Now, he was using the qi and blood from this huge toad to make terrifyingly quick progress toward the second level of the Undying Live Forever Technique.

The tenth heavenly demon was rapidly forming, and once it was complete, Bai Xiaochun would reach the Asura Body level of the Undying Live Forever Technique!

After the Asura Body was the highest level, the Undying Heavenly King Body!

When that time came, he would be able to break through the second shackle of life, and potentially form a Fleshly Body Nascent Core, which was also more commonly known as an Undying Heavenly King Core!

RUMBLE!

Bai Xiaochun was trembling visibly. As the life force poured into him and the tenth heavenly demon took shape, a miraculous transformation was occurring in his spiritual seas.

His seventh spiritual sea suddenly crystallized, and then his eighth! In fact, the process was going along so rapidly that his ninth spiritual sea was already about half crystallized, and was continued to grow more solid by the second.

He was growing stronger in all aspects. To Bai Xiaochun, this was an incredible good fortune, and all of it was because of the Eternal Parasol!

The parasol seemed to radiate an evil aura as it rapidly sucked in the life force of the toad through the restrictive spells. By this point, the toad was like a candle flickering on the verge of being extinguished!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0321 awe-chapter-322

The toad wanted to fight back, but all it could do was roar in frustration. As the gravitational force continued to suck away at its life force, it let out a miserable shriek and withered down even more....

As that happened, Bai Xiaochun’s ninth spiritual sea reached a state of ninety percent crystallization. With ten percent more, he would reach the great circle of Foundation Establishment, a level of power vastly greater than before. It was in that moment that…

His tenth heavenly demon fully formed!

In the blink of an eye, the ten heavenly demons superimposed, instantly becoming a blurry field of mist.

The mist seethed and roiled, sending out terrifying fluctuations; apparently, a completely awe-inspiring Dharma incarnation was forming!

Then, a magical halo of fire appeared within the mist, a fire that seemed to contain infinite screaming souls.

Beneath the fiery halo, two red dots appeared that looked like eyes. Only half a moment later, though, two more red eyes appeared next to the first two. Then a third pair appeared!

From the look of it, the figure within the mist had three heads!

Within the following short few breaths of time, two enormous, pitch-black arms stretched out from inside the mist. However, things weren’t over yet. A second pair of arms appeared, and then a third! After that was a black suit of armor!

The image which was forming was something that seemed powerful enough to prop up heaven and earth, a figure of incomprehensible power!

It had three heads and six arms, and radiated terrifying might. This was none other than the manifestation of the Undying Asura Body!

Bai Xiaochun shook as his fleshly body power skyrocketed. He was now vastly stronger than he had been before, and when he opened his eyes, they shone so brightly that they could surpass the light of the sun and the moon!

It was in the moment that his eyes opened that his soul seemed to return. Pulling the Eternal Parasol out of the toad’s flesh, and thus ending the absorption of life force, he blurred into motion. Howling, he reached out, tore a huge opening in the wall, and shot out into the open!

As he flew up into the air, he probed his cultivation base and saw that it was only a hair away from the great circle of Foundation Establishment. Then he confirmed that he had upgraded from the Heavenly Demon Body to the Asura Body, whereupon elation filled his heart.

The huge toad was now completely emaciated and panting for breath. Before, it could have easily defeated Bai Xiaochun, but now that much of its life force had been sucked away, it could do little more than gasp and look pleadingly at Bai Xiaochun, as if begging for mercy.

Fear had truly gripped its heart. Earlier, it had completely ignored Bai Xiaochun’s suggestion, and had hoped to take him by surprise and kill him, and thus completely change its own fate. But now, the only emotions in its eyes as it looked at Bai Xiaochun were supplication and terror.

That was especially true when it looked at the black parasol he held, the mere sight of which left the toad trembling.

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit bad for the toad. Sighing, he said, “I mentioned in the beginning that we could have worked things out, but you decided to bully me. Like I said, when I attack, I frighten even myself. Still don’t believe me?”

He shook his head and sighed even more deeply at how much of a straightforward and upright person he was. Whenever he attacked people, he always gave them a warning, but sadly, no one ever believed him.

Even as he prepared to sigh some more, several beams of light appeared off in the distance. Heart thumping, and having no time to ponder his next action, he quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then pointed his finger at the toad. Trying to look as threatening as possible, he stuck his chin up and coolly said, “How dare you, mister invincible, unsurpassable toad monster! You think you can fight with me, Bai Xiaochun? Hmmmphhh! Well, do you surrender or not!?”

In almost the same moment, the patriarchs and legacy echelon cultivators burst onto the scene, and saw the shocking sight of the withered toad.

The toad didn’t look huge and impressive like before. It looked almost like a mere pile of skin, lying there gasping for breath, its eyes shining with terror as it looked at the person standing in front of it....

That look in its eyes seemed to be one of complete and utter dread.

As for the person standing in front of the toad, it was none other than Bai Xiaochun.

When they heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, the newcomers exchanged dismayed, even confused, glances. They had rushed over here from distant locations with the intention of rescuing Bai Xiaochun. How could they ever have imagined that a scene like this would meet them upon their arrival?

Li Qinghou was dumbstruck, and the legacy echelon cultivators were left gasping. Even the patriarchs’ jaws had dropped.

A look of incredulous disbelief could be seen on the face of the Heavenhorn ink dragon. The sight of the emaciated toad seemed completely unbelievable, to the point where the dragon was starting to question whether it had made a mistake in judgment earlier.

After a moment of silence, the founding patriarch looked over at Heavenhorn. “Heavenhorn, um... are you sure this is the toad you mentioned earlier?”

“I....” mumbled the Heavenhorn ink dragon. After a moment of contemplation, it was sure that this was the same huge toad. However, the scene playing out before them seemed completely unbelievable. The dragon couldn’t help but look over at Bai Xiaochun, reverence rising up in its heart.

Pretending that he’d just noticed the new arrivals, Bai Xiaochun turned his head to look at them. His veins of steel were pulsing, his murderous aura roiling out in all directions. Clasping hands and bowing, he coolly said, “Greetings, Patriarchs. I very much appreciate your expression of goodwill. However, I, Bai Xiaochun, have already vanquished this unbeatable toad monster!”

Strange looks appeared on everyone’s faces. Clearly, they knew he was showing off, and yet there was nothing they could say by way of retort. They began to smile wryly as they realized that, apparently, Bai Xiaochun was never going to truly grow up.

“How did you do this?” the founding patriarch asked. He could see that the toad’s cultivation base really was at the late Nascent Soul stage, perhaps even in the great circle. It was actually very close to being in the Deva Realm.

“I was born with the power of the gods,” Bai Xiaochun replied, clasping his hands behind his back and sticking his chin up. “As someone who has reached Heavenstring Foundation Establishment, I can shake the heavens. I called countless bolts of Heaven-Dao lightning down upon this creature, seriously injuring it. The only reason I showed it mercy in the end was because I pitied it.” His casual tone mixed with the words he spoke caused everyone present to wish they could give him a good smack across the face.

Even Li Qinghou felt the same way. Seeing Bai Xiaochun show off like this left him chuckling wryly inside.

“Patriarchs and other Fellow Daoists, thank you for coming to save me. I was injured in the process, and yet single-handedly defeated this unsurpassable monster. Even still, your expression of friendship will forever be inscribed upon my heart. To return the favor, allow me to present this monster as a gift to the sect!” With that he flicked his sleeve.

“After all, with the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, can reduce any kind of beast to ashes....”

The founding patriarch’s cheek twitched. He really couldn’t take any more of this. With a final glare at Bai Xiaochun, he looked over at the toad. Inside, he was delighted. Waving his hand, he collected the toad into his bag of holding. Although the toad’s vital energy had been seriously damaged, with time and rest, it would recover, and could prove to be another powerful spirit beast guardian for the Spirit Stream Sect.

There was even a bit of beast king aura left on the toad. The patriarchs were delighted. They could sense its life force had recently been drained away, but they didn't say anything.

Although they had their suspicions, they kept them to themselves. As for the legacy echelon cultivators, they all approved. When a disciple acquired good fortune, it belonged to that disciple. If others in the sect tried to steal it away, it would lead to discord within the sect.

Besides, Bai Xiaochun was the junior patriarch. Not even Nascent Soul masters would go overboard in dealing with a person like that.

Soon, the group was on their way back, and Bai Xiaochun was in their midst looking exactly like a lonely hero. Of course, inside, he was bursting with joy!

“So,” he thought, “this place really did turn out to have some good fortune. Excellent. Very excellent. I guess I won’t get rid of the little turtle after all. Perhaps he will lead to more good fortune in the future.” Although he felt completely pleased, he suddenly recalled what the Heavenhorn ink dragon had done, and looked over at it with a glare.

Heavenhorn’s heart trembled. It had been able to tell earlier that ninety percent of the toad’s life force had been drained away, and that fact left the dragon trembling in fear. It wasn't sure what secret method Bai Xiaochun had used to accomplish such a task. Regardless, it was a terrifying thing. Now, an ingratiating expression could be seen on its face when it looked at Bai Xiaochun. Actually, its behavior earlier was quite similar to how Bai Xiaochun himself would have acted....

Bai Xiaochun nodded magnanimously at the dragon. It was in that fashion that the group returned to the entrance, flew through the vortex, and found themselves back in the Spirit Stream Sect.

After everyone emerged, the vortex vanished, and the Heavenhorn ink dragon sank back down into the chasm to stand guard.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0322 awe-chapter-323

Now that the patriarchs and the legacy echelon cultivators were back, the final work on the Heavenspan Battleships began. Everyone in the sect helped out as the deva beast spine was used to craft the keels of the ships!

There were a total of three, each one a different size. The largest was 300,000 meters long, and completely awe-inspiring in appearance. It hadn't started moving yet, but it looked like a gigantic mountain that caused all of the Spirit Stream Sect disciples who saw it to tremble in awe and reverence!

And that was just based on its appearance! The largest of the Heavenspan Battleships emanated a shocking aura that surpassed that of a Nascent Soul patriarch. It was at a completely different level altogether; the aura of a deva!

After the Nascent Soul stage was the Deva Realm. This battleship had been made with the spine of a deva beast, and even though it couldn’t necessarily unleash the full might of the Deva Realm, it was still incredibly powerful. It would make their trip up the Heavenspan River much safer. That, coupled with the Dharmic decree from the riversource Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, would ensure that they faced almost no hazards along the way.

Of course, the largest of the battleships was big enough to contain all of the Spirit Stream Sect cultivators who were going to war!

The second of the battleships was a bit smaller, being only 210,000 meters in length, and had been prepared specifically for the Profound Stream Sect. The last of the battleships was the smallest, being only 90,000 meters long. However, it had been constructed in the same fashion as the largest, and radiated the aura of the Deva Realm.

Before leaving their temporary headquarters, the patriarchs of the four sects had already agreed that the Blood Stream Division didn’t need a Heavenspan Battleship. Apparently, they had their own way of traveling up the Heavenspan River.

When the third Battleship was completed, all the disciples in the Spirit Stream Division felt shaken. Everyone knew that the most critical part of the war was coming!

They would soon travel up the river to destroy the Sky River Court and take its place!

Bai Xiaochun had no desire to see anyone die. However, he was no saint either, and didn’t allow such feelings to extend to people he didn’t even know. What he cared about were his family and friends!

Half a month later, the founding patriarch’s voice echoed out through the sect, accompanied by the tolling of bells. “All disciples of the River-Defying Sect’s Spirit Stream Division who have been assigned to fight will now board the battleship! Our next destination is the Blood Stream Division, further up the Heavenspan River!”

The Spirit Stream Division instantly stirred into action. There was no chaos. Thanks to the arrangements made by Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong, as well as the various peak lords, all disciples and battle beasts boarded the battleship in an orderly fashion.

The precious treasures and reserve powers of the sect were also loaded onto the battleship. Bai Xiaochun even saw a familiar coffin, which was now covered. Under the patriarch’s care, it was placed in a secret location on the battleship!

Bai Xiaochun knew at a glance that the coffin contained the true spirit!

“They’re even bringing the true spirit....” he murmured to himself. The Spirit Stream Division was clearly going all out in this war effort!

It took three full days to move the Spirit Stream Division’s ninth mountain peak onto the battleship. By this point, the Spirit Stream Sect seemed empty. There were only some Outer Sect disciples left behind to operate the grand spell formation and protect the headquarters.

The two unused battleships vanished by means of the teleportation power of the ninth mountain peak.

Bai Xiaochun stood on the battleship looking back at the old headquarters, a profound look in his eyes. Hou Xiaomei stood next to him. Looking a bit scared, she edged closer.

Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds then echoed out as the Spirit Stream Division’s Heavenspan Battleship vanished!

When it reappeared, it was beyond the Luochen Mountains, which was the limit of its teleportation power. As soon as it appeared in Blood Stream Division territory, the people who had been sent out to receive the Spirit Stream Division bowed respectfully, and at the same time, gasped in shock at the sight of the huge ship.

It wasn’t just them. Any living beings in the area who could see the Heavenspan Battleship with its deva pressure were shocked. Everything went completely silent.

The Blood Stream Division disciple led the way. Rumbling sounds echoed out that could break all barriers as the Heavenspan Battleship headed in the direction of the Blood Stream Division headquarters.

As Bai Xiaochun stood there at the front of the battleship looking out at the lands in front of him, he felt a great sense of familiarity. The battleship was incredibly fast, even faster than Nascent Soul patriarchs. It only took about six hours before the Heavenspan River became visible off in the distance. There, the hand of the Blood Ancestor could be seen stretching out of the river, forming the mountain peaks of the former Blood Stream Sect!

For most cultivators of the Spirit Stream Division, this was their first time seeing the headquarters of the Blood Stream Division. Although they had heard stories, to see it personally was completely different, and all of them were left astonished.

“That’s a hand!!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe there’s actually a huge hand stretching out of the Heavenspan River. If the five fingers of that hand can each make a whole mountain peak, then how big is the rest of the giant...?”

“So this is the Blood Stream Division, huh...?”

Even as everyone marveled, the Heavenspan Battleship slowly approached the headquarters. The Profound Stream Division and the Pill Stream Division had not been tasked with creating their own Heavenspan Battleships, so they had long since come to the Blood Stream Division headquarters and set up camp outside. Earlier, the camps and the sect headquarters had been quite bustling, but the arrival of the Heavenspan Battleship changed that. Now everyone was looking over and gasping in shock.

Even the cultivators of the Blood Stream Division had that reaction.

The Spirit Stream Division was shaken by the sight of the huge hand, and the Blood Stream Division was shaken by the Heavenspan Battleship. Even the patriarchs of the other three divisions were taken aback, and their eyes began to shine brightly.

“A deva beast’s spine as the keel, crafted into a Heavenspan Battleship!!”

“The Spirit Stream Division truly is adept at keeping secrets. Of our four divisions, they are the best at concealing their resources!”

Even as everyone gave voice to their astonishment, the 300,000-meter-long Heavenspan Battleship descended into the Heavenspan River itself. Massive golden waves rolled about, leading to quite a bit of nervousness on the part of the onlookers. Eventually, though, the huge battleship came to rest calmly on the surface of the Heavenspan River!

The water didn't corrode the ship or hurt it in any way. The Deva Realm aura rolled out, and even the vicious spirits which inhabited the waters avoided it....

At first, silence reigned, but then, wild cheering broke out. Although most gazes shone brightly, Patriarch Crimsonsoul from the Profound Stream Division didn't seem very happy, and gave a cold harrumph.

“Patriarch Frigidsect, we gave you enough materials to make at least five Heavenspan Battleships!”

“Don’t be so impatient, Crimsonsoul. I’ve already made all the preparations for the Profound Stream Division and the Pill Stream Division.” The founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Sect laughed heartily as he waved his hand. Immediately, a second battleship appeared and began to descend toward the Heavenspan River, followed by a third.

Finally, a smile broke out on Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s face, and his eyes burned with anticipation as he looked at the 210,000-meter-long Heavenspan Battleship. As for all of the materials he had provided, that didn’t matter anymore. A battleship with the might of a Deva Realm beast was far more than worth it.

As for the patriarchs of the Pill Stream Division, they felt slightly left out. However, their 90,000-meter battleship was still formidable, and they knew they were the weakest of the four divisions.

As Bai Xiaochun looked around at everything that was happening, the gathering of the four divisions of the sect, and the familiar Blood Stream Division headquarters, he felt more content than ever.

“With my help, four great sects united and became the River-Defying Sect. Maybe the name isn’t that amazing, but it was my idea!” As he looked around proudly, he happened to catch sight of Song Junwan on Middle Peak.

She was smiling as she looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and he was just about to wave to her when he suddenly found that he couldn’t move his arm. Looking over, he realized that Hou Xiaomei was casually holding it in her own arm. First, she glared at Song Junwan, and then she pointed up into the sky and excitedly said, “Look, big bro Xiaochun, an irispetal ibis!”

Without even thinking about it, Bai Xiaochun looked up and saw a bird flying through the air. Suddenly he shivered....

Meanwhile, Chen Manyao was standing behind one of the patriarchs in the Pill Stream Division’s camp, looking at the battleships. When she saw Bai Xiaochun, an imperceptible flicker passed through her eyes, but then it vanished. A moment later, her skin began to prickle as she realized that someone was looking at her, someone who was on the Spirit Stream Division’s battleship.

It wasn’t Bai Xiaochun, but rather, another disciple in the Spirit Stream Division, a graceful, beautiful young woman!

She wore a long green garment that did little to conceal her curvaceous form. An unreadable expression could be seen on her face, as well as an enigmatic smile.

Chen Manyao suddenly felt icy cold, inside and out. There was an instinctual terror that rose up inside of her. Her heart began to beat, and she quickly averted her gaze.

“Who is she...? How come her gaze is so terrifying!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0323 awe-chapter-324

The young woman who had been looking at Chen Manyao was none other than Gongsun Wan’er. Smiling slightly, she looked around, apparently feeling somewhat bored.

She didn’t seem to be interested either in the previous battles or the fighting to come. Only when she turned to look at Bai Xiaochun standing somewhat stiffly next to Hou Xiaomei did her eyes brighten in a way that no observer could notice.

“What’s your connection to that old bastard, huh sweetie?” She chuckled, and for a brief moment, her pupils turned white. However, no one noticed, and the effect quickly passed.

Under the leadership of the various patriarchs, the cultivators of the Profound Stream Division and the Pill Stream Division flew up toward their respective Heavenspan Battleships to begin familiarizing themselves with them.

Meanwhile, in the Blood Stream Division, arch-patriarch Master Godwind hovered in midair looking at the three battleships. After a moment, he turned to the Spirit Stream Division’s Patriarch Frigidsect.

After realizing that Master Godwind was looking at him, Frigidsect laughed and said, “Master Godwind, river transportation has been arranged for the other three divisions. I'm curious to see how your Blood Stream Division plans to head upriver.”

From the way he laughed and spoke, he clearly felt very proud of himself. After all, creating three Heavenspan Battleships was definitely a major accomplishment.

Arch-patriarch Master Godwind snorted and said, “No need to get nervous. You’ll see soon enough.”

In his heart were mixed emotions including jealousy, as well as anticipation. With that, he looked in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

“Nightcrypt, my boy, are you ready?!” When the cultivators from the other three divisions heard his words, they looked in surprise toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was currently feeling a headache coming on as he looked up in the sky in the direction that Hou Xiaomei had pointed. Off in the distance, Song Junwan was smiling, but there was a coldness in her eyes which made a million needles look soft. Bai Xiaochun had no idea how to resolve the situation. Therefore, when he heard the arch-patriarch’s words, he was inwardly delighted. Putting on a very somber expression, he said, “Patriarch, disciple is ready!”

With that, he struggled free from Hou Xiaomei’s devilish clutches and flew up into the air.

Smiling proudly, Hou Xiaomei looked away from Bai Xiaochun toward Song Junwan standing there on Middle Peak. Song Junwan snorted coldly. After Bai Xiaochun had escaped from the Luochen Mountains, she and Hou Xiaomei had clashed and bickered constantly. Neither of them liked the other very much at all.

Looking very excited, the arch-patriarch spoke out in a voice that boomed like thunder, “Very well. Foundation Establishment and Gold Core cultivators of the Blood Stream

Division, present yourselves! The time has come to activate our greatest reserve power!”

To the shock of the other three divisions, numerous beams of light flew out from the Blood Stream Division headquarters.

All of the Foundation Establishment Dharma protectors, grand elders, blood masters, prime elders, and blood rippers were there. Not a single one was missing!

All seven patriarchs were present. Even Patriarch Limitless looked very excited.

Master Godwind’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and blood qi erupted from the assembled crowd. Instantly, the sky began to vibrate, and blood clouds began to form. The clouds rapidly began to converge upon themselves, shrinking down into a bolt of blood-colored lightning which shot down toward the enormous hand stretching up out of the river.

In response, the magical symbols on the spell formations in that area flickered and shone as they seemingly melted, revealing a large gap. That gap had apparently already existed on the skin of the Blood Ancestor’s hand, an ancient wound that had existed for countless years.

From a distance, the wound almost looked like a huge canyon.

The cultivators from the other three divisions were amazed, especially the patriarchs. Their eyes went wide as they realized what the Blood Stream Division intended to do.

“That’s... that’s... impossible!” Frigidsect said, a look of complete incredulity on his face.

Looking extremely proud of himself, Master Godwind said, “Blood Ancestor. Fleshly body: 108 major acupoints!”

He had been looking forward to this day for a very, very long time, and been making preparations for countless years. This was the culmination of generations of hard work and research on the part of numerous Blood Stream Sect cultivators!

As his words echoed out, the Foundation Establishment cultivators of the Blood Stream Division began to fly forth with solemn looks on their faces. Song Junwan, Song Que, Jia Lie, and Master God-Diviner were among them, as were the blood masters and grand elders. All of them headed directly toward the gap which had been opened up in the hand.

After they vanished inside, secret means were employed to teleport them to the various 108 major acupoints located elsewhere in the Blood Ancestor’s body.

Some were transported to various locations on their own, others went in teams. After taking their places, streams of life force power began to rise up from the Heavenspan River, causing rumbling sounds to echo about in the sky.

Looking even more excited, Master Godwind said, “Blood Ancestor. Fleshly body: 72 blood apertures!”

In response, the prime elders’ expressions flickered, and they let out excited cries as they shot toward the opening in the arm.

The 72 apertures had to be manned by 72 Gold Core cultivators. In the case of some of the cultivators who were weaker than the others, a team of two was necessary.

Before Bai Xiaochun’s arrival, they had run various drills to prepare, but this was the moment of truth!

As the prime elders disappeared into the enormous arm, it was possible to see dots of light shining up from the Blood Ancestor’s enormous body beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River.

Those glowing dots of lights, some of which were visible on the hand, extended out of the river, numbering exactly 72!

The cultivators from the other three divisions were all gasping. Even Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes were glittering with surprise.

Voice rising to a roar, the arch-patriarch said, “Blood Ancestor. Fleshly body: 37 meridians!”

Instantly, the eyes of the blood rippers began to glow, and their blood qi erupted out as they shot toward the opening. They disappeared in the blink of an eye. By this point, every bit of the Blood Ancestor’s body was glowing with blood-colored light!

The light was so intense that it was rising up beyond the surface of the golden river water. At the same time, an indescribable pressure was spreading out, causing the vicious spirits within the river to scream and flee. None of them dared to get even close, and they were clearly more terrified than they had been upon sensing the Deva Realm aura from earlier.

“Three spiritual souls, seven physical souls. One Nascent Soul Daoist master for each physical soul. If the spiritual souls are lacking, the Blood Ancestor’s body will not move. Nightcrypt, my boy, you will fill the position of the three spiritual souls! You are well prepared, all of you. Whether or not the Blood Ancestor’s body can move will be up to you!” Laughing loudly, the arch-patriarch flew toward the opening, as did the other six patriarchs, giving Bai Xiaochun a glance just before disappearing.

Moments later, rumbling like thunder echoed out, and the river water began to churn as the seven powerful patriarchs took their positions in the head of the Blood Ancestor, where they became the physical soul!

Shockingly, well over two hundred Foundation Establishment cultivators, over a hundred Gold Core experts, and dozens of blood rippers, plus seven Nascent Soul patriarchs, were unleashing shocking power inside the body of the Blood Ancestor, to give him the strength to rise to his feet once again!

Although it was a simplistic movement, it would still be shocking enough to cause the wind to scream and the ground to quake.

However, as the arch-patriarch had said, the truly critical factor, Bai Xiaochun, had not yet gone into action. The Blood Stream Division had actually performed this exercise before, but they had been unable to get the Blood Ancestor to move even an inch.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and closed his eyes for a moment. Upon opening them, he sent blood qi exploding out of him, becoming a pillar of crimson light that shot up into the sky. At the same time, he blurred into motion, heading directly toward the opening in the Blood Ancestor’s hand.

As soon as he entered, it felt as if the Blood Ancestor’s body were calling to him. That call helped him to speed along even faster through the body; he didn’t need any special techniques or magics. He proceeded forward without the slightest obstacle.

“The Foundation Establishment cultivators are the acupoints. The Gold Core experts are the apertures. The blood rippers are the meridians. The patriarchs are the physical soul. And I'm the spiritual soul!” Eyes shining with a strange light, he shot toward his destination, which was located in the Blood Ancestor’s chest. He was heading toward the heart!

That was also the last place where he had seen Du Lingfei!

Nothing blocked his path, and before long he was traveling the same path he had gone along once before. Eventually, he arrived in the heart cavity, the same place he had entered not so long ago in the past!

When he saw the withered heart, and the countless blood vessels filling the area, he took a deep breath. Then he shot toward the heart itself. In the blink of an eye, he fused into the heart, completely replacing it!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0324 awe-chapter-325

The beating of his heart echoed out into the Blood Ancestor, becoming the Blood Ancestor’s heart. The blood vessels around him began to tremble as his consciousness spread out through them. He could soon sense the Foundation Establishment cultivators in the 108 major acupoints, the prime elders in the 72 apertures, the blood rippers in the 36 meridians, and even the 7 patriarchs who had become the physical soul!

“I... am the Blood Ancestor!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Although his voice couldn’t be heard on the outside, all Blood Stream Division cultivators inside could hear it clearly!

It was like a signal calling out to them, prompting all of them to roar at the tops of their lungs, and unleash all of the blood qi they possessed!

The blood qi began to surge through the Blood Ancestor, starting from the acupoints, then moving through the blood apertures, then the qi passageways, and into the seven physical souls. Then it converged upon Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness. No other person could do this but him, the Blood Lord. When he received the legacy of the Blood Ancestor, he became connected to the Blood Stream Sect, and thus, all of the cultivators in it. He was related to the Blood Ancestor!

The only thing they had lacked was the consciousness, something that could link everyone together. The only person who could do that was obviously the Blood Lord!

Rumbling sounds echoed out from inside the body of the Blood Ancestor as his enormous frame twitched, a motion that sent countless waves surging across the Heavenspan River, and caused the headquarters of the Blood Stream Division to quake violently.

The countless Blood Stream Division disciples who had long since packed their belongings and evacuated the headquarters now stood on the banks of the river, watching excitedly as the scene played out.

“Stand up!!”

“Stand up!!!” It was hard to say who said it first, but soon, all of the cultivators of the Blood Stream Division were shouting it. The other three sects looked on with complete astonishment.

However, controlling the Blood Ancestor was no simple task. Even with all the preparations they had made, for the following seven days, the only thing that happened was that the Blood Ancestor continued to twitch here and there.

The Blood Stream Division cultivators’ nervousness mounted, and eventually, they stopped shouting. However, in their hearts, they were cheering as loudly as ever.

The other three divisions stopped paying very close attention, especially the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions, who were focused on working with their Heavenspan Battleships.

Suddenly, on noon of the seventh day, the hand which had once been the headquarters of the Blood Stream Sect moved, accompanied by muffled rumbling!!

That simple movement was enough to cause the Blood Stream Division cultivators to let out shouts of joy. The cultivators of the other three divisions looked over in shock to see Middle Peak slowly bending over!

As it did, countless buildings and structures were destroyed and began to fall down. However, no one seemed to care about that. Everyone was paying attention to the Blood Ancestor’s body, submerged beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River, as it slowly twitched again.

River water churned, and huge waves rolled out. Slowly but surely, the other fingers on the hand began to move. The cultivators of the Blood Stream Division were going mad with excitement, and the other cultivators were gasping constantly.

Indescribable rumbling sounds echoed out. Everyone who was witnessing this event felt as if they were watching a myth play out before their own eyes.

Despite having prepared mentally, the shock which rose up in the hearts of those present was impossible to avoid. All cultivators, even the patriarchs of the other three divisions, looked on with flickering expressions and wide eyes.

Founding patriarch Frigidsect was sweating as he murmured, “If the Blood Ancestor of the Blood Stream Sect can truly stand up....”

As it turned out, Bai Xiaochun was even more important to the Blood Stream Division than he had previously imagined!

Patriarch Crimsonsoul also gasped when he saw the huge fingers bending. He swallowed hard, and beads of sweat popped out on his forehead. Suddenly, he felt relieved that the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects hadn’t mobilized the

Blood Ancestor to attack the Profound Stream Sect. If that had happened, they would have been lucky to come out of the fight with even half of the people they currently possessed.

Things didn't end with the moving of the finger. In the following days, boulders continue to fall down into the waters below. The former Blood Stream Sect headquarters didn’t just look like mountains anymore, but rather, an actual hand!

In fact, some places on its surface truly resembled skin!

The Profound and Pill Stream Divisions had finally completed their work with their Heavenspan Battleships, and just like the cultivators from the Spirit Stream Division, they were now ready to begin traveling. It was at that point that the Blood Ancestor’s entire hand moved!

On that day, under the eyes of countless onlookers, the five fingers which had once been the headquarters of the Blood Stream Sect slowly clenched together into an enormous fist!

Intense rumbling echoed out, and countless boulders were shattered, causing a hail of rubble and rock to rain down. Countless cries of shock rang out as, unexpectedly, the entire arm moved!

Although it was only a simple motion, because the arm was actually connected to both the land and the river, everything quaked violently, and huge rifts snaked out in all directions. Massive portions of land surrounding the Heavenspan River simply collapsed.

The river itself surged with huge waves, waves so powerful that the Pill Stream Sect’s Heavenspan Battleship actually began to rock back and forth.

“What’s happening...?”

“The arm just moved. Don’t tell me....”

“Don’t tell me that hand is going to push down onto the ground and lift up the rest of the body!” After the words left Patriarch Crimsonsoul’s mouth, everything went silent. By now, everyone could see what was about to happen. The patriarchs of the three divisions, as well as all of the other disciples, could do nothing but watch in muted silence. As for the Blood Stream Division, they yet again began to call out.

“Stand up!”

“Stand up!!”

“Stand up!!!”

Their voices were louder this time as they gave voice to the emotions which had been building up for the past half month.

Amidst the cheering, the Blood Ancestor’s arm continued to move. Cracking sounds rang out, and more boulders and rubble fell. Inside of the Blood Ancestor, the Foundation Establishment and Gold Core cultivators, along with the patriarchs, were all sending explosive cultivation base power out, which was continuously fusing with the Blood Ancestor.

The most difficult job, though, was up to Bai Xiaochun!

Not only did he have to merge the consciousnesses of everyone present into one, he had to send that merged consciousness back out into the rest of the Blood Ancestor’s body. He was the crux of it all, and every time he made even the slightest mistake, it led to failure.

During the past half month, he had performed numerous tests, and had failed on countless occasions. However, he never gave up. The cultivators of the Blood Stream Division were giving him their support, their strength, and their divine sense. What he had to do was take that and use it to give the Blood Ancestor the strength to stand up!

Currently, he was sitting cross-legged in the heart of the Blood Ancestor, trembling visibly. His heart was pounding, and boundless blood qi was flowing through the blood vessels out into the Blood Ancestor.

“I... am the Blood Ancestor!!” he roared. Everything he had experienced in the past half a month had led up to this moment. Not only was he guiding the consciousnesses of everyone present, he was doing so without the slightest misstep, sending power to all corners of the Blood Ancestor's body.

His eyes were completely bloodshot as he howled at the top of his lungs. His mind was reeling as he experienced something very similar to when he had received the legacy. He was now the Blood Ancestor!

The feeling was even more intense than before. Bai Xiaochun took a long, deep breath as he seized hold of the feeling, then lifted his right hand and pushed it forward.

In that exact same moment, the cultivators of the three divisions were looking on with wide eyes. Suddenly, people began to cry out in shock!

“It’s....”

“It’s moving!!”

Everyone watched as the enormous hand which had once housed the headquarters of the Blood Stream Sect rose up, angled down, and then planted itself onto the ground. It was almost as if the body attached to that hand were about to use it to push itself into a standing position!!

Deafening booms filled the area, and countless crevices opened up in the ground. Dust billowed out in all directions, sweeping about like a cyclone as a huge depression opened up in the land.

Massive waves rolled out over the surface of the river in completely unheard-of fashion. At the same time, two enormous beams of light suddenly shone up from beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River!

They were eyes! The eyes of the Blood Ancestor, and the eyes of Bai Xiaochun!

After countless years of silence, the two eyes on the enormous head down below had opened!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0325 awe-chapter-326

The cultivators of the four divisions of the River-Defying Sect would never be able to forget the unbelievable event they were witnessing. It was now burned down into their minds, into their very souls, and would be there for all eternity!

As the hand settled onto the surface of the ground, the rest of the arm shot out from beneath the surface of the water!

The river surged with powerful waves that sent even the Profound Stream Division’s 210,000-meter Heavenspan Battleship rocking back and forth. As for the Pill Stream Division’s battleship, the patriarchs had to intervene to keep it stable.

The minds of all onlookers were left blank as they stared at the enormous arm sticking up out of the Heavenspan River.

Amidst the silence which prevailed, the two beams of light continued to shoot up into the sky. Intense rumbling sounds were accompanied by flashes of multi-colored light, as well as a powerful wind. Then, everyone could sense an indescribably powerful energy radiating out as the hand shoved down.

Something like an island appeared in the middle of the Heavenspan River, which was actually a head that slowly rose up from the surface of the water!

By now, even the 300,000-meter long Heavenspan Battleship was affected by the surging waves. All three of the huge battleships were being pushed away down the river, causing gasps to ring out among the onlookers.

Even Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes were wide, and an extremely rare expression of shock could be seen on her face.

Slowly, the head rose up, revealing two eyes that would leave anyone who saw them completely shaken to the core. Next, a nose became visible, and then the lips. Finally, a roar shot out from the mouth, a roar which could shake the heavens.

The sounds filling heaven and earth exceeded thunder. The Blood Ancestor’s hand continued to push down as, next, his neck was revealed!

Before anyone could even react, the Heavenspan River virtually exploded, sending 300-meter-tall waves rolling out as another hand stretched out from the water and planted itself onto the opposite bank.

The ground quaked as crevices opened up and portions of the land completely collapsed. Beneath the hand of the Blood Ancestor, the seemingly rock-hard earth became as soft as putty.

Now that both hands were firmly planted, everything was cast into shadow as an unforgettably enormous figure slowly rose to a standing position above the Heavenspan River.

The head, the neck, the shoulders, and the chest rose up to an unimaginable height. 300 meters. 3,000 meters. 30,000 meters. Soon, the portion of the Blood Ancestor which rose up above the river reached a height of tens upon tens of thousands of meters.

His broad shoulders were almost as wide as the Heavenspan River itself. Every scrap of muscle on his body radiated terrifying pressure, and his waist was so narrow that it almost formed a triangle with his shoulders….

Although everything beneath his waist was below the surface of the river, anyone who possessed the ability to do so would be able to see that the Blood Ancestor’s feet were already planted on the river bottom!

To cultivators, the Heavenspan River was profoundly deep, but to the Blood Ancestor, that was not the case!

Although it was the Blood Ancestor who was standing up, Bai Xiaochun was now the Blood Ancestor’s soul, and its entire body was under his control. As he looked out of the Blood Ancestor’s eyes, heaven and earth seemed much smaller. To him, the mountains were nothing more than playthings, and the mighty river below him was like a stream.

The mightiest of trees were like grass, and the cultivators were like tiny ants.

The feeling was difficult to describe. As he lifted his gaze, he felt as if he could reach up and pluck the heavenly bodies out of the sky. His heart swelled, and after a moment, he couldn’t help but throw his head back and let loose a long cry!

That cry shook the highest heavens, and filled the entire continent. Birds and beasts trembled in terror, and the waters of the Heavenspan River surged. The huge golden crocodile which lay beneath its surface looked up, and even it appeared to be shaken.

There were other enormous beasts who were similarly terrified, and left shaking.

“Blood Ancestor!” murmured founding patriarch Frigidsect. His scalp was tingling, and he was shaking visibly. Next to him, Li Zimo, Patriarch Ironwood, and the other patriarchs were similarly ashen-faced and incredulous.

“I can’t believe it actually moved....”

“Now *that* is how to make an impression. The Blood Stream Division is going to use the body of the Blood Ancestor to move upriver!!” Patriarch Crimsonsoul was struck speechless, and the other Nascent Soul Daoist masters from the Profound Stream Division were all completely taken aback.

It was even more the case with the Pill Stream Division. All eyes were focused on that towering figure which blotted out even the sun!

If even the patriarchs were reacting in such a way, there was little need to mention the Gold Core and Foundation Establishment experts. All cultivators from all four divisions were shaken and excited. Of course, most excited of all were the cultivators from the Blood Stream Division. All of them dropped to their knees to kowtow to the Blood Ancestor, calling out at the tops of their lungs.

“Greetings, Blood Ancestor!!”

“Greetings, Blood Ancestor!!” The words echoed out throughout the lands in shocking fashion!

Meanwhile, aboard the Spirit Stream Division’s Heavenspan Battleship, Gongsun Wan’er was looking at the Blood Ancestor with a strange expression on her face. She seemed confused, and was frowning; apparently, she was trying to recall something, but was having trouble doing so.

Then she saw the Blood Ancestor’s eyes, and she felt as if she were looking at Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. At that point, a mysterious light rose up in her own gaze.

There was another woman who had a very strange expression on her face, an expression of both reverence and fear, as well as a level of incredulity that surpassed virtually everyone else present.

That young woman was in the Pill Stream Division. She was so beautiful as to cause almost any male to lose control around her... Chen Manyao.

There was another shadowy figure that no one else detected, not even Bai Xiaochun. In the moment that he took full control of the Blood Ancestor, that figure appeared high up in the sky.

He wore a long black robe, and it was impossible to make out his facial features. However, he was clearly very old, and was permeated with an aura of death.

He was looking at the Blood Ancestor with mixed emotions, including reminiscence.

If Bai Xiaochun had been able to see him, he would have recognized him immediately. That old man was the same man he had run into in the nameless mountains, the person who had saved his life. The gravekeeper!!

After a moment, the gravekeeper sighed, and then vanished without a trace....

As the Blood Ancestor rose to his feet, massive amounts of Heavenspan River water flowed off of him, pouring down like rain toward the surface of the earth. The patriarchs gasped and immediately drove the water away from the cultivators of their various divisions. After all, that water was so powerful it could instantly melt many of the weaker cultivators upon contact.

Bai Xiaochun looked back down at the area around him. He was still not quite used to the new sensations he was feeling. However, after seeing that his disturbance of the Heavenspan River water hadn’t hurt anyone, he breathed a sigh of relief. As of this moment, he realized that his own body was actively benefiting from having seized control of the Blood Ancestor, and was slowly growing more powerful.

His Asura Body was improving!

“It’s too bad the Blood Ancestor is dead. I can control his body, but can’t unleash the true power he was capable of in life. Even the fleshly body power I can unleash is only a small portion of his true potential.” After taking some more time to analyze his connection to the Blood Ancestor, he had a better idea of the situation.

Even the small portion of power he controlled was enough that a single fist strike on his part was more than a Nascent Soul patriarch could withstand!

After a bit more contemplation, he sensed the thoughts and fluctuations of the other Blood Stream Division cultivators inside the Blood Ancestor. He could even sense the divine sense of arch-patriarch Master Godwind. With that, he stretched out the hand that had once been the headquarters of the Blood Stream Sect, and placed it back down onto the ground.

When he spoke, his voice caused all the lands to shake.

“Blood Stream Division, to me!”

The excited Blood Stream Division disciples excitedly flew forward toward the opening in the hand. After they were all safely inside of the Blood Ancestor, Bai Xiaochun lifted the hand back up, and then pointed up the river.

“Army of the River-Defying Sect, let us begin our march!!”

As his thunderous voice boomed, Bai Xiaochun sent one of the Blood Ancestor’s legs forward, and he began to walk up the river!

Spirit Stream Division founding patriarch Frigidsect took a deep breath and then waved his hand, sending the Spirit Stream Division into action. The 300,000-meter Heavenspan Battleship erupted with shocking power as it began to slice through the water after the Blood Ancestor.

The Profound Stream Division and the Pill Stream Division similarly sent their battleships into motion. Soon, they were all following along, traveling up the Heavenspan River toward the Middle Reaches!

The sun was beginning to set. A huge giant was in the lead, followed by three enormous battleships. As they proceeded up the river, the heavens shook and the lands quaked. It was a majestic sight!

All beasts who inhabited the Heavenspan River were completely incapable of hindering their path, and did nothing but flee from them.

End of Book 2

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0326 awe-chapter-327

Book 3: Rise of the River-Defying Sect!

The Heavenspan Sea occupied the very center of the world. It was a vast, boundless body of golden water that not even Nascent Soul cultivators would dare to enter without some sort of magical device designed for sea travel.

Only people in the Deva Realm could possibly make an attempt at crossing the sea, and with difficulty at that.

In the east, west, south and north regions of the Heavenspan Sea, there were places where the sea water poured through openings that created four enormous rivers. Although those rivers didn’t reach the very borders of the world, they did come close.

Each of the four great rivers had a riversource sect at the base of the river, in the location where the sea and the river met. The sect which controlled the eastern river was the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. After the river flowed for a certain distance, it split up into four smaller branches of the same river.

The locations where those four rivers branched off came to be known as the Middle Reaches of the cultivation world. Those locations were home to the Starry River Court, the Sky River Court, the Dao River Court, and the Polarity River Court!

Those four sects were deserving of the domineering reputation they maintained in the eastern Middle Reaches of the cultivation world. Any one of them was powerful enough to completely dominate the other smaller sects in the region, as well as the vast number of cultivator clans.

Although each river branch that formed the Lower Reaches was occupied by four powerful sects, even if those sects combined forces, they wouldn’t be a match for one of the larger sects that occupied the Middle Reaches. However, there was only one reason for that!

The patriarchs of the Lower Reaches sects were all Nascent Soul cultivators, whereas the patriarchs of the Middle Reaches sects were in the Deva Realm!

The Deva Realm was something completely different from the Nascent Soul stage. It was an almost unimaginable level of power, and the difference between it and Nascent Soul was even greater than the difference between Nascent Soul and Gold Core!

It was almost impossible to even fathom the disparity!

Because of the threat of such power, none of the sects in the Lower Reaches would ever dream of trying to topple a Middle Reaches sect, not unless some heaven-defying event occurred. Furthermore, the chances of one of the Nascent Soul cultivators from the Lower Reaches breaking through to become a deva were miniscule.

Even people who overflowed with latent talent would be hard-pressed to find an opportunity to do so. The reason for that was because in the Lower Reaches, the spiritual power of the Heavenspan River was different, the resources were different, and the techniques were different. An even bigger reason was that Deva Tribulation was virtually impossible to transcend without a Dharma protector!

However, the biggest reason was that the Middle Reaches sects would never let one of their subordinates in the Lower Reaches produce a deva! That would be a threat to their own positions!

However, none of that applied in this situation. An exceedingly rare opportunity had arisen with the Sky River Court.

For some unknown reason, the Sky River Court had done something to enrage the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. As a result, two devas had been sent to execute judgment on the Sky River Court’s Deva Realm patriarch. Supposedly, they had even extracted part of his soul to create something that was rarely ever seen in the world, and very valuable: a deva soul.

In addition to that, more than seventy percent of the Sky River Court cultivators had been put to death, and that included portions of the reserve powers and precious treasures.

If they had wanted to, they could have simply exterminated the entire Sky River Court. Instead, they had issued an important ruling allowing it to stay in place!

By allowing the Sky River Court to survive, they had created the spark which led to the war among the four subordinate sects in the Lower Reaches.

By leaving the severely weakened Sky River Court in place, they provided an enticing goal for the Lower Reaches sects. Of course, the Sky River Court wouldn’t just sit around waiting to be supplanted. If they could survive the assault of the Lower Reaches sects, then according to the stipulations of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, they would have a chance to continue to exist!

If they managed to raise another of their cultivators to the Deva Realm in the future, then they might be able to return to their previous level of glory.

It wasn’t that they weren’t aware that the four sects had ended up joining forces. They did know, and yet, didn’t dare to interfere. According to the rules set forth by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, they weren’t allowed to meddle with the affairs of the Lower Reaches sects. They had no choice but to sit still and await the final punishment which had been arranged by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

That punishment was none other than the invasion of the Lower Reaches sects!

The sect headquarters of the Sky River Court was built atop the Heavenspan River itself. It was ten times larger than any sect in the Lower Reaches; after all, it was almost impossible to see one side of the river from the other in this area.

Much further down the river from that location was where it split into four more branches, which was the Lower Reaches of the cultivation world.

On the first of those four branches, it was possible to see an enormous giant plodding along, half-submerged in the river water. Every step the giant took sent water surging and spraying about, and the countless vicious spirits and other vile creatures nearby fleeing for their lives.

Even the most powerful of entities which lived in the river would choose to hide in the face of the power they felt, and would simply allow the giant to pass by.

Occasionally, it was possible to see a rabbit flitting about on the shoulders of the giant.

Some distance behind the giant was a 300,000-meter-long Heavenspan Battleship, slicing through the water. Countless cultivators could be seen on the battleship, most of them seated cross-legged in meditation as they attempted to get themselves into peak readiness for the fighting to come. A somber and solemn aura surrounded the entire battleship.

Two more battleships could be seen further back in the river, one of them 210,000 meters long, the other 90,000 meters. They seemed just as solemn as the first battleship.

Bai Xiaochun had converged the consciousnesses of numerous powerful cultivators to take control of the Blood Ancestor. His eyes shone with bright light as he strode through the river water. He could sense the vastness of the world around him, and to him, the water bashing against him felt soft and gentle. He couldn’t help but feel a grand sense of wonderment.

“One day, I won't need to use the body of the Blood Ancestor to get this exact same feeling!” With that, he took another step forward, moving thousands of meters in the process.

Based on the speed of the Blood Ancestor and the Heavenspan Battleships, it only took a few days for them to pass unobstructed through the river until they reached the spot where it connected to the larger river upstream!

Stretching out to the horizon was a massive river that only the patriarchs had ever seen during their formal visits to the Sky River Court every sixty-year-cycle. For the other cultivators, it was their first time ever seeing a river this big; it was ten times wider than the Heavenspan River they were used to.

“The Middle Reaches Heavenspan River!!”

“Is this the Heavenspan River? It’s so huge!!”

“Compared to this river, ours really is nothing more than a stream!” The cultivators of the three divisions on the Heavenspan Battleships could immediately sense that the spiritual energy of heaven and earth here was ten times stronger than that which existed in the Lower Reaches.

Many people took in deep breaths, whereupon cracking sounds could be heard coming from inside of them. They had never encountered spiritual energy this strong, and for many, it immediately allowed them to break through cultivation obstacles that had hindered them in the past.

“This… this is the Middle Reaches! My cultivation base….”

“The only way to take over the Sky River Court is to defeat them in battle. If I continue to cultivate here, I’ll definitely be able to reach the level of a Nascent Soul patriarch!!”

Even the patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect were panting in excitement. In fact, their feelings ran even deeper than the other cultivators, because they were finally closing in on their ultimate goal: becoming devas!

If they could put down roots in the Middle Reaches, the resources and spiritual power there would make the Deva Realm more than just a distant dream. Furthermore, no one from above would come to interfere as they reached the breakthrough point; after all, having a Deva Realm expert was one of the main requirements for Middle Reaches sects!

Bai Xiaochun could sense the excitement of the patriarchs. As he controlled the body of the Blood Ancestor, he took a deep breath, and everything in heaven and earth shook. A massive surge of the spiritual energy of heaven and earth raced toward him, as he became like a black hole. After the spiritual energy entered the body of the Blood Ancestor, he sent it out to the cultivators of the Blood Stream Division, and then took a bit for himself.

His ninth spiritual sea had previously been just on the verge of crystallizing. As of this moment, it only took that single breath to finish the process!

The instant it fully crystallized, Bai Xiaochun trembled as his cultivation base erupted with power vastly greater than before.

After nine spiritual seas fully crystallized, that was the great circle of Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment!

“The Middle Reaches....” he thought, brimming with excitement. All of a sudden, he felt as if he were connected by destiny to the Middle Reaches; if not, why else would he have made a breakthrough the instant he entered...?

Despite being inside of the Blood Ancestor, he was still able to suck in spiritual energy without any wastage. It seemed boundless.

Eyes flickering, he sent the Blood Ancestor leaping forward. Massive rumbling could be heard as the Blood Ancestor flew through the air and then splashed down into the river that was the eastern Heavenspan!

RUMBLE!

Water splashed everywhere, and huge waves rolled out. It was in that moment that the three Heavenspan Battleships also burst out into the Middle Reaches!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0327 awe-chapter-328

Bai Xiaochun felt truly free and unrestricted as he sent the Blood Ancestor up into the Middle Reaches. By this point, he could control the body of the Blood Ancestor with complete agility and dexterity.

The river began to get deeper, and soon it was up to the chest of the Blood Ancestor.

As for the three Heavenspan Battleships, because of the abundance of spiritual energy, they were able to move more quickly, making it easier for them to keep up with the giant.

Rumbling echoed out from the Heavenspan River as the group proceeded on upstream.

It was at this point that the patriarchs of the three divisions issued orders, and the enormous sails of the battleships were unfurled. Upon each sail could be seen three shining, golden characters!

River-Defying Sect!!

This was the first time that the name of the River-Defying Sect had been announced in the Middle Reaches of the cultivation world. As the wind caused the sails to flap, the words looked particularly impressive!

The patriarchs of all four divisions had agreed to do this ahead of time. Back then, the arch-patriarch Master Godwind hadn’t been completely sure that the plan with the Blood Ancestor would work. Therefore, the plan was to use the three Heavenspan Battleships, not just to transport the members of the sect, but also to impress and awe those who saw them.

It was an attempt to threaten anyone who harbored thoughts of trying to carve out their own spheres of power in the territory currently controlled by the Sky River Court.

Clearly, this method was working!

The cultivation world of the Middle Reaches was far larger in area than the Lower Reaches. Considering that all of the Lower Reaches was simply one part of the territory controlled by the dominant Middle Reaches sect, it was possible to imagine how large of an area that was.

Occasionally, smaller sects and cultivator clans were visible on the shores of the river. Clearly, such organizations had unique relationships with the Sky River Court to be permitted to establish themselves so close to the river itself.

Normally, they were a proud and arrogant lot, comfortable in their respected position within the Middle Reaches. As for the Lower Reaches, they looked down on them with disdain.

But now that the Sky River Court was being punished, such organizations were getting more and more nervous. Then they saw the three Heavenspan Battleships, and their eyes went wide. They were struck with fear and awe, and could scarcely believe what they were seeing. And that was without even mentioning the enormous giant that led the way for the battleships.

“They’re the River-Defying Sect?”

“They come from the Lower Reaches....”

“They’re going to attack the Sky River Court in the hopes of replacing it!!” The cultivator clans and small-scale sects were all trembling in nervousness, completely shaken by what they were seeing!

Once the battleships and the giant made their way off into the distance, the cultivator clans and small-scale sects immediately sent word to others that they knew in the Middle Reaches. Before long, everyone was shaken, and even the Courts on the other rivers became aware of what was happening.

Of the other sects and clans in the territory of the Sky River Court, some were terrified and some were nervous. However, there were some who merely narrowed their bloodshot eyes, as if they were trying to decide what to do.

However, other groups which had never been treated very well, especially groups more on the borders of the Sky River Court territory, quickly made up their minds.

“This is an opportunity for the River-Defying Sect, but it's also an opportunity for our Zhoushi Clan!”

“We can show up in the River-Defying Sect’s moment of greatest need. If we join them in attacking the Sky River Court, the merit we earn in battle will be a protection for our clan. It will buy us at least 1,000 years of stability!!”

“Let’s risk it! If we don’t attack now, the heavens only know when we might get another chance!”

Before long, the entire Sky River Court territory was in a huge commotion as numerous organizations began to head in the direction of the Sky River Court’s headquarters.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun's progress up the Heavenspan River had slowed some. This was a decision made by the patriarchs of the four divisions. As far as they were concerned, it wouldn’t make any difference if they arrived at the Sky River Court a day earlier or a day later.

Besides, they wanted to wait for news of the River-Defying Sect to spread in the area. That way, any sects or clans who wished to join them would have time to make their decision. Furthermore, any who were on the fence would have a chance to make their way to the area near the Sky River Court to observe how things played out.

By waiting until the right moment to strike at the Sky River Court, they would be able to maximize the benefits of winning!

When Bai Xiaochun heard their plan, he couldn’t help but sigh. Clearly, the patriarchs were making a gamble. However, he knew that all of them were profound at scheming and planning, and were the slyest of sly foxes.

When they all got together to plan, they would hash things out to the finest detail.

At one point, the patriarchs of the other three divisions gathered on the shoulders of the Blood Ancestor. As they sat there cross-legged, Master Godwind materialized in illusory form on the Blood Ancestor’s ear to confer with them. “Our attack on the Sky River Court will encompass three major offensives!”

Restrictive spells were cast to ensure that no one would eavesdrop.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked askance at the ant-like forms on his shoulders, and couldn’t help but feel a bit annoyed.

“The first offensive will be via the water! This assault must be lightning-swift, and we must achieve victory as soon as possible. Only in that way can we impress the cultivator clans and the other sects, and give them the confidence to join us!”

“That's right. The second offensive will be through the jungle! The Sky River Court is enormous, and is surrounded by jungle on either side. The fighting will be bitter, and the main goal will be to reach the Sky River Court headquarters!”

“Heh heh. So what you’re saying is that the third offensive will be on the sect headquarters itself!”

“Yes. But the most difficult part of the final offensive won’t be dealing with the cultivators of the Sky River Court. It will be the Dire Skybanyan, which feeds on the flesh and blood of 1,000,000 cultivators every hundred years! The Sky River Court’s deva patriarch might have perished, but according to our intelligence reports, their Dire Skybanyan is still very much alive. Furthermore, its power is similar to that of a deva....”

As the patriarchs discussed their plans, Bai Xiaochun listened in, heart pounding with shock. When he heard them mention the Dire Skybanyan, he couldn’t help but be intrigued.

Time passed. Half a month later, the first of the cultivator clans presented themselves to the River-Defying Sect on the bank of the river, and declared their allegiance!

They would join the River-Defying Sect in attacking the Sky River Court!

These organizations who didn’t feel the need to wait and see how the fighting went before joining were taken very seriously by the River-Defying Sect. Although they weren’t invited to board the battleships, they were promised many benefits in the future.

In the following days, more organizations appeared to offer allegiance. Another half a month passed, and by that time, 30 cultivator clans and five small-scale sects had joined the alliance with the River-Defying Sect.

As they got closer to the Sky River Court, this trend influenced many of the other organizations, and became a major factor in their own decisions.

By this point, the River-Defying Sect felt that they were ready. With that, they pushed forward at full speed. Rumbling could be heard as the Blood Ancestor flew through the Heavenspan River, slicing through the water, followed by the three Heavenspan Battleships.

A few days later, the members of the River-Defying Sect finally caught sight of something astonishing up ahead on the river. It was a gigantic tree that reached high up into the sky, and actually connected both banks of the river!

It was an enormous banyan tree that was called a skybanyan!

The tree had lived for many, many years, and was tens of thousands of meters tall. Its roots were buried into both banks of the river, with rootlets dangling down to brush the surface of the water below. Many of the rootlets had grown together in clumps, creating walkways for people to tread upon. The entire sight was completely shocking!

The roots which sank into the banks of the river actually formed countless smaller skybanyans, almost like children to the mother that was the enormous larger tree. Because they were all connected together, they were like a huge jungle!

That jungle fairly radiated an aura of blood and gore. It was like an enormous graveyard, something which was nurtured by the power of flesh and blood.

That was because skybanyans were trees that loved to feast on skin and gore!

Although the patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect had already spread word about the skybanyans, when the members of the sect saw them with their own eyes, they couldn’t help but be shaken mentally.

The main tree radiated an aura of death, and many of its branches and limbs were withered, as were many of the smaller trees in the disorganized jungle which surrounded it.

Even more astonishing was that in the middle of the trunk of the main tree, an enormous handprint could be seen, as if a palm strike had been delivered with the intention of destroying it!

Clearly, the Dire Skybanyan, despite not being dead, was panting on the verge of passing away. Even still, the scant bit of power that it still retained was enough to threaten everything in the area!

The Sky River Court was a place that abounded with a sinister air. Currently, not a single cultivator was visible in the area, and yet it was possible to detect glares of hatred falling upon the River-Defying Sect from within the skybanyans. Most of those gazes were leveled on Bai Xiaochun and the Blood Ancestor.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0328 awe-chapter-329

In the moment that the Blood Ancestor and the three Heavenspan Battleships appeared in front of the headquarters of the Sky River Court, the entire Heavenspan River seemed to go quiet.

At first no one from either side said a thing. They only looked at each other, gazes burning with killing intent.

Whether it was the Sky River Court or the River-Defying Sect, neither could be considered in the right or in the wrong.

As the silence wore on, an intense pressure built up until the air itself seemed to solidify. At the same time, numerous organizations that existed within the territory of the Sky River Court were all watching to see what would happen.

After a long moment, an illusory version of the Blood Stream arch-patriarch appeared out in the open. Facing the Sky River Court, he clasped hands and bowed deeply. “I, Master Godwind, offer greetings to the presiding sect!”

Next, the Spirit Stream founding patriarch appeared in person. Bowing, he said, “I, Frigidsect, offer greetings to the presiding sect!”

After him were the strongest patriarchs from the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions. Their expressions were wistful as they clasped hands and offered formal greetings.

“I, Crimsonsoul, offer greetings to the presiding sect!”

“I, Sievepill, offer greetings to the presiding sect!”

At first, the Sky River Court maintained silence. Of the countless gazes emanating from the Dire Skybanyan, many were filled with mixed emotions. After a long moment passed, a hoarse voice echoed out.

“Master Godwind, Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul, Sievepill. It’s been a long time, Fellow Daoists....” As the voice filled the air, an old man emerged from the Sky River Court, hovering tall and straight. He had long white hair, and a malicious air to him. Especially terrifying was the fact that, on the left side of his face, he had a huge growth of flesh the size of an infant’s head.

Eight people appeared along with him, just behind him; shockingly, each one was a Nascent Soul cultivator. The strongest of them all was the old man, who was clearly in the great circle, and even had a bit of a Heaven-Dao aura to him. Given enough time, that old man would most likely be able to reach the Deva Realm.

The old man flashed a bitter smile. Eyes filled with profound ancientness, he said, “This fight doesn’t need a lengthy preamble. I know that you have come to offer greetings today because of the judgment set forth by the presiding sect. There is no right or wrong here today, at least, not that exists between our two sects....

“However, there is one thing that I’m certain of. And that is...” As the man spoke, mixed emotions could be seen on his face. His voice grew softer and softer, until Master Godwind and the other patriarchs were straining to hear what he said. However, in that very moment, a crimson eyeball suddenly opened on the tumor on the side of his face, and it radiated venomous hatred and madness. Then the old man shouted, “... you people will all die here today!!”

Even as the words left his mouth, the air around the three Heavenspan Battleships began to twist and distort as tens of thousands of people materialized. All sorts of cultivation bases were present. However, each and every person was extremely fast, and was adept at using spatial manipulation magic. In the blink of an eye, they were already attacking the battleships.

Even more such figures appeared in the vicinity of the patriarchs, and those figures' murderous auras were especially intense!

Clearly, the Sky River Court was attempting to take advantage of the River-Defying Sect's moment of unpreparedness to launch a sneak attack, and hopefully, seize the upper hand!

However, in the very moment that the Sky River Court's cultivators attacked, rumbling echoed out as an enormous sword materialized. Almost as soon as it appeared, it divided into tens of thousands of smaller greatswords which slashed through the air toward the Dire Skybanyan!

This was the Profound Stream Division's sword formation, which normally took a significant amount of time to prepare. The fact that it had suddenly appeared right here and now indicated that the four patriarchs' politeness earlier had just been for show!

This was a situation of fighting viciousness with ferocity! This was a war that would determine the fate of two sects, and there was no room for righteousness or morality. Any such weakness would come at a bitter price!

Rumbling booms filled the air as shields of light sprang up around the Heavenspan Battleships, completely blocking the attacks of the Sky River Court cultivators and preventing them from advancing toward the ships. Simultaneously, blood-colored light erupted from the Blood Ancestor, protecting the patriarchs.

In the direction of the Sky River Court, the Dire Skybanyan began to glitter with light, and then countless leaves flew out to block the sword formation. The mutual sneak attacks launched by both sides had failed to secure the upper hand for either one of them. Neither sect was showing any consideration for the other, nor was anyone interested in having a discussion. The fighting had begun!

Countless vine-like branches shot out from the Skybanyan like vicious, bloodthirsty snakes. Accompanying them were numerous cultivators, almost blurs as they shot through the air toward the River-Defying Sect.

The Sky River Court cultivators were skilled with spatial manipulation magic, and were far faster than ordinary cultivators. Furthermore, they were very skilled at concealing themselves. The truth was that in the Middle Reaches of the cultivation world, the Sky River Court was known for being able to kill anyone, anywhere!

It was even correct to say that the Sky River Court was a sect of assassins!

In the blink of an eye, more than ten thousand Sky River Court cultivators appeared, blotting out the sky as they unleashed deadly attacks. They flitted through the air as if they were performing teleportations; almost as soon as they became visible, they would vanish to another spot.

This was the first time that the River-Defying Sect was facing such techniques, and that gave the Sky River court a clear advantage!

Then there were the vines, which brimmed with astonishing strength as they screamed through the air. At the same time, numerous smaller skybanyans on the two banks of the river emerged from the ground and transformed into treants. Howling, they launched themselves out over the Heavenspan River toward the River-Defying Sect.

Some of the treants were dozens of meters tall, some of them were hundreds of meters tall. In each and every one of them, Sky River Court cultivators could be seen, sitting there meditating as they unleashed power to control the treants' shocking strength.

Even as the Sky River Court forces charged forth, Bai Xiaochun sent the Blood Ancestor leaping up into the air. As a result, massive waves rolled out across the surface of the Heavenspan River water. Many of the Sky River Court cultivators were simply impeded by the waves, but others who didn't evade them quickly enough screamed miserably as they were inundated and then melted by the water.

How could the Sky River Court possibly ignore the fact that the Blood Ancestor had just leaped up into the air? The truth was that the Blood Ancestor was actually the focal point of this fight. Instantly, countless vines shot out from the numerous skybanyans, which flew through the air and began to wrap around the Blood Ancestor.

Those vines emanated shocking strength, and were backed by the will of the Dire Skybanyan itself.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes flickered with cold light. Without the slightest hesitation, he unleashed all of his blood qi, viciously waving his right hand and snapping all of the vines. Bai Xiaochun was well aware that his mission in this battle was to neutralize the Dire Skybanyan!

As he proceeded forward toward the enormous tree, more and more vines snaked out, speeding toward him with wild abandon as they attempted to impede his progress.

At the same time, the 300,000-meter-long Heavenspan Battleship shot forward, glittering with the light of spell formations as countless giants rose up on its deck. Roaring, the giants leaped out to fight with the Sky River Court cultivators.

A similar thing occurred with the second battleship. A vast host of puppets flew out, smashing into the forces of the Sky River Court.

More sword formations appeared up in the sky, and then a rain of swords began to fall. Then came the Pill Stream Division. An enormous cauldron materialized up in the air, which began to bathe everything in the area with soft light.

There was something toxic about the light, and any Sky River Court cultivator who it touched began to shake violently. In contrast, the River-Defying Sect cultivators who the light touched felt their cultivation bases rising and their wounds being healed.

Chen Manyao’s voice rang out as she gave orders to the Pill Stream Division, and toxic gas immediately began to spread toward the enemy.

In the blink of an eye, massive rumbling sounds rose up to the heavens.

Up in the air, the patriarchs from all four divisions began to fight with the Nascent Soul cultivators from the Sky River Court. Booms rang out. In the initial fighting, it wasn't clear which side had the upper hand among the patriarchs. Although the Sky River Court was outnumbered, the old man who was half a step into the Deva Realm actually gave them a bit of an advantage.

The prime elders, legacy echelon cultivators, and Gold Core experts of the River-Defying Sect formed the backbone of the army. They outnumbered the Sky River Court, and thanks to their constant attacks, the Sky River Court’s Gold Core cultivators were suffering one defeat after another!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But then, the three Heavenspan Battleships erupted with blinding light, beams of destruction fully 300 meters wide.

The power source for the beams of light were the skeletal parts of the Deva Realm beast that formed their keels. As the light shot forth, rumbling sounds filled the air, and any Sky River Court cultivator who got in the way was instantly transformed into ash.

The target of those destructive beams of light was none other than the Dire Skybanyan!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0329 awe-chapter-330

For the River-Defying Sect, there was one key to this battle.

The Dire Skybanyan!

The attacks from the Heavenspan Battleships had one purpose: to clear the way for Bai Xiaochun to reach the Dire Skybanyan.

The three beams of light cut through everything like razor-sharp knives slicing through bamboo. When they slammed into the Dire Skybanyan, the tree trembled and let out a bitter cry that caused blood to ooze out of the mouths of any cultivators in the vicinity.

However, it didn’t affect the Blood Ancestor at all. Under Bai Xiaochun’s control, the Blood Ancestor leaped high into the air to appear directly in front of the ancient skybanyan. Then, a giant fist formed and slammed into the tree with the force of ten mountains.

A huge boom echoed out, and the gigantic tree trembled even more violently. Suddenly, enormous waves surged out on the surface of the Heavenspan River as a 30-meter-wide root exploded out. It was over 3,000 meters long and razor-sharp, causing whistling sounds to echo out as it sped toward the Blood Ancestor.

SMASH!

The Blood Ancestor wasn’t hurt, but many of the Blood Stream Division cultivators inside coughed up blood from the force of the blow, and had to struggle to prevent their cultivation bases from surging out of control. Bai Xiaochun knew that time was limited, so he quickly unleashed another fist strike.

It was a fist strike that could seriously injure even a Nascent Soul cultivator, but the Dire Skybanyan did not fall!

And yet, the ancient tree was shocked by the threatening power of the Blood Ancestor, and could tell that only a small portion was being used. If the Blood Ancestor’s full battle prowess were unleashed, a single fist strike would be more than enough to cause the Dire Skybanyan to explode into countless fragments!

Even still, the small portion of power being used was still shocking. Although the tree wasn't confident in being able to harm the giant, it was sure that it could kill the person inside who was controlling it!

At the moment, it was willing to pay any price to do just that! As Bai Xiaochun battered it, the tree began to sway back and forth. As for the cultivators of the Sky River Court, it was with complete shock, and fully bloodshot eyes, that they attempted to intervene.

It was in that moment of crisis that a second root shot out toward the Blood Ancestor, then a third and a fourth.

Whistling screams filled the air, and Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth. Considering he was in the heart cavity, the brunt of the attacks were being borne by others. Even still, blood was oozing out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and on top of that, the power of the attacks was increasing.

Moments later, a fifth root appeared, then more, until there were eight. The cultivators inside the Blood Ancestor were having a hard time sustaining such force, and many of them were lapsing into unconsciousness. As a result, Bai Xiaochun’s control over the Blood Ancestor was beginning to falter.

However, the sustained barrage by the Blood Ancestor had knocked open a gap in the trunk of the Dire Skybanyan!

“I can’t keep things up like this!” Bai Xiaochun thought, eyes flickering. Roaring at the top of his lungs, he stretched the Blood Ancestor's hands out, shoving them into the gap that had opened, and then exerted all the strength he could muster to rip the opening wider!

An ear-piercing ripping sound echoed out, causing numerous Sky River Court cultivators on both banks of the river to let out bloodcurdling screams. Even the Nascent Soul cultivators fighting up in the air were shocked.

Bai Xiaochun ripped the gap open to double its previous size, causing the screams of the Dire Skybanyan to echo high into the heavens.

As the huge tree struggled, the waters of the Heavenspan River water seethed, and massive waves rolled out as a gigantic root erupted into the air.

When the huge root slammed into the Blood Ancestor, Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to pass out. Many of the other cultivators inside the Blood Ancestor coughed up blood. Bai Xiaochun could sense his control over the Blood Ancestor slipping away.

It was in that very moment that two enormous, 30,000-meter-long roots suddenly rose up from within the Heavenspan River.

They were clearly different from the other roots; they were the main roots of the Dire Skybanyan! They were like enormous pillars, one on the right, one on the left, smashing toward the Blood Ancestor!

It was a critical moment in which there was no time for pondering or consideration. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bright red, and he was operating fully on instinct. The Blood Ancestor’s left hand reached out to grab the huge root on the left side. Clamping it under the Blood Ancestor's left armpit, Bai Xiaochun sent the right hand out to grab the other root and do the same!

Rumbling sounds echoed out from the right and left. Bai Xiaochun’s face was as white as a sheet of paper as he exercised the last bit of control he was capable of... to bend the Blood Ancestor’s legs!

“Maybe I can’t kill you, but I can lock you down!” The Blood Ancestor gripped the two main roots tightly, then began to sink down into the river!

Intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the Blood Ancestor sank below the surface of the Heavenspan River, holding the two roots as he descended toward the river bottom. No matter how the Dire Skybanyan struggled, it was incapable of preventing this from happening.

ROAR!!

The Dire Skybanyan was going mad, but was helpless. In the blink of an eye, the sinking Blood Ancestor caused the Dire Skybanyan to begin to tilt over.

Now that it was locked in place, it was difficult for the Dire Skybanyan to struggle, let alone unleash its most powerful divine abilities. Taking advantage of the moment, Bai

Xiaochun opened the Blood Ancestor's mouth and let out a shocking roar from beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River.

Instantly, a blast of air carved out a tunnel within the water, within which appeared numerous Blood Stream Division cultivators. Borrowing the force of the blast of air, they shot out into the open. Gold Core cultivators, Foundation Establishment experts, patriarchs, and even vast numbers of Outer and Inner Sect disciples all burst out into the open.

All of them had injuries, but as soon as they bathed in the light cast by the Pill Stream Division’s cauldron, their wounds began to mend. Clearly, they had been prepared for this moment. As soon as they were out in the open, members of the other three divisions rushed to aid them, and many of them grouped up into the Blood Stream Division’s locust-like battle formations.

The Nascent Soul cultivators, including Master Godwind, Patriarch Limitless, and the Song Clan patriarch, all roared and transformed into beams of light that went to join the Nascent Soul battles.

Although all of them were injured in various ways, as soon as they joined the fighting, the Nascent Soul battles became like the Gold Core battles, and favored the River-Defying Sect!

As for the Gold Core battles, they became even more one-sided.

The last person to fly out of the Blood Ancestor’s mouth was Bai Xiaochun, blood spraying out of his mouth. As soon as he was visible, eight cultivators from the Spirit Stream Division shot toward him.

These eight were no strangers to Bai Xiaochun. They were the same compatriots with whom he had formed the ninth spell formation of Mount Daoseed. Without the slightest hesitation, they closed in on Bai Xiaochun, and immediately, the light of a spell formation appeared.

“Form up!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Instantly, light rose up around the nine of them, becoming a 300-meter-tall giant, which leaped into the air. As it sailed upward, its right hand shot out, and a blood-colored greatsword appeared. That sword was formed from the blood qi of the cultivators of Middle Peak!

Bai Xiaochun raised the sword high into the air and then slashed it down, whereupon it sliced a nearby skybanyan into two parts!

RUMBLE!

Everything shook wildly, and all onlookers were completely shaken by the preparation and teamwork shown by the River-Defying Sect.

That was especially true of the audience of cultivator clans and smaller sects. Their minds were completely spinning, and their scalps were tingling with shock.

The power and determination shown by the River-Defying Sect left them completely shaken down to their souls.

The battle between the Blood Ancestor and the Dire Skybanyan was something no one would ever be able to forget for their entire lives. Whether it was that fight, or the fighting with the Nascent Soul cultivators or the Gold Core experts, it was clear that the Sky River Court had the disadvantage!

All of the cultivators from the clans and sects were left gasping, their eyes shining with strange light.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0330 awe-chapter-331

The fighting spirit among the River-Defying Sect and the Sky River Court raged over the Heavenspan River. Rumbling sounds filled the air, and vicious gleams could be seen in the eyes of all cultivators!

Miserable shrieks echoed out, and magical techniques lit up the sky. Although the River-Defying Sect’s patriarchs and the Gold Core cultivators held the advantage in the fighting, the assassination techniques used by the Sky River Court were a big source of frustration. When facing such techniques, even the slightest misstep could lead to death.

After all, when the Sky River Court had initially been punished by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, their top-level forces, and even middle level forces, had all suffered severe losses. However, the low-level cultivators hadn’t been affected as much.

The fighting going on over the Heavenspan River was incredibly fierce. The four divisions of the River-Defying Sect had already experienced such fighting in the Lower Reaches, and were familiar with large-scale battles. Although they were initially surprised by the Sky River Court’s unique battle tactics, it didn’t take long before the fighting reached a deadlock.

As far as the River-Defying Sect was concerned, that was a good position to be in. All they needed to do was wait for the patriarchs and Gold Core cultivators to seize victory, and then the rest of the enemy forces could be easily crushed!

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out. As for the clans and sects which had already sworn allegiance to the River-Defying Sect, although they weren’t making a huge showing on the battlefield, they were providing significant assistance, and were fighting just as fiercely as everyone else.

As the deadlock continued, numerous Chosen rose to prominence in the fighting. Shangguan Tianyou controlled one of the spell formation incarnations, and the sword qi he unleashed caused a web of swords to appear, a dazzling sight as it swept across the battlefield.

Ghostfang didn't say much, but his attacks were extremely intimidating. The spell formation he was part of became just like him, abounding with ghost qi. Numerous pitch-black ghost hands appeared, which unleashed deadly violence onto the Sky River Court enemies.

Then there was Hou Yunfei, Gongsun Yun, as well as cultivators from the Blood Stream Division such as Song Que, Xuemei, Master God-Diviner, Jia Lie, Song Junwan, the three blood masters and the grand elders. Everyone was attacking with full power, making a spectacular showing on the battlefield.

Others were also present, such as Nine-Isles from the Profound Stream Division. He had long since recovered, and usually spent his time avoiding Bai Xiaochun. Now, he took advantage of the opportunity this battle presented him to vent his frustration.

There were few Chosen among the Pill Stream Division disciples. The spectacular beauty Chen Manyao was actually the only one, but she was extremely skilled in commanding the army on the field of battle. Pill Stream Division squads of three to five cultivators roved about, unleashing toxic gases, or using healing powers to aid their comrades.

In fact, it was mostly because of the Pill Stream Division that the River-Defying Sect was able to benefit from the deadlock.

Chen Manyao’s orders kept the Pill Stream Division cultivators completely in order, moving about the battlefield with particular skill and finesse.

As Chen Manyao sent out one order after another, strange light gleamed in her eyes. She was like a star shining over the aquatic battlefield, and became the second most important target for the Sky River Court.

The person who people were paying attention to the most, however, had just emerged from the Blood Ancestor and then formed a giant incarnation. It was Bai Xiaochun, who wielded an enormous greatsword formed from blood qi!

Considering that the look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes was the same as the look in the eyes of the Blood Ancestor, everyone could tell that he had been the person in control of the blood giant!

Of course, even though the Sky River Court had been prohibited from interfering with the affairs of the Lower Reaches cultivation world, they were able to gather intelligence. As such, they knew that he was also the person responsible for unifying all of the Lower Reaches sects.

Therefore, almost as soon as he appeared, the Sky River Court forces glared over at him and sent a wave of assassins in his direction. At the same time, numerous smaller skybanyans began to race toward him, expressions those of madness and ferocity.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glowed with red light. As of this moment, he felt like he was back fighting the Luochen Clan, or in the Fallen Sword Abyss. Even the fighting outside the Profound Stream Sect city had been similar. Throwing his head back, he roared, causing blood qi to surge around him, increasing the battle prowess of the Blood Stream Division cultivators in the area.

Bruiser could sense Bai Xiaochun’s energy, and also let out a howl, causing waves of battle beasts to leap toward the Sky River Court forces.

Then there were the refined corpses, gargoyles, and puppets. A dazzling display could be seen on the battlefield as endless booms and crashes rang out.

Bai Xiaochun swung his blood sword at an incoming skybanyan treant. Even as he did, an explosive voice roared, “Die!!”

The voice came seemingly out of nowhere. Simultaneously, eight Foundation Establishment cultivators materialized out of thin air. Every one of them was clearly a cold-blooded assassin, and none of them paused for even a moment before unleashing their most powerful attacks onto Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he followed through with his blood sword strike. Even as he slashed the skybanyan treant into two pieces, his energy erupted, and an enormous figure formed behind him. In the blink of an eye, it became crystal clear; shockingly, it was the manifestation of his Undying Asura Body!

The undying asura and the spell formation incarnation merged together, and when the combined attacks of the eight Foundation Establishment cultivators landed on it, the only thing that happened was that the Foundation Establishment cultivators coughed up mouthfuls of blood. Looks of disbelief and terror appeared on their faces.

“Impossible!!”

“What type of fleshly body is that? I can’t believe something like this exists!!”

“Dammit! He's almost at the point where he’s indestructible within the Foundation Establishment stage!!”

The eight cultivators were so shocked that their qi and blood was in chaos. Looking at Bai Xiaochun like he was a ghost, they didn’t hesitate for even a moment to begin to flee at top speed.

“Indestructible in Foundation Establishment?” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t hurt in the least. He let go of the blood sword, allowing it to dissipate as he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing all of the resulting blood qi to form into a cloud of smaller blood swords, which shot out like a tempest wind.

The eight Foundation Establishment cultivators didn’t have the time to flee very far. The blood sword formation swept over them, slashing away their flesh and blood and chopping their bones into dust. By the time the wind passed, not a single trace remained of the eight cultivators.

When the other Sky River Court cultivators saw this, they gasped in shock. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes flickered with cold light as he looked around the battlefield. He saw River-Defying Sect cultivators dying here and there, killed at the hands of the assassins. Hatred began to gleam in his eyes, and instead of continuing his fight with the skybanyan treants, he began to flit across the battlefield looking for the elusive assassins.

Everywhere he went, thunderous booms could be heard. The assassin’s murderous methods didn't hurt Bai Xiaochun at all, not with the explosive power of his Asura Body.

Instantly, the assassins began to tremble and hide. None of them dared to get anywhere near Bai Xiaochun. Just as Bai Xiaochun was about to start hunting them down, a roar of rage echoed out behind him, and it came from one of the skybanyan treants that was twice as tall as any of the others.

A bizarre gleam could be seen in the eyes of the huge treant, whose body was festooned with freshly severed heads. Some of those heads belonged to Spirit Stream Division disciples, and when Bai Xiaochun saw that, his murderous aura erupted.

Suddenly, a face appeared on the trunk of the treant. It was a young man, whose venomous eyes were filled with madness. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, he said, “Indestructible in Foundation Establishment? Invincible within your stage? Trifling Lower Reaches punk. I’ll show you what it means to be invincible. I’ll show you what an indestructible Foundation Establishment fleshly body is!”

Looking nervously at the treant speeding toward him, Bai Xiaochun murmured. “A Sky River Court Chosen? Every time I see people looking crazy like this, I feel like I need to bring them to their senses....”

Without any hesitation, he shot forward with the Mountain Shaking Bash!

Every time the Mountain Shaking Bash appeared, his energy rose even higher than before!

As the Mountain Shaking Bash was unleashed, a second asura appeared behind him, which merged with the first asura, causing his power to skyrocket!

He moved with such speed that the treant had no time to react. He was nothing more than a blur of afterimages, like an entire mountain smashing through the air toward the treant.

A huge boom echoed out, and everyone in the area gasped. As for the treant, it let out a bloodcurdling scream as it was sent flying backward, tumbling through the air like a kite with its string cut, all the way until it slammed into the ground on the bank of the river.

At that point, it went silent.

“Can’t take a hit, can we?” Bai Xiaochun said proudly. The other eight cultivators in the formation with him all smiled wryly, and knew that the situation had been under control the entire time. There were few people in the Foundation Establishment stage who could withstand the Mountain Shaking Bash.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0331 awe-chapter-332

A huge crater was now visible in the jungle on the right bank of the river.

There, the broken and shattered body of a skybanyan treant could be seen. It was currently dead, but struggling out from inside was the arrogant young Chosen who had spoken with Bai Xiaochun moments ago.

There was no madness or arrogance on his face now, only terror. After a bit of hesitation, his reverence toward Bai Xiaochun caused him to simply sit down in place cross-legged and meditate.

Bai Xiaochun felt very pleased. It was only after emerging from the Blood Ancestor that he realized that his time inside the giant had been incredibly beneficial, especially to his Undying Live Forever Technique. Thanks to the absorption of power inside the giant, he had already reached the point of being able to materialize a second asura.

Of course, he knew that he would be one of the main targets on the battlefield, and had actually waited for someone to try to plot against him. Just when he was being picked on, that was when he chose to fight back with vicious force.

Considering that he had knocked the arrogant Chosen completely off the battlefield, and that the young man hadn’t made a peep afterward, Bai Xiaochun felt more at ease than ever.

“Let’s see who dares to pick on me now!” he said proudly.

The surrounding Sky River Court cultivators looked at him with terror in their eyes, and just as he had said, not a single one dared to approach him. Even the smaller skybanyan trees were trembling at the sight of his use of the Mountain Shaking Bash.

As for the cultivators, they were forced to stew in their irritation, and hope that the spell formation around him would crumble, leaving him out in the open. Only then would they be able to show him what it was like to fight without the protection of a spell formation!

“Dammit! I refuse to believe that he can keep that spell formation powered up for much longer!”

“Hmph! Once he’s out in the open, we can see what this guy’s real battle prowess is like!” Although they were cursing him in their hearts, the Sky River Court cultivators had no choice other than to flee from Bai Xiaochun.

“Hey,” he howled cockily, “don’t run! I'm ready to fight till the bitter end! Bring it on!” However, he simply watched them as they ran away, feeling more wonderful than ever.

Thanks to Bai Xiaochun, the River-Defying Sect cultivators were able to relax momentarily, and also solidify their defensive positions within the deadlock.

Before long, the River-Defying Sect Gold Core cultivators were able to increase their advantage. Hundreds of Gold Core experts had pooled their power to create a sword formation that had already injured numerous contemporaries among the Sky River Court.

Some of the Sky River Court Gold Core cultivators had already met their end in the fighting, and soon, the group as a whole began to retreat. Down below, people looked up to see the Sky River Court Gold Core cultivators being chased across the battlefield by the River-Defying Sect.

Finally, one of the River-Defying Sect’s prime elders indicated that the time had come to attack, and the four divisions charged forth excitedly over the river water.

Now that the River-Defying Sect was seizing the initiative on the river, the Sky River Court’s Nascent Soul expert who was half a step into the Deva Realm shoved back Master Godwind, Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul, and Sievepill. Waving his sleeve, he pointed toward the Dire Skybanyan and howled in a mixture of grief and anger, “Protect the sect headquarters! Activate the grand spell formation!”

As his words echoed out like thunder, a green field of light shot out from the enormous Dire Skybanyan and exerted a powerful gravitational force.

That force locked onto the cultivators of the Sky River Court and, in the blink of an eye, hauled them back toward the tree. That included the Gold Core cultivators and the Foundation Establishment experts.

With the spell formation activated, this part of the Heavenspan River was completely sealed tight. The River-Defying Sect would now be forced to expend significant effort to break through, which should have given the Sky River Court some breathing room in the already dire situation they were in!

Unfortunately for them, the Dire Skybanyan’s spell formation wasn’t complete. Astonishingly, there were two enormous gaps in the shield, one on the right side and the other on the left!

Obviously, the reason they had waited until now to activate the formation was because it was so weak! The spell formation actually had openings.

“Abandon the Heavenspan River!” said Patriarch Frigidsect. “It's time for the second offensive. Attack the Sky River Court headquarters through the jungle!” In accordance with the previously drafted battle plans, the most powerful division, the Blood Stream Division, teamed up with the weakest division, the Pill Stream Division, and headed to the left bank of the river, where they began to pour into the jungle.

The Spirit Stream Division and the Profound Stream Division joined forces to head into the jungle on the right bank.

This was the jungle offensive!

Because the jungle was so cramped and crowded, it wasn’t appropriate to use the spell formation giants or the Profound Stream puppets. In the jungle offensive, all of the disciples would rely on their own power to fight.

Countless cultivators were attacking from both flanks, fighting their way rapidly toward the Sky River Court’s headquarters. The Sky River Court forces had little time to rest. All of their cultivators, even the Gold Core experts, spread out to try to stop the advance of the River-Defying Sect.

Once again, fighting broke out between the Nascent Soul patriarchs!

Before the truly deadly fighting began, the River-Defying Sect patriarchs made arrangements for the Outer and Inner Sect disciples to retreat to the Heavenspan Battleships, where they would be safer.

Only Foundation Establishment cultivators and higher would participate in this battle. After all, without spell formations to protect them, any injuries the weaker disciples received would likely lead to deaths.

That was war!

To provide an incentive, the patriarchs had agreed that none of the spoils of war procured in the jungle offensive needed to be offered up to the sect, but could be kept by whoever won them!

However, infighting among fellow sect members was strictly prohibited. Everyone was excited, but at the same time, didn’t dare to violate the rules.

After Bai Xiaochun’s spell formation broke apart, he exchanged glances with his eight compatriots, then they all clasped hands and bowed to each other. None of them spoke as they shot at top speed into the jungle.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. As he looked at the jungle, what he thought about most was his encounter with the Luochen Clan. The surroundings here looked very similar to those mountains back then.

“Considering I’m so important, there will definitely be someone looking out for me....” Even still, he took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and slapped his bag of holding. Instantly, a big stack of paper talismans appeared. Next, smacking sounds rang out as he began to place them all over his body. Within moments, a hundred layers of glowing shields appeared. He limited the number of course; too many shields would be too eye-catching.

Having accomplished that, he sped into motion, drawing upon the explosive power of his fleshly body to speed into the jungle toward the Sky River Court’s headquarters, the Dire Skybanyan.

The jungle was very humid, and the occasional miserable scream echoed out here and there. Some of those screams came from the forces of the Sky River Court, others came from the River-Defying Sect. Bai Xiaochun was soon panting. After less time passed than it takes half an incense stick to burn, his expression flickered, and he suddenly dodged to the side. As he did, four Foundation Establishment cultivators appeared. Two of them unleashed palm strikes that slammed into the ground exactly where Bai Xiaochun had just been standing.

The other two attacks landed on Bai Xiaochun’s shields!

The shields emitted cracking sounds, but held fast. In fact, they even sent backlash attacks to the two Foundation Establishment cultivators, instantly destabilizing their qi and blood. As the two cultivators staggered backward, Bai Xiaochun howled and shot forward, smashing into one of the cultivator’s chest.

A boom could be heard, and the cultivator shrieked. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as his chest caved in, and he tumbled across the ground for several meters before coming to a stop, dead.

Even as the other three cultivators stared in shock, Bai Xiaochun’s hand flashed with black light as it shot out with lightning speed. A gravitational force erupted, and one of the fleeing Foundation Establishment cultivators suddenly found himself flying toward Bai Xiaochun. Before he could do anything, Bai Xiaochun’s hand had clamped onto his throat!

The Throat Crushing Grasp!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun clenched his fingers together. The Foundation Establishment cultivator’s eyes bulged, and then he was dead!

When the other two cultivators saw what had just occurred, their eyes went wide, and they began to flee in terror. When they had seen him on his own, they had been itching to tangle with him, but never could they have imagined that, even without his spell formation incarnation, he would be completely terrifying!

Even as they turned to flee, Bai Xiaochun extended his right hand, and blood qi swirled into the shape of a 30-meter-long beam of blood-colored light, which then slashed out like the sharpest of blades.

The two fleeing cultivators shivered, then looked down in shock to find that they had been cut in half at the waist!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0332 awe-chapter-333

Almost exactly when Bai Xiaochun cut down the last of the four Foundation Establishment cultivators who had just ambushed him, a strange cry rose up from the distant Sky River Court.

“Hehehe. Hehehe....” Everyone who heard the bizarre, echoing laughter felt a cold chill spreading out across their body, almost as if they were being frozen.

As the laughter rang out, a beam of light rose up from within the Sky River Court, which came to a stop high in the air. Visible there was a cloth doll!

It was only about a meter tall, and dressed in a ragged garment full of holes. It only had a few tufts of hair on its head, and a bizarre smile on its face!

It seemed like something completely ordinary, the type of toy any child might have at hand. But as it hovered there, it emanated a terrifying aura, and let out cackling laughter.

Its eyes shone with red light, making it seem viciously bloodthirsty. Almost as soon as it appeared, it flickered, vanishing, to reappear in front of one of the River-Defying Sect cultivators. The cultivator’s eyes went wide, and then his head exploded, sending blood spraying out in all directions, accompanied by mad laughter.

Everyone who saw the scene play out gasped. As for Bai Xiaochun, his scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode.

“Is that the Sky River Court’s reserve power precious treasure?” he thought. At the same time, Gongsun Wan’er was in another location in the jungle, looking up at the doll with scorn flickering in her eyes.

That was when, all of a sudden, another beam of light cut through the air, speeding rapidly toward the cloth doll. Within that beam of light was the Blood Stream Division’s reserve power, the scarecrow!

It also wore a bizarre smile, and held a patch of skin in its hand. As it flew along, it threw the patch of skin on as if it were a garment, and then sped toward the doll.

Shocking rumbling echoed out as the two bizarre beings slammed into each other and started fighting. The freakish laughter which rang out was bizarre to the extreme!

Many of the River-Defying Sect cultivators breathed sighs of relief. However, Bai Xiaochun, along with the Gold Core experts and some of the particularly quick-thinking Foundation Establishment cultivators, all had anxious looks on their faces!

“If that doll is the Sky River Court’s reserve power, then good. But what if it’s not the reserve power, but rather a lower-level precious treasure? If a mere low-level precious treasure requires the Blood Stream Division’s reserve power to handle, then what would their true reserve power look like?!” Based on what Bai Xiaochun could see, the doll didn’t really seem like a reserve power. If the Dire Skybanyan was considered a reserve power, then Bai Xiaochun couldn’t even imagine what other types of reserve powers the Sky River Court might have.

Even as shock gripped his heart, a piercing scream rang out through the air, and something else flew out from the Sky

River Court headquarters. It was a shroud, complete with brownish blood stains and a terrifying, indescribable aura.

Clearly, this shroud was on the same level of power as the cloth doll!

As it screamed through the air, a stream of smoke suddenly rose up from below. Golden light poured out from the smoke, which formed into the shape of a middle-aged Daoist. The Daoist immediately strode forward to intercept the shroud!

That projection was the reserve power of the Profound Stream Division!

The lands were filled with the rumbling of combat, which caused Bai Xiaochun to start to pant. He was feeling anything but safe at the moment, so he quickly produced some more talismans. After collecting the four bags of holding from his enemies, he cautiously made his way forward across the battlefield.

Doing his best to avoid looking up at the fighting in the air above, he focused on his surroundings, trying to move as quickly as possible. At one point, his eyes suddenly flickered, and he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Waving his finger, he summoned a violet cauldron, which then smashed down toward the ground.

A huge crater opened up. Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun opened his third eye, and immediately saw something standing next to the cauldron that was only visible because of the power of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

Not pausing for even a moment, he burst forward, clenching his hand into a fist and unleashing a fist strike backed by the power of his Asura Body.

The figure up ahead seemed shocked, and fell back at top speed. However, the force of the blow still slammed into him, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. The figure solidified into a middle-aged man, who was looking at Bai Xiaochun with shock.

“You can see me!?!?” Even as the words left his mouth, he turned to flee. However, a pair of wings sprouted out behind Bai Xiaochun, and a single flap sent him rocketing forward, his right foot spinning through the air in a powerful, swiping kick.

The cultivator tried to defend himself, even pulling out a large collection of defensive magical items. However, a boom rang out as the magical items were easily destroyed by Bai Xiaochun’s kick. The kick then smashed into the cultivator, crushing the life out of him instantly.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t stop moving. Grabbing the enemy's bag of holding, he proceeded onward, keeping his Dharma eye open. Any enemies who had concealed themselves in his path were completely incapable of escaping. Soon, Bai Xiaochun changed his trajectory, taking advantage of his sight to help out any fellow sect members who were in trouble.

He saw many corpses along the way. Some were Sky River Court cultivators, others belonged to members of the River-Defying Sect. Some of them were people he knew, which caused him to sink further into silence.

He was unsure of how to express the emotions he was feeling, but he was sure of one thing: his murderous aura was growing more intense by the moment....

“So, this is what cultivation brings...?” he murmured. He understood the truth of matters. He had come to that understanding long ago, based on what he had experienced with the Luochen Clan, in the Fallen Sword Abyss, and fighting outside the Profound Stream Sect city. However, whenever he came face to face with reality, it filled him with complex emotions.

Even as he sank further into silence, he suddenly heard a shrieking call off in the distance. It was a scream of anxiety and grief, and as soon as he heard it, his heart trembled painfully.

Although other people might not be sensitive to that cry, to Bai Xiaochun, it was like thunder crashing into his mind. He recognized that call!

“A phoenix?” Bai Xiaochun sped up, heading as fast as he could in the direction of the anxious cries. As he neared, he saw the very same phoenix that had consumed his Aphrodisiac Pill all those years ago. It seemed to be completely maddened; despite being injured and soaked with blood, it was doing everything it could to attack a black-robed young woman from the Sky River Court.

The young woman’s face was grim, and there was a long, ugly scar on it that marred her beauty. Her eyes gleamed with a murderous light, and she radiated a sensation of intense danger.

Held in her hand was the severed head of an old man, whose eyes were still filled with the disbelief that had struck him in the moments before death.

On the ground at the young woman’s feet was a headless body, clad in the robes of the Spirit Stream Division, blood pooling up around it.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw the head, his eyes went wide, and he began to tremble. “Elder Zhou!!”

The severed head belonged to none other than the Spirit Stream Division’s Elder Zhou from Fragrant Cloud Peak, who had taken over as peak lord from Li Qinghou!

Bai Xiaochun was shaking visibly, his lips trembling, his mind filled with countless scenes from the past....

He remembered back in the ovens when he and Big Fatty Zhang had pilfered the precious materials that had been meant for Elder Zhou....

He thought back to when this very phoenix had led Elder Zhou to the Medicine Concocting Pavilion to accuse him....

He thought back to Elder Zhou’s enraged howls as he shot off of Fragrant Cloud Peak to chase Bai Xiaochun, and how he had screamed miserably the entire time....

Back in the qualifying round before the north and south bank Chosen Battles, he had intended to come in last. However, it had been Elder Zhou’s provocation that caused him to flee and take first place....

The memories filled his mind, and then shattered in a burst of indescribable grief. That grief filled his heart, until it was ready to explode out like lightning from the heavens.

Glaring at the young woman, his hands slowly clenched into fists.

When the phoenix saw Bai Xiaochun, it shrieked in anguish and then began to fly toward him. That was when the young woman slowly raised her hand and pointed at the phoenix.

A black stream of light flew out, transforming into a huge mouth that shot toward the phoenix to consume it.

“Are you looking to die!?!?” Bai Xiaochun roared. He took a step forward, and his veins of steel began to pulse. Another step, and he was past the phoenix, where he unleashed a fist strike onto the enormous black mouth.

A boom echoed out as the black mouth collapsed, sending black mist pouring out in all directions. However, the mist didn’t dissipate. In the blink of an eye, it reformed into the shape of the young woman!

The version of her off in the distance was nothing more than an afterimage. Her true body was now right in front of Bai Xiaochun, sneering with disdain as she stabbed her index finger toward his forehead!

Because of how close she was, dodging the move wasn’t an option. And yet, Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even considered doing such a thing. His Undying Live Forever Technique erupted with power, and his Asura Body manifested behind him. Instead of retreating, he headbutted her!

The young woman’s face fell. Never could she have imagined that he would do something so vicious. Before she could react, his head slammed into her finger, causing a cracking sound to ring out. The young woman immediately sped backward, her finger mangled and her eyes shining with a very serious look.

“I don’t have time to waste tangling with you!” she said hoarsely, turning to leave.

“Yeah, well tangling with you is exactly what I feel like doing!” Although Bai Xiaochun’s forehead was injured, he didn’t seem to notice. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then he shoved his palm out. “Blood Annihilation World!”

Instantly, boundless blood qi erupted out from him, forming sealing marks which then took the shape of a whole world that blocked the young woman’s path of retreat.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0333 awe-chapter-334

“Looking to die!?!?” the young woman said with an enraged laugh, the killing intent in her eyes bursting with intensity. Her cultivation base was in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and she was an extremely adept killer. In fact, she had killed quite a few other cultivators in the great circle. Were it not for the fact that she was on a special, urgent mission, and Bai Xiaochun was clearly beyond ordinary, she would never have just fled.

And yet, here he was, blocking her path as if he didn’t know what was good for him!

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was placid, but his eyes were bloodshot, and he was surrounded by a strong murderous aura that caused the Blood Annihilation World to ripple and distort. Without the slightest hesitation, he waved his finger in the direction of Elder Zhou’s corpse.

Instantly, all of Elder Zhou’s shed blood began to merge together and float up into the air, where it turned into a blood-colored sword!

Staring at the woman, he said, “Don’t get anxious.... It will only take a moment for me to cut you down with this sword!”

In response, the woman’s laughter grew louder. And yet, for some reason, perhaps because of the expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face, she felt unease growing inside of her.

“Since you have a death wish,” she said, “I guess I’ll help you get what you want!” Eyes flickering with killing intent, she performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, her body blurred, and nine streams of black mist erupted out, which began to gobble up the spiritual energy in the area. In the blink of an eye, the nine streams of mist had become nine enormous waves, racing toward Bai Xiaochun from nine different directions.

Apparently, if those nine waves converged upon each other, they would explode with shocking power!

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, the young woman attacked with surgical precision and quickness. In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, the nine waves were locked down on Bai Xiaochun and closing in rapidly.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with cold light, and his heart burned with lingering pain. The death of Elder Zhou, and the anguish of the phoenix, gave him an even clearer understanding about war, and about cultivation. Within the bitterness visible in his eyes, a killing intent erupted out. Instead of backing away from the waves, he lifted his right hand and waved it out in front of him.

In response, a surge of violet qi erupted, whizzing through the air to form a huge, 300-meter-wide violet cauldron that settled around him protectively.

BOOM!

A deafening boom rang out as the nine waves slammed into the huge cauldron.

The cauldron began to tremble; the force of each successive wave was greater than the wave before it, and from the look of things, the cauldron was about to collapse.

“Die!” said the young woman, hovering some distance off in the air. At the same time, she lifted her right hand and viciously stabbed out with her index finger.

In response, the nine waves swirled and transformed into countless black leaves. The leaves began to spin around the enormous cauldron, emitting an incisive aura that slashed at it like countless sharp blades.

Rumbling echoed out, and the cauldron shook even more violently than before. Finally, the slashing of the leaves caused the cauldron to shatter, allowing the leaves to speed inside toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun watched all of this happen without commenting. The woman’s magical techniques were strange, and she was clearly no stranger to magical combat. However, he didn’t care about any of that. Taking a deep breath, he slapped his bag of holding and produced a black parasol.

It was none other than the Eternal Parasol!

Without any hesitation, he lifted it over his head and opened it!

His cultivation base erupted with the power of nine crystallized spiritual seas. Streams of Heaven-Dao aura also swirled about, seemingly connecting him to heaven and earth. Strange ripples even appeared in the sky above the battlefield.

The huge black parasol almost seemed like the night itself as it spread out to cover Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, he poured his cultivation base power into it, causing a black glow to spread out.

That glow was the black of night!

At the same time, an astonishing gravitational force erupted out, causing the young woman’s face to flicker. Then she cried out in alarm as her body began to tremble and then wither rapidly. White streams of mist began to pour out from her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, which were then sucked relentlessly toward the black parasol.

Those streams of mist were her life force!!

“What is that thing!?” she shrieked, shaking violently. She tried to back away, but seemed locked in place in midair. No matter how she struggled, she couldn’t prevent her life force from streaming out of her. Even as her hair began to turn white, she suddenly bit down on her tongue, unleashing the power of self-detonation!

Her right eye exploded, sending blood spraying out in all directions. However, the force of the explosion ripped her free from the gravitational force, shoving her backward by several dozen meters. There, she coughed up more blood, then glared at Bai Xiaochun with venomous hatred and, at the same time, fear. Of course, most of her terror was because of the Eternal Parasol.

Almost immediately, her body began to turn translucent as she prepared to fade into the air and make her escape. Her only desire now was to escape the Blood Annihilation World and then leave this place.

Without any hesitation, Bai Xiaochun put away the Eternal Parasol and shot after her at top speed. Inwardly, he was bemoaning the fact that his ruse hadn’t played out exactly as he'd wished. He’d intentionally provoked her into attacking with the hopes that he could use his Eternal Parasol to drain her life force.

However, this young woman was a Chosen of the Sky River Court, on the very cusp of reaching the Gold Core stage. Not only was she more than an ordinary cultivator, but Bai Xiaochun’s current cultivation base made it difficult for him to control the parasol. Because of that, she managed to escape.

Even as he bore down on her with lightning speed, she began to fade away, until only ripples were visible in the spot where she had just been.

“You’re not getting away!” he said, his voice filled with an intense coldness that even he didn’t realize was there, a coldness like the dead of winter. As the coldness spread out, he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

As soon as he looked around with his third eye, he unhesitatingly clenched his fist and unleashed a fist strike directly to his left.

A boom rang out, and the air distorted. The young woman suddenly became visible, blood oozing out of her mouth, a look of incredulity and terror on her face.

“How did he find me!?!?” The young woman’s heart was starting to pound. She had been injured again, and was now incapable of fleeing. “Dammit, how could the River-Defying Sect have a cultivator like this? His cultivation base isn't weak, nor is his fleshly body. His magical techniques are bizarre, and he obviously has a lot of experience fighting. He’s actually managed to pin me down!!” Because of Bai Xiaochun’s strange techniques, she was incapable of fleeing the Blood Annihilation World. Suddenly, her left eye was shot with blood as she realized that instead of fleeing, she had to risk everything in a fight to the death!

“Inverse Blood Sky Spirit!” she shrieked. Instantly, all of the blood in her body began to flow in reverse, causing an intense energy to rise up from within her. At the same time, a powerful aura of plants and vegetation began to spread out.

From a distance, she appeared to be surrounded by scintillating, emerald-colored light. Numerous types of plants and vegetation began to grow around her, almost as if she were becoming one with the jungle around her. Then the plants began to twist and distort as they shot through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

It was almost as if Bai Xiaochun wasn’t just fighting this young woman, but rather all of the plants in the jungle around him!

“Let’s see how you handle this!” she said, her killing intent surging. Countless leaves, vines, and flowers became a tempest hundreds of meters in diameter. As they swept out, the Blood Annihilation World began to emit creaking noises as it teetered on the verge of collapse.

Cultivators on both sides of the conflict in the area all noticed, and were shocked.

“I’ll show you exactly how I handle it!” Bai Xiaochun replied, his expression growing even more icy than before. Taking a deep breath, he reached out with both hands and performed an incantation gesture. As the tempest of vegetation closed in, he swept his hands violently through the air, simultaneously uttering three words!

“Magic Plant... Arsenal!”

BZZZZZZ!

His hair whipped about him as his energy soared, and he drew upon his great circle cultivation base, his Heaven-Dao aura, and his skill in the Dao of medicine, to use the very magic that Li Qinghou had bestowed upon him, the Magic Plant Arsenal!

Buzzing sounds filled the air as the vegetation around him suddenly stopped in place and began to tremble. It was almost as if two forces of will were battling it out within the tempest, vying for control over the plants and vegetation!

“Impossible!!” the young woman gasped, her face falling.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0334 awe-chapter-335

The black-robed young woman’s control over plants and vegetation had to do with her Dao of medicine. Coupled with the technique she cultivated, it created something like an innate divine ability that she could use to communicate with and manipulate all types of plants.

Although the Sky River Court was adept with spatial manipulation magic, their ultimate reserve power was the Dire Skybanyan. It was only natural for people who practiced cultivation on the huge tree to develop a connection with plants and vegetation. In fact, all disciples of the Sky River Court eventually formed a bond with a lesser skybanyan, which they could use as a weapon in battle!

Such an arrangement was less of an external manipulation of the plant, and more of a bonding in which the plant assisted the cultivator!

However, Bai Xiaochun’s abilities were completely and utterly different. Using his skill in the Dao of medicine, and the Magic Plant Arsenal, he didn’t seek to bond with or gain assistance from the plants, he sought total control!

He was skilled with techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression, and was familiar with how to fuse different types of plants and vegetation together. Coupled with his Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivation base and nine crystallized spiritual seas, he was capable of domineering feats that were beyond other Foundation Establishment cultivators!

This young woman was a Chosen from a Middle Reaches sect. Were it not for that, she would have long since been crushed by Bai Xiaochun. Even still, her struggles were proving useless!

“Begone from me!” he said, voice echoing like thunder, his eyes shining with strange light. With that, he waved both hands.

In response to his berating words, the tempest of plants and vegetation had no choice other than to turn in place and shoot back toward the black-robed young woman.

Complete incredulity could be seen in her remaining eye, and she almost seemed incapable of accepting the situation. By this point, she also realized that she had been tricked into the situation with the black parasol.

She was already becoming terrified of Bai Xiaochun’s battle tactics, especially that parasol. However, what was worst of all was that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t given her any chance to effectively utilize her spatial manipulation magic. His third eye made her feel like she was completely and utterly exposed no matter what she did.

Without spatial manipulation magic, it was difficult to utilize any assassination techniques, and also impossible to become invisible. It was almost like trying to fight with a limb having suddenly been crippled. She felt weaker than ever.

After experiencing so many setbacks, she finally decided to resort to her magic of plants and vegetation to kill Bai Xiaochun. And yet, contrary to anything she could have imagined, he wrested control over her plants and vegetation as well!

“I refuse to accept this!!” she shrieked, her remaining eye more bloodshot than ever. She was almost on the verge of going crazy. As a Chosen of the Sky River Court, she had always been a proud and arrogant person, someone who could easily crush anyone in the same cultivation level as her. In fact, she was only a hair away from Gold Core. Never before had she ever encountered a situation in which someone in the same stage as her could control her so easily!

As the tempest closed in on her, she let out a miserable shriek. Then, she suddenly dropped to the ground and planted both hands down in front of her. Looking up, she shouted, “Treesoldier Incantation!!’

Suddenly, brown tendrils began to spread out from her feet and bore into the ground, tendrils that almost looked like roots!

At the same time, every portion of skin visible on her body was suddenly filled with bulging green veins, to the point where her skin looked like the surface of a plant!

As her skin turned green, her life aura suddenly erupted, transforming from that of a cultivator to that of a treant!

The Treesoldier Incantation was a legendary secret magic of the Sky River Court that allowed a cultivator to transform into a treant!

“I refuse to believe that you can wrest away my control of plants and vegetation!!” she yelled hoarsely. As of this point, she had completely transformed into a huge treant!

Rootlets spread out from her feet into the ground, causing the energy of the plants and vegetation to surge toward her.

In the blink of an eye, she was huge, fully 300 meters tall. From a distance, she almost looked like a true skybanyan!

When the tempest of plants and vegetation hit her, it instantly submitted to her, swirling around her before converging onto her right hand, where it formed the shape of a battle-axe!

It was a green battle-axe formed from countless types of plants and vegetation, and it radiated power that caused the surrounding jungle to tremble. By this point, the battle between this young woman and Bai Xiaochun was starting to attract quite a bit of attention.

“Time to die!!” she roared in a sonorous voice, her killing intent surging. With that, she lifted her tree-like arm into the air and then slashed the battle-axe down toward Bai Xiaochun.

As it descended, the power of plants and vegetation surged and grew, until nearly half of the power of the entire jungle was converged into that deadly blow!

An intense sensation of deadly crisis erupted inside of Bai Xiaochun. By this point, his control over the Blood Annihilation World had weakened to the point where it had collapsed. The resulting blast caused even more people to take notice of what was happening.

“That’s Sect Uncle Bai!!”

“Elder Sister Tong!!”

As cultivators on both sides of the conflict began to cry out in alarm, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and then closed his eyes. Then he raised his right hand, not to perform an incantation gesture, nor to rotate his cultivation base. Instead, the image of a huge spike appeared in his mind!

As that spike appeared, the water vapor in the area began to swirl, growing denser and thicker, filling an entire 50-kilometer area.

Within that area, cultivators of both the River-Defying Sect and the Sky River Court trembled as a sensation of crushing pressure began to weigh down on them.

Even the Gold Core cultivators up in midair looked shocked!

The young woman in treant form was also shaken. However, there was no time to ponder the situation at the moment. Instead, she focused fully on sending the battle-axe slashing down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Closer and closer it neared....

Bai Xiaochun’s clothing and hair were even being destroyed by the power of the incoming battle-axe....

When the axe was only about nine meters away from Bai Xiaochun, his eyes suddenly snapped open, and when they did, a terrifying wind sprang up as the entire 50-kilometer area was filled with a watery swamp!!

“Waterswamp Kingdom!” he murmured, almost as if he were calling out to something or someone. Although his words were spoken softly, they caused even Nascent Soul cultivators to tremble.... A roar suddenly echoed out, a roar like that from ancient times, a roar that filled the world with profound ancientness!

Heaven and earth trembled as the roar increased in intensity. In the blink of an eye, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling filled all creation. Every cultivator in the area was trembling, and the young woman in treant form had a look of complete and utter incredulity on her face.

The moment that look appeared on her face, and even as her battle-axe descended, the image of a huge spike suddenly appeared around Bai Xiaochun!

30 meters. 300 meters. 3,000 meters. 30,000 meters!

Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions as the spike rose higher and higher. Furthermore, after it reached 30,000 meters in length, more rows of spikes became visible beneath it. All light dimmed, and a huge wind screamed across the lands!

The young woman had no chance to land a blow on Bai Xiaochun. The spike stabbed through her, and she screamed as she was pushed higher and higher into the sky!!

Even as despair washed through her, the young woman reverted from treant form back into human form. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and her eyes began to grow dim. She was panting on the verge of death!

Powerful fluctuations rolled out across the lands. Just barely visible within the dense water vapor were row upon row of spikes, as well as an enormous body!

However, even the 50-kilometer wide swamp wasn’t large enough to contain that enormous body, making it impossible for anyone to tell exactly what type of creature it was!

In any case, compared to that enormous creature, the young woman impaled on its spikes was almost too small to see....

All cultivators in the area looked on with total shock. The process didn't last long, only a few breaths’ worth of time. Then the Waterswamp Kingdom creature let out a bellow before slowly fading away. The water vapor vanished, and everything returned to normal. The pressure disappeared, and the body of the young woman fell down from the sky and landed in front of Bai Xiaochun with a thud.

Blood was oozing from wounds all over her body. She was now hovering on the brink of death, her eyes filled with bitterness and rage as she stared at Bai Xiaochun. Using her last bit of energy, she opened her mouth to curse him.

However, even as her lips moved, he waved his sleeve, and the blood sword which he had formed from Elder Zhou’s blood slashed down and took off her head!

Her head tumbled off to the side, her remaining eye growing dim. She was dead in body and soul!

The blood sword slowly faded away....

Just as Bai Xiaochun had said, he used that sword to take her life away. Blood for blood!

Without saying a word, he collected her bag of holding, then sighed and turned to leave. However, it was in that very moment that an anguished howl echoed out from off in the distance.

“Junior Sister Tong!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0335 awe-chapter-336

The voice was completely beyond ordinary, and was accompanied by a gale-force wind that shook everything in the area. The ground around Bai Xiaochun shattered, and many objects in the area exploded.

Even Bai Xiaochun was badly shaken, and found himself staggering backward several steps from the force of the sound.

His face flickered as he looked up and saw a young man flying through the air toward him. He had long, wild hair, and his eyes burned red with killing intent as he closed in.

Although his speed couldn’t be counted for much within the Gold Core stage, it was vastly beyond anything Foundation Establishment cultivators were capable of. The majestic sight caused Foundation Establishment cultivators from both sides of the conflict in the jungle to be completely shaken.

Soon, alarmed cries could be heard. “A Gold Core cultivator!!”

The River-Defying Sect had dispatched people to lock down all of the enemy Gold Core experts, to prevent them from attacking the Foundation Establishment cultivators.

And yet, for some unknown reason, a Gold Core cultivator had suddenly appeared right here, and was bearing down on Bai Xiaochun with murderous intentions. Some distance behind him was one of the River-Defying Sect’s Gold Core cultivators, who was racing to block his path.

However, even as the River-Defying Sect Gold Core elder was about to intercept the young man from the Sky River Court, the young man waved his hand, sending a green beam of light shooting backward. Moments later, a huge skybanyan treant emerged from the light!

The skybanyan treant was the young man’s battle weapon, something that he normally would care for just as much as his own life. However, after summoning the battle weapon, the young man cried out in a frantic voice, “Buy me ten breaths of time, even if you have to pay for it with your life!!”

A tremor ran through the skybanyan treant, but it didn’t hesitate for even a moment. Energy surging, it shot forward and blocked the Gold Core elder from the River-Defying Sect!

The young man’s murderous aura surged sky-high as he shot toward Bai Xiaochun, his eyes so bloodshot they were almost bleeding. He had only been in the Gold Core stage for about half a year, but he was completely and utterly confident that he would only need ten breaths of time to kill a Foundation Establishment cultivator!

The sight of the young woman’s severed head tumbling off to the side moments ago had filled him with intense pain. She had been his Daoist partner, his Junior Sister, and he had already sworn an oath to himself that he would personally kill the one responsible for her death.

“Die!!” he howled, smashing his hand toward Bai Xiaochun. The wave of his hand was backed by an early Gold Core cultivation base, causing a black palm to appear that screamed through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

It radiated a terrifying aura that no Foundation Establishment cultivator could possibly stand up against, and even caused the air to distort as it sped along.

In the face of such a murderous aura, Bai Xiaochun immediately began to fall back, his pupils constricting. A sense of deadly crisis overtook him, causing his flesh and blood to scream that he was in incredible danger!

There was no time to contemplate the situation, and he knew that he couldn’t rely on someone to intervene. Although people would come to rescue him eventually, he would have to hold out until that moment.

There was only one thought running through his mind at the moment....

“I can't die here. If I want to stay alive, then I have to fight!!” Bai Xiaochun sped backward rapidly, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that summoned three huge violet cauldrons, along with numerous spirit enhanced flying swords, all of which flew to block the enormous hand.

BOOM!

Those three cauldrons could be considered astonishingly powerful in the Foundation Establishment stage, but the hand summoned by the Gold Core young man completely destroyed them one after another. As for the spirit enhanced flying swords, as soon as the hand touched them, they began to fall apart.

The hand destroyed them all like a hammer crushing ice cubes, then proceeded on toward Bai Xiaochun!

Intense rumbling sounds could be heard. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and his entire body flickered with gold light as his Undying Skin erupted with power to defend against an early Gold Core attack. Although he was sent tumbling backward, he was not killed!

The killing intent in the young man’s eyes grew stronger. Without uttering a single word, he advanced, viciously waving his sleeve to summon a black wind. The black wind quickly transformed into a black dragon, which let out a powerful roar as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

There was no time for thought or planning. Roaring, Bai Xiaochun opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, causing violet light to erupt out. At the same time, his little wooden sword appeared, shining with the dazzling silver light that came from multiple spirit enhancements. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t just defending himself, he was fighting back!

When the power of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye locked onto the black dragon, the dragon roared and began to struggle. Although intense pain stabbed through the eye into Bai Xiaochun, he continued to unleash its power until the black dragon began to show signs of imminent destruction.

Lips twisted into a sneer, the young man said, “Can the light of a tiny firefly dare to contend with the glory of the shining moon?!”

With that, he advanced again. At the same time, rumbling sounds could be heard as the black dragon began to grow larger, sloughing off the effects of the Heavenspan Dharma eye. Bai Xiaochun coughed up some blood, and blood even began to ooze out of his third eye.

The little wooden sword continued to speed through the air, and when it hit the black dragon, a booming sound could be heard. The Gold Core young man's eyes then went wide as he saw the sword pass completely through the dragon.

However, it was merely a stab wound. The difference in cultivation base between Bai Xiaochun and the young man was too vast. Without even a pause, the black dragon roared and headed toward Bai Xiaochun.

The dragon hadn’t even touched him, and yet his entire body was wracked with pain. Even his bones felt like they were creaking, and his qi and blood were in chaos. Madness began to rise up in his eyes.

Off in the distance, he could see several beams of light racing urgently toward him; clearly, those were the patriarchs coming to rescue him....

Unfortunately, they were too far off. If he couldn’t continue to hang on for a little bit longer, the patriarchs wouldn’t be able to help him. Although he feared death, he was also aware that such fear would do him no good right now!

“Asura Body!” he roared. His Undying Gold Skin was operating at full power, causing golden light to shine out from him in all directions. At the same time, the manifestation of the second volume of the Undying Codex, the Asura Body, appeared. Instantly, his fleshly body power rocketed up as he prepared to face the incoming black dragon.

A huge boom filled the air when the dragon slammed into his chest. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and the dragon collapsed into numerous strands of black mist. Bai Xiaochun’s body trembled on the verge of collapse as he was thrown backward. Even as he did, a shout of rage could be heard from the young man, who burst through the remnants of the black dragon toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the blink of an eye, the young man’s palm was bearing down on Bai Xiaochun’s chest!

In the moment before it struck, enraged shouts could be heard from the patriarchs. Heaven and earth shook violently, and the Gold Core youth began to tremble. However, he ignored everything around them, gritting his teeth as he shoved his palm forward.

“You’re dead!!”

Madness could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as well. He knew that there was no way he could avoid this blow. Therefore, he raised his right hand, and black light shimmered from his thumb and index finger as he sent the Throat Crushing Grasp toward the young man!

But then, rumbling echoed out as the young man grabbed Bai Xiaochun’s right hand with his left and twisted it to the side. Cracking sounds could be heard as bones were broken, and pain surged through Bai Xiaochun. An expression of madness twisted his face; clearly, he was about to do something completely outrageous. Even as his right arm was wrenched to the side, and a palm strike was about to land on his chest, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash!

It was a case of *even if I die, I'm going to make sure you feel some pain!*

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Mountain Shaking Bash was unleashed, and Bai Xiaochun shot forward. He couldn’t prevent his hand from being crushed, nor could he block the incoming palm strike. So, he chose to simply body-slam the Gold Core youth!

Even as the destructive palm strike slammed into his chest, a black glow could be seen as the turtle-wok appeared to defend him. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth; he had been injured, but not killed!

“That’s all you've got?!” Bai Xiaochun said, smiling even as blood oozed out of his mouth. His vision was blurred, and he could barely move. Since that was the case, he decided that he might as well use what little energy he had left to force his nine spiritual seas to merge together!

If he did that, he would reach the Gold Core stage!

Normally, such an act would be preceded by much preparation, but as of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was going to attempt to force it to happen!

As for his Gold Core opponent, after being hit by the Mountain Shaking Bash, he was flung backward, and coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. Then he looked over at Bai Xiaochun with complete disbelief and shock.

“A Foundation Establishment cultivator can actually hurt me? And that wok, it actually blocked my extermination strike?!” The young man’s killing intent grew stronger than ever when he realized that Bai Xiaochun was still not dead. Madness gleamed in his eyes, and he gritted his teeth. Despite the fact that people were only moments away from intervening and rescuing his target, he drew upon the full power of his Gold Core cultivation base and shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Considering that Bai Xiaochun was so grievously wounded, he was sure that one final attack would be enough to kill him!

This was his last chance to kill Bai Xiaochun before he himself was killed!

“I might die, but you're going to die first!” he roared, picking up speed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0336 awe-chapter-337

Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness was fading. At the same time, everything around him seemed to slow down. He suddenly found himself thinking about how he used to light incense on Mount Hood, and everything that happened in the Spirit Stream Sect, the Blood Stream Sect, and then the River-Defying Sect....

As those memories flashed through his mind, he smiled.

It was a smile of both bitterness and helplessness.

He practiced cultivation in order to live forever, and yet, in pursuit of that goal, he always ended up in deadly crises. The slightest mistake in such a situation could lead to him losing his poor little life.

It was somewhat of a paradox.

“To live forever,” he murmured, “you don’t just have to struggle against the heavens, you have to fight other people. It’s a narrow, rugged path to walk, a path that most people give up on. Many people meet defeat, or end up losing their way....

“Living forever.... That's the whole reason I started to practice cultivation. To live forever....

“Live forever.... I’m going to live forever!!” Suddenly, everything became incredibly clear. Although he felt incredibly weak at the moment, he was completely focused on living forever. That one simple thought continued to fill his mind, like the rumblings of thunder!

“I can’t count on other people all the time. I have to get stronger! Only if I get strong enough can I make sure that nobody interferes with my will to live forever!!” Bai Xiaochun trembled as his heart and mind roared, causing his nine spiritual seas to begin to rage and emit thunderous rumblings.

The Heaven-Dao aura which had built up in his nine spiritual seas throughout Foundation Establishment suddenly erupted out. It was like a string, connecting all of the nine spiritual seas and drawing them together into one!!

Bai Xiaochun had already been in a position to begin the process of reaching Gold Core. Now, being completely focused on his desire to live forever, and with his life actually being on the line, he was ready to break through!

“Live forever!!” Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared, and as he did, his nine spiritual seas erupted with shocking energy, energy that surged out of him and connected to heaven and earth!

The Heaven-Dao aura caused colors to flash in the sky, and a huge wind to kick up. An enormous, swirling vortex appeared overhead, so large that the entire Sky River Court was covered!

The sudden appearance of the rumbling vortex caused many people to look up and then involuntarily gasp!

Even as the wind swept around Bai Xiaochun, bolts of lightning appeared up above, as well as an illusory scene that looked somewhat like nine seas.

It was in that exact moment that his Gold Core opponent closed in with killing intent surging. Even as he reached out to attack, his face fell, and the energy surging from Bai Xiaochun battered him backward by over 30 meters!

“You....” the young man said, his face a mask of disbelief. What shocked him was not the fact that Bai Xiaochun was choosing this moment to step into Core Formation, but rather, that this type of Core Formation was something completely different than anything he had ever seen before!

Never before had he ever seen such strange signs and portents appear in heaven and earth during Core Formation.

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even actually reached Core Formation, and yet the mere pressure and aura was so powerful that he couldn’t get close. The young Gold Core cultivator was completely and utterly taken aback.

He wasn’t the only one. Everyone in the area was shocked beyond belief!

“That....”

“That’s....”

“That’s a Heaven-Dao aura. Don’t tell me... don’t tell me he’s going to reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core!?!?”

The Nascent Soul Daoist masters from the Sky River Court were also shocked, and some of them even had looks of jealousy on their faces.

Heaven-Dao Gold Core was something out of legend!

The term Gold Core was actually a blanket term often applied to different levels. The Core Formation stage was more properly classified into the heaven, earth, and mortal varieties. The Mortal-Dao of men led to Mortal Core. Earth-Dao led to Earth Core. And Heaven-Dao led to Gold Core!

Only Heaven-Dao Gold Core could truly be considered Gold Core!

The only way to reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core was to start out in Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. And yet, being in Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment wasn’t a guarantee of being able to reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core!

Heaven-Dao Gold Core experts were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns, and not a single one had appeared in the last 10,000 years, not even in the Middle Reaches. The crushing pressure exerted by the Heaven-Dao Gold Core stage was something that could only be read about in the ancient records.

Although the Nascent Soul patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect weren’t as surprised as everyone else, they were still taken aback. They knew that Bai Xiaochun was in the Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment stage, but that didn’t necessarily mean that he would reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core!

There was always a chance that he would fail, but if he succeeded, and formed a Heaven-Dao Gold Core, then it would mean his future potential was almost limitless, and he would also be capable of crushing anyone else in the same stage as him!

The battlefield suddenly went quiet. The Heaven-Dao aura which was now crushing down on everyone ensured that all fighting stopped!

All eyes were looking in the direction of Bai Xiaochun. Not even a deva would be able to interfere with the process of

Heaven-Dao Gold Core, and if they tried, they would be punished by the heavens!

Failure or success would not depend on any outside force, only on the person striving to reach Core Formation!

As everyone watched, the crashing of thunder grew louder and louder in the sky above. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s ninth sea began to merge with the eighth, and at the same time, the first sea merged with the second!

As the four seas merged together, colors flashed in the sky, the wind screamed, and the pressure grew more intense. Even the Nascent Soul cultivators were panting.

“The merging has started....”

“The process of breaking through from Foundation Establishment into Gold Core involves merging the spiritual seas. To start out by merging four together is the best. Merging six spiritual seas at the beginning is rare, and for someone to merge eight would be rare even in the Upper Reaches riversource sects!”

“Bai Xiaochun already has four of the seas merged together....” The Gold Core and Nascent Soul cultivators were all looking up at the signs in the sky, and commenting among themselves.

However, many of the cultivators from the Sky River Court actually sighed in relief when they saw that Bai Xiaochun had only merged four of the seas.

“A mere four merged spiritual seas means that he will fail to reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core!” The Sky River Court cultivators weren’t the only ones to realize this; the patriarchs from the River-Defying Sect were now starting to get nervous.

As the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, the patriarchs viewed him with utmost importance. They had originally planned to do everything in their power to help Bai Xiaochun reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core after the battle was over.

But then, something unexpected had happened, and Bai Xiaochun was forcing Core Formation in the middle of the fighting. To the River-Defying Sect, this unexpected event was turning out to be a big setback.

However, it was at this point that, all of a sudden, cries of shock began to rise up.

“He's not stopping at four!!”

“Another merging is taking place!!”

Two spiritual seas had merged on the top, and two on the bottom. But now, the first two spiritual seas were beginning to merge with the third!

And that wasn’t the end of it! The eighth and ninth spiritual seas were slowly beginning to join together with the seventh!

As that happened, the Heaven-Dao aura grew even more intense, suppressing the cultivation bases of all cultivators, and even throwing them into chaos.

More and more cries of shock rang out.

“How could this be happening?!?!” The Sky River Court cultivators were completely shocked, especially the young

Gold Core expert who had been trying to kill Bai Xiaochun moments ago. That young man was trembling, his expression that of complete disbelief, and his heart was filled with regret at the realization that he had provoked a monster.

“Six seas!!” Patriarch Frigidsect from the Spirit Stream Division and Master Godwind of the Blood Stream Division were both overjoyed. The other patriarchs had the same reaction, and as for Li Qinghou and the other Gold Core cultivators, they were watching with wide eyes.

And yet, before the uproar could even commence, something else happened up above in the sky!

The first three spiritual seas began to merge into the fourth!

Simultaneously, the seventh through ninth spiritual seas began to connect to the sixth!

Everything was changing!

The bottom four spiritual seas and the top four spiritual seas were drawing closer together, and between all of them was the fifth spiritual sea!

Although the fifth spiritual sea didn’t seem to be doing anything at all, it was obvious that all nine of the spiritual seas were merging together!!

The Heaven-Dao pressure grew stronger than ever, exploding out into the entire area with unprecedented intensity!

That pressure was almost like a natural protection offered to anyone stepping into the Heaven-Dao Gold Core stage. As the pressure roiled out, something else happened that no one noticed. The ancient gravekeeper appeared high up in the sky. First, he looked at the spiritual seas, then down at Bai Xiaochun....

Everyone watched as the nine spiritual seas slowly converged upon each other; as they did, they began to form a shape....

Clearly, that shape was a circle!!

The nine golden spiritual seas were completely eye-catching. To everyone who was looking at them, they seemed almost like a golden sun!

It was a true and authentic Gold Core!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0337 awe-chapter-338

Qi Condensation. Foundation Establishment. Core Formation!

In the Lower Reaches, the gaps between those three stages were like enormous gorges that separated the cultivators into groups. With the exception of some extreme circumstances, someone in a higher stage could easily crush anyone from a lower stage!

During Qi Condensation, cultivators absorbed the energy of heaven and earth and then transformed it into rivers and lakes. During Foundation Establishment, those rivers and lakes became spiritual seas, giving the cultivators such strength that Qi Condensation couldn’t even compare to it!

Overall, that transformation wasn't so much an improvement in the quality of the power, just the sheer amount!

However, Core Formation was different!

After crystallizing the spiritual seas and then merging them together into a core, unprecedented levels of battle prowess could be unleashed. Furthermore, it wasn’t just a situation of increasing the amount of power; the quality was also vastly improved!

Depending on how many spiritual seas were merged together, different types of cores could be formed: Mortal Core, Earth Core, and of course, Gold Core!

If Bai Xiaochun were not a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator, but had traveled the more common path of Earthstring Foundation Establishment, then at this point he would have formed an Earth Core.

But he was different. He was a Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment cultivator, and as such, he walked the path of the Heaven-Dao Gold Core!!

A Heaven-Dao aura was spreading out in all directions, causing crushing pressure to weigh down on cultivators of the Sky River Court and the River-Defying Sect alike. Everyone was forced to stop fighting, and none of them could even emit cultivation base fluctuations.

It was as if some mysterious natural law was at work!

Gasps rang out without cease across the field of battle, and countless eyes were all focused on the enormous Gold Core which hovered in the air above Bai Xiaochun!

Everyone was shocked, but different thoughts were going through the minds of different people. For example, Shangguan Tianyou’s hands were clenched into fists, and a defiant gleam could be seen in his eyes. Not only was he jealous, he simply refused to admit that he was falling behind.

Song Que was also trembling, and his heart was filled with anything but calm. However, even he wasn’t sure exactly what he was feeling as he watched Bai Xiaochun. It was similar with all the other Chosen.

Zhou Xinqi, Ghostfang, Master God-Diviner, the three blood masters, as well as Nine-Isles from the Profound Stream Division, were all people who fully deserved to be called Chosen. However, they were now being forced to watch Bai

Xiaochun rise to prominence, the first among their generation to reach Core Formation. The emotions which rose up in their hearts were complicated and difficult to put into words.

Then there was Chen Manyao from the Pill Stream Division. A strange look could be seen in her eyes, and since no one was paying attention to her, no one saw as she slowly lifted her right hand. However, even as she did that, a gaze from afar locked down onto her, a gaze filled with iciness and menace.

A tremor ran through Chen Manyao as she suddenly felt extremely cold. Looking around, she realized that the person who was looking at her was one of the disciples of the Spirit Stream Division, the same person she had seen on the Heavenspan River back at the Blood Stream Division headquarters. It was a young woman named Gongsun Wan’er!

As various thoughts ran through various minds, a sound suddenly crashed out from within the nine spiritual seas, a sound that surpassed heavenly thunder!

RUMBLE!

All light went dim, and all hearts were shaken. It was as if the heavens were roaring. At the same time, a bolt of golden lightning shot out from the clouds above, filling the air around the nine spiritual seas and transforming into countless hands that shoved against them!

In response, the nine merged spiritual seas began to shrink down!

Among the forces of the Sky River Court, the most powerful cultivator, the old man who was half a step into the Deva

Realm, suddenly blurted, “Nine lightning bolts smelt the core!!”

In almost the exact same moment, the Nascent Soul patriarchs from the River-Defying Sect also began to cry out.

“It really is Heaven-Dao Gold Core! In the moment of this type of Core Formation, the heavens form lightning that assists in the smelting of the core itself!”

“It seems like assistance, but the truth is it’s like a Tribulation! Only by withstanding nine strikes of lightning can success be had....”

Even as the hubbub of conversation echoed out, the nine spiritual seas shrank down, and Bai Xiaochun trembled. Blood began to ooze out of his mouth, and a terrifying aura radiated out from him. That aura seemed like an aura of complete madness; if he made the slightest mistake, he would be destroyed. Not only would he fail to succeed at his Core Formation, but he would be ripped to shreds, destroyed in body and soul!

Attempting to reach Core Formation without being fully prepared was an extremely dangerous task!

When the River-Defying Sect cultivators saw blood oozing out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, they started to get even more nervous than before. However, they could do nothing to help him. Outsiders could not interfere during Heaven-Dao Gold Core Formation. Everything was up to Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochun alone.

His eyes were completely bloodshot as he looked up into the sky at the spiritual seas, which was also the exact moment when another crackling boom filled the air.

RUMBLE!

A second golden lightning bolt appeared, even bigger than the last one. As it descended, it wrapped around the nine spiritual seas and began to crush them with pressure!

Things weren’t over yet, though. A third boom came, then a fourth and a fifth. Each golden lightning bolt which appeared was bigger than the last, and the pressure they exerted onto the nine spiritual seas caused them to shrink down rapidly. Soon, the core formed by the spiritual seas was only about 300 meters wide, and it glittered with golden light!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was trembling, and blood was pouring out of his eyes, nose, and ears. He truly seemed like he was hovering on the verge of collapse.

And yet, the end had not yet been reached. A sixth boom could be heard, then a seventh. More golden lightning appeared, and the nine spiritual seas seemed to be trembling on the verge of collapse, as if they might explode at any moment!

Six bolts of lightning were difficult enough, but then a seventh appeared, and a Heaven-Dao aura even more shocking than before spread out. The core formed by the merged spiritual seas began to ripple and distort!

By now, the spiritual seas had shrunk from 300 meters to 30, and looked more than ever like they might collapse.

“Xiaochun!!” More than one person among the River-Defying Sect was calling out Bai Xiaochun’s name. That was especially true of those who were his close friends. They were more nervous than anyone. Hou Yunfei, Big Fatty Zhang, and Li Qinghou were all wracked with anxiety. Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan seemed completely on edge.

In sharp contrast, the cultivators of the Sky River Court were already beginning to sigh with relief now that it seemed that the Core Formation process was going to fail. That was especially true of the Core Formation youth who had been fighting Bai Xiaochun. A vicious smile spread out on his face, and the regret in his heart began to fade. He began to sigh with relief, and killing intent once again rose up in his eyes.

“So, it seems I won’t even need to do anything. I can just watch him die!”

However, even as the sigh of relief left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and struggled to lift his head, staring up at the nine spiritual seas as an eighth rumbling sound caused heaven and earth to shake!

As the deafening sound spread out, an eighth golden lightning bolt appeared, larger and wider than any of the previous ones. It looked like a golden dragon as it wrapped around the nine spiritual seas and began to crush them!

Heavenly lightning was shaking the sky!

The Gold Core formed from the nine spiritual seas shrank from 30 meters down to a mere 3. The core rippled and distorted out of shape, and cracks could even be seen on its surface!

Bai Xiaochun was trembling so hard that blood was seeping out of his pores, turning him crimson. His eyes were bloodshot and filled with madness. That was when his Undying Live Forever Technique kicked into effect, and golden light spread out from him. Behind him, his Asura Body manifested!

“Form!!” he shouted. Booms like thunder filled him, and his life force power erupted, healing him. After the eighth lightning bolt vanished, the Gold Core formed from his nine spiritual seas was still there, and it was no longer misshapen!

People gasped loudly in shock, but even as they did, a rumbling crash filled the sky, the ninth!

“The last lightning bolt!!” said Master Godwind softly, even as he shook visibly.

“Either he succeeds, or he dies!” said the old man from the Sky River Court, his voice low. As he looked at Bai Xiaochun, mixed emotions could be seen on his face. He knew that if Bai Xiaochun successfully reached Heaven-Dao Gold Core, then as long as he didn’t meet an unexpected end, he would surely reach Nascent Soul, and most likely, the Deva Realm!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0338 awe-chapter-339

Intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the ninth bolt of golden lightning shot through the air. It was far larger than any of the preceding lightning bolts, and caused the entire sky to turn the color of gold as it sped toward Bai Xiaochun’s three-meter Gold Core.

The crushing pressure exuded by that lightning bolt was both the strongest and the final round!

Bai Xiaochun let out a long cry as he released all the power of his cultivation base. His Undying techniques were in full swing, and his will, soul, and everything else about him was completely and utterly focused. Nothing else in the world even existed at the moment. His mind was devolving into chaos, and yet, there was one thing that remained....

“I must form this Gold Core! I want to live forever!!” Without even realizing what he was doing, he threw his head back and roared, then shot up into the air toward the Gold Core.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

From a distance, it was just possible to see him arriving at the Gold Core at exactly the same time as the bolt of lightning!

As of this moment, heaven and earth were turning blurry, the sky was shaking, and the land was being rocked back and forth!

As of this moment, so much golden light filled the world that it became the only color in existence!

As of this moment, it was almost impossible to even distinguish Bai Xiaochun from the lightning, as both merged into the Gold Core!

As of this moment, every person on the battlefield was completely focused on the events playing out above!

No longer was the lightning visible, nor Bai Xiaochun. Not even the Gold Core itself could be seen.

The only thing it was possible to see now was a field of endless gold!

No one was able to determine whether Bai Xiaochun had succeeded. The ancient records didn’t contain detailed information about what could happen in a scenario like this. They only contained a general overview; currently, no one had any idea to judge what was happening.

The only thing they could do now was wait!

The Heaven-Dao pressure slowly began to dissipate, and the golden light started to fade....

Everyone was looking anxiously up into the sky, countless thoughts running through their minds. However, all of them realized that this would likely be both the first and last time any of them ever saw someone reach Heaven-Dao Gold Core!

It was the same in both the River-Defying Sect and the Sky River Court.

As for the young man who had been fighting Bai Xiaochun earlier, he was shaking all over. The idea of Bai Xiaochun reaching Heaven-Dao Gold Core filled him with a level of dread he could never have even imagined before.

“There’s no way he’s going to succeed!" he shouted to himself, his expression distorting with rage. “There’s no way!!”

However, even as the young man shouted to himself, the gold light faded away completely, and everyone caught sight of Bai Xiaochun!

There he hovered, his eyes closed, his hair floating around him, his arms outstretched. Golden light shone from him, making him look like a celestial being. Everyone was completely shaken.

That was when his eyes suddenly snapped open!

Instantly, rumblings like thunder echoed out in all directions, and at the same time, terrifying cultivation base fluctuations rolled out.

That was something that a Foundation Establishment cultivator could not accomplish. That was something that came only with the power of a Gold Core!!

“Impossible!” the young man cried, his mind spinning. Cries of alarm rang out from the Sky River Court, whereas cheering could be heard from the River-Defying Sect.

“Did it work!?!?”

“Junior Patriarch!!”

“Xiaochun!!”

Even as the cheers rang out, Bai Xiaochun hovered there, somewhat in a daze. He could sense the cultivation base power coursing through him, and felt his previous injuries and wounds vanishing. The power he was experiencing was not just from his fleshly body; it was a comprehensive power that gave him the feeling that a mere wave of his hand could crush everything around him.

“So, this is Gold Core, huh...?” he murmured. He could clearly sense that the nine spiritual seas inside of him were gone, and had been replaced by a spinning Gold Core!

This was true Heaven-Dao Gold Core!

Every time the Gold Core spun, it released more power than the last time. As the cultivation base power poured through him, his body underwent a heaven-shaking, earth-toppling transformation.

It wasn’t just an addition to his longevity; he was ascending to a higher form of life. Everything around him now looked different than before.

There were more colors, everything was more crisp and detailed, and he seemed closer to everything!!

Furthermore, a Heaven-Dao aura erupted out from him that far surpassed the aura from his days in Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. It connected him to heaven and earth in such a way that he almost felt as if he had the power to summon heavenly lightning!

There was another indescribable feeling that existed inside of him, something like what he had experienced in the world of the Blood Ancestor. It was almost as if he were being doted upon by heaven and earth; when he looked up into the sky, it seemed strangely familiar to him.

“Gold Core!!” Clenching his hands into fists, he threw his head back and let loose a long cry. Everything around him shook, and the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect began to cheer even more loudly than before.

“I think I can keep going!” he thought. Taking a deep breath, he sent his Undying Live Forever Technique into motion. Shockingly, an asura appeared behind him, then a second, a third, and a fourth....

One asura after another appeared, causing his energy to skyrocket. By this point, he was already far beyond the ordinary early Core Formation level. Everyone, especially the Chosen, were completely shocked.

“He’s... he's going to keep going?”

“How is this possible?!?!”

“That’s fleshly body power. Don’t tell me he’s going to form a fleshly body Gold Core?!?!” Numerous onlookers were crying out in shock.

Stepping into Core Formation in the middle of a battlefield was a shocking thing in and of itself. But then he actually reached Heaven-Dao Gold Core, and after that, continued to increase his fleshly body power. The cultivators of both the River-Defying Sect and the Sky River Court were so shocked that they were going into a daze.

Even as they went silent, a fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and finally, a ninth asura appeared behind him. Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the energy of nine asuras caused everything to shake violently.

Bai Xiaochun’s breakthrough was not limited to his cultivation base; he was actually making progress with his Undying Asura Body!

The nine asuras were like nine Dharma Idols, surrounding Bai Xiaochun and roaring into the heavens just like he was.

It was a sound that surpassed heavenly thunder, and caused everyone to be shaken to the core. Even the plants in the jungle were trembling, and all Qi Condensation, Foundation Establishment, and ordinary Core Formation cultivators felt their cultivation bases teetering unstably.

Gasps and cries of astonishment could be heard everywhere!

But then, a tenth asura appeared next to the ninth one, and a massive tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun.

It was in that moment that he could sense a shackle inside of him!!

“The five great shackles....” he murmured to himself. He had already broken through the first shackle back when he had mastered the Undying Skin. Now, the second shackle had appeared!

Although he couldn’t break through it at the moment, he could at least make contact!

To him, it felt as if four enormous mountains were weighing down onto him. It was something he couldn’t detect before, but now his senses were heightened, and the feeling couldn’t be clearer. He suddenly had the urge to destroy those mountains, to break free and truly rise up!

“I'm almost at the point of achieving the Undying Heavenly King Body. Once that happens, I can form an Undying Heavenly King Core!” As he thought back to the details of the second volume of the Undying Codex, his eyes shone with anticipation, and his heart thumped with excitement. At that point, he looked down at the young man he had been fighting before, who was now trembling with terror.

Almost as soon as their gazes met, the Heaven-Dao aura vanished, and the pressure faded away.

The young man’s hair began to stand on end, and he started to back up. He really had no choice other than to give up on the fight; as of this moment, Bai Xiaochun filled him with indescribable terror.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun was looking directly at him caused his heart to pound wildly. That gaze was like two sharp swords stabbing into his heart and mind, causing his Earth Core to shake.

In the same moment that the young man turned to flee, several streams of divine sense, as well as a group of cultivators, began to race toward him from the Sky River Court to save him. However, Bai Xiaochun was much closer to him than they were. He already had shocking speed back in Foundation Establishment, and now that he was in Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he was even faster!

“You’re not getting away!” he said, his voice as cold as ice. The young man had forced him to make the dangerous and potentially deadly choice of forcing Core Formation early. As a result, Bai Xiaochun’s killing intent surged with complete intensity.

He took a step forward, and wings sprouted behind him. The Mountain Shaking Bash gave him an explosive burst of speed, causing him to leave behind afterimages and a series of sonic booms. In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of the young Core Formation cultivator!

“You just hit me with a palm strike. Now it’s my turn!” His voice echoed out like the winter wind as he reached his hand back and then sent his palm flying toward the young man.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0339 awe-chapter-340

The palm strike caused an illusory golden wave to sweep through the air, and thunder to boom up above. It contained the power of Bai Xiaochun’s Heaven-Dao Gold Core, as well as fleshly body power that had already made contact with the second shackle. It was a domineering power that no one in the same cultivation stage as him could possibly stand up to.

The young Core Formation cultivator let out a howl like a caged animal. The sensation of deadly crisis he felt caused his heart to tremble. In his madness, he realized that he couldn’t flee, and that his only chance to get out of the situation alive was to withstand this palm strike. Suddenly, he was in almost the exact opposite situation as before!

There was little time to consider the situation at the moment. Howling, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a vast array of magical items. Then he performed an incantation gesture, and stabbed his finger toward Bai Xiaochun. He even went to the lengths of spitting his own Earth Core out of his mouth!

“I refuse to believe that you can kill me right after you stepped into Core Formation!!” he shrieked.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with intense coldness as his hand shot forward with lightning-like speed. When it made contact with the magical items, they couldn’t stand up to the power for even a moment. They were destroyed like dried twigs as Bai Xiaochun’s palm sped forward to the young man.

Then the palm made contact with the young man’s extended finger, and it was almost instantly blotted out of existence. As the golden Heaven-Dao power reduced it to ashes, the young man screamed miserably. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't pause for even a moment; his palm continued forward, smashing into the young man’s Earth Core!

Instantly, rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and the Earth Core collapsed into nothing more than fragments. Blood sprayed out of the young man’s mouth, and a look of despair filled his eyes as Bai Xiaochun’s palm made contact with his chest!

“You want me dead? How about I kill you first!?” Bai Xiaochun’s words were spoken softly, but they were filled with a ferocity that could chill the soul.

Even before he finished speaking, his words were drowned out by a blood-curdling scream....

The young man was shoved backward, tumbling through the air. Before he could come to a stop, his body exploded, sending a rain of blood spattering all over the Sky River Court Core Formation cultivators who had come to aid him.

From the moment Bai Xiaochun began to strike out until the end of the fight, only a moment had passed. Quick and efficient!

The Core Formation cultivators who had just arrived were clearly shocked. Only now did they understand how truly frightening a Heaven-Dao Gold Core expert was!

He had only just stepped into Core Formation, and could already cut down someone in the same level. Furthermore, he had completely dominated his opponent. How could these other Core Formation cultivators be anything other than astonished?

Everything went silent for a moment, after which the River-Defying Sect cultivators began to cheer again as their fighting spirits rose. As for Bai Xiaochun, he hovered there, looking up at the Nascent Soul cultivators some distance off.

For the first time, he felt that he wasn't so far removed from them after all.

Master Godwind from the Blood Stream Division threw his head back and laughed uproariously. “Children of the River-Defying Sect,” he cried, “attack with full force! Storm the Sky River Court!”

In response, the River-Defying Sect cultivators located in the jungle on either side of the river all roared and began to attack!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and then caused a blood-colored light to explode out from him that vastly exceeded what he was capable of in Foundation Establishment. As it spread out, the cultivators of the Blood Stream Division yet again found their battle prowess increasing!!

Rumbling could be heard as the fighting resumed in full force, and in ever more bitter and deadly fashion than before!

From high up in the air, it was possible to see River-Defying Sect cultivators swarming through the jungle on both banks of the river. They were like two sharp blades, slicing toward the Sky River Court headquarters with deadly abandon.

The Sky River Court couldn't fight back for much longer. They were being pushed back relentlessly, and the signs of imminent defeat were clear!

That was when an emerald green lantern suddenly flew out from the Sky River Court. As it rose into the air, it grew larger and larger, until it was fully 300 meters tall, and emanated shocking pressure. Surrounding the lantern were countless vengeful spirits, who let out vicious screams as they flew with the lantern toward the left bank of the river.

That lantern was none other than one of the Sky River Court’s precious treasures!

Before the lantern could fly very far, a black sun shot up from the right bank of the river. Inside of the sun was a white raven, whose opened eyes emanated intensely cold light. It let out a cry that could shake the soul as it shot toward the lantern!

As the pace of the battle increased, the time had arrived for the River-Defying Sect to release their reserve powers. Of course, a reserve power like the black sun was little more than a precious treasure to the Sky River Court.

When the precious treasure and the reserve power closed in on each other, a huge gravestone, hundreds of meters tall, appeared in the air above the right bank. It instantly began to smash down toward the ground, emanating a profoundly archaic air. As it descended, the ground down below began to bulge up, as if it were forming a grave.

Then, a withered hand shot up from the dirt, and a hoarse howl echoed out over the right bank.

How could the River-Defying Sect not be prepared for something like this, though? As soon as the gravestone appeared, a white sun shot up over the right bank, within which was a black raven. It let out a piercing cry as it shot toward the gravestone. As it neared, the hand which had emerged from the dirt dissolved into ash, and a face floated out from the gravestone. Howling, the face shot toward the white sun as if to consume it.

The fighting was proceeding with utter intensity as reserve powers and precious treasures were unleashed. Cultivators fought fiercely with other cultivators. Slowly but surely, the River-Defying Sect was pushing the Sky River Court back, and getting closer and closer to the Sky River Court headquarters itself!

The time had come for the third offensive, the assault on the headquarters!

As the offensive proceeded, large numbers of River-Defying Sect cultivators poured out of the jungle and began to fight on the Dire Skybanyan itself!

Booms rang out. The light of magical techniques rose up into the air. Bitter screams echoed here and there.

The battle between the patriarchs was growing more intense. People on both sides were receiving grievous injuries, and yet none of them were willing to back down, and instead, began to fight with even more madness.

Battles were going on between the Gold Core cultivators everywhere, both on the river banks and within the sect headquarters itself!

Bai Xiaochun was no longer tangling with the Foundation Establishment cultivators. Instead, he was higher up, battling the Core Formation cultivators from the Sky River Court. The River-Defying Sect had already had the upper hand in that regard, so there was little danger involved for him. Furthermore, it was giving him valuable experience in fighting other Core Formation cultivators.

As his battle prowess continued to climb, the Core Formation cultivators of the Sky River Court were increasingly shocked.

**

Meanwhile, on a towering mountain some distance away from the Sky River Court, three figures materialized. Despite the distance, they were able to clearly see everything that was happening on the field of battle.

Two of those figures were men, and one was a woman. The woman was beautiful, and emanated an aura that resembled the starry sky itself. She was there in illusory form, sometimes taking clear shape, sometimes blurring visibly. Anyone who stared at her too long would feel themselves growing dizzy.

Of the other two men, one was middle-aged, and emanated a pulsing black mist that formed into the shape of numerous black skulls. The grass near the man was all dead, and even the rocks were beginning to decay. Clearly, that black mist contained shocking power, and closely resembled devil qi!

Finally, there was an old man wearing a Daoist robe. He bore the demeanor of a transcendent being, and possessed a profound and mysterious aura. Anyone who got close to him would be able to hear a faint sound like the music of a Dao.

These three people came from the other three great sects in the Middle Reaches, the Starry River Court, the Polarity River Court, and the Dao River Court!

The woman who was phasing in and out of visibility, she came from the Starry River Court, which was widely known to wield the power of the starry sky! The man with the devil qi came from the Polarity River Court, which was widely regarded as a devilish sect! As for the old man, he came from the top sect in the Middle Reaches, the Dao River Court!

“The Sky River Court will be defeated this day. Interesting.”

“It seems our new neighbors aren’t weaklings, either. That will make things a bit more fun.”

“They even have a Heaven-Dao Gold Core cultivator. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will surely take note of that....”

“You know, since the Sky River Court is going to meet defeat, their shares will need to be redistributed....”

The three of them exchanged slight, knowing smiles. Apparently, their true hope was that neither side came out truly victorious.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0340 awe-chapter-341

The fighting was getting more bitter than ever. Of course, the casualties on the Sky River Court side far outmatched those of the River-Defying Sect. People were being injured or killed almost every moment, leading to taciturn silence within the Sky River Court itself.

In the very center of the Sky River Court was a tree growing upon the larger tree. At the crown of that smaller tree was a log cabin, outside of which stood an old man in a white robe, who was looking out at the fighting. The booms and screams of battle were clearly audible from his position.

He seemed completely exhausted, and if one were to look closely at him, an aura of death could be detected. He seemed to be on the verge of breathing his last breath.

Next to the old man was a handsome boy with rosy lips and white teeth. He was almost pretty, and even emanated a fragrant aroma. He wore fresh, clean clothes, and almost looked like a celestial creature of some sort. He had his hands clasped behind his back as he studied the battlefield. He seemed particularly interested in Bai Xiaochun.

After a long moment passed, the old man spoke in a voice hoarse from exhaustion. “Fellow Daoist Li, haven’t things gone on long enough?”

The boy smiled and looked over at the old man. “Oh no, not quite yet.” He sighed. “Fellow Daoist Chen, if you had known things would turn out this way, would you have repented of your sins earlier?”

The old man stood there quietly for a moment. Then his eyes went a bit dimmer, and he said, “When will enough be enough? Plenty of people have died already.”

After a moment of thought, the boy smiled and said, “Fine, fine. How about this: produce your Sky River Court reserve power. Once it's destroyed, we can end the punishment.”

The old man seemed to tire even further. Many people had actually come to assume that he was dead already. However, as the true patriarch of the Sky River Court, this old man was in the Deva Realm, and had numerous means by which to prolong his life, even after receiving a grievous injury. Despite being like an oil lamp about to wink out, he was still able to continue living.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect didn’t want to completely eradicate the Sky River Court. Rather, they wanted this old man to watch it being destroyed. They wanted him to understand that this was his punishment. Only after enough cultivators had died could the remaining disciples have a chance to keep on living.

The old man sighed, and then reached out and tapped the tree trunk next to him.

The tree shivered, and the effect rapidly spread out. In the blink of an eye, the entire Dire Skybanyan was shaking. Then, countless white insects began to crawl out from inside of the tree!

Each insect was only about the size of a finger, but they let out piercing cries, along with powerful auras. As soon as they appeared, they began to fly up into the sky.

This development caused an immediate stir. The fighting stopped momentarily as swarms of the creatures flew up out of the Dire Skybanyan. It only took moments before they blotted out the sky; it was a completely hair-raising sight.

Among the cultivators of the Sky River Court, only a few recognized what those insects were, and when they did, looks of terror appeared on their faces.

The entire sect was filled with white insects, and the droning sound they caused as they flew up. Everyone looked on in shock as the countless bugs flew up, creating a sea of insects.

If a sea of insects were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But these bugs were clumping together, and before long, they had created the shape of a vicious, gargantuan beetle!

Upon forming, the beetle wasn’t white, but rather, bright red. It was fully 3,000 meters long, and covered with countless vicious spikes that emanated the black glow of deadly poison.

After forming, the enormous beetle let out a terrifying screech that caused numerous cultivators to cough up mouthfuls of blood. That included cultivators from the Sky River Court as well as the River-Defying Sect.

The terrifyingly ferocious nature of this beetle cast cold shock into the hearts of all present.

Even Bai Xiaochun was trembling at the sight of the beetle. Despite his recent step into Core Formation, the beetle’s aura left him shaking in utter terror!

“A death beetle!!”

“One of the Sky River Court’s two reserve powers! A death beetle!!” The numerous Nascent Soul cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were visibly taken aback. Frigidsect and Master Godwind exchanged a look, and each could see the serious expressions on the others’ faces.

After letting out a powerful roar, the beetle lunged forward, spitting out a huge stream of green fluid that sprayed about like rainwater. Everything it touched began to dissolve, even the ground!

Instantly, miserable cries began to ring out; even the Sky River Court cultivators were being affected.

The corrosive power of the acid raid went far beyond anything Bai Xiaochun had created in his pill concocting. Terrified, he began to back up.

“What is that freakish thing!?!?”

Even as everyone was reeling in shock, the death beetle burst into motion, sending a shower of spikes out in all directions. Then, it opened its mouth, snatched up a Core Formation cultivator and swallowed him down.

Next, it landed hard on the ground, where it curled up into a ball and began to roll about, crushing everything in its path into a bloody pulp....

Not even attacks from the Nascent Soul cultivators could do anything to hinder its path. Even when some particularly powerful attacks were successful, the huge bug would simply break up into countless smaller white insects, then reform moments later.

Inside the log cabin, the boy began to clap his hands slowly. Smiling, he said, “Ah, a death beetle. An excellent mid-grade spirit treasure!”

The old man didn’t respond.

“This River-Defying Sect has quite a few reserve powers at their disposal, but they’re all mortal-tier spirit treasures. Although, they do have that extraordinary Blood Ancestor of theirs. What a pity that the patriarchs issued orders not to touch it.” The boy shook his head sadly.

“I did hear that their Spirit Stream Division has a very mysterious origin. Perhaps they have a spirit treasure that can broaden our horizons?” The boy was only getting more interested by what was happening.

As he looked out at the battlefield, the death beetle was smashing back and forth, inflicting serious damage on the River-Defying Sect.

If the situation wasn’t resolved, the deaths involved would be serious. The patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect all looked over at Frigidsect.

Master Godwind sounded quite anxious as he said, “Brother Frigidsect, didn’t you say that you would take care of the death beetle?!”

Frigidsect hesitated for a moment. Then he looked at the huge beetle, and gritted his teeth. Without saying a word, he shot through the air toward the Spirit Stream Division’s Heavenspan Battleship out on the river.

After ten breaths of time passed, the death beetle spat out another rain of acid, and sent another wave of spikes shooting out. More screams echoed out, despite how the Nascent Soul cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were doing their best to block the attacks. That was when a shocking aura suddenly rose up from the river, specifically, from the Spirit Stream Division’s Heavenspan Battleship!

In response to the aura, the death beetle shivered. It wasn’t the only one. All cultivators on the battlefield, from the Qi Condensation stage to Nascent Soul, were shaking uncontrollably. Their faces began to fall, and their cultivation bases began to spin out of control.

Even the boy in the log cabin was visibly shocked. Then, a look of unprecedented solemnity appeared on his face as he looked over at the Heavenspan Battleship.

“That’s....”

The old man’s face fell, and a look of complete incredulity appeared on his face.

“A high-grade spirit treasure?!”

Somewhere on the battlefield was Gongsun Wan’er, who moments ago had worn a carefree expression on her face. Suddenly, she stopped in place, and a mysterious gleam rose up in her eyes as she looked over at the Heavenspan Battleship.

The entire battlefield went still. Even the Dire Skybanyan, which up to this moment had been continuously attempting to free itself from the grip of the Blood Ancestor, suddenly stopped moving.

In the Heavenspan Battleship, in a heavily guarded secret chamber, Frigidsect was kneeling down in front of a coffin. Inside of the coffin was the corpse of a baby girl, whose eyes had just opened!

The terrifying aura that had just appeared came in the moment that she opened her eyes.

Trembling, Frigidsect raised his voice and said, “True spirit, please exterminate this death beetle!”

The instant the words left his mouth, the corpse of the baby girl vanished from within the coffin.

When she reappeared, she was in the air above the Heavenspan Battleship, except now, she looked like a young woman!

The baby girl hovered there looking like a young woman, silently looking up into the sky, an expression of confused curiosity in her eyes, almost as if she were thinking about the past. As she floated there silently, all eyes were focused upon her.

Everyone felt their hearts and minds trembling, and were filled with the urge to drop down in worship. As for the boy in the log cabin, he was shaking visibly.

“That’s... that’s....” A look of complete and utter disbelief filled his face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0341 awe-chapter-342

The boy wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. The old man’s eyes shone with strange light as he stood there panting. Outside of the Sky River Court headquarters, the three observers from the other sects all had looks of complete shock on their faces.

“Who is that!? Her aura... it’s....”

“I’ve never felt so shaken, not even when facing a deva-level patriarch....”

“Who could ever have imagined that the River-Defying Sect would have reserve powers like this!?!?”

Even the other three divisions of the River-Defying Sect were completely and utterly shocked. Master Godwind’s eyes were wide as he was yet again impressed with how well the Spirit Stream Division kept their true strength hidden. Never in all eternity could he have imagined that they would have power such as this at their disposal....

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were wide as he looked at the baby girl. Although there were other people who might know more about the girl than he did, he still was more familiar with her than most.

In fact, back when he’d laid eyes on her for the first time, he’d even heard her voice....

Now that the baby girl had emerged from the coffin, allowing Bai Xiaochun to directly sense the indescribably terrifying fluctuations rolling off of her, he couldn’t help but pant.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but from the moment she opened her eyes until the instant she appeared in midair, only the briefest of moments passed.

Before anyone could even react, the baby girl looked away from the sky, taking in everyone in the world with her gaze, including the enormous beetle.

Then she simply lifted her hand and pointed at the bug!

In that instant, the death beetle began to shiver, and then seemed to lose any ability to fight back. No one could even see any ripples of a magical technique, and yet, the death beetle began to shake violently....

A moment later, the beetle was nothing more than ash dissolving in the air. The wave of the baby girl’s finger had stirred natural law, and completely wiped the beetle out of existence!

The response to the scene which had just played out was complete silence....

The eyes of the River-Defying Sect cultivators were wide, and the Sky River Court cultivators’ minds were reeling.

Bai Xiaochun hovered there in midair, eyes wide with shock. He had just witnessed something that no one else had noticed. With the power of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he had noticed that the wave of the baby girl’s finger had caused a vibration on something that looked like a thin thread....

That slight fluctuation gave rise to transformations that he didn’t understand, but the result was that the death beetle was blotted out of existence.

What had just occurred was something that could not be explained with an understanding of magical techniques and divine abilities.

As for the three people from the other sects, their scalps were tingling, and they were shaking visibly. In fact, they weren’t even capable of imagining what kind of power could simply wipe away a mid-grade spirit treasure like that death beetle.

However, they could imagine what would happen if that power were turned upon them; they would be instantly turned into nothing more than ash....

Back in the Sky River Court, the young boy gasped and murmured, “A foreigner... I can’t believe the Spirit Stream Division has a foreigner....”

The look in his eyes as he observed that baby girl couldn’t have been more serious.

The old man suddenly chuckled. “Foreigners are inauspicious.... Everyone knows that. Furthermore, any sect that has dealings with foreigners also becomes polluted and inauspicious....”

A gleam of anticipation could be seen deep within the old man’s eyes.

The boy maintained his silence. He was one of the five devas of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and had a very profound understanding of the world around him. He was well aware that foreigners truly were incredibly inauspicious.

However, at the same time, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s stance toward them was to stay hands off and simply ignore them.

“Damn,” thought the boy. “There must be someone very powerful in the Spirit Stream Division.... The point of revealing that foreigner wasn’t just to kill the death beetle, it was to put on a little show for me. Well, I can do the same thing!” Gaze flickering across the battlefield, he suddenly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then pushed his hand down onto the tree trunk next to him.

The old man’s face fell as if he wished to stop the boy, and yet, was unable to. Almost as soon as the boy pushed down onto the tree trunk, the ancient Dire Skybanyan that was the home of the Sky River Court suddenly surged with life force, and began to struggle mightily.

Powerful roaring could be heard as countless branches flew out onto the battlefield and began to wrap around the Sky River Court cultivators, even the Nascent Soul experts. Then the branches lurched back, dragging the cultivators into the Dire Skybanyan.

As the cultivators were swallowed up, they became nutrients for the Dire Skybanyan, causing its life force to surge.

That in turn caused the enormous palm-print on the Dire Skybanyan’s trunk to heal up. Countless branches spread out over it, and leaves sprouted. More intense roars could be heard, and then the enormous tree jerked, snapping the two main branches which had been pinned down by the Blood Ancestor. With that, the gigantic tree reared up to its full height.

The tree let out a bellow that shook heaven and earth, and then, its eyes opened, bright red eyes which stared at the baby girl up in the air.

The baby girl only had ten breaths of time to be awake. Although everything almost seemed to be happening in slow motion, the truth was that those ten breaths of time still hadn’t passed yet, only about eight or nine.

The baby girl was already starting to wither up, and the light was fading from her eyes. And yet, she didn’t even bother to glance at the roaring tree. Instead, she turned her head to look at the shocked Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun’s mind instantly began to spin as a familiar yet mysterious voice spoke to him.

“I’ll give you a bit of my qi and blood. I hope... that you can concoct the River-Defying Pill sooner rather than later.”

The baby girl waved her right index finger, and a drop of blood flew out of the tip, which shot with lightning-like speed toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. In the blink of an eye, it had fused into him!

Having accomplished this, the baby girl vanished.

A moment later, she reappeared back inside of the Heavenspan Battleship, in the coffin, her eyes closed, once again nothing but a desiccated corpse.

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and his qi and blood began to seethe. That drop of blood which had just been absorbed into his body apparently contained boundless power. As the power spread out, Bai Xiaochun let out a long, piercing cry. At the same time, nine asuras appeared behind him. Then, with the stimulation of the blood drop, a tenth asura came into being.

As the tenth asura appeared, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned bright red. Throwing his head back, he let out a howl that caused heaven and earth to shake. Everyone in the River-Defying Sect was completely shocked.

His fleshly body power instantly began to rocket up, and he suddenly felt as if he were pushing against the second shackle. It seemed that just a bit more power would break through it!

“Undying Heavenly King Body!!” Blue veins bulged out on his face and neck as a shockwave blasted out from him. At the same time, the ten asuras behind him began to merge together!!

When they became one, a terrifying fleshly body power instantly exploded out of Bai Xiaochun.

Bursts of golden light shone out from the single asura as golden armor fell down upon it. Its physical appearance was changing rapidly!

No longer did it have three heads and six arms. It was now an enraged heavenly king, enormous, fully 300 meters tall. It was an Undying Heavenly King! [1. There are many different versions of what the “heavenly kings” look like. Here is one depiction of the famous “four heavenly kings” of Buddhism]

The appearance of the Undying Heavenly King indicated that Bai Xiaochun was finally breaking through the second shackle.

As he did, he threw his head back and roared. He suddenly felt freer. His fleshly body power was skyrocketing, and at the same time, something became visible inside of the projection of the Undying Heavenly King. It was a golden core!

It was none other than an Undying Heavenly King Core!!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, causing the Undying Heavenly King and the core within it to fly toward him. In the blink of an eye, it merged into him, causing an energy that was even more terrifying than before to explode out!

That was the power of two cores!

At the same time, the drop of blood from the baby girl instantly gave Bai Xiaochun deeper enlightenment of the River-Defying Pill. As of this moment, he had new ideas, and was slightly more confident in being able to concoct the pill!

Meanwhile, the Dire Skybanyan was still rising up into the air, and countless River-Defying Sect cultivators were fleeing from it at top speed. As for the cultivators of the Blood Stream Division, they were following the directions of Master Godwind to head back toward the Blood Ancestor.

Although everyone was shaken by what was happening with Bai Xiaochun, there was no time to ponder the situation. Master Godwind immediately roared, “Nightcrypt, my boy, take control of the Blood Ancestor! Kill that Dire Skybanyan!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0342 awe-chapter-343

It was a critical juncture. In order to test out the true spirit, the young boy gave new life to the Dire Skybanyan, which had previously been panting on the verge of death. However, the price which had been paid was enormous: the lives of all of the cultivators of the Sky River Court.

It was an unforeseen turn of events that caught the River-Defying Sect unprepared. According to any estimation, after the death beetle was destroyed, the Sky River Court should have surrendered.

After all, the death of that beetle was supposed to signify the end of the punishment.

But now everything had changed. The Dire Skybanyan roared as its enormous frame rose up over the Heavenspan River. Countless roots were connected to either side of the river bank, making it look almost like a giant.

Outside of the log cabin, the boy frowned. He didn’t care at all about the deaths of the Sky River Court, nor about what the River-Defying Sect was doing. He only cared about that baby girl.

“So, she can only remain active for ten breaths of time, huh...?” The boy shook his head sadly. After a moment, a look of sadness appeared in the eyes of the old man, and even pain. He almost seemed to be hesitating over some decision.

As for all of the other cultivator clans and sects that had come to observe the fighting, they were completely shaken by what they had seen, and could hardly control their own breathing. That was especially true considering that they had seen the powerful death beetle wiped out with the single wave of a finger. Then the Dire Skybanyan suddenly surged with life force. Everyone began to back up, trembling.

Most of the River-Defying Sect cultivators had managed to flee successfully. Although a few had been wounded or killed in the process, most were now back in the Heavenspan Battleships, whose shields had been raised. As for the Blood Stream Division, most of them were on the banks of the river.

Bai Xiaochun had no time to think about the matter at the moment. He was surging with incredible power, and his skin was the color of gold. The feeling of being at the peak of the Undying Skin and Undying Flesh left him with the sensation that he could hurl mountains and drain seas.

As soon as Master Godwind called out to him, he blurred into motion. He could now move even more quickly than when he had just stepped into the Heaven-Dao Gold Core stage. Although the waters of the Heavenspan River were very dangerous to most people, they wouldn’t harm Bai Xiaochun at all!

Thus, he dove into the water and shot downward toward the Blood Ancestor. It only took a few breaths of time before the Blood Ancestor’s eyes opened and began to shine with golden light. Slowly but surely, the Blood Ancestor rose to his feet!!

Before, something like this wouldn’t have been possible. Bai Xiaochun needed the combined strength of countless other Blood Stream Division cultivators to take control of the

Blood Ancestor. But now, with effort, he was able to do it single-handedly.

As the Blood Ancestor rose up from within the waters of the Heavenspan River, the Blood Stream Division cultivators flew into the air and quickly disappeared inside. Then, the Blood Ancestor began to radiate even more incredible power than last time. Under the control of Bai Xiaochun, the blood-colored giant leaped up into the air.

It was in that moment that the Dire Skybanyan turned its gaze to the Blood Ancestor. Hatred and animosity burned inside of it as it sent countless branches and vines swirling together to form a huge hand, which then shot toward the Blood Ancestor in the form of a fist.

Instead of retreating in the face of such an attack, the Blood Ancestor continued to fly through the air, even higher than last time. In a flash, he appeared directly in front of the Dire Skybanyan, whereupon he reached out and grabbed ahold of the incoming hand, then unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash.

Boundless golden light glittered as the Blood Ancestor bashed into the Dire Skybanyan, ripping it up by the roots and sending it flying backward several thousand meters.

Everyone who was watching could scarcely believe their own eyes. The events which were playing out this day completely surpassed the imaginations of anyone present, to the point where they almost felt as if they were suffocating.

The Blood Ancestor and the Dire Skybanyan were both gargantuan giants, large enough to be the headquarters of a huge sect. And here they were fighting at close quarters; each blow unleashed contained the power to destroy heaven and earth. Shockwaves blasted out in all directions, sending earth and vegetation flying everywhere. Even the waters of the Heavenspan River were affected.

The giant and the tree fought back and forth relentlessly across the landscape, felling mountains and hewing massive craters into the earth.

Of course, the Dire Skybanyan hadn’t truly recovered; it had only been aided by being fed the life force of the entire Sky River Court. The tree had long since been doomed to die.

Considering the intensity of the fighting, it wouldn’t be long before its injuries flared out of control, and it slipped away into death!

The enormous tree let out roars of rage as it was battered backward and backward. Because of the unrelenting attacks of the Blood Ancestor, the Dire Skybanyan was unable to seize the initiative. Bai Xiaochun had already become very comfortable in his control over the gigantic body.

His Heaven-Dao Gold Core surged with energy, releasing constant power. His Undying Heavenly King Core also seethed, unleashing boundless fleshly body power.

With the increase of his cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun could also send his consciousness to greater limits. His mind now filled the Blood Ancestor, and at the same time, his fleshly body formed a resonance, giving him an unheard-of level of control. Sometimes, he even forgot that he was actually inside of the Blood Ancestor.

It was almost as if he truly were the Blood Ancestor!

“Die!” he howled. However, his voice came out of the Blood Ancestor’s mouth, rumbling like thunder. The Dire

Skybanyan was shoved backward again, and yet, before it could get very far, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed it by the arm, flinging it through the air.

The Dire Skybanyan slammed into the ground some distance away, then struggled to rise up again. Meanwhile, the log cabin inside the huge tree hadn’t been affected at all. The boy still stood outside of it, a thoughtful expression on his face. As for the old man, a look of determination had finally solidified in his eyes.

Taking a deep breath, he reached out and pushed his hand down onto the trunk of the tree. In that instant, his body withered, and a powerful aura of death completely surrounded him.

The boy looked over at him.

“Fellow Daoist,” he said coolly, “please pardon my actions from moments ago. I got caught up in the heat of the moment, and my desire to interact with that foreigner. That was unfair to you, and it also made things hard for the River-Defying Sect.

“Ah well.... If this is the choice you wish to make, so be it. With new life breathed into the skybanyan, your mark will be left behind for all time.

“It will also serve as a bit of recompense to the River-Defying Sect on my part.” With that, he waved his sleeve behind him, stepped out into the air, and vanished.

The old man didn't say anything when the boy disappeared. He looked at the huge struggling treant, and at the same time, his body withered. Everyone in the Sky River Court was dead, and he didn’t have much longer to live either.

Therefore, he was choosing to sacrifice himself to give the Dire Skybanyan a chance to live.

At the same time, some of his own will and life force would remain behind within the tree.

“Henceforth,” he murmured. “I acknowledge allegiance to the River-Defying Sect. I will protect it, just as you protected the Sky River Court!” With that, he withered up, fusing into the Dire Skybanyan.

The Dire Skybanyan shivered, and then the red glow in its eyes faded away. Even as that happened, the Blood Ancestor sailed toward it, fist held back in preparation to launch a blow. That was when the Dire Skybanyan prostrated itself and said in a deep voice, “I acknowledge allegiance....”

Even as the words echoed out, a scintillating light flew out from inside of the huge tree. The light shrank down until it revealed a green crystal, which was the heart of the Dire Skybanyan. Whoever controlled that crystal would have the Dire Skybanyan’s life in their hands.

Under Bai Xiaochun’s control, the Blood Ancestor stopped moving right in front of the Dire Skybanyan.

Everything went silent, and all of the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect looked over at the Blood Ancestor.

It wasn’t just them. The surrounding cultivator clans and smaller sects were also waiting to see what the Blood Ancestor would do.

No one could interfere. The choice was up to Bai Xiaochun. Not even the Nascent Soul patriarchs could do anything. Bai

Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, then smiled and reached out to grab the green crystal.

Instantly, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering swell of cheering rose up from the three Heavenspan Battleships.

“Victory!!”

“From now on, our River-Defying Sect is a Middle Reaches sect!!”

“We won, we won!!”

Within the cheering could be heard crying, whistling, and shouts of excitement. Everyone in the River-Defying Sect was boiling with elation. Moments later, a beam of bright light became visible, shooting through the sky. As it neared, a stone stele could be seen inside.

The stone stele slammed into the ground, burying itself halfway into the earth. Visible on the top half were three characters.

River-Defying Sect!

Beneath those three characters was another smaller line of characters....

Subdivision of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

That stone stele was a sign of the approval of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and as soon as the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect saw it, their excitement grew even more intense. This was everything they had worked hard for, and at long last, they had confirmation. Many of them began to think back to all the fighting that had been involved in becoming a Middle Reaches sect, and it left them sighing.

The surrounding cultivator clans and small-scale sects all began dropping to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, River-Defying Sect!” More and more voices joined together, creating a cacophony of sound. As for the three representatives from the other sects, they took deep breaths as they recovered their composure. With a final look at the Blood Ancestor, they turned and left.

Everyone knew that from this day on...

The eastern Middle Reaches was no longer controlled by the Sky River Court, but rather, the honorable River-Defying Sect!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0343 awe-chapter-344

The River-Defying Sect had taken control over the Middle Reaches!

All of the cultivator clans and smaller sects were completely shaken, as were the representatives of the three other major sects.

The entire structure of the Middle Reaches would change, and it also meant that one of the four major overlords had been replaced. That was even more meaningful considering that the River-Defying Sect had come from the Lower Reaches. To the sects subservient to the other three major sects, new doors had suddenly been opened.

At the same time, the River-Defying Sect was now busier than it had ever been before. Regardless of the level of their cultivation bases, the disciples of all four divisions were mobilized to aid in the construction of a new sect headquarters.

That new River-Defying Sect headquarters was being built on the former location of the Sky River Court itself!

The patriarchs of the four divisions had long since discussed and come to an agreement regarding how it would be laid out and what it would look like. Not only did their plan fulfil the requirements of each of the four divisions, it put the sect in the perfect position to both defend and attack. After all, this new headquarters would need to stand for thousands upon thousands of years, and would be a source of glory and honor for the entire sect!

The nucleus of the headquarters was to be an enormous mountain, half of which rested beneath the surface of the Heavenspan River, and the other half of which rose high into the heavens!

Although one might think that such a mountain would impede the flow of the Heavenspan River water, various magical means would be used to ensure that the river continued to flow just as before.

The mountain would stretch high into the clouds, so tall that it was impossible to see the summit.

As for the name of the mountain, it would be called Mount River Defiance! That mountain would be the nucleus of the sect, where all the important decisions would be made. The patriarchs would live there, and the reserve powers would be held there as well.

Mount River Defiance would form the center of the sect, with four majestic mountain ranges stretching out from it in four directions. Transported into the area by powerful magics, each one would stretch out for 500 kilometers, and would feature eight peaks that, despite being impressively tall, did not rival Mount River Defiance.

Those four mountain ranges would be assigned to the four divisions of the River-Defying Sect, the Spirit, Blood, Profound, and Pill Stream Divisions!

The main gate of the River-Defying Sect would face the Heavenspan River, and would be guarded by two enormous figures. On the left there would be a towering giant that thrummed with powerful blood qi, and yet appeared to be sleeping, which would be none other than the Blood Ancestor! On the right side would be the Dire Skybanyan, standing guard over the River-Defying Sect just like the giant.

The towering tree and the enormous giant would cause all other smaller sects in the Middle Reaches to cower in fear and terror.

The planned layout of the River-Defying Sect seemed simple, but the truth was that much thought had been put into it. For example, a grand spell formation would be erected to defend the sect, a spell formation that was ten times larger than the one the Spirit Stream Sect had created years ago in the Luochen Mountains.

This was the type of enormous sect that deserved to occupy the Middle Reaches, a sect that was clearly so powerful that none of the other forces in the region would dare to trifle with it.

The River-Defying Sect sent emissaries back to the Lower Reaches with new regulations for the four sects which had risen up in their absence. The old customs were reinstated; in the past, the four great sects of the Lower Reaches had sent tribute upriver every year. The same arrangement would continue into the future.

The River-Defying Sect also locked down the borders of the Lower Reaches, ensuring that the new sects would have time to fully establish themselves and not face any outside invaders.

While the shocking memory of the destruction of the Sky River Court was still fresh in the minds of all, this first Dharmic decree issued by the River-Defying Sect was something that no one was willing to defy, not even the other three major Middle Reaches sects. No one wanted to incur the ill will of the River-Defying Sect.

Although the River-Defying Sect was weaker than the other three major sects, they had received approval from the presiding sect upriver. As such, the other sects couldn’t very well offend them before they even had a chance to establish themselves.

Because of that, the River-Defying Sect’s territory was peaceful and calm, although the population was filled with both excitement and nervousness.

The River-Defying Sect had many important affairs to attend to. Whether it was the construction of their new headquarters, the pacification of the Lower Reaches, or the task of bringing their new territory under control, there were countless tasks that required careful attention.

The first matter to take care of was to assign a mountain range to each of the four divisions. Once each division had a mountain range, they could go about setting it up according to their own styles and requirements.

Because of Bai Xiaochun, the Spirit Stream Division took the east mountain range. There were few changes to their division. The same seven mountain peaks remained that had once been on the north and south banks of the river. The only difference was that the eighth mountain now belonged to the Core Formation cultivators.

The mountain range occupied by the Blood Stream Division was the one closest to the Blood Ancestor, which would ensure that the cultivators there were able to practice their techniques with the least interference possible. Another new rule was instituted; in order to become a blood master of one of their eight mountain peaks, a cultivator had to reach Core Formation first!

As for the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions, they had similar rules as before. The Profound Stream Division specialized in spell formations and clone cultivation, whereas the Pill Stream Division focused on the Dao of medicine. When all was said and done, the River-Defying Sect had a strong foundation in virtually all aspects; they truly met the requirements for a large sect!

The construction efforts all proceeded with great fanfare.

There was also much work to be done on what had once been the battlefield surrounding the Sky River Court. The corpses of many River-Defying sect cultivators who had died in battle needed to be cleared away.

Those cultivators were given proper burials, and their names were inscribed to be remembered for all time. They were brave heroes of the River-Defying Sect whose names would be sung in songs for generation to come.

There were many, many tasks to accomplish. Now that the fighting was done, one of the main matters at hand was to select a new sect leader. Thankfully, such matters were the responsibility of the patriarchs; Bai Xiaochun didn’t have to worry about them.

Days passed, and soon Bai Xiaochun realized that everyone around him was busy in some way or another. Whenever he walked around, the disciples of the River-Defying Sect would cast reverent gazes in his direction, and offer formal greetings. At first, it felt wonderful, but soon, the thrill began to fade.

“This is so boring,” he murmured. “I think I’ll go chat with Xiaomei.” It took a bit of searching, but he soon found her. She was with a team of fellow cultivators operating a spell formation giant to clear away rubble.

As soon as he saw her, he called out, “Xiaomei--”

“Don’t bother me now, big bro Xiaochun,” she called out, wiping the sweat from her brow. “I'm busy.” With that, she continued on with her work.

Bai Xiaochun stood there awkwardly for a moment before catching sight of Big Fatty Zhang.

“Eldest Brother--”

Big Fatty Zhang looked over with a serious expression, then said, “Can you save it for later, Xiaochun? I have a bunch of spirit enhancing to do....” With that, he went back to his work with Xu Meixiang and the other spirit enhancers.

Bai Xiaochun smiled, but inside he felt embarrassed and even crestfallen. Just when he was about to leave, he noticed Hou Yunfei flying in his direction.

“Big Bro Hou--”

“No time to chat, Xiaochun. Master sent me to work on the Magic Pavilion....” Hou Yunfei flew by without even stopping.

Smiling wryly, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the people bustling about, and then decided to head to the Blood Stream Division. As soon as he set foot on the mountains, he saw Song Junwan commanding a group of Middle Peak disciples as they constructed a new Middle Peak.

“Big Sis Song--”

“Go hang out somewhere else, Nightcrypt!” she barked, flicking her sleeve. Then she issued some more orders to the Middle Peak disciples.

Bai Xiaochun's jaw dropped. Even as he was trying to decide how to respond, a quavering voice reached his ears from behind.

"Junior patriarch, do you mind just leaving? You're making me nervous...."

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to go mad. Sighing, he turned and moped off.

Everyone he knew was ignoring him because of the various tasks they had been assigned. Even Bruiser had been given an assignment, and was overseeing some of the battle beasts.

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was the only idle person in the entire River-Defying Sect. The only people who qualified to give him orders were the Nascent Soul patriarchs, and they were all busy with important matters. In fact, it was even possible to occasionally catch wind of the sounds of arguing and discussion coming from Mount River Defiance.

"The elites usually do the most work, but apparently a person as incredible as me, a junior patriarch, actually ends up with nothing to do...." Completely incapable of thinking of any important tasks to attend to, he could only sigh.

"Ah whatever. I guess I should go concoct some medicine...." After finding his way to the bank of the Heavenspan River, he found a good location, sat down cross-legged, and began to think back to what he had learned from the true spirit about the River-Defying Pill.

"She gave me some good fortune, so I should definitely try to concoct that pill!" Gradually, he sank down into the calm that came with seeking enlightenment, and began to analyze the formula for the River-Defying Pill.

Time passed. Soon, night had fallen. Although the River-Defying Sect cultivators were all very busy, it was customary to rest at night, so soon, all heaven and earth grew quiet.

Most of the corpses on the battlefield had been cleared away, although a few remained here and there.

At the moment, the moon hung high in the sky, illuminating all of the lands down below. But then, a dark cloud appeared, which slowly spread out, casting darkness everywhere. Then, a white-robed figure appeared out of thin air.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0344 awe-chapter-345

Heaven and earth were nothing but a vast swath of darkness. As the white-robed figure appeared, a sinister coldness swept out. Because of the darkness which surrounded the figure, it was only just barely possible to identify her as a woman.

Her long hair flowed about her as she strolled across the battlefield through the darkness of night.

Wherever she went, everything around her grew so cold it seemed to hover on the verge of becoming ice. The plants and vegetation withered as though the white-robed woman was sucking away their life force. At the same time, her own life force rapidly grew stronger.

Before long, she was next to a pile of corpses belonging to former cultivators of the Sky River Court. Looking down at them, she chuckled, then sucked in a breath which caused the corpses to begin to wither up. In the briefest of moments, the corpses became nothing more than skeletons that looked like they had been dead for years.

The young woman didn’t stop there. She proceeded along through the battlefield, causing numerous corpses to transform into skeletons. As this occurred, her body grew increasingly distinct. In the end, she stretched her neck a bit to loosen it, then floated over to another location where a large amount of Sky River Court cultivators’ corpses lay.

This location belonged to the Blood Stream Division, and these corpses had been set aside for them to use in their corpse refining. The entire area was sealed tight with spell formations, and yet, they posed no obstacle to the young woman. She floated right through them until she was right above the corpses. Then, a strange gleam could be seen in her eyes as she yet again breathed in deeply....

Instantly, the vast quantity of corpses began to wither. In the blink of an eye, the more than 10,000 corpses turned into nothing more than bones. Some of those bones even dissolved into ashes....

By this point, the young woman’s features were even clearer. After a moment passed, she burped lightly, then slowly looked up into the sky. The dark clouds began to fade away, and a shaft of moonlight fell down to reveal her face.

Shockingly, that young woman was Gongsun Wan’er!

“Well I’m not starving anymore, but what a pity that they were all dead. If only I could eat something living!” Covering her mouth, she chuckled, then turned and vanished into thin air.

With her departure, the dark clouds disappeared completely, allowing the moonlight to shine down onto a field of pale white bones....

No one detected Gongsun Wan’er that night, not even the Nascent Soul patriarchs....

Bai Xiaochun suddenly sneezed as a cold feeling swept over him. Emerging from his meditative trance, he looked around for a moment, then, after seeing nothing out of the ordinary, closed his eyes again.

The next morning at dawn, the disciples responsible for the corpses suddenly realized that the corpses were now nothing more than dried up bones. Their jaws dropped, and soon cries of alarm rose up into the air. The matter instantly caused a huge stir in the River-Defying Sect.

“What... what could have happened!?”

“Heavens, how could all the corpses here have dried up overnight...?”

“There’s not even any flesh or blood left at all. They look like they've been dead for ages. They definitely didn’t look like that yesterday!”

As the news spread, everyone was completely and utterly shaken. Even the patriarchs’ meeting regarding the sect rules was thrown into chaos.

Bai Xiaochun was eventually disturbed by the racket, and quickly went to see what was going on. As he hovered in the air, he heard the various discussions, and then looked over at the corpses on the battlefield.

“What happened?” he thought, shocked. The fact that all of the flesh and blood had vanished from the corpses left him with a very bad feeling.

It was in that exact moment that more than ten beams of light shot off of Mount River Defiance. It was the patriarchs of the four divisions, who had very serious expressions on their faces as they sped in the direction of the Blood Stream Division’s corpse refining district.

Behind them were a large number of Core Formation cultivators. Seeing what was happening, Bai Xiaochun quickly flew up to join them.

A large group of cultivators had already gathered in the area, and were discussing the situation. When they saw the patriarchs and the Core Formation experts, they quickly quieted down. However, curious expressions could be seen on their faces; they could tell that the events of the previous night were clearly no small matter.

Obviously, the fact that the corpses’ flesh and blood had been drained away meant that someone or something had done the deed. If that news spread, it could definitely cause problems.

The Nascent Soul patriarchs soon arrived at the corpse refining district and began to investigate. Before long, their expressions began to flicker.

That was especially true of the three most powerful of the patriarchs, the great circle Nascent Soul experts Frigidsect, Master Godwind, and Crimsonsoul. They could sense a lingering aura in the area that caused their expressions to turn very grim. After exchanging glances, Master Godwind of the Blood Stream Division said, “When the Dire Skybanyan was uprooted, it created rifts for earth qi to seep through. That’s what caused this event. There’s no need for anyone to panic. I’ll set up some spell formations to keep the earth qi sealed.”

Next, Frigidsect and Crimsonsoul also made similar statements. Considering their reputations in the sect, such words quickly eased the hearts of most of the disciples.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too far off from the Nascent Soul cultivators, and when he looked around, he instantly sensed the cold aura in the area. There were even streams of frigid qi which entered his body and caused his life force to grow sluggish.

He didn’t quite believe the patriarchs’ explanation, but hesitated for a moment and looked over at Frigidsect.

Frigidsect gave him a meaningful look that indicated he should hold his tongue.

The matter was quickly swept under the rug. All four divisions entrusted key disciples to guide the flow of conversation in the sect. This, coupled with the fact that everyone was so busy, and that no living cultivators had been affected, ensured that discussion of the matter faded away quickly. Although a few people harbored some suspicions, no one attempted to dig for more information.

However, that very night, there was a secret meeting on Mount River Defiance between the patriarchs and the Core Formation cultivators. Bai Xiaochun was present.

Master Godwind of the Blood Stream Division looked over the gathered Core Formation cultivators, then slowly began to explain.

“The strangest thing is that none of us patriarchs detected anything unusual during last night’s odd events....

“Those corpses were completely drained of all flesh and blood, and although they didn’t contain any true life force, they would have contained other strange powers. Even more odd was that the corpses originally had a strong aura of death. However, my inspections earlier didn’t reveal even a trace of such an aura!

“The only aura remaining in the area was something extremely sinister, something akin to the power of the Nine Serenities underworld!

“I can only hope that we patriarchs’ conclusion in the matter is not mistaken.... From what we could tell, something visited the River-Defying Sect last night, something that shouldn’t even exist in the world of the living, the powerful ghost of some dead entity!

“Only the ghosts of the dead thrive on auras of death. Furthermore, after reaching a certain level of power, such ghosts require life force from living beings!”

Considering that Master Godwind was a Nascent Soul Daoist master, everyone simply listened to his words and took them to heart.

The Core Formation cultivators were completely shocked. As for Bai Xiaochun, his face drained of blood.

“A ghost....” he thought, shivering, his hair standing on end.

It was Patriarch Crimsonsoul who spoke next, his voice hoarse, a strange light gleaming in his eyes. “There isn’t any need for anxiety. We’re giving you this information so that you can be on guard. The other patriarchs and I will set up an airtight spell formation! If that ghost appears again, we’ll make sure it is completely destroyed!”

As his gaze swept over the Core Formation cultivators, it lingered for a moment on Bai Xiaochun, who was currently trembling and scowling on the verge of tears.

It was with complete and utter terror that Bai Xiaochun left Mount River Defiance. His thoughts were in utter chaos, and he couldn’t stop thinking about how he had suddenly been dragged out of meditation the previous night. At that point, his skin began to crawl.

“Don’t tell me that some unclean thing was out looking for me last night!?!?” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun almost screamed. Not daring to return to the place he had been concocting pills the previous day, he decided to stay on Mount River Defiance. As far as he was concerned, staying close to the patriarchs would obviously be the safest thing to do.

Because he was the junior patriarch of the sect, he was able to lay claim to a small area of his own on Mount River Defiance, where he personally dug out a simple immortal's cave. Then he thought about the unclean thing from the previous night, and again, his skin began to crawl. Gritting his teeth, he went to find some Profound Stream Division disciples to help him set up some defensive spell formations.

Most cultivators in the sect would be content with one spell formation, but Bai Xiaochun was terrified at the moment, so he tracked down dozens of top experts from the Profound Stream Division. With their help, he set up dozens of spell formations, most of them designed to ward off evil spirits.

The experts from the Profound Stream Sect had very odd expressions on their faces when they left. And yet, Bai Xiaochun still didn’t feel safe. Gritting his teeth, he spent a huge sum of merit points to purchase a vast quantity of paper talismans, most of them designed to ward off or suppress evil spirits. After plastering so many talismans onto himself that he looked like a boiled sticky-rice dumpling, he finally felt at ease.

“Hummmphh! That unclean thing won’t dare to cause trouble for me now. I'm close to the patriarchs, I have tons of spell formations set up, and all kinds of talismans ready. I refuse to believe that ghost would set foot in my direction!” Breathing a sigh of relief, he strolled out of the front door of his immortal's cave.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0345 awe-chapter-346

A few days later, the work on the sect headquarters continued. No more incidents occurred, and everyone would have quickly forgotten about it were it not for the fact that Bai Xiaochun only appeared in the open blanketed with paper talismans.

Xu Baocai and some of his other friends were very curious about the situation, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t simply refuse to tell them the truth of the matter. Therefore, he used a variety of vague wording to explain that the River-Defying Sect was being haunted by a ghost.

Xu Baocai and the others were quite frightened, and soon started imitating Bai Xiaochun, plastering all sorts of paper talismans on themselves to ward off evil spirits. Of course, they didn't quite use as many as Bai Xiaochun did....

Bai Xiaochun’s talismans covered virtually every inch of his body other than his face.

When he went out and about, jaws would drop, and eyes would go wide.

Whether it was Zhou Xinqi or Ghostfang, Song Que or Nine-Isles, all of them were completely taken aback. One evening when Bai Xiaochun was strutting about festooned with talismans, he happened to run into Gongsun Wan’er.

Even she was shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s appearance. Jaw dropping, she blurted, “Elder Brother Xiaochun, what are you....”

“Well, if it isn’t Junior Sister Gongsun.” Bai Xiaochun looked her up and down, then glanced around furtively, stepped closer, and whispered, “Look, I’m gonna tell you something that you have to keep secret. The River-Defying Sect is haunted by a ghost! That's why I have all these paper talismans on, to ward off evil spirits.”

Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes went even wider. A moment passed, and she jokingly looked him up and down, then reached out and rubbed some of the talismans. Finally, she forced a smile onto her face, promised that she wouldn’t tell anyone else, and left.

Feeling very pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun continued on his way.

Eventually, everyone was talking about the matter of the sect being haunted. By the time the patriarchs of the four divisions realized what was happening, it was too late to quell the rumors. Bai Xiaochun’s eye-catching appearance left them frustrated and shaking their heads wryly.

“He’s at Gold Core, and he’s still scared of ghosts....”

“Besides, that ghost is so terrifyingly powerful that those paper talismans he’s wearing would be completely useless against it.”

Chuckling dryly, the patriarchs decided to just ignore the matter. A few more days passed, and when Bai Xiaochun realized that no further incidents were forthcoming, he finally started to feel more at ease.

Sighing emotionally, he said, “It doesn’t matter what demons or devils or ghosts come around, with my special anti-evil clothing, they’ll all be turned into nothing but ash. Ai. Yet again, I've saved the sect. Nobody even knows the true extent of what I, the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, have done to help out all my other fellow disciples!” It was currently late at the night, and he was sitting cross-legged in his immortal's cave, meditating.

However, even as the words left his mouth, ripples spread out across the floor. They were strange ripples that seemed to be separating the area from the world outside, and they were accompanied by a frigid coldness.

The sudden development caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to widen, and a shrill shriek to escape his lips. He leapt to his feet, slapping his bag of holding and producing a huge stack of evil-warding paper talismans.

“Get out of here! Stay away! I'm dangerous! I'm wearing hundreds of evil-warding talismans!!” However, even as he backed up, trembling, a red beam of light shot out of his bag of holding, which was none other than the mask he had worn during his time as Nightcrypt.

The mask was vibrating, and emanating ripples, and soon, the voice of an old man began to speak from within the mask.

“You--”

“‘You’ who?!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked. Without any hesitation, he threw the entire stack of paper talismans at the mask, and then poured all of the Heaven-Dao Gold Core power he could into it. Within that stack were talismans of sealing, crushing, and warding, and once the power hit them, they virtually exploded.

Rumbling filled the air, and the mask trembled as countless paper talismans slapped down onto it. Whatever connection it had with the ground was severed, and the mask fell down.

In that same moment, the fluctuations vanished, and everything went back to normal.

Beads of sweat covered Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. Even in the heat of the moment, he knew that the voice which had spoken was not the ghost he feared, but rather, the mysterious group that was behind the mask....

A moment later, the soul of imposter Nightcrypt flew out of the mask, trembling with fear. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, he cried, “They came! They really came....

“We’re finished, Bai Xiaochun, finished! You took the relic of eternal indestructibility, and now the mysterious power is after us!

“We're dead for sure.... There’s no way they’ll show leniency to betrayers. They’ll probably skin us alive and turn us into fertilizer....”

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun barked, annoyed and surprised at the same time. However, he also felt somewhat guilty. After all, he really had taken away the little turtle.

“Dammit. I'm not even wearing the mask! How could they have tracked me down anyway!?” He thought about simply throwing the mask away, but couldn’t quite bring himself to get rid of something so precious. Besides, the soul of imposter Nightcrypt was still stuck inside, so if he threw it away, he would be screwing him over too.

“What... what do we do, Bai Xiaochun?” If imposter Nightcrypt weren’t a soul body, he would definitely have been leaking tears.

Bai Xiaochun looked anxiously at imposter Nightcrypt, then took a moment to think about the situation. Despite some consideration, he couldn't come up with any solution other than to hand the mask over to the patriarchs.

“What a pity to get rid of a treasure like this that can change your appearance.” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure about what to do. Another half a month went by, and when nothing else happened with the mask, he finally started to calm down.

**

The work on the sect headquarters was approaching its conclusion.

The patriarchs were also reaching the end of their discussions about how to handle the situation in the Lower Reaches, as well as the territory currently under the control of the River-Defying Sect.

Most importantly, they were finalizing all the official sect rules.

According to the new arrangement, one of the four divisions would be formally in charge of the sect for a two-hundred-year period. After those two hundred years, the sect affairs would pass to the next division. The same arrangement would determine who the sect leader was. The first division to wield leadership power in the sect was the Spirit Stream Division. No longer was Zheng Yuandong to be the leader of the Spirit Stream Division, he was to be the sect leader of the entire River-Defying Sect!

Although his cultivation base was a bit lacking, he was more than qualified to handle the responsibilities!

In fact, with the agreement and help of the patriarchs, Zheng Yuandong decided to sacrifice his potential for future growth to make an immediate breakthrough into Core Formation. Furthermore, he made arrangements for Li Qinghou to succeed him as the second sect leader, one hundred years later.

At the end of the Spirit Stream Division’s two hundred years of leadership, the Blood Stream Division would take over. After that would come the Profound Stream Division, and then finally the Pill Stream Division.

None of the patriarchs were opposed to the arrangement!

Soon, the sect headquarters was completed. The Blood Ancestor and the Dire Skybanyan stood tall, and the four mountain ranges spread out in all directions. The last step was to activate the grand spell formation, and then everything would be finished!

The cheering was deafening. A month before, the three Heavenspan Battleships had been sent downriver to the Lower Reaches, and had returned with the disciples who had been unable to fight in the war for various reasons.

With all the disciples present, the River-Defying Sect now had well over 1,000,000 members. It was quite a bustling place.

A grand ceremony was held to commemorate the occasion, and numerous invitations were sent out into the Middle Reaches to the other three great sects, as well as certain ancient cultivator clans.

The formalities lasted for seven days. The Starry River Court, Dao River Court and Polarity River Court all sent people to offer formal congratulations. Not a single one of the cultivator clans failed to send representatives.

As for the four major sects who had risen up in the Lower Reaches, they also sent representatives with congratulations and gifts. During that seven-day period, the River-Defying Sect was the talk of the entire Middle Reaches.

As the junior patriarch of the sect, Bai Xiaochun obviously had a very high standing, and was the subject of much attention. He made public appearances every day, wearing ceremonial clothing and showing off his veins of steel. He could not have glittered with any greater glory than he did. Bai Xiaochun quickly fell in love with his role. However, the patriarchs, as well as Li Qinghou, only got more nervous, fearing that he would reveal his true nature in front of all the crowds.

However, no one noticed any such clues. He chatted with people wittily, and was definitely the center of attention. Whenever he intentionally unleashed his murderous aura, everyone in the area was shocked.

The patriarchs were very pleased with his performance, and Bai Xiaochun was quite proud of himself. To him, it was actually a very simple matter to put on such an act. Seven days later, the ceremonies ended, the visitors left, and the sect quieted down.

At the moment, the biggest problem facing the River-Defying Sect was...

They had no Deva Realm cultivator!

The other three great sects in the Middle Reaches all had a Deva Realm patriarch to oversee the sect. That was the only way to truly be a great sect, and it was a fatal weakness for the River-Defying Sect!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0346 awe-chapter-347

It was only now that Bai Xiaochun was learning about how the higher levels of the cultivation system in the Heavenspan Realm worked. After Qi Condensation, Foundation Establishment, Core Formation, and Nascent Soul came the Deva Realm!

The Deva Realm was completely terrifying. It was like a complete fusion with heaven and earth, in which the cultivator didn’t unleash his own power, but rather, the power of all creation around him. He drew upon the energy of heaven and earth to emit crushing pressure and utilize divine abilities that went beyond the imaginations of even Nascent Soul cultivators.

For many years, there had only ever been four Deva Realm cultivators in the eastern Middle Reaches of the Heavenspan River. However, one of them, the deva from the Sky River Court, had been killed, leaving only three behind.

Deva Realm experts were powerful enough to be able to destroy entire sects, which meant that if one of them attacked the River-Defying Sect, it would most certainly be destroyed.

Even with Bai Xiaochun controlling the Blood Ancestor, and the assistance of the Dire Skybanyan, they would still be defeated. Only by calling upon the assistance of the true spirit would they be able to survive, and unfortunately, they had already used their one and only River-Defying Pill.

Although the River-Defying Sect currently seemed very powerful, they were lacking the highest level of power they needed. One of the driving forces in the patriarchs’ ability to reach a decision regarding the sect rules, and in fact, one of the reasons they had all agreed to fight together into the Middle Reaches to begin with, was that the spiritual energy and resources there were such that reaching the Deva Realm was a distinct possibility.

At the moment, the three people most likely of being able to reach the Deva Realm were Master Godwind, Frigidsect, and Crimsonsoul!

After the ceremonies were over, Master Godwind and Crimsonsoul chose to go into secluded meditation. The other patriarchs did the same. Each and every Nascent Soul cultivator hoped to eventually reach the point of becoming a deva!

In all of the eastern Heavenspan River, there were no more than ten devas total, and that included the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! From that, it was easy to see not only how powerful they were, but also how rare.

In a grand hall on Mount River Defiance, the founding patriarch of the Spirit Stream Division, Frigidsect, had called Bai Xiaochun to explain to him certain matters regarding the sect and devas. “Although you can’t quite say that in the Deva Realm it's possible to live as long as heaven and earth, with the energy at your disposal, you can remain unwithered for almost all eternity. Your battle prowess would be such that you could dominate the entire cultivation world!

“Therefore, I will be going into secluded meditation to strive for my chance to break through into the Deva Realm!”

This was actually Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing about the Deva Realm, and he already wished he could reach it.

“What’s after the Deva Realm?” he asked.

Frigidsect remained silent for a moment, but his eyes were already shining brightly. “After that is the Demigod Realm!”

Unexpectedly, the moment he said the word ‘demigod’, a peal of thunder rang out in the sky above!

The sudden crack of thunder startled Bai Xiaochun.

“Even saying the name can cause fluctuations to appear in heaven and earth. The Demigod Realm defies description. Perhaps people like that really are just as the name describes, part god!” The truth was that not even Frigidsect knew much about the Demigod Realm.

“In all of the eastern cultivation world, there is only one demigod, and he is the living reserve power of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. That patriarch is the only reason why the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect became a riversource sect!”

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing such things, and his eyes were as wide as saucers. Without even thinking about it, he asked, “What's after Demigod?”

“I don’t know!” Frigidsect replied, shaking his head. Having finished his explanation of cultivation, he extended his right hand, and three glowing motes of light appeared.

Within those motes of light could be seen a scroll painting, a reptilian scale, and a dagger!

The scroll painting possessed the air of something that had existed for many years, and pulsed with an ancient aura. As for the scale, Bai Xiaochun’s first impression was that it was beginning to rot; he couldn’t even tell what kind of creature it came from.

And then there was the dagger, which actually looked less like a dagger and more like a black horn!

“The Landscape of Nine Provinces is an earth-tier precious treasure, capable of storing a vast quantity of items. Anything that gets sucked in can be refined, and then sealed with an enslaving branding mark. It can provide an incredible boost to speed, and is even capable of short-range teleportation!

“The Ancient Devil Scale is also an earth-tier precious treasure. Not even a Nascent Soul expert could break through it. Unfortunately, I only have this one scale. With more, a full suit of armor could be forged, which would make it even more difficult for Nascent Soul cultivators to deal with you!

“Last is this dagger, which is also an earth-tier precious treasure. It can summon a rebel dragon of incredible power!”

“You're giving all of these to me?” Bai Xiaochun said, his heart starting to pound as he eyed the motes of light. Any one of the objects in front of him would be enough to arouse his excitement, let alone all of them. He swallowed hard.

“As the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, you will represent the sect when you go out into the world. It's only natural that these three precious treasures should go to you. Take some time to get used to them. In the future, it will be up to you to make a name for the River-Defying Sect!” Frigidsect smiled. Bai Xiaochun was incredibly important to the River-Defying Sect, and the patriarchs had all agreed that since they were going into secluded meditation, Bai Xiaochun should be given three precious treasures to use for his own protection.

Bai Xiaochun was visibly excited, and quickly offered profuse thanks. Then he took the three precious treasures and began to fondle them lovingly. Frigidsect cleared his throat.

“I'm going to enter into secluded meditation now. In a moment, someone from the Senior generation will come to pay you a visit, so please wait for him. Finally, take this jade slip. It's an arcane cultivation technique for you now that you’ve reached Core Formation, a secret magic of the former Frigid School!” A strange expression could be seen on Frigidsect’s face, but before Bai Xiaochun could look up to notice, Frigidsect tossed him a jade slip, turned, and vanished.

“Someone from the Senior generation?” Bai Xiaochun asked, catching the jade slip. “But who?” However, Frigidsect was gone. As the moments ticked by, though, Bai Xiaochun's anticipation grew.

“Maybe they’re going to give me some more rewards....” he thought, getting more excited. As time went on, he was coming to find that, as the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, he was treated very well. Someone from the Senior generation was even coming to give him a gift! Taking a deep breath, he rose to his feet and stood there straight and tall, trying to look as somber as possible.

Inside, he was already feeling pleased with himself; he knew that this pose was one that the older generation would definitely be pleased with.

After waiting for a bit, Bai Xiaochun was starting to lose patience. But then, he suddenly got a very strange feeling, as if someone were watching him. Without even thinking about it, he turned around, and when he saw what was right there in front of him, his eyes went wide.

At some indeterminable point, a rabbit had appeared right behind him!

The rabbit didn’t walk around on all fours like a normal rabbit. It stood on its hind legs. It had its hands clasped behind its back much like a person would do, and it was staring at Bai Xiaochun with its red eyes. Its ears stuck straight up above its head, and although it looked somewhat comical, there was something ancient in its eyes that made the rabbit seem completely beyond the ordinary.

“You….” Bai Xiaochun said. Gasping, he backed up. Then he clasped his hands over his mouth. Perhaps other people might not recognize this rabbit, but Bai Xiaochun did. He would probably recognize it even if it were transformed into a pile of ash. This was none other than that damnable talking rabbit!

The truth was that way back in the fight outside the Profound Stream Sect's city, when he saw the rabbit and the monkey together, he’d begun to suspect that something strange was going on. Now that the rabbit had appeared again, he began to pant. However, he quickly plastered a smile onto his face, and then cautiously clasped his hands in greeting.

“Um... disciple offers greetings, Senior!”

The rabbit snorted coldly as it looked Bai Xiaochun up and down. For some reason, the rabbit wasn’t repeating his words like it usually did, and although that should have made Bai Xiaochun happy, he was only left with a dark premonition.

Getting more nervous, he backed up a few paces and said, “Senior, I--”

“You looked quite pleased with yourself when you tried to chase me down last time,” the rabbit said, his voice cracking with ancientness. “However, I won’t lower myself to your level.”

Bai Xiaochun immediately started to get more nervous.

“I've come here today to perform a little test. Let’s see if those precious treasures of yours will really work.” As he glared at Bai Xiaochun, his mouth widened into a smile, a smile that filled Bai Xiaochun’s heart with terror. Letting out a shriek, he didn’t hesitate at all to turn and flee.

However, in the moment he started to move, the rabbit blurred into motion, raising his right foot and kicking Bai Xiaochun hard on the back.

A rumbling sound echoed out, mixing with Bai Xiaochun’s scream as he flew through the air. However, even as he flew, he righted himself and then shot forward with greater speed.

“Help! He’s trying to kill me!! A killer rabbit!! Patriarchs, save me! Save me!!” Bai Xiaochun sped along frantically, his shrieks echoing out in all directions. Many disciples heard, and immediately looked up to see what was happening.

What they saw was a rabbit flying through the air, slamming into Bai Xiaochun and sending him spinning. Then the rabbit began to cackle with laughter.

“Scream! The louder the better! Remember how you tried to blow me up during our last chase? Dammit! I went to hide in

10,000 Snakes Valley, and yet you suddenly showed up looking for me!!

“I even went all the way to the Blood Stream Sect to hide from you. Y-y-you... you little bastard! I can’t believe you tracked me down to the Blood Stream Sect!!” The rabbit’s eyes were bright red as it chased after Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun's screams echoed out into the sky. Soon, certain cultivators from the Blood and Spirit Stream Divisions recognized the rabbit, and began to cry out in alarm.

“That’s....”

“Heavens, that’s the talking rabbit!!”

“What’s that rabbit doing here? And why isn’t it repeating things!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0347 awe-chapter-348

Bai Xiaochun felt more than ever that he was being unjustly accused. He instantly drew upon the full power of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, and even his Undying Heavenly King Body. Although that pushed him forward with incredible speed, it didn’t make him faster than the rabbit. Furthermore, the rabbit was a very crafty character, and knew just where to kick him for it to hurt the most.

Scowling on the verge of tears, he considered calling upon the three precious treasures he had just been given. But before he could, the rabbit shot forward with blinding speed, causing a series of sonic booms to echo out as he kicked Bai Xiaochun over and over again.

Most outrageous of all was that the rabbit actually chose to kick him in the face....

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was going to go crazy. The rabbit was obviously refusing to give him a chance to use the precious treasures, all in its attempt to bully its way to revenge.

“You can’t blame me for everything! You’re the one who loves to repeat everything! Y-y-you’re... you’re a total bully!!”

Behind him, the rabbit roared, “You think I want to repeat what everybody says? Dammit! Nobody asked you to bring up that topic! This... this is all your fault!” The rabbit unleashed more kicks at Bai Xiaochun.

“All your fault! Especially the last time! I can’t believe you only said half a sentence! Do you know that you almost drove me literally insane!?!?

“Listen to me, you little punk, the next time I'm repeating what people say, you had better finish your sentences!!” The angrier the rabbit got, the harder and more viciously it kicked Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was sore all over, and was being driven to the point of rage.

“He’s trying to kill me!” he howled. “He’s trying to kill me!!

“Somebody save me! I'm the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect! I've spilled my own blood for the River-Defying Sect!

“Save me, patriarchs!!” However, no matter how loudly he shouted, the Nascent Soul Daoist masters didn’t respond at all. Bai Xiaochun felt completely maligned.

“You’re pushing things too far, rabbit!!

“So what if I only said half a sentence? If I had said any more, and you repeated it, I would have lost my poor little life!

“I said half a sentence back then, and I’ll say half a sentence next time too!

“In fact, I’ll do it now.... What comes after *I, Bai Xiaochun*? Tell me! Hurry up, spit it out! What comes after *I, Bai Xiaochun*?!?!”

As the words left his mouth, a tremor suddenly ran through the rabbit. A blank look appeared in his eyes, and he suddenly lurched to a halt in midair.

“I, Bai Xiaochun....”

In response, Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and it was the same with the other disciples who had come to see what was going on. Everyone was looking at the rabbit, which now looked completely different from before.

Instead of keeping his hands clasped behind his back, he dropped down on all fours, like a normal rabbit. Ears sticking straight up, he began to repeat the same words over and over again.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding, but instead of continuing to flee, he cried, “Come on, tell me! What words come after *I, Bai Xiaochun*?!”

Equally nervous, the rabbit howled, “I, Bai Xiaochun....”

“Come on, tell me! Spit it out!” Looking excited, Bai Xiaochun took a few steps forward toward the rabbit. Now that he had found what appeared to be the rabbit’s weakness, he was eager to take advantage of it.

“I, Bai Xiaochun....” The rabbit’s eyes were so red that they looked like they might start bleeding. His fur was standing on end, and the pressure being put on him from Bai Xiaochun made him tremble on the verge of collapse. With that, he let out a bellow like a crack of thunder, then turned and began to flee for his life. At the same time, it began to cry out all sorts of gossip, a large amount of it having to do with Patriarch Crimsonsoul. Incensed, Crimsonsoul himself appeared and tried to chase down the rabbit, but it soon disappeared.

At long last, Bai Xiaochun realized that the rabbit clearly wasn't stable mentally. Sometimes it was clear-headed, other times not. Only when it was clear-headed did it act like an old bastard. The most important thing was that their last encounter had left a deep impression on him; the matter of saying only half a sentence could drive the rabbit nearly to collapse....

“So that’s how it is! Hahaha! Trifling little rabbit. How dare you try to tangle with Bai Xiaochun! Let’s see if you ever dare to mess with me again in the future!” He breathed a sigh of relief, and was just about to continue to boast when suddenly he realized that Patriarch Crimsonsoul had given up on chasing the rabbit, and was currently glaring at him.

Then he thought back to some of the things the rabbit had said, and quickly ducked his head and hurried back to his immortal's cave.

“It wasn’t my fault,” he muttered. “Nobody did anything to help me! Everyone just watched the poor junior patriarch getting beaten up by that rabbit!” Rubbing his face discontentedly, he decided that it would be best not to go out very often. After all, if he ended up chasing the rabbit again, who knew what the thing might say.

“Hey, what about Bruiser? Where did he get off to? I haven’t seen him for days now. I bet he’s off messing around with some female beast!” Because of the special connection between the two of them, he could tell that Bruiser was safe, though, so he didn’t give it much more thought.

“Ah whatever. I never took the time to rest and recover after reaching Heaven-Dao Gold Core. I might as well take advantage of the time now to go into secluded meditation.”

With that, he made his decision. He immediately sealed his immortal's cave up tight and began to focus on cultivation.

Time passed. A month later, he opened his eyes, and found that his cultivation base was much more stable than before, and had even made a bit of progress. With that, he slapped his bag of holding and produced a jade slip.

It was pitch-black, and didn't seem very impressive. However, as soon as he put his hand on it, a sensation of intense coldness filled him. This was none other than the technique that Frigidsect had given him....

After scanning the jade slip with divine sense, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered with surprise.

“Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation!

“The cultivation of this technique requires Heavenspan River water. However, instead of consuming it, you alter its structure into two types: Frigid and Will....

“Use the technique to form the Frigid, use the Frigid to evolve the Will....

“If one masters it, one’s Will can freeze everything in the area with frigid coldness. Hmm... what’s the Will it talks about?” As he continued to study the jade slip, his surprise grew. Eventually, he put the slip down.

“So, Will is the ultimate level of control power, something completely and utterly bizarre. Essentially, it comes by fusing control power with one’s own thoughts!

“The Violet Qi Cauldron Control Art develops control power, and the Violet Qi Heavenspan Incantation uses that control power to create the Heavenspan Dharma Eye. That’s only the initial step toward fusing control power with one’s thoughts. The Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation involves a complete fusion of one’s thoughts with control power. Then, true Willpower can be developed and grown....”

Bai Xiaochun took a long, deep breath, and slowly picked up the jade slip again. Finally, he understood the truth; the Spirit Stream Sect techniques were all steps in a ladder leading to the ultimate form of power: Will!

“In that case, I can definitely succeed with my Human Controlling Grand Magic!

“In fact, by using Will, I can also complete my work with the powers of gravity and repulsion!

“Will....” he murmured. Looking over at a rock in the corner of the Immortal's cave, he tried to use nothing but his own thoughts to get it to fly up into the air.

Almost immediately, the little rock trembled in place. Although it didn’t fly up, Bai Xiaochun was already delighted. He had just moved that rock without any magic, without any cultivation base power, without any divine abilities. He had used only his own thoughts.

After a bit of time passed, he suppressed his excitement and began to think about going to get a huge bucket of Heavenspan River water to start cultivating. All of a sudden, he thought about his Undying Live Forever Technique. Closing his eyes, he began to review the information he had received from the legacy of the Blood Ancestor, the third volume of...

Undying Tendons!

Tendons were the source of speed, and the power of tendons could make a person strong and tough. When you combined such levels of speed and power into a fist strike, the shocking results would surpass anything that had come before it!

Even more fantastic was that the ultimate combination of speed and power in the Undying Tendons technique led to an incredible divine ability, a hexing magic that could be unleashed with every punch or kick!

It was a hexing magic that could seal anything and everything!

The first two volumes of the Undying Technique provided miraculous divine abilities in addition to the ultimately powerful fleshly body improvements, and this one was no different.

“The Undying Hex!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with bright light. That was the divine ability that came with the third volume, something similar to the Throat Crushing Grasp and the Mountain Shaking Bash!

Unlike the other two volumes, the Undying Tendons were not divided into different levels. Instead, the goal was to apply the technique to every part of the body!

It was divided up into the four limbs, the torso, and the head!

The only way to master the technique was to apply it to each and every one of those body parts!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0348 awe-chapter-349

After delving into the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation and the Undying Tendons, Bai Xiaochun was filled with anticipation regarding what was to come in the future. That was especially true after sensing his own flourishing life force. Although he wasn’t completely sure of the limits of his longevity, he had the feeling that it was at least a thousand years or so.

Many people found cultivation to be dull and boring, but he didn’t mind it at all, and quickly immersed himself in the Frigid School Will Evolving Incantation and the Undying Tendons.

After some consideration, he decided that he would begin cultivating the Undying Tendons with the big toe on his left foot.

“I’ll go one toe at a time,” he thought. “That will be the most stable way to go about it!” He was fully convinced that this was the right course. He could already imagine the screams of pain from his enemies when they were completely caught off guard by the power of his toe.

“Only an idiot would start with the fingers. What good are fingers? Everyone is prepared for someone to attack with the hands. Besides, in a critical moment, how could your fingers help you to escape? But toes are different. Not only can they catch people off guard in a sudden attack, they can also be used to run away at full speed. As long as I have my poor little life, I have everything!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he was the epitome of wisdom, intelligence and courage. He was so pleased that he started looking around for a copper mirror to admire himself in, only to discover that there were no mirrors in his immortal's cave.

“That won’t do!” he thought. “I can’t believe there’s not a single mirror in here!” He was feeling more than a little disappointed. However, it was at that point that he thought back to the young woman from the Sky River Court whom he had killed in battle. When he'd scanned her bag of holding, he remembered seeing a mirror.

He quickly opened his bag of holding and began rifling through its contents until he found a round, palm-sized copper mirror. He also looked for the little turtle, but didn't find even a trace of him. However, he was used to the turtle’s mysterious vanishing acts, and thus wasn’t very surprised.

After examining the mirror for a bit, Bai Xiaochun was delighted to discover that it wasn’t just an ordinary mirror, it was actually a useful magical item. Although it wasn’t as extraordinary as his three precious treasures, it was still quite impressive: it could form a magical clone.

However, it wasn’t the type of clone that could be used for fighting, and was more for distracting the enemy. Back when he had been fighting the young woman, he had completely dominated the fight. Plus, his use of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye had made the use of such a clone useless.

“Not bad at all, actually,” he said as he fiddled with the mirror. A moment later, he decided to study the mirror with his third eye. As soon as it opened, he said, “Eee?”

Violet light flickered within the immortal's cave, then disappeared a moment later when he closed his third eye.

“It seems that young woman didn’t even know the true function of this mirror. Not only can it form magical clones, it can also keep souls alive!” Another surprise was that the fluctuations of this mirror were very similar to the fluctuations of the mysterious mask. Although they weren’t exactly the same, they were very close.

After playing with it for a bit longer, he finally put it off to the side and resumed his cultivation. Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by.

One night when he was in the middle of a session of cultivation, all of the hair on his body suddenly stood on end. Opening his eyes, he noticed that the floor was rippling wildly, and a cold air was building up in the immortal's cave, as if it were being separated from the wider world around him.

At the same time, a red beam of light flew out from his bag of holding, and the mask appeared. Then, an ancient voice spoke, seemingly trembling with anxiety.

“Don’t--”

Bai Xiaochun gasped. Before the voice could say more than a single word, he produced a stack of paper talismans even larger than before, poured his Heaven-Dao Gold Core cultivation base power into them, and then threw them at the mask.

Smacking sounds rang out again, along with a roar of rage from within the mask. Then the mask clattered to the floor, and the ripples vanished.

Only then did imposter Nightcrypt’s soul float out, trembling.

“Finished!” he screamed. “We’re finished! They came again! What do we do? What are we supposed to do...?”

Bai Xiaochun was also terrified, and was convinced that if he’d acted any slower, he would have been placed in extreme danger.

“Damned evil spirit!!” Bai Xiaochun said, grinding his teeth. Then he looked over thoughtfully at imposter Nightcrypt’s soul. After a moment, a gleam of determination appeared in his eyes.

“Imposter Nightcrypt, I'm going to give you a new home, and you need to cooperate. Otherwise I’ll have to throw you into the Heavenspan River along with the mask to feed the fishes!”

Imposter Nightcrypt began trembling again, and it seemed like he wanted to say something. However, considering how bloodshot Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were, he didn’t even dare to open his mouth. He simply nodded, eyes shining with terror.

“I can mop the floor with that old rabbit,” Bai Xiaochun said with a growl, “so I refuse to believe that I can’t handle this wimpy little mask!” Snorting coldly, he pulled the mirror out and studied it a bit further. Then he performed an incantation gesture with both hands and pointed at the mask. Imposter Nightcrypt immediately began screaming, but then Bai Xiaochun glared at him and he quickly shut his mouth.

Bai Xiaochun slipped into complete focus as he unleashed his Heaven-Dao aura. His Gold Core seethed as his cultivation base erupted with power. As a result, his right hand turned completely golden. At the same time, his Heavenspan Dharma Eye opened, shining with intense violet light.

A terrifying shockwave blasted out from Bai Xiaochun. The violet light shining from his Heavenspan Dharma Eye was now tinged with gold as a stream of Heaven-Dao aura raced through it to land onto the mask. Almost instantly, Bai Xiaochun was able to see the areas where imposter Nightcrypt's soul was connected to the mask itself.

As soon as he saw the connections, he didn't hesitate for even a moment to chop his hand through the air, causing golden light to flicker brightly.

"Sever!" he growled. Rumbling sounds echoed out as his hand chopped into the connections. The connections trembled; although they were tough, they were now being assaulted by a Heaven-Dao aura, and could only hold firm for a short moment. Then they melted away!

Imposter Nightcrypt immediately let out a bloodcurdling scream as his soul shot out of the mask. Unexpectedly, as soon as he appeared in the open, some powerful force seemed to grab ahold of him as if to drag him away.

Imposter Nightcrypt screamed in terror, and Bai Xiaochun's jaw dropped. Thankfully, he already had the mirror ready to go. He quickly waved his sleeve, sending the mirror flying toward imposter Nightcrypt. In the blink of an eye, imposter Nightcrypt was sucked inside.

After everything was over, Bai Xiaochun was left gasping for breath. Although the events which had just occurred had seemed simple enough, they had actually been incredibly draining. A quick check confirmed that imposter Nightcrypt was now in the mirror. His soul seemed to have been weakened significantly, and he was unconscious, but not seriously injured. Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief.

Then, he turned his gaze to the mask. Snorting coldly, he pulled out more paper talismans, which he slapped onto the surface of the mask. In the end, even he wasn’t sure how many restrictive spells were sealing the mask, but there were layers upon layers of them. Finally, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit more at ease.

“Let’s see if you manage to misbehave again now that you’re in that state!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he put the mask away, and then continued with his cultivation.

Another half a month went by, during which time the mask didn’t act up again. Bai Xiaochun was starting to get a bit distracted, and even found himself pondering the issue of the River-Defying Pill.

Half a month later, he couldn’t sit still any longer.

“I'm already in the Gold Core stage,” he thought, “which is already pretty awesome. I need to strike a good balance between hard work and leisure. I can’t just sit around cultivating all the time.” The more he reasoned on the subject, the more it made sense to leave secluded meditation. With that, he opened his immortal's cave and stepped out into the open....

After taking in a deep breath of fresh air, he looked around at the River-Defying Sect, and deep in his heart, a sense of intense pride rose up. Clasping his hands behind his back, he began to stroll through the sect, appreciating the sights as he went.

“It’s been a long time since I saw Big Sis Song,” he thought. “Man, I miss her....” Whenever he thought about Song Junwan’s scorchingly sexy appearance, his heart surged with warm feelings. After blinking a few times, he decided that he should go find her and say some loving things.

As he walked along, the leaves in the trees rustled, and the birds sang. The spiritual energy in the River-Defying Sect was abundant, and the entire place seemed like a celestial paradise. He encountered many River-Defying Sect disciples, including young men and young women, all of whom gazed at him with looks of awe and reverence. Because of his status as junior patriarch, he had one of the highest positions in the entire sect.

Such looks of awe were especially noticeable on the faces of the disciples from the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions, who didn’t actually know very much about him. After all, his pure and fair appearance was quite pleasing to the eye. Plus, he enjoyed putting on a good show in public. The truth was that there were quite a few young female disciples who had taken a liking to him.

At the moment, he was passing through the Profound Stream Division, and ran into some disciples who were offering him greetings. Suddenly, a female disciple flew out from one of the mountains. She was quite a beauty, but was blushing furiously as she hurried over to Bai Xiaochun. To his shock, she bit her bottom lip and averted her gaze as she quickly handed him an envelope. Before he could say anything to her, she turned and hurried away.

Cultivators usually used jade slips to communicate with each other, making handwritten letters somewhat of a rarity. Bai Xiaochun gaped in shock for a moment, and then looked down at the envelope to discover that a heart was drawn on its surface....

“Is this...?” His eyes went wide, and he gasped. Then he began to shiver in excitement.

“A love letter!!!”

Chapter 349: A Love Letter

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Hey everyone, on Friday night at 8:00 p.m. EST, some fellow wuxia fans and I will be live streaming a full session of Wandering Heroes of Ogre Gate on YouTube. I'm starting to get nervous, as the GM has stated that in this session, and I quote, "characters are probably going to get maimed and killed." Crossing fingers that my character Meng Wai's Eighth Hex will get him through alive....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0349 awe-chapter-350

Chapter 350: You’re Lying!

All of the disciples in the area had stopped walking, and were now looking at Bai Xiaochun.

The envelope he was holding in his hand was most certainly a love letter!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have much experience getting love letters. As for the surrounding disciples, from the looks in their eyes, they all seemed to be wishing him well over the matter, and some of the male disciples even seemed a bit jealous.

Bai Xiaochun’s hands were trembling as he held the envelope, and his heart surged with emotions. Then, his eyes widened, filling with excitement.

“This is the first time in my entire life that I've been given a love letter! The only letters I got in the past were fighting notices!” He was so moved that tears began to seep out of the corners of his eyes. Taking a deep breath, he looked up at the young woman who’d given him the letter, who was fleeing as quickly as a frightened bunny.

“Although I don't even know your name,” he murmured, “I will definitely cherish this love letter, the first one that has ever been given to me in my entire life. Years from now, I’ll show it to my descendants so they can appreciate how charming their patriarch was in his youth!” Even as he sighed deeply in his heart, he realized that all of the surrounding River-Defying Sect disciples were looking at him, and he felt even more wonderful than before.

“I love the River-Defying Sect,” he thought, “and I love all of my fellow disciples....” It was with some difficulty that he collected himself and then oh-so-carefully placed the love letter into his bag of holding. With that, he stuck his chin up, flicked his sleeve, and prepared to make a little speech. But then...

Another female disciple of the Profound Stream Division bit her lip as she made a big decision. Without any more hesitation, she hurried over to Bai Xiaochun, head lowered and cheeks flushed as she pressed an envelope into his hand and then rushed off.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped at the sight of this second love letter resting there in his hands. Instead of a heart drawn onto the surface of the envelope, it showed two little clasped hands.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only shocked one. The other disciples who’d begun to gather to see what was happening all began to cry out in shock.

“There’s nothing strange about the junior patriarch getting a love letter. But I can’t believe he actually got two of them!”

“Aggghhhh! Everybody knows that I, Xu Xiaoshan, am one of the most handsome guys in the sect! How come nobody’s ever given me a love letter!?”

Even as the discussions broke out, Bai Xiaochun’s hands began to shake, and then he threw his head back and let loose a long cry of joy. His eyes were sparkling, and he was trembling visibly. At the same time, he was deeply and profoundly moved, down to the core of his being.

“This is only the second love letter I’ve ever received in my entire life! I never could have imagined that I would actually receive two love letters!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be more excited, and he was virtually panting as he looked at the retreating form of the young woman who’d just given him the letter. After carefully putting the love letter away, his eyes began to gleam with unprecedented determination.

“I shouldn’t be so selfish as to just worry about my own affairs. Ever since I became the junior patriarch, I’ve become the complete center of attention. All of the disciples are watching me, and that includes the female disciples!” Brimming with righteousness, and eyes glittering, he decided that now wasn’t the best time to go visit Song Junwan. Instead, he began to stroll through the mountains of the Profound Stream Division.

Before he’d gone very far, a third female disciple hurried over to him and shyly handed him an envelope.

Then there was a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth....

Over the course of the following hours, Bai Xiaochun continued to feel more and more moved. He had received dozens of love letters, all of them hand-written. He was now filled with deep and profound emotions.

In response, the disciples who had begun to follow him devolved into pandemonium.

“Heavens, another one!”

“How could this be happening? He’s gotten so many love letters. Th-th-this....”

“Are those girls all blind or something? He might be the junior patriarch, but I’m a Chosen too!!”

Bai Xiaochun was already in a bit of a daze. The first few love letters had left him moved, but now he had dozens of them, and almost couldn’t believe it. The sight of so many blushing female disciples caused waves of emotion to batter his heart.

“Am I... am I really so outstanding?” he thought giddily.

Eventually, he left the Profound Stream Division’s mountains and headed into the Pill Stream Division. Unexpectedly, the first thing that happened was that a female disciple ran over bashfully and handed him a love letter.

In fact, one of the particularly creative female disciples had concocted a medicinal pill which she had carved with countless lines of text....

It was evening before he returned to Mount River Defiance. Never could he have been prepared for the events of the day, and they left him feeling more blessed than ever.

“I guess I really am just too outstanding. Hahaha! I guess that’s what happens when you’re dashing like me. Well, like I’ve always said, only dashing people can get special treatment like this.” Bai Xiaochun’s giggling laughter filled his immortal's cave as he sat down cross-legged, pulled out all of the love letters he’d received, and spread them out in front of him. It was almost as if a whole group of attractive female disciples were all standing there, bashfully expressing their love to him....

After studying the drawings on the envelopes, he began to open and read each letter.

Bai Xiaochun was left trembling, and his face was even a bit flushed. That night, his heart burst with emotion over and over again. By the time he finished reading all of the letters, the light of dawn was rising up over the horizon.

After the sun was up, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, straightened up his garments, and then hurried out of his immortal's cave, a broad smile covering his face. However, even as he stepped into the open, he stopped, then went back inside to change into his official junior patriarch’s robe.

It was a very ornate Daoist robe, ocean-blue and seemingly filled with rippling waves. It had five golden dragons embroidered on it, all of them very vivid and lifelike. Every move he made in the robe caused mysterious light to ripple around him, making him look even more heroic and impressive than before.

This particular Daoist robe had been prepared for him specifically for the grand ceremony earlier, and he’d only worn it for those seven days. Back then, he’d believed it to be a bit too uncomfortable. But now, he quickly donned the robe, and then examined himself in the mirror. Pleased with how incredibly handsome he looked, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously, then finally opened the door and stepped outside.

As the day went on, he strolled through the four divisions of the sect, his chin stuck up as high as ever. Of course, his attire instantly attracted the attention of the River-Defying Sect disciples. During the night, the news about the love letters had spread, and was now the subject of much discussion. As of now, many people were looking over at Bai Xiaochun with odd expressions on their faces.

Of course, most of those odd expressions could be seen on the faces of the male disciples. On the other hand, the female disciples’ eyes shone brighter than ever when they saw Bai Xiaochun in his junior patriarch’s robe.

In one short hour, Bai Xiaochun was delighted to find that more girls were giving him love letters. They came from the Profound Stream Division, the Pill Stream Division, and even from the Blood Stream Division!

Yet again, the onlookers were completely taken aback, and the male disciples began to cry out in distress.

“Wh-what... what exactly is going on here!?”

“Heavens, the junior patriarch must have received over a hundred love letters between today and yesterday!!”

“Crazy! This is just completely crazy....”

Bai Xiaochun struggled to keep himself under control. Maintaining a soft and warm expression, he accepted the love letters, and then gave slight smiles to the female disciples who delivered them.

When he heard the cries of shock and the exclamations of envy, his heart burst with joy. That was how he spent the following days. During the night, he would spend his time reading the love letters. The matter quickly became the talk of the entire sect.

Everyone had different perspectives on what it meant for Bai Xiaochun to have garnered the affections of almost all the female disciples.

The gossip in the sect was almost all about Bai Xiaochun; everyone was talking about him. People like Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang were fairly jealous. As for Hou Xiaomei and

Song Junwan, when they heard the news, grim expressions appeared on their faces, and their anger began to burn.

“371 letters!! Hahaha! That’s only in the past couple of days! I can’t believe I actually got 371 love letters!!” Even as the sect was in an uproar, Bai Xiaochun was sitting in his immortal's cave, looking at his piled-up collection of love letters.

“Am I... am I really so outstanding?” Bai Xiaochun was nearly drunk with pride. Waving his right hand, he produced his little copper mirror and began to examine himself. Sighing emotionally, he realized that he needed someone to share this moment with.

“Copper mirror, what do you think? Who is the most outstanding person in the entire River-Defying Sect?!”

Of course, imposter Nightcrypt was inside the copper mirror. As soon as he heard Bai Xiaochun talking, he promptly continued to pretend to be unconscious. He had heard such words uttered by Bai Xiaochun numerous times in the past few days. Considering how terrified he was of Bai Xiaochun, he didn't dare to respond, fearful that if he bungled his response, he would be punished.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare. “You think I don’t know you’re awake, copper mirror!?” he barked. “Answer the question!!”

Terrified, imposter Nightcrypt opened his eyes and then fawningly said, “Master, you are definitely the most outstanding person in the entire River-Defying Sect!!”

“You're lying!!” Bai Xiaochun said angrily.

Imposter Nightcrypt was so frightened by Bai Xiaochun's response that he nearly passed out. That was especially true considering how bloodshot Bai Xiaochun's eyes were. He seemed to be brimming with anger. Imposter Nightcrypt immediately gave a piteous cry and then said, “I'm not lying! I... I hereby swear an oath! I swear I'm not lying at all. You're not just one of the most outstanding persons in all the lands of Heavenspan, you're the most, most, *most* outstanding!!”

“Really?” Bai Xiaochun asked suspiciously.

Imposter Nightcrypt knew what Bai Xiaochun was trying to do. Therefore, it was with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron that he quickly replied, “Absolutely. Positively! It's true from many points of view!!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. Looking very pleased, he put the mirror away, and then began to organize the love letters.

“Well, since you put it that way, I guess I understand. No wonder so many Junior Sisters love me. So that's how it is!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Hey everyone, some fellow wuxia fans and I will be live streaming a violent and deadly session of Wandering Heroes of Ogre Gate on YouTube, starting about an hour after this chapter is launched. The live stream and the video archive version should both be accessible through this link.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0350 awe-chapter-351

Chapter 351: Come Hang Out In My Immortal's Cave....

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had been placated, imposter Nightcrypt was both howling in frustration, and at the same time, sighing in relief. Even still, his terror regarding Bai Xiaochun only continued to grow.

What worried him most was that he had no idea what things might happen in the future....

Sighing in contentment, Bai Xiaochun put the copper mirror away, then organized the love letters and slowly put them away into his bag of holding. By this point, he was completely determined to show the love letters to his descendants so that they too could bask in his glory.

Feeling wonderful, Bai Xiaochun went on to cultivate the Frigid School Will Evolving Incantation, and then work on his big toe with the Undying Tendons. Glancing outside, he realized that it wasn’t dawn yet, and he got a bit irritated.

“What’s taking the sun so long to rise?!” he muttered. Having nothing else to do, he decided to ponder the issue of the River-Defying Pill again.

Time slipped by, and soon it was the fourth watch. Outside, everything was quiet. Suddenly Bai Xiaochun’s face sank as a cold sensation washed over him, and ripples began to spread out on the floor beneath him. In the blink of an eye, they had filled the entire immortal's cave.

Although no one on the outside could hear anything, inside the immortal's cave, some powerful force seemed to be trying to cut the immortal's cave away from the world around it. At the same time, the sealed mask in his bag of holding erupted with brilliant red light.

Apparently, the mysterious group behind the mask were paying a huge price to try to break the seals and try to communicate with Bai Xiaochun.

The mask flew out of his bag of holding, and the ancient voice began to speak urgently.

“Listen to what I--”

This time the voice managed to speak a bit more than the previous time, leaving Bai Xiaochun petrified. Screaming, he waved his right hand viciously through the air, sending a huge stack of paper talismans slamming into the mask. At the same time, he sent cultivation base power surging out, completely suppressing it.

Despite all of that, the mask was still struggling, and the ancient voice was still speaking. However, despite how viciously the voice struggled, it wasn’t possible to tell what it was saying.

“You're forcing me to do this!” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes bright red, his heart pulsing with fear. After using all of the paper talismans he had at his disposal, he raced out of his immortal's cave, heading at top speed toward the Heavenspan River at the bottom of Mount River Defiance.

Upon his arrival, he sent a fist strike in the direction of the river, causing a huge wave to roll out across its surface, then scooped up a bunch of the water into a large jade bucket.

He had originally intended to use that bucket to collect water for cultivation purposes, but things were different now. After racing back to his immortal's cave, he saw the mask, still struggling, a muffled voice echoing out from inside of it. This time, the words were more coherent.

“You... don’t... need... to refuse--”

“I refuse, dumbass!” Bai Xiaochun roared, shoving the mask down into the bucket of Heavenspan River water.

In that instant, the conversation ended, and everything went silent.

After looking cautiously at the bucket for a moment, Bai Xiaochun finally breathed a sigh of relief, then gave a slight harrumph.

“Did you really think Lord Bai wouldn't be able to come up with a solution? Now, let’s see how you act up *this* time!” Sighing proudly, Bai Xiaochun sealed the bucket of Heavenspan River water and then put it in his bag of holding.

If the mask had been submerged in Heavenspan River water with imposter Nightcrypt inside, then his soul would have been negatively affected. That was why Bai Xiaochun had chosen to move imposter Nightcrypt into the copper mirror.

Now that the incident with the mask was over, Bai Xiaochun felt as if a huge weight had been lifted off of his shoulders. Not only did he wish to avoid officially offending the mysterious organization, he also wanted to avoid dragging the River-Defying Sect into the matter.

After all, the entire situation was his doing, so unless he was left with absolutely no other options, he didn’t want to hand the mask over to the sect to handle. At this moment, he was almost weak with relief that the situation had been resolved.

In the following days, he continued to go out every morning to receive love letters.

Eventually, Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai came to Bai Xiaochun and expressed their desire to accompany him during his daily excursions to receive love letters. Bai Xiaochun was naturally unable to refuse them.

When they personally witnessed the female disciples rushing over to give Bai Xiaochun love letters, their eyes went wide with open envy....

“Ninth Fatty, I’ve lost a lot of weight, haven’t I? Why don’t any of the girls give me a love letter?!” Big Fatty Zhang was a bit depressed. The truth was that despite having lost so much weight, he still had a bit of a belly.

Xu Baocai was equally downtrodden. Of course, he had already recorded the details of the legendary love letter incident into his little notebook. At the moment, he felt like he had ants crawling around in his heart....

In response to Big Fatty Zhang’s question, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and cleared his throat.

“To be honest, it takes skill. There’s no need for you two to get anxious. Just be patient, and I’ll explain everything....” Even as Bai Xiaochun was preparing to dazzle them with his insights, he noticed that Xu Baocai’s eyes had gone wide, and that Big Fatty Zhang was staring at something behind him.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped as he realized that it wasn’t just Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai who were acting in such a way. He quickly looked over his shoulder and saw a young woman gliding up the path toward him.

She appeared to be about eighteen or nineteen years of age, with large black eyes and plump rosy-red lips. She was charming and graceful as she swayed toward him, refined and beautiful in a way that defied description.

Her garments were simple yet elegant, and covered her slender frame in just the right way. Her skin was as pure as a lotus, and she had long legs that looked like they had been carved by a master craftsman. Her face was so beautiful it was like a work of art. She was clearly a peerless beauty among women.

She was none other than Chen Manyao!

Xu Baocai gasped. “The number one hottest girl in all of the River-Defying Sect!”

Actually, he was the one who had proclaimed her to be the so-called number one hottest girl. Not only had he officially recorded it in his notebook, he had also spread word about the matter personally. He had even dreamed about her on more than one occasion. As soon as he laid eyes on her, he subconsciously puffed his chest out and stood straighter. In the past, he had often come off a bit awkward in front of pretty girls, but as of this moment, he actually seemed a bit heroic.

Big Fatty Zhang subconsciously sucked in his stomach, and his eyes began to sparkle.

Bai Xiaochun heard all of the gasps around him, and noted the reactions of Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang. “You must be exaggerating,” he said. With that, he proceeded to look Chen Manyao up and down. Although he had to admit that she was pretty, he didn’t think that she was so shockingly good-looking as to leave one dumbstruck.

“Hmph,” he thought. “She's definitely not received as many love letters as I have!” Sticking his chin up, he couldn’t help but muse to himself that this Chen Manyao was far too pretentious.

Just when he was about to stalk off impatiently, Chen Manyao suddenly spoke in a voice that sounded like a hundred spirit creatures singing in a choir.

“Elder Brother Bai, please wait a moment.”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. This was the first time Chen Manyao had ever greeted him. Turning his head, he watched her approach.

When his gaze fell upon her, she blushed slightly. Looking somewhat embarrassed, she bowed her head, and then pulled a pink handkerchief out of her sleeve, which she quickly placed into his hand.

Seemingly mustering her courage, she said, “If you have time, Elder Brother Bai, why don’t you come to my immortal's cave tonight at the third watch? We can hang out a bit....”

As the words left her mouth, the flush on her spectacularly beautiful face deepened. Giving him a dazzlingly bewitching look, she turned to leave. As she did, the turn of her head revealed that her fair neck was just as red as her face. Ducking her head, she hurried off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun was completely taken aback as he looked down at the handkerchief. Considering how many love letters he had received, he was no stranger to receiving them in the form of a handkerchief. However, this was the first time that any girl had been so bold as to actually set a time and place for a date with him....

Bai Xiaochun looked back at Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai and said, “What exactly does she mean by hang out in her immortal's cave...?”

Big Fatty Zhang simply stood there with his mouth hanging open.

Xu Baocai was as shocked as a wooden chicken, and although he was still standing there as heroically as possible, a look of incredulity could be seen on his face, and his mind was spinning. He had already been jealous of Bai Xiaochun receiving so many love letters, but just now, he had personally witnessed him getting one from Chen Manyao....

Of course, in recent days, Chen Manyao had become the dream girl of many male disciples in the sect. She was completely famous, and existed on a different level than any other female disciple. She was widely known as the number one hottest girl in the sect!

And yet here she had taken the initiative to invite Bai Xiaochun to hang out in her immortal's cave.

Xu Baocai forced himself to exhale slowly. Jealousy burning in his heart, he said, “How should I know what she means...?”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme**

archives: Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0351 awe-chapter-352

Chapter 352: Come On In, Elder Brother Bai

Bai Xiaochun looked over at Xu Baocai, and could see that he was clearly a bit irritated. Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then glanced at Big Fatty Zhang, whose eyes were glowing with admiration. Big Fatty Zhang even reached out and clasped Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder.

“Go on, Xiaochun. Afterward, you’ll truly have grown up....”

Coughing dryly, Bai Xiaochun tossed the handkerchief into his bag of holding, then swished his sleeve and grandly announced, “You think I’ll go just because she wants me to? Hell no!”

That only seemed to make all the surrounding onlookers admire him even more. However, what no one noticed was that, even as he threw the handkerchief into his bag of holding, a profound light flickered deep in his eyes.

Xu Baocai was in a bad mood for the rest of the day. Sometime in the afternoon, after Bai Xiaochun returned to his immortal's cave, Xu Baocai finally started to spread the news about Chen Manyao’s amorous date proposal to Bai Xiaochun.

The gossip spread even faster than before, like a tempest that swept through all four divisions. The matter with the love letters was like a mere ticking timebomb, whereas Chen Manyao was the spark that caused it to explode.

The four divisions were thrown into a complete uproar. Cries of shock and astonishment filled the air everywhere.

“What!?!? I can’t believe Chen Manyao is wooing Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Th-this... this is just crazy! Who cares if all those other girls gave him love letters. Why did my beloved Junior Sister Chen have to go and do the same thing!?”

“This can’t be true!”

“What!? They’re going to ‘hang out’ in her immortal's cave tonight during the third watch? What exactly are they planning to do together?!?!”

Word spread through the entire River-Defying Sect, until even the sect leader and the Core Formation elders heard. There were also a few patriarchs who weren’t in secluded meditation at the moment who also caught wind of the matter.

However, whether it was the old news about the love letters, or this new development, none of them took the matter too seriously. In fact, some of them even joked about it a bit. As for Li Qinghou, he had a serious discussion with Xu Meixiang about what type of person Chen Manyao was....

Two of the patriarchs who happened to be out of their secluded meditation were Nascent Soul patriarchs from the Pill Stream Division, and they were actually very pleased with this development.

The Profound Stream Division Nascent Soul experts were also fairly excited. They knew how important Bai Xiaochun was to the sect; if one of the disciples from their division became Bai Xiaochun’s Daoist partner, it would be of incredible benefit to them.

However, the patriarchs of the Spirit Stream Division, as well as Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong, all felt headaches coming on. That was especially true of Zheng Yuandong, who knew Bai Xiaochun better than most. This new development, coupled with the way Bai Xiaochun had been strolling around the sect every day recently, accepting love letters, caused him to let out a long sigh.

“When is Xiaochun going to grow up a little bit more?” he thought. “He’s already reached Gold Core! Maybe by the time he reaches Nascent Soul he’ll be a bit better?” In the end, he simply shook his head. By this point, he had actually given up on the hope that Bai Xiaochun's personality would change much.

Considering the entire sect was talking about the matter, it didn’t take long before Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei heard about what was happening. Both of them immediately started to get anxious. Although they had been angered by the love letter situation, they hadn’t viewed it as a serious threat. This was different. This latest deadly intrusion by Chen Manyao left both young women filled with sensations of intense crisis.

“Slut!!”

“Completely shameless!!”

Both of them sat in their Immortal's caves, stewing in rage. Song Junwan had an explosive temper, and Hou Xiaomei was as fiery as a hot pepper sometimes. Both of them seemed on the verge of erupting.

For the first time ever, they dropped their differences and met together to discuss the situation. After hashing things out, they made an agreement; that very day when evening fell, they would strike!

Bai Xiaochun was currently sitting in his immortal's cave, looking at Chen Manyao’s handkerchief, a strange light flickering in his eyes as he thought about the situation. Suddenly, his face fell as he detected a killing aura just outside of his immortal's cave. Looking over his shoulder, he realized that Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei were standing outside.

Shivering with fear, he quickly put the handkerchief away, then opened the door, a warm smile on his face.

“Big Sis Song, Xiaomei, what are you two doing here? The two of you have completely occupied my thoughts lately! I’ve missed you so much....”

Song Junwan’s eyes went wide, and she snorted coldly. Completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun, she stalked into the immortal's cave and inspected every inch of it. Then she gave Bai Xiaochun another glare before leaving.

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped in surprise, Hou Xiaomei stepped forward and grabbed him by the arm.

“I've missed you too, Big Bro Xiaochun. I'm going to stay here with you tonight!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, stunned.

“What’s wrong, Big Bro Xiaochun?” she said, tears welling up in her eyes as she looked up at him. “You don’t want to spend time with me?”

Bai Xiaochun shook his head. Slapping his chest, he said, “Of course I want to spend time with you. How about--”

Before he could finish speaking, Hou Xiaomei smiled and dragged him into the immortal's cave. Once inside, she sat down and started talking, and didn’t stop for the entire night. Bai Xiaochun could only watch as time passed by. When the third watch came, he let out a long sigh.

Hou Xiaomei’s eyes narrowed. “What’s wrong, Big Bro Xiaochun? Are you thinking about your date with Elder Sister Chen Manyao that I heard about?”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled. Making himself the picture of righteousness, he said, “Who cares if she asked me on a date!? I’m not going to go just because she wants me to. I'm Bai Xiaochun, the junior patriarch of the sect. No way would I go!”

The following morning at dawn, Hou Xiaomei left, and Bai Xiaochun finally breathed a sigh of relief. But then, Song Junwan arrived. And that was how the next day and night went.

For the following month, Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei took turns standing guard over Bai Xiaochun, giving him no chance to accept any love letters and no chance to go on any dates....

Thankfully for Bai Xiaochun, the sect had just been established, and there were many tasks at hand. Eventually, both Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan were called away on various assignments. At long last, he was able to breathe a sigh of relief.

However, during the month which had passed, the matter of the love letter, as well as the situation with Chen Manyao, had become a thing of the past. Furthermore, the actions of Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei had put an end to the aspirations of the other female disciples.

By the time Bai Xiaochun was finally free to walk around in the sect, he was very disappointed to discover that not a single person approached to hand him a love letter.

“I should have known this would happen....” he thought, crestfallen. Not willing to accept the situation, he strolled around the entire sect a few times over the following days, until he was completely convinced that there were no love letters to be had.

Sighing dejectedly, he returned to his immortal's cave where he slumped in a daze. Finally, late in the night, he looked out at the darkness and his eyes narrowed.

“As the junior patriarch of the sect, it wouldn't be very appropriate to simply ignore Chen Manyao’s request for a date. I think I should go over and see exactly what she has planned!” Eyes flickering, he decided that he really had to make a decision based on the overall situation, especially considering his status in the sect. Clearing his throat, he cautiously made his way through the sect, being careful to avoid notice. Soon, he found himself outside of Chen Manyao’s immortal's cave.

The mountains of the Pill Stream Division were quiet this night. Bai Xiaochun scouted the immediate vicinity to make sure there was nobody lying in wait, and then, he inspected the area surrounding the cave. He even went so far as to use his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, which allowed him to see the form of a young woman sitting in meditation inside the cave.

Seeing that there didn’t appear to be any traps, Bai Xiaochun finally felt a bit more at ease.

It was a very quiet and peaceful location. A narrow path led up to the immortal's cave, next to which was a small cistern filled with lotuses. Milky moonlight cascaded down onto the violet lotuses, which cast a lovely fragrance out into the night.

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back, looked up at the moon, and then cleared his throat.

“Junior Sister Chen, are you asleep? It’s me, the junior patriarch. I've come for our date.”

Almost instantly, a shocked voice responded from within the immortal's cave.

“Is that you, Elder Brother Bai?” Even as Chen Manyao’s soft voice could be heard, the door to the immortal's cave swung open, and she appeared in the open. She was wearing a tight-fitting blouse that completely revealed her curvaceous figure, and looked especially attractive because of the moonlight.

“Elder Brother Bai, please come in,” she said, flashing a smile that made flowers look dull. She turned and gestured for him to enter.

Bai Xiaochun looked her up and down, but didn’t take a step forward. An enigmatic smile appeared on his face, as well as something fierce and a bit domineering!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme**

archives: Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0352 awe-chapter-353

Chapter 353: The So-Called Wildlands!

The flush on Chen Manyao's face deepened. At the moment, she almost felt like she was standing there naked in front of Bai Xiaochun. Stepping back, she angrily said, "Elder Brother Bai...."

Bai Xiaochun shook his head, his eyes shining intimidatingly. "Very amusing. Unfortunately, your acting skills aren't up to par, Chen Manyao. You gave me a handkerchief for absolutely no reason! You asked me to come at the third watch, without any explanation!

"I sat around for an entire month, and you never sent me a message.... Chen Manyao, do you really think that the junior patriarch of the sect has the intelligence of a three-year-old child? Or did you take me for one of those idiots who nearly passes out as soon as he sees a pretty woman?! Did you secretly arrange for that whole love letter situation, all to give yourself a chance to launch a sneak attack during the chaos?!"

Every word Bai Xiaochun spoke was as cold as ice, and in the end, he unleashed the power of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core cultivation base, causing intense pressure to weigh down. A powerful wind even swept through the area, causing Chen Manyao's face to fall, and her knees to tremble.

After all, she was only in the Foundation Establishment stage!

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and stuck his chin up. He looked more somber than ever, with a powerfully murderous aura and a gaze as sharp as a blade. “I didn’t really need to come here, but as the junior patriarch, how could I not notice all the clues? Naturally, I had no other choice than to come and see what your true purpose in all of this is!”

Chen Manyao started backing up. “Elder Brother Bai, I...”

Before she could continue, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed with cold light, and he waved his hand, sending a dagger-shaped horn flying out to hover above him, which instantly began to radiate the pressure of a precious treasure. In combination with the Heaven-Dao Gold Core cultivation base fluctuations, it caused an intensely murderous air to begin to crush down onto Chen Manyao.

That dagger-shaped horn was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s Renegade Dragon Horn!

“Don’t move even a muscle,” he said casually. “You have three chances to explain yourself properly, and what you just said counts as one of those chances. Don’t forget that, as the junior patriarch, I have the authority to execute any disciple I wish.”

Although he spoke the words as if he were having an ordinary conversation, he had actually pushed the big toe of his left foot down into the ground, and had prepared it to unleash explosive force. If anything happened, he would instantly leave the area.

His Landscape of Nine Provinces was also ready to be used at a moment's notice.

Chen Manyao stopped moving, and gave Bai Xiaochun a deep look. She didn't fail to notice that Bai Xiaochun had stopped right on the edge of the spell formation she'd set up. Clearly, he had come well-prepared.

For the first time, fear of Bai Xiaochun was beginning to take hold in her heart. Finally, she chuckled, and dropped the bashful act she had put on from before. Now, a mysterious light gleamed in her eyes.

Smiling, she said, "No wonder those old fogies care so much about you.... Bai Xiaochun, I bear you no ill will. Of that I can swear an oath. The reason I wanted you to come here was so that you could meet a certain person!"

"You still have one chance left!" Bai Xiaochun said coolly. The Renegade Dragon Horn hovering above him began to emit a cold light.

Chen Manyao's face twitched. After a moment of silence, she gritted her teeth and said, "Nightcrypt. Mask. Bai Xiaochun. Mysterious group. Spy. Relic of eternal indestructibility!"

A grim expression overtook Bai Xiaochun's face, and his eyes widened. Mind reeling, he didn't hesitate for even a moment to send the Renegade Dragon Horn flying forward toward Chen Manyao. At the same time, he pushed down with his big toe, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as he shot backward. Simultaneously, he produced the Landscape of Nine Provinces.

Currently, his heart was pounding. Although he had noticed that there was something suspicious about Chen Manyao, never could he have imagined that she actually worked for that same mysterious group he'd been in contact with for so long!

In the exact same moment that he took action, a black vortex appeared on Chen Manyao’s forehead, from within which shot streams of black energy that wrapped up the Renegade Dragon Horn. Despite the fact that the horn was backed by Bai Xiaochun’s Gold Core power, it instantly lurched to a stop.

At the same time, an ancient voice echoed out from within the black strands.

“Fellow Daoist, please just trust me this once. I had no choice but to use this method to make contact. I even revealed the secret identity of my apprentice Yao'er. I'm willing to risk her life to get the chance to talk with you. Please, can’t you just trust me!?!?

“You can leave at any time you wish. Just let me say a few things. If you don’t like what you hear, I won’t try to stop you from leaving!!” Even as the words echoed out, the black strands formed together into the vague image of an old man. Within that old man's eyes could be seen complex emotions, profound secrets, and even more surprising, respect and politeness toward Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun forced his breathing under control. By this point, he was high up in the air. Furthermore, the fluctuations rolling out from the area had been noticed by others in the River-Defying Sect, and some of the nearby cultivators on patrol flew over, including a late Core Formation elder.

“Junior Patriarch, what’s wrong?”

“What happened?!” The patrolling cultivators looked around suspiciously, and yet strangely, didn't seem to notice the old man formed from black strands of energy. The only thing they could see was Bai Xiaochun, hovering there in midair, cultivation base power rippling out from him.

Everything down below was invisible to them.

The old man quickly said, “The only way for anyone to see or even detect me would be if a Deva Realm expert were in the River-Defying Sect. However, you are not within the cloaked area, so they can see you!”

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was the only one who heard him speaking.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was grim as he first looked over at the suspicious cultivators who'd flown over, then looked back down at the image of the old man.

Seeing Bai Xiaochun’s reticence, the old man hurriedly continued, “The lands of Heavenspan are vast. The Heavenspan Sea is in the middle, and four great rivers spread out in the four directions from that sea. Those are the eastern, western, southern and northern cultivation worlds!”

“Each of the four major rivers splits up into four smaller rivers, which in turn become four streams. Beyond the streams are countless deltas that stretch further than the imagination can process. Although it seems like the spiritual energy of the Heavenspan Rivers is infinite, the truth is that when compared with the lands of Heavenspan as a whole, that spiritual energy is negligible. In fact, it's not even enough to fill half of the realm!

“The rest of the lands of Heavenspan are places that the spiritual energy of the Heavenspan Rivers don’t touch, places that have come to be known as the Wildlands!” As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the man’s explanation, his mind began to spin.

In the past, he had wondered about this very subject. The only explanation he had ever been given was that the places without the aura of the Heavenspan River were restricted areas where cultivators couldn’t survive!

The words being spoken crashed like thunder in his mind. Based on what he could tell, it didn't seem like this old man was lying.

Tone serious, the old man continued, “By way of illustration, the areas with the spiritual energy of the Heavenspan River, the four major rivers and the riversource sects, are like the countries that exist in the mortal world. As for the people who live in the Wildlands, we are like defectors or even rebels!

“I am from the Wildlands, and the Blood Stream Sect’s Blood Ancestor also came from the Wildlands!

“It is only because of some unique matters pertaining to Karma that the Blood Ancestor’s corpse stayed in the Heavenspan River!”

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. He had long wondered why the mysterious organization was so interested in the relic of eternal indestructibility that was located on the Blood Ancestor. Based on the old man’s explanation, it now started to make more sense.

“We don't really need the relic of eternal indestructibility. If you want it, then go ahead and keep it. The reason for my change in attitude, and the reason I’m telling these things to you, is that because of the legacy of the Blood Ancestor, you have become the second generation Blood Ancestor!

“In the final analysis, you have sown Karma with us in the Wildlands!” The old man was already starting to calm down. As long as Bai Xiaochun didn’t immediately leave, he would have his chance to explain things, and maybe even discuss matters.

What he feared the most was that Bai Xiaochun would do the same thing he'd done before, and refuse to even listen to him.

“I tried to communicate with you via the mask, but you were too cautious. Therefore, I took a great risk, and expended significant resources, to have Yao’er enact the plan to get you over here!

“I represent an alliance of cities within the Wildlands, and we hope to keep in contact with you long-term. An arrangement like that would benefit you because we have agents in virtually all of the sects in all the four major rivers. We can provide you with help in many ways, and we can also keep you informed about anything important happening in the world!

“However, you would also need to do things for us....” With that, the old man clasped hands and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken, and was almost on the verge of leaving. However, he couldn’t find fault with anything the old man had said, and in fact, many of his own questions had been answered. It was also true that revealing Chen Manyao’s secret identity was in fact a show of good faith.

That was especially true considering that the old man had even admitted to setting up the situation with the love letters. It seemed that the old man was willing to explain the answer to any question he had.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun turned his attention to the patrolling cultivators, who, having checked the area and found nothing amiss, were looking at him hesitantly.

“You may take your leave,” he said, “all of you. I just had a bad feeling a few moments ago. Sorry for the trouble.” With that, he clasped hands and bowed to them.

The Gold Core elder looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, but didn’t ask any further questions. Nodding, he led his men off.

Soon, everything was quiet again.

“So,” Bai Xiaochun suddenly said, “you can answer any question that I have?”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0353 awe-chapter-354

Chapter 354: Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had sent away the patrolling cultivators, the old man finally breathed a deep sigh of relief. He knew that he had struck a chord, and now the two of them could truly interact.

“I can’t guarantee that I’ll be able to tell you *anything*. But there are very few things the Wildlands don't know about. We have agents all over the lands of Heavenspan. And by that, I mean the Lower Reaches, the Middle Reaches, and even at the sources of the rivers! We have people everywhere!” After hearing this first question of Bai Xiaochun’s, the old man had been a bit hesitant. However, after a moment of careful thought, he had decided that the best thing would be to tell the truth. There was even a certain pride to his tone. After all, he was very confident in his ability to generate intelligence reports.

Bai Xiaochun was silent for a moment, and then he said, “Fine. I want information about a person!”

“What level of cultivation base?” the old man replied immediately.

Bai Xiaochun thought about it, then said, “Should be Foundation Establishment!”

“Foundation Establishment cultivation base? Simple. Since this is our first time working together, how about I provide the information for free? No cost whatsoever. Just tell me the person’s surname and given name, and what specifically you want to know.” The old man was immediately relieved. Although there were a lot of Foundation Establishment cultivators in the lands of Heavenspan, it was a simple matter for the Wildlands to get information about them. Furthermore, there was virtually no risk involved.

Bai Xiaochun had been a bit skeptical at first, but after seeing how confident the old man was, hope started to rise up in his heart.

“Her name is Du Lingfei. At least, she... she started out at the Spirit Stream Sect with that name. Then I ran into her again in the Blood Stream Sect’s trial by fire for the blood master position. I want to know who she really is!!”

“Find out her true identity? Even if those are the only things you know about her, that’s enough for us to uncover her identity. Please wait a moment!” Smiling confidently, the old man faded away, having returned to the Wildlands to carry out the search.

Chen Manyao was sitting off to the side cross-legged, her eyes closed. Apparently, the old man had sent her into a trance and sealed her, in order to prevent damage to her soul while he used her as a medium.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and waited silently. Time passed. An hour flew by. The old man had not returned, and Bai Xiaochun was starting to get nervous.

More time went by, enough for half an incense stick to burn. Suddenly, a tremor passed through Chen Manyao, and black strands flew out of her forehead again, which then took shape into the image of the old man.

However, this time, he seemed a bit ashen-faced. A strange light could be seen in his eyes as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, and even confusion.

“Well?” Bai Xiaochun quickly asked. “What information do you have?!”

The old man hesitated, then said, “Why don’t you ask about someone else?”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, both shocked and angry. “Didn’t you say it would be a simple task? It’s just information about a person. What happened? You couldn’t find her?”

The old man smiled wryly. Along with the confusion in his eyes was a gleam of terror. After a moment passed, he shook his head. “We really couldn’t find any information.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened. After looking at the old man for a moment, he suddenly pulled his bag of holding out and threw it onto the ground.

“The little turtle is in there. I can’t find him, but I know he’s there, and you guys should be able to find him. Take the bag and tell me who Du Lingfei is!”

The man looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun, then smiled and decided not to hold anything back. “Really, why don’t you ask about someone else? I can’t get any information about this Du Lingfei. Just moments ago, I sent people to investigate, and the entire city started shaking. Signs and portents were seen in heaven and earth! Most terrifying of all was that in the briefest of moments, a large portion of my agents out in the world suddenly died!

“Does it sound to you like I can keep investigating? Whoever this person is, she’s either profoundly mysterious or backed by a power too incredible to imagine. I would suggest you refrain from provoking her, and it would probably be best if you never ran into her again.”

Everything he had just said was the truth. The investigation he had just ordered had resulted in a cataclysmic response. He almost couldn’t believe that a casual question on the part of Bai Xiaochun could lead to such drastic upheavals. It also left him even more amazed and intrigued by Bai Xiaochun’s own secrets.

Bai Xiaochun stood there silently for a moment, his mind and heart battered by huge waves of shock. He could tell that the man hadn’t been lying to him. After a moment passed, he said, “You didn’t turn up even the slightest clue?”

Seeing how determined Bai Xiaochun was, the old man hesitated. Considering that he wanted to maintain a long-term relationship with him, he finally gritted his teeth and said, “There is only one clue. Most of my agents who were just killed met their deaths in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! As for what that indicates, you can judge for yourself!”

With that, the old man clasped hands and bowed.

“If you want to contact me, you can do so at any time via the mask. If you’d rather not use the mask, then you can make use of Yao’er. She might be my agent, but she bears no ill will toward the River-Defying Sect. I hope you can show her some kindness....” With that, the man broke up into countless black strands that flew back into Chen Manyao’s forehead.

Chen Manyao shivered, then opened her eyes. When she saw Bai Xiaochun standing there, it seemed like she wanted to say something. However, after a moment, she simply gave a curtseying bow, then went back inside her immortal's cave.

Bai Xiaochun hovered in midair, looking up at the starry sky and the moon. Many thoughts ran through his head.

“The fact that most of the casualties among his agents were in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect indicates that I should be able to find more clues about Du Lingfei there.

“Just who exactly are you, Du Lingfei…?

“Trying to track you down like this is really exhausting....” He shook his head slowly. He had long since come to believe that the matter of Du Lingfei was a thing of the past. However, there had always been questions in his heart that he couldn’t quite forget about.

With that, he turned and headed back to Mount River Defiance. However, instead of going to his immortal's cave, he paid a visit to Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong.

By now, Bai Xiaochun knew that he couldn’t keep so many secrets from the sect. Therefore, he explained everything about Chen Manyao, the Wildlands, and the mask.

He left at dawn, having revealed everything to his Elder Brother sect leader. As for what would happen next, he didn’t even want to think about it. However the sect chose to deal with the situation, he would support the decision.

Of course, Zheng Yuandong couldn’t make a decision about something so weighty by himself, so he consulted with the patriarchs of the four divisions. The patriarchs summoned Chen Manyao, and in the end, nothing much happened. Everything soon went back to normal.

Chen Manyao remained in the River-Defying Sect, the celestial goddess to many of the male disciples. She was still a Chosen, and only Bai Xiaochun and the patriarchs, as well as Zheng Yuandong, knew where she truly came from. Apparently, some sort of agreement had been reached....

With that matter having been handled, Bai Xiaochun returned his focus to cultivation. Whether it was the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation or the Undying Tendons, he made progress with all of them. He was in the Middle Reaches now, in one of the four great sects. The spiritual power of heaven and earth was strong here, much stronger than in the Lower Reaches. Therefore, his speed of progress improved.

Of course, he wasn’t the only one to benefit. Zhou Xinqi and the other Chosen like her were all in secluded meditation, gradually making their way toward the great circle of Foundation Establishment.

After that came Core Formation, although none of them would dare to do what Bai Xiaochun had done, and reach for Core Formation in the heat of the moment. Most of them would take at least half a sixty-year-cycle to prepare before attempting the critical breakthrough.

As was to be expected, many of them were competing to see who could reach Core Formation first. Furthermore, not all of them got along, and thus were waiting until Core Formation to try to settle their differences.

Only people like Song Junwan, who had long since reached the great circle, could attempt to step into Core Formation with only a few years of preparation.

As for people like Big Fatty Zhang, Xu Baocai, Hou Xiaomei, Third Fatty Hei, and others, the improved spiritual energy in the Middle Reaches also helped them in their cultivation. That was especially true of Big Fatty Zhang, who made the most startling progress of all. He was already in mid Foundation Establishment.

Everyone in the River-Defying Sect was making progress. In fact, the first wave of Qi Condensation cultivators had already been sent to locations set aside by the River-Defying Sect for the Earthstring Foundation Establishment trials by fire.

Middle Reaches sects had trials by fire that were beyond compare with those in the Lower Reaches.

As the sect seethed with activity, Bruiser finally returned. He appeared out of the blue, and as soon as he appeared at the door, Bai Xiaochun rushed out of the immortal's cave to meet him.

Bruiser was covered with wounds and scars, many of which seemed to run very deep.

However, he seemed to be in a very good mood, and his eyes were shining brightly. Unexpectedly, the aura of an imminent breakthrough was strong upon him!

Bruiser had gone missing almost as soon as the construction work on the new sect headquarters had begun. Bai Xiaochun had been able to sense that he was alive, and had assumed that he’d gone off to look for some female beasts to spend time with. It was only now that he realized his assumption had been incorrect.

As Bai Xiaochun’s eyes met Bruiser's, he realized that the reason Bruiser had gone missing was that he’d left for deadly training.

Bruiser had come to view himself as a bit useless; on numerous occasions in which Bai Xiaochun had faced deadly crises, he had been completely unable to help!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0354 awe-chapter-355

Chapter 355: Bruiser’s Tribulation!

Bai Xiaochun felt a lump forming in his throat.

“Don’t do this kind of thing again, okay!” he said loudly. “I'm your father! Are kids supposed to protect their dad? No! I'm supposed to protect you! Wait until I'm old and feeble, then you can protect me!

“Also, don’t just disappear next time. If you want to go do something, say something to me first!”

Eyes glittering, Bruiser nudged Bai Xiaochun with his head, then dropped down, rolled over onto his back, and stuck his tongue out. He looked very charming, causing the warm feelings inside of Bai Xiaochun to grow even stronger.

Reaching out, he sent some of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core aura into Bruiser, straightening out his qi passageways. Bruiser hummed contentedly, and even reached his head up and licked Bai Xiaochun’s face.

After healing Bruiser’s internal injuries, Bai Xiaochun looked at the wounds on his body, then produced a large quantity of medicinal pills for him to consume.

Each and every one of those pills could be sold for quite a few spirit stones, but when it came to Bruiser, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t stingy at all. The main thing he was worried about was making sure that Bruiser’s injuries didn’t worsen.

After consuming the medicinal pills, Bruiser bared his teeth in a fond smile. As of this moment, Bruiser and Bai Xiaochun looked very much like family.

Bai Xiaochun went on to scold Bruiser a bit more, and Bruiser wagged his tail and continued to rub up against Bai Xiaochun. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have the heart to reprimand him anymore.

After they went back into the immortal's cave, Bruiser’s wounds continued to fade away, and the breakthrough aura on him grew even stronger.

Bai Xiaochun could tell that Bruiser was definitely on the verge of breaking through to Core Formation. Core Formation was of great significance to battle beasts. Although battle beasts’ Tribulations weren’t like cultivators’, they were still dangerous. Furthermore, Bruiser was a beast king, so his Tribulation would be different from that of ordinary battle beasts.

Worried, Bai Xiaochun went to seek the counsel of Zheng Yuandong. After all, Bruiser was very important to the River-Defying Sect as a whole, and especially the Spirit Stream Division. Zheng Yuandong immediately issued a Dharmic decree, identifying the peak of Mount River Defiance as the location where Bruiser would attempt to step into Core Formation.

A large number of spell formations were set up, and work went underway to gather the spiritual energy of heaven and earth in that location. In addition, a large number of Core Formation cultivators were called upon to stand as Dharma protectors.

Even Patriarch Li Zimo, at Bai Xiaochun’s request, ended his session of secluded meditation to also stand as Dharma protector.

Bai Xiaochun paid visits to the other three divisions as well, and as a result, they all offered assistance. The Blood Stream Division provided several precious treasures designed for transcending tribulation, and the Pill Stream Division assigned over a thousand disciples to concoct pills.

As for the Profound Stream Division, they were the ones tasked with creating special spell formations on the mountain peak.

The power of all four divisions had been called on for this special occasion of Core Formation. It was enough to make any ordinary disciple envious. Of course, some of that had to do with Bruiser being a beast king, but more of it was because of Bai Xiaochun's status.

Seven days later, when Bruiser was completely healed, and the aura of an imminent breakthrough was at its peak, rumbling sounds echoed out from the summit of Mount River Defiance.

Heaven and earth shook, and the clouds converged, along with intense, thunderous rumblings. Bruiser took his place on the altar at the mountain's summit, throwing his head back and roaring into the heavens, a roar that seemed capable of piercing the clouds.

The cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were shaken, and quite a few people flew up to see what was happening.

"Bruiser's reaching Core Formation!!"

"Beast king Core Formation is so impressive!"

"Beast kings are rare enough, and Bruiser is like a beast king among beast kings! Of course this is going to be extraordinary!"

As the discussions raged, the battle beasts in the Spirit Stream Division began to howl in support of Bruiser. The Heavenhorn ink dragon appeared, looking up into the sky, and then over at Bruiser, nervousness and anticipation gleaming in its eyes.

Bai Xiaochun stood next to Bruiser, eyes sparkling. Of course, he was standing as Bruiser's primary Dharma protector.

Suddenly, the clouds converged together, and a black lightning bolt appeared, which immediately began to descend toward the altar on Mount River Defiance.

Roaring, Bruiser launched into the air, refusing to draw help from the spell formations or the surrounding Core Formation Dharma protectors.

As he closed in, he viciously head-butted the lightning bolt.

BOOM!

Heaven and earth trembled as the lightning bolt shattered into countless sparks which rained down in all directions. Bruiser howled in delight, turning to look proudly at Bai Xiaochun before looking back up into the sky.

In response to Bruiser’s smug behavior, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. After all, it almost seemed like something he would do. Inside, his anxiety was mounting.

“Stay focused!” he called out. “If things get out of hand, get back down here. Don’t worry, it won’t be a loss of face....”

In almost the exact same instant that the words left his mouth, a second lightning bolt began to fall. Even as Bruiser bashed into it, destroying it, a third lightning bolt appeared, then a fourth and a fifth.

Each of the lightning bolts was larger than the one before it, and they descended toward Bruiser with incredible speed. Trembling, Bruiser roared and continued to face them head-on.

The sixth lightning bolt sent Bruiser tumbling back down to the ground, where he landed inside the spell formation. Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to hurry forward to help, Bruiser gobbled up some of the medicinal pills that had been placed nearby. Eyes blazing red, he threw his head back and let out an enraged roar, then shot back up into the air, rocketing up with incredible speed, a beam of light surrounded by shocking violet flames.

Then, astonishingly, he actually slammed into the Tribulation clouds up above!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath; Bruiser seemed even crazier than he himself.

Even Patriarch Li Zimo was surprised to see what was happening, and the Core Formation cultivators who flanked him in midair were also shocked by Bruiser's valiance.

Disciples from the other four divisions who were observing the event were crying out in shock.

"This... this is incredible!!"

"Heavens! Is Bruiser going to destroy the Tribulation clouds?!"

Even as their voices rose up, the clouds seethed as a seventh, eighth, and ninth lightning bolt began to build up power. Then, gasps rang out as Bruiser yet again slammed into the cloud layer.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The clouds collapsed, and the three bolts of Tribulation Lightning exploded, sending out a powerful shockwave that left all the onlookers astonished.

Amidst the collapsing clouds, Bruiser rapidly grew in size until he was 600 meters long, a sea of violet flames surrounding his feet as he threw his head back and let loose a long cry.

As his cry echoed out, he continued to grow larger, his body radiating intense energy of heaven and earth. It was as if he were experiencing a baptism of sorts, and as a result, an aura spread out from him the likes of which was the subject of ultimate respect. It was the aura of a beast king!

It grew stronger and more powerful until all hearts trembled in response. As for Bai Xiaochun, his excitement was continuing to mount.

As the beast king aura raged, and the energy of heaven and earth converged, a violet-colored Core could be seen forming above Bruiser.

It radiated scintillating light, sending out a medicinal aura that left everyone in the area feeling refreshed and energized.

Bai Xiaochun was getting even more nervous. Seven days earlier, he had consulted the ancient records, as well as Patriarch Li Zimo, and had come to find that battle beast Core Formation usually didn’t involve Tribulation Lightning. That only came with beast king Tribulation.

After the Tribulation Lightning was when heaven and earth formed the Core, which Bruiser would then consume. That was actually the most dangerous part of the process.

Because the beast king aura formed a natural core of heaven and earth, it could be used by other cultivators or beasts for numerous purposes. Whether it was for cultivators to concoct spirit medicines, or for other beasts for use as a second core, it was something intrinsically attractive to many. In fact, if another beast managed to wrest it away, they could refine their own blood and gain a chance to rise up to the level of a beast king!

Even as Bai Xiaochun looked on nervously, and the Violet Core was moments away from condensing completely, a cry echoed out that could shake heaven and earth!

It seemed capable of piercing metal, of stabbing directly into the heart and mind.

Off in the distance, a flying snake could be seen, fully 3,000 meters long. It shot through the air toward Bruiser's Violet Core, eyes radiating sinister light. Shockingly, this snake had an aura similar to Bruiser's!

This flying snake was another beast king!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

This is a slightly short chapter at about 1,600 words.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0355 awe-chapter-356

Chapter 356: Beast King Violet Core!

The flying snake was roughly 3,000 meters long and 30 meters thick. It almost looked like a flood dragon as opposed to a serpent, especially considering that it had two long, curved horns, and three-clawed talons!

Its scales reflected dazzling sunlight, and if one examined it closely, they would detect a holy air to it.

The beast king aura which roiled out from it made it seem like the monarch of all beasts, and caused all of the River-Defying Sect's battle beasts to tremble. The pressure weighing down on their blood made it such that none of them dared to even think about fighting back against the huge snake.

The only exception was the Heavenhorn ink dragon, whose scales stood on end as it howled in defiance.

Heaven and earth went dim, and a huge wind kicked up. Down below, the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were completely astonished, and began to cry out in surprise.

“That's....”

“Another beast king!!”

In the cultivation world of the Lower Reaches, beast kings were rare, and few people even had a chance to see a single one in their entire lives. Bruiser's birth had been unexpected and quite coincidental.

In the Middle Reaches, beast kings were also rare. However, considering how vast of a territory the Middle Reaches covered, they were not impossible to find. In fact, quite a few roamed the depths of the mountains and jungles.

In the moment that the flying snake beast king appeared, Li Zimo’s face flickered, and he rose to his feet, brilliant light shining in his eyes. His Nascent Soul aura erupted out, and he flicked his sleeve, sending a powerful gale force wind shooting toward the flying snake.

Behind him, Bruiser threw his head back and howled, causing his own beast king aura to surge, almost as if he wished to outshine the flying snake.

However, it was obvious that whether it was in terms of aura or cultivation base, the flying snake far surpassed Bruiser. Bruiser was like a baby, and the flying snake was like an adult.

Behind Li Zimo and Bruiser, there was another aura that rumbled out, which transformed into a beam of blood-colored qi that shot up into the clouds. It was... Bai Xiaochun!

That pillar was formed from the power of Bai Xiaochun’s qi and blood, and because of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core cultivation base, it was even tinged with golden light.

“How dare you!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, his eyes crimson. Flying up into the air, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, sending a black light flying out of his bag of holding. It was none other than the Renegade Dragon Horn, which shot toward the flying snake, fueled by the full power of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base.

At the same time, he opened his third eye, causing violet light to spill out onto the creature.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as Li Zimo’s tempest bore down on the flying snake. A moment later, Bai Xiaochun’s Renegade Dragon Horn also closed in, bursting with a Heaven-Dao aura. The flying snake’s eyes widened, and it quickly coiled up, apparently relying only on its fleshly body power to defend itself.

Incredible rumbling echoed out as the tempest collapsed, and the Renegade Dragon Horn was sent spinning off to the side. At the same time, the flying snake was shoved backward by a full 300 meters.

Bruiser let out another roar of rage, turning to glare at the flying snake with a look of utter ferocity. However, he also had his misgivings; he was currently at a critical juncture as his Violet Core continued to form.

The flying snake was a big threat, and made Bruiser very, very uneasy. In that moment, a tiny figure suddenly appeared next to him, reached out, and placed a hand on his side.

Bruiser was currently 300 meters tall, so that figure was miniscule in comparison. However, the hand which reached out to him seemed powerful enough to shake mountains, and as soon as it touched him, all of his anxiety and nervousness vanished.

That figure was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

“Focus on your Core Formation,” he said. “I’ll take care of everything else!” As he spoke, his gaze fell upon the greedy flying snake some distance away.

Moments later, Li Zimo appeared next to Bai Xiaochun, and the Core Formation Dharma protectors flew up into the air as well.

At the same time, the Profound Stream Division’s spell formation erupted with power, materializing nine greatswords which immediately locked onto the flying snake.

The flying snake’s cold eyes widened. It was a beast king, and in the Nascent Soul level at that. However... this was the River-Defying Sect, one of the four great sects of the Middle Reaches, and the flying snake wouldn’t intentionally provoke them unless it was absolutely necessary.

Bruiser’s Core Formation had been so enticing that it simply followed its feelings and tried to grab the Violet Core. With Bruiser’s beast king core, a breakthrough from Nascent Soul into the Deva Realm would have been much more possible.

The cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were equally leery of the snake. Even Li Zimo didn’t wish to tangle with a fully-developed beast king unless absolutely necessary.

Beast kings were capable of summoning countless lesser beasts to fight for them, and if that happened, it would put the River-Defying Sect in a very unfavorable situation.

The two sides were in somewhat of a deadlock as they stared at each other. However, that was when even more streams of Nascent Soul divine sense flew out and locked onto the flying snake.

Although the River-Defying Sect didn’t want to tangle with a beast king, if it truly attempted to attack the sect, then they wouldn’t hold back in the fighting. They would kill the beast no matter the cost.

Li Zimo’s eyes narrowed, and he began to speak in a voice as cold as ice. “Considering you’ve practiced cultivation all the way to your current level, your excellency, it’s only appropriate to address you as a Fellow Daoist. Today, the River-Defying Sect’s champion battle beast is stepping into Core Formation. In order to prevent any misunderstandings, Fellow Daoist, would you kindly take your leave?!”

The snake’s eyes glittered defiantly, and it looked over at Bruiser. By that time, the Violet Core above Bruiser was shining with dazzling light.

The strange aroma continued to billow out in all directions as the Violet Core... formed!

In that moment, Bruiser’s eyes shone with intense excitement as he watched the Violet Core shoot toward his open mouth. Just when he was about to swallow it up, the air next to him distorted and... a hand reached out to grab the Violet Core!

Everyone was shocked by this sudden development. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes were completely bloodshot, and a cry of rage escaped his lips as he unhesitatingly unleashed a fist strike onto the outstretched hand.

At the same time, three cold snorts echoed out from Mount River Defiance, and Master Godwind, Frigidsect, and Patriarch Crimsonsoul instantly teleported out. Surprisingly, none of them showed any signs of having recently been in secluded meditation; apparently, they had actually been watching over the proceedings the entire time. As soon as they appeared, they surrounded the hand and unleashed powerful divine abilities.

Master Godwind spoke, his voice hoarse and echoing with killing intent. “You’ve been surveilling the River-Defying Sect for some time now, haven’t you, your excellency!? Did you really think we wouldn’t be able to deal with you!?”

The attacks of the three patriarchs caused deafening roars to fill the air. The hand shattered to pieces, and the Violet Core continued downward toward Bruiser. However, at the same time, laughter rang out in the clouds as three beams of light suddenly shot down.

Within those beams of light were indistinct figures, all of whom were moving with lightning speed toward the Violet Core.

“I originally thought some unique treasure had appeared. I can’t believe it's actually the Violet Core of a beast king!” Bizarre laughter echoed out from within all of the beams of light. However, it was in that moment that the spell formation rumbled, and a huge greatsword appeared that slashed toward the incoming beams of light.

Next, even more patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect appeared. Everyone had assumed that they were in secluded meditation, and yet, just like Master Godwind and the others who had just appeared, that was clearly not the case!

The flying snake’s eyes glittered as it once again shot toward Bruiser.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun understood what was happening. Over the last months, everything in the sect had seemed peaceful, but the truth was that numerous hidden entities had been infiltrating and spying on them. Bruiser’s attempt at Core Formation was a unique situation that was drawing all of them out of hiding.

The patriarchs hadn’t been in secluded meditation at all, and had actually hoped for this to happen.

The patriarchs were willing to take advantage of Bruiser for their goals, but to Bai Xiaochun, he was too important. Even if the sect was completely prepared for what would happen, he was too anxious to take any risks. Eyes bloodshot, he let out a roar of rage as he shot toward... the Blood Ancestor!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

This is a slightly short chapter at about 1,600 words.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0356 awe-chapter-357

Chapter 357: Malicious Intentions

Chaotic fighting was unfolding. After the River-Defying Sect's Nascent Soul cultivators appeared, even more shadowy figures emerged to join the struggle.

All of those figures had been concealing their auras to prevent the River-Defying Sect from identifying them. Furthermore, it wasn't just a single group of people; there were four groups!

Even as the fighting broke out, the Blood Ancestor's eyes opened, revealing the maddened gaze of Bai Xiaochun. Bruiser was his son, and as a father, it enraged him to see people bullying him. He simply couldn't stand it that people were trying to steal Bruiser's Violet Core!

"Screw the hell off!!" he roared through the mouth of the Blood Ancestor. Rumbling sounds echoed to the highest heavens as the Blood Ancestor's right hand clenched into a fist and unleashed a fist strike.

That fist strike was powered by the entirety of Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base; his Heaven-Dao Gold Core joined with his Undying Heavenly King Core to unleash explosive power. The enormous fist of the Blood Ancestor was like an entire continent rumbling through the air, causing the sky to shatter and sending an enormous shockwave blasting out.

The faces of the infiltrators fell, and they scrambled to get out of the way. Those who were too slow immediately began to cough up blood.

As for the flying snake, the fist hit it directly, and it screamed as it flew backward.

Suddenly, everything went quiet. Everyone was looking at the enormous Blood Ancestor, shock written across their faces as they tried to determine if it even had any weaknesses.

Master Godwind and Frigidsect exchanged a glance. Originally, they had intended to let the fighting go on a bit longer in the hopes of luring out more infiltrators. However, now that Bai Xiaochun had taken control of the Blood Ancestor, they knew that delaying things could further enrage him. After a moment, they nodded to each other.

“Time to end things,” Frigidsect murmured. “Even those who haven’t showed their faces will be too frightened to make a move after what they’ve seen already!” He waved his hand, and a black sun appeared up in the sky, to be joined moments later by a white sun. The two suns overlapped, as did the two ravens inside the sun. The newly-formed raven then opened its eyes and emitted a deafening cry.

Then... the raven flew out. At the same time, cackling laughter could be heard as a scarecrow stepped out of thin air. The Heavenhorn Sword also appeared, flying toward Frigidsect in a beam of golden light.

Things weren’t over yet. Although the spell formations which had been set up looked like they were tapped out, they suddenly glittered with brilliant light, and began to shine three times as brightly as before. Three enormous glowing swords appeared, which began to destroy everything in their path.

Heaven and earth shook violently as all of the intruders fled for their lives. Unfortunately, few could get very far. The Heavenhorn Sword slashed one of them in half, and the cackling scarecrow appeared in front of another and began to skin him alive! Moments later, the victim was revealed to be a projection, but the sight of the attacking scarecrow was still bone-chilling!

The light from the black and white suns made it impossible for any of the infiltrators to hide, and the black and white raven proceeded to slaughter them.

However, none of that was very impressive when compared to the three glowing swords created by the spell formations. They quickly broke down into three nets, each one made up of 100,000 swords, which proceeded to slash their enemies to pieces.

The flying snake appeared to be on the verge of escaping, but Li Zimo snorted coldly and chased after it.

From a distance, the River-Defying Sect made for a spectacular sight. It was almost like flowers of swords were blooming above it....

Strangely, many of the people who died didn’t shed blood, and as their corpses fell to the ground, they simply vanished. Only a small group of actual bodies remained.

Clearly, those who didn’t leave corpses behind weren’t there as their true selves, but had come in clone form. To them, the loss of a clone like that would be somewhat of a waste, but wouldn’t truly injure them.

As the clones vanished and the flower of swords began to fade, the Violet Core safely entered Bruiser’s mouth. He swallowed it, and almost instantly, his aura began to rise.

Inside the Blood Ancestor, Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen, and he looked completely exhausted. Even with his double cores, it was a draining thing to take control of the Blood Ancestor.

As he looked over at the patriarchs, the animosity in his gaze was apparent.

The patriarchs exchanged awkward glances. The truth was that Bruiser’s Core Formation hadn't been part of their long-term plan; they had originally intended to use other methods to draw out the infiltrators. Even still, they were worried that Bai Xiaochun would take things the wrong way, so Frigidsect appeared to offer a complete explanation.

In the end, Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and made a lot of demands on Bruiser's behalf before agreeing to let the matter drop.

“Those old fogeys....” he grumbled to himself. “They’re all wily old foxes!” Then when he saw how Bruiser’s energy was continuing to rise higher and higher, he got wrapped up in excitement and decided to forgive them for the time being.

Beast kings needed to rest and recuperate after reaching Core Formation, and the patriarchs themselves offered to stand as Dharma protectors for Bruiser during that time. Bai Xiaochun joined them, sitting there cross-legged as he waited for Bruiser to recover completely.

However, waiting around was very boring. Soon he started to think about the baby girl that was the true spirit, and the River-Defying Pill. As the time passed, he became wrapped up in pondering the issue of how to concoct the pill.

“I’m not going to be able to concoct the pill inside of me.... That would only work if I had plenty of life force, which I don’t.... Although concocting it outside of the body is possible, it would be too difficult.” He frowned in consternation.

“Having a drop of blood from the true spirit should make it a bit easier… but I still don’t think I have enough skill in the Dao of medicine to succeed.” Bai Xiaochun felt quite dejected. It was a depressing thing to know what to do, but be unable to do it.

“The simplest thing would be to concoct it within myself.... But I lack life force.... Life force... hey, wait a second!” Suddenly, his eyes sparkled, and he looked down at his bag of holding.

“The little turtle... is the relic of eternal indestructibility. His life force should be sufficient... shouldn’t it?” As Bai Xiaochun considered all these matters, his excitement grew. However, he didn’t dare to give voice to his ideas, lest the little turtle catch on.

“The little turtle is too treacherous. I have to think of a way to get him to willingly give me some life force....” He couldn’t help but feel a bit of a headache whenever he reminisced about the good old days when the little turtle had been unconscious. Suddenly, his heart thumped.

“Unconscious....” A crafty gleam appeared in his eyes as he suddenly realized that the best thing to do would be to concoct some sort of powerful knockout medicine!

Early in the morning seven days later, Bruiser suddenly opened his eyes and let out a long cry. As he did, violet light exploded out around him, and the fluctuations of Core Formation roiled out.

At the same time, all of the other battle beasts in the River-Defying Sect began to howl. Having accomplished their task of standing as Dharma protectors, the patriarchs left with smiles on their faces.

Bruiser was in high spirits. Although he spent the next few days with Bai Xiaochun, he eventually got bored and ran out to have fun. This time, though, he didn’t leave the River-Defying Sect. Instead, he spent his time with the other battle beasts, as well as the female disciples he liked.

Bai Xiaochun let him do as he wished. At the moment, he was almost completely focused on concocting his knockout medicine. Therefore, he remained in his immortal's cave, mentally reviewing the countless medicine formulas which existed in his mind.

Time passed. Two months flew by.

Bai Xiaochun had come up with a plan, and was making constant improvements to the new medicine formula. On a few occasions, the little turtle popped his head out of the bag of holding to look at Bai Xiaochun. He wasn’t a mind-reader, so he had no way to determine what exactly Bai Xiaochun was thinking. However, the crazed look in his eye left the little turtle with a bad feeling.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun didn’t give up on cultivation. In addition to mentally pondering the medicine formula, he continued to work with the Undying Tendons and the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation.

One morning at dawn, he finally finished his mental work with the medicine formula. At the same time, he suddenly realized that a jade slip in his bag of holding was vibrating. Upon producing it, he heard Frigidsect’s voice speaking in his mind.

“Xiaochun, come to the grand hall on Mount River Defiance. The other three great sects of the Middle Reaches have come for a visit.”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. In recent discussions with the patriarchs, he'd been told that according to the speculations, some of the people who had infiltrated the sect had been rogue cultivators, but others had come from the three sects.

After all, the River-Defying Sect was a newcomer, and the other three sects were definitely certain to feel them out.

Considering how things had played out, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but snort coldly as he rose to his feet. After donning his junior patriarch robes, he put an icy expression on his face and headed toward the grand hall.

Along the way, he saw other cultivators of the River-Defying Sect looking in the direction of the grand hall, grim expressions on their faces.

Eyes flickering, Bai Xiaochun hurried along until he caught sight of three groups of cultivators, all of whom wore expressions of disdain as they tried to shove away the River-Defying Sect disciples guarding the entrance of the grand hall.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0357 awe-chapter-358

Chapter 358: Arrogant And Despotic!

Each group had roughly a dozen people in it, including Core Formation and Foundation Establishment cultivators, and they all wore different Daoist robes.

The first group had black robes decorated with images of blood moons, and radiated particularly murderous auras. They had sneers on their faces, and icy gazes filled with killing intent.

Another group wore garments decorated with a starry sky. They were all exceedingly attractive, and the disdain in their sparkling eyes couldn’t have been clearer.

The final group dressed in Daoist robes that were black and white. That group contained both male and female cultivators, and radiated a feeling that made them seem as if they had transcended the mortal world. Despite that lofty air, they also looked completely disdainful.

Bai Xiaochun had read introductions regarding the other three sects, and could immediately tell where they were from. The group wearing the starry sky designs were from the Starry River Court. The people with murderous auras were from the devilish Polarity River Court. As for those in the black and white Daoist robes, they were from the most powerful of the sects, the Dao River Court!

The disciples of these three sects were standing directly in front of the grand hall, preventing anyone from entering. They were the guests, but they were acting like the hosts!

They were even driving away the River-Defying Sect disciples who had been assigned to guard duty.

Directly up above in the sky, an enormous, pitch-black lizard could be seen, and when it deigned to look down, its gaze was as cold as ice. It even seemed like it wished to eat the River-Defying Sect disciples.

Some distance away from the lizard was an enormous battleship, fully 3,000 meters long, and completely silver in color. It reflected the sunlight in dazzling fashion, and pulsed with terrifying power.

In another direction was a gigantic meteor, fully 3,000 meters across and surrounded by a scorching sea of flames. The heat radiating from the meteor was such that many plants and trees down below began to wither up.

Even as Bai Xiaochun approached, a middle-aged cultivator from the Starry River Court shoved one of the Foundation Establishment disciples of the River-Defying Sect, causing him to stagger backward thirty meters.

“Back off,” said the Starry River Court cultivator. “Nobody is allowed in here!” Sneering, he turned and started chatting with his fellow sect disciples. “This really is a puny sect. I can’t believe they have trash like this guarding the grand hall.”

His comrades sneered, and the disciples of the other two sects looked even more disdainful than before.

The River-Defying Sect disciples were furious, but managed to hold their tempers. They well knew that the River-Defying Sect had only just entered the Middle Reaches, and didn’t have a very stable position. Considering that the other three sects had only just arrived for their formal visit, and the patriarchs were all in the grand hall having a meeting, any conflicts which broke out could have very negative ramifications.

On the other hand, it was obvious that the disciples from the other sects were trying to provoke a conflict....

However, when they realized that the River-Defying Sect disciples weren’t taking the bait, their faces turned even more grim. Despite that, none of them made any openly aggressive moves. As the disciples of the three sects exchanged hesitant glances, the leaders among each group began to talk loudly.

“I heard there are a lot of self-proclaimed Chosen in the River-Defying Sect. Where’s Bai Xiaochun? How about Song Que, Ghostfang, Nine-Isles, Shangguan Tianyou, and Chen Manyao? Where are they?”

“The Nascent Soul Daoist masters are having a meeting in the grand hall, and we Juniors are stuck out here, bored out of our minds. Why don’t the River-Defying Sect Chosen come out to show their stuff?”

The other disciples in the three groups knew what their leaders wanted them to do.

A young man stepped out of the crowd from the Polarity River Court, and each step he took caused cracking sounds to fill the air; clearly, he had incredible fleshly body power. Looking around, he laughed loudly and then said, “Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Di Gong, and I’m in late Foundation Establishment. Fellow Daoists from the River-Defying Sect, please step forward and give me some cultivation tips!”

He wasn’t the only one to walk out into the open. Cultivators emerged from the other two sects as well, to make similar taunts.

“Seriously?” one of them said. “Nobody from the *majestic* River-Defying Sect will dare to swap pointers with me? What kind of a sect is this?!”

The River-Defying Sect disciples were panting in anger. A moment later, one of the late Foundation Establishment disciples from the Profound Stream Division charged toward Di Gong.

Two more disciples began to charge toward the cultivators from the other two sects.

“Get your ass back in line!” Di Gong said, laughing. Planting his right foot down onto the ground, he kicked off, spinning his leg through the air. Unexpectedly, though, this wasn’t a kick powered by his fleshly body; a vast quantity of wind blades appeared, which shot forward in a dangerous magical attack!

The Profound Stream Division disciple unleashed a flying sword, but to his surprise, the sword passed directly through Di Gong. By the time he realized that what he was looking at was an afterimage, it was too late, and Di Gong was right in front of him. Before he could react, Di Gong unleashed a fist strike which smashed right into him.

Di Gong wasn’t done yet, though. Laughing with vicious killing intent, he prepared to unleash another attack on the same disciple. The surrounding disciples of the River-Defying Sect were enraged, and a few of them flew over to try to save their fellow disciple.

Meanwhile, the other two disciples who had flown out to challenge the visiting sects were being beaten back.

Furthermore, their opponents seemed to be in the same killing mood as Di Gong.

When Bai Xiaochun saw these events playing out, rage flickered in his eyes. In a flash, he appeared in front of the Profound Stream Division disciple, where he stood in place. When Di Gong's fist slammed into him, it didn't even move a hair on his head. The force of Di Gong's blow was redirected back at him, causing blood to spray out of his mouth as he tumbled backward, a look of shock on his face.

“A Core Formation cultivator?!” Di Gong bellowed. “How shameless, River-Defying Sect! You dare to have a Core Formation cultivator fight the Foundation Establishment stage?!?!”

Even as his words were echoing out, Bai Xiaochun blurred into motion again, becoming a series of afterimages as he sped forward to rescue the other two disciples. He did the same thing, using his body to block the attacks being sent against them. He wasn't hurt at all, whereas the attackers from the other two sects were sent tumbling backward, coughing up blood and shouting out in rage.

“Completely shameless!!”

“How dare a Core Formation cultivator ambush a Foundation Establishment disciple!”

Di Gong and the other two disciples were completely enraged as they stared at Bai Xiaochun with cold gazes.

Bai Xiaochun blurred into motion again, ending up in front of the cultivators of the three sects, hands clasped behind his back and chin stuck up. Glaring at them, he said, “So what if I attacked some Foundation Establishment cultivators? I've attacked Qi Condensation disciples in the past too. Is that shameless? Besides, did you actually see me do any attacking? You were obviously hitting me! Seems to me like you’re the shameless ones! Three Foundation Establishment cultivators actually had the gall to gang up on me, a Core Formation expert!! You people are going way overboard, you bullies. Don’t push me too far. When I get mad, I frighten even myself!”

The cultivators of the three sects stared back at him angrily, thinking back to try to remember if he really had made an attack or not....

Meanwhile, the disciples of the River-Defying Sect were more excited than ever, and began to call out greetings.

“Junior Patriarch!!”

“Greetings, Junior Patriarch!!”

“Greetings, Junior Patriarch!!!”

The leaders of the groups from the other sects instantly realized who was standing in front of them, and their pupils constricted.

At this point, a young man strode out from the Starry River Court, his eyes flickering with cold light. Hidden in his hand was a black spike; in his estimation, if he could cripple Bai Xiaochun here, there might be some negative consequences, but overall, it would be a big win. “How amusing,” he said. “So, you’re Bai Xiaochun, huh? Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Chen Yunshan. Why don’t we swap pointers about--”

Even as he began to speak, Core Formation cultivators stepped out from among the disciples from the Polarity

River Court and the Dao River Court, their eyes shining with cold light.

However, before Chen Yunshan could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun yelled, “You're forcing me to do this!”

With that, he threw a medicinal pill toward Chen Yunshan.

“Huh?” Chen Yunshan said, jaw dropping. He waved his sleeve, but it didn’t prevent the medicinal pill from exploding, causing black smoke to swirl out. His fellow disciples were also shocked, and waved their sleeves to disperse the smoke. However, there was some strange property to the smoke that made it impossible to dispel, and it even began to seep into them through their skin.

Of course, as soon as the medicinal pill appeared, strange expressions appeared on the faces of the surrounding disciples of the River-Defying Sect. That was especially true of the disciples from the Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions. They immediately began to back up, dragging the disciples of the other two divisions with them. Within moments, they were more than 300 meters away.

The cultivators of the Dao River Court and Polarity River Court were shocked, and couldn’t figure out why Bai Xiaochun had just thrown out a medicinal pill. Furthermore, the reactions of the River-Defying Sect were very telling, and they subconsciously began to back up as well.

“What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!” Chen Yunshan yelled angrily. Just when he was about to take a step forward, his eyes suddenly twitched. Simultaneously, one of his comrades behind him suddenly howled, lunged forward, and hugged him from behind!

“Junior Sister Li,” he cried, “I've finally found you!!”

Within the blink of an eye, the dozen or so cultivators from the Starry River Court began to go crazy. One of the affected cultivators spread his arms wide and began to run back and forth. Another of them began to rave madly. Another suddenly began to smile broadly. Only the Core Formation disciple was able to stave off the effects with great effort.

“I'm flying! Fly, fly away....”

“What is this place? Everybody get back! AIIIEEEE....”

“Hahaha! I've finally reached the Deva Realm! From now on, I'm unparalleled under heaven!!”

Some of the affected disciples wore looks of terror on their faces, and began to scream at the tops of their lungs. There was one who suddenly seemed drunk with pleasure, and immediately flew up into the sky toward the huge lizard.

“Hey baby,” he said. “Don’t be scared, I'm coming....”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0358 awe-chapter-359

Chapter 359: Bullying Others With Force!

Hissed expressions of shock and surprise could be heard outside the grand hall. As for the disciples of the River-Defying Sect, they were looking at Bai Xiaochun as if he were some sort of god.

That was especially true of the disciples from the Blood Stream Division, many of whom literally shed tears as they thought back to situations they had encountered in the past.

The disciples from the Spirit Stream Division felt similarly sympathetic. As for the Profound Stream Division, many of them had faced Bai Xiaochun and his team on the battlefield, and had been similarly tormented....

Then there was the Pill Stream Division disciples, whose eyes shone with bright light. They had heard many stories of Bai Xiaochun's pill concocting, which by this point were virtually legends. To see such things occurring with their own eyes filled their hearts with passion.

Off to the side, the disciples of the Polarity River Court and the Dao River Court looked profoundly alarmed. Not only were they crying out in shock, they were rushing backward at top speed, doing anything they could to avoid contact with the black strands of smoke.

“W-what's... what's going on!?!?”

“Heavens! What kind of pill is that!? It's absolutely terrifying!!”

“I can’t believe a medicinal pill like that exists in the world! Look, even the Core Formation cultivator can’t hold out any longer! That medicinal pill is horrifying!!”

The disciples of the two sects looked over at Bai Xiaochun with expressions of unprecedented fear, especially the female disciples. The more they thought about the ramifications of what they were seeing, the more frightening it was! Regardless of the levels of their cultivation bases, all of them felt profound terror of Bai Xiaochun rising up inside of them.

Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly and then shrugged his shoulders at the cultivators of the Polarity River Court and Dao River Court.

“You see?” he said, sounding very wronged. “They forced my hand. Like I said, when I get angry, I frighten even myself. But they didn’t listen, did they? They insisted on bullying me!” Suddenly, he cocked his head to the side, as if he'd just remembered something. Looking at the Core Formation cultivators from the other two sects, he said, “Oh right, you two were about to say something, weren’t you?”

The cultivators of both sects were trembling, and the Foundation Establishment disciples edged backward again, trying to put some distance between themselves and the Core Formation elders. As for those elders, their hearts were starting to pound. Glancing over at the tragic scene playing out, they quickly offered explanations.

“Oh no, I wasn’t going to say much. Just that you really live up to your reputation, Fellow Daoist Bai. You’re like a dragon among men!”

“Yeah, exactly! Your sect is definitely going to be very popular in the Middle Reaches!”

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily in response. Looking very pleased with himself, he was just about to boast a little bit more when suddenly, a cold snort echoed out thunderously from inside the grand hall. Everything trembled as a figure sped out of the hall, an old man with a full head of fiery red hair, and eyes that sparkled like lightning.

Instantly, the maddened disciples shivered, and then began to vomit. After a moment passed, their pale faces once again filled with color. They were clearly weakened, and when they looked over at Bai Xiaochun, their gazes were filled with both confusion and terror.

That was especially true of Chen Yunshan, who was glaring murderously at Bai Xiaochun. In his heart, he had already vowed to kill Bai Xiaochun in the future, to settle the score for the humiliation he had just experienced.

After rescuing the maddened disciples, the red-haired old man turned his gaze upon Bai Xiaochun. Of course, considering that the man was vastly above Bai Xiaochun in both terms of cultivation base and status, it wasn't appropriate to meet his gaze. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun simply looked down innocently and kicked at a nearby pebble.

The red-haired old man gave a cold harrumph, then stalked grim-faced back into the grand hall.

Bai Xiaochun immediately looked back up and glared in the old man's direction. Then he glanced around at the other disciples around him, and tried to decide whether or not to enter the hall himself.

That was when Frigidsect's voice echoed out. “Xiaochun, stop causing trouble outside. Come in.”

Sticking his chest out proudly, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and walked somberly toward the entrance to the hall. The disciples of the three sects looked at him with mixed emotions in their eyes. Furthermore, none of them were in any mood to harass the River-Defying Sect any more.

Upon entering the grand hall, Bai Xiaochun heard the voice of the red-haired old man he'd just seen.

“The River-Defying Sect is not the Sky River Court. It doesn’t make any sense at all for the River-Defying Sect to get the Sky River Court’s shares for no reason!”

Bai Xiaochun scanned the hall, and saw Frigidsect, Master Godwind, and Patriarch Crimsonsoul sitting in the position of honor, grim expressions on their faces. Seated in two rows in front of them, on the left and right, were eight other cultivators.

Without a single exception, all of those cultivators had Nascent Soul cultivation bases, and profound ones at that. Terrifying fluctuations spread out from them in all directions.

“That’s right,” one of them said. “Resources are limited, and we all have sects to sustain. Obviously, the strong get stronger and the weak get weaker. You can’t blame anyone but yourselves for that.”

Although the Nascent Soul cultivators of the three sects noticed Bai Xiaochun enter the hall, none of them paid him much attention, with the exception of the red-haired old man, whose eyes glittered with brutal ferocity.

Bai Xiaochun pretended not to notice, striding somberly over to stand next to Frigidsect.

Frigidsect gritted his teeth. Voice rigid with anger, he said, “The River-Defying Sect took over the Sky River Court, and that includes the Sky River Court’s shares!”

“Brother Frigidsect,” said another of the Nascent Soul cultivators, “these are simply the rules governing the Middle Reaches cultivation world. It’s not like we’re specifically targeting the River-Defying Sect.”

As Bai Xiaochun listened to the Nascent Soul cultivators’ discussion, he gradually came to understand why the three other sects had come to visit.

There was an arcane pocket realm in the Middle Reaches that opened once every sixty-year-cycle, within which were copious amounts of spirit plants. Some were the type that only appeared once every ten thousand years, others were virtually extinct in the outside world. Furthermore, there were a few that were critical ingredients to concocting Deva Pills, which could give Nascent Soul cultivators a much better chance to advance to the mortal-tier Deva Realm. The value of such pills to virtually any sect couldn’t be put into words.

Every time the spirit plants in the arcane pocket realm were harvested, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would take roughly half of the crop, and divide the rest among the four great sects.

The entrance to that arcane pocket realm was located in a sealed legacy zone, an area that had been constructed ages ago by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect itself. By sealing the entrance to the pocket realm within a legacy zone, it not only kept the spirit plants safe, it also provided a chance for disciples of the four sects to earn magical techniques and divine abilities from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. That was also a way for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to scout for possible new disciples.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had long since established rules governing how to split up the harvest from the pocket realm. Before the opening of the realm, the four sects would send disciples into the legacy zone to acquire legacy seals. Only one hundred such seals were available, and the number acquired by the disciples would determine how many resources their sect got when the shares were divided.

It was now only a few dozen years before the arcane pocket realm was to be opened again. Last time, the Sky River Court had taken second place in terms of shares, earning thirty percent of the resources, all of which still remained in the treasure storehouses, untouched. Those resources were extremely important to the Nascent Soul patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect, who could make use of them in their attempts to reach the Deva Realm.

But now, the three sects had come to redistribute the shares from the previous harvest, and wanted the River-Defying Sect to hand over the resources, and even make up for any that were missing!

The red-haired old man from the Starry River Court looked at Frigidsect and then spoke in a harsh tone. “Those resources belonged to the Sky River Court, not the River-Defying Sect. If you want resources like that, you’re going to have to work for them yourself!”

Bai Xiaochun frowned as his train of thought was interrupted, and his attention was drawn to the Nascent Soul cultivators from the three sects. Based on what he understood, the Dao River Court was the strongest of the sects, and had taken first place last time. To them, this wasn't a very big issue, and as such, they weren't saying much in the discussion.

The Polarity River Court had come in third, and also had little to say. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, the Starry River Court had come in last, and had the greatest motivation to push the issue.

They weren't willing to back down, and it was primarily them who were trying to intimidate the River-Defying Sect. In fact, it was entirely likely that they had made offers of compensation to the other two sects to make this meeting happen.

Essentially, they wanted to take advantage of the River-Defying Sect's weakness to steal their resources!

Frigidsect and the other patriarchs were doing their best to suppress their fury. Just when the red-haired old man was about to say something more, a white-robed old man from the Dao River Court, who had been dozing the entire time, suddenly opened his eyes and said, "Enough. The matter is settled. We've already been in contact with the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, who have come up with a method to resolve the issue. Although the legacy zone is usually only opened once every sixty-year-cycle, this time, we are being allowed to open it outside of the normal schedule! We'll send our disciples in to take the trial by fire, and use the results to determine how the shares are redistributed. What do you think, Fellow Daoist Frigidsect?"

Frigidsect maintained his silence for a moment, then took a deep breath. He well knew that he wasn't in a position to disagree. If he did, it could have serious negative ramifications in the future. Furthermore, considering the

Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had already given their stamp of approval, the River-Defying Sect had no qualifications to disagree.

“Deva Realm….” he thought. “If only the River-Defying Sect had someone in the Deva Realm, then things wouldn’t play out like this!” Finally, he gritted his teeth and nodded.

Smiling, the white-robed old man rose to his feet. “Excellent. In that case, I won’t disturb you any further. See you in a month at the arcane pocket realm!” With that, he walked out of the hall. The Nascent Soul Daoist masters from the Polarity River Court had icy smiles on their faces as they also left.

Last was the red-haired old man from the Starry River Court. Just before walking out of the hall, he looked back at Frigidsect and said, “Oh, one more thing. I forgot to mention the requirement to enter the legacy zone. The only people who qualify are Core Formation cultivators who reached the stage within one sixty-year-cycle.”

In response, the faces of Frigidsect and the other patriarchs turned even more grim.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0359 awe-chapter-360

When he saw the reactions of Frigidsect, Master Godwind, and Patriarch Crimsonsoul, the red-haired old man chuckled disdainfully, then flicked his sleeve and walked out.

Rumbling could be heard outside of the grand hall as the cultivators of the three sects boarded their magical flight devices and then shot off into the distance, leaving behind nothing more than billowing winds and swirling dust.

“Dammit!” Crimsonsoul said through gritted teeth.

Master Godwind frowned. “I guess this is our fault for not understanding the rules of the Middle Reaches cultivation world….”

Frigidsect smiled wryly and said, “With the plentiful resources here in the Middle Reaches, it’s not as difficult for cultivators to reach Core Formation within a sixty-year-cycle. In the Lower Reaches, such an accomplishment is very, very difficult....”

At that point, he suddenly seemed to remember something, and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Moments later, Master Godwind and Crimsonsoul were also looking at him.

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit unnerved to be stared at by these three, and couldn’t help but subconsciously take a few steps back.

“Um... Patriarchs, I--”

“Xiaochun, the reason we were just bullied and humiliated right now is because our sect is too weak!”

“That's right, Xiaochun. Now that I think about it, there’s only one person in the entire River-Defying Sect who reached Core Formation within a sixty-year-cycle....”

“Nightcrypt, my boy, as the junior patriarch, surely you understand how important this matter is to the future development of the sect!”

Although the words spoken by the three patriarchs were all different, as were the expressions on their faces, the gleams in their eyes were exactly the same.

“I....” Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt as if his throat were bone dry. Moments ago, he had been standing there listening quietly, feeling much the same anger as the patriarchs. But then the three old fogeys suddenly turned to stare at him, and even worse, when they began to talk, their words caused his heart to tremble.

Inwardly, he was crying out in grief, especially when he thought about the fact that he really was the only Core Formation cultivator in the sect who had reached that stage within a sixty-year-cycle. When it came to legacy zones, sects would usually send seven or eight people, but in this case, he would be going in alone.

The mere idea struck Bai Xiaochun with fear, and it was even worse considering that he had just aggressively heaped bad fortune onto the disciples from the Starry River Court, and had also brazenly threatened the Polarity River Court and the Dao River Court.

At this point, his expression suddenly turned somber. A bitter look appeared in his eyes as he continued, “Listen, Patriarchs, the truth is that I actually lied about my age before. Um yeah....

“Now that I'm the junior patriarch, I can’t continue to hide the truth. Back when I was found on that mountain, I wasn’t a teenager, I was actually forty!

“I just looked young, and decided to perpetuate the lie. I was wrong, I know. I should have told you the truth, and not caused such confusion for the sect during important times!”

Bai Xiaochun’s voice was filled with regret, and he truly sounded as if he were divulging a long-harbored secret. As he spoke, his hands slowly clenched into fists.

“Patriarchs, I truly feel terrible. Every time I think about my true age, and how I've hidden it for so long, I feel worse and worse. Alright, well I guess it's time to go into secluded meditation now....” Even as he spoke, he turned and hurried toward the door.

Crimsonsoul was frowning, and Master Godwind looked quite anxious. Just as they were about to speak, Frigidsect smiled wryly and said, “Xiaochun, you’re going, whether you want to or not.”

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t stop heading toward the door.

“Nobody wants our sect to seem weak, right?” Frigidsect continued. “If we can’t produce a single Core Formation cultivator who succeeded within one sixty-year-cycle, it will only mean further humiliation at the hands of the three other sects. I'm afraid if that happens, we won’t have a very strong foundation in the Middle Reaches.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he slowed down a bit, his heart twisting with indecision.

Frigidsect seemed to be getting a bit worked up as he went on, “But that’s okay. You’re the most important of all, Xiaochun. The sect is your home, and we’re your family. We won’t force you to do anything you don't want to do. Even if we get bullied and humiliated, we’ll protect you, and all the other disciples too!”

Bai Xiaochun was at the door, looking out at the world outside, indecision gripping his heart and refusing to let go.

“This time,” Frigidsect said, “the River-Defying Sect will just have to concede defeat. Master Godwind, Crimsonsoul, there’s no need to send me secret messages with divine sense. I’ve already made my decision!” Frigidsect suddenly seemed older, his voice laced with bleakness and exhaustion.

Bai Xiaochun stood there looking up sadly into the sky.

“What?” Frigidsect said loudly. “What's that you say via projected message, Master Godwind? No. Although we know going in that we will lose, and only want to do it to keep from losing face, we can’t send Bai Xiaochun in alone! Yes, I know. Bai Xiaochun once said in his heart that he lives for the sect. Yes, I know we treat him well. I know all that. But you might as well give up trying to persuade me!

“Crimsonsoul, stop projecting messages. My mind has been made up. It doesn’t matter that Xiaochun has precious treasures to defend himself with, as well as a Heaven-Dao Gold Core. It doesn’t matter that he has cultivated an incredibly powerful fleshly body, and that it would be virtually impossible for anyone under Nascent Soul to kill him. Nor does it matter that, by the Dharmic decree of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, killing is forbidden in the legacy seal competition. Bai Xiaochun is our junior patriarch! Even if the place offers no dangers whatsoever, we definitely can’t take any risks at all!”

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and turned to face the three patriarchs, looking almost like he was about to cry. “Fine. I’ll go, alright? Enough with the persuading....”

The instant the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, Frigidsect rose to his feet, walked over to him, and clasped him enthusiastically on the shoulder.

“Good kid! Alright, the matter’s set!

“This jade slip will tell you everything you need to know about the legacy zone. Study it carefully....

“Make whatever preparations you need to. In a month, the three of us will personally escort you to the legacy zone!” With that, he turned and sped away.

Master Godwind and Crimsonsoul gave approving glances to Bai Xiaochun, but fearing that he might suddenly change his mind, they quickly teleported away....

Bai Xiaochun looked around with wide eyes at the empty hall. He reached his hands out as if he wanted to grab onto something, but the only thing he had to grab onto was his hair.

“Those crafty foxes!” he wailed. “Schemers, all of them! There’s no way they didn't know about the rules. Obviously, they knew from the beginning, and were just trying to con me. I... I ....” Scowling, Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt as if he was very, very naïve. After walking dejectedly out of the hall, he looked up into the sky, and it somehow seemed very, very dark.

He moped all the way back to his immortal's cave, where he sat down cross-legged in grief. Then he thought about how he would have to single-handedly go up against people from all three of the other sects, and he suddenly felt quite lonely.

“Wait, it won’t be just me. I can take Bruiser with me! He reached Core Formation in less than a sixty-year-cycle! The two of us against all those people....

“How will we handle it? They’re definitely going to bully us! What do I do...?” Hanging his head dispiritedly, he took out the jade slip and started to go over the information about the legacy zone.

According to the detailed description in the jade slip, there were a total of 100 legacy seals inside. Last time, the Sky River Court sent 13 qualified disciples into the legacy zone, who managed to acquire 30 seals. Unfortunately, none of them managed to acquire enlightenment of any of the legacy techniques.

In the end, the Sky River Court got thirty percent of the resources, whereas the Starry River Court, who came in last place, only got ten percent.

The rules for how to distribute the resources were set down by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and couldn’t be changed.

Bai Xiaochun sighed again. For the following several days, he continued to mull over the matter until he made his final decision.

“Fudge! I already said I'd go, right? Fine. Fine. *Fine!* I’ll go!!” After he thought about how many other people he would be competing against, he decided to go buy a huge amount of paper talismans.

He didn’t purchase them with merit points, but rather, got them on credit. Next, he went to the Treasure Pavilion, where he did the same thing to acquire a large collection of magical items.

Finally, he purchased some armor and more leather clothing. Realizing that the only thing he lacked was a big black wok, he searched the sect up and down until he found an extraordinarily sturdy iron wok that was more than suitable.

Next, he gritted his teeth and requested some multi-colored fuel from the patriarchs, which he used to perform fivefold spirit enhancements on all of his items, including the big black wok.

Despite how many items he had purchased, he still didn't feel safe. Next, he went to the Profound Stream Division to request some spell formations, then to the Blood Stream Division to request spirit blood, and finally to the Pill Stream Division to request spirit medicines.

By the time he was finished with all these activities, half a month had passed. For the next half month, he focused on cultivation, and ended up inching closer toward a breakthrough.

As for his work with his Undying Tendons, the big toe on his left foot was finished. Whenever he called upon it, shocking fleshly body power would surge through him, originating from the toe.

Unfortunately, using that power would also cause his shoe to explode.

Because of that, Bai Xiaochun also prepared a large number of shoes for his left foot.

Eventually, the long-awaited day came. At dawn, Bai Xiaochun walked out of his immortal’s cave, wearing numerous layers of leather clothing, and a black wok strapped to his back. He had paper talismans plastered all over him, and overall, looked very sad.

Then he headed toward the summit of Mount River Defiance, followed by the curious Bruiser, who was wearing a suit of armor and plenty of paper talismans, and yet radiated an air of complete ferocity.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0360 awe-chapter-361

Chapter 361: Only One?

Many disciples emerged to watch Bai Xiaochun go up to Mount River Defiance. Everyone knew why the other three Middle Reaches sects had come last month, and it left them simmering with rage. They also knew that Bai Xiaochun was going to represent the River-Defying Sect in a fight inside an arcane pocket realm!

When news spread that the only person in the entire sect who qualified to go was Bai Xiaochun, many cultivators started to get worried.

The River-Defying Sect was a newcomer to the Middle Reaches, as unfamiliar with the cultivation world there as they were strangers to it.

In these unfamiliar surroundings, the River-Defying Sect seemed impressive, but the truth was that until they produced a Deva Realm expert, they were in a very precarious position, and could be easily supplanted.

A feeling of uneasiness and lurking danger existed in the hearts of not only the ordinary disciples, but even the patriarchs. Thankfully, they had the Blood Ancestor and the Dire Skybanyan, as well as the shocking true spirit which made even the other three great sects nervous.

Those were the only things that gave the River-Defying Sect a modicum of stability.

Bai Xiaochun was aware of all of that. Therefore, despite the fact that he didn't really want to go to the arcane pocket realm, and despite the ferocity he had witnessed among the disciples of the three sects, he had chosen to go along with the arrangement. Gritting his teeth and trembling with fear, he led Bruiser slowly up to the top of the mountain.

Waiting there for him were Master Godwind, Frigidsect, and Crimsonsoul. Three late Nascent Soul Daoist masters would be escorting him to the arcane pocket realm.

Everyone watched silently as Bai Xiaochun made his way to the top of the mountain. Ghostfang emerged from his immortal's cave, an absent-minded look in his eyes as he thought back to the time he had fought Bai Xiaochun back in the Spirit Stream Sect.

That was the first time he had ever lost to someone in the same generation as him, and although he hadn’t appeared to have been affected in any way, it had awoken in him a strong desire to surpass Bai Xiaochun.

At a certain point, though, he had come to realize that Bai Xiaochun’s progress was almost unbelievable. He was already so far ahead that it almost seemed impossible to catch up.

Then there was Song Que, who stood atop one of the mountains in the Blood Stream Division, hands clenched tightly into fists. He was thinking about the Fallen Sword World, Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, and everything which had occurred after that. Within his eyes burned flames of defiance!

“I'm definitely going to surpass you one day!”

As for the blood masters and other top Chosen in the Blood Stream Division, all of them were equally unsettled. While they were concerned about their sect, they also couldn’t help but compare themselves to Bai Xiaochun. The fact that none of them even qualified to go into the arcane pocket realm was profoundly chafing to all of them.

Zhou Xinqi was having a hard time controlling her breathing, and Nine-Isles’ eyes were completely bloodshot. Master God-Diviner and Jia Lie were both unsettled. In the past, there had been one dazzling Chosen who was currently stuck at a cultivation base bottleneck. That was Lu Tianlei, who spent most of his time alone, refusing to go out. However, as of this moment, he chose to emerge from his immortal's cave and stare off at the figure ascending Mount River Defiance.

Chen Manyao appeared, as did Gongsun Wan’er. Gongsun Wan’er’s expression was the same as ever, her lips perpetually upturned into a faint smile. However, compared to all the people just mentioned, the person with the most complicated emotions of all was teetering on the verge of madness: Shangguan Tianyou!

He stood tall and straight, his features as stunningly handsome as ever. He had no desire to even look at Bai Xiaochun, and therefore refused to emerge from his immortal's cave. Although he couldn’t see Bai Xiaochun, his heart felt as if it had been bitten by the most poisonous of serpents, and the pain he felt was difficult to put into words.

Eyes bloodshot and fists clenched, he said, “You're just a cheap bastard with no parents and no education. I'm Shangguan Tianyou! I'm definitely going to crush you beneath my feet!”

Although there were people who were jealous or angry, there were others who were sending Bai Xiaochun away with blessings and well wishes. Big Fatty Zhang, Hou Yunfei, Xu Baocai, Third Fatty Hei, and Li Qinghou were all present. Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan were there too, wishing him well, but at the same time, very nervous.

Countless eyes were fixed upon Bai Xiaochun as he ascended the mountain. Soon, he was at the very same altar where Bruiser had reached Core Formation.

That was where the three patriarchs were waiting for him. As soon they looked over and saw his getup, their jaws dropped, and they exchanged awkward glances. Finally, Frigidsect coughed dryly and then waved his hand.

Instantly, a silver beam of light descended from the sky above. It was the Heavenhorn Sword, which began to grow larger and larger until it was fully 3,000 meters long!

“Alright, Xiaochun, it’s time to leave!” he said. With that, he blurred into motion, shooting toward the Heavenhorn Sword. Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind joined him, and within moments, they were on top of the sword, where they sat down cross-legged in a row. Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and flew up to join them. Behind him, Bruiser threw his head back and roared as he followed along.

Bruiser’s eyes were filled with excitement and anticipation. This was his first time being allowed to go out with Bai Xiaochun for a trial by fire, and being alongside him for such an event was extremely exciting.

“Let’s go!” Frigidsect said, his voice booming like thunder. The Heavenhorn Sword began to shine with dazzling silver light, and then rumbling echoed out as it shot off with incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, it had disappeared, leaving behind nothing but rolling sonic booms and a long streak of silver light.

Only after Bai Xiaochun left did people begin to speak again in the River-Defying Sect. Nine-Isles, Song Que, Ghostfang, and the other Chosen like them all went back into secluded meditation, their eyes filled with the determination to advance. All of them swore to reach Core Formation as quickly as possible.

Even Big Fatty Zhang gritted his teeth and went into secluded meditation.

Virtually everyone in the same generation as Bai Xiaochun did the same thing.

**

The cultivation world of the Middle Reaches was so large that it couldn’t really be described as being divided into continents. Instead, the word ‘domain’ was used. As for the realm occupied by the River-Defying Sect, its name had recently been changed from the Sky Domain to the Defiance Domain.

As for the arcane pocket realm, it was located far away from the Defiance Domain in the Dao Domain, next to a seemingly endless desert. Because the desert was so far away from the Heavenspan River, the spiritual energy of heaven and earth was rather faint there.

It was in that region of scarce spiritual energy that the arcane pocket realm existed, and despite its remoteness, it couldn’t be judged as a place devoid of good fortune.

There was a temple in that desert, a place of extreme ancientness that had existed longer than anyone could remember. This was the location where the legacy seals existed, and also the entrance to the arcane pocket realm!

Surrounding the temple were more than a hundred stones sticking up out of the desert sands, each one well over 300 meters tall.

The stones were very strange-looking, and at first glance seemed to have been distributed randomly around the temple. However, closer examination would reveal that they had been placed in a specific pattern which altered the state of heaven and earth in the area. Shockingly, those stones were a powerful spell formation!

Powerful fluctuations rolled out from the spell formation that even Nascent Soul cultivators would be leery of. Clearly, the only person who could have possibly put such a spell formation into place was a deva!

The forces of the Starry River Court and the Polarity River Court could already be seen sitting cross-legged in meditation atop the stones. Each of the two sects had more than twenty cultivators who had yet to live for a full sixty-year-cycle. There were men and women, all of them with calm expressions. However, there was no hiding the aloof pride in their eyes; they were all top Chosen in their sects.

The truth was that they had a right to be proud. A mere glance at any one of them would reveal how different they were from ordinary cultivators.

The two sects had spent vast amounts of resources to raise these Chosen, who were seeds that would grow to be pillars of their respective organizations. One of them was Chen Yunshan.

The two sects were seated apart from each other, and their auras were clearly different. As for the Starry River Court, their cultivators were surrounded by a murky radiance that almost seemed like countless stars, pulsing with a profound aura.

In sharp contrast to them were the Chosen of the Polarity River Court. They had fiendish, murderous auras, and gazes which seemed capable of penetrating into their opponent’s hearts and minds. They seemed like people who killed at the drop of a hat, and were surrounded by a seething black mist. It was just barely possible to see the outlines of devilish spirits within that mist, roving to and fro.

The energy on display here was something the likes of which no sect in the Lower Reaches cultivation world could ever have. Only the great sects of the Middle Reaches could put on a display like this!

As the forces of the two sects sat there waiting, the cultivators began to look up into the sky as they sensed certain fluctuations off in the distance.

A moment later, a streak of silver light appeared off in the distance, which was the Heavenhorn Sword. As it pierced through the air, the power of a tenfold spirit enhancement rippled out in all directions. Clearly, the River-Defying Sect was trying to put on a good show. In the blink of an eye, the sword was closing in on the spell formation, allowing the cultivators of the Starry and Polarity River Courts to see the figures atop it.

Ignoring the three patriarchs, their gazes came to rest on Bai Xiaochun.

It was hard to say who among the two sects said it, but the surprise and derision in that person's voice couldn’t have been more clear. “Only one person?!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0361 awe-chapter-362

Chapter 362: The Legacy Competition Begins!

Everyone in the two sects began to snicker. Then, they simply looked away from the Heavenhorn Sword, their hearts filled with disdain.

Everyone knew that they were gathered to fight for a share of soon-to-be-redistributed resources. Because of that, the number of people who participated was crucial. If the River-Defying Sect could only produce one person who qualified, then there was no suspense in the matter. The River-Defying Sect... would be lucky to get one percent of the resources in the end.

The Starry River Court cultivators were especially aware of why this redistribution of resources was happening. Not only were they very complacent, they simply couldn't hide their disdain for the River-Defying Sect.

Chen Yunshan was the only one present whose eyes flickered with killing intent; he already hated Bai Xiaochun down to his guts. Not only had the events of the previous month plagued his nightmares afterwards, he had been punished by the sect, and had become a laughingstock among his contemporaries. Because of that, his rancor continued to fester day by day.

Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he thought, “It’s too bad we're not allowed to kill anyone in here, otherwise you’d be dead!”

As for the people from the Polarity River Court, they weren’t interested at all in the River-Defying Sect. To them, this was merely a mission to accomplish for the sect. Everyone here was to be rewarded, and they couldn’t help but feel some disdain for the River-Defying Sect, who had only brought one person.

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the Heavenhorn Sword shot down from the sky. After coming to a stop some distance above the ground, the three patriarchs led Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser off of the sword and down to the ground.

Bai Xiaochun was panting, and his eyes were wide as he took in the crowd of cultivators from the two sects. He almost couldn’t believe that all of them were in the Core Formation stage. Each and every one was clearly an outstanding individual, and Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already starting to fill with an intense sensation of danger because of it.

“How... how could there be so many of them…?” he thought, a miserable expression on his face. The mere idea of having to compete with more than forty other top experts to get the legacy seals seemed almost too much for him to take.

The three patriarchs were also frowning as they looked over the forces from the Starry and Polarity River Courts. As for the Nascent Soul cultivators leading the two groups, they merely looked over and gave faint smiles. Clearly, they weren’t interested in chatting.

Compared to these two sects, the River-Defying Sect looked quite weak.

“So,” Chen Yunshan said all of a sudden, “it turns out the River-Defying Sect doesn’t just have one person. They have a beast, too. I guess that brings their total to one and a half.” He started laughing, and was soon joined by others from his sect.

Another cultivator called out, “I think it’s a bit more than one and a half. Look at this guy! Just how many paper talismans does he have stuck on himself? And look at that huge black wok on his back!”

More laughter rose up as the Starry River Court cultivators began to mock Bai Xiaochun’s outfit.

As for the cultivators from the Polarity River Court, when they saw Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser, a few of them were unable to conceal the glitters of greed that rose up in their eyes. Clearly, they could see how amazing of a creature Bruiser was.

Bruiser couldn’t help but feel a bit uneasy having so many Core Formation cultivators staring at him. Almost instantly, the scales that covered his body began to stand on end, although the armor and paper talismans he was wearing made it impossible for anyone to see that. However, they could see the violet flames which sprang out beneath his feet, and the roar which echoed out from his mouth.

Bai Xiaochun had been feeling a bit anxious, but Chen Yunshan’s words, and the gazes which caused Bruiser to feel so anxious, stirred up his anger.

And yet, anger did little. Compared to the two other sects, the River-Defying Sect... really was too weak.

The three patriarchs were already starting to regret having brought Bai Xiaochun to participate in this challenge. Earlier, they had assumed that his battle prowess and precious treasures would be enough to allow him to get at least a few of the legacy seals and come away unscathed, no matter how many of the other Chosen wanted to harm him.

Besides, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had already laid down rules for how the fighting over the legacy seals would go. No one was allowed to kill any of the other Chosen, an arrangement which was for the benefit of all four sects. After all, none of them wanted their Chosen disciples to die in a place like this.

Because of all that, the three patriarchs had felt comfortable bringing Bai Xiaochun here. Even if he didn’t come away with much in terms of the legacy seals, at least he could get to know some of the other Chosen in his generation, and get some precious fighting experience.

But now that they realized he would be single-handedly facing dozens of opponents, the three patriarchs were starting to hesitate.

In that moment, a booming like thunder filled the sky, and an enormous silver battleship appeared out of thin air!

As the ship appeared, countless bolts of lightning crackled about in all directions, destroying the clouds around it as it descended.

That battleship belonged to... the strongest of the four Middle Reaches sects, the Dao River Court!

In almost the exact same instant that the battleship appeared, numerous figures flew off of it and began to descend at top speed. It took only a moment to determine that there were more than forty of them....

There were men and women among the cultivators, and all of them seemed to radiate an air that transcended the mortal world, as well as shocking cultivation base fluctuations. All of them... were cultivators who had stepped into Core Formation in less than a single sixty-year-cycle!

Middle Reaches sects controlled much larger territories than Lower Reaches sects, and also had access to much more resources. Furthermore, the energy of heaven and earth in the area was far stronger. Because of that, the sects here had many, many more Chosen than Lower Reaches sects did. It almost wasn’t even possible to compare the two regions.

Along with the more than forty Core Formation cultivators, an intense pressure began to weigh down as the same white-haired old man appeared who had made the final decision in the grand hall on Mount River Defiance a month ago.

The old man looked over the collected cultivators, and didn’t seem to be surprised at all that the River-Defying Sect only had Bai Xiaochun with them. Smiling faintly, he said, “I would like to welcome the emissary from the presiding sect to oversee our four sects’ competition for the legacy seals!” Even as the words left his mouth, the clouds up above swirled together as if driven by a powerful wind, rapidly forming into the shape of an enormous eye!

As the eye looked down, it radiated terrifying ripples that caused all light to dim.

Instantly, the cultivators of the Starry River Court and the Polarity River Court rose to their feet, clasped hands and bowed. It was the same with the Dao River Court cultivators, as well as Frigidsect, Master Godwind, Crimsonsoul, and Bai Xiaochun.

Next, a booming voice spoke. “The rules covering this competition for legacy seals are the same as always. Killing... is not permitted. Anyone who intentionally ends the life of another will be destroyed in body and soul!”

Instantly, colorful light sprang up from the temple in the middle of the huge spell formation. The stones began to tremble, and the pressure weighing down began to fade away, making it possible for the cultivators to now enter the temple.

“Let the competition begin!” said the voice. Instantly, the forty cultivators from the Dao River Court began to fly toward the temple.

In the blink of an eye, the disciples from the Starry and Polarity River Courts followed. As for Bai Xiaochun, he gritted his teeth, and then took Bruiser along in the same direction.

As he went along, he mentally reviewed everything he knew about the legacy seal competition. He knew that upon entering the temple itself, he would be teleported to a strange dimension. In the very middle of that dimension was a towering mountain surrounded by shocking spell formations that made it very difficult to approach the mountain itself.

A hundred legacy seals were located inside of the mountain, and would fly out in succession to the surrounding area, where the cultivators could fight over them.

Whoever acquired and absorbed the most would get some type of technique!

Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser followed the group through the stone spell formation. Considering that Bai Xiaochun was cautious by nature, he didn’t hurry, and by the time he reached the temple itself, the other disciples from the three sects had already entered.

Finally, he took a deep breath and looked over at Bruiser.

“Bruiser, remember to stick close to me. There are going to be a lot of bad people in there.” Bruiser gave a soft howl and nodded his head. Bai Xiaochun took a moment to straighten his garments, his paper talismans, and the big black wok. Then he gritted his teeth and stepped into the temple.

The moment Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser entered the temple, the light around them faded away, and jarring rumbling sounds could be heard. Outside the temple, intense pressure once again weighed down, making it impossible for anyone to approach the temple. At the same time, a light screen was projected into the air above the temple, cast by the stone spell formation.

Clearly visible on the light screen were the names of all four sects, next to which were glowing circles, faint and barely visible. The three patriarchs from the River-Defying Sect all exchanged glances. Those glowing circles represented the number of legacy seals acquired by the various disciples in the legacy zone.

As the circles glowed more and more brightly, they would create columns of light which… would make it instantly obvious how many legacy seals each sect had acquired!

Outside of the stone spell formation were the Nascent Soul cultivators of the various sects, who numbered in the dozens or so. At the moment, the red-haired old man from the Starry River Court looked courteously toward the

Nascent Soul experts from the Polarity River Court and the Dao River Court.

“The Dao River Court will definitely take first again,” he said with a slight smile. “As for second place, well Brother Ouyang, I know that the Starry River Court can’t compete with the Polarity River Court. Therefore, we haven’t set our goals too high. Third place will do.” The red-haired old man chuckled.

The cultivator whom the red-haired old man had referred to as Brother Ouyang was a middle-aged man wearing the robes of the Polarity River Court. Smiling, he said, “Brother Zhou, you’re overthinking things. Let’s just wait and see who takes second and third place.”

Despite his words, his expression was one of utmost confidence.

As the cultivators of the three sects chatted, they completely ignored the River-Defying Sect.

Master Godwind, Frigidsect, and Crimsonsoul all had unsightly expressions on their faces as they sat there silently.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0362 awe-chapter-363

Chapter 363: One Should Be Enough

In this legacy zone, heaven and earth were currently cloaked in darkness!

The sky was leaden, a perfect complement to the pitch-black lands that stretched out below it. However, serving as a perfect foil to the darkness were the brilliant beams of light that were breaking out in multiple locations within the dimension.

Those beams of light all contained cultivators, and the brilliance they cast instantly illuminated the murky world around them.

Because of the new light, it was now possible to see that the dimension wasn’t very large. Furthermore, in the exact center of it, there was a mountain with a peak so tall it pierced the clouds. It was so immense that anyone looking up at it would feel like a tiny insect.

The surface of the mountain was covered with numerous sealing marks, which moments ago had been the same color as the surface of the mountain itself. However, the arrival of the cultivators caused them to glow with bright light.

Close examination revealed that the sealing marks on the mountain... were limited in number! There were exactly one hundred of them!

This towering peak was none other than... the Mountain of Legacy Seals!

It was also the brightest location in the entire legacy zone. As the crowd of cultivators appeared, Bai Xiaochun became visible within one of the beams of light.

Next to him was Bruiser. As soon as they both appeared, Bai Xiaochun activated his paper talismans, causing dazzling, colorful lights to appear all around him. It actually looked quite attractive; he was like an entity of colorful light.

Next, he helped Bruiser activate all of his paper talismans, until he looked equally as colorful.

Because of that, they became very conspicuous within the legacy dimension. Quite a few gazes shifted in their direction, gazes of derision and mockery.

Bai Xiaochun had already been nervous to begin with, and when he realized people were staring at him, he gasped, and his heart filled with icy fear.

“This place is so dangerous! So much killing intent!” Bai Xiaochun put a restraining hand on Bruiser’s back, and then looked around vigilantly. After confirming that people were looking at him but not heading in his direction, he breathed a sigh of relief. Then he began to glare back at people.

“I've never lost to anybody when it comes to contests like this. Am I right, Bruiser? Alright, come on. Let’s both glare at them. Show them how badass the two of us are!” From that point on, whenever anyone looked over at him, Bai Xiaochun would glare back with a murderous stare, as did Bruiser.

One particular young man from the Starry River Court who was relatively close to the two of them smiled mockingly and said, “Junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect? Did you bring all of the paper talismans from your entire sect with you? Do you have enough? Or should I give you a few of mine?”

Bai Xiaochun turned and cast him a fierce glare. “Sure. Hand a few over!”

The young man’s scorn increased. Laughing coldly, he ignored Bai Xiaochun and began to head in the direction of the Mountain of Legacy Seals.

He wasn’t the only one. The disciples of the three sects all began to transform into beams of light that headed in the same direction. Because of how close the mountain was, none of them flew, but instead, sped along on foot.

Bai Xiaochun chose not to act blindly and without thinking. Instead, he took some time to assess the situation. The disciples approaching the Mountain of Legacy Seals were all going along on foot. Not a single one was flying. Furthermore, all of them stopped at a certain point roughly 15,000 meters from the base of the mountain.

Furthermore, the disciples didn’t simply scatter. Instead, looks of vigilance could be seen on their faces as they began to gather in ranks according to their sects. Suddenly, rumbling sounds filled the air as numerous lightning bolts appeared in the area between the cultivators and the mountains, as well as a gale-force wind.

The lightning bolts were as thick as buckets, and the intense wind was pitch black and contained incredible power. In fact, the wind almost looked like black dragons sweeping back and forth within the 15,000-meter region.

Anyone with eyes could see how incredibly powerful the lightning bolts and the blasts of wind were.

Other types of magic began to spread out. There were gigantic hands, blades of ice, and tongues of fire. There were illusory projections that looked like shrieking ghosts.

Thorns began to grow up out of the ground, and deep crevices opened up randomly here and there.

Obviously, the 15,000-meter area was a place rife with danger. Even Nascent Soul Daoist masters would be leery of such an area, let alone Core Formation cultivators.

Bai Xiaochun looked over and noticed one of the cultivators from the Polarity River Court summon a puppet, which he sent into the 15,000-meter region. Before it got far, a bolt of lightning struck it, reducing it to nothing more than ashes. Bai Xiaochun gasped, and his face drained of blood.

“The jade slip said this Mountain of Legacy Seals was dangerous, but it didn’t say it was *this* dangerous! That puppet... was at the same level as Core Formation, and it got destroyed by a single lightning bolt!” Bai Xiaochun stood in place hesitantly, trembling the entire time.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to react with such shock. Several disciples of the three sects used various magical means to try to enter the 15,000-meter area on their own, but in the end, were left sighing in frustration.

“It must be because this isn’t the usual time to enter the legacy zone. The defensive spells around the Mountain of Legacy Seals must be much more powerful than usual....”

“Usually the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s emissary limits the power, but not this time....”

After discussing the matter, the three groups tightened their formations and then began to slowly make their way into the 15,000-meter area in groups. Whenever dangerous situations arose, they would pool their power to defend themselves.

Before long, booms filled the air, and the lands began to quake.

Bai Xiaochun stood there in hesitation for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. At that point, one of the hundred sealing marks on the Mountain of Legacy Seals suddenly began to shine brightly, then flew up into the air and spiraled out into the 15,000-meter region.

Almost instantly, all of the disciples of the three sects looked over nervously at the sealing mark as it circled out further and further away from the mountain. When it reached the 13,500-meter mark, the disciples started making attempts to acquire it.

The cultivators from the Starry River Court unleashed all of their cultivation base power, creating a stream of brilliant starlight fully 3,000 meters long. It only took a moment for the stream of starlight to bear down on the sealing mark as if to wrap it up and drag it away. At that point, the people from the Polarity River Court let out a bellow as they erupted with devil qi, summoning a huge flying head that shot toward the sealing mark and began to contend with the Starry River Court.

The Dao River Court had the most people in the legacy zone. When they looked over at what was happening, many of them took deep breaths and then began to emanate a strange power that seemed almost like natural law.

Instantly, the air surrounding their group began to twist and distort.

Then, rumbling could be heard as a towering giant took form. Without any hesitation, the giant strode forward and reached out to grab the legacy seal!

As soon as the giant's hand closed around the sealing mark, it vanished and reappeared in the hand of one of the Dao River Court cultivators.

“It’s mine!!” he cried excitedly, throwing his head back and laughing as he absorbed the mark into his body. The other Dao River Court disciples were a bit jealous, and the Starry and Polarity River Courts were disappointed, but didn’t let it show on their faces. In fact, some of them even smiled in congratulation.

Bai Xiaochun was left gasping at the scene which had just played out. He also understood the rules in this place a bit better now. Once the sealing marks flew out from the Mountain of Legacy Seals, the people who were closer to the mountain would have an advantage in trying to acquire them.

“One should be enough for me!” he thought, gritting his teeth. He didn’t set his expectations too high. As long as he could get one, then at least he could call the mission a success. Trying to get more than that would surely be too dangerous....

With that, he headed toward the mountain. By the time he reached the border and prepared to step in, the cultivators of the three sects were already about two or three hundred meters in.

Almost as soon as he entered, a black blast of wind shot toward him, filling his head with a sense of explosive crisis. Letting out a shriek, he backed up. Then a lightning bolt shot toward him, and he fell back again, scowling on the verge of tears. Within moments, he was back outside the 15,000-meter area. Only then did the various defensive magics ignore him.

“What do I do now...?” he thought. Not daring to enter the area again, he looked over at Bruiser, who stared back at him blankly....

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

This chapter is a bit short, slightly over 1,600 characters

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0363 awe-chapter-364

Chapter 364: You Bullies!

“This won't work!” Bai Xiaochun thought sullenly. He considered approaching the Mountain of Legacy Seals from a different direction, but after a quick survey, was convinced that the other areas were actually more dangerous than this one.

Viewed with the naked eye, all areas surrounding the Mountain of Legacy Seals were possible avenues of approach. However, with his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, Bai Xiaochun could tell that the general area where he and the members of the other three sects were was the only viable option for success.

Other areas were vastly more dangerous, and in fact, the three sects were all staying in roughly the same area, relatively close to each other.

Only by pooling their strength were they gradually making progress. The Dao River Court was strongest, and they were already about 1,500 meters in. On either side of them, and a bit further back were the Polarity River Court and the Starry River Court, the former being over 1,200 meters in, and the latter roughly 900 meters.

Bai Xiaochun was the only person standing alone on the outside.

“Since I’m on my own, there’s no way I can stay inside for long. I'm only going to have a couple chances....” Eyes bloodshot, he produced some more paper talismans and slapped them down on himself and Bruiser. He also pulled out some defensive magical items.

Finally, he turned and whispered to Bruiser, “In a bit, when the right opportunity comes along, I'm going to make my move and try to grab one of the legacy seals. If anything goes wrong, you save me!”

Bruiser immediately nodded. He could see how dangerous the 15,000-meter area was, and although he was very happy to finally be outside on a mission with Bai Xiaochun, he was also very nervous.

Bai Xiaochun stood there staring at the Mountain of Legacy Seals, waiting for his next opportunity. After about ten breaths of time passed, another of the sealing marks suddenly began to glow brightly, then flew out into the air.

It flew a few circles in the 9,000-meter region, then went further out, whereupon the forces of the three sects prepared to begin fighting over it.

However, the sealing mark moved too quickly, and flitted through the grasping hands of the cultivators of the three sects. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and then he howled at the top of his lungs as he activated all of his paper talismans, unleashing the explosive power of his Undying Heavenly King Body, and used the Mountain Shaking Bash. Worried that all that might not give him enough speed, he pushed off using the big toe of his left foot. In the blink of an eye, he was nothing but a series of afterimages that shot into the danger zone.

He was moving so fast that he was little more than a blur as he arrived in front of the sealing mark, and then reached out to grab it. However, in almost the exact same instant, the people from the Starry River Court shouted in rage and pooled their power to block his path.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as he was shoved backward, and the Starry River Court’s stream of stars snatched the sealing mark away.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t want to accept it, but was out of options, and had to flee back to safety. Along the way, he was struck by a bolt of lightning, which destroyed most of his activated paper talismans.

“You big bullies!!” he fumed, glaring back. However, before his anger had much of a chance to flare up, two sealing marks suddenly flickered and flew into the air off of the Mountain of Legacy Seals. The Polarity River Court went all out in their attempt to grab the first, but the second managed to slip past the three sects. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, and then he burst into motion to make another attempt.

More lightning crashed around him, and he had to dodge seas of flames. All of his paper talismans were destroyed, and even his black wok was shattered. However, all of that brought him right up to the sealing mark.

“Beat it!” A cold snort ripped through the air, sending crushing pressure into Bai Xiaochun’s mind. At the same time, rumbling sounds filled the air as the Dao River Court’s illusory giant stormed toward him.

The giant waved its hand, unleashing a terrifying burst of power, a magical technique that was no weaker than the magics of the world itself. Before Bai Xiaochun could do anything, the giant was upon him.

At that point, he drew upon all of his fleshly body power, as well as his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, to fight back. He continued to reach out his hand toward the sealing mark, which was now only nine meters away.

However, that was when the giant’s fist struck out, sending a violent tempest of wind into Bai Xiaochun that carried him away, head over heels.

Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as another set of paper talismans was completely destroyed, along with quite a few of his defensive magical items. At the same time, the force of the blow left him temporarily immobilized.

After all, the giant was backed by the power of a whole group of people, whereas Bai Xiaochun was acting alone. After grinding to a halt, he looked up as the giant casually grabbed the sealing mark which he had been just on the verge of taking. At the same time, numerous magics were unleashed by the world around him.

The giant looked over its shoulder at him, its expression that of scorn. “You think a bit too much of yourself!”

Then it shot back toward the group from the Dao River Court.

In the moment of crisis in which the magical techniques bore down on Bai Xiaochun, Bruiser let out an angry roar, grabbed Bai Xiaochun’s robe, and started dragging him backward.

However, that was when the stream of stars from the Starry River Court appeared and blocked their path, making it impossible for them to escape. The lightning slammed into Bruiser, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had recovered by that point, so he grabbed Bruiser and rushed back out toward the safe area.

The people from the Polarity River Court watched Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser flee with contempt. A cold snort rang out and someone said, “The River-Defying Sect isn’t strong enough to get even one sealing mark. Be a good boy and stay outside. Don’t look for trouble in here!”

The Starry River Court people were equally derisive. Chen Yunshan even said, “If you try to mess with us, we might not be able to kill you because of the rules, but the defensive spells here could destroy you. Nobody would care if that happened.”

The evil intentions hidden within those words couldn’t have been more clear!

Even as Bai Xiaochun continued to retreat, a black wind hit him from behind, causing blood to spray from his mouth. When he finally made it to safety, he looked back to see that the cultivators from the other sects were all about 1,500 meters into the zone of defensive spells.

“Complete and utter bullies!!” he thought, anger burning. Then he looked down and saw how hurt Bruiser was, and his rage simmered even hotter. Glaring over at the cultivators of the three sects, he growled, “I don’t care if you snatch the sealing marks away from me, or even if you hurt me. But you hurt *Bruiser*!

“You people are forcing my hand!” Eyes more bloodshot than ever, he gritted his teeth and gave Bruiser some medicinal pills. Looking back at the situation, he saw that the Dao River Court was now about 3,000 meters in. With that, he blurred into motion, taking Bruiser toward one of the areas he had observed earlier with this Heavenspan

Dharma Eye, a place that seemed impossible to pass through.

Meanwhile, outside of the legacy zone, at the border of the stone spell formation, the Nascent Soul cultivators from the four sects were looking at the glowing screen, and the four circles of light which represented the achievements of the disciples.

The Dao River Court's circle was the brightest, with the Starry and Polarity River Courts also lit up, but not as bright. Only the River-Defying Sect's circle had remained dark the entire time.

The level of brightness indicated how many sealing marks had been obtained, and therefore, the Nascent Soul cultivators from the Dao River Court were all smiles. Of course, none of this was unexpected. As far as they were concerned, the Dao River Court should be the one to take first place.

The red-haired old man from the Starry River Court laughed heartily and said, "Congratulations, Fellow Daoists. It seems the Dao River Court really will take first place again.

"Unfortunately, it doesn't seem the Fellow Daoists from the River-Defying Sect are doing very well. Definitely not as well as the Sky River Court did last time. They took second place back then, and almost tied with the Dao River Court."

The faces of Crimsonsoul, Frigidsect, and Master Godwind, were all very grim. Eventually, they had no choice but to sigh. They had been prepared for defeat from the beginning, but had still hoped that Bai Xiaochun would be able to get at least one sealing mark.

“Fellow Daoist Frigidsect,” the red-haired cultivator said, “what do you say we make a little bet? I'm guessing your River-Defying Sect won't be able to get more than two sealing marks!”

Frigidsect’s expression darkened even further, and it was the same with the other two patriarchs. As for the Dao River Court and the Polarity River Court, they looked very amused at what was happening.

Suddenly, Master Godwind looked over at the red-haired old man and slowly said, “A bet? What are the stakes?!”

The red-haired old man smiled coldly and said, “I happen to have a Starry Meteor from the Starry River Court, which can unleash an attack with power similar to the Deva Realm. I’ll put that up against one of your River-Defying Sect’s Heavenspan Battleships!”

Frigidsect’s expression flickered, and Master Godwind’s eyes glinted with incisive light. Starry Meteors were in fact spirit treasures from the Starry River Court, and were of similar value to Heavenspan Battleships. However, the Heavenspan Battleships were much more precious to the River-Defying Sect than Starry Meteors were to the Starry River Court. Clearly, this red-haired old man had planned this all along!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0364 awe-chapter-365

Chapter 365: What’s That...?

“We’re only talking about two sealing marks,” he said in a cold voice. “Is the River-Defying Sect really not even confident in getting two little sealing marks?” The red-haired old man narrowed his eyes.

Master Godwind maintained his silence, as did Patriarch Crimsonsoul. The two of them looked over at Frigidsect. If the River-Defying Sect won a bet like this, it would be a big gain for their sect. Getting a Starry Meteor would make up for some of the losses that were going to occur within the legacy competition.

However, if they lost, and had to hand over a Heavenspan Battleship, the overall battle prowess of the River-Defying Sect would be significantly reduced.

In the end, the Heavenspan Battleship at stake belonged to the Spirit Stream Division, and furthermore, Frigidsect knew Bai Xiaochun better than the other two. Therefore, he was the one who would make the final decision.

Frigidsect looked up at the dark circle which represented the River-Defying Sect, and took a moment to think back to all the miraculous things Bai Xiaochun had accomplished. If they won the bet, it would be a big boost in confidence and morale for the sect. If they lost.... Well, even refusing to take the bet would mean that they had lost to the other three sects.

The stakes were high, but the truth was that the River-Defying Sect didn’t actually have much to lose.

“You’re on!” Frigidsect said through gritted teeth. In response, the red-haired old man laughed heartily. The truth was that earlier, he had already given orders to the disciples who had gone into the legacy zone.

Not only was their mission to get as many legacy seals as possible, they were also to stop the River-Defying Sect from getting even a single one!

“Considering that,” he thought, “it’s theoretically possible he could get a single seal by accident. But he definitely won’t be able to get two!” Inwardly, he was chuckling coldly. What made him even more confident was that he knew that because it was not the usual appointed time for the trial by fire, the defensive spell zone outside the Mountain of Legacy Seals would be more difficult to pass through. Thererfore, it would be virtually impossible for Bai Xiaochun to get close to the mountain on his own.

The Dao and Polarity River Courts were paying close attention to what was happening. It was obvious to them what the Starry River Court was trying to do; not only were they trying to secure the resources which had once belonged to the Sky River Court, they were trying to weaken the River-Defying Sect. In the future, it was easy to imagine how they, in their greed, would begin to swallow up the River-Defying Sect to strengthen themselves!

After all, the Starry River Court bordered the River-Defying Sect!

In the past, the Sky River Court had completely dominated the Starry River Court, and on many situations, the Starry River Court had been forced to wait to see what the Sky

River Court did before they themselves took action. But now, the Sky River Court was no more, and the Starry River Court had a new neighbor!

As the matter with the bet played out on the outside, the Dao River Court forces inside the legacy zone reached the 3,600-meter mark. Apparently, that was their limit. Not even their powerful giant could progress much further without being destroyed.

The Polarity River Court was about 2,700 meters in, not quite as far as the Dao River Court. However, the Dao River Court wouldn't be capable of snatching every single one of the legacy seals, ensuring that the Polarity River Court would still be able to get a good share.

The Starry River Court was the weakest of all, and was only about 1,500 meters in. Despite being behind the Polarity and Dao River Courts, they would still be able to get some of the seals, and simultaneously deprive the River-Defying Sect of any.

By this point, about ten sealing marks had flown out from the Mountain of Legacy Seals.

Bai Xiaochun had led Bruiser to a point some distance away from the three sects, although they were still within eyeshot.

With his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, he had located the perfect spot. The pressure weighing down in the area was vastly greater than the safe spot where the three sects had entered.

“Bruiser, I need you to shrink down,” he said, his voice cold. “Dad's gonna take you to have some fun!”

Bruiser looked surprised, but a moment later, he shivered and began to shrink down in size. Soon, he was small enough that Bai Xiaochun was able to place him in the folds of his robe. Then, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, causing a tremor to run through him.

Cracking sounds rang out as he used the power of the Undying Live Forever Technique and his Heaven-Dao Gold Core to shrink down. Bones and flesh alike became smaller, until Bai Xiaochun was the size of a small child.

His clothing was too large, so he simply ripped it off. Then he waved his finger toward the ground, and a flash of black light could be seen as the turtle-wok appeared!

“You people are forcing my hand!” he said through gritted teeth. “I didn’t want to cheat!” Bai Xiaochun didn't like using the wok publicly, but right now, he was out of options. Taking a deep breath, he lay down on the ground and dragged the turtle-wok over him.

Now that he had shrunk down, it was easy for him to fit underneath it, making it look very much like an actual turtle as it lay there on the ground.

Almost in the same moment, a delighted exclamation could be heard from within his bag of holding.

“Hahaha! You definitely deserve to be my pet! Good job, Little Bai. Master approves!” It was none other than the little turtle, who flew out with a pop and landed on the ground just behind Bai Xiaochun.

“You shut up!” Bai Xiaochun yelled. Ignoring the little turtle, he tilted the edge of the turtle-wok up and looked at the 15,000 meters of dangerous territory up ahead, then began to crawl forward.

The little turtle followed along, laughing. From a distance, it looked like two turtles, one big and one small, crawling slowly into the zone of restrictive spells.

Almost as soon as they entered, a bolt of lightning many times bigger than any of the previous bolts fell from above and slammed into the turtle-wok. However, the wok was virtually indestructible, and no amount of lightning could do anything to it. Bai Xiaochun felt some vibrations, but that was it. With the added protection of the wok, his Undying Live Forever Technique and Heaven-Dao Gold Core ensured that he was completely unharmed.

Off in the distance, the cultivators of the three sects were currently fighting over one of the legacy seals when they suddenly sensed that something strange was going on with Bai Xiaochun. The cultivators began to look over, and soon noticed the two turtles....

“What’s that...?”

“It’s a turtle shell!”

“I can’t believe that guy from the River-Defying Sect is using this method to get into the defensive spell zone! Hahaha! Bai Xiaochun actually found a turtle shell somewhere and is using it for protection?”

“Wait, it's not just one turtle. Look! There's an even smaller turtle behind the first one. Hilarious!”

Roars of laughter could soon be heard from the three sects. Even the group from the Dao River Court couldn’t contain their scorn. The people from the Starry River Court were laughing the loudest, especially Chen Yunshan.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he yelled through his laughter, “aren’t you the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect? I can’t believe you're willing to become a turtle just to get some legacy seals. Come, come. Just kowtow to me a few times and I’ll give you a few for free. What do you say?”

Bai Xiaochun could hear the mocking of the three sects, and couldn’t help but let out an angry harrumph. “You just wait and see what happens!” he thought.

As he crawled forward, black winds screamed, and seas of flame battered him. Blades of ice shot toward him, along with countless other magics. However, none of them could stop him.

With the turtle-wok on his back, he crawled relentlessly forward until he was 300 meters in.

The mocking cries coming from the three sects began to die down. In fact, many people’s eyes began to widen, and gasps could be heard.

“What kind of turtle shell is that!?!?”

“How... how is this even possible? The area Bai Xiaochun is in is far, far more dangerous than where we are.”

“The lightning, the fire, the wind... none of it has any effect on that turtle shell. Woah! Look, he’s picking up speed!!”

Jaws dropped as the turtle shell, apparently having become used to the area, began to go faster and faster.

600 meters. 900 meters. 1,200 meters. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the magics slammed into the turtle shell, and yet nothing could stop it from accelerating. Before long, it had passed the 1,500-meter mark.

“Impossible!!” Chen Yunshan howled. He simply couldn’t believe what he was seeing, and was panting as a result. He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. Everyone from the Polarity River Court had similar looks of disbelief on their faces.

By this point, more than a hundred bolts of lightning had struck the turtle shell, and yet, it only continued to move faster and faster.

Of course, despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was hidden under the turtle shell, all of them knew exactly what kind of expression was on his face. One of utmost pride....

“Hmmmph! When Lord Bai takes action, he frightens even himself. I can’t believe you people dared to bully me!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he continued to crawl along on his hands and knees. Soon, he was 1,800 meters in. Then 2,100 meters. Then 3,000 meters!

Not even the cultivators from the Dao River Court dared to lightly enter such a region, but Bai Xiaochun didn't seem worried at all. In fact, soon the cultivators of the three sects could hear Bai Xiaochun humming a little tune.

Not a single one of the dangerous magics in the area had even the slightest effect on the turtle shell.

“This... this... this....” Everyone was completely and utterly stunned.

--

Important info: In the note attached to this chapter during its initial release, Er Gen complained about some pain he was feeling while sitting and typing. Over the course of the following several chapters, he included more and more such notes. He tried various folk remedies but nothing helped, and the pain started to reach excruciating levels. He eventually went to the hospital and found that he had some sort of hemorrhoid or other such condition, and needed surgery to fix the problem. He eventually did have surgery, after which he had to write chapters while laying on his stomach. The recovery process lasted for a while before he was able to get back to normal. Throughout that time, he mostly kept to his release schedule, but missed a few days here and there and slowed down once or twice. He also chronicled the situation in his post-chapter notes. Instead of translating all of those notes, I'm including this short explanation. It wasn't until well past 390 that he had recovered from the surgery to the point where he could resume writing as usual.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0365 awe-chapter-366

Chapter 366: Shameless! Cheater!

The cultivators from the three sects were virtually going crazy. Of course, they wished they could do something to stop Bai Xiaochun, but he was in an area of extreme danger that they didn’t even dare to enter....

They could only watch wide-eyed as the two turtles sped further and further into the zone of defensive spells. 3,900 meters. 4,800 meters. Before long, Bai Xiaochun was 6,000 meters in, a distance that none of the rest of the sects dared to attempt to match.

“6,000... 6,000 meters!?!?”

“Dammit! How could this guy possibly get 6,000 meters in? Doesn’t... doesn’t that mean that he’s going to get past the Dao River Court and have the first chance to get the legacy seals?!?!”

As the cultivators of the three sects realized what was happening, shouts of astonishment and jealousy began to rise up into the air.

6,000 meters in, the magic was so intense that it fell like rain. At that point, Bai Xiaochun stopped for a moment, slowly lifted the edge of the turtle-wok and looked out with eager anticipation.

He could hear the shouts of astonishment coming from behind him, and it made him happier than ever. Even as he wallowed in his pride, the Mountain of Legacy Seals began to tremble, and a legacy seal flew out. As it circled about, it got closer and closer to Bai Xiaochun.

“Hahaha! Now nobody can even think of stealing it from me. Hey little legacy seal, come over here!” Smiling broadly, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then waved his finger at the incoming legacy seal.

Whoever was closest to the legacy seals obviously had the advantage, and at the moment, nobody was there to compete with Bai Xiaochun. The legacy seal shivered in place, then shot toward Bai Xiaochun, disappearing into the turtle shell.

“Got one!” he cried excitedly, absorbing it.

When the cultivators of the three sects saw this happen, their eyes turned as red as rabbits’. That was especially true of the people from the Dao River Court. They poured power into their giant to try to get it to move forward, and even as they did, another legacy seal flew out and was grabbed by Bai Xiaochun. The rage of the cultivators burned hot and bright.

“Are you looking to die, Bai Xiaochun!?!?"

“This isn’t fair!!”

“You’re pushing things too far, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Bai Xiaochun only began to hum his little tune louder than before. After resting for a bit longer under the turtle shell, he saw a third legacy seal, which he quickly sucked into the shell.

“I guess I’ll just wait here and grab each one as it comes along. Hmph!” Feeling more pleased than ever, and more awesome, Bai Xiaochun thought about bringing out his mirror to ask imposter Nightcrypt how amazing he was.

However, it didn't seem like a good idea at the moment, so he suppressed it.

He was feeling quite comfortable underneath the turtle shell, grabbing legacy seals at leisure. However, the cultivators of the three sects were simmering on the point of complete madness.

If things kept going the way they were, then Bai Xiaochun would likely pull off a miracle, a miracle that would leave them humiliated more than they had been in years!

That was especially true of the dozens of Core Formation Chosen from the Dao River Court. The pressure on them was suddenly quite intense. The entire group went all out, causing the illusory giant to turn even more corporeal, and then carry them forward 1,500 meters in a wild sprint.

The Polarity and Starry River Court cultivators also took various risks, gritting their teeth to shoot forward once again.

The three sects advanced in grand fashion, with their cultivators using all sorts of magical items, divine abilities and magical techniques. They utilized everything within their power to try to head deeper into the danger zone.

When Bai Xiaochun sensed the surge of energy behind him, and realized that the three sects were trying to catch up, his anger flared.

“This is my spot! I can’t believe you people are going to try to steal from me again. Complete bullies!!” Gritting his teeth, he hunkered down in the turtle shell and started crawling forward again.

The little turtle followed along, laughing in amusement.

Time passed. As Bai Xiaochun crawled forward, he continued to grab the legacy seals as they flew out. Eventually, the Dao River Court reached the 6,000-meter mark. The Polarity River Court was right behind them, and even the Starry River Court had reached the 3,600-meter mark. All three sects had truly reached their limit. And yet, to their complete despair, Bai Xiaochun had already crawled up to the 9,000-meter mark.

And he kept going. Soon, he reached 10,500 meters. Then 12,000....

The distances involved left the Dao River Court in a state of complete hopelessness. The Polarity River Court was filled with bitterness, and the Starry River Court was going mad. One legacy seal after another flew out and was taken by Bai Xiaochun. All the cultivators were filled with a sense of indescribable powerlessness.

“12,000... 12,000 meters....”

“This can’t really be happening....” As of this moment, the Starry River Court had two legacy seals, the Polarity River Court had one more than them, and the Dao River Court had the most with five.

All of the other legacy seals were going to Bai Xiaochun....

To make matters even worse, Bai Xiaochun was loudly announcing how many he’d acquired.

“Thirty-one!”

“Thirty-seven!”

“Forty-three!”

The Mountain of Legacy Seals was shaking violently. From ancient times until now, nothing like this had ever happened. No one had ever gotten so close to the mountain, or acquired so many legacy seals.

Bai Xiaochun was completely elated. He even took a moment to look back at the cultivators from the other three sects, and felt more wonderful than ever. After that, he decided he might as well keep crawling forward.

“Forty-seven!”

“Fifty-three!”

“Fifty-seven!”

Bai Xiaochun’s voice continued to ring out as he got closer and closer to the Mountain of Legacy Seals. The cultivators of the three sects felt as if wild beasts were trampling their hearts. As they watched Bai Xiaochun, their eyes burned with madness and killing intent. From the look of things, if they could, they would ignore the rules and simply kill him.

“Shut up!!”

“Dammit. You’re completely shameless! Cheater!!”

“I'm gonna kill you!!!”

Bai Xiaochun turned around and disdainfully lifted the back edge of the turtle-wok to peer out at the three sects. Then he cried out as loudly as possible, “Do you people dare to come over here!? We can have an epic fight. I dare you! Come on! I'm waiting for you right here!”

Saying such words was like pouring fuel onto the fire. The three sects exploded with rage, especially Chen Yunshan, whose face was distorted from fury.

A moment passed, and then Bai Xiaochun sighed and said, “Why aren’t any of you coming over? How about.... you all come together?! I’ll take you all on at once! What do you say...? Lord Bai is getting tired of waiting.... Ai, heroes are always so lonely. The scenery here is wonderful, what a pity none of you dare to come share it with me.”

With that, he grabbed another legacy seal.

Bai Xiaochun was used to calling out the numbers by now, so he yelled, “This is the fifty-ninth!”

After some thought, he was curious what it would be like even closer to the mountain, so he began to proceed forward again.

At the same time, the cultivators of the three sects realized that they couldn’t stay in their current positions safely, and began to move in the opposite direction.

Of course, a scene of similar madness could be seen outside of the legacy zone….

Some time earlier, the River-Defying Sect's circle on the glowing screen had suddenly lit up.

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul, and Master Godwind were immediately delighted. After all, that glowing light represented the honor of the whole sect. Based on how bright their glowing circle was compared to the other three sects, they were able to speculate that Bai Xiaochun had acquired a single legacy seal.

“Even one makes this whole thing worth it!” Crimsonsoul thought, tightening his hands into fists. Not too far away, the red-haired old man from the Starry River Court felt his heart suddenly tremble. He even frowned, although it only lasted for a moment.

“Congratulations, River-Defying Sect,” he said with a false smile. “You got lucky and managed to get a single legacy seal. However, luck will only carry you so far in--” Before he could finish speaking, the River-Defying Sect’s glowing circle suddenly got a bit brighter. Then, only moments later, it brightened again. Soon, it was brighter than the Starry River Court’s circle.

The Nascent Soul patriarchs from the other three sects were shocked, especially those from the Starry River Court.

“How is this possible?!”

The three patriarchs from the River-Defying Sect were also astonished, and exchanged incredulous glances.

The red-haired old man’s expression was extremely unsightly, and rage could be seen flickering in his eyes. All of a sudden, he felt as if the disciples he had sent into the legacy zone were completely useless. Even as he began to feel regret in his heart, the River-Defying Sect’s glowing circle got even brighter!

There were no rumbling sounds, but everyone felt as if their minds were crashing with thunder. The River-Defying Sect’s glowing circle was getting brighter with indescribable speed. A moment later, and it surpassed the Polarity River Court!

The Nascent Soul Daoist masters from the Polarity River Court couldn't prevent their expressions from flickering.

Moments later, the River-Defying Sect surpassed the Dao River Court. The white-haired old man took a step forward to stare more closely at the glowing circles. Everyone had looks of madness overtaking their faces.

The brightness of the River-Defying Sect's glowing circle was increasing so dramatically that it completely exceeded the imaginations of all present!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

This chapter is a bit short, coming in at around 1,600 words

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0366 awe-chapter-367

Chapter 367: Living Mountain Incantation!

It was so bright that it was almost painful to look at, as if it were the only light which existed. Even the light from the other three sects combined was completely and utterly crushed by it.

“W-what’s... what’s going on!?!?”

“Don’t tell me that all of the legacy seals are being taken by only one person from the River-Defying Sect?!”

“Impossible!!”

“Heavens, even when the Dao River Court took first place last time, the light wasn’t this bright. How... how many legacy seals does that represent?” The Nascent Soul experts from the three sects were all shocked. The red-haired old man from the Starry River Court was physically shaking, and his face was covered with an expression of utter incredulity.

“Maybe the circle got broken somehow...?” he murmured. The Nascent Soul Daoist master from the Polarity River Court was panting, and a look of unprecedented anxiety could be seen in his eyes.

Originally, the matter of redistributing the resources wasn’t very important to the Polarity River Court, especially considering the compensation the Starry River Court had offered to gain their support. However, if things kept going the way they were, that compensation wouldn’t even make up for the losses they would incur.

Now, in this moment of anxiety, their anger toward the Starry River Court was growing.

If the Polarity River Court had such a reaction, there almost wasn’t even a need to mention the Nascent Soul experts from the Dao River Court. They were all trembling, and looks of despair could be seen flickering in their eyes. If they didn’t end up with more resources than they had in the previous competition, their decision to join in the Starry River Court’s little plan would result in indescribable losses.

Furthermore, the sect’s deva patriarch would surely be furious.

After thinking about the consequences at stake, one of the other Nascent Soul cultivators from the Starry River Court said, “Impossible. This is definitely a mistake....”

However, his words of consolation fell completely flat. The area outside of the stone spell formation descended into a deathly silence. All of the Nascent Soul Daoist masters were looking at the glowing circles, and it was completely obvious that the River-Defying Sect’s circle was continuing to grow brighter.

At the same time, the circles representing the other sects hadn’t changed at all.... Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind were all dumbstruck.

Even they had no idea what could be going on inside the legacy zone....

“What... is Bai Xiaochun... doing in there?” Crimsonsoul murmured, looking over in confusion at Master Godwind and Frigidsect.

Meanwhile, back in the legacy zone, the disciples of the three sects were howling in fury. Bai Xiaochun was currently 12,000 meters in, and continuing forward toward the Mountain of Legacy Seals itself.

By this point, deep despair had taken root in the hearts of everyone present....

From the first moment this legacy zone had been opened in ancient times until now, not a single Core Formation cultivator had ever reached the actual foot of the mountain. In fact, no one knew what dangers existed there, nor what would happen if someone reached that point.

But now, everyone watched helplessly as the damnable and shameless Bai Xiaochun used his cheating methods to pull off a miracle.

“It’s not fair....”

“I can’t believe you can actually cheat the system here!”

“Oh heavens, have you no eyes? Send lightning to smite this despicable Bai Xiaochun!!” Tears welled up in their eyes as Bai Xiaochun reached the 15,000-meter mark. He was now right at the foot of the Mountain of Legacy Seals!

As soon as he reached that point, his jaw dropped. It felt as if he had just passed through a sheet of water, and he involuntarily stopped moving. Oh-so-carefully, he tilted up the edge of the turtle shell, and could sense that there was no lightning, no black wind, and no magic of any other type.

“Eee?” Curious, Bai Xiaochun backed up a few meters, and sure enough, could feel the lightning and other magic battering the turtle shell. Then he moved forward a bit, and the sensation vanished.

Under the despairing gazes of the crowd from the three other sects, Bai Xiaochun went back and forth a few times to confirm that the nine-meter-area right beneath the mountain was free of any sort of defensive spells.

Trembling with excitement, he slowly pushed the turtle shell off of himself and stood up, cracking sounds ringing out as he returned to his normal size. Then, he clasped his hands behind his back, flicked his sleeve, and stuck his chin up. Glancing back scornfully at the cultivators of the three sects, he said, “Hmmmmmph! Wanna fight with me? Who of you dares to come over here and have a duel to the death with Bai Xiaochun!?”

No one responded, but if looks could kill, then the gazes falling onto Bai Xiaochun would have chopped him into mincemeat....

Seeing that nobody was going to say anything, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but sigh like a lonely hero. Then he turned and looked up at the Mountain of Legacy Seals, which was so toweringly tall that he couldn’t even see the top.

“I wonder what it would feel like to touch it...?” he thought. After pondering the matter for a moment, he decided that it most likely wouldn’t be very dangerous. Therefore, he cautiously reached out and tapped the surface of the mountain with the tip of his finger.

Nothing happened, and he breathed a sigh of relief. At the same time, the cultivators of the three sects simply stared with wide eyes....

“I guess I have nothing to worry about.” Flicking his sleeve, he planted his hand firmly down onto the mountain and prepared to boast a bit.

However, in the moment that his hand landed on the mountain, rumbling sounds began to echo out.

The ground began to shake, and the sky vibrated as the dozens of remaining legacy seals on the mountain suddenly began to blaze with light, and then fly into the air!

They made a spectacular sight as they swirled about, each one radiating dazzling, multicolored light.

The cultivators of the three sects were completely shocked to see so many legacy seals flying out at the same time, and many of them unleashed magics to try to grab them.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun was just about to pull his hand away from the mountain when suddenly, all of the dozens of legacy seals began to speed in his direction.

He couldn’t have evaded them even if he wanted to. He was like a black hole, and all of the seals were flying toward him, fusing into his body and merging with the seals he'd already acquired.

As they combined, a mnemonic appeared inside of Bai Xiaochun’s mind, a fragmented divine ability!

Because it was incomplete, he couldn’t quite make it out clearly. However, it was in that moment that the cultivators from the other sects who had acquired legacy seals earlier all began to scream. At the same time, their bodies began to twist and distort as the seals that they had absorbed earlier flew out from inside of them.

“How could this be happening?!”

“No! That’s my legacy seal!!” Amidst the cries of shock and alarm, the legacy seals sped toward Bai Xiaochun and merged into him. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun had... one hundred legacy seals!

Each and every one of those hundred seals was inside of him, merging together!

The fragmented divine ability was now complete and easy to see!

“Living Mountain Incantation!” Bai Xiaochun’s mind spun as the divine ability was imprinted into his mind. Even before the process was complete, he could tell that this divine ability was something completely shocking!

Suddenly, an ancient voice began to speak inside of Bai Xiaochun’s mind. “Merge with the mountain, become a living mountain. Stand in front of the mountain and be called an immortal!”

The voice started out as a mere whisper, but by the end, its words echoed like thunder.

That was especially true of the final word spoken, *immortal*, which was spoken with heaven-rending, earth-crushing volume!

Meanwhile, outside of the legacy zone, the River-Defying Sect’s glowing circle was exploding with intense light. In fact, the light was so bright that it formed a pillar which shot up into the air!

Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds echoed out as the beam of light ascended into parts unknown. The Nascent Soul cultivators from the three sects looked on with minds reeling.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, as the River-Defying Sect’s light grew stronger, the lights representing the Dao, Polarity, and Starry River Courts grew dimmer, until they reverted to their original appearance. The River-Defying Sect’s beam of light... had consumed the light from the three other sects!

“This is impossible!”

“Something definitely went wrong. Majorly wrong!!”

“From ancient times until now, no one has ever lost a legacy seal that they had already absorbed!!” Looks of unprecedented shock appeared on the faces of the Nascent Soul cultivators, and it was with completely bloodshot eyes that they looked over at the River-Defying Sect’s patriarchs.

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind were looking on with wide eyes. They didn’t have any idea what was going on inside the legacy zone either, but one thing was for sure; they couldn’t help but feel strong reverence for Bai Xiaochun!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

This is another shorter chapter coming in at around 1,600 words

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0367 awe-chapter-368

Chapter 368: Let Me Explain

“What is your River-Defying Sect doing in there? This is wrong!” The red-haired old man from the Starry River Court was trembling from the enormity of the situation. After all, the Starry River Court would be hard pressed to deal with a furious Dao River Court and Polarity River Court.

In fact, it was now possible to tell that only about a third of the anger of those two sects was directed at the River-Defying Sect, with the rest being reserved for the Starry River Court!

Therefore, the only option left for them was to try to drag the River-Defying Sect down too.

However, even as the words left his mouth, the sky above began to shake, and a gigantic, blinding figure of light appeared out of thin air. Instantly, intense pressure weighed down, and the lands began to quake. All of the Nascent Soul cultivators immediately clasped hands and bowed formally.

“Greetings, Emissary!”

The figure of light looked at the temple in the middle of the stone spell formation, but despite the level of his cultivation base, he wasn't able to see exactly what was happening inside. Of course, he didn’t really care about that. Although a divine ability was being secretly imparted to a legacy successor, that in itself wasn’t a major incident. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had a total of 300 secret legacies, and all of them were shocking in power. With the exception of a few dozen that were particularly powerful, it was hard to determine which ones were stronger than the others.

“If I remember, the Living Mountain Incantation is rated in the top ten among the secret legacies. Unfortunately, it’s far too difficult to cultivate, which is why it's virtually unheard of to see anyone use it.

“Now that I think about it, it's been tens of thousands of years since this arcane pocket realm was tamed and this secret legacy was left behind in it.” The gigantic figure of light waved his hand, and ripples spread out across the sky like waves rolling across a sea.

“Today,” he said, his voice rumbling like thunder, “someone has mastered the Living Mountain Incantation. Listen ye of the four great sects: within a month, inscribe this person’s information onto a jade slip and deliver it to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to be kept on file!”

With that, the figure began to fade away. The only reason he had come was because he had sensed the Living Mountain Incantation taking form. Having accomplished his task, he immediately returned to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

As the enormous glowing giant disappeared, the Nascent Soul cultivators of the Starry River Court sat there with faces as pale as death. No longer did they try to accuse the River-Defying Sect of cheating. No matter what had occurred within the legacy zone, the emissary's words had to be accepted as fact!

Bai Xiaochun of the River-Defying Sect had obtained a complete legacy, and had gained enlightenment of the Living Mountain Incantation!

Crimsonsoul, Frigidsect and Master Godwind exchanged glances, and could immediately see the excitement in each other’s eyes. They even seemed to be sitting up a bit straighter than before.

The Dao River Court and the Polarity River Court sat there in taciturn silence for a moment. Then, they both took the initiative to approach the River-Defying Sect.

“Congratulations, Fellow Daoist Frigidsect. Hahaha! The junior patriarch of your honored sect has gained enlightenment of the Living Mountain Incantation, and even attracted the attention of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. In the future, he will surely rise to tremendous heights!”

“Fellow Daoist Crimsonsoul, now I understand why you were so confident earlier. This kid Bai Xiaochun is really extraordinary! Now that I think about it, he really stuck out to me back when we came to visit you before. He’s like a dragon amongst men!”

These Nascent Soul Daoist masters weren’t currying favor. Rather, they were worried about how to explain the matter when they got back to the sect, and were hoping that the River-Defying Sect would bend the rules and not take all of their resources....

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind were adept schemers, and knew exactly how to handle the situation. Suppressing their excitement, they decided not to mention anything about the resources.

“Xiaochun is a naughty and mischievous kid,” Frigidsect said. “We’re just as worried as you are about what’s going on inside the legacy zone.”

The Dao and Polarity River Courts knew exactly what was being implied when the first thing Frigidsect mentioned was Bai Xiaochun’s safety.

“It’s impossible to send messages into and out of the legacy zone, so it's hard to say what's going on. But don’t worry, Fellow Daoist Frigidsect. The matter of the legacy seals is over. Everyone will be teleported out within the time it takes an incense stick to burn.”

Having heard this, Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind were much relieved, and even began to chat randomly with the other patriarchs. As for the group from the Starry River Court, they sat off to the side, their faces ashen as they ignored the other sects.

Meanwhile, back in the legacy zone, now that Bai Xiaochun had absorbed all of the sealing marks, the defensive magics faded away. There was no crushing pressure, no lightning, no black winds or seas of flame. In the blink of an eye, they were all gone.

Bai Xiaochun was completely absorbed in the Living Mountain Incantation, when suddenly Bruiser bumped him. Looking around, he realized that none of the defensive spells were in operation, and the cultivators of the three sects were about 3,000 meters away from him, their eyes flickering with cold fury.

“The defensive spells are gone?” Bai Xiaochun shivered, and then subconsciously took a few steps back. The looks being given him by the three sects caused his hair to stand on end.

“Hey there, Fellow Daoists! You know, we're all Middle Reaches sects. We’re on the same team....” Even as he stammered an explanation, the cultivators of the three sects began to walk wordlessly in his direction, the coldness in their eyes flaring.

Backing up, he continued, “Killing people isn’t allowed! Don’t do anything impulsive, okay? You definitely don’t want to fly off the handle....” Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding. He could tell that their tempers had been riled up to the point of detonation. Plus, not only did they need to vent their frustration, they also coveted his turtle-wok.

“Dammit,” he thought. “why did the defensive spells suddenly vanish?” Trembling and on the verge of tears, he continued to back up.

“Listen, Fellow Daoists, you guys all have big teams, but I’m all alone. Getting the sealing marks was just a matter of luck. I know you’re feeling frustrated, but you were doing the best you could! Don’t be sore losers! Come on, Fellow Daoists, let's all calm down. I really didn’t do it on purpose....”

Surprisingly, some of the other cultivators actually listened to his words and stopped walking. After all, the matter was over now, and fighting about it wouldn't solve any problems. However, it was still difficult to rid themselves of the fury which existed in their hearts.

Seeing that his words were having some effect, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. He was well aware that this was not the time to get people riled up. Although it was true that anyone who killed someone else would be executed in punishment, if he lost his poor little life in the process, what good would that do…?

Just when he was about to continue offering some consolation, the little turtle suddenly flew up and landed on top of his head. Bai Xiaochun’s heart instantly began to pound with a feeling of impending doom. Before he could say or do anything, the little turtle cleared its throat and then shouted, “It seems you people just don’t understand. Listen, I’ll explain what my master just said in a clearer way. What he actually means is that you people are a bunch of moronic noobs. How dare you try to fight with my Bai Xiaochun? Stop gawking and screw the hell off!”

His voice was so loud that no one could possibly not hear him. The cultivators of the three sects who had just been calming down suddenly felt their rage burning hotter than ever.

That was especially true of the people from the Starry River Court, who immediately devolved into madness. Chen Yunshan was the first to give voice to his rage.

“Kill Bai Xiaochun! If we work together, we can completely exterminate him. As long as we do it together, there’s no way our sects are going to do anything about it!

“That wok of his is a precious treasure!

“Kill him, and maybe the legacy seals inside of him will be available for the taking again!” Although nobody quite agreed with Chen Yunshan’s assessment of the situation, their killing intent was bursting. The rage which they had been suppressing had been ignited by the little turtle’s words!

Instantly, shouts of fury rose up as dozens of Core Formation cultivators all flew into the air toward Bai Xiaochun. It was a majestic sight as they unleashed all sorts of magical techniques in a deadly attack.

“That’s not what I meant at all!!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked as he took to flight. He was no fool, and knew that no matter how strong he was, his Undying Heavenly King Core and Heaven-Dao Gold Core couldn’t stand up to dozens and dozens of Earth Core Chosen all at the same time.

As for being screwed over by the little turtle, it only caused the hatred in his heart to grow. Tears were on the verge of leaking out of the corners of his eyes. Even as dozens of crazed enemies closed in, the little turtle popped its head out and shouted, “Bring it on you idiotic weaklings! My master can beat you all single-handedly. Bring it on! If you think you have what it takes, then fight!”

“You shut up!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. Then he reached out, grabbed the little turtle, and hurled him backward toward the crowd.

“Kill him, alright!?” he screamed. “He's the one who said it, not me!” The turtle shot through the air so quickly that nobody could possibly evade him, and with a smacking sound, he banged into the face of one of the cultivators from the Starry River Court.

The cultivator was hit so hard that it nearly knocked his teeth out, and as he staggered backward, the black silhouette of a turtle could be seen on his cheek, complete with four limbs, a head, a tail, and a turtle shell.

Then the little turtle whizzed through the air back to Bai Xiaochun.

“What do you think?” he said, looking very proud of himself. “Is Lord Turtle awesome or what? Hmph! When Lord Turtle leaves his mark somewhere, not even a demigod can erase it. A demigod! Did you hear that, you little punk? You’re going to have Lord Turtle’s mark on your face for all eternity!”

The cultivator reached up and felt the black mark on his face, and to his horror, realized that he really couldn’t wipe it away. Heart filling with even more anger than before, he spat the blood out of his mouth and once again began to chase after Bai Xiaochun.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Make sure to take part in this VERY important poll

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0368 awe-chapter-369

Chapter 369: Marks....

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was thumping with pure fear.... If he was being chased by a single person, he would definitely turn and fight.

He might even try fighting if there were two or three people. Considering how heroic and incredible he was, he figured he could probably come out on top in a situation like that. After all, with the level of his fleshly body, it wasn’t likely that only two or three people in the same cultivation level as himself would be strong enough to kill him.

But when he looked over his shoulder, he saw dozens of Core Formation cultivators all bearing down on him with burning killing intent. From what he could tell, if that many people all attacked him at once, it wouldn’t matter if his Undying Live Forever Technique was even stronger than it was, he would still lose his poor little life.

Such thoughts filled his heart with both gloom, and also rage toward the little turtle.

The little turtle didn’t seem to think he had screwed Bai Xiaochun over at all, though. He flew along off to the side, eyes gleaming with excitement, letting loose a stream of shouting.

“Hahaha! Bring it on, *bring it on*! Ya bunch of wimps! Let’s see if you have what it takes to kill my master!” Then he lowered his voice to talk to Bai Xiaochun. “Don’t be afraid, Little Bai. They’re just a bunch of wimps, right? Come,

come. Throw me back toward them again, I’ll crush them to death!”

“Shut up! This is all your fault!” Bai Xiaochun didn’t dare to throw the little turtle back toward the crowd of cultivators from the three sects. When he thought about the enraged look on the face of the man who had been marked with the turtle, his heart trembled. As he pushed forward with greater speed, all sorts of dazzling magical techniques shot toward him. Ice mountains, lightning, seas of flame, twisting vines, hundreds of flying swords, and even a gigantic vortex-like wave of water.

Although the pressure weighing down from this tide of magical techniques couldn’t compare to the defensive spells from earlier, the sheer number involved created a shockingly deadly force. Unfortunately, the turtle-wok wouldn’t be of much help in this situation. After all, the restrictive spells from before had only blasted into the turtle-wok, and hadn’t attempted to lift it up. These people wouldn’t just let him hide underneath and pretend to be dead.

“I'm finished. Kaput. The Mountain of Legacy Seals is gone, why hasn't the teleportation begun? If it doesn’t start soon, then I'm dead!” He continued to speed along rapidly, the enraged roars of his pursuers echoing out constantly behind him.

“Don’t you run, Bai Xiaochun!”

“You were just blowing your horn a few seconds ago, why are you running like a scared rabbit now?!”

“Hmph! You challenged us to fight before, and now we’re giving you the chance. Stand and fight!”

Everyone from the other three sects was giving vent to their frustration, and their killing intent was so intense it caused brightly-colored light to flash in heaven and earth.

From a distance, the roughly one hundred Core Formation cultivators were like countless streams of light shooting after Bai Xiaochun. That was especially true of the Starry River Court cultivator who had been branded with the little turtle mark. His heart was completely overtaken by rage. No matter how he rubbed at his cheek, he couldn’t wipe the mark away. The odd looks given to him by people nearby were especially humiliating.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!” he screamed, his voice rising up above the voices of all the other cultivators.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Bai Xiaochun dodged the flying swords, pierced through the vortex, and leaped over a sea of flames. However, a few lightning bolts managed to hit him, causing him to shake visibly. Bruiser, who was still nestled in the folds of his robe, struggled to get free, but Bai Xiaochun pushed him back.

“Stay put, there are some bad people out here!” Unfortunately, the legacy zone wasn’t very big, and Core Formation cultivators could move very quickly. As a result, they were already starting to run in circles.

To Bai Xiaochun’s despair, he found that the Core Formation cultivators were slowly getting closer and closer. Furthermore, the teleportation effect had not yet activated. Worse, the Core Formation cultivators were splitting up into three groups to try to surround him.

He was really on the verge of going crazy. Eyes completely bloodshot, he shouted, “You people are forcing me to do this!!

“Get over here, little turtle!” When the little turtle heard this, his eyes immediately lit up, and he shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s outstretched hand. Then, he let out a whoop as Bai Xiaochun tossed him violently into the air!

A whizzing sound could be heard as the little turtle turned into nothing but a blur of afterimages. This was a type of speed that Core Formation cultivators couldn’t match. In the blink of an eye, he had landed smack dab onto the right cheek of a burly man from the Polarity River Court.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the burly man screamed and staggered backward, blood spraying out of his mouth along with quite a few chunks of teeth. When he looked up, a black turtle mark could be seen on his face.

It had a head, a tail, four limbs, and seemed very lifelike....

The burly man’s jaw dropped, and he reached up to rub the side of his face. When he realized that the mark wouldn’t rub off, he looked over at the cultivator from the Starry River Court who had a similar mark, and then his eyes turned completely bloodshot. Roaring with rage, he shot directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

In fact, he even unleashed some unique divine ability that caused him to suddenly accelerate past everyone else. Shockingly, it took him only a moment to be right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“Time to die, Bai Xiaochun!” The burly man extended his right hand, and a powerful Core Formation aura erupted, creating a huge vortex. At the same time, the indistinct image of a huge devil hand appeared behind him.

Devil qi swirled out, pouring into the devil hand as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun to grab him.

As it closed in, it grew larger, until it was fully 300 meters tall.

Bai Xiaochun let out a shout as he waved his right hand, summoning a violet cauldron which instantly smashed into the devil hand.

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out. This violet qi cauldron was formed by the power of a Heaven-Dao Gold Core, causing the devil hand to collapse as soon as it was hit. The resulting shockwave caused the burly man from the Polarity River Court to cough up a huge mouthful of blood.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t harmed in the least, and yet his anger continued to burn. Reaching his right hand up into the air, he shouted, “Little turtle!”

The little turtle immediately flew back into his hand, after which he strode over to the burly man and reached his hand back.

“Now I’ll give you another!” he howled, then smashed the little turtle down onto the burly man’s other cheek. Then he hit his chest, and before the man could react, had hit him in nearly a dozen other places.

Blood sprayed out of the man's mouth, and his eyes burned with madness. Finally, he drew upon his own life force to shove Bai Xiaochun and then speed away, the madness in his eyes replaced by terror.

As he fled, it was possible to see more than a dozen little turtle marks all over him....

“Bring it on!” Bai Xiaochun yelled confidently. Just when he was about to give voice to some taunts, more than a dozen magical techniques descended toward him like rainwater. The sight of so many lightning bolts, seas of flame, vortexes, wild winds and vines caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to seize with fear. Immediately, he fell back.

A moment later, countless magical techniques slammed into the spot he had just been occupying.

“You people are too brutal! Stop ganging up! If you have what it takes, come fight me one at a time!” Drawing upon the Undying Live Forever Technique, and his powerful fleshly body, he continued to flee at top speed.

Chen Yunshan from the Starry River Court immediately yelled out, “We have to team up to deal with a shameless villain like you! If we kill you together, it won’t matter that we broke the rules!”

His words instantly bolstered the killing resolve of many in the group.

“Chen Yunshan!” Bai Xiaochun yelled, glaring over at him. He had been targeting Bai Xiaochun from the beginning, and that left Bai Xiaochun feeling very angry. Seeing how he continued to try to incite the crowd, Bai Xiaochun angrily threw out the little turtle.

“Hit him in the mouth! Shut him up!”

The little turtle sailed excitedly through the air. When he appeared directly in front of Chen Yunshan, Chen Yunshan’s face fell, and he tried to dodge. But he simply wasn’t capable of evading the little turtle. A boom rang out as the little turtle slammed into his face, sending all of his teeth flying out of his mouth as he staggered backward.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he screamed. Eyes completely bloodshot, Chen Yunshan ignored the mark which had just been left on his face and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, streams of starlight power descended onto him, giving him blinding speed as he chased after Bai Xiaochun.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Another shortie at 1,600+ words....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0369 awe-chapter-370

Chapter 370: I'm Gonna Kill You, Bai Xiaochun!

“Screw the hell off!” Bai Xiaochun roared, unleashing the Mountain Shaking Bash, sending him barreling toward Chen Yunshan with explosive speed.

They were both moving incredibly quickly, but Bai Xiaochun had the advantage. As he closed in, he stretched out his left leg and tapped his big toe on Chen Yunshan. A deafening boom echoed out, as well as a miserable shriek from Chen Yunshan as he was sent flying. At the same time, golden strands appeared on the surface of his body, apparently some sort of restrictive spell that was boring into Chen Yunshan and sealing his flesh and blood.

“You think a bit too much of yourself! One of my toes can send you flying!” Bai Xiaochun’s left shoe had exploded, revealing the fact that his big toe was flickering with golden light. Brushing off his robe, he produced a new shoe, put it on, then continued to flee.

Behind him, the enraged cultivators of the Starry River Court helped the trembling Chen Yunshan to his feet. Even as he coughed up a mouthful of blood, he realized that his cultivation base had been sealed, making it completely impossible for him to use it at all. Eyes flaring with madness, he howled, “Fellow Daoists from the Starry River Court, set up the formation and kill this guy. Fellow Daoists from the Polarity River Court and Dao River Court, if we don’t join forces and cut him down, how can we ever live down the humiliation of this day!?!?”

The cultivators of the Starry River Court exchanged glances and then nodded. Unleashing the power of their cultivation bases, they called upon the same stream of starlight they had used to deal with the defensive spells earlier, sending it shooting toward Bai Xiaochun with incredible speed.

As that happened, the group from the Polarity River Court looked at each other, then howled, sending devil qi surging out to form a gigantic head.

The vicious-looking head let out a fierce howl, causing intense pressure to weigh down all around it as it shot after Bai Xiaochun.

The cultivators from the Dao River Court weren’t any more willing to let the situation drop. If they did, they could only imagine what would happen upon returning to their sect: they wouldn’t even be able to look anyone else in the eye! Moments later, intense rumbling sounds echoed out as the illusory giant appeared again.

Howling, the giant began to charge toward Bai Xiaochun.

From a distance, it was possible to see a stream of starlight, a gigantic head, and an enormous giant, all three of them deadly divine abilities, closing in on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode.

“You guys are really serious, aren’t you?! I can’t believe... you’re actually using spell formations against me!!” By this point, his Undying Live Forever Technique was in full operation, and he was flying along as fast as his Heaven-Dao Gold Core could push him.

Unfortunately, the combined divine abilities of the three sects were even faster than that. Moments later, intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the stream of starlight appeared in front of him.

Bai Xiaochun trembled, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. Before he could do anything else, though, the huge head closed in, spitting out a blast of frigid devil qi that surrounded him, making it almost impossible to move, and freezing the blood that spilled out of his mouth. Before he could recover, the giant unleashed a fist strike onto him.

BOOM!

Frozen blood shot out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he was flung backward, his hair in wild disarray and his eyes completely bloodshot. As he flew through the air, he slapped his bag of holding, producing a fistful of medicinal pills with he hurled into the air behind him.

Those medicinal pills contained all sorts of strange properties, and as soon as they exploded, they immediately caused problems for all the pursuing cultivators. Bai Xiaochun continued to flee, so nervous that he was bordering on madness.

“Dammit! Why hasn’t the teleportation started!? Patriarchs, I'm about to lose my poor little life!!” Tears welled up in his eyes as he watched the cultivators of the three sects building up another volley of divine abilities.

“What are you scared of?” the little turtle said disdainfully. “I'm still here! Just throw me at them. They’re just using some lame Dharma Idols and magical projections, that’s all. Lord Turtle has destroyed so many of those kinds of things that he can’t even remember how many.”

Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared, “You people push things too far!!”

A murderous aura erupted out from him as he reached his hand back and then hurled the little turtle out as hard as he could.

BOOM!

The little turtle instantly appeared in front of the Dao River Court’s giant, which could do nothing to stop him. In the blink of an eye, he had pierced through the giant and was heading toward the Dao River Court cultivators who were operating it.

This time, the little turtle struck a female disciple. She was the type of person who radiated an extraordinary air, and despite her killing aura, she was quite beautiful. But then, an enormous smacking sound rang out as the little turtle hit her right in the middle of the face.

Tears leaked out of her eyes from the pain, and she let out an agonized shriek. Then, she realized that everyone was looking over at her with odd looks on their faces. Heart pounding, she pulled a mirror out of her bag of holding, and when she looked at herself, she screamed in bloodcurdling fashion.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!!!” she raved, her hair flying about in disarray. Without any hesitation, she shot after Bai Xiaochun as fast as she could. Unfortunately, he was far too quick and agile.

The young woman’s impulsive action instantly affected the other cultivators who were operating the giant.

As for Bai Xiaochun, considering how effective this tactic was, he quickly grabbed the little turtle and threw him out again.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Then, Bai Xiaochun went crazy, constantly tossing out the little turtle to fight back against the magical techniques and divine abilities.

Before long, more than half of his pursuers had little turtle marks on their faces, chests, waists, stomachs, and even some... on their rear ends.

The mark of the little turtle was actually a very terrifying thing; even if he hit their clothing, the mark would pass through and end up on their skin. The marks even glowed, as if they were worried that people might not notice them.

Not even thick clothes or powerful magical defenses were capable of stopping the little turtle marks from glowing brightly. There was one young female disciple who got hit on the chest, and nearly collapsed when everyone looked over to see her and the glowing turtle mark there....

People used all sorts of defensive magical items when the little turtle closed in, but they were all useless. The terrifying little turtle was causing everyone in the battle to go crazy.

The divine abilities and magical techniques they were unleashing were influenced by their surging emotions, or perhaps by the turtle marks. In any case, they eventually just faded away.

“There’s too many of you for me to beat in a fight, but I can sure embarrass you guys to death!” Bai Xiaochun was shocked, and initially felt that the little turtle was being too vicious. However, as soon as he thought about how these people were trying to kill him, he angrily yelled, “Little turtle, are you sure those marks of yours can’t be erased?”

“Don't worry,” the little turtle said proudly, “not even a demigod could erase them!”

With that, Bai Xiaochun glanced back at the cultivators who had no marks on them, seemingly itching to get at them.

“Great! They were the ones who pushed things too far, so they can’t blame me for this!” Gritting his teeth, he hurled the little turtle out again, sending him flying toward one of the unstruck cultivators.

Those unmarked cultivators were currently hesitating a bit. However, they had convinced themselves that the marks couldn’t possibly be indelible. In their minds, they would certainly be able to find a way to deal with them after returning to the sect. Even if they couldn’t, surely someone from the elder generation would be able to help them. Therefore, it was with burning rage that they continued to chase after Bai Xiaochun.

Booms rang out continuously as all of them were branded with the mark of the little turtle. Furthermore, all of their powerful divine abilities and magical techniques were faltering. The stream of starlight collapsed, followed by the huge head. Then the Dao River Court’s giant fell into pieces.

The only thing chasing Bai Xiaochun now was a mob of enraged cultivators, all of whom had turtle marks on them.

“I swear to the heavens, I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!”

“Dammit! If I don’t kill you today, I'm not surnamed Liu!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s powerful fleshly body was being pushed to its limit. He was coughing up blood and covered with wounds, and yet, his counterattacks were incisive and penetrating.

Whether it was his own attacks, or the little turtle marks, he had pushed everyone to the absolute limits of fury.

Thankfully, it was in that moment that teleportation power began to fill the legacy zone.

Beams of teleportation light began to rise up, and the mob of pursuers suddenly stopped in place. If they didn’t enter those teleportation lights before the time limit was reached, they would lose their chance to leave, and not even their sects would be able to do anything to save them. As of this moment, they had to abandon any hopes of killing Bai Xiaochun.

Having been forced to give up, they stared at Bai Xiaochun with such murderous glares that it seemed they were trying to cut him to pieces with their eyes.

Bai Xiaochun breathed a huge sigh of relief as he leaped into one of the teleportation lights. Looking over his shoulder, it was with great pride that he looked at the little turtle marks glittering on all of his opponents.

“Hmph! You guys are the ones who pissed me off! When I attack, I frighten even myself!”

The little turtle looked at the crowd of enemies and seemed completely satisfied. He even appeared to be sighing. From the look of it, he was more proud of himself than Bai Xiaochun was.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0370 awe-chapter-371

Chapter 371: Patriarchs, Save Me....

Outside the temple and the stone spell formation, the Nascent Soul cultivators were waiting anxiously for the disciples to emerge. Suddenly, beams of light descended from above, within which were the disciples of all the sects.

Without a single exception, the disciples all had black turtle marks on them, either on their faces, or on other parts of their bodies. The Nascent Soul cultivators from the three sects couldn’t stop their eyes from widening at the sight.

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind instantly had a very bad feeling....

“All of you....” Before any of the Nascent Soul Daoist masters from the three sects could inquire into the matter, another beam of light shot up from one of the enormous stones in the spell formation. Then, Bai Xiaochun appeared. The instant he was fully materialized, he shot at top speed toward the patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect.

“They’re trying to kill me!” he shouted as he neared. “Save me, patriarchs! I almost lost my poor little life! They want me dead!”

Even as the words left his mouth, the other disciples atop the enormous stones devolved into madness. Disregarding the fact that they were in the presence of members of the older generation, they all shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!!” Rumbling sounds echoed out as the nearly one hundred cultivators who had just returned all launched attacks. All of the Nascent Soul cultivators were completely taken aback.

As for Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind, their expressions turned very grim. Considering that all these people wanted to kill Bai Xiaochun, they could only imagine what dangers he must have been facing just now inside the legacy zone.

“Humph!” Crimsonsoul said, taking a step forward and stomping his foot onto the ground. A massive shockwave spread out in all directions, sending the cultivators of the three sects tumbling off their feet.

“Bai Xiaochun is the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect! Which of you dares try to kill him!?!?” These cultivators were all Chosen, but they were still just in the Core Formation stage, and couldn’t possibly compete with Crimsonsoul. The fearsome aura emanating out from him now caused them all to tremble inwardly.

Even as Bai Xiaochun cowered behind Crimsonsoul, Frigidsect, and Master Godwind, he felt very moved, and couldn't help but muse that all the dangers he had faced in the legacy zone were worth it.

Frigidsect’s eyes glittered, and his expression was grim as he looked over at the Nascent Soul cultivators from the other sects and said, “Dao River Court. Polarity River Court. Starry River Court. You three had better give us a good explanation for this!”

Master Godwind stepped over to Bai Xiaochun and put his hand on his shoulder, using his cultivation base to scan Bai

Xiaochun for injuries. At first, he seemed surprised, but then he gave Bai Xiaochun a look that no one else noticed.

Bai Xiaochun instantly understood his intention. Forcing his face to look even paler than before, he let out a wail, then bit his tongue and coughed up some blood.

Placing his hand onto his chest, he began to pant for breath. Pointing at the cultivators of the three sects, he said, “They’re... so vicious! They... they tried to kill me... I... I just....”

When the other cultivators saw this, the fury they had been suppressing raged even higher than before. They had all seen how tough Bai Xiaochun was with their own eyes. Furthermore, he had been as quick as a six-legged rabbit, which had made him very difficult to hit in the first place.

And yet here he was claiming to be seriously injured....

“Bai Xiaochun, you--”

Although several people began to shout in rage, before they could say more than a word or two, the white-haired old man from the Dao River Court grimly shouted, “Shut up, all of you!”

His thunderous voice instantly crushed down on everyone, causing the disciples’ hearts to tremble. Averting their gazes, they quickly went silent.

“The Dao River Court will provide an explanation within one month’s time. Fellow Daoists from the River-Defying Sect, I hope you will take some time to consider the matter we discussed earlier, and provide an answer as soon as possible.” Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he forced a smile onto his face, then left along with the other Dao River Court cultivators.

As for all of the turtle marks on the disciples, he completely ignored them....

As the Dao River Court cultivators were leaving, the group from the Polarity River Court offered some similar words about providing an explanation, then left. Last was the Starry River Court. As for the expression on the face of the red-haired old man, it couldn’t have been more unsightly....

Glaring at the disciples of his sect, he was just about to turn and leave when Master Godwind suddenly said, “Fellow Daoist, I expect that Starry Meteor to be delivered within the month!”

Without even looking back, the red-haired old man said, “I wouldn’t go back on my word for a paltry Starry Meteor!”

With that, he gave a cold harrumph and left with his disciples.

In the silence which followed afterward, Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind looked over at Bai Xiaochun with incredulity written on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun continued to clutch at his chest. Complexion ashen, he looked piteously over at the three patriarchs.

“Patriarchs, you have no idea how miserable I was in there. If things had gone on for even a moment longer, it would have been the end of me. You would have needed to pick a new junior patriarch for the River-Defying Sect.”

The three patriarchs weren’t sure whether to laugh or cry. After a moment, Crimsonsoul said, “How did you pull it off?”

“Huh? Oh. Well, even I'm not sure. They wanted to kill me almost as soon as they saw me. It was really bewildering.”

“I'm talking about the legacy seals.”

“Oh, the legacy seals! Look, I don’t want to brag, but as soon as I went inside, the legacy seals acted as if I were their master or something. They just kept rushing toward me. I didn’t even need to go after them. It was a real headache.” Bai Xiaochun’s braggadocio caused the three patriarchs to simply stand there staring at him. Unsure of the situation, he cautiously probed, “So, did we win? I got all the legacy seals, and I even got this thing called the Living Mountain Incantation.”

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind all exchanged glances, and then suddenly burst out laughing. The truth was, they didn’t care how Bai Xiaochun had managed to get all of the legacy seals. However he did it, he was the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, and they were all on the same team!

“You didn’t just win. You won big!!” Master Godwind laughed heartily.

Relieved, Bai Xiaochun also started laughing, feeling prouder of himself than ever.

“Alright, let’s get back to the sect!” Frigidsect said excitedly, his eyes shining with approval of Bai Xiaochun. With that, he swept Bai Xiaochun up into the air toward the Heavenhorn Sword.

On the way back to the River-Defying Sect, the patriarchs told Bai Xiaochun about everything which had happened outside. It was almost unbelievable. They had acquired one hundred percent of the resources, which meant that all of the other three sects had to take the shares they'd acquired in the last competition and send them to the River-Defying Sect.

There was nothing they could do to complain about the matter. After all, the rules had been established by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect at the request of the three sects themselves. In addition to all that, the River-Defying Sect was also to get a Starry Meteor.

Because of all of that, the River-Defying Sect’s overall power would continue to grow stronger.

As of now, they were in a good position whether they wanted to act aggressively or be more defensive. Furthermore, because of the situation with the resources, there would be more interactions with the Dao and Polarity River Courts. In the negotiations which would eventually come regarding the redistribution of resources, they could not only make the other two sects happy, but probably get better benefits for themselves.

Most importantly of all, because of the heaven-shaking, earth-toppling events which had just occurred, the River-Defying Sect was now much closer to having a Deva Realm patriarch.

They had enough resources, and enough information. It wouldn’t be long before Crimsonsoul, Frigidsect, and Master Godwind all had their chance to become devas!

With the solid foundation they were establishing, the River-Defying Sect was finally in a position to have a true base of power in the Middle Reaches.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested or skilled in politics or scheming, so as far as he was concerned, the dealings with the other three sects were best left in the hands of the wily foxes Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind.

In terms of what the patriarchs wanted him to focus on, they made it clear right away.

“Matters between all the sects aren’t really important. What you need to do now is work on understanding the Living Mountain Incantation. It’s one of the three hundred secret legacy magics in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

“If you can master the Living Mountain Incantation, your battle prowess will increase to a shocking level!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately began to meditate upon the Living Mountain Incantation.

However, as he contemplated the technique, he realized that it came with some very harsh requirements in terms of cultivation.

Furthermore, it needed to be cultivated in a special environment. Based on the description that came along with the technique, that environment could only be found in a land of mountains within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect itself.

Bai Xiaochun was a little depressed about that, but knew that there was nothing he could do about it now. Even as he let the matter drop, he realized that they were nearing the sect headquarters!

There, the Blood Ancestor towered over the lands, and the aura of the Dire Skybanyan suppressed everything in the area. The four mountain ranges stretched out like dragons.

That was the River-Defying Sect!

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0371 awe-chapter-372

Chapter 372: They’re Talking About Me!

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been gone very long, and furthermore, everyone had been aware of the purpose behind his departure. As such, the entire sect had been quietly awaiting his return, and wondering what had occurred.

Although everyone had been prepared for the worst, no one had been able to keep from wondering what it would be like if Bai Xiaochun managed to pull off a miracle.

Actually, the patriarchs had already sent word back to the sect about the result. Everyone knew that the River-Defying Sect had acquired one hundred percent of the resources, that the other three sects had been crushed, and that Bai Xiaochun had single-handedly driven countless Chosen crazy.

Therefore, as soon as Bai Xiaochun returned, the entire sect erupted into wild cheering that shook the heavens.

“Elder Brother Bai, you’re incredible!”

“The junior patriarch smashed the Starry River Court and trampled the Polarity River Court. He’s unparalleled under heaven!”

Bai Xiaochun had just stepped off of the Heavenhorn Sword, and when he heard all of the cheering, he was instantly enlivened.

Reaching over excitedly to tug at Frigidsect’s sleeve, he said, “They’re talking about me!”

Frigidsect cleared his throat, but didn’t say anything. Pulling his sleeve out of Bai Xiaochun’s grasp, he headed back toward Mount River Defiance with Master Godwind and Crimsonsoul.

Bai Xiaochun flew out into the air, filled with excitement at the sight of all the disciples in the sect cheering at him. After only a moment of thought, he realized that now was not the time to look icy and cold. Trying to appear as affable as possible, he cleared his throat and headed to the most crowded area he could find.

Over the course of the following days, Bai Xiaochun spared no effort in spreading different versions of the stories of his accomplishments in the legacy zone. However, in each version, he was always incredibly heroic and mighty, and single-handedly crushed his opponents.

Bai Xiaochun could clearly tell how much the disciples in the sect adored him. In fact, there was one occasion when he merely smiled at one of the female disciples, and she literally fainted from excitement.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun felt as if the whole world were beaming at him with approval. Even the sun seemed to be grinning....

Bruiser was also the subject of much acclaim, and immediately went to show off to some of the female beasts he spent time with.

Half a month went by before things finally started to calm down. After thinking about everything that had happened in the legacy zone, Bai Xiaochun was more concerned than ever about his cultivation base.

“I need to get stronger....” he thought. With that, he somberly went into secluded meditation to cultivate the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation and his Undying Tendons.

The Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation was a very profound technique indeed. Before, his cultivation of it had mostly consisted of him fumbling around in the dark. He had even been forced to ask some questions of Frigidsect before being able to wrap his mind around it.

“Use the technique to form the Frigid, then use the Frigid to evolve the Will....” Closing his eyes, he did as the mnemonic described, taking a drop of the Heavenspan River water that he had absorbed and transforming it into a power of frigid coldness.

Gradually, frigid qi began to build up around him, until frost appeared on the walls of his immortal's cave. At the same time, his body began to get colder and colder.

A few more days went by, and finally, he opened his eyes. Deep within, a profound gleam could be seen; as of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he had grasped the quintessence of the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation.

“First form the Frigid, then evolve the Will. Frigid....” He slowly lifted his right hand and looked at his fingers, the tips of which were covered with white frost.

“I don’t have enough frigid qi. According to the description in the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, people who manipulate frigid qi are divided into four levels. Frigid Acolytes, Frigid Adepts, Frigid Masters, and Frigid Paragons!

“Frigid Acolytes can summon frigid qi and use it to freeze objects within a small area. Frigid Adepts can freeze everything in a 3,000-meter area, and Frigid Masters can create a frigid land 30,000 meters across! Furthermore, those frigid domains can also be used to create clone projections!

“As for Frigid Paragons, they can even freeze portions of the Heavenspan River!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with a strange light as he contemplated what it would be like to freeze part of the Heavenspan River. Even freezing just a small portion would be an act of power that would leave everyone in awe.

“Right now, I don’t even count as a Frigid Acolyte.” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He knew that this wasn’t a matter that could be rushed. The only thing he could do was slowly absorb Heavenspan River water and accumulate frigid qi.

The frigid qi would build up inside of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, and once the nine spiritual seas that made up the core were completely transformed into frigid qi, it would indicate that he was at the peak of the Gold Core stage.

“I wonder how many years that will take….” he thought, shaking his head. However, he didn’t feel anxious. After all, he currently had more than a thousand years of longevity to work with.

Therefore, he focused on his Undying Tendons. By this point, he could progress from his big toe to his second toe….

Other than his cultivation, he also had the River-Defying Pill to worry about. Although he now felt comfortable with the concoction process, he still hadn’t been able to come up with a way to solve the life force problem.

Although absorbing some of the qi and blood of the true spirit had improved his confidence, after some tests, he found he still couldn't succeed.

Most importantly, he still couldn’t come up with enough life force from the Heavenspan River water.

“It must have something to do with my cultivation base. I’m just not strong enough to extract the boundless life force from the Heavenspan River.” He shook his head. For now, worrying about the concocting part wasn’t even worth it; he needed to figure out how to get the life force he needed.

As his train of thought progressed, he looked down at his bag of holding and recalled the idea he'd come up with before going to the legacy zone.

The root of the entire problem was that he needed life force, and he had long since determined where he would get it.

The little turtle!

The undying, indestructible qualities of the little turtle ensured that it had plenty of life force. However, the problem was that the little turtle would definitely not cooperate willingly. That was why Bai Xiaochun had begun to secretly plan how to concoct a certain type of spirit medicine.

He wanted to make a high-level medicine that would knock the little turtle out!

Although it sounded like a simple enough task, it wasn’t. He would only have one chance to succeed; if he somehow tricked the little turtle into taking that medicine, and it worked, then all would be well. But if the medicine didn't work, then he could only imagine what lengths the feisty turtle would go to in his attempt to get revenge.

“What a headache!” he thought, sighing. After some time passed, he gritted his teeth and continued on with the concocting effort in the same way he had been before. Thankfully, the three sects were supposed to visit soon to delivered the resources they owed, which would surely include a large number of legendary spirit medicines. After some thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that he should definitely go study some of them.

As Bai Xiaochun went about his cultivation and medicine concocting, the cultivation world of the Middle Reaches was astir. Although the three sects had done everything they could to suppress news of what had occurred in the legacy zone, it was virtually impossible to sweep such a momentous event under the rug. Before long, everyone in the Middle Reaches had heard about it, and everyone was thoroughly shaken.

Furthermore, when everyone heard that the task had been accomplished by Junior Patriarch Bai Xiaochun alone, and that not only he had been up against dozens of top Core Formation Chosen, but he had also left a special mark on all of them, it led to a complete uproar. And that was before people heard about the Living Mountain Incantation.

By that point, people were starting to look into his background, and soon, the details about his life began to spread.

He had joined the Spirit Stream Sect as a teenager, and had fought a bitter battle against the Luochen Clan in which he risked his own life to defend his fellow disciples. He took first place in the Chosen battles in his sect, and was also an eccentric genius when it came to concocting medicine. Later, he infiltrated the Blood Stream Sect, and became both a blood master and their Blood Ancestor. He alone had prevented a war between the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, and even convinced the two sects to join forces. Then they absorbed the Profound and Pill Stream Sects. In the end, he became the junior patriarch of the newly formed River-Defying Sect!

Any one of the many things he had accomplished would be shocking, let alone all of them together.

It didn't take long for Bai Xiaochun’s fame to spread throughout all of the cultivation world of the Middle Reaches.

Of course, the River-Defying Sect controlled the information that leaked out about him. They had no desire for the world as a whole to learn his true nature. That was kept secret.

One matter that led to gasps throughout the Middle Reaches was that all of the Core Formation Chosen who had entered the legacy zone had ended up with turtle marks on their bodies and faces.

They were very strange marks, marks that would shine brightly at night, and could not be covered up, even with thick clothing or magical shields....

It was a shocking matter, and no matter how the three sects attempted to erase the marks, they couldn’t. The combined efforts of numerous Nascent Soul cultivators proved useless, to the point where the deva patriarchs of the sects got involved.

Shockingly, not even the deva patriarchs could do anything about the marks. In the end, the entire cultivation world was stunned by the matter.

As for the Core Formation cultivators who had been affected, the matter left them filled with sorrow but unable to weep. Furthermore, they now hated Bai Xiaochun more than ever. Most of them went into secluded meditation and refused to come out into the open. To them, being branded with that turtle mark was like a fate worse than death.

Because of the terrifying nature of Bai Xiaochun’s turtle mark, countless people were terrified, and resolved to never, ever provoke him.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0372 awe-chapter-373

Chapter 373: Three Breaths River-Defying Pill!

As the entire cultivation world was talking about Bai Xiaochun, something else happened. The Dao, Polarity, and Starry River Courts all took time to come visit the River-Defying Sect.

During the negotiations, the River-Defying Sect didn’t refuse to compromise with the Dao River Court and the Polarity River Court. In the end, they reached an agreement whereby which those two courts only handed over some of their resources.

Because of that, not only did those courts come to understand the River-Defying Sect a bit better, they also developed their relationship in a good direction. After all, there had never been any hate between them, only an instinctual aversion to newcomers.

After everything that had happened, such aversion was much reduced.

However, when it came to the Starry River Court, the River-Defying Sect didn’t back down at all. They knew that they had to put on a good show for everyone paying attention to the situation. If they let the Starry River Court off the hook, then it would be entirely possible for more situations like that which had occurred with the resource redistribution to arise in the future.

The River-Defying Sect had the upper hand, and the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had set forth rules governing the situation. The Starry River Court had no other choice than to comply, and hand over all of their resources, plus the Starry Meteorite.

Of course, because of that, the two sects came to view each other as enemies.

The Dao and Polarity River Courts were more than happy to see such a development. After all, their patriarchs were also wily old foxes, and were well aware that the River-Defying Sect was merely asserting itself as a newly-arrived sect who had fought its way up from the Lower Reaches. Not only did they not fear conflict, they were also willing to work peacefully with the Dao and Polarity River Courts. Naturally, those two courts were fine with such an arrangement.

There were many schemes and plots involved with the overall situation, and none of that was of much interest to Bai Xiaochun. Almost as soon as the sect received all of the resources, he went over to look through the medicinal plants.

Generally speaking, not a single request by Bai Xiaochun would ever be denied in the River-Defying Sect, so before long, Bai Xiaochun had a whole collection of spirit plants in hand. He found all of the plants he remembered reading about, including some types of virtually extinct immortal grasses that he was confident would work well in a knockout medicine.

Next, he went straight into secluded meditation. During the concocting process, he did something fairly unusual. He intentionally gave voice to words which were completely different than what he was actually thinking.

It was all for the goal of knocking out the little turtle....

The concocting process lasted for a month. Afterward, rumbling sounds filled the immortal's cave, and to Bai Xiaochun’s excitement, two fingernail-sized white medicinal pills appeared.

It was impossible to tell the quality of the pills, but a mere whiff of their aroma would cause all of the pores on a person’s body to suddenly open up as if they were about to receive an incredible replenishment of energy. Anyone would think that it was an uncharacteristically high-level medicine.

That was because Bai Xiaochun had created a surface layer for the pill made from a very expensive medicinal plant. Based on the luster and sheen of the pill, it was clearly the type of amazing pill that would cause anyone to drool with desire.

Of course, it was only Bai Xiaochun’s meticulous selection of various spirit plants that led to the color of the pill.

What was impossible to tell by looking at the pill was that on the inside, it contained the knockout medicine that Bai Xiaochun had conceptualized only after intense and prolonged effort.

After looking at the resulting spirit medicine, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but take a deep breath. Expression flickering with excitement, he pondered how to get the little turtle to consume it. Just asking him to consume it wouldn’t work. Furthermore, he needed to prevent potential retaliation on the part of the little turtle.

After some thought, his eyes sparkled and he murmured, “This spirit medicine is incredibly valuable. Very, very rare in the world. Based on the aroma, it’s obviously a spectacular delicacy. I don't think I can bring myself to consume it now. I can only eat it in a critical moment, a moment when all of the extinct immortal grasses I used could be considered worth it. Only then could I possibly eat these two consummate spirit medicines!”

Panting, he carefully put the two spirit medicines into a small bottle, then sealed it and put it into his bag of holding.

After some thought, he seemed to still be worried about them, and quickly took them out again. After opening the bottle to ensure that the pills were still there, he tucked the bottle into the fold of his robe. Then he went to take a short walk. Only afterwards did he seem to be convinced that they were safe. After gritting his teeth, he sealed the bottle again and then put it into his bag of holding.

During the following few days, he took the bottle out constantly to check the number of pills inside.

At first, he checked after the amount of time it took an incense stick to burn. Then he checked every two hours. Then he checked every few days. Eventually, he settled on a duration of four hours. Every four hours, he would check on his pills as if they were precious treasures. Finally, a look of deep satisfaction appeared on his face.

“Hmmmph!” he thought. “Ah, little turtle, I’ve definitely piqued your curiosity. When the time comes.... hah!” That was what he was thinking every time he checked on the pills. Another ten days passed. Then, in the afternoon, Bai Xiaochun opened his bag of holding and was instantly shaken to the core.

The pill bottle only had one pill in it!!

Bai Xiaochun quickly suppressed his excitement, worried that the little turtle might notice. Plastering a look of shock onto his face, he rifled through his bag of holding, and after finding nothing, opened his third eye, which he powered with the full strength of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core.

Violet light spilled out, illuminating the entire immortal's cave. Finally, after much searching, he managed to find a crease in the corner of the bag of holding, where he saw the little turtle!

The reason bags of holding could hold so many items was that they created small, unique dimensions. Such dimensions often contained cracks and fissures that weren’t visible to the naked eye. Although he had examined this particular crack before, he had never found anything unusual in it. But now, he just so happened to have found the little turtle!

The little turtle was already unconscious, his head lolled to the side and his limbs stuck out, unmoving....

Bai Xiaochun chuckled. He knew that the only reason he had been able to spot the turtle was because he was unconscious. Were it not for that, the crafty little thing would still have been able to evade him, Heavenspan Dharma Eye or not.

After cautiously taking the little turtle out of his bag of holding, a snapping sound rang out, and it returned to its previous state. After shaking him, his head and limbs began to smack against his shell, producing distinctive knocking sounds.

Thrilled, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Then he began to exact his revenge, shaking the little turtle as hard as he could.

“Who said you could curse me, huh?

“Who said you could piss off that big crocodile, huh?

“Who said you could provoke that toad, huh?

“You got me injured and even got people to try to kill me!”

He angrily shook the little turtle, causing knocking sounds to ring out in the immortal's cave. Before long, the turtle began to emit the fragrance which Bai Xiaochun found so familiar.

Bai Xiaochun’s excitement instantly grew, and he couldn’t help but think back with a sigh to how things had been before. Worried that the little turtle might wake up, he quickly produced a pill furnace and threw the little turtle inside. Then he poured in a large quantity of Heavenspan River water. Settling his qi and clearing his mind, he set about concocting a River-Defying Pill!

Time was limited; he had no idea when the little turtle might wake up. Worried about the prospect of revenge, he went about the concocting even faster than usual.

Thankfully, he had reviewed the formula for the River-Defying Pill hundreds if not thousands of times, and was completely familiar with the process. As soon as the pill furnace heated up, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and got to work.

Three days later, the entire pill furnace was glowing bright red. Then, the pill furnace burst open, and the little turtle flew out and flopped onto the ground. At the same time, a virtually transparent medicinal pill appeared, which apparently possessed some level of intelligence, as it immediately attempted to flee.

As soon as the medicinal pill appeared, the sky above the River-Defying Sect began to dim, and a huge wind kicked up. The Nascent Soul cultivators’ expressions flickered as, in almost the exact same instant, Tribulation Lightning formed up above!

A bolt of lightning appeared, and before anyone could do anything, it slammed down onto Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, causing it to burst open. Bai Xiaochun quickly tossed the little turtle into his bag of holding and then opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye. After locating the semi-translucent medicinal pill, he immediately began to chase after it.

By this point, all of the River-Defying Sect’s Nascent Soul cultivators were flying out into the open. Although they weren’t sure exactly what was happening, they knew that any event which provoked Tribulation Lightning was no light matter.

“Patriarchs!” Bai Xiaochun shouted anxiously. “Quick, set up a spell formation! I concocted a River-Defying Pill and it’s alive! It's trying to get away!!” In response, Frigidsect shivered, and his eyes went wide. With a roar, he unleashed his cultivation base, causing intense pressure to fill the entire area.

Even the old monkey appeared, shooting toward the pill with speed that far surpassed Bai Xiaochun.

Thanks to the cooperation of several of the patriarchs, the fleeing medicinal pill was eventually apprehended by the old monkey. As for the Tribulation Lightning, the Nascent Soul cultivators handled it easily.

The old monkey excitedly held the pill up toward his nose and inhaled. “A Three Breaths version!” he said.

“That’s fine too. Even a Three Breaths version will be useful!” The old monkey gave Bai Xiaochun a deep look that contained both approval and gratitude. Then he flashed into motion, disappearing with the medicinal pill.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit disappointed. He had concocted that medicinal pill, only to have it taken away by someone else. Just when he was about to go look for Patriarch Frigidsect to complain, suddenly, an incredible pressure weighed down from above. This wasn’t pressure from Tribulation Lightning, and it caused everything in the entire area to tremble. All cultivators of the River-Defying Sect felt themselves shaking as if heavenly might were descending!

Then, a bemused voice echoed out in all directions.

“How amusing. My first visit to your River-Defying Sect, and I run into some Pill Tribulation!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0373 awe-chapter-374

Chapter 374: Hostage!

A boy appeared up above, wearing a long red robe. As he strode forth, the pressure that felt like heavenly might grew even more intense.

Ripples even appeared on the surface of the Heavenspan River, and the plants and vegetation in all four mountain ranges of the River-Defying Sect bent over as if they were bowing in obeisance.

If even the plants and vegetation were affected, it almost wasn’t necessary to mention the cultivators. Frigidsect and the other patriarchs hesitated for only a moment; as soon as they saw that boy, expressions of dread rose on their faces.

Even the Dire Skybanyan was trembling.

“A deva....” Frigidsect said, trembling. He exchanged a glance with Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind. They had heard about this boy; in the vast eastern cultivation world, there was only one Deva Realm expert who maintained the physical appearance of a child....

He was one of the five Deva Realm experts of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, Li Yuantian!

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind immediately clasped hands in formal greeting and said, “Greetings, Senior Li!”

The other Nascent Soul cultivators were shaken, and quickly followed suit.

Bai Xiaochun was standing off to the side, and immediately started to get nervous. This was his first time seeing a deva, and from the heaven-like pressure weighing down from him, it made it seem like the whole world was being crushed. Heart pounding, he didn’t even dare to look at him directly. He couldn’t help but marvel at how this boy, despite not being tall as Bai Xiaochun himself, was so incredible.

The boy looked at Bai Xiaochun with an enigmatic smile, but didn’t say anything to him. Then he waved his sleeve.

“Frigidsect, the three of you lead the way to your grand hall. I have an important message for you!”

Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind looked very somber as they voiced their assent and then respectfully led the way. The Nascent Soul cultivators followed along with serious expressions on their faces. The entire River-Defying Sect fell into silence, and many people started to get nervous, wondering why the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect might have sent a deva.

Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness was mounting. For some reason, he got the feeling from the way the boy had looked at him that something strange was going on. After returning to his immortal's cave, he began to repair the damage done by the bolt of lightning, frequently looking over his shoulder at the summit of the mountain. Suddenly, he thought of something, and opened his bag of holding to check to see if the little turtle was still asleep. Upon finding that he was, he put him back in the place where he'd found him.

“That way,” he murmured to himself, “even if he suspects something happened after he wakes up, I can just pretend I don’t know what he's talking about.” Although he was pleased with himself for how he’d handled the situation, he couldn’t help but feel nervous about the arrival of the boy, and once again looked up in the direction of the grand hall.

In that very moment, the boy-like Li Yuantian was sitting down in the seat of honor in the grand hall on Mount River Defiance. Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind stood respectfully off to the side, while the other Nascent Soul cultivators waited outside.

“It seems I'm connected by destiny to your River-Defying Sect,” the boy said coolly. “I was the one who slaughtered the majority of the Sky River Court before your arrival.” Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind were shaken by those words.

“That’s why I was the one selected to come here today, to tell you about another of the rules in the Middle Reaches cultivation world.

“Every so often, all of the four great sects that exist downriver of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect must send an important disciple or two upriver to be political hostages! [1. The practice of exchanging political hostages goes way back into Chinese history all the way to the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE)]

“I'm here to take your hostages back with me to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.” The boy looked at Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind, whose expressions flickered with surprise as they looked up at him.

“Hostages?” Although this was Frigidsect’s first time hearing of the arrangement, it wasn’t anything out of the ordinary. After all, the four great sects of the Middle Reaches were important parts of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and were essentially like feudal vassals.

Master Godwind took a deep breath and said, “We’ll definitely pick our hostage candidates as quickly as possible!”

He was well aware that when a deva came with a request, it wasn’t something they could refuse.

“You don’t need to do anything,” the boy said calmly. “I’ve already made the decision for you. The main hostage will be Bai Xiaochun.” The hearts of the three patriarchs began to pound.

With that, the boy sent some divine sense sweeping out into the rest of the River-Defying Sect.

With the exception of the location where the true spirit was resting, which was a place he didn’t wish to disturb, the rest of the sect was like an open book to him, although apparently, he didn’t notice the monkey.

“Eee? There’s something special about that girl...!” A strange light flickered in the boy’s eyes, and he waved his hand, causing the image of a young woman to appear, seated cross-legged in meditation. That girl was none other than Gongsun Wan’er! “She’s going to be the other hostage! Go ahead and notify them, and also explain that they can take no more than five fellow disciples of your sect to act as their Dao protectors. The entire group will come with me to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to continue their cultivation.”

The three patriarchs were grumbling inwardly. The truth was, they didn’t care much about Gongsun Wan’er. Although she had respectable latent talent and potential, what they really cared about was Bai Xiaochun.

Master Godwind hesitated for a moment, and then said, “Senior--”

Before Master Godwind could finish speaking, the boy’s eyes turned cold and he interrupted, “Hmm? Planning to refuse?”

Instantly, Master Godwind turned extremely cold, almost as if he were being frozen. He couldn’t even speak a word.

Frigidsect quickly offered further explanation. “Senior, there’s something you might not be aware of. Although Bai Xiaochun is our junior patriarch, the truth is that he’s extremely naughty and mischievous, and definitely not the ideal candidate for a hostage. Senior, I'm just worried that he might cause problems for your honored sect.”

“That’s absolutely right, Senior,” Crimsonsoul said with a smile. He was also aware of how important Bai Xiaochun was to the River-Defying Sect. “Bai Xiaochun isn’t just naughty and mischievous, he loves concocting medicine. The downside to that is that he always causes huge problems, creating plagues and harming everyone in the area. Not even chickens or dogs can escape his tribulations. If he goes to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, I’m afraid he really might cause a big catastrophe....”

“None of those things will be problems,” the boy responded. “The majestic Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect controls all of the eastern reaches, and leads the cultivation world on behalf of the Heavenspan Sea. Do you really think we can’t handle one Core Formation cultivator?

“Even if he were more naughty and mischievous than he is now, even if he caused worse disasters, do you really think he would bring the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to its knees?!

“He likes concocting medicine? Well, in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, we have the best pill furnaces, the best medicinal plants, and the best concocting facilities. Whatever problems he has with concocting medicine, they can be solved there. Fear not! Bai Xiaochun might be a hostage, but at the same time, he will be a disciple of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

“Very well, the matter is settled, and there will be no more discussion. Go. In three days, I will take your disciples back to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!” Clearly, the boy would brook no further argument. Waving his hand, he sent out a gentle light that carried Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind out of the grand hall, after which the door slammed shut with a bang.

Outside the hall, Frigidsect, Crimsonsoul and Master Godwind looked at each other with grim expressions. Unfortunately, there was nothing they could do in this situation.

Master Godwind sighed and said, “Well, we don’t have much time. It won't be difficult to explain the matter to the girl, but as for Bai Xiaochun... Brother Frigidsect, why don’t you go talk to him first? We can go later to offer more explanations. We also need to think about which disciples to send with him as Dao protectors.”

Of course, Master Godwind was very worried about the whole thing. Bai Xiaochun was the Blood Ancestor, and if mishaps occurred after he left, the Blood Stream Division would be at a serious disadvantage.

“Well, at least he can take Dao protectors, right?” Crimsonsoul said through gritted teeth. “Even though he can only take people from his generation, they’ll at least be of some help. Whoever he wants to go with him will have no choice in the matter. I’ll explain everything to them!”

Frigidsect sighed. Frowning, he headed toward Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, where he found the restless and antsy Bai Xiaochun, and then explained the situation to him.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and he stared at Frigidsect, his mind spinning. “Hostage? In the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect?”

He had read about political hostages in the ancient records, and knew that they always suffered all sorts of tragic and grievous fates. He was especially worried about going alone; being all by himself in a strange sect didn’t seem safe at all.

The River-Defying Sect was great! He had an incredibly high standing, lots of female disciples liked him, and people offered formal greetings to him wherever he went. The mere thought of going to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect caused his vision to grow dim.

Yelping, he lurched forward and grabbed onto Frigidsect’s leg.

“Patriarch, I don’t wanna go!” he wailed, “I’ll miss you all too much! This is my home! Don’t make me go!

“I just made a heroic contribution to the sect! I... I'm the junior patriarch!

“For years now, I’ve always been ready to stand up for the sect during hard times. I saved my fellow disciples from the Luochen Clan, I made a name for myself in the Fallen Sword Abyss, I went undercover in the Blood Stream Sect! But my biggest contributions have been to the River-Defying Sect! Patriarch, I don’t wanna go!

“I can’t stand to part with all of you. I’ll miss my fellow disciples! Don’t make me go, please...! Have Shangguan Tianyou go instead! He’d be a great choice. He's heroic and confident and super handsome! Heaven and earth would weep if he doesn’t become the hostage. Or how about Song Que? The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect doesn’t have somebody like him, do they? So send him! Or what about Beihan Lie or Nine-Isles? They would be great choices! If not, then how about Chen Manyao. Send her....”

Frigidsect felt a headache coming on. Sighing, he looked down at Bai Xiaochun and softly said, “Xiaochun, if I had any choice in the matter, I definitely wouldn’t make you go.”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and he looked up at Frigidsect, looking like he was about to cry.

“I really have to go?”

Frigidsect tousled Bai Xiaochun’s hair. A kind look appeared in his eye as he said, “Yes, you do. However, you can take some Dao protectors with you. Also, it won’t be for very long. You’ll be back here at home before you know it.”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0374 awe-chapter-375

Chapter 375: Bai Xiaochun’s Dao Protectors....

Bai Xiaochun felt as if his heart were withering. Looking up again at Frigidsect to make sure he wasn’t pulling a prank, he finally exclaimed, “Why did you make me so outstanding, oh heavens? I can’t believe that even the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect can’t do without me!”

Moments ago, Frigidsect had been feeling sad, but after hearing Bai Xiaochun’s words, he could do nothing but cough dryly. Now that he thought about it, in some ways, sending Bai Xiaochun to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect wasn’t that bad of a choice after all.

“You leave in three days,” he said. “Take this command medallion. It gives you the authority to select any Dao protectors from your current generation to accompany you....” With that, he handed Bai Xiaochun the command medallion and then turned to leave. Before walking out the door, he added one final reminder.

“You can select, at most, five Dao Protectors. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect won’t allow any more than that.”

Bai Xiaochun stood amidst the ruins of his immortal's cave, watching Frigidsect leave. Then he slumped down, somewhat in a daze. After wrestling with his thoughts for an hour, he watched the sun rise and then finally sighed.

“Ah, whatever. Since the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect wishes for me to come, then I guess I’ll go check things out.”

Although he was still a bit depressed, the idea of being able to select his own Dao Protectors was an exciting thought.

“I'm not going to take Bruiser with me,” he murmured. “The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is too much of a strange and dangerous place.

“So. Dao protectors, hm? Who should I pick? I'm going to be in a strange place, so I’ll definitely need someone good at digging up information!” With that, he began to think about everyone he knew.

“They’ll need to be quick-witted, and good at making discreet inquiries. I need someone who’ll be able to find out about everything in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and quickly at that. I’ll need to know all the rumors! It will definitely require a pure genius....”

Suddenly, he slapped his thigh, and his eyes began to shine. “Xu Baocai!”

Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, Xu Baocai had always been adept at rooting out information. He knew who all the top beauties in the sect were, and how they were ranked. Bai Xiaochun also remembered how, whenever Xu Baocai got some new information, he would make a record of it in his little notebook.

“He prefers to hand-write things instead of using jade slips. Only a person completely dedicated to his work would do that. Yeah, nobody would be fit for this position other than Xu Baocai!” Chuckling, Bai Xiaochun thought about how quickly Xu Baocai had fit into the River-Defying Sect as a whole, and how he knew about all the gossip and news. In fact, whenever Bai Xiaochun wanted to know anything, he was completely confident in being able to get an answer from Xu Baocai.

Without any further hesitation, he shot through the air toward the mountains of the Spirit Stream Division. As he neared Xu Baocai’s immortal's cave, he saw Xu Baocai standing outside, his eyes sparkling like gems, and his expression one of intense sorrow. Almost immediately, Xu Baocai began to wail, “Sect Uncle Bai, I'm going to miss you so much! I heard that you’re going to become a hostage in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Who knows when we’ll meet again, Sect Uncle Bai? You take care of yourself!!”

“Wow, you got the news that quickly?” Bai Xiaochun said, surprised. He had just been informed himself, and yet somehow, Xu Baocai already knew.

“Yeah, that’s right,” Xu Baocai said proudly. “Nobody knows more about what's going on in the River-Defying Sect than Xu Baocai. Wherever I go, I find out all the secrets. I have countless ways of ferreting out information.” This was actually what Xu Baocai was most proud of, and he couldn’t tolerate when people doubted his abilities.

“But don’t worry, Sect Uncle Bai,” he continued in a serious tone. “I’ll continue to make sure everyone knows about all of your stories. All the new recruits in the sect will hear everything about you.” Inwardly, he was feeling very pleased. The recent events in which virtually all the female disciples in the sect had become infatuated with Bai Xiaochun had left him very depressed. As far as he was concerned, with Bai Xiaochun around, it would be very difficult to get a Daoist partner of his own. All of the girls he liked turned out to be smitten with Bai Xiaochun, which left him feeling very down.

As soon as he'd heard that Bai Xiaochun would be leaving for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, his heart had swelled with excitement.

Bai Xiaochun was actually very pleased by what he had just heard. Clasping Xu Baocai’s shoulder tightly, a look of both sincerity and sorrow appeared on his face as he said, “Listen, my brother, I was actually hesitating before. After all, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will be an unfamiliar place, and I didn’t want to drag any of my sect brothers and sisters into this situation with me. But after what you said just now, I completely understand!”

“Huh?” Xu Baocai suddenly realized that he hadn’t gotten all the information, and that something about the situation was clearly off.

He opened his mouth to speak, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun said, “I need a Dao protector who can help me get information in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and that person is you!”

A tremor ran through Xu Baocai, and his eyes widened. Suddenly, he understood everything, and his face fell. “Sect Uncle Bai, um, my cultivation base is a bit low....”

Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively. “I need someone who can get information, not someone with a high cultivation base!”

“B-but... but I'm really clumsy....”

“Ah, don’t worry about it. As long as you can root up all the secrets and get all the news about the places we go to, that will be enough. Besides, I'm well acquainted with your brave personality. The blood notice from years ago proved that. Alright, don't bother with any pretence of refusing. I know you’ll miss me too much if I leave you behind. Therefore, the matter is settled!” Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily, but then he noticed that Xu Baocai’s face was a bit ashen, and he appeared to be on the verge of refusing. Therefore, Bai

Xiaochun quickly pulled out the command medallion Frigidsect had given him and waved it in front of Xu Baocai's face.

"A patriarch's command medallion!" Xu Baocai said with a gasp. He was completely and utterly thunderstruck, and unsure of how to react. After a long moment passed, he felt like he was about to cry; he knew that he couldn't refuse even if he wanted to. All of a sudden, he felt a bit sick to the stomach.

Bai Xiaochun put his arm around Xu Baocai's shoulder and the cleared his throat. Chuckling, he said, "Don't worry, I'll take care of everything. Come, come, Little Treasure. You know everything about the sect, so help me analyze the situation a bit. Which other dependable disciples do you think I should bring with me?"

Xu Baocai appeared to be on the verge of tears. The thought of going to the unfamiliar Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a terrifying thing. However, despite how much he didn't wish to go, he didn't have a choice. Based on what Bai Xiaochun had just said, it appeared that they would be able to drag some other people into the situation with them, which helped Xu Baocai focus.

Gritting his teeth, he pondered the situation for a moment, and soon thought of Master God-Diviner. Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner had developed a bit of a grudge between each other, and Master God-Diviner had even given him a nasty look before. Both of them had happened to like the same female disciple at one point, but in the end Master God-Diviner won her over. Sadly, Xu Baocai's cultivation base was too low, so he had been forced to accept the situation. However, he never forgot about what had occurred.

Therefore, when he realized that he had a chance to drag others into the situation with him, the first person he thought about was Master God-Diviner.

“Well,” he said, “we’ll need someone good at divination and fortune-telling. He’ll need to have a high cultivation base, too. That way, when danger comes, he can divine the details ahead of time and we can figure out the best way to protect ourselves. If I were going to pick someone, I would definitely pick Master God-Diviner from the Blood Stream Division!”

“You’re absolutely right. We definitely need someone who can perform divination!” Bai Xiaochun was fully convinced. Grabbing Xu Baocai, he headed toward the Blood Stream Division to find Master God-Diviner.

To their surprise, when they reached Master God-Diviner’s immortal's cave, they found him standing outside, his hands clasped behind his back, looking up into the sky. His bags were already packed and lined up next to him, and apparently, he had been waiting for them.

“So, you’re finally here,” he said calmly. He seemed completely cool and collected, almost as if he belonged in a higher world.

Looking a bit melancholy, he flicked his sleeve and said, “I long since divined that tribulation was coming my way. It was decreed by fate that I would leave the sect for a period of years, and that the tribulation would come during that time. Considering that someone from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect came to visit, it was obvious that my tribulation was nigh.”

With that, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun and Xu Baocai, his countenance completely otherworldly. “It doesn’t matter where you’re going. I will accompany you; it is my tribulation, and it has been decreed by fate!”

Xu Baocai couldn’t help but gasp at the sight of Master God-Diviner, standing there with his robe fluttering in the wind, looking like some sort of transcendent being. The words he had just spoken were enough to shock just about everyone.

Bai Xiaochun had a look of complete incredulity on his face as he said, “I... I can’t believe you actually divined that we were coming!”

But then, he walked a few circles around Master God-Diviner, who suddenly recalled how terrifying Bai Xiaochun could be, and started to get a bit nervous.

“Alright, Master Snortsnort,” Bai Xiaochun said, “answer me this. Can you divine where I'm going to hit you in a just a moment!?”

“I--” Master God-Diviner’s face turned pale, and he instantly began to curse in his heart. He had complete and utter confidence that Bai Xiaochun would do just as he had said and launch a blow. Master God-Diviner suddenly shrank down, and instead of looking like a transcendent being, he reverted to his normal appearance. In fact, he even looked a bit devious.

Smiling, he said, “I was just kidding around with you, Junior Patriarch! Actually, sir, Master Godwind came last night and told me to get ready for you to come, and that I had to do whatever you told me. I was so excited at the prospect of accompanying you, Junior Patriarch, that I couldn’t sleep the whole night. Therefore, I decided to just pack my bags and wait for you.”

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily and clapped Master God-Diviner on the shoulder. From the expression on his face, he clearly seemed very pleased with himself, and also was reveling in how much more intelligent he was than Master God-Diviner. As for Master God-Diviner, he appeared to be on the verge of crying. Worried that Bai Xiaochun would press the matter, he quickly offered a reminder.

“Junior Patriarch, Xu Baocai and I won’t be enough. We need someone with us who's really good at fighting!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0375 awe-chapter-376

Chapter 376: An Uninvited Guest

“It would need to be a very skilled warrior,” Master God-Diviner said somberly, “an expert who could keep us safe at all times. We need some muscle, a person with an extraordinary cultivation base, and even more importantly, shocking potential for growth!”

Xu Baocai was nodding his head vigorously, and Bai Xiaochun was looking at him with an intent stare.

Shaking his head, Master God-Diviner continued, “Don’t forget, we don't know how many years we’ll be in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Therefore, we can’t be sloppy in our selection. The best thing to do would be to pick someone who will likely reach Core Formation shortly after arriving.”

“You couldn’t be more correct!” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes sparkling. Then he laughed loudly.

Master God-Diviner inwardly breathed a sigh of relief. Then he said, “Junior Patriarch, I have a suggestion. Why don’t you pick from either Song Que, Ghostfang, Nine-Isles, or Beihan Lie? Which one do you think is better?”

After some thought, Bai Xiaochun murmured, “Hmm. Any of them would do, actually. But Song Que is my nephew, after all. Going to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will actually be an incredible opportunity, so the most appropriate thing would be to give that chance to him.”

Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai exchanged a look of surprise, but didn’t dare to say any further. Instead, they merely praised Bai Xiaochun for how much he took care of his juniors.

And that was how Song Que became their muscle. Of course, none of the three of them actually went to Song Que to tell him. Bai Xiaochun called over a disciple from the Blood Stream Division and sent him to deliver the news.

“I can take five people, and now I have three.... Hmm. Next I need to pick someone to be my confidante!” It didn’t take much consideration for him to think of Big Fatty Zhang.

“Eldest Brother is definitely the best choice to be my confidante. Plus, even though the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will be new to us all, it is a riversource sect, which means that Eldest Brother will probably be able to get some good fortune of his own.” With that, gave orders to Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner to prepare for departure in three days. Then he flickered into motion, becoming a bright beam of light that shot off into the distance.

After he left, Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner exchanged bitter smiles as they pondered what the future held for them.

When Bai Xiaochun arrived at Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave, he was in the middle of performing some spirit enhancements. Bai Xiaochun waited outside for a bit of time, a smile on his face, until Big Fatty Zhang finally opened the door. After seeing that it was Bai Xiaochun, he laughed heartily, then hurried out proudly with a flying sword in hand.

“What do you think? A threefold spirit enhancement!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the sword in surprise. Apparently, Big Fatty Zhang had become shockingly skilled at spirit enhancement. He immediately offered some praise, which Big Fatty Zhang soaked up readily.

“So, why have you come?” Big Fatty Zhang said. “As long as I can help out, I’ll do it without even the slightest frown!”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment. Although it was true that Big Fatty Zhang might be able to get some good fortune in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he would probably be a lot safer if he stayed behind in the River-Defying Sect. After pondering the matter briefly, he described the situation and then left Big Fatty Zhang make the choice for himself.

Almost as soon as he heard what was happening, Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes began to shine. Reaching out, he grabbed Bai Xiaochun’s arm.

“I’ll go. No questions asked! The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! That’s a riversource sect, right? My Master said that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is the only place in the eastern cultivation world where they perform fifteenfold spirit enhancements!

“They even have a legacy technique for spirit enhancement! Ninth Fatty, you definitely have to take me.”

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. Then he chatted a bit with Big Fatty Zhang to make sure he was truly determined to come along, before finally nodding in agreement.

“Alright, Eldest Brother. Meet me in three days at the grand hall on Mount River Defiance!”

After leaving Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun returned to his ruined immortal's cave on Mount River Defiance. There, he sat down cross-legged and pondered who to pick as his last Dao Protector.

“Xiaomei and Song Junwan... ah what a headache. I only have one spot left, and there are two of them.... What am I supposed to do? Who should I take?” Actually, the truth was that even if he could take both of them along, he would do everything possible to prevent that from happening. It really didn’t have anything to do with the number of spots left.

After much thought, he couldn’t come up with any good ideas. Therefore, he decided to stop thinking about it for a while. Closing his eyes, he slipped into meditation to calm himself and ponder what gains he might achieve in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Deep in the night, he opened his eyes, looked around, and sighed.

“I'm gonna miss this place too much,” he thought, shaking his head. He still hadn’t decided who to pick to fill the last Dao Protector slot. It was at that point that his expression flickered, and he looked up, a somber and even intimidating look on his face.

Moments later, the air in the direction in which he looked began to ripple and distort, and a slender, graceful woman emerged. Completely ignoring his intimidating expression, she stepped forward to stand right in front of him.

A fragrant aroma accompanied this young woman, who was none other than Chen Manyao!

She wore a close-fitting black garment that only served to accentuate her natural beauty. As she stood there beneath the shimmering moonlight, she looked completely and utterly enticing.

That was especially true when her long, luxurious hair rippled in the breeze. Furthermore, there was something charming and soul-stirring in her eyes that made her dangerously attractive.

“What are you looking at me so viciously for?” she asked in a voice so soft and weak that it would cause anyone who heard it to be even more attracted to her, and would leave most men hard-pressed to resist the urge to throw her to the ground and ravage her.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at her with a frown. He knew that the sect leadership had come to an agreement with whatever group backed her, which was the only reason why she had been allowed to stay in the River-Defying Sect.

However, he still felt completely on guard against her.

“What do you want?!” he asked calmly.

“Oh nothing. What, I can’t just come to see you?” Somewhere in her eyes could be seen a trace of bitterness, like a grudge. As she looked at Bai Xiaochun, she realized that he was looking her up and down, causing a spark of aloof pride to rise in her heart. Just when she was about to continue speaking though, she suddenly realized she couldn’t move a muscle, and that a third eye had appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead.

The violet eye seemed to possess a strange power, a power that left Chen Manyao completely immobile. A moment later, her right hand began to move, completely beyond her own control. It slowly rose to one of the buttons on her garment, and undid it, revealing some of her curvaceous body that had previously been concealed under the tight fabric.

After that first button was removed, Bai Xiaochun’s third eye closed, and Chen Manyao’s body returned to her own control. She was panting, and her forehead was beaded with cold sweat. Without even thinking about it, she backed up a few steps, her face flickering between the red of anger and the green of humiliation.

“You came here for a reason,” Bai Xiaochun said grimly, “and I’m not the kind of person who would pretend you haven’t. I’ll ask you again, what do you want?!” He was actually trying to imitate the way Song Que would talk to people, and he pulled it off more than perfectly.

Chen Manyao took a breath to still her heart. Not daring to do anything rash, she backed up again, and then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Junior Patriarch, I very much hope you’ll agree to let me take the final spot.”

“No way,” Bai Xiaochun said immediately. “Now get out of here.”

“Junior Patriarch, please hear me out. With me at your side, you’ll be able to communicate with the Wildlands any time you wish, and plus, I can find out all sorts of information for you. In addition to that, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect has a battleship that can take you to the Wildlands! My home….

“If you agree, I’d be willing to share some of the secrets of the Wildlands with you. Another thing you can’t forget is that I know a lot about the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and I can even--” At this point, before she could even finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve, causing a wind to wrap around her in preparation to throw her out.

“Bai Xiaochun,” she gushed, “there are clues about Du Lingfei in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Take me with you and I can help you find them!! Only I can do that, because I’m a Wildlander! The agents in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect know me, but they don’t know you. I’ll even swear an oath to help track down those clues!” As she spoke, the wind around her slowed to a crawl, but when she finished speaking, it picked up again and carried her off of Mount River Defiance.

Even as her anxiety built to a crescendo, Bai Xiaochun’s cold voice echoed in her ears.

“Meet me in two days at the grand hall on Mount River Defiance.”

Having sent Chen Manyao away, Bai Xiaochun sat there silently at the edge of the ruins of his immortal's cave, looking up into the starry sky. If Chen Manyao hadn’t spoken that one name, he would never have even considered taking her.

However, that name left him unsettled. By now, even he wasn’t sure exactly how he felt about Du Lingfei.

It was almost as if nothing about her was real except for what had happened in those mountains.

“Maybe all I want is an answer,” he murmured, “and the truth....” As he sat there beneath the moonlight, his eyes flickered with reminiscence.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0376 awe-chapter-377

Chapter 377: The Celestial!

Time passed. Soon, the moon rose again, and now... there was only one day left.

Bai Xiaochun had filled all five spots for his Dao Protectors, and couldn’t stop thinking about the benefits and drawbacks of going to the unfamiliar Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. On the final day, he went to visit Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei to bid them farewell, which left him feeling very down. Finally, he sat down cross-legged to pass the final night. It was around the third watch when Frigidsect appeared next to him, without word or sound to herald his coming.

He looked down at Bai Xiaochun, saw the sadness on his face, and sighed.

Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, looked at him, then looked away without saying a word.

“Xiaochun,” Frigidsect said in his ancient voice, “you’re going to be leaving tomorrow....

“There are some things I need to explain to you. Master Godwind, Crimsonsoul and I have come to an important decision....” Overlooking the fact that Bai Xiaochun was ignoring him, he smiled and sat down next to him.

“I know that your goal in practicing cultivation is to live forever. The thing is, all of us want to live forever. That’s one of the reasons why we all work hard at cultivation.

“Unfortunately, on the road that leads to living forever, there are other things that pop up, things that are sometimes even more important than our final goal. Right now, you probably don’t understand what I'm talking about, but by the time you reach my age, I think you will.

“The reason we cultivators can increase our longevity has to do with our cultivation bases. With Foundation Establishment, you get an additional 100 years of life. With Core Formation, 500. And did you know that Nascent Soul cultivators receive an increase, at minimum, of 1,000 years?! Do the math yourself.... If you reach Nascent Soul, how long can you live?” Frigidsect looked expectantly at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had been planning to ignore Frigidsect no matter what he said. Regardless of how much he understood the decisions made by the sect, that didn’t stop him from feeling depressed about the situation. However, to hear Frigidsect bring up this topic, the topic upon which he was most focused in life, and in which all his hopes lay, ensured that he couldn’t hold himself back from doing the calculations.

It really was simple. Upon realizing that after reaching Nascent Soul, he would be able to live for 2,000 years, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone, and his heart began to beat.

“2,000 years....” he murmured, licking his lips. He might have been able to refuse to think about the Nascent Soul stage if he hadn’t calculated the exact numbers involved. But now, he could hardly refrain from panting, and his desire to reach Nascent Soul was even more intense than ever.

“And again, that’s the minimum. If you use special techniques and methods, or certain spirit medicines, you can increase your longevity by multiple times over. Of course, people who do that have to pay a heavy price. Although their cultivation bases are not limited in any way, they are doomed to die eventually, no matter what happens. Such people live a long time, but not forever. I'm in that very situation.” Frigidsect sighed and looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked back at him. “Do a lot of people do that?”

“Yes. But don’t forget that the path cultivators travel is a long and winding one. From Qi Condensation to Foundation Establishment, from Foundation Establishment to Core Formation, from Core Formation to Nascent Soul.... Many people are ejected off of the path before they can get very far.

“Out of a hundred Qi Condensation cultivators, one will be lucky to reach Foundation Establishment. Of course, that still leaves us with a lot of Foundation Establishment cultivators, but out of every hundred, one might reach Core Formation, if they are lucky.... When it comes to Nascent Soul, well... even if you count all the people who have died, the Spirit Stream Division hasn’t even produced ten of them, even going back years and years. Given that... do you think reaching Nascent Soul is difficult?”

Frigidsect sighed again before continuing. “It most definitely is difficult. The process is a challenging one, to say the least. Either you succeed and become a Nascent Soul Daoist master, or you fail and die. Of course, sects in the Middle Reaches have much higher rates of success among cultivators who attempt to step into the Nascent Soul stage. However, that doesn’t change the difficulty level for the people involved.”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything. He knew that Nascent Soul was a difficult stage to reach, and that even with his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he would only have a slightly higher chance of success.

“Xiaochun, although becoming a hostage in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect means losing a bit of freedom and independence, the truth is that you have an extremely rare opportunity!

“The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is a riversource sect, responsible for watching over all of the eastern Heavenspan River. The spiritual energy there is very strong, far beyond that of the Middle Reaches. They have all sorts of unique techniques and divine abilities, plus many types of fantastic spirit medicines.

“After you get there, you can take advantage of all the power available in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to increase your chances of reaching the Nascent Soul stage!” Frigidsect was slowly raising his voice, causing it to pound into Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

Bai Xiaochun could hear the sincerity in Frigidsect’s voice, and could tell that he wasn’t being dishonest in any way. It really was true that he would have a better chance of reaching Nascent Soul in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

That, along with his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, wouldn’t give him a one hundred percent chance of success. However, he would have an astonishing seventy percent chance!

Thinking of the matter that way, going to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect wasn’t a bad thing at all. In fact, it was actually incredible good fortune when it came to his cultivation!

Much of Bai Xiaochun’s negative feelings were already draining away, and his eyes were beginning to shine brightly.

“If you become a Nascent Soul cultivator in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, you can even join their parliament of elders, and would gain a relatively high level of power and influence. At that point, even being a hostage wouldn’t matter, and wouldn’t be an obstacle to you in any way. In fact, your hostage status would be a shield of sorts to you as a member of the parliament of elders!

“Furthermore, if you become a Nascent Soul cultivator there, it would be of incredible benefit to the River-Defying Sect!” After all of the analysis provided by Frigidsect, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but let out a long sigh.

“Patriarch,” he said quietly, “I think it's a big waste for you to be a cultivator. You should go off and become a diplomat....”

Frigidsect roared with laughter before tousling Bai Xiaochun’s hair.

“I’m not finished yet! Stop interrupting!” Then, his expression turned serious. “Xiaochun, much like Foundation Establishment and Core Formation, there are three ways to enter the Nascent Soul stage. The first is the simplest, and yet the most dangerous because of the high failure rate. Although you can make the attempt multiple times this way, every failure leads to a loss of longevity. That method is... using Nascent Soul Pills!”

Bai Xiaochun was listening very intently. There was no information in the sect records about the Nascent Soul stage, so this was his first time hearing such an explanation.

Frigidsect shook his head before continuing, “That method leads to a low-grade Nascent Soul, with only a slim chance of ever becoming a deva. It is also the most commonly used method....

“The second method is... by using five elements deva beast souls! So-called deva beast souls are the souls of dead Deva Realm beasts. All such souls have a certain measure of five elements power, and cultivators who step into the Nascent Soul stage using them not only become very powerful, they also have a good chance of becoming devas!”

Bai Xiaochun was shaken, and immediately committed the words ‘five elements deva beast soul’ to memory. Never could he have imagined that it was possible to reach the Nascent Soul stage with the soul of a deva-level beast.

“Then there’s the third method....” Frigidsect paused for a moment, his eyes shining brightly with both veneration and madness. This sort of expression was something rarely seen on his face.

Bai Xiaochun instantly started to get even more nervous.

“This last method is the stuff of legend. In fact... in the Heavenspan Realm, only one person has ever done it. The requirements are incredibly strict. That method is... by using five elements deva souls!

“A deva soul is the soul of a dead Deva Realm cultivator. One of the unique properties of deva souls is that each one contains the power of one of the five elements, either metal, wood, water, fire, or earth. To reach the Nascent Soul stage using this method requires... five different deva souls!

“Anyone who succeeds... becomes completely invincible within the Nascent Soul stage!”

Bai Xiaochun gasped. “Five deva souls?!”

To him, it seemed almost inconceivable. Devas were already rare to begin with; even in the Middle Reaches, there were currently only three of them. If you added in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, there wouldn’t even be ten.

Considering all of that, using the five elements deva souls method seemed virtually impossible.

Frigidsect sighed. “From ancient times until now, the number of devas who have existed is very limited, and the souls of any who die are rare and precious items.... Because of that, you can see why using the five elements deva souls method to step into Nascent Soul is unimaginably difficult, and thus, the stuff of legend.”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and couldn’t hold back from asking, “Patriarch, didn’t you just say that someone did succeed once? Who is that person...?”

Frigidsect didn’t respond for a moment. Looking up into the sky, he said, “The Celestial!”

“The Celestial?” Bai Xiaochun was taken aback.

“He is the most powerful cultivator in the Heavenspan Realm... and also the one who rules over the four great riversource sects.... He lives on the island in the middle of the Heavenspan Sea.... The Celestial!

“Common people like us can’t even speak his name. If you do, he will sense it, and no one wishes to do that. That is why people simply call him... the Celestial!” Frigidsect sighed yet again.

“According to the legends, he reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, Heaven-Dao Gold Core, and used the five elements deva souls method to reach Nascent Soul. The entire time, he walked the heavenly path [1. In Chinese “deva” consists of the characters for “heaven” and “person” put together, so all three of these paths have “heaven” in them]. You’ve had some contact with the Wildlands, so you can probably imagine what type of position the Celestial occupies!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0377 awe-chapter-378

Chapter 378: I’ll Be Back!

Bai Xiaochun reeled as he thought back to the old Wildlander he had spoken to by means of Chen Manyao. The things that old man had told him clicked into place with what he had learned just now, and suddenly, he understood.

If the four main branches of the Heavenspan River and the sects that grew near them were the feudal governments, then this Celestial... was the emperor!

Bai Xiaochun sat there in silence with Frigidsect for a long moment. Finally, Frigidsect rose to his feet and extended his right hand, within which was a blue-green walnut!

Apparently, the walnut had been crafted from jade, and inside of it was... a sleeping soul.

It didn’t emanate any soul fluctuations at all, and in fact, even examining it with divine sense didn’t reveal the slightest fluctuation. Bai Xiaochun stared at it blankly for a moment.

“Is that...?”

Frigidsect looked at the walnut, then at Bai Xiaochun, his expression alive with anticipation.

“Xiaochun, your service to the River-Defying Sect has gone above and beyond the call of duty. The fact that you are a member of the River-Defying Sect... is a true blessing. Unfortunately, we are too small and weak now, and are unable to provide you much in the way of help. However, after discussing matters with the Fellow Daoists from the other divisions, we all agreed that it was appropriate to take this... a deva soul... and give it to you!” Frigidsect’s voice echoed like thunder in Bai Xiaochun’s ears, causing his mind and heart to tremble.

“A deva soul!?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened. If he hadn’t just heard Frigidsect’s explanation of the rarity of five elements deva souls, he wouldn’t have thought this item to be of much value. But now, now that he understood everything, his heart was filled with waves of shock.

It wouldn’t be a wild guess to assume that this deva soul was the only one in the entire River-Defying Sect. In fact, there might not even be a second one in all of the eastern cultivation world of the Middle Reaches.

After all... deva souls were items that Middle Reaches sects usually wouldn’t possess. It was only because the Spirit Stream Division had once been the Frigid School that it had one!

“This....” For the first time ever, Bai Xiaochun didn’t reach out to take the treasure being offered him. It was so valuable that he didn’t dare to even touch it.

“We were going to give this to you eventually anyway,” Frigidsect said with a smile. “We’re just handing it over a bit early. Don't feel any pressure. After all, reaching the Nascent Soul stage by means of a five elements deva soul is something legendary, to say the least. Think of this wood-type deva soul as a direction to follow. If you can’t collect any other deva souls, then perhaps you can find someone in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect with some five elements deva beast souls willing to trade for it. Either way... we have long since begun to think about how to make your path to the Nascent Soul stage as clear as possible!”

Bai Xiaochun was trembling, and was even having trouble breathing. He looked up at Frigidsect for a long moment, then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Many thanks, Patriarch!”

“Very well. I’ve said everything I needed to say, and it’s nearly dawn. I’ll wait for you at the grand hall on Mount River Defiance with the rest of the patriarchs.” Patting Bai Xiaochun on the shoulder encouragingly, he turned to leave. For some reason, he seemed especially old underneath the pale moonlight.

Bai Xiaochun carefully placed the deva soul into his bag of holding. His mind was currently in chaos; not only was he feeling really hesitant about leaving the sect, he was deeply and profoundly moved.

Soon, dawn arrived, and as the first rays of light pierced through the clouds and illuminated the River-Defying Sect, they revealed a scene of lush mountains and flowing rivers. Everything was peaceful and quiet, with pulses of spiritual energy filling the entire area. The River-Defying Sect truly looked like a celestial paradise.

A look of determination could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as he straightened his clothing and headed toward the summit of the mountain.

At the same time, Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner gathered their belongings, mustered their courage, and headed in the same direction.

Big Fatty Zhang was very excited as he flew into the air, and as for Chen Manyao, she shot through the dawn air in a beam of colorful light.

Somewhere in the Blood Stream Division, an immortal’s cave opened, and Song Que walked out. His face was ashen, his fists clenched, his teeth gritted. Unfortunately for him, he had no choice in the matter, so he flew up into the air and headed toward Mount River Defiance.

In addition to them, other cultivators of the River-Defying Sect began to step out of their immortal’s caves. News had spread over the past few days, and many people knew about the matter of the hostages. In fact, if the sect hadn’t specifically forbidden people from visiting Bai Xiaochun to express condolences and bid him farewell, he would have gotten almost no rest.

As of this moment, all of the cultivators in the entire sect had emerged. During the past three days, they had been prohibited from disturbing Bai Xiaochun, but now, they simply had to see him off.

Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei were in the crowd, both of them looking very sad as they flew toward Mount River Defiance.

When Bai Xiaochun arrived at the grand hall, he saw Frigidsect and the other Nascent Soul cultivators there waiting for him. He also saw that he wasn’t the first disciple to arrive. Gongsun Wan’er had come a bit earlier, and when she caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, she smiled slightly.

Bai Xiaochun had been informed earlier that Gongsun Wan’er was also to be a hostage. For some reason, he’d always found there to be something strange about her, although he wasn’t sure what. When she looked at him, he forced a smile onto his face and walked over to stand next to her. Strangely, she had no Dao Protectors.

Surprised by that, he asked, “Where are your Dao Protectors?”

“I don't need any,” she replied with a smile.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and was about to inquire further when Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai arrived, followed by Big Fatty Zhang and Chen Manyao.

Last of all was the ashen-faced Song Que, who was wearing a very grim expression. Upon arriving, he snorted slightly and then stood next to Master God-Diviner, looking somewhat sulky.

Cultivators were gathering outside of the mountain to say their farewells to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun could see Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei in the crowd, as well as Hou Yunfei, Third Fatty Hei, and many other familiar faces. None of them could cover up the gloomy expressions on their faces. All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun realized that his life truly was bitter sometimes... he always seemed to be saying goodbye to people.

It had been like this back when he had left the village, and back when he had left the Spirit Stream Sect. Now here he was in the River-Defying Sect, and it was the same thing....

Just when he was pondering whether or not to make a short speech like he usually did, an intense pressure suddenly exploded out from the grand hall. At the same time, the door to the hall slowly opened.

The boy appeared, clad in a red robe, his hands clasped behind his back. Although he was not very tall, he seemed grander than heaven and earth, which was, of course, because of the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy which roiled off of him.

As the pressure of the Deva Realm filled the entire River-Defying Sect with solemn silence, the boy looked at Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er, then nodded slightly.

“Since everyone’s here, let’s be off!” He waved his hand up into the sky, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out, as if the sky itself were being crushed. Then, two illusory hands appeared, ripping a huge hole into the air itself.

Then, a 30,000-meter-tall giant emerged to hover above in the air.

The giant had a powerful fleshly body, and a savage aura. Although it wasn’t quite as impressive as the Blood Ancestor, it was still a completely shocking sight.

As it hovered there, the mountains below almost seemed like toys that it could crush at will.

Gasps could be heard among the River-Defying Sect cultivators, and even Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. That was especially true after the giant threw his head back and howled, then dropped to its knees and prostrated itself in the direction of Mount River Defiance.

“Master!” it said, its voice deafening as it rolled out in all directions.

Even as everyone in the sect was shaken, the boy flicked his sleeve, causing the visions of Bai Xiaochun and everyone around him to blur. Their bodies were suddenly filled with pain, and they vanished. When they reappeared moments later, they realized that they were looking down at Mount River Defiance....

All of them were now... on the head of the giant!

To be able to teleport people without any spell formations whatsoever was something that Nascent Soul cultivators could only do with great difficulty. However, this young boy had done it with the flick of his sleeve, as if it hadn’t taken him any effort at all.

This was the first time that Bai Xiaochun had been shaken in such a way by a deva. Even more shocking was that each hair on the giant’s head was like a huge tree, making his head almost like a forest.

Xu Baocai shrieked, and Big Fatty Zhang’s face drained of blood. Master God-Diviner was left trembling, and even Song Que started panting a bit. Chen Manyao took things in stride a bit better, whereas Gongsun Wan’er was the only one who didn’t seem to have any reaction whatsoever.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was a true Gold Core cultivator, so although his face paled a bit, he stood there in place, looking down at the River-Defying Sect. Suddenly, he cried out in a loud voice, “I'm leaving... but I’ll be back!”

The Deva Realm boy looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a smile, then sat down cross-legged on one of the giant’s huge hairs. A moment later, the giant rose to its feet, roared, and leaped back into the hole in the air, vanishing in an instant!

The only thing left behind for the River-Defying Sect cultivators to see were some ripples, and the echoes of Bai Xiaochun’s voice.

End of Book 3

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0378 awe-chapter-379

Book 4: A Different Kind Of Hostage!

Chapter 379: Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect

Beyond the Middle Reaches was the true eastern Heavenspan River, vast and majestic, so grand that it wasn't possible to see the end of it. It was an area so large that the entire Middle Reaches cultivation world couldn't even compare to it.

If you followed it along far enough, it reached the place where the river flowed out from the sea!

In that location was a waterfall so large and boundless that it virtually defied description. It was as tall as an enormous mountain, and so wide that it was impossible to see one end from the other. As the waters flew down, they transformed into the eastern Heavenspan River!

One could only imagine what existed at the top of that waterfall: the Heavenspan Sea!

The spiritual energy in the area was so strong that it also defied description; the spiritual energy of the Middle Reaches cultivation world couldn't even compare to it. This was the location of the sect headquarters of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Shockingly, that headquarters rose up from within the boundless mists at the bottom of the waterfall. Towering high above the waterfall itself were seven rainbows, which were organized into three levels.

The first level, and the highest, was made up of a single rainbow. The second level had two rainbows, one on the left and one on the right. Beneath them was the third level, made up of four rainbows lined up in a row....

Considering how enormous the waterfall itself was, it only made sense that the rainbows were even more majestic. Astonishingly, those seven rainbows were actually part of Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

Even from a distance, it was just barely possible to see countless indistinct figures flying back and forth through the air, making it very clear how enormous the sect was!

Furthermore, those rainbows were only part of the sect. Higher up, at the very top of the waterfall, was an enormous, ancient battleship!

It was pitch black, and emanated the most archaic of auras. There was something ghastly about it, and it was even possible to see ghostly figures inside, perhaps the reserve powers of the sect itself.

In addition to all that, there were four gigantic cities built on the banks of the Heavenspan River, two on each side.

Any one of those cities alone was larger than any of the four great sects of the Middle Reaches, and could clearly house millions upon millions of people. The mere sight of this sect would leave anyone completely shaken.

This was the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

At the base of the waterfall were four enormous cities.

Towering above the waterfall were seven rainbows.

And behind the waterfall was the Heavenspan Sea!

A moment ago, the enormous giant had just stepped out of thin air to appear some distance off from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Bai Xiaochun was on the giant's head, looking at the sect and gasping. The mere size of the sect was enough to cause his head to spin.

Then, as he got closer, he could feel the spiritual energy getting stronger, so strong that it was almost uncomfortable.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't the only one to have such a reaction. Everyone else was left similarly gasping.

Master God-Diviner's face was a mask of incredulity. "How did they do this? Rainbows are fundamentally immaterial, but that's what the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect actually built their headquarters with!"

"You're right," Chen Manyao said, keeping her voice low. "Rainbows are immaterial. However, experts in the Demigod Realm can take that which is immaterial and make it eternal!

"Furthermore, the seven rainbows are strictly separated by a ranking system. From bottom to top, those ranks are: Starry, Sky, Dao, Polarity, Mortal, Earth, Heaven!

"See the highest rainbow? That's Heaven! The next two below it are Earth and Mortal. The four rainbows which make up the bottom level are Starry, Sky, Dao, and Polarity!

"We're from the River-Defying Sect, but technically, we count as the Sky River Court. Therefore, our final destination will be the second rainbow of the third level!" Bai Xiaochun listened intently as Chen Manyao explained everything she knew about the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“Those four cities on the banks of the river are nothing more than the outer sect. You see, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s ranking system is a bit different from what we’re used to.” Even Gongsun Wan’er seemed to be surprised at how much Chen Manyao knew, and was listening carefully.

The Deva Realm boy opened his eyes and looked over. “You seem to know quite a bit, little girl.”

Chen Manyao’s face flickered. Fearful of angering a Deva Realm eccentric, she nervously clasped hands and said, “Please don’t take offense, Senior.”

“None taken,” the boy said coolly. “The more you explain, the fewer words I have to waste in my own introduction. Listen up, all of you. Just as the girl said, the ranking and organization of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is different from that of most other sects, and that’s intentional.

“Most sects have an outer sect, an inner sect, a conclave, and a legacy echelon, or some variation thereof. But not the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. We are organized by color. Red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, violet. Those seven colors are how we organize our sect. It doesn’t matter who you are, as long as you’re under the Nascent Soul stage, you have to follow that ranking system. Everyone starts out as a red-robed disciple, and rises in the ranks, not based on cultivation base level, but based on how many merit points you accumulate!

“The more merit points you get, the higher your rank. Newcomers do not even qualify to step onto the rainbows. Only becoming yellow-robed disciples gives you that right, the right to be promoted from the ground to the rainbows.”

As the boy talked, the giant strode forward, carrying them toward the second city on the left bank of the Heavenspan River, at the base of the waterfall.

“Very well, this city is where you will start out. As for where you end up later, that will depend on your own personal good fortune.” He rose to his feet, flicking his sleeve to send a jade slip flying over to Bai Xiaochun. “Take this jade slip. Once you’re in the city, someone will arrange everything for you.” With that, he waved his sleeve again, causing a wave of power to pick Bai Xiaochun and the others up and fly them off of the giant’s head. Then the giant roared, ripping open the sky in front of it and vanishing into the hole.

As for the boy, he also disappeared, reappearing out of sight, far up on the second level rainbow!

After the boy left, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. Then he looked over at the huge city, which teemed with countless people, beyond which was the enormous waterfall and the rainbows.

This place was gigantic, and completely unfamiliar to Bai Xiaochun, leaving him feeling more isolated than ever, a stranger in a strange land.

“These four huge cities have simple names,” Chen Manyao said softly. “Starry City, Sky City, Dao City, and Polarity City. Once in the cities, don’t make the mistake of underestimating anyone. There could be people with powerful cultivation bases who simply don’t have enough merit points to rise beyond the level of being an orange-robed disciple.

“Remember, in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, everyone under the Nascent Soul stage is a disciple, and their ranking is based on the color of their robes, not their cultivation base. That is why Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect cultivators are often called *seven-colored disciples*!”

With Chen Manyao there to explain things, Bai Xiaochun and the others weren’t at such a loss even though they were newcomers to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Things were already starting to become clear.

“What are the requirements to reach the first and second level rainbows?” Gongsun Wan’er suddenly asked.

Chen Manyao had long since been very leery of Gongsun Wan’er, and thus, did absolutely nothing to conceal her knowledge.

“The first rainbow is also called the Heaven Rainbow, and is occupied by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s one and only demigod patriarch. Beneath it is the Earth Rainbow on the left and the Mortal Rainbow on the right. The Earth Rainbow is for the devas, and the Mortal Rainbow is for the sect leader. It is also the location of many trials by fire and special cultivation zones.

“Most terrifying of all is that ancient battleship at the very top of the waterfall, which actually rests on the Heavenspan Sea itself. All of the four riversource sects have a battleship like that, and they are boundlessly mysterious and infinitely powerful!” With that, she glanced over at Bai Xiaochun, cleary done with her explanation, and also obviously not planning to divulge any information about the Wildlands.

Only she and Bai Xiaochun were aware of her involvement with the Wildlands, and he didn’t plan to say anything either. As for Gongsun Wan’er, she merely smiled, and didn't ask any further questions.

“Well, let’s go,” Bai Xiaochun said with a sigh. “Now that we’re here, we might as well find a place to settle down.” With that, he headed toward the city, and everyone followed along.

As they neared the city itself, they sensed invisible fluctuations spreading over all of them. Bai Xiaochun took out the jade slip he’d been given, which began to glow with a bright light that was none other than teleportation power. Before anyone in the group of seven could react, they had vanished.

When they reappeared, they were in a grand hall somewhere in the middle of the city. As soon as they appeared, and before they could even see their surroundings clearly, and icy voice spoke out.

“Hostage Bai Xiaochun. Hostage Gongsun Wan’er. Within these bags of holding you will find identity medallions and red Daoist robes for both you and your Dao Protectors.

“From this day on, all of you are cultivators of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!” Two bags of holding appeared out of thin air and flew toward Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er.

Before they had a chance to even open them, streams of power wrapped them up and threw them out of the hall. Moments later, they were out on the street. No one even spared them a second glance; apparently, they were used to people appearing like this.

Bai Xiaochun looked around blankly. Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang were a bit pale-faced from the teleportation. Song Que and Master God-Diviner seemed to have handled it a bit better, and Chen Manyao didn’t appear to be affected at all.

However, the cold reception from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was something none of them were used to.

Feeling less than pleased with the treatment, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, looked back at the grand hall, and shouted, “Hey, I'm an important political hostage!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0379 awe-chapter-380

Chapter 380: I'm Hungry

Bai Xiaochun’s shout provoked no response from within the hall. Master God-Diviner and the others exchanged awkward glances. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was extremely displeased. After all, he was an important political hostage, a status that he felt should come with at least some level of respect.

“Right guys?!” he said, looking over angrily at Big Fatty Zhang and the others. “Come on, I'm an important political hostage!”

Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat and looked left and right, but didn’t say anything.

“Ah well, whatever. I guess this hostage will just have to rough it out. Alright guys, what should we do now?” Sighing, he looked over at Master God-Diviner.

“Um,” Master God-Diviner began cautiously, “well... maybe we should check things out first before making any decisions.” Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang seemed to agree with him. Chen Manyao didn’t say anything, and Gongsun Wan’er simply stood there with a slight smile on her face. As for Song Que, he looked just as grim as always, and didn’t seem interested at all in even looking at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at everyone, and felt a headache coming on. He was already starting to regret bringing all these people with him. However, he couldn’t change the situation now. Therefore, he decided to do just as Master God-Diviner had suggested, and began walking down the street in the city.

As he went along, he slowly forgot about his mistreatment from before. Soon, he began to gasp and let out exclamations of shock. He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way; the others were similarly astonished by the things they saw.

After all, they were at the source of the entire eastern Heavenspan River, and this city had an enormous population. Most of the people in the city were disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, but others were from various families and clans that had lived in the city for generations.

One of the strangest things that Bai Xiaochun realized was that he hadn’t seen a single overweight person in the city so far. Everyone was skinny to the point of being gaunt. Some of them even looked like little more than skin and bones. Furthermore, everyone always seemed to be rushing about, as if they didn’t want to waste even a bit of time. Another strange thing was that none of them revealed even the tiniest sliver of their cultivation base. Bai Xiaochun was a Gold Core cultivator, so he was able to pick up some clues here and there. However, most other cultivators would look around and see people who looked like nothing more than mortals.

Suppressing his curiosity about that, Bai Xiaochun focused on all the things that were for sale in the city. Just about anything could be bought, from spirit treasures to magical items to ancient books. There were all sorts of medicinal pills as well.

There was spirit food available, some of which was made from precious materials of heaven and earth. Other spirit foods were the meats of different types of wild beasts. The prices for the spirit foods were astronomical, and yet to the surprise of Bai Xiaochun and his companions, people still would buy them, although it always seemed to be with some level of reluctance.

Bai Xiaochun had never seen such a bustling city before, nor had any of his companions. Thus, they took their time strolling through the city, slowly taking in all the sights and sounds.

As time passed, they were convinced of one thing... prices in the city were simply beyond belief. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had been given a sizeable sum of spirit stones back in the River-Defying Sect, but even with what he had, it only took a quick calculation on his part to come to the conclusion that he didn’t have enough to buy any of the things he really wanted.

After a few hours of wandering the city, the entire group came to another shocking realization: for some reason, all of them were very hungry!

This development caused their eyes to grow wide. After all, once cultivators reached Foundation Establishment, they didn’t need to consume physical food. Instead, they subsided on spiritual energy alone.

But as of this moment... a sensation of profound hunger had risen up within all of them.

“What’s going on...? I'm... I'm hungry!” Bai Xiaochun rubbed his belly and then looked over at Chen Manyao with a confused expression on his face.

Chen Manyao was also clearly taken aback. After a moment of thought, she pulled out a jade slip which she used to send a message to someone. After a moment, an odd expression appeared on her face. Looking around at her companions, she hesitated, then said, “Did any of you notice... that your cultivation bases have progressed already?”

Everyone quickly checked their cultivation bases, and sure enough, it was just as Chen Manyao had said. They hadn’t experienced huge advancements, but the evidence was there; they had just been so entranced by the bustling city that they hadn’t noticed.

Chen Manyao went on to explain, “Considering how close we are to the Heavenspan Sea, the spiritual energy is especially strong, and after entering our bodies, it throws our five yin organs into chaos. Although it causes our cultivation bases to advance more quickly, it’s also very draining on us.... That’s why we’re feeling hungry. Essentially... the energy drain is so severe that we can’t sustain our cultivation without eating normal food.”

Even as Chen Manyao explained the situation, Bai Xiaochun’s stomach began to grumble loudly.

When she finished speaking, his face fell. Other than death, the thing he feared most in life was hunger. Back on Fragrant Cloud Peak when he had begun to practice the Undying Live Forever Technique, he had almost starved to death. After reaching Foundation Establishment, he had never felt the pangs of hunger, but now, here they were rising up again.

Chen Manyao smiled bitterly and said, “Furthermore, I just asked... a friend of mine, and was told that everyone in the city has to eat a huge amount of food every day to replenish their energy. Also, it has to be spirit food.”

Big Fatty Zhang was already starting to get very nervous. Just like Bai Xiaochun, he feared hunger as if it were the shadow of death. “So... so does that mean we have to be eating constantly?”

“Once you become a yellow-robed disciple and get into the rainbow district, then the aura there will aid in your absorption of spiritual energy, and the problem will resolve itself naturally.” Chen Manyao’s brow was also furrowed because of the sensation of hunger she felt.

Gongsun Wan’er rubbed her belly, licked her lips, and then chuckled. “Well then, I think I’ll go get something to eat. See you all later.”

With that, she waved at them and melted into the crowd.

“Junior Patriarch, what do we do...?” Master God-Diviner said, looking at Bai Xiaochun. “I'm hungry too....”

Xu Baocai had the same reaction, and even grim-faced Song Que finally turned to look expectantly at Bai Xiaochun.

Rubbing his bag of holding anxiously, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and said, “Let’s just suck it up for now. We need to find a place to stay first, then we can worry about how to get something to eat.”

The others agreed that it was a good idea. All of them produced some medicinal pills to temporarily relieve their hunger, and then began searching through the city for a place to stay.

Soon, they found the location where Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect disciples could get immortal's caves, which was when Bai Xiaochun learned that all the immortal's caves were rented out, not sold. After looking over the rent prices, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp.

“This... this is way too expensive!”

The cultivator in charge was an orange-robed disciple, and all he did was look at Bai Xiaochun coldly, refusing to even say a word.

It was soon apparent from the incredible prices that only very wealthy people could afford immortal's caves here. Ordinary people had to settle for spirit abodes. Of course, the prices for spirit abodes were also very high.

Since they had few options available, Bai Xiaochun and his companions agreed to rent the cheapest spirit abode they could find. By the time they acquired the jade slip key and found the spirit abode in the city, it was starting to get dark outside.

It was located in the city’s east district, and was very simple and crude. It actually reminded Bai Xiaochun of his residence back in the village when he was young. Furthermore, to his agony, renting it for half a year cost him half of the spirit stones he’d been given by the sect.

A whole day had been wasted already, and all of them were getting increasingly hungry. By this point, all of their stomachs were grumbling loudly. Sighing, Bai Xiaochun tossed the bag of spirit stones over to Master God-Diviner and told him to go find some food.

Master God-Diviner excitedly caught the bag of holding and then rushed out, to return shortly with a large collection of spirit food which he divided out equally. Now that they had food, everyone sat around silently eating, wrapped up in their own thoughts.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he couldn’t stop thinking about how much he missed the River-Defying Sect.

The night passed silently. The next day at dawn... Bai Xiaochun was awoken by the sound of his own grumbling stomach. Looking around at everyone else, he could tell that they already looked a bit skinnier than they had the day before.

“Dammit! What wickedness is this? How are we supposed to deal with this?!” It was a terrifying situation; he was so hungry he could hardly see straight. Producing more spirit stones, he asked Master God-Diviner to go out again to buy spirit food.

And that was how the first day passed. Then a second day went by, and a third, and a fourth....

During that time, everyone from the group went out to explore the city at some point, but would return frowning and the settle down cross-legged and unmoving, not willing to waste any energy.

Despite trying to save energy, all of them, Bai Xiaochun included, were started to get much thinner. That was especially true of Xu Baocai, who was already at the point of looking like skin and bones.

However, none of that was truly frightening. What scared them the most was that the bag of holding was on the verge of running out of spirit stones, most likely within two days.... Even Bai Xiaochun’s personal bag of holding was almost ninety percent devoid of spirit stones.

“We have to think of a plan!” he said passionately, looking around at everyone with a serious look on his face. “Going on like this won't work. You guys are my Dao protectors! Go out and make some money!”

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, Song Que rose to his feet, a look of determination flickering in his eyes, as well as a bit of madness. Bai Xiaochun looked at him curiously, and was just about to ask what he was going to do when Song Que blurted, “I’ve had enough of this!!

“Enough, do you hear me Bai Xiaochun? Dao protector? Forget it, I quit! Song Que can solve his own problems for himself. From now on, you’re on your own! It all comes down to the merit points, right? Maybe I wasn’t a match for you in the Blood Stream Sect, or in the River-Defying Sect, but here in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, I'm going to become a yellow-robed disciple on my own merit, and get promoted to the rainbow district!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened angrily, and he was just about to offer a retort, when suddenly Master God-Diviner rose to his feet....

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0380 awe-chapter-381

Chapter 381: Out Of Options

Master God-Diviner gritted his teeth in hesitation for a moment before continuing, “Junior Patriarch.... Junior Patriarch, I'm leaving too. If we all stick around here, we’ll never solve the problem of being hungry. Look, why don’t you--”

At the sudden realization that everyone was apparently planning to go their own way, Bai Xiaochun shot to his feet.

“Don’t go, guys! You’re my Dao protectors! I brought you here with me! What am I supposed to do if you all leave...?” What was especially terrifying was the realization that the spirit stones the sect had given him were almost all gone. The fact that everyone was leaving at that point was what hurt the most.

“I brought you here with me! You’re supposed to take care of me....” Despite his protestations, Song Que simply snorted coldly, then turned and left. His plan was to go on some missions to earn the resources he needed to take care of himself.

“Que’er....” Bai Xiaochun called after him. However, Song Que didn’t even look over his shoulder. As for Master God-Diviner, he was getting ready to leave too, but Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed his arm.

“Master God-Diviner,” he said piteously, “I won’t call you Master Snortsnort anymore, okay? Don’t go....”

“Junior Patriarch, I don’t have any other choice. Before coming here, none of us had any idea that merely staying alive in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would be so difficult. I think I’ll go start performing some divinations to get some food to eat....” Although his words were chosen well, inside, he was furious, and at the same time, couldn’t stop thinking about how much he missed the River-Defying Sect. Shaking himself out of Bai Xiaochun’s grip, he left the spirit abode and was gone in a flash.

“I can’t believe you people!” Bai Xiaochun said angrily. As far as he was concerned, Song Que and Master God-Diviner were being completely unreasonable. If they had gone out on their own earlier, it might have been tolerable, but instead, they waited until he ran out of spirit stones to abandon him.

Even as Bai Xiaochun stood there fuming, Chen Manyao sighed and stood up. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, she said, “This is my fault for not getting complete information. Junior Patriarch, I'm going to go look for some friends of mine. If destiny will have it, we’ll meet again in the rainbow district.”

Without giving Bai Xiaochun a chance to respond, she flew out of the spirit abode.

Chen Manyao’s sudden departure pushed Bai Xiaochun toward the brink of madness. After all, she had come to him to ask to join the party, and now here she was just throwing him to the wayside. Thankfully, he could console himself with the fact that Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang were staying behind.

“Hmph! Fine, if they want to go, let them go. At least Eldest Brother and Little Treasure have some loyalty!” Looking over at them, he slapped his chest and said, “Look you two, don't worry, I’ll--”

However, that was when Xu Baocai rose awkwardly to his feet. “Junior Patriarch, I--”

“Hey what are you doing? Sit back down!” Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun was just getting ready to physically block Xu Baocai’s path, when he noticed the look of determination in his eyes, as well as the tears.

“Junior Patriarch,” he pled, “let me go, please. I... I don't want to die of starvation! Look at me! I'm the weakest of all of us, and I'm already skin and bones! If things keep going like this, I’m going to be the first one to die!

“Show me mercy, I beg of you! Let me go!

“Please, Junior Patriarch....” He even started tugging at Bai Xiaochun’s sleeve.

The anger faded from Bai Xiaochun’s face, and he sighed. “Alright, everyone has the right to pick their own path. Leave if you want!”

“Many thanks, Junior Patriarch!!” Eyes filled with gratitude, Xu Baocai fled the spirit abode.

As soon as he was outside, he caught sight of Master God-Diviner off in the distance. The two of them exchanged a glance, then joined together and headed off into the city, chuckling.

Looking quite proud of himself, Master God-Diviner produced a chunk of spirit meat from his bag of holding and started munching on it as he said, “Song Que has pretty high ambitions and isn’t very flexible. I bet he really did think that he was in a bad position. We’re different though. Finally, we're free from the clutches of evil!”

Xu Baocai hesitated for a moment, then produced a similar chunk of spirit meat. After taking a bite, he said, “Are you sure this is a good idea though? After all, we’re still technically Dao protectors.”

Clearly, the two of them had quite a collection of resources built up. After all, for the past several days, all of the food they’d been eating had been provided by Bai Xiaochun.

Master God-Diviner hesitated for a moment. After a bit of thought, he said, “There’s nothing we can do about that. If we had stayed back there, we would still have gone hungry eventually anyway, what with the junior patriarch’s way of handling things. Don’t worry, let’s take care of ourselves first, and then we can meet back up with him when we get to the rainbow district.”

After a bit more chatting regarding their plans, the two of them headed off into the city to find their own place to stay.

As of this point, the only people left in the spirit abode were Bai Xiaochun and Big Fatty Zhang. Big Fatty Zhang looked at Bai Xiaochun standing there in anger, then sighed and closed his eyes to meditate.

Despite Bai Xiaochun’s rage, there was nothing he could do about the situation. At least he had Big Fatty Zhang there to accompany him. However, the next day, not even Big Fatty Zhang could take it any longer. When evening fell, he walked over to Bai Xiaochun and said, “Ninth Fatty....”

Bai Xiaochun instantly started to get nervous. “Eldest Brother, are you--”

“Ninth Fatty, it’s not that your Eldest Brother doesn’t care about you. If things keep going like this, I’m gonna die. I’ll go out to perform some spirit enhancements. Don’t worry, Ninth Fatty, after I get some money built up, I’ll come back and take care of you!” Big Fatty Zhang had clearly made his mind up, and Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything to try to change his mind.

Big Fatty Zhang clapped Bai Xiaochun on the shoulder, then took a deep breath, his eyes gleaming as if he had accepted a holy mission. With that, he walked out of the spirit abode....

Bai Xiaochun was the only person left. As the sun slowly sank down over the horizon, he stood outside the door looking more lonesome than ever. Finally, he let out a long sigh.

“Gone. They've all gone....” Crestfallen, he walked back into the spirit abode and sat down, his hunger growing.

“What am I supposed to do? I'm so hungry!” Considering that night was falling, he finally went out and used some of his dwindling spirit stone savings to buy some more spirit food. Then he looked around at all the red-robed disciples hurrying here and there on various missions.

Although some of the missions were dangerous, considering that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was in the Gold Core level, they wouldn’t pose any threat to him. However, the rewards for accomplishing such missions were small.

Based on his calculations, doing missions to survive would require him to do them almost all day every day. That was mostly because the high level of his cultivation base meant that the drain on his body was even more noticeable.

And of course, the missions with bigger rewards were the ones that were more dangerous.

Despite putting some thought to it, he couldn’t come up with any good ideas. Sighing, he went back to his spirit abode. Back inside, the little turtle finally woke up and stuck his head out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. He looked at Bai Xiaochun suspiciously, clearly wondering why he had been asleep so long. However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in any mood to pay attention to him. Seeing how he was being ignored, the turtle’s suspicions faded, and he disappeared back into the bag of holding.

A few more days passed. Bai Xiaochun went out into the city a few times to try to get inspiration for what to do. He completely suppressed his cultivation base, ensuring that no fluctuations whatsoever emerged from him, which also reduced the drain on his body.

However, no matter how many ideas he came up with, he found that there were already people in the city using those methods to earn merit points. Trying to compete with them would be pointless. He even tried to find some unique missions at the Missions Office suited to his style, but there were simply too many disciples there looking for missions.

By this point, he knew exactly why all of the people he had seen in the city were always thin and in a hurry, and also had such strange cultivation bases. The pressure weighing down on them on a daily basis created something like an instinct. Because of the interference of the spiritual power, it was impossible to see who was powerful and who was weak.

“Don’t tell me that a majestic Gold Core cultivator like me is actually going to starve to death!!” he lamented. He was getting to the point that he was so hungry he couldn’t take it. His bag of holding was now completely devoid of spirit stones, and he was almost out of food. Soon, he would have nothing left to eat other than spirit plants.

Of course, he had plenty of those, because he was always equipped with numerous ingredients with which to concoct medicine. However, even if he sold them all, the merit points they would earn would vanish just as quickly as his spirit stones.

“I can’t keep going on like this, or I'm going to die! This Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is just too wicked! I can’t believe they treat their disciples so harshly! I'm a Gold Core expert! I'm an important political hostage! Don’t they even care that I’m starving to death!?!?” Depressed, he even considered resorting to theft. However, the punishment for theft in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was so severe that he quickly abandoned such thoughts.

“Alright, I’m out of options. I guess I’m going to have to use my best skill to solve this problem. I'm... I'm going to concoct medicine!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0381 awe-chapter-382

Chapter 382: Ultra Fasting Aid Pill!

“Even if some disastrous things happen as a result, I don’t care. Things are already bad enough as it is. What do I have to be scared of? I'm gonna concoct some sort of medicine that prevents hunger long-term! In fact, I already came up with a name for it! Ultra Fasting Aid Pill!!” Eyes bloodshot, he slapped his bag of holding, producing a pill furnace, as well as some flamestones. Taking a deep breath to calm himself, he devoted all of his thoughts to the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill he wanted to concoct.

Some people in the world perform better under more pressure, and Bai Xiaochun was just that type of person. In fact, he was extraordinary even among people like that.

The truth was that surviving in this city wasn’t as hard as Bai Xiaochun imagined it to be, especially for Gold Core cultivators. In fact, it was relatively simple. All he had to do was take on a few relatively dangerous missions every once in a while, or do smaller, easier missions on a daily basis. Using either of those methods, it would only take a year or two to save up enough merit points to become a yellow-robed disciple and be promoted to the rainbow district. Of course, it would require a bit of frugality, but it was nothing undoable.

But Bai Xiaochun didn’t like danger, and didn’t want to do any missions. Only when he was so hungry that he could hardly see straight did the pressure build to the point where he finally exploded with creativity and innovation.

For the following four days, he didn't rest or sleep. He ate what little food he had left, and even nibbled on some spirit plants, until finally, the pill formula for his Ultra Fasting Aid Pill came to be complete in his mind.

“My Ultra Fasting Aid Pill will be a concentration of the quintessence of heaven and earth! Upon consuming it, one will receive temporary replenishment, will be relieved from the pressure caused by the draining of ordinary energy, and will even find that the spiritual power inside of their body has become gentler and easier to work with!” Bai Xiaochun was trembling with excitement, and although he was now quite gaunt, his eyes were shining brightly. Having completed the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill formula, he immediately began to concoct.

Six hours later, his first batch appeared, and although it only contained three pills, the mere odor emanating from them caused Bai Xiaochun’s hunger to lessen!

“Hahaha! I really am a genius. It worked! My Ultra Fasting Aid Pill worked!” Surging with excitement, he took the three pills out of the furnace, and was just about to consume them when he hesitated, and thought back to all the bizarre and strange things which had happened in the past when he had concocted medicine.

“Maybe it would be better to do some tests.” Gritting his teeth, he left his spirit abode, sold a few medicinal plants to get some merit points, and then went and bought a spirit chicken.

Back in his spirit abode, he gave one of the Ultra Fasting Aid Pills to the spirit chicken, then carefully watched to see what happened. After a full day passed, he was convinced that nothing had gone wrong, and that the spirit chicken was fine. At that point, his eyes blazed with excitement.

“Looks like I really did succeed!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, then went to work on the next batch. Before long, he had several dozen Ultra Fasting Aid Pills.

“Now that I think about it, it would be a waste for me to consume these pills myself. I actually like spirit food a lot better than medicinal pills.” After some thought, he decided to try to sell some of the pills. Filled with anticipation, he left the spirit abode yet again.

Instead of trying to sell the pills to one particular shop or another, he went to one of the busiest public squares in the east district of the city, and after spending a bit of time, found a suitable location to set up a vendor’s stand. After placing three pill bottles onto the stand, each of which containing a single pill, he sent some power from his cultivation base into a jade slip, causing it to send bright, multicolored light shining up into the air above him. Immediately, four brightly-glowing characters could be seen....

Ultra Fasting Aid Pill!

With that, he settled down to wait for customers.

It didn’t take long. After all, the term ‘Ultra Fasting Aid Pill’ was quite eye-catching. Before long, people began to gather around him.

“Ultra Fasting Aid Pill? I’ve never heard of that medicinal pill before.”

“Considering how things work in Sky City, I almost can't believe this guy dares to sell a fasting aid pill. He’s either a con artist or a psycho.”

“Hmph. Fasting aid pills don’t do any good here!”

More and more people gathered and began to discuss the matter, but no one was willing to buy a pill. That was even more so considering that Bai Xiaochun’s quoted price was 100 merit points.

Bai Xiaochun soon got nervous, and was even starting to consider dropping the price. However, that was when a certain cultivator appeared in the crowd. He was currently gaunt, but considering his height, he had obviously once been very muscular. Furthermore, he had a cold gleam in his eyes, and a murderous aura that anyone could detect.

He wasn't alone, either. Walking along next to him was a young boy with a waxen face and listless eyes.

As soon as the big man appeared, the gathered crowd went silent, and many of them even backed up a bit. Apparently, they recognized him, and didn’t dare to do anything to offend him.

“Ultra Fasting Aid Pill? 100 merit points, huh...?” The big man’s eyes narrowed as he looked at one of the pill bottles, then back at Bai Xiaochun. Because of the way that everyone in the city suppressed their cultivation bases, it was impossible for the man to determine Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation level. However, based on his judgment, he placed him at Foundation Establishment or higher. Eyes glittering coldly, he said, “If this thing really works, then it would definitely be worth 100 merit points. But... if it doesn’t, then you’ll either pay me back tenfold, or I’ll teach you a lesson you won't forget for a long time!” Before Bai

Xiaochun could even react, he reached out, grabbed one of the pill bottles and crushed it, then tossed the medicinal pill to his child.

The boy morosely opened his mouth and swallowed the pill.

Of course, everyone was watching closely to see what would happen. As for Bai Xiaochun, his expression was the same as ever, but inside, his nervousness was mounting, although it wasn't because of the big man. From what he could tell, the man was only in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and Bai Xiaochun knew that he could stomp the man in a fight even if he were hungrier than he already was.

What had him nervous was his uncertainty about how effective the pill would be....

As everyone looked on, the boy’s expression suddenly flickered. His eyes opened, and he began to shake visibly, causing the audience to crane their necks to see what would happen next.

Gradually, the onlookers’ eyes began to widen, and then cries of disbelief and shock began to ring out.

“W-what’s... what’s going on!?!?”

“Heavens! I can’t believe this Ultra Fasting Aid Pill actually works!!”

“How is this possible?!?!”

As such exclamations continued to fill the air, the young boy’s gaunt frame suddenly began to fill in with flesh. Within only a few breaths of time, he was the picture of a healthy boy. He was even a bit chubby!

Gasps and cries of astonishment could be heard in all directions. As for the big man who had bought the pill, he was shaking, and his eyes began to shine with shock.

“Immortal medicine! That’s immortal medicine!!” The man quickly reached out to grab the remaining two bottles, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun leveled a cold gaze at him.

The man’s mind filled with rumbling sounds, and his hand lurched to a halt. As of this moment, a sensation of deadly crisis had filled him, and something inside of him was telling him that if he dared to try to steal the pill bottles, he would be struck dead instantly!

“I painstakingly concocted these pills with undying wheatgrass,” Bai Xiaochun said coolly. “It's very expensive. I only offered it up for 100 merit points because I knew that nobody would be interested or even trust that they were real. As of this moment, these pills cost 300 merit points each!”

The big man took a deep breath and said, “Fine, 900 merit points for the first pill plus these two!”

Without any hesitation, he pulled out a jade slip and transferred 900 merit points to Bai Xiaochun. Then he grabbed the pills and hurried off.

Although everyone else in the crowd wished they could have bought the pills, nobody was able to do anything. That was when Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and produced three more bottles from his bag of holding....

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he sold thirty Ultra Fasting Aid Pills. Only after all of the pills had been snatched up did he put away his vendor’s stand, and then stroll off proudly, hands clasped behind his back.

“Hmmmmmph. Master God-Diviner schemed his way out of the group, but little did he know that Bai Xiaochun could casually come up with 9,000 merit points with almost no effort!” The sight of so many merit points in his identity medallion filled his heart with complete satisfaction.

“Right now, I'm a red-robed disciple, which means I have to spend 100,000 merit points to become an orange-robed disciple. However, to leave Sky City and fly up to the rainbow district, I need to become a yellow-robed disciple, which costs 1,000,000 merit points.

“That’s not very much....” Feeling very proud of himself, he rubbed his belly and then hurried to a nearby spirit food restaurant. After buying enough food for five people, he began to stuff himself, simultaneously contemplating how wonderful life was. Filled to bursting, he returned to his spirit abode and began to concoct more medicine.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Hey everyone, if you have just a minute, could you click my latest YouTube video and let it play for a bit of time to get it some views. I usually do not make such blatant request for views, but this one is kind of important. It's a pre-review of a translation of one of the most classic wuxia novels, Legend of the Condor Heroes. The publisher is making a bad decision about the translation (in my opinion and the opinions of some other translators) and I hope getting a (pre)-review video with a good amount of views will attract their attention to some extent. Thanks so much.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0382 awe-chapter-383

Chapter 383: Attracting Attention

As the night wore on, Bai Xiaochun became obsessed with pill concocting in a way that was completely different from before. By the time the sun rose, he had concocted 50 Ultra Fasting Aid Pills, whereupon he hurried out of his spirit abode toward the public square.

This time, he had barely set up his vendor stall and put the medicinal pill bottles out before a whole crowd of cultivators had gathered, pushing and shoving in their madness to buy some of the pills.

It didn’t take long before all 50 of the Ultra Fasting Aid Pills were gone. Bai Xiaochun was completely taken aback. However, after a bit of thought, he realized why the pills sold so quickly.

Compared to the outrageously expensive spirit food in the city, the pills were very cheap. Furthermore, they were so effective that no one could possibly be unmoved by them. After some consideration, though, Bai Xiaochun decided not to raise his prices. As far as he was concerned, the inhabitants of the city had things rough as it was, and besides, he was already making a great profit.

However, the next day as he was passing by a random shop, he noticed to his astonishment that they had an Ultra Fasting Aid Pill for sale for 3,000 merit points!

Upon arriving at the public square, he couldn’t even sit down before eight cultivators rushed over and began fighting over the chance to be first in line. And furthermore, all of them wanted to buy his entire supply of pills.

By now, Bai Xiaochun was on guard, and after a bit of observation, came to the realization that these cultivators were all employees of various shops in the east district. Obviously, they wanted to purchase the pills at a low price and then resell them for a profit.

Bai Xiaochun was not very pleased at all, and immediately established a new rule governing sales. Each customer could only purchase one pill at the normal price. The second pill would be twice as expensive. The same went for the third pill. However, this new rule wasn’t very effective. After all, the cultivators in Sky City were most unscrupulous....

Bai Xiaochun simply ignored that, though, and continued selling pills for seven days. By that point, he had accumulated close to 100,000 merit points.

Meanwhile, the matter of the Ultra Fasting Aid Pills in the east district had caused quite a commotion. Many people had heard of them, including certain powerful organizations in the city.

There were countless such organizations in Sky City, which were essentially gangs of cultivators. The largest and most powerful of them was the Celestial Sky Society, which controlled nearly eighty percent of the shops. With that monopoly, and the fact that they were backed by a deva clan, no one ever dared to provoke them.

When it came to the east district, there was no single person from the Celestial Sky Society who ran it, but rather, there were three of them, all of them famous orange-robed disciples. Currently, they were meeting in a secret location, serious expressions on their faces as they studied... an Ultra Fasting Aid Pill!

They took turns holding it in their hands and looking at it from all angles. None of them spoke, and a bit of time passed before someone called out greetings from outside of the secret chamber.

Standing outside was an old man with a full head of white hair. He was surrounded by a strong medicinal aroma, and as soon as he entered, the three orange-robed cultivators rose to their feet and greeting him respectfully.

The old man didn’t waste any words. Pointing at the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill, he said, “This pill contains 123 different types of medicinal effects. The combination of so many types of effects can lead to infinite variations.... I've never seen anything like it in my life.

“In terms of ingredients, it contains nineteen different varieties of medicinal plant, which, when merged together, give rise to those 123 different medicinal effects. If my speculations are correct, a unique concoction method was used to produce the pill!

“Whoever concocted it might not have overall skill in the Dao of medicine to rival my own, but when it comes to the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression, he definitely is my superior!” This old man had spent several days researching the pill, and had been left completely shaken by what he saw.

One of the three orange-robed disciples couldn’t help but ask, “Is there any way you can reproduce the formula and technique so that we can concoct it ourselves?”

“Apparently you didn’t understand what I just said. Let me put it this way: not only have I never heard of an Ultra Fasting Aid Pill before, even after researching it, I can assure you that the formula is not like anything I’ve ever seen before. There are some flaws to it, but consuming it won’t cause any significant harm. At worst, it might cause some temporary damage to one’s vital energy. However, any such damage will quickly be repaired. Furthermore, after consuming the pill, a cultivator will be able to stave off the draining of their energy for about half a month. In the final analysis, I’m convinced... that someone recently invented this pill formula!

“Do you really think that I can simply analyze and reproduce such a powerful, recently invented pill formula? I don’t have that level of skill!”

Eyes shining brightly, the old man continued, “However, what I can do is take an existing pill and possibly split it up into more than one pill. Unfortunately... that would reduce the quality and make the side-effects worse.”

The three orange-robed disciples didn’t respond. All of them knew that if these pills continued to be concocted and sold to the inhabitants of Sky City, it would have a seriously detrimental effect on the sale of spirit food. In fact, it could even end the industry altogether.

Obviously, the Celestial Sky Society had no desire for the status quo to change.

If only they could acquire the pill formula, then they would be able to get a handle on the situation, and perhaps even prevent the pill from being concocted!

The three orange-robed disciples exchanged glances, and then two of them turned to the third.

“Killing people violates the rules set forth by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect,” said one of the two, “so we should avoid that if possible. Even the main headquarters agrees with that.” Both of the men clasped hands respectfully. “Therefore, Fellow Daoist Zhou, would it be possible for you to get in contact with the cultivator selling this pill, and somehow acquire the pill formula? If not, well... hmph, I guess we could use the cooperation method!”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun had been enjoying life for the past seven days. He was both pleased and shocked at his rapidly growing accumulation of merit points, and had been constantly splurging on the most expensive spirit foods. He had even gone to the Magic Pavilion to buy a large collection of magical items and defensive treasures.

What excited him most was that in Sky City, there were certain shops that sold beast mounts. The most expensive could cost millions of merit points, and even the cheapest went for more than 100,000.

Bai Xiaochun immediately fell in love with the idea of having a beast mount. After all, the cultivators he had seen in the city who went around on such mounts were all extraordinary figures. His desire itched in his heart, but unfortunately, he was worried that he couldn’t actually afford one. Therefore, he waited a few days until he couldn’t hold back anymore, and then spent over 100,000 merit points on a battle mount.

To most cultivators in the city, a mount like this would be considered a luxury. It was fully 90 meters long, and looked like a fearsome crocodile. It had three eyes, was covered with armor-like scales, and had a cultivation base comparable to the early Foundation Establishment stage.

When Bai Xiaochun sat on the back of the crocodile, he felt extremely grand and imposing. Its growling cry echoed like thunder, and ensured that he was the subject of much envy as he rode it back to his spirit abode.

“In a few days, I’ll pick a new place to stay,” he thought. “This spirit abode doesn’t fit me anymore. I need an immortal's cave! And the best one at that!” Even as his eyes sparkled with pride, he realized that there was an orange-robed cultivator waiting for him outside of his spirit abode, hands clasped behind his back.

He was flanked by seven or eight red-robed disciples, all of whom seemed energetic and ready to fight. In fact, they weren’t suppressing their cultivation bases, which ensured that a weighty pressure filled the entire area surrounding the spirit abode.

However, even the orange-robed disciple was only in the great circle of Foundation Establishment. As for the other Foundation Establishment cultivators, Bai Xiaochun could tell that they wouldn’t pose a threat to him at all, so he ignored them.

They looked at him, and he looked back at them. As for the orange-robed disciple, as soon as he got a look at Bai Xiaochun’s face, his expression turned very serious.

Everyone in the city usually suppressed their cultivation bases to the limit. However, as for this orange-robed disciple, with careful scrutiny, he could determine if a person was weaker than him or not. The only people he would be unable to assess would be people who were already in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, or higher.

Currently, he couldn’t assess Bai Xiaochun at all....

However, it didn’t occur to him that Bai Xiaochun might be in Core Formation.... That was because, despite how packed Sky City was, there were actually very few Core Formation cultivators there.

After all... with a Gold Core cultivation base, it would be a relatively simple thing to go on missions and earn the merit points necessary to be promoted to the rainbow district.

“Well this might be a problem....” the orange-robed cultivator thought, frowning. Despite having run a background check on Bai Xiaochun, he hadn’t found any information about him other than his surname. After a moment, he decided that, considering the level of cultivation base he was dealing with, he shouldn’t beat around the bush. The Ultra Fasting Aid Pill was too important, and therefore, the best choice in the situation was to start out by trying to cooperate with its maker. His frown turned into a smile.

As Bai Xiaochun neared, the orange-robed disciple clasped hands and bowed.

“Brother Bai, I presume? I am your humble servant Zhou Tao, a leader of sorts within the Celestial Sky Society. I was hoping to discuss the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill with you. If we cooperate, I think we can make a handsome profit!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Hey everyone, I've had a lot of people mention that they don't use Twitter, so I decided to start mirroring my content on other social media. For the most part, the content will be the same as Twitter, so if you already follow me there, then there's no need to follow the other accounts. By the way, the new version of wuxiaworld is coming, and I don't think there will be a sidebar with my Twitter feed, so please do follow me somewhere. I post about Chinese fantasy novels, wuxia, xianxia, life in China, stuff about the Chinese language, etc. For those of you who followed my Facebook page a while back, you might remember that it got deleted because I unwittingly violated the Facebook terms and conditions. So this is a new page that won't be deleted. Soon I will update the "credits" I include with the chapters to have these links, but for now, you can follow me on:

Facebook page

Google+

Instagram (this is different from BDB's Instagram)

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0383 awe-chapter-384

Chapter 384: Schemes and Tricks

“What do you mean work together?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking down at Zhou Tao from his position atop the crocodile.

Zhou Tao was not very pleased that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t dismounted from the crocodile, but his tone of voice didn’t reveal that as he said, “Your humble servant wishes to purchase the precious pill formula for the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill. Would you be willing to part with it for 100,000 merit points, Brother Bai?”

“It’s not for sale,” Bai Xiaochun said, rolling his eyes. With that, he flew off of the crocodile, then swished his sleeve, causing it to fly into his spirit beast bag. Just as he was about to step into his spirit abode, Zhou Tao moved to block his way.

“Brother Bai, if you don't want to sell the formula, that's fine. But would you be willing to let the Celestial Sky Society be the exclusive dealer for your pill?”

“Exclusive dealer?” Bai Xiaochun looked at Zhou Tao for a moment. The truth was that going out to sell the pills on his own over the past few days had been a bit troublesome. If this Zhou Tao could do that for him, it would definitely save some effort.

“The Celestial Sky Society virtually runs Sky City,” Zhou Tao said with a smile. “Therefore, I am very confident that within a few short months, we could get your Ultra Fasting Aid Pill to every corner of the city. By that point, you would be able to make a huge profit without having to do any of the grunt work yourself.”

Bai Xiaochun thought about it for a moment, and then began to discuss the particulars with Zhou Tao. Two hours passed, and they finally agreed that the Celestial Sky Society would buy the pills for 300 merit points, resell them at a higher price, and then split any subsequent profits 50/50. Bai Xiaochun almost felt like he was taking advantage of them, but Zhou Tao seemed quite pleased. Smiling, they swore a Dao oath and recorded it on a jade slip, which they then sent to the Justice Bureau of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to make the deal official.

Before leaving, Zhou Tao smiled and asked, “Brother Bai, might I know your illustrious given name? Since we’re partners now, I’d like to know a bit more about you.”

Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up, waved his sleeve and loftily said, “You can just call me Apothecary Bai.”

After a brief moment of hesitation, Zhou Tao smiled again and then took his leave.

In the following days, Bai Xiaochun went crazy concocting medicine. Furthermore, he increased his daily quota from 50 pills to 100.

That was his limit. Every time Zhou Tao came to collect the pills, he would simply hand over 30,000 merit points. As for the extra money from the profits, that would come later, after all sales were finalized.

Another seven days went by in a flash. During that time, the Celestial Sky Society’s hard work ensured that the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill created a huge stir in the east district. The entire place was thrown into an uproar, and the cultivators there were going crazy. Although the prices were quite high, many cultivators bought them, and soon, the spirit food market began to drop.

Before long, virtually all of the cultivators in the east district were talking about Ultra Fasting Aid Pills. Furthermore, the Celestial Sky Society made a point of crediting Apothecary Bai. As a result, virtually everyone in east district knew that the Ultra Fasting Aid Pills were concocted by Apothecary Bai, with the Celestial Sky Society cultivators being nothing more than dealers representing him.

Bai Xiaochun found something odd about that, but didn't do anything to stop them from spreading his name. Eventually, Zhou Tao came to share the merit point profits, which was a sum of tens of thousands. When he said that such profits would only continue to increase, Bai Xiaochun got more excited than ever.

Of course, what Bai Xiaochun didn't know was that after the Celestial Sky Society got the Ultra Fasting Aid Pills, their apothecary spared absolutely no cost or effort to turn the 100 pills into 3,000. Because of that, the negative side effects grew even more extreme!

Over the course of the past week, Bai Xiaochun had given them 700 pills, but they had turned that into over 20,000 pills to sell. Furthermore, they didn't just sell them in the east district, they also sent them to the west, south, and north districts. As for Bai Xiaochun, there was no way for him to catch wind of that in the short time which had passed.

For the first time, Bai Xiaochun had more than 200,000 merit points saved up. Excited, he finally decided to spend

100,000 of them to become an orange-robed disciple.

The new clothing was very comfortable, and as he went around on his battle beast, he felt extremely grand. With his Ultra Fasting Aid Pill, he could easily dominate everything under heaven. However, even as he proceeded along down the street looking down upon all creation with haughtiness, he suddenly heard someone scream. Shocked, he stood up on his battle beast and craned his neck to see a cultivator off in the distance, writhing on the ground as his flesh rapidly withered up.

Before he could even react, more people in the crowd suddenly fell to the ground, screaming as their bodies began to wither. Bai Xiaochun instantly started to get nervous.

“What’s going on? Is the city under attack!?” He immediately sent his battle beast rushing back toward his spirit abode. Along the way, he was astonished to discover that dozens of people were falling to the ground and withering up. In fact, he even noticed that one of them was a cultivator who had bought his pill in the past. More than ever, he now felt that something strange was going on.

Unfortunately, things were only getting started. The next day, even more people in the east district were suddenly struck with incredible, explosive levels of hunger. More than a hundred people were affected, and already, the news was spreading like wildfire.

Although no one had died yet, all of them ended up with damaged vital energy. Some could recover after a bit of rest, but for others, the injuries were more serious.

Of course, the wrath of the cultivators was aroused, and as people began to look into the situation, it quickly became apparent that everyone who had been struck with sudden hunger and gauntness, without a single exception, had consumed an Ultra Fasting Aid Pill.

In terms of how serious the injuries to vital energy were, nobody paid much attention. As far as everyone was concerned, that didn’t matter. Furthermore, thanks to the whisperings of certain individuals, people quickly began to lay the blame on Bai Xiaochun.

“These Ultra Fasting Aid Pills are fake!”

“Apothecary Bai is a swindler!!”

“Dammit! Things are already bad enough here, I can’t believe someone would stoop to conning us! If there weren’t strict rules here, I’d personally go and kill Apothecary Bai!!”

More and more people began to fall to the symptoms. As for the friends and family of the victims, as well as they other cultivators who weren’t affected, they all began to simmer with rage. Of course, there were people egging them on secretly, attempting to sway public opinion and stoke the fury which was building in the east district.

The anger quickly began to transform into killing intent, and despite Bai Xiaochun being a Gold Core cultivator, this wasn’t the River-Defying Sect. This was the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, a place where he was a stranger. Furthermore, he had nobody to protect him, and as such, the rising anger being directed toward him filled him with a sensation of deadly crisis!

It soon reached the point where he was nearly scared out of his mind. Thankfully, he had experienced similar situations in the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, so before anything could actually happen, he packed his bags and fled into the night.

Now that he was descending from the high of suddenly having so many merit points, it occurred to him that he had been well played by the Celestial Sky Society.

“Damn you, Celestial Sky Society!! I didn't do anything to offend you people!” Gritting his teeth, he sped along under the cover of darkness, feeling very sorry for himself, and at the same time, extremely irritated.

To have been schemed against and then toyed with in such a matter was a huge loss of face, and the anger in his eyes soon began to burn brightly. Of course, he couldn’t bring himself to just flee without getting to the bottom of the situation. Not daring to go confront anyone from the Celestial Sky Society, he found some of the people who had been struck by side effects, and did a bit of research of his own. Soon, he understood the truth.

“The Ultra Fasting Aid Pills these people consumed were altered. They weren’t the pills I gave to the Celestial Sky Society! My pills might have some impurities, but the side effects should have been limited to minor damage to vital energy. Nothing that a bit of rest couldn’t fix! Something that minor would be worth it in exchange for half a month without being hungry and having your energy drained!

“But the Celestial Sky Society changed my spirit medicine and made it far more harmful. They even reduced the effectiveness!!

“Why would they do something like that!?” Gritting his teeth, he drew upon the power of his cultivation base to flee the east district and go to the north district. However, after arriving, it was to his shock that he found that there were also people there who had been harmed by consuming Ultra

Fasting Aid Pills. By this point, a thought struck him like lightning.

“I get it. The Celestial Sky Society is the most powerful organization in Sky City, and they control most of the shops and stores. The biggest profits in the city come from spirit food, and the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill struck a huge blow to the spirit food industry!

“They came to me, not to work together to sell pills, but to completely destroy the reputation of my Ultra Fasting Aid Pill!!” The more he came to understand what had occurred, the angrier he got.

“Well isn’t this interesting. They didn’t use magic or try to assassinate me, they schemed their way to victory! Well, Bai Xiaochun can play that game too! You just wait, Celestial Sky Society. You just wait!!” Gritting his teeth, he settled down in the north district.

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0384 awe-chapter-385

Chapter 385: Running Into Master God-Diviner

After arriving in the north district, Bai Xiaochun rented another spirit abode. He also spent some merit points to get some food, and then sat down and focused on cultivation for a few days until the commotion in the city died down.

Now that he was at the very source of the Heavenspan River, he could continuously work on his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, as long as he had enough food to make up for the energy drainage.

The energy of heaven and earth in the area was majestic beyond description, and ensured that his cultivation was advancing by leaps and bounds. Although he hadn’t quite broken past the Frigid Acolyte level, he was definitely far beyond his previous point.

By now, he could emit shocking pulses of frigid qi out of his palm to form something like a projection of a person. That projection was one of the key signs of the Frigid Acolyte level, a frigid shadow.

He also persisted in the cultivation of his Undying Tendons, making sure to spend time working on it every day. By now, he had completely finished his work on his second toe, and had moved on to his third toe.

“The patriarchs were right,” he thought with a sigh. “My cultivation is moving a lot faster here in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.”

Time marched on.

Three months later, the waves caused by the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill incident had mostly died down. Virtually everyone in Sky City had heard that the whole thing was a scam, and as such, were very leery of any type of fasting aids.

Because of that, it was impossible to sell Ultra Fasting Aid Pills, and even if someone created a new type, no one would trust that it was real, and even fewer people would dare to consume one.

The Celestial Sky Society had achieved their goal with minimal effort. In fact, they had even made a bit of profit in the process. Not only had the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill been done away with once and for all, all of the blame had been placed onto the head of the now-missing Apothecary Bai.

Of course, the Celestial Sky Society also apologized to everyone who had been injured because of the pills, and used various means to provide compensation. In the end, there were almost no negative ramifications for them.

The only thing they regretted was that they hadn’t managed to incite the populace to rise up and put Bai Xiaochun to death. However, as far as they were concerned, he was nothing more than a talented apothecary, not someone worth worrying about.

It was a war that had been fought without unleashing a single magical technique, and Bai Xiaochun... had been thoroughly defeated!

That fact left Bai Xiaochun profoundly irritated. Had he lost in magical combat, he wouldn’t have cared. But to have been defeated this way left him filled with fury, almost to the point of madness. Never before had he been humiliated in such a fashion, and he had even considering relying on the power of his cultivation base to go stomp the Celestial Sky Society. But then he realized that considering how large of an organization they were, even with his Gold Core cultivation base... they probably wouldn’t be that easy to deal with.

“Relying on one’s cultivation base isn’t a true display of skill,” he said to himself through gritted teeth. “Wherever Bai Xiaochun falls down, that’s where he rises back up! I can scheme too, can’t I!?” With that, he took a sip of Hundred Flowers spirit alcohol, and then ate a mouthful of Precious Jade spirit rice. Those two particular brands of spirit food were relatively expensive, and had been his favorite back in the east district. Thankfully, after arriving at the north district, he still had some left over that he'd bought earlier.

Unfortunately, over the past three months, he had been forced to watch as his food supply dwindled and the merit points in his identity medallion were slowly eaten away. He hardly had any left now.

“I guess I was just living too extravagantly before....” he thought. He was even starting to regret having spent those 100,000 merit points to become an orange-robed disciple, and also realized that it had been a bit impulsive to buy his crocodile mount.

“What am I supposed to do?” he thought, scowling on the verge of tears. “I can’t sell Ultra Fasting Aid Pills anymore. Don’t tell me that I'm going to have to go back to living frugally and survive by consuming my own Ultra Fasting Aid Pills...?” With that, he ate another mouthful of spirit rice, his anger toward the Celestial Sky Society continuing to grow.

Half a month later, he was on the verge of completely running out of spirit food, and he had almost no merit points left. Sadly, he had yet to come up with an idea of how to earn more merit points. Finally, when he was sure that the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill commotion had died down, he sighed, took a bath in spirit water, and then worked up a quick disguise so that people wouldn't recognize his face. Then he left his spirit abode.

"I guess I have no choice but to sell my crocodile mount, plus all of those magical items I bought. Probably that jewelry too." Although he was loathe to do such a thing, he didn't really have any other choice. After jumping onto his crocodile's back, he thought about how grand he must look with his orange robe. Unfortunately, his bag of holding was virtually completely empty....

Thankfully, crocodiles were one of the most common types of mounts in Sky City, so nobody connected the current Bai Xiaochun to the Apothecary Bai of the east district.

As he proceeded along through the north district, quite a few people looked at him with envy and respect. There were even some orange-robed disciples who looked at him that way. After all, only people with lots of money or power could afford battle beast mounts. That, coupled with the glitter of the magical treasures with which he festooned himself, all made him look very impressive.

However, such gazes only made Bai Xiaochun feel worse.

"After today," he thought dejectedly, "nobody is going to look at me like that anymore." Sighing, he decided to parade around the city for a bit longer.

It was with great wistfulness that he toured the north district all the way until evening was about to fall. At that point, he gritted his teeth and decided to head to the Spirit Beast Pavilion. Along the way, he passed a certain alley where he happened to notice a familiar cultivator standing there.

He was holding a banner in his hand upon which were written three characters.

Master God-Diviner....

He was clearly much thinner than he had been when he had parted ways with Bai Xiaochun. His face was waxen and sunken in, his eyes listless. He seemed to be in very bad shape.

Few people paid any attention to him as they walked past, and even when he called out to try to drum up business, people simply ignored him. Considering the bleak expression on his face, and his blank stare, it almost looked like his soul had left him.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked at his appearance, and immediately felt bad for him. Patting his crocodile mount, he headed over in Master God-Diviner’s direction.

Even before he got near, the crocodile's enormous frame cast a huge shadow over Master God-Diviner, who shivered and looked up. The sight that met his eyes was a ferocious 90-meter-long crocodile looming over him.

It had armor-like scales that glittered in the evening light, and the breath that escaped its nostrils as it breathed was enough to leave one’s mind spinning. Atop the crocodile was Bai Xiaochun, clad in the garments of an orange-robed disciple, looking very grand, surrounded as he was by the glittering light of magical treasures.

Master God-Diviner was instantly shaken, and his eyes began to shine with unprecedentedly bright light. His experiences during the past few months had left him with a keen understanding regarding people like this. They were like Chosen in Sky City, people with tens of thousands of merit points at their disposal, many of whom were very close to becoming yellow-robed disciples.

They were the truly powerful figures in the city, people whom Master God-Diviner had come to envy and look up to during the past months. As of this moment, his excitement was building at the prospect of getting a client like this. Eyes sparkling, he straightened out his robe and then clasped hands and bowed.

“Brother, please wait a moment! I am your humble servant Master God-Diviner, and if possible, would like to speak a word with you!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then remembered that he was in disguise. Therefore, he pretended to think about the matter for a moment before finally voicing his assent.

Master God-Diviner was so excited that he was trembling. The truth was that he hadn’t even prepared any words to say in a situation like this. The mere fact that someone had agreed to listen to him left his eyes brimming with tears of excitement. Mustering his courage, he told himself, “Master God-Diviner, ahhh, Master God-Diviner. You definitely have to please this fellow. Look at how impressive he is! If you make him happy, the merit points will surely come flowing in. Furthermore, you might even be able to convince him to take you on as a permanent diviner!!”

With that, he put a serious expression on his face and then performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then peered at Bai Xiaochun as if to look into his future. Soon, powerful fluctuations began to roll off of him, making him look quite imposing.

However, a moment later, his eyes widened, and he began to tremble.

“No. No, it can’t be. This can’t be right. Why are my divinations showing me him? Hold on, let me start over....” By this point he was breathing heavily, and a look of complete incredulity could be seen on his face. He quickly performed another double-handed incantation gesture, after which his eyes grew even wider. He almost looked like he had seen a ghost.

“You’re... you’re....”

A strange expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he looked down at Master God-Diviner from his position on the crocodile. Obviously, Master God-Diviner had deduced his true identity, which was no surprise considering that he did have some skill with divination.

After all, he had divined information about Bai Xiaochun back in the Blood Stream Sect days, and had always been fairly accurate....

“How did you get yourself in such a bad situation, Master Snortsnort?” Bai Xiaochun said. “I mean, I thought I had it bad, but obviously, you have it *way* worse than me.”

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Master God-Diviner felt like he had just been struck by lightning. Trembling, he staggered backward. When he had performed the divination just now, what he had seen had been almost impossible to believe. Now that he recognized Bai Xiaochun’s voice, he was left reeling in shock.

Bai Xiaochun felt quite pleased to see Master God-Diviner reacting in such a way. However, he cleared his throat and said, “Keep your voice down....”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0385 awe-chapter-386

Chapter 386: Why Aren’t You Kowtowing!?

“You.... I....” Master God-Diviner stared at Bai Xiaochun, his mind reeling, almost unable to believe how events were unfolding. However, he *could* believe it, no matter how much he didn’t want to.

He was currently teetering on the verge of passing out, and all he could think about were the grand aspirations he had harbored upon leaving Bai Xiaochun’s spirit abode all those months ago, and also Bai Xiaochun’s voice calling out to him as he left.

Back then, he had been absolutely certain that he had made the right decision. Now, though, it felt like the world was playing a cruel joke on him....

That was especially the case when Bai Xiaochun said, “you have it *way* worse than me.” That caused tears to instantly well up in Master God-Diviner’s eyes.

There Bai Xiaochun was, glittering with the light of magical treasures, his face glowing with a healthy sheen, riding a huge crocodile. He didn’t seem to have things bad at all, and it caused Master God-Diviner’s heart to fill with an intense sensation of injustice.

The past few months had been very difficult. Few people believed the divinations he performed, and he had even gotten into some disputes with customers. At first, he hadn’t worried about that, but as more and more people got angry with him, he had been forced to flee in terror from the east district. Eventually, he ended up in the north district, where he managed to get back on his feet to some extent. Unfortunately, his income was scanty, and he ended every day feeling hungry. Even worse, he had to pay a merit point protection fee to one of the local gangs to be allowed to have a spot to perform divinations.

As he thought about all these things, Master God-Diviner smiled bitterly. Realizing that he had to accept reality, he sighed and said, “You really think you have it bad? I think you’ve actually gained some weight since I saw you last.”

Bai Xiaochun hopped off of the crocodile, which he then sucked into his spirit beast bag. As he stood there with his orange robe and glittering magical treasures, Master God-Diviner couldn’t help but gasp inwardly. He well knew that to become an orange-robed disciple, one had to pay 100,000 merit points. Plus, a crocodile mount like the one Bai Xiaochun had would cost about the same. After all, Master God-Diviner had even enviously passed through the Spirit Beast Pavilion before.

“Oh, I have it bad alright,” Bai Xiaochun said sadly, “let me tell you. Ai. It’s been two meals now since I've had any Precious Jade spirit rice, and a whole day since I ran out of Hundred Flowers spirit alcohol. Plus, I haven’t bathed in spirit water for nearly half a day. Look, I even smell a bit sweaty! I can’t believe I've gotten so poor!” Everything he had just said was true. After all, his life in the east district had been one of luxury and excess. Now that he was in the north district, everything was different, and he couldn’t help but feel irritated about that.

Master God-Diviner’s eyes glazed over. The mere words ‘Precious Jade spirit rice’ left his heart trembling. Spirit rice like that was something he had only heard about, and had never even been able to smell, let alone taste. It was incredibly expensive, and it had once been his dream to try some. And yet here Bai Xiaochun was saying that he had gone two meals without eating any....

And then there was ‘Hundred Flowers spirit alcohol.’ That sent Master God-Diviner even further in the direction of madness. That was the most expensive types of alcohol available in the city, and among his current circle of friends, being able to even drink a mouthful would have made him the subject of envy and jealousy. And yet here Bai Xiaochun was saying that he hadn’t had any for a day! That implied that he normally drank it on a daily basis....

And when bathing in spirit water was mentioned, tears began to stream down Master God-Diviner’s face. A mere glance at Bai Xiaochun’s skin confirmed that it was glossy and imbued with spiritual energy. That wasn’t from his cultivation base; it was caused by the special properties of the spirit water in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Such water left the body with a layer of natural protection that was mysterious and profound, to say the least.

However, such protection was definitely a luxury; if one went for five days or more without bathing in spirit water, it would naturally fade away.

Master God-Diviner stared at Bai Xiaochun, eyes glistening miserably. “Junior Patriarch....”

“Ah, whatever,” Bai Xiaochun said, waving his hand in grandly dismissive fashion. “I brought you here with me, didn’t I? Therefore, I'm responsible for you. You might have mercilessly dumped me early on, but I'm a magnanimous person. From now on, you stick with me, alright?” Master God-Diviner immediately began to tremble. The truth was that he would have stuck with Bai Xiaochun even if Bai Xiaochun tried to drive him away. He had already resolved to swear an oath to follow Bai Xiaochun even if it meant following him into death!

“Many thanks, Junior Patriarch!!” From the excited way he put his banner and table away, it was clear that he felt no attachment to his vendor spot. Hurrying to follow Bai Xiaochun, he said, “So, Junior Patriarch, where are we going?”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, but then decided to simply tell the truth. “Let’s go to the Spirit Beas--”

However, before he could finish speaking, three beams of light sped toward them. Apparently, these three people had noticed Master God-Diviner getting ready to leave, and were now attempting to intercept him.

Three cultivators landed in front of Master God-Diviner, one of them a middle-aged man with a cultivation base in the great circle of Foundation Establishment. “Leaving early because you got a new customer, Master God-Diviner?” he said. “Very well, at least pay your daily fee before leaving!”

The man’s eyes flashed like lightning, and although he wasn’t exactly fat, neither was he skinny, and he wore an orange robe just like Bai Xiaochun’s. Obviously, he lived a fairly comfortable life here in Sky City.

Glancing at Bai Xiaochun, he looked back at Master God-Diviner, a false smile stretching out across his face.

Master God-Diviner’s face fell. These three were by no means strangers to him; they came from the group that controlled this area. They and a few dozen other cultivators that made up the gang forced all of the vendor stalls in the area to pay a protection fee for the right to do business.

Master God-Diviner was clearly embarrassed, and didn’t want Bai Xiaochun to see him in such a situation. Lowering his voice, he said, “I didn’t do any business today. How about tomorrow I--”

One of the red-robed disciples among the three interrupted Master God-Diviner and said, “We don’t care if you did business or not. The fee is 10 merit points a day! That's what we agreed to, so pay up!”

Master God-Diviner’s expression flickered with distress. He knew that Bai Xiaochun, with his Gold Core cultivation base, wouldn’t even bother to spare these three a glance. But Master God-Diviner still didn’t want to lose face in front of Bai Xiaochun. After all, he had been the one to part ways, and if he needed Bai Xiaochun’s help in this situation, it would be far too embarrassing.

Gritting his teeth, forced a smile onto his face and prepared to pull out his identity medallion.

But then, the man in the orange robe said, “Now that you have such a high-class customer, Master God-Diviner, I'm afraid the 10 merit point fee won't be enough. We need you to pay for next month in advance!”

Rage immediately began to flicker in Master God-Diviner’s eyes. “You people--”

“Now now, hold that temper of yours! If you don't have enough, I’m sure this new customer of yours wouldn’t mind giving you an advance on your services.” The orange-robed cultivator looked at Bai Xiaochun with a false smile, his eyes lingering on his numerous glowing magical treasures.

Despite his greed, though, he didn't dare to push things too far. He could tell that Bai Xiaochun most likely had an impressive background. However, trying to get a few hundred merit points out of him wouldn’t be too excessive.

“Junior Patriarch....” Master God-Diviner said hesitantly. However, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand to cut him off. Eyes shining brightly, he looked over at the orange-robed cultivator.

“Well, isn’t this interesting. I can't believe I never thought of this myself.” The look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes left the orange-robed disciple feeling very unsettled, and the two red-robed disciples suddenly had very serious expressions on their faces.

“You dare to try to take my money with a Foundation Establishment cultivation base?” Bai Xiaochun said. “I'm afraid things don't work like that.” With that, he threw his head back and began to laugh loudly. The three cultivators instantly realized something was wrong, and were just getting ready to attack Bai Xiaochun when he suddenly waved his hand, causing a gale-force wind to spring up.

Rumblings sounds filled the air, and blood sprayed out of the mouths of the three cultivators as they were sent tumbling backward thirty meters.

“Core Formation!!”

Before the three of them could stop hurtling through the air, Bai Xiaochun made a grasping motion, turning the wind into bonds that wrapped around them and pulled them toward him.

“I have the feeling you people are in need of a good leader. What do you think? Join me, and we can rule everything under heaven!” Bai Xiaochun was being very sincere, and in his mind, the grandiose words he had just spoken should definitely cause the three men to drop to their knees and kowtow.

The three of them were trembling, and appeared to be on the verge of weeping.

Even Master God-Diviner was a bit taken aback.

“Don't worry. With me around, nothing bad will happen to you. Come, come. Lead the way to your headquarters so I can meet all the other Fellow Daoists in your group.” As of this point, he had completely abandoned his plan to sell his crocodile mount. These three cultivators had unwittingly opened a door that Bai Xiaochun had never imagined even existed....

All of a sudden, he could almost see all the merit points that were waiting for him....

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0386 awe-chapter-387

Chapter 387: Fantasy Pills

In Sky City, the east district had the reputation of being luxurious and extravagant. The north district was more out-of-the-way, and not as well off. Most of the cultivators there were just ordinary people without impressive backgrounds.

The Azure Dragon Society had started out relatively unknown in the north district. Considering the impressive name they had picked for their organization, one could well imagine the heroic aspirations of its founders.

But ideals don’t always measure up to reality. In the hundred years since its founding, they had never grown beyond the small sphere of influence they had started out with on the very edge of the north district.

Luckily, the headquarters of the Azure Dragon Society happened to be an immortal's cave, and not a spirit abode. It even had a courtyard with a fountain. Unfortunately, the courtyard was overrun with weeds, and the fountain had long since dried up, but the place was good enough for a small organization like the Azure Dragon Society.

The Azure Dragon Society only had about thirty members, and made their living from protection fees and selling spirit medicines that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect neither prohibited nor endorsed. Although they couldn’t count as being rich, they at least had it better off than average cultivators.

Over their hundred-year-history, eight of their number had already become yellow-robed disciples. The most successful of all was one of the original founders, who was now in the early Gold Core stage and lived in the rainbow district. For old times' sake, and to keep the organization going, he occasionally came back to offer some support and assistance. However, it wasn't a simple thing to return to Sky City, so such visits were somewhat of a rarity.

Therefore, the moment Bai Xiaochun walked through the door of the Azure Dragon Society with his Gold Core cultivation base, he was their new leader.

After Bai Xiaochun and Master God-Diviner entered the immortal's cave, booms and bangs began to ring out. Then everything went silent. Moments later, people began to call out greetings.

“Greetings, Boss!”

Bai Xiaochun sat down proudly in the seat of honor, Master God-Diviner standing next to him with a somber expression on his face. Everyone else in the room was bruised and battered as they kowtowed, expressions of fear filling their eyes.

With the exception of Bai Xiaochun, everyone present was in the Foundation Establishment stage. The orange-robed disciples, including the one Bai Xiaochun had met earlier, both had bitter expressions on their faces.

Smacking the arm of the chair, Bai Xiaochun raised his voice and said, “We're all brothers here! Don't worry. Now that I'm in charge, we're going to take over Sky City!”

The thirty members of the Azure Dragon Society exchanged awkward glances, but none of them dared to say a word. To

Bai Xiaochun’s pleasure, they simply bowed their heads. With that, he toured the immortal's cave, picking the largest room for himself, where he sat down to practice some cultivation. As time progressed, he was coming to find that he was getting used to the strong spiritual power and energy drainage in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and because of that, his cultivation speed only continued to increase. For example, his Undying Tendons were making rapid progress.

As for Master God-Diviner, he didn’t have any feelings toward the Azure Dragon Society, either negative or positive. However, he already felt like he was somewhat in a leadership position, so while Bai Xiaochun was in secluded meditation, he took it upon himself to audit the Azure Dragon Society’s account books. He also collected and organized all of the loose merit points.

The Azure Dragon Society cultivators weren’t happy about that, but didn’t dare to say anything. Nor was there anything they could do about it. Bai Xiaochun was a Gold Core cultivator, and was like an enormous mountain that they could do nothing to contend with. All they could do was accept the situation. In fact, some of them hoped that having a Gold Core cultivator as their boss might put them on the path to a new and better lifestyle.

However, such hopes and dreams gradually faded as time passed. Half a month went by, during which Bai Xiaochun never came out of his room and never did anything. However, considering the income of the Azure Dragon Society, all they had to do was be a bit frugal, and the addition of two new members didn't cause much trouble.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun did have a very big appetite, and also demanded the best quality food. He even required plenty of spirit water to bathe in every day. Because of that, anger began to fester in the hearts of the Azure Dragon Society.

After an entire month went by, even Master God-Diviner was reaching the limits of his patience. Since he was in charge of accounts now, he could see with his own eyes that the Azure Dragon Society’s merit points were rapidly dwindling.

Eventually, Master God-Diviner led all of the cultivators to Bai Xiaochun, who was currently in the middle of eating a spirit chicken. Weeping, they began to explain their woes.

“Boss, please spare us. Our meager profits aren’t enough to fill your appetite, sir....”

“This isn’t going to work long-term, Boss! With expenses like these, the Azure Dragon Society is going to have to sell our immortal's cave within a few days at most!”

Even Master God-Diviner chimed in to voice his frustration.

Bai Xiaochun immediately felt bad. He had lived so extravagantly in the east district that his current lifestyle seemed like a big step down. However, to others, he seemed to be living in the lap of luxury.

Even worse, he had made significant progress in his cultivation of his Undying Tendons, which caused his energy to be drained at a much higher rate than before. He had tried using some Ultra Fasting Aid Pills, but that could only help on a superficial level.

The truth was that he hadn’t even realized that he was eating more food than usual. Considering how small the Azure Dragon Society was, he had already emptied their storerooms.

The orange-robed cultivator that Bai Xiaochun had met in the very beginning looked tearfully at him and said, “Please, Boss, let us off the hook! We've already cut back on food this past month. We increased protection fees and the prices we charge for our Fantasy Pills, but even with that, we’re not making enough money to get enough food to eat....”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat in embarrassment. During his month of secluded meditation, he had completely forgotten about the grand words he had spoken about leading them to take over new territory when he first took over the Azure Dragon Society.

“Wait,” he said, “what are these Fantasy Pills you just mentioned?”

“Huh? Oh. Well, Fantasy Pills are a type of spirit medicine that have gotten popular in the past few years. They don't really do much of anything other than induce hallucinations. Of course, the cultivators who consume them can alter the hallucinations to a certain degree, and thus experience any type of fantasy they wish..... The possibilities are endless....” Bai Xiaochun immediately demanded to see one of the pills, so the orange-robed cultivator pulled a small wooden box out of his bag of holding and handed it over.

Bai Xiaochun accepted the box and opened it. Placed inside was a fingernail-sized black medicinal pill that emanated no medicinal aroma whatsoever. Curious, Bai Xiaochun picked it up to examine it more closely.

Master God-Diviner leaned over to have a look too. He had heard of the pills, of course, but this was his first time seeing one.

Intrigued, Bai Xiaochun used his fingernail to start scraping the black coating off of the pill to see what was inside. The sight of an entire Fantasy Pill being so casually destroyed caused pain to rise up in the hearts of the rest of the Azure Dragon Society.

As Bai Xiaochun scratched the coating off, his expression changed from one of curiosity into surprise. Then his eyes widened. After piercing through the black coating, a wisp of gray smoke began to swirl out from inside.

Upon seeing the smoke, Bai Xiaochun gasped, and Master God-Diviner cried out, “Junior Patriarch, is that your hallucination smoke?!?!”

The Azure Dragon Society cultivators’ jaws dropped, although they really had no idea what Master God-Diviner was talking about.

A grim expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he reached out and grabbed the strand of gray smoke. After examining it closely, he was absolutely certain that this so-called Fantasy Pill was concocted from the very same hallucination smoke that he had accidentally created when concocting pills back in the Blood Stream Sect!

During the great war of the four sects, he had altered the formula using the powers of gravity and repulsion, and then used it to create weapons for his compatriots to use.

How could he ever have imagined that he would actually find that same medicine so far away in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect? Clearly, someone had acquired one of his hallucination spheres and then altered the formula, reducing the hallucinatory effects and also changing it so that whoever took the pill could control the hallucination to some extent and become lost in a wonderful world of their own making.

Considering that Bai Xiaochun was an expert in the Dao of medicine, it only took a moment for him to understand everything that had happened.

However, the changes to the medicinal pill were crude at best, and Bai Xiaochun could tell that they could lead to dangerous side-effects. In the end, though, the fact that this pill had been created using his own hallucination smoke left Bai Xiaochun feeling very angry.

“To take without asking is robbery!” he said through gritted teeth. Eyes flashing with anger, he looked at the Azure Dragon Society. “Where did this Fantasy Pill come from?”

The Azure Dragon Society’s two orange-robed cultivators could tell that something was off. The expressions on the faces of Bai Xiaochun and Master God-Diviner were very telling, and they could only guess that some unimaginable turn of events had occurred. However, they didn’t dare to keep any secrets.

“From the Celestial Sky Society!”

“Yeah, the Celestial Sky Society is the biggest organization in Sky City. They have connections to all the businesses in the city, and they also control the city’s underworld. They're the ones who distribute the Fantasy Pills. We smaller organizations just resell them for a small profit....”

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme**

archives: Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0387 awe-chapter-388

Chapter 388: The Rise Of The Azure Dragon Society

“The Celestial Sky Society again!?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with icy coldness. Clenching his hand into a fist around the black medicinal powder in his palm, he looked around at the Azure Dragon Society cultivators and said, “How well do the Fantasy Pills sell?”

The two orange-robed cultivators were panting, and their eyes were shining brightly. One of them quickly responded, “They sell great! We usually distribute a few hundred pills per month, and that’s just us. If you counted all of the north district, the sales would probably be tens of thousands per month. As for Sky City as a whole, probably 200,000 or more. One Fantasy Pill is worth 50 merit points, so that’s the equivalent of at least 10,000,000 merit points per month!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his eyes almost turned green, and he began to pant. “If the Celestial Sky Society can use my hallucination smoke to earn merit points, then so can I!

“All of you, wait here for me. I’ll concoct some high-quality Fantasy Pills for you to sell!” With that, he rushed into his room and slammed the door behind him.

The Azure Dragon Society members looked over at Master God-Diviner, hearts filled with curiosity over what was to come.

“Master God-Diviner, is it true that our boss really invented the Fantasy Pill?”

“Is our boss really an apothecary? Can he... can he really concoct Fantasy Pills? Heavens! If that’s true, then good times are definitely to come!!”

Master God-Diviner was more excited than anyone, but he didn’t let it show on his face. Looking around, he smiled faintly, and then gave a confident nod.

“Don’t you worry,” he said. “I can’t speak for the boss when it comes to other matters, but I can tell you that my junior patriarch is the best there is at medicine concocting!”

When the Azure Dragon Society heard that, their anticipation grew, and it was almost possible to see them calculating their future profits.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun entered his room, he waved his hand, summoning several dozen pill furnaces from his bag of holding. These were furnaces that he had collected back in the River-Defying Sect, and were all different sizes and shapes. Considering how familiar he was with the hallucination smoke, he didn’t plan to produce just one batch of Fantasy Pills at a time. He was going to concoct multiple batches simultaneously!

The main thing he was concerned about was maintaining a standard of quality. After all, these pills weren’t designed to be used in war, so he needed to control the hallucinatory effects. And that meant he had to control the strength of the pills.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had invented the hallucination smoke to begin with, so his ability to do that vastly exceeded that of the Celestial Sky Society’s apothecary. He was completely confident that he would be able to concoct Fantasy Pills that were on a whole different level than the trash produced by the Celestial Sky Society.

In terms of how to actually contain the hallucination smoke, the black coating on the Celestial Sky Society’s Fantasy Pills had given him a bit of inspiration. After studying it a bit, he improved it, and then managed to actually fuse the smoke itself with the coating!

Time passed, and outside, the Azure Dragon Society waited in eager anticipation. Three days later, Bai Xiaochun emerged, eyes bloodshot but shining with excitement. Waving his sleeve, he sent out countless violet medicinal pills from his bag of holding. As they piled up on the ground, they formed a small mountain of more than a thousand pills.

The Azure Dragon Society members were shaking with excitement. Then, one of the cultivators clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun, hurried forward and carefully picked up one of the pills. After placing it into his mouth, he closed his eyes, and within moments, a look of intoxicated pleasure appeared on his face. Throwing his head back, he howled with complete and utter madness.

Clearly, he was experiencing no side-effects. As for the other cultivators, they knew that an important test was being performed, so they watched closely. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the cultivator still hadn’t woken up from his reverie, and everyone else started to get very excited.

“The Celestial Sky Society’s Fantasy Pill lasts for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, but boss's pill lasts for even longer than that!”

“And from the look of it, there are no harmful side-effects whatsoever!!” Even as the Azure Dragon Society devolved into a hubbub, another incense stick’s worth of time passed. Only then did the cultivator’s eyes open.

Although he seemed to be in a bit of a daze, he was clearly satisfied in an unprecedented way. After a long moment passed, he regained his senses. Trembling, he said, “The hallucination was much more realistic than the Fantasy Pills from the Celestial Sky Society! And easier to manipulate! In fact, after a certain point, I completely lost myself! I didn’t need to control the hallucination at all: it did everything I wanted. How pure! How unadulterated. This... *this* is what a Fantasy Pill is supposed to be like!!!”

The rest of the Azure Dragon Society grew even more excited. Panting, the cultivators looked at the pile of Fantasy Pills and realized that it was essentially a huge pile of merit points.

One of the orange-robed cultivators excitedly said, “Boss, if you let us sell these Fantasy Pills, we can clear the stock in two months at the most!”

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun truly was like nobility to these cultivators, a grand figure who existed on a different level than them.

Bai Xiaochun was tired, but looked excited, and was clearly pleased with the quality of the Fantasy Pills he had concocted. Looking at Master God-Diviner, he said, “For now, steer clear of the Celestial Sky Society. When the time comes to butt heads with them, I don’t just want a *little* scuffle....”

Master God-Diviner saw the gleam in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and after a moment of thought, nodded. In recent days, he had made some inquiries of his own, and had heard stories of Apothecary Bai from the east district, and the methods the Celestial Sky Society had used in dealing with his Ultra Fasting Aid Pill.

His information had left him ninety percent that Bai Xiaochun and Apothecary Bai were one and the same. As of now, he was completely convinced, and also understood why Bai Xiaochun had disguised his appearance. In fact, he still hadn’t even revealed his name to the Azure Dragon Society.

“Celestial Sky Society....” Master God-Diviner thought, his eyes narrowing. Almost immediately, countless nefarious plans sprang up in his mind, which he began to explain to the rest of the Azure Dragon Society.

Bai Xiaochun remained off to the side, completely satisfied with Master God-Diviner’s performance. With Master God-Diviner at his side, he didn’t feel like a lone wolf anymore.

At this point, he suddenly thought about Xu Baocai and the others. “If only the rest of you merciless betrayers could turn over a new leaf. I can’t believe you just abandoned me....”

Depressed, he went back to his room to practice cultivation.

After Master God-Diviner finished explaining all of his plans, the Azure Dragon Society went to work. They even got their friends and family involved in selling the Fantasy Pills. Considering that the Azure Dragon Society had been around for more than a hundred years, they had good relations with many of the other small organizations in the north district. As such, the Fantasy Pill sales started out with a bang.

Most of the merit points they earned were spent on recruitment efforts. Life was hard in Sky City, so as long as enough merit points were offered, there would be no shortage of people willing to join up.

Bai Xiaochun had plenty to keep him busy. To keep up with demand, he had to concoct more and more Fantasy Pills, until he was concocting them in batches of fifty at a time.

With the Fantasy Pills to support them, the Azure Dragon Society was able to fully call upon its hundred years of connections and history. With the help of Master God-Diviner's plans and schemes, their numbers grew in shockingly rapid fashion.

As their territory expanded, cultivators came constantly, hoping to join. Fantasy Pill sales skyrocketed, until all of the north district was shaken.

Because of how vice-boss Master God-Diviner had arranged everything, the Celestial Sky Society still hadn't noticed what was happening. Although only half a month had passed so far, that half month had seen heaven-shaking, earth-toppling changes for the Azure Dragon Society.

Eventually, the Celestial Sky Society finally took note of what was happening. Ten days after that, it had been a full month since the Azure Dragon Society began their big expansion. They had reinvested all of the merit points into their growth plans, and Bai Xiaochun had even decided to go all in by selling his crocodile mount to help out. By that point, the Azure Dragon Society had over a thousand members.

In Sky City, that didn't really count as anything amazing in terms of membership, but it was big enough that it was a cause for concern for the Celestial Sky Society. Unfortunately, the Azure Dragon Society was large enough now that using force on them wasn't an option. If any fighting broke out, they might end up breaking the rules of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Not even the Celestial Sky Society dared to push things too far when it came to the official rules of the sect.

Bai Xiaochun was getting better and better at concocting the Fantasy Pills. In fact, sometimes he just set the pill furnaces up and then had Master God-Diviner watch over them until they were ready to be completed.

With more spare time on his hands, Bai Xiaochun was able to focus more easily on cultivation. At the same time, he had returned to his previous extravagant lifestyle. However, he no longer ate the Precious Jade spirit rice. Instead, he favored Heavenspan spirit rice, which was prepared by a special method using Heavenspan River water.

It was the same with the alcohol; he only consumed the best. He had a new mount, too, a blue-eyed qilin lizard. Whenever he went out on that mount, flanked by a hundred followers, he made a very impressive sight.

Time passed. Two more months went by, and not only did the Azure Dragon Society continue to grow, they had expanded their influence into three of the other districts, ensuring that their Fantasy Pill sales only continued to increase. Simultaneously, the Celestial Sky Society's Fantasy Pill sales were dropping significantly.

After all, the two pills were on completely different levels!

Bai Xiaochun's life was getting better and better....

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0388 awe-chapter-389

Chapter 389: People Can Live Like This?

“Things here are so expensive!” That was Bai Xiaochun a year ago, when he first arrived in Sky City.

“Hey, this looks pretty nice. It's a bit expensive but... ah, whatever, I’ll just grin and bear it!” That was Bai Xiaochun during his days profiting from the Ultra Fasting Aid Pills.

“This looks great! I’ll take it!” That was Bai Xiaochun when the Azure Dragon Society was beginning to rise to prominence in the north district.

And now....

Currently, Bai Xiaochun was in the Magic Pavilion, looking at about a hundred magical items on display. Sounding very pleased with himself, he began to point at some of the objects. “This one. That one. Oh, that one too.... Those are the three I *don’t* want. I’ll take everything else!”

The shop attendants were sweating, and their hearts pounding at having such a rich and important person to deal with.

Bai Xiaochun really couldn’t help but live so extravagantly. Whether it was in terms of food, clothing, or anything else, he only got the best. If you added up the value of everything he was currently wearing, it would be valued at something around 7-800,000 merit points. In fact, if he wanted to be promoted to the rainbow district, it would be a very simple thing.

But Bai Xiaochun couldn't bear to leave Sky City, and was convinced that life on the rainbow definitely wouldn’t be as nice. In fact, he had even made some inquiries, and had been informed that his suspicious were correct; nobody on the rainbow lived like he did now. Therefore, he had made up his mind to spend the rest of his time as a hostage in Sky City.

“Only an idiot would go to that rainbow!” he thought, humming a little tune as he swaggered through the crowd. When people in the north district caught sight of him, expressions of both envy and respect could be seen in their eyes. He was beside himself with delight, and couldn't stop thinking about how outstanding he was. Everywhere he went, he ended up being the center of attention.

The truth was, he didn’t really care much about the money, and didn’t even pay much attention to how much the Azure Dragon Society was saving up. As long as there were enough merit points to keep the Azure Dragon Society running, he didn’t care.

However, there were a few aspects to his wonderful life that he wasn’t too pleased about. Because the Azure Dragon Society had expanded so quickly, their new recruits were a mix of good and bad. Other organizations within Sky City had sent people to infiltrate them, and that was especially true of the Celestial Sky Society.

Furthermore, as the Azure Dragon Society expanded into the other three districts, rumors began to spread.

Some rumors claimed that Bai Xiaochun was none other than the Apothecary Bai from the east district. Others focused on how wicked and violent the Azure Dragon Society was. The third type of common rumor focused on how harmful and addictive the Fantasy Pills supposedly were.

In the end, virtually all of the rumors were about the Azure Dragon Society and Bai Xiaochun, like a wide net slowly being stretched out over the both of them.

Master God-Diviner quickly caught on to this. Other than the first small group of cultivators who had made up the original Azure Dragon Society, few people ever saw him. He was Bai Xiaochun's trusted adviser who lurked in the shadows, unseen by the public. When Bai Xiaochun got Master God-Diviner's report about the rumors, he took it very seriously. He was well aware of the devious ways of the Celestial Sky Society, and could well imagine that their lack of action during the past few months was because they were waiting for the right moment to deliver a fatal blow.

Considering how seriously Bai Xiaochun took the matter, Master God-Diviner did so as well. He quickly mobilized all of the Azure Dragon Society to try to counteract the rumors. Unfortunately, their work did little to quell the gossip, and in fact, it grew even worse.

One evening, Bai Xiaochun was enjoying his evening meal, an exotic spread of the finest delicacies piled up as high as mountains... with two lovely female cultivators there to serve him.

Master God-Diviner also sat at the table, providing his usual daily report regarding the affairs of the Azure Dragon Society. That was when the news came in....

“Boss, the investigations we started running a few days ago identified one of the main sources of the rumors. We captured him and brought him in, and now we just need you to come decide what to do, boss!”

Bai Xiaochun grunted an acknowledgement as he continued to munch on the chicken leg he had just picked up.

Master God-Diviner smacked his hand down onto the table and gave a cold harrumph. “Bring him here! Let’s see who it is that had the gall to stir up trouble for us!”

Before long, shrill shrieks of terror could be heard, drawing closer and closer to the room where Bai Xiaochun and Master God-Diviner were eating dinner.

“Fellow Daoists of the Azure Dragon Society, spare me! I'm sorry... really, I'm truly sorry....” The shrieking grew louder and louder as two burly Azure Dragon Society cultivators dragged a young man with disheveled hair into the room.

The young man didn’t struggle at all as the two burly cultivators forced him onto his knees. Not daring to look up, he continued to whimper and cry for mercy.

“Spare me, Boss Azure Dragon. I’m sorry, sir, really, I won’t ever dare to do it again....

“I was a fool to work for the Celestial Sky Society. Please, forgive me, Boss Azure Dragon....” The young man’s wails were truly inspiring of pity.

However, as the young man prattled on, Bai Xiaochun stopped gnawing on the chicken leg and looked closer at him. Next to him, Master God-Diviner’s eyes widened.

Then, the two of them exchanged a glance. Both of them had simultaneously realized that, unexpectedly... the young cultivator begging for mercy... was Xu Baocai!

He had been beaten up, his nose swollen and his hair completely disheveled. His voice was hoarse, and he still hadn’t even dared to lift his head.

A strange expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Clearing his throat, he finished the chicken leg and then suddenly yelled, “Xu Baocai!!”

Xu Baocai had been kneeling there with his head bowed. In response to Bai Xiaochun’s sudden outburst, he screamed and prepared to continue begging for mercy. However, the voice from just now seemed very familiar, and without even thinking about it, he looked up... to find an unfamiliar face behind the mounds of exquisite delicacies on the table.

The other face at the table was not unfamiliar, though. Shocked, he realized that the second person sitting there was Master God-Diviner.

Xu Baocai’s jaw dropped, and a blank expression filled his eyes. In that moment, the unfamiliar face suddenly blurred, and then... he was looking at a face that was anything but unfamiliar.

Xu Baocai’s mind was spinning, and a look of complete and utter incredulity could be seen on his face.

“Bai--” he shrieked. However, before he could finish his sentence, a chicken leg shot through the air and entered his mouth.

Coughing dryly, Bai Xiaochun smiled and said, “How did you get yourself in such a bad situation, Xu Baocai? I mean, I thought I had it bad, but obviously, you have it *way* worse than me.”

After seeing Bai Xiaochun’s reaction, the two men holding Xu Baocai released him. Aware that some things weren’t meant for their ears, they quickly departed.

Xu Baocai’s eyes were completely bloodshot from crying. As he looked at Bai Xiaochun with his glittering magical treasures, his face glowing with health, his table full of spirit food, Xu Baocai began to pant. The combined value of all of that wasn't quite enough to rise to the yellow-robed disciple level, but it was very close. In sharp contrast, the income he made from selling information couldn’t reach that level in a sixty-year-cycle!

Furthermore, the fact that Bai Xiaochun was now Boss Azure Dragon was completely mind-blowing, to the point where tears began to leak out of his eyes....

In addition to all that, the two women waiting upon Bai Xiaochun weren’t actual people, they were ingeniously crafted puppets. Xu Baocai trembled at that. Such life-like puppets were astronomically expensive.

Xu Baocai also couldn’t help but notice all of the glittering magical treasures that Master God-Diviner was wearing, and how his cultivation base fluctuations were clearly at a higher level than the last time they had met. Much to Xu Baocai’s bitterness, Master God-Diviner was obviously getting very close to Core Formation.

By now, he was filled with deep and utter regret regarding his earlier decision to leave the group. As he thought back to the rough and bitter days he had experienced trying to gather and sell information, he almost couldn’t believe he had been so arrogant. Furthermore, how could he have missed the fact that Bai Xiaochun had become the boss of the Azure Dragon Society? The mere thought of how leaving Bai Xiaochun had caused him to lose out on this incredible opportunity left him extremely bitter.

“Junior Patriarch, I really messed up....” he said, staring up piteously at Bai Xiaochun. As of this moment, he had decided in his heart that he would stick with Bai Xiaochun no matter what, even if he tried to drive him away.

“Ah, whatever,” Bai Xiaochun said, waving his hand in grandly dismissive fashion. “I brought you here with me, didn’t I? Therefore, I'm responsible for you. You might have mercilessly dumped me early on, but I'm a magnanimous person. From now on, you stick with me, alright?”

Tears of gratitude immediately began to pour down Xu Baocai’s face. As for Master God-Diviner, he cleared his throat awkwardly. After all, the words Bai Xiaochun had just uttered sounded quite familiar to him....

“It’s getting late,” Bai Xiaochun said, “so why don’t you go rest up? Tomorrow we can reminisce a bit about old times.” Having finished eating, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, and one of the serving girls came over to wipe his mouth with a handkerchief. Sighing, he stuck his chin up and looked at the girl, then said, “Let’s go. Carry me over to my pill concocting station.”

The two serving girls picked Bai Xiaochun up and floated away. He didn't even need to walk at this point....

Master God-Diviner quickly rose to his feet, clasped hands, and bowed. Then, in a voice which sounded well-rehearsed, said, “Farewell, m'lord....”

This display left Xu Baocai shocked into stupefaction. How could he ever have imagined that life could be lived in such a way...?

--

Translator: Deathblade. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Editor:** GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Hi everyone, I sometimes get requests for help from people interested in writing their own Chinese fantasy stories, so I made a video talking about how to make authentic Chinese names. There are also quite a few interesting tidbits of information about Chinese names within the video, even if you're not interested in creating names for a character. Check out the video here.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0389 awe-chapter-390

Chapter 390: Kidnap Bai Xiaochun

“I want to live like this too!!” Xu Baocai wailed inwardly as he watched Bai Xiaochun leave.

A moment later, Master God-Diviner rose from his bow, cleared his throat, and said, “Brother Xu, it's been a few months. How did you end up in such a bad situation?”

Xu Baocai’s wrath was immediately aroused. After all, it had been the goading of Master God-Diviner that had convinced him to leave Bai Xiaochun to begin with. However, he knew that now was not the time to give voice to his anger. All he could do was put a bitter expression on his face and curse Master God-Diviner inwardly.

Master God-Diviner actually felt a bit bad. Sighing, he said, “Don’t blame me for all this. Even I had no idea that our junior patriarch would rise to such shocking heights.... In Sky City, not everything depends on cultivation base, you know.” With that, Master God-Diviner arranged for a place for Xu Baocai to stay, and even gave him some merit points as pocket money....

As Master God-Diviner led Xu Baocai to his new accomodations, Xu Baocai came to realize that Master God-Diviner also occupied a lofty position within the Azure Dragon Society; all the cultivators in the immortal's cave who saw him gazed upon him with expressions of deep respect.

Xu Baocai was starting to get more and more excited....

That night, he found it hard to sleep. The next morning at dawn, he walked bleary-eyed out of his room, uttering another oath under his breath.

“I have to become more important to the junior patriarch than Master God-Diviner is!”

With Xu Baocai back, Bai Xiaochun now had one more of his original group of Dao Protectors.

Xu Baocai immediately began to go above and beyond the call of duty when it came to his work, gathering information and propagating rumors. Under his direction, the Azure Dragon Society wasn’t just able to quell some of the bad rumors being spread about them, they were actually able to fight back with increasing effectiveness.

Xu Baocai was going all out, using every trick in his book to achieve the best results possible.

Bai Xiaochun had plenty of spare time on his hands. Master God-Diviner took care of day-to-day operations, Xu Baocai was responsible for handling intelligence, and they had a few dozen orange-robed disciples to act as sub-bosses. The Azure Dragon Society was growing more and more stable.

Their expansion hadn’t slowed in the least, and in fact, they were still growing. As a result, their Fantasy Pill business grew with shocking speed.

The Celestial Sky Society had been doing plenty of plotting and scheming, but it did little good. They were very capable of handling problems with individuals, but when it came to other large organizations in the city, they fell short. The rise of the Azure Dragon Society had come too quickly and unexpectedly, and because of that, the Celestial Sky Society was completely incapable of dealing with them.

The matter with the rumors had been one part of their initial plan, and although it had started out well, in the end, it fell flat. As their other strategies failed, the Celestial Sky Society grew increasingly enraged by the Azure Dragon Society.

One reason was that everything they did had to be accomplished from the shadows. Eventually, their research into the Fantasy Pill revealed that the boss of the Azure Dragon Society was none other than the very same Apothecary Bai who had created the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill.

Unfortunately, when they tried to investigate Bai Xiaochun’s past, they came up with nothing. Not even their agents in the Azure Dragon Society itself could come up with any information. Apparently, very few people within the Azure Dragon Society even knew the level of his cultivation base. Thanks to the training provided by Master God-Diviner, the original members who did know a bit about Bai Xiaochun were circumspect and kept their information to themselves.

Although the Celestial Sky Society was a bit apprehensive that Bai Xiaochun seemed to have come out of nowhere, it wasn’t completely unheard of for people in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to be so secretive. As far as looking into the origins of the Fantasy Pill, it might have seemed like a good idea, but the truth was that they had come across the pill completely by accident, and had no idea where it came from. Besides, the eastern cultivation world was a huge place, and the things that went on in the Lower Reaches were of little interest to people upriver.

As the days marched by, the Celestial Sky Society watched the Azure Dragon Society growing larger and larger. Eventually, the Azure Dragon Society’s Fantasy Pill sales surpassed the Celestial Sky Society’s, and that was the straw that broke the camel’s back.

The Celestial Sky Society’s headquarters was in the central district of Sky City, and currently, a meeting was going on there to try to decide what to do about the Azure Dragon Society. Some were in favor of continued plotting and scheming, with the eventual goal of breaking the Azure Dragon Society apart. However, a plan like that would take some time to be effective. At one point in the meeting, a cold snort echoed out.

“We can't wait any longer. It’s not that our Celestial Sky Society can’t use force to solve the problem, it's that we can’t afford to break any rules. These people from the Azure Dragon Society are just too stubborn. Look, what’s the point of having endless meetings about this? Have you people forgotten how powerful the Celestial Sky Society is? Let’s just go kidnap that Apothecary Bai!”

“But we don’t know the level of his cultivation base!” someone protested. “Without that bit of knowledge, trying to do something like that....”

“There are plenty of things under heaven that we don’t know. Is that a good reason to just back down? No matter how impressive his background, can he match up to the Celestial Sky Society? We come from a deva clan! As for his cultivation base, there’s no way he’s a Nascent Soul expert. It’s even highly unlikely that he’s at Core Formation. If he were, why wouldn’t he have been promoted to the rainbow district? Why would he waste his time here concocting medicine?!”

The person making these arguments had a relatively high position in the organization, and as such, no one was willing to go against him. Although most of them weren’t quite convinced that it was a good idea, they merely exchanged glances and then held their tongues.

Soon, the Celestial Sky Society was stirring. They didn’t have any Core Formation cultivators, only people in the great circle of the Foundation Establishment stage, and a few quasi-Core stage experts. After all, there were only red- and orange-robed disciples in their organization. Those who had reached the yellow-robed level had already left, and couldn’t easily be called back.

In order to handle Bai Xiaochun, they gathered ten quasi-Core cultivators, as well as a few dozen in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, plus even more who were in late Foundation Establishment.

After night fell, they headed straight into the north district, toward the immortal's cave that was the headquarters of the Azure Dragon Society.

A group that powerful was strong enough to dominate any other organization in the entire city.

They didn’t hold anything back in terms of speed. After all, this was a surprise attack, and the success of their plan hinged on clinching victory in the first move. Although the main plan was to kidnap him, if worse came to worst, they were also prepared to kill him, and deal with the consequences later.

It was a dark and windy night, and Bai Xiaochun was just preparing to settle down cross-legged to start cultivating his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. After all of his recent cultivation, he was nearing the peak of the Frigid Acolyte level.

The frigid qi which swirled around him would be shocking to anyone who could see it, and caused layers of frost to slowly cake the walls of the room. Thankfully, his cultivation was mostly focused inwardly, because such intensely frigid qi could freeze even Foundation Establishment cultivators to death.

He had just settled his qi and cleared his mind when, all of a sudden, his eyes widened. Looking up, a strange expression appeared on his face. But then, he merely cleared his throat, and then closed his eyes to meditate.

Meanwhile, numerous shadowy figures were approaching the immortal's cave. After exchanging glances, they charged forward, which caused the Azure Dragon Society’s defensive spell formation to spring up.

Immediately following that, thunderous booms filled the air as the Celestial Sky Society cultivators unleashed all of their most powerful attacks, blasting the spell formation shield to pieces. The Azure Dragon Society responded immediately, the cultivators inside shouting at the tops of their lungs and unleashing magical techniques in all directions.

“Beat it!” But then the ten quasi-Core cultivators waded into the fight, and no matter how well-prepared the Azure Dragon Society cultivators were, they couldn’t deal with such power. They were immediately put on the defensive. By this point, the sub-bosses of the Azure Dragon Society realized what kind of people they were fighting.

“Quasi-Core stage!” Gasps rang out as the ten quasi-Core cultivators stomped everything in their path as easily as dried weeds.

In almost the exact same instant, the spies that had infiltrated the Azure Dragon Society appeared. “Boss Azure Dragon’s room is right there!”

Arrogant expressions could be seen on the faces of the ten quasi-Core cultivators as they shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s room. Six of them were faster than the others, and it was with complete disdain that they crashed into his room.

As for the other four, they remained outside to prevent anyone from entering.

“After tonight, the Azure Dragon Society won’t have any boss at all!” one of the quasi-Core cultivators said loftily.

The Azure Dragon Society cultivators were getting very nervous, and the cultivators from the Celestial Sky Society were chuckling coldly, convinced that their mission had been accomplished, and that once a boom rang out from that room, they could flee.

However, instead of a boom, their ears were met with silence. After the six quasi-Core cultivators charged into his room, no sounds of combat emerged. It was so quiet you could hear a pin drop!

Expressions of shock began to appear on the faces of everyone in the crowd, with the exception of Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai, who were looking on with disdain.

“What happened...?” someone whispered. Something definitely seemed off about the situation. The door to the room looked like a black mouth ready to swallow up anyone who entered it. Many people present felt chills running down their spine just at the sight of it.

The four quasi-Core cultivators exchanged glances, and then gritted their teeth to take action. They couldn’t just leave now and return with no information to report! Joining their power together, they moved to enter the room. However, before they could reach the door, a blast of frigid qi erupted from the room, filling the area.

As the frigid qi filled them, it felt like they were being frozen in place, causing their eyes to go wide with disbelief. One of the quasi-Core cultivators suddenly began to emit red light as he burned a paper talisman in defense. With the power of the flames assisting him, he managed to stagger backward a few paces, his face ashen. Eyes wide with shock and terror, he cried, “Core Formation!!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0390 awe-chapter-391

Chapter 391: Are You Fellow Daoist Zhang Dahai?

Even as the words escaped the lips of the cultivator who had spoken them, he felt more frigid qi wrap around him, making it impossible for him to move. As for all of the other cultivators outside in the main area of the immortal's cave, including those from the Azure Dragon Society and the Celestial Sky Society, they were completely and utterly shaken.

“What!?!?”

“Core Formation? Heavens! The boss of the Azure Dragon Society is actually at Core Formation!?!?”

“There are only a few Core Formation experts in all of Sky City! Shouldn’t he be in the rainbow district!?!?”

“Dammit! I’ve never seen a Core Formation cultivator so bored as to forsake missions and merit points just to make a profit with business!!” The Foundation Establishment cultivators from the Celestial Sky Society had expressions of complete shock on their faces as they began to flee.

Even if they had more people on their side, they wouldn’t be able to win in a fight against a Core Formation expert. The only thing they could think about now was escaping the area as quickly as possible.

But how could Bai Xiaochun simply let them get away? A cold snort echoed out like thunder from his room, crashing into the ears of all of the Celestial Sky Society cultivators in the area.

Agonized shrieks rang out as those cultivators began to tremble, and their cultivation bases destabilized. Having lost the ability to even move, they fell down out of midair to be immediately captured by the excited cultivators of the Azure Dragon Society.

The fact that a mere snort could do that to such a powerful group of cultivators was dumbfounding. Of course, the Foundation Establishment cultivators who had just been captured had encountered Core Formation experts before. But from what they could tell, Bai Xiaochun was far, far more terrifying than any such people that they had met.

He hadn’t even stepped out of his room; he had simply tossed the quasi-Core cultivators out.

However, that simple action had a profound effect on the Azure Dragon Society cultivators. Their boss was now even more mysterious and unfathomable than before, shocking to a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering degree. As for the people from the Celestial Sky Society, their hearts overflowed with indescribable astonishment and terror.

Bai Xiaochun felt more than pleased about everything, and didn’t feel at all like he was a Gold Core expert bullying Foundation Establishment cultivators. In fact, he felt quite the opposite.

“I didn’t go looking to cause problems for them,” he thought. “They came looking for trouble.” Of course, he was also aware that what had just occurred could never be kept a secret; it wouldn’t be long before news about him being in the Core Formation stage would fill all of Sky City.

“Well, that’s fine,” he thought. “I was going to reveal myself soon anyway. To do it this way will make the Azure Dragon Society’s expansion go even smoother.” Marveling at his own command of strategy, and also at his impressive display of might, he chuckled complacently and then closed his eyes again to continue meditating.

Naturally, Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai took care of everything outside. After taking all of the Celestial Sky Society cultivators into custody, they quickly began to plan what to do next.

The following day, rumors began spreading through all districts of the city. Furthermore, the stories being told were so vivid and lifelike that everyone could visualize them as if they had been present.

“Did you hear? Last night, the Celestial Sky Society sent ten quasi-Core cultivators, dozens of people in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and countless late Foundation Establishment cultivators to attack the Azure Dragon Society. However, they were totally routed! In fact, the Azure Dragon Society captured them all!”

“How is that possible...?”

“How is it *not* possible? Guess what? The boss of the Azure Dragon Society is actually a Core Formation cultivator!!” It didn’t take long for the rumors to fill the city, until everyone was talking about the matter.

After all, Core Formation cultivators were somewhat of a rarity in Sky City. Normally speaking, they would be completely focused on doing missions to earn merit points, not engaging in idle activities with the organizations and gangs in the city.

The four cities at the base of the waterfall were essentially considered to be outside of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, like the outer sects of most other sects. As such, everyone desired to leave them as quickly as possible.

As the gossip proliferated, the Azure Dragon Society's reputation grew more and more exaggerated. At the same time, the Celestial Sky Society was shaken to its core. As for the leaders in their headquarters, they were enraged to the limit. After a few days passed, they eventually sent an emissary to the Azure Dragon Society and paid a hefty ransom of merit points to get their cultivators back.

The Celestial Sky Society quieted down, and thus ended the first stage of the conflict. It wasn't that Bai Xiaochun hadn't considered completely wiping them out and being done with it. After all, the Celestial Sky Society didn't have any Core Formation cultivators at all. However, having been in Sky City for so long, he had come to an even deeper understanding of the background of the Celestial Sky Society.

The truth was that, in terms of manpower, they didn't really count for much. He really could wipe them out single-handedly if he wanted to. However, the leadership of the organization were all servants in a deva clan. After finding that out, Bai Xiaochun abandoned any ideas of wiping them out.

As things continued to ferment in the Celestial Sky Society, the Azure Dragon Society continued to expand and become more famous.

Bai Xiaochun's Fantasy Pills continued to rise in popularity in all five of the city's districts. Eventually, the Azure Dragon Society reached a terrifying level of power.

Their merit point reserves also continued to grow, and more cultivators sought the security that came from being part of their ranks. There were even some smaller cultivator clans and minor organizations that officially joined the Azure Dragon Society.

They had tons of merit points, and a boss in the Core Formation stage. Because of that, it only took one year for them to grow from a small gang into Sky City’s second largest organization!

By that point, they had long since moved their headquarters from the original immortal's cave to the very best area in the north district. Were it not for the fact that people couldn't actually own property in Sky City, they would likely have bought all of the real estate in the area and rented it out.

In addition, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t busy at all anymore. He had hired a huge team of apothecaries to concoct medicine for him. Of course, he kept the pill formula a secret.

In contrast, Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai were both very busy handling the affairs of the organization. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun thought about his other Dao Protectors, and wondered whether or not they had heard about his recent accomplishments....

“Song Que is definitely out doing missions, so he probably doesn’t know. But Eldest Brother has surely caught wind of the situation. Why hasn’t he come looking for me?”

Even as he contemplated the matter, Chen Manyao showed up. She simply walked through the entrance of the immortal’s cave and said that she was Madam Bai, the Daoist partner of the Azure Dragon Society’s boss. Considering that the boss of the Azure Dragon Society was like the sun in the noonday sky, that made Chen Manyao extremely important as well. No one was willing to offend her, and they quickly escorted her to see Bai Xiaochun.

After listening to her explanation about why she'd left and then come back, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit of a headache coming on. Realizing that he couldn't send her away, he sighed and agreed to let her stay.

Because she continued to claim to be Bai Xiaochun's Daoist partner, everyone in the Azure Dragon Society treated her with extreme respect. Bai Xiaochun didn't feel like dealing with the matter, so he focused on Big Fatty Zhang. Worried that he might be in some sort of danger, he passed down orders that the entire Azure Dragon Society was to be on the lookout for him. Of course, in the orders, he didn't use the nickname Big Fatty Zhang, but rather his friend's true name, Zhang Dahai.

The Azure Dragon Society was a huge, powerful group, so tracking down a single person was not a very difficult task. That was especially true considering that the orders had come from the boss himself. In fact, to many cultivators, it was an opportunity to make a name for themselves in the organization, and so soon, everyone was looking for Big Fatty Zhang.

It was impossible to prevent the Celestial Sky Society from hearing about the matter, and they also began a search for Big Fatty Zhang. There was nothing that could be done about the matter, and Bai Xiaochun knew that, so he also sent people to keep watch over the Celestial Sky Society.

As the search went on for Big Fatty Zhang....

There was a small cultivator clan in the west district whose clan chief had just recently joined the Azure Dragon Society and had quickly risen to the rank of sub-boss. He had just been given the notice handed down to look for Big Fatty Zhang, and as soon as he saw the picture of the subject of the search, beads of sweat popped out on his forehead.

For some reason, the person the boss was looking for looked very much like a spirit enhancer who had accidentally destroyed one of his magical items about six months before in a failed spirit enhancement attempt. That young spirit enhancer had claimed to be surnamed *Zhang*. In his fury, this sub-boss had imprisoned the spirit enhancer and forced him to perform spirit enhancements day and night to make up for the loss.

Something like that didn't involve killing, so the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect didn’t care about it. Eventually, the sub-boss had forgotten about the lone spirit enhancer, but now that he suddenly came to mind, the man started trembling.

He thought back to when he'd apprehended the spirit enhancer, and remembered thinking that as long as the young man didn’t die, he could use him to perform spirit enhancements in the future. Regret and nervousness gripped him as he realized that it was possible the young man very well could have died since then. Without any hesitation, he began to rush toward the clan’s spirit enhancement workstation.

Even from a distance, he could make out the gaunt and shriveled Big Fatty Zhang, his eyes listless as he weakly held a flying sword out in front of him. Off to the side, one of the clan servants was berating him loudly.

“Hurry it up! If you destroy another flying sword, then I’m gonna--”

Before the servant could finish speaking, he saw the clan chief rushing over, and immediately put on a fawning expression. Just when he was going to clasp hands in greeting, the clan chief slapped him across the side of the face, sending him spinning through the air with a squawk to land about 30 meters away.

“Dammit! I can’t believe you were being so rude to my honored guest!”

When Big Fatty Zhang saw this happen, he shivered and looked over nervously at the clan chief.

However, the clan chief was even more nervous than him. Hurriedly helping Big Fatty Zhang to his feet, he cautiously asked, “Are you Fellow Daoist Zhang Dahai?”

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0391 awe-chapter-392

Chapter 392: Dao Protector Reunion

In Big Fatty Zhang’s mind, this clan chief was a completely domineering figure, and he had never before seen him act this way or speak with such courtesy. In this part of the city, he was the kind of person who could bring a torrent of trouble to anyone who bothered him. Not only was he an orange-robed disciple, he was also the chief of an entire cultivator clan!

Supposedly, this clan had once produced a cultivator who went all the way to the Nascent Soul stage, and although he had long since perished, he had left an impression on the cultivators in this part of the city that continued on down to this day.

Big Fatty Zhang had started out very confident in being able to make a living with his spirit enhancement abilities, but after a string of failures, including one very important magical item belonging to this clan chief, he had ended up being imprisoned in their clan headquarters. Half a year had gone by, and Big Fatty Zhang felt like he was descending into insanity. He didn’t do anything other than perform spirit enhancements, and never got enough food to make him full. Were it not for his intense determination to keep living, he probably would have long since died from hunger and exhaustion.

He was instinctively afraid of the clan chief already, but to hear the man speak his own name left Big Fatty Zhang trembling even harder than before. However, deep in his heart, he also felt anger, and that seeped into his eyes. If looks could kill, then the way he was staring at this clan chief right now would cause the man to explode violently.

“Um... Fellow Daoist, please, just tell me. Are you Zhang Dahai?!” The clan chief’s anxiety was mounting, and he didn’t dare to even think about simply killing the young spirit enhancer to silence him. The Azure Dragon Society was too big and powerful, and the matter would definitely be found out eventually. If the boss found out he’d imprisoned Zhang Dahai, only to kill him later, the entire clan would be doomed.

“Yeah, that’s right!” Big Fatty Zhang yelled. “I'm Zhang Dahai!!”

The clan chief felt like his head was about to explode. He started shaking physically, and his pupils constricted into tiny dots. To see him reacting this way gave Big Fatty Zhang a very bad feeling. Suddenly feeling weak at the knees, he cursed inwardly and was just about to say something more when the clan chief unexpectedly spun to face the clan servant he had just knocked to the side.

“You dumbass servant!” he shouted. “Don’t you remember how I told you this young man was an honored guest? You’re supposed to respect guests! You were instructed to take care of him, but instead, you used him to screw me over!!” With that, he raised his hand and slapped the servant again, sending him spinning off to the side once more.

Blood sprayed out of the servant’s mouth, along with a bitter scream. Completely bewildered by why his master would suddenly act this way, he was just about to beg for mercy when the clan chief yelled, “Men, get this servant out of my sight! Cripple his cultivation base and throw him into the dungeon!”

With that, the clan chief hurried over and helped Big Fatty Zhang to his feet. Smiling at him amiably, he tried to sound as apologetic as possible as he said, “Brother Zhang, all of this was a big mistake. If you want me to execute that servant, just say the word!

“Ai, you must have had it so difficult these days, Brother Zhang.” Patting the dust off of the dumbfounded Big Fatty Zhang’s shoulders, the clan chief supported him by the arm as he led the way to the clan’s main hall.

Raising his voice, he called out, “Prepare the best spirit food and the finest liquor as my apology to Brother Zhang!”

Within moments, the entire clan was buzzing with activity. Although everyone was scratching their heads in confusion, none of them dared to question what was happening. An entire table of spirit food was prepared, and the clan chief himself waited upon Big Fatty Zhang. He even called over some female clan members to sit next to him.

Big Fatty Zhang was more taken aback than ever at this sudden change of events. Never had the clan chief acted so politely, and he couldn’t fathom why he would be acting like this. However, after seeing all the spirit food on the table, he put the matter out of mind and immediately began wolfing it down.

The clan chief stood off to one side, trembling inwardly, but keeping a smile plastered on his face as he continuously served new dishes. Furthermore, the beautiful female clan members continued to give Big Fatty Zhang meaningful glances. Although they were somewhat confused about why they had been told to do this, they didn’t hold back, and one of them even began to gently massage his neck. The others kept his drinking glass full, and even chatted with him in subdued tones.

Although Big Fatty Zhang was feeling very nervous about what was going on, he simply gritted his teeth, threw caution to the wind, and enjoyed what was happening.

Two hours later, Big Fatty Zhang had eaten and drunk to his heart’s content. Finally, he slapped the table and looked over at the clan chief with a glare.

“Alright, just what is going on here!?”

The clan chief couldn’t keep the bitterness out of his voice as he replied, “Brother Zhang, what happened before really was a big mistake on my part. Please, don't take it to heart.” Clasping his hands, he eyed the female clan members, then gritted his teeth and continued, “Brother Zhang, if you don’t despise them too much, why not just take these daughters of the clan as your own!?”

The young women gasped, and opened their mouths to protest, but the clan chief’s fierce glare kept them silent.

Big Fatty Zhang was scared speechless, and more nervous than ever. He simply couldn’t decide what to do. After a moment passed, he asked, “Why are you doing this...?”

Considering how Big Fatty Zhang was pressing the issue, the clan chief didn’t dare to try to pull the wool over his eyes. Taking a deep breath, he said, “Brother Zhang, the boss of the Azure Dragon Society is scouring the city looking for you....”

“Azure Dragon Society?” Big Fatty Zhang said, looking confused. He had been imprisoned back when the Azure Dragon Society was first starting to rise to prominence. Back then, there had been plenty of people who had never even heard of them, including Big Fatty Zhang.

Considering the expression on Big Fatty Zhang’s face, the clan chief quickly explained how, during the past few months, the Azure Dragon Society had risen to the heights of glory. Big Fatty Zhang was now shaking harder than ever.

“Somebody important like that is looking for me?” He grabbed a big flagon of alcohol and took a long drink.

Before long, evening was falling. Peppering Big Fatty Zhang with nonstop apologies, the clan chief led him out and toward the north district to finally meet the illustrious Boss Azure Dragon.

Along the way, Big Fatty Zhang heard a lot of people on the street talking about the Azure Dragon Society, and his nervousness grew. Soon, the moon hung high overhead, and the two of them were in the north district, right outside of a sprawling immortal's cave.

It had eighteen enormous stone golems standing guard outside, along with countless cultivators. Inside, it was just barely possible to see rank upon rank of powerful cultivators patrolling about.

Glittering spell formations surrounded the immortal's cave, and high in the sky above it was a magical projection of an azure dragon. It was extremely realistic, and a mere glance at it would be enough to fill anyone’s heart with shock.

“Th-this... this is the Azure Dragon Society?” Big Fatty Zhang asked hesitantly. The clan chief nodded. Of course, this wasn’t the clan chief’s first time coming here, but he was still extremely nervous.

Big Fatty Zhang was already having trouble breathing, and truly could not fathom why an important person like the boss of the Azure Dragon Society would possibly be looking for him. However, he had no choice but to follow the clan chief as he cautiously headed toward the main gate and reported in.

Before he could even finish making an explanation, three beams of light shot out from inside the Azure Dragon Society. The person in the lead had a long orange robe on, and wore a beautiful headdress embroidered with an azure dragon. It was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

He was festooned with various defensive jade jewelry, and glittered with dazzling magical treasures. He even had a halo hovering above his head, and couldn’t have looked more impressive. Flanking him were Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner. By this point, Xu Baocai looked very different than he had when he'd first been reunited with Bai Xiaochun. His face had a healthy glow, and he was also covered with all sorts of glittering treasures. He looked like the picture of riches and honor.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, the Azure Dragon Society was thrown into a hubbub. Cultivators and maidservants poured out from inside the immortal's cave, and the cultivators who were already outside trembled and dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Boss!”

“Greetings, Boss!!” Their cries created a rumbling like that of thunder. At that point, Big Fatty Zhang realized to his shock that the clan chief next to him had also dropped to his knees and was kowtowing.

Big Fatty Zhang was the only one left standing, his eyes wide as he stared in shock at Master God-Diviner, Xu Baocai, and Bai Xiaochun.

“Ninth Fatty!!” Big Fatty Zhang said, completely flabbergasted.

“Eldest Brother!” Bai Xiaochun cried. Laughing loudly, he stepped forward and embraced Big Fatty Zhang. Big Fatty Zhang returned the embrace heartily, looking like he had just been reunited with family.

When the clan chief from the little cultivator clan saw that, his heart shook with fear that Big Fatty Zhang would try to get revenge on him, and put a look of ultimate remorse and supplication on his face.

Big Fatty Zhang was so excited that he didn’t even notice how the clan chief was looking at him. His laughter mingled with Bai Xiaochun’s as the two of them excitedly headed toward the immortal's cave.

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

--

Hey everyone, I had some T-shirt designs made for the Dao of Alchemy, the Dao of Alcohol, and the Dao of Swords. Check them out here. I don't make much off of the sale of the shirts, only a small percentage, which I put back into getting more designs done. Don't forget that the link to my shop is always in the credits of the chapters.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0392 awe-chapter-393

Chapter 393: File A Grievance....

Of the five Dao protectors Bai Xiaochun had brought with him, the only one unaccounted for was Song Que. The other four had all returned to Bai Xiaochun’s side.

Even Chen Manyao was behaving herself. To Bai Xiaochun, it felt completely wonderful to have people relying on him for reasons other than his cultivation base. It was something he often thought about during his meditation sessions.

Now that Big Fatty Zhang was back, Bai Xiaochun felt as if a huge weight had been lifted from his heart. Big Fatty Zhang was different than Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai. Their friendship had begun on the very first day that Bai Xiaochun became a part of the cultivation world.

In fact, almost as soon as Big Fatty Zhang arrived at the Azure Dragon Society, he became its second most important figure, with a standing higher than Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai. Of course, Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai took this in stride; they were well aware of how close Bai Xiaochun and Big Fatty Zhang were.

As the Azure Dragon Society expanded and grew more powerful, not only did they compete with the Celestial Sky Society with their Fantasy Pills, but in other areas as well.

However, such efforts couldn’t be met with success quickly, and needed a lot of merit points to be invested. At the moment, the Fantasy Pills were still the bread and butter of the Azure Dragon Society.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t actually have a hand in such matters; he delegated the authority to Big Fatty Zhang and the others. Overall, Bai Xiaochun was completely pleased with how amazing he was. The only thing that he wasn’t happy about was that he actually didn’t own his own immortal's cave; everything in Sky City was rented out by the sect.

After making some inquiries, he learned that it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone in Sky City who owned their own property. The only way to get one would be to have someone very powerful backing you.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have any powerful backers, so he had no choice other than to abandon the idea. Instead, he focused on his cultivation, using much of his profits from the Azure Dragon Society to purchase spirit medicines and spirit food to increase the speed of his progress.

It was only after spending about 1,000,000 merit points that he finally reached the point where he had successfully cultivated the third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique from the toes of his left foot all the way up to his calf!

When that part of his leg pulsed with the power of his Undying Tendons, he could send astonishing fluctuations rolling out from it, fluctuations that could shake heaven and earth with intense power.

The power in his left leg vastly surpassed that of his right leg, and was the source of the most incredibly fleshly body power he had at his disposal.

After a few tests, Bai Xiaochun realized that he hadn’t just experienced an increase in strength, but also speed. At the moment, his left leg could move at least twice as fast as his right!

Of course, even before that, he had been one of the top figures in his cultivation level in terms of speed, thanks to his Undying Heavenly King Body and Heaven-Dao Gold Core. Therefore, anyone who saw his speed now would be left gasping with shock!

In fact, thanks to this increase in speed, Bai Xiaochun actually felt as if the other parts of his body were sluggish.

“One day, when I finish cultivating the Undying Tendons, then when I burst out with full speed....” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with anticipation.

Back in the Middle Reaches, in the River-Defying Sect, it would have taken a very long time to reach this point, even with the help of the Blood Ancestor. But here at the source of the river, in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the indescribably strong spiritual power, plus the vastly superior spirit medicines and spirit food, made everything completely different!

The only catch was that acquiring those resources required merit points, and a lot of them. Thankfully, that was exactly what Bai Xiaochun had!

In addition to his success with his Undying Tendons, the vast quantity of merit points at his disposal ensured that his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation also advanced by leaps and bounds.

The Heavenspan River water here was much different than in the Lower or Middle Reaches. It was so much stronger and purer that the lesser versions could hardly compare. At one point, he even spent tens of thousands of merit points to buy an entire a bowlful.

Eventually, he reached the peak of the Frigid Acolyte level. With the wave of a hand, he could cause frigid coldness to fill a 300-meter area, within which would appear a single blurry frigid shadow.

Bai Xiaochun could switch positions with the frigid shadow at will; if used correctly in combat, it was a trick that could help him win in an unexpected way, and perhaps even turn a defeat at the hands of a powerful opponent into a victory!

Bai Xiaochun was very excited about this, and even set up a special training ground to practice in. After sealing the place so that he was completely alone, he performed some tests. Upon summoning the frigid shadow in a location inside the 300-meter frozen area, he could take a step forward and then instantly take the shadow’s place. It was almost like a teleportation! After familiarizing himself with the process, he was left so excited that it was difficult to put into words.

After reaching the peak of the Frigid Acolyte level, his techniques all improved, and his cultivation base also advanced. Because of the frigid qi buildup in his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, his cultivation base was now at the peak of the early Gold Core stage!

With one more step forward, he could break through into mid Gold Core!!

Bai Xiaochun was already certain of how to head in the direction of that breakthrough. It was none other than reaching the Frigid Adept level!

“Once I reach the Frigid Adept level, I’ll step into the mid Gold Core stage!

“And that day isn’t too far off!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, musing that coming to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect really was the right choice. In fact, if he had known how wonderful Sky City was going to be, he would have come earlier.

Even as Bai Xiaochun reveled in complacency, the hostilities between the Celestial Sky Society and the Azure Dragon Society were increasing. In fact, numerous meetings had been held in the Celestial Sky Society to try to figure out what to do about Bai Xiaochun and the Azure Dragon Society.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was a Core Formation cultivator, something that had caught them completely unawares, and had also lost them the initiative. Their previous failed attempt to take him out had also significantly damaged their awe-inspiring reputation.

Of even greater significance than that was that the sheer size of the Azure Dragon Society made any schemes and plots they hatched relatively useless. Furthermore, in terms of their ability to use force, although they had a powerful background, they didn’t have even a single Core Formation cultivator in their organization.

Although everyone talked about how they came from a clan with a deva patriarch, the truth was that the top orange-robed disciples in the Celestial Sky Society were nothing but servants in that clan. As such, their background sounded very impressive, but nobody in the clan really cared that much about them.

They really had no choice other than to report the matter to some of their superiors and hope that someone would show up to help them. However, despite having made several such requests over the past months, nobody had paid them any attention. Things to do with Core Formation cultivators weren’t very important to the clan as a whole, and definitely wouldn’t mobilize the forces of the entire clan to help them. The Celestial Sky Society would have to handle the matter on their own.

After waiting for quite some time without getting a response, the people in the Celestial Sky Society realized what was going on, and yet, weren’t willing to just give in.

“We can’t let things keep going on this way!”

“That’s right. That damned Azure Dragon Society rose up too quickly and violently. If we don’t do something soon, we’re going to be playing second fiddle to them forever!”

“But the clan has been ignoring us. Ai.”

“I can’t believe we haven’t been able to turn up any information about the background of Boss Azure Dragon. There’s something fishy going on, I'm telling you! It’s almost as if someone has wiped out all records of him!”

As the discussion played out, a shadowy figure sat off to the side, a person who seemed to be wreathed in flickering darkness. Suddenly, he spoke in a sinister voice.

“Since the clan is ignoring us and Boss Azure Dragon is too mysterious, then why don’t just take the Fantasy Pills out of the picture? That would cripple the Azure Dragon Society, resolve this deadlock, and also make it more clear how to completely finish things.

“As for exactly how to take the Fantasy Pills out of the picture, it's simple. You people just never put enough thought into it. Just file a grievance with the sect regarding Fantasy Pills!!

“After all, they still aren’t really legal to sell!” His words were met with silence, and yet, all of the Celestial Sky Society’s leaders’ eyes began to shine brightly.

The person who had just spoken was none other than the boss of the Celestial Sky Society.

After the decision was formalized, the Celestial Sky Society sprang into action. They compiled a list of all the supposed side effects and harmful aspects of the Fantasy Pill and reported them to the sect. Furthermore, they backed the effort with all the money and connections they had at their disposal.

Three days later, an order came down from Sky Quarter Rainbow, which was announced everywhere in Sky City.

The Sky Quarter peak lord had ordered that disciples were forbidden from purchasing Fantasy Pills!!

And there was more! A jade slip shot through the air in a bright beam of light toward the immortal's cave that was the headquarters of the Azure Dragon Society. It pierced through all of the defensive spell formations like a hot knife through butter before coming to a stop before Bai Xiaochun. Then, scintillating light burst out from it, along with a profoundly ancient voice.

“Hostage Bai Xiaochun from the River-Defying Sect is to report immediately to the Sky Quarter peak lord!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0393 awe-chapter-394

Chapter 394: Sky Quarter Rainbow

Bai Xiaochun had just been in the middle of performing some breathing exercises, so the sudden arrival of the jade slip caused his eyes to go wide. Shivering, he said, “The Sky Quarter peak lord? He wants to see me?

“What does he want? I don't even know him!” From the tone he had detected in that voice just now, the speaker hadn’t seemed very pleased.

“What’s going on!?” Even as Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness began to mount, Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai showed up, serious expressions on their faces. Big Fatty Zhang seemed very angry, and the other leaders all looked extremely anxious.

Xu Baocai gritted his teeth and said, “Junior Patriarch, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect just issued orders prohibiting the trafficking of Fantasy Pills! This is definitely the handiwork of the Celestial Sky Society. They’re trying to cut off our main source of income!”

Xu Baocai’s life had been quite comfortable lately, and he had very much enjoyed seeing merit points rolling in without stop. But now, it seemed that it all was coming to an end; how could he not get nervous?

“What do we do, Boss?”

“Without Fantasy Pills, the Azure Dragon Society is in great danger!”

“That’s right. We’ve been expanding too quickly recently, and the news about the restrictions on the Fantasy Pills is definitely going to spread like wildfire through the city....”

Xu Baocai wasn’t the only nervous one. The other cultivators in the Azure Dragon Society were all thinking the same thing. After all, the vast majority of the Azure Dragon Society’s income came from Fantasy Pills.

Without those pills, the Azure Dragon Society’s enormous size would quickly become its biggest disadvantage. After all, to maintain its current size required a significant merit point expenditure in salaries.

If too much time went by, they would be forced to cut back in certain areas, and the Celestial Sky Society would definitely take advantage of that. They would go in for the kill, and try to destroy all the advances that the Azure Dragon Society had made in the past.

In the final analysis, the biggest problem was that the Azure Dragon Society didn’t have any resources built up. Compared to the Celestial Sky Society, they were like a huge, empty building, fundamentally unstable and prone to collapse at any moment.

Sadly, other than Bai Xiaochun’s Dao protectors, virtually all of the other Azure Dragon Society cultivators present were all starting to ponder what move to make next.

If the leadership was doing that, it almost wasn’t necessary to mention the ordinary cultivators who made up the rest of the organization. Bai Xiaochun knew that if he didn’t handle this situation well, the entire Azure Dragon Society could collapse.

However, now wasn’t the moment to ponder the Azure Dragon Society’s situation. The glittering jade slip still hovered in front of him, and even as everyone who had just rushed in was still peppering him with questions, his eyes flashed, and he cleared his throat.

“What are you getting so anxious for!?” Everyone’s mouths snapped shut. Bai Xiaochun was the boss of the Azure Dragon Society, and a Gold Core cultivator. Even more importantly, he was the inventor of the Fantasy Pill. Although he didn’t have much of a role in the daily operations of the organization, the Azure Dragon Society was his, and he was the most stabilizing force within it.

“I know the Celestial Sky Society has powerful backers, but did you really think I wouldn’t have some too?!” With that, he rose to his feet, stuck his chin up, and the pointed at the jade slip.

“Look at that, all of you. What is it?” Everyone looked over in surprise, and soon people realized that it was an object from the rainbow district.

“That’s the command medallion of the peak lord of Sky Quarter Rainbow!!”

“I knew I saw a beam of light flying down from Sky Quarter Rainbow! So, it came *here*. It was actually a message for our exalted boss!” The cultivators of the Azure Dragon Society couldn’t help but gasp as they looked over at Bai Xiaochun, eyes shining with bright light.

“Don’t tell me that the boss actually has special connections with Sky Quarter itself?!?!” As everyone was reeling in shock, Xu Baocai, Master God-Diviner, and Big Fatty Zhang were all staring at Bai Xiaochun with blank looks, completely unable to wrap their minds around how he could possibly be connected to the Sky Quarter peak lord.

“As long as you understand the situation,” Bai Xiaochun said coolly. “Well, now I'm going to go pay a formal visit to the Sky Quarter peak lord. We’ll figure out our next step after I get back!” With that, he waved his sleeve, grabbing the jade slip and walking out the chamber.

As he left, all of the Azure Dragon Society cultivators clasped hands and bowed. Although they were still somewhat worried, they felt much more relieved than they had been moments before. That attitude would have a big influence on the cultivators under their control, and at the very least, would ensure that the restrictions placed on Fantasy Pills would not cause chaos in the Azure Dragon Society, at least not for the time being.

Bai Xiaochun’s act had been pulled off perfectly. Even Big Fatty Zhang had been taken in, and watched Bai Xiaochun with both confidence and anticipation.

However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun left the Azure Dragon Society’s immortal's cave, he almost collapsed into tears. Moments before, he had been standing tall and straight, but now he was wracked with anxiety. At the same time, his rage toward the Celestial Sky Society burned hotter than ever. However, there was no time now to dwell on his anger.

“What does the Sky Quarter peak lord want with me...?” he thought nervously as he headed toward a certain location in the central district of Sky City that led to the rainbow district.

This was where newly-promoted yellow-robed disciples would come to head to the rainbow. As for red- and orange-robed disciples, they could only enter this area if they had special invitations or orders.

Upon reaching the teleportation portal, he produced the jade slip and took a deep breath. Trying to look solemn and tragic, as if he were going for broke, he stepped forward into the portal.

Rumbling sounds could be heard, along with the dazzling light of teleportation, which wrapped around him for a moment before fading away, and him along with it.

When he reappeared, he was in the third level of rainbows at the bottom of the waterfall, on the second rainbow.

As soon as he materialized, he looked around to find himself surrounded by richly ornamented buildings connected by green jade paths. Immortal trees flourished everywhere, and spiritual energy wafted about, making the place seem like the picture of a celestial paradise.

There were ponds and immortal's caves, as well as domesticated spirit creatures frolicking within the trees and waters. Soft, seven-colored light permeated the entire area, creating a spectacular scene of beauty.

Yellow-robed disciples could be seen everywhere, sitting in meditation or strolling about. Everything was quiet and peaceful, completely lacking the raucous brouhaha common in Sky City. There were flowing crowds of people, and yet all of the cultivators looked cold and indifferent. Each and every one seemed tall and slender, with mysterious light swirling around them that made them seem like something from beyond the mortal world.

Apparently, there was some sort of restrictive spell in place that made the strong spiritual energy softer and more gentle, and ensured that one’s energy was not drained while absorbing it.

Bai Xiaochun was immediately taken aback. This was his first time seeing the world that existed on the rainbow, and he couldn’t help but rub his eyes to make sure he wasn’t seeing things. Sure enough, it was all there. One interesting thing he noted was that although the rainbow district was large, it was only about half the size of Sky City.

Even as Bai Xiaochun looked around in amazement, the air in front of him distorted, and a female yellow-robed disciple stepped out of thin air. She had long flowing hair, and lovely facial features, although her expression was a bit cold. Looking Bai Xiaochun up and down, she said, “You're Bai Xiaochun?”

A serious expression took over Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. This young woman was at the peak of the early Core Formation stage, just like him, and yet the method she had used to appear in front of him was quite astonishing.

This was his first time encountering someone in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect who was in the same cultivation level as himself, and also his first time seeing first hand some of the divine abilities and magical techniques that he had only just heard about so far.

If her cultivation base had been higher than his, he might have reacted differently. But considering they were in the same level, he decided that he couldn’t let himself look weak, so he proudly stated, “Yeah, I’m Bai Xiaochun. Who are you?”

“Come with me. My Master wants to see you. By the way, watch your step around here. Core Formation cultivators can get killed here very easily if they get lost.” With that, she turned and began to walk off.

Her words made Bai Xiaochun feel more nervous than ever as he hurried to follow her. The two of them became two beams of bright light that shot off into the distance.

As they flew along, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the things passing by below, and quickly came to realize how the Sky Quarter Rainbows were set up. There were five ring-shaped districts that seemed to be filled with more coldness and pressure the further they went toward the center.

Eventually, the young woman led him to the middle ring, where a shockingly tall mountain peak became visible. It was surrounded by dazzling seven-colored light, and was completely devoid of any type of plants or vegetation. The only thing visible on the peak was an enormous temple, gray in color and surrounded by an indescribable energy. Just by looking at it, Bai Xiaochun got the feeling that it wasn’t a temple, but rather, an ancient wild beast.

The young woman came to a stop after leading Bai Xiaochun to the foot of the mountain. Then, she stepped back a few paces, maintaining her silence. Even as Bai Xiaochun was wondering what exactly she was doing, an ancient voice suddenly drifted out from the temple at the peak of the mountain.

“Admit to your crimes, Bai Xiaochun!”

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0394 awe-chapter-395

[/expand]

In response to the words, Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety suddenly faded away, and he sighed inwardly. At the same time, he inwardly thanked the Senior cultivators back in the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect, who had often scared the living daylights out of him by uttering such words.

As soon as the words registered in his mind, he was relatively certain that he wasn’t in trouble. Whenever members of the Senior generation spoke like that, it was like they were brandishing a club, only to hand out rewards afterward.

Having realized this, Bai Xiaochun immediately knew what to do next. Gasping, he plastered an expression onto his face that was a mix of bitterness, defiance, and anger. At the same time, he tried to look like he felt deep respect for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and hoped to rise within its ranks, but simultaneously, missed the River-Defying Sect. As these expressions all played out on his face, it created the perfect complicated look that a hostage should have.

As he stood there silently, he clasped hands and bowed deeply, as though he had thousands of words he wished to speak, and yet didn’t. Instead, he was simply waiting to see what would happen to him.

Although he didn’t say anything, his expression spoke volumes.

Bai Xiaochun had mastered this tactic of responding to accusations with righteous indignation back in the Blood Stream Sect, and had always found it to be particularly effective.

As for the cold-faced young woman, when she saw the expression on Bai Xiaochun's face, her jaw dropped.

The voice which had just spoken out from the mountain maintained silence for a moment before continuing, "Fine, we'll let the matter drop. After all, you're a hostage from the River-Defying Sect, which is an important sect connected to the Sky Quarter. Give me the formula for the Fantasy Pill. It has some blemishes, but at the same time, could come in useful."

Bai Xiaochun hesitated, causing a protracted moment of silence. Then, the ancient voice once again spoke from within the seven-colored light shining out of the temple. "I won't force you to give it to me for free. I'll pay you 1,000,000 merit points, and immediately promote you to a yellow-robed disciple. Henceforth, you will no longer reside in Sky City!"

When the young female cultivator heard this, her eyes went wide, and she looked up at the temple in shock.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very pleased with himself, but didn't let that show on his face. Actually, he was feeling a bit of disdain at the moment. After all, he had plenty of merit points, and if he'd wanted to be promoted to the rainbow district, he could have done it long ago. He often spent tens of thousands of merit points on a single meal, not to mention all of the puppet maid servants he had to wait upon him.

Plus, he had lots of subordinates to take care of. In the end, his monthly expenses probably exceeded 1,000,000 merit points.

“Only a complete moron would come here,” he thought. “Life is great back in Sky City! I'm super powerful, my cultivation goes really quickly, and nobody causes me any problems!” Bai Xiaochun had already decided that he didn’t want to be promoted to the rainbow district, and this trip had proved it. Everyone had cold expressions here, and it didn’t look like a fun place at all.

Upon hearing the peak lord’s offer, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, clasped hands and bowed deeply, his expression more somber than ever.

Sounding profoundly righteous, he spoke out in a loud voice, “Peak Lord, of course disciple is willing to give you the pill formula. As for the merit points, I don’t want them. I have no desire to become a yellow-robed disciple in that fashion. That’s simply not my style. Bai Xiaochun will become a yellow-robed disciple with the merit points he earns with his own two hands!”

The cold-looking young female cultivator looked at Bai Xiaochun again. Moments ago, her Master the peak lord’s offer had been completely astonishing to her. In all her years as his apprentice, this was her first time hearing him be so generous. But then, her shock only continued to grow as Bai Xiaochun refused the offer!

She couldn’t help but gasp. Never before had she seen anyone turn down such an opportunity; 1,000,000 merit points was a huge sum to any cultivator. It was the type of savings most people spent an entire sixty-year-cycle building up.

As for the peak lord, were it not for the fact that he had already heard about Bai Xiaochun’s antics in Sky City, he would also have been shocked. After all, throughout all his years serving as the peak lord, he had never seen any disciple turn down the opportunity to become a yellow-robed disciple.

Up in the temple, he was sitting there with an odd expression on his face, looking off to the side, where stood the vague image of a white-robed young woman. Melancholy and other mixed emotions could be seen on her face as she looked at Bai Xiaochun.

She seemed to exist somewhere between illusory and corporeal, and was difficult to see clearly. However, from the way the air around her distorted and filled with rifts, it was possible to determine that she either had a shocking cultivation base, or possessed some unimaginably powerful precious treasure!

When the young woman didn’t react to Bai Xiaochun’s statement, the Sky Quarter peak lord’s frustration rose. The truth was that he didn’t need the medicine formula at all, nor did he want it. However, someone who he didn't dare to provoke had tasked him with watching out for Bai Xiaochun, and therefore, he had been looking for an opportunity to give him a large sum of merit points.

But without a good excuse, how could he stoop to helping a mere Core Formation cultivator? After all, he was the Sky Quarter peak lord, and although he wasn’t a deva, he was half a step into that realm, and a hostage definitely wasn’t someone he should care about.

And yet, here Bai Xiaochun had gone and rejected his offer.

The peak lord was starting to feel very frustrated. After all, the person he didn’t dare to provoke, the one who had made the demands of him to begin with, was standing right next to him. It was none other than that young woman in the white robe!

“Cut the crap!” he said. “Considering my status, you think I'm just going to take things from you? Tell me what you want, and as long as it’s in my power, I’ll meet your demands!”

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to gape in response to the words. The cold-faced female cultivator gasped; as of this day, her view of her Master had changed. Clearly, he wasn’t trying to trade with Bai Xiaochun, he was simply handing things over to him....

“What powerful backer does this Bai Xiaochun have!?” she thought, looking at him with wide eyes, her heart pounding.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun looked up toward the dazzling temple at the peak of the mountain, and suddenly felt a bit nervous. Something about the whole situation seemed odd, as if this peak lord wouldn't let him go without giving him something. In fact, it seemed like refusing the offer would enrage the man.

Even as he hesitated, the peak lord once again demanded that he hurry up and accept the offer.

Bai Xiaochun grit his teeth. Eyes sparkling, he looked up at the temple and said, “Peak Lord, disciple is extremely grateful for your kind intentions. If you truly wish to give me something, Senior, well... down in Sky City you have to rent everything. I really can never feel at home. After coming here all alone, sir, I really wish I could have my own piece of land, something that belongs just to me. What do you think?

“When I find the right location, I’ll build myself a little mansion right on top of it....” With that, he looked up toward the mountain peak, anticipation written on his face.

Although he had been a bit hesitant to make the request, it was to his surprise that he saw a seven-colored beam of light immediately fly out from the temple and come to a stop right in front of him in the form of a little seven-colored flag.

“The east, south, and central districts are off limits. But go ahead and select any open land in the west or north districts. Plant that flag in the ground, and that 5-kilometer area will be your personal property!” With that, the Sky Quarter peak lord sighed in relief, then sent a wave of seven-colored light to push Bai Xiaochun and the cold-faced female cultivator away.

The female cultivator was completely taken aback, and couldn’t stop staring at the seven-colored flag in Bai Xiaochun’s hand. Even as the peak lord’s personal apprentice, she had never received such treatment, and she couldn’t prevent her eyes from shining brightly. How could she ever have imagined that her Master would give Bai Xiaochun the gift of personal property!?

In Sky City, a 5-kilometer-area of personal property was so expensive that it was impossible to even imagine, and yet her Master had handed it over without even pausing. From what the young woman could tell, Bai Xiaochun must have a very powerful backer indeed.

“He really gave it to me?” Bai Xiaochun thought with a gasp, clutching the seven-colored flag in his hand as he was pushed 300 meters away from the mountain. As he looked over his shoulder, he was fairly certain that he could see through the door of the seven-colored temple, where the vague image of a young woman could be seen. It was impossible to tell exactly what she looked like, and even in the moment in which he saw her, she vanished.

With that, he turned and left, taking his suspicions with him. A moment later, the young woman who had just vanished materialized again, this time wearing a veil.

“Long time no see, Xiaochun....” she murmured. A moment later, a passing breeze lifted the veil for just a moment, revealing a spectacularly beautiful face.

Had Bai Xiaochun been there to see it, he would have recognized this young woman immediately. She looked very much like Du Lingfei!

Slowly, a smile spread out on her face, the type of smile that comes when reuniting with someone important, a smile filled with warmth and anticipation.

Chapter 395: Seeing Du Lingfei Again!!

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0395 awe-chapter-396

Chapter 396: Comeback Time!

Puzzlement and confusion could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes the entire way out of the rainbow district. The cold female cultivator leading the way suddenly seemed much warmer than before, and even looked at him a few times out of the corner of her eye to size him up.

When they reached the teleportation portal, she smiled and gave him a curtseying bow.

“Brother Bai, sorry for my lack of manners earlier. Oh, my name is Qing Xuan.”

Then the light of teleportation rose up between them. Bai Xiaochun’s vision swam, and the echo of the young woman’s words was replaced by the cacophonous din of Sky City.

Bai Xiaochun felt almost like he had been dreaming just now. But then he pulled the seven-colored flag out of his bag of holding and looked it over, and his eyes began to shine brightly with excitement.

“I can’t believe he actually gave it to me!” The idea of having his own five-kilometer area of personal property in Sky City was spine-tingling.

However, he didn’t forget his suspicions about why exactly things had played out as they did. Looking back up in the direction of Sky Quarter Rainbow, he murmured to himself, “Somebody is secretly helping me.... The Sky Quarter peak lord was obviously being forced to give me a gift. Otherwise, why did he never actually take the pill formula!?!?" Lost in thought, he headed back toward the north district. However, his reverie didn't last long; soon he realized that everyone around him was talking about the Azure Dragon Society.

"Did you hear? After you consume that evil Fantasy Pill, it gives you permanent brain damage! How sadistic!!"

"It doesn't just give you brain damage. If you consume enough of them, your latent talent deteriorates, and you slowly go crazy! I even heard of some people who died from them!"

"There's worse! They're addictive. Once you start consuming them, you go crazy if you try to stop! I should have known the Azure Dragon Society would be responsible for a sadistic pill like that!"

"The boss of the Azure Dragon Society was the one who invented it! Hey, do you guys remember the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill? He made that too! What a depraved devil!!"

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy about such talk. Although his Fantasy Pill wasn't perfect, it definitely wouldn't cause any sort of permanent harm, and the positive aspects of the pill more than made up for any side effects.

Furthermore, nobody had ever died from consuming them.

However, the rumors were too perfectly crafted, and by the time Bai Xiaochun arrived at the north district, word had spread to the other districts as well.

Based on the animosity being voiced toward the Azure Dragon Society and Boss Azure Dragon, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but imagine what would happen if someone recognized him. All it would take would be for someone to shout out and identify him, and everyone around him would surely pounce on him.

He was trembling with fear, but in order to play it as safe as possible, he walked through the crowd cursing the Azure Dragon Society as loudly as possible. After hurrying along for some time, he finally arrived at the Azure Dragon Society's headquarters.

Upon his return, everyone offered greetings, but clearly, they were very nervous. Seemingly on the verge of tears, Xu Baocai said, "Junior Patriarch, that shameless Celestial Sky Society has been spreading rumors everywhere, slandering the Azure Dragon Society! A lot of our people have already renounced their membership!"

"The situation is completely out of control...." Master God-Diviner said, a bitter smile on his face. Despite the fact that they had been on guard for a counter attack, the Celestial Sky Society was too big of an organization, and had connections in the city that went far deeper than the Azure Dragon Society's.

Big Fatty Zhang and Chen Manyao seemed very anxious, and the other Azure Dragon Society cultivators were all standing there in mute silence. Everyone was obviously waiting to hear what exactly had occurred during Bai Xiaochun's trip to the rainbow district, and if anything positive had come of it.

If the result was indeed positive, then they would stick with the Azure Dragon Society and wait to see how things developed. If not, then they would have to start considering how they would survive after having offended the Celestial Sky Society.

Bai Xiaochun was very angry. After all, the Celestial Sky Society had been the group who had started selling the Fantasy Pills, and those versions had been crafted from stolen hallucination smoke. Now, they were going so far as to pin all the blame on Bai Xiaochun, which was a humiliation that left him fuming. Then he thought back to how he had been set up in the situation with the Ultra Fasting Aid Pill, and his anger reached the point where he almost couldn't contain it.

Big Fatty Zhang eyes shone with vicious light as he said, "Ninth Fatty, the Celestial Sky Society has pushed things too far. Let's go have it out with them once and for all!"

Clearly, his experiences recently had left him with a much sharper killing aura to him.

"Junior Patriarch," Xu Baocai said. "I think we really do need to just go fight it out with them. But how are we supposed to do that considering the sect rules...?"

"There's nothing we can do!" Master God-Diviner jumped in. "With the Fantasy Pills outlawed, we have no way to make a living. What are we supposed to do?!" All the other cultivators simply stood to the side as the discussion progressed. Finally, one of the orange-robed disciples stepped forward, clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

"Boss, did anything good come of your trip to the rainbow district?" As soon as the words left his mouth, everyone quieted down and looked at Bai Xiaochun expectantly.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath to suppress his anger, then said, "Of course some good came of it. But we still can't sell Fantasy Pills."

The silence which met his words was even deeper than the silence from before.

After looking over the group, he asked for someone to bring him a map of Sky City, then turned and walked into his room

Time passed. The next day, more cultivators left the Azure Dragon Society. The day after that, even more left. That trend continued with each passing day.

By the time seven whole days had passed, the continued pressure from the Celestial Sky Society saw ninety percent of the cultivators leave the Azure Dragon Society. The Azure Dragon Society had risen with explosive speed, and although such people had been happy to join it at the peak of its success, none of them had any desire to stay with it as it declined.

The group’s subsidiary organizations in the other districts of the city collapsed, and the smaller clans and gangs that had joined them abandoned them and cut all ties.

All sorts of rumors swirled in the city, and the Celestial Sky Society took advantage of the situation to absorb as many former members of the Azure Dragon Society as possible. Soon, the Azure Dragon Society’s headquarters was almost completely empty.

There were now less than 1,000 cultivators remaining, and after two days passed, more left. By the ninth day, they had less than 200 members.

The majestic Azure Dragon Society had almost completely fallen in only nine days. The matter shook all of Sky City, and further reinforced the Celestial Sky Society’s reputation of being powerful and having deep resources. In some ways, it was not a big surprise. Everything about the Azure Dragon

Society had been based on their incredible income of merit points. Without time to truly settle down, they were like an empty building that could collapse when hit by a single big wave or a single gust of wind.

Only a bit more than 100 cultivators stayed behind, and they were either the original members, or very sentimental and loyal. This time around, Bai Xiaochun's Dao protectors didn't leave, not even Chen Manyao. They all sat around in the immortal's cave, waiting for Bai Xiaochun's door to open.

During the nine days which passed, Bai Xiaochun didn't rest. Instead, he carefully studied the map of Sky City, poring over every street and alley, studying each aspect in the most minute detail. It was the evening of the ninth day when he finally emerged.

His eyes were bloodshot, but he looked excited. Although he was a bit surprised that only a few people remained in the Azure Dragon Society, after a moment of thought, he threw his head back and laughed.

When the remaining members of the Azure Dragon Society saw him laughing, their hearts began to thump with hope.

Eyes shining with mysterious light, he took a deep breath and then said, “Alright, Fellow Daoists. Pack your bags. We're moving!

“The Azure Dragon Society has fallen, but I've thought up a new name which will take us even farther than before!” Swishing his sleeve, he said nothing more. However, the rest of the cultivators' moods were instantly lifted. Master God-Diviner was the first to start packing his bags, and before long, the entire group of more than 100 cultivators was walking out of the immortal's cave!

Their destination was not in the north district, but rather, in the west district!

Quite a few cultivators noticed them as they made their way along, and when people realized that they were the Azure Dragon Society, they began to follow curiously. Everyone was wondering where the bedraggled remnants of the organization would go. There were even some people sent by the Celestial Sky Society to follow them.

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored them, and it was without the slightest pause that he headed to an area on the very edge of the west district. Shockingly, what existed there was a vast desert!

When people realized where he was heading, their jaws dropped in shock. After all, within that dessert was a ruined city where cultivators of Sky City would often go to carry out important missions!

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0396 awe-chapter-397

Not very far into the desert itself were the crumbled ruins of a temple, which was the entrance to a necropolis that stretched out under the surface of the city.

The necropolis was huge, almost half the size of Sky City itself. All sorts of rare beasts, immortal grasses, and spirit plants grew there. It was a source of abundant resources for cultivators.

The ruins of the necropolis were the only place where disciples could go on missions inside Sky City itself. In fact, many of sect missions required that disciples go there.

It was a special place, much safer than locations on the outside. Although it was indeed the ruins of an ancient necropolis, it had been put there by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect for the express purpose of allowing disciples to train.

There were some creatures and areas in the ruins that certain disciples couldn’t easily handle alone, but they were few and far between. Furthermore, Sky City itself was considered to be inside of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and as such, many disciples preferred to come to this place to go on missions.

Because of that, it tended to be a very bustling place.

The land itself was extremely valuable, and no one in Sky City other than the Celestial Sky Society was powerful enough to set up shop there. Generally speaking, they let anyone inside, but when people came out, they were required to share thirty percent of whatever profits they had acquired inside. Either that, or they had to spend a significant amount of merit points to get a special command medallion from the Celestial Sky Society that let them go on their way with no questions asked.

Only the Celestial Sky Society, with their deva clan background, could do such a thing. Many people had thought of trying to take similar advantage of the ruins, but the Celestial Sky Society wouldn’t let them.

After all, the Celestial Sky Society had paid an enormous price for the right to take control of that location, and the profits they earned made up more than fifty percent of their total income.

With such enormous profit at stake, the Celestial Sky Society obviously viewed the place as being extremely important.

As Bai Xiaochun led his group of over a hundred people toward the desert, everyone was shocked, including the cultivators from the Celestial Sky Society.

“What’s wrong with this Azure Dragon Society? What do they think they’re going to do here?”

“Don’t tell me that they want to go into the necropolis ruins to go on some missions?”

“It doesn’t look like that’s what they’re doing....”

Outside of the ruins was a checkpoint manned by large numbers of Celestial Sky Society cultivators, and as soon as they saw Bai Xiaochun and his followers heading their way, serious expressions appeared on their faces, and they rose to their feet.

There was also quite a crowd of cultivators preparing to go into the ruins to go on missions. When they saw the big group approaching, curious expressions appeared on their faces.

Nobody said a word. As for the Azure Dragon Society cultivators Bai Xiaochun had brought with him, none of them really understood what was happening, not even Big Fatty Zhang and the other Dao protectors.

Finally, Xu Baocai couldn’t hold back from asking, “Junior Patriarch, what are we doing here?”

“This is where we’re moving to!” Bai Xiaochun replied loudly, not even bothering to look back. Instead, he simply kept his eyes fixed ahead as he walked forward, completely ignoring the Celestial Sky Society cultivators.

Those cultivators didn’t dare to get in Bai Xiaochun’s way. Not only was he a Gold Core cultivator, more importantly, the rules of the Celestial Sky Society stated that anyone could enter the ruins. It was only upon leaving that they had to pay the Celestial Sky Society their share of the loot.

Bai Xiaochun passed the Celestial Sky Society cultivators, and then stopped at a point roughly 3,000 meters from the ruins of the temple. After looking around for a moment, he seemed to be quite pleased.

“Alright,” he announced “This is our new home!”

Master God-Diviner blinked a few times and then glanced around.

A blank look could be seen in Xu Baocai’s eyes, and Big Fatty Zhang was staring mutely in shock. Even Chen Manyao’s jaw had dropped.

If they had such a reaction, there was little need to even consider how the other cultivators from the Azure Dragon Society reacted. They simply exchanged blank, awkward stares.

When the Celestial Sky Society cultivators heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, they immediately burst into loud laughter.

“Very amusing. They think they’re going to live here or something? This whole area belongs to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, not any individual person.”

“Just what does the Azure Dragon Society think they’re going to do?”

They weren’t the only ones who found it hard to hold back from laughing. The crowd which had followed along, as well as the cultivators who had gathered in preparation of entering the ruins, were all roaring with laughter.

“I know the Azure Dragon Society got castigated recently, but don't tell me they’re all actually insane? Do they really think they can just settle down in this place?”

“Boss Azure Dragon is a Core Formation cultivator, but even he couldn’t have taken over this area during the height of his power. This place is the lifeblood of the Celestial Sky Society, and they’re backed by a deva clan. If Azure Dragon Society tries to settle down here, that clan will definitely put them in their place.”

As the mocking laughter surrounded them, Master God-Diviner’s face turned red, and Xu Baocai looked very awkward. Furthermore, the embarrassment and confusion in the eyes of the Azure Dragon Society cultivators grew deeper.

Big Fatty Zhang and Chen Manyao coughed dryly, and appeared to be hesitating about whether or not to say anything.

“Xiaochun--”

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and waved his sleeve, sticking his arm out to reveal what was clasped in his hand: a small, seven-colored flag, shining with dazzling light!

Instantly, intense pressure weighed down on the area, and all the laughter ceased. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked very pleased with himself as he cast the little flag straight down into the ground at his feet!

“Activate!” he roared. The instant the little flag pierced into the ground, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling filled the air, a sound like the crashing of thunder!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Everything began to shake violently as a gale force wind spiraled out of the little flag, engulfing the entire area and causing even more intense pressure to weigh down!

The Dao protectors’ faces flickered, and they backed up, gasping. The Celestial Sky Society cultivators, the passersby, and the cultivators hoping to go on missions all began to edge backward.

The pressure weighing down on them seemed like heavenly might, the source of which was the little flag that Bai Xiaochun had just stabbed down into the ground!

As the wind screamed and the lands shook, Bai Xiaochun’s hair whipped about him, and the seven-colored light swept out, filling a 300-meter area around the flag.

However, things weren’t over yet. The light continued to spread, and in the blink of an eye, had filled 1.5 kilometers. Then 2.5 kilometers! And finally, 5 kilometers!!

Seven-colored ripples filled that entire area, completely replacing the desert sands which had existed there before. Everything flickered with scintillating light, as well as silence, which was broken only by the gasps of the other cultivators in the area.

But then, before any of them could react, the land began to tremble again, and more intense rumbling sounds rose up as the seven-colored ripples slowly merged into the ground. As they vanished, an enormous sealing mark became visible!

An enormous, indelible sealing mark!!

Then, a powerful force of expulsion appeared, a force which no one in the area could possibly fight back against as it wrapped around them and removed them from the 5-kilometer area.

Everyone was completely flabbergasted....

“That was... that was the force of expulsion that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect spell formations create for personal property!!”

“That’s impossible! How could that be a true force of expulsion? Heavens! Only people who have the approval of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s grand spell formation can have personal property with a spell formation like that!!”

“There aren't even ten locations in all of Sky City that are personal property!!”

“I can't believe Boss Azure Dragon can stake claim to personal property!!” The surrounding cultivators felt as if lightning were crashing around in their minds, giving rise to shouts of astonishment and disbelief. Even the people from the Azure Dragon Society, including the Dao protectors, were all struck mute with astonishment.

However, most mind-blowingly shocking of all was that the entrance to the necropolis ruins was located within that 5-kilometer area!

As the cries of shock rose up, Bai Xiaochun stood there with his hands clasped behind his back and his chin held high. Looking extremely pleased with himself, he said, “Ahem. I’ll be setting up a little inn right here, and I already thought of a name for it. It’s going to be called the Live Forever Tavern.

“Everyone, feel free to enter the necropolis just as before. However, since this place is my home, before entering, I request that you enjoy a cup of spirit tea. Once you do, you’re considered a friend!”

Then he cleared his throat, smiled broadly, and continued, “Don’t worry, a cup of spirit tea is very cheap. Furthermore, when it comes to the loot from inside the necropolis, I’ll charge much less than the Celestial Sky Society did. Only ten percent!”

The people from the Celestial Sky Society felt their hearts surging with shock. Control of the entrance to the ruins had just been viciously wrenched out of their hands!

As for all of the other cultivators, their eyes began to shine brightly. The Celestial Sky Society had charged thirty percent, so obviously, the Azure Dragon Society was doing everything they could to keep the masses happy.

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0397 awe-chapter-398

Chapter 398: Mid Gold Core Stage!

As soon as Bai Xiaochun took the seven-colored flag given to him by the Sky Quarter peak lord and stabbed it into the ground in that desert, everything in the 5-kilometer area around it became his personal property. The matter instantly caused a major commotion within Sky City.

The news spread like wildfire, until everyone in the entire city was talking about the matter in tones of complete shock and disbelief.

“Personal property?! How... how is that even possible?!”

“There are less than ten places in all of Sky City that count as personal property, and they’re only given out as rewards for people who perform incredible meritorious service for Sky Quarter Rainbow!! The Azure Dragon Society obviously has some powerful backers!!”

“That’s what I said! Everyone was wondering why the Azure Dragon Society dared to challenge the Celestial Sky Society, and now we know! The Boss Azure Dragon is incredibly mysterious and unfathomable. It wouldn’t be surprising if he had a deva on his side!”

Even as word spread in the city, the news was brought to the leadership of the Celestial Sky Society, who reacted with looks of dumbfounded shock.

They had worked themselves to the bone fighting against the Azure Dragon Society both physically and in terms of wits. Now, Bai Xiaochun had unleashed a deadly counter strike. Just when he seemed to have been defeated without possibility of recovery, he turned everything around. The Celestial Sky Society simply couldn’t accept the situation.

“Personal property!?!?!?” Countless cries of shock filled the Celestial Sky Society, and many members were filled with bitterness and hesitation.

In the briefest of moments, everyone’s opinions of the Azure Dragon Society had completely changed. After all, they now controlled the only entrance into the necropolis ruins.

As for everyone who had recently abandoned the Azure Dragon Society, their hearts swelled with regret, and yet, there was nothing they could do about the situation. The Azure Dragon Society wasn’t recruiting anymore, and rejected any people who took the initiative to apply for membership.

It didn’t take long before, there in the desert in the west district of the city, right next to the entrance to the necropolis ruins, a tavern was erected by the over 100 members of the Azure Dragon Society.

It was a huge tavern consisting of multiple structures, and even had outdoor seating under numerous tented pavilions. The more than 100 members of the Azure Dragon Society became waiters who specialized in selling spirit tea.

People who wanted to enter the necropolis ruins couldn't do so with a Celestial Sky Society command medallion. Instead, they had to buy a cup of tea.

It only took a few days to build the tavern, and then it was open for business. Of course, Sky City was a subsidiary of Sky Quarter Rainbow, and yet not a single peep had been heard from there regarding the matter. Apparently, no one up on the rainbow cared about what was happening, and that in and of itself was extremely telling. It also fueled even more speculation regarding the mysterious background of Boss Azure Dragon.

Time passed, and the Celestial Sky Society was forced to simply deal with the situation. Soon, the number of people entering the ruins returned to its normal rate, and before long, the fact that the Azure Dragon Society was only collecting ten percent of the profits from inside ensured that more and more cultivators chose that location to go on missions. Eventually, more than 100,000 disciples were entering the ruins on a daily basis.

Considering the volume of customers, it was little wonder that the Azure Dragon Society was very busy. Soon, the outdoor pavilion seating couldn’t accommodate the crowds, and they had to erect even more pavilions.

In terms of the merit point profit, when Bai Xiaochun checked into it, he gasped. They were earning so much more profit than when they had been selling Fantasy Pills that it was simply terrifying.

“The Celestial Sky Society must be filthy rich!!” he said, swallowing hard. Next to him, Big Fatty Zhang looked at the merit point reports, his eyes shining as he likewise denounced the Celestial Sky Society.

No one personally kept the merit point profits. They were collected in a command medallion belonging to the organization as a whole. That way, the millions of merit points wouldn’t accidentally force anyone to rise to the position of a yellow-robed disciple if they didn’t want to.

In fact, Bai Xiaochun was actually very worried that he one day might accidentally get himself promoted to yellow-robed disciple. If that happened, he would probably cry himself to death. Therefore, he was very careful never to have more than a few hundred thousand merit points on his person at any given time. Most of the merit points were stored in the Azure Dragon Society’s joint command medallion.

A few days passed, and the tavern continued to explode in popularity. As for the Celestial Sky Society, their income dwindled. They had lost the Fantasy Pills, and they had lost their control of the ruins. After much debate, they finally sent people to try to work out a deal with the Azure Dragon Society.

Bai Xiaochun had Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai handle the negotiations. Naturally, the Azure Dragon Society didn’t agree to any compromises, and eventually just drove the Celestial Sky Society cultivators away.

Bai Xiaochun felt very, very pleased with himself. By now, Sky City truly felt like home, and his share of the merit point profits was very satisfactory.

“Ah, now this is life,” he thought, standing on a balcony in the tavern, looking down at all the hustle and bustle.

Even more pleasing to Bai Xiaochun was that because of his recent cultivation progress, he had reached the point of an imminent breakthrough. From what he could tell, it would only be a few days before he reached the mid Gold Core stage.

Therefore, he set aside external matters and went into secluded meditation in a secret room in the tavern, hoping to achieve that breakthrough as quickly as possible.

That session of secluded meditation lasted for a month.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open, and a bright blue light could be seen in his pupils. At the same time, intense streams of frigid qi were roiling off of him.

The frigid qi soon filled the entire area, causing the temperature in the chamber to drop rapidly. Cracking sounds could be heard as ice began to cover the walls, ceiling, and roof.

“Frigid Acolytes can form frigid shadows and unleash the magic of frigid coldness. As for Frigid Adepts, they can freeze everything in a 3,000-meter area!” With that, he waved his hand.

Instantly, his hand turned as clear as crystal, making it possible to see the blood flowing through the veins beneath his skin. Apparently, the cold in the chamber didn’t affect him at all.

“Time to break through,” he said. Rising to his feet, he sped out of the secret chamber, and before anyone could detect his passage, was gone from the tavern.

He became a beam of light, shooting through the air to appear in a location deep in the desert. It was a remote area with no signs of life whatsoever, and definitely no cultivators from Sky City. Few people would ever come to a distant place like this.

It was a place that blistered with intense heat; despite being so close to the Heavenspan River and the Heavenspan Sea, this was still a desert, and the temperature was so high that it distorted the air, making it difficult to see anything clearly.

As Bai Xiaochun stood there, the blue light in his eyes grew more intense. After looking around to confirm that there really was no one present, he suddenly closed his eyes, whereupon a blast of intense frigid qi spread out to fill the 300-meter-area around him. Instantly, the blazing heat of the desert was completely neutralized, and the ground even froze up!

In fact, because of the sudden juxtaposition of hot and cold, thunderous rumbling sounds filled the air. However, things weren’t over yet. Bai Xiaochun rotated his cultivation base, and as the power of the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation erupted, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the 300-meter-area of coldness to expand rapidly

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

600 meters. 900 meters.... 1,500 meters!

And yet, the process was not over! Bai Xiaochun’s hair whipped around him, and although his eyes were closed, it couldn’t stop the blue light from spilling past his eyelids and spreading out in all directions. Both of his hands were as translucent as crystal, making it seem almost as if he were made of ice!

The area of frigid qi soon reached 2,100 meters, and the cracking sounds continued as the heat of the desert was driven away. Frigid qi erupted, spreading out to 2,700 meters!

2,760 meters. 2,850 meters. 2,940 meters. Within the space of a few breaths of time, the frigid qi had filled an area of 2,997 meters!

There were only three meters left!

Three meters to the Frigid Adept level!

“Frigid Adept!” Bai Xiaochun roared as his eyes snapped open. Intense rumbling sounds echoed out from his cultivation base as the frigid qi in his Heaven-Dao Gold Core continued to expand.

In that moment, the area covered by his frigid qi reached 3,000 meters!! The intense coldness within that area was such that the ground was completely iced over, turning the area into a world of freezing ice!

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun’s Heaven-Dao Gold Core broke through from the early stage to the mid Gold Core stage! Simultaneously, a Heaven-Dao aura spread out in all directions.

Outside of that 3,000-meter-area, the desert was just as hot as ever. However, because of the presence of the intense cold right next to it, even the air began to shatter. It was a completely and utterly shocking sight.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes overflowed with excitement, and then flickered, causing numerous illusory projections to appear within the 3,000-meter-area, all of which looked exactly like Bai Xiaochun. These were none other than his frigid shadows!

Suddenly, he switched places with one of them. There was no speed involved, because it was just like a teleportation. If anyone had been there to see so many versions of Bai Xiaochun, they would definitely have gasped in shock.

Moments later, the numerous frigid shadows converged, revealing Bai Xiaochun’s true form. Waving his sleeve, he dispelled the area of coldness, allowing the heat to sweep back in. The resulting tempest sent his hair whipping about as he threw his head back and laughed heartily.

--

Translator: Deathblade. (Follow me on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest)

Editor: GNE. **Memes:** Logan. **Meme archives:** Tocsin. **Chinese language consultant:** ASI a.k.a. Beerblade. **Transcendent Patrons:** Daoist Elder N, BLE, ttre208. **AWE Glossary**. **Xianxia-inspired T-shirts**.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0398 awe-chapter-399

If anyone had been there to see what was happening, they would have been deeply shaken. This was something that could not be accomplished by ordinary mid Core Formation cultivators, or even the top chosen of the generation!

Furthermore, this was the riversource Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, whose chosen vastly surpassed those in the Lower or Middle Reaches. And yet, what Bai Xiaochun was currently doing would shock all such chosen.

And the might of the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation was only just revealing its potential!

“This... this is only the Frigid Adept level. When I reach the Frigid Master level....” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with anticipation as he thought back to the description of the technique.

“Frigid Masters can create a 30,000-meter frigid domain with actual clones! These are just frigid shadows, not true clones!” At this point, he couldn’t help but think about the Frigid Paragon level!

“Frigid Paragons can even freeze portions of the Heavenspan River!” Bai Xiaochun’s hands were clenched into fists, and the anticipation in his eyes shone strong and bright. However, this session of cultivation was not yet over, and his breakthrough wasn’t going to be limited to the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. The time had come for his Undying Tendons!

Next, he looked down at his left leg, the tendons of which had by now been refined to completion, making his leg the strongest part of his entire body by far, and also the most resilient.

Eyes glittering, he lifted his left foot up and then stomped it back down toward the ground, fueling the motion with all the power of his Undying Tendons. Even before the foot actually made contact, the ground began to quake, sending countless volumes of sand flying up into the air.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun wasn't satisfied. In the moment that his foot made contact with the ground, his eyes flashed, and he said, "Undying Hex!"

Countless crevices snaked out in all directions, creating something like a natural restrictive spell. In that instant, everything in the area was simultaneously sealed in place and then destroyed. The area around Bai Xiaochun began to collapse, sending massive amounts of dust flying up into the air.

Sounds like muffled thunder echoed out in all directions, reaching even the inhabited parts of Sky City.

Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp as tumbled downward through the flying dust and sand. Then, moments later, as the dust settled, he could be seen at the bottom of an enormous, 300-meter-wide crater!

Covering the crater were countless interlocking golden threads, which were none other than the manifestation of the divine ability which came after the Throat Crushing Grasp and the Mountain Shaking Bash, the Undying Hex!

It could seal anything and everything!

At the bottom of the crater, the dust-covered Bai Xiaochun was struggling back to his feet, not sure whether to laugh or cry. He had forgotten that he was in a desert, and that there was only loose sand and dirt beneath his feet. To suddenly tumble down and end up covered in dirt right in the moment of triumph was definitely a loss of face, but after climbing out of the crater and confirming that no one was in the area to see him, he breathed a sigh of relief. Then he composed himself for a moment before transforming into a beam of light that shot back in the direction of the tavern.

Moments after he left, cultivators from Sky City arrived to see what had caused the commotion. When they caught sight of the 300-meter-wide crater, all of them gasped in shock.

“This... this desert was put here by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, wasn’t it?!?!”

“No ordinary force could cause this kind of damage here. I can’t believe someone actually managed to create a crater like this. Could it be that one of the famous chosen in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars came down here to do some training?”

“Not even Core Formation cultivators could do something like that. It must have been somebody from the top 1,000 in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!” When the subject of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars came up, looks of envy could be seen on the faces of all the cultivators present.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars were very important in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect; they were an elite group of cultivators under the Nascent Soul stage who were ranked according to power and ability. Anyone on that list could single-handedly shake the eastern cultivation world.

Even as the discussion about the matter unfolded, a beam of light appeared off in the distance, within which was a handsome young man. He seemed weary and travel-worn, but his eyes shone brightly, and astonishingly, his cultivation base was a step beyond the great circle of Foundation Establishment; he was in the quasi-Core stage!

A mere glance at him would confirm that by merely crystallizing his spiritual seas, he would step into Core Formation. Although there was always a possibility of failure, considering the fluctuations that rolled off of him, that didn’t seem likely in his case.

There was also a murderous aura surrounding the young man which, when coupled with the scars on his face, made him seem somewhat unapproachable.

He was none other than Song Que!

Back when he had parted ways with Bai Xiaochun, he had immediately gone outside the sect to start working on missions. Lots of them. Nearly a year had passed, and he had faced many potentially fatal situations. However, he had gone all out to complete most of his missions, and had only a few more to go, all of them inside of the necropolis ruins. After accomplishing those missions, he would have a savings of tens of thousands of merit points.

As he passed through the area, he noticed the crater, and couldn’t help but stop to take a look.

“Whoever made this crater must be completely extraordinary.... one of these days, I'm going to be just as incredible!”

The other cultivators looked at him warily. After all, the dangerous gleam in his eye, his murderous aura, and his generally sinister air made him seem like the type of person no one would dare to provoke. He seemed like the person who lived a life surrounded by death.

When Song Que noticed the looks of fear in their eyes, he was secretly pleased, and even a bit proud. He felt as if he had become a new person in the last year or so, and had become much more powerful. From what he could tell, he was just around the corner from becoming a yellow-robed disciple.

“I wouldn’t be surprised if those other losers had starved to death by now. Hmph!” In his arrogance, he couldn’t help but muse that Master God-Diviner, Xu Baocai, and Big Fatty Zhang were all completely useless. Only Chen Manyao had a bit of potential.

Of course, the mere thought of Bai Xiaochun caused Song Que to grind his teeth. Bai Xiaochun had crushed him for the first time in the Fallen Sword Abyss, stealing his chance to reach Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, and that was a source of constant angst, something he would never forget for the rest of his life. And then there were all the things which had occurred in the Blood Stream Sect, which had nearly driven him crazy. Even how things had played out in the River-Defying Sect were almost beyond bearable.

“Bai Xiaochun, you made a fool of me in the Fallen Sword Abyss, twice as badly in the Blood Stream Sect, and three times as badly in the River-Defying Sect. You just never shut up about *Que’er this* and *Que’er that*. You just wait until I become a yellow-robed disciple, then I’ll make a fool of you ten times worse than you ever did to me!!” As he spoke, his eyes began to shine even more brightly than before.

He was completely and utterly confident that he could do exactly as he had planned.

“The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is a land of good fortune for me. Before coming here, the clan patriarch told me he had full confidence that I would become a Nascent Soul cultivator here!!” Looking down, he tapped his bag of holding to produce a blue command medallion.

It wasn’t large, but it was very significant. Earlier, when he was outside the sect on a mission, he had run into another cultivator from Sky City who had sold it to him for a hefty sum. It was none other than a command medallion which could be used to enter the necropolis ruins run by the Celestial Sky Society.

“Whether or not I get enough merit points to become a yellow-robed disciple will depend on how things go in these ruins. Hopefully, I’ll come out with enough to get my promotion, and then I can ascend to the rainbow district!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, his eyes began to burn with passion and anticipation.

“First, I’ll go scout out the ruins a bit. Then I’ll go make some special preparations to finish the missions.” Smiling, he shot off in the direction of the necropolis entrance.

Before long, he was closing in on the location, which was when he caught sight of a rather large tavern that had been erected around it.

He also saw the outside seating area with the tented pavilions, and cultivators bustling about wearing white garments that make them look like waiters.

A lot of other ordinary disciples could also be seen going into and coming out of the ruins.

“Well, they certainly deserve to be known as the top organization in Sky City. Only the Celestial Sky Society with their deva clan backers could build a tavern like this.” He sighed, eyes gleaming with envy when he thought about how much income the Celestial Sky Society must be making by controlling the area. Sadly, there was nothing he could do about that.

“I bet they make more in a day than I could save up in a year....”

He had spent the entire past year outside the sect working on missions, and thus had no idea about what had gone on in the city during that time. Sighing with envy, he produced his Celestial Sky Society medallion and headed toward the tavern.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0399 awe-chapter-400

The ruins of the temple were very different from the rest of the desert. Right in the middle of them, a huge door could be seen, which was the entrance that led into the necropolis.

Next to the ruins and the door was the Azure Dragon Society’s tavern, and the bustling pavilions filled with countless cultivators.

Some of them were calculating their earnings from inside the necropolis, others were finishing their cups of spirit tea before heading inside. The rules were actually a bit different from when the Celestial Sky Society ran the area. Although the Azure Dragon Society only collected ten percent of the profits, they also required that anyone entering the necropolis purchase a 10-merit-point cup of spirit tea first.

Even with that new rule, they were being much kinder than the Celestial Sky Society, leaving the cultivators of Sky City very pleased. Of course, nothing could cause them to forget that they were on private property, which was threatening in and of itself.

Furthermore, many frightening rumors had spread regarding Boss Azure Dragon, and nobody dared to do anything to offend him.

As the hustle and bustle continued in the pavilions, Song Que approached with a cold expression on his face and his murderous aura roiling. That was how he had grown used to carrying himself outside the sect; generally speaking, it made it much easier to handle matters when he looked intimidating.

Song Que had no plans whatsoever to enter one of the pavilions, and instead headed straight toward the ruins with the intention of doing some scouting. However, one of the young Azure Dragon Society cultivators noticed that he was planning to bypass the pavilions, and quickly hurried over.

Clasping hands and smiling, he politely said, “Hello, Fellow Daoist, I’d like to invite you to come over and buy a cup of spirit tea.”

The courteous way that the Azure Dragon Society cultivators treated customers was a result of the rules put in place by Chen Manyao.

After all, their being here was already a subject of envy, and despite having reduced prices, they still needed to treat customers courteously. At the same time, if anyone came along who didn’t show them courtesy in return, the Azure Dragon Society would make sure they came to know that troublemakers weren’t welcome!

“Spirit tea?” Song Que said, surprised. “I’m not buying any spirit tea!” Although he wasn’t pleased, when he thought about how powerful the Celestial Sky Society was in the city, he suppressed his irritation and flashed the command medallion. “See that? I have a command medallion!”

His tone of voice instantly attracted the attention of some of the other cultivators in the area, who looked over with strange expressions on their faces.

The young man from the Azure Dragon Society didn’t seem to be offended, and the smile never left his face. After taking over the location, the Azure Dragon Society had encountered other people like this who didn’t know about the change in arrangements. Clasping hands again, the young man offered a kind explanation.

“I'm very sorry, Fellow Daoist, but your command medallion is from the Celestial Sky Society, and they don’t operate in this location anymore. We’re the Azure Dragon Society, and things work differently under our control.” With that, the young man patiently explained the rules, and as he did, Song Que’s expression changed multiple times.

He had spent a lot on that command medallion, all for the purpose of avoiding the thirty percent fee charged by the Celestial Sky Society. Now that he was being told that the command medallion was useless, Song Que was nothing less than flabbergasted.

“How is this even possible?” Song Que said. “The Celestial Sky Society is so powerful, you people....” Song Que was starting to get anxious. If it was really true that the command medallion was useless, that would be a big blow to his plan to be promoted to a yellow-robed disciple.

By this point, Song Que’s murderous aura was pulsing dangerously; he already had a short temper to begin with, and in his anxiety, his wording began to turn sharp. “You people can’t do this! This command medallion was extremely expensive!!”

The cultivators in the area began to edge away, clearly amused by the scene which was playing out. There were even some cultivators in the crowd who secretly worked for the Celestial Sky Society, and joined in to fan the flames.

“The Azure Dragon Society had better explain this!”

“Yeah, that’s right! I bought the same kind of command medallion for a pretty penny! Don't tell me it's completely useless now!”

The expression on the face of the young man from the Azure Dragon Society suddenly turned grim. Snorting coldly, he said, “Get the hell out of here! If you cause any more trouble, don’t blame the Azure Dragon Society for being impolite!”

Song Que had just faced a year of deadly danger, and his killing intent could erupt at the slightest provocation. Eyes flashing with cold light, he unleashed the power of his quasi-Core cultivation base, causing a powerful wind to rush through the area as he took a step forward.

The young man from the Azure Dragon Society looked shocked, and cries of astonishment rose up in the area. From the look of things, a huge commotion was about to break out. However, in that very moment, someone spoke in a quizzical voice.

“Song Que?” Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai had just been passing by, and when they looked over to see Song Que, their jaws dropped.

Song Que had been bristling with a murderous aura, but when he caught sight of Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai, it changed to an expression of astonishment. That was especially the case because of the healthy glow they had, and the way all of the Azure Dragon Society cultivators in the area looked at them with expressions of reverent respect.

“You two....” Something seemed off to Song Que, but before he could react any further, Bai Xiaochun, who had heard the commotion and taken the time to straighten up his robes before stepping out, scanned the area with divine sense. Upon seeing Song Que, he blinked a few times, and then smiled broadly and rushed out.

As he appeared in the open, the numerous Azure Dragon Society cultivators looked at him with expressions of reverence as they dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Boss!”

The reaction of the Azure Dragon Society cultivators caused a stir in the crowd. When people looked over and saw Bai Xiaochun, they gasped and rushed to clasp hands and bow their heads.

“Greetings, Boss Azure Dragon!”

It only took a few moments for everyone in all of the pavilions to join in. As for Song Que, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, dumbfounded, his mind spinning and his eyes completely blank.

“Que’er!” Bai Xiaochun cried, a loving expression on his face as he hurried over. “You finally showed up! How did you get yourself in such a bad situation, Que’er? I mean, I thought I had it bad, but obviously, you have it *way* worse than me.”

When people heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, more gasps could be heard, and then people looked over at Song Que with envious looks. Considering that the boss of the Azure Dragon Society was addressing this cultivator as *Que’er*, it confirmed that the two of them had a very close relationship.

Clearly, this Que’er was a generation below Boss Azure Dragon when it came to family ranking.

Song Que’s face was as white as a sheet, and his mind was being battered by tsunamis of astonishment. He suddenly felt like the entire world had been turned upside down. Here Bai Xiaochun was, glittering with the light of magical treasures, numerous jade pendants hanging all over him. Even at a glance, it was obvious that he must be wearing more than 1,000,000 merit points’ worth of ornamentation.

In addition to that, he was flanked by more than a dozen puppet maidservants, each of whom had a leashed spirit creature with it. Their combined value had to be in the millions of merit points.

Song Que had spent an entire bitter year eating frugally and risking his life to reach the threshold of being a yellow-robed disciple. Now, he felt like he was about to fall to pieces mentally.

“Y-you're... you’re Boss Azure Dragon?” he stammered. He felt like his vision was swimming, as if the sheer incredulity of the situation was more than he could process.

As that happened, Big Fatty Zhang and Chen Manyao approached. Song Que tore his vision from Bai Xiaochun to look at them, and when he saw the finery they wore, he suddenly got a very bad feeling.

“You guys....”

Xu Baocai cleared his throat and looked at Song Que with an expression of pity and compassion.

“Song Que, we own this place. The junior patriarch built the Azure Dragon Society into what it is today, and this tavern belongs to us. This whole area is the personal property of the junior patriarch. Your command medallion really doesn’t do any good here. But considering that you’re the junior patriarch’s nephew, then we’re all on the same team, right? Who cares about command medallions! Just toss that thing in the trash. You can go into the necropolis any time you wish. Right, Junior Patriarch?”

Bai Xiaochun wore a very somber expression as he patted Song Que’s shoulder. Looking very much like someone in the elder generation, he nodded his head.

“Que’er, your aunt entrusted your safety to me. As your Senior, it’s my responsibility to care for you. Despite how you callously abandoned me when we first got here, you’re my nephew, so I can cut you some slack. Listen. Those ruins are quite dangerous, and as your uncle, I really can’t see you facing such peril. How many merit points do you need? I’ll make up the difference, and you can become a yellow-robed disciple immediately. All it will take is a single word on my part.”

In response to his words, countless gasps could be heard in the area, and many covetous gazes fell upon Song Que. Most people could only dream of becoming a yellow-robed disciple, and yet they had all personally heard Bai Xiaochun say that he could give that honor as a gift to Song Que. The envy in their eyes couldn’t have been more obvious.

However, Song Que was a proud person, so to hear terms such as ‘uncle’ and ‘Que’er’ caused his anger to spike to the heavens. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and then, unable to control himself, he passed out flat on his face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0400 awe-chapter-401

Song Que opened his eyes later that night to find himself lying in one of the rooms of the tavern. After looking around blankly for a moment, he realized that the events which had occurred earlier in the day were no hallucination. On the one hand, he almost felt like crying, but on the other hand, his rage burned hot.

“How could this be happening...? I... I worked myself to the bone for an entire year. I skimped on food and clothing! I risked my life....

“And Bai Xiaochun.... Why? Why?! WHY?!?!” By now, tears really were threatening to well up in Song Que’s eyes. As he thought back over his life, he realized that it had consisted of two main segments.

The first part of his life had been flush with success. He had been a Chosen of the Blood Stream Sect, with unlimited prospects for the future. However, that part of his life had ended when he had met Bai Xiaochun, and then the second part began, a life of humiliation and suffering.

“I wasn’t his equal in the Fallen Sword Abyss, in the Blood Stream Sect, or in the River-Defying Sect. And now the same thing is happening here in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. I... I don’t match up to him in any way!!” Enraged, Song Que decided that he simply didn’t have the face to stick around. Gritting his teeth, he walked out of the room and flew up into the air to leave.

But then, with no warning whatsoever, a beam of light exploded out from Sky Quarter Rainbow and shot down toward him. Stunned, he quickly checked his merit points, and then his eyes widened.

Sure enough, he had more than 2,000,000 merit points, which was far more than the required amount to become a yellow-robed disciple. In fact, it was enough that he didn’t need to personally go hand them in; the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s spell formation would automatically promote him to the rainbow district.

Those were the rules in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

As the light descended, all of the cultivators in Sky City could see it, and it caused their eyes to shine with envy and hope. As for Song Que, mixed emotions could be seen on his face as he looked back down at the tavern below. Even he wasn’t sure exactly what he was thinking.

He was the first among the River-Defying Sect group to become a yellow-robed disciple, and the first to be promoted to the rainbow district. However, in the end, he was actually the biggest loser.

Even as he stewed in his thoughts, Bai Xiaochun emerged and looked up at him. Clearing his throat, he gave a farewell wave of his hand.

“Focus on your cultivation when you get up there. Don’t lose face for your aunt and me! If you run into any problems, or if anyone bullies you, make sure to tell me. As your uncle, I'm family! Make sure to stay in touch....”

Song Que’s mixed emotions got even more complicated upon hearing that. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he sighed as the beam of light surrounded him, and he vanished in the direction of the Sky Quarter Rainbow. After he left, the only thing that remained behind was a seven-colored glow that caused all onlookers’ hearts to surge with the desire to experience the same thing themselves.

Having seen Song Que off, Bai Xiaochun returned to his room feeling wonderful about himself for his good deeds. He could only imagine the look on Song Junwan’s face after he returned and told her how he’d cared for her nephew.

“Que’er sure is lucky to have an uncle like me!” Feeling very much like a magnanimous member of the Senior generation, he sat down cross-legged to work on his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation.

Now that he was in the Frigid Adept level, his cultivation speed had increased, which led to a greater energy drainage. As such, he had to eat a shocking amount of spirit food every day.

Since he had plenty of food to replenish his energy, he decided that in terms of his Undying Tendons, it was time to move on to his head. Bai Xiaochun felt that the fist was the most obvious weapon to use in combat, and at the moment, the speed and power of his left leg was already sufficient for use in a fight. As for what an opponent would be least on guard against, the head seemed the best choice.

The thought of suddenly headbutting someone in the middle of a fight got him very excited, so it was with great enthusiasm that he set about refining the tendons in his head.

Business in the tavern had stabilized, and fewer incidents occurred. The Azure Dragon Society’s profits had also evened out, and they were starting to build up some savings. By now, they were something of a unique organization within Sky City.

They were very famous and powerful, and were essentially on equal footing with the Celestial Sky Society. They had far surpassed the old version of the Azure Dragon Society.

However, as it became clear that the Live Forever Tavern was going to be a part of Sky City for a long time, the leaders in the Celestial Sky Society felt like they were going crazy. Sadly for them, the tavern was built on private property, and none of their plans to deal with the situation had any effect.

Even if they tried to physically fight it out with Bai Xiaochun, they would lose, and besides, that would be a violation of sect rules. The only thing they could do was bring the matter to the attention of their superiors in the deva clan they were part of.

It had been a year since the Celestial Sky Society’s income had begun to decline, and at long last, the elder in the clan who managed outside affairs took note. After reading the latest report from the Celestial Sky Society, he snorted coldly and said, “Trifling orange-robed disciple! What tremendous gall! Bully people if you want, but how dare you steal things that belong to our clan!”

This particular elder was a Nascent Soul cultivator, and although he wasn’t one of the most important people in the clan, his words carried a lot of weight. After a bit of thought, he decided that it would be best not to do anything rashly, so he took out a jade slip to do a bit of research into why Bai Xiaochun had been given personal property.

“The Sky Quarter peak lord traded it to him for the formula for Fantasy Pills. Well, I don’t care if this Bai Xiaochun has some connections to the Sky Quarter peak lord, I’m going to go teach him a lesson anyway!” Flicking his sleeve, he was just about issue some orders to go beat up Bai Xiaochun and take back the land when, all of a sudden, a piercing sound rose up outside of his room.

Moments later, a violet jade slip flew through the spell formation protecting his room, then came to a stop right in front of him.

The Nascent Soul elder’s face fell when he looked at the jade slip and saw the character “Heaven” inscribed on it. Trembling, he reached out with both hands to respectfully accept the jade slip, then scanned it with divine sense. As he did, his eyes widened.

“What... what kind of backer does this Bai Xiaochun have...?” Violet light spilled out of the jade slip, and it vanished.

When the jade slip was gone, the Nascent Soul elder's face returned to normal, although a bit of fear could still be seen lingering in his eyes. He immediately ceased any thoughts of issuing orders to the clan, and at the same time, felt his anger rising at the realization that he had almost done something which would have brought harm to the clan as a whole. Snorting coldly, he immediately sent people to bring the boss of the Celestial Sky Society up to the rainbow for a meeting.

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society was a middle-aged man who, when he was told a Nascent Soul elder from the deva clan had summoned him, hurried over to the teleportation portal as quickly as possible. His initial assumption was that he would be given orders to go beat up Bai Xiaochun and take back the entrance to the necropolis. However, what he found was that the ashen-faced Nascent Soul elder had called him up to issue a tongue-lashing.

“I can’t believe you annoyed me with such a small matter as this. Why didn’t you just take care of it yourself!?!?”

The Nascent Soul elder was virtually yelling, causing the boss of the Celestial Sky Society to tremble with fear. After voicing numerous subservient words, he hurried away, almost on the verge of tears. Whenever he had to deal with Bai Xiaochun, it felt like no matter how much power he had on his side, he would always end up hitting his head against the wall.

“What did he mean *small matter*...? Boss Azure Dragon has personal property! I’m just a Core Formation cultivator! How can an outer clan member like me deal with something like that?” Sighing continuously at the unfairness of it all, he walked through the clan courtyard, musing that since the clan didn’t seem to care about the matter, he probably shouldn’t do anything to provoke Bai Xiaochun.

“Ah whatever. If this is how the clan wants things to be, then fine.” Just when he was about to teleport back to Sky City, he looked over and saw a young man in an extravagant yellow robe, walking along with a group of other cultivators.

This young man had a high place in the clan, and the arrogant expression on his face fit him perfectly because of it. The boss of the Celestial Sky Society instantly recognized him as a clan Chosen, Li Yuansheng, who had reached Core Formation in less than a hundred years. A few years ago, when he was still in Foundation Establishment, he had come to Sky City to collect some merit points from the Celestial Sky Society, which was why the boss remembered him so clearly. The boss immediately clasped hands and called out a greeting as the group passed by.

Li Yuansheng stopped and looked over. Recalling their last meeting, he said, “What brings you here?”

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society felt his heart pounding with excitement. Immediately, he launched into a very vivid account of the frustrating matter of Boss Azure Dragon.

Li Yuansheng’s friends immediately began to make some teasing comments.

“Brother Li, does your clan really just let people steal their business!?”

“How amusing, the boss of the Azure Dragon Society is a mere core Formation cultivator, and yet he dares to steal from the tiger’s mouth?”

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society clasped hands and bowed deeply, then said, “Young Lord, could you please take charge of the situation?!”

Li Yuansheng’s eyes flickered, especially because of the words just spoken by the other cultivators. Snorting coldly, he said, “Well, I’m bored today anyway, so I might as well go check the situation out myself. I can't believe this guy has such incredible gall!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0401 awe-chapter-402

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society was delighted, and immediately began to lead the way. As for the other cultivators with Li Yuansheng, they were all silkpants from various clans in the rainbow district. Because of how they had been showered with cultivation resources by their clans, their cultivation bases, despite being in the Core Formation stage, were extremely high.

Generally speaking, they had little to occupy their time, so seeing that something interesting was afoot, they all followed along with Li Yuansheng, laughing and chatting the entire time. One by one, they entered the teleportation portal, and were zipped down to Sky City.

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society was very excited, but he knew that when it came to silkpants like this, however quickly they got interested in something, that was also how quickly they would lose interest. Therefore, he wasted no time hurrying in the direction of the west district.

“Boss Azure Dragon Society is a complete villain!” he said. “He created that Ultra Fasting Aid Pill, which hurt a lot of fellow disciples!

“He was also the one who invented those Fantasy Pills, which were so bad the sect outlawed them. Given the extent of his vile deeds, it’s impossible to even guess how many people in Sky City hate him!

“Young Lord, you’re not just acting for the benefit of the clan, you’re wiping out an evil that threatens the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

Along the way, the Celestial Sky Society boss continued to spout all sorts of stories to Li Yuansheng and the other silkpants. They found it all very amusing, although they didn’t believe much of what they were being told.

“I can’t literally wipe him out,” Li Yuansheng said coolly. “If he has his own personal property, then he definitely has powerful backers. But considering he's offended a deva clan, that won’t help him.” Although Li Yuansheng was a silkpants, he was also a Chosen from a deva clan, and despite his arrogant nature, was not the type to lose his head because of a bit of flattery and oily words. “Of course, after I handle the matter, you should know how to proceed going forward.”

With that, he gave a meaningful look to the Celestial Sky Society boss, who immediately understood what he was implying. Li Yuansheng wanted some merit points in compensation for his help! The Celestial Sky Society boss quickly nodded his head to indicate that he understood.

Li Yuansheng responded with a slight smile. As far as he was concerned, going to pick a fight with the Azure Dragon Society wasn’t a big deal, so he simply continued to laugh and chat with his friends as they headed toward the west district.

Along the way, quite a few Sky City cultivators noticed them, and many of them looked very shocked. With the exception of the boss of the Celestial Sky Society, everyone in the group was a yellow-robed disciple.

The sight of so many colorful yellow robes caused many hearts to tremble with astonishment and envy. Clearly, this was a group that had come down from the rainbow district.

It didn't take long for some people to realize which direction these yellow-robed disciples were heading: the west district! As speculations rose about what they were planning to do, many people began to follow along cautiously.

Soon, a crowd of several hundred people was following them. Li Yuansheng didn’t pay them any attention; as a Chosen from a deva clan, and a yellow-robed disciple, he would receive a reception like this just about wherever he went in the eastern cultivation world.

The group didn’t proceed along with any great haste. Eventually, they reached the desert, from which point they could just make out the ruins, and the enormous tavern next to it.

There were still quite a few cultivators coming and going, despite the fact that it was already evening. However, as soon as the cultivators in the area noticed Li Yuansheng and the other yellow-robed disciples, expressions of shock appeared on their faces.

“Yellow-robed disciples!”

“Look at how many of them there are! And look at that guy with them. Isn’t that the boss of the Celestial Sky Society?!?!”

“It's no wonder. The Celestial Sky Society is backed by a deva clan, and now they’ve finally come to deal with the Azure Dragon Society!!”

Under the astonished gazes of everyone present, Li Yuansheng and his friends flew toward the tavern, unleashing their Core Formation cultivation bases with reckless abandon. Instantly, rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and a huge wind kicked up. Intense pressure weighed down on the area, causing all cultivators to tremble in place.

It was like layer upon layer of pressure descending from the heavens, like numerous mountains crushing down onto the shoulders of all the cultivators. As for the cultivators of the Azure Dragon Society inside the tavern, their faces fell, and they began to cry out in alarm.

Master God-Diviner rushed out into the open, his eyes shining with a strange light. Thanks to his enormous income of merit points, he had recently been able to surpass the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and was now in the quasi-Core stage.

Big Fatty Zhang also appeared. His progress in cultivation was the fastest among all of the Dao protectors. Perhaps it was because he had an affinity for the spiritual energy near the source of the Heavenspan River, or perhaps it was because he was so skilled at spirit enhancement, but those things, coupled with the help of some merit points, helped him to break through into the great circle of Foundation Establishment.

Thus, he made quite the impressive figure as he rushed out to see what was happening. Xu Baocai and Chen Manyao also appeared, expressions flickering with uncertainty. When all of them saw a group of a dozen or so yellow-robed disciples in the air above, all of them radiating the pressure of Core Formation, they were completely taken aback.

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society looked extremely excited as he shouted, “Tell Boss Azure Dragon to get the hell out here this instant!”

Obviously, he hated the Azure Dragon Society down to his marrow, so being able to utter such words left him feeling very satisfied.

The group of several hundred onlookers who had come to watch the show couldn’t help but look on with wide eyes at what was happening.

“The Azure Dragon Society is finished....”

“The Celestial Sky Society is so powerful! They're backed by a deva clan.... Even a single command from a deva clan is enough to send countless cultivators crazy with the desire to please them!”

“I've seen that guy before. He’s Li Yuansheng! Heavens! He’s a Chosen who ranks somewhere in the 900’s among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!!” Such exclamations rang out loud and clear for all to hear.

Only the true superstars among Chosen could make it into the top 1,000 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. After all, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a huge sect, so large that it would be difficult for any outsider to even calculate how many disciples were in it.

As the crowd devolved into a hubbub, and as the boss of the Celestial Sky Society roared out his challenge, Bai Xiaochun opened the window a crack to see what was happening outside. When he saw the dozen or so cultivators hovering up above, he simply rolled his eyes. After all, this was his personal property, so there was nothing for him to worry about. Clearing his throat, he swaggered out into the open.

“Who’s causing all this racket!?” he said, standing on the balcony, frowning with disdain. “Leave, all of you!”

With that, he waved his sleeve, activating the spell formation power from the seven-colored flag. Instantly, violet winds spread out to drive the unwanted guests away. However, that was when Li Yuansheng smiled and suddenly produced a jade slip, which he pushed his finger down onto.

“Disperse formation!”

As soon as those two simple words left his mouth, the power of the spell formation vanished as if it had never existed. Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped as Li Yuansheng burst into motion, white flames erupting around him as he shot down like a meteor.

As he closed in, his mid Core Formation cultivation base erupted with power, becoming intense pressure. From a distance, it almost looked like the fires of the heavens had appeared right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“Don’t make me say it again,” Li Yuansheng said coolly, his expression one of complete scorn and disdain. “Get the hell out here!”

The sight of such shocking flames caused Bai Xiaochun’s pupils to constrict. This person’s cultivation base was at the same level as his own: the mid Core Formation stage. Also, he was attacking with extraordinary power. In fact, he didn’t appear to be holding anything back, indicating that he not only wished to seriously injure Bai Xiaochun, he wanted to destroy his tavern!

Master God-Diviner and the other Dao protectors all shouted out in alarm, but as for Bai Xiaochun, his anger spiked. This was his home, and for someone to show up like a bandit and try to wrest it away from him caused his fury to burn.

“*You* get the hell out!” he said, his right hand flashing with an incantation gesture. Instantly, the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation roiled out, sending shocking frigid qi spiraling out from his palm to freeze everything within a 3,000-meter area.

Li Yuansheng's heavenly flame blasted into Bai Xiaochun's right palm, and was deflected, causing it to rage out into the surrounding area. However, not only did it not affect any of the frozen buildings or structures of the tavern, the flames themselves were transformed into little frozen flower petals!

Li Yuansheng's face fell as frigid coldness swept into him. Strangely, the frigid qi couldn't be dispelled, but instead, became like countless tiny ice chunks, causing blood to instantly ooze out of the corners of his mouth and freeze into chunks.

However, his breathing wasn't affected, so he barked, "The rest of you join forces and--"

However, before the complete sentence left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun looked up. Frigid qi swirled around him, completely eradicating the flames as he burst into motion, shooting toward Li Yuansheng.

Considering the incredible speed he was capable of, it only took a moment before he was right in front of Li Yuansheng, where he quickly performed an incantation gesture. In response, the frigid cold in the area swept toward Li Yuansheng, whose face fell as he let loose another attack. A moment later, a huge boom filled the area as all of his friends unleashed attacks, causing the air to collapse as a huge mouth formed and attempted to consume Bai Xiaochun.

"Xiaochun!!" Big Fatty Zhang yelled. He wanted to help, but unfortunately, was incapable.

Unexpectedly, the instant the huge mouth seemed to be on the verge of swallowing up Bai Xiaochun, he vanished. When he reappeared, he was behind the group of a dozen or so Core Formation cultivators, his expression grim, his murderous aura raging in much the same way it had back when he was Nightcrypt!

A moment later, the Core Formation cultivators turned around, their faces masks of disbelief as they cried out in alarm.

“A minor teleportation? That’s impossible!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0402 awe-chapter-403

It wasn’t just the dozen or so Core Formation cultivators who were muttering exclamations of shock. The other cultivators in the area were also looking on with disbelieving expressions.

“There’s no way that was a minor teleportation!!”

“Core Formation cultivators can’t teleport!!”

“He must have some sort of precious treasure! Either that, or he’s mastered some special technique....”

The commotion was no surprise. Only Nascent Soul Daoist masters could perform minor teleportations, which were considered to be divine abilities that resulted when one’s consciousness began to merge with heaven and earth.

People under the Nascent Soul stage simply couldn’t do that, not unless they possessed some unusual means of accomplishing it, but even that would indicate that such a person was not the type to be trifled with.

A person who could teleport in such a way would be impossible to surround in battle, and would almost always have the initiative. A mere thought on their part could allow them to attack or retreat at will.

The pupils of Li Yuansheng and his friends all constricted, and their hearts began to thump in their chests.

After Bai Xiaochun evaded the combined attack of the dozen or so Core Formation cultivators, the layer of ice which had built up on the surface of the tavern faded away, revealing that it hadn’t been damaged at all.

To see Bai Xiaochun use a divine ability that could freeze a 3,000-meter area and then easily dispel the effect left the Azure Dragon Society cultivators very excited. As for the crowd that made up the audience, they couldn’t help but gasp.

Li Yuansheng and his friends were clearly shocked, but then their expressions turned serious; despite being silkpants, they were all disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, people who were experienced and knowledgeable. Before, they hadn’t thought much of Bai Xiaochun at all, but now that they had actually tangled with him briefly, they viewed him in a completely different light.

Furthermore, from the murderous aura which surrounded him, they could tell that he was not just some ordinary cultivator. He obviously had a lot of experience fighting, even more than the type of cultivators who went out on missions for the sect.

Li Yuansheng’s heart surged with anger, and he shot a glare at the boss of the Celestial Sky Society. As of this moment, he already regretted leaving the rainbow district, and he especially regretted bringing his friends with him. If he and his friends couldn’t handle one opponent, then it wouldn’t be long before they became the laughingstock of the sect.

The boss of the Celestial Sky Society couldn’t stop trembling. He had known that Boss Azure Dragon was a Core Formation cultivator, but never could he possibly have imagined that he would be so vastly superior to other ordinary cultivators. Not only could he hold his own against a group of a dozen or so people in the same cultivation level as him, he had actually gained the advantage. He was the type of incredible cultivator who had access to some sort of teleportation magic.

“Um....” Even as the boss of the Celestial Sky Society began to pant in fear, Li Yuansheng’s eyes turned icy cold, and he flickered into motion. In the blink of an eye, he became an enormous ball of flame that shot toward Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, his friends all unleashed various divine abilities, and the sky filled with multicolored light as a dozen Core Formation cultivators yet again joined forces to attack Bai Xiaochun.

“You people push things too far!” Bai Xiaochun said, his anger building. He took a step forward, causing frigid qi to explode out in all directions. He became the center of a whirling tempest that almost instantly slammed into his would-be attackers.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun once again vanished, appearing a moment later behind one of his Core Formation opponents. Even as the man's face fell, Bai Xiaochun clenched his right hand and unleashed a vicious fist strike.

More rumbling could be heard as the man’s clothing suddenly swirled through the air to defend against the fist strike. Trembling, the man tumbled backward, blood spraying out of his mouth as frigid qi poured into him. Instantly, the blood coming out of his mouth began to freeze up.

“So,” Bai Xiaochun thought with a frown, “his clothes can defend against a significant blow....”

Meanwhile, the injured Core Formation cultivator shouted frantically out in the hopes of warning his friends. “He has tremendous fleshly body pow--”

However, even as the words left his mouth, wings popped into being behind Bai Xiaochun, a flutter of which sent him rocketing forward at blinding speed to appear in front of the man yet again. This time, he reached out with lightning quickness and grabbed his opponent.

A moment later, a boom rang out, as well as a scream, as the Core Formation cultivator was flung into the ground. Numerous bones in his body were now broken as he lay there in a crater, looking up at Bai Xiaochun with fear written across his face.

Then, Bai Xiaochun used another teleportation to appear in front of a second opponent. This time, he didn’t use a fist, but instead, his left foot, which he spun through the air rapidly in a vicious kick.

A sonic boom echoed out, and the air distorted. At the same time, this second opponent’s face fell as he drew upon all the strength he could to defend himself. However, the power and speed in Bai Xiaochun’s left leg was backed by his Undying Tendons, and before his opponent could do anything, his foot landed on the man’s lower back.

A pop rang out that sounded almost like an inflated paper bag bursting. The second cultivator’s eyes went wide, and before he could even open his mouth to speak, blood sprayed out of it, and he was sent flying hundreds of meters off to the side. Shockingly, some of the vertebrae from the man’s lower back had been shoved out of his skin and were even sticking out through his clothing! His screams could not have been any more agonized.

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Golden strands exploded out around the cultivator, some sort of restrictive spell that sealed his cultivation base and made him seem like little more than a mortal.

Everyone who could see what had just occurred was left gasping.

“This Boss Azure Dragon is totally vicious!! Plus, he actually has the power to seal people with his attacks!!” The battle still wasn’t over, though. Bai Xiaochun spun in place, unleashing all the power of his Undying Live Forever Technique to defend against the magical techniques that two Core Formation cultivators had just unleashed from behind him. Then, a vicious expression appeared on his face as he once again spun his left foot in a powerful kick. Instantly, the two cultivators who had just tried to attack him from behind were sent flying through the air, golden strands wrapping around them and sealing them. Both of them now had numerous broken bones to deal with, and one of them had been injured so badly in the leg that he was bleeding profusely.

Next, several huge violet cauldrons materialized and began to smash down toward Bai Xiaochun’s opponents. As they did, he performed another minor teleportation, appearing next to a fifth cultivator.

However, by this time, the other cultivators were prepared, and instantly attacked with deadly force.

Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and used the Mountain Shaking Bash to shoot forward like an explosive dragon to slam into a nearby cultivator. That cultivator instantly coughed up blood as he was sent tumbling backward, his chest caved in. Next, Bai Xiaochun turned in place and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, waving at three incoming attackers.

“Frigid!” he murmured inwardly. Instantly, frigid qi billowed out, and cracking sounds could be heard as the air in front of him froze up. At the same time, the three incoming cultivators suddenly stopped in place.

Because of their faltering momentum, Bai Xiaochun sped forward and kicked out again with this left foot. Boom. Boom. Boom!

All three were sent spinning away, blood spraying out of their mouths.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but from the moment Bai Xiaochun first made a move until this moment, only a few breaths’ worth of time had passed. The silkpants were routed one after another, until the only ones who remained standing were Li Yuansheng and three others.

Those three were trembling in shock. After looking around at their defeated comrades, they quickly began to back up, having no desire to participate in any more of Li Yuansheng’s affairs. The pitiable state of their friends was the most effective warning message that could possibly have been sent to them.

At the same time, the gasps of the onlookers grew into a strange silence. Apparently, they were so flabbergasted by Bai Xiaochun’s actions that they couldn’t even utter a sound.

Li Yuansheng was shaking visibly. For the space of a few breaths of time, all he could do was look around at his friends, who were either unconscious or running away. Within moments, he was the only person left hovering there in midair. Bai Xiaochun’s teleportation ability, and his shocking battle prowess, made him like a monster to people in the same cultivation level as him, someone virtually impossible to fight against!

Beads of sweat popped out on Li Yuansheng’s forehead as he looked down at Bai Xiaochun with bloodshot eyes. Suddenly, a cold feeling rose up from the pit of Li Yuansheng’s stomach, and he began to back up.

“Why don’t you come on down from up there too?!” Bai Xiaochun, his eyes flickering with icy light.

Because of the frigid shadows in the area, and his incredible speed, he appeared as if by teleportation right in front of Li Yuansheng, who had been just on the verge of trying to flee. Then, he reached out with his right hand, drawing on the power of his Heavenly King Body in his attempt to grab Li Yuansheng.

A gravitational force appeared, and the frigid qi in the area transformed into countless needles of ice that instantly turned toward Li Yuansheng and began to speed in his direction. Li Yuansheng’s face fell, and he shouted, “How dare you try to hurt me!! I'm Li Yuansheng, from a deva clan! I don't care who you have backing you, I’ll see you expelled from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect within three days!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0403 awe-chapter-404

Although the words uttered by Li Yuansheng were spoken in a moment of panic, they were clearly a powerful threat. As far as he was concerned, most cultivators who managed to make it into the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would view being driven out of it as a fate worse than death.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was the riversource sect in the eastern Heavenspan River. Anyone expelled from a sect like that would not be welcome in any other sect in the eastern cultivation world, be that in the Lower Reaches or the Middle Reaches. Any such person would have no choice but to become a rogue cultivator.

In the Heavenspan Realm, rogue cultivators occupied an extremely low position. They were not allowed to practice cultivation close to the Heavenspan River itself, and if they were caught secretly attempting to do so, they would immediately be driven away by the sects that controlled those areas.

Rogue cultivators who managed to reach the Nascent Soul stage had it a bit better off, but anyone beneath that level lived a very bitter existence.

And thus, Li Yuansheng did not hesitate to resort to such a threat. After all, according to the rules of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the fact that Boss Azure Dragon was a disciple of the sect meant that if Li Yuansheng wanted to see him dead, it would be either very, very difficult, or outright impossible. However, considering his position in the clan, having him expelled would be very easy.

Then, once he was on the outside, and no longer had the protection of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, killing him could be accomplished with little more than a thought!

Although he didn’t actually know who Bai Xiaochun had backing him, he didn’t seem to care, nor did he care that this area was personal property. After all, on Sky Quarter Rainbow, any one of the hallmasters of the Ten Halls had the right to bestow personal property in Sky City. Although many in Sky City itself viewed personal property as something completely mindboggling, Li Yuansheng didn’t think very much of it at all, considering that he came from a deva clan.

As soon as the words left Li Yuansheng’s mouth, a tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes widened. Without any hesitation, he pulled his hand back, and at the same time, caused the countless shards of ice stabbing toward Li Yuansheng to vanish.

“What did you just say!?” he said, sounding somewhat nervous as he looked at Li Yuansheng.

This response caused all of the surrounding silkpants to stare in shock, as well as all of the other surrounding cultivators. Considering how shocked they had all been because of the fight which had just been playing out, this sudden reversal left them completely taken aback.

The abrupt change in Bai Xiaochun’s actions seemed completely incomprehensible. Moments ago, he had been bursting with seemingly unstoppable momentum, but then, a mere threat uttered by Li Yuansheng seemed to make him weak in the knees.

Even Li Yuansheng was surprised, and in fact, his heart was still pounding in fear. He had uttered that threat in the heat of the moment, fearing he had no other options. Unexpectedly, it seemed to have worked, and as such, delight rose up in his heart, and the fierceness is his eyes grew more intense.

“Hmph. So, now you know what it means to be afraid, do you? Well it's too late. I don't care who you have backing you, in three days or less, you will no longer be a member of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and will have no choice other than to get the hell off this land!” Li Yuansheng clasped his hands behind his back, sending his words echoing out and his energy surging. Overall, he seemed very mighty and impressive.

He could well imagine how, within a single breath of time, this Boss Azure Dragon would be stricken by profound panic. Either he would explode into a rage, or he would bitterly bow his head in acquiescence. Li Yuansheng very much wanted to know which of those two reactions he would see.

“That’s the difference between our statuses in the sect,” he thought. “Hmph! Let’s see whether or not this guy has what it takes to submit to fate.” As a cold, sinister smile spread out on Li Yuansheng’s face, the surrounding silkpants exchanged glances. The turn of events had been quite sudden, and it didn’t seem quite right that the vicious person from moments ago had suddenly become so nervous.

What happened next went beyond the powers of imagination or prediction of Li Yuansheng or anyone else present. As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard Li Yuansheng’s words, his face lit up with excitement, and even joy.

“Are you serious? Hahaha! Great! Wonderful! You’re Brother Li, right? Wow, I can't believe I just offended you the way I did. Well, it wasn’t on purpose. Why didn’t you say earlier that you could get me out of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect *within three days*!? If you had spoken up in the beginning, I would never have moved a muscle against you and your friends!” At this point, though, he still seemed concerned about the situation. Seemingly hesitant, he continued, “Brother Li, let me just make sure I understood you correctly. We need to make things very clear. You said that you would get me out of the sect within three days, right?”

The silkpants in the area were completely flummoxed, and Li Yuansheng didn't seem to know what to make of the situation. The people in the audience were exchanging awkward glances, completely unsure of what was going on, and unable to comprehend why Bai Xiaochun seemed so excited.

“You....” Li Yuansheng suddenly felt lost, and began to wonder if he and this Boss Azure Dragon were even talking about the same thing. Finally, he couldn’t hold back from saying, “Did you hear what I just said? I told you that in three days or less, I would have you kicked the hell out of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! Kicked out, you hear? That means you won’t be a disciple here anymore! Driven away! Expelled!”

Bai Xiaochun nodded eagerly, and seemed to be in higher spirits than ever. “Yeah, as long as you’re sure you can pull it off, Brother Li. Wow, you truly are my greatest benefactor!”

With that, he turned toward Xu Baocai and the other Dao protectors.

“Xu Baocai!” he shouted. “Eldest Brother. Master Snortsnort! Hurry up and express your thanks to Fellow Daoist Li! He can get me out of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! I don’t have to be a hostage here anymore. We can all go home!”

Master God-Diviner, Xu Baocai, and Big Fatty Zhang all looked up sympathetically at Li Yuansheng.

As for Li Yuansheng, the blank look on his face changed as soon as he heard the word ‘hostage’. His eyes went as wide as if he had just seen a ghost. Pointing at Bai Xiaochun with a trembling finger, he said, “You’re a hostage?!”

“Yeah!” Bai Xiaochun said loudly, swishing his sleeve. “I’m an important political hostage!”

Most other hostages would be very embarrassed or even angry to have their status revealed publicly, and as a result, they usually ran around with their tails between their legs. Bai Xiaochun, on the other hand, loudly announced it in grandiose fashion.

Most of the time, he felt quite depressed when he thought about the fact that he was a hostage. But at the moment, the look on Li Yuansheng’s face left him feeling wonderful, and in fact, he couldn’t help but muse that being a hostage wasn’t that bad after all....

When the crowd heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, they immediately erupted into chaos. The boss of the Celestial Sky Society looked like he had been struck by lightning, and his jaw was hanging open.

At long last he realized why he had never been able to dig up any information about the background of Boss Azure Dragon....

“Dammit! I can’t believe he's a hostage! And even more unbelievable is how brazen he is! Hostages are supposed to go around filled with grief and indignation!!” The tears that filled the Celestial Sky Society’s boss were enough to form a new Heavenspan River....

“Y-you... you....” Li Yuansheng’s mind was reeling so hard he couldn’t even talk. He had the power to drive out any ordinary disciple, no matter what their background was. However, even if he were more powerful than he was, there was no way he could do anything to a hostage, who was an important connection between two sects. Not even Nascent Soul cultivators could do such a thing. Only a Deva Realm expert would have the authority to weigh in on the matter, and the clan deva would definitely not do so for such a trivial matter.

Clearly, his threat from moments ago had been nothing more than lunacy, and to have it thrown back at him in this way made it feel like had just been slapped across the face. Not only did rage build up in his heart, but his face flushed bright red, and he then coughed up a mouthful of blood. Howling with rage, he spun and shot back toward the rainbow district, not pausing for even a moment along the way.

Waving his hand, Bai Xiaochun called, “Ai, what are you leaving for!? Hey, Brother Li! Don’t go! You promised to get me out of the sect within three days!”

When his words reached Li Yuansheng’s ears, Li Yuansheng coughed up another mouthful of blood and then howled, “Intolerable bully!!”

At the same time, he pushed forward with greater speed than before.

He wasn't the only one. The remaining silkpants in the area looked over at Bai Xiaochun with fear and awe at his incisive methods. Bowing their heads, they quickly fled, the more able ones supporting the injured ones on their shoulders.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat as they made their way off. Then, he flicked his sleeve proudly and sighed in disappointment.

"I really hate it when people pretend to be threatening and awesome, only to turn out to be fakers. If you can't get me out of the sect, don't pretend you can! There's nothing funny about practical jokes!" Sighing, he looked down at the tavern, and his Dao protectors, who didn't seem to know whether to laugh or cry. Finally, he headed back into his room to continue his cultivation.

Before long, word about Bai Xiaochun being a hostage began to spread through Sky City. It was a momentous development, and cleared up a lot of suspicions people had harbored. Soon, word even spread to the other three cities in the sect, leaving everyone there completely astonished.

That was especially true of the hostages in the cities belonging to the Starry River Court, Polarity River Court, and Dao River Court. All of them were left completely flabbergasted.

"I never realized you could be so domineering as a hostage...."

"I really need to go pay a visit to this Bai Xiaochun!"

Virtually all of them decided to go meet Bai Xiaochun and chat about their experiences as hostages, and perhaps get some advice about how to improve their situation in the sect.

As for the Celestial Sky Society, their repeated setbacks left them with no other choice than to bow their heads. They knew that there was nothing they could do to fight Bai Xiaochun directly. After more meetings, the Celestial Sky Society boss finally gritted his teeth and said, “Since we can’t provoke him, let’s just get him out of Sky City!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0404 awe-chapter-405

The rules governing the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect's promotion system worked in two ways. Either disciples voluntarily handed over 1,000,000 merit points to get their promotion, or, if they saved up enough merit points, the sect's grand spell formation would detect it and automatically promote them.

Such a method had been enacted to prevent any individual from saving too many merit points, and also to control inflation within the sect. Furthermore, it wasn't under the control of any individual, but rather, the spell formation, which was linked to the identity medallions of all disciples, making it impossible to cheat.

Of course, the second method was rarely seen, as it required a very large number of merit points. When a person's merit points exceeded the limit, they became like a beacon on a dark night, and instantly attracted the attention of the spell formation.

Bai Xiaochun had used this exact method on Song Que. By transferring a large amount of merit points from the Azure Dragon Society to Song Que's identity medallion, it ensured that as soon as he flew out into the open, he was noticed and whisked away to become a yellow-robed disciple.

At the moment, the leaders of the Celestial Sky Society were so terrified of Bai Xiaochun that they decided they had to simply get him out of the city.

"We'll only have one chance. If we don't get enough merit points into his command medallion, the strategy won't work, and after that, Boss Azure Dragon will be on guard. If we tried to do it a second time, it would be very difficult.”

“Let's throw caution to the wind! The Celestial Sky Society will foot the bill to get him out! Even all those merit points will be worth it if we can achieve that goal!” After making their decision, they waited a few more days until the fluctuations of the sect’s grand spell formation had reached a certain level of intensity. That night, the moon hung high and bright in the sky, bathing the lands with white moonlight. Although it made everything seem soft and hazy, Sky City was just as busy at night as it was during the day.

In the desert on the edge of the west district, the Azure Dragon Society’s tavern was in operation as it usually was. Cultivators came and went, not willing to rest just because it was dark outside.

Bai Xiaochun was sitting at a table in the tavern, flanked by two maid servants who were cooling him with large fans. If those fans had been on display outside of the tavern, they would have caused quite a stir. In terms of their value in merit points, either one would be enough to purchase a powerful magical treasure. However, as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, they might as well have just been ordinary fans.

Even the table itself had been crafted from 1,000-year-old mahogany. If that wood had been used to make something like a flying sword, it would have been an extraordinary weapon, but in this case, it had simply been made into a table....

The table was piled with all sorts of delicacies, the type that would go for astronomical prices on the outside. Even the bowls and the chopsticks had magical properties.

The room was extravagantly decorated, so much so that a Nascent Soul cultivator who entered it would be shocked.

Xu Baocai, Master God-Diviner, and Big Fatty Zhang were all there as well, eating and drinking to their hearts' content. As they laughed and chatted, Chen Manyao sat demurely next to Bai Xiaochun, fanning herself with her own fan, occasionally joining in on the conversation.

Their clothes were extremely luxurious, exactly the type you would expect the nouveau riche-type to wear....

"So," Bai Xiaochun said, "it turns out you can't trust anything that Li Yuansheng guy says. Three days have passed, and nobody has said I could leave the city." Rubbing his belly, he let out a contented burp.

Xu Baocai chuckled and said, "You know, Junior Patriarch, things are actually pretty good here. Hahaha! We get the best to eat and drink, and the best of everything else. We wouldn't even have it this good off in the River-Defying Sect. Although now I'm really curious about what life in the rainbow district is like."

"*Look!*" Bai Xiaochun suddenly shouted, pointing at Xu Baocai and hurrying over to throw his arm around Big Fatty Zhang. "Look at this guy! You see that? That's ambition. Keep it up, Xu Baocai, keep it up." With that he let out a loud guffaw. "It's a good thing we never let him into the Ovens back in the day. Come on, Xu Baocai, we have it way better off here than the rainbow district! Only an idiot would want to get promoted. I'm going to stay right here for the rest of my life!" He emphasized his last words with a dramatic wave of his hand, looking very, very satisfied.

Master God-Diviner and Big Fatty Zhang roared with laughter, and Xu Baocai looked a bit embarrassed. Just when he was about to defend himself, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively and said, “Listen to me, guys--”

Just when he was about to brag about his visit to the rainbow district, and explain how everyone there was so cold and distant, his expression suddenly flickered as he realized that his bag of holding was vibrating. Slapping it, he produced his identity medallion and scanned it with divine sense.

Shocked, he realized that his merit point balance was increasing rapidly.

“What’s going on?” he said, puzzled. Then his eyes widened as, in the briefest of moments, his balance shot past 1,000,000. Soon, he had 2,000,000 merit points. Then 3,000,000. Then 4,000,000!

Shrieking in terror, and without any time to offer any explanations, he quickly began to transfer merit points to the others. However, no matter how quickly he acted, it was still too slow. Within the blink of an eye, his merit point balance reached more than 5,000,000.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s grand spell formation was most sensitive and active during the full moon, and it just so happened that the moon outside was shining as brightly as a signal fire. It took only a moment for the spell formation to notice what was happening, and send power rushing into the tavern, and the room Bai Xiaochun was in.

“No!!” he screamed. To the shock of Master God-Diviner, Xu Baocai, Big Fatty Zhang, and Chen Manyao, and before any of them could react, the stream of light entered the room and wrapped around Bai Xiaochun.

Even as the light grabbed him, his merit point balance continued to increase with maddening speed. Unexpectedly, it had already reached more than 7,000,000.

That incredible balance seemed to anger the spell formation, which was by no means gentle as it grabbed Bai Xiaochun and yanked him out of the room and up into the sky.

As Bai Xiaochun’s screams echoed out in all directions, his four Dao protectors rushed out, shaken, and yet completely helpless to do anything.

“I don't wanna go! I wanna stay here! I don’t wanna become a yellow-robed disciple! I'm much more suited to being an orange-robed disciple....” By this point, it was obvious that he had fallen victim to the scheming of the Celestial Sky Society. Furthermore, considering the incredible sum of merit points involved, it was clear how determined the leaders of the Celestial Sky Society were to get rid of him.

The beam of light which was dragging Bai Xiaochun away was far larger and brighter than the usual type. As such, it lit up the night sky, filling all of Sky City, drawing the attention of numerous gazes, many of which were filled with excitement.

As for all of the cultivators who had suffered the side-effects of the Fantasy Pills and the Ultra Diet Supplement Pills, they couldn’t have been more delighted. Some of them even started banging on drums and gongs as they cheered.

“Old Devil Bai is finally leaving!!”

“The heavens do have eyes! Boss Azure Dragon is getting promoted!”

“Hahaha! That fiend is the number one villain in Sky City. Now that he’s leaving, it’s like a huge mountain is being lifted off of our shoulders!!”

The cheers in the city mixed with Bai Xiaochun’s screams to echo out into the night. His Dao protectors looked on with shocked expressions as the powerful beam of light dragged Bai Xiaochun through the night sky toward Sky Quarter Rainbow.

On that very rainbow, the disciples in charge of receiving other newly promoted disciples were standing on the official welcoming platform, expressions of disbelief on their faces as they looked down at the cheering Sky City. If they could hear the sound from that far up, it could only be imagined how enthusiastic the crowds were down below....

The disciples exchanged awkward glances. Never before had they seen such tumult in the city below, and never had they seen the beam of light sent to welcome a new disciple to the rainbow district being so large and bright. Soon, Bai Xiaochun was there in front of them....

As soon as Bai Xiaochun sensed the cold gazes of the other disciples, he wailed, “I don’t wanna become a yellow-robed disciple!”

Tears even welled up in his eyes as he cursed his previous complacency, and his carelessness in not taking preventative measures against such tactics as the Celestial Sky Society had just used.

The grief that spilled from his heart into his voice was the kind that would incite sorrow in the hearts of anyone who heard it, and caused the surrounding disciples’ jaws to drop. Usually, people who were brought up to the rainbow district were beside themselves with joy. This was their first time seeing anyone sad about the matter.

Bai Xiaochun sighed repeatedly, and appeared to be on the verge of tears as he left the welcoming platform. His surroundings were beautiful, with strong spiritual energy, pools and ponds everywhere, and even immortal mountains. However, considering how cold and indifferent everyone was, Bai Xiaochun still felt that his tavern was a much better place.

Scowling, he realized that he simply had to accept the situation.

Sighing, he murmured to himself, “You just can’t be too outstanding. Ai. I never thought that I, Bai Xiaochun, who always tries to keep such a low profile, would be ripped away from the mundane world to become a yellow-robed disciple.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0405 awe-chapter-406

The two disciples escorting Bai Xiaochun both wore yellow robes, and eyed Bai Xiaochun more than a few times as they walked along, apparently unsure of what to make of him.

After all, he had made quite a commotion upon his arrival. Usually, these two yellow-robed disciples were quite harsh in their treatment of newcomers, but for some reason, they were being very polite to Bai Xiaochun.

“Sky Quarter Rainbow has the Ten Halls,” one of them explained, “and all newly promoted yellow-robed disciples end up joining one of them. The selection process doesn’t happen each time a disciple is promoted, but rather in groups, once per year.”

“However, your luck runs strong, Fellow Daoist Bai,” said the other. “We only have four months to go until the next Hall Selection Forum.” Not only were these two explaining how things worked on Sky Quarter Rainbow, they were also explaining his new responsibilities.

“One of the reasons Sky Quarter Rainbow is divided up into five rings is because of the Ten Halls. The inner ring is where the peak lord lives, and nobody can go there without being summoned. As for the other areas, they are set aside for use by the Ten Halls.”

Last time Bai Xiaochun had been here, he had merely been passing through, but this time, thanks to the introduction given by these two disciples, he was already coming to a much better understanding of Sky Quarter Rainbow.

Although it was called a rainbow, it actually had flat ground inside just like any other location. There was a seven-colored sky overhead, and the dirt beneath their feet also featured seven colors, although it wasn’t generally visible because of the green limestone which covered almost everything.

The only places where the seven-colored dirt was visible was on the immortal mountains which rose up in certain locations. What left the deepest impression of all on Bai Xiaochun was how soft and gentle the spiritual energy was. He could already tell that it would be very easy to absorb, and wouldn't lead to the terrifying energy drainage that was common in Sky City.

From his current vantagepoint, Bai Xiaochun could look to the side and see lushly vegetated hills and mountains interspersed with blue bodies of water, which were the lands of Heavenspan. There was also a golden channel of water stretching off as far as the eye could see, which was the Heavenspan River.

In the other direction was the vast and boundless sea!

Last time Bai Xiaochun had been here, he had come to the inner ring, and hadn’t been able to see much. At the moment, though, he was in the outer ring, and was able to glimpse the magnificent golden waters of the sea. The sheer grandeur caused him to gasp in shock.

Furthermore, the strength of the spiritual energy in that sea seemed beyond imagination. It even caused mighty waves to roll across the surface of the water, the crashing of which even reached all the way to the rainbow and Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

“That’s the Heavenspan Sea?” he murmured, shaken.

The two cultivators escorting him couldn’t conceal the pride which rose up on their faces. After all, being a yellow-robed disciple in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was truly a glorious position. One of them smiled.

“That’s right. Only disciples who get promoted to the yellow-robed level qualify to live here and enjoy the majestic sight of the Heavenspan Sea!”

That sea formed the center of the lands of Heavenspan, and was the source of its spiritual energy. It was a sea that would never dry up, a sea that would flourish for all eternity!

As Bai Xiaochun looked at the Heavenspan Sea, he was struck with the sudden impulse to fly out and explore it. After a moment, he took a deep breath and turned his gaze to look at the ancient battleship which existed on top of the waterfall.

From this vantage point, it was clearly visible. It was pitch black, and appeared to be in a state of extreme damage and dilapidation, especially its sails. Within the ship, terrifying, shadowy figures floated here and there.

The mere sight of it caused Bai Xiaochun’s hair to stand on end, and he quickly looked away.

As they walked along, Bai Xiaochun caught sight of other cultivators who lived on Sky Quarter Rainbow. All of them were yellow-robed disciples, without a single one wearing robes of green or cyan. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, the green- and cyan-robed disciples were either very rare, or lived in a different area.

Just as he remembered from his last time here, the cultivators were very aloof and cold. None of them spoke to each other; at most, they would occasionally exchange a glance. Because of that, Sky Quarter Rainbow was a very quiet place.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t used to such silence, but there was little he could do about it. The cultivators escorting him along eventually took him to the location where new disciples were required to check in. He handed over his identity medallion for inspection, and then was given a yellow robe and a jade slip key to an immortal's cave. After exchanging a few parting words, the two disciples who had led him up to this point took their leave.

Bai Xiaochun sized up his surroundings, feeling very out-of-place and very alone. Frowning, he followed the map in the jade slip until he found his immortal’s cave on the very edge of the fifth ring.

It was a very ordinary immortal's cave, and the only good thing about it was that if he stood at the window, he could catch a glimpse of the sea far off in the distance.

The cave was relatively small and ordinary, but most newly-promoted disciples would be elated to be given such a dwelling, which vastly exceeded the standards of virtually every cultivator in Sky City.

But to Bai Xiaochun, it was like a hovel compared to his room back in his tavern. Sighing, he stood there looking around blankly for a moment, then resigned himself to his misfortune and began to tidy the place up. A bit later, he sat down cross-legged to do some cultivation.

As his session of cultivation progressed, he grew more and more calm. Sure enough, his progress surpassed what he could accomplish in Sky City, and plus, there was no energy drainage. Once again, he was filled with the sensation that he didn’t need to eat food.

With every breath he took, boundless spiritual energy poured into him, filling his body, swirling here and there. Gradually, Bai Xiaochun immersed himself in his cultivation.

During the following ten days, he spent much of his time in cultivation, but also took some time to explore and familiarize himself with his new surroundings. Whenever he encountered fellow disciples, they treated him very coldly. Even if he called out a greeting, they would ignore him.

However, he soon got a good sense of the true power of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. During those ten days, he realized that almost all of the yellow-robed disciples he encountered on Sky Quarter Rainbow were Core Formation cultivators!

Although a few were in Foundation Establishment, most of those were in the quasi-Core stage. Everyone possessed incredible battle prowess, which was quite a shock to Bai Xiaochun.

He also asked about the location where the Living Mountain Incantation was intended to be cultivated, but was disappointed to find that it wasn’t on Sky Quarter Rainbow at all. Instead, it was on the second level of rainbows, where the sect leader resided.

Looking up at the rainbows above him, he murmured, “On the second level, there are two rainbows, the one on the left being for the devas, and the one on the right set aside for the sect leader, as well as various training grounds and trials by fire....”

He was a newcomer, and because of how everyone was so cold and indifferent, it wasn’t easy for him to get information.

After becoming a yellow-robed disciple, there were certain restrictions regarding returning to Sky City. Such restrictions didn’t really apply to people like Li Yuansheng and his friends, but for Bai Xiaochun, getting back down to the city was a very complicated ordeal.

However, jade slips could still be used to communicate, and he soon got news from Master God-Diviner and the other Dao protectors. After Bai Xiaochun’s departure, the mood in the Azure Dragon Society had turned very bleak. However, after making some adjustments to the profit margins, they were fairly certain they would be able to get by.

Although the Celestial Sky Society had begun to cause more problems, they still feared Bai Xiaochun, and thus, didn’t do anything overtly aggressive. The Dao protectors also told him that they planned to handle a few important affairs regarding the tavern, and then do their best to be promoted to the rainbow district as well.

That got Bai Xiaochun very excited. Without all of his Dao protectors, he was actually very bored, with little to do other than cultivate his Undying Live Forever Technique and Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. Things went on like that for about a month, until one day in the middle of a session of cultivation, his expression suddenly flickered. Waving his hand, he sent the door of the immortal's cave creaking open, revealing a figure approaching, bathed in the morning sunlight.

When that person saw the door of the immortal's cave open, he stopped in place for a moment, seemingly in thought, before proceeding forward again. Soon, his handsome, grim face was clearly visible.

He was none other than Song Que!

“Que’er!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed happily as he shot to his feet. Just when he was about to rush forward to pull Song Que inside, Song Que snorted coldly and took a few steps back, refusing to enter.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he said in a stony voice, “the details regarding my promotion to yellow-robed disciple aren’t important. What’s important is that I owe you because of it. There are some things you probably haven’t been told about since you’re new, so listen up!

“First. In three months, both you and I will be part of the Hall Selection Forum. Because I got here a bit before you did, I’ve learned a few things about it. There are some halls which many people desire to enter, mostly because they are safer, and can even lead to lucrative opportunities. Some examples are the Hall of Magical Techniques, the Hall of Defenders, and the Hall of Spirit Enhancement. However, some halls are considered perilous, and there are high mortality rates among the disciples who join them. Most notable among those are the Hall of Covert Operations and the Hall of Devil Slayers! Be careful when the time comes!

“Second. During the month since you’ve arrived, word has spread that someone is out to give you a hard time... or worse. You should consider who it is you might have offended and take precautions!” With a final look at Bai Xiaochun, Song Que turned and left. Apparently, his only reason in coming had been in an attempt to pay back his debt of merit points.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0406 awe-chapter-407

A thoughtful expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun's face as he watched Song Que hurrying off. Before long, though, a slight smile could be seen.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun didn't view Song Que as being any sort of rival. In fact, he actually believed Song Que's life to be a bit rough. He went around all the time trying to look tough, surrounded by a murderous aura, constantly looking to pick fights.

Bai Xiaochun wouldn't forget how he had come to offer these warnings. After some thought, he came to the conclusion that, based on what Song Que had told him, it was likely that Li Yuansheng was looking for an opportunity to cause problems for him because of the matters with the Celestial Sky Society.

Unfortunately, knowing the identity of the person targeting him didn't really provide much help. After all, it would be impossible to prepare for all of the ways Li Yuansheng could get to him in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. The only thing he could do was be as cautious as possible.

"If we were in the River-Defying Sect, I'd definitely show him a thing or two!" Bai Xiaochun let out a harrumph and proceeded to ponder how he would handle the situation if he were in Li Yuansheng's shoes. After a moment, his eyes suddenly lit up.

"The Hall Selection Forum!!" he thought, a tremor passing through him. The more he thought about it, the grimmer his expression grew, and the more certain he was that the Hall

Selection Forum was where Li Yuansheng would try to make a move on him. However, Bai Xiaochun couldn't think of any way to counter such a move. At one point, he even considered trying to reach out to the Sky Quarter peak lord.

Unfortunately, without being expressly summoned by the peak lord, it was impossible to gain access to the inner ring. Even a simple visit to offer greetings had to be approved by the peak lord, and despite going on several occasions to do just that, Bai Xiaochun was never allowed to enter, and was forced to return gloomily to his immortal’s cave.

He basically had no options at the moment, so he simply decided to wait it out until his Dao protectors arrived. Soon, Master God-Diviner, Big Fatty Zhang, and Chen Manyao all paid the requisite number of merit points to get their promotions.

Xu Baocai was the only one who stayed behind. After all, business in the tavern still had to be managed. The tavern itself was the main reason everyone had been able to get up to the rainbow district to begin with, and someone had to stay behind to run it, at least for a while.

After being received by the disciples at the welcoming platform, the Dao protectors got their clothing and identity medallions and then went to find Bai Xiaochun. It was a happy reunion, even for Chen Manyao. After working closely with Bai Xiaochun and everyone else, and gaining the approval of Bai Xiaochun himself, she was now considered to be part of their circle of friends.

After the initial reunion was over, they all sat down in Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave. First, the Dao protectors explained how things had gone in the tavern after he left, and then he told them about everything that had happened to him. When he was finished, he said, “And so, I need all of your help to figure out what to do about the Hall Selection Forum.”

Master God-Diviner and Big Fatty Zhang frowned in thought, but unfortunately, they were new here, and couldn’t think of a single countermeasure to take. Eventually, they looked over at Chen Manyao.

Bai Xiaochun did the same thing. Chen Manyao was from the Wildlands, and knew other agents in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, so she was obviously the best-equipped to provide a solution.

Chen Manyao smiled. “Don’t worry, Xiaochun. I should be able to take care of the situation. Just tell me which hall you want to join.”

Bai Xiaochun was so happy that he almost couldn’t hold back from leaping forward and hugging her. Laughing heartily, he said, “You’re so awesome, Yao’er! Alright. I want to join the Hall of Defenders!”

Chen Manyao’s face turned a bit red, and after glaring at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, she pulled out a jade slip to make contact with her comrades in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. After a moment passed, she gave Bai Xiaochun a smile of confirmation, which got him even more excited. At that point, Big Fatty Zhang said that he wanted to join the Hall of Spirit Enhancement, and as for Master God-Diviner, he wanted to get into the Hall of Magical Techniques.

Later, the Dao protectors left. At long last, Bai Xiaochun didn’t feel completely lonely any more. In fact, his cultivation speed even seemed to pick up, and before he knew it, three months had passed.

Including his first month, that meant four months had gone by, and it was time for Sky Quarter Rainbow’s yearly Hall Selection Forum.

That morning at dawn, the sound of tolling bells filled Sky Quarter Rainbow, and all of the disciples who had been promoted to the yellow robe level in the past year all made their way out of their immortal's caves, looking both solemn and apprehensive.

All of them knew that their fates for the following years would be determined on this day. Whichever hall they ended up joining would determine how they grew in the years to come, and would also have a huge influence on how long they managed to stay alive. Because of that, all of them were completely on edge.

Of course, the rules of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect were strict. The ten halls selected who would join them, not the other way around. Because the new disciples had absolutely no say in the matter, they could only wait nervously until the announcements were made.

Bai Xiaochun had long since straightened his clothing in preparation for the event. As soon as the bells began to toll, he strolled out of his immortal's cave glowing with excitement, visualizing what it would be like to join the Hall of Defenders.

Over the past few months, he had spent some merit points to get a bit more detailed information about the various halls, and knew that the Hall of Defenders could only be described as wonderful. They were tasked with defending Sky Quarter Rainbow as a whole. However, considering that Sky Quarter Rainbow was in the middle of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the chances of someone invading the place were virtually zero. Because of that, the cultivators who were members of the Hall of the Defenders tended to enforce sect rules within the rainbow district itself.

They were a very impressive group, similar to the Hall of Justice back in the Spirit Stream Sect.

Bai Xiaochun was very excited about the prospect, and was sure that as a member of the Hall of Defenders, he would surely become very famous on Sky Quarter Rainbow.

It didn't take long before more than 200 newly promoted yellow-robed disciples were hurrying toward the inner ring.

For most disciples, the Hall Selection Forum was the only time they would ever be able to visit the inner ring, where a huge square existed atop the seven-colored mountain there.

Of course, this was Bai Xiaochun's second time to the inner ring, so things were somewhat familiar to him. Upon entering the square, he caught sight of Big Fatty Zhang, Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao, and even Song Que.

Although he was able to catch their eyes, they were separated by enough distance that it wasn't possible to exchange words. The entire square was filled with a very somber air. Before long, the sound of bells faded away, and silence filled the air for a moment before ten beams of light appeared out of nowhere and shot down toward the ground.

Instantly, crushing pressure filled the area, causing the faces of Bai Xiaochun and all the other disciples to flicker; it felt as if their bodies were being pushed down into the ground. At the same time, ten cultivators appeared.

Some were men, some women, some seemed old, some did not, but all were Nascent Soul cultivators. Three of the women were beautiful, and yet looked very stoic. Somehow, such expressions only made them seem more attractive.

As for the others, some had faces wrinkled with age, whereas others looked like young men or women. Some appeared to be kind and amiable, while others were surrounded by murderous auras, and seemed like very vicious characters.

“Greetings, Hallmasters!” It was hard to say who spoke first, but soon, all of the gathered disciples were bowing their heads and calling out greetings to the ten Nascent Soul cultivators who were the hallmasters of Sky Quarter.

Bai Xiaochun did the same, peering out of the corner of his eye at the ten Nascent Soul cultivators and wondering which one was the hallmaster of the Hall of Defenders. At the same time, he couldn’t help but gasp at the power of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Even Sky Quarter Rainbow alone had enough power to dominate any sect in the Middle Reaches, assuming that sect didn’t have a deva.

“And they have three other rainbows just like Sky Quarter,” he thought, shaken. “There’s also Starry Quarter, Polarity Quarter, and Dao Quarter....”

At that point, one of the ten Nascent Soul cultivators said, “And now, you will come to join the hallmaster who calls your name.”

“Chen Biao!”

“Xu Ke!”

“Zhou Songli!”

As the names of the disciples were called out, they respectfully hurried over to the side of whichever Nascent Soul cultivator had called them.

“Song Que!” said one of the fierce-looking Nascent Soul cultivators. Song Que took a deep breath and flew over. Eventually, Chen Manyao was called by one of the beautiful women, and by some lucky chance, Big Fatty Zhang was called by one of the other beauties.

Master God-Diviner wasn’t sure if luck was with him when he got called by an icy-faced young man. As the crowd began to thin, Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness grew, and he continued to flash glances in the direction of the Nascent Soul cultivators, hoping to remind them of his presence.

Unfortunately, the Nascent Soul Daoist masters all had completely expressionless faces, and none of them were even looking in his direction. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun soon realized that, unexpectedly, there was one among the Nascent Soul cultivators who hadn’t said a single word so far.

He was a kindly-faced old man, who looked over the dwindling group of cultivators with a wide smile that did nothing to reveal what he was thinking.

It didn’t take long before the group of more than 200 had been whittled down to less than a dozen or so. Bai Xiaochun stood there, blinking, wondering what exactly was happening. Then he looked over at Chen Manyao and realized that she was wearing a look of shock, at which point, his heart began to sink.

By now, the nine Nascent Soul Daoist masters weren’t saying anything else, and in fact, were all looking at the kindly-faced old man. The beautiful Nascent Soul cultivator who had selected Big Fatty Zhang smiled and said, “Brother Feng, we're finished with our selections.”

The old man laughed heartily and then swished his sleeve.

“Alright. If you don’t want this group, then I’ll take them.” He waved his finger, causing seven-colored light to spread out beneath the feet of Bai Xiaochun and the others and carry them over to his side.

“Very well then,” he said with a smile. “I’ll take my leave now.” The other Nascent Soul cultivators called out farewell as he carried Bai Xiaochun and the others off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as he looked around at the other cultivators and then nervously asked, “Senior, which hall are we?”

The old man turned and looked back at him, and the kindness that was on his face before was now nowhere to be seen. His smile was sinister, and he suddenly possessed a powerful, murderous aura that caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp. “Congratulations on being selected by the Hall of Devil Slayers!”

“The Hall... of Devil Slayers...?” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes widening in terror. Never could he have imagined that after calling upon the help of Chen Manyao, he would actually be taken away by the Hall of Devil Slayers. Instantly, rage boiled up inside of him.

The other disciples around him had a variety of expressions on their faces, and none of them looked happy.

“Throughout the history of Sky Quarter Rainbow, the most dangerous hall of all is the Hall of Devil Slayers. They also have the highest casualty rate!”

“Heavens.... I heard that a few decades ago, the Hall of Devil Slayers went on a mission outside the sect, and thousands of disciples died in the briefest of moments....”

“I heard that the disciples in the Hall of Devil Slayers all get sent out on missions to assassinate enemies, and can get killed at the drop of a hat....”

“Noooo....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0407 awe-chapter-408

The entire group was crying out in alarm. None of them could have guessed that they would actually have been selected by the Hall of Devil Slayers, and even as they trembled in terror, the hallmaster glared back and said, “Shut up, all of you!”

His thunderous voice instantly crushed the entire group into silence. Neither Bai Xiaochun nor any of the rest of them could reconcile the kindly-faced old man from before with this stern hallmaster and his sharp gaze.

“In the Hall of Devil Slayers, we subdue demons and exorcise devils. The Dao we pursue is that of slaughtering our enemies. Do the lot of you really wish to forsake such honor and glory? Listen up. I'm only going to use ten percent of my speed, so don’t fall behind. The last person to meet me in the grand square of the Hall of Devil Slayers’ main temple will immediately be sent out on a very ‘important’ mission! Of course, I'm the type of person who likes to offer rewards in addition to punishments. If any of you can beat me to the square, you won’t have to go on any missions for the next three years!” With a cold snort, he pushed forward with greater speed.

Everyone gasped. From the hallmaster’s tone of voice, whatever ‘important’ mission he had in mind would not be a good thing for any of them. Without any hesitation, all of them shot forward with all the speed they could muster.

Bai Xiaochun appeared to be on the verge of tears, and at the same time, was furious at having been screwed over. That, coupled with his terror regarding the Hall of Devil

Slayers, caused him to speed after the hallmaster as quickly as possible, his mind filled with all the rumors he had heard recently.

Especially terrifying were the quavering words spoken by his fellow disciples moments ago.

“It probably wasn’t Chen Manyao’s fault. She has no reason to screw me over. Most likely, she just didn’t have enough backing to keep me safe. I’d bet everything that it was Li Yuansheng and his deva clan. He’s pulling out all the stops to try to get me killed!” Gritting his teeth, he looked around to measure how fast his fellow disciples were, after which his eyes flashed with determination, and he picked up speed.

As he accelerated, the wind screamed past his ears, and he left behind nothing more than afterimages. In the blink of an eye, he caught up with the leaders of the pack, barreling forward as if he were fleeing for his life.

Not only did he not wish to come in last, he couldn’t stop thinking about the possible reward if he could beat the hallmaster to the square. The idea of being exempt from missions for three years was like rocket fuel inside of him. His eyes were completely bloodshot as he gritted his teeth and kept his eyes fixed on the old Nascent Soul cultivator up ahead. Although the hallmaster was moving quickly, he obviously wasn’t going all out. In fact, he was strolling casually through the air, each step taking him thousands of meters along.

As far as the hallmaster was concerned, it would be quite impressive if any of the disciples could merely keep up with him at this pace. Furthermore, putting them in their place a bit also had its benefits. After all, life in the Hall of Devil

Slayers was a bitter one, and he always tried to take the new recruits down a notch or two.

Sighing, he proceeded along up ahead when suddenly, he heard a whistling sound behind him, causing a look of surprise to play out on his face. Sending his divine sense back, he saw Bai Xiaochun flying along at an almost impossible speed, passing all of his comrades and actually closing in toward him. In fact, he was only moments away from catching up altogether.

“Eee?” the hallmaster muttered in surprise. In all the years he had selected new recruits for the Hall of Devil Slayers, never had he encountered anyone this fast. Having no other choice, he sped up a little bit, instantly pushing himself several hundred meters forward.

Bai Xiaochun was gasping for breath as he caught up, only to see the hallmaster suddenly accelerate and put a few hundred meters between the two of them. As the anxiety welled up inside of him, two wings appeared, which gave him another explosive burst of speed.

As the two of them raced along, it was clear to see that Bai Xiaochun was actually moving a bit faster than the hallmaster. With his wings, his fleshly body power, and his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he was soon able to close the distance, until he was only a few dozen meters behind the hallmaster.

The hallmaster’s eyes widened, and pushed himself along a bit faster. By this point, he was virtually at his limit when using only ten percent of his power. Through all the years that he had been tasked with selecting new disciples, he had never encountered anyone who could force him to use more than ten percent. However, to his shock, he found that Bai Xiaochun was nothing like the other disciples.

In fact, the hallmaster also realized that if he only used ten percent of his cultivation base power, then at some point, Bai Xiaochun would actually pass him up.

By now, they could actually see the Hall of Devil Slayers up ahead, and that was when Bai Xiaochun actually pulled up alongside the hallmaster. His panting gasps were audible in all directions, and blue veins were bulging out of his forehead. From the look in his eye, his life was on the line.

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, his life really was on the line. Up ahead was the Hall of Devil Slayers, a huge mountain surrounded by swirling clouds and covered with countless pavilions, temples and other buildings. Cultivators were hustling about everywhere, and most notable of all were the enormous characters carved upon the mountain itself!

Hall of Devil Slayers!

Each character that made up the name was fully 300 meters tall and as red as blood. Not only did they make a shocking sight, they emanated a terrifying, murderous aura.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted as he realized that he was definitely going to pass up the hallmaster, and then win three years of being exempt from going on missions.

“What does this little punk think he's doing?” the hallmaster thought, glaring over. “Trying to embarrass me?!”

He was a Nascent Soul Daoist master with a profoundly high cultivation base. Even though he was limiting himself to ten percent of his cultivation base power, it would still be quite a loss of face if someone in the younger generation actually surpassed him. Frowning, he looked at the Hall of Devil Slayers up ahead, and was just hesitating about what to do when....

Bai Xiaochun was only about 3,000 meters away from his final destination. Suddenly, he shot forward with even greater speed, drawing upon the Mountain Shaking Bash, which caused rumbling sounds to echo out as he passed the hallmaster. Within moments, he would be stepping down onto the square.

The hallmaster’s glare intensified, and inwardly, he was cursing. Taking a step forward, he finally resorted to a minor teleportation.

However, even as he did, Bai Xiaochun sent frigid qi roiling out, creating a 3,000-meter area of frozen ice around him. Suddenly, he also did something that resembled a minor teleportation, and in the following moment, was right at the temple standing over the square.

The hallmaster’s jaw dropped as widely as if he had just seen a ghost as he also finished his teleportation.

“I'm first!” Bai Xiaochun cried, simultaneously panting for breath. “Hahahahaha!!”

Looking around, he was absolutely convinced that he was the first person to reach this spot. It was in that moment that an ancient voice floated over to him from off in the distance.

“Not bad. You really did get there first. However, what are you doing way over there? The square I was talking about is right here.” Bai Xiaochun spun, his jaw dropping as he realized that the hallmaster was actually standing in another square some distance away, smiling broadly at him.

Bai Xiaochun looked around and confirmed that he was standing in the square outside the main temple, and that the hallmaster was in the square of one of the side temples. Instantly, Bai Xiaochun’s face turned grim, and dejection rose up in his heart.

“You….” he said, almost on the verge of tears. Despite the hallmaster’s shamelessness, there was nothing Bai Xiaochun could do about it, so he simply sighed sadly and then hurried over. Clasping hands and bowing deeply, he said, “Disciple Bai Xiaochun offers formal greetings, Hallmaster!”

The hallmaster smiled, once again looking kindly like he had before. However, inwardly he was snorting coldly, and had determined not to forget that Bai Xiaochun had actually gone so far as to surpass his own speed.

Now that the hallmaster had arrived, other members of the Hall of Devil Slayers began to hurry over. The first to arrive was a middle-aged cultivator with a goatee and a late Core Formation cultivation base. He clasped hands respectfully in greeting to the hallmaster, and also offered some fawning words that he apparently didn’t mind Bai Xiaochun hearing.

The hallmaster smiled and nodded in response, after which the middle-aged man stood off to the side, where he looked at Bai Xiaochun with a sparkling glint of interest.

Before long, the other new recruits arrived, the last one being a trembling quasi-Core cultivator. The hallmaster gave him a cold look and then looked away. However, the man with the goatee seemed to have marked the last-place disciple with his eyes.

“I am Feng Youde, hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers. From now on, all of you are cultivators of the Hall of Devil Slayers, and must abide by all of our rules and customs. Master Cloud-Dao, I’ll leave them in your hands!” With that, the hallmaster flashed into motion, flying up toward the summit of the mountain, leaving all the new recruits standing around with blank expressions.

The man with the goatee, whom the hallmaster had called Master Cloud-Dao, flashed a cold smile at Bai Xiaochun and the others and then said, “There is no need for fear, ladies and gentlemen. I am your humble servant Master Cloud-Dao, the honor guard of the Hall of Devil Slayers. From now on, we’re all on the same team. However, your first task as new recruits is to go out alone on a mission, which I will assign to you right now.” For some reason, it seemed like something special glittered in his eyes when he looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0408 awe-chapter-409

“Zhao Ke, you will go to the Nineshadows Continent to kill the devil cultivator Zhou Wu. Last month, he committed murder, and even went to the lengths of forging an evil magical weapon. He must be eliminated!

“Lu Peng, your mission is to kill Chen Fan from the Yunchen Clan. He has an early Core Formation cultivation base, but according to our latest information, he was gravely injured recently, so he shouldn’t put up much of a fight. Bring back his head!

“Han Ping, your destination is the Holypatron Continent, where you will be escorting a representative of the Liumin Clan to bring their yearly tribute to the sect!”

As Master Cloud-Dao rattled off the missions, it was clear that some were more dangerous than others, but generally speaking, they were all roughly within the same level of difficulty. After all, this group had just joined the Hall of Devil Slayers, and Master Cloud-Dao wasn’t trying to intentionally make things hard for them. As for the merit point rewards for the missions, the smallest was 20,000, with the largest being multiple times higher than that.

As for the cultivator who had come in last in the race to the square, his mission actually didn’t seem very hard at all. All he had to do was deliver a message to a place called Grandforest Mountain.

Most of the cultivators seemed relieved after hearing their missions. As for Bai Xiaochun, he continued to wait nervously for Master Cloud-Dao to speak his name and explain his mission.

“Bai Xiaochun, you will travel to Whitegrove Cliff on the Eternalflux Continent to kill the notorious sex fiend Zuo Hengfeng, a cultivator in the late Foundation Establishment stage. Your reward upon success will be 30,000 merit points.” With that, he tossed a jade slip to Bai Xiaochun and went on to assign more missions. Soon, everyone had their missions, after which Master Cloud-Dao looked over the group and smiled.

“Fellow Daoists, these first missions of yours shouldn’t be very difficult, and I truly hope they go smoothly. However, if any of you dare to disrespect the arrangements set forth by the Hall of Devil Slayers by not going on your assigned mission, you will face a punishment the likes of which you can't even imagine. Very well, you have two hours to prepare before leaving!” Master Cloud-Dao swished his sleeve and left. Meanwhile, other disciples from the Hall of Devil Slayers who had been waiting off to the side hurried over with uniforms and identity medallions for the new recruits.

Everyone exchanged unsettled glances and then, not being in the mood for chit-chat, rushed away to prepare as well as they could for their missions.

Bai Xiaochun did the same, hurrying back to his immortal's cave as quickly as possible. Along the way, he couldn’t stop thinking about how he didn't want to go out on the mission. Unfortunately, this wasn’t the River-Defying Sect, and he didn’t have any basis upon which to refuse to go.

“Kill the notorious sex fiend Zuo Hengfeng? Is he really in the late Foundation Establishment stage? If so, then the mission shouldn’t be very hard at all!” However, something seemed suspicious about the whole thing. Chen Manyao had attempted to arrange things, but he had still ended up in the Hall of Devil Slayers. Although he wasn’t sure how Li Yuansheng had pulled it off, he couldn’t shake the feeling that this first mission would somehow be very dangerous.

After arriving at his immortal's cave, he sat there nervously, waiting for everyone to return. Big Fatty Zhang came first, then Master God-Diviner, and finally, Chen Manyao, who immediately rushed to apologize and explain.

“Junior Patriarch, I really did my best. I made some inquiries after the fact and confirmed that it was Li Yuansheng who ruined my plans....”

Big Fatty Zhang and Master God-Diviner were very angry. Although they had ended up going to the halls they had wanted, for Bai Xiaochun to end up in the most dangerous place of all, the Hall of Devil Slayers, left them incensed.

Bai Xiaochun sighed. By this point, he wasn't worried about how he had ended up in the Hall of Devil Slayers, he was more concerned with exactly how dangerous this mission of his was going to be.

Scowling on the verge of tears, Bai Xiaochun said, “Look, we might as well drop that topic. Hurry up and look into this mission for me. What’s so dangerous about it? I have to leave within the hour.”

With that, he went on to explain everything he knew about the mission.

His Dao protectors nodded seriously, and instead of wasting time sitting around talking about the matter, they all hurried away to see if they could get any information.

However, there was very little time to work with. Bai Xiaochun quickly packed what he would take with him on the mission, and then watched the time ticking down on the jade slip. When there was only enough time left for an incense stick to burn, he walked out of his immortal's cave, looking quite crestfallen.

Big Fatty Zhang and Chen Manyao were still trying to find information for him. As for Master God-Diviner, he called upon the full power of his cultivation base to perform a divination.

“Don't worry, Junior Patriarch,” he said somberly. “My divinations are always very accurate. Although you will face some danger on this outing, as well as some misfortunes, in the end, a person of very high rank will come to your aid!” Actually, not even Master God-Diviner was sure whether he was actually offering a true prediction, or just comforting Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun let out a long sigh, and was about to say something when the mission jade slip began to emit intense light, urging him to leave the sect and begin his mission.

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth, and from the look in his eyes, he seemed ready to throw caution to the wind. With that, he rushed over the teleportation portal, where he was whisked away to the Eternalflux Continent.

The Eternalflux Continent was one of 97 continents within the territory of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Although it wasn’t considered very remote, it was still some distance from the sect itself.

Although it was well within teleportation range of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the teleportation portal itself was on the edge of the continent, some distance away from Whitegrove Cliff itself.

It was currently summer, and the jungle was very hot and humid. Mountains zig-zagged across the landscape, and there were no signs of human habitation, not even in the area near the teleportation portal.

The portal was located in a mountainous valley, surrounded by restrictive spells and other defenses, making it impossible for anyone other than cultivators from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to use it.

After the glitter of the teleportation light faded away, Bai Xiaochun was revealed, long-faced and clearly not in a good mood.

“I sure hope this mission goes smoothly....” he murmured to himself. When he thought back to the mission into the Luochen Mountains, he couldn’t forget about how smoothly it had gone at first. Everything had seemed quite safe until the very end.

“I shouldn’t think about that. I’ll just do what I can and make sure I don’t lose my poor little life. If I can’t handle the mission, I’ll just abandon it.” Gritting his teeth, he double-checked his magical items, making sure he had his Renegade Dragon Horn ready, as well as his Ancient Devil Scale and the Landscape of Nine Provinces. With those three precious treasures at his side, he was a bit more confident.

“You just wait until I get back, Li Yuansheng. Things aren’t over between us yet!” Gritting his teeth, he sighed and thought back on the wonderful life he had led in Sky City, and how coming to the rainbow district had been like falling into the depths of the Yellow Springs.

Within the mission jade slip was a map. After confirming his current location, he began to fly along at a good pace in the direction of Whitegrove Cliff.

Down below, the terrain was covered with thick jungle, complete with enormous, towering trees. As he went along, he didn't see anybody within the jungle itself. The only thing on the ground was a thick blanket of leaves which had been decaying there for who knew how many years. In many areas, the leaves had rotted into nothing more than a sludge.

It was currently overcast, and although it wasn’t raining, the muffled sound of thunder could be heard.

The entire place seemed very desolate, and left Bai Xiaochun feeling very, very alone. He couldn’t help but sigh repeatedly.

“The best thing would be to find some of the local cultivators and see if I can get some news about Whitegrove Cliff and this Zuo Hengfeng.” After a moment, he changed out of his yellow robes and into a more nondescript outfit, after which he went about trying to find some locals.

However, he really did seem to be in an out-of-the-way location. After spending ten full days searching, he couldn't find a single cultivator in the jungle. The only thing he saw was the occasional wild beast.

One of them was a 300-meter-long anaconda, and once he even caught sight of a flock of birds with human heads and pulsing murderous auras. Almost in the same moment that he noticed the birds, a mouth suddenly open up in one of the trees, which then gobbled one of them up. The sight of that caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to grow numb, and he even climbed a bit higher into the air as he flew along.

“Something really seems off here. Don’t tell me that this Eternalflux Continent is completely uninhabited...?” The deeper he got into the jungle, the more beasts he saw down below. There were even some who were comparable in power to the Core Formation stage. At that point, Bai Xiaochun stopped in place.

“How could late Foundation Establishment cultivators live permanently in a place like this?!?!”

Even as he was pondering the issue, he saw a huge lizard leap up from the jungle and fly toward the clouds. As it sped higher and higher, it increased in size, and to Bai Xiaochun’s wide-eyed shock, transformed into a flood dragon!!

As it swirled about in the clouds emanating terrifying pressure, Bai Xiaochun gasped and backed up.

“I can’t do this mission! There’s no way. Is the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect trying to get me killed!?” Eyes bloodshot, he gritted his teeth, spun in place, and headed back in the direction of the teleportation portal.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0409 awe-chapter-410

Ten days had passed since Bai Xiaochun left the Hall of Devil Slayers and the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. All of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao protectors were very nervous. Although none of them really knew much about the mission he was on, after spending a significant amount of merit points, they managed to dig up more information about the Foundation Establishment cultivator he was supposed to track down and kill. What they found was that this cultivator had a fairly significant background.

They immediately tried to get in contact with Bai Xiaochun to inform him of what they had discovered, only to find that for some mysterious reason, he was impossible to reach!

Perhaps it was because of how distant the Eternalflux Continent was, or perhaps there was some other reason. In any case, he was currently out of contact.

Even as they stewed in their nervousness, Feng Youde, the Nascent Soul Daoist master who was the hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers, was sitting in a temple meditating.

By now, he had long since put everything which had occurred with the new recruits out of his mind. He didn't even care whether or not they lived or died on their missions; throughout the years, too many disciples of the Hall of Devil Slayers had died to even count.

Generally speaking, the first missions assigned to new recruits weren’t very difficult, and had a high survival rate. Several days ago, he had asked Master Cloud-Dao a few perfunctory questions regarding the missions that had been assigned, and had then proceeded to focus on cultivation.

As he sat there in the temple, he suddenly realized that something in his bag of holding was flickering with bright light. Frowning, he opened his eyes and wondered who it was that had dared to displease him by interrupting his meditation. Looking down, he used divine sense to scan a jade slip in his bag of holding, whereupon his expression flickered and his eyes widened.

He even gasped, and soon, an expression of bewilderment and incredulity could be seen on his face.

“The Heavenspan emissary is summoning me!?!?”

He only knew a bit about the Heavenspan emissary, who was a very enigmatic figure, and was said to have come from the Heavenspan Sea to stay temporarily in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Even the sect’s demigod patriarch treated the emissary with respect.

An eminently important person like that was someone the hallmaster would normally only be able to gaze at from a distance, and yet now, he was being personally summoned! Feng Youde’s normally kind-looking face was now twisted with anxiety. Not daring to tarry, he rose to his feet and hurried out of the temple he had been meditating in, transforming into a beam of light that shot up past the second level rainbows and directly toward the summit of the first level rainbow.

The entire area was sealed off by a restrictive spell, but after the spell scanned Feng Youde, he was let through. For some reason, that only caused his nervousness to mount.

The first level rainbow of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was occupied by the sect’s demigod patriarch, and more recently, by the mysterious Heavenspan emissary.

After Feng Youde was let past the defensive barrier, he didn’t dare to actually set foot onto the rainbow, and merely waited above it, hands clasped and bowing deeply.

“Feng Youde, hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers on Sky Quarter Rainbow, is here to request an audience with the Heavenspan emissary.”

Almost immediately, a blurry figure stepped out of thin air, looked Feng Youde up and down, and then led him down toward the rainbow.

Feng Youde’s anxiety continued to build as the blurry figure led him to a valley filled with birdsong, the fragrance of flowers, and strong spiritual energy, as well as a pond filled with seven-colored fish swimming lazily about. Closer inspection revealed that the fish looked very much like infant dragons.

Adjacent to the pond was a log cabin, within which a figure could be seen playing a zither. The music floating up from the zither was graceful, and yet filled with a twinge of killing intent. Somehow, it affected the spiritual energy in the valley, causing vague images of wild beasts to appear, beasts that were shocking to the extreme.

Feng Youde took a deep breath, then walked forward to a position roughly 300 meters from the log cabin. At that point, the pressure weighing down on him was so intense that he didn’t dare to proceed any further. Clasping hands, he bowed deeply and said, “I am Feng Youde. Greetings, Heavenspan Emissary.”

His expression couldn't have been more respectful. This emissary was a person who even the demigod patriarch respected, so whether it was in terms of cultivation base or background, Feng Youde knew well that being disrespectful in even the slightest aspect wasn't an option.

After a long moment passed, the voice of a young woman drifted out from within the log cabin. “Feng Youde....”

The mere fact that she had spoken his name caused Feng Youde's expression to turn even more somber. Yet again, he bowed deeply.

“There's no need to be nervous,” the young woman continued. “I called you here today because I have a task in mind for you....”

“Anything, Emissary! Whatever orders you have, I, Feng Youde, will do everything in my power to see them accomplished!” The determination in his voice could sever nails and chop iron, and anyone who heard it would be convinced that he would go to any and all lengths to keep his word.

A moment passed, and the young woman spoke again. “You have a disciple in your Hall of Devil Slayers named Bai Xiaochun. Make sure that nothing untoward happens to him during his time on Sky Quarter Rainbow. If you keep him safe until he reaches the Nascent Soul stage and joins the parliament of elders, I will bestow upon you a bit of good fortune that will see you reach the Deva Realm!”

Feng Youde was taken aback by her words. He was a Nascent Soul cultivator and hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers. Being the wily fox that he was, he understood that in some situations, the less you knew, the safer you were.

That was especially true when it came to powerful people like the Heavenspan emissary. The less he understood about this situation, the better. Furthermore, when he heard about good fortune that would help him become a deva, his eyes immediately shone with bright light. Were any other person to make him such an offer, he wouldn’t believe it, but this was a promise from the Heavenspan emissary! As such, he completely and utterly trusted the young woman’s words!

“Deva Realm....” he murmured, eyes glittering with excitement. Of course, his desire to reach the Deva Realm was intense, but the current level of his cultivation base made it such that, although becoming a deva wasn't impossible, it was becoming less and less likely by the day. Therefore, the words of the Heavenspan emissary couldn’t have been more enticing to him. Clasping hands, he bowed even more deeply than before.

“Fear not, Emissary. I will do exactly as you say, beyond the shadow of a doubt!!” Brimming with excitement, he turned and left, flying back toward Sky Quarter Rainbow in a beam of prismatic light.

Along the way, he couldn’t stop bubbling with excitement over the thought of the good fortune which had been mentioned, and how this could very well be his lucky break. He tried to bury his excitement, and yet, it was impossible for him prevent his eyes from glittering brightly.

“I can’t believe this Bai Xiaochun prompted someone so powerful to personally issue orders about him!” For some reason, the name Bai Xiaochun seemed familiar to him, but at the moment, he couldn’t put a face to the name. Whoever he was, Feng Youde was already determined to take good care of him during his time in the Hall of Devil

Slayers, keep him out of any sort of danger, and groom him all the way to the Nascent Soul stage.

“Hahaha! It seems my chance at the Deva Realm is just around the corner!” With that, he pushed forward with a bit more speed, quickly arriving at Sky Quarter Rainbow and the Hall of Devil Slayers.

“Send for Master Cloud-Dao immediately!” he said. There were simply too many disciples in the Hall of Devil Slayers for him to remember them all by name, and therefore, the best way to deal with them was through Master Cloud-Dao.

After all, Master Cloud-Dao was responsible for the records of all the disciples and their mission assignments. As Feng Youde’s most trusted assistant, he had done a wonderful job of managing things over the years.

Just as Feng Youde was settling down in his temple, Master Cloud-Dao arrived. Fearful of keeping Feng Youde waiting, he had even used a secret magic to arrive as quickly as possible, which was why the lingering sound of sonic booms could be heard outside. After landing outside the temple, he quickly straightened up his garments, put an ingratiating smile onto his face, and hurried inside.

Upon entering, he saw that the kindly-faced Feng Youde was not sitting in his chair at the head of the hall like he usually did. Instead, he was pacing back and forth, his expression tinged with a delight that most people would not notice. However, after working closely with him as an aide for so long, Master Cloud-Dao couldn’t help but notice it.

“Greetings, Hallmaster!” Master Cloud-Dao said. Looking like the picture of a toady, he continued, “Congratulations, and please accept my most sincere felicitations! From the healthy glow on your face, disciple can tell that some momentous event has occurred!”

Upon hearing Master Cloud-Dao’s words, Feng Youde laughed heartily.

“Oh *you*!” he said, smiling and wagging his finger. “If you spent less time working on reading faces and more time on cultivation, you might break through to the Nascent Soul stage!”

Master Cloud-Dao chuckled with the realization that he had judged the situation correctly. “Disciple--”

However, even as he prepared to offer some more flattery, Feng Youde swished his sleeve and interrupted, “Alright, that’s enough with the adulation. We have a disciple in the Hall of Devil Slayers named Bai Xiaochun, right?”

Master Cloud-Dao’s jaw dropped. “Huh? Bai Xiaochun?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0410 awe-chapter-411

Upon seeing Master Cloud-Dao’s reaction, Feng Youde frowned, raised his voice, and said, “Well, is there?”

Unsure of why exactly Feng Youde was asking about Bai Xiaochun, Master Cloud-Dao immediately started to get nervous. Nodding his head, he said, “There is.... He was in the last group of new recruits....”

Feng Youde laughed loudly as he suddenly recalled Bai Xiaochun, and how his burst of speed had been a bit irritating. Now, however, Feng Youde’s attitude was completely different. Someone very important cared about Bai Xiaochun, which meant that he obviously was not anybody ordinary.... “Oh, I remember him now. Well, go get him, no wait, go *invite* him to come see me. And remember to be *very* polite!”

“Huh?” Master Cloud-Dao said, his eyes widening and his head beginning to spin. Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead as he realized that something about the situation was definitely not right. The fact that Feng Youde had used the word ‘invite’ spoke volumes, and caused Master Cloud-Dao’s nervousness to mount.

When Feng Youde realized that the mention of Bai Xiaochun’s name caused Master Cloud-Dao to start sweating, he immediately suspected that something was going on. Gaze sharpening, he said, “Well? What are you standing around for?”

Bracing himself, Master Cloud-Dao said, “Hallmaster... Bai Xiaochun... he’s... he’s still out on his first mission.”

Inwardly, he was cursing Li Yuansheng. The reason why Master Cloud-Dao had recognized Bai Xiaochun at first sight was because he had personally worked very hard to make sure that he ended up being recruited by the Hall of Devil Slayers.

According to the agreement he had reached with Li Yuansheng, if he could get Bai Xiaochun killed, he would receive all sorts of rewards. This wasn’t Master Cloud-Dao’s first time handling such a matter. As far as he was concerned, one disciple couldn't possibly be very important in the grand scheme of things, not even a hostage. This was the Hall of Devil Slayers, and if he wanted to see someone dead, that person would definitely die.

All of a sudden, Master Cloud-Dao’s heart began to pound.

“His first mission?” Feng Youde said, looking a bit surprised. Then, his gaze turned as sharp as daggers. As the hallmaster, he didn’t pay much attention to the day-to-day affairs of the Hall of Devil Slayers. However, he was aware of the corruption and vice that existed within its ranks. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun must have offended someone, otherwise, Master Cloud-Dao wouldn’t be reacting in such a way.

“What mission is he on?” Feng Youde said, sounding a bit displeased.

Face clinching bitterly, Master Cloud-Dao said, “He... he was sent to kill the notorious sex fiend Zuo Hengfeng....”

Feng Youde’s left eyelid twitched as he glared at Master Cloud-Dao, and then spoke in the most frigid of tones, “Where exactly is this mission to be carried out? Tell me the truth!”

By this point, Master Cloud-Dao was actually quite confused, and was already furious at Li Yuansheng. Furthermore, if the hallmaster was connected to Bai Xiaochun in some way, why hadn’t he said so earlier?! “In the immortal's cave of Eccentric Earthvile. Zuo... Zuo Hengfeng was recently accepted as Earthvile’s new apprent--”

“What!?!?” Feng Youde exclaimed, his eyes widening in rage. Flicking his sleeve, he sent a wind screaming through the temple that instantly caused all the miscellaneous items lying about to be reduced to ash. As for Master Cloud-Dao, he began to tremble visibly.

Brimming with rage, Feng Youde yelled, “You sent Bai Xiaochun to the immortal's cave of Eccentric Earthvile, a Nascent Soul Daoist master, to kill his apprentice!? Get him back here immediately! He shouldn’t be out doing missions!!”

He backed his words with the power of his Nascent Soul cultivation base, causing them to echo like thunder throughout the Hall of Devil Slayers.

Terrified by Feng Youde’s display of anger, Master Cloud-Dao dropped to his knees to kowtow. Nearly weeping, he said, “It’s... it’s too late. He’s been gone for ten days already. Also... um... I gave him a faulty jade slip that won’t work outside of the sect....”

“Y-you... you....” Feng Youde felt his heart go cold. It was as if he had been struck by lightning out of a blue sky, and immediately, his robes were soaked with sweat. Eccentric Earthvile was a late Nascent Soul stage expert who had gathered quite a band of rogue cultivators. Furthermore, he had certain proclivities, the mere thought of which got Feng Youde shaking with nervousness. If the Heavenspan emissary hadn’t made that special request, it might not have been a big deal, but now that she had, Feng Youde knew that if Bai Xiaochun died outside the sect, there would be severe repercussions, the extent of which he couldn’t even begin to fathom.

Then he thought about how even the demigod patriarch showed respect to the emissary, and he began to shake harder. Eyes completely bloodshot, he roared, “What have you done!?!?”

A resounding smack sounded out as Feng Youde slapped Master Cloud-Dao in the face, sending him tumbling out of the temple. Then Feng Youde shot up into the sky, where he called out in a voice that filled the entire Hall of Devil Slayers.

“Every cultivator in the Hall of Devil Slayers has ten breaths of time to assemble in the main square!

“Deploy the Devil-Slaying Battleships!!

“Activate the teleportation portal that leads to the Eternalflux Continent. Power it up as much as possible!! Immediately!!!” Everyone who heard Feng Youde’s frenzied howl was deeply shaken and didn't dare to delay for even a moment. All of them flew over at top speed, and within the blink of an eye, over 10,000 cultivators were gathered in midair, bowing to Feng Youde.

At the same time, ten shocking battleships appeared, terrifying in appearance and pitch black in color.

And yet, things weren’t over yet. The teleportation portal leading to the Eternalflux Continent began to power up, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions. The flurry of activity in the Hall of Devil Slayers attracted the attention of the other halls, and even the notice of the Sky Quarter peak lord on his seven-colored mountain.

However, before any of the other powerful figures in the sect could inquire about what was happening, Feng Youde led all of the more than 10,000 cultivators of the Hall of Devil Slayers onto the battleships. Then, the power of teleportation surged out, whisking them away. Of course, to teleport so many people so far and so quickly came at significant cost.

As the massive rumbling sounds echoed out, the cultivators from the other three rainbows looked over in complete shock.

“What’s happening on Sky Quarter Rainbow?”

“Was that... was that the Sky Quarter’s Hall of Devil Slayers? Considering the extent of that teleportation, they must be on their way to wipe out an entire sect!”

The cultivators on Sky Quarter Rainbow were even more astonished, including Li Yuansheng, who was suddenly struck by a very bad feeling.

Meanwhile, as the entire Hall of Devil Slayers was mobilizing and teleporting to the Eternalflux Continent, Bai Xiaochun was cautiously making his way through that very continent. He had already decided to abandon his mission, and was currently heading back to the teleportation portal.

Considering the speed he was able to maintain, he was still about three days away from his destination. Inwardly, he was sighing, and couldn’t stop wondering how he would be punished for failing to accomplish his mission.

“Well,” he encouraged himself, “no punishment could be worse than losing my poor little life.”

Even as he made his way along, he suddenly noticed three beams of light heading in his direction from off in the distance.

Within those beams were three people, one of them a young man with handsome features, holding a fan in his hand. He wore bright red robes, and looked quite stunning. However, his eyes were a bit sunken, as if from too much drinking and licentious behavior.

Flanking him were two old men, both of them in the early Core Formation stage, who looked about with cold eyes as they escorted the young man.

The small group caught sight of him in almost the same moment that he caught sight of them, and everyone seemed surprised. To run into cultivators in a wilderness like this wasn’t an everyday occurrence. Bai Xiaochun was immediately on guard, and when he was able to get a good look at the young man’s face, his heart began to pound.

That young man looked exactly like the image of Zuo Hengfeng in the mission jade slip!

“At last the fishy element of the mission is revealed!” Bai Xiaochun thought. “This guy is a Foundation Establishment cultivator, but he has two Core Formation experts to back him up! Dammit! I'm the junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect, and not even I got an escort like that!” After blinking a few times, he pretended that he hadn’t noticed the group of three, and decided to just be on his way.

Even as he turned to leave. Zuo Hengfeng caught sight of him, and his eyes lit up. Snapping open his fan, he cooled himself a bit as a carnal smile spread out across his face.

“It’s been a long time since I saw a cultivator as dainty as this one. Wow, snow-white skin, slender.... Enough to make anyone sigh in praise. There’s something so fresh and pure about him! If he put on women’s clothing, he would definitely be a top-rate beauty!” He laughed lightly, and his eyes began to burn with passion.

At first, Bai Xiaochun didn’t respond to Zuo Hengfeng’s words, but as they sank in, he suddenly got a bad feeling. Looking back, he saw the flames of passion burning in Zuo Hengfeng’s eyes, and the sight caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to prickle.

That look almost made him feel like he wasn’t wearing any clothing at all! It was very bizarre, to say the least. “W-what... what did you say?”

Licking his lips, Zuo Hengfeng laughed again, and then pointed at Bai Xiaochun with his fan. “Seniors, grab him! He's the perfect gift to give to my Master!”

The two Core Formation cultivators frowned slightly. They had a rough sense of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, and would normally avoid such a person. However, since Zuo Hengfeng said he wanted this person captured to give as a gift, they looked Bai Xiaochun over closely, and then had to admit that he perfectly suited the tastes of Eccentric Earthvile.

Eyes flickering with cold light, they began to head in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Eyes gleaming with excitement, and face slightly flushed, Zuo Hengfeng said, “Don’t worry, darling, we’ll have some time to whisper sweet nothings into each other's ears at some point.”

Gasping, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he yelled, “Hey, I’m a guy!!!”

Zuo Hengfeng chuckled darkly and said, “Oh, I know. Don’t worry, little boy, I have plenty to teach you. Beauties like you aren’t very common out here in the wilderness!”

Even as the words left his mouth, the two Core Formation experts closed in on Bai Xiaochun with explosive speed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0411 awe-chapter-412

These two Core Formation cultivators had profound cultivation bases, and were accustomed to joining forces to cut down their enemy. Instead of attacking on their own, they split up and closed in on Bai Xiaochun from the left and right.

As they approached, the old man on the left performed an incantation gesture, causing black mist to explode out of his hand and take the form of a vicious black dragon. Despite being made of mist, it pulsed with an aura of rot, and even the air around it seemed to be decaying. At the same time, an acrid air spread out from it that caused the leaves and vegetation in the jungle below to wither up into ash. The mere sight of it caused Bai Xiaochun's pupils to constrict.

The old man on the right was equally as vicious. With each step he took through the air, red lotuses bloomed beneath his feet which, despite being illusory, were clearly part of a spell formation that was sealing down the area tight.

As the spell formation formed, the old man's eyes suddenly flickered with bizarre magical symbols that caused the atmosphere in the area to push down with incredible pressure.

"One of them uses an aura of death to rot everything around them," Bai Xiaochun thought, "and the other creates a spell formation with every step he takes...." Inwardly, he was feeling very glum. He hadn't even wanted this mission to begin with, and had even been trying to flee. He had only run into his intended target by chance. Even then, he had pretended not to recognize Zuo Hengfeng. And yet, despite all of that, Zuo Hengfeng had arrogantly put his evil intentions on full display.

That in itself was irritating to Bai Xiaochun, but even worse were the things that Zuo Hengfeng had just said out loud. Not only did Bai Xiaochun find them revolting, they caused fury to begin to burn in his heart. The mere thought of what might happen to him if he were to be captured caused chills to run up his spine. Shouting out in rage, eyes flashing with cold light, he unleashed his murderous aura, and even as his two Core Formation opponents closed in, he chose not to retreat, but rather, to step forward.

As he advanced, he called upon the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, which spread out rapidly, causing cracking sounds to fill the air. The aura of the Frigid Adept level spread out for hundreds of meters in all directions, turning everything as cold as the dead of winter. Snowflakes even appeared in the air, causing both the Core Formation cultivators and Zuo Hengfeng to be engulfed by bitter iciness. Zuo Hengfeng's face immediately fell.

“A technique from the Dao of frigid coldness!” The two Core Formation experts' pupils constricted as the frigid qi wrapped around them. For someone to cultivate the power of frigid qi to this level, to the point where transformations manifested in heaven and earth, was something rarely seen among Core Formation cultivators.

With the exception of Bai Xiaochun, everything in the area seemed to be in the process of freezing rapidly.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually occurred in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. As the frigid qi billowed out, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, and the rotting black dragon reached a point where it was only about three meters in front of him.

However, the black dragon couldn’t move beyond that point. The frigid cold in the area caused the vicious dragon to freeze, and in the blink of an eye, it was nothing more than ice.

Ignoring it, Bai Xiaochun took another step forward, vanishing and then reappearing in front of the old man on the right. Without any pause, he clenched his hand into a fist and punched out.

A look of incredulous shock appeared on the old man’s face as he staggered backward, blood spraying out of his mouth. Then he shouted, “A minor teleportation?!?!”

He wasn’t the only one to react with such shock. The old man on the left gasped in astonishment.

Even as the words left the mouth of the old man on the right, Bai Xiaochun shot like lightning toward the other man, reaching out with his right hand to unleash the Throat Crushing Grasp. Simultaneously, a powerful gravitational force locked onto the man, ensuring that Bai Xiaochun reached him in the mere blink of an eye.

A sensation of deadly crisis rose up in the old man’s mind, and he began to pant. Having no time for consideration, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing even more black mist to erupt out into the area, forming the image of a gigantic skeleton. As Bai Xiaochun closed in, the old man called upon the full power of his cultivation base to try to block the killing move.

The old man on the right was equally wracked with anxiety. By now, he realized that they had provoked a completely terrifying individual, and knew that if his partner died, then it would be very unlikely that he would make it out of the situation alive. Eyes completely bloodshot, he let out an urgent shout, causing the magical symbols in his eyes to shine with intense brightness. Magical symbols even swirled about on the surface of his skin as he dove through the frigid cold in the direction of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone brightly as he gave a cold snort. Not only did he not slow down, he summoned a pair of wings, and also used the Mountain Shaking Bash to add a further burst of speed. Deafening sonic booms rang out as he passed up the old man who had been attempting to bar his path, and then slammed into the black mist which had just been summoned.

Before the black mist of rot could do a single thing to Bai Xiaochun, his hand had pierced through it with lightning-like speed and latched onto the throat of the Core Formation cultivator.

“You....” The old man’s eyes went wide with disbelief and shock, but before he could say more than a single word, Bai Xiaochun’s hand clenched down. The old man screamed and lunged backward. The flesh was ripped out of his neck, causing blood to spray everywhere, and yet, he was a Core Formation cultivator with powerful life force, and that in and of itself didn't kill him. He quickly backed up, his eyes shining with terror, and yet, before he could get very far, Bai Xiaochun waved his finger in his direction.

Instantly, the Renegade Dragon Horn flew out of his bag of holding, piercing through the air in a blinding flash before stabbing into the old man’s forehead and shooting through his head.

The old man’s eyes went wide as he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut before slamming into the ground below. Even in the moment before he died, his eyes were filled with incredulity, as if he couldn’t imagine how he had possibly been defeated so easily. The moment the battle began, his opponent had used a teleportation to gain the upper hand, and then completely dominated him, leaving him dead only a few breaths of time later.

In the moment of the old man’s death, his partner, the man who had used the magical symbols and spell formation, gasped. Heart pounding, he sent the magical symbols flying out of his body toward Bai Xiaochun. However, before they could get close, they all collapsed.

Incredible rumbling sounds echoed out as a massive force slammed into the old man, sending him tumbling through the air. Terror gleamed in his eyes as he spun to a stop next to Zuo Hengfeng. Without the slightest hesitation, he shot his right hand out to grab Zuo Hengfeng.

A bang rang out, and Zuo Hengfeng coughed up some blood. The passion in his eyes had already transformed into terror, leaving him rooted in place. However, that didn’t stop the old man from grabbing him and fleeing in the opposite direction.

Everything happened with fluid, unnatural speed.

“Think you can leave just like that?!” Bai Xiaochun said. Then his third eye opened, and violet light burst out.

As soon as the violet light wrapped around the old man, his steps faltered, and something began to drag him backward. A look of despair appeared in his eyes as he gritted his teeth and shouted, “Get out of here, Young Lord! This guy... isn’t a normal Core Formation cultivator!!”

With that, he violently shoved Zuo Hengfeng out in front of him. Blood oozed out of the corners of Zuo Hengfeng’s mouth as he became a beam of light that shot away at top speed. By this point he was shaking in fear, and his heart was gripped by regret; never could he have imagined that the cultivator he chose to pick on would be someone so powerful.

“Dammit, dammit….” he muttered, shivering. He even drew on his longevity, using a blood escape art to harm himself in an attempt to gain enough speed to flee.

As he accelerated, he heard an agonized shriek from behind him, which was then cut off abruptly. That caused Zuo Hengfeng to shake even harder.

Moments ago, Bai Xiaochun had used his Heavenspan Dharma Eye to bind the second Core Formation expert. Then, a wave of his hand had sent copious amounts of frigid qi pouring into him, almost instantly transforming him into an ice statue, which dropped down to the ground below and shattered into countless pieces.

Looking at the fleeing Zuo Hengfeng, Bai Xiaochun growled, “You! You forced me to do this!”

Thinking about Zuo Hengfeng’s licentious smile, and the way it sent shivers down his back, Bai Xiaochun planted his right foot into the ground and then pushed off. A huge crater opened up as he used the momentum to shoot forward, also drawing on his wings and the Mountain Shaking Bash. Not even Zuo Hengfeng’s blood escape art could help him evade that.

As Bai Xiaochun closed in, frigid qi spread out, and Zuo Hengfeng shook violently. Moments later, the frigid qi began to freeze his legs into place, and he started to slow down!

Then, Bai Xiaochun waved his finger, causing the frigid qi to form into numerous ice blades which instantly slashed toward Zuo Hengfeng.

“How dare you try to kill me!” he screamed. “My Master is--” However, it was at that point that the ice blades slashed him into pieces, killing him in body and soul!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0412 awe-chapter-413

Bai Xiaochun truly was revolted by the situation. Gritting his teeth, he said, “Hmph! Who cares who your Master is? If I hadn’t killed you, you scoundrel, you would have eventually gotten stronger and then come for revenge. Then what? Even if you couldn’t beat me, what if you went to pick on my friends?!”

At that point, the little turtle stuck his head out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

“You know, Lord Turtle has some experience with things like this. Based on what that guy was shouting before he died, I’d guess he has a powerful Master who will show up at any moment and--”

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun said, looking around nervously. For some reason, he felt very unsafe at the moment, and just when he was about to head toward the teleportation portal at top speed, a thunderous howl of rage ripped through the air.

“Who killed my beloved apprentice!?!?” The words were spoken at such a high volume that a powerful wind blasted through the lands, dimming the sky and causing many of the trees down below to sway back and forth.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. “This is your fault, little turtle! Why’d you have to go and open your big mouth!”

Based on the terrifying nature of the words which had just been spoken, Bai Xiaochun was sure that they didn't come from the mouth of a Core Formation cultivator, but rather, a Nascent Soul Daoist master.

The mere idea of a Nascent Soul cultivator caused his hair to stand on end. Shrieking, he drew upon all the power he possessed to flee toward the teleportation portal.

“How dare you look down on Eccentric Earthvile! And how dare you kill my beloved apprentice right outside of my very own immortal's cave! Are you looking to die?!?!” Based on the volume, Bai Xiaochun could tell that whoever was speaking was now much closer to him.

Looking over his shoulder nervously, he saw a 3,000-meter-wide black cloud that clearly contained the power to topple mountains and drain seas. It was filled with countless vengeful souls, all of them screaming and tearing at each other with their teeth. It was a very shocking sight.

Standing on top of the cloud was an old man in a black robe, who was clearly Zuo Hengfeng’s Master, Eccentric Earthvile. His hands were clasped behind his back, and his eyes flashed like lightning. His grim expression did nothing to conceal his rage, and despite the fact that he was more than 3,000 meters away, as soon as their gazes met, Bai Xiaochun felt his mind reeling and his cultivation base destabilizing.

“He's really a Nascent Soul expert!!” Tears were welling up in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, but at the same time, he couldn’t help but feel that he was being falsely accused.

“I was leaving!” he thought. “He was the one who started picking on me....

“Why did the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect give me this mission anyway!? It looked like nothing more than killing someone in late Foundation Establishment, but the truth was that the despicable bastard had a Master who’s a Nascent Soul expert!” Feeling more wronged than ever, he unleashed his Undying Live Forever Technique, and even sent some frigid qi roiling out to call upon his minor teleportation abilities. And yet, nothing could prevent the black cloud from catching up to him.

“Time to die!!” As the words echoed out, the black cloud began to envelop Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, a huge, 300-meter-wide hand stretched out toward him.

It was a shocking sight, and the pressure weighing down in the area was immense, enough to lock down everything around it. The lands quaked, and the plants and vegetation down below began to wither. Bai Xiaochun also felt the life force inside of his body stirring, as if it were about to be sucked away.

The hand got closer, and in the critical moment, Bai Xiaochun screamed, unfurling his Landscape of Nine Provinces, which gave him another burst of power similar to teleportation.

In the moment that the hand was about to land on him, Bai Xiaochun vanished, reappearing a few dozen kilometers away, face completely ashen. Not bothering to even look behind him, he began to flee at top speed.

Behind him, Eccentric Earthvile stamped his foot down onto the black cloud, sending it racing toward Bai Xiaochun.

“You can't escape! “ he shouted. “Once I get my hands on you, I’ll skin you alive and turn you into a lantern!”

As he neared, Eccentric Earthvile’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then he waved his finger toward the ground.

Instantly, the plants and vegetation beneath Bai Xiaochun withered, transforming into black mist which rose up into the air. In the blink of an eye, it transformed into a huge circle that resembled a sealing mark, and made it impossible for Bai Xiaochun to proceed past its borders.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as another enormous black hand rumbled toward him. Screaming, he once again used the Landscape of Nine Provinces.

Yet again, he vanished, but when he reappeared, he wasn't 3,000 meters away. Instead, his path was blocked by the perimeter of the black circle that had just formed.

As soon as he was out in the open, the huge black hand once again shot toward him, causing an expression of despair to appear on his face. Considering his pursuer was a Nascent Soul cultivator, he was incapable of fleeing.

“Do you really dare to try to kill me!?” he shouted. “I've got powerful people backing me up! If you dare to harm me, you’ll get killed for sure!” In response, Eccentric Earthvile simply snorted more coldly than ever and sent the black hand speeding toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Not even my turtle-wok will be able to block this....” Bai Xiaochun thought, tears leaking out of the corners of his eyes at how unfair all of this was. As soon as Zuo Hengfeng said something threatening, his Master showed up. But when Bai Xiaochun tried the same thing, nothing happened....

In that moment of critical danger, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot as he prepared to throw all caution to the wind and make a final move. But then....

“How dare you, Eccentric Earthvile!!” The voice which spoke came from a distance, and seemed to be flustered on the verge of going mad.

Instantly, the huge black hand faltered, and Eccentric Earthvile turned his head, a look of complete shock in his eyes. He even gasped.

Bai Xiaochun was similarly shocked, and looked off toward the horizon, where a huge army had just appeared. Winds screamed and the lands shook as ten enormous battleships appeared, speeding toward him over the jungle.

The battleships were teeming with more than 10,000 cultivators, all of them bursting with cultivation base fluctuations. The ripples streaming out from them made heaven and earth seem as if it were an ocean covered with surging waves.

Shockingly, the prows of all ten battleships suddenly lit up with blinding light. Even as Bai Xiaochun looked on, that light transformed into stabbing blasts of energy that shot through the air toward Eccentric Earthvile. Deafening rumbling could be heard, and all creation shook violently as the beams closed in with lightning speed.

In the blink of an eye, they were right in front of Eccentric Earthvile. Face falling, he waved his sleeve, completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun, as he hurtled backward at top speed.

Even as he fell back, rumbling sounds echoed out as the black hand shattered under the force of the light beams. The black clouds were destroyed, and as for Eccentric Earthvile, although he managed to defend himself, he was still shoved backward 3,000 meters until he slammed into the ground, opening up a massive crater.

Everything in the area shook violently, leaving Bai Xiaochun gasping in shock. Then, a figure blurred into motion off of one of the battleships, simultaneously shouting, “Eccentric Earthvile, how dare you harm one of the disciples of the Hall of Devil Slayers!!”

The voice belonged to none other than the kindly-faced Feng Youde, hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers, who suddenly appeared directly in front of Eccentric Earthvile, toward whom he unleashed a vicious palm strike.

“Are you crazy, Feng Youde?!” Eccentric Earthvile roared, falling back yet again, his face a mask of terror and confusion. As far as he was concerned, no matter what he might have done to provoke Sky Quarter’s Hall of Devil Slayers, it couldn’t possibly have elicited a response of this level!

However, even as the words left his mouth, the ten battleships once again powered up and unleashed piercing beams of light toward him. Booms rang out, and blood sprayed out of Earthvile’s mouth as he fell back anxiously. By this point, his hair was in complete disarray, and he was clearly in bad shape. One of his arms had been ripped off, and his expression was one of both rage and frustration.

“Ten Devil-Slaying Battleships?! Y-y-you’re... y-y-you’re crazy!! How many resources did you waste to deploy them?! You paid that price just to kill me? Is it really worth it!?!?” Trembling in fear, Eccentric Earthvile unleashed all of his secret magics in his attempt to flee, and yet, his heart was gripped by despair. From what he could tell, he would most likely perish this day. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would go to such lengths to try to kill him.

“I have to admit that dying under the volley of ten Devil-Slaying Battleships is--” It was in that moment of despair, and just when Earthvile was about to start begging for his life, that he suddenly realized something seemed off. Looking over his shoulder, he realized that Feng Youde wasn’t pursuing him.

Elated, he sped off into the distance, heart pounding with lingering fear.

Bai Xiaochun looked on in complete shock at the ten battleships, and the hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers. The impressive sight left him completely and utterly moved.

“This sect really does treat me great....” he thought, his eyes turning red with emotion. Earlier, he had harbored some suspicious about the sect, but now, in his excitement, he turned toward the hallmaster, clasped hands and bowed.

“Disciple--”

Before he could even get a single sentence out, Feng Youde rushed over nervously and asked, “Bai Xiaochun, how are you doing!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0413 awe-chapter-414

Bai Xiaochun was truly moved at how well the sect was treating him. That was especially true considering that the hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers had personally led more than 10,000 people and ten extraordinary battleships to his rescue.

The hallmaster even remembered his name! Although it was true that the more than 10,000 cultivators who had come along were all looking at him with surprise and even suspicion, it didn’t stop him from crying out, “Disciple Bai Xiaochun is safe and sound!”

A smile broke out on Feng Youde’s face as he amiably said, “You’re not injured at all?”

Even as the words left his mouth, he looked Bai Xiaochun up and down to see if he was hurt. He even produced some medicinal pills, which he handed over.

“Take those after we get back, just in case you have any internal injuries that aren’t obvious at the moment. The Hall of Devil Slayers can’t have disciples like you shed either blood or tears!” Eyes shining with approval, he clasped Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder.

“Bai Xiaochun, as a Core Formation cultivator, you held out for a long time against that Nascent Soul Daoist master. You’ve performed a great service for the Hall of Devil Slayers!” With that, he laughed heartily, causing the surrounding 10,000 or more cultivators to exchange awkward glances. Although none of them were sure exactly what services Bai Xiaochun had performed, they already had their suspicions regarding what was going on. Feng Youde truly did seem to be treating Bai Xiaochun far better than he should.

There were even some disciples who had been in the Hall of Devil Slayers for quite some time, and were very familiar with Feng Youde. When they saw him acting in this way, their eyes went wide with surprise. Never before had they seen him treating a disciple in this way. Everyone knew that despite his kindly face, he was very narrow-minded and petty, and if he got even slightly annoyed at someone, he would treat them with the coldest of cold shoulders.

In fact, many disciples in the Hall of Devil Slayers secretly called Feng Youde “Hellgod Feng”.

However, at this moment, Hellgod Feng was treating Bai Xiaochun as gently as a spring breeze, a sight which left all of the onlookers completely shocked. Then all of them thought back to how Hellgod Feng had urgently summoned everyone, and even deployed the ten Devil-Slaying Battleships, all to save Bai Xiaochun.

“Who is this Bai Xiaochun? What kind of background does he have?!”

“What’s Bai Xiaochun’s connection to the hallmaster?”

As speculations ran through the minds of everyone present, Master Cloud-Dao was there in the crowd, trembling from head to toe. Fear and sorrow gripped his heart, and hatred for Li Yuansheng and his plots against Bai Xiaochun festered in his bones.

“Damn you, Li Yuansheng! Are you trying to get me killed or something?!?!”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised to hear Feng Youde say that he had performed a great service for the sect. Apparently, he must have done something without realizing it. Therefore, he stuck his chest out and tried to be the picture of someone who didn't fear death.

"These wounds are nothing," he said in a loud voice. "Besides, all I did was kill twenty or so Gold Core cultivators and then about a hundred Foundation Establishment experts. After that, I had a bit of a tussle with that Nascent Soul eccentric, that's all. I, Bai Xiaochun, have sworn to defend the Hall of Devil Slayers with my own life, to sacrifice everything for it if necessary. It's nothing more than duty! Compared to that, what are some trifling merit points!?"

It was with great effort that the surrounding cultivators held back from laughing out loud, and many strange expressions could be seen. Even Feng Youde had to clear his throat. His words from moments ago had been uttered with the intention of safeguarding Bai Xiaochun, and creating a good excuse to give him a large amount of merit points upon returning to the sect.

Therefore, Bai Xiaochun's exaggerated statement left Feng Youde feeling a bit awkward. Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was preparing to continue with his speech, he quickly interrupted, "Very well, let's get back to the sect!"

With that, he waved his sleeve, sending everyone back toward the teleportation portal in beams of scintillating light.

They returned to Sky Quarter Rainbow with much pomp and grandeur, and the completely unexpected trip out of the sect caused Bai Xiaochun's name to immediately become the talk of the Hall of Devil Slayers. Furthermore, the way

Feng Youde treated him caused everyone to look at him with expressions of deep reverence and respect.

Everyone watched with shining eyes as Bai Xiaochun joined Feng Youde and Master Cloud-Dao in entering the main temple in the Hall of Devil Slayers. In fact, Bai Xiaochun led the way, under the approving gaze of the kindly-faced Feng Youde.

As for Master Cloud-Dao, he almost never saw any version of Feng Youde who resembled this, and it left him completely shaken and even terrified. He was well aware that he was the one at fault for provoking this near disaster.

Smiling more sincerely than ever, Feng Youde looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Xiaochun, you really did an excellent job today, and performed a great meritorious service for the sect. Therefore, I will take the responsibility for making the following decision: henceforth, you are completely exempt from mission duty in the Hall of Devil Slayers! From now on, you can simply focus on your cultivation!”

Bai Xiaochun had been silent the entire way back, reveling in how moved he was. For Feng Youde to say what he had just said left him even more shaken than ever.

“Hallmaster,” he said excitedly, “you’re treating me far too well.”

Off to the side, Master Cloud-Dao watched Feng Youde and Bai Xiaochun chatting, and couldn’t help but murmur bitterly to himself, “Too well? More like impossibly well....”

Feng Youde laughed loudly, and then spoke in a very kind voice, “I'm just doing what should be done. From now on, the Hall of Devil Slayers is your home! You won’t face any danger here, and can simply relax and focus on cultivation.

Work hard, and you should be able to reach the Nascent Soul stage very soon!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. For some reason, he felt well and truly blessed. However, the blessings had come very suddenly, and no matter how he thought about the matter, he couldn’t determine what meritorious service he had actually performed.

“If you ever hit any snags in your cultivation, you just come looking for me and I’ll help you out. As far as merit points go, considering the meritorious service you’ve performed, you can have access to any cultivation resources you need from the Hall of Devil Slayers!”

“Hallmaster--” Bai Xiaochun said, shivering a bit.

“Hahaha! There’s no need to look at me with that child-like expression, Xiaochun. The Hall of Devil Slayers is your home, and as the head of the household, it's my job to treat you well. In fact, I've already taken the liberty of acquiring some medicinal pills perfect for Core Formation cultivators. Here, take them, and don’t forget, the best way you can repay the kindness you’ve been shown is to break through to the Nascent Soul stage as quickly as possible.” Smile widening, he handed a bag of holding to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun shivered again. Accepting the bag of holding, he clasped hands and bowed, then said, “Hallmaster--”

However, Feng Youde interrupted again and offered some more words of encouragement before finally dismissing Bai Xiaochun.

After Bai Xiaochun left, the smile vanished from Feng Youde’s face, and he spun grimly to look at Master Cloud-Dao.

“How could you have done this, Master Cloud-Dao?!”

Master Cloud-Dao immediately flopped to the ground to kowtow, his face ashen. “Hallmaster, please forgive me....”

“It's a good thing Bai Xiaochun wasn’t hurt, otherwise you would have put me in a horrendous position!” Snorting coldly, Feng Youde waved his sleeve, causing a powerful wind to wrap around Master Cloud-Dao and throw him violently out of the hall, blood spraying out of his mouth.

“If it weren’t for your years of faithful service,” Feng Youde continued, “I would definitely have you skinned alive! From now on, if the slightest bad thing happens to Bai Xiaochun in the Hall of Devil Slayers, I’ll come looking for you to settle accounts!”

As Master Cloud-Dao staggered to a stop outside, he clasped hands, bowed, and said, “Don’t worry, Hallmaster, I’ll accomplish this task or die trying!”

A moment passed, and no more word came out from the temple. Master Cloud-Dao wiped the blood off of his mouth, and then turned to look in a certain direction, his eyes burning with venom, venom directed, not toward Bai Xiaochun, but toward Li Yuansheng!

“Li Yuansheng!!” he said through gritted teeth. With that, he flew into motion, leaving the Hall of Devil Slayers and heading toward the immortal's cave Li Yuansheng occupied when outside of his clan.

Upon arriving, he banged his fist on the main door so hard that the entire immortal's cave shook. Li Yuansheng had been in the middle of meditating, but now his eyes snapped open, and he rushed out to find Master Cloud-Dao simmering in anger just outside.

“Brother Cloud-Dao, you--”

Before he could finish speaking Master Cloud-Dao performed an incantation gesture, causing a rift to break open in midair and rush toward Li Yuansheng. “I thought you were worth making friends with, Li Yuansheng! How could you do something so sinister!?!?”

Li Yuansheng’s jaw dropped, and he leaped backward to avoid Master Cloud-Dao’s divine ability.

“Sinister?” he said angrily. “How was I sinister?”

“You asked me to get rid of Bai Xiaochun, but it was all a setup to get me killed! Do you know who Bai Xiaochun is? Well, do you, Li Yuansheng? What did I ever do to offend you!?!?” Before Li Yuansheng could even react, Master Cloud-Dao dashed forward and launched a palm strike that struck Li Yuansheng directly in the chest.

Li Yuansheng staggered backward, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth, eyes blazing with shock. “That’s impossible! He’s nothing but a hostage from a Middle Reaches sect! He’s only--”

“That guy is anything but ordinary. When Hallmaster Feng heard that he was in trouble, you should have seen the look on his face. He summoned 10,000 disciples and ten Devil-Slaying Battleships to go rescue him!”

When Li Yuansheng heard this, his eyes went wide, and an exclamation of shock escaped his lips.

“How is that possible...?”

“How should I know?” Master Cloud-Dao raged. “You should have seen how badly Eccentric Earthvile was hurt!”

By this point, his hatred toward Li Yuansheng was bone-deep. However, he knew that Li Yuansheng came from a deva clan, so after venting some anger, he simply swished his sleeve and left.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0414 awe-chapter-415

After Master Cloud-Dao left, Li Yuansheng went back into his immortal's cave, his face ashen and yet green with fury. Blood still smeared his lips as he balled his hands into fists and growled, “Bai Xiaochun is nothing more than a hostage from a Middle Reaches sect. The River-Defying Sect is still unstable, and doesn't even have a Deva Realm cultivator yet. They could be destroyed at any moment. How could a hostage like that have anybody powerful supporting them?”

Li Yuansheng gritted his teeth and contemplated giving up on the matter. However, that seemed too bitter of a pill to swallow, especially when he thought back to the humiliation he had endured in Sky City. It only took a moment for him to lose his cool immediately. Eyes flickering with cold light, he thought, “It must have just been a coincidence. Hallmaster Feng must have had a beef with Eccentric Earthvile. There’s no way that Bai Xiaochun can have somebody that powerful watching out for him!

“Since Master Cloud-Dao won’t help me, I guess I’ll have to handle things myself. This time, I’ll make sure Bai Xiaochun knows the height of the heavens and the breadth of the earth!” Li Yuansheng pulled out a jade slip, thought for a moment, and then decided that he would call upon the resources of his clan….

A few days later, Li Yuansheng emerged from his immortal's cave, a grim expression on his face as he headed straight for the teleportation portal that led down to Sky Quarter Rainbow. His destination: the desert, and Bai Xiaochun’s tavern.

**

Now that Big Fatty Zhang and the other Dao protectors had been promoted, Xu Baocai was the only one who remained to lead the rest of the Azure Dragon Society. For the most part, he just watched the merit points rolling in, and enjoyed a comfortable life.

“Ah, this is the life. I can have anything I want at the snap of a finger. Even the junior patriarch and all of them up in the rainbow district are probably jealous of me.” He was currently laying on his belly, enjoying a full body massage being performed by eight maidservants. The feeling of their warm, dainty hands caused a wide smile to spread out across his face. He even reached his arm around the waist of one of the beautiful maid servants and pulled her close.

“You’ll be keeping me warm tonight,” he said, smiling so broadly his eyes became nothing but slits.

The maidservant flushed and said, “Lord Baocai, you....”

Xu Baocai laughed heartily. Heart burning with passion, he was about to roll over when, all of a sudden, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering noise filled his ears. In the blink of an eye, everything began shaking violently, and the roof of the tavern shuddered as if it were about to be torn off.

Instantly, numerous agonized shrieks rang out, and the entire tavern began to collapse into rubble. Screaming, Xu Baocai scrambled to safety, heart pounding with rage. Just when he was about to cry out some orders, he looked up and saw the yellow-robed Li Yuansheng floating up above in the air.

“You have the time it takes an incense stick to burn to get in touch with Bai Xiaochun and tell him to get the hell down here. If he doesn’t show up in time, then I’ll rip that property-bestowal flag right out of the ground!!” With that, Li Yuansheng waved his right hand, sending a sea of flames down to engulf the remnants of the tavern.

As the tavern began to burn, a little flag was revealed, which was none other than the flag Bai Xiaochun had received, granting him the right to personal property in Sky City.

Xu Baocai looked around with bloodshot eyes at the ruins around him, and the wailing cultivators of the Azure Dragon Society. Obviously, Li Yuansheng was trying to goad Bai Xiaochun out into the open, but at the moment, Xu Baocai couldn’t think of anything else to do other than make contact with him.

Without any hesitation, he pulled out a jade slip to send a message.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was in his immortal's cave on Sky Quarter Rainbow, consuming the medicinal pills Feng Youde had given him and reveling in the feeling of his cultivation base rising. After performing some breathing exercises, he expelled some impure vital energy from his mouth, and then prepared to continue with his cultivation.

He had taken the time to contemplate the events which had played out on the Eternalflux Continent on a few occasions, but still couldn’t make heads or tails of them. No matter how many explanations he came up with, none of them made much sense.

“First there was that incident with the Sky Quarter peak lord, and then Feng Youde’s sudden change in attitude. What’s going on here? Should I take the initiative to do a little investigating of my own?” Even as he was rubbing his chin thoughtfully, his expression flickered, and he pulled a jade slip out of his bag of holding. As soon as he sent some divine sense into it, he heard Xu Baocai wailing,

“Save us, Junior Patriarch.... Li Yuansheng is here, he burned the tavern to the ground! Lots of brothers of the Azure Dragon Society are injured....

“He said to tell you that you have the time it takes an incense stick to burn to get down here or else he’ll take the property-bestowal flag! What do we do, Junior Patriarch...?”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard this, he gasped, and his anger began to burn. “You want my flag? That’s my personal property!! You burned my tavern to the ground? Li Yuansheng, ah, Li Yuansheng. I still haven’t settled accounts for the last time you plotted against me in secret, and now you try to bully me out in the open!?”

Bai Xiaochun was completely incensed. Xu Baocai had been bullied, the tavern had been destroyed, and his property-bestowal flag was being threatened. There was no other option for Bai Xiaochun than to shoot to his feet.

“You want me down in Sky City, huh? Not convenient to make a move against me on Sky Quarter Rainbow? Alright, that’s exactly what I wanted anyway!” Hanging his Hall of Devil Slayers identity medallion around his neck to make sure he had no problems getting down to the city, he flew out of his immortal's cave.

“Let’s go see if Li Yuansheng will dare to make a move against me when I go as a representative of the Hall of Devil Slayers! Will he dare to disrespect the hall?!” Seething with anger, he rushed over to the teleportation portal. Just before teleporting down, though, he hesitated for a moment, and then sent a quick message to Hallmaster Feng Youde. He felt much better after that, and quickly teleported down and shot toward the west district, and the desert.

Even from a distance, he could see the large crowd of cultivators gathered to look at the black smoke rising up into the air from the rubble that used to be his tavern.

Then he saw Xu Baocai and the other Azure Dragon Society cultivators huddled off to the side, ashen-faced and bleeding, and Li Yuansheng hovering in the air amidst a sea of flames, right above Bai Xiaochun's flag of property bestowal.

“Li Yuansheng,” Bai Xiaochun roared, “how dare you threaten that flag of mine!” With that, he shot into the air toward Li Yuansheng, simultaneously sending frigid qi roiling out to quench the flames of the burning tavern.

As soon as Li Yuansheng looked up and saw Bai Xiaochun, a cold smile twisted his face, and he waved his finger. In response, the air around Bai Xiaochun twisted and distorted, and numerous pulses of astonishing energy erupted out. At the same time, four figures stepped out of thin air.

Bai Xiaochun's face fell, and he stopped in place, causing the frigid qi around him to grow stronger and stronger as he looked around at the four newcomers.

They were all young men with cultivation bases in the mid Core Formation stage. Obviously, these were not like the silkpants friends Li Yuansheng had brought with him before. These four had grim expressions on their faces, and intensely murderous auras. These were true Chosen, people who were practiced killers. In addition to all of that, their handsome features were all similar in some ways, and they all wore identical green robes!

Most of the cultivators in the crowd didn’t recognize them, but a few did, and immediately began to call out in shock.

“The Flashflame Four!!”

“They're definitely the Flashflame Four! They’re in the top 300 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!!”

In response to the cries of shock, Bai Xiaochun frowned and looked over at the group. All of these four green-robed disciples emanated incredible pressure similar to that of Zuo Hengfeng’s two Core Formation cultivator escorts.

Li Yuansheng threw his head back and laughed. Clasping hands and bowing to the Flashflame Four, he then turned his attention to Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes shone with piercing light.

“Bai Xiaochun, I don’t care what happens today, I'm going to uproot your property-bestowal flag and put an end to the days of your tavern!”

With that, he let loose another stream of laughter. He had complete and utter confidence in the Flashflame Four, especially considering that all of them were in the same cultivation level as Bai Xiaochun, the mid Core Formation stage. From what he could tell, they should have no trouble dominating Bai Xiaochun in a fight.

“In fact, I'm not just going to take your flag. I’m going to make sure you personally understand that there are certain people in the world who you can't afford to offend!” More laughter erupted from Li Yuansheng’s mouth as he waved his hand, sending his sea of flames down to engulf what little remained of the tavern.

“Attack!” he cried. Instantly, expressions of disdain could be seen on the faces of the Flashflame Four, and they began to walk forward. As they did, shocking flames erupted out from them, to the point where they themselves almost looked like beings made from flame.

Clearly, they weren’t attempting to kill Bai Xiaochun, but they most certainly were attempting to seriously injure him.

Eyes flashing, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and shoved it out in front of him, causing the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation to erupt with power. As frigid qi began to build up in the area, he fell backward several paces, then threw his head back and roared.

“You bunch of insufferable bullies! You’re pushing things too far! Four of you ganging up on one of me? Plus you want to steal my flag and destroy my business! What’s next, you’re going to take my poor little life!?

“Hallmaster, hurry, they’re trying to kill me!!” Bai Xiaochun let loose his words with as much power backing them as possible, causing them to echo like thunder through the entire area. Before the Flashflame Four or Li Yuansheng could react, booms filled the sky, and a huge wind kicked up. Boundless fluctuations of power roiled through all creation as a blast of energy descended from above.

An old man suddenly appeared up above, his expression grim and his eyes shining with icy coldness. As he neared, the pressure in the area mounted, causing the land to quake and leaving everyone in the area trembling.

This old man was none other than the hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers, Feng Youde!

“Who dares try to take Bai Xiaochun’s poor little life!?!?” he cried, his rage causing heaven and earth to shake violently.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0415 awe-chapter-416

The voice which filled the area was backed by the might of a Nascent Soul cultivation base, and it instantly caused the faces of the Flashflame Four to fall, and their bodies to tremble. If the voice had belonged to an ordinary Nascent Soul cultivator, their reaction might not have been so extreme. After all, the entire group had extraordinary latent talent, and were also listed among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. They were the type of people who wouldn’t be fazed by ordinary Nascent Soul cultivators.

But Feng Youde was in the late Nascent Soul stage, a cultivation base level that surpassed most ordinary Nascent Soul experts, and as such, the hearts of the Flashflame Four were filled with fear.

Of course, most terrifying of all was not Feng Youde’s cultivation base, but rather, his status in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. People who were capable of rising to the position of hallmaster on any of the rainbow districts were few and far between.

And even more telling was that he was the hallmaster of the Hall of Devil Slayers. Although each of the four rainbow districts had its own Hall of Devil Slayers, the cultivators from any of them were always fierce and terrifying. Very, very few people would ever dare to provoke a Nascent Soul eccentric like that, and the fact that he had shown up burning with fury left the Flashflame Four trembling in fear.

If that was the case with those four, there was little need to mention Li Yuansheng. While it was true that he was from a deva clan, and that such a clan wouldn’t fear a single

Nascent Soul hallmaster, Li Yuansheng was not here as a representative of his clan. He had come here of his own volition.

Not even a powerful clan like his would risk offending a hallmaster because of a conflict with a single clan member, not even one who could potentially reach the Deva Realm one day.

Li Yuansheng understood that immediately, and therefore, was filled with terror. Inwardly, he was howling in grief, and couldn't help but think back to what Master Cloud-Dao had told him.

"How could this Bai Xiaochun have someone so powerful backing him!?!?" he thought. For the first time, Li Yuansheng regretted everything he had done, especially when he saw the trembling Flashflame Four glaring at him with venomous hatred.

Bracing himself, he clasped hands and began to speak, "Senior Feng, please, I--"

Moments before, Bai Xiaochun had been staring at Feng Youde in shock.

Despite having sent the message requesting help, he was still deeply shaken by the fact that Feng Youde had actually come in person. After all, this was not a sect affair at all, and thus, the lengths to which Feng Youde was going to watch out for him were beyond what he ever could have imagined.

Therefore, as soon as he realized Feng Youde's stance in the situation, he pointed at the Flashflame Four, and interrupted Li Yuansheng to say, "Hallmaster, these were the ones who wanted to take my poor little life. And that guy down there was trying to force me to give him my property-bestowal flag! Once that flag came out of the ground, I would be dead for sure!”

Even the Flashflame Four opened their mouths to offer some explanations.

As Feng Youde hovered there in midair, he couldn’t help but feel a bit down. After receiving Bai Xiaochun’s message, he had hesitated about what to do. After all, considering his status, it was completely inappropriate for him to act like Bai Xiaochun’s bodyguard. But considering what the Heavenspan emissary had promised him, he had ended up gritting his teeth and intervening.

Upon arriving and seeing the Flashflame Four attacking Bai Xiaochun, he made his decision. He would help Bai Xiaochun in this situation, and do it in a way that would scare any other disciple who harbored thoughts of causing problems. That way, there would be no further such incidents in the future.

“N-no, that’s not what happened, sir!” Li Yuansheng stammered. “Senior Feng, please listen to--”

Eyes radiating coldness, Feng Youde snorted, interrupting Li Yuansheng and simultaneously waving his sleeve. Instantly, a majestic power parted the clouds and descended, transforming into a powerful attack. To the shock of Bai Xiaochun and everyone else present, that attack slammed into the Flashflame Four, causing blood to spray out of their mouths as they were violently tossed 300 meters away.

“Get the hell back to where you came from,” Feng Youde said coolly, “and focus on cultivation. From now on, don’t get involved in things like this!”

Seeing how events were unfolding, Bai Xiaochun also shouted, “Yeah, get the hell back to where you came from and focus on cultivation. From now on, don’t get involved in things like this!”

The Flashflame Four staggered to their feet, blood oozing out of their mouths. Not daring to offer even a single retort, they clasped hands, shot angry glances at Li Yuansheng, then turned and left.

Trembling, Li Yuansheng began to back up subconsciously, but before he could get very far, Feng Youde’s ice-cold gaze fell on him. Then Feng Youde waved his sleeve, sending a gale-force wind slamming into Li Yuansheng, who screamed and coughed up blood as he was thrown off into the distance.

“I don't care how long you’ve had a grudge with Bai Xiaochun. If you insist on causing problems, then I’ll issue an order pulling you into the Hall of Devil Slayers for a bit of hardcore training.” In response, Li Yuansheng’s face became a mask of terror, and he trembled even more than before. Not only did he have no desire to join the Hall of Devil Slayers, he was also filled with incredible regret and bitterness that Bai Xiaochun had someone so powerful watching out for him. Bowing his head, he turned to make his escape, vowing to never cause problems for Bai Xiaochun ever again.

Bai Xiaochun could see how scared he was at the threat, and therefore, couldn’t hold back from excitedly yelling, “That's right, Li Yuansheng! If you ever provoke me again, you can come join me in the Hall of Devil Slayers! Hey, where are you going? Hold on a second, you destroyed my tavern! You owe me!”

Heart dripping with blood, Li Yuansheng gritted his teeth and threw a bag of holding out behind him before scurrying off into the distance.

Delighted that everything had been resolved, Bai Xiaochun looked up at Feng Youde, then clasped hands and bowed.

“Many thanks, Hallmaster!”

Feng Youde looked down at Bai Xiaochun, cleared his throat, and offered a few words of encouragement. Then he turned and left. The sensation of having been summoned by another person left him feeling very unsettled.

After Feng Youde left, Xu Baocai and the other Azure Dragon Society cultivators turned to look at Bai Xiaochun as if he were some sort of god. Never could they have imagined that their moment of deadly crisis would have been resolved in such a way.

The mere wave of his hand summoned a Nascent Soul cultivator, something that left everyone shaken, including all of the cultivators who had come to watch the show.

Under the glowing eyes of all present, Bai Xiaochun strutted over to Xu Baocai and the others, puffed his chest out, and handed over a sizeable sum of merit points. Eyes sparkling, he then made his way proudly back to Sky Quarter Rainbow and his immortal's cave.

“I can't believe I'm so important to him,” he thought. “He actually came when I summoned him, and unwillingly at that, from the look on his face. Actually, the Sky Quarter peak lord also had the same look on his face back when I saw him....

“Has someone forced them to watch out for me? But who?”

Time passed. An entire month flew by. During that time, Li Yuansheng didn’t cause any trouble for Bai Xiaochun, nor did the Hall of Devil Slayers assign him any missions.

Whenever he went to visit the Hall of Devil Slayers, if he saw something he liked, he would take it on credit. The only exception were certain extremely rare and precious items which were only made available to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay too much attention to those things. Life was good, and his cultivation base was slowly progressing.

Eventually, he came to realize that if he wanted to cultivate his Living Mountain Incantation on the second-level rainbow, all he needed to do was buy a certain type of command medallion from the Hall of Devil Slayers, which acted as a single-use pass. Considering that they weren’t very expensive, he bought several.

Of the second-level rainbows, the one on the left was for the deva patriarch, whereas the one on the right was for the sect leader.

That rainbow was also known by the name Myriad Star Rainbow.

Myriad Star Rainbow was also the location of various unique locations for training and trials by fire, which were accessible to disciples who possessed the requisite command medallions.

There was a reason for Myriad Star Rainbow’s name, and that was because it was also where the list of cultivators in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars was on display.

Cultivators like that were the type who could shake the entire eastern cultivation world!

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars list was quite eye-catching; it took up roughly thirty percent of Myriad Star Rainbow, upon which could be seen a collection of numerous glittering stars.

The stars were distributed among the various seven colors of the rainbow, most of them being in the red portion; those were so densely packed that they were impossible to count. After that, the numbers were distributed as such: orange, tens of thousands; yellow, thousands; green, a single thousand; cyan, four or five hundred; blue, a bit over a hundred. The fewest stars were in the violet section, where only eight were visible!

Each of those colors represented a different trial by fire, and as for the stars, they stood for different Chosen!

Only those who qualified to be on this rainbow were considered to be Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. Of course, many, many cultivators didn’t qualify, and as such, anyone who could get onto that list was the subject of much envy on the part of others, and would instantly be quite well-known.

Furthermore, in order to foster this trend, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s grand spell formation had a special function; a disciple who looked closely at any of those stars would suddenly find the name of that particular Chosen floating in their mind.

Because of that, countless disciples in the sect were completely and utterly determined to become one of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

Once their name was on that rainbow, their names would be able to completely shake heaven and earth. Of course, only cultivators under the Nascent Soul stage could be Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0416 awe-chapter-417

Bai Xiaochun was currently in line at the teleportation portal which led to Myriad Star Rainbow. Since he had time to spare, he looked up at the three sections of the rainbow up above. Recently, he had spent a bit of time getting more familiar with the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars arrangement.

Those who qualified to be listed as stars on that rainbow were true Chosen who received special treatment from the sect, and access to resources far beyond what was available to ordinary disciples. There were even special items that could only be purchased on Myriad Star Rainbow, and only by those on the list.

Bai Xiaochun had recently learned that the trials by fire in the seven layers of the rainbow were all very dangerous, and that every year, disciples ended up dying within them.

“Those trials by fire seem really dangerous,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “I really don’t get why so many people want to participate in all that fighting and stuff.”

And yet, there was never a shortage of disciples willing to take on the challenge.

One of the reasons had to do with the incredible rewards available once someone got onto the list. Of course, there were also prizes that were awarded for simply getting on the list to begin with, such as merit points and various rare items.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the different colors of the rainbow, and eventually his eyes came to rest on the top level, the violet one, and the eight stars which rested there. Those stars were the highest of them all, and when Bai Xiaochun realized that everyone seemed to be staring at them, he couldn't help but be skeptical.

"Let's see who's in first place...." He looked up at the highest star in the violet section of the rainbow, and a moment later, a name appeared in his mind.

"Zhao Tianjiao!" Bai Xiaochun's eyes went wide. He had never seen someone with a name like this before, which literally meant "Chosen." It was a very domineering name, and yet, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but tartly mutter to himself, "Not as good as my name...."

Next, he looked at the second star on the rainbow, and moments later, another name appeared in his mind. This one was obviously a Daoist name.

"Heretic!" Bai Xiaochun gasped, and yet again, felt a bit annoyed. "What kind of a crappy name is that? Heretic schmeretic…."

With that, he moved on to the third name.

"Chen Yueshan...." It was obvious at a glance that this name belonged to a female cultivator. Just as Bai Xiaochun was about to continue down the list, people started pushing him from behind. The area around the Myriad Star Rainbow teleportation portal was usually quite crowded, so people weren't happy about someone blocking the way.

Looking away from the rainbow, Bai Xiaochun proceeded along in line until he reached the teleportation portal. After vanishing, he reappeared on Myriad Star Rainbow.

This was his first time here, but he had come well-prepared. He had acquired a map of the place in the Hall of Devil Slayers, and after confirming his location on it, he flew up into the air.

There were cultivators everywhere, most of them having come from the third level rainbows either to practice cultivation or to attempt to get into the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

“This place is pretty busy!” Bai Xiaochun thought in surprise. It was a lot louder here than on Sky Quarter Rainbow. Bai Xiaochun even spotted some vendor stalls which had been set up by disciples to peddle various items. Such stalls seemed very popular.

As for the locations set aside for special types of cultivation, almost all of them had lines of disciples waiting to enter. Some of those lines had hundreds of disciples in them, which was definitely something new to Bai Xiaochun. As he made his way along, he eventually reached the special location set aside for cultivating the Living Mountain Incantation.

It was a desolate, weed-choked ravine, next to the entrance of which was a greenish-black boulder. Sitting on top of the boulder was a gaunt middle-aged man with a jaw that jutted out like an ape's. His skin was so tan it was almost black, and from a distance, he almost looked like a monkey wearing human clothing.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and couldn’t help but stare a bit at the odd-looking man. Clearly, he was a Core Formation cultivator, and yet there was something about him that made him seem extremely powerful, something that Bai Xiaochun couldn't quite put his finger on. It was almost as if there was some terrifying energy in him that was somehow impossible to release into the open.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun had the distinct premonition that if this man actually attacked someone, that power would indeed erupt, and when it did, it might even be enough to fight someone in the Nascent Soul stage.

“The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect really is a terrifying place....” he thought. “Even the random guards are completely spine-tingling.” At that point, Bai Xiaochun looked around and realized how cold and desolate this place was. Nobody was lined up to get in, and after a moment, he even wondered if he had somehow lost his way and was in the wrong place. However, after double-checking his map, he was certain that he was in the right place.

As he stood there, the man on the boulder suddenly opened his eyes and spoke in a grating, ear-piercing voice. “The Valley of Floating Flowers is on the right. The Peak of Green Cliffs is to the left. The Pool of Emerald Waters is behind me. And up ahead is the Crag of Martial Sealing.”

“Um, thanks, Elder Brother,” Bai Xiaochun replied, “but I'm actually on my way to the Ravine of Endless Mountains.”

“Really?” the man said, looking a bit shocked. After looking Bai Xiaochun up and down, his eyes suddenly sparkled.

“You cultivate the Living Mountain Incantation?”

Bai Xiaochun immediately nodded.

The man chuckled, and the look in his eyes softened. With that, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger at the adjacent ravine. Instantly, the ravine trembled, and then began to ripple and distort. Suddenly, an enormous stone hand stretched out from the valley, over 30 meters wide. Apparently, the hand was waiting for Bai Xiaochun to step onto it.

The man looked back at Bai Xiaochun and said, “It’s been a long time since anyone cultivated the Living Mountain Incantation.

“It is not a technique, but rather, a divine ability focused on becoming a human mountain, and thus having access to unlimited power. It is divided into four levels, those levels being the Mortal Mountain, the Earth Mountain, the Heaven Mountain, and finally, the ultimate level... the Immortal Mountain!

“The key to this type of cultivation is the mountain meld. After all, mountains have spirits, and in this ravine you will find countless mountains. Find one with whom you are connected by destiny, and then gain enlightenment of that mountain’s spirit. If you succeed, you can unleash the power of the Living Mountain!” The man waved his finger, and a deafening roar filled Bai Xiaochun’s ears as more information about the Living Mountain Incantation poured into his mind.

Expression somber, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and bowed deeply to the man.

“Many thanks for your help, Elder Brother. Might I request to know your honored name?”

“You can just call me... Stonemountain!”

Stonemountain smiled faintly and then closed his eyes and went back to meditating, looking very much like a stone monkey.

Bai Xiaochun once again bowed, then took a deep breath and hopped onto the huge stone hand which had stretched out from inside the ravine. As soon as he did, the hand closed into a fist around him, then pulled him into the ravine. Moments later, the hand began to fade away, and as it did, the ripples that had appeared moments ago faded away, and the ravine looked as desolate as it always had.

Bai Xiaochun’s vision swam a bit, and rumbling echoed in his ears. However, all of that soon faded away, and when he could see clearly, he realized to his shock that he was in a completely unfamiliar world.

The sky was a bluish-green color, and down below... was a boundless sea of clouds, with countless mountain peaks poking up through them. To see so many mountain peaks stretching as far as the eye could see was indeed very shocking.

“The Ravine of Endless Mountains....” he thought, shaken. After flying around a bit, he did just as Stonemountain had said and began to search for a mountain that was connected to him by destiny.

“How am I supposed to know if we're connected by destiny, though?” he murmured to himself, feeling a bit confused. “Do I just find a mountain that looks good to me?”

As he flew along over the sea of clouds, he looked this way and that for an eye-catching mountain.

As Bai Xiaochun flew along through the Ravine of Endless Mountains, outside on Sky Quarter Rainbow, Song Que was sitting cross-legged in his immortal's cave, his eyes shining brightly.

“Finally.... I've finally reached the moment of Core Formation!” Currently, he had numerous spell formations set up around him, and had already notified his hall of what he was doing. He had also procured some medicinal pills designed specifically for Core Formation. Popping one into his mouth, he closed his eyes and prepared to make his breakthrough.

Half a month after Song Que, Chen Manyao also began to break through to Core Formation!

Two days after that, Master God-Diviner... also started to make his breakthrough!

Other than Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai, all of the Dao protectors who had followed Bai Xiaochun to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect were making their attempts to break through to Core Formation.

The three in that group had already made extensive preparations. Combined with the fact that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a riversource sect with abundant spiritual energy, it made it much easier for them to attempt their breakthroughs. As for Chen Manyao and Master God-Diviner, the vast amount of merit points at the disposal of the Azure Dragon Society also had something to do with it.

As for Big Fatty Zhang, he couldn't come close to the others in terms of preparations, but Bai Xiaochun had been sure to take care of him, and had set aside plenty of merit points for him to use. As such, his cultivation base had now reached the great circle of Foundation Establishment.

That meant that for him, Core Formation was just around the corner!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0417 awe-chapter-418

As Bai Xiaochun’s Dao protectors went into secluded meditation to attempt to break through from the Foundation Establishment stage, Bai Xiaochun was flying around in the Ravine of Endless Mountains, looking for a mountain that was connected to him by destiny.

“Just which of these mountains is destined for me?!” he thought, frustrated. There were countless mountains within this world of clouds, and although most of them looked impressive, none of them seemed to be connected to him by destiny.

Bai Xiaochun was not sure what to do, and just kept flying around aimlessly. He wasn't even sure how much time had passed. Just when he was about to randomly select a mountain to try out, he caught sight of a very unique mountain off in the sea of clouds, and a tremor passed through him.

This mountain actually looked less like a mountain and more like a statue! It depicted a giant, kneeling down on one knee, right hand outstretched as if to grasp at the sky. The facial features were worn down and not possible to identify, but there was something in the statue’s eyes that left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

He was almost sure he could hear a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering roar echoing in his ears, and could almost see that enormous giant trying to rip open the heavens.

“Looks kind of like the Blood Ancestor!” he thought. As he flew nearer to the mountain, he realized that a shocking pressure was weighing down on him, a pressure that left him trembling and shaking.

Instantly, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“Could it be that this mountain is the one connected to me by destiny? If it wasn’t, then why did I start to feel pressure after looking at it? That proves that it's connected to me by destiny, right?!” Excited, he continued to fly closer to the statue.

It was in that moment that the little turtle suddenly stuck his head out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding and disdainfully murmured, “Destiny? Yeah right. This statue is in the middle of this dimension; anybody who reached this point would feel pressure, as long as they were alive. Don’t let your imagination run wild, Little Bai.”

“You shut up!” Bai Xiaochun barked angrily. Ignoring the little turtle, he flew closer to the statue until he was able to alight onto its open hand. At this point, he felt more than ever that the statue was similar to the Blood Ancestor, so he quickly sat down cross-legged to meditate.

“This statue and I are definitely connected by destiny. Definitely!” With that, he proceeded to cultivate the Living Mountain Incantation with complete and utter determination.

The following day, he opened his eyes and was depressed to find that despite having spent the entire time trying to meld with the mountain, there had been no reaction whatsoever.

“All mountains have spirits....” he thought, shaking his head. With that, he closed his eyes and spent another three days trying to solve the mystery. However, the only result was that he got more depressed.

“Does it really have a spirit?” he thought. “I don’t feel anything....” He thought a bit more to try to come up with some more ideas, and then closed his eyes to try again. Time passed. At a certain point, he lost track of how many attempts he had made, and yet despite all that, he hadn’t provoked a single reaction from the statue. However, thanks to his unswerving determination, he eventually began to notice some trends, and soon, something like varying layers of fluctuations appeared in his mind.

However, that didn't solve the problem completely, so Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth even harder and continued to work.

Two months later, Song Que emerged from his secluded meditation facilities on Sky Quarter Rainbow, accompanied by thunderous rumbling. At the same time, a Core Formation aura roiled out in all directions, causing the clouds to swirl about, and attracting much attention from people in the area.

A screaming whistle rang out as Song Que flew up into the air, eyes sparkling like the stars, body shining like a treasure. The cultivation base power rippling out from him, the Core Formation pressure, was enough to rip apart heaven and earth!

Eight crystallized spiritual seas now existed inside of him, which had formed together into an Earth Core!

An Earth Core formed from eight spiritual seas gave him power and might that made him one of the most powerful among Core Formation experts.

“This is the day that I've been waiting for! At long last. Core Formation!” Song Que threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he declared excitedly, “I’ll be passing you up in no time!” Eyes shining with anticipation, he flew back into his immortal's cave to stabilize his cultivation base.

Not long after Song Que reached Core Formation, Chen Manyao and Master God-Diviner also succeeded. If this event had occurred back in the River-Defying Sect, it would have attracted quite a bit of attention, but in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, Core Formation cultivators were relatively common. Of course, that made sense considering how large the sect was, and how it controlled all of the eastern cultivation world.

It was a sect where all sorts of powerful experts gathered, and as such, trifling Core Formation cultivators weren’t anything that people would pay much attention to. Only after reaching the Nascent Soul stage could one be considered strong enough to dominate any other location in the eastern cultivation world.

Despite the fact that reaching Core Formation wasn’t a very big deal in this sect, Master God-Diviner and Chen Manyao were both very excited.

Meanwhile, back in the Ravine of Endless Mountains, Bai Xiaochun was dejectedly continuing his work atop the enormous statue.

“How come it isn’t working!?!?” Another half a month went by, and Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of mental collapse. Up to this point, all efforts to meld with the mountain had ended in failure, and the only headway he’d made was in being able to sense the mountain spirit inside of it.

“At this rate, it's going to take over a hundred years to get this right!” Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of going mad. After arriving in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he had done a bit of investigating, and knew that the Living Mountain Incantation was one of the sect's 300 secret magics. Not only that, it was actually listed within the top 10. From ancient times until now, only a few people had ever succeeded in cultivating it, from which its difficulty could be seen. Although some people succeeded at it almost right away, there were others who never succeeded even in an entire lifetime.

“Ah forget it. This is too hard.” Depressed, he rose to his feet, looked down at the statue-like mountain beneath his feet, and then gave a slight harrumph.

“Well, even if I can’t use this Living Mountain Incantation, it doesn’t matter. I still have my Waterswamp Kingdom and the powers of gravity and repulsion!” When it came to the magic of gravity and repulsion, his extensive research had led his cultivation to the point where he could form small spheres that contained the powers of gravity and repulsion. Based on what he could tell, it wouldn’t be very long before he had complete control over that magic.

As far as his Waterswamp Kingdom went, that was one of his trump cards, something he wouldn’t use unless absolutely necessary.

Still feeling a bit disgruntled, Bai Xiaochun stepped off of the mountain into the air. With a final look at the statue, he sighed and began to make his way off into the distance.

Before long, he was out of the Ravine of Endless Mountains. As soon as that enormous hand placed him outside of the mirror-like entrance, he looked over at Stonemountain, who sat there looking like a statue of a monkey, in exactly the same posture as he had when Bai Xiaochun entered the ravine months before.

But then, Stonemountain opened an eye and looked over at Bai Xiaochun. “Nobody has ever succeeded at melding with the mountain on their first attempt. Even people with exceptional latent talent usually need ten tries.

“To meld with the mountain, first forget yourself, then forget the mountain. When you wake up, you will be the mountain, and the mountain will be you....”

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place for a moment, thought about what Stonemountain had just said, then nodded. Clasping hands, he bowed and then made his way off. Back in his immortal's cave, he sat down cross-legged and meditated for a bit longer on what he'd just been told.

Before long, he opened his eyes, and they sparkled brightly.

“Core Formation!?”

Before long, a beam of light pierced through the sky toward him, transforming into a young woman with spectacularly beautiful features, and a yellow robe that completely complemented her figure in every way.

“Hello, Elder Brother Bai.” She was none other than Chen Manyao. Smiling charmingly, she landed outside of Bai Xiaochun’s immortal’s cave and was just about to say some more words when the door opened and Bai Xiaochun stepped out. Clicking his tongue, he circled around her and looked her up and down.

Face flushing, she pouted playfully and said, “What are you doing, Elder Brother Bai?!”

Sounding slightly flirtatious, he looked away and said, “It’s been a few months since we last saw each other, *wife*. Congratulations on reaching Core Formation!”

Back in Sky City, Chen Manyao had taken to calling herself Bai Xiaochun's "wife" during the time that she coveted his merit points. However, to hear him use this term now caused the flush on her face to grow deeper. Eyes sparkling with a seductive gleam, she stepped closer to him.

"Elder Brother Bai," she said softly, her breath caressing his cheeks, "as long as you promise me one thing, then you can do anything you want to me."

"What one thing?" Bai Xiaochun coughed dryly, eyeing some of Chen Manyao's more prominent curves.

"Simple. Just join us in the--"

"Save your breath!" he interrupted, shaking his head. This was not Chen Manyao's first time bringing up this subject. Back in Sky City, she had hinted on numerous occasions that he should join the Wildlanders, but he had always refused.

"The sects of the Heavenspan River are the orthodox ones," he said proudly, "and you Wildlanders are the renegades. I, Bai Xiaochun, am from a famous orthodox sect, and am backed by entities so powerful even I don't know who they are. How could I possibly join a bunch of traitors?" Of course, he had only learned the details of such matters from Chen Manyao herself. However, after much thought, he had thought the matter through clearly, and decided that joining forces with the renegades would be risking his poor little life.

"Maybe one day you'll change your mind." Chen Manyao said with a slight smile, as if she didn't mind at all that he'd refused her. With that, she changed the topic.

“Oh right. Elder Brother Bai, the reason I came here today is that I have some clues regarding Du Lingfei....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0418 awe-chapter-419

Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked at Chen Manyao with glistening eyes.

Chen Manyao covered her mouth as she laughed lightly, her eyes sparkling with charm. Seeing how much Bai Xiaochun was interested in such news, she didn’t beat around the bush.

“Based on a comprehensive investigation I carried out, I am sure that, despite not knowing Du Lingfei’s exact current location... she is definitely in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

Although Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything, his eyes continued to glitter brightly.

“The things I've promised to do for you, I will do,” Chen Manyao said. “I’ll continue to investigate, and when I get some more specific information, I’ll tell you immediately. Just keep in mind that Du Lingfei is likely already aware of your presence here.” Giving Bai Xiaochun one last look, she turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun stood at the entrance of his immortal's cave for some time after Chen Manyao left, looking at the setting sun on the horizon, at the spreading shadows of evening, and at the majestic golden sea spreading out as far as the eye could see. At the same time, he thought back to many memories of the past.

Two hours later, he took a deep breath, settled his heart, and walked back into his immortal's cave to meditate. By now, he was not as stubbornly attached to learning the truth about Du Lingfei as he had been years ago.

A few days later, though, he was still feeling somewhat unsettled. Not only was the matter of Du Lingfei still eating at him, but his troubles with the Living Mountain Incantation were continuing to frustrate him, and he couldn’t stop thinking about what Stonemountain had said.

“Forget myself, forget the mountain. When I wake up... I will be the mountain, and the mountain will be me....” Bai Xiaochun frowned. Although he understood the words in general, it was the word ‘forget’ that was obviously the most important part.

Of course, it was easy to talk about forgetting something, but to actually do so was another matter, and at the moment, Bai Xiaochun had no idea how to go about doing it.

“How do I forget...?” he murmured anxiously. “Go into a trance? The mnemonic doesn’t specifically say anything about going into a trance.... I wish there was some way you could just say forget and then instantly forget! That would be perfect.” Almost as soon as the words escaped his lips, he suddenly froze in place, his eyes shining with a strange light.

“Say forget and then instantly forget....” He licked his lips, eyes sparkling as he thought back to his own Fantasy Pill, which, upon being consumed, placed one into a hallucination in which one forgot about reality.

“That’s right!” He smacked his thigh excitedly, then rose to his feet and started pacing back and forth in his immortal's cave. After spending much time in thought, he produced one of his Fantasy Pills and looked it over carefully. After a moment, his brow furrowed as he thought of the very strange expressions that appeared on the faces of cultivators who took the pill, and then started to worry that he would look like them if he consumed it.

“No, that won’t do. Since I'm going to consume it myself, I need to be much more careful. I need to adjust the formula to suit me specifically.” After spending some more time in thought, he hurried out of his immortal's cave to the Hall of Devil Slayers to get some necessary ingredients.

When the disciple in charge of the supply depot saw Bai Xiaochun coming, he smiled and then respectfully bowed in greeting. Bai Xiaochun visited the Hall of Devil Slayers quite often to acquire items he needed, much of which he purchased on credit. It was an arrangement the likes of which had never occurred in the Hall of Devil Slayers, and as a result, he was very famous.

“I need to re-concoct this pill. I need a pill designed for me, something that's not dangerous at all. Say forget and then instantly forget, say wake up and then instantly wake up. That’s the pill I need!” The more he thought about it, the more it made sense. Therefore, he produced a huge sum of merit points to acquire the medicinal plants he needed, all of which were very rare.

As he browsed through the available items, he suddenly saw one particular spirit plant that had no flower, but instead, seven leaves, each one a different color.

Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up, and he gasped.

“Seven-colored mistysea grass!!” Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, he had read some information about seven-colored mistysea grass on a jade slip. It was a spirit plant known to emit a hallucinatory mist that could be used in psychedelic medicinal pills. Not only was it unusually effective, but it had absolutely no harmful side-effects.

“Give me some of those!” he said excitedly, pointing at the seven-colored mistysea grass.

“Elder Brother Bai, the sect limits the sale of this type of medicinal plant. Only people in the top 1,000 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars can buy it.”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, his jaw dropping. After hesitating for a moment, he still couldn't suppress his excitement about the plant, and immediately flew toward the main temple in the Hall of Devil Slayers.

Along the way, numerous disciples of the Hall of Devil Slayers cast respectful glances in his direction. Normally when he came here, he would strut around and show off a bit, but now, he was simply too excited, and rushed directly toward the temple.

“Hallmaster,” he cried out before even arriving, “it's me, Bai Xiaochun. May I request an audience?” Master Cloud-Dao was standing guard outside the temple, and when he saw Bai Xiaochun coming, he smiled and did nothing to block his path, allowing him to enter directly into the temple.

Feng Youde was sitting at the end of the temple, meditating. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun hurried in, his eyes opened.

Forcing a smile onto his face, he said, “How can I help you, Xiaochun...?”

Recently, Bai Xiaochun had been in the Ravine of Endless Mountains, leaving the Hall of Devil Slayers much quieter.

Before that, he had always come over with one issue or another to annoy Feng Youde.

“Hallmaster,” Bai Xiaochun said anxiously, “I really need some seven-colored mistysea grass. Do you happen to have any? Can I have a few stalks...?”

Feng Youde pulled out a jade slip to check how much seven-colored mistysea grass was in the Hall of Devil Slayers. After a moment, his face twitched; although seven-colored mistysea grass wasn’t a very rare plant, there wasn’t a big supply on hand. The Hall of Devil Slayers only had three stalks. Furthermore, considering the hallucinatory effects of the plant, it could only be safely handled by cultivators with a relatively high cultivation base. As such, the sect had put limitations on how it could be distributed.

Feng Youde sighed and said, “Ah, this isn’t a big deal. Just go find someone in the top 1,000 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, and have them buy it for you.”

As of this point, he really felt like he had become Bai Xiaochun’s Dao protector. Suppressing the gloomy feeling which had risen up in his heart, he raised his voice and he said, “Master Cloud-Dao, could you please handle this?”

Master Cloud-Dao nodded in assent and hurried over.

Bai Xiaochun was immediately moved. His entire purpose in coming here was to seek help from Feng Youde in getting someone from the top 1,000 to buy the plants for him. Throwing his arm over Master Cloud-Dao’s shoulder, Bai Xiaochun quickly led him out of the hall.

“Junior Brother Bai,” Master Cloud-Dao said quickly, “the Hall of Devil Slayers only has a few dozen disciples in the top 1,000. All of them are Chosen, obviously, and are a proud and arrogant lot. Obviously, any of them who agree to help you will expect some sort of compensation in return.” Master Cloud-Dao did nothing to hide the truth from Bai Xiaochun. As the honor guard of the Hall of Devil Slayers, not only did he wish to avoid offending Bai Xiaochun, he also sought to avoid provoking those who were in the top 1,000.

“No problem!” Bai Xiaochun said, waving his sleeve. If there was one thing he had a lot of, it was merit points. Filled with zest, he hurried along after Master Cloud-Dao toward a distant immortal's cave.

Upon reaching a certain distance, Master Cloud-Dao stopped to offer an explanation. “This is the immortal's cave of Junior Brother Zhou. He's already in the late Core Formation stage, despite not being even a hundred years old. He reached the green portion of the rainbow, earning a rank of 777 in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!

“Junior Brother Zhou is a true Chosen, and is very famous in the Hall of Devil Slayers. He also has a lot of followers among the lower-ranking disciples. Let’s go pay him a visit. Remember to be very courteous, and definitely don’t say anything to offend him.” Master Cloud-Dao offered a few more exhortations along these lines, and Bai Xiaochun nodded in agreement the whole time. He knew that when going to ask for help, one had to be on their best behavior.

Before the two of them could even get close to the door, three cultivators rushed forward to block their path. These three cultivators had profound cultivation bases, but once they saw that it was Master Cloud-Dao approaching, they stepped aside. However, after reaching the door, no amount of calling out on the part of Master Cloud-Dao provoked even the slightest response.

“I guess Junior Brother Zhou isn’t home....” Master Cloud-Dao said a bit awkwardly.

Bai Xiaochun frowned and then opened his third eye a tiny slit. Instantly, he could see inside of the immortal's cave. Reclining on a divan was a young man being waited upon by several maid servants. A look of scorn could be seen on his face as he blatantly ignored Bai Xiaochun and Master Cloud-Dao.

“Don’t worry, Junior Brother Bai, let’s just move on. Next is the immortal's cave belonging to Junior Brother Chen. He’s a friend of mine, so he should be able to help out with a small matter like this.” Bai Xiaochun was starting to get a bit depressed, but he followed Master Cloud-Dao along to a second immortal's cave.

Apparently, Master Cloud-Dao really was friends with this Junior Brother Chen, who immediately opened the door and allowed them in. However, despite the fact that he didn’t treat them coldly, neither did he treat them with much warmth. After Master Cloud-Dao explained the situation, Junior Brother Chen looked over coolly at Bai Xiaochun and said, “I’ll handle it after my current session of secluded meditation.”

“Many thanks, Elder Brother Chen!” Bai Xiaochun said quickly. “By the way, how long is your--”

“At the soonest, two years. Perhaps as much as five.” Looking a bit impatient, he waved them out of his immortal's cave.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0419 awe-chapter-420

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare, and if it weren’t for the fact that Master Cloud-Dao was pulling him away, he would almost certainly have begun arguing with the cultivator named Chen, who looked on coldly as the two of them left the cave.

Then, a loud bang could be heard as the door slammed shut. Moments later, a cold voice echoed out from inside the cave. “Can’t wait? Go challenge the trials yourself then!”

“Fine!” Bai Xiaochun barked back angrily. “What’s so amazing about getting into the top 1,000 anyway? If you don’t want to help, so be it, but there’s no need to be such a jerk about it!!”

Master Cloud-Dao smiled bitterly and quickly tried to comfort Bai Xiaochun. “Calm down, Junior Brother Bai.” He shook his head. “Ai. Look, all of the people in the top 1,000 are top Chosen! They’re not the type of people we can just tell what to do. The sect views them all as important future figures, especially those who are in the top few hundred in the rankings. For example, I heard that not too long ago, Sima Feiru occupied an entire cultivation district and wouldn’t let anyone enter. It caused quite a disturbance, but in the end, nothing was done about it. Nobody wanted to risk offending him.”

Bai Xiaochun had heard of this Sima Feiru, and knew that he ranked somewhere in the 90’s. He was a spectacular and domineering Chosen, not from the Hall of Devil Slayers, but rather, from the Hall of the Sect Sanctum.

Next, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s sorrow that Master Cloud-Dao led him to the third location, and then the fourth....

Of the few dozen cultivators in the Hall of Devil Slayers who were in the top 1,000, most were currently in secluded meditation, and others were away. As the day passed, not a single Chosen paid any attention to Bai Xiaochun and Master Cloud-Dao. The two of them were either ignored or outright rejected. Although different expressions could be seen on the faces of the various Chosen, none of them could hide the arrogance that seeped out from their very bones. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more irritated.

“They’re as arrogant as spirit tail chickens!” By now it was evening, and Bai Xiaochun was both furious and humiliated at how this seemingly inconsequential task had gone. In fact, he even felt the impulse to simply go try to get into the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

“Junior Brother Bai, ai, look there’s still one more left. He’s more reasonable than the others, we should definitely be able to succeed!! Don’t get angry. This is just how Chosen are! They fought their way through a crowd of tens of thousands to get to where they are now. Think of the danger involved in that! It’s only natural that they would be a bit proud and arrogant....” Master Cloud-Dao had been cajoling Bai Xiaochun in this way the entire day. Although he did feel slightly embarrassed about what had occurred, he was also a bit derisive of Bai Xiaochun for relying on Feng Youde to do everything for him. If he had true skill, why didn’t he just take the challenge himself instead of going around begging for help?

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, suppressed his feelings of depression and followed Master Cloud-Dao to the final immortal's cave. As it turned out, this cultivator was a bit more reasonable. After hearing the request, he smiled immediately.

“Ah, this is a simple matter. I’ve actually done things like this before. However, I charge an intermediary fee. Junior Brother Bai, I've heard quite a lot about you, so for a mere 1,000,000 merit points, I can get those medicinal plants for you!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. 1,000,000 merit points wasn't a price he couldn’t afford, but the seven-colored mistysea grass he wanted should only cost a few tens of thousands. And yet this guy wanted to charge him 1,000,000?

Seeing Bai Xiaochun’s expression, the cultivator smiled, a smile of both disdain and confidence. “Think it’s expensive? Don’t want to pay? That’s fine! If you’re good enough, just go try to get into the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. If you can get into the top 1,000, then you won't need any help from me at all.”

Trying to keep his breathing calm, Bai Xiaochun spun on his heel and, without saying a single word, walked off. Master Cloud-Dao hurried along behind him, sighing. Worried that Bai Xiaochun was going to devolve into a rage, he prepared to offer some words of consolation. However, after some distance, Bai Xiaochun stopped and turned to him.

“Many thanks for your help today, Master Cloud-Dao.”

After a moment of hesitation, Master Cloud-Dao said, “Um... Junior Brother Bai, listen, we can still make this happen. Let’s just go talk to the hallmaster. He can issue a Dharmic decree, and force them to help you whether or not they want to.”

Bai Xiaochun had obviously noticed the veiled looks of scorn that Master Cloud-Dao had attempted to hide throughout the day. Gritting his teeth, he said, “There’s no need!”

Master Cloud-Dao eyes widened. “You mean--”

“It’s only the top 1,000, right? I’ll challenge the trials!” Flicking his sleeve, he transformed into a beam of light that shot toward his immortal's cave.

Master Cloud-Dao stood there watching him leave. After a moment, he laughed softly. “If you actually have what it takes, then why did you need to go begging for help? I bet that within a few days, you’ll be back asking for help from the hallmaster.”

After returning to his immortal's cave, Bai Xiaochun rested for a bit, then sent a message to his Dao protectors, asking them to get as much information as they could about the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. During the following month, all sorts of inquiries were made.

Another half a month passed. Finally, Bai Xiaochun felt that he was well enough prepared. Gritting his teeth, he said, “It’s only the top 1,000, right? What's so special about that? When I come back, I’ll definitely be in the top 1,000!”

Eyes glittering, he packed a few things and then headed for the teleportation portal leading to Myriad Star Rainbow and the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials.

The trials took up nearly thirty percent of Myriad Star Rainbow, and regardless of the time of day or night, the entrance was almost always packed with people. People went into the trials all the time, and if anyone ever succeeded in causing their own star to rise in the ranks, people would immediately notice and get jealous.

The entrance to the trial was an ancient, greenish-black door, fully 3,000 meters tall, carved with countless profound magical symbols that emanated bizarre light and tremendous pressure.

The door was flanked by two enormous statues that depicted, not cultivators, but rather, enormous lion-like beasts, completely fierce and savage in appearance.

The door was opened by just a crack, a crack which from a distance seemed very small, but was actually several dozen meters wide, leaving plenty of room for cultivators to come and go. Even as Bai Xiaochun arrived, he saw a handsome man in a green Daoist robe flying toward the entrance on a cloud.

As soon as the other surrounding cultivators saw the man, they began to cry out.

“That’s Zhao Yidong from Starry Quarter Rainbow! Elder Brother Zhao!”

“This time, Elder Brother Zhao is definitely going to get into the top 1,000!!”

“Yeah, that’s what I was thinking. Elder Brother Zhao is a Chosen from Starry Quarter Rainbow, and a member of the Hall of Sea Sentinels. The first time he took the trial, he got into the top 5,000. The second time, he made it into the top 3,000. And the third time, he got to 1,500th place. This is his fourth time, and I have the feeling he’ll definitely get into the top 1,000!”

Even as they cried out, the star representing Elder Brother Zhao on the green section of the rainbow lit up, prompting even more people to pay attention to it.

Even as everyone focused their attention on Zhao Yidong, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and headed toward the gate. Virtually no one was paying attention to him at all; everyone wanted to see if Zhao Yidong would make it into the top 1,000.

The major milestones in the trial were the 10,000th spot, then the 1,000th, 500th, and 100th. Furthermore, breaking through to a higher-ranking level would provide vastly more incredible rewards.

Rising in the rankings in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars was a way to make a name for oneself. Being in the top 10,000 could be a point of great pride, but only by breaking into the top 1,000 could one truly be considered a true Chosen of the Halls!

Anyone who made it into the top 500 would be considered a Chosen of the Quarters. After that was the top 100. Anyone who reached that level was considered to be a true superstar of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

“I can do it too!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his eyes flashing with determination. Because of what he had experienced in the Hall of Devil Slayers, and because of the passionate atmosphere around him, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was starting to pound in excitement. He suddenly felt the same as he had back in his Qi Condensation days, when he was challenging the stone steles of plants and vegetation.

With that, he shot forward toward the crack in the door, and in the blink of an eye, was inside. Rumbling sounds filled his ears, and his vision swam as numerous images flashed by. Everything was a blur, almost as if the entire world had been turned upside down.

A force began to drag at him that, when combined with the power of the teleportation exerted upon him by the door, became an incredible pressure, like a huge hand grabbing at him and pulling him into another dimension!

His entire body was shaking, and his face drained of blood; this was his first time experiencing a teleportation this intense. Were it not for his powerful cultivation base, he might have been trembling on the point of collapse right now.

Actually, everyone who took the trial experienced this. The truth was that anyone who couldn’t handle the pressure would be ejected; the trial by fire actually began with this teleportation!

As things became clear, a blast of heat hit his face, and based on the aroma he had just smelled, he even wondered if his hair was being burned away. He quickly backed up a few steps and looked around to find himself in a world whose border was made up of crimson cliffs.

Beneath the cliffs was a sea of lava that stretched out as far as the eye could see. Fire raged and liquid rock surged, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions.

At the same time, numerous wild beasts flew out of the cliffs and attempted to make their way off into the distance.

However, many of them were scorched by the flames, and ended up being burned into ash and swallowed up by the sea.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0420 awe-chapter-421

Some of the roaring, struggling beasts were stronger than the others, and managed to make their way far off into the distance, where a mirror-like object was visible, into which they disappeared!

Bai Xiaochun looked around at everything that was happening, and then reviewed some of the information he had gathered in recent days.

“The ranking system of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars is divided into different colors, seven in total. The first level of the trial by fire is the red level, and is the simplest of all. You have to get through this sea of flames. As long as you get thirty percent into the sea itself, your personal star will rise up in the rankings!

“The key is how far you can get; that determines your final ranking. After a certain point, you can go right to the next trial by fire. The number of people who actually reach the very end of the red trial is very small....”

Sighing softly, he looked at all of the countless beasts rushing out into the sea of flames, their miserable shrieks echoing out as they died. As of this moment, he was more impressed than ever by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

“No wonder people go so crazy over the rankings. I’ve never seen anything like this. So, to get through this first level, you’re supposed to use one of those beasts!” With that, he patted his bag of holding to produce a seven-colored jade pendant, which he had purchased earlier for a few merit points. This jade pendant was designed specifically for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials by fire, and by crushing it, the owner would be safely teleported out of the trial by fire in the blink of an eye. It would also keep a record of the person's accomplishments and how far they had proceeded.

Of course, throughout the years, there were always people who didn’t crush the jade pendant fast enough, and ended up dying.

Bai Xiaochun stepped closer to the edge of the cliff. He could tell that flight was prohibited in this area, leaving him with no choice but to leap down and try to land on one of the beasts flying out from the base of the cliff. After looking down for a moment, he jumped out and began to speed down toward a crimson anaconda that was just flying out over the lava.

When Bai Xiaochun slammed onto the flame anaconda, it twisted back and forth in an attempt to hurl him off of its back. However, Bai Xiaochun stamped his right foot down, sending out a burst of power that instantly cowed it. Eyes shining with madness, it continued to speed along.

All the beasts in this place knew that as long as they could reach the final destination, they would have their freedom.

For them, this red trial by fire was actually a prison!

“Alright, be a good little snake and go a bit faster....”

Bai Xiaochun nervously maintained his position on the flame anaconda as it sped along for about the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. As he proceeded along, he noticed that not only did the sea down below grow choppier, but also, that he wasn’t alone. He saw about seven or eight other cultivators, some of whom attempted to switch mounts midflight to be able to get further along into the sea.

There were even two of them who cast covetous gazes at Bai Xiaochun’s mount. After all, he was riding a flame-type beast, which could last longer than other beasts in these intensely hot conditions.

“That's a flame anaconda!”

“Flame-type beasts aren’t very common here....” Both of those cultivators quickly steered their own mounts in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, clearly hoping to snatch his beast.

“What are you people doing?!” Bai Xiaochun shouted angrily.

Both of the cultivators were in the mid Core Formation stage. None of them said anything, and in fact, after eyeing him for a moment, they both unleashed attacks upon the sea of flames below, causing a huge wave of lava to suddenly roll in his direction.

There was no time for Bai Xiaochun to get angry. As the heat surged toward him, he suddenly realized that he was probably on the verge of being burned to a crisp. Screaming, he dodged to the side, and yet still managed to get splashed.

A moment later, he suddenly stopped screaming, and looked down in surprise at his arm. Although some holes had been burned into his garment, the skin beneath hadn’t been harmed at all.

“Eee?” Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, which was when some more drops of burning lava filled the air around him.

Instead of trying to avoid them, he let them land on him, whereupon they burned through his clothing down to his skin.

However, all he felt was a bit of a warm sensation, not the scalding pain he had anticipated. At that point, his eyes lit up. Not too far off, the two cultivators who had been closing in on him with ill intentions looked on with incredulous expressions on their faces.

“He... he wasn’t hurt?”

“Does he have some sort of magical item protecting him? Wait, that’s impossible. Magical items aren’t allowed in this trial!” Even as they looked on in shock, Bai Xiaochun reached his right hand down into the lava below, and even swept it back and forth a few times.

“So nice and warm....” he said excitedly.

When the other two cultivators saw that, their eyes nearly popped out of their skulls.

“Impossible!!”

“Heavens! He... he actually stuck his hand into the lava!!”

“What the....”

As for Bai Xiaochun, he couldn’t have been more excited, and immediately threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“What kind of a sea of lava is this? I thought it was supposed to be scary!” Looking very pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun stepped off of the flame anaconda and dropped down into the lava. Almost immediately, his clothing burned away, revealing his body beneath, absolutely unharmed in any way. He even seemed to be enjoying himself.

“Not bad. Not bad at all....” Then he looked up at the two cultivators who had been on the verge of attacking him, and were now staring back at him with faces as white as sheets. Before Bai Xiaochun could do or say anything against them, they pulled out their seven-colored jade pendants, crushed them, and faded away.

Clearly, they had been worried that Bai Xiaochun might try to get back at them by unleashing some sort of deadly attack.

“Cowards!” he shouted smugly. “Get back here! Come down and have some fun in the lava with me....” With that, he turned and began to swim forward through the lava. Soon, he caught sight of other cultivators in the trial, and when they saw him, they immediately let out cries of shock and disbelief.

“What’s... what's that...?”

“Is that... is that a person!?!?”

“Heavens! There’s actually someone swimming through the lava! That lava is hot enough to melt unfathomantium metals!!”

“Could that thing be some sort of beast in human form?!?!”

As such cries filled the air, Bai Xiaochun swam along casually, feeling very proud of himself. He even took the time to wave to some of the other cultivators. “Why don’t you come down and join me. It's very nice and warm....”

Soon, he had swum thirty percent into the sea of lava, which was the requisite point to make the rankings. That was when, all of a sudden, a new star lit up on the crimson portion of the rainbow outside.

Of course, the crimson part of the rainbow was filled with countless stars, so the appearance of a new one wasn’t necessarily something very incredible. However, every time a star appeared for the first time, it would shine more brightly than normal to attract the attention, and envy, of those looking on.

“Hey look, a new star! Someone got promoted!”

“Let’s see who it is. Hmm. Bai Xiaochun? I’ve never heard of him.”

Normally speaking, there would have been more discussion about the topic, but considering that Zhao Yidong was in the middle of making an important run, most people were focused on his star.

In fact, there were even some people who had special types of command medallions with which they could watch the competitors inside of the trials. Obviously, such medallions were extremely expensive, so people wouldn’t waste them on a cultivator who hadn’t made it into the top 1,000.

Because no one would ever think to use such a method to observe Bai Xiaochun, nobody on the outside knew that he was swimming through the lava.

However, many people in the trial by fire itself saw him, and their cries of shock continued to ring out ceaselessly.

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun could achieve quite a bit of speed while swimming, such that he was actually faster than a lot of the flying beasts.

He even started humming a little tune as he picked up speed. Any time he started to feel uncomfortably hot, he would release some frigid qi. Because of that, he always felt wonderful as he headed toward the bank of the sea.

“This trial by fire is way too simple,” he thought. Clearing his throat, he thought about what a pity it was that more people didn’t realize he was swimming through the sea of lava.

“Once I get out, I’ll be able to tell people about this, and they’ll definitely think I'm super awesome.” Excited, he continued to pick up speed until the bank of the sea was just up ahead.

Meanwhile, back outside, a few of the spectators happened to notice that one of the stars on the red portion of the rainbow was rising at an unusually fast speed. In fact, it was already approaching the border of the red part of the rainbow.

“So fast! Who is that? Bai Xiaochun? That’s the same guy who just appeared for the first time!”

“What’s going on? His star just appeared on the rainbow, and he’s already reached the end of the red portion?!” One of the disciples with one of the special command medallions decided to focus it on Bai Xiaochun’s star, to see what type of beast he was using....

Within the space of a few breaths of time, his eyes had grown as wide as saucers. His jaw dropped, and then he cried out, “How... how could this be happening?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0421 awe-chapter-422

What the cultivator saw was Bai Xiaochun, looking very pleased with himself and even humming a little tune as he swam merrily through the majestic sea of lava....

The cultivator's cry of astonishment caused quite a few other disciples in the area to look over and see what was happening. The sight that met their eyes was the cultivator with the medallion shaking physically, his expression flickering between numerous emotions, his eyes so wide it seemed they might pop out of his head. Then, he raised a trembling hand to point at the star that represented Bai Xiaochun. Voice quavering with disbelief, he shouted, "He's... he's swimming!!"

Even more people were now looking over, and yet few seemed to understand what the cultivator was talking about. One of the curious disciples even asked, "What do you mean swimming? Who?"

"Bai Xiaochun! That guy whose star just started rising. He... he's actually swimming in the sea of lava!!" This time, the cultivator's shout was met with complete silence. His words seemed beyond comprehension, and in response, many people looked up at Bai Xiaochun's star.

Some of them couldn't resist the temptation, and pulled out their own special command medallions to check the scene out for themselves. When they finally saw for themselves that Bai Xiaochun really was swimming through the lava, they also began to cry out in shock.

"It's true! He's... he's really swimming!"

“Heavens! This is impossible! I've never seen anyone swim in the sea of lava before!”

“How could this be happening...? Is he a man or a beast?!?!”

Such cries led to even more people paying attention. The sudden turn of events left everyone completely shaken, and soon, more curious disciples began to pay the requisite price to use their command medallions to watch personally. When that happened, more excited reactions could be heard, and soon, the area outside the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials devolved into a complete commotion.

“Who exactly is this Bai Xiaochun?!”

Amidst the exclamations of shock, many of the cultivators began sending messages to friends, and some of the generous ones even began to project the images from their command medallions for others to see. More people began to rush over to the area, causing the commotion to grow.

The same thing was happening back in the Hall of Devil Slayers in Sky Quarter. Master Cloud-Dao had already received word of what was happening. Having pulled out his own command medallion, it was with gaping jaw that he watched Bai Xiaochun swim along through the lava.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

Word was spreading rapidly, but Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing that he was the center of such attention. He was focusing on swimming forward, and also contemplating how wonderful it would feel to show off later in front of everyone.... Eventually, he climbed up onto the opposite bank. Jumping up and down a bit to get all the lava off him, he looked down at himself and then proudly threw on another set of clothing.

“It’s been a long time since I took a bath,” he said. “Feels great!” Of course, little did he know that large numbers of people in the sect were watching his every move....

That included all of the female disciples, many of whom were blushing, but none of whom looked away for even a moment....

Big Fatty Zhang was currently in the Hall of Spirit Enhancement when suddenly, cries of shock began to ring out. After asking curiously what was going on, he was shown an image which was none other than Bai Xiaochun leaping out of the lava....

“Xiaochun....” he said, his mouth gaping.

Back in the trial by fire, Bai Xiaochun looked back at the vast sea behind him, then stuck his chin up and flicked his sleeve.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun reduced this trial to ashes.” Sighing, he assumed the pose of a lonely hero, then began to stride away from the sea. As he did, his vision swam, and he left the red trial by fire. When he reappeared, he was in the next trial, the orange one!

Meanwhile, back outside, Bai Xiaochun's words and the expression on his face only added fuel to the fire that was the commotion among the onlookers. Many strange expressions could be seen, although no one gave voice to exactly what they were thinking.

“A dark horse! He’s definitely a dark horse!”

“How far do you think this Bai Xiaochun will get?”

As the discussions raged through the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, Bai Xiaochun was just appearing in the orange trial by fire. Almost immediately, deafening rumbling sounds filled his ears, and around him, the world trembled.

In almost the same moment that he appeared within the orange trial by fire, a mountain-like boulder suddenly began to drop down toward him, moving at incredible speed.

Letting out a shriek, he dashed backward, just in time to see the boulder smash into the ground where he had been standing, causing everything to tremble and shake, and even sending crevices snaking out in all directions. Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun looked back up, and what he saw left him gasping.

The world was completely gray, including the sky and the land. However, that was not the shocking part. Unexpectedly, two enormous stone golems were also there in the world with him.

Both of them were tens of thousands of meters tall, and every move they made caused heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds to echo out. Their bodies were constructed of numerous rocks and boulders lumped together, making them look both like statues, and like puppets. Most terrifying of all was that they were fighting each other!

As they fought back and forth, they let out howls and roars that sounded like thunder. Numerous smaller rocks and stones fell off of them with each blow that landed, which would smash into the ground below, opening up huge craters. Even larger craters would open up when the two stone golems’ feet landed on the ground as they took steps.

In addition to the quaking of the ground, the fighting giants caused powerful gusts of wind to sweep out in all directions. They also unleashed divine abilities that unleashed stone dragons and stone spikes which wreaked havoc everywhere.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered as an intense sensation of crisis swept through him. Anxiously dodging the various dangerous elements, he looked around and noticed that there were other cultivators in the area.

Those were the other disciples participating in this trial by fire, and all of them were scurrying about like ants as they avoided the falling stones, blasts of wind, and divine abilities, desperately attempting to get past the area in which the two stone golems fought.

Unfortunately, that was by no means an easy task.... They were caught in the crossfire, like fish who suffered when a castle's walls caught on fire and crumbled into the moat. The two gigantic fighting stone golems put the cultivators down below in extreme danger.

Based on what Bai Xiaochun could tell, those stone golems were beyond the level of the Nascent Soul stage, and were more like the Deva Realm boy who had come to take him from the River-Defying Sect. As he looked around in shock, he reviewed the information he had studied about the orange trial by fire.

The entire world around him was like a prison, with the two stone golems being prisoners who were forced to fight each other constantly as part of their punishment.

They were forbidden from directly killing any of the disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, but the side-effects of their combat could. Because of that fact, this particular trial by fire was much more difficult than the previous one.

“No wonder there are only a few tens of thousands of stars on the orange portion of the rainbow,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “as opposed to the innumerable amount on the red portion.... Furthermore, only a few thousand people are ever good enough to get past this trial by fire and onto the yellow level of the rainbow.” With that, he began to cautiously make his way forward, relying on his incredible speed to stay out of danger. Although he wasn't putting on a poor performance, the people on the outside who were watching him had to use up merit points for every second that they continued to observe.

Therefore, many people weren’t very pleased with what he was doing.

“What? He literally swam through the red trial by fire! Why is he going through the orange trial like that?”

“That’s what I was thinking. I’m not going to waste any more merit points watching this guy. Forget it!”

Even as people grumbled on the outside, Bai Xiaochun was picking up speed in the trial by fire. Suddenly, a blast of wind bore down on him, within which was half of a stone dragon.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, and when he realized that he didn't have time to dodge, his eyes flickered with cold light, and he suddenly spun his left leg out in a sweeping kick toward the dragon.

A boom filled the air as the stone dragon exploded, and the wind faded away. Gritting his teeth, Bai Xiaochun shot forward, getting closer and closer to the exit the entire way. However, at a certain point, he stopped in place and looked up at the two enormous stone golems, and as they fought back and forth, his eyes suddenly lit up.

Before, the two stone golems hadn’t stood out much to him, but now that he was closer, and had had a chance to look at them for a bit longer, all of a sudden, they seemed a bit familiar.

“If these two stone golems knelt down and stopped moving, then they would look exactly like… that statue I saw in the Ravine of Endless Mountains!!” Gasping, he realized that the more he looked at the giants, the more they looked like that statue. Before long, he was absolutely convinced that they were the same type of creature as the giant in the Ravine of Endless Mountains!

“If you want to cultivate the Living Mountain Incantation, you have to meld with the mountain, and understand everything about it. You have to gain enlightenment of its spirit, and forget yourself. You have to become a human mountain. When you wake up… you will have completed a circle. The divine ability will be complete, and you will have succeeded in becoming… a living mountain!” Panting, he looked up at the two fighting stone golems, and suddenly everything became clear. All his previous areas of confusion were destroyed instantly.

Eyes flashing with excitement, he murmured, “There is no better place than here… to seek enlightenment… of the Living Mountain Incantation!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0422 awe-chapter-423

Bai Xiaochun was currently only about 3,000 meters away from the exit of the orange trial by fire. Considering the speed he was capable of, it would only take a bit of effort for him to proceed on to the yellow trial.

In fact, there were many other disciples in the area who, despite trying their very best, couldn’t make it past the wind and divine abilities to reach the very spot he was standing in.

Many of them were shocked that he had made it through so quickly, but none of them were paying much attention to him. After all, they were more concerned with their own situation; the slightest lapse in concentration could leave them crushed to death in an instant.

Because of the intense danger, all of the other disciples were essentially risking their lives.

The contrast between all the other disciples, and Bai Xiaochun, who was simply standing there watching the stone golems fight, was very obvious, and some of the cultivators on the outside who were watching him were taken aback.

“What's wrong with this Bai Xiaochun? He didn't do anything very special in this section, but he did go really fast. Why doesn’t he just go out through the exit?!”

“This guy is pretty incredible. He's already in the top 10,000, and once he gets to the yellow section of the rainbow, he’ll instantly be in the top 5,000!”

“What’s he doing just standing there?”

As the cultivators on the outside looked on, puzzled, Bai Xiaochun was still trying to decide what to do. As he stood there, various key aspects to the Living Mountain Incantation were unlocked within his mind, and with each second that passed, it became clearer that this was an opportunity he could not afford to pass up on.

Unfortunately, his divine sense was restricted within the trial by fire, and could only spread out a few hundred meters. Only being able to observe the giants with his naked eyes was almost like looking at them through a veil.

“If I could get a bit closer, and observe them with divine sense, then I'm pretty sure I could come to understand these stone golems in a much more complete sense!” Eyes bloodshot, he struggled back and forth for a short time before gritting his teeth. “If worst comes to worst, I can just use the seven-colored jade pendant to teleport to safety!”

With that, he burst into motion, not toward the exit, but in the opposite direction!

Everyone looking on was immediately shocked, but before anyone even had a chance to cry out in shock, Bai Xiaochun became a beam of light speeding across the ground of the orange trial by fire. All of the other cultivators within the trial by fire looked on with wide eyes.

“What is he doing...?”

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun shot along, heading directly toward the stone golems, and then, maintaining his incredible speed, he began to fly up the legs of the nearest one.

From a distance, Bai Xiaochun looked like a tiny bug compared to the enormous stone golem. And yet, he was extremely agile, and quickly scrambled and leapt his way up to the giant's back. Eventually, he reached something of an outcropping where, despite the swaying of the giant’s movements, he was able to settle down cross-legged and send his divine sense out to observe the giant.

By this point, everyone was gasping in shock; both the cultivators in the trial by fire, and the audiences outside watching events play out on the projected screens.

“He... he jumped up onto the giant itself?”

“Is this Bai Xiaochun crazy?!”

“Wait, is he going to start practicing cultivation? Heavens! What is he thinking? Most people try to get out of that place as quickly as possible. But he actually went backward, and now is going so far as to practice cultivation. It's a trial by fire, not a place for cultivation!” Bai Xiaochun’s actions were causing a huge stir both inside and outside of the trial by fire.

Meanwhile, Zhao Yidong’s star was not the subject of much attention anymore. Bai Xiaochun’s actions, despite the fact that he was only in the orange trial by fire, were leading to profound shock among the audience.

As time passed, word continued to spread through the cultivators of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and even more people began to pay attention to what was happening.

As for Song Que, he was in the middle of a session of meditation, when suddenly his bag of holding began to vibrate. Opening his eyes, he produced a jade slip from inside that had a short message from one of his friends.

After scanning it, his eyes went wide, and he shot to his feet.

“Bai Xiaochun?!” Without any hesitation, he rushed out of his immortal’s cave and looked over at the orange section of the rainbow overhead. Upon finding one particularly bright star, he focused on it, and moments later, Bai Xiaochun’s name appeared in his head.

As the commotion in the outside world spread, Bai Xiaochun was inside the trial by fire, doing his best to stay in one place on the back of the giant. Enduring the screaming winds, he sent his divine sense pouring out to observe the internal structure of the stone golem.

There was no more suitable place to study this stone golem than the position he had occupied!

“To meld with the mountain,” he murmured, “you have to understand it first!” With that, he rose to his feet and began to climb higher up through the cracks and crevices on the back of the stone golem. The entire time, the stone golem was engaged in fierce fighting with its opponent, swaying back and forth amidst heaven-rending, earth-crushing rumbling sounds.

On a few occasions, Bai Xiaochun was almost hurled off of the surface of the stone golem, especially whenever the other stone golem landed a blow on it, which caused everything around him to shake violently.

Once, the opposite stone giant attacked with a fist strike that summoned a divine ability, leaving Bai Xiaochun coughing up blood. Despite being relatively hidden among the crevices on the giant's back, he still felt as if his inner organs were vibrating on the point of collapse.

And yet, determination filled his eyes. Tightening his grip on the rocky surface, he once again sent some divine sense out to understand more about the stone golem.

Everyone watching the scene was left gasping, and even the two stone giants had noticed him. However, other than strange gleams which appeared in their eyes, they did nothing, and simply continued to fight.

Meanwhile, in another location on Myriad Star Rainbow, outside of the Ravine of Endless Mountains, Stonemountain was sitting cross-legged on the same greenish-black boulder. Slowly, his eyes opened, and he looked in the direction of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials, his gaze coming to rest on Bai Xiaochun's star on the orange portion of the rainbow. Gradually, a strange light rose up in the man's eyes, and a smile broke out on his face.

"Now that's clever," he murmured quietly.

Back inside the orange trial by fire, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and climbed higher up the giant. By now, he had a fairly thorough understanding of the internal makeup of the enormous stone creature, except for its head. Of course, that was the most dangerous area of all. But Bai Xiaochun was currently engulfed within the Living Mountain Incantation, in much the same way that he often lost himself in concocting medicine. It was with a seeming complete lack of the fear of death that he flew higher, even as the two stone golems battered at each other endlessly.

Wings appeared behind him as he pushed on with greater speed, and he even relied on the Mountain Shaking Bash and the Undying Tendons in his left leg. Sonic booms echoed out, and a series of afterimages stretched out behind him as he shot upward to appear on top of the stone golem's head.

Winds battered him, making it almost impossible to stand still, but he grabbed onto one of the stone hairs sticking out of the giant’s head, and then sent his divine sense out with reckless abandon.

Apparently, the stone golem did not like its head being interfered with. Frowning, it jerked its head to the side, causing a violent wind to rise up within the trial by fire. Instantly, the other cultivators within the trial began to emit agonized shrieks, and quickly began to crush their jade pendants to teleport away.

Bai Xiaochun finally couldn’t hold on any longer, and was flung off of the giant’s head. At the same time, the huge stone golem began to swing its mountain-like hand toward Bai Xiaochun, almost the way a human would in an attempt to grab a fly out of the air.

As Bai Xiaochun watched the huge hand filling his field of vision, his eyes suddenly flashed with enlightenment.

“Spirit-meld!” Bai Xiaochun roared, his hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture as he used the spirit-melding techniques described in the Living Mountain Incantation. He had attempted this same thing numerous time in the Ravine of Endless Mountains, and had failed each time. But this time, he suddenly felt something stirring in his mind, a connection of sorts with this enormous stone golem.

It was a unique, indescribable connection, almost as if he were melded with the emotions of the giant. He could feel how ancient it was, and could feel its madness and bitterness. He could also sense how much it hated this world, and especially the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and the same thing happened to the stone golem. Its eyes shone with bright light as it looked at Bai Xiaochun, and suddenly, instead of trying to grab Bai Xiaochun, it swatted at him!

Instantly, Bai Xiaochun was sent flying through the air, spinning head over heels toward the exit of the orange trial by fire!

Bai Xiaochun barely had time to pant before he was within the teleportation range of the exit, and was sucked away toward the yellow trial by fire. In the moments before he faded away, he looked back to see both of the stone giants standing there staring at him.

Moments later, intense rumbling sounds once again echoed out. Apparently, their performance would not conclude for all eternity. They would not rest until they died!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0423 awe-chapter-424

Because the same wind that carried Bai Xiaochun to the exit was like a heavenly tempest filling the entire trial by fire, everyone else who was still inside anxiously teleported out as soon as they could.

As they reappeared one by one outside of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trial, not a single trace of fury could be seen on their faces. Instead, they wore expressions of incredulity and shock.

“What technique does this Bai Xiaochun cultivate? That stone golem actually took the initiative to send him to the exit!”

“How is that possible...?”

“In the red trial by fire, he swam through the sea of lava. In the orange one, the stone golem helped him. Where does this guy come from?!”

As the clamor rose up from the audience, Bai Xiaochun’s star climbed from the orange section of the rainbow into the yellow one, to join the several thousand other stars there!

That indicated that Bai Xiaochun was now in the top 5,000!

Considering the momentous event which was playing out, more and more audience members were personally paying merit points to be able to observe Bai Xiaochun as he made his way through the trials by fire.

Meanwhile, as soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared within the yellow trial by fire, he sensed intense, frigid coldness somewhere nearby, and could also tell that the ground was trembling.

There was still some of bewilderment in his eyes; the events which had played out in the orange trial by fire were still a bit hard to reconcile. His heart even trembled with a trace of residual fear. Plus, there was the sensation he had experienced when the stone golem reached out to grab him in the end. All of it left him gasping in astonishment.

“There are way too many secrets in this Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Those stone golems were obviously some race of creatures, locked away within the trial by fire. How come these Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstar trials all seem like prisons!?” He was both trembling with fear and shaking in excitement. After all, he had taken a significant step with his cultivation of the Living Mountain Incantation, making progress far beyond anything he had before.

“All I need to do is get into the top 1,000 so I get the seven-colored mistysea grass. Then I can concoct that medicinal pill, and be strong enough to fully cultivate the Living Mountain Incantation!” With that, he looked around excitedly at the yellow trial by fire. Despite what he had experienced so far in the red and orange trials by fire, what he saw around him left him profoundly shaken, and deeply moved by the methods of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

The dimension he was in now was a single room. Standing in the middle of the room was a burly man with a red rope tied around his head. He held a pair of iron tongs in one hand, which he used to hold a red-hot sword in place below him!

Further down, below the red-hot sword, was a channel filled with black liquid that seemed cold beyond description, and emanated a frigid aura.

The burly man held an iron hammer in his other hand, which he used to hit the sword with all the force he could muster.

The resulting booms which rang out were completely deafening.

Clearly, this burly man was a blacksmith, and this room was an ironworks! Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun had apparently been shrunk down to a size much smaller than before, and was now standing on the iron tongs!!

Or perhaps Bai Xiaochun hadn't been shrunk down, and this place was just enormous, with the blacksmith being a giant! Considering the proportions, if that were true, then the blacksmith was no smaller than the stone golems from the last trial.

Every time the iron hammer smashed down, the entire dimension shook!

Bai Xiaochun’s face was completely ashen, and his mind was spinning from the frightening nature of the scenario. Shivering, he looked up at the gigantic blacksmith and his huge hammer, then at the red-hot sword being held by the tongs, and then down at the channel below....

From his perspective, that body of water might as well have been a sea.

After a long moment of indecision, Bai Xiaochun finally gritted his teeth and charged forward, leaping up onto the red-hot sword. Almost immediately, he could sense the heat rising up into his feet, so he rotated his cultivation base to fight back, and proceeded forward.

As he ran along pell-mell, he felt tears welling up in his eyes. This place was simply too hot, and he couldn’t help but let out yelps of pain and even leap up into the air. He would have flown if he could have, but flight was restricted in this dimension.

Not only was there the heat to deal with, but there was also the enormous iron hammer. It was like an enormous falling star smashing onto the sword, and if he wasn’t careful and got struck, Bai Xiaochun knew that his powerful fleshly body would do nothing to protect him, and he would be crushed out of existence.

“I’m gonna get myself killed! Killed!

“Agghhh!” he screamed. “Lord Bai is gonna die from this heat!” This heat vastly exceeded the heat from the sea of lava in the red trial by fire, and at the moment Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure if there was anything special that he could do to pass the trial. However, he did remember that above the yellow portion of the rainbow was the green portion, with only about a thousand stars. That meant that in all of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, only about a thousand Core Formation cultivators had passed this trial.

Considering how enormously large the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was, a thousand was a very small group of people, and from that, it was possible to determine how difficult this trial by fire was!

But Bai Xiaochun was incredibly fast, and also cultivated the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. By focusing all of his frigid qi in his legs and feet, he was able to counteract the heat to some degree. Although it still hurt, he was able to keep speeding along. As of this point, he had made it about thirty percent across the sword.

“Have to go faster....” he thought, fearing that he was going too slow. He was like an ant bustling across a hot kettle, and when the people on the outside saw what he was doing, their eyes went wide.

They had all seen people challenge this trial, and many of them had attempted it themselves. All of them knew that it was very difficult, and that people usually challenged it only with the greatest caution. In fact, most people spent the majority of their time within the trial just observing the surroundings.

After all, this trial was not just about speed or heat resistance, but about understanding vibrations. Every time the hammer hit the sword, the entire thing would vibrate, and at the same time, some of the heat would disperse. Simultaneously, one could take advantage of the shaking of the sword to accelerate. By timing things perfectly, one could make each forward movement without being hurt by the heat.

This type of test was especially designed to hone the divine sense of the cultivators who took it. With exceptional control, they could reduce the danger significantly.

Never before in history had anyone attempted the trial in the way Bai Xiaochun was doing, by just recklessly running forward at top speed.

“This Bai Xiaochun, he... he....”

“This guy is definitely a weirdo who doesn’t like to do things the normal way....” Outside, people exchanged wry glances as Bai Xiaochun sped along screaming as loudly as a rabbit with its tail on fire. That was especially true when some of the disciples heard the things Bai Xiaochun was muttering under his breath.

“What kind of crappy trial by fire is this? What is it testing, how well people can get burned? Ah, I’m gonna die from the heat!!

“How did everyone else pass the trial? I bet none of them matched up to me. They probably ran crying through the whole thing, or maybe even crawled!” Bai Xiaochun himself was on the verge of tears as he flew along, accelerating the entire time. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, he was about seventy percent across....

“Hmmphhhhh! Bai Xiaochun is the awesomest as usual!” Seeing that he was almost at the end, his spirits rose, and although he continued to shriek in pain every so often, he was still very pleased.

“Now that I think about it, this heat is actually pretty comfortable for my feet.”

Everyone looked on in complete silence, stunned by Bai Xiaochun’s reckless method. From the look of it, he was just about to finish the third trial.

“There’s no way he's going to pass the trial like this!!” Quite a few people spoke words similar to this as they looked on in envy.

“Dammit. How come he's going through this third trial so fast!? Aren’t you supposed to get through based on timing out the vibrations...?” More and more people began to comment in such a way, until Bai Xiaochun was about ninety percent of the way across, and closing in on the end.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very pleased with himself, when, all of a sudden, he realized that something wasn’t right.

“Why is the sword moving?” Even as he looked around in surprise, looks of delight could be seen on the faces of the people observing on the outside.

Apparently, the huge giant working with the sword was happy with the results. Lifting it up with the tongs, he began to stretch it down toward the black liquid in the channel below.

“Hahaha! He’s quenching the iron!”

“Bai Xiaochun sure got unlucky. I can’t believe he’s going to quench the iron!”

“This only happens one time out of ten. Bai Xiaochun just got lucky enough to see it!” As everyone reveled in Bai Xiaochun’s misfortune, he was standing there on the red-hot sword, an agonized shriek escaping his lips.

He could see what was happening, but before he could react at all, the giant was plunging the sword, and Bai Xiaochun along with it, right into the black ocean of frigid qi.

Bai Xiaochun immediately began to scramble backward, but before he could get more than a few paces, and before he had time to pull out his seven-colored jade pendant, the black liquid was rushing up toward him. “No, I don’t wanna--”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0424 awe-chapter-425

When Big Fatty Zhang saw what was happening, he immediately got nervous, and cried out, “Xiaochun!”

Chen Manyao was also taken aback. As for Master God-Diviner, without even thinking about it, he began to perform an incantation gesture in the hopes of divining some information about Bai Xiaochun’s safety.

Even Song Que was completely shocked.

As for everyone else, they were also stunned, but at the same time, somewhat happy. However, in the following instant, their expressions flickered wildly.

“Why... why isn’t he teleporting out?”

“Don’t tell me he ran out of time....”

“Maybe he didn't bring in a teleportation pendant?”

“No way! Did he really die, just like that?” The sudden turn of events left everyone flabbergasted, and unsure of how to react. Based on everything they knew, Bai Xiaochun should have just teleported out as soon as he realized he was in danger.

However, after nobody appeared on the outside, they realized that he hadn’t even pulled out a teleportation pendant, leading to various reactions.

“He didn’t really die, did he...?”

“Well, that is everfrigid water. I’ve seen a few people fall into it before, and all of them died instantly....”

“This....” Nobody was really completely sure of what to say. The situation really seemed very strange.

However, that was when, all of a sudden, the eyes of one of the cultivators in the audience went so wide they almost popped out of his skull. Pointing up at the stars, he shouted, “S-swim... he... h-he’s... he’s swimming again!!”

Quivering, everyone looked up at the climbing star, whereupon gasping sounds began to ring out.

Moments before, back in the yellow trial by fire, within the black sea-like channel of water, Bai Xiaochun’s head had just popped up into the open. Taking a deep breath, he shivered and looked around, his face looking a bit blue.

“Where the hell am I?” he thought, shivering on the verge of tears. “I feel like I’m about to freeze to death.” By now, he was convinced that these trials by fire weren’t fun at all. They either involved searing heat or freezing cold, and were all a torment.

“If it weren’t for that medicinal plant, I definitely wouldn’t come to this place. What kind of a crappy trial by fire is this?” At the moment, he was mostly out of options. Flight was restricted, and the sword was nowhere to be seen. Therefore, he decided that he might as well start swimming through the frigidly cold water....

“Don’t tell me this trial by fire is a test of swimming skill?” Sighing and shivering, he proceeded to swim forward. As he did, the people watching on the outside devolved into complete chaos.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing that. As he swam along, the freezing cold caused his face to turn bluer and bluer. Even his joints started stiffening up. It was at that point that he realized the frigid qi in the area was actually boring into his pores and swirling into his Heaven-Dao Gold Core.

“Eee? Don’t tell me the frigid qi here can actually help my cultivation?” Without any hesitation, he unleashed his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, sending frigid qi swirling out from inside of him. In the blink of an eye, it had filled the entire area.

In response, the frigid qi in the water around him suddenly began to surge toward him. Cracking sounds could be heard and the sea began to freeze as the qi rushed into Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s mind was spinning as his Heaven-Dao Gold Core rotated with maddening speed, constantly absorbing the frigid qi and building up greater reserves.

Delighted, Bai Xiaochun drew even more deeply upon the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, watching as the absorbed frigid qi caused his Heaven-Dao Gold Core to slowly increase in size. At the same time, his cultivation base began to advance!

Before, he had been in the mid Gold Core stage, but now, he was rapidly approaching the late Gold Core stage. Furthermore, he was also moving away from the Frigid Adept level, and nearing the Frigid Master level.

This sudden stroke of good fortune left Bai Xiaochun feeling so ecstatic that he couldn’t help but cry out at the top of his lungs.

“Good fortune! Woohoo! This trial by fire is awesome. I can't believe there’s so much good fortune to be had! Hahaha!” Thrilled, he began to absorb the frigid qi at an even more rapid pace. Gradually, a whirlpool began to build up around him as nearly all of the frigid qi within the sea of water began to madly rush in his direction. Eventually, the water ceased being black, and started becoming increasingly transparent.

One could well imagine how, if all of the water in the sea began clear, it would no longer be a channel of frigidly cold liquid.

Everyone on the outside was watching with gaping jaws, completely struck numb by the god-like performance being put on by Bai Xiaochun.

“Were the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials made for this guy?”

“He swam through the red trial by fire, and sought enlightenment in the orange one. And now in the yellow trial he’s practicing cultivation?!”

“What’s going on!?!?”

A whole din of voices could be heard, most of them filled with jealousy. Big Fatty Zhang and the other Dao protectors sighed in relief, except for Song Que, whose eyelids were twitching, and whose hands were clenched into fists as he thought back to the Fallen Sword World....

“Wherever Bai Xiaochun goes, he razes the place to the ground!” he growled through gritted teeth.

Many people throughout the rainbow districts of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect were now watching Bai Xiaochun, and could hear his exclamations of delight at how his cultivation base was rising. As of this moment, he was only about 3,000 meters away from the exit, but had already stopped swimming and was just floating there, reveling in the feeling of growing stronger.

“Hahaha! This place really is like a holy land for me!” Bai Xiaochun watched excitedly as his cultivation base continued to climb. Just when he was thinking that breaking through to the late Gold Core stage in this place wasn't just a dream after all, he got the intense feeling that someone was watching him.

Looking up nervously, he saw that the gigantic blacksmith was staring straight down at him....

Bai Xiaochun shivered as an intense sensation of deadly crisis spread through him. As quickly as possible, he stopped absorbing the frigid qi.

“Okay, I guess I’ll leave now th--” Before he could offer any explanation, the blacksmith howled and began to swing his enormous hammer down toward Bai Xiaochun.

Shrieking, Bai Xiaochun began to swim like mad. As the hammer descended, the black liquid in the channel filled with waves from the force of the incoming blow.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as the waves swept him about. Then, he sent frigid qi surging out of him, not for 3,000 meters, but instead for 9,000 meters, causing everything to turn to ice. Although flight was prohibited, Bai Xiaochun could use his frigid qi clones to switch positions in something like a teleportation, which was exactly the method he employed to race toward the exit.

Almost as soon as he vanished, the huge hammer smashed down into the spot he had just occupied, shattering the layers of ice and sending a huge shockwave out in all directions. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and yet, he still managed to accelerate.

He was now very close to the exit, but in the blink of an eye, the blacksmith had raised his hammer and was sending it back down. Shrieking, Bai Xiaochun barreled through the exit of the yellow trial by fire and was teleported to the next level.

Upon seeing Bai Xiaochun vanish, the huge blacksmith snorted coldly, then looked down at the black water, frowning. He had not swung his hammer with full force just now; if he had, Bai Xiaochun would never have escaped. This blacksmith was different from the stone golems, and was actually on good terms with the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. As such, when this insect came along and began to steal his frigid liquid, all he could do was drive him away.

Everyone who saw what had just occurred was left gasping in shock. In fact, more gasps had come out of the mouths of these disciples than normally could be heard in a whole year.

“He actually pissed off the guardian....”

“He’s not challenging the trials by fire, he’s actually there to steal stuff!!” Angry exclamations and expressions of disbelief could be heard everywhere. Almost no one outside of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials was sure whether to laugh or cry.

“In any case, this Bai Xiaochun is definitely a top Chosen. However he managed it, he's gotten through three trials, and is closing in on the top 1,000!”

“Yeah, well let's see how he does in the next challenge. It’s incredibly difficult. If he gets past it, he’ll be in the top 500!!”

Although Zhao Yidong was already in the fourth challenge, nobody was even paying attention to him anymore. Everyone was looking closely at Bai Xiaochun’s star, and wondering how he would fare in the fourth level, the green trial by fire!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0425 awe-chapter-426

“What a stingy blacksmith....” Bai Xiaochun thought as he flew into the exit. Even as he was being teleported away, he already missed the frigid sea. In the short time he had spent in it, he already advanced to the very peak of the mid Gold Core stage.

Before coming to this place, he would never have even dared to hope that such good fortune would come his way.

“If only I’d had just a bit more time, I could have broken through!” After reluctantly leaving the third trial by fire, he found himself in the fourth.

This fourth level corresponded to the green portion of the rainbow, and as soon as he arrived, he tucked away his regret at having left the third trial by fire, and looked around vigilantly. A moment later, his vigilance turned into surprise.

Here, the sky was blue and dotted with fluffy white clouds. A gentle breeze touched his face, and everything seemed very peaceful and devoid of danger.

“Hm, something's not right,” he thought. According to the information he had collected, the fourth trial by fire was related to thunder and lightning. Even just reaching this point got one very close to being in the top 1,000.

“That’s my goal, the top 1,000....” He looked around hesitantly, but then thought about how simple the third trial by fire had been, and he puffed his chest out and sped into motion.

However, in the instant that he took a step forward, the previously sunny sky suddenly filled with countless black lightning bolts which shot down toward him.

Face falling, Bai Xiaochun fell back as the lightning converged up ahead of him, ripping the air apart into the form of a rift that a person could pass through.

Beyond that rift, Bai Xiaochun could see another dimension.

It was a world filled with lightning, similar to the black lightning from moments ago, but blindingly bright.

There was so much lightning dancing about that it was impossible to count the number of bolts. Furthermore, there was a shocking, gigantic bridge made of lightning itself that stretched out through the dimension!

It was impossible to say how the bridge had been built, but it seemed to have been formed by countless bolts of lightning merged together in shocking fashion.

Astonishingly, it was possible to see a person about halfway across the bridge, trudging forward with great difficulty. It was none other than Zhao Yidong!

With every step that he took, vast quantities of lightning would rain down to block his path and even try to knock him off of the bridge.

The sight of what was happening caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp, but at the same time, he realized that this lightning bridge was going to be quite a headache.

“First was the fire, then the stone, then the ironworks. I can’t believe there’s actually a bridge of lightning here in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. What a bunch of showoffs.”

Feeling a bit annoyed, he decided that after getting back to the River-Defying Sect, he would have to sit down and talk with the patriarchs about getting some dimensions like this set up.

After standing there watching for a moment, he gritted his teeth and said, “I have to get into the top 1,000!”

Looking like he was staring death straight in the eye, he leaped through the rift and into the world of lightning.

Almost immediately, bolts of lightning snaked together to form a huge net which began to descend upon him.

It happened so quickly that, before he could try to take evasive action, the lightning slammed into him, provoking an agonized shriek. Down on the bridge, Zhao Yidong heard the sound, looked back, then shook his head scornfully.

“Another fool who overestimates himself,” he said. With that, he gritted his teeth and continued forward.

However, even as Zhao Yidong looked away, the lightning dissipated from around Bai Xiaochun. His clothing had been ripped up, and his hair was standing on end. He was even shivering a bit. Having been struck by countless bolts of lightning left him feeling almost like he was vibrating, and yet, he was unharmed.

After a moment, he let out a long breath, and his eyes began to shine brightly. A pleased expression appeared on his face, and he couldn’t help but let out a faint moan of pleasure.

“Feels great....” Just now, he had come to find that being struck by lightning caused the countless impurities that had built up over his years of consuming various medicinal pills to break down and seep out of his pores.

It was almost like being cleaned or purified, as if countless tiny little hands were massaging him all at the same time. The prickly sensation was quite pleasant, and was something he had never experienced in all his years of practicing cultivation.

When people on the outside noticed the expression on his face, they were struck mute. Although most of them had various speculations about how Bai Xiaochun would handle this trial, none of them could have imagined that things would turn out this way.

“Is he... even human!?”

“How shockingly tough must his skin be to not only not feel pain when being struck by lightning, but to actually enjoy it?”

“There are limitations placed on the lightning in there, but each bolt is comparable to the mid Core Formation stage. And those which strike the bridge include some in the late Core Formation stage!”

As everyone gave voice to their shock outside, back in the lightning dimension, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he realized how comfortable he felt. He could sense the spiritual power in his body thrumming, and there were even some qi passageways that he normally had difficulty finding that were now completely visible.

Because of the cleansing of the lightning, his cultivation base had also increased slightly. Excited, he began to move forward along the bridge, which caused countless bolts of lightning to converge and then slam into him. And yet, that only caused him to sigh in satisfaction yet again.

“This place is awesome!” he said, probing his skin a bit to confirm that he really wasn't injured. As far as he was concerned, this trial by fire really was too simplistic. With that, he began to edge back and forth at the bridge entrance, letting out moans of contentment as the lightning struck him. As for Zhao Yidong, he was so shocked his eyes were bulging.

“Did he really come to challenge this trial?” Gasping, he looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then himself, and then simply gritted his teeth and proceeded onward.

Eventually, the lightning bolts actually seemed to be a bit weak, so Bai Xiaochun finally stepped onto the bridge.

Zhao Yidong looked back, his lips twisted into a cold smile....

“Done showing off? Who cares that you’re attuned to lightning? The lightning outside of the bridge is completely different. Being able to deal with that lightning doesn’t mean that when you get onto the bridge you’ll be able to do the same thi--” However, before Zhao Yidong could finish speaking, an even louder moan escaped Bai Xiaochun’s lips.

More impurities were forced out of him, after which he took a deep breath and looked around at the bridge with shining eyes.

“This is one naughty bridge, alright. Very naughty!” With that, he took another step forward, and then shivered and moaned again. With each step, he moaned, the sound of which was distinctly audible to everyone watching on the outside. Soon, embarrassed expressions could be seen on their faces, and many exchanged awkward glances.

That was especially true of many of the female disciples, all of whom were blushing.

“Completely shameless!!”

“This bridge is obviously supposed to test the limits of the fleshly body. But once this guy shows up, everything changes!”

“Dammit! He’s just showing off the toughness of his skin. How cocky!!”

As of this moment, Big Fatty Zhang, Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao and Song Que, despite how well they knew Bai Xiaochun, were all smiling wryly. As for Master Cloud-Dao, he was there in the Hall of Devil Slayers, gaping in shock.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t really sure what was going on. However, every time he challenged a trial, unique circumstances unfolded that ensured that his name was being spread throughout the sect in a very short time.

Not only was he thoroughly enjoying the pleasurable sensations, but he was delighted to have the accumulated impurities forced out of him, and realized that, once again, he was hovering on the verge of a breakthrough.

As he continued on happily, he soon reached Zhao Yidong, and when their eyes met, Zhao Yidong’s expression couldn’t have been grimmer.

The sensation of being passed up so casually left him clenching his fists in anger.

Waving his hand enthusiastically, Bai Xiaochun said, “Greetings Elder Br--”

However, Zhao Yidong simply snorted coldly and looked away. Gritting his teeth, he took another step forward, trembling when the lightning slammed into him.

Bai Xiaochun hurried forward and clasped Zhao Yidong's shoulder. “You’re doing it the hard way! Look, I’ll show you. You have to make some noise! That makes going forward a lot easier.”

“Screw off!” Zhao Yidong yelled.

Bai Xiaochun was instantly enraged, and shot an angry glare at Zhao Yidong. He had come with good intentions, only to be treated completely rudely! Giving his own cold snort, he walked forward, moaning the entire way to the end of the bridge. Then he turned and glared at Zhao Yidong one last time before jumping into the exit.

Zhao Yidong could only grit his teeth in anger at the ease with which Bai Xiaochun had proceeded through the trial. He took a few more steps, and then realized that he had reached his limit, and it was time to give up. But then he thought back to what Bai Xiaochun had said moments ago, and hesitated. Finally, he decided to give it a shot. Opening his mouth, he exhaled sharply out as he took another step forward....

Although he wasn’t sure if it was an illusion or not, he actually felt less pressure than before. Furthermore, the breath which he had just exhaled contained some impure vital energy.

Shocked, he gritted his teeth and then decided to imitate Bai Xiaochun’s method. As he went forward, more lightning bolts hit him, but he was still able to go about 30 more meters before he couldn’t hold on any longer, and had to teleport away.

In the moment before he left, though, his eyes shone with excitement as he realized that he now had the key to passing the bridge.

“Next time, I’ll definitely succeed!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0426 awe-chapter-427

Outside the trial was complete silence, as all of the disciples looked on with wide eyes. Soon, their expressions began to transform into those of jealousy, envy, contemplation, awkwardness, and confusion.

The method Bai Xiaochun had used was outrageous, and yet, it had enabled him to pass what they all viewed as the incredibly difficult green trial by fire. Their minds spun in astonishment for a long moment, after which a commotion broke out which could shake heaven and earth.

“Is that really the trick?”

“No way! You can really do it that way?!?!”

“I can’t believe you can use such a perverted method to get past this trial!! Plus, Zhao Yidong had obviously already reached his limit, but then he changed methods and got 30 meters farther!!”

Conversations weren’t just echoing out on Myriad Star Rainbow, but in all of the other rainbow districts as well. Everyone was astounded by the unheard-of method Bai Xiaochun had used to get past the green trial, and many people were very excited.

There were some Chosen who had been stuck in the green trial level for some time, whose eyes were now shining brightly as they realized they might have a chance to get further than they had before. Even if they had to embarrass themselves a bit by moaning, that was something they could accept!

After all, there were more than a thousand stars in the green section of the rainbow, but if you could get past those onto the cyan rainbow, you would be in the top 500. The difference between the top 1,000 and the top 500 was incredible!

The former consisted of the Chosen of the Halls, the latter consisted of the Chosen of the Quarters!

“I get it now. The key to this trial isn’t just speed and fleshly body strength. It can also be used to aid your cultivation!”

“Those weren’t just ordinary moans. They were timed with his breathing. If you're careful, you can use the power of the lightning to cleanse impurities in your body. You can actually strengthen your fleshly body, and even strengthen your qi passageways!!”

“You know, you might not even need to moan. You probably just have to regulate your breathing. It might not make sense at first, but once you figure out the secret, you can pass it easily!” Numerous Chosen who had long been stuck in the green trial by fire were suddenly enlivened, and rushed in the direction of the Myriad Star Rainbow teleportation portal. Within moments, quite a few people were flying toward the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials from all four of the rainbow districts.

Of course, it wasn’t that no one in the sect knew the secret of the green trial by fire. However, the sect’s demigod patriarch had issued orders that those who did know the trick were forbidden from explaining the truth to others.

Furthermore, all of the other hundreds of disciples who had passed that trial already were not as free and uninhibited as Bai Xiaochun was....

It was only now, thanks to Bai Xiaochun, that the secret of the green trial was now beginning to spread. It could well be imagined that soon, the number of people able to pass this trial would grow rapidly.

“That’s definitely the case. I remember watching some of the other people pass this green trial, and all of them were always breathing in a very strange way!” Chosen were streaming forward to rechallenge the green trial by fire, one of them being a young man who laughed uproariously as he charged into the entrance.

Almost as soon as that young man entered, more Chosen appeared, dozens of them, each and every one ready to use Bai Xiaochun’s method to try to pass the trial!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was unaware of all of that. After he vanished from within the green trial, he reappeared in the next challenge, the cyan trial by fire!

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials were broken up into colors: red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, and violet. There were seven different trials by fire, and as for the cyan trial, only about 500 people had been able to make it this far. That indicated that Bai Xiaochun was already within the top 1,000!

“Well, that wasn’t very hard,” Bai Xiaochun said, clearing his throat and swishing his sleeve.

Although he wasn’t sure of his exact ranking, when he remembered how many stars were visible on the green portion of the rainbow, he stuck his chin up proudly and looked around at the dimension that contained the cyan trial. “Originally I planned to just get into the top 1,000. Who would have thought that I would accidentally get into the top 500? What a headache....”

Everything around him was gray, including the sky and the land. Silence prevailed, and there was something sinister in the air. Visible upon the ground were rows upon rows of gravestones that seemed to stretch as far as the eye could see.

An ominous coldness pervaded the dimension, something that Bai Xiaochun almost immediately identified as an aura of death. It was strong, so strong that it caused the air to ripple and distort off in the distance.

As he looked around, fear built up in his heart. After all, the silence was terrifying.

“Why did the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect have to go and make a creepy place like this? The aura of death is way too strong. There are definitely ghosts around!” Bai Xiaochun felt the hair standing up on the back of his neck, and swallowed hard as he looked around. Face slowly turning ashen, he thought back to the unclean thing the patriarchs had mentioned back in the River-Defying Sect, and then swallowed again. Without any further hesitation, he pulled out some paper talismans designed to ward off evil spirits, and began to slap them down onto himself.

“Damned Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. How am I supposed to pass this trial?” Even as his fear mounted, a sinister gaze suddenly locked down on him from afar. It almost felt like a blade coming to rest on the top of his head.

At the same time, a shrill cry filled the air that sounded like metal scraping against metal, as a vengeful soul rose up from one of the gravestones. It had a long, creepy tongue sticking out of its mouth, and its eyes seemed to burn with resentment as it stared at Bai Xiaochun. Then, it began to speed toward him.

It moved with incredible quickness, and in the blink of an eye, was right in front of him. Bai Xiaochun gasped, waving his right hand to unleash the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. Instantly, frigid qi erupted from his finger, slamming into the vengeful soul, which let out a miserable shriek as it began to crumble to pieces. However, it wasn’t destroyed; instead, it began to retreat.

“Eee? Not as strong as I expected.” Excited, Bai Xiaochun was about to start chasing it down when the fleeing soul’s eyes suddenly gleamed with hatred, and even as it fell apart, it let out a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering screech!

The screech filled the world, causing rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth, and leaving the sky and earth shaking violently. Next, vengeful souls rose up from all of the gravestones in sight. Swarms of the things filled the air, their appearance ferocious and terrifying, and their presence causing the aura of death in the dimension to grow vastly stronger than before.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, eyes widening, scalp tingling in fear.

“S-so... so many....” When he realized that all of the vengeful souls were glaring at him, he shrieked and began to back up. Even as he did, a noise like rumbling thunder filled the air as the gigantic image of a ghostly specter rose up off in the distance.

He appeared to be a shadowy soul wearing an emperor’s crown, almost as if he were the monarch of all the vengeful souls. He was so large that he seemed capable of shouldering the heavens. Green flames flickered in his eyes, a cold smile covered his face, and he carried an enormous trident in one hand. His body looked to be composed of countless other vengeful souls, whose faces were twisted mixtures of laughter and tears.

“Now that you’re here, don’t leave....” The voice which spoke seemed to contain countless other voices, some of which were crying and some of which were laughing. The enormous soul emperor then waved the trident through the air to point toward Bai Xiaochun, after which a shocking energy pulse shot out, which caused all of the other vengeful souls in the dimension to scream shrilly.

Then, rumbling sounds filled the air as the countless, densely-packed vengeful souls began to surge in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

To make things worse, even more vengeful souls could be seen approaching from over the horizon. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but let out a shriek; this was the largest group of ghosts that he had ever seen in his life....

Terrified, he gritted his teeth and growled, “Sorry, but Lord Bai doesn’t feel like messing around with you!”

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, he had reached his goal of getting into the top 1,000. If he hadn’t, things might be different, but considering the danger here, and the fact that he hadn’t been interested in challenging the trials to begin with, he didn’t hesitate at all to pull out his seven-colored jade pendant. Just when he was about to crush it, the enormous soul emperor off in the distance looked at him scornfully.

“Are you going to fight me or not?!” he said in his sinister, thunderous voice.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered. To be directly challenged in this manner, and then just leave, would be a bit of a loss of face. “I....”

However, before he could say anything else, the vengeful souls in the area began to scream even more loudly than before, apparently at the behest of the soul emperor!

The sound felt like stabbing pain in Bai Xiaochun’s mind, causing him to gasp. If he had to fight the soul emperor alone, he might have done it, but considering how awe-inspiring and terrifying the sea of vengeful souls was, he couldn’t help but come away with the feeling that these ghosts were bullying him.

“Wait for me, alright? I’m too tired at the moment. I’ll go back and rest a bit, then return and show you a thing or two!” With that, he crushed the jade pendant and teleported away.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0427 awe-chapter-428

There was a whole crowd of people outside who were spending merit points to watch Bai Xiaochun in the cyan trial by fire.

When they saw him screaming in the face of the endless sea of souls, strange expressions appeared on everyone’s faces. This trial by fire was a bit different than the ones before it; it tested one's ability to endure the attacks of the vengeful souls, and for how long.

Everyone had assumed that, considering Bai Xiaochun’s extraordinary performances before, he would surely pass this trial in some amazing way. But then they saw him fleeing in fear, leading first to shock on their part, and then sighing.

“Well, it’s no wonder Bai Xiaochun’s momentum faltered here. After all, this trial by fire is connected to the Wildlands, and is designed to prepare us disciples for what exists out there. Even Eldest Brother Zhao Tianjiao had trouble on his first run. It wasn’t until later that he managed to take 1st place.”

“Exactly. You know, according to a story I heard, all of the souls in the cyan trial by fire were actually brought here from the Wildlands....”

“The fact that Bai Xiaochun got all the way into the top 500 on his first attempt at the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials is extraordinary. It looks to me like he’s ranked at over 490! Now that he's in the top 500, he’s not a Chosen of the

Halls, he’s a Chosen of the Quarters! That's a completely different status altogether!”

Even as the discussions raged, Bai Xiaochun appeared in a white column of light at the main gate of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials by fire. As soon as he appeared, countless disciples looked over, gazes filled with envy and other mixed emotions. To see so many people looking at him with open jealousy caused Bai Xiaochun first to blink a few times, and then begin to calm down from his frenzy of moments ago.

“They were all watching me?” he thought, starting to get excited. Looking up at the rankings, he could see his star in the green section, in the top 500.

“No wonder everyone was watching me....” he thought, clearing his throat at the thought of how awesome he was. Puffing his chest out a bit, he tried to look as much like a Chosen as possible.

“They were all watching me. I really am too outstanding. Ai. I should keep a lower profile. I am a hostage after all.” Feeling incredibly wonderful at being the center of so much attention, and completely forgetting about his hectic final moments in the cyan trial by fire, he stuck his chin up, swished his sleeve, and strutted away.

As he walked along, the eyes of the disciples who looked in his direction shone with respect. He could have simply flown along, but considering his new reputation as a Chosen in the top 500 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, he realized that he shouldn’t be so arrogant. Instead, he decided to give as many fellow disciples as possible a chance to meet him and offer formal greetings up close.

“Yet again I think of the bigger picture,” he thought proudly. Everyone was quick to make way for him, leaving Bai Xiaochun feeling more pleased than ever. In fact, he even took the opportunity to wave to the nearby disciples.

“Hello everyone!” Bai Xiaochun really felt like he was at the pinnacle of existence, with the only disappointing thing being that only a few hundred people were present.

“If only there were a few more people around,” he thought. Sighing, he strolled away through the crowds. One of the members of that very crowd was a young woman who was currently watching Bai Xiaochun walk off.

She wore a long green robe, and was the type of cold person that no one was willing to get close to. There was even a sinister, frigid aura around her that made people standing in the area feel uncomfortable and unsettled.

She had been watching Bai Xiaochun closely the entire time, and when he had started acting proud moments ago, she had chuckled and placed her hand over her mouth. Right now, her eyes were glittering with a very strange light.

Looking up at the entrance to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials, she murmured, “They do seem pretty interesting.”

That young woman was none other than Gongsun Wan’er!

She had parted ways with Bai Xiaochun almost as soon as they had arrived in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. She had long since been promoted to Sky Quarter Rainbow, and was now a green-robed disciple. As of this moment, her eyes were sparkling with profound light; clearly, she was very interested in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

Bai Xiaochun slowly made his way along Myriad Star Rainbow, clearing his throat to draw the attention of any groups of disciples he encountered. When he got back to Sky Quarter Rainbow, voices assailed him the moment he began to materialize in the teleportation portal.

“It’s Bai Xiaochun!”

“He ranks at over 490 in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. Bai Xiaochun!”

After the effects of the teleportation faded away, he saw a large group of people gathered outside, their eyes shining with admiration and fervor.

The exclamations being uttered got Bai Xiaochun even more excited than he had been. Right now, he felt more like a Chosen than he ever had. Smiling faintly, he walked out, waving to the crowd.

“Hello, all of you!

“Keep up the good work, everyone.

“This isn’t my honor and glory, Fellow Daoists, it's honor and glory for Sky Quarter!”

Every wave of his hand caused more oohs and ahs to be heard. However, what was somewhat confusing to the cultivators near the teleportation portal was that Bai Xiaochun was simply standing there. Soon, strange expressions could be seen on their faces.

“Why isn't Bai Xiaochun leaving?”

“There’s something strange about his facial expression. Why does he seem so different from all the other Chosen I've seen...?” When Bai Xiaochun saw their expressions, and realized what was happening, he waved his hand a final time and then left.

The entire way back to his immortal's cave, he walked very slowly, taking the time to smile and nod to everyone he encountered. Quite a few people had been paying attention to his run through the trials, but the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a vast organization, and there were still plenty of people who hadn’t heard about what happened. As for those people, they returned his smiles with blank stares.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too happy about that, and actually wished he had someone to go spread word about him. After all, considering how awesome and respectable he was, it wouldn’t be appropriate for him to go praising himself.

“This won’t work! Word spreads far too slowly in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. I need to think of a method to remedy this.” After arriving back at his immortal's cave, he thought back to the matter of his personal glory, and how to get more people to learn of it.

“I brought Xu Baocai along, not just to get information, but to spread it. Leaving him down in Sky City is a big waste.” With that thought in mind, he sent a message to Xu Baocai telling him to handle matters in the tavern and then get promoted as quickly as possible to come help.

Xu Baocai was thrilled at the prospect of his talents finally being used to the fullest extent possible. After thinking about the matter for a short while, he decided that he needed to convince Bai Xiaochun of how important he was, and quickly composed a response.

“Junior patriarch, I have an idea. As you know, I’m very familiar with this sort of thing, and based on my understanding of the situation, I would bet that people are going to come offer formal greetings soon. Remember, when they show up, you have to pretend that you’re not happy with your performance, and emphasize that you plan to go challenge the trials again. The more you do that, the more people will be convinced of your future potential. And don't forget, *do not* try to show off in front of the people who come to visit.”

After receiving Xu Baocai’s message, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that it was great advice. Therefore, after a bit of thought, he opened the door of his immortal's cave and stood there to keep an eye out for any passersby or visitors.

“Ai, what a headache. Based on what Xu Baocai said, there will probably be a lot of people coming to offer formal greetings soon.” Sighing, he pulled his magical mirror out of his bag of holding and looked himself over. Then he put it away and clasped his hands behind his back, putting a somber, thoughtful expression onto his face. He even seemed to be seeking enlightenment as he stared up into the sky.

Before long, two beams of light appeared, which were none other than Master God-Diviner and Big Fatty Zhang. In the short time which had passed recently, Big Fatty Zhang was already in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and was surrounded by some faint, seemingly illusory mist that was quite shocking in appearance.

As for Master God-Diviner, he was in the early Core Formation stage, and was equally spectacular-looking. They had both been quite shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s performance, and as for his current appearance as he stood there outside of his immortal’s cave, it was beyond ordinary. He seemed lofty to an extreme degree, especially the way the wind caused the hem of his garment to stir slowly, along with his long, black hair. Considering the profound look in his eye, he seemed to have the air of a transcendent being, someone who didn’t even belong in the mortal world.

“Junior Patriarch....”

“Xiaochun....”

Before Big Fatty Zhang and Master God-Diviner could do anything other than call out a greeting, Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve, looking both determined and unhappy.

Glancing at them out of the corner of his eye, he said, “Don’t try to convince me!”

Instantly, Big Fatty Zhang and Master God-Diviner’s eyes went wide.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0428 awe-chapter-429

“I hate that cyan trial by fire! I didn’t know what I was doing, otherwise how could I, Bai Xiaochun, have placed only in the 490s?

“I'm definitely going to get my star higher. I'm going to get past the cyan part of the rainbow and into the blue portion! Actually, I’m going to go all the way to the violet trial by fire! Just wait until next time and watch me do it!” The decisiveness in his voice could sever nails and chop iron, and his entire person seemed to radiate a valiant air.

Big Fatty Zhang and Master God-Diviner were immediately shaken, and stood there a bit awkwardly for a long moment.

“Don’t be discouraged, Xiaochun,” Big Fatty Zhang said finally. “I heard that when you pass the blue trial, you leave a statue behind that other people who take the challenge have to beat in a fight. Of course, that also means that you have to beat the statue left behind by the previous winner. But you shouldn’t have any problem next time you challenge the trials. You’ll definitely leave your own statue behind!”

“That's right, Junior Patriarch. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is huge, so you getting into the top 500 is already a huge accomplishment. I’m sure that next time, you’ll make even a bigger stir!”

As they persuaded him, his gaze softened a bit. However, as he looked down from the sky, the regret and defiance could still be seen in his expression.

Master God-Diviner and Big Fatty Zhang weren’t quite sure what to make of the situation, so they offered some more encouragement. In the end, though, Bai Xiaochun still didn't seem to be in a very good mood. Finally, they clasped hands and left.

As soon as they were gone, Bai Xiaochun’s expression relaxed, and he looked very proud of himself.

“Hahaha! My performance was spot on. Xu Baocai really earned his keep this time!” Thinking back to the expressions on the faces of Big Fatty Zhang and Master God-Diviner, his excitement rose. However, that was when another beam of light appeared, flying toward him, within which was none other than Chen Manyao.

As she approached, Bai Xiaochun once again looked up, clasped his hands behind his back, and put a defiant expression on his face. The profound gleam once again filled his eyes, and before she could even say anything, he said, “Don’t try to convince me! I hate that cyan trial by fire....”

And to Chen Manyao’s astonishment, he went on to repeat exactly what he had said to Master God-Diviner and Big Fatty Zhang.

Chen Manyao was taken aback, and almost felt as if she didn’t know this version of Bai Xiaochun who was standing in front of her. “Xiaochun, you don’t need to feel bad....”

Over the course of the following several days, whenever people came for a formal visit... they would see this version of Bai Xiaochun, and hear the same words. As a result, the admiration and respect they felt for him continued to grow.

Three days later, Xu Baocai finished wrapping up matters in the Live Forever Tavern and was promoted to Sky Quarter

Rainbow. The very first thing he did was go to Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, where the two of them hunkered down for a long meeting. Afterward, Xu Baocai requested a sizeable sum of merit points for operating expenses and then made his way off, bursting with smugness and pride.

Xu Baocai really did have some unique methods for digging up information and spreading rumors, and in this situation, he was using his talents to the absolute limit. As he propagated stories about Bai Xiaochun being a Chosen, several different tales about Bai Xiaochun began to spread. Some of the stories praised him, and others belittled him, and there were actually some aspects of each story that contradicted the others. However, that only led to more people talking about the subject.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun’s name was well known in all of Sky Quarter Rainbow. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had his own role to play; he went out every day to places where disciples gathered, his hands clasped behind his back, looking defiant and lost in thought. Of course, the cultivators on Sky Quarter Rainbow weren’t familiar with Bai Xiaochun, and so from what they could tell, he looked like the picture of a proud Chosen, whose determination and confidence ran deep in his bones.

Because of that, many cultivators began to look forward in anticipation to the next time Bai Xiaochun challenged the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials.

To be the center of such attention on a daily basis left Bai Xiaochun’s heart bursting with joy. Of course, he had long since gone to buy the seven-colored mistysea grass, which had been the entire reason he had challenged the trials to begin with.

After combining them with the ingredients he had already prepared, he went into secluded meditation for a few days and concocted a medicinal pill that could be used to forget the self.

The resulting pill glowed with seven-colored light that reflected in Bai Xiaochun’s proud eyes.

“This time I'm definitely going to gain enlightenment of the Living Mountain Incantation!” Spirits soaring, he thought back to the stone golems he had encountered in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trial, and felt more confident than ever about succeeding. Medicinal pill in hand, he flew out of his immortal's cave and headed to Myriad Star Rainbow, and the Ravine of Endless Mountains.

Outside of the ravine, he once again saw Stonemountain, sitting there on the boulder, looking very much like a monkey.

Yet again, Bai Xiaochun was unable to determine the level of Stonemountain’s cultivation base. Furthermore, there was something about his aura that seemed similar to that of the stone golems. After staring for a moment, he clasped hands and bowed. “Bai Xiaochun offers greetings, Elder Brother Stonemountain.”

Stonemountain’s eyes opened, and he looked at Bai Xiaochun for a moment before giving a rare smile and then a nod. Not saying a single word, he waved his hand.

Instantly, the ground trembled, and the familiar stone hand stretched out. Bai Xiaochun leaped up onto it, whereupon his vision swam and he was teleported away. When things were clear again, he once again found himself in a strange world, with countless mountain peaks stretching out in all directions.

This time, his eyes shone with confidence as he retraced the path he had followed last time until he found the mountain that looked similar to the stone golems. Once he found it, he settled down cross-legged on the giant's head.

Then, he produced the medicinal pill he had just concocted, hesitated for a moment, and gritted his teeth.

"I acquired the Living Mountain Incantation back when I got all of the legacy seals from that legacy zone. If I don't cultivate it to completion, it would definitely be a big waste. I have to succeed this time!" Taking a deep breath, he looked down at the medicinal pill he had created to forget himself.

"To meld with the mountain," he murmured, "first forget yourself, then forget the mountain. When you wake up, you will be the mountain, and the mountain will be you...." Following the methods described in the Living Mountain Incantation, he began to seek enlightenment of the structure of the mountain, and then meld with it. He tried several dozen times, until it became something of a reflex to do it. Only then did he place the medicinal pill into his mouth and swallow.

Once the medicinal pill sank down into his belly, it melted, transforming into warm currents that filled his body, creating something of a stream leading to his head. Then rumbling sounds filled him, almost like thunder from the heavens. At the same time, his mind began to devolve into chaos, eventually becoming a complete blank.

Although his mind was a blank, he remained seated there just as before, trying to gain enlightenment of the structure of the mountain, and then meld with it.

Time passed. Three days later, Bai Xiaochun was still sitting there motionless. He had forgotten about himself, and his mind was a complete blank. He had even forgotten about the golem-like mountain he was seated upon. His mind seemed to be completely devoid of thought.

Eventually, on the seventh day, some simple thoughts appeared in his mind. More days passed, and the thoughts seemed to slowly converge, transforming into the outline of a stone golem.

That outline looked very similar to the mountain beneath him, and also the stone golems in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials....

Another half a month passed, and Bai Xiaochun still had not woken up. The image of the stone golem in his mind was growing more and more complete, and increasingly lifelike.

**

Meanwhile, out in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, something happened that rocked the entire sect; even the sect leader was shaken deeply.

Gongsun Wan’er... challenged the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials!

At first, few people paid much attention to her. However, as her star rose, people began to notice the unique methods she was using to pass the trials, and more people started to pay attention to her!

In the red trial by fire, she became a god of death within the sea of lava, slaughtering beasts the entire way and using their corpses to cross the sea. The other disciples in the trial by fire with her were completely shocked to see her make a bridge of corpses!

In the orange trial by fire in which the stone golems were fighting each other, all the other disciples cowered in fear, whereas she simply walked straight through. In the yellow trial by fire, she did the same thing by simply walking casually across the metal being forged. In the green trial by fire with the lightning, she actually absorbed much of the lightning through her mouth as she walked across the bridge.

Most shocking of all was that in the cyan trial, her mere appearance within the trial caused the vengeful souls to tremble and hide away. Only the soul emperor showed up to fight her, and in the end, they fought to a draw!!

The entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was shocked by what had occurred.

After all, the soul emperor’s power was equivalent to the early Nascent Soul stage!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0429 awe-chapter-430

As Gongsun Wan’er stepped from the cyan trial into the blue trial, Bai Xiaochun slowly opened his eyes in the Ravine of Endless Mountains.

He had a blank expression, and just barely visible within each eye was the flickering image of a stone golem.

Only gradually did he begin to become aware of his surroundings. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he took a deep breath, and was fully conscious. He felt like he had just woken up from a long sleep, with his thoughts being a bit sluggish.

“Did it work?” Rubbing his forehead, he slowly stood up and then checked his cultivation base. However, he still wasn’t sure if he had succeeded; everything that had happened recently was a complete blank.

“This....” After a moment of hesitation, he used the techniques of the Living Mountain Incantation to perform an incantation gesture. When he did, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes widened as an explosively powerful force began to build up inside of him.

At almost the exact same instant, the images of two stone golems grew clear in his eyes. As for the power inside of him, it continued to build, and he suddenly felt as if his own body were restricting it and making it impossible to release. Without even thinking about it, he opened his mouth.

In that instant, a rumbling sound that resembled his voice exploded out in a roar. As it did, the illusory image of a gigantic stone golem appeared above him, roughly 30 meters tall!

As he roared, he leapt up into the air, his eyes shining with berserk light. The power inside of him had reached the point where he felt that he had to release it, so he clenched his hand into a fist and then unleashed a punch toward one of the other nearby mountains.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as an enormous force slammed into the mountain peak, causing it to tremble violently and then explode into pieces. The sea of clouds in the area roiled violently, and from a distance, it almost looked like Bai Xiaochun was at the center of a huge vortex.

The power that he had just unleashed was by no means weaker than that of the early Nascent Soul stage, and had been pure fleshly body power. Perhaps it was even correct to say that it was a magic pertaining to the fleshly body!!

It was a secret magic just like his Throat Crushing Grasp, Mountain Shaking Bash, and Undying Hex!

After unleashing the fist strike, Bai Xiaochun felt a tremor pass through him. Then, the illusory image of the stone golem faded away into obscurity. Bai Xiaochun’s face was a bit pale, and yet, his eyes were shining with disbelief and excitement.

“This is totally different from the Undying Live Forever Technique. Although I won’t be able to use it as many times in a row as the Throat Crushing Grasp or the Mountain Shaking Bash, this Living Mountain Incantation is actually the most powerful technique I can unleash. It’s way more domineering than the Throat Crushing Grasp!” After a quick check, he confirmed that using the fist strike seemed to converge all of the different types of power in his body, and that after using it, he was almost completely drained.

Even still, it was worth it to be able to unleash a strike that could shake heaven and earth!

“Hahaha! I finally succeeded. From now on, the Living Mountain Incantation will be one of my trump cards. Hmph! Bai Xiaochun is now invincible to anyone under Core Formation!” Filled with excitement at how awesome he was now, he flew away in high spirits to leave the Ravine of Endless Mountains.

Upon emerging out into the open, he immediately turned to look at Stonemountain on the boulder, hoping to share his success. After all, despite not being able to assess Stonemountain’s cultivation base, he could sense from his aura that he too cultivated the Living Mountain Incantation.

However, he quickly realized that Stonemountain was staring off in the direction of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials.

“Elder Brother Stonemountain,” Bai Xiaochun called out excitedly, “I succeeded!”

“Mhmm.” Stonemountain had a very serious expression on his face as he continued to look in the direction of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials.

Surprised at the reaction, Bai Xiaochun repeated himself. “Elder Brother Stonemountain, I said that I just succeeded with the Living Mountain Incantation!”

Stonemountain didn’t even look over at him, and in fact, seemed to be getting even more somber by the moment. “Oh. Congratulations.”

The fact that he had just succeeded in fully cultivating a powerful trump card, but had no one to share his joy with, was a bit depressing. However, he couldn’t resist the urge to look over at the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials to see what Stonemountain found so interesting.

Almost immediately, he realized that on the blue portion of the rainbow, there was a star that happened to be glittering more brightly than the others, to an eye-catching level. Focusing on the star, he suddenly found that Gongsun Wan’er’s name had popped into his mind.

“Huh?” he said, jaw dropping. He quickly took out a command medallion and spent some merit points to see what was happening inside the trial. To his shock, he saw Gongsun Wan’er in the blue trial, fighting some unknown young man!

His cultivation base was in the great circle of Core Formation, and he was wearing a cyan robe. His face was expressionless, and he was surrounded by countless swirling bolts of lightning. As he fought back and forth with Gongsun Wan’er, he unleashed divine abilities that were definitely beyond his own cultivation level.

Despite that, Gongsun Wan’er unexpectedly waved her finger, causing the young man to shake violently and then explode into pieces.

Bai Xiaochun gasped, and as for all of the other cultivators in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect who were watching the scene, they were completely shaken. After all, the statue in the blue trial by fire was left behind by the most recent previous successful challenger.

In other words, the statue she had just defeated represented a consummate Chosen who occupied 8th place in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!

Anyone who wanted to get into the blue section of the rainbow would have to fight the statue left behind by the previous victorious challenger. That was the only way to get into the violet portion of the rainbow. In the moment that Gongsun Wan’er attained victory, a statue of her formed right there in the blue trial by fire.

That indicated that anyone who came after her to try to get into the blue trial by fire would have to defeat the statue of Gongsun Wan’er in battle. A moment later, Gongsun Wan’er vanished, to appear within the violet trial by fire!

In that instant, the star which represented her on the outside rose from the blue section of the rainbow all the way to the violet section, becoming the ninth star therein!

Countless cries of shock and surprise filled the air. After all, for many years, the current generation of Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars had only seen eight stars in the violet section of the rainbow. But as of this moment, there were nine!

According to the sect rules, anyone who reached the violet portion of the rainbow would have any request they made of the sect fulfilled, as long as it wasn’t too excessive!

Another thing happened when Gongsun Wan’er entered the violet trial. No one could see her anymore. According to the rules of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials, it was permissible to observe the first six trials by fire, but as for the final trial, the violet one, only the people who entered the trial itself were allowed to know what happened inside.

Very few people were aware of what the violet trial by fire was like.

It only took a few moments for Gongsun Wan’er to appear back out in the open, and her name remained in the ninth spot. Immediately, rumors began to spread through the sect regarding what that indicated.

Even still, Gongsun Wan’er had risen to prominence by reaching 9th place. It was a spectacular accomplishment that shook the whole sect. Even more shocking, moments later, a Dharmic decree was sent out from the sect leader’s portion of Myriad Star Rainbow.

“Gongsun Wan’er, your request is granted. Henceforth, you are no longer a hostage, but rather, a core disciple of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

Everyone was completely stunned by the announcement, and actually, it was the first time that most people even realized that Gongsun Wan’er had been a hostage. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes were wide with shock.

This was his first time realizing how amazing Gongsun Wan’er actually was. However, he also felt a bit irritated. Then he thought back to everything that had ever happened with Gongsun Wan’er, and suddenly, his vigilance rose.

“What’s so amazing about that…?” he muttered as he left the Ravine of Endless Mountains. As he walked along, nobody paid much attention to him at all; they were all talking about Gongsun Wan’er.

More irritated than ever, he returned to Sky Quarter, and found that all of the cultivators there were also talking about Gongsun Wan’er. Depressed, he went back into his immortal's cave and sat down.

Gritting his teeth, he said, “I can do the same thing. I got all the way to the cyan trial last time. It's just that there were too many ghosts! I should figure out a way to suck all of the ghosts into one place and keep them from moving. Then I can just walk past them.” Frowning, he began to think about the matter.

A few days later, he looked up, his eyes bloodshot, but his expression one of excitement.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0430 awe-chapter-431

“They're just some little ghosts, right? It’ll only take a bit of thinking for Lord Bai to figure out a way to transform them into nothing but ash!” Bai Xiaochun spent several days wrestling with the problem. At first, he considered using evil-warding talismans, but considering the vast numbers of vengeful souls in the cyan trial by fire, he decided that such a method wouldn’t be very reliable.

Besides, back when he had first faced all the vengeful souls back then, he had plastered a good amount of such talismans on him, and it hadn’t done much good at all.

“Evil-warding talismans aren’t going to work. In that case, I need to concoct a medicinal pill. Only then will I be confident enough to succeed....” At that point, his eyes glittered with anticipation.

After some thinking, he came up with an idea for a new pill formula that he was sure would work. It wouldn’t require many medicinal plant ingredients, and would mostly serve as a vehicle with which to use the powers of gravity and repulsion that he had begun to study in the Spirit Stream Sect.

“I need to concoct a spirit medicine that will cause all of the vengeful souls to gather together in one spot....” He wanted to make something that, as soon as it appeared in the open, would cause all of the vengeful souls in the area to rush toward it at top speed. The mere idea of concocting a pill like that got him fidgeting in excitement.

Eyebrows dancing in anticipation, he began pacing back and forth in his immortal's cave, continuing to analyze his new pill formula. Finally, he slapped his thigh.

“This is definitely going to work. The glowing sphere I made with the powers of gravity and repulsion could rip clothes to shreds, and even form hallucination smoke. I can definitely use it to gather souls together!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun made his decision. He rushed out of his immortal's cave and went over to the Hall of Devil Slayers, where he got quite a large collection of medicinal plants, after which he returned and went into secluded meditation.

Three days later, rumbling sounds filled his immortal's cave. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bloodshot as he looked at the white spirit medicine he had just concocted. Taking a deep breath, he drew upon the powers of gravity and repulsion and began to infuse them into the pill. Gravitation and repulsion were not easy to cultivate, but Bai Xiaochun had spent dozens of years on his research, and as such, was able to manipulate them, albeit with some amount of difficulty.

It took several hours, but he managed to infuse the medicinal pill with the powers of gravity and repulsion, after which he excitedly pulled out his copper mirror.

“Imposter Nightcrypt, get out here!”

Imposter Nightcrypt’s soul shivered. He didn’t really have any desire to emerge from the copper mirror, and yet, didn’t dare to refuse. Trying not to cry, he flew out into the open.

“Master, you--”

Before he could finish his sentence, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Take this!”

And then he crushed the medicinal pill.

A boom rang out, and Bai Xiaochun’s clothes were instantly shredded to pieces, leaving him buck naked. As for imposter Nightcrypt, he instantly screamed, and yet, after a moment, the scream faded into an exclamation of surprise.

“Huh? I'm not hurt! Hahaha! I'm fine!” Imposter Nightcrypt hadn’t been affected at all. Excited, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who was looking back at him with his bloodshot eyes twitching a bit. Imposter Nightcrypt shivered, and then slunk off to the side, convinced that Bai Xiaochun was in a very dangerous mood.

Panting, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the crushed remnants of the medicinal pill. Then he completely ignored imposter Nightcrypt, threw on another set of clothing, and began to concoct another pill.

Another three days passed....

“Take this!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, crushing the medicinal pill.

A boom rang out, and this time, his clothes were completely unaffected. However, the force of the explosion slammed Bai Xiaochun into the wall of the immortal's cave, causing cracks to spread out in all directions.

Only after a long moment passed did Bai Xiaochun then fall down to the ground, leaving a human-shaped indentation in the wall. Face ashen, and yet also filled with determination, he gritted his teeth and started working again.

As for imposter Nightcrypt, when he saw what had just happened, he couldn’t help but gasp.

“What... what kind of medicine is he concocting?”

Another four days passed, and another medicinal pill appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s hand. His eyes were so bloodshot that they were almost completely red as he backed up until he was leaning up against the wall. Convinced that this time would be a success, he crushed the pill and shouted, “Alright, take this!”

This time, his clothing was again shredded to pieces, and instead of being pushed backward, he was pulled forward, body completely out of his own control as he slammed into the opposite wall. Popping sounds rang out, and cracks spread out in the wall. Meanwhile, imposter Nightcrypt looked at Bai Xiaochun, shivering violently.

“He’s... he’s not concocting medicine, he’s trying to kill himself!” Imposter Nightcrypt was shaking in fear and anxiety, not at the prospect of Bai Xiaochun dying, but at the fact that Bai Xiaochun had tested the first pill on him. He couldn’t imagine what fate he would meet if Bai Xiaochun succeeded in concocting whatever pill he was planning.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was furious. After struggling to get out of the wall, he once again began to concoct. A few more days went by, and he had a new version of his spirit medicine. This time, he crawled into one of the holes he had previously punched into the wall, in the hopes that such a position would keep him safe. With that, he gritted his teeth and prepared to crush the pill.

Unable to keep control of himself, Imposter Nightcrypt wailed, “Master, spare me!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed and said, “Trust me, this time it's going to work!”

With that he crushed the pill. Instantly, a huge boom rang out as the powers of gravitation and repulsion erupted out. This time, the pill merely exploded, and Bai Xiaochun, despite being hidden in the wall, was still hit by the blast. The entire immortal's cave even rocked back and forth.

Bai Xiaochun was wrenched out of his position in the wall and slammed into the ground, where he lay for a long moment before struggling back into a sitting position. Then, he yet again began to concoct medicine, seemingly as if his life depended on it.

Imposter Nightcrypt was trembling on the verge of collapse, and couldn't stop wondering what his future held. It was a true torment; every time he saw the tragic results when Bai Xiaochun crushed one of his pills, his terror mounted.

A few more days passed, and Bai Xiaochun started to get ready to perform another test. Wailing, imposter Nightcrypt said, “Master, spare me, please!!”

He truly wished to be spared. He felt like a prisoner on death row, whose head had been placed on the chopping block, only to have the axe veer to the side and miss its mark over and over again. It was a truly agonizing feeling.

“Trust me, this time it's going to work!” Howling, Bai Xiaochun crushed the medicinal pill, causing another boom to echo out....

Time passed. Two whole months. During that time, Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave continued to rock and sway on a regular basis. As for Bai Xiaochun himself, were it not for the fact that he had a tremendously powerful fleshly body, he would have been severely injured on several occasions.

Finally, on a day when imposter Nightcrypt was wracked with despair, a boom rang out, and a powerful gravitational force erupted out. Imposter Nightcrypt was instantly grabbed up and, in almost the exact same instant, was sucked over to Bai Xiaochun’s palm.

“Hahaha! Success at last!!” Bai Xiaochun cried, standing there in the wreckage of his immortal's cave, his hair in complete disarray, but his expression one of pure excitement. Clearly, Imposter Nightcrypt hadn’t been the only one to be in torment over the past two months.

As of this moment, he had created a medicinal pill that, when crushed, would unleash the powers of gravity and repulsion, and drag any nearby soul bodies to the location where the pill had been crushed.

“I'm going to call it the Soul Convergence Pill!” With that, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Although he was tired, he was almost mad with excitement, and had already decided that he would rest up a bit and then go challenge the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials again.

“This time I’m definitely going to show those measly ghosts a thing or two!” Feeling prouder of himself than ever, he concocted some more Soul Convergence Pills, then settled down cross-legged to do some breathing exercises.

Over the following month, Bai Xiaochun went mad concocting Soul Convergence Pills. Whenever he got tired, he would do some breathing exercises, then start work again as soon as possible. As time went along, not only did he build up a shockingly large collection of pills, but because of the constant cycle of exhausting himself and then recovering, his cultivation base began to creep closer toward the late Gold Core stage!

One day when he finished a run of concocting, and had just settled down to do some breathing exercises, he suddenly looked out of his immortal's cave, an expression of surprise on his face.

Soon, three beams of light became visible, flying toward him. They were none other than Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao, and Xu Baocai, and all of them looked very anxious.

Considering he was at the peak of the mid Gold Core stage, Bai Xiaochun could tell even from a distance that they were upset, and that something was clearly going on.

Even before they reached the immortal's cave, they began to call out at the tops of their lungs.

“Junior Patriarch, Big Fatty Zhang’s in trouble!”

“Xiaochun, hurry up and save Big Fatty Zhang!!”

Upon hearing their words, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. Swishing his sleeve, he slammed open the door of the immortal's cave and rushed out in a blast of wind.

Grabbing Master God-Diviner by the shoulders, he shouted, “What’s wrong with Eldest Brother?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0431 awe-chapter-432

Master God-Diviner could see how anxious Bai Xiaochun was, and knew how important Big Fatty Zhang was to him. Shivering, he replied, “Big Fatty Zhang is trying to reach Core Formation, and fell into a deadly crisis!”

Looking equally anxious, Xu Baocai offered further explanation. “Last month, Elder Brother Zhang could tell that he was on the verge of reaching Core Formation, and went into secluded meditation. Master God-Diviner and I stood as Dharma protectors outside of his immortal's cave. At first, everything seemed normal, and we assumed he would only need a couple of months to finish the process. But for some reason, on the third day, his aura began to weaken. As of now, there’s only a faint bit of it left!!”

“I went too,” Chen Manyao said anxiously, “but his immortal's cave is sealed tight, and we can’t get in. We didn’t want to blow up the door either, in case that would cause further problems.” Considering how long she had been part of the group, she considered herself part of them now, and was just as anxious as they were about Big Fatty Zhang being in danger.

After hearing their explanations, Bai Xiaochun didn’t hesitate for even a moment. Transforming into a beam of prismatic light, he shot through the air at high speed toward Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave.

Master God-Diviner, Xu Baocai and Chen Manyao all followed along as fast as they could. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave appeared up ahead. Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding with nervousness; Big Fatty Zhang was his Eldest Brother, and the two of them had a deep connection. After all, the two of them had begun their friendship on the very day Bai Xiaochun joined the Spirit Stream Sect.

His mind was almost a complete blank as he landed in front of the immortal's cave, the door of which was sealed tightly. Bai Xiaochun quickly sent out some divine sense, backed by the power of his mid Gold Core stage cultivation base. Almost instantly, he could sense Big Fatty Zhang’s aura, and how weak it was. Apparently, the flame of his life force was on the verge of being snuffed out.

It almost looked as if he had made repeated efforts to reach Core Formation, and had failed each time, causing much of his life force to waste away.

“How could this be happening?!” Bai Xiaochun said. Eyes bloodshot, he clenched his hands into fists and then called upon the explosive power of his Undying Hex, as well as the frigid qi that came from being on the verge of the Frigid Master level. Almost instantly, the door of the immortal's cave was covered with spider-web like cracks, before exploding into bits.

Bai Xiaochun charged inside, to find Big Fatty Zhang sitting there as ashen as death, looking like little more than a skeleton!

A faint mist surrounded him, some of which would occasionally be sucked into his body before flowing out again. As that happened, Big Fatty Zhang’s aura slowly faded, to be replaced by an increasingly strong aura of death. From the look of it, he was hovering on the very brink of perishing.

“Eldest Brother....” Bai Xiaochun murmured. It felt like his heart was being cut in half by the sharpest of blades. Without hesitation, he reached out and put his right hand on the top of Big Fatty Zhang’s head, then poured life force into him, hoping to bolster the flickering flame of his life force.

It only took a moment for Bai Xiaochun to realize that there was some sort of strange power inside of Big Fatty Zhang, something that was repelling the outside life force. That power felt like some sort of complete and utter determination. Furthermore, there in Big Fatty Zhang’s dantian region was a dense cloud of mist that looked almost like a sphere.

Every so often, the mist would converge together into the shape of a core, after which it would fall apart.

Apparently, the mist swirling around Big Fatty Zhang had been created by the same force.

“What’s going on!?” Bai Xiaochun said, stunned. Because of the force of expulsion inside of Big Fatty Zhang, any life force he sent in was almost completely dispelled. At best, he could slightly reduce the speed at which Big Fatty Zhang’s life force was fading away. At the current rate, it would likely be only two hours or so before Big Fatty Zhang wasted away into death.

It was in that moment that Master God-Diviner and Chen Manyao arrived. When they saw Big Fatty Zhang’s appearance, they both gasped.

“How is this possible?” Master God-Diviner said, looking shocked. “Big Fatty Zhang was only in secluded meditation for a month! How could he have been reduced to this state? It looks like he made ten failed attempts at reaching Core Formation!!”

Chen Manyao looked a bit more closely at the mist, and then suddenly, she said, “That mist.... Big Fatty Zhang is a spirit enhancer. Could it be... that he’s trying to form a Will Core?!”

“Will Core?” Bai Xiaochun looked up at Chen Manyao, his expression fierce, not because of Chen Manyao, but because he was hovering on the brink of madness because of Big Fatty Zhang.

Chen Manyao immediately revealed everything she knew about Will Cores. “In ancient times, spirit enhancers often attempted to form Will Cores. However, it's fundamentally very dangerous, and nowadays, virtually no one even tries. Only someone completely and utterly confident in their spirit enhancement abilities could attempt it successfully. It’s basically like creating something from nothing!

“If the spirit enhancer successfully forms the Will Core, he will experience incredible good fortune afterward. But if he fails, he will be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

Upon hearing the explanation, a tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and he suddenly realized he had sensed a form of utter confidence within the mist inside Big Fatty Zhang. Suddenly, a look of regret appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

“Will Core....” He couldn’t help but think back to the Spirit Stream Sect, and how he had tricked Big Fatty Zhang into thinking he had succeeded, all to prevent his feelings from being hurt. From that moment on, Big Fatty Zhang’s journey along the path of spirit enhancement had completely changed.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun realized that Big Fatty Zhang’s path of spirit enhancement was closely related to his confidence, and that his confidence had been significantly affected by Bai Xiaochun himself.

“You guys keep feeding him as much life force as you can. I’m going to get a Nascent Soul Daoist master!” With one final glance at Big Fatty Zhang’s dwindling aura, Bai Xiaochun raced out of the immortal's cave and headed toward the Hall of Devil Slayers.

Master God-Diviner and Chen Manyao immediately began to pour life force into Big Fatty Zhang, as did Xu Baocai, who had only just arrived.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bloodshot as he raced along, his mind empty except for a single thought: he could not allow Big Fatty Zhang to die!!

A whistling sound echoed out in all directions on Sky Quarter Rainbow as he shot at top speed toward the Hall of Devil Slayers.

The Hall of Devil Slayers was some distance from Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more anxious. Therefore, he used as much speed as possible, unleashing the Mountain Shaking Bash and also relying on the power of the Undying Tendons in his left leg.

Before long, he was nearing the Hall of Devil Slayers. However, it was at that point that, just up ahead, five cultivators were being blocked from passing through the area.

The people blocking their path were three disciples wearing long green robes, with cold expressions on their faces. When they saw Bai Xiaochun hurrying in their direction, one of them realized who he was, and hesitated a moment before calling out, “You there, get back! This whole 500-kilometer area is set aside for our Young Lord’s personal cultivation!”

“Yeah. Our Young Lord is Sima Feiru!” Apparently, they thought that uttering the name Sima Feiru would be a huge threat. After all, this was essentially the same thing they said to anyone who tried to pass through this area.

Quite a few people on Sky Quarter Rainbow were familiar with Sima Feiru. After all, he ranked 97 in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. As a member of the top 100, he was extremely famous!

At any other time, when he was in his usual mood, Bai Xiaochun would never have bickered with these people about being able to pass through. But at the moment, his heart was on fire because of the situation with Big Fatty Zhang, and he had absolutely no patience. He couldn’t have cared less if Sima Feiru had the area locked down. In fact, if an even more famous Chosen had done the same thing, he still wouldn’t have taken the time to go around!

At this moment, every breath of time counted. Completely ignoring the three green-robed disciples, he continued onward at top speed.

The three disciples’ faces flickered, and one of them said, “How dare--”

However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun roared, “Beat it!”

Instantly, a wild wind sprang up, and the three disciples’ ears filled with deafening rumbling sounds as an incredible force smashed into them, forcing them off to the side as Bai Xiaochun shot past them into Sima Feiru’s sealed, 500-kilometer land.

Almost immediately, a powerful aura erupted from a deep cistern within that 500-kilometer area.

“Who dares to interrupt my cultivation!?!?” Along with the voice which echoed out, a magical technique was unleashed that caused a huge face to appear above the cistern. It was the face of a young man, twisted in rage.

This person was none other than Sima Feiru!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0432 awe-chapter-433

In the moment that Sima Feiru’s voice echoed out, a burst of late Core Formation cultivation base power erupted out from the cistern.

Simultaneously, ten figures shot up into the air from various directions, which were none other than Sima Feiru’s followers. Cold smiles could be seen on all of their faces; clearly, they were confident that anyone who disturbed their Young Lord’s cultivation would meet a grisly fate.

This was not the first time Sima Feiru had staked claim to a cultivation area, nor was it the first time someone had attempted to interfere with him when he did. However, nobody had ever been successful in an attempt to drive him away, and everyone always ended up backing down.

As for Bai Xiaochun, in his anxiety and rage, his eyes flickered with cold light as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed down at the freezing cistern.

“Shut up!” he shouted, unleashing the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation through his right index finger. Instantly, frigid qi that bordered on the Frigid Master level shot down.

Even as Sima Feiru prepared to burst out of his cistern, the frigid qi poured down like a beam of light, slamming into the water. Instantly, cracking sounds rang out, and the entire cistern was frozen solid!

Not only was the cistern frozen, but the gigantic face was as well, and even Sima Feiru as he prepared to burst out into the open.

Sima Feiru’s face fell; before he could even struggle, he was locked in place, and the terrifying frigid qi that entered him turned him into a statue of ice....

His mouth was stuck open, and his eyes were wide with complete and utter disbelief.

As for his followers in the area, they all gasped, and their eyes went wide.

“How... how is this possible?!?!”

“Is that Bai Xiaochun? Heavens! He only ranks in the 490s, doesn't he? I can’t believe he sealed Sima Feiru with the single wave of a finger!!”

Sima Feiru’s followers were left with minds spinning as Bai Xiaochun flew past them.

Considering his speed, it didn’t take him long to reach the Hall of Devil Slayers, which he entered without the slightest hesitation. Outside, Bai Xiaochun wasn't extremely famous, but inside the Hall of Devil Slayers, everyone treated him with the utmost respect. Because of how Feng Youde cared for him, Bai Xiaochun could do virtually anything he wanted. Nobody dared to interfere with him at all, and within moments, he was in front of the main temple.

Upon entering the temple, he immediately caught sight of Feng Youde sitting at the far end. Hurrying over, he clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Bai Xiaochun offers greetings, Daoist Master! Daoist Master, I beg of you to save a life!!”

“What’s wrong this time?” Feng Youde said, a bit begrudgingly.

Bai Xiaochun quickly explained the situation with Big Fatty Zhang, and continued to beg for Feng Youde’s help, bowing over and over again at the waist as he did so.

Feng Youde’s expression soon turned serious. He had never seen Bai Xiaochun acting so earnestly. After hearing the situation, he thought for a moment, and then frowned.

“A Will Core, huh? Very well, I’ll go take a look.” With that, he rose to his feet. Even as Bai Xiaochun continued to bow and scrape, Feng Youde flicked his sleeve, taking Bai Xiaochun away with him in a teleportation.

When they reappeared, they were about 500 kilometers away, whereupon they teleported again. That put them outside of Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave. To see a teleportation magic like that with his own eyes left Bai Xiaochun shaken, and at the same time, a bit envious.

Feng Youde led the way into Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave, where Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao, and Xu Baocai were waiting. When they saw that Bai Xiaochun had brought Feng Youde with him, they quickly bowed and backed away.

Feng Youde cared about Bai Xiaochun, but not the others, so he paid them absolutely no attention. Walking over to Big Fatty Zhang, he put his hand onto his forehead and sent some divine sense into him. After inspecting him for a moment, his expression turned even more grave than before.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, his heart began to pound, and his face drained of blood.

“It really is a Will Core....” Feng Youde said, withdrawing his hand and frowning. Sighing, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“Half a month ago, I might have been able to help. But at this point, he’s a candle flickering in the wind, only a step away from death. I simply don’t have the power to save him.”

Bai Xiaochun felt like he had been hit with a sledgehammer. His heart was pounding, and his face was pale white as he staggered backward a few paces. Grief filled him, pushing him to the point where he felt like he was going to collapse.

Almost immediately, he began to think back to all his memories of Big Fatty Zhang.

“Isn’t there some other way?” he said, looking over at the corpse-like Big Fatty Zhang.

“Who is he to you?” Feng Youde asked, a profound light gleaming in his eyes.

“He’s my Eldest Brother!” Bai Xiaochun replied. From the look in his eyes, he would clearly pay any price to save Big Fatty Zhang. Feng Youde was shaken by the level of determination he saw.

Up to this point, he had only been watching out for Bai Xiaochun because of the promise given him by the Heavenspan emissary. But now, after seeing the look in his eyes, he could sense a level of sentiment in Bai Xiaochun that he hadn’t seen for quite some time.

“Who would have thought that this kid would care so much about his friends...?” he murmured inwardly. Based on the level of his cultivation base, and his years of experience, he could tell that Bai Xiaochun was not putting on a show.

After a moment of thought, he inspected Big Fatty Zhang more thoroughly. Enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, whereupon he said, “You might still have a chance to save your Eldest Brother. However, the help of a Nascent Soul cultivator won’t do it. You would need a Deva Realm cultivator from the Senior generation. Either that, or the power of a deva. Only then could the chaos surrounding the Will Core be nullified, and the core fully formed!”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes began to shine with bright light. Without the slightest hesitation, he said, “The power of a deva? How do I get that?! I’ll pay all of my merit points if I have to!”

Even Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao, and Xu Baocai could sense the unswerving determination in his voice.

Feng Youde shook his head. “The power of a deva can come only when an almighty deva gathers some of his or her aura into a talisman, transforming it into a disposable magical item. Usually, devas will give such talismans to their apprentices as a form of protection.

“Such items take years to craft, and are astronomically valuable. They’re not the type of thing you can purchase with merit points.”

Master God-Diviner sucked in a breath and exchanged a glance with Xu Baocai. Based on what they had just heard, it didn’t seem like ordinary disciples would ever be able to get that type of item, something which was normally reserved for the apprentices of devas.

Bai Xiaochun turned even more ashen than before, and yet, he now had hope.

“If you want to get the power of a deva,” Feng Youde continued, “you would have to take a deva as your Master. Either that, or challenge the Starry Sky Dao Polarity

Superstars trials, and reach the violet section of the rainbow. At that point, you would receive a boon from the sect, and could request the power of a deva!”

“The violet section of the rainbow?” Xu Baocai said faintly. “Is that even possible...?”

Despite having only been in the rainbow district for a short time, Xu Baocai had learned a bit about the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, and he knew that reaching the violet portion of the rainbow was indescribably difficult.

The violet trial by fire was the final trial, and in the current generation of disciples, there had long since been only eight in that group. It was only recently that Gongsun Wan’er had become the ninth.

If someone else reached that level, there would be ten!

Xu Baocai wasn't the only one to be taken aback. Master God-Diviner and Chen Manyao were also shocked. Although all of them had confidence in Bai Xiaochun, when they heard that he needed to get the power of a deva by reaching the violet portion of the rainbow, their faces fell.

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly for a few breaths of time, then looked up. “How much time do I have?”

Feng Youde sighed. “You’ve made up your mind, then. Very well. I’ll take your Eldest Brother back to the Hall of Devil Slayers to watch over him. Even still, you’ll have no more than twelve hours!”

The look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned as sharp as the edge of blade. “Many thanks, Daoist Master. I’ll leave this instant!”

Without even the slightest hint of hesitation, he turned, rushed out of the immortal's cave, and sped toward the teleportation portal!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0433 awe-chapter-434

“Twelve hours....” Bai Xiaochun thought as he sped across Sky Quarter Rainbow. As of this moment, his veins of steel were pulsing, and he seemed ready to risk his life and fight to the death!

He couldn’t just let Big Fatty Zhang die, nor any of his other friends. He knew that the cultivation world was a brutal place, and that he was relatively powerless to alter the course of major events, but he still couldn’t give up. Back when war had been on the cusp of breaking out between the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, he hadn’t given up. Back during the fight between the River-Defying Sect and the Sky River Court, he hadn’t given up. Back during the fighting at the Mountain of Legacy Seals, he hadn’t given up.

And neither would he give up now!

That was his way of walking the path of immortal cultivation. That was his decision. That was what was important to him!

Bai Xiaochun drew upon all the power of his cultivation base to shoot at top speed toward the teleportation portal. Then, he sped through Myriad Star Rainbow toward the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials.

From the moment he busted open the door of Big Fatty Zhang’s immortal's cave to the moment he reached the entrance of the trials, only two incense sticks’ worth of time had passed. Currently, a few hundred cultivators were gathered there. Many of them spent a lot of time at the entrance, watching the performances of others in the hopes of improving their own chances of success.

There was quite a din of conversation in the area, but as soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, he was noticed by some of the gathered cultivators. After all, his previous charge all the way to the 400s had been an unusual event that drew a lot of attention.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“He's back! How long has it been?”

“I’ve heard of this guy. People said he was really irritated at his last performance, and that the next time he challenged the trials, he would definitely rise in the rankings!” Everyone began to look over at Bai Xiaochun, which would normally cause him to slow down and relish the praise. But he wasn’t in the mood for that now. His expression was grim, and he even radiated a murderous aura as he shot past the crowds and into the entrance, not pausing for a moment!

When challenging the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials, one had to start all over from the beginning. That was a standard rule that no one could change. Regardless of the fact that Bai Xiaochun’s star was high up on the cyan portion of the rainbow, he still had to start from the first trial.

His vision swam, and when things became clear again, a blast of heat hit his face. Without pause, he leapt off of the cliff and dropped down toward the sea of lava.

As soon as he touched the surface of the lava, his eyes glittered, and he unleashed all of the speed he was capable of. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he shot forward, causing huge waves to roll out on the sea of lava. He almost seemed to be running along a flat surface, which, combined with his murderous aura, caused all the other trial-takers in the area to gasp.

Meanwhile, some in the crowd outside were already spending merit points to watch Bai Xiaochun's performance. Of those, most had expected him to do the same thing he had last time, and swim through the lava. Therefore, the scene playing out now cause their hearts to seize with shock, and almost immediately, people began to cry out in shock. That in turn caused more people to start watching him challenge the trials.

“He's doing something different from the first time. He's actually running on top of the lava!”

“Heavens! It was shocking enough when Gongsun Wan'er killed her way across, but seeing Bai Xiaochun run on the surface of the sea is equally astonishing!”

As everyone outside cried out in shock, Bai Xiaochun proceeded forward with a grim expression on his face, not reducing his speed at all, and in fact, accelerating. He only used a bit more time than it takes half an incense stick to burn to cross the entire sea of lava, step onto the far shore, and enter the second trial!

In the second trial, the stone golems were still fighting fiercely. Boulders rained from the sky, and fierce winds swept about. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't stop for even a moment!

None of the obstacles in the challenge seemed to affect him at all, and all of them actually crumbled before even touching him!

However, that almost didn’t count for anything compared to the most shocking development of all. To the astonishment of the crowd, the two enormous stone golems actually stopped fighting when they noticed Bai Xiaochun!

“Get me through this place!” Bai Xiaochun said, calling upon the power of the Living Mountain Incantation. Although he didn’t summon his own stone golem, the aura of the incantation itself was enough that the stone golems could sense it. To them, it felt very familiar, almost as if something or someone was communicating with them.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun asked for help getting through the trial, it was to the utter astonishment of the crowds that one of the stone golems actually reached down toward Bai Xiaochun, not to attack him, but to grab him and throw him through the air toward the exit.

Explosive rumblings sounds could be heard as Bai Xiaochun was propelled by the full power of the stone golem, transforming into something like a shooting star that pierced through the air of the second trial and right into the teleportation portal leading to the third trial!

He had passed through the first and second trials in less time than it takes an incense stick to burn!

Everyone on the outside was going mad with astonishment.

“Heavens! This... this Bai Xiaochun....”

“He was actually holding back last time!!”

By now, the cultivators outside were starting to send messages to their friends, causing more and more cultivators to pay attention to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trial.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was already in the third trial, the one that featured the enormous blacksmith and ironworks. Currently, the enormous sword that was the path to the exit was being beaten by the blacksmith with his hammer.

Just like before, Bai Xiaochun didn’t hesitate for a moment. Instead of trying to make his way across the sword, he dove right down into the frigid sea below!

This time, he didn’t absorb any frigid qi, but instead, drew upon his own frigid qi to freeze everything in the area. Then, just like he had done with the sea of lava, he began speeding across the surface.

Something different happened in this trial, though. Almost as soon as the huge blacksmith noticed Bai Xiaochun in the frigid sea, his expression twisted with rage as he recalled what had occurred last time.

Roaring, he reached down with his huge hand to grab Bai Xiaochun.

As the hand bore down, Bai Xiaochun’s murderous aura spiked, and instead of dodging, he drew upon his Undying Live Forever Technique, and especially the fleshly body power in the Undying Tendons of his left leg. Then, just before the hand grabbed him, he managed to kick off of it, causing incredible rumbling sounds to echo out. Blood sprayed out of his mouth from the force, but he managed to make use of it to accelerate, and fly at top speed toward the exit.

As for the hand, it stopped in place, the veins stretching out from the point of the kick’s impact apparently having been sealed. The hand was temporarily locked in place, causing the blacksmith to roar in rage. Then he slowly clenched his hand into a fist, causing many of the veins to burst before he regained motion.

However, in that short period of time, Bai Xiaochun disappeared into the exit. Again, he didn’t even use the time it takes an incense stick to burn!

As of this moment, he was in the fourth trial!

The green trial had the bridge of lightning. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t appear to be fazed by the lightning at all, and instantly proceeded forward with incredible speed. Lightning slammed into him, but he didn’t slow down at all. No matter how the lightning inundated him, his speed wasn’t reduced, and in less time than it takes an incense stick to burn, he was at the end of the trial.

When he disappeared into the exit, the people in the audience looked on in stunned silence.

“He only used two incense sticks’ worth of time to pass the first four trials. Heavens....”

“How much was he holding back last time? This speed is unbelievable!”

“He’s crushing the trials even more than Gongsun Wan’er. This is crazy!”

“He’s heading into the cyan trial now. Last time, that was where he stopped....”

Everyone seemed to think that there was something strange going on with Bai Xiaochun, but didn’t put too much thought into it. They were all very curious to see how he fared in the cyan trial.

The cyan trial was a world of vengeful souls and endless gravestones. As soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, cyan smoke rose up, and countless terrifying souls appeared. Staring at Bai Xiaochun, they let loose heaven-shaking, earth-shattering howls.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0434 awe-chapter-435

The sight of so many vengeful souls left Bai Xiaochun shivering a bit. Ghosts filled him with indescribable fear, and yet, right now he had no other option available but to face them.

“Shut up!” he yelled with just as much rage as all the howling vengeful souls. Time was of the essence at the moment, and the only thing that occupied his thoughts at the moment was that he only had twelve hours to get to the violet trial by fire.

Big Fatty Zhang’s life was on the line!

Even as Bai Xiaochun yelled at the souls, they flew into the air toward him. As for Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t back down, nor did he slow his pace. Instead, he shot directly toward the vengeful souls.

Outside, the cultivators of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect looked on, their eyes glued to the scene playing out in front of them. All of them were incredibly intent on seeing how Bai Xiaochun tackled the cyan trial.

“It looks like this Bai Xiaochun is going to use some sort of divine ability or something....”

“This trial tests how long you can stand up to the bombardment of the vengeful souls, and how many you can take out. Anyone who wants to last any length of time has to be very careful about their spiritual power, and not waste a single bit. It requires a lot of control.”

“Gongsun Wan’er pulled off something of a miracle. The vengeful souls didn’t dare to actually fight her, although the effect didn’t do anything to the soul emperor. Even still, something like that never happened before in history.”

“I wonder how many souls this Bai Xiaochun will take out....”

Even as the discussions played out in the audience, Bai Xiaochun was inside the cyan trial, rocketing toward the incoming vengeful souls at top speed.

From a distance, it looked like a sea of souls, shaking heaven and earth as they screamed through the air.

However, in the moment before that sea crashed into Bai Xiaochun, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a medicinal pill.

It was white, and didn’t emit any medicinal aroma. In fact, it didn't seem to be extraordinary in any way. As for the audience, they were stunned, and couldn't imagine why Bai Xiaochun would possibly pull out a medicinal pill at this critical moment.

But then, Bai Xiaochun hurled the pill down toward the ground, simultaneously shouting, “Take this!”

The instant the pill hit the ground, it shattered, sending invisible ripples spreading out in all directions. At the same time, the faces of the incoming vengeful souls flickered as they suddenly changed directions and flew down toward the location of the shattered pill. Apparently, their soul bodies were completely beyond their own control!

Some sort of indescribably powerful gravitational force had appeared, which sucked in the vengeful souls, crushing them together. First it was ten, then a hundred, then a thousand, and then ten thousand!

Almost instantly, an opening appeared within the sea of souls, right in front of Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, more than 10,000 souls were sucked down toward the ground, screaming the entire time. In the blink of an eye, a black, fist-sized sphere took shape!

Within that glowing sphere were more than 10,000 vengeful souls!

The audience members’ minds were spinning, and they looked on with wide eyes as Bai Xiaochun flew forward without pausing for a moment. As he did, he produced another of his Soul Convergence Pills.

Every time he threw out one of the pills, all of the souls in the area would be sucked into a black, glowing sphere. Gradually, the vengeful souls grew fewer and fewer as more and more black spheres appeared, each of them filled with numerous screaming souls, none of whom could escape.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun saw the enormous soul emperor in the middle of the cyan trial by fire. Unleashing his cultivation base power, the soul emperor shot toward Bai Xiaochun and howled, “Begone from this place!”

Power erupted from the soul emperor, causing the sky to dim, and yet, Bai Xiaochun simply waved his right hand, throwing out dozens of Soul Convergence Pills at the same time.

“Take this!” he shouted. As the pills exploded, the howling soul emperor’s face suddenly filled with disbelief and shock.

Without any warning, his body suddenly split up into dozens of parts, all of which were sucked away and sealed by the medicinal pills....

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even pay attention to the result. Instead, he continued to speed here and there, tossing out medicinal pills. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn... the cyan trial by fire which had caused problems for countless cultivators in the past... was devoid of even a single vengeful soul.

Bai Xiaochun sped past countless gravestones toward the far end of the trial by fire, and then vanished into the exit.

The spectators outside were trembling in shock. They had had their speculations about what would happen, but never could any of them have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would use a shocking method like this to pass the trial!

From ancient times until the present, no one had ever done anything like it. Everyone knew that the point of this trial was to exterminate as many vengeful souls as possible, and yet, as of this moment, the trial was completely empty....

“Th-this... this....”

“I thought Gongsun Wan’er’s performance was spectacular. I never thought that this Bai Xiaochun... would actually surpass her!”

“The vengeful souls didn’t dare to attack Gongsun Wan’er, and she fought to a draw with the soul emperor. But Bai Xiaochun... he actually absorbed the soul emperor....”

Soon, a deathly silence fell over the audience. Bai Xiaochun’s run through the trials was doing much the same as Gongsun Wan’er’s. The entire sect was shaken as word spread, and more people began to turn their attention toward the trials.

Back on Sky Quarter Rainbow, in the main temple in the Hall of Devil Slayers, Big Fatty Zhang was sitting cross-legged just like he had been before. By this point, he was completely without consciousness, and the flame of his life force was almost gone. Were Feng Youde not there to bolster him, that flame would already have flickered out.

Outside of the temple, Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner were watching the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials, along with Chen Manyao. All of them were completely shaken by what Bai Xiaochun was pulling off.

The other disciples in the sect didn’t really know Bai Xiaochun, but they did. Given his personality, they knew that he normally wouldn’t take risks like this. Everything he was doing was for the sake of Big Fatty Zhang.

As the news about Bai Xiaochun spread, shaking the sect, he appeared within the blue trial by fire. In total, he had used only a bit more than an hour to pass all five of the previous trials, and yet, that was not a reason for him to relax. He was now at the final challenge, after which he would be able to enter the violet stage.

In terms of ranking, he didn’t care about that, and wasn’t even thinking of it. However, he knew that this trial would be the most difficult.

After all, his opponent here would be... Gongsun Wan’er!

Or, more precisely, a statue of Gongsun Wan’er!

The dimension in which the blue trial took place wasn’t large, only about 30,000 meters across. Beyond those borders, everything was a blur. Within the very center of the 30,000-meter area was a lone statue depicting a young woman. She was beautiful, but there was something strange about her; she pulsed with a frigid aura that caused everything around her to turn a light blue color.

At almost the exact same instant that Bai Xiaochun appeared, the statue’s eyes opened, revealing an intense coldness as they locked onto Bai Xiaochun.

That gaze was like a pair of knives stabbing into Bai Xiaochun’s own eyes and piercing into his mind. A tremor ran through him, along with an intense sensation of deadly crisis.

He had fought once with Gongsun Wan’er, long ago. However, after returning from the Blood Stream Sect, he had always felt that there was something very strange about her, although he couldn’t quite put his finger on what that was. Because of that, he had always avoided her.

At long last, in this blue trial by fire, he would be tangling with her once again. Although this was only a statue representing her, Bai Xiaochun knew that it would attack him with the full power that Gongsun Wan’er had used when she challenged the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials.

Furthermore, he knew that unless Gongsun Wan’er had held back during her own fight, this statue would be just as powerful as she was in real life. Although it wouldn’t be quite as intelligent as she was, because it wasn't a real life-form, it wouldn’t sense any pain. In the end, the statue’s strong points would cancel out its weak points, and vice versa.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun’s gaze locked with Gongsun Wan’er’s, her body blurred, and four versions of herself appeared, almost like clones. Incantation gestures flashed, and they all waved their fingers in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Instantly, four streams of light shot toward him, each one a different color. As they streamed through the air, they intersected with each other, forming into an ice flower with four petals, each one a different color. Then, the flower began to rotate rapidly as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

As it passed along, the ground beneath the spinning flower froze up, and the temperature dropped rapidly, until cracking sounds rang out in all directions....

On each of the four flower petals was a face that resembled Gongsun Wan’er, smiling in enigmatic and bizarre fashion. Bai Xiaochun was even sure that he could hear sinister chuckling.

Despite the hair-raisingly terrifying smiles, Bai Xiaochun knew that there was no time to ponder the situation. Drawing upon his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then shoved it out in front of him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0435 awe-chapter-436

That simple gesture, backed by the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, as well as his Gold Core, caused frigid qi from the Frigid Adept level to surge out, distorting the air as it shot to meet the four-colored ice flower.

When they made contact, a huge boom echoed out in all directions. Three of the flower's petals shattered into ash, but the final one only grew larger, transforming into an ice blade that sliced through Bai Xiaochun's frigid qi and continued onward.

The shocking speed of the ice blade caused Bai Xiaochun's expression to flicker. After making contact with the ice flower, his Frigid Adept power had been almost completely sucked away, and as the ice blade neared, the intense cold caused his blood to begin to freeze up. Thankfully, in addition to his Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he also had his Undying Heavenly King Core, which vibrated as it stimulated his fleshly body power.

As the ice blade neared, Bai Xiaochun howled and clenched his right hand into a fist, which he punched out at the ice blade.

A huge boom could be heard as the ice blade shattered into bits. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood and then looked down to see the flesh of his right hand shredded and bleeding. However, now was not the time to retreat. Instead, he blurred into motion, heading directly toward the statue of Gongsun Wan'er, unleashing more frigid qi and using his frigid shadows to perform a minor teleportation.

Shockingly, he appeared right in front of the expressionless Gongsun Wan’er, whereupon his left leg swept out in a kick, backed by the full fleshly body power of his Undying Tendons.

In the same moment that Bai Xiaochun attacked, Gongsun Wan’er, seemingly ignoring him, performed an incantation gesture with her left hand and then pushed her finger down onto her forehead. As she did, a burst of frigid qi emerged that vastly surpassed that from before.

Everything around her instantly froze, and at the same time, an enormous ice hand materialized behind her, which shot toward Bai Xiaochun as if to grab him!

Bai Xiaochun had already sent his foot flying through the air with explosive power, so it smashed into the ice hand, destroying most of it. However, the hand still continued onward to slam into Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was sent spinning backward, blood spraying from his mouth. And yet, his eyes shone with ferocious light as he completely ignored his own injuries and once again summoned a frigid shadow as he prepared to teleport to safety.

As he did, his expression flickered as he realized that Gongsun Wan’er’s frigid qi had formed something like a sealing power, a barrier that obstructed his ability to change locations with his frigid shadows.

As for the mostly destroyed ice hand, it quickly repaired itself, and then began to grow larger. In the blink of an eye, it was fully 300 meters tall, and once again began to rumble through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

Up to this point, Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even been able to get close to Gongsun Wan’er, who currently stood behind the ice hand, staring at him coldly.

The ice hand closed in, growing larger the entire time, until it was more than 3,000 meters tall. Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted as he realized that he wasn’t sure what to do at this point. For the entire time during this fight, he had been reacting, and had yet to take the initiative. If he couldn’t turn things around, then he would surely meet defeat.

“So, you want to compete in terms of frigid qi...? Fine, let’s do it!” Anxiety for the safety of Big Fatty Zhang was the most important thing right now, so Bai Xiaochun knew that if he couldn’t defeat this statue of Gongsun Wan’er, he wouldn’t get into the violet trial. Therefore, he took a deep breath and then drew upon a vast amount of frigid qi from his Gold Core, all of which he converged upon his right hand, causing it to turn a deep blue color.

Then, he shoved his blue hand directly toward the ground!

“Frigid... mountain!!” Rumbling sounds echoed out as the frigid qi exploded downward toward the ground, causing a mountain of ice to form, and freezing everything in the area.

Even as the ice hand closed in, the mountain of ice rose up hundreds of meters into the air. Then, the two forces met.

He was drawing upon so much frigid qi that his qi passageways were pulsing with pain, and yet, he didn’t seem to notice. He was drawing upon virtually all of the frigid qi his Gold Core was capable of, completely regardless of the consequences. It almost seemed like an insane suicide attack!

The ice mountain continued to grow rapidly, until it was also 3,000 meters tall. That was when the ice hand reached it!

“Detonate!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, his eyes bloodshot.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The ice hand shattered and the ice mountain exploded, sending a powerful shockwave out in all directions. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he was sent tumbling backward, and for the first time... the statue of Gongsun Wan’er was harmed by Bai Xiaochun seemingly insane attack.

Popping sounds emanated out as a tremor ran through her. Shockingly, Gongsun Wan’er’s forehead split open, a crack that ran all the way down to her mouth, and was completely terrifying in appearance.

The battle had only just begun, but had already reached a completely shocking level. Everyone watching outside was glued to the action, especially because of the fact that Gongsun Wan’er had only recently become famous by breaking into the top 10. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was only in the mid Gold Core stage, putting him at a clear disadvantage. Everyone watching the fight was completely shocked.

“Mid Gold Core stage versus late Gold Core! This Bai Xiaochun... has really been hiding his strength!”

“He has frigid qi, and so does Gongsun Wan’er. This battle is going to be determined by who has better control!”

“I never thought that this Bai Xiaochun... would get so far!”

All of the top 100 Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars who heard about the matter were moved, and instantly stopped whatever type of cultivation they were currently practicing to watch.

Fights like this were not often seen, and in fact, even the superstars in the top 10 came out of their immortal's caves to observe.

In the battlefield that was the blue trial by fire, Bai Xiaochun was gasping for breath as he stared at the statue of Gongsun Wan’er. Gongsun Wan’er had used frigid qi when he fought her back in the Spirit Stream Sect, but her control of it in this battle was on a completely different level. She used it with a finesse that left Bai Xiaochun completely shocked.

He wasn’t sure what method she used to cultivate frigid qi, but however she did it, the results were astonishing, and seemed to surpass his own Frigid Adept powers. In addition to that, their cultivation bases were not on the same level. He was in the mid Gold Core stage, and despite how close he was to a breakthrough, he was not in the late stage.

As for Gongsun Wan’er, considering the fluctuations of her cultivation base, it was obvious... that she was in late Core Formation!

“It doesn’t matter,” he said, his eyes glittering with cold light. “I have to win this fight!” He had just used all of the frigid qi at his disposal in a near-suicidal attack, which had resulted in wounding his opponent. As of now, the situation was different than before, and this was the moment in which he needed to clinch a victory.

With that, he blurred into motion, using the fleshly body power of his left leg to shoot forward at incredible speed. As he did, he slapped his bag of holding, causing numerous flying swords to emerge, all of which had received multiple spirit enhancements. At the same time, a flash of black light could be seen, which was none other than his Renegade Dragon Horn!

The Renegade Dragon Horn formed the center of a sword formation that descended like rain toward the statue of Gongsun Wan’er. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s right hand shot out in a gripping motion that flashed with black light: the Throat Crushing Grasp!

However, even as the sword formation descend onto Gongsun Wan’er, the statue’s eyes flashed and her right hand shot up, ripping into her own throat and then, in completely shocking fashion... dragging a spine-like bone sword out of her own body!!

As the bone sword appeared out in the open, a sound like that of countless screaming souls filled the entire blue trial by fire. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was instantly filled with a sense of profound and deadly danger.

Everyone on the outside devolved into cries of shock and astonishment.

At the same time, the statue of Gongsun Wan’er didn’t hesitate for even an instant before slashing the bone sword viciously toward Bai Xiaochun’s incoming sword formation!

The air shattered around the bone sword, as though heaven and earth were about to be destroyed. Everything in the area turned black, with the starkly white bone of the sword shone so brightly that it became the only light in the dimension.

One by one, the flying swords began to shatter into pieces, until only the Renegade Dragon Horn was left. Even that couldn’t last for very long before cracks spread out on its surface and it began to collapse. In the final moment, it was sent spinning off to the side as the bone sword slashed toward Bai Xiaochun with shocking power!

“So, this is your trump card, huh?!” Bai Xiaochun murmured, his pupils constricting. At the same time, he slapped his bag of holding, causing a black scale to fly out and block the path of the bone sword. Simultaneously, he took a deep breath and then stretched both hands out wide before pushing them down toward the ground. Eyes shining with bizarre light, it was with the softest of voices that he said, “Waterswamp!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0436 awe-chapter-437

In the same moment that Bai Xiaochun spoke, the 30,000-meter frozen area suddenly filled with piercing pulses of moisture, water vapor so thick that it made it difficult to see!

From a distance, that 30,000-meter area seemed to have been transformed into a frozen swamp!

Bai Xiaochun’s hair whipped around him as a burst of energy surged out from beneath his feet!

At the same time, a brutal and wild aura erupted out, along with a roar that seemed to echo from ancient times, something that left all onlookers’ minds spinning.

ROAR!!

It wasn’t just the cultivators watching the fight who heard the sound; even cultivators in other areas could hear the echoing cry of some beast!

Disciples throughout the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect looked around with flickering expressions, and many of them even cried out in alarm.

“What was that!?”

“Did you guys hear that? What type of beast makes a sound like that?!?!”

“Heavens! Even though we’re outside of the trial by fire, we can still hear it! What kind of divine ability does that?!”

Meanwhile, on Starry Quarter Rainbow, there was a bright red mountain that rose high into the sky. At the top of the mountain was a young woman with hair like fire, sitting there meditating. She was very beautiful, and seemed to be surrounded by shapeless, invisible flames that would instantly eradicate anyone who got too close to her.

Moments before, she had been completely focused on meditation, and hadn’t been paying attention to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials. But as soon as the beast roar echoed out, she detected it, and her expression flickered as she looked over in the direction of Myriad Star Rainbow.

“And here I thought Gongsun Wan’er would be the only one to make it onto the violet portion of the rainbow before the soul-hunting expedition. Apparently, I was wrong.”

That young woman occupied 3rd place among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, Chen Yueshan!

She wasn’t the only one who noticed what was happening. In a deep cistern on Polarity Quarter Rainbow was a bare-chested young man with thin lips and cold eyes. He seemed like the completely merciless type, and was currently fighting a fierce battle with a host of vengeful souls. Despite the fierce attacks of the souls, they were being efficiently exterminated by the young man.

As soon as the roar echoed out, he stopped in place and looked up, his eyes shining with mysterious light.

“It doesn't matter how many people get onto the violet portion of the rainbow. When the soul-hunting expedition begins, I’ll kill anyone who gets in my way!”

This young man was one of the top superstars in the sect, who ranked even higher than Chen Yueshan. He occupied 2nd place, and was known by the Daoist name Heretic!

Considering that the roar was so powerful even people outside of the trial heard it, there was little need to mention how it affected the statue of Gongsun Wan’er. Her eyes began to shine brightly, and instead of backing up, she propelled the bone sword toward Bai Xiaochun with even greater speed than before.

As it pierced through the air, it emitted ear-splitting whistling sounds!

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s murderous aura skyrocketed as he shoved his hands high into the air and shouted, “.... Kingdom!!”

Ear-splitting rumbling sounds spread out as the entire 30,000-meter area turned into a huge, watery swamp. Then, an indescribably large spike rose up like a mountain out of the ground, filling the entire world. Beneath the enormous spike, it was possible to see black, scaled skin!!

In addition, there were more spikes spreading out all over the creature below. The 30,000-meter area was actually like a window, allowing only a glimpse at the shockingly large beast beneath!

As soon as the first huge spike appeared, it smashed into the statue of Gongsun Wan’er, causing indescribable rumbling sounds to echo out. Everyone watching the scene gasped, and as for those who ranked higher in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, they seemed to be the most shocked of all. That was especially true of Chen Yueshan and Heretic, both of whom looked on with widening eyes.

Deafening rumbling sounds filled the entire blue trial by fire, sounds which surpassed heavenly thunder. It was almost like two continents colliding, releasing a destructive shockwave that instantly shattered Gongsun Wan’er’s bone sword into countless fragments.

At the same time, her statue dimmed and was covered with countless cracks, as though it might collapse at any moment as she sped backward in retreat. However, her bone sword was by no means ordinary in any way. Despite its physical form having been destroyed, its sword qi still existed, and it actually pierced all the way through the huge bone spike to Bai Xiaochun.

This was the first time anyone had ever pierced his Waterswamp Kingdom, and the sword qi moved so quickly that he had no time to evade it.

When the sword qi hit him, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his entire body was wracked with pain. Whether it was his bones or his flesh, he felt like he was about to explode, and he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut.

Apparently, these two opponents were evenly matched, and had just seriously injured each other!!

Everyone on the outside felt their hearts being battered by waves of shock. Not only were they completely shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s magical technique, but they were filled with fervor from being able to watch this most ultimate of Core Formation battles!

It was easy to imagine how, even if Bai Xiaochun ended up losing in the end, he would still become quite the center of attention!

“Both of them are almost on the same level as Nascent Soul experts!”

“Gongsun Wan’er is already in the late Core Formation stage, but this Bai Xiaochun is only in mid Core Formation!”

“I asked around, and apparently Bai Xiaochun is from the River-Defying Sect in the Middle Reaches, and so is Gongsun Wan’er! Heavens! I can’t believe the River-Defying Sect is so incredible. Both of the hostages they sent are completely heaven-defying!!”

As everyone discussed the events playing out, back inside the blue trial by fire, the cracked statue of Gongsun Wan’er looked up, her eyes shining with cold light. Then she reached up and placed her palm onto her forehead.

A pop could be heard as her forehead collapsed, and more cracks spread out over her body. However, by opening her forehead, she apparently drew on the truly frigid coldness of her life essence, which erupted out with utter madness.

As the frigid qi spread out, cracking sounds could be heard, and everything around the Gongsun Wan’er statue was frozen. Within the blink of an eye, she transformed into an enormous ice giant, dozens of meters tall.

If all that happened was that she became an ice giant, it might not have been a big deal. However, as she grew in size, a frigid qi began to swirl around her that seemed lethally cold, dropping the temperature in the 30,000-meter area so rapidly that, in the blink of an eye, everything was completely frozen!

The frigid qi was so powerful that even the air froze, and the land began to crack to pieces!

In fact, the only sound to be heard in the dimension were the popping sounds of everything freezing up!

Furthermore, Gongsun Wan’er was only continuing to grow larger!

“Frigid Extermination!” Everyone on the outside was so shaken that even the Nascent Soul experts were watching the fight, some of whom recognized where Gongsun Wan’er’s frigid qi actually came from, leading to exclamations of astonishment.

As more and more of the Nascent Soul cultivators picked up on the clues, their expressions flickered with shock. Even the sect leader of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect emerged from his secluded meditation facilities to watch the fight.

If they had such reactions, there was little need to even consider how everyone else was reacting. Within the blue trial by fire, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he sensed the exterminating power of the frigid qi. He could tell that, within moments, he would be frozen solid, killed in body and soul!

“Dammit! How did Gongsun Wan’er get frigid qi like this!?!?” In the critical moment, Bai Xiaochun looked around at everything rapidly freezing, and knew that he only had one option.

“Living Mountain Incantation!” As soon as the words left his mouth, the images of two stone golems appeared, one in each of his eyes. At the same time, a stone golem began to take shape around him!!

After melding with the mountain, you become the mountain, and the mountain becomes you!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Bai Xiaochun was no longer visible. Instead, what everyone saw was an enormous stone golem dozens of meters high!

Instantly, the stone golem emitted an aura that would cause any Core Formation cultivator to be stricken with shock. Even the Nascent Soul cultivators were left gasping. As that energy surged out, it slammed into the frigid qi, resulting in a deafening explosion.

Soon, cultivators on the outside recognized what it was that they were seeing, causing cries of astonishment to echo out. Even the Nascent Soul cultivators were shaken.

“The Living Mountain Incantation!!”

Gongsun Wan’er’s Frigid Extermination had been shocking enough, but then the Living Mountain Incantation was thrown into the mix, leaving everyone thoroughly flabbergasted.

“I can’t believe someone actually succeeded in cultivating the Living Mountain Incantation!!”

“This Bai Xiaochun is completely incredible!!”

Even the sect leader had a very serious expression on his face.

Meanwhile, outside of the Ravine of Endless Mountains, Stonemountain sat there on the boulder, his eyes shining with a strange light. Apparently, his smile was one of excitement!

As of this moment, a huge ice giant was facing off against an enormous stone golem, and the energy emanating off of the two was causing the entire blue trial by fire to tremble violently.

“Die!!” Bai Xiaochun howled.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0437 awe-chapter-438

As soon as Bai Xiaochun shouted “die,” a scene of violent destruction played out in front of the eyes of all onlookers. Bai Xiaochun shot forward in a beam of blue light, drawing upon the Living Mountain Incantation and leaping forward with...

The Mountain Shaking Bash!

The strength of the stone golem bolstered Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body, making it vastly more powerful than before, to a virtually indescribable degree. Furthermore, he moved so quickly that it almost seemed like a teleportation.

He pierced through the frigid qi, unleashing a series of sonic booms that crushed everything around him before appearing directly in front of Gongsun Wan’er!

The statue had already been seriously damaged, and of course, was only a statue, not the true Gongsun Wan’er. As such, it was completely incapable of dodging or evading the attack. Instead, her hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as she attempted to block the strike!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bright red as he put everything on the line in this last-ditch effort. If he couldn’t secure victory at this point, then not only would he lose his chance to advance to the violet trial, but he would also be unable to rescue Big Fatty Zhang!

That was not an outcome he could accept.

There was only one thought in his mind....

“I have to win!!!” Howling, he closed in, using the stone golem’s body to launch a spinning kick with his left leg, which slammed directly into the ice giant summoned by Gongsun Wan’er’s statue.

The power of that kick was backed by the fleshly body power of the Undying Live Forever Technique, as well as the Living Mountain Incantation and the Mountain Shaking Bash. Furthermore, it also contained his Undying Hex. It was... a devastatingly deadly attack!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the foot sailed through the air, causing the entire blue trial by fire to tremble. The statue of Gongsun Wan’er attempted to use both arms to block the incoming left foot, but as soon as it made contact, the statue’s arms began to collapse. Bai Xiaochun’s foot smashed through them like a boulder crushing a drinking glass to land directly on the statue’s chest!

Almost instantly, the statue’s chest began to cave in, and then cracks spread out in all directions. However, the statue wasn’t dead yet; all Bai Xiaochun had managed to do so far was destroy an outer layer of ice shields. Although the statue was seriously damaged, it was still able to defend itself.

However, as the statue fell back, Bai Xiaochun drew once again upon the power of the stone golem to launch into another Mountain Shaking Bash, fueling it further with the power of his left leg. This time, he sent the stone golem’s hand shooting out, its thumb and forefinger glittering with black light.

It was none other than... the Throat Crushing Grasp!

Rumbling echoed out as the throat of the statue was crushed, and then... the entire statue began to fall apart....

The final move had come as fast as lightning, and was delivered with ruthless efficiency. In the blink of an eye, the ice giant was destroyed, and the statue shattered!

As that happened, a beam of teleportation light shot down, which was none other than the entrance to the violet trial!

Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun’s Living Mountain Incantation faded away, and the stone golem vanished. Bai Xiaochun was revealed in person, his face ashen as he floated down to the ground. Clearly, he was having trouble standing, and even coughed up three consecutive mouthfuls of blood. Despite his seeming weakness, though, his eyes shone with a gleam of determination that left everyone in the audience completely shaken.

“He... won?!?!”

“A mid Core Formation cultivator fought someone in the late Core Formation stage, and actually won?!?!”

“Heavens! He just beat the statue of Gongsun Wan’er! Doesn't that mean... that he qualifies to enter the violet trial? He’s going to become... the tenth superstar to be on the violet portion of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect rainbow!?!?”

Outside of the trials, everyone was devolving into a huge commotion. Nearly half of the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was shaken to the core, even more so than when Gongsun Wan’er had recently challenged the trials.

An uproar was sweeping through the sect, and especially through Sky Quarter Rainbow, where Bai Xiaochun came from. The hubbub there was far more intense than in other locations.

Back on that very rainbow, Song Que was standing outside of his immortal's cave, his hands clenched tightly into fists. It was difficult to read his expression, but his heart was filled with bitterness. He simply could not bring himself to admit that he didn’t measure up to Bai Xiaochun, but the endless succession of evidence had pushed him to the brink of collapse.

Xu Baocai, Master God-Diviner, and Chen Manyao were all shaken deeply. Although all of them knew that Bai Xiaochun was no ordinary cultivator, never could they have imagined that he was this incredible.

Gongsun Wan’er was also on Sky Quarter Rainbow, sitting outside of her immortal's cave on a boulder, looking up toward the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials. She had just watched the entire fight play out between her statue and Bai Xiaochun, and at the moment, a strange expression could be seen on her face. In fact, when her statue collapsed, she actually smiled.

“So, my sweetie is as awesome as ever!” She even clapped her hands softly, a mysterious light flickering in her eyes.

Outside of Sky Quarter Rainbow were Chen Yueshan and Heretic, both of whom were superstars and chosen from the top 3. They were completely shaken by the battle they had just witnessed. As for Chen Yueshan, her eyes shone with a mysterious light, whereas Heretic simply snorted coldly. Although he didn’t say anything, the arrogant look in his eyes couldn’t have been clearer.

Even Nascent Soul cultivators in the sect had been watching, and were moved by Bai Xiaochun’s actions. As of this moment, it was correct to say that within the Starry Sky

Dao Polarity Sect... there wasn't a single person who didn’t know Bai Xiaochun!!

However, even as everyone devolved into exclamations and discussion, someone suddenly cried out.

“No, wait... look at Bai Xiaochun. He’s... he’s starting to practice cultivation!!”

In response, more people looked over and saw what was happening. “Frigid qi. Look at the frigid qi....”

Bai Xiaochun really was practicing cultivation, although it wasn’t intentional. After Gongsun Wan’er’s statue was destroyed, frigid qi began to spread out from it and fill the blue trial by fire. And since it had nowhere else to go, it began to stream toward Bai Xiaochun.

Whether Bai Xiaochun wanted it or not, the frigid qi began to pour into his body, sweeping through his qi passageways and heading toward... his Heaven-Dao Gold Core!

It was strong frigid qi, and in the blink of an eye, it transformed into a vortex with Bai Xiaochun at the center!

As it rushed into his Gold Core, it filled it to thirty percent capacity, then forty percent, fifty percent, sixty percent....

As more frigid qi rushed into him, he trembled at the sensation of his cultivation base rising. Before, he had been at the peak of mid Core Formation, but as of this moment, he was breaking through into late Core Formation!

It took only a short moment for the overall frigid qi in his Gold Core to reach sixty percent, and yet, it hadn’t stopped!!

His Gold Core was made from nine spiritual seas, sixty percent of which were now a world of intense coldness. And then... Bai Xiaochun shivered, threw his head back and let loose a long cry as his frigid qi reached... seventy percent!!

The Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation involved gathering frigid qi into the Gold Core, which meant that thirty percent was the peak of the early stage, and sixty percent was the peak of the mid stage.

Earlier, his overall level of frigid qi had reached roughly sixty percent, but now... having reached seventy percent, intense rumbling sounds exploded within him as his cultivation base released shocking power.

This was... the late Gold Core stage!!

And things weren’t over yet! More frigid qi poured into him, pushing his Gold Core frigid qi past seventy percent to eighty percent!

When the final bit of frigid qi was sucked in, his Gold Core frigid qi capacity had reached eighty-five percent, and his cultivation base was still climbing. As of now, he was very close to reaching one hundred percent capacity and being at... the great circle of the Gold Core stage!!

As his cultivation base rose and his energy surged, the blue trial by fire shook violently, and on the outside, the star that represented Bai Xiaochun shone with blinding light!

Everyone outside was completely shaken!

“This Bai Xiaochun, he... he actually just had a breakthrough!!”

“Late Core Formation! He just reached late Core Formation!!”

“He could fight late Core Formation when he was only in mid Core Formation. Now that he’s in the late stage, doesn’t that mean he could fight someone in the great circle!?!?”

“What good fortune.... It’s all because he cultivates a technique that uses frigid qi. By absorbing the excess frigid qi from Gongsun Wan’er’s statue, he was able to break through!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0438 awe-chapter-439

Although it might not have seemed possible, the commotion outside grew even more chaotic. This second time in which Bai Xiaochun challenged the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials had involved him pulling off one miracle after another!!

First was the incredible speed with which he made it through the early trials, then was his victory over a late Core Formation expert while he himself was only in the mid stage, and finally was his cultivation base breakthrough!

Because of all those things, everyone outside was left reeling. After all, of the group that made up the nine cultivators who were already in the violet portion of the rainbow, eight were in the great circle, with Gongsun Wan’er being the only one in late Core Formation. And yet now, someone else had joined, someone who had entered the group in the mid stage and then immediately risen to the late stage!

As everyone discussed the matter, Bai Xiaochun shivered, and the frigid qi inside of him settled down, placing him firmly in late Core Formation. However, there was no time for him to probe his cultivation base; instead, he shot toward the light of teleportation. Even as he did, numerous motes of light in the area swirled together to form another statue.

It was a statue of Bai Xiaochun!

When he stopped for a moment to look back at it, he saw that it resembled him perfectly, and its aura was very similar to his. However, the statue's expression was cold and blank as it stood there, completely unmoving.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. He knew that from now on, anyone who tried to get into the violet portion of the rainbow would have to fight his statue as the last part of their trial!

After a moment, he looked away, headed into the teleportation light, and then vanished!

Of course, the discussion among the audience didn't die down at all. The events which had unfolded on this day were things rarely ever seen, especially considering that there were now ten extremely famous cultivators in the sect. It was a momentous, joyous occasion.

Because Bai Xiaochun had made his breakthrough after the battle, that meant that anyone who tried to challenge that trial in the future would fight the mid Core Formation version of him, not the late stage Bai Xiaochun from after the victory.

That statue represented a certain status in the sect. As long as it remained undefeated, no one would be able to enter the violet trial, and as of this moment, more people were staring at the statue than there had been people watching Bai Xiaochun himself.

As for Bai Xiaochun, when he stepped into the teleportation light, he vanished, disappearing from the blue trial by fire and reappearing within the violet trial!

Meanwhile, on the violet portion of the rainbow, a tenth star had appeared, and all the eyes that had been focusing on the statue shifted over to look at it.

Although no one could see what was happening with Bai Xiaochun now, everyone was wondering.

The mere fact that no one knew what was going on in the violet trial made the entire scenario more mysterious. That added level of mystery made everyone want more than ever to know what would happen next. In a short few months, two people had reached the violet portion of the rainbow, and the mere thought of what happened inside that violet trial was a motivating force for many other cultivators.

As such thoughts filled the minds of all present, Bai Xiaochun appeared within the very violet trial that no one else could see, to find himself in a dimension that was different from all of the other trials by fire.

Stretching out in front of him was a river, upon whose bank he stood.

A blank look could be seen in his eyes, as though he had forgotten something. Furthermore, as he looked around, he got the sensation that nothing around him was real.

“What did I forget?” he thought in surprise, sitting down on the riverbank to think. However, even after some time passed, the only thing he could remember was his name. All of his other memories seemed to have disappeared.

The confusion in his eyes grew deeper.

His original plan upon entering the light of teleportation had been to abandon the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trial as soon as he entered the next stage. After all, by that point, his goal would have been met, and he could request the power of a deva to save Big Fatty Zhang.

Time was of the essence.

However, as soon as he entered the mysterious violet trial by fire, he couldn’t remember any of that.

“No,” he murmured, “I remember that there was something important I needed to do.” Frowning, he tried harder to think back to whatever it was that he’d forgotten, and it was in that moment that he suddenly heard someone singing.

The voice rose and fell, making the lyrics of the song impossible to make out. However, the person singing seemed old, ancient even. A moment later, a lonely boat appeared on the river.

An old man sat in the boat, wearing a wide bamboo hat, and pushing the boat along with a long bamboo pole. Upon nearing the bank, he looked up, revealing a face wrinkled with age. Smiling, he said, “Is your heart unsettled?”

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the old man and the boat. Feeling confused, he replied, “I feel like I’ve forgotten something.”

“Everyone forgets things sometimes,” the old man said with a smile. “Why don’t you come aboard and listen to my ballad? Perhaps that will help you remember whatever it is you've forgotten.”

Bai Xiaochun sat there quietly for a moment, then rose to his feet and hopped into the boat. With that, the old man pushed on the bamboo pole, and the boat once again began to move down the river.

As Bai Xiaochun sat there in the lonely boat, the old man began to sing. Strangely, no matter how closely Bai Xiaochun paid attention, he was unable to make out any of the words the old man sang.

After a moment, he couldn’t hold back from asking, “What are you singing?”

“A folk song,” the old man replied.

Bai Xiaochun listened for a bit longer, then asked, “Does it have a name?”

“It doesn’t.” Smiling, the old man continued, “It’s a ballad, the end of which no one will ever hear. Nine other people came before you, and none of them listened to the entire song. The first person listened to it for the longest, but gave up eventually.” With that, he continued singing.

Bai Xiaochun sat there silently, both listening and also trying to recall what it was that he had forgotten. The water in the river was by no means still; waves rolled back and forth, and after a bit of time, a rather large one hit the side of the boat. As Bai Xiaochun swayed back and forth with the rocking of the boat, his mind stirred, and suddenly, he remembered something.

He was in a room with his father, who was gripping his hand tightly as he said, “Xiaochun, you have to keep on living....”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun as that memory sparked a fire which raged through his mind, causing his memories to flood back into him with mountain-toppling, sea-draining power.

“I have to save Eldest Brother!!” he thought, shivering as he remembered everything from before. He suddenly stood up, whereupon the boat vanished, along with the river. The entire room around him was now completely empty.

In front of him was the old man, though, who turned and looked at Bai Xiaochun, eyes sparkling with bizarre, mysterious light.

“Do you see clearly now?” the old man asked.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said. “Oh. I don’t want to participate in this trial by fire. I need to save someone!!” Now that he had regained his memories, this trial seemed even stranger than before.

The old man looked at him for a long moment, and then repeated, “Do you see clearly now?”

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get a bit angry. “I--”

However, he only got one word out of his mouth before the old man shook his head and interrupted with a sigh. “Fine, I know what you’re thinking. Get into the violet trial, and you can ask for a boon from the sect. As long as it’s not too excessive, your wish will be granted. For example, your hostage status can be removed.”

“I want the power of a deva!” Bai Xiaochun said immediately.

The old man nodded. “After you leave, someone will deliver it to you.”

With that, he waved his hand, causing a vortex to spring up in the void, which began to tug Bai Xiaochun toward it.

Just before going through the exit, Bai Xiaochun stopped and looked back at the old man, who was walking away from him into the void.

“Just now,” Bai Xiaochun said, “you asked if I could see something clearly. What were you talking about?”

The old man didn’t look back. Voice cool, he replied, “Your Dao!”

Bai Xiaochun was confused. The old man continued to walk away, and as Bai Xiaochun sank into the exit, he called out, “I’m not sure what my Dao is, but I do have a wish, and that’s to live forever!”

The old man stopped walking, looked back, and smiled. “That’s your Dao!”

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and Bai Xiaochun vanished, to appear moments later outside of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials!

The first thing that met him was the sound of numerous discussions, shortly after which, his vision grew clear. Almost immediately, he caught sight of countless cultivators looking at him with envy and respect.

At the same time, a solemn voice spoke out from the sect leader’s portion of Myriad Star Rainbow.

“Hostage Bai Xiaochun of the River-Defying Sect, your request has been granted. You will be bestowed with the power of a deva!”

A bright beam of light shot down from the sky to appear in front of Bai Xiaochun in the shape of a crystalline leaf that pulsed with incredible power!

Everyone in the area felt incredible pressure weighing down onto them, making it hard to even breathe, almost as if their cultivation bases were being suppressed. Shockingly, that leaf contained wood-type deva power!

Furthermore, it was a full portion of power, not just a tiny scrap!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0439 awe-chapter-440

When Bai Xiaochun appeared outside of the trials, and the sect leader’s voice echoed out, everyone who had been watching his performance was left completely shaken.

It only took moments for countless fervent gazes to be turned in Bai Xiaochun’s direction. Normally speaking, he would have given everyone an opportunity to approach and offer words of praise. But he was in no mood for that now.

As soon as he had that power of a deva, he shot into the sky, transforming into a beam of light that sped directly toward the teleportation portal.

He had no idea how much time had passed, and anxiously wished to get back to the Hall of Devil Slayers on Sky Quarter Rainbow to save Big Fatty Zhang!

As he left, numerous discussions broke out amongst the audience. Bai Xiaochun was now listed among the absolute most high-level disciples within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

He was in the top 10!!

Although no one was sure of what he had experienced within the violet trial, they did know that the violet portion of the rainbow now had a tenth star!

It was easy to imagine how, in the days to come, Bai Xiaochun’s name would continued to rise to unprecedented heights within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

However, Bai Xiaochun was not in the mood to revel in the glory of his achievement. He pushed forward with all the speed he could muster until he was at the teleportation portal, where he vanished, to reappear moments later on Sky Quarter Rainbow.

As soon as he stepped off of the teleportation portal there, he saw numerous Sky Quarter Rainbow cultivators gathered, looking at him with expressions of awe as they called out greetings.

“Greetings, Elder Brother Bai!”

Bai Xiaochun was too nervous about Big Fatty Zhang to do more than simply nod in response, and then hurry on his way. Considering he was now in late Core Formation, he could move faster than ever as he shot off in a beam of light.

Literally nothing could have blocked his path, although no one attempted to do so, not even when he passed directly through some of the other Ten Halls.

Because he was in the top 10 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, he had a special place in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, as well as special privileges. Thus, he arrived at the Hall of Devil Slayers in less time than it takes an incense stick to burn.

Instantly, numerous cultivators emerged to offer formal greetings, their faces filled with respect. Back before he had challenged the trials, everyone in the Hall of Devil Slayers had only pretended to respect him, and secretly scorned him for relying on a powerful backer to become important.

Some of them had changed their tune a bit after he got into the top 500. But now that his name was on the violet portion of the rainbow, everything had changed.

“Greetings, Elder Brother Bai!”

“Elder Brother Bai....”

More and more people appeared, and more voices rang out. There were some people Bai Xiaochun recognized, including Master Cloud-Dao, who was waiting outside the main temple. As soon as Master Cloud-Dao caught sight of him, he clasped hands and bowed in deep and exaggerated fashion.

“Congratulations, Elder Brother Bai!”

Master God-Diviner, Xu Baocai, and Chen Manyao were also waiting outside of the main temple, and when they caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, excited expressions appeared on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun nodded to everyone, then walked into the temple looking very serious. The first thing he saw was the gaunt, skeletal form of Big Fatty Zhang, sitting there cross-legged in the middle of the temple, a pained expression on his face. Clearly, his life force was so faint that it was almost nonexistent, and a strong aura of death surrounded him. Had Feng Youde not been there the entire time bolstering him with his Nascent Soul cultivation base, Big Fatty Zhang would have long since slipped into death.

“Daoist Master, I've brought the power of a deva!” Looking trepidatiously at Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun quickly pulled out the wood-type leaf he had just received.

Feng Youde looked up and made a grasping motion, causing the leaf to fly over and come to a rest above Big Fatty Zhang’s head.

Expression somber, Feng Youde performed an incantation gesture and pointed out at the leaf, which began to tremble and emit a greenish glow. At the same time, green strands of energy emerged from the leaf and began to bore into Big Fatty Zhang.

Big Fatty Zhang shivered, and the look of pain on his face faded away. Almost immediately, a faint, ruddy glow could be seen on his cheeks, and the mist which surrounded him began to swirl back inside of him. Instead of spreading out in all directions like it had been, it was taking form inside his dantian region.

Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness immediately began to fade. Finally, Feng Youde took a deep breath and rose to his feet.

“With the help of the power of a deva, your Eldest Brother’s Core Formation should proceed smoothly from here on out. However, he did drain a lot of his life force. The process should take a full half year before it’s complete.” He sighed. “Fine... you can leave him here for me to watch over.”

“Many thanks, Daoist Master!” Bai Xiaochun said excitedly, clasping hands and bowing deeply. Then he looked over one more time to confirm that Big Fatty Zhang was safe, which was when he realized how exhausted he was.

The fight with the statue of Gongsun Wan’er had been a huge draw on both his cultivation base and his energy in general. Coupled with all the anxiety he had felt regarding Big Fatty Zhang, everything returned to hit him at once. Now that he was sure Big Fatty Zhang was safe, he left the temple and returned, not to his immortal's cave, but rather, one of the empty residences in the Hall of Devil Slayers, where he sat down to do some breathing exercises and recuperate.

He rested for three days straight.

During that time, the commotion which had begun three days before continue to sweep through the sect, and Bai Xiaochun’s name grew more famous than ever. Soon, the details of his background became more commonly known. As such, the cultivators in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect... came to know of the River-Defying Sect.

After all... two of the top 10 Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars... were from the River-Defying Sect!

“This River-Defying Sect... is extraordinary!”

“It’s hard to even wrap your mind around the fact that two River-Defying Sect hostages are in the top 10!”

“I heard that when Bai Xiaochun came from the River-Defying Sect, he brought some Dao protectors with him.... I bet those Dao protectors are incredible too!” Slowly but surely, the identities of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao protectors came to be known.

Song Que. Big Fatty Zhang. Xu Baocai. Master God-Diviner. Chen Manyao. Those five names gradually became the subject of much discussion. Xu Baocai didn’t think much of the matter, and actually basked in the glory, whereas Song Que had a hard time accepting it.

In fact, on the fourth day, Song Que left his immortal's cave and headed toward the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials to prove that, although he might not be Bai Xiaochun’s equal, he was still not far behind.

Because he was one of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao protectors, a lot of people paid attention to his run, and when he ended up being ranked within the 600s, it caused quite a stir.

After Song Que was Chen Manyao, who placed around the same as Song Que, neither very high nor very low.

Master God-Diviner didn’t really want to go, but ended up being convinced, and after going all-out, reaching a rank in the 900's.

Xu Baocai hesitated about whether or not to go, and in the end, didn’t dare to try. As far as he was concerned, if he couldn’t get into the top 1,000, then it would be too embarrassing to try.

Xu Baocai didn’t challenge the trials, but Song Que, Chen Manyao, and Master God-Diviner all did, and it caused the name of the River-Defying Sect to rise to even greater heights. Eventually, the peak lord of Sky Quarter Rainbow personally sent down instructions to notify the River-Defying Sect of what had occurred, and to give them a bit of a reward.

The reward itself didn’t count for much, but the peak lord’s attitude did. Furthermore, the performance of Bai Xiaochun and his Dao protectors ensured that the other three great sects in the Middle Reaches were even more hesitant than before to cause any problems for the River-Defying Sect.

That was especially true because of how both Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er had reached the top 10. The other three sects were shocked, and immediately did their best to contact the River-Defying Sect and improve relations.

In response to all of this, the patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect were very excited.

Patriarch Frigidsect threw his head back and laughed uproariously. “Ah, Xiaochun. Wherever the kid goes, he becomes a star. Nothing can keep him down!”

The other disciples in the sect were overjoyed, especially Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan, as well as Bai Xiaochun’s other friends.

A month went by in which Bai Xiaochun’s name continue to rise in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, to the point where literally everyone had heard of him, even the devas.

As for Big Fatty Zhang, he never awoke, but was in stable condition. He was no longer gaunt and skeletal, and the mist which surrounded him was slowly merging into his body. He had passed the moment of deadly crisis, and within a few months, would have formed his Will Core and stepped into Core Formation!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0440 awe-chapter-441

Everything was turning up, and Bai Xiaochun’s mood was improving. Considering that, he now felt up to public appearances, and not just on Sky Quarter Rainbow. He went to the other rainbow districts as well, and the adulation he received left him feeling quite pleased. From what he could tell, he was almost at the ultimate peak of life.

“Ai. With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun reduced the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars to ashes. What a headache. Imposter Nightcrypt, why do think I’m so outstanding?” Before leaving his immortal’s cave, he would always pull out his copper mirror to examine himself, and when he was in a good mood, he would always ask this same question of imposter Nightcrypt.

As for imposter Nightcrypt, every time he heard that question, he felt as if he were covered with goosebumps. And yet, he would still plaster on a smile and rack his brains to come up with some new words of flattery to please Bai Xiaochun.

The little turtle always seemed to be busy, and never came out even once to say anything sarcastic. As such, Bai Xiaochun felt more wonderful than ever at being here in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Unfortunately, good things never last forever. Another half a month went by, and a Dharmic decree came down from the demigod rainbow!

It happened one morning when Bai Xiaochun emerged from his immortal's cave in very high spirits. He looked at the distant sea, felt the breeze caressing his face, and took a deep, contented breath. Patting his bag of holding, he produced his copper mirror.

Clearing his throat, he said, “Hey Nightsies, come, come, explain to me why Lord Bai gets praised wherever he goes.”

Of course, he was just getting ready to go strolling about to receive some praise and adulation.

Poor Imposter Nightcrypt was on the verge of crying. Over the course of the last half month, he had scraped the bottom of the barrel in his attempts to come up with new material, and his existence was now a torment that made life almost unbearable.

“Master, please spare me....” he groveled piteously.

Bai Xiaochun was not very pleased by his reaction. Glaring, he was just about to respond when, all of a sudden, thunderous rumbling filled the air, causing everything to shake. Colors flashed in the sky, and a screaming wind kicked up. All of the rainbows were shaking, including the deva rainbow and Myriad Star Rainbow.

Everyone from the devas down to the Qi Condensation disciples were completely shaken, and no matter what they were doing at the moment, looked up with flickering expressions.

Startled, Bai Xiaochun almost dropped his copper mirror as he looked up into the sky, astonishment and confusion playing out on his face.

“What’s going on!?”

A moment later, a profoundly dignified and ancient voice echoed out from the demigod rainbow to fill the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“A Heavenspan imperial decree has been issued, and a soul-hunting expedition will begin. In one month, the Starry Sky Battleship will set sail for the Wildlands!”

Every single word spoken by that ancient voice almost seemed like natural law, causing all creation to fill with rumbling sounds, and all hearts to be shaken. As for Bai Xiaochun, he wasn't quite sure exactly what the voice was talking about.

After all, he had only just entered the top 10 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, and didn’t have a very complete understanding of how things worked for that group. However, as for everyone else who was in the top 100, they couldn’t hold back their excitement upon hearing the announcement.

“The soul-hunting expedition is finally going to happen!!”

“After this trial by fire, I’ll definitely be able to step into the Nascent Soul stage!!”

“Hahaha! I've been waiting for this day for a long time now!”

On Starry Quarter Rainbow, atop a mountain peak covered with endless flames, was 3rd place holder Chen Yueshan, who rose to her feet, her long hair swirling around her as her eyes burned with passion.

“The soul hunt....”

On Polarity Quarter Rainbow, 2nd place holder Heretic, one of the top superstars in the sect, was fighting a host of vengeful souls at the bottom of a deep cistern. Suddenly, a tremor passed through him, and his eyes began to shine with excitement.

“It’s finally happening, huh...? Alright, Zhao Tianjiao, now we can finally see which of us will get a deva soul, and then step into the Nascent Soul stage!! It's definitely going to be me!”

As waves of astonishment swept through the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, somewhere outside of the sect, in a seemingly endless mountain range, a young man walked along beneath the trees. He was tall and slender, with a very cold expression, and a greatsword strapped to his back. The reek of blood surrounded him as he walked, as if he had slaughtered countless enemies on his journey.

Shockingly, he held a head in his hand. It was the head of an old man, his expression twisted viciously, and emanating an aura that indicated his cultivation level when he had been alive: the Nascent Soul stage!!

As the young man strode through the trees, he suddenly stopped in place and produced a jade slip from his bag of holding. Upon looking at the information in the slip, his eyes shone with a gaze so bright and corrosive that the surrounding plants and vegetation began to wither and die.

“So, the soul-hunting expedition that I’ve been waiting for is finally happening!!” The young man’s gaze intensified, and the destructive effect on the plants and vegetation spread. In the blink of an eye, everything in an entire 3,000-meter area withered away into death!

This young man was none other than the 1st place holder among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, Zhao Tianjiao!

After the news about the soul-hunting expedition came down from the demigod rainbow, the sect leader quickly sent out a number of orders, as did the peak lords from the four rainbow districts.

All sorts of information began to spread through the sect, until everyone was bubbling with gossip.

After hearing some of the talk, Bai Xiaochun still wasn’t completely sure of all the details, and quickly summoned Xu Baocai.

As soon as he stepped into Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave, he said, “Junior Patriarch, this is something big. Very big!!”

“Alright,” Bai Xiaochun said nervously, “hurry up and explain exactly what this soul-hunting expedition is!”

Sounding very excited, Xu Baocai said, “Junior Patriarch, I already got all the information. The soul-hunting expedition is basically good fortune for all Core Formation cultivators preparing to step into the Nascent Soul stage!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking surprised. “Good fortune?”

Based on some of the information he'd heard, the soul-hunting expedition, although not anything like a death sentence, was definitely very dangerous.

“That’s right!” Xu Baocai continued. “I just heard about it myself. If you want to break through from Core Formation into the Nascent Soul stage, you have to do it by one of three ways. First is by using a Nascent Soul Pill, which is the mortal-tier method. The second method is by using five elements deva beast souls, which is the earth-tier method. Last is the most legendary of all, the heaven-tier method, in which you use five elements deva souls. However, that final method is virtually impossible!”

“If you stay inside the sect, even reaching the earth-tier Nascent Soul stage is quite difficult. After all, deva beast souls are rare just like deva souls.

“However, things are different in the Wildlands. Supposedly, there is a river in the Wildlands which is similar to the Heavenspan River. The difference is that it is a river that the living cannot see. It’s an underworld river, a path that all the souls from the entire world travel after death!

“Because of that, souls are a lot more common in the Wildlands. In fact, they’re everywhere. Within that literally uncountable number of souls, it’s possible to find, not only deva beast souls, but also deva souls!!

“And that’s why the place is the ultimate place of good fortune for Core Formation cultivators!!” From the level of Xu Baocai’s excitement as he spoke, it was evident that he would leap at the chance to be qualified to go the Wildlands.

“The Wildlands....” Bai Xiaochun said. The truth was that Bai Xiaochun knew a bit more about the Wildlands than Xu Baocai did, and the first thing that popped into this mind was that something seemed strange about this trial by fire. It was definitely not as simple as it sounded.

After all, there weren’t just souls in the Wildlands, there were also cultivators!!

“This soul-hunting expedition is going to happen in the Wildlands. That ancient battleship is going to sail across the Heavenspan Sea toward another path which leads to the Wildlands!” Xu Baocai pointed to the huge, mysterious battleship at the top of the waterfall.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the ship, and was shaken as he recalled something Chen Manyao had said back when she had been trying to convince him to let her join his group of Dao protectors. She had mentioned this very ship, and Bai Xiaochun now realized that she must have known about this soul-hunting expedition all along!

“The only people who qualify to go to the Wildlands on this ten-year-long trial by fire are famous people among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. Congratulations, Junior Patriarch. It's hard to say for sure, but when you come back, you’ll probably be a Nascent Soul cultivator!

“The ultimate goal of the trial by fire is to acquire a deva soul. Anyone who does can bring it back to the sect and exchange it for a complete set of five elements deva beast souls!!

“Even if you can't get a deva soul, and only get a single deva beast soul, you can still bring it back to the sect and trade it for a precious Nascent Soul Pill!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0441 awe-chapter-442

“I even heard that a lot of the top 100 Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars could have reached the Nascent Soul stage years ago, but have been suppressing themselves just so that they could join this soul-hunting expedition!” Beaming with delight, Xu Baocai continued to explain everything he’d learned.

The more Bai Xiaochun heard, the grimmer his expression got. In the end, he felt deeply conflicted about the whole trial by fire.

Finally, he made a decision. “I definitely can’t go,” he thought. “Absolutely not!!”

Suddenly, Xu Baocai’s face lit up as if he had just remembered something. Looking shocked and incredulous, he said, “Oh right, there’s something else you definitely don’t know about, Junior Patriarch, something huge. Heavens! Even I had never heard a whisper about this. It was only after word of the trial by fire began to spread that I caught wind of it.

“Junior Patriarch, did you know that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is a lot bigger than you ever imagined? That’s right. What you see around us here is not the entirety of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. There are other parts of the sect that are located within the Great Wall!!” Even Xu Baocai was still shaking from this shocking news, despite having heard it some time ago.

“The Great Wall?” Bai Xiaochun said, a look of shock appearing on his face.

“That’s right,” Xu Baocai said. Throwing his arms above his head to emphasize his words, he continued, “The Great Wall!! We are in the eastern Heavenspan River, and between us and the northern Heavenspan River is a huge area devoid of spiritual energy. The closer you are to the Heavenspan River, the stronger the spiritual energy, but the further you go out into the uncivilized areas, the weaker it gets. There are some areas that are technically part of the Wildlands, but that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect has paid a heavy price to permanently occupy!

“That’s where three cities have been built!

“The first city is the one closest to the Heavenspan Sea, where the spiritual energy is the strongest. The second is further in, where the spiritual energy is weak, and the third city is so deep into the Wildlands that there isn’t any spiritual energy at all!

“The third city has a huge wall stretching out from it to surround everything. It's a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering Great Wall that contains the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect inside of it, and is manned by the most elite army of cultivators there is. According to what I’ve heard, they’re called the Hall of Steel Veins!

“I also heard that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect isn’t the only sect that controls the Great Wall. All of the four riversource sects on the Heavenspan Sea defend one portion of it!

“The four sections of the Great Wall all connect eventually, creating a huge circle that protects the Heavenspan Sea, and all the sects too!

“Everything outside the Great Wall is the true Wildlands!! According to what I heard, everyone who takes part in the soul-hunting expedition has to actually go outside of the Great Wall, on more than one occasion....” As he talked, and brought together all of the various bits of information he had learned, Xu Baocai’s expression slowly changed as he realized that, clearly, this Great Wall was separating two opposing forces!

His voice gradually faded away, and his pupils constricted.

“You get it now, don’t you?” Bai Xiaochun said, scowling a bit as he looked at Xu Baocai.

“It can’t be like that, can it?” Xu Baocai said quietly. “Maybe the area outside the Great Wall is just really dangerous. That's why they built it, to keep out the danger? Or maybe to keep all the souls from getting inside?” Xu Baocai was feeling more and more like there was something mysterious going on, and he shivered, almost like an instinctual reaction to piecing together some puzzle.

Not daring to think about the subject too deeply, Xu Baocai left in somewhat of a daze. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was scowling on the verge of tears. Based on the sensation of danger he was feeling, he knew that he had to think of a way to make sure he didn't go on the soul-hunting expedition. And yet, before he could, the orders of the sect leader and the peak lords spread out to all of the disciples.

“All Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars in the top 1,000 are required to join the soul-hunting expedition. It will last for ten years, during which time you must go outside of the Great Wall at least three times! After the ten years are up, you may return to the sect headquarters!”

Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun was filled with a sense of foreboding.

“I'm finished,” he moaned. “Kaput....” After all, this was not the River-Defying Sect, where he had so much sway with the patriarchs. He had only just reached the violet portion of the rainbow, and made a name for himself. As far as he could tell, he had no options available.

“This mission is going to be way too dangerous! The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s so-called Great Wall is obviously there to keep out, not just the souls, but the traitors....” After much thought, he decided to go to Chen Manyao’s immortal's cave to see if he could get some answers.

Chen Manyao didn't seem surprised at all to see him. After inviting him inside, they sat down, and an enigmatic smile appeared on her face.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and said, “So, um, Manyao, do you think I’ve treated you well here in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect? You still haven’t fulfilled that one promise from early on.”

Chen Manyao covered her mouth and chuckled lightly. She was beautiful to begin with, but whenever she laughed or smiled, she seemed even more attractive.

“Don’t worry, Junior Patriarch. Even in the Wildlands outside of the Great Wall, you’ll be safe as long as you’re careful. Furthermore, this trip will definitely be an opportunity for good fortune. You never know. You might even end up with a deva soul. Although, if you’re really worried, you could always join our side.”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. Avoiding the topic she had brought up, he said. “Ah come on, how many deva souls can there be in the world? After all the years that have passed, surely any that did exist have already been found.”

“There are some things you probably don't understand completely, Junior Patriarch. The Wildlands are special. The Underworld River there contains a huge amount of souls. Throughout all the countless years that have passed since the Heavenspan Realm came to exist, all the souls which have died end up in that river, and build up in the Wildlands. Even if there were fewer deva souls than there are, there would still be some!”

“They build up?” he murmured, a look of shock appearing on his face.

“I don’t know the details, and in fact, I don’t even know why it happens that way. But what I do know is that the Wildlands has been building up souls for years and years.” Chen Manyao seemed very earnest in her words.

“There isn’t any spiritual energy in the Wildlands,” Bai Xiaochun pointed out, “so how do the people there practice cultivation?”

“There is no spiritual energy,” Chen Manyao said softly. “But there are plenty of souls. Hunt them, absorb them, and that is how you can practice cultivation!”

After a long moment passed, Chen Manyao once again brought up the subject of Bai Xiaochun joining the Wildlanders. This time, Bai Xiaochun didn’t refuse outright. He thought about it for a bit, then turned and left.

As he walked along the paths of Sky Quarter Rainbow, he heaved sighs left and right. His intuition was telling him that this soul-hunting expedition was going to be very dangerous. And yet, there was nothing he could do to get out of it. Therefore, he had no choice but to accept his fate. Face grim, he flew back to his immortal's cave.

Along the way, quite a few cultivators noticed him and called out respectful greetings. However, he was no longer in the mood to revel in their attention. Evening was falling, and the light of the setting sun reflecting off of the golden waters of the Heavenspan Sea made for quite a beautiful scene. Bai Xiaochun looked out at it, then sighed, thinking about how he already had a deva soul. If he really ran out of options, he could always find a safe place inside the Great Wall to hide for ten years, then come back to the sect, trade it for a set of deva beast souls, and then step into the Nascent Soul stage.

Feeling sorry for himself, and still wrestling with what decision to make, he walked up to his immortal's cave and prepared to enter. However, just before stepping inside, he stopped and looked up, and his eyes flashed.

Unexpectedly, someone was waiting for him inside of his immortal's cave!

He immediately drew upon the power of his cultivation base, waving his finger to cause the front door to swing open, revealing a young woman, standing there with her back to him!

As soon as he saw her back, a tremor ran through him, and he began to breathe heavily.

“You....”

As soon as the words escaped his lips, the young woman slowly turned, revealing a face that shocked Bai Xiaochun down to the core!

“Xiaochun....” she said softly, her eyes glistening.

“Du Lingfei!” he said. He had often thought about what it would be like to see Du Lingfei again. As of this moment, he realized that it was not as shocking of an event as he had imagined. Although it had come like bolt out of the blue, deep in his heart, he had long since prepared for their reunion.

His eyes flickered with complicated emotions as a quiet moment passed. All of a sudden, he thought about how the Sky Quarter peak lord had treated him, and how Feng Youde had taken him under his wing. During the entire time he had been in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, it had always seemed like someone was out there, secretly watching out for him. Although he had had his various speculations, now that he saw Du Lingfei standing there, everything made complete sense.

Her expression complex and filled with melancholy, she said, “Xiaochun, I'm sorry for--”

“Was that you in the Blood Stream Sect!?” he interrupted, speaking his words slowly and with force.

“Yes!” she replied without the slightest hesitation.

Staring at her, he continued with more questions. “Were you an agent of some sort? Why? What were you doing in the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect? And what are you doing here?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0442 awe-chapter-443

“I had no choice in the matter,” she said bitterly, shaking her head.

The pain visible in her smile softened Bai Xiaochun’s heart a bit. Lowering his voice, he said, “Who exactly are you? Where are you from?”

After a long moment of silence, she took a deep breath and said, “I'm from the Heavenspan Sea, and that’s all I can say. Don’t ask any more about it....”

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun remained silent.

Outside, the sun was setting, and the sky was growing dark. It was quiet in the immortal's cave, with the only sound being their breathing.

Eventually, the immortal's cave grew dark, and finally, Bai Xiaochun decided to ask another question, a question which had been lurking in his heart for a long time, a question which he very much wanted to know the answer to.

“Back in the Luochen Mountains, the tears you shed, were they real, or just for show...?”

She didn’t directly answer his question. Instead, she extended her right hand, within which appeared a violet tongue of flame. As it burned, it released a shocking energy, something that surpassed the energy of the leaf Bai Xiaochun had received that contained the power of a deva. This made it seem like a deva was actually standing right there with them. Furthermore, within the burning violet flames was... a soul!!

Looking up at him, she spoke in a voice that was almost a murmur. “Do you think this deva soul is real, or just for show?”

To see Du Lingfei holding a deva soul shocked Bai Xiaochun to the core. He also had a deva soul, the wood-type soul that Patriarch Frigidsect had given him. He had been shocked when he was told how valuable deva souls were, but back then, their true value had been some abstract to him.

Now, on the verge of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect sending numerous disciples on a soul-hunting expedition, he was more acutely aware than ever of how valuable deva souls were.

Anyone who wanted to achieve a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul needed five deva souls, each one a different type. When it came to deva beast souls... any single deva soul could be traded for a set of five of them!

From that alone, it was easy to calculate how astronomically valuable any deva soul was!

Before Bai Xiaochun could even respond to her words, Du Lingfei sent the fire-type soul floating over to Bai Xiaochun. As it did, her body began to slowly fade away.

The entire time, her gaze was soft as she looked at Bai Xiaochun, and seemed to be filled with regret and sentiment.

“The Wildlands is a dangerous place. You... should make sure not to do anything risky. When you get back, trade that deva soul for a set of deva beast souls.... At that time, I’ll explain everything!” With that, she disappeared.

Bai Xiaochun simply stood there the entire time, declining to speak. After she faded away, he closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them and reached out to take the fire-type deva soul. Then he sat down cross-legged to think, although he wasn’t sure about what.

Time passed. Half a month flew by, and the day of the trial by fire grew closer. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun had no choice but to rouse himself and start preparing. He got very busy, both concocting pills, performing spirit enhancements, and doing everything else he could to get himself in peak condition.

On the day before the trial by fire was to begin, he emerged from his immortal's cave and went to the Hall of Devil Slayers to say goodbye to Big Fatty Zhang. Big Fatty Zhang had not yet awoken, but had recovered significantly. His aura was stable, and his cultivation base was growing stronger. Within two or three months, he would have successfully reached Core Formation.

He sat down in front of Big Fatty Zhang, feeling more than ever like he couldn’t bear to leave. “Eldest Brother... the next time we see each other will be in ten years. I really wish I didn’t have to leave.”

He spoke many more words from his heart, until the sun began to set. Worried that he might be disturbing Big Fatty Zhang’s Core Formation, he left the temple and went to see Feng Youde. Clasping hands deeply, he offered sincere thanks for the help Feng Youde had given him.

“Maintain a calm heart, that’s the best thing you can do,” Feng Youde said. “If you want to repay me, then come back as a Nascent Soul cultivator. As far as your Eldest Brother is concerned, I guarantee to watch over him.”

Clasping hands and bowing again, Bai Xiaochun again expressed his gratitude. Of course, Xu Baocai would not be going along, so he went to visit and leave some parting instructions. Finally, he gritted his teeth and went back to his immortal's cave, where he meditated through the night.

Nothing happened during the night, and the sun rose into a cloudless sky. The day had come in which the trial by fire was to begin.

The thunderous sound of booming drums filled the entire sect, prompting all of the cultivators to emerge excited and filled with anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun had packed his bags, and looked very sad as he walked out the door of his immortal's cave and stood there trembling.

Almost in the same instant, a huge rumbling sound rippled out from the direction of the sea down below. It almost sounded like the roaring of a giant, and it caused huge waves to roll across the surface of the sea as the enormous, ancient battleship thrummed with power.

As the ship powered up, the mysterious, ghost-like entities inside of it began to howl and scream, and eventually fled in terror. Apparently, the will of the battleship itself was awakening, causing its energy to rise to the point where even the rainbows that made up the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect were shaking.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he stared at the enormous battleship. It was fully 300,000 meters long, pitch black, and in very bad condition. It seemed ancient beyond belief, and there was something ferocious about it that made it seem like the type of ship no one would dare to even approach. The corpse of some enormous, rotting beast had been lashed to its prow, something so disfigured it was impossible to determine what it was. However, it was clearly humanoid, and had once been 30,000 meters tall.

The surface of the battleship was covered with countless spikes, all of which glowed with black light. It was easy to imagine powerful magical techniques being unleashed by means of those spikes, and how they would surely cause heaven and earth to tremble!

The ship had five decks, some parts of which were apparently locked down with magical seals.

Even as Bai Xiaochun was studying the battleship, it began to move, releasing explosive power that caused huge waves to roll out across the surface of the golden Heavenspan Sea.

Even as the battleship stirred into motion, an old man flew off of the deva rainbow. He was ancient, with flowing white hair that made him look like a transcendent being. In addition, he had a third eye on his forehead, giving him a very intimidating appearance.

“I am Chen Hetian, and I will lead you on the journey to the sect outpost, where the soul-hunting expedition will be held. The journey across the sea will be a long one, more than half a year. All of you... board the ship immediately and prepare for departure!” The three-eyed old man’s final words struck the hearts of the listeners like lightning.

Immediately, the top 1,000 Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars from all four of the rainbow districts began to fly at top speed toward the battleship.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he gritted his teeth and decided that he had no choice but to throw caution to the wind. Howling at the top of his lungs, he joined the crowd flying down toward the battleship.

Almost as soon as he took to flight, Bai Xiaochun could sense the intensely powerful spiritual energy from the Heavenspan Sea slamming into him like a hurricane.

It was a blast that was difficult to endure despite the fact that he was a Core Formation cultivator. Everyone who was flying toward the ship trembled unsteadily for a moment before accelerating toward the ship again.

Everyone was weighing each other up, trying to go along as fast as possible through the battering spiritual energy to prove that they were better.

One of the cultivators flying along was a young woman, who happened to take the lead by a wide margin, flying through the air like a ball of fire. She was Chen Yueshan, and even as she closed in on the battleship and seemed moments away from stepping onto it, a cold snort echoed out as Heretic appeared. With a single step forward, he seemingly teleported, surpassing Chen Yueshan to become the first person to step onto the ship!

When Heretic used what appeared to be a divine ability of teleportation, the other cultivators were shocked, and Chen Yueshan’s eyes flickered with a flash of light.

Even Bai Xiaochun sucked in a breath. By using his frigid shadows, he could perform minor teleportations, but what Heretic had done just now was completely different!

Some of the people near Bai Xiaochun knew what it was they had just seen, and cried out in astonishment.

“That was the Wind Dash!”

“Wind Dash?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, taken aback. Meanwhile, more cultivators were landing on the ship. Bai Xiaochun didn’t go very quickly, and arrived within the first hundred or so.

Almost immediately, the cultivators who landed on the ship edged away from each other. Clearly, the spirit of competition and rivalry was strong already, and one could only imagine how the situation would intensify when they got to the Wildlands.

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, these people were all acting like fiends and monsters, so he quickly found an empty corner away from the crowd.

“What’s with all the fighting and killing?” he thought. “These people... can’t they be more simple and pure like me?” As he looked around, he eventually caught sight of Song Que, Master God-Diviner, and Chen Manyao, which put him in a slightly better mood. However, it wasn’t convenient to approach them at the moment.

Off in the distance, he also noticed Gongsun Wan’er, but when he thought about how strange she was, he ducked his head and avoided her gaze.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0443 awe-chapter-444

As people continued to alight onto the ancient battleship, the three-eyed old man who had just emerged from the deva rainbow vanished, reappearing on the ship itself. Actually, he wasn't alone; he was joined by five Nascent Soul cultivators.

It seemed as if the ship was just about to set sail, and yet, it was in that moment that a beam of light pierced through the air off in the distance, causing intense whistling sounds to echo through the air.

"How could I, Zhao Tianjiao, *not* participate in a major event such as this!?"

It was a travel-worn young man, tall and slender, with long black hair and an icy cold aura. Shocking cultivation base fluctuations rolled off him that, despite being at the great circle of the Core Formation stage, felt even more profoundly powerful than that. He actually seemed like a Nascent Soul cultivator, and even though he wasn't quite in that level, as he approached, it was possible to see him occasionally blur to the point of being impossible to see.

In truth, he was actually using a teleportation ability. Although he could only teleport for short distances, he was still only a Core Formation cultivator, which made him shocking to a level that surpassed even Heretic.

It took only a few moments for the young man to reach the ship and land on the deck. As he stood there looking extremely lonely and proud, he was so different from the other cultivators that he was like a full moon in a field of stars!

“It’s Eldest Brother!”

“Heavens! Was Eldest Brother teleporting just now?”

“Elder Brother Heretic has his Wind Dash, but Eldest Brother was using real minor teleportations!” Everyone in the crowd was looking at Zhao Tianjiao with expressions of reverence and respect.

“Hey, I can teleport too!” Bai Xiaochun grumbled to himself in irritation. Although he wasn’t fully convinced that Zhao Tianjiao was as amazing as the crowd apparently thought he was, he had to admit that he had skill. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun could sense from the shocking fluctuations rolling off of him that he was stronger than the statue of Gongsun Wan’er.

The three-eyed Chen Hetian looked over at Zhao Tianjiao, his gaze soft, and yet his words sharp as he said, “And what reason do you have for being late and delaying things?!”

Clasping hands respectfully, Zhao Tianjiao said, “A year ago, a Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect disciple went missing, and in my efforts to find him, I found that these three freaks were responsible. They all fled in different directions, though, which cost me a bit of time.”

With that, he waved his sleeve, causing three heads to tumble down onto the deck.

Two of them were old men, and one was a middle-aged, but all of them had looks of lingering astonishment in their dead eyes. Based on the aura which still remained on them, all three had been Nascent Soul cultivators!

When the surrounding disciples saw the three severed heads, they immediately began to call out in surprise.

“Patriarch Riverwater!”

“Enlightened Sage Headwind!”

“That’s Eccentric Flamecloud!!”

“All three of them are Nascent Soul experts! Heavens.... Eldest Brother actually killed all three of them!!”

“He definitely deserves to be called Eldest Brother!!”

Chen Yueshan’s pupils constricted, but she didn't say anything, and as for Heretic, his expression turned extremely grim, and he began to breathe heavily.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he even gasped. Although he had known that Zhao Tianjiao was incredible before, at this point he could tell that he was definitely someone to avoid provoking at all costs.

Looking at the three severed heads, he murmured to himself, “Ah whatever. I’ll just have to deal with the fact that he has a slightly better name than me!”

Chen Hetian nodded slightly and then, without another word, turned and headed to the highest deck on the ship, leaving the Nascent Soul cultivators behind to handle the rest of the disciples.

One of the Nascent Soul cultivators, a middle-aged man, stepped forward with an expressionless face and said, “All of you are Chosen of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and are already somewhat familiar with this trial by fire. As such, we will not waste time with further explanations.

“However, there is one thing that I must make clear. Our voyage will take half a year, and during that time, you will live in quarters assigned to you based on your ranking in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!

“The top 3 will be staying on deck 2. Take your pick of the cabins there to be your own personal immortal's caves. Those of you in 4th to 10th place will stay on deck 3, where you will also have personal immortal's caves within which to further your cultivation.

“Those of you who occupy 11th through 100th place, you will stay on deck 4. Everyone after that will be on deck 5!”

Meanwhile, the ship had already begun to pick up speed as it moved across the surface of the sea; the crashing of waves against the sides of the ship was already audible.

There was also a fierce wind, and a bit of sea spray that carried with it a powerful corrosive element that didn’t harm the ship, but could be detrimental to cultivators if it touched them.

Bai Xiaochun was a little nervous about that, but when he heard that everyone was being assigned to their quarters by means of their seniority in the ranking system, he was instantly enlivened.

“Now *that’s* what I’m talking about!” he thought. “The people with higher rankings *should* have better accommodations!” He already couldn't wait to see what his own immortal's cave would look like.

“Use these identity medallions as keys to your immortal's cave. Very well, you’re all dismissed!” With that, the middle-aged cultivator Nascent Soul spun on his heel and flew up to deck 1 with the other Nascent Soul experts, where they entered their own cabins to meditate.

Now that the members of the Senior generation were gone, the 1,000 other cultivators on board all dispersed, apparently eager to get off of the main deck and away from the powerful sea winds and corrosive spray.

Zhao Tianjiao was the first to fly into motion, heading toward deck 2, with Chen Yueshan and Heretic following close behind. Many of the other cultivators were a bit envious of the fact that those three got an entire deck to themselves, and yet, there was nothing that could be done about the matter.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t feel any irritation at all. He flew excitedly toward deck 3 with the other top 10 cultivators, including Gongsun Wan’er.

As for the other cultivators, they stewed in their frustration and jealousy as they looked for their own immortal's caves.

Bai Xiaochun was brimming with anticipation as he entered deck 3, and it was to his delight that he discovered that the entire deck had been renovated and fitted with only seven cabins.

Using the identity medallion he’d been given, he randomly selected one and branded the cabin to himself. Then he opened the door, stepped in, and looked around. Despite everything he had seen and done in his life so far, the sight which met his eyes was such that a gasp of shock escaped his lips.

The cabin was huge, fully 300 meters from side to side. Furthermore, it wasn’t actually a single cabin, but a suite of cabins, with seven rooms, plus a pill-concocting workstation.

It contained everything a person could possibly need, and was incredibly luxurious.

The floor wasn't made of wood as one might expect on a ship, but rather, green limestone that was suffused with spiritual power. The slabs were partially translucent, and inside of them could be seen swirling mists and clouds. Not only were they beautiful in appearance, but the spiritual energy that emanated from them could be used in cultivation. Furthermore, there were defensive spell formations built into the cabin that also provided complete sound-proofing from the rumbling sounds that echoed outside.

Even more extraordinary was that the cabin came with six puppet handmaidens, who were tasked with keeping the entire cabin in order at all times. On one side of the cabin were windows which provided a spectacular view of the golden sea outside, and there was also a balcony where one could enjoy the sea breeze if one wished, or even do a little fishing.

Considering that it was currently about noontime, and the sun was shining brightly outside, Bai Xiaochun had the sudden impulse to go outside and soak in the warmth of the sun.

The truth was that this cabin was so large that it could fit a hundred people and still have room to spare.

“How luxurious! The fact that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will treat the higher-ups so much better is... it’s wonderful!” Taking a deep breath, he toured the cabin for a bit before sitting down cross-legged to do some breathing exercises.

Time flashed by. During the three days which followed, Bai Xiaochun only continued to be more pleased with his accommodations. That was especially true when he found that every day, his puppet handmaidens would bring large quantities of spirit food.

The amount of spirit food was so extensive that even after working hard, he couldn’t consume it all. For him, life was even better than it had been in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and after eating, he would pat his belly and burp a bit, then lay down on a divan on the balcony to enjoy the sea breeze and the warmth of the sun.

“I'm in the top 10, and things are great. I wonder what the three rooms for Zhao Tianjiao and the others are like? How big are they?”

Thinking of Zhao Tianjiao caused Bai Xiaochun to suddenly be reminded of Song Que and his other Dao protectors. At that point, he realized that, considering how large his room was, and how it was almost empty, he might as well enjoy it with some others. With that thought in mind, he excitedly rushed out of his cabin and headed to deck 4.

The first thing he did was try to get an idea of what the cabins on deck 4 were like. Considering that there were always people coming in and out of one cabin or another, it didn’t take long for him to get an answer.

Deck 4 was much smaller than deck 3, and each cabin was only a few dozen meters across. Even still, all of the cabins were single-occupancy. However, when he got down to deck 5, he saw that things were much more cramped.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0444 awe-chapter-445

There were more than a hundred cabins on deck 5, none of them very large. Furthermore, not a single one was a single-occupancy cabin; they were designed to house five people each....

Although each person in each cabin had a separate living area which they could seal off with a spell formation, comparing these quarters to Bai Xiaochun's accommodations was like comparing the earth to the heavens or the dirt to the clouds.

After looking around for a while, he found Master God-Diviner's cabin, where Master God-Diviner sat looking around anxiously at his murky surroundings. The mere thought of spending half a year in conditions like this left him feeling very sullen.

Just as he was about to become completely and utterly dispirited, Bai Xiaochun appeared....

"Junior Patriarch...." he cried.

"Alright," Bai Xiaochun said with the wave of his hand, "you're coming with me. My place is plenty big." Master God-Diviner was instantly elated, and to the envy of the other cultivators in the cabin, he hurried over to Bai Xiaochun's side.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, clasped his hands behind his back, and went about looking for his other friends. Eventually, he found Song Que who, by chance, was in the same cabin as Chen Manyao.

As soon as Chen Manyao saw Bai Xiaochun, she flashed him a radiant smile that couldn’t have been more enticing. As for Song Que, his face was already about as grim is it could be; the past few days had been extremely annoying to him, considering that this was the first time he had ever stayed in a room with other people.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun said, “Que’er, your aunt entrusted you to me, so how could I possibly stand idly by while you suffer? Why don’t you come along with your uncle? I feast on spirit food every day, and have so much I can't even finish it all.”

Song Que’s face darkened, and he glared at Bai Xiaochun with gritted teeth.

Of course, that made Bai Xiaochun feel wonderful. He knew that Song Que didn’t like him, and therefore, he didn't like Song Que very much, and would occasionally find opportunities to intentionally mock him.

Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to invite Chen Manyao to come with him, she spoke up.

“I’ll come with you, big bro Xiaochun. I know you feast on spirit food every day, and have so much you can't finish it. I’ll help you with that problem!" Covering her smile with her hand, she glided over to Bai Xiaochun side, where she joined Master God-Diviner.

Seeing that Song Que wasn’t even going to say a word, Bai Xiaochun shook his head and turned to leave. However, he stopped at the door and looked back at Song Que.

“You’re really not coming? The spiritual energy in my cabin is much stronger than it is here, so your cultivation will proceed more quickly.”

Song Que really didn’t want to go, but the truth was that he didn’t know any of the other cultivators in his cabin on deck 5. The idea of having to spend half a year with them darkened his mood even further.

Then he heard Bai Xiaochun mention that the spiritual energy in his cabin was strong, and would aid in cultivation. That finally gave Song Que the excuse he needed.

“I have to surpass him,” he thought. “A true man knows when to stand tall and when to submit. I can't let myself fall too far behind during this half year. The only reason I’m doing this is for cultivation purposes, and that’s all!” After convincing himself in this fashion, Song Que clenched his jaw and rose to his feet, face grimmer than ever as he walked over to Bai Xiaochun’s side.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised, having been certain that Song Que wouldn’t join him. Clasping Song Que’s shoulder, he said, “That’s the spirit! We're all one big family, right? Considering the relationship between myself and your aunt, you should listen to me more closely in the future. After all, when did your uncle ever treat you unfairly?”

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun felt more than ever like someone from the older generation, and knew that he had to take care of Song Que no matter how he did it. Then, after he got back to the River-Defying Sect, he would make sure Song Junwan knew all about it. She would definitely be pleased.

Sighing, he led all of his Dao protectors back to deck 3....

After entering Bai Xiaochun’s cabin, not even Song Que’s willpower could prevent him from gasping and looking around with shock at the size of the room, the spirit food, the puppets, the limestone floor, and the balcony. Almost immediately, he felt stabs of pain pricking at his heart....

In that moment, he madly swore an oath in his heart that he would focus fully on cultivation, and strive for his own chance to break into the top 10. The difference in treatment between that group and where he was at almost couldn’t be described in words.

In fact, that difference was so great that Song Que could even feel his eyes getting a bit moist.

As for Master God-Diviner, he also gasped, and was instantly drawn to the windows. During the past three days, the only way he had been able to feel the sun on his face was to go to the main deck, but things were too noisy there, and the spray from the waves was too dangerous. But in Bai Xiaochun’s cabin, one could look out the windows at any time, or even sit on the safety of the balcony.

Master God-Diviner was instantly overwhelmed with excitement.

As for Chen Manyao, she was also stunned into silence. Before, she had assumed the difference in accommodations would be big, but not this big. As of this moment, she couldn’t help but feel a bit irked at how the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had arranged things.

The looks on their faces caused Bai Xiaochun to sigh. He hadn’t actually intended to show off in this situation, and was now worried that his friends might misunderstand his intentions. As such, he quickly tried to explain how he felt.

“This is all my fault,” he said. “If I had worked a bit harder, maybe I could have made it into the top 3. I heard that their accommodations are even better than these, and bigger. Mine are only so-so....” Bai Xiaochun really was just trying to smooth things over, but the result was that even stranger looks appeared on the faces of his three friends.

Seeing this, Bai Xiaochun was just getting ready to try to explain things further, when all of a sudden, an ear-piercing cry rang out from the sea outside. The cabin was protected by a spell formation, so the fact that the cry was distinctly audible went to show how incredibly powerful it was. In fact, the entire battleship even began to sway from side to side a bit.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and his three Dao protectors had similar reactions. All of them rushed over to the balcony and looked out, whereupon they saw a streak of silver light shooting out of the sea and up into the sky.

That streak of light was what had caused the noise just now, and had also sent a huge wave slamming into the side of the ship. As such, it was possible to imagine that whatever it was that was causing that light was extraordinary!

Gasping, Bai Xiaochun craned his neck in an attempt to see what was inside of the light, and almost immediately could tell that it was something with a Heaven-Dao aura!

Although others might not notice it, because Bai Xiaochun had a Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he was more acutely attuned to such matters.

“What is that…?” he thought. At this point, he couldn’t hold back from opening his Heavenspan Dharma Eye. Almost immediately, rumbling sounds filled his mind, and he felt stabbing pain in his forehead. He quickly closed his third eye, which had already begun to leak some blood.

Even in that short moment, Bai Xiaochun had been able to catch a glimpse of what was in the light, and it left his mind and heart battered by waves of shock!

Within that light was a silver-colored dragon!

Apparently, that dragon was injured, and even as it flew along, silver blood leaked from its wounds....

In the instant that the silver dragon appeared, the three-eyed deva Chen Hetian was meditating on deck 1. Suddenly, all of his eyes opened, and his expression flickered with incredulity and joy.

“A silvermoon dragonfish!!” he shouted. “Kong Lie, the five of you come with me right now. We’re going to catch that beast!”

With that, he vanished, to reappear a moment later up in midair. As for the five Nascent Soul cultivators, they teleported out to join Chen Hetian. Even as they appeared out in the open, expressions shining with anticipation, the silver light began to disappear over the horizon.

“Let’s go! If we get that dragonfish, I’ll give all five of you an incredible reward!” Chen Hetian’s eyes burned with passion as he and the five Nascent Soul cultivators shot off into the distance.

Many of the other cultivators on the ship could tell that something strange was going on, and had hurried up to the main deck. When they saw what was happening, various expressions appeared on their faces.

On deck 2, Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan appeared to see what the commotion was about, with Heretic being the only one who didn’t react.

Although no one noticed, Gongsun Wan’er was in her cabin, standing at the window and looking at the silver light fading off into the distance. A strange smile could be seen on her face, and on the tip of her index finger was a single drop of silver blood, which she quickly licked away.

“Finally, I can get some real food,” she said with a chuckle.

Considering how fast Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul cultivators were moving, and the speed of the battleship, it only took about ten breaths of time before they were completely separated.

Everyone on the battleship began to discuss matters, but soon the talk quieted down. With the deva and the Nascent Soul cultivators gone, and the vast sea stretching out in all directions, a sense of unease filled the hearts of everyone present.

Time passed. Three days later, Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul cultivators still weren’t back, and everyone aboard the battleship felt greater pressure weighing down on their shoulders. Furthermore, there was a strange and mysterious aura that seemed to be building up around them.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0445 awe-chapter-446

Days passed. Song Que, Master God-Diviner and Chen Manyao all had their own personal space in Bai Xiaochun’s cabin, and were able to enjoy the treatment that only cultivators in the top ten of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars could receive. Filled with gratitude, they did their best to focus on their cultivation.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very far from the great circle of Core Formation, and couldn’t help but feel that he was already quite formidable. Therefore, he spent most of his time basking in the sun on his balcony and looking out at the sea, which was exactly what he was doing right now.

The main deck of the ship wasn’t very far above Bai Xiaochun’s balcony, and among the cultivators there was Gongsun Wan’er, who was apparently also staring out at the sea.

Bai Xiaochun finally looked away from the sea water and then took a long swig of spirit alcohol.

“Now this is the life!” he said with a sigh. Behind him were two puppet hand maidens who were massaging his shoulders.

Occasionally, huge waves would roll across the surface of the water, but at the moment, it looked more like a beautiful golden mirror. By this point, Bai Xiaochun was used to the wind, and as for the sea water, because of the techniques he cultivated, it wouldn’t harm him unless he was exposed to it for long periods of time.

Furthermore, because of the spell formation built into the battleship, the incredibly intense spiritual energy in the water was softened and purified before entering the ship.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun looked back at his huge cabin, and saw Song Que, Master God-Diviner, and Chen Manyao all sitting cross-legged in meditation, apparently completely focused on their cultivation. Feeling a bit bored, he decided that he should probably go find someone to chat with.

“These guys are too focused on cultivation. This half a year is a time to enjoy things. Once we reach our destination, we’ll be heading into the outposts of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and the Great Wall.... Things definitely won’t be as comfortable there.

“Wouldn’t it be great if Xu Baocai were here?” Taking another drink of spirit alcohol, he was just contemplating how to alleviate his boredom when, all of a sudden, he saw a golden flash of light off in the distance.

Some distance away, a school of golden fish had just leapt up out of the sea water, flashing through the air like golden sparks before splashing back down into the water.

Considering how sharp Bai Xiaochun’s vision was, he could see the fish quite clearly, and was able to tell that they were about as long as a human arm. They were covered with glittering golden scales, and most shocking of all, had two heads! Furthermore, those two heads weren’t located next to each other. Rather, the second head was where a fish's tail would normally be.

“Golden loaches!!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed, shooting to his feet. He recognized these strange fish from one of the volumes of spirit creatures he had studied in the Spirit

Stream Sect, and knew that they were a very rare type of spirit fish!

Such spirit fish didn’t need to be refined into medicinal pills to be consumed as food. They were a precious material of heaven and earth that could strengthen the qi passageways and bolster divine sense. Fish like that could be very useful for cultivators, and if they were older than a hundred years of age, could even help when stepping into the Nascent Soul stage.

As Bai Xiaochun looked excitedly out at the sea, the school of golden loaches once again broke the surface of the water. Then a huge amount of water exploded up as a fish ten times larger than any of the other ones launched itself up into the air.

Just like the other fish, it was golden in color and had two heads. However, there was something ancient to this one, as though it had lived for a very long time. Furthermore, its scales glittered with a golden light that surpassed the other fish.

“A hundred-year-old golden loach!!” Gasping, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, sending a stream of frigid qi out which instantly wrapped around the fish. However, a stream of power shot back toward him, destabilizing his cultivation base and very nearly dragging him off of the balcony.

Expression flickering, he quickly called out at the top of his lungs, “Que’er, Master Snortsnort, Little Manyao, hurry up and help me! I hooked a precious treasure here!”

Song Que, Master God-Diviner, and Chen Manyao immediately opened their eyes from meditation. Song Que seemed a bit irritated, and Master God-Diviner was also slightly annoyed. As for Chen Manyao, she had the same smile on her face that she usually did. However, when all of them looked over and saw the huge loach leaping into and out of the water, their eyes went wide. Song Que was the first to rush out, followed by Chen Manyao and Master God-Diviner.

“Hurry up and help me!” Bai Xiaochun said excitedly. “If we can catch this fish, we’ll have a great dinner tonight!” With that, he poured some more cultivation base power into his efforts. Thankfully, as a member of the Spirit Stream Sect, he had been cultivating control power for quite some time, and was very familiar with it. Therefore, despite the fact that the fish had already dropped back down under the surface of the water, he still managed to maintain a connection to it.

The struggling of the enormous fish was causing huge waves to roll out, along with intense crashing sounds. Thankfully, Song Que and the others quickly arrived to help. Song Que’s right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and a shadow spread out from his feet and into the water. Although the water weakened it a bit, it still managed to shoot directly toward the huge fish.

Master God-Diviner also performing an incantation gesture as he unleashed the power of a magical item.

Chen Manyao’s actions were the strangest of all; after performing an incantation gesture, she opened her mouth and spat out a pink cloud, which rapidly shrank down into the shape of a mist hawk that let out a piercing cry as it dove toward the fish.

Bai Xiaochun let out a whoop of excitement. Moments ago, he had been bored, but now everything had changed.

“Come on everybody, don’t hold anything back!” he shouted. “We can’t let this fish get away!” Bai Xiaochun’s excitement was rubbing off on the others, whose hearts began to pound. Considering how much this huge fish was struggling, they all could tell that it wasn’t anything ordinary.

The fish struggled mightily, even letting out muffled cries that reached the cultivators who were gathered on the deck. As for Gongsun Wan’er, she wasn’t too far away from Bai Xiaochun’s position, and when she looked down, she could actually see the fish, as well as Bai Xiaochun and his Dao protectors.

Laughing softly in amusement, she waved her finger in the direction of the huge fish, unleashing her own cultivation base power to aid Bai Xiaochun and the others.

Bai Xiaochun sensed that Gongsun Wan’er was helping them, and was quite moved.

“Wan’er!” he shouted. “Help us reel in this fish and we’ll all have a great dinner!”

Gongsun Wan’er looked down at Bai Xiaochun, smiled, and said, “Dinner? You mean tonight?”

“Yeah!” he replied, not thinking much about her question. Under the combined efforts of the group, the struggling fish slowly weakened, and soon, they managed to heave it up out of the water toward the battleship.

Laughing excitedly, Bai Xiaochun extended his hands to grab the fish. Simultaneously, excited smiles broke out on the faces of Song Que, Master God-Diviner and even Chen Manyao. Although catching his huge fish hadn't involved any danger, they were out in the middle of the Heavenspan Sea, and had worked quite hard to succeed.

However, even as the huge fish flew through the air, a figure burst into motion from the deck, moving like lightning to unleash his great circle Core Formation cultivation base power. Before anyone could do anything, he had waved his finger in the direction of the fish.

Instantly, a huge hand appeared in the middle of the air, which rumbled toward the exhausted fish, and then hit it with such intense power that it instantly died!

Next, the hand wrapped around the fish and pulled it back toward a young man on the deck of the ship, who swished his sleeve to pull the fish into his bag of holding.

“What are you doing!?” Bai Xiaochun shouted, enraged. Unable to react in time, he had no choice but to fly up to the deck, fuming with anger. Song Que, Master God-Diviner, and Chen Manyao all joined him, where they confronted the young man face-to-face.

“Hey,” Bai Xiaochun said, “we saw that fish first, and we're the ones who weakened it. We were just about to grab it, you thief!”

Shockingly, the young man in front of them had once been in the top 3 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, but was now in 5th place. His name was... Ji Fang!

“Are you kidding me?” Ji Fang said, a cruel expression twisting his face. “I have the fish now. It’s mine!” Of course, he completely ignored Song Que and the others, and only looked at Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er, albeit with complete scorn.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0446 awe-chapter-447

Ji Fang had been eyeing the golden loach the entire time. Virtually everyone on the battleship had almost instantly begun to covet it, with the exception of Zhao Tianjiao, Chen Yueshan and Heretic.

Therefore, Ji Fang had simply decided to snatch it in the heat of the moment. Although he did fear Bai Xiaochun to some extent, he was confident that he could handle him, even if he teamed up with Gongsun Wan’er.

After all, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one with people to back him up; Ji Fang had his own followers. Therefore, he didn’t even bother to respond, and simply turned on his heel and walked off.

“Insufferable bully!” Bai Xiaochun grumbled angrily. To have his belongings openly robbed was a bitter pill to swallow, and he was just about to step forward the prevent Ji Fang from leaving when Master God-Diviner grabbed his arm.

“Junior Patriarch, just let it go. Ji Fang used to be in the top 3, and even though he’s dropped down to 5th place, he's still terrifyingly powerful!”

“It’s just a fish,” Song Que said through gritted teeth as he watched Ji Fang walking away, “There’s no need to get into a big fight over it. That might make things problematic once we reach the sect outposts.”

Considering that everyone was persuading him to back down, Bai Xiaochun clenched his jaw and let out a cold harrumph. He could tell than both Song Que and Master

God-Diviner felt the same way and didn’t want to offend Ji Fang. Even if Bai Xiaochun made a move on his own, it would still drag them into it, so therefore, he really had no choice other than to just grin and bear it.

“That guy is too overbearing,” he muttered. “With a personality like that, he’ll definitely get killed once we reach the Wildlands!” With that, he returned dejectedly to his cabin.

After the scene was over, only Gongsun Wan’er remained standing there. Although no one noticed it, she was chuckling as she watched Ji Fang walking away. Then she licked her lips, a strange light flickering in her eyes.

“Looks yummy,” she murmured to herself.

Nothing happened that night for Bai Xiaochun. He sat cross-legged in meditation, mulling over the day’s events and feeling more irritated by the moment.

“I can’t just let this drop,” he thought. “Ji Fang might have some skills, but I have even more skills! I have to think of a way to teach him a lesson he won’t ever forget!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he opened his bag of holding to look for the little turtle, but even after searching around for quite a while, couldn’t find him.

By the time the first rays of dawn emerged, he was feeling more depressed than ever. However, it was at that point that the still and quiet atmosphere of the battleship was broken by a bloodcurdling scream that echoed out from deck 3, the very same deck that Bai Xiaochun’s cabin was on.

There was something terrifying about that scream, as if it had been fueled by a life force that was in the midst of being extinguished. Quite a few people heard the scream, including Bai Xiaochun.

“What’s going on!?”

Song Que and the other Dao protectors opened their eyes and looked around, shocked. Before long, the other top 10 chosen on deck 3 began to emerge, Bai Xiaochun included.

Even Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan came down from deck 2, and joined in as everyone searched for the origin of the scream!

It didn’t take long before they discovered that one of the cabins on deck 3 had a shriveled corpse in it!

The corpse was discovered in Ji Fang’s cabin... and after examining it closely, everyone could tell that it was none other than Ji Fang himself!

“This....” Bai Xiaochun said with a gasp.

Ji Fang had been withered dry to the point where he was almost unrecognizable. Despite being little more than a skeleton, he clearly hadn't been dead for long, and yet, already seemed to be rotting. Everyone present was a Core Formation cultivator and a top chosen, and therefore, it didn’t take long before they all noticed... that Ji Fang had died in a very strange way. Apparently, all of his blood had been drained away!!

Gasps and looks of astonishment appeared on the faces of everyone present. After all, Ji Fang was in the great circle of Core Formation, and possessed incredible battle prowess. And yet, there were no signs of magical combat in the area, as though Ji Fang had been killed in the briefest of instants!

Even more telling was that Ji Fang's cabin was filled with intense, frigid coldness, something that caused everyone's minds to tremble.

Bai Xiaochun stared mutely at Ji Fang's corpse, his eyes wide with incredulity. He had been thinking about Ji Fang all night, and never could have imagined that the following day, he would actually be dead.

"He really died?" Bai Xiaochun was having trouble controlling his breathing, especially when he realized that the corpse itself actually looked very familiar. Before he could put much thought into it, the faces of Master God-Diviner and Song Que drained of blood, and looks of fear began to shine in their eyes.

Chen Manyao also gasped, and a look of fear spread out across her face.

If the three-eyed Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul cultivators had been present, things might not have been as terrifying. But all of those members of the Senior generation were gone, and none of the Core Formation disciples present were quite sure what to do. Therefore, everyone looked to Zhao Tianjiao to take the lead. After approaching the corpse and examining it for a moment, his expression flickered and he said, "It seems that some sort of unclean thing is on board the ship with us. Everyone needs to be extra careful!"

All the disciples present shivered in fear, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he felt his scalp going numb. Unfortunately, the mystery of Ji Fang's death was not something that could be explained at the moment, so everyone eventually dispersed, maintaining full vigilance along the way.

Heart pounding with fear, Bai Xiaochun returned to his cabin with Song Que, Master God-Diviner and Chen Manyao. As soon as they were all inside, he closed the door and then looked at his ashen-faced friends.

Worried that he might be reading too much into the situation, he tentatively asked, “Did you guys also think that corpse looked familiar...?”

Face filled with alarm and terror, Master God-Diviner replied, “Junior Patriarch... that corpse... reminds me of the corpses back in the River-Defying Sect!”

“It looks exactly the same!” Song Que growled.

“I noticed it too,” Chen Manyao said after a moment. “This corpse looks just like those other corpses....”

Upon hearing their responses, Bai Xiaochun felt like his scalp was tingling so hard it was going to explode. Considering how familiar the corpse seemed, and coupled with Zhao Tianjiao’s words, he couldn’t help but think about what had happened back in the River-Defying Sect. Now, the confirmation of his three Dao protectors left him convinced that the two events were connected.

“Dammit!” he wailed. “How could this be happening? I... I came all the way here, and that unclean thing followed the entire way...?” The more he thought about it, the stranger it and more terrifying it seemed. In fact, he immediately produced some evil-warding talismans from his bag of holding and plastered them onto himself.

Of course, that wasn’t enough for him. He quickly urged Master God-Diviner and Song Que to help him set up some more spell formations in the cabin. Then he went into his own private room and set up some additional spell formations, and also made sure he had plenty of Soul Convergence Pills ready.

“I have evil-warding talismans, spell formations, and Soul Convergence Pills. If that unclean thing has any sense at all, it won't dare to provoke me.... Yeah, that’s right. If it provokes me, it will definitely meet a miserable end!” Scowling on the verge of tears, he continued to try to encourage himself with the fact that Song Que and the others were also present. Considering that they were around, it wasn't likely that the unclean thing would come for him.

But then he remembered that Ji Fang had been in the great circle of Core Formation. Considering that he was also in the Core Formation stage, that left him feeling more unprotected and unsafe than ever. The image of Ji Fang’s desiccated, blood-drained corpse remained floating in his mind constantly.

“Just what kind of ghost are we dealing with…?” he thought. “When is that deva Chen Hetian going to get back…?”

It was in this manner that he stewed in his anxiety and vigilance for an entire night.

He wasn’t the only nervous one, of course. Song Que, Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao, and all the other chosen on deck 3, and even the disciples on decks 4 and 5, were all very anxious.

If any other person had been killed, it probably wouldn’t have been a big deal. But Ji Fang had been in 5th place in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, with extraordinary battle prowess. And yet, he had still met a bizarre and grisly fate, leaving everyone feeling completely ill at ease.

When dawn came, and people checked around and found that no one else had died, people finally began to breathe sighs of relief. Bai Xiaochun was slightly less anxious, but not by much. Taking advantage of the daylight, he set up more spell formations both inside and outside of his room. Sadly, he wasn’t good at creating paper talismans, otherwise he would have painted many, many more such items to ward off evil spirits.

Three days passed by in a flash. No one died, and soon, the atmosphere on the ship returned to normal. People once again went up onto the main deck. However, everyone still felt a great weight on their hearts, and often looked up into the sky, hoping to see three-eyed Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul cultivators returning.

Eventually, half a month went by.... And yet, Chen Hetian and the other still were not back. However, no one had been killed during that time. At long last, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief.

“Maybe I was mistaken. Maybe Ji Fang was killed, not by the unclean thing, but by... that big fish?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0447 awe-chapter-448

After much thought, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t able to determine whether or not the hundred-year-old loach could possibly have been the cause of death. However, he knew that he definitely couldn’t come up with any answers locked in his room, so eventually, he called on his Dao protectors to discuss the matter further.

Over the past few days, his Dao protectors had been too rattled to focus fully on cultivation, but once they heard this new fish theory of Bai Xiaochun’s, they began to calm down.

Finally, after more than half a month of remaining in seclusion, Bai Xiaochun emerged and headed up to the main deck. There, he happened to catch sight of Gongsun Wan’er, who also seemed to have come up to the deck to relieve her boredom. Upon catching sight of Bai Xiaochun and his Dao protectors, she smiled and joined them.

Most of the cultivators on the deck were grouped together in twos or threes, although a few of them stood by themselves.

As such, Bai Xiaochun’s group was the largest present. Song Que was walking behind him, radiating his usual murderous aura that made him seem completely unapproachable. Master God-Diviner was walking next to him, looking almost like his personal assistant. And then there was Gongsun Wan’er on one side with her incredible good looks, and Chen Manyao on the other side with her spectacular beauty. Together, they made quite a sight.

Many of the cultivators in the area looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and although some of them had cold looks on their faces, many seemed envious.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath of sea air, looked up into the sky, and then gazed out at the golden sea. Gradually, the weight in his heart seemed to lessen.

“Ai,” he sighed. “I can't believe our wonderful voyage took such a turn for the worse.” Looking around at the crowd, he suddenly realized that a lot of people were looking at him. Turning, he realized that Gongsun Wan’er and Chen Manyao were right by him, and by chance, both of them happened to be smiling at him. They were two different smiles, and two different facial expressions, but they were both very beautiful. All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun’s mood got even better.

As of that moment, he discovered a new hobby. In the following days, he would take time every day to go for a stroll on deck, and would always make sure to chat openly with Chen Manyao and Gongsun Wan’er. As they smiled and laughed with him, many of the other cultivators in the area would look over enviously.

The more looks like that he got, the more he liked this new hobby, and at the same time, he felt less distant from Gongsun Wan’er.

“Gongsun Wan’er really is pretty when she smiles,” he thought, glancing around proudly at the crowd. As he did, he noticed that up ahead, Zhao Tianjiao was standing there, looking as cold as a statue.

During the past few days, he had caught sight of Zhao Tianjiao a few times, as well as Chen Yueshan. Both of them were superstars in the top 3, with extremely high status. They were the type of people who didn’t need to have an entourage to provoke countless envious glances from the surrounding cultivators.

As Zhao Tianjiao walked along, a group of seven or eight other cultivators trailed along behind him, looking very subservient. Bai Xiaochun actually recognized some of them from back on Sky Quarter Rainbow, when he'd gone around asking for help to get some seven-colored mistysea grass.

Lowering his voice, he leaned over and said, "Hey Master Snortsnort, why do you think all of the superstars are so cold-looking? Zhao Tianjiao looks like he's above everyone else, and it's the same with Chen Yueshan and Heretic. They hardly ever hang out with anybody else, and spend most of their time in secluded meditation."

Master God-Diviner hesitated for a moment and then said, "Well, ummm... maybe they act that way because everyone expects them to be like that."

Even as Bai Xiaochun contemplated this possibility, he looked over at Zhao Tianjiao, and found that Zhao Tianjiao had turned and was looking back at him.

Suddenly, their gazes met.

Although Zhao Tianjiao's expression was placid, there was something intense within his eyes that Bai Xiaochun found to be almost painful. Of course, although Bai Xiaochun was definitely the type who feared death, he was not the type who shrank back when someone simply looked at him. As soon as he felt the painful intensity of Zhao Tianjiao's gaze, his own eyes began to shine as he stared back.

Though no sound could be heard from the interlocking of their gazes, both of their minds filled with intense fluctuations. Bai Xiaochun's expression flickered, and he stopped walking, and then Zhao Tianjiao retracted his vision. And yet, unlike Bai Xiaochun, Zhao Tianjiao didn't stop walking. Instead... he headed in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Zhao Tianjiao occupied 1st place among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, so no matter where he went, he was always the center of attention. When people realized that he was walking toward Bai Xiaochun, everyone began to pay close attention.

That was especially true considering that he was flanked by seven or eight followers, making it seem like a grand procession.

Song Que’s expression turned very serious, and although Master God-Diviner initially gaped in shock, his expression quickly became the same as Song Que’s. Even Chen Manyao looked surprised. The only one among the group whose expression was the same as ever was Gongsun Wan’er, who even seemed interested to see what would happen with Zhao Tianjiao.

As Zhao Tianjiao proceeded forward, silence fell upon the main deck. Everyone was watching as he slowly came to a stop right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

His expression was as cold as ice, and he looked like a glistening, unsheathed sword, as powerful as a mountain who could look down upon everything below him. As he measured Bai Xiaochun up, Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, wondering what exactly was going on. After all, he and Zhao Tianjiao had only ever seen each other a few times, and had never even exchanged words.

After a moment, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hold back from saying, “Elder Brother Zhao?”

Almost as soon as the words left Bai Xiaochun's mouth, Zhao Tianjiao responded in a cold voice, "Junior Brother Bai, a word please?"

Although Zhao Tianjiao didn't unleash any of his aura, considering his status and accomplishments in battle, he was the type of person that would leave anyone feeling cold with fear.

"Huh?" Bai Xiaochun replied, feeling a bit shocked. After a moment of thought, he nodded. The truth was that he wasn't scared, just curious as to why a superstar like Zhao Tianjiao would want to talk with him.

Zhao Tianjiao's face remained as cold as ever as he headed toward the prow of the ship. As he neared, the cultivators who had originally been gathered there backed away to make room.

More curious than ever, Bai Xiaochun followed along. Of course, he maintained his vigilance the entire way; although he doubted that Zhao Tianjiao had any ill intentions, he was prepared for anything.

Soon Bai Xiaochun and Zhao Tianjiao were alone at the prow of the ship, whereupon Zhao Tianjiao waved his right hand, causing a glittering shield of light to rise up that cut them off completely from everything outside. Clearly, this was not a defensive shield, but rather something that would block both sound and divine sense alike. As of this moment, the two of them would be able to speak freely without anyone else being able to hear.

Bai Xiaochun's curiosity continued to mount as he looked expectantly at Zhao Tianjiao, waiting to hear what he had to say.

Zhao Tianjiao stood there quietly for a moment looking at Bai Xiaochun, his expression extremely solemn, as though he were wrestling with an important issue. Bai Xiaochun's curiosity was reaching the boiling point, and as for everyone else on the main deck, they were watching the scene play out with various expressions on their faces.

"I wonder why Eldest Brother wants to talk with Bai Xiaochun?"

"Something strange is going on... could it have something to do with the death of Ji Fang?"

"Now that I think about, there was some friction between Ji Fang and Bai Xiaochun right before Ji Fang died...."

All sorts of speculations filled the hearts of the onlookers.

Even as Bai Xiaochun was going to try to make his own guess, Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath and said, "Junior Brother Bai...."

Bai Xiaochun leaned forward intently.

Looking very serious, Zhao Tianjiao said, "Junior Brother Bai, those... those two girls you hang out with are pretty good-looking...."

"Huh?" Bai Xiaochun said, stunned. Considering the serious look on Zhao Tianjiao's face, he almost wondered if he had misheard him.

"Um... listen, don't take this the wrong way, Junior Brother. I don't have any feelings for them.... I just want to know how you managed to win them over. I've been watching you the past few days, and really want to understand how you managed to get two hotties like that to hang out with you."

Zhao Tianjiao had a somber expression on his cold-looking face. He seemed tall and proud, like an unsheathed sword. And yet, the words he spoke caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to go as wide as saucers.

Had he not heard the words with his own two ears, Zhao Tianjiao’s somber expression would have made it completely impossible for Bai Xiaochun to guess what it was he wanted to talk about. It was completely unexpected....

Bai Xiaochun scratched his head, feeling a bit confused. Without even thinking about it, he said, “They're the ones who took to hanging out with me. I couldn’t get rid of them if I tried....”

When Zhao Tianjiao hear this, his expression turned even more serious than before, and he even frowned. Considering his status and incredible battle prowess, a frown like that would make anyone who saw it feel like a thunderstorm were descending.

Of course, no one could hear what the two of them were talking about. They could only see the expressions on their faces. First, they saw the incredulity and disbelief of Bai Xiaochun, and immediately began to come up with explanations for why he was reacting in such a way.

“Something big is happening! Look you guys! Bai Xiaochun is shaking his head. Now he's explaining something!”

“This is really weird. Look at Eldest Brother’s expression. It's even more serious than before. It’s almost like... he doesn't believe what Bai Xiaochun just told him!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0448 awe-chapter-449

As the onlookers speculated about what was happening, Song Que and Master God-Diviner looked on in shock, completely unable to come up with any ideas of what Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Xiaochun might be talking about. Even Chen Manyao seemed very curious.

Gongsun Wan’er was the only one with a slight smile on her face.

Meanwhile, up at the front of the ship, Bai Xiaochun was only just now recovering from his shock. It was with a very odd expression that he looked at Zhao Tianjiao, pondering how this was the 1st place Eldest Brother from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, a person with a profound cultivation base, who could cut down Nascent Soul experts....

“Hm, this is the kind of guy I should probably make friends with,” he thought. “That way, if someone picks on me in the Wildlands, I’ll have someone to help me out. Things will probably go much more smoothly with a friend like him.” With these thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun smiled and patted Zhao Tianjiao’s shoulder like he would a close companion. Voice as casual as a spring breeze, he said, “Eldest Brother....”

Zhao Tianjiao wasn’t used to people touching him, and was about to back away, when he heard Bai Xiaochun’s tone of voice, and could tell that he was speaking with heartfelt sincerity. Therefore, he allowed Bai Xiaochun to continue to clasp his shoulder.

“You have to trust me on this one, Eldest Brother. Those two girls you saw me with, there are only two of them, right? Well, back in the River-Defying Sect, I got love letters from tens of thousands of girls!” Bai Xiaochun sighed and tried not to look proud of himself.

Assuming that Bai Xiaochun must be exaggerating, Zhao Tianjiao frowned.

Of course, the expressions playing out on their faces fueled more discussions among the onlookers. That was especially true when Bai Xiaochun clasped Zhao Tianjiao’s shoulder, and Zhao Tianjiao didn’t back away. Shocked expressions appeared on the faces of everyone present.

To these people, Zhao Tianjiao occupied the highest of high positions, and was a completely proud and aloof figure. He was the type of cold person that no one could ever get close to. Therefore, to see this sudden change in behavior was quite shocking.

Back at the prow of the ship, Zhao Tianjiao was frowning in disappointment at Bai Xiaochun. In fact, he was actually planning to simply turn and leave.

“Hey! You still don't believe me? Alright, look at this!” Bai Xiaochun hated when people didn’t trust what he said, so he quickly patted his bag of holding, causing a rustling sound to fill the air as vast quantities of love letters began to spill out like rain.

There were so many of them that they quickly formed a tiny mountain right there on the deck. Zhao Tianjiao gasped, his eyes going wide with shock and disbelief. He even picked up a few of the letters and read them, whereupon an expression of even greater astonishment appeared. It quickly became obvious that all of the love letters were written by different people, and were not fake. There were even some jade slips in the pile, within which could be seen the beautiful faces of the girls who had delivered them....

“Th-this... this....”

Zhao Tianjiao was starting to pant, and his heart trembled fiercely as it was battered by waves of shock. He looked up slowly at Bai Xiaochun, the same expression in his eyes that he would have if he was facing a deva.

Swishing his sleeve proudly, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and said, “See? Now do you believe me? And this is only some of my collection. I have more in my bag of holding. With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, won over the hearts of countless female cultivators in the River-Defying Sect!”

The strange scene which was now playing out caused the hearts and minds of the onlookers to be filled with both shock and speculation. No one could hear the words being spoken, and divine sense was useless, so all they could do was watch what was happening.

When people saw the huge pile of letters pouring out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding, they gaped in shock. At first, many people didn’t take the letters to be anything special, but soon people realized that many of them were folded up into the shape of hearts.

“What are those things? Heavens! Eldest Brother is actually going through and reading some of them! Why do I get the feeling that those are love letters?”

“Nah. No way! Have you ever seen anyone with *that* many love letters? There must be more than 10,000 of them! They’re obviously not love letters! Besides, look at the expression on Eldest Brother’s face. He’s clearly privy to some mysterious secret, right?”

“How come this Bai Xiaochun only proves to be more and more enigmatic?!?!”

Of course, when Chen Manyao recognized the love letters, she made a ‘pshaw’ sound, seemingly unsure of whether to laugh or cry.

Before people could look at the scene too closely to analyze what was happening, Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath and waved his hand, causing the sound barrier to suddenly blur, making it impossible for anyone to even see the two of them.

Expression extremely somber and profoundly sincere, Zhao Tianjiao clasped hands and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun.

“Junior Brother Bai, I almost can’t believe that someone as young as you has such uncanny skill. I wonder if you might be willing to deign to teach me a thing or two?”

Bai Xiaochun was yet again taken aback by the strange sight of Zhao Tianjiao looking so serious and yet uttering such words.

“You want to learn that kind of stuff?” Bai Xiaochun asked quizzically.

Eyes shining with solemnity, Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath and yet again bowed deeply. “Junior Brother Bai, please teach me. I want to be happy in life, and if you can bless me with such kindness, I’ll never forget it for as long as I live!!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a couple times as he finally came to realize what was going on. Zhao Tianjiao was clearly the type of person who seemed cold and distant on the outside, but was secretly very passionate and romantic. After a moment, Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily.

“Hey, we’re brothers, right? What do you mean teach you a thing or two? Let’s schedule some time and I’ll teach you everything I know. Just tell me which girl it is that you like. There’s no challenge that Love Saint Bai Xiaochun can’t handle!” He even slapped his chest confidently to emphasize his words.

Zhao Tianjiao heaved a long sigh of relief. They immediately set a time to meet and discuss the matter further, after which Zhao Tianjiao bowed deeply, then dispelled the sealing shield and walked away somberly.

Bai Xiaochun put all of the love letters away, and then strutted proudly back to his Dao protectors. Master God-Diviner seemed very curious, and although Song Que was feigning complete disinterest, it was obvious that he was paying close attention to Bai Xiaochun.

After a moment, Master God-Diviner couldn’t hold back from asking, “Junior Patriarch, what were you talking about over there with Zhao Tianjiao?”

“I can’t say,” Bai Xiaochun said, shaking his head in very enigmatic fashion. “It’s a matter which touches on the most important thing in Elder Brother Zhao’s life. How could I possibly reveal that information so casually?” Clasping his hands behind his back, he pompously strolled off toward his cabin.

Of course, his secrecy only caused Master God-Diviner and the others to grow more curious, and it was the same with everyone else who had been present to witness the scene. In fact, many people began making discreet inquiries to try to dig up information, although none of that produced any results.

Three days passed, during which time Bai Xiaochun never left his cabin. Instead, he waited patiently for Zhao Tianjiao to come consult with him.

Seeing this, Master God-Diviner couldn’t help but ask about the situation a few more times, but each time, his inquiries were rebuffed. Finally, though, Bai Xiaochun sighed and said, “I’m waiting for someone.”

“Zhao Tianjiao?” Master God-Diviner replied, shocked. Even Song Que’s ears perked up.

“That’s right,” Bai Xiaochun replied calmly. “The truth is that the only person on this entire battleship who can help him is me, Bai Xiaochun.” With that, he closed his eyes and continued to meditate, looking prouder of himself than ever.

Master God-Diviner and Song Que exchanged a quizzical glance. However, no amount of speculation on their part could provide any insight. Finally, when evening was falling on the third day, Zhao Tianjiao’s voice could be heard outside the cabin door.

“Is Junior Brother Bai in?”

Master God-Diviner and Song Que looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who slowly opened his eyes.

“Que’er, hurry up and get the door. Manyao, please give us some privacy.”

Chen Manyao gave a light harrumph. She had her own speculations about what was going on, but had no choice but to glide over to her room and close the door. As for Song Que, his eyes widened to a glare, but he knew that he was a guest under someone else’s roof, so therefore he simply gritted his teeth and went to open the door.

As soon as the door opened, Zhao Tianjiao appeared, solemn as ever as he walked in with two followers.

The two followers had anxious expressions on their faces; they happened to be two of the chosen from the Hall of Devil Slayers that Bai Xiaochun had visited to ask for help buying medicinal ingredients. Back then, both of them had intentionally made things difficult for Bai Xiaochun. One of them had quoted an astronomical price, and the other had pretended to be in secluded meditation.

How could they ever have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would suddenly rise to the top in spectacular fashion, reaching the violet portion of the rainbow and shaking the entire sect? Of course, even after all of that, they had still felt confident that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t come looking for revenge, not considering that they were followers of Zhao Tianjiao.

But now, it was to their complete disbelief that they learned that Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Xiaochun were somehow very close to each other. What was even more shocking was that Zhao Tianjiao had a very serious expression on his face, and was being very polite.

The two of them couldn’t help but be quite shaken.

Upon entering, Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath and, completely ignoring the fact that Master God-Diviner and Song Que were still present, clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Junior Brother Bai, I hope you won’t laugh at me when I tell you that I’ve always been in love with Junior Sister Yueshan. I just don’t know how to win her over. In terms of compensation, I’ll give you anything you ask for, as long as it’s in my power. Even a deva beast soul!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0449 awe-chapter-450

Master God-Diviner took a deep breath, and Song Que stood off to the side with a look of blank shock on his face. No matter how either of them had considered the matter, they could never have guessed that the preeminently proud Zhao Tianjiao would say something like that upon entering Bai Xiaochun's cabin.

They weren't the only ones to be completely taken aback: Zhao Tianjiao's two followers were also struck with shock.

That was especially true considering that the compensation Zhao Tianjiao was offering was a deva beast soul. All four of the other cultivators present were completely flabbergasted by that; back at the sect, a deva beast soul could be traded for a Nascent Soul Pill, which showed how incredibly valuable they were.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged, not even having bothered to rise to his feet. In fact, he was actually frowning in displeasure.

Then he snorted coldly, flicked his sleeve and angrily said, "Elder Brother Zhao, you and I got along with each other at first sight, and it was the sincerity of your request that convinced me to help you. And yet here you go and offer compensation? Do you really think that I, Bai Xiaochun, am the kind of person who cares about compensation from you?!"

Face turning even more grim, he continued, "Deva beast soul...? Hmph! If I want one of those, I'll get it myself. You may leave now, Elder Brother Zhao. See yourself out!"

Master God-Diviner and Song Que suddenly found it hard to breathe, and Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers’ jaws dropped. As for the latter, they had never heard anyone in the current generation of disciples speak to Zhao Tianjiao in such a way. Just as they were about to step forward and berate Bai Xiaochun, Zhao Tianjiao raised his hand to stop them.

Giving Bai Xiaochun a deep look, he suddenly smiled, which was something he very rarely did.

“How foolish of me, my brother. Please don’t be angry.”

The sincerity of his smile and his words caused the hearts of his two followers to begin to pound even harder. They had been followers of Zhao Tianjiao for a very long time, and had never once seen him smile. Not only was that shocking in and of itself, but it also made them even more terrified of Bai Xiaochun.

Laughing heartily, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet.

“Eldest Brother, the truth is that I’m just trying to get the best you have to offer. You see, the reason I want to help you is not because I want to make a quick profit, but rather, because I seek long-term compensation. And that compensation is none other than your friendship!” Bai Xiaochun was of the opinion that the words he had spoken were particularly impressive, and was feeling quite proud of himself for coming up with them.

Master God-Diviner and Song Que exchanged a glance, and even Zhao Tianjiao seemed surprised. But then, Zhao Tianjiao’s smile grew even more sincere than before. Shaking his head, he sat down in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“I'm in love with Chen Yueshan, Xiaochun. What am I supposed to do?”

Bai Xiaochun sat down, placing a flagon of spirit alcohol down between them as he did. Master God-Diviner, being as quick-witted as he was, quickly took it upon himself to serve them. Bai Xiaochun lifted his cup and took a sip, his eyes glittering faintly.

Zhao Tianjiao didn’t rush him. Taking a sip of his own alcohol, he sat there waiting for Bai Xiaochun to speak.

It took Bai Xiaochun a moment to organize his thoughts, after which, he began to speak, his expression placid, but seemingly profound, like someone who had long since achieved the Dao.

“Love is a complex and ever-changing thing, like an entire world of interlocking thoughts and emotions. It's not common for people to be able to see things clearly when it comes to love, especially considering how many things affect it. Consider: one’s personality, one’s actions, one’s status, and one’s other relationships all play a part, as well as sundry other factors.”

Placing his drinking vessel down, he slowly continued, “Loving someone is a simple thing. However, getting that person to love you back is a skill unto itself.

“Upon first entering the cultivation world, I did not shrink back from that tribulation called love, and in fact, dominated the field for decades. I received 37,931 love letters, and won the hearts of tens of thousands of young women. I’ve seen many instances of love, and seen many beautiful women age and fall by the wayside. Although I can’t say that I understand everything about the topic, based on what I've experienced, I can claim to have learned a bit.” Waving his sleeve, he stuck his chin up, and from the look in his eye, he seemed to have many profound thoughts running through his head.

Master God-Diviner’s eyes went even wider than before, and as for Song Que, his lips curled with a bit of scorn. The two of them exchanged a look, and both could see how much the other was scoffing at Bai Xiaochun’s blatant, showy display.

Zhao Tianjiao coughed dryly, and was about to say something when Bai Xiaochun suddenly gave him a piercing look.

“What I am about to explain now is a secret that took me half a lifetime to perfect. Anyone who masters this secret will have the power to shake heaven and earth, and even cause signs to appear in the sky. Were it to fall into the wrong hands, wicked hands, it would lead to countless young women being struck witless with terror, and likely, plunged into an abyss of misery.... Therefore, all of you must remember that this is a secret which cannot be spread beyond this room!

“The field of love is like the field of battle. In battle, you seek victory, and in love, you seek to win the heart of the person you love!

“Therefore, I, Bai Xiaochun, have taken everything I have learned in life, and combined it all into a single character. *Win!*” As he spoke, his voice grew louder, and seemed to surge with intensity.

“When you break apart the character win 赢 into all its smaller elements, you get 亡 death, 口 mouth, 月 moon, 贝 shell-money, 凡 and mortal!

“The death character represents an awareness of deadly crisis. The mouth character represents the power to communicate properly. The moon character represents how important timing and the environment are. The shell-money character represents how important spirit stones are. The mortal character represents how you must always keep your mortal heart calm and peaceful, especially in critical moments.”

Upon hearing these words, Zhao Tianjiao’s expression flickered.

He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. Master God-Diviner couldn’t keep his expression calm, and Song Que’s mind began to spin with numerous thoughts. Even Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers gasped, as though they had just received important enlightenment.

Never before in their lives had they heard words spoken like this, and the more they thought about them... the more they made sense!

“This is the summary of all the insight of Love Saint Bai Xiaochun... my secret method, the Win Charm!” To emphasize his words, Bai Xiaochun slapped his hand down onto the ground, the sound of which echoed into the minds of everyone present, leaving them utterly shaken.

“This....” Master God-Diviner looked in shock at Bai Xiaochun, his mind filled with thoughts of the Win Charm.

Song Que was gaping in disbelief, trying to figure out how Bai Xiaochun could possibly have come up with something like this....

Zhao Tianjiao lost control of his breathing for a moment before calming down. As of this moment, he was completely convinced that Bai Xiaochun knew what he was talking about. He really was like a deva, and his Win Charm left Zhao Tianjiao feeling as if he had been struck by lightning. Suddenly, whole new worlds of possibility had opened up.

“This guy took the battlefield that is love,” he thought, “and all the techniques and skills involved with it, and bound them together into a single character.... Just how profoundly skilled is he?” Zhao Tianjiao couldn’t stop from rising to his feet, clasping hands, and bowing deeply to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked completely and utterly calm. Furthermore, at some unknown point, he had produced a fan, which he slowly swished through the air as he gazed around with an enigmatic smile on his face.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun hadn't come up with the Win Charm on his own. He had received quite a bit of help from imposter Nightcrypt. After all, back in the Blood Stream Sect, imposter Nightcrypt had gained a lot of experience in the love department.... Although all of his experiences had left him shedding proverbial tears of blood, were it not for his special techniques, neither he nor anyone else in his position could ever have accomplished what he had.

A profound look appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as he slowly said, “The Win Charm is just an overview, which I have explained to you today so that you can understand how the field of love is just like the field of battle!

“And now, I will give a more detailed explanation of the essence of the Win Charm!

“Death, mouth, moon, shell-money, mortal. The first aspect is the death character, which represents an awareness of deadly crisis. You need to be prepared for dangerous threats at any moment, and must always remind yourself that a crisis might be around the next corner!

“After all, Elder Sister Chen is a natural born beauty with spectacular latent talent. You can’t just simply think of her as a young woman with no Daoist partner. Obviously, there are many, many other disciples in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect who secretly have a crush on her, so many that you have no way of knowing how many there are!

“In fact, forget about the sect as a whole. Even on this very ship, there are surely many disciples who are already in love with her, so if you ignore that sensation of crisis now, then you have already met defeat!” To Zhao Tianjiao, Bai Xiaochun’s words felt like a fist punching him in the face. Moments ago, he had felt as if he suddenly understood things more, but now he was left shaking in fear. The truth was that he truly did care about Chen Yueshan, but because of his personality, found it impossible to express himself directly. He didn't even know how to *try* to woo her. Therefore, when he had seen how easily Bai Xiaochun seemed to handle women, he had come to him for advice.

First, he had been shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s love letters, and then came the shocking Win Charm. By now, he had complete and utter faith, and couldn’t wait to hear what was coming next.

“So, what am I supposed to do?!?!” he asked anxiously.

“Calm down,” Bai Xiaochun said sincerely, “I’m not finished yet. Although you must always foster that sense of crisis, you mustn’t let it show on your face. Keep it alive in your heart only. That way... you will always understand that time is limited!”

Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath to calm himself down.

Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes twinkled with approval. Nodding his head, he continued, “Very good. Now, let’s move on to the mouth character, which represents communication and interaction. You say you love Elder Sister Chen, therefore, I won’t even wait for your response to the next issue. Have you told her about your feelings, or done anything to act on them? Obviously not, and that’s fine. You don’t want to be too hasty about such matters. However, you need to find more opportunities to interact with her, and when you do, you must be charming and witty. That’s very important. And don’t worry about what exactly to say. I’ll teach you everything.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0450 awe-chapter-451

“I....” Zhao Tianjiao began nervously, but couldn’t even figure out what to say after that. After hearing everything that Bai Xiaochun had said so far, his heart was already filled with profound gratitude.

“Next,” Bai Xiaochun continued, “is the moon character, which represents timing and environment. We’re all on a ship right now, and the two of you are staying on the same deck. That means you have the advantage in terms of location. With me on your side, you’ll definitely succeed!” He emphasized his last words by clapping his hands together loudly, then raising his voice and continuing, “Next is the shell-money character, which I don’t think we even need to discuss. You surely have plenty of spirit stones. Last is the mortal character, which is very important, and is the antithesis of the death character. You see, despite embracing a sense of crisis within you, you must also have a calm heart. You must not let yourself get flustered; you have to keep control. And remember, as we proceed, I’ll take care of everything!”

His voice seemed to thrum with encouragement and power, causing Zhao Tianjiao’s blood to pump harder, and his mood to soar.

As for Master God-Diviner and the others present, when they heard Bai Xiaochun’s more detailed explanation, they started to get even more excited, and began to pay more close attention than ever. After all, they could tell that what Bai Xiaochun was saying could probably help them as well.

Only Song Que still felt a bit of derision, although even he couldn’t quite tear himself away from listening.

Coughing dryly, Bai Xiaochun said, “Don’t get excited yet, I haven’t finished speaking.”

Zhao Tianjiao personally refilled Bai Xiaochun’s drinking vessel, after which Bai Xiaochun took a sip of alcohol to wet his throat. Then he continued, “My explanation of the Win Charm was mostly so that you could understand why Love Saint Bai Xiaochun was able to dominate the field of love for decades. At this point, we need to start talking specifics.

“You see, on the field of love, you have to know yourself, and know your enemy. Furthermore, you have to be willing to adapt. If you want to get her to fall in love with you, you first have to get on the good side of her friends and family. If they think you’re a good person, then you'll be a good person to her, even if you really aren’t!” Bai Xiaochun spoke with complete and utter confidence, making his words utterly convincing.

Master God-Diviner suddenly slapped his thigh, and his eyes sparkled with bright light. Sitting up straight and tall, he looked at Bai Xiaochun with an expression of reverence; clearly, he took Bai Xiaochun’s words to be like gospel at this point.

Bai Xiaochun, however, seemed a bit annoyed at the interruption. Looking askance at Master God-Diviner for a moment, he continued, “There is a fact of which you might not be aware. When it comes to female cultivators, many of them lack a sense of security, something which is compounded by the brutal nature of the cultivation world. If you can give a girl a sense of security, then you will be like a beam of light on a dark night. She will naturally be drawn to you. Once you succeed in that, then you will have taken your first step toward success....” In response to these words, Zhao Tianjiao’s eyebrows shot up with excitement.

Apparently, Master God-Diviner was worried he might forget what he was hearing, and had pulled out a jade slip to inscribe the information permanently. As for Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers, they were staring at Bai Xiaochun with looks of awe and reverence.

“There are two important techniques you must master. Put simply, they are both ways to get her attracted to you! After you acquire her attention, you need to do as the line from the ancient poem says: *hold a lute in your arms and use it to cover your face*. In other words, make yourself seem mysterious! When she approaches you, back off! When she backs away, get closer to her! After a number of such back-and-forth encounters, she will eventually be filled with unquenchable desire! And that, heh heh, is when you will finally have hooked her!” Even Bai Xiaochun was getting excited by this point, and was waving his arms in dramatic gestures as he spoke.

“That is how to conceal the fact that you are pursuing her, and actually make it seem like *she’s* the one pursuing *you*!

“Back in the Blood Stream Sect, I used this exact method to win the heart of Que’er’s aunt.”

Song Que’s expression grew even darker, and all of a sudden, it made complete sense why his aunt, who had never been one to be attracted to the immature type, fell head over heels for Bai Xiaochun....

Although Song Que felt like simply walking out of the room, he had to admit that much of what Bai Xiaochun was saying could be useful in the future. Therefore, he quickly came up with an excuse to stay behind. “I'm definitely going to make sure my aunt knows the truth about this Bai Xiaochun!” he thought.

Zhao Tianjiao was completely shaken. Given the expression on Song Que’s face, it was obvious that Bai Xiaochun wasn't lying. Therefore, Zhao Tianjiao’s confidence only continued to grow.

“At that point, though, you will not have secured your win on the field of love. Your position will still be very precarious, and you will have to work hard to consolidate your standing.” Bai Xiaochun felt extremely proud of himself at how shaken everyone was by his words. The truth was that during the past three days, he had spent a lot of time discussing the matter with imposter Nightcrypt, and had himself been quite shaken by what he had heard.

“I understand!” Zhao Tianjiao said excitedly. “I get what you mean by consolidating my standing. It’s like cultivation. After you make a breakthrough, you have to stabilize your cultivation base. I get it!”

“No, you *don’t* get it!” Bai Xiaochun barked, glaring. “What you get is how to build upon existing feelings. That’s not what I'm talking about. The highest realm in this aspect of love is being able to keep your distance! You need to get her worked up emotionally, to give her the feeling that she could lose you at any moment. That’s when you finally make your move!

“You absolutely, positively must not spend too much time with her during this phase. If you do, she’ll be too complacent regarding the growing feelings between the two of you. You must make her treasure such feelings! You must make her hell-bent on being with you. Remember, the easier something is to get, the less precious it will be in the end." Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun lapsed into silence, an expression of reminiscence and longing appeared on his face, as though he were lost in his memories of love, and the bittersweet recollections of an immature youth.

The truth was that he was actually thinking back to what he and imposter Nightcrypt had discussed, reviewing what came next in the speech, and mentally rehearsing how to say it. After enough time passed for two incense sticks to burn, his thoughts were in order.

Of course, during that time, Zhao Tianjiao was on the verge of prostrating himself in admiration, and was convinced that Bai Xiaochun must abound with countless stories regarding love and relationships.

In any other circumstance, there was no way that Zhao Tianjiao, with his level of experience in life, would be so easily swayed. But the truth was that his heart was completely wrapped up with thoughts of Chen Yueshan. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun's words left him totally shaken, and the way Bai Xiaochun was explaining things left him utterly bereft of any powers of judgment....

Eyes still flickering with the gleam of reminiscence, Bai Xiaochun began to speak in a voice so soft it seemed that he had forgotten about Zhao Tianjiao's presence. "You have to take your time. Make it seem like you are slowly coming to accept her....

"Then, when the moment is right, you give her the surprise of her life. Make her feel that the only reasonable decision is to become your Daoist partner. Up to that point, she will have been stewing in nervousness over the prospect of losing you, only to be suddenly overwhelmed with joy. When that happens for you, Elder Brother Zhao, I will finally be able to offer my congratulations to you for succeeding!”

At this point, he seemed to have fully emerged from his memories of the past, and looked over at Zhao Tianjiao. Raising his voice, he said, “However, I have to warn you, Elder Brother Zhao, relationships are not easy, and since you are going at it with a long and complicated plan, you must promise to never cast your loved one away. If you do, you will surely be punished by the heavens!” By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s words were spoken so loudly that they were almost deafening. Zhao Tianjiao was completely shaken, and immediately jumped to clasp hands and bow deeply.

Expression serious, and eyes shining with determination, he spoke in the most decisive of decisive voices, “I, Zhao Tianjiao, hereby solemnly swear that if I can tie the knot with Junior Sister Yueshan, then she will be my only Daoist partner for my entire life! If I break my oath, may the heavens destroy me and the earth bury me!”

“Good!” Bai Xiaochun said, nodding approvingly like a member of the Senior generation. “Since that’s the case, then it's not in vain that I, Love Saint Bai Xiaochun, have explained my secrets to you!” Then he looked over at Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers. “The same goes for the rest of you too!”

Master God-Diviner didn’t hesitate for a moment to swear a similar oath. As for Song Que, when Bai Xiaochun looked directly at him, he felt a bit guilty, and almost swore an oath, but finally just snorted and refused to speak.

As for Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers, they were completely shaken, and didn’t even think twice about swearing oaths.

Bai Xiaochun nodded in satisfaction. After taking another sip of alcohol, he looked at the fervent Zhao Tianjiao, then smiled and stuck his chin up.

“Very well, the formalities having been dispensed with, the time has come for you to go ingratiate yourself with Elder Sister Yueshan’s close friends and family.”

“Wait,” Zhao Tianjiao said miserably, “I can’t do that! Junior Sister Yueshan only has two good friends, and both of them left for the Wildlands years ago. Furthermore, in terms of her family, her father is my Master, and he's very strict. How can I ingratiate myself with him?”

“Your master is old three-eyes?” Bai Xiaochun said, his jaw dropping.

Zhao Tianjiao cleared his throat, and was thinking of correcting the way Bai Xiaochun referred to his Master, but considering that he was here asking for help, he pretended that he hadn’t noticed.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart suddenly surged as he realized that if he could get Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan together, then it would essentially mean that he would have a deva on his side. He immediately began to consider more ways to handle Zhao Tianjiao’s situation.

After a moment, his eyes began to sparkle.

“Very well, let’s shift tactics. You need to get Elder Sister Yueshan’s attention. Therefore, we need to know what type of man she likes.”

“I'm not sure!” Zhao Tianjiao said, looking even more miserable than before.

“Don’t worry. I’ll take care of everything. The easiest way to get an idea about someone’s personality is to look at the clothing they wear. How about this: you leave it to me to pick what clothes to wear over the next few days. It shouldn’t take long to figure out what she likes.” As Bai Xiaochun imagined all the different clothing he would have Zhao Tianjiao wear, he couldn’t help but muse that this was the perfect plan. With that, he pulled Zhao Tianjiao closer and began to whisper into his ear the details of which outfits he should get ready.

Zhao Tianjiao’s expression flickered. His eyes went wide, he hissed, he gasped, and soon, a bitter expression appeared on his face.

“Do we really have to do it that way?”

“Yes, absolutely! Pay attention to her reaction. If she frowns, or simply looks away, it means she doesn’t like that outfit. If she looks more closely, it means she’s interested. Either way, you need to keep me informed immediately of all developments.”

Zhao Tianjiao seemed to be vacillating, leading Master God-Diviner and the others to wonder exactly what outfits Bai Xiaochun wanted Zhao Tianjiao to wear.

But finally, Zhao Tianjiao decided to throw caution to the wind. Gritting his teeth, he nodded and said, “I’ll do whatever you say!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0451 awe-chapter-452

Teeth gritted and eyes bloodshot, Zhao Tianjiao said, “Tomorrow. Tomorrow morning, I’ll go through with your plan!”

Heart swelling with determination, he gave Bai Xiaochun a deep bow of thanks, and then turned and left.

His two followers exchanged awkward glances, then bowed to Bai Xiaochun and hurried to follow Zhao Tianjiao back to deck 2.

After Zhao Tianjiao and his followers left, Master God-Diviner rose to his feet and looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a look of complete reverence, having been completely overwhelmed by Bai Xiaochun’s mastery of the ways of love.

As the expression goes, *listening to the words of a wise man can be superior to ten years of studying from books*, and that was exactly how Master God-Diviner felt now. If he could master Bai Xiaochun’s consummate techniques, then after he got back to the River-Defying Sect, he would have the power to rebuke the heavens and rise to the pinnacle of all creation.

Such thoughts left Master God-Diviner completely excited, and he immediately stepped forward to refill Bai Xiaochun’s drinking vessel with alcohol.

“Junior Patriarch, you must be tired from all that speaking, please quench your parched throat.”

Chin tilting up, Bai Xiaochun looked at Master God-Diviner, and felt quite pleased to see how subserviently he was acting. Taking a drink of alcohol, he nodded approvingly.

At first, Master God-Diviner was a bit taken aback, but he quickly recovered and said, “Junior Patriarch, your shoulders must be tired. Come, come, allow me to massage them.”

With that, he hurried over and began to knead Bai Xiaochun’s shoulders.

“Junior Patriarch,” he continued politely, “if you want it softer or harder, just say the word.”

Feeling extremely pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun laughed loudly and continued to fan himself. As far as he was concerned, he really was incredible; by consolidating and then revealing all of imposter Nightcrypt’s skills and knowledge, he had left everyone completely flabbergasted.

Song Que couldn’t take this scene anymore, although secretly, he was quite shaken. He would never deign to reveal that fact to Bai Xiaochun though. Snorting lightly, he rose to his feet to leave when, all of a sudden, Master God-Diviner asked a very interesting question.

“Junior Patriarch, I’m very curious about the advice you gave to Zhao Tianjiao a moment ago. What kind of clothes did you tell him to wear?”

Bai Xiaochun straightened out his sleeve and replied, “Oh, you want to know that?”

At this point, Master God-Diviner decided to go all-in with the flattery. “Junior patriarch, you are consummately wise, intelligent, and courageous. I know that I'm not smart enough to hide my curiosity from you, sir, so I figured I might as well ask directly.”

Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t cover up how proud he was of himself. Laughing, he continued, “Well, that’s true. I'm Love Saint Bai Xiaochun! I dominated the field of love for decades! What is there that I haven’t seen!?

“Ah, whatever. You can’t to go up to deck 2 to see for yourselves tomorrow; that would interfere with the plan anyway.” With that, Bai Xiaochun slapped his bag of holding and produced his copper mirror. “Que’er, why don’t you deliver this mirror over to Elder Brother Zhao. Tell him to keep it on his person so that we can see what’s happening, and I can give him instructions as needed.”

Song Que hesitated, but caught the mirror as Bai Xiaochun tossed it over. Although he was inclined to refuse, he was also curious about the plan with Zhao Tianjiao, and therefore, gritted his teeth and left to deliver the mirror.

Nothing happened during the night. The following morning, Bai Xiaochun, Master God-Diviner, Song Que and Chen Manyao were all gathered around a jade slip, which emanated a soft light above it in the form of a screen. The images on the screen were very clear, and revealed a room that was vastly larger and more luxurious than Bai Xiaochun’s.

In addition to the room, Zhao Tianjiao was there, although only his face was visible at the moment.

He was frowning, apparently vacillating about what to do, and also clearly aware that Bai Xiaochun could see him. Finally, after a long moment of hesitation, he gritted his teeth and said, “This is all for the sake of Junior Sister Yueshan. I'm... I’m gonna put everything on the line!”

Zhao Tianjiao took a moment to gather his focus, and then, without any hesitation, performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, a field of mist appeared around him, from within which could be heard loud rustling sounds.

Since Bai Xiaochun and the others were observing through the copper mirror, it was impossible to see through that mist unless they used some special techniques. Considering that, Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and Chen Manyao were all extremely curious about what was happening.

Soon, the rustling sounds faded away, but the mist remained in place. Apparently, Zhao Tianjiao wasn't willing to emerge from inside. Time passed. A lot of time. Finally, Zhao Tianjiao's eyes could be seen from within the mist, shining as brightly as stars.

"Xiaochun, you can hear me, right?" he said, his voice quavering a bit. "Based on my observations, every day at about this time, Junior Sister Yueshan emerges from her cabin. Therefore, I'm going to do just as you asked. I'm going to walk out and make sure... that she sees me." Zhao Tianjiao seemed very nervous, so nervous in fact that even having a higher cultivation base wouldn't have enabled him to control it. And yet, in addition to that nervousness, there was also a hint of excitement.

A moment later, Zhao Tianjiao's eyes narrowed, and then the mist began to vanish, and he strode toward the door.

By the time the door opened, the mist had vanished, revealing a sight... that left Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and Chen Manyao's eyes as wide as saucers.

He was wearing a pink outfit, including pink trousers, a pink hat, and pink robes.... Everything was pink.... Even his face seemed pink, although that was likely from embarrassment. Most noteworthy of all was that he held a pink, feathered fan in his hand....

Zhao Tianjiao looked absolutely nothing like he usually did. Usually, he was cool and aloof, a higher being of sorts, a person with no expression on his wooden, ice-cold face!

But now, he was completely pink, almost as if he were trying to be flirtatious. It was a shocking transformation, and even Bai Xiaochun, who had come up with this idea to begin with, felt like his mind was being struck by lightning.

As all the observers reeled in shock, Zhao Tianjiao gritted his teeth and, according to the plan put in place, he strode out the door with a coquettish look on his face. He fanned himself slowly, his eyes narrowed, and even went so far as to pull out a pink flower and bite it between his teeth. As he strolled in the direction of Chen Yueshan's cabin, he looked like the picture of an important government official on his way to take some liberties with women.

"Th-that's... that's really Elder Brother Zhao?" Master God-Diviner stammered. Song Que was just as shaken, and Chen Manyao's eyes were wide with shock.

It was in that very moment that the door of Chen Yueshan's cabin opened, and she walked out into the open. She stood tall and straight, clad in a green robe, apparently having just bathed. There were even a few beads of moisture on her neck that made her look as beautiful as a water lily. Although it wouldn't be correct to call her one of the most beautiful women in existence, she was definitely the type to catch the attention of any male.

Apparently, she was on her way to the deck to enjoy the sea breeze, but even as she slowly pushed open the door to her cabin, her eyes fell upon Zhao Tianjiao.

In that instant, her eyes went so wide they became completely round. Her jaw dropped, and she forgot to keep pushing the door open. As for Zhao Tianjiao, he was so nervous that he couldn’t think of anything to say, and before he could think of what to do, Chen Yueshan recovered her senses. Eyes going blank, she stepped back into her cabin and slammed the door shut.

The slamming of the door struck Zhao Tianjiao senseless for a moment, and the flower even fell out of his mouth. Then, he hurried back into his own cabin and pulled out the copper mirror.

“Well, how did it go, Xiaochun?” he said. “I... I feel like things were a bit off....” As of this moment, the crestfallen Zhao Tianjiao didn’t seem at all like the Eldest Brother of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Instead, he seemed more like a confused teenager.

“Stand firm, Elder Brother Zhao!” Bai Xiaochun said solemnly, projecting his words through the copper mirror to Zhao Tianjiao. “Did you forget what I said to you about keeping your mortal heart calm? I saw everything that happened just now. Elder Sister Yueshan’s reaction was completely normal. Don’t worry at all. We just need to keep doing things as planned.”

Bai Xiaochun seemed to be struggling to sound confident, but Zhao Tianjiao didn’t notice. After hearing Bai Xiaochun’s words, he steeled himself, took a deep breath, and nodded solemnly.

“I’ll do whatever you say!”

“Trust me,” Bai Xiaochun said, slapping his chest, “what happened just now is no problem at all.”

The truth was he was feeling a bit guilty about what had happened, but did his best to sound encouraging. Gritting his teeth, he became more determined than ever to help his Elder Brother Zhao win over the beautiful Chen Yueshan.

The following morning at dawn....

Zhao Tianjiao paced back and forth in his room, building up his courage. When he was ready, he swished his sleeve and summoned the mist. When he pushed open the door and dispelled the mist, he was wearing a completely different set of clothing....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0452 awe-chapter-453

In the same moment that Zhao Tianjiao walked out of his room, Chen Yueshan’s door opened and she slowly walked out, dressed exactly the same as she had been the day before.

Even as she walked out, she subconsciously turned to look at Zhao Tianjiao....

Today, Zhao Tianjiao wasn’t wearing pink. This time, he wore a long white robe and a scholar’s hat, making him look completely different than before.

He seemed refined and learned, a man of erudite knowledge, righteous instead of cold, and even smiling broadly. The smile was a bit stiff, but compared to his usual self, he seemed much warmer.

Most astonishing of all were the deep emotions which swirled in his eyes, emotions that Zhao Tianjiao didn’t need any help from Bai Xiaochun to put on display.

As he stood there outside of the door of his cabin, he looked like the picture of a young scholar preparing to go take the imperial examinations. As soon as Chen Yueshan looked over, she saw him, and their gazes met.

At that point, Chen Yueshan’s jaw dropped, and she gasped. Without even thinking about it, she took a few steps back, and appeared to be on the verge of hurrying away down the corridor. However, the strangeness of the situation caused her to turn and walk back into her cabin, after which the door slammed shut behind her.

Doing his best to control his nervous breathing, Zhao Tianjiao hurried back into his own cabin. He seemed to be a lot less flustered than the day before, though, and was continuously reminding himself to remain calm.

“She doesn’t like playboys and doesn’t like scholars. Xiaochun was right. I really need to try out multiple angles here....”

On the third morning when Chen Yueshan walked out, she couldn’t help but look over in the direction of Zhao Tianjiao’s cabin, whereupon she instantly caught sight of him standing there....

This time, he was wearing a full suit of armor, with a greatsword strapped to his back. The way he bristled with a murderous aura made him seem like a matchless hero, a general ready to charge into the thick of battle.

Yet again, Chen Yueshan was completely taken aback. However, instead of being confused, she was more curious about what was happening, and even thought about asking Zhao Tianjiao what was going on. However, the strangeness of the situation made her a bit embarrassed to do that, and after a moment of hesitation, she went back into her room.

“Keep up the good work, Elder Brother Zhao!” Bai Xiaochun said excitedly via voice transmission. “You’ll succeed in no time. It seems that Elder Sister Yueshan has abandoned any plans to go up to the deck. That indicates that you’ve attracted her attention!”

Zhao Tianjiao was also getting excited, as he could sense that things were already a bit different between him and Chen Yueshan. Feeling more confident in Bai Xiaochun than ever, he hurried to prepare the following morning’s attire.

On the fourth day, Chen Yueshan hesitated in her cabin before finally deciding to go outside at the same time she usually did. This time when she opened the door, it wasn’t with the intention of going to the main deck, but rather, to see what crazy antics Zhao Tianjiao would get up to.

As soon as she emerged, she didn’t even have a chance to look over at his cabin before she realized that the corridor was filled with the dazzling twinkle and glow of pearls and gold. Today, Zhao Tianjiao looked like the epitome of a rich and powerful person.

He was festooned with countless spirit pearls and other treasures, including at least three rings of holding on every finger on both of his hands, for a total of more than thirty. His forearms were also completely filled with bracelets of holding.

He seemed proud and arrogant, as if he were the richest person in all the world. As soon as Chen Yueshan saw him like this, her eyes went wide, and she was convinced that something was wrong with Zhao Tianjiao.

Frowning, she hurried back into her room, her eyes sparkling a bit, and her heart pounding for some unknown reason as she thought back on the events of the past few days.

Crestfallen, Zhao Tianjiao paced back and for in his room. “I'm finished, Xiaochun. Finished! I told you that Junior Sister Yueshan wasn’t so lowbrow. I... I should never have dressed up like that.”

“Calm down,” Bai Xiaochun said sternly. “We want to give Chen Yueshan just enough rope to hang herself with. Only by dressing up in this fashion could you provide the perfect foil for tomorrow, and leave her truly shaken. Don’t worry, I’ve already decided what you’re going to wear. It's time to pull out our trump card!!”

“Trump card?” Shivering, Zhao Tianjiao looked at the copper mirror, his eyes shining brightly.

“That’s right. After the past few days of observation, I, Love Saint Bai Xiaochun, can draw upon my decades of experience to see through all of Elder Sister Yueshan’s defenses!” With that, he laughed loudly. However, inside, his confidence was beginning to waver a bit. So far, the plan had not quite gone as he had expected.

Based on his original assumptions, it should have only taken four days of dressing up to identify what Chen Yueshan liked. However, as of this moment, she was completely unreadable.

“It almost seems like she likes all of them, and at the same time, none of them....” After some more thought, he was convinced that it was time to deal the finishing blow.

The night passed quickly. Zhao Tianjiao was too nervous to do any meditation, and kept pacing around, thumping himself on the chest. When the appointed time came, he rushed out of his cabin under the careful observation of Bai Xiaochun and his Dao protectors.

Outside, he stamped his foot down and then began to remove his clothing.

One piece at a time fell to the ground until he was almost completely unclothed, revealing his strong, muscular body. He even pulled out a vial of medicinal oil that Bai Xiaochun had provided and spread it out on his skin, making him look even more athletic than before, as if he were on the verge of unleashing explosive and shocking power.

He had an almost perfect physique, with tight muscles bulging out everywhere, making him almost like the ultimate representation of manly attractiveness....

This was the trump card that Bai Xiaochun had prepared for Zhao Tianjiao!

Zhao Tianjiao wasn’t quite thinking straight at the moment, otherwise he would never have agreed to do something like this. However, he had already followed the plan up to this point, so there was no going back now. He could only grit his teeth as he placed all of his hopes on Bai Xiaochun’s plan.

He even began to practice a few poses that Bai Xiaochun had taught him.

Chen Yueshan’s door opened, and she cautiously stepped outside, looking slightly scared. Then she looked over in the direction of Zhao Tianjiao’s cabin, and saw him standing there bare-chested, shifting from one pose to another. At that point, her mind began to spin as she was shaken to the core.

After seeing all of Zhao Tianjiao’s strange transformations over the past few days, Chen Yueshan finally couldn’t hold back anymore. Overwhelmed by curiosity, she finally said, “Elder... Elder Brother Zhao, what... what are you doing...?”

To hear her speak was almost too much for Zhao Tianjiao to take. Thankfully, he had been practicing remaining calm, and thus, he stuck to the plan. Maintaining the pose he had just struck, he turned his head and looked deeply into Chen Yueshan’s eyes.

His eyes burned in a way that caused her heart to begin to pound, and suddenly, a flush spread out over her face.

Seemingly flustered, she suddenly rushed back into her cabin.

When Zhao Tianjiao saw that, he got so excited he couldn’t control himself anymore.

“I did it, Xiaochun! Hahaha! Did you see that? Not only did she talk to me, but she actually looked me up and down a few times! And she blushed!”

Back in his own cabin, Bai Xiaochun slapped his thigh and exclaimed, “Now that’s more like it! This indicates that Elder Sister Yueshan likes it when you look strong and enticing!”

He couldn’t be more excited that the plan he had designed and executed had finally made some major progress.

Moments later, Zhao Tianjiao was back in his cabin, pacing back and forth in excitement, his eyes shining brightly. “How could I have never noticed that Junior Sister Yueshan liked me when I looked like that? You’re awesome, Xiaochun! Hahaha!”

“Yeah, I know,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Like I said, this was a trump card designed by Love Saint Bai Xiaochun!” Clearing his throat, he continued in a stern tone, “However, it’s too early to get excited. This is only the first step. You’ve got Elder Sister Yueshan’s full attention, but now we need to solidify things. We need to make sure that she gets even more attracted to you than ever, and that your face is burned indelibly into her heart!”

Zhao Tianjiao immediately nodded. Looking very serious, he said, “What do you want me to do?!”

Bai Xiaochun rubbed the bridge of his nose as he sat there in thought. After a long moment, he looked up, and his eyes were shining even more brightly than before.

“Elder Brother Zhao, we can’t delay our next move. We get to work tomorrow....

“It’s been a few days since Elder Sister Yueshan has gone up to the main deck. If she doesn't see you out in the corridor tomorrow, then she’ll probably go outside. Therefore, you need to be there waiting for her, in a place where there are a lot of waves crashing against the side of the ship!

“Remember, you need to wear some really thin clothes! Once Elder Sister Yueshan appears, make sure some of the Heavenspan Sea waves splash on you and soak your clothes. That way, your strong, muscular body will again be completely revealed to Elder Sister Yueshan. That will make her even more attracted to you than ever!” Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and Chen Manyao all stood off to the side, strange expression on their faces as they listened in on the conversation.

After a moment of silence, Zhao Tianjiao said, “I’ll do whatever you say, Xiaochun!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0453 awe-chapter-454

Early the next morning, Bai Xiaochun rushed up to the main deck. The past few days, he had become completely wrapped up in helping Zhao Tianjiao pursue Chen Yueshan.

He took great pleasure in the sense of accomplishment it gave him, and as for his Dao protectors, they were also part of the whole effort, so it was with no little curiosity that they also headed up to the deck to see how events would play out.

It was early in the morning, and was somewhat of a stormy day. Great golden waves would occasionally slam into the ship, sending golden water spraying onto the deck.

Heavenspan Sea water could be very dangerous to ordinary cultivators, but top Chosen could endure it for quite some time.

Superstars such as Zhao Tianjiao wouldn’t be harmed in any short period of time. A bit of water splashing on someone like him wouldn’t corrode his skin at all, and he wouldn’t truly be harmed unless he was submerged in the water itself.

Time ticked by, and soon it was noon. As Bai Xiaochun waited, the wind and the waves began to die down. Not a cloud could be seen in the sky.

Bai Xiaochun was just starting to get nervous, and was even thinking of changing his plan, when Zhao Tianjiao finally appeared. He looked over at Bai Xiaochun and smiled, but then put a serious expression on as he strode confidently toward a place on the deck where the waves splashed especially vigorously. Standing there, he looked back in the direction of deck 2.

Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to transmit some reminders to Zhao Tianjiao, Chen Yueshan appeared on deck 2, strolling along, a slight frown on her face. Apparently, she was a bit disappointed at not having seen Zhao Tianjiao out in the corridor like she usually did.

As soon as she emerged into the open and headed to the main deck, she saw Zhao Tianjiao standing there at the prow of the ship, his eyes burning with passion. Instantly, their gazes locked.

By this point, even Bai Xiaochun could see that there was something different between Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan.

“Don’t miss this opportunity!!” he murmured, feeling shaken. If Zhao Tianjiao didn’t strike while the iron was hot, then all of their work so far would have been a waste. They might be able to continue on with other plans in the future, but they would never be able to recover their original momentum. Worst of all was that because of the sudden calm in the wind and the waves, there was no ocean spread, which caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to begin to pound with anxiety.

He wasn’t the only nervous one. Zhao Tianjiao’s anxiety was also mounting.

Seeing that the opportunity was about to slip through their fingers, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and then drew upon the full cultivation base power of his Gold Core, as well as his Undying Live Forever Technique and blood qi, to summon an enormous blood sword!

Simultaneously, he sprang into motion, shooting toward Zhao Tianjiao at high speed. Even as he flew through the air, the blood sword materialized, and he grabbed it, swinging toward the water outside of the ship.

“Don’t even think of trying to escape, you weird old fish!”

His blood sword screamed through the air, piercing into the sea water and, backed by the full force of Bai Xiaochun’s power, causing a huge wave to swell up.

As the wave smashed into the side of the ship, it turned into countless droplets, some of which splashed onto Bai Xiaochun, while the others drenched Zhao Tianjiao.

Zhao Tianjiao had already been wearing somewhat thin garments, and now that they were soaked with sea water, they became almost completely translucent. Furthermore, they stuck to his skin, revealing his perfect physique and bulging muscles to everyone gathered on the deck.

The glittering sunlight which fell from above made Zhao Tianjiao look almost like he was made from gold. The shocking sight was made even more unique because of the fact that Bai Xiaochun had also been soaked.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit thin, but handsome, and considering that the sun was also shining down on him, it made him look like an immortal. As he turned his head, his hair swung through the air, making him look completely beyond the ordinary.

Although he and Zhao Tianjiao looked completely different, both of them were the type that numerous female cultivators would swoon over, and in fact, all such young women on deck were staring at them.

Chen Yueshan’s heart began to pound as she looked Zhao Tianjiao up and down, her face flushing. Some of the other cultivators present were looking at Bai Xiaochun, curiosity rising up in their hearts.

Not only did Bai Xiaochun look almost otherworldly, but the fact that an attack backed by his late Core Formation cultivation base was powerful enough to cause waves to rise up on the surface of the Heavenspan Sea showed what incredible battle prowess he possessed.

Suddenly, people recalled the fight between Bai Xiaochun and the statue of Gongsun Wan’er, and thoughtful expressions appeared on their faces.

Excitement surged in Zhao Tianjiao’s heart as he saw Chen Yueshan looking at him, and noticed the flush on her cheeks. Before meeting Bai Xiaochun, nothing like this had ever happened before, and at the moment, he was filled with such boundless gratitude that he felt as if he had no choice but to give voice to it. However, that was when Bai Xiaochun grabbed him.

“You need to quit while you’re ahead,” hissed. “Did you forget what I told you before? Don’t get impatient!”

Zhao Tianjiao nodded, and the two of them quickly turned to leave. Many eyes followed them as they walked away, and numerous hearts were shaken at the realization that Bai Xiaochun and Zhao Tianjiao seemed to be quite close with each other.

“Lots of people want to be friends with Elder Brother Zhao, but he’s too lofty. You just can’t get close to him. How did Bai Xiaochun do it?!”

“Plus, you can tell from the look on his face that Elder Brother Zhao really trusts Bai Xiaochun....”

Even as murmured conversations broke out, Bai Xiaochun dragged Zhao Tianjiao back to his cabin. After changing clothes, they sat down across from each other to confer. Zhao Tianjiao was bursting with excitement; the events of the past few days had been too special and important for him to maintain his calm.

“Xiaochun, as of this point I'm absolutely sure that Junior Sister Yueshan is attracted to me, and not just perfunctorily either. So, what's the next step?” The look in his eye as he faced Bai Xiaochun was one of utter sincerity and anticipation.

“Don’t worry,” Bai Xiaochun said with a confident smile, “I’ll take care of everything.” Then his expression turned somber. “Getting her attracted to you is just the first step. We’ll definitely get her to fall in love with you as well. However, don’t get overconfident! A good start doesn’t necessarily guarantee the perfect outcome. There are a lot of important things left to do, and you have a long way to go to reach your goal. Are you ready for that, Elder Brother Zhao?!”

“I’ll do whatever you say, Xiaochun!” Zhao Tianjiao said, looking equally as somber.

Bai Xiaochun nodded in satisfaction.

“Remember what I said about a sense of security? That’s the most important thing to think about right now. You have to make sure that you give Elder Sister Yueshan that sense of security. When she is in danger, you have to thrust yourself in harm’s way, perhaps even being injured, to keep her safe.”

Zhao Tianjiao frowned thoughtfully “A sense of security? Considering Junior Sister Yueshan’s cultivation base and status, there isn’t much on this ship that could make her feel insecure.”

Apparently angered that Zhao Tianjiao was falling short of expectations, Bai Xiaochun slapped the table and said, “Not much that could make her feel insecure? Have you forgotten about that unclean thing?

“Listen, you can secretly set up a spell formation just outside Elder Sister Yueshan’s cabin door. Then when that unclean thing shows up again, it will get trapped, and you can be the first person to jump out and attack it. Not only will that show how mighty you are, but it will also show that you will always be there to protect Elder Sister Yueshan. With you there, she will definitely have a sense of security.”

Zhao Tianjiao apparently wasn’t very impressed by this plan. “I can easily set up a spell formation, but... I can’t control when the unclean thing shows up. What happens if it never comes back, or never goes near Junior Sister Yueshan’s cabin?”

Bai Xiaochun felt a headache coming on. Recently, he had come to find that although Zhao Tianjiao was cold and proud, he was not very flexible, and always tended to think of things one way. “Come on, don’t be stupid,” he said. “You’re the number one Chosen in the sect, right? Don’t tell me you don’t have some confidantes? Have your confidantes dress up like the unclean thing. Then you show up, an invincible knight in shining armor there to save the princess.

“Also,” he continued, “you need to remember the right thing to say in the critical moment. You say, *Junior Sister Yueshan,* *as long as I'm around, I’ll never let anyone harm a hair on your head!*”

Zhao Tianjiao thought it sounded a bit corny, and initially hesitated. However, considering how much he trusted Bai Xiaochun’s sense of judgment, he finally nodded. Producing a jade slip, he sent a message to summon his followers.

Before long, eight of his followers showed up at Bai Xiaochun’s cabin, one after the other. All of them clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun and Zhao Tianjiao, expressions of utter respect on their faces as they wondered why they had been called.

“Xiaochun, which ones do you think would do best?” Zhao Tianjiao asked.

Bai Xiaochun looked the group over. Eventually, his eyes came to fall upon the two cultivators from the Hall of Devil Slayers on Sky Quarter Rainbow, the same ones who had offended him not too long ago. Even as they shivered, he said, “These two Junior Brothers look familiar, how about them?”

The two followers already had bad feelings about what was to come.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0454 awe-chapter-455

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had already made his choice, Zhao Tianjiao dismissed the others, then turned to look at the two who had been selected.

“This is one of the most important things in my entire life,” he said to them, “and it all depends on you two!”

The two cultivators immediately got nervous, and at the same time, felt ill premonitions about what was to come. They exchanged a quick glance, but knowing that they had no choice in the matter, they both nodded and asked what they were supposed to do.

After Zhao Tianjiao explained everything, the followers’ eyes turned blank with shock. Upon hearing that they were to dress up as villains and then allow Zhao Tianjiao to beat them up, they couldn’t help but grumble inwardly at how Bai Xiaochun nursed his grudges. How could he still be interested in getting revenge over a minor event from so long ago? However, Zhao Tianjiao was obviously very serious about the matter, and they were his followers, so they had no choice but to agree.

Clasping hands, Zhao Tianjiao bowed and said, “Don’t worry. When I attack you, it will look quite fierce, but I won’t hit you very hard. You’ll have plenty of time to just run away.”

The two followers gritted their teeth as they glanced furtively at Bai Xiaochun. By this point, they had both determined to never again do anything to provoke him; it was truly frightening how he never let anything go, and wreaked his revenge in the most complicated ways....

Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, all smiles. Inwardly, he was snorting coldly; the truth was that he really had nursed that grudge, and when he thought about how one of these cultivators had asked for 1,000,000 merit points to help him, and the other had told him to wait for five years, he couldn't help but feel angry.

After going over the plan several times, the two followers left miserably. As for Zhao Tianjiao, he was filled with anticipation. According to Bai Xiaochun, they couldn't delay at all, and would carry out the plan that very night. Upon success, Zhao Tianjiao would have made significant progress in getting closer to Chen Yueshan.

“It will definitely work!” Zhao Tianjiao said to himself as he left to get ready.

As the sky grew dark outside, Zhao Tianjiao set up a whole series of spell formations outside of Chen Yueshan's cabin, using all the power of his cultivation base to do so.

Considering how he truly loved Chen Yueshan, it didn't matter that this was all part of an act; he was meticulous in how he set up the spell formations, not holding anything back. He even used some special materials to make the spell formations especially effective against illusory spirit entities.

Before long, it was the dead of night. Master God-Diviner and the other Dao protectors wanted to come along to watch, but having so many people present would attract too much attention, so the only person Zhao Tianjiao brought along to deck 2 was Bai Xiaochun.

“I have to be here,” Bai Xiaochun said quietly. “That's the only way for me to direct things properly. Tonight is too important to leave things up to chance!” Zhao Tianjiao was fully convinced. Without Bai Xiaochun here, he wouldn't have the faintest idea what to do.

Therefore, he led Bai Xiaochun to a corner with a clear vantage point of the entire corridor, and then used a deva-level magical device to cloak him in invisibility. Finally, he took a deep breath and stood there to wait for the next phase of the plan.

Time passed, and the two of them remained in place, unspeaking. As the moments ticked by, Zhao Tianjiao got more nervous, as did Bai Xiaochun. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was nervous about seeing his meticulously scripted plan come to life.

“The time has come for Love Saint Bai Xiaochun to shine!” he murmured to himself, eyes glittering. They waited in silence for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, after which two shadowy figures suddenly appeared, dressed in voluminous black robes with deep hoods that covered their faces. Faint mist surrounded them, making them seem almost like illusory spirit creatures.

Of course, these were Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers, and considering that their faces were covered, it was impossible to see the bitter looks on them. Gritting their teeth, they headed at full speed toward Chen Yueshan’s cabin.

As they approached, they did as they had been instructed by Bai Xiaochun, and emitted bizarre shrieking noises that echoed out in all directions.

The next part of the plan was for Zhao Tianjiao to leap out with a roar, looking like he would fight to the death rather than allow Chen Yueshan to be hurt.

But then, even as the two followers began to shriek, and Zhao Tianjiao tensed in preparation to take action, his expression turning into one of rage...

There was an unexpected turn of events.

All of a sudden, the door to Chen Yueshan’s cabin was violently kicked open from inside.

Then, Chen Yueshan herself appeared, her eyes flashing with bluish-green light as she transformed into a series of afterimages. Right hand flashing with an incantation gesture, she sent a gale force wind surging out toward one of Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers.

Blood sprayed out of the young man's mouth, and he staggered backward as if he had been struck by a mountain. At the same time, Chen Yueshan snorted coldly and took a step forward to appear in front of the other of the two followers. Clenching her right hand into a fist, she unleashed a powerful and even somewhat manly punch.

Cracking sounds reached Bai Xiaochun’s ears, whose eyes went wide as he watched the two cultivators being beaten backward by the shocking power of Chen Yueshan’s fleshly body, blood spraying out of their mouths.

Gasping, he said, “This... this....”

Zhao Tianjiao was equally struck mute; things were not playing out how Bai Xiaochun had planned, and as of this moment, he had absolutely no idea what he should do.

Chen Yueshan’s eyes were flickering with killing intent; she had a profound cultivation base, and although she had pretended to not pay much attention to Ji Fang’s death, the truth was that from that moment on, she had been extra vigilant. Zhao Tianjiao had been able to get close to her cabin undetected because of his own incredible cultivation base, but as soon as his two followers got close, she noticed them.

Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers were already soaked with blood, and were shedding so many tears of sorrow that they could form a new Heavenspan Sea....

From what the two of them could tell, if the fight went on much longer, they would both be killed. Therefore, even as Chen Yueshan was about to press the attack, the two of them both threw back their hoods to reveal their faces.

“Elder Sister, hear me out....”

“Don’t hit me, Elder Sister....”

Even as the words escaped their lips, they couldn’t help look over at Zhao Tianjiao, who was standing there with his jaw hanging open.

The lamentations shining within the eyes of the followers couldn’t have been more clear. You said it was just an act.... You said it would only be fake blows.... You said we would have plenty of time to run away....

Eyes flashing, Chen Yueshan snorted and looked in Zhao Tianjiao’s direction.

Beads of sweat were running down Zhao Tianjiao’s forehead, and his heart was pounding wildly with alarm. Without even thinking about it, he turned to look at the place where Bai Xiaochun was hiding in the cloak of invisibility. Bai Xiaochun’s heart was also pounding; never could he have imagined that the seemingly soft and gentle Elder Sister Yueshan, who so often had blushed at the sight of Zhao Tianjiao, would be so explosively violent and terrifyingly fierce.

Most nerve-wracking of all was the thought of what would happen if Chen Yueshan found out that he had been directing Zhao Tianjiao in his attempt to seduce her. Would she fly into a rage and vent her explosive temper on him...?

Bracing himself, Zhao Tianjiao said, “Junior Sister, I--”

However, before he could continue with any sort of explanation, a bloodcurdling scream echoed out from deck 3, a scream filled with the utmost terror and indescribable fear. Everyone who heard it was immediately shaken.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, Zhao Tianjiao’s pupils constricted, and Chen Yueshan looked similarly serious. Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers gasped.

Before any of them could react, a white, shadowy figure flew up from deck 3 to deck 2.

It was impossible to see clearly, but it had a freezing aura that spread out in all directions, causing ice to build up on everything, and causing everyone’ souls to suddenly feel as if they might turn to ice.

On this very night, the unclean thing... chose to make a comeback!!

As soon as that white shadow appeared, Zhao Tianjiao, being the one with the highest cultivation base among the group, quickly took action. He was not acting in the heroic way that Bai Xiaochun had asked him to, but instead, was immeasurably grim. A murderous aura burst out from him, making him look like a god of death as he strode toward the white shadow.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Zhao Tianjiao attacked with incredible power. Lightning bolts appeared, each thrumming with incredible power. Such lightning bolts would cause even Nascent Soul cultivators to frown, and as they converged onto Zhao Tianjiao’s person, they emitted heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power.

Before the white shadow could reach Chen Yueshan, Zhao Tianjiao slammed into it, causing a huge boom to echo out!

Bai Xiaochun gasped. He had been aware that Zhao Tianjiao was strong enough to kill Nascent Soul experts, but to see him in action personally was quite a different experience.

“Elder Brother Zhao, I can't believe you’re so strong!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0455 awe-chapter-456

Even as Bai Xiaochun looked over, Zhao Tianjiao threw his head back and roared, performing a double-handed incantation that caused the countless lightning bolts to converge on his palms in the form of a pair of one-meter-wide spheres.

Although the lightning started out as silver, in the blink of an eye, it turned golden, and then shot directly toward the white shadow.

“Be destroyed!” Zhao Tianjiao shouted, his energy surging in such shocking fashion that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp at the sight.

“So badass!” Bai Xiaochun thought, completely shaken. The dazzling balls of lightning were blindingly bright, and pulsed with a terrifying power that was incredibly astonishing.

The white shadow was difficult to make out clearly, as if it weren’t even corporal, but rather, a glob of light. But suddenly, it twisted and distorted, transforming into a white hand that shot forth toward Zhao Tianjiao with incredible speed.

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out into the dark of night, filling the entire ship, which was when Bai Xiaochun realized that Zhao Tianjiao’s goal was actually to arouse everyone on board. If he could get more people to come and join the fight, they could pool their power to eradicate the white shadow once and for all.

However, Zhao Tianjiao had underestimated the power of the white shadow. When the huge hand came into contact with the balls of lightning, a huge boom rang out, and blood sprayed out of Zhao Tianjiao’s mouth as his lightning spheres collapsed into pieces.

Bai Xiaochun had never seen lightning destroyed like this before; it transformed into countless sparks which scattered around in all directions, accompanied by crackling, pitter-patter sounds as it hit the walls of the corridor.

The white shadow was powerful, but was still shaken by Zhao Tianjiao’s full-power attack, which shoved it backward a few meters, and even caused it to dim a bit. But then, it shivered, splitting up into nine different parts that all shot toward Zhao Tianjiao, apparently intent on either possessing or consuming him.

Simultaneously, a frigid coldness spread out from the shadow that seemed capable of freezing the soul.

When Chen Yueshan saw the danger Zhao Tianjiao was in, her face fell, and she leapt forward, right hand clenched into a fist that rocketed toward the incoming white shadows. Simultaneously, her left hand flashed in an incantation gesture, causing bursts of moonlight to gather around her, merging together into the image of a full moon.

Bizarre light streamed out from the moon which, under the direction of another incantation gesture, poured into Chen Yueshan herself as she shot toward the white shadows.

Shockingly, as she passed along, the power of Time erupted out, as though the moonlight itself were causing everything it touched to age!

Zhao Tianjiao's eyes were burning with anger in this critical moment of danger. Taking a deep breath, he suddenly shoved his hands out in front of him, causing thunderclaps to echo out as a whole series of golden balls of lightning began to build up around him.

However, things weren't over yet. Zhao Tianjiao's two followers also joined in the fight, gritting their teeth as they bravely leapt toward the seemingly illusory white shadows.

As everyone joined forces in the fight, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth off to the side. He knew that, considering everyone was working together, if he didn't join in, he would never have the face to appear in front of Zhao Tianjiao and the others later on. Roaring, he emerged from his cloak of invisibility and charged toward the white shadows.

In his anxiety, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but wonder why no one else had shown up to help. However, the truth was that from the moment the white shadow had appeared up until now, only about ten breaths of time had passed.

Even as everyone joined forces, the nine separate white shadows which had just sprang into motion changed directions. Two of them shot toward Zhao Tianjiao's followers, two headed toward Chen Yueshan, two headed toward Bai Xiaochun, and the remaining three continued toward Zhao Tianjiao.

More rumbling sounds echoed out. The white shadows slammed into the two followers, causing blood to spray out of their mouths as they staggered backward, trembling. Not only were their lips turning purple, but the hair all over their body was turning white. However, what was most shocking of all to Bai Xiaochun was that their eyes were turning blank, as if their souls were flickering on the verge of being extinguished.

Chen Yueshan also noticed that, and let out a furious shout. At the same time, her Moon Time Disk slammed into the two white shadows, causing a boom to ring out, and leaving Chen Yueshan shuddering in place. Cracks even spread out across the floor beneath her feet. At the same time, numerous frigid ice spikes appeared all around her, blocking her path and making it impossible for her to move. Blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth as she shouted, “Watch out, Elder Brother Zhao! It’s a soul attack!!”

Simultaneously, she performed numerous incantation gestures and pressed her finger down on various acupoints to prevent her injuries from worsening.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he closed in on the two white shadows, performing an incantation gesture with his right hand to unleash the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. Instantly, Frigid Master power spread out in all directions; he was fighting cold with cold!

As rumbling sound spread out, Bai Xiaochun trembled visibly; he was currently in the late Gold Core stage, making his frigid qi incredibly shocking. By this point, he would even be able to cause ice to build up on Heavenspan River water. However, the frigid coldness being utilized by the white shadows was different than his own, and also different than the type he remembered the statue of Gongsun Wan’er using. This was a type of coldness that could cause the soul to fall into a deep slumber!

It truly was... a soul attack!

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he sensed the frigid qi pouring into him and rushing toward his head!

In that moment of crisis, he let out a powerful roar, simultaneously drawing upon his Undying Live Forever Technique as he lifted his left foot up and then slammed it down into the ground!

What he was unleashing was not incredible fleshly body power, but rather... the Undying Hex!

Furthermore, he wasn’t using the Undying Hex on his opponent, but rather, himself!

Cracking sounds echoed out as rifts spread out across the surface of his skin, apparently coming from the inside of his body to the outside. In the blink of an eye, they had completely covered him, and also prevented the frigid qi from invading his soul.

Everything happened so quickly that Bai Xiaochun really had no time to react; everything he was doing came from instinct alone, even his use of the Undying Hex.

Battle instinct was something that Bai Xiaochun had learned about back in the Luochen Mountains. Perhaps it was his terror regarding death, or his intense obsession with being able to live forever, but either way, in moments of crisis such as this, his instincts were more on point than ever.

As the effects of his Undying Hex spread, Bai Xiaochun found that the invading frigid qi was blocked outside of him, and what was inside of him was being forced out.

Even as Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, his face suddenly twitched as he looked over at Zhao Tianjiao, who was currently under attack by three white shadows. The shadows easily destroyed all of the spheres of lightning that Zhao Tianjiao had unleashed, and then formed together into a white sword that stabbed toward his forehead.

Zhao Tianjiao’s face fell as, at the same time, the ground beneath his feet began to freeze up. In that moment of ultimate danger, Bai Xiaochun opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, causing control power to erupt out toward the flying sword.

“Stop right there!!” he shouted as violet light streamed out from his third eye, backed by his late Gold Core stage cultivation base. The light then wrapped around the white sword, which lurched to a stop right in front of Zhao Tianjiao.

That slight pause was the opportunity Zhao Tianjiao needed. Before, he had been sure that he wouldn’t be able to avoid the blow, and had planned to let the sword stab his forehead, and then take advantage of the moment in which his opponent attacked his soul to use some other method to fight back. Although he had been confident in being able to succeed, it still would have been a dangerous move. But now that Bai Xiaochun was helping him, it was without the slightest hesitation that he took action, causing his eyes to become completely replaced by flickering, golden lightning!

“Lightning Detonation!” he roared. Instantly blinding lightning erupted from his eyes, spreading out in all directions. The white sword instantly began to fall to pieces. Then it retreated, and all of the other white shadows flew toward it, taking a human shape that seemed to look deeply at Zhao Tianjiao and then Bai Xiaochun before fading away.

It almost seemed as if it could come and go as it pleased!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0456 awe-chapter-457

After the white shadow vanished, Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers coughed up more mouthfuls of blood. However, because the source of the frigid qi was gone, they were finally able to suppress it, leaving them as ashen-faced as death and looking around with lingering fear.

Both of them felt overwhelmed with grief at how unlucky they were. First, they were attacked by Chen Yueshan, only to be surprised by an actual spirit creature, whereupon they nearly lost their lives.

Of course, the reason for it all was Bai Xiaochun, and as of this moment, they yet again swore to themselves that they would never do anything to provoke him. And in fact, they were already trying to think of ways to curry his favor. After all, if they got swept up in any more of Bai Xiaochun’s sudden brainstorms, they might end up getting killed before they even got to the Wildlands.

As for Chen Yueshan, after looking around to confirm that the white shadow was gone, and the ice spikes surrounding her were fading away, she turned her attention to Zhao Tianjiao.

Zhao Tianjiao was sweating and gasping for breath. Ever since reaching the mid Gold Core stage, it had been rare for him to encounter anyone who was a match for him in a fight. And then he reached the great circle of the Gold Core stage, after which the only opponents who could cause problems for him were Nascent Soul experts. As such, he had come to be quite confident in his abilities.

But at the moment, his heart was pounding with fear. From what he could tell, the cultivation base power unleashed by that white shadow was definitely less than the Nascent Soul stage!

“It had battle prowess comparable to the great circle of Core Formation. And yet it was so formidable that not even Nascent Soul experts could match up to it!” Breathing deeply, Zhao Tianjiao looked around the area and realized that, up to this point, they were still alone. No one had come to investigate the sounds of battle. Apparently, that white shadow had sealed down the entire area just before the fighting broke out.

Now that the shadow was gone, though, the sealing had been removed.

As Zhao Tianjiao got his breathing under control, he prepared to go track down the white shadow. As for Chen Yueshan, she moved to follow.

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochun was wiping the sweat from his brow and pondering how he was willing to go the extra mile for Zhao Tianjiao, when suddenly he realized that Zhao Tianjiao seemed to want to go chase after the shadow. Bai Xiaochun immediately cleared his throat loudly.

When Zhao Tianjiao didn’t notice, Bai Xiaochun’s anger spiked, and he cleared his throat even louder.

Thankfully, Zhao Tianjiao hadn’t reached the point of being completely beyond hope. After hearing Bai Xiaochun clear his throat, he stopped in place, suddenly remembering that the point of tonight’s mission wasn’t the spirit entity, but rather, to make sure that Chen Yueshan felt a sense of security.

Suddenly, his heart swelled with gratitude for all the help Bai Xiaochun had given him. Glancing over at him, he couldn’t help but think that Bai Xiaochun really was a true friend. Putting a somber expression on his face, he abandoned any thoughts of chasing after the white shadow, and instead held his arm out to prevent Chen Yueshan from proceeding any further.

“Junior Sister Yueshan,” he said calmly, “there’s no need to chase after it. Since the spirit entity decided to flee, I doubt it can be tracked down any time soon. If we go running off into the night, it could easily cut us down one by one.”

“If only father were back!” Chen Yueshan said through gritted teeth, both fear and anger visible in her eyes. “Then that damned spirit would definitely have been destroyed in body and soul!”

Based on what she knew of her own battle prowess, if she had been alone just now, she would have been no match for the white shadow. Without Zhao Tianjiao there, she might have met a similar fate as Ji Fang.

The mere thought of Ji Fang’s grisly death left Chen Yueshan’s heart pounding with fear.

“Many thanks, Elder Brother Zhao,” she said softly.

Zhao Tianjiao’s heart leapt with excitement, but he didn’t let it show on his face. Turning to Chen Yueshan, he spoke in the deep voice that Bai Xiaochun had instructed him to use, making sure it was coupled with a look of complete sincerity. “Junior Sister Yueshan, as long as I'm around, I won’t let you get hurt in any way!”

Clearly, Zhao Tianjiao was willing to brave countless spears and swords, even seas of flame for Chen Yueshan’s sake. He would face countless dangers, and go through hell and high water without even a single frown! He would die for her without regret!

His words, the expression on his face, the way that he had fought heroically against the white shadow, and most especially the sincerity in his eyes, made him seem to thrum with both veins of steel and tender sentiments. When he looked into Chen Yueshan's eyes as he spoke, it was like molten lava pouring into her heart.

Chen Yueshan instantly began to breathe more rapidly, and her heart started racing as wildly as a frightened baby deer. The sensation she got from looking at Zhao Tianjiao made her almost dizzy, and as she heard his words ringing in her ears, and saw him standing there like an indomitable hero, she thought back to everything they had experienced just now, and for some unknown reason, suddenly felt a strong sense of security.

Gradually, her face began to flush, and she bowed her head, her mind blank, as if she wasn't even sure of what she was thinking.

Zhao Tianjiao's two followers gasped, and their faces went pale. Although they had already recovered from being injured, when they saw Chen Yueshan's expression change, they couldn't help but think back to the instructions Bai Xiaochun had given earlier, and all of a sudden, he became more godlike to them than ever.

“I can't believe it actually worked!” the first one thought.

“Heavens!” thought the other. “Elder Sister Chen's affections have clearly been aroused!”

The two followers exchanged a shocked look.

Zhao Tianjiao was already going wild with excitement, and had to struggle to keep himself under control. He almost couldn’t restrain himself from throwing his head back and roaring to the sky. As of this moment, everything he had done was worth it, and his gratitude toward Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be greater. At the moment, he wanted to reach out and embrace Chen Yueshan, but then he hesitated, nervous about the fact that he didn’t know what to do next. He quickly looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun immediately sighed inwardly. “How can Zhao Tianjiao be so dense?” he thought. “Even at this point he still has to ask me what to do? What a headache....”

For a moment, he simply rubbed his forehead and thought about how much of a good person he was.

Then he dropped his hand, and at that point, his expression was one of utter anxiety. Leaping forward toward Zhao Tianjiao, he suddenly shouted, “Elder Brother Zhao, you’re... you’re injured! Heavens! It looks bad. Elder Brother Zhao, are you alright?!”

Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun’s voice pierced into Chen Yueshan’s daze, and she looked over with concern written on her face.

Zhao Tianjiao turned to Bai Xiaochun, shocked, and was about to say that he wasn’t hurt at all, when Bai Xiaochun suddenly reached out to support him by the elbow, and simultaneously jabbed him hard in the back.

Zhao Tianjiao finally realized what was going on. Letting out a miserable groan, he caused his face to drain of blood and then said, “I'm hurt... I'm hurt, and it’s bad!”

He suddenly lurched to the side as if he might fall over.

Chen Yueshan was in a bit of a daze, but when she saw what was happening, she leaped forward to support Zhao Tianjiao by the other elbow. This time, Zhao Tianjiao didn’t act dense at all, and managed to fall into her arms.

“Junior Sister Yueshan, it doesn’t matter if I'm injured, I still won’t leave your side. I'm staying right here to protect you!”

Chen Yueshan’s flush deepened, and her heart quivered. Not bothering to check whether he was really injured or not, she cast a glare at Bai Xiaochun and then began to lead Zhao Tianjiao in the direction of her cabin.

Zhao Tianjiao leaned up against her, and as he passed Bai Xiaochun, looked over and winked. By this point, his admiration for Bai Xiaochun was like the crashing of the waves of the Heavenspan Sea, ceaseless and unending....

Bai Xiaochun chuckled inwardly as he watched Chen Yueshan and Zhao Tianjiao head into her cabin. As of this moment, he felt so pleased with himself that he could hardly stand it. Without even thinking about it, he stuck his chin up, waved his sleeve, and assumed the pose of a lonely hero.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun... ah, never mind. No reducing anything to ashes today.” After all, it was a wonderful day for Zhao Tianjiao. Motioning to Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers to come along, he turned to leave deck 2.

The two followers didn’t dare to ignore Bai Xiaochun’s gesture, and immediately followed along.

Upon returning to deck 3, which was the origin of the original scream that had preceded the arrival of the white shadow, Bai Xiaochun mingled with the crowd to see if he could figure out what had happened. Soon, he found that the victim was one of the handful of chosen whose cabins were on deck 3.

His happy mood quickly dissipated, to be replaced with nervousness. He quickly hurried back to his own cabin, although even after closing the door, he still felt unsettled.

“Everyone who has died so far has been from deck 3. Plus, I actually attacked that white shadow just now. What if it comes back for revenge…?” The more he thought about the situation, the more anxious he got.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0457 awe-chapter-458

Bai Xiaochun felt jittery all the way until late in the night, until he eventually called over Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and even Chen Manyao to have a little chat.

Eventually, Chen Manyao and Song Que closed their eyes to meditate, leaving only Master God-Diviner and Bai Xiaochun awake to give each other cultivation advice. Whenever Bai Xiaochun started to brag about something, Master God-Diviner would respond very enthusiastically, which made Bai Xiaochun feel wonderful. Eventually, he even started to explain some of the tips and tricks he'd learned from imposter Nightcrypt.

Previously, Bai Xiaochun had assumed that the death of the cultivator the previous night would lead to another situation like before, in which a long period of time went before tragedy struck again. However, it was only the next evening when another scream ripped through the night, causing Bai Xiaochun to nearly leap up into the air in fear.

“What was that!?” he shouted. Master God-Diviner, Song Que and Chen Manyao were all alarmed, but went out nonetheless to find out what had happened. Soon, they learned that one of the more than fifty chosen assigned to deck 4 had been completely drained of blood during the night. Bai Xiaochun’s fear continued to mount.

Things weren’t over yet. Over the course of the next few days, the deaths continued to occur on deck 4, and with greater frequency. After a half a month had gone by, the nightly screams and deaths had all of the cultivators onboard shaking with fear.

Based on the look of the corpses after they were discovered, everyone came to the conclusion that the killer had incredible battle prowess that Core Formation cultivators were defenseless against.

Terror gripped the hearts of all aboard. As for Bai Xiaochun, in his anxiety, he set up more and more spell formations both inside and outside of his cabin.

He wasn’t the only one to do that. No one on deck 4 dared to sleep alone anymore, and huddled together in groups of between three to five. After that, the deaths seemed to slow down.

A few more days went by, and although no one died, the shadow of dread still loomed large, and Bai Xiaochun continued to fear that the white shadow he had fought would come back for revenge. Considering that there seemed to be safety in numbers, he finally asked for help from Gongsun Wan’er....

He told her that if she came to his room, everyone from the River-Defying Sect would be in one place, ready to brave the crisis together.

Upon receiving his invitation, a strange look appeared on Gongsun Wan’er’s face. Covering a smile with her hand, she followed him back to his room to join the group.

When everyone was assembled, Bai Xiaochun felt a little better.

“With me and Wan’er here, and Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and Chen Manyao to back us up, even if that white shadow shows up, we’ll definitely be able to break free and cry for help.” Seven days later, not a single additional death had occurred. Bai Xiaochun was finally starting to relax, and once again began to think back to everything which had occurred with Zhao Tianjiao.

That was actually just about the time that Zhao Tianjiao actually came to see Bai Xiaochun, his face a bit flush and clearly in high spirits. A smile covered his face, as if he had just experienced some wonderful, life-changing event.

“Xiaochun, I think things are pretty much taken care of. Junior Sister Yueshan definitely doesn’t look at me like she used to. Hahaha!” Upon looking around the room, Zhao Tianjiao realized that there was a new addition to the group, that being Gongsun Wan’er.

He had never paid much attention to Gongsun Wan’er before, but gave her a nod as he walked in and sat down cross-legged in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“Okay, Xiaochun,” he continued excitedly, “what do we do now? What’s the next step? Am I supposed to reveal my true feelings to Junior Sister Yueshan?”

Zhao Tianjiao had never felt more blessed than he had during the past few days. He had visited Chen Yueshan every day in her cabin, where the two of them would sit down and spend the whole day chatting. In fact, they had spoken more to each other in the past few days than they had in the past ten years combined.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and then cast a very serious look at Zhao Tianjiao, complete with a bit of a glare. “What happened? Did a few days of happiness knock all the sense out of you?!

“Let me ask you, Elder Brother Zhao, are you looking for a momentary burst of youthful passion, or a love that will last as long as the world itself?!” Bai Xiaochun’s words hit Zhao

Tianjiao like a club to the face. Suddenly, his heart trembled, and a serious expression overtook his face.

“I don’t want youthful passion!” he said earnestly. “I want love that will last as long as the world!”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression softened, and it was with heartfelt sincerity that he continued, “Elder Brother Zhao....

“I know that you want to make Elder Sister Yueshan your Daoist partner as quickly as possible. But that’s the wrong way to look at it. Have you forgotten the Win Charm that I taught you, and how you have to keep calm!?

“I already told you before, once you get her attention and give her a sense of security, the next thing to do isn’t to push things forward, it's to back off!

“You need to make yourself seem mysterious. You need to advance things by backing away! Make Elder Sister Yueshan incapable of resisting the urge to get near you. Leave her hanging, and make her take the initiative to reach out to you!

“You have to remember this point! Keep your distance, and don’t seem too excited. Accept her a little bit at a time, that’s all. Only then, after enough time has passed, can you provide her with a hard-earned reward!” Bai Xiaochun explained things meticulously, but couldn’t prevent his words from revealing how disappointed he was that Zhao Tianjiao hadn’t learned his lesson already.

As for Zhao Tianjiao, he was fully persuaded, and after Bai Xiaochun was done speaking, he gritted his teeth and said, “Alright, I’ll do whatever you say!”

Filled with determination, he rose to his feet and left.

Over the following several days, Zhao Tianjiao did exactly as Bai Xiaochun had asked him to do. He started to back off from Chen Yueshan a bit, even disappearing for days at a time. When he did show up, he acted a bit coldly.

Occasionally, when Bai Xiaochun directed him to, he would revert to giving her enthusiastic attention.

Sometimes he was distant, sometimes he got close to her. At first Chen Yueshan was confused by this, but soon, she started to get angry.

Eventually, her confusion and anger combined, and she came to the conclusion that something was wrong. After that, she decided that she had to figure out exactly what was going on, and why Zhao Tianjiao seemed so different than she remembered.

At that point, she started to seek him out with the hopes of figuring out exactly why they had been going back and forth as if fighting....

The process went on for about a month, during which time, the mysterious deaths aboard the ship resumed. Yet again, they occurred on deck 4, where some of the cultivators had stopped sticking together in groups, and had gone off on their own. It was those solitary cultivators who ended up being killed.

Once the screams and the corpses returned, fear yet again rose up in the hearts of everyone onboard. As the death toll rose, terror mounted to an almost unbearable degree.

No matter what types of investigations were carried out, no one could come up with any clues whatsoever. Furthermore, suspicions were running high, and few people trusted each other. Plus, it soon reached the point where two or three people were dying at a time....

Most shocking was one instance when a total of thirteen people died, all of their blood drained away until they were nothing more than desiccated corpses. Everyone onboard was shaken to the core.

Bai Xiaochun was completely terrified at how dangerous this ship was, and couldn’t stop hoping that the three-eyed Chen Hefan would return....

“If this keeps up, there won’t be anyone left to reach the Wildlands!” Scowling on the verge of tears, he even called Zhao Tianjiao and his two familiar followers over to his room, hoping to have safety in numbers.

Those two followers were also scared out of their minds, fearful of the white shadow coming to exact vengeance. They had been spending their days shaking in their boots, so when Bai Xiaochun asked for them to join him, they were actually elated, and couldn’t help but rejoice at how wonderfully he was treating them. They immediately began to fawn over him and seek favor, offering to do anything he wished without the slightest complaint.

A few more days went by. By this point, the voyage was more than half over, and Zhao Tianjiao was reaching his breaking point. He felt like he was boiling inside; after all, he clearly loved Chen Yueshan dearly, and yet wasn’t able to get close to her.

As for Chen Yueshan, she persistently tried to get to the bottom of the strange situation. Zhao Tianjiao very much wanted to give voice to his true feelings, but whenever he reminded himself of Bai Xiaochun’s plans, he swallowed his words.

Even still, he eventually couldn’t take it anymore. One evening, he returned to Bai Xiaochun’s cabin to find his own followers next to the reclining Bai Xiaochun, massaging his shoulders and legs. One of them was even quietly asking Bai Xiaochun if the massage was comfortable.

Zhao Tianjiao looked haggard and thin as he stared at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Xiaochun, I can’t take it anymore. I can't count how many times I’ve wanted to reveal my true feelings. If things keep going like this, I don't see how I can be with Junior Sister Yueshan for as long as the world exists.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0458 awe-chapter-459

Bai Xiaochun was currently staring in shock at Zhao Tianjiao. His recent days had been spent in abject fear as he thought nonstop about how to defend himself if the white shadow returned. Having not talked with Zhao Tianjiao about the matter for some time, he'd almost forgotten about the whole situation.

Zhao Tianjiao’s words immediately jolted him out of his reverie. Feeling guilty, he forced a smile onto his face and made a show of calculating some things on his fingers. Then he slapped his thigh.

“Perfect timing!” he said loudly. “Elder Brother Zhao, tomorrow at noon you will confess your love to Elder Sister Yueshan. This is the final move. It won’t be long now before you can take that beautiful woman in your arms and never let her go for the rest of your life!”

Zhao Tianjiao seemed instantly enlivened, and began to pace back and forth in the room, his expression that of both excitement and anxiety. Hands clenched into fists, he seemed to be completely wrapped up in thinking about what was going to happen.

At one point, he suddenly stopped in place. “What happens if she rejects me?” he asked nervously. “What then?”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. “Considering Love Saint Bai Xiaochun’s decades of experience dominating the field of love, I can tell you the main reason why declarations of love tend to fail. They’re too rushed!

“But you’re different,” he continued, gesturing grandly. “You've spent a lot of time with Elder Sister Yueshan, and therefore, what you need to worry about most is your wording. Fear not. I, Bai Xiaochun, am extremely adept at such things, and can definitely provide you with some help!”

Zhao Tianjiao was completely convinced of Bai Xiaochun’s skills, and therefore, would do anything he said. As far as he was concerned, with Bai Xiaochun there to help him, any difficulties he faced would be resolved as easily as a sharp blade could cut through bamboo.

“I’ll help you come up with a comprehensive plan,” Bai Xiaochun said with a calm smile that made him look more enigmatic than ever. Then, he and Zhao Tianjiao spent the entire night discussing the matter. In the morning, Zhao Tianjiao left, in high spirits and brimming with confidence.

Noontime came, and it was a beautiful day. A gentle breeze blew across a calm sea that had only slightly rolling waves. From a distance, the sea almost looked like a huge golden mirror.

Off in the distance were some of the unique seabirds that lived in the Heavenspan Sea, soaring about and letting out occasional cries.

Zhao Tianjiao stood at the prow of the ship, dressed in a long cyan robe and looking particularly handsome. His eyes shone with profound light, and from a distance, he looked as imposing as a mountain. His back was straight, and he seemed to brim with an intense energy that would cause him to instantly stand out in the eyes of anyone who came to look at him.

He was looking off into the distance, his hands folded at the small of his back, his chin raised, his hair fluttering in the breeze. He looked as attractive as a perfectly sculpted statue, seemingly divine and mighty in an otherworldly way.

Of course, no one could possibly know that Bai Xiaochun's voice was actually speaking in his ear.

“No, no, no! Put your left hand on your hip. Yes. Yes! Hold your chin up as you look off into the distance!

“Keep that same look in your eye. Don't change it!

“Move your left foot half a pace forward. Mhmm. Yes, that looks good. Wait, you seem too somber. This is a confession of love, not an interrogation. Soften up a bit....”

Bai Xiaochun was tucked away in a nearby corner where he could see Zhao Tianjiao, and was transmitting instructions via divine sense. Whatever instructions he gave, Zhao Tianjiao followed immediately. He was nervous about what was to come, but had complete confidence in Bai Xiaochun, so he simply steeled himself and waited for the moment of truth.

“Okay, that's perfect. Don't move. The time you agreed to meet Elder Sister Yueshan is almost here.” Bai Xiaochun was also excited. All of his meticulous plans with Zhao Tianjiao recently came down to this moment. All the preparations were set. It was time for the final move.

“It has to work!” he murmured, clenching his hands into fists. Even as he waited in anticipation, Chen Yueshan slowly walked out from her cabin on deck 2.

She seemed different than normal, and had clearly dressed up a bit. She looked entrancing in her long, cyan robe, with her hair coiled up in braids to reveal her snow-white neck. Her skin was fair beyond belief, and as the noon sun shone down on her, she seemed pure, holy, and dazzlingly beautiful.

There was a bit of a flush to her face, something almost shy. She also seemed nervous, as was evidenced by how she unconsciously fiddled with a jade ring on her finger.

After stepping onto the main deck, she noticed Zhao Tianjiao at the prow, and slowly began to walk in his direction.

Bai Xiaochun ducked his head down and excitedly transmitted the news to Zhao Tianjiao. “She's coming. Don’t look back! She’s walking right toward you!”

Zhao Tianjiao trembled imperceptibly, and did his best to maintain his pose, simultaneously sending some divine sense out to confirm that Chen Yueshan was walking in his direction. Before long, she was standing there at his side, and her fragrance caused his heart to skip a beat before beginning to race.

“Why did you want to see me, Elder Brother Zhao?” she said softly, clutching at the insides of her sleeves with her delicate hands. For some reason, she found this version of Zhao Tianjiao to be somewhat strange, and yet at the same time, attractive.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened as he looked on, nervous that a mistake might be made.

Zhao Tianjiao slowly took a breath, but didn’t turn to look at her. Instead, he kept his gaze fixed on the sea beyond, quickly reviewing the words Bai Xiaochun had instructed him to speak. Suddenly, he pointed up into the sky and said, “Yueshan, see how pure and blue the sky is? My feelings for you are just like that, pure and free from the contamination of the mortal world. Eternally unchanging.”

In response to his words, Chen Yueshan looked up at the sky, and her heart suddenly began to beat a bit faster. Even her breathing turned a bit ragged.

Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but praise Zhao Tianjiao inwardly. At long last, he was finally getting into the swing of things. From Bai Xiaochun’s perspective, his wording just now had been perfect....

“It took me a long time to come up with that,” Bai Xiaochun thought, feeling very pleased with himself. However, in the same moment that Chen Yueshan looked up at the azure sky....

The muffled rumble of thunder could be heard as, for some unknown reason, the weather suddenly changed. In the blink of an eye, dark clouds began to form, and before Bai Xiaochun could even react, more thunder echoed out. As of this moment, the sky was no longer blue, but rather, had been contaminated into a grayish black color.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and Zhao Tianjiao’s eyes went wide. Even Chen Yueshan seemed taken aback.

“What’s... what’s going on?” Bai Xiaochun thought, gasping. Something about the situation definitely seemed strange.

Zhao Tianjiao didn’t say anything, and even Chen Yueshan appeared to be at a loss for words, and even a bit embarrassed. After a long moment passed, Zhao Tianjiao gritted his teeth and decided to proceed.

“Yueshan....” With that, he raised his voice and pointed out at the sea. “Look at how calm the sea is. It is like my heart, now that I have you in my life. Henceforth, I swear to the mountains and pledge to the seas that you and I shall share both honor and disgrace. Not a single woman in the entire world could ever cause my heart to even tremble in the slightest. It is just like this endless, tranquil sea, unmarred by the slightest wave!”

A tremor ran through Chen Yueshan as she followed the line of Zhao Tianjiao’s finger to look out at the sea. However, even as the words left his mouth....

More thunderous rumbling echoed out from the clouds, and huge raindrops began to fall, splashing down noisily onto the ship and the sea alike. Suddenly, huge waves appeared on the water, which was no longer calm at all....

Bai Xiaochun almost leapt to his feet, and was instantly covered in cold sweat. The events of the day were far too strange, and had Bai Xiaochun’s mind racing with all sorts of crazy thoughts about what was causing them.

“Could it be that I misjudged the destiny of these two lovers...?” he thought in surprise. Zhao Tianjiao was on the verge of tears; it was almost as if heaven and earth were directly opposing him, and intentionally turning his words against him. His fury began to mount, and yet, it was in that moment that Chen Yueshan suddenly laughed softly.

She was beautiful to begin with, but when she laughed, her eyes turning into twin crescent moons, she was even more exquisite. Reaching out her delicate, jade-like hand, she clasped Zhao Tianjiao’s hand in hers, and immediately, her feelings were made clear.

Zhao Tianjiao shivered as his eyes met hers, and in that instant, a memory was created that would last for all eternity.

Chen Yueshan had fallen in love with Zhao Tianjiao long ago, back when her father had first taken him in as an apprentice. She had always been charmed by how bumbling and inarticulate he was in daily life, only to become a fierce tiger in critical moments.

She had even tried to get close to him in the past, but Zhao Tianjiao had never seemed to respond to her. He spent most of his time in training, and eventually, Chen Yueshan got disheartened, and buried her feelings away. Occasionally, she would think back to those emotions and sigh.

After the journey on the battleship began, and she saw Zhao Tianjiao walk out in a pink outfit, she had been shocked. Then, everything that happened after that had seemed something like a dream....

Bai Xiaochun let out a long sigh. Seeing what was happening now between Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan, he mused that even if he had misjudged their destiny, there was nothing he could have done differently. Chuckling, he reveled in his status as a love saint, and then stuck his chin up and assumed the pose of a lonely hero. Waving his sleeve, he murmured, “With the snap of a finger, I, Bai--”

However, even in that moment of self-satisfaction, and before he could finish speaking, the thunderous rumbling in the sky grew more intense, and several figures appeared, all of them flying at high speed toward the battleship.

At the head of that group was none other than that three-eyed Chen Hetian!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0459 awe-chapter-460

The deva was back!

“Father!”

“Master!”

Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan immediately backed away from each other, as if they had just been caught doing something wrong. At the same time, feelings of embarrassment and anxiety rose up in both of them.

Three-eyed Chen Hetian wore a grim expression as he glared at Zhao Tianjiao. Behind him, the five Nascent Soul cultivators all seemed exhausted, and yet, were still exchanging enigmatic smiles. Strange expressions could also be seen on their faces as they sized up Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan.

Because of Chen Hetian’s glare, and the odd expressions on the faces of the Nascent Soul experts, Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan immediately realized that… these old-timers had heard the entire confession of love from moments ago.

Furthermore, the strange phenomena in the sky and sea almost certainly had something to do with Chen Hetian.

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochun felt a chill running up his spine. All of a sudden, he was struck by a very bad feeling. He thought about trying to sneak way, but decided that wouldn’t be appropriate. Instead, he looked in a different direction and tried to pretend that he was just a passerby taking in the scenery. He even took out a flask of spirit alcohol and began to sip it slowly....

Zhao Tianjiao was sinking into his nervousness. The person he feared most in life was his Master, and at the moment, not only was he anxious, he was also embarrassed. However, Chen Yueshan was not. After the initial shock of her father's arrival, she reached out again to grab Zhao Tianjiao's hand, then looked up with an expression that said she wouldn't back down an inch.

“Finally grew some spine, eh Zhao Tianjiao?” Chen Hetian said. Giving Zhao Tianjiao another good glare, he snorted coldly and looked over at Bai Xiaochun's hiding spot.

His gaze was like a razor-sharp knife that cut right down to Bai Xiaochun's heart. Bai Xiaochun looked up in thought for the briefest of moments, then caused his face to flush as if from drinking. Staggering a bit, he slurred, “Nice stuff!”

Swaying back and forth, he retreated backward and then ducked around the corner to escape Chen Hetian's gaze. Once out of sight, he began to hurry down the corridor.

Chen Hetian snorted again. Paying no attention to Bai Xiaochun, he led the five Nascent Soul cultivators up to the cabins on deck 1.

Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan exchanged a look. Then, Zhao Tianjiao forced himself to calm down. Bracing himself, he went off to offer formal greetings to his Master, as well as an explanation; he didn't want his Master to have any ill feelings toward Chen Yueshan or Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun jogged all the way back to his cabin. Once inside, an anxious expression could be seen on his face.

“If I had known this was going to happen, I would have had him confess his love yesterday! What a weird coincidence. How come old three-eyes had to return today...? If he finds out I'm the one who got Zhao Tianjiao together with his daughter, it could turn out to be a real disaster for me.” The more he thought about the situation, the more nervous he got. And yet, there was nothing he could do other than sigh and try to come up with a contingency plan.

After a few days passed, Bai Xiaochun still hadn’t seen Zhao Tianjiao. However, Chen Hetian hadn’t come looking to cause problems, so Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety started to ease. However, that was when Chen Hetian actually issued an order throughout the ship.

“All disciples are to remain confined in their assigned cabins until they are called up to deck 1 for questioning!”

Chen Hetian’s voice sounded very somber, even angry. Not a single person aboard dared to disobey his orders, so Song Que and the other Dao protectors all returned to their assigned living quarters.

Soon, Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul experts began to make the rounds, inspecting each and every cabin. Obviously, they had been informed about the numerous deaths which had occurred while they were away, and were now making a thorough investigation.

The inspection was very meticulous. Next, all disciples, regardless of their ranking, were questioned thoroughly by Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul cultivators. Soon, it was Bai Xiaochun’s turn.

Bai Xiaochun nervously headed up to deck 1, and as soon as he was in the presence of three-eyed Chen Hetian and the other top experts, he clasped hands in greeting.

“Disciple Bai Xiaochun offers greetings, Seniors!”

“You're Bai Xiaochun, huh?” Chen Hetian said, eyes shining brightly.

Bai Xiaochun nodded nervously, keeping his eyes fixed on the three-eyed old man.

Chen Hetian looked at him closely, then coolly said, “So you’re the one with the spine....”

Then he closed his eyes and let the Nascent Soul cultivators proceed with questioning him. One of those Nascent Soul experts had a gaze like lightning that seemed capable of piercing all illusions.

Bai Xiaochun answered all of their questions, and was soon dismissed. As he left, sweat dripping down his forehead, he sighed and thought, “What did old three-eyes mean when he said I’m the one with the spine...? Was he praising me? Or insulting me? I was obviously just trying to make sure his apprentice and his daughter are happy for the rest of their lives.... What am I supposed to do if he makes things difficult for me later on?” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t quite make heads or tails of the situation, and even after much thought, he was forced to sigh and give up any efforts to figure things out.

It took half a month for all of the disciples on the battleship to be questioned. Even after the investigation, though, no amount of analysis on the part of Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul cultivators could lead them to any conclusion on the subject.

They also inspected the corpses, of course, but the only result was that their expressions turned very grim, and they were left completely at a loss.

Thankfully, after Chen Hetian returned, no more deaths occurred. Time passed. Two more months went by, during which time Bai Xiaochun never caught sight of Zhao Tianjiao or Chen Yueshan. He really had no idea what was happening with them.

It was only in the sixth month of the voyage, when land appeared on the horizon again, that he finally saw them.

After all the time which had passed, Zhao Tianjiao’s cultivation base seemed to have improved. His eyes sparkled as he appeared on the main deck, and it was the same with Chen Yueshan, who walked at his side. In fact, there was a faintly discernible aura on both of them that seemed to indicate that, with the necessary items to form a Nascent Soul, both of them could advance to the next cultivation stage.

Quite a few people noticed that, and were immediately envious. Obviously, Chen Hetian had returned with good fortune for his apprentice and daughter.

Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of moping along on the main deck when he saw Zhao Tianjiao. He in turn saw Bai Xiaochun, and his expression brightened. Hurrying over, he pulled him off to the side and handed him a white bottle.

“Your sister-in-law and I saved this for you. It’s a bit of silver dragon blood. Consume that, and your cultivation base will advance quite a bit.”

Remembering that Chen Hetian and the Nascent Soul experts had gone chasing after a silver dragon, Bai Xiaochun was immediately excited and quickly took the white bottle. Seeing that Zhao Tianjiao still trusted and liked him, Bai Xiaochun felt very relieved.

“You already want me to call her sister-in-law?” he said with a smile. “Does she know?”

Now that he knew everything had been settled, he could sigh with relief. Obviously, old three-eyes wouldn’t be causing problems for him later....

Looking a bit awkward, Zhao Tianjiao cleared his throat and said, “Yeah, she knows.... Your sister-in-law told me to express her profound thanks to you.”

Then he clasped Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder, and a serious expression appeared on his face.

“Xiaochun, you need to focus on your cultivation. From the look of things, you’ve been slacking off recently. That’s definitely not the right attitude. We're going to reach the shore soon, and once we do, your battle prowess is going to be the crux of everything!

“I'm guessing you don’t know much about the Wildlands, so let me explain a few important details, so you’ll know what’s going on once we get there. These are some things that even I just recently learned from my Master.”

With that, Zhao Tianjiao pulled Bai Xiaochun further away from anyone else, apparently not caring at all that people realized how close they were with each other now. Lowering his voice, he said, “The Heavenspan Sea lies in the very middle of the Heavenspan Realm. Four rivers stretch out from it, which all break up into smaller branches. In that sense, they are almost like the branches of a tree. The areas near the water have spiritual energy, but the lands themselves are too vast, far larger than can be reached by all of the rivers. That is why there is so much land out there with no spiritual energy, the places which we call the Wildlands.

“The Wildlands don’t just exist far beyond the rivers, they also exist in the areas between each of the four main rivers. There are plenty of locations there that have no spiritual energy. That’s why the Great Wall was built.”

A very serious expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face. He took the Great Wall very seriously, and had even asked Chen Manyao about it. As a result, he knew how important it was to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Therefore, despite having heard information similar to this before, he was still paying rapt attention. After all, this pertained to a ten-year trial that could very well result in his death if he wasn’t careful.

“The Great Wall is like a circle of protection that ensures that the main branches of the Heavenspan River can thrive in safety. It’s like a border of sorts, beyond which are the Wildlands. The Wildlands are barren and infertile, and constantly at war. Furthermore, within those Wildlands are not only vengeful souls, but also savage giants!”

“Savage giants?” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed. He couldn’t help but think about the powerful organization that backed Chen Manyao.

“I don’t understand too much about them myself. But apparently, the savage giants practice cultivation in much the same way that we cultivators do, except that most of them cultivate body refinement exclusively. They’re savage and brutal, and whenever they get their hands on a disciple of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, they eat them alive!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he gasped.

“Eat them alive?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0460 awe-chapter-461

“The Wildlands are completely barren, so they absorb soul power from the souls they collect. Of course, they also thirst for spiritual energy, so whenever cultivators go into their lands, they try to capture them to drink their blood and absorb the power it contains. The barbaric savages have been our enemies since ancient times, and are always trying to get closer to the Heavenspan Sea to get spiritual energy. Our job is to keep them out.” Zhao Tianjiao seemed a bit surprised at how Bai Xiaochun had suddenly turned pale in the face, but didn’t think too much of it.

“That’s why the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect built three cities between the Heavenspan Sea and the Great Wall itself, to keep out the savages and the vengeful souls!”

Worried that Bai Xiaochun needed more than just a general introduction, he continued, “In a few days, we’ll disembark, and arrive at the first city. It's called East Sea City, and has strong spiritual energy. Obviously, it’s the safest location behind the Great Wall.

“The further you get from East Sea City, the weaker the spiritual energy gets. The second city is called World City, where a large military force is garrisoned. It can be considered a transfer hub on the way to the Great Wall itself, but is also a major line of defense.”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun had suppressed his terror at the thought of being eaten alive, and was listening carefully to all the new details Zhao Tianjiao was providing.

“Beyond World City, the spiritual energy gets even weaker, until you reach the Great Wall itself. That’s the location of the third city, which is simply named Great Wall City. That is where the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s most terrifying, steel-veined cultivators are stationed. Any one of those cultivators can be viewed as a god of death. Even I wouldn’t dare to provoke any of them.” As soon as Zhao Tianjiao mentioned Great Wall City, his eyes shone with respect and passion.

“Those cultivators form an army which is called the Hall of Steel Veins. They... are the true defenders of the Great Wall, and are at constant war with the Wildlands savages. Of course, the casualty rate among them is very high.

“According to what I’ve heard, the Hall of Steel Veins is broken up into five legions. Anyone who achieves the rank of captain in one of those armies will be very famous upon returning to the sect. After all, such a person would be backed by the Hall of Steel Veins, which surpasses even the devas. After all, the Hall of Steel Veins is the only hall in the sect... personally overseen by the demigod patriarch!”

Bai Xiaochun continued to nod in response to everything he was hearing, and couldn’t help but think that the name of the Hall of Steel Veins was particularly impressive.

“As for me,” Zhao Tianjiao continued, “my first goal is to go take a look at the Wildlands, maybe get some experience, and then... join the Hall of Steel Veins. After that, I’ll make some impressive military contributions and fight to reach the rank of colonel!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking in surprise at Zhao Tianjiao. For some reason, it seemed to him like Zhao

Tianjiao was essentially talking about putting himself right in the path of death itself....

Zhao Tianjiao clasped Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder again, and his eyes were warm as he continued, “The only place where a deva is stationed is in Great Wall City itself. Actually, one of the purposes of this journey is for my Master to relieve Senior Zhou from his position there. For the next hundred years, my Master will be stationed on the Great Wall, tasked with repelling any invasions!”

Although Zhao Tianjiao was actually older than Bai Xiaochun, the recent events caused him to view him as a very close friend. Zhao Tianjiao didn’t have very many friends, and once he made one, that person was a brother for life.

“Xiaochun, getting a deva soul is only a secondary goal for me. My main purpose is to get into the Hall of Steel Veins. But you're different. You need to fight hard to get one of those deva souls.

“Remember, there are a lot of souls in the Wildlands. Every living entity that dies in the lands of Heavenspan ends up there, as long as their soul isn’t destroyed. They travel along the Underworld River all the way through the Wildlands, which is one reason why the Wildlands represent death and hell!”

By this point, Zhao Tianjiao’s voice was so low that he was clearly talking about secret matters, things that could not be spread to outsiders. And yet, fearing that Bai Xiaochun might end up pursuing the wrong path, he decided to clarify things a bit more. “Because souls have been building up there for years and years, it can be stated with certainty that there are definitely some deva souls there.

Unfortunately, they only appear once every few thousand years, and are as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns. According to my Master's calculations, the number of deva souls that exist in all the Wildlands can probably be counted on two hands! Furthermore, the number of people who have used deva souls to become a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul expert are even fewer than that. There is only one, the Celestial."

Bai Xiaochun had often wondered exactly how many deva souls there could be in the Wildlands, so this new information left him quite shocked. Considering that he already had two deva souls, he had often wondered if he could potentially... reach the legendary Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage.

However, after what Zhao Tianjiao had just told him, he realized that such a task would be far too difficult to accomplish. He had two deva souls in his bag, the value of which likely surpassed even his own imagination.

The thought of those two deva souls made him think of who had given them to him. One had come from Patriarch Frigidsect, and the other had come from... Du Lingfei!

"So, you shouldn't try to pursue the path of the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul. It's a dream, a fantasy that could never become reality. You should aim for deva beast souls. They are rare, but are more plentiful than deva souls. According to my Master's calculations, there are probably fifty or so deva beast souls in the Wildlands, although nobody can be completely sure." After offering a few more warnings and reminders, Zhao Tianjiao finally left, leaving Bai Xiaochun standing there alone, looking at the distant shore growing closer and closer.

“We’re almost there.... Ten years! What am I supposed to do for ten years?” Bai Xiaochun sighed.

Three days passed by in a flash, and the battleship continued to near the shore. One afternoon, virtually all the cultivators on board spontaneously began to gather on the main deck.

From there, it was possible to see an enormous green city rising up where the land met the ocean, part of which was a huge harbor.

The power of spell formations filled the area, as well as the flicker of magical symbols. Waiting on the docks were quite a large number of cultivators.

The ship began to slow down, and two hours later, the cultivators onboard were close enough to see the people on the dock with their naked eye.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the huge battleship slowly came to a stop roughly five kilometers away from the harbor itself. At that point, eight somber-faced Nascent Soul cultivators flew out from the city to receive them, followed by large numbers of Core Formation cultivators.

“Greetings, Senior Chen!”

“Please accept our congratulations, Senior Chen!”

Voices rolled out like waves as Chen Hetian and the five Nascent Soul cultivators appeared. After nodding in response to the greetings, they simply flew off into the city.

Some formalities were exchanged, and then Bai Xiaochun and the rest of the hundreds of Starry Sky Dao Polarity

Superstars flew out over the five kilometers of the Heavenspan Sea into the East Sea City.

The entire way, the Core Formation cultivators who had emerged from the city were sizing up the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, and made no attempt to conceal their disdain. Obviously, these were seasoned veterans who were looking at a group of new recruits.

Bai Xiaochun also took the opportunity to measure up the Core Formation cultivators from East Sea City. It didn’t take long for him to realize that, without a single exception, they all had intensely murderous auras, even those who were in the Early Core Formation stage. These were people who were no strangers to killing, and their eyes even had a crimson tinge to them.

According to what Bai Xiaochun had heard, that crimson tinge came after killing large amounts of vengeful souls. Apparently, it was the outworking of some sort of natural law, and there was no harm to it whatsoever. Furthermore, it made a person seem quite threatening.

Before long, they were in the city, and unexpectedly, nobody came out to receive them. However, one of the East Sea City cultivators who was in the great circle of Core Formation handed everyone a command medallion.

“Welcome to the sect outpost. This is your one and only authentication device, so don’t lose it! If you go out into the Wildlands and try to come back into the Great Wall without it, you will be refused entrance. Be very careful with it.

“There are no official arrangements for any of you. This is a trial by fire that is set to last for ten years. During that time, you have to go out into the Wildlands at least three times. Make sure records are kept of any such outing. If you don’t meet that requirement, then when the ten years are up, you won’t be allowed to return to the sect.

“Finally, let me remind yourself to take good care of yourselves. Remember... you are only allowed to stay in East Sea City for a single day. For every day beyond that in which you remain, the total length of your trial by fire will be increased by an entire month. After leaving East Sea City, be very careful to control your usage of spiritual power.” With that, the man turned and flew off into the city.

Bai Xiaochun was already very anxious. This unfamiliar East Sea City had actually seemed like a pretty nice place, and he had initially planned to stay here for as much of the ten-year period as possible, only to find out that he couldn’t.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars exchanged glances. Obviously, everyone had their own plans and goals in this unfamiliar location, and it only took moments before people began to disperse and head off in different directions.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0461 awe-chapter-462

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as a very serious expression played out on his face.

Back when he was on the eastern Heavenspan River, he had always felt as the River-Defying Sect were still nearby. But now, he was in a completely strange place, with virtually no familiar faces around whatsoever.

It was with a very somber expression that he looked over at Song Que and his other Dao protectors and said, “In a strange place like this, we have to stick together more than ever! Song Que, Master God-Diviner, Chen Manyao, as my Dao protectors, the time has come to show your true skill and ability!”

With that, he flicked his sleeve, eyes shining brightly.

“For the most part, I have been the one to protect the lot of you, whether it was in Sky City or on Sky Quarter Rainbow, and even on the battleship. But now... the time has come for you to protect me. Here’s the plan, we’ll--” Before, he could finish speaking, Chen Manyao cleared her throat.

“I need to leave now, Xiaochun....”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun blurted.

“It’s not that I don’t want to stay and help you out. But... you know the situation. I... I want to go home.” She gave him a profound look that seemed to say she didn’t wish to part with him. It even contained other, unique implications.

A long moment passed. Then she sighed and took a curtseying bow.

“We’ll meet again if destiny will have it....” With that, she turned and disappeared into East Sea City. Although her departure was a bit sudden, it wasn’t completely unexpected to Bai Xiaochun. He knew that her home lay beyond the Great Wall, and that one of main reasons for coming with him was because she wanted to return there. She had said as much even back in the River-Defying Sect.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and looked over at Song Que and Master God-Diviner. Just when he was about to explain his plan to them, Song Que snorted coldly. Looking around at East Sea City, as well as the lands beyond, he thought to himself, “This is the perfect place for me. I, Song Que, am the type of person who likes to live in the middle of extreme danger. The more brutal a place is, the more opportunities there will be for deadly training. That is the only way to get more powerful. This is my chance to crush Bai Xiaochun ten times over!”

Heart surging with heroic aspirations, and face covered with a look of utter determination, he didn’t even deign to look at Bai Xiaochun as he said, “Bai Xiaochun, whether it was in the Blood Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, or on that battleship, I was never able to measure up to you.... But this time, in this place, I will finally surpass you. This is my last opportunity, and I won’t let it slip by!”

With that, he transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

“Que’er....” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes wide, his body trembling. The scene which was playing out seemed very familiar.... Suddenly very nervous, he looked over at Master God-Diviner.

“Master God-Diviner, you--”

“Junior Patriarch... um... I don’t really want to part ways, but I’ve been given some assignments by the Hall of Defenders. Um... see you in ten years, alright?” Master God-Diviner looked a bit embarrassed, but was actually not being deceptive at all. The Hall of Defenders really had given him some assignments.

After blinking a few times, Master God-Diviner clasped hands and bowed, then flew away.... As of this point, Bai Xiaochun was left standing alone with Gongsun Wan’er. She looked over at him, smiled faintly, then left.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the enormous East Sea City, stunned. Nothing looked familiar, and he felt completely alone, and at the same time, angry.

He also couldn’t help but recall what had happened upon arriving at Sky City in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, how Song Que and the others all abandoned him....

“Fine! Want to spread your wings? Go ahead. If you have what it takes, you can come looking for me later!” He was both furious and depressed, a mixture which actually got his fighting spirit quite worked up.

“I'm definitely going to live it up here, and that’s when you people will realize that abandoning me for the second time was the worst mistake of your lives!” Bai Xiaochun really was very angry at how everyone had just disappeared without a trace, leaving him completely unprepared. Considering what had occurred last time, he had assumed that his Dao protectors would never again abandon him....

“You eat my food, drink my alcohol, use my stuff!? Fine, you people just wait!” Gritting his teeth, he looked around, scowling on the verge of tears as he tried to decide what to do and where to go. That was when one particular group of six people who had been just about to leave changed directions and headed toward the lonely Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun!” someone called out. It was none other than Zhao Tianjiao. Bai Xiaochun turned and saw him, as well as Chen Yueshan, who were flanked by two male cultivators and two female cultivators. The two male cultivators were the very same followers of Zhao Tianjiao who had been so impressed by Bai Xiaochun recently.

As for the female disciples, Bai Xiaochun didn't recognize them, but based on what Zhao Tianjiao had told him early on about Chen Yueshan, he assumed that they were the two good friends of hers who already lived in East Sea City.

“Elder Brother Zhao,” Bai Xiaochun called out.

Laughing heartily, Zhao Tianjiao landed next to Bai Xiaochun and clapped him on the shoulder. “What are you doing here alone? If you don’t have anything else to do, why not join us? It’s probably better to stick together anyway. I'm planning to go do a bit of sightseeing and eventually head out past the Great Wall.”

Smiling faintly, Bai Xiaochun said, “I told my Dao protectors to go their own way. They have their own destinies, and I don’t wish to block their paths to the future. As for me, it’s only natural that I want to tackle the world on my own. Only in that way can my heart be as tranquil as the sky, and my mind as broad as the earth. That is the key to the Dao of the heavens!”

Chen Yueshan landed next to Zhao Tianjiao, and although she was smiling as she looked at Bai Xiaochun, there was a hint of anger in her eyes. Clearly, Zhao Tianjiao had told her about all the things Bai Xiaochun had taught him.

Zhao Tianjiao’s two followers immediately bowed with great respect toward Bai Xiaochun, whom they didn’t dare to offend in any way. As for Chen Yueshan’s two friends, they merely sized him up curiously.

When Chen Yueshan spoke, her voice was soft and pleasant, “Junior Brother Bai, we were just about to leave, but Elder Brother Zhao was worried about you, so we came back to look for you. We were planning to go exploring a bit as well, and it's always safer to travel in numbers, so why don’t you join us?”

Bai Xiaochun very much liked what he was hearing. Zhao Tianjiao laughed and grabbed his arm, leaving Bai Xiaochun incapable of refusing no matter how much he tried. With that, the group shot up into the air and left East Sea City.

As soon as they left the city, Bai Xiaochun could tell that there was a difference in the spiritual energy, but it wasn’t very noticeable. After all, they were still very close to the Heavenspan Sea.

What was noticeable was that the hard-packed soil outside the city was a blackish violet color. It almost looked like it was suffused with countless volumes of blood, making it very sinister in appearance.

They also saw many craters, one of which had turned into a lake filled with black liquid.

Chen Yueshan looked around at the blackish violet lands and said, “My father told me that from the time the Starry Sky

Dao Polarity Sect was founded until now, the Great Wall has only been breached once. A huge army of Wildlands savages invaded, and the resulting slaughter caused rivers of blood to flow through the lands....”

Bai Xiaochun already felt a bit uneasy. In addition to the odd-looking soil, there were also strange and terrifying flora and fauna. There were 25-meter-tall trees that, instead of foliage, had huge human heads growing at their tops. Any small creatures who happened to pass by the sinister-looking trees would instantly be gobbled up.

At one point they happened to see a cloud of black, cottony seeds floating into the air off of a willow tree. When Zhao Tianjiao saw that, his expression flickered.

“Let’s take the long way around,” he said. “Those are the larvae of bloodsoul ticks! If they get into your skin, they’ll burrow into your body and start feasting on your blood and soul! The only thing that can stop them are city-level spell formations! We would be powerless to defend ourselves!”

Bai Xiaochun opened his third eye and instantly confirmed that they were indeed not floating seeds, but rather, densely packed insect larvae.

Everyone was shaken, and quickly fled in the opposite direction. It took them a few days to pass by the area, and despite having avoided the tick larvae, Bai Xiaochun was still trembling in shock. Along their way avoiding the larvae, they had passed what at first appeared to be a pile of rotting bones, but was actually a flock of undead birds which stunk like carrion, and were indescribably ferocious-looking. Just as the flock of undead birds seemed to notice the group of cultivators, and was preparing to attack them, a crevice opened up in the seemingly empty ground beneath them. A powerful gravitational force erupted out, and the entire flock of undead birds was sucked into the crevice. As the crevice closed up, crunching and cracking sounds filled the air.

By that point, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and his face was as ashen as death.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0462 awe-chapter-463

“And we're still inside the Great Wall....” Bai Xiaochun thought. Everything he had seen so far was giving him a much clearer understanding of this area.

“If things are like this inside the Great Wall, then... what is it like on the outside?” The truth was that he didn’t even want to know the answer to that question. The group flew along for quite a while, passing through three teleportation stations. Eventually, they were getting close to the halfway point across the area that was inside of the Great Wall.

That was the location of World City.

They had faced dangerous situations along the way, but nothing they couldn’t handle. After all, the lands between East Sea City and World City were relatively safe.

Occasionally, they saw other cultivators, most of whom traveled in groups of between three to five. Very rarely did they ever encounter someone alone, and when they did, they were people with cold faces and vigilant expressions, who gave Bai Xiaochun’s group a wide berth.

There was also an exhaustion visible in their eyes that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to grow even colder than before.

“This place is even more crazily dangerous than I thought it would be....” he thought, heart pounding. The closer they got to World City, the more such feelings within him intensified.

Time passed. As they got closer to World City, Bai Xiaochun realized that the soil around them was growing blacker, and the vegetation was becoming even more bizarre. Even the birds and the beasts were growing stranger, and more and more black in color.

Besides all of that, the most telling change that Bai Xiaochun could sense was the spiritual energy, which was getting weaker and weaker. Zhao Tianjiao and the others in the group had a hard time adjusting to it, but it wasn’t as bad for Bai Xiaochun. At the moment, the spiritual energy levels were about the same as they were back in the Lower Reaches.

To people who were only used to the spiritual energy in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, it was a huge difference, but Bai Xiaochun didn’t find it very shocking.

A few more days went by and, at long last, they reached the second of the three cities, World City!

It was different than East Sea City, enormous, like a gigantic cube made from black bricks. Black light shone out from it in all directions, and just barely visible on the walls were patrolling cultivators....

Enormous magical cannons that were clearly defensive weapons could be seen on the walls, and as for the enormous stone slabs that made the bricks, they were all inscribed with sealing marks, indicating that the entire city was itself a spell formation.

Although that spell formation was only partially active, it still kept the city perpetually sealed. This was the second major line of defense inside the Great Wall!

If Great Wall City ever fell, then this place... would serve as its replacement. There were many cultivators in the city, and the resources available were plentiful beyond belief. The truth was that, in addition to acting as a backup defense location, this place existed as a supply depot for Great Wall City!

In the dim light of evening, World City looked like a hulking beast, sinister and predatory. It was the type of place that would leave someone shaken even looking at it from a distance, as if it had its own murderous aura!

“That’s World City up ahead,” Zhao Tianjiao said. “We’ll rest up a bit here and then begin the second leg of the journey. We will definitely be facing some dangerous situations on the second part of the journey, so all of you need to prepare mentally.” The faces of the others in the group were extremely somber, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he was wailing inwardly.

There were bones scattered about outside of the city, some of which were bleached by the sun and had clearly been laying there for a very long time. The entire area seemed very wild and desolate.

Bai Xiaochun could tell that many of the bones were clearly not those of cultivators, and yet, were not beast bones either. They seemed humanoid, but much thicker and longer, as if they belonged to giants of some sort.

Such bones were very resilient, and even among those which were scattered about, almost none were broken.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart started pounding at the implication.

“Don’t tell me that those are the bones of Wildlands savages from beyond the wall?” he thought.

When Zhao Tianjiao noticed Bai Xiaochun looking at the bones, he said, “When the Great Wall was breached, World City... was besieged. Although it happened a long time ago, these bones were intentionally left out in the open so everyone would understand the brutality of war!

“We cultivators pursue our Dao, but at the same time, we have to defend our sect, and the world around us! We can't let the Wildlanders through to the Heavenspan Sea!” With that, he and Chen Yueshan flew along toward World City.

Zhao Tianjiao’s followers and Chen Yueshan’s friends went too, leaving Bai Xiaochun to be the last to catch up.

“What’s with all the fighting and killing…?” he thought. “Ah, whatever. Now that I’ve seen for myself how dangerous this place is, I have to agree with Du Lingfei. I need to find a place to hole up for ten years, then I can trade one of my deva souls for some deva beast souls.”

Having made his decision, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and hurried forward, keeping a somber look on his face. Although he was inwardly terrified, he obviously wouldn’t let such feelings show.

Quickly catching up to Zhao Tianjiao, he declared, “You’re absolutely right, Elder Brother Zhao! We cultivators have to put our lives on the line to fight the Wildlanders!”

Zhao Tianjiao laughed heartily in response. Soon, they arrived outside the city gates, where their identity medallions were examined before they were allowed inside.

World City seemed large on the outside, but after entering, it seemed even larger. The streets were packed with cultivators going this way and that, and yet, there was no din of conversation, almost as if no one wanted to speak out loud.

Bai Xiaochun could tell that resources were definitely abundant in World City. Whether it was medicinal pills, magical items, or paper talismans, goods were available everywhere. Furthermore, the prices weren’t too outrageous. In fact, many of the medicinal pills were cheaper here than they would be in other places.

Another thing that stood out to Bai Xiaochun was the garrison in the city!!

It was packed with cultivators, all of whom radiated murderous auras, and also wore unique clothing that was decorated with a blood-colored hand!

That hand pulsed with the power of a spell formation that made each and every one of those cultivators seem like the type of person who had climbed mountains of corpses and swam through seas of blood. Whenever cultivators from the garrison went out into the city, everyone else treated them with the utmost respect.

“Those cultivators are members of the Hall of Steel Veins,” Zhao Tianjiao explained, “but they’re different from their compatriots in Great Wall City. These people only go beyond the walls to fight occasionally. Most of the time, they’re on guard here in World City.” When Zhao Tianjiao looked at the cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins, his eyes shone with respect and anticipation.

“They go beyond the walls occasionally?” When Bai Xiaochun thought about the fact that these people only occasionally went beyond the wall, and yet seemed completely shocking, he couldn’t help but wonder... what the cultivators stationed in the third city were like.

As he wallowed in his anxiety, the group found an inn to stay at for the night. As for Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan, they went to visit the elders in the garrison; considering their status, that was a right that only they possessed among the group.

Zhao Tianjiao invited Bai Xiaochun to come along, but after some thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that he would explore the city instead.

Evening fell, and the sky turned dark. Despite that, World City was just as busy as it was during the day, and all the shops remained open. Bai Xiaochun walked along looking at the crowds and window shopping. The crowds were very quiet; even when people spoke, it was in a near-whisper.

It was a very strange environment, to say the least.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0463 awe-chapter-464

Since everyone was either not talking, or talking in whispers, Bai Xiaochun decided that the best thing to do was follow the ancient wisdom of imitating the locals. Therefore, he tried to look as cold and aloof as possible, even a bit sinister, all in the hopes of blending into the crowd.

Before long, things didn’t seem as strange as they had been. Bai Xiaochun felt like he was just like everyone else, and was soon strolling around happily. After a bit of time passed, he stopped in place and looked over at one particular nearby shop.

“Scattered Souls Pavilion?” After looking at the name of the shop, he peered inside, and saw that the walls were stacked with countless strange-looking bottles. There were also quite a few cultivators inside browsing through the bottles.

Curious, Bai Xiaochun turned, headed into the shop, and picked a bottle to look at. As soon as he saw what was inside, his eyes widened.

The bottle contained a mist that was at first tranquil and calm. However, as soon as he looked closely at it, the mist shrank down into the form of a face that glared out murderously at him.

It was the face of a young woman, viciously contorted into a ferocious expression. A moment after it formed, it banged into the side of the bottle as if it were trying to get at Bai Xiaochun! That face was none other than a vengeful soul!

It happened with no warning whatsoever, and Bai Xiaochun had been completely unprepared for such a reaction, so he couldn't hold back from letting out a yelp of surprise. Almost immediately, the surrounding cultivators looked over at him with frowns on their faces. Simultaneously, all of the other bottles in the shop began to tremble and vibrate as the mists inside of them turned into faces that looked at Bai Xiaochun with glaring eyes.

To see so many vengeful souls staring at him caused Bai Xiaochun's scalp to tingle with fear. He could also hear strange noises that resembled a mixture of laughter and weeping.

There were even some voices that seemed to be singing. The sounds swirled and mixed together, seemingly boring all the way down into his soul.

“Release me!”

“Hey, big bro, remember me...? We know each other!”

“I've eaten plenty of little kids just like you throughout the years!”

“Hahaha, bwahahaha...!”

The voices grew louder and louder until they echoed in Bai Xiaochun's mind like thunder. At that point, a cold glow appeared in his eyes, and frigid qi began to swirl within him. His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he unleashed the Undying Hex onto his own chest.

Instantly, all of the sound died away, and everything returned to normal. The vengeful souls in the bottles were still staring at him, but apparently, they could sense that they were incapable of affecting his mind, so they looked away and began to transform back into spheres of mist.

The other cultivators in the shop also began to look away and return to browsing the bottles.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and looked around, his gaze eventually coming to rest on a man in the corner of the shop. He was old, and wore a gray robe that matched the color of his hair. Hands clasped behind his back, he walked forward and smiled at Bai Xiaochun.

“You new here?” he asked quietly.

Bai Xiaochun nodded, a bit depressed as he realized that he was pretty sure he now knew why the people here didn’t like to talk much.

“In World City and the lands beyond it, you need to keep your voice down to avoid getting tangled up with vengeful souls. The best thing to do is transmit your voice with divine sense.

“There are far, far too many vengeful souls out there. Some of them you can see with your eyes, and some not. What you see in these bottles are none other than the souls of the dead. You see, both inside and outside of the Great Wall, souls are the most valuable resource. Whether it’s for cultivation, concocting medicine, or making magical items, you have to use souls.” With another smile and a nod, the old man turned and walked away.

Bai Xiaochun offered his thanks, and then took a bit more time to look around at the souls. What he found was that Foundation Establishment level souls were the cheapest and most plentiful, with Core Formation souls being more expensive. He didn't see any belonging to Nascent Soul experts.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun left and melted back into the crowd. This time, he was even more careful than before as he walked along the moonlit streets. Eventually, he reached another shop that caused him to stop and stare.

Within that shop, they were selling... savages!

Just as the bones outside the city had indicated, the savages looked very much like cultivators, except bigger and taller. Most of them were three meters tall or more, and were extremely muscular.

The savages on display were packed into coffins, and had sealing marks on them rendering them immobile. There were both men and women, and each and every one of them had very impressive fleshly bodies.

As Bai Xiaochun approached, he was noticed by one of the salesmen, a man with a Foundation Establishment cultivation base and a waxen face. After looking Bai Xiaochun up and down, he clasped hands respectfully and quietly said, “Senior, our Wildlander servants might not be the absolute best available in World City, but they’re definitely top-of-the-line.”

Bai Xiaochun looked curiously at the savages, and was shocked to find that they had teeth as sharp as wild animals.

“You see,” continued the salesman, “even down to their teeth and bones, their fleshly bodies are very powerful, making them excellent servants. Furthermore, they’ve been sealed with restrictive spells, so that you can control their life or death with a single thought.”

“They don’t look like Chen Manyao at all....” Bai Xiaochun thought curiously. He considered purchasing one, but in World City, the only currencies accepted were spirit stones and battle credit. Merit points were completely useless.

“They’re so incredibly expensive....” he thought.

Considering how many years the salesman had been working here, he could tell what Bai Xiaochun was thinking. Chuckling softly, he said, “Senior, I'm guessing you’re relatively new to World City. Let me explain: these savages aren’t really very expensive at all. Outside the Great Wall, in the cities inhabited by the savages themselves, captured Foundation Establishment cultivators sell for a price ten times as large as savages of a similar cultivation level!”

“What?” Bai Xiaochun said, a look of shock appearing on his face. “The savages sell cultivators out there?”

“Of course!” the salesman replied coolly. “To the savages, cultivators from inside the Great Wall are like the most nourishing type of food available. They don’t have spiritual energy out there, and inside of every cultivator is a spiritual sea. To them, cultivators... are like living spirit stones!”

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp prickled with fear. The mere thought of being captured by savages outside the Great Wall, and then sucked dry like a spirit stone, left him trembling inside and out.

“This place is way too dangerous....” he thought. Looking quite displeased, he left the shop, and instead of exploring the city more, went back to the inn.

Before long, dawn arrived, and Zhao Tianjiao came looking for Bai Xiaochun. It was time to leave World City and head toward the Great Wall itself.

They moved slower than before. The spiritual energy was getting weaker, making traveling more strenuous, and increasing the amount of time it took to recover from exertion. Furthermore, this leg of the journey was clearly more dangerous than the previous one.

The lands were actually losing their black tinge, and were almost completely violet, as if they really had been soaked through-and-through with blood. It was the same with the water in the rivers. It was a completely shocking sight to Bai Xiaochun and the others in the group.

There were mountains here and there, all of them bare of vegetation, as well as the occasional abandoned village. There were also mobs of vengeful souls that flew about, which usually had at least a few dozen that were as powerful as the Core Formation level.

Thankfully, the vengeful souls weren’t particularly aggressive. Generally speaking, they would just fly by without stopping. Even still, Zhao Tianjiao and the other kept a close eye on them, and obviously, Bai Xiaochun was even more cautious.

He kept his mouth sewn shut tight, refusing to utter even a peep. Only after the vengeful souls were completely out of sight would he let out a sigh of relief.

As they proceeded forward, they rarely saw any other cultivators. There were almost no signs of life in this barren wasteland, and even the flora and fauna were few and far between, and were the type that put everyone on guard.

Each plant or tree they encountered seemed stranger than the last, and more ferocious.

Bai Xiaochun even saw one huge tree that was literally running along the ground as it chased after a pitch-black, nine-meter-tall spiked leopard. After catching the creature, the tree devoured it alive.

At one point, an enormous, undead hand shot out of a ravine to grab a passing black eagle, which it crushed into a pulp as it extracted its blood....

The squishing sounds were enough to cause one’s heart to prickle with shock!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0464 awe-chapter-465

The strange things they were seeing far surpassed anything they had seen during the first part of the journey. The trip from East Sea City to World City had been like a romp through the park compared to this. Although they had faced some tricky situations, overall, everything had gone quite smoothly.

The path from World City to Great Wall City was much more tempestuous. Whether it was the vegetation or the animals, everything was bizarre to the extreme, and of course, left Bai Xiaochun completely terrified. Even Zhao Tianjiao, with his incredible cultivation base and extraordinary courage, proceeded with extreme caution.

Chen Yueshan seemed a bit pale in the face, and the others in the group were shaken terribly on numerous occasions. Even the slightest breeze left them jumpy.

This was a very different world than the one they were used to. The spiritual energy was weak, leaving everyone feeling stifled. They even had to rely on magical devices and spirit stones to sustain flight.

As for the spiritual energy within their bodies, they didn’t dare to use it. In fact, to prevent it from seeping out, Zhao Tianjiao magically sealed himself.

Everyone else took similar actions. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had taken such precautions much earlier....

Although sealing one’s own body would slightly reduce one’s spiritual senses, it would solve the problem of leaking spiritual energy. That was important in a place where spiritual energy was scarce, and one was essentially adrift alone, unconnected to heaven and earth.

That method was useful for solving the problem of spiritual energy leakage, but did nothing to alleviate the danger. Whether it was because of the souls flying about, or the bizarre entities which inhabited these lands, they had to proceed with extreme caution.

Despite their carefulness, an incident occurred about two months after they left World City. They were all sitting cross-legged on the magical skiff that Zhao Tianjiao had purchased, when suddenly, a terrifying howl split the air.

The deafening cry pierced through the skiff’s sealing shields to batter the minds of everyone onboard. Zhao Tianjiao’s eyes opened, and Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled. Everyone looked up in the sky to see what appeared to be clouds converging together.

Within moments, they had taken the shape of an enormous beetle, fully 3,000 meters long, which quickly turned pitch black!

Clearly, this 3,000-meter-long pitch-black beetle was attempting to block their path, and its intense howls caused everything in the area to shake.

“A Wildlands cloudgyre!!” Chen Yueshan blurted. Zhao Tianjiao’s face fell, and the others in the group seemed equally shaken.

“The origin of Wildlands cloudgyres are unclear,” Zhao Tianjiao said, “and no one knows exactly how they form. If I remember correctly, they can pop up anywhere in the Wildlands, whether that’s inside the Great Wall or outside!

“They have no predefined form, and can take almost any shape, even that of plants or vegetation. Clearly, this cloudgyre has taken the form of a beetle!

“Cloudgyres aren’t really animals; they’re a manifestation of the weather, and one this big will surely attract the attention of Great Wall City!”

Without any hesitation, he steered the flying skiff to the side in an attempt to avoid the black beetle. As the skiff veered off course, an intense sensation of danger filled Bai Xiaochun, and his heart leapt up into his throat.

However, even as they tried to change directions, the 3,000-meter-long beetle stopped roaring and then looked over at them with a cold gaze.

That gaze in and of itself was enough to drive Bai Xiaochun wild with fear, and send his mind spinning. Everyone else was also sweating in fear.

Before anyone could react, the black beetle once again let out a deafening roar, then opened its mandibles....

Instantly, a gravitational force spread out, accompanied by thunderous rumblings and screaming winds. It was almost as if the black beetle’s mandibles had become a black hole!

Everything began to shake, causing dust and pebbles to rise up into the air, and even distorting the clouds above. A nearby flock of vicious-looking birds screamed as they were sucked toward the beetle.

The ground was shaking so hard that a hill in the area was ripped off of the ground and began to spin toward the beetle.

Everyone’s minds were being battered by waves of shock, and as they did their best to remain firmly attached to the skiff, their hair and garments whipped in the wind. If they weren’t already being protected by the spiritual power of the vessel itself, they would have been pulled out into the air and ripped to shreds. In fact, the skiff was already twisting and distorting on the verge of breaking.

From high above, it looked like the black beetle was the center of an enormous vortex sucking in everything around it, even the trees!

Zhao Tianjiao, Bai Xiaochun and everyone else were extremely nervous, and didn’t think for a moment about conserving spiritual energy. They immediately unleashed the full power of their cultivation bases to power the skiff as it flew out of the vortex.

As the skiff struggled through the air, the spirit stones which had been placed into its power slots glittered with bright light, then turned dark and transformed into ash.

The spirit stones having been fully drained, and with the extra power from the cultivation bases of the entire group, the skiff seemed to roar with rage as it pulled out of the gravitational vortex and then shot off into the distance.

Behind them, the black beetle howled in rage, but didn’t pursue them.

Bai Xiaochun sat there in taciturn silence, his mind a blank. All of his cultivation base power was being poured into the skiff, and it was the same with everyone else. Only after they had gone all out to flee, and were some distance away, did they slow the skiff and stop near a random mountain. There, they breathed long sighs of relief, and exchanged awkward glances that were tinged with lingering fear.

“That cloudgyre... was at least as powerful as the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage....”

“Cloudgyre....” Bai Xiaochun looked over his shoulder in the direction they had fled from. He felt like he had just barely made it out of that situation with his poor little life. If the flying skiff hadn’t been able to rip free from the gravitation vortex, what would have happened...?

There was no answer to the question. In the Wildlands, cloudgyres didn’t just cause problems for cultivator, but the savages as well. They were manifestations of the weather, not the power of humans, and nothing that entered their jaws ever came back out alive.

Therefore, no one really knew what happened to the things that they consumed....

“I can't believe that freakish thing even exists....” Bai Xiaochun said with a frown.

Trying to sound comforting, Zhao Tianjiao said, “With our command medallions... we should be mostly safe as long as we’re careful. As long as we don’t go beyond the Great Wall....”

Chen Yueshan was a bit ashen, but she nodded. The only thing they could do in this sparsely populated land was hope that the power of the command medallions truly would keep them safe. That was what they were designed to do, considering that they were disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“You sure about that...?” Bai Xiaochun said, scowling on the verge of tears as he pulled out the command medallion. He already regretted coming along with Zhao Tianjiao to this place. It would have been a much better idea to stay holed up in East Sea City for ten years. Better and safer!

Evening was falling. Unfortunately, draining the spirit stones to gain a burst of speed had damaged the power slots on the skiff, and they couldn't use it anymore.

However, Zhao Tianjiao and his group had begun the journey well prepared. After a bit of rest, Chen Yueshan produced another flying skiff, which they set up with new spirit stones and then resumed their journey.

Along the way, they were even more cautious than before. They had wasted a lot of their own cultivation base power, and the spiritual energy of heaven and earth was very weak. Therefore, they had to use spirit stones to recover, a process which was long and difficult.

Two more months went by. During that time, they faced some dangerous situations, but passed through them all safely. Even still, the mental strain was growing.

Thankfully, the slow and steady recovering process of their cultivation bases had pushed them close to their peak level. As a result, Bai Xiaochun felt a lot safer than before.

At one point, Zhao Tianjiao shook his head and said, “Even I still can't believe that things are so dangerous inside the Great Wall.... I wonder what it’s like on the other side.

“Xiaochun, our main goal still hasn’t changed. After we get to the Great Wall, we’re going outside to get some experience. Are you going to join us?”

Bai Xiaochun looked out wistfully at the lands around them, and then shook his head.

“I don’t think so,” he replied. “Um... I think I’ll explore Great Wall City a bit. The better I get to know the city, the less trouble I’ll have later on.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0465 awe-chapter-466

“Xiaochun,” Zhao Tianjiao said, his tone serious, “as you know, everyone participating in this ten-year-long trial has to go out on at least three missions beyond the wall. You can choose when to do that, but there is no way to get out of the responsibility. In other words... you have to go out of the Great Wall at some point!”

Zhao Tianjiao clasped his shoulder. “When the time comes, you’ll have to go, even if you don’t want to.... Otherwise, you’ll fail the final test, and won’t be able to go back to the sect.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled. The thought of going out three times on missions made the world seem like a much darker place. Although he had heard of that arrangement, he hadn’t give it much thought before, and had assumed it wouldn’t be anything worth worrying about. But after seeing the dangers on the journey so far, he realized that the slightest misstep could lead to him losing his poor little life. Then he contemplated going outside of the Great Wall on three different occasions, and couldn’t help but think that it was nothing less than a deadly trap....

However, he didn't let any of his fear show on his face. In fact, he even stuck his chin up, as if he didn’t care at all about the subject. “It’s only three times, right? Not a big deal at all. You don't need to remind me, Elder Brother Zhao, when the time comes, of course I’ll do what needs to be done.”

Zhao Tianjiao laughed loudly and smacked Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder. “Good! That's how Zhao Tianjiao’s Junior Brother

Bai should act!

“Very well, I won’t go on and on about it. Based on our current speed, we should catch sight of the Great Wall itself within about half a month. That’s where we will part ways.... I hope that by the time we meet again, whether its inside the Great Wall or out, that both of us will have made names for ourselves!” With that, he took out a flagon of alcohol, took a long drink, and then handed it to Bai Xiaochun. As of this moment, Zhao Tianjiao seemed tall and mighty, and absolutely impressive. Behind him, Chen Yueshan looked on with sparkling eyes.

Bai Xiaochun slapped his chest, took the flagon, and drank a big mouthful. Despite how grand he was trying to look, it was to his disappointment that he realized that Chen Yueshan and the others in the group all had eyes fixed on Zhao Tianjiao.

“Ahem,” he thought to himself. “Low profile. I’m the type who keeps a low profile....”

Half a month flew by. One morning, when the first rays of dawn were peeking out from the east, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and looked over at the horizon to see... something that looked almost like a mountain range. It was... the Great Wall!

The sight left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken, and was almost impossible to describe with words. The Great Wall was like a hulking dragon lying on the horizon, snaking back and forth for as far as the eye could see.

It was fully 6,000 meters tall, a barrier that completely separated the lands on either side, and completely prevented anything on the outside from getting in.

In addition to the physical structure of the wall, there was a black, shimmering shield of light that rose from the top of the wall into the heavens. With that shield in place, everything on the other side was completely sealed out!

The wall and the shield together created what seemed like an impassable barrier!

As for the wall itself, it wasn’t black, but violet.... Bai Xiaochun was even able to detect the reek of blood coming from it.... It was possible to imagine that, years in the past, the wall had actually been black, but over time, had been stained by the endless flow of blood which ran down it!

The lands leading up to the wall were completely barren and devoid of life. There was a bleakness to the area that even seemed to affect the clouds above, staining them violent and spinning them into a wild vortex that emitted occasional rumbling sounds.

Red lightning danced in that vortex, almost like red dragons flitting about and roaring.

The wall was violet, and the shield was black. Each tile and brick that formed the wall emanated incredible pressure, and all of that together... created the ultimate division between the lands of Heavenspan and the Wildlands!

Currently visible atop the wall itself were over a hundred magical cannons, ferocious weapons that seemed mighty enough to destroy the heavens and extinguish the earth.

Right in the middle of the Great Wall was a city that was fully ten times larger than either East Sea City or World City. That city formed the gate which led into and out of the Great Wall!

Countless auras could be detected within that city, each and every one of which seemed to pulse with the blood of countless battles, and were suffused with complete and utter determination. Based on what Bai Xiaochun could sense, there were millions upon millions of such auras.

Furthermore, in addition to the numerous Nascent Soul auras, there was something else, something... that could shake heaven and earth, something powerful that it seemed to be a part of creation itself.

It was... a deva!!

Deva were rare, but there was one here. Furthermore, it was a deva that neither Bai Xiaochun nor Zhao Tianjiao were unfamiliar with. It was Chen Yueshan’s father, three-eyed Chen Hetian, who had arrived in the city much earlier than them.

In the following years, he would be tasked with leading the defense against the Wildlands!

In the very middle of the city was a five-sided pagoda, a tower that stretched 30,000 meters into the sky. From the top of that tower, everything on either side of the Great Wall was clearly visible. The intense light which flickered inside of it was enough to shock anyone who laid eyes on it.

At the very top of the pagoda was a huge pearl fully 300 meters wide, inside of which was a mysterious, swirling mist that occasionally formed together into an eye with two pupils!

Anyone who that eye looked at would instantly begin to shake, as if the will of the heavens were focusing on them!

Even as Bai Xiaochun was looking at the tower in shock, Zhao Tianjiao whispered, “Starry Sky Pagoda!”

When Zhao Tianjiao looked at the pagoda, it was with utter fervor and deep respect.

“It's a holy object of our Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. The Starry Sky Pagoda. I heard that sealed inside of that pearl... is a true spirit!”

“True spirit!?” Bai Xiaochun said, a look of shock appearing on his face.

“Even I don’t know what a true spirit really is. But my Master told me that with that true spirit in place, the Great Wall is no longer an inanimate object. Instead, it possesses a life force of its own.

“The pagoda not only possess all types of strange defensive powers, but also forms the heart of the Great Wall. All matters pertaining to battle credits and resource distribution are under the control of the pagoda.” Suddenly, Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath and pointed his finger out.

“Xiaochun, look! Surrounding the Starry Sky Pagoda are the banners of the five legions!”

Sure enough, five banners could be seen flapping in the wind, a dazzling and eye-catching sight that made it possible to distinguish the five legions of the army, even from a distance!

The five banners were all a different color, and all had different sigils. All of them were very unique, but one of them seemed to stand out in particular to Bai Xiaochun. The sigil on that banner depicted a Wildlands savage that had been skinned alive!

The sigil was extremely lifelike, and it was even possible to see the skinned savage howling from the pain. Bai Xiaochun was almost sure that he could hear a bloodcurdling scream when he looked at the banner.

“Those banners represent the five legions that make up the Hall of Steel Veins, each one of which has accomplished incredible things during the wars throughout the years. The five legions are the Skin Flayers, the Black Demons, the Bane Stars, the Savage Butcherers, and the Soul Slaughterers!

“The Skin Flayers!” Bai Xiaochun said with a gasp. For some reason, that name really caused his mind to tremble.

“Each legion has their own banner, which not only represents what they’ve accomplished in battle, but also demonstrates how incredible they are. See the Skin Flayers’ banner? I’ve heard that their legion is incredibly bloodthirsty. Whenever they march to battle, they skin their enemies alive. Their name alone causes the savages outside the Great Wall to tremble in fear!” From the way Zhao Tianjiao’s eyes glowed with reverence, it was obvious that he very much wanted to join one of the five legions.

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard. After seeing the five banners, he thought more than ever that he should keep his distance from them.

Zhao Tianjiao was almost breathless as he revealed everything he knew. “Xiaochun, did you know that beyond the Great Wall, the savages have something called the Execution List? Once your name gets on that list, everyone in the Wildlands will do everything they can to kill you!

“The generals of the five legions are all in the top 10 of that list, the highest among them being the general of the Skin

Flayers, Bai Lin. He has the same surname as you, and is highest on the list at sixth place, surpassed by only the devas!”

The more Bai Xiaochun learned about the Great Wall, the more dangerous and unsafe it seemed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0466 awe-chapter-467

As the group neared Great Wall City, they reached a certain point where a rippling fluctuation appeared, surrounding them and locking them in place.

It was impossible to detect with the naked eye, and almost immediately surrounded them with indescribable restrictive power that made it almost impossible for them to move. Even Zhao Tianjiao suddenly lurched to a stop and couldn’t move a muscle!

The same thing happened to Chen Yueshan, Bai Xiaochun, and the others in the group. All of them were suddenly as stiff as boards, completely incapable of movement.

Next, the rippling power used some unknown method to examine their identity medallions and confirm that the medallions belonged to them. Even Chen Yueshan, daughter of three-eyed Chen Hetian, was examined thoroughly.

After that, another fluctuation passed through them, and they could sense their souls being examined!

It only lasted for a moment, but even that short bit of time left Bai Xiaochun and the others all trembling as if they had just had a brush with death.

After all, they had just been immobilized and scanned with divine sense; if they had harbored any ill intentions at all, they would have been killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!

After the rigid examination, the fluctuations locking them in place slowly faded away, and they regained the ability to move. Expressions flickering, they continued on toward Great Wall City.

Moments before, when the small group was being stopped and inspected, a door had opened somewhere in Great Wall City, and a middle-aged cultivator had stepped out, clad in a black suit of armor. He emanated the fluctuations of the great circle of Core Formation, as well as a bleakly murderous aura which grew more intense by the moment. The man took only four steps, and yet, that placed him right in front of the newly arrived group.

Even Zhao Tianjiao could sense that this man’s murderous aura was unusual and unique.

When his eyes fell upon Chen Yueshan, he immediately clasped hands and bowed. “I am your humble servant, Colonel Li Hongming of the Skin Flayers.

“The inspection you underwent just now was merely protocol. Great Wall City’s spell formation has a special function which strictly inspects every person who comes in. I hope you can forgive me for the unexpected inconvenience.” From the way Li Hongming was speaking, it was clear that he didn’t expect a response from any of them, but rather, wanted them to listen carefully.

“It is not permitted to tarry inside of Great Wall City, and in fact, the other trial-takers won't even be allowed inside. They can only pass in and out of the Great Wall via a side gate, and must take no more than the time it takes an incense stick to burn to do so.

“However, the deva patriarch passed down orders that your group would be allowed in the city, albeit for only a single day. After that, you must leave…. I’ve been tasked with overseeing your stay, and therefore, you are not allowed to leave my sight. Please do abide by that arrangement.” With that, he turned and began to walk off.

When Bai Xiaochun examined Li Hongming, he could tell that the man’s cultivation base was only a bit higher than his own, and yet, his murderous aura was vastly more intense. Furthermore, his eyes seemed to radiate a feeling of blood, as though he had killed too many souls to even count.

The fact that a person like that was a mere colonel in charge of a thousand soldiers left Bai Xiaochun even more shaken regarding the five legions.

After a moment of silence, Zhao Tianjiao hurried after Li Hongming and asked, “Brother Li, why did the inspection from before even go as deep as our souls?”

Without even turning his head to look at Zhao Tianjiao, Li Hongming said, “One sixty-year-cycle ago, the vengeful souls outside the Great Wall devised a unique possession technique that allowed them to masquerade as cultivators. They used that technique to try to infiltrate Great Wall City and assassinate the generals. From that point on, we took precautions against such methods. Everyone who wants to enter the city must first undergo a soul inspection!”

Zhao Tianjiao nodded and didn't ask any further questions. Bai Xiaochun followed along cautiously with the rest of the group as Li Hongming led them into Great Wall City itself!

He could instantly tell that the place was different from East Sea City or World City. First of all... there were no shops anywhere to be seen. Although there were a lot of people present, most of them wore suits of armor, and had cold, expressionless faces.

This wasn’t really a city, it was... a huge military base!

The cultivators were all members of the five legions, each of which had their own section of the city to themselves. There was a harsh, stern atmosphere that weighed down everywhere, leaving Bai Xiaochun and the rest of the group feeling somewhat unsettled.

Even Zhao Tianjiao was affected.

When Li Hongming saw the reactions of Bai Xiaochun and the others, a cold smile appeared on his face, and a bit of scorn could be seen in his eyes. He obviously didn’t have a very good opinion of them, and were it not for the orders of the deva patriarch, he would never have lowered himself to the point of giving them a tour of the city.

As far as he was concerned, his current task was simply taking him away from fighting or cultivation.

“They’re nothing but a bunch of highfalutin kids from the sect, here to see what war looks like.” Although his heart was filled with scorn, he kept his face expressionless as he led them through Great Wall City.

Along the way, various cultivators from the five legions looked over at Li Hongming, and when they saw the type of armor he was wearing, would clasp hands and offer respectful greetings.

“Greetings, Colonel!”

“My respects, Colonel!”

Bai Xiaochun heard many such greetings being called out, and when he saw the looks of respect on the faces of the other cultivators, couldn’t help but be curious about the rank of colonel.

Zhao Tianjiao and the others were all wrapped up in their own thoughts as they looked around at the violet walls of the city.

Everything in the city was violet, including the buildings, and emanated a reek of blood.

“Great Wall City is divided into five districts, corresponding to the five legions. We are currently in the district assigned to the Skin Flayers, which is itself larger than all of World City.

“The Skin Flayers’ district is further subdivided into ten garrisons. As for that area over there... it belongs to General Bai Lin.” Li Hongming was currently pointing to an area with a vast, 300-meter-tall building that looked like a violet coffin.

The coffin was emblazoned with the sigil of the Skin Flayers, and emanated a very sinister air. As he looked around, Bai Xiaochun could see the looks of zealous devotion in the eyes of the cultivators when they looked at the huge coffin. It was the same even with Li Hongming.

“The other areas are similar, so I won't take you to look at all of them.” Having led them on a rather circuitous route through the city, Li Hongming finally took them into a rather ordinary-looking courtyard.

Li Hongming looked up at the noon sun and then coolly said, “It's getting late, so why don’t you rest up a bit. There’s a curfew at night, so remember that, and be careful.”

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the sun, and could tell that it was actually very early, and not anywhere close to night time. Li Hongming clearly didn't want to waste any more time showing them around.

“I’ll escort you out tomorrow morning at first light.” With that, Li Hongming turned to leave.

Zhao Tianjiao was frowning, and seemed to be on the verge of saying something when Chen Yueshan took a step forward and said, “Brother Li, please wait a moment.”

Li Hongming stopped in place. If anyone else in the group had spoken up, he would have ignored them, but Chen Yueshan’s status was different. Frowning slightly, he turned to look at her.

“Brother Li, would you mind taking us up to the Great Wall to look around?” she said lightly, giving voice the words that Zhao Tianjiao had just been thinking.

After a moment of silence, Li Hongming slowly said, “There’s currently a battle going on, making it quite dangerous. If we go up, I can’t guarantee your safety. Are you sure you want to go?”

“Yes, we’re sure!” Zhao Tianjiao said, nodding his head.

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, but seeing how everyone else was nodding, he decided to go along. “We definitely want to go have a look!”

Li Hongming did nothing further to dissuade them. Turning in a different direction, he began to lead them toward the Great Wall itself.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0467 awe-chapter-468

It was some distance to the edge of the city where it connected to the wall. Even with Li Hongming leading them, it took the time it takes an incense stick to burn before they arrived.

As Bai Xiaochun stood there, looking up at the enormous wall, he felt so truly insignificant that it was suffocating.

Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan had the same feeling, as did the others in the group. The imposing pressure of the wall caused their hearts to race, their blood to boil, and their cultivation bases to spin rapidly.

Their reaction only served to increase Li Hongming’s disdain.

“Alright, get onto the stairs. In a moment you’ll get to feel what war is like.” As soon as Li Hongming stepped onto the stairs, ripples spread out in all directions, revealing what appeared to be more than 10,000 steps leading up to the top of the wall!

Zhao Tianjiao immediately stepped forward, and Chen Yueshan followed, pausing briefly on the first step before hurrying after Li Hongming.

From where Bai Xiaochun was standing, he couldn’t hear anything that was happening beyond the wall, but as soon as he stepped onto the stairs, he could instantly hear screaming and yelling. At the same time, his heart began to thump as if with the desire to do battle.

“Something's off!” he thought. After looking around for a moment, he quickly hurried after the others.

Soon, the stairs were blurring by beneath his feet, and the sounds of screaming and yelling were getting more intense. Before long, he had reached the final stair, and was on top of the wall. At that point, the sounds of battle rang loudly in his ears.

He could hear agonized screams, enraged roars, and maniacal laughing, along with booms and rumbling that could shake lands and rock mountains.

The wall was so wide at the very top that a hundred people could patrol it in formation. And yet, it was still packed with cultivators, all of them wearing black suits of armor emblazoned with the sigil of the Skin Flayers, their murderous auras rising high into the heavens.

Some of them were operating the enormous magical cannons, sending destructive beams of light down ino the area beyond the wall. Others were at the ramparts, unleashing magical techniques and powerful attacks.

There were some who had flown off the wall and were fighting the mist-like clouds that were hordes of vengeful souls.

The deafening sounds of battle instantly assailed Bai Xiaochun’s mind, leaving him gasping in shock. However, he quickly recovered, and looked over to find Li Hongming staring at him in shock.

As it turned out, he was the first to regain his senses. Neither Zhao Tianjiao nor any of the others had recovered from the shocking sight of the field of battle.

Bai Xiaochun was the first of the group to recover, which was apparently quite a surprise to Li Hongming, who had been standing there with his arms crossed, looking at the small group. Throughout the years, he had seen many such trial-takers come to the Great Wall, and whenever they saw true battle for the first time, they always needed a bit of time to recover.

At the minimum, it usually took them several breaths of time to do so, and yet this nameless cultivator in front of him had only required a single breath of time. In fact, from the look of it, it might have been even slightly faster than that. Apparently, this young man was no stranger to war.

Of course, compared to Zhao Tianjiao and the others in the group, Bai Xiaochun had a lot more experience on the field of battle. Thanks to everything that had occurred in the Lower Reaches and the Middle Reaches, he was very familiar with large-scale conflicts.

However, despite his familiarity, it was still a shock to see all of the cultivators atop the wall fighting, and especially with the magical cannons. Furthermore, all of that quickly tore his attention to what was happening outside the wall!

Beyond the wall, the sky was crimson, as though it had been stained red by countless years of flame. Even the ground outside was bright red, a sharp contrast to the black soil inside the Great Wall.

Down below the wall were vast numbers of vengeful souls, their faces twisted into vicious expressions and they screamed and howled, doing everything in their power to try to destroy the wall itself.

They were the souls of men and women, old and young, all of them vicious beyond compare, and charging forward in tide-like waves of attack.

The number of souls was mind-boggling. Wherever Bai Xiaochun looked, he saw nothing but vengeful souls, whether it was on the ground or in the air. It was as if he were looking out at a massive sea of souls.

Some were attacking the black glowing shield, and others were gnashing and biting at the wall itself. Many were flying up and trying to attack the Skin Flayers who were out in the open.

Although the vengeful souls could attack and retreat at will, the black shield and the wall held strong against them.

For the Skin Flayers, things were different. Most of them were on the wall, and even if they did charge out into the open for an offensive, they always had to return to the wall at some point, and rely on the protection of the shield to weaken the souls for a period before beginning another offensive.

In addition to the vengeful souls, there were occasionally giants visible within the enemy forces. Most of them were about three meters tall, and despite being physically imposing, seemed emaciated and sickly. Even still, they were crazed, bloodthirsty and completely vicious, and their eyes radiated with unfathomable hatred whenever they looked in the direction of the Great Wall.

Bai Xiaochun instantly recognized those giants; they were none other than Wildlands savages!

Most of them held back, looking for opportunities created by the sea of souls. Once such an opportunity presented itself, they would call upon their fleshly body power to rocket through the air like meteors.

The attacks of the savages were what the Skin Flayers on the Great Wall would get most nervous about. Whenever they happened, the cultivators would fly off of the wall to counter-attack with full force!

Rumbling booms filled the air, and crimson blood and gore filled the battlefield as the bitter fighting went on. Even as Bai Xiaochun looked around to take everything in, the savages outside seemed to take notice of him. They could tell that he and his group were new arrivals, and one of them, who happened to be a bit larger than the others, suddenly launched himself into the air toward them.

Howling, he sped along in a beam of light, simultaneously performing a double-handed incantation gesture, which caused numerous vengeful souls to join him in his charge!

In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun saw blackened, yellowish teeth and an emaciated body hurdling madly in his direction!

Li Hongming's pupils constricted, and he strode forward, right hand flashing in an incantation gesture before waving his finger in the direction of the savage. At the same time, numerous nearby Skin Flayers also began to charge forward.

To see the savage staring at him in such bloodthirsty fashion caused Bai Xiaochun's heart to prickle in fear. And yet, the more danger he was in, the more explosively he would react. Having no time to considering the situation, he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, causing a violet beam of light to shoot out.

The violet light almost instantly landed on the savage, wrapping around him. The effect only lasted for a moment before he freed himself, but within that time, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture, causing shocking frigid qi to roil out. Cracking sounds could instantly be heard as layers of ice sprang up around the attacking savage.

Simultaneously, Li Hongming and the other soldiers attacked, causing booming sounds to echo out in all directions. That was when Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan recovered. Expressions flickering, they also joined in the attack.

Amidst the rumbling sounds, the savage let out a miserable shriek, and was torn to shreds. Black blood burst out in all directions, but was too far away from the wall and the shield to hit them. Instead, it splashed down onto the ground below, where it hissed and sizzled as it dissolved the soil.

“The savages’ blood is filled with various toxins,” Li Hongming explained, “and is strong enough to erode the wall itself. It’s a new development from within the last hundred years, and is why we can’t let the savages even get close to the Great Wall.” From the look in his eyes, the disdain he had felt toward Bai Xiaochun seemed to have lessened significantly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0468 awe-chapter-469

Bai Xiaochun looked down wide-eyed at the crater which had been melted by the savage’s blood, and his heart trembled.

“They’re not savages,” he thought, “they’re more like pill furnaces on the verge of exploding.... I can’t believe that’s what happens when you kill them....”

Despite the fact that he was even more nervous than ever, he could tell that Li Hongming was looking at him differently than before, so he forced his chin up and coolly said, “It’s been quite some time that I’ve hoped to feast my eyes on fighting like this. Presumably, battles like this don’t happen very often.”

Li Hongming’s derision for Bai Xiaochun was continuing to lessen, so he smiled and explained, “Of course they do! Small-scale skirmishes like this happen every two or three days.”

Bai Xiaochun would rather have not heard such an explanation, and his heart immediately began to thump. Looking out beyond the wall, he saw a sea of souls, the countless savages, and even certain locations where there were huge, ferocious battle beasts.

“This is a small-scale skirmish?” he thought in surprise. “What are the big battles like?” Not only did everything look very dangerous, but it reminded him that he had to go outside of the Great Wall on at least three missions. What a headache!

Smiling faintly, Li Hongming looked at Zhao Tianjiao and the others and said, “Very well, it’s dangerous here on top of the wall. Now that you've had your look at war, why don’t we head back down?”

Bai Xiaochun was just about to agree when Zhao Tianjiao took a deep breath. Eyes sparkling, he looked down at the fighting and said, “Brother Li, how long will this battle last?”

Li Hongming looked around for a moment to assess the situation, then replied, “From the look of things, I’d say the soul tide will recede tonight. Then there will be a day or two of peace and quiet.”

“In that case, I’ll wait here. Once the battle is over... I’d like to immediately go out into the Wildlands to begin my training!”

Bai Xiaochun had known all along that Zhao Tianjiao would think in this way, and wasn't surprised at all.

However, Li Hongming seemed quite taken aback. “You want to go outside of the Great Wall?”

“That’s why I came here. To go out into the Wildlands!”

Li Hongming looked at Zhao Tianjiao a bit more closely for a moment before clasping hands and bowing deeply. “In all the years I’ve been stationed here in Great Wall City, I can’t count how many people have gone out into the Wildlands, never to return. Fellow Daoist Zhao, the fact that you have such a goal despite your incredible status is truly worthy of respect. I truly hope that your journeys are safe, Fellow Daoist.”

Zhao Tianjiao laughed heartily, then looked over at Chen Yueshan.

Placing her hand over her mouth to cover her smile, she walked over without a word to stand at Zhao Tianjiao's side. Her message was clear; she would stay with Zhao Tianjiao wherever he went. It might be dangerous on the outside, and she might have a reputation as being one of the most beloved young women in the sect, but at the moment, those things didn't matter to her.

As for Zhao Tianjiao's two followers, and Chen Yueshan's two close friends, none of them said anything. Originally, they had planned to go along with Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan, but after seeing the deadly fighting just now, they were left so shaken that they could only look down at the ground in an attempt to hide the shame on their faces.

Zhao Tianjiao didn't seem to care. Smiling broadly, he looked at Bai Xiaochun. "Xiaochun, will you be joining us?"

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. Considering that he was only in the late Gold Core stage, he didn't feel that going out into the Wildlands would be a very good idea.

Perhaps once he reached the great circle, then he would go out. At least at that point, he would be more capable of defending himself. By then, he could just make a quick trip outside and back, and hopefully, wouldn't find himself in too much danger.

By enduring the next ten years in such a fashion, he could then go back to the sect and trade his deva soul for a set of five elements deva beast souls. Taking the safe and easy route to the Nascent Soul stage was the way for him.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun felt more confident in his decision than ever, and was just trying to decide whether or not to explain his decision, when suddenly, cries of shock could be heard from the surrounding Skin Flayers.

Many faces in the area filled with astonishment, and despite the fact that the spiritual energy was so weak, many people unleashed the power of their cultivation bases.

The sudden development left Bai Xiaochun, Zhao Tianjiao and everyone else stunned. Looking out at the battlefield, they saw that the seemingly endless tide of souls had suddenly stopped moving.

In fact, they even began to back up. At the same time, there were no vicious expressions on their faces anymore, but rather, what appeared to be flickers of intelligence. It was a very odd-looking sight; such expressions seemed very out of place.

If that were all there were to the situation, it might not have been a big deal. But then, the vengeful souls threw their heads back and let out ear-piercing howls, and at the same time began to rush toward each other and clump into groups.

In the blink of an eye, more than ten 300-meter-tall soul emperors had formed on the battlefield. They had broad shoulders and seemingly muscular bodies made up of countless souls, and each one of them wielded different magical weapons. The mere sight of them was enough to shake heaven and earth.

The more than ten enormous soul emperors let out terrifying howls as they brandished their magical weapons in shocking fashion.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide at the sight of the soul emperors, and he couldn’t help but think of the soul emperor he had seen in the cyan trial by fire back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

That soul emperor there looked almost exactly like these ones!!

“This... this....” The terrifying soul emperors out on the battlefield seemed incredibly powerful, almost as if they were comparable to... Nascent Soul experts!

In addition to the more than ten soul emperors, Bai Xiaochun could also see... that there were certain souls out on the battlefield that were different from the others!

The ordinary vengeful souls weren’t intelligent, and couldn’t use magical items. For the most part, they acted on instinct, and were mostly illusory, like smoke. But now, seven or eight figures could be seen on the battlefield, clad in voluminous black robes complete with deep hoods that obscured their heads and faces.

It was impossible to say when they had appeared, but now they hovered in midair, surrounded by crackling black lightning.

There were also some vengeful souls that were beast-like in appearance, and held enormous weapons in their hands as they strode forward.

In addition, at one point off in the distance, swirling smoke formed into the shape of a warhorse with blood-red eyes and flames surrounding its hooves.

Seated on the back of the warhorse of smoke was a gray-robed man!

Clearly, that man was no vengeful spirit, and neither was he a savage. He was... a cultivator!! Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he was like a cultivator. He was tall and thin, and the skin of the hand which held the reins of the horse was pure white and seemingly devoid of any dirt or filth whatsoever.

There was something elegant about him, something that made him seem beyond ordinary. Furthermore, he wasn't alone. Flanking him were seven or eight men and women wearing dilapidated clothing, yet who were very good-looking. As they stood there staring at the Great Wall, eyes flickering coldly, the cultivation base fluctuations rolling off of them placed them in the Core Formation stage.

Immediately, the nearby emaciated savages bowed their heads and clasped hands, expressions of awe and reverence on their faces.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the black warhorse, the first thing he thought of was Bruiser. Then he looked more closely at the figure in the gray robe mounted atop it, and realized that there was definitely something different about him.

He almost seemed like a king to the vengeful souls and the savages, as if he could single-handedly control all of them.... For some reason, Bai Xiaochun found himself thinking about Chen Manyao and the group she represented.

When Li Hongming saw the gray-robed figure, his expression flickered.

“Who would have thought that a small-scale skirmish like this would see the appearance of... soul cultivators and necromancers!!”

Zhao Tianjiao stared at the gray-robed man, coldness rising up in his heart as he asked, “Soul cultivators? Necromancers?”

“In the Wildlands," Li Hongming said in a low voice, "vengeful souls are considered to be the lowest ranking and least powerful of all entities. Then come the savages, and after that, the soul cultivators. At the top... are the necromancers! As for the soul cultivators, they are powerful cultivators who treat the savages like nothing more than servants. There is no spiritual energy for them to cultivate, so they settle for the next best thing. They use soul vitality instead of spiritual power, and that is why they are called soul cultivators!

“The people responsible for capturing the most powerful vengeful souls, the masters of soul manipulation techniques, and the ones who extract soul vitality for the soul cultivators to use, are rare in the Wildlands, and are highly valued. They are the necromancers!

“Necromancers are terrifying beings. Each and every one is a powerful expert who can control souls, merge them together, and even contain souls inside their bodies to be unleashed with devastating power!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0469 awe-chapter-470

Even as Li Hongming was explaining about soul cultivators and necromancers, the gray-robed man on the black warhorse extended his right hand and pointed at the Great Wall. In response, the more than ten gigantic soul emperors roared and began to charge across the battlefield, followed by the numerous battle beasts in the area.

Of course, not all of the vengeful souls on the field of battle had been used to make the soul emperors, so there were plenty of ordinary vengeful souls to accompany them in their charge.

There were also the pitch-black souls in midair, surrounded by black lightning, and the souls with special magical weapons. As the charge began, intense rumblings echoed out that were enough to topple mountains and drain seas.

The savages also howled as they began to run toward the Great Wall, with only the gray-robed man and the seven or eight soul cultivators remaining unmoving as they watched the scene play out.

The battle was ramping up, and deafening rumbling sounds were already filling the air. As for Zhao Tianjiao, he stood looking out at the battle, listening intently to Li Hongming’s explanation. Although Zhao Tianjiao knew quite a bit about the Wildlands, Li Hongming had personally been here fighting battles for many years, so clearly, his understanding was much deeper and clearer.

Bai Xiaochun stood there licking his lips as he looked at the soul cultivators and the gray-robed man. He had a bit of a different perspective than Zhao Tianjiao; he had been dealing with the Wildlands for a long time now, and was very glad to have this additional information from Li Hongming.

“Neither the vengeful souls nor the savages are the true rulers of the Wildlands,” he thought. “The real ones in charge are the so-called rebels who have been forced to live out there!

“Originally, there probably weren’t very many of them, but after all the years that have passed, they’ve multiplied and become many. Considering how barren the place is, they have no choice but to use soul vitality to practice cultivation. And that’s why they’re called soul cultivators.

“The necromancers must just be outstanding figures among soul cultivators. He said they’re adept at manipulating souls, so I wonder if the process is similar to how medicine is concocted or magical items are forged?” Even as Bai Xiaochun was wrapped up in these thoughts, Chen Yueshan frowned.

“Even if soul cultivators are strong, and necromancers are rare, what are they doing here? What gives them the courage to take on the entire Great Wall with just that small group? Aren’t they worried that we will charge out and kill them?!”

Chen Yueshan wasn’t the only one pondering that very question. Zhao Tianjiao had also been thinking about it. Even Bai Xiaochun looked over expectantly at Li Hongming.

Li Hongming didn't respond. Instead, he extended his right hand, within which appeared a jade slip that he apparently used to transmit some orders. Next, ten enormous magical cannons suddenly began to power up on the Great Wall, sending powerful fluctuations out in all directions. Moments later, rumbling sounds could be heard as bright beams of light shot out from the cannons out onto the battlefield.

The air distorted around the beams of light as they shot toward the soul emperors, some of whom let out miserable shrieks as they were destroyed. The beams of light cut through them like a hot knife through butter, and then proceeded onward to destroy more savages and souls behind them. In an instant, the light was closing in on the necromancer.

Those ten beams of light were powerful enough to destroy Nascent Soul cultivators, and yet, when they hit the necromancer and the soul cultivators, their bodies simply faded away.

Obviously, they hadn’t been killed, but rather, had visited the battlefield via projection, and not with their true forms!

Chen Yueshan’s jaw dropped, and Zhao Tianjiao’s pupils constricted. Even Bai Xiaochun was completely taken aback.

Apparently, Li Hongming wasn’t at all surprised by Chen Yueshan’s question, and had even been expecting it. “Back when I first arrived at the Great Wall, I had similar questions. Unfortunately, no one provided me with any answers, and I only learned the truth after seeing things with my own eyes.” Turning to face her, he said, “I suspect you don’t know as much about the Wildlands as you think you do.

“The Wildlands are huge, much larger than the Heavenspan River that we come from. The vengeful souls there are so numerous that they are without end. For countless tens upon tens of thousands of years, the savages there have been born with the power of gods running in their veins.

After they grow up, some of them become giants that are thousands of meters tall!

“There are also countless vicious beasts in the Wildlands, the type that would shock you to hear them described. Remember, it’s not just the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect who resists the Wildlands, it’s all of the sects in the Heavenspan River basin!

“Furthermore, we aren’t the only ones who have devas! Nor are we the only ones to have demigods!”

As Li Hongming continued with his explanation, Bai Xiaochun looked out at the spot where the necromancer and the soul cultivators had been standing, as well as the terrifying battle which was playing out.

Even as he was sighing and cursing about ending up in a place like this, Zhao Tianjiao threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“If the Wildlands were filled with weaklings, then what would be the point of going there for training? The lands out there are filled with crouching tigers and hidden dragons, which make them the perfect place for me! Besides, the Wildlands might be strong, with even devas and demigods, but we have the Celestial!

“With the Celestial on our side, the Wildlands will be the Wildlands for all eternity. They will always be stuck outside the Great Wall, and will never pollute our Heavenspan Sea!” Zhao Tianjiao seemed very grand as he stood there and uttered such words, so much so that Li Hongming also joined him in laughing.

“That’s right. We have the Celestial, so the Wildlands will always and ever be stuck on the outside. That’s how things have always been!” A strong gleam of approval could be seen in Li Hongming’s eyes as he looked at Zhao Tianjiao.

As the two of them laughed together, Zhao Tianjiao looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and could see that he was nervous.

“Xiaochun, does it scare you to see all those souls and hear about how strong the Wildlands are? Cultivation is fundamentally a defiance of the heavens, so we cultivators should obviously dominate the battlefield to carve out our own great Dao!”

When faced with the heroic-looking Zhao Tianjiao and Li Hongming, Bai Xiaochun knew that he couldn’t let himself look scared. Glaring at them, he slapped his chest hard and loudly declared, “Scared? Who said I'm scared? I could destroy those puny souls as easy as turning over my hand!”

Looking out at the tide of souls and the soul emperors, Bai Xiaochun decided to make his words even more persuasive, and to truly convince them that he wasn’t afraid. Therefore, he had to take some action. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a Soul Convergence Pill...

Looking disdainfully down at the battlefield, he threw the pill out.

“Take this!”

As the medicinal pill flew through the air, he performed an incantation gesture and then waved his finger at it.

As he did, the pill landed amidst the sea of souls, and then exploded!

Instantly, a terrifying gravitational force erupted out, becoming a black hole fully 300 meters wide.

All of the souls in that area were in the middle of howling and charging toward the Great Wall. However, in the blink of an eye, their howls were cut short. Meanwhile, expressions of wide-eyed astonishment suddenly appeared on the faces of the Skin Flayers up on the wall.

Within that 300-meter area, all of the vengeful souls were suddenly sucked beyond their control in the direction of the exploded pill, and in the blink of an eye, the entire area was empty!

From a distance, there was a now a large, 300-meter hole in the middle of the soul tide, something completely eye-catching that everyone was looking at.

To the astonishment of everyone, after the souls were sucked together, they became a head-sized soul sphere that dropped down onto the ground. From the look of it, there were over 10,000 vengeful souls inside of it, all screaming and struggling to no avail to free themselves.

Not only were the cultivators on the Great Wall shocked, the savages on the battlefield were completely astounded. There were also many nearby vengeful souls who instinctively stopped in place and looked over.

Even some of the soul emperors looked over in surprise.

“This... this....” Li Hongming said, his mind spinning. Earlier, he had assumed that Bai Xiaochun was pulling out a medicinal pill simply to get some face, but what had actually resulted left him completely and utterly shocked.

Zhao Tianjiao’s eyes were wide as he looked at the newly-emptied 300-meter circle in the middle of the battlefield, and the more than 10,000 vengeful souls struggling in the soul sphere. Gasping, he turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, his expression one of slight confusion.

Chen Yueshan, as well as the others in their group, were standing there with hearts pounding as they suddenly remembered Bai Xiaochun's actions in the cyan trial by fire back in the sect.

After a moment of silence, the Skin Flayers on the wall erupted into chaos, their eyes shining with disbelief and shock as they looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

"Heavens! What just happened!?"

"What... what magical item did he throw out just now!?!?"

"This is unheard-of! I can't believe this! I don't think I've ever seen anything that works so well against vengeful souls!!"

"Who is that guy!?!?"

Seeing that not only had his pill worked quite well, but he had also attracted quite a bit of attention, Bai Xiaochun was immediately enlivened. Therefore, he pulled out a whole pile of Soul Convergence Pills and, with a mighty shout, threw them out over the wall, and then began to perform an incantation gesture.

Booms began to ring out on the battlefield, and soon, vast numbers of vengeful souls were screaming in anguish. Even one of the soul emperors was caught up, and ended up being sucked away into a soul sphere....

The crowd of cultivators on top of the wall stood there in stunned silence.

Bai Xiaochun was more excited than ever by this development. Clearing his throat, he happily stuck his chin up and waved his sleeve.

“Who said I was scared? With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun reduced all those souls to ashes! You think I'm scared of them?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0470 awe-chapter-471

"Bai Xiaochun? Scared?” Feeling very pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun tried as much as possible to flaunt his veins of steel, as if the slightest word of provocation would cause him to throw all caution to the wind and fight it out to the death with his enemies.

The shocking result of him throwing out so many Soul Convergence Pills led to more silence as virtually all of the Skin Flayers on top of the wall looked over at Bai Xiaochun, their jaws hanging open and their eyes shining with ardor.

Even Zhao Tianjiao could barely breathe. His words earlier had been casually spoken, and he had never imagined that Bai Xiaochun would react the way he did. With the mere wave of his hand, he eradicated a huge number of vengeful souls.

He wasn’t the only one. In addition to the Skin Flayers in the area, someone had been watching unseen from the huge coffin off in the distance. That gaze seemed to be completely fixed on Bai Xiaochun for a long moment before retracting back into the coffin.

“I've gone through just about everything you can imagine,” Bai Xiaochun declared. “Back when the Spirit Stream Sect and the Blood Stream Sect were about to go to war, I was the one who single-handedly stopped it. After the sects joined forces, we went on to subjugate the entire cultivation world of the Lower Reaches!” Looking off into the distance, he tried to look as heroic as possible.

“Later on, I charged into battle with a million other cultivators, including those from the Pill and Profound Stream Divisions. In fact, I was the one who came up with the name of the River-Defying Sect!” As he swished his sleeve, the wind blew his hair, making him seem even more impressive than before.

“When the River-Defying Sect fought the Sky River Court, I led the charge, cutting down countless enemies. I even took control of the body of the Blood Ancestor to fight the Sky River Court’s reserve power, the Dire Skybanyan!

“Fellow Daoist Li, now do you understand why I wasn’t very shocked by the sight of the battlefield earlier? On my path of cultivation... I’ve already experienced far too many wars.” There was a tenacity visible in Bai Xiaochun’s expression, and something in his eyes that seemed both profound and ancient.

Because of that, he seemed more than ever like he had veins of steel, and lacked any fear of death. Anyone who saw him at this moment would be shocked, and even Li Hongming was panting a bit.

These weren’t stupid people; none of them knew Bai Xiaochun, and since this was their first time meeting him, he seemed completely and utterly impressive. Plus, his Soul Convergence Pill truly had shaken the entire battlefield, and left everyone’s’ minds spinning.

On the battlefield beyond the Great Wall, the savages were trembling in fear, and none of them even dared to advance. As for the remaining vengeful souls, they were already backing up.

“Xiaochun, Elder Brother really misjudged you!” Zhao Tianjiao said, sounding a bit self-reproaching. Thinking back to everything that had occurred since he had met Bai Xiaochun, he quickly clasped hands and bowed apologetically.

Letting his sleeve drop, Bai Xiaochun lowered his voice and said, “It's no matter. Elder Brother, you're not the first person to assume that I, Bai Xiaochun, am afraid of death. And the truth is that I actually do fear dying. But the reason is that I fear dying for no reason, and fear that my life will be devoid of a future!”

At the moment he felt wonderful, and couldn’t help but muse that the events just now would ensure that in the future, no one would ever dare to say that he was scared of fighting in battle.

“Xiaochun....” Zhao Tianjiao said, shivering a bit.

“I understand your sentiments, Elder Brother Zhao,” Bai Xiaochun replied, “so there’s no need to speak them aloud. Fellow Daoist Li, the battle is not over yet. I suggest you issue orders to take advantage of the opportunity I’ve won you, before it fades away!”

Li Hongming looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun, and without saying a single word, waved his hand toward the battlefield outside the Great Wall.

The magical cannons on the Great Wall rumbled to life, sending beams of destructive light out into the enemy forces, and at the same time, large numbers of cultivators flew into the air, unleashing divine abilities and magical techniques in a riot of colors.

Soon, rumbling sounds filled the air. The vengeful souls struggled to fight back, but Bai Xiaochun continued to throw out Soul Convergence Pills, making it impossible for them to rally together. As a result, they continued to fall back across the battlefield.

Bangs rang out one after another as he tossed numerous medicinal pills out. One 300-meter-area after another was opened up, and the seemingly endless tide of souls was finally being beaten back. Miserable shrieks and bloodcurdling screams rang out without end.

As the tide of souls shrank, the beasts and the savages had no cover, and were unable to defend themselves against the blasts of the magical weapons. Soon, they were being cut down like chaff, with the survivors devolving into sheer madness.

Savages relied on vengeful souls for almost everything, and using them as cannon fodder to charge the Great Wall was one of the primary tactics of the Wildlands forces. But now, that tactic was completely useless!

Hearts trembling, the savages finally realized that too many strange things were occurring in this battle, and that they had no chance of surviving. Having no other choice, they began to retreat.

Before, it had seemed the battle would last until night fell, but as of this moment, evening hadn’t even fallen, and it was already concluding. The Skin Flayers almost couldn’t believe what was happening. In all their years fighting savages and vengeful souls, they had never experienced anything like this.

As the Wildlands forces retreated, Li Hongming clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Many thanks for your help in this battle, Fellow Daoist Bai,” he said sincerely.

The Great Wall was designed as a defensive barrier, so unless dire circumstances presented themselves, the cultivators wouldn't go beyond its bounds for protracted lengths of time. Therefore, it wasn't just Li Hongming who turned to bow to Bai Xiaochun, all of the Skin Flayers in the area who had stayed behind also joined in.

"There's no need to thank me," Bai Xiaochun said somberly. "I do everything for the Heavenspan River and Sea, for my comrades-in-arms, and for my sect! If anything, I should be thanking you! Without your year-round service here on the wall, where could any of us safely practice cultivation?!

"Ladies and gentlemen, Fellow Daoists, thank you, all of you!" With that, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

His words were spoken with a sincerity and deep emotion that touched the hearts of all present, and caused them to approve of Bai Xiaochun even more than before. As for Li Hongming, he laughed heartily and then said, "Brother Zhao. Brother Bai. Come, come. I will personally arrange for a feast so that we can eat and drink to our heart's content!"

With that, he smiled and led the way off of the Great Wall.

His attitude was completely different this time around. Along the way, he passionately introduced the various areas of Great Wall City, and even told them some things he knew about the Wildlands. Instead of taking them to an inn, he led them to his own personal residence. There, his maidservants laid out a huge feast, and they began to socialize and eat.

"Brother Zhao, if you go outside the Great Wall, you will be completely surrounded by danger. I know that you have an impressive background, but you still have to watch out for yourself. Here, take this jade slip. These are all the maps

I've collected during my years doing missions outside. Perhaps they will be of some use.” After handing over the jade slip, he raised his cup in a toast to Zhao Tianjiao.

“Many thanks!” Zhao Tianjiao said, nodding his head somberly as he accepted the jade slip and drank with Li Hongming.

“Brother Bai, I’m sure you have grand aspirations of your own that you will be pursuing, but no matter what happens, if you need help in any aspect, just say the word and I’ll be there.” From the sincere way Li Hongming looked at Bai Xiaochun, it seemed that he really did approve of him, and even wanted to be friends.

Instead of responding with words, Bai Xiaochun simply raised his drinking vessel and took a long drink. Then the three of them all joined together in a round of contented laughter.

Chen Yueshan remained off to the side, watching them with a smile and occasionally refilling their drinking vessels.

Time passed, and soon it was late in the night. The three young men were all Core Formation cultivators, and were sincerely interested in being friends. Their conversation flowed naturally, and they even exchanged some tips about puzzling cultivation problems. Overall, it was a very beneficial conversation for all of them.

Eventually, the sky began to grow light, and Zhao Tianjiao put down his drinking vessel. Eyes shining, he rotated his cultivation base to dispel the effects of the alcohol, and then rose to his feet.

“Xiaochun. Brother Li. It’s time for me to take my leave. I hope that when I return, the three of us can once again eat and drink together!” With that, he clasped hands in farewell. Next, Bai Xiaochun and Li Hongming watched as Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan went to say their farewells to their friends and followers at the other table. Then they left the courtyard, escorted by some of the Skin Flayers to leave the Great Wall and head... into the Wildlands! Their friends and followers all went their own separate ways.

“Stay safe on your travels, Elder Brother Zhao!” Bai Xiaochun murmured as he watched them leave. In his heart, he truly admired Zhao Tianjiao, both for his cultivation base and his temperament. He even felt a bit of an impulse to follow him out into the Wildlands. However, he managed to quickly suppress that terrifying impulse before it could do anything.

“Elder Brother Zhao has his path, and I... I have my own road to follow.” Taking a deep breath, he lifted his drinking vessel and drained of the last bit of alcohol.

“My road leads back to East Sea City,” he thought. “I’ll find somewhere there to spend a few years, and then decide what to do. I definitely don’t want to stay in this crappy place for any longer than I have to.” Fully convinced that this was the right course of action, he rose to his feet to bid farewell to Li Hongming.

“Brother Bai, I know that you're anxious to be on your way, and I don’t have much time on my hands either. I have some orders to carry out, and hope that we can meet again soon in the future. And now, let me escort you to the side gate.” With that, he led the way toward one of the side gates of Great Wall City. As they walked along, the bright, morning sun shone down to light their path.

Bai Xiaochun would occasionally look out at the sky which hung over the area outside the Great Wall, and send his well wishes in the direction of Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan. Before long, they were at the side gate.

All he had to do was walk outside, and then he could return along the path he'd traveled to come here.

Turning to Li Hongming, he sighed and said, “Brother Li, if we’re connected by destiny, then we’ll meet again.”

Li Hongming hesitated for a moment, then said, “Xiaochun.... You know, I really feel like this is the best place for you. Why don’t you think about joining the Skin Flayers? If you enlist, then I can definitely expedite your application!”

“Huh?” As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the words spoken by Li Hongming, the sentimental feeling in his heart vanished, to be replaced by trembling fear. He didn’t want to stay at the Great Wall for any longer than he had to. It was just too dangerous. He was about to shake his head in refusal, but realized that doing so would be a bit embarrassing.

Sighing, he said, “I would love to join. Unfortunately, I’m well aware that the process of enlisting with the Skin Flayers is very complicated. I don’t want to add any trouble to your busy life, Brother Li. One day, if I can do it completely on my own merit, then I’ll definitely join the Hall of Steel Veins.... Well then, I guess I’ll be off now!” Fearing that Li Hongming might do more to try to get him to stay, he turned to leave.

However, before he could take a single step, a grave, somber voice echoed out through the air.

“Do you really want to join the Skin Flayers?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0471 awe-chapter-472

Not only was the voice somber, but it was the weighty type that would apparently not tolerate the slightest bit of disobedience. Anyone who heard that voice would instantly feel shaken inwardly.

Even as the voice echoed out, a middle-aged man appeared, clad in a long black robe. A moment ago, he had been some distance away, but a single step brought him to stand right in front of Bai Xiaochun, blocking his path forward.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes going wide. Whoever this man was, he moved incredibly quickly, so quickly that before his words had finished entering Bai Xiaochun’s ears, the man was already standing right there in his line of sight.

He was handsome, with long black hair that made him quite dashing despite the fact that he seemed to be middle-aged. There was also something profound about him, as though his gaze contained the starry sky itself. A mere look at him left Bai Xiaochun shaken.

Although his clothing seemed casually selected, the way he stood there made him seem as if he were fused with heaven and earth. He was not quite at the level of a deva in that regard, but seemed capable of reaching that level at any time. It was as if he could draw upon the energy of heaven and earth and transform it into boundless battle prowess.

He was not in the Deva Realm, but neither was he in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. He had reached a point where he could understand some of the magical laws of heaven and earth, which meant that he… was in the quasi-Deva Realm!!

Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt as if his breathing were stifled, and he couldn’t even speak.

Although what had occurred so far takes a bit of time to describe, all of it happened in the time it takes to say a short sentence. When Li Hongming saw who was now standing there, his expression turned profoundly solemn, and his eyes began to shine with fervor. Clasping hands, he bowed extremely deeply.

“Greetings, General!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately flip-flopped as he realized who this man was. Considering that Li Hongming had called him General, it meant that he was obviously... the commanding general of the Skin Flayers!

Bai Xiaochun immediately clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, General.”

The black-robed man looked calmly at Bai Xiaochun and then said, “I just asked you if you really want to enlist with the Skin Flayers.”

Bai Xiaochun immediately regretted what he had just said. Seeing the black-robed general staring at him, he started to get nervous, and stammered, “Um... w-well I don't....”

Before he could finish speaking, the black-robed man’s eyes began to shine aggressively.

“Hmm?” A murderous aura suddenly exploded off of him, transforming into wave-like ripples of rage that threatened to capsize the tiny rowboat that was Bai Xiaochun. “Think your answer through clearly before you give it.”

Despite how calmly he spoke, the man’s words echoed like thunder in Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

Bai Xiaochun felt an indescribable pressure weighing down on him, leaving him both trembling and literally on the verge of tears. His eyes were red, and he suddenly had the feeling that if he didn’t agree to enlist, then he might be struck down dead on the spot.

Swallowing hard, he said, “Um... I'm a hostage... it’s kind of a sensitive position....”

“Hostage?” Looking surprised, the man waved his right hand, causing a jade slip to appear in his palm. After examining some information inside, he looked up in thought for a moment.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding with anxiety. He was completely convinced that he must not stay by the Great Wall; it was far too dangerous, and if he didn't leave, he would likely lose his poor little life. However, because of what was happening right now, his emotions were quickly devolving into complete despair.

After a long moment of silence, the black-robed man put away the jade slip and said, “That doesn’t matter. Since you wish to stay here, then I can resolve the issue of you being a hostage. Very well, the matter is settled. From this day on, you are a soldier in the Skin Flayers!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and seeing that the black-robed man was already turning to leave, he quickly cried, “I'm a chosen! I’m in the top ten of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars! I'm free to do whatever I--”

“Chosen?” the man said, not even bothering to look back, his voice ringing with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron. “That’s even better!”

Anger rising, Bai Xiaochun cried, “I... I don’t want to enlist! I take back what I said, alright?”

“Taking it back won’t do any good. You’ve been conscripted. Term of service: ten years.” The man stopped walking and then extended his right hand, within which appeared a violet command medallion, emblazoned with the terrifying, murderous sigil of the Skin Flayers.

“As a general of one of the five legions here at the Great Wall, I have the power to conscript anyone I want. Those were some nice medicinal pills you used yesterday, and will be of great use here. Let me put it his way, Bai Xiaochun: you’re staying here... whether you want to or not!”

Flicking his sleeve, he looked over at Li Hongming.

“Li Hongming!”

“Sir!?” Li Hongming replied loudly.

“Get him his uniform and then take him to the Armory!” With that, the man left, completely ignoring how Bai Xiaochun was reacting to all of this.

Bai Xiaochun felt like weeping, but no tears would come. That was even more the case considering that as the black-robed man had spoken moments ago, a few dozen cultivators had appeared in the area, bristling with murderous auras. They were the type who had obviously fought in countless military campaigns, and had done so much killing that their eyes glowed red. The mere fact that they were looking at Bai Xiaochun left him jumpy.

Clearly, if he refused to comply with the orders, they would not let him leave alive!

Bai Xiaochun was both furious, and also filled with regret. He knew that all of this was the result of him trying to show off a bit....

“If I could take it all back,” he thought, scowling on the verge of tears, “I would never have jumped out into the limelight....” Then, he looked at the back of the black-robed man as he headed off into the distance, and decided to throw caution to the wind.

“General!” he shouted at the top of his lungs.

His words echoed out like thunder, causing the eyes of the surrounding cultivators to grow even sharper than before. Li Hongming was clearly getting anxious, worried that Bai Xiaochun might do something to offend Bai Lin. He well knew that Bai Lin was the type of person who could slaughter both savages and cultivators without batting an eyelid. His rules for the Skin Flayers’ legion were very strict, and thus, Li Hongming quickly tried to give Bai Xiaochun a meaningful look.

Meanwhile, Bai Lin stopped in place for a second time.

“What do you want?!” he said, turning around slowly, his eyes as cold as ice.

Bai Xiaochun immediately shivered as though he had suddenly been dropped into the dead of winter. He wasn’t the only one to have such a feeling. Li Hongming and the other cultivators were suddenly trembling in their boots.

Dejected by how terrifying the man’s gaze was, Bai Xiaochun lowered his voice and said, “If you want to conscript me into the Skin Flayers, that’s fine. But you haven’t told me what my salary will be!”

Li Hongming gasped in response. He knew that Bai Lin was a moody person, and if Bai Xiaochun provoked him in the wrong way, it wouldn’t matter what his background was. If Bai Lin wanted Bai Xiaochun dead, then nobody in Great Wall City could stop him.

“You’ll serve for ten years,” Bai Lin said coldly. “Each year, your salary will be five times what you get in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! As for other rewards, you can acquire them using battle credit!” With that, he turned to leave.

“General!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted.

This time, Li Hongming was wailing inwardly at how brazen Bai Xiaochun was acting. Li Hongming himself would never dare to open his mouth a second time, were he in Bai Xiaochun’s shoes.

The other surrounding cultivators all felt the same. From what they could tell, this Bai Xiaochun... really had some balls.

As for Bai Lin, his murderous aura suddenly intensified by multiple levels. His hair began to fly around in the air as his aura raged out, causing brightly-colored lights to flash in heaven and earth. As of this point, he looked like a god of death as he stared wordlessly at Bai Xiaochun, making the entire area seem more and more cold. The entire Skin Flayers’ district was now completely and utterly silent.

Bai Xiaochun was trembling. The truth was that he didn't really want to yell out, but at the same time, he had the feeling that if he didn’t make some demands now, he wouldn’t get another chance later. Therefore, he steeled himself and said, “I had two Dao protectors, both of them dear friends.... They were in charge of keeping me safe. Um... I’d really hate to be stuck here all alone, is there any way you could send for them?”

Had Song Que or Master God-Diviner been there to hear his words, they would immediately have coughed up mouthfuls of blood, and instantly begun to curse him. To join the army that defended the Great Wall was like a death sentence, and anyone with sense would refuse to do so.... Furthermore, there was no way that either of them could have imagined that after fleeing again, Bai Xiaochun would be trying to get them back....

However, neither Bai Lin nor Li Hongming knew Bai Xiaochun very well, so to them, his words carried a different meaning. From what they could tell, Bai Xiaochun was worried that if he stayed at Great Wall City, his Dao protectors would probably go through a lot of trouble going around searching for him. Thus, in his attempt to care for them, he was asking that they join him.

The fact that, despite being under such pressure and facing Bai Lin’s murderous aura, Bai Xiaochun would still make such a request showed how much he valued friendship and loyalty.

Bai Lin’s expression immediately softened a bit.

“I'm afraid that’s not possible....” he said. “However... I can promise that if you gain enough battle credit, then you can go find your two friends and conscript them yourself!" With that, Bai Lin flickered into motion and disappeared, not giving Bai Xiaochun any more chances to say anything else.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0472 awe-chapter-473

Face falling, Bai Xiaochun watched Bai Lin leave, then turned to look at Li Hongming.

An odd half-smile appeared on Li Hongming’s face as he looked back. Laughing lightly, he said, “Congratulations on attracting the attention of the general, Xiaochun. It’s a big honor to have someone like him personally recruit you and vouch for you. In all the years that I’ve been in the army, I've only seen that happen to three people. You’re the fourth.”

Bai Xiaochun immediately began to grumble to himself that he didn't want to become the fourth person to be personally conscripted by the general. However, he had no choice but to accept his fate, and thus, left with Li Hongming.

As the side gate got further and further away, he couldn’t help but feel like he had lost his freedom, his control over his life, and his chance to pursue his dreams....

“Why did things have to turn out this way...?” he thought, sighing continuously. Complaining inwardly the entire time, he followed along as Li Hongming took him to get his uniform, which was a suit of black armor. After changing into the armor, Bai Xiaochun realized that he looked quite heroic, and yet, that didn’t make him feel any better than before.

As they walked along, Li Hongming excitedly told him about the history of the Skin Flayers. Bai Xiaochun listened morosely as they head toward the location Bai Lin had indicated for him to be taken, the Armory.

What was referred to as the Armory was a well-guarded area filled with numerous courtyard residences. Despite being a colonel, even Li Hongming was inspected thoroughly before being allowed inside.

“The Armory is one of the most important locations in the Skin Flayers district. The only people who are allowed to live in this area are the grandmasters who concoct medicine, create paper talismans, and forge weapons and armor.

“Xiaochun,” Li Hongming said with a sigh, “the general really did take a liking to you!” Bai Xiaochun immediately sensed that the Armory was somewhat different than the other areas outside. Not only was it more peaceful and quiet, but there was also somewhat of an accumulation of spiritual power.

Something else that was strange was that all the cultivators in the Armory seemed very arrogant. As Li Hongming proceeded along, he would clasp hands in salute, and yet they all completely ignored him in response.

Seeing Li Hongming being given the cold shoulder made Bai Xiaochun a bit angry.

“What's so amazing about these people?!” he asked.

Li Hongming laughed and replied, “Xiaochun, they’re all grandmasters. They’re the people who make the tools we require to fight in battle. That's just the way things are.”

At that point, they stopped outside of the seventh building in the Armory.

“Xiaochun, this is as far as I can take you. From now on, we’re fellow comrades-in-arms. If you need help with any issue, just let me know.” After a few more words of advice, he turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun sadly watched Li Hongming leave, then turned and stepped into the building which had been prepared for him. It was thousands of meters across, and other than a three-story structure at one end, was mostly just a large courtyard neatly paved with green spirit stone slabs. Considering that Great Wall City as a whole was virtually devoid of spiritual energy, that made this location a wonderful place for any cultivator.

Although Bai Xiaochun didn't really want to be stuck in Great Wall City, he had to admit that this residence wasn’t too bad. He even saw a lovely little lake off to the side.

Lakes were a rarity near the Great Wall, and any that did exist were filled with black water. Therefore, to see a lake like this one with cool, clear waters instantly left him feeling relaxed.

“Ah well, I might as well just follow orders.” Sighing, he walked over and sat down next to the lake, contemplating what was to come in the future. At that point, he noticed that there were three golden carp swimming back and forth in front of him. They had long whiskers that indicated they had lived quite a long time, and most shocking of all was that they were partially translucent. Clearly, they were not mortal-tier creatures, and were the type of creatures that could be used as ingredients in medicinal creations.

“These dragonfishes must have lived for at least a sixty-year-cycle. That’s pretty rare. They’re the main ingredient for Fishdragon Pills.” After watching the fish for a bit, he decided to go for a walk through the Armory. Soon he realized that all of the buildings had numbers on them, and the smaller the numbers were, the larger the buildings. Furthermore, the locations of the larger buildings were also better.

He was in building 7, which was one of the best buildings in the entire Armory. After examining the building records, he looked over at the little lake that now belonged to him and murmured, “According to the records, there should be a whole school of dragonfish. Why are there only three?” Before he had time to think about the matter, his expression suddenly flickered as he looked over at a nearby wall. There, a figure was flying through the air, using some unknown method to circumvent the defensive spells and enter right into his courtyard.

It was a gaunt old man with an arrogant expression on his face, and a cultivation base in the late Core Formation stage. As soon as he entered the courtyard, he noticed Bai Xiaochun, whereupon his eyes flickered in surprise. However, instead of saying anything, he simply walked over to the edge of the lake and, in plain view of Bai Xiaochun, reached into the water and grabbed one of the dragonfish. Then he turned to leave.

Bai Xiaochun was stunned at how condescending the man was acting. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun was standing right there, yet the man pretended not to see him and then went so far as to grab one of his treasured fish.

Bai Xiaochun had already been feeling depressed about being here, but now, his anger sparked.

“Hey, what do you think you’re doing!?” he barked.

“Concocting medicine,” the old man replied, not even bothering to stop.

“If the general wants to bully me, that's fine. But you think you can bully me too?!” As Bai Xiaochun’s anger burned, his eyes shone with icy light. Reaching out, he made a grasping motion, simultaneously opening his third eye and sending violet light pouring out. The shocked old man attempted to flee, but was too late. In the blink of an eye, the dragonfish he had taken was snatched by Bai Xiaochun and thrown back into the lake.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun realized that there really were less dragonfish in the lake than there should have been. Obviously, the others had been stolen, and likely, all by this old man.

A very unsightly expression could be seen on the old man’s face as he backed up a few steps. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he chuckled coldly and said, “I've been living in building 8 for years, and have never seen anyone as brazen as you. The dragonfish from building 7 are mine for the taking. As for you, you trifling child, do you really think you can act so wildly in my presence?!”

Bai Xiaochun had already been irritated to begin with, and the man’s words only served to increase his irritation.

“Pipe down!” he said, taking a step forward. Instantly, cracking sounds could be heard as frigid coldness spread out in all directions, causing layers of ice to build up everywhere. Then, he performed something like a minor teleportation, placing him directly in front of the old man.

The old man’s expression flickered, and before he could even think of fleeing, Bai Xiaochun punched out with the Living Mountain Incantation. A force like an entire mountain slammed into the old man, who tumbled backward several hundred meters, blood spraying out of his mouth.

“Screw off! From now on, all the dragonfish in this place are surnamed Bai!”

Although the old man’s eyes flickered with venomous hatred, he didn’t press the issue, and simply turned and left.

Driving away the condescending old man lifted Bai Xiaochun’s mood quite a bit, so he sat down next to the lake to meditate. Before long, evening had arrived.

As the colors in the sky changed, Bai Xiaochun was just about to rise to his feet when he suddenly turned to look up into a different direction. A moment later, a few beams of light appeared, moving with lightning-like speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Three figures approached, and in the lead was Bai Lin, clad in a black suit of armor, his face completely expressionless.

Behind him were two old men with murderous auras and Nascent Soul cultivation bases, both of whom were clearly sizing up Bai Xiaochun curiously.

Bai Xiaochun immediately stood up and said, “Greetings, General.”

“Have you gotten used to the environment in the Armory yet?” Bai Lin asked.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then carefully responded, “It's alright, just a bit quiet, that’s all.”

Having heard this, Bai Lin looked at one of the old men and said, “Lin Tao, arrange for some handmaidens to care for Bai Xiaochun’s daily needs.”

The old man nodded, pulling out a jade slip to send out some orders.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback at how quickly his needs were being cared for. Just as he was considering what else he should say, Bai Lin looked down at the clear waters of the lake for a moment, then up into the sky.

“The Great Wall has existed for many years,” he said. “In fact, it’s older than the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect itself. Do you know how many cultivators have been stationed in this city over the years, how many have fought here against the Wildlands...?

“Too many. The five legions of the Hall of Steel Veins have only been garrisoned here for the past 10,000 years or so.

“Generations come. Generations go. People perish. People leave. But the Great Wall remains.

“Although there is a bit of rivalry between the five legions, overall, relations are good. We live up to our various areas of responsibility, guard the wall, and prevent the Wildlanders from invading.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0473 awe-chapter-474

Bai Xiaochun was having a hard time keeping up with what Bai Lin was saying, or at least, having trouble understanding what the point was. However, there was nothing else he could do but stand there and listen.

“The five legions all have a general and ten major generals,” Bai Lin continued. “Each major general has ten colonels beneath them, and so on, down to the lieutenants and the captains!

“As for me, I am the current general of the Skin Flayers.” Bai Lin looked back at Bai Xiaochun, and his gaze grew even sharper than before. “I'm not the type of man to mince words. I like to say things directly, and I always mean what I say. I have a strange personality. Some people say that I’m temperamental, and others say that I’m bloodthirsty.

“Some say that I will definitely become a deva someday, and others speak of my incredible natural-born talents. People call me brilliant, and say that I have a profound understanding of strategy and tactics. There are all sorts of such talk.

“I don't like it. I’m not interested in hearing those things, and in fact, there is only one thing that I like to hear people talking about. Do you know what that is?”

Considering how Bai Lin seemed to be blathering on so much, Bai Xiaochun had to admit that he really was quite weird. It almost seemed as if he were just randomly saying whatever came to mind. For example, what he had started talking about earlier seemed to have nothing to do with what he was talking about now.

Therefore, Bai Xiaochun simply stood there blinking for a moment until Bai Lin frowned.

“I asked you a question. Do you know what I like to hear people talking about?” From the look in his eye, he expected Bai Xiaochun to answer the question.

“Um... no?” Bai Xiaochun said, musing that this Bai Lin really was an odd fellow.

Bai Lin’s eyes flickered with cold light as he said, “You know, I don’t like it when people do things half-heartedly!”

Bai Xiaochun was cursing inwardly, and yet, Bai Lin’s cultivation base was far higher than his own, so there was little choice. Therefore, he plastered a look on his face to make it seem like he was thinking very deeply. Then, after a long moment passed, he slapped his thigh. Eyes shining, he said, “I know! Senior, in the future, you want people to look back and remember that there was once a cultivator named Bai Lin, a man who led armies across all creation, and who protected the Great Wall for his entire life!” Bai Xiaochun was of the opinion that his flattery was flawless, and was actually starting to feel proud of himself, when he noticed that Bai Lin’s expression had turned grim.

“Wrong!” Bai Lin said, flicking his sleeve, his eyes beginning to shine brightly. “I like people to talk about how Bai Lin has a wonderful grandfather. That is because my father’s father ranks second only to the demigod patriarch in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. He is... a deva grand elder!

“And what does that mean? That means that nobody in the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would ever dare to provoke me! Furthermore, I'm free to provoke anyone I wish! And beyond that, it means that I can dominate anyone and everyone in Great Wall City! It also means that the Skin Flayers have a profoundly shocking backer to rely on. From the day that I became the general of the Skin Flayers, I've had access to anything I wanted. If I lack a single thing, I simply make a request of the sect!

“In summary, the point of what I’m saying is that when you join up with the Skin Flayers, other than Deva Realm Senior Chen, there is no greater force to be reckoned with in this city than me!” With that, he leveled a cool gaze onto Bai Xiaochun. “Understand?!”

“Uh... yeah....” Bai Xiaochun said, staring in surprise at Bai Lin. Finally, he understood what the general had come here to do, which was simply to show off his family background.... Of course, there wasn’t much difference between that and the way that Bai Xiaochun often showed off....

As for the Senior Chen that he had referred to, Bai Xiaochun was aware that he meant Chen Yueshan’s father, the three-eyed Chen Hetian.

Bai Lin nodded approvingly. As for the two Nascent Soul experts flanking him, they had no expressions on their faces whatsoever, as if they had long since grown used to Bai Lin’s personality and speeches.

Sounding very serious, Bai Lin continued, “Well, now that you understand what I like to hear people talking about, you also understand that as long as you work for me, you can have anything you need. And you also understand what I want from you! I want your service!!” By this point, Bai Lin’s eyes were beginning to shine with passion.

“I want you to work hard for our legion, to kill savages, to defeat vengeful souls, and to help us win more campaigns!

“That is why I conscripted you into the Skin Flayers. I want you to work hard at concocting medicine. Make medicines that can help us in our fight on the Great Wall. As long as you do that, you can have anything you want here in Great Wall City. In fact, I can even make things happen for you in the sect itself.

“For example, would you like the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to open more slots for River-Defying Sect cultivators to come join the sect?

“Would you like your hostage status to be removed?

“Even if I can’t personally make it happen, my grandfather can. The only requirement is your military service!

“Therefore, Bai Xiaochun, I want you to concoct that same medicinal pill you used before. I want lots of them. The more the better. And if possible, I want them to be even more powerful than before!”

Generally speaking, silkpants weren’t anything to fear. Naturally skilled silkpants were, though. And even more fearful were ambitious silkpants. They were the most terrifying of all....

Bai Xiaochun was actually a bit impressed by Bai Lin. However, considering they were both surnamed Bai, it was a bit annoying that Bai Lin had someone so powerful to rely on, whereas Bai Xiaochun himself didn’t.

Of course, Bai Lin’s request was something Bai Xiaochun had assumed was coming. Furthermore, considering the things that tended to happen when he concocted medicine, he also figured it was probably good to at least mention that possibility at the outset.

If he didn’t, and something bad happened, then the next time he saw Bai Lin, the man would surely be furious.

This wasn’t the River-Defying Sect, where he could do just about anything he wanted. Nor was it the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect headquarters, with Du Lingfei there to make sure he was safe.

He was now at the front lines of a war. He had seen how much fighting and killing went on beyond the Great Wall, and could sense the murderous aura that filled the entire city. He could well imagine how, if he caused some disaster, he would have a hard time protecting his poor little life, and would likely be left with no other choice than to flee the city.

Therefore, he took a deep breath and gave Bai Lin a very serious look.

“General, I can definitely concoct a lot of Soul Convergence Pills for you. That’s no problem at all. However, I invented that pill, and am familiar with the instabilities that can crop up during the concocting process. To be honest, not even I can truly explain why those things happen.”

Feeling a bit nervous, but not wanting to hide the truth, he continued, “If you want more powerful Soul Convergence Pills, then I need to do more research and experimentation. I'm not saying that I can’t do that, but I do have to point out that from the time I was very young until now, I always cause huge commotions whenever I concoct medicine....”

“That doesn’t matter,” Bai Lin said, waving his hand dismissively. “What could possibly go wrong when concocting medicine?”

“I’m serious, General,” Bai Xiaochun continued cautiously. “Back in the Spirit Stream Sect, one of my pill concocting sessions caused acid rain to fall all over the whole sect. A lot of people had their clothes melted right off.... Another time, a whole bunch of animals mutated. You can’t even imagine how terrifying that was.

“Another time, I provoked lightning from heaven that destroyed my entire immortal's cave.... Later on, all the snakes in 10,000 Snakes Valley rebelled and invaded the sect because of me.” The two Nascent Soul experts behind Bai Lin already looked a bit fearful.

As for Bai Lin, he hesitated for a moment, then waved his hand dismissively again. “Those are just minor problems. Things like that won’t hurt anybody!”

Looking a bit embarrassed, Bai Xiaochun said, “I'm not finished yet....

“Um... later on in the Blood Stream Sect, my pill furnaces kept exploding... and one time I made this smoke that caused everyone on the mountain to come down with near-deadly diarrhea.... And that’s not even mentioning my Fantasy Pill, which gives people all sorts of crazy hallucinations. Oh, right. There was one time that I almost blew up an entire holy mountain....”

The two Nascent Soul experts with Bai Lin were actually major generals in the army, but even they were trembling in fear. The vivid descriptions provided by Bai Xiaochun sounded like nothing less than disasters, no matter how they analyzed them....

The worst thing of all was that they could tell that Bai Xiaochun wasn't lying.... He really was telling them of the consequences of his own medicine concocting.

Bai Lin’s eyelids twitched a bit, and he hesitated for even longer this time. But finally, he waved his hand even more forcefully than before.

“It doesn’t matter. You just take responsibility for getting those medicinal pills to the army. Whatever you need to do it, just ask. As for any problems which crop up during the concocting process, I’ll take responsibility!”

At long last, Bai Xiaochun was able to breathe a sigh of relief. From what he could tell, now that he had offered an honest warning, if anything bad happened later, it wouldn’t matter.

“Although,” he murmured to himself, “everyone who has said similar things in the past always ended up regretting it....” Whenever he thought back to everything that had occurred with medicine concocting in his life up to this point, he always sighed. At this point, he realized that considering Bai Lin had said he could have anything he needed, he decided not to hold back out of politeness.

“Okay. I need a hundred of your best, most expensive pill furnaces! Each one must have been used to successfully concoct thirty batches of medicinal pills, should have high-quality medicinal aromas, and must all look identical. Otherwise, I would have to spend time getting used to each one, which would be a waste of time...” After the briefest of moments, he added, “...and therefore, a waste of my military service!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0474 awe-chapter-475

When Bai Lin realized that Bai Xiaochun wanted a hundred pill furnaces, and had even more requirements beyond that, he hesitated for a moment. After all, the type of pill furnace being requested were very valuable. However, Bai Xiaochun’s final added words were very convincing, so Bai Lin nodded in agreement and said, “No problem at all!”

“I also need 10,000 high-grade earthflame crystals,” Bai Xiaochun continued, “not a single one of them lacking even an iota of earthflame power. They need to be fully charged! By the way, that 10,000 is only for the first month. I’ll need the same amount every month afterward.”

“Simple!” Bai Lin said, smiling broadly. As far as he was concerned, any requirements that could be solved by means of spirit stones weren’t a problem at all.

Seeing Bai Lin’s casual reaction, Bai Xiaochun felt slightly irritated, and thus went on to say, “I need fuel for five-colored flame, six-colored flame, seven-colored flame and eight-colored flame!”

Bai Lin hesitated, then gritted his teeth and said, “I’ll do my best.”

“Plus 1,000 cloudysoul leaves! 1,000 earthspirit tubers! 1,000 atmosphere flowers....” With that, he went on to name several dozen types of medicinal plants, any one of which could only be purchased via a sizeable amount of merit points back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. There were some that were only available for purchase to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, and even a few which were considered to be extinct. But Bai Lin considered himself to be incredibly rich, and after a moment of thought, agreed to all the demands.

Despite wracking his brains, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t think of any other ingredients or items he needed, so decided to change tactics a bit. “Oh right. Concocting medicine is very draining on one’s energy and cultivation base, and will be even worse considering the surroundings. If you want me to work without resting, then I need some supreme-grade spirit alcohol to keep my cultivation base going!”

Bai Lin immediately let out a hearty burst of laughter. “You got it!” However, only a moment later, his eyes shone with a cold light, and his murderous aura began to pulse dangerously. “However… although, I can give you everything you’ve asked for, when it comes to what I want, if you fail to--”

Flicking his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun interrupted proudly to say, “No ifs! When it comes to concocting medicine, when Bai Xiaochun says that he can do it, he definitely can!”

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have anyone questioning his ability to concoct medicine, after all!

Bai Lin seemed taken aback, and yet, didn’t get angry. In fact, a broad smile could be seen on his face. He respected people with skill, and Bai Xiaochun seemed completely confident in his abilities. As such, Bai Lin could only assume that he truly was very skilled at concocting medicine.

Furthermore, Bai Lin wasn’t worried about any so-called disasters. After all, no one in Great Wall City would dare to provoke him. On the other hand, if Bai Xiaochun didn’t end up concocting the medicine, then Bai Lin would make sure he reaped the harsh consequences of lying.

Laughing, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Very well. You’ll get everything you need within three days. If there’s anything else you require, say the word. The only thing I care about is that you succeed in the end!”

After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the wall leading to building 8. Not only had the old man from that building casually stolen his property, he had also given him a very dirty look. Earlier, he knew that, as a newcomer, it would be wisest not to cause any problems that might have negative ramifications later.

But now that he realized how important Soul Convergence Pills were to Bai Lin, he decided that he might as well add in one last requirement and see how Bai Lin handled it. Eyes narrowing, he said, “I’m afraid my courtyard isn’t large enough to contain all one hundred pill furnaces, and that old guy over in building 8 offended me earlier.”

Bai Lin seemed surprised, and looked at Bai Xiaochun deeply for a moment.

“You know, Bai Xiaochun, the more requirements you add on, the less room you have for failure. Very well. Henceforth, building 8 belongs to you! As for Grandmaster Chen, you won’t see him for the next ten years. Furthermore, you--” Before he could finish speaking, an intense rumbling roar could be heard from beyond the Great Wall, something so loud that the whole city seemed to shake.

Bai Lin’s pupils constricted, and Bai Xiaochun’s heart instantly began to pound in shock. Everyone looked over in the direction of the Great Wall, and could see that, at some unknown point, the clouds in the darkening evening sky had formed a huge vortex. The vortex was so large that it was impossible to even see the end of it, and pouring out of it, like prisoners escaping from a jail cell, were endless numbers of vengeful souls, all of whom were furiously charging in the direction of Great Wall City.

The vast number of souls was enough to make anyone’s scalp go numb. They seemed evil and ferocious to the extreme, and a few of the unfortunate cultivators from the five legions who happened to be outside the wall dispatching some enemies were pounced upon and instantly reduced to desiccated corpses!

“How could this be happening?!?! Someone’s using some type of grand magic to tap into the Underworld River!!” With that, Bai Lin shot with lightning-like speed toward the Great Wall.

Bai Xiaochun gasped, and once again realized that the intense sensation of deadly crisis he was feeling right now was just how life was at the Great Wall!

The flames of battle could rage at any time!

After a long moment, he exhaled slowly, more conscious than ever that his Soul Convergence Pill could probably be very useful on the battlefield.

Thankfully, he was very familiar with how to concoct Soul Convergence Pills, and since all he had to do was make them a bit stronger, was confident that it wouldn’t be extremely difficult. After all, he only needed to adjust the pill formula a bit. He had been devoted to the Dao of medicine for years, and had even concocted a River-Defying Pill, so he had absolute confidence in being able to add bit of strength to a trifling Soul Convergence Pill.

Despite that, he still felt a bit nervous, not because of the pill itself, but rather, the strange things that often happened when he went about his concocting work. However, Bai Lin had unequivocally guaranteed to take responsibility, so therefore, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit better.

Considering the level of his Dao of medicine, there was no saying that he would even cause any problems at all. Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun was very excited, and decided that Great Wall City actually wasn’t a very bad place after all.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, end up being like a shining star wherever I go. Ai. It’s not like I want to be that way.” Humming a little tune, he swaggered back into his residence.

The next day, a large group of cultivators entered building 8, and Bai Xiaochun soon heard bellows of rage coming from Grandmaster Chen. However, such cries soon faded away, and less than two hours later, the wall between buildings 7 and 8 had been torn down.

In the end, the two courtyards were connected, and a new spell formation put in place. As of this point, Bai Xiaochun’s residence was about twice the size as it had been.

The limestone flooring in the two courtyards was connected, and soon, more spiritual energy than before could be detected. Although it was still rather weak, to anyone else in Great Wall City, it would be a luxury. In fact, the only other type of people who would have access to so much spiritual energy would be major generals.

When Bai Xiaochun emerged from his residence and looked out at the expansive courtyard, he felt quite satisfied. From what he could tell, no one in the same generation as him could possibly have a finer immortal's cave.

“Not bad. Not bad at all.” Despite being very happy, he did feel that the place was a bit empty. However, that afternoon, one of the major generals in the Skin Flayers arranged for about a dozen handmaidens to come over and help take care of the place. At that point, Bai Xiaochun felt that everything was perfect.

Of course, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had moved into the Armory, and that the day after, Grandmaster Chen had been kicked out of building 8 by the Skin Flayers, was news that shocked all of the other grandmasters.

The residents of the Armory were all famous cultivators, and although none of them were really close friends with each other, when they saw the aggressive way that Bai Xiaochun threw his weight around, they weren’t very happy.

“Let’s see how long things last for this kid!”

“Hmph! General Bai Lin of the Skin Flayers only cares about results. If this Bai Xiaochun doesn’t make him completely happy, he’s definitely going to be furious!”

“The more Bai Lin gives you, the worse things are if you fail. This kid is a complete idiot. He's definitely going to be dead sooner rather than later!”

Bai Xiaochun was unaware of how the other grandmasters in the Armory were talking about him, but whenever he went out for a walk, he could sense their coldness.

“Hmph,” he muttered. “I can’t help but feel that my residence is still a bit too small.” Another day went by. Around evening, Bai Xiaochun went for another stroll, and when he came back, his eyes immediately began to shine.

There in his courtyard were one hundred pill furnaces, neatly lined up, each one of them fully three meters tall. Standing in front of the pill furnaces was one of the same major generals who had come to visit him with Bai Lin a few days before. The old man was flanked by four youths, all of whom were staring wordlessly at Bai Xiaochun.

The pill furnaces were greenish-black, and were all identical, carved with auspicious qilins. They all emanated powerful auras as well.

Furthermore, despite the fact that furnaces weren’t being used to concoct anything at the moment, they were surrounded by a strong medicinal aroma.

Hurrying forward excitedly, Bai Xiaochun quickly began to inspect the furnaces, after which his eyes shone brightly. “He actually did get me a hundred pill furnaces, all of them tier-3 at that!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0475 awe-chapter-476

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochun saw a pile of a few dozen bags of holding. Upon checking them, he gasped at the sight of 10,000 earthflame crystals. Furthermore, everything else that he had asked for was there, without exception.

Even the spirit alcohol he had requested had been provided in full measure.

“Bai Lin wasn’t just showing off. Three days! It only took him three days to get all of this!” By this point, his eyes were shining with excitement and determination. Furthermore, he was determined that, considering Bai Lin had kept his promise, there was absolutely no reason to hold back from working hard to keep his.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the major general.

“If it’s not too much trouble,” he said, “please let the general know that I won’t hold anything back in my work!”

The old man nodded. “These are four of my best soldiers. You have a big responsibility to bear, so I’m going to leave them here to stand guard and make sure nobody disturbs you.” With that, the old man turned and left.

The four young men had cold expressions on their faces as they walked some distance off and then sat down cross-legged. From the look of it, they weren’t there to protect him, but to keep an eye on him.

After all, the items which had just been delivered were extremely valuable, and had only been acquired through some effort on Bai Lin's part.

Bai Xiaochun immediately ignored the gazes of the four young men. He was simply too excited. The sight of so many pill furnaces and so many medicinal plant ingredients had him itching to get to work.

"It's been a long time since I concocted any medicine…." he murmured, licking his lips. Having nothing to fear regarding future ramifications, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but feel that everything in life was going perfectly at the moment.

He even threw his head back and laughed merrily. As for the four young men, they looked over at him and frowned, but did little else.

"To make my Soul Convergence Pills more powerful, I can't just add more medicinal ingredients. I need to completely readjust the formula...." With that, he sat down cross-legged and began to take the medicinal plants out of the bags of holding. Then, the light of augury flickered in his eyes as he began to analyze them on a deep level.

Soon, the foundations of a new medicine formula appeared in his head. Three days went by in a flash, during which time Bai Xiaochun didn't sleep or rest. He was completely immersed in the process of adjusting the medicine formula. His eyes soon became shot with blood, and occasionally he would stand up and pace around in the courtyard, muttering to himself.

"No, that won't work!

"Should I use smelting techniques? There isn't much spiritual energy here, so it would be hard to make that work....

“Completely seal the pill furnace? The impure vital energy would make the ingredients melt faster, but with so much qi in the mix, there would be a bigger risk of the furnaces exploding....”

Bai Xiaochun muttered and frowned, seemingly bedeviled. As for the four guards, they often exchanged awkward glances at Bai Xiaochun’s strange behavior.

Meanwhile, the other grandmasters in the Armory had heard that Bai Xiaochun was beginning to concoct medicine, and their hearts were all filled with cold laughter. Some of them even went over to Bai Xiaochun’s residence to try to get a peek at what he was doing.

The guards didn’t pay them any attention. As long as they didn’t enter the residence itself, they wouldn’t do anything to interfere with them.

“He’s being deliberately mystifying. I can't wait to see the true level of his skill!”

“Hmph! If he doesn’t concoct the first batch successfully, his head will be on the chopping block!”

Of course, even to these grandmasters, the sight of a hundred top-quality pill furnaces was shocking, and led to quite a bit of jealousy and envy.

Two more days went by, and some of the grandmasters who had gathered outside started to get impatient and leave. Before long, only eight remained behind. Bai Lin also came for a visit, his face grim because of the fighting that was going on outside. After looking at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, he decided not to disturb him, and left.

On the afternoon of the sixth day, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up. His eyes were bloodshot, and his face a bit wan. However, a strange gleam could be seen in his pupils.

“I need to use the cloudysoul leaf as the main ingredient. Yes. I’ll bolster the formula with just a bit of earthspirit tuber, add in the unique properties of the atmosphere flower, and then seal the pill furnace up tight. That should increase the power of the Soul Convergence Pill by several times! Well, there’s only one way to find out if I'm right. I’ll start out with ten batches.” By this point, Bai Xiaochun had lost track of time, and wasn’t even aware that there were people around watching him. Convinced that he was going in the right direction, he waved his right hand, causing ten pill furnaces to fly over and land in front of him. Then he waved his sleeve, sending their lids flying off.

Next, he tossed some earthflame crystals underneath the pill furnaces, and unleashed their earthflame power. In the blink of an eye, the ten pill furnaces turned bright red, and began to emanate intense heat. The four young guards all looked over, intense expressions of concentration on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun was completely focused on the furnaces. Even as they continued to heat up, he unhesitatingly began to put the medicinal plant ingredients inside, following the formula that currently existed in his head. Because this was his first test, he was careful with every action, hoping to prevent any failures from cropping up at the end of the concocting process. He even put all the ingredients into the furnaces in very careful order. In this session of concocting, he was at his peak state, whether that meant his thinking, or his actions.

That was why he had selected only ten furnaces, and also why he was being very careful about the order he put the ingredients in. Finally, his eyes shone as he put the lids back onto the furnaces, performed a double-handed incantation gesture, and then roared, “Seal!”

Numerous magical sealing marks flew out from his hands, landing on one of the furnaces, which trembled in response. After the sealing was performed, its lid was closed tighter than ever, leaving not even the slightest opening.

He employed more than a hundred such sealing marks, until he was sure that the furnace was absolutely shut tight. It wasn't even possible for smoke to emerge from it.

Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun had sweat dripping down his face. However, he didn’t look away from the furnaces. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a bottle of spirit alcohol, downed it, and then continued to add sealing marks to the furnace. When he was satisfied, he went on to seal the other nine furnaces, after which he took a few steps back, face a bit pale. Settling down cross-legged, he began to do some breathing exercises.

The four young guards had been watching the whole time, and although they pretended that they understood what was going on, they really didn’t. However, the surrounding grandmasters apparently did.

“Is he sealing the medicinal ingredients?”

“No, that can't be right. You don’t seal the ingredients by sealing the furnaces, do you? What is he thinking?”

“Sealing the furnaces increases their chances of exploding. Does this Bai Xiaochun really know how to concoct medicine?!”

“He’s wasting all of those precious medicinal plants!! I guarantee you that those furnaces will explode within eight hours! Hmph! When the time comes, you people just wait and see if I'm right!” The disdain that the grandmasters felt for Bai Xiaochun was very clear.

Time passed, and soon the eight-hour mark approached. The grandmasters were all staring at the pill furnaces, and just as they had predicted, the furnaces were not just bright red, they were trembling and emitting cracking noises. There were even heatwaves spreading out in all directions.

The situation seemed especially dire with five of the furnaces. Cracks were spreading out over their surfaces, and it seemed very likely that they were going to explode.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide when he saw those five particular furnaces. Backing away, he shouted, “Those furnaces are gonna blow. Everybody, heads up!”

Even as he edged away, his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture as he tried to protect the five pill furnaces that weren’t cracked.

As for the four young guards, cold smiles could be seen on their faces. These young men had fought in countless battles, and had profound Core Formation cultivation bases. As far as they were concerned, they had seen everything there was to see, and therefore, a few exploding pill furnaces wasn’t anything to worry about. Right?

As for the grandmasters outside of the residence, they were all looking on disdainfully, and even with disinterest.

“What's the big deal about a few trifling pill furnaces exploding? This Grandmaster Bai really doesn’t know how to keep his cool.”

“When a concocting session ends with the pill furnace exploding, the size of the explosion depends on the type of pill furnace and the type of pill. A tier-3 pill furnace will make a bit of a bang, but it’s nothing to be scared of.”

“Sealing the pill furnace might make the medicinal pills inside slightly stronger, and can lead to the furnace exploding, but won’t add that much power.”

When the four young guards heard what the grandmasters were saying, they calmed down a bit. However, considering how close they were to the pill furnaces, some of them brought out defensive magical devices just in case.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0476 awe-chapter-477

One of the young guards was so confident in the level of his cultivation base that he didn't even take out a defensive magical device. As the surrounding grandmasters continued to scorn Bai Xiaochun....

The surfaces of two of the five weakened pill furnaces were suddenly covered with nothing but cracks. Apparently, the energy that had been building up inside them had reached a point that the furnaces couldn't contain it anymore. Finally, both furnaces exploded.

A wave of energy immediately burst out, filled with shockingly terrifying power. Shrapnel buzzed out in all directions like meteors, accompanied by a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering boom.

As the energy wave spread outward, the air distorted, and brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth. Everyone in the area felt their ears tingling with pain from the intense noise.

The courtyard's spell formation was instantly damaged, and although it wasn't completely destroyed, several enormous holes were punched into it.

As for the four young guards, their eyes went wide and their mouths opened, but they had no time to do anything else. In the blink of an eye, the energy wave from the two exploding pill furnaces was upon them.

The three who had taken precautionary actions had it better off. Blood sprayed out of their mouths as they were blown back several hundred meters. There, they slammed into the ground, bones shattered and blood oozing out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths. Even their soul flames were flickering, as though their souls might be wrenched out of them at any moment.

As for the fourth young guard, the cocky one who had failed to take out a defensive magical item, he screamed miserably as the energy blast picked him up and hurled him far off into the distance. No one could even tell where he landed....

Things weren’t over yet, though. If those four young guards were affected in such a way, it almost wasn’t necessary to mention all of the grandmasters, none of whom had produced any defensive items at all. Despite being outside of the courtyard, they were incapable of fleeing, and as the energy wave continued to spread, miserable screams rang out as they were violently hurled backward.

Blood sprayed out of their mouths, and their souls seemed to teeter unstably. Each and every one was injured without exception....

Simultaneously, everything in the area began to shake, and quite a few nearby buildings collapsed. The power that was being unleashed right now was almost unimaginable!

“This is impossible!!”

“Heavens! Was that explosion really from a pill furnace?!?!”

“How could this be happening? What did Bai Xiaochun do to that pill furnace? I've been concocting pills for my entire life, and I've never seen an explosion like that! That was more like some sort of deadly magical attack!!”

Even as their shrieks rang out, the Armory continued to tremble, and numerous cultivators flew out into the open and looked in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s residence, shocked expressions on their faces. Bai Xiaochun was quite frightened by what was happening. However, he had been retreating to begin with, and also had an incredibly powerful fleshly body, and furthermore, didn’t hesitate to unleash some frigid qi to protect himself. As such, he was unharmed.

Even he had been completely unaware that his newly developed medicine formula would cause an explosion of this scale. It was almost on the same level as an attack by a Nascent Soul cultivator.

Furthermore, the Soul Convergence Pills were designed to affect souls, and therefore, everyone affected felt as if their souls were about to be ripped out of their bodies. Many of them were now staring ahead blankly, as if they had lost the ability to even think.

And that was the result of only two exploding pill furnaces. It was easy to imagine what could happen if more of them exploded. Most likely, the people in the area would either be ripped to shreds, or at least, sustain incredible damage to their souls.

“This... this....” A look of blank shock could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he looked at the remaining three pill furnaces. Cracks were spreading out on their surfaces, and energy was continuing to build up inside of them. Clearly, they were about to explode. Gasping, Bai Xiaochun began to back up.

It was in that instant that an enraged roar filled the air.

“Bai Xiaochun!!!” It was like a deafening clap of heavenly thunder that shook everything in the area. Simultaneously, a black-clad figure suddenly teleported into the area from off in the distance.

It was none other General Bai Lin of the Skin Flayers!

Feeling both wronged and crestfallen, Bai Xiaochun blurted, “You can't blame me! I warned you about this!”

After all, he really had offered a warning, only to be disbelieved....

Moments before, Bai Lin had been on the wall, offering support to the troops as they fought. Because someone had tampered with the Underworld River, there were currently boundless amounts of vengeful souls outside of the Great Wall. The five legions were under a lot of pressure, especially because necromancers had been spotted out in the enemy forces. It was for that very reason that Bai Lin had personally taken charge of the battle.

However, before the necromancers could make a move, a huge explosion had rocked the Armory, sending out an energy blast that shocked even Bai Lin. Alarmed, he had teleported over, to be met with a scene of complete disaster. Everyone in the area was coughing up blood, and in addition to that, there were three severely damaged pill furnaces that were clearly on the verge of detonating.

Despite being enraged, there was no time for thought or planning on Bai Lin’s part. Roaring, he grabbed the three pill furnaces, then teleported up to the Great Wall and hurled them out toward the other side.

Outside of the Great Wall, countless vengeful souls blotted out the sky because of their sheer numbers. Many of them were converging together to form soul emperors that howled at the tops of their lungs as they charged, seemingly oblivious to their own existence or destruction. As the shimmering shield rising up from the wall rippled under the force of the attacks, the cultivators of the five legions poured all the power they could into their magical cannons, sending destructive beams of light out without cease. Unfortunately, there were just too many souls, and the resistance of the cultivators was already proving to be somewhat futile.

There were also large numbers of savages intermingled amidst the souls, who used their formidable physical bodies to viciously fight their way toward the wall, where they would unhesitatingly self-detonate. As a result, casualties were rising among the five legions.

It was in that moment that the three scarlet pill furnaces, each one of them roughly three meters tall, sailed through the air like suns, crushing anything in their path.

Then, they landed on the ground, so many cracks spreading out on their surfaces that it seemed impossible for them to last any longer without exploding!

The savages seemed shocked that they were being attacked by pill furnaces, which were objects completely unfamiliar to them. One of the savages, who was several dozen meters tall, snorted coldly and flew through the air toward the nearest furnace, upon which he unleashed a mighty fist strike.

In that instant, the combined forces inside and outside of the furnace proved too much for it to sustain. A boom echoed out that could shake heaven and earth as the furnace exploded, sending burning shrapnel out all over the battlefield. As everything in the area shook violently, countless vengeful soul screamed, and many of the nearby beasts which couldn’t avoid the blast were instantly lit on fire.

The savage who had just struck the pill furnace screamed as the energy overwhelmed him, wiping out most of his body as he was flung backward.

However, the explosion itself was not the most powerful aspect of the blast. The medicinal strength of the Soul Convergence Pill was instantly unleashed into a 3,000-meter area, causing all of the vengeful souls to tremble as they were latched onto by a powerful gravitational force. Then, the energy shockwave rolled past, shredding them to bits!

Everything happened so quickly that the savages and vengeful souls had no time to react. Moments later, the other two pill furnaces exploded, and in the briefest of instants, deafening booms and shrill screams filled the entire battlefield.

Numerous savages were slain, and countless beasts and souls were ripped apart. Seas of flame erupted out, and enormous, shocking craters were torn into the ground....

As the blood and gore spread out in all directions, the surviving savages looked around in shock, and even the mostly unintelligent vengeful souls seemed terrified....

“What were those magical items!?!?”

“How could this be happening? I've never seen anything like this!” One by one, the savages turned to look at the Great Wall, expressions of profound fear on their faces.

The truth was that they weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. The cultivators on the Great Wall, not only the

Skin Flayers, but also the cultivators from the other four legions, were dumbstruck.

“What were those things...?”

“How come they seemed like pill furnaces?”

“How is that even possible? How could pill furnaces release power like that!?”

“I'm pretty sure that General Bai Lin of the Skin Flayers personally threw them out! Could it be some sort of newly invented magical item?!?!”

Everyone was shaken, and in fact, Bai Lin was so shocked that his anger completely dissipated. He stood there looking out blankly at the craters outside of the Great Wall, and the terrified souls and savages, and after a moment, he began to pant. Then, his eyes began to glow with unprecedented brightness, and even joy.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0477 awe-chapter-478

“The explosion is of secondary value,” Bai Lin thought, his eyes shining more brightly by the moment. “The most important aspect is the medicinal effect, which increases the potency by severalfold....” Finally, he laughed loudly for a moment before turning and heading back toward the Armory.

Bai Xiaochun was currently feeling very out of sorts as he stood there, nervously watching the remaining five pill furnaces. Quite a few cultivators had come to investigate the huge noise from earlier, and were now staring in shock at the wreckage in the area.

Although Bai Xiaochun’s residence hadn’t been completely destroyed, it had been severely damaged. Of the four guards, one had been flung to parts unknown, and the remaining three were now looking at Bai Xiaochun with expressions of dread on their faces.

As for the grandmasters, they were all consuming medicinal pills and glaring angrily at Bai Xiaochun.

“You really can’t blame me,” he said nervously. “I warned you all ahead of time....

“Listen to me, everyone. Either back up, or take out some defensive magical items. After all... you people came here of your own volition. I didn't ask you over.

“When I used to concoct medicine back in the day, no one would even get close. Back on Middle Peak in the Blood Stream Sect, the minute I started concocting medicine, everyone fled the whole mountain.” It would probably have been better if Bai Xiaochun hadn’t said anything at all. As soon as the words left his mouth, the people who had just recently been injured flared into a rage.

“You destroyed the Armory! You hurt your fellow disciples! Let’s see how you explain this to the general, Bai Xiaochun!”

“When other people cause pill furnaces to explode, they lose the pill, nothing more. But you were obviously trying to cause problems!”

Everyone was glaring at him with gritted teeth, especially the grandmasters, who now hated Bai Xiaochun more than ever. After all, they had merely come to see what was happening, and could never have guessed that their lives would have been at risk because of exploding pill furnaces. Even more terrifying was how they had felt their souls being tugged at.

Bai Xiaochun really felt a headache coming on, and that was only compounded when he thought about how angry Bai Lin had been. Obviously, Bai Lin had ignored all of the warnings that Bai Xiaochun had given.

As he considered that point, his frown deepened, and his sighs grew longer. Even as he was trying to come up with some good ideas about how to explain himself, a beam of light rumbled through the air in his direction.

It was none other than General Bai Lin!

He was moving with such incredible speed that he appeared above the Armory only a moment later, where he dropped down in front of Bai Xiaochun.

Looking very somber, and eyes shining with an odd gleam, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Do you know what you’ve done, Bai Xiaochun?”

Bai Xiaochun had no idea what had occurred outside of the Great Wall, and as a result, his heart was pounding with fear and anger. Therefore, he decided to just throw caution to the wind.

“General,” he said loudly, “I told you about what can happen when I concoct medicine. You said that I should focus on my work, and that you would take responsibility for everything else. You said the results of my work would have nothing to do with me. You said--”

Before he could finish speaking, Bai Lin stepped forward and grabbed his arm. Not only was he incredibly quick, but his cultivation base was far beyond Bai Xiaochun’s. Therefore, it was impossible for Bai Xiaochun to evade him. As soon as Bai Xiaochun felt himself being grabbed by Bai Lin, a tremor ran through him, and he prepared to call upon his frigid qi to defend himself. However, it was at that point that he realized Bai Lin had a very strange expression on his face.

His eyes were shining with unprecedented brightness, and he could hardly keep his breathing under control. He was almost looking at Bai Xiaochun the way one might look at a rare gem.

“How could the results have nothing to do with you? More like the opposite! Hahaha! Bai, my boy, you definitely didn’t disappoint. Keep up the good work! Concoct away to your heart's content. Who cares about a few exploded pill furnaces, right?!

“Do things exactly how you want to. The more explosions that occur, the better. In fact, if you can make them even more explosive, that would be great. The more terrifying the better. And don’t worry, I’ll take care of any dangerous situations!” With that, he threw his head back and laughed heartily.

Not only was Bai Xiaochun shocked by Bai Lin's words, but so were all the other spectators, who had all assumed that Bai Lin would descend in a deadly rage. Never could they have imagined that things would turn out opposite of the way they had anticipated.

“What’s... what's going on...?” The recently injured grandmasters almost couldn’t believe what they were seeing. It surpassed their imaginations to the point that it didn’t even seem real.

Even as everyone stared in shock, Bai Lin thought back to what had just occurred outside the Great Wall, and his excitement continued to build. As far as he was concerned, each and every exploding pill furnace was a deadly weapon that could be unleashed upon the souls and savages!

Furthermore, they could be used to accumulate incredible battle credit!

Throughout the years, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had come up with many ideas to deal with the Wildlanders. They had tried all sorts of soul-exterminating techniques, but none of them would ever be very effective for long. Usually, the Wildlanders would come up with a way to neutralize whatever effect was being used against them.

Therefore, Bai Lin wasn’t expecting Bai Xiaochun’s new method to be effective for very long. However, even just being able to dominate the sea of souls temporarily would be a good thing. Furthermore, the Underworld River had recently been tampered with, which was a major event. Even the Deva Chen was enraged by that development.

“Bai, my boy,” Bai Lin said seriously, “I only have one requirement, and that is to work faster. Can you pick up the speed of your concocting work?!?!”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. This was his first time hearing Bai Lin address him as ‘my boy,’ and it sounded somewhat intimate. It took him a moment to realize that Bai Lin wasn’t actually reprimanding him, but rather, encouraging him to make more exploding pill furnaces.

“I can’t believe someone wants me to detonate pill furnaces intentionally. I guess Bai Lin must have found some use for them....” Unable to hold back his curiosity, he simply asked Bai Lin directly.

Bai Lin didn’t conceal the truth. He explained what had just occurred outside the Great Wall, after which Bai Xiaochun’s face lit up with excitement.

Lifting his head proudly, he said, “Well, that’s what I thought would happen. Did you really think my research was just about how to improve the Soul Converge Pills? Obviously, I was aiming for something more useful, and apparently, I succeeded.

“When Bai Xiaochun concocts medicine, he always ponders how to do it in the most timely and advantageous fashion. You know, I actually intended for the pill furnaces to explode. Furthermore, the medicinal pills in the furnaces were only ninety percent complete. The final blast of energy was what catalyzed the last bit of the process, releasing the perfect amount of medicinal strength at exactly the moment of detonation!” With that, he flicked his sleeve and stuck his chin up.

Everyone else in the area exchanged awkward glances; if they hadn't heard his nervous explanations from moments before, they might actually have believed him.... Bai Lin cleared his throat, but didn't interrupt Bai Xiaochun's boasting. Apparently, he even approved of it.

That in and of itself left everyone even more shaken. None of them had ever seen Bai Lin treat someone with such courtesy. It made it very obvious how highly he valued Bai Xiaochun.

Waving his sleeve proudly, Bai Xiaochun said, "Don't worry, Brother Bai, it will take three days at the most for me to get another batch of exploding furnaces ready. No problem at all."

Bai Lin laughed heartily, then set a specific date to come get the furnaces, after which he turned to leave.

Before vanishing, he cast an ominous glare at the grandmasters in the area, causing them to duck their heads and scatter. They were all feeling very down about the whole thing, but there was nothing they could do but grit their teeth and endure.

As for the three young guards, they were thoroughly rebuked by their major general for what had happened. Later, their friends told them what had occurred outside of the Great Wall, leaving them completely awestruck. [1]

As for the young guard who had been blasted off to parts unknown, he eventually was found, weak-kneed and nearly torn to shreds. The terror he felt toward Bai Xiaochun couldn't have been more intense.

And thus, the ordeal ended. As for the other five pill furnaces, Bai Xiaochun opened them up later that night to find that, even though the furnaces hadn’t detonated, the medicinal pills inside of them were nothing more than slag.

He pondered the matter for a while, then got some rest. The following morning at dawn, he emerged from his residence, sat down in front of the pill furnaces and took a deep breath. Then he shouted, “Everybody, stay back. Don't say I didn’t warn you. Bai Xiaochun is starting to concoct medicine!”

His voice echoed out like thunder to fill the entire Armory.

The other grandmasters hurried out of their residences and scurried off into the distance, their hearts burning with fury. As for the four young guards, they began to tremble, and despite not wanting to stay behind, had no choice in the matter. They could only brace themselves, rotate their cultivation bases, and remain fully vigilant.

Apparently, Bai Xiaochun’s warning was effective. Feeling very pleased, he flicked his sleeve to begin concocting. This time, he decided to work on twenty batches!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0478 awe-chapter-479

“I think I'm heading in the right direction. I just overlooked a few of the problems that cropped up because of the ingredient interactions. I should be able to do a few tests and work things out. In any case, as long as the furnaces continue to explode, the general will be happy.” Bai Xiaochun sighed, convinced that life in Great Wall City was actually wonderful.

At the very least, he could concoct medicine in any way he wished, without fear of any punishments. He even got rewarded for detonating pill furnaces, which had never happened before.

Looking at the furnaces which had survived the first concocting session, Bai Xiaochun calmed himself and put a somber expression on his face. This time, he intended to vary the ingredient levels in each pill furnace, that way he would be able to quickly identity which medicine formula was the most effective.

Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best idea, he got to work. Drawing upon the incredible speed of his fleshly body, he began to produce medicinal plants and toss them into the furnaces. He would occasionally adjust the earthflame, ensuring that all of the various batches were being concocted slightly differently.

Of course, he couldn't forget how Bai Lin had requested more power. Therefore, he added extra atmosphere flower to some of the furnaces, and yet, was careful not to go overboard. After all, he was concocting these pills in his own residence, and if he somehow lost control of one of the batches, causing the furnace to explode ahead of schedule, he could end up hurting himself.

It was with caution and reserve that he continued to walk back and forth between the twenty different pill furnaces, making adjustments and occasionally adding more medicinal plants until all twenty of the furnaces were glowing bright red, and were emanating powerful medicinal aromas.

As he descended into complete and utter focus regarding this concocting session, the four young guards were off to the side, trembling with fear and anxiety. Then, after a few hours had passed, they noticed that Bai Xiaochun was putting lids onto all of the pill furnaces and sealing them. Instantly, the four guards’ minds began to reel.

“This is bad! Grandmaster Bai is sealing the pill furnaces again!”

“Heavens! The last set of furnaces exploded because they were sealed, and the energy couldn't escape. After enough energy built up, the furnaces couldn’t take it any longer, and exploded....”

“What do we do now?!” The four of them exchanged glances, then gritted their teeth and pulled out defensive magical items, simultaneously backing as far away from the pill furnaces as they could.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were glued to the pill furnaces, and as he adjusted the earthflame, rumbling sounds began to rise up. “This time, one of these furnaces is definitely going to explode. It’s hard to say which one it will be, but as long as just one of them blows, that will be enough!”

Of course, his mind was filled with the various ingredient ratios for all twenty furnaces. That, coupled with his manipulation of the earthflame and other concocting methods, would hopefully lead him in the direction of the ultimate medicine formula.

Soon, sixteen hours had gone by. All twenty pill furnaces were bright red, and were emanating terrifying fluctuations, as well as intense heat. The four young guards were shaking visibly, and their hair was standing on end.

“Last time it took only eight hours. But now... now....”

“It's already been sixteen hours so far!!”

Suddenly, four of the pill furnaces began to emit cracking sounds, and appeared to be in the process of breaking open!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he shouted, “They’re gonna blow!!”

Simultaneously, he backed up, performing a double-handed incantation gesture as he threw a handful of paper talismans out in front of him, and even used a few magical items to put up some shields.

The faces of the four young guards completely fell, and yet, even as they hesitated about what to do, cracks spread out across the surfaces of seven more pill furnaces. Even the ground beneath those furnaces was starting to sink down and distort; clearly these furnaces were about to detonate!

“Elev... eleven!!”

“Last time only two detonated, and we almost had our souls wrenched out of our bodies. This time eleven are gonna blow!!” Without any hesitation, everyone began to flee from the courtyard.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was so shocked that his eyes were on the verge of popping out of his head.

“Eleven of them this time!?” Even as a feeling of unease rose up in his heart, and he backed up, two more pill furnaces emitted cracking sounds! Two more furnaces were about to explode!

“Thirteen?!” Bai Xiaochun said with a gasp. Suddenly, he had a very bad feeling in the pit of his stomach. Even as he backed up more, shocking auras spread out from the thirteen pill furnaces, and more cracks appeared on their surfaces. By this point, it was actually possible to see with the naked eye that the energy buildup in the furnaces had reached the point where they would detonate at any moment.

However, that was when a peal of maniacal laughter suddenly rang out, and Bai Lin miraculously appeared, looking down elatedly at the thirteen pill furnaces, as if they were the most valuable of precious treasures. With that, he swished his sleeve, and the thirteen scalding hot pill furnaces flew up into the air like miniature suns. Then, Bai Lin called upon the full power of his cultivation base to shoot up toward the top of the Great Wall.

Immediately, the cultivators of the five legions saw Bai Lin and the thirteen brightly glowing pill furnaces, and thought back to the incredible scene which had played out only days before.

At that point, Bai Lin let out a powerful roar as he flung all thirteen of the pill furnaces out onto the battlefield.

The war recently had been playing out differently than usual, and the fighting had been going on this entire time. In the first stage of the conflict, the Wildlanders probed and harassed the Great Wall. Then they tampered with the Underworld River. And now, they were even drawing upon entire tribes of savages.

Although there weren’t a huge number of tribes involved at the moment, there were a lot more present than usual. Furthermore, the savage tribes were currently in the middle of a major assault in which more than 10,000 savages joined together in a charge. In addition, they were surrounded by massive hordes of souls from the Underworld River.

Within that vast sea of souls were certain unique souls who were different and more powerful than the others, and it was with madness and ferocity that they hurtled toward the Great Wall and the shield.

The magical cannons on top of the Great Wall itself were being fired constantly, cutting through swath after swath of the enemy. It was in this moment that Bai Xiaochun’s thirteen pill furnaces were hurled out.

Each one of the thirteen furnaces was only about three meters tall. Compared to the battlefield as a whole, they were very tiny. However, the intense red color with which they shone, coupled with the wild aura which spread out from them, instantly caught the attention of both the five legions and the savages.

As the pill furnaces flew through the air, many of the savages’ faces fell. Those were ones who, although they had not seen the three pill furnaces a few days before, had heard the stories of the soul-exterminating magical items that the Great Wall forces were now using.

Because the exploding furnaces were a new development, the Wildlands forces had not yet devised a way to deal with them. All they could do was watch as the pill furnaces sailed through the air, then landed onto the ground with deafening booms.

The ground trembled as flames rushed out in all directions, along with blasts of energy that rolled along like tsunamis.

Even more shocking was the soul-shredding power contained within the blasts. That was the medicinal effect of the Soul Convergence Pills, which spread out to fill a 30,000-meter area. Within that area, all vengeful souls screamed in terror, but were unable to flee. Within the blink of an eye, the energy swept over them, completely destroying them!

It was a force that could not be defended against, and moved with incredible speed. From a distance, it almost looked like a pair of hands wiping away everything within that 30,000-meter area!

Moments later, those areas were completely empty....

The members of the savage tribes were flabbergasted. At the same time, at a location some distance away from the Great Wall itself was an area protected by spell formations and filled with ragged tents. In the middle of that area was a black altar floating in the air, upon which an old man sat cross-legged. Currently, his eyes were shining with disbelief and fury.

The source of that fury was an image he was looking at, projected onto a screen of water. Clearly visible was that empty, 30,000-meter area right outside the Great Wall!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0479 awe-chapter-480

The plain covered by the spell formation was vast, and was filled with black mists and countless vengeful souls whose screams echoed about and caused the mists to seethe and churn.

However, that was only on the borders of the mist-filled area. In the middle was the location filled with dilapidated tents, apparently created from the hides of enormous beasts. There were so many of the tents that they were virtually impossible to number, even from a distance.

Within each tent lurked numerous savage giants, clad in hide garments. Some of them were sleeping, others would occasionally walk here and there among the tents. Whenever any of them looked in the direction of the center of the enormous camp, expressions of awe would appear on their faces. Furthermore, if the giants happened to cross glances, they seemed to have to force themselves to hold back from fighting. Apparently, they were extremely violent and short-tempered. Any of them who couldn’t hold their temper and actually began to fight would quickly be separated by streams of divine sense sent out by the tribal chiefs.

The camp was split up into ten areas according to the tribes, and although the giants all looked similar, they had clear differences in skin tone and eye color.

In addition to the giants were the beasts, which were kept beyond the tens of thousands of tents. Each beast was secured by iron chains, and occasionally let out thunderous roars that shook heaven and earth.

In the very center of the tents was a circular area demarcated by a ring of more than a thousand 9-meter-tall black boulders that emitted intense pressure in all directions. In fact, the air for 30,000 meters in all directions rippled and distorted because of it, seemingly carving that area out of the world itself.

Obviously, the black boulders were no mere decorations, but had some sort of magical function!

Occasionally, people could be seen walking into and out of the shimmering light cast by the boulders!

Although such cultivators were not dressed in expensive, extravagant clothing, they were clearly different from the giants. They were good-looking, well-washed and clean!

Clearly, these were none other than... Wildlands soul cultivators!!

Whenever such soul cultivators emerged from the central area in the tents, the savage giants who saw them would drop to their knees and kowtow respectfully.

In the Wildlands, soul cultivators occupied a high position, almost like nobility. They were almost like gods who enslaved the savages and commanded the seas of souls.

Also in the middle of the ring of black boulders... floating in midair... was a black altar!

“Dammit!!” The old man sitting on the altar had a very unsightly expression on his face, and his eyes burned with fury as he watched the scene playing out on the water screen. Thirteen pill furnaces sailed out from behind the Great Wall, then exploded, completely razing a 30,000-meter area.

The looks of fear on the faces of the savages were clearly visible, and as for the vengeful souls, they were clearly terrified....

“Pill furnaces....” the old man murmured, his eyes flashing with hatred. This was his second time seeing pill furnaces thrown out from behind the Great Wall. Of course, what was most shocking was not the explosions themselves, but the medicinal strength of the pills inside of them!

Although it was impossible to say what those pills were, they were terrifyingly effective at handling vengeful souls.

“How can we carry out the grand elder’s plan this way…? We need to get that Chen Hetian outside of the Great Wall and then kill him....” The old man frowned. He was sure that it wouldn't take long for the tribal chiefs among the savages to realize the implication of this development.

With those terrifying pill furnaces being used, the sea of souls would be of little help. As such, the savage giants would have no backup, and it would be difficult to force them to charge into battle.

Back on the battlefield outside the Great Wall, the sudden appearance of a 30,000-meter area of emptiness resulted in complete silence. Atop the Great Wall, the cultivators of the five legions all gasped, their eyes going wide and their jaws dropping.

Then, a huge commotion broke out.

“Were those... the same type of pill furnaces as last time?”

“Heavens! This time was even more shocking than last time. Thirteen exploding pill furnaces really devastated the sea of souls!!”

“The countless vengeful souls... are clearly terrified!!”

After all, everyone had seen dear friends injured and killed in the fighting. Because of that, their emotions were running particularly high, and many of them turned in the direction of the Skin Flayers’ district, their eyes shining with bright light.

After that, the fighting continued. However, it was clear that the savages and the vengeful souls were slightly hesitant compared to before. Occasionally, they would look up into the sky, seemingly fearful of descending pill furnaces.

Bai Lin was thrilled as he turned and headed off of the wall. Back in the Armory, Bai Xiaochun was standing there looking absentmindedly at the unexploded pill furnaces, wondering what was happening outside the Great Wall.

However, the situation in the city was the same now as it had been before. Unless something incredibly shocking happened, like the previous appearance of the Underworld River, people inside the Great Wall wouldn’t be able to hear anything about what was happening on the outside.

Bai Lin soon came whistling through the air toward Bai Xiaochun, and before he even arrived, his laughter filled the air. As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard that laughter, his heart calmed, and he struck a lofty pose. Clasping his hands behind his back, he stood there looking like a transcendent being, elegant and graceful to the extreme.

“Bai, my boy, you did wonderful!” As Bai Lin touched down, excitement could still be seen on his face as he waved his hand, sending a violet command medallion with the Skin Flayers’ sigil on it flying toward Bai Xiaochun.

“The five legions of the Hall of Steel Veins have clear punishments and rewards in place. Bai Xiaochun, your success in the Dao of medicine has earned you the right to lead ten soldiers. Henceforth, you are a lieutenant of the Skin Flayers!”

Considering that Bai Xiaochun was new to the Great Wall, he wasn’t completely familiar with everything, and didn't know much about the position of lieutenant. However, the four young guards who had been watching over them immediately cast envious glances at the violet command medallion.

All of them had been members of the Skin Flayers for years already, and still had not reached the rank of lieutenant. And yet, Bai Xiaochun had just barely arrived, and was already being promoted.

In any other circumstance, they would have found this hard to accept. However, the fear inspired in them by the exploding pill furnaces ensured that, after merely exchanging a few glances among themselves, they all admitted it was reasonable.

“Not only does that command medallion represent your position in the Skin Flayers, it also will keep a record of your battle credits. The number of enemies killed by each of your exploding pill furnaces will be collected there!” The approval in Bai Lin’s eyes couldn’t have been clearer, and the truth was that were it not for the strict rules in the five legions, he would have directly promoted Bai Xiaochun to the rank of captain.

“Lieutenant?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, accepting the violet command medallion. When he did, something warm spread out from the medallion and entered his body, instantly enlivening him. As of that moment, he realized that this command medallion was no ordinary item. After merging it with his divine sense, he could sense a strange connection between himself and the enormous, towering pagoda in the middle of Great Wall City.

“That’s right,” Bai Lin said. “Don’t underestimate the rank of lieutenant. As of now, you can select ten cultivators from the army to be your personal entourage. They will have no choice but to follow any and all orders you give them!” After giving a bit more encouragement, Bai Lin said that he hoped Bai Xiaochun would be able to make more exploding pill furnaces, and increasingly powerful ones at that. Finally, he left.

Bai Xiaochun stood there looking at the lieutenant’s command medallion for a moment before blinking a few times and looking up at the four young guards. Immediately, the four of them stepped forward and saluted solemnly.

“Greetings, Lieutenant!”

Feeling wonderful, Bai Xiaochun looked over the group of four, then glanced down at the command medallion momentarily. Clearing his throat, he looked at the young men and said, “You’ve been stationed here for some time, and yet I don't know your names.”

“Zhao Long, at your service!”

“Sun Li, at your service!”

“Xu Deshan, at your service!”

“Zhou Wu, at your service!”

Considering everything these four young men had seen over the past several days, and the fact that Bai Xiaochun was now a lieutenant, they looked him with solemn expressions of awe. That was especially true of Zhao Long, who was in the late Core Formation stage, and seemed especially in awe of Bai Xiaochun. Part of that was because he was the very same young man who had been blasted off into parts unknown a few days before....

“From now on, you four are under my command. We have six more spots open, so I’ll let you four handle that. Hurry up and find the right people. With me in charge, we will advance triumphantly to the highest of heights!” Bai Xiaochun felt that the words he had just spoken were quite extraordinary and inspiring.

Zhao Long and his companions could see that Bai Xiaochun was on the rise, and that following him was a good choice for them. After a moment of hesitation, they exchanged glances, then voiced their assent and left to find more cultivators.

After they were gone, Bai Xiaochun began to inspect the pill furnaces again. Around evening, Zhao Long and the other returned, six cultivators in tow. Four were men and two were women, and all of them were looking curiously at Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0480 awe-chapter-481

This group of six all had extraordinary cultivation bases. After saluting Bai Xiaochun, they offered their names and stated the levels of their cultivation bases. Four were in early Core Formation, one was in the mid stage, and one was in the late stage, the latter being one of the young women.

Her name was Liu Li. She was pretty, with phoenix-like eyes set in a young face. Despite her youthful appearance, she was buxom in a way that her armor couldn’t hide. In fact, her armor had been crafted in a way that made her look good-looking, and even heroic.

Bai Xiaochun was the lieutenant of the squad, with Zhao Long and Liu Li being the next strongest, and his immediate subordinates. Already, their group was strong enough to shake almost the entire Middle Reaches cultivation world.

Furthermore, from what Bai Xiaochun could tell, this group of ten were all friends with each other. Presumably, they had met in some other part of the army, and got along quite well. Most likely, they also had the ability to form and operate a spell formation. With their combined power, it would probably be possible for them to tangle with someone in the Nascent Soul stage, and if not defeat them, at least cause them quite a headache in battle!

As Bai Xiaochun sized them up, they were doing the same to him. The truth was just as Bai Xiaochun had suspected; they had long since been a small team. Zhao Long’s suggestion, plus the fact that they had personally witnessed the pill furnaces exploding on the other side of the wall, convinced them that becoming followers of this mysterious apothecary would be a good thing for them.

Unfortunately, now that they were actually laying eyes on him for the first time, they were a bit let down. Not only did he seem quite young, but there was something that made him seem somehow untrustworthy.

Bai Xiaochun gave a few words of explanation about his requirements and then, considering that it was already evening, gave them the rest of the day off. From this day forth, they would live in his courtyard, and would be responsible for carrying out all of his commands.

During the night, the fighting still went on outside of the Great Wall. However, because of the spell formation shield, Great Wall City itself was very quiet.

Bai Xiaochun sat quietly in his residence, looking at this lieutenant’s command medallion. After a moment, he sent some divine sense into it, and once again felt the connection between himself and the huge eye on top of the pagoda.

At the same time, he branded the medallion with his life sense, causing it to flicker with violet light. Moments later, he was able to see his accumulated battle credit.

“43,753?” he murmured.

“Lieutenants are pretty impressive. But if I could become a captain, it would probably be even more impressive. Then I could command a hundred cultivators.” Filled with anticipation at the thought, he decided to check the requirements to get a promotion to captain.

“1,000,000?” His jaw dropped.

“That’s way too much....” he thought, frowning. Then, he read further into the matter, and his frown deepened.

“There are different rewards for exterminating vengeful souls than there are for killing savages. And you get even more battle credit for taking out soul cultivators and necromancers.” At this point, his eyes began to shine.

“Well, no need to get antsy. I can get battle credit by just making exploding pill furnaces, right? Doing that is a piece of cake. It all comes down to Soul Convergence Pills!

“If I could concoct a truly powerful Soul Convergence Pill, then I could rake in a whole bunch of battle credit with almost no effort!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun felt more excited than ever.

Of course, battle credit was good for more than just getting promotions. Therefore, he decided to check what items were available for purchase.

All you had to do was go to the tower and meet the requirements of the eye, and then whatever you wanted was yours.

After a moment of silence, he murmured. “I really don’t have enough battle credit at the moment.”

With that, he decided to check his cultivation base.

“I'm not too far from being at the great circle of the Gold Core stage. Sadly, the spiritual energy here is too weak. It won’t be very easy to speed up my cultivation that way.... If I got enough military credit, though, I could easily get my hands on some cultivation resources.” After some thought, he sent some divine sense out to confirm that no one was in the area watching him. Then he produced a handful of paper talismans which he set up around his residence.

Then he guiltily opened up his bag of holding and pulled out some earthspirit tubers!

The earthspirit tubers were completely golden, and were covered with countless ringed lines which could be used to determine their age. Each tuber had more than a hundred of them.

“They're all more than a hundred years old....” he thought, licking his lips. The truth was that, although he did need these tubers to concoct Soul Convergence Pills, he didn’t need very many.

The reason he had requested a thousand of them, as well as certain other precious medicinal plants, was that he planned to secretly keep a few for himself, and use them to increase the power of his qi and blood, and also strengthen his life force.

After all, life force was key to cultivating his Undying Live Forever Technique.

“With these earthspirit tubers, my Undying Tendons should advance by leaps and bounds!” Even a single hundred-year-old earthspirit tuber would fetch an astronomical price if sold publicly. In fact, in auctions, they would usually be classified as precious materials of heaven and earth.

In Great Wall City, only someone like Bai Lin would be able to acquire so many at the drop of a hat. Bai Xiaochun could only imagine how he'd done it. A huge price must have been paid to get the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to part with a thousand of them.

With such thoughts on his mind, he looked around again to make sure that no one was spying on him. Then he took one of the earthspirit tubers and performed a spirit enhancement using his turtle-wok. After all, he had also requested fuel for numerous different types of multi-colored flame. Almost immediately, the earthspirit tuber was even more extraordinary than it had been before.

Unfortunately, he only had enough fuel to enhance a few more. When he finally gave up, he picked up one of the spirit enhanced earthspirit tubers and took a bite.

He suddenly felt like he was right back in the Ovens, causing his heart to swell.

“I wonder how Eldest Brother is doing back on Sky Quarter Rainbow?” he thought. Suddenly he recalled everyone he knew back in the River-Defying Sect, such as Li Qinghou, Hou Xiaomei, and Song Junwan. All sorts of memories floated up in his mind.

At the same time, he felt his life force surging hotter and hotter until it was like a fire. He immediately began to work with his Undying Live Forever Technique, causing the Undying Tendons in his left leg to become like a black hole, sucking in all of the heat.

The night passed quickly, during which time Bai Xiaochun consumed the entire hundred-year-old earthspirit tuber. Anyone else who did something like that would find their life force surging with incredible vitality.

But Bai Xiaochun was different. His Undying Live Forever Technique almost seemed like a bottomless pit. Thankfully, the Undying Tendons on his left leg were almost complete, and he was even beginning to develop his right leg.

Soon, he could sense that his fleshly body power was increasing with incredible intensity.

When the light of day spread out, he began to concoct medicine again. This time, he didn’t fall behind at all, but instead, increased to fifty batches. Thanks to the constant testing, he was making some progress toward a more powerful Soul Convergence Pill, and yet, was not pleased with the results. So far, nothing seemed to have reached the ultimate level that he knew was possible. However, he wasn’t in a hurry, and was convinced that his tests would soon lead to a complete success.

Besides, with every day that passed, pill furnaces continued to detonate.

As far as Bai Lin was concerned, everything was going great. In fact, at one point when Bai Xiaochun was worried that he would run out of pill furnaces, Bai Lin had a whole new batch delivered....

General Bai had long since fallen in love with the exploding furnaces. To him, they weren’t tools for concocting medicine, they were weapons to harvest vengeful souls!

As time went by, Bai Xiaochun continued to work on his cultivation. Eventually, he found that he had gone through so many earthspirit tubers that he only had a few dozen left.

That night, his entire right leg seemed to burn with incredible heat, and to pulse with incredible power. Rumbling sounds echoed out, causing everything in the area to shake.

“It worked!” he thought excitedly. As of this moment, he could sense a terrifying fleshly body power radiating from both of his legs!

In combination with the Undying Hex, he was confident that not even a Nascent Soul cultivator could catch up with him now, at least not without using a minor teleportation! Bursting into motion, he sped to a location 3,000 meters away in his courtyard, and by the time he had come to a rest and was standing there, the sound of his movement still hadn't reached his ears!

"Faster than the speed of sound!" Elated, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0481 awe-chapter-482

The sound of Bai Xiaochun’s voice echoing out in the courtyard attracted the attention of Liu Li, Zhao Long, and the others. Expressions flickering, they all rushed out to see what was happening.

As soon as they approached, they could sense the powerful fluctuations in the air, prickling against their skin, apparently the result of something passing by with incredible speed.

Then they saw Bai Xiaochun off in the distance, laughing uproariously, and they gasped, exchanging glances of astonishment and disbelief.

All of them could tell at a glance that Bai Xiaochun must have been testing out some new technique, something that involved moving with incredible speed.

Liu Li looked at Bai Xiaochun a bit more deeply, then murmured to herself, “Who would ever have thought that Apothecary Bai would have a secret magic like that…?”

She, along with Zhao Long and the others, all clasped hands in salute.

Bai Xiaochun was quite pleased to see the astonishment in the eyes of Zhao Long and the others. Clearing his throat, he gave some words of encouragement regarding a few things, then strutted back into his residence.

Zhao Long and the others were significantly affected by what had just occurred. Days later, they would still think back to what had happened, and feel their hearts trembling. That was especially true of Liu Li and Zhao Long. Being in late Core Formation, they felt especially taken aback.

“That speed... it couldn't just be a secret magic. It would also require shocking levels of fleshly body power....”

“With unbelievable speed like that, an ordinary fist strike would be like a divine ability!”

As time passed, Bai Lin continued to come collect pill furnaces, which he would send over the Great Wall to explode on the battlefield. Each explosion would rouse the hearts of the five legions. That was especially true considering that the power and effectiveness of the exploding furnaces increased every day. Of course, that made them only that much more of a headache for the Wildlands savages.

The pill furnaces mostly targeted the vengeful souls, and didn’t just converge them together in one spot, but rather, wiped them out of existence. The destructive power of the explosions ensured that the once boundless sea of souls outside the Great Wall was slowly showing signs of weakening.

Were it not for the fact that this campaign was backed by ten tribes of savages, as well as soul cultivators and necromancers, then the souls would most likely have already dissipated.

The Wildlands were in a very tight situation at the moment, and couldn’t think of any good strategies to turn the tables. Of course, they had no way of knowing that it was all due to the fact that Bai Xiaochun was now working for the five legions. On one occasion, Bai Lin took Bai Xiaochun up to the wall to experience for himself the power of the exploding pill furnaces. Of course, that was only after Bai Lin swore up and down that there wouldn’t be any danger at all.

As soon as he set foot on the wall itself, he could sense the countless gazes of the cultivators of the five legions, gazes filled with respect and awe.

Bai Xiaochun immediately fell in love with the sensation. Being in the center of the public eye made him feel very much like a true hero....

From that day on, whenever Bai Lin came to take the pill furnaces away, Bai Xiaochun would go along to witness the explosions.

When he saw the blasts of energy, and heard the deafening booms, it lifted his spirits to the maximum. Furthermore, with each explosion, the battle credit in his command medallion rose higher, which got him even more excited.

“This is definitely the place for me!” Bai Xiaochun looked out at all the craters beyond the Great Wall, the infuriated savages, the recoiling sea of souls, and swished his sleeve. “With a single massive snap of my finger,” he mused proudly, “I can destroy anything and everything.”

An entire month flew by, during which time the sea of souls continued to grow thinner. It was something that had not occurred for many years, and got the cultivators in Great Wall City into very high spirits. Conversely, the Wildlands forces were now paying closer attention to the situation than ever.

“I have over 300,000 battle credits!” Bai Xiaochun murmured. Every day, he would check to see how much his battle credit had increased, and was always pleased with the result. From what he could tell, he was definitely making enough to sustain his cultivation.

One afternoon when Bai Xiaochun had just sealed fifty pill furnaces, he didn't stand there watching them like he usually did. Instead, he swaggered out of the Armory and headed toward the huge pagoda in the middle of the city.

Not only did that pagoda operate the city’s grand spell formation, it was also where the five legions would go to spend battle credit. Therefore, it was a very important place.

It was only natural that a place like that was also the dwelling place of a deva. Generally speaking, cultivators from the five legions could be seen coming and going there on a daily basis.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun showed up at the pagoda, people recognized him. All of them seemed to view him favorably, and would salute him with clasped hands. Bai Xiaochun called out greetings in return, sighing at how popular he was.

Upon reaching the pagoda itself, he sent out some divine sense to check what items were available for purchase. It was in that moment that cries of shock rose up around him, and a bright beam of light appeared up above. That light shot down with incredible speed, surrounded by a frigid coldness that was shocking on a deep level.

“It’s Ji Feng!”

“Of all the cultivators in the great circle of Core Formation in the five legions, he’s the one most likely to get promoted to major general! Ji Feng!”

“I haven’t seen him for a long time. I heard he was sent out on a secret mission outside the Great Wall, to infiltrate the Wildlands and gather intelligence!”

As the discussions went on, the beam of light faded away, and a young man appeared, clad in a blood-colored suit of armor. He had long black hair, and a handsome face that was marred by a long scar which ran from the top of his forehead down to the corner of his mouth, and transformed his good looks into something grotesque! As he hovered there in midair, he completely ignored everyone around him as he stared up at the huge eye atop the pagoda.

Down on the ground, Bai Xiaochun looked up at Ji Feng. He didn’t recognize him, but something about the strength of his cultivation base reminded him of Zhao Tianjiao.

“He must be a famous person like Zhao Tianjiao....” he thought.

Ji Feng had terrifying cultivation base ripples, and a murderous aura that was more powerful than anyone Bai Xiaochun had seen in the five legions other than Bai Lin. And considering that Bai Lin was half a step into the Deva Realm, that was very telling.

“A fiendish killer!” Bai Xiaochun thought with an inner gasp. Although Ji Feng seemed intimidating, Bai Xiaochun wasn't convinced that he would lose to him in a fight. After all, fiendish killers like this guy were usually the crazy type. Just when Bai Xiaochun was about to look away, Ji Feng waved his hand in the direction of the huge eye.

That motion caused a vast quantity of vengeful souls to pour out of his sleeve. There were more than 10,000 of them, screaming and struggling. However, once the gaze of the eye locked onto them, they were sucked up, and in the blink of an eye, had been absorbed.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped.

Simultaneously, expressions of astonishment could be heard in the area.

“Elder Brother Ji Feng just offered a sacrifice of 10,000 vengeful souls!”

“Not many people increase their battle credit by offering a sacrifice in such a way. Only top experts like Ji Feng can pull off something like that.”

“There were more than 10,000 vengeful souls, but in terms of quality, they were varied. I'm afraid his battle credit will only increase by a few tens of thousands.”

Even as the discussions continued, Ji Feng turned and blurred into motion, speeding off into the distance. As for Bai Xiaochun, it was only at this point that he finally realized you could earn battle credit in such a fashion.

“What a pity. Right now, my exploding pill furnaces simply tear the vengeful souls to shreds. If I could use Ji Feng’s method, I could earn even more battle credit.” Sighing, he shook his head. After giving a final glance to Ji Feng disappearing in the distance, he poured some divine sense into his command medallion, establishing a link with the huge eye.

A moment later, all sorts of information appeared in his mind.

“I can’t believe you can trade for so much stuff here.... They even have Nascent Soul Pills....” Considering the shocking fact that Nascent Soul Pills were for sale, then it was no surprise at all that they had the type of medicinal pills that could help during the Gold Core stage.

There were also magical items, paper talismans, and medicinal plants of all types. Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding with excitement.

Many of the items were unique to this location, such as soul grasses from the Wildlands, and even… Underworld River water!

The Underworld River was illusory in nature, almost like something that belonged to another world. It had very unique properties, and was difficult to summon. In fact, other than devas, no one could manipulate it.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0482 awe-chapter-483

“Underworld River water....” Although Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure what that type of water could be used for, he could see that a single drop was extremely expensive. Obviously, it was something very useful for cultivators.

“Perhaps cultivators want Underworld River water... the same way Wildlands soul cultivators want Heavenspan River water?” Although Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been at the Great Wall for very long, he had heard that in the Wildlands, Heavenspan River water was extremely valuable.

Because of that, quite a few people would smuggle it out into the Wildlands to trade with the soul cultivators. Although the practice was strictly forbidden, it was impossible to prevent it from happening altogether.

There was even a black market within Great Wall City itself. However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested in that.

What he was interested in were Nascent Soul Pills!

He quickly found the listing for Nascent Soul Pills, and when he saw the price attached to it, he couldn’t help but gasp. Earlier, he had assumed that he had a good amount of battle credit built up. However, after seeing how expensive things were, he felt really bad for himself.

“Nascent Soul Pills cost millions of battle credits....” Looking sadly at his violet identity medallion, he sighed. After all, Nascent Soul Pills had other uses than just breaking through to the Nascent Soul stage. They served the general function of increasing one’s cultivation base level, and therefore, could also be used to break through to the great circle of Core Formation.

The reason for that was that the main way Nascent Soul Pills helped with breakthroughs was by means of providing power through the medicinal ingredients. However, only some of those ingredients were specifically for the purpose of forming the Nascent Soul itself. At the moment, what Bai Xiaochun cared most about was the extra power the pills could provide.

“One pill.... With one Nascent Soul Pill, I could probably get to the great circle of the Gold Core stage!” At the moment, Bai Xiaochun had to give up on the idea of purchasing a Nascent Soul Pill. Instead, he bought some other high-grade medicinal pills useful for the Core Formation stage, as well as some magical items he needed, then left.

After returning to his residence, he sealed the place thoroughly and then took out his turtle-wok and performed sixfold spirit enhancements on everything he had just purchased, as well as some other items in his bag of holding.

After he was finished, he looked hesitantly at the numerous designs on the objects he had enhanced.

“I only have two sets of seven-colored flame fuel, and one set for eight-colored flame.... That’s all Bai Lin could give me.” Back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he had tried to track down fuel for various levels of multi-colored flame, but hadn’t been successful. At that point, he had come to understand that seven-colored flame fuel was possible to find, but when it came to eight-colored flame fuel, it was very rare.

It had probably been difficult for Bai Lin just to get this one set.

After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun pulled a jade box out of his bag of holding, opened it, and examined the contents. Inside was a fingernail-sized stone that initially seemed completely ordinary in nature. However, it was possible to sense a shocking power within that stone, power that could be unleashed by the smallest bit of friction.

That stone was none other than eight-colored flame fuel!

After studying it for a bit, he carefully closed the lid of the jade box and shook his head.

“I need to hold onto this eight-colored flame fuel,” he thought, “and only use it on a really good magical item.” After putting away the eight-colored flame fuel, he began to consume the medicinal pills he’d just enhanced.

As he did, spiritual power began to course through him, transforming into strands of frigid qi that gathered inside of his Gold Core.

Another month flew by.

The higher Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base grew, the easier it became to concoct medicine. He continued to produce successful batches of Soul Convergence Pills, and although he wasn’t very happy with the outcome, the final versions continued to improve compared to his original version.

Bai Xiaochun was certain that it wouldn’t be long before he would be able to produce a satisfactory Soul Convergence Pill. Furthermore, he had decided that the best option was to wait until he made a significant improvement before presenting the pill to Bai Lin.

By now, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with his life in Great Wall City. Not only did everyone respect him, but the pill furnaces being constantly tossed over the wall and exploding among the enemy caused his battle credits to increase on a daily basis.

His exploding furnaces were now one of the deadliest weapons at the disposal of the Skin Flayers, and were a source of great pressure for the Wildlander necromancers.

Were it not for the fact that this was a large-scale assault, the Wildlands forces would have long since retreated. Whenever Bai Xiaochun went out to personally witness the devastating effects of his exploding furnaces, he could sense that the fighting was continuing to intensify.

By this point, it wasn’t just a single savage tribe who was participating in the offensive... there were now six of them. Before, there had been about 10,000 savages on the battlefield, but now there were around 80,000. It had been many decades since a battle this large had been fought in the war.

Whenever the savage giants roared and charged into battle, all heaven and earth would shake violently.

Furthermore... more and more soul cultivators were showing up to fight. The cultivators of the five legions took them very seriously, and would often send out their most powerful experts to contend with them.

However, the soul cultivators were always under the protection of large groups of savage giants, and although a few of them were successfully taken down, they never went out without a fierce fight.

Both sides ended up suffering casualties, although it was generally worse for the Wildlands. After all, the five legions had the Great Wall to protect them, and most importantly, the exploding pill furnaces were wreaking havoc on the mostly unintelligent vengeful souls.

Were it not for the pill furnaces, the vengeful souls, who didn’t fear extermination at all, would have posed a huge problem for the five legions.

By this point, there was virtually no one among the forces of Great Wall City who hadn’t heard of Bai Xiaochun. Also... his name was spreading outside of the Great Wall as well. Many of the savage tribes were now aware of who he was, and that the magical items which were so useful against the vengeful souls were created by none other than him!

In fact, he had already been placed onto the Wildlands’ Execution List, and was in the top 100!

All the people above him on the list were incredibly famous individuals who the Wildlands hated deeply.

It couldn’t be stated that Bai Xiaochun had completely changed the course of the war. A few exploding furnaces couldn’t do something like that. However... he had influenced the state of battle, and that effect continued to grow as time passed!

Furthermore, the chiefs of the savage tribes, as well as the necromancers, all hated him with a vengeance!

The chiefs mourned those who had been lost among their various tribes, and the necromancers, who were a proud and lofty lot, were now forced to spend almost all their time keeping the vengeful souls under control.

Generally speaking, controlling these souls should have involved simply directing their momentum. After all, the souls which poured directly out of the Underworld River were particularly fierce. But now... the threat of the exploding furnaces made the souls very difficult to control. Some of them tried to flee, and others even tried to fight back against those controlling them.

Currently, a meeting was taking place on the vast plain with the more than 1,000 black stones.

Surrounding the black-robed old man on the floating black altar were ten figures. All of them wore gray robes, and emanated terrifying fluctuations which identified them as none other than necromancers!

One of them was speaking to the old man in a raspy voice.

“Exalted emissary, we can’t keep going on like this. We have to do something to resolve the situation!!”

In addition to the necromancers, there were also ten giants on the altar, all of whom seemed extremely ancient. They looked different from the other giants, larger and far more intelligent. One of those ancient giants looked at the black-robed old man and slowly said, “I agree, exalted emissary. If things keep going on like this, the warriors of our tribe will lose the protection offered by the tide of souls. Without that protection, they’re no match for the cultivators on the wall! Exalted emissary, please use your divine abilities to put an end to this catastrophe!”

Considering what the necromancers and the tribal chiefs were saying, the old man thought for a moment, and then responded in a sinister voice, “We can’t waste too much soul power before the appointed time....

“However, don’t worry. I've already made some preparations, and I think the time is right to make a move. Pay close attention to the battle tomorrow. I'm going to make Bai Xiaochun’s pill furnaces a thing of the past!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0483 awe-chapter-484

Bai Xiaochun was sitting cross-legged inside Great Wall City, feeling very uneasy, although he wasn’t sure why. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and he looked around with a strange expression on his face. However, after a moment passed, nothing happened, so he went back to cultivation.

Eventually, when the sun was setting, he finally let out a long breath and then emerged from his residence.

Clearing his throat, he said, “Bring the furnaces over!”

Instantly, Liu Li, Zhao Long, and the rest of his squad all sprang into action and began setting up fifty pill furnaces in a circle around him.

By now, they had grown used to Bai Xiaochun’s ways, and how famous he had become now that he was on the Wildlands’ Execution List.

At the same time, he had treated them well, bestowing medicinal pills and magical items upon them frequently. After all, despite not having a huge accumulation of battle credit, he did get more and more on a daily basis, and was not the stingy type. He wanted everyone around him to be just as happy as he was.

Therefore, Zhao Long and the others didn’t mind being ordered around. After setting up the pill furnaces, they took their places to stand guard.

After things were set up, Bai Xiaochun nodded in satisfaction. Waving his hand, he opened all of the pill furnaces, and then sent large quantities of medicinal plants flying out. As was his usual custom, he made unique adjustments to all fifty of the medicine formulas.

The pill furnaces began to heat up, whereupon Bai Xiaochun began to walk amongst them, occasionally adding ingredients to a furnace here, or adjusting the heat to a furnace there. After about two hours had passed, all the proper adjustments had been made, and he began to seal the furnaces.

As Bai Xiaochun sealed pill furnaces, Zhao Long and the others exchanged glances, and then began to whisper among themselves.

“I wonder how many will explode this time?”

“I bet it will be twenty or less!”

“Yesterday, seventeen blew up, so I bet that it will be more than twenty today!”

This was how things usually went....

After sealing all of the furnaces, Bai Xiaochun brushed off his hands and walked back into his residence, paying the furnaces no more heed.

Another eight hours passed, after which one of the pill furnaces began to emit cracking sounds. As usual, Bai Lin showed up, whereupon Bai Xiaochun ended his session of cultivation and walked out to meet him.

“Thank you for your hard work, Grandmaster Bai,” Bai Lin said with a smile. He viewed Bai Xiaochun more favorably with each day that passed.

“It’s no trouble at all,” Bai Xiaochun replied grandly, looking very much like an important hero. “I do everything for the Great Wall! However, I have to say, Old Bai, I’m almost out of pill furnaces, and am running very low on medicinal plants, especially earthspirit tubers. Next time, bring a few more than usual.”

“No problem. I’ll handle it right away!” Bai Lin continued to watch the furnaces with sparkling eyes until more cracking sounds began to ring out. With every pill furnace that began to show signs of exploding, Bai Lin would get more excited. Furthermore, in order to ensure that they would all explode at the same time, he would often draw upon the power of his cultivation base to suppress the more unstable ones.

Eventually, when twenty-seven pill furnaces were on the verge of exploding, and the others clearly weren’t, Bai Lin laughed heartily, flicked his sleeve, and shot toward the Great Wall with the furnaces.

As usual, Bai Xiaochun flew along behind him to see what would happen on the battlefield. After all, such direct observations of the exploding furnaces helped a lot when it came to adjusting his medicine formulas.

Bai Lin knew that Bai Xiaochun liked to watch the explosions personally, so he flew slow enough that he could follow along. When they both reached the Great Wall, Bai Lin flung the twenty-seven furnaces out in twenty-seven different directions.

When the cultivators of the five legions saw what was happening, they began to cheer in support. In contrast, the savages down on the battlefield gritted their teeth and began to back up. As for the vengeful souls, once the pill furnaces appeared, they became almost impossible for the necromancers to control, and instinctively began to scatter.

The mere sight of what was happening before the pill furnaces detonated left Bai Xiaochun feeling quite wonderful. However....

Even as the savages and souls began to flee, a dozen or so sphere-shaped beasts suddenly flew out onto the battlefield.

They moved with incredible speed, and at the same time, expanded rapidly, becoming a dozen 30-meter-tall spheroids that shot toward the incoming pill furnaces.

As they closed in, the spheroid beasts opened their mouths wide. Next, intense sucking sounds could be heard as the pill furnaces were suddenly wrenched in their direction.

The unexpected development occurred so quickly that before anyone on the Great Wall had a chance to react, the spheroid beasts had gobbled up all of the pill furnaces!

Moments later, muffled thuds could be heard from inside them. The creatures bulged, and their eyes went wide, but after a moment, nothing else happened, and they actually just closed their eyes again.

Then, they slowly deflated, returning to their original size. Finally, they opened their mouths and burped out wisps of black smoke, which slowly faded away in the wind.

The entire battlefield went silent. The cultivators on the wall looked on with wide eyes, and Bai Lin stood there trembling, the killing intent in his eyes rising rapidly.

The dozen spheroid beasts were all surrounded by rippling distortions that indicated that they were under the protection of powerful guardians. If Bai Lin personally went out to try to deal with him, he would be in great danger, and the rest of the forces on the wall would be forced to decide whether or not to come out to aid him.

“Dammit!” Bai Lin growled, the killing intent in his eyes growing stronger. By this point, he had come to understand that the Wildlanders’ goal in this entire campaign was to get deva patriarch Chen Hetian to come out of the city. If that happened, a trap would likely be sprung in an attempt to kill him.

“I never could have guessed that they would come up with a way to deal with the pill furnaces in less than half a year. Those weird beasts have obviously been mutated recently....” Even as Bai Lin sighed darkly, the savages outside the wall began to cackle madly. As for the vengeful souls, their murderous auras grew even more intense, and they once again began to charge across the battlefield.

This time, the charge was made with more intense violence than before. Booms instantly rang out, along with miserable screams.

The cultivators of the five legions could do little more than steel themselves and once again fight to defend the Great Wall.

As of this moment, few people were paying any attention at all to Bai Xiaochun; everyone knew that his exploding pill furnaces had been rendered useless.

To see the pill furnaces that he had so painstakingly prepared for detonation be consumed just like that first left Bai Xiaochun staring in mute shock. It was almost as if his mind had been smashed with a sledgehammer.

“How could this be happening? What kind of beasts are those?!?!?!” He felt as if his heart were in physical pain.

“No more battle credit? No more medicinal plants? No more pill furnaces? And on top of it all, I wasted a whole bunch of time and energy on concocting medicine!!” Bai Xiaochun let out a bellow of anger, his eyes completely bloodshot.

At the moment, he felt like someone had just ruined his life. Without battle credit income like he had before, his dreams of being promoted to captain would be completely dashed.

When he thought of that, his anger grew even hotter.

Furthermore, having his pill furnaces destroyed right in front of all the other cultivators was like a slap to the face, and was a severe blow to his self-esteem. As he stood there glaring at the spheroid beasts, he felt like he had just fallen out of the sky and slammed into the earth.

“You just wait. How dare you consume Bai Xiaochun’s pill furnaces! I’m gonna make you regret it!”

Rage burning, he spun and shot back to the Armory. As for Bai Lin, he saw Bai Xiaochun’s reaction and sighed. Bai Lin knew that it wouldn’t be long before all of the savage tribes in the Wildlands would have those same spheroid beasts, which had obviously been specifically designed to deal with Bai Xiaochun’s pill furnaces!

Before long, Bai Xiaochun was back in the Armory and walking into his courtyard residence. “How dare you consume my pill furnaces! How dare you destroy my medicinal pills! Challenging me, huh?! Trifling little beasts. With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun will reduce all of you to ashes!

“Zhao Long. Liu Li. All of you stand guard, and don’t let anyone inside. I'm going into secluded meditation!!” Waving his arm, he dragged eight pill furnaces with him into his personal residence, slamming the door shut behind him with a bang. Zhao Long and the others gasped, unsure of what had happened. None of them had ever seen Bai Xiaochun like this.

“What’s going on?” As they exchanged awkward glances, uneasy feelings rose up in their hearts.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0484 awe-chapter-485

As Bai Xiaochun settled down cross-legged in his residence, he had a fierce expression on his face, and his eyes were so wide that all of the veins were visible, and they seemed like they were on fire. Waving his hand, he produced an earthflame crystal and settled one of the pill furnaces in front of him.

“I can’t believe you made me lose face in front of all those cultivators! Dammit! Bai Xiaochun is afraid of a lot of things in heaven and earth, but he's not afraid of beasts like you!” Waving his sleeve, he sent a huge pile of medicinal plants flying into the pill furnace.

“I refuse to believe that I can’t mop the floor with those big-bellied beasts. How dare they consume my pill furnaces and destroy my medicinal pills! It's bad enough they wrecked my battle credit income, but they also had to discredit me! They’re intentionally embarrassing me!” The more he thought about it, the angrier he got, and at the same time, he began to concoct medicine as if he were bedeviled.

It had been a long time since he had sunk into a state like this. His hands almost blurred, and rumbling echoed out from the pill furnace. Soon, the medicinal liquid in the furnace began to form, and a strong medicinal aroma spread out.

Three days passed by in a flash, during which time Bai Xiaochun never stepped out of his residence. Instead, he remained inside, concocting medicine, and occasionally letting out peals of maniacal laughter.

“How dare you provoke me! I’m gonna show you once and for all how awesome Bai Xiaochun is!

“Hmmmmph! This medicinal pill isn’t strong enough yet. Just wait, you trifling beasts, you just wait!”

When Zhao Long, Liu Li, and the others heard his laughter, they gasped in fear at the strange state that he was in.

By this point, they had heard about what occurred outside the Great Wall a few days before, that the savages had used some strange, spheroid beasts to consume Bai Xiaochun’s pill furnaces. At that point, they understood why he’d come back so angry.

“Is he really that mad just because they figured out how to stop his pill furnaces?”

Another half a day went by. On the evening of the third day, Bai Xiaochun’s door slammed open, and he stepped out, thin, emaciated, and his hair completely disheveled.

“Zhao Long, go tell Bai Lin that I need skythicket leaf, female beast musk, male beast bones, earthdragon root....” In one breath, Bai Xiaochun rattled of several dozen types of medicinal plants. “And I need them today!”

With that, he walked back into his residence and slammed the door.

Zhao Long was starting to get nervous. For some reason, this version of Bai Xiaochun seemed very dangerous. As soon as Bai Xiaochun walked back into his residence, Zhao Long hurried off to find General Bai Lin, and before long, the medicinal plants Bai Xiaochun had requested were delivered.

Zhao Long cautiously knocked on Bai Xiaochun’s door, which opened as Bai Xiaochun reached out to grab the medicinal plants. Through the crack of the opened door, Zhao Long was just able to make out a cloud of swirling pink smoke.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked haggard and thin, with a terrifying, demonic gleam in his eyes.

Another two days passed. For some time now, a huge vortex had filled the sky because of the tampering with the Underworld River, but for some reason it was now obscured with clouds, clouds that were filled with bolts of crackling lightning. Then, without any warning, large amounts of lightning suddenly began to descend upon the armory.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Armory’s spell formation activated. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s hoarse laughter could be heard filling the air. The combination of all the sights and sounds immediately caused Zhao Long and the other guards to looked around in alarm.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“W-what’s happening!?” Simultaneously, wisps of smoke were beginning to seep out from the cracks and crevices in the corners of Bai Xiaochun’s residence building. In the blink of an eye, they filled the area, and from the way they were moving, they almost seemed intelligent, like a whole group of tiny snakes.

Zhao Long and the rest of the guards began to edge away in fear. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, and yet, as soon as the smoke appeared in the Armory, vast quantities of ants suddenly rushed out into the open and began fleeing in the opposite direction.

Ants weren’t a very common sight in Great Wall City, but at the moment, they carpeted the ground. Before any of the guards could react, the entire Armory was thrown into a commotion.

“W-what’s causing this!?!?”

“Heavens! There’s thunder and smoke and ants! Something big is going on, but what?!”

Considering what was happening in the Armory, other cultivators in the five legions were devolving into a commotion. Furthermore, the savages outside of the Great Wall could see the strange lightning, and were wondering what terrifying item had appeared inside of Great Wall City.

As everyone reeled in shock, and as the heavens rumbled with thunder, a lightning bolt that seemed to be composed of countless other lightning bolts put together slammed down onto the Armory, piercing through its spell formation shield and landing onto Bai Xiaochun’s residence.

The ground quaked, and the entire residence shook as much of it was destroyed. Zhao Long and the other guards backed up in terror, gasping the entire time.

“What kind of medicine is Grandmaster Bai concocting?!” Meanwhile, what could only be described as crazed laughter rang out from the wreckage of Bai Xiaochun’s residence.

“Still not good enough! Zhao Long, go get me three thousand portions of the same set of ingredients I had you get last time!!”

A tremor ran through Zhao Long as he looked at the mostly-destroyed residence, and the increasingly thick smoke emanating from it. It caused a sensation of intense danger to fill his heart. Swallowing hard, he looked over at the other guards, and could see how ashen their faces were. Thoroughly bewildered by what was happening, he gritted his teeth and hurried off.

When he returned, Bai Lin was with him.

When Bai Lin saw the wreckage, and the terrifying pink smoke, he looked up at the thunderclouds in the sky, and called out, “Xiaochun, there’s no need to be impulsive about the--”

“Leave me alone! They’re just a few beasts, right? I have tens of thousands of ways of dealing with stupid-ass beasts like that! Just wait and see!” A long moment passed, and then Bai Xiaochun spoke again. “Zhao Long, throw those medicinal plants over here!”

Zhao Long didn’t dare to refuse. After glancing at Bai Lin and getting confirmation, he tossed a bag of holding into the pink smoke.

A bit of time passed in which Bai Lin considered trying to do more to convince Bai Xiaochun to stop. However, that was when rumbling sounds could be heard inside the smoke, which suddenly transformed from pink to red. At the same time, more bolts of lightning began to fall from above. Shockingly, even as the first round of lightning fell, more lightning could be seen converging higher up.

In the blink of an eye, fully 10,000 lightning bolts merged together into something like a net that covered the entire sky. Even Bai Lin gasped at the sight of it, let alone the other ordinary cultivators in Great Wall City.

Even the charging Wildlands army suddenly stopped in place to look at what was happening. As for the beasts in the army, they were suddenly stricken by very uneasy feelings. Some of them even began to pant, and look over toward Great Wall City with red, glowing eyes, as if they were being stimulated into madness.

Bai Lin was suddenly stricken by a very ominous feeling when he saw the smoke turn red. There was something terrifying about it, something that didn’t have anything to do with one’s cultivation base, but rather, with some other, deeper instinct. “Xiaochun, don’t... don’t get too worked up. I'm working on a way to deal with those spheroid beasts. You just--”

“Don’t even try to convince me!” came the growling interruption. “I, Bai Xiaochun, will definitely show those beasts that Lord Bai’s pill furnaces are *not* that delicious after all!” Inside the residence, Bai Xiaochun was sitting right in front of eight crimson-hot pill furnaces, his hair disheveled, his face gaunt, surrounded by large quantities of medicine bottles. He had gone crazy in his pill concocting, relying completely on spirit alcohol to sustain his cultivation base, as well as numerous special medicinal pills.

By this point, it was correct to say that Bai Xiaochun had gone all out!

With a shout, he slapped his hands onto the surface of each of the violently shaking pill furnaces.

Cracks spread out across their surfaces, whereupon intense gravitational forces sprang up. At the same time, the red smoke stirred, instantly rushing into the eight pill furnaces!

As soon as the smoke vanished, Bai Xiaochun appeared in front of Bai Lin and the others. A bright gleam flickered in his eyes as he threw his head back and laughed at the top of his lungs.

“Trifling big-bellied beasts! I, Bai Xiaochun, have prepared a wonderful gift for you. Let’s see if you ever dare to consume my things again!!

“I used several thousand sets of supreme-grade ingredients, and even cleansed the impurities with tens of thousands of bolts of lightning. Then I purified the medicine again with a secret magic, and then went so far as to ruin the pill furnaces to refine them a third time! The result is something paramount, something unparalleled in heaven and earth, something that affects both male and female beasts. A single whiff of it will drive them crazy to the point of insanity! It is an Aphrodisiac Pill to shock all creation!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0485 awe-chapter-486

Zhao Long’s eyes went wide, and Liu Li gaped in shock. Everyone else had similar expressions on their faces as they looked at Bai Xiaochun standing there, laughing crazily.

“Aphrodisiac Pill?” Bai Lin said, mouth agape.

Before anyone could ask any more questions, Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve, sweeping up all eight pill furnaces as he used the power of his Undying Tendons in his legs to leap into the air toward the Great Wall.

“Alright, big-bellied beasts,” he said, his eyes shining brightly as he sailed through the air, “Bai Xiaochun is coming for you!”

As for Bai Lin, his eyes flickered as he suppressed his confusion and took a step to follow Bai Xiaochun. As for Zhao Long and the others, after a moment of hesitation, they also flew into motion toward the Great Wall, filled with curiosity about the medicinal pills Bai Xiaochun had created in such a terrifying state.

It didn’t take long for Bai Xiaochun to be atop the Great Wall itself, where he let out a shout and threw all of the pill furnaces out toward the battlefield.

Down below, the giants of the savage tribes, as well as the seemingly endless sea of souls, were in the middle of a charge toward the wall. Now that the pill furnaces’ power had been negated, the vengeful souls were under less pressure, and were easier to control. As a result, the necromancers had power to spare, which they used to upgrade some of the vengeful souls, making them much more powerful than before.

More booms rang out on the battlefield than ever before. The increased power of the vengeful souls ensured that less savages were falling in battle, and at the same time, the pressure on the five legions had increased.

As for the eight pill furnaces that had just been tossed out, they were crimson from heat, and were a shocking sight to behold. The mere thought of what would happen if they exploded was terrifying to contemplate.

In fact, as soon as they appeared, the savage giants felt anxiety rising up in their hearts. However, they didn’t panic. As they stared at the incoming furnaces, the black-robed old man on the black altar some distance away, as well as the necromancers and tribal chiefs by his side, were all watching the scene play out on a screen of water.

“Scraping the bottom of the barrel, huh?” the black-robed old man said coolly. “That move won’t work anymore!”

Expression cold, he performed a right-handed incantation gesture and then waved his finger at the water screen. The screen rippled, after which a dozen or so spheroid beasts on the battlefield suddenly raised their heads and bellowed.

Then, looks of disdain appeared on their faces as they opened their mouths wide and inhaled deeply!

Instantly, the eight pill furnaces wobbled back and forth, and then shot toward the spheroid beasts, who began to fight amongst each other to consume them. Within moments, all of the pill furnaces had been swallowed down.

As for the beasts who hadn’t managed to swallow any furnaces, they began to howl in discontent.

When the old man on the black altar saw the scene playing out, he smiled faintly, a look of scorn in his eyes.

This was the second time that the cultivators of the five legions had witnessed pill furnaces being consumed. Bai Lin stood there quietly, while the other cultivators let out light sighs.

Bai Xiaochun was the only one who simply stood there, looking coldly at the eight beasts who had swallowed the pill furnaces.

“Eat up,” he murmured, “and don’t spill a drop!”

A muffled thump rang out, and the huge beasts’ bellies expanded for a moment before shrinking back down to normal.

The beasts then looked threateningly toward the Great Wall and let out menacing howls before turning, as if to leave. Simultaneously, a large number of savage giants flew over to protect them. Meanwhile, the other savage giants on the battlefield began to call out in taunting fashion.

“That’s all you’ve got? Those magical items are useless against us now!”

“Those wimps on the Great Wall are still trying this gimmick? Eight pill furnaces aren’t even enough to get our beasts full!”

“How moronic can you get? Their pill furnace trick didn't work last time, and yet they tried the same thing again!”

When the cultivators of the five legions heard the laughter ringing out from the battlefield, they gritted their teeth in frustration. Were it not for orders passed down by the deva to hold their position on the wall, they would definitely have poured out in deadly fashion and filled the battlefield with rivers of Wildlander blood.

Bai Lin sighed, and turned to Bai Xiaochun as if to say something.

Before he could, Bai Xiaochun's eyes narrowed, and he murmured, "Any moment now, and their laughter will cease. When I get pissed off, I frighten even myself."

When Bai Lin heard that, he was taken aback. And then, before he could ask any questions, the eight beasts who had consumed the pill furnaces suddenly stopped moving.

A moment later, their expressions flickered, and slowly, their eyes began to turn bright red. They began shivering, and even opened their mouths to burp out pink smoke. In fact, their entire bodies suddenly seemed to be glowing red.

Hoarse pants could be heard, which soon turned into clamoring howls. As the surrounding savage giants looked on in shock, the eight beasts suddenly turned on them and pounced in full madness.

Two of the beasts even turned on their own kind with maddened howls. It took only a moment before all eight of the beasts were pouncing on anything nearby that moved....

All of them were under the complete control of the Aphrodisiac Pill!

Furthermore, because the Aphrodisiac Pills had exploded inside of the beasts, the energy released was impossible to dispel. It was difficult to put into words the incredible power contained in pills like that, pills which had been refined four times!

Whether the beasts were male or female didn't matter. As long as the pill furnaces had exploded in their stomachs, they were bereft of all sense of reason, and became lost within the effects of the Aphrodisiac Pill. If that were all there were to the situation, it might not have been a big deal. However, they continuously belched out pink smoke, smoke that didn’t affect the vengeful souls, but most definitely affected the savage giants!

All the giants had to do was get a whiff of that smoke, and their faces would instantly flush. A moment later, their eyes would turn both blank and bloodshot at the same time, and they would throw their heads back and roar.

In the briefest of moments, the entire battlefield was thrown into complete and utter chaos....

Screams and shrieks rang out in all directions. As of this moment, the area outside the Great Wall didn’t look like a battlefield at all, but rather, a scene of absolute pandemonium....

One of the main reasons why these Aphrodisiac Pills were so terrifyingly effective was that Bai Xiaochun had combined his original formula with his Fantasy Pill formula. He had even performed spirit enhancements on some of the main ingredients. Thus, the pills were far more shocking than they had ever been before.

The cultivators on the Great Wall looked down, their minds spinning, looks of blank shock on their faces, their hearts battered by waves of astonishment because of what they were witnessing.

“Th-this... this....”

“They... dammit! What exactly is going on?!”

“What medicinal pills were they? Heavens!!”

Everyone from the five legions was talking about what was happening, whether they were ordinary soldiers, lieutenants, captains, and even the colonels and major generals. Without exception, the shocking scene playing out caused them all to lose their cool.

Even Bai Lin, a general of the five legions, felt his mind spinning in astonishment.

In fact, the indescribable scene playing out was so shocking that the huge eye on top of the pagoda flickered. Then, three-eyed Chen Hetian appeared. He was a respected deva, and yet even he couldn’t help but gasp, and then look over at Bai Xiaochun with a very strange expression on his face.

“Is this really the Great Wall?” he thought.

In fact, everyone was similarly stunned. As of this moment, the name of the pill’s creator, Bai Xiaochun, was being indelibly branded into the minds of everyone present. “For the rest of my life, I must make sure to never, ever provoke the terrifying Bai Xiaochun!”

As countless gasps rang out, and the chaos on the battlefield continued to play out, the black-robed old man on the black altar, as well as the surrounding necromancers and tribal chiefs, were all watching what was happening.

Deathly silence prevailed on the altar, as all eyes were completely glued to the water screen. No one was talking, and in fact, none of them were even breathing. It took a long moment before any breathing to occur, but when it did, it soon turned into panting, and eventually the entire group was physically shaking.

Then, cries of rage began to ring out from the altar.

“Bai Xiaochun!!!”

“The Wildlands will destroy you or die in the attempt!!”

“Heaven-damned Bai Xiaochun! Y-y-you... you will not die a good death!!!”

“Issue a death warrant! Tell the whole world that this Bai Xiaochun must die!! If he doesn’t die, the Wildlands will live in disgrace for all time!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0486 awe-chapter-487

Bai Xiaochun looked out at the chaos on the battlefield and cleared his throat. Then he stuck his chin up and flicked his sleeve.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun gave all savages and beasts no other choice than to be reduced to ashes!” Looking like the picture of a lonely hero, he turned and strolled dramatically off the Great Wall. As he did, the cultivators behind him watched him leave, shock and other mixed emotions clearly visible on their faces.

Some of those expressions were those of reverence, some were fear, and others were plain terror....

As Bai Xiaochun left, the magical cannons on the Great Wall rumbled to life. How could the five legions not take advantage of this spectacular opportunity? Some of the cultivators even charged onto the battlefield itself, where every enemy in their path was crushed like twigs. Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to know the final outcome of the battle. He was content knowing that his message had been clearly sent to the Wildlands: *provoke Bai Xiaochun, and pay the price!*

The Aphrodisiac Pill was not without fault. For example, although it worked quite well on beasts, if the savage giants wished to protect themselves from its effects, they could do so in many ways. The only reason it had worked so effectively in this situation was because of the element of surprise. And of course, Bai Xiaochun was well aware of that.

However, he didn’t plan to use the Aphrodisiac Pill as a way to accumulate battle credit. He simply wanted to use it to frighten the Wildlands, and ensure that they didn’t dare to send beasts to consume his exploding furnaces.

“Hmph! Well, exploding furnaces can't be a long-term tactic anyway. I need to switch things up a bit, and the key to that is my Soul Convergence Pill.” As Bai Xiaochun left, Zhao Long and the others followed him, their hearts trembling, the mere sight of Bai Xiaochun’s back causing their hair to stand on end.

When it came to thoughts of Bai Xiaochun’s terrifying Aphrodisiac Pill, both Zhao Long and Liu Li felt the same. Not only were they scared to death, but they also couldn’t help but muse that he was truly born for battle....

In the following few days, word spread to all of the cultivators in Great Wall City. Stories abounded about what had occurred when Bai Xiaochun made his move, and yet again, his name shook the entire city.

Not only were his pill concocting techniques fear-inspiring, but his medicinal pills were horrific. Most of the grandmasters who lived near him in the Armory were so scared that they moved away....

By that point, the Armory was almost half empty, and when Bai Xiaochun realized that, he simply waved his sleeve and had the empty half consolidated into his own personal headquarters.

Of course, because of his actions, he earned a huge amount of battle credit, which immediately got him promoted from lieutenant to captain.

Because of that, despite his residence being much larger than before, the increased number of subordinates under his control ensured that it didn’t feel empty at all.

Not only was Bai Xiaochun famous within Great Wall City, but he was now well-known beyond the wall as well.

Of the hundreds of tribes that occupied the eastern Wildlands, all had heard of Bai Xiaochun and his horrifying Aphrodisiac Pill, as well as the tragic defeat the Wildlands had suffered because of them. For those reasons, Bai Xiaochun’s name rose high on the Wildlands Execution List. Before, he had been in the top 100, but now, he was in 27th place!

Of the people higher than him on the list, the weakest were Nascent Soul cultivators. In fact, many of the people below him on the list were in that same cultivation level. Bai Xiaochun was the only Core Formation cultivator in the top 50.

He was now famous, had a huge accumulation of battle credit, and had earned the rank of captain. Everywhere he went in Great Wall City, the cultivators who saw him would salute with clasped hands.

It was a wonderful feeling that Bai Xiaochun loved, and he couldn’t help but muse that staying here had been a good decision. In fact, he would often take out his copper mirror and ask all sorts of questions that drove imposter Nightcrypt crazy.

Imposter Nightcrypt would wrack his brains with new ways to flatter Bai Xiaochun, until Bai Xiaochun would eventually start to get embarrassed and stop asking questions.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation by no means stagnated. With all his battle credit, he was able to get plenty of medicinal pills to help with his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. At the same time, he continued to work on his Soul Convergence Pill.

Although his cultivation speed was actually moving along quite rapidly, whenever he thought about how much it cost to get the Nascent Soul Pill that would propel him into the great circle of the Gold Core stage, he would always worry that he was going too slow.

However, despite his cultivation base rising at a relatively slow rate, his Undying Live Forever Technique was making huge progress. After all, Bai Lin had been utterly shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s skill in the Dao of medicine, and was more than happy to provide him with anything he asked for.

He didn’t even mind that some of the medicinal plants being requested were actually for personal use. As far as he was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was just too important.

With so many medicinal plants at his disposal, Bai Xiaochun’s speed with the Undying Live Forever Technique picked up. By this point, he had Undying Tendons spreading throughout his left arm. One night, his left arm even began to glow with bright light, and turned translucent to the point of being able to see his blood and veins inside.

Eyes widening, he clenched his hand into a fist, which caused cracking sounds to emanate out. Then he punched out into the air, and his hand moved so quickly it was almost invisible.

The sensation of incredible power which spread out from his body gave him a very clear idea of how much fleshly body strength he had at his disposal.

“Success! I have Undying Tendons in both legs as well as my left arm. Now I just need to finish my head, right arm, and torso!

“When that happens, I’ll have completed my work with the Undying Tendons, and as such, the third volume of the Undying Codex. Then, all I’ll have to do is break through from Gold Core to Nascent Soul!

“Once I'm in the Nascent Soul stage, I can finally cultivate Undying Bones!” The mere thought of Undying Bones caused Bai Xiaochun to purse his lips in excitement.

According to the descriptions in the Undying Codex, once he cultivated the Undying Bones, he would essentially have reached the point of having an indestructible fleshly body.

“Skin, flesh, tendons, bones, blood!” he said softly.

“Undying Skin is for defensive purposes. Undying Flesh gives power. Undying Tendons helps with speed. Undying Bones provides the unifying factor for all three, allowing one to unleash incredible force!” Having considered all these matters, his anticipation regarding the Undying Bones grew even greater.

“Even without Undying Bones, and only being half-finished with my Undying Tendons, my fleshly body power combined with my Gold Core cultivation base puts me in an incredible position with my cultivation level.” A flicker of pride appeared in his eyes as he thought back to his fight with the statue of Gongsun Wan’er. Back then, although he had a Heaven-Dao Gold Core, he was still only in the mid Core Formation stage.

During the fight, he had been unable to truly unleash what he was capable of. After all, even an ocean of water that has to pass through a tiny bottleneck, will be limited.

Things were different now, though. As he inched closer to the great circle, and had half a body’s worth of Undying Tendons, he was completely confident that if he had to fight that Gongsun Wan’er statue again, he would be able to secure victory as easy as flipping over his hand!

“Elder Brother Zhao Tianjiao could kill Nascent Soul experts when in Core Formation.... I should be able to as well.” Bai Xiaochun could tell that if he truly unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, the terrifying level of power would be no weaker than what Zhao Tianjiao was capable of.

“From now on, not a single person beneath late Core Formation will be a match for me!” Flicking his sleeve, he laughed loudly.

Sometimes, good things come in waves. It was only three days after the Undying Tendons in his left arm were finished that, after nearly half a year of endless experimentation, he produced a batch of Soul Convergence Pills that were exactly what he had been looking for!

These Soul Convergence Pills were no longer black, but rather, gold!

They emanated an invisible aura that distorted the air around them, and in addition to that, a black hole could be seen spinning inside of them.

Furthermore, if you looked at one of the pills for too long, you would almost feel like your soul was going to be tugged out of you.

The moment the golden Soul Convergence Pills appeared, he knew that they were high-grade pills. Although they still had some impurities, those impurities wouldn’t cause too many problems.

These were the most perfect Soul Convergence Pills he had concocted so far.

Excited, he sent a message to Bai Lin, and then took Zhao Long and his other guards up to the Great Wall.

Bai Lin was there to meet him, and immediately noticed the golden medicinal pill he was holding.

“Soul Convergence Pill?” he asked, looking excited.

“Exactly!” Bai Xiaochun replied, a proud smile on his face as he held the pill in his hand and looked out beyond the wall, his eyes glittering.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0487 awe-chapter-488

The battle outside the Great Wall had been going on for the better part of a year. However, because of the chaos which had played out recently, the Wildlanders had been driven into a fury. At the same time, the savage tribes didn’t dare to show their faces.

Few savage giants could be seen on the battlefield, and those that were visible kept their distance from the wall. There were few beasts either. However, the tide of vengeful souls continued to smash into the wall and the shield. Although this form of attack wasn’t particularly effective, the sheer numbers involved ensured that the shield continue to ripple and emit light.

Clearly, the vengeful souls had no hope of breaking through the defenses of the Great Wall. The magical cannons were firing constantly, and the cultivators of the five legions attacked with surgical precision. As a result, most of the souls which got close were destroyed.

A battle like this had not taken place from the moment the Great Wall came into existence until this moment. By this point, it was impossible to determine exactly how many vengeful souls had been destroyed. And yet, there were always more souls to replace them.

Furthermore, because the Underworld River had been tampered with, the number of souls only seemed to increase.

It was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and strode out to the edge of the wall, his eyes shining with anticipation. When he threw out the golden Soul Convergence Pill, it turned into a streak of golden light that flew out into the very middle of the soul tide.

When it thumped onto the ground, it didn’t break apart like the previous version of the pill had. Instead, it emitted gold, rippling light in all directions.

Instantly, both the cultivators on the wall and the Wildlands savages could see that the golden ripples extended to fill a 3,000-meter area!

Within that 3,000-meter area, all of the vengeful souls trembled, and before they could do anything, a whooshing sound filled the air as all of the souls were sucked together into one spot.

The Soul Convergence Pill became like a black hole, and in the blink of an eye, countless screams could be heard as all of the more than 10,000 souls in the area of the pill became streaks of light that were absorbed into the pill itself.

However, that wasn’t anything very impressive, and Bai Lin even frowned in response. The power of this Soul Convergence Pill didn’t seem to measure up to the exploding pill furnaces.

However, before he could put too much thought into the matter, the golden Soul Convergence Pill which had sucked in all the souls in the 3,000-meter area suddenly change color. In the briefest of moments, it turned bright red!

In that instant, an incredible rumbling sound echoed out as the second deadly effect of the Soul Convergence Pill was unleashed. The pill exploded in wild fashion, sending red ripples out to cover a 30,000-meter area!!

As that happened, the vengeful souls that were covered by the red ripples began to shake violently, as if they were struggling against something. Then, the brutality in their eyes vanished, and their bodies vanished as quickly as a strand of smoke in a storm wind! Furthermore, in the moment of vanishing, their eyes suddenly seemed to be looking around and seeing everything clearly!

Within that clarity, there seemed to be a look of relief....

The battlefield once again went silent. The savage giants began to tremble as they looked over at the terrifying medicinal pill that was clearly as powerful as ten exploding furnaces. Without even thinking about it, they began to edge away.

Back on the Great Wall, everyone, Bai Lin included, gasped in the realization that this new pill was clearly as effective as ten or more exploding furnaces.

And that was just one medicinal pill!!

Bai Lin looked over excitedly at Bai Xiaochun and asked, “Grandmaster Bai, are you the only one who can use this pill, or can it be used by others, too?!”

“When Bai Xiaochun concocts pills, of course they’re the type that anyone can use!” Even Bai Xiaochun had been a bit shocked by what had happened outside the wall. That was especially the case because of how the vengeful souls had looked relieved right before vanishing. That left Bai Xiaochun feeling very strange.

Even he had been unaware that there would be another incredible use to the pills. Apparently, they could purify the souls they affected.

Meanwhile, something else happened that no one else noticed. A blurry figure had appeared high up the sky, who was now looking down at the ground below. It was an old man, and although it was difficult to make out his facial features, if Bai Xiaochun had been close by, he would have recognized him immediately. He was none other than the gravekeeper!!

Surrounding him were what appeared to be illusory, rippling fluid, which was none other than Underworld River water.

He looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun, then turned away and vanished into the Underworld River water.

Down on the Great Wall, Bai Lin's eyes shone as brightly as the sun.

"Wonderful. Can you mass-produce them?"

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then looked out at the battlefield and waved his hand dismissively. "Of course I can. However, as you can probably tell, I don't have enough medicinal plants or pill furnaces."

Delighted, Bai Lin threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

"That's no problem at all. Would a thousand pill furnaces be enough?! As for the medicinal plants, I can take you to see the liaison from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. As long as your demands aren't too excessive, he should be able to accommodate you."

Bai Xiaochun realized that Bai Lin was reminding him not to get too greedy. Chuckling, he replied, "Of course...." while simultaneously trying to decide what medicinal plants he would ask for.

Bai Lin took a deep breath to keep his excitement under control as he thought about what it would be like for all the soldiers in the Skin Flayers to have a Soul Convergence Pill ready to throw out at any time. It could completely change the entire course of the war!

In fact, he could even see himself as being the first general from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to actually lead a devastating campaign into the Wildlands!

The meritorious services he would perform, and the glory he would accumulate, would be talked about throughout the ages. Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Lin couldn’t prevent his heart from racing as he looked from the battlefield back to Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun, according to the deva patriarch, this Wildlands offensive is different from anything in the past. Although it might seem like they’re on the run right now, the truth is that within the next few months, they will lead a charge greater than anything so far!

“During that battle, it is highly likely that one of their almighty Deva Realm experts will join the fight. Of course, Senior Chen will handle that part of the fighting, and we wouldn't be able to do much to help. But in terms of the rest of the battle, it will be huge, and we will see an unimaginable number of savages and souls.

“Therefore, not only must you hurry and concoct as many Soul Convergence Pill as possible, you should also try to come up with a way to produce a type of exploding furnace whose detonation surpasses anything you did before by multiple times. The bigger the explosion, the better!!”

In response to Bai Lin’s words, Bai Xiaochun stood there thoughtfully. The truth was that he didn’t particularly want to concoct medicinal pills with the express purpose of getting the furnace to explode. After all, he was an apothecary, and apothecaries were supposed to concoct medicine, not explode furnaces. His exploding furnaces had only resulted from an unexpected turn of events during the concocting process.

Back when he had first arrived in Great Wall City, he would have been too nervous to refuse, but right now, he felt a bit daring, and also determined. He was a grandmaster, right?! Therefore, he glared back at Bai Lin and shook his head.

“General Bai, I’m afraid you can just forget about--” However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Lin’s expression flickered, and at the same time, both of them heard numerous cries of alarm rising up.

Some distance away from the Great Wall, more than a hundred beams of light could be seen screaming through the air at incredible speed, clearly ignoring any threat to themselves. As they closed in, it was possible to see that there were over a hundred giants, each one of them at least 60 meters tall. From their size, and from the incredible fluctuations rolling off of them, it was obvious that these were powerful experts from whatever tribe they came from.

The cultivators on the wall instantly focused on the incoming giants. Soon, the giants began to self-detonate, causing incredible booms to ring out. However, even as that drew the attention of more cultivators on the wall, three beams of light appeared from a different direction, like three arrows ripping through the air, borrowing the force of the self-detonating giants to reach the Great Wall itself.

Soon, it was clear that within these three beams of light were not giants, but rather, soul cultivators!!

There were two men and one woman, and as soon as they appeared, they unleashed a bizarre divine ability that caused a demonic green light to form together into a huge hand. In response, Bai Lin’s eyes glittered, and he waved his right hand, sending out a powerful surge of energy toward the three soul cultivators. In that same moment, Bai Xiaochun looked over.

He was separated from the three soul cultivators by the shield, and yet, they were staring directly at him with venomous hatred. Before Bai Lin’s divine ability could get close to them, all three self-detonated!

There had to be a good reason for two waves of attackers to all self-detonate!!

Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun slowly began to back up.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0488 awe-chapter-489

A huge boom echoed out as the soul cultivators’ self-detonation sent a huge shockwave rolling out in all directions. At the same time, an illusory figure appeared within the explosion. It was a gray specter riding a black soul horse, and it was moving with speed that far outmatched that of the soul cultivators from moments before. In the blink of an eye, it pierced through the shield and was bearing down on Bai Xiaochun!

“Quasi-Deva Realm necromancer soul!!” Everything happened so quickly that everyone was rooted in place in shock, with the exception of Bai Lin, who immediately leapt to intercept the enemy. However, the incoming necromancer soul was already resigned to being destroyed, and was holding nothing back in his attack. Stretching his right hand out, he pointed his finger at Bai Xiaochun, sending a green stream of energy out toward him. Even Bai Lin attacking with all the power he could muster only slowed down the green energy, and it was still moving so quickly that no Core Formation cultivator would be able to evade it.

Bai Xiaochun’s face drained of blood as a sensation of deadly crisis filled him. In that dangerous moment, he roared at the top of his lungs and drew upon the power of the Undying Tendons in both of his legs to fly backward with speed that surpassed the Core Formation level. After putting some distance between himself and the stream of green energy, he drew upon his frigid qi to teleport 300 meters away. Only by doing all of these things was he just barely able to extricate himself from the danger!

The spot he had once occupied was pierced through by the green energy. Sadly, all of the Skin Flayers within several hundred meters of that spot who were hit by the fluctuations of the energy were instantly transformed into pools of blood....

None of them even had a chance to scream before they were killed. With the exception of Bai Lin and Bai Xiaochun, everyone was killed instantly. As for the Skin Flayers beyond that radius, their faces went ashen in terror.

Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood. His bones were all on the verge of being crushed, and even his five yin organs and six yang organs were almost destroyed. And that was just from the fluctuations rolling off of the attack itself!

Looking around at the pools of blood that were all that remained of the nearby cultivators, Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled.

“You--” Before he could say anything else, he coughed up another mouthful of blood. Thankfully, he had a powerful fleshly body and a Gold Core cultivation base. Because of that, he had avoided death. And yet, he still ended up being seriously injured.

Spitting more blood out of his mouth, he looked over at the illusory necromancer, who was just now being wiped out by the gaze of the enormous eye on the tower.

Even as the illusory necromancer was destroyed, a look of deep confusion could be seen in his eyes that said, *How did he survive? How did he escape death!?!*

Originally, the necromancer had assumed that even if Bai Xiaochun managed to avoid the initial attack, being nothing more than a Core Formation cultivator, he would definitely be killed by the resulting fluctuations.

After all, that necromancer had a quasi-Deva Realm cultivation base, and plus, there had been absolutely no indication that there would be an assassination attempt. In order to guarantee success, the Wildlands had sacrificed more than a hundred savage giants as a distraction, as well as three soul cultivators. In addition to all of that, the assassin was actually the soul of a powerful necromancer. All of that had been done just to try to kill Bai Xiaochun!

The mere sight of Bai Xiaochun caused all Wildlanders to seethe with hatred, and yet, they had met with nothing but defeat in their effort!

Sweat was currently pouring down Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. The sensation of imminent death moments ago had been incredibly intense. The three soul cultivators had been extremely powerful, with Nascent Soul cultivation bases. As for the necromancer, he was on the same level as Bai Lin, half a step into the Deva Realm. Because he existed as a soul body, and also had some special techniques on his side, he had been able to get through the shield to deliver a single attack.

If Bai Lin hadn’t been there, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t have been able to evade the attack even if he was capable of greater speed than before!

Bai Lin had a very unsightly expression on his face. Bai Xiaochun had almost been killed right next to him, which was in and of itself a bald-faced provocation. Bai Xiaochun was extremely important to him; perhaps if he had already concocted a large number of Soul Convergence Pills, his loss could be accepted. But at the moment, he hadn’t even started working. For him to die now would have been a huge blow to the cultivators of Great Wall City.

In his anxiety, he rushed over to Bai Xiaochun and handed him a medicinal pill that glowed with violet light.

“Take this Godly Vestige Pill!”

With a single whiff of the pill’s medicinal aroma, Bai Xiaochun was able to identify it as a holy pill that was designed to heal injuries. Without hesitation, he popped it into his mouth, and an instant later, his entire body thrummed with spiritual power and life force. At the same time, all of his wounds and injuries began to fade away.

It was a miraculous pill the likes of which Bai Xiaochun had never seen before, but he could tell that it was something incredibly valuable. In fact, Bai Lin probably kept it on hand as a life-saving contingency plan for himself. However, at the moment, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested in getting more information about that. Turning to Bai Lin, he said, “General Bai, when you invited me to the top of the Great Wall to observe the fighting, you said over and over again that it would be safe!”

Bai Xiaochun was still feeling a bit jumpy and frightened, so as soon as he finished speaking, he backed a bit further away from the edge of the wall.

Bai Lin felt horrible. Clasping hands apologetically to Bai Xiaochun, he then glared out at the battlefield with killing intent flickering in his eyes.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t angry at Bai Lin. Were it not for Bai Lin stepping in to help, Bai Xiaochun might not even be alive at the moment. “Can necromancers really just go right through the Great Wall’s shield?” he asked.

Although Bai Xiaochun’s question had been worded rather vaguely, the point was obvious: he had almost just died. He usually maintained vigilance wherever he went, but because of the spell formation shield protecting the Great Wall, had always assumed that he was safe.

After a moment of silence, Bai Lin replied, “Most people can't. In fact, necromancers with physical bodies can’t either. Only in soul form can they do such a thing. However, after passing through the shield, the eye on the tower will detect them, and they will be killed within three breaths of time. Therefore, very few necromancers would choose to do such a thing.”

Forcing his breathing under control, Bai Xiaochun glared out at the battlefield beyond the wall. At the moment, the savages were retreating, as was the tide of souls.

“Xiaochun, please forgive my carelessness today,” Bai Lin said, turning back to look at Bai Xiaochun. “Why don’t you come with me to see the sect liaison? All you have to do is say the word to him, and any resources you need will be yours.”

Bai Xiaochun immediately understood Bai Lin’s implication. Bai Lin was giving him an opportunity to stuff his pockets as a way of making up for what had happened. Therefore, he suppressed his anxiety over the events which had just occurred, cast a final hateful glare at the savages, and then followed Bai Lin away.

Soon, they were back in the city, and heading to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect liaison office. Considering his status, Bai Lin didn’t need to act polite. Striding up to the entrance, he barked, “Song Yiduo, get out here right now!”

Moments later, a fat, middle-aged man hurried out, huffing and puffing. Clasping his hands in greeting, he said, “What do you need? Just say the word.”

Bai Lin looked over at Bai Xiaochun and nodded, then stood there looking thoughtfully up into the sky.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun felt that the best way to deal with his anxiety was to crush it with cultivation resources. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to say, “I need 5,000 earthspirit tubers, and each one needs to be at least 500 years old!”

Song Yiduo shivered like a wild boar whose tail had just been stepped on. Yelping, and fat jiggling, he replied, “500 years old? 5,000 of them? That’s impossible!”

Ignoring him, Bai Xiaochun continued, “I also need skydragon plums, seven seas ginsengs, wyvern scales, and godglory herbs. 10,000 each!”

Song Yiduo was about to respond when Bai Xiaochun cut in and added, “Plus, fuel for nine-colored flame. A hundred portions!”

Song Yiduo’s anger flared. “Impossible! I don’t have those things on hand! Who could?!”

Completely ignoring Song Yiduo, Bai Xiaochun continued, “Also, I need 10,000 bottles of spirit alcohol designed to replenish the cultivation base!

“And a hundred Nascent Soul Pills!

“Oh right. That -- what’s it called? -- Godly Vestige Pill! I want a hundred of them too!”

By this point, even Bai Lin was getting a bit nervous. From what he could tell, it would probably require sending a message to his grandfather to acquire such a collection.

As for Song Yiduo, he was wailing inwardly with grief. He was in charge of all the day-to-day affairs in Great Wall City, and if expenditures got too high, he would be punished. Conversely, if he didn't spend enough to keep the five legions happy, they would get angry.

Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively and looked over at Bai Lin. After a moment of thought, Bai Lin gave Song Yiduo a wry smile and then dragged him off to the side. First, he started out whispering, but then got angry, and finally, smashed his fist into a nearby ornamental rock, scaring the daylights out of Song Yiduo. Then the two of them walked back to Bai Xiaochun.

With a wry smile, Bai Lin hustled Bai Xiaochun away, worried that he would start making more demands. "He couldn't get you the nine-colored flame fuel or the Godly Vestige Pills even if you killed him. Everything else, he can handle. As for the Nascent Soul Pill, I need to think about how to pull that off...."

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0489 awe-chapter-490

Bai Xiaochun had been mentally reviewing all of the wonderful things he knew about to try to figure out more things to request, but before he could, he found himself being dragged away by Bai Lin.

Even still, Bai Xiaochun was chuckling inwardly. He had demanded an exorbitant compensation moments ago, and would have been happy if only part of his requests had been fulfilled.

Feeling very pleased with himself, he looked over at Bai Lin, the deadly crisis he had just endured still fresh in mind.

“General, didn’t you just ask me if there was a way to make the pill furnace explosions even more powerful...?”

“What?” Bai Lin replied, his pupils constricted. “Didn’t you say that was impossible?”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare. “Impossible? What do you mean impossible? Of course it’s possible. Or at least, it could be!” Gritting his teeth, he continued, “All you want is a bigger explosion, right? It’s simple. Some time back, I actually caused a pill furnace explosion so big it almost leveled an immortal mountain! All the plants and vegetation were incinerated, and everything else was burned to a crisp!”

As soon as Bai Lin heard this, his eyes began to shine brightly. He was completely obsessed with the exploding pill furnaces, and as such, he quickly asked, “What do you need? Just say the word!”

“The specific medicinal pill formula is one aspect. But more important is the actual furnace involved. I need the same type of pill furnace they had back in the Blood Stream Sect. I'm not really sure how to explain it. Why don’t you have the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect send some people to the River-Defying Sect, and look for the grand elder of Lesser Marsh Peak in the Blood Stream Division? He can explain the details. Just have the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect make some similar pill furnaces based on his specifications!

“Pill furnaces like that are especially strong, so the explosions they make are incredibly large!

“Just don't forget that I’m from the River-Defying Sect, General Bai, so please make sure the representatives from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect are a bit more polite than usual!”

“No problem at all!” Bai Lin said enthusiastically. Laughing, he told Bai Xiaochun to go back to the Armory on his own, while he went back to discuss things with Song Yiduo.

Bai Xiaochun made his way back to the armory, his mood much better than before. By now, he had recovered from the sensation of deadly crisis. However, he couldn’t forget the ordeal he had just gone through, nor the icy killing intent he had seen in the eyes of the necromancer who had attacked him.

“I can’t believe that the Wildlanders were willing to sacrifice over a hundred savage giants, three soul cultivators, and a necromancer, all to try to kill me....” As of that moment, he made the decision to never go up onto the Great Wall itself unless it was absolutely necessary.

After all, once his new exploding furnace made its debut, and he started pumping out Soul Convergence Pills, the

Wildlanders would hate him more than ever. Before long, his head would definitely fetch an astronomical price in the Wildlands.

That thought left his heart stirring with fear and fury both.

“I never wanted any of this,” he thought with a sigh. “But I guess there’s nothing I can do about it. We’re just on different sides, that’s all.” Then he thought about the fact that he would be leaving in ten years, and breathed a sigh of relief...

“Might as well not worry about it. In ten years, I’ll be gone anyway. For now, I need to focus on battle credit, and even more importantly, getting myself into the great circle of the Gold Core stage. I also need to cultivate my Undying Live Forever Technique to completion. Once I do all that, I’ll be in a much better position.” After returning to the Armory, he went into secluded meditation and began to work on his cultivation.

Seven days sped by in a blur. Bai Xiaochun himself had no idea how Bai Lin and Song Yiduo managed it all, but on the eighth day, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s teleportation portal was activated, and a whole batch of supplies was sent to Great Wall City.

That afternoon, Bai Lin came personally to Bai Xiaochun’s residence, and with the wave of his hand, sent a thousand pill furnaces rumbling down out of the sky.

There were also numerous bags of holding, plus something completely new. There were ten shocking pill furnaces, each of which was fully 300 meters tall. When they descended from the sky and landed onto the ground, everything in the area shook violently.

Dust blew out in all directions as incredible pressure weighed down. Zhao Long and all of the other soldiers under Bai Xiaochun’s command looked at the pill furnaces with complete shock.

“Those... those are pill furnaces?”

“Heavens! I've never seen a pill furnace that big before!!”

“There’s no way those are pill furnaces. Those are some kind of powerful magical treasure! Look at what they’re made from! That’s the same stuff they make Nascent Soul-level battleships from. Deep sea meteoric iron!” Even as their cries rang out, Bai Xiaochun emerged from his meditative trance and walked out of his room. When he saw the pill furnaces out in the courtyard, he gasped just as loudly as everyone else.

“Well, what do you think?!” Bai Lin said, laughing triumphantly. In order to procure all of these items, Bai Lin had been forced to beg for help from his grandfather, and had used every other method at his disposal. Furthermore, to produce these ten enormous pill furnaces, all of the power of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had been mobilized, and they had even called upon help from other parts of the eastern cultivation world.

The River-Defying Sect had been completely shaken when an emissary from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect arrived and respectfully asked many questions of them. At the same time, they got some news about Bai Xiaochun, leaving the entire River-Defying Sect very excited.

“Those are all of the medicinal plants you requested,” Bai Lin continued, pointing at all of the bags of holding. “By the way, this is about the limit of my abilities to procure resources....”

Feeling profoundly pleased, Bai Xiaochun rushed over to examine the bags of holding, his heart beating more rapidly with every moment. Within moments, his face was flushed with excitement.

Although there were no Nascent Soul Pills or nine-colored flame fuel, there were ten Godly Vestige Pills, as well as all of the medicinal plants he had requested. Although there wasn’t a mind-bogglingly large number of them, everything he had asked for was present. Most importantly, the earthspirit tubers and other ingredients that could increase life force were all present in large numbers.

Eyebrows raised in delight, Bai Xiaochun nodded repeatedly as he inspected the bags. Next, he walked over to inspect the pill furnaces, including the 1,000 ordinary furnaces, and also the ten 300-meter-tall ones.

After examining the huge pill furnaces, Bai Xiaochun was delighted to find that in terms of quality, they actually exceeded the pill furnace he'd used on Lesser Marsh Peak. Furthermore, they could also be sealed even tighter; the surfaces were covered with spell formations for just that purpose.

“Xiaochun, most of the things you requested are here. For the items that aren’t, give me some time to try to think of a way to get them. Right now, the most important thing to consider is that the biggest battle yet to be fought will be coming in the next few months!

“Therefore, time is of the essence. You need to start producing Soul Convergence Pills as quickly as possible, and also work on those ten destructive furnaces!” With a final deep look at Bai Xiaochun, Bai Lin turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun rubbed his hands together, eyes shining as he circled around the ten huge pill furnaces a few more times. Finally, he threw his back and laughed.

“Zhao Long. Liu Li. You and the rest of the battalion are going to help me make some unheard-of super-pills, the likes of which have never been seen before!” The 100 members of the battalion all voiced their agreement, whereupon the ten huge furnaces were set up in the middle of the courtyard, surrounded by the 1,000 ordinary furnaces in concentric rings.

Unfortunately, there were simply too many furnaces, so Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, issuing orders to his men to expand his residence. After tearing down and absorbing more of the nearby empty residences, he had a new courtyard that was fully 30,000 meters across, giving them more than enough space.

The first furnaces he started to work with were the huge ones. Bai Xiaochun knew that they were extraordinary, and therefore, used ten times as many earthflame stones as usual. In fact, he even went to the length of putting some of the stones inside the pill furnaces themselves. He also added numerous medicinal plants that would cause violent explosions when they got hot enough. For each type of plant, he was liberal with his usage, adding in hundreds of portions.

“All I want is an explosion, right? For concocting other types of medicines, I need to put a lot of thought into the formula, but for exploding furnaces, it's simple.” Brimming with self-confidence, he walked among the ten huge pill furnaces, adding medicinal plants in here and there, and even adding in some low-quality Soul Convergence Pills he had concocted in the past.

He also added some of the other medicinal pills he had in his bag of holding that he didn't plan to use in the future. After a bit of thought, he also went so far as to add quite a few types of poison medicine....

Still worried that the explosions wouldn’t be powerful enough, he gritted his teeth and added in many of the mystery pills he had concocted in the past, pills that he would never dare to consume.

In the end, he had no idea exactly what type of bizarre medicinal pills would form within the furnaces, but the entire point was to make the ingredients inside of the furnaces unstable to the point where they would explode.

Finally, he patted his hands in satisfaction.

“That should do it,” he said, looking contentedly at the ten huge furnaces. By now, he very much looked forward to seeing what they would do when they finally exploded.

Having accomplished these things, he rested a bit before beginning to work with the 1,000 ordinary pill furnaces.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0490 awe-chapter-491

Two months went by in the blink of an eye. As time passed, the 300-meter-tall pill furnaces gradually began to turn crimson, and emanate shocking levels of heat. However, Bai Xiaochun still wasn’t completely satisfied, and would often add more earthflame stones.

To ensure that he got the best results possible, he even went to Bai Lin and asked if any top experts were available who could bless the flames. Bai Lin and Bai Xiaochun were on completely the same train of thought when it came to those ten huge furnaces, so Bai Lin didn’t even hesitate for a moment before agreeing to his request.

In fact, Bai Lin personally went to seal the pill furnaces, and then had ten of his subordinates who were Nascent Soul cultivators come and converge Nascent Soul flames from their cultivation bases to help heat up the furnaces.

When Bai Xiaochun went out every day and saw ten Nascent Soul cultivators looking almost like living earthflame stones, he couldn’t help but anticipate the results.

“I wonder what these things are going to end up doing?” Eventually, he was forced to simply suppress his curiosity and wait. During the two months which passed, he produced batch after batch of Soul Convergence Pills. In fact, he quickly reached the point where he was concocting more than 10,000 per day.

Zhao Long and the others would collect the completed pills, after which Bai Xiaochun would use his command medallion, which was connected to the pagoda and the huge eye, to brand them with divine sense. Then, cultivators sent by Bai Lin would take the pills away to be stored for distribution when the big battle came.

The reason the pills were branded with divine sense was so that Bai Xiaochun would get some battle credit when they were used in the fighting. He wouldn’t get all the credit for each pill, but rather, thirty percent.

That was the agreement he and Bai Lin had come to. As for Bai Lin, since he was the financial backer of the pill, and also a general, he also received a small cut of all battle credit earned by the Skin Flayers. As for pills which ended up being used by the other four legions, Bai Lin would get a thirty percent cut.

The fact that everyone was profiting handsomely was quite pleasing to both Bai Lin and Bai Xiaochun. Bai Lin was already very protective of the Soul Convergence Pills, and had even sent a contingent of men over to stand guard over the Armory.

A large number of Soul Convergence Pills were created during those two months, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun still managed to set aside plenty of time for cultivation. Although he currently wasn’t making much in terms of battle credit, with all of the medicinal plants that had been delivered by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, his cultivation went on as normal. His frigid qi continued to grow stronger, and he was getting closer and closer to the great circle of the Gold Core stage.

However, his most rapid area of advancement was with his Undying Live Forever Technique. With so many earthspirit tubers at his disposal, all of them hundreds of years old, he had a shocking amount of life force to work with. As such, his entire left arm was now filled with Undying Tendons, and he was reaching the point of completion with his right arm.

Bai Xiaochun munched on earthspirit tubers the way a rabbit would munch on carrots on a daily basis. He even tended to nibble a bit here and there when concocting medicine. After another ten days passed, rumbling sounds echoed out into the evening sky as Bai Xiaochun’s right arm came to be fully filled with Undying Tendons.

Everything down to his fingers throbbed with shocking power, and when he shot his right arm out with full speed in the form of a fist, cracking sounds filled the air.

Even more strangely, when he clenched his hand into a fist, it almost felt like he was grasping onto the fabric of space itself, and that by moving his hand, he could twist the air around him.

Looking down excitedly at his arms he said, “I’ve finished cultivating both arms and both legs!”

He could sense that his arms were now filled with incredible power and speed.

“This place is more of a holy land than the Blood Stream Sect was!” Bai Xiaochun was extremely excited. After all, the Undying Live Forever Technique was a huge drain on resources, and that trend only grew more pronounced the more one cultivated the technique. Without the chance occurrences that had led him to large amounts of resources, he would never have been able to cultivate it to its current level.

Before, he had been in the late Gold Core stage, but only had Undying Tendons in one of his legs.

But now, thanks to the indescribably valuable earthspirit tubers, he had advanced by leaps and bounds. Of course, one thing that Bai Xiaochun didn't know was that the amount of earthspirit tubers he had consumed so far was actually more than half of the available reserves for the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, reserves that had been built up over the course of many years. After all, few people in the cultivation world raised earthspirit tubers, which were fundamentally hard to grow. Most of them existed in arcane pocket realms, and only transformed into medicinal plants after having grown for a hundred years.

“Now the only parts left are my torso and head. At this rate, it should only be a few more years before I succeed completely with my Undying Tendons. At that point, I should be able to break through... the third shackle!” The more he thought about it, the more excited he got. After experimenting a bit more with his newfound power, he looked up proudly, and mused about the fact that if he had a match with Eldest Brother Zhao Tianjiao, he would actually have a chance at victory.

“Aiya. I wish I could find a Nascent Soul expert to fight.” However, after a moment passed, he realized that such an idea didn’t make much sense, and quickly changed his mind. Clearing his throat, he murmured, “No need to be so impulsive....”

With that, he took a moment to readjust his thinking, then went back to cultivation.

Another month went by. One day, when Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of meditating, he suddenly heard what sounded like a war drum being beaten outside. The thunderous sound filled the entire city, and caused many cultivators to rush out and look up into the sky.

Zhao Long and the others were in the middle of watching over the pill furnaces in the courtyard when they heard the war drum, and their expressions instantly flickered. The ten Nascent Soul cultivators also opened their eyes and looked up in the direction of the tower and the eye.

That eye was where the sound of the war drum was coming from....

“The Drum of the Celestial Warrior!”

“We haven’t heard the Drum of the Celestial Warrior for a long time!”

“Whenever that drum sounds, it means that an army of savages larger than 500,000 strong is coming!”

Even as the cries of alarm rose up, the beating of the drum caused the blood within the veins of the cultivators to flow more swiftly than before, Bai Xiaochun included. The sound of the drum filled them with a desire to fight, and caused their bones and blood to vibrate. The sound even caused their cultivation bases to grow slightly more powerful.

That was the power of the Drum of the Celestial Warrior. Furthermore, there were additional benefits; all of the cultivators in Great Wall City found that they had begun to glow with a faint violet light.

That light was a type of armor that made their defenses stronger, and gave them a slight boost to agility.

Moments later, bugles began to sound, filling the city and drawing the attention of all cultivators of the five legions, no matter what they were doing.

Bai Xiaochun walked out of his room to find that Bai Lin was flying over toward him at top speed. A moment later, he came to a stop up in midair, his expression serious as he looked down at Bai Xiaochun.

“The Wildlands has sent an almighty Deva Realm expert, along with more than 100 necromancers, 1,000 soul cultivators, and 100 savage tribes with 700,000 giants. There are also innumerable beasts and souls. This is the major attack we’ve been waiting for!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered. Despite having been prepared for this moment, the news was still shocking.

“The deva patriarch has sent down orders that all cultivators in the city should prepare for battle. This is going to be the biggest fight we’ve had in years!

“Bai Xiaochun, I’ll be very busy commanding the army, and won’t have time to watch out for you. Make sure to take care of yourself in the coming battle.” With that, Bai Lin looked over at the ten huge pill furnaces. Although they were radiating intense heat, they had not yet reached the point of detonation. Unfortunately, there was nothing else that could be done. Bai Lin nodded at the ten Nascent Soul cultivators, who joined him as he flew off toward the wall.

Zhao Long and the rest of the battalion were already getting into their armor, and from their expressions, they hungered to do battle.

Ever since they had become Bai Xiaochun’s followers, they hadn’t gone out to fight on the battlefield. Now, with the Drum of the Celestial Warrior tugging at their hearts, their killing intent was burning hot, and their eyes were shining with the red light could only be seen among warrior cultivators from Great Wall City.

Bai Xiaochun looked around quietly at Zhao Long, Liu Li, and all of the other soldiers under his command. After a moment, he patted his bag of holding to produce numerous sets of armor, sundry magical items, countless bottles of medicinal pills, and stacks upon stacks of paper talismans. Although he didn’t have so many items that they could be referred to as endless, he definitely had enough to equip more than a thousand soldiers for battle. Without any hesitation, he sent the items flying out to Zhao Long and the other hundred cultivators in the battalion.

“I'm your captain, and you fight under my banner!” he said. “Although I haven’t given you much in the way of rewards up to this point, I've long since prepared for this battle. These magical items, medicinal pills, and paper talismans are for you!

“One suit of armor, isn’t enough, so I've prepared multiple sets for all of you. Make sure you’re well covered! Ideally, all of you should make sure to wear your spirit helmets at all times! In terms of magical items, I’ve prepared more than twenty for each of you. Even if you just use them for the force they unleash when detonated, at least you’ll be able to take down more of the enemy!

“As we all know, you should never allow yourself to run low on medicinal pills, especially not in the middle of a battle! Therefore, I’ve prepared all sorts of pills for you, including pills to replenish your cultivation base, to heal injuries, and even some poison pills!

“Remember, when you go out into battle, you represent me, Bai Xiaochun!

“Furthermore, I’ve personally prepared a set of 100 Soul Convergence Pills for each of you. As for orders for battle, I only have one.... As you go about killing the enemy... please... you absolutely must make sure to keep yourselves alive!” Bai Xiaochun’s voice quavered a bit by the end of his speech. Waving his sleeve, he sent numerous bottles of Soul Convergence Pills flying out to Zhao Long and the rest of the battalion.

Everyone was stunned, and soon, their eyes brimmed with gratitude. All of them knew that the things Bai Xiaochun was giving them had been purchased with his own battle credit.

Furthermore, everything was high quality, and would give them a clear advantage among anyone of the same cultivation level as them.

With that, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and unleashed his murderous aura. Eyes glinting, veins of steel pulsing, he turned into a beam of light as he led his battalion up to the Great Wall. “Let’s go!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0491 awe-chapter-492

Before Bai Xiaochun and his battalion could even reach the Great Wall, a blood-colored cloud suddenly appeared on the horizon, spreading out with incredible speed.

Within the blood-red cloud were countless vengeful souls that looked quite different from the ordinary type. These souls were crimson, and seemed to contain something boundlessly evil.

As they neared, the souls began to clump together into the shape of a head, fully 9,000 meters tall. It was the face of a young woman, complete with long, flowing hair and eyes that sparkled with sinister coldness. Astonishingly, that head radiated an energy that seemed capable of rocking both heaven and earth!

Standing on the very top of the head was a young woman in a crimson garment, who was barely visible within the cloud. Although it was impossible to make out her features clearly, she radiated an aura that seemed to fuse with heaven and earth!

The scene playing out was completely and utterly shocking!

“Chen Hetian!!” the young woman cried in a voice that wasn’t loud, and yet echoed out in bizarre fashion, completely disregarding Great Wall City's spell formation to fill the entire city. Anyone who heard the voice would sense their mind spinning, and would feel as if they were drowning in a sea of blood. Virtually all of the cultivators of the five legions, including the ones inside the city, couldn’t help but scream in response.

Bai Xiaochun was leading his 100-man battalion up to the wall when the sound hit them all. His subordinates immediately found blood oozing out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths, and began to shriek in fear. Bai Xiaochun also began to tremble; it felt like two daggers were stabbing into his ears, and it was only because of the Heaven-Dao aura within his Gold Core that he was mostly unscathed by the sound.

“A deva!” Bai Xiaochun gasped. At the same moment, the eye atop the enormous pagoda in the middle of the city suddenly cast bright light out.

Although it wasn’t the dead of night at the moment, the sky was dark, casting all the lands into murkiness. Therefore, when the huge eye began to shine brightly, it made it look like a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering sun.

As the light spread out, the cultivators in Great Wall City and on the wall itself quickly recovered from the effects of the deafening noise, which was rapidly driven out past the shield.

Suddenly, an old man appeared within the huge eye, flashing through the air to appear high above Great Wall City. The instant he appeared, a ghost image sprang up resembling the entire city, which vanished moments later as he stepped out beyond the wall. “Back down Red-Dust, you she-devil!”

That old man was none other than Chen Yueshan’s father and Zhao Tianjiao’s Master, Chen Hetian!

He wore a long white robe, had a third eye on his forehead, and just like the young woman in red, seemed connected to both heaven and earth.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as these two shocking forces appeared out in the open. In the blink of an eye, Chen Hetian had reached the blood cloud, and vanished inside. Moments later, muffled rumbles like the crash of thunder echoed out from inside, and the cloud itself began to churn and seethe.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp at the sight. Clearly, that young woman was a deva from the Wildlands, and the battle she was fighting with Chen Hetian was beyond that which ordinary cultivators could participate in.

Moments later, Bai Xiaochun and the rest of his battalion recovered, and proceeded up to the Great Wall. The first thing they heard upon arriving were the booms and screams of the combat going on beyond the wall.

There were more than 700,000 savages from over a hundred tribes out there, a mighty force that was so awe-inspiring that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went as wide as saucers upon seeing them.

So many vengeful souls were gathered that it was impossible to see the end of them; within their midst were the giants, who were equally innumerable.

Based on the slight differences between them, these giants were clearly from more than a hundred different tribes, and interspersed among them as they charged toward the wall were numerous vicious beasts.

The lands quaked because of their passage, and even the Great Wall itself seemed to be swaying back and forth.

And that was just the land. Up in the sky were even more giants and vengeful souls, screaming through the air along with thousands of soul cultivators!

Among those soul cultivators could be seen both men and women, all of them good-looking, but with cold expressions. They were people who could attack with vicious power, and at the same time, could control the savages among whom they were scattered!

Further off in the distance were even more powerful figures, figures who were guarded closely by even more soul cultivators. Necromancers! Most of the necromancers wore dark robes, and with the single wave of a hand would send countless vengeful souls screaming out in front of them in devastating attacks.

Even further off in the distance were five black altars hovering in midair. Black beams of light shot out from the five altars, connecting together in a pentagram-like sealing pattern. High up in the sky, the pentagram split the air and cracked it open, allowing numerous ghostly hands to stretch out from beyond, accompanied by cackling screams.

Atop each altar was a wrinkled old man in a black robe, all of whom were chanting scriptures that caused the rifts overhead to widen.

Those were merely the things Bai Xiaochun could see with his own eyes. The army was so huge that it was impossible to even see where it ended.

The vast size of the army left Bai Xiaochun wondering if the Great Wall forces could even hold out against it. As he looked around, he could see various expressions on the faces of the cultivators of the five legions. However, none of them were expressions of fear, as if this enormous army were nothing out of the ordinary.

It didn’t take long for the Great Wall’s shield to begin to ripple and distort, and then slowly begin to advance forward onto the battlefield. At the same time, the cultivators of the five legions began to break up into groups and charge forward to fight.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun received orders from the colonel who was his commanding officer, instructing him to lead his troops into the fight.

As the shield advanced across the battlefield, the forces of the Great Wall began to engage in close-quarters fighting with the Wildlanders.

The savage giants were the least difficult of the enemy forces to deal with, considering that they weren’t very numerous. The vengeful souls which surrounded them didn’t fear being destroyed, and had always been the most troublesome. However, that was before Bai Xiaochun came to the Great Wall.

As of this moment, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s surprise that cultivators of the five legions were already tossing out Soul Convergence Pills into the fight.

Soon, the booms of exploding Soul Convergence Pill filled the air, as well as the shrieking of the vengeful souls who were sucked together in one place, and those who were destroyed in the secondary blast.

Not only were the vengeful souls affected in devastating fashion, but the savage giants were also injured by the explosions, and were sent staggering backward with blood spraying out of their mouths.

Even just one Soul Convergence Pill was powerful on its own, but to have more than a thousand exploding at the same time struck terror into the hearts of the Wildlands forces.

Thus, the five legions were able to advance slowly but surely across the battlefield!

In addition, the several thousand elite cultivators of the five legions were specifically targeting the soul cultivators and engaging them in deadly duels.

The sounds of fierce fighting filled the battlefield, and although everything seemed chaotic on the surface, the truth was that the Great Wall forces had the advantage, both because of their shield, and because of the Soul Convergence Pills.

As the shield inched across the battlefield, the five legions followed along, forcing the Wildlands savages to either retreat, or get stuck inside the shield to fight the cultivators, and eventually be cut down.

Furthermore, because of how the cultivators of the five legions were well-disciplined and frequently rotated their forces up to the front lines and back, there were few casualties. It was really a terrifying situation for the enemy.

It was the same on the ground and up in the air as well.

As for the huge eye atop the pagoda, its gaze swept across the battlefield, killing giants and decimating vengeful souls, hewing furrows into the earth and sending powerful ripples through the sky.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0492 awe-chapter-493

Although the hundred Wildlander tribes vastly outnumbered the five legions, they were as disorganized as a plate of loose sand.

Normally speaking, the five legions would never have such an advantage. Considering how things normally went during such battles, the vengeful souls would always cause a huge headache for them, and also provide a powerful measure of defense for the Wildlanders.

Usually, the charge of the vengeful souls would prevent the Great Wall's shield from advancing across the battlefield, and could even push it back or threaten to break it.

After all, the attack of such a vast number of vengeful souls was difficult to even describe. Although a single soul couldn't do much to the spell formation shield, masses of them together were terrifying.

But now, as soon as that tide of souls got close to the five legions, Soul Convergence Pills were unleashed, instantly hewing out enormous spaces that were completely free of vengeful souls. Furthermore, the explosions would also injure the savages.

It was almost as if the Wildlands army had been grabbed by its figurative neck and was being shoved backward.

“Dammit, how come they have so many of those pills?!?!?”

“This is impossible! I thought the Great Wall only used pill furnaces!!”

“What kind of medicinal pill is that? I remember something like this happening once, but that was a single pill. Dammit! They’re throwing out thousands of them!!”

“How... how do we fight back against this?!?!”

The fury of the tribal chiefs rose high into the heavens, and even the soul cultivators were left frowning.

As for the esteemed necromancers, of which there were only a few more than a hundred, all they could do was force the vengeful souls to attack in an attempt to somehow reverse the situation. Unfortunately for them, that was no simple task.

“This is all the doing of that Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Dammit! If we don’t get rid of him, our Wildlands forces are going to suffer a huge loss!!” Numerous hateful gazes were cast toward the Great Wall from the tribal chiefs and the necromancers.

All of that made Bai Xiaochun quite nervous, and he even backed up a few steps in his position on top of the wall, worried that there might be another assassination attempt. Down on the battlefield, Zhao Long and the rest of the battalion were engaged in fierce fighting.

Compared to the five legions as a whole, Bai Xiaochun’s battalion wasn’t very large. However, they stuck out quite a bit. After all, they all wore multiple layers of armor, and when they attacked, they destroyed their opponents as easily as a boulder crushing a drinking glass. In moments of danger, they would toss out vast quantities of Soul Convergence Pills, to the point where the other cultivators of the five legions were looking over at them enviously.

Most over the top was how they wouldn’t hesitate to detonate their own magical items to defend themselves. Even some of the colonels in the army noticed what was happening.

“Whose men are those!?!?”

“Heavens! Look at how many Soul Convergence Pills they’re using. How do they have so many?!?!”

“And the magical items! I just saw them blow up six at the same time! Those things are expensive!”

“That’s nothing. Look at how much armor they’re wearing. Five or six layers at least! They don’t even get hurt when the savage giants self-detonate!!”

The performance of Zhao Long and the rest of the battalion couldn’t have been more eye-catching, and the numbers of vengeful souls and savages that they cut down far exceeded any of the other cultivators.

Nothing could stand in their way as they fought their way across the battlefield.

“Keep it up guys!” Bai Xiaochun shouted excitedly. Turning to some of the soldiers manning positions on the wall near him, he proudly said, “Those are my men! What do you think? Pretty awesome, huh?”

The other cultivators were left speechless by how well-equipped Bai Xiaochun's battalion was. Many of them even looked over at Bai Xiaochun and sighed in envy.

“They’re not Skin Flayers, they’ve obviously become Grandmaster Bai’s personal retinue....”

It was in that very moment that something like a sudden clap of thunder rang out in the distance. Bai Lin and the other leaders of the army were clearly startled, and as for Bai Xiaochun, his heart leapt in fear. Everyone looked over to see the clouds parting off in the distance as a river appeared!

The river was so wide it was almost like a sea, and was pitch black in color. Within those waters could be seen countless vengeful souls, all of them howling as they attempted to break free from the water. However, none of them seemed capable of doing so, and were swept away with the current.

“Underworld River!” someone shouted in alarm. Bai Xiaochun immediately backed up a bit more, looking up wide-eyed at the huge Underworld River. Moments later, an enormous hand suddenly appeared next to the flowing waters of the Underworld River.

Instantly, incredible pressure erupted out, causing the Great Wall’s spell formation shield to tremble. Even Chen Hetian, who was in the middle of battling the red-garbed young woman, was shocked by what was happening.

Next, the huge hand began to chop down like a blade, slashing into the Underworld River, causing intense, mind-numbing rumbling sounds to fill the air.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

It was with a deafening roar that the Underworld River was ripped open, creating something like a tributary that poured out in the direction of Great Wall City!

The gap that had been opened up began to close, but couldn’t prevent a massive number of vengeful soul from pouring out. Black Underworld River water rushed through the air toward the battlefield, and the Great Wall shield.

Some of the savage giants weren’t quick enough to react, and were swept up by the water. Screaming, they were dissolved away, instantly becoming part of the river itself.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it happened so quickly that before anyone could react, the countless vengeful soul from the Underworld River had reached the Great Wall’s shield.

A huge boom echoed out as the shield trembled in unprecedented fashion, and rapidly began to weaken!!!

As the shield weakened, it shrank back, forcing the cultivators of the five legions to retreat. Bai Xiaochun immediately began to get nervous.

As for Bai Lin, when he saw what was happening, he roared, “Everyone, toss out your Soul Convergence Pills! I refuse to believe these vengeful souls can’t be vanquished!!”

The cultivators of the five legions gritted their teeth and began to toss out Soul Convergence Pills as they backed up.

It took only the briefest of moments for the sky to fill with countless medicinal pills. The pills were designed to affect the souls, not the waters of the Underworld River, and yet, they were still partially effective.

Furthermore, there were so many of them that when they exploded, they transformed into numerous whirlpools within the Underworld River.

Instantly, those whirlpools began to absorb the nearby vengeful souls, and at the same time, began to merge together with each other as they grew.

Soon, one gigantic whirlpool could be seen in the Underworld River, which sucked in a massive amount of soul bodies before it trembled and then detonated!

The blast spread out, sending Underworld River water splashing out in all directions, along with countless miserable shrieks.

Although the Great Wall’s shield had been weakened, the cultivators of the five legions still had the advantage. The Underworld River began to fade away, and the gap that had been opened up in it had already closed up. Apparently, the hand which had opened the gap could only do so once.

Countless vengeful souls on the battlefield had been destroyed, and the ones which remained behind had been thrown into such chaos that the necromancers couldn’t control them, and some even began to flee or attack the Wildlanders.

It was the perfect opportunity for the five legions to make their move. Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Lin sent out orders to counter-attack. The shield once again began to advance, the cultivators of the five legions moving with it.

Zhao Long and the other members of Bai Xiaochun’s battalion were like razor-sharp blades that slashed through the enemy with reckless abandon.

In response to everything which had just occurred, Bai Xiaochun frowned. Even he hadn’t been aware that the detonation of his Soul Convergence Pills could be so devastatingly effective.

“Weird,” he thought, blinking a few times. “I never thought they would be so powerful....” He could also see numerous leaders among the savage giants glaring at him in hatred. If looks could kill, then he would definitely have been chopped to pieces and boiled to death on the spot.

“Um....” For the first time, Bai Xiaochun actually felt a bit guilty. At the same time, he felt more in danger than ever. Sadly, they were just on different sides, and there was nothing he could do about it.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0493 awe-chapter-494

As Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety mounted, the twists and turns in the battle down below caused the red-garbed young woman fighting Chen Hetian to frown.

However, the intensity of the fight she was participating in ensured that she didn’t have much attention to spare. The blood cloud surrounding her seethed, and rifts snaked out into the sky as a result of the attacks being unleashed.

As the cracking sounds rang out above, some of the rifts even reached down to the ground, almost like lightning bolts that caused huge explosions when they touched the soil.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp prickled in fear as he watched one of those rifts hit a soul cultivator who was comparable to the Nascent Soul stage. As soon as the rift touched him, he was ripped to shreds, destroyed in body and soul.

“Deva....” he breathed. This was his first time witnessing the true power of devas, and it left his mind reeling. The level of power on display far surpassed that which a human body could handle. It was something completely beyond what ordinary cultivators were capable of dealing with.

“Merge oneself with heaven and earth,” he murmured, “and borrow their boundless might....” From his perspective, everything around Chen Hetian and the red-garbed young woman became weapons to use at their disposal, whether it was the wind, or the clouds, or other things. Anything in heaven and earth could be used like divine abilities!

There were also illusory forms which took shape around them, figures from ancient times which began to battle each other....

Thankfully, the Great Wall still had the overall advantage in the battle. The cultivators of the five legions continued to advance, and the tide of souls was pushed away. Without the vengeful souls to protect them, the army of 700,000 savage giants had to fight the five legions directly, and were suffering one setback after another.

Bai Xiaochun felt quite relieved because of that. After all, despite having participated in quite a few wars, this was definitely the largest one he had ever been part of.

However, in the exact moment in which Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, the over one hundred necromancers among the Wildlands forces suddenly looked up. Because of how the necromancers had just lost control of the vengeful souls, that meant that they now had attention to spare. One by one, they began to settle down cross-legged, after which they pulled out black sticks of incense, the smoke of which they inhaled deeply, causing them to instantly slip into deep trances.

Moments later, even as large groups of soul cultivators approached to guard them, shadowy figures appeared above the heads of the necromancers!

They were the necromancers’ own souls, which emanated shocking auras as they then shot toward the Great Wall’s shield!

Although the shield could keep most Wildlanders out, with the help of the incense they had just inhaled, the necromancers could now pass through it!

This was almost the same thing which had occurred during the assassination attempt on Bai Xiaochun!

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw the souls flying out of the necromancers, he backed up again. As he did, the souls became beams of light that shot forth and pierced through the Great Wall’s shield.

Without hesitation, the five generals of the various legions, Bai Lin included, flew forth to meet the necromancer souls in battle, followed by the various major generals of the armies.

The souls of the necromancers were thus prevented from reaching the Great Wall itself. Furthermore, the huge eye also began to shoot out terrifying, destructive beams of light.

At the same time, the savage giants received new orders from their tribal chiefs. Eyes turning red, they howled and began to charge toward the Great Wall, disregarding all danger to themselves!

Booms rang out as they began to self-detonate, throwing themselves fearlessly at the shield, which began to distort and weaken once again!

The Wildlanders were making a major offensive!

Tens of thousands of giants blew themselves up, instantly shoving the shield backward across the battlefield. Many of the cultivators of the five legions who weren't quick to react were caught up in the explosions and died screaming.

However, such screams paled in comparison to the screams of the cultivators who the giants managed to grab ahold of.

Bai Xiaochun’s face went pale when the sounds reached his ears. He even personally watched as two of the giants ripped a cultivator in half and began to eat him alive. As a result, both giants clearly began to head toward a cultivation base breakthrough.

The savages also practiced cultivation, but instead of using spiritual energy, they absorbed soul power. However, that didn’t mean that they didn’t desire to absorb spiritual energy. In fact, they found spiritual energy to be delicious!

“Eat them!!”

“It’s been a long time since I dined on a cultivator....”

“Hahaha! Now that's the flavor I’m talking about!!” The savage giants charged forward with madness, grabbing any cultivators they could get their hands on and devouring them as ravenously as wild beasts.

Some of them continued to self-detonate, explosions which not only weakened the shield, but also completely destroyed any cultivators unlucky enough to get caught up in them.

Bai Xiaochun’s ashen face began to flush in response to what he was witnessing. Although he had heard that the savages ate human flesh, this was his first time seeing it actually happen.

“Now is not the time to fear death!!” he growled through gritted teeth. Although he had felt a bit guilty earlier because of his Soul Convergence Pills, now that he saw the brutality of the Wildlanders on full display, his heart suddenly turned cold and grim.

After a moment of silence, he spun and shot back down to Great Wall City, transforming into a beam of bright light that headed directly toward the Armory.

Back in the Armory, numerous pill furnaces were set up in concentric rings. Although the ten 300-meter-tall furnaces weren't being attended by the Nascent Soul cultivators anymore, they were still bright red, and were emanating intense heat waves.

Bai Xiaochun quickly examined the ten huge pill furnaces, then took a deep breath and waved his sleeve. In response, all of the huge furnaces rumbled up into midair and then began to circulate around Bai Xiaochun.

Then, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing numerous sealing marks to fly out to the furnaces, backed by the power of his Gold Core and filled with a Heaven-Dao aura. As they sank into the pill furnaces, muffled sounds like thunder began to echo out.

Although the huge pill furnaces had not quite reached the point of detonation yet, Bai Xiaochun was a skilled apothecary, and naturally had his ways of forcing them to explode early. By relying on the external power of the sealing marks he had just unleashed, he could prematurely destabilize the medicine within the furnaces.

Although the resulting detonation would be slightly less effective, a huge amount of power had already built up in the furnaces during the past several days. Having placed his sealing marks onto the furnaces, he shot back up toward the Great Wall, furnaces in tow.

When he returned, quite a few cultivators of the five legions noticed him, as did many of the Wildlands savages. After all, the 300-meter-tall furnaces were completely eye-catching, especially considering that they were all bright red, and emanated shocking fluctuations.

“Those are....”

“Grandmaster Bai’s pill furnaces!!”

Expressions of excitement and profound anticipation appeared on the faces of the cultivators of the five legions.

Similar expressions could be seen on the faces of the generals and major generals who were fighting the necromancer souls, especially Bai Lin.

As for the faces of the necromancer souls, they flickered with shock, and the Wildlands savages gasped.

The tribal chiefs were especially astonished.

“They’re... they’re so huge!!”

“Heavens….”

Before anyone could recover from their shock, Bai Xiaochun flew up into the air above the Great Wall, howling as he hurled the ten enormous furnaces out over the battlefield. They were like ten burning suns that pierced through the air, sailing right into the army of countless savages.

In that instant, the entire battlefield went quiet, and all eyes came to be fixed onto the burning, sun-like pill furnaces....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0494 awe-chapter-495

The chiefs of the more than one hundred Wildlands tribes were all completely shaken.

During the course of previous skirmishes, the power of the exploding pill furnaces they had seen left them completely shocked. Now, the sheer size of the furnaces they were looking at left them incapable of even breathing.

“They're... they're so huge!!”

“If those ten furnaces explode....” The chiefs’ eyes went wide as their hearts were slammed by waves of shock. And they weren’t the only ones. Upon seeing the furnaces, the tens of thousands of madly charging giants were suddenly overwhelmed by painful memories.

“Devil Bai!!”

“Dammit, it’s that Devil Bai!!”

In their terror, countless numbers of giants tried to retreat. Devil Bai was the nickname the Wildlands tribes had given to Bai Xiaochun after the appalling scenes of devastation he had wreaked upon them.

Not even Bai Xiaochun was aware that he had been given that nickname, and yet, it was already widely known in the Wildlands.

In that moment in which all eyes were locked on the pill furnaces, a shrill cry suddenly rang out from within the Wildlands forces. “Pay any price to lock down those pill furnaces!!”

Instantly, numerous soul cultivators and tribal chiefs all drew upon the full power of their cultivation bases to summon a massive, all-encompassing net.

The net shot across the battlefield with incredible speed, and in the blink of an eye, had reached the pill furnaces. Although the net managed to block some of the furnaces, the furnaces were moving so quickly that four of them managed to slam into the ground, instantly crushing the giants who had been too slow to evade them.

As soon as they touched the ground, a deafening boom rang out that could shake heaven and earth, a sound that surpassed everything else on the battlefield, a sound that rose to the highest heavens and the furthest reaches of the earth!

As the first of the 300-meter-tall pill furnaces filled with cracks and exploded, lands shook and mountains were rocked. It was like the end of days as a blue sea of flames erupted out from the location of the pill furnace, instantly spreading out to fill an area ten of thousands of meters across.

Wherever the blue flames passed, agonized shrieks rose up as the giants were incinerated. In addition to the flames, the shrapnel from the furnace itself became meteoric blades of flame that slashed through everything in their path!

And things weren’t over yet! There was also a shockwave which spread out, picking up the burning giants and hurling them violently across the battlefield.

The boom of the explosion made it seem like heavenly lightning was crashing into the earth in an unceasing waterfall. Simultaneously, tendrils of five-colored smoke spread out rapidly, boring into the bodies of the giants, provoking bloodcurdling screams as the giants’ flesh began to rot and decay.

Others amongst the giants were seemingly struck senseless, and simply stood there unmoving as the flames burned them away!

And yet... things *still* weren’t over! The second pill furnace cracked and exploded, then the third and the fourth. One by one, massive explosions ripped across the battlefield, filling an area 300,000 meters across, and transforming it into little more than rubble!!

And that was only four of the pill furnaces. The other six had been wrapped up by the huge net and sealed.

Even still, the explosion of those four pill furnaces was a devastating blow to the Wildlanders!

Vast numbers of giants were burned alive. Meteor-like shrapnel pierced bodies left and right, and the shockwave sent countless savages tumbling across the battlefield.

Most calamitous of all was the five-colored smoke!

That smoke didn’t leave a single living thing in its wake. It was the result of countless types of mystery pills whose medicinal effects touched the savages in ways that not even Bai Xiaochun could have anticipated.

Agonized shrieks continued to ring out as blood sprayed out of the mouths of the soul cultivators, many of whom were sent tumbling backwards. Furthermore, those four pill furnaces had not only killed countless savages, but they had also wreaked incalculable damage on the survivors.

Those surviving giants... had their will to fight destroyed! Their determination was cut away, and as they backed away, their eyes were filled with fear, astonishment, and utter incredulity.

“Devil... Devil... Bai!!” Chaotic cries of alarm began to ring out, as if they were the only way to dispel the terror felt in the hearts of the Wildlanders. When their horrified gazes turned toward Bai Xiaochun on the Great Wall, he could sense how fearful they were.

Actually, it wasn’t just the savage giants who were reacting in such a way. As of this point, many of the cultivators of the five legions had forgotten to breathe, and were looking over at Bai Xiaochun with looks of extreme reverence and awe.

He had created the original exploding pill furnaces, and he had concocted the Soul Convergence Pills. As for the supernova-like detonations just now, they had also originated with him.... He had crushed the enemy with impunity over and over again, to the point where every last individual among the five legions knew his name.

As the effects of the explosion began to fade away, it became clear that the space in front of the five legions on the battlefield was almost completely empty.... There were only four enormous craters... and six ruined furnaces that had not exploded.

The battlefield was almost completely silent, the only sounds to be heard coming from the deva battle, and the fighting of the souls of the necromancers against Bai Lin and the other leaders of the armies. Everyone else on the battlefield was simply staring in complete and utter shock.

Further off in the distance were the five altars in pentagram form and the black beams of light. The black-robed old men sitting there chanting scriptures were trembling as they looked out at the battlefield. Then they glanced up at the devas fighting, and then looked silently over at Bai Xiaochun standing on the Great Wall.

Despite how far away they were, it was almost as if he were standing right in front of them.

Currently, Bai Xiaochun was staring with gaping jaw at the battlefield. After a moment passed, he remembered to breathe, after which, his heart began to thump in fear. At the same time, he realized that his battle credit was rising at shocking speed.

“At this rate, I'm definitely going to be promoted to colonel!” Even as his heart began to swell with excitement, a gaze was suddenly leveled upon him from within the blood cloud.

At the same time, a stream of blood mist shot out in his direction; it was none other than an attack by the Deva Realm young woman in red clothing.

However, there was no way Chen Hetian would simply allow that to happen. Laughing loudly, he blocked the attack, and then, the fighting between the two of them resumed at even more intense levels.

At first, Bai Xiaochun was startled, but seeing that the attack couldn’t reach him, he sighed in relief. However, before even half of that sigh could escape his lips, more gazes fell upon him from within the Wildlands army. Those gazes came from the numerous tribal chiefs, all of whom were now staring fixedly at Bai Xiaochun.

The ferocity and madness in those gazes completely surpassed anything from before....

“What are they all looking at *me* for...? Well, I think my work is done here anyway. This place is way too dangerous now. I’ll just head off the wall.” Having made his decision, he was just about to leave when, all of a sudden, a howl rippled through the air that seemed intense enough to shred the heavens.

As it did, the rifts which had previously opened up in the heavens were completely ripped open, creating a pentagram-shaped hole.

Muffled cries could then be heard. “Hungry... so hungry....”

At the same time, one terrifying ghost hand after another stretched out, which quickly grabbed the black-robed old men and dragged them up into the rifts.

The old men didn’t resist at all! They simply allowed the ghost hands to drag them up, whereupon sickening crunching sounds echoed out!!

That strange scene instantly caused the cultivators of the five legions to stare in shock, and threw their breathing into chaos.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes went wide as he looked at the pentagram-shaped opening up in the sky, a bad feeling rising up in his heart. Even as he began to race backward toward the city, an incredible rumbling sound erupted from the pentagram, revealing a gargantuan mouth!

Apparently, that mouth existed in some location beyond the heavens, and was so huge that the opening could only reveal part of it.

It was greenish, with black teeth that were stained with blood and gore. Almost as soon as that mouth appeared, more words could be heard.

“Hungry... so hungry...!” Even as everyone was shaken, the mouth shifted to face the direction of the Great Wall and then begin to inhale deeply....

Heaven and earth dimmed, and everything began to shake as an indescribable gravitational force erupted from the mouth. Not even the spell formation shield could do anything to stop it, and within moments, many of the cultivators of the five legions were shocked to find themselves flying up into the air, their bodies completely beyond their own control!

Whooshing sounds could be heard as more than half of the five legions’ cultivators were suddenly sucked beyond the shield and toward the huge mouth!

There were quite a few cultivators on the Great Wall itself who were affected, even Bai Xiaochun. Trembling, he found that he was completely incapable of retreating. A scream escaped his lips as he was sucked off of the Great Wall and out onto the battlefield beyond the shield.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0495 awe-chapter-496

“Noooo....” Bai Xiaochun screamed. However, the incredible gravitational force simply plucked him off of the wall and sent him flying out into the air and past the spell formation shield.

A sensation of profound crisis filled Bai Xiaochun, rumbling in his mind like heavenly thunder and causing his face to drain of blood.

Even as he screamed, he looked around and realized that there were many other cultivators of the five legions who, just like him, were being sucked toward the enormous mouth behind the pentagon.

Some of them had already reached the mouth itself, and were being shredded into masses of blood and gore. The entire battlefield was shaken by their screams; this was a huge blow to the forces of the Great Wall!

The mouth was like a hungry ghost, and the gravitational force exerted by it caused heaven and earth to grow dim. The screaming winds swept the cultivators through the air, who were now calling upon all sorts of techniques to try to protect themselves.

Some used secret magics, others used powerful magical treasures. Some combined the two. A few even called upon their powerful trump cards!

Some succeeded and some failed. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was so scared out of his mind that he could only think of one thing.

“I can’t let myself reach that mouth....” Gritting his teeth, he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, whereupon intense fluctuations of spiritual power erupted out, transforming into a restrictive spell that instantly tried to lock him in place.

However, it wasn’t very useful.... As he watched himself flying over the heads of the savage giants, and as the enormous ghost mouth grew larger, Bai Xiaochun truly started to get anxious.

Eyes completely bloodshot, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then slapped his hands onto his chest.

“Living Mountain Incantation!!” he shouted at the top of his lungs. Instantly, his body began to expand, almost as if he were being surrounded by countless boulders. As the boulders merged together and swirled around him, he flew along another 300 meters or so, whereupon Bai Xiaochun wasn’t visible anymore. Instead, he had been replaced by a huge stone golem!!

He was now 300 meters tall, like a small mountain, and also much heavier than before. Even with the gravitational force tugging at him, he suddenly lurched to a stop, and began to fall downward!

Then, he landed on the ground with a boom, causing shockwaves to roll out from the point of impact. However, despite being on the ground, he was still being pulled toward the mouth.

Bai Xiaochun’s stone golem face bore the same features as his normal face, except that they were twisted ferociously as he threw his head back and howled. Shoving his hands forward, he stabbed them into the ground in front of him, causing everything to tremble!

Using all the power at his disposal, he shoved himself like a nail into the ground, ensuring that, no matter how wildly the gravitational force tugged at him, he didn’t move.

The gravitational force didn’t last for very long, only about ten breaths of time. Then the mouth behind the pentagram rift closed, taking the blood and gore that remained of the cultivators it had sucked away with it. Then, the rift slowly began to close up.

Bai Xiaochun was shivering, his breath coming in ragged pants as he reverted from his Living Mountain Incantation form to normal. Seeing the huge mouth fade away, he felt as if he had just passed through a deadly tribulation.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one among the cultivators of the five legions to have resisted the gravitational force exerted by the mouth. After all, considering that there were hundreds of thousands of cultivators among the forces of the Great Wall, it was impossible for the mouth to have affected them all. Furthermore, many of them had trump cards of their own to use, and as such, had been able to pass through the tribulation.

However, there was no time to rejoice. As the surviving cultivators looked around, they realized that they were surrounded by numerous Wildlands giants, whose cold eyes seemed to flicker with ravenous hunger!

The truth was that the Wildlanders didn't necessarily care whether or not the huge mouth actually consumed many of the five legions cultivators. They simply wanted to get them outside of the shield.

As long as they were outside of that shield and within reach of the army, then most of their lives would be within the hands of the Wildlanders!

The generals and major generals of the armies were in the middle of fighting the necromancer souls, and were unable to do anything other than shout, “Fall back immediately!”

At the same time, more beams of light began to shoot out from the enormous eye to attack enemies on the battlefield. Simultaneously, the spell formation shield began to advance, hoping to bring the exposed cultivators back under its protection.

Some of the cultivators who were close to the shield to begin with were able to retreat behind it with reckless bursts of speed. However, there at least 200,000 who were too far away to make it, or who were blocked by the vast numbers of giants!

“Kill them!!” the tribal chiefs shouted. The truth was that the savage giants on the battlefield didn’t need any orders to do just that. Roaring, they began to charge the nearest cultivators!

Hundreds of thousands immediately intercepted the cultivators who had been pulled beyond the shield, making it impossible for them to retreat!

Lingering fear could still be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s ashen face, and he was still trembling. His heart felt cold as he looked around at the battlefield, almost on the verge of tears. Moments ago, he had been safe on the wall, relishing the sensation of having so much battle credit being added to his name. But now, he was now surrounded by the enemy, and in mortal danger.

This turn of events was too sudden, and he almost couldn’t accept it. However, as he looked around at the scores of savage giants, he realized he had no choice. All of them were glaring at him with madness and greed as they rushed in his direction, cackling madly.

“Devil Bai’s here! Kill him!!”

“Hahaha! I can’t believe Devil Bai is right in front of me!!”

“He’s mine! I'm gonna eat him!”

Bai Xiaochun almost felt like his head was going to explode as the giants neared. They were so close that he could smell the rotting stench that came from their mouths.

His eyes were bloodshot, and the sensation of deadly crisis was like a needle slowly poking into his mind. However, it was in that moment that, all of a sudden, his veins of steel began to pulse, and a murderous aura erupted out.

“Hey, I'm... I’m friends with your commanding officer....” he said. However, the clever words which came out of his mouth did no good. This was not a situation in which he could retreat, and as such, his fleshly body began to pulse with power.

“My flesh belongs to me, not you people!! You want me dead? Well you’re gonna regret it!” With that, he slapped his bag of holding, causing numerous suits of armor to fly out. Most people would, at most, wear a few sets of armor at the same time. But somehow, Bai Xiaochun was using a strange method to don far more than was normal. Plus, he was putting them on with blinding speed.

Flying swords flew out to surround him, as well as magical items. Within the blink of an eye, he was surrounded by scintillating, multicolored light.

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Stacks of paper talismans appeared, which he slapped all over himself, then activated, creating a glittering shield with more than a thousand layers.

Quicker than words could describe, Bai Xiaochun was armed to the teeth, which was when the dozens of incoming savage giants slammed into him. These giants all had profound cultivation bases that were comparable to Core Formation. However, they were completely incapable of penetrating Bai Xiaochun’s defenses, and in fact, were hit with a backlash that sent them stumbling backward, blood spraying out of their mouths.

The other nearby giants stared, dumbstruck.

“Dammit, I can’t believe he’s wearing more than ten suits of armor! How do we pierce through that!?”

“And look at all the paper talismans! Even one of them alone would be very expensive, and he’s using more than a thousand!!”

“Heavens! He’s like a living bag of holding!”

Considering that he was temporarily invincible, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and mustered his courage. Seemingly ready to put his life on the line, he charged toward the nearby giants.

“You people push things too far!!” he roared. Although some observers might think that having so many suits of armor, defenses, magical items, flying swords, and the like would be very cumbersome, they didn’t affect his speed at all. In the briefest of moments, he was upon the nearest savage giant, whom he slammed into before a reaction was even possible.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0496 awe-chapter-497

Even as the savage giant was shoved away, Bai Xiaochun's right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he pointed out, sending a dozen flying swords out at top speed, completely cutting off the giant's path of retreat.

There was no time for the giant to even react. In the blink of an eye, miserable shrieks rang out as the flying swords slashed him to pieces.

He died so quickly that he didn't even have a chance to self-detonate before being destroyed in body and soul.

Bai Xiaochun didn't hesitate for even a moment. After cutting the giant down, he exploded into action, bearing down on the next giant and waving his hand to send his flying swords forward.

The giant wanted to evade, but Bai Xiaochun was too quick, and within moments, the giant's head was flying through the air!

As that happened, more giants closed in and prepared to attack.

Bai Xiaochun looked up, simultaneously reaching out with his right hand and then slamming it into the ground, causing rumbling sounds to echo out, as well as a gale force wind. The savage giants' faces fell as Bai Xiaochun unleashed incredible speed to fight back against more than ten of them at the same time.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Although the scene playing out now didn’t count for much when considering the battlefield as a whole, in that particular area, Bai Xiaochun was a like a god of death!

The giants in the area couldn’t do anything to stop him or even obstruct his path. However... overall, there were just too many savage giants.

It didn’t take long before more than a hundred of them were unleashing deadly attacks. Bai Xiaochun’s defenses were beginning to crumble, one layer at a time. And yet, his eyes were completely bloodshot, and even gleaming with madness.

“What a bunch of bullies! I can’t believe all of you are ganging up on one person!” Both offended and enraged, he shot forward like a meteor, then slammed into the chest of one of the giants, who flew backward uncontrollably. However, the rest of the more than one hundred giants were circling around him, cutting off all avenues of escape. Finally, Bai Xiaochun slapped his bag of holding and tossed out a big handful of medicinal pills.

As they flew through the air, they exploded, sending streams of hallucination smoke out in all directions. As soon as the smoke bored into giants’ bodies, they began to act very strangely, giving Bai Xiaochun the perfect opportunity to break past them.

However, even as he did, hundreds more howling giants poured toward him, their killing intent surging. There were even a few in the lead position who reeked of the aura of self-detonation.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened. By this point, he couldn’t evade even if he wanted to. More than ten savage giants all self-detonated simultaneously, sending corrosive blood out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as a huge portion of his defenses crumbled. And yet, he borrowed some of the force of the momentum to flee!

Unfortunately, the battlefield was huge, and he was a great distance from the spell formation shield. There was no way he could make it to the shield in any short period of time, and furthermore, hundreds of savage giants were swarming forth to surround him.

“You’re *dead*, Devil Bai!”

“I'm gonna eat ya!!” As the giants closed in, more fierce fighting broke out. The madness in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes burned hotter than ever as he waved his hand, causing roughly thirty percent of the magical items swirling around him to explode.

The shocking force released by the detonation of the magical items sent hundreds of savages tumbling backward with blood spraying out of their mouths. However, before Bai Xiaochun even had an opportunity to flee, more giants began to close in on him.

Shockingly, they appeared to be trying to bury him with numbers.

Cold grins appeared on the faces of the distant tribal chiefs. As of this point, they were certain that as long as nothing unexpected happened, Bai Xiaochun would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt. However, some of the chiefs even began to head in his direction.

As for the other chiefs, they headed in other directions to start fighting the five legions’ colonels who had been pulled out past the shield!

As the battlefield sank into chaos, Chen Hetian’s anxiety began to mount. Never before had the Wildlands used tactics like this, and it had caught him completely unprepared. Unfortunately, considering how he was being pinned down by the red-garbed young woman, there was little he could do to reverse the situation.

Although Bai Lin and the other generals and major generals were still inside of the protection of the spell formation, the necromancer souls they were fighting were extremely dangerous and vicious.

The entire tide of battle had been reversed in the shortest of moments. The shield continued to advance, and more cultivators were returning to its safety, but too many of the five legions’ forces had been separated, making it difficult for them to extricate themselves from danger.

Because of the recent turn of events, the battlefield had quickly become a sea of blood!

Bai Xiaochun’s throat was already hoarse from the shouting. He was completely inundated by a sensation of deadly crisis, and was spattered with blood and gore. Considering how he was being completely surrounded, he finally had to abandon his idea of trying to use frigid qi to teleport to safety.

Although he had put on an impressive performance so far, the truth was that up until now, he had mostly been relying on fleshly body power. After all, he was outside of the Great Wall, where there was almost no spiritual power at all. If he used magical techniques, he would not be able to replace the spiritual energy they used, and would quickly drain himself.

Once that happened, death would be just around the corner!

Therefore, he could only use spiritual power in the most critical of moments. Gritting his teeth, he decided to detonate another large portion of magical items.

An earth-shaking explosion rang out, and more savage giants were seriously injured. However, the bloodthirsty madness in their eyes shone brightly as, instead of retreating, they lunged forward and self-detonated.

The booms sounded like drums of death that finally battered through the remaining layers of Bai Xiaochun’s personal shields.

His armor could only hold out for so long, and even the detonation of his last group of magical items barely allowed him to break through. By that point, his armor was crumbling into dust.

Behind him was a pile of corpses. In the short amount of time that the fighting had been going on, Bai Xiaochun’s strength and madness had shocked the nearby giants to the core!

“I can’t believe Devil Bai... single-handedly killed so many of us!”

“Dammit! Not only is he shockingly skilled at concocting medicine, but his battle prowess is incredible! He can’t be left alive! I'm definitely gonna eat him!”

“He has shocking levels of defense, but at the moment, is right out in the open. He’s definitely going to die today!” Roaring, the giants once again raced to surround him. Among the group were three who were larger and fiercer than the others, and also faster. They were the first to close in on him.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen, and he was stooped over, panting for breath. The giants were closing in on him like a rising tide, and it almost seemed impossible for him to kill all of them. When he heard their roars, and smelled the reek of blood in the air, his eyes turned crimson.

“You think you can kill me just because I ran out of defenses?” All of a sudden, he started laughing, a laughter that contained no small amount of madness. By this point, he had already decided to throw caution to the wind. It was obvious that he was in a deadly predicament, and if he didn’t go all out, he wouldn’t even have a chance of making it out alive.

Continuing to laugh, he stood up straight, and his fleshly body power began to thrum. Then, a blast of wind shot out in all directions as his skin turned completely golden, and the illusory image of a Heavenly King appeared behind him. Simultaneously, numerous complex magical symbols that resembled hexing marks appeared all over his legs and arms.

His Undying Live Forever Technique was now on full display!

With that, he took a step forward, and then unleashed... the Mountain Shaking Bash!

The sudden development happened too quickly for the three of the fastest giants to react. A moment later, a string of afterimages stretched out as Bai Xiaochun shot forward toward the nearest of them.

That giant had originally been grinning in confidence because of his own incredible fleshly body strength. However, when Bai Xiaochun slammed into him, his eyes went wide, and before he could cry out... he was launched into the air with a bang!

The cracking sound of breaking bones could be heard, and blood spurted out in all directions. Finally, the giant screamed, and yet before he could land on the ground, a pop could be heard as he exploded into a cloud of blood and gore!

A single move on Bai Xiaochun’s part had killed him in body and soul!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0497 awe-chapter-498

After exterminating the first giant, Bai Xiaochun spun to face the other two incoming giants. Just when they were about to unleash attacks, Bai Xiaochun grinned viciously and lifted his right hand. Even as the second giant was striking out with his fist, Bai Xiaochun's hand moved as quickly as lightning to grasp onto his throat.

His hand wasn't even big enough to wrap around that throat, and yet his hand still contained incredible destructive power. In the blink of an eye, his two fingers clamped down with crushing strength!

Black light spread out, and the giant's throat and neck were crushed!

It was none other than the Throat Crushing Grasp!

Things weren't over yet, though. After killing the second giant, Bai Xiaochun's right foot swept through the air toward the third giant, who was just preparing to slash at him with a serrated greatsword.

However, when Bai Xiaochun's right foot slammed into the sword, cracking sounds rang out as the sword shattered. Then Bai Xiaochun's foot contacted the giant's arm, reducing it to a haze of gore. Even as the giant screamed, black threads spread out to completely seal him!

Apparently, the sealing was an indescribably painful one. Continuing to scream, the giant dropped to his knees, unable to move.

It was none other than the Undying Hex!

“Who else wants to die!?!?” Bai Xiaochun growled. His skin was gold, his hair was flying in the wind, and his murderous aura was as explosive as ever. He looked like some sort of god!

As he glared at the other savage giants in the area, his eyes radiated madness and ferocity, causing the savages to hesitate, their eyes shining with disbelief.

They had just witnessed how powerful he was, even when surrounded by more than a thousand giants. Before, they had assumed he was impressive only because of his defenses, but now they had watched him kill three of their own in a row, even without any defenses to back him up.

Not a single one of them dared to respond to his challenge....

He had killed three giants with precision and ruthlessness. However, it had not been a simple task; they had not been ordinary savages, but rather, had cultivation bases comparable to the great circle of Core Formation. They were actually half a step into the Nascent Soul stage.

So far, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Live Forever Technique was the key to everything. Because of how it helped him recover quickly, it ensured that his battle prowess remained very potent for a long time.

In fact, although his murderous aura made him seem very threatening at the moment, he was actually taking time to relax and build back some energy.

It was in that moment that a voice rang out from off in the distance. “Here I come!”

Then, the ground began to tremble, and Bai Xiaochun looked up to see a 300-meter-tall giant running in his direction, clad in beast pelts.

The giant’s hair was flying about crazily, and a ferocious expression could be seen on his scar-covered face. He made a very impressive sight, and clearly possessed massive amounts of power. As for the other giants, they rushed to make way for this newcomer, expressions of reverence on their faces.

As the giant got closer and closer, the other giants began to howl excitedly.

“King!”

“King!!”

“King!!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately started pounding. It wasn't quite clear what the other giants meant; was ‘king’ this giant’s name? Either way, the simple wave of his hand knocked all of the other giants out of the way.

Almost in the same moment that Bai Xiaochun looked over at him, the giant glared at him with vicious rage and then lifted his food to stomp on him!

“Time to die!!” Both in terms of size and speed, this giant was completely shocking, and fairly radiated intense fleshly body power.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly popped out of his head, and yet he knew that he wouldn’t be able to evade this attack. If he even tried to, he would quickly be surrounded and overwhelmed by the other giants in the area.

“You’ll be the one dying!!” Bai Xiaochun yelled, his anger burning. Instead of trying to avoid the giant’s descending foot, he clenched his hand into a fist and struck out!

From a distance, the two opponents were so mismatched it almost seemed like a joke. The giant was 300 meters tall, whereas Bai Xiaochun was like a tiny ant. And yet, he was relying on his fleshly body power to fight back with a fist strike!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

A deafening boom filled the sky, causing the entire battlefield to tremble!

At the same time, a shockwave rolled out in all directions!

When Bai Xiaochun’s fist made contact with the giant's foot, he began to shake. Howling, he poured all of the power he could into the fist strike, causing his skin, his bones, and even his blood to begin to vibrate.

It was almost as if his life force and body itself were about to be destroyed!

“How could I possibly die in this place!?!?” Bai Xiaochun howled. Pulses of boundless power rippled through him, originating from his own flesh and blood as it created a powerful energy to counter-attack.

“Die, die, DIE!!” Bai Xiaochun roared as he punched out again and again. The power of his Undying Skin, Undying Heavenly King, and Undying Tendons all merged together, making a black glow that spread out from his fist to cover the huge giant!

The 300-meter-tall giant began to tremble, and then let out an agonized howl as his right leg collapsed into a mass of blood, ripped flesh and shattered bone. Then, the black light continued to spread out, doing the same thing to the giant's other leg, his torso, his arms, and finally his head. In the blink of an eye, his entire body was reduced to a mass of gore!!

Blood splashed down like rain in all directions as the giant was destroyed in body and soul, leaving Bai Xiaochun standing there completely alone.

Silence spread out as the surrounding giants stared in shock at what had just occurred. Their minds felt as if they were being struck by countless bolts of lightning.

“King is dead?”

“How could this be happening? King! He was King! The boundlessly powerful King was actually killed by Devil Bai's fist strike!?”

“How is this possible!? Heavens! Is Devil Bai a warrior of the Holy People, or are we?!?! That fleshly body power, it... it....” All of the savages were shaking in terror of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had clearly proven that his power came, not from his defenses, but from his fleshly body. Not even the boundlessly powerful King had been a match for him!

As the rain of blood spattered down onto the surrounding savages, their hearts drained of the desire to do battle. At the same time, that figure standing in the middle of all the falling blood became like a thing of nightmares.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't affected at all by the corrosive rain of blood as he looked around coldly at the rest of the giants in the area.

“Who else wants to die!?”

Not a single giant responded. Instead, they just stood there, panting, their expressions those of terror.

“Who else wants to die!?!?” Bai Xiaochun repeated, his murderous aura raging. Then he took a step forward, only to find that the ashen-faced giants stepped backward in response.

“You want to kill Bai Xiaochun? Well let me ask you. Who else wants to die!?!?!?” The thunderous roar of Bai Xiaochun’s voice spread out across almost half of the battlefield, reaching the ears of many of the other savage giants as they fought with the cultivators of the five legions.

As for the cultivators who heard, they trembled and looked in the direction the voice came from. Some of them had strange expressions on their faces, but most of them gritted their teeth and began to head in his direction.

Before long, more and more of the scattered five legions cultivators began to close in on Bai Xiaochun. They were wounded and bedraggled, and yet none of the giants dared to block their paths. Before long, a group of hundreds had gathered around Bai Xiaochun.

When they saw him, and the mountains of corpses that surrounded him, their hearts were filled with complete and utter shock.

“Our respects, Grandmaster Bai!!”

“Our respects, Grandmaster Bai!!”

As their stunned cries rang out across the battlefield, it became clear that all of these cultivators now viewed Bai Xiaochun as their figurehead.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0498 awe-chapter-499

When Bai Xiaochun saw all of the cultivators gathering in his area, and how the suddenly cowardly giants were doing nothing to stop them, his heart quivered with an anxious feeling.

For some reason, the current situation seemed like a great opportunity....

“The larger the group, the stronger we are....” he thought. The expression on his face remained as cold as ever, and his energy continued to surge as he waved his hand and called out in a hoarse voice.

“Let’s go! I'm taking you back to the Great Wall!”

As his words entered the ears of the surrounding cultivators, they began to tremble.

In their moment of helplessness, surrounded by savages and faced with the prospect of almost certain death, what they wished for more than anything was to get back to the Great Wall. Of course, all of them knew that doing such a thing on their own was virtually impossible.

That was especially true when they saw so many of their comrades falling in battle. To be in a situation like that, only to have someone offer to lead them back to the Great Wall, someone who the giants were terrified of and who seemed actually capable of following through on his words... led to a sensation they would never ever forget. The gratitude which rose up within them was intense to an indescribable degree!

Who else wants to die!?!? The words so recently uttered by Bai Xiaochun were still echoing in their hearts, which were now pulsing, not with anxiety, but with anticipation. Without any hesitation, they began to form up protectively around Bai Xiaochun, their eyes shining with hope and the desire to live.

“Let's go!” Bai Xiaochun said. “We kill anybody who tries to get in our way! Join our voices together so that more cultivators can join us on our way back! Even if we don’t make it all the way back, we’ll make sure that everyone in this part of the world remembers our battle cry for the rest of their lives!”

Bai Xiaochun’s voice was like the last bit of hope in the world, and it caused the surrounding hundreds of cultivators’ eyes to shine bright red.

After Bai Xiaochun was satisfied that the cultivators were sufficiently worked up, he waved his arm, gritted his teeth, he stepped forward to lead the formation, which was the best way to control the power of the group. And then, even as he and the rest of the cultivators hovered right within the jaws of death, he shouted out at the top of his lungs and burst into motion toward the distant spell formation shield!

“Advance!”

The rest of the cultivators also began to shout out.

“Advance!!”

“Advance!!!”

Hundreds of them clustered around Bai Xiaochun, adding their power to the formation as they shot like a deadly spear across the battlefield.

As they moved along, the savage giants immediately backed up, convinced that if they didn't, they would die. That feeling was especially bolstered by the savagery Bai Xiaochun had just put on display.

All of them knew that if they simply fell upon him with wave upon wave... they would eventually overwhelm him with numbers.

And yet... not a single one blocked his path. The hundreds of cultivators shot across the battlefield with Bai Xiaochun in the lead, who relied only on his fleshly body power, and didn't draw upon a single magical technique.

Of course, there was a reason for that. In his opinion, there were obviously a lot of people who were aiming to kill him, and thus, he needed to keep his spiritual power in reserve as a trump card. Thankfully, his Undying Live Forever Technique came with shocking restorative powers, and as such, he was able to lead the cultivators forward without any resistance!

They crushed anything in their path like a hammer crushing an ice cube. As for the cultivators he led, they had grasped onto that last bit of hope, and were willing to give their all to make sure that no one even got close enough to take it away.

As they barreled forward, their voices rang out for everyone to hear.

“Who else wants to die!?!?”

“Fellow Daoists of the five legions, join us and get back home!!” More and more cultivators who were locked in deadly combat on the battlefield did everything they could to join the group, which was now growing larger and larger.

Soon, it didn’t number in the hundreds, but rather, the thousands.

As a result, their momentum picked up, and they became even harder to resist!

They were now a major focus on the battlefield, to the point where the cultivators who had managed to stay in place on the Great Wall could see them. Even Chen Hetian caught a glimpse of them, and was instantly moved.

“Unleash all the power of the eye!” he bellowed. “Focus the spell formation shield to extract Bai Xiaochun!” In response to his words, numerous beams of light shot out from the enormous eye, screaming through the air to clear a path for Bai Xiaochun.

As for the spell formation shield, it trembled as a small section bulged out and began to spread across the battlefield toward the group he was leading.

By this point, more and more tribal chiefs were paying attention to what was happening.

Finally, the red-garbed young woman fighting Chen Hetian suddenly shouted, “Kill him!”

Chen Hetian roared in anger and attacked with full force, but other than that, could do nothing but watch as the thousands of soul cultivators who were standing guard over the necromancers suddenly turned their heads in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

A large number of them then rose to their feet, becoming beams of light that shot toward Bai Xiaochun and the cultivators he led. They moved with incredible speed, and despite the fact that they were made up of all sorts of handsome men and beautiful women, from the mysterious light that shone in their eyes, it was obvious that they possessed powerful soul magic.

Bai Xiaochun had heard Chen Hetian’s words earlier, and saw both the beams of light shooting out from the enormous eye and the spell formation reaching out to meet him. Even as excitement rose up in his heart, the red-garbed young woman called out her orders, and whistling sounds filled the air as numerous soul cultivators shot in his direction.

“Complete and utter bullies!!” he thought, his anxiety mounting. Just when the chance to escape was right in front of him, these people were rushing to block his path, and as a result, his anger began to burn.

“Brothers, cut down those soul cultivators. With them out of the way, we can return to the Great Wall!” The surrounding thousands of cultivators could see exactly what Bai Xiaochun meant, and all began to shout out battle cries.

Unfortunately, the soul cultivators didn’t come alone. By utilizing some unknown technique, they forced the retreating giants’ eyes to suddenly turn blank, as if they had suddenly lost their ability to think. Then the giants roared and joined the charge. It was the same with the various battle beasts.

Thankfully, not all of the giants were affected, only some of them. Even still, the group that did join in the attack was not small compared to Bai Xiaochun and the cultivators he led.

In the blink of an eye, the soul cultivators were on them, some of them focusing on Bai Xiaochun, and others attacking the men with him. Almost immediately, the troop formation began to fall apart.

A middle-aged soul cultivator suddenly faded into being right in front of Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining with cold light as his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture. Instantly, green strands of flame sprang into being in his palm, which shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Behind him were seven additional soul cultivators, none of them slower than him. Apparently, all the first soul cultivator planned to do was slow Bai Xiaochun down to give his fellows time to finish him off.

Further off in the distance were even more soul cultivators, dozens of them, spreading out to try to cut down all possible paths of escape for Bai Xiaochun.

“Wanna kill me?!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, his eyes flickering with madness. Instead of trying to dodge out of the way of the expressionless middle-aged soul cultivator, Bai Xiaochun charged forward, seemingly oblivious to his own life or death. He slammed into the man, instantly causing blood to ooze out of his own mouth, but then didn’t hesitate to unleash the Mountain Shaking Bash. Instantly, the man was shoved backward with deadly force into the group of seven incoming soul cultivators.

This sudden development caused the seven soul cultivators’ eyes to flicker. Without any hesitation, they shoved their hands out, sending seven illusory soul dragons roaring toward Bai Xiaochun as if to consume him.

“Just what I've been waiting for!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Instantly, blue light appeared in his pupils, and before anything else could happen, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering frigid qi erupted out!

Frigid School Will Evolving Incantation!

Although the frigid qi was not quite at the Frigid Paragon level, it was very close!

The frigid qi instantly spread for thousands of meters, causing all savages and soul cultivators within that area to begin to tremble as they iced over. The giants were especially affected.

As for the soul cultivators, their expression flickered; this turn of events completely surpassed their power of prediction. Especially shocked were the soul cultivators closest to Bai Xiaochun, who were stunned to find that their cultivation bases were freezing up.

In the blink of an eye, an area thousands of meters across had become like the dead of winter. Icy coldness filled the area, as well as astonishing frigid qi. Everything was frozen over to the point where... blue snowflakes appeared and began to fall.

Although Bai was trembling with fear and anxiety, he was also grittily fierce as he said, “Time to do some killing!”

He had no desire to die, and therefore, the only option now... was to kill the enemy!

This was a frigid domain!

This was... Bai Xiaochun’s world!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0499 awe-chapter-500

Within the frigid domain, giants and soul cultivators alike trembled in fear as their cultivation bases were seemingly frozen solid!

Not a single person under Nascent Soul could escape its effects!

Even people in the great circle of Core Formation, or quasi-Nascent Soul experts were by no means exempt! The shocked giants and soul cultivators' first instinct was to flee.

However, thanks to the frigid qi locking them down, they were incapable of doing so. Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, and with the wave of his hand caused the middle-aged soul cultivator in front of him to explode to bits. The other seven soul cultivators were howling in rage, and yet couldn't do anything to fight back.

Moments later, booms filled the air as the seven Core Formation soul cultivators exploded to bits, sending frozen chunks of blood and gore out in all directions.

"This is my world!" Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes shining with fierce light as he waved his finger down at the ground, causing the frigid qi to surge out again!

This time, it didn't spread out for thousands of meters, but rather, for 30,000!!

The 30,000-meter frigid domain was a tool of the Frigid Master!

Within that area, everything was frozen solid and couldn’t stand up to Bai Xiaochun any more than dried twigs and limp weeds. Each and every attack he unleashed cut down another Core Formation soul cultivator, one after another!

Everything was happening too quickly; nothing could prevent the slaughter from being carried out!

A savage giant shivered, and then his head exploded, sending frozen chunks of flesh out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun burst through him, hand flashing in an incantation gesture that caused a dozen nearby soul cultivators to explode to bits!

However, there were so many savages and soul cultivators that even with the help of his Frigid Master powers, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t wipe them all out in a short period of time. As the moments ticked by, the terrified and despairing soul cultivators looked around with flickering eyes, hoping to find some way of extricating themselves. Soon, some of them began to twitch and move.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he snorted coldly, performed a double-handed incantation gesture, and then stretched his arms out wide.

“Domain projections!”

Instantly, what appeared to be a dozen human-sized mirrors appeared in the area, from within which stepped a dozen shadowy figures. Shockingly, all of those figures looked exactly like Bai Xiaochun!

These clone-like entities were frigid domain clones who immediately began to slaughter the enemies around them.

Giant after giant, soul cultivator after soul cultivator, one by one they were destroyed in body and soul. Even those who were regaining their ability to move couldn't do so quickly enough, and died screaming.

Booms rose up as the entire frigid domain became like a terrifying hell!

Unfortunately, to use divine abilities and magical techniques in this way would quickly drain one’s cultivation base. Were Bai Xiaochun back in the lands of Heavenspan, it would have been easier to use and easier to recover from. But he was in the Wildlands, where there was no spiritual energy of heaven and earth. Whatever spiritual power he lost was lost for good, and therefore, he was being drained of energy at a rapid pace.

As such, Bai Xiaochun could only keep up the current action for the space of a dozen breaths of time or so. After that, his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and the freezing domain around him began to melt and fade away.

As that happened, screams began to ring out; some of the soul cultivators and savage giants had been smashed to pieces, but because they were frozen in place, hadn’t been immediately killed.

But now, blood and gore filled the 30,000-meter area, and the ground was littered with the corpses of hundreds of giants and roughly seventy or eighty soul cultivators!

The other soul cultivators and giants who hadn’t entered the freezing area earlier were now left gasping in horror and disbelief at Bai Xiaochun.

“H-how... how is this possible?!?!”

“How could he be so strong? He’s not a Core Formation cultivator; that was obviously the power of the Nascent Soul stage!!”

“He slaughtered those Core Formation experts as easily as if he were stomping on ants!!”

Not only were the giants and soul cultivators shocked, but the cultivators of the five legions who had remained within the freezing area but weren’t affected by the coldness were also dumbfounded.

As they looked around, panting, their eyes began to shine with passion, and for many, worship!

In an era where the law of the jungle prevailed, powerful experts always gained respect. That was even more true in the cultivation world than the mortal world. As of this moment, the way that Bai Xiaochun had dominated the battlefield ensured that a deep impression would be left on the hearts of all present!

“Come with me,” Bai Xiaochun said loudly. “We're going back to the Great Wall!” Bai Xiaochun’s breath was coming in ragged gasps, and exhaustion gripped him tight. He had already drained much of his cultivation base. However, he still threw his head back and roared as he led the cultivators of the five legions charging across the battlefield once again.

The way the cultivators clustered around him protectively caused him to sigh in relief; despite the carnage he had just unleashed, he was jumpier than ever. Only he could truly be aware of how nervous he was at the moment.

However, he didn’t think it was appropriate to let anyone know how afraid he was, which was a skill he had long since mastered. As he sped along, he pulled out a bottle of spirit alcohol and guzzled it down, sparing some to give to a few of the surrounding cultivators.

At the same time, he surreptitiously pulled out a Godly Vestige Pill and tucked it into his palm in case he needed it later.

His Godly Vestige Pills were his trump cards. One such pill could completely heal any injuries in the blink of an eye. Although it wouldn’t restore his spiritual power, he did have plenty more spirit alcohol in his bag of holding.

Everyone in the group around him was getting excited as they charged viciously toward the shield. At the moment, the savages and soul cultivators were powerless to stop them, and by now, they were only about 3,000 meters away from the shield. However, there were also hundreds of soul cultivators speeding in their direction.

Further off in the distance were numerous tribal chiefs who radiated shocking auras. Clearly, they had the battle prowess of the Nascent Soul stage, and yet, under the command of Chen Hetian, the enormous eye within Great Wall City continued to send destructive beams of light out to prevent them from getting closer!

Unfortunately, there were too many Core Formation soul cultivators for the enormous eye to do anything about them. As they closed in, they unleashed wave after wave of soul power which forced the giants to join their attack.

The giants’ eyes would turn blank, and then they would howl as they lurched forward and self-detonated as soon as they got close enough!

From the look of things, the giants and soul cultivators were going to throw everything at their disposal toward Bai Xiaochun to prevent him from escaping!

The power of the detonations rippled out, and corrosive blood splashed everywhere. Many of the group of thousands of cultivators were injured, and tumbled backward as a result. At the moment, it seemed like the troop formation they had created would fall apart at any moment.

Anxiety mounting, Bai Xiaochun guzzled down another mouthful of spirit alcohol, then burst into motion, unleashing more frigid qi.

However, as the frigid qi spread out, the soul cultivators' eyes flickered, and all of them quickly responded by sending out clouds of black mist. Within those mists were soul shadows that screamed through the air toward Bai Xiaochun, fighting back against the frigid qi and simultaneously providing the soul cultivators with a measure of protection.

Theoretically speaking, all Bai Xiaochun had to do was unleash slightly stronger frigid qi, or keep the current frigid qi roiling out for a bit longer. If he did, then his opponents wouldn't be able to do anything against him, at least not for the following ten breaths of time.

After all, the soul cultivators from earlier had been powerless to resist, and the current batch were only just able to fight back on a small scale!

However, Bai Xiaochun could do neither of those things. Not even relying on spirit alcohol could negate the fact that there was no spiritual energy in the Wildlands.

There was only one thing that Bai Xiaochun could do, and that was rely on his veins of steel to go all out to fight the soul cultivators, even if he got injured in the process!

And that was exactly what he did. He quickly closed in on the nearest soul cultivator, ignoring the divine ability being unleashed against him. Grabbing his opponent's arm, he unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash, crushing him to pieces!

Things weren’t over yet, of course. He took another step forward, placing him right in front of a soul cultivator who had just summoned a pitch-black soul sword. Allowing the sword to bite into his shoulder, he grabbed the man’s neck with his left hand, then crushed his fingers down viciously.

Without pausing for a moment, he continued forward, using Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning as well as a host of wind blades to destroy everything in his path!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0500 awe-chapter-501

Bai Xiaochun seemed like he had already descended into madness. He had received numerous injuries, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. Behind him, the ground was littered with corpses, and the soul cultivators ahead of him were completely shaken.

To them, Bai Xiaochun seemed insane and completely bereft of the desire to live. Despite having killed quite a number of soul cultivators, he was clearly seriously injured.

However, he didn't seem to care about any such injuries as he strode forward, shouting, "Die!!"

Suddenly, an old soul cultivator appeared in front of him, reaching out with a hand that was already decaying into blackness. By the time his hand was extended, it looked like nothing but ashen bones as he tried to grab Bai Xiaochun's chest, apparently to rip out his heart.

At the same time, eight other soul cultivators in the area drew so deeply upon themselves that blood began to ooze out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths. Soul power battered Bai Xiaochun's frigid qi as they charged in attack; if they could just slow down his momentum, then perhaps their combined force would be enough to destroy him in body and soul.

In the face of such danger, Bai Xiaochun laughed viciously and allowed the old man's pitch-black bone hand to slam into his chest. The old man's eyes lit up with delight, and just when he was about to grab down, his face fell as he realized that it felt like his hand had run into a chunk of iron. Heart pounding, the old man made to retreat.

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun lunged forward, headbutting the man in the face. As the man's head was crushed, he screamed and tried to fight back, and yet, the frigid qi had suppressed even his quasi-Nascent Soul cultivation base, and a moment later, he was dead in body and soul.

After killing the old man, Bai Xiaochun spun, his hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture to summon a gale-force wind that blasted against the other eight soul cultivators

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and yet he shot like lightning toward the eight enemies, landing vicious fist strikes onto their chests that sent them tumbling backward like kites with their strings cut.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually occurred within about ten breaths of time. During that time, he had already killed at least a hundred soul cultivators, and many savage giants. Behind him, the ground was soaked with blood and gore.

As his frigid qi faded away, he staggered a bit to the side, where some of the cultivators of the five legions reached out to prop him up. Those cultivators' eyes were bright red; after witnessing Bai Xiaochun's brave ferocity, they were also pushed deeper into madness, and took it upon themselves to protect him as they again charged forward.

Bai Xiaochun's face was pale white, and he was having a hard time breathing. However, with the help of the other cultivators, he managed to grit his teeth and put a Godly

Vestige Pill into his mouth. Then he pulled out a few bottles of spirit alcohol to restore his spiritual energy.

The main reason he had been willing to sustain such injuries moments ago was because he had the Godly Vestige Pill to fall back on. As soon as the miraculous pill entered his mouth, heat washed through him, and in the blink of an eye, all of his injuries were being healed.

Meanwhile, the cultivators continued to charge toward the shield, which was now only about 1,500 meters away. Along the way, other nearby cultivators had noticed what was happening, and had been hurrying over to join them the entire time, causing their numbers to swell to over 10,000.

Of course, they weren’t the only large group of cultivators who had managed to group together. There were seven or eight other such groups, all of whom were in formation and trying to reach the shield. Furthermore, all of them were rallying around a powerful figure of some sort.

And of course, Bai Xiaochun was just such a leader!

However, he was a bit different from the other core figures who had rallied troops around them. Those people had long since grown in prestige and power. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun had slaughtered his way into fame in a very short time!

He seemed to lack any fear of death, and was willing to fight back against hundreds of soul cultivators and savage giants. Because of that, he had gained the complete approval of everyone around him.

As his group blasted through layer after layer of opposition, and got closer and closer to the shield, one of the Nascent Soul tribal chiefs finally used some unknown method to make it past the destructive beams of light being sent out by the huge eye.

At first, the tribal chief was only about 30 meters tall, but as he closed in, he rapidly grew in height to 300 meters tall. Every step he took caused his energy to rise to even more shocking heights, even causing a powerful wind to sweep about in all directions.

As he sped toward Bai Xiaochun, cries of alarm rang out from the cultivators.

“Time to die, Devil Bai!” he howled in rage, his voice echoing like thunder. The mere sound of his voice was such that the cultivators who had been clustered protectively around Bai Xiaochun began to tremble and cough up blood.

With that, the tribal chief lunged forward, shoving his mountain-like hand forward and unleashing pressure that the cultivators of the five legions could not fight back against. From the look of it, there was nothing anybody could do to stop this chief.

Even as Bai Xiaochun stood there, supported by another cultivator, he looked up, and his pupils constricted.

“Nascent Soul....”

There was no time for hesitation. He had already surmised that the Wildlanders wouldn’t let him escape so easily, which was why he had held back so many of his other trump cards.

Although the scene which was playing out was shocking, it was by no means unexpected. Gritting his teeth, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then dashed forward to meet the tribal chief, frigid qi swirling around him, his Undying Live Forever Technique on full display.

In the blink of an eye, the two of them met, and an intense boom filled the air. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and he almost felt like the pressure and might of the Nascent Soul stage alone was enough to crush him into oblivion!

However, the tribal chief didn't come out unscathed. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and his eyes shone with incredulity as he staggered backward several steps.

“What level is your cultivation base?! You’re not injured?!?!” In his shock, the tribal chief asked two questions in one breath. From what he had been able to tell, this Devil Bai was actually on equal footing with himself, which seemed like a complete impossibility.

Bai Xiaochun wiped the blood off of his mouth and said, “My cultivation base level? The level that can kill you!”

A quick glance confirmed that the beams of light from the giant eye would definitely keep the other tribal chiefs at bay temporarily. However, if he didn’t take care of this tribal chief quickly, then death would be just around the corner.

Eyes flickering, he decided to completely throw caution to the wind. Quickly performing a double-handed incantation gesture, he shoved his hands down toward the ground!

“Waterswamp!!”

Instantly, ripples spread out through the air, causing water vapor to spring out of nowhere as the entire area was transformed into a huge swamp!

When that swamp appeared, the tribal chief’s face fell, and the profound sense of deadly crisis that inundated him caused his heart to begin to pound.

“This Devil Bai is very strange....” The chief’s eyes flickered with killing intent; well aware that he couldn’t let Bai Xiaochun finish using this technique, he suddenly lunged forward.

“You’re dead!”

“Nope,” Bai Xiaochun retorted. “*You’re* dead!” With that, he flung his hands over his head, causing his hair and his blood-stained garments to whip about as energy surged in all directions.

“.... Kingdom!!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The lands quaked as a massive spike shot out from the ground, then a second, and then a third! One after another, they rose up like mountains, provoking looks of wide-eyed shock from everyone on the battlefield.

The tribal chief had been in the middle of lunging forward, and was stabbed directly by one of the spikes. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and a look of utter shock appeared on his face.

Frigid qi poured into him as he looked down at the spike, and the swamp around him. From what he could tell, that water vapor hid some shockingly enormous beast!

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Bai Xiaochun leaped into the air above the tribal chief, spreading his arms wide as he howled, “Living Mountain Incantation!”

In the blink of an eye, rocks began to form around him until he looked like a huge stone golem!

With the power of a living mountain, he bore down on the tribal chief and then crushed him with vicious ruthlessness!

“Elder Brother Zhao can kill Nascent Soul experts, and so can Bai Xiaochun!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0501 awe-chapter-502

Below the tribal chief was the Waterswamp Kingdom. He was surrounded by frigid qi, and was looking up at Bai Xiaochun’s living mountain power. The combination of all of those factors created a deadly gambit that was Bai Xiaochun’s last hope for survival. These were his most powerful trump cards!

Early on, he had assumed that he would face a moment of ultimate danger such as this, and as such, he had been holding back a bit of fleshly body power, and even some of his spiritual power, all for a moment like this!

Furthermore, because of his Godly Vestige Pills, he was much more confident of being able to survive. Therefore, he also knew that he had to go all out!

Although he feared death, in a moment like this when the flame of his life force could be snuffed out at any moment, such fear was useless. If he wanted to keep himself from dying, he had to risk his life!!

Throw caution to the wind!

That was his line of thinking. As he descended, the maddened tribal chief also drew upon every ounce of power he could to fight back against this unprecedentedly deadly crisis. The most unbelievable aspect to the entire situation was that he was a Nascent Soul expert. Although he was only in the early Nascent Soul stage, that still counted as Nascent Soul!

And it didn’t matter how strong Bai Xiaochun was, the chief could sense that he was only in the late Core Formation stage, not even the great circle!

Despite that, despite the fact that this was a late Core Formation cultivator, he imparted such a sensation of imminent danger that the chief couldn’t help but feel both humiliated and terrified.

However, there was no time for thought or planning, nor any time for discussion. The tribal chief’s cultivation base power erupted out, bolstering his fleshly body to the point where he looked like a heavenly king!

The savage giants were different from soul cultivators in that they focused mostly on fleshly body cultivation. Although this tribal chief had some magical techniques at his disposal, the true foundation of his power was fleshly body strength.

“Wanna kill me?!?!” the chief roared, throwing both his hands above him to smash into the Living Mountain Incantation.

“None other!” Bai Xiaochun roared back, unleashing everything that his Living Mountain Incantation, Waterswamp Kingdom, and Frigid Master powers were capable of.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

Wind blasted out in all directions, and brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth. The entire battlefield trembled, and cultivators from both sides of the conflict all simultaneously stared in the same direction to see what would happen.

The eyes of the other tribal chiefs were glued to the scene, and at the same time, their minds were battered with waves of shock. Even the necromancers and the top experts from the five legions were all looking over at Bai Xiaochun!

He was the complete and utter center of attention!

As everyone looked on, a heaven-rending, earth-crushing boom ripped through the air. Then, a moment later, the Frigid Master aura began to fade, and the Waterswamp Kingdom spikes began to vanish.

Up above in the air, Bai Xiaochun was trembling and coughing up blood as he tumbled backward. Cracking sounds rang out as his living mountain form cracked and crumbled. Soon, his true form was revealed, and after coughing up another mouthful of blood, he popped another Godly Vestige Pill into his mouth!

When he looked up, he didn’t even take the time to see the outcome of his attack, but instead, bolted toward the shield.

At the same time, the fading effects of the Living Mountain Incantation, Waterswamp Kingdom, and Frigid Master aura slowly revealed the Nascent Soul tribal chief.

At first, he stood there completely unmoving, but then a breeze swept passed, and he trembled. Then the chief slowly crumbled and transformed into ash, starting from his feet and head, and slowly spreading to the rest of his body!

He had been completely destroyed, from his physical form down to his soul!!

In the moment of his death, his eyes continued to shine with terror and defiance. And yet, nothing could stop him from fading away into the wind....

The battlefield went silent for a long moment before panting sounds began to rise up, and then a huge commotion.

“Impossible!!”

“Heavens! A late Core Formation cultivator just killed a Nascent Soul expert!!”

“This... this.... He wasn’t an ordinary Nascent Soul expert either, he was a tribal chief from one of the Wildlands tribes! His fleshly body power must have been shocking!!”

“This Devil Bai.... Dammit, not only did he come out alive, but he actually ended his opponent! What brilliance!!”

Even as the exclamations of astonishment rang out, the more than 10,000 cultivators in the area began to cry out in joy and cluster around Bai Xiaochun as they all shot toward the shield.

The other giants and soul cultivators in the area were completely shaken. As Bai Xiaochun barreled toward them, their faces turned ashen with fear, and they scattered, not daring to provide even the slightest bit of resistance!

Bai Xiaochun had put far too many giants and soul cultivators to death. He had even killed one of the tribal chiefs. How could any of them even think of trying to stand in his way!?

The enormous eye began to send beams of light out with even more rapidity, making it impossible for any other tribal chief to get closer. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s own battalion was also speeding in his direction. They had been trying to reach him the entire time, intent on joining and guarding him.

After all, Bai Xiaochun had always treated them well, plus, his current achievements in battle ensured that he would almost certainly be promoted in the army. How could they possibly be anything but awe-inspired?

As for the spell formation shield, it continued to bulge out toward him, to the point where all of the savages and soul cultivators, and even the tribal chiefs could see... that he would be within that shield in moments!

In the moment he did, a tremor ran through him, and all of the valor and bravery from moments before vanished, to be replaced by lingering fear. His face was ashen, and he was panting as he turned back to look at the countless savages gnashing their teeth beyond the shield.

“You just wait for Lord Bai to come back and show you a thing or two!”

Inside of the shield, Bai Lin and the other top experts were still fighting the necromancer souls. Unsightly expressions could be seen on the faces of the necromancers, many of whom had received grievous injuries. As soon as Bai Xiaochun made it back inside the shield, the necromancer souls exchanged glances and made as if to charge in his direction.

And yet, how could Bai Lin and the other top experts let that happen? Without the slightest hesitation, all of the major generals, as well as other Nascent Soul experts from the five legions, leapt forward to fight them. Moments later, the necromancer souls scattered, not in an attempt to get at Bai Xiaochun, but to flee back outside of the shield.

They all headed in different directions, and although some of them were close enough to Bai Xiaochun that they might have been able to send a casual attack in his direction, considering how many cultivators surrounded him, and considering how he had fought the tribal chief, they were so frightened that they just left.

Bai Xiaochun maintained full vigilance as all of this happened. Soon, the necromancers were gone, and he finally breathed a sigh of relief. Surrounded by all the cultivators he had led off of the battlefield, he began to speed back toward the Great Wall.

When he finally reached the wall itself, he finally seemed to run out of energy. Heart pounding, he thought back to everything which had occurred during the fight, and was left with the sensation that he had barely escaped with his life.

**

Eventually, as evening gave way to night, Chen Hetian and the red-garbed young woman finally stopped fighting. The day of battle had finally come to an end, and the only thing left behind on the battlefield were mounds of corpses.

The Wildlands had suffered grievous casualties, and yet, so had the five legions. After a night of rest, the fighting resumed in the morning, just as fierce as before.

Three months passed, during which time the fighting raged. At the same time, the savage giants’ army continued to receive reinforcements, and it was the same with the five legions. Cultivators from World City were continually being sent to bolster the forces at the Great Wall, and ensure that their overall strength didn’t lessen.

During the three months, one name after another rose to prominence within the five legions, all thanks to the battle credit they had accumulated. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was the most spectacular of them all.

Although he never went back to the front lines during the three months which had passed, his bravery and veins of steel during the initial battle caused the more than 10,000 cultivators who he had led to safety to view him with reverence and awe.

Furthermore, his battle credit continued to rise, although no one in the five legions could determine the exact extent of it!

Meanwhile, a similar situation occurred among the Wildlands forces. Because of the fierce fighting, one powerful expert after another rose to fame, the vast majority of them being... necromancers!

A month before, as the battles seemed to be winding down, the necromancers seemed to abandon the tactic of using souls as their weapons, and instead began to fight personally on the battlefield. When they did, the attacks they unleashed shocked everyone present.

That was because the magical items they wielded, despite not being at the level of precious treasures, were all decorated with a minimum of seven spirit enhancement designs!

There were even some of them that had received tenfold spirit enhancements!!

Most shocking of all were three particular necromancers who were in the late Nascent Soul stage. Their magical items unleashed shocking power that not only enabled them to easily kill other Nascent Soul cultivators, but also allowed them to challenge quasi-Deva Realm experts like Bai Lin.

Each of those three Necromancers wielded magical items with thirteen silver designs on them. Shockingly, they were magical items with thirteenfold spirit enhancements!

Many of the cultivators from the legions were shocked by this, especially Bai Xiaochun. In fact, it was so unbelievable to him that he personally went up to the wall to see for himself.

“How is this possible?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0502 awe-chapter-503

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing. In the lands of Heavenspan, the most advanced spirit enhancement he had ever seen was tenfold.

But now, in a completely unexpected turn of events, he was looking at magical items which had been enhanced far beyond that.

“There’s something strange going on. Could it be... that the Wildlands harbors some mysterious secret regarding spirit enhancement?!” Even as he pondered the issue, he subconsciously cast his senses toward the turtle-wok inside his finger.

Most telling of all about the whole thing was that Bai Lin and the other most powerful experts didn't seem to find the matter unusual at all. It was almost as if they were used to seeing necromancers using such spirit enhanced magical items. Furthermore, their eyes burned passionately at the sight of them, and they attacked with greater fervor than before, clearly in the hopes of getting their hands on one of the enhanced treasures.

Apparently, for the generals and major generals, one of the key things they could gain from battle wasn’t battle credit, but rather, the spirit enhanced treasures of the necromancers.

The fighting went on for another month, after which the Wildlands finally retreated.... The Great Wall forces didn’t chase after them.

After all, the Great Wall had suffered extensive losses in this battle as well.

Neither Chen Hetian nor the red-garbed young woman came out on top in their conflict, and in fact, both received similar injuries. It was only in the moment that the Wildlands armies began to retreat that Bai Xiaochun finally got a good look at the young woman in red.

She wore a long red garment and had flowing black hair. She seemed very young, and was beautiful in a way that surpassed even Chen Manyao.

Of greater significance, however, was her cultivation base, which made her radiate an air of nobility that would cause anyone who looked at her to feel their heart pounding in their chest.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun didn’t really care about any of that. At the moment, he was looking glumly at Li Hongming, who had come to the Armory to visit Bai Xiaochun the very afternoon the fighting ended. Li Hongming had been a colonel to begin with, and still was, but had risen within the ranks of the colonels thanks to his accumulation of battle credit during the fighting.

“Xiaochun, you’re famous now! Completely famous!! According to the secret reports I saw, the Wildlands has increased the bounty on your head. Do you know what the reward is for your death?

“A deva beast soul!! Although the reward is only one of them, and it’s not clear what type, that’s still something incredibly valuable. After all, if you can collect enough five elements deva beast souls to meet the requirements of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, you can step into the Nascent Soul stage!!

“Only people in the top 10 of the Wildlands Execution List have rewards like that attached to their names. Congratulations! Xiaochun... you’re already in the top 10!

“The only people even close to you on that list are Nascent Soul cultivators. In fact, you are the only Core Formation cultivator in the top 30!

“Devil Bai. That's what the Wildlanders call you now!!” Li Hongming was sincerely offering his congratulations to Bai Xiaochun, and had actually hurried over here just to tell him this news. However, Bai Xiaochun was left shaking in fear.

“A deva beast soul as a reward....” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp in shock as his heart began to pound. He could only imagine how badly the savages and soul cultivators in the Wildlands would want to kill him now.

Li Hongming was left sighing continuously in his heart. When he thought back to the time Bai Xiaochun had first arrived, it would have been impossible to predict that he would become so famous both inside and outside the Great Wall.

The two of them chatted a bit more about some random things, until eventually Li Hongming could sense that Bai Xiaochun was feeling down. Finally, he patted his shoulder and left.

Afterward, Bai Xiaochun sat down and sighed.

“Ah, whatever. No matter where I go, I always put on a breathtaking performance. Ai.... Worst case scenario, I just don’t go outside the Great Wall after this. I’ll stick around until the ten years are up, and then head back to the sect.” Only by comforting himself in this way could he somewhat still his pounding heart.

And yet, his anxiety just wouldn’t go away. Not only was he worried about the Wildlands soul cultivators trying to get the bounty on his head, but he also couldn’t keep from being nervous about the other cultivators in the five legions. After all, his head was very valuable now....

Thankfully, he didn’t have to stew in his worries for too long. Now that the fighting was over, the promotions were being handed out. Many cultivators were being promoted from ordinary soldiers to the rank of lieutenant or captain.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was one of only two captains who were promoted to colonel!

Now that he was a colonel, he could occupy both the Armory and his own personal colonel’s command center. Furthermore, in addition to Zhao Long and the original battalion of 100 men... he would now command an additional 900 cultivators!

It took a huge amount of battle credit to earn a promotion from captain to colonel, which made such promotions very uncommon as a result of only one battle.

The other captain to receive a promotion to colonel had already been stationed in Great Wall City for a hundred years. The only reason he had finally been able to get his promotion was because he was about to break through into the great circle of Core Formation, and had risked his life in countless battles.

The truth was that despite how many soul cultivators Bai Xiaochun had cut down, and regardless of the fact that he had slaughtered a tribal chief, he still shouldn’t have had enough battle credit to get promoted. The only reason he was now a colonel was because of his Soul Convergence Pills and pill furnace bombs!

In that fashion, he had advanced by leaps and bounds, and been promoted to colonel in one fell swoop!

As an apothecary, he had invented Soul Convergence Pills, which ended up changing the course of the battle. Furthermore, his exploding treasures also shocked everyone near and far. And then there was his battle prowess. After cutting down numerous soul cultivators, and even a tribal chief, it was clear that his fleshly body was similar to the Nascent Soul level. And although he wasn’t a true Nascent Soul expert, he could obviously do things that ordinary Core Formation cultivators could not!

In addition to all that, he had saved the lives of over 10,000 soldiers, causing countless cultivators to revere him.

To top it all off, he was now in the top 10 on the Wildlands Execution List!

All of these various honors and glories were like a shockwave that rolled through all of Great Wall City. In addition, it caused the generals of the other four legions to suddenly view Bai Xiaochun as being vastly more important than he had been before.

Whoever had Bai Xiaochun in their legion would not only have a valiant warrior, but would also have Soul Convergence Pills and exploding pill furnaces. Plus, they would have someone who thousands upon thousands of other cultivators revered. He was really a comprehensive package.

The generals of the other four legions were quite excited, and therefore, it was no surprise that on the evening in which Bai Xiaochun was promoted to colonel, a bright beam of light suddenly appeared outside of the Armory.

Within that beam of light was an old man wearing a pitch-black suit of armor. He pulsed with a black energy, and had the illusory image of a fierce tiger floating above his head. His eyes were bright red, and he seemed to pulse with demonic qi. Overall, he made a very terrifying sight.

In addition to all that, he had a very profound cultivation base, being half a step into the Deva Realm. Heaven and earth trembled upon his arrival, and all of the cultivators in the Armory looked up and then clasped hands in salute.

“It's the general of the Black Demons! Greetings, General!”

Zhao Long and his compatriots were shaken, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he had been in the middle of meditating when he felt the sudden pressure in the area. Walking out, he saw the general of the Black Demons hovering in midair.

Bai Xiaochun had never interacted personally with the man; they had only seen each other on the battlefield. Feeling a bit surprised to see him here, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and bowed.

The old man laughed heartily as he landed in front of Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining with approval and admiration.

“Grandmaster Bai, why don’t you join the Black Demons? Whatever compensation they’re giving you here, I’ll triple it!”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. “Uh....”

He had a lot of freedom in the Skin Flayers, and hadn’t planned to leave. However, this general’s eyes burned as if with fire; clearly, he really wanted Bai Xiaochun to agree to the proposition. Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, and just when he was about to say something else, another beam of light appeared in the sky. Before anyone could say a word, a new voice rang out.

“Don’t listen to him, Grandmaster Bai. Why don’t you join the Bane Stars? Not only will I offer you ten times your current compensation, but I can also guarantee that you won’t be injured by the Wildlanders even a single time. I definitely won’t let you end up in any critical situations such as those which unfolded before!” Even as the words rang out, a middle-aged man in a crimson robe appeared.

He was very attractive, and had a warm smile that lacked even the hint of a bad temper; he was almost humble-looking. However, Bai Xiaochun had seen him fight in battle, and knew that his murderous aura was beyond comparison to anyone except for Bai Lin.

“You’ll guarantee my safety?!” Bai Xiaochun blurted, his heart suddenly pounding. He had just been pondering the issue of how dangerous things were, so to hear the general of the Bane Stars make an offer like that instantly got him excited.

When the general of the Black Demons saw Bai Xiaochun’s expression, he instantly started to get nervous, and was just about to insert some words when, all of a sudden, a cold snort filled the air.

“The Black Demons and the Bane Stars are all stingy tightwads, Grandmaster Bai. What’s the use of joining miserly legions like theirs? If you come to the Savage Butcherers, I’ll increase your compensation by twentyfold. I’ll also guarantee your safety, *and* get you *any* medicinal plant you need. The same goes for spirit alcohol and medicinal pills. Whatever cultivation resources you require will be at your disposal!” A third beam of light appeared, and as it touched down, a tall, burly man came into view.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0503 awe-chapter-504

The burly man wore a suit of heavy armor, and looked almost like a mountain. His eyes flickered with a brutal gleam as he glared at the old man and the middle-aged cultivator.

The generals of the Black Demons and the Bane Stars glared back at him, and it almost looked like a fight might break out at any moment.

“Ummm?” Bai Xiaochun said, blinking a few times. Although he was very pleased by the fact that the generals of these three legions were competing over him, he had to conclude that the offer from the Savage Butcherers seemed the best of them all.

However, it was in that very instant that another cold snort echoed out, along with a blast of wind that caused intense rumbling sounds to fill the air. Then, numerous bolts of lightning descended from the sky, which swirled together into the form of a white-haired cultivator.

In the blink of an eye, he was standing there in Bai Xiaochun’s courtyard, lightning crackling beneath his feet, transforming the entire courtyard into something like a lake of lightning.

Of course, the lightning didn’t harm Bai Xiaochun or his men. However, the faces of the other generals flickered as they were forced to rotate their cultivation bases to keep themselves from harm.

“What do you think you’re doing, Master Soul Slaughterer?!” shouted the burly man from the Savage Butcherers.

“What am I doing? Competing with you people, obviously. Grandmaster Bai, why not join the Soul Slaughterers? I can guarantee you ten years of safety, and fifty times your current compensation. Plus, I can ensure that you will be rich and taken care of after you go back to the sect. I’ll give you access to all the medicinal plants and other resources you need, and I’ll even give you a priceless Nascent Soul Pill! All you have to do is nod your head yes, and I’ll hand the pill over immediately!” Even as he spoke, he lifted his right hand, which was holding a crystalline medicinal pill!

The pill instantly erupted with a shocking medicinal aroma that Zhao Long and the others had no trouble identifying as that of a Nascent Soul Pill. Nascent Soul Pills were one of the most important types of cultivation resources in existence at the Great Wall. They were even hard to get in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and extensive records were kept on their distribution. They were second in value only to deva beast souls.

In fact, most people actually valued them more than deva beast souls. After all, despite the fact that using deva beast souls to step into the Nascent Soul stage would lead to incredible power, it would only work if you possessed all five souls of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth.

However, any cultivator in the great circle of the Core Formation stage would have a good chance of achieving a breakthrough with a Nascent Soul Pill. Although breaking through using that method came with certain downsides, such as being less powerful than someone who used deva beast souls, it was still the Nascent Soul stage!

And besides, very few people would be able to build up a full collection of five elements deva beast souls.

Not even Bai Xiaochun had been able to get his hands on a Nascent Soul Pill since he had arrived in Great Wall City. As such, he knew how valuable they were, and here, this white-haired cultivator was holding one of them in his hand. All he had to do was nod his head, and he could have it!

How could Bai Xiaochun not be excited about that? His eyes were burning with passion as he looked at the pill; although he didn't actually plan to step into Nascent Soul using that method, the pill could still be very useful. With it, he could ascend to the great circle of Core Formation almost immediately!

That would definitely save him a lot of time.

The other three generals looked at the Nascent Soul Pill, their hearts trembling. It wasn't that they didn't have Nascent Soul Pills of their own to offer; they did. However, such pills were so valuable that they couldn't help but hesitate about what to do.

The more Bai Xiaochun looked at that Nascent Soul Pill, the brighter his eyes shone. Taking a deep breath, he glanced over at the other three silent generals, and decided that if he hesitated any longer, he might lose this chance. Just when he was about to nod, an enraged shout ripped through the air.

“Absolutely disgraceful! Screw off, fools!! Dammit, how dare the four of you bastards show up here in Skin Flayers territory and try to steal my people!

“That's nothing more than a Nascent Soul Pill! Ignore them, Xiaochun! I'll give you *three* Nascent Soul Pills!!” It was none other than Bai Lin, his voice cracking like thunder as he appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun to stare furiously at the four other generals.

As far as he was concerned, the fact that they had shown up in his territory to brazenly attempt to recruit one of his men was completely embarrassing. Thus, his murderous aura raged as he waved his sleeve, sending a blast of air rumbling toward the other generals.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun backed up, and as for Zhao Long and the others, they had long since fled.

The four generals' faces fell; clearly, none of them had expected Bai Lin to actually unleash an attack. They immediately drew upon the power of their cultivation bases, and were about to start fighting back, when all of a sudden, a beam of light shot out from the enormous eye atop the pagoda.

The beam slammed down right in the middle of all five generals, forcing them to back away from each other. At the same time, Chen Hetian's ancient voice echoed out with icy coldness.

“You're dismissed, all of you. The five of you are generals, so start acting like it!”

Gritting his teeth, Bai Lin glared at the other four generals. The generals, fully aware that they were in the wrong, cleared their throats, then cast longing glances at Bai Xiaochun before turning and leaving.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, looked around, and then turned his attention to Bai Lin. Feeling a bit embarrassed, he said, “Um, they came looking for me....”

Face grim, Bai Lin walked over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun, those four bastards are real tricksters. Don’t listen to them. You stay here with me. Don’t worry, I’ll keep you safe, and I’ll keep you supplied with whatever medicinal plants you need. Compensation won’t be a problem either, nor will Nascent Soul Pills!” With that, he winced a bit as he pulled two Nascent Soul Pills out of his bag of holding and handed them over to Bai Xiaochun.

“I only have two at the moment. Take them. With a bit of time, I can come up with a way to get a third.” Inwardly, Bai Lin was cursing at the fact that he now needed to come up with yet another Nascent Soul Pill. The truth was that they weren’t impossible to acquire, but it always took a long time to save up enough resources to buy one.

Bai Xiaochun took the two Nascent Soul Pills, his heart quivering with anticipation. Then he looked back at Bai Lin, suddenly struck with how well the general was treating him. And then he thought about how he would be continuing to serve as the man’s subordinate for some time, and his expression suddenly turned very serious. Shaking his head, he said, “What kind of person do you think I am, General?! If I wanted to join one of the other legions, I could have agreed before you showed up. General, don’t you understand why I was buying time?

“I can’t afford to provoke those four generals! Therefore, I also couldn’t simply refuse them. And that was why I was waiting for you to come take control of the situation!” With that, he flicked his sleeve. Looking more serious than ever, he continued, “General, you have treated me with great kindness. How could I possibly cause difficulties for such a benefactor? Two Nascent Soul Pills are valuable enough on their own. I won’t take a third from you even if you offer it!”

With that, he clasped hands and bowed deeply in salute, feeling very pleased with himself. From what he could tell, his words just now had brimmed with righteous intent, and had been worded perfectly.

Regardless of how much Bai Lin truly trusted what Bai Xiaochun had just said, he was still moved. After looking at Bai Xiaochun for a long moment, he realized that he was definitely the type of person who knew how to act properly in front of others. Taking a deep breath, he said, “Xiaochun, if possible, try to build up enough battle credit over the next ten years to become a major general!

“If you can reach that rank, your status and position will be completely different. Even your River-Defying Sect’s position will change for the better. When major generals return from the five legions to the sect, they become elders of the Hall of Steel Veins. That’s a status that surpasses the position of anyone in any of the other halls!

“If you can reach that level, you would be in one of the most powerful groups in the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! As long as you didn’t ever betray the sect, you could do almost anything you wanted!” Bai Lin didn’t offer any more detailed explanation than that. After making a few more vague statements, he turned and left.

Afterward, Bai Xiaochun thoughtfully walked back into his room. Then he pulled out his command medallion and checked how much battle credit was required to be promoted to major general, and gasped.

“That much...?”

He was left almost completely speechless. He had no idea how the other major generals had ever managed to get promoted; it took more than a hundred times as much battle credit as it took to get promoted to colonel. That basically implied that it would take a hundred battles such as the one he had just fought in to get that promotion.

“Well forget that, then,” he thought. “I’ll just stick with being a colonel.” Feeling a bit discouraged, he shook his head and put his command medallion away. Then he pulled out a Nascent Soul Pill, whereupon his eyes yet again began to shine.

“The great circle of Core Formation....” Trying to keep calm, he set up some restrictive spells around his residence, and then told Zhao Long and the others that he would be going into secluded meditation. By the time all his preparations were complete, it was deep into the night.

When everything was ready, he slowly put one of the Nascent Soul Pills into his mouth!

Instantly, he began to tremble, and his mind filled with rumbling sounds. Then, shocking energy of heaven and earth surged through him, converging in the location of his Gold Core.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0504 awe-chapter-505

RUMBLE!

The boundless power of the Nascent Soul Pill slammed into him like an enraged wave, pouring into his Gold Core and causing his qi passageways to thrum.

His Gold Core, which was filled with a Heaven-Dao aura and nine spiritual seas, rumbled as the spiritual power of heaven and earth crashed into it, causing his cultivation base aura to immediately begin to rise.

Before, he had been in the late Gold Core stage, and very close to the great circle. The frigid qi within him had already reached the eighty percent level, and once he reached the one hundred percent level, he would achieve the breakthrough he sought.

As the energy of heaven and earth filled his Gold Core and its nine spiritual seas, he unleashed his Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, causing frigid qi to pulse out rapidly!

That wasn’t ordinary frigid qi, it was of the Frigid Master level!

Once he entered the great circle; his frigid qi would also break through to the Frigid Paragon level!!

As a Frigid Paragon, he would be able to freeze portions of Heavenspan River water. Furthermore, when combined with his other extraordinary abilities and powers, he would be able to freeze anyone in the Core Formation stage in place, and even kill them with a mere thought.

The aura of a Frigid Paragon could even cause major problems for Nascent Soul experts!

After his breakthrough into the great circle, the power of his Heaven-Dao Gold Core would be able to unleash its true potential. It was the most powerful type of Gold Core, the type which could shake the Nascent Soul stage!

Before, he had only been able to fight the Nascent Soul tribal chief by relying on Godly Vestige Pills and his incredible fleshly body strength. But once he stepped into the great circle, then even if he faced ordinary soul cultivators with divine abilities of the Nascent Soul stage, he would definitely be able to fight them toe to toe!

“The great circle of the Gold Core stage....” Such thoughts filled Bai with anticipation, as well as excitement. He had been waiting for this day for a long time, and therefore, he calmed his thoughts and focused on the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, sending pulses of frigid qi out of his body.

Frigid qi filled the building, instantly freezing everything over. In fact, from the outside, the building almost looked like an enormous ice cube!

As the cracking sounds rang out, Zhao Long and the others who were standing guard looked on in shock. Moments later, even some of the nearby pill furnaces were frozen just like the building.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had warned them ahead of time of what to expect, and they were some distance away. Were they not, they very well could have been in danger of being frozen in place.

“What technique does our exalted colonel cultivate!?”

“That... that frigid qi is so strong! It’s horrifying!!”

Zhao Long and Liu Li exchanged glances, as did everyone else. Even as they looked on, frigid qi filled more than half of the Armory!

Everywhere it went became a world of frozen ice!

Thankfully, during the course of Bai Xiaochun’s rise to prominence, the other grandmasters had all moved away. If they hadn’t, they would also have been frozen in place in their residences.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the entire Armory was frozen. It looked like an ice mountain that astonished not only Zhao Long and the others in the regiment, but also the other Skin Flayers in the area.

There were even major generals with Nascent Soul cultivation bases who were astonished, and as for Bai Lin, he personally flew over to see what was happening. After looking down at the Armory, his eyes began to shine with a strange light.

“If he’d possessed frigid qi of this level before, he would have been able to fight his way back to safety much more easily than he did.” Eyes sparkling with approval, he quickly issued orders for more Skin Flayers to come and stand guard as Dharma protectors.

The last to take note was the deva Chen Hetian. A beam of light shot out from the enormous eye to shine upon the Armory, which closely examined the situation before retracting a moment later.

“This seems to be some new transformation of frigid qi....” Chen Hetian murmured thoughtfully.

Time passed. Bai Xiaochun's session of secluded meditation lasted for several months, during which time fighting resumed outside the Great Wall, but little more than small-scale skirmishes. Nothing like the fighting earlier that year occurred.

Eventually, his months of cultivation led to a crucial moment. The energy of heaven and earth provided by the Nascent Soul Pill had converged in his Gold Core, causing his spiritual seas to vibrate as frigid qi completely froze his Gold Core!

From the look of it, his core was transforming into an Ice Core!

By this point, the Gold Core was more than ninety percent iced up, and pulsed with a freezing aura that left Bai Xiaochun motionless and seemingly frozen.

Another three days passed. That evening, when the final bit of the Gold Core came to be covered with ice, Bai Xiaochun's Gold Core truly had transformed into an Ice Core!

Rumbling sounds echoed out in his mind as his eyes snapped open. At the same time, boundless streams of energy erupted out from inside of him.

Cultivation base breakthrough!

No longer was he in the late Gold Core stage, he was now in the great circle!

“It worked!” he shouted, his eyes gleaming with strange light. As of this moment, he could sense that the golden Ice Core inside of him contained frigid qi that vastly surpassed anything from before. Furthermore, as that qi flowed through him, it didn’t harm in in the least.

He slowly extended his right hand, causing a stream of frigid qi to emerge from his fingertip. Instantly, the layers of ice around him began to tremble, as though an incredible pressure had suddenly descended onto the existing ice, a pressure from the emperor of all freezing things!

Instantly, more ice began to build up in the armory, causing all of the cultivators who had been standing guard to back up to avoid it.

“Frigid Paragon...?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, his expression the same as ever as he looked thoughtfully at his fingertip. For some reason, it felt as if some unexplainable transformation was occurring to the Ice Core inside of him.

It was almost as if something were growing inside....

A thoughtful expression appeared on his face. Although he couldn’t be sure if something really was inside of the Ice Core, he could definitely sense some familiar fluctuations, and was certain that if he made another breakthrough, the results would be astonishing!

“It almost seems like control power...?” he murmured.

“Wait, I get it. Since I cultivate the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, and have just made a major breakthrough, then I most likely have Will growing inside of the Ice Core!”

Bai Xiaochun already had his own speculations and understanding regarding the so-called Will. After a bit of time, he suppressed his curiosity; the answer would come when his Willpower was eventually brought out into the world. Then he would know for sure.

“My cultivation base is now in the great circle of the Gold Core stage. Next is my Undying Live Forever Technique....” The strength of the Nascent Soul Pill had already pushed him into the great circle, but there was still a bit of power left, which he could transform into life force.

“These Nascent Soul Pills really live up to their reputation. What a pity I don’t have the medicine formula. Of course, based on what I can tell, main ingredient is almost certainly immortal birthing grass!”

Immortal birthing grass was a near-extinct type of medicinal plant whose primary function was to provide life force power. In the legends, that type of life force could be used to become an immortal. Of course, that wasn’t true at all, and yet, it went to show how valuable immortal birthing grass was.

“From what I can tell, as long as I prevent the Nascent Soul Pill from taking my core and forming a Nascent Soul, then I can absorb the life force with my Undying Live Forever Technique, and make a huge advancement!

“The third level of the Undying Codex is the Undying Tendons. I've already cultivated it in both arms and both legs, and am lacking only in the torso and head. The requirements for the torso are significant....” After a moment of thought, he looked at the second Nascent Soul Pill, gritted his teeth, and put it in his mouth!

Anyone on the outside who saw him consume a second Nascent Soul Pill would have been completely flabbergasted. For one thing, Nascent Soul Pills were incredibly valuable, and furthermore, few people would ever need to consume more than one to make their breakthrough.

As soon as he consumed the second pill, the energy of heaven and earth erupted out into his qi passageways. Almost immediately, it began to head toward his Ice Core, where normally speaking, it would shatter the core and begin to form a Nascent Soul!

However, as soon as the energy began to speed toward the Ice Core, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he unleashed his Undying Live Forever Technique. Rumbling sounds could be heard as a huge vortex formed in his torso, and a shocking gravitational force sprang into being. In the blink of an eye, all of the energy of heaven and earth veered off course and began to pour into that vortex.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0505 awe-chapter-506

The Undying Live Forever Technique could be cultivated with incredible rapidity as long as enough life force was available. Bai Xiaochun had learned that many years ago.

Also, he had come to understand that cultivating it required a huge, almost preposterous expenditure of resources. There was no way the River-Defying Sect could sustain such a resource drainage, and even the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, one of the riversource sects, would be hard-pressed to do so.

And as of this moment, he had only reached the third level of the Undying Codex, the Undying Tendons. Later, he would need to work on the Undying Bones and Undying Blood, and could scarcely imagine what level of life force would be required for that.

“I can’t worry about all of that!” he thought, his eyes shining with determination as the vortex in his torso sucked in the life force from the Nascent Soul Pill. Almost immediately, his body began to radiate intense heat that began to melt the surrounding ice, and caused his blood to seethe as it surged through his veins.

As the heat filled him, he could clearly sense his qi passageways being reformed. As they were, black light filled him, the representation of powerful fleshly body power flowing through his body.

As it connected to the power in his four limbs, something like a restrictive spell began to spread out to surround him!

Time passed, although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be sure how much. Suddenly, his eyes opened to find that his entire body with the exception of his head was radiating a black light that was painful to look at. Eyes shining, he cast his senses throughout his body, and could immediately tell that his fleshly body power had increased far beyond its previous level.

However, that was not the most shocking aspect to the change. He could also sense that his body was much lighter. Or at least, that was what it felt like. As of this moment, he was quite sure that he could move so quickly that he could pierce through the air.

Curious, Bai Xiaochun was struck with the desire to test out his theory. However, he suppressed that desire and decided to examine himself a bit further. Suddenly, he gasped.

“This....” To his delight, he realized that he was just on the verge of making contact with the next shackle of mortality!

That feeling brightened his spirits immediately. From what he could tell, all it would take would be one more bit of advancement to spread his Undying Live Forever Technique to his head. Unfortunately, the life force from the Nascent Soul Pill was already fading away.

“What a pity,” he thought sadly. However, he was still excited. “I'm in the great circle of the Gold Core stage, and made a big breakthrough with my Undying Live Forever Technique. As of this point, not a single ordinary Core Formation cultivator would ever dare to provoke me!”

Laughing heartily, he rose to his feet. No longer suppressing his desire to pierce through the air, he took a step forward.

When he did, the layers of ice in front of him exploded, and Bai Xiaochun vanished!

As that happened, the other layers of ice in the area cracked and shattered, and in the blink of an eye, the building was revealed. The effects quickly spread out into the courtyard, and within the space of a few breaths of time, to the entire Armory!

Cracking sounds filled the air, causing the Skin Flayers to look around in surprise. Zhao Long and the others from the regiment looked on in shock as the masses of ice, and the mountain that had been the residence, all collapsed!

Everything in the Armory, from buildings to pill furnaces, all shattered as they transformed into a blast of wind that spread out in all directions.

Then, countless gasps rang out as people realized that Bai Xiaochun was nowhere to be seen.

“The grandmaster is missing?!”

“W-what’s... what’s going on!?” Zhao Long, Liu Li, and others from the regiment rushed over to the collapsed residence, and sure enough, Bai Xiaochun was gone.

As they began to search for him, something happened on the battlefield outside the Great Wall. Of course, there was no fighting going on at the moment, although the landscape was shattered and there were corpses everywhere. That was how the area outside the Great Wall usually looked, like a scene from the underworld.

Occasionally, various Wildlands animals that enjoyed feasting on carrion could be seen munching on severed limbs and crunching on other parts of the corpses.

Suddenly, ripples spread out into the air, after which a black glow appeared, which seemed to take the shape of a magical symbol.

The carrion-eating animals were startled, and many shot off in the opposite direction, not daring to get close to the black glow. At the same time, the cultivators on duty atop the Great Wall also noticed what was happening. Some of the magical canons even began to warm up, as if they were about to unleash attacks.

The ripples outside of the wall eventually formed into the shape of a bubble, which popped, after which a figure staggered out. Killing intent appeared in the eyes of the cultivators on the wall, and they were about to attack when suddenly, some of them began to call out in surprise.

“Grandmaster Bai!!”

“It’s Bai Xiaochun!!” Gasps could be heard as the cultivators realized who it was they were looking at, and yet were unable to reconcile his sudden appearance on the battlefield.

The person down there was definitely none other than Bai Xiaochun!

At first, he glanced around in confusion. When he finally realized where he was, his scalp began to prickle in fear.

“What am I doing here?!” Instantly, his anxiety mounted as he thought about what would happen if a group of soul cultivators suddenly showed up. Without any hesitation, he began to speed back toward the Great Wall.

“Let me in!” he cried as he flew along. Seeing that the cultivators on the Great Wall were hesitating, he quickly pulled out his identity medallion to prove who he was. With that, he passed through the shield and landed on the wall itself.

The cultivators still seemed a bit suspicious though, and began to ask some questions.

“Grandmaster Bai, what... what were you doing out there?”

“We didn’t see anyone go out beyond the wall. You’re supposed to get permission from a general before doing that!”

“Um, an accident, that’s all,” Bai Xiaochun said, clearing his throat. “Just a little accident.” Now that he was back inside the protection of the Great Wall, his heart began to calm down. Earlier, he had been attempting to test out his ability to pierce through the air, and hadn’t been expecting to suddenly step into a void of darkness.

Within that void, he felt like his body was collapsing, and, terrified, had struggled to emerge. When he did, he was dropped onto the battlefield outside of the Great Wall.

The mere thought of what had just occurred left his heart pounding with residual terror. After offering some more vague explanations, he hurried back to the city.

“Way too dangerous,” he thought. “I definitely can't take risks like that anymore....” Despite his lingering fear, though, he had to admit that what he had just done was extraordinary. He had actually pierced through the Great Wall and its spell formation shield with something almost like a minor teleportation.

“Or maybe that’s not it.... After all, outside of battle situations, the huge eye will prevent cultivators from the five legions from leaving the shield without orders. And of course, they can’t get back in without an identity medallion.

“And yet, I definitely managed to get out. Why?” He blinked a few times, and after a moment, couldn’t help but feel that what he had done just now felt like a strange manifestation of his Undying Tendons.

“Don’t tell me it’s the Undying Hex? Maybe it can affect or even bypass other restrictive spells?” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun considered doing some more tests. However, the sensation of almost being ripped apart in that void was something he couldn’t stop thinking about.

“No, it's too dangerous. If I want to do some more tests, I’ll have to wait until my Undying Tendons are complete, and I’ve broken through the next shackle.” Shaking his head, he finally got back to the Armory. That was when Zhao Long and the rest of the regiment finally found him. Zhao Long immediately breathed a sigh of relief.

The members of his regiment felt more than ever that Bai Xiaochun was a mysterious and enigmatic figure, and were shocked that he had been able to vanish despite all of them being present to stand guard.

“Congratulations on your breakthrough, Grandmaster!”

“Grandmaster, do you want us to start rebuilding things?”

As of this point, the Armory was uninhabitable, but as a colonel in the Skin Flayers, he had his own command center. Therefore, he simply waved his hand and said, “We’re done with this place for now. Let’s go to my command center!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0506 awe-chapter-507

Great Wall City was divided up into east, west, south, north, and central districts, one for each of the five legions.

The Skin Flayers occupied the east district, which was further divided up into ten garrisons, one for each of the major generals. The major generals were all Nascent Soul experts, people who had climbed mountains of corpses and swam through seas of blood to get to their current position. Their murderous auras and battle prowess vastly exceeded those of others in their same cultivation level.

Without illustrious service performed for the army, and also powerful backers, it was virtually impossible to become a major general!

As for the garrisons, they were divided into ten command centers, which belonged to the ten colonels who led them. As for the lieutenants and captains, they occupied locations within the command centers of the colonels.

Bai Xiaochun’s command center was in the garrison belonging to Major General Zhou Xingjun of the 3rd Corps, right next to Li Hongming’s command center. After Bai Xiaochun was promoted to colonel, Major General Zhou Xingjun had almost immediately arranged for troops to be assigned to him.

Clearly, the army cared a lot about Bai Xiaochun, because all of those cultivators came from the group of 10,000 that he had personally rescued off of the battlefield. Originally, they had been members of other parts of the army, but had been specifically reassigned by General Bai Lin.

The entire group of cultivators felt incredible gratitude toward Bai Xiaochun, and had personally witnessed his ferocity and madness in the heat of battle. As such, they were fully convinced of his abilities, and were very excited to serve in his regiment.

As Bai Xiaochun was making his way over to the command center, some of the cultivators of the regiment were drilling on the parade ground, practicing the use of various divine abilities, their faces expressionless. Others were sparring amongst themselves. Although everyone appeared to be completely ferocious, they all maintained careful control at all times.

The majority sat crosslegged, meditating in silence. The entire command center seemed filled with a very somber air, and a weighty pressure that would make any outsider hesitant to enter it.

The place had been like this ever since Bai Xiaochun was promoted to colonel, and in fact, the troops under the command of the other colonels all trembled in fear when they passed by it.

Suddenly, a beam of light appeared in the sky which shot down toward the command center. Immediately, all the soldiers inside looked up with cold eyes.

Within the beam of light was a middle-aged man with a somber expression and pulsing veins of steel. “The exalted colonel is coming!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the cultivators in the command center trembled with excitement.

Immediately, the captains began to shout out orders. “Get into formation!”

Soon, the entire place was buzzing.

When Bai Xiaochun finally arrived, he saw many familiar faces lined up outside the command center. As soon as the group caught sight of him, they stepped forward a pace and then shouted out in a mighty voice, “Greetings, Colonel!”

Their words echoed like thunder to fill the entire 3rd Corps. As for Li Hongming and the other colonels, they were shaken, and quite a few of them rushed out of their own command centers to see what was happening.

What they saw was the assembled cultivators of Bai Xiaochun’s regiment, pulsing with tenacity, as if their very bones were filled with the desire to do battle. It was as if all Bai Xiaochun had to do was say the word, and they would raze any area to the ground in a blaze of destruction!

Li Hongming and the other colonels were deeply shaken.

“Valiant troops and a gallant officer!!”

“Not only are they grateful to Bai Xiaochun, but they also personally witnessed his veins of steel and vicious fighting. Therefore, they truly respect and admire him. Because of their zealous devotion to him, until the day comes that they pay back the kindness he has shown, they might as well be his personal army!!”

This was Bai Xiaochun first time visiting his command center and seeing all the cultivators he recognized from that fateful battle. Now that he could sense how heroic and dauntless they were, it got his own blood pumping a bit faster. All of a sudden, he found himself thinking about how he had faced countless dangers that day during the war.

After a long moment, he took a breath as a feeling of profound emotion filled him. After all, he knew that, while he had saved them, they had also saved him!

The looks of reverence and awe with which they gazed at him caused his heart to tremble. Without any hesitation, he waved his hand toward the command center and said, “Come on men, let’s drink and eat together! What battle credit we earn, we spend together, and when we have to flee for our lives, we do it shoulder to shoulder!”

Bai Xiaochun felt that his words were particularly domineering, and when the cultivators under his command heard them, they exchanged amused glances, then clasped hands and shouted, “Sir, yes sir!”

As their voices resonated through the area, Li Hongming and the other colonels exchanged odd glances. They had seen quite a few commanding officers give speeches to encourage their troops, but had never heard anyone say things as directly as Bai Xiaochun had.

Some distance away in the Skin Flayers’ district was an enormous building that looked like a coffin, within which Bai Lin stood looking in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, shaking his head and smiling.

Ten armor-clad individuals stood near him, most of them middle-aged, but some older. Moments ago, the group had been discussing business relating to the Skin Flayers, but after the scene which had just played out, they had sent their divine sense over to observe, and now, all of them seemed to be reminiscing about the past.

“This Bai Xiaochun sure is candid,” Bai Lin said with a chuckle. “I can’t believe he just said that they would flee from battle shoulder to shoulder.” He turned to look at one of the group of ten, an old man with white hair. “Brother Zhou, Bai Xiaochun is very important to the Skin Flayers. Please make sure to take special care of him.”

The ten men surrounding Bai Lin were none other than the ten major generals of the Skin Flayers. As for the white-haired old man, he was Bai Xiaochun’s commanding officer, Major General Zhou Xingjun of the 3rd Corps. Upon hearing Bai Lin’s words, he smiled and nodded his head.

“Don't worry, General. I’ll make sure to keep Grandmaster Bai safe and sound.”

Bai Lin nodded in response, then looked away from the scene outside and resumed his discussion with the major generals.

Meanwhile, the members of Bai Xiaochun’s regiment clustered around him as he headed into the command center. Once inside, he looked around at what was to be his new residence. As for Zhao Long and his original squad, they were now Bai Xiaochun’s personal guard, and they quickly made strict rules regarding who was allowed into the command center. Without express orders, no one from outside the regiment could gain entrance.

After all, not only was Bai Xiaochun a colonel, but he was also on the Wildlands Execution List, and in the top 10 at that. The reward on his head was a deva beast soul, something that would be lucrative to Wildlanders and cultivators alike....

In fact, in the past, there had been situations in which people on the Execution List were killed by cultivators, not Wildlanders.

Before long, half a year had gone by.

By now, Bai Xiaochun had been serving at the Great Wall for two years. After his promotion to colonel, fighting went on as usual beyond the wall, but they were all skirmishes that didn’t come close to the scale of the huge battle the year before.

Bai Xiaochun was now very familiar with life in Great Wall City, and had taken up a new hobby. Every few days, he would don his colonel’s armor and strut out of his command center, surrounded by large numbers of his men, to stroll through the city.

He very much enjoyed the looks of awe and envy that people cast in his direction when he appeared in public. In fact, it was something he would never grow tired of.

At first, Zhao Long and his original squad found this very odd, as did the other cultivators in the regiment. However, they gradually grew used to it, and realized that this was just Bai Xiaochun’s personality. Although it was a bit embarrassing, it gradually became nothing out of the ordinary.

However, Bai Xiaochun continued to do it so often that he appeared to be neglecting his day-to-day duties. It reached the point where Bai Lin caught wind of it. Annoyed, he made some special arrangements. The next day, when Bai Xiaochun led his regiment out of the command center to enjoy the gazes of the other cultivators in the army, he had just begun to savor the buzz of conversation around him when all of a sudden, a group of several thousand cultivators appeared, all of them wearing suits of armor. As they proceeded along, they cleared a 300-meter path through the crowds in front of them.

Not even Bai Xiaochun was exempt, and was forced off to the side.

“What are you people doing?!” he complained.

Without any hesitation, the cultivator in question flashed a command medallion which was emblazoned with the surname *Nian*, as well as the sigil of the Skin Flayers! “Major General Nian Herong is coming through. Back up, all of you!”

Within the five legions, the only people who had command medallions with their surnames on them were the major generals!

As soon as the command medallion appeared, the cultivator didn’t need to say anything else. With the wave of his hand, the thousands of cultivators under his command began to drive Bai Xiaochun and the others backward. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too happy about that, but there was little he could do about. All he could do was watch as the nearly 10,000 cultivators cleared a path through the area. Moments later, a dazzling sight appeared not too far off in the distance. It was an old man in a crimson suit of armor, flanked by ten colonels, all of whom had respectful expression on their faces.

Everyone who had been cleared out of the 300-meter path began to cheer and cry out fervently, in a way that vastly surpassed how they had reacted when they saw Bai Xiaochun. The drone of their enthusiasm instantly bore deep into Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

“It’s a major general!”

“Heavens! You hardly ever see the major generals walking around....”

“The major generals of Great Wall City can shake all creation! They're the kind of people who cause the lands to tremble wherever they go!”

Bai Xiaochun could merely gape in astonishment at the ostentatious and domineering scene which was playing out in front of him. At the same time, he felt a bit down-hearted.

“What’s so amazing about him?” he thought. “He’s just a major general, right...?” Then he gritted his teeth.

“I have to become a major general!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0507 awe-chapter-508

Bai Xiaochun had left in the highest of spirits, and came back feeling like he was at the bottom of the barrel. After returning to his command center, he thought back to the sight of the major general's procession, and felt very irritated.

“Major general....” he thought, gritting his teeth. Then he considered how the major general had walked along with an escort of ten colonels, while he himself was only a colonel.

“I can't settle for this. I have to become a major general!” With that, his eyes began to shine with determination. Over the course of the past half year, he had spent almost no time on cultivation, nor had he done any pill concocting. Most of his time had been spent enjoying the perks of being a colonel. However, as of this moment, he had received a sharp reminder that being a colonel was not the end of the line for him.

Now that the idea of being a major general was stirring in his mind, he thought back to how Bai Lin had encouraged him to work hard to get promoted.

“If I retire as a major general,” he murmured, “then when I get back to the sect, I'll be an elder in the Hall of Steel Veins....” Realizing that he didn't have all of the information he needed, he decided to go out and make some inquiries.

The truth was that such matters were not secret within the five legions, and were in fact quite well-known. It only took a bit of asking around for Bai Xiaochun to get all of the information he was looking for. Elders in the Hall of Steel

Veins had a position far above ordinary elders. In fact, they were on a level that put them only slightly below the sect leader, a fact which left Bai Xiaochun gasping and deeply moved.

“How is that even possible!? This is the sect leader of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect we’re talking about! He’s only in the Nascent Soul stage, but he’s still in a very high position. And elders in the Hall of Steel Veins are just below that...?” Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe it at first, but after further enquiries, he came to understand why it was the case.

“The five legions operate beyond the control of the sect leader. Even the deva stationed at the Great Wall is only here to oversee things. The only person who directly controls the five legions is the demigod patriarch!

“The reason the Hall of Steel Veins is so powerful is because it only follows his orders!” Bai Xiaochun was both flabbergasted and also palpitating with eagerness.

If he could somehow manage to become a major general, then when his commission was up and he went back to the sect, he could get a set of five elements deva beast souls and step into the Nascent Soul stage. Furthermore, he could also become an elder in the Hall of Steel Veins!

When that happened, he would have a very high position, higher than ordinary elders in the sect. Not only would that be a big help to the River-Defying Sect, but it would also be immensely beneficial on a personal level.

The mere idea left his heart burning with anticipation, to the point where his eyes sparkled with the light of countless stars.

“I absolutely have to become a major general!” he said, slapping his thigh.

Now that he had set his goal, though, it immediately led to new anxiety. After all, he had already calculated how much battle credit it would take to become a major general, which was more than a hundred times the amount he had earned in that huge battle.

In the better part of a year which had passed since then, no major battles had even occurred.

More than a month went by, and he only got more depressed. Eventually, he climbed to the top of the great wall and looked out toward the Wildlands. Unfortunately, all he could do was wish that their huge army would come back.

“Why aren’t they attacking...?” he said as he stood there sighing. “Dammit! I don’t have much time to work with, only seven or eight more years. What am I supposed to do…?

“I guess the savages and soul cultivators are just too scared, and don’t dare to come over and fight!”

The other cultivators noticed how he was acting, and heard his constant sighing. Soon, they began to exchanged awkward glances.

As far as they were concerned, it was a good thing that the Wildlands savages hadn’t attacked in full force. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem to think so, which they found very strange.

Of course, the sight of him acting in such a way led some of them sigh inwardly and muse, “Why aren’t they attacking? Isn’t it because of you? If it weren’t for you and your special methods, they would be doing things the way they usually did, and attacking several times per month."

Bai Xiaochun waited a bit longer, and yet there was no change. Every day that went by, he continued to try to think of a solution to the problem, until his eyes were bloodshot. Finally, he decided that he had to do something to speed things up.

"Fine, if the savages insist on being so uncooperative, then I'll just have to think of a new way to earn battle credit! I absolutely have to become a major general!" With that, he headed toward the huge pagoda in the middle of the city.

From what he remembered last time he had gone to exchange battle credit, the five legions had an Execution List just like the Wildlands did. Taking the heads of some of the people on that list came with hefty rewards.

"Now that I'm a colonel, I have lots of powerful experts under my command. I refuse to believe that I can't earn some battle credit with their help!" It didn't take Bai Xiaochun very long to reach the central district, and the base of the tower, where quite a group of cultivators was gathered. When they caught sight of him, they gave him solemn nods of greeting.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the eye at the top of the tower, then pulled out his identity medallion and sent some spiritual sense into it to begin browsing the Execution List. The first thing that jumped out to him was the first name on the list.

As soon as he saw it, his eyes went wide.

"Mistress Red-Dust!"

Mistress Red-Dust’s information was clearly listed there in first place on the list. She had a Deva Realm cultivation base, and was a ruthless fighter who was cold and cruel to the bone. In fact, there was even a reminder that, because she was a deva, it was best to avoid her at all costs.

The number of cultivators she had killed since she made her debut was shocking to behold, including many Nascent Soul cultivators.

Most shocking of all was that she hadn’t even been practicing cultivation for 200 years!

To become a deva so quickly seemed almost impossible to Bai Xiaochun, especially considering how impoverished the Wildlands were. There was no energy of heaven and earth there, only soul power. And yet, despite being in those conditions, this Mistress Red-Dust had managed to set a heaven-defying pace in her cultivation.

“I remember Mistress Red-Dust....” Bai Xiaochun murmured. As soon as he focused on her name, a picture appeared in his mind. It depicted a young woman, more beautiful than Chen Manyao, wearing red garments that accentuated her good looks, and yet made her seem very dangerous. Her murderous aura was shocking to the extreme, even though it was just a picture.

Bai Xiaochun remembered seeing her in the flesh during the battle outside the Great Wall. She had been in the middle of fighting Chen Hetian when she had actually made a move to try to kill Bai Xiaochun....

Of course, anyone who looked at Mistress Red-Dust’s name on the list would see the same image Bai Xiaochun was seeing.

She was a spectacular figure, who had a reward on her head so high that it was astonishing to behold. Anyone who killed her would be promoted to general!

If there were no generals who needed to be replaced, then a new legion would be created! That was a reward that surpassed even Bai Xiaochun’s ideal of becoming a major general. As soon as he saw that reward, his eyes burned with passion and envy. However, it also caused him to purse his lips.

“So stupid! The only person who could take that shrew out is a deva, and why would a deva want to be a general in the army?” Bai Xiaochun shook his head. If he was good enough to take out a deva, then he wouldn’t be sitting around at the Great Wall. He would definitely be back in the River-Defying Sect already. Besides, when it came to devas, they weren’t the type of people he would ever be willing to offend.

Sighing, he went on to look at the second name on the list, which also belonged to a deva, who went by the Daoist name Wakening Insects. The number of merit points offered up for his death was shocking, to say the least.

Astonished, Bai Xiaochun continued to go down the list. Soon, he began to frown as he realized that all the names in the top 30 were those of Nascent Soul stage necromancers. Although some of the names at the bottom of the list were Core Formation cultivators, the battle credit reward for them wasn’t very high. After a few calculations, Bai Xiaochun found that he would have to kill everyone from 30th place all the way down into the 200’s to earn enough battle credit to become a major general.

“What am I supposed to do, then...?” he thought, sighing. Obviously, he had to give up on the idea of killing people on the Execution List. It was simply too dangerous of an undertaking. However, the thought of the honor, glory, and benefits that came with being a major general were something he just couldn’t give up on. There had to be a way to get more battle credit.

“What a headache!” he thought. “How am I supposed to pull something like this off when the only thing I’m good at is concocting pills?

“Wait a second. That’s not right. There *is* something I'm good at!” Stopping in place, he thought back to his time hanging out with Zhao Tianjiao, and how he had called himself a love saint. Suddenly, his heart began to pound.

Looking back at the Execution List, he blinked a few times, feeling a bit torn.

“Don’t tell me that in order to become a major general, I’m going to have to rely on my sex appeal to seduce Mistress Red-Dust...?” The mere thought left him grieving in indignation. That was especially true considering that she was so much older than him. Although she was pretty, who knew what kind of eccentricities she had? The more he thought about it, the more that plan seemed like a huge sacrifice.

“Not worth it...” he thought, feeling more crestfallen than ever. With that, he abandoned the idea.

--

Quick note about Mistress Red-Dust’s name. First of all, this is a Daoist name, not her real name. That fact is not confirmed until later in the novel, but it seems pretty obvious from the get-go. It’s a hard name to pin down how to translate. There are different ways to interpret it, but I’m going with the way the term is used in Buddhist philosophy. The “red dust” is a metaphor referring to the world of mortals or human society. In terms of why she would have such a name, there is no explanation provided at this point, so you will have to contemplate that on your own.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0508 awe-chapter-509

“Could it be that the heavens are jealous of me, Bai Xiaochun? Have I been doomed to never become a major general?!” Feeling overwhelmed by sorrow, he clasped his hands behind his back and looked up into the sky. After a long moment, he sighed and turned to leave the pagoda.

However, in that very moment, one of the cultivators nearby opened his bag of holding and produced a collection of vengeful souls. Bags of holding couldn't be used to hold vengeful souls for long periods of time, and in fact, these souls were already starting to grow dim. As soon as they flew out into the open, a gravitational force sprang out from the huge eye.

In the briefest of moments, the souls were sucked up, which seemed to enliven the huge eye.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly stopped in place, his eyes growing wide. Clearly, after turning in all of the vengeful souls, the cultivator from just now had been given some battle credit. Instantly, Bai Xiaochun’s spirits lifted.

Eyes shining brightly, he slapped his thigh.

“Of course! How could I have forgotten? You can turn in souls to get battle credit.... In fact, as long as you keep turning in souls, your battle credit will continue to climb.”

However, only a moment after getting excited, he suddenly felt even more down than before. “That won't work either....” After all, there wasn’t very much fighting going on lately, which meant that there were very few souls on the battlefield. He was extremely adept at taking care of souls, but had nowhere to exercise his talents. Sighing, he trudged away.

After returning to his command center, he sat there in frustration, mulling the matter over from different angles. In the end, he could only think of one solution. If he wanted to get more souls, he would need to leave the Great Wall and go out into the Wildlands to search for them himself.

“No way, I can’t do that! It's too dangerous! There’s no way I’m going to openly court death.” Sighing, he gave up on the idea. No longer in the mood to go strolling about outside the command center, he decided to focus on cultivating his Undying Live Forever Technique.

The third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique was the Undying Tendons. All he had to do was cultivate that part of the technique using his head, and he would be finished. At the moment, he had plenty of medicinal plants that he could use to make medicinal pills, and yet, he knew that the head was different from the limbs and torso. Therefore, he went about his cultivation cautiously. After a bit of work, he was able to confirm that there was indeed some danger in cultivating the Undying Tendons in his head. Therefore, he pondered the matter for quite some time before proceeding.

Before long, half a year had gone by. In a few more months, Bai Xiaochun would reach the three-year-mark at the Great Wall. As the months passed, there were a few battles here and there. Every time a battle came along, Bai Xiaochun would get very excited. Although he wouldn’t personally participate, his subordinates would fight, and as a result, he would get some vengeful souls and battle credit.

However, he was still a very long way away from becoming a major general.

When he was only two months away from the three-year-mark, he was meditating in his command center, working on his Undying Live Forever Technique, when he realized that he was fifty percent finished with the Undying Tendons in his head. However, it was at that point that he began to slow down with his cultivation. It was definitely dangerous to work on the Undying Tendons in the head, and he had almost fallen into deadly crises on multiple occasions.

One day, he suddenly realized that something was glowing red inside his bag of holding. Surprised, he opened his eyes from his meditation and looked down.

“What’s going on...?” he thought curiously. As soon as he opened his bag of holding, dazzling red light spilled out, light that was coming from his identity medallion.

“It's glowing?” he thought. This was the same medallion he had received upon debarking the huge ship years ago. He remembered being told to never lose it or allow it to be damaged, lest he be incapable of going into and out of the Great Wall. Furthermore, it was also his ticket back to the sect.

He had never forgotten those warnings. Afterward, he had even performed a few experiments, and had confirmed that the medallion was made in some fashion that made it impossible for him to affect it in any way.

Now, that very same identity medallion was shining with blinding red light. If that were all there were to the situation, it might not have been a big deal. But to Bai Xiaochun’s astonishment and anxiety, he found that the jade medallion was... emanating the fluctuations of imminent self-detonation.

“What’s happening?!” he thought, leaping to his feet, his face falling. Not daring to be hesitant, he cast some divine sense into the medallion, whereupon a message appeared in his mind.

“You have only two months until the deadline to complete your first mission. If there is no record of you leaving the Great Wall within that time, this jade medallion will self-destruct!”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and his eyes went wide. After sending more divine sense into the medallion to confirm that he had received the message correctly, he began to drip with sweat.

“Dammit! I knew I had to go on three missions during the ten-year trial, but this is the first time I've heard about having to do one within the first three years!” His anxiety immediately began to grow as he thought of the prospect of the medallion being destroyed, and being unable to return to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“This is blackmail!” he fumed. The truth was that he wasn’t the only one in this position. There were other chosen who hadn’t gone on any missions during their first three years, who were now similarly staring at their brightly-glowing identity medallions.

Clearly, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had prepared methods to deal with any lazy disciples who neglected to go on missions.

Wracked with anxiety, Bai Xiaochun flew out of his command center to find Bai Lin. Considering his current rank, he didn’t have to make any special requests to see the general, and was soon right in front of him.

“General, save me!” he cried piteously.

Bai Lin had been meditating, but as soon as he heard Bai Xiaochun's words, he opened his eyes. Before he could even ask about the situation, Bai Xiaochun held the glowing red medallion aloft and explained.

When he was done, he stood there staring at Bai Lin with wide eyes with a look that said, *I'm your subordinate, you* have *to help me*!

Most of Bai Lin's subordinates were lifetime devotees of the five legions, who had enlisted directly into the Hall of Steel Veins. As such, he wasn’t very familiar with the rules and regulations regarding the chosen who were out on trials by fire. Furthermore, were it not for the fact that Bai Xiaochun had put on such a spectacular performance when he had first arrived, Bai Lin would never have conscripted him.

“Alright, calm down!” Bai Lin said. Pulling out a jade slip, he sent out a few messages of inquiry. After receiving the information he needed, he slowly looked back up at Bai Xiaochun.

Nervous, Bai Xiaochun said, “General, I’m a colonel! It won’t really be a big deal if the medallion self-destructs… will it?”

“You are indeed a colonel in the Skin Flayers,” Bai Lin replied, “but you were conscripted. If you were a major general it might be a different story, but... you still have to follow the rules of the sect.

“I should have thought of this myself, but don’t worry, I’ll help you resolve the situation.” This was Bai Lin’s first time seeing Bai Xiaochun in such a state, so he smiled and immediately started to call upon his network of contacts to try to solve the problem.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Bai Lin was starting to transmit a large number of messages through his jade slip, and remembered how he had an important background, he started to calm down. However, after a bit of time passed, a frown appeared on Bai Lin’s face. Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, an unsightly expression could be seen on Bai Lin’s face. Putting away the jade slip, he hesitated for a moment and then said, “Hmph. Those people back at the sect are complete philistines. Not flexible at all. Bai Xiaochun, I can reduce your mission requirement from three to one. But you’ll still have to go out at least once. Take some time to think about it. After all, it’s only one mission, right?”

Bai Lin was actually feeling a bit embarrassed. He really had tried to help Bai Xiaochun out, but had made so many special requests of the sect in recent years that it made things difficult. As for the elder in charge of the missions, he simply wouldn’t budge. Unfortunately, there was nothing more Bai Lin could do other than offer Bai Xiaochun a bit of comfort.

Bai Xiaochun felt like crying, but could tell that Bai Lin had already done all he could by reducing the mission requirement down to one.

“General, I'm in the top 10 of the Wildlands Execution List! The people out there hate me to death! They’ll kill me as soon as they see me. I... I don’t dare to go beyond the wall!”

Bai Lin cleared his throat. “Don’t worry. Look, just put on a disguise! Go out, finish a mission, and get back as soon as possible. Nobody will even notice that you left. Only the two of us will be in on the secret.

“Besides, although the sect won’t budge on the mission issue, there are other ways I can help. For example, the rule says you have to go on a mission, which means that Great Wall missions also count. Since you’re a colonel, I hereby give you the authority to post your own missions. Just make a mission for yourself, and go accomplish it. Simple. All you have to do is make sure that it’s a mission suitable for the Gold Core stage. After all, the true spirit in the eye of the pagoda is responsible for declaring missions officially complete.”

“I can post my own missions... and go on one of those....” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up. Laughing heartily, he clasped hands in salute and then left.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0509 awe-chapter-510

“At one’s darkest hour, a glimmer of hope always appears!” Bai Xiaochun hurried back excitedly to his command center, his mind abuzz with ideas. As soon as he got back, he had Zhao Long bring him a map of the area outside the Great Wall.

After studying the map for a while, he pointed at a little valley barely five kilometers away.

“That's the place!”

Looking a bit surprised, Zhao Long peered down at the valley, which seemed ordinary in every aspect, and was generally a place devoid of signs of life. In fact, he couldn’t think of any reason why Bai Xiaochun would be pointing it out.

“Colonel, what’s so special about that valley?” Zhao Long asked.

Waving his hand in a grand fashion, Bai Xiaochun replied, “According to the intelligence reports I have at my disposal, there’s an early Nascent Soul stage soulhorn deer that lives in that valley. Anyone who can kill that creature and turn in its soulhorn will receive a battle credit reward. Go post the mission immediately.”

“Huh?” Zhao Long said, confused. Soulhorn deer were native to the Wildlands. Not only were their horns valuable ingredients for medicines, but they could also be used as the primary component to make soulhorn bows. However, soulhorn deer usually gathered in locations where there were a lot of vengeful souls. Considering that the valley in question was only about five kilometers away from the Great Wall, there definitely weren’t any souls there, which mean that it would be impossible to find a soulhorn deer in the same location.

Besides, battles were constantly being fought near the Great Wall, so even if a soulhorn deer happened to end up in the valley, it would quickly flee. After all, soulhorn deer weren’t stupid, and definitely wouldn’t choose a dangerous place like the Great Wall to settle down.

Most importantly, early Nascent Soul stage soulhorn deer were almost never found outside of the depths of the Wildlands....

After a brief moment of confused hesitation, Zhao Long looked over at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Um... Colonel, are you sure there’s a soulhorn deer there? Also, major generals are the only ones who have the right to post missions. We--”

“Look, if I say there’s a soulhorn deer there, then there is. Just put the mission briefing together and send it to the general.” Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively.

Zhao Long smiled stiffly, clasped hands, and asked, “Very well, sir. How many battle credits is the reward?”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and then said, “Well, it’s a very dangerous mission that will be filled with countless dangers. The chances of making it back alive would be small. I guess the only option will be to post a handsome reward. Very well. Set it at 100,000,000 battle credits.”

Zhao Long’s jaw dropped, and he gasped loudly. However, it only took a moment before he realized what was going on, whereupon a strange look appeared in his eye.

“Oh right,” Bai Xiaochun said, giving Zhao Long a very serious look, “don’t forget to remind the general to let me know just before he posts the mission. We definitely can’t have anyone else snatching it up!”

Zhao Long gave another stiff smile, nodded, then hurried away. As he went along, he couldn’t help but envy Bai Xiaochun’s ability to embezzle so brazenly. Soon, he reached Bai Lin, where he reported in officially and then handed over the mission briefing.

When Bai Lin took the jade slip and looked at it closely, then saw that the reward was 100,000,000 battle credits, his eyes went wide and he almost threw the jade slip on the ground.

“This is highway robbery! If he wants battle credits, that’s fine, but he can’t be so obvious about it! A soulhorn deer in valley five kilometers away, and at the early Nascent Soul stage?! And then he has the nerve to put a reward of 100,000,000 battle credits!?” Bai Lin wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. However, considering that he hadn’t been able to convince the sect to exempt Bai Xiaochun from mission duty, he couldn’t simply refuse to post the mission. After a bit of thought, he reduced the reward from 100,000,000 to 1,000,000, then sent it to the pagoda in the center of the city.

Even a reward of 1,000,000 was still significant, and would be enough for an ordinary soldier to get a promotion to captain.

“The brat’s getting a lucky break this time.” Bai Lin posted the mission a bit begrudgingly. After all, since it was a Skin Flayers mission, which meant that the reward would come from the Skin Flayers’ coffers. Nonetheless, he posted the mission, sending a message to Bai Xiaochun right before it went public.

As soon as the mission appeared in the listings at the pagoda, it was noticed, causing quite a commotion to break out.

“A mission for 1,000,000 battle credits! Heavens! Quick, get it!”

“What... what mission is that? It’s in valley five kilometers away? An early Nascent Soul stage soulhorn deer? How... how is that even possible?!”

“I want that mission!” All of the cultivators who saw the mission instantly tried to do everything they could to be the ones to get their hands on it.

However, none of them were a match for Bai Xiaochun. He had been waiting for the mission to be posted, and had also received advanced notice from Bai Lin. Almost as soon as the mission showed up, he accepted it, and then swaggered away under the envious gazes of those around him.

“Trying to steal my mission, huh?” he thought. “I was the one who made the mission! Even if you got it, you still wouldn’t find a soulhorn deer in that valley!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he peeked into his bag of holding, where he happened to have some soulhorns that he had requested as ingredients for concocting Soul Convergence Pills. One of them was clearly from an early Nascent Soul stage soulhorn deer.

“All I have to do is go over to that valley with my identity medallion in hand, then come back and turn in the mission.” It was quite a stimulating feeling to be able to utilize one’s power and connections to be able to earn battle credits in such an open and above-board way.

However, despite feeling so pleased with how things were going, he was still very cautious about going outside of the Great Wall. After much thought, he decided that he definitely couldn't take any risks.

“Even though it’s only five kilometers away, I can’t just casually head over by myself. I definitely need to bring some people with me.” He was absolutely convinced that this would be the best course of action, although he wasn't sure if it made sense to bring his entire 1,000-man regiment along.

On the other hand, bringing too few people would be too dangerous. In the end, he gritted his teeth and murmured to himself, “I don’t care about how it looks. Safety is the priority. I'm bringing all 1,000 of them with me!” Having made his decision, he quickly passed down orders to his subordinates, making it clear that they weren’t to spread word of the matter.

None of them questioned Bai Xiaochun or what he was doing. He was their colonel, and had also saved all of their lives. Therefore, all Bai Xiaochun had to do was point in a direction, and they would fight with bloodthirsty ferocity!

It also helped that Bai Xiaochun had always treated them fairly. He had even spent his own battle credits to equip them with plenty of armor and magical items. He had also passed out a lot of medicinal pills that he himself had concocted. As a result, his regiment was better equipped and prepared for battle than most others in the legions.

After a few days of preparation, it came time to go out on the mission. That night, the moon wasn’t very bright, and the lands were blanketed in darkness. The regiment dressed in disguises to make their passage outside the Great Wall easier, and then prepared to leave.

Everyone in the regiment had been stationed at the Great Wall for years, and were very familiar with how soul cultivators operated. Furthermore, they were all acquainted with the lands bordering Great Wall City. By disguising themselves as soul cultivators, complete with a few vengeful souls on display, they would definitely be less noticeable on the outside.

The only way their disguises would be pierced would be if some extremely powerful expert came along, or if they were forced to use a divine ability that required spiritual power.

After all, there was little fundamental difference between ordinary cultivators and soul cultivators. The main distinction was that the former used spiritual energy, while the latter used soul power.

The thousand members of the regiment didn’t go out in battle formation. Rather, they scattered and headed out one by one. However, all it would take would be a single word from Bai Xiaochun, and they would all group back together.

After making all the arrangements for his subordinates, Bai Xiaochun nervously put on his own disguise, then gritted his teeth and went out beyond the wall.

Outside, he reached up to feel his face, and realized that he still didn’t feel at ease. Therefore, he patted his bag of holding to produce a large bucket of water, which was full to the brim with Heavenspan River water. Inside of that water was a semitransparent mask made from flesh, the very same mask he had acquired from imposter Nightcrypt. That mask could change one’s appearance and aura, and even the fluctuations of one’s life force.

“There are some mysterious things about this mask, but at the moment, I absolutely have to hide my appearance and aura.

“I need to seize the moment! Go to the valley, come back, and then everything will be over.

“Besides, it’s not like I'm going to run into some Wildlands army in a little valley five kilometers from the Great Wall. Things shouldn’t be too dangerous.”

With that, he took the mask out of the Heavenspan River water and put it onto his face. Instantly, his appearance changed. No longer was he a young man, but instead, a sallow-faced, middle-aged soul cultivator. Furthermore, his spiritual power fluctuations vanished, to be replaced by intense, rippling soul power.

As of this moment, he looked exactly like a soul cultivator!

It was only at this point that he finally started to feel comfortable, and began to speed across the lands under the darkness of night. The light of the waning moon made it just possible to see the shadows cast by the boulders that littered the landscape, as well as bones of the dead....

The occasional lonely soul could be seen floating through the air, and every once in a while, carrion-eating beasts would lift their heads to look around.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0510 awe-chapter-511

It was late in the night, and the dim moon cast a pale, fragmented light over the lands. Coupled with the patchy clouds, it made everything murky and difficult to see. The occasional cries of various beasts could be heard, along with the wails of lonely souls that drifted to and fro.

This was not Bai Xiaochun’s first time outside the Great Wall, but the last time, he had been in the middle of a battle, whereas this time, he was out alone, and that was terrifying. After all, despite being in the great circle of Core Formation, he was still a bit leery of ghosts and souls.

He wasn’t afraid of them as much as he had been in the past, mostly because of his years serving at the Great Wall, and his deeper understanding of the Wildlands.

Although he hadn’t seen everything there was to see in the world, he had seen enough that he didn't fear the specters of the dead like he had in the past.

As he sped along through the night, it was impossible not to notice the skeletons of savage giants sticking up from the soil. Sighing, he thought, “The whole reason I got into immortal cultivation to begin with was because I want to live forever. Who would ever have thought that my path would bring me to a place like this?”

Shaking his head, he proceeded along, contemplating how fate liked to drag people down all sorts of different paths, paths they might never have intended to walk.

Another moment passed, and he cleared his mind of such thoughts and focused on being careful. He even slowed down a bit. By this point, he was about three or four kilometers away from the Great Wall, and more and more souls were becoming visible. Although the amount of souls was nothing compared to the soul tide that would fill the area during battles, there were still enough of them that Bai Xiaochun had to be extra careful.

Most of the lone souls weren’t humanoid in shape, but were spheres of mist that pulsed with icy coldness. Occasionally, they would converge together into the form of beasts or vicious spirits that would then pounce on the carrion-eating animals in the area.

Some of the souls would burrow into the corpses lying on the ground, as if attempting to possess them. However, most of the corpses in the area were too old and stiff, making such efforts fruitless.

As Bai Xiaochun moved forward, he was careful to give any souls he saw a wide berth. It wasn’t that he couldn’t handle them in a fight, but rather, that there was no need to do so. There were too few of them, and they were too low quality for him to even care about. Besides, if a fight broke out, it could attract attention, and perhaps cause other problems. If there had been enough souls that it would be worth it to attack and collect them, he might have thought about it. But right now, it wouldn’t be worth it.

Eventually, when he was only about half a kilometer away from the little valley that was his destination, his eyes began to shine as he looked up ahead of him.

“That’s quite a large number of souls.” From what he could see, there were over a thousand random souls flying about, occasionally letting out shrill cries. Normally speaking, there wouldn't be so many souls in this area. However, because of Bai Xiaochun's Soul Convergence Pills, many of the souls in the attacking forces had fled and scattered, to gather in places like this.

"More than a thousand souls would be a good bit of battle credit." Starting to get a bit excited, he inched forward, then pulled out a Soul Convergence Pill, quickly disabled the explosion effect, and threw it forward with all his might. The pill became a bright beam of light that landed right in the middle of the flock of souls, where it shattered, unleashing a gravitational force that quickly sucked in all of the more than 1,000 souls.

Then Bai Xiaochun rushed over, grabbed the soul sphere and giddily tossed it into his bag of holding. After looking around to confirm that he hadn't attracted any unwanted attention, he proceeded toward the valley.

The moment he entered the valley, he realized that there were a few hundred souls inside, and his delight grew.

"Who would have thought that I would make a bit of extra profit on this little venture?" As of this moment, he was pleased with how lucky he had gotten, and how smoothly things were going.

After glancing around the valley one more time, he pulled out another Soul Convergence Pill, and was just preparing to throw it out when all of a sudden, his heart trembled. Eyes sparkling with vigilance, he turned to look over his shoulder.

Behind him, a cloud of red mist was billowing out of the ground. However, it didn't seem to see Bai Xiaochun, and flew right past him into the valley.

That red mist was a soul that, upon entering the valley, took the form of a vicious bird head, which then began to attack and consume the other souls in the valley.

“It's at the Nascent Soul level!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed to himself. As the soul in question attacked and consumed the other souls, its red color grew brighter, causing Bai Xiaochun to lick his lips.

Souls of that level weren’t as valuable as deva beast souls, but were still worth quite a bit of battle credit. However, Bai Xiaochun was still a bit hesitant.

“Logically speaking, that soul should have attacked me first. Why didn’t it? Maybe... it can't see me?” Something about the situation seemed very strange, so he carefully took a few steps forward into the valley. However, not a single soul in the valley even looked his way.

In fact, some of them even flew right past him as they attempted to flee the Nascent Soul-level soul.

“They really can’t see me?” he thought. Both surprised and emboldened, he hurried further into the valley and looked around at the souls flying everywhere, his eyes shining more brightly by the moment. Finally, he reached out with his hand, grabbed one of the passing souls and threw it into his bag of holding.

Not even the crimson Nascent Soul-level soul seemed to be paying attention to him, and was simply going around attacking other souls.

Before long, there were almost no souls left other than the crimson one, and by that point, Bai Xiaochun was fully convinced that the souls couldn't see him. Heart pounding, he reached up and felt his face to confirm that he was wearing his mask.

“Last time I was on the battlefield, the souls could definitely see me. But this time they can’t. It must be... because of this mask!” Then, oh so carefully, he reached up and took the mask off.

The instant it left his face, the crimson soul suddenly shivered and turned to stare straight at him. Then it opened its mouth, apparently preparing to scream and pounce on him.

However, before it could make a noise, Bai Xiaochun quickly put the mask back on. The crimson soul seemed surprised, but quickly closed its mouth and then began searching around the valley, apparently looking for traces of whoever it was it had just seen.

Seeing all this happen caused Bai Xiaochun’s excitement to grow.

“What a goldmine!! I can’t believe the mask can do this too! It's a good thing I didn’t get rid of it back then.” With that, he walked up to the confused crimson soul, and before it even realized what was happening, reached out with lightning-like speed, grabbed it, and threw it into his bag of holding.

“Got it! This mask is like a precious treasure for collecting souls. If I use it with my Soul Convergence Pills, I should be able to get enough battle credits to become a major general in no time!” The more he thought about the prospect, the more excited he got. He quickly walked the length of the valley to make sure that his mission could be counted as having been accomplished, then looked up to see that dawn was nearing. Walking out of the valley, he decided that since he was invisible to souls, and also had about a thousand subordinates shadowing him, that he was actually in a very safe position.

Unless a huge army of savages showed up all of a sudden, he wasn’t really in any danger at all.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he made a decision.

“It would be a big pity to go back right now. Since I’m outside the wall already, I might as well take the time to collect a few souls for battle credit.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0511 awe-chapter-512

Chapter 512: Bring It On! Who Dares To Make A Move!?

Having made his decision, Bai Xiaochun did his best to keep his excitement under control as he sped off into the distance. This time, instead of avoiding all of the random souls, he would walk right up to them and then grab them with the swish of a sleeve.

The entire time, not a single soul noticed him at all.

“Hahaha! Now *this* is how to get battle credit!” As he went along, he didn’t let a single soul escape.

His collection continued to increase, especially when he ran into larger groups of souls, which was when he would walk right into the middle of them and crush a Soul Convergence Pill in his hand. With a whoosh, all of the souls would then be sucked into his bag of holding.

“So sick! This mask is the key to dominating the Wildlands!” Over the course of the next four hours, he continued to move about to and fro picking up souls, until he had well over 10,000. Unfortunately, that was the best he could do without running into a truly large group of souls.

As for his subordinates who were shadowing him, ready to jump out and protect him at any time, many of them saw him going around collecting the souls, and were somewhat surprised, but took it in as a matter of course.

From their perspective, Bai Xiaochun was the bane of vengeful souls, and therefore, virtually nothing he did with regard to them would be very surprising.

Time passed. Eventually, the light of dawn was spreading out across the sky, and Bai Xiaochun was more than a hundred kilometers away from the Great Wall. By this point, he was almost completely beyond the area that could be considered the battlefield, and was truly in the Wildlands.

All sorts of strange rock formations and ferocious plants could be seen, as well as the occasional beast. He even saw a few savages.

At one point, Bai Xiaochun caught sight of a soul cultivator in the mountains off to the distance, chasing after a beast of some sort.

This soul cultivator didn't look much like the ones he had seen on the battlefield. He wore ordinary clothing, and wasn’t very handsome. Based on his aura, he seemed to be in the Core Formation stage, except that the soul power fluctuations coming off of him were not pure, but rather, heterogeneous...

A few years before, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t have known what to make of this soul cultivator. But as a colonel of the five legions, he had access to intelligence reports that gave him a much deeper understanding of the Wildlands.

The soul cultivators in the Wildlands were not united, and in fact grouped together in all sorts of different organizations. There were even some soul cultivators who didn’t belong to any organization, and were like rogue cultivators.

The most powerful forces in the Wildlands were gathered in metropolises called ‘cities of the kings’. There was even one city that bore the ‘imperial’ designation. The forces who occupied such cities were the ones who fielded the huge armies, and were the home of the type of soul cultivators he had seen before on the field of battle.

However, people like that were actually the minority. Most soul cultivators were scattered, and did not belong to powerful organizations. Most of the time, they came from small groups that controlled tiny bits of territory in random places. As for the soul cultivator with the heterogenous soul power Bai Xiaochun was looking at now, he was obviously one of those types.

When Bai Xiaochun realized how far away he was from the Great Wall, he stopped and decided that it would be best to end his mission and go back.

Just as he was turning around, though, a muffled boom could be heard from the mountains off in the distance. A cloud of dust shot up into the air as one of the mountains actually collapsed, transforming into something like a crater.

Revealed within that crater was a huge group of souls that almost instantly began to fly out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun's jaw dropped.

"What's going on?" he thought. Almost immediately, other savages and soul cultivators in the area noticed that something strange was going on. When they saw all of the souls suddenly flying out, they began to rush in the direction of the crumbled mountain to try to grab some of them.

To Bai Xiaochun, souls were essentially battle credit, but they were just as valuable to the Wildlanders. Not only could they be used as weapons to attack the Great Wall, but they were also useful for cultivation in a place where there was no energy of heaven and earth.

Also, anyone who could get their hands on souls could turn around and sell them to necromancers, who would use them not only for cultivation, but to create soul medicine.

Furthermore, the areas of the Wildlands closer to the Great Wall would often have more souls because of all the people who died in battle. It was for that very reason that there were giants and soul cultivators lurking around in the area, hoping to collect more souls than was possible in other areas.

Looking around, Bai Xiaochun could see at least a few dozen savage giants and more than ten soul cultivators, all rushing forward to fight over the souls.

“There must be tens of thousands of them....” Bai Xiaochun thought. As for the group which was rushing forward to compete over the souls, not a single one was in the Nascent Soul stage. They were all in Foundation Establishment or Core Formation, with the three strongest of them being in the great circle of Core Formation. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to rush forward along with them, grabbing souls with every step he took.

“Mine! They’re all mine!”

The savages and soul cultivators had no idea who Bai Xiaochun was, and assumed he was just another soul cultivator. However, it didn’t take long before they realized that he was grabbing more souls than everyone else. In fact, he was getting about half of them.

Then, it became apparent that, as he moved about, none of the souls were reacting to him. He would simply reach out and grab them, in quite a contrast to all the effort they were putting forth.

For those who were in Foundation Establishment, there was little they could do about it, but for the handful who were in the great circle of Core Formation, it didn’t take long for their eyes to flicker with fury and killing intent.

“Where did this monkey come from? He’s so fast!”

“Dammit, he's single-handedly grabbing more souls than all of us put together? Does he have a death wish or something?!”

One of them was an old man in nondescript clothing, whose eyes glittered with violet light. Although there were three soul cultivators in the great circle, the other two seemed to be following this one’s lead as they all turned to look at Bai Xiaochun with coldly glittering eyes.

There were no formal rules in the Wildlands, where the fittest survived, and the law of the jungle prevailed above all. In the end, strength was the most important. When Bai Xiaochun saw the group of three staring at him, he stopped in place, narrowed his eyes, and looked back at them angrily, his murderous aura on full display.

If any of them had been in the Nascent Soul stage, he would never have done such a thing, but since they were only in the great circle of Core Formation, how could he possibly fear them?

That was even more the case considering that he had a thousand subordinates not too far off. All it would take would be a single order, and they would rush over to help him. Therefore, not only was Bai Xiaochun not afraid, he was actually feeling a bit arrogant at the moment. Glaring viciously, and looking very much like he was on the verge of attacking with full force, he roared, “Bring it on! Who dares to make a move on me!?”

None of the savages or soul cultivators had attacked him to begin with because of his fear-inspiring speed. Now, he looked like some sort of fiendish devil, the type who was used to vicious fighting. Therefore, the old man simply snorted coldly, ignored him, and proceeded on toward the crater.

The other Core Formation experts did the same, and as for the other soul cultivators and savages in the Foundation Establishment level, they obviously had no intention of provoking him. All of them just continued on toward the crater in the hopes of lucking out and getting some souls.

Seeing this, Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly, and then let out a few cold harrumphs.

“So, they *do* realize how awesome Lord Bai is. Guess they have some sense after all!” Sticking his chin up, he looked very much like the kind of person who was unparalleled under heaven and could crush anyone in front of him in battle. At this point, he couldn’t just leave and go back to the Great Wall, so he clasped his hands behind his back and headed toward the crater.

As he got closer to the crater, he was finally able to spot a cave mouth at the bottom of it. That was where all the souls were emerging from. Surprisingly, some of them were even crimson, indicating that they were at the Nascent Soul-level.

“How could there be so many souls?!” Elated, he leaped forward and began to collect one soul after another. When the soul cultivators and savages in the area saw him snatching so many souls right out from under their noses, their killing intent continued to grow stronger.

Pursing his lips to suppress his laughter, Bai Xiaochun envisioned what it would be like if they attacked him, and then he suddenly called a thousand cultivators to his side to fight for him. The mere thought of the grandiose spectacle got him so excited he started hoping they would actually attack him.

“Come on, hurry up and make a move!” he thought. With that, he picked up speed in collecting souls, focusing on those which were in the Nascent Soul level.

Moments later, the old man in the great circle of Core Formation suddenly grinned in terrifying fashion. All of a sudden, a black mist poured out of him, transforming into the shape of a huge skull around him. Then he began to walk toward Bai Xiaochun.

However, in that very moment, an intense rumble that far surpassed any sound from before rose up from the crater.

RUMBLE!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0512 awe-chapter-513

The sudden, intense rumbling was quite startling, both to the old man and to Bai Xiaochun. That was not to mention the other savages and soul cultivators in the area. Before anyone could react, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering shockwave erupted from within the crater.

As a result, everyone, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, was violently thrown backward. In fact, some who were in the Foundation Establishment level were ripped to shreds, with even their souls being destroyed in the process.

Bai Xiaochun was left gasping, and everyone else was shocked to the core.

“What’s going on!?”

“First the mountain collapsed into a crater, and now the crater is falling apart. This....”

“Don’t tell me that some powerful magical treasure is coming into the world!!”

Even as the cries of astonishment began to ring out, a gravitational force erupted from within the crater that didn’t affect anyone in the area except for the countless scattering souls. Instantly, they began to tremble as they were sucked back into the crater.

At the same time, shocking roars began to emanate from the crater, causing Bai Xiaochun’s mind to reel from the incredible, shocking force contained within it.

Everyone reacted in such a way, with the exception of the old man. His eyes suddenly flickered with disbelief, and he even began to tremble in excitement.

“That’s... that’s....” Even before the man could finish his sentence, another intense rumbling sound echoed out, accompanied by a ball of white mist that shot up into the air. Just barely visible within that mist was a golden blur that appeared to be some entity trying to fly up into the heavens!

Only a moment later, the golden entity within the mist became clear, which was none other than a golden crocodile!

At the same time, a metal-type aura erupted out, causing rippling fluctuations that both Bai Xiaochun and everyone else instantly recognized.

“A deva beast soul!!” The savages and soul cultivators began to cry out in shock, and their eyes instantly burned with madness and greed. Of course, those who were merely in the Foundation Establishment level began to back away, aware that they didn’t qualify to compete for something like this, at least not do so and stay alive.

The savages and soul cultivators who were in the Core Formation level were going mad with glee. As powerful experts of the Wildlands, they lived in an impoverished place where fighting for resources was the natural order of things. Rewards come only with risk, and that was a virtual instinct for people like this.

Deva beast souls were rare, something that some people might never even see in their entire life. Just catching sight of one could be considered good fortune for some.

The sudden and unexpected appearance of one right here led everyone present to go wild with anticipation.

Without any hesitation, everyone present shot directly toward the golden crocodile!

Although the golden crocodile seemed confused, almost like a newborn creature without much intelligence, it quickly realized that a whole group was bearing down on it with the desire to take it.

Booms could even be heard as some of the Core Formation soul cultivators and savages began to fight each other. Clearly, a large number of them were actually from the same organization, and were teaming up to beat away the rogue soul cultivators.

As for the three who were in the great circle of Core Formation, they were virtually invincible, and quickly began to close in on the deva beast soul. Although the deva beast soul hadn’t fully regained its senses, its instincts were still there, and it quickly began to back up.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were wide, and his mind was spinning. He actually possessed deva souls, but this was his first time seeing a deva beast soul. Despite being less rare than deva souls, they were still astronomically valuable, and if he could turn it in for battle credit, it would count for nearly thirty percent of what he needed to get a promotion to major general.

Therefore, it was no surprise that his excitement instantly built to a frenzy.

“That belongs to me!!” he roared, unleashing all the speed he could to blast toward the deva beast soul. In the blink of an eye, he was in the crowd of soul cultivators, waving his sleeve to unleash blasts of power and knock people out of his way.

Although he was actually using spiritual power, the mask made it seem like soul power, and revealed absolutely no clues about the truth. Screams rang out as the soul cultivators were hit with power, causing blood to spray out of their mouths as they looked over in confused terror at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was like an explosive dragon, holding nothing back as he battled his way forward. Soon, he was almost upon the deva beast soul, which would normally cause it to flee in the opposite direction. And yet it didn't even seem to notice him.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased at that, and was well aware that the beast couldn't see him because of his mask. Laughing heartily, he reached out to grab the soul. However, that was when the old soul cultivator madly shouted, “Heed my command and block this monkey! I want that soul as a gift for the Giant Ghost King!”

The enraged old man's hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture. At the same time, the others under his command recklessly charged forward to block Bai Xiaochun's path, their eyes glowing red with madness.

This was the combined attack of more than ten people, two of them in the great circle of Core Formation, four in late Core Formation, and the rest in the early and mid stages.

However, despite all of that, they weren't a match at all for Bai Xiaochun, and were incapable of preventing his advance. And yet, their wild charge did have the effect of frightening the deva beast soul.

The soul couldn’t see Bai Xiaochun, but could see the others, and immediately began to flee. As a result, Bai Xiaochun snatched nothing but air, after which he was struck by the divine abilities and magical techniques launched by the more than ten soul cultivators.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken, but not hurt, and yet could do nothing other than watch as the deva beast soul fled. At the same time, the old soul cultivator tossed out a glowing red sphere, which was a magical treasure specifically designed to capture souls. As soon as it left his hand, it transformed into a huge net which neatly wrapped up the fleeing deva beast soul.

Enraged, Bai Xiaochun unleashed the power of a Frigid Paragon in a blast toward the ten Core Formation soul cultivators.

In the blink of an eye, they were transformed into lifeless statues of ice as the entire 30,000-meter area became a frigid domain!

The old man was scared out of his mind. How could he ever have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would be so terrifying? In this moment of crisis, all he could do was grab his net and then slap his hand down onto the crown of his head, causing a statue of a giant ghost to appear.

It had two horns, green skin, and the faces of countless vengeful souls bulging out from its skin. Not only did it look matchlessly vicious, but it radiated a terrifying fleshly body power. As for its eyes, they glowed red, as if the statue had just climbed up out of the underworld! This statue depicted something completely and utterly legendary, something that existed above berserk ghosts. This was a giant ghost!

As the statue flew out, it radiated green light, as well as a sinister, murderous aura that seemed to contain fluctuations of the Deva Realm.

Because of that murderous aura, Bai Xiaochun’s Frigid Paragon domain suddenly slowed, giving the old man just enough time to flee with the deva beast soul.

Even still, he was covered with ice and coughing up blood. Clearly, his blood and internal organs had been negatively affected, and yet he still managed to shout, “I'm the seventh apprentice of Marquis Lan, direct subordinate of the Giant Ghost King! I'm here on a mission! How dare you injure me!!”

The old man could see how much danger he was in, and how furious Bai Xiaochun was. Trembling inwardly, he pointed down at the statue of the giant ghost, which began to rumble loudly. Then, fifty shadowy figures burst out from inside, which transformed into fifty savage giants. All of them had expressionless faces and glowing red eyes, and quickly began to grow until they were fully 30 meters tall. Based on the powerful fleshly body fluctuations rolling off of them, they were all in the Core Formation level.

Most shocking of all was that they wore matching armor engraved with images of giant ghosts! Because of that armor, they were even more powerful than they would have been normally. Furthermore, they were arranged in a formation designed to protect the old man!

Protected from the frigid qi, the old man breathed a sigh of relief as he continued to speed away, and even had a bit of killing intent flickering in his eyes as he looked back at Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0513 awe-chapter-514

There was no way Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be startled by the sudden appearance of more than fifty savage giants. He had been impressed with the statue to begin with, but this new development left his eyes flickering. Then he heard how the old man referred to himself, and realized that this was no ordinary soul cultivator.

Furthermore, these giants were different from the other savages Bai Xiaochun had seen in battle. Although giants in the armies he had seen were numerous, and abounded with killing intent, they were very similar to the rogue soul cultivators he had seen. They were disorganized and unable to work together. These fifty giants he was facing right now were clearly different.

There was something even colder about their demeanor, and the madness lurking within them caused Bai Xiaochun’s pupils to constrict. Clearly, these giants practiced some special type of cultivation that made them elite among their savage compatriots.

Even their armor was beyond ordinary, and capable of defending them against his Frigid Paragon powers. Plus, the power of their formation was such that they could easily protect the old man as he fled. Simultaneously, when the power of that formation reached its pinnacle, it thrummed with an energy similar to the spell formation giants of the River-Defying Sect!

That was a power similar to the cultivation base of a Nascent Soul expert!

Of even more concern to Bai Xiaochun was the giant ghost statue, which contained a bit of deva-level defense power. Even if he managed to use his Frigid Paragon powers to freeze all of the elite savages in place, it was the power of a deva that formed the nexus of the spell formation.

“So, is this the true power of the Wildlands...?” he thought. Over the course of the battles he had fought with the Wildlands armies, he had slowly come to look down upon them. But now, such feelings were fading away.

Within the spell formation, the old man’s eyes glittered with killing intent. “How dare you attack me after I revealed my identity. Do you have a death wish or something?!”

Although he was a bit intimidated by Bai Xiaochun’s display of strength, he knew that if he didn’t kill him, the enmity caused because of the stolen deva beast soul was not something that could be easily resolved at a later date.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled coldly. Staring the old man in the eye, he slowly said, “What’s so impressive about ganging up on people? Do you have the guts to fight me in a duel?!”

In response, the old soul cultivator laughed as loudly as if he had just heard the funniest joke in the entire world. Eyes flaring with icy killing intent, he said, “Are you a moron or something? So what if I'm ganging up on you? What are you going to do about it?!”

With that, he lifted his right arm in preparation to give the order to kill Bai Xiaochun.

However, it was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun also started laughing. Lifting his chin up proudly, he suddenly revealed a jade slip, which he then crushed between his fingers.

“Fine. Ganging up it is. Come, my brothers!”

The old soul cultivator was taken aback by Bai Xiaochun’s words. Then, sensing a change in the wind, he looked off into the distance.

Suddenly, dozens of beams of light appeared off in the distance to shoot toward them.

The old man laughed coldly. “Hmph. That’s not very many peop--”

However, before he could finish his sentence, more beams of light appeared in a different direction. Rumbling sounds echoed out as, within the blink of an eye, dozens upon dozens of beams of light appeared, shooting through the air at blinding speed.

Within the briefest of moments, hundreds of beams of light could be seen!

The old man’s face turned ashen, choking on his own breath and trembling physically. And yet, things weren’t over yet. Hundreds more beams of light began to speed toward the area, causing the old man’s defenses to begin to vibrate.

There were a thousand of them, causing the old soul cultivator’s face to turn as white as a sheet of paper. Eyes wide, he began to pant with incredulity and disbelief.

“This... this is impossible!!”

He had no idea why so many people had been hiding in the area, nor was he sure how he had missed any signs of them. Most frightening of all was that, without fail, all of them were in the Core Formation stage!!

There were even quite a few who were in the same cultivation stage as himself, the great circle of Core Formation!

Feeling very dashing and spirited, Bai Xiaochun pointed at the old man and shouted, “Brothers, put this old man to death!”

“Die!!” shouted the thousand cultivators, pouring through the air like a grand army, causing intense rumbling sounds to fill the area as their murderous auras raged. These were top troops under the command of an intrepid officer, a sight which caused the old soul cultivator's mind to spin. Even more shocking was that the fifty savage giants gasped and began to back up. Not even they could possibly have dreamed that they would end up facing a huge number of cultivators in this place!

The old soul cultivator could immediately tell that if this group massed together, there would be no way for him to make it out of the situation alive.

“Flee!!” he screamed. The fifty savage giants immediately drew upon the full power of the spell formation, which accelerated rapidly in an attempt to get the man outside of the closing net.

“Get him, boys!” Bai Xiaochun roared.

Although the spell formation was moving at incredible speed, these were cultivators of the five legions. Furthermore, they had gone through a life-or-death trial with Bai Xiaochun, and had been hand-picked from tens of thousands of other soldiers. Therefore, it was with murderous ferocity that they shot toward the fifty savage giants.

The majestic sight of a thousand of his men attacking fifty giants with deadly intent immediately got Bai Xiaochun’s blood boiling, so he shouted, “Fudge! How dare you steal my deva beast soul! Even worse, you actually went so far as to gang up on me!”

There was no way the fifty giants could last for long under such an attack. They fought back, roaring, and yet the thousand cultivators of Bai Xiaochun’s regiment were well-trained, and quickly fell into their own formations, which the giants were incapable of defending against.

As the giants were destroyed in spectacular fashion, the old soul cultivator trembled, clearly on the verge of tears because of the unfairness of the situation.

“You big bully!!” he screamed, his hair flying about wildly as the few surviving giants tried to force their way out of the situation. “What’s so impressive about ganging up on people? If you have what it takes, why don’t you fight me in a duel?!”

“Are you a moron or something?” Bai Xiaochun replied proudly, spitting the old man’s words right back at him. “So what if I'm ganging up on you? What are you going to do about it?!”

With that, he shot toward the old man with deadly force.

Soon, more bitter screams rang out.

By this point, all of the fifty giants were dead, most of them having chosen to go out in self-detonation. However, the resulting explosions were of little use. Bai Xiaochun had been prepared for that, and used his Frigid Paragon energy to dispel the force. As a result, not a single one of his men were killed!

Actually, if he had allowed his men to go all out, disregarding even their own safety, it would have been even easier to get rid of the fifty giants. However, he didn't do that. He wanted every single person that he took out of the Great Wall with him to get back safely!

As the last of the fifty giants died, the statue of the giant ghost above the old soul cultivator's head began to power up to attack.

But how could Bai Xiaochun possibly let that happen? Now that the old man was alone on the battlefield, Bai Xiaochun sped forward and lashed out with his palm. In the blink of an eye, a force like that of a mountain slapped into the enormous statue.

A boom could be heard, and blood sprayed out of the old man's mouth. As for the statue, it immediately began to spin downward toward the ground, clearly on the verge of collapsing.

"Get that statue!" Bai Xiaochun barked as he pursued the old man. "It's definitely a precious item!"

Some of his men immediately went to retrieve the giant ghost statue.

Meanwhile, the vengeful souls had all been sucked back into the crater, which had fully collapsed into an enormous, mist-filled pit.

The old man finally fell down out of the sky and landed at the edge of that pit, coughing up blood. Bitter laughter escaped his lips; the attack from just now had revealed to him how shockingly powerful his opponent really was. His five yin organs and six yang organs were almost completely destroyed. His soul power was in chaos, and the flame of his life force was about to wink out.

“I'm the seventh apprentice of Marquis Lan, direct subordinate of the Giant Ghost King! It doesn’t matter where you’re from, if you kill me, then you’ll die for sure!!” Despairing, the old man made one last-ditch effort to frighten Bai Xiaochun.

However, even as the words escaped his lips, Bai Xiaochun appeared in front of him and reached out to grab his neck. Then he relieved him of the deva beast soul and said, “Who gives a crap about some Giant Ghost King? I'm an army officer, fool!” The disdain in his voice was clear as he laid some restrictive spells onto the old man and then tossed him over to some of the men in his regiment.

“Take him with us!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0514 awe-chapter-515

When the old soul cultivator heard Bai Xiaochun call himself an army officer, his eyes went blank. Then, a moment later, his mind began to reel, and his face completely fell. He even forgot to breathe for a moment. Earlier, he had been confused as to why Bai Xiaochun would suddenly have a thousand men to back him up, and had assumed that he was from another of the powerful group of soul cultivators.

Fear of displeasing the organization led by the Giant Ghost King might have been able to keep him alive. After all, the Giant Ghost King was one of the four great kings of the Wildlands, and one of only five demigods. Therefore, few people would be willing to offend him.

But now that the old man realized that Bai Xiaochun was actually from the lands of Heavenspan, his eyes filled with despair. However, that only lasted for a moment, whereupon venomous hatred appeared. Before he could do anything else, though, Bai Xiaochun bopped him on the head.

“What are you so surprised about? And what is that look in your eye supposed to mean?!” Bai Xiaochun was clearly not very pleased with the man’s reaction. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, he was actually being very merciful; most other people in his situation would have just killed the old man right off the bat.

Instead, he was a very kind person. Instead of killing him, he planned to take him back to the Great Wall and trade him in for battle credit. But then the man dared to give him a dirty look.

The old man gritted his teeth and cursed inwardly at his lack of options. Unless he wanted to die on the spot, he would just have to endure the situation. After all, considering his background as someone from Giant Ghost City, it was likely that he wouldn’t be killed after being handed over to Great Wall City.

Sighing, he gritted his teeth and bowed his head.

Bai Xiaochun bopped him on the head again and then complacently said, “Yes, yes, that’s much better. Behave yourself, now!”

Feeling like a very grand figure, he was just about to flick his sleeve and withdraw his regiment back to the Great Wall, when all of a sudden, a chorus of piercing screams rang out from the mist inside the pit.

For some reason, those screams sounded familiar to Bai Xiaochun, as if they were coming out of the mouths of souls. Frightened, he backed up a few paces and then peered down into the pit.

The pit was so incredibly deep that, combined with the mist, it was impossible to see the bottom of it. In fact, not even divine sense could reach its end.

And yet, the screaming just now had clearly been coming from a large number of vengeful souls, perhaps even as many as 10,000 or more.

Even as Bai Xiaochun assessed the scene cautiously, grave expressions appeared on the faces of the cultivators of his regiment. Then, Zhao Long stepped forward and whispered, “Colonel, there’s something strange going on here. It almost seems like there's some sort of natural restrictive magic in place. We should probably get going immediately.”

Bai Xiaochun agreed that there was something very odd about this place. First the mountain had collapsed into a crater, and then the crater had turned into a pit. Plus, there was that deva beast soul. All of those things had happened in a very short period of time. Plus, neither the Great Wall nor any of the savage tribes had sent anyone to investigate the matter.

It was almost as if nobody had been able to detect what was happening.

Bai Xiaochun's expression was just as grave as everyone else's as he nodded in agreement. But then he looked down into the mists, which were apparently filled with large numbers of souls, and couldn't help but think about how much of a pity it would be to just leave.

"That's a bunch of battle credit down there...." he murmured to himself. Opening his third eye, he rotated his cultivation base, which sent a beam of violet light out. Almost immediately, the power of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye began to dispel the mists.

Seeing that this method was working, he added some cultivation base power, which caused the mists to melt away at an even more rapid pace.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't the only one who could see what was happening. The old soul cultivator and all of the men in his regiment could also see the mists vanishing.

Soon, the gaping pit was revealed. Although it was still impossible to see the bottom itself, it was possible to see innumerable souls floating around inside of it!

Even just at the entrance, there appeared to be more than 100,000 of them, with quite a few being at the Nascent Soul level. Considering how many there were, it was impossible to even guess how many the entire pit contained.

The number was essentially incalculable!

The scene was profoundly shocking to Bai Xiaochun, and caused the cultivators of his regiment to stare with wide eyes.

There were so many souls in sight now that, despite the fact that everyone in the regiment had Soul Convergence Pills, they could tell that if the souls all attacked them at once, they would definitely be killed. Furthermore, the rancor these souls emanated surpassed that of ordinary souls, and made it clear that if they attacked together, it would be a situation of enormous danger.

As for the old soul cultivator, he was staring into the pit of souls, feeling completely shaken and unwilling to even move a muscle. He knew what kind of terrifying power that group of vengeful souls represented, and that if their attention was attracted, he wouldn’t have to worry about the cultivators who had just captured him; the souls would rip his flesh apart as they consumed him and then possessed his body.

If he got taken back to the Great Wall, he might be a prisoner of war, but at least he would be alive. But if those souls took to action, then he would definitely be fated to die.

As a soul cultivator of the Wildlands, he was far too familiar with souls to do anything other than fear them in this situation.

Thankfully, the souls seemed to be in a state of partial hibernation, and weren’t interested in leaving the pit. As long as they weren’t riled up, they would likely stay put and not attack.

Everyone was shocked, and Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling. However, as he looked at the vengeful souls, he saw something a bit different than everyone else. He saw a huge amount of battle credit!

“If I could capture those souls, I could turn them all in for battle credit.... Look at how many of them there are! Heavens! Maybe becoming a major general isn’t just a pipe dream after all!” His lips were pursed tight in excitement, and yet he was still feeling a bit hesitant. After all, the sheer number of souls meant that even with Soul Convergence Pills, it was still a very dangerous situation.

“The best thing would be to lure them out a bit at a time, or maybe split them up into groups....”

Although he had his mask to protect himself, he still wasn’t comfortable relying completely on that to stay safe. On the other hand, simply walking away would be a huge pity. After a bit of thought, he crept backward and quietly signaled for the rest of his regiment to do the same.

After they were a few hundred meters away from the edge of the pit, in a relatively safe location, Bai Xiaochun looked over with glittering eyes at the old soul cultivator he’d captured.

The old man had just been sighing in relief that they were moving away from the pit of souls when, all of a sudden, he realized that Bai Xiaochun was staring at him.

The old man’s heart started to thump in his chest. He had the distinct premonition that whatever plans this Core Formation cultivator had for him, they definitely couldn’t be good.

Before he could open his mouth to say something, Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly, stepped forward, and patted the man on the shoulder.

“Listen, Fellow Daoist, why don’t we forget about the matter of you trying to steal my deva beast soul? All you have to do is just do me a little favor. What do you say? It’s nothing difficult. I’ll simply give you a medicinal pill, then you walk into that big pit, and crush it. Remember, you can only crush it *after* you get into the pit. Alright? Simple!”

Then, it was with a very fervent and hopeful look in his eyes that he produced a Soul Convergence Pill and held it out.

The old man’s mind spun, and he began to tremble as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. Seemingly on the verge of tears, he said, “Please let me off the hook, oh exalted one. I'm... I'm more than happy to become a prisoner of war. I have a lot of information about Giant Ghost City! I'm... I'm very valuable as a hostage!!”

“I know, I know. Come, come. Just be a good boy and take this medicinal pill.” Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun forcibly opened the old man’s hand and put the Soul Convergence Pill in his palm. “Alright, off with you now.”

Starting to struggle, the old man loudly said, “I'm not going anywhere! You might as well just kill me! Forget it!”

Bai Xiaochun was clearly very displeased.

“If you refuse,” he said angrily, “then I’ll have my men rough you up a bit and then throw you inside! Look, you’re gonna go into that pit whether you want to or not!” Instantly, the surrounding cultivators of Bai Xiaochun’s regiment began to stare at the old man with cold killing intent.

The old man was trembling in fear, and simultaneously bristling with rage. However, he could tell that he was out of options. If he didn’t do as he was asked, then it was obvious that this fiendish killer would toss him headfirst into the pit of souls anyway.

Gritting his teeth helplessly, the old man closed his hand around the medicinal pill. Then, he threw caution to the wind as he began to creep forward to the edge of the pit.

In the same moment that he began to move forward, Bai Xiaochun and his regiment fell back until they were 3,000 meters away. There, they prepared to run away at top speed if necessary.

Only at that point did Bai Xiaochun finally turn to look back at the old man as he prepared to dive into the pit.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0515 awe-chapter-516

The old man’s face was a mask of grief, and his heart was filled with ceaseless venomous curses toward Bai Xiaochun. Even though he realized that he was holding a Soul Convergence Pill, he hadn’t yet made any connection to Bai Xiaochun himself. After all, while not every single cultivator in the five legions was armed with Soul Convergence Pills, enough were that they could be considered common.

“Damned monkey! You’re definitely not going to die a good death!!” Gritting his teeth, he edged closer to the pit, where he looked back to see Bai Xiaochun and the other cultivators waiting nervously, clearly ready to flee at a moment's notice. Immediately, the old man’s heart filled with disgust.

And yet, he had no other options in front of him. If he did as Bai Xiaochun asked, maybe he would get out of the situation alive. But if he caused problems, he could theoretically revel in the thought of his captors being killed, but he himself would also perish.

As he stood there at the edge of the pit wavering back and forth about what to do, Bai Xiaochun impatiently cried out in a hushed voice, “Hurry up! We’re all waiting on you!”

Yeah, well keep waiting, bitch! the old man cursed inwardly. Clenching his jaw, he toed the edge of the pit, and was just preparing to jump in when the vengeful souls inside suddenly stopped floating around and then turned to look at him.

The old man’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode, and his mind was spinning into a complete blank.

Finally, he let out a shout and simultaneously crushed the medicinal pill. Before any of the souls could do anything, a massive gravitational force sprang out.

Instantly, more than 10,000 vengeful souls were sucked up, without even a chance to fight back. In the blink of an eye, they became a soul sphere, which the soul cultivator grabbed. However, the other vengeful souls were now riled up, and began howling, even the ones in the depths of the pit. Then, they began to pour out into the open like a massive tempest.

The old soul cultivator shrieked as he spun around and began to flee. Behind him, a cloud of souls rose up into the air, tens upon tens of thousands of them.

“Help me!” the old man shrieked as he fled. Feeling angrier than ever at Bai Xiaochun and his men, he headed straight in their direction.

The old man was quick, but Bai Xiaochun was quicker. In almost the same moment that the old man crushed the Soul Convergence Pill, he and his men began to flee in the opposite direction.

The old man saw this, but had no other option than to push forward with greater speed. Sadly, his cultivation base had already been sealed and limited, making things very difficult. Behind him, a sea of souls bore down, their howls echoing out in all directions.

The sensation of deadly crisis that filled him, and the despair, made it so that the old man couldn’t hold back his curses.

“You won’t die a good death, you monkey! If I become a ghost, I’ll haunt you to the end of your days!!”

The cultivators were trembling at what they saw, and Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as he fled. As he looked over his shoulder, what he focused on was not the old man, but the huge sea of souls.

“1,000,000... no, wait, 10,000,000... no wait.... Heavens, how many souls are there!?!?” Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling in terror as he pushed forward with greater speed. As for the old man, there was no time to pay any attention to him, which Bai Xiaochun felt a bit bad about. After all, it was his own greed which had put the man in this situation.

Even as he smiled bitterly, his expression suddenly flickered, and he looked over his shoulder again to see the old soul cultivator howling as he fled from the souls. But then, after the souls reached a position several hundred meters away from the edge of the pit, they suddenly stopped giving chase. Instead, they flew back up into the sky and then circled back toward the pit, where they vanished. Moments later, everything was quiet again.

Bai Xiaochun looked on in shock, as did the other cultivators. As for the old man, he felt like he had just survived a deadly catastrophe, and was looking around with incredulous delight.

“I'm... I'm not dead!!” he muttered as tears of joy streamed down his face. However, before he could even calm down from the thrill of having survived, Bai Xiaochun walked up and gave him an appraising glance.

The old man suddenly went stiff with anxiety. Considering that he was completely surrounded by Bai Xiaochun’s forces, it was obvious that he couldn’t escape, and all of a sudden, the old man thought back to the curses he had just been uttering. Without any hesitation, he handed the soul sphere over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Exalted one, I--” However before he could continue with any explanation, Bai Xiaochun began to walk around him slowly, poking and prodding him a bit here and there. The old man’s anxiety quickly mounted.

“They didn’t chase you very far, did they?” Bai Xiaochun said. “Don’t tell me it's because of some secret of yours?” After circling the man a few times without finding anything out of the ordinary, still seemed suspicious. “Alright, how about this. Considering that the souls don’t seem inclined to chase you, why don't we do a little experiment...?”

With that, he produced another Soul Convergence Pill and handed it to the old man.

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, the old man nearly exploded. Eyes going wide, he was unable to suppress his rage as he yelled, “No! Fudge, I don’t care if you tell your men to skin me alive, there’s no way I'm going!! Kill me first!!”

The old man really was angry. Earlier, he had been staring death in the face, the result of which was that he was now hovering on the verge of mental collapse, and even hysteria.

The surrounding cultivators didn’t feel bad for the man at all. Furthermore, they realized that if the man really would rather die than do as requested, then it would be virtually impossible to force him to help them. Therefore, a few of the cultivators stepped forward with clasped hands.

“Colonel, allow me to go test things out!”

“Let me go, Colonel!”

“Colonel, this experiment was made for me!”

Bai Xiaochun could immediately tell that these cultivators were trying to return the kindness he had shown them. However, there was no way he would agree. After all, he was most likely in the safest position of them all with his mask.

Looking over at the pit, he gritted his teeth and said, “Stand down, all of you.” Then he glared at the old man. “And as for you, what are you yelling for? Boy do you have a loud voice.”

With the wave of a hand, he bound the man up again and then tossed him back to his subordinates. With that, he looked at the pit for a moment before walking toward it.

Zhao Long and some of the others were just about to try to persuade him not to go, but he was too quick. Even as he flew toward the pit, his voice echoed back into their ears.

“Get back and wait for me.” When Bai Xiaochun arrived at the edge of the pit, his heart was gripped with anxiety and indecision. Further back, the cultivators of his regiment were waiting nervously, in contrast to the old soul cultivator, who was chuckling coldly and cursing inwardly.

“I’m a Wildlands soul cultivator, and probably do have some of the aura of Giant Ghost City on me. Those souls didn’t want to chase me, but as for that monkey of a cultivator, he's definitely *dead!*” Actually, the old man had no idea why the souls had abandoned the chase, but was relatively convinced that his own analysis was correct. Even if it wasn’t, he was still sure that the souls would consume Bai Xiaochun the instant he got too close.

As he chuckled coldly to himself, and the other cultivators looked on nervously, Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to shine with determination.

"I should be fine. They definitely can't see me!" Rubbing his mask to reassure himself, he took another step forward, and was inside the pit.

Of course, at the slightest sign of anything wrong, he was prepared to call upon the full strength of his fleshly body power, even to the point of harming himself, to flee. However, as soon as he entered the pit, he realized that the souls weren't even looking at him. Instead, they simply continued to float around like before.

The thousand cultivators of his regiment, as well as the old soul cultivator, were all shocked.

"What's going on...?"

Bai Xiaochun was delighted, but continued to maintain vigilance. He proceeded carefully through the throngs of souls, and the entire time, not a single one showed even a hint of paying attention to him.

Soon, he was deep within the crowd of souls, where he pulled out a Soul Convergence Pill and crushed it.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as a gravitational force erupted out. In the blink of an eye, more than 10,000 vengeful souls were sucked into a soul sphere, which Bai Xiaochun tossed into his bag of holding. In response, the other souls were thrown into a commotion, which caused Bai Xiaochun to tense up for a moment before he realized that they still weren't able to see him.

Even as his subordinates looked on in shock, Bai Xiaochun chuckled, clasped his hands casually behind his back, and stuck his chin up, making himself look just like a lonely hero.

Everyone looking at him saw what appeared to be tens of millions of souls howling and screaming in madness, ready to destroy everything in their path. There were even some crimson souls of the Nascent Soul level who appeared right by Bai Xiaochun.

And yet, he calmly waved his hand and collected all of the souls nearby into a soul sphere.

He looked like a consummate master, completely calm and collected, and in no danger whatsoever!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0516 awe-chapter-517

The thousand men in Bai Xiaochun’s legion looked on in both shock and fervor. However, when they considered who Bai Xiaochun was in the army, they realized that with him, nothing was beyond the realm of possibility.

He was Grandmaster Bai! He was in the top ten on the Wildlands Execution List! He had crushed a Nascent Soul cultivator in battle!

In terms of how many vengeful souls he had put an end to, it was impossible to even say. In fact, to call him the bane of vengeful souls was no exaggeration.

These cultivators viewed Bai Xiaochun with blind devotion, and therefore, were able to take the matter in stride. However, the old soul cultivator was so shocked he felt like the world was spinning around him.

“How... how is this even possible?!?!”

“Th-there... there must be hundreds of millions of souls in there! This... it’s....” The old man had already reached the point where he could barely speak coherently. Considering what he himself had just experienced, the fact that Bai Xiaochun was acting completely calmly was almost impossible to accept.

But what happened next was even more terrifying. Even as the old man’s mind teetered on the verge of collapse, he watched Bai Xiaochun pull out another Soul Convergence Pill and crush it. Immediately, more souls were sucked in, whereupon he pulled out another pill.

And that was how Bai Xiaochun proceeded into the depths of the pit. Every step along the way, he pulled out another Soul Convergence Pill. 10,000 souls. 30,000. 50,000. 100,000... 200,000. 500,000.... Not very much time passed at all before Bai Xiaochun had collected at least 1,000,000 souls. And he was barely exerting any effort at all....

Of the 10,000,000 or so souls that existed at the entrance to the pit, it was clear that over ten percent had already been collected by Bai Xiaochun. The old soul cultivator was completely and utterly flabbergasted.

What was especially shocking was how casually Bai Xiaochun strutted along, almost as if he were taking a stroll in his own backyard. The old man’s eyes looked like they might fall out of his face at any moment, and he could hardly breathe.

“Nascent Soul!” he screamed inwardly. “Dammit, this guy is definitely a Nascent Soul eccentric! That’s the only explanation for this!! He’s definitely a Nascent Soul eccentric who possesses some sort of powerful magical treasure!!” The old man was convinced that this was the only way to explain Bai Xiaochun’s incredible performance. The way he had cut down Core Formation experts as if it were child’s play indicated that he was definitely a Nascent Soul cultivator!

“Damned Heavenspan cultivators. I can’t believe someone who’s clearly a Nascent Soul expert would find it amusing to disguise himself as a Core Formation cultivator and then go around bullying people!!” Even as the old man stewed in his bitterness, Bai Xiaochun reached the point where he had collected the majority of the souls around the entrance. Although he was excited, he suddenly realized that he was running low on Soul Convergence Pills.

He quickly flew out of the pit and sped over to Zhao Long and the other members of his regiment, who were staring at him as if he were some sort of god.

“Hurry up and loan me your Soul Convergence Pills!” Bai Xiaochun said. “I’ll pay you back later!” Without hesitation, the cultivators in his regiment began pulling out their Soul Convergence Pills and handing them to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted to suddenly have so many Soul Convergence Pills at his disposal. He quickly turned and rushed back into the pit, where he began to head down toward the very bottom of the pit to collect more souls.

Zhao Long and the others hesitated for a bit, but then cautiously creeped over to the edge of the pit and looked over the edge to watch.

What they saw was shocking to the extreme. There was Bai Xiaochun, standing on top of a white surface, looking around in astonishment and disbelief.

At first, no one was quite sure what they were seeing, but upon closer examination, they realized what that white surface was, and their minds reeled.

“That’s....”

“Heavens, he’s standing on... on a....” All of the cultivators in the regiment felt like their heads were about to explode, and as for the soul cultivator, he was literally screaming.

“How is this possible?!?! It’s a skeleton?!”

The mouth of the pit was actually an entryway leading into what they were now looking down into, an enormous necropolis!

It was virtually impossible to describe how large the necropolis was, but it was possible to see a shocking skeleton right there inside!

It was fully 300,000 meters in size, and from what they could see looking through the passageway, that was only part of the skull!

Bai Xiaochun was actually more shaken than the rest of them. At first, he hadn’t realized what exactly the white surface that the was standing on was, but after a moment, he realized it was a skull. And then he saw... the ghastly 300,000-meter skeleton!!

It wasn’t a human skull, but rather the skull of some enormous crocodilian creature, stretching down into the necropolis. The bones were like mountain peaks, so shocking that Bai Xiaochun gasped out loud.

Furthermore, the enormous necropolis also contained... seemingly innumerable vengeful souls! None of the souls had fixed shapes, but rather, existed as misty spheres of different colors, within which faces would occasionally appear.

Considering how many of the souls there were floating around in the necropolis, it was possible to estimate that there were at least 100,000,000, or maybe more. Even a deva who was privy to this sight would feel shocked to the core. After all, if 100,000,000 souls all attacked at the same time, even a deva would perish under the assault, unless they possessed some special means of controlling the souls.

“Crocodile.... The deva beast soul that I grabbed looked like a crocodile. Could it be... that this skeleton was its fleshly body?!?!” The mere thought left Bai Xiaochun utterly shocked.

“So, does that mean that all these other souls showed up after it died, or... did they kill it!?!?” It was impossible to determine the answer to the question just by looking, but Bai Xiaochun certainly hoped that his former supposition was the correct one, not the latter.

And yet, for some reason, he had the feeling that something very strange was going on here, and that the latter... might not be too far from the truth.

It took a long moment for him to calm down. The only thing he could do was bury his speculations in his heart. Only one thing was for certain; there was definitely some big secret hidden in this place. Clearly, the restrictive spells that filled the area were one reason why no one had noticed the strange phenomena or come to investigate. Of course, a huge hole had opened up, which ensured that it wouldn’t be long before either the Great Wall or the Wildlanders discovered the place, and when that happened, there was no way Bai Xiaochun would be able to investigate the area alone.

“These souls are all battle credit!” he thought, his eyebrows dancing in anticipation. With that, he reached out and began to crush Soul Convergence Pills. In the blink of an eye, countless souls were all rushing toward him to form soul spheres.

However, there were so many souls in the area that the ground began to shake, and the screaming of the souls pierced dangerously into the minds of the onlookers.

The cultivators of Bai Xiaochun’s regiment, as well as the old soul cultivator, felt their own souls trembling in response to the sound, and some people even found blood oozing out of the corners of their mouths. They quickly began to back up in terror. The soul cultivator was especially frightened considering that his cultivation base had been sealed. He was coughing up mouthfuls of blood, and his face was as ashen as death.

“How many souls are down there!?!? Heavens! That sound couldn't come from any less than 10,000,000 souls. Or maybe even... 100,000,000!!” The old man was reeling in disbelief. Based on his experience, even large armies that marched into battle would never go in with more than 10,000,000 souls. A force of 100,000,000 was something that he had never even laid eyes on.

Zhao Long and the other cultivators in the regiment were astonished, and also worried for Bai Xiaochun. However, none of them revealed such feelings as they backed up and kept their eyes fixed on the pit.

Down inside, Bai Xiaochun was looking around ashen-faced as he realized he had discovered another use to the mask. Shockingly, it could reduce the effects he felt because of the shrieking of the souls, making it possible to stand there without being hurt.

“Rich! I’m rich!” he exulted inwardly. Eyes shining with excitement, he continued to collect more and more soul spheres, simultaneously calculating how much battle credit he would earn.

A day flashed by, during which terrifying howling sounds continued to echo out from the pit. Outside, everyone was looking on nervously, except for the old soul cultivator, who was trembling in astonishment and terror.

“Heavens! Just what kind of cultivation base does this guy have!?!?

“There’s no way that a Core Formation cultivator could remain so close to that sound without exploding. Not even a Nascent Soul expert could do it for long!!

“The only kind of person who could, would be... a deva!!

“He... he couldn’t possibly be... a deva, could he?!” The old man’s thoughts were in chaos as his terror mounted. Before, he had harbored a slim bit of hope that he might be able to get out of the situation alive and then get revenge. But now, such thoughts were long gone.

“Heavens! If he’s really a deva, then everything makes sense. Deva eccentrics always have strange habits, perhaps even... masquerading as Core Formation cultivators....” Convinced that he had gotten to the bottom of the truth, the old man felt even more terrified than before.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0517 awe-chapter-518

To everyone on the outside, the passage of time left them more and more nervous. Inside the pit, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining, and his eyebrows were dancing with happiness.

He was now almost out of Soul Convergence Pills. It had taken a whole day to go through several thousand of them, which meant that he had already collected tens of millions of souls.

Whenever he scanned the thousands of soul spheres in his bag of holding, he could almost see all of the battle credit coming his way, and couldn’t help but muse on how amazing he was.

“I absolutely have to become a major general!!” he declared loudly, eyes shining with excitement. After using his last few Soul Convergence Pills, he patted his bag of holding a bit begrudgingly.

“If I had known this was going to happen, I would have come prepared!” There were still so many vengeful souls in the area that they were almost impossible to count. It made him feel like he had encountered an iceberg made of gold, but had only been able to see the tip of it.

The feeling of not wanting to leave caused him to heave numerous sighs.

“Well, there’s nothing I can do,” he thought with gritted teeth and bloodshot eyes. “For the sake of the safety of my brothers on the outside, I should probably get back. Then I can concoct some more Soul Convergence Pills and come back later!” There were definitely more than enough vengeful souls here to propel him to the rank of major general. The feeling of having that promotion just within arm’s reach was exciting, and the mere thought of how different his life would be as a major general got his heart racing. Finally, he turned and headed out of the pit.

As soon as he flew out into the open, the cultivators of his regiment bristled with excitement as they awaited his orders. As for the old soul cultivator, he was trembling physically because of the waves of shock battering his heart.

Clearly, Bai Xiaochun wasn't injured at all. His eyes were bloodshot and he seemed tired, but in very high spirits. All of that only served to convince the old man that his previous suppositions were correct.

“He's definitely a deva....” the old man thought, seemingly on the verge of tears. As far as he could tell, nobody but a deva could possibly survive in that terrifying pit for a day without being hurt.

“Why the hell is a deva picking on me like this...?” he thought, staring at Bai Xiaochun with despair.

Everyone watched as Bai Xiaochun set up a rudimentary spell formation over the entrance of the pit, then flew over, swished his sleeve, and said, “Let’s get back to the Great Wall!”

The cultivators in the regiment breathed sighs of relief.

Although these were all crack troops under the leadership of a famous officer, they had been away from the Great Wall for quite some time. Plus, the area they were in seemed far too quiet. Although they could tell that there were natural restrictive spells in the area that were likely the reason that no one had sensed the strange phenomena, they also knew that the longer they stayed in one place, the more danger they would be in.

If any of the powerful groups in the Wildlands showed up, they would definitely end up facing a major crisis.

Therefore, as soon as the orders left Bai Xiaochun’s lips, they scattered and began to make their own way back to the Great Wall.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he began to retrace his own route back. After proceeding for a bit, he looked back in the direction of the pit, and saw what appeared to be nothing more than a mountain range of countless overlapping shadows. There weren’t even any sounds coming from the area.

Considering it was currently late at night, the countless shadows looked very foreboding.

“Are the restrictive spells in there really natural?” Bai Xiaochun thought. Recalling the image of the huge crocodile skeleton, he quietly turned and proceeded back toward the Great Wall.

On his initial trip leaving the wall, he had proceeded with caution as he made his way along. Although he was still cautious on the way back, he was in a much different mood. Furthermore, the trip back went very smoothly. Although he ran into a few small groups of vengeful souls, none of them slowed him down, and within a few hours, he was within sight of the Great Wall.

It was now just before dawn on his third day outside. Although the lands were bathed in darkness, the spell formation shield on the wall made it seem like a huge dragon hulking there, radiating shocking energy that would astonish anyone who laid eyes on it.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun and his regiment were used to the sight of the Great Wall, but not the old soul cultivator. He began to tremble even harder than before. And yet there was nothing he could do as the cultivators of the regiment produced their identity medallions and entered the Great Wall through one of the small entrances.

Even till this point, the old man had no idea who Bai Xiaochun really was. After entering Great Wall City, the cultivators sent him to the prisoner of war camp, where he would be handed over to the interrogators for questioning.

As for the thousand men in his regiment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t treat them stingily. As soon as they regrouped, he rewarded each of them with a soul sphere.

Although the 10,000 souls they were each being given wasn’t necessarily a huge amount, considering that Bai Xiaochun had only collected only a few tens of millions of souls in total, it still counted as a lot. It was an amount that not even Bai Lin or the other generals would hand out as a reward.

“Brothers, stick with me, and you’ll always have alcohol to drink and meat to eat. Whenever good things happen to me, I won’t ever forget about you!” Not only did the eyes of the men shine brightly, they needed no reminder from Bai Xiaochun to understand that the matters which had occurred on the outside needed to be kept under tight wraps.

Bai Xiaochun didn't waste any time. After handing out the rewards to the regiment, he didn’t rest, but instead, excitedly went to his residence to work on concocting medicine. His main goal, of course, was to produce as many Soul Convergence Pill as he could in a short time.

As for the soulhorn mission, he had Zhao Long and some of the others go hand it in. Not long after they did, Bai Xiaochun's identity medallion vibrated and emitted bright red light as 1,000,000 battle credits were added to it.

Another three days passed, during which time Bai Xiaochun didn't rest at all. Eyes bloodshot, he concocted medicine like mad, producing one batch of Soul Convergence Pills after another. Including some others he'd had lying around, he now had more than 5,000, and simply couldn't wait any longer.

"Long delays usually lead to trouble. The longer I wait, the more likely someone is to find that place...." By this point, it seemed more likely than ever that he would be able to get a promotion to major general. Therefore, he gritted his teeth and threw caution to the wind. When night fell, he slipped out of the command center, not telling anyone that he was leaving. By utilizing his Undying Tendons and the Undying Hex divine ability he had gained enlightenment of, he left the city.

After vanishing, he once again felt like his body was about to be ripped apart. A long moment passed, whereupon he reappeared on the battlefield outside of the Great Wall. Then, without any hesitation, he sped off into the night.

Of course, he was already wearing his mask. Based on the soul fluctuations it sent out, along with his murderous aura, it ensured that any savages or soul cultivators who saw him along the way perceived him to be someone no one would provoke.

After drawing upon all the speed he could muster, Bai Xiaochun soon reached those same shadowy mountains that he had left a few days before. Making sure he wasn’t being followed, he headed into the mountains.

However, after searching thoroughly, his face fell as he realized that the pit was nowhere to be found!

“This is definitely the spot.... Why isn’t it here? Could it be something to do with the restrictive spells?” After looking around a few times, he finally decided to open his third eye. However, not even that revealed any clues.

Most other people would likely have given up at that point. But Bai Xiaochun wasn't so willing to give in. He continued to search here and there, calling upon his Heavenspan Dharma Eye every so often. After several hours had passed, and dawn approached, the countless overlapping shadows that were the mountains suddenly seemed to start folding in on themselves.

“So that’s how it is!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his expression brightening.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0518 awe-chapter-519

The natural restrictive spells in the area seemed complex, but were actually quite simple. The layout of the overlapping mountains in the area would shift depending on the time of day.

The way the mountains were organized affected the method of entry. Back when Bai Xiaochun had first come to the area, there hadn’t been any such restrictive spells active. However, upon leaving, it had been when the break of dawn was approaching.

Therefore, the route he remembered could only be retraced at that same time.

In fact, even at that exact same time, it also required additional effort to find the path. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, and was thus able to find the path.

Upon realizing these facts, he quickly left the mountains and then flew back in.

This time, he quickly found a path leading into the depths of the mountains. After about two hours passed, he found the pit!

Suppressing his excitement, he refrained from immediately jumping inside, and instead surveyed the area. For one thing, he checked the spell formation he had set up earlier to see if anyone else had come by.

After discovering that the spell formation was unaltered, he breathed a sigh of relief. Then he flew into the pit and descended into the necropolis.

Upon entering the necropolis, Bai Xiaochun was thrilled to find that the number of souls had returned to the amount from before. There were clearly more than 100,000,000, which was the original amount before he collected the majority of them.

“Could it be that the souls here are literally without end?!” Overjoyed, he began to toss out Soul Convergence Pills.

“100,000 battle credits!”

“1,000,000 battle credits!”

“Hahaha! 10,000,000 battle credits!” Bai Xiaochun was bubbling with happiness. The only thing he regretted was that he didn’t have more Soul Convergence Pills. This time, he spent a total of two days before he ran through all 5,000 of them. The only reason he took so long was that he tried to make sure that each pill was used in the most effective manner. As such, he continued to proceed further and further into the necropolis.

Two days later, he emerged from the pit with 50,000,000 vengeful souls in his possession. After waiting until the break of dawn was nearing, he followed the same path to the outside and then left for the Great Wall.

He proceeded with extreme nervousness, feeling like he was holding an incredibly valuable treasure, and that someone might try to rob him at any moment. If some accident occurred, and his trip back to the Great Wall was interrupted, then his dream of becoming a major general might be dashed to pieces.

Thankfully, his mask was very powerful, and made him look just like a soul cultivator. Coupled with the caution he showed, it ensured that he didn’t run into any problems. When he finally reached the battlefield outside the Great Wall, he used his Undying Hex ability to get back into the city.

“Now I have more than 70,000,000 vengeful souls. If I convert them all to battle credit, it will be a huge amount. Sadly, I still have to get a lot more before I can get that major general promotion. I have to keep working hard!” Feeling excited, but also worried that something unexpected might occur in the pit, he recruited all of his subordinates to go out and borrow as many Soul Convergence Pills from other members of the five legions as possible.

After all, most of the Soul Convergence Pills that he had concocted since arriving at the Great Wall had been distributed among the five legions.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun didn't remain idle while his subordinates went to borrow Soul Convergence Pills. He went to many of the commissaries in the city that specialized in spell formations, and bought as many pre-packaged formations as he could get his hands on.

After all, he wasn’t sure how many Soul Convergence Pills his subordinates would be able to get, and wanted to be fully prepared on his next trip to the pit.

A few days later, he was delighted to find that his subordinates had managed to get their hands on over 90,000 Soul Convergence Pills.

“So many! This time I should definitely be able to succeed in getting that promotion to major general! With these 90,000 Soul Convergence Pills, plus all the souls I’ve already collected, I should be able to get a total of 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls!” With that, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Then, later that night, he slipped out of the city once again.

Being so familiar with the route, he proceeded along casually, entering the mountains right before the break of dawn. He encountered no problems along the way, and was soon at the pit. There, he put all of the spell formations in place, and then flew on down.

After looking around at all the vengeful souls, Bai Xiaochun was ecstatic to discover that, yet again, they had been replenished to the 100,000,000 level.

“This time, I'm definitely going to get that promotion to major general!” Feeling enormously proud of his imminent success, he headed into the necropolis, tossing out Soul Convergence Pills left and right.

The cracking sound of medicinal pills shattering filled the air. With every pill that shattered, 10,000 vengeful souls would be gathered into a soul sphere. Considering the vast amount of Soul Convergence Pills he had at his disposal, it only took him three days to actually clear out the entire necropolis!

Then, after an incense stick’s worth of time passed, streams of mist began to flow up from the ground, which were filled with countless vengeful souls! The roaring souls began to fly to and fro inside of the necropolis as they searched for Bai Xiaochun, and yet, couldn’t find him.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly as he waited for a bit until the souls had been restored to the 100,000,000 level, then once again began to collect them.

“They’re mine!

“All mine!

“Hahaha! I'm going to be a major general!” What made him even more proud was that he was developing some techniques to collect the souls even more quickly than before. This time, it only took him two days to clear out the entire necropolis.

Then, before long, a third wave of souls appeared....

It was in this fashion that seven days sped by. At that point, he started to run low on Soul Convergence Pills; he only had a few thousand left.

Of course, he wouldn't leave until he was completely out. However, it was at this point that something unique happened; for some unknown reason, after clearing out the necropolis and waiting for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, no new souls appeared.

“Hmm. Aren’t there any more?” Curious, he flew here and there in the necropolis for about an hour, and yet no souls could be seen. Stunned, he murmured, “I guess there really aren’t any more.”

He could only shake his head and sigh ruefully at the fact that he still had some Soul Convergence Pills left, but no vengeful souls to collect. Unfortunately, he was very close to having 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls, which was how many he needed to become a major general.

“And here I thought I had found a never-ending supply of battle credit. Who could have thought this place would run out so quickly?” Feeling less than pleased, he waited around for a bit longer to confirm that no more souls were forthcoming. Finally, he began to fly toward the exit.

However, just when he was about to fly out into the open, everything around him began to tremble, and then, a huge rift opened up in the ground of the necropolis.

In fact, not only was there a rift, but there were numerous crashing sounds like thunder. Apparently, the necropolis was collapsing! Even the shocking crocodile skeleton was beginning to sink down into the earth!

This development caused Bai Xiaochun's face to flicker, and then transform into an expression of delight.

"Don't tell me there's another level down below?!" However, as he looked down, all he saw was a thick, seemingly endless stream of black mist pulsing out from below.

Within that mist, it was just possible to see a gigantic ghost hand stretching out as if to grab Bai Xiaochun, accompanied by a roar of rage.

The sight of the gigantic ghost hand caused Bai Xiaochun's face to fall, and filled his heart with an intense sensation of deadly crisis. Every bit of his flesh and blood began to scream at him that he was descending into incredible danger!

"It can see me?

"I'm finished! I must have provoked some gigantic soul that wants to destroy me!" Screaming and shivering, he hurled out several thousand Soul Convergence Pills, which detonated shortly after, creating a massive gravitational force that caused the ghost hand to distort and slow down. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun began to flee for his life.

Even as he shot out of the pit, another roar of rage could be heard from behind him, and the enormous ghost hand once again reached out to grab him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0519 awe-chapter-520

As the ghost hand moved forward, the air around it distorted, causing everything near Bai Xiaochun to be completely locked down. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t escape any more easily than he could have escaped from a locked cage!

Because of the profound sensation of crisis, his eyes were completely bloodshot, and blue veins even began to bulge out on his face and neck. Just when the hand was about to grab him, though, he roared and called deeply upon his Undying Hex.

He took a step forward, causing his body to suddenly begin to turn blurry. By the time his foot landed, he had suddenly vanished!

A boom rang out as the shocking ghost hand closed around the space Bai Xiaochun had just occupied, and yet, grabbed nothing but air.

An enraged roar filled the pit, a roar so loud that it broke through the spell formations, causing everything to tremble and attracting the attention of numerous people in the area.

Meanwhile, only about five hundred meters beyond the entrance, Bai Xiaochun appeared, staggering forward, coughing up numerous mouthfuls of blood, his face ashen.

Shockingly, his back was also bloodied, and five long wounds had been scraped down it!

It looked the type of serious injury that could even damage internal organs. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had a very powerful fleshly body, and thus managed to hold himself together. Blood was oozing out of his mouth, and his heart was pounding with lingering fear, and yet he didn’t even pause for a moment before speeding off.

Even as he shot out of the strange mountains, a black pillar of light rumbled up into the sky behind him, creating a shockwave that rolled out in all directions.

The natural restrictive spells in the area were all smashed by the powerful energy shooting out from the pit, and were completely destroyed.

Bai Xiaochun was scared out of his mind, and was fleeing for his life through the wild terrain, heart pounding as he focused solely on getting back to the Great Wall.

“I'm finished. Kaput. I got too greedy, didn’t I, and summoned something big...?” Feeling very dismayed that he had brought about such a catastrophe, he pushed forward with greater speed.

Meanwhile, many savages and soul cultivators near the pit could see what was happening, and looked over in astonishment.

“What’s going on!?”

“Those fluctuations are unbelievable!” Even as they cried out in surprise, they began to head in the direction of the pit to investigate.

Thankfully for them, after the black pillar of light shot up and destroyed the spell formations and natural restrictive spells, the enormous ghost hand didn’t appear again.

Therefore, they weren’t in any extreme danger, and in fact, after they arrived at the pit and peered down inside, some of them flew in to look around more.

The forces in Great Wall City also noticed the black pillar of light. Chen Hetian stepped out of the huge pagoda, and looked at the black pillar and its incredible fluctuations, a very serious expression on his face.

“Send someone to investigate,” he ordered. “Find out what that is!” Even as he passed down orders, Bai Lin saw the black pillar and sensed its fluctuations.

Further out in the Wildlands, on the plain with the encampment of hundreds of savage tribes, a large tent could be seen in the middle of the camp. Seated inside that tent was a young woman in a long red robe, who was none other than Mistress Red-Dust. Suddenly, her eyes opened, and she looked up into the sky at the pillar of light.

“Could that be...?” After a moment of hesitation, she passed down orders for people to go investigate.

Even as the two major forces sent people to look into the situation, two figures could be seen standing in the mountains a few kilometers away. One was a young man, the other a young woman, and they appeared to be in sore straits. Their clothing was ripped and torn, and haunted expressions could be seen in their eyes, the type that would leave anyone who saw them shaken. They almost looked like wild beasts.

There was nothing about these two that indicated they were cultivators. They had soul fluctuations rippling off of them, and also possessed shockingly murderous auras.

The young man seemed cold and proud, while the young woman was extremely beautiful. Both of them had clearly been injured fairly recently. Although their injuries had healed, the evidence of their presence was clear; apparently, these two had fought numerous bloody battles.

This young man and woman were none other than Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan!

After leaving the Great Wall years ago, they had begun to travel about in the Wildlands. They had fought many battles, and even built up a small team composed of other cultivators from the Great Wall whom they had encountered during their travels. However, at this point, everyone else was dead, leaving them as the sole survivors. They had gone through what was essentially a baptism of blood, leaving them completely reborn inside and out.

In the past, there had been something tender and immature about them, but that was long gone now. Instead, they were completely composed and cold-looking!

“We need to get back to the Great Wall as quickly as possible....” Zhao Tianjiao said. “I already sent a message to Master. Once we get back, we can spend the rest of our time as members of the five legions.” He chuckled, causing the scar that ran from the right corner of his mouth to his ear to twist in ferocious fashion.

Chen Yueshan seemed slightly distressed as she stood there next to Zhao Tianjiao. In response to his words, she looked over at him and nodded, her gaze lingering on his scar. He had earned that scar in battle when he had saved her from a dangerous necromancer.

The mere thought of the bitterness of that battle left her heart thumping with fear. Thankfully, their training outside the wall had resulted in injuries, and yet had resulted in them finding a deva beast soul!

Just as they were about to head back to the Great Wall, they saw a shocking black pillar of light shooting up into the air off in the distance. After some discussion about the matter, Zhao Tianjiao sent a message to his master Chen Hetian asking for instructions about what to do. After word came back, they began to head, not toward the Great Wall, but toward the black pillar.

Thanks to the black pillar of light, both the Wildlands and the Great Wall were sending people to investigate the situation.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was speeding along at top speed, his face ashen. Eventually, he caught sight of the Great Wall, whereupon he gritted his teeth and yet again called upon the Undying Hex to pass inside.

After coughing up some blood, he staggered back into his residence in his command center, whereupon he fell over, unconscious.

Three days later, he woke up and struggled into a cross-legged position. After examining himself, he found that his five yin organs and six yang organs were all in extreme pain, and his cultivation base was in total chaos.

“That ghost hand was absolutely horrifying,” he thought. “And it didn’t even grab me, just graze my back….” When he thought back to everything that had occurred, the fear in his heart continued to eat away at him. Of course, he also knew that one of the reasons he was so hurt was because he had used the Undying Hex to pierce through the air and get past multiple spell formations.

Whether it was the natural restrictive spells from the mountains, or the Great Wall’s spell formation, piercing through the air to get past them was very harmful to him.

Thankfully, his Undying Live Forever Technique was very powerful, and was able to sustain such stress. Normally speaking, even a Nascent Soul cultivator would hardly be able to accomplish what he had accomplished.

Another upside to the situation was that Bai Xiaochun’s regenerative powers vastly exceeded those of normal people. In combination with all of the medicinal pills he had at his disposal, it only took him about seven days to be almost completely recovered.

During that time, he didn’t dare to go out. As he pondered the ghost hand, the black pillar of light, the destruction of the necropolis, and the enormous, 300,000-meter crocodile skeleton, he came to the conclusion that the pit definitely harbored some monumental secret!

Then he thought about how he was the one responsible for everything that had occurred, and it struck him with even more fear. At the same time, he felt wronged.

“It’s not like I did it on purpose....” he thought, sighing. After all, he had only been trying to get his hands on some souls.

During his period of recovery, he continued to get reports from Zhao Long and the rest of his regiment. That was how he learned that both Great Wall City and the Wildlands had taken the matter of the black pillar of light very seriously. In fact, quite a few people had entered the pit to explore the area.

Unfortunately, there was no other news than that.

Another half a month went by, during which time bits of news continued to trickle in. Considering that Bai Xiaochun was only a colonel, he didn’t have access to very many details. Therefore, he went to Bai Lin to ask for more information. Apparently, quite a few people had been sent to gather intelligence, and although there had been some conflicts with the Wildlands forces, they were still able to send back some useful information. Supposedly, there was a big necropolis in the area where the beam of light had originated. When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he felt a bit more at ease.

“I guess I just opened a necropolis, that’s all,” he said to comfort himself. Looking out at the quiet streets in the city, he rubbed his bag of holding, and his eyes began to shine. “Well, the whole reason I went through all of that was to become a major general. I think now the time has come to finish the job!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0520 awe-chapter-521

When he thought about how impressive and glorious it would be to become a major general, his excitement began to build. With that, he hurried out into the command center, where Zhao Long and the others clasped hands in salute.

Waving his hand in grand fashion, he tried to sound as heroic as possible as he said, “Come, my brothers. Join me at the pagoda to witness... my promotion to major general!”

Zhao Long’s eyes went wide, but he quickly began to send messages to call everyone together. Before long, all 1,000 members of Bai Xiaochun’s regiment were notified, and were hurrying over.

“Brothers,” he said loudly, “once I become a major general, we’ll have more meat to eat and more alcohol to drink!” Then he flew into the air toward the pagoda.

All the cultivators in the regiment were very excited, and none of them questioned Bai Xiaochun’s words at all. If he said that he was going to become a major general, then they had complete confidence that he would do just that.

It made quite a grand sight as the entire group clustered around him and flew toward the pagoda.

The sight of more than a thousand beams of light shooting through Great Wall City captured the attention of quite a few other cultivators. However, many soldiers had looks of derision on their faces. After all, the sight of Bai Xiaochun parading through the city wasn’t anything new. The only surprising thing was how long it had been since they last saw him do it.

Most of them gave him little more than a single glance. Before long, Bai Xiaochun and his men were outside of the pagoda, where quite a few other cultivators were gathered to either purchase items or turn in souls.

The arrival of Bai Xiaochun and his men didn’t cause too much of a stir, and most people just continued on with whatever business they had at hand.

Ignoring them, Bai Xiaochun walked up to the pagoda, took a deep breath, and then flew up into the air, just as he had seen the top chosen do in the past when they handed in vengeful souls. There, he waved his sleeve, producing a soul sphere which he subsequently crushed!

A boom could be heard as souls poured out from the crushed soul sphere. The sight of so many souls attracted a bit of envy from some of the cultivators present, although most of them weren’t paying much attention.

“Oh, it’s Bai Xiaochun!”

As soon as the 10,000 vengeful souls appeared, the giant eye atop the pagoda absorbed them.

Feeling quite pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun patted his bag of holding to produce another soul sphere. After crushing it, another 10,000 souls appeared, which the eye absorbed. Then he produced a third sphere, causing quite a few curious eyes to look up at him from below.

Just when he was about to crush the third soul sphere, a blood-colored beam of light appeared off in the distance, which caused a murderous aura to fill the entire area.

“That’s... Ji Feng!”

“Colonel Ji Feng! Back before Bai Xiaochun rose to prominence, he was considered the Core Formation cultivator most likely to become a major general! I wonder which of the two of them will actually succeed?”

As the crowd buzzed, the beam of light faded away, revealing a young man with long hair, clad in a suit of blood-colored armor.

That young man was none other than Ji Feng!

He hovered to a stop in midair on the other side of the huge pagoda, making it possible for him to look Bai Xiaochun right in the eye. When he did, an expression of scorn appeared on his face.

“Trifling apothecary,” he thought. “Other than a nice cultivation base, what do you have? I, Ji Feng, have too much battle credit to count. What makes you think you deserve to compare yourself to me?!”

Not only did Ji Feng despise Bai Xiaochun, he despised his Soul Convergence Pills as well. As far as he was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was nothing more than an apothecary who had used some fancy tricks to get into a good position, and didn’t compare to him at all!

He actually hadn’t planned to hand in any souls today, but after seeing Bai Xiaochun show up, he decided to come put him in his place.

Bai Xiaochun recognized Ji Feng. Technically speaking, this was their second time encountering each other. The first time had been back when he first got to the Great Wall, and had come to check how much battle credit he had to spend to get certain items. At that time, Ji Feng had handed in 10,000 souls to the pagoda and caused quite a stir. Of course, that was before the advent of Soul Convergence Pills, when getting 10,000 souls together in one place had been quite an accomplishment.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the scorn in Ji Feng’s eyes, he was actually a bit surprised. “I never did anything to offend you, did I?” he thought.

But after thinking about it for a moment, he realized what was going on, and glared at Ji Feng.

Ji Feng looked back at him coldly, and soon, it became obvious that they were having a bit of a showdown.

When the cultivators down below saw what was happening, their spirits were roused, and they began to pay close attention.

“They’re having a stand-off!”

“I'm more of a fan of Colonel Ji Feng. He got his battle credit from climbing mountains of corpses and swimming through seas of blood!”

“Didn’t Colonel Bai Xiaochun do the same thing though? Forget about the Soul Convergence Pill, for a moment. Do you know how many people he saved in that battle!?”

As people talked about the matter, and even placed some bets, Ji Feng chuckled coldly and then waved his arm, sending a collection of 100,000 vengeful soul streaming out of his bag of holding. Although the souls were somewhat listless and faded, as soon as they appeared in the open, the huge eye quickly absorbed them.

“100,000 souls....”

“Colonel Ji Feng definitely deserves his reputation as a top chosen in the five legions. He doesn’t even use Soul Convergence Pills, but still managed to collect 100,000 souls!”

After tossing out the 100,000 souls, Ji Feng looked over coldly at Bai Xiaochun, and from the look in his eye, his message was clear. *You have souls, right? Well let's have a little contest and see who has the most!*

A smile immediately broke out on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Now that he thought about it, handing over souls all by himself was actually pretty boring. But who would have thought that Ji Feng would suddenly show up and want to have a contest? The truth was that Bai Xiaochun loved crushing opponents in this way. Sighing, he waved his hand to send twenty soul spheres flying out.

A boom rang out as the soul spheres collapsed, sending out a vast cloud of 200,000 souls. Almost as soon as the shocking sight appeared, the huge eye atop the pagoda began to shine brightly, and quickly absorbed them.

Then, Bai Xiaochun looked over at Ji Feng with an expression of open provocation.

Ji Feng’s expression turned grim, and he chuckled in disdain. Waving his hand, he sent tens of thousands of souls flying out of his bag of holding. However, he didn't stop there. Having emptied one bag of holding, he pulled out another, opened it, and sent an additional group of tens of thousands of souls out to be absorbed by the huge eye.

This scene immediately provoked exclamations of shock from the surrounding cultivators.

“Heavens! Just how many vengeful souls does Colonel Ji Feng have?!”

“How did he possibly get so many souls...?”

Everyone else was shocked, but Bai Xiaochun was actually feeling a bit impatient.

“Alright, how many souls do you have?” he said loudly. “Just spit out the number. Sitting around while you open up a bunch of bags of holding is too boring. How about this. You say a number, and if I can’t produce that many souls, then I’ll admit defeat.”

The arrogant tone with which he spoke immediately caused the entire area to go quiet.

“Think you’re really tough stuff, don’t you?” Ji Feng replied. “Well, since you’re asking to be humiliated, then I’ll oblige!” Then his hands blurred as he sent one bag of holding after another flying out, until there were nine of them. “Feast your eyes upon 2,700,000 vengeful souls!”

Although Ji Feng’s words were spoken with coolness and calm, it was impossible to conceal the arrogance which existed deep in his bones.

Complete and utter silence met Ji Feng’s words and actions. A few breaths of time passed, and then, with the exception of Bai Xiaochun’s subordinates, everyone devolved into a huge commotion.

“2,700,000? Heavens!”

“I can't believe that the exalted Colonel Ji Feng can produce so many souls! That's... that’s as many souls as you’ll see in a small-scale battle outside the Great Wall!” In addition to crying out in surprise, many cultivators began to send messages to their friends, telling them to hurry over to watch the scene playing out.

“Hurry up, Colonel Ji Feng is handing in 2,700,000 vengeful souls! This kind of thing has never happened before, it’s incredible!!”

“Get over to the pagoda!”

Meanwhile, Ji Feng was looking over at Bai Xiaochun with feigned indifference, a faint smile on his face that reflected his confidence in having secured a victory.

“I don’t have that many souls,” he said, “only about 2,000,000. What about you, Bai Xiaochun...?”

Sticking his chin up, Bai Xiaochun said, “You’re right, that isn’t very many. Only 2,000,000? A drop in the bucket!”

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was a top martial arts master fighting a little kid. It was actually a wonderful feeling. Chuckling, he waved his hand.

300 soul spheres flew out.... But things didn’t stop there. Next came another 300, and then 400.... That was a total of 1,000 soul spheres, all floating there for everyone to see!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0521 awe-chapter-522

The sight of 1,000 soul spheres flying out into the open caused jaws to drop everywhere. Ji Feng was so shocked that he wasn’t even sure he could believe what he was seeing. Everything was deathly quiet in the area surrounding the pagoda.

As for the cultivators who were currently in the middle of flying over to the pagoda, when they got close and saw 1,000 soul spheres, their eyes went wide.

“One... one thousand?”

“Heavens! Don’t tell me he actually has 10,000,000 vengeful souls? How is that even possible?!?!”

“There’s no way that each of those soul spheres has 10,000 vengeful souls in it. Is there?”

Everyone was reeling in shock, and Ji Feng was struggling with an intense feeling of unease. Although it was impossible to tell exactly how many souls were inside each of the 1,000 soul spheres, he couldn’t help but get very nervous. Just when he was about to open his mouth to say something, though, Bai Xiaochun, who apparently didn’t feel he had dominated the situation enough, licked his lips and said, “Using 1,000 soul spheres to crush your 2,000,000 souls is a bit boring. Check *this* out!”

Every time he encountered a situation like this to totally show off, he got very excited. Clearing his throat loudly, he waved his hand in a circle, causing another 1,000 soul spheres to fly out. However, things weren’t over yet....

Another 1,000 appeared. Then another. And another.

In the blink of an eye, a total of 10,000 soul spheres were floating around!

Everyone present felt their minds reeling as they gasped in astonishment. As they stared, they mentally calculated how many souls that could represent, and were filled with even more incredulity than before. In fact, many of them couldn’t even believe that their own calculations were correct.

“No way....”

“10,000? Okay... theoretically it’s possible. Maybe each of the soul spheres only has a few souls in it...?” Even as everyone waited in nervous uncertainty, Ji Feng lost his ability to keep his mouth shut.

“You think you can pull a fast one, Bai Xiaochun?” he said loudly. “I refuse to believe that you have 10,000 souls sealed inside each of those soul spheres. What a joke! 10,000 soul spheres with 10,000 souls each? Do you really think that someone like you can collect more than 100,000,000 souls?” Considering how bloodshot Ji Feng’s eyes were, it was clear that he definitely didn’t believe Bai Xiaochun had 100,000,000 souls.

After all, a group of souls that large would only be seen in large-scale battles. Furthermore, if they were all released at once, they would most certainly blot out the sky and cause the lands to quake violently.

“Don’t believe it? Well why don’t you just take a look?!” Lifting his chin slightly, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger at the soul spheres.

“Open!”

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

10,000 soul spheres exploded, and in the blink of an eye, souls immediately began to spill out, filling the entire 30,000-meter area, and then rapidly expanding to fill a 300,000-meter area!

And yet, things weren’t over yet! Within a single breath of time, that area stretched to 3,000,000 meters!!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was doing that on purpose. If he had wished, he could have prevented such a dramatic display. But right now, the entire 3,000,000-meter area around him was filled with vengeful souls. That area far surpassed the limits of Great Wall City, and ensured that the entire city was now cast into darkness. Heaven shook and the earth quaked, causing countless cultivators of the five legions in the city to look up in shock.

“Are the Wildlands attacking?”

“Did the spell formation get destroyed?!?!”

“What’s... what’s happening?!?!” As countless exclamations of shock rose up, the cultivators near the pagoda were trembling mutely, as if their minds had been reduced to complete blanks....

Even the generals of the five legions were shaken. Bai Lin flew out into the open and looked up in astonishment at the sky, as did the other generals.

“How... how many souls is that!?!?”

Numerous beams of light were flying through the air toward the pagoda as almost all of the cultivators of the five legions struggled with each other to be able to witness what was happening.

The commotion caused Chen Hetian to emerge from the pagoda, whereupon he looked around in disbelief. At that point, the huge eye atop the pagoda began to shine with unprecedentedly bright light, a light that seemed excited. It was almost as if the eye itself possessed a spirit, and that spirit were jubilant.

A gravitational force sprang out, causing winds to scream as a vortex formed. Soon, the shocking sea of souls began to slowly shrink down as it was absorbed, the process of which took a full hour.

As the light bathed Bai Xiaochun, he felt satisfied to an indescribable degree. And of course, his battle credit skyrocketed.

As the sea of souls faded away, Bai Xiaochun hovered there in midair, his chin stuck up, his expression tranquil, but his heart leaping with excitement. In fact, he had to repeatedly remind himself that in this moment, he needed to keep his cool.

The cultivators in the area were stupefied, and were looking at Bai Xiaochun both as if he were a god, and also as if he were some sort of freak of nature!!

Ji Feng was trembling as violently, as if Bai Xiaochun had struck him physically. His entire world suddenly seemed to have been turned upside down, his mind rendered a complete blank. Clearly, this was an event which he would never be able to forget for the rest of his life.

People began to look over at Ji Feng with expressions of sympathy. The blow which had just been delivered to him was a vicious one; his opponent had used 100,000,000 souls to crush his paltry 2,000,000....

Even Bai Lin and the other generals were looking at him with sympathy, as was three-eyed Chen Hetian. In that moment of extreme pride, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat loudly and said, “Everybody back up a bit. The next set is even larger....”

Before anyone could react, the huge eye atop the pagoda sent out blinding beams of light that almost seemed to be pandering to Bai Xiaochun as they created incredible pressure that pushed all of the surrounding cultivators away!

Not even Bai Lin and the other generals were exempt. Soon, the only person standing nearby was Chen Hetian, who was staring with wide-eyed shock at what was happening. He had never seen the true spirit inside of the eye do anything remotely like this. It was almost as if it were following orders from Bai Xiaochun.

Beads of sweat popped out on his forehead as he muttered, “This... this....”

That was when Bai Xiaochun slapped his bag of holding, causing numerous soul spheres to pour out of it. 1,000. 3,000. 5,000....

In the blink of an eye, another 10,000 soul spheres had appeared!

Even as gasps began to ring out, more soul spheres flew out. 15,000. 20,000... 30,000... 40,000....

Every single cultivator in the entire city was shaken to the ultimate degree. Finally, when the number of soul spheres reached 60,000, the people erupted into a thunderous hubbub.

“Impossible!!”

“Did this Bai Xiaochun tap into the Underworld River or something!?!?”

“So many souls.... Heavens! Are... are they really souls?!?!”

“Unheard-of. This is completely unheard-of!!”

Bai Lin and the other generals were dumbstruck, and Chen Hetian was completely flabbergasted, and incapable of even reacting.

However, most elated of all was the huge eye. It seemed openly excited, as though it were trembling in joy.

Soon, more than 80,000 soul spheres were visible, and the excitement of the huge eye began to affect the Great Wall’s spell formation. The spell formation shield was rippling and distorting, the sight of which cast shock into the hearts of the onlookers.

Outside in the Wildlands, people could see the distortions on the spell formation shield, and although they weren’t sure what was happening, they could tell that something momentous was occurring. Curious, Mistress Red-Dust finally sent some divine sense out toward the Great Wall to see what was going on.

It was at that point that 90,000 soul spheres were out in the open. Then the huge eye emitted a scream of frenzied delight that caused everything in heaven and earth to tremble!

The sound of it caused Mistress Red-Dust’s divine sense to instantly shatter. Back in her tent in the Wildlands, her eyes snapped open, and she coughed up a massive mouthful of blood.

“Impossible!” she exclaimed. “I can understand why the true spirit in that eye is willing to protect the Great Wall, considering it made an agreement with the Celestial. But why would it go so far as to use True Spirit Resonance to wound me and force me away?!?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0522 awe-chapter-523

When Mistress Red-Dust’s divine sense was shattered, Chen Hetian detected it. First, he looked out at the Wildlands, then he looked down at the huge eye, his expression that of amazement.

Obviously, he had also detected the True Spirit Resonance....

A true spirit could call upon the quintessence of its voice to unleash a True Spirit Resonance, but would usually only do so in extremely dire circumstances. It was quite draining on the true spirit, but was incredibly powerful, so much so that even a deva would be forced to go all out to defend against it.

Although the True Spirit Resonance from moments ago had not been fully powered, it had been enough to destroy Mistress Red-Dust’s divine sense, and would definitely have been very draining to the true spirit.

The true spirit and its pagoda were closely connected to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and in fact, only a few people knew the true origin of the true spirit, one of those people being Chen Hetian. The truth was that it... came from Heavenspan Island in the Heavenspan Sea!

To the riversource sects on the four branches of the Heavenspan River, Heavenspan Island was like a supreme entity. In the mortal world, emperors were often supported by noble ministers, and the relationship between the four riversource sects and Heavenspan Island was much the same. The sects were the nobility, and Heavenspan Island was the imperial palace!

Heavenspan Island was also the home of the Celestial. Naturally... he was the ruler of the lands of Heavenspan.

And now, the true spirit who had been convinced by Heavenspan Island to guard the Great Wall had suddenly acted in this way.... As a result, Chen Hetian couldn't help but look with glittering eyes at the more than 90,000 soul spheres, and Bai Xiaochun.

"It's protecting its food.... Mistress Red-Dust was just unlucky to send her divine sense over right in this moment. As for this Bai Xiaochun, how did he get his hands on so many vengeful souls…? He's certainly full of secrets." Over the years, Chen Hetian had secretly been paying close attention to Bai Xiaochun. Whether it was his Soul Convergence Pills or his exploding pill furnaces, he had watched over everything carefully. He had even sent some Soul Convergence Pills back to the sect for them to analyze. Of course, he had done all of these things very carefully; he knew that running investigations into members of the five legions was a sensitive task.

Even as Chen Hetian pondered these things, Bai Xiaochun grandly swished his sleeve.

"Open up!" he roared. Instantly, all of the 90,000 soul spheres vibrated before bursting open. Clouds of souls immediately poured out, filling the entire city and then pouring out beyond it.

30,000 meters. 300,000 meters. 3,000,000 meters. 30,000,000 meters.... In the blink of an eye, the cloud of souls spread out to cover all creation!

It was such a shocking event that it wasn't just the cultivators of the five legions in Great Wall City who were astonished. Even people in World City noticed what was happening, and their expressions flickered in surprise.

It was the same in the Wildlands, where the savages and soul cultivators were completely flabbergasted.

“What’s going on!?”

“Heavens! What... what is that?!”

As the cloud of souls spread out, shocking everyone in the area, the eye atop the tower began to tremble as if in excitement. Then, bright rays of light erupted from the eye, almost as if the true spirit felt that the previous absorption method was too slow, and that it needed... to come out into the open!!

The shining light rapidly converged down into a single point, which then flew out of the eye and transformed into a bat!

It was partially translucent, with bright red eyes, and after it came out into the open, it threw its head back and roared, causing an enormous, shadowy figure to appear in the sky above it.

That shadowy figure was also a bat, so big it filled the entire sky. As soon as it appeared, it took in a deep breath which caused heaven and earth to tremble as the cloud of souls began to move. They almost looked like tide waters as they moved inexorably toward the enormous bat.

The ordinary cultivators of the five legions were trembling in shock; never before had anyone been privy to the fact that there was a bat inside of the huge eye!!

Although Bai Lin and the other four generals had been aware of it, they had never personally seen it, and therefore, all of them were also gasping in astonishment.

Heaven and earth distorted as the massive cloud of souls was absorbed by the gigantic bat. The process took approximately two hours, after which the enormous shadowy bat looked around with cold but contented eyes. A moment later, it ignored everything else around and allowed its gaze to focus on Bai Xiaochun. Within that gaze was approval, and also a sort of newly-acquired closeness.

A moment later, the image of the bat transformed back into a dot of light that returned to the huge eye.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback by everything that had occurred, having never imagined the act of turning in a few souls would result in such a scene.

Now, he hovered there, heart racing amidst the quiet as all gazes shifted from the huge eye to him.

He blinked a few times, mind racing as he tried to come up with an explanation. Meanwhile, his identity medallion in his bag of holding began to vibrate with unprecedented intensity. Startled, Bai Xiaochun pulled out the medallion and scanned it, whereupon his eyes went wide.

“So many!!”

The battle credits in his identity medallion were currently skyrocketing. Within moments, it passed the point necessary to receive a promotion to major general, and still kept going. Soon, he had enough for two such promotions! Only then did the total begin to slow.

The staggering number of battle credits was such that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly popped out of his skull. His heart began to beat rapidly, and although he wasn't actually sure exactly what he could get with so much battle credit, he was sure that it was definitely enough to become a major general.

Clearly, the true spirit in the huge eye was very pleased with him....

Bai Xiaochun looked excitedly at his battle credit, and forgot any plans of trying to explain the situation. Holding his identity medallion high above his head, he shouted, “I want a promotion to major general!”

The surrounding cultivators were stunned.

“What... what did he just say? Major general!?”

“Bai Xiaochun wants a promotion to major general?!?!”

“This is astonishing! Whether it was the cloud of souls, or the actions of the eye, or his request for a promotion, this... all of this... Heavens! Bai Xiaochun is definitely going to become a legend!!”

“He’s actually handing in souls to become a major general?”

In almost the same moment that the words left his mouth, the battle credit in his identity medallion was reduced by roughly half.

Then, blinding light shone out from the medallion, as Bai Xiaochun’s rank as listed inside was altered. Before, he was a colonel, but now he was... a major general!

However, attached to the title was another word: acting.

After all, the rank of major general was a very important one, and was essentially the highest rank any ordinary cultivator could achieve within the five legions. The five generals and the deva patriarch all had to ratify the decision and submit it to the true spirit, whereupon a report would be sent to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Another factor to consider was that there were currently no open slots for major generals within the five legions. If a new major general were to be promoted, one of the previous major generals would have to be transferred away.

It was a complicated process that required numerous formalities. Therefore, when Bai Xiaochun spoke the words out loud, and the crowd began to clamor in response, Chen Hetian, Bai Lin, and the other generals immediately felt headaches coming on.

Sighing, Chen Hetian transmitted his thoughts to Bai Lin and the generals. “Well, what do you all think? How do we handle the situation?”

However, none of them had any idea what to do; this sudden turn of events had been completely unexpected.

If Bai Xiaochun had used some other means to rise through the ranks, they might not have needed to consider the matter. However, his actions had caught them completely unprepared. Not even Bai Lin, who had actually attempted to stoke Bai Xiaochun’s ambitions in the first place, could ever have imagined that he would actually become a major general so quickly.

Much of their shock stemmed from the fact that from the moment the Great Wall had been built until now, Bai Xiaochun was the first person to ever hand in enough souls to be directly promoted to major general.

Seeing that nobody else was saying anything, Bai Lin braced himself and said, “Well, I think Bai Xiaochun clearly has the skills necessary. I don’t see any problem.”

“This is not children’s game!!” Chen Hetian replied angrily. The rank of major general was far too important to be taken lightly. However, there was no way to deny that Bai Xiaochun had earned it. Refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the promotion would be preposterous.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was not very happy. Unaware that Chen Hetian and the generals needed to approve the promotion, he couldn’t help but feel a bit irritated that he was listed as only an acting major general.

“Senior Bat, this isn’t very sincere of you!” he said loudly. “I gave you a whole bunch of souls! I mean... there were more than 1,000,000,000!! And you only made me an acting major general?!” Not willing to give up so easily, he raised his voice and continued, “If you act like this, then why should I turn in more souls later? And what about all the other Fellow Daoists here? Why should they turn in souls if they can’t trust that they’ll be rewarded properly?!” The huge eye glittered as if in thought. After a few breaths worth of time passed, and even before Chen Hetian and the others could finish discussing the matter... a message appeared within the identity medallions of all cultivators of the five legions.

“Bai Xiaochun has been promoted to the rank of major general!” The true spirit had gone over the heads of Chen Hetian and the generals to directly report the matter to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0523 awe-chapter-524

“Major general?!” As news spread back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, people were initially taken aback, and then quickly sank into astonishment. Big Fatty Zhang had long since succeeded at forming his Will Core and had been taken in as an apprentice by the hallmaster of the hall of Devil Slayers. He was in the middle of a session of cultivation when the news came in, and was immediately enthused.

“Good job, Xiaochun!!”

Meanwhile, back at the Great Wall, the five legions were in an uproar. Earlier, they had heard Bai Xiaochun’s request, but hadn’t seen any confirmation that the promotion had been granted. But then, moments later, the message was sent out indicating that Bai Xiaochun had indeed become a major general!!

Bai Xiaochun was beside himself with joy as he looked at his identity medallion, and the word “acting” vanish from in front of his rank of major general. Very pleased with himself, he laughed loudly and said, “From this day on, Bai Xiaochun is a major general!!”

Chen Hetian, Bai Lin, and all the other generals were shocked. After exchanging glances, a strange expression appeared on Bai Lin’s face, and Chen Hetian looked up wryly at the true spirit in the huge eye.

Clearly, the promotion was the true spirit’s way of thanking Bai Xiaochun. After all, a huge amount of vengeful soul like that would be unprecedentedly useful to the true spirit.

In the end, Chen Hetian sighed and decided not to worry about the matter any more than necessary.

“Bai Lin,” he said, “considering that Bai Xiaochun is a Skin Flayer, why don’t you arrange for one of your current major generals to retire....” Then, he departed, shaking his head the entire way.

Seven days sped by in a blur. The entire time, Great Wall City was filled with talk of Bai Xiaochun handing in souls, and his promotion to major general. In fact, such stories would continue to persist for much longer than seven days.

Although countless cultivators were envious of what had happened, it also sparked hope in their hearts. Suddenly, they felt much more anticipation for the possibilities their own futures held.

Bai Xiaochun was extremely famous by this point. Although his name wasn’t necessarily known among everyone in the three major cities within the Great Wall region, everyone in a position of power had heard of him.

Something else happened during the seven days which passed. The major general of the 3rd Corps, of which Bai Xiaochun’s regiment was a part, was convinced by Bai Lin to return to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

That major general wasn’t angry with Bai Xiaochun, but rather, quite grateful. He had been serving at the Great Wall for far many years, and upon returning to the sect, would become an elder in the Hall of Steel Veins. He would also be generously compensated by the sect for all the battle credit he had accumulated.

Although he would miss the Great Wall in some ways, going back to the sect was actually the best option for him.

Normally speaking, major generals were such important people that they couldn’t just leave the Great Wall whenever they wished. In fact, the other major generals were actually a bit envious.

Before leaving, he visited Bai Xiaochun to both express his thanks and also transfer his personal staff over for Bai Xiaochun to make use of. Bai Xiaochun was quite moved at the man's sincerity, and guaranteed over and over again that he would treat the staff extremely fairly.

A few days after the old man left the Great Wall, Bai Xiaochun’s official commission was handed down. He was now the major general of the 3rd Corps of the Skin Flayers!

The day the commission came down, Bai Xiaochun was trembling with excitement, and looked as proud as a rooster as he put on his intimidating, glittering major general's armor. The suit of armor had a built-in spell formation that, upon activation, instantly caused his entire person to blur and distort, as if intense, shocking energy were building up.

His hair even flew around him wildly for a moment before his features became clear again. With that, he pulled out his copper mirror to examine himself.

After preening for a long moment, he chuckled and said, “What do you say, little magic mirror? How do I look?”

Imposter Nightcrypt’s soul appeared within the mirror, holding back a sigh as he put a shocked expression onto his face.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was elated by his response.

After a long moment passed, imposter Nightcrypt seemed to recover from his shock, and then began to praise Bai

Xiaochun in very exaggerated fashion.

“Heavens! Sir, are you really the imposing, handsome, carefree, and consummate chosen Bai Xiaochun? Impossible! The exalted Bai Xiaochun, who in my heart is a figure who shines more brightly than the sun itself, is clearly a colonel!”

Although Bai Xiaochun was very pleased by this, he hid his smile behind a blank face and said, “Alright, enough with the flattery. Do you really think Bai Xiaochun the kind of person who likes to be brown-nosed? I wanted your opinion on whether or not the armor fits properly!”

Imposter Nightcrypt rolled his eyes inwardly, well aware that if he did as Bai Xiaochun had actually asked, and stopped flattering him, then Bai Xiaochun would punish him.

“I don’t like brown-nosing either,” imposter Nightcrypt said. “Nobody in this world does!” Inwardly, he was filled with disdain, but didn’t show that. Instead, he continued to flatter Bai Xiaochun for the time it takes an incense stick to burn before actually getting around to answering the initial question.

“That armor was made specifically for you, wasn’t it? It fits perfectly! Although, I do have to say that the reason it looks so intimidating isn’t because of the armor itself, but because of how you wear it!” Hearing imposter Nightcrypt’s boot-licking was one of Bai Xiaochun’s favorite pastimes, and he truly admired his way with words. Finally, he cleared his throat, tossed some medicinal pills into the copper mirror, and then somberly walked out of his residence.

Outside, the 10,000 cultivators of the 3rd Corps were all standing at attention. As soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, Zhao Long stepped forward and shouted, “3rd Corps, hand salute!”

As soon as the words left Zhao Long’s mouth, the 10,000 cultivators clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Greetings, Major General!”

When they shouted their greeting, their words echoed about as loudly as thunder.

Seeing 10,000 people lined up in front of him caused Bai Xiaochun to sigh inwardly and think back to how he had come to Great Wall City all by himself, and had climbed from the rank of lieutenant to captain, and then colonel. Now, here he was at the very pinnacle, a major general.

The mere thought of how much work he had put into becoming a major general left him sighing ceaselessly.

Finally, he waved his hand and said, “Very well, let’s go for a bit of a walk.”

With that, his thousand-man regiment from before stepped forward and fell into ranks around him to act as his personal guard. At the same time, the ten colonels under his command also stepped forward.

As they flew up into the air, the rest of the corps spread out to clear a path and make sure no one got too close.

Bai Xiaochun felt extremely excited to be so awe-inspiring, and was very pleased that all of his hard work had paid off. He even made sure to proceed along slowly so everyone could look at him, and also took time to chat with his colonels. The cautious way they carried out conversation with him left him very pleased.

Quite a few people noticed that he was parading through the city. Some time back, he had done the same thing as a colonel, but this time, he was a major general.

The news that Bai Xiaochun had been commissioned as the major general of the 3rd Corps of the Skin Flayers was big news in the Wildlands. Intelligence regarding him was actually very important in general there. Whether it was his exploding pill furnaces or his Soul Convergence Pills, everything he did seemed to hurt them.

When the news reached Mistress Red-Dust in her command tent, she looked at the intelligence report before crushing the jade slip.

“So that’s what happened the other day,” she said. “Bai Xiaochun turned in souls to get battle credit, which then earned him a promotion to major general.” Kneeling in front of her was a necromancer in a gray robe, whose cultivation base fluctuations placed him in the Nascent Soul level.

“According to the information from our spies,” he said, “that's exactly what happened. More specifically, Bai Xiaochun handed in more than 1,000,000,000 souls....” Even the necromancer almost couldn’t believe the number he had just spoken out loud.

“1,000,000,000....” Mistress Red-Dust murmured, her eyes flickering with cold light. After a moment, she waved her hand. “Send down orders to put Bai Xiaochun in 5th place on the Execution List. Increase the bounty on his head to two deva beast souls!

“Yes ma’am!” the necromancer said with a somber nod of his head. With that, he left.

Before long, word spread to Great Wall City that Bai Xiaochun was now in 5th place on the Wildlands Execution List, and that the reward for killing him had increased to two deva beast souls. When Bai Xiaochun heard the news, he was quite shocked.

“How ruthless of them....” he thought. He almost couldn’t believe that the Wildlands hated him so much that they were willing to pay two deva beast souls to see him dead.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0524 awe-chapter-525

“If things keep going on like this,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “I wonder if they’ll increase the reward to an actual deva soul one day?” After thinking about the frightening implications for a moment, he buried such thoughts and then decided that he would never again take a single step outside the Great Wall on his own.

“Hmmmph! If I do have to go out, I’ll take my entire 10,000-man corps with me. I refuse to believe that anyone in the Wildlands can kill me with them around! Of course, there might be some spies among the cultivators here, but I’m in the middle of Great Wall City after all!” Such reasoning left him feeling a bit comforted, but not completely.

“Wait a second. My cultivation base is still too low. I'm only in the great circle of the Gold Core stage. If I want to make a breakthrough, I’ll at least need a full set of deva beast souls. Metal, wood, water, fire, earth....” Although he still had a lot of battle credit, he definitely didn’t have enough to trade for a deva beast soul.

Furthermore, if he wanted to trade in one of his deva souls, he would have to wait until he was back in the sect. To pull a deva soul out by the Great Wall would be too risky.

“Maybe I can’t increase my cultivation base, but I can definitely make some progress with my Undying Live Forever Technique!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun took out a jade slip, filled out a list of certain items he needed, and passed it off to Zhao Long to take care of.

Now that Bai Xiaochun was a major general, he had a lot of special privileges. Not only could he post simple missions without needing any authorization, but he could also make requests for supplies.

Of course, considering how much battle credit he had, he didn’t want to take advantage of his position, so he also gave Zhao Long plenty of resources to purchase the necessary items.

Before long, Zhao Long returned with the precious materials he had requested. Then, Bai Xiaochun announced that he would be going into secluded meditation, whereupon he began to cultivate his Undying Live Forever Technique.

“This time I can’t hold anything back. I have to get my Undying Live Forever Technique to the great circle of the third level!” Taking a deep breath, he pulled out an earthspirit tuber and popped it into his mouth. As the life force within the tuber began to course through him, he closed his eyes and began to work with his Undying Live Forever Technique.

Almost immediately, that life force transformed into streams of heat that flowed toward his head, where they began to take the shape of Undying Tendons.

His work required focus and concentration, and couldn’t be rushed. Thankfully, he had so much battle credit that it was easy to get the precious materials he required. Time passed. Before long, a year had gone by.

That year was mostly spent in quiet cultivation. Bai Xiaochun rarely appeared out in the open, and therefore, the talk about the events leading up to his promotion gradually began to die down.

Another half a year went by, and the talk died down even more. One day when Bai Xiaochun was sitting there cross-legged in his secluded meditation facilities, his eyes snapped open, and it almost looked like lightning was crackling within them.

Settling his breathing, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then waved his hands out in front of him. Instantly, all of the precious materials arrayed in front of him shattered into dust.

Then, the dust clumped together and flew into his mouth, sucked away in an instant.

Boundless life force erupted out inside of him, which Bai Xiaochun immediately sent flowing toward his head.

By this point, the Undying Tendons in his head were more than ninety percent complete, with only a tiny fraction remaining incomplete. It was almost like a huge door that needed to be slammed at with great force before it could open.

As Bai Xiaochun was completely focused on achieving a major breakthrough with the third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique, it was high noon outside, and the sun was shining down hot and bright onto the lands outside the Great Wall.

Some distance away, the same black pillar of light could still be seen shining up into the sky. It was something the cultivators of the five legions had grown used to in the more than one year since it had appeared. Although many people had been dispatched to gather information about it, nothing conclusive had ever been determined.

The only thing that was clear was that the necropolis was huge, and filled with the skeletons of many shocking beasts. Other than that, it appeared to be empty.

However, neither the Wildlands nor the Great Wall forces were willing to give up on trying to uncover its secrets. They were constantly trying to uncover new information. It was because of that that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect issued orders that all of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars were required to investigate the location at least once.

Therefore, all of the various chosen who had scattered in different directions over the years were forced at some point to head in the direction of Great Wall City.

During the year and half that Bai Xiaochun was in secluded meditation, quite a few people passed through Great Wall City on their way outside to investigate the necropolis.

When it came to Bai Xiaochun, only the Hall of Steel Veins could give him orders, and naturally, they wouldn’t order him to do something like that.

Currently, there was a group of three chosen outside of the Great Wall, all of them disguised as soul cultivators. One was a beautiful woman, one was a gaunt middle-aged fellow in mid Core Formation, and the third was a strapping young man with a murderous aura so strong it made him seem completely unapproachable.

At the same time, though, there was something about him that made people trust him and not hesitate to follow his orders. His eyes were profoundly cold, making him look like a sheathed sword just waiting to strike. Clearly, he was the type of person who no one would be willing to provoke casually.

Quite a few vicious-looking scars could be seen on him, but instead of diminishing his appearance, they actually served to make him even more attractive to female cultivators.

If Bai Xiaochun were here, he would recognize this young man in an instant. He was none other than Song Que!

As soon as the group of three caught sight of the Great Wall, the beautiful young woman sighed and said, “Finally back!”

The middle-aged cultivator was clearly moved as well. “Who would have thought that our journey would take three years? Without you, Brother Song, I'm afraid we would have ended up dead and buried in the Wildlands.”

He would never forget the events which had unfolded over the past three years. At the outset, their group had numbered more than ten. However, on their very first mission they ended up stranded in a very dangerous location, unable to send messages requesting backup, and also cut off from news about what was happening on the outside.

They had been trapped in that danger zone together with a large group of savages and soul cultivators. Despite the fact that the two groups were from the Wildlands and the Great Wall respectively, no major conflicts had broken out at first. However, as time progressed, the situation devolved into open fighting.

It was Song Que who had combined force and charm to bring the situation under control. By winning over the savages and the soul cultivators, he had managed to direct the efforts of the entire group into finding a way out of the trap.

As for his two companions, they felt like they had survived a huge catastrophe, and they couldn't help but feel respect and gratitude toward Song Que for how he had helped them.

The young woman looked over enviously at him and said, "That's right, Big Bro Song. With everything you've accomplished, you'll definitely be able to achieve a meteoric rise. I wouldn't be surprised if you get into the top 10 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. In fact, considering your current battle prowess, you probably already qualify to tangle with the current top 10."

Song Que smiled faintly and didn't bother to act modestly. Even he was convinced that his three bitter years in the Wildlands had turned him into a completely different person.

He had achieved a cultivation base breakthrough, and was currently in late Core Formation. Furthermore, thanks to certain secret magics of the Blood Stream Division, he now possessed enough battle prowess that he had been able to kill a soul cultivator in the great circle of Core Formation.

Such an accomplishment was definitely worthy of pride. He could well imagine what it would be like to get inside the Great Wall, and go back to World City. At that point, he would surely be one of the best of the best among the chosen.

"Even if some of the others stumbled into good fortune, none of them could compare to me!" Another source of pride was the fact that during the three years in which he had been in the Wildlands, he hadn't accomplished only three missions, but rather seven. All of them had been completed within the danger zone that he had ended up trapped in. Furthermore, because he had personally united the cultivators and the Wildlanders, he had also made valuable connections with people in the Wildlands.

Although he hadn’t acquired a deva beast soul, he had managed to get more than 300 Nascent Soul-level souls, each and every one of which could be sold for a significant profit.

Most importantly of all, he had uncovered some clues as to the location of a deva beast soul. Not even his two companions were aware of that, only him.

His current plan was to finish out his first five years of the trial finishing missions, improving his cultivation base, and exploring the Wildlands. The final five years would be devoted to reaching the great circle of Core Formation, and searching for a deva beast soul.

“Considering my accomplishments in battle and the missions I've completed, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn that to find someone who has surpassed me. Hmmmmph. From what I heard a few years ago, Bai Xiaochun got stuck in Great Wall City doing work as an apothecary.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0525 awe-chapter-526

Song Que chuckled coldly, convinced that this time, he would soon be crushing Bai Xiaochun ten times over. He could even visualize himself stomping Bai Xiaochun underfoot and forcing him to beg for mercy.

“You dare to call yourself my uncle?! Well this time I’m going to make you call me grandfather!” The thought of Bai Xiaochun groveling mournfully filled Song Que’s vicious heart with pleasant warmth.

Of course, he had received absolutely no news about Bai Xiaochun’s escapades in Great Wall City. After his three years in isolation from the world, he had rushed directly back toward the Great Wall, with no way of knowing how much things had changed.

It was with a heart surging with pride that Song Que finally arrived at the Great Wall and laid eyes on the enormous spell formation shield. Of course, before he and his group could even get close to the shield, cold gazes filled with killing intent locked onto them.

Then, an icy voice rang out from the wall.

“Who goes there?!”

Song Que’s expression flickered, and he suppressed the arrogance in his heart as he stopped in place. No matter how incredible he thought himself outside the wall, now that he was back here, he didn't dare to do anything rash.

After all, he was absolutely not in a place to be able to provoke the five legions. Behind him, his two companions stopped in place, their faces ashen.

Clasping hands respectfully, Song Que called out, “Sir, I am your humble servant Song Que. These two friends of mine are fellow disciples of the sect. We are returning from running missions on the outside, and would like to request entrance into Great Wall City.”

The person who had spoken from the wall moments ago was none other than Zhao Long, who happened to be on duty at the moment. Of course, he was a member of the Skin Flayers’ 3rd Corps, and one of Bai Xiaochun’s private guards. Considering that Bai Xiaochun was in secluded meditation at the moment, most matters relating to the 3rd Corps were handled by him and the ten colonels.

Zhao Long looked Song Que and his companions over, and after a moment, his gaze softened. After all, he was aware that Bai Xiaochun came from the sect headquarters, as did these chosen, and that it was possible they could all know each other. Waving his hand, he sent some cultivators flying out to retrieve the group’s identity medallions and excursion permits for inspection.

Zhao Long himself looked over the medallions, using a special technique to confirm that there was nothing suspicious about them. Then he checked the jade slips that were the excursion permits, which were required of any cultivator who left the wall. Whenever a cultivator went outside, the soldiers of whichever legion was on duty at the time would stamp the permit. Upon return, if the soldiers of a different legion were on duty, then the permit would need to be sent to the original legion for verification.

However, Zhao Long could tell at a glance that their verification stamps were from the 3rd Corps of the Skin Flayers. The only difference was that they had been issued during the command of the previous major general. According to the rules and customs of the five legions, whenever a new major general took command, new verification stamps would need to be created.

Zhao Long looked up and said, “Your identity medallions are authentic. However, let me remind you that once you enter the city, the spell formation will lock onto your identity medallion. If your true identity does not match up with the information in the medallion, if you are an impersonator or have been possessed, then you will be instantly killed in body and soul!”

Song Que and his companions were a bit taken aback, but after exchanging glances and nodding, they proceeded forward. This was the first time for any of the three of them to return to Great Wall City after going outside, and therefore it was impossible for them to avoid being nervous. After all, it was impossible to say how many cold, murderous gazes atop the wall were fixed on them.

Soon, they were passing through the spell formation. Rippling fluctuations appeared that scanned them thoroughly, then slowly faded away. After that, they found themselves standing there beneath the wall.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Song Que looked up at the figures atop the wall, and was suddenly struck with the impulse to join the five legions.

After the many spectacular things he had accomplished on the outside, joining the five legions didn’t seem like a bad choice, or anything particularly difficult.

Seeing that the group had passed through the spell formation with no problems, Zhao Long smiled faintly and then issued orders for the side door to be opened. When the group actually entered the door, they found Zhao Long waiting for them on the other side.

Clasping hands in greetings, Zhao Long smiled and said, “That inspection was a necessary formality, Fellow Daoists, I hope you weren’t offended.”

A moment later, his gaze came to rest on Song Que, who was clearly the most exceptional of the group, and who he deemed worthy to try to recruit.

Song Que smiled in response. He could tell that Zhao Long seemed to be singling him out, and it already felt wonderful. Obviously, Zhao Long was no ordinary soldier, so Song Que clasped hands respectfully and then began to chat amiably. Before long, they even exchanged names.

Now that they knew each other a bit better, Zhao Long said, “Brother Song, are you interested in joining the Skin Flayers?”

“Um....” Although Song Que was actually very pleased to be asked this question, he put a look of hesitation onto his face.

From what Zhao Long could tell, Song Que was quite a talented individual, and therefore, he had decided to try to recruit him for Bai Xiaochun. Facial expression warm, he said, “Don’t worry, you don’t need to make a decision right away. Take some time to think about it, and tell me your answer later. By the way, the three of you will need to update your excursion permit stamps.

“Your current stamp was issued by our 3rd Corps, but a new major general recently took command. The three of you will need to come with me to the garrison to update your stamps.”

“A new major general?!” Song Que exclaimed. His two companions exchanged a shocked glance. Although they weren’t very familiar with the Great Wall, they knew that major generals were extremely important people, and that such a change in command didn’t happen every day!

Song Que didn't dare to do anything rash. Of course, he would go so far as to chat casually with Zhao Long, but when it came to a major general, he wouldn't do anything even remotely offensive. He was well aware that the cultivators of the five legions, who lived their lives to defend the Great Wall, were the most terrifying of individuals. That was especially true of their major generals, all of whom were exalted figures who could shake heaven and earth.

Even though Song Que viewed himself as chosen, in front of a major general, he would be like a bug. The mere thought of what it must be like to be a major general caused him to sigh.

“I wonder if I, Song Que, might one day have a chance to reach a lofty position like that of major general.” Although such thoughts left him slightly discouraged, he forced himself to be optimistic, and also reminded himself that although he might not have come back as mighty as a major general, he was still vastly beyond anyone else in his generation. He was also looking very much forward to encountering Bai Xiaochun, whom he would instantly stomp underfoot. When that happened, he would make sure Bai Xiaochun knew what a real chosen was like!

Such thoughts made his heart blossom with delight, and he almost couldn’t wait to finish handling the formalities regarding his excursion permit so that he could go find Bai Xiaochun!

He immediately nodded to Zhao Long, as did his companions, and moments later, the three of them were heading to the garrison of the 3rd Corps.

Along the way, Song Que thought about asking for more details about the major general, but then decided not to. Instead, he gave a meaningful look to his female companion. The two of them had been working together for quite some time, and therefore, she immediately picked up on the hint and took it upon herself to make some inquiries.

“Who exactly is the new major general?” she asked.

“You don't know?” Zhao Long said. Chuckling, he continued, “Well, I don’t want to say too much. Who knows, maybe you and the major general already know each other.”

With that, the conversation topic was ended, and Song Que and his companions were left more curious than before.

As Song Que and his companions were having their stamps updated, Bai Xiaochun happened to reach a critical moment in his cultivation. After absorbing all of the precious materials, his eyes gleamed with determination as he gritted his teeth and felt the power of the energy flowing through his qi passageways.

The rippling fluctuations turned into mighty waves that raged up to the top of his head, transforming into something like a heavenly water dragon that then shot through the final qi passageway in his head.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

No one but Bai Xiaochun could hear the intense sounds battering his mind. At the same time, he began to tremble violently, and even heard cracking sounds entering his ears.

It was almost as if a door had been opened by the intense life force, whereupon Bai Xiaochun let out a roar and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, more precious materials were crushed and then breathed in through his mouth.

As the final qi passageway in his head shattered, allowing the life force to rage freely through his entire body, he suddenly sensed something like a seal or weight pressing down on him with mountain-like force. It actually felt quite uncomfortable.

It was almost like something completely suppressing him. Although he had never been able to detect this specific pressure before, it now pervaded his consciousness. Furthermore, it was something the likes of which he had sensed twice before in the past, when working with the Undying Skin and Undying Heavenly King.

As of this moment, he had made contact with… “The third shackle!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0526 awe-chapter-527

“The next step is to figure out a way to break through it!” Taking a deep breath, Bai Xiaochun reined in the life force, whereupon his entire body began to glow with black light.

At the same time, an intense fleshly body power coursed through him, to the point where simply clenching his fist caused cracking sounds to explode out.

Most shocking of all was the speed he was now capable of. Eyes flickering, he waved his sleeve to open his secluded meditation room, and then took a step out.

The instant his foot fell, he vanished. Although it almost seemed like a teleportation, it wasn’t. It was just incredible speed that instantly took him out of the room and up into the air above.

As he hovered there in the air above the 3rd Corps’ garrison, he realized that a bird was flying in front of him, its wings beating very slowly, a look of shock on its face. Then he looked around and noticed that everything around him seemed to be moving in slow motion.

It was a shocking feeling, and immediately led him to the realization that the speed he was now capable of was so great that it bordered on teleportation.

“Once you get fast enough, everything gets slow?” he murmured. Because he was now hovering in one place and not moving, everything quickly returned to normal.

It was at that exact same moment that Zhao Long led Song Que and his two companions in through the main gate of the garrison. As they did, they saw a tall, slender figure hovering in the air above them, radiating shocking energy that made him seem like some devilish god....

Just as they were looking up at that devilish god, Bai Xiaochun looked down and saw Song Que.

Instantly, their gazes locked....

Song Que’s eyes went wide, and he gasped, then quickly looked down. Closing his eyes, he told himself that he had just been seeing things, most likely because of how he had been thinking about crushing Bai Xiaochun recently.

“That’s definitely it,” he told himself. “Just seeing things....”

However, even as he struggled to get himself under control, Bai Xiaochun enthusiastically shouted, “Que’er!”

Bai Xiaochun was so excited he was trembling, and his eyes were shining as brightly as if they were on fire.

As for Song Que, as soon as he heard “Que’er,” his mind was shaken into emptiness. Any endeavors to convince himself that he had been seeing things vanished into absolute nothingness.

His attempts to prevent himself from trembling left him looking very stiff and unnatural as he stood there with a blank look on his face, feeling like he was being struck by endless bolts of lightning.

Bai Xiaochun began to laugh heartily as he dropped down to the ground and then began to hurry over toward Song Que and his two companions.

It was only at this point that the other cultivators of the 3rd Corps realized that their major general had emerged from meditation. Instantly, the cultivators who made up his personal guard began to fly over in beams of light.

The first person to reach him was the beautiful Liu Li, accompanied by others of his private guard, who clustered around him and saluted respectfully.

“Congratulations on emerging from meditation, exalted one!”

Looking very serious, Zhao Long walked a few steps away from Song Que and his companions, then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Congratulations on emerging from meditation, exalted one!”

Looking very pleased at the words of congratulations being offered by his personal guard, he hurried up to Song Que.

Meanwhile, other cultivators in the garrison realized that Bai Xiaochun was out of secluded meditation, whereupon dozens upon dozens of beams of light began to fly in his direction.

Ten of the beams of light surged with the aura of the great circle of Core Formation, and also radiated profound dignity. They were people who, in any other circumstance, would dominate any area they entered.

They were the colonels of the 3rd Corps, including Li Hongming. All of them approached and offered respectful greetings.

“Greetings, Major General!”

As more and more people arrived and saluted in greeting, Bai Xiaochun came to stand in front of Song Que, his eyes shining with excitement. Everyone in the area could sense how happy he was.

“It’s really you, Que’er. It’s really you!! How did you get yourself in such a bad situation, Que’er? I mean, I thought I had it bad, but obviously, you have it *way* worse than me.

“When we left, your aunt entrusted your safety to me. As your Senior, that’s simply my responsibility. Although you mercilessly cast me to the side in the past, as your uncle, I can be magnanimous when necessary. How about this: forget about going out and doing missions. You stick with me. I'm a major general now, and you can be one of my personal guards!”

Bai Xiaochun really was excited to be reunited with an old friend. Of course, it was all the better considering how arrogant Song Que had acted upon parting ways. Furthermore, although Bai Xiaochun was very happy to be a major general, he wouldn’t be able to return to the River-Defying Sect any time soon, and it was a bit disappointing to have no old friends around to bask in his glory. Therefore, he was so excited right now he felt like he could explode; it was really one of the most incomparable feelings in the world.

Song Que’s two companions were clearly in a state of shock as they looked at Bai Xiaochun. Although the clothing he wore was relatively simple, it somehow made him look very impressive. He was almost like the bright moon surrounded by countless lesser, faintly twinkling stars. There was something about him that just seemed innately superior. Although he clearly wasn’t in the Nascent Soul stage, he seemed even more terrifying than if he was. Then they heard everyone calling him major general, and their minds began to spin as they realized that this person in front of them was none other than the major general of the 3rd Corps! Complex, indecipherable emotions immediately began to overwhelm them!!

Furthermore, they immediately recognized that he was Bai Xiaochun. After all, they were all chosen from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, and it would have been harder for Bai Xiaochun to be more famous than he was among their number. They almost couldn’t believe what they were seeing in front of their very eyes, and could do little more than gasp in anxiety. Plus, it was all made even more shocking because this was the first time they had heard that Song Que had such a shocking background. His uncle was a major general!!

Trembling, they subconsciously bowed their heads, clasped hands, and offered greetings.

“Greetings, Major General, greetings.”

A blank look could be seen in Song Que’s eyes as this happened. Everything was developing too quickly, and there was no way he could have prepared himself for this turn of events. Just moments ago, he had been reveling in thoughts of how incredible he himself was, and how he would heap humiliation onto Bai Xiaochun. And now, here Bai Xiaochun was standing right in front of him as a major general....

Face ashen, Song Que began to stammer, “Bai Xiaochun... how is this even possible? Y-you... you actually became a major general?!”

He could hardly bring himself to believe that it was true; it was almost as if his life were a huge comedy playing out.

However, as soon as the words left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun's personal guards began to frown, clearly not happy at all. Liu Li even let out a cold harrumph. They were crack troops who served a famous officer, and their murderous auras immediately began to rage, crushing down onto Song Que and his companions.

“How dare you use the major general's personal name!” Zhao Long shouted. “You can't just call him by name whenever you wish!”

Although he approved of Song Que in general, the fact that he would question his commanding officer in this way caused him to immediately lose his temper.

Li Hongming and the other colonels were also frowning in displeasure, to the point where killing intent rose up in their eyes. In fact, the entire garrison suddenly became like a hulking beast, staring at the three newcomers as if they were about to consume them!

The sight of so many glares being cast at them caused Song Que and his two companions' hearts to pound on the verge of bursting. As for the young woman, she immediately flopped to the ground to kowtow, to be joined moments later by the middle-aged man. Based on the intense murderous auras around them, they were certain that if they didn't do so, they would be killed in body and soul!

Song Que was trembling, and his face was ashen. He could sense the intensity of the murderous auras just as the other two could, and yet, he wasn't afraid. Instead, he just stood there staring at Bai Xiaochun, his grief and indignation pushing aside all other thoughts, and his frustration building to the point where it threatened to inundate him like flood waters.

“This is impossible... it’s simply impossible....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0527 awe-chapter-528

Song Que thought back to the first day he had met Bai Xiaochun, and everything which had happened since then. Bai Xiaochun had always been there, hanging over him like thunderclouds of misfortune, impossible to dispel.

Back in the Fallen Sword Abyss, Bai Xiaochun snatched his heavenstring energy. Then in the Blood Stream Sect, he stole away the position of blood master. Later, he seized control of the lofty title of junior patriarch. Each and every time, Song Que found himself outmaneuvered and defeated.

After coming to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he had mustered his courage and fought on his own as hard as he could, only to be outdone again.

The same thing happened on the huge battleship. Later, after arriving in a strange land, he had unleashed every scrap of his explosive potential, all in the hopes of rising to prominence. When he did, he would finally crush Bai Xiaochun and put him in his place, make him kneel on the ground, and then crush him underfoot!

Even in this moment, he could still envision himself stepping on Bai Xiaochun’s chest, shoving his finger in his face, and yelling, “From now on, whenever you see me, you’ll grovel your way off into the distance!”

And yet, such a thing could only happen in his dreams. Yet again, Song Que found himself being crushed, and not just by a little bit. He was being crushed to a heaven-rending, earth-shattering degree, by a major general!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Song Que's grief and indignation reached the point where tears began to roll down his cheeks.

Startled at seeing tears on Song Que's face, Bai Xiaochun spun around and yelled, "What are you people doing? Get rid of those murderous auras! This is my dear nephew! What are you doing trying to frighten him? He's just a kid!"

Then, he turned and gave Song Que a warm look, and even reached out to tousle his hair.

When Song Que heard Bai Xiaochun call him a kid, veins began to bulge out on his neck and face.

"Bai Xiaochun!!" he roared. Then, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he toppled backward onto the ground, unconscious.

This was actually the second time he had passed out in Bai Xiaochun's presence. The first time was back in Sky City in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect....

Song Que woke up the next morning. After looking around grimly, he gritted his teeth and prepared to leave. However, as soon as he walked out the door, three cultivators appeared in his path. The one in the lead position was Zhao Long, who leveled a cold stare in his direction.

"The major general went back into secluded meditation. Before he did, he passed down orders to conscript you into service. From now on, you're one of the major general's personal guards. You *will* accept this assignment!"

A snarl immediately appeared on Song Que's lips.

“Remember your place, Song Que,” Zhao Long continued. “In any other corps of the army, you would have been executed on the spot for the impudence you showed yesterday. Thankfully for you, the major general took pity on you for old time’s sake. Not only did he not punish you, but he also rewarded you by placing you in his personal guard, under my command! From now on, disrespect toward the major general will not be tolerated at all!

“If you continue to act arrogantly, then for the sake of the major general, I’ll be forced to put you to death!” Zhao Long hadn’t consulted Bai Xiaochun regarding the last part of his speech. After all, he knew that there was a special relationship between the two of them. However, as the leader of Bai Xiaochun’s personal guard, there were some matters that were better to nip in the bud. If it turned out that Song Que didn’t know what was good for him, Zhao Long would definitely risk Bai Xiaochun’s wrath by putting him to death!

He had been following Bai Xiaochun for years now, and therefore, viewed Bai Xiaochun’s honor and glory as his own responsibility, and would brook no violations against it!

Song Que could see the killing intent in Zhao Long’s eyes, and could sense the intimidating, murderous intentions within him.

A tremor passed through him as he realized that everything Zhao Long had just said was no mere threat or exaggeration....

Another half a month went by, and despite his reluctance, Song Que was getting used to being one of Bai Xiaochun’s personal guards.

During that half month, Bai Xiaochun spent time stabilizing his Undying Live Forever Technique. At this point, he was at his absolute peak both in terms of fleshly body and cultivation base. Most importantly, he had become more familiar with his ability to move at such incredible speed that the world slowed down around him.

After emerging from secluded meditation, he headed to his private office in the 3rd Corps to get the latest briefings from his colonels.

Bai Xiaochun knew that since he was a major general, he had to listen very carefully to the reports. The last to report in was Zhao Long, who explained everything that had occurred in Great Wall City and within the 3rd Corps recently.

The beautiful Liu Li stood behind Bai Xiaochun, kneading his shoulders. She had been one of Bai Xiaochun’s personal guards for years now, and generally had a cold and icy demeanor. However, whenever Bai Xiaochun was exhausted, she wouldn’t hesitate to give him a soothing massage.

“Up to now, more than a hundred huge caves have been discovered inside the necropolis. Each one is filled with terrifying skeletons. Two deva beast souls were found there, and big battles erupted because of them. One of them was taken by our side, another was won by the Wildlands.

“More news came in about half a month ago. Beneath the necropolis with the hundred caves, there is another terrifying area that no one has discovered how to enter yet.” With that, Zhao Long concluded his report. Then he casually added one more item.

“The new member of your personal guard, Song Que, has been performing satisfactorily. However, he has a bit of a rebellious side, and sometimes refuses to follow orders. As such, sir, I was planning to send him to the necropolis out in the Wildlands to learn a thing or two.”

Bai Xiaochun shook his head and smiled. “No, no, don’t do anything to put him in real danger. I'm his uncle, you know. Besides, it’s normal for kids to be headstrong sometimes. How about this: I'm planning to go take a trip to World City in a few days. Now that I'm the major general of the 3rd Corps, it’s my responsibility to conscript some new chosen to join our ranks.” Actually, Bai Xiaochun had been planning to do this for some time now. After what had occurred with Song Que, he thirsted to see more eyes bulging out of the faces of people who knew him.

Zhao Long immediately started to get nervous, and was even thinking of trying to persuade Bai Xiaochun to change his mind. In the end, however, he simply voiced his assent, and went off to make special preparations to ensure that Bai Xiaochun was kept safe.

Although it wouldn’t be possible to take the entire 3rd Corps on the trip, Zhao Long did have the authority to select five colonels, along with their five regiments, a total of roughly 5,000 soldiers.

A few days later, Bai Xiaochun submitted a request via jade slip to Bai Lin, asking for permission to go to World City for a recruitment drive. For a major general to leave the city like this was a major event, so obviously, a general had to sign off on it ahead of time.

Upon reading the request in the jade slip, Bai Lin understood immediately that Bai Xiaochun wanted to go show off a bit, and make sure his companions realized how incredible he was. The truth was that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only person who had ever done a thing like that. Even many colonels would do the same type of thing.

Considering what he knew about Bai Xiaochun’s personality, Bai Lin decided that he might as well just directly approve the request. In fact, he even transmitted some information to Bai Xiaochun, not only giving him some warnings about what to avoid, but teaching him a few things about how to successfully accomplish his goals. Bai Xiaochun was initially shocked, but then realized that it merely went to show how experienced Bai Lin was.

“We’re here on the front lines,” Bai Lin said, “so the people in World City will definitely be ready to shower you with praise and even gifts. However, don’t push things too far....” He went on to offer a few more words of wisdom before finally approving Bai Xiaochun’s request.

Another two days passed, and after all of the formalities were taken care of, the gates of Great Wall City opened, and a procession of thousands of black-armored cultivators emerged to head in the direction of the Heavenspan Sea. Right in the middle of all of them, of course, was Bai Xiaochun.

He wore a golden suit of armor, and looked remarkably intimidating. With the proud wave of an arm, he sent his men into motion.

Zhao Long and Liu Li flanked him, and Song Que was also there, albeit begrudgingly. The colonels had arranged for the troops to fly through the air in tight formation, and scouts had been sent ahead to make sure they didn’t stumble into danger. Everything had been set up to protect Bai Xiaochun and crush anything that got in their way.

Even from a great distance, it was possible to detect the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering murderous aura that radiated out from the group!

Song Que was actually a bit nervous as he looked around at the troops around him. He had come to a better understanding of Great Wall cultivators recently, and it was to his despair that he had come to realize that a group like this could eradicate him in the blink of an eye. He wouldn’t even be able to make them pause in their tracks.

What left him even more unsettled was that the entire group would leap to obey any command Bai Xiaochun gave them.

There were even Nascent Soul cultivators within that group of 5,000, including some of the colonels. This was roughly half of the entire 3rd Corps, and wherever they went outside of Great Wall City, vicious animals and plants alike would tremble and not dare to get close.

Not even the bizarre cloudgyres would dare to appear in front of 5,000 cultivators from Great Wall City.

Thus, not a single obstacle at all blocked their path as they drew closer and closer to World City.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0528 awe-chapter-529

When Bai Xiaochun originally made the trip from World City to the Great Wall, he had been with Zhao Tianjiao and the others. Because of the incredible dangers they had faced, their small group hadn’t been capable of much speed on their journey.

But now he was traveling through the same area with an army at his command. Furthermore, they had spell formations to increase their speed. Therefore, it was less than a month later that the group of roughly 5,000 cultivators saw an enormous city rising up on the horizon.

It was a city that seemed to abound with murky darkness, and was none other than World City!

The cultivators of the five legions who were camped in World City were there as a backup in case Great Wall City fell. If that happened, they would provide the bulk of the force which would counter attack.

Because Bai Xiaochun was a major general, news of his arrival had been previously announced to the garrison in World City. As such, there were numerous cultivators lined up in formation roughly five kilometers outside the city, waiting to receive him.

Furthermore, the city magistrate, as well as the leaders of the other major organizations in the city, were all present. After all, a major general was the type of person that anyone would view with the utmost importance. Of course, the city magistrate had been directly appointed to his position by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, but not even he would be willing to sow hostility with the legions due to an act of negligence.

The garrison in World City had four major generals, and they were all on their best behavior. Despite being the same rank as Bai Xiaochun, he was from the front lines, which meant that they didn’t quite measure up to him in terms of status. They had worked their way up through the ranks because of their administrative abilities, and were much more suited to the peaceful World City than the brutal front lines of battle.

At the moment, well over a thousand people were waiting for Bai Xiaochun, roughly half of whom were from the five legions, with the other half being made up of the forces of the city magistrate and other powerful organizations.

Most of them were whispering in hushed tones about the new major general, on his way to recruit troops.

“It’s definitely a bad thing for us that this guy is coming!”

“That’s right. Normally, they only send colonels here from Great Wall City. Plus, this guy was just promoted. He wouldn’t be here unless it was on some important mission.”

“Do you guys really believe that he’s here to levy troops?” The city magistrate was a middle-aged cultivator with a Nascent Soul cultivation base, who, contrary to expectations, was actually quite plump. Although he had a kind face, it was currently twisted with anxiety.

Although his cultivation base could be considered high, when it came to the five legions, that didn’t really matter. Besides, he had only achieved his breakthrough with a Nascent Soul Pill, and had reached his current position by greasing the wheels back at the sect.

He was also wondering why this major general had really come to World City. The fact that the four World City major generals all seemed similarly suspicious only served to further his reservations.

Even as everyone was discussing the matter, nine bright beams of light appeared off in the distance. As muffled rumbling filled the air, the congregated cultivators turned to look in the direction of the light, and soon, nine soldiers came into view.

All of them had expressionless faces and seethed with murderous auras. Despite being mere Core Formation cultivators, they were obviously the type of people one couldn’t afford to underestimate.

“The exalted major general will be arriving soon. Thank you for coming to receive him, ladies and gentlemen!” After making their introductions, a few of the group of nine went back the way they came to report in, while the rest inspected the area.

Very serious expressions could be seen on the faces of the city magistrate, the major generals, and the other city leadership officials.

Another two hours went by before intense rumbling sounds could be heard. Everyone in the waiting crowd looked up with sober expressions as rippling fluctuations filled the sky like waves.

Moments later, the vanguard of the 3rd Corps appeared, bristling with energy, looking like a sharp blade as they sliced through the clouds!

Everyone gasped at the impressive sight.

That was especially true of the four major generals, who all smiled bitterly when they realized that the subordinates under their control were clearly not a match for the cultivators from the 3rd Corps.

Just behind the vanguard were two regiments of a thousand men each, stretched out in wings to the left and right.

The two regiments with their pulsing murderous auras almost looked like a bow, taut and ready to unleash mighty arrows. Next came Bai Xiaochun, surrounded by his personal guard, and flanked by more troops. Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun became the focus of all attention, what with his glittering golden suit of armor.

As the army approached, the gathered cultivators got even more nervous. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun was feeling very excited, and was continuously sighing in satisfaction.

“Back when I first came to this place, not a single person knew my name. Now, every single person with a title or power has come out to receive me.” As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was fully convinced that all the hard work he had gone through to reach his current rank was definitely worth it.

As they drew close to the city magistrate and other cultivators, Bai Xiaochun barked out an order, and the army halted in place just in front of the city officials. Then, troops were sent out to scout the area, while the other cultivators under Bai Xiaochun’s command stared coldly at the people from World City.

Of course, that made everyone, city magistrate included, even more nervous than before.

Moments later, the four major generals took deep breaths and flew up into the air, where they clasped hands and bowed.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, we’ve been waiting for you!”

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily, waving his hand at the vanguard soldiers, who parted to make way for the four major generals. They quickly approached and introduced themselves, and also offered some introductory gifts. Considering that they were all members of the five legions, and were being very courteous, Bai Xiaochun was very happy. Smiling, he began to chat amiably with them.

A moment later, the city magistrate and other important figures exchanged glances, then sighed and flew up into the air to offer greetings.

They also surreptitiously offered some gifts, which left Bai Xiaochun feeling even more pleased than before. Then, they clustered around him and began to escort him toward World City.

“Brother Bai, you are truly a consummate chosen. I almost can’t believe you’ve reached the rank of major general at such a young age! Your future prospects are limitless!”

“That’s right. I've long since heard about all of your impressive exploits back in the sect, Major General Bai.”

“You truly are a great hero, Major General. By the way, what important task has brought you here? If those of us here can be of any help at all, just say the word.” Talk like this spilled out of the mouths of the officials, officers, and other important people the entire way toward the city, causing Bai Xiaochun to burst with joy. However, he didn’t utter a peep about why he was here, which was what Bai Lin had advised him to do.

So far, everything had gone according to the plan laid forth by Bai Lin, including the cold demeanor of the soldiers, and the way that Bai Xiaochun refused to talk about his reason for coming. The goal was to make the important people from the city more and more anxious, and prompt them to lavish him with more gifts.

That was exactly what happened. Upon arriving at the city itself, he found that the road ahead had been cleared and barricaded to make the path clear for him. When he looked around at the expressions of respect and anticipation on the faces of the World City cultivators as they looked at him, he sighed even more deeply.

If he wanted to, he could have anyone killed instantly with a single order. Or, if he fancied a female cultivator, a word from him, and everything would be taken care of. Men would be sent to handle the matter, and she would be delivered to his room later that night.

At least, Bai Xiaochun was confident that he could do such things given his current rank.

A few days passed, during which time the powerful organizations in the city continued to send him gifts on a daily basis, until they were piled up like a little mountain. As of now, Bai Xiaochun fully understood why so many people would fight hard to be promoted to major general.

Of course, he didn’t forget about his plan to recruit troops. Zhao Long arranged everything. Men were sent out to look for the various members of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars who had come with Bai Xiaochun on the boat trip over from the sect. Whenever any of them were spotted, a record was made, and a report would be given to Bai Xiaochun. Then, the simple nod of his head would result in them being conscripted.

After searching through all the familiar names, though, he didn’t see any mention of Gongsun Wan’er or Master God-Diviner. Of course, when it came to Chen Manyao, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain that she must have long since returned to her home in the Wildlands.

As for Gongsun Wan’er and Master God-Diviner, it was impossible to say where they were, and even using a transmission jade slip to try to reach them didn’t work.

“Gongsun Wan’er has always been very mysterious, so I might as well forget about her. But where did Master God-Diviner get off to?”

Seven days went by, during which Bai Xiaochun continued to collect gifts. It reached the point where he didn’t even bother to organize them, and would just casually toss them into his bag of holding.

One evening when he was contemplating whether or not to send some people to search specifically for Master God-Diviner, the plump city magistrate came for a visit.

“Brother Bai,” he said with a laugh, “today is your lucky day!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, as he was completely unsure of what the city magistrate was talking about.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0529 awe-chapter-530

The city magistrate still seemed to be in shock at the nature of the news he bore as he chattered, “Brother, the mere threat of your presence here has resulted in something marvelous. You see, a local official had become wrapped up in taking bribes, and was even embezzling military resources. However, he got so scared by you that he turned himself in, and ended up forfeiting all of his personal property in exchange for his life. I went over to inspect the confiscated materials personally, and was shocked to find that he was incredibly rich!

“Most spectacular of all was a ginseng root that was more than 9,000 years old! I doubt you’ve ever seen anything like it. The rootlets are as transparent as crystal, and the buds all look like spirit pearls. It’s virtually priceless, and in fact, is probably worth more than all of the man’s other assets combined.”

“More than 9,000 years old?!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed, his eyes going wide with shock. “You’re right, I’ve never seen anything like that....”

If he used a ginseng root like that in a medicinal pill, the level of life force it could provide would defy description, and would be a huge help in his Undying Live Forever Technique.

“Don’t worry, Brother....” the city magistrate said with a knowing smile. Lowering his voice, he continued, “I already had the ginseng root secretly delivered to Zhao Long. After I leave in a moment, he’ll surely come to present it to you for your enjoyment.

“As for all of the other confiscated resources, I’ve put them all in order for you to take back to the Great Wall and handle as you see fit with the other generals.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed slightly as he looked at the city magistrate. All of a sudden, he felt as if a new world were opening up to him, and couldn’t shake the feeling that this city magistrate was a genius.

As of this moment, everything became clear, and Bai Xiaochun felt as if he understood life in a different way.

“So, this guy is also a bit dirty, and couldn't figure out why I was here. Worried that I had come to audit the military resources, he decided to take the initiative. Not only did he hand the ‘confiscated’ resources over to me, but he also arranged for a big gift to placate me. Flawless! On top of all that, he didn’t even directly give me the gift, that way he wouldn’t run into any trouble later because of it! So smart!” All of a sudden, he felt like he had learned a new move from this city magistrate, and was just about to say something to further the conversation when his expression flickered.

Inside of this bag of holding, his identity medallion was shining with bright light. Pulling it out and casting some divine sense into hit, he heard Bai Lin’s stern voice.

“Major General Bai Xiaochun, the Wildlands is mounting a huge offensive. Return to the Great Wall post haste!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, causing the city magistrate to hesitate for a moment. He was just about to ask about what was happening, when Bai Xiaochun suddenly called out in a thunderous voice, “Zhao Long!”

Zhao Long, who had been standing guard at the door, immediately rushed in and clasped hands in salute.

“Send down orders immediately. R&R is over. In half an incense stick’s worth of time, the 3rd Corps moves out and returns to the Great Wall!”

A tremor passed through Zhao Long, who quickly voiced his assent and then left to pass down the orders.

Feeling quite nervous, the city magistrate asked, “Brother Bai, this....”

Bai Xiaochun interrupted him with a hearty laugh. “Nothing important. The Wildlands are attacking, that's all. I need to take my leave now, Brother. If destiny will have it, I hope we meet again in the future.”

Then he clasped hands and paid the city magistrate no further heed as he turned to leave.

The city magistrate was delighted to hear that Bai Xiaochun was leaving, and respectfully escorted him along his way.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the roughly 5,000 cultivators of the 3rd Corps were all assembled. Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, and the entire group flew up into the air above World City and prepared to make their way off to the Great Wall.

However, just when they passed over the city walls, two beams of light suddenly appeared off in the distance. Clearly, they were two cultivators engaged in a deadly chase.

Being chased was a cultivator with disheveled hair and numerous wounds all over his body. Clearly, he was running low on spiritual energy, and were it not for his dogged persistence, would have already begun to beg for mercy.

“Hey, Master God-Diviner, that soul belonged to me! How dare you steal it. Are you looking to die?!?! Nobody can save you now!” A young man was giving chase, his expression so cold that he almost seemed to be made of ice. His eyes radiated rage, and he didn’t hesitate to burn his spiritual power to chase after his quarry.

“Don’t be such a bully, Heretic! I saw that soul first! You’re the one who’s trying to steal it from me!” These two cultivators were none other than Master God-Diviner and Heretic. Even as he yelled, Master God-Diviner drew upon some more of his scant spiritual power to pull out a little flag, which he waved through the air to deliver a burst of speed. With a whooshing sound, he shot through the air toward World City, which was when he happened to catch sight of the more than 5,000 cultivators in the air.

Immediately, his eyes shone with delight. After all, this group of cultivators was exactly what had kept him going recently. The last few years had been very rough on him. At one point, a chance series of events led to his bag of holding being broken open. All of his belongings were lost or destroyed, including his magical items, his identity medallion, and his transmission jade slip. He had almost died during that incident. However, he didn't come out empty-handed; he ended up winning a little flag that could increase his speed, which was truly a powerful magical treasure.

In a desperate attempt to stay alive, he had used some of his last remaining spiritual power to perform a divination, which had told him that a major turning point in his life would come at World City. He had immediately begun to hurry in that direction, which was also when he had come across the unexpected news that Bai Xiaochun had become a major general.

The news left him profoundly shaken, but at the same time, filled him with joy. Eyes shining, he had determined to seek asylum with Bai Xiaochun.

However, along the way, he happened to come across a Nascent Soul-level soul, and had been just on the verge of nabbing it when Heretic came along. The two of them immediately began to struggle over the soul, and although it was impossible to say who had truly laid eyes on it first, somehow, Master God-Diviner ended up with it in his hands. Overjoyed, he had taken to flight, using his little flag to keep himself one step ahead of Heretic the entire time during their chase.

Now that he saw the 5,000 cultivators over World City, he immediately cried out at the top of his lungs, “Save me, Junior Patriarch!! Heretic is trying to kill me!!”

Heretic’s eyes began to shine brightly. Although he was shocked by the large group of cultivators, and was fairly certain that they were from the Great Wall, he had a strange, introverted personality, and thus, had not heard the news about Bai Xiaochun. The sight of the huge group of soldiers initially struck him with an uneasy feeling that caused him to pause for a moment, but then killing intent flickered in his eyes, and he decided that he couldn’t let Master God-Diviner reach his goal. Gritting his teeth, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, his face flushed red as a huge, illusory hand formed right in front of him.

“Nobody can save you now!”

Intense rumbling sounds that tugged at the soul filled the air as the huge palm shot toward Master God-Diviner. This was one of Heretic’s trump cards, and it came at a significant wastage of spiritual power. As such, it wasn’t the type of thing he would use casually, and yet the importance of the current situation definitely warranted it.

Master God-Diviner’s face fell as his heart filled with an intense sensation of deadly crisis. His face also drained of blood as he realized that even his little flag wouldn’t give him enough speed to evade the illusory palm.

Moments before, Bai Xiaochun had looked over at what was happening, and immediately recognized Master God-Diviner. Then he heard Master God-Diviner’s shout, and saw the gigantic, illusory hand.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. Having no time to ponder the situation, he stepped forward, whereupon everything around him slowed down. Next, he shot forward to stand between Master God-Diviner and the huge palm.

There, he raised his right hand to meet the incoming hand. A huge boom echoed out, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s view of the world returned to normal. The power of the attack dissipated, leaving behind nothing more than rippling fluctuations.

Everything happened so quickly that none of Bai Xiaochun’s 5,000 soldiers realized what was going on. Not even Heretic or Master God-Diviner had eyes fast enough to process the situation. All Heretic saw was his enormous illusory hand suddenly collapse.

But then, as the energy faded away, he noticed a slender figure standing in front of Master God-Diviner, hand raised up into the air.

Heretic’s eyes widened, and he sucked in a breath as a look of utter incredulity swept across his face. He immediately recognized Bai Xiaochun, and realized that he must have drawn upon speed that bordered on teleportation to appear in front of the illusory palm, a trump card technique that he had subsequently destroyed.

Even more shocking was that after destroying that trump card, Bai Xiaochun didn't seem the least bit hurt or even fazed!!

Heretic’s heart leapt up into his throat, and even the Nascent Soul experts among the forces of the 3rd Corps were looking at Bai Xiaochun with very serious expressions. All of them were utterly flabbergasted at the incredible display of speed from moments ago.

With such astounding speed, it wouldn’t be impossible for Bai Xiaochun to make a sudden, killing move against a Nascent Soul expert!

Master God-Diviner felt like he had just been plucked out of the jaws of death, and was filled with excitement at the sight of Bai Xiaochun hovering there in front of him.

“Save me, Junior Patriarch, Heretic is trying to kill me!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0530 awe-chapter-531

Bai Xiaochun slowly looked up at Heretic and said, “What are you doing trying to kill one of my men?”

Considering how he was clad in a golden suit of armor, he looked very impressive to say the least.

Heretic’s pupils constricted as he stared at Bai Xiaochun. Inwardly, his heart was being battered by waves of shock, not only because of the 5,000 cultivators behind Bai Xiaochun, but also because of his incredible display of speed, and how he had so casually dispatched Heretic’s trump card.

He almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing. After all, Heretic occupied 2nd place among the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, while Bai Xiaochun was only in 10th place. For him to have transformed so much in a few short years was shocking to the core.

After a few breaths of time went by, Heretic gritted his teeth and said, “He stole that soul from me!”

“Rubbish!” Master God-Diviner shot back. “You’re trying to steal it from me! Junior Patriarch, I saw it first, and was even planning to give it to you as a gift, sir!” With that, he produced a soul from inside of his flag and then, suppressing the pain he felt in his heart, handed it over to Bai Xiaochun.

“You!” Heretic growled, eyes shining with cold light.

Bai Xiaochun already felt a headache coming on. Obviously, it would be impossible to determine who was stealing what from whom. Furthermore, he couldn’t help but sigh at the fact that the two of them were fighting over a Nascent Soul-level soul.

“Is it really worth it for you two to be fighting over a soul like that...?” Shaking his hand, Bai Xiaochun patted his bag of holding, causing 100 Nascent Soul-level souls to fly out....

Master God-Diviner and Heretic both shivered at the sight, and began to pant in mute shock.

“So... so many....”

“Heavens....”

Bai Xiaochun was quite pleased at their reaction. Smiling faintly, he continued to speak to them in an admonishing tone, “You’re both fellow disciples of the same sect! What's the point in all the fighting? It’s just a soul, right? Here, you two take these hundred souls and split them between the two of you.”

Master God-Diviner shrieked and lunged forward to start grabbing souls. He was so destitute that a single such soul could drive him crazy, much less the number floating out in the open right now. After grabbing half of the souls, he eyed the remainder of the group covetously, but didn't dare to touch them. Hurrying back over to Bai Xiaochun, he said, “I can’t believe I finally found you, Junior Patriarch,” he said with a bit of a wail. “You have no idea how bad things went for me when we were apart....”

From the look of things, he seemed determined to stick by Bai Xiaochun no matter what.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun's 5,000 men were surrounding them.

"Alright, enough," he said with a slight frown. "Back when you cast me aside, I never saw any expression like that on your face. Well, considering how incredibly magnanimous I am, I supposed I'll let you become my follower." With that, he turned to leave.

Deeply touched, Master God-Diviner immediately made to follow Bai Xiaochun. By this point, his admiration for Bai Xiaochun flowed like a mighty river. Back in Sky City, he had believed Bai Xiaochun's rise to prominence to be something of a fluke. But here he was in the Wildlands, a major general, something that left Master God-Diviner shocked on the deepest level. In fact, he had already sworn an oath to himself to never abandon Bai Xiaochun for the rest of his life.

That was even more the case when he noticed Song Que among Bai Xiaochun's men, which immediately got him even more on guard. Back in Sky City, Master God-Diviner had been the first to start following Bai Xiaochun again, and it had led to incredible benefits. Now, he was only the second to join him, which put Song Que in his sights as a major rival.

When Heretic realized that nobody was paying much attention to him, he began to shiver, and it was made worse by the sight of all the souls floating in the air. It was all a huge blow to his self-esteem. Clenching his hands into fists, he ignored the souls and faced Bai Xiaochun.

"Bai Xiaochun!!" he roared.

Instantly, Bai Xiaochun's 5,000 men turned to look at him with cold glares. Heretic's body went stiff, but he clenched his teeth and continued, “I want to enlist at the Great Wall!”

When Bai Xiaochun saw how Heretic’s eyes were shining with determination, he thought back to how Bai Lin had spoken with such solemnity to him all those years ago, when he had been about to leave through the side door of Great Wall City.

Back then, he had been just as devoted to the idea of shedding blood for the sect that it caused him to sigh at the thought.

“So,” he mused inwardly, “it seems this Heretic and I are similar. We both are willing to suffer personal loss in the pursuit of justice and righteousness.” Although his heart was currently softening, his gaze only continued to grow sharper.

Thinking back to how Bai Lin had looked on that day, he stuck his chin up, and clasped his hands behind his back. Armor glittering with golden light, and eyes sparkling brightly, he looked closely at Heretic.

“Do you really wish to join the Skin Flayers?” he asked, trying to sound exactly like Bai Lin had sounded back then. His voice was somber, but also seemed to carry a weight that made it impossible to disobey. Anyone who heard that voice would instantly feel shaken inwardly.

Heretic immediately responded in a loud voice, “I--”

However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to shine even more brightly.

“Think your answer through clearly before you give it,” he interrupted, his tone cool, and yet his words echoing like thunder.

Panting a bit, Heretic gritted his teeth and replied, “I really wish to enlist!”

“You’re so much like me back then. Alright, whatever. As the major general of the 3rd Corps of the Skin Flayers, I have the authority to conscript anyone I want into service. Henceforth, you are one of my soldiers!!” With that, he flicked his sleeve. “You’ll serve for five years. Each year, your salary will be twice what you get in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! As for other rewards, you can gain them via battle credit!

“Furthermore, I can promise you that if you earn enough battle credit to become a major general, then you can go conscript anyone else you like to become one of the Skin Flayers!” With that, he gave Heretic a profound look, and mused that he was almost the spitting image of himself back when he had been recruited.

“I must have looked exactly the same back then,” he thought. “So passionate. So enthusiastic. So unique. Such a consummate chosen.” Wrapped up in the enchanting memories, he cleared his throat and led the 3rd Corps off into the distance.

Along the way, the army pushed with even greater speed than they had on their way to World City. After all, Bai Lin had ordered him to get back as quickly as possible. Therefore, it only took a few days before Great Wall City became visible up ahead. Almost immediately, it was possible to see a shocking, blood-colored cloud on the other side of the wall, which had taken the shape of the face of a young woman.

She was very beautiful, but extremely solemn-looking, as if she viewed herself as being above all other living beings.

She almost seemed a part of the heavens above, and emanated the shocking pressure of a deva.

This young woman occupied first place on the Great Wall Execution List. She was Mistress Red-Dust!

Fighting Mistress Red-Dust was none other than three-eyed Chen Hetian. Their battle caused numerous booms and rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions. Meanwhile, endless masses of savage giants could be seen on the ground below, as well as soul cultivators and necromancers!

Although the spell formation shield was there to protect the Great Wall, the rumble of battle could still be faintly detected from beyond the wall. Clearly, shocking fighting was underway.

As the protective shield rippled, the cultivators of the five legions grouped into spell formations and unleashed constant counter attacks. Beams of light erupted from war chariots and magical cannons, all of which caused widespread destruction.

The huge eye was also participating in the fighting. Whenever the Wildlands forces managed to group together and lead a huge charge, they were routed before they could reach the Great Wall.

Some distance away from the wall were three enormous vortexes, from within which poured countless masses of savage giants.

However, there were no vengeful souls!

Clearly, the Wildlands still had not devised a method of neutralizing the Soul Convergence Pills, and were instead relying on a huge army of savage giants.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw what was happening, he took a deep breath. As a major general, he could not shrink back in fear of the enemy, and therefore, he gritted his teeth and said, “3rd Corps, proceed immediately to the Great Wall!”

As Bai Xiaochun roared and led the 3rd Corps forward, Master God-Diviner and Heretic followed along in shock. Master God-Diviner’s eyes were as wide as saucers, and his knees were shaking. After seeing how dangerous this place was, he already regretted having sworn to follow Bai Xiaochun. However, he was also certain that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t let him go even if he wanted to, and sighed bitterly.

As for Heretic, he was panting, and his eyes burned with passion, as though the prospect of being able to fight in battle already had his blood boiling.

It didn’t take long before Bai Xiaochun was taking his men through the side gate. Then they were inside Great Wall City and heading toward the wall itself.

A rare situation was playing out in this battle; the fact that the Wildlands had chosen not to use vengeful souls made the five legions’ Soul Convergence Pills relatively useless. Furthermore, exploding pill furnaces were only of limited use, and this battle was so huge that they weren’t effective on a large scale.

However, the huge enormous pill furnaces were still the foundation of Bai Xiaochun’s power in Great Wall City. Despite having grown very busy collecting souls earlier, he hadn’t stopped his work with his pill furnaces. Therefore, it was only natural that some of the sealed pill furnaces would appear in this battle.

Booms rang out, accompanied by miserable shrieks. Unfortunately, the fact that there were only a limited numbers of pill furnaces available ensured that they were quickly used up.

The Wildlands had prepared well for this offensive. Considering how many savage giants were pouring out of their three vortexes, it was obviously that many more than 100 tribes were involved.

There were definitely no less than 1,000,000 giants fighting, many of them unhesitatingly resorting to self-detonation in their attempts to break through the spell formation shield.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0531 awe-chapter-532

Strangely, no matter how powerful the attacks of the Wildlanders seemed, Bai Lin and the other generals didn’t issue any orders for their soldiers to fight back. Instead, they were ordered to stay behind the shield.

In fact, as the shield retreated, they retreated!

The only fighting that went on was with any necromancers who were able to pierce through the shield itself!

As of this moment, the battle seemed somewhat lopsided. Countless savage giants roared forth to attack the shield, which was slowly being pushed back across the battlefield.

The cultivators of the five legions were pulling back until the point that they were in the shadow of the wall itself. Anxiety was mounting among the soldiers, and yet the eyes of Bai Lin and the other four generals glittered brightly, as though they were waiting for just the right moment to order a counter attack.

“And that should do it....” Bai Lin murmured, looking both edgy and eager at the same time.

Even as the cultivators continued to fall back, the huge eye atop the pagoda in the middle of the city suddenly flared to life, revealing the image of a bat!

Instantly, cold-blooded laughter pierced into the ears of everyone present as the bat opened its mouth and then spit out a stream of vengeful souls!

1 soul. 10 souls. 1,000 souls. 10,000 souls. Soon, it was almost impossible to count how many souls were pouring madly out of the bat's mouth. The bat was like a bottomless pit; within the blink of an eye, more than 100,000,000 souls could be seen flying out of Great Wall City and through the shield toward the massive army of giants!

And things weren’t over yet. The souls continued to pour out. 100,000,000. 200,000,000. 300,000,000. Within mere moments, there were fully 500,000,000!!

The cultivators of the five legions looked on, eyes wide with disbelief. The Wildlanders were even more incredulous.

Savage giants, soul cultivators, and necromancers alike reacted with complete shock.

“Th-this... this....”

“Impossible!!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe there are so many vengeful souls! Aren’t we the ones who fight with vengeful souls? How can the Great Wall have so many of them!?!?”

“Even if they saved up for a very, very long time, it would still be very difficult to get that many!!”

As rumbling sounds rose up into the sky, the Wildlanders looked on in disbelief. What was happening was so shocking they felt like their world had been turned upside down. After all, they were usually the ones who drove the vengeful souls into attacking the Great Wall.

And yet now, everything had been turned around. The Great Wall was sending the vengeful souls charging in attack against them!

Even more outrageous was that there were 500,000,000 of them. That was more than had been used by the Wildlands in the previous major battle. The sight of the seemingly endless group of vengeful souls rushing toward them caused the Wildlands savages to tremble in shock and terror.

In the blink of an eye, the 500,000,000 souls fell upon the savage giants, whom they bored into, provoking agonized shrieks before causing their bodies to explode.

Such explosions did not merely occur here and there. Within a few short breaths of time, tens upon tens of thousands of giants exploded, causing a mist of blood to build up on the battlefield.

As the souls charged forth, the huge army of giants began to fall apart, and the previously lopsided state of affairs changed.

Almost instantly, chaos prevailed, and no matter what the soul cultivators did to try to keep the giants under control, nothing worked. Even the necromancers' eyes were bright red as they drew deeply upon their own powers to try to take control of the souls. However, there were simply too many of them, making such efforts totally futile.

Most important was that the huge bat in the eye was continuing to spit out souls, creating a tide that crushed everything in its path like a boulder crushing a drinking glass.

The cultivators of the five legions were extremely excited, and as their blood boiled, they began to cry out at the tops of their lungs.

“Those are the souls Bai Xiaochun handed over!!”

“I get it now! Those are Major General Bai’s souls!!”

“Hahaha! This is unheard-of. This is the first time the grand forces of the Great Wall have sent vengeful souls to attack the Wildlands!”

At the same time, Bai Lin and the other generals threw their heads back and laughed uproariously. This was the moment they had been waiting for!

“Skin Flayers,” Bai Lin roared, “follow me into battle!!” Howling with laughter, he charged forward across the battlefield, the Skin Flayers following along behind him.

The other four legions similarly advanced into battle, and within moments, the five legions were cutting through the enemy like sharp blades. With the savages in chaos and the vengeful souls providing cover, they emerged from behind the shield to unleash slaughter.

As for the spell formation shield, it flickered with bright light, and then, instead of pulling back, began to push forward, completely uninhibited.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” someone screamed in a voice replete with hatred and murder. It was none other than Mistress Red-Dust, who was in the middle of fighting back and forth with Chen Hetian.

She wasn’t the only one to put the pieces of the puzzle together. As the giants suffered defeat after defeat on the front lines, they heard the exclamations of the five legions, and soon realized that Devil Bai was to blame. Then, countless roars of rage and howled curses could be heard.

“The Wildlands’ humiliation will never go away unless Devil Bai is killed!!”

“Devil Bai, our Holy People won’t rest until you’re dead!!”

“If you fall into my hands, Bai Xiaochun, I’ll make you suffer for a thousand years!!”

Even as words such as these began to echo out across the battlefield, Bai Xiaochun and his five regiments stepped onto the wall itself. Immediately, Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped.

“What did I do this time?” Then he saw the countless vengeful souls smashing into the Wildlands army, and rubbed his eyes a bit before looking out again to make sure he wasn’t seeing things.

The 5,000 cultivators he led looked out at the battlefield, and then glanced over at Bai Xiaochun, odd expressions on their faces. Master God-Diviner was completely shaken, and although he wasn’t sure exactly what was going on, he could hear what the savage giants were screaming about. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he felt his scalp prickling in shock, and even trembled from the feelings of reverence that rose up within him.

“Sure enough, the junior patriarch is completely extraordinary. Not only did he already become a major general, but he somehow got the Wildlands to hate him down to the core of their being!”

Heretic was as stunned into silence, as if he had been physically struck.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling quite anxious due to the unimaginable events which were playing out. He turned his head to look up at the bat in the huge eye, and then back out at all the eyes on the battlefield staring at him, and then his eyes glittered. All of a sudden, he was struck with the realization that this was a perfect situation to show off a bit. Sticking his chest out, he looked down his nose at the battlefield.

Clasping his hands behind his back, he coolly said, “Trifling savages. I can reduce the lot of you into ashes without even stepping foot onto the battlefield!”

In response, the savages cursed, and the five legions cheered. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun felt more important than heaven or earth.

However, it was also in that moment that Mistress Red-Dust turned to glare at him with gritted teeth. The last major battle had been a defeat for the Wildlands because of Bai Xiaochun, and now the same thing was happening with this battle. Mistress Red-Dust’s desire to kill Bai Xiaochun surged more powerfully than ever.

However, with Chen Hetian there blocking her path, there was nothing she could do to Bai Xiaochun.

Therefore, she raised her voice and said, “Wildlanders, hear my orders! I hereby call upon my authority as Mistress Red-Dust to place Bai Xiaochun in 1st place on the Execution List, and also increase the reward on his head!

“That reward is now a full set of five elements deva beast souls!!! The bounty is good throughout all creation, and is available to both members of our Holy People and cultivators from the Great Wall. The only requirement is to kill Bai Xiaochun! I, Red-Dust, swear an oath upon my cultivation base, and vow to never break my word in the slightest aspect. Furthermore, I will not reveal the identity of the person who kills him, nor divulge even the slightest bit of information about them. If I violate any aspect of this oath, let my cultivation base be ruined and my life destroyed in body and soul!” As Mistress Red-Dust’s piercing words rang out, thunder rumbled up in the heavens, as if to bear witness to her promise. That in itself indicated that Mistress Red-Dust had just uttered a Dao oath!

When a Dao oath was uttered, it could not be violated!!

As her words echoed back and forth, the entire battlefield went quiet, and countless eyes turned to fall upon Bai Xiaochun.

Such gazes didn’t just come from the Wildlands forces, but also from cultivators of the five legions!

The reward which had just been proclaimed was simply too dramatic!! A complete set of five elements deva beast souls was equivalent to a deva soul, and their value to someone who wanted to step into the Nascent Soul stage was beyond description!

Furthermore, Mistress Red-Dust had promised not to divulge any information about the person who killed Bai Xiaochun. Because of that, many hearts began to race with excitement.

When Bai Xiaochun saw so many murderous and greedy gazes falling upon him, his expression flickered, and he even started shaking. Without even thinking about it, he slapped his bag of holding, causing more layers of armor to build up around him. Suddenly, he had no desire to try to show off, and instead, had a very bad feeling.

“Hey this wasn’t my fault!” he muttered, feeling very wronged. “Who would have known that bat would spit all those souls out...?” The unexpected calamity not only had him feeling very nervous, but he was also filled with regret. It felt like a cold wind was creeping up his back as he suddenly realized that his poor little life was now being threatened.

“This is completely unfair!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0532 awe-chapter-533

The entire state of the battle had changed. A boundless soul tide swept out, shoving the Wildlands savages backward, causing agonized screams and intense rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth.

Blood soaked the ground red, and the sky darkened. In the moment before death, countless gazes came to rest on Bai Xiaochun, gazes of hatred and madness that caused Bai Xiaochun’s own expression to rapidly become unsightlier than ever.

He truly felt as if he had been wronged. To him, it made sense that people would hate him for his Soul Convergence Pills or his exploding pill furnaces. But what was happening now had nothing to do with him. In fact, there wasn’t even any evidence that the battle credit in his identity medallion was increasing.

“No battle credit, and on top of that, I'm the scapegoat? Something seems weird!” The more terrified he got about the situation, the more it felt like he had somehow been scammed.

However, even as he stewed in his anxiety, and the Wildlands seemed to be on the verge of being completely crushed, the three distant vortexes began to shine brightly and emit thunderous rumbling sounds.

Next, an enormous, pitch-black 3,000-meter tall hand with nine fingers stretched out of the leftmost vortex. The hand quickly grabbed one of the nearby savage giants, and then threw it toward the five legions as if it were as light as a baby chicken.

The screaming giant turned into a beam of light that shot toward the five legions, where it then exploded, creating a powerful attack. A moment later, the huge hand grabbed another savage giant and threw it across the battlefield in similar fashion.

Things weren’t over yet, though. Another huge, pitch-black, nine-fingered hand emerged from the rightmost vortex. After that, an enormous head stuck out from within the centermost vortex.

The head had no eyes on its face, but had a long, black horn protruding from its forehead, as well as a blood-red mouth. Apparently, it was some sort of evil ghost!

Moments later, the ghost let out a roar that caused heaven to shake and the earth to tremble!

ROAR!!

A sound wave rolled out that crushed everything in its path, suppressing all other sounds until it was the only thing audible on the battlefield. As the sound wave passed along, it prevented the savage giants from retreating, and blasted the five legions back like a gale-force wind.

From a distance, the three vortexes almost looked like windows leading into another world, from within which an enormous giant had stuck its head and hands.

Even more noteworthy was that the roar of the ghost instantly pushed an indentation into the advancing tide of souls!

Bai Lin, the generals, and Chen Hetian were all shocked. This development alone wouldn't be enough for the Wildlands to take back the initiative in the battle, but considering that they were the ones waging this war, it was obvious that they had come prepared.

Although the unexpected appearance of the soul tide had been devastating, they obviously had other trump cards to call upon. This became apparent when, with no warning whatsoever, hundreds more of the window-like vortexes appeared in other locations on the battlefield.

More arms and heads stretched out, along with roaring sounds that caused the savage giants' eyes to gleam with madness, as though their hearts were being touched. Instead of retreating, the all began to roar at the tops of their lungs and then charge toward the five legions, seemingly in complete disregard to their own safety.

A grim expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun's face. Clearly, the Wildlands had come very prepared for this battle, and that idea left him feeling profoundly uneasy. There was no time to ponder the matter now, however, so Bai Xiaochun simply extended his right hand and cried, "3rd Corps, take control of the Great Wall's magical cannons. Blast those evil ghosts to bits!"

The cultivators of the five regiments quickly fanned out to follow his orders.

As of this moment, the battlefield situation was more unstable than ever!

Booms rang out, and enraged roars filled the air along with agonized shrieks. The spell formation shield rippled as both sides fought back and forth.

Although the forces of the Great Wall were clearly outnumbered by the Wildlands, with the vengeful souls and the spell formation shield, they actually had the advantage, although they had to pay a heavy price to keep the upper hand in battle.

The Wildlands savages were going crazy, and their strategy of self-detonation was almost impossible for the Great Wall forces to deal with.

The battlefield was like a huge meat grinder, oozing blood every moment as countless combatants died.

How bitter!

Evening had already fallen. Chen Hetian and Mistress Red-Dust were still engaged in such a spectacular battle that neither of them could spare any attention for the battlefield.

As for Bai Xiaochun’s corps, half of them were down on the battlefield, and half of them were on the wall itself. However, all of them were fighting passionately. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was trembling, but as he saw the blasts of the magical cannons shooting out onto the battlefield, he knew that the time had come for him to actually take part in the fighting.

However, even as his eyes began to glow red, and he leapt off of the wall with a large group of cultivators, the land down below began to quake.

At the same time, deafening rumbling sounds filled the air, and a mighty wind kicked up. Mountains crumbled and trees were felled as sounds ripped across the lands that vastly surpassed the soundwaves the evil ghosts had unleashed.

RUMBLE!

Savage giants coughed up blood, as did the cultivators of the five legions. The sound which was battering them was completely deafening!

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he looked off toward the horizon, where previously, a single black pillar of light had risen up into the sky. Now, there were two pillars of light!!

As the second pillar of light shot up, countless powerful ripples spread out through the air.

Both sides of the conflict were shocked to the extreme.

“Another pillar of light appeared!”

“W-what’s... what’s going on!?”

“What happened?!” The expressions of all the combatants flickered, and as for Bai Xiaochun, his heart began to tremble with anxiety. Before he could do anything more, though, another deafening roar split the air, causing more blood to spray out of the mouths of savages and cultivators alike as a third pillar of light shot up!!

Everyone was so flabbergasted that they couldn’t hold back from shouting out in alarm!

Up in the air, Chen Hetian’s face fell, and it was the same with Mistress Red-Dust. Immediately, they stopped fighting, backed away from each other, and looked over in the direction of the pillars of light.

“What happened...?”

“Two more pillars of light have appeared!!”

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Even as everyone looked on in shock, yet another intense rumbling sound echoed out, and then a fourth and a fifth.

A total of eight explosive sounds rocked the lands one after another!

Everything was shaking violently, and even the sky seemed like it might be rent apart. There was no need to even mention the mountains that existed between the Great Wall and the pit where the pillars of light originated. Almost everything was crushed flat and reduced to ashes!

The drastic events playing out made it difficult for many people to even stand up. Blood oozed out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths, and agonized shrieks rang out constantly. Some of the savage giants and Great Wall cultivators were injured so badly, or had their cultivation bases destabilized so profoundly, that they instantly died!!

The spell formation shield shattered into pieces, and to Bai Xiaochun’s shock, cracks even began to spread out in the Great Wall itself!

“This... this....” As the incredible rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, more pillars of light appeared.

Six, seven, eight. Shockingly, a total of eight black pillars of light appeared, bringing the grand total to nine!

Nine pillars of light shot up into the heavens, creating something like a spell formation that seemed capable of pushing away the heavens and shaking all life forms.

Chen Hetian couldn’t control his panting, and Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes were wide. Down below, savages and cultivators alike were stunned, standing there motionless as blood oozed out of their orifices.

Bai Xiaochun was similarly bleeding, and as he looked at the nine black pillars of light, his heart surged with a very bad premonition.

“Something big is happening!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0533 awe-chapter-534

Almost in the same moment that the nine pillars of light appeared together, Chen Hetian and Mistress Red-Dust both pulled out transmission jade slips; clearly, both of them were receiving messages from other parties.

Their faces flickered with equally unreadable expressions, and they began to pant. Finally, they looked up into each other’s eyes and began to transmit a conversation.

It only took a few breaths worth of time for the two of them to reach an agreement, whereupon Chen Hetian waved his hand and called out to the forces below.

“Five legions, fall back!”

At the same time, Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes glittered as she looked at the Wildlands army and spoke in a cold voice.

“Holy People, fall back!”

Considering that both of them had been issued the same orders, there was no way for the fighting to continue. The battle was over. The Wildlands savages retreated, seemingly puzzled, and at the same time, shocked because of the nine pillars of light.

The Great Wall forces reacted similarly. Numerous speculations rose up in the hearts of the cultivators as they pondered what could possibly have caused the two devas to agree to stop the fighting! Whatever it was, there was a high likelihood that it had something to do with the nine pillars of light!

As Bai Lin and the other generals oversaw the retreat back to the wall, the Wildlands army disappeared into the darkness of the evening.

As for Chen Hetian, he suddenly faded away, vanishing for several hours. When he reappeared in the huge pagoda, it was late in the night. The first thing he did was summon Bai Lin and the other generals of the five legions to convene a meeting.

By that time, the cultivators of the five legions were all back in their various garrisons.

Bai Xiaochun was there with his 3rd Corps, looking at the nine pillars of light rising up into the sky off in the distance. Although it was night, and the beams were black, they still emanated a soft glow that made them clearly visible.

The uneasy feeling in Bai Xiaochun’s heart continued to rise.

“Just what exactly is happening...?” he thought nervously. “I'm not sure about the other pillars, but the first one came because I grabbed too many souls and instigated some kind of chain reaction.

“Could it be that someone else provoked the soul of that wicked ghost I saw? Or maybe something happened inside the necropolis?” The more Bai Xiaochun considered the situation, the more he was convinced that someone else had done something. After all, both the Great Wall and the Wildlands had sent a lot of people into the necropolis to investigate it.

“What if the soul of that evil ghost escaped? What if it’s after me!?!?” That thought caused him to start chewing on his lip in anxiety. Looking around fearfully, he thought back to how terrifying that evil ghost had been, and realized that he completely lacked any sense of security.

“What am I supposed to do...? Please tell me I’m wrong about this!” By now, he was scowling on the verge of tears, and couldn’t stop sighing inwardly.

Chen Hetian’s meeting with Bai Lin and the other generals only lasted for about two hours. Afterward, the generals flew out of the pagoda, eyes shining with excitement that they couldn’t keep hidden.

By the time Bai Lin got back to the Skin Flayers’ district, it was almost dawn. The first thing he did was issue orders to the major generals. “All major generals will come to my residence immediately for a meeting!”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, but then took a deep breath and flew out toward the huge coffin-like residence that belonged to Bai Lin. Before long, he caught sight of the other major generals of the Skin Flayers, all of whom had somber but curious looks on their faces. After exchanging salutes with clasped hands, the group flew into Bai Lin’s residence.

Inside the grand hall, Bai Xiaochun and the other eight major generals stood before Bai Lin and saluted with clasped hands.

“Something big happened!” Bai Lin said, his eyes flashing like lightning. Everyone shivered inwardly.

As of this point, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, as he expected Bai Lin to go on to talk about how an evil ghost had escaped from the necropolis.

Before anyone could ask any questions, Bai Lin excitedly said, “A deva soul was located!”

With the exception of Bai Xiaochun, all of the major generals seemed stunned.

“A deva soul!!”

“I can’t believe a deva soul was located!!”

“I've been stationed at the Great Wall for years now, and have only heard stories of deva souls! I've never even seen one with my own eyes!!” Although all of the other major generals were already Nascent Soul experts, the astronomical value of a deva soul was still very enticing.

Bai Xiaochun finally relaxed a bit. He knew what deva souls were like, and obviously, the powerful evil ghost he had faced in the pit was not a deva soul. As long as that evil ghost didn't show up, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t be too worried. Furthermore, considering how familiar he was with the Great Wall now, he was also acutely aware of how valuable deva souls were!

For one thing, a deva soul could be traded for a full set of five elements deva beast souls. Conversely, a set of five elements deva beast souls could also be traded for a deva soul, although it would be virtually impossible to find someone who would make that trade.

After all, deva souls were incredibly rare.

Almost anyone who actually possessed a deva soul would keep that fact a well-hidden secret, and attempt to collect the other four needed deva souls. If word spread about such a thing, the ramifications would be grave. To date, only the Celestial on Heavenspan Island had ever done such a thing.

It was even rumored that the Celestial did not wish for any other person to use deva souls to reach the Nascent Soul stage. Although it was just a rumor, if the Celestial really did wish to prevent such a thing from happening, it would be a simple thing to have someone walking down that path be put to an end.

All of the ambiguous stories left people feeling very unsure about what to believe.

In any case, Bai Xiaochun didn’t spend too much time worrying about it. What he cared most about was his poor little life. Upon looking around and seeing the expressions on the faces of the other major generals, he felt very proud of himself.

“It's just a deva soul, right? What’s the big deal? I have two in my bag of holding.” Of course, despite such thoughts, he put a similar expression of madness and anticipation on his face.

Bai Lin seemed to be very pleased at the reaction his words were getting. He had been equally shocked when Chen Hetian gave the news to the generals. However, the reason for his shock was not the value of the soul itself, but rather, some further information that had been provided by Chen Hetian.

At first, Bai Lin was hesitant to divulge that information to the major generals. But since it was likely that the other generals would tell their major generals, and that Bai Lin would need help to come out ahead in the coming competition and win the deva soul, he decided to proceed.

“A complete set of five deva souls can help a cultivator create a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, but that’s only one of the benefits of having such souls. Another is that they can give Nascent Soul cultivators a much better chance of success when stepping into the Deva Realm!

“Even a single deva soul can increase that possibility, and if you can get a full set, the chances are astronomically better!”

Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very impressed, some of the other major general’s eyes were popping out of their heads. From the way they gasped, they were clearly flabbergasted by this new information.

“They can increase your chances of stepping into the Deva Realm....”

“I can’t believe deva souls are so useful!!”

Bai Lin looked over the group silently, paying close attention to their reactions. Of the nine major generals excluding Bai Xiaochun, three didn't seem to be reacting at all. Two had slight changes of expression, and four were clearly shocked.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he had a cool expression on his face. From what Bai Lin could tell, the information he had just revealed was not of much concern to Bai Xiaochun, who was still thinking about reaching the Nascent Soul stage. Obviously, his reaction would be different from the other major generals, who were all already Nascent Soul cultivators.

Of course, the truth was that Bai Xiaochun’s coolness came from the fact that he already had two deva souls. As the old saying goes, *a full man doesn’t understand the feelings of a hungry man*.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times when he realized Bai Lin was looking at him. Then he looked thoughtfully at the other major generals, and finally clasped hands and bowed toward Bai Lin.

“General, this seems like a great opportunity. If you can get that deva soul, you’ll have a much better chance at becoming a deva!”

Bai Xiaochun’s words brought the excited major generals back to their senses. Obviously, getting a deva soul right now wouldn’t help them much, considering how far away from the Deva Realm they were. Even if they got one, news would definitely spread about it.

Obviously, the person closest to a cultivation base breakthrough was none other than General Bai Lin, who was standing right in front of them. When the excited major generals saw the way his eyes glittered coldly, and heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, they immediately realized that Bai Xiaochun was actually reminding them of the reality of the situation.

The truth was that they were out of sorts because of the shocking news of a deva soul, otherwise they wouldn’t have needed such a reminder. Considering the cold look in Bai Lin’s eyes, the major generals in question immediately felt gratitude for Bai Xiaochun.

Those four major generals looked over at Bai Xiaochun with profound looks. One of them even clasped hands and bowed to Bai Lin.

“General, where exactly is this deva soul?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0534 awe-chapter-535

An enigmatic smile could be seen on Bai Lin’s face, evidence of his approval of the reminder Bai Xiaochun had offered just now. After all, there were some things that weren’t appropriate for Bai Lin to directly say himself. Looking at the major generals, he nodded.

“All of you have seen those black pillars of light,” he said. “As I'm sure many of you have already deduced, there have been some dramatic developments regarding the necropolis in that direction.

“By this point, the necropolis has completely collapsed, revealing an entrance within an entrance, a path that leads to a shocking labyrinth.

“Outside of the entrance is a stone stele, upon which is a line of text that clearly indicates a deva soul exists inside the labyrinth!”

No one responded. As for Bai Xiaochun, his heart skipped a beat. Moments ago, he had finally been calming down, only to suddenly be as tense as a taut bowstring. Although he had guessed that the deva soul would be connected to the necropolis, he had hoped it wouldn’t be the case. He couldn’t help but think that this entire scenario had all begun with him collecting souls in that pit, and that made him very nervous.

“Senior Chen Hetian has issued orders. Tomorrow evening, a group of 30,000 soldiers will be heading into the labyrinth, with him leading them! Of course, the security of the Great Wall is paramount, so in terms of who will be going, Senior

Chen will consider the matter carefully, and announce the roster later tonight.

“I’ll be going along as well, but not to enter the labyrinth. The other generals and I will lead armies to encamp in the area and guard against any sneak attacks from the Wildlands. Even the true spirit from the pagoda will be present.

“All of you go back to your corps and make whatever preparations are necessary. Whichever Skin Flayer manages to bring back that deva soul for me will earn a handsome reward for whatever major general leads their corps!”

Bai Xiaochun heart was pounding. He didn't care about the deva soul at all; he only cared about his poor little life.

The fact that such a large group was being selected to go into the labyrinth only increased his nervousness. The mere thought of how terrifying that evil ghost was, and the fact that the Wildlands had a huge bounty on his head, caused his heart to leap up into his throat in fear that he might be sent along.

“Considering how important this whole thing is,” he thought, “and how low my cultivation base is, they probably won’t send me, right?” That made him feel a bit better.

Trying to sound as serious as possible, he looked at Bai Lin and said, “General, this whole thing seems a bit strange. There’s a labyrinth with a stone stele that outright says there’s a deva soul inside? It seems pretty likely to me that this is just a big trap set up by the Wildlands!”

After Bai Xiaochun was finished speaking, another of the major generals spoke up. “Sir, I was thinking the same thing. Besides, even if one of us Skin Flayers manages to get our hands on the deva soul, if Senior Chen feels like taking it away, well.... And another thing, General. Can this information really be trusted?!”

Bai Lin smiled faintly. “We generals already discussed these very matters with Senior Chen. Actually, Senior Chen secretly took a trip to the labyrinth himself already, and confirmed that it is no trap. As for the other matter, the generals have already made a formal agreement with him to make sure nothing like what you’ve mentioned will happen....

“We agreed to let him pick which 30,000 individuals will go into the labyrinth, and he agreed that whoever gets the deva soul will receive his personal protection and approval!

“As for whether or not the basic information can be trusted, Senior Chen revealed the truth to us in our meeting....

“The news came directly from his apprentice Zhao Tianjiao, and his daughter Chen Yueshan. They were on their way back from a mission in the Wildlands when the first pillar of light appeared. That was when he sent them into the necropolis to investigate the place!

“Unfortunately, their current situation is unknown, and in fact, we’re not even sure if they’re alive. Presumably, they are trapped somewhere in the labyrinth, and can’t make contact. Supposedly, the labyrinth is enormous, and definitely impossible for any one person to search thoroughly. That is one reason why Senior Chen is taking 30,000 people with him. In addition to the matter of the deva soul, there is another important purpose to the mission; to find Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan, and escort them out safely.” When Bai Xiaochun heard this, his heart immediately trembled.

“Elder Brother Zhao....” Bai Xiaochun recalled how horrifying the gigantic evil ghost had been, and then thought about how Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan were missing. Then he began to pant in anxiety.

Soon, the meeting with the major generals concluded, and Bai Lin dismissed them. Bai Xiaochun was very worried. On the one hand, it was possible that Zhao Tianjiao was in trouble, and on the other hand, he feared being selected to go into the labyrinth.

“With so many people going in to look for Elder Brother Zhao and Elder Sister Chen, they should be fine. So I really, *really* hope they don’t pick me.” After sighing all the way back to the garrison, he sat in his quarters, brooding.

“They’d better not pick me to go into that labyrinth. As soon as the Wildlanders see me they’ll definitely go crazy. Plus, considering how far away from the Great Wall that place is, there might even be cultivators from the five legions who get greedy for the bounty!” The mere thought of the wild reward Mistress Red-Dust had put up for his head, and how numerous cultivators from the five legions had turned to look at him in that moment, caused his heart to grow cold with dread. But then he thought about how Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan were basically in trouble because of a situation he had caused, and he grew even more anxious.

Before long, the light of dawn filled the sky. However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in the mood to go out and do anything. Instead, he stayed inside to fret and pray about the roster.

Meanwhile, Chen Hetian sat grim-faced in the pagoda beneath the huge eye, his mood one of anxiety and regret. After all, if he hadn’t sent his apprentice and daughter into the necropolis, events wouldn’t be playing out the way they were.

His daughter and apprentice had gone through a dangerous mission in the Wildlands, and were coming back safely when he ordered them into further danger. The mere thought of it caused his heart to prickle with pain. Thankfully, his daughter’s life slip was still intact. Furthermore, he had given her a handful of precious treasures to protect herself. Therefore, he wasn’t completely overwhelmed with worry.

He had only agreed to let the two of them go out into the Wildlands after careful consideration and deliberation. He had been worried about them the entire time, and only relaxed a bit when he found that they were on their way back safely.

Never could he have imagined that things would turn out like they did.

He hadn’t revealed the entire truth of the situation to Bai Lin and the generals. Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan had been in the middle of fleeing from some Wildlands soul cultivators when they stumbled into a restrictive spell that unleashed the eight pillars of light. Only then, when the mountains were crumbling and the earth was shaking violently, did the entrance to the labyrinth appear.

Furthermore, a gravitational force had appeared, which sucked everyone inside. Zhao Tianjiao had only been able to send one quick message out before being cut off, words filled with terror and alarm: “This labyrinth is a land of ghosts! It opens in the evening and closes in the morning....”

“The labyrinth is a land of ghosts....” Chen Hetian had murmured. After the Wildlands army retreated, he vanished for a few hours, which was when he personally went to the location of the labyrinth.

He had even tentatively entered. However, once inside, he realized that not only was the place huge, but there was also something about it that rapidly suppressed his divine sense down to a very limited state. Clearly, there was no way that he alone would be able to search for and find his daughter and apprentice.

Plus, in the short time he had been inside, he had seen things which caused fear to rise up even in him. However, the realization that his daughter and apprentice could be killed at any moment filled Chen Hetian with immense anxiety.

Thus, he had made his agreement with Bai Lin and the other generals. Considering the level of Chen Hetian's cultivation base, he didn't care too much about a deva soul. Therefore, for the sake of his daughter and apprentice, he recruited the help of the legions to search the labyrinth.

If he had been in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect instead of the Great Wall, he could have mustered 3,000,000 cultivators with ease. But he was dealing with the five legions of the Hall of Steel Veins, which answered to the demigod patriarch. When it came to the security of the Great Wall, 30,000 cultivators wasn't a small number. But the wall could still be manned in their absence, and therefore, a deal had been reached.

Currently, Chen Hetian held a jade slip, within which were the records regarding all of the cultivators in the five legions. Included in the information was a detailed description of each cultivator's cultivation base, as well as what skills and techniques they were adept with.

As Chen Hetian browsed through the records, he selected one cultivator after another to join the mission.

Most of the cultivators he selected were in the Core Formation stage, skilled with the use of divine sense, and very quick.

He also selected some Nascent Soul cultivators, but was limited in the total number he could pick, and was thus being very choosy.

Before long, the list of 30,000 was almost complete, which was when Chen Hetian's divine sense locked down onto one name in particular.

"Bai Xiaochun…." he muttered. Bai Xiaochun had only joined the Skin Flayers because of a chance series of events, and had only been a member for a few years. To cultivators, that was a fairly short period of time, and yet, there were plenty of records regarding his accomplishments, many of which came from when he had been unexpectedly sucked out onto the battlefield.

For one thing, he was noted for his incredible speed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0535 awe-chapter-536

Chen Hetian paused when he got to Bai Xiaochun's name. Bai Xiaochun had become very important to the Great Wall in the short time since he had joined the Skin Flayers, and Chen Hetian knew that. Furthermore, he was aware of the close friendship between him and Zhao Tianjiao.

Of course, when evening fell, it wouldn't just be Chen Hetian and 30,000 cultivators showing up outside the labyrinth. There would be a host of Wildlands savages and soul cultivators....

Deva souls were just as precious to the Wildlanders, who could use them to add extra power to their secret magics. Because of that, Chen Hetian was worried about the Wildlanders contending for the deva soul.

However, of even more concern was the fact that the more soul cultivators and savages who entered the labyrinth, the more likely they would be to encounter his apprentice and daughter.

Therefore, Chen Hetian wanted someone in the labyrinth whom the Wildlanders would be especially drawn to, upon whom they could focus their killing intent. He wanted someone who the Wildlanders would specifically want to track down....

And there was no one who met those requirements more perfectly than Bai Xiaochun.... The Wildlanders hated Bai Xiaochun with a vengeance, and the instant they saw him, would definitely try to chase him down and kill him. After all, the reward on his head was for a complete set of five elements deva beast souls, which was something no one in the Wildlands could remain ambivalent about.

For all intents and purposes, any Wildlander who went into the labyrinth without very specific orders to the contrary would most likely choose to try to hunt down and kill Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s mere presence would attract the attention of all the Wildlands forces. Not only would that make things safer for other Great Wall cultivators, but it would increase their chances of getting the deva soul.

“Bai Xiaochun....” Chen Hetian murmured, his eyes glittering. The truth was that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had long since been working on a way to crack the secret of the Soul Convergence Pill.

Such pills were far too important to the sect to be controlled by any one person. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had also been kept in the dark, to prevent any frustration or defiance on his part.

The sect had almost reached the point of determining the medicine formula, and as for the exploding pill furnaces, the sect had also begun to come up with their own methods of reproducing the effects. Because of all of that, whether it was to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect or Chen Hetian himself, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t of much value anymore.

If the current situation hadn’t come about, Chen Hetian would have continued to use him as before. But now, with the lives of his apprentice and daughter on the line, he was more than willing to sacrifice Bai Xiaochun if it meant getting the slightest advantage.

With such thoughts on his mind, Chen Hetian unhesitatingly added Bai Xiaochun’s name to the list!

By the time the sun was high in the sky, Chen Hetian had completed the 30,000-name-long list. He was already nervous. After all, the labyrinth would be opening up later in the evening.

After sending the name list into the huge eye, he called upon his authority to notify all of the cultivators who would be marching toward the labyrinth. One by one, the identity medallions of the cultivators in the five legions began to vibrate as the news came in.

“I'm included!”

“This mission is going to be dangerous, but rewards come only with risk!”

“There’s a deva soul in that labyrinth! Heh heh. There are definitely going to be soul cultivators too, and they all have terrifying spirit enhanced weapons. If I can get one, then all of this will be worth it even if I don’t get that deva soul!”

Different reactions could be seen on the faces of the various cultivators in the five legions who received orders to join the mission. Many were very excited at the chance to join a deva on an important assignment. Some were frowning at the thought of how dangerous things would likely be. However, they were cultivators of the five legions, and therefore, they refrained from complaining.

After all, at the bottom of the order was a line of text which explained that anyone who refused to go on the mission would be treated as a deserter!

And at the Great Wall, deserters were put to death!

As everyone else received their orders, Bai Xiaochun was sitting in his quarters, trembling as he looked at his identity medallion. After looking at the message, he shrieked loudly as the blood drained from his face.

“Deserter!? Deserters are punished with death by a thousand cuts.... I don’t want to go!!”

Leaping to his feet, he stared at the identity medallion so hard that his vision began to fade. He felt like he was a lamb who had walked right into the jaws of a tiger, and the sense of profound danger he felt inundated every scrap of his flesh and blood. Terrified, he immediately transmitted a message to Bai Lin.

After a long moment passed, Bai Lin responded.

“Senior Chen has made his decision. I tried to fight him on the point, but he refused to budge. I'm sorry, Xiaochun, nothing can be done about it.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately went very cold, and his gaze filled with rage as he stared at his identity medallion.

“I've performed great services for the Great Wall! I'm a major general!” Bai Xiaochun was extremely angry, and refused to believe that Chen Hetian was unaware of the lengths the Wildlanders would go to try to kill him if he went outside of the Great Wall. In fact, within that labyrinth, it wouldn’t be surprising if five legions cultivators gave in to the temptation to try to kill him.

Furthermore, there was almost nothing he could do to defend himself. If he went, it wouldn’t just be extremely dangerous, it would be almost like a death sentence!

Despite all of that, Chen Hetian had intentionally selected him to go, and had refused Bai Lin’s request to make a change. Clearly, Chen Hetian was doing all of this on purpose.

“He must intend to use me as bait to distract the Wildlanders....” Bai Xiaochun thought, his eyes glinting red with anger, and his blood pumping wildly. Certain that his analysis was correct, his rage continued to mount. To him, it felt as painful as if someone were standing behind him, poking a sabre into his back to force him to jump into a fiery pit. He almost couldn’t breathe.

“If I don’t go, I’ll be punished with death by a thousand cuts. Plus, the River-Defying Sect would be implicated. I'm not simply being put into extreme danger, I’m being sentenced to death....

“I've been defending the Great Wall for years now! I've earned countless battle credit. And this is how the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect treats me!?” Bai Xiaochun was so angry that he balled his hands into fists, his face turning red and blue veins bulging out on his neck. Then, after a long moment, he began to chuckle bitterly

There were no options. It was either a literal death penalty or a figurative death sentence, and therefore, he had no choice other than to pick the latter.

“They must have already cracked the secrets of my Soul Convergence Pill.” There was nothing he could do about that. By this point, he was physically trembling, although it wasn’t from fear, but rather, fury!

The incident with the Fantasy Pills back in Sky City had been a clue about how the sect tended to treat him, but he had never imagined that after everything that happened later, he would reach a point like this.

After struggling to get himself under control, he chuckled bitterly and began to pack his belongings. Since he had no choice in the matter, the only thing he could do was make sure he was as prepared as possible to keep on living.

He took out the Eternal Parasol and his eight-colored fuel. Originally, he had hoped to use the eight-colored flame at some other time in the future, but now, he didn’t hesitate to use it to perform a spirit enhancement on the parasol.

After placing the parasol into the turtle-wok, eight dazzling silver designs appeared!

He did nothing to cover them up. After all his years at the Great Wall, he had seen Wildlands soul cultivators in battle who wielded magical items with multiple spirit enhancements on numerous occasions. From what he could tell, the spirit enhancement techniques in the Heavenspan River were different from those in the Wildlands.

He had long been curious about that, and had even asked Bai Lin about it, but the only answer he had been given was that it had something to do with necromancers. Bai Lin was hesitant to give any information beyond that.

Bai Xiaochun’s own enquiries had also indicated that the answer had something to do with necromancers, but had uncovered little else, and he had been forced to simply forget about trying to get an answer.

After performing an eightfold spirit enhancement on the Eternal Parasol, he made similar preparations with his medicinal pills, armor, and magical items, performing spirit enhancements on as many as he could.

At one point, both Master God-Diviner and Zhao Long came to inform him that they had been selected for the mission. Zhao Long took the news in stride, but Master God-Diviner was terrified, and begged Bai Xiaochun to try to get him off the list.

“Junior Patriarch, save me! I just got here! This... this isn’t fair!!”

Roughly 800 members of the 3rd Corps had been selected to go on the mission, Song Que included.

All of them were completely taken aback to hear that Bai Xiaochun was also included. Master God-Diviner was especially dumbfounded, and eventually just left with a bitter smile on his face. Obviously, if Bai Xiaochun couldn’t get out of the mission, then there was no hope for anyone else to be exempted.

After sending everyone away, Bai Xiaochun sighed and headed to the pagoda in the middle of the city, where he spent all of his battle credit to purchase paper talismans, as well as spirit alcohol that could be used to restore spiritual power.

Only with sufficient spiritual power could he protect himself within the labyrinth. As for the 800 other members of the 3rd Corps, although he was responsible for their safety, considering the limited time involved, he did what he could to help them, but it wasn’t much.

Soon, it was only two hours away from evening. That was when Chen Hetian emerged from the pagoda and summoned the 30,000 cultivators who had been selected for the mission, then waved his hand and shot out beyond the wall.

Worried that the group would travel too slowly, he performed an incantation gesture, causing a mass of clouds to build up that quickly carried the 30,000 cultivators across the lands. Because of that, it only took about two hours to reach the entrance of the labyrinth.

Bai Xiaochun was there in the crowd, glaring furiously at Chen Hetian. However, considering the level of the man’s cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun knew that he could only sigh helplessly about the situation. However, that didn’t prevent him from swearing an oath.

“You just wait until I become a demigod, you old fossil! Then I’ll get my revenge in full!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0536 awe-chapter-537

Along the way, Bai Xiaochun had considered putting his mask on. However, it wasn’t very convenient to do so with so many people around, so all he could do was scowl and maintain his place within the crowd.

Currently, he was wrapped up in thoughts about how to keep himself safe. However, up to this point, he hadn’t come up with any new ideas. The only thing he could think to do was try to find an opportunity inside the labyrinth to put on his mask and change his identity.

“That’s my only option....” he thought sullenly, his expression grim.

**

While Chen Hetian was leading his group of 30,000 cultivators toward the nine black pillars of light and the labyrinth beneath them, the Wildlands forces were doing the same.

After all, when compared to a deva soul, the war was of little consequence. The fighting had gone on for countless years, and the Great Wall had held strong over and over again.

Unfortunately for the Wildlanders, deva souls were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns. Therefore, whenever one appeared, it became the most important aspect of anything. As with the Great Wall, they had their misgivings about whether or not the labyrinth was some sort of trap. However, when it came to Mistress Red-Dust, she had immediately come to certain speculations regarding the place, even when the first black pillar of light had appeared.

Later, when the single beam turned into nine, her speculations had been confirmed as being true!

“It is almost completely without question that this is one of the ten sepulchers of the second-generation Arch-Emperor!” Mistress Red-Dust had been visibly moved by the sight of the nine black pillars of light, and they immediately caused her to recall a bit of history that her father had related to her.

Before the rebellion led by the Celestial from Heavenspan Island, the realm was not called the lands of Heavenspan, but rather, the lands of the Arch-Emperor. Furthermore, there were actually two emperors who ruled in those lands. One was the Arch-Emperor, and the other was the Hell-Emperor.

The Arch-Emperor presided over the Ancestor River, and the Hell-Emperor presided over the Underworld River! The Ancestor River was none other than the modern-day Heavenspan River!

One of the emperors presided over the living, the other presided over the dead!

One was the ultimate entity in the world, the other was the ultimate expression of the faith of its people!

Before the second-generation Arch-Emperor’s longevity ended, he drew upon the energy of all living things in heaven and earth to construct ten sepulchers. The first sepulcher was the actual location of his remains, and would remain eternally unopened. However, the other nine sepulchers contained various funerary objects left behind after his death, as well as numerous legacies.

His entire purpose in leaving behind the sepulchers was in case one of his later descendants ended up facing a powerful enemy. In such a situation, they could rely on the sepulchers to gain the power to fight back. Of course, the sepulchers were protected by restrictive spells that made them impossible for people to search for and find.

The location of the sepulchers had been passed down from one Arch-Emperor to the next over several generations, and were kept top secret. However, something unexpected happened during the reign of the fifth-generation Arch-Emperor!

He died a sudden and unexpected death, without the opportunity to pass on all of his secrets. Because of that, the location of the second-generation Arch-Emperor’s sepulchers became an unsolvable mystery.

It was during the reign of the ninth-generation Arch-Emperor that Heavenspan rose to prominence. All the lands rebelled, and the rulers of the world changed. The battered and broken survivors of the Arch-Emperor’s bloodline fled into the Wildlands, and the sepulchers of the second-generation Arch-Emperor became little more than legend.

Mistress Red-Dust was deeply excited about the possibility of the labyrinth being one of the sepulchers of the second-generation Arch-Emperor. “Each sepulcher would be surrounded by dozens of caves, each of which would contain the remains of deva-level beasts. There would also be a stone stele with details regarding the trial by fire inside. Other than one of the sepulchers of the second-generation

Arch-Emperor, I can’t think of any other location that would directly offer a deva soul as a reward!”

She didn’t tell anyone about what she knew, but at the same time, was relatively certain that few people in the world had even heard about the second-generation Arch-Emperor. Of course, the mere mention of a deva soul was enough to stir all of the local Wildlands soul cultivators into a frenzy, and to avoid suspicion, she did nothing to prevent them from taking action.

In fact, having so many soul cultivators along exploring the labyrinth at the same time as her would make it easier for her to cover up her true intentions, and make her way through the maze.

And that was what led to all of the soul cultivators and savages in the area rushing at top speed toward the labyrinth.

Many of them had never fought on the battlefield, and did not belong to any of the major powers of the Wildlands. They were essentially rogue cultivators, and they were showing up in droves.

Currently, the sky was growing dark as evening approached, and numerous such figures were starting to show up outside of the labyrinth’s entrance. At the moment, it was too early for the labyrinth to be open, and therefore, the new arrivals either stuck together in groups of three to five people, or waited alone off to the side.

As evening grew nearer, rumbling sounds filled the air from the direction of the Great Wall as 30,000 beams of light appeared. The commotion instantly drew the attention of the Wildlands soul cultivators and savages, whose eyes began to glitter with killing intent.

The buzz of conversation soon rose up.

“The rebel cultivators!”

“Hmph! Rebel cultivators from the Great Wall! And a big group of them!”

“Yeah, so what? This is the Wildlands, and we’re the Holy People!”

However, despite the Great Wall having sent a large group, they were actually outnumbered by the Wildlands soul cultivators, of whom there were at least 100,000.

Chen Hetian was in the lead of the group of 30,000, and as they neared and saw the cold stares being leveled at them, he snorted.

The sound of that snort immediately slammed like thunder into the ears of the Wildlanders, many of whom couldn’t hide their shock as they realized who was in the lead of the Great Wall cultivators.

However, Chen Hetian wasn’t interested in starting a fight. He could sense Mistress Red-Dust’s aura locked onto him, and was also aware that, just like himself, she was interested in entering the labyrinth.

Therefore, other than his cold snort, Chen Hetian did nothing to the surrounding Wildlanders, not even look at them. He just remained there outside the entrance, waiting for evening to fall.

Bai Xiaochun was trying to keep himself hidden within the army of 30,000, and was hoping that none of the soul cultivators would recognize him. He even edged his way through the crowd until he was concealed behind a tall, burly man. Then, by peering through the spaces between the man’s arms, he took a look at the area up ahead, which was riddled with pits and craters. It actually didn’t look very much at all like it had the last time he was here.

In the very middle was the largest of pits, which was covered with a shimmering gray shield of light. Apparently, the place was closed, and no one could enter it.

Just outside of that pit was a 30-meter-tall stone stele which radiated a sensation of ancient time, as if it had existed in place for countless years on end.

Lines of text could be seen on the stone stele which were too small to read with the naked eye. However, by boosting the vision with one’s cultivation base, they would become quite clear.

“Beneath the labyrinth is a realm of trials by fire. Travel through the labyrinth, and pass one of the trials by fire. Whoever takes 1st place will acquire a deva soul!” After reading the text rather quickly, Bai Xiaochun didn't pay it any more attention. After all, the main thing he was concerned about was protecting his poor little life.

In fact, he even bowed his head and tried to tune out the muttered conversations of the Wildlanders. After all, the gazes of those Wildlanders who turned in his direction made him feel very uneasy.

“They can’t see me,” he told himself. “They can’t see me....” He even turned to the side a bit to make it harder for people to notice him.

However, there were just too many soul cultivators and savages present, and they were congregated in almost every direction possible. Furthermore, more were showing up every moment. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was trying to hide in the crowd, that crowd of 30,000 were completely eye-catching, and all of the soul cultivators and savages were eyeing them. Even if Bai Xiaochun had been able to hide in a better way, he couldn’t make himself invisible. It was only inevitable that people would find him, and even if he used cursory methods to disguise himself, they would have been able to detect his aura.

The only way to evade detection would have been to put on his mask. However, there were too many people around, and besides, old three-eyes would definitely have spread word that he had an appearance-changing ability. Then he would have been in even more danger than before. The best thing to do was to wait for the right moment inside the labyrinth to put on his mask!

Even as he was shrinking down in an attempt to keep hidden, one of the soul cultivators off in the distance happened to catch sight of his profile.

Almost instantly, the young man’s eyes went wide. Pointing in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, he shouted, “Devil Bai! I just saw Devil Bai!!”

The explosive volume of his voice ensured that all of the soul cultivators in the area heard him. Jaws dropping, they all turned in the direction he was pointing.

Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun was howling in grief. Moments ago, he had felt that he was doing a very good job of hiding himself, and could never have imagined that someone would so viciously call out his name.

Numerous gazes fell upon him, as sharp as swords, and although not everyone could see his face clearly, there were plenty who could!

“Devil Bai!!”

“It’s Devil Bai! I can only see his back, but that’s definitely him. Hahaha! I can’t believe Devil Bai is here!”

“It’s really him!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0537 awe-chapter-538

Bai Xiaochun was howling inwardly, his scalp tingling in terror. Even if he were more powerful than he currently was, there were just too many Wildlanders, all of whom wanted his head for the bounty on it. Immediately, he began to tremble, and hurried in a different direction to try to hide.

However, the people who had already caught sight of him were yelling out loudly, causing more Wildlanders to turn their gazes in his direction. Some people even flew up into the air, eyes flashing like sharp arrows as they locked onto his position. The cultivators of the five legions who were in his area subconsciously began to back away from him, pushing away the 3rd Corps soldiers as they did. The burly man he had been hiding behind instantly felt pressure weighing down on him, and moved away.

“Don’t go, bro!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed. “Let me hide behind you for a bit, and once the danger is past, I’ll definitely give you some handsome compensation!” And yet, the burly man simply hurried off without so much as a backward glance.

Bai Xiaochun was getting very anxious, and was about to look for other cultivators to hide behind when he realized that everyone was struggling to get away from him, leaving him completely exposed.

Before long, everyone in the entire area was looking at him!

“Devil Bai!!”

“The Wildlands’ humiliation will never go away unless Devil Bai is killed!!”

“I can’t believe he has the guts to show up here! Hahaha! Devil Bai is mine! Forget about the hidden treasure and the deva soul. I don’t care about that stuff. If I can kill Bai Xiaochun, I’ll get a full set of five elements deva beast souls! That’s pretty much the exact same thing as a deva soul!!”

“How outrageous! He dares to show up here despite having a bounty of deva beast souls on his head! He’s basically taunting us!!”

Bai Xiaochun was grief-stricken and enraged at the same time, and felt his guts cramping up inside of him from the terror. The greedy, hateful gazes of the Wildlands soul cultivators and savages only seemed to intensify with every moment that passed....

Plus, all of his compatriots from the Great Wall were backing away from him, and some even gazed at him with glittering eyes, making his heart feel as cold as ice.

“I didn’t want to come here! I'm not taunting anybody....”

Almost everyone was looking at him with evil designs, and the way they seemed to think that he was a treasure worth looting caused sweat to break out on his forehead.

After all, whoever it was that killed him would get a full set of five elements deva beast souls, which could theoretically be used to trade for a deva soul.

“Most importantly, if somebody killed me, not only would they get a set of five elements deva beast souls, they would also get my two deva souls! They would be rich in an instant!”

The more he thought about it, the more Bai Xiaochun realized that he was actually more valuable than any of the treasures hidden in the labyrinth.

“How did this happen?” he thought, tears welling up in his eyes. “I'm... I'm worth more than all the secret treasures down there....” The more he thought about how unfair it was that all his service for the Great Wall had ended up at this point, the more he ground his teeth, and the more bloodshot his eyes got.

Some of the soul cultivators and savages, and even some of the scattered necromancers, had such vicious glares that it seemed like they might charge forth at any moment to try to kill him.

Even as Bai Xiaochun was left exposed by the Great Wall cultivators, there were some of his men from the 3rd Corps who were trying to rush over to help, but were clearly too late.

After all, if some of the soul cultivators really did attack, the entire situation would get out of control immediately. Eyes flickering because of the deadly crisis, Bai Xiaochun suddenly took a step forward and shouted, “Who else... wants to die!?!?”

As his voice echoed out like thunder, the soul cultivators and savages who had been contemplating attacking him suddenly recalled how he had fought in battle years ago!

Some of them had seen the fight with their own eyes, and others had just heard about it. Either way, all were struck with fear by the thought of it, and began to hesitate.

After all, Bai Xiaochun had incredible battle prowess, and whoever tried to attack him first would not only be incapable of killing him, but would also have a hard time staying alive. Even as they hesitated, the setting sun sank behind the clouds, and evening fell.

As the lands were blanketed in golden light, the gray shield covering the entrance to the labyrinth vanished, allowing miserable shrieks and other noises to echo out from within.

It sounded like the howling of countless ghosts, piercing deep into the minds of everyone present.

Bai Xiaochun was wracked with anxiety, but didn’t see any other options available. Although going into the labyrinth would place him in the middle of extreme danger, it also would give him an opportunity.

Therefore, as soon as the entrance was revealed, and while everyone else was still reeling in shock, he gritted his teeth and shot forward in a blast of speed, becoming a series of afterimages that made a beeline toward the entrance.

He drew upon the Mountain Shaking Bash, causing a thunderclap to echo out. In the blink of an eye, he was at the entrance. Of course, unwilling to let anyone think he was scared, he bellowed, “Elder Brother Zhao, Elder Sister Chen! Bai Xiaochun is on his way to rescue you!”

Then he disappeared, grabbed up by the natural teleportation function of the entrance.

Almost immediately, the killing intent of the savages, soul cultivators, and necromancers burned high, and they shot forward to give chase.

“Don’t even think about running, Devil Bai!!”

“Kill Devil Bai and get that bounty!!”

“Chase him!!”

Chen Hetian looked on, his face completely expressionless. However, when he heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, his eye twitched slightly. Then he waved his sleeve and said, “Five legions, heed my command. Enter the labyrinth!”

The 30,000 cultivators didn’t dare to hesitate, and all flew toward the labyrinth, Chen Hetian along with them.

Within moments, the entire group that had been gathered outside the entrance was nowhere to be seen. And yet, there were still beams of light approaching from the distance to join those who had entered the labyrinth.

Meanwhile, news that Bai Xiaochun had entered the labyrinth was being spread among the soul cultivators in the areas nearby.

**

In one of the Wildlands tribes some distance away, a savage chief was sitting cross-legged when he got a report about the matter. Instantly, he looked up from his meditation. “What? Devil Bai showed up?!”

Gritting his teeth, the tribal chief burst into motion. “Devil Bai is dead, and I'm going to make sure it happens!”

Similar scenes played out in other tribes. At the same time, the rogue soul cultivators who abounded in the Wildlands also got the news through their own channels of communication, and their eyes began to shine brightly.

“Devil Bai.... Mistress Red-Dust increased the reward on his head to a whole set of five elements deva beast souls! Whoever kills him can definitely get to the Nascent Soul stage!!”

“Heh heh. At first, I wasn’t very interested in that labyrinth. After all, it would take a lot of good fortune and pure luck to get the deva soul. But now there’s another option. For all intents and purposes, there are two treasures to be had in that labyrinth!”

“Come on, let’s get going to the labyrinth!”

It wasn’t just the soul cultivators and savages who were going crazy. There were necromancers and other high-ranking Wildlanders who thirsted for a set of five elements deva beast souls. After hearing that Bai Xiaochun had made an appearance, all of them began to rush toward the labyrinth.

During the several hours which passed after the entrance opened, more and more Wildlanders poured into the area and unhesitatingly entered the labyrinth.

Their goal was not to take first place in the trial by fire that was the labyrinth itself, and thus acquire a deva soul. Most people viewed that as being a goal too difficult to reach. Their goal was to kill Bai Xiaochun!

Kill Bai Xiaochun and get a set of deva beast souls!

Furthermore, of those people who had come to the labyrinth with the intention of winning the deva soul, virtually all of them had planned to trade it for a set of deva beast souls. Therefore, to them, it actually made more sense to try to kill Bai Xiaochun!

Because of that, Bai Xiaochun was now just as valuable as the deva soul, if not more....

Killing Bai Xiaochun was the key to everything!

Regardless of when they came to the decision, the Wildlanders were almost all interested in searching for Bai Xiaochun, and as soon as they entered the labyrinth, they began to rush out in every direction to try to find him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0538 awe-chapter-539

Another two hours went by, during which more and more people appeared near the entrance of the labyrinth. Eventually, a young man arrived who caused the other soul cultivators and savages in the area too look over in shock.

“Beat it!” he said. The coldness of his words caused everyone in the area to scatter immediately to make way.

The young man hovering in the air above the entrance to the labyrinth was exceedingly handsome, and wore expensive clothing that made him look very different from the soul cultivators and savages. There was something noble and grand about the way he carried himself.

He had a star-shaped mark on his forehead, a sigil that pulsed with strange power and caused the young man to radiate a mysterious pressure.

Strapped to his back was a pitch-black greatbow that had nine silver designs on its surface. Anyone who laid eyes on that weapon would instantly be filled with both fear and envy.

Soon hushed whispers could be heard in the area. “He’s from one of the aristocratic necromancer clans....”

Looks of respect soon appeared in the eyes of the soul cultivators, and as for the savages, they trembled as they bowed in greeting.

In the Wildlands, necromancers occupied extremely high positions, and the aristocratic necromancer clans were extremely powerful, to the point where they were even highly valued by the nobility. [1]

The easiest way to identify whether a necromancer was a rogue cultivator or from one of the aristocratic clans was to examine his or her forehead. Only necromancers from the aristocratic clans would have ancestral sigils like this young man.

This young man was not in the Nascent Soul stage, only in the great circle of Core Formation. However, because of his status as an aristocratic necromancer, he was the type of person who commanded respect no matter where he went in the Wildlands.

His name was Zhou Yixing [2], and as he stood there outside of the entrance of the labyrinth, he completely ignored all of the surrounding soul cultivators and savages. Originally, he hadn't planned to enter the labyrinth. Neither had he participated in the recent war with the Great Wall. Such things were beneath him. After all, although the clan he came from couldn't be considered extremely large, it was quite famous in this particular area.

He only had one reason for coming to the labyrinth: Bai Xiaochun!

"Although my Zhou Clan might get a complete set of five elements deva beast souls soon, I would never be in the running to get them.... But, if I can kill Bai Xiaochun, then I'll definitely have those souls for my own. Then, after I reach the Nascent Soul stage, I'll be able to rise in the necromancer rankings. I can finally try to conjure ten-colored flame, or perhaps even eleven-colored flame. With ten-colored flame, I will rise to the absolute peak of the master necromancer rank. And if I can make eleven-colored flame, then I'll finally be a terrestrial necromancer!!" With such thoughts on his mind, Zhou Yixing's eyes sparkled with anticipation, and he flew directly into the entrance to be teleported into the labyrinth.

By this point, there were fully 200,000 people inside the labyrinth, with only 30,000 of them being from the Great Wall. The rest of that number was comprised of soul cultivators and savages, as well as a few hundred necromancers.

Although everyone was teleported to different locations throughout the labyrinth, considering there were 200,000 of them, they made a huge splash upon their entrance.

The labyrinth was essentially a complicated, sprawling maze in which divine sense was severely limited. As for all the people who wanted to track down Bai Xiaochun, they immediately scattered in different directions to look for him, and yet, none of them were able to find a single trace.

That only made the Wildlanders more anxious, as they worried about the prospect of someone else being the one to find him. Because of that, whenever the Wildlanders ran into cultivators from the Great Wall, they mostly ignored them, not wanting to pull time away from their search.

Not all of the Wildlanders were searching for Bai Xiaochun. But he had attracted the attention of most of them, and thus, there was much less pressure on the Great Wall cultivators.

Of course, if the Wildlanders came across a lone Great Wall cultivator, they would attack in the hopes of getting some treasure. It wasn't limited to the Great Wall forces either; Wildlanders would even attack each other if the opportunity arose.

At the same time, many strange and bizarre things began to occur in various parts of the labyrinth….

**

Bai Xiaochun had long since donned his mask of flesh, and looked like a middle-aged soul cultivator. He was currently creeping along carefully in the labyrinth, terrified of being recognized. Back when he had first entered the place, he had shot through the tunnels at top speed, randomly picking directions in the hope of losing his pursuers. In that he had succeeded, but as a result, he now had no idea where he was. He tried to use some magical techniques in the hopes of figuring a way out, but quickly found out that the labyrinth contained a sealing pressure that made such magics of heaven and earth impossible to use.

“So what if I’m lost? Everyone else is going to be just as lost as me.” Rubbing his forehead a bit, he looked around at the walls of the tunnels, which all looked exactly the same to him. He almost felt a bit dizzy.

The tunnels had low ceilings, making it impossible to fly up into the air and get one’s bearings. Plus, divine sense was limited. Bai Xiaochun had even tried blasting his way through the walls, but it had little effect. Even more frustrating was that it was impossible to leave marks on the walls to keep track of which tunnels he had passed through. Worse of all was that the entire place was freezing cold.

It was a sinister coldness that differed from his frigid qi, and made the entire labyrinth seem like it was a cemetery or graveyard. On numerous occasions, Bai Xiaochun got the sensation that someone was watching him from behind.

However, whenever he looked over his shoulder, he didn't see anything behind him.

“What kind of awful place is this...?” he muttered, chewing on his bottom lip. After walking a few more steps, he suddenly stopped in place, his eyes shining with a fierceness that made him seem like a sharp, drawn blade.

It was in that moment that four figures hurried around a corner up ahead of him. Three of them were soul cultivators, and one was a savage giant who had shrunk his body down to a height of three meters.

They were obviously a team of some sort, and they all had profound cultivation bases at the great circle of Core Formation. Shockingly, one of the soul cultivators had a partially formed Nascent Soul, indicating that he had failed in his attempt to reach the Nascent Soul stage and was now considered a pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator.

Being in the pseudo-Nascent Soul stage had upsides and downsides. The upside was that such a cultivation base was higher than even the great circle of Core Formation. The downside was that if a person with that type of cultivation base wished to complete their Nascent Soul, the difficulty level would be ten times greater than normal.

This group of four was moving in formation, with the giant taking the lead position, and the three soul cultivators following. Although the soul cultivators weren’t wearing very extravagant clothing, they all had magical items swirling around them.

One had a green flying sword with six silver designs. The other had a similar sword, except that it was red!

Clearly, those two swords had both received sixfold spirit enhancements!

Even more shocking was that the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator had a glittering pearl floating above him that had seven silver designs on it!

The group of four swung around the corner with vigilant expressions on their face, and almost immediately caught sight of Bai Xiaochun with his mask on.

Bai Xiaochun stood there, staring back at them. This was not the first group of Wildlanders he had come across. He had run into a few other groups along the way, all of whom had simply looked at him for a moment before proceeding along their way.

Bai Xiaochun and the group of four stood there for a few breaths of time, sizing each other up. Then, Bai Xiaochun backed up a bit to make room for them to pass. The Wildlanders continued forward, eying Bai Xiaochun and his multiple layers of armor. When they were roughly thirty meters away, the giant suddenly turned and started running toward him, cackling madly.

“They still don't know who I really am,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “They just liked my armor, and since I’m alone, think they can rob me. I need to finish this quickly!” Eyes flashing with cold light as the savage giant closed in, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward with speed that left his opponents completely taken aback.

Before any of them could see him clearly, they heard a muffled boom, and then the screams of the savage giant, who flew backward through the air for a brief moment before exploding into bits, sending arrow-like streaks of blood toward the soul cultivators.

When things became clear, they saw Bai Xiaochun standing in the spot once occupied by the savage giant, slowly lowering his fist.

Their eyes went wide, and their hearts started to pound at the realization that they had provoked a powerful expert. However, it was too late for regrets by this point. All three of the soul cultivators had fought on the field of battle, and knew that when enemies faced each other in a fight, there was only one option.

The blood streaking toward them contained corrosive toxins, and there was nothing that the three of them could do to negate it. Therefore, the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator sent a burst of light streaming out of his pearl, which created a glimmering shield that blocked most of the blood. Then the killing intent of the three soul cultivators began to surge.

“Die!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0539 awe-chapter-540

Two of the three soul cultivators performed incantation gestures, sending their two flying swords screaming through the air toward Bai Xiaochun at top speed.

Both swords had sixfold spirit enhancements, and thus, Bai Xiaochun was very well aware of how dangerous they were.

Simultaneously, the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator began to chant an indecipherable enchantment that caused the pearl floating above him to fill with black mist. Then, the image of an evil ghost appeared, which lunged out toward Bai Xiaochun with outstretched hands.

Considering how they quickly blocked all of Bai Xiaochun’s possible avenues of approach to them, it was obvious that this group had worked together before in the past. Just as they were preparing to move forward, though, Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly.

“You guys have spirit enhanced treasures, huh? Well so do I!” With a flourish, he pulled a black parasol from his bag of holding!

It was none other than the Eternal Parasol.

In the past, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base had only allowed him to use a fraction of the power of the parasol. But now he was in the great circle of the Gold Core stage, and although he still couldn’t unleash its full potential, he didn’t have trouble using it like he had before.

Almost in the same movement with which he produced the parasol, Bai Xiaochun shoved it out in front of him and pushed his finger down onto the handle. Then, a pop could be heard as the black parasol opened up, just in time to meet the flying swords and the misty ghost.

The two flying swords slammed into the defensive barrier that was the parasol, and were sent spinning off to the side. As for the misty ghost, it let out a shriek and made as if to retreat. However, that was when a bizarre, smiling face appeared on the surface of the black parasol. The face began to inhale, and the ghost shrieked as it was sucked in. Although all of these things take some time to describe, they took place in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint.

A moment later, the three soul cultivators were looking at Bai Xiaochun with expressions of complete and utter shock, and the pseudo-Nascent Soul expert was so shocked that his eyes were bulging out of his head. The sight of the eight silver designs on the surface of the Eternal Parasol left him panting in shock. But then, only a moment later, his eyes glinted with ferocity, and he took advantage of his two companion’s astonishment to suddenly reach out and shove them.

The two soul cultivators’ faces fell; never could they have imagined that their own leader would act so ruthlessly! And yet their bodies were completely beyond their own control as they tumbled toward Bai Xiaochun. Simultaneously, the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator retreated as quickly as possible.

From what he could tell, this middle-aged cultivator not only had a powerful fleshly body, but he also had a profound cultivation base and shocking magical items. He was like a prowling wolf who was completely confident in being able to move about on his own. Not only did he not fear people ambushing him, he intentionally put himself out in the open to attract attention.

As the three soul cultivators were thrown into chaos, Bai Xiaochun closed the parasol and took a step forward, utilizing such blinding speed that he transformed into a series of afterimages that instantly appeared directly in front of his two weaker opponents. Then, he struck out twice in quick succession with his right hand, striking each of them in the chest.

Agonized shrieks rang out, and blood erupted from the mouths of the two soul cultivators as they tumbled backward like kites with their strings cut. Unexpectedly, they also began to wither up as their life force turned into white mist that swirled out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths, and headed toward the Eternal Parasol.

Bai Xiaochun was used to the Eternal Parasol consuming life force, and now that it had received an eightfold spirit enhancement, it was even more powerful than before. However, the fact that it could do so from a distance was new to him. Of course, now wasn’t the time to ponder the new development. Seeing that the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator was trying to flee, he immediately began to give chase.

When the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator heard the screams of his companions, he looked over his shoulder and saw their life force being extracted. Mind reeling, he blurted, “You’re not a soul cultivator, you’re a necromancer!!”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback, but didn’t let it show. Snorting coldly, he pushed forward with explosive speed that clearly put him in a place to catch up within moments. The pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator was cursing inwardly; despite the level of his cultivation base, he could tell from Bai Xiaochun’s display of battle prowess that there was no way he could fight him. Finally, he shouted, “Exalted one, wait! I'm willing to become your follower!! It’s much better to explore the labyrinth with followers than to do it alone, exalted one...!”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered as he realized that what the man was saying actually made sense. As long as he was on his own, he would almost certainly run into more ambushes, and the more fighting he did, the more likely his divine abilities and magical techniques might expose his true identity.

With someone else to traverse the labyrinth with, he would be able to avoid many annoying situations.... Having reached this point in his train of thought, he waved his right hand and sent a powerful blast of energy out toward the pseudo-Nascent Soul cultivator.

Blood oozed out of the corners of the man’s mouth, and his eyes flickered with fury. However, he simply gritted his teeth and stopped fleeing. Then he clasped hands respectfully and bowed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“I, Chen Jue, am willing to become your follower, exalted one!”

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything in response. After looking Chen Jue up and down a few times, he pointed toward the man’s forehead, sending a stream of frigid qi into him that came to rest in his chest.

Now, all it would take would be a single thought, and the frigid qi would erupt, instantly crushing the man’s heart.

Chen Jue shivered, but didn’t dare to evade the frigid qi. After accepting Bai Xiaochun’s restrictive spell, he sighed with relief at having managed to preserve his own life, at least temporarily.

“Let’s go!” Bai Xiaochun said in a raspy voice, proceeding forward.

“Yes sir,” Chen Jue said, taking a deep breath as he proceeded to scan the area for threats. He knew that his only chance at staying alive was to stick close to this necromancer, and hope that after everything was over, he would be allowed to go free.

Although no expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face, he was secretly eyeing Chen Jue and feeling very pleased with how brilliant he was. Wherever he went, people would bow and scrape and even weep at the chance to become his follower. He really had no choice but to agree to the arrangement, although he was very curious to know how the man would react upon finding out that he was now a follower of Bai Xiaochun.

It was all really very amusing. In fact, Bai Xiaochun decided that from now on, he would have to pretend to be a man of few words; that way, he would seem even more threatening.

“Besides, what this Chen Jue said actually makes a lot of sense. The more soul cultivators I have following me, the safer I’ll be....” Continuing to ponder the issue, he raced along with Chen Jue.

Every turn and tunnel of the labyrinth seemed the same, and leaving marks on the wall was virtually impossible. Bai Xiaochun's head was already spinning as he tried to keep track of where he was. Finally, he decided that he would stick to the right. When moving along, he would hug the right wall of the tunnel, and when he reached the occasional intersection, he would always pick the right-hand path.

Three days passed in a flash, during which time Bai Xiaochun and Chen Jue ran into Wildlanders and Great Wall cultivators on numerous occasions. Soon, Bai Xiaochun realized that many of the others were doing the same thing he was, and traveling in one fixed direction.

For the most part, everyone avoided each other. It seemed no one wanted to get into fights. Even when they ran into larger groups of Wildlands soul cultivators, when they saw how Chen Jue treated Bai Xiaochun, and spotted the Eternal Parasol with its eight silver designs, they immediately jumped to the conclusion that he was a necromancer, and not to be provoked.

Because of that, he encountered no dangerous situations during those three days. At one point on the fourth day, he suddenly stopped in place, his eyes flashing.

“There’s something strange up ahead,” he said to Chen Jue, speaking in a raspy voice. Surprised, Chen Jue looked at the tunnel up ahead, but didn't see anything out of the ordinary.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see anything specific either. However, from his battle with Luochen Clan onward, he had continuously developed his sensitivity to danger. As a result, he was never mistaken in identifying perilous situations.

He could sense that even though the area up ahead didn't seem unusual, there was killing intent lurking there. Without any hesitation, Bai Xiaochun began to back up. As for Chen Jue, although he wasn’t sure what exactly was going on, he didn’t dare to defy Bai Xiaochun, and also began to edge backward.

Almost at the same time, a peal of cold laughter rang out, and in the blink of an eye, ripples spread out through the air like waves on water, and numerous figures appeared out in the open.

Shockingly, there were more than a dozen people in the tunnel now!

All of them had profound cultivation bases, and all of them were charging toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with killing intent, and he spun, raising his Eternal Parasol. Eight silver designs erupted with blinding light, and the bizarre face appeared again. Just when it seemed that fighting was about to break out, a cold voice drifted out from the ripples in the air.

“Don’t be so disrespectful!”

Almost immediately, the soul cultivators who had been charging toward Bai Xiaochun stopped in place.

At the same time, a young man stepped out from the ripples, his expression grim. He was clad in a long, expensive garment, and had a star-shaped sigil on his forehead. He was none other than Zhou Yixing!

Intense fluctuations of soul power rolled off of him, soul power that completely differed from that of the soul cultivators. There was something abstruse to it, an indecipherable pressure of incredible magnitude.

Even more shocking was that flickering within the palm of his hand was a tongue of underworldly flame.

The flame had many colors to it. In fact, closer examination would reveal nine different colors. The instant Bai Xiaochun saw it, his eyes went wide and his mind spun. That fire was...

Nine-colored flame!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0540 awe-chapter-541

When Chen Jue saw Zhou Yixing and his nine-colored flame, his expression instantly became one of deep respect. “Nine-colored flame! A master necromancer!!”

Zhou Yixing ignored Chen Jue, as if he felt soul cultivators weren’t even worth looking at. All he cared about was Bai Xiaochun, or more specifically, the Eternal Parasol in his hand. However, after examining it for a moment, he seemed a bit unconvinced about Bai Xiaochun himself.

Turning his gaze from the parasol to Bai Xiaochun, he asked, “Are you a soul cultivator, or a necromancer?”

“Nine-colored flame....” Bai Xiaochun thought, his mind reeling as he stared at the fire in Zhou Yixing’s hand. Based on what he could sense, it was clear that Zhou Yixing was not a Nascent Soul cultivator, but instead, was in the great circle of Core Formation.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun could tell that if the power contained within the nine-colored flame were to be released, it would be shocking to the extreme.

Even as Zhou Yixing was sizing up Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun was doing the same. He could tell that the young man was eyeing his Eternal Parasol, which he had originally pulled out to use as nothing more than a threat. Considering this newcomer’s cultivation base, his nine-colored flame, and what Chen Jue had just said, Bai Xiaochun knew exactly what kind of person he was.

“Wildlands.... Spirit enhancement.... Necromancy....” Based on the information Bai Xiaochun had learned years ago about necromancers, and the fact that he had seen so many spirit enhanced magical items in the Wildlands, he was already starting to come up with some theories about how the two were connected.

However, now was not the time for protracted contemplation. Bai Xiaochun’s gaze met Zhou Yixing’s, and both of them could sense the powerful fluctuations emanating from the other.

Frowning, and eyes glittering with cold light, Zhou Yixing said, “It’s rare that I run into someone I can’t personally assess. I’m going to ask you again. Are you a soul cultivator, or a necromancer?”

As he spoke the words, the soul cultivators with him leveled icy gazes onto Bai Xiaochun.

“A necromancer!” Bai Xiaochun replied, narrowing his eyes. However, in his opinion, words alone wouldn’t be very convincing. Therefore, after taking a quick moment to analyze Zhou Yixing's soul power fluctuations, he released some of the power of his cultivation base.

Furthermore, he used the miraculous powers of the mask to adjust the fluctuations so that they seemed to be soul power instead of spiritual power. It was a powerful, domineering energy that could not come from a soul cultivator, and contained pressure that was unique to necromancers. Immediately, the surrounding soul cultivators’ expressions flickered.

As for Zhou Yixing, his pupils constricted as he quickly analyzed the soul power. Then he glanced at Bai Xiaochun’s

Eternal Parasol, and once again, a frown appeared on his face.

“Was I mistaken just now?” he thought. “I could have sworn that my nine-colored flame bent toward him when he got close to me, as if it wanted to fly out of my hand in his direction.

“It only lasted for a moment before returning to normal, but that's definitely never happened before.... Was it that parasol? No, I don’t think so.... There’s something very strange about this guy.... Well, maybe I can figure out the answer after killing him.” Even as Zhou Yixing hesitated, Bai Xiaochun also stood there trying to decide what to do.

Considering that it was nine-colored flame he was looking at, he was tempted to try to kill this young man and take it. After trying to assess how he measured up in strength, and then looking at the nine-colored flame, he was still hesitant, not because of the number of opponents, but because he wasn’t sure how powerful nine-colored flame was.

And yet, he couldn’t stop thinking about the fact that he could perform a ninefold spirit enhancement on the Eternal Parasol with that flame, making it even more powerful, and also increase his chances of getting out of the labyrinth safely.

“This guy doesn’t know how fast I am, so if I suddenly make a move, he’ll probably automatically use that nine-colored flame to attack me....”

As they stared at each other, both could see the coldness in each other’s gazes. A moment passed, and then Zhou Yixing pointed at Bai Xiaochun with his left hand.

“Kill him!”

Even as the words left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, instantly resorting to the top speed he was capable of. A series of afterimages stretched out behind him as he sped forward so quickly it made it impossible for anyone to react.

In almost the same moment that he began to move, he was right in front of Zhou Yixing, his right hand rocketing forward in a fist strike!

Although he wanted the nine-colored flame, he didn’t reveal that fact in his first move, which was a punch leveled square at Zhou Yixing’s chest!

Zhou Yixing’s eyes went wide; never in his wildest imagination could he have guessed that his opponent would be so fast. After being struck, Zhou Yixing flew backward and waved his right hand through the air, causing the nine-colored flame to erupt into a sea of fire that moved to block Bai Xiaochun’s attack.

The surrounding soul cultivators were shocked by what was happening, but charged Bai Xiaochun nonetheless. As for Chen Jue, he moved to defend Bai Xiaochun. In the shortest of moments, fierce fighting broke out!

To see a nine-colored sea of flame roaring toward him caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to start pounding. Although he had already decided to go all out in this battle, he could already sense how terrifying the nine-colored flame was, and was unsure if he could survive being hit with it. However, since the fight had already broken out, all he could do was grit his teeth and unleash his frigid qi.

The power of a Frigid Paragon instantly filled the area, freezing the soul cultivators solid before they could do anything.

The ground and tunnel walls alike were frozen, making the entire area a world of frigid coldness. When the frigid qi made contact with the nine-colored sea of flames, it sunk down into something like a mouth that opened up to swallow the fire.

Intense rumbling sounds were spreading out into the labyrinth in every direction!

“Be sealed!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Instantly, frigid qi began to converge onto the nine-colored flame in an attempt to seal it. However, the incredible nine-colored flame was actually causing the frigid qi to melt!

Unfortunately for the nine-colored flame, it had no foundation upon which to burn, and therefore, it quickly began to grow dim, as if it might be snuffed out an any moment. Expression flickering, Zhou Yixing quickly prepared to pull the flame back into his hand. However, how could Bai Xiaochun possibly allow that to happen? In almost the same moment that the frigid qi made contact with the nine-colored flame, he snapped his Eternal Parasol open.

The bizarre face yet again appeared, looked at Zhou Yixing, and then began to inhale. As for Zhou Yixing, it was to his terror that he felt something locking down onto his life force. The fact that his opponent had such shocking battle prowess, and also had a frigid domain, was completely mind-blowing.

In response to the appearance of the ghost face on the Eternal Parasol, he reached up and pushed down onto the star sigil on his forehead, causing starlight to erupt out in an attack on the Eternal Parasol.

The Eternal Parasol shivered, and yet, it had enough power to fight against Zhou Yixing’s starlight, which in turn gave

Bai Xiaochun just enough time to reach out and grab the sealed nine-colored flame.

In one fluid move, he tossed the flame, and the frigid qi seal which contained it, into his bag of holding. After all, he realized that by using his frigid qi, he risked revealing his identity. Furthermore, the starlight magical technique that Zhou Yixing had just used seemed very bizarre, and considering that Bai Xiaochun had already acquired the nine-colored flame, he didn't want to keep fighting. Without any hesitation, he began to flee in the opposite direction.

"Are you looking to die!?!?" Zhou Yixing roared, his eyes brimming with rage and his hair starting to unravel from its top knot. So far, he still hadn't deduced Bai Xiaochun's identity. However, this opponent was blocking his path, had stolen his nine-colored flame, and made it impossible for him to have time to unleash any magical techniques. As such, his rage was burning extremely hot.

Slapping his bag of holding with his right hand, he produced the black greatbow that he usually kept on his back. Speeding after Bai Xiaochun, he pulled the bowstring back and then unleashed a screaming, illusory arrow.

It was a soul arrow formed from soul power, and as soon as it left the bow, it pierced through the air to appear right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

His bow was a precious treasure that had received a ninefold spirit enhancement. The sheer power on display caused Bai Xiaochun's eyes to widen before yet again opening his Eternal Parasol to defend himself.

Intense rumbling sounds rang out as the power of the parasol was unleashed. As for Bai Xiaochun, he trembled as the parasol absorbed the power of the attack, and yet was shoved backward nonetheless. After a moment, he struggled to a stop, whereupon he looked over at the greatbow.

“Why didn’t you say that you had other precious treasures!” he said, licking his lips. Instead of fleeing, he began to stride toward Zhou Yixing.

Zhou Yixing’s jaw dropped; never before had he met someone as openly brazen as this. Not only had he stolen his nine-colored flame, but the mere sight of his greatbow caused him to stop fleeing and come back to rob him of it.

“Are you looking to die?!” Zhou Yixing roared a second time. Then he pulled the bowstring back and launched three soul arrows in rapid succession.

Off in the distance, Chen Jue was shaking in fear. Although Zhou Yixing hadn’t yet recognized Bai Xiaochun, the instant that frigid qi appeared, Chen Jue did, and it sent his mind into a tailspin. The first thing that popped into his head was that he himself was doomed to die. Howling inwardly in grief, he tried to decide whether or not to flee.

Then, the fighting between Bai Xiaochun and Zhou Yixing started again. That was when something completely unexpected happened!

“Red hats, green hats, we’re a bunch of little hats....

“Red heads, green heads, our favorites are the white heads....” A strange chanting song that almost sounded like a nursery rhyme suddenly filled the air!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0541 awe-chapter-542

There was something entrancing about the sound of the chant that left Bai Xiaochun, Zhou Yixing, and Chen Jue all completely shaken. Even more spine-tingling was the fact that it wasn’t a single voice chanting the nursery rhyme, but a whole group of them!

They sounded like children, laughing and giggling as they sang. As the sound of their voices moved along, invisible sound waves filled the air, causing the walls to begin to ripple.

Then, faces appeared on the walls, one after another. There were men and women, old and young, and without exception, they appeared to be terrified. Then, they started to scream....

“The red hats are coming!”

“Run! The red hats are on their way....” The faces seemed to want to flee or hide, but couldn't. Even more bizarre, faces began to rise up out of the ground.

Most shocking of all was that the walls began to move dramatically, causing the path behind Bai Xiaochun, Zhou Yixing, and Chen Jue to be sealed up tight, placing them in a dead end!

All three of the cultivators were physically trembling, and the hair on the backs of their necks began to stand on end.

All of them were struck by a feeling that came, not from their cultivation bases, but from their souls. It was the cold, prickly dread that one would face when being tracked down by a predator.

It didn’t matter that Bai Xiaochun cultivated the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, the coldness he felt right now left him shivering.

“What’s going on!?”

This dread left the entire group completely disinterested in fighting each other. All of a sudden, an agonized shriek rang out, and a hand shot out from the corner of the intersection just up ahead. The hand was dripping with blood, and as soon as it appeared, it tried to grab on to the wall, in clear view of Bai Xiaochun and the others.

However, there was clearly something around the corner tugging on the owner of the hand. The hand flexed, and the fingers clawed against the wall to grab at something, and yet, it was soon dragged back around the corner.

Then, horrifying crunching sounds could be heard, during which time the singing of the nursery rhyme ceased.

Trembling violently, the terrified Chen Jue inched over toward Bai Xiaochun, hoping that the proximity would bring him some measure of safety.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen, and he was also shaking as he stared wide-eyed at the corner behind which the hand had just disappeared. What he wanted to do was flee in the opposite direction, but unfortunately, the three of them were now right in the middle of a dead end!

Zhou Yixing seemed just as shocked. Through the several days in which he had been in the labyrinth, he had picked up a sizeable group of followers, with whom he had survived several ambushes and cut down quite a few opponents. However, he had never encountered anything as bizarre as this.

The terror he felt now caused his pupils to constrict as he stared at the corner where the hand had just disappeared.

About then, the chewing sounds ceased, and the nursery rhyme resumed.

“Red hats, green hats, we’re a bunch of little hats....

“Red heads, green heads, our favorites are the white heads....” The joyful tone of the singing caused the scalps of all three cultivators to tingle on the verge of exploding.

It was at that point that a bright red hat suddenly flew out from around the corner.

The hat’s brim dripped with blood as it swayed back and forth a bit, then suddenly stopped in place, as if it had just noticed Bai Xiaochun and the others.

“White heads....” the hat said in the voice of a child. Then it began to fly forward, causing the group of three to back up. However, that was when it became clear the hat wasn’t heading toward them, but rather, to the dozen or so soul cultivators who had been locked down within layers of ice!

In the blink of an eye, the red hat landed on the head of one of the cultivators, causing the ice to instantly shatter and reveal the cultivator beneath.

The cultivator wasn’t dead; the flame of his life force was still burning. Instantly, his eyes opened, and his expression twisted with fear as he let out a miserable shriek. However, what was even more hair-raisingly shocking was what happened next.

As the hat settled down onto the head of the soul cultivator, the man’s body began to shake, and crunching sounds like chewing began to fill the air.

“Get off! Get off me!!” The cultivator screamed madly. He even reached up and grabbed the hat to try to take it off his head, but it did no good. After a few breaths of time passed, his struggling ceased, and he eventually just stood there motionless. Finally, the hat flew up into the air, dripping blood the entire time.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun and the others could see that the cultivator’s head was now completely white!! That was because his skull was now visible!!

His skull wasn’t intact though; there was a large chunk missing, allowing everyone to see that the inside of his head was now completely hollow.

“Red heads, green heads, our favorites are the white heads....” the red hat sang, chuckling as it flew around in a circle and then landed on top of another of the ice-sealed soul cultivators. At the same time, more laughing, giggling hats flew around the corner, some of them red, some of them green.

“Red hats, green hats, we’re a bunch of little hats....” There were dozens of them, all dripping with blood as they flew along singing. Within moments, the hats were fighting amongst themselves to land on the heads of the sealed cultivators.

However, there were only a dozen or so cultivators, and many more hats than that. Before long, there were no more cultivators available, and the hats began to turn their attention to Bai Xiaochun, Zhou Yixing, and Chen Jue.

In that very instant, the faces on the walls and floor began to scream.

“We’re finished. *Finished!* They’re here!”

The remaining hats began to laugh happily as they shot toward the group of three. Bai Xiaochun was already wound tight. Howling, he waved his hand to send over a thousand paper talismans slapping down onto his body. At the same time, he tossed a whole stack over to Chen Jue.

“Run for your life!” he shouted. Then he burst into motion, simultaneously donning numerous layers of armor, causing slapping sounds to echo out. Glittering light from more than ten layers of armor filled the tunnel, along with the glitter of paper talismans. In the blink of an eye, he was off in the distance, blazing along at full speed with seven or eight hats chasing after him.

Chen Jue gritted his teeth and slapped the paper talismans onto himself, simultaneously unleashing the power of his cultivation base as he prepared to go all out. Utilizing every magical technique he could think of, he began to flee, five or six hats pursuing him doggedly.

Zhou Yixing stood there in mute astonishment. He almost wanted to cry at the unfairness of it all. Only seven or eight hats had chased Bai Xiaochun, and only five or six went after Chen Jue, leaving him there with nearly a dozen hats to deal with.

“How could this be happening?!?!” he moaned, his face turning ashen. Then, just as the dozen or so hats began to fly in his direction, he gritted his teeth and sent starlight shining out of the star sigil to fill the area.

The hats suddenly flew out from the other side of the starlight, as if they hadn’t been able to find Zhou Yixing at all. Then, the starlight began to fade, and Zhou Yixing was nowhere to be seen.

The hats searched the area thoroughly, but when they couldn’t find anything, began to fly off again, singing the entire time....

Meanwhile, in another location in the labyrinth, more starlight appeared, from within which Zhou Yixing staggered out, coughing up a massive amount of blood as he did. His face was as pale as a sheet of paper, and the star sigil on his forehead was much dimmer than before.

“Dammit, I can’t believe I had to use the power of my clan’s star sigil!!” Thinking back to the bizarre hats, he couldn’t help but shiver. After looking around to confirm that none of them were in the area, he finally breathed a sigh of relief.

“He stole my nine-colored flame, and then tried to rob me of my precious bow. He has frigid qi and a powerful fleshly body. Why does he seem so much like Bai Xiaochun!?!?” After reviewing everything he remembered about Bai Xiaochun, he was more convinced than ever that he had just encountered him, and yet, couldn’t be sure.

“If that really was Bai Xiaochun, it means he has some sort of item that lets him change his aura! But... dammit! Teleporting out of that situation has me completely turned around. I'm going to have to start searching for clues to find the right path again!” Sighing, he began to move through the tunnels of the labyrinth once more.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0542 awe-chapter-543

In the location where Bai Xiaochun, Chen Jue, and Zhou Yixing had just tangled with the hats, there now remained only a dozen or so soul cultivators, standing there motionless.

They were nothing more than corpses, with their empty, white skulls clearly visible. It was a very bizarre sight.

The faces on the wall and floor began to breathe sighs of relief and simultaneously chatter with each other about what had just occurred.

“They’re finally gone. The red hats have gone! Hahaha!”

“The hats were acting really strange today. They didn't bully us at all!”

“Yeah, you’re totally right! Very strange indeed. Something odd is going on....” Then, in the middle of their conversation, their expressions flickered, and their eyes went wide. Looking down the tunnel, they all snapped their mouths shut. Currently, the terror glimmering in their eyes vastly exceeded that which had come from the hats, and they all began to shiver visibly.

Further down the tunnel, a figure had become visible, blurry at first, but rapidly becoming clear. It was a beautiful young woman with long hair. For some unknown reason, there was something very bizarre about her, although it was impossible to say exactly what.

“So many people have come. Even my sweetie is here!” The young woman chuckled, her eyes turning into twin crescent moons in the process and making her look even more pretty. At the same time, she looked profoundly bizarre, because visible within her eyes were two pupils each! Shockingly, she had one large pupil and one small pupil, the two of which overlapped! Anyone who might have been able to peer into her eyes would have been shocked to the core.

As for Bai Xiaochun, if he had been present, he would immediately have recognized this young woman as being none other than Gongsun Wan’er!

Except, he was currently in the middle of fleeing madly for his life from eight hats. He had attempted to fight back, but his magical techniques were absolutely useless against them. He had even resorted to some of his special methods of increasing his speed, and yet the hats were always able to keep up.

“What are you chasing me for!? My... my head doesn’t taste that good!” As he raced along pell-mell, he ran into the occasional soul cultivator or giant savage, which was when he finally came to realize that the hats weren’t specifically after him. As the hats encountered others to eat, he was slowly able to lose them.

When he was finally free, he breathed a sigh of relief. However, the thought of what he had just gone through continued to cause his heart to pound in fear. At the same time, though, the fact that the hats had given up chasing him to go after other people left him feeling a bit down.

“Don’t tell me my head really doesn’t taste very good after all?” he grumbled. Finally, he cleared his mind of such thoughts and found an out-of-the-way corner where he could have some privacy. Waving his hand, he sent a mist spreading out to fill the area, as well as some frigid qi to lock the place down. Then, he licked his lips and pulled the nine-colored flame out from his bag of holding.

After carefully removing the ice seal which contained it, he looked excitedly at the fire, which despite having grown dim, was still filled with nine colors. Considering the intense heat he could sense from it, he was convinced that everything he had just gone through was worth it.

“This nine-colored flame is incredible! If it had been linked to a solid foundation, then my frigid qi would have been incapable of sealing it.

“With this flame, I can definitely perform a ninefold spirit enhancement on the Eternal Parasol....

“Then it will be even more powerful than it already is, and will definitely make it much easier to stay safe around here.” After looking around one more time to make sure he was alone, he produced his turtle-wok and the Eternal Parasol, and prepared to begin the spirit enhancement process.

However, after only a moment passed, he hesitated. “I wonder if the energy of heaven and earth in this labyrinth will be sufficient....”

Back when he had performed some spirit enhancements in Great Wall City, he had clearly sensed that, because of the weak levels of spiritual energy, the enhancement process wasn’t very stable.

Thankfully, his miraculous turtle-wok had ensured that the spirit enhancement worked no matter what. Therefore, despite having a dim nine-colored flame, and being in the middle of the labyrinth, he decided to grit his teeth and proceed with the plan.

“I need to increase my chances of getting out of here alive. That’s worth doing a bit of testing. If it fails, then so be it.” When it came to safeguarding his poor little life, Bai Xiaochun would never be stingy. Therefore, he immediately began the spirit enhancement process.

As soon as the nine-colored flame was absorbed by the turtle-wok, the designs on its surface began to shine with dazzling light. Bai Xiaochun looked on nervously, eyes wide, until the designs were fully lit. Then, he excitedly tossed the Eternal Parasol inside.

The turtle-wok immediately began to tremble, and the designs on its surface shone even more brightly, almost as if they knew what was happening. Then, the designs shot toward the Eternal Parasol, transforming into the ninth spirit design on its surface! A tremor ran through the Eternal Parasol, and Bai Xiaochun was almost sure he could hear something like an excited cheer. Then, the turtle-wok went calm, and everything went back to normal.

“It worked? Just like that? I didn’t feel any energy of heaven and earth at all!” Surprised, he picked up the Eternal Parasol and examined it, confirming that the spirit enhancement truly had worked.

Then he looked at the turtle-wok again, and finally back at the Eternal Parasol. Every time he'd performed spirit enhancements in the past, it had always incited the energy of heaven and earth in the area, but this time, nothing of the sort had occurred.

After thinking everything over, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes suddenly glittered.

“The flame was different!

“For all of my other spirit enhancements, I always used multi-colored flame fuel to make my own fire. But this time, I had the fire to start out with. Plus, it was Wildlands fire....” Soon, Bai Xiaochun found himself thinking about soul cultivators and necromancers, and how they often had magical items with numerous spirit enhancements. As of this moment, he felt like he had another piece of the puzzle.

“Maybe the way they do spirit enhancement in the Wildlands doesn’t require the energy of heaven and earth. Considering how barren of spiritual energy this place is, that seems like the only plausible explanation.” After a bit of thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that a deadly labyrinth was not the place to sit around trying to analyze the situation. Shelving thoughts about spirit enhancement for the moment, he retracted the mist and the frigid qi, and then began to cautiously search for an exit.

Another two days passed, and Bai Xiaochun’s careful explorations did not lead to any more bizarre situations like the hats. However, he noticed that he seemed to be encountering fewer and fewer people, whether they were Great Wall cultivators or Wildlands soul cultivators and savages.

“Before, I was running into at least ten per day. But now, it’s more like four or five, or even fewer....” Looking around at the tunnel walls, he couldn’t help but feel like the labyrinth was a huge mouth intent on consuming everyone.

The thought made him shiver.

“I can’t let that happen to me! I have to find the exit!

“But everything looks the same. How do I get out...?” None of the ideas he came up with, such as leaving marks on the wall, were of any use whatsoever.

Finally, he just resorted to his old, somewhat mindless method of sticking to the right. As he proceeded along, another three days passed. Soon, he was feeling so lost he was dizzy, and was also scowling on the verge of tears. That was when he turned a corner, and saw something that caused his eyes to go wide.

A creepy sensation filled him, becoming an icy coldness that left him gasping.

There were no hats. Instead, he found himself looking at something like a large, open square, with tunnels leading into it from all four directions. Right in the middle of the square were two enormous candles with green flames that cast odd, flickering light out. As a result of the shadows cast by the flames, the square seemed completely terrifying.

Sitting between the two candles was an enormous platter, atop which was a mountain-like pile of steamed buns!

However, these buns appeared to be soaked in blood, so much so that they were dripping with it! It was a horrific sight that caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode.

Gathered in the square were several hundred Great Wall cultivators and Wildlands soul cultivators and savages. There were even a few necromancers too. All of them were standing there motionless, expressions those of madness as they stared at the blood-soaked buns. Although none of them were talking, it was possible to hear them panting as they stood there.

A fragrant, sweet aroma wafted up from the blood-soaked buns that, when it entered Bai Xiaochun's nose, made him so nauseated he wanted to vomit up his internal organs!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0543 awe-chapter-544

Bai Xiaochun’s face went completely ashen, and not because his cultivation base had been affected, but because of the fear he felt; within the group of hundred gathered in the square, there were a few with Nascent Soul cultivation bases. That left Bai Xiaochun feeling thoroughly petrified.

He started backing up, and yet, had only taken a step when he realized that there were people in the square that he recognized.

“Zhao Long.... Master God-Diviner....” The two of them were behaving just like everyone else in the square, staring at the platter of blood-soaked buns, their expressions those of savage madness.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was starting to struggle over what to do.

“Zhao Long has been a loyal and devoted follower of mine for years now. Back when I got stuck on the battlefield, he led the charge to try to reach me....” Slowly but surely, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were starting to turn bloodshot.

“I'm the one who forced Master God-Diviner to become my Dao protector, and I'm also the one who conscripted him into the army. The tribulation the two of them are facing today all has to do with me....” Bai Xiaochun was so torn he could hardly breathe straight. His eyes were completely bloodshot, and yet, at the same time, he was scared! The terror he felt at the thought of dying was almost completely overwhelming.

Clearly, the square that stretched out in front of him was a location of extreme danger. If he turned and left now, he would most likely be able to get away safely. But if he stepped into the square, who knew whether or not he would get swept up into the calamity?

As he stood there wallowing in indecision, it was almost as if there were two people on either side of him, one telling him to go save his friends, the other screaming at him to flee immediately.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but think back to the situation with the Luochen Clan all those years ago. Although his current predicament wasn't exactly the same, it was certainly similar....

As he stood there vacillating, the flames on top of the huge candles suddenly danced wildly, which caused the several hundred cultivators in the square to suddenly howl madly as they rushed toward the platter of blood-soaked buns. To their eyes, what lay on the platter in front of them was not a pile of blood-soaked buns, but rather, the ability to live forever, or to increase their cultivation bases, or other types of amazing good fortune.

In the briefest of moments, all of them went crazy, even going so far as to start fighting each other to be the first to grab a blood-soaked bun. Those who did manage to get ahold of one of them would excitedly take a huge bite and then start cackling madly.

Any who didn’t get one of the blood-soaked buns would fly into a rage and look for someone to steal a bun from. The scene playing out in front of Bai Xiaochun right now left him trembling with fear and terror!

Furthermore, because he was watching from an outsider’s perspective, he quickly realized that none of them were actually eating blood-soaked buns! What Bai Xiaochun had assumed to be corporeal buns were actually not real. The people in the square were actually fighting over nothing!

Furthermore, those who believed they were eating a bun were actually voraciously devouring their own hands!!

Some of them had already ripped their own fingers off, causing blood to spray about everywhere. And yet, they weren’t satisfied! It was with complete insanity that they went on to bite their palms, crunching them all the way down to the wrist!

And some of them were even chewing their way down to their own elbows, expressions of delight on their faces the entire time....

Those in the square who weren’t able to snatch one of the “blood-soaked buns” were madly trying to rip the hands and arms off of those who had. Bitter fighting was already playing out everywhere.

Some people were cut down by magical attacks, and as their flesh and blood exploded out, others in the area would pile onto them and start to feast....

As all of these things began to happen, the flames of the two enormous candles danced, and female voices could be heard, singing....

“Eat up, eat up.... Delicious, isn’t it...?”

Bai Xiaochun felt like his mind was being struck by countless lightning bolts, and he was shaking visibly at the horror in front of him!!

That was when he saw Master God-Diviner finally get one of the “blood-soaked buns” and then begin to laugh uproariously as he lifted his hands up toward his mouth. Off to the side, Zhao Long, who hadn’t managed to get his hands on the prize, was now starting to fight over one of the corpses of the other cultivators....

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun’s hesitation vanished. Eyes bloodshot, he made his decision. Throwing caution to the wind, he took a step forward.

The instant his foot touched down in front of him, everything around him seemed to slow down. At the same time, his frigid qi rushed out in all directions to fill the square. In the next instant, Bai Xiaochun moved with such incredible speed that, combined with his frigid domain teleportation, he appeared right in front of Master God-Diviner. Without hesitating at all, he reached out and grabbed Master God-Diviner’s hand in the instant before it reached his mouth. Jerking the hand back, he shouted, “Master God-Diviner, wake up!!”

A snapping sound rang out as Master God-Diviner’s teeth clicked down on nothing but air. Then he looked up at Bai Xiaochun and howled; clearly, anyone who interfered with him in any way was little more than an enemy.

Master God-Diviner’s hand blurred in an incantation gesture and then shoved out at Bai Xiaochun. At the same time, he lunged forward like a rabid dog as he tried to bite down onto the hand Bai Xiaochun had grabbed.

Bai Xiaochun looked over anxiously at Zhao Long, who was now laughing madly as he dragged one of the corpses off to the side. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun’s vision was starting to cloud over. In fact, the blood-soaked buns on the platter up ahead were now starting to transform into Live-Forever Never-Die Pills!

The mere sight of such pills caused Bai Xiaochun’s mind to reel. However, he bit down onto his tongue to clear his mind. Already, the frigid qi in the area was beginning to fade away, meaning that time was very limited.

“Dammit!” he yelled. With that, he reached out with his left hand and grabbed Master God-Diviner by the throat. Holding him fast no matter how he struggled, he rushed over to Zhao Long, who was just in the middle of taking a bite of bloody flesh, and grabbed him up. Then he rushed back toward the tunnel mouth.

Suddenly, two soul-chilling screams erupted from the candle flames as two women became visible. They looked exactly the same, middle-aged with disheveled hair, and they were both looking straight at Bai Xiaochun.

“How dare you meddle in our affairs! You’ve disturbed our sacrifice of flesh and blood, and therefore, you will not leave this place alive!!”

In response to the voices, Bai Xiaochun shuddered. Then he looked around, and saw everything in the area slowly becoming piles of Live-Forever Never-Die Pills.

“Live forever.... Live forever....” Even as he felt himself descending into madness, all of a sudden, a tiny strand of Willpower rose up in his Gold Core.

The Willpower poured into his mind like boiling water poured onto snow. Instantly, the illusions he had been seeing vanished, and he looked around ashen-faced to find that more than eighty percent of his frigid qi had been melted by the candles.

Once it was completely melted, he would be incapable of teleporting away, and would have to rely only on his fleshly body speed to escape, which wouldn’t be sufficient....

By this point, many of the cultivators in the area had caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, and to them, he was good fortune to be had! They quickly began to turn and head in his direction.

Roaring, Bai Xiaochun called upon all the power he could muster to teleport through his frigid qi. Even as it collapsed, he appeared right at the edge of the square, and then bolted into the nearest tunnel entrance.

Looking over his shoulder, he saw the two women floating in the candle flames, screaming at him.

“Think you can escape just like that?” they screamed, suddenly flying into the air toward him.

Even as he fled at top speed, the air rippled in a different tunnel, and Gongsun Wan’er appeared. Striding forward, she shoved her right hand out viciously in the direction of the two women.

“Screw off! How dare you try to mess with one of my people!”

The two women screamed miserably. Although the wave of Gongsun Wan’er’s arm had not contained even a bit of magical power, the two women flickered as if they might vanish. At the same time, expressions of unprecedented shock and terror appeared on their faces.

Not daring to move forward even an inch, they dropped down and kowtowed.

“Get back to your sacrifice of flesh and blood,” Gongsun Wan’er said coolly. “And from now on, mind your own business.” As she spoke, the tiny second pupil in each of her eyes began to shine with a mysterious light.

It was that very light that caused the two women to tremble in terror, and creep backward toward their candles.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0544 awe-chapter-545

Bai Xiaochun raced down the tunnel, unaware of what was happening behind him in the square. Eventually, when he was far enough away that he couldn’t detect even a bit of the sweet aroma, he finally slowed down and then checked his surroundings.

Convinced he was far enough away from the square, he put Zhao Long and Master God-Diviner down, both of whom were unconscious. Master God-Diviner seemed in better shape than Zhao Long, who was currently biting down on a chunk of bloody flesh.

Bai Xiaochun removed the chunk of flesh and put a medicinal pill in Zhao Long’s mouth, and then did the same for Master God-Diviner. Then he bopped them both on the top of the head.

The two of them shivered, and then slowly opened their eyes. They looked up in confusion at Bai Xiaochun with his mask on, and then looked around to try to determine their location. Finally, they recalled what had occurred in the square, and both of them began to retch. Zhao Long even curled up into the fetal position.

Upon recovery, Master God-Diviner looked at Bai Xiaochun with an expression of gratitude. Clasping hands, he bowed and said, “Many thanks for your kindness in rescuing us, Fellow Daoist!!”

He was well aware that, considering how terrifying the situation had been, without someone there to rescue him, he might have ended up eating himself to death.

The residual fear still had him trembling.

After Zhao Long managed to stop vomiting, he looked at Bai Xiaochun with clasped hands and then bowed deeply. Although Bai Xiaochun looked like a soul cultivator, he was still profoundly thankful.

“This place is very dangerous,” Bai Xiaochun said. “You two take care of yourselves.” By now, he felt physically and emotionally exhausted. From the moment he had entered this labyrinth, he had been fighting with cultivators or running from terrifying entities, and it was getting very hard to handle. Whether it was the red hats or the blood-soaked buns, they all left Bai Xiaochun feeling very threatened. Sighing, he gave Master God-Diviner and Zhao Long some medicinal pills and paper talismans, then left.

He chose not to take them with him; if his identity were revealed, it would place them all in great danger. Besides, he had the feeling that going around in this place on his own was much safer.

After he left, Master God-Diviner and Zhao Long exchanged a silent glance, then looked down thoughtfully at the medicinal pills and paper talismans they had been given. Then they talked for a bit, which led them to the decision of joining forces.

A few more days went by. Bai Xiaochun made his way through the labyrinth as cautiously as ever. Unfortunately, after leaving the square with the blood-soaked buns, he was just as lost as ever.

Gritting his teeth, he used the same method as before to try to figure out where exactly he was. However, the more time that passed, the more his fear mounted. Before long, he reached a point where he hadn't seen anyone else for a full two days.

The entire labyrinth seemed filled with nothing other than corpses, and his heart was wound as tight as a taut bowstring.

“Something weird is going on. Don’t tell me that more than 100,000 people are all dead?” The thought left him feeling completely stifled. He had no idea where he was heading, and couldn’t find the exit. He couldn’t leave marks on the walls to keep track of where he'd been, and actually had the feeling he was going in circles. On top of it all, he now felt like he was alone. He was so jumpy about everything that he wasn’t even thinking about his mask and disguise.

Another day passed. He had decided to pick up speed, and yet, still hadn’t encountered anyone else. His terror grew.

Then he thought of the person who had landed him in his mess, and gnashed his teeth. “Damn that Chen Hetian! I served the Great Wall well, and this is how you repay me!?!?”

It was in that moment of rage when Bai Xiaochun suddenly heard the sound of whistling air. Apparently, someone was heading in his direction at top speed. Considering it had been days since he'd seen anyone else, he was actually delighted.

However, at the same time, he maintained full vigilance, backing up and keeping his eye on the intersection up ahead.

At the same time, the whistling sound stopped, as if whoever it was on the other side of the corner had also detected the presence of another.

Bai Xiaochun had no idea who was around that corner; it could be a person or a ghost for all he knew. Whoever it was, they seemed equally befuddled about Bai Xiaochun. For a very long moment, nothing happened as the two of them stood there silently, the tension mounting.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun took in a quiet breath and pulled a flying sword out. With the wave of a sleeve, he drew upon his control power to send it flying toward the intersection. Meanwhile, a black shaft of light flew out from the other side of the corner.

Within that black shaft of light was a soul arrow which slammed into Bai Xiaochun’s flying sword, shattering it to pieces. A moment later, the soul arrow was right in front of Bai Xiaochun, forcing him to summon a huge cauldron to block its path.

Even as the resulting boom shook the area, Bai Xiaochun suddenly laughed.

As soon as he saw that soul arrow, he recognized the type of arrow it was, and thought of the bow which shot it, and of Zhou Yixing! He actually didn’t know Zhou Yixing’s name, but he did remember the star sigil on his forehead. Because the character ‘star 星’ rhymed perfectly with the character ‘gorilla 猩,’ he decided to make up his own name.

“So, it's you! Mr. Gorilla!!”

Now that he was sure that he was dealing with a person, and not some freakish entity, his spirits were lifted immediately. Rushing forward, he burst into the intersection in almost the same moment that Zhou Yixing emerged.

When Zhou Yixing saw Bai Xiaochun, his expression flickered. He had been jumpy with fear lately himself. Although the bizarre entities in the labyrinth weren't completely impossible to escape from, without his star sigil, Zhou Yixing would likely have been killed long ago.

At the moment, he seemed to be in bad condition. His hair was disheveled, and his bag of holding was running low on magical items. Worse, his star sigil was fading away from being used so many times. Once it ran out, the only way to get a new one would be to return to his clan and kowtow in front of the ancestral shrine for 49 years.

As far as he was concerned, the main reason he was on the verge of losing his star sigil was Bai Xiaochun. Before encountering him, everything in the labyrinth had gone well, but afterward, he had been plagued with bad luck.

Never could he have imagined that after days without seeing anyone, the first person he would encounter would be Bai Xiaochun!

“*You’re* the gorilla, Bai Xiaochun!” he shouted. “Everyone in your family is a gorilla!”

Actually, he wasn't completely sure who this person was, but was convinced that he had to be Bai Xiaochun. Even as Bai Xiaochun neared, Zhou Yixing lifted his greatbow and unleashed a rapid succession of nine soul arrows.

In response, Bai Xiaochun laughed and opened his Eternal Parasol, easily blocking all of the soul arrows before closing in on Zhou Yixing.

Zhou Yixing immediately noticed the nine designs on the Eternal Parasol, and recalled that before, it only had eight. His eyes turned red, and he let out a bellow of rage.

It didn’t take much speculation on his part to reach the conclusion that his own nine-colored flame had been used to perform another spirit enhancement. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had succeeded with the spirit enhancement on the first time seemed like a complete stroke of luck, and further incensed Zhou Yixing.

“No need to get angry, Mr. Gorilla. Just tell me what your name is!” Closing the Eternal Parasol, he performing an incantation gesture and waved his hand, sending frigid qi blasting out to form a hail of ice spikes which sped toward Zhou Yixing.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun was very happy to have encountered Zhou Yixing, and was not inclined to kill him, not after spending so many days alone. He had even begun to regret leaving Master God-Diviner and Zhao Long behind, so any familiar face at all was like a blessing.

“I'm Zhou Yixing 周一星, you moron!” he roared, leaping back to avoid the ice spikes, and simultaneously performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused numerous vengeful soul to burst out from inside of him. The souls quickly merged together into a magical symbol, which then erupted with soul fire as it moved forward to meet the ice spikes.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the ice spikes shattered, releasing a shockwave that Zhou Yixing took advantage of to retreat. At the same time, he shot out a succession of eighteen soul arrows!

“Time to die!!” he screamed.

Without his Eternal Parasol, Bai Xiaochun would have had a hard time dealing with Zhou Yixing’s bow, which also had received a ninefold spirit enhancement. But things were different now.

“Zhou Yixing 周一猩? You mean the *xing* for *gorilla*? So you really are a gorilla! Hahaha!” Bai Xiaochun snapped open the Eternal Parasol and yet again blocked the soul arrows, then unleashed his frigid qi to send out a volley of ice spikes.

His plan was to capture Zhou Yixing alive, and then hopefully extract some necromancer secrets from him. Even better, if he ran into some powerful enemy, he could toss him out as bait or cannon fodder....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0545 awe-chapter-546

Booms echoed back and forth in the tunnel as the true power of the Eternal Parasol was put on full display. Not a single one of the eighteen soul arrows harmed it in the least, and although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see the bizarre face on the top of the parasol, Zhou Yixing could.

To Zhou Yixing, the smiling face looked hair-raisingly terrifying, and even reminded him of the red hats from before.

“What the hell kind of parasol is that!?” he thought, his scalp tingling. As for the frigid qi in the area, it was so cold that he felt himself shivering inside.

It was a moment of deadly crisis in which Zhou Yixing’s eyes shone with madness as he flew backward. This time, instead of summoning soul arrows, he pulled a new type of arrow out of his bag of holding!

It was bright red and emanated intense heat, which caused the frigid qi in the area to tremble on the verge of collapse. When Bai Xiaochun saw it, his expression flickered.

“What... what is that...? Why does it feel so much like nine-colored flame?!? No, wait. Could that be a ten-colored flame...? Aiieee....” Bai Xiaochun was completely stunned that Zhou Yixing would have a precious object like this on him.

What made Bai Xiaochun even more nervous was that at one glance it looked like an arrow, but a moment later, it actually looked like it was made from fire!!

It was almost as if it existed in a state between corporeal and illusory! Even more extraordinary was that Bai Xiaochun spotted... a golden design on the surface of the arrow!!

“Golden design....” Although he initially wasn’t certain what that golden design was, it sent his mind spinning, and within moments, he had reached a conclusion.

“That’s... a precious treasure which has received an elevenfold spirit enhancement!!”

A tenfold spirit enhancement led to ten silver designs, but the mark of an eleventh spirit enhancement was a single golden design!!

Bai Xiaochun’s speculation was correct. That arrow... was none other than a fire soul arrow with an elevenfold spirit enhancement!

Zhou Yixing felt that he had no other choice than to pull out this trump card of his that he had been hoping to save for some other occasion. It was a special item given to him by his clan to use as a last-ditch line of defense!!

It was a precious treasure with an elevenfold spirit enhancement, which, in combination with his ninefold spirit enhanced greatbow, was capable of killing Nascent Soul cultivators!

The fact that he was resorting to this arrow showed how much Zhou Yixing wanted to kill Bai Xiaochun.

“Time to die, Bai Xiaochun!” he roared as he knocked the arrow to the bow. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s hair was standing on end, and his pupils were constricted as a sensation of deadly crisis swept through him.

As of this moment, he was convinced that this arrow... could most definitely kill him!!

There was no time for thought or planning. As Zhou Yixing drew the bow, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout and opened his third eye. Instantly, Zhou Yixing shivered, and a confused expression appeared on his face as the hand he was using to draw the bowstring back suddenly stopped moving.

In that same moment, rumbling sounds could be heard as Bai Xiaochun used the Living Mountain Incantation, and also stretched his hand out to call upon his Waterswamp Kingdom!

As the area around him turned into a watery swamp, he pulled his frigid qi back in, causing a tempest to rage around him. And yet, things weren’t over yet. The power of the Undying Live Forever Technique surged around him, pushing his fleshly body power to the limit.

All of these things take some time to describe, but actually happened in the briefest of moments. A moment later, the star sigil on Zhou Yixing’s forehead erupted with starlight, breaking him free from Bai Xiaochun’s control. As sweat began to drip down his face, he released the bowstring. Then, a thrumming sound could be heard... as a fire soul arrow with an elevenfold spirit enhancement flew forth!

The instant it left the bow, it transformed into a huge fire dragon, extremely lifelike in appearance. As the dragon shot toward Bai Xiaochun, it ran into the frigid qi tempest, shattering it, and then continued forward until it ran into a huge spike that was rising up from the ground.

As a deafening boom rocked the corridor, Bai Xiaochun leapt into the air, transforming into an enormous stone golem. Extending his right hand, he unleashed the Mountain

Shaking Bash and then the Throat Crushing Grasp, using all the power of a living mountain and his fleshly body in one massive attack.

After all, this arrow could kill a Nascent Soul cultivator, and therefore, he had no hope of being able to evade it!

His only hope now... was to capture it!

As his Gold Core spun rapidly, a black light suddenly flashed out from inside of him as his turtle-wok appeared to block the fire soul arrow.

A huge boom echoed out as the two connected, and the fire soul arrow even let out something like a miserable shriek as a shockwave rolled out. However, because all of these things were happening so quickly, and because Bai Xiaochun's current position blocked Zhou Yixing's line of sight, he couldn't see exactly what was happening.

Just when the fire soul arrow was about to collapse into pieces, Bai Xiaochun used the power of his fleshly body and the strength of a living mountain, as well as the force of the Mountain Shaking Bash and the Throat Crushing Grasp, to reach out and grab the throat of the fire dragon. Then, the might of the Undying Hex surged out to prevent the arrow from exploding!

Massive rumbling filled the tunnel, and the intense shockwave that spread out caused blood to spray out of the mouth of Zhou Yixing as he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut, his expression a mix of disbelief and shock.

How could he ever have guessed that his fire soul arrow, which could kill a Nascent Soul expert, would be grabbed by Bai Xiaochun!?

As soon as Bai Xiaochun laid his hand on the fire soul arrow, his Waterswamp Kingdom spike collapsed, and his frigid qi faded away. His stone golem form shattered, and he was revealed, coughing up a cloud of blood.

He was thrown backward, his layers of armor disintegrating into ash, and yet, his hand held fast onto the arrow. The struggling fire dragon roared and fought, but in the end... it shrank back down into an arrow!

“Impossible!!” Zhou Yixing cried, his eyes nearly popping out of his skull. Panting as a sensation of deadly crisis filled him, he looked at the unbelievable scene playing out in front of him, his heart filled with terror. Finally, he drew upon the star sigil on his forehead, which began to pulse with the power of teleportation.

Bai Xiaochun slowly looked up, his eyes bloodshot, his killing intent burning as he took a step forward. “Time to die, Zhou Yixing!”

That step almost seemed to land directly on Zhou Yixing’s heart. He trembled visibly, and let out an involuntary shriek. If his fire soul arrow couldn’t kill this opponent, then what could? Mind spinning and having no time to think, he pushed down onto his forehead, causing a massive burst of starlight to pour out of his star sigil, which wrapped around him and teleported him away.

He didn’t dare to do anything other than flee. At the moment, the mere thought of Bai Xiaochun left him terrified.

Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood as Zhou Yixing was whisked away, after which his jaw dropped.

“I can’t believe he ran away so quickly. I didn’t even get to finish coughing up that blood....” As soon as Bai Xiaochun had sensed the power of teleportation coming from Zhou Yixing’s star sigil, he had intentionally coughed up some blood to try to make himself look weak. His plan had been to trick Zhou Yixing into staying behind, and then show off how powerful he really was.

Ideally, he would have ended up killing Zhou Yixing. However, in defiance of all his expectations, Zhou Yixing didn't even wait for him to cough up the blood before vanishing.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun pulled out a Godly Vestige Pill and consumed it. As he began to recover from the fight, he looked down at the arrow in his hand and then began to laugh merrily.

“I probably shouldn’t kill this Zhou Yixing anyway. Every time we fight, he ends up giving me a precious item. Nine-colored flame. A soul arrow with an elevenfold spirit enhancement. Hahaha! Hmm... there’s also that bow of his.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he excitedly thought back to the fight which had just played out.

The arrow had been incredibly powerful, so much so that he had been terrified of it. If it wasn’t for his use of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye and the protection of the turtle-wok, he would either have been captured, or absolutely destroyed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0546 awe-chapter-547

“That was really a nice bow....” Bai Xiaochun thought, licking his lips. The more he pondered how amazing the bow was, the more excited he got, and at the same time, realized he had put on too good of an act earlier. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have ended up scaring his lucky star away. [1]

“I probably shouldn’t call him Mr. Gorilla in the future. What a pity this labyrinth is so big. Most likely I won’t run into him again.” Sighing, he realized that he already missed Zhou Yixing.

A moment later, he looked back down at the fire soul arrow with its elevenfold spirit enhancement. The arrow only continued to leave him more shaken, especially with the way it seemed to flicker back and forth between illusory and corporeal. The longer he looked at it, the more he felt like it was tugging at his own soul.

“Is the arrow itself extraordinary, or... or is it the elevenfold spirit enhancement that’s made it so incredible?!” Taking a deep breath, he thought back to the Heavenhorn Sword back in the River-Defying Sect, with its tenfold spirit enhancement. How might that sword change if it had an elevenfold enhancement? Presumably, it would be even more incredible than before.

“What an awesome arrow,” he thought, quickly putting the arrow into his bag of holding. Patting his bag contentedly, he mused that he really had profited well by coming into the labyrinth.

“Hmmmmphh. I bet nobody in this labyrinth is richer than me, not even that deva. I've got stuff in my bag of holding that would shock even him!” Although he was quite proud of himself, he also couldn’t forget all of the ordeals from the past several days, and the bizarre things that had occurred. That left him feeling a bit stiff, and drove away any feelings of pride. He even had to remind himself that he mustn’t allow himself to grow lax in his caution.

“No amount of riches is worth more than my poor little life!” Shaking his head, he looked around cautiously before proceeding forward.

Meanwhile, in a tunnel not too far away from Bai Xiaochun, starlight swirled, and Zhou Yixing stepped out into the open, coughing up a mouthful of blood.

By this point, the star sigil on his forehead was visibly cracked, and looked like it might collapse at any moment. Zhou Yixing felt like weeping about it, although he currently had no tears to shed.

“It’s all your fault, Bai Xiaochun!!” he raged as he stood there trembling and ashen-faced. “You took my nine-colored flame and my fire soul arrow. Damn you, Bai Xiaochun!! If it wasn’t for you, I never would have even come here. Damn you and damn this labyrinth!!”

Zhou Yixing felt like he was hovering on the verge of going insane. As of this moment, he only had one teleportation left before his star sigil was destroyed for good.

Before entering the labyrinth, he couldn’t have possibly guessed that it would be so dangerous, and that he would have to rely on the power of his star sigil so many times. By now, he completely regretted his decision.

“I absolutely, positively must not run into any of those bizarre entities.... And I definitely have to avoid Bai Xiaochun.... I can’t believe my fire soul arrow didn’t kill him. He’s completely inhuman!” Sighing, he began to creep forward, mind focused on a single thing: finding the exit, leaving, and never coming back. As for Bai Xiaochun... he had already made a decision. After he got back home, he would ask his entire family to track him down and kill him.

As Zhou Yixing was resolving to avoid Bai Xiaochun at all costs, Bai Xiaochun was proceeding through the labyrinth, feeling dizzy from how all the walls looked exactly the same.

“Where is that exit...?” he thought anxiously. “This is crazy! I’m totally turned around. Alright, whatever. I’ll just count this intersection as my starting point!”

Taking a deep breath, he took out a jade slip and then continued with his previous custom of sticking to the right. This time, however, he tried to take measured, uniform steps. At the same time, he began to trace out his path in the jade slip. It took patience, but he stuck with it. Whenever he reached intersections, he would pick the right-hand side. Gradually, an outline of his route began to take shape in the jade slip.

A few more days went by. By this point, he had been in the labyrinth for nearly a month.

Thankfully, he had plenty of spirit alcohol, which helped him keep his cultivation base and battle prowess sufficiently powered. However, he would still run into occasional situations in which he needed to draw upon spirit energy, and after a few more months passed, he began to run low on spirit alcohol.

Bai Xiaochun's anxiety continued to build, and he started to lose track of time. One day, he suddenly saw movement up ahead of him in the corridor.

"Who's there?!" he said loudly, pulling out his Eternal Parasol.

However, whoever it was up ahead completely ignored him and kept moving. Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun was about to start backing away when he suddenly saw clearly who it was up ahead of him, and his jaw dropped.

It was one of the cultivators from the Great Wall, someone he recognized. However, to his shock, he realized that the man's eyes were completely blank, and his face was slack and expressionless....

His cultivation base seemed to have slipped back down into Foundation Establishment, and even more strange was the fact that he wasn't really walking! His feet dragged on the ground, and although he wasn't floating through the air, it almost seemed like he was being pushed along from behind.

The man didn't seem to notice Bai Xiaochun, who stood there wondering exactly what was going on. He thought about taking the initiative to attack him, but then hesitated and decided not to inadvertently provoke him. Instead, he simply stepped to the side and watched him closely as he passed by.

The entire time, the man didn't stop or even look at him. He just walked on by. That was when Bai Xiaochun's gaze fell upon the man's back, and suddenly, he felt all the hair on his body stand up on end.

"Wh-wh... wha... what is that?!" Backing up, his face drained of blood as he looked at what was sticking to the man's back. It was... a life-size person made of paper!!

The paper person had arms, legs, and a head with a lifelike face! It was stuck to the cultivator’s back as if it had always been a part of him, and yet, Bai Xiaochun could tell that life force and cultivation base power was flowing constantly from the cultivator into the paper person.

The paper person’s eyes were closed, but Bai Xiaochun could clearly see that its expression, and also its facial features, were slowly coming to resemble the cultivator it was stuck to.

The bizarreness of the spectacle caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver in fear, and even place his hand over his mouth from the horror. Worried that he might attract the attention of the paper person, he simply watched the cultivator trundle off into the distance. Then he breathed a sigh of relief.

“What the hell is this place...?” he thought. Whether it was the red hats, the blood-soaked buns, or this paper person, everything gave him a feeling of terror.

Furthermore, the paper person seemed like something that couldn’t be fought against using the cultivation base, but rather, something that affected the soul directly.

After everything which had occurred so far, Bai Xiaochun was feeling very jumpy. Not daring to continue in the direction he had been heading, he picked a new path and continued to try to keep track of his progress. However, despite his vigilance, he soon realized that there were five people up ahead. Two were Great Wall cultivators, two were soul cultivators, and there was even a savage giant. Furthermore, all of them were trudging along just like the cultivator he had seen earlier.

Because they were walking away from him, and thus had their backs to him, he could see that there were paper people stuck to all of them....

Sucking in a quiet breath, he began to back up, and then picked another direction. However, to his shock, it wasn’t long before he ran into a group of ten cultivators, all of whom had paper people stuck to their backs....

“Dammit, what’s going on?” Bai Xiaochun anxiously picked a new path to follow, and after a bit of time passed and he didn't see any paper people, he finally breathed a sigh of relief. The next day, as he was walking along, he suddenly stopped in place when he realized that someone was heading toward him at top speed from up ahead.

It was a soul cultivator, and as soon as the man caught sight of him, his expression turned grim. After sizing Bai Xiaochun up to get a sense of his power, he snorted coldly and continued to fly through the air at top speed...

Originally, Bai Xiaochun had been happy to find that the man’s expression wasn’t blank like all the other people he had seen recently, and was about to call out a greeting. However, when the man flew past him, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide.

There on the soul cultivator’s back was a paper person! Clearly, the man had no idea the paper person was there. A moment later, the paper person’s eyes opened and it looked at Bai Xiaochun with an odd smile. Then it raised a finger to its lips and pursed its lips as if to say *sshhh*....

Apparently, it was telling Bai Xiaochun that it was involved in a game of hide-and-seek, and that he shouldn’t say anything....

Bai Xiaochun was so scared that his face went completely ashen. Goosebumps broke out all over him, and he even began to sweat. Worried about some misunderstanding with the paper person, he nodded, and even slapped his chest to emphasize that he wouldn't speak up....

The paper person seemed to understand, and nodded in satisfaction before closing its eyes again.

After the soul cultivator disappeared into the distance, Bai Xiaochun wiped the sweat from his brow.

“These paper people must be able to sneak up on you without you ever realizing it....” Nervous, he suddenly looked over his shoulder.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0547 awe-chapter-548

Bai Xiaochun whipped his head around with lightning speed, and gave no advance warning that he would do so. However, he didn’t see anything attached to his back. He even reached up with his hand and felt around to make sure there was nothing there, before breathing a sigh of relief.

“Alright, good. There’s nothing on my back.” Even still, he was very nervous about the whole situation. The soul cultivator from moments ago was the first person he had encountered recently who had seemed conscious. And yet, the fact that he still had a paper person on his back was very telling, and was also quite confusing to Bai Xiaochun.

After glancing around, he wasn't quite sure what to do. Finally, he gritted his teeth and picked a new direction to head in.

He continued to encounter more cultivators, almost as if they had been gathering in this area. That would explain why he had gone for so long without seeing anyone. However, almost everyone he encountered had a blank expression and a paper person on their back.

Those who were lucid were often fleeing madly through the tunnels, or even thrashing about as they tried to grab at their backs. Others were ripping their clothing off. However, nothing anybody did could stop the paper people from sticking to them....

Everything that was happening had Bai Xiaochun jumping at his own shadow, and constantly looking over his shoulder. Occasionally, he would encounter locations with magical nodes on the ground, upon which lay paper people, apparently absorbing energy.

Bai Xiaochun was slowly slipping into a panic, and resorted to increasingly higher speed. He tried to skirt around any areas that had paper people, and eventually noticed that he was encountering fewer and fewer cultivators. However, for some reason, everything seemed to be getting more frightening and more cold, to the point where his hair started to stand on end. Finally, he stopped and picked a different direction.

However, the next day, Bai Xiaochun was startled to discover that no matter which direction he picked, the sinister coldness only continued to grow stronger.

“Don’t come after me....” he muttered, scowling on the verge of tears. Heart burning with anxiety, he rotated his cultivation base to push the sinister coldness away from him.

However, despite reducing its effects a bit, he couldn’t prevent it from touching him.... One day as he was rushing nervously through the tunnels, he caught sight of a pile of corpses!

There were more than a thousand of them, and without exception, they all had paper people on them!

The paper people appeared to be either sleeping or absorbing energy from the corpses. In fact, many of the corpses had more than one paper person on them, with some having as many as seven or eight....

What caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to go wider than anything else was one gray-robed necromancer who had dozens of paper people wrapped around him and absorbing his energy.

The necromancer wasn’t dead, and apparently, was still aware of what was happening. However, his eyes were completely filled with despair. Shuddering with fear, Bai Xiaochun murmured, “This place must be a paper person hive!!”

From what he could tell, there were at least two thousand paper people in the area!

“They can’t see me. They can’t see me....” Fearful of attracting their attention, and worrying that he was disturbing their mealtime, he quietly began to tiptoe backward.

However, before he could take even five steps, one of the dozens of paper people on the necromancer looked up, almost as if it had smelled something. Sniffing the air, it turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, and then its eyes began to shine with strange light.

Bai Xiaochun was nearly scared out of his mind, and stopped moving. Swallowing hard, he looked back at the paper person, and then slowly raised his finger to his lips and said *sshhh*.

The paper person seemed surprised, and a moment later, lowered its head. Relieved, Bai Xiaochun was just preparing to back up again, when all of a sudden another of the paper people looked up at him.

Tears welling up in his eyes, he said, “I didn’t mean to disturb you guys. Eat up, alright? I’ll... I’ll just take off now. *Sshhh*....” However, before he could continue to back up, the paper people that were looking at him suddenly began to let out a round ear-piercing shrieks.

It was a sound that could batter at the soul itself, and by the time the second round of shrieks filled the air, all two thousand of the paper people in the area had looked up, and many of them were flying toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was almost scared witless. Screaming, he turned and fled for his life.

“You people don't play fair! I... I saw one of your friends earlier, and when he asked me to *sshhh* I didn’t break his cover....”

Soon, Bai Xiaochun had disappeared into one of the nearby tunnels, being chased by two thousand paper people. After everything went silent, the area with the corpses suddenly went very quiet, and a bit later, a mist began to build up.

The mist covered the corpses, which then started withering up rapidly. In the blink of an eye, they became nothing more than ash.

Not even their bags of holding or magical items could stand up to the mist, and were soon gone. Then, the mist began to converge upon itself, wriggling and twitching as it formed into a humanoid shape.

As the shape took form, it became a young woman, extraordinarily beautiful, the smile on her face covered by a hand. If anyone had been present to witness that smile, they would have been struck cold with terror from how bizarre it was.

She had long black hair, and a curvaceous figure that her ocean-blue robe could do nothing to conceal. She was none other than Gongsun Wan’er!

As of this point, the second pupil in each of her eyes had a figure visible within it, the face of a young girl, who was also smiling.

“Don’t be scared, sweetie. They’re just playing hide-and-seek with you, that's all....” Despite the softness of her voice, her expression was ice cold as she took a step forward, dissolving yet again into a mist that spread out in all directions.

Somewhere off in the distance, Bai Xiaochun was shrieking and sweating as he fled from the two thousand paper people. No matter how fast he went, they stuck with him. It was almost as if there was some strange connection between them and him that enabled them to match his speed.

Bai Xiaochun was nearly convulsing with fear as he barreled down the tunnels, downing one bottle of spirit alcohol after another. He kept up top speed for more than an hour, and yet to this despair, found that even after that time, he hadn’t managed to shake a single paper person.

None of his divine abilities or magical techniques did anything to help. His frigid domain didn't affect the paper people, and although his Eternal Parasol was strong enough to stave off one or two at a time, there were too many overall.

Plus, if he slowed down at all, they would rush toward him without stopping.

The idea of being buried in a pile of two thousand paper people, all of whom wanted to suck him dry until he was a pile of bones, left him shivering in terror.

“I didn’t do anything to offend you people? What are you chasing me for?!”

He even thought about using his Waterswamp Kingdom to see if it could take out some of the paper people, but it cost far too much spiritual power to use, which meant he needed to save it for only the most critical of moments.

After all, the amount of spiritual power it took to use the Waterswamp Kingdom one time was enough to keep him moving at top speed for a full day.

“Dammit! Alright, I’ll keep running for two more hours, and if the paper people are still chasing me, then I’ll try out my Waterswamp Kingdom!” Gritting his teeth, he continued to move along at top speed.

An hour flew by, and Bai Xiaochun was feeling more hopeless than ever. He hadn’t run into a single other person, and was dejected to find that the paper people didn’t ever seem to get tired. He felt like he was about to go mad, and was just thinking about using the Waterswamp Kingdom when he noticed a young man flying toward him. As the young man got closer, it was clear that he was trembling. And then he saw the two thousand paper people behind Bai Xiaochun, which caused him to gasp, and then turn to flee in the other direction.

However, despite how quickly this newcomer reacted, Bai Xiaochun still managed to get a look at his face.

First, he was shocked, and then, delighted! “Zhou Yixing!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0548 awe-chapter-549

Bai Xiaochun was extremely happy to see Zhou Yixing, and felt like he had just run into an old friend. After all, he hadn't seen any other living beings for quite some time.

To unexpectedly run into Zhou Yixing right here left Bai Xiaochun feeling as if the two of them were connected by destiny somehow.

Plus, the fact that he ended up profiting handsomely every time they met got him very excited.

“Don’t run, Zhou Yixing!” he shouted. “I'm not gonna take that bow of yours! Get the attention of these 2,000 paper people, okay, my lucky star!?”

The joy in Bai Xiaochun’s voice caused Zhou Yixing to tremble on the verge of insanity. He truly felt as if he had fallen into more bad luck than was possible in one lifetime....

“*You’re* the lucky star! Everyone in your family is a lucky star!!!” Rage filled him at how sharp Bai Xiaochun's eyes were. Just now, Zhou Yixing had spun around as quickly as possible, and yet somehow, had still been recognized. Then, he’d been called ‘lucky star,’ which pushed him deeper into madness, to the point where he felt like he was going to collapse.

During his recent travels through the labyrinth, he had prayed constantly that he never meet Bai Xiaochun again, and yet... that was exactly what had happened!

“Oh heavens, why? This labyrinth is so big, why did you have me run into this damnable Bai Xiaochun!?” This was the third time Zhou Yixing had encountered Bai Xiaochun, and by this time, he was sure he had worse luck than anyone in the world.

During their first meeting, he lost his nine-colored flame. Then he had his fire soul arrow taken away. The third time, Bai Xiaochun came running at him with 2,000 paper people in pursuit....

Zhou Yixing had been just as terrified recently by the paper people as Bai Xiaochun had. To see more than 2,000 of them in one place had him terrified to the extreme.

“Do I owe him a debt from a previous life or something!?!?” Eyes bloodshot and expression twisted from rage, he turned to glare viciously at Bai Xiaochun.

“You want my help to get the attention of those paper people?” he yelled. “Fine! Since you have a death wish, I guess that means fate has put you in my hands to be killed today!!” Zhou Yixing was convinced that by taking advantage of the paper people, he would be able to have his chance to kill Bai Xiaochun!

“The perfect opportunity!” Howling, he threw caution to the wind, pulling out his black greatbow with its ninefold spirit enhancement. Then, he pulled the bowstring back and unleashed a succession of 36 soul arrows, simultaneously flying backward away from Bai Xiaochun!

36 was Zhou Yixing’s limit, and was such a strain that he was already coughing up blood. And yet, that was how much he hated Bai Xiaochun! All the way down to the bones!

The 36 soul arrows screamed through the air toward Bai Xiaochun, whose face fell at the realization that, in his excitement at running into his lucky star, he had pushed things too far. The truth was that this really was the perfect opportunity for Zhou Yixing to kill Bai Xiaochun.

“I can't believe you’re being such a bully, Mr. Gorilla!” he shouted. As the 36 soul arrows closed in, it was clear that they were locked onto his position, and that he couldn’t dodge them. Considering that there were paper people right behind him, it put him in a very dangerous position. Therefore, he waved his right hand and snapped the Eternal Parasol open.

Then, the 36 soul arrows all exploded, and Zhou Yixing mockingly shouted, “Your comeuppance is at hand, Bai Xiaochun!”

Ignoring any injuries it would wreak upon him, he took a breath and launched another 30 arrows.

The arrows slashed through the air like lightning, instantly reaching Bai Xiaochun’s position and then exploding with incredible force. Even if Bai Xiaochun were stronger than he already was, he couldn’t have done anything other than fall back in the face of such an attack.

As he did, the 2,000 paper people increased their speed, closing the distance in the blink of an eye.

Bizarre smiles could be seen on the faces of the screaming paper people, and looks of greed and madness filled their eyes as they pounced toward Bai Xiaochun.

Off in the distance, Zhou Yixing watched what was happening with such excitement that he was shaking. Then he threw his head back and laughed at the top of his lungs.

“I didn’t kill you, Bai Xiaochun, this is just the will of the heavens!!” Zhou Yixing felt wonderful at being able to instantly rid himself of the depression that had gripped him so deeply recently.

As Zhou Yixing watched the paper people pouncing toward Bai Xiaochun, he cackled madly and then said, “Bai Xiaochun, you--”

However, before he could finish speaking, his eyes went wide, and his words stuck in his throat!

“Impossible!” To Zhou Yixing’s shock, one glimmering shield after another had sprung up around Bai Xiaochun, until there were more than a thousand of them, creating a 30-meter-thick barrier around him.

As the shields spread out, the paper people who had been pouncing on Bai Xiaochun stuck to its surface.

However, because there were so many of them, they ended up looking like a huge paper ball!

Inside of the paper ball, Bai Xiaochun was drenched in the sweat of fear. In the heat of the moment, he had been too short on time to use his Waterswamp Kingdom, and therefore, had resorted to defensive talismans to stop the advance of the paper people.

After confirming that the shields were effective against the paper people, he looked through the cracks in their arms and legs at the gaping Zhou Yixing off in the distance.

“Zhou Yixing!” he bellowed, then began to move in his direction!

Zhou Yixing’s jaw dropped, and his mind began to spin as the huge paper ball began to speed in his direction. The sheer number of paper people that huge ball represented caused Zhou Yixing’s scalp to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode.

“He's still not dead!?!?” he blurted in rage. Spinning, he began to flee, and yet despite the speed he was capable of, was no match for Bai Xiaochun.

“What do I do? What do I do!?!? Don’t tell me I'm really going to have to resort to my final star sigil teleportation!?!?” Swept up in a feeling of madness, he gritted his teeth and prepared to unleash the starlight within the star sigil. However, that was when he suddenly realized that the 2,000 paper people stuck to the surface of the shields were actually absorbing their power, which was causing the paper ball to shrink.

“Hmm?” Enthused, Zhou Yixing immediately abandoned his plan to teleport away. Heart thumping with excitement, he came to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun was actually shooting himself in the foot, and once his shield disappeared, he would be killed in body and soul.

Feeling more thrilled with every moment that passed, Zhou Yixing proceeded onward, keeping an eye on what was happening behind him and even laughing at the situation.

Suddenly, a rumbling sound echoed out from the paper ball, startling Zhou Yixing. However, after confirming that it was maintaining the same speed as before, he calmed down.

“Let’s see how long you manage to hold out, Bai Xiaochun!”

Inside the paper ball, Bai Xiaochun was chuckling coldly, and thought about what Zhou Yixing’s reaction would be to the fact that... he could pull hundreds of thousands of paper talismans out of his bag of holding if he felt like it.

“Hmph. If I pulled them all out at one time, you would definitely freak out!” However, Bai Xiaochun was still worried. After all, he didn’t have an endless supply of talismans, and would run out of them eventually. Looking around at the paper people absorbing the energy of the shields, he quickly came to the conclusion that they found the shields to be delicious.

Heart pounding, he put some more thought into the matter, then pulled out another paper talisman and threw it off to the side. Sure enough, some of the paper people immediately pounced on it and began to absorb it happily.

Eyes flickering, Bai Xiaochun looked at Zhou Yixing fleeing off into the distance, and then decided to take one more risk.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0549 awe-chapter-550

Because Bai Xiaochun was mostly out of sight inside the paper ball, and also because Zhou Yixing had to focus on moving ahead, he didn’t see what had just happened. He was excited, only occasionally looking back to see how much the paper ball had shrunk.

By this point, the ball had already shrunk from its previous size of 30 meters down to about half of that.

In addition, Bai Xiaochun was slowing down, as if he were about to succumb to exhaustion. Zhou Yixing could even hear him let out a howl of seeming despair.

“Your comeuppance is at hand, Bai Xiaochun!” Feeling almost completely free from care or worry, Zhou Yixing laughed loudly and pondered how all of this had been carefully planned out and executed by none other than himself.

“When I want someone dead, that person wouldn’t dare to try and stay alive!” Laughing, he looked back at Bai Xiaochun slowing down, the paper ball having shrunk down to roughly 9 meters. By this point, Zhou Yixing was confident enough to stop in place to watch Bai Xiaochun be reduced to a desiccated corpse.

“Zhou Yixing!” Inside the paper ball, Bai Xiaochun was looking quite flustered. No matter how he yelled out in anger, his speed continued to drop, until he couldn’t even move forward. Of course, his struggles pleased Zhou Yixing to no end, who was now staring fixedly to watch the final result.

“Yell all you want,” he said with a chuckle. “Even if you yell your throat out, nobody will come to save you!” Zhou Yixing was pleased as punch at how little effort he was now expending. As for the shield surrounding Bai Xiaochun, it was now so small that it was impossible to catch even a glimpse of him inside of all the paper!

It was a critical moment in which Zhou Yixing nervously watched what was happening, and was even visualizing what would happen next. In his mind, the paper ball would soon break through the shield, and Bai Xiaochun would scream miserably as he was destroyed in body and soul.

Not only could he keep a record of everything that was happening, but he would be able to take Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding in the end. Then he could draw upon the final bit of teleportation power in his star sigil, and go get his reward of a full set of five elements deva beast souls!

Even as he excitedly contemplated that outcome, he saw the paper ball collapse, causing him to crane his neck forward to observe the outcome....

In the exact same moment that the ball collapsed, a huge clump of paper talismans suddenly flew out into the air, a development which occurred so quickly that Zhou Yixing could never have reacted in time. In the blink of an eye, all of the paper talismans landed on the ground right in front of him.

Zhou Yixing’s jaw dropped, and before he could do anything, the paper talismans exploded, causing numerous shield layers to spring up around him.

The talismans were defensive in nature, and quickly spread out to surround Zhou Yixing. At the same time, all of the paper people near Bai Xiaochun suddenly turned over to look in Zhou Yixing’s direction. Completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun, their eyes lit up with madness as they pounced onto the shields surrounding Zhou Yixing!

All of these things take some time to describe, but from the moment the shield around Bai Xiaochun collapsed until the paper talismans landed in front of Zhou Yixing and the paper people pounced, only two breaths of time had passed.

Zhou Yixing’s face fell, and his mind began to spin. Things were turning out exactly the opposite of how he had imagined. Screaming, he tried to back up, but it was too late. The paper people moved so quickly that in the following moment, Zhou Yixing found himself in exactly the same situation Bai Xiaochun had just been in.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he bellowed in rage, his heart quivering with regret and madness. “Shameless! Completely shameless!! You will not die a good death, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was fleeing madly. The situation he had just been in was far too dangerous for his liking. Now that Zhou Yixing had replaced him, he forgot about his desire to get his bow and fled without hesitation.

“My poor little life is worth way more than that bow. I guess Zhou Yixing still counts as my lucky star!” When he looked over his shoulder at the shrinking paper ball, he worried that the paper people might still notice him and give chase, so he tried to get as far away as possible.

Meanwhile, Zhou Yixing was inside the paper ball, looking around in sullen fury as the paper people got closer and closer to him. Soon, tears began to leak out of the corners of his eyes.

At the moment, he had no time to ponder how Bai Xiaochun was the bane of his existence. Instead, he reached up and pushed down onto his forehead.

Rumbling sounds then echoed out as starlight filled the area, and the power of teleportation erupted. When the starlight faded away, Zhou Yixing was nowhere to be seen. Within a few moments, the paper people had completely devoured all of the shields, whereupon they scattered and began to search the area. When they found nothing, they drifted off into different random directions.

In a tunnel somewhere else in the labyrinth, starlight glimmered, and Zhou Yixing stepped out, coughing up blood. He did nothing to hold it back, leaning up against the wall as blood spilled out from inside of him. Then he chuckled bitterly.

As for the star sigil on his forehead, it gradually grew dimmer, until finally, it crumbled into ash and blew away....

“My star sigil is gone....” he lamented. As he thought back to everything which had occurred with Bai Xiaochun, he felt more than ever that he was the bane of his existence. More tears began to pour down his cheeks. “I'm not going to try to kill him. I hope... I hope I never see him again for the rest of my life!!!”

In that moment, Zhou Yixing seemed to age significantly. He had been wounded both physically and mentally, and was even starting to question the purpose of his own life....

In sharp contrast to Zhou Yixing’s bitter grief, Bai Xiaochun was in extremely high spirits. He felt like he had just survived a major tribulation, and had finally secured safety for his poor little life.

He wasn’t even angry about Zhou Yixing’s previous treachery. After all, without Zhou Yixing there, he might not be alive right now.

He had even gone to the lengths of sacrificing himself to save Bai Xiaochun.

“Ah whatever. If we're connected by destiny, Brother Zhou, then you’ll probably make it out alive yourself. I hope we have a chance to meet again one day.” Relishing the thought of what might happen then, Bai Xiaochun hurried along his way.

However, as he walked through the tunnels, he started getting the feeling that something was off. He suddenly whipped around to check his back, but didn’t see anything. Reaching over his shoulder, he fumbled around with his hand, but couldn’t feel anything.

Unsure of whether he was just imagining things, he kept going. Eventually, he noticed a Great Wall cultivator approaching from the other direction looking very nervous, as if he had just survived some dangerous ordeal.

When their eyes met, Bai Xiaochun could instantly see that the man was terrified....

A moment later, the cultivator bowed his head and stepped to the side to allow Bai Xiaochun to pass. Bai Xiaochun was thinking of asking the cultivator some questions, but quickly dismissed the idea when he realized the man had a paper person on his back.

Bai Xiaochun immediately sped up, flying past the cultivator. Some distance away, he looked over his shoulder to find the cultivator rushing toward him aggressively. But then, the man suddenly stopped in place and nodded in terror....

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had noticed him, he shrieked and fled.

Bai Xiaochun was at first taken aback, but then he thought back to when he had seen one of the paper people on someone else’s back. That paper person had said *sshhh*, and he had nodded in response....

The nod of the cultivator just now had seemed very similar, and at that point, Bai Xiaochun’s terror began to mount....

“There’s no way I have a paper person on my back....” he thought, his mind spinning. Face turning ashen, he looked over his shoulder over and over again until his neck hurt. However, he didn't see anything. Unfortunately, divine sense was suppressed in the labyrinth, making it impossible to use it to scan himself. Even reaching around with his hands didn’t reveal anything....

Finally, he decided to pull out his copper mirror, but still couldn’t see anything on his back.

He proceeded onward, filled with suspicions. As time went on, his expression turned more and more unsightly, until he was absolutely certain that there was something on his back.

Scared out of his mind, and hair standing on end, he breathed, “There’s... there’s something on my back!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0550 awe-chapter-551

Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp of fear, and looked over his shoulder, trembling. He also fumbled around behind his back. And yet, he still didn’t have any evidence that anything was there.

However, the feeling only kept getting stronger, to the point where he felt like he couldn’t breathe.

“There’s definitely something there!” Tears welling up in his eyes, he let out a shout as he plastered some paper talismans onto him. And yet, after the shield layers sprang up, he still felt the same.

No matter what he did, he felt like there was someone clinging to him.

“How come nothing works…?” he thought nervously. Gritting his teeth, he unleashed the Living Mountain Incantation, transforming into a stone golem and then back again. Despite that, he still felt like something was there.

In fact, the sensation was even stronger. Most terrifying of all was that Bai Xiaochun was sure that whoever was behind him was absorbing his life force.

“No... that’s my longevity!” he wailed. “That’s my chance to live forever! I don’t want this! Come on, let’s talk things over. Just get off my back....”

He even pulled out the Eternal Parasol and poked it over his shoulder, but whoever was stuck to his back refused to budge.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel confused, and he even went so far as to use his Waterswamp Kingdom. However, nothing changed....

“What am I supposed to do? Don’t tell me that I, Bai Xiaochun, am going to lose my life right here!? I refuse to accept this! I'm still young! I haven’t even gotten married yet. I haven’t had kids....” And yet, in his fury and grief, he only continued to descend into confusion.

He started to look a bit listless as he trudged along, even staggering a bit, almost as if he were being pushed forward from behind.

The truth was that he did have a paper person on his back, as if it had always been a part of him. Furthermore, it was greedily sucking away at his cultivation base and life force.

This paper person was different from the others, though. It wasn’t white. It... was red!

Furthermore, it had six eyes, which opened and closed continuously in a very strange fashion.

As he walked along, he didn’t notice how, when other paper people would appear near him and look at him greedily, they would subsequently notice the red paper person on his back, and then shiver and flee.

Eventually, he was completely alone, walking along in confusion and slowly transforming into something more like an old man.

However, at some point as he walked along, a fair, graceful female hand reached out, completely disregarding the presence of the red paper person, to land directly onto Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder.

It was a smack that sent a tremor running through him, rousing him as if from sleep. Suddenly recalling everything which had been going on, he shrieked and leapt forward a few paces before spinning to look back.

What he saw caused his jaw to drop.

Right there in front of him was a beautiful woman in a long gown. She had an odd-looking smile on her face, and it even looked like she had some blood on her lips, as if she had just eaten something and forgotten to wipe her mouth. That young woman was none other than…

“Gongsun Wan’er!!”

In her hand she held a red paper person, who was screaming and struggling as it tried to break free. However, such efforts were useless, and soon, a pleading look could be seen in the thing's eyes.

Looking down at the red paper person, Gongsun Wan’er smiled, and the second pupil in each of her eyes began to shine with cold light. “You really have some guts to bully my sweetie.”

With that, she squeezed her fingers together, prompting the paper person to scream as it was crushed to bits!

Then, white wisps of smoke rose up and floated back toward Bai Xiaochun, which was none other than his lost life force being returned to him.

Face turning more ashen, he subconsciously backed up a few steps. For some reason, this version of Gongsun Wan’er seemed like a complete stranger to him.

As he thought back to his past memories, he was certain that it had been a very long time since he felt anything like this. In fact, now that he thought about it, he realized that Gongsun Wan’er had always seemed a bit different after he got back from the Blood Stream Sect.

Plus, the blood on her lips was clearly not her own; it had come from something she’d eaten. Bai Xiaochun immediately began to pant as a hair-raisingly terrifying feeling overwhelmed him.

The sinister coldness in the area far surpassed anything he had felt from the red hats or the blood-soaked buns. Not even the hive of paper people had been as cold as this.

Most shocking of all was how she had called him *sweetie*, which, for some very odd reason, seemed familiar....

Voice quavering, he continued to back up as he said, “Uh... Wan’er, it's you... what are you doing here...?”

He almost couldn’t tear his eyes away from the blood on Gongsun Wan’er’s lips.

Noticing his gaze, she reached up and touched her lips softly, then licked them clean and smiled at him. It was a smile that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to go cold. He couldn't be certain whether he was imagining things or not, but he was almost sure he had seen a second mouth inside of her just now!

In addition, he could see that she had two pupils in each of her eyes!

He was shaking visibly and scared witless, and yet, that feeling of fear also stoked his anger. At the same time, cold sweat began to drip down his back.

Teeth chattering, he said, “Wan'er, I... I have an errand to run, so, um... see you later.”

With that, he prepared to leave.

Gongsun Wan’er covered her smile with a hand, and said, “Ah, why don’t you come play with me, sweetie!?”

Strangely, her voice was different from before, and almost seemed like that of a child. As it echoed back and forth in the labyrinth tunnel, Bai Xiaochun’s body went stiff, and his eyes went wide. The way she had called him *sweetie* had already seemed familiar, and now that he heard that child’s voice, his mind began to spin.

Shrieking, he backed up again, eyes filling with incredulity as he pointed at Gongsun Wan’er and blurted, “Wh-who... who... who are you?!?!”

“How could you have forgotten me, *sweetie*?” Although her words were spoken softly, they crashed like thunder in Bai Xiaochun’s mind. Memories flooded into his mind as he thought back to the Fallen Sword World, and how among the banesouls had been a young girl holding a skinned, bloody teddy bear!!

“How is this possible?!?!” he thought, his mouth and throat going dry. He felt like he was going crazy, and couldn’t even breathe. It was almost like being hit in the head repeatedly with a big stick.

Gongsun Wan’er smiled at his reaction. Then she casually waved her right hand, causing a blood mist to spring up next to her, which rapidly converged together into the form of a tall man.

He was burly and well-built, but terrifyingly, had no skin. Blood-slicked muscles were all that could be seen, with occasional blue veins bulging out here and there.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw that burly man’s face, a name popped into his mind.

“Lei Shan!!”

“Just wait for me here, sweetie,” Gongsun Wan’er said in her child's voice. “I'm still not full yet. I'm going to take teddy to go get a bit more food, and then we can play together. You wait here like a good boy, now. I’ll be very upset if you disobey!” Smiling happily, she turned and skipped off into the distance, accompanied by Lei Shan, who walked alongside her with an expressionless face, the faint sounds of thunder rumbling out from him as he walked.

Bai Xiaochun watched all of this happen with an ashen face. He felt cold all the way down to his marrow, and had already decided that he wouldn’t wait around for Gongsun Wan’er and Lei Shan even if someone threatened to kill him. As of this moment, he finally put the pieces of the puzzle together, and realized that the terrifying young girl from the Fallen Sword Abyss had emerged into the world in Gongsun Wan’er’s body.

Whether it was the haunting of the River-Defying Sect or the deaths on the ship, all of them were carried out by that girl....

And then Bai Xiaochun remembered that she had originally transformed because of a medicinal pill he had concocted, and his heart flip-flopped.

“Um... don't worry!” he said loudly. “I’ll be a good boy. I won’t go anywhere.... Oh, by the way, there’s a guy out there named Zhou Yixing. He's very fair and delicate, and clearly very delicious. Why don’t you go play with him for a bit...?” After waiting for a bit to confirm that the girl was gone, he turned and fled.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0551 awe-chapter-552

Bai Xiaochun had never harbored even the slightest intention of doing what Gongsun Wan’er told him to. As far as he was concerned, only an idiot would have sat there obediently waiting for her to come back.

“Think I’m a moron? That I'm just gonna sit around waiting?” As he fled nervously, he pondered how quickly she had trusted that he would do what she said.... “Well, all’s fair in both love and war. Whatever. It's not like I’ll be around to find out what happens later anyway.”

Although he wasn’t sure of exactly what was going on, or what the girl was thinking, he continued to flee at top speed. As usual, he used his simplistic method of sticking to the right to try to find the exit.

A few days passed, over which he didn’t encounter anyone, and hadn’t run into any bizarre situations either. Because of that, he picked up speed, and eventually, the path of his movement as outlined in the jade slip became clearer. Eventually, he stopped and examined the would-be map.

Then he looked around at his surroundings for a moment. Although he couldn’t be absolutely sure, after examining the jade slip, he was fairly certain... that he had passed through this area before.

“So, this place is a big circle.... The labyrinth is made up of a whole bunch of massive, interconnecting concentric rings....

“What I have been assuming is the right-hand wall is actually the left-hand wall in other locations. They’re the same wall!

“In that case, there are two possibilities. The first is that all of the rings in the labyrinth are never-ending dead-ends, and only one of the rings has the exit!

“The other possibility is that none of the rings have an exit, and that the exit... is in some other location.” Bai Xiaochun rubbed his forehead and sighed. Despite how long he had been in the labyrinth, he had no idea whether or not anyone else had found the exit. Although it was a huge and complicated place, there were plenty of amazing geniuses among cultivators, so just because he hadn’t solved the puzzle didn’t mean no one else had.

Muttering a bit, he looked at the jade slip for a bit longer, then headed down a path that headed left, continuing to track his progress as he went along. Whenever he encountered a place that he thought he had passed before, he would pick a different path. However, the entire time, he generally continued to go to the right.

“I have to find a spot where this ring connects to the next ring.... It's got to be around here somewhere!” Gritting his teeth, he proceeded to search.

“There’s no guarantee that this method will find me the exit, but as long as nobody interferes and gets me lost again, I think it has a good chance of succeeding!”

Half a month later, Bai Xiaochun was looking a bit haggard. However, he had long since found a way into the next ring, and had also confirmed that it was also a never-ending dead end.

However, he didn’t give up looking for a way to the next ring.

As time crawled by, bad luck seemed to be further away than ever, and good luck seemed just around the corner. Another month passed by. By this point, Bai Xiaochun's jade slip was filled with a complicated outline of the various paths he had traveled. As he moved along, he was constantly absorbed in studying the unfolding map. Eventually, he stopped in place and looked up to find that ahead of him was a wide-open square!

The square did not contain any candles or blood-soaked buns. Right in the middle of it was an altar with a glowing door atop it.

As soon as he saw that door, his heart swelled with excitement.

"Finally! I finally found it!!" Bai Xiaochun took a few moments to calm himself down. Furthermore, he didn't just blindly charge toward the door. He took a moment to examine his surroundings, and after confirming that there wasn't anything overtly dangerous, he began to slowly make his way forward. Soon, he was at the end of the tunnel and right at the border of the square, where he looked at the shining door and began to laugh loudly.

"What kind of crappy labyrinth is this anyway? With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun brought this place to the verge of becoming ash. Now, with a bit of thought on my part, I'll finish the job and breeze through the exit." Feeling very proud of himself, he flew toward the altar and the glowing door.

There was no rumbling or any other sound as he flew inside and disappeared.

His vision swam, and when it grew clear, he looked around and instantly began to tremble. In fact, he couldn't even breathe.

There didn’t appear to be any ground in this place, just an empty void. Stretching out in all directions were numerous glowing spheres of starlight, well over a thousand of them.

Within each globe of starlight was a person. There were ordinary cultivators, soul cultivators and savage giants, all of them sitting cross-legged with their eyes closed, as if in meditation. Occasionally, the expressions on their faces would change. Some would grit their teeth, some would look elated. All sorts of different emotions could be seen.

Bai Xiaochun actually recognized many of the people in the spheres as people from both the Great Wall and the Wildlands who had gathered outside the labyrinth.

“It seems that more than a thousand other people got to the end of the labyrinth before me.” After looking around for only a moment, he saw Chen Hetian, Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan.

Among those from the Wildlands, he spotted a woman in a long red gown... Mistress Red-Dust!

Mistress Red-Dust’s glowing sphere was very eye-catching, sending dazzling light out in all directions, making it much brighter than any of the other spheres.

Not even the light of a hundred of the other glowing spheres would come close to hers.

After examining the situation a bit more closely, Bai Xiaochun realized that he was also surrounded by a glowing sphere of starlight, and that he was just another amongst the group of more than one thousand people floating within this starry sky.

In the middle of all the stars, floating there right in the boundless void, was a shocking, soul-stirring stone stele of enormous size!

Bai Xiaochun wasn't even able to tell exactly how large it was. It had words written on its surface describing the rules of the trials by fire here. Furthermore, each glowing sphere was connected to the stone stele by a faintly shimmering thread!

Bai Xiaochun trembled inwardly at the sight of this second stone stele, which looked similar to the first one outside the labyrinth. Based on the description written on the stone, passing a trial by fire here was the way to leave the labyrinth, and whoever took first place would acquire the deva soul.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun realized that he had definitely reached the end of the labyrinth, and entered the realm of the trials by fire.

“Deva souls are great and all, but my poor little life is most important. This place seems pretty safe, so I think the best thing will be to wait for someone else to get the deva soul, and then just leave....” With that, he reached out with both hands to touch the glowing sphere that surrounded him, to see if it was possible to emerge from within it. Unfortunately, the sphere itself was an unbreakable barrier that was impossible to pass.

That actually made him very happy.

“Seems I was right. This place is great! Hahaha! If I can’t get out, then other people probably can’t get in. We can all just sit around in harmony!” He was quite pleased with how fair and considerate this realm of trials by fire was.

Even as he reveled in his delight, he noticed some starlight off in the distance forming into a glowing sphere. Inside, a shadowy figure appeared who quickly became distinct.

“Zhou Yixing!”

Zhou Yixing looked very excited at having been able to find the exit. Just like Bai Xiaochun had, he looked around at his surroundings and almost immediately noticed the shocking stone stele. After a bit of time passed... he saw Bai Xiaochun.

When their gazes met, Zhou Yixing’s eyes went wide.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he laughed heartily. Apparently, Zhou Yixing really was Bai Xiaochun’s lucky star. Not only had he luckily escaped death, but he had also found the exit. Even though Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure if Zhou Yixing could hear him, he waved his hand enthusiastically and called out a greeting.

Zhou Yixing’s face twitched as he glared at Bai Xiaochun. Then he gritted his teeth and turned away, worried that if he kept looking at Bai Xiaochun, more bad luck might come his way....

After seeing Zhou Yixing look away, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and rubbed his nose, then looked around, feeling a bit bored.

“These people are taking forever! It’s just a trial by fire, right? Hurry up and finish!” Yawning, he looked back at the stone stele to see if he could figure out what was taking so long.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0552 awe-chapter-553

Any cultivator within one of the glowing spheres merely had to look in the direction of the text on the stone stele, and the words would appear in their minds. Although the descriptions of the trials by fire seemed simple, anyone who took 1st place in any of the trials listed on the stele would be named the overall 1st place winner!

It didn’t matter which trial by fire it was, or when the cultivator started it. As long as they took 1st place, they would immediately be teleported to the third level of the labyrinth, which was the location of the deva soul!

However, the description wasn’t clear about whether or not others might also be able to reach that third level. Based on the way the rules were described, it seemed possible that if the 1st place winner didn’t acquire the deva soul quickly enough, then the 2nd and 3rd place winners of the trial by fire might also be teleported to the third level, and thus have a chance to acquire the deva soul.

There was also a point explaining how the further one proceeded in a trial by fire, the more brightly that person’s glowing sphere would shine. From that, Bai Xiaochun could tell that Mistress Red-Dust was further along than anyone else. Likely, she would take 1st place and get the deva soul.

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit disappointed about that. After all, he wasn’t absolutely set on winning another deva soul, but if he could do so without much trouble, he would be more than happy.

At this point, though, there didn’t seem much hope. He had arrived too late, behind over a thousand others. Sighing, he looked closer at the stele to see the information about the various trials by fire.

The first was a trial regarding battle prowess.

“No way am I gonna do that one,” he murmured with the shake of his head. “All the fighting and killing doesn't suit me at all!” The second trial by fire caused his eyes to glitter. It was a trial of medicine concocting.

“Medicine concocting, huh? I'm pretty good at that!” Enthused, he proceeded down the list.

“Divine ability trial? Equipment forging trial? Divine soul trial? None of those will do. There’s no way I could match up with Granny Red-Dust in divine abilities. I can’t forge equipment, and I haven’t even formed a *divine soul* yet, whatever that is. I guess medicine concocting is the best bet for me.” Bai Xiaochun was starting to get interested in the idea, especially considering how boring it was. With that, he continued to look at the rest of the trials.

“Supreme unity trial? Spirit enhancement trial? Intrepid body trial?" Bai Xiaochun had no idea what the supreme unity trial was about, so he dismissed it. As for the intrepid body trial, he had his speculations.

“Sounds like that’s a test of fleshly body power. Definitely not for me. Too dangerous.” He continued to look down the stone stele, upon which were at least a hundred different trials by fire of all sorts. Many of them were tests of things Bai Xiaochun had never heard of, and eventually, his attention was drawn back to the trials of medicine concocting and spirit enhancement. However, he was still hesitating.

“It’s too bad that time is so limited, otherwise I would pick the medicine concocting. But when it comes to spirit enhancement....” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed a bit, glittering with a mischievous light as he realized that this was the perfect opportunity to cheat....

“If I can use my turtle-wok, then a spirit enhancement trial wouldn’t be hard for me at all. Maybe I would still have a chance of snatching 1st place away from Mistress Red-Dust!” The more he thought about it, the more excited he got.

“Yeah, might as well. I have no chance of catching up in medicine concocting, so I guess I should place my bet on spirit enhancement. If I win, I’ll get a deva soul, and if I lose, no harm done.” And thus, his decision was made. Focusing on the spirit enhancement trial, he followed the description on the stone stele, allowing his mind to sink into the words.

Rumbling sounds filled his mind, and everything around him began to spin. All of a sudden, he realized that his soul was leaving his body and flying toward the stone stele.

Shocked, he looked back to see himself sitting cross-legged in meditation in the glowing sphere. Because his soul was no longer in his body, the mask on his face stopped working, and slowly fell down onto his chest.

Bai Xiaochun was taken aback by this unexpected turn of events, and yet there was nothing he could do to change the situation. In the next moment, his soul slammed into the stone stele.

More rumbling sounds filled his mind, like the sound of thousands of ghosts screaming simultaneously, trying to shred his soul to pieces.

Thankfully, it didn’t last for long, only a few breaths worth of time. Then the sounds faded away, his blurred vision turned clear, and he found himself in a private chamber of some sort.

The walls were pitch black, and seemed oppressively sinister. The chamber was completely empty except for three stone daises, each one roughly waist-high. Atop the center dais was a withered yellow leaf that seemed completely ordinary in nature, and in fact, that was exactly what it was. It was a leaf so ordinary that it couldn’t have been more mundane.

Floating above the left-hand stone dais was a slowly-burning tongue of red flame. The flame wasn’t very hot, only a bit more than ordinary flame from the mortal world. However, Bai Xiaochun could instantly tell that it was no ordinary flame; it was the one-colored flame that was commonly seen in the cultivation world.

On the right-hand dais were some random materials such as rocks, vegetation, and metals, as well as some other things that Bai Xiaochun didn’t recognize.

However, there was something familiar about them, and after a moment, he realized that they reminded him of some of the things he had seen Big Fatty Zhang use when performing spirit enhancements.

Other than the three stone daises, there was nothing else in the room. Clearly, this room was designed to be a spirit enhancement workshop, and the current task was to perform a onefold spirit enhancement.

Bai Xiaochun looked around, and took a moment to study the one-colored flame. Then he thought back to how the mask had fallen off his face outside, and started to get nervous. Finally, he gritted his teeth and said, “I'm probably fine. The glowing spheres are really tough, otherwise, the people who showed up first would have ended up getting killed. First things first, I need to see if I can summon my turtle-wok....” After all, he didn’t have his bag of holding in this place, nor any of his other belongings. Therefore, he took a deep breath and then waved his finger like he usually did to summon the turtle-wok.

Instantly, a black light shot out, resolving into the shape of the turtle-wok!

Bai Xiaochun was taken aback, but quickly began to laugh proudly.

“It came in with me! Hahaha! I can’t believe it actually came in with me!!” Eyes shining brightly, he thought about what it would be like to take 1st place and get his hands on that deva soul.

“With my turtle-wok, who can possibly compete with me?!

“Hmmphhh! When Bai Xiaochun wants to take 1st place, who dares to stand in his way!” Confidently swishing his sleeve, he stuck his chin up proudly. However, he knew that time was of the essence, so he quickly suppressed his excitement and walked up to take the one-colored flame. Then, he excitedly threw it into the turtle-wok.

In response, the turtle-wok trembled and soaked up the flame, and the designs on its surface began to shine brightly.

More confident than ever, Bai Xiaochun chuckled and then carefully picked up the withered leaf. After looking it over and confirming it was just an ordinary item, he muttered, “What a waste to enhance a leaf like this.” However, he felt fairly certain that, no matter what items he enhanced here, he would not be able to take them with him, so in the end, it didn’t really matter how the fuel was used. Therefore, he tossed the leaf into the turtle-wok.

Instantly, the turtle-wok’s designs flared with light that coalesced onto the leaf. A moment later, the blinding light faded away, and a single silver design could be seen on the surface of the leaf!

Bai Xiaochun quickly picked it up and looked at it. Other than the silver design, he couldn’t find anything else about it that was unusual.

“What a waste,” he thought, shaking his head. Looking over at the left-hand dais, he saw that another tongue of flame had appeared, this one with two colors. Of course, it was none other than two-colored flame.

“I guess it doesn’t matter. This is just a trial by fire, and none of this stuff belongs to me anyway. No skin off my back.” With that, he casually took the two-colored flame and started another spirit enhancement.

Before long, the leaf had two silver designs on it. Then a third, a fourth, and so-on, until there were a total of eight. By this point, Bai Xiaochun was really bemoaning the whole situation.

“An eightfold spirit enhancement....” he murmured, looking at the leaf in his palm. It was still withered, but was clearly more durable and tough than before. It was even glowing a bit, and was obviously much more than an ordinary leaf. It was now some sort of treasure.

At this point he had another idea, considering that it had become a valuable treasure. If he could brand it to himself, then perhaps it would recognize him as its master, and then allow him to take it away with him when he left....

Hoping for the best, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, sending his personal mark into the leaf, which glowed in response. It was a success!

Pleased, Bai Xiaochun took the nine-colored flame and began to perform another spirit enhancement....

Nine, ten....

Before long, there were a shocking ten silver designs on the surface of the leaf. Although it still looked withered, its fundamental nature had changed, and it now glowed with a bright light. Anyone who looked at it would take it to be jade or some other precious stone!

“Tenfold enhancement....” Bai Xiaochun murmured. Looking over at the stone dais, he watched as an eleven-colored flame took form, entrancing and eye-catching.

Most accurately speaking, the eleven-colored flame wasn’t actually made up of eleven colors. However, Bai Xiaochun could tell just by looking at it that it was eleven-colored flame!

It was impossible to describe exactly how he knew it. Further, there was something about how the fire was constantly changing that tugged at his soul with shocking power.

Thinking back to the golden design on the fire soul arrow, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, and he thought, “In the past, I speculated about what miraculous transformations would occur with an elevenfold spirit enhancement....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0553 awe-chapter-554

When Bai Xiaochun’s soul entered the trial by fire dimension inside of the stone stele, none of the other people participating in the trials could see.

However, Zhou Yixing still hadn’t selected which trial by fire to enter. At one point, he got a strange feeling, and looked over to find that one of the glowing spheres off in the distance was growing brighter.

At that point, his jaw dropped as he realized that he was looking at Bai Xiaochun sitting there, his mask having fallen off of his face.

Bai Xiaochun’s glowing sphere was much brighter than it was before, and from the look of it, appeared to already be among the 500 brightest spheres.

“So, it turns out he really is Bai Xiaochun! How could he be going so fast!? What trial by fire did he pick?!” Unconvinced that Bai Xiaochun could possibly be advancing so quickly, he took a deep breath and tore his gaze away, determined to focus solely on his own trial by fire.

Meanwhile, back in the private spirit enhancement workshop, the turtle-wok was absorbing the eleven-colored flame, and Bai Xiaochun was looking on in anticipation as the leaf began to shine brightly.

The light was far more dazzling than that from the previous ten enhancements, causing silver to flood the area. But then, as Bai Xiaochun looked on with wide eyes, the ten silver designs overlapped, transforming into a single golden design!

“So, it really does work that way!” At this point, Bai Xiaochun assumed the process was concluded. However, in a sudden, unexpected turn of events, the instant the golden design appeared, the leaf wriggled, and began to turn green!

After it was completely green, life force could be sensed inside of it, leaving Bai Xiaochun thunderstruck.

“How... how is this possible?!?!” he exclaimed. Even as he looked on, the leaf stalk began to grow out, turning into a branch that had even more leaves on it. Shockingly, even those leaves began to grow out into larger branches....

Bai Xiaochun forgot to breathe as he watched a small tree trunk form, and more branches spread out. As of this moment, the turtle-wok actually contained a small tree!!

The tree brimmed with life force, and seemed completely corporeal. A dazzling golden design could be seen on its surface. Furthermore, the incredible transformations had completely wiped away Bai Xiaochun’s own mark.

“With an elevenfold spirit enhancement, that one leaf turned into an entire tree!

“The elevenfold enhancement even erased my branding mark....

“And the silver design transformed into a golden one!” However, after looking more closely at the tree, Bai Xiaochun could tell that it wasn’t completely stable. Occasionally, it would blur, as though it existed somewhere in between the level of a leaf and a tree.

That was the same characteristic shared by the fire soul arrow.

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken by the precious spirit enhancement he had performed. As of this moment, he had a much deeper understanding of how spirit enhancements worked. With that, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed out, hoping that he could brand his mark onto the little tree to make it his own.

As soon as the mark settled onto the tree, Bai Xiaochun confirmed that even elevenfold spirit enhanced items could also be branded to a master.

“So,” he thought, gnawing his lip, “when a treasure receives an elevenfold spirit enhancement, it transforms on a fundamental level. It doesn’t matter who it belonged to before, anyone who leaves a branding mark on it will become its new master....” By this point, he had completely forgotten about his goal of taking 1st place in the trial by fire. All of his interest was focused on the spirit enhancements.

“The first ten enhancements left silver designs. Could it be that the next ten all leave golden designs? But what about after that? What kind of designs will appear then?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with unprecedented brightness as he looked over at the stone dais, upon which another flame was taking form. Without the slightest hesitation, he began to perform more spirit enhancements.

Twelvefold. Thirteenfold. Fourteenfold!

More golden designs appeared on the surface of the little tree, until there were four. At the same time, the tree grew more healthy and strong. The trunk became thicker, and more branches spread out, each of which was covered with numerous leaves. Also, a strong pressure began to radiate out from the tree.

When Bai Xiaochun sensed the increasingly powerful pressure coming from the tree, his excitement grew. By now, he was completely entranced with spirit enhancing, and kept his eyes glued to the tree as he grabbed the fifteen-colored flame and started another enhancement.

In the instant that the spirit enhancement was completed, the turtle-wok began to tremble in unprecedented fashion. This was a reaction Bai Xiaochun had never witnessed before; the golden light which shone out of the wok was so intense it was almost completely blinding.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun realized that a fifteenfold enhancement must be a point at which drastic transformations occurred.

“What transformation, though...?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, gnawing excitedly on his lip. Soon, the golden design on the turtle-wok faded, and the tree grew bigger. At the same time, it began to pulse faintly with the power of a deva!!

“Deva!” Bai Xiaochun blurted, his expression one of complete incredulity. Although he hadn’t interacted with devas very many times, he had done so enough to recognize the fluctuations of the Deva Realm.

After looking carefully at the tree, he reached out to touch it, and when he did, he suddenly felt as if he were connected to the heavens.

“I can't believe that spirit enhancement is so profoundly mysterious!” Expression flickering, he took a few steps back. Then, seemingly entranced, he grabbed the next tongue of flame off of the stone dais and began another spirit enhancement

RUMBLE!

Sixteenfold. Seventeenfold. Eighteenfold. Nineteenfold. Twentyfold....

He performed five spirit enhancements in a row, causing the tree to grow larger and larger. By now, it seemed to fill most of the workshop, and even seemed like it might break through the walls to continue its growth. Upon looking up, Bai Xiaochun couldn't even see the top of the tree. Thankfully, there was still some room inside of the turtle-wok to continue performing spirit enhancements.

Ten golden designs covered the surface of the tree, dazzling and eye-catching. Furthermore, the deva power the tree radiated caused Bai Xiaochun to tremble physically.

To him, it almost felt like there was an actual deva standing in front of him, a deva far more powerful than either Chen Hetian or Mistress Red-Dust.

Apparently, this level of power was the peak of the Deva Realm!

It was like a brooding thunderstorm that, if it touched Bai Xiaochun, would kill him in body and soul, regardless of how powerful his fleshly body was. In fact, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain that it was even strong enough to render Chen Hetian and Mistress Red-Dust completely powerless!

Even more exciting to Bai Xiaochun was the fact that the tree still had his mark on it. With a single thought and the wave of a finger, he could make it into a magical item of his own possession.

With a magical item like that, he was completely confident in being able to dominate Chen Hetian or Mistress Red-Dust.

“I... I created this treasure because of my turtle-wok. I wonder if there are any other precious treasures in the world that have twentyfold spirit enhancements?!?!

“If... if I can take this tree with me, then I’ve definitely struck gold! I... I could go back to the River-Defying Sect immediately!” However, his excitement quickly devolved into concern of what was at stake. Considering how powerful the tree was, he couldn’t imagine that he would actually be able to take it out of this place. Therefore, he reached out to the newest tongue of flame and put it into the turtle-wok.

“Twenty-onefold!”

Meanwhile, on the outside, Zhou Yixing felt his hair standing on end. Earlier, he had decided which trial by fire to select, and was just about to enter it, when Bai Xiaochun’s glowing sphere began to shine even more brightly.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun’s sphere really was increasing in brightness far too quickly. Zhou Yixing’s eyes went wide as he watched it rapidly surpass almost all of the other glowing spheres in the area!!

All of the people in those spheres had arrived in this area before Bai Xiaochun, and yet now, didn’t measure up to him at all. He was even catching up to Mistress Red-Dust, who had once been the clear leader!

Although he hadn’t caught up yet, from the way the light of his sphere emanated boundless brightness, it didn't seem impossible for him to catch up to Mistress Red-Dust.

Zhou Yixing’s eyes couldn’t have been wider, and his mind was spinning. Convinced he must be seeing things, he rubbed his eyes, and yet, upon opening them, nothing had changed.

“How could this be happening?!?!” he muttered through angrily gritted teeth, his jealousy rising. “Dammit, don’t tell me he’s actually going to take 1st place?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0554 awe-chapter-555

Twenty-onefold!

Rumbling sounds echoed about within the workshop, causing the walls to shake to the point where they were beginning to break apart. However, the three stone daises remained in place. As for Bai Xiaochun, he grabbed one of the tree branches for stability. As he did, the ten golden designs on the surface of the tree began to converge together.

Bai Xiaochun was panting, and forced himself not to blink as he waited to see what transformation would occur with a twenty-onefold spirit enhancement.

This was an opportunity for him to get a glimpse of the power of spirit enhancement that he would never be able to see on the outside.

Currently, the intense rumbling sounds weren’t just affecting the area around the tree; the huge stone stele on the outside was also shaking.

The process lasted for about a dozen breaths’ of time, whereupon Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as the ten golden designs began to turn violet.

In the end, they became a single violet design!

When the violet design was complete, the tree didn’t continue to grow larger. Instead, blinding violet light shone out, and a face suddenly became visible on its surface, as if it were turning into a living being.

There was something profoundly ancient about the face, and yet, when it opened its eyes, they shone like that of an infant as they looked around curiously.

The deva aura of the tree faded away, and was replaced with a pressure that was even more terrifying. Although the pressure remained mostly inside of the tree, Bai Xiaochun was still able to sense it, and could tell that if it were unleashed, it could do mind-boggling things.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. Mind spinning, he cautiously checked to see if his branding mark was still on the tree.

When he saw that the mark was still there, unchanged by the twenty-onefold spirit enhancement, he sighed in relief.

“After the tenth enhancement, the leaf became a tree. After the twentieth, the tree became a spirit. A tree spirit? A plant spirit?”

Swallowing hard, and wiping the sweat from his brow, he looked at the tree and face, which still had a blank look it its eyes. Gritting his teeth, he said, “Whatever it is, my mark is still there. Considering the twenty-onefold enhancement is completely heaven-defying, I wonder what will happen after the thirtieth enhancement?” As Bai Xiaochun considered all these matters, his anticipation regarding a thirtyfold enhancement grew keener than ever.

Looking over at the stone pedestal, and the new flame, his eyes shone with madness as he began to perform more spirit enhancements.

Twenty-two!

With every spirit enhancement after the twentieth, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds rocked the area. The workshop had long since been destroyed, and as for the tree, it was trembling violently. At the same time, the light in its eyes grew more profound, and it even began to show signs of intelligence.

It was almost as if it were growing profoundly older with each passing moment.

Outside, the stone stele was shaking, almost as if it were unable to withstand the spirit enhancements that Bai Xiaochun was performing!

And as for Bai Xiaochun's glowing sphere, it was so bright that it had long since outshone Mistress Red-Dust's, and was almost the only thing visible in the entire void!

By this point, Zhou Yixing was in complete despair, especially after he calculated how much time had passed.

"This Bai Xiaochun is completely inhuman! I hope I never meet him in person ever again!" What was happening was a huge blow to Zhou Yixing, and had him completely downhearted.

Bai Xiaochun's spirit enhancement session was causing the stone stele to shake so violently that many of the trial-takers in the surrounding glowing spheres found their trials interrupted. Apparently, the stone stele didn't have the power to sustain all of the trials by fire, and therefore, people soon began to regain consciousness.

At first, those who recovered looked around blankly, but soon cries of alarm began to ring out.

"What's going on!?"

“Hey, what am I doing out here? I wasn’t finished with my trial by fire!”

“Heavens! Look at how badly the stone stele is shaking! What’s happening? And whose sphere is glowing so brightly?!?!”

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

The stone stele was still shaking, but hadn’t collapsed. Although more and more trial-takers were being ejected, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t showing any signs of stopping in his mad burst of spirit enhancement.

Twenty-three!

When the three violet designs appeared, the stone stele began to shake even harder, and had no choice but to eject hundreds more of the trial-takers. And yet, after a moment, even that wasn’t enough, and soon everyone other than Mistress Red-Dust and Bai Xiaochun was interrupted!

It didn’t matter how the other people were progressing in their trials by fire, they were all removed. Over a thousand people were now awake, and the buzz of conversation was louder than ever.

Of course, as all of the other trial-takers were interrupted, their glowing spheres went dark, until there were only two that glowed with blinding light. One belonged to Bai Xiaochun, and the other, to Mistress Red-Dust!

Bai Xiaochun’s glowing sphere was completely radiant, with Mistress Red-Dust’s being significantly less bright. And yet, hers was still bright enough to attract quite a bit of attention.

“It’s Bai Xiaochun!”

“Heavens! Which trial did Devil Bai go into? Not even a deva can compare to him!!”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s hair was in complete disarray, and he was shouting in excitement.

“Twenty-four!”

With the fourth violet design, even more intelligence gleamed in the tree’s eyes, and it even looked down at Bai Xiaochun.

That was when a crack appeared on the stone stele outside, causing widespread astonishment among the onlookers.

And yet, things weren’t over yet! Bai Xiaochun madly yelled, “Twenty-five!”

He couldn’t even determine the color of the fire he had just thrown into the wok, but as soon as it entered, intense violet light streamed out, and a fifth violet design appeared on the tree.

At that point, the face on the tree let out a sigh that seemed to originate in the most ancient of times. The echoing sigh also seemed to be filled with the evidence of countless other living beings, lives that were constantly multiplying. At the same time, the tree itself was evolving in a direction that seemed almost completely outrageous to Bai Xiaochun!

Unfortunately, it was still missing something to be complete, and what it was missing was more spirit enhancements!

“A world...? Don’t tell me that after the thirtieth spirit enhancement, this tree will become its own world?!” Bai

Xiaochun’s mind spun with unprecedented enlightenment, and his body trembled. However, he still reached out to get the new fire from the stone dais. Sadly, the dais was incapable of producing a twenty-sixth flame, and instead, crumbled into dust....

In addition, the other two daises and the tree also crumbled away!

Bai Xiaochun felt like his mind was being struck by countless bolts of lightning. This trial by fire had been of incredible benefit to him, and was definitely unprecedented good fortune!

Not only had his own spirit enhancement abilities improved, but it was likely that he now knew more about spirit enhancement than almost anyone else in the lands of Heavenspan! It would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone as knowledgeable as him!

What left him most shaken of all was that he now realized how much he had overlooked spirit enhancement. Spirit enhancement could turn what was useless into something miraculous. Essentially, it was the greatest source of good fortune in the entire world!!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and deep inside of him, he suddenly had a profound desire to focus on spirit enhancement, for much the same reason he had developed his desire to learn how to concoct medicine. Spirit enhancement could help him live forever!

“Live forever? It can even turn you into a world!!” From what he could tell, the path of spirit enhancement could possibly be a more direct route to his goal, and that was because of the turtle-wok!

“Just where exactly did my turtle-wok come from?!” The incredible spirit enhancement powers of the turtle-wok left Bai Xiaochun even more curious about its origins.

Even as he was shaken by all of these things, a voice echoed out that seemed to come from beyond the heavens.

“You have taken 1st place!” At the same time, a profound darkness spread out over the realm of the trials by fire, seemingly sealing it in place. As for Bai Xiaochun, before he could even react to anything, he found himself being sucked into a vortex.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0555 awe-chapter-556

Outside of the stone stele, in the glowing sphere of light, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened. A blank look could be seen in them, and before he could react, the glowing sphere became another vortex which sucked him inside. Then the vortex vanished.

At that point, the stone stele finally stopped shaking, although the crack on its surface remained.

Furthermore, the spirit enhancement trial vanished from among the list of available trials....

When the more than 1,000 spectators saw that, their jaws dropped, and their minds began to spin.

“Bai Xiaochun vanished!!”

“Did he really take 1st place!?!? That means he must have just gone to the third level to get the deva soul!!”

“How could it be him!?!? Damn that Devil Bai! Why did it have to be him!?!?”

“Hmph! Actually, it's good that he's getting the deva soul. If a deva won it, none of us would ever have a chance of taking it away. But there’s no way Devil Bai will be able to keep his hands on it!”

“That’s right. Now Bai Xiaochun is worth more than ever. Kill him, and not only will you get a full set of five elements deva beast souls, but you’ll also get a deva soul!”

However, even as the discussion raged, people realized that Mistress Red-Dust’s glowing sphere was still lit up, making it even more eye-catching than before. Not only had she not been ejected from the trial by fire, but she was apparently very close to completing it.

At that point, it became obvious that Bai Xiaochun might not be the one to get the deva soul. If he didn’t move quickly enough in the third level, then not only would he fail to get the deva soul, but he might also lose his life.

After all, he would be stuck alone with a deva who wanted him dead. As for how that scenario would end, few people even needed to wonder.

Zhou Yixing was trembling, his eyes shining with rabid excitement. “Go, Matriarch Red-Dust, go! Get to that third level and slaughter that damned Bai Xiaochun!”

In the third level of the labyrinth, which was the location of the deva soul, there was a huge, octagonal sepulcher. Not only were there brightly shining lamps illuminating the entire area, but there were also eight statues, one in each corner.

The statues were fully 300 meters tall, and yet, compared to the overall size of the sepulcher, seemed insignificant. The floor was made up of overlapping tiles that resembled dragon scales, and in fact, closer examination revealed an inlaid depiction of nine golden dragons!

All nine of those dragons were situated around an altar, as if that altar were their revered leader!

And that was only the floor! The walls of the sepulcher were covered with innumerable openings, from which erupted beams of multicolored light, which swirled together in midair to form the shape of an enormous golden dragon!

It was extremely lifelike, as though it were real and corporeal, coiled about on the ceiling, with its head resting just above the altar, its eyes closed as if sleeping.

The way that everything in the sepulcher seemed to point to the altar truly made it stand out. As for the altar, there was no coffin on top of it, only a green stone stele!

It seemed ancient, as if it had existed for countless years, and was covered with lines of script that had obviously been left behind for later generations to read.

However, anyone who got close enough would instantly realize that the stone stele was actually floating above the surface of the altar!

There was some mysterious power holding the stone stele up, and ensuring that it floated there completely unmoving. Furthermore, floating in the space between the stone stele and the surface of the altar was a blue and white jade bracelet!

Within the jade bracelet was a wisp of green mist that was apparently a distillation of the quintessence of heaven and earth. Occasionally, the swirling mist would form together into a drop of water, which would emanate the soul fluctuations of the Deva Realm!!

This was the deva soul, and a water-type deva soul at that!

Currently, golden light was flickering above the golden floor roughly 3,000 meters to the right of the altar, which was where Bai Xiaochun was materializing.

At first, Bai Xiaochun looked confused, which was no wonder considering how many teleportations he’d just gone through. He had been completely focused on spirit enhancement, only to have his soul whisked back into the glowing sphere. Then, just when he had opened his eyes, he was taken to this place.

He looked around blankly for a moment, then noticed the golden dragon’s head above the altar. At that point, his eyes went wide, and he gasped and took a few steps back. Then he looked around at all the holes in the wall which were projecting the light that formed the dragon.

“Oh, I thought it was a real dragon, but turns out it's fake. Trying to scare Lord Bai, huh?” Even as he breathed a sigh of relief, his thoughts began to clear, and as he recalled everything which had just occurred, he realized that he must be in the third level!

“I took 1st place!” Eyes shining with excitement at the thought of how much he was benefiting from all of this, he looked around and then prepared to fly toward the altar. However, that was when his face suddenly fell.

“My wok....” Unsure of whether or not he had left his wok behind during the sudden teleportation, he quickly attempted to summon it. Thankfully, the black light appeared, and the wok popped out. Sighing in relief, he put it away. Then he remembered his mask, and looked down to find it stuck to his chest. After putting it away into his bag of holding, he hurried toward the altar.

After looking up at the shining dragon, he reached out to see if he could touch it, only to find that his hand passed through it. Finally, he relaxed a bit.

“This place is decorated very nicely. It has a glowing dragon in the air, and even the floor is made of dragons. You know, it actually reminds me of a tomb, except that there isn’t a coffin.” By this point, he was standing right in front of the stone stele, and could see that right beneath it was a white and blue jade bracelet, filled with mist!

Many people would never even have the chance to see a single deva soul in their entire life, and would thus have difficulty identifying one. But Bai Xiaochun already had two in his bag of holding, and therefore, he instantly realized that the mist in the bracelet was a deva soul!

Clearly, the deva soul was being suppressed by the power of the stone stele, which would also make it difficult to take it away. Looking up at the stone stele, Bai Xiaochun began to read the script, whereupon his eyes widened, and he subconsciously took a few steps back, his eyes shining with disbelief.

I am the second generation Arch-Emperor, and this is one of nine of my sepulchers that do not contain my fleshly remains. My cultivation base came from my father, the emperor before me. In accord with his wishes, upon my death, I did not hesitate to split apart my three spiritual souls and seven physical souls, and send them into the sepulchers for my descendants to acquire as good fortune.

All people in this world are of my blood, and thus, any who reach this point will be one of my descendants....

Located here is my seventh physical soul, which is also a deva soul....

Bai Xiaochun was shaken by what he read, and could only speculate at what further secrets were hidden in this place....

Panting, he continued to read the script, which left him even more shocked, as it described how to use deva souls.

After he finished reading all the text, Bai Xiaochun was shocked to find that, before, he had been completely unaware of how to properly use deva souls. Before, he had been under the impression that all you had to do was collect five deva souls and put them together in much the same way that you would put together a set of five elements deva beast souls, then absorb them internally. At that point, you could break out of Core Formation and step into the Nascent Soul stage!

The truth was that there was much more to it than that!

It was true that five deva souls were needed to reach the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage. However, it wasn’t necessary to wait until collecting a set of five before beginning to absorb them! Each deva soul could be absorbed individually, and then used to produce a clone with exactly the same cultivation base as one’s true self!!!

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing about such a thing. Perhaps no one had ever told him because... no one else knew about this either! This bit of information was something which had been erased by the passage of countless years of time!

If one could absorb five different deva souls of different types, not only would the five clones give one indescribable battle prowess, but all one had to do was fuse the clones with one’s true self, and then use that incredible power to instantly reach the Nascent Soul stage without any chance of failure!

From the process of reaching the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, it was possible to see how incredibly powerful it was.

Of course, there was a downside. Upon absorbing even a single deva soul, it became impossible to ever again attempt to use deva beast souls to form a Nascent Soul! Once one started down the path of the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, one could never go back.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0556 awe-chapter-557

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding from the fact that, if he counted this deva soul right in front of him, he now had three in his collection. Furthermore, all of them were different types of souls. Deva souls were very rare to begin with, and was impossible to say if or when he would be able to find two more of different types. After a bit of thought, he sighed.

“Forget it. Going with deva beast souls is definitely the safest bet.” Although he was a bit disappointed that there was basically no way for him to reach the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, he was fairly certain that no one outside of this sepulcher was aware of the other usages of deva souls. That was a bit of information that he might be able to profit from later.

With such thoughts on his mind, he reached out to see if he could erase the script from the stone stele. That way, if someone else ever came along, Bai Xiaochun would still remain the only person privy to the secrets he had just learned.

To his delight, a quick test proved that the words on the stone stele had been there for so long that it took almost no effort on his part to wipe some of them away. Just when he was preparing to erase the entire body of text, he suddenly saw one line off to the side that he hadn’t noticed before.

I have intentionally left these words behind, and thus, anyone who defaces them shall be cursed....

“Cursed!?!?” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed, his eyes going wide and his hair standing on end. He pulled his hand away from the stone stele as if it were a hot iron. “How sinister, this second generation Arch-Emperor! Why did he have to make the warning so small you can’t see it unless you stick your nose right up to the stele?! If he didn’t want people to erase the text, he should have used some magic to make sure people couldn’t.” Gritting his teeth, he decided he couldn’t take any more risks. The idea of a curse left him completely jumpy, and looking around in fear.

“I only erased a few words, that’s all. Plus it wasn’t on purpose. Shouldn't be a problem....” Following the method described in the text he had just erased, he carefully performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger at the stone stele.

Instantly, the stele began to vibrate, and then move backward, freeing the light blue bracelet. Even as it began to fly into the air, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed it!

“Deva soul in hand!”

In the moment that Bai Xiaochun grabbed the bracelet, something happened in the realm of trials by fire in the second level. Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes snapped open.

Instantly, her glowing sphere became a vortex which sucked her away, and the crowd broke out into a huge commotion.

“Matriarch Red-Dust just disappeared!”

“She finished her trial by fire! She’s being teleported to the deva soul!”

“What a pity. Now none of us have any hope of getting the deva soul.”

Zhou Yixing couldn’t have looked more excited, and started laughing loudly. “This time, you’re definitely *dead*, Bai Xiaochun! Maybe I can’t handle you, but I refuse to believe that you’ll have any other choice than to flee from Matriarch Red-Dust and her deva cultivation base!”

At the same time, another loud cracking sound rang out from the huge stone stele, as the fissure which had opened up because of Bai Xiaochun’s spirit enhancement activities widened. In fact, seven or eight smaller fissures spread out from the main one.

At the same time, enormous, thundering rumbling sounds began to ring out into the void, almost as if some invisible giant were striking the stele.

Everything began to shake, and a sensation of imminent collapse filled the entire area. Everyone present looked around in shock and fear.

“What’s going on!?”

“Is this place gonna collapse or something?!”

“Let’s get out of here! We're underground! If the place collapses, we’ll be buried alive!!”

The cultivators in the glowing spheres were getting very nervous. As the stone stele began to crack, the glowing spheres started to twist and distort, and some of them even began to crack just like the stone stele. Some of the cultivators managed to blast open the spheres and fly out from inside.

Although none of them knew why the imminent collapse was occurring, it seemed likely to them that someone had triggered the destruction of the labyrinth, which meant that they were in danger of being killed.

There was little time for contemplation. After breaking free from the glowing spheres, people began to speed here and there in an attempt to find an exit.

Zhou Yixing also broke free and began to join the search. However, the more than 1,000 people quickly discovered that, to their despair, there were no exits!

Chen Hetian was among them. Eyes shining brightly, he flew high up in an attempt to use his deva cultivation base to break free.

Booms rang out, and the area where Chen Hetian had attacked rippled and distorted. However, the depression he had formed with his attack quickly restored itself, and the signs of imminent self-destruction did not lessen. If anything, they grew more pronounced. Destructive bubbles even began to appear, which would instantly shred any cultivator too slow to avoid them to pieces.

Chen Hetian’s face fell at the realization that not even he with his incredible battle prowess could break the barriers leading out of this place. Without any hesitation, he called out in a booming voice, “Listen up everyone. I don’t care if you’re from the Great Wall or the Wildlands, join me in attacking the barrier. Let’s get out of here!”

Everyone knew that time was limited, and therefore, regardless of which side of the war they came from, they all joined forces under Chen Hetian, unleashing divine abilities and magical attacks to try to break out. As they did, the bulge created in the barrier grew more pronounced....

As the realm of trials by fire shook, drastic events were playing out in the rest of the labyrinth. The previously indestructible walls were now cracking and crumbling. Countless faces appeared on them, screaming as they attempted to flee, and yet, they were incapable of doing so.

The labyrinth as a whole was rocking as violently as if it were being held in someone’s hand, and shook back and forth. The cultivators who were still searching for exits within the main part of the labyrinth were completely shaken, and it was all they could do just to stay on their feet.

Everyone could tell that a major crisis was developing, and that the entire area was about to collapse.

“How could this be happening?!”

“Dammit, I still haven’t found the exit. Don’t tell me I'm going to die in here!” Bitter howls of grief and anger filled every corner of the labyrinth.

Master God-Diviner was still making his way through the tunnels when he saw, to his despair, that the walls were falling apart around him. He even saw a whole group of red hats flying through the air, screaming.

“It’s all over. I’m finished....” he moaned. In another area not too far from the realm of trials by fire, Song Que was laughing bitterly as the labyrinth fell apart around him. He could tell that the exit was just up ahead, and yet, before he could reach it, drastic upheaval struck.

“Could it be that I, Song Que, will end up buried in this labyrinth?!?!” Unwilling to give in, and yet bereft of any other options, he threw his head back and roared bitterly.

Dramatic events were unfolding outside of the labyrinth as well.

There were many people gathered outside. Bai Lin and two of the other generals had summoned large armies to camp outside the entrance. There were large groups of Wildlanders on the other side of the entrance, with hundreds of thousands of savages and soul cultivators, as well as quite a few necromancers.

Both sides were waiting to find out who would get the deva soul, and in order to prevent a large-scale conflict from breaking out, had encamped in the area.

However, before anyone could even emerge from the labyrinth, intense rumbling sounds began to echo out. Shocked expressions could be seen on the faces of Bai Lin and the generals, as well as the Wildlander necromancers. As of this moment, the entire area for 500 kilometers around the labyrinth was shining with bright light.

At the same time, the land was beginning to cave in, causing a mushroom cloud of dust to rise high into the sky.

The effects only continued to spread. Mountains collapsed, and the lands quaked as surely as if earth dragons were thrashing about beneath its surface.

Everyone began to back away nervously from the expanding area of collapse.

“Something’s happening!” Bai Lin’s heart was pounding, and he considered going to investigate. However, as the lands collapsed, an aura erupted out that destabilized the souls of everyone present. It seemed obvious that anyone who got too close would get sucked into the destruction.

Clearly, the area of collapse was transforming into a huge spell formation, the size of which only continued to grow larger!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0557 awe-chapter-558

“What’s going on in there!?!?” On the Wildlands side, the high-ranking necromancers were all shocked, and began to edge backward nervously.

Compared to the pressure radiating out from the area of collapse, the cultivators in the area were like bugs!

Meanwhile, as everyone outside looked on anxiously, the third level where Bai Xiaochun stood was also collapsing!

Apparently, the sepulcher itself was the reason why the entire labyrinth was collapsing; the instant Bai Xiaochun grabbed the bracelet, everything began to shake violently. Even the statues were starting to fall apart.

The head of one of the statues fell off, slamming into the ground and causing a spiderweb of cracks to spread out.

It was the same with the walls, and even the altar seemed to be crumbling. The golden light dragon was distorting, and slabs of stone were falling down from the dome-like roof up above, causing booms to ring out when the pieces hit the ground.

At the same time, dust rose up everywhere, making it difficult to see.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered; all of these sudden developments had come completely without warning, leaving him totally unprepared. Just when he was about to start backing up from the altar...

In an area to the left of the altar, near one of the corners of the sepulcher, the light of teleportation glimmered, and a red, shadowy figure emerged.

Moments later, the nearest statue began to fall over, causing the shadowy figure to flick a sleeve and reduce the statue to rubble. As the dust flew about, the shadowy figure began to speed in the direction of Bai Xiaochun and the altar.

Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized who it was that had teleported into the room. “Mistress Red-Dust!”

Mistress Red-Dust’s expression was grim, and her eyes burned with anger. Just as Bai Xiaochun before, she was a bit disoriented. She had just finished her trial by fire, and then been teleported to this place to find everything collapsing. Although she wasn’t sure of exactly what was happening, when she saw Bai Xiaochun and the bracelet he was about to put into his bag of holding, she knew it was the deva soul. At that point, everything clicked.

She had not taken 1st place, Bai Xiaochun had. And he had reached the deva soul before her!

“How impudent!” she yelled. “You don’t even qualify to speak the name *Mistress Red-Dust!* How dare you steal the treasure of the sepulcher, Bai Xiaochun. Do you have a death wish or something?!?!” Her eyes burned with killing intent, and when her piercing voice stabbed into Bai Xiaochun’s ears, it felt like a sword was ripping into his brain.

He staggered backward as if he had been struck with a hammer, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. He suddenly felt frigid qi boring into him, causing his spine to arch. Shivering, and pupils constricting, he realized in that moment that he was only moments away from dying!

“I'm finished. Kaput!” He knew exactly how much the Wildlanders hated him, and remembered Mistress Red-Dust herself proclaiming a bounty on his head right outside the Great Wall. The way she was looking at him now, it almost seemed like she wanted to eat him alive.

In that moment of deadly crisis, his mind spun to come up with an idea. That idea came almost instantly, and without hesitation, he reached out with his right hand to wipe some of the text off of the stone stele!

His goal was to wipe away the text about the curse, but from what Mistress Red-Dust could tell, he was urgently trying to wipe away all of the words.

Her eyes widened, and she waved her hand, sending a gust of wind out to slam into him.

“Big Sis Red-Dust... let me explain!!” However, blood sprayed out of his mouth as he tumbled away from the stone stele. However, because he had been so close, he still managed to wipe away that one line of text....

It seemed obvious that he was trying to win her favor, which was really the only option he had at the moment....

In almost the same moment that Bai Xiaochun flew away from the altar, Mistress Red-Dust’s blow landed, and the altar was blasted into bits, leaving the stele hovering there alone.

Some of the flying rubble hit Bai Xiaochun, causing more blood to spray out of his mouth.

“She’s trying to kill me!!” Bai Xiaochun trembled as he fled, unable to stop thinking about the fact that he was essentially stuck in a small room with Mistress Red-Dust. She was like a raging, explosive dragon, and he was like a tiny bunny rabbit. There was no way she would calm down, and if she hit him with a deadly blow, he would be killed instantly....

He already regretted taking the deva soul, and regretted everything he had done in the trial of spirit enhancement. How could he have known that he would take 1st place?

“Let’s just hope that Mistress Red-Dust’s curiosity gets the better of her, and that she picks up on the fact that I was going to erase the script on the text, then finishes the job....” Over and over again, he prayed inwardly for that very thing to happen.

“I really didn’t take 1st place on purpose!” he called out in a quavering voice. “Big Sis Red-Dust, you have to believe me....” Even as the altar was destroyed, and cracks spread out into the floating stone stele, Mistress Red-Dust appeared in front of it. As she began to read what was left of the text, her eyes went wide, and she seemed to forget about drawing on the power of her cultivation base.

Seeing that Mistress Red-Dust had been distracted by the stone stele, Bai Xiaochun urgently began to speed around, looking for an exit. However, even as the sepulcher collapsed around him, no exit was there to be found.

“Dammit. Where’s the exit!! There’s got to be one around here somewhere! If the second generation Arch-Emperor went to the trouble of giving someone a deva soul, he had to provide a way out too. Otherwise what would be the point!?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot. Finally, he let out a shout and used his Undying Hex!

The power of the Undying Hex could pierce through both spell formations and land alike, and although it hadn’t worked in the labyrinth, considering that everything was collapsing, he had to give it a shot here.

And yet, just as he was about to take a step, Mistress Red-Dust let out a cold snort, looked over at him, and waved her hand.

“Trying to run?!” she growled. Incredible power filled the sepulcher, sealing the entire place down and locking Bai Xiaochun in place.

It felt like a mountain was crushing down on him; his bones creaked and cracked, and he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood as the Undying Hex was interrupted.

Thankfully, he had a tough fleshly body. Before anything else could happen, he tossed out a heap of spirit enhanced magical items. There were dozens, some of them with threefold spirit enhancements, some with sixfold enhancements. All at once, he detonated them, creating a huge blast that pushed away the forces crushing against him. Without any hesitation, he fell back, moving away from that area as quickly as possible, feeling like he had just stepped away from the gates of hell.

“Big Sis Red-Dust,” he cried, “Just take the deva soul, alright? Why don’t we just talk things--”

Mistress Red-Dust turned to look at him. At the moment, there was no time for protracted consideration. She knew that Bai Xiaochun had wiped away some of the words on the stone stele, which would make it very difficult to completely understand the rest of the contents.

That was especially so concerning she had seen the extra information about how to use deva souls, which was something even she had never heard of. Clearly, that was information that could not be left behind for others to read. Without another moment of hesitation, she waved her hand, shattering the stone stele and destroying any words which remained upon it.

“Too late,” she said coolly. Then, she burst into motion, heading directly toward Bai Xiaochun. As of this moment, she had three reasons to kill him. One was the deva soul. The second was to prevent him from spreading word about the information on the stone stele. And the third was because she hated him. Therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that she unleashed a deadly attack.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0558 awe-chapter-559

In the same moment that Mistress Red-Dust destroyed the stone stele, it activated some unseen restrictive spell. The slowly-fading golden light dragon suddenly opened its eyes, causing all of the light shooting out of the holes in the walls to suddenly change direction and sweep through the crumbling sepulcher.

The golden dragon vanished, and in the blink of an eye, the entire sepulcher was filled with dazzling, colorful shafts of light. Most of them landed on Mistress Red-Dust, causing her face to fall.

The light possessed some corrosive power that instantly dissolved Mistress Red-Dust’s clothing, revealing her milky white skin. Then, glowing red dots appeared on her that began to eat down into her skin, a corrosive attack that required cultivation base power to fight against. Magical items were useless against it, and therefore, Mistress Red-Dust waved her hand in an attempt to destroy the light-emitting holes. However, nothing worked, and she was forced to simply try to evade the touch of the light.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked by all of this, but was in no mood to ogle Mistress Red-Dust’s lithe body. Some of the light flying around the room landed on him as well, although the effects seemed rather mild....

“The curse. It's the curse.... I wiped away a line of text, but Mistress Red-Dust is far guiltier! Hah, the Arch-Emperor is a smart one after all!” Bai Xiaochun was feeling very proud of himself, and yet, before he had much time to gloat, a red mist sprang up around Mistress Red-Dust, she threw another set of clothing on, and then began to speed in his direction.

The mist was rapidly being whittled away by the shooting light, and yet, Mistress Red-Dust seemed to think she had plenty of time to kill Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, and he let out a yelp of fright.

“Your curse isn’t working, second generation Arch-Emperor....” With that, he shot forward with another burst of speed, becoming a series of afterimages as he fled from Mistress Red-Dust.

However, Mistress Red-Dust was a deva, and even a casual effort on her part was something that a person like Bai Xiaochun, in the great circle of the Gold Core stage, would be powerless to fight against.

A boom rang out, and blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth. Despair filled his eyes; if he couldn’t find the exit, he would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!

“You’re too slow.” Mistress Red-Dust said coldly. She took a step forward that seemed to simultaneously stretch and shrink the space around her. Clearly, she was about to place herself right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s hair stood on end as he backed up, letting out another shriek. However, it was in that moment that the sepulcher began to sway back and forth even more dramatically than before. Virtually all the statues along the walls were now falling to pieces.

Furthermore, a burst of teleportation power suddenly appeared. Clearly... a teleportation spell formation was activating!

Its effects weren’t limited to the sepulcher. In the realm of trials by fire, as well as in the tunnels of the labyrinth, teleportation power began to build up. Obviously, the teleportation was only moments away.

When that happened, everyone inside would be teleported away....

As of this moment... the exit was opening!!

To everyone else, the chance to leave meant a chance to survive. But that wasn’t the case for Bai Xiaochun. Considering how Mistress Red-Dust was attacking him, he wouldn’t be able to hold out until the teleportation formation activated!

However, the teleportation power interfered with Mistress Red-Dust’s technique, leaving her in exactly the same place she had been in moments ago. Aware that a teleportation was imminent, her eyes flashed with determination as she began to stride toward Bai Xiaochun.

The shafts of light didn't seem to be hurting her very much at this point, and although the red dots on her skin were painful, she was able to suppress their effects with her cultivation base. Having no other options available, she summoned another cloud of red mist, and then attacked Bai Xiaochun again.

Bai Xiaochun was like a trapped animal. In the moment he had in which Mistress Red-Dust was delayed, he quickly pulled out a Godly Vestige Pill and popped it into his mouth, then continued to fall back. However, all Mistress Red-Dust had to do was take a single step, and his speed was useless. In the blink of an eye, she was right in front of him, whereupon she waved her right index finger in his direction.

Although she moved her finger casually through the air, it contained wildly destructive power. A sense of profound deadly crisis immediately caused Bai Xiaochun's bloodshot eyes to go wide. Considering he had no options left, he decided to throw caution to the wind and simply attack her with everything he had!

Bai Xiaochun knew that his only chance now was to buy some time for the teleportation spell formation to finish activating.

“Let's finish this!” he roared, unleashing all of the potential of his Undying Live Forever Technique. Utilizing his Undying Gold Skin, Undying Heavenly King, and Undying Tendons, he reached out toward Mistress Red-Dust and pinched his fingers together!

It was none other than the Throat Crushing Grasp!

But then, a boom echoed out, along with a scream from Bai Xiaochun, as Mistress Red-Dust simply grabbed his hand! With a slight gleam of disdain in her eye, she tossed him to the side.

Cracking sounds could be heard as his fingers were broken, and a massive force sent him flying away. Thankfully, his cultivation base and Undying Live Forever Technique made him extremely tough. Despite not being killed, he slammed over and over again into the ground, bones shattering and blood spurting out everywhere! His Undying Live Forever Technique had been completely routed!

It took only the shortest of moments for Bai Xiaochun to be severely injured.

Chuckling coldly, Mistress Red-Dust said, “Aren’t we the tough one? Got anything else left in you?”

Then she flickered into motion to eradicate the last bit of Bai Xiaochun's life force. Bai Xiaochun could tell how badly he had been injured, and could sense that the flame of his life force was on the verge of being extinguished. Groaning, he stuffed his mouth full of Godly Vestige Pills, but swallowed only one of them.

Waves of heat washed through him, repairing his body with incredible speed. However, that was all the time it took Mistress Red-Dust to reach him.

Eyes bloodshot, he released the power of his cultivation base, causing frigid qi to shoot out with reckless abandon. He even drew upon his spiritual power, not holding back even the smallest bit. In the blink of an eye, the entire sepulcher filled with cracking sounds as it froze into a world of ice.

There was no time for thought or planning. Bai Xiaochun immediately turned and fled.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it took place in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Mistress Red-Dust's eyes flickered with scorn; she could tell that Bai Xiaochun was trying to buy time, and yet, was still confident that even still, she would be able to crush him to death.

As the frigid qi bore down on her, she waved her hand, causing it to crumble and disperse. Then she reached out with her finger, piercing through the air to appear right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

She was planning to end Bai Xiaochun's life in that moment, but before she could, the shafts of light destroyed her red mist, forcing her to summon it again. Before she could, the red dots on her skin corroded her even further, forcing her to combat the effects with her cultivation base. Because of all of those distractions, she could only spare thirty to forty percent of her power to attack Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was spattered with blood, but could do nothing to dodge or evade her. Howling with rage, he resorted to the Mountain Shaking Bash!

A boom rang out, along with a miserable howl as Bai Xiaochun was flung off to the side again, where he slammed into the crumbling wall. Virtually all of the bones in his body were broken, and the flame of his life force was once again pushed to the edge of being extinguished. However, almost no time passed before he bit down onto one of the Godly Vestige Pills he'd put into his mouth earlier. Warmth spread through him again, healing him almost instantly.

Even as Mistress Red-Dust closed in him again, he danced to the side in lively fashion, causing her brow to furrow. Snorting coldly, she momentarily stopped worrying about the dots on her skin or the red mist, and unleashing a mighty blow onto Bai Xiaochun.

“I refuse to believe that you can recover from a true killing blow!”

The massive image of an illusory hand closed in on Bai Xiaochun, causing the air to twist and distort and releasing explosive energy in all directions.

“Lord Bai isn’t the kind of guy you can just kill whenever you want, Granny Red-Dust!” Even as the huge hand bore down on him, Bai Xiaochun whipped out his Eternal Parasol. Nine silver designs shone on its surface as he snapped it open. Then, the bizarre face appeared.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0559 awe-chapter-560

In the same moment that he produced the Eternal Parasol, he also pulled out countless paper talismans, which he plastered all over himself. At the moment, his mind was empty of anything other than thinking of ways to buy time.

When Mistress Red-Dust’s palm attack hit the Eternal Parasol, a massive boom filled the air. Cracking sounds could be heard, as if the Eternal Parasol couldn’t sustain the force. Fissures appeared on its surface, and the ghost face twisted as if in agony.

The parasol was then ripped out of Bai Xiaochun’s hand and sent tumbling to the side. There was no time for him to think about retrieving it as he was sent flying backward, blood spraying out of his mouth. The shield layers created by his paper talismans were so thick that they almost didn’t fit inside of the sepulcher, and when Mistress Red-Dust’s palm slammed into them, the result was astonishing.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

One by one, the paper talismans were destroyed, and the shield layers fell apart. However, Mistress Red-Dust’s palm attack also began to fade. Within the space of a few breaths of time, both the shields and the talismans were spent, and Bai Xiaochun was still falling back, the power of a Godly Vestige Pill sweeping through him and healing him.

Although this exchange seemed relatively simple, if Bai Lin had been there to see it, his heart would have twinged with pain. It was as if Bai Xiaochun had just defended himself with a big stack of money!

Bai Xiaochun’s face was as pale as a sheet of paper. Even as he backed away from Mistress Red-Dust, and did everything he could to buy time, he continued to pepper her with insults.

“Hey Harlot Red-Dust, do you see now how hard it is to kill Lord Bai? You just wait until I become a demigod, then I’ll come for revenge!”

“Dammit!!” Mistress Red-Dust cursed angrily. She had already attacked multiple times, and had not been able to kill Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, the teleportation power in the area was building up to a peak. Eyes flashing with the desire to kill, she sent red mist swirling around to form a tempest that began to block up the holes in the walls of the sepulcher!!

Although the mist was rapidly corroded, it gave Mistress Red-Dust the few breaths of time free from the shafts of light that she needed to build up the full power of her cultivation base. Then, she prepared to unleash a blow that she was sure would kill Bai Xiaochun!

She had long since noticed that the shafts of light didn’t affect Bai Xiaochun, and yet were extremely bothersome and dangerous to her. Obviously, she had fallen into a trap laid by Bai Xiaochun, all of which centered around the script on the stone stele.

After blocking the holes on the walls, Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes glittered, and she took a step toward Bai Xiaochun.

As her foot fell, the air around her sunk in, creating something that looked like a huge, sinister mouth. Then, a powerful gravitational force sprang out, grabbing onto Bai Xiaochun and dragging him toward the mouth.

Bai Xiaochun was scared out of his mind, and quickly performed an incantation gesture with both hands. Then he waved his finger toward the mouth and shouted, “Waterswamp!”

Suddenly, the entire sepulcher twisted and distorted as water vapor roiled out everywhere, turning the entire area into a watery swamp!

Next, a terrifying aura erupted out, something that seemed to come from primordial times. Time and space both seemed affected, as if the entire area within that swamp now existed in ancient times!

Mistress Red-Dust’s pupils constricted.

Before she could do anything, though, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Kingdom!”

Instantly, five mountain-like spikes began to rise up from within the watery swamp, shooting straight toward Mistress Red-Dust.

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t even pause for a moment. Leaping into the air, he roared, “Living Mountain Incantation!”

After directly transforming into a 30-meter-tall stone golem, he joined the Waterswamp Kingdom spikes in a merciless attack on Mistress Red-Dust.

In response to the Waterswamp Kingdom, Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes shone with a curious light. And yet, a moment later she chuckled coldly.

“A very mysterious magical technique. I'm not sure which sect you come from to have a divine spirit beast guardian like that. It’s too bad... that you can’t fully summon it. And even if you could, I wouldn't give you the time to do so. First, I'm going to kill this creature, then I'm going to kill you!” Even as the words left her mouth, Mistress Red-Dust performed an incantation gesture and sent red mist roiling out from her palm. In the briefest of moments, it transformed into a long red spear that she thrust, not toward the incoming spikes, but toward the ground where the actual watery swamp was located.

The red spear stabbed down toward the space below, piercing into whatever world lay beneath, and the creature inside, the creature which even Bai Xiaochun had never seen.

Subsequently, a roar of rage echoed out from below, causing Mistress Red-Dust’s spear to shatter. Even the sinister mouth she had formed with her magical technique collapsed. At the same time, the five mountain-like spikes continued to shoot up from below!!

The were not straight, but rather curved, and if one looked at them for more than a moment, one would be struck by how they resembled the claws of some beast. However, they were so enormous that those mere claws were like mountains. Furthermore, the creature appeared to be enraged by Mistress Red-Dust, and was trying to get out of the watery swamp to reach her....

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base wasn’t strong enough to support the Waterswamp Kingdom. As the clawed hand stretched out, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he let out a shriek as he felt his cultivation base and life force being ripped at violently. Clearly, the power required to fully allow the clawed hand to appear in the open was enough to completely wither him to death.... Terrified, he had no choice but to dispel his own magical technique, and dissipate the power of the Waterswamp Kingdom....

Mistress Red-Dust’s expression flickered into one of shock as she staggered backward. “What was that thing!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun’s face was just as ashen as Mistress Red-Dust’s. He knew that his Waterswamp Kingdom was powerful, but had never realized it was *this* powerful. The claws on one of the creature’s hands had been enough to nearly kill him. As he contemplated the fact that if he wasn't careful using the Waterswamp Kingdom, he could get himself killed, he shivered....

Even more depressing was how fanatically crazy Mistress Red-Dust was acting. What was the deal with that? All she had to do was follow through with his plan and attack the mountain-like spikes, whereupon he could have blocked her path and even used his Living Mountain Incantation.

Instead, the Waterswamp Kingdom was now gone, and he was stuck out in the open in his stone golem form. The only upside was that by this point, the holes in the wall had destroyed the red mist, and the shafts of light were now shooting toward Mistress Red-Dust.

Bai Xiaochun knew that time was running out for him. Therefore, he let out a shout and sped toward Mistress Red-Dust like a meteor!

Just as Mistress Red-Dust was recovering from her shock at the enormous creature she had just had a brush with, the shafts of light returned. Anger immediately burned in her heart; were it not for those shafts of light, she would never have had so much difficulty killing Bai Xiaochun!

However, the shafts of light, and the red welts they left on her skin, caused intense pain, and required significant effort to suppress. Furthermore, the slightest lapse of attention on her part could lead to permanent consequences.

Bai Xiaochun was turning out to be incredibly resilient. Plus, he had all sorts of random items and techniques to keep him going. Finally, Mistress Red-Dust barked out a cold laugh, and then glared at Bai Xiaochun with more killing intent than ever.

“You’re running out of time!” Taking a deep breath, she yet again ignored the red welts and abandoned the use of the red mist to defend herself. Performing an incantation gesture, she summoned another long, red spear, and hurled it toward Bai Xiaochun.

That spear contained the true power of a deva!

In the same instant that the spear flew out into the air, Bai Xiaochun produced an arrow. It was... the fire soul arrow that had received an elevenfold spirit enhancement! Treating his body like the bow and his arm like the bowstring, he viciously hurled the arrow toward Mistress Red-Dust.

The fire soul arrow pierced through the air with numerous cracking sounds, the shocking golden designs on its surface shining brightly. In the blink of an eye, it reached the red spear, and the two of them collided, unleashing a deafening boom.

Normally speaking, the red spear would have been far too powerful for the fire soul arrow to deal with. However, it was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Detonate!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0560 awe-chapter-561

When the fire soul arrow exploded, it sent a huge shockwave out in all directions. The long red spear slowed down for a moment, but after completely destroying the arrow, continued on toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the blink of an eye, it slammed into him, causing a boom that shook the entire sepulcher. The walls cracked, the floor shattered, and Bai Xiaochun’s 30-meter-tall stone golem form collapsed, revealing his true form.

He was holding his turtle-wok in front of him, coughing up blood as he was flung violently backward. Although he wasn’t dead, his internal organs had been crushed, and his bones shattered. Skin and muscle were shredded, and he was left hovering on the brink of death.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled bitterly, his eyes flickering with despair. He was well aware that without his turtle-wok, he would have been killed moments ago. After all, he was facing a deva....

The restorative warmth of the last Godly Vestige Pill he had placed into his mouth earlier was already fading away. He only had one more pill in his bag of holding, which he produced now and put into his mouth.

As of this moment, he was out of tricks. If he was injured again, there would be no recovery. And since he was facing repeated attacks at the hands of Mistress Red-Dust, that meant that he now had no chances at survival.

He had used just about every trick he could think of so far, and all of them were weak at best when used against the power of a deva. And clearly, this Mistress Red-Dust was very insistent on seeing him dead.

Whether it was the deva soul itself, the knowledge he possessed of how to use such souls, or just the general Wildlands hatred toward him, she had more than enough reasons to want him killed.

The teleportation power was still building up in the sepulcher, but from what Bai Xiaochun could tell, if the battle continued on as it had so far, he wouldn’t last until it finished.

“I can’t believe he’s not dead!!” Mistress Red-Dust thought. She was really starting to go crazy because of how this fight was progressing. She was a deva, and although there were some mitigating factors to explain why she couldn’t kill someone in the great circle of the Gold Core stage, if news spread that he had stood up to her over and over again, it would turn her into a laughingstock.

The fact that the wok he had pulled out was capable of blocking her red spear caused Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes to glitter. However, she didn’t hesitate to once again advance on Bai Xiaochun, her cultivation base surging as she summoned a Dharma idol into being behind her.

It was an enormous head that bore Mistress Red-Dust’s features. Devas were vastly more powerful than people beneath them, even without Dharma idols. To summon a Dharma idol would draw significantly on the deva's cultivation base, and would normally only be used when fighting another deva. And yet here, Mistress Red-Dust was so anxious to kill Bai Xiaochun that she didn’t hesitate to resort to that method.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the Dharma idol, his eyes turned even more bloodshot than before, and he smiled a mad smile.

“I guess there are no more options now!!

“There is only one thing left to do to buy time, one chance to hold out until the teleportation begins and I can flee this death trap!!

“It’s going to force me down a one-way path that I’ll never be able to come back from, but I have to protect my poor little life!! Time to go all out!!”

The madness in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes grew as the idea swirled in his mind; as of this moment, he really didn’t have any other options available.

As Mistress Red-Dust closed in with murder in her eyes, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout and slapped his bag of holding, producing a blue and white jade bracelet.

Immediately, the deva soul inside the bracelet began to shine with scintillating light.

Almost as soon as the bracelet appeared in the open, Mistress Red-Dust seemed to realize what he was thinking of doing, and roared, “How dare you, Bai Xiaochun!!”

At the same time, she picked up speed, reaching back with her right hand to deliver a fierce palm strike. That simple motion caused all of the energy in the entire sepulcher to surge into her palm, which she would then use to crush Bai Xiaochun.

Behind her, the Dharma idol’s eyes glared menacingly, and it began to race toward him.

“You’re forcing me to do this, Harlot Red-Dust!!” he yelled angrily. Even as she neared, he unhesitatingly crushed the jade bracelet!

As the deva soul floated out, a look of despair could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as his hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture.

“Deva soul merger!”

Instantly, the deva soul shot toward him, merging into his chest. However, that was when Mistress Red-Dust’s palm arrived, collapsing the air around him, shattering everything, and shoving him backward, blood spraying from his mouth, hair flying around wildly. His chest caved in, instantly revealing the flesh and blood beneath his flayed skin!

At the same time, shocking fluctuations began to spread out from inside of Bai Xiaochun, and then a double-image of himself appeared, which stepped out in front of him.

It looked exactly like him, as if a second Bai Xiaochun had suddenly appeared!!

“Deva soul clone!” Mistress Red-Dust exclaimed, the killing intent in her eyes growing stronger.

It most definitely was a deva soul clone of Bai Xiaochun, with a complete cultivation base that was virtually exactly the same as Bai Xiaochun’s. His first action was to protectively grab his own true self and flee from Mistress Red-Dust.

The clone was also bleeding and injured, but he gritted his teeth and unleashed all the speed he could muster.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun's true self didn't hesitate at all about what to do next. It was a moment of deadly crisis, and Mistress Red-Dust's fury was blazing, and therefore, he yet again slapped his bag of holding.

"Fudge! Alright, if I'm gonna absorb deva souls, what's the difference between one and two!? Alright, Red-Dust, you pushed Lord Bai, so he's gonna push you back. To death!!" Gritting his teeth, he produced the deva soul that Du Lingfei had given him and slammed it down onto his chest, using the prescribed method to instantly absorb it.

"You!! Impossible!!" Mistress Red-Dust's eyes were wide and her mind was reeling. She almost couldn't believe what was happening; Bai Xiaochun actually had an additional deva soul!!

"Dammit!!" she growled, her madness growing. She had just unleashed power sufficient to destroy Bai Xiaochun's true self and clone, and yet, that was when another double-image appeared and stepped out. Just when the true self and the water clone were on the verge of being shredded to pieces, the flames of their life force flickering on the verge of eradication, a second clone appeared!

This was Bai Xiaochun's fire clone!

The fire clone stood directly in front of the water clone, roaring as he drew upon the full power of his cultivation base and battle prowess to fight back against Mistress Red-Dust....

Only a moment later, blood was spraying out of the fire clone's mouth, and he was bloody and battered. Even his bones were visible, many of them shattered.

However, the time he had bought ensured that Bai Xiaochun’s true self was still alive.

“So what if you have two clones? You’re still dead!” Mistress Red-Dust was feeling quite humiliated. The battle so far had been quite a blow to her, and she even regretted how she had conducted herself so far. If she had known before that Bai Xiaochun had two deva souls, she would simply have allowed the shafts of light to injure her in exchange for the ability to crush him with her full might!

What left her more flabbergasted than anything, though, was what happened next. Even as the two clones fought back against her with all their power, Bai Xiaochun’s true self pulled out another deva soul, this one in the form of a green, jade walnut, which he crushed into his chest.

As soon as he merged with the deva soul, a third clone stepped out! It was none other than a wood clone!

Three clones stood with Bai Xiaochun’s true self to defend against Mistress Red-Dust, howling and fighting back with unyielding defiance!

Mistress Red-Dust was herself on the verge of collapsing mentally at the absurd sight in front of her. To her, Bai Xiaochun was like some sort of freak; not even in her dreams could she ever have imagined that a person like him would have so many deva souls!!

“Impossible! Y-y-you... you have *how* many deva souls?!?!” Mistress Red-Dust’s heart was in physical pain, and the regret she currently felt went all the way to the deepest level of her being!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0561 awe-chapter-562

“I don't care how many deva souls you have,” Mistress Red-Dust shrieked. “I wouldn’t care if you had a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul cultivation base! Today is the day you’re going to die!” Mistress Red-Dust’s face was distorted with such madness that it seemed even her aura was negatively affected. As she yelled, her Dharma idol grew larger, transforming into a sun which began to rumble toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s true self was joined by three clones to fight back against a single deva-level palm strike being delivered by Mistress Red-Dust. With even one less clone, all of them would have been killed in body and soul.

Although death still seemed to be an inevitability, at least they were able to delay that dismal outcome for a bit longer than before.

Thankfully, it was in that very moment that, as the sepulcher collapsed into nothing around them, the teleportation spell formation was completely and fully activated within the sepulcher.

The glow of teleportation began to rise up around everyone present, whether they were in the tunnels, the area surrounding the trials by fire, or in the sepulcher itself!

Anyone and everyone that was still alive was being wrapped up in the teleportation power.

Back in the realm of the trials by fire, the combined efforts of Chen Hetian and everyone else present had resulted in them being able to break the barrier surrounding the void they were in. And yet, to their surprise, the only thing they found beyond that barrier was another void.

However, despair was not in order, as the light of teleportation began to build up around them, leading to sighs of relief on the part of all present.

“We can finally get out of here!”

“Yeah, but considering how enormous the spell formation must be, who knows where we’ll end up afterward....”

“What are you scared of? We're all members of the Holy People, we’ll be fine as long as we end up somewhere in the Wildlands....”

“Heh heh. How do you know we won’t be transported into the lands of Heavenspan...?”

Such talk rose up everywhere within the labyrinth. Everyone was feeling much more relaxed now that the teleportation was beginning.

Of course, the light of teleportation was also there around Bai Xiaochun and Mistress Red-Dust, causing Bai Xiaochun’s expression to brighten, but Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes to blaze with fury.

If Bai Xiaochun got away now, before she had used all the power she had at her disposal, it would be the greatest humiliation of her life. That in itself caused her fury to burn hotter than ever.

“You’re not going anywhere, Bai Xiaochun!!” she screamed. Then her Dharma idol began to pick up speed, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as it closed in on Bai Xiaochun, threatening to turn him and everything around him into nothing more than ash.

The moment that the teleportation light had appeared, Bai Xiaochun had assumed that he’d held out long enough, and finally had hope of surviving. But when he saw the Dharma idol speeding toward him, he suddenly realized that his hope was like a candle flickering in the wind, with that wind being imminent destruction!

“How could I possibly die in this place!?” His eyes were so bloodshot that they were pure crimson, and that included his three clones in addition to his true self. Bai Xiaochun’s true self threw his head back and roared, disregarding all matters of safety pertaining to his cultivation base or his spiritual power. As if this moment, none of that mattered. If he didn't get past this moment, he would be dead forever!

“Living Mountain Incantation!” shouted his true self. Despite being seriously injured, rumbling sounds surrounded him as he transformed into a 30-meter-tall giant. At the same time, his three clones echoed his words.

“Living Mountain Incantation!!”

“Living Mountain Incantation!!!”

“Living Mountain Incantation!!!!”

All three of the clones transformed into 30-meter-tall stone golems. Then, even as the four stone golems prepared to defend against the incoming attack, the clones joined their voices with his true self’s to shout, “Waterswamp... Kingdom!”

Four stone golems performed incantation gestures and then shoved their hands down toward the sepulcher floor, causing the entire area to turn into a watery swamp!

In fact, the borders of the swap seemed to go past the edges of the sepulcher and out into the void beyond, as though this weren’t a single Waterswamp Kingdom, but rather, four!!

As the four Waterswamp Kingdoms expanded and then merged into each other, they became a watery swamp that was four times larger than the original!!

That was a huge difference! Almost immediately, a roar erupted out from the Waterswamp Kingdom, as if from ancient times.

The sound alone caused Mistress Red-Dust’s face to fall, and was so loud that it reached the locations outside the trials by fire, and the labyrinth as a whole.

“Come forth, my life essence spirit!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, throwing his head back and laughing madly. His voice was a bit hoarse, and he was physically shaking. His cultivation base and life force were being drained madly, and it was the same with the three clones, and yet, that was when something came out of the watery swamp that did not look like the spikes from before!

Five twisted mountains could be seen, and yet, closer examination would reveal that they were no mountains!

It was the clawed hand of some enormous beast, with talons as pitch black as night!

As the five talons stretched up, it was possible to see further down into the watery swamp, to what appeared to be a forest-like stretch of pitch-black hair, beneath which was green skin!!

However, because of the incredible size of the clawed hand, even a Waterswamp Kingdom that was quadruple its normal size was still not large enough for it to fit through. Only the claws could emerge into the open, where they shot toward the incoming palm and Dharma idol!

Were anyone capable of illustrating this scene, it would have been completely shocking to behold. When the five talons touched the Dharma idol and the palm, it was the palm which began to tremble first, and then collapse into pieces. As for the sun-like Dharma idol, it erupted with radiant light and a powerful shockwave that rippled out in all directions.

Anything that remained of the sepulcher was smashed into rubble and sent spinning into the pitch-black void beyond.

In fact, that made it possible to see Chen Hetian and the others far off in the distance, who had long since noticed what was happening, and were looking on in complete shock.

The shockwave sent Bai Xiaochun stumbling backward, his stone golem form crumbling to reveal his true form.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as his three clones became white motes of light that spun back into his true self. Bai Xiaochun could tell that all of the clones were seriously injured. Half of his water clone’s body had been destroyed, his fire clone’s chest was completely caved in, and worst off was his wood clone, of whom only half a head remained.

Although his true self remained completely intact, he was also severely injured. Most of his bones were crushed, and the majority of his flesh and blood had been destroyed. Even his skull was cracked and on the verge of shattering....

Thankfully, he had used his Living Mountain Incantation right before summoning the Waterswamp Kingdom, otherwise he would have been killed, and not just injured.

He and all of his clones would have been rendered into nothing more than dust!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even have the energy to smile bitterly. His vision was fading, and he couldn’t move. He could also sense the flame of his life force teetering on the verge of being extinguished. If he had plenty of time to rest, the power of his fleshly body would ensure that he could recover. But at the moment, he had used every trick in his book, and had nothing left.

Off in the distance, Chen Hetian and the others looked on with gaping jaws. Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan were completely wrapped up in their anxiety, and Chen Hetian’s pupils were tiny dots. As for Zhou Yixing, he looked quite excited.

“Your comeuppance is at hand, Bai Xiaochun!” Zhou Yixing hadn’t seen Bai Xiaochun’s clones, nor had anyone else. Nobody had really been able to see clearly everything that just happened.

It was in that very moment that an incredible rumbling sound filled the entire area. The light of teleportation grew dazzlingly bright, and even before Zhou Yixing could laugh out loud, he began to fade away. So did everyone else.

Bai Xiaochun was finally completely gripped by the power of teleportation, and began to disappear.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Mistress Red-Dust screamed, her hair whipping around her as she took a step forward.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0562 awe-chapter-563

Usually, Mistress Red-Dust was beautiful, with a curvaceous body, the fairest of skin, and entrancing eyes. But right now, she was bedraggled, shaking, and seriously injured. On top of that, she was furious. Never before could she possibly have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would turn out to be so difficult to kill!

She was covered with red welts, the result of trying to fight in the middle of dealing with a curse. For a beautiful woman like her, such a thing was a heavy price to pay.

Although she was confident in being able to dispel the effects of the curse eventually, the pain and numbness she felt because of it right now had her going mad with fury.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” she screamed, her hatred for him taking root in the very marrow of her bones. As of this moment, she could not live under the same sky with him. It didn’t matter that they were still surrounded by the dazzling light of teleportation, the fact that he wasn’t dead yet caused her eyes to shine with insanity as she took another step forward toward him.

She had to kill him before he teleported away!

She could never rest easy with him alive. Before, she had disliked him because of his Soul Convergence Pills and exploding pill furnaces, as well as the general humiliation and pain he had caused to the Wildlands.

Furthermore, the actions of the soul tide and the true spirit in Great Wall City had put a significant dent in her years of accomplishments in the war, which caused further hatred in her heart toward Bai Xiaochun.

However, considering the level of her cultivation base, and the fact that Bai Xiaochun was like a bug beneath her, none of those things had really mattered very much. He would be killed eventually, and his meddling wouldn’t cause any permanent problems for the war effort.

But now, things were different!

If it had been anyone else in that sepulcher, even a Nascent Soul cultivator, they would never have survived in a fight against her.

And yet Bai Xiaochun had!

Not only had he survived, he had left her bruised and injured. Plus, he had revealed the fact that he had three deva souls, a fact that left her completely unsettled.

“He’s keeping some big secret, and if he brings it to fruition, then given enough time, he’ll be so terrifying that today’s events will seem like nothing! He’ll bring about disaster after disaster!

“I've already reached the point where I can’t live under the same sky as him. How could I possibly let him get away now!?” Gritting her teeth and ignoring the fact that she was already starting to fade away because of the teleportation power, she edged closer to Bai Xiaochun.

Then she reached out with her hand. This was the moment in which she would eradicate him, ending his life once and for all. Only then would she feel at ease. After all, considering how difficult it had been to kill him in this state, if he grew stronger, he would be even more terrifying.

It was a moment of critical danger for Bai Xiaochun. Despite being in the middle of teleportation, with his body fading away, at the current speed with which Mistress Red-Dust was moving, it seemed highly likely that she would strike him before he vanished. Then, it wouldn’t matter that he was teleported away; the only thing to be teleported would be a corpse!

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun’s listless eyes suddenly sparkled, and he drew upon the last little bit of life force he had left.

He couldn’t move his body, and his cultivation base was completely stagnant. The injuries to his fleshly body were severe. However, he didn’t want to die. He wanted to live! There were so many things he had yet to do in life, and to accomplish them, he needed to live forever!!

“I want to live forever! I can’t die!!” Roaring inwardly, he closed his two eyes and opened the third eye on his forehead, his Heavenspan Dharma Eye!

Furthermore, it wasn’t just his true self who did it. Inside of him, his three clones also opened their Heavenspan Dharma Eyes. The power of four Heavenspan Dharma Eyes merged together and shot out toward Mistress Red-Dust!!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Instantly, control power surged out. Despite the fact that it filled his entire body with intense pain, he ignored that and focused his gaze fully on Mistress Red-Dust!

Rumbling sounds continued as she lurched to a halt. Although she recovered a moment later, that moment was all the time that was needed.

Blood oozed out of Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenspan Dharma Eye as the power of teleportation surged. Grabbing the Eternal Parasol just in the nick of time, he vanished.

As for the magical technique that Mistress Red-Dust had just been preparing, it shot through the space that had previously been occupied by Bai Xiaochun, and did absolutely nothing....

“Bai Xiaochun!!” she screamed shrilly, her eyes burning with hatred. Then, a moment later, she also vanished.

At the same time, teleportation light swept through the rest of the labyrinth, causing everyone else to disappear, including Master God-Diviner, Zhao Long, Song Que, and others....

Great Wall cultivators, soul cultivators, and savage giants alike were all whisked away as the labyrinth collapsed, leaving behind nothing but a huge, sinking crater.

Within that enormous area, the space that had once been created by the nine black pillars of light was replaced by a single white pillar that shot into the sky and then sent ripples out in all directions.

Bai Lin and the Great Wall forces, as well as all the people from the Wildlands, all clearly saw what was happening, and were shaken. Furthermore, all of them very much wanted to know what occurred within the labyrinth.

It wasn’t until a month later that everyone came to know about the teleportation spell formation which had been activated, and how everyone inside had been teleported to different parts of the Wildlands!

Some people ended up in areas relatively close to the labyrinth, others were sent deep into the Wildlands, to places where transmission jade slips were useless....

As more and more Great Wall cultivators managed to make it back to Great Wall City, news began to spread about what happened in the trials by fire. Stories of Bai Xiaochun began to be told again, causing the news to resound in Great Wall City and the Wildlands alike....

He had taken 1st place in the trials by fire!

He had been the first to enter the sepulcher!

Later, Mistress Red-Dust also entered the sepulcher, where the two had fought a bitter battle. After the sepulcher collapsed, it was revealed that Bai Xiaochun had apparently survived the fight up to that point!

But then the teleportation began, and as for whether or not he made out it alive, nobody knew.

After a second month passed, Mistress Red-Dust increased the reward on Bai Xiaochun’s head to an unheard-of level. Five deva beast souls and one deva soul!

Both the Wildlands and the Great Wall forces were completely shaken. Not even the Great Wall’s Execution List had a reward so high.

Bai Xiaochun was now in 1st place on the Wildlands’ Execution List!! It was also in that fashion that the Great Wall forces came to realize that Bai Xiaochun was not dead!

Currently, Bai Lin sat in Great Wall city, a melancholy look on his face and an alcohol flagon in hand. Sighing emotionally, he murmured, “As long as you're not dead, Xiaochun, I'm happy. I really let you down this time.... Where are you...?”

End of Book 4: A Different Kind Of Hostage

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0563 awe-chapter-564

Book 5: The Peak Of Life!

The Wildlands were huge, so huge that few people even knew their true extent. However, most cultivators who understood a thing or two about them were able to guess.

If the entire world were circular, then the Heavenspan Sea would be in the very middle, with four enormous rivers stretching out from it in each of the cardinal directions. The tributaries, streams and even the deltas were all like tree branches that grew out from the rivers.

The areas in which the Heavenspan River existed were the Heavenspan Realm. The places where that river didn’t exist occupied roughly half of the ‘circle’ that made up the world. And those locations were known as... the Wildlands.

There was even a well-known saying: *Everything beyond the Great Wall is the Wildlands*!

In the areas between the four major rivers were the four major sections of the Great Wall, which acted like gates, keeping the Wildlands locked on the outside, and the Heavenspan Realm sealed on the inside.

If one could look down from high enough, the four sections of the Great Wall would make something like a large circle.

**

Somewhere deep in the Wildlands, there was a boundless jungle, dense to the extreme, filled with countless towering trees that formed an enormous canopy overhead. Because of that canopy, only scattered bits of sunlight made it through to the rotting marshlands below.

Enormous jungles like this existed in numerous locations within the Wildlands. Although such areas were devoid of the spiritual power of the Heavenspan River, they still teemed with life. In fact, whether it was the plant life or the local savages, everything seemed to be free of certain constraints that spiritual power brought, and thus were especially large and tough.

One particularly large tree in this jungle had bones littering the ground beneath it, many of which had bite marks on them. There were also the scattered feathers of flying creatures. In the middle of all the bones, leaning up against the tree itself, was a person. His hair was messy and knotted, and he was devouring the carcass of some small creature. The crunching sounds of his chewing were terrifying as they echoed out into the jungle; apparently, he was so hungry that he didn’t care whether or not he was eating the flesh or the bones, or both!

Considering all the bones surrounding this person, it seemed that he had eaten quite a bit during this meal. It was a really frightening scene....

Not too far away, beneath another large tree, was a corpse! Clearly, that corpse had been laying there rotting for many weeks.

It was so withered up that it was difficult to make out its facial features, but based on the clothing, it had been a cultivator in life. There was even a bag of holding laying off to the side next to the corpse.

The living person devouring the raw meat was none other than Bai Xiaochun.

As for the corpse… not even Bai Xiaochun had any idea who it was.

Bai Xiaochun had been teleported to this location on a stormy night roughly two months before. Considering how badly injured he had been, he had struggled just to crawl over to the base of the tree. Using his last scrap of spiritual power, he had pulled out his damaged Eternal Parasol and stabbed it into the ground next to him, relying on the pressure it emanated to protect himself. Having been completely drained of spiritual power, he simply lay there, unmoving.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun noticed a young man lying on the ground at the base of another nearby tree. At that point, the young man had not been dead. He had stared in disbelief at Bai Xiaochun for a long moment, neither of them talking, until he finally leaned his head down onto the ground and died.

Seeing the young man die had frightened Bai Xiaochun, but at that moment, he had been too weak to even move. The emotion of the moment, combined with his exhaustion, had shoved him into unconsciousness.

He didn’t wake up for almost a week. Unfortunately, he was still too weak to move at that time. His injuries were truly severe, and he had been pushed to the very brink of death, leaving him completely empty of any sort of spiritual power. To recover would definitely require time. After all, he didn’t even have enough spiritual power to open his bag of holding.

He was surrounded by the corpses of various wild animals, which he didn’t remember seeing there when he had passed out earlier. Clearly, the animals had come too close to the

Eternal Parasol, and had been killed by the pressure it emitted.

Furthermore, the power of the parasol had also protected the corpse of the young man at the other nearby tree.

“It's a good thing that I ended up pulling the Eternal Parasol out of my bag of holding instead of something else. Otherwise... I would have woken up to find myself eaten.” He sighed bitterly, his heart filled with anger.

“To think that a magnificent major general like myself would fall to this level.... You’ll get what's coming to you one of these days, Granny Red-Dust! I’ll show you how awesome Lord Bai is! And as for you Chen Hetian, you and I are now archenemies!

“Ai. I really got hurt badly this time....” Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, and at the same time, felt his fury building. However, he couldn’t even turn his head, only move his eyes around to examine his unfamiliar surroundings.

Eventually, he forced himself to accept his current situation, and also realized that since there was no spiritual energy, he was obviously not near the Heavenspan River. Clearly, he had been teleported out into the Wildlands.

After a while, he sighed. Feeling bored, he rolled his eyes over to look at the corpse lying beneath the tree.

Earlier, it had been impossible to determine what had caused the young man’s death. But now his skin was pitch black, leading to the obvious conclusion that he had been hit with a poisonous magical technique that had burned his heart and blood vessels until he died.

Suddenly, another wave of exhaustion swept through Bai Xiaochun, and he passed out again. Another week or so went by before we woke up, but this time, he could move his head a bit. Furthermore, he didn’t feel completely numb. In fact, he felt little stabs of pain all over himself, almost like needles. It was a somewhat unbearable feeling, and yet, he could do little more than sigh.

“Well at least I can feel pain. That means I'm slowly recovering.” There were more animal corpses piled up in the area now, and he was so hungry he felt dizzy. Unfortunately, he could only move his head, nothing else. Swallowing, he lay there blankly for a bit before looking back at the corpse to analyze it a bit further.

“It looks like he was in early Foundation Establishment.... Doesn’t look like he was teleported here from the labyrinth. More like a local soul cultivator. Seems like he was fleeing for his life from somebody or something.” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too worried about that fact. After all, he had already been laying in one place for about half a month without anyone passing by.

As time passed, and Bai Xiaochun continued to watch the corpse rotting away, he picked up on more and more clues.

“Doesn’t seem like a rogue cultivator. Must be from some local cultivator clan....”

“I remember looking at him right before he died. He looked haggard, and defiant. He must have had some aspirations in life that he never fulfilled....”

“Seems pretty young. Smart and good-looking, although not as much as me.”

He often muttered things like this to himself. After all, as he was slowly recovering, he literally had nothing to do except study the corpse.

When he got tired, he would go back to sleep. Eventually, two months later, he was excited to discover that he could move again. The first thing he did was crawl over one of the animals that had been killed because of the Eternal Parasol.

He devoured the entire thing in a single mouthful.

Over the course of the past two months, he had become so hungry he could barely see straight. That was compounded by the fact that his recovery was rapidly emptying him out. Therefore, he ate all of the nearby animals in a single sitting. He even ate the tiny birds, feathers and all.

The more he ate, the warmer he felt, and the more energy he had. In the end, after devouring everything in sight, he rubbed the back of his neck and finally felt alive again.

“I’m back!!” he yelled excitedly. It was a wonderful feeling to escape with one’s life against all odds. As he thought back to everything which had happened in the labyrinth, it truly felt as if he had ended up stepping halfway through the gates of the underworld.

Sighing, he walked over to the corpse.

“Thank you for keeping me company these past two months, my brother,” he said softly. “I guess it was fate that we met here. If I ever have the chance, I’ll do my best to pay you back.” Reaching down, he picked up the bag of holding lying next to the corpse.

Meanwhile, on a barren mountain some distance away from the jungle, someone was sitting cross-legged in meditation, in a cave.

There were seven or eight corpses laid out in front of him, all of them belonging to Foundation Establishment cultivators. They were little more than skin and bones, with their flesh and blood having been absorbed.

Eventually, the cross-legged figure’s eyes opened, although instead of shining brightly, they glimmered with faded life, as if this person had received significant injuries. Ignoring the corpses, he rubbed his forehead and gritted his teeth.

“Even if you’re dead, Bai Xiaochun, one of these days I’ll pay you back for the humiliation you brought upon me. I’ll avenge myself upon your friends and family, a thousand times over!”

He was none other than... Zhou Yixing!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0564 awe-chapter-565

Bai Xiaochun stood there in the jungle, holding the bag of holding and looking down at the corpse of the young man. For some reason, he really felt as if it had been destiny which teleported him to this location, where this corpse had accompanied him for two months. He sighed.

“Allow me to give you a proper burial, my brother.” Bai Xiaochun could tell that he was recovering rapidly now. However, his spiritual power was still so depleted that he couldn’t even open his bag of holding.

Therefore, he used the Eternal Parasol to dig a pit, into which he lowered the corpse of the young man.

Patting the soil he had filled the grave back in with, he said, “Don’t worry, in a few more days I should have enough spiritual power built up to open your bag of holding. Then we can see what's inside, and maybe I’ll even learn your name. Then I can put up a proper grave marker for you.”

Then he walked back over to the tree he had spent the last two months under and sat down cross-legged to try out some breathing exercises.

Unfortunately, there wasn’t any spiritual power in this part of the Wildlands, so he was forced to rely only on the restorative powers of his own body, and the bits of spiritual energy which had built up in his flesh and blood over the years.

A few days passed. It was early evening, but because of the darkness that blanketed the jungle floor, it seemed like the middle of the night. As Bai Xiaochun sat there meditating, he slowly opened his eyes, and a brief flicker of light could be seen.

“Got some spiritual power back!” His heart was pounding with excitement. After all, he was in a strange land bereft of spiritual power, and that left him feeling very uneasy. Panting a bit, he slapped his bag of holding, which flashed with light as a bottle flew out.

It was a bottle of spirit alcohol!

He excitedly poured the spirit alcohol down his throat, whereupon it turned into warm currents that flowed through his qi passageways in a very pleasing fashion. He was like a dried, parched land that was finally receiving rain, and it caused prickling sensations to fill him.

“That’s the feeling!” he murmured, tears welling up in his eyes. Taking a deep breath, he rotated his cultivation base, not allowing a bit of the spiritual power from the spirit alcohol to go to waste.

A few hours later, Bai Xiaochun was laughing madly, his eyes glittering at the small fraction of spiritual power which he had built up, which was only about five percent of his total limit. Although it was only a small amount, it was enough to open his bag of holding numerous times.

Therefore, he opened the bag again to pull out a dozen or so bottles of spirit alcohol, consumed them all, and then sat quietly to perform breathing exercises. For the following three days, rumbling sounds filled him as spiritual power poured through his body.

On the afternoon of the third day, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, and tears flowed out.

“I’ve finally recovered completely!! Man, that was hard! Whether it’s in terms of body or cultivation base, I'm back to normal!! You just wait for Lord Bai to get his hands on you, Granny Red-Dust!!” Laughing loudly, he stood up and assessed his spiritual power levels. To his delight, he found that he was actually a bit stronger than before.

Thanks to the deadly battle he had fought, his position within the great circle of the Gold Core stage had advanced, both in terms of fleshly body power and cultivation base.

In fact, when it came to his fleshly body, he felt more than ever that he was on the verge of being able to break through the next shackle!

He couldn’t help but sigh, especially when he thought back to how closely he had brushed with death during his fight with Mistress Red-Dust.

Taking a deep breath, he looked around a bit, which was when his excitement began to wane, and he even started to feel a bit anxious.

“I don’t even have any idea where I am in the Wildlands. Wherever I am, it’s too dangerous here. I need to get back to the Great Wall.” Now that he thought about it, if any of the soul cultivators or savages found out that he was Bai Xiaochun, they would surely skin him alive.

The mere thought of what that would be like left him shivering. Finally, he looked over at the simple grave he had erected, and finally decided to open the bag of holding that had belonged to the young man.

It contained a variety of miscellaneous items, few of which were of any interest to Bai Xiaochun. After all, it was the bag of holding of a mere early Foundation Establishment cultivator.

However, what did interest Bai Xiaochun was the collection of bone slips. Much like jade slips, they could store information, and after skimming through the group in the bag of holding, Bai Xiaochun found three that were of particular interest.

The first bone slip contained a map of the immediate area. After studying it for a while, Bai Xiaochun still had no idea where he was. There was absolutely nothing on the map that indicated how far away the Great Wall was.

“Well that doesn’t help much....” he thought nervously. With that, he moved on to the second bone slip, after which his eyes glittered, and he looked over at the grave mound.

His name was Bai Hao, and was a bastard son from one of the local aristocratic necromancer clans. Apparently, he wasn’t very well liked in the clan, and had provoked the ire of the wrong people, who plotted against him. That was what led to him perishing when and how he did.

From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, the necromancer clan in question wasn’t considered to be spectacularly famous.

“Aristocratic necromancer clan....” After some more thought, he moved on to the third bone slip, which contained the most intriguing information so far. It was a detailed description of necromancers, with information he had wondered about back at the Great Wall.

Essentially, it was a basic primer to necromancy!

Even the first few sentences left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

“Necromancy is an amalgamation! Necromancers use the foundation of spirit enhancement, medicine concocting, and equipment forging as the basis of necromancy!”

Bai Xiaochun had long since noticed that there was something strange about the spirit enhanced treasures wielded by the Wildlanders, and had come to his own conclusions about why that was. Now, the information in this bone slip corroborated his previous speculations. After going on to read through the rest of the information, he was left stunned.

At that point, the Wildlands didn’t seem as profoundly mysterious as they had before. All of the various clues suddenly fit together to form a complete picture.

The lowest of the low in the Wildlands were the savage tribes. The giants had been the last to become civilized, and were treated mostly like servants. They actually worshipped the soul cultivators, and viewed them as protectors of sorts.

Soul cultivators occupied a much higher position than the savages, and were not very different from ordinary cultivators. The only difference was that they couldn’t practice cultivation with the spiritual power of the Heavenspan River, and instead had to rely on the soul vitality provided by the necromancers.

In the sprawling Wildlands, there were far more savages than soul cultivators, and yet, the soul cultivators couldn’t be described as few and far between. They had their clans and powerful organizations, and there were also many who were like rogue cultivators.

As for the necromancers, they were like the nobility of the Wildlands. Any necromancer of any sort occupied a very high position. Not only could they produce the soul vitality that soul cultivators needed to advance their cultivation, but they could also forge magical items and bless such items with spirit enhancements!

Because of that, necromancers were extremely important to the Wildlands as a whole.

Of course, necromancers had their own ranking system based on fire. The truth was that although Wildlands necromancers resembled the spirit enhancers from the lands of Heavenspan in some ways, they were actually very different.

In the lands of Heavenspan, spirit enhancers would search for fuel to make multi-colored flame. However, the necromancers didn’t need any fuel. Although they also experienced a similar issue of having a high failure rate, they didn’t need to rely on fuel; they worked directly with the flame itself.

Of course, such flames didn’t exist on their own. Necromancers used different types of souls and special methods to conjure them!

Anyone who could conjure one-colored flame was considered an initiate necromancer. Upon being able to conjure four-colored flame, one was promoted to the journeyman rank. Seven-colored flame was the standard to become a master necromancer.

Most necromancers in the Wildlands fell into those three ranks.

Ten-colored flame was the absolute peak for master necromancers, and not very many necromancers could reach such a level. After going beyond that level, necromancers would experience a period of transformation, after which, they were ranked according to the denominations of terrestrial, celestial, earthly, and heavenly!

Being able to conjure eleven-colored flame made one a terrestrial necromancer! In the Wildlands, any terrestrial necromancer was a person who could dominate the lands wherever he went.

The next level beyond that was the celestial necromancer, of which there were even fewer. In any of the necromancer clans, a celestial necromancer occupied the highest of positions, similar to that of a grand elder or the reserve powers. After all, the hallmark of celestial necromancers was the ability to conjure fifteen-colored flame!

Earthly necromancers were legendary, and in all of the Wildlands, there were only three. To become an earthly necromancer, one had to conjure eighteen-colored flame!

The highest level of all was that of the heavenly necromancer. From ancient times until now, not a single one had ever appeared, and they were considered only a theoretical rank. After all, to reach the heavenly rank, one had to conjure twenty-one colored flame!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0565 awe-chapter-566

“Necromancy and spirit enhancement are basically the same thing....” Bai Xiaochun murmured to himself as he looked at the information in the bone slip. From what he was reading, all of the various types of multicolored flame in the Wildlands were produced by necromancers, a fact which caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to leap with excitement.

After generations of experimentation and research, the formulas for everything from one- to fourteen-colored flame had been well-established. In fact, there were multiple variations on how to conjure each of those types of flame.

Such formulas weren’t exactly secret within the Wildlands. Although not every necromancer had the skill to use all of the formulas, all of the aristocratic necromancer clans had the formulas in their records.

However, the formula for fifteen-colored flame was a tightly-kept secret that not even mid-level necromancer clans had access to. Only the large clans and other major powers had them.

As for sixteen-colored flame, that was a secret among secrets.

In any case, because of all these factors, when it came to spirit enhancement, the Wildlands existed on a far higher level than the lands of Heavenspan.

The information in the bone slip made it clear that simply possessing a certain level of flame didn’t guarantee success in using it to perform a spirit enhancement. The more colors in the flame, the higher the chances of failure. That was one area in which there was no difference between the Wildlands and Heavenspan cultivators. Also similar was how failure led to complete destruction of all the materials involved. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, that was a sort of equalizer between the two sides.

However, what he had learned about how the necromancers could conjure their own flame was still very shocking.

“If I could learn the formulas for producing multi-colored flame....” Bai Xiaochun was aware that his biggest advantage was his turtle-wok. After all, just because someone could conjure fourteen-colored flame didn’t mean that they could successfully perform a fourteenfold spirit enhancement. But for Bai Xiaochun, it was the exact opposite!

As a result, he felt completely and utterly shaken.

The bone slip also had information about so-called soul vitality, which was really just soul medicine. Soul medicines were much like spirit stones in that the soul cultivator not only used them for cultivation, but as currency.

In terms of how to make soul medicine, it wasn’t very difficult. The initial process was the same as when conjuring multi-colored flame, except that in the end, the final result became soul medicine instead!

Soul medicines made from ten-colored flame or less were considered low-grade, and were further classified according to how many flames had been used to make them. For example, soul medicine made from one-colored flame was a level one low-grade soul medicine. If it was made from ten-colored flame, it was a level ten low-grade soul medicine.

Soul medicine made from eleven-colored flame was known as mid-grade, and was much more expensive. Furthermore, mid-grade soul medicine could only be conjured by terrestrial necromancers.

In terms of high-grade soul medicines, they were very rare, and could only be produced with fifteen-colored flame or higher. They were what was referred to as soul vitality.

There was also a type of soul medicine referred to as supreme-grade, but was mostly something of a legend that was conjured using twenty-one colored flame!!

Soul medicine and soul vitality were the main reasons that necromancers had risen to prominence in the Wildlands!

In terms of services they performed for others, they could conjure soul medicine for use in cultivation, and could use their necromancy to place spirit designs onto magical items, transforming them into spirit enhanced soul treasures.

In terms of their own powers, there was one thing that necromancers could do that no one else could, and that was use their necromancy to create soul slaves. By transforming large groups of vengeful souls into slaves, and then directing their movements and actions, they could use them as powerful weapons to kill the enemy. Furthermore, they could use their soul slaves as a basis with which to conjure soul medicine and make multi-colored flame....

After reading all of the information in the bone slip, Bai Xiaochun realized that necromancers truly were strong in all areas.

“Necromancers... can do just about everything!!” He couldn’t help but think back to everything that had happened when he was performing spirit enhancements back in the trial by fire. Then he thought about how all-encompassing the powers of the necromancers were. From what he could tell, necromancers weren’t just nobility in the Wildlands, they were like... the direct descendants of the land itself!

“I have to become a necromancer!!” Eyes burning with passion, he gripped the bone slip hard in his hand and reviewed the information therein. Then he searched through Bai Hao’s bag of holding again. However, there were no bone slips which had formulas for multicolored flame.

“I guess Bai Hao’s cultivation base wasn’t high enough to have formulas like that. Or perhaps his position in the clan was too low?” Looking over at the grave mound, he reached out and inscribed some words into the tree above it.

Here lies Bai Hao.

Then he clasped hands and bowed to the grave. After that, he turned and burst into motion. Although he was moved by what he had learned about necromancers, he knew that the most important thing for him to do at the moment was to get back to the distant Great Wall.

“I guess I have to rely on my appearance-changing trick again.” With that, he used his mask to change his appearance to that of Bai Hao.

“I’ll use Bai Hao’s identity temporarily.” With that, he picked up speed.

“There are some odd things about this mask, though....” he thought with a frown. After all, the mask itself came from the Wildlands, where there was some powerful group that could theoretically track him down by means of it.

“The fact that they could locate me with the mask before indicates that there is some branding mark on it that I can’t detect.” Although that powerful group had never shown much hostility toward him, Bai Xiaochun didn’t want to bet his life on their lack of interest. A moment later, his eyes glittered as he recalled the change which had occurred back in the trial by fire, when he performed an elevenfold spirit enhancement on the leaf. Not only had its appearance changed, but his own branding mark had been wiped away from it, forcing him to bond it again.

“That sounds like a good way to handle the situation!” Having made up his mind, he continued onward, using the map in the bone slip to navigate his way toward the edge of the jungle.

Not long after he had left, a mysterious gray mist began to build up in the area surrounding the grave mound.

Then, sounds could be heard like someone walking along a bed of brittle leaves.

Soon, a figure appeared, walking slowly through the mists to come to stand in front of Bai Hao’s grave.

It was an old man in a long gray robe, with an expressionless face. If Bai Xiaochun had been there, he would have recognized him immediately. He was... the gravekeeper!

The old man looked at the grave mound for a long moment, then turned to look in the direction Bai Xiaochun had taken before. A moment passed, and then the old man turned and walked away.

**

As Bai Xiaochun sped through the jungle toward its border, Zhou Yixing walked out of the cave on the mountain some distance away.

He looked much healthier than before, and his eyes shone brightly. Although he wasn’t completely back to normal, he was mostly recovered. However, when he thought back to the losses he had sustained in the labyrinth, depression gripped his heart, and he gritted his teeth in frustration.

“It’s all the fault of that Bai Xiaochun! The world will be a better place with him dead!” Snorting coldly, he looked around, and then began to reinforce the spell formations he had set up in the area.

Despite the two months that had passed, he still wasn’t fully recovered from the injuries he had suffered in the labyrinth. However, after being teleported to this place, he was lucky enough to encounter a few wandering Foundation Establishment soul cultivators.

After killing them, he used a secret magic to consume their flesh, blood, and cultivation bases, which helped him recover quite a bit. However, as a necromancer, he was well aware that this location was far beyond his own clan’s territory, and that he was a stranger here. Even he was in great danger here.

During the two months in which he had stayed in place, he had used spell formations to trap a few more soul cultivators, who provided nourishment for his recovery.

“If I’m not mistaken, this is the Jungle of Lost Souls, which would mean I'm very, very far away from home....” Frowning, Zhou Yixing looked around again, and then sighed.

“That means I’m in the territory of the Giant Ghost King, one of the four great kings of the Wildlands, a demigod with five devas under his command.... If I want to get home, I'm going to have to pass through Giant Ghost City at some point. That’s where the teleportation portal will be.” After some thought, he finished his work with the spell formations.

“There won’t be as many soul cultivators out in the open once I leave the region of the Jungle of Lost Souls. I’ll capture a few more and restore my cultivation base, then head to Giant Ghost City.” Having made his decision, he was just about to go back into the cave when his expression flickered as he noticed a figure speeding through the jungle some distance away.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0566 awe-chapter-567

"Not a bad cultivation base, this Core Formation soul cultivator!” Eyes widening and heart beginning to race, Zhou Yixing looked at the figure speeding out from the jungle and licked his lips. After weighing matters, his eyes shone with determination.

“If he goes in a different direction, then I’ll ignore him. But if he enters the range of my restrictive spells, I can consume him with ease!

“Absorbing him would be the equivalent of consuming over a hundred Foundation Establishment soul cultivators. Not only would that completely heal me, but it would push my cultivation base to the peak!” He quickly backed up into the darkness of the cave, keeping his attention focused on the incoming figure, who was none other than Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun followed the map out of the jungle, and upon emerging into the open, he saw the evening sky up above, and a barren landscape stretching out in front of him. There were mountains everywhere, all of them the completely inhospitable type that left one with a choking sensation.

Occasionally, spheres of mist that were vengeful souls could be seen floating here and there. The entire area seemed very sinister....

“This place looks wilder than the places I visited outside the Great Wall!” Sighing, he proceeded forward.

Meanwhile, Zhou Yixing was crouching in his cave on the barren mountain. When he realized that the cultivator who had just flown out of the jungle wasn’t heading in his direction, he hesitated for a moment, after which a brutal gleam appeared in his eyes.

“I'm thinking too much into it. I just need to consume him, and then I’ll be back to normal.... Considering that I’m a necromancer, and he’s just a soul cultivator, I should be able to crush him with ease!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Zhou Yixing’s expression turned even more fierce. Waving his hand, he summoned his ninefold-enhanced black greatbow, and then leaped out from the cave, shooting eighteen arrows in quick succession at Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun sensed him as soon as he leapt out in the open. Spinning, he looked in Zhou Yixing’s direction, and when he saw him, his jaw dropped.

The eighteen soul arrows screamed through the air, eighteen beams of light that bore down so quickly on Bai Xiaochun that, before he could react, they were right in front of him.

“Zhou Yixing?” he thought. Almost immediately, excitement rose up in his heart. How could he have possibly imagined that he would actually run into a familiar face here? Even more surprising was that the familiar face was none other than his lucky star! Bai Xiaochun was already exuberant at how considerate Zhou Yixing was to show up in such a way.

However, he quickly came to a decision. “I can’t let him figure out who I am....”

Not hesitating any further, he waved his right index finger at the eighteen soul arrows.

Instantly, a vortex sprang up to meet the arrows, and intense rumbling sounds rang out as the arrows exploded. The resulting shockwave blasted out, sending dust up in all directions. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun continued forward, completely unharmed.

Zhou Yixing's eyes nearly popped out of his skull, and his heart began to pound so hard he started shaking. All of a sudden, a very bad feeling filled him.

“Dammit,” he cursed inwardly, “this guy's way stronger than me!” Already regretting his impulsiveness, he shot back toward the safety of his restrictive spells on the mountain.

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly and strode forward. As he did, his visage blurred, and in the blink of an eye, his wood clone stepped out and shot toward the barren mountain in a blur of light.

At first, Bai Xiaochun hadn't noticed the restrictive spells on the mountain, but now that they had caught his attention, he could see how deadly they were. And yet, that didn't bother him. Waving his hand, he sent another clone speeding toward the mountain.

Because he was currently wearing his mask, the clones he produced also looked like Bai Hao.

When Zhou Yixing saw all of this happening, his face fell dramatically.

“Clones!!” From what Zhou Yixing understood, anyone with a clone was an extraordinary individual, and shockingly, this person had two. Then he remembered whose territory he was currently in, and came to the conclusion that this person must somehow be connected to the Giant Ghost

King. It probably wouldn’t have mattered if he absorbed him, but now that it was obvious he wasn’t a match, his regret only continued to grow more profound.

“Stay your hand, Fellow Daoist! I'm Zhou Yixing from the eastern Zhou Clan. This was just a misunderstanding! I mistook you for an old enemy of mine!”

Bai Xiaochun chuckled. Intentionally keeping his voice a bit raspy, he said, “Misunderstanding? Is that what you say to everyone surnamed Bai? I was just passing through here, and I'm supposed to believe this little ambush of yours was a mere misunderstanding?”

Then he waved his hand, sending his two clones slamming down onto the mountain peak, where they began to batter the restrictive spells into oblivion.

However, these were no ordinary restrictive spells, so the two clones couldn’t accomplish the task immediately. Overall, it took them the time it takes half an incense stick to burn before breaking through them all.

From Bai Xiaochun’s perspective, things were going very slowly, but to Zhou Yixing, it was the opposite. The restrictive spells he had used were a specialty of his clan, and were particularly powerful. The fact that this person could break the formations so easily left him completely shocked.

Even as he tried to keep his restrictive spells operational despite the onslaught of the two clones, he nervously called out, “Fellow Daoist Bai, please, just listen... I'm a necromancer, and a master necromancer at that! I can compensate you with some soul medicine....”

At the moment, the fact that this person was surnamed Bai didn’t really make him pause for thought. After all, Bai was a relatively common surname.

Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun was smiling broadly; dealing with Zhou Yixing actually gave him a warm feeling of familiarity. On the outside, however, he maintained a proud expression as he waved his hand and caused shocking soul power fluctuations to roil out. The fluctuations were so domineering that it was instantly obvious that they weren’t from a soul cultivator, but rather, a necromancer.

“I'm a necromancer too!” he said in a cool voice that abounded with dignity. When Zhou Yixing heard it, he shivered, and his eyes turned more bloodshot than before.

“You think I’m scared of you or something!?” he roared. Performing a double-handed incantation gesture, he sent a black mist pouring out of his greatbow, which formed into a black arrow with a vicious ghost face on it. Then, Zhou Yixing pulled back the bowstring.

“Feeling a bit cocky, huh?” Bai Xiaochun responded loftily. He blurred again as his water clone stepped out, transforming into a third beam of light that shot toward the mountain.

“You have another clone!?!?” Zhou Yixing blurted. With three clones battering at the restrictive spells, it was obvious they wouldn’t last for much longer. Finally, Zhou Yixing let out a shout as he unleashed a black arrow toward Bai Xiaochun.

The ghost face arrow howled as it closed in. As it did, Bai Xiaochun proudly lifted his chin, fully confident that even Zhou Yixing in his peak state wouldn’t be a match for him. Considering that he was currently injured, he was even less in a place to fight him. After all, Bai Xiaochun was now even stronger than he had been back in the labyrinth.

As such, he didn’t even pay attention to the arrow. He simply reached out and grabbed it forcefully.

The arrow lurched to a halt, and the ghost face screamed miserably. However, no struggles on its part did any good. Zhou Yixing’s mind was already spinning by this point.

“Impossible!!”

Even as he gaped in shock, a series of explosions rang out as the three clones finally broke through the last of the restrictive spells, and then surrounded Zhou Yixing.

Zhou Yixing struggled a bit, but within moments, had been subdued, and his cultivation base sealed. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s true self stepped over into the cave, clearing his throat as he looked him up and down.

Zhou Yixing’s heart immediately began to beat wildly. Glaring up at Bai Xiaochun, he gritted his teeth and said, “My Zhou Clan has served the Nine Serenities King to stand guard over the east for years. Plus, I'm from the clan’s direct bloodline! If you kill me, the Zhou Clan will definitely avenge my death!!”

Smiling faintly, Bai Xiaochun ignored Zhou Yixing’s threats and picked up his bag of holding. After erasing the branding mark, he opened it and looked inside.

Unfortunately, it was mostly empty except for some miscellaneous objects. There were four tongues of seven-colored flame, which Bai Xiaochun was happy to collect, along with the greatbow.

Zhou Yixing stared angrily at Bai Xiaochun as he rifled through his bag of holding, grief pulsing in his heart. He simply couldn’t figure out why he would be bullied by Bai Xiaochun in the labyrinth, only to escape and be bullied by someone else named Bai.

“I hate people named Bai!!” he wailed inwardly, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0567 awe-chapter-568

After looking through Zhou Yixing’s bag of holding inside and out for quite a bit, he found little else of interest.

Glaring in irritation, Bai Xiaochun said, “If you’re a direct bloodline clan member of the Zhou Clan, what's the deal with your bag of holding? It's virtually empty!”

“You’re too late!” Zhou Yixing replied angrily. “Before I ran into you, some other damned brute took away all my stuff!” To have someone rob him and then look down on him with disdain was pushing him to the brink of madness. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined ending up this poor state. Once upon a time, his bag of holding had contained nine-colored flame, a fire soul arrow, plenty of soul slaves, and a huge collection of soul medicine.

However, all of that had either been stolen from him or used up in the labyrinth....

When Bai Xiaochun saw how angry Zhou Yixing was getting, he narrowed his eyes. He had noticed Zhou Yixing’s use of the term ‘damned brute’, and was fairly certain who he was referring to. Clearing his throat, he ignored Zhou Yixing and then began to examine a few bone slips that he had found in his bag of holding.

There was quite a bit of information, but most of it was already known to Bai Xiaochun. After quite a bit of searching, he didn’t find any formulas for multicolored flame, which was the main thing he was interested in at the moment.

However, what he found in the last bone slip left him feeling a bit better. It had a map much larger than the one he currently possessed, which showed almost the entire Wildlands. Although it wasn’t very detailed, it at least made his current situation a bit clearer.

One thing he noticed was that there were five enormous cities marked on the map. Four of the cities were located in the cardinal directions of east, west, south and north. Those four cities were Nine Serenities City, Giant Ghost City, War Champion City and Spirit Advent City!

Those four huge cities controlled large areas within the Wildlands. Furthermore, far away in a location between War Champion City and Spirit Advent City was a fifth city, which was listed as the imperial city!

Lost in thought, he put the bone slip away. After a moment, he looked back at Zhou Yixing.

Seeing the look in his eye, Zhou Yixing knew that his life or death would be decided within the next few moments. Glaring back angrily at Bai Xiaochun, he snarled, “If you’re gonna kill me, kill me!”

Chuckling, Bai Xiaochun squatted down in front of Zhou Yixing and said, “Calm down, I just want to ask you some questions. If you answer them well, then I might be pleased enough to spare your life.”

Worried that his clones might be frightening Zhou Yixing too much, he waved his hand, and they faded away into motes of white light that merged back into his body.

“If you think I'm going to tell you anything, you might as well stop dreaming right now!” Zhou Yixing shouted, spraying a bit of spittle out of his mouth as he did. “If you’ve got what it takes, just kill me! The necromancers from my clan will definitely avenge my death!” Zhou Yixing knew that this necromancer would likely want to use his soul for necromantic purposes. Therefore, he didn't believe at all that his life would be spared.

Bitterness filled Zhou Yixing’s heart, but he was ready to die, and therefore, decided to throw caution to the wind and take a stand.

Zhou Yixing’s raving reaction actually startled Bai Xiaochun, but when spittle almost landed on his face, he started to get mad.

“You really think you’re tough stuff, don’t you Zhou Yixing!? I didn’t even ask you any questions, you fool, and you’ve already refused to answer!?!?” Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe how brazen Zhou Yixing was acting. Here he was, a prisoner of war, and yet he dared to act like a bully!

Zhou Yixing chuckled coldly. Convinced that he was about to die, he didn’t even attempt to conceal the scorn in his eyes as he said, “Hmph! I don't care what questions you have. You can forget about getting even a scrap of information out of me. By the way, I might as well tell you that the Zhou Clan has made interrogation and torture into an art. People like me train in that kind of thing from childhood! If you have what it takes, go ahead and see if you can get me to open my mouth. I can’t wait to see you try!”

That scorn touched a nerve in Bai Xiaochun, whose eyes widened as he slapped his bag of holding. Suddenly, an Aphrodisiac Pill appeared in his hand, and before Zhou Yixing could even see what it was, he shoved it into his mouth. Then he bopped him on his chest, whereupon the pill slid down Zhou Yixing’s throat.

“I’ll show you what true terror means,” Bai Xiaochun raged, “and then we’ll see if you talk or not!”

Zhou Yixing was immediately alarmed at the warm currents of energy that began to flow through him. Although he maintained a calm front, inside he began to get nervous. However, he managed to maintain his angry glare at Bai Xiaochun.

It didn’t take long for an unnatural expression to appear on Zhou Yixing’s face as he felt himself growing hotter and hotter. At the same time, an explosively impulsive urge began to fill him, causing his eyes to turn red. He also began to pant heavily. The torturous feeling caused him to start shaking, and yet, he seemed to possess incredible tenacity that allowed him to endure the feeling. He even managed to continue to stare hatefully at Bai Xiaochun.

After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, Zhou Yixing seemed like he was about to catch on fire, and yet, he hadn't uttered a peep. Bai Xiaochun was actually somewhat moved.

“Why are you being like this? I just want to ask you a few questions.” Sighing, Bai Xiaochun was just about to try to talk some sense into him when Zhou Yixing suddenly began to cackle madly.

“Cut the crap! Is this all you can do? What else ya got? Bring it on!” Although his voice quavered a bit, he seemed to brim with self-confidence, and even went so far as to spit a glob of spittle at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun dodged out of the way, his fury burning. The two of them faced off angrily for a long moment, until finally Bai Xiaochun pointed at him and said, “Alright, you’re forcing my hand, Mr. Zhou!”

Even as he spoke the words, his wood clone stepped out and flew down the mountain toward the nearby jungle. He returned moments later, whereupon he waved his sleeve, sending a three-meter-long pig-like creature flying toward Zhou Yixing. Its skin was covered with long, thick fur, and it was clearly male.

The pig-creature looked around warily, and even let out a few squeals, but underneath the pressure that emanated from Bai Xiaochun, it couldn’t even move.

Zhou Yixing stared at the creature in shock, unsure of exactly what Bai Xiaochun was planning to do. Next, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, removing Zhou Yixing’s bonds but leaving his cultivation base sealed.

Zhou Yixing’s expression flickered at the sudden return of mobility, but then his eyes fell onto the pig-creature, and he almost couldn’t hold back from pouncing onto it.

As he stood there, his eyes crimson, his entire body shaking, beads of sweat popped out all over him. He looked like he was burning up inside, to a degree that far surpassed anything from before.

“Talk,” Bai Xiaochun said with a sigh. “There’s no reason to be like this. Don’t worry, all you have to do is tell me what I want to know, and I won’t kill you.”

“I’ll die before I talk. You might as well forget about learning anything from me!!” Zhou Yixing felt like he might explode at any moment. His expression was distorted, and blue veins were bulging out all over him. The intense heat inside of him was something he had never felt in his entire life.

“You’ve vastly underestimated Lord Zhou’s willpower! It's so strong that even my clan patriarchs praised me for it!” Zhou

Yixing was soaked in sweat, and was clearly on the verge of burning up. However, he still managed to back up a bit, and finally, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously, more disdain in his eyes than ever.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered in surprise, and even some heartfelt admiration for Zhou Yixing. Based on what he could tell, he really did have terrifying willpower and endurance, something that was beyond the grasp of ordinary people.

“I understand, Fellow Daoist Zhou. Your willpower surpasses that of common folk. Quite amazing. All I wanted to do was ask you a few questions, I really had no choice but to push things this far. Please don’t hold a grudge over what happens next....” Sighing deeply, he looked over at the pig-creature, and then back at Zhou Yixing.

“I just hope this pig-creature has as much willpower as you do....” Shaking his head, he pulled out an Aphrodisiac Pill, crushed it into powder, and prepared to feed it to the creature.

When Zhou Yixing saw this, he stopped laughing and stared with eyes so wide they looked like they might explode. He began to pant and even grunt, and the blood drained from his face. His legs were shaking, as if he might collapse at any moment. Although he wasn’t sure exactly what type of medicine he had been given that had driven him into this madness, the thought of the same thing happening to the pig-creature caused his scalp to tingle violently. He didn’t even dare to think about what might happen next.

He didn’t dare to bet that the pig-creature had any level of willpower, and before long, the thought of what was to come filled his mind with indescribable bitterness. And yet, his lip curled....

“Bring it on! Let’s see who’s scared of whom!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0568 awe-chapter-569

“Ah, a true man!” Yet again, Bai Xiaochun was moved by how Zhou Yixing was still refusing to give in after things had gone so far. In Bai Xiaochun’s estimation, there were few true men like this in the world, other than himself of course.

It was quite a shock to find another true man, and yet that was exactly what was happening right now. Sighing, he couldn’t help but feel that he and Zhou Yixing were actually quite similar in certain ways.

Sighing deeply, he said, “It pains me to put a true man into a situation like this. However, in order to respect your wishes, I will comply with your request. Furthermore, I will look away so that I don’t see your ignominy.”

After all, he simply couldn’t bear to watch a true man shed tears.

“If you can endure what happens next, then I won’t ask you any questions!” Gritting his teeth, Bai Xiaochun looked at Zhou Yixing one last time, fully convinced that he deserved to be called a true man. With that, he held the powder of the crushed pill out in front of the pig-creature’s snout....

After consuming the powder, the pig-creature began to tremble, and much more quickly than Zhou Yixing had. Then its eyes turned red, and it began to squeal over and over again, as if in arousal. And then it began to look around.

In response, Zhou Yixing shivered, and no matter how stiff he tried to keep his upper lip, it didn’t stop him from letting out a shriek.

Even more terrifying was how the pig-creature suddenly turned and looked at him, it eyes shining with madness and fire. It began to stamp its hooves into the ground and squeal even louder, the sound of which intensified Zhou Yixing's shaking.

Were it not for the fact that Bai Xiaochun had placed his hand restrainingly onto the pig-creatures' back, it would have already pounced....

Because of the horrifying nature of the situation, Zhou Yixing's shriek was filled with incomparable terror. By this point, he was completely devolving into fear, to the point where he was losing control....

He could very clearly imagine what would be happening in the moments to come, and knew that he wouldn't last for very long....

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun's eyes shone with both determination and admiration as he slowly removed his hand from the pig-creature's back, then turned and walked toward the mouth of the cave.

He truly did admire Zhou Yixing, and was determined to keep his promise. Considering how much he respected him, if he said he wouldn't watch the outcome, then he definitely wouldn't. He sighed again, a sigh filled with no small amount of grief.

"I really can't bear to watch a true man cry.... Why did you have to push me into doing this?" Shaking his head, he walked out of the cage. As he did, he heard the pig-creature squeal loudly, and heard the miserable shrieks of Zhou Yixing as he tried to dodge the thing.

“Lord Bai, I’m sorry!” he shouted, “Stop this! Ask me whatever you want, I’ll tell you anything you need to know!!” Zhou Yixing was using every scrap of energy he had to dodge back and forth, completely cognizant of the fate in store for him if the pig-creature managed to pin him. By this point, he had completely abandoned any attempt to look brave, and was shrieking miserably.

In response to his words, Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, a look of pride flashing through his eyes. Face lighting up, he turned to look at the scrambling Zhou Yixing.

“You agree to answer my questions?”

Zhou Yixing was so terrified that tears were already leaking out of his eyes. Scrambling backward, he shrieked, “I’ll talk! I’ll tell you anything you want to know. Just make it stop!”

Pleased and yet somewhat disillusioned, Bai Xiaochun shook his head at the sadness of the world’s loss of another true man.

“It seems that I really am the only true man in this heaven and earth. Ah, whatever.” Sighing, he stepped forward and grabbed the pig-creature, then gave it to one of his clones to take back to the jungle.

After the pig-creature left, Zhou Yixing leaned up against the cave wall and then slumped down to the ground, panting, his face completely ashen. His clothing dripped with sweat as he looked up at Bai Xiaochun, feeling very much like he had just sidestepped an utter catastrophe.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t even seem human to him, but rather, like one of the most evil and wicked beings in existence....

Squatting in front of Zhou Yixing, Bai Xiaochun put a look of complete sincerity on his face as he placatingly said, “See, Zhou Yixing? I never had any ill intentions. I just wanted to ask you some questions, that's all. Come, come, be a good boy and tell me all of the flame formulas you know. Let’s start with one-colored flame.”

Zhou Yixing’s eyes went wide with shock.

“Th-that’s... that's all you wanted to ask me?” Zhou Yixing almost couldn’t believe that he had heard correctly.

Bai Xiaochun shot to his feet and angrily barked, “Of course that’s all I wanted to know! What, don’t tell me you’re going to go back on your word, are you?! That pig-creature can’t have gone very far....”

“I’ll tell you! Of course I’ll tell you!!” Zhou Yixing looked up at the cave ceiling and forced the tears of frustration and anger back into his eyes. He felt like he was going crazy, to the point where his heart was palpitating. He had assumed this necromancer wanted to ask him about top secret information, and never even considered that he would simply want to know some flame formulas. Virtually all the aristocratic necromancer clans had formulas for everything from one- to eleven-colored flame. Furthermore, such formulas were available for purchase at the cost of soul medicine in all of the cities of the kings....

If he had known that these were the questions he was to be asked, he would never have held out for so long. When he thought back to the pain he had endured, he felt like the entire world was spinning around him.

But then, his mind suddenly trembled as he realized that something about the situation seemed off. If this Necromancer Bai was from one of the necromancer clans, then it would be impossible for him to be unaware of the formulas for various multicolored flames. The fact that he was asking questions about the formulas meant that he wasn't telling the complete truth about what he wanted.

Obviously, he was simply playing games!!

Zhou Yixing's eyes flashed as he became more and more convinced that his analysis was correct. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he contemplated resisting, but the mere thought of the pig-creature's blazing eyes caused his heart to tremble. Gritting his teeth, he began with the formula for one-colored flame, and explained everything up to fourteen-colored flame.

Bai Xiaochun was in very high spirits as he took out a jade slip and took notes about everything. After Zhou Yixing finished, he even had quite a few detailed follow-up questions. Zhou Yixing's explanations seemed quite satisfactory, and in the end, Bai Xiaochun was beaming with joy.

Of course, this caused Zhou Yixing to curse inwardly. All of the formulas he had explained were genuine; he didn't dare to give any false information. After all, this was a necromancer he was dealing with. And yet, this Bai fellow seemed completely immersed in his little act.

“Fudge, this guy sure can put on a good show!” Zhou Yixing thought, grinding his teeth. The humiliation he was enduring had him completely seething with anger.

Bai Xiaochun happily put the jade slip away and asked a few more questions, each of which further convinced Zhou Yixing that he was being cruelly toyed with....

After all, many of the questions seemed completely random and superfluous, to the point where Zhou Yixing couldn’t even imagine why they were being asked. His humiliation continued to fester.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun asked, “Hey, wait a second, Zhou Yixing. What about the formula for fifteen-colored flame? Spit it out.”

With that, he stared expectantly at Zhou Yixing.

At this point, Zhou Yixing couldn’t take it anymore. Eyes burning with flames of anger, he shouted, “Enough with the act, Bai! What’s going on here?!?!?! You expect me to believe you don’t know we’re in Giant Ghost City territory?! You really don’t know that the Giant Ghost King is one of the four great kings!?!? You really don’t know that the teleportation portal is in the city itself!?!?

“Is this some kind of game to you?!?! I can’t believe you asked me how old I am and how many Daoist partners I have. What’s the point!?!

“You’re a necromancer, but you don’t know that only the great clans have the formula for fifteen-colored flame? Dammit! How long are you going to keep toying with me!?!?!?” Zhou Yixing was so angry he was weeping.

His outburst left Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit embarrassed. Many of the questions he had asked were just things he was randomly curious about, with others being completely inane and pointless. Seeing how angry Zhou Yixing was, Bai Xiaochun chuckled and then smacked the back of his head, rendering him unconscious.

Ignoring him, he walked to the entrance of the cave and stood there, looking solemnly out at the lands in front of him.

“At long last I understand how the Wildlands’ forces are organized,” he murmured. “Strange. Why didn’t the information back at the Great Wall make this clear? A lot of these things are obviously not secret. I wonder if someone intentionally got rid of some of the details....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0569 awe-chapter-570

In the Wildlands, the five great powers were split among five enormous cities!

Of those five cities, four were the cities of the kings, and one was the imperial city! Those cities were Nine Serenities City, Giant Ghost City, War Champion City, Spirit Advent City, and lastly... Arch-Emperor City!

The Wildlands was structured in the same ancient fashion as the lands of Heavenspan. At the peak of everything was the current Arch-Emperor, and beneath him were the four kings!

The four kings were like feudal vassals, who controlled the four major cities, and raised and kept armies.

In the imperial city, there were also lords and marquis who were ranked lower than the kings. Essentially, the Wildlands was structured very much like a feudal empire.

Bai Xiaochun had learned all of this information by asking one question after another of Zhou Yixing earlier. Although he was surprised by some of the new things he had learned, it all made sense based on what he had known before. After all, he had long since come to understand that the soul cultivators and the necromancers were the true rulers of the Wildlands.

However, what he hadn’t known was that years and years ago, the Celestial from Heavenspan Island had overthrown the current empire. Afterward, the surviving members of the overthrown dynasty had fled to the Wildlands, which led to the current situation.

He was currently in territory ruled by one of the four great kings, the Giant Ghost King. As for the jungle behind him, it was called the Jungle of Lost Souls, and was relatively close to Giant Ghost City.

Furthermore, Giant Ghost City lay in the western regions of the lands of Heavenspan, whereas the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was in the east. That put him very, very far away from home.

If he wanted to get back to the eastern branch of the Heavenspan River, he would have to cross the Heavenspan Sea, which was something that not even Nascent Soul cultivators could do. Only people with Deva Realm cultivation bases could do such a thing.

Of course, there were other methods of travel, such as using teleportation portals. It wouldn't be extremely difficult to get to the eastern Heavenspan region via that method. Unfortunately, by means of a very vague line of questioning, Bai Xiaochun was able to learn from Zhou Yixing that only people born in the Wildlands could use those teleportation portals.

The foundation of such teleportation portals was soul power, which gave them many other strange properties.

And yet, not even Zhou Yixing had been absolutely sure about all of that. Most of the information he provided was based on things he had heard but couldn't personally verify. In the end, Bai Xiaochun lapsed into silence for a bit, staring out at the sky outside the cave.

"Ah, whatever," he thought with a sigh. "I might as well give it a shot. Who knows, maybe I'll get lucky and be able to teleport out of here." Shaking his head, he looked back at

Zhou Yixing, who was lying there unconscious after being bopped in the head.

Despite the fact that Zhou Yixing had tried to kill him three times, simply ending his life here didn’t seem like the right thing to do. If they were back at the Great Wall, it would have been a different story, but out here all alone in an unfamiliar place, it seemed like a better choice to keep him as a traveling companion.

Besides... Bai Xiaochun was absolutely convinced that Zhou Yixing was truly his lucky star. With him to lead the way, the Wildlands didn’t seem like such a perilous place after all....

That thought left Bai Xiaochun even less inclined to kill him. After a bit more thought, his hand flashed in an incantation gesture, and he put a few hundred restrictive spells onto Zhou Yixing. Having accomplished that, he held Zhou Yixing’s life in his hands, and could kill him with a mere thought.

“It wouldn’t be good to keep him completely cut away from his cultivation base. What would happen if we ran into some trouble and he got killed? That wouldn’t do.” After some more thought, he unsealed ten percent of Zhou Yixing’s cultivation base. However, that still left him feeling a bit uneasy, so he reduced him to only half of that.

“With only five percent of his cultivation base, he’s essentially a Foundation Establishment cultivator. That gives him a bit of freedom, but will ensure that he doesn’t try to escape.” Marveling at how well he treated his lucky star, he ignored him, settling down cross-legged to experiment with one of the flame formulas Zhou Yixing had explained to him.

In order to make sure nothing unexpected happened, he summoned his three clones, sending one to the cave entrance, and having the other two sit on either side of him as Dharma protectors.

Three days went by in a flash. Zhou Yixing had long since regained consciousness, and was lying there motionless. He could sense that ninety-five percent of his cultivation base was sealed away, and yet, was still very relieved. Obviously, his captor didn't plan on killing him, and had instead sealed his cultivation base. For the moment, he was safe.

However, when he thought of how unlucky had been since going to the labyrinth, he couldn't stop the grief from welling up inside of him, and simply lay there, staring at the cave ceiling.

As Zhou Yixing lay there in a daze, Bai Xiaochun was fully immersed in studying the flame formulas. The more he did, the more shocked he grew, to the point where he began muttering to himself.

"So that's how you conjure multi-colored flame.... Different types of flame require different types of souls as the ingredients. Actually, there are very strict requirements in that regard.

"To make two-colored flame, you need to start out with one-colored flame.... After you get two-colored flame, you can put more souls into it and thus conjure three-colored flame...." The more he studied, the more his eyes began to sparkle with interest. There were many differences between conjuring flame and concocting medicine, but there were enough similarities that it made it easy for him to gain a basic understanding of the process.

"Interesting...." he thought, licking his lips. He knew that concocting medicine was one of his best skills, and therefore, the idea of getting good at conjuring flame was very enticing.

For the moment, he decided to forget about two-colored flame and focus on one-colored flame. He even decided to do some tests to see if he could perform a conjuring himself.

After carefully studying the formula, he had his water clone take his bag of holding outside to capture some vengeful souls.

Zhou Yixing watched all of this happen with flashing eyes. He was especially shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s clones, and couldn’t stop thinking about how they had crushed his restrictive spells as easily as dried weeds.

“Just what kind of divine ability does this Bai guy cultivate? It’s not like I've never seen clones before, but most of the time they’re illusory, and usually only have about ten percent of the true self’s cultivation base. Even that is extraordinary. But this guy’s clones seem to be just as powerful as his true self. It’s... completely impossible!”

Zhou Yixing pondered the subject for a couple of hours, until it was dark outside. Then, a figure suddenly burst into the cave, startling him. However, it turned out to be the clone which had left earlier.

The clone walked over to Bai Xiaochun’s true self and handed him the bag of holding, then sat down cross-legged next to him and continued meditating.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened, and he waved his hand, causing eight vengeful souls to emerge from his bag of holding. They were blurry balls of mist that occasionally took the shape of savages or beasts that growled at Bai Xiaochun.

After studying them briefly, a very serious expression overtook Bai Xiaochun's face as he sank into the same state he often did when concocting medicine. Reaching out, he grabbed all eight of the souls and crushed them down into his palm.

Almost immediately, it felt as if some natural law were at work. To his surprise, streams of fiery light began to seep out of the cracks between his fingers, which quickly faded away. When he opened his hand a moment later, it was completely empty.

Off to the side, Zhou Yixing's lip curled into a sneer.

"He's using Zhou Clan flame conjuring techniques.... Hmph! The techniques of our clan were bestowed upon us by the Nine Serenities King. Although we don't have the best techniques available, they're still incredible. Most people need to practice for a decade to use them with skill, and sometimes even a few sixty-year-cycles. Even one-colored flame usually takes people a year to master. The clan chief praised my abilities as being exceptional, and I took three months and thousands of sessions to succeed. This guy is obviously used to other techniques, but is still trying to master Zhou methods. Doesn't know his own limits!"

Bai Xiaochun frowned as he looked down thoughtfully at his palm. After analyzing matters a bit, he pulled out eight more souls, and then grabbed them into his hand to try again.

The same thing happened as before, as fiery streams of light escaped his hand. However, this time, they didn't fade away. They actually began to glow more brightly, and then, transformed into a tongue of one-colored flame, burning right there in his palm!!

Zhou Yixing’s eyes went wide with shock, and his jaw dropped. He was very well aware of how different the various flame conjuring techniques were. It was a very difficult thing for a necromancer familiar with one system to master the techniques of another, and would usually require a lot of fine-tuning in the process.

But this Necromancer Bai… had used the time it takes an incense stick to burn to master it on the second try!

Zhou Yixing was so shocked he started panting.

“Beginners luck, that’s all. This guy is just lucky!” Despite the way he comforted himself, he swallowed hard and stared at the one-colored flame Bai Xiaochun had conjured.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0570 awe-chapter-571

“It’s not that hard!” Bai Xiaochun said proudly, looking at the one-colored flame. Conjuring flame and concocting medicine really were similar in a lot of ways.

Although the specific techniques were different, there were plenty of commonalities. For example, when conjuring flame, one mixed together certain types of souls, and then made adjustments based on the subsequent transformations.

The main difficulty lay in the fact that all the adjustments needed to be made in one fell swoop, when the souls were crushed together into the palm. The slightest mistake at that point would lead to a failure.

Of course, the process also required the use of one’s cultivation base. Both spiritual power and soul power counted as energy of heaven and earth, and were a required element.

To a novice, all of those different factors would require time to get used to. But Bai Xiaochun’s first failure had only been because he didn’t make the proper adjustments in the necessary moment. Afterward, he had analyzed the situation, and then decided to simply think of the souls as medicinal plants with unique properties, his hand as the pill furnace, and his spiritual power as the fire to heat the furnace!

After that, everything became clear.

Therefore, he succeeded on his second try!

The sight of the one-colored flame in his hand got him very excited, as if a huge door had been opened, leading to a new road to follow.

“Necromancers are like the direct descendants of heaven and earth! And I'm a necromancer!” He laughed heartily, aware that his ability to conjure one-colored flame made him an initiate necromancer in the Wildlands.

“Next up, two-colored flame....” Eyes glittering, he produced some more souls from his bag of holding, then followed the formula. Treating the souls like medicinal plants, he combined them according to the required ratios, adjusted his spiritual power, and then closed his hand over the souls to act as the pill furnace.

It might have seemed complicated, but Bai Xiaochun had been concocting medicine for years, and was very familiar with such tasks. His eyes shone as he immersed himself in his work, and soon, the one-colored flame and the various souls combined, and a second color appeared within the flames.

Zhou Yixing couldn’t help but rise to a sitting position, his eyes wider than ever as he stared at the two-colored flame forming in Bai Xiaochun’s palm. He almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing.

“Impossible! It took me a full three years to succeed at conjuring two-colored flame!!” Zhou Yixing almost looked like he’d seen a ghost, and the disappointment in his heart was very uncomfortable.

“Well, it's not like it’s *that* amazing. It’s just two-colored flame, right? Not really a big deal. This Bai guy is just really lucky, that’s all!!” Even as Zhou Yixing stewed in his irritation, the two-colored flame finished forming.

However, things weren’t over yet. Bai Xiaochun pulled out some more souls, roughly fifty this time, and used what seemed to be an even more complicated method to feed them into the two-colored flame. Gradually, a third color appeared, and he had a three-colored flame!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem very impressed with the three-colored flame. Without even pausing, he waved his sleeve to produce a few hundred vengeful souls. Then, eyes glittering, he fed the souls into the three-colored flame, which roiled like a sea of fire. Although it seemed like he was simply throwing them in, he actually put them in according to a very specific order, making adjustments the entire time. However, the overall process happened in a flash.

A moment later, the sea of fire shrank back down into a tongue of flame, this time... with four colors!!

“How is this possible?!?!” Zhou Yixing exclaimed inwardly, his eyes wider than before as he stared at the four-colored flame. Before, he had chalked everything up to luck, but by now, he couldn’t continue to convince himself that it was mere chance.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had produced four-colored flame in almost one smooth action indicated to Zhou Yixing that he was actually dealing with a journeyman necromancer!

However, everything was happening so quickly that Zhou Yixing began to wonder if this was someone from his clan that he didn’t know....

But he quickly quashed the idea. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he gritted his teeth, unable to conceal the envy which flickered in his eyes.

“I refuse to believe that this guy is really this amazing. That’s nothing but a trifling four-colored flame. There’s no way he’s going to be able to conjure a five-colored flame using Zhou Clan techniques. After all, when trying to conjure five-colored flame, there is an extremely difficult factor that most people--” Before he could finish that thought, Bai Xiaochun produced over a thousand vengeful souls, combined them, and fed them into the four-colored flame. The flame danced wildly as though it were about to wink out, and yet, Bai Xiaochun somberly closed his hand over it. Then, moments later, he opened his fist to reveal... a fifth color!!

Zhou Yixing was struck numb, and his scalp started tingling madly.

“I don't care how amazing his guy is, there’s no way he can conjure nine-colored flame!! He can’t! I don’t care how awesome he thinks he is, or how talented, he still needs time to stabilize the flame!”

Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing that Zhou Yixing was virtually going crazy. Had he known, he would have been very pleased, but at the moment, he was fully focused on the five-colored flame in his palm. Instead of continuing on to try to conjure more flames, he spent time pondering why the five-colored flame had almost winked out earlier.

After a bit of time passed, he reached a conclusion....

“There was a conflict with the soul ingredients. The formula isn’t perfect! When five-colored flame forms, some of the souls clash with each other. If the disturbance is contained, the flame is conjured. If not... then it's a failure.

“So, it seems that I can’t really trust the formulas after all.” After some more thought, he proceeded to try to conjure six-colored flame, and did just as the formula required, which was produce 3,000 souls.

Generally speaking, it was very important to maintain the proper ratio of souls, and also mix them together at the right time. For many journeyman necromancers, that was a very difficult thing to do, but for Bai Xiaochun, it was a simple thing, even with 3,000 souls.

Before long, the 3,000 souls were all arranged and adjusted properly, and were pouring into the five-colored flame. Before long, he had his six-colored flame!

Next was seven-colored flame. By this point, Zhou Yixing couldn’t have been any more shocked, and was in fact wracked with feelings of intense jealousy, and at the same time, despair.

It was simply impossible for him to imagine how someone could be so talented that they could use his clan’s flame formulas to conjure everything up to a seven-colored flame in one single session.

It was simply inhuman.... What was even more amazing was that Zhou Yixing had been the one to tell him the formulas, and yet, hadn’t mentioned the most important things to pay attention to. One example was how important it was to contain the disturbances that arose in five-colored flame. And yet, despite leaving such things out, this Necromancer Bai had figured everything out on his own. Zhou Yixing couldn’t help but be a bit terrified.

When eight-colored flame appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s palm, Zhou Yixing felt a bit numb, and simply stared in shock, unsure if he was seeing things or not....

But then, rumbling sounds echoed out as a nine-colored flame appeared, and Zhou Yixing shrieked involuntarily. Leaping to his feet, he pointed at Bai Xiaochun, his face as ashen as if he had just seen a ghost, his heart filled with such astonishment that he was about to faint.

“This is impossible!” Zhou Yixing shrieked hysterically. “It’s simply impossible.... You failed on your first try at one-colored flame, but after that, succeeded with everything up to nine-colored flame! I... I don’t know a single master necromancer who would dare to claim to be able to do that. Only terrestrial necromancers are capable of such a thing!! Just who exactly are you!?!?”

The miraculous performance he had just witnessed seemed unbelievably preposterous.

Bai Xiaochun frowned at being interrupted, and looked over at Zhou Yixing with an angry glare. Of course, at the same time, he was feeling very pleased at having just conjured nine-colored flame.

“Pipe down!” he said in his best imitation of someone from the Senior generation. Trying to suppress his excitement at having a nine-colored flame in his palm, he calmed himself and pulled out 30,000 souls. Then he opened his fingers, allowing the nine-colored flame to transform into a sea of fire. Carefully arranging the 30,000 souls, and pouring in his spiritual power in just the right way, he began to feed the souls into the fire. Some went in alone, others in groups of three to five. Before long, they were all inside.

Of course, the speed at which he did all of that defied description. Within about ten breaths’ of time, the souls were merged into the fire, whereupon Bai Xiaochun extended his hand and closed his fist.

RUMBLE!

His hand became like a black hole that sucked in all the surrounding flame. Then, when he opened his fingers, he saw... a ten-colored flame!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0571 awe-chapter-572

The instant the ten-colored flame appeared, the entire cave was illuminated by brightly-colored light. In fact, the light even pierced through the walls of the cave, making the entire mountain light up brightly.

An intensely strong pressure emanated out from the flame, causing Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to go wide with excitement. He even started to tremble visibly.

“I did it! I concocted ten-colored flame!!” He even felt more excited about personally conjuring multi-colored flame than he usually did when concocting medicine.

In contrast to Bai Xiaochun’s excitement, Zhou Yixing’s mind was struck as if by lightning. He simply stood there gaping, his thoughts wiped clean by the sight of the ten-colored flame.

He wanted to believe that he was simply hallucinating... but unfortunately, wasn’t able to fool himself in such a way. He had just witnessed his own clan’s formulas used to conjure everything from one- to ten-colored flame.

It was a matter that had already turned his world upside down. Back home, even patriarchs who were terrestrial necromancers wouldn’t be able to do such a thing.

Even more shocking was that this necromancer had only just learned his clan’s formulas. Despite that, he had still succeeded, something that left Zhou Yixing feeling completely lost.

“This is impossible... impossible.... How could this be happening...?” His face was as white as a sheet of paper as he muttered crazily to himself. It was a huge blow to him, after all, and when he compared himself to this Necromancer Bai, he couldn’t help but feel like he himself was little more than trash.

“Inhuman! He’s really and truly inhuman!!!”

Disappointment surged through him, washing away the jealousy from before. The difference between him and this necromancer... was like the difference between the clouds and the mud beneath them. He didn’t even qualify to be jealous.

Ten-colored flame marked the absolute peak of the master necromancer rank. In all of the Wildlands, the number of necromancers who could conjure ten-colored flame was very limited. Any person like that was capable of dominating the field virtually anywhere they went.

Master necromancers at the peak of their level could attract other large numbers of soul cultivator followers. Furthermore, considering that they could conjure ten-colored flame, when they made soul medicine, it would be considered level ten low-grade soul medicine.

Most necromancers welcomed soul cultivator followers. After all, it took a lot of souls to conjure flame. For example, ten-colored flame required 30,000 vengeful souls. For a necromancer to get all those souls single-handedly would be quite troublesome. Therefore, having followers to help was the natural way of things.

Although, not all necromancers liked having followers. A few of them liked to do things on their own for various reasons. In terms of getting souls, it was also possible to go to the cities of the kings, or the necromancer clans, and trade soul medicine for what they needed.

In any case, necromancers who reached the master rank were generally well-known if not famous. If destiny was on their side, they could achieve a heaven-shaking, earth-toppling advance and become terrestrial necromancers. Terrestrial necromancers were even more famous, and were high above master necromancers in terms of standing.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he tore his gaze away from the ten-colored flame to look over at Zhou Yixing. When their eyes met, all of Zhou Yixing's pride and defiance crumbled, completely destroyed by the ten-colored flame. Mumbling bitterly, he didn't even dare to hold Bai Xiaochun's gaze.

Bai Xiaochun's heart thumped happily. Clearly, it would be much easier to get Zhou Yixing to do what he said in the future.

"Well, since I've already scared him this much, I might as well keep going. I bet that when I conjure an eleven-colored flame and become a terrestrial necromancer, Zhou Yixing will be so shocked he'll end up half dead." Filled with anticipation, Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly to himself and then pulled out the jade slip with the information about the flame formulas. Even as Zhou Yixing stood there watching, he reviewed the eleven-colored flame formula.

Zhou Yixing hesitated for a moment, then whispered, "Fellow Daoist Bai, there's a big difference between ten-colored flame and eleven-colored--"

"You just sit quietly and watch," Bai Xiaochun interrupted proudly. His previous ten successes left him feeling very confident. From what he could tell, conjuring flame was actually a very simple matter.

The way Bai Xiaochun responded to Zhou Yixing caused his heart to begin to pound. The truth was that if he could actually personally witness an eleven-colored flame being conjured, it would be a good thing for him. That was especially true considering that the techniques being used were his own clan’s. To Zhou Yixing, it would be almost the same as watching one of his clan’s patriarchs conjuring flame.

Zhou Yixing sucked in a breath and sat there stock still, gaze fixed on Bai Xiaochun’s hand.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased by Zhou Yixing’s reaction. Making sure to look very impressive, he contemplated the formula for eleven-colored flame, then slapped his bag of holding to produce 60,000 vengeful souls, which erupted like a tempest into the cave. Then, he waved his right hand and sent the souls into the fire.

After about ten breaths of time passed, his expression flickered. Although he was able to control the way the 60,000 souls merged together, as they poured into the ten-colored flame, he realized that an unforeseen transformation was underway. The pressure of the flame power was too intense. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too familiar with the fluctuations of flame conjuring, but could clearly sense them.

“Not good!” Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. Losing control of even one of the souls meant losing control of the entire ten-colored flame. The souls suddenly all poured into the fire at the same time, causing the flame to flicker wildly. Then, a popping sound could be heard… as the flame winked out.

A green wisp of smoke rose up and then faded away. Bai Xiaochun's jaw dropped, and Zhou Yixing was equally stunned.

Bai Xiaochun's breath caught in his throat. To have just finished bragging only to fail dramatically caused his face to burn as if with fire. Roaring angrily, he slapped his bag of holding to produce more souls, and then began to conjure flame, starting from the one-colored variety and going all the way back up to ten. Then he stared at the ten-colored flame and reviewed everything that he had done so far, and then, started another attempt at eleven-colored flame. Soon, rumbling sounds could be heard as... he failed again!

"I refuse to believe that I can't succeed!" Bai Xiaochun furiously smacked his back of holding, only to realize that he was running out of souls.... Then he slowly looked over to Zhou Yixing, who had recovered from his earlier shock and was staring at Bai Xiaochun with a strange expression on his face.

Feeling both humiliated and even more angered, Bai Xiaochun said, "What are you looking at?! Go get me some more souls!! If you don't come back with at least 100,000, then don't come back!"

Giving Zhou Yixing one last good glare, he waved his sleeve, sending him flying out of the cave.

Once outside, Zhou Yixing gnashed his teeth in anger at the domineering ways of this Necromancer Bai. Clearly, he just wasn't skilled enough to conjure eleven-colored flame, and Zhou Yixing had even tried to warn him. Not only had he ignored him, but he had even started bragging. Then when he failed, he vented his anger on Zhou Yixing.

Chuckling coldly, he said, “Hmph! You really think it’s that simple to become a terrestrial necromancer?!” Unfortunately, because of the restrictive spells Bai Xiaochun had placed on his cultivation base, he had no choice other than to follow orders and go catch some souls.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun’s clone had already captured all of the nearby souls, so no matter where he searched in the area, he couldn’t find a single one. Gritting his teeth, he expanded his search. As he walked along, evening began to fall. At the same time, dark clouds filled the sky, and rain began to fall, rain that was acrid in odor and hurt when it touched his skin.

Occasionally, green bolts of lightning would crackle across the sky above.

At any other time, Zhou Yixing would simply have rotated his cultivation base and ignored the rain. But having ninety-five percent of it sealed, he was forced to endure it in misery and cursing.

“I hate people named Bai! If only the Hell-Emperor would notice what was happening, send down a bolt of hell-lightning and wipe that guy off the map!”

After sending Zhou Yixing out to hunt for souls, Bai Xiaochun sent his three clones out to do the same thing, except that he told them to search in the jungle.

His clones had the same cultivation base as he did, and were also equipped with Soul Convergence Pills, which made things a bit easier for them than it was for Zhou Yixing. As for Bai Xiaochun himself, he sat there silently, analyzing his previous failures and working on some more conjurings.

One day, two days, three....

Soon, seven days had gone by, and Bai Xiaochun had successfully conjured more than ten tongues of ten-colored flame. However, he hadn’t been able to push a single one to the eleven-colored level. Every time, he met with failure.

As his fury and humiliation grew, his eyes became more bloodshot. His hair was disheveled, and he seemed bedeviled as he madly tried to determine the reason for his failure. As more time passed, he began to change the formula he was using for eleven-colored flame, even though he didn’t realize it.

Thanks to the changes, his skill in flame conjuring advanced steadily. However, he continued to face difficulties at every turn, the reason being that there was actually a bottleneck between ten- and eleven-colored flame.

Not only did one need to adjust the formula, but one also had to have perfect control over ten-colored flame. Days passed, and Bai Xiaochun continued to descend into a state of bedevilment....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0572 awe-chapter-573

As Bai Xiaochun went about his flame conjuring, eight days went by....

Meanwhile, some distance away, Zhou Yixing was flying along through the air, his hair disheveled, coughing up blood.

Chasing him was a group of more than a hundred savage giants.

“You people push things too far!!” Zhou Yixing howled in frustration. Bai Xiaochun had asked him to bring back 100,000 souls, but with his cultivation base sealed, that was an almost impossible task. Although he was actually in late Core Formation, he had never recovered completely from the labyrinth, and that meant that the five percent of his cultivation base he had access to gave him battle prowess roughly equivalent to early Foundation Establishment.

At one point, he had considered taking advantage of his relative freedom to flee. However, he soon discovered that if he went too far away from Bai Xiaochun, the restrictive spell inside of him would begin to show signs of detonation. As such, he had no choice but to abandon such thoughts of fleeing, and continue to curse Bai Xiaochun even more than before.

At one point, he realized that he was being stalked, or perhaps even hunted. Just when he had turned to flee, he found that a group of savage giants had appeared to block his path. He fought and killed some, but their numbers continued to grow until he was virtually surrounded. As of that moment, he realized that he was like a weak animal being assaulted by vicious predators.

Because of the dangerous crisis, he finally resorted to using a secret magic to break free, something that drained him of some of his life force but gave him a huge burst of speed. Unfortunately, his use of the secret magic only got the savage giants more interested in him, and they began to dog him relentlessly.

Zhou Yixing couldn’t have been more frustrated. If his cultivation base wasn’t sealed, then he would never have let these Foundation Establishment giants off the hook. He would have cut them all down with a mere thought.

But now, his soul power was sealed, and most of his magical techniques were unusable. The predicament had tears leaking out of his eyes as he realized that if the giants caught him, he would definitely die.

“I'm a master necromancer!” he shouted. “How dare you do this to me!!” Even as Zhou Yixing’s voice rang out, two soul blades suddenly screamed through the air toward him, a powerful attack that slammed into him and sent him staggering to the side, coughing up blood.

The more than one hundred savages behind him were all completely focused on chasing him, and there were even two soul cultivators with them, who were eying Zhou Yixing as if he were some sort of treasure.

However, once they heard him call himself a master necromancer, their expressions flickered with hesitation. A similar reaction could be seen among the savages.

“Necromancer?” one of the soul cultivators said. “His soul power fluctuations are weak, so even if he's a necromancer, we should still be able to take him. But what if he's hiding his true cultivation base level? What if he's really in Core Formation, but injured? That means that if we don't kill him now, we could be bringing a huge disaster on us in the future....”

After a long moment of hesitation, the two soul cultivators exchanged a glance, and then one of them called out, “If you’re really a master necromancer, then make some seven-colored flame! Then we’ll believe you. In fact, we’ll even offer an apology and give you some gifts of compensation!”

Zhou Yixing was instantly more frustrated than before. He had no seven-colored flame on him, and because his cultivation base was sealed, he couldn't conjure any. Having no way to prove who he was, he simply roared in fury and then used his secret magic to flee again.

To see Zhou Yixing flee actually left the two soul cultivators feeling quite relieved.

“How dare he impersonate a necromancer!!”

“He can’t get far. Chase him down! If we kill him, the current crisis our Blackmountain Tribe is facing can be solved! Besides, he's injured and only in the Foundation Establishment stage. He’s a gift from the Hell-Emperor to our Blackmountain Tribe to help us pass this difficult time!!”

With that, they began to chase after him again.

The chase continued, with Zhou Yixing using all the power he could muster to flee. Soon, he was so angry and tired that he felt like he was going to explode.

“I hate people named Bai!” he cursed inwardly. “Everyone in the world named Bai is on my hate list now!!! I kindly told him that eleven-colored flame was very hard to summon. If he wanted to ignore my warning, fine, but why did he have to get so angry when he failed!?

“If it weren’t for him getting pissed off and forcing me to go find souls, I would never be in this situation!”

More and more enemies were joining the chase, giving the infuriated Zhou Yixing no other choice than to continue to use his secret magic to race back toward Bai Xiaochun in the cave, coughing up blood the entire time.

This was a day that Zhou Yixing would never be able to forget for his entire life. Only by repeatedly drawing on his life force to fuel his secret magic was he able to stay alive. By now, some of his hair was turning white, revealing the true price he was paying to flee.

Eventually, he caught sight of the barren mountain where Bai Xiaochun was located. Never could he have imagined that he would be so overjoyed at the prospect of returning. Tears leaking out of his eyes, he looked back at his pursuers and shouted, “You people just wait!”

The two soul cultivators, and the giants they led, got a bad feeling when they looked at the mountain that was Zhou Yixing’s destination, but didn’t stop chasing him. The soul cultivators even gritted their teeth and performed incantation gestures to unleash a joint soul power attack.

Instantly, two soul blades appeared, each one a dozen meters long or more. Even as they appeared, they fused together, becoming a 30-meter long weapon. At the same time, the savages howled in fury, causing streams of qi and blood to erupt from their bodies, a black mist that merged with the soul blade, causing it to grow even larger. By this point, it was fully 150 meters long as it slashed toward Zhou Yixing.

As a result, the two soul cultivators were significantly drained, and the more than one hundred savages all had ashen faces. And yet, they were looking toward Zhou Yixing with keen anticipation.

“Tribal secret magic!!” Zhou Yixing exclaimed, shocked. Wracked with anxiety, he coughed up eight mouthfuls of blood as he again unleashed his secret magic, narrowly staying ahead of the soul blade as he shot toward the mountain.

“Help me, Fellow Daoist Bai!!” he shouted. At the same time, the 150-meter long soul blade bore down on both Zhou Yixing and the mountain itself, clearly moments away from reducing everything to dust!

Bai Xiaochun’s three clones were still out collecting souls, so his true self sat alone inside the cave on top of the mountain. Currently, a vicious expression could be seen on his face; his hair was wildly disheveled, and his eyes were completely bloodshot, as if with madness.

Right in the middle of his palm was a tongue of ten-colored flame, into which he was feeding a seemingly endless stream of vengeful souls. He was completely and utterly focused, and didn’t dare to allow himself to be distracted. His eyes were bloodshot, and he didn’t even know how much time had passed. All he knew was that his repeated failures had come at incredible cost. Because of all that, he had no idea what was happening outside the cave.

“This time it's definitely going to work. It has to!!” The ten-colored flame gobbled up all the souls, and an eleventh color was just about to appear in the flames, when all of a sudden, the flame destabilized. Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and he quickly performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and then pushed his finger into the flame.

However, the flame only flickered more wildly, and then powerful fluctuations began to roll out of it that caused Bai Xiaochun’s expression to flicker.

It was in that moment that Zhou Yixing’s scream reached his ears, as did the howling of the more than one hundred savage giants.

Then, all such sounds were drowned out by the massive explosion which occurred when the ten-colored flame completely destabilized and detonated!

Shrieking, Bai Xiaochun shot backward, pulling out his Eternal Parasol to protect himself as the entire mountain shook violently!

Before the soul blade could even reach the mountain, the top blew off, and massive flames shot out in all directions!

Flaming rubble and even lava spewed out, completely destroying the soul blade as if it had never even existed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0573 awe-chapter-574

Everything was happening too quickly. Whether it was Zhou Yixing or his pursuers, none of them even had a chance to react before the entire mountain in front of them erupted like a volcano.

The way the mountain collapsed, even to the point where lava was streaming out of it, made them feel as if they were suddenly facing some vicious monster. Shrieking, everyone began to back up.

Thankfully, the flame and lava didn’t shoot out very far, and soon began to fade away. Zhou Yixing had been blackened a bit, and that was even after he had shot backward at full speed for fear of being incinerated.

Everyone was completely shocked, and all hearts began to pound in astonishment.

It was then that an enraged voice echoed out from within the remaining sea of flames.

“How dare you people!! I can’t believe you would actually interrupt my flame conjuring!!” Even as the fury of the words continued to float in the air, the last of the fire faded away, and Bai Xiaochun appeared, a very unsightly expression on his face as he strode forward.

His robes were in tatters, but the rage in his heart couldn’t have been more intense. He had been absolutely convinced that he was about to succeed, and was sure that the only reason he had failed was because he had been interrupted.

As soon as his bloodshot eyes caught sight of the savages and soul cultivators, Bai Xiaochun slapped his bag of holding to produce a seven-colored flame.

“A master necromancer!!” As soon as the savages saw the seven-colored flame, they began to instinctively tremble and pant in fear.

As for the two soul cultivators, they were in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, but even they were staring at Bai Xiaochun with pale-faced astonishment.

They knew that seven-colored flame was the hallmark of master necromancers, and that people such as that were the type who could gather large groups of soul cultivator followers. Furthermore, it was now obvious that the person they were chasing must be the follower of this master necromancer.

Not only had they tried to kill the follower of a master necromancer, but they had interrupted that very master necromancer when he was conjuring flame.... The two soul cultivators, who were already sweating profusely, then noticed how bloodshot Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were, and that he was clearly enraged. Immediately, they clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Please quell your anger, Master Necromancer....”

“We really didn't know that you were here conjuring flame, Master Necromancer. Please, quell your anger. We... we can offer compensation!” After hearing the soul cultivators’ trembling words, and seeing them bowing, the savages behind them all dropped down to kowtow.

When Bai Xiaochun saw all of that, his fury began to subside. After all, the interference during the critical moment of flame conjuring was not the main reason his eleven-colored flame had failed. The biggest fault lay in his lack of control.

Although he had solved all the previous problems he had encountered, a new problem had suddenly arisen, which led to the explosion moments ago that had shocked even him.

“There were obviously some internal instabilities. But there were instabilities before, and never such an explosion....” Muttering thoughtfully to himself, he pondered the situation in search of an answer. Meanwhile, the two panicked soul cultivators offered profuse apologies. However, then they considered the crisis their tribe was facing, and suddenly exchanged a glance.

“Grandmaster,” one of them said, “now that your immortal's cave is destroyed, could it be that you are temporarily without a place of residence? If so, why not come to our tribe to rest up a bit?”

Bai Xiaochun glanced back at the destroyed mountain cave, and then nodded. What he needed right now was exactly that; a quiet place to analyze the problem with the eleven-colored flame.

Considering how the soul cultivators and the savages were treating him, Bai Xiaochun finally understood what kind of a position necromancers occupied in the Wildlands. It was definitely beyond anything he had imagined before.

Off to the side, Zhou Yixing was stewing in his own anger. After all, he had mentioned that he was a master necromancer, and yet the savages and soul cultivators had refused to believe him.

Soon, the soul cultivators and savages were cautiously leading Bai Xiaochun back to their tribe. It wasn’t a very large tribe, with only about a thousand members, who made their home in one of the local mountain valleys.

The tribe was fortified, but in a very primitive fashion, with immortal's caves dug into the sides of the mountains. Bai Xiaochun was immediately treated as an honored guest, and was personally give an immortal's cave that had previously belonged to one of the two soul cultivators. Even better, they constantly provided him tribute in the form of vengeful souls.

There were other forms of compensation as well. Yet again, Bai Xiaochun was struck by how important necromancers were in the Wildlands. Whenever he ran into any of the savage giants, they looked at him with a mixture of fear and respect. Bai Xiaochun was quite sure that if he asked them to, they would do anything he wanted.

As for the two soul cultivators, they clearly respected and feared him, but at the same time, wanted something of him, although they seemed hesitant to speak of it openly.

Everyone assumed that Zhou Yixing was one of Bai Xiaochun’s followers, and therefore, they also treated him with great respect, and gave him handsome compensation, although not quite to the same level as Bai Xiaochun.

After being in the tribe for only about half a month, his daily usage of souls ensured that the two soul cultivators couldn’t prevent from gritting their teeth when they handed them over. Finally, Bai Xiaochun started to feel bad about it.

The next time they came to deliver souls, he sighed and said, “Alright, spit it out. What do you want my help with?”

The two soul cultivators couldn’t conceal their excitement. They had been holding back this entire time, so now that Bai Xiaochun took the initiative to bring up the subject, they exchanged a glance and then revealed the truth.

Two months before, the Hell-Emperor had issued a proclamation indicating that he would be selecting a successor to receive his legacy. Very demanding qualifications had been put in place for the successor, and virtually everyone in the Wildlands was going mad to prepare, including people in the city of the kings, as well as the necromancer clans.

There was a cultivation base limitation for those who could compete to become the successor, and for many, that meant that a vast quantity of soul medicine was needed to improve their cultivation base. As a result, the three great clans that lived under the control of Giant Ghost City were going all out in their preparations, which included issuing strict orders to the tribes in their respective areas of influence to provide large amounts of soul medicine. Any tribe who couldn’t meet the requirement would face potential execution.

Because of an event which had occurred recently, the Blackmountain Tribe was particularly weak, and was temporarily incapable of producing any soul medicine. As a result, they had come up with three ways to solve the problem: sell other products produced in their tribe; find a necromancer to help them; or resort to banditry to try to get soul medicine.

They were currently utilizing all three different options to try to escape from this disaster....

Bai Xiaochun found the whole explanation a bit confusing. However, Zhou Yixing's eyes went wide. In fact, the news that the Hell-Emperor was looking for a successor caused his eyes to shine with unprecedented brightness.

Bai Xiaochun maintained a neutral expression, and managed to casually ask for some more details in a way that didn't reveal his lack of understanding. Of course, Zhou Yixing was so excited about the whole matter that he didn't notice that at all, and proceeded to tell Bai Xiaochun everything he knew.

It was only at this point that Bai Xiaochun finally came to understand that, in addition to the Arch-Emperor from the imperial city, there was also a Hell-Emperor in the Wildlands!

There was a legend about the Hell-Emperor which stated that after the first generation Arch-Emperor died, his soul didn't vanish, but instead, became the Underworld River. It went on to control the aspect of death in the world, and was the spirit of the Underworld River. That was the origin of the Hell-Emperor!

From generation to generation, the faith of the people ruled by the Arch-Emperor would bolster the Hell-Emperor's strength. In fact, over the years, the savages had been influenced by the soul cultivators to the point where they also began to exercise faith in the Hell-Emperor.

Essentially, the Arch-Emperor was a physical leader who everyone could see, whereas the Hell-Emperor was a symbolic luminary!

Also according to legend, the Hell-Emperor's palace existed deep within the Underworld River, which was where the Hell-Emperor resided. Occasionally, he would send emissaries out into the world of the living, people who were always treated with the utmost respect, even by the reigning Arch-Emperor.

Two months before, the Underworld River had appeared above the imperial city, and a stone stele descended with a Dharmic decree. According to that decree, a successor was to be chosen within one sixty-year-cycle, a successor who could become the next generation Hell-Emperor!

The Wildlands were fully shaken; after all, this was the first time in countless years that there had ever even been mention of the Hell-Emperor choosing a successor.

All of the clans, marquis, and lords in the imperial city, as well as the powerful forces in the four kingly cities and even other influential groups, were profoundly moved. Everyone wanted the Hell-Emperor’s successor to come from their group!

Two prerequisites had to be met to be a potential successor: First, to have a Nascent Soul cultivation base. Second, to officially acquire candidacy qualifications!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0574 awe-chapter-575

Of the two requirements, the latter was the most important.

After all, even in the Wildlands, Nascent Soul cultivators were no rarity. That was especially the case because powerful necromancers could make soul medicine that gave them an advantage over the soul cultivators. For them, it was much easier to break through from Core Formation into the Nascent Soul stage.

Therefore, the most difficult of the prerequisites was to gain candidacy qualifications!

“How do you get the candidacy qualifications?” Zhou Yixing asked, looking very serious, his heart pounding in his chest. The matter of the Hell-Emperor choosing a successor was a monumental one for the entire Wildlands, so even Zhou Yixing, despite not having a Nascent Soul cultivation base at the moment, was still thinking of trying to join the competition.

Bai Xiaochun sat there listening thoughtfully as the two soul cultivators explained everything they knew. After all, the matter was no secret.

“To get candidacy qualifications,” said one of the soul cultivators, “you have to be a necromancer. Most importantly, you must have performed at least a fivefold spirit enhancement on your Nascent Soul. That’s the only way to get candidacy qualifications!”

As soon as Zhou Yixing heard this explanation, his face fell. “How are you supposed to do that?!?! Nascent Soul spirit enhancement is a high-level skill, legendary even among necromancers! It’s true that doing such a thing can lead to explosively quick cultivation progress, and also incredible power. But... very few people can even attempt to do such a thing! And a *fivefold* enhancement... isn’t that courting death!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered brightly. He had never heard of anything like this before; the idea of performing a spirit enhancement on one’s own Nascent Soul seemed unimaginable, and also incredibly difficult.

After all, there was always the chance of a spirit enhancement failing, and that probability would increase with each enhancement from the first to the fifth. If an enhancement on a magical item failed, then the item would be destroyed, but if an enhancement on one’s own Nascent Soul failed... then presumably, the outcome would be the same.

A failure leading to the destruction of one's Nascent Soul would result in being obliterated from existence. Not very many people would dare to attempt such a thing.... Bai Xiaochun was shocked, and at the same time, realized why Zhou Yixing’s face had drained of blood. Obviously... the only people who would make such an attempt would either be supremely self-confident, or utterly crazy.

“That’s definitely the requirement,” said the soul cultivator. “Even still, the chance to become the successor of the Hell-Emperor has already got many Nascent Soul experts preparing to compete.... Don’t forget that in Arch-Emperor City, there is that mysterious stone stele that came from the Underworld River itself. Supposedly, it can sense if anyone in the Wildlands comes close to meeting the two prerequisites, and will then list their names publicly, showing how many spirit enhancements have been performed on their Nascent Soul.

“The name list on that stone stele is right out in the open for everyone to see. I heard that the names of seven or eight chosen Nascent Soul experts are already there.... After a sixty-year-cycle passes, whoever occupies the 1st place spot on that stone stele will become the successor of the Hell-Emperor....” After hearing this next set of information, Zhou Yixing’s ambitions were instantly crushed. The entire thing seemed completely insane. The idea of performing five spirit enhancements on his Nascent Soul seemed more like trying to play chicken with death five times in a row.

On the other hand, Bai Xiaochun blinked and said, “A fivefold spirit enhancement on your Nascent Soul? That doesn’t seem very hard.”

“Not very hard?” Zhou Yixing blurted, staring at Bai Xiaochun with wide eyes, clearly having forgotten his place for the moment. By now, Zhou Yixing was convinced that there was no way he could ever participate in a competition like this, and his excitement from before began to wane.

“Even if you think a fivefold spirit enhancement isn’t hard,” he said tartly, “do you really think that all you have to do to stay in 1st place is that? The Nascent Soul chosen are definitely going to be fighting it out to the last man. The fivefold spirit enhancement is just the beginning. If you want to get into 1st place and stay there, you’ll probably have to perform more spirit enhancements than that!

“When the time comes, think about the fact that all of the chosen in the competition will come from powerful organizations and groups. Five definitely won't be the limit. I bet we’ll see seven or even eightfold enhancements!

“You know, there’s even a legend that if you can perform a fifteenfold spirit enhancement on your Nascent Soul, you can break through into the mid Nascent Soul stage. An eighteenfold enhancement will get you into the late Nascent Soul stage. A twentyfold enhancement is the great circle. There probably isn’t even a need to mention the legendary realm of a twenty-onefold spirit enhanced Nascent Soul, which is guaranteed to push you into the Deva Realm! But who would possibly dare to attempt such a thing!?”

By this point he realized that he had just spoken a bit impetuously, and his heart began to pound. Worried that he might have pushed the boundaries too far, he said, “It’s definitely a dead end. Literally. Besides, if you want to fuse with heaven and earth and reach the Deva Realm, you can also use fifteenfold spirit enhanced magical items. Although there’s always a chance of failure using that method, it's still a much more stable path to take.”

An imperceptible flicker of light ran through Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as he suddenly came to a deeper understanding of how Wildlander necromancers became devas.

For one thing, it had to do with the ranking of the necromancer in question. After all, the requirement to make a cultivation base breakthrough in such a fashion was to perform a fifteenfold spirit enhancement on a magical item, and to fuse with heaven and earth.

And only celestial necromancers could conjure fifteen-colored flame....

“It seems that everything in the Wildlands has to do with necromancers....”

Necromancers could progress their cultivation by performing spirit enhancements on their nascent soul. However, it was a path in which one step could lead to the heavens, but a misstep could lead to the Nine Serenities underworld. Life or death would be determined in the briefest of moments.

At least... that was how it would be for most people. As for Bai Xiaochun, his heart was already racing madly as he contemplated his turtle-wok and its spirit enhancement abilities.

“If I ever reach the Nascent Soul stage one day... then maybe I can use my turtle-wok to advance my cultivation base by leaps and bounds. In fact... it might not even be impossible to become a deva.”

Of course, he knew that such matters were for the distant future. Right now, the most important thing was to get back to the Great Wall, and also, get more deva souls.

He had already formed three deva soul clones, which meant that he couldn’t achieve cultivation base breakthroughs with deva beast souls anymore. The only option he had now was to find metal- and earth-type deva souls.

The more he thought about deva souls, the more anxious he got.

By this point, the two soul cultivators had finished all of their explanations. Looking at Bai Xiaochun with pleading eyes, they clasped hands and bowed.

“Exalted one, the entire Wildlands has been shaken by this matter recently. Whether it’s the princes in the imperial city, or the chosen from the cities of the kings, or the necromancer clans, they’ve all gone crazy.... They’re using every method they can think of to fight for the chance to become the successor of the Hell-Emperor.

“It’s the same in Giant Ghost City. Not only is the city itself demanding large amounts of soul medicine, the three great necromancer clans are also doing the same thing in the hopes of improving the cultivation bases of their clan members. Because of that, the taxes have been raised very high recently....

“In fact, the orders only came down recently that our soul medicine tribute requirement had been more than doubled.... Our Blackmountain Tribe really can’t meet the requirement, so we had no choice but to try to think of some other way to pay up.” The more they talked, the more the Blackmountain Tribe soul cultivators seemed to sink into despondency.

“Grandmaster Bai, we beg of you to help us. If you can concoct five hundred portions of low-grade soul medicine for us, we would be more than willing to pay a soulhoarding pagoda in exchange.” The two soul cultivators clasped hands and bowed deeply, and then one of them pulled a small gray pagoda out of his garment and respectfully held it out toward Bai Xiaochun.

A gray mist pulsed out of the little pagoda, completely surrounding it and making it difficult to see it clearly. At the same time, it emanated a feeling of ancientness, as though it had existed since primeval times.

The five levels of the pagoda were all integrated smoothly, making it look more like a conical tower than a traditional pagoda. Even more surprising to Bai Xiaochun, he could sense the power of spatial magic within it, something very similar to bags of holding.

If you put vengeful souls into a bag of holding, they would slowly deteriorate in much the same way that food would rot away if left out in the open. Only the legendary soulhoarding pagodas could keep vengeful souls fresh indefinitely.

As Bai Xiaochun examined the soulhoarding pagoda, Zhou Yixing looked on enviously. Although soulhoarding pagodas weren’t exactly rare, they were still very valuable, and were highly prized by necromancers. As for this particular pagoda, it was clearly very well crafted, and very old.

Although a five-story soulhoarding pagoda might not be anything particularly amazing to extremely powerful necromancers, to ordinary necromancers, they were like precious gems. However, to Bai Xiaochun, it seemed like little more than a bag of holding.

“What so amazing about that?” Zhou Yixing grumbled inwardly. “I had one before too....” And yet, he couldn’t help but be a bit envious. His previous soulhoarding pagoda, which had been gifted to him by his clan patriarch, only had three stories. Unfortunately, after being injured by Bai Xiaochun in the labyrinth, he had encountered another powerful enemy, and in the resulting fight, the pagoda had been destroyed....

As Zhou Yixing stewed in his envy, Bai Xiaochun looked thoughtfully at the soulhoarding pagoda. Then, his eyes flashed as if with lightning.

“Now I understand why I kept failing at conjuring eleven-colored flame!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0575 awe-chapter-576

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t control his breathing as he reached out and made a grasping gesture, causing the soulhoarding pagoda to fly out of the soul cultivator’s hand and fly toward him.

As soon as he had it in hand, he sent some divine sense inside, and detected a strong spatial power that was uniquely designed to nourish souls!

Now that his speculations were confirmed, his eyes began to shine with bright light.

“So, I was right! Soulhoarding pagodas really are like bags of holding! Except, they’re specifically designed to hold vengeful souls. If you put souls into a bag of holding, they slowly degenerate and eventually just fade away. But if you put them in a soulhoarding pagoda, they’ll stay in perfect condition forever!

“Furthermore, the reason I couldn’t conjure eleven-colored flame wasn’t a lack of proficiency with the technique, nor any problems that cropped up during the process. The reason... was because the souls I was using to try to make the eleven-colored flame had already begun to degenerate!!

“Although they had only degenerated a small bit because they were in a bag of holding, a little bit of degeneration with such a large group of souls would eventually build up into a major instability!

“The instability would only get more intense until eventually... it leads to detonation!!

“So basically, if I keep the vengeful souls inside of a soulhoarding pagoda, then when it comes time to conjure flame, I shouldn’t have any problem at all. I should definitely be able to conjure eleven-colored flame!!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun was more excited than ever, and couldn’t wait to test out his theory.

When Zhou Yixing and the two soul cultivators saw how excited Bai Xiaochun was, none of them were really sure what was going on. Zhou Yixing was a bit taken aback, but the two soul cultivators were starting to get excited, convinced that this grandmaster necromancer was going to help them.

Deciding that it was best to strike while the iron was hot, they exchanged a glance, then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Grandmaster,” one of them said, “there are plenty of vengeful souls in that soulhoarding pagoda. As for the extra beyond what it will take to concoct the soul medicine in question, please keep them as our means of apologizing for everything that happened before.”

Ignoring Zhou Yixing and the two soul cultivators, Bai Xiaochun continued to examine the soulhoarding pagoda with his divine sense, and then began to count how many souls were inside.

From the number, he could tell that the Blackmountain Tribe was both anxious about the matter they had brought to his attention, and also sincere in their offer.

Feeling very pleased, he nodded and said, “Alright, I’ll help you concoct the--”

Before he could finish speaking, though, he suddenly looked up into the sky.

Soon, a beam of light became visible, streaking through the air at incredible speed as it headed directly toward the Blackmountain Tribe.

Even before it arrived, the aura of the great circle of Core Formation erupted from inside, causing the beam of light to shine radiantly in the evening sky.

Everyone in the Blackmountain Tribe was shaken, and countless savages gasped. As for the two soul cultivators standing near Bai Xiaochun, their faces fell as they looked up.

Zhou Yixing was clearly shocked, and his pupils constricted as he realized that whoever this newcomer was, he had a profound cultivation base that was on par with his own.

Everyone watched as the beam of light reached a position above the Blackmountain Tribe, and then faded away to reveal a middle-aged man with long black hair that flowed over his shoulders. He had average features, but his murderous aura was especially strong. Furthermore, he was surrounded by a black mist, within which could occasionally be seen twisted faces that were apparently vengeful souls.

The fluctuations emanating off of the man were not the soul power fluctuations of a soul cultivator. No, this man... was a necromancer!!

Everything and everyone in the area was shaken by this lofty figure who gazed out of the corner of his eye at what was happening down below. After looking at Zhou Yixing, his gaze fell onto Bai Xiaochun for a moment, and then he noticed the soulhoarding pagoda. At that point, a cold gleam appeared in his eyes, and he looked over at the two soul cultivators.

“Are you the leaders of the Blackmountain Tribe?” he said coldly. “Step forward and offer greetings!” From his tone of voice, he seemed like the ultimate ruler of this area, as if his mere presence was good fortune for the Blackmountain Tribe.

Almost immediately, the two soul cultivators stepped forward nervously and then clasped hands and bowed deeply in formal greeting.

“Greetings, exalted necromancer,” they both echoed.

“I, Li Feng, am here to solve the problem of your Blackmountain Tribe’s five hundred portions of low-grade soul medicine. So hand over that soulhoarding pagoda!” Li Feng was clearly not making a request, and expected his words to be obeyed immediately. If not, he would raze the entire area to the ground.

Actually, the entire reason he had come here was because he had been passing through the area and had heard the news that the Blackmountain Tribe was offering a soulhoarding pagoda in exchange for a large batch of low-grade soul medicine.

The prospect of getting a soulhoarding pagoda was very enticing to Li Feng. After all, soulhoarding pagodas were relatively commonplace among necromancer clans, but Li Feng was a rogue cultivator. To him, paying the price of five hundred portions of low-grade soul medicine to get a soulhoarding pagoda would definitely be well worth it.

As soon as he'd heard the news, he'd hurried over to the tribe’s headquarters. Unfortunately, as soon as he saw that the soulhoarding pagoda was in Bai Xiaochun’s hands, he realized that he had probably arrived a bit too late....

And yet, it was too important of an opportunity for him to just give up. And besides, he was still confident that he could get the soulhoarding pagoda for himself, regardless of whether or not he had come late.

Bai Xiaochun simply stood there, blinking a few times but withholding any comment.

The two Blackmountain Tribe soul cultivators were a bit stunned. Before Bai Xiaochun had shown up, they would have been ecstatic at Li Feng’s arrival. But now that there were two necromancers to deal with, they weren’t sure what to do. Obviously, they didn’t want to offend either one of them.

After a long moment of hesitation, one of them said, “Um... exalted one, this other grandmaster already agreed to help us. Er....”

In response, Li Feng’s gaze sharpened, becoming something like sword light that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“The affairs of this region have nothing to do with you,” he said. “Furthermore, I want that soulhoarding pagoda. Give it to me immediately.” His glare was terrifying to behold, and his words were spoken with the utmost arrogance. From the cold look in his eye, he would obviously fly into a complete rage if Bai Xiaochun didn’t do exactly as he said.

There was also a certain disdain in his coldness, a disdain birthed from supreme self-confidence.

Bai Xiaochun glared back up at Li Feng in irritation. As far as he was concerned, he had done the right thing by refraining from going around bullying people, and yet, here someone had come to try and bully him. That was especially true considering that the soulhoarding pagoda was at stake. That pagoda was very important to him, and was not something he would simply abandon.

“What are you looking at?!” Li Feng said, his eyes flickering icily.

“I’m looking at you!” Bai Xiaochun replied, popping his neck. “Got a problem with that?!” As he stared, he mused that, in his entire life, he had never been bested in a staring contest. Considering that, he actually made his gaze look even more fierce as he stared up at Li Feng.

The two soul cultivators from the Blackmountain Tribe looked at Li Feng and then Bai Xiaochun, and finally just sighed. By this point, they knew that they couldn’t do anything about the situation, and would just have to wait and see how things played out. Besides, as long as they got what they were looking for out of the deal, it didn't matter to them who won out in the end.

After a few breaths worth of time, Li Feng suddenly laughed out loud. However, it was an icy, disdainful laugh that seemed to say he didn’t want to lower himself to the level of speaking at length with Bai Xiaochun. With that, he extended his right hand, within which appeared... a ten-colored flame!!

Almost immediately, the ten-colored flame caused the fading evening light to grow even dimmer. The Blackmountain Tribe savages almost immediately began to cry out in surprise.

“Ten-colored flame!!”

“Heavens, he’s... he’s at the peak of the master necromancer rank!!” The savages all began to drop to their knees to kowtow.

The savages weren’t the only shocked ones. The two soul cultivator’s minds were reeling, and they immediately rushed forward to kowtow, feeling completely shaken.

“The peak of the master necromancer rank! Necromancers like that are very rare. With only a bit of progress, he’ll reach the terrestrial rank!!”

“A necromancer like that agreeing to concoct soul medicine for us is good fortune for our tribe!!”

“I can’t believe that this Li Feng is at the peak of the master necromancer rank!! Wonderful, wonderful! Looks like we have a chance to survive after all!”

Off to the side, Zhou Yixing was feeling very excited at the chance to gloat at Bai Xiaochun’s misfortune. If Li Feng could crush this Necromancer Bai in battle, then Zhou Yixing would finally be free of his current situation. “Come on,” he thought, “start fighting. Take him out!”

Li Feng was very pleased at the crowd’s reaction. The truth was that he had only recently succeeded in conjuring ten-colored flame, so the feeling of being virtually worshipped for showing it in public was quite new to him. Looking down at Bai Xiaochun with a cold sneer, he said, “Screw off!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0576 awe-chapter-577

Li Feng really was extremely confident in himself. He could tell that Bai Xiaochun had an extraordinary cultivation base, but he didn’t care. The fact that he had the power of ten-colored flame on his side made him fully confident in being able to look down on almost anyone in the same cultivation level as himself.

He was a necromancer who relied mostly on soul fire when it came to magical combat. As long as his opponent wasn’t a higher ranked necromancer than himself, and had a similar cultivation base, then he was confident in being able to secure victory.

Li Feng looked down at Bai Xiaochun, chuckling coldly in his heart, completely confident that as long this opponent of his wasn’t completely foolish, he wouldn't dare to cause problems.

Bai Xiaochun frowned as he looked up at the openly aggressive Li Feng. At the same time, the words being spoken by the onlookers reached his ears. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, Li Feng was being far too overbearing. Obviously, he was pulling out a ten-colored flame in an attempt to steal Bai Xiaochun’s thunder!

Shaking his head inwardly, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but think that Li Feng didn’t match up to him at all. “This Li Feng has a Core Formation cultivation base, but his personality clearly doesn’t match. We cultivators should emphasize inner qualities, and should refrain from bombastic showboating. Even if you want to show off, you shouldn’t do it in such crude fashion.”

At the same time, he was wondering whether he should just exterminate him with a single blow, or show him by example what it meant to make a big scene.

As he tried to decide what to do, the two soul cultivators from the Blackmountain Tribe began to make vague requests of Bai Xiaochun to return the soulhoarding pagoda. Considering that he could only conjure seven-colored flame, whereas Li Feng could conjure ten-colored flame, it seemed obvious who was in the superior position.

However, they kept their requests extremely vague, as they didn't want to offend Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun simply ignored them, prompting Zhou Yixing to clear his throat and whisper, “This is not the type of person you want to mess with, exalted one. Why don’t we just back off...?”

Bai Xiaochun’s glare intensified. More displeased than ever, he decided that it was indeed time to show, not only Li Feng, but everyone else present, what it meant to make a scene!

“I hate it when people try to show off in front of me!” he thought. Sticking his chin up and looking around with disdain, he waved his hand to produce a tongue of seven-colored flame.

The instant the seven-colored flame appeared, strange looks could be seen on the faces of the savages and the two soul cultivators. As for Li Feng, he chuckled softly and said, “I think you’ve bitten off a bit more than you can chew.”

Bai Xiaochun snorted. “Li Feng, when you run into necromancers in the Wildlands, you would do well to hold back from saying things like that. You should really take this advice of mine to heart.”

The words sounded very profound and meaningful, and coupled with the way his hair floated around him and his clothing rippled in the wind, it made him seem very elegant and beyond ordinary.

There was something archaic to his voice, something that echoed about in heaven and earth. It almost seemed rueful, as though he were thinking back to memories of the past. The entire picture he presented was instantly etched deeply into the minds of those present.

“Allow me to elaborate,” he continued. “You see, in a situation like this, you have no idea who exactly you are dealing with, and no clue as to what incredible individual you might be facing.” Shaking his head, he waved his left hand, causing a vast quantity of vengeful souls to pour out from the soulhoarding pagoda.

As soon as the souls appeared, Bai Xiaochun threw the seven-colored flame out in front of him, causing it to spread out into a sea of fire. Then, he sent the vengeful souls pouring inside.

It happened very quickly. In the blink of an eye, rumbling sounds could be heard as the sea of flames rushed back into Bai Xiaochun’s palm, transforming into a single entity. It was... a tongue of flame with an additional color!!

It had become eight-colored flame!!

All of the savages looked over with wide eyes.

“Eight-colored flame! He... he just conjured flame!!”

“The wave of a hand turned seven-colored flame into eight-colored flame. This... this....”

The two soul cultivators were completely shaken. They had seen necromancers conjure flame in the past, but had never seen anyone do it as casually as Bai Xiaochun just had. He had moved with utmost fluidity, seemingly transforming seven-colored flame into eight-colored flame with almost no effort!

They weren’t the only shocked ones. Up in midair, Li Feng was equally stunned. After all, when he conjured eight-colored flame, it was always a very difficult process. All of a sudden, he had a very bad feeling, and almost lost control of his facial expression. Chuckling coldly, he said, “You must have had a lot of practice with eight-colored flame, right? So what if you’ve been stuck at that level for a long time? You still don’t qualify to stand in front of me!”

Bai Xiaochun looked up at Li Feng, his expression placid as he said, “If eight-colored flame isn’t enough for you, how about nine-colored flame?”

Casually waving his hand, he spread the eight-colored flame out into a sea of fire, then sent more vengeful souls pouring out of the soulhoarding pagoda. No time passed at all before the sea of flames began to swallow up the souls.

Despite the speed with which it happened, there was obviously some pattern involved in the way that the souls were fed into the sea of flames. Then, Bai Xiaochun slowly closed his palm into a fist, causing the sea of fire to fall back in upon itself within his grasp. After the fire was all contained between his fingers, he opened his hand again, revealing a flame with... nine colors!!

“Nine-colored flame!!” The savages were no longer stunned, but were left gasping in shock. The two soul cultivators' eyes were popping out of their heads, and they were panting, their minds reeling out of control.

Li Feng was beginning to shake as he stared at the flame in Bai Xiaochun’s hand. The casual way that he had conjured the nine-colored flame was something that Li Feng had never seen before, and left him feeling as if unprecedented levels of pressure were weighing down on him. It seemed almost unimaginable that someone could conjure nine-colored flame with such ease.

If he wanted to conjure nine-colored flame, he would have to go into secluded meditation and spend significant time clearing his thoughts before making an attempt. And even then, he wouldn’t succeed every time.

“This is impossible....” he muttered, panting.

“Nothing is impossible,” Bai Xiaochun said with a slight shake of his head. “Just because you think something is hard doesn’t mean that everyone will feel the same. I mean, it’s just nine-colored flame, that's all....” Looking as calm as ever, he sent more vengeful souls flying out of the soulhoarding pagoda, filling everything within a 300 meter area and forcing the crowd to back away as his nine-colored flame spread out into a raging sea.

It was a shocking sight. The vengeful souls merged into the sea, a process which took a few breaths worth of time, after which Bai Xiaochun once again closed his palm into a fist.

Within moments, the raging sea of fire had shrunk down and was hidden within his hand.

Everyone was devolving into madness at Bai Xiaochun’s performance, which made him seem like the ultimate ruler of flame! It was as if all types of fire would capitulate and acknowledge allegiance to him!

“Even ten-colored flame isn’t really a big deal!” Bai Xiaochun said, smiling faintly. When he opened his hands, all faces fell as scintillating light exploded out in all directions to reveal... ten-colored flame!

Furthermore, this ten-colored flame seemed particularly vibrant and lively, its heat so intense that the air rippled, almost as though it were about to ignite!

Everyone in the area was forced to back up again, expressions of profound shock on their faces as they looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Clearly, Li Feng’s ten-colored flame was much dimmer than Bai Xiaochun’s. Despite being of the same level, it was obviously weaker by far!

Along with the appearance of the ten-colored flame came shocked exclamations from the savages, expressions of complete and utter astonishment.

“The peak of the master necromancer rank!!”

“Heavens, Grandmaster Bai... is actually at the peak of the master necromancer rank!”

The two soul cultivators were completely stunned, and looked like they had seen a ghost. Never in their wildest imaginations could they have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would conjure a ten-colored flame, the quality of which clearly surpassed that of Li Feng’s.

Li Feng was shaking visibly, and his hair was already disheveled. As he stared at the flame in Bai Xiaochun’s hand, his mind began to turn into a blank.

“Impossible. This is just impossible....” Moments ago, he had been hovering there with a feeling of complete superiority, but now he suddenly found that there was someone present who was far superior to himself.

Zhou Yixing was similarly shocked. He had known before that Bai Xiaochun could conjure ten-colored flame, and yet, the flame currently dancing in his palm caused Zhou Yixing’s heart to pound wildly.

“Is... is that really ten-colored flame? I've never seen ten-colored flame that dazzling....” Zhou Yixing looked up at Bai Xiaochun’s face, terror written on his own.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0577 awe-chapter-578

Bai Xiaochun was quite pleased by all the looks of shock among the crowd that surrounded him. However, he didn’t allow any hint of that to show on his face, and in fact, pretended as if he couldn’t care less about what was going on.

After glancing at the tongue of flame in his palm, he looked up at the shocked Li Feng and said, “If ten-colored flame isn’t sufficient, well then... how about eleven-colored flame?!”

In response, the savages of the Blackmountain Tribe erupted into wild cheering, and the two soul cultivators let out shouts of surprise.

“Eleven-colored flame.... Only terrestrial necromancers can conjure that! No wonder....”

Zhou Yixing gasped, and up in the air, Li Feng was trembling.

Before any of them could say anything, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered with profound light. The time had come to test out whether his previous analysis was correct or not. He sent some divine sense into the soulhoarding pagoda, which shivered as it began to belch out large quantities of vengeful souls.

As they filled the area, coldness spread out, an ill wind that made the place seem like a land of death. Even as the vengeful souls howled and attempted to flee, Bai Xiaochun said, “Flame, disperse!”

He waved his hand, and the ten-colored flame spread out in all directions to form a huge sea of fire. Yet again, the onlookers backed away in fear.

Ten-colored light filled the sky, and the wind screamed as the intense power of the flame exploded out in all directions. The sea of fire was like a cyclone whipping about as it devoured all of the vengeful souls.

The mist-like strands that were the fleeing souls could not possibly have been fast enough to escape the flames, and it took only about thirty breaths of time before the entire 3,000-meter area surrounding Bai Xiaochun was completely devoid of any vengeful souls.

The sea of fire raged in shocking fashion around Bai Xiaochun, making it almost impossible to see him. Everyone in the area looked on with shock and terror, their hearts battered by waves of astonishment.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun truly looked like a sovereign of flame!

That was even more the case when he extended his right hand and said, “Form!”

It was only a single word, but it seemed to contain the power of magical law, a power that forced the fire in the area to begin to converge onto Bai Xiaochun’s palm, a process which took only the briefest of moments.

As he closed his fingers, every last bit of fire disappeared into his hand, after which, the entire audience looked on with bated breath and quivering hearts.

No one spoke. Zhou Yixing stood there, heart pounding, almost unable to believe what he was seeing, and at the same time, more nervous than ever before.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was the same as ever, as if everything which was happening was beneath his interest. Of course, the truth was that he was feeling immensely proud of himself, and was reveling in the gazes of the audience. He even intentionally slowed his movements as he opened his fingers.

The moment his fist opened up... a tongue of flame appeared, the heat of which caused everything in the surrounding 3,000-meter area to ripple and distort. An intense sensation of deadly crisis filled the hearts of all present, and everyone was certain that the slightest touch of that flame would reduce them to nothing but ashes.

At the same time, thunder rumbled in the sky above; the appearance of the flame had provoked a heavenly sign!

All eyes were fixed dead on the flame, which had become the most dazzling and eye-catching thing in existence to the people present!

At the same time, the ground beneath Bai Xiaochun’s feet began to melt, as if it couldn’t endure the intense heat of the flame.

However, Bai Xiaochun himself wasn't harmed in the least!

The numerous colors within the flame danced and leapt, making it difficult to see the number of colors clearly. However, anyone who focused the power of their cultivation base on their eyes would quickly be able to tell that the flame... had eleven colors!!

Shockingly, it was... eleven-colored flame!!

A short silence prevailed, after which the entire audience erupted into shouts of excitement and praise, causing a sound wave to roll out in all directions.

“Is that really eleven-colored flame!? I've never seen eleven-colored flame in my entire life!!”

“Eleven-colored flame. Eleven-colored flame! Grandmaster Bai isn’t at the master rank, he’s a terrestrial necromancer!!”

“A terrestrial necromancer.... A person like that would be welcomed with full honors in any necromancer clan. In fact, it would be the same even in Giant Ghost City!!”

The savages were completely overwhelmed, and as for the two soul cultivators, they were virtually struck mute. Shaking physically, they looked at Bai Xiaochun in disbelief, feeling like they might collapse at any moment.

“Terrestrial... terrestrial necromancer...?”

“He’s a terrestrial necromancer!!” Upon recovering their wits to some extent, they immediately flopped down and began to kowtow, their hearts filled with awe and reverence. To them, a terrestrial necromancer... was the type of grand entity that could shake all the lands with the single stomp of a foot!!

And just such a person was standing right in front of them! Then the two of them contemplated how they had just suggested that he return the soulhoarding pagoda they had offered. Despite how vaguely they had made the suggestion, the mere fact that they had struck them both with deep levels of fear and panic.

If they had such a reaction, it almost wasn’t necessary to mention Li Feng, whose eyes were on the verge of popping out of his skull. Shivering physically, he suddenly dropped out of the air and landed onto the ground.

“Grandmaster, please calm yourself....” he said, ashen-faced, his fear going so deep that his soul began to tremble. The fact that he had possibly offended someone he should never have offended caused his hair to stand on end, and filled his heart with a sea of bitterness and grief.

At the same time, he was stunned that an illustrious terrestrial necromancer would concoct soul medicine for a small tribe just to get a soulhoarding pagoda....

Zhou Yixing was equally flabbergasted, and was staring with brightly shining eyes at Bai Xiaochun. Earlier, he had had his doubts, and had even felt scorn for Bai Xiaochun, but now, he was fully convinced of what kind of person he was, and his heart began to burn with fervor.

He knew for a fact that this necromancer hadn’t been able to conjure eleven-colored flame before. Then, after not much time passed at all, he conjured that very flame with complete ease, even perfection. It left Zhou Yixing completely shaken and in awe.

More than that, he actually felt that it was good fortune for him to have become the follower of a terrestrial necromancer! That was especially because of the ease with which he conjured flame. Clearly, this Necromancer Bai was spectacularly talented, and that meant that there was always the possibility that he would reach the celestial rank! Since Zhou Yixing was his first follower, and had no one else to compete with, that meant it would be easier to curry favor.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Zhou Yixing’s zeal and devotion grew.

Bai Xiaochun stood there for a moment, basking in the gazes, and then cleared his throat and looked over at Li Feng.

“Alright, alright, an important person like me wouldn’t stoop to the level of causing problems for someone like you. Although, considering how talented you seem, you really need to listen to me when I tell you to keep a low profile.... Look at how awesome I am! And yet, did you ever see me going around trying to show off?” He waved his hand, storing the eleven-colored flame away in his bag of holding. Then he swished his sleeve, keeping his chin stuck up as he sauntered back toward his immortal's cave.

Li Feng chuckled bitterly in his heart. As far as he was concerned, if this grandmaster considered himself to be keeping a low profile, then he obviously had no idea what it meant to do the opposite. However, he didn’t dare to speak such words aloud. All he did was gratefully voice his agreement. At the same time, he had similar thoughts to the ones Zhou Yixing had just had.

“If I could become a follower of this terrestrial necromancer, and receive some occasional pointers, that would be good fortune for me.... And what if he even agreed to teach me some things…?” Life as a rogue cultivator was hard, and people like Li Feng would rarely get a chance to even see a terrestrial necromancer. Therefore, he gritted his teeth and decided that, no matter what happened, no matter how much fawning or fighting it took, he would become this necromancer’s follower.

At that point, he subconsciously glanced over at Zhou Yixing and thought, “This guy must already be one of his followers. I've got to do better than him!”

Zhou Yixing noticed Li Feng’s glance, and could guess what he was thinking. Less than pleased, he decided to keep his guard up even more than before. “There’s no way I’m going to let this guy surpass me as a follower!!”

Both of them could see the hostility in each other’s glances.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0578 awe-chapter-579

Instead of leaving, Li Feng chose to stay in the Blackmountain Tribe, where he planted himself at Bai Xiaochun’s side and leapt to meet his every demand, even if it meant going through hell and high water.

It put a lot of pressure on Zhou Yixing, and also served to increase his own zeal and devotion.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t drive Li Feng away. Instead, he wallowed in the wonderful feeling of having two people fawning over him.

“Ai. I really am just too outstanding. Wherever I go, people kowtow to me left and right. It’s really hard to reject such treatment. I guess I’m just too much of a softy.” Of course, the savages were even more fanatical about Bai Xiaochun than before, and the soul cultivators had begun treating him as if he were some sort of god.

All the energy of the tribe was focused on fulfilling any request that Bai Xiaochun made, which he found to be a wonderful thing. At the same time, he didn't forget that he had promised to concoct soul medicine for them.

However, before taking on that task, there was something very important to be done, something that could not be delayed. That very night, he sent his three clones out into the darkness to stand guard, and then sealed his immortal's cave with numerous restrictive spells. Finally, he sat down cross-legged and carefully took off his mask.

After the mask was off, he looked around vigilantly. Outside, his clones did the same thing. Only after they were all sure that the coast was clear did Bai Xiaochun relax a bit.

“Now that I can concoct eleven-colored flame, it's time to perform a spirit enhancement on this mask and see if I can remove the branding mark inside and replace it with my own!

“If I do that, then nobody should be able to find me through it!” Eyes sparkling, he pulled out his turtle-wok and prepared everything from one- to eleven-colored flame. After performing the first ten spirit enhancements, he put the eleven-colored flame into the wok.

Almost instantly, the wok began to shine with bright golden light that instantly filled the entire immortal's cave. The energy which pulsed within that golden light left Bai Xiaochun feeling completely shaken.

Thankfully, this wasn’t his first time using eleven-colored flame; he had also done so in the illusory world of the trial by fire. Therefore, he settled his qi and calmed his mind, then waited for the turtle-wok to suck in all of the golden light. When the time was right, he put the mask into the wok.

“It’s definitely going to work!” The mask was very important, so of course Bai Xiaochun was very concerned with how things could turn out. His eyes were glued to the mask as the golden light in the wok grew more dazzling and boundless, transforming into countless golden threads that converged on the mask itself.

Then, they rapidly merged together, covering the mask and causing deep rumbling sounds to echo out in the immortal's cave. Finally, right before his eyes, the mask... began to melt!!

Within moments, it had transformed into a milky white liquid that emanated a fragrant aroma, a mere whiff of which left Bai Xiaochun feeling enlivened.

“An elevenfold spirit enhancement returns the object to its essence. That leaf transformed into a tree, whereas this mask... became a drop of essence liquid.” The milky white liquid rapidly formed into a pearl that glowed with soft light. Shockingly, on the surface of that pearl was... a golden design!!

As the turtle-wok went dark, Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety mounted. Finally, he picked up the pearl, whereupon he could sense an aura within it that contained the power of illusion.

By merely sensing that aura, he suddenly felt as if he were surrounded by an illusory world. No longer was he in his immortal's cave; he was in a celestial paradise, filled with immortal mountains, immortal cranes, spirit flowers, and mystical mists. It was almost impossible to tell whether it was real or not.

Thankfully, the sensation quickly passed, and he regained his senses. Then, he looked suspiciously at the pearl he held in his hand.

“This thing’s powers of illusion surpass that of the old mask by far!! There are probably even more differences that I will have to discover over time.” Heart pounding wildly, he examined the pearl further to ensure that there were no branding marks on it. Only then did he place his own branding mark onto it.

The white pearl flickered as a link was created between him and it.

“It worked! I never felt anything like this with the mask!” Laughing heartily, Bai Xiaochun pushed the pearl down onto his forehead, whereupon it vanished into his Heavenspan Dharma Eye. Moments later, his facial features blurred, and then transformed back into Bai Hao’s.

As of this point, there wasn’t the slightest crack in his mask disguise. Whether it was his soul fluctuations or any other aspect of him, not a single shred of evidence that he was Bai Xiaochun remained.

In the past, certain almighty figures such as demigods might have been able to notice some abnormalities caused by the mask. But now, not even demigods would pick up on any clues.

Meanwhile, in the very moment that Bai Xiaochun transformed the mask into a pearl by removing the previous branding mark and replacing it with his own, something happened in a location a vast distance away in the Wildlands.

In that location was a shocking city that was completely golden and matchlessly large. It almost looked like a golden dragon, emanating an intense pressure that would suppress anything in the area.

That city... was none other than Arch-Emperor City!

In the very middle of Arch-Emperor City, floating high in the air, was an area filled with floating clouds that seemed to contain a city of its own within them. It was... the location of the imperial palace!

Inside the palace, in an extravagantly decorated hall, an old man sat cross-legged in meditation. He wore luxurious clothing, and was the type of person who seemed threatening without being angry. He occupied a very high position, the type who could determine the fates of tens upon tens of thousands of people with a single word.

His cultivation base was profoundly enigmatic, and even from a distance, he looked like a divine, godly being!!

The moment the branding mark was erased from the mask, the old man's eyes opened, causing golden light to spill out. Anyone who looked into those eyes would be shaken to the core. As soon as the old man’s cultivation base fluctuations began to roll out, the entire imperial palace began to shake.

“It's gone....” he murmured, frowning. A moment later, he waved his hand, causing the main door of the palace hall to swing open noiselessly and reveal a middle-aged man, who bowed and scraped his way inside.

“Grand Heavenmaster, his excellency was startled by your cultivation base fluctuations just now. He has asked your humble servant to come and inquire as to what aroused your wrath....”

“It seems his excellency is a bit too high strung,” the old man replied. “Now that I think about it, it’s the perfect time for him to go into secluded meditation. That way he can increase his cultivation base a bit and build up some courage. Pass down orders that his excellency will enter a ten-year period of secluded meditation, starting immediately.” With that, the old man closed his eyes.

Back in the area near Giant Ghost City, Bai Xiaochun was in the Blackmountain Tribe, feeling at his face. Pleased, he called back his three clones, then studied the soulhoarding pagoda for a bit before summoning a large group of vengeful souls.

Then he waved his hand and pinched his fingers together, creating something like a gravitational force that caused the cloud of souls to converge on his palm. As they formed into a one-colored flame, he spread his arms wide, causing the flame to transform into something that looked like a piece of crystal.

“So, this is soul medicine?” Bai Xiaochun grabbed the crystal, and could immediately sense the soul power fluctuations coming from it. Then he began to study it a bit more closely.

“Seems simple enough. The only difficulty lies in how many colors are in the flame.... So, only people who can conjure flame can concoct soul medicine. I just wonder... if you can use real medicine concocting techniques to make the soul medicine even better?” After some thought, he produced a pill furnace, tossed the soul medicine inside, and began to use some of the concocting methods he knew.

However, nothing happened. Bai Xiaochun even took out some medicinal pills and tried to combine them with the soul medicine. He put quite a bit of effort into it, even adding in some plants and vegetation, and yet, in the end, got little out of it.

“Well, that doesn't work. It adds a bit of medicinal mist to the soul medicine, but that won’t do much of anything at all. Definitely too much of a waste of resources to provide any help in cultivation. Not worth it.... However, it seems I can get a bit of effect by adding toxic elements.” In the end, he just gave up. Although it seemed like a pity, there really weren’t any significant changes to the soul medicine. In fact, only grandmaster alchemists would even notice the slight changes inside. However, all of this made sense considering the Wildlands was a place devoid of medicinal plants and vegetation.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0579 awe-chapter-580

Even after further study, Bai Xiaochun was left with no other option than to give up on the idea of combining soul medicine with ordinary medicinal pills. Although he was a bit disappointed, there was simply no way to get these two completely different types of medicine to work together.

“Oh well. At least I know how to add toxic elements. Perhaps that will prove to be useful one of these days.” With that, he continued on with the task of concocting soul medicine.

After all, he had promised the Blackmountain Tribe that he would do this for them, and he was the type of person who lived up to his promises. Therefore, the following days were focused mostly on that task.

All of the work was done with the souls they provided. Considering the predicament they were in, and how soft-hearted Bai Xiaochun was, he didn't impose any further requirements on them.

A few days later, Bai Xiaochun was looking at 500 full portions of low-grade soul medicine, and feeling very pleased at how impressive he was.

“I guess it isn’t that bad that I’m stuck away from the Great Wall temporarily. Since I'm good at concocting soul medicine, I should be able to dominate the scene out in the Wildlands just as well as back home.” He was immeasurably self-satisfied, and couldn’t help but sigh at how outstanding he was; no matter where he went, he always managed to come out on top.

“Perhaps that’s just my biggest strong suit.” He closed his eyes to revel in the feeling, but then, he couldn’t help but think back to the scene back in the labyrinth when everyone was teleported away. That got him wondering about where Master God-Diviner, Song Que, and Zhao Long had ended up.

“I wonder where they are now...?” All of sudden, he was filled with anticipation at being reunited with them somewhere in the Wildlands. For some reason, that made him feel less lonely.

After thinking about it for a bit longer, he cleared his throat and then reached up to feel his disguised face. In the past few days, he had come to find that, not only did the power of the pearl mask cover his own aura, but it also disguised the fluctuations that were caused by conjuring flame. Now, he could conjure flame whenever or wherever he wanted, and no one would be able to detect it.

“What a lovely treasure!” Eventually, he put the matters of the mask aside for the time being and pulled out his soulhoarding pagoda to examine it.

“After I give the 500 portions of low-grade soul medicine to the Blackmountain Tribe, my task here will be accomplished. Although this place isn’t bad, there’s no reason to stay here.” With that, he settled into contemplation. On the one hand, he really needed to figure out how to get back to the Great Wall, but on the other hand, he also wanted to acquire the formula for fifteen-colored flame.

Most importantly, he needed to find more deva souls. If he didn't, he would be unable to break through from the Gold Core stage into the Nascent Soul stage.

“It’s all the fault of that damned Mistress Red-Dust!” The thought of who had pushed him into this predicament caused him to gnash his teeth. Furthermore, he was now determined to make sure that, one day, Mistress Red-Dust and Chen Hetian knew exactly how awesome he was!

Before, he had scanned the soulhoarding pagoda a bit with divine sense, but had never taken the time to study it in detail. Now that he was finished with his soul medicine task, he calmed himself down to do just that, his goal being to figure out how soulhoarding pagodas worked.

However, after a detailed inspection, he couldn’t come up with any clues. The soulhoarding pagoda was filled with a mist that his divine sense had a hard time piercing. However, he could sense a profound sensation of age within the pagoda.

“There’s too much of that mist.... That’s what’s making it hard to see inside.... Alright, soulhoarding pagoda, you just watch and see how I handle you! Hmmmphh! Since you belong to me now, I’ll use spirit enhancement techniques to clean you up a bit! I don't care whose branding mark is hiding inside of you, I’m going to erase it for good!” What had occurred with the mask had impressed upon Bai Xiaochun what exactly he could do with magical items that had been given to him by others. Therefore, it was with great secrecy that he sent his three clones out to collect more vengeful souls.

On top of that, he ordered Zhou Yixing and Li Feng to do the same thing, as well as the rest of the Blackmountain Tribe.

A few days later, his three-pronged method of attacking the matter resulted in him having enough souls to produce everything from one- to eleven-colored flame. That very evening, he conjured the eleven-colored flame he needed!

Without the slightest hesitation, he then produced his turtle-wok and tossed the soulhoarding pagoda inside to give it an elevenfold spirit enhancement!

Golden light flashed, and the soulhoarding pagoda changed appearance. Instead of being gray, it was now crystalline and exquisite. Furthermore, it had a single golden design on its surface. The little pagoda was now completely different, and would be extremely enticing even to the most powerful necromancer.

Bai Xiaochun grabbed the crystalline soulhoarding pagoda and then elatedly branded it with his mark. When he felt the invisible connection that came into being as a result, he could finally relax.

“Now this soulhoarding pagoda truly belongs to me, and me alone.” Laughing heartily, he sent some divine sense inside it to examine it again. This time, there was no obscuring mist blocking his ability to clearly see it through and through.

But then, his expression turned very serious. “Eee?”

He sent more power into his divine sense, causing it to fill the entire soulhoarding pagoda.

There, very deep inside, in an area which had once been covered by mist, Bai Xiaochun could now see... evidence of a restrictive sealing spell!!

The sealing mark was very faint, and wouldn’t be detectable except upon close examination.

“A sealing mark....” His first thought was that the members of the Blackmountain tribe must have been courting death by trying to con him. But soon, he realized that that was probably not the case. Based on what he could detect, the sealing mark seemed to be just as ancient as the soulhoarding pagoda itself.

After a bit of thought, his eyes glittered, and he attempted to open the sealing mark and see what exactly was inside. But after a few tries, he found that the mark was apparently fabricated from an aura of death. Without a massive blast of divine sense, it would be impossible to open. In fact, Bai Xiaochun could tell that he was currently incapable of getting past it!

“Interesting. A seemingly-ordinary soulhoarding pagoda turns out to have an ancient sealing mark inside....” He retracted his divine sense and then sat there thinking, his eyes shining brightly.

“If I want to open it, I have to blast it with incredible power.... My cultivation base isn’t strong enough at the moment, but... that doesn’t necessarily mean I'm out of options!

“Alright, soulhoarding pagoda, you just watch and see how Lord Bai does things!” With that, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a large bucket!

It was as tall as a person, and almost two meters wide, and as soon as it appeared, it erupted with powerful spiritual power. Shockingly, that bucket was filled to the brim with... Heavenspan River water!!

Back during the haunting of the River-Defying Sect, Bai Xiaochun had, in his fear, submerged his mask in this very bucket. Even he had forgotten about that matter for a while.

Considering that he needed a big blast of spiritual power to deal with the soulhoarding pagoda, this was the perfect item to retrieve from his bag of holding.

“Heavenspan River water is a major rarity in the Wildlands. This bucket might not make me the richest person here, but definitely a big moneybags.” Licking his lips, he looked at the bucket and then back at the crystalline soulhoarding pagoda.

“With the spiritual power in this bucket, I should be able to blast open that sealing mark.” Eyes sparkling, he performed a right-handed incantation gesture and then waved his finger at the soulhoarding pagoda. Instantly, a gravitational force sprang up, causing more than half of the water in the bucket to surge toward the sealing mark in the depths of the pagoda.

The soulhoarding pagoda shook physically as Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense inside to watch the sealing mark falling apart under the barrage of Heavenspan River water. And yet, even as it broke apart, it began to heal itself.

Bai Xiaochun quickly performed another incantation gesture, sending more water into the pagoda. The healing signs vanished, and more cracks appeared; it looked like the sealing mark would fall apart at any moment.

However, it was in that very moment... that suddenly, a terrifying aura leaked out that caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to immediately fall!

Even just brushing against that aura with his divine sense left him utterly shaken and gasping for air. Leaping to his feet, he exclaimed, “That’s... that’s....”

He quickly performed an incantation gesture to pull all of the Heavenspan River water back from inside of the pagoda.

Thankfully, after he did that, the sealing mark ceased collapsing. However, it had apparently lost its ability to repair itself, and now remained in a dilapidated state, as if only a bit more power could destroy it.

Bai Xiaochun got his breathing under control and then stared back into the pagoda, his eyes shining with fear....

“That aura surpasses anything I’ve ever felt from any person, even from devas.... It's very similar to the aura I sensed back in the trial by fire in the labyrinth, when I performed the twenty-onefold spirit enhancement on that leaf.... That’s an aura which surpasses devas. Don’t tell me it’s... the Demigod Realm! What exactly is sealed inside of this pagoda!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0580 awe-chapter-581

Bai Xiaochun was so nervous his throat was completely dry. After a long moment passed, he carefully sent his divine sense back into the soulhoarding pagoda and inched it toward the sealed area.

From the perspective of his divine sense, the sealed area looked like it was covered with countless cracks, as though the slightest nudge would break it. Bai Xiaochun remained there hesitantly, analyzing the faint pulses of energy which occasionally emerged from the other side.

“I'm finished. Kaput. I’ve caused another disaster....” Depressed, he realized that it wasn't an option to just run away, and that he really needed to take a look to understand what he was dealing with. Exercising utmost caution in his control of his divine sense, he slowly sent it into one of the cracks.

He didn't send much in, only a teeny bit, but that was enough to give him a general idea of what was inside the sealed area!

Shockingly, there was a dimension inside!

It was an empty space filled with gray light, in the depths of which could be seen... an old man sitting there cross-legged in meditation!!

His face was a mass of wrinkles, and he had no hair. Shockingly, he was being tightly restrained by 999 chains formed from magical symbols.

His aura vastly surpassed that of a deva, and to Bai Xiaochun, he looked like some sort of god or deity. The mere pressure emanating off of him left Bai Xiaochun trembling!

“Is he... a demigod...?” Bai Xiaochun thought, barely able to breathe. What he was seeing via his divine sense almost defied belief. Fearful of attracting the old man’s attention, he carefully began to retract his divine sense. At the same time, he decided that he didn’t really want this soulhoarding pagoda after all....

However, it was in that same moment that the old man’s eyes snapped open to reveal light as bright as a shining sun. At the same time, he suddenly transformed into a crimson, three-headed python. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hold back from letting out a shriek.

“Spare me, Senior....” he wailed as he pulled his divine sense back. However, a moment later, he stopped his divine sense from moving.

“Eee?” he murmured. It was only at this point that he realized the chained old man didn’t seem corporeal. Rather, he was partially translucent, almost as if he weren’t complete....

Even more telling was that his gaze, despite being fiercely powerful, was somewhat blank, almost as if he weren’t conscious....

“He's a discarnate soul?” Bai Xiaochun gasped and looked a bit closer. “A discarnate demigod soul!!”

After confirming what he was looking at, Bai Xiaochun carefully retracted his divine sense. Then, he sat there, heart pounding, looking at the crystalline soulhoarding pagoda he held in his trembling hands.

“If there are deva souls, then it makes sense that there would be demigod souls.... Although the soul in the pagoda is discarnate and incomplete, it still counts as a demigod soul!

“Clearly, it didn’t originally belong to a cultivator, but rather, to a demigod-level beast.... It must have been some almighty entity in ages past, which was killed by some cultivator. Its discarnate soul was then sealed, either by whoever killed it, or perhaps even by itself. Whatever exactly occurred, it ended up in this soulhoarding pagoda....”

Bai Xiaochun licked his lips at the thought of how precious this treasure was that he had acquired. Unable to hold back his curiosity, he sent his divine sense back into the pagoda to study it further. The following day at noon, he finally finished his inspection, whereupon his eyes shone with enlightenment.

“It really is an unconscious discarnate soul that was fused into the pagoda.... If the pagoda were to be destroyed, the sealed soul would also be destroyed. However, that would simultaneously result in a blast of destructive energy that would probably kill even a deva, or at least inflict serious injuries....

“This thing is essentially a disposable magical item!! The soulhoarding function is just a secondary feature, or perhaps something to disguise its true function!” Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken, and couldn’t even imagine what entity would be able to turn a discarnate demigod soul into a disposable magical item.

It almost didn’t seem real that he could so casually acquire an item that would be threatening even to a deva.

However, that wasn’t necessarily a good feeling. More like a hair-raisingly terrifying one.

“Was it really a coincidence...?” he thought, recalling everything that had led up to him being teleported out into the Wildlands.... The more he thought about everything, the more it seemed like something fishy was going on....

After a bit more thought, he put the soulhoarding pagoda away and then summoned the two soul cultivators. They quickly rushed into his immortal's cave and bowed in greeting, nervous about what was going on.

Looking at the two soul cultivators with eyes that flashed like lightning, he cut right to the chase and asked, “Where did you get this soulhoarding pagoda!?”

In order to make sure they didn’t lie to him, he cracked open his Heavenspan Dharma Eye just a bit so that he could sense any changes in their auras and fluctuations.

The soul cultivators were trembling under the might of the pressure weighing down on them, and didn’t dare to hold anything back; they went on to tell him everything about the soulhoarding pagoda in extreme detail.

As it turned out, the pagoda was an ancient legacy heirloom in the Blackmountain Tribe. Not even the two soul cultivators were really sure of its origins. After all, most savage tribes in the Wildlands would have some object left behind by a founding ancestor. Some would be incredibly valuable, while others would be relatively insignificant.

After hearing this, Bai Xiaochun called over the leaders of the savages in the tribe and asked some detailed questions. In the end, he dismissed everyone and sat there, frowning.

Clearly, the soulhoarding pagoda was nothing more than something passed down from generation to generation in the Blackmountain Tribe. It, like other similar legacy items, had been around for such a long time that no one knew much about where it came from.

He still didn’t feel confident based on what he knew, though, so he went back to the leaders of the savages and asked to see the other things left behind by their ancestors.

After examining them all closely, he couldn’t find any useful clues. Eventually, he was forced to abandon his search for information about the origin of the soulhoarding pagoda.

Late that night, he stood outside of his immortal's cave, studying the sky, the lands, and the mountains. Eventually, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“I hope I'm just overthinking things.... Well, in any case, this soulhoarding pagoda can at least be a powerful trump card! It's too bad I can only use it once, though!” Sighing, he put the matter aside and stopped thinking about it.

A few days later, he chose to leave the Blackmountain Tribe. Upon his departure, all of the savages kowtowed, their eyes filled with awe and reverence.

The two soul cultivators behaved similarly.

Bai Xiaochun looked around, heart swelling at how popular he was.... Back in his home village, everyone had gathered to see him off with great fanfare. It was the same in the Spirit Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, and of course Sky City in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect....

Now here he was in the Wildlands, where the Blackmountain Tribe was similarly seeing him off with great fanfare.

A moment later, he swept the crowd with divine sense to make sure that none of them had any gongs or drums hidden in their clothing, after which he was convinced that they were sincerely seeing him off.

“You’re all dismissed,” he said with the wave of his hand. Then, he stuck his chin up and strode off, looking as grand as possible.

Zhou Yixing followed close behind, his eyes shining with determination. He had long since vowed to follow this Grandmaster Bai wherever he went. Of course, he continuously cast vigilant glances at the person who was walking next to him.

That person was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s other follower, Li Feng....

Li Feng could see Zhou Yixing glancing at him, and it made him just as vigilant. Considering that this Grandmaster Bai hadn’t driven him away, it indicated his approval. Therefore, Li Feng knew that at the moment, his greatest competition was none other than the damnable Zhou Yixing.

The three of them proceeded along for a bit before Zhou Yixing finally couldn’t take it anymore. Spinning, he glared at Li Feng and shouted, “What are you following us for?! Screw the hell off already!”

Then, he turned and bowed to Bai Xiaochun at the waist, plastering onto his face a fawning expression that he had been practicing lately....

“Grandmaster,” he said, “this guy is up to no good. He's obviously following us because he has some sort of nefarious plan!”

Bai Xiaochun gave a noncommittal grunt, but nothing more. Taking out a map, he checked to see which direction Giant Ghost City was.

Li Feng looked over scornfully at Zhou Yixing as he clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Please don't misunderstand, Grandmaster. Your humble servant has no such intentions. Because of my deep reverence for you, I sincerely wish to be your follower!” Li Feng was telling the truth. He wanted so much to be Bai Xiaochun’s follower that he almost had to hold back from grabbing his leg so that he wouldn’t be sent away.

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay much attention to him. Instead, he just turned to leave.

Zhou Yixing, on the other hand, felt wonderful. Casting another glare at Li Feng, he hurried after Bai Xiaochun, his expression more fawning than ever.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0581 awe-chapter-582

Li Feng was getting very, very nervous. After all, this Grandmaster Bai was a terrestrial necromancer, the most powerful necromancer Li Feng had ever met.

The benefits of being a follower of a person like that defied description, and Li Feng knew that if he didn’t seize this opportunity, he would regret it for the rest of his life. Aware that he had to do something to make himself valuable, he quickly cried, “Wait for me, Grandmaster Bai! I can be of a lot of use. For example, when you need souls, I can go looking for them for you. I can also--”

Bai Xiaochun paused midstride. After all, the things that Li Feng was saying made sense.

As for Zhou Yixing, his heart was starting to pound with anger. Back before Bai Xiaochun had proved to be a terrestrial necromancer, he had felt that being his follower was somewhat of an insult. But now things were completely different; as far as he was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was almost like a deva.

Zhou Yixing had done a lot of boot-licking to try to get Li Feng kicked away, only to have him shamelessly offer to do the same things that he himself was responsible for.

“I can do that too!” he shouted, worried that Bai Xiaochun would agree.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, but maintained his calm. He could tell that these two viewed each other as competition, and the truth was, he was actually pleased by that. Without saying anything, he continued along.

Feeling a bit better, Zhou Yixing glared over at Li Feng and pondered how he would stomp him to death if his cultivation base were unsealed....

Li Feng couldn’t just sit around and let Zhou Yixing act like this. Turning anxiously toward Bai Xiaochun, he raised his voice and said, “Grandmaster Bai, I... I know a place where you can get a huge amount of souls!!”

“So do I!” Zhou Yixing shouted immediately. “I know lots of places like that!”

“I can concoct soul medicine for you, Grandmaster!” Li Feng said. “I'm at the peak of the master necromancer rank, so I can make plenty of soul medicine to keep you safe, your majesty!!”

“I can concoct soul medicine too!” Zhou Yixing said through gritted teeth.

“You’re pushing things too far, Zhou Yixing! I know a place where you can get Heavenspan River water! That stuff is incredibly valuable! Even a single drop can get you tons and tons of soul medicine! Can you match that, Zhou Yixing?!” Li Feng shouted.

“I....” If Zhou Yixing were back home, he could definitely do that, but here, there was no way....

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes brightened. He had been aware that Heavenspan River water was rare in the Wildlands, and that it was valuable, but he had never really put much thought into exactly how valuable it would be....

Seeing that Zhou Yixing appeared to be at a loss for words, Li Feng started to get excited, and immediately began to list out all his selling points in the hopes that he could get Bai Xiaochun's attention.

"I know somewhere you can get a deva soul!

"I can gather all kinds of information from the area!

"I can--"

Eyes bloodshot, Zhou Yixing was just about to offer a retort when Bai Xiaochun suddenly stopped and turned around.

Then, Zhou Yixing's heart began to pound as he realized that Bai Xiaochun was staring at Li Feng.

"Did you just say that you know the location of a deva soul?"

Bursting with excitement at Bai Xiaochun's reaction, Li Feng immediately clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Grandmaster Bai, your humble servant absolutely has some information about a deva soul. According to the rumors, the Giant Ghost King himself has one. In addition to him, each of the three great necromancer clans within Giant Ghost City territory also has one!"

Bai Xiaochun frowned. From what he could tell, this information might as well be a complete fabrication.

Zhou Yixing was delighted to see Bai Xiaochun frowning, and decided that he had to counter attack. "Hmph. The Giant Ghost King is a demigod expert. How could you possibly just take a deva soul from him?! And as for what you said about the necromancer clans, that’s pure speculation!”

Li Feng stared at him coldly for a moment, then chuckled. Putting a very respectful expression onto his face, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “How could I possibly do anything to deceive Grandmaster Bai? Obviously, the deva soul possessed by the exalted Giant Ghost King is not something to go after. As for the necromancer clans, there are two who I can't say for certain have a deva soul. But one of them does. I’d stake my life on that fact!

“I was once a vassal in that very clan, and during one of their ceremonies, I had the honor of seeing that deva soul with my own eyes. It bore the semblance of sandy soil, and instantly caused incredible pressure to weigh down in the entire area!” As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard Li Feng’s complete description, his eyes sparkled.

Deva souls were precious treasures in the Wildlands just like they were in the lands of Heavenspan. They were the type of thing that few people could ever lay eyes on, and as such, few people knew what they would look like. However, Li Feng’s description matched the description exactly.

“If he’s telling the truth, then that means he saw an earth-type deva soul. I already have fire, wood, and water.... I'm just missing metal and earth!” Bai Xiaochun’s heart was palpitating in eagerness.

“Which clan are you talking about?” Bai Xiaochun asked, his eyes sparkling.

Li Feng hesitated for a moment, but considering that his chance to be Bai Xiaochun’s follower was at stake, he finally said, “The Bai Clan, on the east outskirts of the city!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened in surprise. The clan Li Feng had just mentioned sounded very familiar, and when he realized why, his jaw dropped....

“The east outskirts of the city…” he thought. “Three great necromancer clans... the Bai Clan.... Isn’t that the clan Bai Hao came from?” Such thoughts got his heart pounding. “But a clan like that, a great clan attached to Giant Ghost City... they must have a deva patriarch!”

Bai Xiaochun licked his lips, and yet, was still hesitating. However, he absolutely had to get more deva souls, and considering that he was already masquerading as Bai Hao, it would probably make things easier.

As he hesitated, the nervous Li Feng began to give more information about the Bai Clan. As far as he was concerned, even offending the Bai Clan would be worth it if he could be Bai Xiaochun’s follower.

Although he had served at the Bai Clan as a vassal, he had never noticed Bai Hao during that time. After all, Bai Hao was only in early Foundation Establishment, and wasn’t considered an outstanding member of the clan. It would only be natural for Li Feng, a master necromancer, to ignore him.

Bai Xiaochun’s mind spun as he considered the matter for a long moment. Finally, he gritted his teeth and thought, “I might not succeed in the end, but I should at least give it a shot. After all, I do have my demigod pagoda.... Even if my identity gets exposed, I shouldn’t be in too much danger.”

At the same time, his anger toward Mistress Red-Dust smoldered. After all, if it weren’t for her, he wouldn’t need to get deva souls to step into the Nascent Soul stage.

"It's all the fault of that shrew Mistress Red-Dust. Once I'm awesome enough, I'll definitely teach her a lesson! And the same with Chen Hetian!" Finally, he made his decision, and formally agreed to let Li Feng be his follower. With that, the three of them flew off in the direction of the Bai Clan.

Along the way, Bai Xiaochun reviewed the bone slips he had found in Bai Hao's bag of holding, and also thought about the circumstances surrounding Bai Hao's death. Obviously, returning to the clan as Bai Hao would probably cause something of a stir.

"Very well, Bai Hao. If I get a chance, I'll figure out who's responsible for your death and get revenge!"

A few days later, they were closing in on the Bai Clan. Obviously, it wouldn't do to take Li Feng and Zhou Yixing with him, so at a certain point he stopped and arranged for them to stay in the vicinity and work on their cultivation, ready to come the instant he called for them.

He dropped his cultivation base from the great circle of Core Formation down to where Bai Hao's had been, in early Foundation Establishment, and also flew a bit slower than before, doing everything he could to make himself look like Bai Hao should. He even put a taciturn expression onto his face.

"Bai Hao was a bastard son, so the clan probably doesn't care about him very much...." It only made sense to him that Bai Hao wouldn't look very happy to come back to the clan after almost being killed.

This area was considered the outskirts of Giant Ghost City, and all of it was controlled by the Bai Clan. It was a huge area, populated to the point where it was essentially a huge city.

The city was violet, and almost looked like it had been imprinted into the earth itself from above. The city wall was formed by statues of dragonsnakes, which formed together to make four huge gates, the entrances to the clan!

There was clearly a spell formation at work, which emanated terrifying pressure that both filled the Bai Clan and made it stand out among the lands that surrounded it.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun entered the vicinity of the city, he felt eyes on him from all directions, although no one looked at him for too long.

As for the power of the spell formation, it caused his heart to tremble. “The Bai Clan... definitely has a deva patriarch!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0582 awe-chapter-583

“Am I still me...?” Bai Xiaochun thought. Even he could tell that he had changed in a fear-inspiring and dangerous way. “There’s a deva patriarch here! I... I can’t believe I'm actually attempting to steal a deva soul right out of the tiger’s mouth....”

He rubbed his eyes a bit, but no tears came away. He really was at the point where he wished he could cry, but there were no tears to shed. Inwardly, he sighed.

There was no question that a younger version of himself wouldn’t have entered this place even upon the threat of being beaten to death. Yet... here he was, taking the initiative.

“It’s all the fault of Mistress Red-Dust and Chen Hetian! They’re forcing me to do this.... Dammit, when I get angry, I frighten even myself!” No matter how he sighed, though, there were no other options available. Settling his thoughts, he tried to make himself look even more taciturn as he headed into the city.

“The Bai Clan is one of the three great necromancer clans attached to Giant Ghost City. Of course they have a protective spell formation.... It’s hard to say whether or not the spell formation will check whether people have the blood of the clan in their veins. And it’s also hard to say whether or not my mask will be able to deceive it if it does.... I'm guessing it can.” Bai Xiaochun proceeded forward nervously, prepared to flee in an instant if necessary.

More and more gazes seemed to pass over him, until he was roughly 300 meters away from the city entrance. At that point, the extremely lifelike dragonsnake statues opened their eyes and looked in his direction!

Their sinister gazes were coupled with a terrifying aura that left Bai Xiaochun certain that if they decided he wasn’t a member of the Bai Clan, and tried to enter uninvited, that he would be struck with lightning-like destructive power.

Bai Xiaochun stood there thoughtfully for a few breaths’ worth of time, then walked forward, entering the perimeter of the clan spell formation. Almost immediately, Bai Hao’s identity medallion in his bag of holding began to glow with a soft light. At the same time, his mask unleashed imperceptible fluctuations that completely fooled the spell formation, ensuring that it believed him to be Bai Hao, and not Bai Xiaochun!

As soon as he entered the perimeter of the spell formation, the gazes which had been resting on him vanished, and the eyes of the statues grew dark. Then, a creaking sound could be heard as the huge main gate slowly opened.

A middle-aged man walked out who was in the great circle of Qi Condensation. He had his hands tucked into the opposite sleeves of his robe, and was extremely gaunt. Eyes anything but kind, he frowned as he looked Bai Xiaochun up and down.

Bai Xiaochun was finally relaxing a bit now that he had passed the first step of entering the Bai Clan. Steeling himself, he headed toward the main gate.

However, the middle-aged man quickly stepped in front of him, scorn written on his face as he coolly said, “Well, you’re back, Young Master Bai Hao. Did you forget the madam's orders? Bastard sons are only allowed to enter through the side door! I can’t believe you triggered the clan spell formation and even forced the dragonsnake gate open! You’ve obviously forgotten your place! This gate is not for the likes of you to enter.”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at the man with a slight frown. He had been aware that Bai Hao wasn’t well-liked in the clan, but would never have guessed that even a lowly gatekeeper would treat him with such scorn. That indicated there was more to Bai Hao’s low standing in the clan than Bai Xiaochun understood.

“This is blatant humiliation,” he thought.

When the sharpness of Bai Xiaochun’s gaze stabbed into the gatekeeper’s eyes, his mind trembled. It felt as if an intense coldness had suddenly gripped his mind and dragged him into the dead of winter. Shocked, he didn’t dare to keep looking into Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and even subconsciously stepped out of the way to make room.

Bai Xiaochun walked past, his face expressionless. It was only after he entered the gate and walked off that the gatekeeper recovered.

“How could Bai Hao’s gaze be so intense?” he muttered. “It wasn’t like that before!”

After entering the clan itself, Bai Xiaochun began to simply stroll around. The place was large, but it was a clan, so there weren’t things like stores and shops. There were only mansions belonging to the various bloodlines of the clan. Everything was luxuriously decorated, complete with ornamental rocks and trees. Members of the clan walked about here and there, and some flew about overhead. Overall, it was a bustling place.

Before he could get very far, a young woman dressed like a servant appeared up ahead, walking toward him as she talked with a friend. When she saw Bai Xiaochun, her eyes flashed with scorn, and she snorted coldly.

“Is anyone even awake at the Department of Visitor Affairs? Apparently, they’ll let any cretin through the gates!” With that, she walked past.

Bai Xiaochun was just about to glare back at her angrily, but restrained himself.

“Just deal with it,” he thought. “After all, I'm not really Bai Hao.” Taking a deep breath, he looked over his shoulder at the servant girl and then continued on his way. As he explored the city, he encountered quite a few servants, all of whom seemed surprised to see him. However, each one had looks of scorn and disdain in their eyes as well.

Many of their looks seemed too exaggerated to be sincere, as if they were merely putting on a show. Others didn’t seem intentional at all, but rather, instinctive reactions, as if they truly found him disgusting, or even dirty.

Bai Xiaochun had a hard time not losing his temper, but he continued to remind himself of his purpose in coming here.

“Just deal with it!” he thought, gritting his teeth. After looking around for a while, he still had no idea where Bai Hao lived, and obviously, he couldn’t just ask people. The more time passed, the more he became aware of what Bai Hao’s life must have been like. Although he had been prepared to be treated poorly, he had never imagined it would be this bad.

“What exactly is the reason for it all...?” he thought. At one point as he was walking along, an old man walked out of a temple up ahead. His clothing seemed of better quality than everyone else Bai Xiaochun had seen so far, and he had a Foundation Establishment cultivation base. Clearly, he was no clan member, but rather, someone who had been hired to serve as a valet.

As he walked out, hands clasped behind his back, he prepared to leave, when suddenly he spotted Bai Xiaochun. Then, his eyes widened with surprise before turning extremely grim.

“Bai Hao! Have you forgotten your place!? This isn’t a place you can just come visit anytime you want! What gall you have! How dare you disregard clan rules!” From the way the old man’s eyes flashed, and from the impoliteness of his tone, it almost seemed like he was scolding a servant.

Up til this point, Bai Xiaochun had simply endured all the dirty looks people had given him. But the fact that this old man actually went so far as to rebuke him caused Bai Xiaochun's anger to rise. However, before he could do anything, the voice of a young woman rang out.

“Valet Chen, this is the Bai Clan, and no matter what your position, you are no member of our clan! What gives a servant like you the right to act so disrespectfully!?” At this point, a beautiful young woman appeared, hovering in midair. She had an icy expression and a profound cultivation base in the great circle of Foundation Establishment.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at her and simultaneously suppressed his rising anger.

The old man’s face fell, and his eyes even flickered with a bit of fear. Ducking his head, he clasped hands respectfully toward the young woman.

“Greetings, Fifth Young Lady. That was just a slip of the tongue by an old servant. However, the clan chief really did establish a rule that bastards are not allowed into the inner residence district unless summoned....”

The young woman glanced at Bai Xiaochun, sighed, and then turned her attention back to the old man. “It doesn’t matter what the circumstances are. You may not be so disrespectful to a member of the clan.”

With that, she shook her head and flew off into the distance.

“Of course, of course,” the old man said. However, after she was gone, he looked back at Bai Xiaochun with disgust.

“You’ll escape punishment today because the fifth young lady showed up. Get the hell back to the north district. If I see you around here again, I’ll report you to the clan chief!” With a cold snort, he flicked his sleeve and walked off.

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to explode. From the moment he had entered the Bai Clan, he had been forced to endure and endure. If things kept going on this way, he wasn't sure if he could keep up the act of being Bai Hao.

“How did Bai Hao even deal with all this? What would be the point of staying around in a clan like this?! Even if he wasn't well-liked, it shouldn’t be this extreme. There must be more to the story!

“Well, whatever. I’m not Bai Hao, so I guess I’ll just have to deal with it until I get that deva soul.” Gritting his teeth and doing his best to suppress his anger, he turned and headed north. It was at that point that he noticed a seven-story pagoda in the middle of a sprawling group of mansions.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0583 awe-chapter-584

The seven-story pagoda wasn't very far away, making it easy to see how exquisite it was, glowing like a treasure that illuminated everything around it. That and the restrictive spells that surrounded it indicated that it was a very important place to the Bai Clan.

As Bai Xiaochun made his way toward the north district, a middle-aged woman stood on a fifth story balcony of the pagoda, her expression icily sinister as she stared down at him.

She wore expensive clothing woven from spirit thread and embroidered with nine phoenixes, which radiated a soft warmth that indicated it had magical properties designed to enhance a person’s good looks.

Such clothing was extremely extravagant in the Wildlands. Even in the Heavenspan River regions, it would be the type of clothing that only an upper-class woman would wear. Because of it, this woman would be able to maintain her looks even if she were much older than she was now. She was curvaceous, with the fairest of fair skin, and although she couldn’t be considered spectacularly beautiful, there was something very enticing about her. Unlike many young beauties, she was not the type who would ever yield to an opponent, and radiated an air of maturity and grace.

As she stared at Bai Xiaochun walking toward the north district, she gritted her teeth with the most malicious venom imaginable. A moment later, a man appeared behind her, wearing black clothing and surrounded by a murderous aura. His eyes glowed red, and overall, he looked like an unsheathed sword waiting to strike. As soon as he appeared behind the woman, he clasped hands and bowed respectfully.

“Greetings, Madam Cai.”

Madam Cai didn’t look back at the man. Keeping her eyes fixed on Bai Xiaochun, she growled, “Didn’t you say that the bitch’s son, Bai Hao, was dead?!”

“Yes,” the man replied in an icy, confident voice. “I hit the kid with my Exterminating Soulbrand. His heart and blood vessels were irreparably damaged. Although I teleported him away and wasn’t able to personally witness him become a corpse, I can guarantee that he was killed, beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

“Killed beyond the shadow of a doubt? What a wonderful way to put it. Well, take a look over there. Who’s that?!” Erupting in rage-filled laughter, Madam Cai pointed at Bai Xiaochun.

The man’s eyes widened as he took a few steps forward, following the line of Madam Cai’s finger until he was looking at Bai Xiaochun.

“Impossible!” he said incredulously.

“Whether that’s really him or not.... kill him immediately!!” With that, Madam Cai turned to leave.

The man hesitated for a moment. Although he knew that Madam Cai didn’t like Bai Hao, and had been involved in a power struggle with him, he didn’t understand why she wanted him dead so urgently. “Madam Cai, killing him won’t be hard, but we’re in the Bai Clan. If I kill him right now, it could be... problematic.”

“That bitch’s son isn’t even a person!” she shrieked. “He’s inhuman! *Inhuman!!* I don’t care how you do it, just kill him as quickly as possible!! He must not be allowed to grow any further!!” A moment later, she seemed to realize she had lost control. Taking a deep breath, she recovered her composure and walked away without another word.

The black-garbed man stood there silently, unsure of exactly what Madam Cai meant when she said *inhuman*. However, the fact that his target had survived being hit with his Exterminating Soulbrand was actually a bit intriguing.

“I guess this Bai Hao really does have some skill after all,” he mused. “I arranged the entire matter, and even delivered the fatal blow myself. And yet somehow, he didn’t end up dying! And then he dared to come back! Well, you might have escaped by the skin of your teeth last time, but let’s see if you can pull off the same thing again!”

Chuckling coldly, the man turned to leave. At the same time, he began to pulse with the aura of Core Formation!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing the details of what had just been said in the pagoda. Because of the incredible restrictive spells which protected it, he wouldn’t be able to hear anything unless he was also inside of it. Furthermore, if he attempted to use divine sense to do so, the restrictive spells would detect it and react.

However, despite not being able to hear the conversation between the black-garbed man and the middle-aged women, he had seen them clearly, and had detected the ill will and killing intent with which they looked at him.

“Well isn’t this interesting....” he murmured to himself. Smiling coldly, he continued on toward the north district. Soon, he came to realize that the north district was far from the city center, and definitely not luxurious. Simple houses filled the entire area, the majority of them occupied by servants who had been attached to the Bai Clan for generations. Most of the people present were old, sick, and generally unhealthy-looking.

The houses seemed scattered about haphazardly, making the entire place seem vastly different from the east district. As Bai Xiaochun walked along, he realized that fewer people were looking at him with scorn and disgust. Considering that this was a poor and simple part of the clan, Bai Xiaochun was further struck by what kind of life Bai Hao must have lived.

There were even some people who seemed happy to see him, and stepped forward to greet him with sincere pleasure. This place was definitely very different from the east district.

“Big Bro Hao....”

“Young Master Hao!!”

Bai Hao was obviously welcome here. Furthermore, he didn’t even need to look for his residence. A group of children surrounded him and began to chat happily as they led him to a ramshackle house.

It was little more than a hut that seemed like it might collapse into rubble at any moment. Thankfully, the entire Bai Clan was protected by a spell formation that prevented the elements from affecting the buildings in the clan, otherwise his hut would have long since been washed away by the rain.

After entering the hut, he looked around and sighed.

The only thing inside was a bed. There wasn't even a chair present. It seemed almost impossible to believe that an early Foundation Establishment cultivator would live in a place like this. Whether it was in the Wildlands or in the Heavenspan River region, Foundation Establishment cultivators would always be treated very well no matter where they went.

“How could Bai Hao end up living like this in his own clan…?” Although Bai Xiaochun already knew a bit about Bai Hao, he simply couldn’t understand the situation. Even though he had been expecting something less than ideal, nothing could have prepared him for this.

“Either Bai Hao was willing to live like this... or didn’t dare to try to change his situation.... In that case, who is it that wants him dead? That man and woman from just now?” Considering the clothing the woman had been wearing, it was obvious that she occupied a very high position in the clan.

However, no amount of pondering brought any insight or clues. He just didn’t have enough information. In the end, he shook his head. “I wish I could help you, Bai Hao. But you need to give me something to work with. Help me understand what was going on with you!”

Sighing, he sat down cross-legged on the dilapidated bed. However, instead of meditating, he sent his divine sense out into the area.

He also performed some incantation gestures and prepared to place some restrictive spells in the area that no one but him would notice. This was a practice he had grown accustomed to over the years. Whenever he was in a strange place, the most important thing to do at first was make sure he was safe.

However, almost as soon as he sent his divine sense out, a serious expression appeared in his eyes, and his gaze shifted to an area in the corner of the room. Stepping off the couch, he walked over and squatted down to have a closer look.

Although this corner of the room looked ordinary in every way, when his divine sense touched it, he could sense the lingering fluctuations of some magical technique.

They were faint, as though they had been fading away for months now, and were just about to disappear for good. Were it not for the fact that Bai Xiaochun was currently fused with his three clones, quadrupling his divine sense's sensitivity, then he would never have noticed the traces. Although his current divine sense did not have all the powers that Nascent Soul divine sense did, it was equally acute as that of a Nascent Soul expert.

After examining the location further, Bai Xiaochun's eyes lit up with surprise.

“Someone used some kind of magic here.... It wasn't very long ago, months at most.... From the look of things, another type of magic was used later to wipe the ground clean. Erase some evidence of something perhaps…?” Curiosity growing, Bai Xiaochun opened his Heavenspan Dharma eye just a crack, and sent violet light spilling out into the confines of the hut.

After looking at the ground using this method, Bai Xiaochun realized that what had been wiped away with magic was most likely some lines of hand-written text....

“Interesting,” he murmured. Suddenly, several afterimages appeared, which formed into his three clones. Each clone opened his third eye a crack, causing three more beams of violet light to converge on the same place.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun knew what he was doing, and prevented any of the violet light from leaving the hut, ensuring that no one on the outside would be able to detect what he was doing. Within moments, the line of text which had been wiped away was restored enough that Bai Xiaochun could read it.

Despite the level of his cultivation base and the extent of his mental control, the mere sight of the text caused him to let out a yelp of surprise!

“That’s.... That’s....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0584 awe-chapter-585

What is fire...? According to my studies, mundane fire is not a physical substance like water. Instead, it is a reflection of something that can’t be seen with either the naked eye or divine sense!

Fire is similar to an aura... a mixture of something illusory and something miraculous!

The only reason you can see it is because of the glow of light that results from its existence!

Multi-colored flame is the same.... In that case, a new question arises. What are souls? And why do souls produce multi-colored flame...?

By this point Bai Xiaochun was panting, and his eyes were as wide as saucers as he stared at the writing. Although only a portion of it was still visible, even the little bit he could read left him completely reeling. At the same time, the feeling of enlightenment left him gasping.

“This... this....” He had never imagined that someone would study fire in this way, research it in such detail. Based on how the words were written, it seemed that the person who had left them behind had just been casually writing down their thoughts.

Most importantly, in addition to the waves of shock which pounded at Bai Xiaochun’s heart and mind as he looked at the words, they opened a new door to him. By combining what he was reading with his current understanding of how to conjure flame, he suddenly felt as if he were gaining significant enlightenment.

“That’s right! This is exactly what I've experienced when conjuring my own flame. Fire... is not a physical substance like water, but rather, a reflection of something else. Or perhaps... a symbol! In many senses, it is illusory, and not material like water is!!” Bai Xiaochun did his best to keep his calm, but it was almost impossible. From what he could tell, the person who had left these words behind was extraordinary, and had almost unparalleled enlightenment regarding the nature of flame. In that regard, this person was almost like a deva!

Furthermore, considering that he could already conjure eleven-colored flame, this writing left him in even more profound anticipation of conjuring twelve-colored flame! Based on this new information, and his own previous research and analysis, he was confident that he could succeed!!

Never could Bai Xiaochun have imagined that he would stumble across such good fortune here. Drawing upon his cultivation base, he poured more power into his Heavenspan Dharma Eye and continued reading.

As he did, he continued to reel with shock. And that was especially true when he reached the end of the text and realized that it contained speculations about the formula for fifteen-colored flame. After looking over much of that information, Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken.

“How is this possible?!?!” Dumbfounded, he stared at the final lines of writing.

Fire can be incredibly hot, and has mystical power. When that heat and that power combine, they form an outer *flame, an inner flame, and a flame heart....*

My special augury method has not yet produced the formula for fifteen-colored flame. However, making the final calculations shouldn’t be difficult. After that... sixteen-colored flame and seventeen-colored flame shouldn’t be much of a challenge. In fact, I'm even confident that my augury can produce the formula for twenty-colored flame!

Unfortunately... my cultivation base is too low. Even if I produced the formula, it wouldn’t do me any good. I wouldn’t be able to conjure the flame.... However, I still want to make the formula. I’ll show it to father to finally prove to him that I’m not useless. I am *good for something! I'm not interested in fighting with anyone else in the clan for position. I just want father... to notice me....*

Within those final words, Bai Xiaochun could sense both wild confidence and profound self-deprecation.

“I can’t believe he made his own augury method to produce multi-colored flame formulas....” Sighing, he rose to his feet and used his Heavenspan Dharma Eye to search the entire hut. After searching the entire place several times, his anxiety began to mount.

It was obvious that at some point in the past, the entire floor had been covered with notes about flame conjuring. However, at some point, most of the notes had been wiped away by some unknown method!

Clearly, they had been erased by a person!

“The formula for fifteen-colored flame....” Bai Xiaochun thought. There was no way for him to remain unmoved by this development. Furthermore, if Bai Hao did not write the notes, then how did they end up in his residence?!

If Bai Hao wrote them.... then considering the level of his cultivation base, he had obviously achieved astonishing enlightenment of flame conjuring. In fact, his abilities far surpassed Bai Xiaochun’s.

“Wait a second, that can’t be right. If Bai Hao was really that good, he could just reveal his skills and achieve a monumental rise in the Bai Clan. Why would he allow himself to be treated the way he was?” Bai Xiaochun scratched his head in thought for a bit, but couldn’t come up with any explanations.

He stood up and began to pace back and forth in the room, and after a long moment passed, his eyes suddenly began to shine brightly.

“Whether or not Bai Hao wrote these notes doesn't matter. What’s important is that the complete set of notes contains the formula for fifteen-colored flame. In that case... whoever erased the notes is Bai Hao's killer, or at least, is connected to the killer!

“Therefore, the killer is likely the one who possesses the complete set of notes....

“If I want to get those notes, I probably don’t have to do anything. The killer or killers will come looking for me to cause trouble. After all, my return has most likely sparked their killing intent. In fact, if I make a stir in the Bai Clan, it will probably make them accelerate their plans....

“In turn, that would give me more clues to follow to get those notes!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he made his decision. Looking down at the remnants of the notes on the floor, he sighed.

“Bai Hao really had things rough. I feel bad for him....” He shook his head. By this point, he was fairly certain that Bai Hao had been the one to write all of the notes.

“However, I still need some confirmation.” Pulling out a jade slip, he sent a message to Li Feng and asked him to secretly start making inquiries about Bai Hao.

Of course, Li Feng didn’t know that Bai Xiaochun was impersonating Bai Hao, and therefore, excitedly set about following orders. As far as he was concerned, this was a good opportunity to show off. Intentionally keeping Zhou Yixing in the dark, he started calling on his own network of friends and informants to try to get information.

A few days later, he told Bai Xiaochun all of the information he had been able to dig up on Bai Hao. When Bai Xiaochun saw it, his eyes flashed with anger.

Based on the information he had gleaned from Bai Hao’s bone slips, as well as Bai Xiaochun’s experiences in the clan already, he now had a good idea of what type of person Bai Hao had been.

His mother had been a servant girl with no position in the clan, whereas his father was the current clan chief. In a particularly violent and humiliating incident in which his mother had no control over her own body, Bai Hao was conceived, and became a bastard son of the Bai Clan.

He had a very low position from the moment he was born. Furthermore, it wasn’t long after he came into the world that his mother was killed. If Bai Hao had possessed sufficient latent talent, things might have turned out differently for him. However, he wasn’t talented when it came to cultivation, and no matter how hard he worked, was never able to excel.

His father’s first wife was none other than Madam Cai, who occupied a very high position in the clan. In fact, she came from the Cai Clan, another of the three great clans that were attached to Giant Ghost City.

There was another factor at play. Madam Cai’s son was Bai Hao’s older brother, Bai Qi. He was insufferably proud, and was famous throughout all of Giant Ghost City. He was already in the great circle of Core Formation, and had attracted the attention of the Bai Clan patriarch, who viewed him as the qilin son of the clan, the type which only came along once every few hundred years. In fact, Bai Qi was to represent the Bai Clan in their attempt to secure the legacy of the Hell-Emperor.

Family like that made Bai Hao’s life even more bitter than it might have been. His father treated him with cold aloofness that made it seem as if they weren’t related, and apparently didn’t even care whether Bai Hao lived or died.

His father’s first wife hated him, and his older brother was completely condescending, treating Bai Hao as if he were a servant. Eventually, Bai Hao came to be viewed as the lowest of the low within the clan.

Everyone was afraid of getting on Madam Cai and Bai Qi’s bad side, and therefore, not even the servants were willing to have much dealings with Bai Hao. Furthermore, from the time he was in Qi Condensation, his progress had always been indescribably slow.

Thankfully, Bai Hao was the type of person who could deal with all of that. He put on a front of looking weak and cowardly, and always just bowed his head and shivered when people berated him. Eventually, people stopped paying much attention to him. Few people even remembered that he had a hut of his own in the north district.

It had only been recently that he finally broke through into the Foundation Establishment stage. Shortly afterward, he went missing....

By the time Bai Xiaochun finished reading all the information in the jade slip Li Feng had sent to him, his anger was burning hot. He almost couldn’t reconcile the information within the slip with the young man he had seen out in the jungle.

“Who cares if he looked weak and cowardly? If I were in his position, that’s what I would have done to stay alive.... If he had shown any signs of being extraordinary, he would have been a threat, and would definitely have been killed!

“In fact, it was right after he made a cultivation base breakthrough that he died.... And yet, merely having a Foundation Establishment cultivation base doesn't seem like enough to make him a threat to anyone....” Then he looked down at the ground, and suddenly, came to a realization.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0585 awe-chapter-586

“Bai Hao must have accidentally revealed his shocking talents in flame conjuring to someone, and incited jealousy. That's what got him killed!

“I would bet money that the person responsible for his death is that Madam Cai.... However, there’s still something I can’t help but wonder about. Would Bai Hao’s father have treated him that way if he knew about his spectacular talents? After all, any necromancer clan would view a genius like that as a true qilin son!

“Bai Hao.... Did you tell your father about how talented you were? If not, then I guess it's a moot point. However, based on what's left of your notes, it seems you really looked forward to telling your father the truth. In fact, you seemed absolutely set on giving him the formula for fifteen-colored flame....

“If you did tell your father, and then got killed anyway, then this whole thing is a lot more complicated....” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t inclined to contemplate the matter, and yet was unable to do anything except that. As he pondered the situation, a feeling of profound sadness rose up in his heart. He couldn’t help but feel sorry for Bai Hao, who had simply dreamed of being noticed by his own father. Bai Xiaochun sighed.

“Bai Hao, I once promised you that if fate would have it, I would get revenge for you.... Well, at the moment, I really need your flame conjuring techniques, and I’m not the type of person who takes advantage of others. You might have perished already, and left for the underworld, but I still want to take you as my apprentice!

“I’ve never had any apprentices before, so you’ll be my first. I guess it’s just karma. The two of us are separated by life and death, but I'm still going to be your Master!” On the one hand, Bai Xiaochun felt sad about everything that had happened to Bai Hao. On the other hand, he was using Bai Hao’s identity and was trying to track down his research.

“Starting now, you’re my apprentice, and I'm going to find out exactly who it was that killed you!” As Bai Xiaochun contemplated this new state of affairs, his eyes flashed with anger, and his opinion of the Bai Clan fell even further than before.

Sticking his chin up, he coldly murmured, “The higher my profile, the sooner they’ll try to kill me!”

Although he knew that he would be putting himself in danger, considering that he was now Bai Hao’s master, he had no other choice. Besides, he still had his crystalline soulhoarding pagoda to fall back on.

“What a headache. I'm not the type of person who likes to show off, and yet here I am, being forced to do just that.” Shaking his head, he sighed, left his hut, and began to make certain inquiries.

He soon learned about several places in the Bai Clan where clan members would go to participate in trials by fire. All clans had places like that. As for the Bai Clan, they had special trials for spirit enhancement, flame conjuring, and soul medicine concocting.

There were rewards depending on the ranking one achieved, but Bai Xiaochun didn’t really pay much attention to that.

Considering all the sects he had been part of in his life, he was familiar with such arrangements.

“Well,” he thought with the shake of his head, “I guess I’ll just have to go look at the rankings.” It was actually somewhat exhilarating to be in the great circle of the Gold Core stage and be preparing to go mess with a bunch of Foundation Establishment children. Filled with excitement, he headed toward the spirit enhancement trial.

Before long, he was standing in front of a stone stele that listed the Bai Clan’s spirit enhancement rankings. Surrounding the stone stele were a handful of spirit enhancement workshops. Compared to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect Superstars, this ranking list was rather short. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t care about that. There were actually quite a few people gathered in the area, either to challenge the trials, or to watch.

“I'm not here to bully anybody,” he thought to himself. “I’m just here to draw out the killer!” Clearing his throat, he looked around once more and then selected a spirit enhancement workshop.

Considering that Bai Xiaochun was competing against Foundation Establishment cultivators, there was little question about what would happen. The stone stele quickly began to glow, and then Bai Hao’s name appeared on the list. At first, it wasn’t even in the top 100, but it began to rise quickly. Soon it was in the top 30, and then it leaped... all the way into 1st place!!

It happened so quickly that few people even noticed what had occurred. But then, the light from the stone stele grew increasingly bright, and people began to gasp and look over.

“Bai Hao... took 1st place?! A sevenfold spirit enhancement!?!?”

“Heavens! That... that speed is incredible!!”

“This Bai Hao... he’s not that bastard son, is he? How could he have become so powerful so quickly?!?!”

“How is this possible!?!? Even when Bai Qi was in Foundation Establishment, the most he could do was a sixfold spirit enhancement. I can’t believe that Bai Hao can do a sevenfold enhancement!!”

As the crowd buzzed with conversation, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and walked out of the spirit enhancement workshop. Seeing all the shocked glances being sent in his direction felt quite wonderful.

“Hmmmphh. I'm not doing this for myself. I'm here so my apprentice can feel what it's like to be the subject of worldwide adoration.” Bai Xiaochun hadn’t become so underhanded that he didn’t feel embarrassed about competing with Foundation Establishment cultivators when he was in the great circle of the Gold Core stage.

Even still, he couldn’t help but stick his chin up, wave his sleeve, and head toward the next trial.

At the trial for soul medicine, there were even more people than at the trial for spirit enhancement. After all, spirit enhancement was a very difficult thing. Comparatively speaking, concocting soul medicine was actually much easier. And since the Bai Clan was a necromancer clan, they were obviously talented in this regard.

The highest name on the ranking list had used the time it takes an incense stick to burn to concoct 27 portions of low-grade soul medicine. After seeing that, Bai Xiaochun’s spirit soared, and he quickly selected a soul medicine workshop.

Before long, the same thing which had happened moments before happened again. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Bai Hao’s name appeared in 1st place in the soul medicine rankings!

Furthermore, he had actually concocted 50 portions of low-grade soul medicine!!

That was shocking, to say the least. For someone in the Foundation Establishment stage to do something like that was completely eye-catching, and as soon as the other members of the clan saw it, cries of disbelief rang out.

“1st place... 50 portions!!”

“That’s impossible! Bai Hao... I know him! He’s a nobody. How could he have reached 1st place!?”

“Like the saying goes, *a bird might not sing for years, but when it does, its song will shock everyone*!!”

Bai Xiaochun emerged to hear such conversation, and immediately felt quite pleased.

“Hao’er,” he murmured, “if your spirit is out there watching, there’s no need to offer any thanks to Master. Don’t worry, I’ll take care of everything.” Murmuring to himself, Bai Xiaochun strutted off to the flame conjuring trial.

News about Bai Hao’s name getting onto the spirit enhancement rankings quickly began to spread through the clan. Before long, it was the talk of the clan, and of course, the news soon reached Madam Cai.

The area beneath the pagoda in the east district was filled with luxurious mansions. Inside one of them, Madam Cai smashed a flower vase onto the ground, her eyes blazing with killing intent. “Kill him. We must kill him!! He mustn’t be allowed to rise to prominence!!”

Standing in front of her was a young man with a grim expression on his face. He wore clothing just as luxurious as hers, and was extremely handsome. This was none other than that Bai Hao’s older brother, Bai Qi. Looking down at the shattered remnants of the flower vase, and then back up at his mother with her raging killing intent, he said, “Mother, please, calm down. He’s nothing more than a bastard. There’s no need to worry so much about him.”

Madam Cai looked up at her son and angrily said, “Maybe other people don’t realize the truth, but surely you do? Can’t you see how skilled he is in flame conjuring? If your father finds out about his talents, it would be a big threat to you. The boy has to die!”

Even as Madam Cai ground her teeth in frustration, Bai Qi chuckled. “You’re overthinking things, mother. The last time you sent people to kill him, the plan wasn’t executed perfectly. As the clan chief, father obviously knew about it, and yet, did he say anything afterward? Did he do anything to punish you?”

In response to his words, Madam Cai’s eyes widened.

“Mother, you really don’t need to get all worked up over a small thing like this. If Bai Hao thinks he can make a break for fame, then I’ll just go personally to cut him down a notch or two.” Shaking his head, Bai Qi casually turned and walked away.

After he left, Madam Cai thought about the matter more, and still did not feel at ease. Taking a deep breath, she pulled out a jade slip to transmit a message.

“I want him dead *tonight*!”

Outside the residence, Bai Qi’s lips twisted up into a cold grin as he took out a bone slip, which contained a message regarding Bai Hao’s current position. After discovering that he had gone to the flame conjuring trial, Bai Qi headed in the same direction, an expression of scorn on his face.

“Pretty soon, you’re going to find out that no matter how hard you work, and no matter what you do, a single slap of my palm can reduce you to *nothing*!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0586 awe-chapter-587

Bai Xiaochun was in a wonderful mood as he sped toward the flame conjuring trial. Quite a few clan members were following along behind him, extremely curious to see what would happen next.

“He’s going toward the flame conjuring trial!”

“He’s already taken 1st place in the Foundation Establishment trials for spirit enhancement and soul medicine. If he does the same with flame conjuring, then Bai Hao... will definitely rise to prominence with incredible speed!”

“Something seems strange about all this, though. Bai Hao always had a low position, and seemed cowardly and weak. Why is he suddenly showing off like this? Furthermore, it’s hard to believe he has such heaven-defying talent in spirit enhancement!”

As the discussions raged, Bai Xiaochun hurried along to the trial for flame conjuring. Upon arriving, he found a stone stele that was clearly much larger than the other stone steles in the other locations.

Three concentric rings of conjuring stations could be seen at the bottom of the stone stele. Furthermore, quite a crowd was present, including many servants. Obviously, people had already heard about Bai Hao’s performances earlier, and had come to watch.

As soon as he appeared, more conversations rose up.

“He’s here! Bai Hao is here!”

“In one day, he’s already taken 1st place in the trials for spirit enhancement and soul medicine. I'm going to bet that he’ll also acquire a shocking rank in the flame conjuring rankings!”

“Nice job, Bai Hao.... Nobody ever noticed you before, but that was because you were keeping your true potential hidden!”

Bai Xiaochun strode forward through the crowd, which parted to make way for him. Inside, he was sighing repeatedly.

“Bai Hao, my apprentice, all of this praise belongs to you. With your talent in flame concocting, I'm sure you would do even better than me.” The more Bai Xiaochun thought about how tragically Bai Hao had died, the more he felt like it was a huge pity.

“The Bai Clan owes you, and as your Master, I’m going to make sure you get what's yours!

“In addition to flushing out your killer, I have another goal. I want to see the reaction of both your father and the clan as a whole when you prove how talented you are!” Eyes sparkling, he headed toward one of the conjuring workstations and then closed himself inside. Outside, the audience looked on in anticipation.

The matter had even drawn the attention of some of the clan elders, many of whom left their mansions to come see what was going on for themselves.

As of this moment, the entire Bai Clan was being shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s shocking performance.

Not too long after he entered the conjuring workstation, eight beams of light appeared off in the distance, in the lead position of which was an eye-catching young man in the great circle of Core Formation.

The group which accompanied him were all chosen of the Bai Clan who followed him blindly wherever he went. The arrival of the group caused another commotion in the crowd.

“Bai Qi!!”

“A chosen from the direct bloodline, officially proclaimed as the qilin son of the Bai Clan... Bai Qi!!”

“Interesting. He and Bai Hao actually have the same father, but different mothers.” The clan members and servants in the area looked on with glittering eyes, and many of them made way for the new arrivals. Some of the clan members gazed upon Bai Qi with zealous passion; to them, he was the number one chosen of his generation, the crown prince of the clan!

Such clan members stepped forward and offered formal greetings. However, there were others in the crowd who gave little more than hostile snorts.

Those people were from other, auxiliary bloodlines. It was only natural for there to be tension between different bloodlines in a clan, especially when it came to competition between the chosen members.

Bai Qi nodded in response to the clan members who were offering formal greetings, then glanced around at the hundreds of people and said, “Quite a little crowd we have here. I heard something’s going on. What could it be?”

Despite the broad smile on his face, he was actually feeling very displeased.

Among the clan members who clearly revered Bai Qi was a young man who stepped forward and respectfully said, “Crown Prince, everybody’s here because Bai Hao took 1st place in the other two trials by fire. Now that he’s come to the trial for flame conjuring, we're all here to see what happens.”

“Oh? Bai Hao, huh? Seems my worthless little brother has attracted quite a bit of attention. Alright, well as his older brother I guess I might as well wait around to congratulate him.” As soon as these words left his mouth, profound gleams could be seen in the eyes of many others in the area.

Obviously, everyone was well aware of the relationship between Bai Qi and Bai Hao

It was in that moment that Bai Hao’s name suddenly lit up on the stone stele, in 1st place, with the words *seven-colored flame* next to it!

Bai Xiaochun had been careful to limit his success to seven-colored flame; after all, Bai Hao was supposed to be a Foundation Establishment cultivator, and although he was trying to make a scene, he didn’t want to make things too unrealistic, otherwise it could lead to trouble.

Seven-colored flame was where he chose to limit things, the standard for master necromancers. Master necromancers were rare among Foundation Establishment cultivators, and would cause a stir wherever they appeared, even in Giant Ghost City.

“Seven-colored flame!!”

“This Bai Hao... he’s... he’s actually a master necromancer!!”

“Heavens, how is that possible? Even a lot of the clan elders in the Core Formation stage aren’t master necromancers....”

People in the crowd were starting to go crazy, both direct bloodline descendants and people from the auxiliary bloodlines. As for the clan elders who had come to observe, they were visibly moved.

Bai Qi’s face was expressionless, and yet, inside, he was feeling extremely displeased. It was even possible to see a grim glint in his eyes.

As the crowd clamored, Bai Xiaochun emerged from the conjuring workstation, and was very pleased by what he heard. As of this point, he was fairly certain that he had achieved his goal of establishing a high profile. Now that he had taken 1st place in all of the trials by fire, it was highly likely that whoever was responsible for Bai Hao’s death would accelerate their plans. Furthermore, he would soon see what the clan chief felt about the whole thing.

In almost the exact same instant that he stepped out into the open, numerous gazes fell upon him. There were gazes of jealousy, confusion, shock, and various other emotions.

As for Bai Qi, his eyes were cold and filled with disgust.

Bai Xiaochun quickly noticed Bai Qi, and although it was his first time seeing Bai Hao’s older brother, based on his cultivation base and expression, it was easy to identify him.

“So that’s Bai Qi, huh...?” he thought, standing there staring at him with narrowed eyes.

Everyone could see what was happening, and soon, the crowd quieted down. Many of the people from the auxiliary bloodlines looked over, curious about what exactly would happen between the two brothers.

Bai Qi looked over and coolly said, “Feeling proud of yourself?”

His cultivation base was in the great circle of Core Formation, which caused significant pressure to weigh down on the crowd as his voice echoed out with thunderous might. Quite a few people even backed up a bit.

“Taking 1st place in all three trials is quite an accomplishment,” he continued, “I’ll give you that.” Although Bai Qi appeared to be offering words of congratulation, the coldness in his tone didn’t seem congratulatory at all.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes sparkled as he continued to stare at Bai Qi and wait for him to make his point. Whatever he said would reveal the true nature of his relationship with Bai Hao.

“Unfortunately,” Bai Qi continued in a cool tone, “you pushed things a bit too far, Bai Hao. Nobody else here knows you very well, but as your older brother, I do. How could you possibly accomplish something like this on your own? Clearly, you used some underhanded method to cheat! How very disappointing of you.” With that, Bai Qi extended his right hand to reveal a command medallion, which he waved at the stone stele.

Instantly, Bai Hao’s name on the ranking list faded away and disappeared. Shockingly, Bai Qi had used his status as crown prince to simply remove Bai Hao’s name!

At first, everyone in the area was shocked, but then, they broke out into a hubbub.

“Cheating?”

“See, I told you so! Bai Hao was always weak and cowardly. How could he suddenly rise to prominence like that? As it turns out, he was cheating....”

“Interesting. Well, nobody will ever be able to say for sure whether he was *actually* cheating or not....”

Meanwhile, Bai Qi was looking coldly at Bai Xiaochun, doing nothing to conceal the disdain and contempt in his eyes.

It was almost as if he were using his gaze to tell Bai Xiaochun that no matter what he did, he could reduce him to nothing with the single slap of a palm!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0587 awe-chapter-588

Bai Xiaochun stood there looking quietly at Bai Qi. For some reason, he wasn’t angry at how he had wiped away Bai Hao’s name from the stone stele, and presumably, the stone steles for spirit enhancement and soul medicine.

In fact, there wasn't even a need for Bai Xiaochun to ponder the matter. He instantly realized that news about him supposedly cheating would fill the entire clan.

The fact that Bai Qi had taken the initiative to wipe out Bai Hao’s rankings without even investigating the matter was extremely telling. This was Bai Hao’s older brother, and clearly, he treated him just as coldly as the stories had indicated he would.

“He didn’t even give me a chance to explain....” Bai Xiaochun thought with a sigh. He wasn’t angry, just sad for Bai Hao.

“Well, considering that this is how Madam Cai and Bai Qi treat Bai Hao, I can be fairly certain of his father’s attitude....” As he stood there quietly, Bai Qi’s voice could once again be heard.

“Because of the status father and I hold in the clan, most others would feel uncomfortable chiding you, Bai Hao. But not me. You’re a bastard son, and have no right to put your name on the clan’s ranking steles.

“As your older brother, I’d always hoped you would be able to make a name for yourself, and actually came here to congratulate you. Unfortunately, though, you turned out to be nothing more than a huge disappointment.” Shaking his head, Bai Qi turned to the crowd and clasped hands. “Fellow clan members, I, Bai Qi, would like to apologize to all of you for what Bai Hao has done.”

After bowing deeply, he ignored Bai Xiaochun, turned, and became a bright beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun stood there silently, feeling all of the gazes upon him. After a moment passed, he smiled faintly, then turned and walked away.

“It seems I underestimated Bai Qi. Apparently he *can* do a bit of scheming.” After returning to his hut in the north district, he sat down cross-legged to think.

“Well, this was a fishing expedition, that’s all, and my line has been tossed out. Bai Qi can erase Bai Hao’s name from the rankings, but he can’t make everyone forget what happened. Right now, I should probably give the killer a chance to make a move.” He considered going out for a walk immediately, but after looking up to check the time, he decided to close his eyes and work on his Undying Live Forever Technique instead.

As evening fell, an afterimage appeared as a clone stepped out from Bai Xiaochun, who quickly headed outside of the clan.

Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun’s true self masked his own aura; unless someone opened the door of his hut and stepped inside, they would have no way of knowing he was there.

Outside of the Bai Clan, his fire clone sped along with an expressionless face, making sure to keep his cultivation base at the Foundation Establishment level as he headed in the direction of Giant Ghost City.

Before much time passed, his expression flickered, and he stopped in place. Turning, he saw a beam of light shooting toward him at top speed.

Within the beam of light was a black-robed man who fairly burst with a murderous aura. A wicked grin covered his face, and his eyes flickered with killing intent. Surrounding him was a cloud of vengeful souls, and soul fluctuations that instantly identified him as a necromancer.

This was the very same man whom Bai Xiaochun had spotted talking to Madam Cai in the pagoda when he first arrived at the clan.

“I’ve been waiting for you for a while now,” Bai Xiaochun said loudly. “It’s about time you showed up.”

When the man in black saw Bai Xiaochun standing there as if he were waiting, he seemed surprised. The truth was that he had been waiting this entire time for a chance to get at Bai Hao, but hadn’t dared to make a move inside the clan itself. Eventually, the enraged Madam Cai had finally convinced him to do just that, and had even guaranteed his safety. However, just when he had been about to attack Bai Hao inside the clan, to his surprise, he discovered that he had left.

At first, he had been delighted, and had immediately given chase. But now, when he saw the frigid look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and heard his words, he suddenly felt strangely shocked.

“You....”

Bai Xiaochun waved his finger at the man, which caused frigid qi to spring up all around him.

Before the man in black could react, he was completely surrounded, causing his face to fall. He wanted to flee, but quickly realized that he was frozen in place.

“Impossible!” he shrieked, looking like he had just seen a ghost. His mind was reeling, filled with an intense sensation of imminent crisis. Biting his tongue and spitting blood out of his mouth, he caused the souls he had brought with him to all detonate.

However, that wasn’t all he did. His goal was to break free from the frigid qi, and because he didn’t trust the power of the soul detonations to do that on their own, he also resorted to detonating part of his own body!

A boom rang out as his lower half exploded, sending his upper torso speeding backward, face pale and filled with intense terror.

“You’re not Bai Hao!!” Trembling, the man in black prepared to flee. However, that was when Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, appearing directly in front of him. Reaching out, he placed his hand on top of the screaming man’s head.

“Fellow Daoist, please forgi--” Before he could finish, his body went stiff, and his eyes bulged out. His mind began to reel, and the last thing he heard was Bai Xiaochun saying one word.

“Soulsearch!”

The majority of cultivators had soulsearching techniques of one sort or another. Most such techniques didn’t even count as divine abilities. They were simply ways of sending divine sense into the mind of another person and rifling through their memories in domineering fashion. Although there were certain tricks and methods that differed between techniques, most of them were used as a way to prevent the target's soul from being harmed in the process.

Unfortunately for the man in black, Bai Xiaochun wasn't adept with soulsearching, and didn't possess any tricks or special methods. Furthermore, he wasn't doing the soulsearch for himself, but rather, for the sake of Bai Hao.

As the clone soulsearched the man in black, various scenes became visible to his true self back in the Bai Clan.

"Your name is Xu Hai.... Ah, so that's what happened.... It really was Madam Cai.... When Bai Hao publicly revealed that he had reached Foundation Establishment, she arranged for dozens of assassins to go after him. Bai Hao was only in early Foundation Establishment, but was no fool. He was ready, and fought back tenaciously as they chased him. He even used multi-colored flame.... In the end, he evaded most of the assassins, and even killed some of them...." Bai Xiaochun was shaken by what he saw in the memories of the man in black, especially the casual way in which Bai Hao wielded his multi-colored flame!

Bai Xiaochun could also tell that the black-robed man had been equally shocked. After all, he was only a master necromancer, without a deep understanding of the things he had been seeing. However, Bai Xiaochun was different.

"What he did, it was...." He took a deep breath, taken aback at how extraordinary Bai Hao had been, and also profoundly sad at how things had ended for him. "What a pity that in the end, his cultivation base was just too weak. He was hit with this man’s Exterminating Soulbrand, and then teleported away, his heart and blood vessels in ruins....”

In the end, Bai Xiaochun was certain that Bai Hao had been killed, not just because of his cultivation base breakthrough, but because of his skill with flame conjuring.

“Madam Cai, huh. So, she's the one who has Bai Hao’s research notes.” Another afterimage appeared as Bai Xiaochun’s water clone stepped out. Without the slightest hesitation, he left the hut, keeping all cultivation base fluctuations hidden as he headed toward the pagoda where Bai Xiaochun had first seen Madam Cai.

Given the current level of Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense, not even Nascent Soul cultivators would be able to detect him unless they tried extremely hard. Only a deva patriarch would be able to. However, the clan’s deva patriarch wouldn’t have his divine sense out in the clan at all times, nor would he be constantly paying attention to every minor thing that happened.

Bai Xiaochun’s water clone crept along through the night until he was near the pagoda. Keeping his aura carefully concealed, he made his way toward Madam Cai’s mansion!

Just when the water clone was about to start searching for Bai Hao’s notes, his expression flickered, and he stopped in place, looking into the mansion at one particular room where Madam Cai and Bai Qi were having a conversation!

“Qi’er,” Madam Cai said, sounding a bit anxious, “you need to spend more time studying that son of a bitch Bai Hao’s notes. Once you master the ability to conjure eleven-colored flame, the patriarch will value you even more than he does already.

“Only then will he agree to open the ancestral land for you!

“The ancestral land is where the Bai Clan’s only deva soul is housed. Once the ancestral land is opened, anyone in the clan can enter, and although technically speaking any of them could get the deva soul... if the patriarch agrees that it should go to you, then everything will be a formality. The auxiliary bloodlines will have nothing to say about the matter, and you’ll be able to get the deva soul.

“Once you have that deva soul, you can trade it for a full set of five elements deva beast souls, and then form your Nascent Soul! Our clan is huge, and many people have their eyes on that set of deva beast souls. Not even your father could get it for you!” With that, Madam Cai went on to offer further exhortations on the subject.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0588 awe-chapter-589

As Bai Xiaochun’s water clone stood there listening to Madam Cai and her son talking, his eyes began to shine brightly.

Already, he had learned quite a bit about the situation. Bai Qi clearly was a chosen member of the Bai Clan, with extraordinary necromantic talents. Although he wasn’t at the terrestrial rank yet, he was obviously on the verge of mastering eleven-colored flame.

Considering that Bai Qi was trying to win the approval of the clan’s patriarch, then based on what Bai Xiaochun had learned earlier, it seemed obvious that the clan was grooming him to participate in the competition to become the successor of the Hell-Emperor.

Obviously, with his necromantic talents and a Nascent Soul cultivation base, he would have a good chance at succeeding.

Of course, all of that was assuming that he could reach the Nascent Soul stage. The Bai Clan was huge, with numerous bloodlines all competing against each other. Therefore, it wasn’t possible for the clan to simply give the five elements deva beast souls to Bai Qi outright. Therefore, Madam Cai and Bai Qi were attempting to arrange for the so-called ancestral land trial by fire as the vehicle to achieve their aim.

A deva soul would be up for grabs in that trial by fire, and whoever got it could exchange it for a full set of deva beast souls. If they could secretly arrange for Bai Qi to be the one to get the deva soul, and no unforeseen circumstances arose, then the other bloodlines in the clan wouldn’t be able to do anything about it.

All of that, though, was contingent on the clan’s deva patriarch approving of the plan.

Based on what Bai Xiaochun’s clone could sense in Madam Cai’s tone of voice, she was thoroughly convinced that she could convince the deva patriarch to agree....

“So, they’re going to open the ancestral land just for Bai Qi....” he thought, his heart pounding at the significance of this opportunity. “For most people, getting a deva soul is just a formality on the way to getting a set of five elements deva beast souls. But I’m different... I can directly absorb them!” He grinned, his eyes sparkling.

It was in that very moment that, inside the mansion, Madam Cai’s face fell. Reaching down, she pulled a jade slip out of her bag of holding, a life slip which was currently crumbling to pieces.

“Xu Hai is dead!!”

Bai Qi’s eyes went wide as he looked over at the crumbling jade slip. Xu Hai had been sent to kill Bai Hao, and although his cultivation base wasn’t as powerful as Bai Qi’s, he was still in Core Formation. For a Core Formation cultivator to perish in a fight with a Foundation Establishment cultivator was extremely unusual.

“How is that even possible?” Madam Cai said, clearly alarmed. “That bitch’s son is only in Foundation Establishment. Don’t tell me... that your father....”

“Calm down, mother. There’s no way that Xu Hai was killed by Bai Hao, and there’s also no way that father was there. If I'm not mistaken, the bitch’s son must have come across some good fortune, and got something or someone to help him! Xu Hai must have been killed by whoever Bai Hao has helping him!” Bai Qi’s eyes began to shine with cold light.

“Whoever it is that has dared to interfere with Bai Clan matters has overstepped their bounds, no matter who they are!”

Bai Xiaochun’s water clone stood outside the mansion, rubbing his nose. He could sense what was happening with the fire clone, who had never expected Xu Hai to be so unable to deal with pain. In almost the same moment that the soulsearch finished, he expired.

In response to Bai Qi's words, Madam Cai fought to get herself under control. She wasn’t worried about Bai Hao having help from outside the clan. No, she feared interference on the part of her husband. However, after considering the matter closely, she decided that it was extremely unlikely that her husband had played a part in what had just happened.

“Well, it doesn’t matter exactly what happened,” she said. “Bai Hao can’t be left alive. Long delays usually lead to trouble....”

Bai Qi smiled coldly. “Don't worry, mother. Worst case scenario, we can just wait until the patriarch opens the ancestral land. If I have to, I’ll personally kill him there. Even if he does have someone helping him, I refuse to believe that they would follow him into the ancestral land!”

Seeing how confident Bai Qi was, Madam Cai finally sighed and nodded. “Fine. I’ll go talk with your father and persuade him to convince the patriarch to open the ancestral land within the next few months!”

Outside the mansion, Bai Xiaochun’s clone smiled coldly. At the same time, his opinion of this mother and son team grew even lower.

“Opening the ancestral land, huh? Well, that works just fine. I’ll just handle everything in one fell swoop!” Having made his decision, he turned and vanished into the night.

Back in his hut in the north district, Bai Xiaochun waited for his two clones to return before opening his eyes.

“Making a scene in the clan got me a lot of information, and some good news. Ancestral land, huh...?” The thought of getting his hands on a fourth deva soul caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to pound with excitement.

“I can get Bai Hao’s notes *and* the deva soul all in that ancestral land!” Suddenly, he frowned.

“However, I need to go in fully prepared. If I make a move inside the ancestral land, it will likely cause a commotion in the entire clan. I have to make sure I can stay safe....” With that, he walked out of his hut and looked up into the sky to observe the Bai Clan’s defensive spell formation.

After a moment of silence, Bai Xiaochun took a few steps forward, and then suddenly vanished. When he reappeared, he was completely outside of the clan.

It still hurt to use his Undying Hex in this way, but not as badly as before. Turning around, he took another step, vanished, and reappeared in the north district.

“So, my Undying Hex can pierce through this spell formation!

“However, I can’t rely only on that.... I need to attack the problem from two different angles to be completely safe.” For the following several days, he surreptitiously studied the Bai Clan’s spell formation, performing various experiments to try to figure out another way to deal with it.

Unfortunately, he wasn’t very adept at working with spell formations. Besides, this was the Wildlands, and most of the methods he knew about for breaking spell formations required items or methods powered by the spiritual energy in Heavenspan River water. Obviously, those methods wouldn’t work out here in the Wildlands.

“I guess I need to use Wildlands methods.... I should probably ask Zhou Yixing about this.” He immediately sent a message to Zhou Yixing and asked for him to come up with some ways to destabilize the spell formation.

Zhou Yixing and Li Feng had both taken up residence in Giant Ghost City itself. Of course, since they didn’t get along, they lived separately. As soon as Zhou Yixing got a message from Bai Xiaochun, he was very excited, at least, until he checked the actual content of the message, whereupon he was stunned.

After a moment of hesitation, he sent a reply. *I can’t do that.... A clan like the Bai Clan is definitely going to have an incredible defensive spell formation. How am I supposed to do anything to that kind of formation...?*

Recently, he had run into Li Feng on a few occasions, and noticed the pleased expression on his face. That had immediately led Zhou Yixing to the conclusion that Li Feng had accomplished some task for Bai Xiaochun. As he thought about that fact, Zhou Yixing's anxiety mounted, and he gritted his teeth.

When Bai Xiaochun saw Zhou Yixing's reply, he frowned, and was just about to send a message to Li Feng when, all of a sudden, another message came in from Zhou Yixing.

Grandmaster Bai, I thought of a way. It will be very expensive, but it will definitely work. All you have to do is use murdersoul spikes. You would need a lot of them, probably at least a hundred. However, you could insert them into the spell formation from inside the clan, and then, if you detonated them all at the right time, it would definitely crack the thing open. However, it would only buy you a few breaths worth of time before the damage repaired itself....

Also, murdersoul spikes are very expensive. I... I can't really afford to purchase them on my own.... After explaining everything he knew, Zhou Yixing couldn't help but think that the method he had come up with was just too expensive.

Back in the Bai Clan, though, Bai Xiaochun's eyes were shining brightly. As far as he was concerned, money wasn't a big problem. As long as it bought him a greater chance of escaping, then it would be worth it. He immediately sent a message back to Zhou Yixing, setting a time and place for him to meet one of his clones. Before long, that very clone left the clan, bag of holding in hand.

Soon, Zhou Yixing and Bai Xiaochun's clone met up. Before Zhou Yixing could even say anything, the clone slapped his bag of holding and produced a pill furnace.

It wasn't a very large pill furnace, but neither was it small. When it thumped down onto the ground in front of Zhou Yixing, his jaw dropped.

Swishing his sleeve grandly, Bai Xiaochun's clone said, "Take that and go buy the murdersoul spikes!"

Zhou Yixing hesitated for a moment, then took a step forward and opened the lid of the pill furnace. When he confirmed that it was full to the brim with Heavenspan River water, his eyes nearly fell out of his skull.

"This... this...." The spiritual energy he felt in the Heavenspan River water left him shaking, and his mind reeling. Never in his entire life had he seen so much Heavenspan River water, and he instantly realized that if he sold it, the profit would be difficult to put into words.

"Enough? Or not?" Bai Xiaochun's clone said proudly. After all, this wasn't even half of the water he had in his big bucket....

Trembling, Zhou Yixing replied, "Enough! More than enough!!"

"Don't skimp on the murdersoul spikes. Also, buy me some teleportation talismans and extra vengeful souls." With that, the clone strutted off into the distance. As Zhou Yixing watched him go, he suddenly realized that this Grandmaster Bai was even more mysterious than he had realized. To casually produce so much Heavenspan River water was something that no ordinary person could do.

His determination to be a follower of Grandmaster Bai grew even stronger than before.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0589 awe-chapter-590

It would take Zhou Yixing a bit of time to buy all of the murdersoul spikes. After all, they were magical items that usually weren’t available for bulk purchase. He would need to take some time hunting through Giant Ghost City to find enough.

Considering that he wasn’t familiar with the area, Zhou Yixing finally went to Li Feng and talked the matter over with him. Li Feng knew that this was a mission for Grandmaster Bai, and didn’t want to cause any trouble. Therefore, he cooperated with Zhou Yixing, even calling upon his own personal contacts to help track down murdersoul spikes to buy.

Due to their cooperation on this mission, the animosity they felt toward each other began to fade.

While Bai Xiaochun waited for his followers to accomplish their mission, he kept a low profile in the Bai Clan. He rarely left his hut, preferring to spend most of his time cultivating his Undying Live Forever Technique.

Unfortunately, because he was out in the Wildlands, it was impossible for him to replenish his supply of medicinal pills. The upside was that he still had a lot of items he had embezzled during his time as a major general. The downside was that such items wouldn’t take him very far. He was almost finished with his work on his Undying Tendons, and based on his estimations, his current supplies were probably sufficient to complete that work, but no more.

“I need to master the Undying Tendons before I go into that ancestral land. If I can make contact with the third shackle, then my poor little life will be much safer.” Another decision he made was that he needed to perform an elevenfold spirit enhancement on his Eternal Parasol.

Afterward, the parasol looked different. The basic shape was the same, but now it looked like it was made from metal. It was pitch black, and radiated an intense, murderous aura. Furthermore, the ghost face which would appear on its surface looked even more fierce and bizarre!

“It's too bad I'm running so low on souls....” he sighed. If he’d had enough souls, he would have performed elevenfold spirit enhancements on his clothing. Unfortunately, that wasn’t an option.

After all, he needed to save up enough souls to try to conjure twelve-colored flame, and even with his clones out secretly collecting souls, and the help of Zhou Yixing and Li Feng, that was still going to be difficult.

He didn’t even have enough Heavenspan River water to buy all of the souls he needed....

Thankfully, Bai Hao’s notes about conjuring twelve-colored flame had been extremely beneficial. In fact, other than his time spent in cultivation recently, he had focused almost completely on researching the formula for twelve-colored flame.

Because he didn’t have enough souls on hand, he didn’t dare to casually perform any experiments. He could only analyze the method mentally, and prepare himself for the moment in which he actually attempted to conjure the flame.

Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by. Bai Xiaochun's Undying Live Forever Technique was making progress, but his auguries regarding twelve-colored flame had reached a bit of a bottleneck.

"I think I need to do an experiment." Taking a deep breath, he pulled out his soulhoarding pagoda and counted how many vengeful souls he had. As it turned out, he had enough for three attempts.

After some thought, he made his decision. After using his mask to cover up the aura of the multi-colored flame, he began conjuring. Vengeful souls flew out one after another, and flames appeared in his palm. Eventually, eleven colors were present, and Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very nervous.

After all, if he failed, it would be a huge waste of resources. Settling his qi and calming his mind, he cautiously began his attempt to conjure twelve-colored flame.

As the masses of vengeful souls poured into the eleven-colored flame, Bai Xiaochun's expression turned very serious. He also began to work more slowly. At one point, he suddenly began to lose control, and the flame began to flicker. Without any hesitation, he summoned one of his clones, who worked with him to stabilize the flame before he continued.

Utilizing the assistance of his clones was one of the ideas Bai Xiaochun had come up with in his planning. As it turned out, using two clones to help didn't do any more good than using one clone. However he did it, it was still multitasking, and therefore, using one clone was the best technique.

With the help of his solitary clone, the eleven-colored flame grew stable, and more time passed. Two hours later, he was finished with the first step of the process, and a twelfth color was now visible in the sea of fire that surrounded him.

“Bai Hao was absolutely right. Fire represents something else, and is not a material object....” Feeling very pleased, he took a deep breath and prepared to finish the task at hand. As of this moment, he could easily split the sea of fire into two parts and make two portions of mid-grade soul medicine. Or, he could converge the sea into a single tongue of multi-colored flame!

Never could he have imagined that his first attempt at conjuring twelve-colored flame would turn out to be a success.

“Hahaha! It turns out that Bai Xiaochun really is a genius!” With that, he snapped his hand closed to pull the sea together into the form of a tongue of twelve-colored flame.

However, that was when something unexpected occurred!

Even as the sea of fire began to shrink down, it went completely out of control! Bai Xiaochun’s face fell with fear as a terrifying aura erupted out in all directions.

The shocking detonation of the twelve-colored flame scared Bai Xiaochun so much that he let out a shriek. Any other necromancer, even one in the terrestrial rank, would have been completely incapable of reacting in time. However, because of Bai Xiaochun’s extensive experience with exploding pill furnaces, he was always on guard and ready for situations like this.

Therefore, he reacted with lightning speed. He quickly relaxed his hands and performed an incantation gesture that sent frigid qi shooting out. Almost instantly, both hands were shoving down onto the unstable twelve-colored flame.

As the flame was suppressed, the fire died down, revealing two glittering portions of mid-grade soul medicine.

Anyone else who saw two portions of mid-grade soul medicine would be elated, but Bai Xiaochun was scowling on the verge of tears.

“I didn’t want medicine,” he said, tugging at his hair in despair. “I wanted flame! What happened...?” After thinking back to everything he had done during the process, he couldn’t think of any area where he'd gone wrong.

Why did it end up becoming medicine instead of multi-colored flame? The mere thought of the terrifying power he had sensed in the twelve-colored flame left Bai Xiaochun trembling with residual fear.

“Don’t tell me that I'm going to start experiencing the same kind of accidents with flame conjuring as I did with medicine concocting?” He shivered.

After a long moment passed, he looked at his soulhoarding pagoda and tried to decide whether or not to perform another experiment. After all, that was the only way to truly figure out what he had done wrong.

Gritting his teeth, he produced more vengeful souls and proceeded to conjure another eleven-colored flame. At that point, he hesitated.

“I can’t do it here....” he thought. Eyes turning up in thought, he eventually put his clone and the eleven-colored flame away, and then left with his soulhoarding pagoda. Taking advantage of the darkness of night, he left the north district and made his way to the east district.

“That way, even if an accident occurs, I can still rest at ease....” Clearing his throat, he found an out-of-the-way ornamental rock formation in the east district with a large open cavity inside that he could work in. After setting up a spell formation, he took a deep breath and then pulled out his eleven-colored flame. Then his clone appeared, and he began to conjure the twelfth color in the flame.

It was in the still of night that he used the power of the mask to suppress the pressure of the flame. Not even someone standing directly next to the ornamental rocks would have noticed what was happening, or would have been able to detect the incredible power brewing inside....

Bai Xiaochun was very nervous, and his clone was sweating visibly. As the two of them worked together, things went smoothly for about two hours. Then, a twelfth color appeared within the sea of fire. All he had to do was shrink the sea down into a tongue of flame, and he would be finished. However, at that point, he paused.

“It should work this time, right...?” he thought, blinking a few times as the twelve-colored flame began to shrink down.

That was when unstable fluctuations suddenly sprang up within the sea of fire. Explosive power erupted in a tempest that caused a sensation of deadly crisis to instantly rise up in Bai Xiaochun.

Letting out an involuntary shriek, he tried to adjust the flame to stop the explosion, but the power was even more intense than before. No matter what adjustments he made, nothing did any good, and in fact, rumbling sounds echoed out as wildly destructive flames began to spread out in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun screamed and flew backward, pulling his clone back into him and then using the power of his Undying Hex to vanish. As for the sea of fire, it rumbled out in all directions, destroying the ornamental rocks and consuming everything in the area.

Strangely, even as the sea of fire devoured everything in the area and then vanished, the night sky up above turned bright red. Huge red clouds could be seen, which caused widespread chaos within the Bai Clan. Before anyone could react, thunder crackled, and something happened that left everyone astonished!

An endless rain of fire began to fall from above!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0590 awe-chapter-591

A rain of fire descended onto the Bai Clan, illuminating everything with bright red light. The clan was immediately thrown into a huge commotion, and power was poured into the spell formation to defend against the incoming flame.

Countless clan members rushed out of their residences to look up into the sky, whereupon astonished shouts began to fill the night sky.

“What... what is that?!”

“Don’t tell me we’re under attack!?!?”

“Aaahhh! It’s a rain of fire....”

The heat from the fire was almost at the level of twelve-colored flame, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as the clan’s defensive spell formation twisted and distorted. One by one, powerful clan members flew up into the air.

“What happened!?!?” Bai Qi was there in the crowd, looking shocked, as was Madam Cai, who had emerged from her mansion to see what was happening.

“Twelve-colored flame... that’s... twelve-colored flame!? How is this possible! It's raining multi-colored flame?!?!!” Numerous chosen from the auxiliary bloodlines were all looking on in shock and wonder.

From a distance, it looked like the entire Bai Clan was being bathed in fire. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was now outside of the city, looking back in utter shock at the scene playing out.

“Don’t blame me... I didn’t do this on purpose....” Scalp tingling in fear, he gritted his teeth and took advantage of the chaos in the clan to use his Undying Hex to head back to the north district.

Even as he returned to his hut, the clan’s spell formation finally couldn’t last any longer, and began to teeter unstably beneath the barrage of fire. Just when it seemed like it was about to collapse, several enraged shouts could be heard from the east district as eight shadowy figures shot up into the air. Shockingly, all of those figures emanated the fluctuations of the Nascent Soul stage.

These were the Nascent Soul clan elders, who quickly split up and manned key areas of the spell formation. By bolstering the formation with all of their power, they gradually stabilized it.

It was a shocking sight to Bai Xiaochun, who sat there nervously in the north district, looking at the flames outside the shield and scowling on the verge of tears.

“I doubt anybody realizes I'm the one who caused this....” How could he have ever anticipated that trying to conjure some flame would lead to such terrifying results...?

Even as he stewed in his anxiety, a middle-aged man appeared in the east district.

He wore luxurious clothing, and was the type of person who seemed threatening without being angry. There was something grimly impressive about him, and apparently, he was in the mid Nascent Soul stage. As soon as people caught sight of him, looks of respect could be seen in their eyes, and they clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Clan Chief.”

That man was none other than Bai Hao’s father, the current clan chief of the Bai Clan. Looking up into the sky beyond the spell formation shield, his expression turned icily ominous. It looked like he was just about to speak, when all of a sudden, a cold snort echoed out from a subterranean chamber in the depths of the city. It sounded ancient, and as powerful as thunder, causing the clouds above to churn. The sound of it even seemed to merge with heaven and earth, as if this person were becoming one with everything. The heavens were embodied in this person, and vice versa!

“Disperse!” That single word caused the crimson clouds up above to shatter into countless fragments. Then, it was as if an enormous, invisible hand swept them away, clearing the sky.

There in the north district, Bai Xiaochun could sense an incredibly powerful divine sense within that word, something hair-raisingly terrifying that replaced the will of the heavens.

“A deva!” he thought, trembling. At the same time, he once again made sure that his own aura was well concealed.

Having no foundation, the rain of firebolts gradually began to thin out. Thanks to the power of the spell formation, and the fact that the cloud had been destroyed, it disappeared, and the Bai Clan was spared of any disaster....

From deep within the subterranean chamber, the grim and domineering voice of the Bai Clan patriarch spoke: “Someone transformed twelve-colored flame into a devious attack on our Bai Clan.... Investigate immediately, and find out who did this!”

Virtually everyone in the clan responded by kowtowing reverently and voicing their assent.

That included Bai Qi, Madam Cai, and everyone else. As for the clan chief, although he didn't kowtow, he did clasp hands and bowed deeply, a respectful expression on his face. Upon completing his bow, he waved his sleeve and spoke out in a tone that brooked no argument.

“Hall of Corrections, Hall of Justice, and all other members of the clan, hear my orders. Do everything in your power to find out what happened here tonight!!”

That night, virtually no one in the entire clan was able to rest. Under the leadership of the clan elders, as well as the Hall of Corrections and the Hall of Justice, a thorough investigation was carried out.

Internal inquiries were made first, but the scope of the investigation soon led people to the ornamental rocks where Bai Xiaochun had been working. Although it was quickly determined that those rocks were the location in which the incident began, no clues had been left behind. However, the investigation only continued to intensify.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very nervous, and was aware that he had yet again caused a huge disaster. Plus, this wasn’t the River-Defying Sect, it was the Bai Clan, which had treated his own apprentice with frigid brutality. However, he still felt that he hadn’t done anything wrong.

“It’s not like I did it on purpose! What are they making such a big deal out of it for?” The night passed quickly, and yet, the matter didn’t end. During the following several days, people came to ask him questions on several occasions. In the end, though, no headway was made in the investigation, and eventually, the matter came to be somewhat of an unsolved mystery....

Bai Xiaochun knew that it was a tense situation, and therefore, he didn't dare to attempt any more flame conjuring. However, he continued to study and analyze the topic, and kept trying to ascertain why he had failed.

“I can’t believe it actually caused firebolts to rain down. Just what exactly did I do wrong...?

“That fire was pretty powerful, and yet, it was only twelve-colored flame. What if it had been fifteen-colored flame? In that case... the Bai Clan... might have been wiped off the map.” On the one hand, he was moved by how powerful the fire had been, but on the other hand, was worried about why he had failed. As he continued to analyze the matter there in his hut, five days went by. By this point, he was looking a bit thin and haggard, and had already reached the limits of what he could analyze mentally.

“Logically speaking, I shouldn’t have failed....

“Everything was going smoothly the entire time. The sudden failure at the end seemed really suspicious....

“Plus, it actually formed soul medicine....

“Just where exactly did I go wrong?” Clenching his hands into fists, he yet again reviewed every step he had taken, and analyzed them thoroughly. Finally, sometime in the afternoon, he shivered and looked up, his eyes shining brightly.

“Don’t tell me... it was my clone!?!?” The more he thought about it, the more likely it seemed that the problem had something to do with the fact that he had used a clone to help conjure the twelve-colored flame with his true self.

“If it was because of my clone, then that would explain everything. I created that clone with a deva soul, and even I don’t know what divine abilities might have existed in that soul. Perhaps... that really is the reason.” After pondering the matter for a bit more, he left one of his clones behind and then went out into the darkness alone.

Although things were tense in the clan, he was still itching to go do some more tests to see if he was right.

Therefore, he raced along, leaving Bai Clan territory and finding a cave deep in some mountains. There, he began preparations to make another attempt at conjuring twelve-colored flame.

This time, he didn’t use any clone power. He relied only on himself, using the same methods as before. It was difficult, and he very nearly lost control on two occasions. However, by bolstering himself with spirit alcohol, he ensured that he always had enough power at his disposal.

It took a bit more time as well, and soon, his head was aching with pain. By the time the sea of fire formed down into the tongue of twelve-colored flame, he was soaked with sweat and panting with excitement.

“I didn’t do anything differently than before.... The only difference was that I didn’t use my clone to help conjure the flame! Therefore, it definitely has something to do with my clone! My clone was made from a deva soul. It must mean that using a clone to conjure necromantic flame... causes unforeseen complications.”

Excited to have found the reason for his previous failure, he rose to his feet, his eyes shining.

“In that case, I guess I’ve actually created... my own necromantic divine ability! A magical rain of fire!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0591 awe-chapter-592

“I almost can’t believe that I'm really this awesome!” Bai Xiaochun was extremely excited, and his eyes were glowing more brightly than ever. He even felt a bit dizzy from the rush of emotion. “I, Bai Xiaochun, actually created a new divine ability! That’s the kind of thing that sect-founding patriarchs do! I... I can’t believe I’m so worthy of admiration!”

He threw his head back and laughed uproariously at how amazing he was. As he reveled in his success, he thought back to how Chen Hetian had abandoned him, and realized that his loss was definitely a major blow to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“Hmmmphh. One of these days I'm going to make sure Chen Hetian regrets that decision of his. In fact, the whole Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is going to regret it....” With that, he sat down cross-legged for a bit to recover his energy, then swaggered back to the Bai Clan.

Everything went very smoothly along the way. After all, he had left a clone behind in the north district of the Bai Clan, and therefore, no one had even suspected that he’d left his hut.

A few days later, the combined efforts of Zhou Yixing and Li Feng finally got them all of the murdersoul spikes and teleportation talismans that Bai Xiaochun had requested. After studying the murdersoul spikes thoroughly, Bai Xiaochun found that they were crafted from souls, using a technique he had never even realized existed. Furthermore, the souls used to create them had especially strong murderous auras.

After analyzing the murdersoul spikes, Bai Xiaochun realized that if he set them up in the clan right now, there would be too much of a risk of them being found. Therefore, he decided to wait until right before entering the ancestral land. That would be the best and safest bet.

As he waited, he thought about the formula for thirteen-colored flame, and also spent time cultivating his Undying Live Forever Technique.

Another half a month went by. One evening when he was sitting in meditation, working on the final qi passageways necessary to complete his Undying Tendons, his expression flickered, and he looked at the door.

With his divine sense, he could clearly see three beams of light heading in his direction. Soon, three middle-aged men became visible, each of them wearing a black robe with a sun and a moon embroidered on it.

Only members of the Hall of Corrections could wear uniforms like that, and the arrival of these men caused an instant commotion in the north district. Considering that everyone there had very low standing in the clan, they were all left trembling with fear and hesitant to make a single noise.

The three men had arrogant expressions on their faces as they looked around in disgust at the north district. As far as they were concerned, this place was a malignant boil within the Bai Clan, a dirty, filthy place that they were loath to enter. Soon, they were right outside of Bai Xiaochun’s hut.

Then, one of them spoke out in a coldly impatient voice. “Bai Hao, get out here right now!”

Inside the hut, Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound.

“Don’t tell me they figured out it was me? Impossible!” His body blurred as, instead of going out personally, he sent one of his clones out of the hut to meet the men.

He kept the aura of his true self invisible; no one outside would be aware that he was still inside the hut.

As the clone emerged from the hut, the three men from the Hall of Corrections eyed him coldly. Then the one in the lead said, “Let’s go. The clan chief wants to see you!”

With that, they turned to leave, clearly not inclined to stay in this place one moment longer than necessary. Eyes flickering, Bai Xiaochun followed along in clone form.

“The clan chief wants to see me.... He’s Bai Hao’s father. Alright, this will be a good opportunity to see what Bai Hao’s father actually feels about him!” Considering that he was going in clone form instead of as his true self, he felt a lot safer.

The three men from the Hall of Corrections didn’t say anything to him along the way; their arrogance and disdain for him clearly went bone-deep. Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun chuckled coldly at them, proud at how these men were like sparrows, unaware that a dragon was in their midst.

“Just wait until you see my real cultivation base level. Then the three of you will be scared to death!” Bai Xiaochun was wrapped up in his thoughts as he followed them to the west district, which was very different from the east district. It was much quieter, a place that few people visited, and that was mostly occupied by female clan members.

Bai Xiaochun looked around in surprise and confusion as he was led to a mansion in the corner of the district. It wasn't very large, and consisted of only a few buildings surrounding a weed-filled courtyard. It was a bleak, run-down place that didn’t seem to be occupied.

The three men stopped out front of the mansion. “Go in. The clan chief is waiting inside.”

With that, they turned and left.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered; he could sense a faint aura within the mansion that he was sure belonged to a cultivator in the mid Nascent Soul stage.

“Don’t tell me he’s meeting me out here because he wants to kill me?” Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised, but considering that he was here in clone form, his true self would have plenty of time to get away if things went wrong. Therefore, he simply walked into the mansion.

“Bai Hao,” he thought, “your Master is going into this dangerous situation for *you*! I want to see exactly how your father feels about you!”

Upon entering the main gate, he saw a man standing in the courtyard, facing away from him. Next to him was a simple well which he was looking down into.

The man’s hair was mostly black, but had some strands of white in it as well. Although he seemed middle-aged, he was clearly very old. Furthermore, there was something bleak and stern about him.

The courtyard seemed just as bleak, and there was a pressure weighing down that made it feel like a rainstorm might break out at any moment. Bai Xiaochun looked at the man's back, and then around at the courtyard, whereupon his eyes widened in surprise.

Although weeds choked the ground, they couldn’t cover up the countless wooden toys that filled the area. There were little horses and soldiers, drum-shaped rattles and other knicknacks....

There was a finesse to the way the toys were crafted that indicated they weren’t made by a man. They seemed more like trinkets that a mother would make for her child.

There were also some dilapidated items of clothing that had once belonged to a child scattered about in the corners. The scene spread out in front of Bai Xiaochun left him with some very complex and even indescribable emotions.

He wasn’t actually Bai Hao, but the sight of all of these children's toys made him suddenly feel as if he really had turned into him.

“This must be where Bai Hao grew up....” he thought as he stood there looking around at the toys, wondering what Bai Hao would be feeling if he were here instead. His heart already felt as if it were heavier than before.

As numerous complex emotions filled Bai Xiaochun's heart, the man standing there said, “Qi’er told me about how you cheated in the clan trials for spirit enhancement, soul medicine *and* flame conjuring!”

His voice was cold, and didn’t contain the slightest scrap of emotion. It was almost as if he were talking to a complete stranger. There was even a scolding tone to his words, the kind that would be used to reprimand a servant.

Bai Xiaochun stood there silently, unsure of what to say in response. “So, Bai Hao,” he murmured in his heart, “this is your father, huh...?”

Bai Hao’s father slowly turned, revealing a cold, expressionless face and an icy aura. The way he looked at Bai Xiaochun made it seem as if he were looking at someone he had never met. When he continued speaking, his words were as cold as a winter wind. “This isn’t the first time you’ve done something like this, either. I can tolerate your complete lack of ambition, and even the fact that you stole Qi’er’s research notes about fifteen-colored flame. But now you’ve gone and cheated!”

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun realized that before his death, Bai Hao must have revealed to his father that he was talented in flame conjuring, in the hopes of winning his approval. Sadly, Bai Hao had been completely naïve in such hopes.

This man would give Bai Hao no such chances. In fact, it was even possible that he knew the truth of the matter, and yet still acted this way.

“Not only did you humiliate me, but you also broke clan law. According to the rules, I should take away your cultivation base and have you thrown into Devil Penitentiary for ten years! However, considering you do have the blood of the Bai Clan running in your veins, I’ll forgive you this one time. But if something like this ever happens again, I’ll personally cleanse our clan by removing you from it.” The killing intent in the clan chief’s eyes was as clear as day, and his voice cut as coldly as the harshest winter gale. As a result, Bai

Xiaochun felt the same bitter fright that Bai Hao would have in the same situation.

The clan chief didn’t seem pleased with how Bai Xiaochun was standing there silently. A flicker of loathing passed through his eyes as he gestured toward the well.

“This is where your mother died. She was born a servant girl, and after her death, became a servant soul. Her fate was to submit, and as a bastard son, you need to learn to do the same thing. Submit! Understand?!”

The spark of rage which rose up in Bai Xiaochun's heart was impossible to suppress. Looking over at the clan chief, he replied, “No, I *don't* understand.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0592 awe-chapter-593

The anger that burned in Bai Xiaochun's heart was fueled by his compassion and sorrow for Bai Hao. Although he had just said he didn't understand, the truth was that he understood exactly what was going on!

Combined with everything else he had already learned, the situation was crystal clear. Perhaps the clan chief had not always been aware that Bai Hao was extremely talented in flame conjuring. However, after Bai Hao gave him the formula for fifteen-colored flame, how could he *not* know?!

He knew that Bai Hao was a talented flame conjurer, and also knew that there had been no cheating done in the trials by fire. He knew all of these things beyond the shadow of a doubt!

As a mid Nascent Soul stage cultivator, and the clan chief, he could get information about anything he wanted in the Bai Clan as easily as turning over his hand. In fact, Bai Xiaochun couldn't imagine that the man was unaware of how Bai Hao had been chased down and killed. Not only had he been aware of it, but he had turned a blind eye to what was happening!

He had denied everything about Bai Hao, and even shifted all of his accomplishments over to Bai Qi. Clearly, he wanted Bai Qi to soar high, regardless of the price to be paid, even if it was the death of Bai Hao. It couldn't have been more obvious that the clan chief felt that Bai Hao was as valuable as a bug, or even less so.

As for this particular meeting, its purpose was to get Bai Hao to bow his head in acquiescence, and to impress upon him that this critical juncture was not the time to make a scene. Based on the killing intent that Bai Xiaochun could see in the man’s eyes, he clearly desired to see Bai Hao out of the picture for good.

That was the reason why he picked this location to have this conversation, to make it very clear to Bai Hao what it meant to submit....

Submit, and live. Refuse, and die!

His choice to have this discussion in the location where Bai Hao’s mother passed away revealed how truly malicious his intentions were. From the perspective of a bystander, Bai Xiaochun couldn't watch the scene play out without getting angry. Although it had been somewhat on a whim that he took Bai Hao as his apprentice, as of this moment, his heart was filled the same grief and bitterness that Bai Hao must have felt in life. As of this moment, he felt more serious than ever about being Bai Hao’s Master.

Although Bai Xiaochun was the type of person who feared death, he was a righteous and loyal person in his bones. When his friends faced a deadly crisis, it didn't matter if he was trembling and weeping with fear, he would always grit his teeth and go back to their aid. Now that Bai Hao had become his apprentice, he would not turn a blind eye to the wrongs his apprentice had endured!

This was the contradiction that existed within Bai Xiaochun; within his fear of death existed a brightly burning fire of passion!

The clan chief standing in front of him was completely cold and emotionless, and because of that, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help that think that Bai Hao’s deep desire to please the man had been completely pointless!

“What did you just say!?” the clan chief replied, the coldness in his eyes growing more intense. He even unleashed some of the power of his cultivation base, causing wind to whip about the courtyard.

Bai Xiaochun glared angrily at the clan chief and slowly said, “For better or worse, I'm your flesh and blood. Tigers don’t eat their own cubs, but you....”

“How impudent!” the clan chief roared in a voice that echoed like thunder. The killing intent in his eyes blazed as he strode toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun stared back at him as he approached. If the man actually attacked him, it would affect his plan to get a deva soul. And yet, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hold back from saying what he just had!

Just when it seemed like the situation would devolve into a disaster, the clan chief suddenly frowned. Stopping in place, he produced a jade slip from his bag of holding.

After scanning it with divine sense, his face lit with joy. Moments later, he gave Bai Xiaochun a disdainful glance, looking at him almost as if he were a corpse. Turning, he left, leaving a single sentence ringing in the courtyard behind him.

“You’re going to get yourself killed!”

Bai Xiaochun watched as the clan chief disappeared in a beam of light. Then he looked around at the courtyard, complex emotions playing in his heart and mind. Finally, he sighed.

“Bai Hao. Ah, Bai Hao. If your spirit is out there, I hope you were able to see all of that....” With that, he organized the tattered, crumbling clothes and rotting toys, then looked over at the well.

After sending some divine sense inside, he confirmed that there was no corpse inside, so he quietly left and headed back to the north district....

**

Beneath the Bai Clan were sprawling catacombs, which was where the clan chief now stood. His hands were clasped, and he was bent over in a bow in front of a huge door.

After a long moment passed, the grating voice of an old man echoed out from the door, each word seemingly capable of causing transformations in heaven and earth.

“Your request from earlier is granted!”

“Many thanks, Patriarch!” The clan chief did his best to suppress the excitement he felt in his heart, and even deepened his bow. He was well aware that this patriarch was referring to more than just opening the ancestral land.

He was also agreeing to give the deva soul to Bai Qi!

Of course, it was impossible to open the ancestral land only for Bai Qi. Anyone in the clan who was under the Nascent Soul stage would be allowed to enter. Considering how big the Bai Clan was, the patriarch had to give the auxiliary bloodlines an equal opportunity.

However, he naturally had ways to secretly ensure that only Bai Qi got the deva soul!

“You’re dismissed. The event will begin in one month.”

The clan chief took a deep breath, then respectfully took his leave.

Soon, word about the opening of the ancestral land began to spread through the Bai Clan. All of the clan members who met the requirements to enter were very excited.

That was especially true when people heard that a deva soul was in the ancestral land. All of the chosen from the auxiliary bloodlines began to grow very excited about the prospect of competing amongst each other.

The opening of the ancestral land was a big matter, and the trial by fire which would take place inside was something that left the entire Bai Clan shaken. It was with great fanfare that all the preparations went underway.

Madam Cai was extremely pleased, and couldn’t stop thinking about the wonderful prospects in store for Bai Qi.

Bai Qi was equally delighted. Of course, he kept his mouth shut about certain details that only he was privy to. As for all the other chosen from the auxiliary bloodlines, he couldn’t help but scoff inwardly at how eager they seemed to join in the competition.

“That deva soul belongs to me!”

Although Bai Xiaochun had been aware that the ancestral land would be opened, he hadn’t known any details. However, considering how monumental the event was, he soon learned more.

“Almost a month until it opens....” he thought, his eyes shining with anticipation. He was already fed up with the Bai

Clan, but knew he had to suppress his frustration until the time came to truly vent it.

“I'm doing this for you, Bai Hao! I'm going to shock the entire clan when I get into that ancestral land!”

Although he felt confident that the ancestral land wouldn’t be extremely dangerous, he knew that if you stole food from a tiger’s mouth, you almost always ended up with an angry tiger chasing after you. When he made his move in the ancestral land, that would only be the beginning of a very dangerous situation.

Therefore, he needed to be completely prepared to stay safe.

“The Wildlands is a huge place. I’ll just have to wait and see how far the Bai Clan’s deva patriarch will chase me. Detonating my soulhoarding pagoda could change the equilibrium between the Bai Clan and the two other great clans in the area. Let’s see if the deva patriarch dares to keep chasing me when he realizes that!

“Of course, in addition to the patriarch, there will be other members of the Bai Clan to deal with, including Nascent Soul experts. I can’t be lax!” Although Bai Xiaochun was feeling nervous, he had already made up his mind. He would make his move, and then flee immediately!

“Besides, I refuse to believe that the Bai Clan doesn’t have any enemies....” Eyes flickering with cold light, he went back to his cultivation.

Days passed. Nobody paid much attention to him, and he didn’t leave his hut. His medicinal pills were running out rapidly, and yet, one day, he made major progress with his Undying Tendons.

It was a complete breakthrough!!

The instant he completed the third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique, rumbling sounds filled his body, and golden light spread out, piercing through his clothing to fill the area.

At the same time, he could clearly feel something like the weight of an entire mountain pressing down onto him, which was none other than the third shackle!

He desperately wanted to break through that shackle, to destroy the mountainous weight crushing down on him and be transformed into something greater than before.

However, he knew that he needed to wait until he formed a Nascent Soul before doing that. The power he would have access to at that time was the only way he would be able to break the shackle.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0593 awe-chapter-594

It had been the same with the first and second levels of the Undying Live Forever Technique. Shortly after making initial contact with the shackle, it was possible to make use of cultivation base power to break it.

As Bai Xiaochun sat there motionless, eyes glittering, a second shadowy figure appeared in the room. That figure was no clone, but rather, an afterimage created by the manifestation of his incredible speed.

In fact, the figure remained in place for a long moment before fading away.

There was no need to perform any more tests. He could tell that his speed had broken through to another level, and although he couldn’t determine exactly how quickly he could move, he knew that it would be difficult for even a deva to catch him.

“The Undying Skin focuses on defenses!

“The Undying Heavenly King focuses on power!

“The Undying Tendons focus on explosive speed....

“In that case, what does the fourth level, the Undying Bones, focus on?” Such thoughts filled Bai Xiaochun with deep anticipation.

“Too bad it’s too difficult to cultivate before reaching the Nascent Soul stage.... Plus, resources in the Wildlands are severely lacking. The Undying Bones will require even more resources than the Undying Tendons....” After a bit more thought, he suppressed his disappointment. Settling his qi and clearing his mind, he set about solidifying his advancement with his Undying Tendons.

Meanwhile, the appointed day to open the ancestral land grew nearer and nearer. At the same time, the clan was preparing to hold a grand ceremony to offer sacrifices to their ancestors.

This was a custom of the Bai Clan; such ceremonies were always held when the ancestral land was to be opened. During the ceremony, all members of the clan, no matter which bloodline they came from, would attend. Furthermore, high-ranking members of the clan would perform assessments of the clan members, and give out rewards to exceptional individuals.

Oftentimes, members of other clans would be invited to attend, and usually, the Giant Ghost King would send a representative to join the festivities.

After all, it wasn't a simple matter to open the ancestral land, and it only happened once every so often.

The ceremony was held the day before the opening of the ancestral land, in the central district of the Bai Clan, in the ancestral shrine hall.

The other two great necromancer clans sent representatives, as did the Giant Ghost King. The entire Bai Clan bustled with activity as the final preparations were made.

The shrine hall in the central district featured an enormous square, within which had been erected a huge stone gateway. The gateway was carved with the image of a middle-aged man, whose stern gaze seemed to look condescendingly upon all creation. That man was none other than the founding patriarch of the Bai Clan!

The shrine hall was surrounded by crowds from the Bai Clan, more than 10,000 individuals. There wasn’t even enough room for them on the ground, so many sat at tables which floated in the air. It was a grand sight to take in.

The older members of the clan sat nearest the shrine hall, smiles on their faces as they chatted with the representatives from the other clans.

Everyone was simply waiting for the ceremony to begin.

Madam Cai and the other womenfolk sat in their own area, where they buzzed with conversation and made themselves quite the center of attention.

Bai Qi stood out in the crowd like a star in the night sky. He sat close to the shrine hall itself, and was surrounded by important people, including some chosen necromancers from the other clans, with whom he engaged in lively banter.

Of course, there were others from the auxiliary bloodlines nearby, none of whom stood out as much as Bai Qi did, but who were clearly special. One of them was the fifth young lady that Bai Xiaochun had met on his first day in the clan. She was beautiful, and despite her cold personality, was surrounded by quite a crowd of devotees.

There was another young man who was about the same age as Bai Qi. He was tall and muscular, and had a booming laugh that caused everyone to take a liking to him, clan member or not.

Although Bai Hao had been born a bastard, and had a very lowly position, he still had the blood of the Bai Clan in him. Therefore, he was also required to attend the ceremony. He didn’t get to sit near the shrine hall itself, but rather, at one of the tables floating in the air.

As soon as he arrived, he noticed the fifth young lady and the burly young man. During his time in the clan, he had learned a bit about them. The fifth young lady was named Bai Yan’er, and was known even in Giant Ghost City for her good looks. Quite a few young elites from the other clans had their eye on her.

As for the burly young man, his name was Bai Lei, and he was a chosen from one of the auxiliary bloodlines. Although his cultivation base wasn’t at the same level as Bai Qi’s, he was still in late Core Formation. In fact, he and Bai Qi were considered to be the two rising stars of the clan!

However, the two of them didn’t get along very well, a fact that was well known in the clan.

Together, those three were the focus of much attention in the ceremony.

Were it not for the fact that it was required of him, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t have come. As he looked around at the crowds, he contemplated his plans for the ancestral land tomorrow.

“I should plant the murdersoul spikes later today,” he thought. Suddenly, he felt as if someone were looking at him. Glancing around casually, he realized that it was Madam Cai, who sat with the other womenfolk, glaring at him venomously.

“She managed to find me even though I’m sitting so far away....” he thought, surprised. He was sitting in a very inconspicuous position, a place that should have made it difficult to lay eyes on him. And yet, Madam Cai had managed to locate him even in the crowd.

Without even thinking about it, Bai Xiaochun glared back at Madam Cai with such ferocity that her eyes went wide. However, a moment later, the venom returned. Before she could do anything else, though, the sound of bells rang out.

The crowd quickly went silent. At the same time, three beams of light appeared off in the distance. In the lead position was the clan chief, and he was flanked by two old men with cultivation bases in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. They were none other than the grand elders who ran the Hall of Corrections and the Hall of Justice.

After arriving outside the shrine hall, the clan chief began to speak in a loud voice, “To all members of the Bai Clan who have gathered here today....”

All the clan members listened eagerly, but as for Bai Xiaochun, he wasn’t interested at all, and simply closed his eyes.

All sorts of complicated details about the ancestral land were explained, things that didn’t really affect most members of the clan. Only the outstanding figures who planned to participate in the event needed to listen.

Occasionally, bells would ring out, causing ripples to spread out through the cloud-filled sky, and create auspicious signs.

Bai Xiaochun would crack his eye open every once in a while. Feeling very much like an immortal hiding in the mundane world, he would think, “I've witnessed far greater spectacles than this before.”

A few hours passed, and evening fell. The sacrifices to the ancestors were finished, and the bells began to ring again. Bai Xiaochun yawned and opened his eyes. Having come to the assumption that everything was over, he prepared to leave. However, it was at that point that the grand elder in charge of the Hall of Justice, who was sitting in front of the huge stone gate, chuckled.

“Alright, alright,” he said. “Since the clan chief insists, and no one else will back down, I guess I’ll carry out the assessment this time around.” The grand elder’s chuckle was sonorous, and backed by the profundity of his cultivation base, causing illusory ripples to spread out in all directions. There was even a cloud of souls that swirled around him as he spoke.

Looks of reverence could be seen in the eyes of the rest of the clan members as they looked over at him. Even the representatives from the other clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City had very serious expressions on their faces.

When Bai Xiaochun felt the old man’s cultivation base fluctuations, he looked over at him with a serious expression. He was clearly half a step into the Deva Realm, similar to Bai Lin. Furthermore, from the soul power fluctuations coming off of him, he was obviously a necromancer.

“He’s likely in the terrestrial rank, with profound skill in necromancy. That would explain why so many souls appeared at the mere echo of his voice....”

Even as Bai Xiaochun contemplated the subject, the grand elder continued to speak. “Young heroes of the Bai Clan, all of you are aware that the ultimate pinnacle of spirit enhancement is the legendary thirtyfold enhancement, something which no one has ever actually accomplished. Even twentyfold spirit enhancements are virtually unheard of. Therefore, I would like to ask all of you this question: what do you think would happen to this simple feather if it received a thirtyfold enhancement?” Smiling, he held up a feather.

It seemed completely ordinary in nature, lacking in anything which could be considered unusual. It was really just a simple feather.

“There is no correct answer to the question. Based on your skill in spirit enhancement, consider the question for a moment. After all, there are some things in life which can never become a reality unless you ponder them deeply first!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0594 awe-chapter-595

As the grand elder’s words echoed out, the clan members gathered by the shrine hall all looked on with thoughtful expressions. Apparently, a lot of consideration had been put into how this assessment would be carried out....

There was no set answer. Rather, each response would be based on each person’s varied experiences and skill sets in spirit enhancement. As such, it would be a true test of each individual’s level of enlightenment.

The question also touched upon matters of flame conjuring and soul medicine. Although the other two were different branches of study, one’s abilities in those regards would affect one's understanding of spirit enhancement. Therefore, although the question seemed simple, it was actually extraordinarily complex!

Furthermore, it was exactly as the grand elder had said; if one did not dare to contemplate certain matters, then it would be impossible to make them a reality. In some ways, his question actually pertained to each person’s Dao!

It wasn’t just the ordinary members of the Bai Clan who were suddenly looking very thoughtful. The clan elders and the clan chief all seemed to be pondering the question as well.

Even the representatives from the other two clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City were all sitting there in quiet contemplation. Furthermore, from the nature of the question, it was possible to see that the grand elder from the Hall of Justice had extremely profound skill in spirit enhancement.

No one responded to the question. The area outside the stone gate was completely silent, to the point where it would have been possible to hear a pin drop. Everyone was considering the assessment question. This type of assessment was a custom during the ceremony of ancestral sacrifice in the Bai Clan. Theoretically speaking, the question was addressed to everyone, but the reality was that only a few people would actually speak up and answer it.

Usually, the chosen from any given bloodline would represent that bloodline to speak out in answer. As could be imagined, the competition between the various bloodlines in this matter was fierce.

Of course, the elders of the clan were aware of that, and actually encouraged the competition. As long as such competition was kept under control, it was a way to ensure that the blood of the clan pumped strong and hard in the veins of the clan members.

Bai Xiaochun rolled his eyes. To others, this question would be a difficult one to answer, especially because there was no way to prove whether one was right or wrong. But to Bai Xiaochun... it was far too simple.

After all, in the trial by fire in the labyrinth, he had personally performed spirit enhancements well beyond the twentyfold level. Although he hadn’t reached the thirtieth level, he had seen the clues pointing to the outcome.

Clearing his throat, he thought, “If I answer this question, it really would be cheating....”

Although he was itching to give a response and see what happened, he believed himself to be a straightforward and upright person. Furthermore, despite the fact that he could cheat if necessary, in this case, it wouldn't be very helpful, and in fact, could cause more suspicion to be cast on him.

With such thoughts on his mind, he yawned and pretended that he wasn't even listening.

After a long moment, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice looked around at the gathered members of the clan, smiled, and said, "Who would like to answer first?"

After a long moment of silence, one of the young men seated next to Bai Qi, who was also a member of the direct bloodline, rose to his feet with glittering eyes.

"Senior, I am Bai Li, and I wish to answer the question." Instantly, all of the other clan members present looked over. When they identified who it was that had spoken, it was possible to see expressions of scorn, jealousy, coldness, and other various emotions.

As for the clan elders, some seemed bored, whereas others were nodding in encouragement. The clan chief gave a slight nod.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the young man out of the corner of his eye, curious as to what he would say.

Bai Li was very excited to be the center of so much attention, and was already glad he had spoken up first. At the least, he would garner a bit more attention from the Senior generation. Clearing his throat and putting a very solemn expression onto his face, he said, "Senior, based on my understanding, if you perform a thirtyfold spirit enhancement on that feather, it will most likely transform into a precious treasure. In fact, to call it a precious treasure would probably be an understatement!”

With that, the young man looked nervously at the grand elder from the Hall of Justice.

However, before the grand elder could even say anything, ripples of laughter spread out through the audience. Many shaking heads could be seen, as well as chuckles of scorn.

“What a load of garbage.”

“Even a complete moron could guess that an ordinary object that receives a thirtyfold spirit enhancement would become a precious treasure.”

A strange expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he looked at Bai Li. As for Bai Li, he could hear what people around him were saying, and the laughter, and immediately, his face turned scarlet.

“It was a brave thing to speak first,” said the grand elder, smiling. Instead of offering an assessment, he looked around and said, “Would anyone else like to give an answer?”

Bai Li sat down, looking extremely embarrassed. However, despite the fact that his answer had mostly been a cheap trick, his goal had been to get some attention, and from what he could tell, it had worked. When he thought about that, his mood perked up, and he even felt quite pleased.

Because Bai Li had dared to speak up, more of the clan members in the audience began to do the same.

“Grand Elder, I think that after performing a thirtyfold spirit enhancement on the feather, it would become enormous! It would probably be big enough to blot out the sun and the moon!”

“Grand Elder, my bet is that the feather would transform into a fan! A feathered fan that could rock heaven and earth!”

“Grand Elder, in my judgment, if that fan got a thirtyfold enhancement, it would probably become a feather sword that could dominate everything!”

“Not necessarily! Grand Elder, I think that the feathered fan would become a sealing mark that you could use to grow wings!”

Answers and explanations of all sorts filled the air. The clan elders smiled and listened, nodding occasionally, but mostly just sitting there quietly.

As for the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, his expression was the same as ever the entire time. He seemed to be pondering all of the answers given, but not taking any of them too seriously.

Bai Xiaochun, on the other hand, had to hold back from jumping in to correct people. Considering how amazing he was, this was an amazing opportunity to show off, which was one of his favorite pastimes. However, he suppressed that urge with every answer that he heard.

“I have to just bite my tongue,” he told himself. “There’s no point in jumping into the conversation. No point at all!” Eventually, one of the two rising stars of the clan, Bai Lei, shot to his feet.

Immediately, everyone went quiet, and all gazes came to be fixed upon him. Even Bai Qi looked over, his eyes narrowed.

The representatives from the other two clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City were all aware of Bai Lei’s reputation in the clan, and were also very interested to see what he would say.

“Grand Elder, Junior isn't very skilled at spirit enhancement. Based on what I know, it’s hard for me to guess what a thirtyfold spirit enhanced feather would become. However, I can well imagine that after the thirtieth enhancement, the feather might become some sort of spirit. There are flame spirits and wood spirits in the world, so perhaps there are also feather spirits!” Bai Lei’s words caused many in the audience to look either shocked or moved.

The elders’ eyes glittered, and many smiles could be seen on their faces. As for the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, he actually nodded for the first time!

That nod provoked quite a response from the various members of the Bai Clan, and discussions immediately broke out in the crowd.

Bai Xiaochun looked over at Bai Lei curiously. Although the ‘feather spirit’ answer wasn’t completely correct, it was actually more in line with the truth than any of the other answers so far.

As the audience talked about what Bai Lei had just said, a few more clan members spoke up to give answers of their own. However, none of them could compare to Bai Lei’s, and many were obviously just variations of what he had said. The clan elders were all shrewd people, and realized this instantly.

Eventually, the fifth young lady rose, bowed, and then gave a simple answer that attracted a lot of attention.

“Grand Elder, I think... that it would become a rainbow. I know that feathers and rainbows aren’t necessarily related to each other, but I still think that a rainbow is the answer.” As she sat back down, the grand elder nodded, and for the first time, provided some feedback.

“Anything and everything is possible. Not a bad answer.” At this point, the grand elder’s eyes came to rest on Bai Qi. Clearly, he was curious what the number one chosen in the Bai Clan would say as his answer.

Actually, he wasn’t the only one looking at Bai Qi. The other clan elders, as well as many other ordinary clan members, were all waiting for his answer. Considering how many other people had spoken up so far, it was definitely time for him to speak.

Seeing how so many eyes had come to rest on him, Bai Qi smiled faintly and then rose to his feet. After bowing to the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, he looked up, eyes sparkling with the utmost self-confidence.

A proud gleam could be seen in Madam Cai’s eyes, and anticipation was even visible in the clan chief’s expression. From the soft look in the clan chief’s eyes, it was obvious that he viewed Bai Qi differently than the others.

“Fifth Junior Sis and Junior Brother Lei both provided part of the answer. Perhaps it was a bit misleading for me to wait so long to give my answer, I hope you can all forgive me. Spirit enhancement is one of the foundations of cultivation in the Wildlands, and can manifest countless variations. After a twentyfold enhancement, it would indeed be possible for the feather to become a rainbow or a feather spirit. However, there is more to a thirtyfold enhancement than that!” Bai Qi appeared to be in extremely high spirits, and seemed thoroughly captivating as he stood there, single-handedly surpassing all of the other clan members in his generation.

“It is impossible to say for sure what will happen after a thirtyfold enhancement. However, I am eighty percent sure that the feather will become a true, living bird, a phoenix that could dance in the highest heavens, the foremost among all birds in the world!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0595 awe-chapter-596

Bai Qi spoke loudly and clearly, and even backed his voice with the power of his extraordinary cultivation base. As a result, everything in the area trembled, and the clouds in the evening sky roiled in shocking fashion.

It was almost as if heaven and earth were confirming that his answer was correct. The faces of the clan members in the area all flickered, and many seemed to suddenly be struck with new insights. Countless shining eyes focused on Bai Qi.

“A phoenix that could dance in the highest heavens, the foremost among all birds in the world! This answer….”

“How come I didn’t think of an answer like that!?!?”

“I would never have dared to think in such a way. How could a single feather actually turn into a living creature!?!?”

The fifth young lady trembled, seemingly lost in thought. As for Bai Lei, although his hands were clenched into defiant fists, inside he was sighing. He knew that his own skill in spirit enhancement didn’t match up to Bai Qi's, and that Bai Qi’s answer was certain to become a legend in the clan.

Bai Xiaochun’s gaze sharpened as he looked over at Bai Qi. Although the answer wasn’t the correct one, it showed that Bai Qi had already begun to forge his own path of spirit enhancement.

“Sadly, it's still wrong!” he thought. Bai Xiaochun knew that it didn’t matter that Bai Qi had begun to forge his own path.

In the end, that path would never become a reality.

Madam Cai’s face was flushed with pride and excitement as she looked at Bai Qi. The fact that this blazing sun of the clan was her own son left her feeling extremely pleased.

And then there was the clan chief, who was Bai Qi’s father. He looked very satisfied; clearly, Bai Qi was definitely the qilin son of the clan as far as he was concerned.

The other elders were visibly moved and even shocked by Bai Qi’s answer. In fact, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice actually stood up. Smiling, he said, “Excellent! You truly are the qilin son of the Bai Clan! Truth be told, I can’t say if your answer is correct or not, but what I can say is that your boldness is the type that can dominate mountains and rivers!” The grand elder threw his head back and laughed heartily. The praise in his eyes was clear; obviously, Bai Qi’s answer was in line with what the grand elder had already come to understand about spirit enhancement.

Based on the skills he had developed, he had long since come to understand that spirit enhancement was broken up into different realms. The ability to create rainbows or feather spirits was one realm, but just as Bai Qi had said, there was clearly a higher realm.

Looking over with a smile at the clan chief, the grand elder said, “No wonder the patriarch has taken such a liking to Bai Qi. That would explain why he agreed to open the ancestral land for him. In terms of spirit enhancement enlightenment and latent talent, he is clearly extraordinary.”

“He doesn’t deserve such praise, Grand Elder,” the clan chief said. “The kid still needs a lot more training.” However, it was impossible for him to hide how pleased he was.

Considering that the grand elder had approved of Bai Qi’s answer, the other clan members began to raise their voices in praise. It was a thunderous cacophony that filled the area, causing Bai Qi to suck in his breath in surprise, and leaving Madam Cai visibly moved, her eyes shining with unprecedented levels of pride.

“That bastard Bai Hao might be good at spirit enhancement,” she thought, “but he’s definitely not as good as my Qi’er. The only difference is that Qi’er doesn’t like to make a big show of his skills.”

Bai Xiaochun was not very impressed at all by how everyone seemed to be fawning over Bai Qi. In fact, he couldn’t hold back from yawning openly. “The Young Master doesn’t wish to sink to your level,” he thought, “otherwise I’d reveal the answer out loud, and all of your jaws would drop.”

By now, this so-called assessment was getting so boring that he was really wondering when it would all just end. However, it was in that moment that the pompous, preening Bai Qi looked out into the crowd and happened to spot Bai Hao yawning. Malice glimmering in his eyes, he laughed loudly.

“Bai Hao!” he called out. “Didn’t you say that you were talented in spirit enhancement? Everybody else gave an answer for the assessment, perhaps you would like to do the same? Come on, let’s hear it. There’s no need to feel embarrassed.” An enigmatic smile could be seen on Bai Qi’s face. He really did sound like an older brother offering a bit of encouragement to his younger brother. However, his sinister goal was clearly to humiliate Bai Hao.

He was obviously completely confident that the answer he had given left no room for anyone else to say anything worthwhile. Any answer that was given would have to either touch on something immaterial, or something corporeal. Therefore, as far as Bai Qi could tell, no matter what answer Bai Hao gave, he could accuse him of copying his own answer. Then he could act like the older brother and publicly teach Bai Hao another lesson!

That would once again cause Bai Hao to lose a huge amount of face in front of the clan. Furthermore, because he had already been found guilty of cheating, then when the ancestral land opened and Bai Qi found an excuse to kill him, no one would think to even complain.

As soon as the words left Bai Qi’s moth, everything went quiet, and all eyes turned to Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao is nothing more than a Foundation Establishment cultivator. What answer could he possibly give that would be worth listening to? I’d say there's an eighty to ninety percent chance he’ll just chicken out and refuse to say anything.”

“Watch, I bet he says that it’ll become a phoenix which could dance in the highest heavens, the foremost among all birds in the world…. That would be pushing the limits of shamelessness though, wouldn’t it?”

“You never know. He cheated his way to 1st place in all three clan trials by fire. That alone shows you how shameless Bai Hao is. It's a good thing Bai Qi puts righteousness above family ties, and wiped his name off of the stone steles.”

Although most of the gazes were those of scorn and disdain, there were a few that seemed to contain pity at the malice being put on display by Bai Qi.

The fifth young lady and Bai Lei were among those who looked at Bai Hao with pity. Although neither of them knew him well, the fact that Bai Qi hated him so much earned him their sympathy.

Unfortunately, there was no way for them to stop what was happening right now, not when Bai Qi was at the peak of glory.

It only took Madam Cai a moment of thought to realize what her son was up to. Although she was a bit worried about what might result, she trusted Bai Qi’s judgment, and thus, looked over at Bai Xiaochun with an intensely sinister glare.

A placid expression filled the clan chief’s eyes, as if he had no idea what Bai Qi was planning to do. As he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, the other clan elders did the same, their eyes flickering with amusement as they exchanged silent glances. As for the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, he wasn’t a member of the official clan circle of elders, and although he couldn’t be said to be completely impartial in all clan affairs, he came close. Smiling, he looked over at Bai Hao, whom he had never paid much attention to before.

Bai Xiaochun frowned as he studied Bai Qi’s vicious smile. Slowly, Bai Xiaochun’s own eyes turned icier as he realized how vile Bai Qi really was. Earlier, he had been planning to keep a low profile, but now that Bai Qi was going so far as to force his hand, it seemed he had no choice. Since Bai Qi was feeling suicidal, Bai Xiaochun would respect his wishes! Snorting coldly, he rose to his feet.

As he did, the scorn among the audience grew more intense.

“He's actually standing up? Well isn’t this amusing. Let’s see how he copies Bai Qi’s ‘bird’ answer.”

“He really overestimates himself. Bai Hao, the bastard son, daring to compete with the best in the clan!”

“People like him can do nothing but cheat. He’s a disgrace to the entire Bai Clan!”

Bai Xiaochun heard the things that people were saying. He could see the venom in Madam Cai's eyes, and the coldness in the clan chief’s. He also saw the expressions on the faces of the clan elders. Of particular note was that no one did anything to stop the derisive talk. In fact, almost everyone in the clan was speaking scornfully of him.

As for the representatives from the two other clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City, they were clearly taken aback by the commotion, and were looking at Bai Xiaochun. However, despite all of these things, Bai Xiaochun felt no anger.

Sticking his chin up, he looked around at the crowd as if they were a bunch of house sparrows that could be crushed to death in the blink of an eye. Swishing his sleeve in very proud and aloof fashion, he pointed at Bai Qi and growled, “I didn’t want to say anything, but since you’ve come to me looking to be humiliated, you villain, then I’ll do just that.”

Bai Qi’s eyes flickered with killing intent as he chuckled coldly. “Whatever answer you come up with will seem amazing to you, but will sound like a bucket of dog crap to me!”

Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve again. Although he only unleashed the fluctuations of a Foundation Establishment cultivation base, it definitely made him look like a grand figure.

“Very well, I’ll tell you the correct answer to the question of thirtyfold spirit enhancement!

“That one feather will become a world of its own. In fact, anything that receives a thirtyfold spirit enhancement will become its own world!” Bai Xiaochun’s voice boomed like thunder, spreading out in all directions and piercing into the hearts of all clan members.

His answer seemed to provoke reactions from the magical laws of heaven and earth! His voice was like heavenly thunder that rocked everything in the area, completely shattering the cloud layer up above.

Evening light spilled down from above, bathing Bai Xiaochun in brightness, causing him to suddenly radiate a very profound air.

In response to his words, the eyes of many clan members went wide. They felt as if their minds were being struck by lightning, and even Bai Qi began to shiver visibly as an extremely unsightly expression overtook his face.

Never could Bai Qi have imagined that Bai Hao would give an answer like this. There wasn’t even a need to try to compare it with his own answer. Regardless of whether or not that answer was correct, anyone could see that it vastly surpassed the answers of anyone else present, and had crushed his own answer into smithereens.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0596 awe-chapter-597

How shocking!!

It only took one short moment for all mouths to be silenced.... Some people had been making fun of Bai Hao, others had been deriding him. Some had been looking on in boredom, others had been enjoying the excitement. But as of this moment, everyone looked like statues frozen in place with shock.

As the moments ticked by, and people began to recover, the sound of panting could be heard. Expressions of shock and disbelief could be seen everywhere. As for the fifth young lady and Bai Lei, they were clearly reeling in astonishment, and were staring at Bai Xiaochun with almost complete disbelief.

The silence only wore on for a short time, though, before the entire clan erupted into a huge commotion. People shot to their feet, looking ever at Bai Xiaochun with shock and other mixed emotions. Soon, there were even expressions of admiration.

“That answer... surpasses all of the other answers!!”

“Heavens! Is that really Bai Hao? The useless, pathetic Bai Hao? It will become its own world... this... this type of boldness, the type that can dominate mountains and rivers, how is it even possible?!?!”

“A world, a whole world.... That must be it! That must be the correct answer!!”

“How... how is this even possible?!?!”

Bai Xiaochun simply stood there, the focus of all attention. Although he wasn’t very impressive physically, there was something casual and even transcendent about how he carried himself. At the moment, nobody was looking at Bai Qi. Bai Xiaochun’s words had completely eclipsed him, stolen all of his thunder. Bai Xiaochun now seemed completely dazzling, as if all the glory had always belonged to him from the very beginning.

Bai Qi’s face drained of blood, and although he wanted to offer some retort, he soon realized there was nothing for him to say. After hearing the answer which had just been given, he realized that, for some reason... he knew it to be true!!

He wasn’t the only one to have such a realization. The clan elders were all clearly moved, and were looking at Bai Xiaochun with expressions of amazement. Some of them had even risen to their feet in wonderment.

The grand elder from the Hall of Justice was trembling, and even his lips quivered in shock. The gleam of augury could be seen in his eyes, and his breath came in ragged pants; even his cultivation base was teetering unstably.

He had a look on his face that said he had just been struck with perfect enlightenment, as if he could now see everything clearly. Soon, a look of flushed excitement appeared on his face.

Madam Cai and the clan chief were struck most deeply. As for the clan chief, he wasn't sure what to think. However, to see Bai Hao basking in radiant glory didn’t make him feel even slightly gratified. Instead, rage began to bubble up in him. In his estimation, he was looking at nothing more than an unfilial son, which caused killing intent to rise up within him.

The more outstanding Bai Hao proved to be, the more it felt to the clan chief like he was being slapped in the face. As he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, the fires of fury could be seen clearly in his eyes. However, he quickly covered them up; after all, he was the clan chief.

The clan chief managed to suppress his rage, but Madam Cai was entirely incapable of doing so. Bai Xiaochun’s one simple answer had turned the entire situation upside down, and had stolen all of the glory away from Bai Qi. When she saw how ashen Bai Qi’s face was, it filled her heart with pain, and caused her hatred for Bai Hao to grow to greater heights.

“Complete hogwash!” she screamed. “Bai Hao, you impudent son of a bitch, shut the hell up! Men, take this bastard away and have him killed in body and soul!!” Madam Cai seemed to have completely lost her mind. Most of the clan guards in the area were clearly hesitating about whether or not to follow her orders, but a few of them gritted their teeth and began to make their way toward Bai Xiaochun.

But then, Bai Xiaochun spun to face Madam Cai and said, “The only impudent one here is *you!*

“This is a Bai Clan ceremony, and I'm a member of the Bai Clan. I was simply answering a question posed by the grand elder. How dare you go so far as to disrupt the ceremony! Could you *be* more impudent?!

“Clan Chief, this woman has no blood of the Bai Clan in her. At best, she could count as half a clan member. And yet, she dares to act like a madwoman in plain view of the entire clan, and in the presence of the spirits of our dear ancestors! For showing disrespect to our clan ceremony, I request that you immediately punish her to the full extent possible under the clan rules. Clan Chief, she must definitely receive the death penalty!” Bai Xiaochun counter attacked with a watertight argument, with vicious words, and with complete righteousness. There was nothing anyone present could say to find fault with his words.

The members of the auxiliary bloodlines who weren’t fond of Bai Qi and Madam Cai suddenly turned with shining eyes to look at Bai Hao, almost as if they were seeing him for the first time.

Bai Lei was looking at him with a curious gleam in his eyes, and suddenly felt the impulse to go over and introduce himself. The fifth young lady was also shocked, and had a similar expression on her face.

There were even some among the clan elders who gazed at him with glittering eyes.

Bai Qi’s expression flickered in response to the killing intent in Bai Xiaochun’s words. Chest puffing up in rage, he bellowed, “What gall you have to offend your superiors, Bai Hao. You--”

Before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun turned and barked, “Shut the hell up!

“I have the blood of the Bai Clan running in my veins, and that makes me a member of the clan just like everyone else. I'm here to offer sacrifices to the ancestors, and did nothing more than answer a question posed by the grand elder. Gall, you say? Of course I have gall! That’s exactly what our ancestors want to see! The gall to stand up for our clan!

“Offend my superiors? That’s exactly what clause nine of the clan rules talks about! When offering sacrifices to the ancestors, all clan members of all bloodlines are separated according to their rank. And during the ceremony, who are the true superiors? The ancestors! Bai Qi, don’t tell me that you think this woman is one of the Bai Clan’s ancestors? Don't forget, Bai Qi, her surname isn’t Bai, it's Cai!

“Therefore, it seems to me that the person offending their superiors here is none other than *you*, Bai Qi!!” Bai Xiaochun’s booming words stabbed like swords into Bai Qi, causing his mind to reel and sending him staggering backward. Although he wanted to argue back, he couldn't find any words to do so, and ended up merely coughing up a mouthful of blood.

“Bai Hao! You....”

Even as everyone looked in in mute shock at what was happening, Bai Xiaochun turned toward the grim-faced clan chief, toward whom he clasped hands and bowed.

“Clan Chief, first, I must request that you punish this woman for disrupting the ancestral sacrifices. For disturbing the peace of our ancestors, she fully deserves to be killed in body and soul! Second, I must request that you punish Bai Qi for his unfilial act of confusing the identities of our ancestors. Clearly, he has forgotten that his own surname is Bai, which is an act of complete unfaithfulness. Unfilial, unfaithful, and disrespectful people like him do not deserve to be members of the Bai Clan!”

Bai Xiaochun’s thunderous words left all members of the clan visibly shaken. To counter attack by calling for his enemies to be put to death according to clan rules was something that no one could ever have imagined would happen. No one could even react, and many clan members were so astonished they couldn’t even think. To many of them, it was as if their entire world had suddenly been turned upside down.

The representatives from the other two clans were deeply shaken, especially the one from the Cai Clan, who seemed very displeased, and was staring at Bai Xiaochun with a very serious expression. Bai Xiaochun’s intent was clear, and it was no underhanded scheme: it was an open attack! It was also an opportunity for all of the auxiliary bloodlines in the clan, something that the representatives from the other two clans, as well as the emissary from Giant Ghost City, took very seriously.

The clan elders began to exchange glances. The internal affairs of the Bai Clan had already been rocky, and now, the auxiliary bloodlines suddenly had a golden opportunity.

Even as everyone pondered the situation, Madam Cai saw Bai Qi cough up blood, and suddenly went even more crazy.

“Are you looking to die, you little son of a bitch!?!? Men, kill him immediately!!” In her rage, Madam Cai even flew up into the air, as if to attack Bai Xiaochun herself. As she did, the eyes of the clan elders glittered even more brightly as they prepared to jump up and start fighting. However, that was when the clan chief suddenly slapped his hand down onto the table in front of him.

A huge boom echoed out as the table exploded and transformed into nothing more than ash.

“Shut your mouth!” he roared. Waving his sleeve, he sent a burst of power slamming into Madam Cai, causing blood to spray out of her mouth as she tumbled out of the air.

“Take her into custody!” he continued through gritted teeth. Immediately, several clan guards hurried forward and dragged Madam Cai away.

The clan chief did nothing to disguise the killing intent in his eyes as he glared at Bai Xiaochun. “Happy now?!”

Bai Xiaochun glanced at Madam Cai being dragged away, then turned back to the glowering clan chief. Clearly not willing to back down, he clasped hands and said, “Young Bai Qi must be punished for his unfilial, unfaithful, and disrespectful actions!”

“Enough!” the clan chief shouted. This was his first time ever experiencing anything like this during his time as clan chief. The feeling of being forced into action was infuriating, and made him want to kill Bai Hao more than ever. In fact, were it not for the fact that he feared the auxiliary bloodlines, he would likely have killed him on the spot! “If you want him dead, then kill him yourself in the ancestral land.”

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything in response, but inwardly, was chuckling coldly.

Bai Qi glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun, but was clearly afraid of provoking him into further speech. Considering that his mother had been dragged off to be punished, and his father was enraged, all he could do was grit his teeth and swear an oath to kill Bai Hao in the ancestral land!

Obviously, it was not appropriate to continue with the ceremony of ancestral sacrifices.

“The ceremony is over!” the clan chief said with the flick of a sleeve.

However, it was at that point that the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, whose eyes had been flickering with the glow of augury up to this point, suddenly looked over at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Wait a moment. Bai Hao, please continue with your explanation. How did you come up with the idea that a thirtyfold spirit enhancement would create a new world?”

His expression was sincere, and his words were uttered with calm warmth. Apparently, he didn't care at all that there had been some tension between Bai Hao and the clan chief just now.

The truth was that as the grand elder of the Hall of Justice, the only people in the clan who could cause any problems for him were the patriarch and the grand elder from the Hall of Corrections. As for the clan chief... he didn’t care about him at all.

The clan chief’s expression couldn’t have been more unsightly. He would never be able to forget everything which had occurred this day. However, he couldn’t afford to provoke the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, and was therefore forced to sit there, wallowing in his rage. From the way he gritted his teeth and glared at Bai Hao, it was obvious to everyone how he felt about him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0597 awe-chapter-598

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. However, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice had spoken with warm sincerity, and seemed to be thirsting for knowledge. Apparently, he had no ill intent at all, and really wanted to know about the secrets of thirtyfold spirit enhancements.

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything at first. Instead, he scrambled for a way to build on the incredible foundation he had already prepared. There had to be a way to show off a bit more, to build on the high profile he had already created, to the point where everyone would prostrate themselves in worship and admiration!

Of course, no one could tell from the look on his face that he was thinking about that. As for the grand elder, he simply waited in quiet anticipation.

Before Bai Xiaochun had provided his answer, most people in the clan had viewed him with scorn. But now, none of them dared to think in such a way. His explanation about the feather becoming a world had moved all of them. Then, his sharp tongue had forced the clan chief to take his own wife into custody. Bai Qi had come close to either being expelled from the clan or executed.

Because of all of that, Bai Hao seemed like a completely different person than the one they remembered....

Plus, they could all see that the grand elder from the Hall of Justice approved of him. With every moment that passed, Bai Hao’s place in their hearts grew.

The fifth young lady was looking at him with a curious gleam in her eyes. Of course, because of the drastic change in Bai Hao that had just been revealed, it occurred to her that he might be an imposter. In fact, she wasn’t the only one to have such thoughts; the clan elders were also thinking the same thing.

It was the same with the clan chief, who even secretly checked the clan’s defensive spell formation to determine whether this was really Bai Hao or not!

The clan spell formation could perform deep analyses of the blood of anyone in the clan, and therefore, if this person was not Bai Hao, but someone else who had secretly entered the clan by some unknown means, it would be able to detect it.

Everyone in the clan knew that, including the fifth young lady. Therefore, she put such thoughts of imposters out of her mind, and continued to wait in anticipation for further explanation from Bai Hao.

It was the same with Bai Lei, who by now was fully convinced that he had simply overlooked Bai Hao in the past, and that his sudden rise to prominence was a good thing.

Not everyone in the clan was happy, though. The hearts of all the direct bloodline descendants seethed with venomous hatred, although they didn’t dare to reveal that in their facial expressions. After all, Bai Hao’s actions hadn’t just humiliated Bai Qi and Madam Cai; they had humiliated the entire direct bloodline.

In fact, as far as they were concerned, because Bai Hao was also part of the direct bloodline, he was a traitor!

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Bai Xiaochun looked up, his eyes glittering. Facing the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, he clasped hands and bowed.

The grand elder's expression brightened, and he sat there patiently, waiting to hear what was about to be said. It was the same with the other clan elders, all of whom had very somber expressions on their faces.

"Allow me to answer your question, Grand Elder. My speculations regarding thirtyfold spirit enhancements were rather arbitrary. The thing is, Junior is a rather lonely person, with no brothers or sisters, nor any friends. Oftentimes, I sit alone and daydream about the world around me, feeling alone, as though I am the only person left alive in the entire world....

"Perhaps that feeling of loneliness is what makes me dream of having wings, and of flying off into the distance...." As he spoke, his voice slowly grew more and more hoarse, as though he were immersing himself in memories of his youth.

Most clan members knew a bit about Bai Hao's situation, and when they heard his words, they could easily imagine a lonely young boy sitting there looking up into the sky and daydreaming about the world.

Many of the clan elders seemed moved. As for the fifth young lady, she wasn't sure why, but she suddenly felt very melancholy.

Bai Xiaochun was pleased to see this reaction. During the time he had spent thinking moments ago, he had considered long and hard how to give an answer that would shock and move everyone present.

Although Bai Xiaochun didn’t view himself as someone who was adept at bragging and impressing people, he could at least leave them feeling somewhat moved. As he continued to speak, his voice floated in the wind, almost as if they had originated in his youth, and had drifted through the streams of time into the present....

“I often wonder about the shape of the world itself... and how we came to exist in it.... Why are there souls, and why is there multi-colored flame? Why is there such a thing as spirit enhancement...?

"I often wonder if there really are immortals in the world. And I wonder how people learned to practice cultivation....

"I often wonder about the sky, which is so vast. Is there something else beyond it? Is there another world out there? If there is, what does it look like...?" Although he spoke in little more than a murmur, everyone could hear him clearly. The entire area was completely quiet, and everyone was immersed in his words.

The clan elders were holding their breaths, all of them struck with the realization that they had mistakenly overlooked Bai Hao in the past....

That was especially true of the grand elder from the Hall of Justice. His expression flickered through numerous emotions as he thought back to what Bai Hao had been like as a youth. Considering the words he was speaking now, he could almost see what he was describing.

"Are there people in that world beyond ours? If there are... what do we look like to them...?" Bai Xiaochun's eyes gazed softly into nowhere as he continued to speak.

"For all we know, the place we live in is actually an object that some almighty being performed a thirtyfold spirit enhancement on, turning it into a world!!!" As his words echoed out, the sounds of gasps could be heard among the audience.

"Can anyone explain why we even know about spirit enhancements to begin with? Can anyone explain where the practice of performing spirit enhancements came from?!?!"

After a dramatic pause, he concluded, “And that is my explanation!"

Once again, he clasped hands to the grand elder, and then stood there silently. Inwardly, he felt completely pleased. Even he wasn't quite sure of the exact meaning of the words he had uttered; he had spent most of his time earlier trying to come up with some things that sounded incredibly profound and mysterious.

Although he didn't understand what he had just said, he was sure that it was enough to startle everyone. The more enigmatic his words sounded, the more profound mysteries of the Dao they seemed to contain, the better. At the moment, although he seemed completely calm, he was actually surreptitiously looking around, hoping to see a positive reaction.

At the moment, silence reigned. Everyone was staring blankly at him, including the grand elder, whose heart was teetering in shock.

Bai Xiaochun could imagine how incredible he seemed, and could almost see the gears turning in their heads as they realized why he had come up with his answer of the feather becoming a world.

No one could recover from their shock immediately. It was only after about ten breaths of time passed that people began to gasp and utter various exclamations.

"There's another world beyond ours...?"

"What if we really live in some magical item that an almighty being performed a thirtyfold spirit enhancement on?!?!"

"Heavens! Isn't there a story about how the first generation Arch-Emperor created heaven and earth, and then died in battle to protect it for his people...?"

The fifth young lady and Bai Lei were shaking visibly. The more deeply they thought about the words Bai Xiaochun had just uttered, the more mysterious and profound they seemed.

After hearing the cries of shock, Bai Xiaochun finally calmed down. His goal of leaving everyone shaken had been met. To his pleasure, the clan elders were looking at him with shining eyes. As for the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, he rose to his feet, threw his head back and laughed at the top of his lungs.

“Excellent. Excellent! *Excellent!!*” Normally speaking, the grand elder was a very somber person who did little more than nod his head in acknowledgment to people. In fact, he had only said the word *excellent* once to Bai Qi.

But now, he said it three times. Furthermore, the excitement on his face showed how much he approved of Bai Hao. As for Bai Qi, when he saw all of these things, he felt like he was being stabbed in the heart. His eyes instantly turned bloodshot, and his hands clenched tightly into fists.

Snarling, his killing intent grew even more intense, and he thought, "After I get the deva soul in the ancestral land, I'm definitely going to kill you!!"

As for the clan chief, it was with mixed emotions that he looked at Bai Xiaochun. However, that only lasted for a moment before he cleared his heart and filled it with only icy coldness.

"Just blame the fact that you're a bastard,” he murmured in his heart. “Your mother was scum, and therefore you are destined to be scum. You refuse to submit, and constantly fight back. That's why you deserve the same fate as your mother: death!"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0598 awe-chapter-599

"Among all the answers I have heard today, your answer is the most difficult to analyze and assess. It is also the answer that I find most pleasing!

"Well done, Bai Hao, *very* well done!" From the delighted laughter that echoed out of the grand elder's mouth, everyone present could tell how much he approved of Bai Hao.

From now on, Bai Hao would obviously have a much different standing than before. Bai Qi could only grit his teeth, and as for the clan chief, his expression turned grimmer and grimmer. Various thoughts existed within the hearts of all the clan members as the grand elder swished his sleeve and said, "Bai Hao, I have an official residence that, while not the best place to practice the necromantic arts, is still quite satisfactory. I hereby bequeath that residence to you for use in your cultivation. I hope that you can progress to the Core Formation stage quickly."

The grand elder was actually a bit disappointed by the fact that Bai Hao was not yet in the Core Formation stage. If he were, even if it was the early stage, he would officially take him under his wing, regardless of how much the clan chief objected.

Unfortunately, Bai Hao's cultivation base was only in early Foundation Establishment, which was too weak. Therefore, he gifted him with an official residence, which would not only sow good will with him, but would also help him probe the clan chief's intentions.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then looked up in thought. As far as he was concerned, an official residence wouldn't really do him any good, and in fact, he was even considering simply asking for some vengeful souls as compensation instead. However, it was at that point that the clan chief spoke out in an icy voice.

"That would be far too much of an imposition, Grand Elder. I can obviously provide for this *son* of mine on my own."

He spoke with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron, his voice filled with discontent and anger that sent the grand elder into silence. Obviously, there was little he could say on the subject.

Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and said, "Many thanks, Grand Elder." Then he cast a glance at the clan chief.

"Just can't bear to see anything go Bai Hao's way, huh?" he thought with a cold chuckle. "Well, I didn't want that official residence anyway. I want a deva soul! When the ancestral land gets opened tomorrow, you can just sit there and watch me take your clan's deva soul away from right under your nose!"

"The ceremony is concluded!" the clan chief said loudly. As far as he was concerned, this ancestral sacrifice ceremony made him feel like he'd swallowed a mosquito. Waving his sleeve, he transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

The grand elder from the Hall of Justice watched him leave, then sighed inwardly. Bai Hao had a precarious position in the clan, which was quite a pity. Looking over at him, he gave an encouraging nod.

"Since your father has other plans, Bai Hao, I won't interfere. However, if you ever have any questions about cultivation, you can come to me any time to get some advice." With that, the grand elder left, as did the other clan elders. Bai Xiaochun watched them leave. So far, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice was one of the few people in the clan who he actually had a good impression of.

"He knows that Bai Hao is a bastard son, and that his father doesn't like him. Despite that, he still expressed his good will. Clearly, he's offering Bai Hao a bit of protection. Well, in that case, I should represent Bai Hao to take advantage of that protection."

Now that the ceremony was over, Bai Xiaochun left. His arrival had been ignored by everyone, but his departure was the exact opposite. As of this point, everyone was paying attention to him. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't care.

His time dealing with all this pressure in the Bai Clan was coming to an end....

"Tomorrow is when everything will be made clear!" With that, he flew beneath the evening sky all the way back to the north district.

Virtually no one in the Bai Clan was able to sleep soundly that night. Bai Hao's sudden rise to prominence had them all feeling completely shaken. Bai Qi's fury, Madam Cai's mad screams, the clan chief's grim silence; these were images that would forever be imprinted on the hearts of all members of the clan.

Besides all that, the clan's ancestral land would be opened in the morning. Those who would be entering the ancestral land had one more night to prepare. Even the fifth young lady, who didn't particularly want to join the competition, sat in meditation to get herself into top condition. After all, in addition to the deva soul, there would be other rewards available, some of which would be of particular use to her.

Obviously, Bai Lei was aiming for the deva soul. Bai Qi was his direct competitor, and although he knew it wasn't likely that he would succeed, he was still itching to give it a shot.

And then there was Bai Qi. He planned to take all of the rage which had built up in his heart and vent it by killing Bai Hao in the ancestral land. He spent the entire night on breathing exercises, getting himself in the optimal condition to fight.

"The ancestral land is going to be your graveyard! Even if you beg to be exempt from going in, I'll make sure you have no choice in the matter. I’ll drag you in myself if I have to!"

While everyone else in the Bai Clan made their final preparations, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the darkness of night and the powers of his mask to slip undetected through the clan and plant murdersoul spikes in numerous locations.

He had long since scouted out the clan and picked which locations were optimal to sabotage. Now, on the final night before the opening of the ancestral land, he carried out his plan.

Of course, all he did was put the murdersoul spikes in place. His plan was to wait until the right moment, and then detonate all of them simultaneously to completely shake the Bai Clan's defensive spell formation.

The night passed uneventfully....

Eventually, it was the deepest part of the night, when dawn was just around the corner. At that point, Bai Xiaochun's eyes opened, and they glowed like blazing swords as he looked around at his hut.

Although he hadn't been in the Bai Clan for very long, after everything he had experienced, he had come to a very clear understanding of what Bai Hao's life had been like.

"If your spirit is out there, Bai Hao," he murmured, "I hope you know about everything that's happened since your death. Perhaps you would even wish to put the people responsible to death. Well, although your Master doesn't usually participate in fighting and killing, this time, that's exactly what I feel like doing. And I'm going to do it for you."

Soon, bells tolled in the clan, indicating that the ancestral land was about to be opened!

As the bells tolled nine times, numerous clan members flew into the air and headed toward the stone gate outside the ancestral shrine hall in the central district.

Bai Xiaochun joined them, and before long, he was standing there by the stone gate. The instant he showed up, many eyes turned in his direction.

"I can’t believe Bai Hao actually showed up...."

"Couldn't he see yesterday that Bai Qi wants him dead? If I were him, I would definitely just give up on the opportunities of the ancestral land...."

"Guess he's got a death wish, the overconfident little bastard!"

"Hmph. Well, he couldn't give up even if he wanted to!"

There were already a few hundred people gathered outside the ancestral shrine hall, most of them in the Foundation Establishment stage, with only a dozen or so being in Core Formation. All of them were engaged in hushed conversations.

Bai Qi was there, and as soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun arrive, he looked over with cold eyes and open killing intent.

The fifth young lady and Bai Lei were in the crowd as well, and seemed surprised that he had come.

Bai Xiaochun pretended not to hear all the discussions around him, and seemed completely and utterly calm as he looked at the stone gate.

A bit more time passed, and more people showed up, although most of them had come to observe, not participate. When they saw Bai Xiaochun standing there, more discussions broke out.

The representatives from the two other clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City were also there. Eventually, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice showed up, and when he saw Bai Xiaochun, his eyes widened, and then his face settled into a frown.

Before the grand elder could say anything, though, the clan chief shot through the air and came to a stop in the air above the gate. Almost immediately, the discussions in the area ceased.

"So, the unfilial bastard showed up after all," he thought, looking down icily at Bai Xiaochun. Whenever the ancestral land was opened, all cultivators in Foundation Establishment and Core Formation were supposed to go in. However, anyone who didn’t wish to could simply report in at the shrine hall, and would generally not be forced to enter.

Actually, it was common for clan members to submit requests to be exempt from entering the ancestral land. Such requests were almost always granted. In fact, the clan chief had long since planned to approve of all such requests, with the exception of Bai Hao's.

And yet, no such a request had ever come in. Although that had made his little plan somewhat pointless, the fact that Bai Hao was here waiting left him chuckling coldly in his heart.

"So, looking to die, huh? Well, then at least I don't have to put family interests aside and kill you myself!" Turning his attention to the stone gate, he performed an incantation gesture and then waved his finger. That in turn touched the clan's spell formation, which caused the stone gate to begin shining with brilliant light. Gradually, it was possible to see a passageway opening up.

An ancient aura escaped, causing a powerful wind to sweep across everything in the area.

"The ancestral land is officially opened!" the clan chief said somberly. "After everyone has entered, the gate will close of its own accord, and will only open after someone acquires the deva soul. Once you enter, your own destinies will determine what good fortune you acquire. The ancestral land is not free from danger; it is a trial by fire, and throughout the years, fatalities have been known to occur, as all of you know! Now, enter the ancestral land!"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0599 awe-chapter-600

To open the Bai Clan ancestral land from the outside required major preparations over a long period of time. Furthermore, it necessitated a vast expenditure of resources.

Therefore, the entrance would only be left open for a short period of time, then closed again. Only after someone acquired the deva soul inside would they be able to use its power to open the ancestral land again, this time from the inside. Doing that wouldn’t negatively affect the deva soul in any way. Because of how the area could be sealed in this way, the so-called ancestral land also served as an arcane pocket realm that was perfect for preserving soul bodies.

As soon as the clan chief officially declared the ancestral land to be open, Bai Qi sped into motion toward the stone gate, surrounded by dozens of his relatives from the direct bloodline.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, and he took a deep breath to suppress his excitement. As he well knew, he would only have one chance to pull off his plan.

“If it works, I’ll get a deva soul, and also get revenge for Bai Hao....” Gritting his teeth, he flew toward the opening in the stone gate.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as hundreds more clan members did the same thing. Then, the stone gate slowly closed.

As it did, the gate twisted and distorted, after which a shimmering screen appeared above it, which offered a view of the ancestral land itself!

Clearly visible was a towering mountain peak, the summit of which was surrounded by a majestic halo. Furthermore, it was possible to make out an altar at the summit, upon which was... the deva soul!

The halo was actually being manifested by the deva soul itself!

There were other areas on the mountain that had smaller halos of various size, each of which represented a place for the clan members to acquire good fortune.

There were magical items, soul bodies, techniques, and other resources. All of them were there for the taking by anyone who had the skill, power, and luck to do so.

Of course, the higher one went on the mountain, the more intense and colorful the halos became, indicating the higher quality of the good fortune available.

The screen above the stone gate was already quite the focus of attention among the clan members on the outside, and currently depicted numerous figures being teleported into the ancestral land.

Bai Xiaochun’s vision blurred, and intense rumbling sounds filled his ears. When the teleportation ended and everything went back to normal, he found himself standing on a jagged rock outcropping.

The sky above him was violent, and the lands which stretched out in all directions were pitch black. There was also a red sun, whose light made the entire world seem as hazy as dusk.

He could see the towering mountain and the halos on it. The enormous height of the thing was so shocking he felt like it was weighing down on his heart.

He had done a bit of research and asking around beforehand, so he knew that the ancestral land consisted of this enormous ancestral mountain. However, to see it with his own eyes was different.

“It seems incongruous with the heaven and earth on the outside, as if... the mountain came from somewhere else!” In fact, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s surprise that he realized this mountain seemed very similar to the Fallen Sword World. Supposedly, that sword had fallen from the beyond....

He studied the mountain quickly, his eyes eventually coming to rest on the halo at the summit, and the altar within it. When he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye to get a closer look at it, he could see that floating right there atop the altar... was the deva soul!!

It looked like a clump of sandy soil, indicating that it was an earth-type deva soul!

“What if I just went over there right now…?” Heart pounding with eagerness, he studied the situation for a bit longer, then discarded the idea. Although no one else would be able to tell, with his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, he could see that the altar was protected by a powerful restrictive spell.

There was a blood qi within that spell formation that ensured that only people with the blood of the Bai Clan would be able to pass through it. Furthermore, it was also obvious that one needed especially pure and strong clan blood.

“Once I make my move, time will become very limited. The best thing to do is to wait for someone else to break through the restrictive spell and get the deva soul. Then, I can just take it away from them!”

As Bai Xiaochun stood there sizing up the ancestral land, the rumble of teleportations could be heard in other areas as various Bai Clan cultivators entered the ancestral land. There were hundreds of them, and at the moment, most people were looking up at the countless halos on the mountain, their faces filled with anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun looked around thoughtfully as the teleportations proceeded, and eventually, the entrance closed. From that point on, it would require the power of the deva soul to get out. For the land to be opened again from the outside would require a lot of time and effort.

“Well that's good,” he thought. “Things are going pretty much as I’d expected. The entrance being closed... will actually be a big help to me!

“Based on what I learned earlier about the ancestral land, it's safe to assume that everyone else in the clan is observing what’s happening inside. They should be able to see everything through that stone gate.... Well, that's fine. I guess I’ll have a good audience when I make my move, so I might as well put on a good show!” Even as he made up his mind about how to proceed, he sensed something, and turned to find Bai Qi and a large group of direct bloodline cultivators looking over at him with killing intent in their eyes.

Although it made him a bit nervous, he was also at the point where he didn't care much about trying to keep up appearances. Seeing that Bai Qi was glaring at him, he frowned and glared back.

The cold malice flickering in Bai Qi’s eyes was impossible to hide, and he almost looked like he was about to fly over and attack. However, one of his relatives leaned over and whispered something to him, causing him to laugh coldly.

“That’s right. The most important thing is getting that deva soul. With it, I will control the exit from this place, and can prevent Bai Hao from getting away. He definitely won’t be escaping with his life!” Bai Qi knew that this entire event was being held for him, and therefore, he didn't want to concern himself with trivial matters before getting the deva soul. Taking a deep breath, he turned and headed toward the mountain, his relatives in tow.

The rest of the clan members did the same, either alone, or in groups of between three to five.

When Bai Qi looked away, Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly, musing about how he had never been bested in a staring contest for his entire life. “Lots of people have glared at me in my life, Bai Qi. You think I care if you join the club...?”

Proudly clasping his hands behind his back, he prepared to head toward the mountain when suddenly, the voice of a young woman could be heard behind him.

“Bai Hao.... This mountain is a mighty and dangerous place. Some areas are especially perilous. Although most members of the clan won’t find them too unsafe... for people in early Foundation Establishment, they could be deadly. Even I anticipate encountering some difficulties if I proceed alone. What do you say we team up?”

The person speaking was the fifth young lady, her voice soft and her gaze warm as she looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place and looked back at her. Not only had she helped him in a difficult situation when he first came to the clan, but he remembered how kindly she had looked at him during the ceremony the previous day. Clearly, she was interested in helping him out, and yet had vaguely worded her statement to save face, even making it seem as if she considered them both to be members of the same bloodline.

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment. He was grateful for her good intentions, but at the same time, had his own plans, plans that wouldn’t be made any easier by having another person tagging along. Even as he pondered how to answer her, booming laughter could suddenly be heard, which belonged to none other than Bai Lei.

Striding forward, he looked Bai Xiaochun up and down with sincerity glowing in his eyes. “How nice of you to help out Junior Brother Hao, Fifth Junior Sister. Well, I guess I might as well join you. What do you say to a team of three, Bai Hao?”

The fifth young lady smiled charmingly and replied, “It would naturally be wonderful to have you along, Third Brother. But isn't your goal that deva soul?”

Bai Lei sighed. “Forget about that deva soul. That matter has already been settled behind closed doors. The rest of us are just here for show.”

The previous night, he had been very excited about going into the ancestral land. However, in the morning, he had received a message from one of his bloodline’s elders, telling him that the deva soul was to go to Bai Qi to help him reach the Nascent Soul stage. Bai Qi would subsequently begin performing spirit enhancements on his nascent soul to put him in the running to become the successor of the Hell-Emperor. In the end, he hadn’t quite been willing to accept that fact, but really had no choice but to do so, leaving him feeling more than a bit down.

In some ways, that was a better thing for him. After all, performing five spirit enhancements on one’s own nascent soul was very dangerous. Bai Qi was willing to take that risk, but Bai Lei wasn't, so in the end, he had simply given in.

Thankfully, the clan had also given him some special compensation to make things fair.

Considering that both Bai Lei and the fifth young lady were trying to persuade him, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t object. The fifth young lady obviously liked him and wanted to help him, although he couldn’t quite be sure of Bai Lei’s motivations. In fact, it seemed likely that he wanted to make friends because it would be useful in his own competition with Bai Qi.

“Ah, whatever,” he thought. “I need to give Bai Qi some time to get that deva soul anyway. I might as well repay the fifth young lady for her kindness.” Smiling, he nodded in agreement.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0600 awe-chapter-601

As the group of three got closer to the ancestral mountain, the pressure weighing down on them increased. It was the type of pressure that would have a significant effect on any Foundation Establishment cultivator; only Core Formation experts would be able to ignore it.

Obviously, the summit of the mountain was where the pressure was strongest, and based on Bai Xiaochun's calculations, it would only be possible for someone in late Core Formation to get that far.

However, in consideration of how he was weaker, the fifth young lady took the lead, using the power of her own cultivation base to reduce the pressure on Bai Xiaochun. Moved, Bai Xiaochun followed along, simultaneously engaging in some casual conversation with both her and Bai Lei.

Before long, they were at the foot of the mountain. There were numerous paths that led up, and they picked one. As they began to climb, the pressure intensified. Occasionally, they would pass other Foundation Establishment clan members, all of whom were sweating profusely and being very careful to avoid the dangerous restrictive spells.

With the fifth young lady's help, Bai Xiaochun was able to move much faster than any of the other Foundation Establishment cultivators.... Of course, even without her help, the pressure wouldn’t have fazed him. Not even the pressure at the summit would have been a huge deal, let alone the pressure further down.

Because of how kind the fifth young lady was being, Bai Xiaochun tried his best to pretend that he was having difficulty with the pressure, even going so far as to gasp and wheeze occasionally.

After all, people outside of the ancestral land were watching, and therefore, Bai Xiaochun had no choice but to proceed with his act. Occasionally, though, he would look over at Bai Qi and his group speeding toward the summit. Eyes sparkling, Bai Xiaochun tried to calculate how long it would take for him to reach the top.

When Bai Lei noticed who he was looking at, his eyes flickered, and he lowered his voice and said, “Junior Brother Hao, you listen to me... that Bai Qi is someone you can't afford to provoke.”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at him. Plastering a look of anger onto his face, he said, “Well it's not like he’s actually going to kill me, right?!”

Bai Lei sighed. “Don’t you get it, Junior Brother Hao? The clan arranged for Bai Qi to get this deva soul, and that shows how much the patriarch favors him. If you keep pulling stunts like you did yesterday, I’m afraid... you will get yourself killed.”

Bai Lei had a serious expression on his face, but inwardly, he was chuckling. Although Bai Hao had uttered some sharp words the day before, as far as Bai Lei was concerned, he was still just a child.

“You listen to me, alright?” he continued. “From now on, stick close to the grand elder from the Hall of Justice. With him on your side, Bai Qi won’t make a move against you, at least not casually....”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then gritted his teeth defiantly.

Off to the side, the fifth young lady listened, a slight frown on her face. Although Bai Lei's words seemed to be uttered out of concern, to her, it seemed more like he was trying to take advantage of the conflict between Bai Hao and Bai Qi for his own benefit. However, now was not the time to point that out. Sighing, she pondered how everyone in the Bai Clan seemed to have their own agenda, and how everyone was always fighting and bickering.

It was really exhausting to live in an environment like that, which was one of the reasons she didn't feel very at home in this place. Sighing, she looked over at Bai Hao with compassion and sadness. It was bad enough that he had such a lowly standing in the clan, but now, just when he had finally managed to prove himself to some extent, someone came along to try to manipulate him.

Seeing that Bai Lei was about to continue speaking, she jumped in and said, "Hey, look at that halo over there, Bai Hao. See the bracelet inside...? It's a magical item that's well suited to you!"

Bai Xiaochun looked over at a nearby boulder, upon which was a green bracelet. The fluctuations rolling off of it weren't very strong, but would clearly be useful to someone in early Foundation Establishment.

In the same moment that he looked over at it, the fifth young lady performed an incantation gesture and waved her finger, causing a beam of green light to fly out. As the beam neared the boulder, a protective shield of light suddenly sprang into being.

The green beam of light pierced through the shield, wrapped around the bracelet, and then dragged it back into the fifth young lady’s hand. After looking it over, she handed it to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun took the bracelet, looked up at the fifth young lady with her kind gaze, then clasped hands and bowed.

“Thank you, Fifth Young Lady.”

“Take it. You need every bit of protection you can get. In our clan... you can’t trust anybody.” Looking melancholy, she shook her head and then continued along the path.

Bai Lei frowned, not very pleased that the fifth young lady had interrupted him. However, considering her high status, he knew that she would eventually be married off to someone important outside the clan. Likely, she would achieve an even higher standing in the future, and therefore, he pretended that nothing had happened, and just continued to chat randomly.

The fifth young lady obviously wasn’t in a very good mood, and only occasionally responded to Bai Lei’s banter. However, whenever they encountered items useful for Foundation Establishment cultivators, she would take them and give them to Bai Xiaochun.

Two hours later, Bai Xiaochun had acquired about eight magical items, a few thousand souls, and even some soul medicine.

He was quite moved by all of this. The fifth young lady was now the second person in the Bai Clan to have taken a liking to him. Most importantly, she wasn’t trying to get anything out of him. She was simply treating him like family, out of compassion.

Another thing he noticed was that there were items available on the mountain that the fifth young lady actually wished to acquire, but could not because of the level of her cultivation base.

Bai Lei took the initiative to get a few things that he wanted, then apparently felt a bit embarrassed and got a few things to hand over to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun accepted everything silently, and the group proceeded along for about an hour. By this point, they were about halfway up the mountain, which was when Bai Qi actually reached the summit. His journey up the mountain had gone very smoothly, with almost nothing causing any problems for him or getting in his way.

“The deva soul was put here for me!” he told himself. “It's mine!” The reason why Bai Qi had such an easy time going up the mountain was because he knew exactly how to deal with all of the restrictive spells on the way up. His father had provided him with that information, and therefore, Bai Qi didn’t need to waste almost any of his cultivation base power to get to the summit.

From his current position, he could see the altar, and the earth-type deva soul on top of it. Eyes shining with anticipation, he shifted his gaze from the soul, to the restrictive spell protecting it.

Now that he was here, all he had to do was walk over and take what was his!

“This is the last restrictive spell, and also the most powerful. Only someone with the strongest and purest blood can get through... thankfully, I came prepared! Once I get that deva soul, then I can go and kill Bai Hao!”

Chuckling coldly, Bai Qi sliced a cut open on his index finger and then spattered some blood onto the restrictive spell. At the same time, he patted his bag of holding, producing a jade bottle that he crushed... causing a drop of blood to appear!

That blood came from the deva patriarch, and was incredibly pure.

When Bai Qi reached the summit and began to deal with the restrictive spell, many of the other clan members on the mountain looked up with complex emotions. Although most of them were frustrated and jealous, there was nothing they could do.

Outside of the ancestral land, the clan members who had gathered to watch the event saw what was happening, and various serious expressions could be seen on their faces. The clan chief smiled broadly, whereas the clan elders looked on indifferently. After all, they had all agreed to this matter, and knew that the supposed trial by fire was mostly just for show.

Originally, Madam Cai should have been in custody and being punished, but for some reason she was now in the crowd, excitedly watching the scene play out.

The person paying the closest attention to Bai Qi, though, was Bai Xiaochun. Now that he saw Bai Qi dealing with the restrictive spell, he stopped in place to think for a moment.

Then he turned to look at the fifth young lady, and suddenly, seemed to be bursting with energy. His eyes shone far more brightly than before, and for some reason, he seemed taller and stronger. It was as if, moments ago, he had been a tiny hill, but was now a towering mountain peak!! Conversely, the ancestral mountain he was standing on was now like a tiny hill compared to him! The air around him even began to distort as something like a black hole formed!

“Thank you for watching out for me, Fifth Young Lady,” he said. “I’d like to pay you back for your kindness. If you agree, then tell me what things you want from the mountain, and I’ll get them for you. Take your pick.”

The sudden change to Bai Xiaochun happened so quickly that neither the fifth young lady nor Bai Lei were able to react.

“You....” Bai Lei’s eyes widened, and his heart began to pound. For some reason, Bai Xiaochun seemed like one of the clan’s grand elders right now, completely shocking. In fact, when their eyes met, Bai Lei felt his mind spinning.

The fifth young lady was panting, completely taken aback by what Bai Xiaochun had just said.

Bai Xiaochun looked at her and once again said, “Well, Fifth Young Lady, take your pick!”

All of a sudden, the fifth young lady seemed to realize what was going on. Shivering, and eyes shining, she suddenly laughed.

“If you can get anything on this mountain for me... then what are you waiting for?! Take it all!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at her deeply, then threw his head back and laughed. “You got it!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0601 awe-chapter-602

Very few people on the mountain had even noticed the change in Bai Xiaochun. Most everyone else was transfixed by Bai Qi as he dealt with the final restrictive spell at the summit, and were looking on with jealousy, frustration, and countless other emotions.

“This is really unfair!”

“That’s right. Even if Bai Qi were more of a chosen than he already is, he shouldn’t have been able to make it to the top of the mountain that easily. I don’t care if he is in the great circle of Core Formation!”

“Hmph! I was watching him, and from what I could tell, he knew how to deal with those restrictive spells before he even got to them! It was too easy for him!”

“Come on, don’t you realize what's going on? Not even Bai Lei put up a fight. It’s obvious that the ancestral land was opened just for Bai Qi! The leadership already decided to give him the deva soul, that way he can get his five elements deva beast souls and form his nascent soul!!”

Most angry of all were the people from the auxiliary bloodlines, whereas the people from the direct bloodline seemed very pleased. They even went so far as to rebuke anyone they heard saying anything they didn’t like.

“Bai Qi is the qilin son of our clan! It’s the will of heaven and earth that he gets that deva soul!”

All sorts of talk could be heard on the mountain. Meanwhile, people on the outside were also dealing with all sorts of thoughts and feelings.

No one outside had noticed Bai Xiaochun yet either. Bai Qi was currently the main focus in the ancestral land, and was like a blazing sun that drew all attention.

As he went about dismantling the restrictive spell, discussions could also be heard near the stone gate.

“So, the deva soul is going to Bai Qi....”

“I'd guessed that it would be him. Not that we would have had a say in it anyway.”

“It was definitely set up ahead of time. Nobody else even had a chance. But then again, nobody is on the same level as Bai Qi.”

As people discussed the matter, the faces of the clan elders were all expressionless. After all, they had all known ahead of time that this would happen. Even the grand elders from the Hall of Justice and the Hall of Corrections weren’t reacting.

None of them qualified to argue with the decisions made by the patriarch, and furthermore, Bai Qi really was the cream of the crop of the current generation.

Most excited of all was Madam Cai. She was physically shaking from excitement, and could barely breathe straight as she watched the image of Bai Qi on the screen.

“My Qi’er is definitely the qilin son of the Bai Clan,” she thought. “That deva soul was prepared just for him! How dare that little son of a bitch Bai Hao try to compete with my

Qi’er. What gives him the right?! Everything was prepared for Qi’er. All we did was take his research notes and arrange for him to be killed! How dare he fight back against us!!

“You just wait, Bai Hao. As soon as my Qi’er gets that deva soul, you’ll definitely be dead, you son of a bitch!!”

Madam Cai laughed out loud, sounding completely elated.

The clan chief no longer looked grim like he usually did. As the sun shone down onto his smiling face, he seemed warm, happy, and proud.

However, even as Bai Qi attempted to break through the restrictive spell, people outside of the ancestral land finally noticed that Bai Xiaochun was thrumming with a shocking energy.

In fact, that energy was so shocking, so indescribably powerful, that it caused the screen to distort. The fact that the energy seemed to be interfering with heaven and earth caused looks of shock to appear on the faces of many of the clan members.

“That’s....”

“Bai Hao!”

“What’s going on? What’s happening with Bai Hao!?!?” Eyes widened as more people looked over. The clan elders seemed shocked, as did Madam Cai and the clan chief. All of them subconsciously looked over at Bai Xiaochun!

It was in that very moment that Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Then, he looked at the fifth young lady and said, “Alright, Fifth Young Lady. If you have the guts to ask for everything, then I have the guts to get it for you!”

Only moments ago, Bai Xiaochun had come to realize that although the fifth young lady seemed soft, she was actually a lot more tough and tenacious than he’d realized.

If he took all the treasures on the mountain and gave them to her, it wouldn’t be easy for her to keep them. However, she obviously knew that, and yet was still confident enough to say what she had. In that case, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t going to disagree with her.

As he laughed, his hair whipped about in the air, and his cultivation base began to rise rapidly. In almost the blink of an eye, he went from Early Foundation Establishment to the mid stage, the late stage, and then the great circle. Within a few earth-shaking moments, he had become a Core Formation cultivator.

Wind screamed around him, shaking the entire ancestral mountain, rising up into the sky and even provoking lightning. All of the clan members on the mountain were completely shaken, and began to cry out in shock.

“Th-this... this....”

“Heavens, what’s happening!?!?”

They weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. Even more shocked was Bai Lei, who felt like his mind was being struck by lightning. His face turned completely ashen, and he staggered backward, trembling the entire time. Because he was closer to what was happening, he felt like Bai Hao had become a raging ocean, while he was a little rowboat being tossed about by the waves. It was almost impossible for him to comprehend what was going on, and he felt like he might get wiped out of existence at any moment.

“I... I can’t believe he's so strong!!!” Bai Lei’s mind was devolving into a blank, and he was already sweating profusely.

As for the fifth young lady, she was panting; she had already come to the realization that Bai Hao had been hiding the true level of his cultivation base, and to see him explode to higher levels of power right in front of her caused her eyes to shine brightly.

It took only the briefest of moments for Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base to reach the shocking level of the great circle of Core Formation!

And then, it went a bit further, into the pseudo-Nascent Soul stage!

With his current cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun looked like an immortal devil, his eyes shining like the stars, his fleshly body power surging. Although he was slender and had a fair face, he seemed like he contained the explosive power of a divine dragon!

Then, even as he continued to laugh, he lifted his right foot. The moment had come to vent all of the negative feelings that had cropped up in his heart because of Bai Hao’s tragic fate. All of his discontent with the Bai Clan was about to erupt!

Without any hesitation, he stomped his foot down onto the surface of the ancestral mountain!

Instantly, a sound like heavenly thunder filled the air. The entire mountain began to shake, provoking cries of alarm from all of the clan members standing on it.

Bai Xiaochun stomped down with the full power of his own cultivation base, as well as his three clones’. It was a force that surpassed the Core Formation stage, and also contained control power, which seemed capable of rocking the entire mountain!

And that was not to mention his fleshly body power, which was in the great circle of the third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique. He was already at the point of making contact with the third shackle, giving him access to monstrous force!

All of the frustration he had been keeping suppressed in the Bai Clan was unleashed in the stomp of his foot, which shook the ancestral mountain so violently that a crevice opened up on it!

Cracking sounds could be heard as, in the blink of an eye, the crevice spread out through the entire mountain! Many areas of the mountain even began to completely collapse!

To the clan members on the mountain itself, it was like an apocalypse of destruction. Screams and shouts could be heard everywhere, and at the same time, the halos formed by countless restrictive spells were simultaneously destroyed!

Moments later, all of the items of good fortune which had been placed into the ancestral land by the Bai Clan were out in the open. Vast amounts of magical items, soul bodies, and soul medicine all appeared, completely unprotected by any restrictive spells!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0602 awe-chapter-603

Everyone was completely shaken by what they were seeing. The glitter of countless magical items, numerous soul medicines and endless soul bodies was enough to obfuscate the sky.

All of the cultivators on the mountain were having a hard time staying on their feet, but as soon as they saw the vast number of items flying up, their eyes began to burn with passion, and they began to shout out loud.

“That's... a mid-grade soul medicine!”

“The Magesword of Annihilation! Heavens! That’s one of the most powerful magical treasures in our clan!”

“That’s... a metal-type deva beast soul!!!”

Bai Lei looked on in stupefaction as Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing whooshing sounds to fill the air as all of the items which had just flown up began to speed toward him.

That included almost everything that had been placed onto the mountain, and yet, Bai Xiaochun completely ignored them, and simply sent them to the fifth young lady.

“Hurry up and take them, Fifth Young Lady!”

The fifth young lady was completely taken aback. Despite having been prepared for something like this, to see it actually unfolding in front of her left her almost shell-shocked. That was especially true considering that the single stomp of Bai Xiaochun’s foot had destroyed all of the restrictive spells on the ancestral mountain, as well as all of the glowing halos.

She had never even heard of anyone who could do such a thing, not even the venerable clan elders.

It was even as she stared blankly that Bai Xiaochun’s words entered her ears and shocked her into clarity. Eyes shining with brilliant light, she quickly assessed the items, then gritted her teeth and opened her bag of holding.

“Even if Bai Hao plans to betray the clan,” she thought, “I'm claiming these things, and nobody will take them away from me!” Although the fifth young lady seemed weak, she was actually very tenacious, and thus, it was without the slightest hesitation that she drew upon the power of her cultivation base to drag everything into her bag of holding.

Bai Xiaochun used his control power to help. Magical items, soul medicines and soul bodies alike all flew toward the fifth young lady and disappeared into her bag of holding.

Everyone on the mountain could see what was happening, resulting in gasps and cries of alarm. However, most astonished of all was Bai Lei...

The entire situation had changed so quickly that he couldn’t even react. Instead of Bai Hao being the foolish brat he had taken him to be, he was now a dazzling, almighty being worthy of ultimate veneration.

Even more mind-shaking was how all of the treasures on the ancestral mountain were now being taken by the fifth young lady. Because of the incredible pressure Bai Lei felt from Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t dare to say a single thing, or even reveal by his facial expression that he wasn’t pleased. His intuition was telling him that...

Something big was happening in the Bai Clan!!!

His intuition was correct! And in fact, almost everyone in the ancestral land was thinking the same thing. As for the people outside, watching the screen on the stone gate... many of them were also being pricked by intuition!

The gathered crowd watched as Bai Hao suddenly powered up, shattered the ancestral mountain, and then took all of its treasures. The result was that they felt like their minds were beings struck by countless bolts of lightning.

“This... this... heavens! What’s going on?!?!”

“Is that... Bai Hao? Impossible! I thought he was in early Foundation Establishment!! But that’s clearly not early Foundation Establishment, that’s more like... the Nascent Soul stage!!”

“What exactly is going on here? Bai Hao... has terrifying self-control! He actually has a Nascent Soul cultivation base, but kept it a secret this entire time!!”

“Impossible!!”

“Something big is going down! As of this moment, Bai Hao... is invincible within the ancestral land.... Heavens, the deva soul! His goal... is the deva soul!!”

“Bai Qi is in danger!!”

As everyone began to cry out, the clan elders shot to their feet, their expressions flickering dramatically.

All minds and hearts were completely shaken. No one among the audience could actually see Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, so everyone just assumed he had a nascent soul. However, the clan elders were all Nascent Soul experts, and could see exactly what the situation was.

“Bai Hao is actually in the pseudo-Nascent Soul stage!!”

“Dammit! What if he’s not the real Bai Hao, but an imposter?!?!?!”

“That’s not likely. Without the blood of the Bai Clan in him, he wouldn’t be able to get past the clan spell formation, not even *with* a Nascent Soul cultivation base!”

“With a cultivation base like that... if he really is Bai Hao, then *he* is the qilin son of the Bai Clan!!”

These clan elders were stern and awe-inspiring people, but at the moment, their eyes were lit with shock.

The grand elders from the Hall of Corrections and the Hall of Justice had similar reactions, especially the latter, whose eyes were shining with utter incredulity.

“Pseudo-Nascent Soul stage.... this Bai Hao obviously came across some destiny-changing good fortune, and yet managed to keep it a secret! His level of self-control surpasses his own cultivation base!! Not only does he have shocking skill in spirit enhancement, but he also has an incredible cultivation base. Latent talent like this is the type that will only be seen in the clan once in a thousand years!!”

“Now *that* is what the qilin son of the Bai Clan should be like!!”

The two grand elders felt their minds reeling; Bai Xiaochun’s sudden rise to prominence was something completely unexpected, an event which no one could ever have predicted would happen.

They weren’t the only ones to be floundering in shock. The representatives from the two other great clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City were so shocked their eyes were bulging out of their faces. Never could any of that group have imagined that they would witness something so unbelievable during their trip to the Bai Clan!

“Latent talent like that... has never appeared in the Bai Clan before.... Furthermore, it's obvious that this Bai Hao has a beef with his own clan!”

“Well, this development is a good thing. If Bai Hao were on the side of his people, that could lead to a new rise of the Bai Clan....”

“Bai Hao, huh.... Interesting. I need to report this back to his highness the king. It looks like a schism might occur within the Bai Clan!!”

The two representatives and the emissary were even more shocked than the clan elders, and yet, there was still a person whose shock surpassed everyone else’s.

Madam Cai was literally shaking, and began to scream, “Bai Hao, you little son of a bitch, you deserve to die! Damn you, you deserve to die!!! Men, get in there and kill him! Kill him!! *Kill him!!!*”

Her eyes were completely bloodshot, and she seemed to be on the verge of going insane. Her hair was completely disheveled, and based on her unhinged and ear-piercing screams, she seemed like she couldn’t handle the situation.

There was really no other way for her to react. Her heart was filled with unprecedented terror and astonishment at the realization that Bai Qi's previous explanation about Bai Hao getting outside help to kill his assassin was completely incorrect. Obviously... Bai Hao had done the deed himself!

When she realized how powerful Bai Hao's cultivation base was, and that he had already dispatched previous assassins, as well as the fact that Bai Qi had essentially publicly stated that he wanted to kill him, it meant... that there was little question about what was to come in the ancestral land. Madam Cai's vision began to grow dim, and she couldn't help but scream in terror.

Bai Qi... was in great danger!!!

“No, this can't be happening. It *can't* be! Qi'er, get out of there!!” Unfortunately, Madam Cai had already forgotten that her voice couldn't enter the ancestral land, no matter how loudly she screamed. Ignoring all decorum, she rushed toward her husband and grabbed his arm madly. “Qi'er is the qilin son of the Bai Clan! He can't die!”

Of course, the clan chief didn't need any urging from Madam Cai to understand the gravity of the situation. Almost as soon as Madam Cai grabbed his arm, he threw his head back and howled with grief and rage that could pierce the heavens.

“Damn you, Bai Hao!!” As of this moment, the clan chief was reacting exactly the same as he had the previous day. Instead of being glad that his own son Bai Hao was rising to prominence, he was descending into the depths of fury.

“Why do you have latent talent like this? Why do you have a cultivation base like this? Your fate is to submit! You are the lowest of the low, a bastard son! Why do you have to fight back!?!?” Just like Madam Cai, the clan chief was desperately worried about Bai Qi, so much so that he took a step forward and waved his finger at the stone gate.

Rumbling sounds could be heard, and the gate trembled; shockingly, the clan chief was going all out to try to open the entrance to the ancestral land. Once he did, he would pass through that entrance, find Bai Xiaochun, and kill him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0603 awe-chapter-604

After the ancestral land was closed, opening it from the outside required time. However, the clan chief was desperate, so much so that his eyes were completely bloodshot.

“Clan elders,” he said loudly, “lend me a helping hand! That unfilial bastard *must* die!!”

A few of the clan elders from the direct bloodline flew forward to help forcibly open the stone gate.

However, the other elders hesitated, especially the grand elder from the Hall of Justice.

Enraged, Madam Cai shrieked, “If you dare to stand idly by, and my Qi’er gets hurt in any way, then I won’t let *any* of you off the hook!!”

In her desperation, Madam Cai even turned to the representative from the Cai Clan to ask for help.

Although the man hesitated at first, they were related, so after a moment passed, he came forward to help. However, despite all that, the entrance wouldn’t budge.

Even with the help of a deva patriarch, the gate wouldn’t open quickly. At best, it might open after enough time passed for an incense stick to burn.

Rumbling sounds filled the clan, which was rapidly devolving into chaos. Inside the ancestral land, the mountain was shattered, and the restrictive spells were destroyed. As for Bai Qi, he had only been about halfway finished with his work on the restrictive spell; now his face was a mask of shock as he staggered to the side. Looking over his shoulder, he saw what looked like a massive tempest, within which shone the eyes of Bai Xiaochun.

The sight of those eyes struck Bai Qi to the core. Something like divine sense pierced into him with lightning-like speed, provoking a scream from him as intense fear and disbelief filled his heart.

What was most alarming of all was how Bai Qi suddenly felt like a bug, as if those eyes could determine his life or death with a single thought.

“Impossible! This can’t be happening!!” Bai Qi had never felt more terrified for his own life. He was shaking, every inch of his flesh, blood, and bones screaming out in terror. He immediately abandoned the restrictive spell he had been unraveling, and began to flee.

“If I hold out for long enough,” he thought, “father will definitely come save me!!”

However, almost as soon as he turned to make his escape, Bai Xiaochun chuckled within the tempest....

“Why aren’t you taking down that restrictive spell? Allow me to help you out.” All members of the Bai Clan looked on with pounding hearts as Bai Xiaochun took a step forward.

Originally, he had been fully 9,000 meters away from Bai Qi. However, that distance was nothing to cause much pause for Bai Xiaochun.

He was like a heavenly god, with a single step propelling him 900 meters ahead, leaving behind an afterimage that made it seem almost like there were two Bai Xiaochuns standing in the ancestral land!

Furthermore, his killing intent was so powerful that the entire ancestral land began to shake, both the violet sky and the black soil alike!!

“He's going to kill Bai Qi!!” The clan members inside of the ancestral land were all dumbstruck. Bai Lei was shaking, gulping in fear, his face completely ashen.

As for the fifth young lady, she looked on silently, but with brightly shining eyes.

Outside of the ancestral land, Bai Xiaochun’s shocking killing intent, and Bai Qi’s abject fear, caused everyone to begin to shout in alarm.

“Bai Qi is in danger!!”

“Heavens! Is Bai Hao actually going to go so far as to kill him!?!?”

It wasn’t just the ordinary clan members who were shocked. The clan elders had very serious expressions on their faces. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had taken all of the magical items and other good fortune in the ancestral land didn’t matter too much according to the clan rules. But if he actually killed other clan members right out in the open, that would be a different matter.

Any objective observer would be able to tell how unfair the situation was. After all, if the roles were reversed, and Bai Qi was going after Bai Hao to kill him, the clan elders would likely frown, but wouldn’t take the situation as seriously.

But now, things were different. Bai Qi had been selected by the patriarch to prevail in the ancestral land. Bai Hao's sudden rise to prominence was completely unexpected, and there was no way that they could instantly discount Bai Qi’s importance.

Not even the grand elder from the Hall of Justice could sit idly by at this point. He also stepped forward to help open the stone gate.

However, all of the other clan elders were thinking of things in a different way than those from the direct bloodline. Bai Hao obviously had incredible latent talent, and the fact that he had kept it hidden all this time proved that he was a true chosen of the clan. As such, they couldn’t simply watch as he did something unforgivable.

“Bai Hao, don't do something that you’ll regret,” thought the grand elder from the Hall of Justice. “Just wait until you get out of there, and I’ll handle everything for you!”

He knew that if Bai Hao killed Bai Qi, especially in a situation like this, then he would damage his relationship with the clan permanently!

Killing Bai Qi would essentially be a public act of rebellion against the clan!!

As the clan elders burst into action, the emissary from Giant Ghost City looked at the image of Bai Xiaochun on the screen with shining eyes.

The sight of Bai Xiaochun stepping toward Bai Qi caused the clan chief to go even more crazy. Throwing his head back, he roared, “How dare you, you unfilial bastard!!”

Then he attacked the gate with renewed vigor.

“Stay your hand, you son of a bitch!!” Madam Cai screamed shrilly, trembling with madness, her hair flying about in complete disarray.

It was almost as if, despite being outside of the ancestral land, she could sense the intense level of Bai Xiaochun’s killing intent! After taking his 900-meter step, Bai Xiaochun looked over his shoulder at a spot high up in the sky, where the faint outline of a stone door was visible. It was almost as if he could sense the maddened glares of the clan chief, Madam Cai, and the other members of the direct bloodline.

“Finally getting anxious, huh?” he said with a cold chuckle. Based on the vortex that was forming up above, he didn’t need to analyze the situation at all to realize that they were trying to open the ancestral land from the outside.

“I wonder if that deva patriarch will do something...?” he thought, his eyes flickering. But now wasn’t the time to ponder the situation. Looking back at Bai Qi, his killing intent soared, and he took a second step.

By this point, the entire world was shaking as violently as if a giant had stamped his foot down. The air rippled and distorted as everything slowed down from Bai Xiaochun’s perspective. His second step propelled him even farther than the first step, a total of 2,100 meters!

Everything around him was shaking violently as he moved with blinding speed. By this point, he was only about 6,000 meters away from Bai Qi, who suddenly shrieked, “The clan elders can all see you, Bai Hao! How dare you think about killing me!!”

Bai Qi was so scared he couldn’t even think straight. Although Bai Xiaochun’s second step had been taken casually, the speed on display was so terrifying that Bai Qi obviously couldn’t escape.

The sensation of deadly crisis he felt was like a flash flood that caused even his soul to shake.

Outside of the ancestral land, the souls of the clan chief and Madam Cai were shaking just as hard, and it was with complete despair that they watched Bai Xiaochun speeding toward Bai Qi.

Regardless of what they did, the ancestral land needed time to open, and clearly, they didn’t have enough of it to get inside and rescue Bai Qi. Eyes completely bloodshot, Madam Cai screamed, “You’ll die in pain, Bai Hao!!”

The clan chief’s chest ached with fear, and his expression was unsurpassably grim. The prospect of seeing his own son killed in front of him had him descending into madness.

And of course, he couldn’t forget the fact that Bai Hao was also his own flesh and blood!

All the other members of the clan were panting in shock as they looked at the screen on the stone gate, and the image of Bai Hao descending upon Bai Qi like some sort of immortal devil!

Flicking his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun took a third step, a step which propelled him with lightning-like speed that vastly surpassed his previous movements. It was almost a teleportation, a movement which people couldn’t even track with their eyes as he moved 6,000 meters in the blink of an eye!

He was now directly in front of Bai Qi, his energy surging, a string of sonic booms echoing out behind him. Bai Qi felt like a cotton ball facing a hurricane; he was incapable of doing anything, and wracked with despair.

First step: 900 meters. Second step: 2,100 meters. Third step: 6,000 meters! The speed on display here was so unbelievable that the members of the Bai Clan who were watching felt like their hearts were being bashed by tidal waves of shock!

Most of them couldn’t even breathe....

Bai Qi stared at Bai Xiaochun, panting, wilting under the pressure he was facing. Scared out of his mind, he shrieked, “I’m your brother, Bai Hao. If you dare to kill me, you’ll be a traitor to the clan!!”

When Bai Xiaochun replied to him, it was with a voice as cold as midwinter snow. “Yeah? So what?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0604 awe-chapter-605

Bai Xiaochun's words echoed out, shaking everything in the ancestral land. Up in the sky, an enormous vortex was forming that almost seemed to represent the fury of the heavens.

The ancestral mountain was shaking violently, with rocks and debris tumbling down everywhere. As for the clan members who still stood on the mountain, they were so shocked they couldn’t even think straight, and were merely watching events play out with their jaws hanging open!

This was a case of brothers trying to kill each other!!

One was the qilin son of the Bai Clan, the other was a bastard son. One had once been a blazing sun, while the other had been a bug!

But now, everything had been turned around. The qilin son was the bug, and the bastard son was the blazing sun!

Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t incredibly tall, as he stood in front of Bai Qi, he seemed to blot out the violet sky, and to make the crimson sun up above grow dark!

The sight of a single person surpassing the sky and blocking the sun created an image that caused the observing members of the Bai Clan to devolve into further shock. Members of the direct bloodline and auxiliary bloodlines alike were so astonished they forgot to breathe, and their minds were struck motionless.

Bai Lei’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode, and the fifth young lady’s eyes were blank with astonishment. What Bai Xiaochun was doing right now was something they would never be able to forget for the rest of their lives. No matter how many years passed, they would never be capable of blotting out this memory.

“Don’t push things too far, Bai Hao!!” The despair in Bai Qi’s eyes had reached an indescribable level, and he was seemingly paralyzed. He wanted to fight back, but the pressure weighing down on him from Bai Xiaochun made it impossible. It was like facing a windstorm of such epic power that it left him completely powerless.

It didn’t matter that he was in the great circle of Core Formation. It didn’t matter that he was the qilin son of the Bai Clan. To stand in front of Bai Xiaochun was like standing in terror at the gates of the underworld.

Taking a step back, Bai Qi screamed, “If you kill me, the Bai Clan will never rest until they find you! You won’t be able to get away from them! No matter how big the Wildlands are, you’ll never escape!!”

Terror and fear gripped Bai Qi’s soul, driving him into madness as he cried, “Don’t be rash, Bai Hao! We can talk things over! I'm... I'm your big brother!!”

“Who cares?!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice exploding like thunder from the highest heavens. With that, he reached out with his right hand, the mere movement of which caused the violet sky and the red sun to distort as his energy skyrocketed, bursting past his previous level with explosive intensity!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

The lands around him quaked violently as massive energy began to build up; it was almost as if the entire ancestral land was being crushed!

And the hand to do the crushing... was the very hand which Bai Xiaochun had just reached out with!

Everyone on the mountain was deafened, and their eyes went blank. No soul and no mind could go unaffected by that hand!

They weren’t the only ones to be affected. The clan members outside of the stone gate were all astonished, and Madam Cai was screaming her head off.

“Stay your hand, Bai Hao!!”

The clan elders were reeling in shock, their auras destabilized by the sight of Bai Hao raising his hand toward the ashen-faced, screaming Bai Qi.

Everyone else in the clan was equally shocked. All eyes, all streams of divine sense, were focused on the screen, and the image of Bai Xiaochun!

“Is that... really Bai Hao...?”

“That palm... it....”

“Bai Hao... is turning traitor!!”

The clan chief was going mad, raving and raging as he battered the stone gate and its spell formation. Tears of blood leaked out of the corners of his eyes as he was forced to watch helplessly as his son was about to be killed.

“I'm going to skin you alive, Bai Hao!” he shrieked. As of this moment, he was no longer a clan chief, but rather, a father.

And yet, despite everything, he couldn’t forget... that he wasn’t just Bai Qi's father, he was... Bai Hao’s father too!!

As the Bai Clan reeled in shock, something else was happening in a hidden chamber in the catacombs beneath the clan. Within that secret chamber, seven wrist-thick candles were spread out in a circle, and were burning with green flame.

In the middle of the circle of candles, a wrinkled old man sat cross-legged in meditation. He was little more than skin and bones, with a virtually hairless head, and looked almost like he had just crawled up out of the grave.

Suddenly, the old man’s eyes opened, and began to glow with the light of the sun and the moon. It was an oppressive glow that, if anyone could see it, would immediately make them forget about everything except the man’s eyes.

The old man slowly looked up, and his vision passed through the earth and soil until he could see Bai Qi and Bai Xiaochun on the screen on the stone gate.

The old man didn’t even bother to look closely at Bai Qi. Instead, his eyes came to focus on Bai Xiaochun....

His voice sounded like bones rubbing against bones as he murmured, “With latent talent like that... and that aura... he’s much more suitable than Bai Qi to be my next incarnation....”

Meanwhile, back in the ancestral land, Bai Xiaochun’s soaring energy filled all heaven and earth, making him the complete focus of all attention!

Although his hand was not physically large, it seemed powerful enough to wipe away everything in existence! It was so strong it could destroy the sun and moon, rip apart the ancestral mountain, and shatter all the lands!

As Bai Qi watched that hand rising up, it was as if the violet sky vanished, and the crimson sun disappeared. To Bai Qi, Bai Xiaochun’s hand became the will of the heavens, and the only thing that existed in the entire ancestral land! To Bai Qi, that hand became the representation of death itself!

His eyes felt like they were going to explode, and his blood didn’t even seem capable of pumping through his veins. “Don’t tell me you’re going to turn traitor against the clan, Bai Hao!?!?”

He knew that outside, his father and mother were doing everything they could to break inside and save him.

He also knew that hundreds of clan members on the mountain were all looking at him....

But... none of that mattered. He was filled with the terrifying realization that nothing in heaven or earth could possibly save him.

Almost as soon as Bai Qi mentioned turning traitor, Bai Xiaochun’s voice could be heard, responding with crushing volume that caused the air itself to vibrate!

“So what if I turn traitor!?”

As those words echoed out, Bai Qi's senses converged on one thing. It was as if all light, all energy, and everything else in the ancestral land had vanished, and the entire world consisted of one single palm.

And then... the palm descended!!

“No!!!” Bai Qi screamed hysterically. He was not willing to die, and definitely not willing to die by Bai Hao’s hand. His eyes were bloodshot, his hair in disarray, and his mind gripped by madness. Without any hesitation, he overdrew his cultivation base, using every scrap of energy he could find, and more, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused soul power to thrum within him.

Then, he shoved out with both of his hands to fight back against Bai Xiaochun!

However, such resistance was like a mantis trying to stop a war chariot. The palm descending onto him was backed by the power of all heaven and earth, and could crush anything in its path as easily as crushing dried weeds!

The palm landed on Bai Qi’s head, destroying all resistance. Cracking sounds could be heard as his body began to fall apart, completely and utterly incapable of withstanding the blast of that palm!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0605 awe-chapter-606

“I refuse to accept this!! How can you possibly compare with me, Bai Hao? From the time we were kids, I was the strongest, I was the most important, and I had the highest cultivation base! I refuse to accept this!!” Bai Qi’s scream was one of utter despair, the most wild, raving scream that had ever escaped his lips in his entire life. It lasted for only the briefest of moments, a bright shining light that was cut off moments later in destruction!

Rumbling sounds filled the sky of the ancestral land as Bai Xiaochun’s all-destroying palm made contact with Bai Qi, eradicating all of his divine abilities and magical techniques. Bai Qi was like a snowflake hit by a firestorm, and was completely incapable of providing even the slightest scrap of resistance!

He was in the great circle of Core Formation, only a bit below Bai Xiaochun in terms of level. And yet, he couldn’t compare at all. After all, the person who wanted him dead wasn’t actually Bai Hao, it was a person he should never, ever have provoked. Bai Xiaochun!

It was like the difference between heaven and earth, making the two of them virtually beyond compare with each other. Bai Xiaochun had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, and the Heaven-Dao Gold Core stage. He had fused with three deva souls, giving him three deva soul clones. Although he hadn’t reached the ultimate level of his potential yet, he was strong enough already that he had been able to flee in the face of Mistress Red-Dust, a deva. Considering all of that... the great circle of Core Formation was like nothing to him!

There was nothing Bai Qi could do about that, and therefore, the fact that he refused to accept the situation was mostly just a joke!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as his divine abilities and magical techniques shattered. Then cracks spread out from his hands down his arms, which then erupted with blood and destroyed flesh. His bones were ripped to pieces, and his legs vanished as surely as if they had been devoured by a meat grinder.

Even as pain and despair filled him, Bai Xiaochun’s hand completed its motion. Blood sprayed out of Bai Qi’s mouth as his chest collapsed. His head, neck, and all remaining parts of his body disappeared. He had been... completely and utterly eradicated!!

Under the devastating force of that palm strike, he was crushed like a weed, with even his soul and his core completely destroyed!!

Everyone on the ancestral mountain was left profoundly stunned, including Bai Lei and the fifth young lady. Members of the direct bloodline and the auxiliary bloodlines alike were flabbergasted, their minds left spinning and their bodies trembling as they watched Bai Qi transform into splatters of blood that floated through the air like flower petals!

So stunned were the members of the Bai Clan that they forgot to breathe. They even forgot to cry out in shock.... As for everyone outside of the ancestral land, they were equally astonished, but because they weren’t physically present for what had occurred, they began to recover more quickly. Soon, cries of shock could be heard by the stone gate.

“He... he really killed Bai Qi!!”

“That was Bai Qi! He was the qilin son of our clan!!”

“Heavens! What just happened? Is that really Bai Hao!?!?”

Most people present didn’t dare to believe the incredulous scene they had just witnessed was real. It was as though everyone outside of the ancestral land had been struck by lightning.

All scalps were tingling violently. From the moment the Bai Clan had been founded until now, nothing like this had ever happened!!

Countless people shot to their feet, including the representatives from the two other great clans. As for the emissary from Giant Ghost City, to have personally witnessed what just occurred caused his expression to flicker with profound meaning.

Despite the fact that everyone had been able to guess what was to come... to actually see Bai Qi killed left them completely bowled over.

The clan chief looked almost completely insane as he threw his head back and roared, “Bai Hao!! If I don’t kill you, then I don’t deserve to live!!!”

His entire body was trembling. His hands were shaking, and his eyes were crimson as he wept tears of blood. He had just witnessed his own son being killed, the qilin son of the clan, and its whole future!

Now... all of that was no more.

The spattering blood drove the clan chief into utter madness; he held nothing back as he battered at the stone gate in the hopes of opening it. However, the restrictive spells were strong, and could not be opened in a short time.

The clan elders were panting, their minds simply incapable of processing what had just occurred. Even the grand elder from the Hall of Justice was deeply shaken, his eyes glinting with lamentation.

However, no one, not even the clan chief, was driven to the same level of madness as... Madam Cai.

“Bai Hao you son of a bitch, you’re going to die in pain! I’m going to kill you. *Kill you!!* Qi’er, oh, my Qi’er.... This can’t be happening. It’s not real! Bai Hao!!!” She sounded like a wild beast screaming in madness, and looked like an evil ghost as she stood there trembling.

Although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see what was happening outside, he could well imagine how Bai Qi’s death would shake the Bai Clan to the ultimate degree.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun seemed completely engulfed by killing intent, but the truth was that his heart was already pounding in anxiety. However, now was not the time to be wrapped up in nervousness. Suppressing his lingering fear, he focused on the main task at hand: buying the time to get out of the Bai Clan!

He took a deep breath, and once again, his energy surged. Without the slightest hesitation, he waved his hand, causing Bai Qi’s bag of holding to fly to him, as well as some of his blood and flesh. Then Bai Xiaochun shot toward the restrictive spell at the summit of the mountain!

The restrictive spell needed the blood of the Bai Clan to open; with the blood drop from the deva patriarch, and Bai Qi’s own flesh and blood, it could be unraveled with ease!

When the cultivators on the mountain saw that he was using Bai Qi’s own flesh and blood to open the restrictive spell, their hearts filled with boundless coldness.

It was the same outside the ancestral land. Madam Cai was screaming hoarsely, and the clan chief roared with anger.

“I will never agree to live under the same sky as you, you unfilial bastard!!!”

As Bai Qi’s flesh and blood spattered onto the spell formation, the unraveling process that Bai Qi himself had begun continued with shocking speed. In the blink of an eye, the restrictive spell began to fade away!

At the same time, the final glowing halo that was left on the mountain faded into darkness. Cracking sounds rang out, and the bloodline restrictive spell... opened up!!

Without the halo and the restrictive spell, the mountain summit was open. There on the altar was the deva soul, eye-catching to the extreme.

Even as everyone looked on, Bai Xiaochun strode up to the altar!

He moved quickly, and was soon right in front of the altar, where, without a moment of hesitation, he reached out toward the deva soul, his eyes flickering with strange light.

Numerous afterimages of Bai Xiaochun’s right hand could be seen, and the heavens above rumbled loudly as... he grabbed the soul!!

The entire ancestral land began to shake. Bai Xiaochun’s heart surged as he could sense the fluctuations of a deva from within the earth-type soul.

“It really is a deva soul!” he murmured excitedly. He had been waiting for this day for a long time.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0606 awe-chapter-607

“Deva soul in hand!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have felt more excited. The only path available to him was that of the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, and if he didn’t walk it, his Dao of living forever would end.

But now he had four deva souls. All he had to do was find a metal-type soul... and he would have completed the set of five elements. With those souls, he could break out of the Gold Core stage... and forge that legendary item that, up til now, only the Celestial on Heavenspan Island had succeeded in forming... a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul!!

“After reaching Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment and Heaven-Dao Gold Core, my longevity has increased dramatically. Considering how difficult it is to reach the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, the longevity increase should definitely be heaven-defying!!” As soon as he had the earth-type deva soul, he threw it into his crystalline soulhoarding pagoda!

“He took the deva soul!”

“That was what Bai Hao was after, the deva soul!!”

“What does he think he’s doing? He killed Bai Qi, used his blood to open the restrictive spell, and then took the deva soul.... Does he really think that after all that, he can trade the deva soul in to the clan for a complete set of five elements deva beast souls?!?!”

The clan members outside of the ancestral land were all very puzzled. All they could think about was what they would do if they were in Bai Hao's shoes. After killing Bai Qi, he would already be considered a traitor to the clan, so even if he got the deva soul, he would still face the wrath of the entire clan.

"He's gone crazy! Not only has he turned traitor against the clan, but he's trying to steal our deva soul!" Although cold expressions could be seen on the faces of all the clan elders, the eyes of some from the auxiliary bloodline glittered.

"Not necessarily. Perhaps Bai Hao killed Bai Qi because of some personal matter between the two of them. As for the deva soul, it should belong to whoever manages to get it...."

"That's right. If Bai Hao hands over the deva soul after he emerges from the ancestral land, and asks for the five elements deva beast souls, that would prove that he doesn't have a traitorous heart...."

Different thoughts ran through the heads of the different clan members. However, Madam Cai's shrieks intensified, and her venomous hatred only grew more intense.

Furthermore, the direct bloodline clan members began to speak up, voices filled with rage.

"He *must* die! He killed my Qi'er! He absolutely must die!!"

"I don't care what excuses you come up with, Bai Hao *will* die. He killed someone in the ancestral land, which proves he's a traitor!"

Even as the clan members clamored, the clan chief suddenly stopped battering at the stone gate. Spinning in place, he looked around with a vicious glare, killing intent surging as he roared in a thunderous voice that crushed all other sound: "On my authority as clan chief, I hereby declare that Bai Hao is a traitor, and shall be killed in body and soul! His name will be stricken from the clan records as a warning to anyone who would follow in his footsteps!!”

The icy coldness of his words couldn’t have been clearer as he officially used his power to declare Bai Hao a traitor!

Meanwhile, in the hidden chamber in the clan’s catacombs, the old patriarch sat in the middle of the circle of candles with their green flames. A mysterious glow could be seen in his eyes as he seemingly ignored all of the chaos and shouting that was currently going on in the clan.

His gaze was fixed on the screen, and Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes were gradually beginning to glow with excitement and greed.

“He... is the perfect choice for my next incarnation....” The shriveled patriarch's chest heaved as he considered rising to his feet. However, after looking at the seven candles which surrounded him, he settled back down.

Meanwhile, back in the ancestral land, Bai Xiaochun put the deva soul away and suppressed his excitement. Then he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye a crack, which enabled him to judge how much progress had been made in opening the ancestral land from the outside.

“I have about the time it takes half an incense stick to burn.... After that, they’ll open this place up.” Although he was nervous, he took a deep breath to calm himself, then waved his hand to produce a bag of holding.

It was Bai Qi’s bag of holding; after his death, his branding mark had faded away, leaving the bag ownerless. Bai Xiaochun quickly sent some divine sense inside to search around, whereupon his eyes began to glow.

Inside of the bag of holding was a bone slip which contained a complete record... of Bai Hao’s research notes, which had previously been written on the floor of his hut, and had later been wiped away!

“The formula for fifteen-colored flame... as well as Bai Hao’s augury technique....” Bai Xiaochun was elated, and could barely even breathe straight. The value of this information was no less than that of the deva soul he had just acquired. The formula for fifteen-colored flame was actually secondary. Most important of all was Bai Hao’s augury technique, which pertained to many aspects of enlightenment regarding flame conjuring.

With that augury technique, Bai Xiaochun would be able to understand flame conjuring on a much deeper level, and improve his skill dramatically, just as he had with the medicinal knowledge he had gained in the Heavenspan River region.

Bai Xiaochun put the bone slip away, and then looked around with determination gleaming in his eyes. As of now, he had accomplished just about everything he wished to accomplish in the Bai Clan. There were a few other things, but they couldn’t be handled right here and now.

“The most important thing right now is to get out of here safely....” As usual, Bai Xiaochun wanted to make sure that his poor little life was not in any significant danger. After he made sure it was not in any significant danger, he would reduce that danger even further.

As of this point, he could easily use his Undying Hex to pierce through the boundaries of the ancestral land. In fact, he might even be able to make it past the clan’s grand spell formation. However, he still didn’t feel safe. Even with the murdersoul spikes in place, he wanted a more stable plan.

“I only have one life. The slightest slipup or instance of overconfidence, and I could provoke a complete catastrophe....” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he blinked a few times, and then gritted his teeth.

“When it comes to my poor little life, making extra preparations will always be worth it. After I get out of the ancestral land, I need to make sure the clan is thrown into complete chaos. In fact, I also need to lock down the deva patriarch. That will make things much safer....” At that point, his eyes glittered.

“I know... if I cause heavenly fire to rain down onto the Bai Clan as I'm leaving, that will definitely cast them into turmoil. Even the deva patriarch will have to worry about protecting the clan!” His heart also surged with excitement over the realization that going through with this plan would once again put his awesomeness on display for the entire clan to see.

The feeling of being able to show off a bit after keeping such a low profile caused his excitement to surge.

“Plus, any people hostile to the Bai Clan will definitely take an interest in me afterward....” Chuckling, he flew straight up into the air.

The sight of him flying up caused the hearts of the clan members on the mountain to begin to tremble in fear. Similarly, the clan members on the outside were all paying close attention.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun felt completely thrilled. His lifelong desire to be the center of attention had never been completely fulfilled in the River-Defying Sect, but out here in the Wildlands, it was becoming a reality.

Feeling very proud of himself, he waved his hand, causing a large group of vengeful souls to fly out of his soulhoarding pagoda.

As all clan members looked on in shock, he then made a casual grasping motion!

Instantly, his hand became like a black hole, which caused all of the souls to fly into his palm. He closed his fingers into a fist, and then slowly opened them to reveal... a tongue of one-colored flame!

On the ancestral mountain, numerous eyes widened in shock, and the same thing happened outside in the clan!

“He’s conjuring flame!!”

“Look at how smoothly he did it! It’s only one-colored flame, but even still, it worked instantly!!”

The clan elders’ eyes widened, and as for the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, his heart trembled in shock. After all, the grand elder was also adept at flame conjuring, and could instantly see many things from how casually Bai Xiaochun had conjured the flame....

Of course, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t finished. As everyone watched in amazement, he dispersed the one-colored flame, fed more vengeful souls into the fire... and then casually closed his fist.

Three-colored flame!

Five-colored flame!

Seven-colored flame!

In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun conjured seven-colored flame, sending blistering heat out in all directions. Furthermore, his motions were all completely smooth and casual!

“A master necromancer!!”

“Heavens! I can accept that he’s a master necromancer, but... the speed and accuracy of his flame-conjuring is impossibly high!!”

“Am I seeing things? One shot? In one shot, he conjured everything up to a seven-colored flame?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0607 awe-chapter-608

Bai Hao had risen to complete prominence. He had crushed Bai Qi and stolen the deva soul, inundating the Bai Clan with floodwaters of astonishment.

The representatives from the other two clans were astonished to the ultimate degree.

As for the emissary from Giant Ghost City, his eyes were shining brightly, and he had long since transmitted news back home about what was happening. Earlier, he had assumed the matter had already ended; never could he possibly have imagined that the show... was only just beginning!

“Master necromancer!”

“Everyone used to say that Bai Hao was the garbage of the clan, a bastard son who was so lowly he wasn’t worth paying attention to. They even said his latent talent was the worst quality possible. But now, the lowest of the low has practiced cultivation to an unheard-of level!”

“People said that he was equally untalented in necromancy. But now... he conjured a seven-colored flame in one fell swoop. If that’s not latent talent, then what is?!?!?”

“Unless... he's an imposter....”

However, even as everyone reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun was there in the ancestral land, not yet finished with his flame conjuring.... The wave of his hand caused the seven-colored flame to spread out and gobble up more vengeful souls. The exact method being used would not have been noticeable even to ordinary necromancers, but the grand elder from the Hall of Justice and the other experts all gasped.

“That’s....”

A new color could be seen in the seven-colored flame as the sea of fire converged back into Bai Xiaochun’s palm. Then he opened his fingers to reveal... a tongue of eight-colored flame!!

That, of course, led to even more widespread shock, especially considering how smoothly Bai Xiaochun performed the task. It was almost as if conjuring eight-colored flame could not have been more of a simple task for him.

The implication caused the clan elders’ eyes to narrow. However, they quickly went wide again as... the eight-colored flame spread out and then gobbled up more vengeful souls, causing another color to appear!

It was now...

Nine-colored flame!!

Before any cries of shock could be heard, Bai Xiaochun casually opened his fingers, causing the nine-colored flame to explode out in all directions.

Even as he hovered there, surrounded by a sea of fire, more vengeful souls poured out of his soulhoarding pagoda, to be absorbed by the nine-colored flame. Bai Xiaochun closed his hand, then opened it... to reveal fire with ten colors in it!!

“Ten-colored flame!!”

“The peak of the master necromancer rank!!”

“Heavens! Am I seeing things? He went from one-colored flame all the way to ten-colored flame in one quick motion? How is that even possible!?!?” At that point, no one could hold back from crying out in shock. One might think that they would grow numb to the situation, but Bai Xiaochun didn’t give them the time for that. Every move he made stabbed them with astonishment, leaving them incredulous to the point of disbelief. And yet, many of them were now looking forward with anticipation to what was coming next....

As the cries of astonishment continued to echo out... Bai Xiaochun went on with his work. Eyes shining brightly, he waved his hand to send the ten-colored flame spreading out in all directions. The sky in the ancestral land was on fire as a massive group of vengeful soul burst out from his crystalline soulhoarding pagoda.

The flames danced, becoming like a huge mouth that consumed the souls. At the same time, the onlookers’ hearts were pounding, their eyes were bulging, and their minds were spinning.

Nobody needed any help to understand that Bai Xiaochun was attempting to conjure... eleven-colored flame!

The elders began to hold their breath as the ten-colored flame guzzled down the vengeful souls, and their faces flickered with countless emotions!

“Can he... can he conjure eleven-colored flame...?”

“There’s no way!”

“Eleven-colored flame! That’s the hallmark of terrestrial necromancers! There’s no way that Bai Hao can conjure that level of flame!!”

After all… not a single one of the clan elders was higher than the master rank, and none of them had any hope of progressing any further.

And yet, Bai Hao had already surpassed them! With one more step, he would be a terrestrial necromancer, of which there were only two in the clan at the moment, the two grand elders from the Hall of Corrections and the Hall of Justice.

Not even the clan chief was at the terrestrial rank. Currently, he was staring at the screen on the stone gate, his heart racing with madness as utter incredulity swept over him.

However, the killing intent in his eyes only intensified; it wouldn’t matter if Bai Hao were more of a chosen than he obviously was, he would still want to kill him!!

Madam Cai was even more enraged, with venomous hatred in her eyes that seemed to stem from the Nine Serenities underworld!

Countless eyes were glued to the ten-colored flame, and everyone was panting. As the vengeful souls were fed into the sea of fire, another color gradually appeared.

In that moment, the gasps ceased… and the entire world went silent.

Bai Xiaochun closed his fingers, causing the sea of fire to converge on his palm. Then he opened his hand, causing a radiant light to fill the entire ancestral land!

“Eleven colors!!"

“He’s... he’s not a master necromancer, he’s... he’s....”

“He’s a terrestrial necromancer!!!”

“Impossible! How could this be happening…?” Everyone in the Bai Clan, from the youngsters to the old-timers, were reeling in astonishment and disbelief.

“Terrestrial rank!!” The clan elders were trembling, their breath coming in ragged pants as their eyes bulged out of their skulls. What they were seeing now was the most unbelievable thing so far, even more unbelievable than watching Bai Hao kill Bai Qi.

The two grand elders’ jaws dropped, and their minds spun beyond their control.

Of course, most agitated of all were Madam Cai and the clan chief. Madam Cai stood there, completely stunned, a look of brutal ferocity frozen on her face. As for the clan chief, he felt like his mind were being struck by hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts, making it impossible for him to do anything other than stand there.

He had known that Bai Hao had latent talent in flame conjuring. However, latent talent didn’t necessarily manifest into action. But right now, Bai Hao had casually conjured everything from one- to eleven-colored flame, leaving the clan chief shaken to his very core.

“This can’t be happening!!” he gurgled, his neck turning red from the humiliation and incredulity. It was almost as if that eleven-colored flame were about to burn his world to ashes.

The two representatives from the great clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City were all flabbergasted. In all the lands controlled by Giant Ghost City, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find a terrestrial necromancer this young. As a result, they were all thinking the same thing: “Now *that*... is the qilin son of the Bai Clan....”

However, before people could finish their exclamations of shock, Bai Xiaochun once again waved his hand, causing a final wave of vengeful souls to erupt from his soulhoarding pagoda.

He now had almost no vengeful souls left. However, he had enough to push his eleven-colored flame to the next level. As the flame spread out around him, everyone looking on was stupefied.

“He’s... he’s going to conjure twelve-colored flame!!”

“Crazy! This is completely crazy....”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes radiated bright light as he looked around at the sea of fire. As the vengeful souls poured into the fire, unstable fluctuations suddenly appeared. Bai Xiaochun was well aware that all he had to do now was stop using the help of a clone, and the sea of fire would stabilize and transform into twelve-colored flame.

If he continued to try to conjure the flame as he was doing now... then his rain of magical fire would make an appearance again.

“And that’s exactly what I want!” he murmured through gritted teeth. A ghost image appeared, which was one of his clones. As the clone attempted to suppress the fire, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering light spread out in all directions.

The light was so bright and dazzling that even the people watching the screen were forced to look away, and were unable to see Bai Xiaochun’s clone.

Not even the people inside the ancestral land were able to see clearly what was happening. All they could see was... a terrifying, twelve-colored sea of fire!

In that exact moment, the stone gate that was the entrance into the ancestral land... finally succumbed to the clan chief, and opened!!

“Time to die, Bai Hao!!” roared the clan chief. As soon as the entrance was opened, he stepped forward!

Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun was there in the middle of the sea of fire. Looking up, he saw the huge rift open up, revealing the members of the clan outside of the ancestral land... and the clan chief, preparing to step inside. At that point, a look of madness appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

“Success or failure all comes down to this!!” Howling, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, taking the twelve-colored sea of fire with him as... he emerged from the Bai Clan ancestral land!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0608 awe-chapter-609

“He’s coming out!!”

“He’s bringing that twelve-colored sea of fire with him... heavens!” The clan members outside the stone gate were trembling, especially the ones who weren’t very close to the gate itself. Their faces were as ashen as death, including one young woman who was the very same person Bai Xiaochun had encountered on his first day in the clan. Her expression was a mask of despairing terror.

Everyone in the entire clan was now looking at the stone gate!

As the entrance to the ancestral land opened, the clan chief bellowed and entered. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun shot toward the same location, taking the twelve-colored sea of fire with him.

The heat from the flame caused the clan chief’s face to flicker; he could sense how threatening it was, and yet, nothing could suppress the madness in his heart.

He had just watched his beloved son be cut down, and had simultaneously witnessed someone he viewed as trash, Bai Hao, rise to prominence. Bai Hao had trampled upon everything that was dear and important to the clan chief, and therefore... it was literally impossible to describe how enraged and insane he was. He wanted to kill someone, that person being Bai Hao, and as such, he drew upon the full, explosive power of his cultivation base, using the battle prowess of the mid Nascent Soul stage to become something like a sharp sword that stabbed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Die, you unfilial bastard!!” The clan chief stabbed directly into the twelve-colored flame. However, before he could get very far, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing the devastating power of the flame to push the clan chief to one side.

As the intense rumbling sounds echoed out, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and ignored the clan chief. Instead, he accelerated, causing everything around him to slow down.

He was moving with speed that was impossible to describe. The clan chief had been shoved out of his way, and now, Bai Xiaochun blurred past him, instantly appearing... at the stone gate, where he emerged out into the Bai Clan!

The moment he was out in the open, the twelve-colored flame roiled out in all directions, causing the sky to turn bright red, and filling the area with pressure and energy that left the members of the Bai Clan gasping.

Never before had they seen anything this unbelievable. Not only was the flame itself shocking, but the fact that Bai Xiaochun was right there in the middle of it was even more astonishing. He looked like the overlord of all fire!

All eyes were on Bai Xiaochun as he appeared out in the middle of the clan. As he did, the seven or eight clan elders who were from the direct bloodline all glared at him with killing intent, and then began to move in his direction.

Of course, they feared the twelve-colored sea of fire, so at the moment, their only goal was to surround and capture him.

And yet, it didn’t matter how quickly they moved, they couldn’t match the speed of Bai Xiaochun’s left hand, within which suddenly appeared eight jade slips. He instantly crushed the first of those jade slips, which caused the hundreds of murdersoul spikes he had planted throughout the clan to simultaneously detonate in dramatic fashion.

Explosions rocked hundreds of locations in the clan, causing the defensive spell formation, the strongest spell formation in the entire clan, to ripple and distort. Then, cracks began to spread out across its surface.

The grand spell formation... was about to shatter!!

Next, Bai Xiaochun crushed the rest of the jade slips, which instantly caused the power of teleportation to rise up around him. Shockingly, those jade slips were all teleportation talismans!

All of this happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint; the grand spell formation began to fall apart, and the power of teleportation filled the area. However, even as Bai Xiaochun began to fade away, the clan elders chuckled coldly and sent their Nascent Soul divine sense out, locking the air down and nullifying the power of the teleportation talismans!

Nullifying teleportations was actually a common tactic, and considering that these were all Nascent Soul experts, it wasn’t at all difficult for them to cause spatial chaos.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun’s teleportation power was interfered with, his eyes widened, and his heart began to pound. However, he had planned for something like this. Without the slightest hesitation, he threw his head back and roared. Even as the Nascent Soul clan elders charged from one direction, and the clan chief charged toward him from within the ancestral land, he took a step forward.

With that step, he used the secret magic of the Undying Hex, causing his body to blur, ignoring the spatial chaos caused by the Nascent Soul cultivators.

The faces of the direct bloodline elders and the clan chief all fell dramatically. The type of spatial distortion being used by Bai Xiaochun was something they couldn’t do anything about, especially considering that he was currently surrounded by a twelve-colored sea of fire that made him completely unapproachable.

However, just in the moment when it seemed Bai Xiaochun would teleport away, a cold snort echoed out from the catacombs beneath the clan. It was none other than the deva patriarch surrounded by the seven candles! His eyes were currently glowing brightly as he made a grasping gesture, causing the air outside in the clan to distort as a powerful will appeared. It was a will that surpassed the will of the heavens, and took the form of a huge hand that began to close around Bai Xiaochun!

“You’re not going anywhere!”

The hand locked everything around Bai Xiaochun down, and although it didn't completely interrupt his Undying Hex secret magic, it did slow it down significantly.

Instantly, the faces of the direct bloodline clan elders and the clan chief went wild with joy.

“Patriarch!”

“The patriarch is making a move!!”

“You’re going to die beyond the shadow of a doubt, Bai Hao!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and yet, he had also been prepared for something like this to happen. Eyes shining with cold light, he shouted, “You’re exactly who I've been waiting for!”

Even as the words left his mouth, he moved his hand, closing his fingers into a fist that forced the sea of fire to converge on his palm and take the shape of a twelve-colored flame.

As the sea of fire began to shine with dazzling light, it destabilized, and then suddenly erupted with an intense roaring sound.

Sensations of deadly crisis erupted within the direct bloodline clan elders and the clan chief. Before any of them could react, the sea of fire collapsed, causing deafening rumbling sounds to echo out!

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Twelve-colored flame roiled out for hundreds of meters in all directions, enveloping everything in its path. The clan elders and the clan chief backed up with utmost urgency, but the hand of the deva patriarch didn’t, and within the blink of an eye, made contact with the flame.

The resulting boom rose into the highest heavens!

The air in the area collapsed, and the sea of fire vanished. The deva patriarch’s illusory hand survived, but was clearly in bad shape as it continued to close in around Bai Xiaochun.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t afraid of a weakened deva-level divine ability. Suddenly, three ghost images appeared as his three clones stepped out and shot toward the hand.

Howling, they used all the power at their disposal to fight back!

BOOM!

As soon as his wood clone touched the hand, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he transformed into a beam of green light that shot back into Bai Xiaochun. However, the hand had been slowed, and was even dimmer than before.

BOOM!!

His water clone was next. He slammed into the hand, resulting in most of his body being destroyed. And yet, the hand stopped for a moment, and grew even dimmer!

Lastly was his fire clone. Instead of simply defending, he took the initiative to attack with all his power.

BOOM!!!

Blood sprayed out of the fire clone’s mouth as he fell back. However, the huge hand had been damaged three times in a row, and was now little more than an outline. By the time it hit Bai Xiaochun’s true self, all that happened was that he coughed up a mouthful of blood.

After wiping the blood off of his lips, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“That’s all you can do, deva?!?!” As his words rang out... he began to fade away. Clearly, he was only moments away from piercing through the air and vanishing!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0609 awe-chapter-610

Not even the deva patriarch had been able to prevent Bai Xiaochun from escaping. The entire Bai Clan was dumbfounded, including the clan elders from the direct bloodline and the clan chief, all of whom were struck with disbelief that defied imagination.

They knew Bai Hao was strong, but he was still only in Core Formation. Despite the fact that their deva patriarch had not appeared in person, and had only sent out a divine ability, he was still a deva!!

Because everything had happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, none of them had seen Bai Xiaochun's three clones fighting back against that divine ability.

As Bai Xiaochun faded away from view, the deva patriarch sat grim-faced in his secret chamber in the catacombs, his eyes shining with intense coldness. Then, he extended his right hand, causing his withered body to fill back in with flesh and blood until he looked like a normal person.

At the same time, his right hand seemed to distort with the power of spatial manipulation, causing rumbling sounds to fill the area as heaven and earth seemed to collapse. Then he looked up in Bai Xiaochun's direction, clearly intent on trying to grab him a second time.

However, his face fell when he realized that he was grabbing down, not onto Bai Xiaochun, but onto thin air!

Even as he did that, the entire sky above the Bai Clan turned crimson, and fire began to rain down!

That fire was composed of twelve-colored flame!

As soon as the rain of fire began to fall, everyone in the clan began to cry out in alarm.

“A rain of fire!!”

“It was Bai Hao! He was the one who caused the rain of fire last time!!” The mere thought of a twelve-colored rain of fire caused all faces in the clan to fall. That type of fire was so hot it could melt stone and metal, and was already turning everything in the area into a virtual furnace.

Even worse, the grand spell formation had been damaged, and although it was already repairing itself, it was still weaker than the last time. Furthermore, the gaps in it were so large that the fire could obviously make it through them and land on the clan itself!!

If that fire landed on the clan... it would definitely damage it in a very significant way. Casualties would be severe. Even if the deva patriarch took a hand in defending the clan, he wouldn’t be able to save everyone....

The only chance was to stop the rain of fire before it got past the shield!

The deva patriarch had been presented with two choices: either prevent Bai Xiaochun from fleeing, or extinguish the heavenly fire. The deva could only confidently pick one option. If he tried to do both at the same time, it could easily lead to a catastrophic slip-up.

The deva chose to extinguish the heavenly fire. As soon as his hand latched down onto thin air, another huge hand appeared in the sky above the clan. As the rain of fire descended, he reached out to grab it!

It only took the blink of an eye for the hand to grow dramatically in size, until it was fully 300,000 meters across. Conveniently, in addition to covering the flaming clouds above the clan, it also contained Bai Xiaochun within the shadow of its power.

Clearly, the deva patriarch was still not giving up on trying to get to Bai Xiaochun.

However, Bai Xiaochun was not an ordinary Core Formation cultivator. He had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment, and also the Heaven-Dao Gold Core stage. He had three deva soul clones, and battle prowess that vastly surpassed the Core Formation level. He could even slaughter early Nascent Soul stage experts with ease!

In fact, he could also hold his own against the mid Nascent Soul stage, and if he used his clones, could crush someone in that level!

Thorough preparation can lead to shocking results, and that was exactly what Bai Xiaochun was doing as he made his way toward the Nascent Soul stage!

Just before the hand made contact with him, he vanished, teleported by the Undying Hex to a location outside of the Bai Clan!

As for the flames up above, the hand made contact with them, wiping them away, rain and clouds alike....

Down in the catacombs, the deva patriarch’s expression could not have been more unsightly. Turning to look in the direction Bai Xiaochun had fled, he lifted his foot in preparation to give chase. But then, he looked at the green flames of the seven candles, and gritted his teeth.

“My Seven Life-Locking Candles have reached a critical stage. I can’t just leave....” Taking a deep breath, he sat back down cross-legged and then issued orders to the clan.

“Use my divine will seal and these ships to track Bai Hao down! Get him back here within seven days!” The deva patriarch transmitted the orders with divine sense, causing his words to immediately ring out in the minds of the clan elders. All of the elders were shaken, and quickly clasped hands and bowed in the direction of the catacombs. At the same time, a seal formed from divine sense took shape in their minds.

Those sealing marks would help them determine Bai Xiaochun’s position. Bai Xiaochun had managed to flee, but had been struck by the deva patriarch, who had secretly branded him with a bit of divine will for the purposes of tracking him.

In addition to the divine sense seals, nine soulships flew out from the catacombs. Each of the ships had been forged by the deva patriarch himself, and were capable of speed equivalent to the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage.

A tremor ran through the clan chief, and his eyes began to shine with intense killing intent and madness. Although he wouldn’t dare to disobey the orders of the patriarch, he knew that just because he had to apprehend Bai Hao didn't mean that he couldn’t torture him a bit in the process. He had already decided to make sure his unfilial son knew what it was like to experience such pain that you wished to end your own life!!

Flicking his sleeve, he stepped onto one of the soulships, then reached out in the direction of the ancestral shrine hall.

“Patriarch, I request the use of a speed pennant to help me apprehend my unfilial son!”

“Permission granted!” Instantly, a violet beam of light flew out from the shrine hall, which transformed into a small flag that the clan chief grabbed out of the air.

“I don’t care how far you teleport away, you unfilial bastard, you won't get away from me!” Snarling viciously, he blurred into motion, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as he chased after Bai Xiaochun.

Madam Cai stood in the crowd, trembling, her heart surging with both grief and venom.

“Bai Hao, you son of a bitch, I’m going to skin you alive! I’ll feed you to the dogs! I’ll extract your soul and torture you for lifetimes over!!”

Thanks to the representatives from the other clans and the emissary from Giant Ghost City, news of the drastic upheavals in the Bai Clan would soon spread. It was easy to imagine how, in the near future, all of the territory under the control of Giant Ghost City would be buzzing with gossip.

Although it was a huge humiliation for the Bai Clan, the elders and other members of the auxiliary bloodlines only followed the patriarch’s orders half-heartedly.

In contrast, the direct bloodline raged with killing intent. Everyone who could be mobilized was mobilized, and began looking for clues. Before long, the most powerful experts of the direct bloodline were chasing after Bai Xiaochun.

They needed to catch him within seven days as ordered, and hopefully, nip the rumors in the bud.

**

Deep in a valley not too far away from the clan, the air rippled and distorted, and then Bai Xiaochun flew out at top speed. After landing on the ground, he staggered a few paces, and then coughed up a mouthful of blood.

“I guess I underestimated devas....” he thought, shivering. Back in the clan, he had been fighting tenaciously. But now that he was out here on his own, the terror he felt finally showed on his face.

Taking a few deep breaths, he wiped the blood off of his mouth and chin and then looked around. Lingering fear still prickled in his heart, and yet, he also knew that he still had his demigod soul to use in case of emergency.

“Fudge! In the future, I definitely can’t be so impulsive and trust in risky plans....” Shaking his head bitterly, he had to admit that his actions in the Bai Clan proved how brave he had become. But then, he realized that such thinking was actually mistaken. “There are a lot of important things in the world, but my poor little life is the most important of all....”

He thought back to all of the preparations he had made in order to escape, including the murdersoul spikes, the teleportation talismans, his Undying Hex, and the secret magic of the rain of fire. His timing in everything had been perfect, and yet he still had only escaped death by the skin of his teeth.

If any of his preparations had been lacking in the least, then he would have had no choice but to use his demigod soul. And yet, even still, he was not completely and utterly confident that such a tactic would work.

“Bai Xiaochun, you need to make sure you've learned your lesson. Next time you’re in a situation like this, you need to prepare even more thoroughly!” Pulling out some spirit alcohol, he drank deeply to restore his cultivation base, then pulled out a jade slip to make contact with Zhou Yixing and Li Feng and have them wait for him at a predetermined location.

Considering that they had helped him with his caper in the Bai Clan, he was fairly certain he could trust them. And yet, he still didn’t feel comfortable trusting them enough to tell them where he was.

Finally, he looked down at the earth-type deva soul in his bag of holding, and his eyes shone as brightly as fire.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0610 awe-chapter-611

“I got my earth-type deva soul.... My trip to the Bai Clan wasn’t without its dangers, but in the end... it was worth it!” With those thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun looked around with increased vigilance. Even as he contemplated how rewards come only with risk, he realized that his thinking was yet again getting out of line, and corrected himself.

“No, no, no. I can’t start thinking like that. It wasn’t worth it. It wasn’t worth it at all! I can’t use the deva soul to try to comfort myself.” He even smacked himself a few times to try to get some sense into his head.

“Although, on the other hand, the Wildlands is a fundamentally dangerous place for me, so I really had no choice!” With that, he pulled out the earth-type deva soul. Eyes shining with anticipation, he took a deep breath and then pushed it into his chest!

The instant it touched him, he used the secret magic he had learned in the sepulcher to merge with the soul.

Instantly, strands of yellow light spread out through his body, filling him.

It was a feeling he hadn’t experienced in quite some time, and also a feeling that virtually no one else in the world had ever experienced. And yet, he had experienced it three times already, with this being the fourth. After completely merging with the soul, and being filled with light, he slowly opened his eyes.

Although his cultivation base hadn’t improved, his battle prowess... was now far beyond what it was before. Furthermore, there were a total of four swirling vortexes hidden away inside of him, within each of which was a clone.

Each one of those clones was just as powerful as he was, both in terms of cultivation base and fleshly body power. Even their divine sense was the same. Including his true self in the mix, he was now able to essentially become five people!

Five cultivators in the great circle of the Heaven-Dao Gold Core stage, five cultivators in the third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique! Any one of them could fight toe to toe with an early Nascent Soul stage expert, and possibly even kill that opponent!

If they all fought together, they would be so terrifying that even the mid Nascent Soul stage would be like nothing to them!

Bai Xiaochun was more excited than ever, and was now feeling a lot more confident about being alone in the Wildlands.

“With my four clones, I could most likely even handle someone in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage.... The only thing to really be scared of would be a deva. And if the Bai Clan deva patriarch tries to chase me, then I can always use my demigod soul!” He was still nervous, but at least he had options.

Of course, he knew that the Bai Clan would never let him off the hook. From now, he would have to worry about them trying to track him down. However, he was also confident that they wouldn’t be able to keep it up forever.

“Let’s just see how far they’re willing to push things. If they make me, I’ll use my demigod soul to injure their deva. Even if I only wound him, the other two clans and Giant Ghost City, as well as any other enemies they have, would surely take advantage of the situation to make a move!”

After thinking about the matter a bit more, he gritted his teeth and sped into motion, heading, not toward Giant Ghost City, but toward the depths of the Wildlands. His goal now was merely to buy time.

Meanwhile, outside the Bai Clan, the clan chief was flying along, surrounded by a murderous aura and grim coldness. Countless vengeful souls had been formed together into a huge soulship which carried him along with frightening speed.

He was moving far more quickly than he could on his own, thanks to a secret magic that was quite draining. However, as the clan chief, he had access to plenty of soul medicine to make up for the loss.

And yet, he still wasn’t happy with that level of speed, and also poured some power directly from his cultivation base into the soulship, giving it an even greater boost.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the soulship shot along, leaving afterimages behind as the clan chief used the divine sense seal given by the patriarch to track down his quarry.

“Must go faster!!” Because of the divine sense seal, he could tell that Bai Xiaochun was picking up speed, but that he was actually very close. As long as he maintained his current speed, he would likely catch up within three days.

As those days went by, the patriarch’s orders gradually grew weak in the mind of the clan chief; his desire to kill Bai Hao became like a black hole that sucked in everything else.

At one point, the clan chief suddenly reached up and hit the top of his head, causing a violet stream of light to emerge from his forehead.

The light rapidly formed into the shape of a little flag. Then, the clan chief performed an incantation gesture, which caused the flag to rapidly grow into a huge banner which he reached out and grabbed.

“You can’t escape, you unfilial bastard!” He spit out some life essence blood onto the banner, which began to radiate scintillating light. At the same time, the clan chief produced a huge batch of soul medicine that he tossed into the banner.

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and lightning crackled around the banner as the clan chief then planted it down onto the surface of the soulship.

RUMBLE!

Lightning danced around the soulship as its speed suddenly increased exponentially!

The blinding speed with which the ship now moved surpassed anything from the Nascent Soul stage. This was clearly the power of the Deva Realm!

Of course, for every breath of time that such speed was unleashed, a huge amount of soul medicine would be drained. Not even the clan chief had access to enough soul medicine to keep it going for more than about two hours!

“Two hours. That's all I need to catch up to you!!” In his madness, the clan chief was pulling out all the stops to try to catch Bai Xiaochun.

As the clan chief shot along with heaven-defying speed, time passed, and he could sense Bai Xiaochun getting closer and closer....

“He’s right in front of me!!” By craning his neck, he was now just able to make out Bai Xiaochun off in the distance.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked; considering how fast he was moving, only the deva patriarch should have been able to catch up to him so quickly.

In fact, as soon as he realized that someone was closing in on him, he quickly pulled out his demigod soulhoarding pagoda and looked over his shoulder with a serious expression. However, when he saw that it was just a soulship with the clan chief on it, his jaw dropped. He almost couldn’t believe that the clan chief had dared to chase after him alone....

Then he noticed the huge banner, and the shocking soul fluctuations coming off it. Furthermore, he got the sensation that there was an eye looking at him from within the banner.

It didn’t feel like the eye of a deva. Instead, it felt similar to the true spirit back in the River-Defying Sect, or the true spirit in the pagoda back at the Great Wall.... Although it wasn’t as powerful as either of those other true spirits, it was similar.

“Don’t tell me it’s a counterfeit?” Although something seemed off about the situation, what was most important was that the clan chief was closing in on him with murderous rage.

“Die, you unfilial bastard!!” The clan chief shot toward him with incredible speed, apparently attempting to ram him with the soulship. Face falling, Bai Xiaochun drew upon his ability to make everything around him slow down, and yet, considering how fast the soulship was moving, it didn’t do much good.

He just barely managed to leap out of the way in time, whereupon the soulship screamed past him.

“Considering how fast he's going, and the fact that he's relying on that treasure... don’t tell me he really came alone to try to kill me?” Even as he fell back, he sent his divine sense out to check for anyone else, but to his surprise, didn’t find anything.

“I can see you, Bai Clan patriarch!” he shouted. “Show your face! And you too, clan elders! I can see everyone! Stop hiding, all of you!” At that point, the clan chief leapt off of the soulship, performing a double handed incantation gesture that summoned a horde of vengeful souls, which merged together to make an enormous evil ghost head. Roaring, the head launched itself toward Bai Xiaochun to consume him.

“I can cut you down on my own, Bai Hao. You killed my son, so now I'm going to make you *wish* you could die!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0611 awe-chapter-612

“He’s really alone?!” As the evil ghost head shot toward him, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he performed an incantation gesture, summoning a huge violet cauldron, which went on to smash into the huge ghost head.

During the resulting boom, Bai Xiaochun quickly bit his tongue. Blood spurted out of his mouth, and he shrieked as he flew backward. He almost looked like he was scared for his life, and in fact, he even pulled out a handful of teleportation talismans.

However, his eyes continued to dart around; clearly, he still wasn’t convinced that the deva patriarch wasn’t in the area.

When the clan chief saw that Bai Xiaochun had pulled out a handful of teleportation talismans, and was about to crush them, he let out a defiant roar. On the one hand, he was fairly confident that, considering the current speed he was capable of, he would still be able to catch his quarry again even if he teleported away.

But *eight* teleportation talismans? In the Wildlands, even a single teleportation talisman was extremely expensive, the type of thing that required Heavenspan River water to acquire.

The clan chief’s eyes shone with intense killing intent; by now, he wanted to kill Bai Hao more than anything else. Performing a double-handed incantation gesture, he drew on the explosive power of his mid Nascent Soul cultivation base to summon a massive black hole that instantly caused the air in all directions to distort.

He also sent his divine sense streaming out as he took a step forward, a step that instantly placed him right in front of Bai Xiaochun. Then he reached out with a vicious motion to grab him.

“Even if you flee to the ends of the earth, I’ll still catch you!!”

His hand pierced through the air to appear in front of Bai Xiaochun’s face. If Bai Xiaochun crushed the talismans to teleport away, the clan chief would likely be able to stop him from getting away, but would be injured in the process.

From the vicious expression on the clan chief's face, Bai Xiaochun could tell what he was thinking. However, he was used to keeping his cool. Eyes flickering, it was without the slightest hesitation that he crushed the teleportation talismans!

RUMBLE!

Even as the clan chief’s hand closed in, the power of teleportation rose up, and Bai Xiaochun vanished. The clan chief grabbed nothing but air.

“You’re not getting away!!” the clan chief roared. Waving his sleeve in fury, he leaped back onto the soulship and once again used the violet banner and the divine will seal to give chase.

Enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn. Bai Xiaochun was some distance away, racing along and simultaneously contemplating what to do.

“If there were other people waiting around ready to jump into the fight, they wouldn’t have just sat around and watched me leave.... Don’t tell me that... the clan chief really came after me on his own?” Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe that it was true. The reality of the situation was that although everyone back in the Bai Clan had witnessed him survive the attack of the deva patriarch’s palm, to them, it had seemed like someone in the great circle of Core Formation escaping from a deva by means of a few tricks. In fact, that was how they viewed everything, from the teleportation talismans to the murdersoul spikes.

The only thing that a Nascent Soul cultivator would have to fear was his twelve-colored flame. And yet, any Nascent Soul cultivator who truly went all out in the fight would probably be able to disregard that as a real threat. Besides, the clan chief was in the mid Nascent Soul stage, and was therefore completely convinced that he would be able to kill him.

Bai Xiaochun was still unsure about the situation.

“Another thing. Was it really just a coincidence that the clan chief managed to track me down so quickly and accurately…?” Even as he pondered the matter, he suddenly spun in place, his eyes widening. There, off in the distance, was a violet glow, racing toward him at incredible speed. It was none other than the clan chief!

“He’s still chasing me.... Alright, he obviously knows exactly where I am. Not a bit of time was wasted. He must have a way to track me....” His eyes flashed, and his heart thumped with anxiety, but at the same time, he knew that there was no point in fleeing.

“Mid Nascent Soul stage.... alright, clan chief, you’re really forcing my hand!” Abandoning thoughts of escaping, Bai Xiaochun roared, drawing on the full power of his fleshly body to prepare to fight. Although it didn't look particularly special, the power of the third level of the Undying Live Forever Technique had long since filled his entire body.

He was like an explosive dragon in human form! As the clan chief closed in, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, propelling himself ahead with such lightning-like speed that he became a blur of afterimages.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun... was still not satisfied with that level of speed!

“Mountain Shaking Bash!” he shouted, using one of the secret magics of the Undying Codex. His already astonishing speed increased, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air as he essentially vanished. When he reappeared, he was right in front of the clan chief, focusing all of the power in his body onto his right hand, which reached out in a grasping motion!

He was using... the Throat Crushing Grasp!!

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Furthermore, what was occurring seemed completely unbelievable; even the clan chief’s eyes went wide, before settling back into a mask of viciousness.

“Feeling suicidal?!” His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture before waving wide, which caused a violet shield of light to spring up around him. That shield was a defensive mechanism powered by his cultivation base and bolstered by some magical items. The clan chief’s face was filled with murder and hatred as he then lunged toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Your cultivation base might be higher than I’d realized, you unfilial bastard, but I refuse to believe that it's the same with your fleshly body power!!” Even as the clan chief roared, the distance between him and Bai Xiaochun closed.

From a distance, they looked like two shooting stars, streaking through the sky on a collision course!!

The moment they collided, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling swept out. The air shattered as a huge boom filled the air, a deafening noise that vastly surpassed heavenly thunder. There were even rifts torn open left and right.

An agonized shriek escaped the clan chief’s lips. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as the soulship was sent spinning off to the side, and he tumbled backward head over heels, his hair in complete disarray. Shock and disbelief could be seen on his face as he roared, “You’re not Bai Hao!!”

Bai Xiaochun remained in the spot where they had collided, his body tingling a bit. It had been a long time since he bashed into someone like this, and it was also the first time that he was stricken... by how incredibly powerful his fleshly body was!!

Not only had bashing into his opponent not hurt, but the tingling sensation it left behind was actually slightly pleasurable. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes immediately began to glow brightly.

Of course, there was no time to sit around enjoying the pleasurable feeling. Seeing that the clan chief had lost the initiative in the fight, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, smacking his bag of holding to produce Zhou Yixing’s greatbow. Without any hesitation, he took advantage of the initiative he had gained to unleash more than a hundred arrows in a single volley!

He didn’t need to summon the arrows himself, all he needed to do was feed some soul power into the bow itself, which would then create the soul arrows. Technically, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base didn’t operate on soul power, but after his spiritual energy was changed by his mask, it would function the same.

Twang! Twang! Twang! Twang!

In the blink of an eye, more than a hundred arrows shot into the air, becoming like a rainfall that could destroy anything it landed on.

The arrows moved with blinding speed, piercing through the air with rumbling sounds. Before the clan chief could even react, the first arrow was in front of him, where it exploded. Then, the other arrows arrived, all of them exploding in quick succession. The clan chief had no choice other than to anxiously evade the attack.

However, despite the quickness with which he moved, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye. Instantly, a violet beam of light shot out and landed onto the clan chief.

“Take control!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. The clan chief’s heart began to pound with shock as he found that, unexpectedly... he had stopped moving.

Considering he couldn’t move, there was nothing he could do to evade the force of more than a hundred exploding arrows!!

The air distorted and the lands quaked, and soon, it was almost impossible to even see the clan chief!

There was even a nearby mountain that collapsed because of the force of the exploding arrows. However, that was when a shout of complete defiance and anger rang out.

“You still don't qualify to kill me!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0612 awe-chapter-613

His voice contained incredible frustration and rage, the type of fury that could only come from watching one's own beloved son be killed. Based on the tone of his voice, it was as if every moment in which Bai Hao existed, there were countless invisible forces screaming at him in fury, accusing and blaming him for what had occurred.

Rage built upon rage, and echoed out with the clan chief's voice as an enormous soul fist smashed into the exploding arrows.

This soul fist was fully 300 meters from top to bottom, and was formed from countless souls. This was a secret magic of the Bai Clan, the 30,000-meter Soul Fist!

At the moment, it wasn't 30,000 meters, and that was because of the level of the clan chief's cultivation base. However, even a 300-meter soul fist was still nothing to scoff at.

Quicker than words could tell, the soul fist appeared, smashing through the air to bear down on Bai Xiaochun.

BANG!!

Deafening rumbling sounds filled the area. Bai Xiaochun's face fell, and he immediately fell back. However, even as he did, the clan chief roared, spinning in place as he released a second 300-meter soul fist, which rumbled through the air, emitting shocking pressure the entire time.

After that was a third fist, then a fourth....

In the blink of an eye, heaven and earth twisted and distorted as a total of nine fists in a row were unleashed on Bai Xiaochun.

Nine soul fists rumbled through the air like nine magical sealing marks. Before Bai Xiaochun could react, they were there in front of him, where they began to detonate. Although he immediately began to fall back, there was no way he could completely evade injury.

As one explosion after another ripped through the air, Bai Xiaochun staggered backward several steps, his aura flickering and his eyes widening. This was the first time he had fought such a deadly battle with someone in the mid Nascent Soul stage. As of this moment, he was now convinced that, given his current battle prowess, he could fight someone in this level without the help of his clones, but most likely couldn’t kill them.

“However, that just goes to show how much I've progressed!” Taking a deep breath, he endured the blasts of the clan chief’s nine soul fists.

Even as the air was still distorted, the clan chief lunged forward, his hair in disarray and his eyes completely bloodshot as he became a flowing stream of light that attacked Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Clan secret magic, Hundred Ghosts Haunt the Night!!” His voice seemed to erupt from the Nine Serenities underworld. Gusts of sinister wind pulsed out as his divine sense filled the area. This secret magic was different from the similarly named secret magic from the Spirit Stream Sect. The Bai Clan’s version used divine sense to transform into ghosts....

Despite the fact that it was clearly daytime, this secret magic caused the entire 300-meter area to become as dark as night!

It was a pitch-black night that the light of day could not pierce, a place ruled by a black sun! Furthermore, within that black sun... a hundred eyes suddenly opened!!

The eyes were as red as blood, and matchlessly vicious. At the same time, countless roars split the air, causing heaven and earth to shake. Then... a hundred evil ghosts poured out from the black sun!!

The ghosts themselves were pitch black, and each one sported two horns on its heads. They had long, sharp claws, crimson eyes, and gaping, blood-red maws. They radiated the most sinister of auras, and truly seemed like the type of ghosts one would expect to haunt the night! After swirling once around the clan chief, they howled and followed the line of his finger to charge toward Bai Xiaochun.

These ghosts were the antithesis of sunlight, to the point where sunlight would retreat in front of them. As such, their passage only caused the darkness of the night to grow deeper....

“Let’s see how you get out of this alive, you unfilial bastard!!” the clan chief shouted, his voice vibrating with hatred. Bai Xiaochun was shaken; the sight of so many evil ghosts was definitely terrifying. However, after everything he had gone through in the labyrinth, and then his later experiences learning about flame conjuring in the Wildlands, he was no longer very scared of ghosts. In fact, the sight of so many evil ghosts baring claws and fangs as they rushed toward him only caused a serious expression to appear on his face.

“Alright, I’ll show you how I’ll get out of it alive!” His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and an afterimage appeared, which was none other than his fire clone.

Instantly, the clan chief’s eyes went wide with astonishment.

“A clone?!” he blurted. “You actually have a clone!!?”

The fire clone looked like Bai Xiaochun’s true self in every aspect, including his appearance, his cultivation base, his fleshly body, and his overall strength!!

The only difference was that the clone's aura seemed to contain a small bit of fire-type power. As soon as he appeared, he joined with Bai Xiaochun’s true self to unleash a fist strike against the hundred ghosts!!

For this clone to join the fight meant that Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess had instantly doubled. When the two of them unleashed a fist strike, it caused a tempest to spring up in front of them, which swirled out to smash into the ghosts.

Booms filled the air, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s clone grunted and stumbled backward. As for the clan chief, his face fell as he also fell backward several paces, his fury blazing and his murderous desires growing.

“It doesn't matter if you have a clone. You still don’t qualify to live when I attack you!!” With that, he took a step forward, performing something like a minor teleportation that placed him right in front of Bai Xiaochun. There, he summoned a 3,000-meter-wide cloud of souls and then lashed out at Bai Xiaochun with a palm strike.

“Minor teleportation? I can do that too!” Instantly, frigid qi poured out, filling a 3,000-meter area and transforming it into a land of ice, a world that belonged solely to Bai Xiaochun.

This was his frigid domain, and as such, the instant the clan chief’s palm was about to strike him, he vanished, to reappear directly behind the clan chief! There, he unleashed his own palm strike!

At the same time, his fire clone also struck. Simultaneously, another afterimage appeared, along with another clone! It was... his wood clone, which didn’t hesitate for the slightest moment to join his true self and the fire clone to also unleash a blow.

“Dammit!!” growled the clan chief. Spinning, he waved his right hand, causing the 3,000-meter cloud of souls to sweep toward Bai Xiaochun and his two clones.

Bang. Bang! BOOOOOOM!

The intensity of the resulting explosion caused the lands to shake violently. Crevices snaked out as the clan chief staggered backward, his face draining of blood as he glared at Bai Xiaochun. His eyes still shone with killing intent, but this time, there was also incredulity present.

“Another clone? How many clones do you have!?!?” The clan chief was shocked at how difficult it was to fight Bai Xiaochun, and was enraged at how he could increase his overall battle prowess by adding more people to the fight.

“I refuse to believe that you have another one!” Gritting his teeth, he used another minor teleportation to charge toward Bai Xiaochun. In the face of this onslaught, Bai Xiaochun and his two clones had no choice but to fall back. As he did, his face fell with the realization that, even with two clones at his side, he still wasn’t quite a match for the mid Nascent Soul stage.

Only by summoning his third clone could he bridge that gap....

If he had a fourth clone, he could be confident... in coming out completely on top!!

“Heavens! So... this is how the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage works. And I'm only in the beginning levels, still forming my clones. I can’t even imagine what I’ll be like in the great circle....” Looking over at the clan chief teleporting his way in again, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he also used a minor teleportation.

Even as they closed in on each other, the clan chief could tell that the damnable Bai Hao was not yet going all out, and was actually using him to practice with his clones! Furthermore, he had shocking talent when it came to learning and adapting in the middle of a fight. And on top of all that, his battle prowess kept rising!

All of that left the clan chief wallowing in humiliation. Howling, he threw both of his hands out in front of him to perform a double-handed incantation gesture. Eyes shining with mysterious light, he summoned a total of nine soulhoarding pagodas.

Shrieks exploded from within the soulhoarding pagodas as a whole cloud of vengeful souls erupted. The souls which appeared were clearly different from ordinary souls. Furthermore, instead of flying out to attack Bai Xiaochun, they actually shot toward the clan chief’s eyes... and burrowed inside of him!

“Bai Clan Soul Symbiosis!!” The clan chief threw his head back and let out a howl of agony and rage. As the souls bored into his body, his skin bulged and rippled as faces became visible. He immediately began to grow and transform, causing incredible pressure to radiate from him in all directions.

As of this moment, a sensation of profound danger began to course through Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0613 awe-chapter-614

Before reaching the Deva Realm, and in fact, before even reaching the true Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, he could not underestimate any Nascent Soul expert!

Perhaps he would have had an easier time with someone in the early Nascent Soul stage, but this was a level above that. People in the mid Nascent Soul stage often spent less time worrying about their next breakthrough, and more time focused on developing their trump cards!

The clan chief was the perfect example. Stepping into the late Nascent Soul stage wouldn’t necessarily be an impossible task for him. But instead of concentrating on that, he had spent a lot of time perfecting his trump cards!

And that was exactly what the Bai Clan Soul Symbiosis was!

As soon as the vengeful souls entered his body, he felt as if he were being consumed alive. By drawing upon all the power he possibly could, he was able to use this secret magic to unify the power of tens of thousands of souls, utilizing his body as the medium with which to unleash heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power!

Even for someone in his level of power, using a secret magic like this would drain him significantly. And yet, in his rage, and in his desire to cut Bai Hao down, he found the determination to disregard all negative aspects.

“You *will* die!!” he screamed with vicious savagery. His voice sounded like a combination of tens of thousands of voices, causing brightly-colored light to flash above him in the sky, and a massive wind to suddenly sweep through the area.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered with fear. As of this point, the clan chief didn’t even look human anymore.

“Time to die!!”

The clan chief threw his head back and roared, simultaneously flinging his hands up, which sent a boundless black fog roiling out to form the shape of a gigantic ghost head.

The vicious head surrounded the clan chief, and then the both of them began to fly toward Bai Xiaochun.

The air shattered as they approached, and the ground was destroyed beneath them. Mountains collapsed as a huge, 3,000-meter-wide crater opened up.

Wailing screams filled the air like the howls of ghosts and wolves, countless voices, all of which poured out of the enormous head.

“Die!”

“Die!!”

“Die!!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression turned deadly serious, and at the same time, another afterimage appeared as his water clone stepped out!

As of this moment, he had three clones flanking his true self. All of them faced the enormous head, then shouted in an equally loud and shocking fashion.

“Living Mountain Incantation!!”

Booming rumbles filled the air!

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s true self began to grow in size. Countless boulders formed around him, until his body disappeared, replaced by a shocking, 300-meter-tall stone golem!

Actually, it was not a single stone golem....

His three clones also used the Living Mountain Incantation. A second, third, and fourth stone golem appeared. Then, all four of them launched themselves toward the incoming clan chief and the gigantic head he had summoned.

The combined attack of the four stone golems caused heaven and earth to shudder, and when they slammed into the gigantic head, the resulting boom shook the highest heavens and the deepest parts of the underworld.

A mind-boggling shockwave spread out in all directions, spreading for tens upon tens of thousands of meters and destroying everything it touched.

The gigantic head immediately shrunk down by more than half, and at the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s true self, along with his three clones, all tumbled backward, blood spraying out of their mouths. Popping sounds could be heard as spider-web like cracks spread out across the surfaces of the stone golems. Then, moments later, all of the stone golems simply shattered to pieces.

As Bai Xiaochun’s true self and his clones fell back, the clan chief cackled with sinister laughter from inside of the huge head.

“What other tricks do you have, you unfilial bastard!?!?” Even as his laughter continued to ring out, the ghost head swept toward Bai Xiaochun with madness, killing intent, and intense rage.

From the look of it, the clan chief was trying to wipe Bai Xiaochun away with one, full-power blow!!

“How could I have guessed that even three clones couldn’t beat his secret magic…?” Eyes shining with determination, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and then decided to use a move he had hoped to hold back.

Considering how the fight had escalated, the fact that no one had interfered indicated that the deva patriarch really wasn’t in the area.

Presumably, other clan members were chasing him, but none of them were as maddened as the clan chief was, nor were they capable of his speed.

“It makes sense; I doubt anyone hates me as much as this clan chief does.…”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun didn't hesitate for another moment. Although he was trembling, his eyes shone with an intense desire to fight, a desire birthed of instinct, and impossible to avoid.

His Dao was to live forever, and he didn’t like fighting and killing. He was even afraid of death. Although on many occasions it wasn’t necessary to escalate to blows, sometimes, if you wanted to keep on living, you had to fight to the death. It had already become his nature to simply grit his teeth and fight, despite the fear which existed in his heart.

“Not even a deva could kill me, let alone some trifling mid Nascent Soul stage cultivator!!” His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and another afterimage appeared! This time, it was his fourth clone, the earth clone!

He now had four clones surrounding his true self, one on each side, a formation that instantly caused thunderous rumblings to roll across the sky, and the lands below to quake.

The clan chief couldn’t stop himself from gasping at the sight, and his face instantly fell. But then, he gritted his teeth and, seemingly ambivalent to his own life or death, sent the huge head of souls which surrounded him flying toward Bai Xiaochun, a vicious grin on its face.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun murmured, “Bai Hao, the time has come for Master to teach your father a lesson, and make sure he understands the unimaginable difference between the two of you!”

He took a deep breath, and then he and all four of his clones raised their arms up into the air, just like a conductor would when leading an orchestra.

“Waterswamp…”

With his true self and all his clones doing the same thing, it caused the entire area for 30,000 meters to transform into a watery swampland!

Dense water vapor pervaded the surroundings, causing the soil to grow loose. As the mist and fog built up, an aura filled the area that seemed to come from chaotic, primeval times!

It seemed like the surrounding 30,000-meter area had been cut away from the Wildlands and become its own dimension.

Yet again, the clan chief’s eyes went wide, and a very unsightly expression appeared on his ashen face.

Before he could get any closer, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes sparkled, and he threw his hands down viciously. At the same time, his four clones did exactly the same thing.

“… Kingdom!!”

BOOOOOOM!

RUUUUMBLE!!

THUMP THUMP!!!

A sound almost like a heartbeat filled the entire area, causing the sky to dim and the lands to tremble. Spikes appeared, shooting up out of the ground with shocking speed!

Beneath the spikes were five mountains of such enormous size that the mere sight of them would leave one’s heart trembling!

The five pitch-black curved mountains were none other than the clawed hand of the beast that was Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit!!

Up til now, the full hand had never appeared, only the claws. As for the clan chief, it didn’t matter what secret magics he tried to unleash; compared to this beast, he was like a firefly beneath the full moon.

The profound terror that gripped him left him physically shaking, and unable to keep from screaming. In his long life of cultivation, he had not felt such astonishment and terror even when facing a deva patriarch. It gripped his chest like a vice, and caused his eyes to grow wide as a terrifying premonition ran through him….

Even if his trump cards were more powerful than they were, there was no way he could escape death at the hands of the enormous beast behind this huge claw!

“No… I can’t die here!!” he screamed, his aura driven to complete chaos. Abandoning any attempt to attack Bai Xiaochun, he turned to flee.

The terror gripping his heart was the thing of nightmares. How could he have imagined that his unfilial son would be so powerful? He was so strong that the clan chief was filled with nothing but terror!

“You can't be Bai Hao!! Even if the clan spell formation didn’t realize it, I know that you’re not him!!” The shadow of death loomed over the clan chief to such an extent that he drew on all of his power, burning his cultivation base and longevity alike in his attempt to flee!!

If he didn’t escape, he would die!

However, no matter how fast he moved, he couldn't move as fast as that beast claw!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0614 awe-chapter-615

The Waterswamp Kingdom was a divine ability that Bai Xiaochun had learned in the Spirit Stream Sect. However, to date, the entirety of his life essence spirit had not yet been revealed. Only after merging with the deva souls he had acquired, and creating his clones, had he been able to reveal the beast's claws, to defend himself against Mistress Red-Dust.

However, the clawed hand visible now seemed much larger than the one that had appeared during his fight with Mistress Red-Dust. The energy surging out seemed to obscure the will of the heavens! Furthermore, down beneath the curved claws was something that looked like a black land mass!

However, it was no land, it was actually the hand of Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit!

It was impossible to even imagine what that hand would be like if it appeared fully out into the open. However, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone in anticipation of the day when he would be able to fully employ his Waterswamp Kingdom, and see the beast as a whole.

"Even the claws should do....” One day, if that clawed hand ever fully appeared in the open, it would likely blot out the sky, and leave even a deva wallowing in despair.

“It's definitely going to happen one day!” Heart filled with anticipation, Bai Xiaochun simply watched as the curved claws descended onto the chief of the Bai Clan.

Even now, the incredible energy radiating from the gigantic claws seemed to indicate that one day, it would have the power to crush the heavens. From the perspective of the clan chief, those mountain-like claws filled the sky, and caused his heart to be overwhelmed by despair.

“No!!!” he screamed defiantly. In his madness, he held nothing back as he sent his trump card, the enormous ghost head, shooting toward the claws in a futile attempt to block them.

Rumbling sounds filled the air, and at the same time, the world seemed to disappear around him. He screamed shrilly, but soon, the sound was drowned out.

Heaven and earth shook violently, and then, the claws began to fade away. The 30,000-meter swamp disappeared, and in the soil which was revealed, five enormous ravine-like gouges could be seen!

In the middle of them all was a person, blood oozing out of his mouth, his bones shattered, his chest barely moving. Anyone who looked at him would likely take him to be a corpse.

The clan chief had been completely incapable of escaping from the unprecedented power of Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom. He was a powerful expert in the mid Nascent Soul stage, but Bai Xiaochun, who himself wasn’t even a Nascent Soul cultivator, had been able to best him in battle.

The clan chief was now seriously injured and gasping for breath. However, thanks to his powerful cultivation base and intense life force, he was still alive. Unfortunately, as he struggled to breathe, he realized that so many of his bones were crushed that he couldn’t even move.

He could only glare spitefully as Bai Xiaochun, smiling bitterly, but eyes flashing with indescribable hatred.

“If you have what it takes, you unfilial bastard,” he said, gasping angrily, “then just kill me!!” His grief and indignation were like oceans that completely inundated him. By this point, he refused to believe that this person in front of him was actually Bai Hao, and yet, couldn’t imagine how an imposter could have fooled the clan’s spell formation.

In fact, not even the deva patriarch had seen any clues to indicate that this person was anyone other than Bai Hao.

“Don’t tell me you really are Bai Hao...?” Actually, the answer didn't really matter anymore. Whoever he was, the clan chief wouldn’t hesitate to kill him if he could.

“Asking to be killed?” Bai Xiaochun brushed the dust off his body and then pulled his four clones back inside of him.

Then he walked a slow circle around the clan chief, looking at him closely to see how badly he was injured. Then he squatted down next to him and bopped him on the head. Glaring, he barked angrily, “Behave, alright?!”

“You!!” the clan chief growled, his anger surging again. The unfilial and rebellious behavior on display here was so outrageous that he felt utterly humiliated. Before, the difference between him and Bai Hao had been like that between heaven and earth. But now, it was the opposite, and that feeling pushed him further into madness.

“Unfilial bastard. Unfilial son of a *bitch*!!” Suddenly, the clan chief coughed up a mouthful of blood and then lapsed into unconsciousness.

“Uh... all I did was bop you on the head. I didn't even use any force.” Bai Xiaochun was already feeling slightly guilty. Considering that this was Bai Hao’s father, it would have been acceptable for him to be killed by the Waterswamp Kingdom in the heat of battle. But to end his life under these circumstances didn’t seem right. Besides, a living clan chief would be a lot more useful to him than a dead one.

“Ah, whatever. I'm not the kind of person who likes all that fighting and killing. I might as well just use him as my personal protective talisman.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun sighed and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then slapped his hands down onto various random places on the clan chief’s body, putting over a hundred restrictive spells in place. Still not convinced that he'd done enough, he pulled out some medicinal pills and forced them into the clan chief’s mouth.

Next, he helped himself to the clan chief’s bag of holding, within which he found a sturdy rope. After imbuing the rope with some magical power, he bound the clan chief up. Throwing him over his shoulder, he said, “Hahaha! Let’s see if the Bai Clan dares to make a move against me with this protective talisman of mine.”

By this point, he felt prouder of himself than ever, and particularly clever. It was almost like he was able to have his cake and eat it too.

“It’s too bad this guy is in the mid Nascent Soul stage. Doing a soulsearch on him wouldn’t do much good. However, the fact that he was able to track me down so quickly indicates that there’s some sort of branding mark on me. That's the only way they could follow me so easily.” Then he thought back to when the deva patriarch had attacked him, and suddenly his eyes glittered.

“It must have been then. He must have hit me with some sort of seal.” He felt at his mask for a moment. The mask was extraordinary, and could completely change his appearance and aura, but it wouldn't do anything against sealing marks which had been placed on him by exterior forces.

“Well, who cares? When I make a move, I frighten even myself!” Despite trying to work up his own courage, he was still worried. After taking a step forward, he flew up into the air, then looked over his shoulder at the clan chief.

“If Bai Hao's spirit is out there, I doubt he’ll be unhappy with this. I'm his Master, after all!” Clearing his throat, he began to pick up speed.

Soon, the cold wind brought the clan chief to his senses, and when he realized the situation he was in, his eyes clouded with venomous rage.

“You unfilial son of a bitch! You’re going to die in pain!!”

Bai Xiaochun ignored him and kept flying. Three days passed by in a flash, during which time the clan chief’s voice grew very hoarse from the constant cursing and swearing.

In the end, Bai Xiaochun actually started to get angry.

Looking over his shoulder, he said, “Shut up! Aren’t you getting tired of talking!? If you keep yapping I’ll--”

“Kill me!!” the clan chief interrupted hoarsely, glaring at Bai Xiaochun.

“Don’t worry, I'm not going to kill you. But if you say one more word, I’ll strip you buck naked!” The clan chief’s eyes went wide, and he panted furiously. His face even turned bright red. However, he closed his mouth and didn't dare to utter another word.

From what he could tell, the words uttered by his unfilial son were no mere threat. And the thought of being stripped of his clothes and hung out in the open was a level of humiliation that struck him with enough terror that he shivered.

Seeing that his threat had been effective, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, and he smiled. The clan chief was trembling in rage, but doing his best to suppress it, the act of which seemed to be burning him alive from the inside.

However, he didn’t dare to push the envelope. As the chief of the Bai Clan, if he was humiliated in such a way, then after he died, the Bai Clan would become the laughing stock, not just of Giant Ghost City, but of the entire Wildlands. It would take years to live down such humiliation.

Despite feeling like his scalp was about to explode, the clan chief gritted his teeth and maintained his silence.

“If I had known this would work, I would have done it way earlier!” Bai Xiaochun felt slightly bad for the clan chief, but then he thought about how he’d treated Bai Hao, and his eyes began to shine with cold light.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0615 awe-chapter-616

“People like this don't deserve compassion!” With that, Bai Xiaochun proceeded along his way. Eventually, he took out the soulship and the violet pennant to study them a bit.

They were clearly top-quality items, especially the little pennant. To his shock, he found that it was filled with more than 100,000 branding marks, all of them related to speed. Although it was very expensive to use, it could lead to speed of an indescribable level.

Not even the clan chief could fully utilize its powers. It was just too unimaginably expensive. After some calculations, Bai Xiaochun came to the conclusion that using it for only one breath of time would cost ten portions of mid-grade soul medicine!

Not even the Bai Clan could pay such a price for long.... Most importantly, all of the sealing marks on the soulship and the violet pennant had been placed there by the Bai Clan's deva patriarch, meaning that they would be impossible for him to fully use without first breaking all of them.

Even more worthy of note... was that both of the items had benefited from elevenfold spirit enhancements. Bai Xiaochun could see golden designs hidden on both of them. Unfortunately, all of these combined factors indicated that he couldn’t use either of them at the moment.

“Well, just give me some time. Maybe I can use Heavenspan River water to wear them away....” After some thought, he tossed both of them into his big bucket of Heavenspan River water.

When not being used, the soulship was small enough to fit in his palm. After tossing it into the bucket, Bai Xiaochun stopped thinking about it and narrowed his eyes.

“I still have to deal with the sealing mark that was put onto me....” Frowning, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then began to slap his hands down all over himself. His qi and blood began to surge in a certain rhythm, pulsing through him as he attempted to cleanse himself. At the same time, he continued to flee.

Another three days passed. It was afternoon as Bai Xiaochun fled when, all of a sudden, his expression flickered. Looking over his shoulder, he saw a brilliant beam of light streaking through the sky toward him.

Within that beam of light was an old man on a soulship, moving at incredible speed, his face a mask of vicious, killing intent.

Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure of the man’s name, he recognized him. He was one of the Bai Clan elders, whose cultivation base was very close to the mid Nascent Soul level. He was also a member of the direct bloodline.

“Another one? Also alone?” Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then cleared his throat, then simply slowed down to a stop.

As the old man closed in and saw that Bai Xiaochun had the clan chief strung up and hanging over his shoulder, his eyes bulged, and he gasped. Without any hesitation, he lurched to a stop.

“He captured the clan chief alive!?!? How is this possible?!?!”

A look of complete incredulity played out on his face. He almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing, and in fact, not even in his wildest dreams could he have pictured the clan chief being captured alive. It was impossible to prevent the fear from rising up in his heart; his cultivation base was lower than the clan chief’s. Considering that the clan chief had already been captured... what would happen to him? Furthermore, when he saw how bedraggled the clan chief looked, his heart was seized with anxiety.

“I don’t care how it happened, there’s no way I’m going to risk putting myself in danger....” Sweat popping out on his forehead, he unhesitatingly pulled out a teleportation talisman and crushed it....

Rumbling sounds filled the air as he faded away.

“Scared him off?” Bai Xiaochun muttered, looking surprised. “Well... he has some common sense, that's for sure. More scared of death than I am. And he’s in the Nascent Soul stage....”

He had already been prepared to capture him alive and truss him up like the clan chief. Shaking his head, he looked at the clan chief with his closed eyes and gritted teeth, and couldn’t help but smile and sigh.

“This protective talisman really is useful!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he continued along his way with the clan chief trussed up behind him. From that day on, every time someone from one of the auxiliary bloodlines of the Bai Clan encountered him, they would look at the clan chief, gasp, and then flee.

As for the clan chief, he preferred to simply remain unconscious....

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had captured the clan chief alive proved that no one else could do anything to him. After all, no one among them had a higher cultivation base than the clan chief.

Of course, the people from the direct bloodline were not so easily dissuaded. Considering that they could track him with the divine will seal, they began to team up and attack him in groups!

When that happened, Bai Xiaochun would fight back and spill blood immediately....

It wasn't just members of the Bai Clan who saw him going along with the clan chief trussed up. This was Giant Ghost City territory, so there were many soul cultivators and necromancers who also saw the scene.

Everyone who did was completely and utterly shocked.

“Who's that...? And why does that person he has tied up look like... the chief of the Bai Clan!?”

“No way....”

More and more people saw what was happening, and many more heard the rumors. Soon, stories were spreading throughout Giant Ghost City territory.

At first, the rumors spread quietly, mostly because people couldn't confirm their validity. But soon, after the representatives from the two clans returned to their homes, as did the emissary from Giant Ghost City, the whispered rumors turned into an explosive torrent of gossip.

“What?! A qilin son rose up in the Bai Clan and killed Bai Qi? He stole their deva soul, survived an attack by their deva patriarch, and then escaped!?!?”

“After he escaped, his own father, the clan chief, tried to kill him, but then got captured!? Now the chief is tied up like a dog on his son’s back for everyone to see?!?!?”

“Heavens! This Bai Hao... really did turn traitor against the Bai Clan!!” The rumors grew more and more intense, until large numbers of people were paying very close attention to what was happening. News also began to spread of how Bai Xiaochun was killing many of the Bai Clan cultivators who had been dispatched to chase him down. Before long, all of Giant Ghost City was in a commotion.

Within the kingly city, the heavenly marquises and members of the other clans were deeply shaken. Everyone had heard that a qilin son named Bai Hao had emerged from the Bai Clan, and that he had turned traitor, stealing the clan’s deva soul and even capturing his own father. Plus... he had killed many fellow clan members in ruthless fashion!

“I heard that he suffered in silence in that clan for years, and was bullied constantly. He even came close to death on numerous occasions. However, he endured quietly until they opened their ancestral land, which was when he exploded out in shocking fashion!”

“That’s nothing. I heard that this Bai Hao has shocking talent in flame conjuring. Also, his cultivation base is in the great circle of Core Formation. He's completely extraordinary!”

“I can’t believe the Bai Clan is so short-sighted.... But then again, this Bai Hao is clearly a vicious fellow. He actually kidnapped his own father!” Everyone in the area of Giant

Ghost City was talking about the matter, and not a single person wasn't shocked.

Although very few people had ever even seen Bai Hao, they now had a mental image of him. He was completely sinister, with heaven-defying latent talent. At the same time, he had reviled his own clan, and was completely and utterly ruthless.

Not only did the clans and the heavenly marquises learn about the matter, but word even spread to the very heart of Giant Ghost City. Located there was an enormous statue, upon the head of which was the royal palace.

Within the royal palace was a towering figure in a kingly robe, standing at a railing, his hands clasped behind his back. He looked very majestic as he stood there looking out at heaven and earth. He seemed like the personification of the will of the heavens, the type of person who even a deva would tremble in the face of.

It was as if in his presence, even heaven and earth would acquiesce!

He bore the appearance of a middle-aged man, his features angular but extremely handsome. He seemed superior in all ways, the type of person who could dominate anything in sight.

“Bai Hao....” the Giant Ghost King said softly. “Interesting....” A strange light flickered in his eyes, as if he were thinking. After a moment, he smiled faintly.

“Duke Deathcrier,” he said loudly, “why don't you go find this Bai Hao and bring him back here to Giant Ghost City. Arrange for a position for him as well.” The Giant Ghost

King’s words were spoken with icy coldness, but at the same time, profound meaning could be seen within his smile.

Even as his words echoed out, an old man appeared in the left hand of the enormous statue, which was itself another enormous palace.

He seemed ancient to the extreme, with eyes that shone like the sun and moon. The aura which surrounded seemed to fuse with heaven and earth. Shockingly... this man was in the Deva Realm!

The old man clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Yes, your majesty!”

Then he turned his head and simply vanished.

Chuckling coldly, the Giant Ghost King said, “If the Bai Clan wants him dead, then I want him alive! The three great clans are most likely finishing their preparations.... Let’s see which of them will make the first move!”

To the Giant Ghost King, Bai Hao was insignificant, and in fact, his life or death didn’t matter at all. However, considering that he was connected to the Bai Clan, it meant that he was the perfect tool to feel them out.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0616 awe-chapter-617

Meanwhile, back in the Bai Clan, silence prevailed. In the recent days, the matter of Bai Hao had become something of a crisis.

Because of all the rumors spreading in the area, the entire clan was feeling unstable. Bai Hao had turned traitor, killed Bai Qi, stolen the deva soul, captured the clan chief, and killed many of the direct bloodline clan members who had chased after him.

Everyone in the clan was left with pounding hearts, especially in the higher echelons of leadership. Different people had different opinions, and many of the auxiliary bloodlines were using the matter to denounce the direct bloodline.

“Bai Hao is the true qilin son of the Bai Clan. You direct bloodline people forced him to turn traitor!!”

“He's a true chosen of the heavens! If he were still in the clan, he could break into the Nascent Soul stage and lead our clan to new heights!”

Talk like this grew more common. The more glory Bai Hao earned for himself, the uglier things got for the direct bloodline, and the more they wanted to kill him. Unfortunately, there was currently nothing they could do about that.

Considering that he had already killed some of the mid Nascent Soul clan elders, what could anyone else do? Some of the clan elders who were in the late Nascent Soul stage went out to try to capture him, but none of them succeeded. The direct bloodline... was being completely routed.

The grand elder of the Hall of Justice was not part of the direct bloodline, and although he had followed the orders of the patriarch to send people out to search for Bai Hao, it was obvious that any failure to catch him... was really the fault of the direct bloodline.

When Madam Cai looked around at the situation in the clan, she felt bitterness and despair in her heart. In the past, it would have been impossible for her to even imagine that a nobody like Bai Hao would end up causing such a commotion.

Her son had been killed and her husband taken captive, and it left her heart feeling like it was being ripped apart. At the same time, her venomous hatred for Bai Hao had reached indescribable proportions.

If it weren’t for the fact that there was a deva patriarch in the clan, fighting would have already broken out. Therefore, all of the conflict was happening behind the scenes.

Most importantly, the deva patriarch hadn’t yet stated his opinion on the matter. The auxiliary bloodlines... were all waiting to see who the deva patriarch would side with. That would be very telling. However, at the moment, the deva patriarch was not interested in paying attention to what was happening within the clan.

In fact, he didn’t even really care that the clan chief had been captured. As long as the clan itself still stood, he was content. Worst case scenario, he would have to select a new clan chief.

Right, the main thing on his mind was Bai Hao!!

“What a bunch of good-for-nothing fools! I can’t believe the whole clan has been mobilized, and even then they can't bring Bai Hao back!” A look of determination appeared in the patriarch’s eyes as he sat there in his subterranean chamber.

“I can’t keep waiting. If things go on too much longer, and the Giant Ghost King interferes, then I will have lost an important opportunity.... I guess I just need to risk it!” Gritting his teeth, he rose to his feet.

Something profound and unfathomable could be seen in his eyes as he looked around at the green flames of the seven flickering candles around him. After a moment passed, he took a deep breath, and then stepped forward.

That single step caused a wind to spring up in the chamber around him. The flames of the seven candles danced, and then began to wink out....

Without any hesitation, the patriarch stepped beyond the spell formation created by the candles, whereupon all of the flames... vanished!

At that point, cracking sounds could be heard from inside the patriarch, almost like bones grating against each other. Then, all traces of withering on his body vanished, and he became a middle-aged man.

Shocking cultivation base fluctuations rumbled out, and his eyes flashed as if with lightning. The way he stood there made him seem like he was the representative of the will of the heavens.

“My Seven Life-Locking Candles can lock my longevity in place and help me live a bit longer.... Unfortunately, I can only use them once in my lifetime. Bai Hao... you had better not disappoint me!” Eyes shining with profound maliciousness, he tore a rift open in the air in front of him, stepped through it, and vanished.

In that same instant, a peal of thunder shook the sky above the Bai Clan....

Quite some distance away from the Bai Clan, Bai Xiaochun was speeding through the air. He had killed quite a few members of the Bai Clan recently, although it was not because he had taken the initiative to attack them, but rather, because they had insisted on surrounding him and ambushing him.

When Bai Xiaochun fought back, he struck to kill. He had even killed three clan elders so far. By this point, he was almost at the border of the region considered Giant Ghost City territory.

At the moment, his face was bright red, and as he flew along, he performed constant double-handed incantation gestures, and would then slap his hands down onto himself. This was a secret magic he had picked up in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, useful for expelling sealing marks.

By using the power of his own qi and blood, he was able to remove all sealing marks from inside of himself, and although it worked well, the power of the seals themselves was a critical factor. If they were weak, they could be dispelled easily, but if they were powerful, it could take years or even longer.

Another factor was the strength of one's own qi and blood.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had particularly strong qi and blood. After several days of utilizing this secret magic, it was having an effect. At a certain point very close to the border of Giant Ghost City, he suddenly stopped in place and coughed up a mouthful of blood.

This particular batch of blood wasn't red, but rather, brown. As soon as it was ejected from within his mouth, it swirled through the air to form a head, with the face of the Bai Clan’s deva patriarch. The face stared malevolently at Bai Xiaochun for a moment before fading away.

Bai Xiaochun wiped the remaining blood from his lips and let out a long sigh. At long last, he felt completely free and clear.

“At least I finally got that damned sealing mark out of me!” Feeling much more relaxed, and even enlivened, he began moving again.

“Four hours at the most, and I’ll be out in the desert. Out there... the Bai Clan will never be able to find me now that I’ve gotten rid of the sealing mark!”

As he moved along, he pulled Bai Hao’s notes out of his bag of holding and began to study them. These notes were Bai Hao’s life’s work, complete with his augury technique, as well as detailed information about souls and multi-colored flame.

Bai Xiaochun had studied the information frequently over the past few days, and had benefited significantly every time he did. At the same time, he sighed constantly about the fact that Bai Hao had been killed.

“The kid had incredible talents. If he had lived, then as my apprentice, he could have directly helped me with his augury. With his help, I wouldn’t have needed to go anywhere to figure out the formulas. We could have done it together.” Sighing, he picked up speed.

About the time that Bai Xiaochun was finally removing the sealing mark from within him, there was an ordinary Nascent Soul cultivator flying through the air some distance away on a soulship. Suddenly, the old man’s face fell, and he stopped moving.

That old man was one of the direct bloodline members in the late Nascent Soul stage who had been chasing after him. He was the last member of the direct bloodline who had any hope of actually catching up to Bai Xiaochun. Moments ago, the divine will seal that had enabled him to track Bai Xiaochun had suddenly vanished.

The Wildlands was a huge place, so without that sealing mark, it would be virtually impossible to find Bai Xiaochun. The old man flew as quickly as possible in the direction he had been moving, but had no hope that Bai Hao would be so stupid as to just sit there waiting around.

Before long, the old Nascent Soul cultivator reached the last spot he knew the sealing mark had been, only to look around and find nothing. Furthermore, there was no indication which direction his quarry had taken.

“To the west is the desert. To the north is the Ageless Frigid River. To the east is the imperial city.... Which way would Bai Hao have gone…?”

Further away, the deva patriarch was flying through the air, his expression extremely grim.

“It doesn’t matter that you erased my sealing mark. Devas... can do things beyond your imagination! There is nowhere you could possibly run to that I couldn’t find you!” His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he waved his finger, causing his body to age visibly, but at the same time, creating ripples in the air in front of him, ripples which rapidly coalesced into the shape of a screen.

Within the screen, a vast wasteland was visible, into which the deva patriarch stepped. A moment later, he was actually within the wasteland, where he once again used the same method. And then again...

By the third time, the image he summoned revealed Bai Xiaochun, speeding along!

“Not slow at all... really looks like you live up to expectations!” Grinning, the patriarch stepped into the screen!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0617 awe-chapter-618

This area was still considered to be under the control of Giant Ghost City, and therefore, could be considered to belong to the Giant Ghost King himself. And of course, the Giant Ghost King was a person who surpassed the heavens in terms of status here.

Bai Xiaochun was reaching the border, however. He could actually see the vast desert off in the distance, a place filled with swirling winds.

Eyes sparkling because of the enlightenment from Bai Hao’s notes, he gathered his thoughts and then pushed on toward the desert.

“I’ll head out into the desert for a few months to let the situation calm down. Then I’ll consider whether to come back here, or go to one of the other kingly cities. All of them have teleportation portals that could get me home.... In the meantime, I can spend more time studying Bai Hao's notes.” By this point, he felt that he had made significant progress when it came to thirteen-colored flame, and was getting more confident in succeeding with it.

It was in that moment that suddenly, his expression flickered, and he looked up into the air. When he did, his pupils constricted as he laid eyes on an enormous vortex rumbling into existence.

Within a single breath of time, it transformed into a 30,000-meter-wide portal, from within which erupted shocking pressure.

RUMBLE!

A tremor ran through the lands, and then all of the soil suddenly went completely still, as if the entire area had been cut away from heaven and earth to become its own special space.

Bai Xiaochun’s breath caught in his throat, and he felt as if the air around him had solidified. The pressure weighing down made it almost impossible to move.

The clan chief’s eyes snapped open, and he shouted, “Patriarch!!”

“This Bai Clan patriarch seems even stronger than Mistress Red-Dust!” Up above in the huge vortex, the image of a face appeared, which was none other than the face of the deva patriarch, staring down coldly at Bai Xiaochun.

“A Core Formation cultivator dares defy the heavens!?” He spoke exactly eight words, which, as they left his mouth, became eight magical symbols, dazzling and bright, that instantly shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

As they flew through the air, the symbols transformed into eight giants clad in golden armor.

Bai Xiaochun was immediately shaken. The deva’s mere words immediately transformed into soldiers willing to follow his every command!

He now realized... that he had underestimated devas. During his fight with Mistress Red-Dust, she had been affected by a curse, and had been unable to use some of her most powerful divine abilities. Furthermore, she was also on a lesser level than this Bai Clan patriarch.

It was a moment of critical danger; eight golden-armored giants were bearing down on him, howling and roaring. That was when afterimages blurred around him, not one, but four.

However, he wasn’t summoning his clones. He was directly drawing on the power of their cultivation bases, fleshly bodies, and divine sense!

He was making himself four times stronger!!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Moments before, the pressure surrounding him had been sealing him in place, but now, fissures spread out in the air around him. In almost the same moment that the eight golden-armored giants arrived, he looked up and roared, simultaneously flying backward at top speed.

Then, a boom echoed out as the eight giants landed in the spot he had just occupied. As they did, they transformed into eight golden chains that sealed the entire area.

During the process, the clan chief was sent tumbling off to the side, where he coughed up a mouthful of blood before lapsing into unconsciousness.

“Very interesting.” The deva patriarch’s eyes flickered with surprise. Back in the Bai Clan, his cultivation base had been limited because of his Seven Life-Locking Candles, and he had been unable to personally take charge of the situation. That was why Bai Xiaochun had been able to flee to begin with, and had not actually been completely surprising. But now, here he was in person, and his quarry was still causing problems for him, which he actually found quite interesting.

The huge face in the vortex began to shrink down until it formed the patriarch himself, hovering there in midair, emanating an aura that seemed capable of causing instant transformations in heaven and earth.

He wore a white robe, and had an icy cold expression on his face as he looked down at Bai Xiaochun. Then he took a step forward, a step which caused an enormous foot to appear up above in the sky!

The 3,000-meter-long foot descended, destroying the clouds and causing the lands below to shake. Even the air distorted as the foot rumbled toward Bai Xiaochun.

The foot caused incredible pressure to weigh down on Bai Xiaochun, almost as if the will of the heavens were crushing onto him!

There were a few reasons Mistress Red-Dust ended up being at such a disadvantage when they fought. Because of being in the second generation Arch-Emperor’s sepulcher, and because of the curse she had suffered, she wasn’t able to draw upon the power of heaven and earth. Even despite that, Bai Xiaochun had barely been able to escape with his life.

Now, he could see how truly powerful devas were.... The Bai Clan deva patriarch was fighting right outside his own city, in an area he was very familiar with. He was able to fight with the true power of a deva!

Bai Xiaochun was shocked, and it only took a moment for him to realize why the Bai Clan patriarch seemed so much stronger than Mistress Red-Dust. There wasn’t time to ponder the situation, though. He was gripped by a sensation of deadly crisis, and knew that if he tried to directly fight against this huge foot, he would likely be wiped out of existence!

As his mind spun, the foot closed in, and he took a step back. During that process, his body began to fade, and then he suddenly disappeared.

In the moment he disappeared, the foot landed, crashing into the ground and causing countless amounts of dust and rubble to rise up.

“You won’t be able to escape from me a second time,” the patriarch said coolly. He waved his hand, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air as another huge vortex appeared.

The patriarch moved his right hand, causing the vortex to spin and simultaneously echo with thunderous roars. At the same time, a powerful gravitational force erupted, causing the air to distort as the power of time travel appeared!!

This wasn't the true power of time travel, but it did wrap up everything in the area and pull it toward the vortex with destructive force, including nearby boulders, trees, and even mountains!

At the same time, some distance off, Bai Xiaochun was fleeing with the power of his Undying Hex. However, as soon as the deva patriarch unleashed his shocking magic, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and his technique was interrupted.

As soon as he appeared in the open, the shocking gravitational force grabbed onto him, and began to drag him backward toward the vortex.

Even as it did, his eyes sparkled, and he spun in place. Then, afterimages blurred around him as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then threw his hands up above him!

“Waterswamp... Kingdom!”

His four clones stepped out to surround him, and also unleashed their Waterswamp Kingdoms. Instantly, a watery swamp appeared, and the shocking roar of a beast echoed out from inside. Then, numerous spike-like mountains began to rise up.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The five curved, mountain-like claws that appeared created a scene that would shock anyone who was able to observe it. As they appeared in the open, the sky dimmed, and they slashed toward the vortex!

“What is that!?” Up til now, the deva patriarch had remained completely cool and expressionless. But when the life essence spirit of Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom appeared, his face fell!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0618 awe-chapter-619

The claws of Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit brimmed with mind-bogglingly deadly energy. Five curved, mountain-like claws with all-destructive power shot directly toward the enormous vortex!

When the two struck each other, a deafening boom filled the area. The sky went dim, and a huge blast of wind filled the area, a shockwave that rolled out in all directions.

However, the vortex was backed by the power of a deva, and although Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom was powerful, considering the current level of his cultivation base, that power was limited. Moments after the initial collision, the claws vanished, and the Waterswamp Kingdom faded away.

The only thing that remained was an echoing, beastly cry. However, the attack had not been completely ineffective. Cracking sounds echoed out from the vortex, and five enormous rifts appeared within it. Those rifts grew wider and wider, casting the gravitational force into chaos. The vortex even started to wobble on the verge of collapsing.

Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale as he coughed up a mouthful of blood. His clones all seemed to be in a similar state, and quickly returned into his true self. Then, Bai Xiaochun glared up at the deva patriarch, and slowly pulled out his crystalline soulhoarding pagoda.

His eyes shone with madness, his aura was teetering unstably, and he was trembling physically. However, there was no time to sit around thinking about what to do. He quickly sent some divine sense into the soulhoarding pagoda; with a single thought, he could break the seal inside, and release the destructive power of the demigod soul.

“Don’t push me too far, old man!!” he said, his eyes shining with madness. He wasn’t completely sure whether the discarnate demigod soul could really kill the deva patriarch, but if it did, perhaps he would be able to get his hands on the final deva soul he needed.

Even as the thought entered his mind, he shook his head and dismissed it. He didn’t even know how to properly harvest the soul of a deva who had perished. Most likely, only a demigod cultivator could actually do something like that.

Besides, it was likely that he wouldn’t even be able to kill the Bai Clan patriarch. However, he was confident in being able to seriously injure him in a way that he couldn’t quickly recover from. And that would likely give him enough time to get out of Giant Ghost City territory!

The deva patriarch’s eyes narrowed as he looked at the soulhoarding pagoda Bai Xiaochun held, from which he couldn’t sense anything dangerous. Then he looked back up at Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes began to shine with a strange light.

“I really did underestimate you, kid. Well, that's fine. Wonderful, in fact. I'm not sure how you reached this amazing level, but I can sense from your blood that you really are from the Bai Clan. Truly spectacular.” Smiling faintly, he lifted his foot again and began to take a step. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun shouted loudly, preparing to break the seal in the soulhoarding pagoda.

However, in that very moment, a bellow filled the area that caused everything to shake. At the same time, a whistling sound could be heard, as though someone were approaching the area at top speed.

“Stay your hand, Brother Bai! I'm here with orders from Giant Ghost King himself. He’s issued a summons for Bai Hao!”

The Bai Clan patriarch's face fell, and his eyes flickered with indecision for the briefest of moments before he stepped down with his foot, instantly placing him in front of Bai Xiaochun, whom he reached out to grab.

However, Bai Xiaochun had been ready. The moment he saw the patriarch’s foot moving, he shot backward. However, instead of using his soulhoarding pagoda, he summoned his four clones to defend himself.

A boom filled the area, and his four clones coughed up blood before shooting back into his body. However, they had bought him the time he needed to once again use his Undying Hex.

Right before the deva patriarch’s hand reached him, he vanished. The deva patriarch’s eyes flashed with cold light as he turned to look in a different direction.

“Show your face!”

His words seemed to replace the will of the heavens, causing crushing pressure to appear that wrenched Bai Xiaochun out into the open, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. His hair was in complete disarray, and cracking sounds could be heard as the air around him shattered. Although it seemed as if heaven and earth were about to stamp him out of existence, his eyes flickered with an imperceptible gleam.

And that was because the instant he appeared in the open, a golden beam of light shot through the air toward him. Even as the deva patriarch took control over heaven and earth in the area, a whooshing sound could be heard, and a jade pendant appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun!!

The pendant emanated golden light, and was carved with the image of a two-horned giant ghost that was roaring to the sky. As soon as the jade pendant appeared, the cracking, shattering air around Bai Xiaochun stabilized.

The Bai Clan patriarch’s face turned very grim as the air rippled, and an old man appeared.

He wore a black robe, and his face was completely expressionless. However, his cultivation base fluctuations were no weaker than the Bai Clan patriarch’s. He seemed icy cold and completely sinister, and caused the air around him to ripple.

It was almost as if two streams of divine will had clashed, causing thunder to echo out and crackles of lightning to appear. Even the ground began to quake.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the jade pendant and then the old man, and his heart began to pound. When he had initially fled the Bai Clan, he had hoped that other clans or groups in the area would try to take advantage of the situation, and perhaps help him.

After a while, he had come to suspect it wouldn’t happen after all. But now that this black-robed old man was here, it was obvious that the Giant Ghost King had taken an interest!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed, and his heart began to twinge with nervousness. He kept his hand clenched onto the soulhoarding pagoda, ready to detonate the demigod soul at a moment's notice.

The Bai Clan patriarch stared grimly at the black-robed man, and then spoke in a voice as cold as ice. “This is a private matter of the Bai Clan, Deathcrier! What’s the meaning of this!?”

“There are no private matters for subordinates of the heavenly kings,” Duke Deathcrier replied. Eyes flashing with cold light, he took a step forward, causing a powerful wind to spring up around him. “Are you going to disobey the decrees of his heavenly majesty, Bai Zishan?”

The deva patriarch looked back grimly at Duke Deathcrier, then waved his hand, causing the unconscious clan chief to vanish, then reappear next to him.

“Since his highness the king has summoned this rebel, then of course I won’t interfere.” Gritting his teeth inwardly, the deva patriarch clasped hands and bowed to the jade pendant, then looked back at the black-robed old man. “However, I will have to go visit his highness the king personally to get to the bottom of this matter!”

During the entire exchange between the two devas, the patriarch never once looked at Bai Xiaochun. Finally, he turned and vanished.

At that point, everything in the area went back to normal. The thunder faded away, the lightning vanished, and finally, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. Relaxing his grip on the soulhoarding pagoda, he looked over at Duke Deathcrier.

Duke Deathcrier looked in the direction in which the Bai Clan patriarch had left, then turned his lightning-like gaze onto Bai Xiaochun.

He was wizened and skinny, with a hawk-like nose that made him seem particularly sinister. Furthermore, his gaze was so sharp that it seemed to pierce all the way into Bai Xiaochun’s heart and mind.

“Come with me. From now on, your life is in my hands, and you work for his highness the king.” The man didn't say anything about the deva soul. Apparently, he didn't want to get too involved in the affairs of the Bai Clan.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0619 awe-chapter-620

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare, and he impulsively roared, “Bullcrap! My life belongs to me, not anybody else!”

At least, that was what happened in his mind. The words that came out of his mouth were a bit different....

Face filled with gratitude, he clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Greetings, Senior Deathcrier! Many thanks for the kindness of saving my life!”

“Don’t thank me. If you want to thank someone, thank his highness the king.” With that, Duke Deathcrier waved his hand, causing everything within 30 meters to suddenly blur and ripple, as if it were separating from the area around it.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled as he looked around at what was happening. Soon, it became clear that what was actually happening was some sort of major teleportation.... It was almost as if the entire area were simply being plucked up and moved somewhere else.

Rumbling sounds filled his ears, and then everything vanished.

When he and Duke Deathcrier reappeared... they were in front of a spectacularly immense city!

It was currently afternoon, and brilliant sunlight shone down on the enormous city, making it seem particularly impressive. It looked like some primeval beast, baring its fangs at all creation!

And that was just the sense Bai Xiaochun got without even looking closely at it.

Even at a glance, Giant Ghost City seemed to be as big as 10,000 Bai Clans put together. There were countless richly ornamented buildings and other dazzling structures, and the entire city seemed filled with the auras of innumerable soul cultivators and necromancers....

Bai Xiaochun had never seen a place as big as this before. The population must surely be in the tens of millions....

Even more shocking was that Giant Ghost City itself existed in the middle of a massive, bottomless pit. The pit was so wide that not even divine sense could span it from one side to the other.

And that was just the width, not the depth....

“Giant Ghost City is big, but this pit is even bigger. The city could fit inside of it dozens of times over.”

Giant Ghost City itself existed on a huge column that rose up from within the bottomless pit! Far down in the pit was a hazy mist filled with endless vicious faces and heads, a horde of ghostly souls which screamed constantly.

To get from the cliffs that were the border of the pit to the city itself, one had to cross any one of a number of violet chains, each one of which as thick as a person was tall. They hung like suspension bridges over the misty depths of the pit.

Bai Xiaochun could see people off in the distance, flying toward the city in beams of light. However, they didn’t dare to fly over the pit and into the city, but instead dropped to the ground and then walked along the huge chains.

Going or coming, that was the only way to get into the city.

As Bai Xiaochun continued to examine the area, he realized to his shock that in the middle of the city... was an enormous, shocking statue!

It was a giant ghost with two horns on its head and green skin, tens upon tens of thousands of meters high. It was so high that it seemed to be holding up the sky! Furthermore, on its head was a royal palace!

The palace itself was difficult to make out, and although it was impossible to tell who resided there, it didn’t take much guesswork on Bai Xiaochun’s part to come up with an idea.

“That must be where Giant Ghost King lives....” Even just looking at the royal palace, Bai Xiaochun could sense a pressure like that of all heaven and earth weighing down on him.

It left him with the sensation that whoever was in that royal palace was not a person, but rather, some sort of god!

Another shocking thing he noticed was the giant statue held a palace in each of its hands. Furthermore, both palaces had huge stone steles in front of them, with the name of the palace inscribed for anyone to see. In the left hand was Deathcrier Palace, and in the right hand was the Netherworld Palace!

Bai Xiaochun was shaken by the mere sight, and was immediately certain that those palaces belonged to devas. And considering that the left-hand palace was named Deathcrier... he was eighty to ninety percent sure that it belonged to the black-robed old man standing next to him.

Bai Xiaochun was not as ignorant about Giant Ghost City as he had been when he first arrived in the Wildlands. During his days in the Bai Clan, he had done quite a bit of digging around for information, and now knew a little bit about the place.

For example, he knew that Giant Ghost City consisted of an inner and outer city. The inner city was strictly controlled, and only people with high status could enter it. Most of the people who lived there were nobility, ministers, and other people with close connections to the royal house.

The outer city was where the common people lived, and was a much livelier place.

There was a moat that separated the inner and outer cities, the water of which contained demigod-level restrictive spells. Without the proper command medallion, anyone who tried to cross that moat would be melted into nothing but bones.

Bai Xiaochun's heart was already pounding as he wondered why he had been brought to Giant Ghost City. Although he was very nervous, he put on the most charming expression possible as he stood there behind Duke Deathcrier. He had already decided that, no matter why the Giant Ghost King had summoned him, it was a good thing to be in Giant Ghost City. After all, the teleportation portal he needed to access to get back home was located in this very city.

"If my mask can fool the Bai Clan's spell formation, and their deva," he murmured to himself, "then it should be able to fool the teleportation portal, right?"

Duke Deathcrier's face was completely expressionless as he led the way, and he didn't say a single word. Furthermore, they didn’t enter the city via the chains, but rather, by flying directly into the city.

As soon as they appeared in the city, the soul cultivator guards on duty looked over with reverent expressions and bowed respectfully.

“Greetings, Duke Deathcrier!”

In addition to bowing in greeting, everyone surreptitiously sized up Bai Xiaochun, which he noticed. As he proceeded along, he decided that since the Giant Ghost King had summoned him, he should be on his best behavior. Perhaps, if Duke Deathcrier put in a good word for him, he could get a high position in the city. That way, the Bai Clan definitely wouldn’t be able to touch him.

“Wait, no. That would be too dangerous. I need to figure out a way to get to that teleportation portal and get back to the Great Wall.... It’s just too bad that I'm still missing a deva soul.”

With such thoughts on his mind, he followed Duke Deathcrier through the city.

Duke Deathcrier led him directly toward the inner city, and within the space of a few breaths of time, they were standing in front of the moat that separated the two cities.

The water was black, and looked incredibly dangerous. In fact, Bai Xiaochun even took a few steps back when he saw it. Then he looked over at Duke Deathcrier, wondering why they had stopped moving.

“Uh, Senior... aren’t we supposed to be going over there...?” Blinking, he looked meaningfully toward the giant ghost statue.

Ignoring Bai Xiaochun, Duke Deathcrier coolly said, “Li Xu, get out here immediately!”

His voice didn't seem to echo out very far. However, in response, the waters of the moat rippled, and then a whirlpool appeared, out of which stepped three middle-aged men.

Bai Xiaochun could already sense that something was off about the situation. Why wasn’t he being taken to see the Giant Ghost King?

Of the three newcomers, the man in the lead position wore a green robe, and was clearly half a step into the Deva Realm. As for the other two, they seemed a bit weaker, and were obviously the man’s subordinates.

The green-robed man immediately flew over to stand in front of Duke Deathcrier, where he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Greetings, Duke Deathcrier.”

Duke Deathcrier gestured at Bai Xiaochun and then said, “This is Bai Hao. I’m handing him over to you. Set him up as a guard in Devil Penitentiary.”

Li Xu and his two subordinates immediately voiced their assent. Without another word, Duke Deathcrier turned and flew toward the giant ghost statue.

His mission from the king had been to bring Bai Hao back and then give him a job in the city. As for what exact position to give him, the Giant Ghost King naturally didn’t care. Therefore, Duke Deathcrier didn’t put much thought into the matter, and simply handed him over to the city’s famous Devil Penitentiary.

“Devil Penitentiary? A guard?” When Bai Xiaochun heard what had just been said, his jaw dropped. He had assumed that the Giant Ghost King must have summoned him to be at least a bodyguard of some sort. Never could he have imagined that he was to be a prison guard....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0620 awe-chapter-621

This was not Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing about Devil Penitentiary. Early on, the chief of the Bai Clan had threatened to have him thrown in that very prison, which had sparked Bai Xiaochun’s curiosity. Afterward, he had asked Zhou Yixing for some information about the place, and had learned that Devil Penitentiary was a prison in Giant Ghost City. It was a very famous place, with all sorts of dangerous prisoners locked up inside. They were all evil villains who, for various reasons, had not been put to death. Instead, their cultivation bases had been sealed, and they had been imprisoned. In any case, they were all the type of people that no one would ever want to run into on the outside....

Furthermore, there was a saying in Giant Ghost City. *Death isn’t frightening. Get locked up in Devil Penitentiary, and you’ll* wish *you were dead!*

“How could an illustrious major general like me serve as a lowly prison guard...?” Bai Xiaochun thought angrily. However, he knew that a true leader should be flexible. Plus, if he pulled off the act successfully, he might be able to use this as an opportunity to get access to the teleportation portal and get home.

Before he could even say anything, Duke Deathcrier was gone, and Li Xu and his subordinates straightened up from their bows. Li Xu was the type of person who looked threatening without being angry. After coldly looking Bai Xiaochun up and down, he said, “So you’re Bai Hao from the Bai Clan?”

From the cold tone of his voice, he didn’t seem too pleased to see Bai Hao standing there, and it was the same with the other two men. After all, they had all heard stories about him recently.

They knew that he was vicious and cruel, the type of person who didn’t care about family, and could hide his intentions easily. He had even killed numerous members of his own clan. A ferocious person like that was not the type that people would like to get close to. Of course, at the same time, no one would want to offend him either.

“You can’t act the way you did back in your clan. Now that you’re here, you have to live by my rules. In Devil Penitentiary, I'm in charge! The prison isn’t open at the moment, so come back tomorrow at this same time.” Without even waiting for a response, Li Xu waved his sleeve, causing the whirlpool to reappear in the black waters of the moat. Deep at the bottom of the whirlpool was a cave that Li Xu immediately entered, followed by his two subordinates. Then the whirlpool vanished.

“Gone, just like that?” Bai Xiaochun thought, eyes widening. Obviously, they were trying to impress him with the fact that it wasn’t easy to get into Devil Penitentiary. The message was clear: *from now on, stick your tail between your legs and behave!*

“What kind of a crappy place is this prison anyway?” he muttered angrily. “I'm definitely not going in there!” After all, he was a major general, and although he had originally forced himself to go along with the idea of working as a prison guard, that changed when people tried to threaten him.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he snorted coldly and walked away.

It was currently noontime. Giant Ghost City was a huge place, and the outer city seemed to go on and on without end. People were everywhere, including soul cultivators, necromancers, and even a lot of savage giants.

This was one of the five major cities of the Wildlands, a place which kept watch over a huge area, and was filled with plentiful resources. Just about everything one could imagine was available for purchase, and the streets were packed and loud no matter where one went.

Occasionally, patrols of city guards would fly overhead. However, it was rare to see anyone else flying around. Other than the city guards, the only people allowed to fly were devas.

Still prickling with anger, Bai Xiaochun strolled around and tried to find out where the teleportation portal was. As it turned out, it was no secret, and he was soon heading in that very direction.

“I guess I’ll just have to do without that extra deva soul. Once I get back to the Great Wall, I’ll figure out what to do about the situation.”

Giant Ghost City’s teleportation portal was located in the northern part of the city, in the middle of a huge public square. It was an enormous gate made of glowing light, with a constant flow of soul cultivators, necromancers, and savages going in and out.

By the time Bai Xiaochun got there, it was already evening. After sizing the place up, he noticed that there were city guards in charge of the place.

However, Bai Xiaochun had seen a lot of city guards already, and wasn’t worried about them. As he neared, his eyes began to glitter. This teleportation portal represented his ticket back to the Great Wall. Although it wouldn’t take him directly there, he would at least get close. Considering the level of his cultivation base, making it back from that location shouldn’t be difficult.

His heart was already pounding with excitement, and yet, he couldn’t help but worry about something he had learned while in the Bai Clan. Supposedly, the teleportation portal would check your identity strictly before allowing you to use it.

Ever since Zhou Yixing had told him that, he had begun to wonder how the process worked. Therefore, he stopped some distance away from the portal itself and looked around the area more closely.

Almost immediately, his expression flickered as he noticed that every single soul cultivator who entered the teleportation portal would be touched by flickering ripples. After studying the ripples for a short time, he realized how they worked.

Clearly, they represented some magical technique that assessed a person’s identity....

“With my mask, I shouldn’t have any problems, right...?” After some hesitation, he looked up into the evening sky and then gritted his teeth. “I might as well give it a shot!”

Making sure to breathe calmly, he walked toward the teleportation portal. None of the guards paid any attention to him, and after paying the requisite soul medicine tax, he was given access.

Those few short steps were ones of incredible anxiety. Then, he found himself standing in front of the shining light, his eyes alive with anticipation.

“It’s definitely going to work, and then, I’ll fly off into the sunset!” Taking a breath, he stepped forward, putting him in contact with the light.

However, as soon as he made contact, his heart leapt as a strange, prickly sensation spread across him. It was almost as if some spirit automaton were examining him. Rumbling sounds echoed out from the teleportation portal, and the fluctuations entered him, seemingly intent on scouring his soul!

It was a soulsearch to confirm his identity!

Thankfully, his mask quickly went to work to conceal his true identity. However, the power levels involved surpassed imagination, and Bai Xiaochun could tell immediately that the mask would only be able to hold out for a brief moment under such intense scrutiny. If he didn’t pass this test and allow the soulsearch to confirm his identity, he wouldn't be able to teleport away, and would also be revealed as an imposter!

In the moment of time that the mask bought him, he stepped backward, away from the teleportation portal. As he did, quite a few people noticed, and strange expressions appeared on their faces.

Seeing so many eyes on him, his heart trembled nervously. Raising his voice, he said, “Ah, forget it. I'm not going anywhere. Giant Ghost City is the best place to earn a name!”

With that, he walked away.

People continued to look at him curiously until he melted into the crowd and vanished.

Some distance away, he hurried along, ashen-faced and heart pounding.

“What do I do?” he wailed inwardly. “If I can’t use the teleportation portal, how will I get home?” He wanted to cry, but no tears would come. All of his hopes had been wrapped up in the teleportation portal, and yet now, he knew he couldn’t use it....

A bit later, he blinked a few times and then sighed at how bitter his life had become. Feeling completely crestfallen, he found a random inn to stay the night. The next day, he walked out of the inn bleary-eyed.

“If I can’t get back, I guess I just need to rise to prominence here. Perhaps that’s just my lot in life. How completely annoying for a low-profile kind of person like myself.” Sighing helplessly the entire way, he headed back toward the moat....

Now that he thought about it, being a guard at Devil Penitentiary might not be that bad after all. With that status, he would be temporarily safe from the Bai Clan, which was a good thing.

He got to the moat early, whereupon he sat down cross-legged and frowned his way until evening. At that point, the whirlpool sprang up again, and one of Li Xu’s subordinates appeared. When he saw Bai Xiaochun, he gave him an expressionless nod.

“Alright, come with me,” he said. Without another word, he turned and headed back toward the whirlpool.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0621 awe-chapter-622

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t stop sighing in his heart about how humiliating it was for a spectacular major general like himself to be in this situation. However, considering the circumstances, he knew that he simply had to come to terms with it....

“Ah, whatever. Considering that I, Bai Xiaochun, am so outstanding and awesome, it doesn’t matter where I end up, I always earn a new level of respect!” As he tried to pump himself up, he looked at the man who had just stepped out of the whirlpool. By this point, he realized that Li Xu must be the leader of Devil Penitentiary, and also his own future superior. Furthermore, this man here must be an assistant of some sort to Li Xu.

“Get moving,” the man said, “otherwise you’ll have to wait outside for another day.”

Bai Xiaochun already didn’t like this guy.

“I didn't do anything to offend him!” he complained inwardly. However, there was no other option for him than to bow his head and hurry into the whirlpool.

They disappeared, and began to sink down toward the bottom of the moat. Considering that this man was Li Xu’s assistant, it was no surprise that he had an extraordinary cultivation base. He also had a command medallion that emanated a soft light, protecting both himself and Bai Xiaochun from the deadly black moat water around them.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit nervous as he looked out at the inky blackness. Not only could he not see anything, but he felt a sensation of profound danger just looking at the black water, as if terrifying beasts lurked within it.

He kept his guard up as they pierced their way downward. Eventually, he realized that he could see two green points of light up ahead in the black water.

They seemed to pulse with a netherworldly aura, and almost looked like eyes. Merely looking at them caused his hair to stand on end.

However, the man escorting him didn’t seem to have any reaction whatsoever, so Bai Xiaochun merely followed along, maintaining full vigilance. As they proceeded forward, the two green lights grew larger and larger.

The closer they got, the clearer things became, until Bai Xiaochun’s heart leapt; there at the bottom of the moat was an enormous stone statue!

The statue depicted a gigantic xuanwu turtle that pulsed with spatial distortions. The two green lights that Bai Xiaochun had spotted earlier were actually the turtle’s eyes.

It also seethed with a profoundly murderous aura that seemed to be contained in the area with magical seals. Were it not for those sealing marks, the aura would have seeped out and caused drastic transformations in heaven and earth.

Bai Xiaochun was already shaken, but then he realized that, for some reason, the turtle actually looked familiar. After studying it closely for another moment, his eyes went as wide as saucers, and his heart began to pound in his chest.

“That statue looks a lot like the little turtle....” The little turtle had been missing for a long time now. Bai Xiaochun had searched his bag of holding thoroughly on a few occasions looking for him, but couldn’t find him. Even still, Bai Xiaochun had the feeling that he was there inside, somewhere.

Even as Bai Xiaochun hesitated about what it all meant, the man led him toward the turtle statue's left eye. Nervous about everything, Bai Xiaochun followed along, and soon they entered the eye itself.

A diaphanous barrier kept the black water out, which the man's command medallion allowed them to pass through.

Bai Xiaochun soon found himself in a large stone cavern filled with criss-crossed stalactites and stalagmites that looked almost like vicious fangs. There were four soul cultivators waiting there, who clasped hands and bowed deeply as soon as they saw the man leading Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, Left Dharma Protector!”

Their voices weren’t loud and booming, but rather, bone-chillingly cold. They seemed like people who lived on the border between life and death, whose mere gazes could pierce to the heart. After looking at them for a moment, Bai Xiaochun determined that all four were Nascent Soul cultivators.

“This Devil Penitentiary isn’t some ordinary prison!” he thought. As he continued to look around, he noticed four tunnels leading off in four directions, with a fifth tunnel-like opening in the ceiling.

“Sun Peng, this is one of the new guards the warden just assigned to Cellblock D. You arrange everything for him.”

After issuing his orders, the man clasped his hands behind his back and flew up into the fifth tunnel overhead.

The group of four soul cultivators clasped hands to him as he left, then dispersed into the four corridors, with the exception of an old man. Frowning, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “If Li Xu personally handed you over to the Left Dharma Protector to arrange things, then logically speaking, you should have been assigned to Cellblock A, not my Cellblock D.”

The old man seemed to think something was a bit strange about the situation, but still smiled at Bai Xiaochun.

Although it was a friendly smile, it looked ghastly to Bai Xiaochun. Coupled with the old man’s sinister aura, it caused a chill to run down Bai Xiaochun’s back.

“May I ask your name, Fellow Daoist?” the old man asked.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then carefully answered, “I'm Bai Hao.”

“Bai Hao. Bai Hao... Bai...?” After thinking for a moment, the man’s eyes went wide. “Bai Hao from the Bai Clan?”

Pleased at the man’s reaction, Bai Xiaochun proudly said, “Yeah, that’s right. I’m none other than Bai Hao from the Bai Clan.”

The old man sucked in a breath. Now he understood why Li Xu had assigned this person to Cellblock D.

“Well aren’t you a hot potato,” he thought. “The fact that Li Xu handed you off to the Left Dharma Protector means that the original orders came from higher up. And the only person with a status high enough to give orders like that would be Duke Deathcrier. And the only person who can order Duke Deathcrier around is the heavenly king himself.

“The Bai Clan has a bounty on this kid’s head, but the heavenly king sent him here….” The old man didn’t dare to ponder the matter any more deeply. Sighing, he realized that he couldn’t afford to offend this newcomer. After all, according to the rumors, he had reviled his own clan, and even gone so far as to kidnap his own father.

Not only did he have profound levels of patience, but he was completely and utterly vicious….

“Welcome to Cellblock D of Devil Penitentiary, Fellow Daoist Bai Hao. Come, come, let me show you around.” Forcing a smile onto his face, he led Bai Xiaochun toward the northernmost of the four tunnels. “Although Devil Penitentiary exists inside of a stone turtle statue, it's actually very large inside. Five unique dimensions exist here, namely Cellblocks A, B, C, D, and the Supermax Cellblock.

“The Supermax Cellblock is run by the exalted warden himself, and is the core of Devil Penitentiary. Normally, no one ever gets inside without being summoned.

“As far as the other cellblocks go, the prisoners get locked up in them depending on how important or dangerous they are. The most important prisoners go to Cellblock A. All of the prisoners here are dangerous and vicious people, but the prisoners in Cellblock D are almost like children compared to the others.

“Every cellblock has a group of roughly a hundred guards, with ten captains and a deputy warden. I'm the deputy warden of Cellblock D.

“Of course, Warden Li Xu is in charge of the the four deputy wardens....”

Sun Peng led him directly to Cellblock D and began to show him around. He had already decided that since Bai Hao had been delivered to him, and he couldn’t get rid of him, that he might as well treat him well. After all, with so many people in Cellblock D, having an extra guard around wouldn’t hurt anything.

Of course, he wouldn’t go beyond what was necessary.

Eventually, Sun Peng led Bai Xiaochun to an area in the middle of the Cellblock D part of the prison, a sprawling square, in the middle of which was a glowing door.

The door emanated intense pressure, and occasional rumbling sounds.

Surrounding it were ten areas that Sun Peng explained were the barracks where the ten teams of guards resided. As for the glowing door, it was the actual entrance to the cellblock.

The ten barracks all looked exactly the same, constructed from green limestone, but decorated in colorful fashion. However, perhaps because they were located in the middle of Devil Penitentiary, Bai Xiaochun found them particularly sinister.

Still depressed over the matter of the teleportation portal, Bai Xiaochun sighed and thought to himself, “Ai. I can’t believe I'm actually becoming a prison guard.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0622 awe-chapter-623

Sun Peng assigned Bai Xiaochun to Squad 9. Then, just like Duke Deathcrier and Li Xu, he hurried away.

The captain of Squad 9 didn't see Deputy Warden Sun Peng very often, but considering that the man was his direct superior, he quickly picked up on the unspoken hints he had given regarding Bai Xiaochun's status.

The captain was a burly man who appeared to be about forty years of age. He almost immediately recognized this fair young man as the recently famous Bai Clan rebel, and realized he needed to pay special attention to him. In fact, he even transmitted orders to the guards under his command, explaining who Bai Xiaochun was.

Bai Xiaochun could see how the captain and the other guards of Squad 9 reacted when he smilingly told them his name. They sized him up, and although they weren't extremely cold, they were by no means warm and welcoming. Bai Hao had been a popular topic of conversation recently, and therefore, all of them had at least some impression of him. They knew that he was a vicious fellow who had reviled his clan, and was the type who shouldn't be provoked. After seeing him in person, though, he didn't seem to match up to the rumors.

Before Bai Xiaochun's arrival, Squad 9 had consisted of a total of eleven people: ten guards and the captain. But now there were twelve. There were no women, only men, and all of the other guards seemed middle-aged, with cultivation bases in Core Formation.

The fact that even such a group of low-ranking guards was so powerful further showed how important Devil Penitentiary was.

When Bai Xiaochun realized that the group was not being very welcoming, he felt a bit awkward.

To try to smooth things over, the captain quickly assigned him quarters in the barracks.

“Why don’t you rest up a bit, Bai Hao?” he said. “The truth is that we aren’t very busy here in Devil Penitentiary. The squad doesn’t really know much about you now, but there will be plenty of time later for you all to get to know each other.” With that, he left. As far as he was concerned, the situation wasn’t very complicated. When dealing with a fiendish killer that you couldn’t get rid of, the best thing was to try to get along with him, but not get too close. One just had to be careful not to treat him too coldly.

Bai Xiaochun already had a good impression of the captain. At the least, he was better than Duke Deathcrier or Li Xu.

His quarters weren’t very large, and contained only a bed and a chair. It was a simple room, but it had a remarkable spell formation that was connected to the stone turtle statue, giving it exceptional defensive capabilities.

After looking around, he sat down cross-legged and frowned.

“Ai. How cruel the twists of fate. Here I am, a prison guard....”

The events of the past two days had been quite complicated. The Bai Clan patriarch had attacked, then Duke Deathcrier showed up. After that, the teleportation portal plan failed, and now he was a prison guard.

“Ah, whatever. If I’m a guard, I'm a guard. The most important thing now is to keep myself safe.... Plus, I need to get on the good side of my squad.... If I can get them to like me, they’ll probably be a lot of help to me later.

“I still don't know why the Giant Ghost King saved me, but at least I'm in a pretty safe situation, at least for the moment. How long will that last though...?” He sighed, and eventually his thoughts turned to deva souls, whereupon he gritted his teeth angrily.

“It's all the fault of that Granny Red-Dust!! And Chen Hetian!! Well, whatever. Might as well forget about the teleportation portal. The best thing to do is increase my cultivation base and figure out another way to get back to the Great Wall.... I already have four deva soul clones. All I have to do now is get a metal-type deva soul, and I can step into the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage!” When all was said and done, Bai Xiaochun felt very nervous. It was like he was walking along the edge of a cliff; the slightest misstep could lead him to a disastrous fall.

However, there was nothing he could do about the situation. The teleportation portal wasn’t an option, and therefore, unless he simply gave up on the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul idea, that meant he only had a bit over a thousand years before he ran out of longevity. Then, his dream of living forever would be impossible to realize.

If he wanted to live forever, then he had to walk along that cliff. If he wanted to get home, he simply had to grit his teeth and keep going.

Actually, up to this point in his life, his cultivation had always gone quite smoothly, whether it was in the Spirit Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao

Polarity Sect, or the Great Wall. It was only after entering that sepulcher in the Wildlands that he finally experienced the feeling of being stuck in place, with the shadow of death looming larger behind him.

“Once I get that metal-type deva soul... I’m never going to risk my life like this again!” He was actually so worried about the situation that he almost felt like crying. There was almost nothing in the world he wanted more right now than a deva soul.

“Where am I supposed to get that deva soul from...? Plus, it has to be a metal-type deva soul.

“The Giant Ghost King is a demigod expert, so he probably has one... but... how would I get my hands on it?” He clenched his hands into fists and thought as hard as he could, but couldn’t come up with any ideas.

“Although I know a bit about Giant Ghost City, I definitely don’t know enough. Whether it’s news about deva souls or the details of why Giant Ghost King saved me, I need more information....” Eyes flashing, he took out a jade slip to send messages to Zhou Yixing and Li Feng.

The first thing he said was that they didn’t need to wait for him in the appointed location any longer, and could just return to Giant Ghost City. Second, he asked Li Feng to give him some more details about Giant Ghost City.

It didn’t take long before Li Feng sent back a wealth of detailed information. As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw it, his eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound.

“Five devas....”

The most powerful person in Giant Ghost City was the demigod heavenly king. Beneath him were five dukes and ten marquises. The dukes were all devas, and the marquises were all half a step into the Deva Realm.

Of the five devas, three were the patriarchs of the three great clans. The other two were Duke Deathcrier and Duke Netherworld!

In terms of the ten marquises, they led the ten armies that were garrisoned in Giant Ghost City, and were people with close connections to the royal throne. Each and every one of them was a very important person.

Bai Xiaochun also learned that although the patriarchs of the three great clans were technically subordinates of the Giant Ghost King, they had formed their own separate faction.

“In the end, the Giant Ghost King is a demigod expert, so he could kill them all with the wave of a hand.” In Bai Xiaochun’s opinion, there seemed to be something fishy about the whole situation. However, Li Feng couldn’t provide any further details. These were just the things he had heard about here and there.

“Maybe the Giant Ghost King saved me because he wanted to test out the Bai Clan’s attitude? But why would he need to do that? He's a demigod, after all....” No matter how he analyzed the situation, it only seemed to lead to more questions.

It was a complicated state of affairs, and he simply had too little information, which made it hard to make a good assessment. However, from what he could tell, the three great clans must have some trump card that enabled them to maintain a somewhat antagonistic relationship with the Giant Ghost King....

Most likely, the Giant Ghost King wasn't very happy about the arrangement.

“That’s probably the gist of things, at least. As long as the Giant Ghost King isn’t too happy about being on equal footing with the three clans, then I'm probably safe here in Giant Ghost City....

“So, what I need to do now is get that metal-type deva soul as quickly as possible, before things get dicey. Then I can just run away.” Frowning at his lot in life, he took a deep breath to focus, then closed his eyes to start his auguries regarding thirteen-colored flame.

The formula for thirteenfold flame was completely different from that of twelve-colored flame. It even had different requirements in terms of divine sense, requirements that he would never have been able to meet before acquiring the deva soul from the Bai Clan.

But now he had a fourth clone, which boosted his divine sense even more. With that, he was confident of being able to use Bai Hao’s research notes to eventually succeed with thirteen-colored flame.... In fact, he suspected he might even get so far as fourteen-colored flame.

As he was wrapped up in performing auguries and seeking enlightenment, the night passed uneventfully.

Although it was impossible to see the sun or moon from Devil Penitentiary, because of the spell formation which protected it, the phases of night and day were as normal.

When night gave way to day on the outside, Bai Xiaochun was still in the middle of his work, and didn’t even notice.

Three days passed in the blink of an eye.

During those three days, no one bothered him. Around dawn on the fourth day, he opened his eyes when a voice reached his ears from outside his room.

“Bai Hao, Squad 9 is on patrol duty today. Everyone is waiting for you.” It was the voice of the captain, and it sounded very serious.

“Since this is your first time going out on patrol, it will be a good chance for you to see what kind of prisoners we keep in Cellblock D.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0623 awe-chapter-624

“Prisoners....” Bai Xiaochun got nervously to his feet and walked out of his room. The captain was waiting there outside, a smile on his face.

Bai Xiaochun knew that he needed to develop a good relationship with the squad, but that wasn’t very difficult. He just needed to stop thinking about how he was a Core Formation expert with four deva soul clones, and that he could even kill lofty Nascent Soul cultivators. He just needed to act like an unimportant person. Therefore, he put a look of both respect and cheer on his face as he clasped hands and bowed, then said, “Captain, you really didn’t need to come in person. If you have orders for me, just send a message.”

Actually, Bai Xiaochun already liked the captain to begin with, so it was easy to give him a particularly deep bow.

The captain seemed a bit surprised. The truth was that he had no other choice than to come get Bai Xiaochun. According to the rules of Devil Penitentiary, all guards had to participate in patrol duty. If Bai Xiaochun knew about that and chose not to join, then he would be to blame. But if the captain didn’t personally notify him, then he would be held responsible.

The other guards might be keeping their distance, but when the captain thought about all the rumors he’d heard, he really felt he had no other choice.

However, to his surprise, the reportedly vicious, family-killing fiend who had turned traitor against his clan and kidnapped his own father, Bai Hao, was actually being very polite.

The captain laughed heartily. “Oh, no problem at all! You’re part of Squad 9 now, and since you just arrived, how could I not come to give you the news personally! Listen, Bai Hao. To people on the outside, everything about Devil Penitentiary is a big secret. After all, only two types of people can actually go into the cellblock: the prisoners, and us guards!”

Although he didn’t yet have a very good impression of Bai Xiaochun, the captain seemed a bit more sincere than before, and he even began to explain more information as they walked along.

After following the captain for a bit, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but ask, “Captain, what kind of cultivation bases do all the prisoners have?”

“It doesn’t matter!” the captain replied proudly. “Everyone who comes to Devil Penitentiary has to submit. Even dragons!” Before long, they were approaching the huge glowing door in the middle of the square.

Bai Xiaochun’s curiosity was growing. He had experienced a lot of things in his life, but had never been inside of a prison. The idea of descending into the depths of Devil Penitentiary had him filled with anticipation.

The other soul cultivators who were part of Squad 9 were all waiting impatiently by the doorway, and many of them seemed to get even more irritated when they saw Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun could see that, and considering that he had no idea how long he would be serving as a guard, he hurried forward and said, “Hello, brothers! I'm new here and don’t know the rules. I'm terribly sorry for keeping all of you waiting.”

Currently, he looked like Bai Hao, young, pure and fair, even delicate. Furthermore, he spoke in a very pleasing fashion; almost immediately, some of the irritation in the eyes of the other guards faded.

After all, Bai Hao’s reputation was that of a vicious beast. But here he was politely and passionately offering an explanation and apology. The other guards were surprised, and weren’t quite sure what to say. In any case, Bai Xiaochun’s smiling face made it hard for them to stay angry.

Beyond that, the way he rushed forward and treated them all like older brothers caused strange feelings to rise up in their hearts. Almost immediately, the coldness that many of them felt toward him began to fade.

The only exception was one long-faced young man who responded with a cold snort. Apparently, he had a rather high standing in Squad 9. When the other guards saw his reaction, their expressions went back to being icy.

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy about that.

“I never offended this guy!” he thought.

The captain pretended not to notice what had happened. Laughing, he said, “Alright, everyone’s here, let’s head in!”

Swishing his sleeve, he produced a command medallion, which he extended toward the glowing door. Almost immediately, a rift opened up in the middle of it.

The captain went in first, and everyone else followed behind, with Bai Xiaochun taking up the final spot.

As soon as he entered the light, a feeling like that of teleportation swept through him. It was like heaven and earth crushing down on him, and was a very unpleasant sensation. However, it only lasted for a moment before fading away. Then, Bai Xiaochun's vision cleared, and he found himself looking at... a very peculiar dimension!

There was no sky or land, only a black void. Hanging down from the vast, seemingly never-ending darkness above were countless chains made of bones.

Hanging at the end of the bone chains were enormous skulls, each one several dozens of meters tall. They were vicious-looking things that had clearly been hanging there in this void for tens upon tens of thousands of years.

They seemed to be arranged in some sort of pattern, almost as if to form some enormous, densely-packed spell formation.

Of course, none of them were located too close to any of the others.

Those skulls were the prison cells!

In terms of color, they weren't white. In fact, they seemed to be constantly flickering with random colors, almost as if there were some type of magic at work inside of them. In addition, it was possible to hear the occasional bitter scream coming from inside.

Those screams came from the prisoners!

The prisoners in the skulls all wore ragged clothing, and some of them were even naked. There were men and women, and even the occasional savage giant, forced to shrink down in size to fit in the skull cages.

Quite a few were soul cultivators, and there were also necromancers present. All of them were gaunt and emaciated, and yet, each and every one burst with a murderous aura and an air of brutality.

In addition to the prisoners in the skull cages, there were also soul cultivators roaming around in gray robes, their hands and legs in shackles. They were also prisoners, but weren’t dangerous enough to keep in cages, and were free to roam about among the cells.

Quite a few of the prisoners were female, and many of them were extremely beautiful.

When the gray-robed soul cultivator prisoners saw the guards of Squad 9, they rushed over, trembling, to kowtow. Flattering, fawning expressions could be seen on their faces, and as for the beautiful female prisoners, they made sure to reveal their ample cleavage as they bent over. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he was quite shocked.

At this point, the captain bellowed, “Alright, we’ll be on patrol for three days. For the first six hours, we’ll do things like usual. Go have some fun and don't cause any trouble! When the six hours are up, we’ll meet at Old Devil Zhou’s cell. Let’s see if we can finally get him to spill the beans.”

After the captain finished speaking, Bai Xiaochun watched as the smiling guards dispersed in various directions.

When that happened, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide with shock as he saw many of the gray-robed prisoners flocking around the guards as if they were old friends. Some of them even began to massage the guards’ shoulders and lean down to whisper things in their ears. Furthermore, even more fawning expressions than before could be seen on the prisoners’ faces.

When the captain saw how befuddled Bai Xiaochun looked, he smiled, lowered his voice, and said, “Those people are like stewards here in Devil Penitentiary. None of them committed particularly serious crimes, and they tend to behave well. As for how easy or difficult their lives are, that's up to our whim.

“The prisoners in the skulls are the really important ones.” He pointed at one nearby skull, within which was an old man with a red birthmark on his face. He looked particularly ferocious, but currently had his eyes closed, as if he didn’t care at all about the world around him. “For example, that guy. He pissed off his highness the king two hundred years ago, and has been locked up ever since. He doesn’t have any secrets worth extracting, so he’ll probably just die of natural causes eventually.

“Alright, well go have some fun. As guards, we’re like gods here. The lives of the prisoners are in our hands, and therefore... as long as you don’t do anything too excessive, you can pretty much do anything you please.”

“Anything we please?” Bai Xiaochun thought incredulously, his mind spinning at how different Devil Penitentiary was than he’d imagined.

Even more shocking was how the long-faced youth from moments ago was surrounded by a group of eight beautiful female prisoners, who were pulling him off into the distance with flirtatious looks on their faces.

He couldn’t help but blink a few times and even lick his lips when he saw that. His heart actually started to beat as well. After all, there were a couple of female prisoners in that group who he found particularly attractive. Pointing in their direction, he said, “Captain, what exactly are they going off to do?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0624 awe-chapter-625

The captain cleared his throat. “Just keep your eyes to yourself. Don’t be such a prude. Oh right. Don’t forget to leave the prisoners in the cells alone. They’re murderers and fiends, every last one of them. Accidents have happened in the past, you know. Their cultivation bases are sealed, but on one occasion, one of them bit off the ear of one of the guards.”

After giving a few more reminders and warnings, the captain left to enjoy himself.

Bai Xiaochun felt like a new world had been opened up to him. After looking around, he realized that quite a few of the gray-robed prisoners were looking over at him. They quickly identified him as a new guard, and hurried over to offer greetings.

“Greetings, exalted one....”

“If you need anything, exalted one, please just say the word....”

“You’re so young, exalted one. Now that you’re a guard in Devil Penitentiary, you have boundless prospects for the future. You’re like a dragon among men....”

As everyone began to fawn over him, Bai Xiaochun noticed several attractive female cultivators giving him the eye. Obviously, they were trying to seduce him!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart started to pound with the realization that all he needed to do was point his finger, and any of those female cultivators would cater to his every whim....

“Fudge, this place is evil!!” Panting, Bai Xiaochun realized that this really wasn’t the type of place for him. As he continued to revel in the praise of the prisoners, and the gentle voices of the female cultivators, he continued to stew in anxiety....

“Who would ever have thought that Devil Penitentiary would be like this?” he thought. “Bai Xiaochun is a pure person! How could he deign to wallow in a place like this...?”

As he anxiously allowed the prisoners to lead him off into the distance... he came to understand what Devil Penitentiary was really like, that it was the type of place where you could truly say... *anything goes*.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun realized that he really liked Devil Penitentiary, and that the world really was a wonderful place.

“But Bai Xiaochun is a clean-living and honest person. I definitely won't do anything to violate my conscience!” Six hours later, Bai Xiaochun felt more wonderful than ever about being in Devil Penitentiary. At that point, he followed the directions given him by the helpful prisoners to meet back up with the rest of the squad.

The captain was already present, as were seven or eight of the other guards. Everyone seemed to be in wonderful moods, and were chatting happily. However, the long-faced young man was also there, and as soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun, his expression turned grim.

He held this traitor from the Bai Clan in complete contempt. As far as he was concerned, anyone who would kidnap his own father and kill his own fellow clan members was completely perverse, and the type of person who actually deserved to be locked up in Devil Penitentiary.

Furthermore, he had been friends with Bai Qi, which deepened his hatred.

As for the other guards, they simply pretended not to see Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun stood there feeling a bit awkward, and starting to get angry.

“What’s the deal with this guy?” he thought. “What’s he picking on me for?” With that, he began to assess the young man’s cultivation base, which caused the young man to look over at him with icy eyes.

The captain could see that tension was building up between the two of them, so he quickly planted himself in the middle and then pointed at a nearby skull.

“Alright, let’s get to business. See that guy, Bai Hao? That’s Old Devil Zhou.”

The long-faced young man snorted coldly, and Bai Xiaochun suppressed his anger to look in the direction the captain was pointing.

Within the huge skull sat a burly man who, despite being seated cross-legged, was still nearly two meters tall. From the look of it, if he stood up, he would almost be as tall as one of the savage giants. He was a real brute.

His eyes glowed red, and a ferocious-looking smile twisted his lips. Furthermore, he looked at the guards with a greedy expression that almost made it seem like he wanted to eat them.... As soon as Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on him, he got the sense that the man was a cannibal of some sort.

He had a murderous aura that made him seem completely impervious to reason, the type who would murder people left and right without the slightest compunction.

“This is Old Devil Zhou,” the captain continued. “Not only is he a cold-blooded murderer, but he’s addicted to eating children. A hundred years ago, he ate so many children it was impossible to count. However, because of his connections to the Cai Clan, one of the three great clans, he managed to get spared from the death penalty!”

Bai Xiaochun frowned. He wasn't the type of person who instantly believed everything he heard. However, although the captains story seemed a bit unbelievable, based on what this Old Devil Zhou looked like, it seemed possible.

“But now that he's here,” the captain continued icily, “he has to live a life of suffering.” By this point, all of the rest of the guards had gathered.

“Alright, let’s begin. This is our last chance to get him to talk!” The captain waved his sleeve, and Squad 9 headed, grim-faced, toward Old Devil Zhou’s cell.

When Old Devil Zhou saw them coming over, his vicious grin widened, and his eyes glittered. Suddenly, he jumped to his feet, grabbed the eyeholes of the skull, and let out a furious roar.

That roar caused everyone to stop in place for a moment.

“Useless fools! I, Zhou Yunlong, have eaten so many people like you I’ve lost count!”

“Shut up!” barked one of the guards, jumping forward and performing an incantation gesture. Then he waved his finger at the skull, which changed colors. At the same time, the flicker of lightning could be seen inside, causing Old Devil Zhou to tremble, and then let out an agonized shriek.

The guards of Squad 9, looking very fierce and dangerous, went about using all the tricks they could think of.

“Tell us where the treasure is!”

“Spit it out and we won’t torment you! But if you don't talk, then don’t blame us for what happens!”

“Senior Zhou, there’s no need to be like this. Now that you’re in here, you won’t be getting out. None of your assets on the outside will do you any good. Why not just reveal the truth? Then things will go easy for you! In fact, life inside could actually be pretty nice for you.”

Some of them threatened, some of them cajoled. Every method possible was pulled out to try to get him to reveal the location of whatever treasure it was they were talking about. However, no matter what they did, and no matter how Old Devil Zhou screamed, the vicious smile never left his face. And in fact, it only grew more vicious.

Finally, the long-faced young man strode forward. Laughing coldly, he said, “Not gonna talk, huh? Fine, I’ll *force* it out of you!”

As soon as the young man walked forward, the other guards started to get excited.

“Zhao Feng is Squad 9’s inquisitor! If you don't talk, then he’ll pry your mouth open!’

“That’s right! The other eight squads might not have succeeded, but Zhao Feng can!”

Even the captain’s eyes were glowing with anticipation. As for Bai Xiaochun, he simply watched what was happening. Although he wasn’t sure what an *inquisitor* was, he had the feeling that the long-faced young man must have some higher standing than everyone else. It sounded like *inquisitor* was a title or rank of some sort.

The long-faced young man walked up to the cell and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, summoning a long black needle. Instantly, the needle shot forward and stabbed into Old Devil Zhou, provoking an unprecedentedly ragged scream.

A moment later, Old Devil Zhou’s eyes turned bright red, and yet the arrogance within them didn’t fade in the least. Eventually, he stopped screaming, and then started laughing.

“That's all you’ve got? I've eaten tons of inquisitors like you in the past. Delicious, every last one of them! I wonder what you taste like though?”

The long-faced young man looked angrily at Old Devil Zhou, then went to work on another incantation gesture. However, no matter what he did, Old Devil Zhou just kept laughing and laughing. Furious, the other guards did everything they could to help out.

Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, looking on in shock as the guards of Squad 9 interrogated and tormented Old Devil Zhou. Nearly a day passed, and although Old Devil Zhou was left gasping for breath, he still didn’t say a word about his treasure.

“Dammit this guy is tight-lipped!” Eventually, the guards began to back down, glaring at Old Devil Zhou as if they wished they could break into his brain to get the information they wanted. That was especially true of the long-faced young man.

“When Old Devil Zhou was incarcerated recently,” the captain explained, “he didn’t have a thing on him. But he built up quite the treasure trove in his life. He obviously hid it away somewhere!

“He was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, half a step into the Deva Realm. He dominated the world for an entire sixty-year-cycle, and massacred more than thirty entire clans! He definitely has a lot of treasures!”

After seeing how angry his fellow guards were, Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, and then finally asked, “Um... why don’t you soulsearch him?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0625 awe-chapter-626

The other guards couldn’t help but sneer at the question, and the long-faced young man actually laughed sarcastically.

The captain shook his head. Sighing, he explained, “*Some* people can be soulsearched. But once your cultivation base reaches a certain level, and your soul fuses with your fleshly body, you can use all sorts of methods to defend against soulsearches. At that point, forcing a soulsearch won’t lead to good results.”

Raising his voice to reach all the guards, he said, “We don’t even have two days left now. If we don't get the answer soon, then Squad 10 is going to come along and take over.”

Then he looked back at Bai Xiaochun and continued his explanation. “The prisoners here are all powerful and important people. Most of them have secrets, and many of them were rich. According to the rules of Devil Penitentiary, whichever squad can pry the information out of them can benefit from what they learn. A split has to be given to the higher-ups, but the rest can be divided among the squad.”

Now Bai Xiaochun understood the situation much better. The guards took a short break, and then resumed interrogating Old Devil Zhou. However, as the third day neared, they still weren’t able to get a single word out of him, and finally reached the point of giving up.

Smiling bitterly, the captain said, “Well, I guess it doesn’t matter. Old Devil Zhou’s treasure trove must be destined to go to one of the other squads.”

With that, he prepared to lead Bai Xiaochun and the other dejected guards away. However, as he gave one final look to Old Devil Zhou, the man suddenly spat a blood-infused gob of spittle out of his mouth and then began laughing maniacally. From the way he was looking at the guards of Squad 9, he really seemed like he wanted to eat them.

“People always talk about how Devil Penitentiary is a brutal place!” he laughed. “They say nobody can keep their mouths shut in here. But things have been easy so far!”

His words got the guards even angrier than before, but there was nothing they could do.

“Let’s go,” the captain said through gritted teeth, turning to leave.

However, it was at that point that Bai Xiaochun hesitantly said, “Captain, can I have a try? I think I might be able to get him to talk....”

Actually, he had been itching to have a shot for the entire past day.

“You?” Zhao Feng said with a cold laugh. He was of the opinion that if he, the squad’s inquisitor, couldn’t pry Old Devil Zhou’s mouth open, and the inquisitors of the other eight squads couldn’t either, then there was no way this newcomer could. Obviously, he was feeling a bit too cocky for his own good. He didn’t do anything to cover up his disdain and scorn, as if he were trying to vent his frustration at Old Devil Zhou’s stubbornness onto Bai Xiaochun.

The other guards frowned. They all knew that Bai Hao was a vicious killer, but killing and torture were two different things. Interrogating people required a level of control that ordinary cultivators often lacked.

Therefore, no matter how confident Bai Hao claimed to be, they wouldn’t be so easily persuaded.

“Not even Inquisitor Zhao Feng could get any information out of Old Devil Zhou. This Bai Hao... really overestimates himself. Interrogation is an art, not something that any random person can do.”

“He might have a reputation for being vicious, but in Devil Penitentiary, everybody has that kind of reputation!”

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too happy at the things the guards were muttering. After all, he hadn’t boasted or anything! Although he wasn’t supremely confident, he was at least confident enough to give a try.

The captain frowned in thought. Considering that Bai Xiaochun was now a member of Squad 9, letting him experience first-hand how difficult interrogation was would probably be a good thing.

“Alright, Bai Hao. If you want to give it a shot, be my guest!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately stuck his chin up, clasped his hands behind his back, and strolled up to Old Devil Zhou’s cell. Behind him, the other guards looked on with knowing smiles as they waited for him to fail in his attempt.

“Bai Hao has a reputation for being vicious, but he doesn’t look that scary to me. He probably just has a big mouth.”

“Supposedly he has a lot of patience, but it doesn’t look like it to me.”

Zhao Feng looked especially scornful as he crossed his arms and looked on with cold eyes. “Hmph. If I, Zhao Feng, can’t get this guy to talk, then what makes him think he can?!”

As everyone stood by waiting for him to fail, Bai Xiaochun looked into the cell at Old Devil Zhou, who looked back at him with yellowish teeth and gluttonous eyes.

“Fair skin,” Old Devil Zhou said, “very tender-looking... My three favorite things to eat are children, elegant women, and beautiful men.... This kid is a perfect example of the third type.” With that, he began to cackle madly.

“Makes me think of a soul cultivator I ate ten years ago. Looked similar to this, very pure and fair. I ate him and brutalized him at the same time! Wonderful flavor. Simply delicious!” Old Devil Zhou licked his lips and looked at Bai Xiaochun with an intensely malevolent gaze.

His words coupled with his expression made him look profoundly sinister, and caused the expression on the faces of the guards to turn even grimmer.

As Old Devil Zhou’s laughter rang out, Bai Xiaochun gasped. He couldn’t help but visualize some of the things the man had just said, and realized that he was definitely vicious beyond compare. He even stopped walking for a moment.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was hesitating, Old Devil Zhou chuckled, and then went on with more detailed descriptions. “I ate that fancy little soul cultivator one bite at a time, starting with his nose. After that I went on to his eyes....”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding in his chest. Obviously, this Old Devil Zhou was a complete monster. That, coupled with the fact that interrogation really didn’t suit him, made him begin to think about giving up. Old Devil Zhou could tell what he was thinking, and flung himself against the eye-holes of the skull that made the window, where he let out a powerful bellow.

Although it wasn’t as loud as thunder, when coupled with the things he had just been saying, it was startling enough that Bai Xiaochun jumped backward in fear.

“Scared, kid? Come, come, let me have a taste of you!” Old Devil Zhou then went on to laugh maniacally. Cleary, he was having a lot of fun playing around with this fair, pure young man.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun got angry. After all, he was in the great circle of the Gold Core stage; to be startled by this old guy was a real humiliation. Glaring, he said, “Alright, old man, you brought this upon yourself!” Looking very serious, he turned to the captain and said, “Captain, please open the door of the cell!”

The captain hesitated for a moment, but then performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, an opening appeared in the huge skull, and before Old Devil Zhou could jump out, Bai Xiaochun was inside.

He immediately waved his hand, causing a black smoke to spring out, powered by his mask, which instantly filled the skull and made it impossible for anyone to see what was happening.

The guards of Squad 9 were a bit surprised, and hurried forward cautiously.

“What is he doing?”

“He’s making it so we can’t see?”

Zhao Feng laughed coldly and said, “Trying to pull a fast one, huh?!”

Inside the cell, Old Devil Zhou was shocked to find Bai Xiaochun right there in front of him. However, he quickly licked his lips and smiled, revealing yellow teeth. Saliva even began to flow down his chin.

“I never thought you would have the guts to come in here with me, kid. Think you’re safe because my cultivation base is sealed?

“Considering how brave you are, if you let me eat one of your arms, I’ll give you a clue about my treasure trove. What do you say? One arm for a clue. Or hey, how about four limbs for four clues...?” With that, Old Devil Zhou began to laugh madly. Despite the fact that his cultivation base was sealed, he was still completely stubborn, and clearly not afraid of Bai Xiaochun at all.

After all, he knew that these people wouldn’t kill him, only torture him a bit.

“I don't care where your hidden treasure is!” Bai Xiaochun said with a glare. Snorting, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a medicinal pill.

It was none other than... an Aphrodisiac Pill!!

Old Devil Zhou seemed a bit taken aback. But then he saw that it was only a medicinal pill, and his expression became that of scorn.

“A torture pill? How amusing.”

“We’ll see how amusing you think it is in just a moment,” Bai Xiaochun said proudly. Waving his hand, he sent the Aphrodisiac Pill flying toward Old Devil Zhou, who, because he lacked a cultivation base at the moment, was incapable of dodging. The pill entered his mouth, and immediately dissolved.

Sticking his chin up, Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve and loftily said, “Alright Mr. Devil. In the past, some people have lasted for as long as two hours when I torment them. That’s the ultimate limit. But I'm hoping you’ll break the record.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0626 awe-chapter-627

The rest of the members of Squad 9 couldn’t see what was happening inside of the skull cell. All they could see was dense, black smoke that was impenetrable even by divine sense.

“What is Bai Hao doing?”

“He’s in there alone with the prisoner, hidden by black smoke? Don’t tell me the two of them are working together to plot against us?!”

“Something seems off....” The various members of the squad were all whispering back and forth to each other, some of them with expressions of disdain, others with frowns. The captain was starting to worry that he might have been a bit impulsive.

Zhao Feng stood there with his arms crossed, smiling coldly as he said, “Like I said, this guy--”

However, before he could finish his sentence, a maniacal scream suddenly erupted from within the black smoke.

The shocking scream clearly came from the mouth of Old Devil Zhou, and sounded like the scream of someone who had something pent up inside of them that they wished to release, but couldn’t.

“What’s going on!?” Everyone was now completely focused on the cell, their expressions those of curiosity and suspicion. The sound of the scream was strange; after having interrogated Old Devil Zhou for a few days, they had heard him scream on numerous occasions, but none of those screams had sounded as pent-up as this one.

Before any of the Squad 9 guards could do anything more, the screams intensified until they became a seemingly endless howl.

“What did you just feed me!?!? Aaaaggghhh! Dammit. Dammit!!! Let me out of here!!!”

The terrifying nature of the screams caused everyone's hair to stand on end.

The guards of Squad 9 were looking on with wide eyes. Throughout the past days of interrogation, Old Devil Zhou had never reacted like this; now he almost seemed to be pleading for mercy.

“What is Bai Hao doing?” The captain’s heart was shaken, and as for Zhao Feng, he couldn’t keep his expression still. As for the other nearby gray-robed prisoners, they were looking over in complete shock.

The screaming and howling didn’t last for very long, but as it filled with increasing levels of desperation and horror, it left everyone with the feeling that Old Devil Zhou was being subject to the most bone-piercingly painful type of torment possible.

None of the members of Squad 9 had ever even heard screaming like this before; it was filled with hair-raising desperation, the type which would be present in people who wished to die rather than be alive.

“His voice... it's like something is suppressed inside of him that wishes to explode out, but can’t, and instead, pushes him into complete madness!!”

“Heavens! How is Bai Hao doing this?!?!”

“Whatever interrogation method he’s using to get Old Devil Zhou to scream like that, it shows he's already on the path to success! Nobody could possibly endure under such pent-up pressure!!”

The captain was having trouble breathing calmly, and all the other guards were completely stunned. Zhao Feng was shaking visibly; as an inquisitor, he was well aware that being able to fill someone with pressure and make them unable to release it was extremely, extremely difficult.

“Don’t tell me he's an inquisitor too? Impossible!!” A defiant gleam could be seen in Zhao Feng’s eyes; in his mind, Old Devil Zhou was an extraordinary individual who could likely continue to endure.

Old Devil Zhou’s howling turned more piercing and became more filled with insanity. The level of pain in his voice caused all of the prisoners in the entire cell block to look over in astonishment.

“Old Devil Zhou is incredibly tough, but look at him now!!”

“Who was that kid who went into his cell just now...?”

The process lasted for about an hour before Old Devil Zhou finally began to beg for mercy.

“I’ll talk! I’ll reveal everything! I’ll tell you where my treasure trove is....”

“Shut up! Lord Bai doesn’t want to know about any hidden treasure!”

“Forgive me, Lord Bai. I'm truly sorry.... Let me off the hook....” The guards of Squad 9 almost couldn't believe what they were hearing. All attention was on the cell as they pondered what torment Old Devil Zhou was undergoing to get him to start begging for mercy.

However, Bai Hao’s viciousness seemed to have no limits. It was almost as if... he was enjoying himself, and that the answer to the original question wasn’t really important to him.

Everyone was filled with icy coldness as Old Devil Zhou continued to scream and beg for mercy for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. Finally, he started to tire out. Then, the smoke swirled as Bai Xiaochun appeared, hands clasped behind his back, chin stuck up, an expression of complete indifference on his face as he strutted out into the open.

Everyone was looking at him, guards and gray-robed prisoners alike. Even the dangerous prisoners in the nearby cells were staring.

He looked exactly as he had earlier, without the slightest change in facial expression. However, when everyone looked into the cell, they began to cry out in shock and alarm.

“Heavens....”

“Is that... is that Old Devil Zhou?!”

“What... what did Bai Hao do to him!?!?”

Old Devil Zhou had once been big and burly, but now he seemed shriveled up, almost as if he had been burned up from the inside out. His life force and even his soul seemed mostly gone, and the flame of his life force was barely flickering.

He seemed wilted as he crouched there, trembling, his skin covered with scratch marks so deep that bones and organs were visible through some of them.

Clearly, he had been clawing at himself....

As he looked out of the cage at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shone with indescribable terror, as though Bai Xiaochun were an evil ghost the likes of which could strike fear deep into the heart. No one had ever seen Old Devil Zhou with an expression like that in his eyes. It was as if Bai Xiaochun was so terrifying to him that he was a nightmare eternally branded into the man’s mind.

All observers were left gasping. The difference between the Old Devil Zhou from earlier, and the Old Devil Zhou from when Bai Xiaochun came swaggering out of the cell an hour later, was staggering.

Guards and prisoners alike now stared at Bai Xiaochun with serious and even awe-struck expressions.

Under the reverent stares of everyone present, Bai Xiaochun walked up to the captain and then tossed him a jade slip.

“His confession,” Bai Xiaochun said, feeling very pleased to be the center of so much attention. Keeping his hands clasped loftily behind his back, and with a profound look in his eye, he strolled off into the distance.

The captain looked down at the jade slip, stunned. Then he looked back up at Bai Xiaochun walking off, and it almost seemed as if he were looking at a god.

Zhao Feng couldn’t even breathe for a long moment. When he could, he rushed over to the cell to look at Old Devil Zhou twitching and trembling in the corner.

“He didn't leave any marks.... He got him to scream endlessly from the pent-up pressure.... The prisoner was ready to confess, but he wouldn’t let him. He made him feel hopeless.... Plus, he seemed to love the process of inflicting the torment.... Heavens! There is no higher level among inquisitors!!! Bai is definitely an inquisitor... no, wait, he’s an inquisitor among inquisitors. He’s a dark inquisitor!!” Zhao Feng swiveled his head to look at Bai Xiaochun off in the distance, his eyes burning with zeal.

Earlier, he had looked down on Bai Xiaochun, but now, everything had been turned upside down. As an inquisitor, he couldn’t help but be in awe of Bai Xiaochun’s techniques, which caused passion to flare in his heart.

“Wait for me, Brother Bai!” he blurted excitedly as he hurried to catch up. The other guards in Squad 9 were all staring at Bai Xiaochun with worshipful expressions. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had forced Old Devil Zhou to finally open his mouth meant that Squad 9 would not only earn a lot of face, but they would also be able to get Old Devil Zhou’s hidden treasures. Almost immediately, their opinion of Bai Xiaochun changed completely.

The captain was panting, and his eyes were shining brightly. He knew exactly what it meant to have an inquisitor like this on Squad 9, and he quickly hurried to catch up.

The gray-robed prisoners and the dangerous prisoners in the cells watched the guards hurrying to cluster around Bai Xiaochun, and then turned to look at the twitching and trembling Old Devil Zhou. At that point, all of them decided that this was an inquisitor they could never afford to provoke!!

He was the stuff of nightmares!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0627 awe-chapter-628

As Bai Xiaochun strutted along, the captain and guards of Squad 9 hurried along beside him, their eyes shining with reverence and awe.

In the cultivation world, people always respected the powerful. It was almost like a natural law. However, in Devil Penitentiary, there was an additional law, and that was to respect inquisitors!

Inquisitors were the ultimate representations of wealth and status!

In the past, Zhao Feng had been quite popular as the inquisitor of Squad 9, and had been treated with incredible respect by the captain. The inquisitors of all squads were treated similarly.

But now, everyone could tell that Bai Xiaochun was an incredible inquisitor; even Zhao Feng was convinced. Therefore, it was only natural for everyone’s passions to be aroused.

“Brother Bai is actually a top master!”

“Hahaha! Sorry for the misunderstanding earlier, Brother Bai. But let’s forget about that. From now on, we’re brothers!”

“With such abilities as an inquisitor, Brother Bai, you can soar to the highest heights in Devil Penitentiary!”

Zhao Feng’s previous hostility was long gone, replaced by awe and reverence. “Squad 9 has struck gold! With Brother

Bai, we’re all going to have the best of the best.”

Earlier, there was no way Bai Xiaochun could have imagined that getting Old Devil Zhou to talk would result in having everyone suddenly fall in love with him. The realization that he was completely outstanding caused him to sigh in his heart. No matter where he went, he ended up shining like a treasure, and he couldn’t stop that fact from causing his eyes to glitter brightly.

“I'm simply too outstanding,” he thought. “How could I be this outstanding? Even I have no choice but to admire myself.” Although he enjoyed reveling in his success, he was also the type of person who knew how to treat others smoothly. Clearing his throat, he began to laugh and chat with the other guards.

Slapping his chest proudly, he said, “Ah, that was nothing. From now on, our Squad 9 is going to be one big family! We’re all brothers!”

Such talk continued as he and Squad 9 made their way out of the cellblock.

That very day, the captain sent some of the guards outside of Giant Ghost City to the spot that Old Devil Zhou had confessed was the location of his hidden treasure. Sure enough, there was an immortal's cave hidden by a magical technique, within which lay Old Devil Zhou’s life savings, which was subsequently brought back to Devil Penitentiary.

Soon, Squad 9 was having a meeting in the captain’s quarters, in which they split up all of Old Devil Zhou’s treasure. Bai Xiaochun got the largest share of all, a soulhoarding pagoda filled with countless vengeful souls and more than a thousand portions of mid-grade soul medicine. Even Bai Xiaochun gasped at the sight of all the treasure.

“This Old Devil Zhou was totally rich!” he thought. At that point, the captain waved his sleeve, sending jugs of fine liquor out to all the guards.

Laughing, the captain raised his jug up and then loudly declared, “This is all thanks to Brother Bai Hao’s hard work, everyone. Come, come, let’s drink to him!”

The other guards laughed and raised their jugs to Bai Xiaochun. They had all benefited greatly just now, and from the way their eyes shone when they looked at him, it was almost as if they were looking at the endless treasure they would surely get in the days to come.

Flicking his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun raised his jug. “Brothers, I'm new to Devil Penitentiary, and still don’t know all the rules. Please, I hope you can forgive me for any faux pas I might make.

“By the way, some of the rumors which have been spreading about me are quite painful, and I’d rather not discuss them. In any case, you’re my family now, and going forward, I’m going to do everything I can to make sure we all have a wonderful life. Please, allow me to drink to you!” Bai Xiaochun was very impressed with how wonderful his words were as he took a long drink.

The fact that he seemed so pure and fair, and even delicate to some degree, seemed somewhat disparate with his bold words. However, that simply provoked a cheer from the other guards, who then laughed as they drank deeply from their alcohol jugs.

Even as they lowered their jugs, it was possible to see that their relationship had improved vastly. Bai Xiaochun was now one of them, and all of them were laughing loudly as they addressed each other as brothers.

Even the captain did so. Clasping Bai Xiaochun warmly on the shoulder, he said, “The reason we treated you so ambivalently before was because of those rumors. Everyone said that you were vicious, with no toleration of filial piety. However, those rumors were clearly false. Brother Bai Hao, you are just our type of person. Furthermore, you obviously have great potential as an inquisitor. Coming to Devil Penitentiary was definitely the right decision. Who cares about some crappy Bai Clan? From now on, if the Bai Clan dares to show their face here, we brothers will show them a thing or two!”

Everyone laughed heartily. Then, Zhao Feng clasped his alcohol jug in his hands and gave a deep, sincere bow.

“Thank you, my brothers!” he said loudly. “From now on, all of you are my big bros!”

Zhao Feng raised his alcohol jug and said, “Brother Bai, I treated you poorly before. Let me drink to you!” He drank deeply, and once again bowed to Bai Xiaochun. “There’s no way I could have the face to continue to serve as Squad 9’s inquisitor. Brother Bai, please, I beg of you to take over the position!”

The other guards shot to their feet and voiced similar thoughts.

“That’s right, Brother Bai Hao. Why don’t you be Squad 9’s inquisitor!?”

“With your potential, you’ll surely become the most famous inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary!”

Even the captain joined in. Bai Xiaochun’s heart pulsed with happiness at being so popular. After a bit more time went by, he decided to ask some questions about inquisitors.

Zhao Feng looked at Bai Xiaochun with praise in his eyes as he offered an introduction.“Most of the prisoners in Devil Penitentiary can’t be soulsearched. That’s why we have inquisitors, whose job it is to formally interrogate the prisoners. Only people with incredible skills in interrogation can become inquisitors.

“Each of the four main cellblocks in Devil Penitentiary has a highly respected inquisitor, whose standing is second only to that of a deputy warden. Because of the darkness which fills their hearts, they are known as dark inquisitors! In addition to the four great dark inquisitors, each of the squads in the four cellblocks all have their own inquisitor.

“Old Devil Zhou was a nut that none of the inquisitors in Cellblock D have been able to crack. In fact, even the dark inquisitor from Squad 1 failed with him. Now that you've succeeded, Brother Bai Hao, that means you have the potential to become a dark inquisitor!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked in surprise at this new information about Devil Penitentiary. Then he thought about Old Devil Zhou, and how many vengeful souls he had earned because of him, and his heart began to pound.

“I still need that last deva soul,” he thought. “Until I get it, my cultivation will be stuck at a standstill. For now, the best way to keep my poor little life safe is to use the power of magical items.... In that case, flame conjuring is still going to be very important, and in turn, that means that I need to have a lot of souls....”

With those thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, waved his hand, and said, “Well, since you all insist, then I guess I might as well agree to be your inquisitor.”

The guards cheered, and unanimously raised their alcohol jugs in a toast.

Then someone suggested that they should start visiting some of the most tight-lipped of the prisoners, people who had never revealed the location of their hidden treasures.

“With Brother Bai here, we’re all going to be rich! Brother Bai, did you know that in Cellblock D, there are over a hundred prisoners who have never talked!?”

“That's right! All of those prisoners have tightly-kept secrets. If we can get them to talk, we could probably get as much out of each one as we just got from Old Devil Zhou!” As the conversation progressed along this line, the guards began to look over at Bai Xiaochun with pounding hearts.

Even the captain was obviously getting excited. Slapping his chest, he said, “Brother Bai, I can go talk things out with the captain of Squad 10, and get him to agree to let us take their patrol duty this time around.”

Bai Xiaochun was trembling with excitement at having suddenly become so important. Sticking his chin up, he said, “Very well. Since that’s what you wish, my brothers, then let’s do it right now. I refuse to believe that these prisoners can keep their mouths closed around me!”

The excitement in the eyes of the guards couldn’t have been more evident. The captain laughed heartily, and then rushed over in the direction of Squad 10. When he returned, he waved his sleeve and said, “They agreed! We have Squad 10’s patrol duty!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0628 awe-chapter-629

Squad 9 rushed back into the cellblock, their hearts surging with excitement. The gray-robed prisoners had recovered from the sight of Bai Xiaochun interrogating Old Devil Zhou, and quickly rushed over.

Each and every one clasped hands and bowed, saying things like, “Heavens! The dark inquisitor is back!”

Not in the mood to pay any attention to the gray-robed prisoners, the guards rushed Bai Xiaochun toward one of the old-time prisoners who had never talked.

Bai Xiaochun kept his hands clasped behind his back as they neared one of the cells off in the distance. As they got closer, the gray-robed prisoners in the area eyed them nervously.

Glaring at the prisoner in the cage, the captain said, “Brother Bai, this is Old Devil Xu. It was an entire sixty-year-cycle ago that he was one of the most powerful Nascent Soul experts around. Back then, he murdered 99,999 pregnant women and used their placentas to forge a powerful magical device. It was really a shocking thing that got everyone up in arms!”

Bai Xiaochun could see an old man sitting cross-legged in the cage, looking very calm. The man’s eyes flickered up to look at him, and they were ice-cold, as if he didn’t care about any living thing in the world.

When he spoke, his voice was just as cold as his gaze. “It’s been a long time since anyone tried to get me to talk. Let the fun begin, shall we?”

After actually laying eyes on Old Devil Xu, Squad 9’s confidence in Bai Xiaochun suddenly began to wane. Old Devil Xu was extremely famous, and even Cellblock D’s dark inquisitor had repeatedly failed to get any information out of him.

“Let’s see how Squad 9’s inquisitor deals with Old Devil Xu!” Among the gray-robed prisoners in the area, there were many who already revered Bai Xiaochun. However, most of them were still more in awe of Old Devil Xu.

Even as everyone pondered what was going to happen, Bai Xiaochun looked Old Devil Xu up and down, then entered the cell. Moments later, a black smoke filled the area, and before long, howls rang out that were very similar to the howls that had just been heard from Old Devil Zhou.

Almost immediately, the eyes of the Squad 9 guards lit up. As for the gray-robed prisoners, their hearts began to pound, and many of them gasped.

“Even Old Devil Xu is reacting like this!?”

“No way! This is Old Devil Xu we’re talking about! Not even Cellblock D’s dark inquisitor could get him to talk!”

Roughly an hour later, the howls turned to pleas for mercy. Everyone was shaken, especially the dangerous prisoners in the nearby cells, whose faces had become masks of terror.

Then Bai Xiaochun emerged, looking as calm as ever, a jade slip in his hand.

“Here’s his confession,” he said. “Who’s next?”

Zhao Feng was shivering with excitement, and the captain looked extremely happy. By this point, Bai Xiaochun was like a god to the guards, and it was with great zeal that they led him to another area.

And that was how things went at the second cell, then the third, and then the fourth....

During the following three days, it was to the complete stupefaction of everyone present that Bai Xiaochun swept through each of the old-time prisoners in Cellblock D that he was taken to!

A few managed to hold out for as long as four hours. However, in the end, none of them could hold their tongues. All of them revealed their deepest secrets to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was already very impressed by how he was benefiting from all of this. In fact, many of the old-time prisoners ended up telling him, not only their own secrets, but secrets belonging to other people....

There were secrets which had never before been uttered to anyone, which were now revealed because of Bai Xiaochun. At first he took it all in stride, but as more and more secrets were revealed, his eyes began to shine brightly.

He was really starting to feel that he fit in in Devil Penitentiary. Furthermore, as he interrogated all of the various prisoners, he came to the realization that all of them had really committed heinous crimes that were worthy of execution!

“I guess the Giant Ghost King... really knows what he’s doing,” he thought.

As for Squad 9, they were already starting to grow numb to what was happening. Considering how profoundly skilled Bai Xiaochun was at performing interrogations, and considering how many jade slips were piling up in the captain’s hands, their eyes began to shine like diamonds.

Every jade slip he held represented vast wealth, and when the guards thought about what their lives would be like going forward, their devotion to Bai Xiaochun grew stronger.

Of course, the gray-robed prisoners were even more profoundly affected, and would stare at Bai Xiaochun, trembling with fear and reverence.

Shaken, and filled with deep admiration, the captain gritted his teeth and paid a heavy price to make contact with the captains of the other squads. It was impossible to say exactly how he did it, but he managed to get Squad 9 assigned to patrol duty for an entire month straight.

When the rest of Squad 9 heard the news, they erupted into cheering. In sharp contrast, shocked expressions could be seen on the faces of the gray-robed prisoners and the prisoners in the cells.

Slowly but surely, the month went by.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun completely dominated Cellblock D. One by one, he visited all of the old-time prisoners.

During each interrogation session, screams would erupt from the cell, leading to widespread shock among everyone present.

It was all made even more terrifying by the fact that no one could actually see what was happening during the interrogation.

Whenever Bai Xiaochun emerged from an interrogation session, it didn't matter how brutal or savage the prisoner had been in the past, they all ended up trembling and terrified. In fact, for days after any given interrogation, such prisoners would lurk in their cells like scared rabbits, shaking physically.

Squad 9 was delighted by this, and Bai Xiaochun's fame spread throughout Cellblock D, until everyone stared at him with either terror or awe.

Bai Xiaochun was more entranced by Devil Penitentiary than ever, mostly because of all the secrets he was learning. Most such secrets pertained to the Wildlands, and to Giant Ghost City. In fact, during the month which passed, Bai Xiaochun came to learn... far too many secret matters.

When it finally came time for Squad 9 to end their patrol duty, the prisoners sighed in relief. Bai Xiaochun had created a nightmare for them the likes of which they had not experienced for years. As for those who had been interrogated, their fear could only be described as deep and profound.

Of course, Squad 9 really had struck the jackpot. Furthermore, as they collected and split all of their loot, the other squads in Cellblock D were completely shaken as they received the shares they had been promised in return for giving up their patrol duty.

Once inquiries were made, and the other squads came to realize that the reason for it all was Dark Inquisitor Bai Hao, they couldn’t have been more shocked.

“What? He got all the old-time prisoners to talk in one month?!?! That’s impossible!!”

“Dammit! No wonder Squad 9 wanted to switch patrol duty with us....”

“I can’t believe that Bai Hao knows dark inquisitor techniques. If the stories are true, then he's no ordinary dark inquisitor. After all, not even Cellblock D’s official dark inquisitor could do what he did!”

As more inquiries were made, and the stories were confirmed, the other squads began to tremble and stare in jealousy at Squad 9.

Even the deputy warden of Cellblock D, Sun Peng, was completely shaken by the news.

“He got all the old-time prisoners to talk in only one month!?” When he saw all of the soul medicines and magical items that the captain of Squad 9 had sent him, he realized that he had no choice but to believe this unbelievable news.

“This Bai Hao is so vicious! Well, considering that he even reviled his own clan, I guess the role of dark inquisitor really does fit him.” Then Sun Peng realized that Cellblock D would finally have a chance to shine with glory in front of Warden Li Xu. Without any hesitation, he sent down orders that Bai Hao could enter the cellblock at any time he wanted, and interrogate even the most dangerous prisoners!

The other squads could only go into the cellblock itself once per month for three days. But Bai Hao faced no such limitations.

Ordinarily, such an arrangement would have caused widespread anger. However, because of Bai Xiaochun’s shocking performance, not a single person raised an objection.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0629 awe-chapter-630

The month that passed was a month of bounteous harvest for everyone in Squad 9. In fact, they didn't have to do anything other than escort Bai Xiaochun around and reap the rewards.

After all, the more than one hundred old-time prisoners all had indescribable caches of wealth. Although the guards would only get a small portion of it, when you combined it all together, it was still a shocking amount.

It was no wonder that Sun Peng, who got half of everything, would give Bai Xiaochun special treatment. Of course, Bai Xiaochun got the largest share after Sun Peng, and yet, considering his personality, he wasn’t the type to be a miser....

He had long since made contact with Zhou Yixing and Li Feng, and given them information that they could use to profit as well.

There were many people in Devil Penitentiary who realized this, but actually, it didn’t break the rules. As long as Bai Xiaochun wasn’t too excessive in how he helped his people on the outside, no one would cause any problems for him. After all, few people would ever risk causing trouble for a dark inquisitor.

Besides, Bai Xiaochun knew how to conduct himself with integrity. Whether it was his way with words or his generous nature, he always left people feeling good about him.

In the end, Bai Xiaochun’s greatest reward wasn’t all the wealth, but rather, the secrets he learned.... Those secrets weren’t something physical that could be counted, but were vastly valuable.

“There used to be five great clans in Giant Ghost City, not just three. Two of them... were exterminated overnight by the Giant Ghost King!”

“The Giant Ghost King has a demigod cultivation base, but rumor has it that there is a fatal weakness in the technique he cultivates.”

“There are a few of the ten marquises who actually want to rebel against Giant Ghost King!”

Those were only a few of the secrets he had learned, all of which caused his eyes to sparkle with curiosity.

“Who would have ever thought that I would gain so much in this prison!?” Chuckling to himself, he looked at his crystalline soulhoarding pagoda and the vast collection of vengeful souls he had, which was the largest collection he had accumulated in his entire time in the Wildlands.

“I'm almost finished with my auguries of thirteen-colored flame....” He was almost inclined to make an attempt at conjuring thirteen-colored flame, but his residence was too small. Besides, if he lost control, it could lead to a huge disaster.

After some thought, he walked out of his quarters and headed toward the entrance to the cellblock.

Along the way, any of the guards he saw would greet him very politely. In return, he would smile, reveling in the feeling of being so important to everyone. Before long, he was passing through the entrance.

Inside, he ignored how his arrival instantly caused a stir of fear among the gray-robed prisoners and the prisoners in the cells. During his month-long stay recently, he had found an area some distance away from the entrance that was relatively wide-open, which was where he headed now.

After arriving, he set up numerous spell formations, then sat down cross-legged and took a deep breath. After taking a moment to review the formula he had come up with for thirteen-colored flame, he performed an incantation gesture and waved at his soulhoarding pagoda.

A vast amount of vengeful souls swept out of the soulhoarding pagoda, filling the entire area. Then, a serious expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he waved his hand to produce a twelve-colored flame.

“I started working on thirteen-colored flame back when I left the Bai Clan, thanks to the inspiration I got from Bai Hao’s research notes. After plenty of augury, I'm now eighty percent certain that I’ll succeed!

“Even if I fail, it shouldn’t matter. I can just determine the cause of failure, then make some adjustments, and be even more confident than before!” Without the slightest hesitation, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed at the twelve-colored flame, which spread out into a sea of fire and then began to consume the vengeful souls.

Although the process went quickly, it all went according to the complicated method Bai Xiaochun had come up with in advance. Time passed, and the souls disappeared. Gradually, another color became visible within the flame, but unfortunately, along with it came an uncontrollable instability. No matter how Bai Xiaochun tried to adjust things, nothing worked, and the flame finally fell apart into nothing.

Frowning, he contemplated the matter for a bit, then tried again.

One day. Two days. Three days.... Before long, half a month had gone by. Bai Xiaochun had tried several dozen different methods, all of which had failed, but all of which had given him new directions to attempt.

As time passed, his confidence in being able to produce thirteen-colored flame grew. At one point, he suddenly looked up, his eyes bloodshot, but his expression lively. Furthermore, his eyes were shining in anticipation.

“That was the last issue. As of this moment, I am completely confident in being able to succeed!” He waved his sleeve, causing a huge amount of vengeful souls to fly out of the soulhoarding pagoda and into the twelve-colored flame. Bai Xiaochun was concentrating completely, and his body even blurred with afterimages as he boosted his divine sense using his clones. Gradually, as he exercised rigid control over the process, a thirteenth color appeared in the flame!!

Almost immediately, rumbling sounds echoed out, and the heat emanating from the flame grew exponentially intense. It was almost like a tempest of fire swirling around him.

The prisoners who had been watching him this whole time were completely shocked, and didn’t dare to get near. Even many of the prisoners in the cells were looking over.

In fact, in a location not too far away from Bai Xiaochun was one cell that housed an old man with a red birthmark on his face, who suddenly looked up. In that instant, his eyes flickered... with immense shock!

The most important prisoners, the ones in the cells, all had their cultivation bases sealed, making it impossible to use them. And yet, this old man could clearly sense that Bai Xiaochun was working with thirteen-colored flame. The fact that he could sense that... was extremely bizarre!!

That old man had been pointed out to Bai Xiaochun when he first came to Devil Penitentiary. As the captain had explained, he had supposedly offended the Giant Ghost King, and had been locked up for more than two hundred years because of it.

A moment after opening his eyes, he closed them and went back to meditation, as if thirteen-colored flame was something that could only hold his interest for a moment.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no idea about what had just occurred. Keeping his aura under tight control, he cautiously closed his fingers over his palm, causing the sea of fire to shrink back down, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds. Then, when he opened his hand again... he had a tongue of thirteen-colored flame!

“It worked!” he said, laughing loudly. Thanks to Bai Hao’s notes, now that Bai Xiaochun had succeeded with thirteen-colored flame, he knew that he wouldn’t have much trouble with fourteen-colored flame.

After all, both flames were in the same overall level. However, fifteen-colored flame was a dividing mark, separating the terrestrial rank from the celestial rank.

Celestial necromancers... could be considered reserve powers in necromancer clans! After all, if a soul cultivator wanted to break through from the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage and step into the Deva Realm, he would need an object with a fifteenfold spirit enhancement. Only in that way could he gain enlightenment of heaven and earth, and also, earn the chance to become a deva.

“I already feel confident enough to take a shot at fourteen-colored flame....” he thought, his eyes shining with determination.

Another half a month went by.

Bai Xiaochun’s hair was disheveled, and he looked like a mad devil. He was now at a critical juncture. During the past half month, he had failed on numerous occasions, but had also advanced by leaps and bounds.

“It should only take me five more tries to succeed!” he said, his eyes bloodshot. With that, he slapped his soulhoarding pagoda, causing more vengeful souls to fly out. However, it was at this point that he realized he actually didn’t have enough souls!

Eyes widening in shock, he said, “I’m all out?”

From what he remembered, he had built up a huge amount of souls. After sitting there mutely for a while, he chuckled bitterly at the realization that his expenditures during the past month had been immense.

“I wasn’t paying attention and went overboard....” Scowling, he sighed and thought back to all of the souls he had handed in to the pagoda back at the Great Wall.

“It's too bad I gave all those vengeful souls over to get battle credit....” When he thought about how foolish he had been to do such a thing, his heart pulsed with regret.

“All of the old-time prisoners in Cellblock D have already talked. However, Zhou Yixing should have benefited from the information I sent him a while back.

“Ah, whatever. I guess I’ll just go see how many vengeful souls he's managed to get his hands on.” Although he was worried about his lack of vengeful souls, at least he had a lot of soul medicine in his bag of holding.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0630 awe-chapter-631

“I really ought to take some time to explore Giant Ghost City a bit too....” Now that he had a prison guard's command medallion, leaving Devil Penitentiary was easy. He emerged from the stone turtle’s left eye, whereupon the medallion shone with a soft light that protected him from the black waters of the moat.

Before long he was out of the moat, and basking in the afternoon sunlight. Giant Ghost City was bustling like usual, with a good number of people about even on the streets near the moat.

The splash of the water as he emerged attracted the attention of quite a few nearby soul cultivators, and as soon as they laid eyes on him, they realized where he must have just come from.

“He’s from Devil Penitentiary....”

“Devil Penitentiary....”

Virtually all soul cultivators in Giant Ghost City were terrified of Devil Penitentiary, so as soon as they saw Bai Xiaochun, they lowered their voices and averted their gazes.

There even happened to be some city guards on patrol nearby, and as soon as they saw him and realized who he was, they simply pretended to have not noticed him, and hurried away.

“Wow, I never realized people from Devil Penitentiary have such a high standing!” Although he had heard some rumors before about how people viewed Devil Penitentiary, to experience it firsthand as a prison guard was very different.

“I guess becoming a guard really was a good thing!” Clearing his throat, he began to make his way down the street, simultaneously sending a message to Zhou Yixing to come meet up. Then he began to look around for somewhere to buy vengeful souls.

Zhou Yixing actually wasn’t very far away, but since flight was prohibited within the city limits, he was forced to hurry along on foot toward Bai Xiaochun.

As Bai Xiaochun waited for Zhou Yixing to find him, he walked along and took note of several shops that sold vengeful souls. Some were large and luxurious, while others were smaller and more specialized. However, after asking around a bit, he was saddened to find that all of the shops were running very low on supply. In fact, none of them were actually selling vengeful souls, only buying them.

After checking seven or eight shops and finding that it was the same with all of them, Bai Xiaochun started to get nervous. After all, he had come out with the specific purpose of buying some souls.

“What’s going on? Why do all the shops that specialize in selling vengeful souls not even have any souls to sell?” With that, he headed to another street, where he checked in with another seven or eight shops. To his shock, he found that it was the same with all of them.

Finally, in one of the larger shops, he grabbed a salesperson by the arm and asked, “How come none of you have any souls for sale? What’s the deal?”

“How should I know?” the salesman replied with a glare. “We’re out of stock! What are you grabbing me for? What, are you gonna try to take *my* soul or something?”

This salesman had worked in Giant Ghost City for many years, and had come to have quite an eye for customers. He could tell by looking at Bai Xiaochun, and also from the way he asked his question, that he was a new arrival. Completely uninterested in dealing with a newcomer, the salesman gave him another glare and then prepared to rebuke him a bit more.

Irritated by the man’s attitude, Bai Xiaochun thought about how the city guards had reacted upon seeing him fly out of the moat earlier, and quickly pulled out his Devil Penitentiary prison guard’s command medallion.

“Do you have the guts to say that again?!” he asked angrily, holding the medallion right in front of the man’s face.

At first, the salesperson seemed irritated, but when he realized that a Devil Penitentiary command medallion was being flashed in his face, he gasped. Scalp tingling madly, he shivered, and then plastered a huge smile onto his face.

Considering that he had been in Giant Ghost City for many years, he obviously knew that people from Devil Penitentiary were among those who should never be offended. Devil Penitentiary was a place that even ghosts and gods were afraid of. The guards there were known to be vicious fiends, not to mention the inquisitors, who were brutal and cruel to the extreme.

“Please forgive me, exalted one! The truth is that none of the shops in Giant Ghost City have souls right now. We’re completely sold out....”

“Sold out?” Bai Xiaochun said with a frown, his anger beginning to fade.

“Yes, that’s right. The three great clans have been hoarding souls recently, presumably because of the matter of the Hell-Emperor’s successor.... If you have an urgent need, exalted one, we do have a few random souls here at the shop, just not very many.” Clasping hands nervously, the salesman hurried behind the counter and into the back of the shop to gather a few of the random souls that were available. Clearly, he didn’t want to offend this person from Devil Penitentiary, and just wanted him to be on his way as quickly as possible.

“How domineering!” Bai Xiaochun thought. “I can’t believe they bought all the souls just because of some Hell-Emperor successor thing.” Never could he have imagined that the as-yet distant matter of the Hell-Emperor’s successor would already start to negatively influence him.

Considering that flame conjuring would require more and more souls, the fact that Giant Ghost City was almost completely sold out could make things very troublesome.

“What am I supposed to do now? The three great clans are way out of line here! I guess I should have cleaned out the Bai Clan even more than I did.” Sighing, he realized he had to rest all of his hopes on Zhou Yixing, and whatever vengeful souls he had managed to get his hands on with the information Bai Xiaochun had sent him from the interrogated prisoners.

Even as Bai Xiaochun was pondering the situation, the salesman returned from the back of the shop with a soulhoarding pagoda in hand. Bowing and scraping, he said, “Exalted one, here are about 100,000 souls. It's really everything we have left.”

Bai Xiaochun scanned the soulhoarding pagoda, and confirmed that it contained far from the amount he was looking for. However, it was better than nothing. Nodding his head, he was just about to pay for the souls when a bored-sounding voice echoed out from the entrance of the shop.

“I’ll take those souls.” Two young men strolled into the shop, dressed in expensive clothing that seemed to be woven from spirit silk. Their robes glittered like magical treasures, and if one looked closely enough, it would be possible to see designs on them indicating that they had received sevenfold spirit enhancements.

In the Wildlands, spirit enhancements were more common, but the success rates were the same as back in the lands of Heavenspan. The higher the level of the spirit enhancement, the more likely it was that it would fail.

A failure would lead to the complete destruction of the item and the ingredients, and that meant that any item which had numerous spirit enhancements represented heaven-defying good luck.

Both of the young men were in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, and from their magical clothing, it was easy to tell that they were no ordinary cultivators. They were flanked by eight middle-aged soul cultivators, most of whom were in Foundation Establishment. However, two of them clearly had Core Formation cultivation bases!

Considering that the entire group of eight carried themselves like servants, it made the two young men stand out in even more grand fashion.

Bai Xiaochun eyed the clothing on the two young men, and could hear the stifled gasps coming from the other people in the shop. A look appeared on the salesman’s face that seemed even more polite than the look he had given Bai Xiaochun earlier. Rushing over, he said, “Well met, Prince Chen, Prince Cai.”

“Give me those souls,” said one of the young men, the one whom the salesman had addressed as Prince Cai. Although the young man had spoken in a relatively calm voice, from the look in his eye, he clearly viewed himself to be vastly superior to Bai Xiaochun. One of his servants immediately stepped forward with a bag of holding to take the soulhoarding pagoda.

Of course, there was no way Bai Xiaochun would simply agree to that.

“Slow down, there,” he said angrily. “*I'm* buying those souls!”

The two young men looked at him coldly, and could quickly see that he had a Core Formation cultivation base. However, they didn't seem to care about that, nor did they notice that he was Bai Hao from the Bai Clan.

“We’ll pay double,” Prince Cai said. With that, he and Prince Chen simply turned and walked out, clearly bored.

Bai Xiaochun was already feeling quite humiliated, especially considering that the salesman had just glanced at him out of the corner of his eye, clearly delighted to be able to watch this scene play out. Anger rising, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward and loudly declared, “I’ll pay triple!”

Outside, Prince Cai didn’t even turn around before replying, “I’ll pay ten times the original price!”

These two young men were direct bloodline clan members of the Chen and Cai Clan, and were responsible for coming to clear out the souls of the various shops in Giant Ghost City. Although 100,000 wasn’t a very large number when it came to souls, their clan elders’ instructions had been very clear. They had to get as many souls as possible!

Bai Xiaochun was getting angrier. To him, it felt as if someone had slapped him across the face with a pile of money! Just when he was about to continue speaking, his transmission jade slip in his bag of holding began to vibrate. After scanning it with some divine sense, he heard an anxious message from Zhou Yixing.

“Milord, I'm just east of the teleportation portal! Someone’s trying to kill me and steal all the souls I got for you. Help!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0631 awe-chapter-632

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the message, his eyes turned even more bloodshot than before. If Zhou Yixing had merely been involved in a deadly fight, it would have been more acceptable, but to hear that someone was trying to steal his souls was a different matter....

Right now, Bai Xiaochun wanted souls more than just about everything else. And considering that none of the shops in the city had any souls to spare, Zhou Yixing was his last hope.

“I only need to practice five more times and I’ll be able to conjure fourteen-colored flame. As of this moment, anyone who tries to steal souls from me is my enemy!” Enraged, and having no time to argue with the two crown princes, he rushed out and headed in the direction of the teleportation portal.

As soon as he was out in the open, he flew up into the air and hung his Devil Penitentiary command medallion around his neck. Although flying was prohibited in the city, when the patrolling city guards saw his medallion and realized who he was, they simply pretended not to notice him.

He was already relatively close to the teleportation portal, so coupled with the fact that he was flying, it only took him a few breaths of time to reach his destination.

As he rumbled through the air in a beam of light, he attracted quite a bit of attention. Even before he landed, he could see Zhou Yixing to the east of the teleportation portal, a look of desperation on his face as he struggled with a group of a dozen or so cultivators. One of the cultivators in that group... was the very same chief of the Bai Clan whom Bai Xiaochun had captured when fleeing the clan!

Madam Cai was also there, accompanied by a contingent of followers, most of whom were members of the Bai Clan. There were two other soul cultivators present who, based on their clothing, were obviously from two of the other great clans.

As Bai Xiaochun closed in, the clan chief thrust his hand out, causing a black wind to swirl around Zhou Yixing, locking him in place and making it impossible for him to flee.

Seeing Zhou Yixing in such danger, Bai Xiaochun roared, “How dare you, Bai Clan lowlife!!”

As his voice echoed out like heavenly thunder, the group from the Bai Clan turned to see who was approaching. When Madam Cai recognized who it was, she shrieked, “Bai Hao!”

Bai Hao’s father, the clan chief, looked up and began to tremble. As thoughts flashed through his mind regarding how he had been kidnapped, he gritted his teeth and growled, “Bai Hao!!”

The other members of the Bai Clan were all shocked, and were immediately reminded of all the humiliation which had been heaped onto their heads because of Bai Hao.

“It’s Bai Hao!!”

“The patriarch wasn’t able to kill him back then, and he ended up getting taken away by the Giant Ghost King....”

Zhou Yixing was on the verge of tears, his heart gripped by a sensation of imminent crisis. “Help me, milord....”

The clan chief’s eyes burned with rage; a later investigation regarding the murdersoul spikes had led him to Zhou Yixing, and he quickly realized that he was working with Bai Xiaochun. Therefore, after laying eyes on him during this visit to the city, he had immediately attempted to kidnap him.

However, now that Bai Xiaochun had appeared, the clan chief changed his plan. Instead of trying to kidnap Zhou Yixing, he would try to kill him! Snorting coldly, he reached out and made a grasping motion in Zhou Yixing’s direction, causing the black wind to transform into a wind blade.

“We might not be able to touch you because of your status in Giant Ghost City,” he growled, “but that doesn’t mean I can’t kill your follower!!”

Hope had just appeared in front of Zhou Yixing, only to be replaced by the black wind blade, which now slashed down toward him, filling his heart with despair. Although all of these things take some time to describe, they happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Seeing what was happening, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed, and he burst forward with greater speed than ever!

He wasn’t using the Mountain Shaking Bash, he was using... the Undying Hex!!

Anyone observing him would see him become a blur, while to him, his surroundings suddenly slowed down. Then he vanished. Meanwhile, the wind blade was slashing down toward Zhou Yixing, and he was wailing miserably. But then a screaming sound could be heard as Bai Xiaochun suddenly appeared right in front of Zhou Yixing.

There, he reached out and smacked the wind blade.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The wind blade shattered into countless pieces which spun out in all directions. At the same time, the Bai Clan cultivators all stepped back.

Pupils constricting, the clan chief took a step forward, performing an incantation gesture with his right hand as he said, “Feeling suicidal, Bai Hao?!”

Instantly, the wails of ghosts and wolves could be heard as he used his distinctive Bai Clan secret magic, causing his divine sense to transform into countless shadow ghosts that pounced toward Bai Xiaochun.

“I beat you once before, are you really crazy enough to try again?!” Bai Xiaochun shot backward, slamming into the shocked Zhou Yixing to send him tumbling away.

Then, Bai Xiaochun glared at the clan chief as several afterimages appeared, which were none other than his four clones. Even as they appeared out in the open, they simultaneously unleashed a fist strike onto the clan chief!

A huge boom rolled out to fill nearly half of Giant Ghost City. Instantly, numerous beams of light began to shoot in their direction.

“Magical combat is prohibited in Giant Ghost City. Stay your hands immediately!”

“Stop right there!” Voices rang out from the huge giant ghost statue in the middle of the city, as well as streams of shocking divine sense.

Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun and his clones slammed into the clan chief, after which all of them staggered backward.

As for the clan chief, blood was oozing out of his mouth, and he was panting as he glared angrily at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was also backing up, but wasn't hurt. It was even as he pondered the advantages and disadvantages of fighting the Bai Clan inside of Giant Ghost City that the voices and divine sense of the city guards appeared, much to his relief.

Without any hesitation, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “How dare you ambush someone from Devil Penitentiary, old man Bai! This is Giant Ghost City, not your Bai Clan! Brothers from the city guard, I'm Bai Hao from Devil Penitentiary. These people are violating local law. Not only are they ganging up on me, they’re intentionally disrespecting Giant Ghost City!” With that, he grabbed Zhou Yixing and prepared to leave.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was getting away, Madam Cai completely ignored the city guards and shrieked, “Bai Clan cultivators, kill him immediately!!”

The venom in Madam Cai’s eyes couldn’t have been more evident. Her hatred for Bai Xiaochun had reached unimaginable heights. However, the other members of the Bai Clan hesitated, fully conscious of the razor-sharp gazes of the city guards.

Seeing that the Bai Clan cultivators weren’t giving chase, Madam Cai screamed, “Get moving, all of you! Kill him!!”

Then she turned to the nearby Cai Clan cultivator, and was about to say something, when the Bai Clan chief growled, “Shut up!”

It was a mere growl, but it echoed like thunder, causing Madam Cai to shake visibly as she turned to stare at her husband.

Expression very grim, he said, “Giant Ghost King bequeathed that scum with a title. If the deva patriarch had to give him up, then what do you think we can do? Besides, killing is prohibited within the city limits....”

Madam Cai didn’t seem inclined to agree, but had no choice. However, the rage in her heart was so intense that she was shaking violently.

As for the city guards, when they saw that the Bai Clan was standing down, and that Bai Xiaochun was already leaving, they looked around vigilantly for a bit, then left.

Before long, the street had calmed down. The Bai Clan cultivators exchanged awkward glances, and Madam Cai was gnashing her teeth.

Glancing grimly at the fleeing Bai Xiaochun, the clan chief turned to Madam Cai and quietly said, “Just wait a bit longer. Once the heavens change, we’ll have our chance.”

Madam Cai was taken aback, but quickly realized what the clan chief was talking about....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0632 awe-chapter-633

Bai Xiaochun took Zhou Yixing with him as he left the area of the teleportation portal. After checking to make sure they weren’t being followed, they stopped in a random alley to catch their breath. Then Bai Xiaochun finally took a moment to think about how the three great clans had been buying so many souls that he was left with almost nothing to buy. In fact, they had even gone so far as to offer ten times the normal price for some souls just now.

“Complete bullies. Well... Bai Xiaochun is the type of person who knows how to be flexible. I’ll just have to sit back and hold tight!” Considering how terrifying the Bai Clan patriarch was, and the fact that he was temporarily stuck in the Wildlands, he realized that he had no other choice.

It was at this point that Zhou Yixing, aware he had just escaped a disaster, clasped hands and said, “Many thanks, milord. If you had come even a moment later, I... I probably would never have been able to see you again.”

“Sorry to have dragged you into it,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Oh, right. Did you get your hands on all the loot I messaged you about?”

“All of it!” Zhou Yixing replied. But then he grimaced. “Unfortunately... those people from the three great clans... they robbed me clean....”

“What!?” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes widening.

Bai Xiaochun was so angry he felt like exploding. “Complete and utter bullies!” he thought. “Bai Xiaochun is the type of person who knows how to be flexible, but this time, I can’t just sit around and do nothing! This is ridiculous! You big bullies! You’re obviously just trying to take advantage of how honest I am!! The Bai Clan, Cai Clan, and Chen Clan are all full of scoundrels!!”

The more he thought about it, the more angry and humiliated he got. After all, he hadn't robbed anything from the three great clans, and yet they had gone and robbed him! Well... he had robbed the Bai Clan to some extent, but that didn't give the Cai Clan and the Chen Clan the right to do the same.

Zhou Yixing was a bit taken aback at how angry Bai Xiaochun was getting. In recent days, he had often had certain suspicions about what exactly was going on. However, he had never been willing to put too much thought into the matter.

“It doesn’t really matter who this Bai Hao really is....” he told himself, ducking his head.

Anger burning, Bai Xiaochun muttered, “I'm not going to sit around and do nothing!”

Then he gritted his teeth and paced back and forth in thought for a moment. Finally, his eyes began to shine as he thought back to the soulgrounds in the Bai Clan. The so-called soulgrounds were specially-constructed areas filled with auras of death. Such locations were even more well-suited to keeping souls fresh than soulhoarding pagodas. In fact, not only did they keep souls fresh, but they could slowly improve their quality.

All-in-all, with the exception of a few special types of soulhoarding pagodas, there was nothing that could compare to a soulground. Furthermore, soulgrounds could hold more souls overall.

Obviously, it was natural for great clans to have more soulgrounds than average, and from what Bai Xiaochun could remember, the Bai Clan had possessed something like seven or eight. They were all protected by spell formations and guarded by soul cultivators. In fact, they usually contained something called soul sentries, which were special souls that had been transformed into guards. Because of all that, soulgrounds were very difficult places to get into.

Furthermore, even if someone got inside, the vast numbers of souls would usually consume anyone unfamiliar. Besides, stealing souls from soulgrounds would be provoking the three great clans, and no one would ever dare to do something like that.

“They stole my souls, so therefore, I’m going to steal theirs!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and sent Zhou Yixing away with orders to find a place to hole up and keep his head down. Then he headed out of the city. Because he was a guard at Devil Penitentiary, he was allowed to temporarily leave the city if he wished. If he tried to flee completely, he would be brought back, but as long as he didn’t do that, he had a relative measure of freedom.

It was evening by the time he was outside the city, whereupon he carefully headed toward the Chen Clan. Upon arrival, he was able to spot their soulgrounds near the clan itself. However, the area was so rife with souls that he realized that the risk of being spotted was too high. After some thought, he decided it was too dangerous.

“I’ll go check out the other two clans....” Taking advantage of the darkness of night, he headed to the Bai Clan. However, an inspection of their soulgrounds revealed the sad truth that the Bai Clan actually didn’t have many souls stored up.

“If I rob them, they would realize it almost instantly. Besides, I want *a lot* of souls!” With that, he headed toward the Cai Clan.

It was deep into the night by the time he arrived near the Cai Clan’s soulgrounds. There, his eyes began to shine brightly.

The Cai Clan’s soulgrounds were different than the Chen Clan’s. Instead of being set up near the ancestral mansions, they were scattered around rather haphazardly. Some of them were very close to the residences, but others were many kilometers away. Bai Xiaochun even found two that were fully twenty kilometers away from any of the other buildings.

The two soulgrounds were both under the protection of a single spell formation, which glowed with bright light despite the darkness of the night. Based on the fluctuations of the spell formation, even a Nascent Soul cultivator would have a hard time breaking through it.

Furthermore, disturbing the spell formation in any way would alert the Cai Clan.

Inside the spell formation was a building that looked like a huge beehive, covered with countless holes that the souls could fly into and out of. The mere sight of how many souls were present caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp.

Furthermore, some of the souls were at the Nascent Soul level, and there were also some unique and special souls mixed in.... In addition, there were over 10,000 black-armored soul sentries, whose eyes glowed with bright light. The soul sentries were clearly waiting for any unrecognized person to enter the spell formation, whereupon they would attack with deadly force.

Also located within each of the soulgrounds were buildings occupied by Cai Clan soul cultivators. There were only a dozen or so, and they didn’t have very high cultivation bases, but considering that they had the power of the spell formation at their disposal, if anything happened, all they would have to do would be to hold out for a short time before reinforcements from the clan arrived.

Because these two soulgrounds were so close to each other, all of the clan guards had gathered in one of them.

Because of how everything was set up, the soulgrounds of the three great clans were the type of things that outsiders might be able to look at, but would never dare to mess with. However, Bai Xiaochun was different.... As soon as he was able to study the situation, his eyes began to shine.

“You rob me, I rob you right back! Measly soulgrounds. Other people might think it impossible to do anything to them, but for me, it’s going to be simple.... With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun, will reduce them to ashes....” After making some calculations, he took a step forward and instantly pierced through the air. Completely ignoring the defensive spell formation, and not even attracting its attention, he appeared in the middle of the soulground!

It happened so quickly that the Cai Clan guards didn’t have time to react, and as for the patrolling soul sentries, they simply gaped in shock.

The clan guards’ eyes went wide, and they stared at Bai Xiaochun for a moment before one of them said, “You--”

However, before anything else could happen, Bai Xiaochun unleashed a fist strike!

A huge boom rang out as an attack blasted into the Cai Clan cultivators, sending them tumbling backward, blood spraying out of their mouths before they simply lapsed into unconsciousness.

By this point, the soul sentries began to react, letting out piercing screams as they shot toward Bai Xiaochun. However, that was when he stamped his foot down onto the ground, causing ripples to spread out like they would on the surface of a pond when a rock hit it. In reaction, the floating, beehive-like building erupted with screaming sounds as a tide of souls surged out.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding at the sight of so many souls. Excited, he didn’t hesitate for a moment to toss out a Soul Convergence Pill.

“I need speed.... A blitzkrieg strategy!’

Rumbling sounds could be heard as he tossed out more Soul Convergence Pills, creating black holes which instantly sucked in the countless screaming souls, then transformed them into soul spheres.

“This is awesome!! What a goldmine!!” In his excitement, he looked over at the second soulground, and decided that he might as well kill two birds with one stone. After collecting all of his soul spheres, he flashed into motion, appearing in the second soulground, where a similar scene to what had just occurred played out.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0633 awe-chapter-634

Not even the soul sentries could escape. In less time than it takes half an incense stick to burn, two soulgrounds were wiped completely clean of all souls....

Bai Xiaochun was extremely pleased with the number of soul spheres he had ended up with, which was enough to keep him going, at least temporarily.

However, in the moment in which he sucked up the last of the souls, he apparently triggered something in the spell formation, which sent a shining pillar of light up into the sky. Obviously, it was something that the Cai Clan would quickly notice!

“Dammit! Does emptying the soulgrounds set off the spell formation?” Bai Xiaochun thought, his face falling. The bright light of the spell formation was instantly noticed by people in the Cai Clan, who began to utter exclamations of shock as they flew up into the air.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“Is that... is that coming from the soulgrounds!?”

“What’s happened? It looks like a soulground spell formation is flaring up. No wait, two soulgrounds!!” Even the Cai Clan patriarch flew out and hurried in the direction of the soulgrounds.

Jittery with fear, Bai Xiaochun prepared to leave, but then stopped in place.

“Soul Convergence Pills leave evidence behind. If people look into it too closely, they might guess who I really am.... I need to get rid of the evidence. Even if they see me, it won't matter as long as my true identity isn’t revealed.” He quickly pulled out a twelve-colored flame that he had conjured earlier in preparation for another attempt at thirteen-colored flame. Instantly, one of his clones stepped out, and furthered the conjuring process!

Considering how well-practiced he was, and that his clone was helping, everything went very quickly.

However, conjuring flame wasn’t his true goal. Just when the thirteenth color was about to appear, the flame destabilized, thanks to his clone. Then, the fire exploded!

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as bright red clouds appeared overhead. Then, numerous bolts of thirteen-colored flame appeared and began to fall from the sky....

Incomparably intense heat filled heaven and earth, and the two soulgrounds were instantly incinerated.

In fact, not only was the evidence of the Soul Convergence Pills removed, but the spell formations were also destabilized, and began to collapse. Of course, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the type to kill indiscriminately, so he made sure to throw the unconscious Cai Clan cultivators off to a safe location.

Even as the flames spread, Bai Xiaochun transformed into a beam of light that shot away at high speed, filled with the thrill of having robbed the souls he needed and then destroyed the evidence.

“Who told you to go rob my souls? Hmmmphh!” His heart was pounding with the realization that he had just done something big....

However, now was not the time to ponder the situation. Even as he began to speed away, an enraged roar erupted out.

“How dare you meddle with our Cai Clan soulgrounds? Do you have a death wish?!?!” Eight figures appeared out in the open, and began to move with lightning-like speed. One of them was a young man who appeared to be less than thirty years of age, but who had a full head of silver hair, and radiated the aura of the great circle of Core Formation.

There was even a bit of a Nascent Soul feel to him, as though he were so close to the Nascent Soul stage that all he had to do was go into secluded meditation and spend a bit of time, and he would succeed!

In terms of speed, he was already similar to a Nascent Soul cultivator, and as he bore down on Bai Xiaochun, a look of fury could be seen in his eyes. As for the seven cultivators behind him, they were all Core Formation experts, and their faces all shone with rage when they saw the burnt, scorched soulgrounds.

“Are you looking to die?!?!” When they saw Bai Xiaochun fleeing off into the distance, their killing intent erupted with full power.

They were just the first wave to appear. Next were the Nascent Soul clan elders.

Bai Xiaochun was startled at how quickly the Cai Clan reacted, and knew that if he got involved in a protracted fight, he would likely end up with serious injuries. Therefore, he fled at top speed.

Considering the speed he was capable off, he was instantly able to put a huge distance between himself and his pursuers. Then, he simply vanished.

When the silver-haired chosen saw that Bai Xiaochun was about to make his escape, his killing intent grew even stronger. Without the slightest hesitation, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a beast hide, which he threw out in front of him. The beast hide instantly ignited, and as it burned up, the air behind the young man rippled as a shadowy beast appeared.

It was an enormous, two-headed vulture, with a wingspan of several hundred meters. As soon as it appeared, it threw its head back and let loose a piercing cry before flapping its wings and taking to flight. At the same time, the Cai Clan chosen leapt onto its back. Shockingly, the young man was using some unknown technique to follow the evidence of Bai Xiaochun’s passage and track him down.

Bai Xiaochun staggered out into the open roughly five kilometers away. Not pausing for even a moment, he headed at top speed toward Giant Ghost City.

“Gotta speed up. If anyone from the Cai Clan catches me, I’ll be in great danger....” By now, the high he had felt from snatching all the souls was gone, and he was now starting to feel anxiety and fear.

“They forced me to do it....” he thought, wiping the sweat from his brow. As he rocketed through the air in a beam of light, Giant Ghost City got closer and closer. Within a few breaths of time, he would be there! However, that was when an intense whistling sound filled the air, and a blast of wild wind rose up. It was the type of wind that was capable of exterminating the life of anything it touched, and it instantly pierced Bai Xiaochun to the core.

Shivering, he looked over his shoulder, whereupon his eyes went wide at the sight of the enormous two-headed vulture shooting toward him.

On the vulture's back was the young man, his face a mask of fury, and a long, black spear held in his right hand.

“Impertinent thief! How dare you meddle with our Cai Clan soulgrounds! I'm going to kill you in body and soul!!” Then the vulture accelerated as the young man drew on the full power of his cultivation base to shoot toward Bai Xiaochun, spear outstretched.

Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t react to the incredible speed of the vulture. In the blink of an eye, it was right on top of him, and the black spear in the hand of the Cai Clan chosen was stabbing toward him!

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he let out a shout and threw his hands out to defend himself.

BAAAAAAAANG!

Bai Xiaochun flew backward by several hundred meters. When he came to a stop, he examined himself, and then murmured, “I'm not hurt?”

The young man’s attack moments ago had seemed incredible, and Bai Xiaochun had assumed that he would be badly hurt. However, to his surprise, he was completely unscathed.

“Fudge!” he exclaimed in delight. “That vulture is super powerful, but compared to me, it’s totally weak.... I guess it was just its speed that caught me unprepared.”

The young man on the vulture gasped in shock as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. His vulture was capable of speed rivaling the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. Plus, he had been powering his spear with his cultivation base, which meant that he should have been able to seriously injure even someone in the Nascent Soul stage. But this thief ended up unharmed.... Completely shaken, the young man looked more closely at Bai Xiaochun’s face, which caused his eyes to widen.

“You’re... you’re Bai Hao!!"

Because of how he had rebelled against the Bai Clan, Bai Hao’s face was very well known in the area. Although not everyone would recognize him, not even many of the silkpants cultivators of the three great clans, the elite chosen had all seen his picture. Because of the urgency of the situation earlier, this young man hadn’t paid any attention to the person he was dealing with, but now that he took a closer look, he recognized him easily.

Instantly, nervousness gripped his heart; he knew that Bai Hao was a vicious fiend who had captured the chief of the Bai Clan, who was a mid Nascent Soul stage expert. He had even provoked the Bai Clan’s deva patriarch into action. Obviously, he was not the type of person to go around offending.

“Recognize me?” Bai Xiaochun shouted. “Well recognizing me won’t do you any good!”

Shoving his hand out, he sent a blast of wind toward the Cai Clan chosen.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0634 awe-chapter-635

Bai Xiaochun’s true self and his four clones unleashed a storm of magical techniques that covered everything in the area. A tempest of five parts raged around the Cai Clan chosen, converging upon him with deadly power.

The young chosen’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. His aura teetered unstably, and he already regretted how impulsive he had been in giving chase. However, there was no time for thought or planning at the moment. All he could do was turn his vulture around and try to get away as quickly as possible.

Thankfully for him, the vulture was incredibly quick. By the time the storm of magical techniques reached the spot that he had just occupied, he was several hundred meters away. Despite having made it to safety, his heart was still pounding with shock.

Trying to buy time for others from his clan to arrive, he shouted, “The Cai Clan didn't do anything to provoke you, Bai Hao! Why did you have to go and destroy our soulgrounds!?”

Bai Xiaochun frowned. He could tell that this vulture had been conjured by some magical technique, and that it would soon vanish. However, time was something he was very short on right now.

“You Cai Clan people intimidated me and stole my souls!” he shouted. “Hmph! It’s only natural that I would rob you right back!” Aware that now wasn’t the time to worry about one insignificant opponent, Bai Xiaochun turned and shot away at top speed.

The chosen gritted his teeth, then sent his vulture in pursuit. At the moment, he was operating under the assumption that as long as he didn't get too close, he should be safe. Plus, he would be able to keep eyes on the target and make it easier for the Cai Clan patriarch to track him down.

They both sped along as fast as lightning. Bai Xiaochun felt a bit nervous at being followed, but he knew that the vulture was simply too fast. If he turned and tried to fight, his opponent could simply flee, and then he would end up getting involved in a pointless, time-wasting chase.

“I hate bastards like this who rely on speed to get the upper hand. Hmmmphh! Does he really think he can use that bird to keep up with me?” His eyes flashed with cold light, but his face remained expressionless. Continuing to head straight toward Giant Ghost City, he sent out the aura of a Frigid Paragon, although he did it very carefully, so that it wasn’t obvious.

When the intense cold reached the vulture, the Cai Clan chosen shivered. A moment later, his face fell as he realized he should fall back. However, by that point there wasn’t enough time. Bai Xiaochun spun around and said, “Too late!”

With his Frigid Paragon aura spread out in a frigid domain, Bai Xiaochun could teleport as easily as a Nascent Soul cultivator.

Even as his voice echoed out, he vanished, reappearing right on top of the vulture, in front of the Cai Clan chosen. There, he unleashed the Mountain Shaking Bash, launching himself toward the young chosen with terrifying power.

“You--” Having no time to evade, the young man braced himself for impact. His cultivation base was on the very cusp of reaching the Nascent Soul stage, and yet, compared to Bai Xiaochun, he was weak.

A boom rang out as Bai Xiaochun slammed into the young man’s chest, causing blood to erupt out of his mouth. His bones shattered, and he began to slip into death, but it was at that point that a dark yellow light sprang up from a pendant that hung at his neck. Within that light was the power of a deva, which fought back against the attack.

The young chosen coughed up a mouthful of blood as he tumbled backward through the air like a kite with its string cut. The yellow light around him was more than half gone, and his pendant was now covered with cracks.

Clearly, the deva pendant had saved his life. However, if he sustained another such attack, he would not be so lucky. Face ashen and filled with terror, he thought, “Without that life-saving magic the patriarch gave me... I would have been killed just now!! This Bai Hao, he... he almost killed me!!”

The young man was shaking physically, and his courage was gone. Without the slightest hesitation, he fled, completely bereft of any desire to give chase. He now realized that chasing this target was no simple matter; it was risking his life....

“The people from these great clans really have a lot of ways to save their own skins,” Bai Xiaochun thought with a frown. Seeing the young chosen fleeing, he snorted and considered chasing after him. But then, his expression flickered, and he spun and took a step, piercing into the air and vanishing.

Only a few breaths of time later, three beams of light could be seen approaching from behind the terrified Cai Clan chosen. Rumbling sounds could be heard as three old men appeared in the area where Bai Xiaochun had just disappeared.

As soon as the young chosen saw the old men, his face lit up with excitement, and he shouted, “Elders, the thief is Bai Hao! The traitor of the Bai Clan!!”

These three old men were clan elders, with one of them being a grand elder in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. All of them had very grim expressions as they heard the news from the chosen. Afterward, they nodded and continued to give chase.

Meanwhile, a rift appeared at a location near Giant Ghost City, and Bai Xiaochun stepped out into the open. His aura was in chaos because of the anxiety he was feeling, but it was without hesitation that he shot toward Giant Ghost City.

“Dammit, those Cai Clan people are *fast*. I just finished beating the kid, and the grownups showed up almost in the same instant. If they were *really* good though, they’d fight me one on one!”

Just as he was about to enter the city, the three elders from the Cai Clan appeared behind him, moving so quickly that the clouds swirled up above in the sky, and thunderous rumblings filled the air.

When they realized that Bai Xiaochun was about to enter the city, they pushed forward with greater speed, the killing intent in their eyes shining brightly.

“Bai Hao!” one of them shouted. “I don’t care that you have an official position in Giant Ghost City! For robbing our Cai Clan soulgrounds, I'm going to put you to death!!”

His cultivation base was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, causing his words to roll out like a shockwave, a powerful attack that instantly pierced into Bai Xiaochun’s ears.

Too frightened to even look over his shoulder, Bai Xiaochun raced toward the city. The stunned city guards were about to step forward to block his path when he pulled out his Devil Penitentiary command medallion and then roared, “I'm a guard at Devil Penitentiary! The Cai Clan is planning a rebellion! Stop them!!”

As his words echoed out into Giant Ghost City, the expressions on the faces of the city guards flickered dramatically.

Furthermore, as soon as they saw Bai Xiaochun’s command medallion, and the fact that he was being chased by people from the Cai Clan, they were even more stirred into action. As for the three elders, their expressions also flickered.

“That’s complete bullcrap!!”

“The Cai Clan has always served the Giant Ghost King with complete loyalty. Don’t even think of trying to slander us!!”

Bai Xiaochun was elated to see that his tactic was working. Roaring, he pushed forward into the city. The three clan elders tried to chase after him, but the city guards interfered, and soon, more patrolling guards showed up. Were it not for Bai Xiaochun’s slanderous comments earlier, the elders might have tried to kill him anyway. But if they did that now, it could lead to further complications, the mere thought of which left them terrified.

The three elders were forced to swallow their frustration and anger and try to explain things to the city guards. Because of that delay, Bai Xiaochun managed to reach the moat, then used his command medallion to dive down into the waters.

“I betrayed the entire Bai Clan, and yet, they didn’t dare to try to make a move on me once I was in Devil Penitentiary. As for this Cai Clan... all I did was loot two of their soulgrounds. There’s no way they’ll dare to come after me!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he headed toward the stone turtle at the bottom of the moat and beyond it, Devil Penitentiary.

The truth was that his supposition was absolutely correct. After clearing matters up with the city guards, the three elders from the Cai Clan had no choice but to stand at the edge of the moat and look furiously into the waters. Devil Penitentiary... was a place none of them dared to try to enter uninvited.

After a long moment passed, all they could do was stalk away with grim expressions on their faces.

Although matters seemed to have come to an end, the events which had just played out ended up being just as shocking news in the city as Bai Xiaochun’s betrayal of the Bai Clan. Soon, all of the soul cultivators had heard about what happened, and were talking about Bai Hao and the Cai Clan....

“Did you hear? That Bai Hao caused a big scene. He robbed some of the Cai Clan’s soulgrounds, and even burned two of them to the ground!”

“He really knows how to cause trouble. Not only did he turn traitor against the Bai Clan, he also went and provoked the Cai Clan....”

“I heard that some silkpants from the Cai Clan got into an argument with him over some souls, and ended up outbidding him. He got pissed off, and that’s what led to the situation....”

“I can’t believe he went to such lengths over such a small matter.... Not only is Bai Hao completely vicious and cruel, but he seeks revenge over the smallest grievance. I heard he has some amazing divine ability that calls down fire from the heavens....”

Because of all the talk that was spreading, Bai Hao’s reputation grew, and everyone came to learn about his heavenly fire, and his vicious methods.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0635 awe-chapter-636

Now that Bai Xiaochun was back in Devil Penitentiary, it didn’t matter what was happening outside. He quickly returned to his quarters, and after waiting a few days to make sure there were no repercussions from the recent events, he finally breathed a sigh of relief.

“Turns out being a prison guard is very useful. Although the best thing for now would be to avoid any attention. I won’t go out unless absolutely necessary.” Patting his bag of holding excitedly, he couldn’t help but muse that his plan had been very brilliantly executed. “The three great clans rob me, I rob them back! As the old saying goes, *proper behavior is based on reciprocity*! It’s a basic principle of heaven and earth!”

In the days which followed, he went on patrol with Squad 9 and continued to work on the formula for fourteen-colored flame. Time passed. One day, he finally went back into the cellblock alone.

Cellblock D was usually a loud and busy place. Whenever the guards weren’t present, the gray-robed prisoners and the prisoners in the skulls alike would both do whatever they felt like doing.

Even when the guards were present, most of the prisoners ignored them. However, the instant Bai Xiaochun entered the cellblock, everything quieted down.

As soon as he appeared, he clasped his hands behind his back and grandly announced, “I'm on duty today, so you’d all best behave.”

His words caused the gray-robed prisoners to tremble in terror. Many of the prisoners in the skull cells raised their eyebrows in fear.

“Dark inquisitor!!”

“It’s that damned Dark Inquisitor Bai!”

“This guy is vicious and merciless. I’ll never forget the tragic day he interrogated Old Devil Zhou....”

As for the prisoners who had actually been interrogated by Bai Xiaochun at some point in the past, they trembled visibly, and their eyes shone with terror.

All of Cellblock D went silent, and as Bai Xiaochun passed by, not a single person made the slightest sound. After all, he had become very famous recently. Not a single one of the long-time prisoners in Cellblock D had escaped interrogation at his hands.

Most terrifying of all was how mysterious his interrogation methods were. Because of the smoke he used, no one could see clearly what went on. However, people could most definitely hear the terrified screams that emanated out from the smoke, and would never be able to forget them.

Now that Bai Xiaochun was back, the prisoners were all acting very cautiously. None of them wanted to offend him and thus cause problems for themselves. Therefore, they all smiled ingratiatingly, and a crowd of gray-robed prisoners clustered around him to accompany him.

Bai Xiaochun lifted his chin up a bit and enjoyed the awed gazes that were focused on him, musing about how no matter where he went, he always soared to the highest heights.

“I’m just too remarkable,” he thought. “Well, it’s not like that was my goal. I should really be keeping a low profile.” After a while, he waved his hand to dismiss the gray-robed prisoners, then strolled about for a while on his own. Eventually, he found himself in the remote location where he had worked on his flame conjuring before, where he sat down cross-legged.

“This place is perfect. Plenty of room to conjure flame.” Nodding in satisfaction, he set up some restrictive spells, then waved his hand to send out a cloud of smoke. Then, he closed his eyes to meditate.

After reviewing everything he knew about fourteen-colored flame, he opened his eyes and smacked his bag of holding to summon his soulhoarding pagoda. Then, a very serious expression overtook his face as he began to work on conjuring fourteen-colored flame.

As the souls poured out into the open, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then waved his fingers. Immediately, the souls began to shoot toward his palm, where they formed a flame. It started with one color, to which he rapidly added more colors. Before long, he had a thirteen-colored flame, and was moving on to the fourteenth color.

“I’m feeling very confident in being able to succeed with fourteen-colored flame. All I need to do is make a few adjustments to handle some random issues.... I'd say I should be able to get it to work within five tries!”

Immediately, souls began to stream toward his hand, pouring into the fire.

Within moments, another color appeared, the fourteenth. But then, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered as the flame suddenly winked out.

Frowning, he looked at his hand, and then produced another batch of vengeful souls to make another try. Nine days passed in quick succession.

During those nine days, he made four attempts, all of which were failures. However, he didn’t let that disappoint him. He had plenty of souls to work with, and each failure led him to deeper understanding. It was on his tenth day inside the cellblock that he sat there cross-legged, his eyes bloodshot and his hair in disarray, but his expression that of excitement.

“I've resolved all of the issues. This time, I should succeed at making fourteen-colored flame!

“That will put me at the peak of the terrestrial necromancer rank! If I can make fifteen-colored flame, then I’ll be... a celestial necromancer!” His heart swelled with anticipation; he had been in the Wildlands for quite some time now, and understood quite a bit about necromancers. Obviously, even the great clans viewed celestial necromancers as extremely powerful and important.

Beyond that was the earthly rank, which was even more rare. They had incredibly high positions; perhaps not as high as the heavenly kings, but definitely beyond devas.

Eyes sparkling, he took a deep breath and calmed himself. Everything went very smoothly; he started with one-colored flame and worked all the way up to thirteen colors without stopping. Then, he flicked his sleeve, causing a huge group of vengeful souls to fly out. Finally, he let out a shout, and sent the thirteen-colored flame spreading out into a sea of fire.

The souls began to pour into the thirteen-colored fire, a process which took less time than it takes half an incense stick to burn. It was at that point that a fourteenth color appeared!

His heart pounded with excitement, but his hand remained very stable as he sent his divine sense out to control matters. The fourteen-colored fire slowly began to shrink down, during which time his attention was completely focused on the task at hand.

An hour later, he carefully closed his hand into a fist, causing the sea of fire to disappear inside!

Heart leaping inside of him, he slowly opened up his hand, revealing a scintillating, fourteen-colored tongue of flame!

A light shone out that seemed to surpass everything around it, accompanied by terrifying heat.

Although fourteen-colored flame wouldn't be enough to threaten a deva, it was powerful enough to destroy most types of Nascent Soul cultivators!

“It worked! I finally did it!” He laughed out loud with joy. “Next up is fifteen-colored flame. That's definitely going to be very hard. But if I get it to work, then I'll be a celestial necromancer. Although, fire like that won't do me much good unless I increase my battle prowess first....” Suppressing his excitement, he put the fourteen-colored flame away, and then counted how many souls he had left.

“If I perform fourteenfold spirit enhancements on all of the things I possess... then even though I'm not at the Nascent Soul level yet, my battle prowess would still be very high.” The mere thought of that got him excited. After all, he had always been very focused on equipping himself to the max.

Without the slightest hesitation, he decided that he should perform a spirit enhancement. However, before he could even pull out his turtle-wok, he suddenly thought of something. “Wait, there are too many eyes here... even with my mist to conceal myself, I should really be as careful as possible. My wok is a true treasure, and I can’t let anyone see it. Low profile. Low profile! I have to be careful out here in the Wildlands. I can’t make a big scene!”

With that, he waved his hand, dispelling the mist and transforming into a beam of light that shot back toward the entrance of the cellblock.

As he was leaving, there happened to be an old man sitting cross-legged in one of the skull cells off some distance away. He had a red birthmark on his face, and appeared to be like the other prisoners in every aspect. However, as Bai Xiaochun left, he looked up, and a mysterious gleam could be seen in his eyes.

“It wasn’t that long ago that he succeeded with thirteen-colored flame,” he murmured to himself, “and now he can actually conjure fourteen-colored flame.... This kid is quite interesting.” Because Bai Xiaochun had been working in a relatively remote corner, and had set up restrictive spells and his obscuring mist, no one noticed that he had conjured fourteen-colored flame. No one except for this old man.

Moments later, the old man closed his eyes.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0636 awe-chapter-637

After leaving Cellblock D, Bai Xiaochun ran into some soul cultivators from Squad 9, and took some time to chat with them. Later, he ended up back in his quarters.

“It'll still be a while before Squad 9 is back on patrol duty. I should take advantage of the time to perform spirit enhancements on everything I can.” Bai Xiaochun could actually visualize the amazing sight of himself, adorned head to toe with items that had fourteenfold spirit enhancements. He would shine like a magical treasure!

He even laughed proudly for a bit before setting up some spell formations and taking other precautions to ensure his privacy. Next he used the vast numbers of vengeful souls in his soulhoarding pagoda to produce more tongues of fourteen-colored flame. Finally, he pulled out his turtle-wok and set to work performing some spirit enhancements.

The first thing he enhanced was the Eternal Parasol. Upon receiving its fourteenth spirit enhancement, it changed appearance again. The ghost face on the surface of the parasol now had an enigmatic expression that seemed to be laughing and crying at the same time. Furthermore, on the ghost face’s forehead was a long mark that contained, not a third eye, but another ghost face. The mere sight of it left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

“The next step will be a fifteenfold spirit enhancement. That will create a magical item at the deva level.” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone brightly, and he licked his lips. He knew that once an item received a fifteenfold spirit enhancement, it would emanate a deva-like aura. Items like that were rare even in the Wildlands.

After all, despite how much multi-colored flame existed in the Wildlands, the chances of success when performing spirit enhancements were the same. Because of that, it was more common to see lower-level items, but not higher-level items.

If Bai Xiaochun actually did completely equip himself with fourteenfold enhanced items, it wouldn’t be something completely unheard of in the Wildlands. However, it would still be very shocking.

After enhancing the Eternal Parasol, he looked around to confirm that he hadn’t attracted any unwanted attention, then removed his mask and enhanced it before putting it back on. After that, he started working on his other magical items. He enhanced Zhou Yixing’s bow, as well as the powerful arrows he had collected. He also enhanced his flying swords, and some of the other important magical items he had.

At some point, he thought back to how the silkpants from the great clans had been wearing treasured clothing. Not willing to be outdone, he went to the outrageous length of performing fourteenfold spirit enhancements on some of the clothing in his bag of holding....

That was a level of luxury that, if word spread about it, would cause people to go crazy. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun found that he had run out of things to perform spirit enhancements on. He was now at the point that people would definitely go mad if they could see everything he had performed enhancements on. He was now completely equipped with fourteenfold enhanced items.... At this point, he could definitely be described as being armed to the teeth.

“If I ran into that Bai Clan deva patriarch now, I could probably kill him if I really wanted to!” Laughed heartily, he examined his souls, and found that he had only gone through a bit more than half of his supply.

“Although I can’t increase my cultivation base right now, my battle prowess is much higher than before. If I could only conjure fifteen-colored flame, and be equipped with fifteenfold spirit enhanced items... then any deva who ran into me would be flabbergasted! Yeah, that would be the best. Shock them to death! Then I wouldn’t have to fight. Hahahahaha....” Although he was extremely pleased, he also knew that flaunting one’s wealth was a good way to get into trouble. His mask could keep his general power level a secret, but he still took the time to cover up the golden designs on all of his items.

With that, he sat down cross-legged and used Bai Hao’s research notes to start contemplating the formula for fifteen-colored flame.

Soon, seven days passed, during which time he was completely focused on fifteen-colored flame.

To any necromancer clan, being able to conjure fifteen-colored flame was extremely important. Although Bai Hao’s notes contained information about fifteen-colored flame, that information wasn’t complete. Fifteen-colored flame was extremely difficult, so much so that during his seven days of research and contemplation, Bai Xiaochun was left stunned.

If one were to use numbers to describe the difference in difficulty between fourteen-colored flame and fifteen-colored flame, the former would have a difficulty level of ten, and the latter, one hundred!

Considering that fifteen-colored flame was ten times as difficult, that meant that the two types of flame were as vastly separated as heaven and earth. In fact, fifteen-colored flame was like an obstacle to virtually all terrestrial necromancers in the Wildlands.

Success with it would make someone a celestial necromancer, of which there were only a few dozen in all of the Wildlands. From that alone it could be seen how difficult fifteen-colored flame was to conjure.

Unfortunately, there was nothing Bai Xiaochun could do about that other than to focus on his research and augury. Eventually, he reached the point of being confident enough to perform some initial tests. But after another three days passed, he ended up tugging at his hair in frustration. He had now spent ten days of research and augury on fifteen-colored flame, and was left with nothing to show for it but a frown.

It was at that point that he heard the captain of Squad 9 talking outside, and he seemed to be bursting with joy.

“Get out here, Bai Hao. Something big is going down!”

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun walked outside to find the captain standing there looking very happy.

“What’s going on, Captain?” Bai Xiaochun said, stifling a yawn. “Is there a new prisoner or something?”

“Exactly, it's a new prisoner. However, he’s not being sent to Cellblock D. Furthermore, the person requesting your presence regarding this new prisoner is the warden himself!” With that, he grabbed Bai Xiaochun and began to drag him away.

“The warden?” Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped as he thought back to Li Xu, who he had met outside the moat back when he had first arrived. “Could it be that since the Giant Ghost King isn't paying much attention to me, the Cai Clan or the Bai Clan is trying to cause trouble?” he thought. However, considering how happy the captain seemed, that didn’t seem likely.

Stopping in place, he asked, “Captain, what exactly is going on?”

“Something great! Something wonderful!” The captain laughed heartily, but could also see that Bai Xiaochun was feeling a bit nervous. Pulling him back into motion, he started into a detailed explanation.

Soon, everything became clear to Bai Xiaochun....

According to the captain, a new prisoner had arrived recently in Cellblock A. Apparently, this prisoner was very, very important, and getting him to talk was such a vital matter that the warden himself had taken an interest in the matter.

This new prisoner was very tight-lipped, so much so that not even the dark inquisitors from the four cellblocks had been able to get him to utter a single word. Because he was a Nascent Soul cultivator, performing a soulsearch on him wouldn’t be very effective, and would likely end up killing him. Therefore, this new prisoner had become a thorn in the side of Devil Penitentiary as a whole.

The warden was under a lot pressure because of the situation, and had flown into a rage a few times because of it. Unfortunately, despite using all the methods at their disposal, the four dark inquisitors had come up with nothing.

Having hit a dead end, the deputy warden of Cellblock D, Sun Peng, had pointed out that Bai Hao was very skilled at performing interrogations. He even explained how he had forced all the long-time prisoners in Cellblock D to give up their information.

Normally, a matter this important wouldn’t end up being revealed to Bai Xiaochun. However, Li Xu was out of options, and when Sun Peng mentioned Bai Hao, he remembered that he was somewhat important. Being desperate, he decided that he might as well give this Bai Hao a shot.

“Bai, my boy, this is a good opportunity!” the captain said excitedly. “If you can get this prisoner to talk, you’ll become the number one dark inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary!” The captain had complete confidence in Bai Xiaochun, and was sure that nobody in the world could remain tight-lipped in his presence.

“Although being the number one dark inquisitor doesn’t come with a formal appointment, according to the rules of Devil Penitentiary, as long as all four cellblocks agree on the matter, then it will be official. The number one dark inquisitor has a standing just beneath the warden, and is just as powerful as the deputy wardens!

“If you succeed, you’ll achieve a meteoric rise! In fact, you would be able to get access to the wealth of the long-time prisoners in the other three cellblocks. When that happens, just don’t forget about your old squad in Cellblock D!” Talking excitedly the whole way, the captain dragged Bai Xiaochun toward Cellblock A.

Now that Bai Xiaochun understood everything, he breathed a sigh of relief. As long as the Bai and Cai Clans hadn't come for him, he had nothing to be afraid of. In fact, considering it was merely a matter of an interrogation, he wasn't worried at all.

"Ah, this is nothing. Don't worry, Captain, there are no secrets that I can't uncover." Sticking his chin up proudly, he hurried along with the captain toward Cellblock A.

Cellblock A looked very similar to Cellblock D. However, it was much larger, and also much more sinister. It was filled with a cold, frightening aura, and the guards' quarters were filled with powerful soul fluctuations. Clearly, practicing cultivation here would be very beneficial.

In the square in the middle of Cellblock A, there was a huge skull containing a middle-aged man in tattered clothing. There was someone else in the cage, holding the man up by the neck, and yet, the prisoner still had a look of disdain in his eyes. For some reason, he looked familiar to Bai Xiaochun.

Quite a group of people had gathered outside the cage. There was Sun Peng from Cellblock D, who was flanked by three sinister-looking old men, who were none other than the deputy wardens from the other cellblocks.

There were four other cultivators as well, some of them old, some of them young. However, without exception, they all had cold, sinister auras. It almost seemed like walking into their midst would be like walking into a pit of vipers!

Bai Xiaochun only recognized one among that group of four, him being the dark inquisitor of Cellblock D. Based on that, it seemed obvious that the other three were the number one inquisitors from the other cellblocks, the dark inquisitors.

In addition to them, a large group of Cellblock A guards were present.

In addition to everyone mentioned so far, there was the person holding the prisoner by the neck. He was none other than... Warden Li Xu!

When Li Xu sensed new arrivals, he loosened his grip on the prisoner and turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

The look in his eye was as vicious as a wolf’s and as sharp as a blade!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0637 awe-chapter-638

Li Xu’s gaze was so intense that Bai Xiaochun subconsciously shrunk back. Although Li Xu wasn't a deva, he was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and coupled with the fact that he was the warden of Devil Penitentiary, it made him seem like the sinister type of individual who could erupt with incredible power at any moment.

“Bai Hao, if you can get this prisoner to talk, you’ll be named the number one dark inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary! And if you can't, then you can get your ass out of here and figure out how to handle your own problems without our help!” Li Xu’s patience had clearly been worn thin in recent days. Furthermore, he only had two more days to get the information he needed out of this prisoner, otherwise he would be in big trouble.

That only served to increase his irritation. Furthermore, he had to be careful not to kill this particular prisoner. After all, some discreet inquiries had confirmed that it was the Giant Ghost King himself who had issued orders for the prisoner to be sent here for interrogation.

When the captain of Squad 9 heard the warden’s demand, his face fell. Sun Peng was also taken aback. After all, Sun Peng had recommended Bai Hao, and yet, Li Xu seemed to be turning what was supposed to be a good situation into the opposite.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, his brow furrowed as he looked over at Li Xu.

The other three deputy wardens and the dark inquisitors all looked on with expressionless faces. However, inside, most of them were chuckling coldly, especially the dark inquisitors from the other three cellblocks. They were all proud people, and considering that they had already failed with their own interrogations, they were convinced that calling on this young punk was a complete waste of time.

“Can you get him to talk?! If not, then you can just get the hell out of Devil Penitentiary this instant!” Li Xu’s voice was cold and tyrannical, and was met with complete silence by everyone else in the room. Sun Peng sighed inwardly, and the captain of Squad 9 was trembling, and didn’t dare to speak.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very pleased by the situation. He knew that Li Xu didn’t like him very much, but it wasn’t as though he had asked to come here. He had been called!

“Venting his anger on me, huh?” he thought. “Is he trying to use this situation as an excuse to kick me out of Devil Penitentiary?”

It was a problematic situation. After all, if he got kicked out of Devil Penitentiary, he would have the Cai and Bai Clans to deal with. Considering the difficulties that would be involved in that situation, he decided that he would be best served by enduring his current lot.

Therefore, he slowly walked forward toward the skull cell, where he looked a bit more closely at the man inside. He had seemed familiar earlier, and now, after examining him up close, he realized that he was one of the three Cai Clan elders who had chased him here to begin with.

The elder recognized Bai Xiaochun, and despite having disheveled hair and blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth, he still looked at him with the same expression of disdain as before. Despite how he had clearly been bruised and beaten, the killing intent in his eyes was clear. He even went so far as to hawk up a mouthful of bloody spittle and spit it onto Bai Xiaochun's robe.

Bai Xiaochun waved his robe to remove the spittle from it, then looked at Li Xu and said, "Who exactly is this, Warden?"

When Li Xu saw how calmly Bai Xiaochun was acting, he snorted coldly and said, "You don't qualify to know who he is! I just need answers. Can you get him to talk? If not, then just screw off!"

The truth was that he really was using this situation as an excuse to kick Bai Xiaochun, who he had never liked from the very beginning, out of Devil Penitentiary.

Considering that there were so many people around, Bai Xiaochun couldn't maintain his cool any longer. Anger flaring, he looked at Li Xu and said, "Warden, if you want me gone, just say the word. There's no need to do it this way. You want me to get him to talk? How exactly? You won't even tell me who he is, and yet expect me to conduct a thorough interrogation? Screw this! If you don't want me around, then I'll just leave!" He flicked his sleeve. "However, know this: other than Bai Hao, nobody in Devil Penitentiary will be able to get this guy to talk!"

Chuckling coldly, he turned to leave.

Bai Xiaochun was fully aware that his words would be insulting to the other dark inquisitors. However, considering that Li Xu had caused trouble for him for no reason at all, he felt he had no choice. Even worse, Li Xu was trying to use this situation as an excuse to kick him out of Devil

Penitentiary! Therefore, if he wanted to fight back, he needed to act wildly self-confident.

“If Li Xu is really that anxious about this matter, he’ll definitely keep me around. If not, then I guess I screwed myself. Did you really set this whole thing up to kick me out, you bastard?” Even as he began to walk away, a cold voice rang out behind him.

“He's one of the elders from the Cai Clan. I want to know what types of souls they have used in their clan for cultivation and flame conjuring purposes in recent years, and also how many!” Although Li Xu’s voice was still ice cold, his wording was slightly more polite than before.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place. Based on what Li Xu had just said, it seemed he really did want the answers to those questions, and wasn’t just using the situation to target Bai Xiaochun.

“An elder from the Cai Clan,” he thought, “captured and brought to Devil Penitentiary....” He looked at the man in the cage, and suddenly, numerous puzzle pieces clicked together in his mind.

“What types of souls, and how many?” he said out loud. There didn’t seem to be any hidden meaning to the question. The difficulty would lie in making sure that the Cai Clan elder didn’t withhold any information, or give incorrect information.

Sounding slightly annoyed, Li Xu said, “Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. Earth. Those are the five different properties souls can have. The other four dark inquisitors all asked him this question earlier, and each one came out with a different answer. Therefore, you need to get proof that the answer he gives is true. As for how you prove that, it will depend on your skill.”

Bai Xiaochun walked back to the skull cell and looked at the Cai Clan elder. Obviously, if he had moved any slower when this man and his two fellow elders had been chasing him recently, they would have killed him. Therefore, he didn’t feel the slightest bit of compassion for the man.

One thing he had learned in his time here in Devil Penitentiary was that although the three great clans seemed to be allied with each other, that was mostly because of external factors, over which they had little control.

Then he thought back to how the Giant Ghost King had saved him from the Bai Clan, and suddenly, a new idea formed in his mind.

“The Giant Ghost King obviously doesn’t get along with the three great clans. But what makes the three clans think they can pick a fight with a demigod?! And considering the level of the Giant Ghost King’s cultivation base, why doesn’t he just wipe them off the map?” Bai Xiaochun very much wanted to know the answer to this question.

Considering that Li Xu was standing there waiting for an answer, Bai Xiaochun knew he had no choice in the matter. If he wanted to survive in the Wildlands, he needed to pick a side. The Giant Ghost King? Or the three great clans?

Once he made his choice, he had to stick to it. In the end... he didn’t need to spend a lot of time thinking about which option to pick. Eyes flickering with cold light, he opened the door of the cell and stepped inside.

At the same time, he sent black smoke flowing out of his palm, which spread out into the cell and made it impossible to see inside. Not even Li Xu, who was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, could see past the obscuring mist that Bai Xiaochun’s mask could create.

Cellblock D’s dark inquisitor was familiar with Bai Xiaochun, and stood there silently. As for the other dark inquisitors, they all thought that Bai Xiaochun thought too much of himself, and chuckled even more coldly than before.

Smiling icily, they began to transmit a conversation between themselves.

“He's just being deliberately mystifying. Let’s see what supposed skills he has. Does he really think he can get this guy to talk when we couldn’t?!”

“There's no need to even ponder the question. Of course he’s just putting on an act. He’ll definitely just come up with some random answer.”

“Hmph! One of us definitely got the right answer out of him already. There’s really no need for the warden to ask again!”

Li Xu frowned, but in his anxiety, all he cared about was Bai Xiaochun getting the right answers. As long as he got the truth out of the Cai Clan elder, Li Xu could accept any situation.

Inside of the cell, Bai Xiaochun looked at the Cai Clan elder and sighed.

“Just tell me what I want to know,” he said. “After all, when I ask questions, I frighten even myself.”

Eyes burning with killing intent, the clan elder spat on Bai Xiaochun and then said, “If you hadn’t run as fast as you did, you little bastard, then I would have crushed you to death! Now that you’ve provoked the Cai Clan, you've guaranteed an early death for yourself!”

“Is it really that fun to go around spitting on people all the time?” Bai Xiaochun said. Irritated at having been spit on twice, he slapped his bag of holding to produce... a handful of Aphrodisiac Pills.

“Tight-lipped? Let’s see if you dare to keep your mouth shut after this!”

Outside of the cell, enough time passed for a bit less than half an incense stick to burn. Then, hoarse screams echoed out that seemed to contain pent-up emotions.

The three dark inquisitors were shocked, and quickly began to transmit another conversation.

“From the nature of the screams, it seems this Bai Hao does have a bit of skill after all. And yet, to get people to howl in pent-up fashion like this is something we could do with our eyes closed.”

Clearly, they were still just as disdainful as before.

As for the captain of Squad 9, as soon as he heard that scream, his eyes brightened. As of this moment, he felt as if all of his confidence was being confirmed.

Li Xu’s expression was still grim, but inside, he was anxiously contemplating the potential for both loss and gain.

Even as different thoughts ran through everyone’s minds, the screams from inside the cell grew more intense, filling up with indescribable rage.

“You will die in pain, Bai Hao!! I’m going to kill you! If you hadn’t been fast enough last time, I would have ripped you to pieces!”

Apparently, the Cai Clan elder was attempting to use this method of angry cursing to alleviate the indescribable pain and torment he was undergoing.

“Aaaaghhhhhhhh....”

The screams intensified over the course of an entire hour. Everyone outside the cell was panting, and as for the three dark inquisitors, they continued to exchange shocked glances. Warden Li Xu’s eyes shone brightly, and there was little need to mention the surrounding guards from Cellblock A. Everyone was completely shocked.

“Just what exactly is Bai Hao doing in there...? How could he provoke such screams of pent-up emotion...?”

“Heavens! Even just the sound of it is bone-chilling....”

“Even more terrifying is that, despite how much time has passed, the screams only continue to grow more bitter, and the victim’s life force is actually growing more abundant.... This... this is unimaginable!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0638 awe-chapter-639

Another hour flew by, and the screams continued, growing more bitter as the time passed. It was a tragic and brutal scene. The guards outside the cage, despite having served in Devil Penitentiary for many years, and having seen many, many things, were completely and utterly shaken.

By this point, the screaming no longer contained curses at Bai Xiaochun. They were simple cries of misery, the type that came out so freely, and were filled with such madness and intensity, that everyone who heard them felt chilled to the bone.

Because of the black smoke that filled the cage, it was impossible to see exactly what was going on inside, which only served to make the situation even more dramatic. The ordinary guards were shocked, and even the four dark inquisitors were having trouble breathing normally, and their faces were covered with very serious expressions.

Li Xu’s eyes shone brightly with both anticipation and nervousness.

As everyone waited outside, Bai Xiaochun was inside the cage, frowning at the trembling Cai Clan elder. The man’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and blue veins bulged out on his face and neck as he glared at Bai Xiaochun. Despite the fact that he was screaming miserably, his eyes radiated madness.

“Clever,” Bai Xiaochun murmured. “Using the screams to vent the pressure from inside, huh?” He snorted coldly. This Cai Clan elder wasn’t the only person to have come up with such a method. During his time interrogating some of the other monsters in Devil Penitentiary, Bai Xiaochun had seen this on a few occasions.

Clasping his hands behind his back, he stuck his chin up and said, “I advise you to simply talk. We both have our orders to follow, and I really don’t want to use my method number two! Method number two isn’t completely unparalleled under heaven, but it’s close.”

“Screw off!!” the Cai Clan elder roared, his expression vicious, as if he wished to eat Bai Xiaochun alive. He even went so far as to spit out another glob of blood-laced spittle.

“Old bastard!” Bai Xiaochun said with a glare. “Fine. Time to show you method number two!” His right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he waved his finger at the elder, causing a sealing mark to settle down onto his mouth.

The instant the elder’s mouth was sealed, he was no longer able to emit a single scream! Everything was now stuck inside of him!

This method made it impossible for him to vent through screaming. Instantly the elder began to shake violently. His eyes became even more bloodshot than before, and as he struggled, he felt a sensation like burning fire growing within him. Unfortunately for him, there was no way to release that fire. He began to sweat profusely. It felt like he was both being burned alive and simultaneously trampled by countless ants. The sensation was almost impossible to describe with words.

The sight caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to twitch, and his heart to pound. However, this man had tried to chase him down and kill him. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun was working for Giant Ghost King now, and showing mercy in this situation would not only earn the ire of those above him, but it could also get him killed.

“Sometimes in life you just have to make some compromises,” he thought.

Sighing, he squatted down in front of the Cai Clan elder and said, “Just talk, alright? If you don’t make things hard for me, then of course I won’t make things hard for you. That would be better all around!

“All I want to know is how many souls the Cai Clan has used in the past few years, and what types. It's a simple question.” As Bai Xiaochun spoke, the madness in the Cai Clan elder’s eyes grew more intense. His glare was so brutal that it seemed he would gladly die if it meant being able to take Bai Xiaochun along with him.

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun stood up and stepped back a few paces. Everyone outside the cell continued to observe, surprised that the screaming had stopped, only to be replaced by muffled grunts.

The ordinary guards present weren’t inquisitors, and thus weren’t aware of the serious implications of the silence. Therefore, they were merely surprised. However, the four dark inquisitors’ pupils constricted, and they exchanged serious glances.

“Making prisoners scream is something that ordinary inquisitors do. But preventing them from screaming is another level altogether....”

“Many people understand that general truth, but it's difficult to understand exactly how and when to use such methods....”

“It’s hard to say how this Bai Hao did it, but the previous screaming clearly contained a pent-up pressure that needed to be vented. Now, he’s essentially plugged up the volcano! The next time it erupts, it will be shocking. We underestimated this Bai Hao!”

Li Xu’s eyes were shining brightly. As the warden, he knew a lot about the methods of inquisitors, and therefore, couldn’t help but quiver in anticipation.

The muffled grunts continued for more than two hours before stopping. By that point, the group outside the cell couldn’t help but tremble in uncertainty about what was happening.

Inside the cell, Bai Xiaochun was looking in shock at the Cai Clan elder, who was shaking and twitching, his skin bright red. Despite the madness in his eyes, he was still aware of his surroundings.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the man with utmost sincerity and said, “You’ve lasted longer than anyone I've ever seen. Alright, listen. I have a method number three, but I really don’t want to use it. Why don’t you just tell me what you know...?”

The Cai Clan elder looked back at him and nodded.

Bai Xiaochun was surprised, but quickly stepped forward and performed an incantation gesture to remove the seal from the elder’s mouth. The elder instantly coughed up a huge mouthful of blood, which he directed at Bai Xiaochun. Then, he let out a manic howl that was filled with deranged laughter.

“Is that all you’ve got, Bai Hao?! Why don’t you try this on for size? I’ll tell you something you probably don't know. You know who really killed your mother? It was a daughter of the Cai Clan. That’s right, it was your father’s first wife! Your mother was in the middle of sewing some clothes for you when she died, and let me tell you, it was a horrific death!” The Cai Clan elder let out a string of maniacal laughter.

As for Bai Xiaochun, a tremor ran through him.

“Your mother wasn’t the only one to die, either. Her whole clan was wiped out! Every last one of them. Even the other servant girls who were friends with your mother were executed. The only reason you weren’t killed was because you had Bai Clan blood in you!

“Your mother was a servant girl, a useless nobody. If she never got pregnant, it wouldn’t have mattered, but not only did she get pregnant, she dared to keep living afterward! That’s worthy of the death penalty! The true person responsible for your mother’s death is you! If you hadn’t come along, your mother would still be alive!” More raving laughter spilled out of the Cai Clan elder’s mouth, and his eyes burned with madness. He knew that the words he had just uttered would be profoundly upsetting, but he said them anyway.

Bai Xiaochun sucked in a breath, and his eyes instantly began to shine with killing intent. Of course, everyone on the outside could hear what had just been said.

Li Xu’s face fell, and he shouted, “Bai Hao, you mustn’t kill him!”

He was just preparing to step forward into the cell when Bai Xiaochun’s voice could be heard. “Trying to upset me so much that I just kill you? You really think I would fall for that?!”

Inside the cage, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with cold light. Although he wasn't actually Bai Hao, the words the clan elder had just spoken caused his anger to burn. After speaking, he simply stood there and stared at the laughing Cai Clan elder.

The look in his eye shook the clan elder to the core, and he suddenly stopped laughing.

Ignoring the elder, Bai Xiaochun walked out of the cell, where he instantly became the focus of all attention. Li Xu was about to say something, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun waved his sleeve and said,

“I need an instrument of torture, immediately!”

“Don't get impulsive, Bai Hao,” Li Xu said sternly. “He mustn’t die before confessing....”

“Oh, don't worry, Warden. I wouldn't give him such an easy death.” The casual way Bai Xiaochun spoke those words made them like a vile wind that stabbed into the ears of everyone present, filling them with fear.

Li Xu looked long and hard at Bai Xiaochun, then said, “What torture instrument do you want?”

“A big black dog,” he replied grimly. “Male. The stronger the better!”

Everyone was surprised by his request. However, Li Xu merely frowned before giving the orders. Before long, a black dog was brought in, a huge beast that was nearly the size of a young ox.

It was a vicious-looking thing, with sharp yellow teeth and bulging muscles. Saliva dripped down its chin as it looked around with ferocious eyes.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the dog, he nodded and then led it by the leash into the cage. When the Cai Clan elder saw the dog, his expression flickered, and he screamed, “What are you doing, Bai Hao?!?!”

“Oh nothing. You’re refusing to tell me what you know, right? Fine then. I’ll stop asking.” Smiling coldly, he took out an Aphrodisiac Pill and fed it to the black dog. Then, after a moment of thought, he pried open the mouth of the shocked Cai Clan elder and shoved an entire handful of the pills inside.

Earlier, he had been reluctant to do this, but after what the Cai Clan elder had just said, the hatred in Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to burn hotter than ever. “This is method number three, a method which no one can endure. If you can handle it, then when the process is over, we’ll find an even more ferocious animal for you to enjoy.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0639 awe-chapter-640

The sight of the snarling black dog struck profound fear into the heart of the Cai Clan elder. Furthermore, because of the large quantities of Aphrodisiac Pills which had just been stuffed into his mouth, he could tell that he was about to lose control of himself.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had not yet released the dog caused the elder’s heart to fill with a profound sensation of torment. He already regretted having intentionally upset Bai Xiaochun.

For the first time, a look of hesitation appeared in the elder’s eyes....

“Look, let’s just talk things over, Bai Hao. I can--”

Before he could say anything else, Bai Hao interrupted, “I don’t want to hear it.”

Then he released his grip on the dog's leash. The dog immediately howled and pounced on the Cai Clan elder.

The crowd gathered outside the cell then heard screams the likes of which they had never heard before in their entire lives. The bitterness surpassed any scream they could even imagine.

They were screams that seemed to contain the most ultimate type of pain possible....

The guards of Cellblock A were all gasping and trembling, and each and every one of them was thinking the same thing: *don’t ever provoke Bai Hao!*

The dark inquisitors’ faces flickered with various emotions as they looked at the cell. Although they couldn’t see what was happening, the things they imagined were happening left them indescribably shaken.

“How brutal....”

“Who can endure pain like that? It’s not just physical, it’s psychological! A majestic Nascent Soul cultivator and proud elite member of the Cai Clan is being broken right in front of us....”

“This Bai Hao really is a vicious person. The fact that he’s using methods like this shows that he’s... he’s really a dark inquisitor! His heart has been consumed by the darkness!”

Li Xu’s eyes were wide, and he felt a chill going up his spine. Only now did he realize that Bai Hao really was as the rumors said: vicious and merciless, willing to go to any lengths to get what he wanted....

The screams of the elder mixed with the howling of the black dog, causing the hair of the guards in Cellblock A to stand on end. Thankfully for them, the process didn't last long, only a few dozen breaths’ worth of time. At that point, the screams of the Cai Clan elder turned into discernible words.

“I’ll talk! I’ll talk.... Wood-type souls! We used almost no wood-type souls! Almost none.... Make it stop! Make it stop....”

Not only did the Cai Clan elder reveal the information Li Xu had asked for, he began to reveal more information of his own accord. In the end, he let out a shriek of despair as he revealed a final important detail. “The three great clans are planning a rebellion....”

By this point, the Cai Clan elder was in so much pain he wished he could die. The torture had pushed him to the breaking point, and he had revealed all the information he knew. And yet, the screams still didn’t stop.

When the group outside the cell heard his last statement, their expressions flickered, and Li Xu’s eyes began to shine with a terrifying light.

“The three great clans are planning a rebellion?!”

“What gives the three great clans the courage to rebel against the Giant Ghost King!?!?”

As everyone reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun walked out of the cell, his expression grim. He didn’t say anything; he just looked at Li Xu for a moment, and then left.

There was no need for him to say anything. Everyone had heard the confession, and knew that if what the Cai Clan elder had just said was a fabrication, then getting the truth out of him would be impossible.

Li Xu watched Bai Xiaochun leave. Earlier, he had harbored some ill feelings toward him, but they were gone now, replaced by profound admiration.

“Now *that* is a *real* dark inquisitor!” Li Xu was convinced that most of what the Cai Clan elder had just said was true. The fact that he had confessed to a planned rebellion on the part of the three great clans, of which he was a member, was all the proof that was needed.

The four dark inquisitors watched Bai Xiaochun as he left, their eyes shining with reverence. Deep in their hearts, they knew that in terms of interrogation, his skills actually went beyond the dark inquisitor level.

At this point, Li Xu tore his gaze from Bai Xiaochun's retreating form, and looked around the room coldly. "Nobody is allowed to speak a word of what they heard today!"

The deputy wardens immediately realized the gravity of the situation, and began to issue further orders.

Devil Penitentiary operated on a relatively autonomous level, and if they wanted to prevent information from leaving, it was a relatively simple thing.

In order to make sure there were no slipups, Li Xu ordered a full lockdown of the entire prison. No one was permitted in or out without his express permission.

After making all the necessary arrangements, Li Xu left Devil Penitentiary and headed to Duke Deathcrier's grand hall on the giant ghost statue.

As for the Cai Clan elder, he wasn't very important anymore, and had been left sealed in his skull cell....

Bai Xiaochun had already returned to Cellblock D, and was in his quarters, frowning as he thought about the information he had learned from the Cai Clan elder. Not only did he feel more sympathy than ever for Bai Hao's fate, but he was also very curious about the rebellion that had been mentioned.

"What secret weapon do the three great clans have that gives them the courage to plan a rebellion?" Although Bai Xiaochun had never seen a demigod in action, he knew that the difference between devas and demigods was vast!

For example, in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, there were many devas, but only one demigod expert. A demigod could crush devas with impunity. And yet, the three great clans of Giant Ghost City were willing to rebel against a demigod!

Of even greater significance was the fact that this area was home to all of their clans. If they planned to rebel, then they had to kill that demigod if they hoped to survive!

“There are obviously some big secrets that I’m unaware of. Could it be that there’s some conspiracy afoot that is causing the Giant Ghost King to hold back from taking action?” Bai Xiaochun felt as confused about the situation as if he were trying to study flowers in the fog.

“The three great clans must have *something* that gives them the confidence to succeed. But what?” As Bai Xiaochun was lost in his thoughts, Li Xu was offering a deep bow to Duke Deathcrier in his grand hall on the giant ghost statue.

“Duke Deathcrier, I’m here to report on the matter of how many souls the Cai Clan--”

Before Li Xu could even finish his sentence, Duke Deathcrier interrupted, “Don't tell me. I’ll take you directly to his highness the king!”

Duke Deathcrier immediately sped into motion, heading toward the royal palace located on the head of the huge statue.

Excited, Li Xu followed along. No one stopped the two of them as they hurried on their way, and before long, they were there in the royal palace. At the highest level of the palace, in a towering pagoda, was the tall, sturdily-built Giant Ghost King.

“Greetings, Your Highness!” the two of them said simultaneously.

The Giant Ghost King stood there looking down on the sprawling city down below, a strange light glowing in his eyes. It was almost as if he could see through everything to observe all secrets with those eyes. After a moment passed, he said coolly, “Well? What was the result?”

Li Xu couldn’t stop himself from trembling. Calming himself, he pulled out a jade slip, which he respectfully offered to the Giant Ghost King.

It was impossible to say how he did it, but Giant Ghost King caused the jade slip to fly through the air and land in his hand. After he looked at it for a moment, his eyes glittered, and the jade slip transformed into ash.

The sight caused Li Xu’s heart to pound, and he bowed his head nervously. Although he was confident that the information in the jade slip was mostly true, if there were any inaccuracies, he would be the one to take responsibility.

After another moment passed, the Giant Ghost King said, “The two of you are dismissed.”

Li Xu breathed a sigh of relief, and looked out of the corner of his eye at Duke Deathcrier. Duke Deathcrier’s expression hadn’t changed the entire time, but he had also been very nervous during the meeting. Without any hesitation, Li Xu and Duke Deathcrier both left.

After they left, the Giant Ghost King looked out over the city, glancing at the area where the ten marquises resided, and then in the directions of each of the three great clans. Finally, a smile broke out on his face.

“So, the interrogation revealed the rebellion plan.... Wood-type souls were used the least... just as I had expected.... The three great clans are using the matter of the Hell-Emperor’s successor as an excuse to build up souls. They’re definitely holding nothing back.

“Generally speaking, all five types of souls should be used relatively equally. There shouldn’t be a situation in which one type of soul is rarely used....

“Based on all this, it seems that those three bastard patriarchs have figured out the details of the technique I cultivate. They know about my decay period....

“During the decay period, my cultivation base will drop rapidly.... Most importantly, during that time, large amounts of wood-type souls could be used to significantly reduce my overall power....

“That would be the only time they would have a chance at succeeding. I know that I can fully trust Duke Deathcrier. However, as for the other four dukes, and the ten marquises, I'm very curious to see which ones harbor evil intentions. This time, we’ll find out once and for all.” The Giant Ghost King smiled broadly, and a touch of scorn could be seen in his eyes. As far as he was concerned, the three great clans, as well as his subordinates, the five dukes and ten marquises, were all like bugs.

“This Bai Hao isn’t bad, though. Loves to cause trouble... has incredible talent in flame conjuring....” Smiling, the Giant Ghost King continued to contemplate how to use Bai Hao as a pawn in his little game.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0640 awe-chapter-641

The fact that an elder from the Cai Clan had gone missing didn’t cause a huge commotion. The Cai Clan didn’t even seem to have noticed, and also didn’t look into the matter very deeply.

It was the same in Giant Ghost City, where life went on like it usually did....

The Giant Ghost King didn’t do anything out of the ordinary either. In fact, to anyone who wasn’t aware of the events which had just played out, it would seem as if nothing at all had happened. However, it was very different among the people who were in the know.

To them, it seemed like a storm of disaster was brewing!

The people in Devil Penitentiary who had heard the Cai Clan elder’s confession were all very nervous, and didn’t dare to discuss the matter. They merely waited to see what would happen next.

“It's been a whole month,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “Why hasn’t the fighting started yet?” He had been paying very close attention to the situation, and yet, even after an entire month, neither the three great clans nor the Giant Ghost King had made a move.

“Even if the Cai Clan wasn’t originally aware that one of their elders was captured, they would definitely have found out by now. They must know that he’s revealed the information about the rebellion....

“But they haven’t made a move. And the Giant Ghost King hasn’t said a peep. Could it be that they’re still feeling each other out?” He scratched his head in befuddlement, and couldn’t help but feel a bit of disdain for the Giant Ghost King.

“There can’t be many demigods this lame. If I were a demigod, I would just go wipe out all three of the great clans. That would take care of the problem.

“And as for the three great clans, either they’re not fully prepared, or they’re hesitating. Well, regardless of which it is, this is a good opportunity for me!” With that, he checked his bag of holding to see how many souls he had left from when he had robbed the Cai Clan’s soulgrounds. After performing fourteenfold spirit enhancements on all of his magical items, he had been left with a bit less than half the original amount. Later, he had done some experimentation with fifteen-colored flame, which left him running very low.

“Out already. Conjuring flame really is a big waste of souls.” He narrowed his eyes in thought for a moment, then nodded his head.

“I have to take some risks sometimes. I’ll just go check the situation out. If the chance presents itself, I’ll take some souls. If not, then I won’t worry about it.” Feeling both nervous and excited, he thought a bit more, then rose to his feet.

Devil Penitentiary was on lockdown, but Bai Xiaochun was now the number one dark inquisitor, and was also the one who had dug up the critical intelligence to begin with. Clearly, he was not on the side of the three great clans, and therefore, Li Xu approved his request to leave the prison.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun was in disguise, and heading through the moat toward the city.

The moat wasn’t very large, but nevertheless, Bai Xiaochun found a place where he could leave it without attracting attention. Soon, he was outside of Giant Ghost City.

“It's too bad I have to be very careful about revealing my ability to disguise my appearance. It really leaves me no choice other than to use ordinary disguises.” He was currently wearing a wide-brimmed hat, and some extra layers of clothing to make him look bigger. Keeping his head down, he headed away from Giant Ghost City, and in the direction of the Chen Clan.

“I already robbed the Cai Clan, so they’ll definitely be on guard. The Bai Clan has too few souls to make it worth my time. The Chen Clan is the only option....” Eyes flashing, he flew quickly to the location where the Chen Clan stood. Arrayed in different locations around the clan were eight soulgrounds.

The mere sight of the vast number of vengeful souls flying around the floating, beehive-like structures in the soulgrounds caused Bai Xiaochun to swallow in anticipation.

After sizing the situation up, he murmured, “The Chen Clan really has a lot of souls....”

Unfortunately, the soulgrounds were all very close to the clan itself, and also very tightly guarded. Despite the speed he was capable of, he was fairly sure that as soon as he did the deed, he would be discovered.

“The Chen Clan is really too stingy. They're just some measly soulgrounds, right? What's the point in guarding them so heavily!?” The feeling that came from being able to look at something and not touch it really left him disgruntled.

“They’re just some souls, right? I can't believe these super rich clans are so stingy! What bullies!” Sighing, he decided that the opportunity he had been hoping for had not been presented. Depressed, he headed back to Giant Ghost City. Just when he was about to enter the city and head toward Devil Penitentiary, his eyes widened as he saw a figure speed out of the giant ghost statue and head in his general direction.

Despite the great distance involved, considering the level of his cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun was easily able to determine that he was looking at Duke Deathcrier. Furthermore, he appeared to be heading in the direction of the Bai Clan.

Considering that Duke Deathcrier was a deva, and that he wasn’t attempting to conceal his actions, it meant that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one who could see him. Quite a few people noticed, and many of them began to ponder the significance of what they were seeing.

“What?” Bai Xiaochun said, blinking. “Why would Duke Deathcrier be going to visit the Bai Clan at a sensitive time like this?”

Although Bai Xiaochun was surprised, he didn’t put too much thought into it, and continued on his way.

It was getting dark, but the streets in the city were still crowded. At a certain point when he was only about halfway to the moat, a brilliant light suddenly began to shine from the giant ghost statue.

As the light shone out from the royal palace on the head of the statue, a person appeared. He was tall and strong, and wore a violet robe with a serpentine dragon embroidered on it. He had a royal crown on his head, and emanated a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy.

Even as he hovered there, he exuded pressure that could stifle everything in heaven and earth. Then he began to stride through the air above the city, almost as if he were going on patrol.

“The Giant Ghost King!”

“It’s his highness the king!”

“Greetings, Your Highness!!”

Quite a racket could be heard as countless soul cultivators dropped to their knees to kowtow. As for the city guards on patrol, they reacted in a similar manner.

The Giant Ghost King looked completely calm as he strode silently through the air. Thunder rumbled, and the clouds churned. It was even possible to see lightning dancing about.

All of these heavenly portents struck fear into the heart of the people below. Even more shocking was the enormous shadowy figure which walked along behind the Giant Ghost King, a figure which seemed so powerful that if it fully formed, it could rip heaven and earth to shreds!

Bai Xiaochun’s aura was in chaos; this was his first time seeing the Giant Ghost King, and the shocking energy that the man emanated left him deeply shaken.

“Did the Giant Ghost King leave his palace to try to threaten the three great clans?” Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard as he observed the terrifying figure up above. As he did, he heard a voice that he hadn’t heard for a long time!

“Fudge, what’s that smell? It seems very familiar to Lord Turtle. Smells like treasure!!” Along with the voice, a head popped out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding....

It was the little turtle who had been missing for so long. No matter how Bai Xiaochun had ransacked his bag of holding, he had never been able to find him, not even in the hiding place he’d discovered the time he had rendered the little turtle unconscious.

On many occasions, Bai Xiaochun had even come to the conclusion that the sharp-tongued little turtle must have left. Although that thought had left him somewhat relieved, he was also disappointed at the loss of the turtle. Who would have ever imagined that the turtle would suddenly show up at this time?

Jaw dropping, he looked down at the turtle, whose eyes were gleaming as surely as if he had spotted a valuable treasure. In fact, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain that he was actually drooling.

“Y-you’re... you’re still here?!?!” Bai Xiaochun was actually delighted. He had long since come to feel very alone out in the Wildlands, so to have the little turtle with him was a great thing.

The little turtle stuck his head up proudly and gave a disdainful glance at Bai Xiaochun. “Lord Turtle was just sleeping for a bit. So what? Did ya miss me, fool? Well, even if you did, it doesn't matter. In fact, don’t even talk to me. I'm germaphobic!”

To hear such stinging words immediately took Bai Xiaochun’s delight at meeting an old friend and transformed it into anger.

“Shut up!” he said. Ignoring the little turtle, he looked back up at the Giant Ghost King for a bit. Then he shoved the little turtle's head back into his bag of holding and flew back into the moat, and beyond it, Devil Penitentiary.

Around that time, the Bai Clan deva patriarch was in a grand hall in the Bai Clan, looking grim-faced at Duke Deathcrier!

Gritting his teeth angrily, the patriarch said, “I'm not even going to mention how many years I’ve loyally served his highness the king. We’ve fought side-by-side on the field of battle, and I've never been anything but devoted. Besides, considering the level of my cultivation base, how could I ever fight the king? Do you think I'm crazy or something? Why would I lead the Bai Clan into a rebellion? This is complete nonsense. If you want to falsely accuse me, at least come up with a good excuse!”

Glaring, the patriarch continued, “By the way, regarding what happened with that unfilial bastard of my clan, I respected his highness the king’s wishes because of face. That’s the only reason I didn’t pursue the matter at the time. However, based on some of the rumors that have been floating around about him, I have to ask you, Duke Deathcrier. What is the meaning of the situation?!”

Duke Deathcrier sighed inwardly. Because he was a close follower of the Giant Ghost King, he was privy to a few secrets that no one else knew. Furthermore, he was able to speculate at what the king was thinking. However, he still couldn't figure out why he had been asked to go to all three of the great clans and directly ask the patriarchs if they were planning a rebellion. In fact, the Giant Ghost King had even hinted that he should offer concessions to the three great clans to keep the peace.

Duke Deathcrier was very nervous about the whole thing.

Sighing again in his heart, he looked at the Bai Clan patriarch and thought, “Is he trying to trick the enemy into thinking he's weak, and lure them out of their strongholds? Or has he really reached the decay period...?”

Looking the Bai Clan patriarch in the eye, he said, “Brother Bai, if his highness the king really believed the rumors, he wouldn't send me to you like this. As for the situation with Bai Hao, I understand your frustration.”

“In that case, Brother Deathcrier,” the patriarch growled, “I’d like to make a request. Please tell his highness the king that that unfilial bastard isn’t suited to be a guard in Devil Penitentiary!”

The truth was that the patriarch was taking advantage of this situation to see if the Giant Ghost King really was as clueless as he was acting.

After all, the three great clans weren’t quite ready to make their move!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0641 awe-chapter-642

No one could possibly guess what the Giant Ghost King was actually thinking. It really did seem like a situation of putting on a weak front in order to lure the enemies out of their strongholds. However, in other ways, it actually looked like he was trying to reach a compromise....

The more one was privy to the behind-the-scenes information, the more confusing things became. After all, the Giant Ghost King was a demigod, a fact that put a lot of pressure on the three great clans.

Duke Deathcrier’s trip to visit the three deva patriarchs cast suspicion into all of their hearts. However, each and every one of them made various demands, all of which seemed excessive in some way.

They had done so intentionally, of course. In some ways, such demands would make it seem like they weren’t interested in rebelling. For example, if the Bai Clan was planning a rebellion, they would intend to win it, and would therefore be confident in being able to take care of Bai Hao on their own. They wouldn’t need the Giant Ghost King to do it for them.

However, not even the Bai Clan patriarch could ever have guessed that his request would be granted within a day! The Giant Ghost King didn’t hesitate at all to send a royal decree directly to Devil Penitentiary.

Bai Hao reviled his own clan, treated his father perniciously, and killed his relatives. He is vicious and malevolent, and as *such, his rank of prison guard shall be stripped, and he will be incarcerated as a prisoner in Devil Penitentiary!*

Quite a few people in Giant Ghost City were shocked by the news. After all, Bai Hao had made quite a scene recently, and become very famous. For him to suddenly be imprisoned was a major development.

When Madam Cai heard the news, she was ecstatic. Although she ultimately wanted Bai Hao dead, she knew how brutal the legendary Devil Penitentiary was, and was very happy about the situation.

Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing what people were saying about him outside. He was sitting in his room meditating when Deputy Warden Sun Peng and the guards of Cellblock D surrounded his quarters with no warning.

Bai Xiaochun was so stunned he didn't know how to react. It felt like his entire world had been turned upside down, to the point where he felt like crying.

“There must be some mistake....” he said in a quavering voice, looking around at all the familiar faces among the guards.

The guards of Cellblock D were all on good terms with Bai Xiaochun, and couldn’t help but hesitate a bit. The compassion and other mixed emotions in their eyes was clear. However, they didn’t dare to defy a royal decree, and could do nothing but sigh and clasp hands toward Bai Xiaochun.

“We really have no choice in the matter, Brother Bai Hao....”

“Just stick it out, Bai Hao. You never know, his highness the king might cool down after a bit and change his mind.”

Then, the captain of Squad 9 loudly declared, “Don’t worry, Bai Hao. You’re going to be locked up in Cellblock D, and we're all like a big family. Your title is changing, that's all. We guards will make sure nobody in the cellblock causes any problems for you!”

Clearly, the captain felt very uncomfortable about the situation. The other guards all nodded their heads in agreement. After all, they had all benefited to some extent from the interrogations Bai Xiaochun had performed recently. Coupled with the fact that Bai Xiaochun treated them all well, it ensured that they all liked him.

They couldn’t defy a royal decree, but could use their authority in Cellblock D to make sure that Bai Xiaochun had it easy.

Deputy Warden Sun Peng cleared his throat and said, “It’s just a change of clothing, Bai Hao. We’ll take care of all your daily needs, so there won’t be much change in that. In fact, any time you want to come out and take a walk, just let us know!”

Bai Xiaochun could see that there was no way out of his situation. He was depressed, but everyone was treating him so well that it warmed his heart. Heaving sighs, he walked along with everyone into the cellblock itself.

Soon, the gray-robed prisoners in the cellblock learned of the matter, and all of them were stunned. As for the important prisoners who Bai Xiaochun had interrogated in the past, many of them were very excited, and were clearly happy to see Bai Hao get his comeuppance....

However, their joy didn’t last for long. The ten captains of Cellblock D gave harshly-worded warnings to all the prisoners that they weren’t to disturb Bai Hao. Then Deputy

Warden Sun Peng pointed out that although Bai Hao wasn’t an official guard any longer, he was still an inquisitor. At that point, the prisoners abandoned any thoughts of getting revenge.

As far as most of them were concerned, it would actually have been better for him to remain as a guard. Back then, he only came into the cellblock when on patrol. But now... he would be in there with them all the time. The thought of what that meant if they ended up offending him was terrifying.

Most outrageous of all was that... the guards didn't seal his cultivation base!

That caused each and every one of the prisoners to be filled with incredible anxiety. After a bit of time, the guards said their farewells and left.

Crestfallen, Bai Xiaochun found an empty skull cell, walked in, and sat down cross-legged.

“It all happened so fast,” he thought with a long sigh. “I was a guard, an inquisitor, and even the number one dark inquisitor.... Now I’m just a prisoner.

“Is it some kind of prank...? Giant Ghost King, you bastard, you were the one who saved me to begin with. Why are you causing problems for me now...?”

“You're a demigod expert! The three great clans are planning a rebellion, so why don't you just go wipe them out? What are you picking on me for, you loser!?” From what he could tell, he was simply being used as a pawn in whatever game the Giant Ghost King and the three great clans were playing.

“What secret weapon do the three great clans have? Dammit! This is between the clans and the king! It doesn’t have anything to do with me!” Clenching his hands into fists, he looked around and gave a depressed sigh.

“Thankfully, my bros didn’t seal my cultivation base. Otherwise, life would have been really bad.” Feeling a bit better because of that fact, he looked over at the cell next to him.

In it sat an old man with an expressionless face that featured a prominent red birthmark. Bai Xiaochun remembered this old man from back when the captain had first showed him around. Apparently, he had offended the Giant Ghost King and then ended up being locked away for more than two hundred years.

Hoping to commiserate with a fellow victim, Bai Xiaochun suddenly said, “Hey there, Fellow Daoist. I heard you offended the Giant Ghost King. Ai. I guess you and I are in the same boat.”

The old man didn’t react at all. Either he hadn’t heard, or was pretending not to.

“Your cultivation base is sealed, so why are you sitting around meditating all the time? What’s the point? Come, come, let’s chat a bit about that damned Giant Ghost King. He’s a completely worthless nobody!” Bai Xiaochun was actually getting worked up by this point, and had raised his voice quite a bit.

Despite that, the old man continued to remain motionless in meditation. Irritated, Bai Xiaochun said, “Fine, just pretend you didn’t hear me. What’s so amazing about that? It's not like I ever did anything to offend you!”

Bai Xiaochun had been a bit depressed to begin with, and having this old man completely ignore him didn’t help. Snorting coldly, he leaned back up against the cell wall and began to ponder his misery. Sighing, he thought back to how glorious his life had been as a major general on the Great Wall, and how amazing things had been in the River-Defying Sect.

“Oh Junwan, I miss you so much. And you too, Xiaomei....” For some reason, he then thought of Mistress Red-Dust, and after that, Chen Hetian, and his anger surged.

However, sitting around moping wouldn’t do any good, so after a bit of time passed, he sat up cross-legged and started thinking about what to do next. Unfortunately, no matter how he pondered the situation, he couldn’t come up with any ideas. He had long since tested out his Undying Hex, and found that it was as useless inside Devil Penitentiary as it had been in the labyrinth near the Great Wall.

Now that he was a prisoner, it felt like he was completely and utterly bereft of hope.

“Damn that Giant Ghost King!” he said through gritted teeth. “And the Bai Clan too. They’re all worthless nobodies! If the three great clans rebel and win, then they’ll definitely come and kill me. If they try, then I’ll just use my demigod soul to fight my way free!” A fierce gleam appeared in his eyes. “If the Giant Ghost King wins, then maybe I’ll have a chance of getting out of here. The captain and Deputy Warden Sun might be able to speak up for me, and maybe even Warden Li....”

Bai Xiaochun massaged the bridge of his nose as he contemplated the two possible outcomes. The latter would be the preferred option, whereas the former.... would make it difficult to avoid death. The idea of dying in a fight got Bai Xiaochun so worked up that he started trembling.

“You people are forcing my hand!” Taking a deep breath, he closed his eyes to meditate. After all, the best thing to do in this situation was keep himself in top condition, that way he would be ready to make a move at a moment’s notice.

Time passed. Before long, half a month had gone by. Although Bai Xiaochun remained on alert at all times, nothing much happened. None of the prisoners caused any problems, and the guards would come over on a daily basis to chat and even deliver alcohol and food. Overall, they took good care of him.

From Bai Xiaochun’s perspective, it really was as if he had just changed accommodations and clothing. The guards would even let him out of the cellblock to take a walk whenever he wanted. Generally speaking, his mood was good.

Occasionally, the guards would even ask for his help doing some interrogations. After all, he was still the number one dark inquisitor of Devil Penitentiary.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0642 awe-chapter-643

During the half a month that passed after Bai Xiaochun went from being a guard to a prisoner, Giant Ghost City changed. No longer was there a brooding pressure weighing down on the city. Instead, it once again became a hustling, bustling place. As far as most people were concerned, all of the rumors that had been spreading were just that: rumors.

The three great clans continued to buy up all of the souls in Giant Ghost City, just like they had been before. Just about everything went back to normal. The only slight difference was that the ten great marquises of Giant Ghost City, who normally didn’t make very many public appearances, were now more commonly seen out in the city.

From all outward appearances, there wasn’t anything happening in the city that was particularly noteworthy. As for the three great clans, their deva patriarchs all remained in secluded meditation, or at least, that was what the clans stated publicly.

In secret, the three deva patriarchs were constantly looking up into the sky, as if... they were waiting for something.

Another seven days went by, during which time the people of Giant Ghost City were as busy with their lives as ever. Meanwhile, beneath the moat, in Devil Penitentiary, Bai Xiaochun’s life was wonderful. Although he was technically a prisoner, he got special treatment in Cellblock D, to the point where things were almost exactly the same for him as when he had been a guard.

Furthermore, because he was still the number one dark inquisitor, he continued to get interrogation requests from the other three cellblocks. And because he never failed to get information in an interrogation, his fame grew.

Currently, the deputy warden and ten captains from Cellblock B were clustered around him, leading him in the direction of their cellblock.

“Brother Bai Hao, you’re really doing us a favor here. That Lu Shiyou is a treacherous villain, and no matter what methods we use, we simply can’t get him to tell us where his loot is stashed.”

“That's right, Brother Bai Hao. If you can get him to talk, we’ll give you thirty percent as your reward.” As the group chattered, they cast smiling glances at Bai Xiaochun. By this point, he was extremely famous, and all of the guards knew that getting on his good side was the path to riches and fortune.

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily and said, “Ah, no problem at all, my brothers. All Cellblock B has to do is make the request, and I would do everything in my power to help, reward or not.”

His way with words left the group from Cellblock B feeling very pleased. Of course, the traditions of Devil Penitentiary had to be maintained. Whether it was for tradition or to maintain a good relationship, they would give definitely give him a share no matter how polite he was up front.

Before long, they were out of Cellblock D. Along the way, any guards they happened across would smile and call out a greeting to Bai Xiaochun. And of course, he would always return their greetings. That was simply how Bai Xiaochun did things. When people treated him well, he did the same in return, which always led to people feeling more and more pleased with him.

Soon they were in Cellblock B, which wasn’t as big as Cellblock A, but was larger by far than Cellblock D. The cells there were also more impressive, and the prisoners inside them were far more brutal than the prisoners in Cellblock D.

Before long, they came to a stop in front of one particular skull cell, whereupon the deputy warden politely said, “Well, here we are. Now it’s all up to you, Brother Bai Hao.”

Nodding, Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and looked at the cell, within which was a middle-aged soul cultivator who was none other than Lu Shiyou. Although the man seemed completely at ease, his eyes widened a bit when he saw Bai Xiaochun; after all, he had heard the rumors about the number one dark inquisitor.

Lu Shiyou smiled, and then spoke in a soft voice, “You don’t need to waste your time with me. I’m not the tight-lipped kind. However, my cultivation base is ruined, and I'm dying. In fact, I won’t last for more than ten years. Therefore, I only have one demand that I'm sure Devil Penitentiary can meet, considering how powerful you people are. I want a hundred beautiful female cultivators per day to keep me comfortable. Ten years from now, when I'm on my deathbed, I’ll tell you all the details about my stash of loot.”

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored his words. After having one of the guards open the cell door, he entered, and black smoke spread out in all directions.

The guards of Cellblock B immediately got excited, whereas Lu Shiyou began to pant. Staring at Bai Xiaochun, he said, “What are you doing!? Just wait ten years! It’s not like I'm afraid of dying or something. If you don’t give me what I want, then I won’t say a word!”

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun said, “Look, let’s talk things over. You’ve heard of me, right? When I ask questions, I frighten even myself! What’s the point of trying to hold out?”

Based on what the guards had told him on the way over, this Lu Shiyou had been a city guard before being locked up.

In terms of why he had been incarcerated, he had no one to blame for the matter but himself. He was the type of person who would seek revenge over the smallest grievance, and would do everything in his power to kill people he didn’t like, then wipe out their entire family. He had also used his authority as a city guard to raid the headquarters of numerous small clans within the city and take away all their wealth. Over the years, he had built up quite an accumulation of fortune.

If that were all there were to his vices, he might have been able to get away with it all. After all, his status as a city guard made him difficult to deal with. However, he was also a lecherous fellow, and had taken advantage of numerous women during his so-called ‘raids’. A few days before, he had forced himself on a female cultivator who happened to be connected to one of the marquises of Giant Ghost City. That was what ultimately led to his downfall. The enraged marquis had his cultivation base crippled, and instead of killing him, had sent him to be locked up in Devil Penitentiary.

In Devil Penitentiary, a goldmine like him was the type that the guards would never let off the hook. However, because he knew he only had a short time to live, he kept making all sorts of demands in exchange for talking. Not only was Cellblock B unable to meet all of his demands, but they didn't want to wait ten years, and thus, had asked for help from Bai Xiaochun.

Backing up a few steps, Lu Shiyou loudly said, “There’s no need to talk anything over!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. So far, he hadn't run into a single prisoner in Devil Penitentiary who had been willing to cooperate. Shaking his head, he patted his bag of holding in very practiced fashion to produce an Aphrodisiac Pill. After crushing it, he sent the resulting powder flying over to Lu Shiyou, who couldn’t prevent it from entering his mouth and nose.

Clasped his hands behind his back, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and proudly said, “The people I interrogate always start out refusing to talk, but after a few hours, they won’t shut up.”

Even as the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, Lu Shiyou eyes flickered angrily, and yet, that didn’t match the odd expression that appeared on his face at all.

This was a completely different reaction than the prisoners usually gave when Bai Xiaochun performed interrogations. Not only did Lu Shiyou not seem to be in pain at all, but the odd look on his face only lasted for about ten breaths of time before he looked as normal as he had moments before. His skin was covered with a sheen of sweat, and his eyes were shining as he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “What happened? Do you have more?”

He actually seemed a bit anxious, like someone might be when they were interrupted right in the middle of something vitally important.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun blurted, shocked. This was his first time encountering a situation like this. Looking down at some of the residual medicinal powder in his hand, he briefly wondered if he had grabbed the wrong pill. However, after confirming that it was an Aphrodisiac Pill, he looked back up in at Lu Shiyou in disbelief.

Eyeing the medicinal power in Bai Xiaochun’s hand, Lu Shiyou said, “Give me some more! Hurry up, give me more....”

Beads of sweat popped out on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead at the oddness of the situation. Waving his hand, he sent the residual powder over to Lu Shiyou.

Excited, Lu Shiyou leaped to his feet and swallowed the powder. A tremor then ran through him, and he leaned back against the cell wall, closing his eyes as if in intoxication. By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling in shock, and he subconsciously stepped back a few paces, looking at Lu Shiyou as if he were a ghost.

“What’s... what’s going on? It’s not working? He... he actually likes it?” Bai Xiaochun felt like his world was crumbling around him. Never could he possibly have imagined that someone would actually enjoy the effects of the Aphrodisiac Pill....

“He's... a complete pervert!”

Before Bai Xiaochun could recover from his shock, Lu Shiyou shivered. Other than being soaked with sweat, he had now gone completely back to his normal state. Opening his eyes, he shouted, “Do you have more? Give me more!”

Bai Xiaochun was so shocked by Lu Shiyou’s behavior that he was panting. However, his curiosity was also piqued, so he produced another Aphrodisiac Pill and threw it over.

Lu Shiyou grabbed it excitedly and stuffed it into his mouth. Enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, after which he madly yelled, “Give me another! No, give me three!!”

A strange expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he produced another pill. If Lu Shiyou’s cultivation base hadn’t been crippled, then he would have attacked Bai Xiaochun to try to take it. At that point, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and awkwardly said, “Um... tell me where your loot is stashed, then I’ll give you another one.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0643 awe-chapter-644

“You!!” Lu Shiyou said through gritted teeth. He wanted to refuse, but at the moment, the torment he was feeling actually surpassed the torment normally felt by prisoners who ate the pill....

Other prisoners felt the pain of being unable to release the pent-up pressure, but because of Lu Shiyou’s unique nature, the pain caused by not being able to consume one of the pills was almost impossible to bear.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit embarrassed; even he felt that what he was doing was a bit shameless.... This was a case of taking advantage of someone against their will, of blackmailing them in a key moment.

Blinking a few times, he said, “Just talk, alright? Tell me what you know, and I’ll give you another....”

Lu Shiyou’s eyes seemed to contain all of the passion burning in his body, all of the fire that normally pulsed in his qi passageways. In fact, he only managed to hold out for a few breaths of time before telling Bai Xiaochun everything he knew.

In turn, Bai Xiaochun didn’t go back on his word. After getting the answers to his questions, he gave Lu Shiyou the Aphrodisiac Pill. After consuming it, his skin flushed bright red, causing Bai Xiaochun to sigh as a strange expression appeared on his face.

“This is the first time I've ever seen anything like this. It seems that I need to change my Aphrodisiac Pill formula a bit.” After observing Lu Shiyou for a bit longer, he turned to leave.

However, just when he was about to walk out of the cell, Lu Shiyou shouted madly, “Fellow Daoist Bai, wait! I... I want another one of those medicinal pills!! I'm... I'm almost there! Almost! Just give me another one, alright...?”

Lu Shiyou was shaking visibly, and his eyes shone with an unprecedented level of desire.

The sight left Bai Xiaochun completely shaken.

“You already took three pills!! Are you trying to get yourself killed? Eating too many of the things isn’t good for you!”

“Just give me three more.... Fellow Daoist Bai, I beg of you, please just give me three more!!” Lu Shiyou would never have been able to guess that Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pills would have such a profound effect on him. It had started a fire within him that somehow caused signs of recovery to appear within his crippled cultivation base. Ever since his cultivation base had been destroyed, his life had been one of despair, with nothing but death ahead of him. But suddenly, he had hope!

How could Bai Xiaochun possibly agree to his request? After all, he was in the Wildlands, with no way to concoct more medicine, and no way to replenish his stock. Once he ran out of medicinal pills, it would be difficult to maintain his reputation as a dark inquisitor.

“No way, giving you so many would be a waste.”

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I... I know a secret. If you give me three of those pills, I’ll tell it to you!”

“I'm not interested!” Bai Xiaochun replied, not even looking back over his shoulder.

With that, he took another step forward, placing him right at the edge of the black mist. As for Lu Shiyou, his eyes were bloodshot with anxiety as he blurted, “It's a secret about Giant Ghost City! Once you know it, you’ll be safe from anything in the city under the level of a demigod!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he stopped in place and looked suspiciously back at Lu Shiyou.

When Lu Shiyou saw Bai Xiaochun looking back, his heart flushed with excitement, and he quickly began to reveal the details of the secret. As Bai Xiaochun listened, his heart began to pound, and his eyes became as wide as saucers.

“What did you just say? Giant Ghost City actually has hundreds of teleportation portals in it? Most of them lead to other random locations within city limits? But one can teleport you tens of thousands of kilometers away from the city?

“And some of them are booby trapped? And there’s even a trap golem in one of them? It can only be summoned once, for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, but is as strong as a deva??”

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe what he was hearing. His heart was pounding, sending blood coursing at top speed through his veins. As Lu Shiyou continued to explain his secret, Bai Xiaochun learned that one of his ancestors had been a famous grandmaster of spell formations, and had been involved in the construction of Giant Ghost City. He had been the one who actually set up the city’s defensive spell formations.

Of course, he had been forced into the matter by the original Giant Ghost King, and had been given no choice other than to create the city's grand spell formation. However, he knew that because of the secrets he had been privy to, he would most likely be put to death at the end of the project. Therefore, he had created a path of escape for himself.

Throughout the construction of Giant Ghost City, he had left all sorts of traps here and there. The grand spell formation itself was riddled with smaller spell formations that not even the original Giant Ghost King had been aware of.

Unfortunately, despite concealing the matter from the original Giant Ghost King, he hadn't been able to escape the fate of death in the end. However, the information about the network of smaller spell formations was passed down from generation to generation among his descendants.

Although it wasn't clear how he had managed to get the information out, it was never discovered by the original Giant Ghost King, nor by any of the following generations, all the way down to the ninth. Therefore, it was likely that the current ninth generation Giant Ghost King didn't know about it either.

Lu Shiyou went on to explain that the reason he had fallen into the practice of plundering the wealth of the smaller clans in the city was for the purpose of being able to activate the spell formations in the city. Although those teleportation formations were ancient, and many had fallen into disrepair, there were some that still worked.

However, they needed large amounts of soul medicine to be activated. Unfortunately, Lu Shiyou had never saved up enough soul medicine, which was why he had been unable to escape when the marquis came for him.

Besides, once he activated the spell formations, the Giant Ghost King would never have let him off the hook.

The news Bai Xiaochun was learning battered his heart with waves of shock. Of course, at the moment, he had no way to confirm whether or not the information Lu Shiyou was giving him was true or not. If it was... then it was of monumental importance to Bai Xiaochun.

“This might be my chance to get away! If the Bai Clan comes after me, then as long as I can get out of Devil Penitentiary itself, I could use those teleportation portals to make a complete getaway!!” Heart trembling with excitement, he settled his thoughts and asked for some more details about the teleportation formations and their locations. According to the list he was given, there were a total of 371 formations. After making a complete record of them, Bai Xiaochun tossed three Aphrodisiac Pills over to the anxious Lu Shiyou.

As soon as Lu Shiyou had them, he tossed them into his mouth. Moments later, his face turned bright red, and he began to tremble violently as his previously blocked-up qi passageways began to surge on the verge of opening up. At that point, a look of hesitation appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes as he considered whether or not to kill the man to keep him quiet.

To kill him would be the safest thing. After all, if the information about the teleportation formations was true, then it would be very important that the information not get out, lest it create a major danger for Bai Xiaochun.

“This guy is vicious and merciless. Definitely a villain. He’s also no fool. Considering how important my medicinal pills are to him, and the nature of the things he just told me, there’s no way he didn’t think about the consequences of his actions....” At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed.

“He must be lying! What a treacherous rogue! Hmph. Well, I’m no idiot....” Feeling very superior to Lu Shiyou, he waited a bit until the man let out a howl, and then shook back and forth a few times. He was now panting, and covered with both sweat and filth that had been expelled from within him.

Soon, his eyes regained their focus, and he looked up at Bai Xiaochun. Chuckling, he said, “I never thought I would wake up. I assumed you would kill me after learning my secrets.”

Of course, he had had no other options. Considering how important the medicinal pills were to him, he had decided to gamble a bit. Besides, if Bai Xiaochun did kill him, he had a secret weapon, something that would make anyone who used the teleportation formations regret doing so.

“You didn't kill me because you wanted to give me another chance to talk, isn’t that right, Bai Hao? Alright, I’ll tell you something else. Among the more than 300 spell formations, there are 27 that require a special sealing mark to use. Without the sealing mark, you’ll be stuck on the outside. Furthermore, most of the teleportation formations only link to other places in the city. There’s only one... that leads to a spot 50,000 kilometers outside of the city!

“Bai Hao, I know that you betrayed the Bai Clan, and were also imprisoned by orders from the Giant Ghost King. You probably want to get out of here just as much as I do. Therefore, when the time comes, just bring me with you. I can open those 27 locked formations, and can also take you to the one leads outside of the city!

“Without me, you won’t be fleeing anywhere! And by the way, the formation that leads outside of the city is also one of the ones that needs the sealing mark to enter!” Lu Shiyou’s eyes glittered with deceit; by this point, he was absolutely confident that this Bai Hao would agree to his demands. Then, when the time came to make his actual escape, he would simply kill Bai Hao and escape on his own.

“I don’t have any other choice,” he thought, his heart bursting with greed. “I need those medicinal pills, and this Bai Hao definitely has more of them in his bag of holding. He’s dead one way or another!”

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was no fool. Considering how Lu Shiyou felt about the Aphrodisiac Pills, it seemed obvious that he hoped to get free of the cell and kill Bai Xiaochun for his supply. Before doing anything else, though, Bai Xiaochun decided to confirm what he had just heard. “You can only get into those formations with a special sealing mark?”

“That’s right!” Lu Shiyou said with a pleased smile.

A strange look could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he proceeded to ask, “Interesting. So without that sealing mark, I would be stuck on the outside. Presumably there would be some danger involved with trying to break inside?”

Looking a bit surprised, Lu Shiyou nodded.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then cautiously asked, “And uh... all you have to do is get into the teleportation formation to activate it?”

“What’s with all the questions?” Lu Shiyou barked, annoyed. “Cut the bullcrap. The only way to get into the formations is with the special sealing mark. Once you’re inside, of course anyone can activate them!” Lu Shiyou was completely convinced that he had pulled the wool over this Bai Hao’s eyes. They both had the same goal now, and it only made sense for them to cooperate. If he didn’t agree to cooperate, then Lu Shiyou would simply tell his secret to some other people to ruin his plans, assuming he stayed alive long enough.

“Are you sure about all that?” Bai Xiaochun asked, his eyes shining.

“Absolutely sure!” Lu Shiyou replied, frowning. All of a sudden, he felt like something was off about the situation, although he wasn’t sure what.

After getting his confirmation, Bai Xiaochun smiled. As soon as Lu Shiyou saw that smile, his face fell.

Before he could move, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, sending a blast of wind out that pierced into Lu Shiyou’s forehead.

“You--” Lu Shiyou’s eyes went wide with disbelief. Never could he have imagined that, after everything he had just said, Bai Hao would actually kill him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0644 awe-chapter-645

“You should have said so earlier. Scared me half to death.” Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve in distaste. Although a special sealing mark was needed to get into those 27 special spell formations, he could simply do so with his Undying Hex....

“If I can get through the Great Wall’s spell formation, then there’s no need to even mention some little teleportation formations.” Sticking his chin up, he looked down at the dead Lu Shiyou and felt very proud of coming out on top in this battle of wits.

“You can only blame your lack of insight into my abilities!” With that, he strutted out of the cell.

Although the death of Lu Shiyou caused some complications, it wasn’t anything the guards of Cellblock B couldn’t take care of. After giving the deputy warden the information regarding the man’s loot stash, the fact that he was dead didn’t really matter.

Of course, the guards weren’t stupid. They realized that Bai Xiaochun must have uncovered some other secret, and had been forced to silence Lu Shiyou. However, when Bai Xiaochun proposed forgetting about the thirty percent cut that was owed to him, the guards felt much better.

After all, the official rules allowed for the possibility of inquisitors coming across secret information. As long as the inquisitor was well-liked by everyone else, it usually wouldn’t cause a problem.

Bai Xiaochun’s way of handling the situation not only forestalled any questions, but also left everyone involved feeling pleased. With a few parting words, Bai Xiaochun left and headed back to Cellblock D, in very high spirits. He even decided to contact Zhou Yixing. Earlier, Li Xu had put Devil Penitentiary on complete lockdown, and any attempts to communicate with the outside had been fruitless.

But now, his communication went through. Bai Xiaochun quickly relayed a portion of the information about the spell formations, and told Zhou Yixing to go confirm its validity. The next day, he got word back.

Zhou Yixing sounded completely incredulous as he said, “The spell formations were all there, milord!! Each and every location was really strange, and in fact, impossible to see into. Not even divine sense would work. In fact, I couldn’t actually see any evidence of spell formations. If you hadn’t told me of the exact locations, I would never have been able to find them.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he breathed a sigh of relief, and then excitedly clenched his hands into fists.

“So it really is true! Hahaha! With those teleportation formations, I have a much better chance of getting away!

“The three great clans and the Giant Ghost King are currently at each other’s throats... once the chaos breaks out, I definitely won’t wait around for the Bai Clan to come looking for me. I’ll get out of Devil Penitentiary and then make my way to freedom!”

With that, Bai Xiaochun began to wait patiently. Another half a month went by. Although there were many people in the city who knew that the rebellion was coming, when it actually happened, it still came as a shock!

The first astonishing development occurred, not within the three great clans, but rather... in the form of a huge, illusory axe that appeared in the sky above Giant Ghost City!

It was fully 30,000 meters tall, and radiated shocking energy. The instant it appeared, it sliced down through the air toward the huge giant ghost statue in the middle of the city.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and at the same time, a roar of rage erupted from the royal palace at the head of the statue.

“How dare you, Nine Serenities King!!” Even as the voice echoed out, the illusory image of a giant ghost appeared in the air, which snarled viciously as it unleashed a fist strike to meet the incoming axe!

As the two bore down on each other, indescribable power rippled out in all directions, casting all creation into chaos and even ripping the air apart!!

“I'm only doing this to repay a debt, Giant Ghost King! You’re on your own now.” Laughter accompanied the axe as it descended, along with intense rumbling sounds. Then, the axe and the giant ghost met....

Booming rumbles filled the air!

A massive sound that surpassed heavenly thunder rippled out with the power to destroy the heavens and crush the earth. A huge shockwave spread out, crushing everything in its path and even ripping rifts open in the sky.

Giant Ghost City was instantly thrown into chaos as countless people looked up to see what was happening. The sight that met their eyes was the shadowy incarnation of a giant ghost being completely destroyed by the huge axe!!

“Th-this... this....”

“Heavens! The Giant Ghost King... can’t even fight back!!”

“This is impossible!!”

To the utter shock of countless onlookers, the huge axe ripped through the illusory giant ghost, and then proceeded onward toward Giant Ghost City. Thankfully, that was when a shimmering shield of light sprang up, which was none other than the city’s grand spell formation.

Next, an ear-splitting boom spread out, causing cracks to appear all over the spell formation shield. The shield held, and the axe faded away, but then, more laughter rang out.

“So, you really are in your decay period, Giant Ghost King! Well, whether or not you survive this calamity has nothing to with me. Farewell!” The mad laughter then slowly faded away into nothing.

Everyone who had witnessed this scene was completely shaken, and suddenly realized that... the rebellion was taking place on this very day!

It was at that point that six beams of light suddenly shot into the air above the city. Within those beams of light were the six of the ten heavenly marquises that ruled Giant Ghost City. Those marquises each controlled one of the ten armies stationed in the city. As for the remaining four heavenly marquises, they did nothing.

“Today is the day you meet your end, Giant Ghost King!!”

“Die, Giant Ghost King!!”

Of the six heavenly marquises, none were devas, but some of them were half a step into the Deva Realm. Their combined attack on the royal palace instantly caused Giant Ghost City to tremble, and yet, that was when a roar of rage erupted from one of the statue’s hands. Duke Deathcrier appeared, his expression grim as he released a shout as cold as midwinter snow, filled with the power of his deva cultivation base.

“What gall!”

However, even as Duke Deathcrier flew out to intercept the six heavenly marquises, a sigh could be heard from the giant ghost statue’s other hand.

“Brother Deathcrier,” said a sad voice, “I know we’ve been friends for years, but... now we’re enemies!” A blurry figure suddenly appeared on the statue's other hand.

It was none other than... one of Giant Ghost City’s five dukes... Duke Netherworld!

“You’re also betraying his highness the king, Netherworld?!?!” Killing intent instantly appeared in Duke Deathcrier’s eyes as he shifted targets.

It was in this moment that the three great clans burst into action.

Three shocking beams of light rose up into the air, which then shot toward the giant ghost statue. Within those beams of light were the three deva patriarchs of the three clans.

The reason why the three patriarchs hadn’t made a move until now was because they were waiting for the exploratory attack made by the Nine Serenities King. Now that they were convinced that the Giant Ghost King was weak, they were eager to attack.

The three of them shot through the air at shocking speed, joining the six heavenly marquises to attack the royal palace!

All of this was merely a prelude to the chaos to come. Of the ten marquises, six had turned traitor. Of the five dukes, four were rebelling. It was a situation the likes of which did not occur often in the Wildlands.

In fact, it was an extremely rare development. That was especially true considering... they were fighting against a king! They were... trying to kill a demigod!!

“Your secret is out, Giant Ghost King! The technique you cultivate has a fatal flaw, and although we couldn’t calculate the specific date of your decay period, it’s now obvious that you’re in the middle of it! It’s time for you to die!!”

“I've been waiting for this day for a long time, Giant Ghost King! Today, you will be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!!”

The three deva patriarchs shot like sharp blades through the air, leaving streaks of light behind them as they slammed into the giant ghost statue.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The giant ghost statue simply couldn’t withstand the force of the blow. Cracks spread out across its surface, and the royal palace began to collapse. As the rubble and dust spread out, a tall, muscular man appeared, wearing a violet robe embroidered with a serpentine dragon, and a kingly crown.

He appeared to be middle-aged, and was somehow threatening without being angry. He also radiated an aura that was completely shocking. He was none other than... the Giant Ghost King!

“So, you’ve finally made your move....” he said as he floated up into the air, looking around at the three deva patriarchs and the six heavenly marquises. He didn’t seem nervous at all, and in fact, was even smiling. Furthermore, that smile seemed to contain... a profound level of self-confidence!

“I wasn’t sure exactly who among you would be joining this rebellion, so I was waiting for you to make the first move before wiping you out. Now, the moment has arrived… and unfortunately for you people, I'm not done playing my little game.” From the Giant Ghost King’s statement, it was obvious how confident he was, and it caused the three deva patriarchs’ faces to flicker.

However, there was no going back now. Gritting their teeth, they began to perform incantation gestures.

“Wood Dimension: Killing Seal!!” they roared in unison. Instantly, a huge vortex sprang into being, filled with countless souls!

All of them were wood-type souls, and as they descended, they began to explode, creating something like a huge sealing mark that covered all of Giant Ghost City and filled it with the power of the element of wood!

As soon as the energy rolling off of the Giant Ghost King encountered that wood-type power, it melted as quickly as a snowflake fallen into boiling water!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0645 awe-chapter-646

Laughing loudly, the Bai Clan patriarch said, “You can be controlled with wood-type power, Giant Ghost King, and even more so during your decay period. How will you fight back now?!”

With that, he shot toward the Giant Ghost King, joined by the patriarchs from the Cai and Chen Clans.

The look on the Giant Ghost King’s face remained as calm as before. His energy and his cultivation base were being rapidly eaten away by the wood dimension, to the point where he was no longer in the Demigod Realm. He was now in the Deva Realm, and in fact, his power was diminishing so rapidly that it would soon be that of the Nascent Soul stage!

And yet, he seemed completely calm, with the same confident smile on his face, as if he were facing nothing more than a group of clowns. Of course, that only made the patriarchs and heavenly marquises even more nervous.

Intense rumbling sounds filled the air as the Giant Ghost King single-handedly took on three devas and six near-devas!

Even as the shocking scene played out up above, the armed forces of the three clans, as well as the soldiers of the six heavenly marquises’ armies, all began to pour into the city.

The chief of the Bai Clan led the clan elders in a murderous charge toward the moat, joined by many of the Cai Clan elders.

“The heavens are changing, Bai Hao! You won’t escape this tribulation!” The clan chief’s heart was bursting with anticipation; he had been waiting for this day for a long time, and in fact, couldn’t care less about the Giant Ghost King. His goal was to skin Bai Hao alive!

As chaos spread out down below, the patriarchs of the three clans, as well as the six heavenly marquises, were engaged in fierce combat with the Giant Ghost King. Unexpectedly, the fighting already seemed to be on the verge of ending. One boom after another rang out, and blood sprayed out of the Giant Ghost King’s mouth. His cultivation base was already down to the Nascent Soul level, and yet, the same self-confident smile could be seen on his face. In fact, it even seemed to contain a bit of ridicule, as though he were sneering at the fact that no one had seen through to the truth yet!

However, it was also obvious that the truth would be revealed soon. It was at that point that, all of a sudden, the Giant Ghost King’s body suddenly flickered, as though it were not corporeal. His hand turned blurry, and then the Bai Clan patriarch suddenly shouted, “Something’s wrong!! He's... he’s a clone!!! Dammit! He's a clone! This isn’t the Giant Ghost King’s true self! He’s an expendable clone!!!”

The other two patriarchs began to tremble as looks of complete disbelief spread out across their faces.

“Impossible! Because of the unique way divine will works among demigod experts, they can’t create clones more powerful than the Nascent Soul stage! Demigod Realm clones are an impossibility!!”

“How could he possibly have a clone like this!? And furthermore... how could we have never realized it over all these years!?!?”

The three deva patriarchs weren’t the only ones to be shocked. Duke Deathcrier and Duke Netherworld were also profoundly shaken, and both had expressions of utter disbelief on their faces.

The Bai Clan patriarch gritted his teeth bitterly as he looked at the Giant Ghost King. Finally, he understood why he had been so calm this entire time.... And now, he realized that everything was exactly as the Giant Ghost King had described: a game. “So... this is your secret weapon. This... is why you were so self-confident....”

It was a game that the Giant Ghost King had carefully set up, and was sure he would not lose....

The probing for information, the provocation, the compromises, the placations, pretending to be weak, none of them were real. All of it had been a huge game....

As everyone reeled in shock, the Giant Ghost King chuckled. By this point, his body had almost completely faded away. And yet, his laughter still contained a type of supreme and ultimate power that echoed out through heaven and earth.

“Now you understand, and yet, it's too late. This has all been nothing more than a game to me.... So what if you know about my decay period? And so what if you know about my weakness to wood-type power?

“My decay period didn’t just start right now. In fact, it’s almost over. In three months, I’ll be fully recovered.... And that... is when I’ll return, and we can all reminisce about old times.” The Giant Ghost King shook his head as he looked around scornfully. That look of disdain was like a big palm that slapped all of the rebels directly in the face.

“You only have three months. Let’s see if you can find my true self during that time.... That is phase two of my little game.” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously as he slowly faded out of existence.

The three deva patriarchs and six heavenly marquises were all having trouble breathing steadily, and couldn’t keep the terror out of their eyes. As of this point, they had no choice to believe what the Giant Ghost King had just told them. And they knew that they only had three months.

If they didn’t find the Giant Ghost King’s true self within three months... then they and their clans would be exterminated. They could flee, of course. The Wildlands was a big place. But with the Giant Ghost King at his peak, they would never be able to escape him!

“Find him!” shouted the Bai Clan patriarch. “Spare nothing! Pour all resources into the search. We *must* find where the Giant Ghost King’s true self is! He’s still in his decay period, so if we find him, we’ll live. If we don't find him, we’re all dead!!

“He said three months, but we can’t trust him. One month! We have to find him in one month!

“Somehow he managed to do the unexpected and create a clone. To control that clone, his true self would have to be somewhere nearby. I’d say there’s an eighty to ninety percent chance that he’s actually in Giant Ghost City!”

The Bai Clan patriarch's heart was already filled with despair. They had been beaten. They had prepared for years and built up power, and yet, had been completely routed. It was almost funny. How could any of them have ever imagined that the Giant Ghost King would somehow be able to create a demigod clone, which was supposed to be impossible…?

“How could he have a clone like that!?!?” Eyes bloodshot, the Chen Clan patriarch shouted out similar orders, and even started flying around to search personally.

The Cai Clan patriarch, as well as the six heavenly marquises, were all trembling in fear, but similarly began to carry out searches. They held nothing back, searching everywhere in Giant Ghost City to try to find the Giant Ghost King’s true self.

Duke Netherworld was in no mood to fight Duke Deathcrier any longer, and withdrew from the fight. As for Duke Deathcrier, he was not inclined to continue fighting either, and simply hovered there, laughing at the top of his lungs.

No one bothered to ask him where the Giant Ghost King’s true self was. Everyone knew that there was no way the Giant Ghost King would trust information that important to anyone. Time would be better spent searching rather than asking pointless questions.

And they were right. Duke Deathcrier hadn’t even been aware that the person he had been dealing with for so long... was only a clone!

As the three great clans and the forces of the six heavenly marquises began to search Giant Ghost City, Bai Xiaochun was sitting in his cell in Cellblock D in Devil Penitentiary, looking around in boredom at one of his fellow inmates, the old man with the red birthmark who had offended the Giant Ghost King years ago.

Sighing, he said, “Hey old man, I've been in here for a while now, and I’ve talked to you a whole bunch. Are you ever going to say anything back?”

Originally, he had felt like he and this old man could commiserate with each other as fellow sufferers. However, the man had never even looked at him, much less said anything.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun had decided to just ignore him. However, today, the old man actually opened his eyes, and furthermore, his expression had flickered a few times. Curious, Bai Xiaochun asked him a few more questions, only to be ignored.

“Don't you know who I am, old man?” Bai Xiaochun yelled. “Listen up. I'm the number one dark inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary. It’s not going to do you any good to piss me off!”

However, the old man simply sat there, frowning and ignoring Bai Xiaochun.

Glaring at the humiliation, Bai Xiaochun gave a cold snort and was just about to say something else when the entrance to the cellblock opened, and the captain of Squad 9 rushed in, followed by several of the guards who Bai Xiaochun was particularly close to. Alarmed expressions could be seen on their faces as they rushed over.

“Something big is happening, Bai Hao!” the captain said urgently. “You have to come with us, right away! The three great clans are rebelling, and they’re being joined by six of the heavenly marquises! All of Giant Ghost City is in chaos…. The Bai Clan isn’t going to let you off the hook. You need to get out of here, and that’s just what we’re going to help you do!”

With that, the captain grabbed his arm to drag him away.

Although Bai Xiaochun had long since reckoned that the three great clans would make their move soon, he was still surprised that it was happening so suddenly.

But then the captain explained how the Giant Ghost King’s cultivation base had dropped because of his decay period.... Except, the Giant Ghost King everyone had seen was actually a clone, and the three great clans were now searching for his true self. All of this information struck Bai Xiaochun deeply with shock.

Now he finally understood why the Giant Ghost King hadn’t just wiped out the three great clans. It wasn’t that he didn't want to, it was that he was in his decay period, and couldn’t....

That decay period was also why the three great clans felt confident enough to launch their rebellion. However... in the end, they fell into the Giant Ghost King’s game.

“Damn you, Giant Ghost King! If you want to play games, fine, but why did you have to drag me into it!?” Depressed, and yet completely helpless about the situation, Bai Xiaochun knew that he was in a dangerous situation. The enraged Bai Clan would not just let him go, and therefore, he needed to escape as quickly as possible.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he gratefully clasped the captain on the shoulder.

“Brothers,” he said, addressing the captain and the guards, “thank you for the immense kindness you’ve shown. I’ll never forget it. Now’s not the time for talking, though, I need to get out of here....” However, even as he was about to leave... he suddenly heard the voice of the little turtle in his ear!

“Hey, ya little punk, what are you so anxious to leave for? We have a chance to make some money here, are you in?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0646 awe-chapter-647

“Definitely not!” Bai Xiaochun said without the slightest hesitation. He even rolled his eyes; as far as he was concerned, there wasn’t anything that could possibly be more important than his poor little life.

Outside in the city, the three great clans were going crazy searching for the Giant Ghost King’s true self, which meant that this was a very critical moment for Bai Xiaochun.

The chief of the Bai Clan would definitely take advantage of the chaos to try to kill him....

In a moment like this, Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to think about making money. That was especially true considering it was the little turtle who had suggested it. Over the years, the little turtle had caused one troublesome incident after another, so at the moment, Bai Xiaochun simply ignored him and hurried along with the captain, worried that he might not be able to get out of the prison in time.

Everyone in Devil Penitentiary was completely on edge. Guards and prisoners alike were rushing toward the entrance of the cellblock.

At this point, the little turtle anxiously flew out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding and landed on his shoulder.

“Ai, don’t be like that!” he transmitted. “I'm talking about a lot of money here, the kind of opportunity that only comes around once in a blue moon. It’s right here in front of us! Come on, don’t leave, ya little punk!”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at the little turtle and could see that he seemed really anxious. The turtle glanced behind them and then urgently continued to transmit his voice.

“Alright, listen punk, I know where the Giant Ghost King’s true self is!!” Originally, the little turtle had planned to use a different tactic to try to attract Bai Xiaochun’s attention. However, considering that Bai Xiaochun was clearly intent on leaving, he felt he didn’t have any other choice than to tell the truth. Furthermore, he was sure that this new revelation would provoke a response.

And he was right. This time, Bai Xiaochun’s reaction was more in line with what the turtle had expected.

A tremor ran through him, and his eyes went wide as he said, “What!?!?”

This turn of events was too sudden! The three great clans were turning the city upside down to look for the Giant Ghost King’s true self, and yet the little turtle actually knew where he was?

Despite his shock, though, Bai Xiaochun continued to head toward the entrance of the cellblock.

“What does that have to do with me?” he transmitted back. “You listen here, little turtle, the most important thing right now is my poor little life. You got that?!” As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, getting involved in this matter between the Giant Ghost King and the three great clans would be far too dangerous.

“What are you doing!?” the little turtle replied anxiously. “Listen to me, ya little punk. Slow down! Ah, fine... listen, Bai Xiaochun. You know the old guy in the cell right across from you, with the red birthmark on his face? That’s the Giant Ghost King’s true self!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s mind reeled in shock, and he even gasped. A look of complete and utter incredulity appeared on his face.

“He’s... *he’s* the Giant Ghost King?!?!?!” Even his aura was destabilized a bit. This bit of information from the little turtle was completely shocking. All of a sudden, the thought back to what that old man with the red birthmark on his face looked like.

“Furthermore, Lord Turtle can tell that Giant Ghost King is in the middle of a decay period. In other words, he’s weaker now than ever before. The chance to clean out a demigod expert is the kind of thing that only comes along once in 10,000 years!

“Think about it, punk. A demigod expert! He’s the Giant Ghost King! A demigod king! How much treasure do you think he has!? If we clean him out, we’ll be ultra rich! This opportunity... heavens! I’ve only come across chances like this a couple times in my entire life! Y-y-you... you can’t really be planning to just run away?!?!” By this point, the little turtle was so anxious his voice was transmitted in the form of a shout. Fearful of losing the opportunity, he had actually revealed everything he knew.

Sensing that Bai Xiaochun’s interest was piqued, the little turtle’s excitement began to grow.

“He’s the Giant Ghost King, little punk!” he gushed. “We can clean him out! Clean him out!! *Clean him out!!!”*

“How is that even possible...?” Bai Xiaochun thought, stopping in place, his heart beginning to race.

The captain and the other guards looked back in shock, various expressions flashing across their faces.

“What's wrong, Bai Hao?” the captain said anxiously. “Hurry up, let’s go!”

“Wait just one moment....” Bai Xiaochun said.

Feeling very conflicted, he transmitted a question to the little turtle. “Are you sure?”

The little turtle was trembling with indescribable excitement, and also trying to look as impressive and incredible as possible as he replied, “Of course I'm sure. I’ve been keeping my eye on the Giant Ghost King from the first time I saw him. Why do you think I woke up back then anyway? I could tell what was going on as soon as I saw him, and was just waiting until his decay period hit!

“Hahaha! This is the moment I've been waiting for. At the most, he's at Core Formation right now. Listen, there’s nothing to worry about. The Giant Ghost King is a crafty fellow. Nobody would ever possibly think that he would actually be hiding as a prisoner in this place. It’s just too bad that he ran into Lord Turtle!”

Bai Xiaochun thought back to what the little turtle had said back when he woke up… that the Giant Ghost King *smelled like treasure*....

“This little turtle....” Bai Xiaochun thought, his heart beginning to race even faster, and his eyes beginning to shine. If he had really found the Giant Ghost King’s true self, and the man was currently weak, then just as the little turtle had said, it would be an incredible opportunity. The benefits of cleaning him out... would be difficult to even describe.

In fact, it could also be a secret weapon to cause some problems for the three great clans.... Of course, whether it was simply robbing him, or using his status in a clever way, both would be very dangerous.

Even when Bai Xiaochun got very excited, he wouldn’t lose his sense of reason. Hesitating, he said, “The Giant Ghost King is a demigod. Even though he’s hiding here, he definitely would have some trump cards prepared to defend himself just in case.”

“Don’t worry, his trump card is none other than the invisible spell formation in the stone turtle that contains Devil Penitentiary. Once that spell formation is activated, it will be almost as strong as the Demigod Realm. Devas would be able to break through it, but not right away!

“Unfortunately for the Giant Ghost King, he was just unlucky enough to run into Lord Turtle. Hahaha! I wouldn’t dare to speak about any other spell formation, but this is a turtle spell formation. Lord Turtle can’t control it, but I can nullify its effects, at least temporarily. In fact, I already did! Come on, let’s clean him out. We’ll definitely succeed!

“He's a demigod, he definitely has a bunch of treasure on him.” The little turtle’s eyes were shining with unprecedented excitement, and he was shaking visibly.

“Will he have a deva soul?” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes bloodshot. The fact that a demigod king was right there waiting to be grabbed caused even him to start to go a bit crazy.

“Of course!” the little turtle screeched. “To you, deva souls are priceless, but demigods can get them without even trying. Hurry up! Let’s just grab him and get out of the turtle statue. I can only keep the spell formation suppressed for so long. Once my control slips and the Giant Ghost King is able to control it again, we’ll be in great danger!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and looked over at the captain and other guards, who were anxiously waiting for him to speak. Gritting his teeth, he said, “Captain, you go on ahead. But please give me the key to the cells. There’s a guy back there who pissed me off, and I want to teach him a lesson before I leave.”

With that, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and bowed deeply.

At any other time, the captain would never have been able to agree to this request. But considering everyone was completely on edge, he looked at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, and then sighed and said, “Alright, Brother Bai Hao, you’re on your own now. We’ll take off now.”

Naturally, the captain could tell that Bai Hao had some secret he wasn’t willing to divulge. However, that didn’t matter. Even if Bai Hao wanted to kill one of the prisoners, it wouldn't matter in the end. The captain tossed a command medallion over to him, then turned and left with the other guards.

Bai Xiaochun grabbed the command medallion that acted as the key to the cells, then adjusted his aura and settled his thoughts. He knew that if he slipped up in the slightest way right now, he could get into a lot of trouble.

But his decision was made. Gritting his teeth, he began to speed toward the cell that contained the old man with the red birthmark on his face. Along the way, he had a short transmitted conversation with the little turtle to confirm that the old man was in the Core Formation stage.

However, he was still feeling nervous. Although the little turtle didn’t notice, he looked up in thought for a moment. Then he lowered his voice and said, “No, little turtle, it’s too dangerous. He’s a demigod! If you’re wrong about everything, nothing will happen to you. You could escape any time you wanted. But I would lose my poor little life. You fly over into my hand. That way, if the situation gets dangerous, we can face it together! If we’re going to clean out a demigod together, you need to show some good faith!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0647 awe-chapter-648

The little turtle was completely wrapped up in the idea of getting some treasure. On top of that, the Giant Ghost King’s true self was just up ahead. Therefore, in response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, he immediately flew out and allowed Bai Xiaochun to grab him.

“Hurry up, hurry up!” the little turtle rebuked anxiously. “What’s with all the delays? Fudge! The chance to clean out a demigod is a good thing! Why are you hesitating? Rewards come only with risk! Without taking chances, how can you ever profit?!”

Chuckling inwardly, Bai Xiaochun kept his tone sincere as he said, “I'm just young and don’t have any experience in this kind of thing. My apologies, Lord Turtle. Please don't take any offense, sir.”

With that, he headed toward the cell that contained the Giant Ghost King’s true self.

This was the first time the little turtle had ever heard Bai Xiaochun speak so politely to him, and it felt wonderful. Very proud of himself, he decided that he should take some time to educate Bai Xiaochun a bit more in the future, to prove how wise, intelligent, and courageous he himself was.

Even as the little turtle reveled in his own pride, Bai Xiaochun flew closer to the Giant Ghost King’s cell. Inside was the old man with the red birthmark, who slowly looked up, his eyes shining with a sharp light, and a bit of disdain.

It was the type of look that someone might give to a bug.

However, before the old man could say anything, Bai Xiaochun pulled out his command medallion and unlocked the door of the skull cell. Then, before the little turtle could do anything, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “See if you can handle my secret attack, you old bastard!”

At the same time, he took the pleased little turtle... and hurled him with lightning-like speed toward the old man in the cage!

He did everything with incredible smoothness, force, and speed. As soon as the little turtle left his hand, he slammed the cell door shut and then became a series of afterimages that shot backward away from the cage.

He stopped some distance away, looking back at the cage and preparing to flee at a moment’s notice.

“Don’t blame me, little turtle!” he said, feeling completely in the right. “You’re eternally indestructible, but I'm not!”

“Y-y-you, you little *punk*!!” The little turtle had been completely taken by surprise; never could he have possibly imagined that Bai Xiaochun would be treacherous enough to do this.

“Aaggghh, you little jerk! You're completely shameless! Despicable! Contemptible!!” However, there was nothing the little turtle could do at the moment. Enraged, he turned toward the frowning Giant Ghost King, and then flew forward at top speed.

“How impudent!!” the Giant Ghost King yelled, waving his hand out in front of him.

A boom rang out as the little turtle slammed into an invisible barrier roughly three meters in front of him.

However, that only seemed to make him angrier. Looking at the Giant Ghost King, he shouted, “You think nobody would figure out you were hiding here, Giant Ghost King?! You might be able to trick everybody else, but you can’t fool Lord Turtle! Hand over your treasures this instant, otherwise Lord Turtle is going to beat you to death!”

With that, he shot forward, again slamming into the invisible barrier, this time causing cracks to spread out in the air.

In response to the little turtle’s words, the Giant Ghost King’s expression flickered with shock and disbelief, which went to prove... that he really was the Giant Ghost King!!

“Who are you?!?!” he asked.

He had been a prisoner in this cell for two hundred years, and was also protected by the stone turtle’s spell formation. Because of that, he had assumed that he was safe, but now, his identity was exposed! How could he not be shocked!?

However, it was only a moment later that his killing intent erupted. As the little turtle closed in, he reached out and waved his right index finger!

“Spell formation: Evaporating Destruction!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the stone turtle vibrated, and an indescribable power stirred. Apparently, the single wave of a finger on the part of the Giant Ghost King would unleash an all-destructive divine ability.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken by this development, and yet, before anything else could happen, the little turtle’s eyes widened into a glare. Sticking his head far out from his shell, he roared, “NO destruction!”

Instantly, the air of extermination which had appeared moments ago... faded away into nothing!

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes bulged with disbelief, and before he could do anything else, the little turtle shot forward and slammed into his chest.

The Giant Ghost King let out a muffled grunt, his face turning ashen as he staggered backward a few steps, his heart raging with astonishment.

“Impossible! This is impossible! Be destroyed!!” Trembling, he yet again waved his finger at the little turtle. However, the stone turtle’s spell formation didn’t do anything in response. The blood immediately drained from the Giant Ghost King’s face.

As of this moment, his heart was racing more wildly than it had in countless years. At the same time, a sensation of profound danger filled him. What was happening right now was vastly more critical and astonishing that the rebellion of the three great clans.

“Destroy what, your ass?!” The little turtle threw his head back and laughed uproariously, then launched himself forward in another attack.

Outside the cell, Bai Xiaochun had been paying close attention to what was happening, and by now, his eyes were shining. Throwing his head back, he laughed loudly at the realization that this really was the Giant Ghost King. Clearly, his cultivation base really was at the Core Formation level, and furthermore, he couldn’t use the spell formation. The fact that he was like a sick tiger with no teeth or claws left Bai Xiaochun feeling very relieved. Laughing, he walked forward, and then entered the cage again.

“The majestic, illustrious Giant Ghost King is actually dressed up like a prisoner and hiding in this place.... How low of you, Giant Ghost King!” Sticking his chin up, he assumed his best pose and then waved his sleeve proudly.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Hao, reduced the Giant Ghost King to the point of becoming ashes. Hahaha!” Even as Bai Xiaochun’s laughter rang out, the Giant Ghost King stood there feeling shocked and anxious. However, the look in his eye was cold and sinister. After all, he was a demigod king, and knew how to maintain his dignity.

“Bai Hao,” he began, “you--” However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Hao took a step forward and slapped him across the side of the head.

Instantly, the Giant Ghost King’s cultivation base was sealed. Off to the side, the little turtle let out a whoop of delight.

“Clean him out! Clean him *out*!” A tremor ran through the Giant Ghost King, who was now glaring at Bai Xiaochun with intense killing intent.

Despite that killing intent, Bai Xiaochun simply walked forward and began to search him. A moment later, he pulled out a ring of holding. Unfortunately, further searching didn’t reveal anything else.

“Only one ring of holding?” he said, less than pleased. “That’s it?”

As for the Giant Ghost King, the humiliation he was enduring had his heart pulsing with rage that simply couldn’t be described with words.

As far as he was concerned, this Bai Hao was nothing more than a pawn in his game, something to make the action a bit more interesting. He should be the type of person he could kill with a thought if necessary. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that this pawn would end up holding his own life in his hands!

This sudden turn of events, and the sudden crisis, was something that the Giant Ghost King couldn’t simply accept. He was a demigod, and he had planned this entire event down to the smallest detail.

However, even as he seemed to sink into a cool calm, the little turtle shouted, “Searching for treasures isn’t your forte, ya little punk!”

With that, he flew forward and began searching the Giant Ghost King’s robes and tossing all sorts of items out toward Bai Xiaochun.

There was a long, crimson spear, a blue jade slip, a multi-colored magic bottle, and also... a fist-sized chunk of black rock!

When the Giant Ghost King saw all of these things flying out, his expression flickered, and soon turned extremely unsightly. Those items had been hidden in various spatial pockets he had created, which no one should ever have been able to find. However, the little turtle... easily found them and emptied them.

“You....” the Giant Ghost King said anxiously, his eyes bulging. Although there weren’t many items, each one was the type that could shake heaven and earth!

That red spear was how he had earned his name to begin with, and could not be wielded by anyone under the Deva

Realm. It had been forged with an object that fell from beyond the heavens, and contained 1,000,000,000 restrictive spells. Even among devas, it could be considered a top-rate item!

Then there was the blue jade slip. It looked ordinary in nature, but contained a legacy Dao of incredible importance. As for the magic bottle, it was called the Primeval Cosmos Bottle, and was similarly something that could not be used by anyone under the level of a deva. It could absorb any and all objects in creation and transform them into high-level medicine. He had paid a huge price to acquire this item, and was relatively certain that it was why the Nine Serenities King had gotten involved in the rebellion!

Finally, there was the black rock. It was a completely unique item in the world that not even the Giant Ghost King was sure of the origins of. Supposedly, it had once belonged to the first generation Arch-Emperor, although no one knew where he had acquired it.

These items were his most valuable treasures, so seeing them being taken away by the little turtle filled the Giant Ghost King's heart with uncontrollable anxiety.

Bai Xiaochun was ecstatic to see so many things being pulled out. Although he wasn't sure how to use any of them, and despite the fact that they all were branded personally to the Giant Ghost King, he could tell that they were extraordinary.

"Anything the Giant Ghost King kept hidden on his person should definitely be incredibly precious! Maybe I can't use them now, but I'll be able to eventually!"

Bai Xiaochun did his best to hide his pleasure, but as for the little turtle, it was with immense pride that he looked disdainfully at the Giant Ghost King and said, “Think you can hide your stuff from Lord Turtle? Dream on!”

The Giant Ghost King fought to keep himself under control. He knew that at the moment, his rage could do nothing to resolve the situation, and that despite how his heart was dripping with blood... he needed to force himself to remain calm.

“What do you want?!” he said, uttering his words one at a time. Although his cultivation base was currently very weak, and he couldn’t even control his own life or death, he still managed to radiate calmness, and was even somewhat threatening. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he couldn’t help but shiver a bit; after all, this was a demigod, even though his cultivation base was currently not at that level.

However, the fact that he felt scared also got him angry.

“Trying to frighten me?!” he said. Then he thought about how the Giant Ghost King had been using him as a pawn in his game, and had even turned him into a prisoner. Influenced a bit by the little turtle, his eyes suddenly shone with disdain, and he smacked the Giant Ghost King across the side of the head again.

“Close your eyes when you talk to me!” he said angrily. The sight of the Giant Ghost King so angry that he was physically shaking was actually quite exciting. Licking his lips, he continued,

“I've never smacked a demigod! So exciting....” In fact, he couldn’t hold back from delivering another smack.

“Not gonna follow orders huh? Heh heh. I said close your eyes when you talk to me!”

“Do you have a death wish, Bai Hao?!?!?!” The Giant Ghost King raged angrily. If his cultivation base was at its normal level, he would teach Bai Xiaochun a long and hard lesson about the consequences of slapping people!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0648 awe-chapter-649

Bai Xiaochun was quite excited by the thrill of the moment, so in response to the Giant Ghost King’s threatening words, he angrily yelled, “Still trying to threaten me? How dare you! Don’t push me. I'm the number one dark inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary. When I get pissed off, I frighten even myself!!”

Then he placed his hand onto his bag of holding and considered whether or not to take out an Aphrodisiac Pill.

When the Giant Ghost King saw the rage in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, he was shocked. Then he remembered hearing that Bai Xiaochun was a dark inquisitor, and soon, hatred began to build up in his heart. He was a majestic demigod expert, the illustrious Giant Ghost King. The fact that a small fry like this was threatening to torment him caused him to grit his teeth in anger. However, he still managed to calm down.

“What do you want, Bai Hao? Just tell me! Spit it out! Don’t tell me that your betrayal of the Bai Clan was some elaborate plot!?!?” The Giant Ghost King was able to control his anger so well that his voice actually didn't contain anything threatening in it all. As he spoke, he also couldn’t help but glance at Bai Xiaochun’s palm, and wonder if he was going to get slapped again.

“Plot my ass! You listen up, Giant Ghost King. Lord Bai wants--” However, before he could finish his sentence, Cellblock D suddenly trembled, and then the entrance shook violently, almost as if someone was trying to break it open.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he looked over at the entrance. Another huge boom echoed out, and the entrance collapsed, revealing numerous figures who began to fly in.

Then, a shout of rage erupted out, the type of which that contained unsurpassable animosity.

“Bai Hao!! The time has come for you to *die*!!”

It was none other than the chief of the Bai Clan, flanked by numerous other cultivators from the direct bloodline.

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, the little turtle transmitted a message.

“Let’s take the loot and run! They showed up sooner than expected, and Lord Turtle can’t fully control the spell formation!!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath to restore his calm. His eyes flashed with icy light as he unhesitatingly grabbed the Giant Ghost King by the neck, then turned to flee.

“Give me the command medallion, little punk,” the little turtle shouted. “Fudge! I can’t believe these people dare to interrupt our holy shakedown! Lord Turtle will open all the cells, that will completely screw them over!”

“No way!” Bai Xiaochun replied. “If you open all the cells and free the prisoners... they won’t just start fighting the Bai Clan, they’ll come after me!” After all, as a dark inquisitor, Bai Xiaochun had interrogated many of the prisoners in the cells, most of whom now hated him with deep passion....

The little turtle was too stunned at Bai Xiaochun’s response to say anything. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun shook his head and began to move forward, keeping the Giant Ghost King gripped in his hand.

“If I can’t hide, then I might as well fight!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, and afterimages appeared as he summoned his four clones. At the same time, he pulled out all sorts of magical items, many of which had fourteenfold spirit enhancements. Coupled with the power of his cultivation base, it made his energy surge to a shocking level.

As the rumbling sounds echoed out, the distant members of the Bai Clan saw Bai Xiaochun. The clan chief’s eyes turned bright red, and he bellowed with rage. Flanking him were five clan elders, all of them in the Nascent Soul stage, as well as a crowd of Core Formation experts.

“Time to die, Bai Hao!!” he shouted, immediately accelerating toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun knew that this was a moment of deadly crisis, and that he couldn’t afford to get involved in a protracted fight. Therefore, he pushed forward at top speed, using his frigid qi and Mountain Shaking Bash to achieve shocking speed.

The little turtle also knew that it was a dangerous moment. Whooping with excitement, he tucked his head back into his shell to go along for the ride.

In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun reached the forces from the Bai Clan.

The divine abilities launched by the clan elders were handled by his four clones. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s true self slammed into one of the early Nascent Soul stage elders, sending him tumbling backward several dozen meters. Instead of stopping, Bai Xiaochun continued forward. His four clones attacked another of the nearby clan elders, unleashing all sorts of divine abilities. Meanwhile, he used the Throat Crushing Grasp to crush the neck of one of the incoming cultivators.

In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, the fiercest of fighting had broken out!

Booms and shockwaves spread out in all directions, casting the entire area into chaos!

Scintillating light shone out from Bai Xiaochun as he pulled out his transformed Eternal Parasol and stabbed it into the chest of a nearby enemy. It was a Bai Clan Core Formation cultivator, but it only took a moment for his muscular frame to be withered away, his life force sucked out of him with shocking speed!

As Bai Xiaochun continued his shocking charge, golden designs flared up all over him that were impossible to conceal from the surrounding cultivators.

He also threw out a fourteen-colored flame, which transformed into a sea of fire that burned anything it touched. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was like a celestial warrior, proceeding forward with shocking momentum!

The fighting had only been going on for a moment, and had been matchlessly bitter. Bai Xiaochun’s hair was in disarray, but he didn’t slow down in the slightest. A single fist strike sent the clan chief tumbling away, and caused other clan members to scatter. When he and his four clones all fought with full strength, they could crush anything in their path as easily as dried weeds.

Although they seemed to be acting with practiced ease, they were actually in great danger. Two of Bai Xiaochun's clones had already been nearly destroyed by some of the clan elders, and were forced to transform into motes of light that flew back into Bai Xiaochun.

Blood oozed out of the corner of his true self's mouth, and yet, he didn't slow in the slightest as he barreled toward the exit.

It was a shocking sight for all the prisoners to behold, as well as the surrounding Bai Clan cultivators. The power and ferocity on display by Bai Xiaochun was hard to take in. However, even more shocking was the outrageous nature of his equipment

"Heavens! That... that magical item has a fourteenfold spirit enhancement!!"

"This Bai Hao is crazy! Even that leather armor of his has a fourteenfold spirit enhancement!!!"

"He's a genius! A spirit enhancing genius!!"

"You're not getting away!!" raged the clan chief, using a minor teleportation to close the distance between himself and Bai Xiaochun. The clan elders similarly gave chase.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get anxious. On the one hand, he was trying to break through the enemy to escape, but on the other hand, he had to make sure that the Giant Ghost King didn't get killed. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, the Giant Ghost King was like a deva soul to him, so he couldn't let him die. However, to do both of those things at the same time was very difficult. In fact, it was actually impossible to shield the Giant Ghost King from all of the attacks being thrown their way.

And yet, the Giant Ghost King didn't say a single word the entire time. The truth was that he was actually impressed by Bai Xiaochun’s bravery and ferocity. His veins of steel were on full display, to the point where he seemed like a completely different person!

Despite the fact that the Giant Ghost King wasn't saying anything, Bai Xiaochun found it strange that he was keeping silent. Furthermore, the attacks which found their way to him did nothing more than cause his face to turn a bit pale. He hadn't even coughed up any blood yet, and was clearly not injured in any way.

“This Giant Ghost King is a demigod expert. Don’t tell me he’s got some trick up his sleeve?” Bai Xiaochun was stunned, but didn’t have time to think about the matter. Four Bai Clan elders had just teleported in range, and were unleashing a divine ability, a black cloud filled with screaming, evil ghosts. Eyes bloodshot, Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and he opened up the Eternal Parasol, causing dazzling light to flash out and block the evil ghosts. At that point, the little turtle shot out toward the Bai Clan elders.

However, one of the four elders performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, summoning the image of a palm which shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Without even thinking about it, Bai Xiaochun reflexively shoved the Giant Ghost King out in front of him to defend himself. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the enormous palm fell to pieces, and Bai Xiaochun staggered backward. As for the Giant Ghost King, he felt like cursing, but instead, gritted his teeth and endured the pain.

“Not hurt?” Bai Xiaochun muttered in surprise. The Bai Clan elder was similarly shocked. He had noticed that Bai

Xiaochun was dragging an old man with him, but hadn’t paid it much attention. But now, he realized that this old man was clearly extraordinary; a Nascent Soul-level attack which would have injured Bai Xiaochun didn't faze the old man at all.... In fact, he didn’t even cough up any blood.

Ecstatic, Bai Xiaochun hefted his Eternal Parasol in one hand and the Giant Ghost King in the other, and then charged forward again. As of this moment, the Giant Ghost King was a human shield which Bai Xiaochun could use to block any of the divine abilities being sent his way. The cultivators from the Bai Clan were all shocked.

Eventually, the Giant Ghost King couldn’t take it any longer. He was trembling, and his ashen face was now turning livid with rage. He had just sustained ten Nascent Soul-level attacks, all backed with deadly intent. Unable to hold back his humiliation at being treated like a human shield, he began to curse!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0649 awe-chapter-650

“Bai Hao, you little bastard, I hope you die a painful death! You... you.... You’ll get your comeuppance one of these days!! If I can’t kill you myself, then my daughter will make mincemeat out of you!!”

Although the Giant Ghost King was enraged, he was a demigod and a king; he actually wasn’t very proficient in cursing people. Therefore, he could only come up with some basic taunts, which he repeated using different variations.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat proudly and completely ignored the curses. In fact, he even considered looking for a chance to get the little turtle to teach the Giant Ghost King a thing or two about insults.

Even as that thought crossed his mind, he proceeded forward, not only using the Giant Ghost King as a shield, but fighting back with him. His actions, coupled with his shocking fourteenfold spirit enhanced treasures, ensured that he was already getting close to the entrance of Cellblock D.

Although everyone in the Bai Clan burned with unquenchable rage, they simply couldn’t kill Bai Xiaochun. Not only was he incredibly tough to begin with, he also had four clones to help him, and tons of eye-catching magical items.

There was his strange parasol which could suck away life force and replenish him, and also the fact that he could move with shocking speed. His fleshly body power was incredible, and he could teleport, making it completely impossible to kill him in any short amount of time.

The old man with the red birthmark on his face was an even deeper mystery to the Bai Clan cultivators. No matter how many times he got hit, even with powerful magical items, he didn’t even cough up a single mouthful of blood.

In turn, Bai Xiaochun was bashing his way closer and closer to the entrance.

The clan elders were starting to get very nervous, and even joined together in an attack that cause intense rumbling sounds to fill the cellblock. Powerful fluctuations rolled out, and multi-colored light spread out in all directions. However, Bai Xiaochun continued to use the Giant Ghost King, who never stopped cursing the entire time.

“You will die in pain, Bai Hao!! You’ll get what you deserve one of these days!!” The Giant Ghost King wanted to cry, but no tears would come. His hair was in complete disarray, and his clothes were in tatters. He now possessed none of the dignity of a demigod expert, and it was even possible to see welts and bruises on his skin.

Because this was his true self, and he was a demigod, his body wasn’t necessarily eternally indestructible, but was strong enough to be very difficult to kill in circumstances like this. With the exception of devas, any opponent he faced couldn’t hurt him any more than the bite of a mosquito. Only by wearing him down for a very long time could they possibly kill him.

The rage burning in his heart right now was so hot that not even the waters of the Underworld River could extinguish it. There was also no small amount of grief inside him; despite the many years he had lived, and his overall tenacity, he really felt like crying.

By this point, he felt like he was being struck by eight generations of accumulated bad luck.... It was simply impossible to describe how humiliated he felt to have run into this damnable Bai Hao. Then he thought back to his original plan, and how he was only supposed to remain in Devil Penitentiary for a few more days before emerging like a cicada shedding its carapace, his decay period completely behind him.

Even if the three great clans found him before the process was complete, with the spell formation of the stone turtle, they would have been incapable of defeating him. Because of all that, he had looked down with contempt on the three great clans the entire time, and had looked forward to watching their terror mount as time passed. From beginning to end, everything was to have been within his control.

His anticipation and confidence were so great, in fact, that he hadn’t even mentioned the current situation to his daughter in the imperial city.

It had been many, many years since he had gotten to do anything interesting, and as such, he had truly been looking forward to playing this little game.

However, never could he have possibly imagined that his game would end up like this....

“It shouldn't be happening this way....” he thought miserably. Regret gripped his heart. He had planned everything meticulously, and prepared perfectly. Never could he possibly have guessed that things would happen in this way, that one of the pawns in his game would ruin everything.

He could only watch as he was thrown this way and that to block various divine abilities and magical items. Booms filled his ears, and his heart sank further into lamentation.

“I refuse to accept this!!” he moaned inwardly, his eyes bloodshot. However, there was nothing he could do now. He had secretly tried to make contact with the spell formation, but there had been no reaction, causing his despair to deepen.

As the Giant Ghost King wallowed in hopelessness, Bai Xiaochun coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. His remaining two clones had been destroyed, and were now speeding back to him in the form of two motes of light. Although his fleshly body was powerful, his injuries were serious. And yet, he still managed to break through everything the Bai Clan was throwing at him.

Then, in a blinding flash, he, the little turtle, and the Giant Ghost King all burst out through the main door of the cellblock.

Roars of rage echoed out behind him. Obviously, the clan chief and clan elders weren’t going to just give up. They wouldn’t rest until Bai Xiaochun was dead!

“Maybe you can escape from this place,” the clan chief howled, “but the three great clans control Giant Ghost City now! You won’t get out of the city!”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was speeding toward the exit of Devil Penitentiary.

Moments later, the clan chief and clan elders appeared behind him and gave chase.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and his aura was in chaos. However, what worried him wasn’t his injuries, which were significant, but rather, the fact that he needed to get out of the prison as quickly as possible. If he didn’t... then eventually the little turtle would lose control of the spell formation. And when that happened, the first thing the Giant Ghost King would do would be to kill him!

At the moment, the Giant Ghost King’s eyes were closed, making it obvious that he must be trying to make contact with the stone turtle’s spell formation. More nervous than ever, Bai Xiaochun suddenly slapped him again.

“I’m warning you!” he yelled viciously. “You better not force me to tell them who you are!”

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes snapped open and he glared at Bai Xiaochun, panting so hard he felt like his chest was about to explode. However... he had to continue to endure. At the moment, he had no other options available.

Bai Xiaochun whizzed along; thankfully, he was very familiar with Devil Penitentiary, so he quickly made his way through the various tunnels until he was at the exit. Just before leaving, though, the little turtle’s face fell.

“I'm gonna lose control!!” he shouted. A tremor ran through the Giant Ghost King, and his eyes began to shine with intense light. He could sense that the spell formation was beginning to awaken, and in fact, the entire stone turtle was beginning to vibrate. Further back, the clan chief and clan elders’ faces all fell.

As for the Giant Ghost King, his excitement grew, and he was just preparing to reach out to the spell formation when, all of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun, aware that he couldn't easily slap the man unconscious, suddenly reached into his bag of holding and produced a handful of Aphrodisiac Pills....

Even as joy spread out across the Giant Ghost King’s face, Bai Xiaochun stuffed the pills into his mouth.

“You....” There was nothing the Giant Ghost King could do to fight back. As soon as the pills entered his mouth, they melted, and the medicinal effect of the pills erupted explosively. At the moment, the Giant Ghost King’s cultivation base was incredibly weak, and he couldn't do anything to control the effect of the pills. Rumbling sounds filled his mind, and he instantly lost contact with the spell formation.

Although he wanted to reestablish contact, the burning heat that spread through his body battered at his mind, making it difficult to even think straight. However, he made a mad effort to control himself, and once again reached out to the spell formation. The stone turtle instantly surged with power, causing pressure to weigh down everywhere, and filling the hearts of the Bai Clan cultivators with sensations of imminent deadly crisis.

However... Bai Xiaochun’s Aphrodisiac Pills were simply too devastating, and the Giant Ghost King had been given too many. Soon his face began to turn bright red, and he started shaking visibly. A moment passed, and... despite the fact that his connection to the spell formation was tenuous at best, it had not been broken.

But all Bai Xiaochun had needed was a bit of time. Howling, he pushed forward with greater speed, using everything at his disposal to shoot out of the stone turtle’s left eye and then into the moat beyond.

In that instant, the Giant Ghost King called upon his indescribable levels of self-control to suppress the burning fire within him. He gripped tight on his connection to the spell formation, and then tried to activate it. However... as soon as Bai Xiaochun burst out of the turtle’s eye, the rising energy of the spell formation faded away.

“No!!!” the Giant Ghost King howled as he watched hope vanish right in front of him, sending him plummeting into the depths of despair. As soon as the word left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun looked over angrily and slapped him across the side of the head again.

“Shut up!”

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Hao!” the Giant Ghost King roared. “Kill you, ya hear? You’re dead! Aggghhhh!!”

Whack! Bai Xiaochun slapped him again.

“Don’t hit me, you--”

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack! Bai Xiaochun proceeded to slap him eight more times, until finally, some blood oozed out of the Giant Ghost King’s mouth. Having no choice but to endure the humiliation, the Giant Ghost King bit down on his bottom lip and stopped talking.

The current Bai Xiaochun seemed even more terrifying than the Bai Xiaochun who had just fought his way out of the cellblock. As of this moment, he seemed like nothing more than a devilish ghost!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0650 awe-chapter-651

“You got what you deserved!” Bai Xiaochun said angrily. “You listen to me, you old bastard: don’t push me! When I get pissed off, I frighten even myself!”

Fear still lingered in his heart from moments earlier. He knew that if he had been even a bit slower, allowing the Giant Ghost King to gain control of the spell formation, then he would have died.

As he wallowed in that lingering fear, he glared at the Giant Ghost King with such intense killing intent that it left the man shaken. Furthermore, considering that he was willing to humiliate his own father, was vicious and merciless, and had reviled his own clan, then obviously, provoking him would be a huge mistake.

At the moment, the Giant Ghost King could only bow his head and vent his anger inwardly. “He definitely wants something from me,” he thought. “Fine. I’ll just endure and refrain from provoking him.”

Even as he lowered his head, the clan chief and other members of the Bai Clan flew out from the stone turtle’s eye. Of course, the Bai Clan had their ways of protecting themselves from the corrosive water of the moat, and immediately began to chase Bai Xiaochun.

Face twitching with fear, and having no more time to deal with the Giant Ghost King, Bai Xiaochun burst into motion, heading toward the surface of the water as quickly as possible. However, only a moment later, the little turtle suddenly shrieked, “Back up!!”

Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun shoved the Giant Ghost King out in front of him and lurched in the opposite direction. As he did, a sound louder than heavenly thunder caused everything in the area to shake violently.

At the same time, an incredible force descended into the moat water, causing a massive eruption of water.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun was protected behind the Giant Ghost King, who took the entire force of the blow. Blood sprayed out of the Giant Ghost King’s mouth as his internal organs vibrated on the point of collapsing. Even large portions of his hair fell off of his head; it was as if a full twenty percent of his overall energy had been destroyed!

As for his cultivation base, in the blink of an eye it dropped from Core Formation into Foundation Establishment.... Obviously, that attack wasn’t a Nascent Soul divine ability, but rather... a blow from a deva!

As the boom continued to echo out, Bai Xiaochun realized that all the water around him had been destroyed, leaving him hovering in the middle of the air. Furthermore, up above him, with a grim, maddened expression on his face, was the Bai Clan patriarch!!

Bai Xiaochun was so nervous his tongue was stuck to the top of his mouth, and his heart was racing faster than ever. He knew that if the little turtle hadn’t warned him, he would have died from that attack. Furthermore, without the Giant Ghost King there to use as a shield, the little turtle’s warning would, at most, have enabled him to escape with serious injuries.

The Bai Clan patriarch had been searching for the Giant Ghost King, but had obviously received a message from someone in the Bai Clan, causing him to turn his attention to Bai Hao!

However, he could never have guessed that Bai Xiaochun could survive a full-force blow!!

Shocked, the patriarch looked closer, and immediately focused on the tool Bai Xiaochun had used to defend himself... an old man with a red birthmark on his face!!

“That’s....” The Bai Clan patriarch shivered, and his aura fluctuated unstably. Then his eyes began to shine with unprecedented light. He almost seemed hopeful, as though he had just been rescued from an impossible situation.

“This... this....” He couldn’t even speak straight. A moment later, he threw his head back and laughed maniacally, a laughter that filled all of Giant Ghost City, a laughter filled with delight, joy, and complacency.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his heart began to pound, and he looked over at the Giant Ghost King to see that his eyes were somewhat blank. He didn’t look at all like he had moments ago when arguing with Bai Xiaochun. As of this moment he realized that everything that was happening... was likely just fate.

“The heavens will not destroy the Bai Clan! Hahaha! We're saved!! Giant Ghost King! How could I have ever imagined that you would actually be *here*!!!”

The patriarch was laughing so hard he was shaking, and his eyes were bright red because of the excitement he felt. During the past few hours, he had felt both indescribable torment and unending regret. However, there was no way to undo what had been done, and the realization that he was simply a pawn in the Giant Ghost King’s game left him terrified to the extreme. His chances of finding the Giant Ghost King were virtually nil, and even if he did find him... there was no way the Giant Ghost King would not be prepared to defend himself.

The patriarch had already begun to sink into complete despair and insanity. Upon encountering Bai Hao, he was so upset that he forgot about his plans to use him as a future incarnation, and immediately unleashed a killing blow. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that right there, in the middle of his complete despair... a ray of hope would appear, and that he... would find the Giant Ghost King. Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King was incredibly weak. The patriarch’s eyes immediately began to burn with fiery passion as he ignored Bai Xiaochun and focused completely... on the Giant Ghost King!

As soon as the Bai Clan patriarch’s words echoed out, the clan chief and the other clan members further back stared in wide-eyed shock. Then they gasped and looked at the old man Bai Xiaochun was holding out in front of him.

“He’s... he’s the Giant Ghost King!?!?”

“Heavens! The Giant Ghost King has been hiding here!!”

“I told you there was something weird about that guy to be able to take so many attacks from us and not be hurt!! It turns out he’s actually the Giant Ghost King!!”

They weren’t the only shocked ones. There were cultivators from the other great clans in the area as well, plus some soldiers from the armies of the six heavenly marquises who had rebelled. There were even spies loyal to other forces and groups. Everyone turned to look at Bai Hao, and the Giant Ghost King whom he held by the neck, clearly a captive.

Everyone who could see the scene was completely and utterly shocked.

“This... this is impossible! That’s Bai Hao? He... he kidnapped the Giant Ghost King?!”

“This Bai Hao is completely ferocious! He... he actually kidnapped the Giant Ghost King!! Everyone’s looking for the Giant Ghost King’s true self, and now he has him!!”

“Heavens! I actually underestimated this Bai Hao. He’s incredible! So tough! He’s definitely going to become completely famous because of this!!”

Countless gasps rang out, and within moments, people began sending the news back to their superiors. It was easy to imagine how, within mere moments, everyone in Giant Ghost City would know that Bai Hao had kidnapped the Giant Ghost King!!

Quite a few people immediately recalled how Bai Hao had kidnapped the chief of the Bai Clan, and were even more shocked than before.

“Bai Hao... is vicious and merciless, and reviled his own clan! How fierce! He didn’t just kidnap his own father, he actually also kidnapped the Giant Ghost King!!”

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun’s actions had truly shaken the entire city!!

Of course, that had not been his intention. Currently, he was looking around nervously, his eyes bloodshot, his chest swelling with fear and anxiety.

As for the Giant Ghost King, he maintained his silence, not uttering a single word. However, his eyes were calm, and the dignity which had previously escaped him returned. He might be about to die, but he would die with honor. There was also a flash of regret in his eyes.

“What a pity,” he murmured to himself. “There’s not enough time for the Ghost King Orchid to bloom....”

When he did speak out loud, his voice was cool and collected. “Bai Hao, you can release me now.”

Looking up, Bai Xiaochun saw the Bai Clan deva patriarch reaching out with his right hand.

“What do I do, what do I do...!?” he wailed inwardly.

At that point, a fiery gleam appeared in his eyes, and he said loudly, “Patriarch, you really are brilliant to have anticipated that the traitorous Giant Ghost King would have a secret plan at work. Well, I’ve accomplished my mission. I followed your orders, enduring all sorts of humiliation, even betraying the clan, all to earn the trust of this traitor. And now, I’ll hand him over to you alive and in one piece!

“Patriarch, I hope that you come to be bathed in the most spectacular honor and glory! Long live the Bai Clan!”

Everyone was stunned by this development. The Giant Ghost King smiled wryly, and the Bai Clan patriarch stared in shock. It was to the utter astonishment of everyone that Bai Xiaochun proceeded to head toward the patriarch, seemingly excited to hand him the Giant Ghost King.

The Bai Clan patriarch was so taken aback that he didn’t have time to ponder the matter closely. Bai Xiaochun had worded things perfectly, to the point where no one even thought to question his words.

He had even gone so far as to offer all the glory to the patriarch. All the patriarch had to do was confirm that what he had said was true, and it would actually be of great benefit to the patriarch in the subsequent struggle to secure the crown. The patriarch’s eyes immediately glittered brightly as he realized all of this.

“This Bai Hao... is very interesting....” A smile broke out on his face as he looked at the charming, nervous Bai Xiaochun. Then, he prepared to respond.

However... that was when something completely unexpected changed everything!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0651 awe-chapter-652

Bai Xiaochun’s shocking words caused all sorts of thoughts to go through the minds of the people in the area. If he had said something completely random and meaningless, then it likely wouldn’t have resulted in anything to speak of. However, people almost immediately realized the implications of what he was saying. Even the clan chief gasped.

Many of the ordinary soul cultivators in the area were turning to look at the Bai Clan patriarch.

Everyone knew that deva patriarchs were clever and conniving, so it wouldn’t be anything surprising to find that what Bai Xiaochun had said was true.

After all... three great clans had put their lives on the line in this rebellion.

Everyone reeled in shock, and the Bai Clan patriarch's mouth began to turn into a smile. Bai Xiaochun, looking very meek and obedient, slowly neared the patriarch, with the Giant Ghost King held out in front of him. He moved quickly, and within moments was a short 30 meters away....

At that point, the Bai Clan patriarch’s face fell. After all, he was a deva, connected to heaven and earth, with acute divine sense, and fantastic instincts when it came to danger. In that moment, a profound sense of deadly crisis suddenly rose up in his heart, and he subconsciously began to back up. Although he wasn’t sure why... there was something that suddenly seemed extremely dangerous about Bai Xiaochun.

Although it seemed completely unbelievable, the sensation of crisis caused the Bai Clan patriarch to suddenly shout, “Hold it right there!”

Just when he was about to shoot backward, a vicious, maddened grin suddenly spread out on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

“You’re dead!!” he shouted, slapping his bag of holding to produce a crystalline soulhoarding pagoda. Then, with all the strength he could muster, he hurled the soulhoarding pagoda at the patriarch!

The soulhoarding pagoda didn’t look like anything special, but as it whooshed through the air toward the Bai Clan patriarch, the man’s scalp began to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode. The sensation of impending doom was so intense that it filled every inch of his flesh and blood.

“That thing could kill me!! I need to get out of here immediately!!” A tremor ran through the patriarch, and he immediately began to fade away as he resorted to a powerful teleportation!!

Unfortunately for him, everything was happening too quickly. Bai Xiaochun’s action of hurling the soulhoarding pagoda had caught him completely unprepared. Most importantly... Bai Xiaochun was simply too close to him!

He had only been about 30 meters away, and had hurled the soulhoarding pagoda with all his strength. Because of that, it only took the briefest of moments... for the soulhoarding pagoda to be a few short meters away!!

In the instant that the patriarch began to fade away, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared, *“DETONATE!!”*

He pushed hard against the restrictive spell inside of the soulhoarding pagoda, and at the same time, shot backward at full speed!

He used his Undying Hex, and also kept the Giant Ghost King held out in front of him. However, worried that all of that wasn’t enough, he took advantage of the fact that everyone was looking at the soulhoarding pagoda to pull out his turtle-wok and place it between himself and the Giant Ghost King!

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. The instant the restrictive spell inside the soulhoarding pagoda unraveled, the discarnate demigod soul inside awoke, causing an aura of destruction to erupt out!

Brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth, and the clouds were thrown into chaos. An indescribably powerful pressure instantly filled the entire area!

“Demigod soul!?!?!?” The Bai Clan patriarch’s face fell, and his heart was seized with shock. A sensation of deadly crisis completely overwhelmed him, and a scream escaped his lips as he gave up on the lengthy teleportation process and simply tried to run. Sadly for him, it was too late for that!

The instant the shocking demigod aura appeared, something like a gale force wind sprang up. Cries of astonishment and alarm filled the area.

“Demigod aura!!”

“What’s that!?!?”

“Heavens....”

Then, a heaven-rending, earth-crushing boom rose up in the area, a deafening sound that quickly spreading out to fill all of Giant Ghost City, causing everything to quake violently!

A destructive blast like the crushing blow of a giant rocked the entire city. The sky went dim, and the wind screamed as countless crevices opened up in the lands surrounding the city!

The Bai Clan patriarch took the brunt of the attack, and managed to let out a short frenzied scream that was soon overwhelmed by the destructive force!

The nearby buildings, as well as many nearby cultivators who had been too slow to flee, were also swept up in the powerful force of the attack.

BOOM! RUMBLE! CRAAAAAASH!!

Many of the nearby cultivators had no time to even scream before they were destroyed in body and soul. That included many of the Bai Clan elders, who were completely incapable of defending themselves, and were transformed into ash....

The clan chief had been leading the way in the chase after Bai Xiaochun, but happened to have a life-saving magical item. With the help of that item, he survived, but was still severely injured, his legs shredded into nothing, his arms ripped off, his chest caved in, his hair burned off, and his cultivation base shattered.

“No... this can’t be real!! Bai Hao! Bai Hao!!!” Lingering hatred and despair could be seen in his eyes as he tumbled away, screaming in terror.

A huge crater was being opened up... and the destructive aura could even be sensed by people some distance away.

Amidst the cacophony of sound, the Giant Ghost King’s voice could be heard, letting out a shriek of despair. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was shoved backward. As for Bai Xiaochun, he remained behind his turtle-wok, but still felt some of the force of the blow, and coughed up an enormous mouthful of blood. He felt like his body was going to collapse, and even his internal organs were destabilized. And yet, he still managed to escape with his life.

Even the Giant Ghost King was completely shaken by what was happening. Never could he possibly have imagined that something like this would happen, or that the person to orchestrate it all would be... Bai Hao!!

When it was all over, Bai Xiaochun looked at the crater, heart pounding with residual fear.

“The force unleashed by the detonation of a demigod soul is mind-boggling.... Even I almost got wiped out.” Thankfully, he had been prepared all along for what was going to happen. He had picked the right place and time, and had retreated with incredible speed. Therefore, he was minimally affected. After adding in the protection of the Giant Ghost King and his turtle-wok, he managed to escape with his life.

In fact, that was another reason why he had taken the initiative to approach the Bai Clan patriarch, instead of allowing the man to get close to him. That had given him room to back up.... If it had been a normal fight, and he had casually attempted to use the demigod soul as a weapon, he would likely have blown himself up....

Of everyone else present, the Bai Clan patriarch had been the closest to the soulhoarding pagoda. Now that the force of the blow was fading away, he could be seen floating there in the air, most of his hair burned off, the rest of his body in horrific condition. In fact, this was the worst shape he had ever been in throughout his entire life.

Even more shocking to him was the fact that he was obviously in no place to try to fight Bai Xiaochun. If he did, he would surely be defeated and killed!

Trembling, he uncontrollably coughed up another massive mouthful of blood, then looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a mixture of unparalleled fear and incredible killing intent. However, he also didn't hesitate to turn and flee, using every ounce of speed he could muster to get as far away as possible.

“He survived?!?!” Bai Xiaochun thought, shocked. At the moment, he didn’t dare to chase him, though.

Aware that he wasn’t out of danger yet, he looked up in thought for the briefest moment and then shouted, “I, Bai Hao, am the type who doesn’t attack unless I am attacked first. Listen up, everyone. That divine ability I used just now, I can use it another hundred times! When I attack, I frighten even myself! So don’t even think about provoking me!”

With that, he turned and fled, keeping a firm grip on the Giant Ghost King, who was still coughing up blood.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0652 awe-chapter-653

“Well played, Bai Hao. Vile and sinister, vicious and merciless, reviler of the clan....” The Bai Clan patriarch was currently speeding along, coughing up blood and wracked with bitterness. Although the detonation of the soulhoarding pagoda hadn’t killed him, it had gravely injured him. At the moment, he was in no condition to be thinking about trying to kill the Giant Ghost King. Right now, he had to fear for his own life!

There could be no better opportunity than this moment for the patriarchs of the Chen and Cai Clans to kill him.... After all, the three clans were cooperating at the moment, but in general, were enemies!

The Bai Clan patriarch was in no mood to bet his own life, and therefore drew on every scrap of energy he had left to flee back to the Bai Clan, where he could safely go into secluded meditation and start recovering!

He had no attention to spare for what was happening back in Giant Ghost City, or with Bai Hao!

The longer one lives, the more one will fear death. That was the current situation with the Bai Clan patriarch. After all, the fate of his clan rested on his shoulders, and the clan as a whole couldn’t afford for anything to happen to him.

Meanwhile, back in the city, two new deva auras suddenly erupted out into the open. One of them began to speed toward Bai Xiaochun, and the other... went after the Bai Clan patriarch!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was racing through Giant Ghost City, trying to keep his aura concealed, his heart racing with terror.

“I'm finished. Kaput. Dammit, I was too impulsive. It's all the fault of this Giant Ghost King. He’s too conspicuous!” Bai Xiaochun felt like crying, but no tears would come. At the moment, he was so nervous his soul was trembling.

Equally nervous was the Giant Ghost King, who couldn’t stop coughing up blood, and whose aura was incredibly weak. The destructive blast just now had far surpassed a deva attack, and had very nearly killed him.

Feeling like he had just survived a deadly calamity, he looked over at his captor in astonishment.

He could tell that this Bai Hao was a crazy daredevil who wouldn’t shrink back from any challenge. However, worried that he would say the wrong thing and piss him off, he very carefully chose his words as he said, “If... if you just keep running around randomly like this, you’re going to get captured. Listen, let’s go back to the stone turtle... I can--”

“Who said you could talk!?” Bai Xiaochun growled angrily, his expression as cold as ice. He even reached over and slapped the Giant Ghost King across the side of the head.

More blood sprayed out of the Giant Ghost King’s mouth, and his anger boiled. However, the crazed look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes caused him to shiver and simply suppress his anger.

“This guy is crazy!!” he cursed inwardly. “A complete psycho!!”

By this point, he truly regretted his decision of pulling Bai Hao into his game to spice things up. If he could go back and do things over again, he would absolutely, positively change his decision. After all, if Bai Hao had ended up being killed by the Bai Clan, he wouldn’t be anywhere near a situation like this....

“Listen up, you old bastard,” Bai Xiaochun said angrily. “All of this is your fault. I almost just got killed trying to save you! If you don't want to thank me, fine, but how dare you try to trick me into going back to that stone turtle. You think I'm an idiot or something? As soon as I went back into that turtle, I’d be dead!”

He was truly feeling very irritated. Then he thought about how it was the little turtle who had gotten him into this mess. If it weren’t for the little turtle, he would have long since made his getaway.

“And then there’s you, little turtle!” Gritting his teeth, he looked down at his bag of holding. However, the little turtle was long gone. Clearly... he knew that he had caused some really big problems.

“Well,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “I can’t change things now. I guess if I have to I’ll just hand over the Giant Ghost King....”

When the Giant Ghost King saw the ominous glint in Bai Xiaochun’s eye, he suddenly had a very bad feeling. He also realized that if he wanted to get out of this tribulation alive, everything would come down to this Bai Hao.

“Brother Bai Hao... there’s no need to go do anything hasty. What... what exactly do you want? Whatever it is... just tell me, I'm sure I can accommodate you!" The Giant Ghost King’s words came a bit haltingly as he tried to keep his tone as neutral as possible.

Inside, he was bemoaning how everything had played out. Originally, everything had been going exactly according to plan. He should have been safe in the stone turtle during his decay period, until his cultivation base was back to normal. At that point, he could have wrapped up his game perfectly. But then everything had gone wrong. He had made the critical error of trying to use a crazy person as a pawn. Too many things had then occurred which he could never have anticipated happening....

Glaring angrily at the Giant Ghost King, Bai Xiaochun said, “I want a deva soul, old man! A metal-type deva soul! If you have one, give it to me right now, and I’ll let you go immediately!”

The Giant Ghost King stared back at him in wide-eyed shock. Completely confused, he replied, “You... you kidnapped me because... you want a metal-type deva soul?”

The entire concept seemed completely and utterly absurd. He almost wondered if he was listening to the biggest joke in the world.

Bai Xiaochun was actually starting to get anxious. After all the hardships he had gone through to reach this point, if the Giant Ghost King didn’t agree, he would probably cry....

“Yeah, I do,” he yelled. “So what? Not gonna give it to me? Don’t push me too far, old man!”

“No, I’ll give it to you! I will....” The Giant Ghost King felt like he was about to collapse mentally. Although deva souls were precious, they weren’t that important to him in the grand scheme of things. He had assumed that this Bai Hao would be after something far more grand. And yet, it turned out that all he wanted was a deva soul....

“Damn you, Bai Hao!” he moaned inwardly. “Why didn’t you say so earlier? Was all of this worth it? You’re doing all this for a mere deva soul? You dragged me out of the stone turtle for that....”

“Hand it over!” Bai Xiaochun said impatiently. “Where is it, in that ring of holding?”

With that, he looked around furtively, and then ducked into a nearby alley.

When the Giant Ghost King responded to the question, he tried to word things perfectly. “I... um... I don’t actually have it on me right now. There are only random things in that ring of holding. The deva soul is in my secret palace, but with the current level of my cultivation base, I can’t open it right now. Listen, I have a suggestion, Brother Bai Hao. Just take a minute to think it over.... Keep me safe for a month. After that, my cultivation base will recover naturally, and I swear that as soon as it does, I’ll open my secret palace and give you that deva soul!”

The truth was that he really didn’t have any way of producing a deva soul at the moment.... Furthermore, after what had just occurred with the Bai Clan patriarch, he was also fairly certain that his best chance at staying alive was to stick with Bai Xiaochun. Besides, based on his observations of everything that was happening, he was very worried that Bai Xiaochun might hand him over to the three clans to save his own life.

As soon as the words left the Giant Ghost King’s mouth, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes blazed with anger. Smacking the Giant Ghost King across the head again, he said, “You think Lord Bai is stupid, you old bastard!? After your cultivation base recovered, the first thing you would do would be to kill me!”

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth at how foul the Giant Ghost King was to think he was so stupid.

Eyes burning with anger, but heart pounding nervously, he said, “Back when the Bai Clan patriarch was originally trying to kill me, and you saved me, I was very grateful. I helped you interrogate prisoners, and even helped you clean out the Cai Clan’s soulgrounds. But what did you go and do? Repay kindness with enmity, that’s what! You stripped me of my status as a prison guard and turned me into a prisoner! Outrageous!!”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun realized that he had done something monumentally crazy. He had kidnapped a demigod king.... In the past, he would never have even considered doing such a thing. However, at the moment, he was running out of options. In fact, he was even thinking of trying to work out a deal with the three great clans to trade the Giant Ghost King for a deva soul....

When the Giant Ghost King saw the look in his eyes, his heart started to pound even harder.

“Brother Bai Hao, please, don't do anything rash. You mustn’t! Just... just hear me out. Why don’t you place a restrictive spell on me? Then you won’t have to worry about me causing problems for you even when my cultivation base is back to normal!”

“With my cultivation base?” Bai Xiaochun shot back, feeling angrier than ever. “What kind of restrictive spell could I possibly put on you? You’re really pushing things too far, old man!!” Flicking his sleeve, he was about to continue yelling when the Giant Ghost King cut him off.

“It doesn’t matter if your cultivation base is lower than mine. I’ll teach you a restrictive spell and even help you use it... that should do, right?” The Giant Ghost King really felt like crying. Considering his status in the world, for him to say things like this was unprecedented. It had been a very, very long time since he had pled with anybody in this fashion. Unfortunately, he had no other options....

“You’ll help me put a restrictive spell on yourself?” As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, it seemed like a silly notion. Worried that Bai Xiaochun would fly into a rage again, the Giant Ghost King quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture, and even spat out a mouthful of blood as he forced out a strand of his life essence divine sense. Then, he combined the blood and the divine sense into a sealing mark, which began to glow with multi-colored light as it rested there in his palms.

“Brother Bai Hao, you... you just need to put a drop of blood here. Then absorb the restrictive spell, and you’ll be set....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0653 awe-chapter-654

Bai Xiaochun looked at the glowing light that was the restrictive spell, and hesitated. He didn’t want to make a deal with the three great clans unless it was absolutely necessary. After all, it would be hard to tell how things would work out in the end, and he would definitely be putting himself in a lot of danger.

If he could really control the Giant Ghost King’s cultivation base with a restrictive spell, then that would be worth taking the risk. After all, if it didn’t work, he could simply toss him aside and flee. But if it worked....

Although the thought was very enticing, his eyes widened with anger.

“Even now you dare to screw with me, old bastard?!?!” Bai Xiaochun raged.

“No! I'm really not! Brother Bai Hao, you have to trust me. I'm... I'm really not trying to trick you!!” The Giant Ghost King was getting very anxious. He really was telling the truth, and had no desire to try to trick Bai Xiaochun. If he did, and it was revealed, then he would be putting his life at risk.

“Bullcrap!” Bai Xiaochun yelled.

“I'm really not lying... I swear it....” Feeling he had no other choice, the Giant Ghost King began to swear an actual oath.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was getting the sense that the Giant Ghost King really was being sincere. However, he still didn’t feel comfortable with the situation, so he gave a cold snort and slapped his bag of holding.

“Get out here right now, little turtle!”

However, there was no reaction whatsoever from his bag of holding....

“Fudge!” Bai Xiaochun yelled angrily. “I'm warning you, little turtle, all of this trouble is because of you, so if you don’t get out here immediately, then you and I are done for. Forever! Got it? Don’t ever come to me for help with anything again!”

A moment later, his bag of holding vibrated, and the little turtle poked his head out into the open. Looking a bit embarrassed, and simultaneously ingratiating, he said, “Don’t get angry, kid. Uh... I didn’t realize things would go this way....”

He even blinked a few times for effect. However, Bai Xiaochun merely reached down and grabbed him, and he didn’t dare to dodge to the side.

“Enough with the jabbering. Look at this restrictive spell and see if there’s anything wrong with it.” With that, he held the little turtle out right in front of the Giant Ghost King’s hands.

The Giant Ghost King glared angrily at the little turtle, well aware that he was the reason Bai Hao had uncovered his identity.

As for the little turtle, he was aware of his role in events as well, and could also see that Bai Xiaochun was very angry. They were all in a dangerous situation, and now was not the time to be careless. Eyes sparkling, he looked closely at the glowing restrictive spell in the Giant Ghost King’s hands.

After a moment, his eyes went wide, and he stuck his neck a bit further out of his shell.

“This restrictive spell is really malicious!” he exclaimed. “Listen, punk, if you cast that spell, and you die, the Giant Ghost King will die. But if he dies... nothing will happen to you.”

The Giant Ghost King’s heart couldn’t have been filled with more bitterness, and yet, he was out of options. He had originally planned to use this restrictive spell on some of the rebels, after the whole situation was resolved. However, in order to get through the current crisis, he was going to use it on himself.... Furthermore, although the restrictive spell could be unraveled, even with his fully-restored cultivation base, it would take years.

Having heard the little turtle’s analysis, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and angrily said, “You listen up, old man. I can tell you have a lot of tricks up your sleeve, but considering the fact that I already severely injured a deva patriarch, even if you were more well-prepared, you wouldn’t be able to pull the wool over the eyes of my little turtle. You've only seen a tiny fraction of what I'm capable of. In fact, even if your cultivation base was back to normal and you tried to kill me, I still have ways to make sure we went out together!”

After a moment of silence, the Giant Ghost King quietly said, “You don’t hurt me, I won’t hurt you. Just keep me safe for a month, and I’ll get you that deva soul. Then all of this will become a thing of the past. I'm the kind of person who sticks to my word. I don’t renege on promises. It doesn’t matter what happened before, as long as you can keep me safe for a month, and I get my cultivation base back, then I won’t do anything to you, nor will I remove the restrictive spell. You can really rest your heart at ease!”

Bai Xiaochun looked deeply at the Giant Ghost King, then pulled out the long red spear he had taken from him earlier.

“Alright, Giant Ghost King. Since we're going to do things this way, then remove your branding mark from your ring of holding and your other magical items. That will give us a better chance of getting through this alive.”

“There are only random personal items in the ring of holding. And as for all those magical devices, even if I removed my branding mark, you couldn’t use them unless you were a deva....” He was telling the truth about everything he had just said. However, seeing that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened with anger at this response, the Giant Ghost King quickly removed the branding marks.

Bai Xiaochun’s looked excitedly into the ring of holding to find a large collection of soul medicine.... There were also quite a few treasures. However, none of them were magical in nature, but rather, ordinary treasures that mortals would value.

“Random things?” He pursed his lips as he pondered why the Giant Ghost King would collect things such as this. A moment later, his eyes came to rest on the red spear, within which he could sense a fear-inspiring aura. He quickly tried to brand it with his own mark, but soon found that the Giant Ghost King had been correct, and that he couldn’t.

It was the same with everything else. Finally, Bai Xiaochun sighed and put everything away. Then he looked the Giant Ghost King up and down a few times before nodding in agreement to the proposal.

The Giant Ghost King finally breathed a sigh of relief, and immediately suggested again that they head back to the stone turtle. However, Bai Xiaochun was still hesitating, unsure of whether that was a smart thing to do. First of all, the three great clans would definitely have locked the Devil Penitentiary down, which would make it very difficult to get back inside.

Second of all, although they had reached an agreement, it had only just happened, and Bai Xiaochun was as yet not completely comfortable in giving the Giant Ghost King the upper hand.

“I have a lot more experience than you when it comes to running away,” he said proudly. “I don’t dare to claim to be an expert in much, but I can tell you that I've done a lot of fleeing in my life.” With that, he grabbed the Giant Ghost King and began to move.

“You--” the Giant Ghost King began in irritation. However, before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun smacked him across the side of the head.

“Shut up! Are you keeping me safe, or am I keeping you safe?” At first, it had felt very stimulating to push a demigod expert around. By now, though, he had gotten used to it.

The Giant Ghost King could only grit his teeth and stew in his frustration.

Bai Xiaochun ignored him. He knew that at the moment, it would be nearly impossible to get out of the city via conventional methods. After all, the three great clans would be searching for him, and others as well.

“I guess I have no other option than to use the teleportation formations that Lu Shiyou told me about.... I hope I can find the one that leads 50,000 kilometers out of the city.... I would feel a lot safer that far away.” Having made his decision, he recalled the information he had acquired regarding the locations of the various spell formations, and then began to head toward the nearest one.

Before long, he and the somewhat sullen-looking Giant Ghost King had arrived at an old abandoned courtyard residence. After going inside, the Giant Ghost King looked around curiously, while Bai Xiaochun examined the place more closely. After confirming that this was the correct location, he stomped his foot down onto the ground.

Some rumbling sounds could be heard, and then some rifts spread out. Bai Xiaochun reached into the rift and unleashed some cultivation base power, whereupon the glow of teleportation rose up.

“This....” The Giant Ghost King’s pupils constricted as the power of teleportation whisked them away. In the next moment, they were gone.

In almost the same moment that they vanished, a dozen or so beams of light shot toward the area. After coming to realize that there was a teleportation portal in the area, the group exchanged dismayed glances.

Meanwhile, in another part of Giant Ghost City, glittering light could be seen in a certain residential building as Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King materialized.

When Bai Xiaochun looked around, he was a bit frustrated. He knew that there were a lot of teleportation formations, and he wasn't sure which one led to the spot 50,000 kilometers away. That meant that he would have to search through the formations one by one.

On the other hand, the Giant Ghost King gasped in shock. Just when he was about to ask about what was going on, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun and realized that he was about to punch the ground.

Only a moment later, another teleportation formation appeared, and the two of them vanished again....

By this point, Giant Ghost City had descended into complete chaos. The entire city was on lockdown, and there were even soul cultivators outside the city creating a perimeter to prevent entry and exit.

After the city was fully secure, more people began to join in the search. Before long, the Chen Clan's deva patriarch appeared in the location where Bai Xiaochun had initially appeared out in the open. However, after the area had been almost completely destroyed by the detonation of the demigod soul, the auras in the city had been so disrupted that not even the deva's divine sense could spread out very far to find clues.

Otherwise, the search for Bai Xiaochun would have gone much more smoothly for them.

At the moment, the only option they had was to search everything with a fine-toothed comb.

The Cai Clan Patriarch chased the Bai Clan patriarch all the way back to the Bai Clan. Once the Bai Clan patriarch was safe inside, the Cai Clan patriarch looked at the city with glittering eyes for a moment before heading back toward Giant Ghost City to join in the search.

There were two more deva experts in Giant Ghost City, those being Duke Netherworld and Duke Deathcrier. Although Duke Netherworld was inclined to join the search, in the end, he decided to leave that to everyone else. As far as he was concerned, his main mission was to make sure that Duke Deathcrier didn't find Bai Hao.

If he did, he would also get the Giant Ghost King’s true self, which would make it very difficult for anyone else to do anything. Therefore, Duke Netherworld went to make sure that Duke Deathcrier didn't join the search.

Duke Deathcrier knew what he was up to, and decided that he had no other option than to resign himself to the will of the heavens.

And thus it came to be that only two devas were left who could participate in the search for Bai Xiaochun. In addition to them were the armies belonging to the six heavenly marquises, and the forces of the three great clans. All of Giant Ghost City was being scoured from top to bottom.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0654 awe-chapter-655

As the search continued in Giant Ghost City, Bai Xiaochun led the Giant Ghost King through one teleportation formation after another.

Not a single one led them 50,000 kilometers outside of the city. Bai Xiaochun had no choice but just keep trying to find that particular formation. As a result, the glow of teleportation could be seen popping up all over the city.

Sometimes such glowing light would rise up in the east, sometimes the west, sometimes the north....

The cultivators of the three great clans and the soldiers of the six heavenly marquises' armies were all aware of what was happening. Although they were shocked to discover that there were so many teleportation formations within the city limits, there was nothing they could do about it. Gritting their teeth, they continued the search, many of them rushing toward the nearest glowing light that indicated a teleportation was underway.

The rumbling of the teleportation formations filled the air as Bai Xiaochun dragged the shocked Giant Ghost King here and there. "That wasn't it.... Not that one either.... Eee? Here's one of the formations! Undying Hex!!"

After entering the most recently discovered formation, they were teleported into a courtyard residence in the east part of the city. Almost as soon as they began to materialize, whistling sounds filled the air around them.

As it just so happened, the chief of the Chen Clan was leading a group of three clan elders, and a large contingent of other cultivators from the clan, to search the area. As soon as the light of teleportation appeared, they raced over to find Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King coming into view.

“It’s Bai Hao!!”

“Notify the patriarch!!”

They attacked immediately, unleashing numerous divine abilities and magical techniques, as well as calling upon the power of sundry magical items. In the blink of an eye, all of that force was bearing down on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. Having no time to activate the spell formation again to teleport away, he dragged the Giant Ghost King backward.

A resounding boom filled the air as the courtyard residence they had just been in disappeared, replaced by an enormous crater. As other buildings in the area collapsed, Bai Xiaochun became a series of afterimages that shot away at top speed, Giant Ghost King in tow.

However, in almost the same moment that he took to motion, a huge banner suddenly slammed into the ground in front of him. A blood-colored fog immediately spilled out, spreading in all directions to block his path.

Within that fog, it was possible to see thousands upon thousands... of blood-soaked children!

All of them were between four and five years old, and dripped with blood as surely as if they had been skinned alive. Their eyes shone with desolation as they stared at Bai Xiaochun, screaming and weeping bitterly.

“Save us, mister....”

“Mister, help....”

“It hurts! Sir, it hurts so bad....”

The bizarre wails almost instantly became like an attack on the soul!

As Bai Xiaochun reeled in shock, the Giant Ghost King’s pupils constricted, and he said, “The Myriad Children Blood Banner!! How dare the Chen Clan use a forbidden item like that within Giant Ghost City!!”

At this point, the Giant Ghost King’s eyes began to flicker with fury.

The Myriad Children Blood Banner was created by sacrificing the lives of 100,000 children. It was classified as an evil treasure, something so barbaric that, even in the Wildlands, it was viewed as a violation of natural order. Furthermore, it was formally banned, the type of thing that came with strict punishments if it were used.

And yet, the chief of the Chen Clan had gone so far as to create one, and recently at that. Because he was unfamiliar with its usage, he couldn’t draw upon its full powers, but even still, the blood fog it created was so potent that anyone who breathed it in would be instantly sent into a nightmarish hallucination.

When Bai Xiaochun saw all of the rancorous, blood-soaked children, his heart twinged with pain, and his eyes began to shine with killing intent.

It didn’t matter where this item appeared, it would arouse the wrath of gods and men alike. It didn’t matter that this was the Wildlands; as soon as Bai Xiaochun saw the item, he couldn't control his wrath.

At this point, a sinister voice echoed out from within the blood fog, “Well met, Giant Ghost King. I hope my blood banner doesn’t bother you too much.”

A tall, slender man walked out into the open. He appeared to a bit over forty years of age, handsome, with the demeanor of a transcendent being. However, his eyes were cold and sinister, revealing the cruel and vicious nature of his personality. He was none other than the chief of the Chen Clan, and even as his words echoed out, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger. Instantly, the blood fog seethed, and the thousands upon thousands of blood-soaked children screamed and rushed toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, the clan elders and other cultivators from the Chen Clan released their own attacks, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air. Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered as he quickly performed an incantation gesture to summon his Eternal Parasol. As soon as it opened up, he charged toward the clan chief using the Mountain Shaking Bash.

“Back the hell down!” the clan chief said with a cold laugh. Waving his sleeve, he unleashed the power of his Nascent Soul cultivation base, causing three children to appear within the fog who were soaked with so much blood they looked almost violet. Each one of them radiated the power of the Nascent Soul stage as they screamed and charged toward Bai Xiaochun.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun roared in rage, dragging the Giant Ghost King with him as he took a step forward, accelerating with such blinding speed that everything around him slowed down. By the time he finished taking his step, he was only nine meters from the chief of the Chen Clan.

“Die!” he shouted, clenching his right hand into a fist and punching out with all of the power of his fleshly body and cultivation base. At the same time, a mark appeared on his forehead, which was none other than his Heavenspan Dharma Eye.

As everything in the area shook violently, the clan chief’s face fell; he had been aware that this Bai Hao was incredible, but had never imagined that he would be capable of speed like this.

“Blood Children Detonation!!” he shouted.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The charging blood children screamed in pain as they began to explode, creating a blast of energy that bore down rapidly on Bai Xiaochun. It became like an enormous blood-colored mouth that opened up as if to consume him.

By now, Bai Xiaochun’s veins of steel were on full display. He knew that if he didn’t come out on top in this encounter, he would be in extreme danger. Without any hesitation, he snapped open the Eternal Parasol, upon which four golden designs could be seen. Glittering golden light shone out in all directions as the parasol grew in size, covering him as he shot through the huge mouth and closed in on the Chen Clan chief with blinding speed.

“Time to die!” Bai Xiaochun roared, unleashing the Throat Crushing Grasp. Because of the gravitational force that came along with the technique, the shocked clan chief was incapable of dodging or evading. In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun’s two fingers were almost onto his throat.

The clan chief’s ashen face was covered with a look of profound disbelief and shock. However, it was in that moment that an angry shout could be heard from some distance away.

“Screw off!!” The sound pierced through the air and exploded out into Bai Xiaochun’s mind, causing blood to spray out of his mouth. To the delight of the clan chief, Bai Xiaochun’s hand trembled, providing him the opportunity to escape.

“Patriarch, help me!” he shouted. However, even as he dodged to the side, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned more bloodshot than before. Although he had missed the man’s neck, he still managed to latch onto his shoulder, whereupon he twisted his hand viciously. Cracking sounds erupted out, accompanied by a bitter scream as Bai Xiaochun ripped the clan chief’s right arm off of his body.

Blood sprayed out everywhere as the clan chief’s face went completely ashen. However, he still managed to fall back at top speed. At the same time, a figure appeared nearby, speeding toward Bai Xiaochun.

It was an old man with a Deva Realm cultivation base, who was none other than the Chen Clan patriarch!

Gasping for breath, Bai Xiaochun immediately backed up, his eyes flickering with defiance. The Chen Clan chief had forged a blood banner by exterminating countless young lives, something that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to swell with fury. Therefore, even as he backed up, he slapped his bag of holding, producing a greatbow with a fourteenfold spirit enhancement!

As soon as he pulled back on the bowstring, the area around him became like a black hole, sucking in all of the energy in the area.

At the same time, an arrow appeared on the bow which also had a fourteenfold spirit enhancement. Without any hesitation, Bai Xiaochun aimed the bow at the fleeing clan chief, and then loosed the arrow. When he did, an ear-piercing howl could be heard as the arrow transformed into a black dragon, and shot toward the clan chief.

Then, Bai Xiaochun turned and fled, not bothering to see what happened to the arrow and the chief.

As the clan chief's face drained of blood again, and a sensation of deadly crisis filled his heart, a cold snort could be heard. Then, the deva patriarch appeared directly in front him. Stepping forward, he reached out and grabbed the arrow.

Squeezing his hand down, he completely crushed it!

The deva patriarch's expression was very grim; if he had not stepped in to interfere, he could have reached Bai Xiaochun. However, the brief moment he took to save the chief's life was all the time Bai Xiaochun needed to flee. The killing intent in the patriarch's eyes grew more intense, and yet at the same time, he had his misgivings. He was still unsure of all the techniques at Bai Xiaochun's disposal, who had just seriously injured the Chen Clan chief, and very nearly killed him!

Not wanting to suffer the same fate as the Bai Clan patriarch, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, summoning a large group of ghostly figures, all of them wearing black suits of armor, and all of them radiating the fluctuations of the Nascent Soul stage. Only then did he give chase.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0655 awe-chapter-656

Sonic booms erupted out as the Chen Clan deva patriarch led scores of black-armored Nascent Soul-level ghosts after Bai Xiaochun.

Were it not for the fact that he feared the possibility that Bai Xiaochun might have more methods to endanger devas, the patriarch would have simply gone after him alone. However, he wasn't willing to gamble....

The tragic fate of the Bai Clan patriarch had played out right in front of him. If that patriarch had reacted only slightly slower, and had not taken advantage of the heat of the moment to speed back to the safety of his clan, then the Cai Clan patriarch would definitely have caught him. Although the Cai Clan patriarch would not have exterminated the other patriarch and his clan, he would definitely have forced the Bai Clan patriarch to pay a heavy price to stay alive.

Because of all that, the Chen Clan patriarch didn’t want to take any risks. Eyes flashing with cold light, he performed an incantation gesture, pushing the black-armored ghosts forward with greater speed.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling with fear, and his heart was pounding. Looking over his shoulder, he saw the black-armored ghosts, and his nervousness mounted. The Giant Ghost King’s face was also flickering with various emotions, and a sense of foreboding had gripped his heart.

In his anxiety, he couldn’t hold back from saying, “I told you to go back to the stone turtle, but no. No, you had to--”

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun yelled angrily, zigging and zagging to avoid the magical techniques and divine abilities that were being launched at him from behind. Then he pushed forward with another burst of speed, piercing through the air to appear in a nearby alley.

After glancing around quickly, he unhesitatingly punched a hole in the wall next to him, revealing a courtyard beyond. Obviously, this was a residence belonging to some rich family. As soon as Bai Xiaochun stepped inside, screams rang out as the terrified servants scattered in every direction.

Panting anxiously, Bai Xiaochun hurried to a pond in the corner of the courtyard, upon which he unleashed another punch. Immediately, the glow of teleportation rose up around him.

Not too far away, the black-armored ghosts radiated a murderous air as they rumbled through the air. Then they sent a volley of divine abilities toward that very pond.

The pond was completely leveled, sending water spraying everywhere. However, by that point, Bai Xiaochun was gone!

About 9,000 meters away, in an abandoned building, more teleportation light filled the air as Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King materialized.

“Dammit!” Bai Xiaochun thought. “How come I haven’t found the 50,000-kilometer one yet!?” Just when he was about to activate the formation to teleport away, a growl filled the air as the Chen Clan deva patriarch teleported into the same building. When he realized moments ago that Bai Xiaochun was using his unknown method to teleport away, he split away from the black-armored ghosts to chase after him directly.

He got a very bad feeling when he realized that Bai Xiaochun was using multiple teleportation formations. However, there was no time to ponder the situation at the moment. Murderous aura flaring, he quickly unleashed a palm strike.

A huge illusory hand appeared and shot toward Bai Xiaochun, a powerful strike that instantly destroyed everything around them.

Bai Xiaochun shrieked as the illusory hand closed in, but he had already activated the teleportation formation. Teleportation light rose up, and by the time the palm landed, reducing everything in the area to ash, Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King were gone.

“Where did these teleportation formations come from!?!?” the Chen Clan patriarch thought, his expression grim. As a deva, he could easily lock the air down to nullify ordinary teleportations. And yet, he was incapable of nullifying these spell formations.

“You’re not getting away!” he growled. Eyes flashing with anger, he waved his hand, causing an illusory screen to appear in front of him, which depicted a birds-eye view of Giant Ghost City.

As he peered at the picture, he noticed one spot where a bright light suddenly appeared. Snorting coldly, he stepped forward into the image.

The spot where the light of teleportation had just risen up was a formerly bustling street. However, because of the current chaos in the city, it was an empty and cheerless place. As the teleportation light began to fade away, Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King appeared in front of one of the shops on the street.

By this point, the Giant Ghost King really couldn’t hold back from asking, “How... how many teleportation formations do you have set up?!”

He simply couldn’t imagine how there could be so many teleportation formations set up in his own city, all without his knowledge.

“A lot,” Bai Xiaochun responded quickly, his heart pounding. He was really starting to get worried. His answer was no exaggeration, and right now, he was relying on blind chance to find one particular formation among all of the hundreds that he knew about. Not daring to waste any time, he smacked the ground.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the teleportation formation activated, and Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King vanished. Even as they did, the air rippled, and the Chen Clan patriarch emerged. Waving his hand, he destroyed the spell formation.

However, an unsightly expression could be seen on his face, and the rage in his eyes grew deeper as he realized that he had been a moment too late.

“I really want to see how many times you can teleport before you run out of formations!”

With that, he vanished again. Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, and booms filled numerous locations in Giant Ghost City. Bai Xiaochun was going all out, carrying the Giant Ghost King through one teleportation formation after another. Every time they vanished, the Chen Clan’s deva patriarch would appear and destroy the formation they had just used.

If Bai Xiaochun went even a little bit slower, he would be in great danger, a fact that was pushing him into madness. At the same time, he did everything he could to be as efficient as possible in his actions.

Despite that, he still had not found the teleportation formation that led 50,000 kilometers outside of the city.

He felt like he was going crazy, but it was the same with the Chen Clan patriarch. As far as the patriarch was concerned, this Bai Hao was like a rat who had countless tunnels dug through the city, through which he scurried in mystifying fashion....

In one moment, he would be in the east, in the following moment, the north. The patriarch’s anxiety mounted along with his anger, and at the same time, he couldn’t stop wondering what his quarry was attempting to accomplish....

“It doesn't actually seem like he wants to escape. More like he's looking for something. Don’t tell me that one of the formations is actually capable of long-range teleportation?!” That thought only made him more anxious. He quickly stepped forward, appearing in the most recent place where Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King had teleported through. He immediately destroyed the formation, then threw his head back and spoke in a voice so loud it filled the city.

“Bai Hao, why are you risking your life for the Giant Ghost King? There’s no great enmity between you and our three great clans! Why are you interfering with us!?

“Hand over the Giant Ghost King, Bai Hao! Fear not, I will personally guarantee your safety!

“I can also help resolve your issues with the Bai Clan. We can just wipe the slate clean! Give us the Giant Ghost King, and you can just be on your way!

“In fact, we’ll even pay you for him!”

As his words echoed through the city, Bai Xiaochun appeared in another teleportation formation.

His hair was in disarray, and he looked quite bedraggled. The patriarch’s words immediately left him quite shaken, and were actually quite enticing.

As for the Giant Ghost King, his eyes widened, and the nervousness in his heart mounted. That was especially true when he realized that Bai Xiaochun seemed to be hesitating.

“Not good!” he thought. “This Bai Hao is vicious and merciless, and cares only about personal profit. If he feels threatened, then the little punk definitely won’t think twice about handing me over....”

As the Giant Ghost King was anxiously trying to come up with an idea about what to do, Bai Xiaochun was licking his lips and thinking that the Chen Clan patriarch’s offer wasn’t that bad. However, he had just made an agreement with the Giant Ghost King. He would definitely feel bad if he backed out now, and furthermore, it would be a big loss of face.

“Seems to me this Chen Clan patriarch is starting to get nervous. All I have to do is find that one spell formation, and I can teleport 50,000 kilometers away. Considering the speed I’m capable of, I should be able to buy the time I need. As long as I hang in there, I’ll profit handsomely....” Eyes glittering, he decided that he would only give in if it was absolutely necessary.

Most important of all was that he realized he couldn’t trust either the three great clans or the Giant Ghost King. However, with the restrictive spell he had, his relationship with the Giant Ghost King was a bit more stable.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he decided that now would actually be the perfect time to win the Giant Ghost King over to his side. Therefore, as he continued to search for the teleportation formation, he put on a righteous demeanor and shouted, “Quit wasting your breath. I, Bai Hao, am a person who keeps his word! Furthermore, I repay all kindnesses shown me. The Giant Ghost King favored me with benevolence, and I promised to keep him safe. How could I possibly go back on my word!?!? As long as I, Bai Hao, have strength left in my arms, I’ll never let you people take the Giant Ghost King away from me!” His words resonated out with the most righteous and noble of auras.

As for the Giant Ghost King, he looked up at Bai Xiaochun with a bitter smile. Being the wily old fox that he was, there was no way he could miss the hidden implications in Bai Xiaochun’s words. At the same time, though, he couldn’t help but feel gratitude rising up in his heart.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0656 awe-chapter-657

“Are you looking to die?!” the Chen Clan patriarch roared, his face twisting with vicious anger. The next moment, he appeared in the location Bai Xiaochun had just teleported away from, whereupon a thunderous boom could be heard as the entire area was destroyed. Then he vanished as he continued the chase.

By this point, the Cai Clan patriarch was rushing back to the city to join the Chen Clan patriarch. Once he arrived, things would be even more difficult for Bai Xiaochun.

As for the special formations that required special means to enter, although Bai Xiaochun could use the Undying Hex to get into them, that required extra time.

The Chen Clan patriarch was as quick as lightning in his pursuit. It was when Bai Xiaochun had just encountered the second of the unique, locked-down formations that the patriarch appeared up above. Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even had a chance to activate the teleportation function.

It was a relatively remote location in the west of the city, surrounded by quite a few ancient buildings and pagodas. In fact, many of them were as old as Giant Ghost City itself.

Not many soul cultivators lived in this area, making it a relatively quiet place. Because of the chaos in the city, the populace was shivering in fear, and at the moment, the only person visible in that entire part of the city was the Chen Clan patriarch.

“You’re out of chances now, Bai Hao!” Killing intent raging, the patriarch waved his hand in the direction of Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as a huge hand appeared up above. Everything began to shake wildly, and the buildings below began to collapse into rubble.

Although Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen with fear, his eyes shone with determination. He knew that this was a critical juncture, and that he couldn’t escape easily. Furthermore, if the teleportation formation was destroyed, he would have to run and find another one, a process that would be fraught with deadly peril.

With such thoughts on his mind, he lifted the Giant Ghost King over his head to block the incoming palm attack, and then reached his left hand down toward the teleportation formation.

It was a daring plan: use the Giant Ghost King to absorb some of the force of the blow, and then redirect it to activate the spell formation.

The Giant Ghost King was frustrated, but completely helpless. He knew that it was a critical moment, so all he could do was unleash what little of his cultivation base was possible... and bear the brunt of the blow....

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually took place in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. The Chen Clan patriarch’s palm slammed into the Giant Ghost King, who grunted and then coughed up a mouthful of blood, along with chunks of some internal organs. Clearly, he had been very seriously injured.

Bai Xiaochun was also injured, and coughed up some blood. However, when his hand made contact with the teleportation formation, bright light shone up.

“Teleport!!” he shouted. Rumbling echoed out... but no teleportation began. Instead, random pieces of wood suddenly began to fly into the air from within the rubble of the surrounding destroyed buildings!!

There were also assorted bits of metal, which whizzed through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and even the Giant Ghost King, who was still coughing up blood, stared in amazement. As for the Chen Clan patriarch, an uneasy feeling rose up in the pit of his chest.

Before any of them could react, cracking sounds filled the air as the pieces of wood and metal began to interlock and fit together almost like machinery. In the blink of an eye... a trap golem had formed right in front of Bai Xiaochun, dozens of meters tall!!

The trap golem had three heads, six arms, and a beast-like body with four legs. The surface of its body was speckled, and radiated an ancient air, as if it had existed since the most ancient of times. Almost as soon as it appeared, it threw its head back and howled.

The sound of the howl seemed to ripple with the fluctuations of a deva, something that caused all powerful experts within Giant Ghost City to start in shock.

The Chen Clan patriarch’s eyes went wide with disbelief as he gasped, “A deva-level trap golem!! How is this possible?!?!”

The patriarch wasn't the only one to be stunned; the Giant Ghost King was completely flabbergasted. He had already been surprised at how many teleportation formations Bai Xiaochun had at his disposal, so the fact that a deva-level trap golem was in the city shocked him to the core. Although the trap golem was clearly not completely functional, and would obviously only last for a short time....

It was still a deva-level trap golem!!

The secret magic used to create trap golems was a lost art in the Wildlands, and yet... right here in Giant Ghost City, this Bai Hao had summoned one!

The Giant Ghost King had absolutely no idea what other sorts of divine abilities this Bai Hao had at his disposal. The things he had done in the short half year he had been in Giant Ghost City were shocking, to say the least.

It all seemed completely unbelievable, especially since Giant Ghost City belonged to the Giant Ghost King, and yet even he had no idea how all of this had been set up. Then he thought about how he had fallen into Bai Hao’s hands, and even resorted to giving him his own restrictive spell, and he suddenly realized that both he and everyone else... had completely underestimated Bai Hao. However, a moment later, his eyes glittered as he came to the conclusion that the spell formations must not have been set up by Bai Hao. He was only using them.

Regardless, the fact that he was making use of so many incredible resources made him a profound and accomplished schemer, and a truly consummate chosen!

Shaken, the Giant Ghost King looked over at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining and a complicated sense of admiration beginning to grow in his heart.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times in shock at the sight of the astonishing trap golem. Lu Shiyou had not been lying; his ancestor really had left a trap golem behind, hidden in one of the teleportation formations.

Heart pounding, he shouted, “Kill that man!”

The trap golem’s eyes began to shine with crimson light, and cracking sounds could be heard as it leaped into the air and shot toward the Chen Clan patriarch.

A boom rang out, and everything in the area trembled as they began to fight. As for Bai Xiaochun, he took a deep breath and then pushed his hand down onto the ground again, whereupon the ripples of a teleportation spread out, and he and the Giant Ghost King vanished.

The Chen Clan patriarch wanted to give chase, but the trap golem wouldn’t let him. Enraged, he began to attack with full strength. As for the trap golem, it was an ancient thing, and although it was able to cause problems for the deva patriarch, it wouldn’t be long before it simply began to fall apart.

However, even as the patriarch gained the upper hand, the trap golem’s eyes suddenly flickered. At the same time, the patriarch’s face fell as he remembered the stories he had heard about trap golems, and how they all had a terrifying self-destruct function.

“Not good!” He immediately prepared to back up, but before he could, a hidden spark inside the trap golem suddenly ignited. Within the blink of an eye, the entire trap golem was a mass of billowing flame, exploding out in all directions.

The air twisted and distorted as a shockwave rolled through all of Giant Ghost City. Countless faces fell, and numerous cries of alarm could be heard.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun appeared in another location some distance off in the city. As he did, a wave of heat surged by, blowing his hair up behind him.

“Trap golem self-detonation!” he gasped.

At this point, the Giant Ghost King was still coughing up blood, and his face was slack. However, his eyes burned with fiery passion.

As the flames faded away, a howl of rage could be heard, which came from none other than the Chen Clan patriarch. His hair was in disarray, his robes were in tatters, and he was shaking visibly. Although he wasn’t dead, the way he coughed up blood indicated that he had been seriously injured. At the same time, his hatred for Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been any greater.

However, he didn’t hesitate to make the same decision as the Bai Clan patriarch. Roaring in rage, he became a bright beam of light that shot toward the Chen Clan. Considering how little he trusted anyone, his main priority now was to heal his own injuries.

When everyone in Giant Ghost City saw that, they gasped, completely shaken and terrified by Bai Hao.

“Heavens, the Bai Clan patriarch tried to kill Bai Hao and got seriously injured! Now the same thing happened to the Chen Clan patriarch....”

“Just how many tricks does this Bai Hao have up his sleeve? He’s terrifying!!”

“He’s a deva-killer!! A complete animal!”

Whether it was the three great clans, the armies of the six heavenly marquises, or anyone else, nobody could remain unterrified by what they had seen. As for the forces of the heavenly marquises, they did not have any devas on their side, and thus, were incapable of actually chasing after Bai Xiaochun. At the moment though, they were actually glad about that.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun felt more pleased with himself than ever.

“Did you see that?” he shouted loudly. “Don’t provoke me! When I attack, I frighten even myself!! I can use that same divine ability ninety-nine more times if I feel like it!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0657 awe-chapter-658

Everyone in the city who heard his words instantly grew hesitant. He had uttered similar words after injuring the Bai Clan patriarch, and although few people had believed him, it still put them a bit on guard.

But now... the Chen Clan patriarch had suffered a similar fate. Everyone was completely shaken.

As for the Cai Clan patriarch, he had been in the middle of speeding toward Bai Xiaochun as quickly as possible, but was now hesitating.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had seriously injured the deva patriarchs of the other two clans caused fear to pulse in his heart. However, after a moment, his eyes glittered with cold light.

“There might be some danger involved, but it also means this is an opportunity for the Cai Clan to rise to prominence.... Neither the Bai Clan nor the Chen Clan can do anything at the moment. I'm the only one left who can kill the Giant Ghost King. If I do... who would dare to refuse to bow to me!?

“The Cai Clan would dominate everyone! We could unite Giant Ghost City, and officially swear fealty to the imperial city! I would be the new Giant Ghost King, and with the resources of a heavenly king at my disposal, I would almost certainly become a demigod!” He couldn’t help but pant in anticipation of that day. Chuckling evilly, he shot in the direction Bai Xiaochun’s voice had just come from, simultaneously issuing orders to the Cai Clan to converge on the same spot.

Rumbling sounds once again filled Giant Ghost City as Bai Xiaochun began to teleport back and forth. However, the Cai Clan patriarch was actually a bit faster than the Chen Clan patriarch, and before Bai Xiaochun could even escape ten times in a row, he caught up. When he did, he instantly destroyed the spell formation before Bai Xiaochun could activate it.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he turned and began to flee at top speed. As for the Cai Clan patriarch, he chuckled coldly and began to chase after him, joined by numerous other members of the Cai Clan.

The clan chief and clan elders were there, ensuring that numerous beams of light were now converging on Bai Xiaochun.

“I'm finished. Kaput. There’s definitely no hope now....” Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of tears as he contemplated how the nearest teleportation formation was at least 3,000 meters away. Considering how close his pursuers were, there was no way he would make it there. That was especially true considering that the Cai Clan patriarch was a deva. In fact, were it not for the fact that the patriarch was leery of approaching too closely and quickly, he would have already attacked Bai Xiaochun directly.

“I'm out of options...” he thought. “Giant Ghost King, you can’t blame me for what happens next. The Cai Clan wants you, and although I don’t trust them to honor a trade, if I just throw you at them, then I might have a chance to escape.” Although he didn’t really want to do this, his poor little life was the most important thing, so he sighed and prepared to take action.

However, that was when the voice of the little turtle was transmitted into his ears.

“Calm down, little punk. There’s something you don’t realize about this Giant Ghost King.... He’s a slippery character, I tell you. Lord Turtle was sure before that he was hiding something, and it took me a while to figure out what it was. Hmmmphh. At this point I can see it clearly.

“Listen, punk, the Giant Ghost King was lying. He doesn’t need a month for his cultivation base to recover. He’s fooled everyone! Lord Turtle’s eagle eyes can tell that he only needs five days! Maybe even three! Hmph. This guy really knows how to keep his secrets!

“If you abandon him to the three clans, he definitely has a way to last for four or five days in the hands of those devas. At that point... well, then things would get ‘interesting’.”

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun stole a glance at the Giant Ghost King. The man’s face was ashen, and he wore a bitter, pained expression. Bai Xiaochun immediately hesitated. The little turtle seemed very confident in what he had just said, and it did all make sense. After all, the Giant Ghost King was a profound schemer....

Finally, Bai Xiaochun chuckled.

“Quite the act you’ve pulled off!” he thought. “Five days, huh? If I give up now, it would really be a big waste.” A month was too long, but it might be possible to last for four or five days. In any case, the possible payoff in the end was worth the gamble.

“I guess I need to smooth things out with him....” After looking up in thought for a moment, he cleared his throat inwardly, then plastered a vicious expression onto his face.

“Giant Ghost King!” he shouted at the top of his lungs, his veins of steel pulsing.

Coughing up another mouthful of blood, the Giant Ghost King looked over at Bai Xiaochun and sighed.

“He’s going to break his promise and hand me over to the three clans, isn’t he...?” However, even as he thought this, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out into the air.

“Giant Ghost King, you are a most honorable king, and a demigod as well. I, Bai Hao, am a nameless nobody, with a lowly Core Formation cultivation base.... The gap between the two of us is like the gap between heaven and earth. It’s impossible to even compare the two of us. In fact, were it not for the events playing out right now, the paths of our lives would likely never have crossed.” Bai Xiaochun’s voice contained a mixture of bitterness and profundity that left the Giant Ghost King feeling a bit stunned.

Even the people from the Cai Clan were now staring at him with serious looks on their faces.

Voice hoarse, Bai Xiaochun began to speak as if he were recalling old times, “In the beginning, I was a pawn, dragged unwillingly into your little game. I am aware that it was not an expression of kindness. However, I do know that it was... the sowing of karma!

“Perhaps I removed you from the stone turtle out of resentment, or greed. It’s hard to determine if that was a mistake or not. However, I do know that it was... the reaping of karma!

“Karma. *Karma!* A mysterious and indescribable thing.... Let’s forget about all of those things.... Right now, there is one thing that Bai Hao will not do, and that is forget about his promise, or his agreement with you, Giant Ghost King!”

Bai Xiaochun’s words caused the Giant Ghost King to shiver; never could he have guessed that he would say things like this. He had anticipated being thrown over to the three clans.

Instead, Bai Xiaochun went into a description of everything leading up to this point. Furthermore, his words were sincere in many ways. Even an old fox like the Giant Ghost King couldn’t help but be a bit touched. After all, everything this Bai Hao had said was true. Originally speaking, the two of them would likely never have crossed paths.... Furthermore, it was the Giant Ghost King himself who ended up dragging Bai Hao into the whole mess.

“I said that I would keep you safe for a month.... I said that I wouldn’t abandon you.... And now, I say this: what does death count for!? Giant Ghost King, please allow me to address you as *old pal!* Old pal... if we fail to pass through this tribulation alive, and end up in the Yellow Springs, then I’ll still protect you for an entire month!” Flicking his sleeve, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. It was a laughter filled with both madness and obsession. His expression, his wording, and everything else immediately caused waves of shock to batter at the Giant Ghost King!

It had been a long time since he felt moved in this way by anyone. Although he could also sense that something about the situation was a bit off, and seemed to go contrary to what he knew about this Bai Hao, in his current state of physical and emotional exhaustion, and after having experienced numerous betrayals and unexpected mishaps, he could do nothing else but accept Bai Xiaochun’s sincerity!

“Bai Hao....” he said, his heart trembling and overflowing with emotion. There were actually many factors that had led to the current situation, and normally speaking, the ruthless Giant Ghost King would never allow such warm feelings to erupt inside of him.

It was possible to see that from how he had kept even the loyal Duke Deathcrier in the dark about everything.

In the Giant Ghost King’s moment of profound emotion, the Cai Clan’s deva patriarch looked over with cold eyes and then growled, “Well, the both of you can just die together then!”

Then he waved his finger through the air.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as an attack shot toward Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King. Bai Xiaochun quickly snapped open his Eternal Parasol to block the attack. However, he still ended up coughing up blood and staggering backward under the force of the blow, seriously injured.

“Bai Hao!!” the Giant Ghost King shouted, stunned at the fact that he hadn’t been thrown out in front by Bai Xiaochun to block the attack....

“The reason I used you to defend myself earlier, old pal,” Bai Xiaochun said grandly, “was not because I feared death. No, I simply wanted to save energy to get you out of this situation....” Inwardly, of course, Bai Xiaochun was grumbling about how thoroughly realistic he was making his act seem....

“Don’t despair, old pal! I still have more tricks up my sleeve!” Eyes flickering with sharp light, he looked back at the Cai Clan cultivators only 300 meters behind him.

Inside, he grumbled, “I'm really shedding some blood, sweat and tears to get this old fox to trust me....”

Gritting his teeth viciously, he waved his right hand, summoning a flying sword from his bag of holding, which glittered with the golden light of an elevenfold spirit enhancement.

However, things weren’t over yet. Even as he threw it out, he continued to extract magical items from his bag of holding. All of them were things he had acquired after arriving in the Wildlands, and although some had elevenfold spirit enhancements, most had only five or sixfold enhancements. However, there were dozens of them.

“DETONATE!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0658 awe-chapter-659

These were not the spirit enhanced treasures he had personally made the time he went crazy and enhanced everything he owned. They were items he had acquired via interrogations performed as a dark inquisitor.

Therefore, he didn’t feel even the slightest twinge of pain in his heart as he threw them out and then detonated them, creating numerous fiery streaks of destruction!

Bai Xiaochun had a bit of experience in detonating spirit enhanced items, and knew that when they exploded, they released a huge amount of the energy of heaven and earth, all in one moment. However, despite what he had experienced in the past... he had never detonated dozens of them simultaneously. The explosive force they released left him completely shocked.

He wasn’t the only one. The members of the Cai Clan, from the clan chief and clan elders down to the ordinary cultivators, were all completely stunned by the extravagant wastefulness of it all.

After all, magical items with six or sevenfold spirit enhancements were like cherished treasures to any soul cultivator. As for items with nine or tenfold enhancements, they were even more rare. For example, Zhou Yixing, a member of an aristocratic necromancer clan that was also in the great circle of Core Formation, had only possessed one.

It almost wasn’t necessary to mention how people felt about items with eleven and twelvefold enhancements. The explosions they caused released such incredible force that all witnesses to the event were stunned.

The ear-splitting explosion rocked heaven and earth, causing even the Nascent Soul cultivators to back up in fear and do everything in their power to defend themselves.

The massive detonation caused all of the pursuing cultivators of the Cai Clan to tumble backward, many of them coughing up blood.

The Giant Ghost King also trembled as the words Bai Xiaochun had just spoken continued to ring in his ears. Considering everything he was seeing right now, it was obvious that this Bai Hao was really going to put everything on the line.

Bai Xiaochun was panting as he borrowed some of the force of the explosion to shoot in the direction of the nearest spell formation, 3,000 meters away. Each step he took propelled him hundreds of meters, and within moments, he had reached the formation.

However, that was when a cold snort echoed out; the explosion of the spirit enhanced items had stopped the ordinary members of the Cai Clan, but could do nothing to block the path of the patriarch.

Originally, he had been worried about how Bai Xiaochun had injured the patriarchs of the Bai and Chen Clans, and had kept his distance. But now, he didn’t have the luxury of worrying so much. He had been prepared to perform a teleportation at any time, so he moved with lightning-like speed, piercing through the air and the force of the explosion to appear only about 30 meters away from Bai Xiaochun. Without any hesitation, he reached out with his right hand and unleashed the power of his Deva Realm cultivation base.

“You’re not going anywhere!” he said, his eyes flickering with cold light. Instantly, the air in the area began to solidify, and an energy began to crush down onto Bai Xiaochun with enough force to shatter his bones.

Furthermore, the energy of heaven and earth being released formed together in front of him into the shape of a pitch-black, nine-headed bird. All of the bird’s eyes radiated murderous gleams, and the bird itself exuded a pressure of immense proportions!

This nine-headed bird had been summoned by the Cai Clan’s deva patriarch, not by means of a magical technique, but rather… as an incarnation of the will of the heavens!

Most other cultivators would have been completely shocked by what they were seeing, and their cultivation bases would have been crushed into a state of complete suppression. But Bai Xiaochun had four clones, and although they had been seriously injured and were currently holed up inside of him, they still gave him a huge boost in terms of both cultivation base and divine sense, pushing him far past the level of an ordinary Core Formation cultivator. Furthermore, his fleshly body was already in the great circle of the Undying Tendons. To top it all off, this was not his first time fighting a deva! He didn’t even respect devas very much!

Because of that, he was able to resist the deva pressure weighing down on him, and as the nine-headed bird shrieked and lunged toward him, he let out a powerful roar.

There was no time for thought or planning, nor any time to try to put on an act. He instantly fell back, simultaneously waving his arm, which sent the several sets of leather armor he was wearing shooting toward the nine-headed bird. When he had first performed spirit enhancements on the armor, he had used special techniques to conceal the evidence of spirit enhancement. But the pressure of the deva nullified such effects, and the four golden designs on their surface now shone brightly.

“Detonate!!” he shouted. Instantly, the suits of leather armor all exploded, releasing force that far surpassed the detonation of the dozens of items from moments ago.

The Cai Clan cultivators further back looked on with wide eyes, especially when they noticed the four golden designs on each of the suits of armor. And yet, even as feelings of madness rose up in their hearts, things continued! Bai Xiaochun’s outer garment flew out, along with a hat and a few ordinary-looking bracelets. However, it was to the shock of everyone present that four golden designs now appeared on all of them!

Each one flew out and then exploded, sending waves of intense force to meet the nine-headed bird. The bird was already fading away, but that was when Bai Xiaochun swung his left foot through the air, sending a shoe shooting forward, a shoe that had four golden designs on it! The extravagant wastage on display caused the Cai Clan cultivators to cry out in shock.

“This Bai Hao... he... he even has a fourteenfold spirit enhancement on his shoe?!?!?!”

The Giant Ghost King was being held in Bai Xiaochun’s right hand, so he had a first-hand view of everything, and the shock he felt now was so intense that his face was completely slack.

The Cai Clan patriarch’s eyes went wide with disbelief, and yet, the killing intent within them only grew stronger as he pressed the attack.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he simply continued to speed toward the teleportation portal, which was now only about 300 meters away. As the Cai Clan patriarch closed in, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up with joy, and he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“I've been waiting for you to get close, old man! You finally fell into my trap! Time for you to see my trump card!” Continuing to laugh loudly, he swung his right leg through the air, causing his right shoe to fly out, which also had four golden design on it.

“Detonate!” he roared. The Cai Clan Patriarch’s face fell. He had only just now decided to go all out, and yet, was still filled with apprehension regarding how Bai Xiaochun had seriously injured the other two patriarchs. As soon as he heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, and saw the shoe flying toward him, he backed up, unwilling to take any risks....

When the shoe exploded, it was a shocking sight, but nothing that could really hurt the Cai Clan patriarch. Face turning very grim, he angrily shouted, “How dare you trick me, Bai Hao!!”

Roaring in rage, he stepped forward once again, but the slight delay which had just occurred had given Bai Xiaochun enough time to get within 30 meters of the teleportation formation. Just as he was about to step into it, the Cai Clan patriarch howled and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand.

Waving his finger at Bai Xiaochun, he caused the nine-headed bird to erupt into flames, and then accelerate rapidly.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and he immediately prepared to defend himself. However, before anything else could happen, an afterimage appeared on the bird, and a second one flew out. One of the nine-headed birds bore down on Bai Xiaochun himself, and the other headed toward the spell formation.

“Not good!” To Bai Xiaochun’s shock, the Cai Clan patriarch was not just attacking him, he was trying to destroy the teleportation formation as well!

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the ruins surrounding the teleportation portal were completely destroyed by the nine-headed bird. Buildings collapsed for thousands of meters in all directions, and even the ground was crushed down by a full meter. Clearly, the patriarch actually didn’t know the specific location of the spell formation, and was just trying to destroy everything in the hopes that the teleportation formation would be destroyed as well.

As for Bai Xiaochun, when the nine-headed bird slammed into him, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he was sent tumbling backward until he managed to stop in place on the spot he knew to be the location of the teleportation formation.

“Let’s see how you try to get away this time!” the Cai Clan patriarch said, a vicious grin spreading out on his face. However, even as it did, his eyes suddenly flickered with disbelief.

The light of teleportation suddenly began to rise up right beneath Bai Xiaochun’s feet. As it turned out, the teleportation formation... hadn’t been damaged at all!!

Furthermore, the light that was shining up now was different than the light from before. It was blinding, and the energy of the teleportation was clearly stronger. It only took a moment for anyone familiar with teleportation formations to realize... that this was a long-range teleportation!

This was the very spell formation created by Lu Shiyou’s ancestor which led to a spot 50,000 kilometers outside of the city. All of the other spell formations in the city had really been created to serve as distractions, with this formation being the true escape path. Furthermore, there was no way he would have his true escape path be the type that could easily be destroyed! The only thing the deva patriarch’s attack had done was make it so that Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to use his Undying Hex to enter the spell formation!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0659 awe-chapter-660

Bai Xiaochun was very excited, and yet, within moments, his face turned ashen, and his heart began to pound!

He had never dared to hope that this was the special spell formation that would lead 50,000 kilometers outside of the city. He had assumed it was just an ordinary spell formation that would put him a short distance away.

However, he had come to the conclusion that, unless Lu Shiyou had been lying about that special formation, he would find it soon.

After all, he had tried out quite a few other spell formations up to this point, nearly seventy percent of the total amount. That being the case, his chances of finding the long-range teleportation formation would only increase as time went on.

And yet... this formation he was standing on was definitely the formation he had been looking for! Unfortunately, although it might seem as though this formation was the one that would save his life, Bai Xiaochun now realized that it was also a potentially deadly catastrophe!!

There was no time to ponder the situation. He quickly reached out with his right hand and then pushed it down toward the surface of the portal, causing the light to grow even more intense.

A very serious look filled his eyes, a look that was tinged with madness. He knew that this moment was one of extreme danger; the Cai Clan patriarch had been holding back out of fear, keeping much of his cultivation base power in reserve in case he needed to defend against a deadly trump card. It was only because of that fact that Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King had made it this far.

But now, with the light of the teleportation formation rising up, the Cai Clan patriarch had no reason not to go all out....

And that was exactly what happened. The anger in the Cai Clan patriarch’s eyes faded, replaced by intense determination. Although he still felt hesitant because of the potential danger, he knew that he had to make a move now. Even if this Bai Hao did have one more trick up his sleeve, the consequences of letting him escape were too severe.

Without the slightest hesitation, the patriarch drew upon the full power of his cultivation base, causing the sky to vibrate and bolts of lightning to appear everywhere. Up above him in the air, a huge face appeared, which resembled his own face in every aspect.

The patriarch took a step forward, and as he planted his foot onto the ground, countless lightning bolts began to fall, making it look like a rain of gold was descending onto the earth.

Bai Xiaochun was wracked with anxiety. Never could he have imagined that he would find the special teleportation formation under these circumstances. His plan had been to put some distance between himself and his enemies when he activated it, which would have given him plenty of time to escape.

But that was not how things were playing out.

“I'm finished,” he thought. “Kaput. It’s all over.... What do I do, what do I do...? Even if I handed the Giant Ghost King over now, this old patriarch wouldn’t let me off the hook!” He wanted to cry, but no tears would come. It wasn’t that he didn't consider simply throwing the Giant Ghost King out of the teleportation portal. That might buy him some time, but in the end, the Cai Clan definitely would not let him go free, nor would the Chen or Bai Clans.

Besides, after the Giant Ghost King got his cultivation base back, then Bai Xiaochun knew that the only thing which would await him would be a grisly death.... He had the restrictive spell, and the Giant Ghost King’s promise. However, Bai Xiaochun was certain that if he handed the Giant Ghost King over, that would constitute breaking their agreement.

“Fudge. I guess I need to go for broke!!” In the blink of an eye, his eyes went completely bloodshot. He feared dying, but when death loomed, and he was out of options, he would be gripped by madness. During moments like that, he would not waver; he was not the type of person who liked to gamble, but in moments like this, gambling was the only option.

He would gamble on being able to hold out until the teleportation formation was fully activated!

His four clones were all weak and injured, but they appeared in the open now, surging with energy. For the first time, Bai Xiaochun released the Giant Ghost King, setting him down onto the surface of the spell formation. Then he looked up, his eyes shining with madness as he prepared to face the Cai Clan patriarch directly.

“Prepare to die, Bai Hao!!” the patriarch said, his voice rumbling as if it were the will of the heavens. It even seemed to contain magical laws of heaven and earth, and was accompanied by countless bolts of lightning that, as they fell from the sky, formed together into an enormous battle-axe.

As the battle-axe of lightning descended, the Cai Clan patriarch leaped up into the sky and grabbed it, and then... viciously swung it down toward Bai Xiaochun!

Given the speed of his attack, there was no way that he wouldn’t land the blow before the teleportation completed!

At this moment, nobody was paying attention to the Giant Ghost King, or the strange gleam in his eye. The truth was that he had been profoundly shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s words and actions. He was a wily old fox, a ruthless and ambitious person who didn’t trust anyone except his direct relatives. But the words Bai Xiaochun had spoken had caused a bit of warmth to appear in his heart. Of course, that warmth would only last for so long. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun’s previous actions, if analyzed carefully, did not really match up with his words. However... after the long-range teleportation portal appeared, he was doing something that would forever make up for any deficiencies in his previous actions!

No matter what anyone said, as of this moment, Bai Xiaochun really was living up to his word, and was risking his life to keep the Giant Ghost King safe....

Most importantly, Bai Xiaochun had released the Giant Ghost King in order to take action!!

The Giant Ghost King was even more profoundly moved than he had been at the realization that Bai Xiaochun really wasn’t planning to throw him over to his enemies.... Although the king was a fundamentally ruthless individual, even he could not help but be shaken by what was happening.

The events which had played out on this day were profound, to say the least. It was in this moment that the Giant Ghost King took a deep breath, and at the same time, a shimmer of determination appeared in his eyes. As the Cai Clan patriarch closed in, the Giant Ghost King reached up and pushed his hand down onto his forehead.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as his forehead opened up, and a golden drop of blood flew out and shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao, this is a drop of my soul blood. Absorb it, and you will have access to power equivalent to half a step into the Demigod Realm. Take my crimson spear... and attack with everything you've got!!” He sounded very weak as he spoke the words, and as the soul blood flew out of him, he seemed to age visibly, until he looked like little more than skin and bones. His aura was so weak that he was like a candle flickering in the wind; even his eyes clouded over.

He only had three drops of soul blood in total, each of which was extremely important. Of course, anyone who absorbed one of those drops of soul blood would experience a huge boost to their cultivation base, except that boost would only last for a short time. However, it would give the recipient enlightenment regarding the natural laws of devas and the magical laws of demigods!

At the moment, it was with complete and utter determination that the Giant Ghost King sent his soul blood flying toward Bai Xiaochun!

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped as the Giant Ghost King’s words entered his ears. And then, the drop of soul blood hit his chest and sank inside.

A wave of heat exploded out inside of him, causing blue veins to bulge out on his face and neck. At the same time, a scream of intense pain erupted from his lips.

Cracking sounds could be heard, and his entire body thrummed from the power of the soul blood.

All of a sudden, monumental changes occurred to his cultivation base. His aura surged upward with indescribable speed, pushing him out of the Gold Core stage and into the early Nascent Soul stage. In the blink of an eye, he was in the great circle, and then beyond it. He was a deva, and yet, things weren’t over yet! His aura was almost instantly in the great circle of the Deva Realm, only half a step from the Demigod Realm!

He was... half a step into the Demigod Realm!!

He threw his head back and let loose a protracted roar, his hair whipping around him. As of this moment, all of the Giant Ghost King’s accumulated knowledge of devas filled his mind, as well as much of his enlightenment regarding the Demigod Realm. Although that enlightenment wasn’t complete, to Bai Xiaochun, it was profoundly precious. This was a type of good fortune that could be encountered by chance, but never searched for and found!

It would make his future cultivation advance much more rapidly than before, and would help him avoid many mistakes. In fact, it was highly likely that it would enable him to surpass the Giant Ghost King himself!

Right now... anything and everything was possible!

That was the power of soul blood! It could not truly push someone to new heights permanently, but would still be dramatically helpful in the long run!

As for the Cai Clan patriarch, his face fell, and he blurted, “Soul blood!!”

Never could he have imagined that the selfish and callous Giant Ghost King would actually give out a drop of his soul blood. The patriarch’s killing intent grew more intense, and he began to push his lightning axe down with even greater speed.

The attack he was unleashing contained indescribable energy of heaven and earth, as if nature itself were furious, and intent on punishing all living beings. Lightning filled the sky as the enormous axe bore down on Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0660 awe-chapter-661

Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes, almost as if he weren’t worried at all about the incoming Cai Clan patriarch. Instead, he sank into the feeling of becoming one with everything around him.

He was heaven, he was earth, he was the will of all creation.

“So, this is what it’s like to be a deva.... One with everything....” Right now, he felt like the wave of his hand could draw upon all the power of heaven and earth to crush anything in his path.

It was almost as if heaven and earth were an empty body, and a deva could become the will of that body, controlling it in every aspect.

Of course, there was more than just a single will within that heaven and earth, controlling it. There were other devas who also vied for control. In fact, Bai Xiaochun could sense another such will right there in front of him, drawing upon the incredible energy of heaven and earth to attack him.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open, and when he did, his entire person thrummed with power!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

His energy surged, and not only did that put him on equal footing with the Cai Clan patriarch, but his four clones were also powering up in exactly the same fashion.

“Return!” Bai Xiaochun said, waving his sleeve. Immediately, his four clones merged back into his body, causing his energy to rise even higher. He had already been half a step into the Demigod Realm, but now that he had merged with his clones... he became even more powerful. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he broke through another level, and an aura appeared which shocked even the Giant Ghost King.

The Giant Ghost King had been teetering on the verge of unconsciousness. However, he bit his tongue to produce some clarity, which was exactly when that terrifying aura erupted out from Bai Xiaochun. The Giant Ghost King gasped, and his heart became completely filled with incredulity.

“He used only one drop of my soul blood to actually produce a demigod aura.... How is this possible? He’ll only get one attack out of it, but... it still shouldn’t be possible!!”

If the wide-eyed Giant Ghost King had such a reaction, there was little need to mention the Cai Clan patriarch. His mind was reeling, and his scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode.

“You....”

Before he could say anything else, though.... Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with intense light; his heart was pounding wildly as he felt the fusion between himself and heaven and earth. However, there was something a bit fuzzy, as if.... the previously wide world was now cramped and narrow. It almost felt as if using all the power at his disposal would break beyond this heaven and earth.

“So, this is the difference between a deva and a demigod, huh...?” Bai Xiaochun knew that what he was experiencing was something beyond precious. Extending his right hand, he made a grasping motion, whereupon a red spear emerged from his bag of holding!

The instant that spear appeared, the entire sky filled with thunderous rumbling. At the same time, the sea of lightning up above stopped moving, and even began to distort, as though something were interfering with it.

The wind, the land, the air, everything grew still. Even the Cai Clan patriarch stopped moving, causing his face to fill with a mass of shock and disbelief.

The only thing in the world that could move... was Bai Xiaochun... and the long red spear!

This red spear was how the Giant Ghost King had made a name for himself. Normally speaking, Bai Xiaochun should never have been able to wield it, but now that he held it in his hand, piercing howls could be heard coming from inside of it, almost as if it thirsted to taste blood.

Further, it was now possible to just barely make out nine blood dragons on the surface of the spear, all of them roaring at the Cai Clan patriarch. Those nine dragons were why this spear was named... the Nine Dragons Godslaying Spear!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes gleamed with killing intent, and as everything in the world went still, he gripped the spear and stabbed it toward the Cai Clan patriarch.

That simple stabbing motion became a rapidly spinning black hole that unleashed terrifyingly destructive power of heaven and earth!

In the same way that a canvas painting could be shredded to pieces, the silence was broken, the wind shattered, and the earth quaked. The destructive power was such that the nearby members of the Cai Clan began to cough up massive volumes of blood, and some of them were even shredded into masses of gore, destroyed in body and soul!

Even more shocking, the sea of lightning in the sky was destroyed as easily as if it were made of dried twigs! The black hole completely consumed all of the lightning....

And yet, things weren’t over yet. There was no way the Cai Clan patriarch would be able to complete the blow with his lightning axe. Cracking sounds could be heard as the axe began to fall apart, and then, the Cai Clan patriarch... physically exploded!!

A piercing scream could be heard as his body collapsed into a mass of blood. At that point, he flew out in nascent divinity form, his face a mass of shock and terror as he tried to flee.

But the black hole’s power was formidable, and no matter what the nascent divinity patriarch did to try to escape, he was sucked backward.

“No... NO!!” he screamed, overwhelmed by fear and terror. Never could he possibly have imagined that one drop of the Giant Ghost King’s soul blood could push someone all the way to the demigod level.

But that was completely impossible!!

Therefore, the only other explanation... was that there was something uniquely special about this Bai Hao!

Regardless of the explanation, the Cai Clan patriarch was now in a deadly situation. His nascent divinity screamed as he was sucked toward the black hole. However, just before he was pulled all the way in... a tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and his demigod cultivation base began to drop. In the blink of an eye, he was all the way back in Core Formation, where he had started.

The sensation of vast power from moments ago was gone. Suddenly being wrenched back into Core Formation was not easy to handle, and he immediately coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. As he staggered backward, the long red spear faded, and the nine howling dragons disappeared.

“What a pity....” he murmured to himself. The feeling of incredible power that he had just experienced had been entrancing, to say the least.

The black hole vanished, and the Cai Clan patriarch in nascent divinity form shivered, feeling like he had just stepped halfway into the gates of the netherworld. He instantly burst into motion, traveling 3,000 meters away in the blink of an eye. When he turned to look back, he saw the light of teleportation completely washing over Bai Xiaochun.

The patriarch shivered again, fear lingering inside him at the sensation of having nearly been killed. He knew without a doubt that if Bai Xiaochun’s aura had lasted even a moment longer, he would have been killed.

As of this moment, his fleshly body was destroyed, but his nascent divinity remained. His life was saved. However, the only thing he felt inside was bitterness, terror, and madness.

“They... made it out of Giant Ghost City.... If we don't find them, then the Giant Ghost King will be back in only a few months.... Demigod.... Demigod.... He can kill devas with the simple swipe of a spear....” Trembling, the patriarch threw his head back and howled. Then, he turned and headed toward the Chen Clan. After all, the tribulation to come would rain down on all three great clans, and therefore, they all needed to work together to resolve the situation.

They needed to come to an agreement that, even if one of them were to be seriously injured, the other two would still make a move. There could be no more infighting between them. Right now... they had to focus all their resources on hunting down the Giant Ghost King and Bai Hao!

Furthermore, the Cai Clan patriarch felt confident that the teleportation formation couldn’t have taken them extremely far away. His guess was that, at most, its range was roughly 50,000 kilometers!

As the Cai Clan patriarch left to confer with the patriarchs of the Chen and Bai Clans, countless people within Giant Ghost City were reacting to what had just occurred with Bai Hao. All of the power groups, all of the soul cultivators, came to hear about the matter, and were struck with indescribable shock.

“He seriously injured the patriarchs of the Bai and Chen Clan, and even destroyed the fleshly body of the Cai Clan patriarch!!”

“This Bai Hao... is so strong!”

“Heavens! This Bai Hao single-handedly dominated all three of the great clans!!”

“The Giant Ghost King escaped.... If he recovers and comes back, the three great clans and the six heavenly marquises will all be crushed like weeds.... And Bai Hao... well, it doesn’t matter how he might have offended the Giant Ghost King in the past, after risking his life the way he did, he’ll definitely become one of the most important people in all of Giant Ghost City!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0661 awe-chapter-662

Not even forty hours had passed since the outbreak of rebellion in Giant Ghost City!

During that short period of time, drastic changes had occurred, which the people of the city found outrageous and terrifying.

First the Nine Serenities King had made his probing attack. Then the six marquises revolted. Four devas joined the fray. The Giant Ghost King had not even been able to make a stand, and yet, that was only the beginning. When it was revealed that the Giant Ghost King was only a clone, the second phase of the event began.

The entire city was turned upside down as the rebels searched for the Giant Ghost King's true self. That was when Bai Hao showed up on the scene, holding the Giant Ghost King's true self captive. Everything which occurred after that... would be fixed for all time in the memories of those who had been present.

Three powerful devas were seriously injured, and then... Bai Hao and the Giant Ghost King escaped the city!

From that moment on, Bai Hao would be completely famous within Giant Ghost City. In fact, it was easy to imagine how his name would soon spread to the Wildlands at large.

In a mountain range about 50,000 kilometers away from Giant Ghost City, Bai Xiaochun could be seen speeding along, face ashen, carrying an old man on his back. The man was withered and wrinkled, and his aura was virtually undetectable. In fact, even close examination would lead one to think that he was actually a corpse.

Of course, that old man was none other than the Giant Ghost King. It was hard to say if his current condition was a result of him sacrificing a drop of soul blood, or because of his decay period. Either way, he was completely and utterly unconscious. His virtually indestructible body was now so profoundly weak that it seemed possible for an ordinary knife to cut through him and end his life.

Bai Xiaochun's aura was also unstable. The Giant Ghost King had slipped into unconsciousness right after the two of them teleported out of the city, several hours before. Bai Xiaochun had also been seriously injured, and the soul blood had done nothing to heal him. Although he had received vital enlightenment, after he slipped out of the Demigod Realm, his injuries all flared up, leaving him feeling incredibly weak.

Thankfully, his fleshly body was very strong, so he gritted his teeth and forced himself to stay conscious. After seeing that the Giant Ghost King was unconscious, he decided not to drag him around by the neck any more, and instead slung him over his back.

Bai Xiaochun knew that he was still wrapped up in a momentous event. The three great clans would not rest until he was dead, and it was the same with the six heavenly marquises. As for the latter, because none of them had a deva, and he had been zipping around the city via teleportation formation, he hadn't encountered any of them. But that didn't mean he wouldn't in the future.

It was easy to imagine… that both the three great clans and the forces of the six heavenly marquises would do everything possible to find him.

“It’s a good thing I don’t need to hold on for very much longer. Just a few days. Then the Giant Ghost King will recover.... Although, I wonder if that drop of soul blood will change things.” He sighed. If the Giant Ghost King hadn’t given him that drop of soul blood, and he had been forced into a corner, then maybe he would have given the man up. At that point, he wouldn’t have felt too bad. But considering how things had developed, he simply couldn’t do that.

Bai Xiaochun had deeply ingrained principles when it came to paying back debts. He felt moved by how the Giant Ghost King had helped him, which was actually a bit contrary to how he had planned for things to turn out.

“Ah, whatever.” Sighing, he continued onward through the mountains, the Giant Ghost King on his back.

Soon it was evening, and the sky was starting to grow dark. Bai Xiaochun wanted to keep going, but his injuries were so bad that he couldn’t. Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King’s aura was getting so weak that at times that he couldn’t even sense it. The man’s body was also starting to grow cold.

Nervous, Bai Xiaochun found a suitable spot to hew out a cave for use as a temporary shelter. Using what scant bit of his cultivation base was left, he made a small bonfire and then propped the Giant Ghost King up in front of it.

Unfortunately, the Giant Ghost King’s complexion was ashen, and he only seemed to be getting colder as time progressed. His aura was currently very weak.

“You can’t die!” Bai Xiaochun said. Standing up, he patted his bag of holding to produce some medicinal items useful for treating injuries. Unfortunately, even after forcing them into the Giant Ghost King’s mouth, nothing happened.

“What do I do, what do I do...?” He thought about asking the little turtle for some advice, but there was no trace of him. No amount of angry threatening got him to stick his head out, so Bai Xiaochun finally gave up. Then he sat there looking at the ice-cold Giant Ghost King for a while before finally slapping his own thigh.

“I know what to do!” he thought, his eyes shining. There was definitely something that could heat the Giant Ghost King up, but as he contemplated it, he hesitated.

Unsure of whether the Giant Ghost King could hear him or not, he said, “Um... hey, Giant Ghost King old pal, I'm only doing this to save you, alright? No hard feelings.”

With that, he pulled out... and Aphrodisiac Pill, which he then placed into the Giant Ghost King’s mouth.

Bai Xiaochun remembered how all the prisoners who consumed Aphrodisiac Pills always got very hot, and even sweated profusely. At the moment, he was in a desperate situation and was grasping at straws, but had no other alternatives. Worried that one pill might not be enough, he pulled out a few more, and then stuffed them into the Giant Ghost King’s mouth.

Almost immediately, the Giant Ghost King shivered, and got a bit warmer. His previously fading aura began to fluctuate, and a bit of color even returned to his skin.

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, and at the same time, his face shone with pride at the fact that, in his genius, he had created a medicinal pill that could be used both to interrogate prisoners, and save lives.

“Geniuses like me are always lonely. Ai.” At this point, he was finally starting to relax. If the Giant Ghost King had died, then everything he had done up to this point would have been for nothing.

As he calmed down, he thought back to everything which had occurred in Giant Ghost City, and his heart trembled with lingering fear. Frowning, he reviewed all of his actions.

“I got too impulsive. I shouldn’t have listened to the little turtle.... Three devas? I... I can't believe I actually escaped from three devas.” The thought of how he had put everything on the line left him gasping. Even the slightest mistake, and he would have died.

“I always say that I'm not going to do anything dangerous ever again. How come I always do, though...?” Frowning, he realized that his personality was changing, and that he was actually becoming braver.

“Wait a second, that’s not a good thing!” Deeply worried, he looked over at the Giant Ghost King, and then up at the evening sky, and the moon, which was just barely visible. Finally, he sighed.

“I sure hope that what the little turtle said is true.... The Giant Ghost King had better recover in the next couple days.” And so he sat there nervously, surrounded by silence. Considering how exhausted he was and how quiet the area was, he soon began to think back to what it had been like to rise to the deva level, and then beyond that, to the demigod level.

Eventually, his eyes began to shine with both confusion and desire.

“The Deva Realm.... So that's what it feels like. And the Demigod Realm.... It almost seems possible to break through heaven and earth....” The sensations he felt after absorbing the soul blood, and the enlightenment he had received, were forever branded onto his heart. At the same time, his desire to grow stronger increased.

“I want to become a deva.... I want to become a demigod....” Remembering that he needed to change his way of thinking, he tried to inwardly focus on the longevity aspect. “Umm, I guess becoming a demigod would mean I could live even longer, right?”

Time passed. Even before the night was through, Bai Xiaochun felt rested. After checking on the Giant Ghost King to make sure he wasn’t getting any colder, he once again put him on his back and then flew out of the cave.

It was in that manner, only resting when absolutely necessary, that Bai Xiaochun proceeded along for three days.... The Giant Ghost King was unconscious the entire time, and didn’t show any signs of waking up. As for Bai Xiaochun, thanks to his powerful fleshly body, his wounds were recovering nicely.

However, the anxiety in his heart continued to mount. He knew that with every bit of time that passed in which the Giant Ghost King didn’t wake up, it meant that the three great clans would be getting closer.

Eventually, on evening of the third day, as he was flying along, the sky above him began to rumble loudly.

A voice filled with boundless venom suddenly echoed out. “Bai Hao!!”

Bai Xiaochun looked up into the sky and saw... three enormous faces, each of them hundreds of meters tall!!

They were none other than... the patriarchs of the three great clans!

The one who had spoken was the Cai Clan patriarch, who had lost his fleshly body. His eyes burned with killing intent, and he was surrounded by a sea of lightning that pulsed with metal-type power. That indicated that this lightning could give birth to metal, and supreme-grade metal at that!

Next to the Cai Clan patriarch were the patriarchs from the Bai and Chen Clans. Both of them had very serious expressions on their faces, without a trace of the derision with which they had previously looked at Bai Xiaochun. In fact... they almost seemed to view him as an equal!

Anyone unfamiliar with the situation who saw that would surely be shocked. After all, these were devas, and Bai Xiaochun was only in the great circle of the Gold Core stage. This... was simply the kind of respect that Bai Xiaochun could earn when he used full force!

As for the Bai Clan patriarch, a strange, mysterious light flickered through his eyes.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0662 awe-chapter-663

“Bai Hao! Considering that you’re a member of the Bai Clan, if you simply hand the Giant Ghost King over, I’ll count it as a meritorious service and pronounce you clan chief!” The rumbling pressure coming from the Bai Clan patriarch completely surpassed that of the other two patriarchs.

Although the Cai Clan patriarch didn't seem very happy about what the Bai Clan patriarch had just said, he didn't say anything. Clearly, the patriarchs had come to an agreement of some sort. However, when it came to the Chen Clan patriarch, his desire to kill Bai Hao had actually far surpassed that of the Cai Clan patriarch, although no one knew that.

The things Bai Hao had accomplished so far were completely shocking, so much so that they would eventually shake all of the Wildlands. As a result, the Chen Clan patriarch was absolutely certain that if Bai Hao returned to the Bai Clan, they would eventually control all of Giant Ghost City.

“We can't leave him alive,” he thought. “If he sticks around, the Bai Clan will get so powerful that nobody will be able to stop them!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and braced himself as he looked up into the sky at the three patriarchs. Although the Bai Clan patriarch’s offer seemed great, Bai Xiaochun didn’t trust him at all.

Sighing inwardly, he tried to decide what to do when, all of a sudden, a voice entered his ears that he hadn’t heard for several days. It was none other than the little turtle!

“Don’t agree, little punk!” he said urgently. “Lord Turtle hasn’t appeared for the past few days because he didn’t dare to! Dammit! I knew something was off. The Giant Ghost King... is already awake! He woke up much, much earlier! If Lord Turtle’s guess is correct, he’s actually already back at full strength!!

“The wily old fox! Listen, punk, I’ve been helping you out for a long time now, but this time, I had to make a lot of preparations to be able to send you this message behind the Giant Ghost King's back. He’s a demigod, after all. I have to go now, so as for what exactly you should do now, just play it by ear.”

Bai Xiaochun was complexly flabbergasted, but didn’t let it show on his face. After glancing back at the Giant Ghost King for a moment, he looked up in thought. Then, his veins of steel began to pulse, making it seem to those who could see him as if he would continue on his current course no matter what setbacks he encountered. His eyes were now bloodshot, and he stood there looking like a lone wolf, valiant and heroic.

Swishing his sleeve, he spoke out in a hoarse voice that was both decisive and fierce, “Forget it! On the day that I, Bai Hao, left the Bai Clan, I swore an oath to never again be part of that clan! Although you are surnamed Bai just like I am, the meaning of that character is completely different between the two of us!

“The Giant Ghost King gave me a new lease on life, and is like a brother to me. I promised to keep him safe for a month, and I’ll do that no matter what!

“You people want the Giant Ghost King? Sure, you can have him. *By stepping over my dead body!”*

As he spoke, his voice grew louder and louder, until he was shouting with dauntless courage. There was a lofty arrogance to his words that would make anyone who didn’t know him think that he was the most noble and righteous type of person in the world.

“Even if I, Bai Hao, end up dying in the process, I will never hand over my brother the Giant Ghost King!! I didn’t abandon him in Giant Ghost City, and I'm not going to abandon him here!!” Even as his words rang out, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base. Making sure the Giant Ghost King was secure on his back, he began to flee again, musing about how amazing his speech had been just now. After hearing it, there was no way the Giant Ghost King wouldn't be moved.

At the same time, he was feeling quite nervous, not because of the three devas, but because of the fact that he knew the Giant Ghost King to be a very slippery character....

He also couldn’t stop thinking about how he had slapped the man on the side of the head several times.

Up above, none of the three clan patriarchs said anything in response. Suddenly, the huge face which represented the Cai Clan patriarch blurred, and he emerged from its forehead in nascent divinity form. As he looked down at Bai Xiaochun, his lips quivered as though he were murmuring something. Then, thunderous rumbling could be heard as several lightning bolts appeared and shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

As they moved through the air, they formed together into a sphere of lightning, pulsing with shocking energy that caused the air around it to distort and then ignite into flames!

As that happened, the Chen Clan patriarch also emerged from the giant face that represented him. Brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth as the entire 50-kilometer area around him suddenly became an enormous sealing mark!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened wide. Aware that he couldn’t avoid this attack, he looked at the incoming sphere of lightning and roared, “Even if I die, I’ll never let any of you hurt my big bro!!”

He stamped his foot onto the ground, causing a huge crater to appear below. Then he gently put the Giant Ghost King down behind him and pulled out his Eternal Parasol to defend the both of them.

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out, and the ground quaked. Rifts spread out as sparks of electricity showered about in all directions, creating something like a lake of lightning. The Eternal Parasol twisted and distorted, and behind it, Bai Xiaochun trembled and coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. He was trembling on the verge of collapse, bones breaking inside of him as he withstood the force of the attack. After it was over, he gritted his teeth, grabbed the Giant Ghost King again, and took to flight.

As he sped along, he continued to cough up blood. An expression of despair appeared on his face as he looked at the Giant Ghost King and then spoke in a voice so soft only the two of them could hear.

“Everyone dies one day. Compared to the kindness you have shown me, my brother... what does death count for!?!?” At this point, his expression of despair began to turn into one of madness. “I just hate the fact that my cultivation base is so weak. And the fact that I can’t fulfill my promise to you, my brother!!”

With that, he threw his head back and roared in frustration. Inside, he was thinking that he had continued with the act for long enough. If things kept going on like they were, he really would be flirting with disaster.

He had gone all out to defend against that attack just now, and knew that the only reason he had survived was because the Cai Clan patriarch was in nascent divinity form, making his attacks much weaker than normal. If the Chen or Bai Clan patriarchs attacked him in his current state, he probably wouldn’t be able to take it.

“How far does the Giant Ghost King want to take this!? If he doesn’t do something soon, I'll end up dead, and so will he....” Bai Xiaochun was virtually weeping inside by this point.

Up above, the Bai Clan patriarch sighed in regret about how things were turning out. However, he was a cold-hearted person, and therefore, since this Bai Hao was just too stubborn, he knew he had to act.

“Fine then, just die!” he said, launching a fist strike toward the ground.

RUMBLE!

A huge, illusory fist appeared, and as it descended, incredible pressure weighed down in all directions. That fist represented the will of the heavens, and was so powerful that it could destroy anything it touched!

Within moments, it was bearing down on Bai Xiaochun, causing the ground to quake dangerously!

An intense sensation of deadly crisis erupted inside of Bai Xiaochun. He could tell… that this was not the type of attack he could absorb in defense. Nor could he evade it in time. If it hit him, he would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!!

“Fudge!” he shouted inwardly. “Come on, Giant Ghost King, don’t tell me you really do want me dead?!” Although he was shaking and terrified, the words that actually came out of his mouth were a bit different than his inner monologue.

“It’s not that I don’t want to live up to my promise, my brother. I really do. I guess the only thing now is for the both of us to stroll the pathways of the Yellow Springs together!”

He looked up at the enormous fist, his heart filled not with terror and alarm, but with peace. Although he was trembling physically, he wasn’t nervous or scared anymore. He knew that if the little turtle was correct, and the Giant Ghost King really was awake, abandoning him wasn’t a viable option. Furthermore, considering how things had developed just now, there was no way he could escape from the three deva patriarchs this time.

“No more gambling and no more acts,” he thought. “Fudge! I guess if I'm really gonna lose my life, then I sure as hell am not going to go out looking terrified....” Gritting his teeth, he put the Giant Ghost King behind him protectively.

Even as the entire world filled with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling, and the enormous fist was about to crush Bai Xiaochun, even as a huge crater opened up beneath him, and nearby mountains crumbled into dust, even as the air shattered....

The Bai Clan patriarch, instead of breathing a sigh of relief, suddenly began to tremble. His eyes went wide with disbelief, and his face fell as he shouted, “Giant Ghost King!”

He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. The Chen and Cai Clan patriarchs both began to shake, their minds reeling as though they were being struck by hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts. Never could they possibly have imagined that in this exact moment... the person who had just been lying unconscious behind Bai Xiaochun, would suddenly stand up and walk forward!

He was none other than... the Giant Ghost King!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0663 awe-chapter-664

“This game is now over!”

The voice which rang out was as cold as ice. He spoke five simple words, and yet, he was a heavenly king and demigod expert. His energy was the type that heaven and earth could not support, and it even caused black clouds to roil in the sky above. The three patriarchs immediately began to shake under the pressure; the Giant Ghost King didn’t even need to draw upon the power of his cultivation base. His mere threatening gaze was enough to cause the three patriarchs to tremble in place.

This was the Giant Ghost King!!

As of this moment, he seemed to make all colors in heaven and earth fade away. It was as if all creation could do nothing but tremble and bow to him.

That was because he... was a demigod expert!

That was because he... was one of the four heavenly kings of the Wildlands!

That was because he... was the Giant Ghost King!!

As he stood there in front of Bai Xiaochun, he slowly extended his right hand, a hand that seemed powerful enough to hold up the heavens. Instantly, the Bai Clan patriarch’s divine ability was nullified; the 300-meter area surrounding the Giant Ghost King was completely unaffected by it!

The Giant Ghost King’s body was rapidly reverting from that of an old man to a younger one. His white hair became black, and the wrinkles on his face vanished. His withered frame filled in, and in the blink of an eye, a somber expression could be seen on his face.

A royal crown appeared on his head, and he now wore a violet robe with a serpentine dragon embroidered on it. As of this moment, he seemed more noble than anything else in the world!

The Bai Clan patriarch was trembling, and his eyes were bulging out of his head so violently they seemed like they might explode. At the same time, an icy coldness filled his heart that seemed cold enough to freeze the world.

The Chen Clan patriarch had a similar reaction. Panting in terror, he felt as if he were drowning at the bottom of the sea, a sea so powerful that it could crush him and his clan out of existence!

The Cai Clan patriarch only existed as a nascent divinity now. He was just as shocked, and because he didn’t have a physical body to sustain some of the crushing pressure he felt, it all weighed down on his nascent divinity, causing it to twist and distort. Inside, he was screaming in terror at the realization that he and the other two patriarchs... had completely misjudged the Giant Ghost King!

He had not needed three months to recover, or even one. In fact, he hadn't even required half a month. He... had recovered in five days!!

Only five days had passed since the rebellion began, and during that time, the Giant Ghost King had already recovered. The Cai Clan patriarch understood everything now, and couldn’t help but think back to the sight of the

Giant Ghost King's clone, hovering there above the ruins of the royal palace, a look of complete disdain and contempt in his eyes as he had uttered a very simple sentence.

This has all been nothing more than a game....

The Bai and Chen Clan patriarchs also recalled those words, and suddenly, the entire world around them seemed to go as still and quiet as death....

They hovered there in the air, people who could normally look down condescendingly upon all heaven and earth. And yet, as of this moment, they felt as if they were looking up in awe and fear at the person in front of Bai Xiaochun!!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there, jaw agape, almost incapable of believing that he was still alive. It seemed almost like a dream that the Giant Ghost King really was awake, with his cultivation base restored, leaving the three deva patriarchs shaken to the core.

Of course, he was also deeply nervous about what was to come.

"I hope the Giant Ghost King... has a good impression of me, and forgets about everything that happened before.... He absolutely, positively had better not be holding a grudge!" As Bai Xiaochun stood there, his heart trembling with anxiety, the three patriarchs looked down with flickering expressions. Then, the Cai Clan patriarch let out an ear-piercing shriek as he spun and began to flee!

There was no other option for him. Even if it meant his clan ended up being wiped out, he had no alternative other than to try to escape. He could always establish a new clan, but if he died... then everything would definitely be over.

However, he was the only one to make such a choice. The Bai and Chen Clan patriarchs, in their bitterness, chose instead to power up their cultivation bases and attack the Giant Ghost King.

The rebellion had been a huge gamble. If they had won in the end, they could have achieved a meteoric rise. Now that they had clearly lost... they knew that there would be a price to pay, and that they would never be able to escape.

“The two of you really do have some courage,” the Giant Ghost King said coolly. Although his words were spoken with calm, they contained indescribable pressure, the type that could rebuke all of heaven and earth.

Instead of lowering his right hand, he clenched it into a fist, then stood tall and straight before unleashing a fist strike at the incoming devas.

It almost seemed like a casual motion, without any hints of containing a magical technique or divine ability. And yet, because of it, everything in the area seemed to grow dark. It was as if the entire world were spinning as a huge vortex opened up, a gaping, sinister mouth ready to gobble up the two patriarchs.

Incredible rumbling sounds could be heard as blood sprayed from the mouth of the Bai Clan patriarch. A scream rang out as his body teetered on the verge of collapsing. Then, he was sucked into the huge mouth. The Chen Clan patriarch laughed in bitter defiance before he too vanished into the vortex.

One fist... had completely overwhelmed two devas. They vanished without a trace remaining, sucked into a black hole, possibly dead, possibly alive.

The sight of it caused beads of sweat to break out on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. He had never seen a demigod fighting before, and although he had experienced the terrifying power of that level because of the soul-blood earlier, to witness it in full measure was completely different.

It only served to increase his nervousness. He couldn’t help but think back to everything that had happened, and how he had brazenly slapped the Giant Ghost King, not just once, but seven or eight times, until the man's face was completely swollen.

Bai Xiaochun was wailing inwardly, and wondered what mystical foodstuffs he might have accidentally eaten to give him such gall. He had actually slapped a demigod expert across the face, over and over....

Even as Bai Xiaochun sat there in misery, the Giant Ghost King looked over at the fleeing Cai Clan patriarch. Snorting coldly, he opened his fist and then made a grasping gesture.

Instantly, rumbling sounds echoed out, and the entire world seemed to turn upside down. Even time seemed to flow in reverse, as though the Giant Ghost King now controlled all natural law with the movement of his hand.

To Bai Xiaochun’s astonishment, he saw the fleeing Cai Clan patriarch’s nascent divinity suddenly flying backward at top speed, a look of utter terror on his face.

“No! Nooooo! I beg for mercy, Your Highness, please....” The Cai Clan patriarch trembled as he seemingly moved backward through time until he appeared in front of the Giant Ghost King, who reached out and grabbed him by the neck!

Before the man could say anything else, the Giant Ghost King causally twisted his fingers. A scream echoed out as the Cai Clan patriarch’s entire nascent divinity collapsed into pieces.

However, things weren't over yet. As the nascent divinity began to disperse, a shadowy soul could suddenly be seen. It was none other than... a deva soul!

As soon as it appeared, an intangible vortex sprang up in the sky. Closer inspection revealed that within that vortex was a flowing river filled with countless vengeful souls. It was none other than... the Underworld River!

As the river and vortex appeared, a gravitational force sprang up that contained natural law. It grabbed ahold of the deva soul and began to tug it up. At that point, though, the Giant Ghost King snorted coldly and reached out with his right hand. Instantly, wild colors flashed in heaven and earth, and the gravitational force began to fade away. Apparently, the vortex and the Underworld River didn’t wish to fight with a demigod. Gradually, they faded away, and the deva soul floated down into the Giant Ghost King’s hand.

Within that soul, it was possible to detect a metal-type aura, as well as a bit of heterogeneous lightning power!!

And thus, matters ended. In the briefest of moments, the Giant Ghost King killed one of the three devas, and dispatched the other two, although whether that was into death or not was impossible to tell at the moment.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode, and he was shaking visibly. Sweat poured down him as a feeling of profound disquiet rose up. As he glanced at the Giant Ghost King out of the corner of his eye, the man turned and looked at him, his vision as sharp as a blaze as it pierced into Bai Xiaochun’s mind. Clearly, he could kill him with a mere thought if he wanted to!

Bai Xiaochun was panting, his mind spinning as he sensed the destructive power of the Giant Ghost King. He almost felt like a mortal staring into the gaping maw of a fierce tiger!

The pressure was impossible to describe, the type which could overturn heaven and earth with no effort!

“Bai Hao, give me one good reason not to kill you!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0664 awe-chapter-665

The Giant Ghost King’s words rumbled like heavenly thunder, shaking everything in the world, and Bai Xiaochun along with it.

The pressure coming off of the Giant Ghost King had Bai Xiaochun trembling physically, as if he were a tiny rowboat in a thrashing ocean of angry waves. In fact, he had the premonition that if he made the slightest mistake, he would be destroyed in both body and soul!

The words the Giant Ghost King had uttered just now had Bai Xiaochun scared out of his mind. He didn’t need to think very hard to come up with multiple responses. Whether it was their agreement, or the desperate show he had put on, or the fact that he had saved the Giant Ghost King’s life, they all seemed like viable options.

However, Bai Xiaochun had the strong feeling that he couldn't use any of those as his answer!

The Giant Ghost King was aware of all of those things already, and the fact that he had asked the question he did was very, very telling. Trembling in fear, Bai Xiaochun contemplated the fact that the words he uttered next would very likely determine his ultimate fate!

He had not experienced many situations in life that were this nerve-wracking. That was especially true when he looked up at the Giant Ghost King’s cold, merciless eyes. Looking into those eyes only seemed to confirm his deepest fears.

“He’s holding a metal-type deva soul in his hand.... It seems obvious he’s trying to send a message with that.... And yet, he also seems like he wants to kill me.... I can’t trust the restrictive spell either!” Unsure of what to do, Bai Xiaochun felt like he finally understood that old saying, *being in the king’s company is like living with a tiger*. The Giant Ghost King he was facing right now was the real Giant Ghost King, and yet, for some reason, that only made Bai Xiaochun feel like walking up and slapping him across the side of the head again. Of course, as soon as the thought occurred to him, he shoved it away.

“So, feel like slapping me across the side of the head?” the Giant Ghost King asked placidly, his voice cutting like the winter wind. Suddenly, the pressure radiating off of him grew even more powerful, crushing down on everything in the area.

“He's still pissed off at me!” Bai Xiaochun thought. “If I don’t word things just right, I’m going to be in profound danger!” Although he was inwardly trembling in terror, his eyes were bloodshot with the realization that true men had to be flexible. In that instant, his eyes shone with... burning zeal.

“Your Highness!!” he said, sounding very excited. “Your Highness, I didn’t understand it before, but now I understand that Your Highness definitely deserves to be Your Highness. You are so intelligent and wise that within five days, you completely turned the world upside down. You truly ripped open the overcast grayness to reveal the sunny sky beyond! Every cloud has a silver lining, and you found that silver lining!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with unprecedented excitement, and in fact, it was even possible to see tears of joy glistening within them.

The Giant Ghost King was so surprised that a strange expression flickered across his face. However, moments later, he was just as solemn as before as he coolly said, “You’re so excited you're crying?”

“Your Highness,” Bai Xiaochun replied loudly, “you truly looked formidable and mighty just now. The wave of your finger wiped out all of those devas! I, Bai Hao, have never seen such an impressive display of heroism in my life! The mere thought of becoming the follower of a hero like you, sir, is an honor the likes of which couldn’t be repeated for many generations. That is why I am overwhelmed with joy!” Bai Xiaochun was apparently so excited he was trembling. An expression of utter zeal overtook his face, and his tears of joy were enough to cause anyone to stare in shock.

A strange expression could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face; never could he have imagined that this Bai Hao would be skilled at this sort of thing....

When Bai Xiaochun saw that look in the Giant Ghost King’s eyes, he finally breathed a sigh of relief. Now that he was sure this method would work, he knew that he had to go in for the kill. Putting an expression of utter reverence on his face, he clasped hands and bowed deeply for a long moment. Then he slowly got back up, looking very impassioned.

“Your Highness, you are wise, intelligent, and courageous, a person who is clever in ways that defy description, a hero who has come out victorious in hundreds of battles, an individual of outstanding talent and bearing, a man versatile and adept in all things, someone who surpasses all other living persons, and who has traveled the length and the breadth of the lands. I, Bai Hao, will follow you to the ends of the earth and beyond. Sir, I know in my heart that you would never do anything to harm such a charming and pitiable young child such as myself....” Bai Hao looked anxiously at the Giant Ghost King, having gone all in with everything he could think of. Actually, the crux of everything was his final sentence, in which he spoke the true feelings of his heart.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun almost seemed like he was begging and pleading, and had no idea whether or not he had made the right decision to go with this tactic.

A profound expression of contemplation could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face, but inwardly, he wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. Never before had he encountered a person like Bai Xiaochun, who dared to talk in such a way to a somber person like himself.

However, the more he listened, the more he liked what he heard, and suddenly, a bit of softness could be seen in his eyes.

The truth was that moments ago, there really had been a bit of killing intent in him. After all, if it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun, he would never have been in any real danger. However, the events of the past five days really had softened even his iron heart a bit, and left an impression that would never be removed.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was an anomaly that he could never have planned for. If he took him back to Giant Ghost City now, then based on everything which had happened, it was easy to imagine how powerful Bai Xiaochun would become later on. He would definitely be one of the most influential people in the city.

If he had planned for that all along, then it wouldn’t have been a big deal. But to suddenly be presented with this unexpected turn of events left a sour taste in his mouth.

Therefore, he let Bai Xiaochun make the final decision. If he tried to fall back on their previous agreement and demand compensation, then the Giant Ghost King would never give him the deva soul. Instead, he would seal him until the restrictive spell could be unraveled. Afterward, he would be released secretly somewhere outside of Giant Ghost City, all ties to the Giant Ghost King cut. After that point, his life would be in his own hands, and things would be back to the way they had been in the beginning!

If Bai Xiaochun mentioned how bitter the past few days had been, then the Giant Ghost King would give him the deva soul and send him on his way.... His life would be in his own hands, and there would be no connection between them anymore.

With either of those two options, the Giant Ghost King would not bring him back to Giant Ghost City to bask in glory.

If Bai Xiaochun acted stubbornly, and dared to slap him across the side of the head again, or demanded mercy based on supposed kindnesses from before, then the Giant Ghost King would disregard everything from before and kill him!

These were the three options he had expected Bai Xiaochun to pick from. However, contrary to all expectations, Bai Xiaochun had created something from nothing and made up a fourth option. And thus, a strange, helpless expression could be seen in the Giant Ghost King’s eyes. Inside, he was cursing a bit at everything that had happened with this slippery rogue. However, his killing intent and sinister plans evaporated. In fact, he couldn’t help but notice how badly injured Bai Xiaochun was, and even began to think about everything that had happened as they fled together.

There was also that scene of sincere bravery in the final, critical moment. Being the wily old fox that he was, the Giant Ghost King could tell that part had been no act. At this point, his ruthless heart truly began to soften.

Then he thought about the string of flattering words that had just been uttered, especially the last line, which pushed the Giant Ghost King into that spot between laughter and tears. At this point, his expression turned cold once again, and he waved his hand, sending the metal-type deva soul flying over to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had been very carefully observing the Giant Ghost King’s expression the entire time. As the moments had ticked by, he had grown more and more nervous, to the point where his feelings were perfectly described by the old saying *his heart was beating like fifteen buckets in a well, eight going down while seven were coming up; he couldn’t calm down*. That was when, to his shock, the deva soul flew toward him, and the Giant Ghost King turned and looked up into the sky as if he were about to leave.

Unsure of exactly what the Giant Ghost King was thinking, Bai Xiaochun grabbed the soul and then hesitated about what to do next. Was he supposed to offer his farewells at this point? Was the Giant Ghost King not going to mention anything that had happened early on?

Even as Bai Xiaochun stood there wondering what to do, the Giant Ghost King spoke in a cold voice.

“What are you standing around for? I'm going back to Giant Ghost City. Don’t tell me you’re planning to walk back by yourself?!”

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and his expression immediately brightened. As of this moment, he knew that he had passed all the tests, and that the Giant Ghost King planned to take him back with him....

Bai Xiaochun could only imagine the luxurious life he would be living soon, and immediately flew up into the air to follow....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0665 awe-chapter-666

The Giant Ghost King's cultivation base was back, and of the three devas who opposed him, he had killed one, and apparently captured two. It happened so quickly that there was no way for the three great clans to know what had happened, much less the six heavenly marquises back in Giant Ghost City.

Right now, the rebels in Giant Ghost City felt very alarmed as they sat and waited to find out what would happen. If the Giant Ghost King had simply died, then there would have been much less to worry about. But he had been rescued by Bai Hao, a fact which hung over the heads of the rebels like a sharp blade. They could only hope that the three deva patriarchs would manage to find the Giant Ghost King and kill him in time.

As for those who had not openly rebelled, they also trembled in fear. After all, despite not having participated in the insurrection, they had tacitly approved by not opposing it, a fact they could not deny.

Every group in the city was feeling a lot of pressure. The streets were virtually empty, with all of the soul cultivators remaining in their own residences, waiting to see what would happen in the end.

As for the armies of the six heavenly marquises, their hearts trembled with apprehension, and yet, they continued to search the city high and low. After all, no one could say for sure whether or not the Giant Ghost King who had escaped was another clone. Although it was unlikely that his true self was still hiding in the city, they couldn't take any chances.

As for the six heavenly marquises, they all wore very grim expressions as they gathered for a meeting in a grand hall somewhere in the city. However, not much was said as they all sat there. Most of them were just looking off into the sky, waiting for news from the three devas.

“The Giant Ghost King is very weak, and although that Bai Hao is very crafty and vicious, his cultivation base is just too low. This time... he’ll definitely lose!”

“The Giant Ghost King only has so much soul-blood to use!!”

No matter how they tried to console themselves, though, their hearts were all pounding in fear.

Meanwhile, not too far away from the city, there were two mountain peaks, upon each of which sat an old man.

One of them was Duke Netherworld, and the other was Duke Deathcrier. Both had fears of their own, and waited anxiously to see what would happen. Both knew that their fates no longer rested in their own hands. As for which would live and which would die, it would be determined by what happened between the three devas and the Giant Ghost King.

If the devas of the three great clans prevailed, then Duke Deathcrier would have no choice but to submit to them. On the other hand... Duke Netherworld would face much more severe consequences if he came out on bottom. The two heavenly dukes had ceased fighting, and would only occasionally eye each other. The only purpose the two of them served right now in the larger conflict was to prevent the other from being part of the action.

The city was filled with intense pressure, and everyone was very nervous. Time ticked by. Soon it was evening, and the sky burned with red light, almost as if the clouds were on fire. As it did, the pressure weighing down on the hearts of everyone present seemed to grow stronger.

It was in that moment... that the red clouds in the sky began to seethe. In the blink of an eye, intense rumbling like thunder filled the area, seemingly descended from the highest heavens.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The lands began to quake physically, and within the city, everyone looked up in shock. The six heavenly marquises exchanged glances but didn't say anything to each other, and instead just kept looking up into the sky.

Off in the distance, Duke Deathcrier and Duke Netherworld also looked up, their expressions mixtures of nervousness and anticipation.

Then, Duke Netherworld’s face fell, and a look of unprecedented disbelief appeared in his eyes. As for Duke Deathcrier, his eyes lit up with joy, and he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

One reacted with shock, the other with delight. As they did, a peal of thunder erupted in the sky above.

CRACK!

It seemed louder than all other sounds in the world, and as it rang out, the people in the city felt their minds reeling. Looking up, they saw a massive rift being torn open in the sky!

It was fully 3,000 meters from one end to the other. It was as if a huge, invisible blade had sliced the air open, after which a black wind erupted out from inside. Then... two people emerged!

The first one wore a royal crown, and had a violet robe with a serpentine dragon on it. As soon as he appeared, everything began to tremble violently, and countless peals of thunder filled the air. Clearly, this person was so powerful he could crush everything in the world.

His eyes seemed to contain the ability to suck in all the light in the world, making everything around him dark and colorless.

A new pressure began to weigh down on the city, a pressure which vastly surpassed the pressure from moments ago. All of the soul cultivators in the city began to tremble, and at some point, people began to cry out loud.

“The giant... the Giant Ghost King!!”

“Giant Ghost King is back!”

“We offer respectful greetings, Giant Ghost King!!!”

Instantly, the six rebellious heavenly marquises in the grand hall realized what had happened, and their faces drained of blood. Blank expressions could be seen on their faces, along with bleak despair....

They had been beaten.... Utterly and thoroughly beaten!!

Considering the level of their cultivation bases, it only took a single glance to confirm that the Giant Ghost King... was completely recovered. They could well imagine the fate of the three deva patriarchs from the great clans, and had no doubts about how miserable their ends had been.

Gasps could be heard throughout the city as countless eyes peered out at the dazzling figure hovering in the air nearby. However, in addition to the glorious Giant Ghost King, there was also... Bai Xiaochun!

Overwhelmed with excitement, he did his best to keep his breathing under control as he looked down at the city. Not too long ago, he had been running like a rat through the city as people tried to kill him. Now, he returned at the peak of glory, leaving him feeling extremely smug and proud.

All of a sudden, he stepped forward so that he was in front the Giant Ghost King. Looking down at the city, he shouted, “Listen up, everyone. The three leaders of the clans that dared to offend their superiors have been removed from power! His highness the king is back. When exactly do you plan to step forward and offer formal greetings!?!?”

In response to his words, everyone trembled, and within moments, countless individuals nervously flew up into the air, where they began to kowtow to the Giant Ghost King.

“We offer respectful greetings, Giant Ghost King!!”

“We offer respectful greetings, Giant Ghost King!!!”

In the blink of an eye, countless soul cultivators appeared, all of them offering greetings, their voices combining into a cacophonous roar that rose to the highest heavens.

As for the six heavenly marquises, their faces were as ashen as death, and their eyes filled with despair. They knew that they had no hope of escaping, nor any ability to fight back, so therefore they simply dropped to their knees to kowtow.

As for the four heavenly marquises who had done nothing during the insurrection, they tremblingly appeared to offer greetings, flustered and fearful. At the same time, two beams of light shot toward the city from off in the distance.

They were Duke Deathcrier and Duke Netherworld. As for Duke Deathcrier, he excitedly clasped hands and gave a deep bow.

“Greetings, Your Highness!” he said.

In contrast, Duke Netherworld seemed extremely worried. However, he didn’t rashly try to flee; he knew that such action was pointless, and would lead only to death. The only slight chance he had at living came with not fleeing. Face ashen, he dropped down to kowtow.

Complete tumult filled the city as countless respectful cries of greeting rose up.

The Giant Ghost King looked out with an expressionless face, not saying even a word as he surveyed the city with icy eyes. The truth was that he didn’t need to say anything. His mere presence would crush any remnants of the rebellion.

Bai Xiaochun’s excitement grew at the sight of what was happening, but he didn’t forget about how the Giant Ghost King needed to maintain his dignity. After casting a surreptitious glance at him, Bai Xiaochun made his decision about what to do next. Clasping his hands behind his back, he looked down at the crowds in the city and loudly declared, “Bring me the rebels!”

He was immediately pleased with how incisive and threatening his words were. In response, the four heavenly marquises who had not participated in the rebellion rushed over to seal the cultivation bases of the six guilty marquises.

The six guilty marquises did nothing to fight back. Within the blink of an eye, they were on their knees and incapable of moving. As for Duke Deathcrier, he waved his finger, sealing the cultivation base of Duke Netherworld, who merely looked on bitterly as it happened.

The subordinates of the six heavenly marquises could not escape, and were soon captured and rounded up by the forces of the other four.

The Giant Ghost King watched all of this happen with cold eyes, but nothing more. Inside, he was actually quite pleased with how Bai Xiaochun was handling things. Stepping forward, he appeared in the location where the giant ghost statue had existed, where he waved his hand. Ripples flowed out, and time seemed to move in reverse. Crumbled stones flowed back up into the air, and in the blink of an eye, the statue had reformed!

The royal palace and its grand hall were back in place, and all damage to the statue was healed. Within moments... the giant ghost statue and the royal palace were back in place as if they had never been destroyed!

“I’m back!” the Giant Ghost King said, his first words since returning.

“Giant Ghost King has returned!”

“Giant Ghost King!!”

“Giant Ghost King!!!”

In response, countless voices joined together in a mighty cheer. As for Bai Xiaochun, his voice could also be heard in the cheering, as if he were the one leading it all....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0666 awe-chapter-667

Bai Xiaochun’s emotions surged under the tide of reverent cheering. Although he was a bit envious of how powerful the Giant Ghost King was, he was also excited by the fact that he had definitely won a big victory of his own!

He quickly hurried over to stand next to the Giant Ghost King, making sure to look like the picture of a loyal servant, glancing around vigilantly in case any rebels might dare make a move.

Although his actions were clearly melodramatic, not a single hint of derision could be seen in anyone's eyes. In fact, most people seemed envious, and clearly wished that they could be in Bai Xiaochun’s place. All of them trembled with the knowledge that this Bai Hao… was going to make a meteoric rise. He was like a calm breeze that had been transformed into a dragon, and would soar to the highest height.

The four heavenly marquises who had not joined the rebellion were now looking at Bai Xiaochun with very serious looks. Even Duke Deathcrier was sighing inside. He knew… that the Giant Ghost King now cared deeply about this Bai Hao!

Obviously, the Giant Ghost King took note of Bai Xiaochun’s exaggerated protectiveness. Although no reaction could be seen on the outside, in his heart, he wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. Now that his cultivation base was back to normal, this Bai Hao seemed very different from before.

Shaking his head, he said, “Bai Hao, you take care of everything out here…. Duke Deathcrier, you come with me.”

With that, he turned and headed toward the grand hall in the royal palace.

“Yes, Your Highness!” Bai Xiaochun said loudly, feeling very pleased at his sudden, newfound power.

Duke Deathcrier sighed. Waving his hand, he pulled the taciturn Duke Netherworld with him as he left. As he did, he happened to notice how intently Bai Xiaochun was looking at the rebel duke, as if weighing him to try to decide if he might pose a threat. That left him grimacing inwardly at how exaggerated this Bai Hao was acting.

However, he didn’t let that show on his face. Instead, he gave Bai Xiaochun a friendly smile, nodded, and then flew into the royal palace.

Pleased, Bai Xiaochun looked away. Unable to prevent a feeling of pride from rising up in his heart, he laughed inwardly.

“Hahaha! I, Bai Xiaochun… am truly too outstanding. Even devas have no choice but to give me friendly smiles.” Feeling in incredibly high spirits, Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back as he hovered there in the air near the giant ghost statue, looking down his nose at all the people down below.

Moments later, the four loyal heavenly marquises all flew up to him, smiling ingratiatingly and offering respectful bows of greeting.

“We heard before that you were a mighty hero with superb talents, Brother Bai Hao. But today, the rumors were proved false. You’re not just a mighty hero, you're a dragon amongst men, incomparable under the heavens! Listen, old pal, I happen to have a jade pendant with a fifteenfold spirit enhancement. A mere glance at you, and I can tell that you and this pendant were destined for each other. Please, I beg of you to accept it.”

“That’s right, Brother Bai Hao. Your battle with those three devas will make you famous throughout all the Wildlands. Do you know how many elite heroes exist in the territory of the Arch-Emperor who could possibly compare with you, Brother Bai Hao? I’ll tell you. None! Brother Bai Hao, you don’t have a mansion in Giant Ghost City yet, do you? Well don’t worry. I already made all the preparations for you. I really hope you’ll kindly accept my offer.”

“Of the three deva traitors, Brother Bai Hao seriously injured two, and destroyed the fleshly body of the other. Brother Bai Hao, you are definitely the number one chosen in all of the Wildlands. In fact, I think that you are the only one worthy to use this particular magical item….”

All of the four heavenly marquises were offering gifts along with their fawning words. On any other occasion, they wouldn’t even think to act like this, but right now, they were very nervous, and in their efforts to start out on the right foot with this Bai Hao, the words spilled out of their mouths without end.

“Oh, stop exaggerating,” Bai Xiaochun said with a chuckle. “I did it all in the service of his highness the king. There’s no need for this, you four!” Despite his courteous words, he didn’t hesitate at all to continue taking the gifts they were offering.

When the four heavenly marquises saw that he was accepting their gifts, they sighed in relief. They continued to shower him with praise until the entire group was on intimate terms. In fact, not only did they continue to give him gifts, but they also all extended invitations to their homes for formal visits.

Feeling very pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun licked his lips and continued to chat with them for a bit. Then he waved his sleeve, calling upon the name of the Giant Ghost King to have the six rebel marquises sent away to Devil Penitentiary.

Next, he incarcerated other key figures among the rebels, and passed down orders to get the city back in order. The businesses in the city were repaired, and armies were sent to the three great clans with orders to keep them under strict lockdown.

Although everything didn't proceed completely smoothly, there were no major problems. Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun reassembled the city guard to make sure that public order was maintained. After that, he stationed himself outside of the grand hall in the royal palace, looking like the picture of a vigilant guard. By this point, the Giant Ghost King and Duke Deathcrier had been meeting in private for some time, presumably talking about matters pertaining to the rebellion. From this, Bai Xiaochun could see that Duke Deathcrier was obviously the only deva who was loyal to the king, and had actually fought on his side. However, that actually caused his vigilance to grow.

“Duke Deathcrier is a deva, and has a higher standing than me.… I should be able to get a general sense of the Giant Ghost King’s attitude from him, right?”

As he stood there thinking, night fell. Eventually, Duke Deathcrier emerged from the grand hall, lingering traces of excitement visible on his face. As soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun, his eyes sparkled, and a smile appeared on his face.

Bai Xiaochun hurried over and clasped hands formally….

“Greetings, Duke Deathcrier!”

Duke Deathcrier laughed heartily, and before Bai Xiaochun could even bow, he said, “There’s no need for such formality, Majordomo Bai. You’ve truly performed a meritorious service today, and have opened up countless opportunities for yourself. Considering that the rebellion in Giant Ghost City was just put down, there are many, many things to do. You and I will need to work together closely in the future, Majordomo Bai, and will definitely have quite a bit to discuss later on.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard himself being addressed as *majordomo*, he was a bit stunned. However, he still managed to have a short, polite conversation with the smiling Duke Deathcrier before the man turned and vanished. At that point, Bai Xiaochun sighed with relief. It was then that the Giant Ghost King summoned him into the grand hall itself.

Spirits lifting already, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and hurried inside. When he saw the imposing, awe-inspiring Giant Ghost King sitting there in his throne, he quickly bowed his head in respect.

“How are things going out in the city?” the Giant Ghost King asked.

The way his eyes seemed to flash like lightning caused Bai Xiaochun to suddenly feel very nervous. Quickly clasping his hands, he said in a loud voice, “Normally speaking, the chaos in Giant Ghost City would have been very difficult to sort through. Thankfully, Your Highness is wise and powerful, unparalleled under heaven. Therefore, a single word from you, coupled with a single glance, are like the might of the heavens. Everyone was left in fear and reverence, and couldn’t stop thinking about how wonderful things had been living under your reign. The hearts of the people truly belong to you. Because of all that, handling matters out in the city went very smoothly.”

Even as he spoke, Bai Xiaochun looked out of the corner of his eye to see the Giant Ghost King’s reaction.

Originally, the Giant Ghost King's face had been a mask of solemnity. However, upon hearing Bai Xiaochun’s words, his cheek twitched, and some of that solemnity vanished. By this point, he could see that this Bai Hao was apparently addicted to flattery.

However, deep in his heart, the Giant Ghost King actually enjoyed hearing such words. After all, no one had ever spoken to him in such a fashion before.

“Don’t waste your energy on useless talk like that,” he said. “Your cultivation base isn’t high enough, Bai Hao. You need to focus more on your cultivation, do you understand?” When the Giant Ghost King thought about how this Bai Hao had used a single drop of soul-blood to unleash a demigod-level attack, though, he couldn’t help but marvel.

By the time he reached the end of his short speech, a worried frown could be seen on his face, seemingly placed there accidentally, as if he had become so wrapped up in speaking that he lost control of his facial expression. When the Giant Ghost King saw the look on his face, he seemed a bit nonplussed. However, it was obvious what Bai Xiaochun was getting at; he wanted a position of power!

“You.... Ah, whatever. Listen, from now on you’re a majordomo, alright?” With that, he waved his hand to dismiss Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that he was being made a majordomo, he wasn’t quite sure what that entailed. However, he was already excited, and feeling a bit more at ease.

“Your Highness,” he said quickly, “the three great clans dared to rebel against you, and even tried to kill me. They’re really a bunch of villains....” He blinked a few times to emphasize his words. Of course, the reason he was bringing up the three clans wasn’t because he wanted to target them, but rather, he wanted to highlight how much effort he had put into keeping the Giant Ghost King safe from them.

The Giant Ghost King looked at Bai Xiaochun and then snorted coldly. Although he didn’t say anything, an icy glint could be seen in his eyes.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun chose not to say anything else, and simply turned to leave.

Outside of the grand hall, the wind was blowing, and although he still felt a bit of a chill going up his spine, he breathed a long sigh of relief. Although the conversation had gone smoothly moments ago, he had been very nervous the entire time. After all, the Giant Ghost King seemed very moody, and also very difficult to read.

“At least I know that flattery works! Many pretenses can be seen through, but not the flattery of Bai Xiaochun!” He looked up in thought for a moment, and decided that he would need to do more of this in the future. Then he thought back to how the four heavenly marquises and everyone else had treated him, and he was very happy.

“As long as I keep the Giant Ghost King happy, then who in the Wildlands will ever dare to provoke me?! I've got the Giant Ghost King to back me up!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0667 awe-chapter-668

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun got more excited than ever. By now, the moon hung in the night sky outside as he flew out of the giant ghost statue, feeling very pleased at his recent successes.

“I never asked to be so outstanding. But I guess there’s just no other way. It must be the will of the heavens.... First, I was destined to be the glorious junior patriarch of the River-Defying Sect. Then I became a major general at the Great Wall. And now, here in the Wildlands, I'm yet again achieving a monolithic rise to prominence!” Feeling a bit annoyed about how outstanding he was, he shook his head and did nothing to conceal his feeling of pride.

In the past, Bai Xiaochun had been able to fly in the city because he was a prison guard. However, he had never felt completely comfortable doing so. After all, if he had run into a patrol of city guards, they could have forced him down to the ground if they felt like it.

But now, the patrolling guards all looked at him with extreme respect, and even clasped hands in greeting before clustering around him protectively.

Although Bai Xiaochun was initially taken aback, he quickly warmed to the arrangement. Clearing his throat, he took out a jade slip which he studied very quickly, and then clasped his hands behind his back and headed off in the direction of the mansion the heavenly marquis had gifted him.

It was located in the inner city, and had once been a secondary home to that heavenly marquis. It was rather large, with ornamental rocks, as well as streams and ponds. There was a spell formation protecting it, making it very quiet and peaceful. There were already servants waiting there for him, who immediately offered respectful greetings.

Bai Xiaochun was very, very pleased with all of the arrangements, and couldn’t help but sigh in contentment as he entered the mansion.

The night passed uneventfully. Bai Xiaochun didn’t immediately merge with the metal-type deva soul. That fifth deva soul was of incredible importance; merging with it would end with him stepping into the Nascent Soul stage, which meant that he wanted to do it when in secluded meditation.

However, now was obviously not the time for a session of secluded meditation. For one thing, it was the following day that the official announcement was made regarding Bai Xiaochun’s appointment to majordomo. The news spread like wildfire, leading to widespread astonishment.

“Majordomo.... I can’t believe Bai Hao was actually appointed to be majordomo!!”

“We’ve never had a majordomo in Giant Ghost City before....”

“Majordomo. Majordomo.... On the one hand, that could imply that he's in charge of everything in the city. But on the other hand, it could also imply that he's in charge of nothing.... It’s like something between a real appointment and an honorary one. His true power will depend on his favor with the king. And at the moment, Bai Hao... has the king's complete favor!”

Even as everyone in the city began to ponder what true powers came with the position of majordomo, Bai Xiaochun was pondering whether or not he should go out and bask in his newfound glory a bit. Before he could, though, people began showing up to offer formal greetings.

It started with the four heavenly marquises, and then turned into an endless stream of soul cultivators. Virtually all of the groups and organizations in the city sent people to him.

All of them came bearing gifts, which Bai Xiaochun accepted with great shock and surprise. The sight of so many gifts left him speechless, and at the same time, radiant with happiness.

The most impressive of the gifts was the very mansion in which he now lived. The heavenly marquis who had given it to him was named Chen Hai. He was a rather fat man whose face was always covered with a radiant smile when he saw Bai Xiaochun. Apparently, the man didn't care at all about matters of cultivation base or status; he was being very sincere and welcoming.

Of course, with Bai Xiaochun's sudden rise in status, Zhou Yixing and Li Feng also benefited greatly. That was especially true of Zhou Yixing, who had provided vital services to Bai Xiaochun.

Now that Bai Xiaochun was back in all his glory, Zhou Yixing hurried over excitedly to offer greetings. Bai Xiaochun knew that he had been through difficult times recently, and therefore encouraged him to take advantage of the situation to set up his own power structure within the city.

Zhou Yixing left excited and beaming with contentment. He wasted no time in using the fact that he was backed by Bai Xiaochun to start recruiting his own group of loyalists.

A few days later, the stream of visitors began to thin out, and Bai Xiaochun finally had the time to go for a walk in the city. Wherever he went, the soul cultivators would greet him with immense respect, causing him to excitedly stroll about in every corner of the city that he could find.

“Well met, Majordomo Bai.”

“Greetings, Majordomo Bai.”

“Look, it’s Majordomo Bai....”

The more people he heard talking about Majordomo Bai, the more he strutted about and basked in the glory. In a manner that was very reminiscent of the Spirit Stream Sect, he would sometimes clear his throat to draw the attention of people to alert them that Majordomo Bai had arrived.

Bai Xiaochun was completely intoxicated by the attention he was receiving. In fact, he even decided to go visit Devil Penitentiary....

Although Warden Li Xu wasn’t very happy about it, he had no choice but to offer respectful greetings, and then lead Bai Xiaochun on an inspection of the prison.... As for Bai Xiaochun, he loved the reversal of roles, and made sure to point out many important areas of concern as they went through the facilities.

The four deputy wardens and four dark inquisitors all clustered around him, feeling somewhat dazzled. It was almost hard for them to wrap their minds around the fact that this person had started out as a guard, then become a prisoner, and was now a majordomo....

Most stunned of all was Deputy Warden Sun Peng from Cellblock D. However, Bai Xiaochun was the type of person who remembered his old friends, and heaped quite a bit of praise onto Cellblock D. Sun Peng was soon flush with excitement.

Of everyone in the prison, it was the guards from Squad 9 whom Bai Xiaochun was most fond of. He even called the captain out by name to escort him. It was a huge honor that got the entire squad very excited.

Sighing, he said, “I really have a lot of good memories in Devil Penitentiary. This was once my home, and the place where my feelings run the deepest....”

Everyone seemed moved by his words. Soon, the group had arrived in Cellblock D itself, where they stopped in front of his old quarters. At that point, a look of reminiscence appeared on his face.

“A mere look at this place and I almost want to give up my current position and go back to being a guard!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, everyone hurriedly encouraged him not to do such a thing.

“Majordomo, sir, you absolutely mustn’t do anything of the sort. There are myriad affairs of state for you to deal with. With your position, you are responsible for the prosperity of all of Giant Ghost City!”

“That’s right, Majordomo. The prison guards of Giant Ghost City can’t do without their majordomo!”

After hearing all of their persuasive words, Bai Xiaochun sighed a bit helplessly.

“Ah, whatever,” he said. “Now that all of you put it that way, I guess I have no choice but to give up on my dream.

Everything I do, I do for his highness the king! Everything I do, I do for Giant Ghost City!”

Solemn expressions overtook the faces of everyone present, and it was even possible to see teardrops glistening in more than a few eyes.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. Worried that his reveling in success had pushed things too far... he decided to wrap up the inspection tour. Just when he was about to leave, he looked over at Li Xu, who had worn a very odd, borderline unsightly expression this entire time.

During the whole tour, Li Xu’s expression hadn’t changed at all, a fact that Bai Xiaochun wasn't too pleased about. Looking a bit irritated, he said, “Li Xu, I have to offer a word of criticism. In his highness the king’s moment of danger, I was the only one around to keep him safe. Where exactly were you at that time?”

After a moment of silence, Li Xu gritted his teeth and said, “That day... I, went to see Duke Deathcrier....”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes suddenly turned very cold as he stared at Li Xu and said, “In his highness the king’s moment of danger, you went to Duke Deathcrier? Are those the actions of a true loyalist, Li Xu?”

Li Xu’s face fell. He could see how cold Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were, and realized that he had erred in his comportment earlier. Bai Xiaochun obviously wasn’t irritated by his facial expression, but by his general refusal to perk up. Realizing that he had offended Bai Xiaochun, and cognizant of Bai Xiaochun's current status, Li Xu immediately felt deep regret. Clasping hands respectfully, he began to offer further explanations.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the type to hold endless grudges, and didn’t bear any deep-seated ill will toward Li Xu. Therefore, to see him acting like this in front of a crowd actually left Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit uncomfortable. Seeing that the man had learned his lesson, and was now being a bit humble, he nodded faintly and then finished with the inspection.

Over the following few days, Bai Xiaochun spent all of his time strolling about the city to bask in glory. Of course, he couldn't forget how the three great clans, and especially the Bai Clan, had worked so hard to see him dead.

He was not the type to seek revenge over the smallest grievance, but considering he had power at his disposal, the thought of what the three great clans had done left him feeling quite angry. However, the Giant Ghost King seemed to have different plans. Other than killing the Cai Clan patriarch, and keeping the Bai and Chen Clan patriarchs captive, he didn't seem to have any plans to deal with the clans themselves.

After a few days, Bai Xiaochun started to lose patience, and hinted to the people in the city who were particularly loyal to him that it was time to put the three great clans in their place!

A few more days went by. The Giant Ghost King eventually summoned Bai Xiaochun and rebuked him for simply strutting around all day and doing nothing. Afterward, Bai Xiaochun sulked back to his mansion and went into secluded meditation. Sighing, he pulled out his deva soul and began to cultivate.

It wasn’t that he had forgotten about cultivation. It was just that, now that he was Majordomo Bai, he couldn’t help but revel in his new position. After all, he had been forced to keep a low profile in Giant Ghost City for so long, that the chance to swagger a bit in the open was too much to refuse.

The past days of seeing Bai Xiaochun using his connections to intimidate everyone in the city left the Giant Ghost King with a much clearer understanding of his personality.

“The wily little fox. Sometimes he seems like a profound schemer capable of the most vicious tactics. But other times he’s more like a kid....” The Giant Ghost King shook his head. By this point, he actually felt much more comfortable about having Bai Xiaochun around. Although he was a bit frustrating sometimes, that was only because he enjoyed attention. Overall, he wasn’t the type of person who would betray others. Besides, everything that he was enjoying now had resulted because of kindness from the Giant Ghost King.

As for how he had secretly begun to act aggressively toward the three great clans, the Giant Ghost King didn't really care about that at all. It was a minor matter as far as he was concerned.

“However, he’s definitely too lazy when it comes to practicing cultivation. Without some pressure, he won't even go into meditation. He obviously likes to enjoy life.” Even the Giant Ghost King wasn’t aware of the fact that, after bringing Bai Xiaochun back to Giant Ghost City, he had begun to treat him differently than others....

Meanwhile, in Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation chamber, he was suppressing all of his pride at his new appointment. His eyes began to grow calm as he looked at the deva soul in his hand.

“This is the last deva soul I need.... Merge with it, and my five elements deva souls set will be complete.... At that point, I will be able to break through!” Eyes shining with excitement, he took the deva soul... and pushed it into his chest.

RUMBLE!

Almost instantly, his aura began to condense in on itself, and his cultivation base began to rotate rapidly. A familiar feeling rose up inside him, making it feel almost as if he were being split into pieces.

Even as he sat there cross-legged, afterimages appeared around him. At the moment, it looked like his true self was sitting there with four other versions of himself in the same spot. Time passed.... Slowly but surely... a fifth afterimage appeared, until it was completely clear!

Rumbling sounds filled his mind as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then waved his hands through the air.

“Emerge, my clones!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

Five clones walked out, surrounding his true self. As they did, incredible pressure weighed down on all six versions of Bai Xiaochun.

All of his clones were in the great circle of Core Formation, and together, they could rock early Nascent Soul stage cultivators!

Although he still didn’t have his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul yet, he was already capable of unleashing heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power.

“Next... is the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage!” he thought, his eyes shining brightly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0668 awe-chapter-669

Reaching the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage... was supremely difficult!

That difficulty lay in the fact that not only did one have to get five deva souls, but each of those souls also had to represent a different one of the five elements. Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. Earth. Only with a complete set could one succeed. It really was a very difficult matter.

In the lands of Heavenspan, deva souls were very rare, and it was only by chance that Bai Xiaochun had begun to collect them. He had been given one in the Spirit Stream Sect, and then gifted one by Du Lingfei. However, it was only when it came to the third soul that he had been forced to work hard to get it.

After putting his life on the line, he got the third soul in the labyrinth, after which he had been teleported deep into the Wildlands. Then, to get his fourth deva soul, he had risked everything, and also offended the Bai Clan!

Then came the final soul, which he got only after a long and bitter struggle.

Even as he merged with the deva soul and formed his fifth clone, he thought back to what had happened recently, and felt lingering fear in his heart. Then he looked around at his five clones, took a deep breath, and thought back to the information on the stone stele in the labyrinth, which had described how to break through to the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage.

“Bring all five clones into one’s body, merge them with the true self... Break out of Gold Core and into Nascent Soul!” He closed his eyes to concentrate; this matter was of vital importance, and no mistakes could be tolerated. After getting his thoughts in order, his eyes opened again, and they shone with determination.

“Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. Earth. Let’s begin with my metal clone!” He unleashed the power of his cultivation base, causing the fluctuations of the great circle of the Gold Core stage to erupt out. Even as the pressure of his Gold Core weighed down in the area, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone brightly, and he looked over at his metal-type deva soul clone.

The metal-type clone looked over at his true self and gave a slight nod. Then, without the slightest hesitation, he turned into a beam of gold-colored light that shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead.

As it drew close, it began to crumble into fragments, sending dazzling light out in all directions. In the blink of an eye, it merged into Bai Xiaochun’s forehead, where it became the power of metal, surging through his body.

Rumbling sounds filled his mind, and he began to tremble visibly as he sensed the metal-type power swirl through him and then pound into his Gold Core.

His Gold Core trembled as an aura appeared therein that could only be described as a mystery within a mystery. It seemed to contain profound levels of life force, which spread out through him and began to transform him.

At the same time, golden magical symbols appeared all around his Gold Core, causing his face to radiate an air of profound holiness!

However, before long, the golden magical symbols began to fade away, replaced by a desolate bleakness. It was almost as if the power of metal itself was too strong, and under its pressure, his Gold Core was beginning to crumble into destruction!

In fact, even his qi passageways didn’t seem capable of handling that level of metal-type power, and began to fall apart!

If things continued on in this fashion, it would only be a few moments before Bai Xiaochun was destroyed in body and soul.

In that moment of crisis, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open, revealing a gaze as sharp as a sword, which swiveled onto his fire clone!

“Vital energy defeats that which is solid. Fire restrains metal!” he roared. At the same time, his fire clone’s eyes sparkled brightly, bursting into crimson flames that shot toward Bai Xiaochun and merged into his forehead.

Instantly, the power of metal within him was restrained as the power of fire coursed through him. The metal-type power in his qi vessels was suppressed, and the power of fire shot toward his Gold Core.

Rumbling could be heard as the power of fire turned into a sea of flames that surrounded his Gold Core and then began to pour into it. Instantly, the golden magical symbols began to glitter brightly as the power of metal was replaced by the power of fire, making it impossible to harm his Gold Core.

However, although the power of metal had been suppressed, the power of fire was now posing just as much danger to his Gold Core.

In the blink of an eye, his Gold Core became a Fire Core, radiating such intense heat that Bai Xiaochun immediately began to sweat. It was as if there were a sea of flames sealed up inside of him that was so powerful it could destroy everything in the area if it exploded out.

The sensation of deadly crisis he felt now was no less than before. In fact, it was greater. However, Bai Xiaochun remained calm. Now was not the moment to lose control! Looking over at his water clone, he shouted, “The many defeat the few. Water restrains fire!”

Rumbling could be heard as his water clone became a stream of blue light, within which was a drop of blue liquid, a drop that seemingly contained unending amounts of water. Within the blink of an eye, the drop of water had reached Bai Xiaochun, and merged into him.

As the power of water began to flow through him, it suppressed the power of fire as surely as a bucket of ice-cold water would suppress a spark. Within moments, it was flowing into the Fire Core, and yet, the sensation of danger was still there!

Soon, Bai Xiaochun was filled with the power of water, and it felt as if he were going to be liquified.

It was as if a corrosive force were eating at his bones, filling him with intense pain. At that point, his eyes turned completely bloodshot as he shouted, “The real defeats the illusory! Earth restrains water!”

His earth clone merged into him, causing earth-type power to spread out through his body.

“Focus defeats dissemination. Wood restrains earth!”

Intense rumbling sounds filled him as his wood clone merged into him. As of this moment, he had all five types of power inside of him. The power of earth was suppressed, and the power of wood exploded out, transforming his core into a Wood Core.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t alarmed at all by the danger he felt. Eyes shining with anticipation, he shouted, “The unyielding defeats the soft. Metal restrains wood!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the metal-type power which had been suppressed inside his core erupted out, restraining the power of wood. Then, the resurging power of metal was suppressed by the power of fire, which was suppressed by the power of water, which was suppressed by the power of earth, which was suppressed by the power of wood....

A perfect cycle was completed inside of Bai Xiaochun’s Gold Core, which began to rotate with the full power of all five elements!

This... was why the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul required all of the five elements deva souls. With even one missing, no complete cycle would be created, and the person making the cultivation base breakthrough attempt would be destroyed!

Only when the great circle of the five elements was completed would a perfect cycle be created!

After nine complete revolutions, Bai Xiaochun let out a howl that could shake heaven and earth. As he did, his cultivation base began to grow with terrifying speed. His Gold Core shattered, and the resulting pieces rapidly formed together... to form a small person who looked exactly like Bai Xiaochun!

That small person was his nascent soul!

Its eyes were closed, and it shone with five dazzling colors. The power of the five elements surged through him, and at the same time, a shocking aura appeared within his nascent soul.

If any other Nascent Soul cultivator were here to witness the spectacle, they would cry out in alarm. After all, when an ordinary cultivator used their own core to form their nascent soul, it would be called a Mortal-Dao Nascent Soul. It would be difficult to see clearly, almost as if it were a mortal.

If someone used deva beast souls to create a nascent soul, it would be more clearly visible. Furthermore, based on the latent talent and technique practiced by the individual, it would consist of power of one of the five elements: metal, wood, water, fire, or earth. Furthermore, it would result in a divine light which swirled around the body.

Generally speaking, that was the limit. Only the legendary Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul could be considered the perfect and flawless version, as clear as crystal, and filled with the divine light of the five elements. Such life essence divine light could not be suppressed by any technique based on the five elements; furthermore, when it was unleashed, it could suppress all other types of nascent souls. Whether they were those of Mortal-Dao or those created by deva beast souls, they would all be crushed!

Any other cultivator in the same cultivation stage as a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul expert would be, at best, a third as powerful. In fact, they might even be so weak that they couldn’t rotate their cultivation base.

There were virtually no such nascent souls in the entire world!

This... was the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul!

As the nascent soul’s eyes opened, a massive clap of thunder rang out in the sky over Giant Ghost City.

CRAAAAAAAAAASH!!!

In that same moment, a burst of Heaven-Dao aura erupted from within Bai Xiaochun’s nascent soul, seemingly in coordination with the heavenly thunder.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0669 awe-chapter-670

The great circle of the five elements. Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul!

Bai Xiaochun was bubbling over with excitement. As his eyes opened, he could feel how his Gold Core had become a nascent soul. The tiny person that was his nascent soul sat cross-legged, radiating a holy aura and a sensation of the Dao of the heavens. Anyone who could observe this nascent soul would definitely be deeply shocked.

Boundless fluctuations rolled out from the nascent soul, surging through his qi passageways, filling him with the indescribable power of his cultivation base.

Bai Xiaochun shivered as he looked around to find everything slightly different than before. The world was brighter and more colorful. He felt completely different, as though he had been baptized. In fact, the boundless sensation he now got from his cultivation base reinforced the fact...

That he was now completely and utterly different from before. In fact, he was now confident that if he met the chief of the Bai Clan, he would be able to crush him with a single palm strike!

“So, this is the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, huh...?” In fact, Bai Xiaochun was also excited to realize that, even though it was hard to accept, he was most likely far more powerful than most ordinary Nascent Soul cultivators.

From what he could tell, a mere breath on his part could shake everything in the area, and a glance from his eyes could become corporeal pressure that would suppress anyone he looked at.

Most importantly, his divine sense was now completely different from before. It was now connected to his spirit and soul, and made it possible for him to perform minor teleportations!

“What’s the range of my divine sense, I wonder...?” Even upon simply releasing it, it went out 5 kilometers in every direction!

He could sense everything happening within that area! However, he could tell that 5 kilometers was not his limit, and sent out some more divine sense. Rumbling sounds filled him as it shot out to a range of 50 kilometers!

Even that didn’t seem to be the limit. He was tempted to keep pushing it out further, but in the end, decided not to. After all, he was in the Wildlands, and didn't want to push things too far. Restraint was the safest option.

“So strong....” he thought, retracting his divine sense. As of this point, he felt much more powerful in all aspects. However, what got him even more excited than everything so far was that when he probed his own life force.... It pulsed with a boundlessness of shocking nature, which immediately pushed him to the brink of losing control of his emotions.

“My life force... heavens! My longevity... it’s... even at this early stage I can tell that I’ll be able to live for thousands of years!!” He was so excited that he was shaking physically. After all, his dream in life was to live forever, and although that dream had not yet been realized, he had just taken a major step in the right direction. The idea of being able to live for thousands of years instantly caused tears of joy to well up in his eyes.

“Worth it! It was all worth it!” Leaping to his feet, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously, dancing up and down in happiness. Just when he was about to go run out and do a few tests to see how strong he was, his expression flickered.

“Things aren’t over yet....” he thought. In that moment, he could tell that his transformation was not yet over. His cultivation base had broken through, and yet, he still had another core inside of him... that was now breaking apart!

It was... his Undying Heavenly King Core!

This was the core formed by reaching the third level of the Undying Codex. The power which had slowly been building up in him as he practiced that third level was now causing his Undying Heavenly King Core to break apart!

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with bright light.

“I can borrow the power generated by my cultivation base breakthrough to destroy the shackle of the third level!!” He quickly settled back down cross-legged. He had pushed his Undying Hex to the level of the great circle all the way to the point of making contact with the shackle. Now that his cultivation base had broken through, and his Undying Heavenly King Core was falling apart, his life force began to surge with incredible power.

RUMBLE!

A tremor ran through him, and he suddenly got the sensation that three huge mountains were resting on his shoulders. That indicated that there were three shackles remaining, shackles which limited his fleshly body power.

Now, with his life force flourishing, and with his core falling apart, it was time to destroy that third mountain and break through that shackle!

CRAAAAAASH! RUMBLE!

Rumbling sounds filled him as he drew upon his life force and the energy generated by his crumbling Undying Heavenly King Core. It created an indomitable blast of energy that he sent directly toward the shackle. Cracking sounds immediately began to ring out, and he could feel that mountain falling to pieces. As it did... the shackle vanished!

He immediately felt much more relaxed than he had ever been before, and at the same time, could sense his fleshly body power soaring upward. Power coursed through him as his battle prowess rapidly increased!

He excitedly rose to his feet and took a step forward, whereupon a sonic boom echoed out, and he vanished. When he reappeared, he was several dozen meters away.

“My fleshly body can pierce directly through the air!!” Spirits soaring, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Moments ago, he hadn’t used his nascent soul to teleport, but rather, had pierced through the air with his fleshly body, producing almost exactly the same result. If anyone were here to witness the matter, they would be shocked. After all, when Nascent Soul experts fought, the fact that they could teleport was vitally important, and was why numerous methods were often employed to prevent teleportations.

However, such methods would be useless against Bai Xiaochun! He could use his fleshly body to teleport!

As of this moment, he was not powerful in the simplistic sense of the word. He was powerful in a completely flabbergasting fashion. He could crush anyone in the Mortal-Dao Nascent Soul stage, no matter what techniques they used against him. In fact, someone with a Mortal-Dao Nascent Soul, even one half a step into the Deva Realm, could be easily crushed!

Even if he met someone who had used deva beast souls to reach the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, he could easily defeat them. It would be the same with someone like that in the mid Nascent Soul stage. The only person who might possibly cause a problem for him was someone half a step into the Deva Realm, who had reached the great circle of the Nascent Soul using deva beast souls, and also had some unique trump cards to use! Bai Xiaochun had never fought with someone who was half a step into the Deva Realm and had used deva beast souls to reach that level. However, he was still confident that he would be able to win against them.

Being able to crush someone, and simply defeat them, were two very different things. Crushing someone didn’t require a fight; whereas defeating someone did.

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun... was currently only in the early Nascent Soul stage. If he reached the great circle, then he would be even stronger than he was now....

“I really am... too strong!” Patting his chest, he probed his cultivation base, heart filling with nearly uncontrollable anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun began to laugh loudly at the sensation of being able to look disdainfully out of the corner of his eye at all creation. Swishing his sleeve, he proudly said, “From now on, not a single person under the Nascent Soul stage will ever dare to raise their voice to me!”

After reveling in the sensation for a long moment, he took a deep breath and then thought about the fourth level of the Undying Codex, and burning anticipation rose up in his heart.

“It’s too bad that I don’t have any Nascent Soul-level techniques at the moment,” he murmured. “But at least I have a fleshly body technique to practice!

“The fourth level of the Undying Codex is the Undying Bones!” With that, he thought back to the introduction of the Undying Codex, which described the five levels of skin, flesh, tendons, bones, and blood!

The more he thought about it, the more he anticipated making more progress. After all, the Undying Bones level involved refining all of the bones in one's body. That would lead to increased defenses and greater strength, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering transformation that left him feeling very excited.

“The Undying Skin focuses on defense. The Undying Flesh is about strength. The Undying Tendons are for speed.... And the Undying Bones combine defense and strength together to reach shocking levels!” Shaken, he thought back to the information about the Undying Bones, which was broken up into four sub-levels, each of which was further divided into nine strata!

“Tempered Bones, Powered Bones, Heavenly Bones, Undying Bones!

“Tempered Bones involve a full transformation of the body, leading to an explosive rise in defenses!

“Powered Bones increase one’s overall strength to a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering degree!

“Heavenly Bones fuse strength and defense, making it possible to rock all creation!

“Last are the Undying Bones.... By cultivating to that level, even if your soul perishes, your bones will never cease to exist!

“The soul can perish, but the bones are undying.... That fits perfectly with the technique. The Undying Live Forever Technique.... I'm practicing the Undying Codex, which focuses on the undying aspects of the Undying Live Forever Technique!” This train of thought soon led him to the final level of the Undying Codex, the Undying Blood. What pushed him toward the brink of madness was the fact that the description of the Undying Blood had closing words which said:

With one drop of blood, the body can be re-formed!

“I definitely have to finish cultivating the Undying Bones. Then I can move on to the Undying Blood!” With that, he began to review the secret technique of the Undying Bones.

Every level of the Undying Codex came with a unique secret magic. The first three were the Throat Crushing Grasp, the Mountain Shaking Bash, and the Undying Hex. All of them had proven to be very useful. Furthermore, as he continued to cultivate the Undying Bones, they would continue to be part of his arsenal.

“Undying Emperor’s Fist!”

Fleshly body power found its foundation in the bones, and was unleashed through the skin. By blessing that power with secret magic, it became so explosive that it could shake heaven and rock the earth. That incredible power surpassed both the Throat Crushing Grasp and the Mountain Shaking Bash!

The Undying Bones was another level, and it was the same with the Undying Emperor’s Fist. Upon reaching the third stratum of the Tempered Bones level, one could unleash double the base power of the Undying Emperor’s Fist. At the Powered Bones level, that power would increase to triple. With Heavenly Bones it was quadruple, and at the Undying Bones level, it was five times as powerful!

Theoretically speaking, there was actually no limit to how powerful the Undying Emperor’s Fist could be. It was only limited by the limitations of the body itself!

That was the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

The secret magic of the fourth level of the Undying Codex!

Powerful and magnificent, it could shake all creation!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0670 awe-chapter-671

“The Undying Emperor’s Fist....” Bai Xiaochun murmured, his emotions surging and his eyes shining. He could already visualize himself, looking down at his opponent disdainfully as he unleashed the Undying Emperor’s Fist to shocking effect.

After a moment, he took a deep breath and forced himself to calm down. On the one hand, the Undying Emperor’s Fist could be used as a trump card, drawing upon all of the strength in his body, blessing it, and then using that force to destroy everything in his path. On the other hand, after using it, he would be completely drained, and incredibly weak in terms of his fleshly body.

For the time being, the Undying Emperor’s Fist could definitely only be used as a trump card!

At the moment, it was not something he could just casually use. Generally speaking, it could only be unleashed after reaching the third stratum of the Tempered Bones.

“The fourth level of the Undying Codex... the Undying Bones. To cultivate it, I’ll need so much life force it's difficult to even wrap my mind around it. The third level can’t even compare to it. It would be much easier back in the Heavenspan River region, where I can concoct medicine.” The mere thought of the difficulties involved in cultivating the Undying Live Forever Technique left Bai Xiaochun frowning in anxiety.

“The Wildlands are barren and infertile... I need something that can stand in for life force.” After putting some thought into it, he couldn’t come up with any good ideas. He considered soul medicines, but although they were used like spirit stones by Wildlands soul cultivators, they didn’t contain much life force. After all, they were concocted using souls.

“Maybe I could find some common precious materials and then perform tenfold spirit enhancements on them.... If I enhanced them high enough, they would eventually have indescribable levels of power.” That was the only good idea he had come up with so far.

Taking a deep breath, he sat down cross-legged, closed his eyes, and began to utilize the methods described in the fourth level of the Undying Codex to cultivate Undying Bones. Before long, cracking sounds could be heard inside of him. They started out soft, but after enough time passed for two incense sticks to burn, they became so loud that they were like thunder in his ears.

From the nature of that sound, it was easy to tell that Bai Xiaochun’s bones were undergoing profound transformations.

All of his flesh and blood seemed to be quivering, as though incredible pressure were weighing down on them. At the same time, streams of life force power were coursing into his bones.

His skeletal system as a whole was like a black hole, emanating a terrifying gravitational force that sucked in all the life force around it.... At the same time, drastic transformations occurred.

As the process continued, the rumbling sounds grew more intense, and he began to tremble visibly. Sweat even began to pour down him. And then, he gradually realized that his fleshly body was showing signs of withering!

As soon as that happened, he opened his eyes and ceased cultivating. His eyes flickered with bright light, and he frowned.

“I can't keep going. After only two incense sticks’ worth of time, all of the vestiges of life force from the medicinal pills I’ve consumed over the years were sucked away.... Cultivating the Undying Bones is terrifying!

“If I had kept going, it would have damaged the very foundations of my life force!” Shock still lingered within him as he looked down at his hands, and he suddenly sucked in a breath.

“I still haven’t reached the first stratum of the Tempered Bones... and yet I can already tell that my defensive capabilities have improved.” Although it was obvious to him that he was tempering his bones, it also felt as though he were tempering his body as a whole, and making it more pure.

After a moment of thought, he sighed. There was no need to get anxious about the matter. What he needed to do was simply wait until he could find something to stand in for life force, and then resume his cultivation.

“I can tell that if I had enough life force... then I could actually complete the Undying Bones in one shot! The obstacle I face now has nothing to do with time spent cultivating, just life force!” His eyes glittered brightly for a moment before he calmed himself down again. After checking on his cultivation base, and observing his nascent soul for a bit, his aura was beginning to thrum with fluctuations just like before.

“I had a bit of control power within my Gold Core. I wonder why I can’t sense it now that my core has become a nascent soul?” After some thought, he simply couldn’t figure out why that was, except for the possibility that it was connected to his lack of Nascent Soul-level techniques....

“What a pity. Could it be that my Human-Controlling Grand Magic... has been hidden away somehow? Why can’t I feel it? I wonder what other strange things are going to happen now that I'm in the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage!?” It really was true that he didn’t know much about the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage. In truth, few people in the world knew about it, other than the Celestial.

In fact, Bai Xiaochun had the premonition that the miraculous secrets of the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul would only be uncovered by contemplation on his part.

“For now, I just won't worry about my control power or the Undying Live Forever Technique. Medicinal pills are too rare in the Wildlands. Plus, I don’t have any Nascent Soul techniques. If I want to speed up my cultivation, then there’s only one way to do it....” His eyes shone brightly as a smile of anticipation appeared on his face.

“For anyone else, it would be a deadly risk, but for me... it won’t be dangerous at all!

“Most importantly, it will serve to rapidly increase my cultivation base! I can advance by leaps and bounds! In fact, this will be the most rapidly that my cultivation base has ever improved in my entire life!

“The time has come... to perform some spirit enhancements on my nascent soul!!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with determination, and didn’t contain the slightest bit of hesitation. He waved his finger, and dazzling light shot out as the turtle-wok appeared.

Thankfully, he had built up quite a stockpile of souls because of all the gifts that he had been given recently. Using them, he was quickly able to create everything from one- to fourteen-colored flame. At that point, he closed his eyes and settled his cultivation base. Then, his nascent soul's eyes opened, and he stepped out of his fleshly body in nascent soul form to appear out in the open!

He shivered at the sensation of being out in the open as a nascent soul; it was almost as if there were some type of frigid qi in the area that he could only detect as a nascent soul. Actually, nascent souls were particularly sensitive to frigid qi, and reacted to it in much the way that a mortal would react if placed naked into a snowy field.

In fact, being in contact with intense frigid qi for too long could cause irreparable damage to nascent souls. Bai Xiaochun could tell that clearly. Actually, there were many things in heaven and earth that could injure and destroy nascent souls, with frigid qi being only one of them. The fleshly body was like a boat, and without that vessel, the nascent soul was like a baby tossed into the ocean....

If any other Nascent Soul cultivator had been present to see Bai Xiaochun bring his nascent soul out into the open, that person would be so shocked they might not believe what they were seeing. Generally speaking, it was impossible for one's nascent soul to emerge after having just stepped into the Nascent Soul stage. Not even extremely strong nascent soul cultivators could do it. The blow struck to it by the frigid qi that naturally existed in heaven and earth would be too severe.

Not even people in the mid Nascent Soul stage would do such a thing lightly. And if they did bring their nascent soul out into the open, they wouldn't do so for very long. Only people in the late Nascent Soul stage, or perhaps those who had reached the great circle, would have nascent souls strong enough to bring them out into the open and face the frigid qi of the world....

The only people who could ignore such frigid qi... were devas!

But here Bai Xiaochun was, just having stepped into the Nascent Soul stage, and already having brought his nascent soul out into the open. Although his nascent soul seemed to be struggling, it wasn’t being hurt. Clearly, that was because this was a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul!

“It's freezing out here!” he said through his nascent soul’s mouth. Then he turned back to look at his fleshly body, which was a very strange experience. After looking at himself for a moment, he burst into motion, flying over to sit cross-legged in the turtle-wok.

“So, does this count as cooking myself...?” he muttered. Reaching out with his tiny nascent soul hand, he felt at the surface of the wok. “Well, cooking it is.... I just need to add some fire.”

A strange expression could be seen on his face as his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then he waved his finger. Immediately, the one-colored tongue of flame flew out and merged into the turtle-wok. Moments later, a design appeared on the wok that then began to shine with dazzling light.

He was confident in what he was doing, but still felt nervous. After all, when all was said and done... he was performing a spirit enhancement on himself.

If anything went wrong... Bai Xiaochun could only imagine what it would be like if everyone thought he had been in secluded meditation for too long, and the Giant Ghost King finally came and opened up his meditation chamber to find... a deliciously stir-fried nascent soul waiting for him.

He shivered at the terrifying thought, and even considered flying out of the turtle-wok. However, that was when intense rumbling sounds began to echo out.

He screamed as silver light rose up, completely inundating him. The energy of heaven and earth erupted from the wok, pouring into his nascent soul.

Booming rumbles filled his mind!

Eventually, the sounds faded away, and the silver light disappeared. Bai Xiaochun in nascent soul form flew up into the air, looking terrified. Moments ago, he had felt like a rowboat being tossed about on enormous, angry waves.

“Terrifying! This isn’t spirit enhancement, this is playing with death!” At this point, he decided that he should just give up. However, when he looked down at his nascent soul, he suddenly realized... that there was a silver design on it!

Furthermore, his nascent soul seemed somehow different from before....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0671 awe-chapter-672

As of this moment, his nascent soul had matured to a certain extent.

Not only was it stronger, it was also much more resilient to the frigid qi of heaven and earth.

It was an exhilarating feeling, and was normally the type that would come after spending significant time in secluded meditation, cultivating some powerful technique and constantly performing breathing exercises.

And that was the result of a single spirit enhancement!

Bai Xiaochun thought back to the feeling of the energy of heaven and earth exploding into him earlier, and then his eyes began to shine with excitement.

“This really is a secret magic for improving your cultivation base....” Pursing his lips in thought, he recalled the information he had come across when he first arrived in the Wildlands, regarding the successor of the Hell-Emperor. That was when he had first been introduced to the concept of performing spirit enhancements on nascent souls.

“According to what people say, if you perform a fifteenfold spirit enhancement on your Nascent Soul, you can break through into the mid Nascent Soul stage. An eighteenfold enhancement will get you into the late Nascent Soul stage. A twentyfold enhancement is the great circle. There probably isn’t even a need to mention the legendary realm of a twenty-onefold spirit enhanced nascent soul, which is guaranteed to push you into the Deva Realm!”

Immediately, his excitement began to build. At the same time, he realized that performing spirit enhancements on nascent souls obviously produced different results than with other items. That was clear considering what he had experienced when performing spirit enhancements to a very high level back in the labyrinth. However, nascent souls were unique in heaven and earth, and behaved differently from ordinary objects, so that made sense. Looking down at the two- to fourteen-colored flames he had arranged, he realized that his path to the peak of the early Nascent Soul stage was right in front of him, open and clear.

Then he looked back at the turtle-wok, and realized that unless the wok somehow suddenly malfunctioned, he had nothing to worry about. Suppressing such worries, he said, “There definitely won’t be any problems. If I don’t do this, I'm gonna regret it!”

With that, he sent his nascent soul flying back into the turtle-wok, where he performed another incantation gesture and pointed out, causing the two-colored flame to begin another spirit enhancement process.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing that even performing a single spirit enhancement on a nascent soul was a heaven-shaking, earth-toppling accomplishment in the Wildlands!

**

Meanwhile, far, far away, in the very heart of the Wildlands, was... a city that vastly surpassed Giant Ghost City in size!

It seemed as big as ten Giant Ghost Cities put together, and was completely golden in color. There was something indescribably noble about it, as though it were connected to the heavens. The sky above the city was filled with auspicious clouds, among which a dragon danced, a dragon that occasionally cast intimidating glances at the people below.

This city was the most important location in the Wildlands. It was... Arch-Emperor City!

In the eastern part of Arch-Emperor City was an enormous public square, fully 30,000 meters from one side to the other. In the very middle of that square was a huge stone stele, exactly 2,700 meters tall, green in color, and surrounded by soft, glowing light.

It was a light that seemed so enduring that no divine ability in the world could make it go dark. It was as if, as long as heaven and earth existed, that light could not be destroyed. It was even capable of benefiting the cultivation base of anyone who basked within it. At the moment, roughly eighty names were visible on the surface of the stone stele!

Those names were written in precise and clear fashion, and were the names of various chosen heroes, all of them extremely famous, the type who everyone in the Wildlands had heard of and talked about. They were essentially household names.

That stone stele was none other than the Hell-Emperor Stele! And as for those names... they were the candidates in the running to be the successor of the Hell-Emperor!

When the allotted time for the competition to become the successor ended, then whoever occupied 1st place on that list... would be the successor! Because of how important that competition was, everyone in the Wildlands was very interested in the names on the list.

Currently, the first name on the list was Gongsun Yi, and next to it, a number could be seen: seven!

That meant that this Gongsun Yi had already performed a sevenfold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul!

The person in third place had a fivefold enhancement. Going down the list, the numbers dropped down all the way into the ones....

Unless something unexpected happened, it seemed obvious that Gongsun Yi would become the successor of the Hell-Emperor. After all, not even Zhou Hong seemed willing to go past a sevenfold spirit enhancement. That was no surprise, since the success rate was extremely low, and a failure would lead to death.

Because of the list of names on the Hell-Emperor Stele, and the glowing light which surrounded it, there were always soul cultivators gathered in the area. Not only could they improve their cultivation base because of the light, they also could study the names on the list at the same time.

The name list wasn't static. New names would occasionally pop up, and sometimes names would fade away. Obviously, the names that disappeared represented people who had attempted a spirit enhancement on their nascent soul, only to fail and perish. As for the new names, they always caused a stir.

Of course, the stir for a new name usually wasn’t very much to speak about. After all, new names usually came with only a single spirit enhancement. The only thing that would cause a true commotion was when someone broke into the top 10.

However, on this day, something completely unexpected happened with one of the new names on the list!!

The first person to notice the new name was a middle-aged soul cultivator who happened to be a member of the Giant Ghost Legion forces that were stationed in Arch-Emperor City. Only a few years before, he had been part of the army that fought the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect at the Great Wall.

However, by this point, the cultivators of the Giant Ghost Legion had all been recalled to Arch-Emperor City for rest and recovery. At the moment, they were waiting for deployment orders to go back to the Great Wall.

That middle-aged soul cultivator was seated cross-legged some distance away from the stone stele, doing breathing exercises. As usual, he was looking at the name list on the stone stele, when suddenly, his jaw dropped as he noticed a new name at the very end of the list.

At first, a blank expression could be seen on the man’s face, but then his eyes widened, and his aura began to surge unstably.

“This... this....” What he was seeing seemed completely preposterous, and he was actually convinced that he was seeing things.... He rubbed his eyes a few times, and then he looked over again. At that point, he simply wasn’t able to hold back from crying out at the top of his lungs.

“Bai... Bai Xiaochun!!!”

His cry instantly broke the silence in the area of the stone stele. Countless soul cultivators who were practicing cultivation in the area opened their eyes. Most of them seemed confused; the name Bai Xiaochun seemed familiar, but at first, many couldn’t place it. However, many of them clearly recognized the name, and were instantly shaken. Then, people look over to see what the middle-aged soul cultivator was looking at, whereupon more shouts of astonishment filled the air!

“Bai Xiaochun? How is that even possible!?!?”

“Bai Xiaochun.... I remember! He’s a major general from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s Great Wall!! He’s that shameless bastard who figured out how to detonate pill furnaces!!!”

“It's him.... I knew that name sounded familiar. Senior Red-Dust personally offered a bounty of a deva soul for his head! He’s in 1st place on the Execution List!!”

All of the soul cultivators were shaken, and soon, as their cries of astonishment rang out, more people heard, leading to even more unsightly expressions.

Originally, Bai Xiaochun’s name was not very widely known in the Wildlands. However, after the Giant Ghost Legion’s recent attack on the Great Wall, his name became the talk of the army, and from there, spread out into all of the Wildlands!

He had defeated the Giant Ghost Legion over and over again!

He had inflicted heavy casualties on the vengeful soul forces of the Wildlands!

He had not only led the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s forces to victories on the Great Wall, but his methods had been spread to the other three riversource sects, leading to similar victories on other stretches of the Great Wall.

Because of that, the Wildlands had suffered defeat after defeat, which was completely unprecedented!

Exploding pill furnaces! Driving beasts to madness! Soul Convergence Pills!

Any one of those tactics would have shaken the Wildlands. Then there was the reward being offered for Bai Xiaochun's head, which skyrocketed to such heights that everyone in the Wildlands was flabbergasted.

Furthermore, his rank of major general had been achieved by brazenly trampling the Wildlanders under foot with impunity!

Because he had eventually gone missing, people started to forget about him. But now, his name had appeared on the Hell-Emperor Stele, causing instant chaos in the area!

Countless eyes came to be fixed on the name list, where there, right out in the open for everyone to see... was Bai Xiaochun's name!

It was not Bai Hao... it was Bai Xiao Chun! Three characters made up his name, and right next to it was the number one, indicating that he had performed a single spirit enhancement on his nascent soul.

"It's Bai Xiaochun!!"

"He's in the Wildlands! And he's not dead!!"

"This is too important! Hurry up and report the matter!!" People immediately began to take out bone slips and send messages to their superiors....

It didn’t take long... for all of Arch-Emperor City to be completely shaken!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0672 awe-chapter-673

As word spread through Arch-Emperor City, everyone who got the news was stunned. For many, it took some thought to recall why the name seemed familiar, and some even had to ask around. In the end, though, everyone was shocked.

Of course, there were some people who instantly recalled all sorts of things when they heard the name.

“Devil Bai has appeared!!”

“So, he’s not dead after all! Not only is he here in the Wildlands, he’s actually in the Nascent Soul stage!!”

“Dammit! This is outright provocation! Bald-faced mockery! There’s no way Devil Bai doesn’t know about what happens when you perform a spirit enhancement on a nascent soul. He obviously did this all on purpose to make sure we knew he had come!!”

Arch-Emperor City in general was shaken, but even more so was the Giant Ghost Legion. Countless shouts of rage could be seen as people raced over to the Hell-Emperor Stele.

Of course, not everyone in Arch-Emperor City was very impressed with Bai Xiaochun’s name. Many thought the stories were exaggerations, and that a person like him wasn’t worthy of the commotion.

“This is outrageous! I can’t believe that Bai Xiaochun is being so pretentious! How arrogant! How imperious!!”

“Hmph! Those are just stories, right? I refuse to believe that this Bai Xiaochun is as important as people say he is. He’s a nobody!”

“Obviously the Giant Ghost Legion just wanted to come up with a reason for why they got defeated so handily. The fact that the other three sects on the Great Wall are using the same tactics just goes to show that Heavenspan Island arranged it all.”

Regardless of the specific reactions, though, the entire city was shaken.

Generally speaking, the commotion would have died down fairly quickly, and things would have gone back to normal. But then, something else happened that no one was expecting!

Even as everyone was looking at Bai Xiaochun’s name, his name vanished from last place and then reappeared in the top 20!

Next to his name was no longer the number *one*, but instead, *two*!!

All eyes went as wide as saucers, and yet, before anyone even had a chance to cry out in shock, Bai Xiaochun’s name vanished again. This time, it moved up to 15th place, and the number *three* could now be seen next to it!

And things weren’t over yet. Bai Xiaochun’s name vanished again, then reappeared in 8th place!!

At that point, the number next to his name was *four!!* Moments later, it shot up to 4th place, with a fivefold spirit enhancement!!

Countless gasps of shock could be heard. However, the crowd was being filled with so much pent-up shock that eventually, they couldn’t keep it in.

“Heavens...!”

“A five... fivefold spirit enhancement!!”

“How is this Bai Xiaochun doing this?!?!”

Everyone was completely stunned, battered by waves of astonishment, their minds spinning at what they were witnessing. Immediately, people began to send word to their friends and superiors.

Before, only a few people had been stunned by the mere mention of Bai Xiaochun’s name, with many people believing his reputation to be exaggerated. However, in the briefest of moments, he went all the way to 4th place on the Hell-Emperor Stele, with a fivefold enhanced nascent soul. Instantly, the people who had believed the stories to be exaggerated were left gasping in shock.

“What!? He performed a fivefold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul that quickly!?!?”

“What's going on with this Devil Bai? How is he doing this so quickly? I can’t believe he’s so reckless!! Is he tired of living?!”

The waves of astonishment that rocked Arch-Emperor City only continued to grow more intense. Every group and organization within the city heard of the matter, and reacted with complete incredulity. At the same time, more and more people began to fly over to the Hell-Emperor Stele.

There were also numerous streams of divine sense that converged on the area.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was in nascent soul form in his secluded meditation chamber in Giant Ghost City, looking very pleased as he sat there cross-legged in the turtle-wok.

“Hahaha! I *love* this type of cultivation! This is how things should be done!” The nascent soul Bai Xiaochun’s eyes twinkled, and his aura surged with excitement.

Not only did his nascent soul now have five silver designs on it, but he could also clearly sense how much stronger he was.

“I feel like I just spent a whole sixty-year-cycle in secluded meditation!” After a bout of hearty laughter, he licked his lips and waved his finger at the nearby six-colored flame.

The flame flew over into the turtle-wok, whereupon rumbling sounds could be heard, and another silver design appeared. He had performed another spirit enhancement!

Six. Seven. Eight.

Without pausing for a moment, he performed three enhancements in a row. By this point, eight dazzling designs could be seen on his nascent soul, which thrummed with boundless power. Swirling colors could be seen inside of it, and at the same time, the frigid qi of heaven and earth was like nothing.

“Strong. So strong!” Filled with excitement, he waved at the nine-colored flame. Moments later, a ninth silver design could be seen on his nascent soul!

However, things weren’t over yet. Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun began the tenth spirit enhancement. Dazzling silver light shone out from the turtle-wok as a tenth design appeared!

Bai Xiaochun could tell that his nascent soul was growing stronger and stronger, leaving him trembling with joy. He had often pondered how amazing it would be to become so powerful, but had never experienced the feeling. Now he was....

Of course, to the people in Arch-Emperor City, the fact that Bai Xiaochun was performing one spirit enhancement after another on his nascent soul had them all scared out of their minds. They felt like one bolt of heavenly lightning after another was slamming into their brains.

They watched as Bai Xiaochun's name went from 4th place to 3rd, and then from 3rd to 2nd. Then, without even stopping, it reached 1st place!

Bai Xiaochun had performed an eightfold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul....

If that were all there were to the situation, it might not have been a big deal. After all, what he was doing was not beyond the realm of what was clearly possible. But then, the number nine appeared next to his name, and then ten. The soul cultivators were all shaken to the ultimate degree, to the point where it felt like they were in an out-of-body experience.

He was performing spirit enhancements on a nascent soul, which was completely different than performing enhancements on magical items. If a magical item was destroyed, you could get a new one. But if you failed in a spirit enhancement on your nascent soul, you would be killed permanently!

The Hell-Emperor could have the audacity to require his successor perform spirit enhancements on their nascent soul. But to ordinary soul cultivators, that action was simply risking one’s life!

A single spirit enhancement was something many people could accept, and potentially a second or third. But any higher than that, and the failure rates were simply too dangerous. What everyone was witnessing here was simply a miracle!

It was something the likes of which had never been heard of in the Wildlands! It was complete madness....

“He went from one all the way up to ten! And he didn’t die!!”

“Dammit, what kind of luck is this!?!?”

“Does he have a death wish or something?!”

Not a single person was left unshaken; from their perspective, Bai Xiaochun was toying with his life in an act of complete insanity! Never had anyone dared to enhance their nascent soul in such fashion....

Meanwhile in Nine Serenities City, in a smaller palace adjacent to the royal palace, an enraged roar echoed out. Then, a tall, slender young man burst out from inside the palace. His handsome features were twisted with fury as he raged, “Bai Xiaochun! I, Zhou Hong, put my life on the line to perform a sixfold spirit enhancement on my nascent soul. How could you possibly dare to perform a tenfold enhancement!? How come you didn’t die?!?!”

Bitterness filled Zhou Hong’s heart. Originally, his only goal had been to overtake Gongsun Yi, and he had been fairly confident in being able to do so. At worst, he would at least match Gongsun Yi’s accomplishments.

But as soon as he got news that Bai Xiaochun had appeared and performed a tenfold spirit enhancement, his hopes were dashed....

“You must be using some trick to do it! Otherwise, there’s no way you could succeed! Men, go out and search the Wildlands! Find out where Bai Xiaochun is! *Find him!”* In response to Zhou Hong’s words, Nine Serenities City was thrown into a stir, and his orders were instantly carried out. Of course, the reason for all that was that Zhou Hong was heir apparent in the city!

Similar scenes played out in other parts of the Wildlands, both in the necromancer clans, and in other places that were home to people on the Hell-Emperor Stele’s name list. Everyone was trying to guess where Bai Xiaochun might be, and countless people began to search for him.

In one of the four kingly cities, War Champion City, a thatched cottage could be seen atop a lonely mountain. Within that cottage sat a young man with sword-like eyebrows and eyes that shone like stars. Everyone who knew him personally was used to the placid, arrogant expression that he usually wore. However, as of this moment, his face was ashen, and his eyes glittered with disbelief.

“Bai Xiaochun....” he murmured. A moment later, he looked down at the bone slip he held in his hand, and a defiant gleam appeared in his eyes. This young man was the only son of the most powerful among the kings, the War Champion King. He was Gongsun Yi, the second most powerful person in his generation in the Wildlands, right behind Mistress Red-Dust!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0673 awe-chapter-674

Nine Serenities City and War Champion City weren’t the only two cities to be completely shaken. Spirit Advent City was also thrown into a huge commotion. However, there were simply too many heirs to the throne there. In fact, there were more than 10,000 people who could claim a connection to the royal bloodline. Although some among those heirs could be considered chosen, none of them were as spectacular as Gongsun Yi or Zhou Hong. It was actually one of the young women in the city who was the most famous.

When news reached Giant Ghost City about what was happening in Arch-Emperor City, and that Bai Xiaochun had appeared, it also caused a huge commotion.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was unaware of that. His nascent soul sat giddily in the turtle-wok, feeling extremely pleased with how this session of cultivation was going. Eyes sparkling, he waved his finger at his eleven-colored flame.

“Heh heh. Let’s keep going!” With that, the turtle-wok began to shine with brilliant light again. However, this time it wasn’t silver light, but rather, golden. Moments later, the ten silver designs on his nascent soul vanished, replaced by a single golden design!

Instantly, his nascent soul grew a bit larger, causing Bai Xiaochun to gasp. Remembering that transformations would usually occur after a tenfold spirit enhancement, he suddenly felt uneasy.

“My nascent soul isn’t going to change appearance, is it…?” He watched nervously as the golden light faded away, and then inspected his nascent soul. When he found that there were no fundamental changes, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“Even stronger than before…. Based on how things are going, it seems that a fourteenfold spirit enhancement will be the peak of the early Nascent Soul stage. Normally speaking, even if I had some incredible techniques to use, I would need more than a hundred years to do that….” With those thoughts on his mind, he concluded that this was an opportunity that could not be passed up. Without the slightest hesitation, he began to work on the twelvefold spirit enhancement!

Rumbling could be heard as a second golden design appeared on his nascent soul, and yet, he didn’t stop there. Soon, a third and fourth design could be seen!!

A feeling of explosive strength filled his nascent soul along with the fourth golden design. Now he had the feeling that with a bit more effort, he could break through from the early to the mid Nascent Soul stage!

However, he wasn’t prepared to do that at the moment. At this point, he had no choice but to stop. With that, he opened his eyes and looked down at his nascent soul. The difference between his nascent soul now and how it had been at the beginning was vast!

“I’ve reached my limit,” murmured. “However, once I perform a fifteenfold spirit enhancement, then I’ll break through into the mid Nascent Soul stage!” Even as he spoke, his nascent soul flew back into his fleshly body.

When the fourth golden design appeared on his nascent soul, the number fourteen appeared next to the name Bai

Xiaochun on the Hell-Emperor Stele back in Arch-Emperor City. When that happened, the observing soul cultivators were stunned to the ultimate degree. None of them could even imagine what would happen if the successor of the Wildlands’ Hell-Emperor turned out to be Bai Xiaochun. It seemed almost too preposterous to consider!

And yet, by this point, there didn’t seem to be any suspense at all regarding what would happen in the end…. It was at that exact same moment that the explosive aura of a deva suddenly rose up within Arch-Emperor City.

Brightly-colored light flashed in heaven and earth, and the huge dragon in the clouds above was clearly taken aback as a woman flew up from the Giant Ghost Legion. She was beautiful and curvaceous, and yet possessed a murderous aura that was terrifying to the extreme. Furthermore, her eyes were filled with killing intent and madness. She was none other than… Mistress Red-Dust!

Her cultivation base had long since recovered, but she had remained in secluded meditation, and was unaware of anything that was happening on the outside. However, her subordinates and high-ranking officers knew of her enmity with Bai Xiaochun, and therefore, had passed the news along to her.

When she heard what the damnable, detestable Bai Xiaochun had done, it drove her into near madness. She flew at top speed to the Hell-Emperor Stele, where she glared at the name in 1st place, her body trembling and her murderous aura surging.

When people realized that Mistress Red-Dust had arrived, they bowed their heads and clasped hands in respect. Everyone knew that despite the fact that she had only recently become the newest deva of the generation, her battle prowess was far beyond ordinary!

“Bai Xiaochun… Bai Xiaochun….” A very grim expression could be seen on her face, and her eyes shone with cold light. As of this moment, she knew that Bai Xiaochun… must have reached the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage. Anger burning, she pulled out a jade slip to send a message to her subordinates and officers.

“Pay any price to find Bai Xiaochun. I want him alive!!”

The army responded instantly. Soldiers began to rush to and fro within the army camp, issuing orders in preparation to follow Mistress Red-Dust’s orders and find Bai Xiaochun!

In another location in Arch-Emperor City was a young woman who, like everyone else, was paying close attention to the situation with the Hell-Emperor Stele. Unlike Mistress Red-Dust, there was no icy coldness in her eyes, only anxiety and concern.

She was none other than… Chen Manyao from the River-Defying Sect!

She was a Wildlander, and her Master was a very important person, giving her a unique status in Arch-Emperor City. However, she would never be able to forget everything which had occurred in the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, or the boat that had sailed across the Heavenspan Sea….

In the years in which she had been back in the Wildlands, she had often thought back to the familiar faces she remembered from the past. More often than anyone, she thought of Bai Xiaochun.

Back when she’d first heard that he had gone missing, she had assumed that he was dead, and had slipped into disconsolate melancholy.

But now, his name had appeared on the stone stele, causing her eyes to sparkle with dazzling light.

“Where are you, Xiaochun…?”

Within the imperial palace in Arch-Emperor City was the Grand Heavenmaster, the very same man who had ordered the Arch-Emperor to go into secluded meditation. He was the only person other than the Arch-Emperor who actually held power over the various officials in the dynasty. All of a sudden, the Grand Heavenmaster opened his eyes.

In that instant, the huge dragon in the air above the city trembled, and all of the powerful experts in the city shivered and retracted their divine sense, fearful of doing anything to offend the Grand Heavenmaster.

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes immediately pierced through all creation to land on the Hell-Emperor Stele, and the name that occupied the 1st place position!

A moment later, he looked away, and then, issued a new order.

“Find Bai Xiaochun and bring him to me!”

The orders came out, not from the Grand Heavenmaster, but rather, under the auspices of the current Arch-Emperor himself! Because of that, even the four heavenly kings had no choice but to acknowledge them….

Before long, everyone in the Wildlands was searching for Bai Xiaochun.

Around that time, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, causing the entire secluded meditation chamber to fill with something like the crackle of lightning. At the same time, the pressure of the Nascent Soul stage erupted out from him.

He took a deep breath, a look of delight on his face as he performed a quick inspection of himself. Sure enough, he was in the great circle of the early Nascent Soul stage, and his nascent soul had four golden designs on it. There was no way for him to hold back his pride as he swished his sleeve to open the door of the meditation chamber. Then he swaggered out in grand fashion.

Even as he was considering going to show off a bit and make sure everyone knew that he was no longer in Core Formation, he sent out his divine sense to find that there was a huge commotion going on around him.

He could hear people discussing a certain matter, a matter that instantly got him quivering in fear. His previous grandiosity immediately vanished, and all joy evaporated, replaced by alarm and terror.

“Did you hear? Bai Xiaochun showed up! What, you don’t know who Bai Xiaochun is? Well let me tell you….”

“He performed a fourteenfold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul! That’s totally crazy! He must have done it with some powerful magical treasure!!”

“The Arch-Emperor issued orders that everyone in the Wildlands is supposed to find him and capture him alive…. Well, it can’t really be any other way. If he ended up becoming the successor of the Hell-Emperor, it would be like some gigantic joke.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard what people were talking about, the blood drained from his face, and he almost fell over on his face because of the fear. He staggered backward, suddenly recalling a key piece of information that had slipped his mind…. Anyone who performed a spirit enhancement on their nascent soul would have their name put on display on the Hell-Emperor Stele!!

“This is big….” he thought. Already, regret was welling up in his heart as he wondered how much of a deadly disaster he had brought upon himself…. Heart pounding with anxiety, he quickly abandoned any ideas of showing off. He also decided that under no circumstances would he let anyone check his nascent soul. Thankfully, because of all the spirit enhancements he had performed, it was extremely powerful. Although people would now be able to sense that he was in the Nascent Soul stage, they wouldn’t be able to see any of the details of his nascent soul.

With a bit of adjustment with his mask, he made it seem like, instead of being in the great circle of the early Nascent Soul stage, he had actually just made a breakthrough. Even as he did that, several beams of light appeared, patrolling soul cultivators of the city guard. They clasped hands and bowed to him, then one of them said, “His highness the king issued orders that after emerging from secluded meditation, Majordomo Bai is to go see him immediately!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun blurted, shivering and heart pounding.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0674 awe-chapter-675

The mere thought of the Giant Ghost King’s stern, threatening features, and the profound gleam that was always present in his eyes which made it seem like he could peer deep into one's mind, caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver.

“I'm finished. Kaput....” Deep regret filled his heart, and realized that he really, really should not have gone and performed spirit enhancements on his nascent soul. The entire world knew what had occurred, and the mere thought of that left him weak in the knees.

And then he contemplated the potential consequences of his actions, and his heart began to race.... Thankfully, he was wearing his mask, and also had years of experience living under cover. Although he feared death as much as he always had, he had long since become an absolute master at keeping up an act.

“The Giant Ghost King probably doesn’t know my real identity.... If he did, he wouldn't just send a message summoning me to a meeting.... My mask is incredible, so there’s no way anybody can sense my cultivation base fluctuations....” Inwardly, he was grasping at every possible straw to comfort himself, but on the outside, he seemed completely calm. Keeping his hands clasped behind his back, he gave a slight nod to the city guards, and then flew with them toward the royal palace.

Along the way, his facial expression remained completely normal. However, inside, his mind raced as he tried to figure out why the Giant Ghost King might have summoned him. In the end, he was ninety percent confident that it was just a coincidence, and had nothing to do with his true identity.

Although that made him feel a bit better, there was still a ten percent chance that he was in grave danger. As a result, he couldn’t wipe the worry away completely. He simply had to force himself to remain calm, and keep his expression neutral as he followed the guards toward the palace.

The guards treated Bai Xiaochun very respectfully. Upon reaching a certain point, they clasped hands and departed, leaving Bai Xiaochun standing in front of the royal palace. A moment later, he strode inside, and the first thing he heard was the voice of Duke Deathcrier.

“Your Highness, the Ghost King Orchid has not yet begun to bloom.... Furthermore, the Grand Heavenmaster made it clear to me that he will not open the Necromancer Kettle for us alone....”

Next came the Giant Ghost King’s voice. “Go back to the Grand Heavenmaster and tell him that the Giant Ghost King agrees to owe him a big favor!”

“Yes, Your Highness. I’ll go arrange things right away.” A very solemn expression could be seen on Duke Deathcrier’s face as he clasped hands and bowed to the Giant Ghost King. After turning around to leave, he saw Bai Xiaochun entering the palace, and a faint smile appeared on his face. Giving a quick nod to Bai Xiaochun, he left.

Bai Xiaochun hurried over to the throne, doing his best to keep his anxiety under control. Once in front of the Giant Ghost King, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“My respects, Your Highness!” The Giant Ghost King wore a grim expression on his face, as if he were wrestling with some important matter. When he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, a faint expression of surprise could be seen on his face.

“Eee? You made a breakthrough?” At first, a look of praise could be seen in his eyes, but after a moment, it turned into something more like suspicion. He was an experienced and shrewd person, with exceptional insight, and had picked up on Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had always been nervous in his presence. The difference was that, in the past, he never did anything to cover it up, whereas now... he was. The Giant Ghost King’s eyes flickered.

Bai Xiaochun could immediately see the suspicion in the Giant Ghost King’s eyes, and it caused his heart to leap into his throat with the realization that he had slipped up. Considering his personality, the fact that he had just made a cultivation base breakthrough meant that he shouldn’t be walking around looking calm.... His heart began to race, and his nervousness mounted. Suddenly, an idea occurred to him, and he instantly made his decision. Without the slightest hesitation, he made himself seem even more nervous, so nervous that he even seemed scared. In fact, he averted his gaze so that he wasn’t looking at the Giant Ghost King.

The Giant Ghost King looked at him silently, and as he did, vast pressure began to build up in the grand hall. Bai Xiaochun slowly began to tremble visibly, and sweat began to pour down him. It almost seemed like he couldn’t control himself... which was actually the case. He actually felt as if so much pressure was weighing down on him that he might be crushed into powder.

As the pressure built, Bai Xiaochun finally moaned, “Your Highness, your humble servant made a grave error.... I didn't want to do it! But the thing is that the three great clans really do have it out for me. If it weren’t for the fact that your humble servant has such an impressive title, I think my poor little life would already have been exterminated.... By the way, the Bai Clan hates me especially deeply.

“Therefore, your humble servant felt he had no other option. Despite the fact that Your Highness had other plans for the three clans, your humble servant secretly instructed certain people to go cause problems for them....” By this point, Bai Xiaochun really looked like he was about to weep from fear.

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes widened. He had long since learned of the fact that Bai Xiaochun had sent people to put pressure on the three great clans. Therefore, this display of nervousness put him right in the middle of laughter and tears. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun misunderstood why he had been summoned, and had thus begun to grow nervous.

“Enough with the histrionics!” the Giant Ghost King said, glaring at Bai Xiaochun.

His glare instantly caused Bai Xiaochun to calm down inside. Externally, though, he looked up at the Giant Ghost King with glistening eyes.

The Giant Ghost King could tell that Bai Xiaochun felt wronged, but decided to simply ignore it. Voice casual, he said, “I summoned you here today because of some orders that came down from the Arch-Emperor. An arrest warrant has been issued for Bai Xiaochun, major general from the Great Wall and cultivator from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. I’m entrusting the matter to you. If Bai Xiaochun appears in the territory I control, you will be sent to arrest him.”

A serious expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Without the slightest hesitation, he stuck his chest out and loudly replied, “Fear not, Your Highness! It was on my path to Giant Ghost City that I heard about this Bai Xiaochun. Hmmmphh! If Devil Bai dares to appear near Giant Ghost City, then your humble servant will apprehend him immediately!”

His words were spoken with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron, and caused the Giant Ghost King to nod in satisfaction.

“It's not really a big deal, to tell the truth. Unless he actually shows up, just forget about it. However, if you do run into him, be careful. Thankfully, you’ve made a cultivation base breakthrough, so that will help to some degree.” The Giant Ghost King then went on to offer a few more warnings and exhortations about the matter.

“Your Highness, when it comes to my cultivation base breakthrough, I have you to thank.... If it weren’t for your insistence that I go into secluded meditation, your humble servant would not have succeeded. Your Highness, you truly are divine and mighty, matchless through eternity! The words you spoke to me were like a mystical elixir that pushed me to new heights. Your Highness, I do hope that you summon me more often for audiences, that thusly, my cultivation base can continue to improve with rapid speed!” Bai Xiaochun didn't seem embarrassed at all to have so instinctively launched into a bout of flattery.

The Giant Ghost King snorted in response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, but inside, actually felt a twinge of pleasure. After all, he couldn’t forget about how Bai Hao had had the audacity to slap him across the side of the head and act in wildly presumptuous fashion. Therefore, this complete reversal was quite pleasing. After all, he was a mighty demigod, the type of person who could control every matter around him. If he wanted to, he could forgive anyone of anything. All of the karma had been resolved. In fact, after his cultivation base was restored, a mere thought on his part had retrieved all of the magical items he’d handed over.

Everyone respected power, and as for this Bai Hao, even if he got stronger than he was, he would still be at the Giant Ghost King’s beck and call. Therefore, to hear a bit of flattery from him was quite pleasing to the ear.

In terms of the fact that Bai Xiaochun had formed his nascent soul without any problems, the Giant Ghost King wasn’t interested in prying, nor did he even think to connect him with the wanted fugitive Bai Xiaochun. It wasn’t that the Giant Ghost King wasn’t quick-witted about such things, it was more that Bai Hao had a very clear and well-known background. Therefore, there was no reason to link him to Bai Xiaochun.

Although the timing was a bit odd, the Giant Ghost King knew that since this Bai Hao had received a drop of his own soul-blood, that would also make it much easier for him to form a nascent soul. As one of the Giant Ghost King’s subordinates, Bai Hao’s power came from the good graces of the king, and for him to get stronger was naturally a good thing. The Giant Ghost King didn’t even bother to look into the matter of the little turtle.

After their conversation was done, the Giant Ghost King waved his hand to dismiss Bai Xiaochun.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun was sighing with relief in his heart. Backing up respectfully, he was just preparing to leave when he decided that he needed to make his act even more convincing. Looking over his shoulder, he opened his mouth as if he wanted to say something, but then held back.

The Giant Ghost King noticed, and said, “What’s wrong now?”

“Your Highness, might it be a good idea to go put a bit more pressure on the three great clans?” From the look in his eye, Bai Xiaochun seemed like he simply wasn’t willing to drop the matter.

The Giant Ghost King looked at him grimly for a moment. The truth was that he really did have some special plans in mind for the three great clans. After all, the fact that the incarcerated patriarchs of the Bai and Chen Clans had Deva Realm cultivation bases was of importance to him. Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King knew that if the three great clans fell, other clans would rise in their place, and he didn’t really feel like dealing with weak, rising powers like that.

However, after Bai Xiaochun made his suggestion, the Giant Ghost King thought about it for a moment, and then recalled the scene of being chased by those three clans.

“You really were wronged in all of this.... Those three clans have been around for thousands of years, and have deep reserve savings. Perhaps that is what gave them the courage to rebel....” With that, he gave Bai Xiaochun a meaningful look.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback, but after analyzing the king's words, his eyes began to shine. Then his heart began to pound as he realized that when the Giant Ghost King said *deep reserve savings*, he most likely meant that the three great clans were extremely rich.

Furthermore, that indicated that the king was hinting that he should... go shake them down? Was this his reward for risking life and limb for the Giant Ghost King?

Although he was excited by the prospect, he decided that he should probably double-check that his understanding was correct. “Fear not, Your Highness. My eyes are as sharp as swords. It doesn’t matter how deep the reserve savings of the three great clans are, your humble servant will see to the bottom of everything.”

The Giant Ghost King didn’t respond at all, and in fact, even closed his eyes. Inwardly, he was pleased that Bai Xiaochun could pick up on the meaning of his words.

Bai Xiaochun was immediately enthused by the Giant Ghost King’s reaction, and that it indicated his implicit agreement.... When Bai Xiaochun thought back to how the clans had chased him down, and how he had suddenly risen up in the world, his excitement began to build.

“A shakedown.... I’ve never done anything like that. How exciting to be able to go shake down an enemy.... However, considering the fact that the Giant Ghost King didn’t issue official orders, it indicates that he wants me to keep things low key....” Clenching his fists excitedly, he turned and walked out of the grand hall.

Even as he walked out, though, the lounging Giant Ghost King casually murmured, “The Chen Clan is particularly vile. Especially their clan chief. He always gets lucky with the women, and yet he dared to forge a taboo banner... hmph!”

Although he spoke nearly under his breath, his words reached Bai Xiaochun’s as clear as day.

In response, Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, and he even stopped walking. Eyes turning up in thought, he realized that there were two aspects to what the Giant Ghost King had said that were important. The first was about the taboo banner, and the second... was when he said *lucky with the women*....

As the wheels in his head turned, he murmured to himself, “That old pervert!!”

Then, face beaming with righteousness, he pretended to have not heard, and strode out of the hall.

After he left, the Giant Ghost King sat there on his throne, the five fingers of his right hand tapping each other as he calculated something.

A moment later, he frowned and murmured, “I’m still not exactly sure of the timing. However, based on the date, the Ghost King Orchid in the Necromancer Kettle should be just about ready to bloom.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0675 awe-chapter-676

After emerging from the grand hall, Bai Xiaochun looked over in the direction of the three great clans, and an expression of scorn could be seen on his face. Although there were no truly deep grudges between him and the clans, they had attempted to kill him over and over again.

Back when he had been a prison guard, it had been impossible to seek revenge, and even less so after he became a prisoner. But now things were different. He was Majordomo Bai of Giant Ghost City, acting on behalf of the king.

“Summon Heavenly Marquis Chen Hai!” he said with the swish of a sleeve. Instantly, the nearby city guards rushed off to carry out his orders.

Afterward, he stood there outside of the grand hall, looking up into the sky, his hands clasped behind his back as he waited for Chen Hai to arrive. As he was waiting, he pulled out a jade slip to send a message to Zhou Yixing.

“Have your people keep an eye on all of the three of the great clans for me!”

“Don’t worry, milord. I’ll take care of everything. By the way, the people in the Chen Clan are frightened out of their minds.”

After hearing the response, Bai Xiaochun gave a few more instructions, then closed his eyes and stood there waiting. Before long, a beam of light appeared off in the distance, within which could be seen a pudgy, middle-aged man.

He was one of the four heavenly marquises who had not participated in the rebellion. He was also the one who had given Bai Xiaochun a mansion, as well as a large number of other valuable gifts. As soon as Chen Hai saw Bai Xiaochun standing there outside of the royal palace, a serious expression appeared on his face. Clasping hands and bowing, he said, “What are your orders, Majordomo Bai?!”

“Heavenly Marquis Chen, gather your men. You’re taking a little trip with me!” Bai Xiaochun had served as a major general in the army, so when he spoke now, it was with a grand dignity that left Chen Hai feeling shaken. After looking from Bai Xiaochun to the royal palace and then back, he voiced his assent.

Without the slightest hesitation, he issued orders to the soul cultivators under his command, and before long, a force of 20,000 men had gathered. At that point, Bai Xiaochun and Chen Hai, followed by the small army, flew out of Giant Ghost City!

Everyone in the city was shaken by the sight, especially when they realized that the 20,000 soul cultivators were heading in the direction of one of the three great clans, the Cai Clan. As of that point, everyone knew what was going on… revenge!

The army of 20,000 soul cultivators radiated killing intent as they flew along. Bai Xiaochun was in the lead position, his hands clasped behind his back, an arrogant expression on his face. All of a sudden, he felt like he was back at the Great Wall, a mighty major general with subordinates who would jump to heed his every command.

Chen Hai was right there next to him. Sticking his thumbs up approvingly, he said, “Excellent work, Bai, old pal! You’re truly a dragon amongst men. Let me tell you, I've seen a lot of people throughout the years who really bungle things up when they suddenly rise to power. But not you, Bai, old pal. You’re doing splendidly. It just goes to show that you are a qilin chosen of Giant Ghost City!

“These 20,000 soul cultivators view you like an immovable mountain, as permanent as the sea. Strength of mind like yours is rare even among many imperial princes.” Chen Hai had a very serious expression on his face as he talked, and his fat jiggled up and down a bit. Although he was clearly being a bit flattering, his words seemed completely and utterly trustworthy.

Bai Xiaochun felt wonderful, and couldn’t help but muse that Chen Hai really was very observant. Smiling broadly, he thought back to the old saying: *even if you have a beautiful sedan chair to sit in, you still need others to lift you up*. Therefore, he offered a few ingratiating words of his own. Before long, the two of them were chatting amiably.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun contemplated how he should go about this shakedown. Considering that the Giant Ghost King hadn’t issued formal orders, he couldn’t do it in a very forceful manner.

“Maybe I can't use force, but I can still get my revenge in full!” Looking down at his bag of holding, he thought about the little turtle, and suddenly came up with a new idea.

Before long, they could see the Cai Clan up ahead. As for his reason for selecting this particular clan, there was no special factor other than its close proximity to the city.

Of course, everyone in the Cai Clan was extremely nervous because of his arrival. They were all shaking visibly, and the clan chief’s face was ashen as he led a group of cultivators to the main gate to receive the visitors.

The young chosen member of the clan who had tried to kill Bai Xiaochun sometime back was there, as well as the silkpants who had tried to bully him with wealth. Both of them were trembling, their faces as ashen as death.

The pressure weighing down on the clan recently had been immense. Their patriarch was dead, and every member of the clan felt like they were hovering on the brink of death.

The news that Bai Hao was personally bringing a large group of soul cultivators with him for a visit caused alarm to fill the hearts of everyone in the clan. Most fearful of all was the clan chief and certain clan elders, and yet, they managed to remain calm.

After all… if the Giant Ghost King had planned to exterminate them, he wouldn’t have waited so long to do it….

As the Cai Clan waited there at the front gate, Bai Xiaochun, Chen Hai, and the 20,000 soul cultivators arrived like a black cloud, blotting out the sky. As they neared, Chen Hai called out in a loud voice, “Lock down the area. Without express orders from Majordomo Bai, no one is allowed in or out!”

The 20,000 soul cultivators immediately fanned out and surrounded the Cai Clan, locking it down completely. The cultivators of the Cai Clan were all shocked. As for the clan chief, his expression flickered, but he had no choice but to simply grit his teeth, hurry over to Bai Xiaochun, and clasp hands respectfully.

“Greetings, Majordomo Bai, Heavenly Marquis Chen.” Everyone else in the clan similarly clasped hands and offered greetings.

Bai Xiaochun ignored them, and instead turned and cast a displeased look in Chen Hai’s direction.

“Heavenly Marquis Chen, I didn't come here to exterminate the Cai Clan. Why did you have to go and scare the clan chief?”

“I understand, Majordomo Bai,” Chen Hai said seriously, “but your humble servant has his orders!”

Bai Xiaochun shook his head and walked over to the clan chief, looking a bit apologetic.

“Oh, don’t worry,” the clan chief said, “Heavenly Marquis Chen has his orders, we understand. Majordomo Bai, please just come in, and we can discuss what needs to be discussed.” There was no way the clan chief would miss the fact that Bai Xiaochun and Chen Hai were obviously working in coordination with each other. However, that realization did him relatively little good.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t immediately enter the Cai Clan. Instead, he cleared his throat loudly, prompting Chen Hai’s expression to grow grimmer.

“All Nascent Soul-level officers, step forward to guard Majordomo Bai!” Immediately, a dozen or so soul cultivators flew out from the group of 20,000 and clustered around Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun still didn't seem pleased, but he finally sighed and then gave a wry smile to the clan chief. “I really have no choice, you know. It's not that I don’t trust your Cai Clan. It’s just that his highness the king really values me highly.”

Feeling more bitter than ever about how things were going, the clan chief replied, “Yes yes yes, of course. Majordomo Bai is extremely important to Giant Ghost City. We definitely can't have any mishaps. I completely understand….”

“Very well, let’s go in and talk.” Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve, reveling in the feeling of being so powerful and important. Of course, the first to actually enter the clan were the Nascent Soul cultivators acting as guards. From the way they carried themselves, if anyone in the Cai Clan did even the slightest suspicious thing, they would attack immediately for the safety of Bai Xiaochun.

The cultivators of the Cai Clan were left trembling in fear, especially that one particular chosen, who stood there with his head bowed, hoping that he wouldn’t be noticed.

The clan chief was feeling very irritated, but had no choice other than to join the clan elders in leading Bai Xiaochun into the city.

After entering the clan’s main hall, Bai Xiaochun sat down and smiled. “Clan Chief Cai, I'm not here on any official business today. I just heard that the Cai Clan has a thousand years of reserve savings built up, and would like to perform a bit of an inspection.”

“I understand, Majordomo Bai. Please wait a moment.” The clan chief plastered a smile onto his face, then turned to the side and gave some orders. Before long, another member of the clan came hurrying over, carrying a soul bottle surrounded by scintillating light.

It wasn’t very large, and actually resembled an ordinary flower vase. However, based on the light which surrounded it, it was clearly an extraordinary item. Furthermore, there was a single golden design on its surface, indicating that this soul bottle had received an elevenfold spirit enhancement!

After respectfully placing it down in front of Bai Xiaochun, the clan chief said, “Majordomo Bai, this soul bottle is a powerful magical treasure of the Cai Clan. Please, take a look and tell us what you think.”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was the same as ever as he picked the bottle up and looked it over. He even examined it with some divine sense. Not only was the bottle itself incredible, but it also contained over 100,000,000 vengeful souls. It was clearly an impressive gift, and although Bai Xiaochun was moved, when he thought about how incredibly rich he knew the Cai Clan to be, and then realized they had only offered him 100,000,000 vengeful souls, he immediately got angry.

Face turning grim, and cultivation base surging, he clenched his right hand into a fist, causing cracking sounds to ring out as the soul bottle was suddenly crushed. As it did, the more than 100,000,000 vengeful souls exploded out. Thankfully, there were plenty of Nascent Soul experts around who were able to suppress the resulting horde of souls.

Glaring icily at the clan chief, he said, “Clan Chief Cai, I may not be a grandmaster of equipment forging, but considering how long I’ve practiced cultivation, do you really take me to be a fool? You truly think you can pull the wool over my eyes with a soul bottle like that?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0676 awe-chapter-677

Gritting his teeth inwardly, but maintaining a very calm expression, the chief of the Cai Clan rose to his feet and said, “Majordomo Bai, please, calm yourself….”

The clan elders had similar reactions. All of them could tell that Bai Xiaochun’s act of breaking the soul bottle indicated that he was not here out of any expression of goodwill.

Clearly, he wasn't going to wipe out their lives, but he was definitely planning to wipe out their thousand years of reserves!

“That was only the first thing we planned to show you. Just wait a moment, Majordomo Bai, there’s more to come.” Taking a deep breath, the clan chief then issued some more orders.

Before long, another clan member hurried over with five soul bottles, which were placed in front of Bai Xiaochun. When Bai Xiaochun eyed them, his heart immediately began to beat faster.

“A thousand years of reserve savings….” he thought, his mouth going a bit dry. However, he forced a frown onto his face.

The clan chief’s heart surged with pain as he realized that if the clan didn’t bleed today, they would be put in great danger. Gritting his teeth, he transmitted some more messages, whereupon more clan members arrived, this time to place over a hundred bracelets of holding in front of Bai Xiaochun!

Unexpectedly, each and every one of the bracelets of holding was packed with soul medicine. There was so much that it would be impossible to count in a short period of time. The mere sight of it all got Bai Xiaochun's heart pounding, and he suddenly realized what exactly the thousand year reserve savings of an aristocratic necromancer clan was like.

And yet, he continued to frown with just as much displeasure as before.

The scene playing out caused profound bitterness to grip the heart of the clan chief. Although the things he had offered up were not all of the Cai Clan's thousand years of reserve savings, they were a significant portion. However, considering the danger the clan was in, he had to endure the pain he felt in his heart and send more messages.

Soon, a steady stream of trembling clan members came, bringing all sorts of items with them. There were more than a thousand magical items, many of them spirit enhanced. However, after seeing everything, Bai Xiaochun shot to his feet, looking completely livid as he said, “Clan Chief Cai, I'm here to try to save your Cai Clan from calamity! However, it seems you hold me in complete contempt. Are you really trying to please me with trash like this? Fine. Fine! I'm done with this matter!”

Swishing his sleeve, he chuckled coldly and prepared to leave.

The clan chief's expression flickered, and his frustration surged to the point where he almost lost control. He had already offered quite a bit of resources, only to be rebuffed. Furthermore, he had already given everything he had the authority to give. Everything else… was considered the foundation of the clan, and the decision to do anything with them was beyond him.

At this point, the Cai Clan’s grand elder took a deep breath and stepped forward, a smile on his face. He knew that it was a critical moment for the clan. Unlike the other two great clans, their patriarch was dead. That meant that if they weren’t willing to part with some of their wealth, they would be courting a major disaster. The entire clan could end up getting wiped out.

“Majordomo Bai, please wait a moment. The Cai Clan still has more treasures for you to study….” He turned to look at one of the other clan elders nearby. “Old Third, open the inner storehouse and bring out… everything!”

The elder who had been spoken to sighed, bowed his head, and hurried away.

Bai Xiaochun stopped walking. Currently, his heart was pounding with anticipation. The truth was that the gifts which had been offered him so far actually left him very moved. Softening his expression a bit, he went back and sat down again.

Before long, a trembling Cai Clan cultivator hurried over with a little pagoda!

It wasn’t a soulhoarding pagoda, but rather, a pagoda crafted from wood. Bai Xiaochun scanned it with divine sense to find that it was filled with multi-colored flame…. It had everything from ten-colored flame all the way up to fifteen-colored flame, six tongues of it!

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Another clan member brought a bone slip, which contained the Cai Clan’s formulas for everything from fifteen- to seventeen-colored flame.

Even as he was accepting the bone slip, another clan member arrived… with a deva soul!

It was a fire-type soul contained in a crystal box, and the sight of it finally caused Bai Xiaochun's expression to brighten a bit. He even gasped slightly…. The members of the Cai Clan had been watching him closely, and noticed the change. As for the clan chief, his heart was wracked with indescribable pain; as of this moment, more than half of the reserve savings of the clan had been handed over.

Even the Nascent Soul experts who were guarding Bai Xiaochun were completely stunned by everything that was being spread out in front of him.

As for Chen Hai, he was actually waiting outside, but had he been inside to witness what was happening, he would have been completely stunned.

“Will this do, Majordomo Bai?” the clan chief asked.

Bai Xiaochun licked his lips. By now, his heart was pounding so hard it was like thunder in his ears. However, he didn't answer the question immediately, nor did he collect the items up. Instead, he just patted his bag of holding expectantly.

The Cai Clan cultivators who had just been sighing with relief were suddenly even more nervous than before.

A very, very long moment passed. Bai Xiaochun was started to get anxious. One of the reasons he had been so confident going into this situation was that he had sent a message earlier into his bag of holding, to the little turtle, saying that he was hunting for treasure. The little turtle had been immediately intrigued by the prospect.

However, as of yet, he had received no word from the little turtle. Seeing that everyone was looking at him, he finally cleared his throat and said, “Clan Chief Cai, back in Giant Ghost City, you chased me for a full day trying to kill me.... It got me so terrified that I couldn't focus on my cultivation.”

Bai Xiaochun sighed.

The clan chief’s eyelid twitched, and he looked over at the grand elder sitting next to him. The grand elder’s expression turned even grimmer than before as he gritted his teeth and looked around at the other clan members.

“Give him all of the soul medicine you have. Everyone.” The other clan members quickly pulled out the soul medicine they had, as well as other random objects and began to hand them over. As long as they could get Bai Xiaochun to leave, they would do anything.

It didn’t take long before a large heap of soul medicine was right in front of Bai Xiaochun. Of course, the purpose of the grand elder doing this was to show to Bai Xiaochun that they really had run out of things to give him.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel a bit embarrassed, but the fact that the little turtle hadn’t sent him a message yet indicated that something strange was going on. Perhaps the Cai Clan… was hiding some truly powerful magical treasure. Therefore, he cleared his throat again.

“How very polite of all of you,” he said. Sighing, he shook his head and said, “Now that I think about it, I'm a bit embarrassed about the matter of burning up your soulgrounds.... I really do feel guilty about that.”

Blue veins were bulging out on the neck and face of the clan chief as he realized how vicious this Bai Hao was.... And yet, there was nothing he could do about the matter.

“Oh, they were some trifling soulgrounds, nothing more,” he said. “Don’t feel guilty, Majordomo Bai. From now on, our soulgrounds all belong to you. If you want to burn them to the ground, feel free to do so.”

The fact that the Cai Clan was actually offering their soulgrounds to him left Bai Xiaochun at a bit of a loss about what to do next. He was finally thinking that he might need to call it a day, when… the little turtle’s voice suddenly rang out in his mind.

“Hey, little punk, Lord Turtle found a big treasure! Heavens! I can't believe the Cai Clan has a powerful magical item like this. Even in the Heavenspan River area, something like this would be considered rare. In the Wildlands, it’s even more valuable….” The little turtle went on to provide some further descriptions, whereupon Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine. But then, a moment later, his expression turned grim as he looked over at the grand elder and the clan chief.

When the rest of the clan members saw that, their hearts began to pound.

“Clan Chief Cai, I heard that your Cai Clan… has a spiritjade statue…. I would very much like to take a look at it.” An icy gleam ran through his eyes.

Although his words didn’t mean much to the ordinary clan members, when the clan chief and the grand elder heard them, their faces fell, and they began to tremble with disbelief.

The spiritjade statue was the Cai Clan’s greatest secret, something that, other than the patriarch, only the clan chief and the grand elder knew about. It was a strictly kept secret that they were sure not even a demigod would be able to uncover, let alone Bai Xiaochun.

And yet, somehow, he had discovered their secret. The only explanation they could think of… was that the Giant Ghost King actually did know about it. And the only way he could know about it was if he learned about it from their patriarch!!

Madness rose in their hearts as they exchanged a glance. The spiritjade statue was of incredible importance to them, and was the true reserve savings of the clan. It was their signature treasure, and was what had helped the Cai Clan cultivators advance in their cultivation more rapidly than the average person!

As of this moment, it didn’t matter how defiant they were, they had no choice but to bring it out…. The clan chief felt so completely powerless that he couldn't move. As for the grand elder, he sighed, took a step forward, and vanished. When he reappeared, he waved his sleeve, causing a three-meter-tall statue of a woman to appear in front of Bai Xiaochun.

The spiritjade statue caused blinding, colorful light to fill the area, as well as incredibly strong spiritual energy. In a barren place like the Wildlands, spiritual energy like that was an assault on the senses!

Everyone was completely shocked, and immediately began to look at the statue with envious expressions.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0677 awe-chapter-678

All spiritual energy in heaven and earth came from the Heavenspan River basin. Considering how far away they currently were in the Wildlands, there was no spiritual energy at all in the area.

It was this simple fact that forced Wildlanders to change their fundamental nature and resort to soul medicine to practice their cultivation. It was only because of the endless supply of vengeful souls around them that they could do without spiritual power. But nothing was absolute!

There were some things in the world that, at least in small measure, could produce spiritual energy similar to that found in the Heavenspan River basin. This spiritjade statue was just such an item.

Everything within 3,000 meters of it existed in an area of spiritual energy that rivaled that within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Even Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but be excited by the statue as he stood there in front of it. His cultivation base was like parched land that suddenly felt sweet rainfall. It was a wonderful feeling that caused his mind to tremble, and his eyes to shine brightly.

“A legitimate treasure!!” Bai Xiaochun could immediately tell that this spiritjade statue… was the true reserve power of the Cai Clan. The deathly grim countenances of the clan chief and the grand elder immediately got him feeling very excited.

“I hit it big this time….” he thought. Waving his sleeve, he collected the spiritjade statue into his bag of holding. As soon as it was inside, the spiritual energy in the area vanished. All sorts of expressions appeared on the faces of the Cai Clan cultivators.

None of them could remain calm. Although they had never been aware that a precious treasure such as the spiritjade statue had existed in their clan, they could immediately see how important it was. Except, that statute didn’t belong to the Cai Clan any longer….

And yet, when it came to the survival of their clan as a whole, there was really no question that it was best to part with it….

With that, he turned to gaze at the pile of other items which had built up earlier. Then he sighed and looked at the clan chief.

“Ai, your Cai Clan really is full of treasures,” Bai Xiaochun said. “I really can’t study them all in a short period of time.”

The clan chief was cursing up a storm in his heart. He could see that, not only was this Bai Hao robbing the Cai Clan dry, but he was also waiting for the Cai Clan to give him their blessing!!

Of course, the clan chief didn’t dare to point that out. Plastering a smile onto his face that looked worse than the worst grimace, he forced himself to say, “Oh, don’t worry, Majordomo Bai. Please take your time studying all of these treasures. Our Cai Clan would be honored if you would be willing to take them home with you for further study. We don’t need them at--”

A broad smile immediately appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Swishing his sleeve, he loudly said, “Well, since you insist, Clan Chief Cai, I won’t refuse your gracious offer. I’ll definitely take my time judging the quality of all of these items. Men! Take this stuff away!”

The soul cultivators who had accompanied Bai Xiaochun in as bodyguards exchanged quizzical glances before hurrying forward to collect the items up.

As the clan chief watched all of his clan’s reserve savings being taken away, he forced his rage back down into his throat and smiled bitterly.

Laughing heartily, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands to the clan chief. “Very well then, I’ll be off now. No need to see me out!”

Beaming, he then turned and swaggered off.

Of course, although he had explicitly stated that he didn’t expect them to see him off, the clan chief sighed and begrudgingly hurried forward to accompany him as he left.

As for the Nascent Soul bodyguards, they clustered around him closely as he left through the main gate. Back outside, Chen Hai was waiting for him, looking like the picture of loyalty. As soon as he caught sight of Bai Xiaochun safe and sound, he hurried forward, simultaneously glaring coldly at the Cai Clan cultivators. Obviously, he was ready to destroy the entire clan at a single word from Bai Xiaochun.

Although it all seemed a bit melodramatic, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased by the performance. At this point, he turned and clasped the clan chief warmly on the shoulder. Smiling, he said, “Clan Chief Cai, you’ve been far too kind. There’s really no need to see me off. If I have time in the future, I’ll definitely come back to chat with you a bit.”

Feeling more proud of himself than ever, he turned and flew up into the air, followed by Chen Hai and the other soul cultivators. Under the anxious watch of the Cai Clan, the entire group then flew off into the distance.

After they left, the clan chief finally took all the anger that had been building up in him and released it in a maddened howl. The other clan members who had come out with him all stood there silently.

The grand elder sighed and seemed to age visibly. “Just forget about it,” he said. “They took our reserve savings, but by capitulating, we avoided being completely wiped out.”

Of course, the events which had played out could not be kept secret. Word spread almost immediately to the other organizations in Giant Ghost City, leading to widespread shock and fear. Furthermore, many people began to look in the direction of the other two great clans.

Clearly, things weren’t over yet. The Cai Clan had been viciously cut down a notch, and next… would come the Chen and Bai Clans. Perhaps the Chen Clan might get off lightly, but when it came to the Bai Clan….

“I'm afraid the Bai Clan is finished!” That was what most of the in-the-know people in the city were thinking.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun brimmed with righteousness as he led the 20,000 soul cultivators along toward the Chen Clan. Along the way, his transmission jade slip buzzed several times, prompting him to pull it out and return messages.

When Chen Hai saw that, he considered asking what was going on, but then decided that he needed to be circumspect. “Majordomo Bai, news about the Cai Clan is already spreading. Presumably the Chen Clan will be prepared. Do you think we should pick up the pace?”

“Oh, no, it doesn’t matter. I've long since planned things out. In fact, why don't we slow down a bit.” Bai Xiaochun didn’t offer any other explanation than that. Taking his transmission jade slip out again, he sent another message, then continued slowly on his way to the Chen Clan.

Of course, the Chen Clan really had made advance preparations. In fact, the Chen Clan patriarch had formed an emergency backup plan before the rebellion even began. Those orders had been followed, and the Chen Clan’s valuable resources had already been moved out of the clan by various means and dispersed all over the map to random tribes of savage giants. Many members of the clan had gone along with the goods to keep them safe.

Although those tribes weren’t openly connected to the Chen Clan, their loyalty had been earned secretly over the course of many years.

After hearing about what had gone on at the Cai Clan, the members of the Chen Clan were all extremely nervous. In the Chen Clan’s ancestral palace, the clan chief was meeting with all the clan elders, and the entire group was grim-faced and anxious.

“Things shouldn’t get too bad. After finding out that the patriarch is in custody and not dead, we immediately began to disperse the clan and hide all of our reserve savings….”

“Yes. The clan members who left covered their tracks well, making it impossible to track them down after the fact…. By now, they should all have reached the various savage tribes that were their destinations….”

“Although, don’t you think we might be shooting ourselves in the foot…? The fact that the Giant Ghost King didn’t exterminate us shows that he has plans for us. He might just want to weaken us a bit by taking away our reserve savings…. If he finds out we've sent them away….”

It was through gritted teeth that the clan chief responded, “Hmph! Our patriarch is alive and in custody, which puts us in a completely different position than the Cai Clan. We're not going to just sit around and wait to be executed!”

It was the clan chief who had been the staunchest supporter of the plan of dispersing the clan’s reserve savings. Although he had also questioned the wisdom of the tactic, he had felt there was no other option than to go through with the original plan.

It was even as the clan chief and clan elders discussed the matter nervously that a whistling sound pierced through the air. Faces flickering with various emotions, the group rushed out of the hall and looked up into the sky to see something that looked like a black cloud. It was… an army of 20,000 soul cultivators.

With what seemed like practiced ease, they fanned out to surround the clan, leaving a path through which Bai Xiaochun swaggered in through the main gate. Next to him was Chen Hai, who bristled with open killing intent as he glared at the Chen Clan cultivators.

Even as Bai Xiaochun landed and entered the Chen Clan, something else was happening some distance away in the territory controlled by the Giant Ghost King. At the foot of a mountain which was home to a savage tribe, a small army of a few thousand soul cultivators had gathered, led by Zhou Yixing and Li Feng.

Zhou Yixing held a jade slip in his hand, and had a very cold gleam in his eye as he turned to look at Li Feng, who stood next to him.

“Brother Li, the majordomo has given the go-ahead. This task has fallen to the two of us to accomplish.”

“The Chen Clan thinks they can smuggle their stores to safety!?” Li Feng said. “Not if I have anything to say about it!” His heart was pounding with grand aspirations. After Bai Xiaochun’s meteoric rise to the position of majordomo, the lives of both Li Feng and Zhou Yixing had changed dramatically. After conferring with each other and realizing how different things were for them, they came to the conclusion that there was no need for infighting. That was especially true considering how big and complicated a place like Giant Ghost City was. Clearly, joining forces was the best way for the both of them to advance by leaps and bounds. As of this moment, Li Feng laughed heartily as he and Zhou Yixing led thousands of their own men toward the savage tribe on their mountain.

Under the command of Zhou Yixing and Li Feng, the soul cultivators began to fight their way into the tribe.

Immediately, the Chen Clan cultivators who had gone into hiding here began to fight back with desperate looks on their faces. After the fighting went on for a bit, a voice suddenly rang out from a tent in the middle of the tribe.

“The Chen Clan treasure is right here!”

Delighted, Zhou Yixing was the first to rush over into the tent. Li Feng, not thinking much about the matter, also hurried over. However, as soon as Li Feng entered the tent, it was to his shock that three people attacked him. And one of them was none other than Zhou Yixing!

Li Feng face fell as he blurted, “Zhou Yixing, you--”

But before he could even do anything, he was hit by a devastating killing blow. His voice was drowned out by Zhou Yixing’s battlecry, and within moments, his chest caved in and his heart shattered!

As he lay there dying, his mouth moved as though he wished to talk, and yet, no words came out.

Zhou Yixing squatted down next to him, then leaned over and whispered something into his ear that only the two of them could hear. “I had to kill you. For my future.”

Then he slammed his hand down onto the top of Li Feng’s head, killing him instantly!

With that, Zhou Yixing looked over at the two soul cultivators who had helped him, and solemnly reinforced his promise of riches and glory to come. They knew they had performed a great service for Zhou Yixing in his efforts to rise in the world, and that from now on, they were his men.

Before long, the Chen Clan cultivators in the savage tribe were defeated, and the reserve treasures rooted out. Similar scenes played out in other savage tribes in the region of Giant Ghost City, and before long, all of the treasures that the Chen Clan had smuggled out of their clan were found.

There was so much treasure that anyone who looked at it was struck mute. However, no one would ever dare to covet that which belonged to Majordomo Bai. In fact, when Zhou Yixing saw it, he didn’t even bat an eyelid. He simply directed all of his forces to start heading in the direction of the Chen Clan.

On the way, they happened to pass by the Jungle of Lost Souls, whereupon Zhou Yixing’s eyes flashed with cold light, and he came up with a reason to slaughter one of the savage tribes in the area. Coincidentally, the two soul cultivators who had helped him kill Li Feng died in the fighting.

“Finally, there are no holes left! Fudge. I'm not doing this for *him*, I’m doing it for me!” Zhou Yixing had done everything he could to erase the evidence connecting himself to the labyrinth and the events which had played out there. Of course, all of his actions up to this point had been according to his own plan, not Bai Xiaochun’s. And just as he had said, it was to protect himself.

Although the Giant Ghost King didn't suspect that Bai Hao was Bai Xiaochun, Zhou Yixing was privy to too many clues. He had long since come to suspect the truth, and when the matter of Bai Xiaochun reaching the Nascent Soul stage occurred, he had been completely convinced. Although he could think of some benefits to revealing the truth about him, he had instead chosen to bet everything on sticking with him! As for what would happen in the future, only time would tell!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0678 awe-chapter-679

The 20,000 soul cultivators surrounding the Chen Clan radiated intense murderous auras that combined into a soul-crushing pressure that enveloped the entire clan.

Everyone was left trembling, and had faces as ashen as death. That was true even of the clan chief and clan elders, all of whom felt sensations of intense, deadly crisis.

As Bai Xiaochun strode toward them, a vicious expression appeared on the clan chief’s face, and he shouted, “Don’t push things too far, Bai Hao!!”

Bai Xiaochun stopped walking, a cold glint in his eyes. He had anticipated a reaction like this from the Chen Clan. After all, this was the same clan that had dared to forge a forbidden banner, a heinous crime that angered gods and men alike.

They really had only two choices. Either fight to the death in resistance, or… stoop low and capitulate.

From the look of things, the Chen Clan wanted to choose the former option…. Or perhaps it was the choice of the clan chief. After all, he had come very close to killing Bai Xiaochun with his forbidden banner in their last encounter, and was convinced that he could finish the job if fighting broke out now.

The clan chief shivered in reaction to Chen Hai’s shout and the killing intent of the Nascent Soul experts. As for the clan elders, they were also shocked.

Bai Xiaochun looked coldly at the clan chief for a moment before coldly saying, “So, is this how you Chen Clan people want to do things?”

His casually spoken words, coupled with the killing intent of 20,000 soul cultivators, crushed down onto the Chen Clan like boulders. As for the clan chief, he was left panting, his eyes completely bloodshot. He knew that although this Bai Hao might not be capable of exterminating the entire clan right now, if fighting broke out, he himself would surely die!

The clan chief couldn’t forget the lengths Bai Hao had gone to try to kill him back in the chase in the city. If the patriarch hadn’t interfered to save him, the clan chief wouldn’t have just lost an arm; he would have perished! Furthermore, the Myriad Children Blood Banner was something detestable to gods and men alike, condemned by all creation.

“We already sent all of our reserve savings out of the clan,” the chief said, “along with all important clan members with potential for future growth. I've done everything I can for my clan. With our patriarch incarcerated, it doesn’t really matter whether we here survive or not. As the final clan chief, I am proud to lead the entire clan into a bloodbath! That way, we will go out in a blaze of glory instead--”

Before he could finish speaking, the clan’s grand elder stepped forward.

“Greetings, Majordomo Bai!” he said, clasping hands and bowing deeply. Trembling, the other members of the clan also bowed in greeting.

When the clan chief saw what was happening, his face turned ashen, but he didn’t dare to continue to curse at Bai Xiaochun, and instead bowed his head.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittered, and the smile stayed on his face as he looked down imperiously at the Chen Clan.

“Since I’ve come here in my role as majordomo, I assume you know what that means for you?”

“Of course we do, Majordomo Bai. The Chen Clan has plenty of treasures available for your study.” The grand elder had noticed early on that the clan chief was acting strangely, but had never imagined that he would intentionally infuriate Majordomo Bai. The consequences of such an action were too terrifying to contemplate.

“Trying to drag us down with you into death…?” the grand elder thought, casting an icy glance at the clan chief. Then, he quickly passed down orders to have large amounts of treasures brought over.

Soul medicine, vengeful souls, multi-colored flame, spirit enhanced treasures, flame formulas, and all sorts of other items soon began to pile up. There were even some unique treasures that cast dazzling light up into the sky, illuminating the clouds above.

Although there appeared to be quite a collection of treasure, it was really only a small portion of the Cai Clan’s wealth. Bai Xiaochun’s face immediately darkened.

“That’s it?”

The grand elder smiled wryly, but unfortunately was out of options. The reserve savings had been taken away, a fact that he was not quite willing to explain clearly. Even as he stood there hesitating, the clan chief laughed coldly.

“After this calamity, our Chen Clan will be left completely destitute. If you don't believe us, go search for yourself. If you find anything you like, just take it!”

Chen Hai could sense the open scorn in the clan chief’s words. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun first, he snorted and waved his hand. Immediately, soul cultivators poured into the Chen Clan’s city to search it.

Bai Xiaochun simply remained in place, hands clasped behind his back as he waited for Chen Hai to finish with the search. Before long, the soul cultivators were done with their work, and were recalled by Chen Hai. At that point, Chen Hai approached Bai Xiaochun, face grim. Lowering his voice, he said, “Majordomo Bai, the Chen Clan prepared well in advance… there’s nothing here.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded, but didn’t say anything. He simply remained in place, hands clasped behind his back, waiting. Time ticked by, and the silence in the Chen Clan became a weight that grew heavier with each passing moment. The Chen Clan cultivators’ terror grew, and to them, the pressure they felt from Bai Xiaochun felt like the weight of the heavens, something that could crush them out of existence in the briefest of moments.

Even the clan elders’ auras were fluctuating uncontrollably from anxiety. Only the clan chief stood there, sneering madly, seemingly ready to throw caution to the wind at any moment and start fighting.

At a certain point, a smile suddenly broke out onto Bai Xiaochun’s face, and he turned to look off into the distance. At that point, Chen Hai and the grand elder also seemed to sense something. Moments later, something like a black cloud could be seen on the horizon.

More and more people noticed, and before long, all eyes were turned in the direction of the black cloud. As it approached rapidly, it soon became obvious that it was a group of more than 10,000 soul cultivators.

Leading them was a young man with a proud expression and a murderous aura. He was none other than… Zhou Yixing.

It only took a few breaths’ worth of time for him to reach the Chen Clan, whereupon the soul cultivators he led spread out to join the forces which had surrounded the clan. As for Zhou Yixing, he hurried forward, looking neither left nor right as he approached Bai Xiaochun.

Chen Hai’s expression flickered with unease, but after looking over at Bai Xiaochun, did nothing to block Zhou Yixing’s path. Soon, Zhou Yixing was in front of Bai Xiaochun, hands clasped and bowing deeply.

“Mission accomplished, milord. All of the reserve savings that the Chen Clan moved out of the clan have been recovered. Please take a look, sir!” With that, he waved his sleeve, causing a massive amount of treasure to spill out of his bag of holding.

Soulhoarding pagodas, multi-colored flame, spirit enhanced treasures, and even ten jade bottles that each contained copious amounts of Heavenspan River water…. Even more astonishing were two crystal boxes that clearly contained valuable treasures!

There were other items which Bai Xiaochun didn’t recognize. Altogether, this collection was exponentially more valuable than what the grand elder had produced before. In fact, it was no less valuable than what he had acquired from the Cai Clan, assuming the spiritjade statue was left out of the picture.

As the treasures appeared out into the open, a look of complete madness overtook the clan chief’s face. The clan elders began to pant in astonishment, and the other ordinary clan members stared in abject shock. Not everyone had been privy to the information about smuggling the reserve savings outside of the clan, but as of this moment, everyone could see!

Despite having just seen a similar scene play out in the Cai Clan, Bai Xiaochun was still moved by what he saw. And yet, his facial expression was as calm and collected as ever. Swishing his sleeve, he coolly said, “Take them away. Since the Chen Clan didn’t bother keeping these things around, I guess I’ll take them. Many thanks, Clan Chief.”

As he laughed heartily, Chen Hai gasped in shock. As for Zhou Yixing, he voiced his assent, and then quickly began to arrange to take away everything which had been piled up.

The clan chief’s face was as ashen as death, and his mind was spinning beyond control. As for the clan elders, despite the fury which raged in their hearts, the sensations of deadly crisis they felt ensured that they didn't dare to even look up. However, there were some younger, hot-headed clan members who, used to their clan being strong and uncompromising, could not hold back from shouting out in anger.

“I can’t believe you people!”

“This is outright robbery, Bai Hao!!”

The clan elders’ faces fell, and they immediately turned to stop the younger clan members’ outburst. However, they were too late. Seeing a chance to intervene, Chen Hai waved his finger through the air, his eyes burning with killing intent.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the two younger clan members who had just shouted out suddenly found bloody holes in their foreheads. The rage could still be seen in their eyes as their bodies then flopped down to the ground, dead.

With a cold snort, Chen Hai glared out at the rest of the Chen Clan. “What outrageous gall! None of you have the right to casually speak the name of Majordomo Bai out loud!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0679 awe-chapter-680

Chen Hai’s fierce glare caused the hearts of the Chen Clan cultivators to tremble. As for the grand elder, he could see that the clan chief was just about to speak, so he puffed his chest out and glared at the man.

“Clan Chief!!” he yelled angrily. The clan chief’s face fell, and he closed his mouth.

“Majordomo Bai,” the grand elder continued, “for their impertinence, those two Chen Clan Juniors definitely deserved to die!

“However, since Majordomo Bai has already confiscated our thousand years of reserve savings... then it means our Chen Clan really has nothing left to give. Majordomo Bai... please leave us with enough to survive.” With that, he clasped hands and bowed, looking very solemn and even tragic.

Bai Xiaochun didn't respond at first. The truth was the that the Chen Clan really had just about nothing left. Although they had tried to kill him in the past, they had obviously learned their lesson by now. However, it was at that point that his gaze came to rest on the face of the clan chief, whose eyes flickered with a burst of venom.

Although the clan chief was trying hard to keep that venom hidden, he couldn’t conceal it from Bai Xiaochun’s penetrating gaze. Immediately, Bai Xiaochun’s previous caution hardened a bit, and he made his decision about what to do next. Outwardly, he put on an expression of hesitation, and even embarrassment. Then, he looked over at the female members of the Chen Clan.

Every single one of the female cultivators was beautiful, and as Bai Xiaochun’s gaze swept over them, it didn't go unnoticed by the rest of the people present. The grand elder’s jaw dropped; never could he have imagined that this Bai Hao would have such proclivities....

“Well, he is young after all....” the grand elder thought. Immediately, he gave orders for the ashen-faced women to all step forward and line up in front of Bai Xiaochun.

There were even some female clan members who weren’t in that larger group who were sent forward to stand in front of Bai Xiaochun. In the end, there were several hundred of them, all of them beautiful in different ways.

“Majordomo Bai, you are young and have unlimited potential, a true dragon amongst men. It would really be best for you to have some handmaidens to keep you company. These are all beloved daughters of the clan, any of whom would be blessed to be looked kindly upon by you....” As far as the grand elder was concerned, if this Bai Hao took one of the daughters of the clan with him, it would actually be a good thing. In fact, the man’s heart even began to pound in anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. Inwardly, he was cursing the Giant Ghost King for being such a pervert, and yet, there was nothing he could do but brace himself and do what needed to be done.

Sighing sadly, but having no choice other than to follow orders, he said, “I'm not really interested in these clan daughters of yours. However, I heard that the clan chief is quite lucky with the women. Please bring his wife out for me to take a look at....”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the Chen Clan cultivators’ jaws dropped, and many cries of shock could be heard. The grand elder simply stared at Bai Xiaochun, completely stunned.

The clan chief could no longer restrain himself.

“This is outrageous, Bai Hao!!” he bellowed.

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit guilty, and muttered a few more inward curses directed at the Giant Ghost King. However, he couldn’t back down now. Off to the side, Chen Hai looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a strange look that contained a bit of admiration.

Then he stepped forward, slapped the clan chief’s face and shouted, “What gall!”

Blood sprayed out of the clan chief’s mouth as he staggered backward. At the same time, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun with burning anger. However, the truth was that inside, he wasn’t actually that angry. He had already come to the conclusion that if this Bai Hao wanted to take his wife away, then afterward, he would finally be off the hook.

After all, stealing another man’s wife would earn him quite a bit of criticism. If he then went on to kill the husband, that would earn him the full ire of the public, so that seemed like a very unlikely possibility.

Naturally, the ideal thing for the clan chief to do at this point was to get out of the situation alive. In fact, he was already trying to think of a way to not just do that, but also improve his reputation within the clan.

“Alright, if he's going to take my wife, then I have to make it seem like an unacceptable insult that I will only endure for the sake of the clan. That will resolve my issues with the grand elder and get everyone else in the clan to trust me!!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, the clan chief bit down on his tongue and then coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. Looking up grimly at Bai Xiaochun, he radiated the air of a desperate, injured wild animal, ready to throw away everything to harm his opponent.

Those who saw the look of madness in his eyes were instantly shaken, and as for the Chen Clan cultivators, flames of anger began to burn in their hearts.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit frightened himself, and almost felt like crying. This whole situation was definitely a big humiliation, but he had to take the unjust blame in the place of the Giant Ghost King.... However... it really was an outrageous situation, and after a moment, he decided that the best thing... would be to go back and have the Giant Ghost King do the deed himself....

At this point, just when he was about to take it all back, the clan chief could see that he was hesitating, and instantly got nervous. Abandoning his act, he shouted, “Fine. Fine! I’ll do it for the clan! Men... bring out my wife!!”

The clan chief was trembling with so much anger that he seemed to age visibly. The other members of the clan were so furious that they had forgotten their terror and were glaring with open anger at Bai Xiaochun. When the clan chief saw that, he chuckled inwardly, and then intentionally swayed back and forth, as if he were about to fall over. He also bowed his head in bitter fashion. Of course, there was a glimmer of satisfaction deep in his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun stood there with his mouth open, having been unable to speak a single word. He could only sigh at the injustice of it all.... Then he thought about how he would surely become the subject of public ridicule, and that people might even curse him as a wife-stealer. He would probably drown in the drops of spittle that would inundate him from all the cursing he would endure. He wanted to cry, and yet, knew that he could not give voice to his lamentation. The only parties who would be privy to the truth other than himself would be heaven, earth, and the Giant Ghost King. Bai Xiaochun sighed in distress and simply watched as one of the members of the Chen Clan escorted a woman out.

She appeared to be a bit over thirty, beautiful, with snow-white skin and the elegant charm of a mature woman. However, she seemed terrified, although she was trying to keep herself under control. As soon as she appeared in the open, even Chen Hai couldn’t hold back from looking her up and down a few times. All of a sudden, he seemed to understand why Majordomo Bai wanted this woman.

Bai Xiaochun was cursing angrily inside. Although she was definitely beautiful, he didn’t really care about that, and in fact, was so embarrassed he simply cleared his throat.

“Ahem… sorry about this....” he said to her. With that, he turned and walked away, filled with embarrassment and unable to keep from wailing inwardly at how his name was going to be in ruins from now on.

As for Chen Hai, a strange smile could be seen on his face. Zhou Yixing gulped in a breath, but quickly pulled himself together. Then the two of them exchanged a glance and stepped forward to politely escort Mrs. Chen forward.

Mrs. Chen had already been informed about the situation. Face pale, she looked around at the clan, and then over at her husband, who had a pained look on his face. In her eyes flickered a venomous hatred; she knew her husband well, and although no one else would be able to tell, there was no way she would miss out on the clues that indicated he was putting on an act. Smiling faintly, she didn't hesitate at all to follow Chen Hai and Zhou Yixing out of the clan.

Her seemingly heartless reaction aroused the ire of many in the clan, and many of them swore to never forget the insult.

Before long, the thousands upon thousands of soul cultivators were gone from the Chen Clan. As for the clan chief, he watched everything playing out, and felt very pleased with himself. After all, losing a mere wife to save his life was definitely a price he was willing to pay.

Bai Xiaochun had a taut expression on his face, and felt profoundly annoyed. It was at this point that Chen Hai hurried over with Mrs. Chen in tow.

"Majordomo Bai, she... she requested an audience, sir." After delivering Mrs. Chen over, Chen Hai quickly hurried away, heart filled with admiration at Bai Xiaochun's daring act, and at the same time, feeling sorry for the woman.

Bai Xiaochun turned in surprise to face the exquisitely beautiful Mrs. Chen, and was just about to ask what she wanted when she took the initiative to speak.

"Many thanks, exalted one, for extracting me from a life of complete bitterness. Your humble servant would like to make a request. I sincerely hope that you can fulfil my wish, exalted one!"

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback, but after seeing how sincere Mrs. Chen seemed, and feeling a bit guilty about the whole situation, he nodded.

“Sure. Just say the word, and as long as it’s within my power, I’ll do my best."

“Exalted one, I request that you please... kill Chen Shishan!” The words came out of her mouth one word at a time, and afterward, she seemed as if a great weight had been lifted off of her. Of course, Chen Shishan was none other than the chief of the Chen Clan!

“What!?” Bai Xiaochun blurted, eyes widening as he looked in shock at Mrs. Chen. Things were already turning out very differently than he would have imagined.

“Chen Shishan is narrow and petty-minded. He is also ruthless and violent, and used living children to forge a magical treasure, arousing the wrath of men and gods alike. In fact, in order to gain more perfect control over his treasure, he sacrificed our own children to become the main souls in the item. I was powerless to stop him, and the grief and rage that incident caused has remained cold in the bottom of my heart ever since....

“Exalted one, for you to take me away this day is like a dream come true. I don’t hate you. In fact, I'm grateful. Considering your lofty position, exalted one, you have unprecedented power. Furthermore, I can tell that you aren’t really very interested in me, nor do you care much about your reputation. You must have your own secret sorrows and goals. As for me, I can guarantee that if you grant my request, that no matter what happens in the future, no matter what position you occupy or where you go, I will always carry out your orders without hesitation!” Although her words were spoken quietly, the wisdom and decisiveness within them carried incredible power. Moved, Bai Xiaochun looked at her closely.

In Bai Xiaochun’s heart, the matter of the Myriad Children Blood Banner was something that made the clan chief unfit to exist in heaven and earth. Then he heard that the man had sacrificed his own children to make it, which was something that not even wild beasts did. That made the clan chief worse than an animal! After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun turned and sent a message to Chen Hai.

Chen Hai was stunned at the message, and looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun. Then he turned and left. When he returned... he had the clan chief’s head in his hands!

The chief’s eyes were filled with disbelief and defiance... even in death, he had no idea why Bai Hao had dared to kill him!

When Mrs. Chen saw the clan chief’s head, her heart filled with profound emotions. Struggling to control her breath, she bowed at the waist to Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0680 awe-chapter-681

As the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, his actions were subject to intense scrutiny. Obviously, his action of taking tens of thousands of soul cultivators out of the city to visit the three great clans with violent intentions had not gone unnoticed.

Because of that, news of what had happened in the Cai Clan was already the talk of the town shortly after it occurred. Obviously, it wasn’t even necessary to mention how quickly rumors spread about the Chen Clan….

Almost everyone in the city heard the news, and soon, everyone was talking about the fate of the clan chief.

Faces flickered in shock and disbelief, and soon, the gossip in the city was raging.

“What? He forcibly took Mrs. Chen!?!?”

“Whooaah! This Bai Hao…. Who knew that he had such proclivities!? He actually took a liking to Chen Shishan’s wife. You know, I heard that she’s actually a top-rate beauty that has the perfect body for *that* type of cultivation….”

“You’re right… I don't even know what to say…. This Bai Hao is far too brazen. Not only did he steal Chen Shishan’s wife, he actually went so far as to kill the man!!”

Gossip raged like wildfire. As for some of the more well-informed individuals, they often responded to the shocking news with scornful words and jeering smiles.

As word spread, Bai Hao, in addition to being called vicious and merciless, and a reviler of his own family, was now known as someone who took an interest in the wives of others….

As would be expected, the Giant Ghost King eventually heard of the matter, and it caused his expression to turn grim. However, the fires of passion burned in his heart, and he turned his gaze in the direction of the Chen Clan, an expression of praise in his heart.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun provided Mrs. Chen with an escort of cultivators and sent her back to his residence in Giant Ghost City, while he took the remaining tens of thousands of men toward… the Bai Clan!

As they went along, Chen Hai would often cast admiring glances in Bai Xiaochun’s direction. When he thought about the unexpected proclivities that had been revealed, he suddenly felt like a new world had been opened up to him. He almost couldn't believe it was possible to be so flagrant and brave. And considering that Majordomo Bai was a powerful person, Chen Hai decided that the best thing to do was spend even more time with him than before.

Zhou Yixing prevented any strange expression from appearing on his face, and didn’t dare to speak a word about the matter. However, considering that he was a follower of Bai Xiaochun, he decided that in the future, he would take careful note of any other beautiful wives he saw….

How could Bai Xiaochun not know what the two of them were thinking? Although he felt more wronged than ever, there was nothing he could do to explain the situation.

Sighing with frustration, he kept his gaze fixed on the Bai Clan up ahead, his eyes glittering with cold light.

Many things had happened since he first arrived in this part of the world. Some of those things he had put behind him, but there was one thing that he could never forget: the sight of an ashen-faced young man underneath a towering tree.

“Bai Hao….” he murmured. Whether it was the deva soul or his overall grudge with the clan, all of it was wrapped up in karma. And the entire time, Bai Xiaochun had hoped to get justice for his apprentice.

Now… that time had come!

Tens of thousands of beams of light shot through the air toward the Bai Clan, radiating a bleak, deadly aura.

As for the Bai Clan, everyone was on edge, and many people were rushing around frantically. However, things were a bit different than in the Chen or Cai Clans. In the Bai Clan, the direct bloodline cultivators all knew that they had a life-or-death grudge with Bai Hao!

However, not everyone in the clan was part of the direct bloodline. Those members of the auxiliary bloodlines were nervous, but because they had not really participated in the hunt for Bai Hao, weren’t as worried.

Furthermore, during the rebellion, although the auxiliary bloodlines had participated in storming the city, they hadn’t been the ones to try to kill Bai Xiaochun.

The direct bloodline had taken the lead in that, and especially the clan chief. Even the clan elders who had attacked Bai Hao had mostly been from the direct bloodline.

Because of that, the divide between the direct bloodline and the auxiliary bloodlines was vast and clear!

In fact, the direct bloodline cultivators were currently surrounded and isolated by the auxiliary bloodlines, who stared at them with icy glares.

The clan chief, Madam Cai, the grand elder from the Hall of Corrections, the direct bloodline elders, and nearly a thousand other clan members all waited with ashen faces and expressions of despair.

It wasn’t that they didn’t wish to flee. It was that, despite how big heaven and earth was, it wasn’t big enough to have a place for them to hide. Besides, their enmity with Bai Hao was well-known. After the Giant Ghost King returned, and Bai Hao rose to prominence, everyone in the area had been trying to get on Bai Hao’s good side. Furthermore, many gazes had been cast in the direction of the Bai Clan.

After becoming the majordomo, Bai Xiaochun had hinted to many of the powerful organizations in the area that they should pay special attention to the Bai Clan. He had essentially sealed off the entire clan, making it impossible for anyone to leave it without making a wild and open attempt at escape.

Of course, none of the other groups in the area would have permitted that. Especially considering… that the Giant Ghost King hadn’t yet made clear his intentions for the future of the three great clans. If the clan as a whole tried to simply flee, they would definitely have been exterminated.

From the outside, the clan seemed unified, but the truth was that they were in fact dramatically divided. And thus, things had dragged on until the current moment. Most importantly of all… the auxiliary bloodline elders and clan members all knew that they would have to give an explanation to Bai Hao about the situation. If the direct bloodline fled, then it was entirely possible that Bai Hao would vent his anger on them.

Therefore, for their own safety… they had to make sure that the direct bloodline was around when Bai Hao came.

The entire clan was silent. Because of the taciturn attitude of the auxiliary bloodlines, the direct bloodline clan members were trembling, along with many of the servants associated with them. One of them was a young woman who had sneered at Bai Hao the moment he had entered the clan. Another was the old valet who had rebuked him. Everyone who had scorned and humiliated Bai Hao was there.

As time ticked by, their despair and hopelessness grew. That was especially true of the clan chief, whose face was ashen and whose heart was filled with bitterness. During the fight near the moat in the city, the detonation of the demigod soul had destroyed half of his body, and had nearly shattered his cultivation base. Thanks to some of a secret treasure in the Bai Clan’s reserve savings, he had recovered. But now, he was simply forced to wait as time passed. Next to him was Madam Cai, her face devoid of blood as she occasionally looked up into the air, her terror interspersed with specks of venomous hatred.

Of everyone present, no one hated Bai Hao more than Madam Cai. At the same time, no one felt more terror and despair than her. Never could she have anticipated that even with all the resources of the Bai Clan that she had put into her efforts, she would fail in the end. And Bai Hao… would actually turn everything around and rise to the heavens.

As the Bai Clan waited in silence, there was one beautiful young woman in the crowd who had a very complicated expression on her face as she occasionally scanned the skies. She was the fifth young lady. Even she could never have imagined that Bai Hao would one day achieve the things that he had.

Also in the crowd was an old man who was apparently viewed as a leader by the clan elders from the auxiliary bloodlines. He was the grand elder from the Hall of Justice. He wore a wistful expression as he thought back to the scene of Bai Hao betraying the clan. Eventually, he simply closed his eyes.

“What a pity… The true qilin son of the Bai Clan….” Despite being a powerful grand elder, he couldn’t go against the orders of the patriarch. The best he had been able to do was not attack Bai Hao during the fighting.

Suddenly, both of the grand elders’ expressions flickered. Other clan elders reacted similarly, as did the clan chief. People held their breath as a sound like thunder filled the air, and a black cloud covered the sky, radiating killing intent!

“He’s here….” It was impossible to say who said it. The entire Bai Clan waited nervously, looking up into the black cloud of tens of thousands of soul cultivators. Descending from within that cloud was… Bai Xiaochun!!

Every step he took was like a bolt of lightning that slammed into the hearts of the direct bloodline clan members, and left their faces as ashen as death.

The clan chief was trembling, and the venomous rage in Madam Cai’s eyes was overshadowed only by the terror she felt….

“I don't like killing people,” he said, his growling voice echoing out in all heaven and earth, “but sometimes, I have to do it anyway…. It doesn’t matter if I'm doing it for myself or for others… or whether it's right or wrong…. Kill them!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0681 awe-chapter-682

Bai Xiaochun pointed in the direction of the Bai Clan, not at the auxiliary bloodline members, but at the encircled direct bloodline!

His action of pointing his finger was like a crash of thunder. He didn’t make a speech. He didn’t grandstand. He simply pointed.

Chen Hai was at his side like he had been the entire time, and as soon as Bai Xiaochun pointed out, the man's killing intent soared.

“Carry out the orders of the exalted majordomo!” Chen Hai’s voice seemed to contain a rain of carnage as he spoke these words. At the same time, he blurred into motion toward the Bai Clan!

Behind him, tens of thousands of cultivators followed, killing intent raging.

Among them were dozens of Nascent Soul experts, as well as numerous necromancers. It was an entire army of deadly cultivators descending on the Bai Clan!!

Fierce fighting broke out instantly, and although everyone in the clan had been prepared for it, it was still unexpected. Blood began to rain down almost immediately.

“Bai Hao!! You unfilial bastard!!” the clan chief howled, his eyes bloodshot. The clan chief had never expected that things would play out so simply, that no mercy or compassion would be shown at all. After all, this man was Bai Hao’s father!

He had originally hoped to try to talk matters out, to admit that he was in the wrong. He had hoped to acknowledge that Bai Hao was a member of the clan, and that for the sake of the clan, they should let bygones be bygones.... Of course, from the very beginning, he had also planned to figure out a way to seek revenge later on. But now... all of his plans were pointless.

Bai Xiaochun did not waste time. He hoisted the blade, and then chopped it down!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Chen Hai and his men attacked. Screams began to rise up, as well as pleas for mercy. Although they reached Bai Xiaochun’s ears, he simply looked up into the sky, an unreadable expression on his face. Were Li Qinghou here to see him, or his Elder Brother sect leader, they would be shocked. This was a Bai Xiaochun who was very different from the Bai Xiaochun of the past.

Although his fundamental personality had not changed, his methods and tactics had most certainly transformed.

The auxiliary bloodline members looked on silently. They didn’t interfere, nor did they help the direct bloodline. They simply watched. The fifth young lady, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice, and everyone else did the same thing.

Screams rang out from the direct bloodline clan members. The young servant girl who had scorned Bai Xiaochun was stabbed through the chest with a blade, and died with a look of despair on her face.... The old valet also met his end in horror, his eyes blank.

All of the people who had scorned Bai Hao were put to death by Chen Hai and his men. They couldn’t even fight back. The direct bloodline elders who had chased after Bai Hao outside the clan or attacked him in Giant Ghost City were overwhelmed by despair. A few of them managed to fight back, but then, stained with blood, howled and tried to flee in various directions.

“Loose arrows!” Chen Hai growled with a cold smile. Countless soul cultivators suddenly drew greatbows out, and within moments, a cloud of arrows pierced through the air. Then, the fleeing clan elders screamed as they were destroyed in body and soul!

Bai Xiaochun didn't watch. Instead, he looked up into the sky, motionless and expressionless.

The grand elder from the Hall of Corrections died with a bitter smile on his face, cut down by Chen Hai and two other Nascent Soul experts. Soon, the only person left standing was the clan chief.

He looked around at the mountains of corpses, despair filling his face. Then he threw his head back and howled. Throwing all caution to the wind, he transformed into a beam of light that shot directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

“If I die, I’m taking you with me, you unfilial bastard!!” As he shot through the air, numerous Nascent Soul experts moved to intercept him, and soon, fighting broke out in midair.

The clan chief fought with utter ferocity, until he was only about 300 meters away from Bai Xiaochun. Soaked in blood, eyes filled with madness, he tried to push forward further, but was then set upon by more Nascent Soul experts.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The fighting was fierce, and the clan chief was soon coughing up blood as he glared at Bai Hao, who was standing only 150 meters away. He was trembling, and his life force was almost out. His chest was caved in, and his nascent soul almost destroyed. His eyes were even beginning to fade. He was like a lamp running out of oil, unable to continue fighting, barely able to breathe.... And yet, in his madness, he continued to stagger toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun slowly looked down from the sky toward the clan chief.

“Let him come over,” he said. The surrounding soul cultivators immediately stayed their hands and stepped back, allowing the clan chief to approach.

Oh so slowly, Bai Xiaochun buried the image of the dying Bai Hao into the depths of his heart. Then he focused on the trembling, maddened clan chief.

“Do you feel any regret at all?” Bai Xiaochun asked softly. “Bai Hao... is also your flesh and blood. Your son.”

“Yes. I regret letting your mother die so quickly. I should have made her die screaming in pain! And I also regret the day you were born! I should have crushed you to death that instant!!” The clan chief truly had descended into madness, and even began to cackle maniacally. However, as he laughed, the light in his eyes slowly began to fade, until he simply toppled over onto the ground....

The chief of the Bai Clan was dead!

The members of the auxiliary bloodline stood there quietly, their heads bowed, their hearts filled with complex emotions and deep melancholy.

The public square in the middle of the clan was filled with corpses at the moment. But there was still one person left alive. She was spattered with blood and shaking physically, and yet filled with the vilest of hatred. Deranged laughter rose up as she struggled to her feet.

“Your mother was a slut, you son of a bitch. Get over here. Don’t you hate me? Why don’t you kill me yourself!?!? The only thing I regret is that the people I sent to kill you failed in their task!!”

She actually should have died earlier, but the Nascent Soul cultivators who took the lead in the slaughter knew that Bai Hao’s enmity with Madam Cai was particularly deep. Therefore, they held back, injuring her and leaving her alive for him to deal with.

Bai Xiaochun ignored the hysterical Madam Cai, and instead turned to look at Chen Hai.

“This Madam Cai didn’t just send one assassin. She sent many. Get me their names.” With that, he took a step forward and vanished into the air. When he reappeared, he was in an abandoned courtyard residence somewhere in the Bai Clan.

The courtyard was choked with weeds, in the midst of which could be seen numerous children’s toys, all of them old and rotting. Also in the courtyard was a well....

Bai Xiaochun stood there for a long moment before sighing.

“As Bai Hao’s Master, I am acting on his behalf to execute vengeance on you, Madam Cai.” He waved his hand, and the weeds in the courtyard vanished. The toys turned into dust....

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust....

Having accomplished these things, he left. On his way out of the clan, he looked over at the fifth young lady. Sensing his gaze, she looked up at him, and their eyes met.

“Fifth Elder Sister, why don’t you act as the clan chieftess from now on.... Grand Elder, please offer her your support....”

With a light sigh, the grand elder from the Hall of Justice looked at Bai Xiaochun and nodded. Then he turned and clasped hands respectfully toward the fifth young lady. As for the other surrounding members of the auxiliary bloodline, they slowly began to awaken from the nightmare of blood, whereupon they too clasped hands to the fifth young lady.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun took the Bai Clan’s thousand years of reserve savings with him when he returned to Giant Ghost City. Along the way, Chen Hai turned to him and said, “We got the names you asked for. As for Madam Cai... she’s dead.”

“Heavenly Marquis Chen,” Bai Xiaochun said softly, “might I trouble you to bring the heads of every name on that list to me within three days?” Chen Hai nodded somberly.

By the time they returned to the city, word was already beginning to spread that the direct bloodline of the Bai Clan had been exterminated. Although it was shocking news, it wasn’t entirely unexpected. And of course, it further impressed upon people how vicious and merciless Bai Hao was.

The slaughter which had been carried out caused Bai Hao’s reputation to grow. A mere look from him would cause people to immediately stop talking. A snort from him was like heavenly thunder that would resound in the hearts of all present.

To the powerful organizations in the city, the lost lives of the Bai Clan’s direct bloodline became a clear reminder of what type of person Majordomo Bai was.

He was in the good graces of the king, a powerful official who existed far above everyone else in the realm....

Even devas like Duke Deathcrier felt pressure because of him. After all, nobody had done more for the Giant Ghost King than him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0682 awe-chapter-683

After returning to Giant Ghost City, Bai Xiaochun took some time get his emotions back under control. He didn’t like killing, but after everything that had happened to him during his time as Bai Hao, too much frustration and rage had built up inside of him because of the injustice of it all.

For Bai Hao’s sake, he made the Bai Clan pay the price for their past actions. The direct bloodline had been wiped away forever!

After he was calm again, he looked at the pile of dazzling items that he had accumulated, and his eyes began to glitter brightly.

Although he generally wasn’t a greedy person, and wasn’t overly attracted to worldly possessions, he was currently looking at the type of wealth that most ordinary people wouldn’t be able to accumulate even in ten thousand lifetimes. It was enough to get his heart pounding audibly.

Countless vengeful souls.... A seemingly endless amounts of soul medicine.... A deva soul. Innumerable spirit enhanced magical items. As he examined them all, he gasped constantly.

Most moving of all were the secret treasures that had come from the reserve savings of the three clans.

The Cai Clan had its spiritjade statue, but the Chen and Bai Clans also had similar items. For example, the Chen Clan’s secret treasure was a crimson jade bottle, within which was a drop of blood that could supposedly enable any dead soul to recover its memories from its previous life, and become intelligent. Essentially, it could transform a soul into something like a ghost cultivator!

In the wildlands, precious materials like that were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns. Originally, the Chen Clan had planned to use that drop of blood on their patriarch, after he reached the demigod level and then ran out of longevity. It would enable that patriarch to live on as a ghost cultivator and protect the clan for endless years. Unfortunately, the Chen Clan patriarch had been incarcerated after the rebellion, rendering such plans useless.

The Bai Clan's reserve savings contained a seven-colored lotus seed pod. Originally it had contained seven lotus seeds, but it now only had two. Anyone who consumed one of those miraculous seeds would experience a complete recovery from any injuries. In fact, even if one's body were completely shattered, those seeds would return that person to their original state, as if they had been reborn.

The reason why the clan chief and the deva patriarch had been able to recover from their serious injuries so quickly was because of those seeds!

Any one of these three secret treasures would be enough to shake heaven and earth, and went to show how profound the reserve savings of the three great clans were.

"Those three clans were definitely way too rich...." Bai Xiaochun thought, licking his lips. Next, he picked up a jade slip that contained flame conjuring formulas from all the clans, everything from one- to seventeen-colored flame.

Despite scouring all three of the clans, though, no formula for eighteen-colored flame had been recovered. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun came to be convinced... that the three great clans didn’t have such a formula. Actually, among all of the necromancer clans in the entire Wildlands, the formula for eighteen-colored flame was one of the rarest things imaginable.

“Ah, whatever. I’ll just have to wait for a future opportunity to find the formula. Or, who knows, maybe Bai Hao’s method will eventually produce it.” Despite the fact that his pile of treasures didn’t contain that formula, he was still very excited overall.

“I really struck a goldmine this time. I don’t think I’ll be able to get rid of all this stuff if I tried for my entire life....” By this point, he realized that he really enjoyed shaking down rich clans. Compared to shakedowns, cleaning out soulgrounds was a virtually pointless activity.

“If I have a chance in the future, I’ll definitely shake down some more clans.” He was fully convinced that this was the best route to take. However, moments later, a frown could be seen on his face, and an uneasy feeling rose up in him.

“Wait a second, there are just simply too many valuable treasures here.... If I keep them all for myself, people are definitely going to get jealous.... And the Giant Ghost King probably wouldn’t be happy either....” Hesitating, he eyed the pile of treasure for a bit before making a decision. “Material possessions are nice, but my poor little life is the foundation of everything.”

He finished his work around evening, whereupon he flew up to the royal palace on the giant ghost statue. Upon arriving, he clasped hands and bowed respectfully, then said in a loud voice, “Bai Hao is here to seek an audience with his highness the king.”

Silence met his request, so he stood there quietly for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. Then, a solemn voice rang out.

“Come in.”

The time spent waiting had been very nerve-wracking, so at this point, he finally breathed a sigh of relief. Heart thumping, he mused that the Giant Ghost King really did love to scheme and plot, and then sighed at the memory of being able to slap the man across the side of the head over and over again.

Unfortunately... that excitement was something he had to bury deep in his heart. Even if he were ten thousand times more daring than he actually was, he would still never dare to do such a thing again.

Settling his thoughts, he put a fawning smile onto his face and then hurried into the grand hall to find the Giant Ghost King sitting there solemnly on his throne.

“You’re back?” the king said coolly. “You certainly made quite the scene.”

He looked neither angry nor pleased, and from the words he spoke, it was impossible to say whether he was offering praise or criticism.

Bai Xiaochun was both confused and nervous. Now that the Giant Ghost King had his cultivation base back, he was completely terrifying. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t shake the feeling that if he said even one wrong thing, the man would fly into a rage and have him executed.

However, he was fairly certain how to deal with this version of the Giant Ghost King, and plastered a look of such incredible excitement onto his face that it seemed like he must wish to worship him.

“Just as you had predicted, Your Highness, the three great clans were overflowing with wealth. Vengeful souls, soul medicines, magical items, they had too much stuff to count.... However, instead of handing them over, they defiantly tried to deceive your humble servant.

“Unfortunately for them, I had come to visit you beforehand, and thanks to your boundless royal grace, was given plenty of inspiration, and thus saw through their little plot. I even managed to get my hands on the secret treasures in their reserve savings!” From the look on his face and the way he worded things, it seemed like he was giving all the credit to the Giant Ghost King.

No expression could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face, but there was the faintest hint of irritation in his eyes. Clearly, he was becoming slightly immune to the powers of Bai Xiaochun’s flattery, although he still enjoyed it to some degree.

“Let’s forget about the Chen and Bai Clans for the moment,” Bai Xiaochun continued. “The Cai Clan’s secret treasure is just completely shocking. It's a spiritjade statue, three meters tall and mysterious to the ultimate degree. It emits light that can surpass the heavens, and has spiritual energy of the rarest type here in the Wildlands.” As he spoke, he continued to look extremely excited, but also took the time to secretly gauge the Giant Ghost King’s reaction.

“As soon as it comes out into the open, the entire area for 3,000 meters in all directions gets filled with incredibly strong spiritual energy. In terms of large-scale use, it could sustain an entire clan, and if used alone, would count as a precious treasure for personal cultivation!" Bai Xiaochun's facial expression was extremely lively, and he used compelling gestures to emphasize his words. From the way he described it, the spiritjade statue was obviously something completely one-of-a-kind.

Although the Giant Ghost King had never seen the spiritjade statue, Bai Xiaochun's description made it sound incredible. "Hm. Yeah, if what you say is true, then that thing really is incredible."

However, despite his words, his face remained completely expressionless.

Bai Xiaochun had been measuring the Giant Ghost King up this entire time, and after seeing his current reaction, he decided to take a step forward and lower his voice.

"Your humble servant has already put the spiritjade statue in one of your side courtyards, sir. Feel free to go study it at any time."

At this point, the Giant Ghost King's eyes widened, and then a broad smile appeared on his face. This was the first time he had ever shown such warmth to Bai Xiaochun. Clearly, he was very pleased with what Bai Xiaochun had done, and even looked at him with open praise.

"This little hooligan…" he thought. "Really knows what to say and how to say it. Not only is he skilled, he's generous too…. On top of that, he knows how to figure out what people are thinking." As of this moment, the Giant Ghost King's opinion of Bai Xiaochun was only continuing to grow higher. However, at this point he suddenly seemed to remember something, and cleared his throat. "Oh right, I heard that the wife of the former clan chief of the Chen Clan is supposedly a peerless beauty, as has a physique perfect for cultivation assistance--”

Before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun, despite cursing inwardly, gave a knowing chuckle. “Your Highness, I’ve already delivered Mrs. Chen to your side courtyard. You can go *study* her any time you wish, sir....”

The Giant Ghost King immediately slapped his palm down onto the arm of his throne. Eyes widening into a glare, he barked, “How impudent! Mrs. Chen is the wife of a former clan chief, and I am one of the four heavenly kings, a majestic demigod! How could I do such a thing!? If word got out, what do you think it would do to my reputation!? Are you stupid, Bai Hao?!?! Get Mrs. Chen out of here this instant!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0683 awe-chapter-684

The Giant Ghost King truly seemed angry, and also extremely disappointed by Bai Xiaochun’s failure. From the look on his face, if Bai Xiaochun didn’t get Mrs. Chen out of the royal palace immediately, then he would take action and make sure Bai Xiaochun understood what it was like to be punished for making a mistake!

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very wronged, and was inwardly cursing the shameless Giant Ghost King. However, he simply stood there, giving a level look to the Giant Ghost King, seemingly unmoved by the anger on display.

“What are you doing just standing there!?” the Giant Ghost King roared, slapping his hand down onto his throne again.

By now, there was no fawning look on Bai Xiaochun’s face, only a pained expression. Sighing, he said, “Your Highness, don’t worry.... The only parties privy to this matter are heaven, earth, you, and me. There isn’t a third person in the world who knows the truth. Everyone thinks that I, Bai Hao, took a liking to Mrs. Chen, that I’m the one who swept her away and then killed the clan chief....

“Furthermore, no one knows that she is in your side courtyard, sir.” He sighed again, looking at the Giant Ghost King as if to say... *enough with the act, nobody’s fooling anybody here*....

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes went even wider than before, and yet he was a bit at a loss for words. Originally, he had assumed that Bai Hao would flatter him like he usually did, after which he would eventually pretend to give in. He had never imagined that Bai Xiaochun would be so direct about the matter....

Furthermore, the way that Bai Xiaochun put on an air of being wronged caused an embarrassed smile to surface on the Giant Ghost King’s face. The truth was that this Bai Hao really had suffered a blow to his reputation because of the matter, and nobody else in the world knew the truth of the matter....

Inside, the Giant Ghost King was actually feeling wonderful about the whole matter, and as of this moment, his opinion of Bai Hao only continued to climb. Although he was delighted at how the matter had been handled, he continued to glare in disappointment.

Finally, he sighed helplessly, shook his head and said, “Ah, whatever. Just don't do this kind of thing ever again, alright?!”

Bai Xiaochun’s face twitched, and he continued to cast a level gaze at the Giant Ghost King, the expression on his face saying... *it’s only the two of us here, there’s no need for the act*....

The two of them stared at each other for a moment, after which the Giant Ghost King started to feel more guilty. Clearing his throat, he said, “The position of majordomo is really just honorary. How about I appoint you as the inspections commissioner of Giant Ghost City? No one will be exempt from investigation, and if you find any indications of rebellion fomenting, you can execute the guilty with impunity!”

The Giant Ghost King emphasized his last words with the flick of a sleeve, and a very serious expression.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes sparkled in response. The thought of being the inspections commissioner, a person who could investigate anyone he wanted, was very exciting.

Bai Xiaochun decided to confirm what he had just heard. "What if people offer resistance?"

The Giant Ghost King chuckled coldly. Considering everything that had occurred during the rebellion, he actually didn't trust anyone in the city. And that was especially true considering that the Nine Serenities King had been involved. Therefore, he felt little good will toward anyone. Waving his hand, he summoned a black spear, which he threw over to Bai Xiaochun.

It was like a black bolt of lightning which shot through the air to appear right in front of him. To his shock, as the spear came to a stop in front of him, thrumming loudly, he realized that it had six golden designs on it!

Mind reeling, and eyes as wide as saucers, he gasped and said, "A sixteenfold spirit enhancement!?!?"

"I used that spear a lot in my early days," the Giant Ghost King said. "Take it as a reward. If anyone causes any problems, use that spear to execute them!" The decisiveness in his voice was intense and also somber. As he looked at Bai Xiaochun, he recalled the fact that he hadn't abandoned him despite all of the dangerous situations they faced, and also thought about how there was a powerful magical treasure and a beautiful woman waiting for him in his side courtyard.

"The right hand of the giant ghost statue used to be the palace of operations for Duke Netherworld. Let that be your official mansion from now on."

Bai Xiaochun’s chest heaved with pride, and his eyes sparkled with excitement. The Giant Ghost King had officially promoted him, given him a precious treasure, and also provided him with a palace of operations. All of that showed that he was indeed very pleased.... Radiating health and vigor, he clasped hands and loudly said, “Thank you, Your Highness!”

Smiling in approval, the Giant Ghost King offered a few more words of encouragement, then gave a look that indicated that Bai Xiaochun should take his leave. Bai Xiaochun knew how to behave himself when necessary, and could tell that the old pervert was getting antsy. Therefore, he put the spear he had been given into his bag of holding, then clasped hands and prepared to leave.

Just when he was about to walk out the door, he stopped and looked back at the king. “Your Highness, you don’t happen to have a formula for eighteen-colored flame, do you sir?”

“A formula for eighteen-colored flame? I don’t. Only the earthly necromancers have that formula. There are three of them in all of the Wildlands, and they have incredibly high positions. I couldn’t take the formula from one of them even if I wanted to.” The Giant Ghost King knew that Bai Hao was a genius when it came to flame conjuring, but what he had just said about the formula for eighteen-colored flame was completely true.

With that, he gave an impatient wave of his hand, and then vanished.

“Old pervert!” Bai Xiaochun cursed inwardly. With that, he left the royal palace and flew in a beam of light to his old residence. Then, he took some of the treasures he had taken from the three great clans and gave portions to Chen Hai and Zhou Yixing.

He also had them distribute rewards to the tens of thousands of soul cultivators who had helped them deal with the three clans. After all, he had long since come to understand the value of rewarding the efforts of the people who worked for you.

Chen Hai was very happy, and Zhou Yixing was equally excited. And as the rewards were distributed to the other soul cultivators, their reverence for Bai Xiaochun grew.

Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun looked up at the palace of operations on the right hand of the giant ghost statue. For a moment, he hesitated; he had a lot of secrets, and it made him nervous to think about being so close to the Giant Ghost King himself.

But then he stuck his chin up and proudly murmured, “Ah whatever. It’s only a palace of operations. As the majordomo of Giant Ghost City *and* the inspections commissioner, I can’t just have one single residence.”

With that, he rubbed his bag of holding, within which were more than ten tongues of fifteen-colored flame!

Those fifteen-colored flames had all been taken from the three great clans!

“Although I can’t concoct fifteen-colored flame, with these finished flames in hand to study, perhaps I can reverse engineer my way to success. At the very least, I’ll be able to cut a lot of time off of my research! Plus... with a fifteen-colored flame, I can break through from the early Nascent Soul stage into the mid stage!”

That thought got him even more excited. Once he performed another spirit enhancement on his nascent soul, it would definitely cause another huge stir in the Wildlands.... As if it weren't bad enough that everyone was searching for him....

“Well, I can't let that fact hold me back from improving my cultivation base. What am I scared of anyway? As the majordomo of Giant Ghost City *and* the inspections commissioner, I'm the one in charge of looking for Bai Xiaochun! There's nothing at all to fear! If I can't find Bai Xiaochun, then who else could?!” After going back and forth for a few more minutes, he headed to a secluded meditation chamber.

Once inside, he set up some spell formations and also utilized the powers of his mask to make sure he was completely safe. Then he took out his turtle-wok, sat down cross-legged, and sent his nascent soul flying out of his body.

Then, a fifteen-colored flame appeared, and golden light flickered!

Far away in Arch-Emperor City, on the Hell-Emperor Stele, Bai Xiaochun's name was still in 1st place on the list, with the number fourteen next to it. But then, his name began to shine with dazzling light.

All of Arch-Emperor City was thrown into another commotion as people looked up in shock to see... the number fifteen appear next to Bai Xiaochun's name!

“Fifteen!?!? Bai Xiaochun performed another spirit enhancement on his nascent soul?!?!”

“Is this guy suicidal or something? He just won’t give up on toying with his life! What a psycho!!”

"I have the feeling that as long as he doesn’t get killed, Bai Xiaochun is going to end up being the successor of the Hell-Emperor....”

Quite a few people were making that very prediction.... As the city devolved into chaos, Mistress Red-Dust was sitting in meditation in the Giant Ghost Legion. When she found out what was happening, she let out a shrill scream; her hatred for Bai Xiaochun already ran as deep as the depths of the Yellow Springs.

Of course, the news flew out of Arch-Emperor City as surely as if it had wings, and the search for Bai Xiaochun grew more frantic.

All of the chosen in the Wildlands were forced to grit their teeth angrily. It was almost as if they had all been slapped across the face. There in the Wildlands, the Hell-Emperor Stele had been overtaken by a cultivator from the Heavenspan River! It was really driving them mad.

“I'm gonna kill this Bai Xiaochun!!”

“You better hope I don’t find you, Bai Xiaochun, otherwise I’ll crush your bones into powder and throw it into the wind!!” All sorts of curses could be heard throughout the Wildlands.

Although Bai Xiaochun had no way to know for sure how everyone was reacting, he could guess. His nascent soul’s eyes opened, and it flew out of the wok and back into his body. After he carefully inspected it to make sure there were no problems, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“Hmmmphh. Want to kill me? Why don’t you try and find me first!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he tested out his cultivation base a bit, and was immediately very excited.

His cultivation base was now as boundless as the sea. He was in the mid Nascent Soul stage, far beyond his previous level. In fact, he suddenly felt the impulse to go find someone half a step into the Deva Realm to fight with!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0684 awe-chapter-685

“It’s too bad I still don’t have a way to cultivate my Undying Bones….” Although he was happy to have improved his cultivation base again, the mere thought of his Undying Bones got him depressed.

Although he had acquired plenty of treasure from the three great clans, he hadn’t found any objects that could provide abundant life force. That left him sighing with regret at the fact that he hadn’t used his Eternal Parasol on the Giant Ghost King back when he’d had the chance. That would have at least given him a bit of life force to work with.

“What a pity. Well, time and tide wait for no man….” Sighing, he drove such dangerous thoughts from his mind. After all, if the Giant Ghost King ever found out he had thought such things, he would probably skin him alive….

“For now, I’ll have to forget about my Undying Bones. The most important thing right now is my research into fifteen-colored flame….” Obviously, the best way to keep improving his cultivation base was by working hard with multi-colored flame. Up to now, he had already done plenty of research into fifteen-colored flame, but there were still many aspects of the formula that he didn’t understand.

Taking a deep breath, he produced a tongue of fifteen-colored flame from his bag of holding, then began to study it closely. Soon, the glow of augury could be seen in his eyes as he began to analyze it from all angles.

Studying an actual fifteen-colored flame in this way would make him much more proficient in using it, and would be a reference point that would make future work much smoother.

Three days passed by in a flash. Bai Xiaochun remained immersed in researching fifteen-colored flame, and on numerous occasions, his eyes flickered with delight and anticipation. Although three days was a short time, because of his augury method, he actually made significant progress.

Eventually, he sent the flame spreading out to look at it in a different state, and then even went so far as to intentionally destroy it. When all of the fifteen different types of flame appeared, he compared the familiar fourteen colors with the unfamiliar fifteenth. Based on what he already knew, that gave him significant further enlightenment.

When evening fell on the third day, he took a deep breath and looked at the destroyed fifteen-colored flame for a long moment, then closed his eyes. After an hour passed, his eyes opened, and they glowed brightly. He quickly pulled out another fifteen-colored flame to continue studying, when all of a sudden, he turned his attention outside of the secluded meditation chamber.

“Three days have passed….” he murmured. With that, he emerged out in the open and waited in the courtyard, looking up into the sky. Before long, a beam of light appeared, within which was Chen Hai.

“Bai, my boy!” he said, laughing heartily. After landing in front of Bai Xiaochun, he clasped hands and bowed, a broad smile on his face.

“Chen, old pal!” Bai Xiaochun said, stepping forward to pull him up from his bow.

“Bai, my boy, the mission was accomplished smoothly! All of the things you asked me to get for you are right here.” With that, he produced a bag of holding, which he handed out to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun looked at it, and was already starting to pant. Eyes flashing with cold light, he clasped hands to Chen Hai, took the bag, and then chatted for a few more minutes. Eventually, Chen Hai left.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun went back into his secluded meditation chamber and sat down cross-legged. Inside of the bag of holding were nine human heads!

They were the nine assassins that Madam Cai had identified when being interrogated. None of them were from the Bai Clan; they had all been employed directly by Madam Cai. Regardless of their identity or standing, they were now nothing more than bodiless heads.

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun found himself thinking of that moment when he had first arrived in the Wildlands, and had actually glimpsed Bai Hao in the flesh, still alive. A moment passed, and he waved his hand, transforming the nine severed heads into nothing more than ash.

“Bai Hao, my apprentice,” he said softly, “I have avenged your death. Even though I'm still using your identity, I think that your spirit can now rest in peace.” At this point, he finally let out a long sigh. The direct bloodline had been put to death, and all of the killers were now nothing more than ash. As of this point, all of the karma was completely and utterly resolved.

Bai Xiaochun took a bit of time to calm himself again, then pulled out another tongue of fifteen-colored flame and began to perform auguries.

More time passed. An entire month flew by, during which time Bai Xiaochun immersed himself in his study and auguries regarding fifteen-colored flame. He never came out of secluded meditation, and yet, his fame continued to grow in Giant Ghost City. The talk about the things which had occurred with the three great clans was beginning to die down a bit, but the reverence people felt toward Bai Xiaochun only grew.

And then there was the announcement that the Giant Ghost King had appointed Bai Hao to be the inspections commissioner, and had even gifted him with a treasured spear and an official palace of operations, and his name grew even more powerful and famous.

As Bai Xiaochun grew more powerful and respected, the various groups and organizations within the city began to quiet down. The crisis period for Giant Ghost City had passed, and things were really starting to get back to normal.

However, no one could ever have anticipated that, just when Giant Ghost City was getting back to normal, one afternoon, a very shocking incident occurred 500,000 kilometers away!

It was a vast, 50,000-kilometer area covered with dense fog, a muddy marsh that wasn’t even inhabited by wild animals. Because of the lack of any sort of living beings, it was a location of death and lifelessness.

The fog never lifted from the area no matter the time of year, which made it very difficult for anyone to see in. Because of the intense aura of death, and the vile miasma that was dangerous even to Nascent Soul cultivators, few people ever entered the place for long. If they did, they would surely die.

It had long since become a forbidden region that no one entered. Any soul cultivator who found the place in their way would always skirt around it.

However, any almighty being who could look down on the place from above would notice that there was actually a structure within the swirling fog!

The area around the tea kettle swarmed with souls. However, they were different than the vengeful souls usually seen in the Wildlands. Their eyes were bright red, and they seemed particularly violent. They even had horns sticking out of their foreheads, making them look like evil ghosts!

However, the violent, evil ghosts only existed directly around the tea kettle, and didn’t fly out into the fog beyond. Apparently, unless they were provoked, they wouldn’t actually cause harm.

This location was one of the arcane pocket realms belonging to the imperial clan. It was the Necromancer Kettle!

No investigation or research had ever confirmed the origin of the Necromancer Kettle, or the reason why it bore the semblance of a tea kettle. The only thing that was known was that the good fortune inside of it belonged exclusively to the imperial clan. The fog around the kettle formed a year-round seal that was only opened on occasion. However, on this day, the entire Necromancer Kettle began to tremble unexpectedly, and the lands around it started quaking violently.

Thunderous rumbles filled the air, and the fog began to seethe and slowly rise off of the ground. At that point, high in the sky above the Necromancer Kettle, a bizarre, black flower appeared!

The black flower had five petals, each of which resembled the face of a ghost. As the flower bloomed, the fog swirled around it and also turned into the shape of a ghost face. It was a very shocking sight to behold.

The first person to notice the sudden change was none other than the Giant Ghost King in Giant Ghost City. Moments before, he had been sitting in his royal palace listening to Duke Deathcrier report on some matters relating to Nine Serenities City. His eyes had been flickering with cold light, and he had been about to ask a question when, all of a sudden, his face fell, and he looked off into the distance.

“The Ghost King Orchid!” he said, his aura fluctuating wildly. Duke Deathcrier’s eyes went wide as the Giant Ghost King suddenly vanished, to appear high in the sky above the city. There, he began to move as quickly as a lightning bolt, to appear in the area near the Necromancer Kettle. When he saw the black flower floating in the sky, his eyes began to shine brightly. He cast a glance at the Necromancer Kettle, and then turned and vanished again, to reappear back in his royal palace. After dismissing Duke Deathcrier, he closed his eyes thoughtfully for a long moment, then turned to look in the direction of Arch-Emperor City.

It was in that very city, far, far away from Giant Ghost City, that, in a certain grand hall in the imperial palace, eight ancient and crumbling bones had been enshrined. Suddenly, one of those crumbling pieces of bone began to belch out black mist, which quickly took the shape of a flower identical to the one above the Necromancer Kettle!

Several old cultivators who acted as guards outside of that particular hall had sensed the change, and rushed inside. When they saw the black flower coming out of the crumbling bone, they were shocked to the core.

“The Ghost King Orchid is blooming!!”

After exchanging glances, the old men took out jade slips to notify the Grand Heavenmaster.

The Grand Heavenmaster was currently in Arch-Emperor City’s Heavenmaster Hall. When he got the news, he opened his eyes and looked off into the distance toward the Necromancer Kettle. “The Necromancer Kettle is active, and the Ghost King Orchid is blooming! One of the eight arcane pocket realms has opened. That flower is of particular importance to the Giant Ghost King….”

Suddenly, he heard a voice from outside.

“Heavenmaster, Goddess Red-Dust is here requesting an audience.”

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes flickered, and then he said, “Send her away. Make an announcement that the Ghost King Orchid will be available to whoever destiny sees fit.”

After the Grand Heavenmaster’s announcement, news about the blooming of the Ghost King Orchid quickly spread through Arch-Emperor City. Meanwhile, back in Giant Ghost City, Bai Xiaochun had just gone through his sixth fifteen-colored flame. However, his level of control was improving, and it was at this point that he excitedly took out a soulhoarding pagoda. Moments later, a vast horde of vengeful souls flew out into the open, and Bai Xiaochun began to work on conjuring a fifteen-colored flame.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0685 awe-chapter-686

Due to his augury and reverse-engineering methods, Bai Xiaochun was very confident regarding the formula for fifteen-colored flame. However, it was still a very difficult thing that would require a lot of work.

Thankfully, he had plenty of vengeful souls to work with. He made one attempt after another, and failed at every one, but at the same time, learned from every one. After identifying the reasons for failure and then resolving them, he made constant progress. Time passed, and he became more and more proficient in flame conjuring.

“Ten more times! That’s all I need to succeed!” Even as he pulled out more vengeful souls to work with, the blooming of the Ghost King Orchid was causing a huge stir in Arch-Emperor City.

“The Ghost King Orchid is blooming!! Supposedly, the first generation Arch-Emperor personally planted that Ghost King Orchid in the Necromancer Kettle. If you eat the fruit of that flower, you can heal a damaged divine soul and purify your body, removing any defilements!”

“There’s another thing it can do. It can perfectly reset your cultivation base, allowing you to completely replace all of the techniques you use with other ones!”

“I also heard that the fruit of the Ghost King Orchid can bring dead souls back to life!!”

In the briefest moment, Arch-Emperor City began to buzz with all sorts of talk. The important nobility and influential people within the city were all buzzing with excitement. Although the Ghost King Orchid was of vital importance to the Giant Ghost King, it could also be very beneficial to others. Virtually all of the luxurious mansions in the city were astir, and yet, nobody was actually taking action. After all, the Necromancer Kettle belonged to the imperial clan, and although the announcement had been made that the flower would go to whoever destiny saw fit, the specific rules governing the competition had not yet been made public.

However, that quickly changed as an imperial decree came down!

The Necromancer Kettle, one of the eight arcane pocket realms belonging to the imperial clan, is now open. In accord with the will of the Grand Heavenmaster, no one above or below the Nascent Soul stage may enter. Only Nascent Soul cultivators may go in and seek the good fortune therein!

From members of the imperial clan down to the families of the aristocracy, any group may dispatch a single person to enter the pocket realm!

As soon as the decree went out, all of the influential groups in the city began to analyze the deeper meaning behind it. Soon, eyes were cast in the direction of Giant Ghost City.

Clearly, the decree had not really been put out by the Arch-Emperor, but rather, by the Grand Heavenmaster. Nowadays in Arch-Emperor City, the words of the Grand Heavenmaster were taken more seriously than the Arch-Emperor’s.

However, the reaction from the influential groups in the city was muted, as if they were waiting for something.

Eventually, news about the decree reached the ears of the tall, muscular Nine Serenities King. He stood there in his royal palace in Nine Serenities City, a huge battle-axe propped up next to him, looking at a jade slip. Slowly, a smile spread out across his face.

“You really want that Ghost King Orchid, don’t you Giant Ghost King? Well, I’ll make sure you *don’t* get your wish!” He and the Giant Ghost King had been at odds with each other for many years, during which time he had never been presented with the opportunity to personally do anything about the situation. However, during the Giant Ghost King’s decay period, he had absolutely taken the initiative to strike a blow along with the three great clans’ rebellion.

A cold smile appeared on the Nine Serenities King’s face as he said, “Tell Prince Zhou Hong to come see me immediately!”

Next, a bone slip appeared in his hand as he transmitted messages to other influential groups and clans in Nine Serenities City, giving them various instructions.

On top of a towering mountain in War Champion City, a middle-aged man stood there, clad in a green robe, his hands clasped behind his back. He was not burly like the Nine Serenities King, but he still seemed like a paramount figure in heaven and earth, radiating pressure which weighed down on all creation.

That man was none other than the War Champion King.

“Interesting. The Ghost King Orchid has already bloomed four times. In the past, it was always one of the giant ghost kings who got the flower. The flower is obviously very important to the current Giant Ghost King. If he gets this one, he’ll be able to complete the five elements structure, and his technique will be even more deadly. From that point on, he would never again have a decay period!

“That means that whoever gets the flower this time will be able to get the most valuable treasures imaginable from the Giant Ghost King in trade....” Eyes narrowing, the War Champion King thought of a particular medicinal pill bottle that the Giant Ghost King owned, which could refine all types of high-level medicines.

After another moment of thought, the War Champion King smiled faintly and said, “Yi’er, come see me immediately!”

The Nine Serenities King and the War Champion King both had their various thoughts about the matter. Meanwhile in Spirit Advent City, the last of the four heavenly kings, the Spirit Advent King, was also moved. He was an extremely fat man, a mountain of flesh who was even more exaggeratedly fat than Big Fatty Zhang had been all those years ago.

Of course, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone in the Wildlands who would tease him about his weight. As he sat there in his royal palace, surrounded by handmaidens, a glass of alcohol in hand, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“The Giant Ghost King is sure going to have it rough this time. I bet everyone is going to do their best to screw him over. Well, how could I possibly ignore this chance to profit from his misfortune?”

Laughing heartily, he turned his head and bellowed, “Shanshan, my lovely daughter, aren’t you always looking for people to pick fights with? Well I’m going to give you a chance to do just that. Go to the Necromancer Kettle and fight with whoever you feel like. Get the fruit of the Ghost King Orchid, and bring it back for me!”

In an auxiliary courtyard deep in Spirit Advent City, an intense rumbling sound could be heard as a valiant and formidable young woman appeared….

The actions of these three heavenly kings were like a wind vane that indicated what all of the other powers in Arch-Emperor City would do. It was almost like a chain reaction.

Before long, numerous voices could be heard within the headquarters of the influential groups and clans.

“One person per group? That means only one person from Giant Ghost City will be be there. I guess we could risk offending the Giant Ghost King, but getting involved in a fight between the four of the heavenly kings wouldn’t be worth it. The Zhou Clan will not be participating!”

“The Giant Ghost King might be a demigod, but considering our Li Clan’s good relationship with the Nine Serenities King, we have no choice but to participate. Fine, send the Li Clan’s qilin son into the Necromancer Kettle to earn a name for himself!”

“It's been a long time since a competition has come along that virtually all of the clans can participate in. This is a perfect chance for the Nascent Soul Juniors to rise to prominence! We might end up offending the Giant Ghost King, but with the War Champion King participating as well, we shouldn’t have anything to fear!”

Scenes such as this played out in numerous locations in the Wildlands. Of course, Duke Deathcrier had eyes and ears in many places, and soon got word. Looking very grim-faced, he headed toward the royal palace.

After he left, a roar of rage could be heard from within the royal palace. The Giant Ghost King leapt off of his royal throne, his eyes shining as cold as ice. The truth was that he didn’t really need to get any secret reports from Duke Deathcrier; he had long since guessed that this instance of the blooming of the Ghost King Orchid would cause a huge stir.

After his decay period ended and he returned to Giant Ghost City, he had been thinking constantly about the Necromancer Kettle. Even his rough calculations had led him to the conclusion that the Ghost King Orchid would soon be blooming for the fifth time.

As a result, he had given orders to Duke Deathcrier to keep an eye on the other heavenly kings, and had also opened up talks with the Grand Heavenmaster, hoping to get him to agree to give Giant Ghost City exclusive entrance rights.

Clearly, the Grand Heavenmaster had refused that request. Not even the Giant Ghost King’s offer to owe him a huge favor had changed his mind. Although it was not a huge blow to him, it still made him angry. And yet, there was nothing he could do about the situation. The Grand Heavenmaster held sway over the emperor and the nobility, and was definitely a person to be feared.

“Everybody knows how important the Ghost King Orchid is to me. Do those three bastards really think they can steal what's mine?! Furthermore, they’re trying to weaken me by preventing the organizations I'm on good terms with in Giant Ghost City from participating!

“Hmph! The three other kings ganging up on me is of secondary importance. The Grand Heavenmaster’s attitude is the most important thing….” The Giant Ghost King gritted his teeth at the fact that the Grand Heavenmaster had specifically issued orders preventing demigods and devas from entering the Necromancer Kettle.

“Do they really think that I wouldn’t be ready for something like this though?!” With a cold snort, he thought about a certain person, and then suddenly smiled. “I need to teach that little hooligan a lesson anyway. My head is not to be smacked around casually!”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, the Giant Ghost King issued a royal decree.

“Summon Bai Hao to see me. Immediately!”

As the orders went out, Bai Xiaochun was in his secluded meditation chamber, working on conjuring a fifteen-colored flame. He had failed more than ten times, but his eyes shone with stubborn determination. He was currently focused completely on the fire in his hand, and on feeding it the surrounding vengeful souls.

He didn’t dare to relax for even a moment. As the vengeful souls poured into the fire, his eyes turned completely bloodshot. Fire spread out, and then it began to converge back together onto his palm, whereupon he closed his fingers into a fist.

Taking an excited breath, he opened his fingers to reveal a tongue of flame right there in the middle of his hand. He immediately began to laugh delightedly.

“It finally worked!!”

It was none other than fifteen-colored flame!

This fifteen-colored flame indicated that Bai Xiaochun was no longer a terrestrial necromancer, but had reached the celestial rank!!

There were less than a hundred celestial necromancers in all of the Wildlands, making them very rare. But now, thanks to his constant research and augury, Bai Xiaochun had risen to that very rank!

Even as he reveled in his pride, he heard a voice outside of his secluded meditation facilities.

“Majordomo, his highness the king has summoned you, posthaste!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he wondered why the king might have summoned him, especially right when he had already been planning on coming out of secluded meditation….

“This seems weird. He couldn't see me in here, could he?!” Feeling very nervous, he looked around, and then put away his fifteen-colored flame.

After emerging from his secluded meditation facilities, he saw that there were two city guards waiting, who immediately greeted him with clasped hands.

“What does his highness the king want to see me for?” he asked casually.

The two guards hesitated, but knew that Bai Xiaochun was a person they could not afford to offend. Lowering their voices, they quickly explained what they knew about the Ghost King Orchid, and their guesses about how it involved him.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the news, his heart trembled with fear. “All of the Nascent Soul chosen in the wildlands are going?” he thought. “Sounds way too dangerous!”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, his expression suddenly flickered, and he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. Staggering backward, he wailed, “I just had a setback with my cultivation base! Report back to his highness the king that I have to go back into secluded meditation to make some adjustments….”

With that, he rushed back into his secluded meditation facilities and slammed the door behind him.

The two city guard were left flabbergasted by this unexpected turn of events….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0686 awe-chapter-687

The Giant Ghost King’s divine sense wasn’t so powerful that it could maintain daily scrutiny of all of Giant Ghost City. That was even less the case considering how wrapped up he was in his current plans. In fact, after issuing the summons to Bai Xiaochun, he had already started to completely change his overall plan.

The fruit of the Ghost King Orchid was too important to him. None of the previous giant ghost kings had ever reached his current level of progress. He had accumulated four of the fruits so far, and only needed one more to make a complete set of the five elements. With that full set, he would be able to remove the weakness in the technique he cultivated.

Therefore, he was unwilling to accept the possibility of any mishaps. He needed to guarantee with one hundred percent certainty that he would get that ghost king fruit. After all, if someone else got it, he would then be in the passive position, and it was impossible to say what unexpected things would result.

The optimal outcome would be for him to acquire the fruit by his own means.

The Giant Ghost King was in the middle of contemplating all of these matters when the two guards returned with the unexpected news that Bai Xiaochun had gone into a protracted, half-year-long session of secluded meditation….

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes went wide, and his anger immediately began to burn. Shooting to his feet, he vanished, to reappear right outside of Bai Xiaochun’s auxiliary courtyard. Completely disregarding the spell formation that protected Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation facilities, he stepped forward to appear inside.

The instant he appeared, he saw Bai Xiaochun, his face ashen and eyes cloudy, pushing down onto his chest as he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood…. Although he seemed surprised to find someone else in his secluded meditation chamber, he managed to struggle to his feet, whereupon he clasped hands and bowed.

“Humble greetings, Your Highness.”

The Giant Ghost King was a bit shocked by how much blood Bai Xiaochun had just coughed up, and at how weak he looked. After scanning him with some divine sense, he could sense instabilities in his cultivation base, whereupon his face darkened.

“How did this happen?” he asked with a growl.

“Your Highness….” Bai Xiaochun smiled bitterly and shook his head. Taking a deep breath, he wiped the blood from his lips, lowered his voice, and continued, “Your humble servant went through hell and high water for you. Unfortunately, my cultivation base wasn’t powerful enough, and in my overhasty push into the early Nascent Soul stage, I made some mistakes….”

Although his voice quavered weekly, his eyes shone with the determination to keep speaking.

“But don’t worry, Your Highness, all I need is half a year, and I’ll be back to normal!” Seemingly summoning the effort, he slapped his chest to emphasize his words, looking like the type of person who wouldn’t hesitate to die for his sovereign. At the same time, he was secretly sizing up the

Giant Ghost King, and vowing that he wouldn’t go into any dangerous areas no matter what happened. Giant Ghost City was definitely the safest place to be….

The Giant Ghost King’s expression flickered as he pondered the situation. After looking Bai Xiaochun up and down, he finally decided that everything was just too coincidental. How could it be that, right when the Ghost King Orchid bloomed, causing a huge stir among all the chosen in the land, that Bai Hao’s cultivation base would suddenly have a problem? However, now was not the time to go picking apart Bai Xiaochun’s words. Waving his hand, he summoned a medicinal pill.

It was pure white, and shone with dazzling light. Inside of it could be seen the image of a dragon, and it emanated a shocking medicinal aroma. As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw it, his eyes went wide, and he even gasped. This was the first time he had ever seen a medicinal pill in the Wildlands.

As an grandmaster apothecary , he could instantly tell that this was some sort of holy medicine designed to heal injuries. In fact, it appeared to surpass the Godly Vestige Pills he had used in the past. It was completely unprecedented!

A medicinal pill like this could be considered rare even in the Heavenspan River region, let alone in the Wildlands, where medicinal pills virtually didn’t exist. Clearly, it was a treasured item to the Giant Ghost King.

“This pill’s name is Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill. You can only eat nine in your lifetime, and the reason that my decay period was so short was because I consumed nine at once. Anyone else who consumes it under normal circumstances will experience a full recovery from all injuries in only one breath of time.

“Take a minute to think. Even if you’re seriously injured, you’re going on this mission, whether you want to or not. If you refuse to take the pill, and fail in the mission, I won’t cause any problems for you. But if you do consume it, then you definitely must succeed in the mission!” The Giant Ghost King spoke in a tone that brooked no argument, then looked at Bai Xiaochun with glittering eyes as he flicked his finger and sent the medicinal pill flying toward Bai Xiaochun’s mouth.

Bai Xiaochun shivered in fear, but still managed to reach out and snatch the pill out of the air. Scowling on the verge of tears, he looked back at the king, cursing inwardly, but knowing he had no choice in the matter. Considering how decisively the Giant Ghost King was acting, Bai Xiaochun could tell that it was just as the man had said: he would be going on this mission whether he wanted to or not....

Although he felt very wronged about the whole thing, he didn’t let that show on his face. In fact, it was at this point that some cracking sounds suddenly rang out from inside of him, and his previously unstable cultivation base suddenly returned to normal.

“Don’t worry, Your Highness, I’ll definitely accomplish the mission!” he said loudly.

“You’ve recovered?” the Giant Ghost King asked, his eyes narrowing as he smiled.

“Eee? You said it even before I noticed it, Your Highness! Wow, this is great! My cultivation base breakthrough came because I had an audience with you, and now I've recovered for the same reason! Both of these developments occurred because of meeting with you face-to-face! Your Highness, your might surpasses all creation, like a dragon flying to the highest heavens. A mere glance from you is like consuming a holy medicine of healing!” All of Bai Xiaochun’s flattery was delivered without the slightest blush, and was spoken with utmost sincerity.

The Giant Ghost King sighed, well aware of what Bai Xiaochun was doing. Not concerned about how crafty Bai Xiaochun was trying to be, the Giant Ghost King’s expression turned somber as he went on to give some more information about what was to come.

Bai Xiaochun listened with rapt attention, and afterward, actually breathed a sigh of relief. After all, he knew that, considering how incredible he was, he could crush anyone who tried to make a move against him.

The more he listened though, the wider his eyes went, and the more his heart began to pound at the fact that virtually everyone was teaming up against the Giant Ghost King.

“We're talking about multiple heirs apparent to heavenly kings, plus chosen from the nobility and aristocracy in Arch-Emperor City! Although not all of them reached the Nascent Soul stage with deva beast souls, there are bound to be a few…. Plus, they're all going to be working together against me….” Soon his scowl returned. All of the cultivators who would be going to this trial by fire were powerful chosen. Even though Bai Xiaochun knew himself to be incredible, even a tiger couldn’t fight a pack of ravenous wolves. The slightest misstep on his part, and his poor little life would be in danger….

“Dammit, how come only Nascent Soul cultivators can go!? It would be much better if most of the people were in the

Core Formation stage....” Although he wished to cry, no tears would come. The truth was that even if he were stronger than he was, he still wouldn’t be confident. However, considering the stubborn look on the face of the Giant Ghost King, he knew that there was nothing he could do other than nod in agreement.

The Giant Ghost King could sense Bai Xiaochun’s pensiveness, so after a moment, he sighed and said, “However, don't feel too much pressure. With my trusty spear, and some Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills, you should be very safe. Furthermore, I will make *other* arrangements to make sure that everything goes smoothly in the Necromancer Kettle.”

However, not even such assurances wiped the scowl off of Bai Xiaochun’s face. At this point, the Giant Ghost King lowered his voice and said, “Don’t forget about that restrictive spell that connects the two of us. Do you really think I would send you somewhere to get killed?”

Upon hearing that, Bai Xiaochun’s mood brightened a bit. The more he thought about it, the less likely it seemed that anyone would try to cause problems for him. Besides, based on what the Giant Ghost King had just said, it seemed there would be people on the inside who would help him if he needed it.

After offering a few more words of instruction, the Giant Ghost King handed Bai Xiaochun a medicinal pill bottle, within which were eight Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills! Including the one he had given him moments ago, that made a total of nine!

After seeing all of those pills, Bai Xiaochun felt even more confident than before.

With that, the Giant Ghost King left, simultaneously passing orders to Duke Deathcrier to accompany Bai Xiaochun on a giant ghost battleship to the Necromancer Kettle.

**

The giant ghost battleship was an enormous black airship that pierced through the sky with incredible speed. It had a giant ghost statue on it that radiated black light, as well as a fearsome aura.

Bai Xiaochun was currently standing on the deck of the battleship, sighing listlessly. Next to him was Duke Deathcrier, who was looking at him with a bemused expression. Chuckling, Duke Deathcrier said, “What’s with the furrowed brow, Majordomo Bai? You didn’t frown like that even when three devas were chasing you down.”

“What a load of crap....” Bai Xiaochun thought inwardly. Back when the three devas had been chasing him, he had plenty of secret weapons to call upon. He’d known that the Giant Ghost King would recover within days, and had thus been willing to take a big risk. The current situation was nothing like that.

However, he also realized that now was not the time to be weak or scared. Standing up straighter than before, he smacked himself loudly on the chest and said, “You’re seeing things, Duke Deathcrier. I wasn't frowning, I was thinking! And this is no furrowed brow, it’s an expression of killing intent!”

Duke Deathcrier’s expression turned even more quizzical, but he didn’t say anything further.

The two of them didn't speak much during the rest of the trip. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun realized that there was a huge group of vengeful souls moving along on the ground beneath them.

When Duke Deathcrier noticed what he was looking at, he offered a brief explanation. “Whenever the Necromancer Kettle is opened, it attracts lots of vengeful souls. They instinctively try to get into the place....”

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun realized even more than before that this Necromancer Kettle was clearly an extraordinary place, and also a dangerous one. Another two hours passed, and by now, the battleship was in the actual region of the huge kettle.

It was evening, and the previously clear sky was now choked with clouds. Furthermore, it was possible to see the shocking Ghost King Orchid off in the distance!

Countless vengeful souls swirled around in the area of the Ghost King Orchid, filling the sky and land alike, creating a screaming vortex that no one would dare to get close to.

Bai Xiaochun had actually arrived early, and there was no one else in the area. He was the first.

However, that gave him plenty of time to study the surrounding area. Before long, he could see an enormous kettle beneath the Ghost King Orchid!

It was pitch black, and seemed profoundly ancient. Furthermore, it was the black mist pouring out of the kettle itself that created the enormous, misty Ghost King Orchid up above.

This was the Necromancer Kettle!

Bai Xiaochun gasped, and his heart trembled. Even with a single glance, he could tell that this kettle was some type of magical item….

“There is another heaven and earth inside of the Necromancer Kettle,” Duke Deathcrier explained. “Its origin is a mystery, but according to some legends, it came from beyond the heavens. Other stories say that it was a treasured item belonging to the first generation Arch-Emperor. At this point in time, it’s really impossible to determine the truth. As for the Ghost King Orchid, it actually grows in a basin in the very middle of the world of the kettle.

“It's very large inside, but all you have to do is fly to the very center of the place, and you’ll find that basin…. Incidentally, according to all of the records we have, it will actually take some time after the mist flower forms for the true form of the Ghost King Orchid to mature.

“All you have to do is get your hands on its fruit, and then after you get out, I’ll safeguard you. If anyone dares to attack you or steal the fruit from you at that time, his highness the king will personally come to handle the situation.

“Inside of the kettle, you’ll be on your own.” Duke Deathcrier then went on to offer some more warnings and exhortations.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling more nervous than ever, but kept telling himself that everything would be alright.

A bit later, beams of light became visible off in the distance, some coming from the direction of Arch-Emperor City, and others coming from the other three kingly cities. A few others approached from teleportation portals in the area.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0687 awe-chapter-688

Duke Deathcrier’s expression flickered slightly, and Bai Xiaochun looked very nervous.

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s turned to look off into the distance, two beams of light streaked toward them, unleashing sonic booms as they pierced through the air. Soon, two people became visible!

One of them was a wizened old man wearing a black robe. His eyes were cloudy, and his face slack. He seemed fused with heaven and earth, so much so that he was even invisible when inspected with divine sense.

He glanced briefly at Bai Xiaochun, then looked at Duke Deathcrier and smiled, simultaneously clasping hands in greeting. Duke Deathcrier clasped hands in return.

Next to the old man was a young man in a violet robe. There was something tyrannical and haughty about him, especially his eyes, which were piercingly sharp. His cultivation base was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, which made him seem like an unsheathed sword, ready to chop anything to pieces.

The young man glanced briefly at Bai Xiaochun, chuckled coldly, and then looked away at the Necromancer Kettle.

Seeing how seriously Bai Xiaochun was taking the arrival of these two, Duke Deathcrier transmitted a message.

“He’s the heir apparent of the Nine Serenities King… Prince Zhou Hong. He has a reputation for being cruel and callous, and has killed many people in his time!”

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard. Although he wasn’t sure exactly how he knew it, but just looking at Zhou Hong, he could tell that he had reached the Nascent Soul stage by using deva beast souls. Perhaps he knew it because he had a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul. Zhou Hong looked incredibly impressive. He was an heir apparent, and surely had some demigod-level secret magics. Obviously, he was a chosen the likes of which were not to be provoked.

“I bet I could beat him in a one-on-one fight. But considering who his father is, I probably shouldn’t mess with him.” Even as Bai Xiaochun made this decision, more light appeared off in the distance, two beams that contained two women.

One of them was an old woman wearing a voluminous white robe. Her expression was placid, but the young woman next to her was clearly the bossy and domineering type. Her eyes brimmed with the desire to do battle, and despite the fact that she wore violet gloves, and was very beautiful, she was clearly the violent type.

As soon as the young woman appeared, Zhou Hong’s eyelid twitched with trepidation, as though he didn't dare to look at her. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he gasped quietly.

At this point, Duke Deathcrier transmitted more information. “Princess Xu Shan, daughter of the Spirit Advent King.... A violent girl, the type who will lose her temper if you say one wrong thing....”

“How come all of these Wildlands chosen seem completely brutal...?” Bai Xiaochun thought, his own eyelid twitching. “This Xu Shan reached the great circle using deva beast souls, and has an incredibly powerful fleshly body!” Considering the fact that even Zhou Hong seemed to fear

Xu Shan, Bai Xiaochun didn’t dare to look at her for more than a moment.

However, before he could look away, their eyes locked, and Xu Shan glared at him. From the look in her eyes, she was itching to fight him, but thankfully, the old woman next to her cleared her throat, and Xu Shan backed up a few steps in disappointment.

Bai Xiaochun could see how violent of a girl she was; she wanted to attack him for merely looking at her….

“This place is way too barbarous. The Wildlands definitely isn’t a suitable place for me!” Even as he sighed, more beams of light approached, this time containing dozens of people. These were the chosen children of various groups in the Wildlands, all of them escorted by Dao protectors. None of the Dao protectors were devas, like those sent by the heavenly kings, but most of them were half a step into the Deva Realm.

After arriving, the newcomers fanned out. Some of them joined Zhou Hong, while others went to stand near Xu Shan. Some of them gathered together in smaller groups, where they looked off into the sky, as if they were waiting for someone.

“Little Wolfgod, Li Tiansheng, Zhao Dongshan, Miao Lin’er….” As the chosen arrived, Duke Deathcrier would tell Bai Xiaochun their names. And as he did, Bai Xiaochun’s heart continued to pound.

Little Wolfgod was a young man with a perpetual expression of killing intent on his face, and eyes that radiated brutality. Li Tiansheng seemed a bit better, but had a sinister look to him that left Bai Xiaochun feeling very uncomfortable. Zhao Dongshan was particularly burly, as though the blood of savage giants ran in his veins. He looked like a small mountain as he stood there, holding an enormous wolf tooth club in one hand.

Most of the chosen were men, with few women. However, there was one woman who caught Bai Xiaochun’s eye. She was none other than the one Duke Deathcrier had introduced as Miao Lin’er. She wore very revealing clothing that well-accentuated her lithe frame, and made her quite the center of attention among the other chosen.

She didn’t seem to care about that, and even wore a carefree smile. When she noticed that Bai Xiaochun was looking at her, she covered her smile with her hand. As she swayed forward, her long, milky legs were prominently displayed, causing Zhao Dongshan, who was right next to her, to start panting.

Bai Xiaochun stole a further glance. Heart pounding, he couldn’t help but analyze her objectively. “These Wildlander women dress quite daringly, but they don’t measure up to my Song Junwan.”

Although the Wildlanders were all handsome and even beautiful, they all had murderous auras that indicated they had killed many people.

“I'm here representing the Giant Ghost King, so where are the Giant Ghost King forces? Why isn’t anybody coming to stand by me?!” Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel as if something was off. “Maybe they’re not here yet? Or maybe they’re keeping their identity secret?”

After looking around at the growing crowd, he tried to guess who it might be that the Giant Ghost King had arranged to come help him…. However, after a bit of time, his suspicions about the matter only continued to grow.

More people continued to arrive, roughly half of them being Dao protectors. Most of the Dao protectors just stood there quietly, although a few chatted with each other.

The other half were the Nascent Soul chosen who would be going into the Necromancer Kettle. Bai Xiaochun sized them up, and could see some of them doing the same with him. Some of them looked at him with scorn, while others had icy expressions. Some seemed curious. Most of them knew at least a little bit about him.

Bai Xiaochun was getting very nervous; very few of these people seemed to have anything but ill will toward him. Even as he stewed in his anxiety, everyone suddenly went quiet. Even Duke Deathcrier's eyes seemed to grow unusually focused as a beam of light suddenly appeared off in the distance!

There was only one person approaching, with no Dao protector. However, the fantastic energy radiating off of him seemed enough to crush all of the other chosen in the area.

He was a young man in a green robe, with a placid expression that seemed to indicate nothing in the world could possibly faze him. As he approached, the other chosen clasped hands in greeting, especially those who had not joined the other larger groups.

“Well met, Junior Champion King!”

“Greetings, Junior Champion King!”

Many voices rang out, although the young man completely ignored them. After reaching a certain point, he simply hovered in place with his eyes closed. He never even looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Although a slightly defiant look could be seen in Zhou Hong’s eyes, he kept it in check. Xu Shan from Spirit Advent City seemed more intent than ever on getting into a fight, and from the look of things, was vastly more interested in this Junior Champion King than she was in Bai Xiaochun.

“He’s the son of the War Champion King,” Duke Deathcrier explained, “which is why he is called the Junior Champion King. His name is… Gongsun Yi!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. From what he could tell, this Junior Champion King was already in the great circle, and was almost on the verge of being half a step into the Deva Realm.

Just when he was thinking about asking Duke Deathcrier where his own helpers were, another beam of light appeared.

This time, there were three people, with two of them being particularly eye-catching. One of them was a handsome young man, and the other was a girl who could only be described as a matchless beauty. As soon as they appeared, everyone instantly looked over at them.

“The second prince….”

“That’s… the Grand Heavenmaster’s apprentice, Chen Manyao!!”

Even as the buzz of conversation rose up, Duke Deathcrier began to make the introductions. However, Bai Xiaochun’s mind was spinning, and he didn't even hear Duke Deathcrier talking. The complete focus of his attention was on that spectacularly beautiful young woman!

She was none other than Chen Manyao, and she looked just as beautiful as Bai Xiaochun remembered, with the fairest of skin, and a beautiful figure. The way her long hair swirled around her made her seem like an immortal goddess, and would cause virtually any man who saw her to gasp.

However, she carried some sort of undispellable anxiety with her, and seemed soft and tender in a way that only served to accentuate her incredible beauty!

“Chen Manyao....” Although no one could tell, Bai Xiaochun was suddenly being filled with very complex emotions. This was his first time in the Wildlands... to see a familiar face!

Chen Manyao, disciple of the River-Defying Sect.... She had accompanied Bai Xiaochun to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, but after the journey to the Great Wall, had disappeared without a trace. Although Bai Xiaochun had guessed that she eventually ended up at home, he had always felt a bit worried for her. As of this moment, he suddenly thought back to many memories from the River-Defying Sect....

He remembered how she was the one who had orchestrated the incident with the love letters, which had been such a cause of irritation to Hou Xiaomei and Song Junwan.... He also remembered how infatuated Xu Baocai had been with her....

Of course, Chen Manyao’s current cultivation base was very different than the last time they had met. She now radiated a strong Nascent Soul aura; clearly, she had encountered profound good fortune after returning to the Wildlands.

Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun found himself lost in thoughts of how much he missed the River-Defying Sect.

And yet, as of this moment, he was in the Wildlands, very, very far from home.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0688 awe-chapter-689

Even as Bai Xiaochun felt lost in his thoughts, the person behind the second prince and Chen Manyao stepped forward and spoke in a raspy voice, “It seems everyone is assembled. In addition to escorting the second prince here, Fellow Daoists, I have been appointed by the Grand Heavenmaster to preside over the opening of the Necromancer Kettle.”

He was a middle-aged man, and completely expressionless, with ice-cold eyes. There was also something cold about his raspy voice that pulled Bai Xiaochun out of his reverie.

“Fellow Daoist Deathcrier, Fellow Daoist Cloudpeak, Fellow Daoist Redsieve, might I ask for your assistance?” A mere step took the man to a position above the Necromancer Kettle. As he did, Duke Deathcrier, as well as the two old-timers who had come with Zhou Hong and Xu Shan, nodded and followed along.

Above the Necromancer Kettle, they all began to perform incantation gestures, causing ripples to spread out as deva power descended.

Soon, intense rumbling sounds could be heard, and the Necromancer Kettle began to vibrate. More black mist poured out from inside of it, which then rose up into the sky.

“After enough time passes for a single incense stick to burn, the Necromancer Kettle will open, and the lot of you must enter immediately. We four can only keep it open for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn, so therefore… don’t delay. Opening the kettle a second time would be very difficult. However, it will open automatically after the flower fully blooms. At that time, you’ll have only two hours to emerge, lest you face deadly peril!” The surrounding chosen immediately began to get nervous. Rotating their cultivation bases, they sized each other up, and many of them even seemed to be transmitting messages.

Bai Xiaochun looked over at the Necromancer Kettle and considered trying to delay so that he would be the last one to go inside. However, he didn’t see how he could really do that with only half an incense stick’s worth of time to deal with.

“Ah, forget it....” he thought, feeling a bit depressed. However, it was in this exact moment that he suddenly realized that something seemed very off. It was as if he were now the subject of dozens of gazes, a feeling which caused him to look around vigilantly.

Countless chosen were all looking at him with thoughtful expressions, and gazes that were clearly filled with ill intentions. Even Zhou Hong, Xu Shan and Gongsun Yi were there in the crowd. Bai Xiaochun was starting to get a bad feeling.

“So, they're actually going to team up,” he thought, starting to pant a little. As far as Bai Xiaochun could tell, if everyone attacked him at the same time, it wouldn't matter if he was stronger than he currently was. There were more than a hundred people here... and all of them had deadly trump cards at their disposal, such that they could cause a headache even to a deva.

Not willing to be outdone, he quickly began to comfort himself and even work himself up a bit, “These people are all villains! What gall they have! I'm a mighty major general from the Great Wall, the famed majordomo of Giant Ghost City, a person who dares to fight with devas! I even kidnapped a demigod! How could I possibly be afraid of these people!?

“On the other hand, I can’t bully them. Ah, whatever. I have a really high status, and am in the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage. I shouldn’t lower myself to their level. This time, I really have to keep a low profile. I’ll just go in and take a look around, and definitely won’t get into fights with any of these kids.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he had reached a higher way of thinking than these other chosen. Planting a benevolent smile onto his face, he nodded kindly back at all of the chosen.

However, his smile didn’t seem to do any good. Not only did the gazes locked onto him not grow any less malevolent, some of the chosen, including Zhou Hong and Zhao Dongshan, even began to sneer at him.

That immediately made him mad. After all, it wasn’t common for an incredibly powerful person like him to show such good will. And yet here these dogs went and turned their noses up at him!

“This is outrageous…. Ah, whatever. Just forget about. It’s not a big deal. There’s no point in bickering with them.” Saddened, he decided to simply endure the situation, and was just about to look away, when suddenly, a chill ran through him!

“What’s going on…?”

As of this point, he could sense killing intent within the eyes of the people looking at him…. Not all of these chosen were adept at hiding their true intentions, or perhaps it was that they didn’t feel they needed to. Either way, Bai Xiaochun could clearly sense how much they wanted to kill him.

“They want to kill me?!” His heart immediately began to thump. Although everyone had come to fight over the Ghost King Orchid, and he was here on behalf of the Giant Ghost King, he had always thought that simply refraining from the fighting would make the entire thing much less dangerous.

But now, with so many people staring at him with killing intent, he suddenly felt the need to be completely on guard.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun’s instincts were correct. Although not every single last one of these chosen wanted to kill him, many of them did. Of course, it wasn’t anything about him personally. However, all of them knew that he was not anyone important in the current dynasty; he was nothing more than one of the Giant Ghost King’s subordinates, and therefore, he was someone they would naturally dare to kill!

Killing him would be the easiest way to resolve the biggest issue they all faced. With Bai Xiaochun out of the picture, the matter of who got the Ghost King Orchid fruit wouldn’t be as important, at least, not unless the Giant Ghost King had made other arrangements.

As for which of the other heavenly kings got the fruit, it didn’t really matter. Any of them could trade it to the Giant Ghost King. Furthermore, it didn't really matter which of the other chosen got it, although whoever did would surely benefit in some way.

Everyone knew that killing Bai Xiaochun would offend the Giant Ghost King, and normally speaking, they would be worried about that. But in this situation, all three of the other heavenly kings were working together, and their combined power ensured that even if the Giant Ghost King got angry, he wouldn’t be able to do anything about it.

Everything came down to karma, and everyone knew that the four heavenly kings didn’t really get along with each other. Besides, when other secret treasures had appeared in the Wildlands in the past, the kings would always fight over them, and on more than a few occasions, the Giant Ghost King had come out on top. Therefore, the fact that this incredibly important Ghost King Orchid had appeared ensured that the other three kings would take advantage of the situation to strike a blow against the Giant Ghost King.

When it came to the struggles of demigods, chosen like the ones present today would view Bai Xiaochun as a nobody who could be killed at will.

**

As the second prince stood there, he pondered some of the advice he had been given. Although he didn’t plan to refuse the advice, in his heart, he was chuckling coldly. Nowadays in the Wildlands, the Arch-Emperor was weak. The Grand Heavenmaster controlled the Son of Heaven and the nobility, and the four heavenly kings were not devoted heart and soul to protecting the dynasty. Therefore, one of the second prince’s priorities were looking out for his own interests and solidifying his own power base.

For example, this arcane pocket realm was one of eight that specifically belonged to the imperial clan. And yet, a single order from the Grand Heavenmaster wrested it into the public domain for countless people to struggle over. Considering his status, the second prince hated both the Grand Heavenmaster and the four heavenly kings. Therefore, the infighting among the four kings was a good thing as far as he was concerned. However, the one person who he felt uneasy about was Chen Manyao.

She stood there next to the second prince with a cool expression on her face, as though nothing which was going on held any interest to her. She was here on the orders of her Master to acquire the ghost king fruit; anyone who acquired the fruit before she did was to be viewed as an enemy.

It didn't take long for half an incense stick's worth of time to pass. During that time, Bai Xiaochun's thoughts began to race faster and faster as he became convinced that there were people here who wanted to kill him.

“At least it's not everybody, only some of them…. Besides, if I did get killed, then the Giant Ghost King would die too; there's no way he would send me to my death….” Even as he frowned over the matter, the time limit passed, and rumbling sounds echoed out. As of that moment, the mist stopped pouring out of the Necromancer Kettle, and within the black mist that did exist around it… a tunnel appeared!

The middle-aged man who was presiding over the opening said loudly, “What are you waiting for?!”

Instantly, Gongsun Yi and Zhou Hong shot into motion, followed closely by others. As for Bai Xiaochun, he sighed and then sped into motion.

“I need to catch them off guard and make sure they don't have a chance to join forces. That's the safest way to play things.” Gritting his teeth, he accelerated into the tunnel that led to the Necromancer Kettle.

Although the tunnel appeared to be very long, upon entering it, the chosen all vanished, including Bai Xiaochun.

Moments later, they appeared in the world inside of the kettle!

A gray, overcast sky could be seen up above. The land was violet, and black mist floated everywhere, within which could be seen countless evil ghosts. From the sinister looks in the eyes of the ghosts, they were just waiting for people to pounce on.

Stifling pressure weighed down everywhere, causing a sense of profound danger to rise up in the hearts of the various chosen.

It was just barely possible to see mountains rising up around them, and further off in the distance, an enormous basin!

That basin was covered with a thick conglomeration of mist that formed into a flower that looked exactly like the Ghost King Orchid outside....

The flower was clearly in the middle of blooming, and needed a bit more time to complete the process....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0689 awe-chapter-690

All eyes came to focus on the misty Ghost King Orchid that rose up above the basin. As for Bai Xiaochun, he eyed his surroundings, glanced at the flower, and then prepared to cautiously slip away. However, it was in that very moment that a white light suddenly began to shine up from him.

It was impossible to cover up this light; it poured through his clothing and made him completely conspicuous within the darkness cast by the overcast sky.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped; he had no idea what was going on. As for everyone else, although some of them were inclined to try to kill Bai Xiaochun, most had just been planning to head toward the Ghost King Orchid. There were some who viewed it as beneath them to fight with someone like him. Only a few of them had actually intended to attack him right away.

But before anyone could even move, Bai Xiaochun started glowing with bright light, which instantly attracted a lot of attention. More than a hundred gazes instantly locked onto him, causing his scalp to tingle with fear.

All of these people were Nascent Soul cultivators, and the weakest among them was in the early Nascent Soul stage. Blinking in astonishment, he loudly said, “Calm down, everybody… um… On the behalf of the Giant Ghost King, I forfeit all right to the ghost king fruit! Don’t worry everybody, I'm not going to try to fight you for it!”

He tried to make himself sound especially sincere as he spoke.

Everyone in the crowd was surprised, and many strange expressions appeared on their faces. However, before anyone could say anything in response, the light shining off of Bai Xiaochun grew even more intense, making him completely eye-catching.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao?!”

Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, but no tears would come. He anxiously began to inspect himself to try to figure out what was happening, and soon, found the source of the light. It was none other than… the restrictive spell from the Giant Ghost King!!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound with a very ill premonition. As of this moment, the white light hardly seemed connected to him at all, and in fact, was leaving him, heading at top speed toward the basin!

This sudden development caused numerous faces to fall. With blinding speed, the light shot toward the basin, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as it came to settle on top of the Ghost King Orchid!

Before long, a white shield of light had covered the entire flower. Then, moments later, a huge vortex appeared inside, the gravitational force of which caused the flower to begin to bloom more rapidly!

One could well imagine that with that shield of light, and that gravitational force, the Ghost King Orchid would soon bloom, and the fruit would appear. When that happened, the vortex would surely take the fruit away….

Everyone watching was completely taken aback, and Bai Xiaochun was dumbstruck. He began to tremble, and his pulse raced as he realized why the Giant Ghost King had been so confident in sending him here….

“Giant Ghost King, you fudge-licking prick!!! You didn’t arrange for anybody to help me, did you!? Y-y-you….” Bai Xiaochun’s face drained of blood as he realized that he had been completely screwed over by the Giant Ghost King. All the Giant Ghost King needed was for him to get into the Necromancer Kettle, and all issues would be resolved thanks to the way the restrictive spell worked….

That restrictive spell… was the Giant Ghost King’s true trump card. It was his way to get the ghost king fruit no matter what happened!

Bai Xiaochun moaned inwardly as he realized that the white light shining out from him was also causing his cultivation base to drop. In the briefest moment, he was half-drained! Backing up, his scalp tingling explosively, he suddenly felt a sensation of intense, deadly crisis. As of this moment, it was obvious… that he was in big trouble!!

“Damn that Giant Ghost King!!” Bai Xiaochun was so flustered and exasperated that he was sure he was going to start crying at any moment. Just as he considered how to flee, all of the people around him gasped and then began to cry out in anger and alarm.

“That’s a void spell created by someone with a nascent divinity…. As long as the host of the restrictive spell doesn’t die, not even a demigod could blast it open!!”

Not even the top chosen like Gongsun Yi or Zhou Hong could keep their faces calm. Although none of them could specifically state the name of this particular restrictive spell, they could see that it was obviously too powerful for Nascent Soul cultivators to break open. The only way to get through it… would be to kill the host of the spell. And the host… was obviously Bai Hao!

That was even more obvious given that Bai Xiaochun was still shining with white light that flowed forth to connect him to the restrictive spell. The killing intent in the eyes of the gathered chosen grew more intense.

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Hao?!”

“Dammit, you just said you forfeited! And now this!? You’re dead!!”

“Kill him! That's the only way to get rid of that restrictive spell. Otherwise, we're all defeated for sure!!”

As countless angry shouts filled the air, it was like a huge target came to fall on Bai Xiaochun. Then, people began to draw on the powers of their cultivation base to shoot in his direction.

“You've got it all wrong!” he shouted angrily. “Wait, let me expl--” Before he could finish speaking, a burly man suddenly appeared in front of him, who was none other than Zhao Dongshan.

“Hear me out, Fellow Daoist--” Bai Xiaochun shouted.

However, that was when Zhao Dongshan let out a vicious bellow: “Die!”

Three more people were right behind Zhao Dongshan, all of whom unleashed powerful magical techniques against him.

“Giant Ghost King, you bastard!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, preparing to back up. However, that was when he noticed eight people behind him, killing intent raging with such intensity that he gasped. He knew that he couldn’t hesitate here; if he did, he would give these people a chance to surround him. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to use the Mountain Shaking Bash.

It was with explosive speed that he accelerated toward Zhao Dongshan, who wore a vicious grin as he raised his wolf tooth club up to deliver a killing blow.

Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions that caused shocked expressions to fill the faces of all the surrounding Wildlander chosen. That was especially true of those who were closer to him; their eyes went completely wide.

Zhao Dongshan, within whose veins ran the blood of savage giants, was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying out of his mouth. As for Bai Xiaochun, who everyone had expected would be rebuffed by Zhao Dongshan’s burly frame, he was now fleeing at top speed.

“How is this possible?!?!”

“This Bai Hao… his fleshly body power has reached an absurd level!”

Despite being shocked, there were still numerous individuals who were chasing after Bai Xiaochun, who was so jittery that tears could be seen welling up in his eyes.

“This is beyond outrageous, Giant Ghost King! All I did was slap you across the side of the head a few times and use you like a shield. I'm the one who saved you! I can’t believe you’re screwing me over! Things aren’t going to turn out good for you if I die!!!” Feeling incredibly wronged, he checked the restrictive spell inside of him and confirmed that it was still there. Unfortunately, because of how things had changed, Bai Xiaochun could tell that if he died, the

Giant Ghost King wouldn’t die; he would only receive some serious injuries.

Clearly, the Giant Ghost King was forcing his hand, but at the same time, he was also gambling…. He was gambling that Bai Xiaochun would be able to hold out until the flower bloomed. Then Bai Xiaochun thought about the medicinal pills he had been given, and the spear, and the pieces clicked together.

“Those medicinal pills can only be consumed nine times in one’s life, and he gave me nine of them…. As for that spear, it’s probably the most powerful magical item he possesses that I could use….”

**

In Bai Xiaochun's moment of crisis, the Giant Ghost King stood in a building in his royal palace in Giant Ghost City, various expressions flashing across his face. He was currently looking in the direction of the Necromancer Kettle, his heart pounding with anxiety.

The ghost king fruit was of critical importance to him, and it was just as Bai Xiaochun had just been thinking; he had given him nine precious medicinal pills, and a spear with a sixteenfold spirit enhancement, which was the best possible magical item he could have given him. The truth was that everything which had happened so far was part of the plan he had begun to devise once the variable of Bai Xiaochun had been added to the picture, and the Giant Ghost King got his cultivation base back.

He was gambling… on Bai Xiaochun’s ability to flee for his life. That was something that the Giant Ghost King was actually very confident in. When he thought back to how Bai

Xiaochun had fled with him from three devas and countless Nascent Soul experts, he felt much more confident.

“I've never met anyone as good at running away as this Bai Hao….” he murmured. “I just hope he can last for long enough…. Bai Hao, as long as you get that ghost king fruit for me, then I’ll treat you like my own son! From then on, I’ll never let anything or anyone hurt you!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0690 awe-chapter-691

Booms filled the interior of the Necromancer Kettle, causing the mists which filled it to seethe and dance. Countless evil ghosts could be seen, their eyes flickering with greed at the sight of all of the chosen, as though the qi and blood inside of them were the most nourishing thing they had ever seen.

Bai Xiaochun felt more wronged than ever as he attempted to break free of the crowd of chosen. However, his cultivation base was being greatly weakened by the restrictive spell, making it much more difficult than it should have been. It only took a moment for about eight of the chosen to be rushing toward him.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyelids twitched as he realized that one of these new opponents was none other than Zhou Hong, who was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage!

Zhou Hong’s eyes flickered with killing intent, as though he were facing a mere insect as an opponent. As for Bai Xiaochun, his breath came in ragged pants, and his eyes were completely bloodshot as he shot forward like an angry dragon, unhesitatingly bashing into the entire group.

When everyone collided, a massive boom filled heaven and earth, and the chosen all flew backward, qi and blood surging. Zhou Hong’s expression flickered slightly in response to the ferocity on display by Bai Xiaochun. The other chosen were equally shocked, and were now coming to the conclusion that they had misjudged his speed, and would be unable to prevent him from fleeing.

Bai Xiaochun’s momentum was only growing. His fleshly body power erupted with incredible force, and his cultivation base surged with the power of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul. He was like a celestial warrior, the likes of which nobody could impede in the slightest.

Of course, he didn’t dare to slow down. There were numerous opponents behind him ready to batter him with divine abilities if he paused for even a second. Heart racing, he could do nothing other than speed forward. As he did, he waved his hand, summoning his sixteenfold spirit enhanced spear. That, coupled with his incredible speed, made him almost superhumanly valiant.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Just when it seemed that he would break free of all the chosen, a cold snort echoed out in front of him. It was none other than Gongsun Yi!

As he hovered here in front of Bai Xiaochun, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger out. Instantly, a sealing power erupted forth, causing innumerable illusory magical symbols to appear and rush toward Bai Xiaochun. Within moments, they had formed into a gigantic net which began to rapidly shrink down around him!

There was no way for Bai Xiaochun to get out of the way in time. Instead, he slammed directly into the net. Unfortunately, his cultivation base was too weak at the moment, and he couldn’t break through. The only thing that happened was that cracks spread out on the surface of the net.

That in itself was shocking to Gongsun Yi. Just when he was about to attempt to strengthen the sealing power of the net, the dozens of chosen who had been following Bai Xiaochun appeared.

Without the slightest hesitation, all of them attacked, unleashing divine abilities and magical techniques that appeared to be at the level of trump cards. One of the chosen in that group was Zhou Hong, who sent a shocking beam of sword light slashing down toward Bai Xiaochun!

Little Wolfgod was also present, who howled as he transformed into something that looked half-wolf, half-human. That in turn gave him a huge burst of speed that he used to close in on Bai Xiaochun!

As for the sinister Li Tiansheng, he chuckled coldly as he waved his right index finger, causing a five-colored toxic gas to billow out. The gas rapidly transformed into five skulls which cackled evilly as they shot forward using minor teleportations.

These were all Nascent Soul cultivators, and although many were in the early stage, not a few were in the mid stage. There were even some like Li Tiansheng and Little Wolfgod who were late Nascent Soul stage experts. One, Zhou Hong, was even in the great circle. Each and every one of them was a chosen with powerful techniques, and when they pooled their strength, it was enough to cause even a deva to be shocked.

An intense sensation of deadly crisis rose up in Bai Xiaochun; despite having mentally prepared for something like this, the sudden and unexpected turn of events was difficult to take in.

“You big bullies!” Heart filled with bitterness, he threw his head back and roared as he produced the Eternal Parasol. After snapping it open, he used all the power he could muster to defend himself against the attack from behind. However, even as he did, a shout from the side could be heard as Xu Shan barrelled toward him with a fist strike.

“You’re not going anywhere!” Xu Shan shouted in an iron voice. Her fist strike was backed by the full power of her fleshly body, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air that surpassed heavenly thunder. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was rendered immobile by the sealing net. Shouting angrily, he kept the Eternal Parasol behind him as a shield as he also unleashed a fist strike.

Despite being on different sides of the net, their fists met, and at the same time, numerous divine abilities and magical techniques slammed into the Eternal Parasol.

Booms rose up into the heavens, along with dazzling light. The sealing net instantly shattered, and Xu Shan was blown backward in retreat. Gongsun Yi’s face fell as he too retreated in the face of the wave of powerful attacks.

Blood oozed out of the corners of Bai Xiaochun's mouth as he and the Eternal Parasol were sent tumbling forward toward the black mist.

The mere sight of that left everyone present completely flabbergasted. Never could any of them have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would escape their combined attack with only some injuries!

It was at this point that Miao Lin’er’s lips moved, causing a ripple to spread out into the air from her mouth. It was a ripple that could destabilize the mind of anyone it encountered, and it immediately sped directly toward the fleeing Bai Xiaochun.

It was a sound that defied the ability to defend against it, and as soon as it reached Bai Xiaochun's ears, his mind trembled, and all of his injuries flared up. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he immediately began to stagger forward.

In response, cold light flickered in Zhou Hong's eyes. Waving his right hand, he summoned a black, glowing light that pulsed with a deva aura. Even as everyone looked over in shock, he sent the glowing light shooting toward Bai Xiaochun.

The black light moved so quickly it seemed capable of piercing through the air, and was soon right in front of Bai Xiaochun. And yet, before it could reach him, a different type of black light shot out from inside of Bai Xiaochun.

It was none other than his turtle-wok. A boom rang out, and the black glow shattered, while the turtle-wok was sent spinning back to Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun borrowed the force of the blow to keep moving, simultaneously taking out a Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill, which ensured that he didn't slow down at all.

“We can't let him get away!!”

“If Bai Hao doesn't die, that restrictive spell will never unravel!!” The entire group of chosen was starting to get nervous. Gongsun Yi, Zhou Hong, Xu Shan, Little Wolfgod, and all of the other cultivators gritted their teeth and gave chase.

Before long, everyone was inside of the mist. The second prince wore a cold smile as he joined in the pursuit, and even Chen Manyao could be seen chasing after Bai Xiaochun. However, there was an odd glint in her eye; she hadn't noticed at first, but gradually, had come to the realization that there seemed to be something very familiar about the way this Bai Hao was fighting….

As Bai Xiaochun sped through the mist, burning heat spread through him, healing all of his wounds. Within the space of a few breaths of time, he was completely recovered, which left him feeling slightly less irritated than before.

However, his cultivation base was still being weakened, and when he thought about how the Giant Ghost King had screwed him over, his mood sank again. He felt very angry and very wronged, and yet, knew that he couldn’t dare to slow down a bit.

Thanks to his incredible speed, his pursuers had no way to catch up to him even if they wanted to. In fact, he was actually putting distance between himself and them. Combined with the fact that the dimension inside of the Necromancer Kettle was filled with dense mist and evil ghosts that needed to be avoided, it made things even more difficult. Before long, the howls of evil ghosts could be heard as many of them began to attack the chosen.

In contrast… not a single one of the evil ghosts or vengeful souls could hinder Bai Xiaochun at all. And there was a reason for that! Although the speed of all the other chosen was hampered by their reduced visibility, Bai Xiaochun could see everything around him completely clearly.

“Hmph! With my mask, you fools might as well stop dreaming of trying to catch me!” Snorting coldly, he continued to accelerate. More than two hours passed, after which Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hear anyone chasing him. At that point, he settled down on top of one of the mountains in the area and consumed another Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill. Finally, his cultivation base was no longer being weakened, and was starting to recover. After consuming another of the pills, he was completely back at his peak. Then he thought back to everything that had happened so far, and felt unsurpassable bitterness in his heart.

“I can’t believe so many people are chasing me! I never did anything to them. What a bunch of bullies. Outrageous! If they were all that good, they would fight me one-on-one!!

“And then there’s you, Giant Ghost King, you old codger. I saved you, you fool. Risked my life! And now you go and do this to me!

“Fudge! I'm not going to let this stand. I want revenge!!” The more he thought about it, the angrier he got, until finally, within his negative emotions, he suddenly felt courage rising up within him, and decided that now was not the time to hold back.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0691 awe-chapter-692

“I want revenge!!” he said, his face a mask of rage. Clenching his hands into fists, his mind began to spin with thoughts of how to do just that.

Of course, he was no fool; he knew that killing everyone wasn’t an option. He was in a very precarious position and situation here in the Wildlands. If he killed one or two of these chosen, it might not be a big deal, but if he killed too many, he would end up offending all of the Wildlands. That would be putting himself in far too precarious of a situation.

And yet, merely killing one or two people would not be the revenge he wanted.

“Besides, me killing some people wouldn’t be a very big deal to the Giant Ghost King. After all, it’s not like he would be directly responsible for their deaths…. In fact, he would probably get super pissed off at me. In the end, I would just be screwing myself by doing that….

“No, I have to think of something better. I have to think of a way to get my revenge, and also make things hard on the Giant Ghost King.” Tugging at his hair in frustration, and eyes completely bloodshot, he continued to ponder the situation for a long moment. Then, his eyes suddenly began to shine, and he gasped.

“I know what to do!!” he thought, instantly perking up. As the moments ticked by, his idea grew clearer.

“I won’t kill them, I’ll kidnap them! Then I’ll hand them all over to the Giant Ghost King. At that point, they’ll definitely blame him for everything inside the Necromancer Kettle. Then he’ll either have to release all of the chosen, and lose a huge amount of face, or refuse to release them, and give the rest of the Wildlands a good reason to join together and cause problems for him! Heh heh….

“These chosen are going to end up like hot potatoes, and when the time comes, the Giant Ghost King isn’t going to be able to go to anybody to complain about it…. And even if he were more domineering than he already is, it would be difficult for him to try to hold all the chosen hostage. That would get everyone completely pissed off. If Lord Bai did something like that, it probably wouldn't cause too much of a stir, but if the Giant Ghost King tried to, it would lead to all sorts of disasters!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

He really couldn’t help but marvel at how intelligent he was to come up with an idea like this. Feeling more proud of himself than ever, he sighed and then began to put more thought into how to carry out his plan.

“I definitely have to think of every possibility. What will I do if that punk the Giant Ghost King actually just decides to release everybody? That’s not a completely impossible outcome. Hmmmphh! Lord Bai will make sure that even if the Giant Ghost King frees everyone, he’ll still pay a painful price for it all!” Looking very excited at the prospect of getting his revenge this way, he did a bit more planning. Soon, his eyes shone with anticipation.

“This isn’t my fault, Giant Ghost King. You screw me over? Well don’t blame me for screwing you right back. Furthermore, Lord Bai is going to take this opportunity to cultivate his Undying Bones!” Although there were some flaws to his plan, Bai Xiaochun knew that he couldn't account for every possibility. However, he was certain that his overall strategy was perfect.

"I can't sit around waiting to take vengeance. I need to start now!" With that, he blurred into motion, speeding out into the mists and using the power of his mask to conceal his aura. Not only did the evil ghosts not see him because of that, but he was able to flit about like a spirit from the underworld, passing here and there without making a single noise.

The mists in the Necromancer Kettle were filled with evil ghosts and countless hordes of vengeful souls. To pass by so many of the things left him feeling a bit jumpy.

That was especially true when he realized that the evil ghosts here all had solitary horns jutting out of their foreheads. Furthermore, they seemed to occasionally take corporeal form, which was even more shocking.

"This Necromancer Kettle is a very strange place, and the vengeful souls here are completely bizarre!"

These vengeful souls and evil ghosts were much more brutal than the type outside, and some of them could even utilize magical techniques and divine abilities that drew upon their auras of death. Furthermore, if they saw living beings, they would pounce on them and, if they caught them, immediately begin to extract their life force. Before long, the life force flames of such victims would even begin to flicker unstably.

If cultivators from the Heavenspan River region ran into vengeful souls like this, they would flee in terror. But the chosen here were Wildlanders, people who were well-equipped to deal with hordes of souls. Furthermore, all of them were necromancers of some skill. Despite the fact that the souls and ghosts in the Necromancer Kettle were more brutal than those on the outside, and more fear-inspiring, the chosen could deal with them if they were careful.

The chosen knew that the Necromancer Kettle was a special place, and that although the evil ghosts and vengeful souls there could be taken away, they would be especially hard to subjugate. The best thing to do when running into them was either to destroy them, or flee.

Because of the attacking souls and ghosts, the chosen who had been chasing Bai Xiaochun had already scattered, and were all fighting their own battles. Although, none of them had given up on the search for their quarry either.

All of them were prepared to instantly raise the alarm if they found him, and get everyone to join forces to eradicate him!

“Damned Bai Hao. If he doesn’t die, then none of us will have a chance to get that ghost king fruit!”

“Time is running out!” Everyone pulsed with the desire to kill Bai Hao, especially one young man in a blue robe, who had a very grim expression on his face as he sped through the mists. He was currently being chased by a trail of vengeful souls, and yet, they couldn’t catch up, and were soon left behind.

He was none other than Little Wolfgod, who because of his late Nascent Soul stage cultivation base, was free to move about unless he encountered a huge horde of souls, or perhaps a particularly powerful evil ghost.

“This Bai Hao is fast, but I refuse to believe that he’ll be able to evade so many of us!” Little Wolfgod had originally intended to rely on the power of his cultivation base to help one of the heirs apparent get the ghost king fruit. That was the mission from his clan, and if he accomplished it, he would be handsomely rewarded when he got home.

But Bai Hao had ruined everything. With the restrictive spell in place, nobody could get to the fruit. Both Little Wolfgod and everyone else present got the distinct sensation that this Bai Hao was toying with them.

“There are no grudges between us, but you still have to die!” Chuckling coldly, Little Wolfgod pushed forward with greater speed, sending his divine sense out in all directions to search for his quarry. An hour later, he was still speeding through the mists when he saw a group of several hundred vengeful souls. The vengeful souls caught sight of him in almost the same moment, and began to speed in his direction, eyes glowing with netherworldly light.

Little Wolfgod ignored them; a group of a few hundred vengeful souls wasn’t even worthy of his attention. With a burst of speed, he shot through them. However, even as he emerged on the other side, his face fell as a sensation of profound crisis rose up inside of him. A very strange feeling had just washed through him, making him feel like he had lost thirty percent of his cultivation base power. His cultivation base felt sore, and even sluggish in response.

“What’s going on?!” Before he could ponder the situation, he lurched to a stop, and then backed up. But even as he did so, a cold chuckle could be heard next to him.

“Too late!” A figure blurred toward him from within the vengeful souls, moving as quickly as a lightning bolt, so fast that neither the naked eye nor divine sense could track it. Before Little Wolfgod could react, the figure was right in front of him, where it combined both fleshly body strength and cultivation base power into a powerful fist strike.

Little Wolfgod let out a shout, and drew on all the power he could muster to transform into a half-wolf, half-man. However, before the transformation could be completed, Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike landed.

A rumbling sound could be heard, and a shockwave spread out in all directions. The vengeful souls were shoved away, and the shocked Little Wolfgod had no time to dodge or block, or even unleash his own blow to defend himself. Bai Xiaochun’s fist was like a mountain that slammed into his chest with indescribable force. Little Wolfgod was crushed like a twig, suffering severe internal injuries that caused him to cough up mouthful after mouthful of blood. His cultivation base nearly shattered, and numerous bones in his body were broken.

“Bai Hao!!” He shrieked, scalp tingling with shock. The fist which had struck him contained the violent force of a thunderstorm, and was something Little Wolfgod had never even seen before. Shock and terror rose up in him as blood spilled out of his mouth. This Bai Hao seemed completely different from before, more powerful to an unbelievable degree.

One fist strike had nearly destroyed Little Wolfgod. His injuries were so severe that he could barely see straight, and his nascent soul had nearly been knocked out from inside of him. As for his divine ability of transformation, it was completely interrupted and defeated! Furthermore, the force of the blow sent him tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, until he was fully 300 meters away.

Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward to appear right in front of him. “Change shape! You had a lot of fun hitting me with your wolf form, didn’t you? So, change shape! I want to hit the transformed version of you!”

Little Wolfgod was so weak that he had lost all of his will to fight. Seeing that Bai Hao was closing in on him, his eyes turned bloodshot, and despite the wounds he had suffered, he cried, “Bai Hao is right--”

However, before the words could leave his mouth, Bai Hao sealed him and tossed him into his bag of holding, then sped off into the mists.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0692 awe-chapter-693

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun took to motion, seven or eight figures appeared in the spot where he had tangled with Little Wolfgod. The fluctuations of the magical techniques used were still in the air, as was the blood. The faces of the newcomers flickered, and they transmitted a short conversation before scattering.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun sped through the mists at high speed, licking his lips, his eyes flickering with madness. Little Wolfgod was not the first chosen he had captured, but rather, the eighth.

“That’ll teach you to change shape before attacking me!” he thought with a cold snort. All of the other chosen he had captured, including Little Wolfgod, had been taken out with a single fist strike. For all intents and purposes, this was Bai Xiaochun’s first time truly fighting people since he had stepped into the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage. As he did, he was learning about some of the amazing aspects of his new cultivation base.

“My Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul seems powerful enough to suppress all other types of nascent souls…. All of the other chosen I attacked nearly had their cultivation bases destroyed.” After reviewing the past few fights, he was even more certain than ever that Little Wolfgod’s cultivation base had also been unstable. With that, he decided to go confirm his theory.

He hurried along for a bit until suddenly, his expression flickered, and he changed direction. Off to the right, he had just caught sight of two Wildlander chosen being chased by a large group of vengeful souls.

“I’ll do a little test with these two.” Chuckling, he accelerated toward the two chosen, who caught sight of him only moments later. Their faces fell, and they were about to open their mouths when Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve, sending a burst of wind out. Both of them had mid Nascent Soul stage cultivation bases, which they drew upon to defend themselves, and yet, how could they possibly be a match for Bai Xiaochun? When facing his magical techniques, their cultivation bases were suppressed, making it difficult for them to rotate them properly.

Before either of them could do anything, they were sent tumbling backward, blood spraying out of their mouths. Then, Bai Xiaochun shot forward, reached out, and grabbed them.

After sealing them and tossing them into his bag of holding, he smiled broadly. Just now, he had been closely observing their cultivation bases, and was now sure that his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul cultivation base truly could emit crushing pressure onto other types of nascent souls.

“Heavens! Who would have thought that I was this strong!?!?’ Excitedly, he turned and headed off in a different direction.

By now, the other Wildlander chosen in the Necromancer Kettle were the prey, and Bai Xiaochun, the hunter. One after another, he captured chosen, almost as if he were an eagle swooping down onto baby chickens.

When he encountered larger groups, he would avoid them, preferring to prey on solitary targets. When he found such targets, rumbling sounds would fill the air that attracted a lot of attention. But he won each battle so quickly, and fled with such speed, that no one else was able to even come close to surrounding him.

“Dammit, how come this Bai Hao can move about so freely in this mist?!?!”

“There are already more than ten people missing….”

“Notify everyone that they need to stick together. Form groups of at least five!” Virtually all of the chosen in the Necromancer Kettle were taking orders from either Gongsun Yi, Zhou Hong or Xu Shan, so as the messages were sent out, everyone became more cautious than ever.

When that started happening, Bai Xiaochun got nervous. Although it was possible to kidnap five people at a time, it would take a lot longer. At the moment, he was speeding through the mists, wondering if he should change his appearance with his mask to fool people, when suddenly his face lit up.

“A straggler!” Off in the distance, he could see a burly fellow striding along, slaughtering vengeful souls left and right. It was none other than… Zhao Dongshan.

“He’s pretty far away. If he tried to use a minor teleportation, it would definitely drag things out too long….” With that, he produced a greatbow from his bag of holding.

In almost the same moment that Bai Xiaochun caught sight of Zhao Dongshan, Zhao Dongshan caught sight of him.

Zhao Dongshan was shocked; he had heard that quite a few people were missing, and as such, immediately turned to head toward some of his fellows. However, even as he tried to break out from the tide of souls that had surrounded him, a sensation of profound crisis rose up within him. That sense of crisis didn’t come because of his divine sense, but rather, the special technique he cultivated, a fleshly body danger sense!

Looking back in fear at Bai Xiaochun, he didn't hesitate for even a moment to utilize a minor teleportation. However, before he could complete it, an arrow appeared, shooting toward him at high speed and with shocking energy. Then, before it even reached him, it detonated.

The massive force of the explosion instantly threw the air in the area into chaos.

“A spirit enhanced arrow!!” Blood oozed out of the corners of Zhao Dongshan’s mouth as he realized that this spirit enhanced arrow had reached the tenfold level or higher. Only arrows like that could create spatial distortions that would interfere with teleportations

A look of despair appeared in his eyes as he tried to back up. As he watched in terror, Bai Xiaochun used his greatbow to shoot seven more arrows, all of which whistled toward him with incredible speed.

“Bai Hao!!” Zhao Dongshan shouted, urgently speeding away physically because he was unable to teleport.

Earlier, he had looked down on this supposed Bai Hao. But then he ended up being the first one struck when the chosen attempted to surround him. His chest still hurt from where he had been bashed into, and because of that, he had no intention of getting into a fight right now. And yet, before he could truly begin to retreat, the arrows were upon him, and exploded.

The explosions cast the area into further chaos, and caused blood to spray out of Zhao Dongshan’s mouth. Throwing all caution to the wind, he attempted to flee at top speed. And yet, compared to Bai Xiaochun, he was too slow. Already, Bai Xiaochun was closing in on him in utterly aggressive fashion.

The mere thought of how Zhao Dongshan had been the first one to attack him got Bai Xiaochun very angry. “Think you’re tough stuff? Fudge! How dare you be the first one to attack Lord Bai! Lord Bai is gonna beat you to death!”

Without any hesitation, he unleashed a devastating fist strike, which caused deafening rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions. After the proverbial dust cleared, Zhao Dongshan was kidnapped, and Bai Xiaochun was speeding away.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding with excitement by this point. He was definitely having a lot of fun with this cat-and-mouse game.

“What a bunch of dolts! All they know how to do is gang up on people. Hmmmphh! Which of them would dare to fight Lord Bai one-on-one!?” Feeling truly unparalleled under heaven, he flicked his sleeve and proceeded onward proudly. Before long, he encountered a large group of shrieking vengeful souls, from within which could be heard the sounds of fighting.

“Another windfall. The eagle catches more baby chickens….” Licking his lips, he approached carefully until he could see five Wildlander chosen surrounded by vengeful souls. At the moment, they were just on the verge of breaking out into the open. Of the five, four were in the mid Nascent Soul stage, and one was in the late stage. Their combined power was incredible, and obviously, it was only a matter of time before they would be free of the vengeful souls.

“What a pity I can’t control the vengeful souls here. That would make things a whole lot simpler!” He sighed, then thought for a moment before producing a fifteen-colored flame. Eyes flickering, and chuckling darkly, he flew forward, concealing the fluctuations of his cultivation base as he got closer and closer to the group of chosen.

Before long, intense rumbling sounds could be heard as red clouds appeared in the sky. Then, fire began to fall like rain. It was none other than the special divine ability Bai Xiaochun had come up with in the Bai Clan. He had assumed that after reaching the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, he would lose that ability, and yet, unexpectedly, the opposite had happened. It actually got easier to use. As the sea of flames appeared, the vengeful souls began to scatter. As for the five chosen, their faces fell as they saw the endlessly destructive fire bearing down on them. They immediately turned to flee, which was the exact same moment that Bai Xiaochun appeared among them, long spear in hand, battle prowess surging as he danced in and out of the raining fire….

Booms filled the air, and after ten breaths of time, Bai Xiaochun was gone, along with the five chosen. Even after he left, the rain of fire continued to fall with destructive force.

The entire dimension inside the Necromancer Kettle had been thrown into chaos. The Wildlander Chosen were all shocked to the core, and by now, everyone knew that nearly thirty among their number were missing.

Bai Hao was simply too quick. Nobody ever had a chance to try to surround him, and furthermore, it was to the shock of all present that they realized the evil ghosts didn't even notice him.

Everyone was frustrated, enraged, and also shocked. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun’s revenge was being carried out very smoothly.

By now, the remaining chosen had separated into four main groups, led respectively by Gongsun Yi, Zhou Hong, Xu Shan, and the second prince.

Of course, it wasn’t a long-term strategy. After all, they had to track Bai Xiaochun down. If they didn't, and the deadlock lasted for too long, nobody would get the ghost king fruit.

Eventually, they realized they had to split up. Unfortunately, spreading out into a net-like formation wasn’t very suitable in the Necromancer Kettle. There were simply too many evil ghosts and vengeful souls in the place. As such, they had to stick together, even if just to fight off the occasional evil ghost.

Of the four main groups, each had their own separate way of doing things. The second prince had a group of several dozen with him, including Chen Manyao, who stuck together closely as they searched.

Although Gongsun Yi, Zhou Hong and Xu Shan were all very confident in general, they also kept three or four people with them as they searched. The rest of the cultivators stayed in groups of roughly ten. It was in this way that everyone felt confident enough to tackle Bai Xiaochun if they encountered him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0693 awe-chapter-694

Everyone in the Necromancer Kettle was feeling incredibly jumpy. By this point, all of them realized how powerful Bai Xiaochun was, and yet, there were no other options than to try to deal him. After all, they couldn't leave the Necromancer Kettle early. They could only follow the orders of Gongsun Yi and the others, and try to track Bai Xiaochun down.

One by one, they gritted their teeth and continued to search, their main hope being that they could find Bai Hao, surround him, and join forces to kill him.

The Ghost King Orchid was blooming rapidly, and that was their only shot at being able to win it in the end.

As everyone methodically searched for him, Bai Xiaochun was in a valley between two mountains, chest puffed with pride as he looked at the roughly thirty chosen who were all sitting in front of him, glaring at him angrily. He had sealed both their cultivation bases and their limbs, making it impossible for them to do anything other than look at him threateningly.

“If you’re that tough, then just kill us!”

“Hmph! You’ve brought a heaven-level disaster upon yourself, Bai Hao. Not even the Giant Ghost King will be able to keep you safe!”

The eyes of Zhao Dongshan and Little Wolfgod were particularly bloodshot. If looks could kill, then their eyes would long since have reduced Bai Xiaochun to crumbling bone and ash.

“Trying to scare me? You people just wait!” After glaring at the group of thirty, he proudly patted his bag of holding to produce the Eternal Parasol. Then he walked over to one particular young man whose voice had been more threatening than any of the others.

Startled, the young man stared angrily at Bai Xiaochun and said, “What do you think you’re going to do with that?!”

“Oh nothing. Heh heh. The technique I cultivate requires life force, so I’m going to borrow a bit from you….” Clearing his throat, and yet not hesitating for a moment, he… stabbed the Eternal Parasol into the young man’s chest.

The young man let out a bloodcurdling scream that caused the faces of the other chosen to flicker with various emotions. Many of them even began to pant. Shocked, they watched as the young man’s body began to visibly wither. After ten breaths of time passed, his hair had turned white, and he appeared to be little more than skin and bones. At this point, their hearts were starting to pound, and they were looking at Bai Xiaochun with terrified eyes.

The Eternal Parasol exerted a bizarre, almost demonic gravitational force that greedily gobbled up all life force.

That life force in turn poured into Bai Xiaochun, causing him to tremble inwardly. When he decided enough was enough, he retracted the Eternal Parasol. Then, face slightly flush, he ignored everyone else present and sat down cross-legged to meditate and work on the fourth level of the Undying Codex, the Undying Bones!

The life force which had just poured into him rapidly vanished, soaked into his bones as surely as water would soak into parched earth. At the same time, a comfortable expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

The scene which was playing out caused Little Wolfgod, Zhao Dongshan, and everyone else to gasp in shock. Their faces drained of blood, and expressions of terror appeared. As for the young man whose life force had just been drained away, he seemed like he was gasping his last breaths. Although he wasn’t dead, his vital energy had been badly damaged.

“What kind of devilish technique does this Bai Hao cultivate?!?!”

“Heavens! He directly extracted that life force to use in cultivation….”

“Now I get why he kidnapped all of us. He wants to use us to further his cultivation!!”

As everyone trembled in fear, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes snapped open, and they brimmed with spirit and joy. “Hahaha! It’s exactly as I predicted. As long as I have enough life force, I can cultivate my Undying Bones at will. Hmmmphh! I'm not going to kill these people, I'm going to suck their life force dry, toss them over to the Giant Ghost King, and then let him deal with the headache!”

Chuckling to himself, he looked around at the flustered chosen, and before any of them could say anything, he rose to his feet and approached one of them.

“Hi there! I sure hope you can cooperate. Don’t worry, it doesn’t hurt….” Beaming from ear to ear, he stabbed the Eternal Parasol into the chest of the terrified chosen….

It didn’t take long before he moved from the second chosen to the third, and then the fourth…. It took eight hours to extract the life force from everyone present. As for his bones, thanks to the influx of life force and the cultivation of his technique, they soon reached the point where two thunderous booms spread out inside of him.

At that point, his entire body emitted a black glow that slowly faded away. Then he opened his eyes and expelled a mouthful of impure vital energy. As of this moment, his bones were much more resilient than before.

“The second stratum of Tempered Bones!” Eyes shining with anticipation, he contemplated how all he had to do was reach the next stratum, and he would be able to use the Undying Emperor’s Fist.

“The life force requirements of the Undying Bones are terrifying. Even with all these people, all I could do was reach the second stratum…. Ridiculous. However, at least now I know that it was the right decision to come to the Necromancer Kettle. Having all these chosen here is like having my choice of a whole bunch of high-level medicine!” Radiating health and vigor, he looked at the thirty emaciated and listless chosen, and then quickly threw them back into his bag of holding. Then, he flew back out into the mists.

Bai Xiaochun proceeded along carefully, making sure to stay hidden as he went. Before long, a frown could be seen on his face as he realized that most of the chosen weren’t in groups of five, but rather, ten.

Considering that, it wasn’t likely that he could end a fight quickly. If he got wrapped up in a protracted fight, he would end up getting surrounded like he had in the beginning.

“Hmph! Groups of ten? Well, I can still attack them. Maybe I won’t be able to catch all of them in one shot, but I'm in no hurry. Slow and steady!” After putting a moment of thought into planning, he snorted coldly and melted into the mists. Before long, he had found his target, a group of ten chosen who were doing nothing to conceal the power of their cultivation bases. Although the occasional vengeful soul would appear to harry them, they handled them with ease.

As Bai Xiaochun got closer, his pupils constricted when he realized that one of the chosen in this group was none other than… Miao Lin’er.

He remembered the mystical magical technique she had used during their initial encounter, which had caused all of his injuries to flare up. It was that sudden increase in the severity of his wounds that gave Zhou Hong a chance to hit him with a dangerous attack.

“What a vicious woman! Although my current physical appearance doesn’t quite measure up to what I really look like, I'm still handsome! I never did anything to offend her, and yet she went so far as to attack with complete venom!” Narrowing his eyes, he studied Miao Lin’er a bit more closely. Then he made a few calculations, after which his eyes shone with determination. Without the slightest hesitation, he burst into motion with all the speed he could muster.

In the blink of an eye, he became a streak of light that shot with lightning-like speed that bordered on teleportation. Before anyone could react, he was right on top of Miao Lin’er’s group, where he unleashed a fist strike.

That fist strike became a tempest that descended onto the group with impunity. As for Miao Lin’er and the other chosen, their expressions flickered at the sight of Bai Xiaochun. Some even coughed up blood. However, all of them immediately spread out in specific directions. As for Miao Lin’er, she chuckled and said, “You fell into our trap, Bai Hao! Into formation, everyone!’

Strange gleams appeared in the eyes of the surrounding chosen. At the same time, magical symbols began to pour off of all of them. In the blink of an eye, the symbols linked together to make a spell formation!

Rumbling sounds filled the 300-meter area around them, creating something like a prison that had Bai Xiaochun completely locked down inside of it.

This was the secret plan devised by Gongsun Yi and the other top chosen. All of the groups that were out in the mists were prepared to instantly create spell formations if Bai Xiaochun dared to show his face.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun ended up in the spell formation, the news was passed to Gongsun Yi, Zhou Hong and Xu Shan, all of whom began to rush toward the area.

Zhou Hong was the nearest, and had three people with him, one of whom was Li Tiansheng. Considering the speed they were capable of, it would only take them about ten breaths of time to reach the location where Bai Xiaochun had been caught.

Drastic developments were underway inside of the Necromancer Kettle as all of the chosen raced at top speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Even as Miao Lin’er’s laughter echoed out, her face suddenly turned pale, and her eyes widened. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was right there in the middle of the spell formation, he didn’t seem flustered at all. In fact, he even had a bit of a scornful look in his eyes. Taking a step toward Miao Lin’er, he quickly utilized his Undying Hex.

Rumbling could be heard as he vanished from within the spell formation, to appear right in front of her.

“Impossible!” Miao Lin’er’s face fell as she tried to fall back. However, before she could, Bai Xiaochun bashed into her like a wild animal. An old saying talked about *tender, protective feelings for the fairer sex*, but there was none of that in his actions. He unleashed devastating force that caused blood to spray out of her mouth. Her cultivation base was instantly thrown into chaos, and many of her bones shattered. Her nascent soul was on the verge of flying out into the open. Before she could even consider fleeing, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed her arm, sending cultivation base power inside of her to seal her.

It all happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. The fact that Miao Lin’er had been captured struck fear into the hearts of the other surrounding chosen, and even Zhou Hong and the other who were rushing over were taken completely by surprise.

Many of the vengeful souls in the surrounding mist were startled, and then turned their bloodthirsty, voracious eyes upon the nearby chosen….

Feeling very proud of himself, Bai Xiaochun took the sensual, voluptuous Miao Lin’er with him as he turned to flee. However, even as he did that, his eyes happened to fall onto one particular vengeful soul within the hordes in the area!!

He suddenly stopped in place, trembling, an expression of complete disbelief on his face. He almost felt like he were being struck by countless bolts of lightning.

Although this vengeful soul looked slightly different from the living person it had come from, it was still easy to tell who it was. Furthermore, it was someone that Bai Xiaochun was very familiar with!

It was a struggle to hold back from shouting the name out loud. “Bai Hao!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0694 awe-chapter-695

Bai Xiaochun was well aware of that special characteristic of the world he lived in. After people died, their souls would enter the Underworld River and then emerge somewhere in the Wildlands.

He had even wondered about where exactly in the Wildlands Bai Hao’s soul might have ended up…. However, the thought of finding him had seemed like an impossibility. It would be like finding a needle in an ocean, and was something that not even a demigod could do.

The idea of retrieving Bai Hao's soul could only occasionally flash through his mind and quickly transform into a sigh of regret.

How could he ever have imagined that in a completely unexpected turn of events, he would actually encounter Bai Hao’s soul in the Necromancer Kettle!?!?

He was a vengeful soul, filled with madness and greed, not completely the same in appearance as he had been in life, and bursting with an aura of sinister death. However, Bai Xiaochun recognized at first glance that it was Bai Hao!

Bai Xiaochun was more familiar with Bai Hao than anyone else in the world. Not only was Bai Hao his apprentice, he had also used his identity to reach his current position and status in the Wildlands.

Bai Xiaochun was stunned. He hadn’t forgotten that people were rushing toward him, and that if he slowed down for a moment, it was possible he could end up getting surrounded.

And yet, he stopped in place. He could not pass up this opportunity. After all, even knowing that Bai Hao’s soul was in the Necromancer Kettle wouldn’t necessarily do much good. Even going to search for him in that one particular area would be difficult. Furthermore, if Bai Hao’s soul were to die, then Bai Xiaochun would feel regret over the matter for the rest of his life.

Of course, he also knew that Bai Hao’s soul represented incredible danger. If anyone else found out the truth, and exposed his identity, the fact that the Bai Hao that everyone knew was really Bai Xiaochun would be extremely problematic.

The best choice would probably have been to leave, and completely ignore Bai Hao's soul. After all, despite the fact that it was possible someone might notice him, it was very unlikely.

Another option would have been to destroy his soul. That would ensure that there were no cracks in Bai Xiaochun’s story. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't even consider that option.

There was only one thought in his mind at the moment…. This was his apprentice! The first apprentice he had ever taken in his life! Now that he had encountered him, there was no way he could shrink back from trying to save him!

Therefore, he didn’t hesitate at all to spin in place and then leap over to the location where Bai Hao's soul was within the horde of souls. Of course, the souls didn’t notice him, and therefore, he didn’t cause a stir by entering their midst.

Instead, the souls were looking greedily at the Wildlander chosen, toward whom they began to fly, Bai Hao included.

However, before Bai Hao’s soul could pick up any speed, Bai Xiaochun reached out, grabbed him, and threw him into a soulhoarding pagoda.

Just as nervous as ever, he then turned to face two beams of light which were approaching at rapid speed.

They were none other than Zhou Hong and Li Tiansheng!

“Bai Hao!!” Zhou Hong roared, his cultivation base surging with the power of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, sending devastating fluctuations out in all directions. Then he crushed the jade slip he had been holding in his hand, instantly throwing the surrounding area into chaos, and making all teleportations impossible.

His actions were performed with practiced fluidity, and were accomplished even as his voice rumbled out like heavenly thunder.

Within moments, he was right in front of Bai Xiaochun, striding forward with black streams of light whipping about around him. Those streams of light then began to swirl through the air toward Bai Xiaochun, radiating the fearsome aura of a deva. Clearly, this was a trump card that had been given to him by his father, the Nine Serenities King.

Behind him, a sinister cold look could be seen in the eyes of Li Tiansheng, who had intentionally slowed down. Waving his sleeve, he sent a five-colored toxic gas out which caused even the souls it touched to emit agonized screams and dissolve into nothing.

The rest of the cultivators in the area seemed excited to see Zhou Hong, and quickly began to fan out to prevent Bai Xiaochun from escaping. They knew that all they had to do was delay him for a short time, and as long as enough of the other chosen hurried over, they would be able to kill him.

Even if he were stronger than he had already proved to be, it wouldn’t matter. With numbers on their side, not even a deva would take them on casually.

Bai Xiaochun understood that just as well as them. Looking over at Zhou Hong, he glanced at the streams of light he was using as a weapon, which seemed extremely dangerous. Then he unleashed a fist strike, drawing upon both the explosive power of his fleshly body power, and also his cultivation base. A tempest sprang up, causing everything in the area to tremble, and Zhou Hong’s expression to flicker. Instantly, he sent the black streams of light whipping back to defend himself. A boom rang out, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood as an expression of disbelief filled his face.

“How could he be so strong!?” Zhou Hong’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and filled with a look of defiant madness. More black strands of light shot out, filled with a netherworldly glow as they sliced toward Bai Xiaochun. However, this time, Bai Xiaochun sidestepped, speeding past Zhou Hong toward some of the mid Nascent Soul stage chosen beyond him.

At the same time, he pulled out the Eternal Parasol and unhesitatingly stabbed it into Miao Lin’er’s side.

She screamed as her life force was sucked away, and her beautiful face withered up. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Bones emitted rumbling sounds as they used the new life force to push almost completely into the great circle of the second stratum of the Tempered Bones.

Miao Lin’er alone was enough to do that, much to Bai Xiaochun’s shock. Clearly, Miao Lin’er’s life force far surpassed that of others.

“What technique does this little wench cultivate to have so much life force?” he murmured to himself. “Considering how revealing and smuttily she dresses, it must be some evil technique!”

Of course, everything that occurred happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. After tossing Miao Lin’er into his bag of holding, he accelerated toward the mid Nascent Soul stage cultivators. As they unleashed a bombardment of divine abilities, he snapped the Eternal Parasol open to defend himself, then stabbed it into one of the cultivators.

The cultivator screamed as his body withered up, and he was then thrown into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. Then Bai Xiaochun turned and shot toward his next target. Zhou Hong’s fury burned as he gave chase, and yet, he was not nearly as fast as Bai Xiaochun. However, after Bai Xiaochun sucked away the life force from four cultivators, Zhou Hong performed an incantation gesture, causing all of the black streams of light to form together into a huge spike which shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

The black spike clearly contained the aura of a deva, causing Bai Xiaochun to gasp and pull out his turtle-wok to defend himself. A boom could be heard as Bai Xiaochun fell back by several dozen meters, after which he stabbed the Eternal Parasol into another nearby chosen who had been too slow to evade him.

As the chosen screamed and withered up, life force poured into Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Bones, pushing them all the way to the great circle of the Tempered Bones.

It all happened so quickly that the other surrounding chosen didn’t even have time to gasp. Furthermore, none of them dared to get anywhere near Bai Xiaochun, and were all backing away. Bai Xiaochun’s unique battle methods had them all feeling completely shaken.

“Do you dare to fight me one-on-one, Bai Hao?!?!” Zhou Hong shouted in rage, closing in on him. As for Li Tiansheng, his face was ashen, and he was backing away, cowed by Bai Xiaochun’s bizarre parasol.

“Calm down. I'm leaving you for last so that I can test out my most powerful fist strike.” Ignoring Zhou Hong, Bai Xiaochun turned his attention on the retreating Li Tiansheng. Lips turning up into a grin, he lifted his foot and prepared to move. Although he couldn’t use his Undying Hex because of the jade slip Zhou Hong had crushed earlier, his fleshly body itself was capable of teleportation-level speed. As soon as his foot touched down, he transformed into a series of afterimages that shot directly toward Li Tiansheng!

That smile caused Li Tiansheng’s scalp to prickle with fear. Mind reeling, he began to back up even faster, simultaneously waving his hands through the air and spitting out even more toxic gas. The toxic gas immediately transformed into a seven-colored skull which shot toward Bai Xiaochun as if to consume him.

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored the seven-colored skull, and in fact just pierced right through it with the help of a handful of fourteenfold spirit enhanced items. Then, he was right in front of Li Tiansheng.

“Is playing with poison really that fun…?” he said as he thrust the Eternal Parasol toward Li Tiansheng’s chest. Li Tiansheng let out a shout, causing a red glow to explode out from inside of him. Numerous defensive magical items also appeared. However, it was in that moment that a colorful light appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, which cast Li Tiansheng’s cultivation base into chaos. Li Tiansheng suddenly slowed down, and to his terror… the Eternal Parasol stabbed into him.

Li Tiansheng began to wither up as his life force poured out of him and into Bai Xiaochun. As it entered Bai Xiaochun’s bones, he shivered, and rumbling sounds echoed out inside of him. Furthermore, deep within his eyes, a golden light could be seen. His Undying Bones… had broken through into the third stratum of the Tempered Bones!!

A warm, comfortable feeling filled him, and he could instantly sense that the defensive level of his fleshly body had increased. Even more exciting to him was that he now met the minimum requirements to use the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Meanwhile, whistling sounds could be heard as Gongsun Yi, Xu Shan, the second prince and Chen Manyao arrived with even more chosen.

“Stop him, Zhou Hong!!”

“Don’t let him get away!!”

Zhou Hong watched as Li Tiansheng was captured, and then heard the cries of the approaching cultivators, and it caused his anger to burn hotter. Throwing his head back, he howled, sending more streams of black light flying out around him. At this point, he was so angry that he was finally resorting to one of his trump cards.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the black streams all began to shoot toward Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and clenched his hands into fists. Then his eyes began to shine with bright light as his aura began to retract. It was almost as if all signs of life in his body were fading away. At the same time, a black vortex could be seen spinning around his fist.

Within that vortex were indescribably terrifying fluctuations that caused anyone who could see them to blanch in fear!

He was assuming the opening stance of the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0695 awe-chapter-696

The fourth level of the Undying Codex, the Undying Bones, had a secret magic known as the Undying Emperor’s Fist, and this was Bai Xiaochun's first time using it. As he did, his aura, his flesh and blood, and even his soul and life force, seemed to be compressing down to the ultimate level.

Cracking sounds could be heard from his bones as the foundation of his heaven-shaking, earth-shattering fist strike was prepared. Within moments, Bai Xiaochun pulsed with explosive power.

That power soon turned into a wild tempest that coursed through him with such power that, if his bones weren’t imbued with such incredible defensive power, it would have crushed him out of existence!

His skeleton was the foundation of it all. The power of his flesh and blood was madly compressed, until finally... it exploded out through his skin.

This was a crucial moment, and a unique aspect to the Undying Emperor’s Fist. Under normal circumstances, the power would have erupted from his skin in explosive fashion and dissipated in all directions. But instead, ninety-nine percent of the locations where that power would normally have vented, were now sealed up! The only place for the power to go... was the fist formed by his right hand!

All of a sudden, a black hole appeared inside of him that seemed capable of crushing everything in existence. As for his right fist, the black vortex that had formed around it emanated an aura that could shake heaven and earth, an aura that seemed impossible to constrict or restrain!

It seemed so powerful that if it were to strike out, Bai Xiaochun's entire body would be hit by a backlash from the Undying Emperor's Fist, and destroyed!

Behind Bai Xiaochun, a shadowy figure appeared. It was a man in imperial robes, with an imperial crown. Although his facial features were impossible to make out, there was something domineering about him, as though his imperial will were superior to all creation!

Everything around Bai Xiaochun shattered and twisted. Off in the distance, Gongsun Yi, Xu Shan, the second prince, Chen Manyao, and everyone else all gasped in shock!

Zhou Hong was the closest to Bai Xiaochun, and as soon as he sensed that something strange was going on, a feeling of imminent, deadly crisis rose up within him.

However, before Zhou Hong could do anything, Bai Xiaochun grinned... looked at Zhou Hong and his black streaks of light... and unleashed a fist strike!!

The shadowy emperor behind Bai Xiaochun merged into his fist, causing it to thrum with a domineering, imperial will!

Wild colors flashed in heaven and earth, and a screaming wind kicked up. It was as if an enormous giant were unleashing all of the power in its body! At the same time, a boundless gravitational force sprang up, and the black vortex grew rapidly in size until it was fully 30 meters across. As it did, it sucked in all of the color in the world, becoming the focus of all attention, as if that fist and that vortex were the only things that existed in the world!

As the fist strike rocketed through the air, Zhou Hong let out a miserable shriek. Eyes filling with panic and terror, and heart pounding painfully, he sent streams of green light flowing out of himself to form a long sword. Gripping the sword tightly, he slashed it toward the incoming fist.

“Nine Serenities Slash!!” The mad slash of his sword shook heaven and earth. Green sword light spilled out, shredding the air, and was joined by the black streams of light, which were like a sword rain that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

The witnesses to the event were reeling in shock at the ferocious scene playing out in front of them. Never before had any of them seen a fight like this between two members of their own generation.

However, it only lasted for the briefest of moments. When the green sword light contacted the black vortex of Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike, a massive boom filled the area!!

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

As the deafening sound rolled out, Zhou Hong’s green sword light shattered, and the black streams of light writhed as they were wiped out of existence. A torrent of blood sprayed out of Zhou Hong’s mouth as virtually all the bones in his body were broken. His flesh was instantly lacerated into a mangled mass of bloody strips, and his nascent soul flew out into the open. Immediately rendered unconscious, he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut.

The debut of the Undying Emperor’s Fist was shocking to everyone who could observe it!

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even used the full power of the fist strike, only about thirty percent. Aware of how devastating it was, he had actually been holding back for fear of killing Zhou Hong.

And yet, even that thirty percent was completely and utterly astonishing.

Just as the description of the fist strike had indicated, it could shake heaven and rock the earth. Its power vastly surpassed the Throat Crushing Grasp and the Mountain Shaking Bash! It was a domineering power that could shake one to the depths of their psyche!

Everyone present felt like they were being struck by heavenly lightning, and only began to gasp after a long moment of shock. Even Gongsun Yi and the second prince were stunned, and subconsciously tried to calculate how they would have fared if struck. It only took a moment for them to come to the conclusion... that only someone far stronger than Zhou Hong would be able to stand up to that domineering imperial will!

Nobody in the Necromancer Kettle could possibly stand up to it!

None of the chosen would ever have been able to guess that Bai Xiaochun had a technique like this at his disposal. It was a fist strike so powerful that it didn't even seem like something from the Nascent Soul level....

Taking advantage of the fact that Zhou Hong had been knocked unconscious, Bai Xiaochun sped forward, grabbed his fleshly body and nascent soul, and then transformed into a beam of light that shot away with lightning-like speed.

The shocked bystanders all prepared to start chasing him, and yet, even before they could take a single step, a haughty voice rang in their ears.

“Don’t provoke me, fools! I can use that same fist strike a hundred more times if I want!”

Because of the haughty and domineering tone, everyone, without exception, stopped moving.... Not a single person dared to give chase!

Even Gongsun Yi was left trembling, a very unsightly expression on his face. There he stood, panting a bit, his leg still hovering above the ground as he stared at Bai Xiaochun fleeing into the distance.

As of this moment, Gongsun Yi’s pride had suffered a major blow.

Then there was the termagant Xu Shan, who was equally stunned as she watched Bai Xiaochun leaving. There was a look in her eyes which was rarely seen... fervent adoration!

The second prince’s eyes flickered as countless conflicting emotions appeared in his heart. As for Chen Manyao, she stood next to the second prince, a mixture of suspicion and astonishment mingling deep in her eyes.

After a long moment, however, people finally began to react.

“There’s absolutely no way he can use a fist strike like that more than a few times!!”

“That's right. If he could, why would he run away? If he really is the type who seeks revenge over the smallest grievance, then why wouldn’t he take advantage of how shocked we were to simply attack us!?”

Gongsun Yi and the other top chosen didn’t say anything, but considering their level and status, they obviously saw through Bai Xiaochun's ruse.

And yet, even if it was a bluff, the images of what had just occurred were burned into their minds, filling them with fear.

Another moment passed. Finally, Xu Shan took a deep breath and then began to give chase. Next was the second prince, and then Chen Manyao. However, none of those three were interested in fighting Bai Xiaochun. Rather, they had other intentions. Although most of the chosen present couldn't tell that, Gongsun Yi could.

He stood there quietly for a moment, eyes bloodshot as his desire to do battle slowly grew. "I cannot allow anyone to surpass me. As of this moment, Bai Hao... you have my attention!!"

At that point his cultivation base surged with power as he headed, not after Bai Xiaochun... but toward the Ghost King Orchid! "That's where you'll end up eventually, and that's where I'll be waiting... to fight you!"

Determination shone in Gongsun Yi's eyes, as well as the desire to do battle.

Everyone else exchanged awkward glances, and all of them regretted having provoked someone as inhuman as this. And yet, none of them could ever have predicted what had just occurred, that a person they all assumed they could easily crush would actually turn out to be a vicious and dangerous beast.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0696 awe-chapter-697

“Dammit, I can’t believe this Bai Hao is so strong! If he had used that fist strike from the beginning, then of course we wouldn’t have provoked him!!”

“Yeah, exactly! If he had shown such spectacular battle prowess early on, we would have tried to make friends with him, not attack him! There really wasn’t a need to let things reach this point!”

Everyone was grumbling about the situation, but nobody could do a single thing about it. Instead, they banded together into three groups and scattered in different directions. None of them had any plans to try to kill Bai Xiaochun. Neither did any of them harbor any aspirations of getting the ghost king fruit. All of them were thinking the same thing….

It didn’t matter who ended up with the ghost king fruit; their current goal was to get out of the Necromancer Kettle as quickly as possible….

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun sped along through the mists, his face ashen. Even he had been shocked to see the Undying Emperor’s Fist in action. At the moment, his fleshly body power was severely drained, and his blood, bones, muscles, and tendons all burned with pain.

Thankfully, he had only used thirty percent of the power of the fist strike, and had been able to rely on the power of his cultivation base to flee. Otherwise, he would have been in big trouble.

“The Undying Emperor’s Fist is incredible. If I had used it at full strength, then even a deva would have been shaken.” The mere thought of how things had played out left him excited. He had begun to cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique from the moment he stepped into the cultivation world, and had spent a huge amount of resources on it throughout the years.

After seeing that spectacular fist strike, he decided that it had all been worth it. Furthermore, now that he had reached the third stratum of the Tempered Bones level, his bones constantly radiated a pleasant warmth into him. Clearly, his fleshly body’s defensive capabilities were now far beyond what they had been before.

In addition, he could recover from injuries much more quickly.

“When I made my exit earlier, everyone was clearly terrified. Hmmmphh! I guess there was no reason to be so frightened earlier on!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun realized that his ability to crush everyone else in the Necromancer Kettle meant that he didn’t need to be nervous at all. In fact, it was with great anticipation that he pulled the unconscious Zhou Hong out of his bag of holding. After putting his nascent soul back into his fleshly body, he pulled out the Eternal Parasol and stabbed it into his chest.

The pain caused Zhou Hong’s eyes to snap open.

“What do you think you’re doing, Bai Hao?!?!” he shouted angrily. However, before he could do anything else, his life force began to drain out, provoking a scream of pain. In the blink of an eye, he was withered up, his life force absorbed by Bai Xiaochun, who used it to help restore his fleshly body power. As for Zhou Hong, because of his serious injuries and the pain, he quickly passed out again.

Bai Xiaochun pulled the Eternal Parasol back, and then glared at Zhou Hong angrily.

“Useless! Not even Li Tiansheng was this weak. How can you have so little life force? Are you really an heir apparent? You look like silver, but you’re really pewter!” Grumbling angrily, he put Zhou Hong back into his bag of holding and then shot onward through the mists.

An entire day went by, and Bai Xiaochun continued to rock the Necromancer Kettle. With his incredible battle prowess, his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, and his incredible fleshly body power, he was a force to be reckoned with among the Wildlander chosen. He was like a hungry wolf thrown into a flock of sheep….

Well, perhaps to put it that way would be a bit of an exaggeration, but not by much. Early on, he had not been drawing on the full potential of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, but now he was. Other than some individuals who were already half a step out of the Nascent Soul stage, those powerful experts who had already gained some enlightenment of heaven and earth and were almost devas, few people could possibly be a match for him.

Not even Zhou Hong, who was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, came close. Therefore, there was no need to even mention all of the other chosen. Besides, Bai Xiaochun was actually confident that the power of his Undying Emperor’s Fist would be enough to cause a deva to back down.

During the day which passed, Bai Xiaochun appeared inside of the Necromancer Kettle on numerous occasions. Because there were no solitary stragglers, and not even any groups with five people, he had no choice but to target the groups with dozens of people in them.

He truly was like a starving wolf, stalking about madly. When he attacked, he would grab a few people and then flee before anyone could do anything. Because of that, no one could defend against him, and everyone was slipping into even greater depths of fear.

After a day passed, he had kidnapped more than thirty chosen, which meant that more than sixty percent of the total group of Wildlanders had fallen into his hands.

As for the final group of thirty or so, they trembled with fear, especially because of the strange parasol that he used, which consumed life force.

The survivors were now split into two groups. One group went with the second prince and Chen Manyao to regroup with Gongsun Yi near the Ghost King Orchid. The other group headed back in the direction they knew to be the mouth of the Necromancer Kettle, and the exit. Clearly, they were admitting defeat, and didn’t want to contend with Bai Xiaochun. They wanted to get out of this place at the earliest possible moment.

Other than those two groups, there was a single person who continued to search for Bai Xiaochun within the mists. It was none other than Princess Xu Shan, daughter of the Spirit Advent King.

A strange light could be seen flickering in her eyes as she attempted to track Bai Xiaochun down.

“I’ll definitely find you eventually, Bai Hao. You’re mine!” Half a day before, she had run into him, and they had begun to fight. However, after only fighting for a short time, he knocked her several hundred meters away with a fist strike, then turned and fled. Xu Shan was not happy with that outcome at all.

Bai Xiaochun’s numerous victories over so many chosen had him feeling very, very confident in how intrepid and valiant he was. He currently had more than seventy people captive in his bag of holding, all of them sucked so dry of life force that they were little more than skin and bones.

With so much life force, his Tempered Bones had long since passed from the third stratum to the fifth. The defensive capabilities of his fleshly body were such that divine abilities belonging to the early Nascent Soul stage would still hurt slightly if they hit him, but wouldn’t significantly injure him.

“It won't be long now before I reach the sixth stratum….” he thought excitedly as he sped through the mists. After searching here and there for a couple hours, he came to find that the remaining chosen had split into two groups.

“What bullies, forcing me to work so hard!” Sighing at how impressive he was, he looked in the direction of the group which had already admitted defeat.

“Ah, whatever. Since they’ve admitted the error of their ways, Lord Bai will let them go for now. However, as for all the people who are waiting by the Ghost King Orchid, they can’t blame Lord Bai for teaching them a lesson!” Licking his lips, he began to fly toward the Ghost King Orchid. However, even as he took to motion, a beam of light appeared behind him in the mists.

Within it was a young woman, who after catching sight of Bai Xiaochun, suddenly shouted, “Get back here, Bai Hao…!”

As soon as he saw the shadowy figure approaching, Bai Xiaochun's self-confidence vanished. Frowning, he accelerated with all the speed he could muster, moving in the opposite direction.

During his fight with Xu Shan half a day earlier, he had been put in a very bad position. It wasn't that she was particularly powerful; she actually had about the same battle prowess as Zhou Hong. However, she had a jade pendant that had been given to her by her father the Spirit Advent King, which gave her a defensive shield that Bai Xiaochun couldn't penetrate.

The Nine Serenities King and the War Champion King had not given special magical items to Zhou Hong and Gongsun Yi, their reasoning being that they didn't believe anyone in the Wildlands would go so far as to try to kill their sons. Considering that Zhou Hong and Gongsun Yi were both heirs apparent who would be kings in the future, giving them defensive treasures could actually do more harm than good.

They wanted their sons to be sharpened on the grindstone of battle!

But the Spirit Advent King did not think in such a way. He had given a special jade pendant to Xu Shan, a magical item whose shield could not be broken, even by a deva. Only a strike from a demigod would be able to pierce through it.

Because of that… Xu Shan was completely and utterly safe. In fact, she could almost be considered to be cheating in the Necromancer Kettle. Not even Bai Xiaochun with his seemingly unvanquishable battle prowess would be able to hurt her….

After fighting back and forth with her, he was stunned to find that he simply couldn't hurt her. Angry and a bit depressed, he had finally sent her flying away with a fist strike, and then fled.

And yet, she didn't seem to want to give up, and kept chasing him. The fact that she kept trying to fight him had him feeling very down, and at the same time, glad that not everyone was like her. Otherwise, the Necromancer Kettle would definitely not be any fun at all.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0697 awe-chapter-698

Bai Xiaochun quickly put quite a distance between himself and Xu Shan, and soon disappeared into the mists.

Further back, Xu Shan stopped in place and stamped her foot onto the ground angrily. “I'm going to catch you eventually, Bai Hao. You're mine! Mine!!”

In response, Bai Xiaochun picked up speed. The fact that this princess from Spirit Advent City seemed dead set on fighting him was a big headache.

“How can I fight this wench when she has that jade pendant...?” The more he thought about it, the more annoying he found her to be. And yet, there was nothing he could do about the situation. Worried that she was still following him, he zigged and zagged a bit before heading in the direction of the Ghost King Orchid.

Some distance away from the valley containing the Ghost King Orchid, Gongsun Yi sat on a low-lying hilltop, doing breathing exercises. His goal was to keep himself in top condition for the coming fight, which he was burning to get into.

He was still completely and utterly confident that Bai Hao would show up soon.

Not too far away were the second prince and Chen Manyao, surrounded by a dozen or so chosen from the various noble clans. All of them had very unsightly expressions on their faces because of everything that had occurred in the Necromancer Kettle.

Nobody had even considered that something so unexpected could take place. First was the nascent divinity void restrictive spell, which caught everyone off guard, and then there was the fact that Bai Hao had turned out to be shockingly powerful. It was occasionally possible to catch sight of the group who had already given up, sitting in their location near the mouth of the enormous kettle.

Many in the group near the Ghost King Orchid had also thought of giving up, but simply couldn’t bring themselves to do it. Even though they knew Bai Xiaochun was incredibly strong, some of them still hoped that there was another chance left. After all… the second prince was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and they also had the matchless Junior Champion King Gongsun Yi on their side. Plus, there was the Grand Heavenmaster’s apprentice Chen Manyao. With those three, they still hoped that they could defeat Bai Hao.

Many thoughts passed through the minds of the waiting chosen as they calculated what there was to gain and lose by taking a stand. At the same time, they kept looking around vigilantly.

As for the second prince, his eyes flickered as he contemplated a train of thought quite different from most of the others. He was intrigued by Bai Hao; after all, it seemed obvious that the Giant Ghost King had actually cruelly abandoned Bai Hao in the Necromancer Kettle….

“Perhaps I can win this Bai Hao over to my side…. Although, considering the high level of his cultivation base, he must surely have aspirations of his own. If I want to win him over, I’ll need to give him a good reason to do so!” Off to the side sat Chen Manyao, her brow furrowed as she thought back to what she had seen of Bai Hao. There was definitely something about him that seemed familiar, although she still hadn't been able to come up with any concrete clues to work with.

Even as everyone sat wrapped up in their thoughts, Gongsun Yi suddenly looked up. The second prince and Chen Manyao also turned their heads, and the hearts of everyone else lurched as they looked over in the same direction.

Off in the distance, the mists churned as a figure sped through them like a whizzing arrow. And that figure was heading in their direction.

His hair whipped about him, and his clothes flapped in the wind. His eyes shone with bright light, and he radiated a domineering and proud air.

"Bai Hao!!"

"He's here!!" Everyone was immediately shaken. The desire to do battle exploded in Gongsun Yi's heart, but he suppressed it for the moment. Remaining there cross-legged, he closed his eyes and went back to meditating; his aura was currently not stable enough, and he wanted to be completely calm.

"The time to fight has not yet come...." he murmured. He wanted to wait until his battle spirit was like a raging torrent.

"Bai Hao, you will be the grindstone that makes me an even sharper blade than before!!"

The atmosphere of the group by the Ghost King Orchid immediately grew very stifled upon the appearance of Bai Xiaochun. The second prince's eyes flickered, and he took a step forward, turning into a blur of afterimages as he shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

That immediately got the other chosen excited, many of whom flew to join the second prince.

Only Gongsun Yi and Chen Manyao didn’t move. Unlike Gongsun Yi, Chen Manyao’s eyes were shining brightly as she stared at Bai Xiaochun, imprinting his every move and action into her mind.

Also paying close attention was the group of a dozen or so who were near the mouth of the Necromancer Kettle. Although they had already admitted defeat, it was a begrudging action at best, and they were all eager to see how things would play out.

Everyone paid close attention as Bai Xiaochun and the second prince shot toward each other and then collided.

The second prince drew fully upon the power of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that summoned seven shadowy figures, each of them fully 300 meters tall.

Each shadowy figure wore imperial robes, had an imperial crown, and radiated an ancient air. The figures seemed to lock the entire area down, creating something like a domain in which the second prince radiated the aura of an emperor!

This was the first time he had summoned such an energy, which despite not being the power of a deva, was very close to it, and actually seemed to provoke a reaction from all heaven and earth.

Then, rumbling could be heard as a golden dragon appeared, which shot roaring through the air toward Bai

Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered at the shocking sight of the second prince’s divine ability. It actually seemed very similar to his own Undying Emperor’s Fist, although the two were clearly different on a fundamental nature. The Undying Emperor’s Fist drew upon the power of his own body and then blessed it with explosive might. In contrast, the second prince’s technique was clearly drawing on outside power.

The fact that the second prince could command a qi flow that agitated the energy of heaven and earth left Bai Xiaochun feeling as if he were witnessing something that all of the people of the Arch-Emperor in the Wildlands would bow down and offer worship to.

However, what was most shocking of all was the fact that any one of the seven shadowy figures was filled with so much power that it caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to tingle.

Unexpectedly, the second prince could clearly use only this one divine ability to counter multiple fist strikes from Bai Xiaochun!

“What divine ability is this?!” he thought, shocked. As for everyone else who was watching, they started to get very excited.

“That’s Arch-Emperor magic! It’s the imperial clan’s secret magic!!”

“It’s been a long time since I've seen the imperial clan’s secret magic. The second prince definitely deserves his reputation. After the grand prince, he’s next in line to earn the imperial title!!”

The rumbling sounds of the fighting which filled the air soon drowned out the noise of the chattering crowd.

“He’s a lot stronger than Zhou Hong!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his pupils constricted. With that, he extended his right hand, within which appeared the sixteenfold spirit enhanced black spear.

An unsightly expression could be seen on the second prince’s face as he fell back. He was actually not having as easy of a time as he was making it look. To his astonishment, he found that his cultivation base was actually being suppressed, and was difficult to rotate. Were it not for the fact that he was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage and was using the imperial clan’s secret magic, he would already have been seriously wounded by the fighting. By this point, he couldn’t hold out any longer, and coughed up a mouthful of blood. Shock and terror could be seen in his eyes as he realized that Bai Xiaochun hadn't even used his trump card, that fist attack.

“This Bai Hao is too strong! Not even my imperial clan secret magic is strong enough to get him under control....” With that, he threw his hands into the air, causing yellow light to spill off of the seven shadowy figures. Immediately, the entire area shone as if with gold, and then, two golden dragons appeared, which shot roaring toward Bai Xiaochun.

The audience of chosen watched with sparkling eyes as the battle played out. From the look of things, these two opponents were actually evenly matched. Eventually, some of them even flew out to join the fighting. Before long, divine abilities and magical techniques were flying here and there, causing dazzling light to shine everywhere.

Even the people who had congregated near the exit were now hesitating. After exchanging glances, many of them flew out, defiantly choosing to change their mind and take advantage of the opportunity which had presented itself.

Bai Xiaochun noticed what was happening immediately, and his eyes flickered with cold light. Aware that the second prince was not by any means weak, and that his seven statues were incredibly strong, he suddenly put away his spear, ignored the incoming divine abilities, and punched his hand down toward the ground.

The land quaked, and then, Bai Xiaochun softly spoke a word that was protected by the power of his mask!

“Waterswamp!”

The entire area filled with water vapor, creating something like a huge swamp. However, the powers of Bai Xiaochun’s mask concealed that fact, and ensured that everyone saw nothing but Bai Xiaochun, and the brutal aura which radiated off of him.

That was when Bai Xiaochun quietly spoke another word.

“Kingdom!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0698 awe-chapter-699

After speaking those words, Bai Xiaochun looked up, and an energy erupted out in all directions, sending his hair whipping about. Although no one could see it, a watery swamp now filled the entire 500-kilometer area around them. Simultaneously, numerous spikes appeared, rising up and then curling around themselves as a gigantic beast claw appeared!

Heaven and earth seemed to teeter on the verge of complete collapse. The two golden dragons let out miserable shrieks as they slammed into the claw. To the claw, it was as if they were tiny bugs that were instantly crushed out of existence. Blood sprayed out of the mouth of the second prince as he was sent flying backward. As for the other chosen who had been charging into battle, their faces fell, and they also began to cough up blood. It was almost as if a mountain had slammed into them, sending them tumbling backward.

Further off in the distance, the dozen or so chosen who had previously given up, but had changed their minds and begun flying toward the fighting, now stopped in midair, looks of blank shock on their faces.

That was the only possible reaction. A moment before, Bai Xiaochun and the second prince had been evenly matched, but in the blink of an eye, the second prince was grievously injured, and everyone else was sent spinning off to the side. A single attack left everyone gasping in shock.

Those chosen who had begun to fly over from the mouth of the kettle were left hanging in midair, jaws agape, eyelids twitching, their hearts filled with intense regret. As of this moment, they could neither advance nor retreat. They exchanged dismayed glances, and then suddenly scattered. They did not head toward the Ghost King Orchid, nor toward the mouth of the Necromancer Kettle. In their fear, they hoped to go hide alone somewhere in the world around them. It was a large place, after all, and even if Bai Xiaochun searched high and low, he couldn't find all of them.

Bai Xiaochun ignored them. At the moment, his heart was pounding with excitement. This was his first time using his Waterswamp Kingdom after breaking through to the Nascent Soul stage. The entire claw of the beast beneath could fit through the 500-kilometer area it could now open up, which had been shocking to behold.

“So strong…. Not even my Undying Emperor’s Fist measures up….” Swallowing hard, he contemplated how that fact must have something to do with his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul. Yet again, he sighed inwardly, convinced that everything he had done to reach the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage had been worth it.

He also had the lingering feeling that the clawed hand he had just seen was actually not the complete hand…. He was fairly certain it had only been a portion of the whole.

“My life essence spirit….” he murmured, eyes glittering. Then he burst into motion, capturing all of the chosen who had just been injured by his Waterswamp Kingdom, sealing them, and tossing them into his bag of holding. As for the second prince, he tried to interject and say something, but Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in the mood, and quickly sealed and captured him.

Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun looked at the only two people left in the area. One was Gongsun Yi, who sat there cross-legged, meditating. He hadn't opened his eyes the entire time, not even when Bai Xiaochun delivered the astonishing blow to all the chosen just now. There was an energy building up in Gongsun Yi; from the look of things, when he finally did open his eyes, he would be powered up to a level that he had never yet reached in his life up to this moment.

Bai Xiaochun looked at him briefly, and could tell that there was something odd going on. Then he turned to look at the second person who remained behind, who was… Chen Manyao.

Chen Manyao stood there, her brow furrowed as she looked back at him. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t tell whether or not she recognized him, and that realization made him very nervous. However, he didn’t let such feelings show on his face. Trying to look just as icy as ever, he coolly said, “You haven’t attacked me this entire time. Therefore, I won’t cause any problems for you. Why don’t you leave?”

His words were uttered with profound aloofness and pride, and after speaking them, he turned and headed toward Gongsun Yi. Of course, secretly, he kept his eye on Chen Manyao to gauge her reaction.

Gongsun Yi’s eyelids flickered. Apparently, he was taking advantage of the pressure weighing down from Bai Xiaochun to further temper his own desire to do battle.

When Bai Xiaochun was only about 300 meters away from Gongsun Yi, Chen Manyao’s eyes glittered, and she unexpectedly performed an incantation gesture with her right hand. Snowflakes sprang out around her, swirling together to form a mirror made of ice, which she pointed at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, and he immediately shot backward. As he did, light from the mirror landed in the spot he had just occupied, causing cracking sounds to fill the air as it was turned into ice.

At the same time, frigid qi swirled about everywhere. To Bai Xiaochun’s shock, that frigid qi was stimulating the magic of his frigid domain, to the point where it seemed like it might leap out into the open beyond his control. Thankfully, a mere thought on his part sent his cultivation base rotating to suppress the frigid domain. Afterward, he turned to look at Chen Manyao, his heart filled with mixed emotions, but his eyes showing only anger.

“What do you think you’re doing?!” he said. Ignoring him, Chen Manyao performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing the freezing ice to become the opposite of what it had been moments ago. Now it was a sea of flames! Instantly, the flames bore down on Bai Xiaochun as if to consume him. From what he could tell, this was all a test to see if he had the power of a frigid domain!

These flames were designed to cause a cultivator to react on an instinctive level. Someone who had cultivated with frigid qi for long periods of time, but then unexpectedly encountered a fire-type power, would definitely reveal some weaknesses.

Beads of sweat popped out on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead; the purpose of this probing attack was obvious, and he knew that if things kept going on the way they were, then it was definitely possible that he might reveal something. There was no time to think about the matter at the moment, so he blurred into motion, appearing right in front of Chen Manyao.

“Are you looking to die?!” he said, a vicious expression on his face. The rumbling sounds echoed out as he unleashed a fist strike. However, instead of dodging or defending, a strange look appeared on her face, and she simply remained in place, looking Bai Xiaochun in the eye, apparently waiting for his fist to strike her.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. If his strike landed on her, and she didn’t resist, then she would die, or at the very least, be seriously injured. Before he could even think about the situation, he aborted his fist strike. At that point, a faint smile could be seen in Chen Manyao’s eyes... and Bai Xiaochun realized that he had been fooled. Chen Manyao had taken a gamble by putting herself up as bait....

“Very crafty!” he thought, wanting to cry but finding no tears to do so. As the saying goes, *it does no good to mend the pen after the sheep are lost*. And yet, Bai Xiaochun continued with his attack. Although he didn’t strike with a fist, he did strike her with his palm, instantly sealing her. Before she could say anything, he grabbed her and threw her into his bag of holding, averting his eyes so he couldn’t see the expression on her face....

“What was that all about...?” he thought. By now, he was almost completely convinced that Chen Manyao had guessed who he was. However, he couldn't for the life of him think of how she had done it. After all, his disguise was perfect!

He was of a mind to ask directly, but at the moment, didn’t dare to face her, for fear of revealing more secrets.

Sighing and shaking his head, he looked over at the final person remaining, Gongsun Yi. As soon as he did, Gongsun Yi’s eyelids flickered even more dramatically than before.

“Well isn’t this amusing,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “He’s using the pressure emanating from me as a sort of grindstone to polish his battle spirit.... But what's the point?” Snorting coldly, and feeling very irritated that Chen Manyao probably had figured out his secret identity, he simply charged toward Gongsun Yi.

He still remembered how it was a huge sealing net thrown out by Gongsun Yi that had entrapped him early on, and ended up allowing countless chosen to hit him with divine abilities. Just thinking about that moment of crisis got Bai Xiaochun feeling irritated.

When he was roughly 30 meters away, Gongsun Yi’s eyes snapped open, revealing brightness like that of twin suns. At this point, his battle spirit was at its peak, and it was with explosive speed that he shot forward.

“Bai Hao!!” he roared, instantly summoning 100,000 magical symbols, which swirled around him, casting golden light everywhere, making it seem like he was surrounded by a golden hurricane.

Rumbling sounds filled the air, and blinding light spread out in all directions. In the face of the golden light, Bai Xiaochun seemed like a dandelion that could be crushed in an instant. The magical symbols quickly turned into razor-sharp blades that slashed toward him through the air.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0699 awe-chapter-700

A golden hurricane of countless blades descended onto Bai Xiaochun. However, his fleshly body defenses were already at a shocking level, and he also possessed numerous spirit enhanced treasures. Although he wasn’t a complete wild beast when it came to battle, the hurricane was still not enough to stop him.

Cracking sounds rang out as the golden magical symbols slammed into him, and yet, not much happened as a result. In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of Gongsun Yi, where he clenched his hand into a fist and unleashed a fist strike!

Before the strike could land, though, golden light shone in Gongsun Yi’s eyes as he called all of the magical symbols back, which then transformed into a huge wall.

A rumbling boom could be heard, and Bai Xiaochun was stopped in place. The golden wall trembled, and cracks spread out across its surface, but it held fast. Behind it, Gongsun Yi coughed up a huge mouthful of blood, and then took a step toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Is that all you’ve got, Bai Hao?!” he growled. However, inwardly, he was actually shocked; his cultivation base was under massive pressure, and although he wasn’t sure exactly how this Bai Hao could be so strong, he was convinced that it was because of some strange magical technique.

However, there was no time to think about the matter at the moment. Relying on his surging battle spirit to suppress the instabilities inside of him, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then waved his finger at Bai Xiaochun. Instantly, the golden wall collapsed back into 100,000 magical symbols, which then formed together into the shape of a golden phoenix, which shot toward Bai Xiaochun with a piercing cry.

“This Junior Champion King’s divine ability is incredible. It must have been given to him by the War Champion King…. I don’t have any Nascent Soul techniques, and the powerful techniques I do have take a lot of spiritual power, otherwise I could crush this Junior Champion King with ease.” Snorting coldly, he assessed Gongsun Yi’s cultivation base, which was beyond the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and was approaching the point of being half a step into the Deva Realm

However, that last gap was not easily bridged, and would require the right set of opportunities to do so, as well as tenacious perseverance. As the golden phoenix bore down on Bai Xiaochun, he reached out into the air and made a grasping motion, summoning his black spear with its sixteenfold spirit enhancement. Not hesitating for a moment, he stabbed it toward the golden phoenix!

The spear shot forth with heaven-rending, earth-crushing power, causing a string of sonic booms to echo out. Then it stabbed into the phoenix, unleashing a massive detonation. The resulting shockwave sent Gongsun Yi tumbling backward in the opposite direction.

Then, Bai Xiaochun burst into motion, becoming like a black shooting star that crushed everything in its path as it headed toward Gongsun Yi.

Gongsun Yi finally shuddered to a stop about 300 meters away, unable to prevent blood from spilling out of his mouth. Then he looked up at Bai Xiaochun, and the desire to do battle that existed in his eyes grew even more intense. Howling, he instantly began to charge back in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

“I'm the Junior Champion King. How could I possibly lose to you!?” Eyes bright red, he threw his hands out in front of him, causing the 100,000 magical symbols to form together into the shape of a golden battle-axe. Grabbing it by the haft, he hurled it violently toward Bai Xiaochun.

Rumbling shook the area as Bai Xiaochun destroyed the battle-axe, causing the 100,000 magical symbols to collapse layer by layer. Although he was shaken, he didn’t slow down at all, and continued on toward Gongsun Yi in a streak of black light!

As a result of the backlash, blood gushed out of Gongsun Yi’s mouth, and he was flung backward head over heels. Although a bitter chuckle escaped his throat, his desire to do battle had not been reduced in the least bit. Seemingly disregarding any fear of dying, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture to call back all of his 100,000 magical symbols. Dazzling golden light flickered as they teleported into the space in front of him, taking the form of a long golden staff!

Gongsun Yi gripped the staff and then swung it with all his might, using both the power of his cultivation base and his impressive fleshly body to send something like a golden tempest toward Bai Xiaochun.

“This Gongsun Yi’s divine ability is really remarkable!” Bai Xiaochun thought, shocked. At the same time, he felt a bit envious about the 100,000 magical symbols. Obviously, though, it was a secret magic of the War Champion King, something that could not be used outside of his organization. The golden staff descended upon him with mountain-toppling, sea-draining power. Abandoning his stabbing attack with his spear, he brandished it in front of him, causing the air to distort as he backed it with both cultivation base and fleshly body power.

BOOOOOOOOOMMM!

The resulting collision surpassed anything from before. A waterfall of blood erupted from Gongsun Yi’s mouth, and yet he seemed mad with the desire to do battle. It didn’t matter what injuries he received, he kept on fighting, and refused to retreat.

This time, instead of forming a staff with his 100,000 magical symbols, he formed them into a hundred separate magical items!

There were sabers, spears, swords, halberds, hatchets, battle-axes, hooks, tridents, and weapons of every other type. And not a single defensive item could be seen among them. Each and every one radiated an intense, murderous aura, and as Gongsun Yi waved his hand, they all shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Use your trump cards, Bai Hao. Either I die in this battle, or you die!”

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered. This Gongsun Yi possessed an intense desire to do battle, and a bizarre divine ability. He didn't even seem to be afraid of dying either. All of it left Bai Xiaochun feeling very shaken.

By now, he was finally starting to understand what the true chosen in the Wildlands were like. Of course, all of the people he had captured so easily didn’t count.

But Gongsun Yi, and even Zhou Hong, despite their flaws, could go berserk in battle, and show tenacious brutality. It was something that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t seen very often back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“He’s no match for me, but he still won’t surrender. Now that I think about it, it seems like he really is using me like a grindstone, to temper himself in that precarious location right between life and death....” A gleam of admiration appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and he suddenly felt as if he owed some respect to this opponent. As Gongsun Yi closed in with a hundred magical items, all bursting with murderous auras, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and waved his hand to get rid of the black spear.

His decision was to forgo the use of magical items. As he stood there, cracking sounds could be heard from within him as his aura shrank down. His energy and even his soul did the same thing.

Then, a black vortex appeared around his right hand, which emanated terrifying fluctuations. Simultaneously, a shadowy figure appeared, domineering to the extreme, clad in imperial robes and wearing an imperial crown on his head. Considering the look in his eyes, he clearly felt scorn for everything in heaven and earth.

“Want to find enlightenment in that spot between life and death? Well I’ll give you the chance!” Bai Xiaochun felt particularly impressed by how awe-inspiring his words were. Clenching his right hand into a fist, he stabilized his aura and then unleashed a fist strike onto Gongsun Yi!

He didn’t use full power, instead limiting it to roughly fifty percent. But even still, the sky faded, and the mists in the area seethed. The black vortex around his hand expanded, becoming a black hole that shot directly toward Gongsun Yi!

At the same time, the eyes of the shadowy emperor behind him distorted, causing a domineering air to erupt out as he merged into the fist, and the vortex. This was Bai Xiaochun’s trump card…

The Undying Emperor’s Fist!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The fist strike made everything in the world seem to slow down. All eyes came to focus on it, and it became the only thing in existence!

A piercing howl rang out from Gongsun Yi, and his eyes were crimson as he watched the fist approaching, and the black hole. Then he waved both hands out in front of him.

“Day of the War Champion!” As his voice echoed out like thunder, his one hundred magical items sped up toward Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist.

The instant the two made contact, all of the magical items shattered and were sucked up into the black, incapable of offering any resistance. Then the black hole continued on toward Gongsun Yi as if to swallow him up. Immediately, a sensation of imminent and deadly crisis filled him, battering his heart and mind like an enormous wave.

However, in that dramatic moment between life and death, Gongsun Yi’s battle spirit did not grow weaker. Quite the opposite; it grew more intense! As it did, rumbling and cracking sounds suddenly echoed out inside of him.

It was almost as if some sort of shackle within him had been broken; in that moment, a terrifying energy suddenly erupted.

Countless clouds suddenly appeared up above him, which quickly formed into a face. Gongsun Yi’s face!

Although it only appeared for a moment, the immense energy that came along with it indicated that he had just achieved a cultivation base breakthrough!!

He was now half a step into the Deva Realm!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0700 awe-chapter-701

“Many thanks for being my grindstone, Bai Hao. I've finally achieved my cultivation base breakthrough, and am a half-deva. I've been stuck in place for far too long now, and have you to thank. Therefore, in recompense, I will simply cripple your cultivation base, and won’t kill you!” Gongsun Yi looked both excited and proud. Throwing his head back, he laughed maniacally. As he had said, he had been waiting for this day for a very, very long time.

The pressure he had felt from Bai Xiaochun during their fight had been incredible. Upon seeing the Undying Emperor’s Fist in action the first time, he had been aware that he couldn't defeat it. But he was proud and confident, and thus couldn’t accept that. Furthermore, there had also been the possibility that he could take the situation and use it to achieve a breakthrough!

It was in that moment that he decided to use Bai Xiaochun as his grindstone, to use the pressure to not only ramp up his battle spirit to the ultimate degree, but to achieve a breakthrough during that critical moment between life and death.

The first possibility was that he would step halfway into the Deva Realm, and wait until a later date to acquire a magical item with a fifteenfold spirit enhancement or higher, which he could then use to gain enlightenment of heaven and earth and become a true deva!

The second possibility was that he would fail, and lose the fight. However, even if he ended up losing… he was confident that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t kill him. Although such a loss would be a bitter pill to swallow, it was a cost he could afford to pay. And right now, he was laughing maniacally as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, rumbling sounds could be heard around him as 200,000 golden magical symbols appeared, transforming into a massive vortex that moved forward to meet the Undying Emperor's Fist.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes were nearly popping out of his skull; never could he have imagined that Gongsun Yi would actually achieve a breakthrough right here and now….

"Well that way of doing things really worked out for him…." he thought, taking a deep breath, and also feeling a bit envious. When he thought about how he had suffered untold hardships to reach the mid Nascent Soul stage, it was really grating that his opponent had used a moment of life or death crisis to break through and become a half-deva.

That fact in and of itself left Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit irritated, but then Gongsun Yi went so far as to laugh maniacally, and that got him really mad.

"You thankless wretch!" he shouted. "Just like the Giant Ghost King! I was the one who helped you make your breakthrough, and now you say you're gonna cripple my cultivation base!? Really the type who bites the hand that feeds you, huh...?" Bai Xiaochun was of the mind that it wouldn't be good to let Gongsun Yi continue to show off. He needed to teach him a good lesson, and make sure he understood the old saying *if you receive a water drop of kindness, repay it with a flowing spring*!

"Who cares if you made a breakthrough? Lord Bai is going to kidnap you anyway!" Eyes bloodshot, he loosened his hand briefly, shook it out, and then clenched it down into another fist!

He wasn’t unleashing a second Undying Emperor’s Fist; instead, he was taking some of the power he had held back before and adding it into the current fist strike! Before, he had used only fifty percent of what was at his disposal. but now, he added in an extra thirty percent.

The black vortex of the Undying Emperor’s Fist began to emit a shocking black glow, and also began to grow larger than before as it rumbled toward Gongsun Yi in incredibly domineering fashion!

“Who said you could act so aggressive!?” he shouted. “Time to cut you down to size!” Bai Xiaochun’s thunderous voice caused Gongsun Yi’s previous excited expression to freeze. Then, his face was overtaken by an expression of utter disbelief.

When his golden vortex made contact with the black hole, all 200,000 golden magical symbols shattered. Then, in the blink of an eye, the enormous fist-like black hole was right in front of Gongsun Yi.

“Impossible! I'm a half-deva! I can’t lose!!” Gongsun Yi snarled as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, rotating his cultivation base to defend himself.

“Half-deva? Ha! Lord Bai has already defeated four real devas! Who do you think you are? Back down, you hear me? Back down! Your ass is mine, you ingrate!” Howling, he shot forward, propelling the black hole forward with explosive might. As he did, the divine glow of the five elements could be seen within his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul.

Booming rumbles filled the air!

The entire Necromancer Kettle seemed to fill with ear-splitting, deafening booms. Cascades of blood shot out of Gongsun Yi’s mouth as he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut. His chest was a mass of gore, and all his limbs were bent at odd angles. Even his nascent soul seemed in poor condition. However, what had been struck most deeply was his pride.

“How is this possible…?” He had gone from wild elation because of his breakthrough, to being grievously injured. In his confusion, his vision began to fade as he started to lose consciousness. And yet, before he could, and before he could even stop moving, Bai Xiaochun shot to his side, lifted his right hand, and slapped him viciously.

Whack! Gongsun Yi was sealed and then tossed into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

Huffing and puffing, Bai Xiaochun landed onto a hilltop in the basin, where he sat down cross-legged, his face pale. Using eighty percent of the power of the Undying Emperor’s Fist had taken his fleshly body power down to the very minimum. He was also filled with prickles of stinging pain.

Thankfully, although his fleshly body had been weakened, his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul cultivation base was still fine, and was in fact the reason he had dared to unleash the power he had.

“You bunch of bullies. Well, when Lord Bai gets angry, he frightens even himself! Do you really think the Undying body I've worked so hard on, and my Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, are so weak?!” Grumbling to himself, he thought back to everything that had occurred so far in the Necromancer Kettle, and the sheer unbelievable nature of it all left him admiring himself.

“I really have gotten pretty brave lately….” he murmured. First there was the adventure in the Bai Clan. Then he had kidnapped the clan chief, which was what had really gotten him addicted. Afterward, he went so far as to kidnap the Giant Ghost King, and now here he had gone and kidnapped virtually all of the so-called chosen of the Wildlands.

Once word of this got out, he would definitely become even more famous throughout the Wildlands….

“It’s all the fault of that bastard the Giant Ghost King!” he thought, feeling very annoyed. Then he looked over at the Ghost King Orchid, protected by the white shield of the restrictive spell. By now, it was getting very close to the time when the flower would fully bloom. It was also possible to see a fruit growing in the middle of the flower, rapidly reaching the point of being ripe.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the flower and grumbled to himself morosely for a bit, thinking about his plan to get revenge on the Giant Ghost King. Then he snorted coldly and pulled the second prince, Gongsun Yi, and all the other recently captured chosen out of his bag of holding.

They were nearly unconscious, but were still capable of groggily looking over at Bai Xiaochun. Immediately, their faces went pale, and their eyes shone with terror. As for the second prince, he seemed like he wanted to say something, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun glared and brandished the Eternal Parasol. “Don’t even think about talking to me. I have germaphobia…”

“Bai Hao, listen to me, I--” Before he could say anything else, the second prince’s face fell. Shivering, he let out a miserable scream as his life force was drained by the Eternal Parasol, turning him into skin and bones.

Then Bai Xiaochun went on to the rest of the chosen, all of whom screamed and cursed him as the Eternal Parasol extracted their life force.

“How dare you, Bai Hao!!”

“My father won't let you get away with this!!”

“You’ll never escape with your life after this, Bai Hao!!”

However, the more lividly people cursed, the more life force Bai Xiaochun would take away. Soon the others realized this, and the clever ones among them would simply look at him quietly. Feeling bad, Bai Xiaochun would take a bit less life force from them.

In the end, he got to Gongsun Yi, who looked up at Bai Xiaochun with mixed emotions in his eyes. However, his desire to do battle could still be seen in his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun actually felt some respect for Gongsun Yi, and was going back and forth about whether to take his life force.

“Next time we meet, are you going to attack me again?” he asked.

Eyes brimming with battle spirit, and murderous aura surging, Gongsun Yi said, “Of course I will! We’ll meet again one day, and then I’ll personally crush you beneath my feet!”

“Well fudge!" Bai Xiaochun shot back. "Can’t you say anything that sounds nice? What's with all the fighting and killing all the time!?” Glaring, he shoved the Eternal Parasol into his chest.

After harvesting the life force from everyone, he put his “battle trophies” back into his bag of holding, then sat down cross-legged and sent some divine sense out to form a defensive barrier. Then he began to cultivate his Undying Bones.

Six hours later, cracking sounds could be heard from inside of him. His eyes opened, and they shone with golden light. At the same time, warmth filled him. His fleshly body power was not fully recovered, and yet, his defensive capabilities had increased another notch!

“Seventh stratum of the Tempered Bones....” he murmured excitedly. Just when he was about to test out his newfound power, his expression flickered, and he looked over to the Ghost King Orchid in the restrictive spell.

From the black glow rising up from the flower, it was clear that it was about to bloom!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0701 awe-chapter-702

There were numerous mountain ranges and rivers in the Necromancer Kettle, and all of them eventually led to the basin that was home to the Ghost King Orchid. As of this moment, it was fully in bloom, its petals gracefully curved, and a fragrant aroma wafting off of it. It was a fragrance that actually caused the shadowy evening light to grow even darker.

In the blink of an eye, the entire sky turned black!

At the same time, a strong aura of death spilled out from the flower, spreading out to fill the entire world of the Necromancer Kettle. Within the mists, the vengeful souls and evil ghosts trembled, and then began to kowtow in the direction of the Ghost King Orchid.

Respectful, even reverent expressions could be seen on their faces, as though they were prostrating to some sort of king!

As the flower fully bloomed, the previously greenish fruit in the middle of the flower began to turn black. It was even possible to see the face of a ghost on it!

Bai Xiaochun recognized that face! It looked exactly like the face on the giant ghost statue in the middle of Giant Ghost City!

Clearly, the reason why this fruit was so crucial to the Giant Ghost King was that it was somehow connected to the special technique he cultivated, although Bai Xiaochun had no way to know the specific details.

Even as he watched, the petals of the Ghost King Orchid began to fall off and transform into mist, one by one. As they did, the fruit on the Ghost King Orchid turned more and more black!

At the same time, a shocking gravitational force sprang up from the white restrictive spell. As it did, the fruit began to rise up toward the vortex created by the spell.

In that instant, it was as if the white restrictive spell knew it had completed its mission, and transformed into countless motes of light that, instead of returning to Bai Xiaochun, dissipated into the surroundings.

To see that happen so suddenly provoked a long sigh from Bai Xiaochun. Depressed, he realized that the Giant Ghost King's plan had worked exactly as intended, with the only downside being that Bai Xiaochun had been sacrificed in the process….

“Things aren’t over yet!” Although he had come out completely victorious in all of his battles with the chosen, he was still left with lingering fear about the whole situation. It was actually infuriating that the Giant Ghost King hadn’t just directly explained what was going on.

“It's obvious that he doesn’t trust me. He was worried that if he told the truth, I would refuse to come! Hmph! Am I really that kind of person? Does he think I’d really be scared of something as non-dangerous as this place?! What kind of a person does he think I am!?” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun immediately began to feel a twinge of guilt. Therefore, he dispelled all inner questions about whether or not he really would have come if he'd known the truth. Turning, he headed toward the mouth of the Necromancer Kettle.

Around that time, the entire world of the Necromancer Kettle trembled, and the area near the mouth slowly began to open!

“There are still a dozen or so people who escaped. They’re probably out there hiding somewhere, and there’s still about two hours left. Ah, whatever. Since they fled, I’ll let them off the hook this time.” It was only at this point that Bai Xiaochun started to get nervous. Looking down at his bag of holding, he realized that he really had done something monumental here.

His bag of holding was now a scalding hot potato, and he had no desire whatsoever to hold onto it for any longer than necessary. He needed to get back as soon as possible to hand it over to the Giant Ghost King….

With that, he picked up speed as he headed toward the mouth of the Necromancer Kettle. However, even as he neared the exit, he saw another beam of light shoot toward it from a different direction, and reach it before him.

It was none other than Princess Xu Shan from Spirit Advent City. Within moments, she was hovering in front of the enormous vortex that was the exit of the Necromancer Kettle. By stepping through that vortex, one could leave the kettle!

However, Xu Shan didn’t step into the exit. Instead, she stood there as if to bar the way. When she turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, his heart sank as he saw the glittering light of her jade pendant rising to surround her.

“How are you gonna try to get away this time, Bai Hao!?” Xu Shan said, sounding very proud of herself.

Bai Xiaochun was scowling on the verge of tears; the sight of Xu Shan immediately caused him to feel a headache coming on. Earlier, he had thought that Chen Manyao would be the biggest thorn in his side, and had completely forgotten about the annoying Xu Shan.

Even if he tried to fight her, it would do no good. There she stood in front of the exit, clearly having no intention of moving. Obviously, he was going to have to pay the price to get past her.

“Just what exactly do you want, huh?!” Bai Xiaochun said.

“What do I want?” she said angrily, glaring at him. “I want to know why you ran away every time you saw me!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. Deciding it would be better to save his breath and just tell the truth, he said, “With that jade pendant your father gave you, there’s no way I can beat you. It would be a waste of time fighting, so I just ran.”

“Waste of time?” she shot back. Then, eyes flashing, she asked, “Hmph! Well why did you go and kidnap everyone!?”

Looking as though he felt very wronged, he explained, “Those were the Giant Ghost King’s orders. A nobody like me couldn’t defy the Dharmic decree of the Giant Ghost King, could he?”

“Really?” she asked suspiciously.

“Absolutely. Positively! It’s true from many points of view!” After swearing up and down, he hesitated for a moment and then added, “Um, hey, why don’t we skip the fight this time? Just let me out of here, okay…?”

Xu Shan didn’t respond at first, and simply looked at him, trying to decide if what he said was true or not. Normally speaking, she wouldn’t be so easily convinced. And yet, for some reason, she just felt like trusting him. Suddenly, she smacked her bag of holding, causing more than a dozen soul cultivators to spill out into the open.

They were all chosen from the various important clans, and all of them had clearly been beaten badly in fights. Their cultivation bases were sealed, and as soon as they began to pile up outside of her bag of holding, they began to curse in their hearts, and yet didn’t dare to give voice to any of that. Instead, they looked fearfully at Xu Shan, and then over at Bai Xiaochun.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his jaw dropped. These were all of the people who had previously given up, the ones he had assumed had fled to hide wherever they could find places to hole up. Never could he have imagined that they would all have been captured by the fiendish deviless Xu Shan.

“Um….” he said, staring a bit blankly at Xu Shan, and wondering why the termagant would possibly be doing something like this.

“Since you’re acting under the orders of the Giant Ghost King, then take these ones with you.” When she spoke, her gaze didn't seem as sharp as before, and she wasn’t speaking so loudly. In fact, there was something very strange about the look in her eyes.

Bai Xiaochun was even more taken aback. However, based on the strange look in her eyes, he suddenly came to an outrageous conclusion, something that he initially almost couldn’t believe was true…. “Aha! I get it!” he thought.

“She's one of the people the Giant Ghost King said would help me!!”

Eyes sparkling, he blurted out that very thought, “You work for the Giant Ghost King too!”

And yet, for some unknown reason, Xu Shan seemed to suddenly get very irritated. Stomping her foot, she suddenly launched herself into the air toward Bai Xiaochun, clenching both hands into fists as she prepared to attack.

“One slip of the tongue and she wants to fight? This Xu Shan is crazy!”

Smiling bitterly inside, he took a breath, stepped forward, and shouted, “If you’ve got what it takes, then fight without that jade pendant!” Clenching his hand into a fist, he unleashed a fist strike.

“Fine, I won’t use it!” Xu Shan said crossly. The light of the pendant winked out as she continued to barrel toward Bai Xiaochun.

A boom rang out, and ripples spread out in all directions. Xu Shan had an incredibly tough fleshly body, but after being struck by Bai Xiaochun, blood sprayed out of her mouth, and cracking sounds rang out as she suffered a grievous injury. And yet, that strange look in her eye only grew stronger, and she spun to attack him again.

“This Xu Shan has a screw loose, but she's definitely hot. She’s trying to use that look in her eye to mess with my emotions!” Hesitant and on guard, he unleashed another attack, causing Xu Shan to tumble backward, blood spraying out of her mouth. Considering the fact that she really wasn’t using that jade pendant of hers, Bai Xiaochun was more convinced than ever that there was something wrong with her mentally. With that, he lunged forward, and instead of striking her with a fist, used a palm, hitting her in the back and sealing her instantly.

The smoothness of it all actually seemed strange to Bai Xiaochun. Grabbing her, and heart pounding, he contemplated how he had really hooked a big fish this time.

“With her life force, I can reach the eighth stratum of the Tempered Bones!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he took out his Eternal Parasol and prepared to stab it into her.

However, it was at that point that Xu Shan completely ignored the parasol and, her eyes shining with that strange light, loudly said, "I love you, Bai Hao!”

“Huh?” Startled, Bai Xiaochun dropped Xu Shan onto the ground with a thump.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0702 awe-chapter-703

Xu Shan’s words struck Bai Xiaochun’s ears like a thunderbolt, nearly striking him senseless. Although he had had his suspicions about the strange look in her eyes, it had seemed so improbable that she harbored romantic feelings that he had simply dismissed the notion.

After all, they had only met a few days before, and had been enemies the entire time. Bai Xiaochun really couldn’t think of anything he had done to attract the interest of the termagant Xu Shan….

Shocked, he couldn’t help but take a moment to examine Xu Shan’s face a bit more closely, and then his gaze slid down the rest of her body. The truth was that, despite her violent tendencies, she was actually very attractive. However, he quickly realized that he shouldn’t be thinking that way.

“No. This Xu Shan has a screw loose, and is very violent. She’s definitely not my type…. I have my boo, and Big Sis Junwan, and Xiaomei. Plus, there are the hundreds of thousands of girls who like me back in the River-Defying Sect…. Ai. I really am just too outstanding. No matter where I go, all of the girls chase me. What a headache.” Sighing inwardly, but simultaneously savoring the moment, he suddenly felt more confident and proud than ever. That was especially true when he thought about the countless love letters he had received all those years ago, which proved how dashing he was, and that he was truly unparalleled under heaven.

The dozen or so chosen nearby who had been sealed and immobilized were also staring in mute shock, their minds reeling with so much disbelief that they almost couldn’t recover.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and put his Eternal Parasol away. He was in no mood for stabbing people with it now. Sighing, he grabbed Xu Shan and put her into his bag of holding. Considering how the termagant was an admirer, though, he put her in a special, more private part of the bag of holding

The only other person in that special location was Chen Manyao....

As for the other Wildlander chosen, he also stashed them in his bag of holding. Having accomplished these things, he got his breathing under control and then looked at the exit vortex, heart pounding. After thinking for a moment to come up with a plan, he suddenly reached down and tore his robe up. However, that didn't seem like enough, so he then slapped himself in the face, and even sent some blood oozing out of his mouth. At that point, he stepped through the exit.

**

Outside of the Necromancer Kettle, more than a hundred people were quietly waiting. Whether it was the cloudy-eyed old man who had escorted Zhou Hong, or the old woman who was Xu Shan’s Dao protector, all of them had calm expressions. Apparently, they had utmost confidence that there was nothing dangerous in the Necromancer Kettle that could harm the various heirs apparent, princesses, and princes.

Therefore, few people had even thought much about Bai Xiaochun, nor even considered the possibility that he might accomplish anything in the Necromancer Kettle.

Even the middle-aged man who had escorted the second prince seemed to have the same attitude. His expression was placid as he looked at the Necromancer Kettle and waited for everyone to emerge from inside.

It was almost unnecessary to mention how the other chosen and Dao protectors were reacting. All of them seemed very relaxed, and many were even chatting and laughing with each other. Clearly, no one was worried about the situation. After all, considering that all three of the other heavenly kings were working together, there was no doubt in their mind that the Giant Ghost King would come out as the loser.

In fact, there was literally no chance of him prevailing. As for Bai Hao… although most of them had heard some stories about him, they still discounted him immediately. In fact, many people had already assumed that he would perish.

The only thing they were wondering was which of the other heavenly kings would end up with the ghost king fruit. A few of the people present were even making friendly wagers.

“Unless something unexpected happens, the Junior Champion King will surely acquire the flower….”

“Not necessarily. Princess Xu Shan is not the type to casually admit defeat. If she gets stubborn, she could cause a real headache for him.”

“Prince Zhou Hong is an ambitious and ruthless character. All of the other chosen of the generation have been completely won over by him. I'd say that Zhou Hong definitely has a better chance than the others. After all, it’s not all just about battle prowess.”

When Duke Deathcrier heard the various conversations going on, he sighed inwardly. At the moment, he didn’t have much hope at all, and still couldn’t figure out what the Giant Ghost King was thinking. Considering how important the matter was, if Duke Deathcrier had been in charge, he definitely wouldn’t have sent Bai Hao in alone. He would have sent in as many people as possible, and would have called on every clan connected to the Giant Ghost King to try to secure the greatest chance of victory.

Even he had to admit that Bai Hao on his own would be unable to come out on top. Duke Deathcrier knew Bai Hao better than anyone else here, and was aware of how brave and fierce he could be, but the matter of fleeing from three devas was very different than what would be going on in the Necromancer Kettle.

“I just have to trust in his highness the king....” Duke Deathcrier thought, taking a deep breath. Then he thought of how everything had played out with the rebellion of the three devas, and all of the things the Giant Ghost King had done, and it left him with a bit of anticipation regarding how everything would turn out.

Even as everyone discussed the matter, the Necromancer Kettle suddenly began to vibrate, and then rumbling sounds echoed out from inside of it. Mist began to pour out from the mouth of the kettle, drawing the attention of everyone in the area.

The old man from Nine Serenities City, the old woman from Spirit Advent City, and the middle-aged man from Arch-Emperor City all turned their flickering gazes to the exit.

“Who’s going to come out first...?” That was what everyone was thinking.

As for Duke Deathcrier, he shook his head, convinced that Bai Hao wouldn’t even be coming out. However, he still looked over at the exit.

As everyone watched intently, a bedraggled figure appeared, flying at top speed out of the Necromancer Kettle.

“It’s *him*!”

“How could *he* be the first person to come out!?”

“Bai Hao… didn't die in there?”

Everyone was stunned, even Duke Deathcrier, whose eyes shone with disbelief….

Bai Xiaochun’s hair was a mess, and his clothing was ripped and torn. His aura seemed weak, and an unsightly expression could be seen on his face. He was frowning, and clearly irritated. To everyone present, it was very obvious that he was in a foul mood that bordered on madness.

“Outrageous! Ridiculous!” he shouted angrily. As soon as he was out in the open, he headed at top speed toward Duke Deathcrier.

“Let’s go!” he said, sounding wronged. He seemed discouraged and downhearted, as though all of his hopes and dreams had been turned into dust. In fact, he didn’t even wait for a response from Duke Deathcrier. He simply flew away angrily. Of course, inside he was bursting with nervousness. At the same time, the feeling of pulling a fast one on members of the older generation was very exciting. However… if anyone caught on to the act and looked closely at him, they would surely devolve into madness….

Still surprised, Duke Deathcrier sighed, contemplating what must have gone on inside of the Necromancer Kettle. Clearly, Bai Hao had been bullied to no end, and thus, it was with the shake of a head that he turned and left along with him.

As they left, many in the crowd began to chuckle derisively.

“Now I know why Bai Hao was the first to come out. He definitely got bullied inside, and didn't dare to fight anyone. All he could do was wait until the mouth of the Necromancer Kettle opened to make his escape.”

“Although, you have to admit that Bai Hao certainly has some extraordinary qualities. The fact that he didn’t get killed is amazing. However, the lesson he learned inside will probably force him to keep his head bowed forever. It must have been a bitter lesson indeed.”

“I'd say the only reason he made it out alive was that the heirs apparent didn’t want to provoke the Giant Ghost King too deeply. However, I'm sure they taught some harsh and probably even humiliating lessons to this Bai Hao. Well, they’ll all be coming out in a moment, and we can hear the whole story.” As they waited, the various Dao protectors continued to joke and chat.

Actually, it was happening this way, not because of the flawless performance Bai Xiaochun had just put on, but because an error in their thinking. None of them could possibly imagine how a single person could take on more than a hundred. Those odds… were just too high.

Not even the Dao protectors from Nine Serenities City, Spirit Advent City, and Arch-Emperor City spared much thought for Bai Hao…

And so they continued to wait, calmly watching the exit and waiting for people to come out. Before long, enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, but they still weren’t worried. After all, it was only to be expected that the fierce fighting inside would take some time to end.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was speeding away from the area as quickly as possible. Duke Deathcrier was next to him. He looked over, and was about to say something, when Bai Xiaochun urgently said, “Deathcrier, old pal, bring out the giant ghost battleship!!”

The way that his voice seemed to tremble with nervousness left Duke Deathcrier feeling very taken aback.

“What’s going on…?” he replied, quickly pulling out the battleship.

Bai Xiaochun leaped onto the deck and then urgently said, “RUN!!”

Duke Deathcrier’s eyes went wide, and all of a sudden, his heart started pounding. He suddenly thought back to all the disastrous things that had occurred in Giant Ghost City, and a chill ran down his spine. However, a moment later, his expression brightened, and then, without the slightest hesitation, he drew upon the power of his cultivation base to send the giant ghost battleship zooming off into the distance!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0703 awe-chapter-704

Along the way, Duke Deathcrier was inclined on a few occasions to simply ask about the situation. However, the ill premonition in his heart that continued to grow stronger prevented him from doing so.

Bai Xiaochun stood next to him, face pale, anxious and doubtful as he continuously looked over their shoulders. Apparently worried that they were going too slowly, he gave constant reminders to pick up speed.

Everything that was going on got Duke Deathcrier’s heart pounding harder and harder….

“Just what did this guy do?” he thought, pouring all of the power he could into the giant ghost battleship to keep it moving as quickly as possible.

After a long moment passed, he finally couldn’t hold it in any longer

“What did you do?” he asked.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. Although he was already starting to regret his actions, he was still very proud of what he had accomplished. Sounding very casual, he said, “Oh nothing. I just kidnapped everybody else, and have them here in my bag of holding.”

“What!?!? Everybody…? You kidnapped them?!” Despite being a deva, Duke Deathcrier’s mind began to spin as though it had been struck with a sledgehammer. Face filled with a look of incredulity, he looked, first at Bai Xiaochun, and then at his bag of holding. Then his cheek twitched.

“You… you….” He actually couldn’t say anything other than that. However, he knew that the ramifications of what had been done were almost too monumental to calculate. Without even thinking about it, he drew upon one-hundred-twenty percent of his cultivation base to send the giant ghost battleship shooting at top speed through the air.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as they proceeded along toward their destination….

**

As Duke Deathcrier and Bai Xiaochun got closer and closer to Giant Ghost City, the Dao protectors back at the Necromancer Kettle were starting to get a bit impatient.

That was especially true of the old man from Nine Serenities City, who had a distinct glint in his eyes as he looked at the Necromancer Kettle. Despite being a deva cultivator, the bizarre nature of the Necromancer Kettle made it impossible for him to see what was happening inside.

Next to him was the old woman who had come with Xu Shan. She was also starting to get more and more nervous, and occasionally turned to look in the direction Bai Xiaochun had fled in.

“More than half the time has passed. Soon the exit will close. Something seems off….”

“Even if they continued fighting after the exit opened, an entire hour has passed. After another hour, the exit will close, and then it will be very difficult for them to come out!”

“Did something unexpected occur inside? No, there’s no way….”

It wasn’t just the devas who were starting to get suspicious. The other Dao protectors were starting to feel uneasy. All eyes were focused on the Necromancer Kettle as more time ticked by. Anxiety mounted. After all, the chosen who were inside the kettle were all very important people.

They were all sons and daughters of influential clans and families. Not only were they important in terms of status, their latent talent and cultivation bases were all beyond ordinary. There were even some whose names were on the Hell-Emperor Stele.

These were the best of the best in their generation in the Wildlands, all of whom were destined to be powerful people in the future. There were some who were already certain to become devas, and it was even very likely that some would become demigods.

If an accident occurred with even one of those people, it would be major news in the Wildlands. If something unexpected happened to more than ten of them, it would be ten times more shocking of an event….

Not even the three heavenly kings would be willing to accept responsibility if something like that happened. An accident of that nature would be a blow to the soft spot that existed in all parties involved….

Now that everyone was thinking along these lines, their unease grew more intense. Furthermore, because the second prince and Chen Manyao were also still inside, the middle-aged man from Arch-Emperor City was also starting to look very nervous.

Eventually, the Dao protectors got so nervous that they began to cry out in anxious voices. “Time is almost up!! We can’t wait any longer!!”

The old man from Nine Serenities City looked over at the Dao protector from Arch-Emperor City. Eyes flashing, he said, “Brother Lin, something happened in here!”

“That's right, Brother Lin,” the old woman from Spirit Advent City said, her voice grating and eerie. “It’s a critical situation. The Necromancer Kettle belongs to the imperial clan. The Grand Heavenmaster must have a way to see inside of it!”

Before long, almost all eyes had come to rest on that middle-aged man.

It was quite a bit of pressure for him to deal with. Furthermore, he knew what those gazes represented: nearly eighty percent of the most important groups in the entire Wildlands.... This collection of cultivators was backed by many devas, and three demigods.

“I’ll need to contact the Grand Heavenmaster and let him make the decision.” He quickly produced a jade slip and sent an urgent message. Moments later, the jade slip glowed with dazzling light, after which he crushed it.

As the jade slip fell apart, it became flying ash that spread out in all directions, then rose up above them and created a fist-sized vortex. Blue light shone out from the vortex, which shot toward the middle-aged man. When he reached out and grabbed it… it turned into a fist-sized blue mirror!

The mirror was clearly from ancient times, and was covered with countless faintly-glimmering magical symbols. Despite how old it seemed, it still radiated a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering aura!

“The Grand Heavenmaster used a secret magic to deliver this mirror to me. I can’t use it on my own.” Taking a deep breath, he looked at the old man from Nine Serenities City and the old woman from Spirit Advent City. “Would the two of you mind providing some assistance?”

They didn’t hesitate to fly over and unleash the power of their cultivation bases, sending deva auras out that caused heaven and earth to flash with colors.

As their power entered the mirror, it shone with dazzling light that caused the other Dao protectors in the area to back up nervously. The three cultivators powering the mirror let out hoarse shouts as the blue light transformed into a column that shot directly toward the Necromancer Kettle!

The air distorted around the blue column of light, which could pass through all restrictive spells and all manner of defenses. Ripples spread out on the surface of the Necromancer Kettle as it slowly… became transparent! Before long, everyone could see everything inside as clear as day…. And then, faces began to fall.

“There’s nobody there!!”

“Everyone’s gone!!”

“How is this possible? There were more than a hundred of them…. Where did they go?!?!” Shouts of alarm could be heard in all directions. The old man from Nine Serenities City and the old woman from Spirit Advent City were so shocked that their cultivation base fluctuations reflected their astonishment.

Worried that they were seeing things, they sent more power into the mirror, sending its light sweeping back and forth through the lands inside the Necromancer Kettle. Under the power of that light, even the densest of mists were dispersed. And yet... they still couldn't find a trace of a single one of the chosen!

The middle-aged man from Arch-Emperor City was shaking, and his mind spun with disbelief.

“Wait,” someone said. “I can detect the aura of the Giant Ghost King!”

As everyone began to reach the same conclusion, their eyes turned completely bloodshot, and their hearts began to burn with rage.

“Everybody went missing, and Bai Hao was the only one to come out. This is definitely the handiwork of the Giant Ghost King!”

“That Bai Hao is a mere Nascent Soul cultivator. How could he possibly dare to do something like this? It was definitely the Giant Ghost King's doing!!”

“Remember how Bai Hao looked when he came out? That must have been an act! Dammit!” Shouts of rage began to ring out. As for the old man from Nine Serenities City and the old woman from Spirit Advent City, both of them resorted to teleportations to rush in the direction Bai Xiaochun had left in.

Enraged, everyone else began to follow!

These people were no fools, and they all came to the conclusion that the chosen of their various organizations had been kidnapped by Bai Hao at the behest of the Giant

Ghost King. Even more humiliating was the shocking fact that he had escaped from under their very noses.

However, they didn’t dare to offend the Giant Ghost King, so they had no choice but to vent their anger on Bai Xiaochun.

Rumbling sounds could be heard, and dazzling light flashed in the sky as more than a hundred powerful experts shot through the air in pursuit.

Unfortunately for them, they had delayed for far too long. Bai Xiaochun and Duke Deathcrier were on the giant ghost battleship, which Duke Deathcrier was fueling with all the power he could muster. It was a bright beam of light, shooting through the air, closing in on Giant Ghost City!

When Bai Xiaochun finally caught sight of the city off in the distance, he breathed a sigh of relief. He even started to get a bit excited.

“Giant Ghost King, you fudge-licking prick. I'm back!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0704 awe-chapter-705

As Bai Xiaochun and Duke Deathcrier were still closing in on the city, the Giant Ghost King was in his royal palace, a very excited expression on his face as he looked at the ghost king fruit which he held in his hand!

The way that he had acquired the fruit by means of the restrictive spell was a violation of certain rules, and yet, the fruit was simply too important to him. How could he possibly allow it to be acquired by others and then used to threaten him?

He had really had no other choice than to grit his teeth and proceed with his plan.

“I finally have all five of the ghost king fruits, and at long last I can remove the five elements flaw from my technique. By being able to switch back and forth between the five elements at will, I will no longer be subjected to the potentially deadly decay period!” With that, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously, his heart filled with intense levels of joy. After years and years of waiting, he had won out, despite being opposed by the united front of all his opponents. The fact that all of his plans and schemes had worked left him feeling very pleased.

“The Nine Serenities King, War Champion King and Spirit Advent King were all scheming against me, the bastards. I might have broken the rules, but it was only after their plotting. Now I just need to lay low for a while and not give them any reason to cause me any problems. After some time passes, all of the issues can be resolved.” A faint smile could be seen on his face, and a bright gleam passed through his eyes. It was wonderful to have all matters under his control.

Of course, he had no idea what exactly had occurred in the Necromancer Kettle. The restrictive spell on Bai Xiaochun didn't give him the ability to see what was happening from afar. It was specifically designed to be used the way it had with the Ghost King Orchid. But he wasn’t worried.

Chuckling, he put the ghost king fruit away and prepared to go into secluded meditation to merge all five of the fruits into his body. Just when he was rising to his feet, his expression flickered, and he looked off into the sky.

He immediately caught sight of the giant ghost battleship. As soon as it got close enough, two figures leapt off of its deck and flew toward his royal palace.

Mixed emotions could be seen playing out on Duke Deathcrier’s face, and as for Bai Xiaochun, he seemed both grim and angry.

“Bai Hao sure got back quickly,” the Giant Ghost King thought. “And he doesn't seem injured at all.” He cleared his throat awkwardly. He knew that he was in the wrong in the matter that had just occurred, and felt like simply avoiding Bai Hao. However, avoiding him wouldn’t resolve the situation, so therefore, he put a somber expression onto his face and then settled back down into his throne to wait.

Bai Xiaochun shot at top speed toward the giant ghost statue, followed by a hesitant Duke Deathcrier. After reaching the royal palace, Duke Deathcrier clasped hands to Bai Xiaochun, then hurried back to his own residence, not interested at all in participating in the irksome events which were sure to follow.

“This Bai Hao has got some guts, but I simply can't believe that he would do something like this unless he was acting on the orders of his highness the king…. Just what is his highness thinking? Is he really going to go up against all of the nobility and aristocracy in the Wildlands?” Duke Deathcrier sighed, truly unable to wrap his mind around what was going on.

As Duke Deathcrier left, Bai Xiaochun hurried onward to the main entrance. At the moment, he was still very angry. After all, were it not for the fact that he was so incredible, his trip to the Necromancer Kettle would have been one of almost certain death.

And the reason for that was because the Giant Ghost King had screwed him over.

Gritting his teeth, he took a deep breath and buried his anger inside him, then snorted coldly in his heart and walked into the palace’s main hall.

Trying to look very maligned, he loudly said, “Bai Hao offers greetings, Your Highness!”

As soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun, the Giant Ghost King rose from his throne and said, “Ah, you’re back, Hao’er. Hahaha! You really performed a meritorious service this time!”

He no longer looked somber like before, and even wore a kind smile. He did nothing to hide the praise in his eyes, and seemed like he truly was delighted to see Bai Xiaochun.

It was also his first time ever addressing him as *Hao’er*….

A strange expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun's face, and he was just about to say something when the Giant Ghost King waved his hand dismissively.

Stepping down off of the throne dais, it was with caring emotion that he said, “Not hurt at all, I see. Hao’er, you really did a huge favor for me this time. Son, I've already issued orders to throw a spirit banquet for the both of us. Now, tell me what it is you want. As long as it’s in my power, I’ll grant you any favor!”

That only made Bai Xiaochun angrier though. Raising his voice, he said, “I don’t want any gifts. Those people really bullied me, you hear?! You have no idea, Your Highness. They all ganged up on me, and were clearly trying to kill me. I had no choice but to do something to protect myself. I may have offended some important people, but it was all in your service, Your Highness!”

Obviously, the Giant Ghost King knew that in a situation in which more than a hundred people were chasing Bai Hao, it would be difficult for him to survive without injuring or even killing a few people. And yet, the Giant Ghost King was confident in being able to resolve any issues that had cropped up. “Ah, don’t worry about it. Everything you did was for me. Fear not. I won’t let anything bad happen to you.”

The maligned expression remained on Bai Xiaochun’s face, but inwardly, he was starting to feel very pleased with himself. *Giant Ghost King, oh Giant Ghost King, you screwed me over first, so you can’t blame me for screwing you right back!*

Bai Xiaochun was about to say something more when a buzzing sound could be heard from within the Giant Ghost King's bag of holding.

“They’re coming after you so quickly?” The Giant Ghost King’s eyes glittered, and a faint smile could be seen on his face as he produced a transmission jade slip from his bag of holding. He had been aware all along that, whatever Bai Xiaochun did in the Necromancer Kettle, it wouldn’t be possible to keep it a secret for very long. Therefore, he had long since prepared for the aftermath. With that, he poured some divine sense into the jade slip to power it up.

Sounding very calm and composed, he said, “Nine Serenities Ki--”

However, before he could even finish speaking, the enraged voice of the Nine Serenities King roared out like a volcano to fill the palace hall. “How shameless of you, Giant Ghost King!!”

Assuming that the Nine Serenities King was talking about the matter of the ghost king fruit, the Giant Ghost King cleared his throat and said, “Nine Serenities King, let me expl--”

Before he could say anything else, the Nine Serenities King responded in a voice that echoed like destructive thunder. It even caused the air around the Giant Ghost King to distort.

“I couldn't care less about how you got that fruit, Giant Ghost King. We plotted against you, so we have no right to complain about you fighting back. But considering your status, how could you possibly do something to my son Zhou Hong? You listen to me, Giant Ghost King. The enmity between Nine Serenities City and Giant Ghost City is *not* over!!” With that, the Nine Serenities King severed the communication.

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes widened. Thinking back to what Bai Xiaochun had just said, he looked over and said, “You fought with Zhou Hong? Is he dead?”

Looking like the picture of righteous indignation, Bai Xiaochun replied, “Yeah, I fought with him, that big bully. Hmph! I left him with his poor little life, though.”

Breathing a sigh of relief, the Giant Ghost King said, “As long as he’s not dead, then it’s fine.”

At this point, the Giant Ghost King couldn’t help but muse that Bai Hao’s battle prowess really was incredible. Despite being chased by so many people, he still managed to injure Zhou Hong. Just when he was about to continue speaking, his jade slip once again began to vibrate. This time, it shook even more violently than before, and then, even more angry voices could be heard, many of them sounding like they wished to do battle, although not all.

“Giant Ghost King, my son has always been stubborn and mischievous. He had this tribulation coming! I’ll be there in person shortly to express my gratitude!!”

“War Champion King!?” The Giant Ghost King’s pupils constricted; of all of the other three heavenly kings, the one he feared the most was the War Champion King. Therefore, he was a bit confused by this latest message, and even more confused about what was going on. Heart thumping, he suddenly had a very bad feeling, and looked over again at Bai Xiaochun.

“You fought with the Junior Champion King? He’s not dead either?”

“Oh him?” Bai Xiaochun flicked his hand as if in disgust. Gritting his teeth, he said, “No, he’s not dead. That bastard was a really tough cookie, though.”

A strange expression could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face, but before he could do anything else, his jade slip vibrated again. This time it was the Spirit Advent King, who seemed even angrier than the Nine Serenities King had been.

“That mysterious daughter of yours is in Arch-Emperor City, isn’t she Giant Ghost King? Nobody else knows, but I do! Well, I think I know where I'm going next! I need to be more like you, you old bastard. Bullying people younger and weaker than you!” As the voice echoed out in the hall, the Giant Ghost King began to pant. Everything was happening too quickly, catching him completely unawares.

Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he was just about to ask a certain question when Bai Xiaochun took the initiative to say, “Don't worry, Xu Shan isn’t dead.”

As the Giant Ghost King looked at Bai Xiaochun, his ill premonition grew more intense. And yet, before he could say anything, the jade slip in his hand began to vibrate over and over again. Countless messages poured in, some bitter, some pleading, some angry.

The Giant Ghost King’s mind began to spin. Despite being a demigod, the current turn of events had him reeling in shock. Although most of the people who were sending the messages weren’t on the same level as him in terms of cultivation base, there were simply too many of them. It seemed like just about all of the nobility and aristocracy in the lands of the Arch-Emperor were reaching out to him.

And that wasn’t even mentioning the fact that the other three heavenly kings were involved, and they were on the same level as him.

Even the imperial clan messaged him, saying that the second prince was missing. The Giant Ghost King was dumbstruck by what was happening. Finally, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and weakly asked, “W-what… what exactly did you do in the Necromancer Kettle?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0705 awe-chapter-706

“Oh, I didn’t do anything…!” Bai Xiaochun said, looking like the picture of innocence. Inside, he was feeling extremely pleased with himself, and couldn’t have been happier. The Giant Ghost King had screwed him, and therefore he had screwed him right back…. Therefore, the more shocked the Giant Ghost King looked right now, the more worth it it all was.

“Although, you know how loyal and devoted I am to you, Your Highness, and how much I worry about you constantly. That, coupled with how well you’ve treated me over the years, left me no choice other than to put my life in the greatest danger, to go through countless trials and tribulations, to be spattered head to toe with blood, to come perilously close to the gates of hell, to reject all fear of suffering, of exhaustion, and even death for you. Because of all the favor you have shown me, I subdued *all* of them!” He slapped his chest to emphasize his words, making it look like he was the type of person who would live or die for the Giant Ghost King, and would face death without blinking for him.

“You… you ‘subdued’ them all?” The Giant Ghost King almost felt like fainting. In the short time in which they had just been conversing, a dozen more messages had come into his transmission jade slip.

Looking very impassioned, Bai Xiaochun loudly continued, “Yeah, I subdued every last one of them. The other three demigod heavenly kings were planning to blackmail you, right? They even sent people to try to steal what was yours! Therefore, I kidnapped all of their children and chosen, and brought them here, just for you, Your Highness. And now, you can take them into custody!

“Come, come, let me introduce you to everyone, Your Highness. We’ll start with the Junior Champion King from War Champion City!” Getting more excited, he smacked his bag of holding to bring out the gasping Junior Champion King.

The Junior Champion King was currently little more than skin and bones, and his life force had been seriously damaged. He seemed to be struggling on the verge of death.

“And here’s Prince Zhou Hong from Nine Serenities City.” With that, he produced Zhou Hong….

“Oh, and this one here is, wait, what did they call him? Oh right. Little Wolfgod!

“And this is Li Tiansheng.

“And here’s Miao Lin’er. She’s pretty incredible, and is actually much more suitable for you than Mrs. Chen. I brought her here especially for you, Your Highness.” With that, he cast a very knowing wink at the Giant Ghost King.

“Right, there’s also Princess Xu Shan from Spirit Advent City. This girl is a bit of a nutjob. What a pity.

“Oh, this guy. I think he's pretty special, actually. I heard people calling him *second prince*. I guess he must have a pretty high status. You definitely need to make good use of him, Your Highness. It took a lot out of me to kidnap him.” Clearly in very high spirits, Bai Xiaochun went on to patiently introduce everyone to the Giant Ghost King as he pulled them out of his bag of holding one by one. Before long, the Giant Ghost King was as flabbergasted as a wooden chicken as he watched more than a hundred people fill his palace hall.

Virtually all of them were skinny and emaciated, some of them so weak that they simply lay on the floor, unmoving….

“It was all for you, Your Highness, that I captured these people and brought them here!” Looking like he was ready to go through hell or high water for the king, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and bowed deeply.

The Giant Ghost King felt like his mind was being struck by countless lightning bolts. However, considering the level of his cultivation base and willpower, after sitting there in a daze for a moment, he managed to recover. By this point, he realized what had occurred, and understood why he was getting so many messages via jade slip. He also felt like he was slipping into a nightmare….

In all of his complicating plotting and scheming, the one thing he hadn’t accounted for was how powerful Bai Xiaochun actually was. He was so strong that he had kidnapped all of these people…. The sight of Bai Xiaochun solemnly producing all of the chosen caused bitter laughter to rise up in the heart of the Giant Ghost King, and his face even began to twitch.

“I underestimated this Bai Hao,” he thought. “First, he kidnapped his father. Then he kidnapped me. He’s obviously addicted to kidnapping. I can’t believe that in one fell swoop… he kidnapped over a hundred people.

“This sly bugger was obviously pissed off, and believes that I screwed him over. Therefore, he used this method to screw me back…. Furthermore, he didn't kill anyone. No matter how you look at it, it really is a meritorious service….” His heart was pounding, and he could feel a massive headache coming on. Obviously, this was a very important matter, and it was clear that Bai Xiaochun was intentionally doing it to cause problems for him.

Under any other circumstances, it might not have mattered. But the Giant Ghost King had also broken the rules regarding the Necromancer Kettle. He had wanted to keep things low key, to forestall any problems. Never could he have imagined that something like this would unexpectedly occur….

The three heavenly kings, and the vast majority of the nobility and aristocracy, would definitely use this opportunity to cause problems for him. Furthermore, he was in a very precarious position. If he simply let all of the captives go, it would send the message that the supposedly majestic Giant Ghost King was actually scared. But not releasing the captives wasn’t an option either. He was a demigod, and one of the four heavenly kings, but he couldn't tackle all of the Wildlands at the same time.

Despite feeling extremely annoyed, there wasn’t anything he could do at the moment. Ultimately, he was in the wrong in this matter. He had been the one to screw Bai Xiaochun over, and had even made plans that would have ensured success even if he died.

If Bai Xiaochun had ended up dying, it probably wouldn’t have mattered. But here he was alive, and despite how vicious the Giant Ghost King was in general, when he thought about their history together, and the fact that he was a demigod king, if he went and bit the hand that fed him, his reputation would suffer irreparable damage.

Most importantly, Bai Xiaochun hadn’t killed anyone, a shrewd and ruthless move that left the Giant Ghost King with almost no wiggle room. Had he killed all the other chosen, it would have been a simple matter to deal with. The Giant Ghost King could have put all the onus on Bai Xiaochun. But instead, Bai Xiaochun had delivered everyone to him alive. No matter what action the Giant Ghost King took, he would be in a very difficult situation.

“This Bai Hao is completely ruthless!” The Giant Ghost King looked over the crowd of emaciated chosen in the hall, and noticed how their life force had been damaged. Clearly, that was a method Bai Xiaochun was using to make sure the Giant Ghost King didn’t just casually let all the captives free.

“If I do let them go, it’s going to cost me dearly….” he thought with a long sigh. Then he looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a bitter smile. He had to admit that Bai Xiaochun had played his hand perfectly. When he thought about the price he would have to pay to calm everyone down, he was so depressed that his internal organs hurt.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was actually feeling very nervous. This matter of screwing over the Giant Ghost King wasn’t a conspiracy, it was an open attack! Therefore, he had to be very careful not to push the Giant Ghost King past his bottom line. Seeing that the man was sighing bitterly, Bai Xiaochun realized that his revenge had been had. Blinking a few times, he said, “Your humble servant will take his leave now. When it comes time for the spirit banquet, Your Highness… I’ll be back.”

The Giant Ghost King glared back at him and waved his hand. “What spirit banquet!? There’s no spirit banquet! Get the hell out of here!”

“How stingy….” Bai Xiaochun thought. Rubbing his nose a bit in embarrassment, he reluctantly turned and left the royal palace. Once he was out in the open, his face lit up with joy, and he became a beam of light that shot toward his residence.

As soon as he was back home, he went into his secluded meditation chamber, where he sat down cross-legged, took a deep breath, and then looked at his bag of holding.

There was still one person in there that he hadn’t handed over to the king. It was none other than… Chen Manyao.

“I think there’s a 50/50 chance that Chen Manyao has figured out who I am. So what am I supposed to do…?” All of the wonderful feelings that had come from successfully screwing over the Giant Ghost King disappeared, replaced by a frown.

He thought about bringing her out to just talk the matter over, but wasn’t sure if that was the right thing to do. After all, there was still the possibility that she didn’t know who he was. In that case, if he tried to openly discuss things with her, it would only be giving her more chances to do just that.

And yet, not bringing her out left him in a bit of a deadlock. He really wasn't sure what to do….

“Ah, whatever. I’ll just put the matter out of mind and do some meditating.” Burying the matter in his heart, he thought back to everything which had occurred in the Necromancer Kettle, and as he did, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“My Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul really is shockingly effective. With all of the five elements backing it, I can basically crush any other cultivator in the same level as me….

“Without my Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, it would have been really difficult to kidnap all of those people....” Pursing his lips to suppress his laughter, he examined the five-colored glow coming off of his nascent soul, and his enthusiasm grew deeper.

“Hahaha! I'm so strong already....” As of this moment, he felt more than ever that all the work he had put into forming his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul had been worth it.

Then he thought back to the events of the Necromancer Kettle, and how he had used the Eternal Parasol to absorb the life force of so many cultivators. Although he hadn’t absorbed Xu Shan’s life force, he had surreptitiously done so to the dozen or so captives she had given him. As a result, his Undying Bones were now in the eighth stratum of the Tempered Bones level.

“The eighth stratum!” Although his cultivation of the Undying Bones seemed to be going slow in some respects, he was actually going more quickly than he had with the other parts of the Undying Codex. Furthermore, it was propelling him to almost unbelievable heights.

“Once I break through to the ninth stratum, my Undying Emperor’s Fist will double in power!!

“Compared to all my cultivation progress though, the most important thing I got in the Necromancer Kettle... was my apprentice! I got... Bai Hao’s soul!” Eyes shining brightly, he looked into the soulhoarding pagoda in his bag of holding, within which was a solitary vengeful soul.... Bai Hao!

Eyes flickering with various memories, he murmured, “It's time to restore your mind, my apprentice!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0706 awe-chapter-707

Restoring Bai Hao’s mind was of the utmost importance to Bai Xiaochun. Bai Hao was his apprentice, and if he had never been able to locate his soul, it might have been a different story. But after recovering it, there was no hesitation on his part about what to do.

If this had happened back when he had first arrived in the Wildlands, it would have been very difficult for him to accomplish what he was now setting out to do. But now, he was a celestial necromancer, and had a vast amount of valuable treasures from the three great clans. Most importantly, he had two secret treasures from those great clans, the lotus seed pod, and the drop of blood.

Those two secret treasures were specifically designed for use with souls. That was especially true of the blood drop, which was the secret treasure from the reserve savings of the Chen Clan. It could restore all of the memories that existed in the previous life of a soul, and turn that soul into something like a ghost cultivator.

As for the lotus seed pod, it could be used to form a brand new body. Although he wasn't sure if it would work as well on dead ghosts as it could on living beings, he was determined to try. Despite that, he didn’t take action blithely. The lotus seed pod only had two seeds in it, and there was only one drop of blood. Therefore, he wanted to make sure he was thoroughly prepared before he began.

In the end… he would only have one chance to succeed.

In fact, he even paid a visit to the Chen Clan and had a meeting with their new clan chief. After talking the man up, and even offering a bit of compensation, he won him over with his sincerity, and acquired more detailed information on how to use the blood drop.

After getting all the information he needed and returning, he only felt more nervous than before. “This drop of blood has some mystical powers. It can actually restore the memories of a soul’s previous life.... However, the process is very dangerous, and is very draining on the soul. Perhaps it would be a more certain process if it were a deva soul, but Bai Hao was only in Foundation Establishment when he died.... It’s hard to say whether or not I’ll be able to make it work....”

However, there was nothing he could do about the matter. Bai Hao's soul was now a vicious entity, nothing more than a soul body that couldn’t practice any form of cultivation.

Even if he restored his memories, it seemed he would be stuck for all eternity as a Foundation Establishment soul, unable to make any progress.

“The only thing I can do is use a whole bunch of soul medicine during the blood fusion process.... It will be difficult to pull it off, but the results will definitely be better.” Eyes flashing with determination, he immediately made arrangements to buy up all of the soul medicine in Giant Ghost City.

After becoming the city’s majordomo, he had been the recipient of numerous gifts, and had also ransacked the three great clans. As a result, he could certainly be considered well off. However, for Bai Hao’s sake, he didn’t hesitate to spend massive amounts of wealth on soul medicine.

He had already built up a bit from ransacking the three great clans, and now that he spent so much money to acquire more, his stockpile began growing to terrifying proportions.

As Bai Xiaochun began gobbling up all of the soul medicine in the city, terrifying things were shaking the hearts of all residents.

More than a hundred powerful experts had come to visit the city, including three devas. All of them had been spitting mad, and yet, kept their anger under control. Instead of charging into the city itself, they settled down cross-legged outside, effectively encircling the whole place.

And that had only been the beginning…. Afterward, numerous people appeared in the city via its teleportation portal. All of them were the type who had numerous followers, and didn’t bother to even reign in their surging energy as they headed to the royal palace to talk with the Giant Ghost King.

Before even the first of such meetings concluded, the teleportation portal shone brightly again as more people arrived.

But now, more than ten were in Giant Ghost City, which left Duke Deathcrier with a very sinking feeling. Thankfully the Giant Ghost King hadn’t ordered him to go deal with these people, but had instead invited them to the royal palace to discuss matters.

When he sent a group away, another would come to replace it. And thus, in a short period of only a few days, everyone in Giant Ghost City slowly grew numb to what was happening. Then guesses and speculations began to run wild. In the end, it was virtually impossible to keep the matter a secret.

“What? Bai Hao acted on the orders of his highness the king to kidnap all of the chosen and heirs apparent of almost all of the nobility and aristocracy in the Wildlands!?!?”

“Heavens! Is this Bai Hao addicted to kidnapping, or what?!?! First it was his father, then his highness the king, and now he kidnapped over a hundred chosen in one fell swoop!?”

“His highness the king is playing a big, complicated game…. I really don’t understand what exactly he's doing.”

As word spread, countless gasps could be heard in all corners of the city. By now, it was impossible to relate exactly how bold and powerful people took Bai Hao to be.

Another three days went by, whereupon an intense roar shook heaven and earth in all directions. An enormous battle-axe appeared in the air above Bai Xiaochun’s residence, upon which stood a mighty figure who seemed capable of propping up all creation.

“Nine Serenities King!” The Giant Ghost King immediately emerged from his royal palace and flew up to confer with the Nine Serenities King. After a moment, the Nine Serenities King’s face turned grim, and he followed the Giant Ghost King into the palace for a time before leaving.

Soon after came the enormous mountain of flesh that was the Spirit Advent King. After that was the War Champion King. The things which the people of Giant Ghost City were seeing left all of them gaping in shock.

Seven days passed. Gradually, things at the teleportation portal calmed down a bit. Of course, Bai Xiaochun tried to stay as out-of-sight as possible, and didn't even dare to make inquiries to find out exactly what had resulted. He knew that the Giant Ghost King was obviously in a horrific mood.

"Well, you can't blame me! If you hadn't screwed me, I wouldn't have screwed you." Despite feeling himself to be in the right, he knew who between the two of them was the most powerful. Muttering to himself, he remained in secluded meditation, and continued to buy up soul medicine. At one point, he also secretly took a trip to confer with Mrs. Chen.

**

Just as Bai Xiaochun had guessed, the Giant Ghost King was in a foul mood. During the seven days of meetings with various groups, he had sent away all of the various chosen that Bai Xiaochun had kidnapped. Some of the people who had come to retrieve their chosen were the type that the Giant Ghost King could completely disregard. There were even some he could intimidate with a mere look. But there were others who could force him to pay a bit of a price.

For example, the Spirit Advent King and War Champion King. First, the Giant Ghost King broke the rules of the Necromancer Kettle, and then, due to a freak combination of other factors, had both of their heirs beaten half to death.

The Nine Serenities King was even harder to calm down. In fact, the smile on his face only grew colder as their discussion proceeded. The Nine Serenities King had attacked the Giant Ghost King during his decay period, and had also broken certain rules himself, which showed his attitude and what he was capable of. Therefore, they were not able to get anywhere in their negotiation. Eventually, the Giant Ghost King called in the War Champion King and the Spirit Advent King to join the discussion, and in the end, the Nine Serenities King had no choice but to grit his teeth angrily and leave.

The biggest headache of all came when dealing with the second prince. There was simply no way to work around the fact that he was part of the imperial clan. Although that clan was currently in decline, with most of the power being held by the Grand Heavenmaster, the second prince was still a prince. The imperial clan was still not the kind who would brook humiliation, and thus, it was to the Giant Ghost King's great rancor that he paid a significant price to work everything out.

The Giant Ghost King was currently standing in a pagoda in the royal palace. Kneading the bridge of his nose, he sighed and murmured, "Finally managed to send them all away."

During the process, he had schemed, he had formed alliances, he had used every trick in his book to minimize his losses as much as possible. In the end, he was left feeling exhausted.

"It's all the fault of that bastard brat!' The mere thought of Bai Xiaochun caused his eyes to widen angrily. However, it was at that point that he felt two warm arms wrapping around him from behind. It was none other than Mrs. Chen….

The Giant Ghost King turned to look at her, and his gaze softened. She took the opportunity to say some nice things about Bai Hao, and as a result, the Giant Ghost King's anger faded a bit. He also began to think about all the good things Bai Hao had done for him.

“Well, it certainly cost me, but at least I got the ghost king fruit. I guess it was all worth it! Without Bai Hao on my side, the ghost king fruit would likely have been taken by one of the other three kings. If that had happened, I would have ended up paying ten times the price that I did.” In the end, things did seem to have worked out fairly. Snorting, the Giant Ghost King decided not to worry about the matter anymore.

**

Bai Xiaochun waited for a few more days, and when it seemed that the Giant Ghost King wasn't going to be coming for him, he finally started to feel confident about the whole situation. With that, he put even more effort into buying soul medicine, and soon, had the stockpile he needed.

With that, he gritted his teeth and started his work to restore Bai Hao’s mind!

Of course, the matter was too sensitive, so he didn't dare to do his work in Giant Ghost City. If any mistakes occurred, the ramifications could be too severe. Therefore, he found a remote location outside of the city where he set up plenty of restrictive spells to make sure no one could see him. His preparations having been made, he settled his mind, pulled his soulhoarding pagoda out of his bag of holding, and then took out Bai Hao’s soul.

A glowing halo of light surrounded the soul as it floated in Bai Xiaochun’s hand. It seemed confused at first, but quickly came to its senses, looked at Bai Xiaochun and then let loose a soundless howl of rage.

Then it lunged at the halo as if to break past it and attack him. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked at Bai Hao's soul, and many complicated emotions filled his heart. Within moments, Bai Hao's eyes began to shine with madness and greed, until Bai Xiaochun finally sighed and unleashed some of the pressure of his cultivation base.

Instantly, the soul body in the halo shivered and backed down, instinctively fearful of him.

“It is destiny that brought us together....” Bai Xiaochun murmured.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0707 awe-chapter-708

Eventually, the pressure rolling out from Bai Xiaochun onto Bai Hao’s soul became so intense that the surface of the shield rippled. Then Bai Hao’s soul let out a piercing scream, and he shied away. However, it was with vicious determination that Bai Xiaochun then waved his left index finger toward the shield.

The shield distorted even more dramatically, and then Bai Hao’s soul shivered as though it had been struck by a powerful attack. Then, it collapsed and remained motionless.

According to the information Bai Xiaochun had gained from the Chen Clan, in order to use the blood drop, one had to render the soul body in question completely incapable of resistance. If it resisted in the least bit, the operation would fail, and the soul would be completely destroyed.

In its state moments ago, Bai Hao’s soul had been completely incapable of fighting against Bai Xiaochun. All it had taken was a bit of pressure to not only cow the soul, but to knock it unconscious. Now, it was time to move on to the next step.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and looked a bit more closely at Bai Hao’s soul. A moment later, his eyes began to shine with determination.

“Well Bai Hao, whether or not this works is all up to your own good fortune....” With that, he waved his right hand, causing the shield of light to vanish. For the first time, Bai Hao’s soul appeared out in the open!

Next, Bai Xiaochun slapped his bag of holding, producing a jade bottle that he gingerly opened. Inside was a drop of blood that he let fall onto Bai Hao’s soul.

As soon as it touched the soul, it shattered to create a blood-colored mist that poured into the soul. In the blink of an eye, the soul began to shiver, as though it were about to regain consciousness because of the intense pain it was feeling. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun was paying close attention, and made sure to keep enough pressure on the soul to keep it unconscious.

It was a delicate balance to maintain, but he succeeded. Soon, the blood mist was fully absorbed into Bai Hao’s soul, which was beginning to thrash around so much it seemed it might begin to fade away. Apparently, there was some corrosive power within the drop of blood that was draining Bai Hao’s soul, making it weak to the point where it might not be able to sustain the wastage.

Bai Xiaochun knew that a critical moment had arrived. Maintaining full focus, he waved his left hand to produce a large quantity of soul medicine. He crushed it without hesitation, which caused numerous streams of soul power to spring out and then flow into Bai Hao’s soul body, replenishing what was being drained away.

However, the soul was being drained at a very rapid rate. Bai Xiaochun had just sent out one hundred portions of soul medicine, but it was only able to counteract the wastage for a few breaths of time. Therefore, he produced more soul medicine. Time passed, and eventually he lost track of how much soul medicine he had used.

With the soul medicine keeping him going, Bai Hao in soul form continued to merge with the blood. However, his soul body continued to twitch and distort as if in pain. Despite being unconscious, he could clearly feel what was happening.

The process continued for a full three days. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was in the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, he was still starting to feel the exhaustion creeping up. During that time, he had to watch carefully every moment to make sure that Bai Hao didn't awaken at the wrong time. Simultaneously, he had to make sure he didn’t exert too much pressure on him. It was a very delicate balance to maintain.

Another task was to continuously feed soul medicine to Bai Hao. Any other type of Nascent Soul cultivator would probably have already reached the limit of their abilities. But Bai Xiaochun had spent years concocting medicine, and had razor-sharp focus. Despite being tired, he didn’t let that interfere with his work.

“According to the information from the Chen Clan, it takes seven days to absorb the blood… we’re almost half done at this point.” He didn’t grow lax in the least bit. When the third day passed, and the fourth day arrived, a gold design suddenly appeared on Bai Hao’s soul.

The sight of that golden design instantly lifted Bai Xiaochun’s spirits. Based on what he had learned from the Chen Clan, he knew that the main factor playing into whether or not the soul body recovered memories from its previous life was that very golden design. It was like evidence of the soul’s fate, and once it appeared, it meant that the soul could once again appear in the world as it had in the past.

However, in the moment that the golden design appeared, it seemed that the pain Bai Hao’s soul was enduring suddenly grew more intense. He let out a miserable shriek, and his eyes snapped open. In that instant, Bai Xiaochun could tell that his soul body was just about to fall apart; cracks even began to spread out on its surface.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell at this sudden, unexpected development, and he instantly got extremely nervous. He knew that exerting more pressure wouldn’t resolve the issue, and therefore, he poured more soul medicine into Bai Hao’s soul body. However, that did nothing to forestall the imminent collapse of the soul body. More cracks spread out on its surface; clearly, a very critical moment had arrived.

“Hang in there, Bai Hao!!” Bai Xiaochun said through gritted teeth. With that, he produced a lotus seed, crushed it, and dropped the resulting powder onto Bai Hao’s soul. Although he couldn’t be certain that this method would work, his previous analysis and augury of the seed had left him sixty percent certain that it would help restore a soul.

The moment the powder of the crushed lotus seed landed onto Bai Hao’s soul, gentle light began to spread out in all directions. At the same time, the cracks on the surface of his soul body vanished. Within the space of a few breaths of time, he recovered completely. The excitement in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone brightly as he adjusted the pressure he was emitting, and then brought out more soul medicine to feed to Bai Hao.

“Three more days to go!!” Although Bai Xiaochun managed to keep calm and focused, he was still panting a bit, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. Now that the golden design had appeared, it took much more soul medicine than before to keep him stabilized. But Bai Xiaochun was well-prepared. He crushed soul medicine as if it were the least valuable thing in the world, spending amounts that would cause most people to stare in complete and utter shock. The wealth vanishing here was enough to drive entire clans bankrupt.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun didn’t feel the slightest prickle of pain in his heart. No material possessions were worth more to him than Bai Hao. Bai Hao was his apprentice, and the first person he had encountered after being teleported to the Wildlands. Furthermore, he had used Bai Hao’s identity to accomplish many, many things. The feelings that had built up for Bai Hao because of all that were not those which could be measured in terms of soul medicine.

Soon the fourth day had passed, and the fifth day arrived. After that was the sixth day…. As time marched on, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes grew more and more bloodshot, and his exhaustion mounted. Because of the mounting pressure, his expression became one of pure vigilance and concentration. It lasted all the way until… the seventh day came!

“The final twenty-four hours!” he murmured. By this point he was a bit wan, and his eyes were crimson. All of his energy was focused on maintaining balance. As time passed, Bai Hao’s soul grew more and more stable, and the golden design that covered his soul body grew more and more dazzling.

With every pulse of golden light, Bai Hao’s soul seemed to grow more calm and thoughtful, and less violent. As these things occurred, Bai Xiaochun continued to sigh emotionally.

“The final two hours!” he murmured. In his excitement, he couldn’t help but imagine what it would be like when he succeeded, and Bai Hao got all of his memories back. How would he tell him about everything that had occurred after his death?

“I feel like I know you so well, but to you, I’m a complete stranger….” Bai Xiaochun shook his head and put such thoughts aside for the moment. Instead, he focused fully on Bai Hao’s soul. Soon, the final moments were ticking down, and Bai Hao’s soul seemed to have lost all of its previous viciousness and violence, and was now completely calm. Eventually, he sat up in place, a blank look on his face….

That was when the crackle of thunder could be heard in the sky above. Black clouds converged, and a violet bolt of lightning suddenly shot down toward Bai Xiaochun, catching him completely off-guard.

“Is that tribulation lightning? How could there be tribulation lightning?!?!” The lightning instantly shot down through the mountain until it was right above Bai Xiaochun’s head. As it did, he anxiously reached up with his right hand, drawing on the full power of his cultivation base to fight back.

A boom could be heard, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was sent flying backward, where he slammed loudly into the rock wall of the cave. However, he wasn’t significantly hurt. Unfortunately, he had only cut down the power of the lightning bolt by about half. The rest of it fell directly onto Bai Hao, who had just opened his eyes. Immediately, a tremor ran through him, and cracks spread out all over him. He appeared to be right on the verge of falling apart!

“Bai Hao!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Without any hesitation, he threw out his final lotus seed. Although pain and confusion filled the eyes of soul form Bai Hao, they were quickly replaced by lucidity. He looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and saw the lotus seed flying toward him, and without even thinking about it, opened his soul body’s mouth and swallowed it down.

The moment it entered his mouth, it transformed in a soft warmth which spread throughout his entire body. He closed his eyes, shivering a bit as the cracks all healed up. The black clouds in the sky above seemed to be on the verge of building back up again, and yet, for some unknown reason, faded away….

It took a very long moment for Bai Hao’s soul form to restore balance. When all of the cracks on the surface of his body were healed, he slowly opened his eyes and looked around. Then, his eyes came to rest… on a person who looked exactly like him in every aspect, and yet who wore a look of deep concern on his face.

There was a sincerity to that concern that Bai Hao instantly recognized. It was something that, in his entire life, nobody had ever given to him except his mother. This person in front of him… was the second person to ever look at him with an ounce of caring.

“Who are you…?” he asked softly.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with excitement, and he took a deep breath. He had imagined this moment for a long time, and just as things had gone then, he assumed the mightiest pose he could think of. Lifting his chin slightly, he clasped his hands behind his back and, looking like the picture of a transcendent being, slowly said, “I'm your Master!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0708 awe-chapter-709

“Master….” Bai Hao said, staring blankly at the person who looked exactly like himself. He was a bit confused about why this person would call himself his Master. He didn't remember ever having a Master before. If anything, the only ‘Masters’ he had ever had before his death were the handful of secret cultivation texts he had acquired back in his clan.

He had all of his memories up to the moment of his death, but everything after that was mostly blank. All he remembered was a haze of violent madness in which he swam endlessly through blinding fog, consumed with the desire to eat any living thing he encountered.

Those memories of madness caused him to gasp, and filled his heart with indescribable terror.

It was almost as if the moment he closed his eyes in death, he had gone to sleep. Now he was awake, and yet, his heart was filled with more confusion than ever. Then he looked down at himself, and found that his own hands would pass through his body if he tried to touch himself.

“I’m a soul body….” he murmured, a glint of sadness appearing in his eyes. As of this moment, he realized that he really had died. “But if I’ve become nothing more than a soul, then why do I still have all my memories?”

All of the things he was currently experiencing had Bai Hao feeling extremely confused.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there with his hands clasped behind his back, glancing down out of the corner of his eye at Bai Hao, trying to look as profound as possible. He was also secretly measuring him up, and when he realized that he was simply staring off into space, and completely ignoring him, he started to feel a bit awkward, and even a bit miffed. With that, he loudly cleared his throat to remind Bai Hao that he was standing there.

In response, a strange expression appeared on Bai Hao's face, and he looked up again at Bai Xiaochun. Gradually, his eyes began to flicker thoughtfully, and he said, “Senior, are you the person who appeared beneath that tree right before I died?”

From the way he spoke, it seemed as if he were putting the pieces of the puzzle together even as the words left his mouth.

Each word struck Bai Xiaochun’s like lightning, and his eyes flickered at how incredible Bai Hao was. Only a few words had been spoken since he woke up, and he had already deduced Bai Xiaochun’s identity.

“The reason you look like me, Senior, is that you must have assumed my identity after I died. As for why we are now able to meet again in person, though… I really can’t wrap my mind around that.” More confusion appeared in his eyes, as if he almost couldn’t believe what was happening.

Bai Xiaochun gave him a profound look. Although he had always known Bai Hao was intelligent, he could never have imagined that he would be *this* intelligent.

“That’s correct. After you died, I looked through your bag of holding, and then took your place in the Bai Clan.…” With that, he proceeded to explain to Bai Hao about how he had taken him as an apprentice. Then he went on to recount everything that had occurred during his time in the Bai Clan, with the exception of a few points that were unnecessary to explain.

As Bai Hao listened, it was impossible for him to hide the complex emotions he felt. He could almost visualize all the scenes Bai Xiaochun described, especially the incident in which his father had confronted him in the place where his mother had died. That was when his father had revealed that he was aware of how talented Bai Hao was in flame conjuring, and yet had gone on to talk about him submitting, and had even revealed open killing intent. At that point, hatred and anger began to burn brightly in Bai Hao's eyes.

Bai Hao was familiar with his clan, especially Madam Cai and the clan chief. As such, he immediately realized… that everything Bai Xiaochun was telling him was true.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun explained how, as Bai Hao, he had killed Bai Qi, turned traitor against the clan, and had later used his power as a follower of the Giant Ghost King to exact harsh punishment upon the clan. He had killed the clan chief, executed Madam Cai, and installed the fifth young lady as the new clan chieftess. Bai Hao's chest heaved, and his mind reeled under the waves of shock that were caused by Bai Xiaochun’s words.

The things which Bai Xiaochun had done for him were things he himself could never have done even if he wanted to.

Finally, Bai Xiaochun explained how he had randomly encountered Bai Hao’s soul in the Necromancer Kettle. He also went on to describe, without any exaggerations, the dangers which had been involved. In fact, he actually glossed over that danger to some extent, giving mostly just an overview.

However, Bai Hao was smarter than the average person, and realized that within the glossed-over areas of the story, there definitely were moments of profound danger and crisis. Shivering, he looked up at Bai Xiaochun, eyes shining with gratitude.

Although he realized that this person had obviously done many things out of his own self-interest, he had also helped him get the vengeance he deserved, and would have sought for himself if he could….

“Senior, I--”

Before he could complete his sentence, he was interrupted by Bai Xiaochun, who said, “And that’s everything that happened. Don’t put too much thought into it. You’re my apprentice, and I'm your Master. With me around, people can only dream of bullying you!”

He slapped his chest proudly to emphasize his words.

“Do you want to know who your Master is? I'm the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, and also the inspections commissioner. There is only one person who ranks higher than me, and tens upon tens of thousands who rank below me. Hmmmphh! I even kidnapped the Giant Ghost King once. And in the Necromancer Kettle, I kidnapped the heirs apparent and chosen from almost all of the important clans and organizations in the Wildlands! Crown princes, heirs apparent, princesses? Hah! I defeated each and every one of them! Oh right, there was also some guy everyone called the second prince!” With that he went on to brag a bit more about everything which had occurred in the Necromancer Kettle, and this time he didn't gloss over anything. He actually described everything in vivid detail, the way he normally would.

Bai Hao responded by looking at him with mute astonishment.

“Just stick close to your Master from now on. I already have formulas for everything from one- to seventeen-colored flame. Considering your latent talent in flame conjuring, I want you to start researching the formula for eighteen-colored flame. Later on when I’m powerful enough, I’ll form a new body for you. Come, come, hurry up and kowtow to Master. Then I can give you the gifts I owe you for becoming my apprentice!”

With that, he clasped his hands behind his back again, then lifted his chin and tried to look as strict as possible. At the same time, he glanced at Bai Hao out of the corner of his eye, waiting for him to kowtow in formal fashion to become his apprentice.

A complex expression could be seen on Bai Hao’s face. As a soul body, he could sense from the soul power fluctuations in the area that a large quantity of soul medicine had recently been used in the surrounding mountains….

And as a necromancer, he knew that restoring the memories of a soul was a heaven-defying process of incredible difficulty. Clearly, this person who called himself his Master had completely bloodshot eyes, and he was obviously working hard to appear to be in good condition. However, he couldn't cover up how wan he was. It was obvious that he had worked very hard, and paid a huge price, to restore Bai Hao’s memories.

“Does he really care about me…?” he thought, a warm feeling building up inside of him. At this point, he recalled how, upon first recovering his memories, this person who called himself his Master had been looking at him with deep concern.

That concern gave rise to emotions that Bai Hao had not felt for a very long time. No one in his life had ever cared about him other than his mother. As a young man in the Bai Clan, he had often been humiliated. As he grew older, he had harbored a deep if ignorant hope that he could gain the approval of his father, and perhaps the entire clan. But in the end, he had been cruelly slaughtered.... As of this point, it was all in the past.

After a long moment, he rose to his feet, walked over to Bai Xiaochun, and dropped to his knees. His expression was serious and sincere. He didn’t want to sit around thinking about the past. He knew that this Master of his had already gained vengeance for him, a kindness which filled him with profound gratitude. From the bottom of his heart, he was absolutely willing to be his apprentice.

“Everything from the past ended with my death,” he thought. “Now that I'm awake again, my Master… is my only family!” As he swore this oath in his heart, he thought about the sincere concern Bai Xiaochun had showed for him, and was convinced that he had finally found a second person in his life who cared about him.

Taking a deep breath, he said, “Bai Hao offers formal greetings, Master!”

Then he kowtowed deeply three times. After that he rose to his feet, then dropped back down to kowtow again.

Three expressions of respect. Nine kowtows!!

Bai Xiaochun was moved by what he was seeing, and his heart trembled with emotion. After silently accepting the kowtows, his gaze softened, and a profound feeling filled him that was a mixture of joy and pity.

Wrestling his emotions under control, he laughed heartily and said, “Stick with Master, my little apprentice, and you will eat the best food and drink the best alcohol. You can do anything your heart desires!”

With that, he waved his hand, sending Bai Hao into a soulhoarding pagoda.

Within that soulhoarding pagoda, Bai Hao would have a large measure of freedom. He could come out into the open at any time he wished, and because of certain special aspects of his soul body, could take virtually any form he wished.

After a moment, Bai Hao hesitated. Despite having taken this man as his Master, he felt like there was something a bit unreliable about him. “Master… would it be possible for me to know your honored name…?”

Sounding extremely high and mighty, Bai Xiaochun responded, “Ahem. Remember, your Master’s true name is one that cannot be divulged to anyone else in the Wildlands. If it became public, it could lead to drastic events that would affect all creation. It would be a calamity for the Wildlands! Your Master’s name… is Bai Xiaochun!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0709 awe-chapter-710

After taking Bai Hao back with him to Giant Ghost City, the seven days of protracted exhaustion led Bai Xiaochun to go into secluded meditation to recover.

Before closing the door of the meditation chamber, Bai Hao requested that he be allowed to go out and explore a bit. After all, he had been dead for quite some time, and felt like seeing Giant Ghost City and the rest of the outside world. It was a very natural thing.

After a bit of thought, Bai Xiaochun decided there was no reason not to accommodate his wishes, although he did offer a whole slew of warnings before letting him go. After all, Bai Hao's soul body was unique in many ways. Now that his memories were back, he could take almost any form he wished. Furthermore, considering how intelligent he was, as long as he was careful, he shouldn't run into any trouble.

However, just to be on the safe side, he left a branding mark on him. That way, if Bai Hao ran into any trouble, Bai Xiaochun would be able to track him down immediately.

Having accomplished these things, he felt comfortable enough to go into secluded meditation. As for Bai Hao, he changed his appearance and then left.

Bai Hao had long since burned Bai Xiaochun's name into his memory; he would never forget it for the rest of his life. However, even more unforgettable were the things he heard people talking about after leaving Bai Xiaochun's side. Virtually everything he heard... caused his anxiety to build....

“Hey, keep your voice down. Don’t let Bai Hao hear you. Bai Hao is completely shameless. He’s vicious and merciless, to the point where he killed his own father and reviled his own clan!”

“That’s nothing! I have a good friend who’s a guard at Devil Penitentiary. He told me that back when Bai Hao was a guard there, he was the number one dark inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary! You don’t know what dark inquisitors are? They’re normal inquisitors whose hearts have turned to darkness! The prisoners that Bai Hao interrogated in Devil Penitentiary all ended up screaming with indescribable bitterness!”

“Heh heh. Majordomo Bai? Yeah, he's like a bolt of lightning that can shake heaven and earth. It’s been years since a freak like him has appeared in the world. He had a Core Formation cultivation base, and yet he actually kidnapped his highness the king!”

“Bai Hao is completely vicious! He even likes to take the wives of other men.... In order to get his hands on Mrs. Chen, he killed the chief of the Chen Clan! I heard that he keeps her in his residence even now, and ravishes her a hundred times a day! Completely outrageous!”

“All of that is nothing! The most important thing to know is that Bai Hao is a complete and utter daredevil. Only recently, he kidnapped the chosen and heirs apparent of almost all the nobility and aristocracy in the Wildlands! I saw with my own eyes the horrid state all of those chosen were in. It didn’t matter if they were guys or girls, they had all been tormented to the point of being skin and bones! It was completely terrifying!”

When Bai Hao heard such things, he was at first puzzled, but soon left completely flabbergasted. The realization that his Master had done so many shocking things left him feeling more than a bit jumpy.

He began to make some discreet inquiries of his own about the things which had occurred, and soon learned that it was absolutely true that his Master had kidnapped the Giant Ghost King while only in the Core Formation stage. Plus, there were other things which had occurred. After his rapid rise to prominence in the city, he shook down all three of the great clans. He was so well-known in the city that his name could be used to stop children from crying!

“How fearless.... I can hardly even imagine it!” Bai Hao eventually reached the point of being speechless. However, during his time making inquiries, he also heard people talking about the Bai Xiaochun whose name was listed on the Hell-Emperor Stele, and soon learned that there was a bounty on his head. It was at that point that he realized that the fact that his Master had revealed his true name to him showed a deep level of trust.

Although Bai Hao was a Wildlander, he had already died once, and didn’t care as much about things from his previous life. It wasn't important to him who exactly Bai Xiaochun was; he was his Master to whom he had kowtowed nine times!

Eventually he returned to Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation chamber. By this point, he was convinced of how incredible his Master was. Smiling wryly, he returned to the soulhoarding pagoda in Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. At that point, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, looked down at the bag of holding, and then smiled faintly. The entire reason he had revealed his true name to Bai Hao was because he trusted him. Perhaps such an expression of trust was very sudden, but it came from Bai Xiaochun's heart. Based on everything Bai Hao had said and done so far, Bai Xiaochun truly approved of him.

On the same evening that Bai Hao returned from exploring the city, while Bai Xiaochun was still working on getting back into top shape, the Giant Ghost King sat on his throne in the royal palace, frowning at his transmission jade slip.

He had just received a message from the imperial palace in Arch-Emperor City. The message had not been worded very strongly. In fact, it had taken the form of a single question.

Why hasn't Chen Manyao been returned yet?

It was a simple and calmly worded message, and yet it caused the Giant Ghost King's mind to reel. After all, the person who had sent the message was none other than… he who controlled the Son of Heaven! He who could issue orders to everyone in creation…. The Grand Heavenmaster!

The Giant Ghost King would rather offend all three of the other kings than provoke the Grand Heavenmaster. Part of that was because the Grand Heavenmaster was in a far higher place in the Demigod Realm than any of the four heavenly kings. But the bigger reason was that the Grand Heavenmaster was a profound schemer, the type that could strike dread into the heart of anyone with whom he dealt.

“Chen Manyao….” the Giant Ghost King murmured. He had heard that name before, and knew that she was one of the Grand Heavenmaster's personal apprentices, and a top rate beauty.

However, Chen Manyao had not been among the chosen whom Bai Xiaochun had handed over to him. It only took the briefest of moments for the Giant Ghost King to come to a conclusion about what was going on. Not sure whether to laugh or cry, he immediately began to curse.

“Brat bastard! I’d bet money that he’s entranced with her good looks. Considering his age, it's definitely time for him to have a Daoist partner…. But definitely not Chen Manyao!” Although the Giant Ghost King felt a bit of a headache coming on because of his fear of the Grand Heavenmaster, he actually wasn’t angry at all about Bai Xiaochun keeping Chen Manyao in custody. In contrast, he actually felt a bit of admiration. Because of all of the things which had happened between the Giant Ghost King and Bai Xiaochun, the level of formality which might have once existed between them had long since vanished. After all, he had said earlier on that if Bai Xiaochun helped him win the ghost king fruit, he would come to view him as his son and heir.

As far as the Giant Ghost King was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was the most outstanding and daring individual in his generation in the entire Wildlands. Furthermore, the more he learned about the way Bai Xiaochun thought, the more the wily old fox in him approved! Bai Xiaochun could be daring, crafty, and adaptable, but also knew when to back off. Such a combination in one person was hard to come by!

Were it not for that admiration, he would surely have gone completely mad because of the way Bai Xiaochun kidnapped everyone in order to screw him over.

At the moment, the Giant Ghost King was right in the middle of laughter and tears. Sighing, he realized that Bai Xiaochun was actually acting in much the same way he himself would…. With such thoughts on his mind, he cursed inwardly a few more times, then rose to his feet and vanished from within the royal palace.

When he reappeared, he was outside of Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation chamber. After looking around, he snorted coldly, but refrained from doing what he had last time and simply entering unannounced.

“Bai Hao!” he said, filling his voice with plenty of cultivation base pressure. Inside, Bai Xiaochun was performing some breathing exercises. Upon hearing the Giant Ghost King’s voice, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes widened. Before he could do anything else, though, the Giant Ghost King sensed that he had opened his eyes, and entered the meditation chamber.

A bit shocked, Bai Xiaochun scrambled to his feet to clasp hands in formal greeting.

“Greetings, Your Highness!” Inwardly, he was cursing at how annoying it was that the Giant Ghost King loved to secretly ambush him. This was the second time! How could someone as important as the king be so ignorant regarding manners? However, it was also obvious that, considering how anxious the Giant Ghost King seemed, he would likely not have come for any good purpose.

“Your Highness,” he said quickly, “I was careless in my cultivation and damaged my nascent soul! Considering how badly I'm injured, I definitely can’t go anywhere. Oh, and I already consumed nine Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills, so those won't do any good.” In the hopes of not making the same mistake as last time, he claimed to have consumed nine of the pills, instead of the three which he had actually consumed. And of course, he made his statement without blinking a single time.

Glaring, and clearly not very pleased at Bai Xiaochun’s attitude, the Giant Ghost King snorted and said, “Do you have Chen Manyao?!”

The words struck Bai Xiaochun like lightning, and instantly caused his heart to start racing.

He most certainly did have Chen Manyao in his custody. Up to this point, he still wasn’t sure how to deal with her. Worried that she might recognize him, and that that would cause problems, he had decided that he couldn't let her go.

He quickly shook his head and put a very confused look onto his face.

“Who is Chen Manyao, Your Highness? Sounds kind of like a girl’s name. Oh, don't tell me you’ve taken a liking to her, Your Highness? Fear not,” he said, thumping his chest with his palm, “your humble servant will definitely be able to get her for you!”

Any person who didn’t know Bai Xiaochun very well would have been easily taken in. After all, his acting skills were top notch, and whether it was his wording or the expression on his face, they were all very convincing. It really seemed as if he didn't know anyone by the name of Chen Manyao.

But the Giant Ghost King did know Bai Xiaochun, and therefore, his glare intensified, and he growled, “Stop playing dumb! You listen to me, Bai Hao. You can’t touch Chen Manyao! She has a very important background….”

A profoundly serious expression could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face, and the pressure rolling off of him felt like thunderclouds.

Such tactics would intimidate virtually anyone else, but Bai Xiaochun was familiar with the Giant Ghost King, so he put on a pained expression.

“Your Highness, I really don’t know anyone named Chen Manyao!”

“Enough!” the Giant Ghost King said impatiently. “It’s only the two of us in here, so stop with the act. I know that you took a liking to Chen Manyao because of her beauty. But she’s one of the beloved apprentices of the Grand Heavenmaster! He’s already asked about her, so hand her over immediately! She’s just a hot girl, right? What's the big deal about that? I’ll make up for it with plenty more girls.” As far as he was concerned, it really was a minor matter. It was only a single girl they were talking about, and thus, he really couldn’t understand why Bai Xiaochun was acting this way.

Seeing that the Giant Ghost King wasn’t going to back down caused Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness to mount. He really, really didn't want to let Chen Manyao go. It had to do with his poor little life! However, despite thinking desperately, he couldn’t come up with any backup plan. As for the Giant Ghost King, he could see that Bai Xiaochun was hesitating, causing his anger to rise.

In fact, he was so infuriated that intense coldness immediately spread out in all directions.

“Bring Chen Manyao out immediately, Bai Hao. Don’t make me use force!” His voice was as cold as winter snow, and his eyes burned with cold fury. The meditation chamber even began to ice over!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0710 awe-chapter-711

Bai Xiaochun had already been getting nervous. Handing Chen Manyao over was the same as putting his poor little life into the control of other hands. It wasn’t that he distrusted Chen Manyao, but when it came to critical matters of life or death, putting trust in other people wasn’t an option.

His trust in Bai Hao was unswerving, but… it wasn’t the same with Chen Manyao!

The Giant Ghost King was getting extremely angry, so much so that the coldness filling Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation chamber was tinged with killing intent.

Bai Xiaochun immediately thought back to what the Giant Ghost King had been like right after he had gotten his cultivation base back; he had hovered there with a metal-type deva soul in hand, and had looked at Bai Xiaochun with utter imperiousness as he asked a single question.

Give me one good reason not to kill you!

Those words had scared Bai Xiaochun witless, and the way the Giant Ghost King looked now reminded him of that very day, and those very words.

Then he thought about how he had nearly been killed protecting the Giant Ghost King, and how the restrictive spell had weakened his cultivation base back in the Necromancer Kettle. Without his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, he would likely have been chased down and killed by the more than one hundred chosen who had been his opponents.

All of those things weighed down on his heart, and then combined with both the killing intent and freezing pressure from the Giant Ghost King, and his nervousness about what to do with Chen Manyao. He felt like he was stuck between a vicious wolf and a hungry tiger, and it caused his eyes to turn completely bloodshot.

In any other situation, he would definitely be terrified in this moment, but right now, he didn’t feel like being terrified. Trembling, he glared at the Giant Ghost King and said, “You want to kill me? You want to attack me?”

He wasn't even terrified in the deepest recesses of his heart. He couldn’t help but think about all his dealings with the Giant Ghost King up til now, and not only did it destabilize his aura, but it made his eyes turn completely crimson. Blue veins bulged out on his face and neck, and he suddenly erupted!

“Say that again, Giant Ghost King!” he shouted in rage. “What the fudge!? I can’t believe you actually want to kill me!!

“You want to attack me? I saved your life, Giant Ghost King!! I nearly died, you fool. I got injured over and over again!! And you? You were just testing me out. Testing, testing, testing. Even after your cultivation base was back, you were still testing me. I very nearly got killed before you finally managed to do something. You know what? Fine. Fine, I can accept all that. But then, after all is said and done, you’re *still* testing me?!?! I bet you’ll still try to test me after I'm dead, won't you!?!?” Bai Xiaochun had completely lost his cool, and was yelling so loud that it had the entire meditation chamber shaking.

As for the Giant Ghost King, he was completely taken aback by the sudden outburst. He had only been trying to intimidate this Bai Hao a bit, with the goal of scaring him. He had never imagined that the result would be like this.

“What gall!” he said angrily, glaring at Bai Xiaochun and sending more pressure roiling out.

“Gall? Actually, I usually don’t have much gall, but today, you bet I do!!” Bai Xiaochun was so angry he was almost jumping up and down, and his voice only kept getting louder.

“Ever since we got back to the city, my friend, it might have seemed like I was relaxing after a big victory. But the truth is that I did a lot important things for you! When I shook down the three great clans, the best item I recovered was that spiritjade statue. I knew it would help you in your cultivation, so I secretly delivered to you. But nobody knows that! They think I took everything for myself. Lots of people have been sitting around hoping I would mess up so that they could take the chance to kill me!

“And it's not like you didn’t know, I told you about how worried I was!!” Bai Xiaochun’s yelling had the Giant Ghost King’s chest heaving in rage, and yet, there was nothing he could say by means of retort. Back when Bai Xiaochun had shaken down the three clans, the Giant Ghost King had merely reaped the benefits, and hadn’t thought much about what pressure Bai Xiaochun might have come under because of it.

“You liked Mrs. Chen, and I didn’t hesitate to send her to you. You’re the Giant Ghost King, with a big reputation to maintain, and I'm Bai Hao, a nameless nobody. So I became the scapegoat. Do you know how badly people talk about Bai Hao nowadays? I might as well have the plague! People say that I'm a wife-stealer and a husband-killer! When I go out in the city, all of the men hide their wives so that I can’t even see them. Pretty much everybody hates me!

“And it’s not like you didn’t know, I told you about how unfair it all was!!” Bai Xiaochun was physically shaking, not from fear, but because he had thrown caution to the wind. All of the rancor which had built up in him because of the various events connected to the Giant Ghost King had reached the point that he had no choice but to vent his feelings in one big eruption.

The Giant Ghost King’s rage was reduced again because of what had just been said, and he even started to feel slightly guilty. He had to admit that what Bai Xiaochun was saying was true. The Giant Ghost King did very much care about his reputation, and had also heard about the vile things people in the city were saying about Bai Hao.

“I told you I didn't want to go to the Necromancer Kettle, but you said the ghost king fruit was of vital importance. So I went. And what happened with the fruit? Hahaha! Much to my surprise, the restrictive spell, and in fact my own trust in you, became a noose around my neck! Do you know how quickly my cultivation base dropped after that restrictive spell unraveled? Can you imagine the bitterness I felt when more than a hundred chosen were all trying their best to kill me? The big bro who I had trusted in actually plotted against me. I almost died in that Necromancer Kettle!

“And it’s not like you didn’t know about that, I *told* you!!” The more Bai Xiaochun talked, the more worked up he got. That was especially true of the incident in the Necromancer

Kettle, which continued to stab at his heart like a needle. If it weren’t for the fact that he was in the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, he would definitely have died in there.

And there was only one ultimate culprit: the Giant Ghost King himself!

The Giant Ghost King’s mouth was hanging open as if he wanted to respond, and he was still clearly enraged, but at the same time, had nothing to say.

“Of course, I remember you said that the other three heavenly kings were working together against you, and were trying to blackmail you. So despite the bitterness in my heart, despite the grief, I captured all of those chosen so that you could vent some of your frustration. I handed them all over so that you could blackmail everyone else right back! And you think it was out of ill will that I did that?! If I really had it out for you, I would just have killed all of them. Maybe it would have made things tough for me, but it would have made things *really* tough for you!

“And it’s not like you didn’t know. I explained it all to you!!” By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s anger seemed to be tinged with despair, and had the Giant Ghost King hesitating as he thought back to everything that had gone on between the two of them.

“Let me ask you, Giant Ghost King, have I ever asked anything of you? Which of the things that I've done have hurt you?! And let’s not even get into the Devil Penitentiary! I already risked my life to settle that account. Or was that not enough!?!?” The more Bai Xiaochun yelled, the angrier he got.

“Even people in the tiniest little clans have multiple wives and multiple concubines. And I just want this one girl! Is that really such a big deal?! One girl, that’s all! And over that, you’re actually willing to attack and kill me!?!?” The bitterness in Bai Xiaochun’s words was such that even the Giant Ghost King was starting to feel… that he really had gone a bit too far….

After finishing his outburst, Bai Xiaochun started to recover his senses, whereupon he began to sweat all over. His heart was immediately gripped with anxiety, and he began to wail inwardly as his guts twisted in fear.

“I’m finished,” he thought. “Kaput. I lost control and got all impulsive….” He already felt like he was about to collapse mentally, but realizing that he had already gotten himself into this situation, he couldn’t stop now. Gritting his teeth, he put on the ultimate expression of bitterness.

“I know,” he said softly. “I know. You’re the king, Your Highness, and a demigod too. I'm a nobody. You can discard me any time you wish. I guess what pains me the most is that I foolishly took you to be a true big bro to me….”

To see Bai Xiaochun standing in front of him trembling like he was caused a bit of a flush to rise up the Giant Ghost King’s neck. If anybody else had spoken to him like this, he would have done nothing more than snort coldly. However, if there was one person in this heaven and earth who qualified to talk to him like this, and even prevent him from responding, it was Bai Xiaochun.

And as he thought about the situation, he realized that it was exactly as Bai Xiaochun had said. Bai Xiaochun had served him with loyalty and integrity, and had accomplished all the tasks that he had been assigned. He was also very obedient. Although he tended to be a bit of a brown-noser, the Giant Ghost King actually liked that.

In fact, most of the rewards he had bestowed upon him were honorary at best. He hadn’t really given him anything substantive. Furthermore, he was a genius when it came to conjuring flame. He was so daring that he had single-handedly thrown his own clan into chaos, and then kidnapped the king. He had been completely on his own when he crushed virtually all of the top chosen in the Wildlands. He was actually such an outstanding person that not even the Giant Ghost King had ever met anyone like him, not even his own daughter. She had a high cultivation base, but when it came to her strategies and tactics, she simply couldn’t measure up.

The Giant Ghost King knew that someone like this would eventually soar to the highest heights, as long as he didn’t perish or get killed along the way…. If the former happened, then the two of them would be inextricably linked in various ways. Finally, the Giant Ghost King sighed, and in a very calm and reasonable voice, said, “Hao’er, it’s been a long time since I've come to view you as my own son.”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun sighed inwardly, and knew that the danger was past. “Giant Ghost King, I only have one question. After we got back to the city together, did I ever ask you for anything?”

The Giant Ghost King didn’t respond at first. Bai Xiaochun hadn’t actually asked for anything other than this one girl…. And if you didn't take into consideration her impressive background, then it really wasn't a very big deal.

However, Chen Manyao was a personal apprentice of the Grand Heavenmaster. The Grand Heavenmaster had asked about her, and the Giant Ghost King couldn’t ignore him. After a moment wrestling with the issue, determination filled his eyes, and he looked at Bai Xiaochun, convinced he had come up with a good idea.

“Well, this Bai Hao is completely outstanding, so… might as well do it!”

After a final moment of thought, the Giant Ghost King sighed and said, “Hao’er, you’re right, I’ve never really given you anything. But, I happen to have a daughter who has a higher cultivation base than Chen Manyao, and is even more beautiful than her. Ten times as beautiful! How about I give her hand to you in marriage!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0711 awe-chapter-712

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, stunned. He really never could have imagined that after his angry outburst, the Giant Ghost King would say something like this…. “Uh… you… you have a daughter? And you want to give me her hand in marriage?”

Bai Xiaochun almost felt like he was going to faint. Although he had heard that the Giant Ghost King had a daughter, she was a fairly mysterious person who didn’t live in Giant Ghost City. From a very young age, she had lived in Arch-Emperor City.

“This way, the two of us will be family from now on.” The Giant Ghost King’s eyes sparkled as he measured Bai Xiaochun up and down again. The more he thought about this idea of his, the more he liked it. This Bai Hao had a politically correct family background and education, and truly was outstanding. Even more important, his way of thinking lined up with the Giant Ghost King’s.

As far as the Giant Ghost King was concerned, he was the ideal son-in-law, with the only exception being his relatively weak cultivation base. However, that last part was actually a positive, considering that it meant his daughter would be able to keep him in line easily.

“This Bai Hao has a lot of potential,” he thought. “With a single drop of my soul-blood, he unleashed a demigod-level attack. From that, you can see that he’s made a lot of cultivation progress that no one is aware of….” That got the Giant Ghost King thinking about even more benefits to the arrangement.

“Uh… Your Highness, this is an important matter that shouldn’t be arranged carelessly.” Bai Xiaochun was feeling very nervous. As he looked at the Giant Ghost King, he imagined what he would look like if he were a bit younger, and a woman, and the mere thought caused his scalp to tingle on the verge of exploding. Too ugly!

“What,” the Giant Ghost King said, “think she’s not good enough for you? Hmph.... Don't even bother trying to compare my Zhou Zimo to Chen Manyao. Her talents surpass Chen Manyao’s so much that you can't even mention the two in the same sentence. Once you see her in person, you’ll know what I mean. Besides, unless I personally arranged the marriage, she would never agree to be your wife.” Glaring angrily, the Giant Ghost King waved his hand and said, “Hurry up and give me Chen Manyao. The matter’s settled as of here and now!”

Bai Xiaochun moaned bitterly in his heart. He was out of ideas. If he didn’t produce Chen Manyao right now, the Giant Ghost King would likely start to get suspicious. Therefore, he had no other option than to gamble and hope that either Chen Manyao hadn’t recognized him, or if she had, that she would keep it a secret for old-time’s sake.

With that, he pulled the unconscious Chen Manyao out of his bag of holding and handed her over.

The Giant Ghost King examined her for a moment. Although he had heard that she was beautiful, this was his first time seeing her, and it caused a strange expression to appear in his eyes. All of a sudden, he understood why Bai Xiaochun had been so staunch in his refusal to hand her over.

“Wow, she really is a beauty,” he thought. Clearing his throat, he glared at Bai Xiaochun again, then swished his sleeve to gather up Chen Manyao.

“Alright, things are settled. Tomorrow, you’ll head to Arch-Emperor City via the teleportation portal. Find my daughter in the Giant Ghost Legion. She's the sergeant major there, so you can start out by helping her with her duties there. As for romantic feelings, they will build up between the two of you naturally.”

“Huh? What’s the rush? Um… I….” Bai Xiaochun really had no interest in this Zhou Zimo. Grimacing, he considered refusing, but it was too late. Before he could say a thing, the Giant Ghost King had issued official orders!

“Mo'er sent me a request recently, asking me to send someone to be her assistant. It seems to me that you’re the best man for the job. Things are settled. You leave the city tomorrow! Oh, by the way, Mo'er wants to become strong and powerful on her own merit, so not many people know who she actually is. As for the nobility who do know, there’s a tacit understanding to keep things a secret. Don’t go and stir up trouble!” With that, he turned and vanished.

Bai Xiaochun was scowling on the verge of tears. He didn’t want to marry this Sergeant Major Zhou Zimo whom he didn’t even know. Besides, he was already a major general! As if a sergeant major could compare to that….

As far as the Giant Ghost Legion was concerned, Bai Xiaochun remembered capturing a soul cultivator by the Great Wall who had claimed to be the apprentice of one of the Giant Ghost King’s marquises. It was a bit strange. Why would someone from Giant Ghost City have been all the way on the other side of the Wildlands? However, considering the insurrection that had taken place, perhaps that man had been dispatched by one of the rebel heavenly marquises to handle some personal matter.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no desire at all to go to Arch-Emperor City. The place seemed far too dangerous. That was especially true considering that he wasn’t sure if Chen Manyao knew who he was. If she did, then he could be sending himself right to his own grave.

And there was more… he had kidnapped many of the heirs apparent and other important chosen who came from Arch-Emperor City. If he went to the city now, he would be like a lamb walking into the tiger’s den….

And yet, refusing to go wasn't an option. The Giant Ghost King had made his stance clear. Bai Xiaochun had thrown a tantrum already, and if he tried to do the same thing again… then it really would harm his relationship with the king. If that happened, then he would be in a bad position even in Giant Ghost City.

“How did things end up like this?!” he thought, tugging at his hair. At this point, Bai Hao floated out of his bag of holding, a look of complete and utter amazement on his face. Just now, he hadn’t dared to reveal even the tiniest scrap of his aura to the Giant Ghost King, but had been able to hear the conversation perfectly clearly. And as a result, he was left sighing in shock at how brave and daring his Master was.

Of course, he wasn’t aware of the fact that Bai Xiaochun’s mask would make it virtually impossible for anyone to detect his presence, so his extreme caution hadn’t been necessary.

“Master, I've heard some things about the Giant Ghost King’s daughter. She’s a very mysterious figure who left

Giant Ghost City long ago to further her cultivation….” With that, he went on to explain everything he knew.

Unfortunately, that wasn’t much. In the end, Bai Xiaochun sighed and continued to ponder the matter. In the end, there was nothing he could do. Eventually, he trudged out of his meditation chamber and went out to make some inquiries of his own.

Most of his questions had to do with Arch-Emperor City, the others being about the Giant Ghost King’s daughter. After returning, he sat there grimacing and gnashing his teeth.

“Arch-Emperor City is a terrifying place! I absolutely can’t go there! Worst case scenario, I can leave Giant Ghost City and find a place to hide for a bit….”

Night passed. By evening of the following day, Bai Xiaochun knew that he couldn’t dawdle any longer. He didn't dare to use the teleportation portal, so he came up with an excuse to request the use of a giant ghost battleship to go to Arch-Emperor City. His current plan was to disappear along the way and hide out for a while before returning. If enough time passed, then perhaps the Giant Ghost King would finally understand how he truly felt.

In terms of the giant ghost battleship, he had long since had his eye on them, and knew that they were wonderful treasures. This was actually the perfect opportunity to take one out for a spin. At least, that was his explanation.

Unfortunately, the Giant Ghost King was one step ahead of him. It was with an enigmatic smile that he approved Bai Xiaochun’s request for the giant ghost battleship, and then gave orders for Duke Deathcrier to help him pilot the ship, and also protect him along his journey.

Duke Deathcrier was a bit confused about why Bai Xiaochun wasn't just using the teleportation portal, but considering that the orders came from the Giant Ghost King, he didn’t question them. Soon, Duke Deathcrier was piloting the giant ghost battleship away from Giant Ghost City, with Bai Xiaochun standing there on the deck with a blank look on his face.

Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, but no tears would come. As for Duke Deathcrier, he had a somewhat grim expression, and completely ignored Bai Xiaochun.

As of this point, it was obvious that his plan had been seen through by the Giant Ghost King, and he had no option other than to continue on to Arch-Emperor City.

“Duke Deathcrier is a deva, so with him piloting the giant ghost battleship, the journey will take about three months.” Bai Xiaochun looked down at the jade slip he held in his hand, which contained a detailed map. Giant Ghost City was actually relatively close to Arch-Emperor City, as opposed to Nine Serenities City, which was much further away. If Duke Deathcrier had piloted the giant ghost battleship from there, it would take a full year to make the journey.

Of course, if Bai Xiaochun piloted the ship, the journey would be even longer. Plus, it was a journey that would have been fraught with danger without a deva present.

He had no choice but to accept his fate. Rubbing the bridge of his nose, he contemplated all of the information he had gathered about Arch-Emperor City.

The Arch-Emperor Dynasty was organized with the Arch-Emperor at the top, followed by the Grand Heavenmaster, and then the four heavenly kings. Underneath the kings were the ten heavenly dukes, and 108 heavenly marquises!

Each of the heavenly kings had ten heavenly marquises in their home cities, but no heavenly dukes. Duke Deathcrier and his contemporaries were only earthly dukes. Although they ranked above the heavenly marquises, they were far below the heavenly dukes.

The ten heavenly dukes were the most powerful devas in the Wildlands, all of them being in the great circle of the Deva Realm. They actually counted as one of the reserve powers of Arch-Emperor City. As for the heavenly marquises, there were 68 of them who lived permanently within Arch-Emperor City itself.

Arch-Emperor City was by far the largest city in the Wildlands, and was also meticulously organized. Floating in the sky above the main city itself was the imperial palace.

The imperial palace had four main gates, which defended the four cardinal directions.

After the Grand Heavenmaster seized control of the Son of Heaven, it was an easy thing for the four heavenly kings to stay away from the city. However, the Grand Heavenmaster had ordered that their armies remained garrisoned in the region of Arch-Emperor City, ready to follow any orders they were given.

The army encamped west of the city was the Giant Ghost Legion, the commanding officer of which was the Giant Ghost King’s daughter, Zhou Zimo.

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been able to get much information about Zhou Zimo back in Giant Ghost City. All he knew was that she didn't get along very well with the Giant Ghost King, and had long since left the city to practice cultivation on her own. As for how her relationship with her father was now that she had risen to the rank of sergeant major, it was impossible to tell.

“This Zhou Zimo obviously is a bit of a rebel. Hmmmphh! How could silly little girls like that understand how to lead an army!? As a magnificent major general, I guess I’ll just have to go show her how it's done!” He sighed, feeling quite bitter.

He hadn't had enough time to gather much more information than that. Although Duke Deathcrier probably knew some information, he didn’t seem too pleased about being forced to take Bai Xiaochun on this long journey, and completely ignored the questions he asked.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0712 awe-chapter-713

Although Giant Ghost City wasn’t extremely far away from Arch-Emperor City, it still took Duke Deathcrier months of work to get them close.

And he was a deva. If Bai Xiaochun had been piloting the ship alone, the spiritual power wastage would have been immense. Even by replenishing himself with soul medicine, it would have been difficult to keep going for very long. Most importantly of all, he would have faced ten times the amount of danger.

Whether it was the bizarre creatures that inhabited the Wildlands, or the hordes of souls with their profound death auras, they were all things that left Bai Xiaochun trembling in fear. Of course, the souls would have been easier for him to deal with, but as for the beasts, they were shocking to the extreme.

At one point along the way, he saw a towering tree that was so shriveled it looked dead. However, it could move, and would consume anything that got too close to it.

He saw an enormous beast that resembled a hippopotamus. It was sleeping, but its snores were so mighty that they caused the sky to vibrate, and shook the lands for hundreds of kilometers in every direction.

There was a flock of vicious vultures that followed the giant ghost battleship for several days before begrudgingly letting it go.

The sight of all the bizarre creatures left Bai Xiaochun's mind reeling. They encountered a few cloudgyres, which caused even Duke Deathcrier's face to flicker. Only by piloting the ship at full speed did he manage to evade them.

At one point, Bai Xiaochun noticed that the ground down below was pitch white, and assumed it was snow. However, closer examination revealed that it was a sea of bones, covered with waves just like water. The powerful aura radiating up from the sea of bones caused Duke Deathcrier's face to turn pale. Drawing upon a taboo magic, he negated the aura of the giant ghost battleship, and then pushed forward at full speed for several days until the sea of bones vanished behind them.

The sights changed, and the winds blew past. Thanks to this journey, Bai Xiaochun truly came to understand that crossing the Wildlands without using a teleportation portal was something that only devas could do.

Duke Deathcrier's face grew more and more grim as they faced one danger after another. He was not happy at all about the situation. It was all because of a single order from the Giant Ghost King, and all because the damnable Bai Hao had refused to use the teleportation portal. Because of that, he, a mighty deva, was forced to be a bodyguard.

It didn't matter that Bai Hao was favored by the king, Duke Deathcrier was still feeling very disgruntled. However, there was no way for him to vent his feelings, so he simply ignored Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun knew that he had dragged Duke Deathcrier into the matter, and therefore, took the initiative to try to smooth things out. Although he didn't completely succeed, his efforts were moderately successful.

One day, as the giant ghost battleship streaked through the air in a beam of light, Bai Xiaochun was able to catch sight of a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering city up ahead, a city far more magnificent than Giant Ghost City.

In terms of size, it could contain at least ten Giant Ghost Cities. The green city walls towered over the surrounding plains, casting immense pressure into the hearts of anyone who looked at them. There were countless restrictive spells locking the entire area down, taking the pressure of heaven and earth and using it to protect the city.

The power of the five elements was harnessed to suppress even lightning and thunder. As a result, the city looked like an enormous beast of paragon-like power, resting but ready to erupt with power at a moment’s notice.

Countless towering green pagodas could be seen within the city walls, each one of which had an enormous crystal ball at its top. Each crystal ball had violet mist sealed inside of it which crackled with lightning, and occasionally transformed into huge eyes!

It was difficult to put into words how much life force thrummed inside of the enormous city. However, the amount of qi and blood that Bai Xiaochun could sense was astonishing.

“How many people live there?!” he thought, shocked. As he examined the city, he couldn’t help but look up to see… another city floating in the air above the main city!

It was smaller than the city below, and completely golden in color. There was something domineering about it that made it stand out from everything else in the area, as if it were something that could suppress the entire Wildlands.

Even the air around it seemed to be crushed by its presence, as if this city were something completely different than everything else in heaven and earth. Considering the golden light that shone out from it, it almost seemed like an enormous golden sun, or a gigantic golden castle in the clouds.

It was none other than… the imperial palace of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!

Eight islands floated in the air around the imperial palace, each of them covered with clouds and rainbows. They appeared to be something like guard stations, there to protect the imperial palace against any outside forces!

From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, the rainbows on those islands vastly surpassed those from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. After all, there was only one rainbow structure in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, but here, each of the islands had one!

Furthermore, those islands were only one part of the defensive network protecting the city.

Countless soul cultivators in golden armor were on patrol, making Arch-Emperor City completely and utterly astonishing to behold!

Bai Xiaochun had seen quite a few cities in his life, and Arch-Emperor City existed on a different level than all of them, and that included the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun felt as if he understood the world a bit better. And that was before he even studied the four armies which were encamped in the four cardinal directions around the city, filled with countless Wildlander cultivators.

Above each army flew a banner identifying it. One of them featured a huge green battle-axe, which showed that they were the forces from Nine Serenities City. There was a blood-colored banner without any symbol on it at all, which represented War Champion City.

As for Spirit Advent City, their symbol was a vicious-looking eye that seemed to peer out at all heaven and earth as the banner rippled in the wind…. Last was Giant Ghost City's banner, which was easily identifiable because of the giant ghost sigil on it. The giant ghost had its arms spread wide, and wore a vicious expression, as if it wished to rip the heavens to shreds.

"So those are the four legions…." Bai Xiaochun thought, mind spinning. All of a sudden, he felt the nervousness that came along with being in the headquarters of the enemy.

"What would happen if they found out that I'm Bai Xiaochun…?" he wondered. The mere thought caused his face to turn as ashen as death. It was at this point that he realized he had missed something, and looked up at the clouds in the sky. Suddenly, the enormous head of a dragon dipped down out of the clouds, its enormous whiskers floating in the air beside it as it stared coldly at Bai Xiaochun. A moment later, it lifted its head back up into the clouds.

"A dragon!!" he thought, his eyes widening. Then he could see the long, serpentine form of the dragon swirling through the clouds, as well as its terrifying claws. Off to the side, Duke Deathcrier gave a cold harrumph, but didn't say anything. Instead, he kept his gaze fixed reverently on Arch-Emperor City.

This was the heart of the Wildlands!

As a deva, Duke Deathcrier understood matters much better than Bai Xiaochun. He knew… that what was visible out in the open was only a part of what made up Arch-Emperor City. There was more of it underground…. There was a third city underground that was ten times larger than the part which rose up above the plains!

“Three cities above,” he murmured to himself, “three in the middle, and three below…. They formed what was spoken of in legend… the nine heavens!” He had never seen the true Arch-Emperor City, which was something that had only existed in the distant past. Back in its golden age, Arch-Emperor City was like nine collective heavens that dominated the world.

However… after Heavenspan rose to prominence, Arch-Emperor City declined. Then a grand war was fought in which heaven and earth were split apart. Heavenspan replaced the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and occupied the island in the middle of the Heavenspan Sea.

As for Arch-Emperor City… it was during that war that the lower three cities were shattered, and the middle three cities were crushed. The only thing that remained were the top three cities, which fled to this location, gasping for life, where they remained down to this day, attempting to recover….

Currently, only the top two cities were visible above ground, with the third city remaining beneath the earth, buried and incapable of rising.

Finally, Duke Deathcrier looked away from Arch-Emperor City and took Bai Xiaochun to the west side of the city, where the Giant Ghost Legion was camped.

Before long, they were at the entrance of the camp. Having no desire to remain around any longer, Duke Deathcrier waved his sleeve, sending Bai Xiaochun flying off of the giant ghost battleship and down to the main entrance.

Voice hard as stone, he said, “The task assigned me by his highness the king is now accomplished. You’re on your own now, Bai Hao.” Without another word, he turned the giant ghost battleship and sent it speeding into Arch-Emperor City itself. Clearly, he had his own matters to attend to. Furthermore, he would return to Giant Ghost City via teleportation portal, not by making the long journey on the ship.

Duke Deathcrier’s arrival caused quite a stir in the Giant Ghost Legion. Beams of light immediately flew over to the main entrance of the camp, and the two squads of soul cultivator guards stationed there immediately looked from the departing giant ghost battleship over toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Who goes there?!” one of them said, his voice threatening and seemingly dripping with blood. Clearly, these guards were the type who had seen countless bloody battles, and had frightening murderous auras.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as he watched Duke Deathcrier leave, then turned to face the main entrance of the army camp. Scowling on the verge of tears, he decided that since he had gotten this far, he might as well keep going forward one step at a time.

“There’s no way I’m going to lose any face,” he thought. “I'm a big-shot here too. After all, the Giant Ghost King is giving me his daughter’s hand in marriage!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he looked at the soul cultivator who had just called out to him from the main entrance. Sticking his chin up, he put on the most unfathomable expression he could muster.

Tossing out his identity medallion, he clasped his hands behind his back and proudly said, “I am the grand majordomo and inspections commissioner from Giant Ghost City, Bai Hao, and this is my identity medallion. Take me immediately to see your sergeant major. She is my fiancée!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0713 awe-chapter-714

Bai Xiaochun stood there, pompous and haughty, clasping his hands the way a truly consummate chosen would, as if he could crush the entire army camp if he wanted to.

The two squads of cultivators manning the main entrance were shocked, and didn’t even know how to respond. They weren’t particularly impressed with the first part of what he had said, but the last part left them gasping in astonishment. They actually didn’t know about Zhou Zimo’s relationship to the Giant Ghost King, but he was their king after all. To hear the person he had sent say something like this was a huge shock.

“The sergeant major is his fiancée?”

“Is this for real? This Bai Hao.... I remember hearing about him. He’s one of the top aides to his highness the king.... Could it be that the king is rewarding him by arranging this marriage?” The powerful experts who had been shocked by Duke Deathcrier’s sudden appearance earlier had also heard Bai Xiaochun’s shocking words, and as a result, their expressions flickered. They looked incredulously at Bai Xiaochun, and then examined his identity medallion to confirm who he was. Although strange expressions could be seen on their faces, they didn’t dare to delay, and quickly relayed the information up the chain of command to request orders about what to do next.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased at the reaction to his words, and mused that his days as a major general had truly given him an imperious way with words that surpassed ordinary people. Feeling quite proud, he cleared his throat.

“Very well, I’m coming in now.” As he began to strut forward, the soul cultivators of the Giant Ghost Legion exchanged awkward glances, but didn't dare to get in his way. However, before he could take more than a few steps, a beam of light shot toward the entrance from somewhere in the middle of the camp, resolving into the shape of a young woman.

As soon as she arrived, all of the surrounding soldiers breathed sighs of relief.

She didn’t appear to be very old, and had a Core Formation cultivation base. She was very pretty, with snow-white skin, and eyes that sparkled brightly. There was something formidable about her, but at the same time she was extremely attractive. That was especially the case considering that she wore a suit of tight-fitting leather armor that perfectly accentuated her sensuous curves.

Bai Xiaochun immediately perked up a bit as he wondered if this was Zhou Zimo. However, considering the level of her cultivation base, it didn't seem likely…. After looking her up and down, he was just preparing to say something when she coolly said, “Come with me. The sergeant major wants to see you!”

There was little respect to be heard in her tone of voice, and after finishing speaking, she turned and headed back into the camp. As she walked away, Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t help but once again marvel at her attractive figure.

“So, she’s not Zhou Zimo after all. Hmph. Quite the nerve she has!” He was definitely not very pleased at his reception so far. No matter what the situation was, he was still the famed majordomo of Giant Ghost City. However, Bai Xiaochun also reminded himself that he wasn’t the type to nitpick, so he simply snorted and followed the young woman.

As he walked along, he thought about what the Giant Ghost King’s mysterious daughter would be like. Considering what the king had said to him, she was even more incredible than Chen Manyao.

“If he was lying to me, then I’ll figure out some reason to leave Arch-Emperor City and get back to Giant Ghost City.” Having made up his mind, he swaggered after the young woman into the camp. As he looked around, he could see quite a few people looking over at him with quizzical expressions, occasionally leaning over to whisper to each other.

“Who's that? I can’t believe the sergeant major’s personal guard is escorting him….”

“I just heard some voices from outside. Supposedly this guy claims to be the sergeant major’s fiancé…”

“What!?!?”

As the whispered conversations reached his ears, Bai Xiaochun felt prouder of himself than ever. As he made his way through the army camp, he realized that it was quite large. Based on his estimates, there were probably around 1,000,000 troops garrisoned here. Tents stretched out in all directions, seemingly without end.

There was something stern and harsh to the camp that made Bai Xiaochun think about the Great Wall.

As the young woman hurried him through the camp, Bai Xiaochun got the strange sensation that some of the people around him seemed familiar. However, there was little time to ponder the situation as the female cultivator led him to a huge red tent in the middle of the camp!

It was fully 300 meters wide, and considering that evening was falling, it was already lit by flickering torches.

It was heavily guarded, and the entire area radiated a bleak and deadly air. All of the guards had completely expressionless faces. Even as Bai Xiaochun and the personal guard approached, their gazes remained completely icy, as if they didn’t care who Bai Xiaochun was. If he showed the slightest errant behavior, they would all attack him immediately!

It was at this point that his heart quivered a bit. Although he had been hurried through the camp, he could still sense that there were many powerful experts present. From what he could tell, some of them were even half a step into the Deva Realm. However, he couldn't sense any aura at all coming from inside the bright red command tent. Even as he approached, he heard a cold snort echo out from inside.

“You still haven’t found him?!” It was the voice of a woman, and it sounded like she was growling through clenched teeth. There was something incredibly shocking about her, as though she could surpass heaven and earth. The way the air vibrated sent a twinge of fear through Bai Xiaochun.

“That aura… it's from a deva!” There was even something about the aura that seemed familiar. Before he could spend any time thinking about it though, a rumbling sound could be heard as a statue flew out from inside the tent.

The statue depicted a person, and was already shattering to pieces as it flew out of the tent. However, most of the head remained intact, and it rolled across the ground until it came to a stop at Bai Xiaochun’s feet.

When he looked down at it, his eyes went wide, and all the hair on his body stood on end.

The portion of the head that remained intact revealed a fact that looked much like his own…. Not Bai Hao’s face, but his true appearance….

“This… this….” he muttered.

Before he could collect his thoughts, the woman’s voice could once again be heard inside the tent.

“Keep looking! I refuse to believe that we can’t find that damned Bai Xiaochun!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered, and a look of disbelief appeared on his face. Whether it was the aura he was sensing, or the voice, there was something so familiar with it that if he couldn't place who it was by this point, it would mean he had memory problems.

Although he was now sure of who this person was, he still couldn’t bring himself to believe it was true…. Even as he stood there shivering, the tent flap opened, and another female guard appeared. An unsightly expression could be seen on her face as she completely ignored Bai Xiaochun and began to clean up the shattered pieces of the statue.

However, because of the tent flap suddenly being opened, Bai Xiaochun could now see inside to a woman sitting there. When he saw her face, he felt like a million lightning bolts were striking his mind.

“Mistress Red-Dust!” His face turned as pale as a sheet, and his legs began to shake. Sitting there in the tent was the very same person he had cursed in his heart over and over again, the same person with whom he had fought in the necropolis… Mistress Red-Dust!!

Never could he possibly have imagined that the Giant Ghost King’s daughter would be Mistress Red-Dust…. Clearly, Zhou Zimo was her name, and Red-Dust was a Daoist name.

Shaken, he suddenly realized why so many people in the army had seemed familiar. These were the very same necromancers and soul cultivators who had participated in the war at the Great Wall….

He had even fought some of them personally, and many of them had cursed him to death because of his Soul Convergence Pills….

A few had even experienced incredible humiliation because of the enormous beasts that had consumed his enhanced Aphrodisiac Pills. These were people who hated Bai Xiaochun with an undying passion that defied description.

In fact, in all of the Wildlands, nobody hated him more… than this group of people!

Back when he had been at the Great Wall, information about the Wildlands had been very hard to come by for some reason. Even after becoming a major general, he hadn’t learned very much about the Wildlanders other than that they were all enemies. He’d never been given any information about the specific forces they faced, or where they came from.

“Heavens! The Giant Ghost Legion… Mistress Red-Dust… heavens! What am I doing here!?!? I've been dropped into the lion’s den!!” As he wailed in his heart, and as his mind reeled, he shivered and backed up a step. His first instinct was to flee from this place as quickly as possible.

The mere idea of what would happen if his identity were revealed filled him with intense anxiety….

However, before he could do anything, Mistress Red-Dust's cold voice echoed out, “Who’s sneaking around out there!?”

The surrounding guards’ gazes instantly locked onto Bai Xiaochun, and the killing air that rose up was readily apparent. Even the female guard who was cleaning up the shattered statue looked at him with cold eyes.

Bai Xiaochun really wanted to cry as he stood there, wilting inwardly as everyone looked at him.

“What do I do, what do I do...? I hate you, Giant Ghost King….”

There he stood, unsure of how to respond, heart pounding with fear. Then, Mistress Red-Dust’s cold voice again rang out from within the tent.

“Take him away and execute him!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0714 awe-chapter-715

As soon as the words rang out, the killing air in the area seemed to take corporeal form. Ten beams of light immediately began to shoot in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, making it seem like the army camp itself was like the mouth of some chaotic, primeval beast that wished to devour him.

“We haven’t even talked, and she already wants to kill me!?!?” An intense sensation of deadly crisis immediately swept through Bai Xiaochun, and at the same time, the deva pressure weighing down on his flesh and blood had him wailing inwardly. He had to do something!

“Zimo!” he said loudly, “Uh, your father the Giant Ghost King sent me… I’m… I'm your fiancé, Bai Hao!”

Countless jaws dropped in response to his words. After all, few people knew of the relationship between Mistress Red-Dust and the Giant Ghost King, and therefore, this news was completely stunning to everyone.

“What? The sergeant major is the daughter of his highness the king?!”

“Is… is it true?”

Even as the news began to rock the entire Giant Ghost Legion, an enraged shout erupted from the bright red tent.

“Shut up!”

The tent flap flew open, and Mistress Red-Dust appeared, her expression matchlessly grim, her eyes flashing like lightning as she looked at Bai Xiaochun. It was almost as if she could see right into the center of his being as she sent more deva pressure weighing down onto him.

Hatred burned in her heart over the fact that Bai Hao had revealed her connection to the Giant Ghost King in order to get out of the earlier situation!

Whether it was the ordinary soldiers or Mistress Red-Dust’s personal guards, all of them were staring at Bai Xiaochun with wide eyes and odd expressions. Although none of them had yet fully digested the news about how their sergeant major was connected to the Giant Ghost King, when they saw the look of fury on her face, her personal guards exchanged awkward glances and then backed away. In fact, their expressions even brightened as they prepared to watch the scene unfold.

Bai Xiaochun fought to keep his expression the same. It was hard though, especially considering that, in the moment in which Mistress Red-Dust had thrown open the tent flap, he had seen that inside were seven or eight more statues of himself…. Clearly, Mistress Red-Dust had them at hand to use to vent her anger whenever she felt like it.

From those statues, it was easy to see how deep her hatred ran….

“This Granny Red-Dust really won’t give up on her idea of killing me….” Bai Xiaochun was getting so nervous that beads of sweat covered his forehead, and he was moaning in his heart. He had never intended to intentionally piss off Mistress Red-Dust, but in the moment, he had had no other choice. If he had reacted even a little bit slower, he would have been dragged away and executed. Although it was possible she had only been trying to intimidate him, he hadn’t been confident enough to bet on that option. The only way to save himself was to cause a big scene, which was why he had called upon the name of the Giant Ghost King to put Mistress Red-Dust and her army in place.

“I hate you, Giant Ghost King….” he thought, livid with regret at how things were playing out. He simply couldn’t understand why he was so unlucky to have been screwed over by the Giant Ghost King yet again. Standing right there in front of him was Mistress Red-Dust, clad in a crimson suit of armor, looking very valiant and formidable, and pulsing with a murderous aura.

To say that Mistress Red-Dust was astonishingly beautiful was no exaggeration. Her skin was as fair as snow, and her phoenix-like eyes sparkled as if with starlight. She had an oval face, with a fair neck that one would expect to see on a statue.

The armor she wore accentuated her ample chest and her curvaceous hips, giving her an attractive hourglass figure that perfectly matched her long, slender legs.

In terms of beauty, she and Chen Manyao were very similar. However, Chen Manyao was like a noble orchid growing in a secluded valley, whereas Mistress Red-Dust was like a bright rose bristling with razor-sharp thorns.

If things hadn’t played out the way they had in the necropolis, or if he really was Bai Hao, then to have a fiancée this beautiful, and a deva at that, would have left him feeling very happy. But instead, his heart was pounding with fear, and he felt like the sky was turning dark overhead. To him, Mistress Red-Dust was not a spectacular beauty; she was a deadly wild beast or a fiendish monster.

Even as everyone stole glances at Mistress Red-Dust, reeling in shock about her relationship with the Giant Ghost

King, she stood there, her expression turning grimmer by the moment, her anger surpassed only by the humiliation she felt.

“Did you just say you’re Bai Hao?” she said coldly. Although she did not speak loudly, her voice was filled with the might of a deva, causing the air to distort and a gale force wind to spring up out of nowhere.

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard and then replied in a shaky voice, “Just let me explain, Zimo, I--”

However, before he could complete his sentence, the vicious loathing in Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes grew more intense than ever, and she spoke in a voice as cold as midwinter snow

“You’re the notorious wife-stealing, clan-reviling Bai Hao?” Mistress Red-Dust had heard many stories about Bai Hao, and was especially repulsed by how people called him a wife-stealer.

Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t stand to be wronged in this way. The true wife-stealer was not him, it was Mistress Red-Dust’s father!

“But that was because his highness the king told me to--”

“Shut up! My father is above board and righteous about everything. You’re a debauched, sinister bootlicker who persecutes good and loyal men!” At this point, the truth about who she was had been revealed, so Mistress Red-Dust didn’t see any need to try to keep it secret. Her hatred and loathing growing more intense by the moment, she spoke in an even icier voice than before.

“Don’t even consider talking about matters relating to my father the king. Furthermore, you don’t qualify to be my official Daoist partner. You just stay out of sight in the camp here, and if I see even a single bad report about you, I’ll have you executed immediately!” Mistress Red-Dust had been told that her father had arranged for her to be given in marriage to Bai Hao, and was clearly not happy with the idea. Not giving him another glance, she spun and stalked back into her command tent.

The surrounding guards continued to look over at him with odd expressions on their faces.

“That’s it?” Bai Xiaochun thought, standing there blinking a few times. However, considering what had just happened, he now knew that Mistress Red-Dust had no idea who he really was, which led to him heaving a sigh of relief. Although he was still a bit nervous, there was also something a bit exciting about it all that had him trembling as he stood there.

“She really didn’t recognize me.... And now she’s my fiancée....” He was actually feeling so exhilarated that his throat felt dry. Then he thought back to the scene which had just played out, and the wheels in his head began to turn.

“It actually seems like she was just trying to scare me. Furthermore, she clearly wants to ruin her father’s plans for the marriage.... In that case, she definitely won’t hurt me.... After all, I'm backed by her own father.... However, it's really impossible to say, so I still have to be careful.

“In any case, I definitely can't stick around in the Giant Ghost Legion. It might be exhilarating, but it's too dangerous. The slightest mistake on my part and my poor little life would be out the window.... I really am in the middle of the lion’s den here.” With those thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun turned and hurried away nervously, his heart pounding in his chest the entire time. Things had spun out of control so quickly that he still hadn’t recovered, and was still wracked with nervousness.

Before he got very far, though, a whistling sound could be heard as one of Mistress Red-Dust’s personal guards flew over and blocked his path.

“Majordomo Bai,” she said coldly, “you’re going the wrong way. Follow me to your quarters.” Although her cultivation base wasn't very high, as one of the sergeant major’s personal guards, she still carried herself in a very intimidating fashion.

To see this young woman standing in his way caused Bai Xiaochun to immediately plaster a haughty and angry expression onto his face.

“I'm not going anywhere,” he said coolly. “Since the sergeant major doesn’t approve of me, I’m leaving.”

“It's beyond your control, Majordomo Bai. The sergeant major said that she wants you to stay in the camp, so I advise you not to disobey her orders.” As soon as the words left her mouth, other soul cultivators in the area turned to look at Bai Xiaochun. Clearly, if he disobeyed orders, they would attack him immediately.

“What gall!” Bai Xiaochun growled, his eyes widening into a glare. Of course, inwardly he was shivering in fear at the sensation of so many auras locking down onto him.

Ignoring Bai Xiaochun’s posturing, the young female guard said, “Please don’t make me go hard on you, Majordomo Bai. Follow me!”

Inwardly, he was feeling very nervous. However, he really didn’t want to stay in the camp, and furthermore, he knew that not only was he backed by the Giant Ghost King, he still had the restrictive spell inside of him. Although most of the restrictive spell was gone, it would still be partially effective. On top of all of that, he had come here on orders. Therefore, it was very unlikely that he would face any serious threat to his life.

“She doesn’t know that I’m Bai Xiaochun, but I was so nervous about it earlier that I immediately backed down. The more I back down, the stronger her position will be. In that case, it’s time to stick to my guns! I don't care what they say, I'm leaving!” However, he still didn't feel completely safe about everything, so he secretly took out a transmission jade slip and sent a voice message to the Giant Ghost King.

“Giant Ghost King, your daughter wants to kill me. Is this the marriage you supposedly arranged? I'm about to die!!” Not even waiting for a response, he suddenly looked up, a vicious and fiendish look on his face. Eyes blazing with cruelty, he looked at the red command tent and yelled, “Sergeant Major!! What’s the meaning of this!?”

His voice echoed out like heavenly thunder, ringing out through the entire army camp, attracting the attention of all the soul cultivators.

“If you don’t want to acknowledge the marriage agreement put in place by the Giant Ghost King, then that’s fine with me. But as the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, do you really think you can prevent me from leaving this camp?! If so, then you can't blame me for acting rashly!” To accompany his angry words, he unleashed his Nascent Soul cultivation base, causing a killing air to fill the entire area. At the same time, he kept his eye on the tent to see what reaction would come.

“I’ve dominated the field wherever I went for years now,” he thought. “I created the Win Charm, and received countless love letters. Let’s see how this measly Granny Red-Dust responds to *this* move!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0715 awe-chapter-716

The surrounding soul cultivators were now starting to feel a bit hesitant. After all, Bai Xiaochun’s words just now had revealed a lot more about the overall situation, and all the information was coming too abruptly. First, they had learned that their sergeant major was the daughter of his highness the king. And now they learned that the king had arranged for her to marry someone, only to find that she didn’t accept the arrangement.

For her to refuse was one thing, but it was quite another for her to try to confine Bai Hao to the camp. The source of friction was now very clear.

“Is that really what the sergeant major is trying to do?”

“Seems to me this Bai Hao is actually in the right! If she refuses to accept the arrangement, she should just let him go....”

Such were the types of words that people murmured inwardly. At the same time, the overall hostility toward Bai Xiaochun began to weaken.

Bai Xiaochun was pleased to see that his tactic was working, and began to consider what to say next. On the one hand, he couldn’t go too far in pissing off Mistress Red-Dust, but on the other hand, he couldn’t allow himself to come off too weak. His entire goal was to make a smooth exit from the camp.

However, before he could say anything else, Mistress Red-Dust’s voice erupted from the red command tent, filled with icy cold killing intent.

“I can try.”

Her voice was like a cruel and vicious whip, the strike of which caused all of the soul cultivators in the Giant Ghost Legion to unleash the power of their cultivation bases. Instantly, indescribable pressure descended from all corners onto Bai Xiaochun’s area.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to race. He could feel, not just Mistress Red-Dust’s cultivation base, but the cultivation bases of hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Furthermore, this was Arch-Emperor City, the most important location within the Wildlands. Bai Xiaochun was shaking inwardly, shocked at how unreasonable this Mistress Red-Dust was being. In fact, she and her father seemed completely muleheaded…. All he wanted to do was leave, and she wasn’t going to let him?

“Don’t tell me she's trying to goad me into making a break for it? And then she’ll use that as an excuse to kill me? If things played out that way, then I'm afraid even his highness the king wouldn’t be able to complain.” His eyes widened, and his demeanor on the outside seemed just as stubborn as before. But inside, he was considering that he might need to just give in and spend a bit of time in the army camp. After all, as the saying went… *a wise man knows when to back down when the odds are against him*!

Even as he stood there trying to decide what to do, the Giant Ghost King finally responded to the repeated messages he had been sending. He first offered a few words of comfort, and then said that it was all a big misunderstanding, and that he would talk things over with his daughter.

Having received the response, Bai Xiaochun finally felt a bit more at ease, and decided that he couldn’t let an ounce of fear show.

“It was fairly recently that three heavenly kings and numerous nobles and aristocrats from the imperial city all tried to set a trap for me in the Necromancer Kettle, the purpose being to prevent me from getting the ghost king fruit. I went in alone and captured all of the heirs apparent and chosen, including the Junior Champion King, heir apparent of the War Champion King, Prince Zhou Hong, heir of the Nine Serenities King, and Spirit Advent City’s Princess Xu Shan.... I even did the same to the second prince! I completely dominated the Necromancer Kettle, and nobody could dare say a thing about it!

“Back in his highness the king’s decay period, the deva patriarchs of the Chen, Bai and Cai Clans all tried to chase me down and kill both me and his highness the king. They were joined by a host of Nascent Soul experts, and yet with me to protect the king, he made it safely to the end of his decay period! I escaped every deadly situation I faced in Giant Ghost City, and not even three devas could do anything about me!

“If you don’t like me and want to kill me, Zhou Zimo, then say the word. There’s no need for this disgraceful attempt to humiliate me. And there’s even less need to try to keep me locked up in this camp. I, Bai Hao, am a force to be reckoned with wherever I go. In the big wide world out there, I am like a fish that can become a dragon at any moment. When I flap my wings, I soar to the highest heavens and beyond! Under no circumstances will I allow myself to be the subject of bullying!” His words echoed out like thunder for everyone in the camp to hear, and made it clear that he was the type of person who was not to be trifled with.

Inside of the red command tent, Mistress Red-Dust could be seen frowning. The truth was that she really did want to see Bai Hao dead, but couldn't really do that because of her father. One reason for it all was the fact that the matter had been arranged without her knowledge, and another was the fact that she didn't believe that a lowly person like this deserved to have her father's ear.

However, when it came to the arranged marriage, there was actually a reason why she did want to keep Bai Hao around.

Whether it was in terms of her beauty or her powerful cultivation base, she was one of the blazing suns of the Wildlands, and was the subject of pursuit by countless handsome elites. Of course, she completely ignored the advances of nearly every single one of them. There were only two that she would have a hard time refusing, one being the grand prince, and the other being the Grand Heavenmaster's highest ranking apprentice, Ouyang Song.

They were also devas, and had very high positions. Despite the fact that she didn't really like them, she wasn't in a position to reject them outright. Therefore, if she kept Bai Hao around, she would have a good excuse to avoid them. Plus, if fights broke out between the men, Bai Hao would probably get killed, and she wouldn't have to do anything.

Her original plan had been to simply intimidate him and then force him to stay in the camp. Never could she have imagined that the seemingly weak and timid Bai Hao would be able to ignore all of the pressure weighing down on him and even fight back with biting words. In fact, not only were his words biting, they contained so much truth that there was nothing she could say in response.

Besides, her father the Giant Ghost King had just sent her a message. First, he had offered some consoling words, and then had said some nice things about Bai Hao. He had also discreetly explained the matter about the restrictive spell.

At this point, Mistress Red-Dust sighed. After communicating back and forth with her father quickly, the two of them came to an agreement. Bai Hao had to stay in the army camp, but only for three months. After that, he would be free to go.

During that time, she would guarantee that nothing untoward happened to him.

Mistress Red-Dust's secret hope for that plan was that, during the three months, all of the elites who were pursuing her in the imperial city would come to hear that her father had officially arranged for a Daoist partner for her. Although they would realize that she wasn't happy about the situation, when Bai Hao went back to Giant Ghost City three months later, he would take the hatred of her suitors with him. In the end, she would have the perfect shield to keep them at bay.

Dealing with matters related to his daughter's romantic relationships was a big headache for the Giant Ghost King. After comforting her, he sent some appeasing words to Bai Xiaochun, and then washed his hands of the matter.

When all was said and done, Bai Xiaochun realized that he really didn't have any choice in the matter. After all, of the two people he was dealing with, one was a deva and the other was a demigod.

"Trying to use me as a shield, huh? Like father, like daughter. Scoundrels both!"

With the matter resolved, Mistress Red-Dust reigned in her killing intent, and dissipated the pressure weighing down on the army camp. As for Bai Xiaochun, he sighed and followed the female guard to his quarters.

He was placed in a relatively remote location, which he didn’t mind at all. Once inside, he sat down cross-legged and sighed despondently about the situation.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, am a majestic major general. I even fought Mistress Red-Dust once. But thanks to a freak combination of factors, I ended up in the Wildlands as Mistress Red-Dust’s Daoist partner, and her shield….

“How did things end up like this? And then there’s that Giant Ghost King, the villain. He and Mistress Red-Dust are both scoundrels…. I guess there are just too many bad people in this world, and that pure, honest people like myself are just destined to be at a disadvantage.” Rubbing the bridge of his nose, Bai Xiaochun mused that although he wasn’t their match in terms of cultivation base, when it came to morals, he definitely occupied vastly higher ground.

“Well, at least in terms of my safety, the fact that the restrictive spell is still in place will keep Mistress Red-Dust in check to some extent. She definitely won’t let me get killed. Three months…. Fudge! I’ll just hang in there. It's only three months, right?!” Gritting his teeth, he contemplated the fact that he just wasn’t strong enough. He really needed to get more powerful so that he could just ignore Mistress Red-Dust if he felt like it. That way he could come and go as he pleased.

“I need to conjure some flame!” With that, his eyes began to shine brightly, and he decided that for the next three months, he would keep his head down and avoid provoking anyone. He wouldn't leave the army camp; instead he would conjure a sixteen-colored flame and use it to improve his cultivation base. He needed battle prowess that could put devas in their place.

“Hmph. You just wait until I can handle devas. The first one I’ll cut down to size will be Granny Red-Dust!” With that, he produced a soulhoarding pagoda from his bag of holding. It wasn’t very large, and in fact, contained only a single soul.

It was none other than Bai Hao in soul form. He sat there frowning as he performed auguries regarding the formula for eighteen-colored flame. Sensing that Bai Xiaochun was looking at him, he looked out of the soulhoarding pagoda.

“How is the formula coming along, my little apprentice?” Bai Xiaochun said, a warm smile on his face.

Bai Hao looked quite exhausted. Rising to his feet, he said, “I'm still not quite there, Master. In order to complete the formula for eighteen-colored flame, I have to create something out of nothing. It’s extremely difficult. I think it’s going to take much longer than anything before it. However, I came up with an idea. Perhaps multiple tongues of seventeen-colored flame could be combined and transformed into an eighteen-colored flame…. In fact, I was even thinking that the transformation could occur when they were in the sea of fire state. Then, after the eighteenth color appeared, the sea could be made back into a true flame!”

“Well, no need to be anxious, Hao’er,” Bai Xiaochun replied. “Make sure to keep well-rested. Master is planning to conjure a sixteen-colored flame right now, why don’t you assist me? Plus, I’d love to hear any suggestions you have as you watch.” Bai Xiaochun knew that Bai Hao’s genius in flame conjuring far surpassed his own, although he wasn’t very familiar with sixteen-colored flame. If Bai Xiaochun wanted to be able to conjure sixteen-colored flame with the greatest speed possible, the best way to do that would be to take advantage of Bai Hao’s genius. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun also wondered if the fact that Bai Hao was now a ghost cultivator would be of some help.

Waving his hand, he set some restrictive spells up and produced a large amount of vengeful souls. Then he used the formula for sixteen-colored flame which he had acquired by shaking down the clans in Giant Ghost City. He had studied the formula quite thoroughly, but still had some questions about it that could only be resolved by actually working with the formula.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was about to begin, Bai Hao hesitated and then said, “Master, once you get past fifteen-colored flame, the success rates get much lower. Furthermore, there will be more instabilities; if you’re not very careful, unexpected consequences can occur. Perhaps you should do a bit more research first, Master. Besides, we aren’t exactly in the ideal location to do flame conjuring....”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and confidently said, “Ah, don’t worry about it. This place is perfect. Trust me, Master has a lot of experience in this kind of thing.”

Although Bai Hao still had his reservations, Bai Xiaochun seemed very confident. Perhaps his Master had researched the formula more than he realized. Therefore, Bai Hao suppressed his anxiety and watched closely as Bai Xiaochun began working.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0716 awe-chapter-717

Bai Xiaochun settled his aura and calmed his thoughts. Forgetting about matters pertaining to Mistress Red-Dust, he waved his hands out in front of him to summon a fifteen-colored flame from his bag of holding.

He had originally succeeded at fifteen-colored flame by acquiring some from the three great clans, and then reverse-engineering the formula. Were it not for the fact that he was worried about accidentally revealing his identity, he would already have performed fifteenfold spirit enhancements on everything he owned.

“Well, there’s nothing I can do for now. I’ll just have to settle for fourteenfold enhancements. Otherwise, people might get suspicious, and that would put me in danger.” After mentally reviewing the formula, his eyes flashed, and he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger.

Even more vengeful souls poured out of another soulhoarding pagoda, until there were so many that they produced a tempest.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had set up powerful restrictive spells, and also had the protective concealment provided by his mask. Because of that, not a single fluctuation rolled out into the open to alert anyone to what was happening.

From the outside, Bai Xiaochun’s tent seemed completely still and quiet. In fact, as the guards went about their evening patrol, none of them even looked over at him.

An hour flew by, and Bai Xiaochun was completely focused on the task at hand, making constant adjustments to the fifteen-colored flame, and also carefully controlling the sea of souls around him.

If he made the slightest error in fusing the souls into the flame, it would lead to a failure. Therefore, sweat dripped down his face and neck as he worked, carefully feeding the souls in, and occasionally adding special souls into the mix as they were needed.

Although it was an exhausting process, he gritted his teeth and kept on going.

“I need to get stronger! That’s my only option here in the Wildlands. If my identity gets exposed, at least then I’ll have something to fall back on....” The incident earlier with Mistress Red-Dust had been exhilarating, but had also left him feeling like he had come close to losing his poor little life. Because of that, he knew that he had to do everything possible to make the progress he needed.

There was a stubborn focus within him, something that had first appeared way back in the Spirit Stream Sect when he was concocting medicine. Now that his poor little life was on the line, it was even more fully on display.

Soon his eyes were bloodshot, and a vicious expression could be seen on his face. Off to the side, Bai Hao was getting nervous; this was his first time seeing his Master acting like this.

“Master is really going for broke in this conjuring session....” he thought nervously. Just when he was about to give some advice, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered, and something went wrong with the fifteen-colored flame. It flared brightly, then went dim, and finally, a popping sound could be heard as it transformed into countless motes of light that scattered in all directions.

“Dammit!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Pulling out another fifteen-colored flame, he immediately started over. This time, he spent longer. Eventually, the sun shone brightly outside, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and he was even panting. He had spent the entire night getting the sixteen-colored flame to the point of being thirty percent complete. However, in the final moments, when he thought he could finish the flame in one final burst, he made a mistake, and the fifteen-colored flame did the same thing as before. It flared with light, then vanished.

“How could this be happening?!” Tugging at his hair, he pulled out the formula again and started to study it. As for Bai Hao, he stood off to the side muttering for a bit, until his eyes finally glittered.

“Master, perhaps the problem is that we’re in an army camp, and the overall murderous aura is too strong. Although the murderous aura doesn’t have a specific shape, it can still affect the vengeful souls….”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the explanation, his eyes lit up. It did make sense.

“Well done, apprentice!” he said, slapping his thigh. “You’re absolutely right.”

Spirits lifting, he produced another fifteen-colored flame and was about to start working when Bai Hao continued, “Master, why don’t you rest up a bit first? You don't seem to be in the best shape to conjure flame….”

“Ah, don't worry, Master is in perfect shape at the moment.” Clearly not worried, Bai Xiaochun began to work with the fifteen-colored flame. This time, he took even longer than last time. An entire day went by. By evening of the following day, he was clearly exhausted. His eyes were bright red, and he looked extremely nervous as he stared intently at the vanishing flame in front of him.

“How could this be happening…? Another failure…. I resolved the issues caused by the murderous aura, but something else went wrong! I refuse to believe that I can’t resolve all the issues!” By this point, he had already lost track of the time, or where he was. Gritting his teeth, he produced another fifteen-colored flame and then started conjuring.

Bai Hao was getting very nervous. Something seemed very off about Bai Xiaochun, and he seemed completely unstable. Occasionally he would try to persuade him to stop, and at first he would respond, but eventually just stopped listening. That only made Bai Hao even more nervous.

“This just isn’t the way to conjure sixteen-colored flame! If he keeps going on this way, something unexpected is going to happen….” Bai Hao was extremely apprehensive as he watched his Master work, and he felt a dangerous, pulsing aura building up. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s expression turned fierce as he sent a huge group of vengeful souls into the fifteen-colored flame.

In one fell swoop, he was fifty percent done with his work, and his excitement surged. However, it was in that moment when, all of a sudden, the flame flickered wildly, and a terrifying energy rolled out of it. Another color appeared within the flame, a sixteenth color, but then, just as quickly, that color disappeared, changing it back into fifteen-colored flame.

As this unstable development occurred, the terrifying fluctuations rolling out of the flame became more obvious. Bai Xiaochun was going mad with anticipation, and refused to give up, instead working as hard as he could to get the flame under control.

“Stop, Master!” Bai Hao shrieked, terror written on his face. “The flame is unstable! It's too horrible to contemplate what could happen if you lost control!!”

However, even as the words left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and he lost control over the flame. Instantly, the terrifying fluctuations erupted out with full force.

Fire and blinding light filled the tent. Bai Hao was trembling in despair; even though his soulhoarding pagoda would offer some protection, considering how close he was to the explosion, there was no way he would be able to escape unharmed.

“I'm finished. Finished....” he wailed inwardly. However, even as the flames erupted out, Bai Xiaochun moved with blinding speed. He grabbed Bai Hao, and then a black flash of light could be seen, which was none other than his turtle-wok. Then he dropped to the ground, curled up, and placed the wok over himself and Bai Hao.

It happened with the fluid ease and indescribable speed that only came with a very familiar action....

The instant the turtle-wok thumped down, a deafening boom split the air!

It was late in the night, and most of the soul cultivators in the camp were resting. The sudden sound of the explosion immediately awoke virtually all of them, and yet, before they could react, a massive sea of flames began to roll out.

It was a gigantic mass of fire that was occasionally fifteen-colored and occasionally sixteen-colored. Furthermore, it didn’t fall from the sky, but rather, spread out from Bai Xiaochun’s tent. Viewed from afar, it was possible to see countless tents being reduced to ash, and everything in the area being scorched black….

Nearly half of the camp was affected. As the sea of flames spread out, countless shrieking sounds could be heard as the vengeful souls that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t had time to collect back up were transformed into souls of fire that made the incident even more destructive.

Countless structures were destroyed, and innumerable tents became ash. Anything that wasn’t directly destroyed was instantly engulfed in flame. Furthermore, the fire was unique in that it could also burn armor, causing vast numbers of soul cultivators to throw their armor off, simultaneously screaming in pain.

The entire army was thrown into chaos by the sudden explosion.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“I'm on fire!!”

“Heavens! What’s happening….”

Countless figures emerged into the open, some to fight the fire, others to search for the source of the explosion.

It only took moments for the shouts and cries to reach a deafening level.

Meanwhile, back where Bai Xiaochun’s tent had once stood, a big black wok could be seen on the ground. Slowly, the bottom lifted up by just a crack, and an eye peered out.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then stuck his head out to see everything around him on fire, and the camp in pandemonium. Next to him, Bai Hao also looked out tentatively. He was still shaking from the mere thought of the danger they had just been in.

Clearing his throat guiltily, Bai Xiaochun said, “Don’t worry, like I said, Master has a lot of experience in these kinds of things. Look, not a thing happened to either of us!”

Stunned, and even more nervous than before, Bai Hao replied, “Master, we… just caused a huge disaster….”

Although Bai Xiaochun was actually terrified, he had to put on a good front for his apprentice, so by way of comfort, he said, “It’s fine. In terms of the aftermath to this kind of thing, um… Master… has a lot of experience in that too.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0717 awe-chapter-718

“That’s not ordinary fire, it’s conjured flame!!”

“Dammit! Are we under attack? We're in the imperial city! How could someone be attacking us here!?!?”

“Quick, put out this fire....”

“This is definitely man-made! When I find out who did it, I'm going to chop him to pieces!!”

The entire camp was in utter chaos, with people flying around looking for the source of the explosion. The shouting that filled the air had Bai Xiaochun completely jumpy. In fact, there were already soul cultivators in the area, and as they looked over, they could tell that his tent was the epicenter of the fire.

Bai Hao was also feeling very nervous, and suddenly realized that his Master wasn’t very reliable after all.... With that, his mind began to race as he tried to come up with a solution to the situation.

However, even as the soul cultivators began to approach, and before Bai Hao could come up with any ideas, Bai Xiaochun grabbed Bai Hao’s soulhoarding pagoda and then flew up into the air. His face was a vicious mask of rage as he glanced around and shouted, “Who did it? Dammit! Who’s responsible!! Heaven damn you, whoever you are. I was sleeping and nearly got burned to death. Outrageous!!

“Fellow soldiers, come with me to search for the culprit. Together, we can surely find who was responsible!!” The rage in his voice was clear as his words thundered out. As for the people who had been approaching, they were taken aback, and had no time to ponder the situation before Bai Xiaochun led them around to start searching.

Bai Hao was in his soulhoarding pagoda in soul form. Because of the special properties of his soul body, he could remain formless and invisible to anyone else. Therefore, no one could see him. But if they could have, they would have seen him sitting there dumbfounded, staring blankly as his Master ranted and raved. In fact, if Bai Hao hadn't known the truth, he would have been taken in by the act.

That was what helped Bai Hao to fully understand what his Master meant when he said he had experience….

"This… is definitely not the first time Master has caused a disaster. Nor is it his first time getting out of the situation…. He… really does have a lot of experience…."

However, even as Bai Xiaochun pretended to be incensed, and led the surrounding cultivators in a search, one particular soul cultivator with tattered, burned clothing flew up into the air. He clearly wasn't in very good condition. Pointing a shaking finger at Bai Xiaochun, he howled, "It was *you*, Bai Hao!! I was on patrol here and saw with my own eyes that the explosion started in your tent! I can't believe you're pretending to search for the culprit. *You're* the culprit!!"

Bai Xiaochun's heart began to pound. Just when he was about to offer an explanation, a group of eight more soul cultivators flew over.

"We saw it too! The explosion started in your tent!!"

“How shameless of you, Bai Hao! The people in Giant Ghost City might be a bit scared of you, but nobody here is going to indulge you like that!” As these people spoke, their murderous auras flared to life. As for the other surrounding soul cultivators, they had no reason to distrust their comrades-in-arms, nor any reason to trust Bai Xiaochun, who was an outsider. Soon, many angry glances were locking onto Bai Xiaochun, glances filled with killing intent.

Licking his lips, Bai Xiaochun said, “Listen, everybody, let me explain….”

However, before he could say anything else, the fluctuations of magical techniques erupted out, and a rain of multicolored, magical light shot toward him. Heart pounding, he leapt to the side.

Countless magical techniques slammed into the spot he had just occupied, shattering the ground in all directions. Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling in fear as he attempted to flee, but there were too many soul cultivators in the area. There were already a few hundred within his line of sight, with more behind him.

“I’ve never met anybody as shameless as this guy. Kill him!”

“Who cares if he's a majordomo? This is mutiny, which is a capital offense!”

Rage burning, they gave chase. As for Bai Xiaochun, his heart was racing, and he did his best to evade his opponents. However, despite being in the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, the fact that more and more enemies were showing up by the moment was terrifying.

“Calm down everybody! Don’t do anything you’ll regret. I can explain everything…. There’s nothing that can’t be worked out with a bit of discussion….” The only answer to his words was a hail of magical techniques coming from more than a thousand soul cultivators.

The sea of magical technique was so frightening that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but let out a yelp of shock. Drawing on the power of his fleshly body, he prepared to teleport away. However, before he could, the aura of a spell formation could be sensed rising up in the army camp. Unexpectedly, someone had activated the camp’s defensive spell formation….

“You bunch of bullies! All I did was accidentally cause a fire! Nobody died! Y-y-you people… you’re actually going to use a spell formation to try to attack me!?” As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, these people were all crazy. More and more were beginning to surround him, although none were willing to get too close.

“Zhou Zimo, we had an agreement! Nothing can happen to me for the next three months!!”

Despite being surrounded by a crowd of nearly ten thousand shouting cultivators, he was in the mighty Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, and had shocking fleshly body power. As a result, his voice rose above all of theirs to echo out in all directions.

Of course, Mistress Red-Dust was well aware of what was happening. Up to now, she had been sitting there with clenched teeth, furious with Bai Hao. First, he had seemed weak and timid, only to turn around and act with brazen arrogance. Finally, things had settled down and they made their three-month agreement. But now, only two days into it, he had already caused a huge disaster.

Although the sea of flames had been put down, the damage to the camp was severe. And considering that Mistress Red-Dust was in charge of this army, that meant that she would be responsible for all costs involved in repairing and replacing what had been damaged or destroyed. By this point, Mistress Red-Dust already regretted her decision to keep Bai Xiaochun behind.

However, she couldn’t back out of the agreement easily. Then she heard Bai Xiaochun yelling outside, and her cheeks puffed out in anger. Gritting her teeth, she took a step forward and vanished, reappearing next to Bai Xiaochun.

Ripples spread out in all directions as she appeared, causing the surrounding soul cultivators of the Giant Ghost Legion to suppress their killing intent and clasp hands in greeting.

Bai Xiaochun was still nervous, but he hadn’t started the fire on purpose. It had been an accident! However… worried that Mistress Red-Dust wouldn’t honor the agreement, he quickly said, “We have an agreement, remember! Ai. I told you that if you don't like me you should just send me away, didn’t I? But you had to keep me here.”

He sighed, seemingly on the verge of tears.

His words almost caused Mistress Red-Dust to lose her temper. Taking a deep breath, and her expression profoundly grim, she looked around and said, “You’re all dismissed.”

Despite their raging fury toward Bai Xiaochun, the crowd calmed down and then bowed their heads and left. Soon, everything was quiet, and even the fluctuations of the spell formation vanished.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken by the scene. Considering he had been a major general at the Great Wall, he knew that there were only two ways to get an entire army to back down. One was to use one’s cultivation base, and the other was to have the trust of that army. Clearly, this army trusted Mistress Red-Dust to the ultimate degree.

As everyone filtered away, Mistress Red-Dust turned to look coldly at Bai Xiaochun. It was a look that struck anxiety deep into his heart, so he quickly said, “Um… I really didn’t do it on purpose. It was an accident, nothing more than an acc--”

“Whether it was an accident or not doesn’t matter. I’m warning you… if a second incident like this occurs, I’ll have you executed, agreement or not!” Every word she spoke was like a bolt of deadly lightning striking Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

With that, she paid him no more heed, and turned to leave without another word. Of course, the truth was that she was actually worried that if she looked at him any longer, she might not be able to hold back from killing him.

The fact that Mistress Red-Dust had personally appeared ensured that the chaos quickly settled into silence. However, the icy glances being cast toward Bai Xiaochun from all directions had him feeling very embarrassed.

Most nerve-wracking of all was the thought of what could happen if he continued to try to conjure flame in the camp. If another sea of flame exploded out, then Mistress Red-Dust… would very likely do something very bad to him.

However, not conjuring flame wasn't an option as far as he was concerned. He had already conjured fifty percent of a sixteen-colored flame, and with a bit more work, he was confident he could succeed.

“Ah, whatever…. As long as I don’t provoke Granny Red-Dust, I’ll be fine. I just won’t work in the middle of the camp. I’ll go a bit outside the gates. That way, if there is a sea of flames, it won’t affect the main part of the camp. Granny Red-Dust won’t have any reason to do anything to me because of something like that.” Eyes flashing with determination, he flew out of the camp.

As soon as he was out in the open, he could tell that some divine sense had locked down onto him. According to the agreement, he had to remain with the army for three months, but if he wanted to go out to handle some errand or other, he could. Soon, he was on a low-lying mountain a short distance away.

Once he settled down there, the divine sense slowly faded away, as expected.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0718 awe-chapter-719

Bai Xiaochun looked down at the army camp from his position on the mountain, and sighed. “Too overbearing…. All I'm doing is a bit of flame conjuring….”

Pulling out Bai Hao’s soulhoarding pagoda, he continued, “They forced me to come all the way out here to work. What happened earlier was an accident…. Isn't that right, my apprentice? Master is completely innocent!”

Bai Hao was about to respond, but after a moment, he simply shook his head and smiled wryly. He was beginning to understand this petty Master of his a bit more. However, despite the fact that he seemed very unreliable, Bai Hao couldn’t hold back from trying to offer some more advice.

“Master, why don’t we just take a break for a bit. What happens… what happens if there’s another explosion…?”

Thumping himself on the chest, Bai Xiaochun said, “Don’t worry, your Master has a lot of experience.”

Almost immediately, Bai Hao began to get nervous, and was about to continue to try offer more persuasion when Bai Xiaochun pulled out a fifteen-colored flame and a horde of vengeful souls.

Worried that further interruptions could cause problems, Bai Hao swallowed his words, sighed, and prayed that everything went smoothly.

Before long, three days had passed. Bai Xiaochun was taking things very slowly. Apparently, he was also afraid of causing another explosion, so when even the slightest unexpected variation cropped up, he would stop.

Sticking his chin up, he proudly said, “Look, didn’t I say we’d be fine? After three days, there hasn’t been a single explosion!”

Despite how slowly he was working, he was already seventy percent finished.

By this point, Bai Hao was feeling a bit less nervous, and also very grateful that Bai Xiaochun was listening to him and being more careful.

“Master, when conjuring sixteen-colored flame, the most difficult part is in the end. You need to be a bit more careful from here on out. Absolutely, positively do not do anything impulsive.”

“Yeah, yeah, don't worry.” Bai Xiaochun waved his hand and continued working. A few more days went by, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot. Once again, he seemed bedeviled. No matter what he did, he was still stuck at seventy percent completion, and could tell that if he pushed things ahead prematurely, he would fail.

“Just what exactly am I doing wrong…?” he muttered, tugging at his hair and staring fixedly at the tongue of flame in his palm. Then, the flicker of augury appeared in his eyes. Bai Hao looked on, also unsure of what to do. However, the sight of Bai Xiaochun in this state had him nervously thinking back to the explosion.

Before Bai Hao could contemplate what that meant, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone brightly, and he said, “That must be it! These vengeful souls have too many impurities!”

With that, he started working again. However, Bai Hao couldn’t help but think that the explanation sounded too simple. He was going to give voice to his reservations, but hesitated when he saw how excited Bai Xiaochun was to try out his new idea.

“Ah, whatever. I’ll just let Master give it a shot. Who knows, maybe he’s right.”

Bai Xiaochun was indeed very excited. Considering that the problem had to do with impurities, he immediately thought back to how he had solved such problems when concocting medicine. Eyebrows dancing up and down in anticipation, he waved his hands and started working again.

As he worked, the fifteen-colored flame gobbled up the vengeful souls, and then black tendrils of smoke began to rise up. When it happened with the first soul, it was hardly noticeable, but as more souls poured in, more black smoke appeared, and Bai Hao started to get more nervous.

Although Bai Hao wasn't sure exactly what it meant, he was sure that the black smoke which resulted from burning away impurities could not be a good thing. “Master, wait, there’s too much of this black smoke. Something’s wrong. Give me a minute to figure out what it is….”

“A little bit of smoke like this is nothing. Don’t worry, my little apprentice. Master has a lot of experience in things like this.” Laughing heartily, he continued his work. As he did, more and more black smoke appeared, and Bai Hao continued to get more nervous. In the end, he was actually trembling in fear.

Bai Xiaochun was so focused that he had forgotten himself. The flame gobbled up the souls, and an entire day went by. By evening the next day, it was eighty percent complete!

“So it does work!” Excited, he was just about to continue working when, all of a sudden, signs of instability appeared in the fifteen-colored flame. Terrifying fluctuations began to build up in the flame. However, before they could roll out, Bai Xiaochun decisively closed his hand into a fist, extinguishing the fifteen-colored flame in an instant!

As he did, massive quantities of black smoke escaped through the cracks between his fingers, making a black mushroom cloud that rose up into the air.

“Hmmmphh. Did you see that, my apprentice? Decisive, wouldn’t you say? I told you there wouldn’t be any explosions. The only thing that happened was we saw a bit of smoke, that’s all.” Bai Xiaochun looked over proudly at Bai Hao as the last bit of black smoke swirled away from his hand.

Bai Hao really felt like he was going to fall apart this time. Sighing, he pointed up into the sky.

“Master, we have to get out of here.… Look up there!”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. He had been so focused on the flame conjuring that he hadn’t been paying attention at all to what was happening overhead. After looking up, his eyes went wide, and his face fell.

The black mushroom cloud overhead was growing bigger and bigger. In the blink of an eye, it had turned into something like an enormous thundercloud, floating slowly toward the army camp. It seemed extremely heavy, and was slowly sinking down toward the ground.

“Why does that black cloud look so familiar…? Wait. No way. Black clouds appeared back when I used to concoct medicine. But conjuring flame shouldn’t produce the same result!” By this point, his heart was beginning to pound as he watched the black cloud slowly cover the entire army camp. It continued to sink until it was only about 300 meters above the camp itself. It almost looked like it would make ground fall soon.

The soul cultivators in the camp noticed the cloud, and began to fly up into the air and attack it with magical techniques in the hopes of driving it away.

However, no attacks did anything to the cloud. In fact, it even began to drop down faster. To Bai Xiaochun’s shock, the black cloud… quickly enveloped the entire camp.

Then, coughs began to ring out, along with screams. Clearly, the camp was devolving into pandemonium.

“Heaven damn you, Bai Hao!!”

“*Cough-cough*. What is this… *cough-cough*… Bai Hao! *You* did this!!”

“Heavens, first was that explosion, and now this black cloud. *Cough-cough*… My eyes! My throat! Bai Hao… I’m gonna kill you!”

More and more voices filled the air, creating a deafening cacophony of sound that pushed Bai Xiaochun right to the brink of tears. After all, he truly felt innocent in the matter.

“I did everything to prevent any explosions. I didn’t think that there would be any black smoke. You people can’t blame me for this!” Bai Xiaochun was extremely nervous, so much so that his heart was pounding. As for Bai Hao, he stood off to the side in soul form, also scowling on the verge of tears.

“Master,” he said in a pleading tone, “can we talk this over a bit? How about you change your name? I wanted to bring this up in Giant Ghost City, but now.... You caused the disaster, but they're calling out my name, demanding that I die....”

Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to deal with Bai Hao at the moment. He was staring anxiously at the black cloud, and listening to the increasingly ferocious shouting coming from inside. Soon, people emerged from within and began to fly toward them with murderous auras surging.

“I'm finished. Kaput....” He quickly pulled out a jade slip to send a request for help to the Giant Ghost King. More people were howling in rage and pouring out of the smoke in his direction. Then, Bai Xiaochun gasped as Mistress Red-Dust appeared, shooting out of the smoke like a bright red arrow, right toward him.

Mistress Red-Dust felt like she was about to go crazy. At this point, she was absolutely convinced that her father had sent Bai Hao to her because he was a living disaster!

It hadn’t even been half a month yet, and he had already instigated two mutinies within the camp. Mistress Red-Dust almost couldn’t believe it. In fact, even if she had intentionally set out to do the things that Bai Xiaochun had done, she wouldn’t have been able to....

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Hao?!” she roared, flying toward Bai Xiaochun on the low-lying mountain.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0719 awe-chapter-720

“I didn’t set anything on fire this time!” he blurted as he backed up, heart pounding with fear.

It wasn’t exactly the best explanation, and it immediately led Bai Hao to ponder what calamities would be forthcoming. Unfortunately, he had waited too long before interfering to forestall disaster. The soul cultivators from the Giant Ghost Legion closed in, expressions of rage on their face. As they thought back to what had occurred with the explosion, it only got them angrier and angrier.

Of course, Mistress Red-Dust was the fastest of all. When she extended her hand toward Bai Xiaochun, her will instantly took control of the entire area, surpassing and replacing the will of the heavens. Right in front of her, the image of a huge palm appeared, which immediately began to rumble toward the low-lying mountain.

When it hit, the ground quaked, and the mountain collapsed into pieces. By that point, though, Bai Xiaochun had vanished and reappeared some 3,000 meters away in midair.

“Come on, be reasonable, Zhou Zimo! I didn’t set anything on fire!” Then he anxiously sent another message to the Giant Ghost King.

“Hmm?” Mistress Red-Dust murmured. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had evaded her palm strike was actually quite surprising to her. After all, she was a deva, and had replaced the will of the heavens in the area. She had assumed that Bai Xiaochun would be killed, and yet, contrary to expectations, he evaded her. “Seems father was right. His battle prowess really is beyond ordinary. Incredible actually….”

With a cold snort, she prepared to keep fighting, when all of a sudden, she frowned. Looking down at her bag of holding, she realized that the Giant Ghost King was sending her an angry message.

A grim expression overtook her face as she took out the jade slip and hovered there in midair, communicating with the Giant Ghost King. That sight caused Bai Xiaochun to immediately breathe a sigh of relief.

“I really can't stick around this place. Mistress Red-Dust is completely unreasonable. I mean, come on, I didn’t start any fires this time….” Feeling very unlucky, and at the same time a bit guilty, he furtively studied Mistress Red-Dust.

As for the other soul cultivators from the Giant Ghost Legion, the fact that their sergeant major was taking the lead in dealing with this Bai Hao meant that they couldn’t do anything other than fan out to surround him and lock the area down. Then they stared at him with murderous auras surging, which of course only served to make him more nervous than before.

Mistress Red-Dust was not very pleased at all with how the discussion with her father went. In the end, she crushed the jade slip and looked over at Bai Xiaochun with an icy expression.

Bai Xiaochun waited there nervously to see what she would say.

“If you can survive one attack from me, then you can leave the army camp. And afterward, I don’t ever want to see you again. Ever!” Even as her words continued to echo out, she took a step forward and appeared right in front of Bai Xiaochun. There, she waved her hand through the air, causing a bright red wind to spring up and surround Bai Xiaochun.

That wind contained Mistress Red-Dust’s will, and was a deva-level attack that could easily crush any Nascent Soul cultivator. As soon as the wind appeared, it spun into a huge red tornado that rose up high into the sky.

It was as if Mistress Red-Dust had called upon all of the power of heaven and earth and fused it with her will. It became a deadly attack so powerful that her face appeared within the tornado itself!

The surrounding soul cultivators looked on excitedly, just waiting to see how this Bai Hao would handle a blow backed by the power of a deva.

Bai Xiaochun could instantly sense an incredible pressure weighing down on him. His aura slowed to a crawl, and his face fell. Heart pounding, he tried to back up, but realized that Mistress Red-Dust’s will controlled the entire area, locking it down and making his own teleportation abilities impossible to use.

He could do nothing to escape the red wind, and as such, an intense sensation of deadly crisis built up within him. There was no time to ponder how to deal with the situation. Instead, he roared, “You really think I’m scared of you, Zhou Zimo!?”

Instead of attempting to evade, he took a deep breath and then drew upon the full power of his cultivation base. At the same time, his fleshly body power all erupted out through his right hand in a fist strike!

It was no ordinary fist strike; as soon as it began, his aura shrank down, and a black vortex appeared around his fist. As the vortex spun, Mistress Red-Dust’s will was shattered and sucked into the fist, making everything around Bai Xiaochun a raging, illusory vortex.

Mistress Red-Dust’s face fell as she realized that instead of overestimating her opponent as she had assumed she had, she had actually underestimated him! The power of this fist caused her heart to tremble; clearly this was not a magical technique from the Nascent Soul stage. Furthermore, she could sense a bit of Bai Xiaochun’s will within the fist!

That was a hallmark of the Daoist magic of devas!

In the same moment that Bai Xiaochun’s will appeared, the image of a person appeared behind him, wearing imperial robes and an imperial crown. Almost as soon as that image appeared, it was also sucked into the fist strike. This was the… Undying Emperor’s Fist!

The fist struck out into the red wind, landing directly onto the image of Mistress Red-Dust’s face.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Everything in the area was shaken violently by the resulting boom. Even the populace of Arch-Emperor City was shocked. Furthermore, because it was entirely possible that there might be people in Arch-Emperor City who recognized the Undying Live Forever Technique, Bai Xiaochun used the powers of his mask to alter the image of the black vortex and the shadowy emperor.

What everyone else saw was a domineering fist strike that could shake heaven and earth.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The contact between these two opponents caused heaven to shake and the earth to tremble. The enormous face shattered, and the wild wind began to disperse. As for Bai Xiaochun, despite the fact that he was physically tough, and was fully clad in fourteenfold spirit enhanced items, he was still sent flying backward 3,000 meters. As he did, he coughed up two successive mouthfuls of blood. And yet, he was still at peak battle prowess!

Mistress Red-Dust had not used all of the deva power at her disposal. Furthermore, the subsequent counterattack was far more stunning and spectacular than she could ever have imagined. Despite making a hasty attempt to defend herself, she was still sent staggering backward 300 meters, blood oozing out of her mouth, and her internal organs quivering painfully. After coming to a stop, she looked up in shock at Bai Xiaochun, her face ashen.

In her entire life, there had only ever been two people who were not devas that could fight her in this way. One was Bai Xiaochun, and the other was this Bai Hao. Furthermore, based on what she remembered, there was no way that Bai Xiaochun could pull off a fist strike like this. Despite the fact that a twinge of suspicion appeared in her heart, and she even knew that Bai Xiaochun had a mask of disguise, she still didn’t believe them to be the same person, the main reason being the fact that this Bai Hao had been sent to her by her father.

She refused to believe that Bai Xiaochun could fool the divine sense of a demigod. Therefore, the fact that the Giant Ghost King had approved of this Bai Hao made everything clear. As for the tiny suspicion that had just been born, she quickly buried it.

“I beat Granny Red-Dust half to death last time we fought,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “and I'm a lot stronger now than I was then. How could I possibly be afraid of her now? Hmph. Maybe I can’t beat her, but I'm definitely not going to let her stomp me like she did last time!! However, based on the expression on her face, it’s possible she might be suspicious of my identity now....” At the moment, his cultivation base was quivering a bit. He had just attacked with ninety percent of the power of the fist strike, and had held ten percent in reserve. The truth was that he wasn’t quite capable of unleashing the entire, fully-powered version at the moment.

In this brief interchange with Mistress Red-Dust, he could already tell how much more powerful he was than before. In their previous fight in the necropolis, it had only been because of Mistress Red-Dust being weakened by the curse that he made it out alive. He had sacrificed his clones and used every technique at his disposal before managing to flee. But now… things were different!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he realized that Mistress Red-Dust wasn’t actually as terrifying as he had taken her to be. There he hovered in midair, looking at her, not saying a word.

Meanwhile, all of the surrounding soldiers of the Giant Ghost Legion were looking on in complete shock. As their eyes came to rest on Bai Xiaochun, their minds filled with unprecedented levels of astonishment.

“A Nascent Soul cultivator who can fight a deva!?!?”

“Heavens! Was I seeing things just now? This Bai Hao… is so strong! I heard the rumor that he kidnapped all of the other chosen in the Necromancer Kettle, but I thought that was only because he had the help of the Giant Ghost King. Now I can see how shocking he really is!”

“That fist strike is definitely his trump card….”

As everyone reeled in shock, something else happened in the imperial city high in the air above. Somewhere in the imperial palace, in Heavenmaster Hall, the Grand Heavenmaster suddenly opened his eyes and looked out in the direction of the Giant Ghost Legion. Soon, his vision pierced through all obstacles to come to rest on Bai Xiaochun.

“Was that… the Hell-Emperor Fist?” The Grand Heavenmaster was clearly moved. Based on what he could tell, the fist strike which had been unleashed was definitely very similar to the legendary Hell-Emperor Fist.

“The Hell-Emperor Fist is part of the legacy of the Hell-Emperor…. Only someone approved by the Hell-Emperor would be able to use it!” When it came to the legendary Hell-Emperor, even the Grand Heavenmaster, someone who was very near to the peak of the Demigod Realm, someone who controlled the Son of Heaven and issued commands to all creation, was still shaken and fearful.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0720 awe-chapter-721

Back outside of Arch-Emperor City, right next to where the Giant Ghost Legion was garrisoned, Mistress Red-Dust was staring at Bai Xiaochun, still radiating the pressure of a deva. Her will continued to transform the heaven and earth that surrounded Bai Xiaochun, as if a mere thought on her part could cause everything to tremble violently.

Most Nascent Soul cultivators would collapse under such pressure. As for Bai Xiaochun, it hadn’t bothered him at first, but as the pressure built up, it reached the point where he realized he couldn’t back down at all, otherwise he would be crushed.

“That fist strike of mine is pretty frightening. What a pity I'm only in the eighth stratum of the Tempered Bones level. If I could reach the ninth stratum, it would be twice as powerful. At that point, I would be able to make her cough up blood with it. That will be my true trump card! If I could reach the ninth stratum of the Powered Bones level, it would be three times as powerful!”

With such thoughts on his mind, he felt more courageous than ever, and glared back unblinking at Mistress Red-Dust.

Silence reigned in the area.

The powerful soul cultivators of the Giant Ghost Legion were completely shocked, and almost couldn’t believe what they had witnessed. It was with very mixed feelings that they continued to watch Bai Xiaochun.

The fist strike he had unleashed was truly astonishing. The fact that someone with a Nascent Soul cultivation base could fight with a deva was unprecedented. Although he hadn’t been able to outshine her, he was clearly in the position of being able to completely dominate ordinary Nascent Soul experts.

Beyond that, after delivering the blow, he simply hovered there in the air, seemingly ready to keep fighting at the same level as before. Domineering veins of steel seemed to throb within him, as well as a battle spirit that caused the entire crowd to instantly admire him.

They all lived in a world where power was respected, and a powerful expert like Bai Xiaochun would definitely earn that respect no matter where he went.

After seeing how the look in the eyes of the audience was changing, Bai Xiaochun’s spirit soared even further, and he continued to glare straight at Mistress Red-Dust.

“Staring contest, huh? Back when I was in Core Formation, nobody was my match. Now that I'm even more powerful than before, there’s no way you can intimidate me that way!” As such thoughts raced through his head, his impressive demeanor grew even more prominent.

After a long moment passed, Mistress Red-Dust took a deep breath and looked away. She had said earlier that if he could survive a single attack, he could leave. That had been her agreement with the Giant Ghost King, and she had to stick to her word.

“Don't ever let me see your face again!” A profound glint passed through her eyes as she turned and vanished back into the army camp. The rest of the soul cultivators exchanged glances and then quietly followed her. Before long, everyone was back in the camp, and Bai Xiaochun was left by himself outside.

After watching Mistress Red-Dust leave, he wiped the sweat from his brow and heaved a long sigh. Using that fist strike at ninety percent had completely drained him. Although he could have squeezed a bit more power out with his cultivation base, he knew that there were plenty of powerful experts in the vicinity of Arch-Emperor City, and not all of them would be heroes. There were some things he would be powerless to defend himself against, and therefore, he didn’t want to reveal the full extent of his abilities.

However, fighting like that also limited him in many ways. Now that Mistress Red-Dust was actually leaving, he finally breathed a sigh of relief. Simply too many preposterous things had occurred during this trip to Arch-Emperor City.

“How did it all end up like this…?” he thought bitterly. Thankfully, he was now free from the Giant Ghost Legion, which was a good thing as far as he was concerned. Shaking his head, he turned to leave.

However, the world was a big place, and Bai Xiaochun was immediately unsure of exactly where he should go.

“Plus, my cultivation base isn’t very high. Otherwise, I could simply cross the Wildlands on my own and get back to the River-Defying Sect.” He looked nervously at Arch-Emperor City off in the distance, and then in the direction of Giant Ghost City. After some thought, he produced a transmission jade slip and contacted the Giant Ghost King.

“Your Highness, Arch-Emperor City is way too dangerous. What do you say we just forget about the whole marriage thing? Um… could you send someone to get me? I want to get back to Giant Ghost City, and you, sir….”

As for the Giant Ghost King, he was very annoyed by everything that had occurred. Never could he have guessed that sending Bai Hao to the Giant Ghost Legion would turn out like this. It was supposed to have been a wonderful event, and yet, nothing had turned out as expected.

Whether it was the fact that his daughter refused to cooperate, or the disasters which had occurred, it all had him stamping his feet in frustration. Then he saw another message come in from Bai Xiaochun, and felt an even bigger headache coming on.

Glaring at the transmission jade slip, he sent a reply. “Bai Hao, the marriage agreement is already official. We can't go back now. You need to go over and apologize to Zimo immediately. Just explain everything, and then stay close to her afterward.”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun got the response, he simply gave up trying to be diplomatic. He staunchly refused, and then once again suggested that he return to Giant Ghost City. That got the Giant Ghost King very pissed off.

“No, you can't come back to Giant Ghost City, not unless it's as husband and wife! Go and apologize to Zimo. Beg for her forgiveness if you have to! What, you can’t even handle a single woman? I'm done helping out, so don’t bother me about this anymore!” With that, he severed the connection. When Bai Xiaochun immediately tried to reestablish communication, the Giant Ghost King simply ignored the jade slip and pretended he hadn’t noticed the new message.

“This father and daughter are both scoundrels! Rotten to the core!” Bai Xiaochun was feeling very depressed, and definitely had no desire to go see Mistress Red-Dust. Furthermore, she had said the same about him.

“The world is such a big place. Could it really be that there is no safe harbor for Bai Xiaochun in it?” Considering that he had no giant ghost battleship, nor any way to use the teleportation portal, that meant that he had to give up any hope of getting back to Giant Ghost City.

Sighing, he looked again at Arch-Emperor City off in the distance. Although he really didn’t want to go there, at the moment he didn’t seem to have any other choice. Besides, evening was falling, and if he delayed, it was possible he could end up stuck outside for the night.

“I remember back when I shook down the three great clans, one of the things I got was the deed to a shop in Arch-Emperor City….” Rubbing the bridge of his nose, he patted his bag of holding to produce a jade slip. Sure enough, branded inside the slip was the official deed to a place in the city. At this point, his mood started to brighten.

“Ah, whatever. I’ll just hole up in that shop for a while and make sure not to cause any trouble. I’ll focus on cultivation, and then figure a way to get myself out of the Wildlands.” Shaking his head, he headed toward Arch-Emperor City.

However, it was in that very moment that Bai Hao suddenly popped out of his soulhoarding pagoda in the bag of holding, where he had gone to hide after events started to heat up. At the moment, he was looking at his Master with undisguised admiration, and he even clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Apprentice misunderstood you earlier, Master. Just now, I was dazzled by your techniques. Amazing, simply amazing!”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, a bit taken aback. Despite thinking for a moment, he couldn’t imagine what mistake his apprentice might have made to suddenly speak in such a way.

“There’s no need to be humble, Master. Apprentice understands. You caused those two disasters on purpose, all to get the sergeant major of the Giant Ghost Legion to kick us out of the army camp!” The reverent admiration on Bai Hao’s face was clear. Although he felt his Master’s actions to have been a bit crude, he also found them truly thought-provoking.

“Uhh....” Bai Xiaochun said, blinking a few times. Clearly, Bai Hao didn’t truly understand Bai Xiaochun that much. Contrary to everything Bai Hao had just said, it was only a freak combination of factors that led to the current outcome. However, Bai Xiaochun had to admit that everything had played out well, and after looking up in thought for a moment, he cleared his throat, swished his sleeve, and stuck his chin up.

“Hahaha! So even you noticed. Not bad. Not bad at all, my little apprentice. Although your powers of understanding are only middling at best, perhaps if you pay close attention going forward, you can make some progress. After all, Master’s all-encompassing abilities are such that a single step forward is the same as ten thousand. Nothing in heaven and earth can compare to me!”

Bai Xiaochun’s high and mighty pride was actually somewhat self-defeating. When Bai Hao saw it, he suddenly began to question whether or not his previous assessment had been correct.

Continuing to boast, Bai Xiaochun headed into Arch-Emperor City. The city was enormous, and well-guarded at every corner and intersection. He even had to undergo a formal interview before being allowed in the gates, and pay a tax of soul medicine. Thankfully, he had a lot of soul medicine in his bag of holding. By the time he got into the city, it was evening, and yet, the city was just as packed and lively as any other time of the day.

Once inside, he pulled out the jade slip with the deed in it, and used it to find his way through the winding streets of the city. The sights and sounds along the way left him shocked. Arch-Emperor City was a very rich place. The streets were paved with green jade, and there even seemed to be a bit of spiritual energy about….

Shops of all types imaginable lined the streets, offering everything from vengeful souls to magical items to Heavenspan River water.

Among the crowds on the street, Bai Xiaochun saw countless powerful experts, as well as savage giants, who were required to shrink down to a smaller size when in the city.

Most eye-opening of all to him was how many of the structures in Arch-Emperor City glowed with bright, magical light. Because of that, even during the dark of night, the city shone, bright and dazzling.

It took two hours for him to locate the shop, by which time night had truly fallen. There, in a relatively out-of-the-way part of the city, he found the location of the shop in the deed.

It was a spirit enhancement shop.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0721 awe-chapter-722

Not counting the imperial palace, Arch-Emperor City consisted of ninety-seven subdistricts which were referred to as boroughs. The central district of the city occupied about ten percent of the city as a whole, and the north district was the largest, occupying roughly twenty percent.

Bai Xiaochun’s spirit enhancement shop was located on the edge of Borough 89. Although it couldn’t be considered a very fancy shop, considering that it was located in Arch-Emperor City, it was fundamentally extraordinary.

However, it took Bai Xiaochun a long time to find it. It was already late into the night, and yet the shops on the street were all brightly lit, with customers going in and out constantly.

After finally locating the shop, Bai Xiaochun was depressed to find that it was actually relatively small. The storefront was only about nine meters wide, whereas most of the other storefronts on the street were at least fifteen meters wide.

There was a sign on the door that had three simple words on it: *Spirit Enhancement Shop*.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit stunned by the simplistic wording and the worn-out nature of the sign. Inside, the shop was narrow, but stretched back relatively far from the street. There also appeared to be a courtyard in the back. Unfortunately, no matter which way one examined the shop, it was obviously a lot smaller than the others in the area.

The interior was lit with lamps, but they weren’t very bright, ensuring that it didn’t really stand out to the crowds of passersby.

The only good thing that Bai Xiaochun noticed was that there were actually customers in the shop. One of them was a young man who appeared to be panting in anger. Before Bai Xiaochun had even walked all the way inside, the young man erupted in anger.

“I can’t believe you actually ruined my Trimoon Streamcloud Pearl!! Dammit, all I asked you to do was perform a twofold spirit enhancement! Twofold, that’s all! Y-y-you....” The young man was speaking so loudly that even people outside of the shop could hear him, and soon, some of the passersby were whispering about what was going on.

“He must be new here, otherwise he would never have picked this place to get spirit enhancements.”

“Exactly. This spirit enhancement shop produces nothing more than trash. The true miracle is that it's still in business.”

Upon hearing the talk around him, Bai Xiaochun frowned. Then he watched as the young man stormed out of the shop, cursing it well and good before moping off dejectedly. Bai Xiaochun sighed. From what he could tell, other than its value as a place to rest his head, it seemed relatively worthless.

“Ah, whatever. All I wanted was a place to hole up for bit anyway.” Shaking his head, he walked further into the shop. Once inside, he saw the clerk, who was leaning up against the counter looking bored to death. The shelves on the wall were mostly empty. As for the items that did occupy them, Bai Xiaochun could tell that they would be useful for performing threefold or perhaps fourfold spirit enhancements.

The clerk looked over at Bai Xiaochun and yawned, then ignored him. Bai Xiaochun looked around again and sighed. Then he walked up to the counter and put the deed jade slip down onto it.

The clerk seemed surprised, then suspicious. “You want that jade slip enhanced? Alright, let me explain how things work. Success or failure don’t matter. You pay up front, and if the result is a failure, I won’t take any responsibility.”

Then he picked up the jade slip and looked at it. At that point, his eyes went wide.

“You’re the owner?!” he blurted, shooting to his feet. After examining Bai Xiaochun, he sat back down.

Fairly certain that he had come to the right place, Bai Xiaochun replied, “I believe this is my shop.”

“Whatever. Since you’re here, how about you pay me my salary? 3,000 portions of soul medicine for this year, and 3,000 for next year, up front. If you don’t pay up, I'm not moving a muscle!” With that, he sat there looking proudly at Bai Xiaochun. This clerk wasn't very good at performing spirit enhancements, but he was very familiar with Arch-Emperor City, and how to run the shop. Therefore, as far as he was concerned, there was no way this owner could do without him.

“Salary?” Bai Xiaochun said, stunned. With that, he asked a few more questions about the shop. Soon, he came to understand that the shop hadn’t always been the way it was now. After Bai Xiaochun acquired ownership, all of the old staff had been dismissed by the clan who had previously owned it. The only person left behind to manage things was this clerk.

The clerk’s spirit enhancement skills were average at best, and because of that, the shop had slowly been in decline. As of now, it was actually notorious within the city, and virtually no one would patronize it. The only people who entered its doors were travelers who the clerk would con out of a bit of spirit medicine, and who would never again return.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t quite sure what to say. However, from the way the clerk was sitting there, he seemed like he was prepared to cause quite a scene if he didn't get his salary. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun patted his bag of holding to produce 3,000 portions of soul medicine, which he tossed over to the man.

“Alright, get out of here!”

“You’re kicking me out?” the clerk said, stunned. Not looking very pleased, he took his soul medicine, flicked his sleeve, and left. “It won't even take a month before that guy is begging to have me back. There are a lot of spirit enhancement shops in Arch-Emperor City, and all of them are always squabbling and competing. He’ll have to pay an arm and a leg to get a real necromancer to come over and perform spirit enhancements.” Chuckling coldly, he hurried away.

After the clerk left, Bai Xiaochun looked around for a bit before closing the front door and placing a restrictive spell on it. Then he straightened up the shop, as well as the courtyard and the small residence attached to it. Several hours later, deep in the night, he finally sat down in the courtyard and looked around, sighing.

“This can't compare at all to my mansion back in Giant Ghost City!” Shaking his head, he contemplated how much he missed Giant Ghost City. He also regretted how conscientiously he had handed over Chen Manyao. Hadn’t he done enough at that point?

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy at all with the shop, but Bai Hao had the opposite reaction. As a ghost cultivator with special soul body abilities, he was actually very pleased with everything he saw. After looking around, he sat down next to Bai Xiaochun and excitedly said, “Master, this place is great. Since we can’t get back to Giant Ghost City any time soon, why don't we settle down here? The spiritual power in the area is very beneficial to me.”

Even as he spoke, he changed his appearance to look like a middle-aged man.

“You think this spiritual energy is good?” Bai Xiaochun responded dully. “One of these days Master is going to take you to a place where the spiritual energy is exponentially better than here. You just wait.”

“Don’t feel down, Master. This place isn’t bad at all. Why don’t you focus on your cultivation, and let me handle the day-to-day affairs of the shop?” Bai Hao lived in the soulhoarding pagoda in Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding, and was a ghost cultivator with special soul body powers. Furthermore, he was protected by the powers of Bai Xiaochun’s mask. Because of that, he wasn't worried about anyone figuring out who he really was. Besides, before his death, he had been a mere Foundation Establishment cultivator, and the furthest he had ever been away from his clan was the Jungle of Lost Souls, where he had died.

The idea of running a shop in Arch-Emperor City was extremely exciting to him.

Bai Xiaochun could see how enthusiastic Bai Hao was about the matter, and that actually improved his mood a bit. Looking at Bai Hao thoughtfully for a moment, it was easy to tell that he already felt a bit at home.

“You know what, you’re right. You had a hard lot in life, my apprentice. Plus, because I’m still using your identity, after you came back as a ghost cultivator, you haven’t been able to interact with any other living people. That’s really not fair to you.” With that, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, sending some of the power of his mask over onto Bai Hao.

“Master…?” Bai Hao said, looking surprised.

“From now on, just pretend that you’re my soul slave. With my skill in spirit enhancement, I can bring this shop back from the dead with the flip of my hand.” Many necromancers in the Wildlands had what they called soul slaves, which were usually unable to do much more than perform very simple tasks.

To have Bai Hao pretend to be a soul slave would forestall many suspicions about who exactly he was. Plus, by using his ghost cultivator ability to change his appearance, it would be highly unlikely that anyone would ever be able to figure out who he was.

Bai Hao was getting even more excited. Clasping hands, he bowed deeply to his Master.

With that, Master and apprentice settled down in the shop. A few days went by before the doors of the shop opened. Although nothing about the shop looked very different, the spirit enhancer who operated it was as different from the previous one as heaven was from the earth.

However, the name of the shop was definitely not appropriate, and even after being open for about half a month, it was obvious that all the other shops on the street were very busy, but this one wasn’t.

When Bai Xiaochun realized that, and thought back to the grand words he had spoken to Bai Hao, he started feeling antsy. After some thought, he gave some new instructions to Bai Hao.

“Apprentice, after some thinking, I’ve decided that the reason people aren’t coming to the shop is that the name isn’t attractive enough. Therefore, we're going to change names. From now on, we're… *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven*!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0722 awe-chapter-723

Bai Hao hesitated for a moment. The name seemed a bit bombastic, after all. However, he could see how determined Bai Xiaochun was about it, and that there was really no choice other than to agree. Soon, the shop's sign was replaced.

The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven!

The new sign instantly caused a big commotion in the other shops in the area. Furthermore, quizzical expressions could be seen on the faces of all the passersby.

After changing the sign, Bai Xiaochun temporarily stopped his work on sixteen-colored flame and instead sat eagerly behind the counter, eyes glued to the front door as he waited for some customers.

Bai Hao stood to the side, equally excited. Although he felt that the new name was a bit flamboyant, he was just as eager to get new customers as Bai Xiaochun was.

But after two hours passed, not a single one of the hundreds of passersby stepped into the door. In fact, a lot of people were even pointing at the sign and laughing.

“Number one under heaven? Too pretentious!”

“I know this spirit enhancement shop. Their reputation went down the drain a long time ago. They ruined magical items belonging to quite a few customers. They'll definitely be going out of business soon. What do they think, that changing the name will fool people or something?”

“Is that supposed to be some kind of a joke? We cultivators want reliability!”

Bai Xiaochun could hear many of the comments, and soon, his eagerness began to turn to rage. However, he took a deep breath and told himself that he just needed to have a little patience. A day passed. Then another. Eventually, seven days later, he couldn’t take it any longer.

During that week, not a single person had set foot into the store. At first, the change in sign had caused a bit of a stir on the street, but eventually, even the mocking comments ceased....

Nobody seemed interested in the shop at all, which got Bai Xiaochun depressed, but at the same time, defiant.

“I refuse to believe this! I'm a genius who causes a big scene wherever I go. How could a crappy little store like this be such a problem!?” With that, he called over Bai Hao, who stood there with a bitter smile on his face as he accepted some new instructions.

“Alright, my apprentice, I’ve thought it through. You see, our new sign isn’t enough to do the trick. Let’s put some auspicious couplets on either side of the door to show our proud and unyielding character!

“I’ve already thought of what to put on the couplets. It's best to be simple and direct. On one side put *One Spirit Enhancement, 1,000 Portions Of Spirit Medicine*. On the other side put *Must Enter Shop With Minimum Of 10,000 Portions Of Spirit Medicine*!” With that, he swished his sleeve grandly.

Shaken by what he had just heard, Bai Hao asked, “Um… what about the couplet on top?”

“*Want Enhancements? Come in. Don’t Want Them? Leave!*”

Bai Hao was now right in that spot between laughter and tears, but as long as his Master was happy, he was happy too. Before long, the couplets were written and hung up around the door. Yet again, a bit of a commotion resulted. All of the surrounding shops, and the passersby as well, were stunned at how crazy this shop was acting.

“1,000 for a single enhancement? Is that the set price, or the minimum? Other shops only charge a few hundred at most. A minimum price of 1,000 is the kind of price that only a celestial necromancer would charge.”

“Crazy talk! What kind of a scam do they think they’re running?”

“It’s kind of funny actually....”

Even as Bai Xiaochun waited excitedly, Bai Hao's eyes glittered, and he suddenly leaned over and whispered something into his ear. Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then slapped his thigh and agreed.

Was Bai Xiaochun’s original method effective? Or had word just spread? No one could tell. In any case, the day after the couplets were hung on the door, *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven* got its first customer.

He was a burly savage giant, who despite having shrunk his overall size, was still fully three meters tall. Even just stepping into the shop, he caused the ground to tremble around him.

Bai Hao was just about to hurry over and attend to him when the man waved his hand, causing a huge battle-axe to slam down onto the ground. Although it was relatively ordinary in construction, it had six silver designs on its surface, making it very eye-catching.

“That’s a really crazy sign you have out there,” the burly man said in a booming voice that immediately attracted some attention from outside. People even began to gather to see what was happening. “My battle-axe here already has a sixfold spirit enhancement. Now I want a seventh, and I’m not willing to pay 1,000. I’ll pay 3,000! But if you ruin my battle-axe, then I’ll tear your shop down!”

Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and proudly walked out from behind the counter to examine the axe. “If you have the proper materials, I’ll do it for 3,000. Without materials, it will be 10,000!”

The burly man’s eyes went wide, and then a ruthless smile broke out on his ferocious face.

“Fine. 10,000 it is. I’ll wait here for the finished product.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded, then made a grasping motion, which caused the axe to fly over into his hand. Then, he walked into the back room. By this point, quite a crowd had built up outside, and when they heard 10,000 portions of spirit medicine mentioned, it caused a big stir.

“10,000 for a spirit enhancement…? You never see prices like that from small shops like this! Is that burly guy a shill or something? Doubtful. It seems too obvious.”

“Whether he’s a shill or not doesn’t matter. Let’s just see if the spirit enhancement works!”

“I never could have guessed that this shop would accept a job for a sevenfold spirit enhancement. If the enhancement fails, the shop’s reputation will definitely be in ruins.”

“Does this shop even have a reputation to begin with? If they can’t do spirit enhancements, then they’ll definitely be out of business soon....”

People stood there discussing the matter for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, until powerful fluctuations began to roll out from the shop’s back room. Then, eyes went wide as Bai Xiaochun walked out, holding the battle-axe in his hand. Clearly, it had seven silver designs on its surface!

“It actually worked!”

“Heavens! That’s a sevenfold spirit enhancement! And he did it in the time it takes an incense stick to burn!!”

Even as the crowd reeled in disbelief, Bai Xiaochun tossed the axe over to the burly savage. Then he clasped his hands behind his back and stood there with an arrogant, enigmatic expression on his face.

As for the burly savage, he trembled with excitement as he clasped his battle-axe in hand and looked it up and down. He seemed completely stunned and incredulous.

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem very pleased, and even cleared his throat.

When the burly man heard that, he reacted immediately. Casing a reverent glance at Bai Xiaochun, he suddenly shouted, “A god! Simply incredible! This is the most shocking spirit enhancement I've ever seen in my entire life! From six to sevenfold. And it happened in an instant! As of this moment, Grandmaster Bai, I am fully convinced. *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven* definitely lives up to its name! It really is *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven!!*

“Look, everybody! My battle-axe’s sevenfold spirit enhancement is already finished! This place is second-to-none! I'm definitely coming back here in the future!”

Everyone could hear him very clearly. Within moments, strange, amused expressions appeared on the faces of the people in the crowd. This burly man’s acting skills were terrible, and seemed like an obvious advertisement. He even happened to know the spirit enhancer was surnamed Bai, even though they had supposedly never met before….

Bai Hao stood off to the side, smiling wryly. This burly man was most certainly a shill. Bai Hao had come up with this idea, and after getting his Master’s approval, had gone to find an appropriate person to hire. However, the person who had come up with the script was Bai Xiaochun, although Bai Hao had edited it slightly to make it slightly less exaggerated.

Bai Hao had originally suggested that the burly man act a bit more reserved, and not make things so obvious. But now… things were extremely obvious.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't pleased, and was even frowning. However, the reason for his displeasure was that the burly man wasn’t taking things far enough. His original plan had been for the man to first sing the praises of the spirit enhancer, then the shop itself, and then the spirit enhanced item. The entire process was supposed to last for the time it takes an incense stick to burn.

Despite his displeasure, he couldn't say anything about it under the circumstances. He could only stand there and look up into the sky with a profound and reverent look on his face.

The burly man cleared his throat loudly and then paid the soul medicine he owed, then left looking very happy. The people in the crowd exchanged awkward glances, and yet, after a moment passed, someone gritted his teeth and walked into the shop.

The burly man had been a shill, and an obvious one at that. However, the sevenfold spirit enhancement had worked, which was enough for most soul cultivators.

The shop had six customers that day, and only one failure among those six. However, the fact that there had been five successes cause quite a stir.

A success rate like that was astonishing, and therefore, on the second day, there were twenty customers. And things only went on from there. For the following half a month, *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven* caused an enormous commotion in the area.

Word began to spread. Soon, almost everyone in Borough 89 had heard of it. More and more customers came to the shop, and although not every single spirit enhancement succeeded, the success rate of over sixty percent was a wonderful thing to the local soul cultivators. The following month, Bai Xiaochun became so busy that he and Bai Hao decided to make some new rules. For one thing, there was a limit of ten orders per day.

Another thing had to do with vengeful souls. Bai Xiaochun required a lot of vengeful souls to work on his flame conjuring, and although he had a good stockpile, it was still limited. If he wasn't careful, he would run out eventually.

Therefore, the shop opened up another line of business: selling soul medicine. And of course, the currency used to buy them was vengeful souls. To Wildlanders, soul medicine was an essential part of cultivation, and was one of the most common types of business to get into.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he could produce mid-grade and even high-grade soul medicine. That immediately made his shop extremely competitive in the marketplace. After all, among all of the soul medicine shops in Borough 89, only a few offered high-grade soul medicine. But Bai Xiaochun’s shop offered as much as people could purchase, as long as they had enough souls to pay for it.

As a result, Bai Xiaochun’s shop was soon becoming famous in all of the boroughs.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0723 awe-chapter-724

Business got better and better, to the point where people would line up outside the shop before the doors opened in the morning. Roughly half would come for the spirit enhancements, the other half to purchase high-grade soul medicine.

The benefits of high-grade soul medicine to soul cultivators was almost impossible to put into words. Furthermore, *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven* had all sorts of soul medicines available, to the point where most people were shocked by the variety in stock.

The shop’s popularity grew on a daily basis. Within two months, it had become a top-tier name in Borough 89, and was even the subject of conversation in some of the surrounding boroughs.

Although profits didn’t literally increase every day, it was close. As far as the intake of vengeful souls was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was extremely pleased. As long as things kept going on the way they were, he would be completely set in terms of the souls he needed to work on flame conjuring.

Bai Hao was also very pleased with everything. Although maintaining his role as Bai Xiaochun’s soul slave meant he had to pretend to be stiff and rigid around people, he was still very happy. Whether it was in life or in death, he had almost always been on his own, and had thirsted to interact with people like he was now.

Now that the shop was so popular, he was dealing with lots of customers every day. Although that only involved a bit of basic communication, it was still wonderful as far as he was concerned.

Of course, for the shop to suddenly be incredibly popular incited a bit of jealousy among other nearby shops. Such shops were feeling the pressure, and some of them even tried to cause problems.

However, Bai Hao managed to smooth things out with most of them. He was the type of person who was willing to back down in certain areas as long as business wasn’t affected too negatively.

At first, Bai Xiaochun didn't even notice what was happening. However, as more people came trying to cause trouble, he started to get irritated. That was especially true considering his own cultivation base and status.

“I'm a mighty major general from the Great Wall, and the majordomo of Giant Ghost City. Plus, the Giant Ghost Legion’s sergeant major is my Daoist partner. Fudge! I kidnapped the Giant Ghost King, as well as over a hundred noble and aristocratic chosen in the Necromancer Kettle. I'm just trying to run an honest business here, and I never went around bullying anybody! And now these shrimps dare to come try to push me around?!”

That evening when he closed up shop, he snorted and said to Bai Hao, “Apprentice, starting tomorrow, if anybody comes looking for trouble, you call me, and I’ll take care of them.”

He had been paying attention over the past few days, and had confirmed that most of the people who came to stir up trouble were Nascent Soul and Core Formation cultivators. Because of that, Bai Xiaochun wasn't worried about the situation at all.

Bai Hao could only smile wryly at his Master’s displeasure. However, after thinking about the matter for a bit, he decided to offer some advice.

“Master, why don’t we wait until the shop is more well-established in the area? Business is doing good, and… well, it would probably be better not to make waves. Don't worry, I’ll handle anything that comes up.” The truth was that Bai Hao was actually a bit worried about how good his Master was at causing problems. The mere thought of how everything had played out in the Giant Ghost Legion had him very nervous, not to mention all of the rumors he had heard back in Giant Ghost City. The way that his Master always seem to feel that he was being wronged left Bai Hao unsure of whether to laugh or cry.

In response to Bai Hao’s advice, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare. “Are you kidding? Do you think your Master is the type to just grin and bear it?!”

Sighing inwardly, Bai Hao decided to call on the one trump card he hadn’t used so far. “Master, we're all alone in the imperial city, and nobody here could be considered friends. Plus, remember how you captured all of those chosen? They all live here…. Why don’t we just let things go for a bit? The fewer major issues we have to worry about the better.”

Apparently, his tactic worked. Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he thought about the bitter state all of those chosen had ended up in. If he were back in Giant Ghost City, it wouldn’t have been as big of a deal. But now he was in their territory, and immediately started to feel a bit guilty about everything. However, he didn't let that show on his face. Laughing heartily, he clasped Bai Hao on the shoulder.

Eyes gleaming with praise, and without the least bit of embarrassment, he said, “Master was just kidding around! Not bad. Not bad at all, my apprentice. Your cautious personality shows through again. Reminds me of myself back in the day. What you just said couldn’t have been more correct. In fact, it was actually exactly what I was thinking.”

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun had given up his previous idea, Bai Hao sighed in relief, and didn’t even think about trying to call his Master out. Instead, he merely smiled and continued to chat.

And so the days continued to pass. During the day, Bai Hao would take orders from customers, and Bai Xiaochun would spend more time working on sixteen-colored flame.

In the evenings, Bai Xiaochun would perform the spirit enhancements on all of the magical items from earlier in the day, and would then do more research. Another half a month went by. At long last, it was with Bai Hao’s help that he finally perfected the formula for sixteen-colored flame.

At that point, he began to make preparations to actually conjure the flame. Worried about accidents occurring, he spared no cost to purchase some restrictive spell formations. Considering how well-off he was, he even went so far as to buy a soul formation that could be used to defend an entire clan. Using all of those various formations, he set up his flame conjuring workstation to be as impregnable as the mightiest castle. Only then did he begin to work.

Bai Hao needed no instructions about what to do. He immediately closed the shop and refused to take any more spirit enhancement orders. Then he prepared himself to be fully devoted to assisting Bai Xiaochun in the flame conjuring.

Unfortunately, things didn't go well at first. Despite all of the research, and all of the help from Bai Hao, failure after failure occurred. Thankfully, he had plenty of vengeful souls to rely on. After an entire month went by, he waved his hand, and the fifteen-colored flame in front of him consumed enough vengeful souls that a sixteenth color appeared.

Although he was immediately excited, he kept his feelings under control. Settling his qi and clearing his mind, he kept the sea of fire under control as he slowly brought it back together in his palm. He closed his fingers into a fist, then slowly opened them back up to reveal… a sixteen-colored flame!!

“It worked!!” he said, laughing heartily, his heart pounding with excitement. It had taken the better part of a year, and countless vengeful souls, plus major input from Bai Hao, to finally succeed in this conjuring. For any other person, it would have been impossible to succeed in dozens of years, let alone the amount of time he had spent.

As for Bai Hao, he was exhausted, but equally delighted. Furthermore, he was well-enough acquainted with his Master to realize that he liked to be praised, and thus quickly launched into some flattery.

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily, then started to do some more tests. His success rate wasn’t particularly high, only about twelve to fourteen percent, which he wasn’t very happy about. And yet, that was the best he could do.

“Ah, whatever. I have plenty of vengeful souls. Although I went through quite a bit, at least I mastered the technique.”

After thinking about it for a bit longer, he decided that he didn’t need to be too picky. Furthermore, after some contemplation, he decided that, for the time being, he wouldn’t perform another spirit enhancement on his nascent soul.

Although it would increase his cultivation base, it would also attract a lot of attention in the Wildlands. If such coincidences kept happening over and over, it could arouse too much suspicion.

“I’ll wait until I can conjure eighteen-colored flame, or maybe even something higher than that. Then I’ll enhance my nascent soul all in one shot, and achieve a major cultivation base breakthrough.” Having made his decision, he recuperated for a bit, then started researching seventeen-colored flame. Meanwhile, Bai Hao had opened the shop again. Needless to say, after being closed for a month, business boomed as soon as the doors were opened.

As time passed, business only improved. Bai Hao was very content to run the shop, which warmed Bai Xiaochun’s heart. Then he mused that, just as he had always thought, he really was a genius who rose to prominence wherever he went. Sighing, he reveled in the calm life they were now living. He felt like some sort of mysterious, divine being who was in hiding in the mortal world. The only thing he regretted was that he didn’t have any life force with which to cultivate his Undying Bones.

Unfortunately, as the saying went, *the tree might long for peace, but the wind will never cease*. The fact that Bai Xiaochun’s shop was becoming so famous had indeed attracted some attention.

In the central district of Arch-Emperor City, in Borough 9, there was a rather luxurious building in which several dozen people were gathered.

They were all good-looking individuals with profound cultivation bases. The weakest among them was in the mid Nascent Soul stage, with some being in the great circle. Anybody familiar with the nobility in the city would recognize these people as the heirs apparent and chosen from the various noble and aristocratic families.

One of them was Little Wolfgod, and another was Li Tiansheng. Miao Lin’er was also present.

All of them had grim expressions as they sat waiting for someone to speak first. As it turned out, Little Wolfgod took the initiative.

“Well, you all know that the damned Bai Hao is here in Arch-Emperor City. If he had stuck to the Giant Ghost Legion, it might have been one thing. But instead, he completely looked down on us and went and started a spirit enhancement shop in Borough 89!”

All of these people hated Bai Xiaochun to an indescribable degree. The events of the Necromancer Kettle had become a humiliating nightmare to all of them. Bai Xiaochun had captured them and drained their life force until they were like human raisins, and as a result, every single one of these chosen wished to see him dead.

“I heard that he was kicked out of the Giant Ghost Legion!”

“Yeah, that’s right!”

“How shameless!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0724 awe-chapter-725

“This Bai Hao is shameless to the ultimate degree, and completely notorious. In Giant Ghost City, he’s known for being morally degenerate, a wife stealer and a property thief. He's the worst that society has to offer!”

“After the incident, I asked around, and heard that he’s a reviler of his own clan, and even killed his own father and brother. He also arranged for his foster mother to be killed. Everyone in Giant Ghost City lived desperate lives because of him. Wherever he goes, people end up in a terrible situation. One can only imagine what disasters he will cause now that he’s in Arch-Emperor City!”

“How can the Giant Ghost King like a person like that!?”

“Hmph! Well, as long as the Giant Ghost Legion doesn’t do anything to protect him, then we have to pay him back for the humiliation of the Necromancer Kettle!!”

As everyone in the group took their turn to speak, curses flowed out of their mouths. And yet, considering how powerful Bai Xiaochun was, and who he had backing him, they were forced to admit that they couldn't easily take action.

Not all of the chosen who were present had gone to the Necromancer Kettle, though, and when they heard the stories being told, they couldn’t help but be curious.

Eventually, a young man in pink robes took the floor and said, “Ladies and gentlemen, I think you’re all being a bit too cautious. I admit that this Bai Hao is strong, but this is not the Necromancer Kettle, this is Arch-Emperor City. This is where *we* are the strongest!"

By the time he had finished speaking, almost everyone present had turned to look in his direction.

Li Tiansheng rose to his feet, clasped hands and said, "Brother Chen, if you have a way to fix this situation, then I would be more than happy to offer a gift in thanks."

"That's right. Bai Hao has never met you, Brother Chen. If you can take care of him, then I, Little Wolfgod, will definitely owe you a favor!"

"Fellow Daoist Chen Xiong, you always exceed all expectations. Would you please take the initiative to do something?"

Some people seemed angry, some depressed, and some thankful. The last to speak was Miao Lin'er, who looked at the pink-robed Chen Xiong with such glistening eyes that he couldn't help but cock an eyebrow. "Brother Chen, could you *please* help me out here?"

"Well," Chen Xiong said, "I'll have to do things within the bounds of the law. Killing him wouldn't be easy. But I can drive him out of Arch-Emperor City as easily as I could turn over my hand." He emphasized his words by smacking his fan down onto the counter next to him. His eyes shone with intense confidence.

"Ladies and gentlemen, as long as all of you can donate some soul medicine to the cause, then within a month, I will definitely get him out of the imperial city!"

The eyes of the various chosen glittered brightly, and not another word was spoken.

The night passed uneventfully. The following morning at dawn, seven or eight people were already lined up outside of *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven*, waiting for the doors to open so that they could drop off items to receive spirit enhancements.

Soon, Bai Hao opened the doors, and the waiting customers hurried in. Bai Hao received them as he usually did, taking his time to accept the spirit enhancement orders.

Bai Xiaochun lounged behind the counter, occasionally looking over at the customers, but focusing most of his mental attention on the formula for seventeen-colored flame.

Before long, the morning was almost over. Bai Hao took care of the constant stream of soul cultivators, and things were going so smoothly that Bai Xiaochun eventually yawned and started to think about going out for a stroll.

However, that was when a young man in a long pink robe entered the shop, cooling himself with a fan as he walked. The fluctuations of a late Nascent Soul cultivation base rolled off of him, leaving all of the customers in the shop feeling shaken. Of course, he was none other than Chen Xiong.

He was a very impressive figure, and to top it off, was flanked by two old men with profound cultivation bases, apparently Dao protectors of some sort.

“*The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven*? How bombastic!” Based on his words, all of the customers in the shop could immediately tell that Chen Xiong had come looking for trouble.

As Bai Hao sighed and hurried over to take care of the matter, Bai Xiaochun remained behind the counter. When he looked up at Chen Xiong, there was something familiar about him. “I'm pretty sure he looks like one of the chosen that I saw in the Necromancer Kettle.”

Even as Bai Xiaochun was preparing to speak, Chen Xiong waved his sleeve, sending out a blast of wind out that knocked Bai Hao to the side.

Bai Xiaochun’s face suddenly turned grim, and he vanished from behind the counter. When he reappeared, he was next to Bai Hao, protectively sending the wind away from him. However, Bai Hao’s face was pale, and he looked a bit more blurry than usual. Clearly, Chen Xiong had waved his sleeve with quite a bit of force.

To see Bai Hao weakened in such a way sparked Bai Xiaochun’s anger, and he turned to look at Chen Xiong with an ice-cold expression.

“If you have something to say, just say it. There’s no need to start shoving people around.”

Chen Xiong was a bit shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s icy gaze, and he immediately thought back to all the stories people had been telling. Suddenly, his heart began to pound, and he seemed a bit less impressive than before. However, now was not the time to back down.

“I’ve never relied on force to bully others!” he stated. “Your shop is open, right? And you’re supposedly the number one spirit enhancement shop under heaven? Well I'm here to get a spirit enhancement! And yet, to my surprise, you aren’t taking orders?! Are you intentionally looking down on me?”

As Chen Xiong's words rang out, it caused even people outside of the shop to look inside curiously to see what would happen.

A cold smile broke out on Bai Xiaochun's face, and yet before he could say anything in response, Bai Hao grabbed his forearm. Bai Hao could immediately tell that this person was different from the others who had come recently looking for trouble.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he took a deep breath and thought back to what he and his apprentice had discussed. Then he reminded himself that he wasn't back in Giant Ghost City, and that the best thing to do was suck it up.

"What do you want enhanced?" he said in a hard voice.

When Chen Xiong saw that Bai Xiaochun was willing to compromise, his eyes glittered, and a cold smile spread out across his face. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a violet jade pendant that was surrounded by a dense, violet mist. Unexpectedly, the image of a howling flood dragon could be seen within that mist! With the wave of a hand, Chen Xiong sent the pendant flying over to Bai Xiaochun in a beam of violet light.

Most shocking of all was that the pendant had ten silver designs on it!

The crowd immediately began to comment on what they were seeing.

"That jade pendant has the soul of a flood dragon sealed inside of it! Soul treasures like that are very difficult to perform spirit enhancements on!!"

“It already has a tenfold spirit enhancement! Performing an eleventh… would completely change the fundamental nature of the magical item! Furthermore, it would be extremely difficult to succeed!”

“I'm afraid that not even a terrestrial necromancer would dare to attempt that spirit enhancement. The chances of failure are just too great.”

Bai Xiaochun’s mind raced, and then he quickly plastered a look onto his face that made him seem flustered and exasperated. He even glared a bit at Chen Xiong.

Chen Xiong smiled faintly; the tumult of the crowd was exactly what he had expected would happen. Furthermore, the look on the face of this person who had struck such fear into the hearts of the other noble and aristocratic chosen left Chen Xiong feeling very pleased with himself. A snide look appeared in his eyes as he coolly said, “Just enhance that jade pendant. However, it's very expensive, so don’t even think about ruining it!”

Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve and contemplated how to put this person in his place. “The cost for my services is based on how many spirit enhancements the item has already received!”

Chen Xiong smiled in response, then tossed over a soulhoarding pagoda.

“The soul medicine in this pagoda will cover the cost. Well, get to work! And by the way, if you ruin my item… Then you’ll compensate me in full measure! However, if you succeed, then I’ll pay you ten times your normal price!”

Everyone in the audience was shocked. The prices charged in this shop for spirit enhancements were already high. The fact that the price for this item would be ten times the normal price was shocking to the extreme. And yet, even more shocking was the price that would be paid in the case of a failure.

“Now this is a bet....”

"He has to compensate him if he fails, but if he succeeds, then he’ll reap a huge reward!”

“The bet seems fair to me.... Let’s just see whether or not the shop owner agrees.”

Chen Xiong stood there with a cold smile on his face. He had promised to get Bai Xiaochun out of Arch-Emperor City within a month, and was naturally confident in being able to do so. Although the jade pendant didn’t look particularly impressive, it was actually a gift from the imperial clan, and as such, he could name virtually any price he wanted as its value.

Even if this Bai Hao succeeded, he could then demand to have another spirit enhancement performed. At some point, he would definitely fail, at which point Chen Xiong could start to cause some real problems.

Chen Xiong was an insidious fellow, and had worded things very well. Although it was clearly a bet, he hadn’t worded it in a way that would make it a formal wager. He had also said it in a way that didn’t give Bai Xiaochun any room to maneuver.

Even if Bai Xiaochun refused, he would return the next day with another challenge. And he would also have his followers come with similar challenges. Before long, he would definitely win.

If Bai Xiaochun continuously refused to accept the challenges, it would be difficult for him to stay in business, which would also count as a win. None of this counted as bullying with force. After all, in the world of spirit enhancement, the issue of failure rates meant that compensation was always an issue. Besides, the fact that he had offered a reward of ten times the original cost meant that not even the Giant Ghost King would be able to complain about the arrangement.

Most importantly, this was only the first step in his plan. There was also a second step, and a third. With all of this combined, Chen Xiong was absolutely confident in being able to win.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0725 awe-chapter-726

“Well?” Chen Xiong said sneeringly. “Yes? Or No?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. Before he even had a chance to finish digging the pit for this pink-robed young man to fall into, he had jumped in of his own accord.

“This guy really is insidious. This jade pendant is probably extremely valuable…. And based on how confident he seems, it’s obvious that if I succeed, he’ll just ask me to do another spirit enhancement, and then another and another….” After reaching this point in his train of thought, an imperceptible glint appeared in his eyes. Then his expression turned grimmer. Shivering, and even panting a bit, he forced his eyes to turn bloodshot.

“There’s no job I won’t take!” he shouted, seemingly incapable of revealing how he was actually very unconfident about it all. “But when I perform spirit enhancements, I charge with each successful enhancement! And if you don’t have enough soul medicine, I….”

Everyone looking on would think that he actually didn’t want to accept the job, and was trying to make it sound like the customer couldn’t afford to pay.

“That’s fine,” Chen Xiong said. “We can calculate the bill based on every success!” At this point, he frowned slightly. Something about the situation seemed off. Although he was trying to control everything, it almost seemed like Bai Xiaochun had pushed him into a corner. Eyes flashing, he reviewed his plan, and then chuckled coldly.

“Seems he’s on to me,” he thought. “However, there is no way he could possibly guess how determined I am to succeed, nor the fact that I’m actually prepared for the fact that he can perform spirit enhancements up to the fourteenfold level! Besides, there’s even a high likelihood that he’ll fail somewhere from the eleventh to the fourteenth spirit enhancement!” Although Chen Xiong’s actions all seemed a bit rash, he had actually investigated Bai Hao, and come to the realization that he was equipped almost entirely with fourteenfold spirit enhanced items.

“What a pity that I have items that not even he could compensate me for if he destroyed them. Furthermore, even if he does succeed in raising them to the fourteenfold level, if he gives up after that, my efforts will be equally effective!” Chuckling he agreed to all of Bai Xiaochun’s demands.

When he saw the ashen look on Bai Xiaochun’s face in response to that, he felt a bit more comfortable.

Although Bai Xiaochun appeared to be scowling on the verge of tears, he was actually smiling broadly in his heart. And yet, he kept his teeth gritted, and then flicked his sleeve as he took the jade pendant into the back room.

Before long, he came out, and the jade pendant had no more silver designs on it. Instead, it had a single golden design. Furthermore, it looked different from before. It was a bit smaller, and it emanated spiritual power fluctuations that caused everyone in the area to stare in shock.

“He actually did it!”

“An elevenfold spirit enhancement….”

When Chen Xiong saw it, his expression remained the same as ever, but inwardly, he sighed.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he proudly stuck his chin up and then announced, “Soul Aide, please explain my spirit enhancement pricing method to the young prince here, and calculate how much soul medicine he owes me.”

Bai Hao stepped forward. “When creating something from nothing, the first spirit enhancement costs 1,000 portions of soul medicine. Going from onefold to twofold is 2,000. Twofold to threefold is 4,000. And so on and so forth. Fourfold is 8,000. Sevenfold is 64,000. Ninefold is 256,000. Tenfold is 512,000.... As for the eleventh, the total soul medicine cost would be.... 1,024,000.”

Gasps could be heard among the audience in response to Bai Hao’s words. Although some had already calculated the numbers involved, to hear them spoken out loud was a shocking thing.

Bai Xiaochun stood there looking proudly at Chen Xiong, who simply smiled coolly as he produced a soulhoarding pagoda.

“There are 5,000,000 portions of soul medicine in this soulhoarding pagoda. Keep performing more enhancements. I'm not happy with only eleven.” Another buzz of surprised talk went through the crowd. The kind of bet that they were witnessing was so exciting that many of them were already sending messages to friends using transmission jade slips.

Before long, all of Borough 89 was buzzing, and countless soul cultivators were rushing toward Bai Xiaochun’s shop. There were also numerous streams of divine sense which came to focus on the shop.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted as his theory was confirmed. Abandoning his act, he chuckled coldly and took the jade pendant into the back room.

Shortly thereafter, he emerged, and the jade pendant had a second golden design on it. When people outside the shop saw it, cries of shock rose up into the air.

“Twelvefold enhancement! Heavens!!”

“I haven’t seen a competition like this in years! Call everybody over to watch! This is definitely going to shake all of Arch-Emperor City!!”

The shouts and cries of the crowd were now causing Chen Xiong to feel a bit of pressure, and it was even possible to see some hesitation in his eyes. However, he continued to glare at Bai Xiaochun as he said, “I'm still not happy. Keep going!”

Bai Xiaochun could tell how determined this pink-robed young man was. Inwardly, he gave a cold harrumph and thought, “You just wait. I'm gonna scare you to death!”

Spinning in place, he headed into the back room and came out moments later to reveal three golden designs on the pendant!!

Before anyone could react, Bai Xiaochun loudly said, “Soul Aide, calculate the bill!”

Bai Hao couldn’t help but shiver. Never before had he ever experienced anything like this, and yet, it was without the slightest hesitation that he replied, “The cost is 4,096,000 portions of soul medicine!”

By this point, it wasn’t just Borough 89 that was being rocked by the event. Word was spreading into the other boroughs, and it was even possible to see people hurrying over from those locations to join the commotion.

Chen Xiong was trembling, and a bit of panic could be seen in his eyes. He almost couldn’t think straight. This was definitely not what he had planned for. He had placed all his hopes on the possibility that the jade pendant would be destroyed.

“This guy's skill in the art of spirit enhancement is shocking!” he thought.

However, he still gritted his teeth, looked up at Bai Xiaochun, and then slowly said, “I'm still not happy. Keep going!”

The audience was completely bowled over. By this point, they could tell that this was no ordinary bet, and that there was some specific reason that Chen Xiong kept saying he wasn’t happy.

“Still not happy, huh?” Bai Xiaochun thought. “Alright mister pinkster. You just wait to see how I scare the living daylights out of you!” He returned to the back room, and after the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he came back out. This time, when the audience saw the jade pendant, they devolved into a massive hubbub.

“Four… fourteenfold!!”

“A fourteenfold spirit enhancement! How is this even possible?! Heavens….”

Even as everyone clamored, they also spread word to their friends, who began to hurry over in shock. Not bothering to wait for Bai Hao to calculate the bill, Bai Xiaochun proudly announced, “8,192,000 portions of soul medicine!”

He was of the opinion that personally saying it himself was a lot more impressive.

Bai Xiaochun’s words were like a death knell to Chen Xiong. He felt like his mind and heart were being struck by countless bolts of lightning, and his face was as white as a sheet. He staggered backward as if physically struck, gasping, his eyes completely bloodshot. Although he had told himself he was prepared for the possibility of a fourteenfold spirit enhancement, he was still completely shaken. Furthermore, the amount of soul medicine at stake was immense. That was especially true when he contemplated how he had already spent nearly 15,000,000.

He was already starting to regret this little plan of his, and was even thinking of giving up, but as the saying goes, *if you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off*. There were simply too many people in the audience now, with more showing up by the moment. There were probably tens of thousands of people lining the street outside.

Sticking his chin up proudly, Bai Xiaochun said, “Well, dear customer, are you happy now? At the moment, there isn’t enough soul medicine in this soulhoarding pagoda to pay me the 8,192,000 you owe me. If, after we settle accounts, you’re still not happy, then I’d be happy to continue!”

When Bai Hao heard this, he stood there stunned and feeling a bit hesitant. From what he could tell, his Master had actually calculated the bill wrong, and had only included the most recent spirit enhancement, not the combination of everything up to this point.

Although he wanted to point this out, there were simply too many people in the area. Considering he was supposed to be a simplistic soul slave, there was no way he could speak up now. Sighing, he mentally did a facepalm.

Gasps were also audible among the audience. Quite a few people had odd expressions on their faces as they too came to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun had calculated the bill wrong. However, this pink-robed young man was obviously a noble chosen, and none of them wanted to offend him. Many people were looking at Bai Xiaochun furtively, wondering what would happen next. As for Chen Xiong, he was obviously a bit surprised at Bai Xiaochun's proud front. However, he still couldn't figure out what exactly was going on. Although he refused to believe that his opponent would actually miscalculate the bill… he patted his bag of holding and threw out another soulhoarding pagoda.

"There are 4,000,000 souls in there. I… I'm still not happy. Keep going!!" This was all of the soul medicine that both he and the other chosen had been able to come up with. It was a huge amount, the type that could form the reserve savings of a great clan!

At this point, Bai Xiaochun proudly said, "The cost for going from a fourteen to a fifteenfold spirit enhancement is different. It doesn't cost double. It costs ten times as much! That means that if I succeed, you will owe me… 81,920,000 portions of soul medicine!" Even Bai Xiaochun seemed a bit jumpy to speak such a number out loud. After a moment of silence, he added, "Are… are you sure you can afford that much?"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0726 awe-chapter-727

The number Bai Xiaochun had just spoken left Chen Xiong teetering on the verge of passing out. Gasps could be heard among the other soul cultivators looking on. After all, there was a huge difference between a fourteenfold spirit enhancement and a fifteenfold one.

Fifteenfold spirit enhancements brought with them the power of a deva, and could help cultivators who were in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage to gain enlightenment of heaven and earth. Spirit enhanced treasures like that were incredibly valuable, and usually were possessed only by clans who specialized in spirit enhancement, or the powerful noble or aristocratic clans. Treasures like that which did exist would rarely be brought out into the open.

Such items were not common at all, especially because the success rates with high-level spirit enhancements were so low. One needed only look at the fact that the Giant Ghost King, upon rewarding Bai Xiaochun and simultaneously entrusting him with an extremely important mission in the Necromancer Kettle, only gave him a sixteenfold spirit enhanced spear.

The reason for that was not because he was being stingy. Rather, it was because items with fifteenfold spirit enhancements or higher were just too rare. Besides, most were only suitable for use by devas.

Because of their rarity, it would be difficult for anyone to say with certainty how much soul medicine it would be worth to raise something from a fourteenfold to a fifteenfold spirit enhancement. Bai Xiaochun’s quote of more than

80,000,000 portions of soul medicine seemed dramatic, but everyone present realized that if he succeeded, the resulting item would be of great help to anyone wishing to rise to the level of a deva!

In the Wildlands, people became devas by means of magical items with fifteen or more spirit enhancements. By gaining enlightenment of heaven and earth with such items, they could become one with all creation.

“Take your time and think about it,” Bai Xiaochun said sincerely. “Look, if you’re still not happy, then considering that you offered to pay ten times my quote, then I guess you already owe me… Eee? about 80,000,000. So, are we finished here…?” With that, he looked at Chen Xiong with a look of sincere compassion.

When Bai Hao was reminded of the matter of "ten times” the original quote, he sighed. From what he could tell, the miscalculation of the bill had already lost them more than 60,000,000 portions of soul medicine….

As for Chen Xiong, he shouted, “Shut the hell up!!”

His eyes were so bloodshot that they almost looked like pools of blood. Tone mocking, he continued, “I'm not happy! Do the next enhancement, alright? Do it!! I refuse to believe that you can succeed at a fifteenfold enhancement!!”

The two old men flanking him had long since grown completely ashen. Terrified, they even attempted to interfere and give Chen Xiong some advice.

“Get out of my face!” he yelled at them. “The bet is still on, Bai Hao!” He really had no choice but to keep betting. If he did, then he still had a shot at winning. But if he gave up right now, the price he would have to pay would be impossible to accept.

Bai Xiaochun gave Chen Xiong a long, level look, then took the jade pendant into the back room without another word. Countless gazes and countless streams of divine sense were locked onto him. Everyone was jumpy with excitement, wondering what would happen in the following moments. However, no one could observe what went on in the back room. There was a scintillating restrictive spell that blocked all sight and divine sense, as well as another barrier that was almost impossible to penetrate.

Of course, the barrier was actually created by the powers of Bai Xiaochun’s mask, and was created in a way that only a demigod would be able to pierce through to see what was beyond. And yet, anyone who did pierce through it would only see what appeared to be Bai Xiaochun going about a spirit enhancement in the ordinary fashion.

Bai Xiaochun had set it up this way intentionally to dispel any suspicions on the part of the most powerful experts.

Bai Xiaochun had always planned to rely on the mask as his most powerful line of defense. By now, there were too many soul cultivators gathering outside to count, even filling the air to the point where it cast Borough 89 into shadow.

Everyone was talking, creating a din of conversation that filled the area.

“This Bai Hao is definitely a celestial necromancer. Furthermore, he’s probably at the peak of the celestial necromancer rank!”

“Celestial necromancers all have special methods that they use to increase their success rates. However, going from a fourteen to fifteenfold spirit enhancement is really, really difficult. Success all depends on luck!”

“The truth is that this bet is no longer about necromantic skill. It's really just about luck….”

“Well, whatever happens, *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven* is definitely going to be popular after this. It might not be completely famous, but it will definitely be known throughout Arch-Emperor City!”

As everyone talked about the matter, Chen Xiong stood there trembling, his face devoid of blood and his mind a complete blank. Things had already progressed to the point where he wasn’t sure he could handle it, and might collapse.

“How could this be happening…? My plan was perfect…. How could he be succeeding every single time? I had so much soul medicine built up! It should have been enough. But then he went and refused to fail even once! Well, this time he’ll definitely fail, and when he does, I’ll have finally won!”

Time passed, and more people gathered outside of the shop. Nobody seemed even the least bit impatient. It was common knowledge that going from a fourteen to a fifteenfold spirit enhancement took a lot of time, and therefore, all gazes and all streams of divine sense were fixed on the door to the back room.

Bai Hao floated off to the side, face expressionless, but sighing in his heart at how easily his Master started feuds, and at the same time, counterstruck with deadly force….

Chen Xiong appeared to be in sore straights, so much so that Bai Hao even felt sorry for him. But then he thought, “Well, you could have kept things between the two of us, but you had to go and offend my Master....”

Two hours passed, and Bai Xiaochun still hadn’t emerged. Of course, the truth was that he was actually inside the back room doing some breathing exercises, and not even thinking about spirit enhancement. Six hours later, he expelled a mouthful of impure vital energy, then opened his eyes.

“That should be enough time,” he thought, shaking his head. “I really didn't want to screw you over, but I had no choice. You kept pushing me to do more spirit enhancements. You insisted! Well, when I make a move, I frighten even myself.”

Marveling at how pure and benevolent he was, he finally started to work on the spirit enhancement. Before long, he had a jade pendant with five golden designs on it. It pulsed with the energy of a deva, and the flood dragon inside of it looked incredibly realistic, to the point where it almost appeared to be a deva soul.

“What a lovely treasure!” he thought, moved. After looking at it closely, he realized it would be a simple thing to unleash a shadowy flood dragon from within the pendant, and that it would be monumentally powerful.

After fiddling around with the pendant for a bit, he finally rose to his feet and took a deep breath. Then, he forced himself to look tired and drained, and even made sure that his forehead was dripping with sweat. Finally, he trudged out of the back room looking very ashen-faced.

As soon as he appeared, all eyes and all streams of divine sense focused on him, and especially on his hand. When everyone saw the jade pendant, the first reaction was silence.

But then, everyone erupted into a commotion that could shake heaven and earth.

“Heavens… this… this….”

“Fifteenfold!! I can sense the aura of a deva on it!!”

“He did it! I can’t believe he really did it! A fifteenfold spirit enhanced magical item!!” Countless eyes began to shine with greed.

“If a fifteenfold spirit enhanced item like that went up for auction, it would bring in an astronomical price! And this Grandmaster Bai enhanced it all on his own!!” The exclamations turned into a small-scale sound wave that caused much of Arch-Emperor City to tremble. As for Chen Xiong, he could barely speak.

“Impossible… impossible… it’s not real….” he muttered, staggering backward in despairing daze.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then said, “Look, didn’t I just try to persuade you not to do another enhancement? But you wouldn’t listen. Ah, whatever. I'm a soft-hearted kind of guy. How about I give you a discount? Let’s just make it a nice round number. 80,000,000 portions of soul medicine…. Ai. Wait, no. You said that if you were happy, you would give ten times the original price. So that makes 800,000,000….” Looking sincerely at the flabbergasted Chen Xiong, he continued, “You absolutely, positively must not ask for another enhancement…. You listen to me, alright…? Keep your cool!”

Off to the side, Bai Hao was feeling very odd. By now, he could see that his Master had intentionally miscalculated the bill earlier to lay a trap. How could he not have seen it himself? All of a sudden, his Master seemed even more profound and enigmatic than ever, and on top of that, completely unpredictable.

Blood sprayed out of Chen Xiong’s mouth as his heart was gripped with regret. “Bai Hao!! You conned me! You miscalculated that bill on purpose!! You tricked me!!”

He had originally planned to simply back out of the bet, but after Bai Xiaochun miscalculated the bill, he decided to keep going. Considering how things had turned out though, it seemed obvious that his opponent had been playing him all along. With that, he spun on his heel and prepared to make a run for it. There was absolutely no way he could continue the bet; the stakes were just too high. And that didn’t just count for him; not even his entire clan could sustain such losses. The mere thought of 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine filled his heart with such fear that the only thing he could think to do was leave.

“I conned you?” Bai Xiaochun shot back. “What’s that supposed to mean? Hey, get back here! You owe me some soul medicine! How dare you try to renege on your debt!!” Bai Xiaochun truly had no idea what he meant, and even started to think back to make sure he had calculated everything correctly. The truth was that he really had accidentally calculated the bill wrong. And now, the sight of his opponent preparing to flee instantly caused his expression to turn grim. After all, he had sincerely tried to persuade him to stop. And yet, not only had the pink-robed young man demanded to keep going, he had then hurled false accusations about miscalculating the bill. It was really outrageous.

“I absolutely hate cheaters!" Bai Xiaochun roared. With that, he took a step forward. Of course, Chen Xiong’s two Dao protectors had sensed that things were heating up, and immediately moved to block the way. But when they made contact with Bai Xiaochun, blood sprayed out of their mouths, and they tumbled backward. As for Bai Xiaochun, he barreled forward at top speed to appear right in front of Chen Xiong. Then he reached his hand back and prepared to slap him across the face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0727 awe-chapter-728

A thunderous smacking sound rang out, and blood sprayed out of Chen Xiong’s mouth as he was sent flying backward.

“Do you truly dare to start a fight in Arch-Emperor City!?!?” he shrieked.

“You bet I dare!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. “You owe me soul medicine, buddy! I'm completely in the right here!” With that, he stepped forward and kicked Chen Xiong, sending him flying into the air. A moment later, he slammed into the stone wall on the opposite side of the shop, where he remained, embedded and unmoving. Many of his bones were broken, and his cultivation base was in chaos. Then, unexpectedly, he simply passed out.

“Hmph! I can’t believe he tried to renege on his debt. When you owe Lord Bai a debt, you pay up!” As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, this pink-robed brat was a complete scoundrel. He was the one who had come and suggested the bet, and then he'd attempted to flee. That just went to show how arrogant the brat was, and one of the things Bai Xiaochun hated most in life was when people looked down on him.

Looking over at Chen Xiong lying unconscious in the wall, his two old Dao Protectors immediately began to shout in rage at Bai Xiaochun.

“What gall, Bai Hao!”

“Chen Xiong is the qilin son of our Chen Clan, and our most powerful patriarch is currently a heavenly duke!”

“Heavenly duke?”

A flicker of dread ran though Bai Xiaochun. After all, in the Wildlands, the only people who could become heavenly dukes were people at the peak of the Deva Realm. Devas like Duke Deathcrier were only earthly dukes. However, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he was in the right here, and besides, this Chen Xiong had been the one to come looking for trouble, not the other way around. He had also been the one to suggest the bet, and had been the one to try to flee. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in the wrong at all, and therefore, he had no reason to look scared in front of all these people.

Gritting his teeth, he glared at the Dao protectors and said, “Who gives a crap about heavenly dukes? Back in Giant Ghost City, I kidnapped a demigod!”

With that, he casually waved his sleeve, causing a wild wind to pick up the two Dao protectors and slam them into the wall next to Chen Xiong, where they too fell unconscious.

When the bystanders saw all of this, gasps rang out. Everyone was thoroughly impressed by Bai Xiaochun’s valiant performance, and word of the incident was already beginning to spread.

With that, Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and proudly said, “Soul Aide, please close the shop!”

Heart pounding with fear, Bai Hao quickly escorted all of the customers out and then closed the front door.

As for all of the soul cultivators who had come to watch the excitement, they were shaken by what they had seen. In fact, very few of them left. After all, it was unlikely that the heavenly duke from the Chen Clan would simply let this matter drop, and therefore, people wanted to see what would happen next.

“From now on, this spirit enhancement shop is definitely going to be famous in Arch-Emperor City!”

“A fifteenfold spirit enhancement.... That alone is enough to make the shop worthy of its name, and the couplets!”

“Who would have thought!? There was actually a top master hiding in Borough 89, someone named Bai Hao. Why does that name seem familiar...?”

Of course, everyone was aware of Bai Hao's name because of how Chen Xiong had yelled it out. Soon, people began contemplating that name, and before long, one of the soul cultivators suddenly let out a shout of shock.

“Bai Hao.... I remember now! He must be Bai Hao from Giant Ghost City. He killed his own father and helped the Giant Ghost King during the rebellion. He’s also the one who kidnapped all of those chosen in the Necromancer Kettle. Bai Hao!!”

“Heavens, I remember now too! It *is* him. I heard that he's vicious and merciless, and a reviler of his own clan. He’s a bully through and through who everybody hates!”

“All that is nothing. I heard that he actually takes pride in being a wife-stealer! Shameless to the ultimate degree! So, he’s actually in Arch-Emperor City now. And now he’s taken up the mantle of a grandmaster of spirit enhancement!!”

As more people talked, more people recalled the stories they had heard about Bai Hao. Meanwhile, back inside the shop, Bai Xiaochun stood there with his hands clasped behind his back, looking at Chen Xiong and his two Dao protectors embedded in the wall. As he thought about how arrogant Chen Xiong had acted, and how he had even tried to escape without settling his debt, his anger grew.

“Complete and utter bullies. I was keeping my head low, trying not to provoke anybody. Suffering in silence! But then this bastard had to come and try to bully me!”

Using the powers of the mask to ensure that only Bai Hao could hear him, he said, “Hao’er, this isn’t Master’s fault, is it? You saw everything! They were completely out of line!”

Bai Hao simply smiled wryly and shook his head, unsure of exactly what to say in response. Disaster had already been instigated, and yet, it was true that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t started it. It really was a case in which *the tree might long for peace, but the wind will never cease*.

“Master, we need to think of what to do now,” he said. “Their clan is definitely going to come looking for them soon.”

Bai Xiaochun actually felt a bit nervous. Although he had acted brazenly earlier, he had actually been very nervous. After all, this was a clan with a deva in it, and he wasn’t in Giant Ghost City. Therefore, he nervously took out a transmission jade slip and sent a voice message to the Giant Ghost King.

Before long, the Giant Ghost King’s domineering voice could be heard responding.

“What are you scared of? He’s just a heavenly duke, right? Listen, Bai Hao, you’re the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, and also my son-in-law. They came looking to stir up trouble, and you beat them up, right? If that’s all, then so be it. If Chen Haosong tries to use his status to be a bully, then I’ll do the same thing right back!”

It had been a long time since Bai Xiaochun felt moved by the care of another, so as soon as he heard the Giant Ghost King’s response, it was like music to his ears. The fact that his highness the king actually cared was enough to take a lot of the pressure off. Taking a deep breath, he looked over at Chen Xiong and his Dao protectors, and gave them all a good glare.

“Hmph! Trying to run out on a debt to me?! Maybe I should charge some interest! After all, the Giant Ghost King said he would back me up.” Licking his lips, he tried to decide if he was pushing things a bit too far. But then he remembered that he was owed 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine, and his anger flared. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to pull out his Eternal Parasol and then stick it into Chen Xiong.

“I’ll just take a little....” he murmured. Immediately, Chen Xiong’s eyes snapped open, and blue veins bulged out on his face and neck. He even let loose an agonized shriek.

When the people on the outside heard that, their jaws dropped. Even Bai Xiaochun was a bit startled, and pulled the Eternal Parasol back. He had only sucked away ten percent of Chen Xiong’s life force to improve his standing in the Tempered Bones level.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao!? You’re not gonna die a good death!!” Chen Xiong was obviously a bit thinner. Glaring angrily at Bai Xiaochun, he began to try to struggle free from the wall.

Considering how clear-eyed and worked up Chen Xiong was, it seemed that he hadn't really been hurt by the Eternal Parasol, and therefore, Bai Xiaochun decided that he might as well take a bit more life force. With that, he stabbed the parasol into Chen Xiong again. “Shut up! I just took a little, it’s not like it’s a big deal! You owe me 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine! How dare you curse me!”

Another agonized shriek rang out, followed by more cursing. After that, Bai Xiaochun used the parasol a third time, then a fourth and a fifth….

Bai Hao was stunned, and quickly began to offer some advice. “Master, you should stop. You’re going to kill him….”

“Don’t worry, your Master has a lot of experience with this kind of thing.” Bai Xiaochun was actually feeling quite enthused, and before he realized it, Chen Xiong was little more than a bag of skin and bones. His cries were now weak, and he was even gasping for breath. Furthermore, his eyes shone with an unprecedented level of terror. By this point, he thoroughly regretted all of his decisions, and also understood why all of his friends had cursed this Bai Hao so much, and yet hadn’t dared to tangle with him.

Having finished with Chen Xiong, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the two Dao protectors. After a moment, he said, “What do you say, my apprentice… should I move on to these two?”

Bai Hao smiled wryly and looked over at the poor Chen Xiong, who had been turned into a virtual skeleton by his Master. Although he felt bad for him, Bai Hao also felt he needed to tell his Master how he truly felt.

“Um… why not give them all the same treatment? We've already offended Heavenly Duke Chen, so it probably won't make a difference either way….”

“That’s the spirit!” Bai Xiaochun replied. “Hahaha! I was thinking the exact same thing!” With that, he stabbed the Eternal Parasol into the first of the Dao protectors. Before long, both of the Dao protectors were both much skinnier than before. However, knowing that he didn't want to go too far, and also considering that they hadn’t been the main culprits, he only took a portion of their life force.

Even as he was delighting in the influx of life force, the front door of the shop rumbled as though a powerful force had landed onto it. Then, the door slammed open, and a wave of deva energy surged into the shop.

“Bai Hao!”

Teeth gritted and eyes blazing with rage, Mistress Red-Dust burst inside.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0728 awe-chapter-729

Startled, Bai Xiaochun pulled back the Eternal Parasol and spun to face the beautiful Mistress Red-Dust as she stomped into the shop.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was in no mood or position to enjoy feasting upon her beauty. There were few things in the Wildlands that he feared more than Mistress Red-Dust. After everything the two of them had gone through, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that if she found out who he really was, she would stop at nothing to kill him.

Heart pounding, he tried to look as calm as possible as he affectionately said, “What are you doing here, Zimo…?”

“What have you done, Bai Hao!?” she said in a voice of rage, nauseated by the fact that he had called her *Zimo*. Moments ago, she had received a message from the Giant Ghost King, and then right afterward, from Heavenly Duke Chen. That made sense considering that many people in the city already knew that Bai Hao was the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, and also her intended husband.

If Bai Xiaochun caused trouble, then the Chen Clan’s heavenly duke would naturally come to Mistress Red-Dust. After all… once Heavenly Duke Chen learned of what had happened, and heard that 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine were at stake… he knew that not even he could afford to pay up.

Despite being completely enraged, and also having absolutely no desire to see Bai Xiaochun, Mistress Red-Dust had no choice but to come handle the matter.

Looking over at the emaciated Chen Xiong and his two Dao protectors, Mistress Red-Dust's fury built, and her loathing of Bai Xiaochun grew.

"You really know how to cause problems, don't you? I don't know what my father sees in you! Listen up. If you cause any more problems in the future, you'll end up like this statue!" With that, she pulled a statue out of her bag of holding and crushed it to pieces.

Originally, Bai Xiaochun had been preparing to argue a bit. But when he realized that the statue she had pulled out bore his own true visage, his temper suddenly vanished….

"Heavens! This Granny Red-Dust really does hate me, doesn't she? She actually carries statues of me around to crush when she gets angry…." A shiver passed through him. After all, what scared him was not Mistress Red-Dust's threat, but rather, her attitude.

However, even as his fear increased, he realized that the situation really was very exhilarating. After all, Mistress Red-Dust's own father was playing the matchmaker between the two of them, and Mistress Red-Dust had no idea that he was really Bai Xiaochun. The entire thing was… very exciting!

"Hm… if I ever have the chance to take her into the bridal chamber… and take off my mask, I wonder if it would startle her to death…?" Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun realized that he was thinking about things in entirely the wrong way, and quickly readjusted his attitude. However, it was still very exhilarating….

When Mistress Red-Dust saw the way that he was looking at her, she simply couldn't suppress her revolt. Were it not for the Giant Ghost King's support of Bai Hao, then she would definitely not suppress her desire to exterminate him on the spot.

“This Bai Hao is an obscene lowlife,” she thought. “You can tell from the look in his eye that he’s contemplating something abominable!” However, she had no choice but to suppress her woe. Waving her right hand, she collected up Chen Xiong and the two Dao protectors.

Her beautiful face was almost green with fury as she growled, “I'm warning you, Bai Hao. I don’t have any patience left to deal with you. If you annoy me even the slightest bit, don’t blame me for exterminating you!”

Having cleared his mind of the inappropriate thoughts from before, Bai Xiaochun said in a frustrated voice, “Hey, this wasn’t my fault! He came looking to cause trouble, and he was the one who suggested we make a bet. He was the one who lost 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine to me.”

“Shut up!” Mistress Red-Dust shot back, glaring at him. Then she turned to leave, apparently not inclined to help Bai Xiaochun collect the soul medicine he was owed because of the debt.

Everyone on the outside had clearly seen Mistress Red-Dust stomp her way into the shop. Furthermore, word had already spread that Bai Xiaochun was the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, and also that the Giant Ghost King had promised Sergeant Major Mistress Red-Dust of the Giant Ghost Legion to him in marriage.

That only served to intrigue people further. When they thought about it all, and about how domineering Mistress Red-Dust was, it caused many mouths to twist into slight sneers.

“Well I guess it’s not Bai Hao’s fault. After all, his Daoist partner is a deva…”

“Goddess Red-Dust has always been completely domineering. To tell you the truth, I actually feel sorry for this Bai Hao….”

When such talk drifted into Bai Xiaochun’s ears, he couldn’t help but feel a bit embarrassed.

The truth was that he didn’t care too much about the soul medicine. Material things like that weren’t very important. However, he did feel that it was a big pity that Chen Xiong still had the fifteenfold spirit enhanced jade pendant in his bag of holding. And yet, considering how domineering Mistress Red-Dust was acting, he hesitated to say anything. But then he thought back to something the Giant Ghost King had once said to him.

What, you can’t even handle a single woman…?

Those words rang in his mind, and actually made him feel like he was losing a lot of face. If nobody else were present, it might not have been a big deal. But Bai Hao was standing off to the side, and there were plenty of people on the street who could see what was happening, and were even discussing the situation in hushed tones. At this point, Bai Xiaochun decided that the situation had gone too far. After all, he was the very love saint who had invented the Win Charm! How could he possibly lose so much face in front of so many people?

“Stop right there!” he shouted at Mistress Red-Dust, who was currently walking away from him, seething with a murderous aura.

Mistress Red-Dust stopped in place and looked over her shoulder, her phoenix-like eyes flashing with cold light. “How dare you speak to me in such a tone!”

She even unleashed some deva pressure to go along with her words. She had never liked this Bai Hao, and would love to take this opportunity to teach him a lesson if he said even the slightest wrong word.

Bai Xiaochun’s innards churned underneath Mistress Red-Dust’s cold glare, and he realized that he had gone and done something impulsive. However, when he heard the crowd gasping in response to his words, he braced himself, slowly clasped his hands behind his back, and turned his head to the side. After all, his profile was his most impressive feature as far as he was concerned. Looking out of the corner of his eye at Mistress Red-Dust, he put on the most arrogant expression he could manage. As of this moment, there was now something unique and special about him, something different than before, as though veins of steel pumped beneath his skin.

“Although his highness the king betrothed his most beloved daughter to me, I most certainly do not deserve such an honor…. Because of my status and standing, you refused to accept the matter, and there is nothing in that decision with which I can find fault!

“Furthermore, the reason I came to Arch-Emperor City was not just because of the matter of the marriage, but rather, for another important purpose. Your father the king wanted me to assist you in your duties. Sadly, you hate me. And I'm not interested in intentionally annoying people. But his highness the king has shown me unending kindness, and therefore, I must still do my best to fulfill the task he assigned me!

“I won that soul medicine in a bet, all for the purpose of giving it to you. 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine is a massive amount of wealth, but if you don’t want it, then at least make sure that Heavenly Duke Chen owes you a huge favor. Either way, I can say that I followed his highness the king’s commands to assist you.

“Take the soul medicine, or not, the choice is yours. However, the choice of whether or not to speak, and what to say if I do speak, is mine! I don’t need instructions from you. Furthermore, I would very much appreciate if you don’t ever again use the words *shut up* with me. Now, please see yourself out!” To make his performance more impressive, he called upon a bit of the underlying power of the Undying Emperor’s Fist, which made him seem vastly more impressive than before.

Everyone watching on the street was shocked, and even Mistress Red-Dust seemed stunned. Never could she have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would utter words like this. Regardless of how much of what he had said was true, the fact that he was giving her 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine was monumental. Either she took the money, and ended up with massive wealth, or she rejected it, and earned a huge favor from someone very powerful.

Even to her, a favor from a heavenly duke was something to take very seriously.

Mixed emotions could be seen in her eyes as she looked at Bai Xiaochun one last time. Then, without saying another word, she turned and left. As she did, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out.

“Soul Aide, please close the shop!”

Bai Hao shivered. He had been stunned over and over again by the events of the day. The sudden appearance of Mistress Red-Dust had been a total shock, and not even he had been able to pierce through the act put on by his Master. He quickly hurried over and closed the front door of the shop. As he did, Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and went into the back room.

As soon as he did, he slumped down onto the ground, and sweat began to pour down his forehead. Taking a deep breath, he thought back to everything he had said, and felt very pleased with the show he had put on.

“Hmmmphh! You listen to me, Granny Red-Dust. There’s no way that the mighty Love Saint Bai Xiaochun can’t get *you* to submit!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0729 awe-chapter-730

A whole slew of dramatic events had just occurred. After Mistress Red-Dust left, the crowd finally began to thin out, and people went on their way, various thoughts running through their heads.

None of them would be able to forget what had occurred. Whether it was the success with the spirit enhancements, the terrifying bet that ended up reaching a sum of 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine, the arrival of Mistress Red-Dust, or the sight of Bai Xiaochun making his solemn and yet domineering monologue, they were scenes that would be branded into the memories of everyone present.

Everybody knew that from this day on, the name of Bai Hao… would become very important throughout all of Arch-Emperor City!

Before long, everyone was talking about the news of what had happened to the qilin son of the Heavenly Duke Chen's clan, Chen Xiong. Of course, word soon came back to all of the various chosen, and they gasped in shock.

"This Bai Hao… is too vicious!"

"800,000,000 portions of soul medicine… that's ridiculous!"

"I heard that it wasn't just the soul medicine. He also drained Chen Xiong's life force! He ended up nothing more than skin and bones…." Little Wolfgod, Li Tiansheng, Miao Lin'er and many of the other chosen were all taken completely aback. Although none of them had been completely convinced that Chen Xiong would be able to get rid of Bai Hao, they had at least harbored some hope. After all, they were in Arch-Emperor City, not the Necromancer Kettle.

As they heard the news about how things had played out, they trembled with fear. The mere thought of Chen Xiong's fate made them all think back to the Necromancer Kettle, and the brutality they had experienced. The entire group still shivered with fear because of those lingering memories.

That vicious face, those coldly brutal eyes, and the nightmarish draining of their life force, were things that Little Wolfgod and the other chosen could never forget. In fact, many of them even cut ties with Chen Xiong. It was a bitter decision that they weren't happy with, but they knew they had to abandon any ideas of trying to cause problems for Bai Hao.

"Dammit, losing to him in the Necromancer Kettle was one thing, but how could the same thing happen in Arch-Emperor City?!"

"It's all the fault of that Chen Xiong. No skill whatsoever. But what do we do next? This Bai Hao is incomparably vicious! We definitely need to come up with a good plan, and must avoid any rash decisions!"

Of course, now that everyone was talking about Bai Hao, it didn't take long before stories about what had occurred in the Necromancer Kettle began to spread again, until everybody was talking about the matter.

Soon enough, tales about the Bai Clan and Giant Ghost City also began to spread. Before long, everybody in the city had heard about such matters.

As for Mistress Red-Dust, in the end, she decided not to demand the 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine, and instead, asked for Heavenly Duke Chen to owe her a favor.

Bai Xiaochun was definitely no ordinary soul cultivator. He had a very impressive background, and because of that, the noble and aristocratic chosen were not easily able to do anything against him. They could only plot against him within the bounds of the law. Just as they had mentioned earlier in their discussion, they had to take their time to come up with a good plan.

After the incident, *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven* became very famous. In the following days, soul cultivators came from all over Arch-Emperor City and lined up to get spirit enhancements and soul medicine. Others came to merely get a glimpse of Bai Hao, and see whether he was really as superhuman as everyone claimed him to be.

Borough 89 was more of a bustling place than ever. Business for the other shops in the area began to pick up because of Bai Xiaochun's shop. It was a welcome development as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, but Bai Hao felt nervous about it.

Worried, he said, "Master, showing off too much isn't really going to help us with our master plan...."

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun put an anxious expression onto his face, sighed, and said, "Ai, Master didn't want things to turn out this way either. You just need to get used to it. The thing is, no matter where your Master goes, he always ends up rising to prominence and becoming a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering figure. I really am just too outstanding. There's nothing I can do about it."

A strange expression appeared on Bai Hao's face as he looked at his Master, unsure of how to respond. Finally, he simply smiled wryly and shook his head. Aware that discussing the matter was useless, he began trying to come up with his own plan about how to resolve any dangerous situations. After a bit of time passed, he came up with an idea and started to make plans.

Before long, people were talking about this Bai Hao’s impressive background. Certain people were very emphatic about how important Bai Hao was to the Giant Ghost King, and how good their relationship was. Other people would emphasize his cultivation base and battle prowess. In this way, people began to get a more rounded view of him.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased to be such a center of attention. He would often leave the shop and stroll about with his hands clasped behind his back, enjoying all the people looking at him. However, after a few days of such showing off, he got bored and went back to continue working on seventeen-colored flame.

After the incident with Chen Xiong, nobody came looking to start trouble. Everyone knew that Bai Hao was the type of person who was not to be trifled with. When he lost his temper, not even a heavenly duke clan could do anything about it, let alone more ordinary people.

Rumors spread like wildfire. However, for Bai Xiaochun, life just got calmer and calmer. He immersed himself in researching seventeen-colored flame, and even began to perform some experiments, although he would immediately abort them if unexpected problems cropped up. After all, if he caused fire to rain from the heavens in this area, or sent black smoke out everywhere, his comfortable life would definitely become anything but comfortable.

Because of that oath, nothing particularly dramatic occurred. However, because of how much time he was devoting to seventeen-colored flame, his understanding and control of sixteen-colored flame improved.

It also helped a lot that Bai Hao would give good ideas here and there, and would help with his own augury. Together, they made slight adjustments to the formula for sixteen-colored flame. As time went on, Bai Xiaochun continued to struggle with seventeen-colored flame, and at the same time, improved his success rate with sixteen-colored flame. By this time, he had roughly a thirty percent success rate.

Actually, anybody who heard that he had achieved a success rate that high would be completely incredulous. Virtually no formulas in the world were so successful, and it was all thanks to the help provided by Bai Hao.

“Master, this specific augury technique was designed for fifteen-colored flame. If I want to succeed with seventeen-colored flame, then we really need to improve the sixteen-colored flame first.” Bai Hao had been working very hard lately. Even when he had time off, he would sit around thinking about seventeen-colored flame, and even the future formula for eighteen-colored flame.

He had a few ideas, one being to use multiple seventeen-colored flames to deduce the formula for eighteen-colored flame. The other was to spread a seventeen-colored flame out into a sea of fire, add another color to it, and pull the fire back into a tongue of flame afterward. All of the thinking and discussions about the matter left Bai Hao feeling very drained mentally.

It would have been very difficult for Bai Xiaochun to accomplish these things on his own. Even if he had succeeded, it would have taken an unimaginable amount of time.

As Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao were focusing on their research on flame conjuring, the rumors in the city continued to rage, and Little Wolfgod and the other chosen continued taking their time coming up with a plan. However, as all of that happened, there were two people whose sinister gazes came to be locked on Bai Xiaochun’s shop in Borough 89.

“Little Wolfgod and the others are complete morons. How could they bungle things up dealing with one trifling Bai Hao!?” In Borough 3, there was a particularly towering pagoda in which the heir of the Nine Serenities King, Prince Zhou Hong stood, staring off into the distance.

He normally spent his time in Nine Serenities City, but after hearing that Bai Hao had come to Arch-Emperor City, he had hurried over. After all, he simply couldn’t let the matter of the Necromancer Kettle rest. Almost immediately upon arrival, he heard about the wretched fate of Chen Xiong.

Standing next to Zhou Hong was a handsome, middle-aged man dressed in luxurious clothing. His facial features looked much like Xu Shan's. Upon hearing Zhou Hong's words, he chuckled and replied, “You’re exactly right, Brother Zhou. This Bai Hao… is relying completely on the Giant Ghost King. Maybe he does have some pretty good battle prowess, but he’s only one person, and he’s not the actual heir of the Giant Ghost King. Zhou Zimo hates him too. I think dealing with him… shouldn’t be much of a problem at all.”

Turning to look at the middle-aged man, Zhou Hong said, “Brother Xu, I heard that Xu Shan actually likes this Bai Hao. Is that true?”

“My little sister is a bit naïve. She said a lot of nice things about this Bai Hao after she got back, which cooled father down quite a bit. Anyway, she just doesn’t get life. As her older brother, I simply cannot allow this insult to Spirit Advent City to stand. That is why I was more than happy to accept your invitation to come here, Brother Zhou!” This middle-aged man was one of the sons of the Spirit Advent King, Xu Peng.

“Brother Zhou,” he continued, “do you happen to have already come up with a plan on how to deal with him?” The truth was that Xu Peng didn’t really feel any enmity toward this Bai Hao. However, in the Wildlands, the position of king wasn’t exclusively passed on to sons. It could also go to daughters. And the Spirit Advent King had many, many sons. It was also common knowledge in the Wildlands that all the princes and princesses in Spirit Advent City feared Xu Shan the most.

After coming to find that Xu Shan had a good impression of Bai Hao, and then having received the invitation from Zhou Hong, Xu Peng decided that it was the perfect opportunity to better his own position. Of course, since he had never met this Bai Hao before, he was also prepared to back out of the situation if Zhou Hong’s plan was too dangerous.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0730 awe-chapter-731

Zhou Hong looked askance at Xu Peng. Considering what he knew about Xu Peng’s personality, he knew that it wouldn’t be possible to change his mind.

Unfortunately, Gongsun Yi had refused his invitation with a sarcastically worded message explaining that he didn’t need to resort to plots and schemes to earn back the face he had lost, that he would do so with his own battle prowess.

Although Zhou Hong wasn’t too pleased about that, afterward, he had been left with no other option than to meet with Xu Peng. After all, he had certain misgivings about the Junior Champion King, and didn’t want to get involved with him.

“Don’t worry, Brother Xu, this Bai Hao has already reached a dead end. I know we can’t kill him, so my plan is to simply humiliate him and make sure he won’t stick around in Arch-Emperor City. We just need to drive him back to Giant Ghost City.” That really was what Zhou Hong wanted. Having this Bai Hao stuck in Giant Ghost City, out of sight and out of mind, was much different from having him right in Arch-Emperor City, making a big scene. Besides, the former would give him the chance to achieve even greater success eventually.

Right now, the political climate in Arch-Emperor City was very unstable, so if Bai Hao managed to consolidate his power, it could make him very difficult to deal with later.

“Oh?” Xu Peng said with a smile. “I’d love to hear the details.” With that, he looked over expectantly.

“Well,” Zhou Hong replied, “I haven’t thought through all of the specifics yet, but we can’t just let him do whatever he wishes around here. His shop is getting really popular, right? My plan is to call over one of the top grandmaster necromancers from Nine Serenities City and set up a shop right next to Bai Hao’s.

“When it comes to battle prowess and fighting, Bai Hao is definitely incredible. But I refuse to believe that he’s just as good at doing business. If we cut off his source of income, he’ll get desperate enough to start making mistakes, and then we’ll have the advantage.”

The truth was that Zhou Hong had already worked out a complicated plan, but didn’t want to reveal that fact to Xu Peng. He was actually still disgruntled that he couldn’t just attack Bai Hao and deal with him directly. Unfortunately, he couldn’t beat him in a fight, and therefore had to resort to schemes to get his revenge.

Xu Peng listened attentively, and in the end, gave an enigmatic smile. He was no fool, and knew that Zhou Hong must have other plans that he wasn’t revealing. However, Xu Peng still wanted to try to take advantage of the situation for his own benefit, and in any case, there couldn’t be any harm in opening a shop. In fact, it might even help out the situation. Finally, Xu Peng nodded.

“That sounds like a good idea, Brother Zhou. In fact, how about I invite a grandmaster necromancer from Spirit Advent City? We can both open shops, right in Borough 89!”

The two of them laughed heartily, and then went about making the arrangements.

Half a month later, Bai Xiaochun was still in the middle of researching the formula for seventeen-colored flame. Bai

Hao was finished with his improvements to the techniques, but still needed to work out some of the particulars.

Business kept getting better, and there never ceased to be a line going out the door. It was also during that half a month that the two shops on either side of Bai Xiaochun’s changed ownership.

After closing briefly for renovations, they both re-opened, larger and more luxurious than ever before. In terms of the specific businesses involved, they sold soul medicine and offered spirit enhancement services!

Most shocking of all were the names attached to the signs above the shops.

One was Sima Tao, the other was Sun Yifan!

When those two names were revealed, it caused a big stir in Borough 89. It only took a short period of time before people were talking, not only about Bai Xiaochun’s shop, but about these two newly opened shops!

“Sima Tao…. He’s a grand elder from the Sima Clan in Spirit Advent City! And he's also a celestial necromancer. He's adept at spirit enhancements, and is widely accepted as the number one spirit enhancer in Spirit Advent City!”

“He’s so famous! Everybody says that he’s one of the few necromancers who might actually break through into the earthly rank!”

“Sun Yifan is no ordinary individual either. He's a rogue cultivator without a clan, but who earned the favor of the Nine Serenities King. After that, he achieved a meteoric rise to his current rank of celestial necromancer!”

“You know what I heard? Supposedly, he was so grateful to the Nine Serenities King that he agreed to become his high counselor. In terms of his skill in necromancy, it's on par with Sima Tao’s!”

The entire city was shaken by these two names, and despite the incident which had occurred with Chen Xiong, many people began to pay much closer attention to see what would happen. After all, Borough 89 wasn’t in Arch-Emperor City’s central district; it was located more toward the fringes of the city. For two grandmasters to suddenly set up shop in a place like that was very telling.

“They’re making a move on Bai Hao….”

“One from Nine Serenities City and one from Spirit Advent City…. They’re challenging him without making any open moves. I smell a plot.”

Bai Xiaochun was angered by this new development, which immediately cast him in a bad light. Despite the fact that he could perform a fifteenfold spirit enhancement, in terms of both cultivation base and reputation as a spirit enhancer, he could only be considered someone of the Junior generation to these two.

Almost immediately, business began to shift to the shops operated by the two grandmasters. The soul medicine being sold there was high-grade, and every portion was marked with an official seal guaranteeing its level of quality, which also made the medicine something of a collectible. As far as spirit enhancements went, both necromancers had enhanced multiple magical items to the point of a fifteenfold enhancements. In fact, Sun Yifan’s masterwork was a magical device he had enhanced sixteen times for the Nine Serenities King!

Bai Xiaochun was stuck right between those two other shops, and it only took three days for his business to take a critical hit.

Bai Xiaochun was not happy at all. Upon walking out to inspect the two other shops, he found that they were indeed larger than his. When you added in how their work was guaranteed by means of a seal, it really made his own shop seemed too simplistic.

“What’s the meaning of this!? Can’t beat me in a fight so now they’re going to try to put me out of business!?” Both of the other two shops were completely bustling, and although his shop wasn’t completely empty, it was nothing like it was before. “Nine Serenities City… that must be Zhou Hong. And Spirit Advent City. Hmm. I didn’t take any life force from Xu Shan. Why would she have it out for me?”

Quite a few people noticed that Bai Xiaochun had walked out onto the street to look at the other shops. Even Sima Tao and Sun Yifan noticed, but seemed to view him as little more than business competition, and didn’t pay him much heed.

As far as they were concerned, Bai Xiaochun might have impressive battle prowess, and even have a Nascent Soul cultivation base, but in terms of spirit enhancement and necromancy, he couldn't compare to them. They had spent the majority of their lives immersed in necromancy, and had vast amounts of experience. There was no way that some up-and-coming brat could even come close to their abilities.

After sizing up the situation, Bai Xiaochun stalked angrily back into his shop. Although he hadn't originally cared too much about this spirit enhancement shop of his, considering that his future cultivation was tied to multi-colored flame, and he needed to do a lot of research, it meant that he had a greater need for vengeful souls than ever. In fact, the number involved was difficult to even process mentally.

He couldn’t go back to Giant Ghost City, and there was no way to shake down any clans. Mistress Red-Dust wouldn’t be of any help at all. That meant that the only other possible way to get souls was to beat people in fights, which was far too dangerous as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned.

Without souls, he couldn’t conjure flame, and without multi-colored flame, he couldn’t increase his cultivation base. Without a higher cultivation base, he would never be able to get out of the Wildlands. That, coupled with all the pressure from Mistress Red-Dust, had him feeling very anxious.

He was alone, with no clan to back him up, and without any stipend of souls from the Giant Ghost King. If he wanted to conjure flame and improve his cultivation base, then he had to rely on vengeful souls.

His hope had come to rest in his shop, and he had originally assumed it would be able to support him to the point where he could increase his cultivation base and leave the Wildlands.

But now that these two new shops had opened up, Bai Xiaochun’s plan was completely wrecked. Besides, if things kept going on the way they were, the other chosen in the city would surely get involved. If things got to the point where he had no business at all, then he would be in very serious trouble, and might even get killed.

“No, I have to think of a way!” Back in his shop, he sat there thinking, a frown on his face as all sorts of ideas ran through his head. However, no matter what ideas he came up with, they had flaws that he couldn’t deal with, considering how weak he was overall.

Off to the side, Bai Hao looked at his Master, and then at the people outside going mostly to the other two shops. After a moment, he said, “Master, I have two plans that can resolve the situation!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0731 awe-chapter-732

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, a bit taken aback. “Two plans?”

In the short time he had been together with Bai Hao, he had already come to see that he was extremely talented, so much so that he qualified to shake all of the Wildlands.

Without Bai Hao, Bai Xiaochun would have faced nearly insurmountable difficulties when it came to flame conjuring.

However, it wasn’t just Bai Hao’s skill in flame conjuring that was impressive. Although Bai Xiaochun definitely had something to do with the success of the shop, much of it had to do with how Bai Hao handled everyday business. Overall, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased by the arrangement.

However, he had noticed a weakness in his apprentice. Bai Hao always thought of things in a very limited way. He simply didn’t match up to Bai Xiaochun, who thought grand thoughts and carried out dashing plans….

Looking very serious, Bai Hao lowered his voice and said, “Master, these two plans of mine are currently in the early stages of planning. If you want more details, I’ll need to put a bit more thought into them and work everything out. Or I can come up with some other ideas.”

Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively and said, “No, that’s fine, tell me your ideas.”

Then he looked at his apprentice with eager anticipation.

Looking thoughtful, Bai Hao continued. “Master, Sun Yifan from Nine Serenities City and Sima Tao from Spirit Advent

City are both celestial necromancers. One of them is a high counselor to a king, and the other comes from an aristocratic necromancer clan. On the surface, it seems like they’re cooperating, but the truth is… as grandmaster necromancers, they're both very arrogant. There’s no way that they truly get along.”

The truth was that Bai Hao really had put a lot of thought into the situation, and was not just shooting his mouth; he was providing a fairly accurate analysis.

“Because of that, it doesn’t really matter who is behind the scenes organizing all this. All we have to do is make it so that these two grandmasters stop following orders, which should be possible as long as they aren’t acting directly on behalf of their respective kings. You see, both of them view their reputation as being all important. Although they are currently holding back, the two of them definitely are interested in outdoing the other…. We just need to throw some fuel on the fire, and the two of them will start squabbling with each other!” Bai Hao’s eyes glittered, and his tone grew more sinister.

“Master, all you have to do is make that happen, then suck it up a bit and get on the good side of one of them by acknowledging him as superior. Not only would that improve your own reputation, you also could use it as an attack on the other. In terms of all the complicated things that need to happen behind the scenes, I can handle that. By following this plan, it will only take a short period of time to achieve the first measure of success.” With that, Bai Hao stopped talking and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times as he considered the matter. Pretending to bow his head to one of the two newcomers was something he could accept. However, even as he pondered Bai Hao’s words, his own thoughts brought him back to a situation which had occurred when he first got to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Bai Hao could tell that his Master suddenly seemed a bit distracted. Feeling a bit hesitant, he continued with his second plan.

“There’s another plan I came up with,” he explained. “This one is a bit more direct, and also a bit more high profile. It will probably lead to more situations that have to be dealt with. You could participate in a competition with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao regarding necromancy and spirit enhancement, and then crush them. It could lead to other problems. However, if we managed to get *them* to challenge *you*, Master, then as the accused party, you could strike back with impunity.”

Afterward, Bai Xiaochun remained silent and thoughtful for a bit. Then his eyes glittered, and he suddenly looked very excited.

“Hahaha! Well done, apprentice. Those two plans are excellent. However, I actually have a better way to deal with the situation!”

Bai Hao’s eyes widened. “Master….”

His heart began to pound when he thought about how Bai Xiaochun had handled matters in the past. For some reason, he was already getting a bad feeling about the situation.

“Fear not, my apprentice, Master has a lot of experience handling situations like this. Just watch and learn!” With that, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, looking very excited and confident. To him, the sky already looked bluer than it had before.

The truth was that if Bai Xiaochun hadn’t mentioned having experience, then Bai Hao would actually have felt a lot better. But now, he got a very sinking feeling about what was to come. At that point, Bai Xiaochun produced a transmission jade slip from his bag of holding.

“Hmmmphh! I don’t care if this is business warfare, do you really think I'm afraid of you? Back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, Lord Bai was unparalleled under heaven. When it comes to fighting wars without landing blows, nobody can beat me!” Feeling quite proud, he quickly sent a message to Zhou Yixing back in Giant Ghost City.

The task he had in mind for him was something that Zhou Yixing would easily be able to handle. Furthermore, considering that Zhou Yixing still had the restrictive spell in him, his life and death could be controlled by a single thought from Bai Xiaochun.

He hadn’t contacted Zhou Yixing since coming to Arch-Emperor City, the reason being the death of Li Feng. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun had heard of the incident which had occurred during the battle with the savage tribe.

He had immediately begun to suspect the significance of the event, and had eventually come to realize what it meant about Zhou Yixing.

It had put Bai Xiaochun on guard, and he had decided to leave Zhou Yixing to his own designs for a short time before deciding what to do with him.

**

Zhou Yixing was currently in a mansion he owned in Giant Ghost City, looking very gloomy. Things had gone well for him after Bai Xiaochun’s departure, and everyone had treated him respectfully. But as time went on, relations with the powerful groups in the city had cooled, and were not like they had been in the past.

Not all of them were distancing themselves, and Zhou Yixing still had his ways to assert his power.

However, he was feeling very conflicted about being left behind in Giant Ghost City. He wanted to be with Bai Xiaochun in Arch-Emperor City, and yet, Bai Xiaochun had apparently gotten too busy to think about him.

“Could it be that I really made the wrong choice…?” That was a question he asked himself more and more often nowadays. However, there was nothing he could do but stick to his guns and wait to see what happened. If enough time passed and Bai Xiaochun didn't contact him, then he could always take the initiative to send a message.

Even as he sat pondering these issues, the transmission jade slip in his bag of holding suddenly vibrated. After pulling it out anxiously, a stream of divine sense entered his mind, and he heard Bai Xiaochun’s voice.

“Zhou Yixing, come to Arch-Emperor City!”

Heart bursting with excitement, he didn’t delay for even a moment. After making all the necessary arrangements, he headed toward the teleportation portal.

Before long, he was in Arch-Emperor City. It was his first time in the place, and he was immediately awed by its grandeur. It took a long moment for him to calm down and then find the inn that Bai Xiaochun had instructed him to stay at.

That evening, Bai Xiaochun slipped into the inn unnoticed and found Zhou Yixing.

“Milord!” Zhou Yixing said, shooting to his feet, clasping hands, and bowing deeply. Although he was very excited, he kept it out of his voice and facial expression. Instead, he put a serious expression onto his face that said he would climb mountains of daggers and swim through seas of flames if Bai Xiaochun asked him to.

Bai Xiaochun handed a bag of holding to Zhou Yixing and then lowered his voice and said, “Take these vengeful souls and other resources. Go to the shops run by Sima Tao and Sun Yifan and buy as many of the high-grade soul medicines they have that are marked with their seals!”

Zhou Yixing immediately bowed his head in agreement, a very serious expression on his face. Although he had just arrived in Arch-Emperor City, he had been receiving some reports about Bai Xiaochun’s activities, and was generally aware of the situation. As such, he immediately understood what Bai Xiaochun was talking about.

“Don’t worry, milord,” he said with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron. “I’ll handle it all immediately!”

A smile appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. He offered a few more words of encouragement, and then gave the formula for thirteen-colored flame to Zhou Yixing, along with some advice on how to use it. Bai Xiaochun had done similar things back in Giant Ghost City, the result being that Zhou Yixing was already a terrestrial necromancer skilled with twelve-colored flame.

Combined with the special advice Bai Xiaochun had given, this formula was essentially the most precious of treasures to Zhou Yixing, whose heart swelled with gratitude.

Although the advice from Bai Xiaochun couldn’t match up to personal experience, it would at least make things easier. More important was that it indicated to Zhou Yixing how Bai Xiaochun felt about him.

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun also promised him that as soon as he mastered thirteen-colored flame, he would give him the formula for fourteen-colored flame, along with some personal advice. At that point, Zhou Yixing felt more certain than ever that he had made the right decision.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0732 awe-chapter-733

After making the arrangements with Zhou Yixing, Bai Xiaochun stopped worrying about the two new shops. Instead, he hurried back to his own shop, exhilarated and in very high spirits.

“After this, those two old fogies won’t be underestimating me! The more experience you have in life, the sharper you get…. Take me for example. After everything that happened between me and that Whatchamacallit Society back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, how could I *not* think of using this method?! Hmmmphh! It’s simple, but effective. I’ll just do the same thing!”

Bai Xiaochun had never forgotten what the malevolent Celestial Sky Society did with his Ultra Fasting Aid Pill. The way they took that special pill which he had used to replace spirit food, and completely ruined it, had caused him to slip into a deep depression.

“Since these two necromancers have come looking to cause problems for me, then they can’t blame me for being vicious and merciless in return!” With that, he settled down cross-legged to meditate. As he did, the light spilling in through the door cast him in stark shadow… making him look completely ambitious and ruthless.

The next day, Zhou Yixing went to work with the vengeful souls Bai Xiaochun had given him. Of course, he didn't do it himself. He hired people to go to the shops operated by Sima Tao and Sun Yifan, disguised as ordinary patrons, to purchase plenty of high-grade soul medicine.

High-grade soul medicine was expensive stuff, but Bai Xiaochun was clearly determined to come out on top. For the following several days, Zhou Yixing did the same thing, using different agents every time. Eventually, half a month went by, and he had quite a large collection of high-grade soul medicine.

Each and every portion was marked with the seal of either Sima Tao or Sun Yifan. Just having those marks on the soul medicine made it more expensive than before.

There were also some portions of mid-grade soul medicine that were marked with the grandmasters’ seals. Zhou Yixing bought all of them. A few more days went by, and finally, he ran out of the vengeful souls that Bai Xiaochun had given him.

At that point, he made contact with Bai Xiaochun. Late in the night, they met again in the same inn. Without even a moment of hesitation, Bai Xiaochun gave Zhou Yixing enough vengeful souls to buy an entire second collection of soul medicine, and then took the first collection away.

The next day, Zhou Yixing went to work again.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was back in his shop, hustling about as he prepared to get to work. Off to the side, Bai Hao watched, and soon had a fairly good idea of what exactly the plan was.

“Obviously, Master is buying up the competition’s soul medicine, and then tampering with it. Afterward, he’ll secretly distribute it, and when people start having problems, they’ll blame Sima Tao and Sun Yifan.

“It's a simple plan, and matchlessly vicious. However, that soul medicine was well-made, and won't be easy to tamper with. If people pick up on any of the clues, we could be shooting ourselves in the foot.” After a bit of hesitation, Bai Hao voiced his concerns to Bai Xiaochun.

“Don't worry, my apprentice. Master knows what to do. This will work perfectly!” Sticking his chin up proudly, he went into the back room and pulled out all of the soul medicine Zhou Yixing had purchased. After examining it closely, he had to admit that these two necromancers deserved their reputation. The medicine all abounded with soul power.

“Well, I don't have any other options. You were the ones who provoked me.” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and a strange glint appeared in his eyes. He had reached a critical stage in the operation; he knew that if he tampered with the medicine and people realized it, then it would be exactly as Bai Hao had reasoned. However, Bai Xiaochun was confident, and it all went back to what had occurred back when he first arrived in the Wildlands and worked with soul medicine.

Back then, he had tried to treat soul medicine like medicinal pills, and combine Wildlands necromancy and the apothecary techniques from the Heavenspan River region to create a shocking type of soul pill.

The only person who might notice would be someone who was both a grandmaster necromancer and a grandmaster apothecary. In the wildlands, necromancers were numerous, but apothecaries were essentially nonexistent!

The reason for that was that the plants and vegetation in the Wildlands were not suitable for use in medicines. It was for a similar reason that spirit enhanced magical devices were much more rare in the Heavenspan River region.

“I never thought that my previous failure would actually turn out to be a powerful tool.” Eyes flickering thoughtfully, he further pondered the idea of imbuing the soul medicine with toxic gas, and at the same time, doing so in a way that would not be lethal. After all, Bai Xiaochun was not the type who would rise to success by trampling upon mountains of innocent corpses.

“Aphrodisiac Pill? No, that pill is too cruel. Fantasy Pill…? No, that won’t work either. It got too famous. If the same effects show up here, people might think of my true identity. Besides, if the situation blew up, it would be difficult to get under control.”

After deliberating for a bit more time, his eyes began to shine.

“That green smoke from the Blood Stream Sect that gave people diarrhea would be perfect! Besides, if the situation blows up, there would be plenty of ways to get it back under control!” Pursing his lips to suppress his laughter, he thought back to the green smoke which had resulted when he tried to concoct the Misty Spirit Incense on Middle Peak in the Blood Stream Sect.

“It's been a long time since I did any pill concocting.” After taking a moment to settle his qi and clear his mind, he set to work concocting some pills, and then began to take the green toxic gas that resulted and imbue it into the soul medicine.

The night passed uneventfully, and when he walked out of the room the following morning at dawn, Bai Hao could see that, despite his exhaustion, he was very excited. In fact, he was even laughing loudly.

“You want to fight me, Zhou Hong!? There’s nothing that Lord Bai hasn't experienced in life!” Thankfully, he had plenty of restrictive spells set up, ensuring that his voice didn’t go outside of the shop.

Worried about the situation, Bai Hao hurried over and was about to say something when Bai Xiaochun held out a portion of soul medicine.

“Here, my apprentice,” he said proudly. “Use every trick you know to study this portion of soul medicine and see if there’s anything wrong with it.”

A serious look appeared in Bai Hao’s eyes as he looked at the high-grade soul medicine. However, after studying it for a long moment, he couldn't see anything out of the ordinary. He even performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger, studying the soul medicine in every way he could think of. In the end, he had to admit that it looked like nothing more than an ordinary portion of soul medicine.

Lookup quizzically at Bai Xiaochun, he said, “Master, did you really tamper with this soul medicine? Or did you take out the wrong one?”

Bai Hao was both a ghost cultivator who existed as a soul body, and also a genius when it came to flame conjuring. If he couldn’t identify something unusual about the soul medicine, then it would be hard to find someone else in the Wildlands who could.

At first, Bai Xiaochun was worried that he had pulled out the wrong soul medicine, but after looking it over, he laughed heartily and said, “That's the right one! Within one month, those two shops’ names will be ruined!”

When he thought back to his own miserable defeat at the hands of the Celestial Sky Society way back when, he knew that he was pulling a vicious and dirty trick. However, his opponents had really forced him into a corner….

“When I make a move, I frighten even myself!” Rushing out of the shop, he contacted Zhou Yixing to set up another meeting. After handing over all of the tampered soul medicine, he gave some warnings and instructions that Zhou Yixing accepted without question. Afterward, Bai Xiaochun left in a wonderful mood.

Zhou Yixing was definitely a skilled follower. He had only been in Arch-Emperor City for a short time, but had plenty of men and resources at his disposal back in Giant Ghost City. Therefore, it was relatively easy for him to make certain connections in his new home. Almost immediately, he began to arrange for dealers to distribute the soul medicine.

This soul medicine was high-grade, and had the marks of grandmasters on them. Furthermore, no amount of inspection would reveal any flaw in them. Considering that they were being offered at a discounted price, it made them easy to sell. In fact, were it not for the fact that Bai Xiaochun had expressly forbidden it, it would have been possible to sell the entire batch of soul medicine in one go.

It only took about a day to get the high-grade soul medicine distributed within Arch-Emperor City. Not too long after that, the second batch that Zhou Yixing had purchased was finished, and also began to filter out into the city. More and more soul cultivators were getting their hands on it….

Of course, Zhou Yixing made sure that most of it went to soul cultivators from Borough 89 and the surrounding boroughs.

Before long, a third batch was being sold, then a fourth and a fifth.... during the half month that passed, more and more cultivators acquired such medicine. And then, gradually, very strange things began to happen....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0733 awe-chapter-734

The first incident occurred at Little Wolfgod’s house. Little Wolfgod himself sat stock still and completely expressionless on a balcony, watching two soul cultivators dueling in the courtyard below.

Whoever prevailed in the duel would win Little Wolfgod’s favor, and would be able to join him as a follower.

To Little Wolfgod, it wasn’t a very important matter, but to the two cultivators involved in the duel, it was quite the opposite. That was especially true of the weaker of the two opponents, who was a middle-aged man named Zhou Chenwu. In fact, the duel was so important to him that he had bought a portion of high-grade soul medicine and consumed it right before the fighting started. That had pushed him to much higher levels of power.

The duel had been going on for some time when, all of a sudden, that Zhou Chenwu’s face suddenly flickered. Then he fell back, a look of complete incredulity on his face. He looked like he was about to say something, but before he could, his opponent moved in for the kill.

“Hold on, Li Linsen, I--” His opponent completely ignored him, unleashing a magical technique before Zhou Chenwu could even finish speaking. Zhou Chenwu anxiously dodged to the side, but that motion apparently put pressure on his abdomen, and as he moved away, a shocking *phhhhhhrt* sound echoed out.

In addition to the amazingly loud sound, Zhou Chenwu’s pants… suddenly expanded outward as if they were being filled with air or gas…. Moments later, the most noxious of odors imaginable began to spread out in the area.

Zhou Chenwu’s opponent Li Linsen was nearest, and was immediately blasted by the odor. Li Linsen had a Core Formation cultivation base, and would generally not be affected by toxic gases. However, this odor was so strong that his face fell, and he immediately felt sick to his stomach.

Everyone watching the duel was stunned, and Little Wolfgod, who had closed his eyes moments before, suddenly opened them and looked over in shock.

“What was that sound…?”

“This can’t be right. Cultivators of our level don’t eat food…. Unless… maybe Zhou Chenwu is using some kind of special divine ability?”

Most of the audience was simply looking on in wide-eyed shock.

As for Li Linsen, he had to suppress the urge to vomit as he angrily said, “What are you doing, Zhou Chenwu?!?!”

Face scarlet, Zhou Chenwu replied, “Let’s end things for today, Fellow Daoist Li. We can reschedule the duel for another day.”

Inside, he was nearly going crazy. Completely unsure of what was happening, he turned to leave, howling miserably in his heart. He could feel his abdomen churning, and could even hear loud gurgling noises coming from the same area, noises that were completely embarrassing.

“What’s going on? What’s happening?!?!” Even as Zhou Chenwu turned to leave, Li Linsen in his humiliation let out a shout and prepared to attack again. At this point, Zhou Chenwu’s back was to him….

“Stay away!” Zhou Chenwu shouted urgently. “I can’t hold it in!!”

But he was too late…. Li Linsen closed in and hit him on the back. At that point, Zhou Chenwu truly couldn’t hold on any longer, and a thunderous *phhhhhhrt* rang out, followed by a burst of some gaseous substance…. Before Li Linsen could do anything, the gas blasted into him.

The noxious nature of the odor was even more intense than the last time, and Li Linsen was even closer. A scream erupted from his mouth, and he tumbled backward miserably.

“You’re pushing things too far, Zhou Chenwu!!!”

Face burning red, Zhou Chenwu fled. As he went along, the *phhhhhhrt* sounds continued to echo out, and left behind clouds of gas the entire way….

It was only after he was gone that the soul cultivators back in Little Wolfgod’s home finally got around to reacting. When the noxious gas reached them, they immediately devolved into a hubbub.

“Was that… was that a fart?!?!”

“Zhou Chenwu must have done it on purpose!”

Chaos ensued, and Little Wolfgod was immediately enraged. And that was only the first incident. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, there was a second incident somewhere else in Arch-Emperor City. Then a third, and a fourth….

The fourth incident was particularly shocking. In one bustling market in Borough 87, a beautiful female cultivator was surrounded by a cluster of male cultivators. The entire group was chatting merrily when, without any warning, the woman’s face fell, and a loud *phhhrt* sound escaped into the open.

The male cultivators all gaped in shock, and some blurted, “What was that sound?”

Then, an indescribably noxious odor caused all of their faces to flicker. As for the female cultivator, she simply couldn’t stop more thunderous *phhhhhhrt* sounds from exploding out….

It sounded like a booming drum originating directly from the female cultivator. Eyes went wide, and numerous jaws dropped. As for the female cultivator, she began to scream, and tried to prevent what was happening, but was completely incapable.

Phhhhhhrt! Phhhhhhrt!! Phhhhhhrt!!!

Clouds of foul, noxious gas spread out in all directions into the crowded marketplace, causing numerous shouts of alarm to rise into the air. Panic ensued as people scrambled to escape.

Such scenes played out not only in Borough 87, but also in Borough 88, Borough 86 and Borough 85. And even more incidents occurred in Borough 89.

Chaos spread as the *phhhhhhrt* sounds and the foul gas began to fill the city. Anyone who encountered that odor felt as if they were being infected.

Before long, clouds of gas covered large areas of the city….

And yet, the most unimaginable aspect of the disaster was yet to come. Soon, the soul cultivators with the upset stomachs found that after expelling the gas, they started having diarrhea. The lucky ones were struck by the diarrhea when they were alone. Unfortunately, many were out in the open. Soon… agonized shrieks of madness began to fill all of the areas near Borough 89.

“What exactly is going on here!?!?”

“This isn’t a sneak attack is it? It doesn’t seem like it is!!”

“Who did this? Who’s behind it!? I'm gonna kill ‘em!!”

Miserable screams and roars of rage filled Arch-Emperor City.

Bai Xiaochun soon heard about what was happening, and even saw a soul cultivator outside of his shop unleashing an overwhelming stench onto the street. As the foul gas spread out, people scrambled to avoid it.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and Bai Hao looked completely taken aback.

“Something’s wrong,” Bai Xiaochun muttered. “That smoke I added was supposed to cause diarrhea. Why is everyone farting…?” Nervous, he backed away from the gas, worried he might be infected. Then, his eyes went wide as he saw a second soul cultivator emitting *phhhhhhrt* sounds.

Before long, a third could be seen, and then a fourth….

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, eight people on the street near his shop were all struck, and were sending foul gas out in all directions. Cries of alarm rang out as the passersby fell into pandemonium.

His next-door neighbors Sima Tao and Sun Yifan also looked on in shock, and quickly ascertained that the gas would be impossible to dispel. Both necromancers were very unsettled.

Suddenly feeling very nervous, Bai Hao looked out at the crazed populace, then turned to Bai Xiaochun and said, “Mas-Master… I'm pretty sure all of those people had high-grade soul medicine in their hands. Could it be that--”

“Keep your voice down!” Bai Xiaochun interrupted. Rushing forward, he slammed the door shut.

“Don’t tell me that I’ve gotten rusty at concocting medicine? It was supposed to be diarrhea. Why is everybody farting? That odor is almost unbelievably noxious!” Shaking his head gloomily, he thought back to all of the various accidents that had occurred back when he was into medicine concocting.

“I really didn’t do it on purpose this time…. Who would ever have thought that things would turn out so crazy!?” Heart pounding, he looked out through the door crack at the gas filling the street, and the fleeing soul cultivators. Some of them weren’t able to take the stench, and began to pass out. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, his fear mounted.

Trembling, he murmured, “That stench is so powerful! It affects everybody, regardless of their cultivation base….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0734 awe-chapter-735

The cataclysmic nature of the event was thanks in large part due to how well Zhou Yixing had gone about distributing all of the soul medicine. He had hired a lot of people to help, and had sold the medicine just as Bai Xiaochun had indicated, focusing mostly on the area around Borough 89. After all, if the effects were too scattered, they couldn’t be considered a true catastrophe.

Borough 89 and the surrounding areas were very densely populated. Therefore, as the various patches of foul gas spread and combined, they slowly became something like a dark fog that gripped the entire area in its clutches.

It all came as a complete shock to Zhou Yixing. However, he had followed the plan which had been set in place, dismissing all of the people he had hired, and then changing his disguise and going into hiding. However, he didn’t forget the final step of the plan. Even as he lay in hiding, he gritted his teeth and pulled out a portion of high-grade soul medicine that had been tampered with, then consumed it.

Before long, he also became a source of loud *phhhhhhrt* noises. Face ashen, he began to shout in a gruff voice.

“Damn this high-grade soul medicine! The symptoms only appeared after I consumed this medicine! Dammit, it even had the mark of Sima Tao on it!”

Other soul cultivators in the area heard him. They had already been gripped by rage, but after hearing Zhou Yixing’s words, they initially hesitated, but then came to the realization that they had also consumed such soul medicine. Immediately, angered shouts began to sing out.

“It's the high-grade soul medicine! I consumed a portion that had the mark of Sun Yifan on it! That’s when all of this started happening! It's his fault!!”

“That’s right! I had some of that high-grade soul medicine too! The kind with Sima Tao’s mark on it!!”

“He’s in on it too!”

More and more such accusations began to fly, and the howls of rage and humiliation began to reach a fever pitch.

At first, people began to search for the dealers who had sold them the high-grade soul medicine, but Zhou Yixing had long since ensured that they couldn’t be found. Naturally, the attention of the victims quickly became focused on Sima Tao and Sun Yifan.

“Let’s find Sima Tao! He's the one that concocted this soul medicine, and it was obviously defective! He’s trying to get famous at the expense of the common people!!”

“Don’t forget Sun Yifan. It was his soul medicine that I ate. He’s a grandmaster! How dare he try to run a scam on us!!”

“Find them!!”

It didn't take long before a huge mob was pouring through the streets of Borough 89. Soon, they were on the very street where Bai Xiaochun’s shop was located, a river of countless soul cultivators, only a small portion of which were people who had actually consumed the soul medicine. The rest had only been affected second-hand. Righteous indignation burned within the crowd as they rushed toward the shops owned by Sima Tao and Sun Yifan.

Borough 89 was in complete chaos. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was the one truly responsible for all of this, and the sight of what was happening had him trembling in fear. Furthermore, he knew that it would not be easy to sate the anger of this crowd. After all, he had personally experienced many situations just like this in which the crowd had been after him.

“You people forced me to do this!” he muttered nervously. “I really had no choice.”

As he crouched there in his shop, he would occasionally open and close the door to fan the gas away.

Bai Hao watched everything happening, sighing and musing that this unreliable Master of his really did have a knack for making people feel helpless. In fact, Bai Hao almost couldn’t believe that he was really a Nascent Soul expert.... And yet, somehow that made Bai Xiaochun seem more down-to-earth to him, instead of some lofty and unreachable person. Bai Hao smiled wryly at the realization that it actually made him feel closer to his Master.

As Bai Hao sighed, Bai Xiaochun nervously peeked outside to see how events played out. The enraged shouting seemed to be peaking. The foul gas made it difficult to see, but people were already relying on divine abilities and magical techniques to try to drive it away.

As the mob grew larger, Bai Xiaochun was able to detect with his divine sense that people had burst into the two shops on either side of him. Instantly, cursing and shouting could be heard inside.

“What are you people doing!?!?”

“What are we doing? More like what did *you* do!? This soul medicine has your mark on it, doesn’t it Sima Tao?!”

“I'm gonna kill you, Sun Yifan!!”

“Stay your hand! Listen to me! That soul medicine doesn’t have anything to do with me!”

Booms and crashes could be heard, and Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense clearly revealed to him that the two shops on either side of him were a scene of utter chaos. People were completely trashing both shops, and both signs had already been torn down and ripped to pieces.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. Although things seemed to be going well, the anxiety in his heart continued to mount. Even as he started pondering how to defuse the situation, his divine sense revealed to him that certain people from the crowd were now rushing in the direction of his shop.

“Not good! They must know I'm responsible!” That was his initial thought, but he quickly realized that it couldn't be the case. “No. There’s no way they could know that....”

A boom rang out as the door to his shop was blown to bits, whereupon a large group of soul cultivators stormed in.

Standing tall and straight, he glared at the soul cultivators and shouted out in a thunderous voice, “What do you people think you're doing!? I'm not Sun Yifan. And I'm not Sima Tao either! This shop belongs to me, Bai Hao. This is *The Number One Spirit Enhancement Shop Under Heaven*!”

He even unleashed some of the power of his cultivation base, causing incredible pressure to weigh down in his shop.

The soul cultivators froze in place, and their faces fell. They immediately began to apologize, then rushed back out. The truth was that it wasn’t a case of mistakenly identifying the wrong shop; they had hoped to take advantage of the riot outside to do some looting! After all, in addition to the victims, there were also many unscrupulous individuals in the mob. Bai Xiaochun’s shop wasn’t the only one to be targeted; others in the area also fell victim.

When Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, his anxiety mounted. However, despite the fact that he had caused the foul gas to appear, he couldn't control it. In that moment of crisis, Bai Hao’s eyes lit up, and he leaned over and whispered, “Master, I have a plan....”

Bai Hao quickly explained his idea. Having no time to think about it at length, Bai Xiaochun nodded and then rushed out the front door. Looking around at the countless people milling about in the foul gas, at the ruins that were the two adjacent shops, and at all the other shops in the area, from within which echoed the sounds of yelling and fighting, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base.

Then he blurred into motion, appearing in front of one of the nearby shops. Backing his voice with all of the power he was capable of, he bellowed, “Stop, all of you!”

He even drew upon some of the energy of the Undying Emperor’s Fist to cause his voice to boom out in a way that seemed highly threatening. At the same time, he waved his hand, causing all of the rioters inside to fly out into the street.

Facing the employees that remained, he said, “Come with me immediately! Let’s put an end to this chaos!”

Of course, everyone in the affected shop was furious at how they were being unfairly dragged into such a bad situation. Having been saved from the rioters, they were profoundly grateful, and immediately joined Bai Xiaochun with the intention of helping calm the situation down.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun and his group appeared in front of a second shop, where they quickly quelled the chaos. Then they moved on to a third shop. More and more soul cultivators joined him. Furthermore, he acted with utmost heroism and bravery, taking the initiative to attack the rioters. Before long, all of the shops in the area were banded together under his leadership, and were restoring order.

“Stay your hand!”

“If you have an issue, explain yourself calmly. Anyone resorting to violence will be executed according to the law!!”

“This is Arch-Emperor City, don't even think of staging a revolt!!”

Under Bai Xiaochun’s leadership, the shops suppressed most of the chaos. Soon, they had about as many people on the streets as the angriest of the soul cultivators in the mob. That, coupled with the fact that Bai Xiaochun himself was so powerful, and that they also occupied the high ground in terms of the law, ensured that the rest of the soul cultivators gradually calmed down.

As a result, everyone from the local shops looked to Bai Xiaochun with eyes that shone with gratitude. Although many of them had felt ill will toward him in the past, as of now, his actions in this moment of crisis led them to feel much respect toward him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0735 awe-chapter-736

Although the chaos had been brought under control, there was no way that the angered soul cultivators would simply disperse. Their gazes flitted back and forth between Bai Xiaochun and the ruined shops of Sima Tao and Sun Yifan. Clearly, if Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been there to interfere, the mob would still be attacking those two shops.

Despite feeling nervous and a bit guilty, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Listen to me, everyone. I, Bai Hao, guarantee that I will get you the explanation you deserve!”

“Fellow Daoist Bai, we are not at fault today. It's *them*! Sima Tao and Sun Yifan!”

“That’s right! Those two shameless fellows sold us counterfeit soul medicine! The embarrassment we have endured today must be avenged!!”

“It’s good that you’re here, Fellow Daoist Bai. We’ll follow your lead as you resolve this issue!”

The soul cultivators all knew that although the riot hadn't affected a very large area, this was Arch-Emperor City, and if things went on for too long, the city guard would definitely arrive at some point.

Although they were all furious at Sima Tao and Sun Yifan, they gritted their teeth and forced themselves to remain calm. Some of them even wondered why the city guard hadn’t arrived already.

After all, every borough was overseen by a contingent of city guards, who were responsible for keeping the peace. However, not a single city guard was visible.

“Don't worry, everyone. I, Bai Hao, as well as the other Fellow Daoists at my side, will ensure that you get your explanation!” He even thumped his chest in emphasis. The other shop owners and employees who were with him acted similarly.

Seeing that the crowd had calmed down left Bai Xiaochun feeling quite relieved. He had worried that things had gone overboard, and that it would result in misfortune. But now, he was the one the crowd expected to render judgement, something he found to be outrageously ironic.

With that, he called out, “Fellow Daoist Sima! Fellow Daoist Sun! Please come out for a chat!”

In response, Sima Tao and Sun Yifan emerged from the rubble of their shops, unsightly expressions on their faces. Although they both had profound cultivation bases, there had simply been too many enraged and maddened soul cultivators to deal with. Before either of them had even been able to react, their shops were destroyed. Therefore, not only were both of them angry, but they also cast piercing glances at Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao,” Sima Tao said, “the soul medicine they’re talking about has clearly been tampered with. Give me even one portion, and I’ll bring the truth to light!”

“As for who the true culprit is,” Sun Yifan said coldly, “we’ll figure out soon enough, and announce it for everyone to hear!”

These two necromancers had been brought there to put Bai Hao in check. Therefore, this turn of events left them feeling very unsettled. At the same time, they couldn’t help but harbor some suspicion that Bai Xiaochun was actually the one behind it all.

And yet, if that was true, they still couldn't imagine how he had managed to alter the soul medicine in the way he had.

However he had tampered with it, there was no way he could have done it without leaving evidence. They were both sure that they could find the clues. After exchanging a glance, they both confirmed their mutual intention to drag things out until Zhou Hong arrived.

In fact, they had both contacted Zhou Hong as soon as the incident began. He was the reason the city guard hadn’t appeared; considering how things had gotten out of hand so quickly, he didn’t want to get implicated.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, mostly in admiration of his apprentice’s intellect. After all, everything he was doing right now was according to Bai Hao’s plan. In the heat of the moment, he had been given no other choice than to go with that plan, and now that he was seeing the results, it caused his eyes to shine.

He had quickly gone from being in the passive position to being completely in charge of the situation. Furthermore, he was now in a position to decide the fate of the reputations of Sima Tao and Sun Yifan, all with a single word.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, his heart began to pound with excitement. However, he kept a very somber expression on his face.

“Fellow Daoists, the two of you are necromancers, and therefore… I believe you! There’s no way that soul medicine concocted by necromancers such as you two would cause such outrageous side-effects!”

Sima Tao and Sun Yifan were clearly shocked by how firmly Bai Xiaochun seemed to be standing by their side, and both of them immediately felt as if something fishy were going on.

The other soul cultivators in the area began to stir, and even shout out angrily.

“What do you mean by that, Fellow Daoist Bai?!”

“You believe them!? What, you think we’re stirring up trouble for no reason?!”

Bai Xiaochun immediately waved his hand to interrupt the shouts of the crowd.

“I also believe the rest of you!” he said loudly. “You wouldn’t have come here for no reason at all. Please, allow me to tell you how I truly feel. Although I know how things ended up, I don't know *why* they happened. All of you say that you consumed soul medicine concocted by these two grandmasters, which was what led to the various incidents. Does anyone have one of those portions of soul medicine that I could examine?”

His words seemed to pacify the crowd for the moment. Then, a middle-aged cultivator snorted coldly and tossed out a portion of high-grade soul medicine.

Bai Xiaochun caught it in his hand and then peered down to examine it. After a moment passed, he frowned and looked up at Sima Tao and Sun Yifan.

“Fellow Daoists, the two of you definitely outrank me in terms of necromancy. Pray forgive my ignorance, but I really can’t see any signs of tampering.” With that, he handed the soul medicine over to Sima Tao.

Snorting coldly in his heart, Sima Tao took the soul medicine. He had heard earlier that the cause of the disaster was his own soul medicine, but hadn’t been able to get his hands on one of the offending portions.

After taking it, his eyes shone as he began to examine it closely. However, as the moments ticked by, his eyes widened, and his heart began to pound. He even performed an incantation gesture, drawing upon the power of his cultivation base to perform a very thorough investigation. After all of that, though, he was unable to identify any problem areas. Soon, beads of sweat began to pop out on his forehead.

Furthermore, he could tell that this soul medicine really was the work of his own hand. No matter how he looked at it, he couldn't find any traces of tampering. Slowly, he began to pant, and his heart began to quiver with a sensation of profound foreboding.

Sima Tao’s behavior was also getting Sun Yifan nervous. In the end, he grabbed the soul medicine and used his own methods to examine it. Soon, his face turned just as ashen as Sima Tao’s, and a look of incredulity could be seen in his eyes.

“Impossible!” Sun Yifan thought. “This soul medicine really was concocted by Sima Tao! But I don’t see anything wrong with it! There’s plenty of soul power inside, and it seems completely stable…. Don’t tell me that this is just an ordinary portion of soul medicine, and they’re intentionally using it to try to fool us?”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Sun Yifan prepared to speak, and yet, was beaten to the punch by Bai Xiaochun.

“Fellow Daoists, I wasn’t able to find anything wrong with that portion of soul medicine, nor find any traces that it's counterfeit. In fact, I suspect that it is just an ordinary portion of medicine. I think we need to perform a test!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, Sun Yifan chimed in. “That’s right. This medicine is definitely not counterfeit!”

Sima Tao’s eyes glittered. He refused to believe that a portion of soul medicine that he had concocted could be tampered with without him being able to tell. The only person who could possibly do something like that would be an earthly necromancer. And yet, if an earthly necromancer really wanted to cause problems for him… he wouldn’t need to do it in such a complicated way. An earthly necromancer could have him expelled from Arch-Emperor City with a single word.

With such thoughts on his mind, he looked at the soul medicine again, and then pointed at one of his shop clerks, a young man he had brought with him from Nine Serenities City.

“You test it!”

The clerk hesitated for a short moment, then walked forward and took the soul medicine. After taking a deep breath, he sat down cross-legged and then began to absorb the soul power from the medicine through his palm.

With so many people watching him closely, there was no way he could pull a fast one in this situation. Everyone simply waited to see what would happen. Before long, the clerk opened his eyes, and the soul medicine was completely absorbed. As he rose to his feet, he seemed completely normal, leading Sima Tao to breathe a sigh of relief. Then he opened his mouth to speak when, all of a sudden, a loud *phhhhhhrt* erupted into the open, followed by a cloud of foul gas.

All of the soul cultivators present who had been affected earlier immediately erupted into howls of rage.

“So that soul medicine *is* defective! What were you just about to say, huh Sima Tao?!”

“Sun Yifan, you and he are both completely out of line!!”

“Impossible!” Sima Tao blurted, his face draining of blood as he staggered backward. “This is impossible! I checked it myself. There were no problems....” However, he was at a complete loss as to how to defend himself.

Sun Yifan was physically shaking, and knew that the game was up. He and Sima Tao had been thoroughly defeated: their soul medicine really was defective!!

Bai Xiaochun shook his head silently, seemingly at a loss for words. As for the other shop owners and clerks, they all began to sigh.

The shouting from the crowd began to grow more intense.

“Alright, Sima Tao and Sun Yifan. We have proof now. You’d better compensate us for all of this!”

“Give us our compensation, otherwise, we won’t let you go even if you call for help from the Arch-Emperor!!”

“Once this story gets out, everyone in the Wildlands is going to know that Sima Tao and Sun Yifan are knaves through and through!”

Sima Tao and Sun Yifan were so nervous they were sweating rivers, when, all of a sudden, a grim voice cut through the shouting of the crowd.

“I, Zhou Hong, will provide the compensation!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0736 awe-chapter-737

Along with the words came a beam of light, slicing through the air. It was none other than the heir apparent from Nine Serenities City, Zhou Hong. He wasn’t alone either. He was flanked by dozens of henchmen, as well as a group of several hundred cultivators wearing black armor.

The black-armored soul cultivators had expressionless faces, and completely ignored everyone present as they spread out in the area, performing incantation gestures as they set up a spell formation.

As soon as the spell formation was activated, a massive gravitational force appeared, which immediately sucked away all of the foul gas in the area.

The sight of the gas vanishing filled the other soul cultivators in the area with complete shock.

“The heir apparent of Nine Serenities City….”

“It’s Zhou Hong….”

The truth was that Zhou Hong was actually feeling very nervous. Even the smallest incident in Arch-Emperor City could have profound implications outside. He might be an heir apparent, but that didn’t mean he had the luxury of letting his guard down. After all, relations between the four heavenly kings weren’t very good at the moment.

At the moment, it didn’t matter whether or not Sima Tao and Sun Yifan were truly responsible for what was happening. The soul medicine had their mark on it, which meant that they couldn’t extricate themselves from the situation. Furthermore, neither could Zhou Hong. The truth was that Zhou Hong was even more worried than Bai Xiaochun was about things getting out of control.

After all, this was Arch-Emperor City!

In his anxiety, he had called in some favors to stop the city guards from getting involved. After all, once they did, it would be impossible to prevent reports from going up the chain of command.

That didn’t mean that a lack of a report would keep the matter hidden. However, once someone did report the matter, formal action would have to be taken.

After ensuring that the city guard would wait a bit before taking action, Zhou Hong quickly came over with members of his father’s own personal guard, who used a powerful spell formation to get rid of the foul gas.

It had been a lot of things to take care of in a short time, and he was feeling extremely frustrated about the matter. However, there was nothing he could do. As soon as he arrived on the scene, he called out, “It doesn’t matter how all of this happened. It was probably just a mistake. Don’t worry, everyone, I will provide compensation that will surely leave you feeling very pleased!”

Immediately, his henchmen spread out and started taking care of everything.

Those who had been directly affected by the soul medicine were given handsome compensation, and actually ended up profiting quite well. Furthermore, everyone understood that this hefty remuneration was also a way to buy their silence.

The other soul cultivators who had been affected by the disaster were also given compensation, and although it was less than what the actual victims received, they were all very satisfied. As for Zhou Hong, although he was loath to pay such a heavy price, he really had no other options.

Bai Xiaochun watched through narrowed eyes, unable to hold back his admiration for how quickly Zhou Hong had taken care of everything. Apparently, Zhou Hong was even more nervous than he was about causing a larger disaster.

After seeing how happy everyone was at the compensation, Bai Xiaochun looked up in thought for a moment, then cleared his throat, lowered his voice, and spoke to the other shop owners behind him. “Our shops were damaged too!”

The shop owners all began to grumble and then complain aloud. Not too far away, Zhou Hong's heart felt like it was dripping blood as he forced himself to calm down. Gritting his teeth, he waved his hand, sending a person over to Bai Xiaochun and his group to discuss the matter. Before long, a bag of holding was given to Bai Xiaochun.

At this point, everyone felt very pleased, although Bai Xiaochun was feeling a bit guilty. Considering how badly everyone had suffered, he took his own share and began to distribute it among those who had been directly affect by the soul medicine, leading more and more people to cry out his name in admiration.

The smiles on the faces of everyone in the crowd sent stabs of pain into Zhou Hong’s heart. Never could he have imagined that his little scheme against Bai Xiaochun would not only fail, but also cause great injury to himself.

“Well, at least things are all worked out now,” he told himself comfortingly. He was just about to open his mouth to speak to the crowd when he saw all of the soul cultivators who had been given compensation rushing over to clasp hands to Bai Xiaochun.

“Grandmaster Bai, many thanks to you for taking a stand for justice!”

“You’re a great person, Grandmaster Bai!”

“Fellow Daoist Bai Hao, I owe you a big favor for what you did today!”

They weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. The shop owners also clasped hands and offered expressions of gratitude. Moved, Bai Xiaochun immediately announced that everyone present could have a discount the next time they came to his shop, which made people even more happy.

Zhou Hong was the one who actually gave out the compensation, but the person everyone thanked was Bai Xiaochun. It left Zhou Hong’s mind spinning, and he simply couldn’t control his emotions. Profound hatred for Bai Xiaochun immediately blossomed in his heart.

Unfortunately for him, he could only wrestle it into check. After all, he didn't want to dig himself further into a pit. After a long moment, he simply left. And thus it was that the incident with the foul gas was resolved.

Bai Xiaochun stood there looking at the crowds dispersing, his hands clasped behind his back. Then, feeling very pleased with himself, he walked back into his shop, musing that his apprentice’s plan really had been amazing.

“Beautifully executed final move!” he said, laughing heartily and giving Bai Hao a look of praise. Bai Hao felt both embarrassed and pleased. After all, his Master was the only family he had, and his approval left Bai Hao feeling wonderful.

Bai Xiaochun spent some time bragging and boasting, then went into the back room, very pleased with not only having avoided disaster, but also coming off with a bit of profit.

Savoring the victory, he took out the formula for seventeen-colored flame and continued his work with it.

Three days passed by in a flash. During that time, Zhou Hong was run ragged dealing with the aftermath. He spread bribes high and low, and put out fires left and right. When everything was said and done, nobody came looking to ask questions.

It was on the evening of the third day that he finally called Sima Tao and Sun Yifan over to discuss the matter. After the three of them were seated in a locked chamber, he grimly asked, “Did you find out what happened? Was it Bai Hao?!”

Sima Tao and Sun Yifan didn’t say anything at first. A moment passed, and then Sima Tao braced himself and bitterly said, “The two of us used every trick in the book. We even asked for some help from some fellow experts we know. We really can’t find any signs that the soul medicine was tampered with.”

“No signs at all?” Zhou Hong replied angrily. “Then what's wrong with it? Don’t tell me the two of you really are responsible!?!?” He wasn’t being polite at all. Normally speaking if he had spoken like this, Sima Tao would have been very displeased, and would have immediately rebuked him. After all, he wasn’t a mere counselor to the Nine Serenities King, he was a grand elder from the Sima Clan in Nine Serenities City.

Even Sun Yifan would have responded with little more than a cold snort. After all, he was a high counselor to the Spirit Advent King, and would be well within his rights to scold a prince from Nine Serenities City.

But in the current circumstances, both of them had little choice but to accept the treatment.

Wording things carefully, Sima Tao said, “To be able to tamper with soul medicine and leave behind no evidence is a level of necromantic skill that neither of us has ever even heard of before. The only way it could be done is with some legendary secret magic of some sort or another.”

“Although we weren’t able to learn anything from the soul medicine itself,” Sun Yifan added through gritted teeth, “we did come up with another clue. All of the soul medicine in question was purchased from our shops, and after looking into our records, Brother Sima and I were able to determine that over the course of the last month, we had quite a few suspicious customers!” Bones aching with hatred, he pulled out a jade slip that he handed over to Zhou Hong.

Zhou Hong’s eyes flashed as he accepted it and looked it over. Then he rose to his feet and left to make various arrangements. Soon enough, the full power of the heir apparent of Nine Serenities City was on display as a massive investigation was carried out. Over the course of the following few days, clues were unearthed one by one.

Although all of the suspicious people who had purchased the medicine were wearing disguises, Zhou Hong’s network ran wide and deep. Soon, he uncovered the fact that on the day of the disaster, every person in that suspicious group had used Arch-Emperor City’s teleportation portal to travel to Giant Ghost City!

Soon, it was also uncovered that the entire group of people had originally teleported into Arch-Emperor City on the same day!

Although the exact times were staggered, it was obvious that they were working together.

“I don’t care if I can’t prove it directly, Bai Hao, I'm convinced that this was all your doing!!” Anger burning, Zhou Hong gritted his teeth and sent messages to Sima Tao and Sun Yifan.

Once Sima Tao and Sun Yifan got the news, their minds reeled, and their fury also began to rage.

“You framed us, Bai Hao!!”

“How shameless, Bai Hao!!”

The mere thought of Bai Xiaochun’s act that day got their blood boiling, and they immediately rushed out of their shops and headed toward Bai Xiaochun’s.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0737 awe-chapter-738

After the recent disaster, Zhou Hong had spent a lot of time and resources smoothing things over.

Unfortunately, business for Sima Tao and Sun Yifan had been seriously damaged, and few customers came their way. Thanks to the efforts of Zhou Hong, much of the news of the events in Borough 89 and the surrounding areas had been stifled. And yet, it was impossible to prevent word from spreading completely.

Nobody seemed interested at all in Sima Tao and Sun Yifan. In contrast, the way that Bai Xiaochun had taken action on the day of the disaster ensured that many people approved of him more than ever. Almost immediately, a steady stream of customers was flowing into his shop.

The other shops in the area who had helped Bai Xiaochun also benefited, so whenever soul cultivators arrived wanting high-quality spirit enhancements, they would refer them to Bai Xiaochun’s shop.

Bai Xiaochun was doing business like crazy, even more so than when he had initially become popular. Bai Hao was constantly running around, busier than ever. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was very pleased with everything, especially with how perfectly the plan had been executed. Clearly, Bai Hao was very useful when it came to coming up with plots and schemes.

Bai Xiaochun was currently in the back room of his shop, doing research into seventeen-colored flame.

It was with great contentment that he went about researching seventeen-colored flame. Thanks to his several months of hard work, he now felt that he understood this type of flame much better than before. As of this point, there were only two main problem areas that, once he resolved, meant that he could formally start trying to conjure the flame.

Suddenly, his eyebrows danced up and down with delight as he finally resolved the first of those main problem areas. Everything made sense now that the problem faded away.

However, it was in that very moment that, out in the main part of the shop, Bai Hao let out a cry of alarm.

Then, two rumbling sounds like thunder echoed into the shop from the street. The entire shop vibrated, and cracks even appeared in the walls and ceiling, as though the shop might collapse at any moment.

Bai Xiaochun was instantly startled out of his good mood. Irritated, he burst out of the back room just as the angry voices of Sima Tao and Sun Yifan rang out.

“Get the hell out here, Bai Hao!!”

“Bai Hao, you contemptible rapscallion! You were the one who tampered with that soul medicine! How dare you slander our names! Things are *not* over between you and us!”

Their voices were so laced with rage that other shops in the area also began to tremble and vibrate.

Everyone who heard the words being spoken were shocked, and looked over hesitantly.

“Bai Hao tampered with the soul medicine?”

“Well he certainly had the motive… but I don’t think he's good enough to do something like that.”

Bai Xiaochun had originally been extremely irritated at having been interrupted, but then he heard the words being spoken, and his heart lurched with nervousness and guilt. Unfortunately, there was no time for thought or planning; he couldn’t leave Bai Hao out there on his own.

The shop was already in complete disarray. Thankfully, Bai Hao hadn’t been hurt. However, Bai Xiaochun had put a lot of hard work into this shop, so to see someone else messing it up felt just the same as if someone had broken into his home. At this point, his anger began to burn.

Eyes bloodshot, he shouted, “So, repaying kindness with enmity, huh Sima Tao, Sun Yifan? You’ve ruined your reputations and now you’re trying to drag me down with you? How despicable!

“If I hadn’t stepped in during the disaster, you two might have lost your lives! I calmed everyone down and gave you time to explain yourselves. I'm the one who resolved the whole situation!

“If you don't want to show your appreciation, fine. But now you dare to slander me? You two… are complete bullies!!” Bai Xiaochun made his voice as loud as possible, causing it to echo out clearly throughout the area. He was aware that it was possible that Sima Tao and Sun Yifan had actually come up with some clue to implicate him, and therefore, he decided to try to overawe them with an intimidating display.

Sima Tao’s fury grew hotter, and he retorted, “Bai Hao, you--”

“I what?!” Bai Xiaochun interrupted, glaring at him. “When you opened up a shop right next to me in open competition, Sima Tao, did I ever ask you to stop? Did I ever go and threaten to tear it down? Did I ever curse you to your face?

"I accepted the humiliation silently. I swallowed my complaints. And why? Because I, Bai Hao, am a nobody here, and I didn’t dare to provoke you!

“I didn't even do anything when you clearly tried to take advantage of how nice I was being. Even when you were in a really bad situation and I could have taken advantage of it, well, I have my bottom line, and I know that there are just some things I can’t do!

“I couldn’t just stand around and watch all of the other Fellow Daoists from the other shops in the area get dragged into the situation, and that’s why I helped you. But now, you actually come here to wrongly accuse me? Sima Tao, do you have no heart? If so, then dig open your chest to prove it. But if you do, then, how evil-hearted you are!

“Not only are you ungrateful, you are the type who oppresses the good and timid people in the world. You are completely and utterly selfish, and in fact, don’t even qualify to speak a single word to me!” Bai Xiaochun spoke with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron, in a manner as grand and lofty as the highest clouds in the sky.

Bai Xiaochun’s words were like a razor-sharp sword that cut deeply into Sima Tao. His face fell, and he was so shocked he took a few subconscious steps backward. Mind numb, he stared at Bai Xiaochun with the desire to respond. He even opened his mouth. And yet, not a word came out.

Seeing how Sima Tao was trembling in shock because of Bai Xiaochun’s words, Sun Yifan shouted, “Cut the crap, Bai

Hao!”

“You can just shut up this instant, Sun Yifan!” Bai Xiaochun shot back. “Do you really think that Lord Bai doesn’t know that you and Sima Tao are as thick as thieves? You set up shop on either side of me, you villains. You had the backing of an heir apparent, and used your seniority as old-time necromancers to try to put me out of business!

“You know, there’s a question I've been wanting to ask this whole time. Did I ever do anything to offend you?!?! No! I didn’t! For mere profit, you attempted to prevent me from making a living. Alright, fine. I can deal with that. But now you want to plant false evidence against me to try to earn your reputation back? Well let me tell you, I have nothing to hide in anything, and I certainly don’t fear evildoers like yourself!”

Bai Xiaochun’s words were spoken with complete frankness, and flowed out as smooth as a river. They made Bai Xiaochun seem more impressive than ever, and caused both Sima Tao and Sun Yifan to freeze in place, their hearts pounding with anger, but unable to say anything in response.

Everyone else in the area was surprised. This was their first time realizing how sharp-tongued this Bai Hao could be. It was almost as if his words were weapons, making this spectacle even more dazzling than an actual fight.

Even Bai Hao was stunned. This was also his first time witnessing how glib his Master could be, and it left him gaping with surprise. It was only now that he finally realized what it must have been like to see Bai Xiaochun during the Bai Clan’s ancestral ceremony. If words were swords, then speeches like this could kill!

“You… you….” Sun Yifan was furious, and his mind was spinning, but he could hardly speak. Neither he nor Sima Tao were proficient in battles of words. Furthermore, to people like them, reputation was everything, and they had long since come to believe that as grandiose Nascent Soul experts, they couldn’t possibly act like newbie cultivators who battled with words.

And yet… here was Bai Hao, a Nascent Soul expert, an elite cultivator with shocking battle prowess, whose sharp words left them feeling completely helpless.

Sima Tao was the first to recover. Gritting his teeth, he said, “At this point, Bai Hao, words are meaningless. It doesn’t matter whether you admit it or not, today… I challenge you to a duel! Not a duel of magical techniques, but a duel of flame conjuring! Whoever loses will get the hell out of Arch-Emperor City, and never conjure a single flame again for all time!”

At this point, Sun Yifan also recovered. He knew that the incident with the soul medicine was something very damaging that had to be recovered from. Right now, the most important way to go about doing that was to get revenge. If they could crush this Bai Hao once and for all, they could wipe away their disgrace, and slowly recover from the humiliation of recent days.

With such thoughts on his mind, he shouted, “That’s right, Bai Hao. I also challenge you to a duel. Since you're good enough to tamper with soul medicine, then let’s see how good you actually are at flame conjuring!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0738 awe-chapter-739

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered slightly. If it were a competition of spirit enhancement, then as long as he had enough flame, he could be completely confident. However, Sima Tao and Sun Yifan were obviously aware that he had defeated Chen Xiong in just such a competition, and that he could perform fifteenfold spirit enhancements. Besides, when it came to spirit enhancement, because of how success rates worked, no one could ever be absolutely confident in winning.

That was why they didn’t mention spirit enhancement. And when all was said and done, necromancers also had to be proficient in the other skills of flame conjuring and soul medicine concocting. And because flame conjuring was how one went about concocting soul medicine, the foundation of everything came down to flame conjuring.

However… Bai Xiaochun was not completely confident when it came to flame conjuring. At the moment, he still couldn’t conjure seventeen-colored flame, and even had problems succeeding consistently with sixteen-colored flame.

And thus, his expression flickered slightly.

Although Sima Tao and Sun Yifan couldn’t compete with Bai Xiaochun in a battle of words, they had both lived many years and experienced many things. As a result, they could instantly tell what he was thinking.

Seeing that, Sima Tao added, “If we’re going to compete, then we also need to have a little wager. The stakes are the right to stay in Arch-Emperor City! If you lose, you have to get the hell out of the city, never perform spirit enhancements again, and also give up your shop! If you win, then I'll hand my shop over to you!"

"And mine as well!" Sun Yifan said with a cold smile. "Since it's two on one, we won't try to take advantage of you!"

"If it's a wager you want, then I guess I'll have to gamble a bit!" Bai Xiaochun said, clasping his hands behind his back and emphasizing his words with a cold harrumph. As far as he was concerned, it didn't matter that Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were Nascent Soul cultivators. Bai Xiaochun had a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, and had defeated over a hundred top chosen. He had even come out victorious over the half-deva Junior Champion King. Considering all that, these two necromancers shouldn't be a problem at all.

Just as he was contemplating whether or not to drive them away, Sima Tao apparently realized what he was thinking. If this Bai Hao wasn't already a legend for his bravery and ferocity, Sima Tao would have simply challenged him to a fight, instead of bringing up the matter of flame conjuring. But now that he could tell that Bai Xiaochun was contemplating escalating things to outright fighting, he knew he had to do something.

"Bai Hao, you're a Nascent Soul necromancer, and a famous one at that. If you try to beat us up, we might not be able to fight back. But resorting to violence will only delay things today. And there will always be a tomorrow! Even if you don't agree to our challenge today, we'll come back a second time!" Sima Tao had experienced a stroke of inspiration due to his nervousness, and it immediately caused Bai Xiaochun to frown.

“Fine, Bai Hao,” Sun Yifan jumped in, “I’ll also put up 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls! If you win, you can have them all!” Obviously, Sun Yifan had also realized that Bai Xiaochun wasn't completely confident when it came to flame conjuring, and that it was important to force him into the challenge no matter what!

Sun Yifan had thought his plan out well. He knew that if he caused a big enough scene, and attracted enough attention, then if Bai Hao wanted to continue to do business in Arch-Emperor City, he would have to take the challenge seriously.

And when it came to attracting attention from an audience, the best way to do it was offer huge stakes in a bet. It was exactly the same thing that had happened with Chen Xiao.

And that was why he offered up 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls!

As expected, his words caused an immediate stir. After all, 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls was a mind-boggling number. It was the same number that had propelled Bai Xiaochun to the rank of major general back on the Great Wall. Even the true spirit back there had been completely shocked and moved by that number.

“Another shocking wager is taking place because of Bai Hao's shop. Last time it was 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine, and this time it’s 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls!!”

“This is monumental!” There was already a clamor of conversation, and many people were excitedly taking out jade slips to send message to their friends.

Meanwhile, Sima Tao realized what Sun Yifan was thinking. Gritting his teeth, he said, “I’ll also throw in 1,000,000,000 vengeful souls!”

His words only served to throw oil onto the fire; numerous cries of astonishment could be heard erupting from the crowd.

“Heavens! Another 1,000,000,000!?!?”

“That’s 2,000,000,000 vengeful souls! That number… is staggering to even think about!!”

“This goes way past the 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine. Hurry, this news is priceless! We have to spread word!” More and more soul cultivators began sending messages to friends, and it didn’t take long before all of Borough 89 was shaken. Other surrounding boroughs were similarly affected. By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s neighborhood, which had once been a relatively remote and out-of-the-way location, was now getting packed with excited crowds.

When Bai Xiaochun looked around and saw that people were rushing into the area from all over, he suddenly felt a lot of pressure, and his eyes even turned a bit bloodshot. Looking back at Sima Tao and Sun Yifan, he realized that he had been backed into a corner. If he didn’t accept the wager, then these two would be free to spread rumors about him tampering with their soul medicine, which would get the whole city mad at him.

“Alright,” he said through gritted teeth. “How are we going to do this?”

Sima Tao chuckled coldly in his heart at how they had forced Bai Xiaochun’s hand. Voice tranquil, he said, “We’ll set a certain type of flame, and a time limit. Whoever can conjure the most during that time will be the winner. Brother Sun. Bai Hao. What do you think?”

Generally speaking, there were two main types of competitions that would occur between necromancers. One was to see who could conjure the flame with the most colors, the other was to see who could conjure more flame in a given time period.

The first type would show what overall level the necromancers had achieved, and the second would show how skilled they were in it.

Although Sima Tao had come up with the idea for a competition on the spur of the moment, he had abundant life experience as a necromancer, and knew that, considering this Bai Hao could perform fifteenfold spirit enhancements, he was obviously at the celestial rank, just like himself and Sun Yifan.

He had never even considered that he could be an earthly necromancer. After all, the number of earthly necromancers who existed in the Wildlands could be counted on one hand. Furthermore, they were the type of people who wandered from place to place and were rarely seen.

Celestial necromancers couldn't conjure eighteen-colored flame. At most, they could handle seventeen-colored flame. Of course, even those who could only did it with difficulty, making that type of flame unsuitable for wagers.

Sixteen-colored flame was a different story, though. Sima Tao was very familiar with sixteen-colored flame, and could produce it quite consistently. Considering his level of experience and skill, he was very confident in being able to win a competition involving that type of flame.

Sun Yifan was essentially thinking the same thing, and quickly nodded in response.

“Let’s compete in sixteen-colored flame,” he said, smiling coldly inside. “How about this: we can all start from one-colored flame and work up to sixteen-colored flame. Whoever can conjure three flames first will be the winner!”

Sima Tao laughed heartily. “Perfect! That’s an even more simple method than the usual one. And fairer too. All of the Fellow Daoists who are here to watch can serve as witnesses!”

Although they had made a show of giving Bai Xiaochun the option of giving an opinion, they had spoken so quickly that he had been given no such opportunity.

And yet… nobody present was willing to point that out. After all, the method suggested by Sun Yifan was just as Sima Tao had said, very fair.

The truth was that both Sima Tao and Sun Yifan were people who had been famous for years already, and had deep reserves of skill. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun was a newcomer to the necromancy scene, and nobody would think to describe him as being very skilled.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart thumped when he heard the details of the wager, and he immediately got a bad feeling. When it came to fifteen-colored flame, he was actually very confident. In fact, he could succeed with virtually one hundred percent certainty. But sixteen-colored flame was different. Even with the improvements Bai Hao had made to the formula, he was still only capable of roughly a thirty percent success rate.

Furthermore, he hadn’t had the opportunity to discuss the matter of flame conjuring with anyone else besides Bai Hao. Although Bai Hao was skilled, not even he had ever been in much contact with other celestial necromancers. Therefore, not even he was sure of what success rates were common when it came to sixteen-colored flame.

After all, success rates were not often discussed by necromancers with outsiders. Usually, they kept things like that a secret.

Most other people in this situation would either bow their head in defeat, or impulsively take the bet. But not Bai Xiaochun. He blinked a few times, then looked at Sun Yifan and Sima Tao and angrily said, “That’s not a fair bet. I can only manage a twenty percent success rate with sixteen-colored flame! How am I supposed to win like that!?”

His words caused many jaws to drop in the audience. After all, many people had at least heard of the supposed success rates for sixteen-colored flame. Although none could be absolutely certain, they at least had a general idea.

“Twenty percent success rate? Seems a bit exaggerated.”

“Sixteen-colored flame is one of the most advanced forms of multi-colored flame, and has a very low success rate. Only earthly necromancers can produce it consistently. Celestial necromancers are all different, but for the most part, they can’t make it very easily.”

As the audience chattered, Sima Tao threw his head back and laughed sarcastically. “Nice try, Bai Hao! To tell you the truth, I only have a twelve and a half percent success rate when it comes to sixteen-colored flame. Brother Sun is a bit more adept than me, but even he can’t get past fifteen percent.”

Sounding utterly serious, Sun Yifan said, “If you can manage a twenty percent success rate, then you don’t have to worry at all. You’ll definitely win!” With that, he looked at Bai

Xiaochun as if to say, *what, did you really think that was going to scare us or something?*

“Fine, you’re on!” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes glittering.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0739 awe-chapter-740

Bai Xiaochun’s comportment immediately caused Sun Yifan and Sima Tao to hesitate, and even exchange glances. Although it seemed like he was simply trying to put on a brave front, they were now more on guard than before. The truth was that Simao Tao had actually held back a bit of the truth. Both he and Sun Yifan could achieve success rates of nearly seventeen percent!

In fact, if they got lucky they could sometimes reach twenty percent! However, that was the limit for a celestial necromancer when working with sixteen-colored flame. The only exception would be… if they managed to improve the formula they worked with!

But doing something like that was incredibly difficult. All necromancers in the Wildlands knew that even earthly necromancers who tried to alter flame conjuring formulas would have to spend a huge amount of time and energy to do so, and even then might not succeed.

After all, the current formulas had been derived by constant refining and augmentation from generation to generation. Countless tests and confirmations ensured that the current formulas were the most reliable.

Considering all of that, Sima Tao and Sun Yifan calmed themselves, and immediately called for help to set up a competition arena in front of the three shops.

It wasn’t a large arena, and had just enough space for the three of them to do their work. In that short time, however, so many soul cultivators showed up that there were now row upon row of them waiting to watch what would happen.

There were even people floating in the air to observe. By now, there were definitely more than 100,000 people present, with more beams of light appeared every moment. The city guard was shocked, and immediately dispatched a few hundred people to make sure that order was kept.

Zhou Hong was present, of course, as were Little Wolfgod, Li Tiansheng, Miao Lin’er, and even the second prince. Virtually all of the chosen that Bai Xiaochun had kidnapped in the Necromancer Kettle had arrived.

There were also other chosen and heirs to the noble and aristocratic houses, people like Chen Xiong who hadn’t been in the Necromancer Kettle. Everybody came to watch and comment on Bai Xiaochun’s performance.

This competition was already sizing up to be much bigger than the previous one. Not only was the audience larger, but the fact that there were so many chosen present got everyone else in the audience even more excited.

Chen Manyao was also there, alone in the crowd and away from the second prince and the other chosen. She stood there by herself, quietly watching Bai Xiaochun.

To see so many people crowded together watching him made Bai Xiaochun a little nervous. Although he was capable of a thirty percent success rate with sixteen-colored flame, that still didn't leave him completely confident. And yet, there was nothing else he could do.

“Too bad we can't compete in fifteen-colored flame!” he thought. Although he wasn’t feeling very confident, he had to brace himself and hope that Sima Tao and Sun Yifan weren't capable of much more than fifteen percent or so.

Bai Xiaochun's visible nervousness caused Sima Tao and Sun Yifan to feel more relaxed than ever. They sat cross-legged on either side of him, meditating to settle their qi and clear their minds.

Before long, the audience started to quiet down. Zhou Hong hovered in the air above them, eyes flashing. After casting a brief glance at Bai Xiaochun, he loudly announced, "It is a great honor to have been invited here today by Grandmaster Sima and Grandmaster Sun, to preside over this competition of flame conjuring. Very well, enough with the introductions. Let the competition... begin!"

As his words rang out, countless eyes came to focus on the competition area, and the three necromancers sitting there.

The eyes of both Sima Tao and Sun Yifan snapped open, and without the slightest hesitation, they casually performed double-handed incantation gestures, causing soulhoarding pagodas to fly out of their bags of holding. Then, with the wave of a finger, they each summoned hordes of vengeful souls.

Neither of them delayed in the least bit. They began their conjuring work, creating something from nothing as they started with one-colored flame, which would be the foundation upon which they worked all the way up to sixteen-colored flame!

They were clearly both very familiar with the process. They were both celestial necromancers with significant skill sets, and that was fully on display right here. Both of them had suffered severe blows to their reputation recently, and knew that this wager was critical to repairing some of that damage. Therefore, neither of them held back at all.

Within the space of a few breaths of time, both of them closed their fingers down, then almost simultaneously, opened them again to reveal tongues of one-colored flame.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had also produced his soulhoarding pagoda as soon as Zhou Hong officially began the competition, and he was no slower than Sun Yifan and Sima Tao! In the end… all three of them produced a tongue of one-colored flame at the same time!

Everyone watching the competition was stunned.

“It only took them a few breaths’ of time to produce a one-colored flame!!”

“They clearly deserve to be called grandmasters, and definitely deserve to be celestial necromancers!!”

Neither Sun Yifan nor Sima Tao revealed any reaction to what had just occurred. They knew that since this Bai Hao was in the celestial rank, he must be very familiar with the process of conjuring one-colored flame. Were he not, then he wouldn’t deserve to be their opponent.

Soon, all three of them were at work again, producing two-, three-, four-… all the way to ten-colored flame!

The entire time, they all seemed to be racing neck and neck. The fact that they were all keeping the same pace was a bit worrisome to Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, and yet, at the moment, all it did was cause their hearts to tremble slightly.

Next came eleven-, twelve-, and thirteen-colored flame. When Sun Yifan and Sima Tao saw that Bai Xiaochun was still keeping pace, serious expressions appeared in their eyes.

Everyone in the audience watched with bated breath, their hearts pounding. It wasn’t that the onlookers had never seen people conjuring flame before. In fact, many in the audience were necromancers themselves.

However… it was not an everyday occasion to be able to see celestial necromancers conjuring flame…. Considering that most earthly necromancers were wanderers who nobody ever encountered, that meant that celestial necromancers were the ostensible peak of the necromancy world.

“Celestial necromancers… are terrifying! They went from one- to thirteen-colored flame with ease. And the speed! Furthermore, all three of them seemed to be on almost exactly the same level!”

“Heh. These three are definitely not ordinary celestial necromancers. They're all at the very peak of their rank!”

“I feel like my eyes have been opened! Just watching them work is beneficial… I’ve already resolved a few areas I had problems with in the past.”

Bai Xiaochun ignored all of the discussions. He was now completely immersed in the flame conjuring, and sparing no effort in the process. Usually, he preferred to have all of the variables under control when he worked, but this time, he had no such luxury. The only thing he could do was maintain complete focus in the hopes that he wouldn’t lose.

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were equally focused on their work, and completely ignored the crowd. Currently, they were now working on fourteen-colored flame, and couldn't afford any distractions.

Moments later, it was for the first time that the audience saw… a difference between the three necromancers!

Although the methods used by Sun Yifan and Sima Tao varied slightly, they were mostly the same, and followed the prescribed pattern everyone was used to. Sima Tao followed the soul ratios precisely, and Sun Yifan mostly ignored the sea of fire, and focused on feeding the souls into it.

Occasionally, ripples of multi-colored light would glow off of them, which came from the flame conjuring secret magics that they employed to increase their speed. However, Bai Xiaochun’s method of conjuring fourteen-colored flame was completely different.

He used the thirteen-colored flame to consume all of the tens of thousands of vengeful souls in one moment, which caused gasps to rise up in the audience.

“Bai Hao’s conjuring methods are unprecedented!!”

“He fed tens of thousands of vengeful souls into the fire at once! Isn’t he worried that the tongue of flame will collapse?!”

However, it was to everyone’s wide-eyed shock that, not only did Bai Xiaochun’s flame not destabilize, but it actually grew stronger. Furthermore, because of how he fed all the souls in at once, his speed greatly surpassed the secret magics used by Sun Yifan and Sima Tao!

This time, the three necromancers didn’t all finish at the same time. However, the disparity wasn’t very dramatic;

they all finished within roughly ten breaths of time of each other.

After the fourteen-colored flame appeared, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath to calm himself. Not even bothering to look around, he continued with his work, sending vast amounts of vengeful souls out to be consumed by the sea of fire. Gradually, his fourteen-colored flame rose to the level of a fifteen-colored flame!

After Bai Xiaochun’s flame appeared, Sun Yifan and Sima Tao succeeded as well. By this point, the pressure was on the other two necromancers, as they had to admit that Bai Xiaochun’s abilities in flame conjuring were unique and shocking.

Expressions flickering as they contemplated what was at stake, they exchanged a glance. However, that was when they found to their shock that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t stopped; he was going on directly to sixteen-colored flame!

“This Bai Hao is too young and inexperienced. That’s not the way to go about conjuring. You need to get plenty of fifteen-colored flames built up, that way your chances of success will increase.”

“We’re definitely going to win.”

Exchanging a smile, Sun Yifan and Sima Tao felt more confident than ever.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0740 awe-chapter-741

Many of the people watching frowned sadly when they saw what was happening.

“Well, there’s not much suspense now about how this will end. Although Bai Hao is good at flame conjuring, he obviously doesn’t have much experience!”

“Although I can’t personally conjure sixteen-colored flame, I’ve heard that the best way to do it is to get a large collection of fifteen-colored flames, and then proceed. You’ll lose a few of the flames in the process, but once you find the sweet spot and get into a rhythm, you’ll succeed instantly. That way, the overall chances of success are improved.”

“Yeah, that’s right. If you just try with one flame, and then fail, you have to start again from the very beginning. How will you ever find the sweet spot that way?” Everyone else was sighing, but Bai Hao was off to the side, looking on with complete approval. He knew that his Master’s choice was the correct one. Now that he was working with Bai Hao's improved sixteen-colored flame formula, there wasn’t a need to rely on luck or sweet spots.

Bai Hao's improved formula broke down the steps involved with sixteen-colored flame into tens upon tens of thousands of specific steps. Every successful step in the right moment built upon itself, so as long as Bai Xiaochun followed the exact routine and didn’t slip up, then theoretically speaking, his success rate should be one hundred percent!

Of course, following those steps correctly required a very draining usage of augury techniques and divine sense. Although it seemed simple, it involved a level of difficulty that was almost impossible to describe. Even Bai Xiaochun could only do it because of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, and divine sense that bordered on the level of a deva's.

“You can do it, Master! You’ve followed all of the steps perfectly so far!” Of course, Bai Hao had been paying very close attention to everything that Bai Xiaochun had been doing the entire time.

As for Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, it was with very casual motions that they placed their recently concocted fifteen-colored flame off to the side and started to work on new tongues of one-colored flame. Their goal, of course, was to build up enough fifteen-colored flame to be completely confident in conjuring sixteen-colored flame.

Another two hours passed. By this point, Sima Tao and Sun Yifan had both taken their second tongue of flame to the fourteen-colored level. As for Bai Xiaochun, sweat poured down his face as his fifteen-colored flame continued to consume vengeful souls. He was now down to the very last step.

Not bothering to wipe the sweat off of his face, he looked at the flame with glittering eyes and then let out a shout. His right hand then clamped down, causing a blast of heat to spread out. People shouted in surprise as the sea of fire sank down into Bai Xiaochun’s palm and then disappeared between his fingers.

Zhou Hong was feeling very nervous. Little Wolfgod, Li Tiansheng, Miao Lin’er, the second prince, and all of the other chosen craned their necks forward to look. Even Chen

Manyao was covered with a sheen of sweat because of her nervousness.

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were both visibly shocked, and were looking over in nervous expectation. As for Bai Hao, his eyes were wild with joy. He was the only one who knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that his Master had not made any mistakes.

Tens of thousands of eyes were glued to Bai Xiaochun as he slowly opened his fingers!

The instant he did, fiery light exploded out, and the silence erupted into pandemonium.

“Sixteen-colored flame!! Heavens! This Bai Hao did it in a single shot!!”

“What kind of luck is that!? He did it on the first try!!”

“Awesome! This guy is awesome!!”

Countless expressions of praise rang out. However, unsightly expressions could be seen on the faces of Zhou Hong and the other chosen. The only exception was Chen Manyao, who was smiling broadly.

As for Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, the blood drained from their faces as they stared at the sixteen-colored flame in Bai Xiaochun’s hand. After a moment passed, though, they gritted their teeth.

“Well, he certainly got very lucky. However, I refuse to believe that he’ll be lucky enough to do that a second time!!” That was how both of them tried to comfort themselves. And yet, the pressure was mounting, and as such, they didn’t hold back any of their secret magics as they continued their conjuring work.

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, and a smile broke out on his face. He really had gone all out, and thankfully, hadn’t slipped up a single time. Finally wiping his forehead clean of sweat, he produced some more vengeful souls and then started working on a one-colored flame.

Time passed. Although watching people conjure flame wasn’t the most exciting thing, everyone was still completely wrapped up in what was going on. Some people were just enjoying the commotion, others were taking advantage of the situation to learn a bit about flame conjuring. By the time Sun Yifan and Sima Tao finished with their third tongue of fifteen-colored flame, Bai Xiaochun had his second!

Once that happened, everyone began to watch with even more excitement. Even Sun Yifan and Sima Tao looked over to watch, wondering if he would do the same thing he had last time, and go straight from a one-colored flame all the way to a sixteen-colored flame.

Before long, more excited shouts split the air, and the eyes of Sun Yifan and Sima Tao went as wide as saucers.

Just like last time, Bai Xiaochun had chosen to go straight to sixteen-colored flame!

“This guy is crazy!”

“Dammit! Why is he doing this? What does he hope to accomplish!?”

There was no way that Sima Tao and Sun Yifan couldn’t be gripped with anxiety by this point. Although his previous success had been shocking, they were both ninety-nine percent sure that he would fail the second time, but they still had to wonder: what if he succeeded?

Zhou Hong’s heart was racing as he looked down at Bai Xiaochun. He felt like his head was swelling from the pressure, just like it had back in the Necromancer Kettle. Little Wolfgod and the other chosen all had similar reactions. The fact that this Bai Hao went about things differently from everyone else was actually completely terrifying.

What if he actually succeeded in the end…?

“There’s no way he’ll succeed a second time in a row!!” Sun Yifan shouted inwardly, his eyes bright red as he put down his third fifteen-colored flame and started with a fourth one-colored flame!

Sima Tao could hardly control his own breathing, and yet he gritted his teeth and also started working on a one-colored flame. However, neither of the necromancers could stop from glancing over occasionally at Bai Xiaochun and cursing him.

Unfortunately, their cursing seemed to be very ineffective. Bai Xiaochun was working even faster than before, and actually felt less pressure than with the previous flame. He was more familiar with all the complicated steps, and also understood the augury technique even better. Even Bai Hao was stunned by how smoothly he worked.

“It seems Master is even better with sixteen-colored flame than he was before.”

Nobody understood Bai Xiaochun’s flame conjuring techniques better than Bai Hao, and in this situation, he was completely correct. Bai Xiaochun had indeed improved.

Perhaps it was the pressure of the occasion, or perhaps it was some measure of enlightenment he had received due to his study of seventeen-colored flame. Either way, he was definitely much better at working with sixteen-colored flame than he had been in the past.

In this second flame of the competition, he was completely lost in his work, and had even forgotten where he was. He was completely focused, reveling in the feeling, his hair disheveled and his eyes completely bloodshot.

He seemed to be descending into madness, much the way he would when concocting medicine back in the Heavenspan River region. It was a state he had not often entered here in the Wildlands, but the current circumstances were perfect.

The fifteen-colored flame in his palm almost seemed alive, as if the flame had a spirit. It seemed to be dancing in high spirits as it consumed numerous vengeful souls. As the flame swirled around him, Bai Xiaochun began to exude an indescribable air, as if he were somehow the sovereign of all flame!

As for the audience, everyone held their breath as they watched. Not a single person spoke a word, as if they were worried that doing so would end the spectacular scene they were beholding.

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were shaking as they looked at the maddened Bai Xiaochun, their eyes shining with the utmost level of disbelief.

“Flame Harmony....” hissed Sun Yifan. From the look in his eyes, he was clearly completely shaken.

In the Wildlands, there were different realms of flame conjuring, and Flame Harmony was one of them. It was a state in which one's mind became one with the flame, in much the same way that a deva would become one with all creation. In fact, the various secret magics employed by necromancers were all imitations of this very realm.

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao had never heard of celestial necromancers who could achieve Flame Harmony; according to their understanding, it was something that only earthly necromancers could do!

As of this moment, the sky grew dim, almost as if all light in the area were fading away because of Bai Xiaochun. He was the focus of all creation as the dancing flame converged into his palm. In the blink of an eye, another color appeared. It was now a sixteen-colored sea of fire!

However, Bai Xiaochun didn't converge the sea of fire into a sea of flame. His eyes were currently sparkling with the light of augury as he contemplated the formula for seventeen-colored flame. All of a sudden, he was focused on the two different possibilities his apprentice had mentioned regarding the formula for eighteen-colored flame!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0741 awe-chapter-742

Bai Xiaochun was immersed in the depths of augury. However, as for everyone else in the audience, when they saw the sixteen-colored sea of fire surrounding him, they erupted into pandemonium.

“A sixteen-colored sea of fire! All Bai Hao has to do is finish the last step, and he’ll have a second tongue of sixteen-colored flame!!”

“This is completely fantastic. He's breaking new ground! I never would have thought that someone would do something so spectacular with flame conjuring!!”

“Is that… wait, don’t tell me that’s the legendary Flame Harmony?”

The clamor wouldn't stop; people really were completely and utterly shaken by what they were witnessing.

Tens upon tens of thousands of voices all clamored together, creating a rumbling sound that was as loud as thunder. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun was in a little world of his own, surrounded by a sea of fire and completely immersed in augury. Otherwise, the thunderous sound would likely have distracted him.

Zhou Hong’s eyes shone with mysterious light. Even Little Wolfgod and the other chosen could tell that something odd was going on. They even considered doing something to interrupt Bai Xiaochun, but knew that doing so would provoke too much public outrage. Besides, who knew whether or not Bai Xiaochun would do something drastic in response. Therefore, they were forced to simply watch broodingly.

“Dammit,” Li Tiansheng said through gritted teeth. “Since when did we have to be so worried about making a move on someone!?” However, he could do nothing but sit there bitterly. Based on the glint in Zhou Hong’s eyes, Li Tiansheng could tell that he had already decided it wasn't worth it to try to interrupt Bai Xiaochun.

“This guy is crazy,” Zhou Hong murmured inwardly. “I could do something to interrupt this session of enlightenment, but for all I know, he might disregard all propriety and do something unspeakable….” Gritting his teeth, he shook his head. The truth was that virtually all of the Wildlands had been shaken by what Bai Xiaochun did in the Necromancer Kettle, and all of the chosen who had been part of it had been profoundly affected.

Meanwhile, Sun Yifan and Sima Tao both had looks of despair in their eyes. As celestial necromancers, they had more insight into the situation than anyone else present, and could tell that, given the current state Bai Xiaochun was in, there was no way they could compete with him.

When everyone else looked at the sixteen-colored sea of fire around Bai Xiaochun, they assumed he was preparing to form it down into a sixteen-colored flame. However, Sun Yifan and Sima Tao could both tell that Bai Xiaochun’s level of control over the sixteen-colored flame had reached an unimaginable level. They knew that all it would take would be a single thought on his part to form that flame!

“How do we compete with this…?” That was what both of them were thinking. At the same time, neither of them were willing to just give up. Eyes crimson, they each looked down at the four fifteen-colored flames they had conjured up to this point, and knew they only had one chance.

To throw caution to the wind!!

If they went all out, they might get lucky and succeed in transforming their current batch of fifteen-colored flames into sixteen-colored flames, all in one shot!

Although there was only a minimal chance of success, it was their only hope.

“Time to go for broke!!” Sun Yifan murmured through gritted teeth. Sima Tao’s eyes were just as bloodshot as his. Both of them seemed ready to put their lives on the line to come out on top in the wager.

However, even as they made up their minds, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up and started laughing like a maniac. He threw his hands up above his head in delight, and his eyebrows danced with joy as he shouted, “I understand! I get it now! This technique *will* work!! I'm gonna try it out. I *have* to try it out!!”

His mind was currently filled with the two different methods his apprentice had come up with regarding the formula for eighteen-colored flame.

One method involved getting a large collection of seventeen-colored flame and transforming them into something new. With that method, the focus was not on vengeful souls, but on the seventeen-colored flame itself.

The other method was to take a seventeen-colored flame and spread it out into a sea of fire, and slowly add another color by using flame itself. When the eighteenth color appeared in full, then the sea of fire could be formed back into a tongue of flame.

The second method was actually very shocking, and was something that had never been done before. It went completely contrary to the traditional way of conjuring flame.

After all, the formula for eighteen-colored flame was very rare. Not even the Giant Ghost King had it. Anyone who succeeded in conjuring eighteen-colored flame… would instantly become an earthly necromancer! And earthly necromancers were the rare among the rare in the Wildlands!

All earthly necromancers occupied incredibly high positions that were no weaker than the heavenly kings. In fact, the Wildlands currently only had three earthly necromancers in total. They were even more rare than demigods.

Bai Xiaochun was bursting with excitement, and yet he forced his breathing under control. At the moment, he had completely forgotten about the competition, and was completely focused on flame conjuring. With that, he waved his right hand, causing the surrounding sixteen-colored sea of fire to rapidly form down into a true sixteen-colored flame!

Before any exclamations of praise could be heard, and before Sun Yifan and Sima Tao could even begin to try to conjure sixteen-colored flames, Bai Xiaochun turned his attention on them, and the fifteen-colored flames which hovered around them.

Eyes shining, and mind abuzz with the new technique, he completely ignored Sun Yifan and Sima Tao as he waved his sleeve, causing the power of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul to sweep out. He instantly created a windstorm that Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were completely unprepared for, and sent them tumbling backward out of the competition area.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao?!?!”

“Bai Hao!!”

Blood oozed out of the corners of their mouth as they reeled in confusion about what was happening. As for the audience, they were shouting in alarm, completely stunned by Bai Xiaochun’s actions. Only Bai Hao seemed to know what his Master was thinking, and his eyes shone brightly as a result.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even hear the words uttered by Sun Yifan and Sima Tao. Instead, he focused on the eight tongues of fifteen-colored flame they had left behind. Waving his sleeve again, he collected them up, even as Sun Yifan and Sima Tao shouted out in rage.

Countless eyes went wide with disbelief as people tried to figure out what was happening.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao!?”

“What’s… what’s… what’s going on?!”

“Isn’t this a competition? What are you suddenly stealing our flames for?! What kind of a competition is this…?” Although Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were yelling angrily, secretly they were breathing sighs of relief. Bai Xiaochun’s impulsive action had actually resolved any feelings of embarrassment they had before, and gave them plenty of ammunition with which to attack him later.

Zhou Hong and the other chosen were immediately bursting with joy. That was especially true of Miao Lin’er, who knew that this stupid move on the part of Bai Hao would definitely give people plenty of ground to talk about him negatively, no matter what he did from this point out.

Chen Manyao looked on nervously. However, there was no way to take back what had been done, nor any way for her to resolve the current situation. Even as everyone was completely shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s actions, all of a sudden… his two sixteen-colored flames suddenly spread out and then combined.

It was one giant sea of sixteen-colored fire, which sent blistering heat out in all directions as it rose high into the sky. Everyone in the audience was backing away in fear.

“I need ten tongues of sixteen-colored flame….” he murmured, eyes shining with madness. Based on the inspiration he had just received, he tossed the eight tongues of fifteen-colored flame into the sixteen-colored sea of fire.

Instantly, intense rumbling sounds exploded out, sounds that could be heard quite a distance away. Furthermore, the way the flame filled the sky ensured that everyone could see it!

Cries of alarm could be heard as people scrambled away. Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were no longer beside themselves with joy, and their scalps were tingling with fear.

“What is he going to do?!?!”

“Heavens! If that sea of fire destabilized, something very, very bad would happen!!”

The city guards seemed the most nervous of all as they spread out, not only trying to quiet people down, but also setting up a spell formation to contain the area Bai Xiaochun was in.

The guards knew that Bai Xiaochun could not be disturbed. If he did, and the sea of fire exploded, mass chaos would ensue. As they tried to contain the situation, they all sent messages to their superiors.

Zhou Hong's eyes flickered malevolently, but he quickly abandoned any ideas of trying to interfere. The trouble that would happen as a result was too much for even him to be able to handle.

As everyone watched nervously, Bai Xiaochun remained in the middle of the spell formation, hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture as he controlled the sea of fire. It was almost as if the sea of fire had a spirit that was meekly responding to all of his orders. As he fed the eight tongues of fifteen-colored flame into the sixteen-colored sea of fire, they unexpectedly became... part of the sixteen-colored sea of fire!!

The sight of so much sixteen-colored fire was completely and utterly unbelievable.

“Sixteen-colored fire.... I can't believe all those fifteen-colored flames became part of a sixteen-colored sea of fire!!”

“If he formed that sea of fire back down into tongues of flame, then he would have... ten tongues of sixteen-colored flame! Heavens! How is this even possible!?!?”

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were as ashen as death as they stood there, gazing blankly at the shocking sixteen-colored sea of fire.

Of course, things weren’t over yet!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0742 awe-chapter-743

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes sparkled brightly as he manipulated the shocking sixteen-colored sea of fire. Although his aura was calm, his heart was bursting with excitement. He felt very similar to how he used to feel back in his medicine concocting days, when he would suddenly be struck by inspiration. His heart prickled as surely as if tiny hands were tickling it.

“Seventeen colors!” he roared, throwing both hands wide in a double-handed incantation gesture. The sixteen-colored sea of fire instantly began to spin, and without the addition of any other vengeful souls, began to grow vastly hotter.

And then, as everyone watched, it began to shrink down!!

Soon, it was only 30,000 meters wide, and rapidly shrinking. The power of fire within it was shocking, and the heat caused the air to distort wildly. Nobody in the audience dared to say a single word, and all of them continued to back away anxiously.

Even more cultivators further away could feel the blistering heat, and more city guards were mobilizing to lock the area down.

Bai Xiaochun had become a source of ultimate terror, and everyone knew that if he lost control of the sea of fire, and it exploded, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Zhou Hong trembled in nervousness. Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were also shaking, and looked as ashen as death. At the same time, though, traces of excitement could be seen in their eyes. Although they viewed Bai Xiaochun as competition, they were also celestial necromancers, people who devoted themselves to the study and understanding of flame conjuring. To see a completely unheard-of technique being used right in front of them was definitely a source of major excitement.

Everybody had forgotten about the competition, and were now completely and utterly focused on that figure within the sea of fire!

As the sea of fire spun, rumbling sounds echoed forth, and the fire shrank down. 24,000 meters. 18,000 meters. 15,000 meters. 9,000 meters. Soon, it was only 3,000 meters wide!

It was at that point that within the sea of fire… another color appeared! Under the eyes of all spectators, it became… a seventeen-colored sea of fire!!

All onlookers were struck with shock. Although many of them had guessed that this would happen, to see it occur right in front of them drove them to near madness.

People didn't even know what to think! This was completely overturning all previous traditions; this was a new page in the history of flame conjuring!

At this point, people couldn’t refrain from calling out in surprise.

“He didn’t need any souls to add a seventeenth color to that flame!!”

“Am I seeing things? This is unheard-of!!”

“This Bai Hao is definitely going to be completely famous in the Wildlands! He's creating a new paradigm!!”

As for Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, they were shaking physically; the events of this day would be certain to alter their future path of flame conjuring.

Because everyone was focused on Bai Xiaochun, nobody was paying much attention to Bai Hao, who remained off to the side as he had the entire time. His eyes were fixed on his Master, and they gleamed with excitement and satisfaction. He couldn’t have been happier that his Master was proving that his own theories about the formula for eighteen-colored flame were correct.

It was a critically important factor, and for the sake of the eighteen-colored flame formula, Bai Hao was burning every last detail of these events into his mind. As of now, he was completely confident of being able to finish that formula!

“Eighteen-colored flame….” When it came to that formula, he didn’t really care about the glory or honor that would go with it. He cared mostly about how useful it would be to his Master. With that formula, his Master could become an earthly necromancer!

Although he had come to realize that his Master was somewhat unreliable in certain things, nothing had changed between the two of them. Bai Xiaochun was Bai Hao’s only family!

At this point, numerous streams of deva-level divine sense locked down on the area, and their owners were all completely shaken by what they saw.

However, even as people reacted to what was happening, the cries of astonishment suddenly increased.

“He’s not stopping….”

“He’s not forming it into a tongue of flame. Is he going to…?”

“Don’t tell me he's going to….”

“If he conjures an eighteen-colored flame, he’ll break out of the celestial rank and become… the fourth earthly necromancer in the Wildlands!!” In the blink of an eye, the pandemonium increased by tenfold.

“Earthly rank…. Is Bai Hao really going to become an earthly necromancer?!”

“He’s going to make a breakthrough with tens of thousands of people watching!?!?”

“It actually doesn’t matter if he succeeds. This boldness is worthy of admiration!!”

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao stood there in the middle of the pandemonium, their chests heaving as they breathed, and their hearts filled with shame. By now, they seemed to truly be convinced that Bai Xiaochun was their superior.

“What spirit! He's doing something that we could never do…. This guy is a genius among Wildlander necromancers. How could we possibly do anything to offend him…?” The two of them exchanged a glance, and each could see that the other was thinking the same thing.

Even as speculation ran wild, Bai Xiaochun looked up, his cultivation base surging with explosive power as he spoke in a voice that boomed like thunder, “Eighteen colors!!”

As his voice echoed out, the sea of fire spun down rapidly, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds.

3,000 meters. 2,400 meters. 1,800 meters…. Eventually, the heat radiating out filled everyone with sensations of intense danger.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

In the blink of an eye, the sea of fire was only 900 meters wide!!

Bai Xiaochun was shaking, his divine sense waning dramatically. Even his cultivation base was having trouble sustaining the conjuring. After all, this type of flame conjuring required the use of the cultivation base to shrink down the flame. His fleshly body power also sustained the effort; were it not for the incredible strength he possessed in that aspect, he would not be able to do this.

“I can still keep going. I’m sure that this method can take the flame from seventeen colors to eighteen…. Even if that eighteenth color is faint… it will prove that my apprentice Bai Hao’s method really is viable!” Eyes completely bloodshot, he threw his head back and roared at the top of his lungs as he forced the 900-meter sea of fire to shrink down.

Intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the sea of fire grew smaller and smaller. 600 meters. 300 meters. 150 meters… 90 meters. 30 meters!

It was at that point that the colors in the flame flickered, making it impossible to tell exactly how many colors it held. However, the power of the fire was clearly undergoing some shocking transformation!!

Nobody in the audience was able to speak a single word. Everyone was completely and utterly focused on the sea of fire as it continued to shrink!

21 meters. 15 meters. 9 meters.... Soon, it was only a single meter across!

It had shrunk from a size of 30,000 meters all the way down to a single meter! It was also clear that the flame no longer had seventeen colors in it. Instead... a new color had appeared, something holy and indescribable!

An eighteenth color!!!

Up above, the clouds surged away to make way for a new set of clouds, heavenly tribulation that instantly caused intense pressure to weigh down on all of Arch-Emperor City!

The entire city trembled, and countless powerful experts could sense the danger. It was at this point that cries of alarm could be heard.

“That’s....”

“Eighteen-colored flame!!!”

Out in the Giant Ghost Legion, Mistress Red-Dust was shaken by the glow of fire which lit up the sky above Arch-Emperor City. When her divine sense locked onto Bai Xiaochun, she was immediately shaken, and almost didn’t dare to believe what she was seeing.

High in the sky in the imperial palace, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty’s Grand Heavenmaster sat in Heavenmaster Hall. His eyes opened, and he looked down at Bai Xiaochun.

“Whoever the Hell-Emperor selects... should be able to conjure eighteen-colored flame. Not a simple feat. Could this person actually be Bai Xiaochun?” A long moment passed, and then the Grand Heavenmaster closed his eyes again. “Ah, Hell-Emperor, just what are you up to...?”

As the winds raged, Bai Xiaochun drew upon his cultivation base all the way to the limit. He was being completely drained as the eighteenth color appeared, and the sea of fire shrank down. However, he could only hold on for three breaths of time… whereupon the sea of fire vanished.

The eighteen-colored flame disappeared as if it had never existed!

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun's mouth, and he staggered backward. Everyone looked on silently for a moment. Then, their eyes burning with passion and respect, they clasped hands and bowed to him. Even the city guards!

Although he had failed in the end, he had still done something completely glorious!!

After all, only earthly necromancers could conjure a divine, eighteen-colored flame. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun had a unique path of flame conjuring, his own way of doing things that didn't restrict him to using the formulas of others!

He was now half a step into the earthly rank!!

His eighteen-colored flame had only existed for three breaths of time, and had been faint, but it was still shocking to behold. Furthermore, although he could only conjure a faint eighteen-colored flame right now, it was entirely likely that at some point in the future, he would fully succeed! Then he would truly be the fourth earthly necromancer in the Wildlands!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0743 awe-chapter-744

The people who had been watching were extremely moved. Although they had only been able to glimpse eighteen-colored flame for a brief moment, it was still…

Eighteen-colored flame!

Very few people in the Wildlands had ever seen eighteen-colored flame. To most soul cultivators, it was a thing of legend, something holy that could only be talked about.

But now… they had actually seen it!

A deep desire had been fulfilled, and everyone present would remember this moment for as long as they lived!

Off to the side, Bai Hao looked on in utter excitement. Although he had been the one to break the new ground, and had spectacular talent for flame conjuring, he also knew that he could never have done it with his current cultivation base. Only his Master could possibly have taken the theory and turned it into reality. The process had simply been too difficult.

Furthermore, Bai Hao had seen something in his Master that other people had, but not to the same degree…. Focus!!

Bai Hao did not feel as though his own prestige had in any way been diminished by his Master. As long as he could help his Master shine, then he was completely happy.

He wasn’t a wildly ambitious person, and in life, had cared mostly about family love. After being brought back to life as a soul, that aspect of his personality had remained. Bai Xiaochun was his Master… and his family.

There was someone else in the crowd who looked on with mixed emotions, and that was Chen Manyao. Before, she had felt about eighty percent sure that this person was actually Bai Xiaochun, but now she was starting to hesitate.

She knew that Bai Xiaochun was skilled in concocting medicine, but conjuring flame was completely different. This Bai Hao was clearly outstanding when it came to flame conjuring, and she didn't dare to lightly come to the conclusion that he and Bai Xiaochun were one and the same.

“Is he really Bai Xiaochun…?” she thought.

As everyone looked at him with various thoughts running through their heads, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and settled his cultivation base. It had been extremely draining for him to conjure the eighteen-colored flame, and now, waves of exhaustion were sweeping through him. Prickles of pain also filled his fleshly body.

He slowly slipped out of the Flame Harmony state, and his mind gradually emerged from the trance he had entered while conjuring. All of a sudden, he remembered that he was supposed to be in the middle of a competition. Then he recalled everything he had just done, and his eyes went wide with shock.

“Er… um… what did I do…?” he thought. Looking around nervously, he saw that everyone had looks of respect and veneration in their eyes as they stared at him. He blinked a few times, and then suddenly started to get excited. “I conjured an eighteen-colored flame! Heavens!”

Excited, he took a deep breath, clasped his hands behind his back, and stuck his chin up. Aware that he was the center of attention, he decided that it would be completely appropriate to say something profound. As he scrambled to come up with the exact words, someone within the crowd of noble chosen suddenly moved forward. It was Zhou Hong, who appeared to be completely livid as he looked down at Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao,” he said, eyes flashing, “you tried to win by interfering with the conjuring efforts of Sun Yifan and Sima Tao. You broke the rules, and therefore… you lose!”

When people heard that, they suddenly came back to their senses, and remembered that Bai Xiaochun had just been in the middle of a competition with Sima Tao and Sun Yifan. What Zhou Hong had just said did seem to make sense, and suddenly… everyone began to hesitate.

The truth was that Zhou Hong was feeling very nervous. Never could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would put on such a stunning performance, that he would break tradition and manage to conjure a faint eighteen-colored flame.

He could already imagine how difficult it would be to deal with Bai Xiaochun in the future. Unless the top members of the nobility and aristocracy directly opposed him, he would be almost untouchable.

However, because of everything that had occurred in the Necromancer Kettle, Zhou Hong decided that he had to take advantage of the moment, however inappropriate it was!

After all, what Bai Xiaochun had done really did violate the rules of the contest!

Almost as soon as Zhou Hong spoke, Little Wolfgod and Li Tiansheng voiced their agreement.

“That’s right, Bai Hao is definitely the loser!”

“He interfered with the flame conjuring of Grandmaster Sun and Grandmaster Sima. Even if he did conjure a faint eighteen-colored flame, he definitely lost the competition!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. Knowing full well that he was currently at the crest of a wave of glory, he prepared to offer a retort to Zhou Hong. However, even as he opened his mouth, Sun Yifan rushed out of the crowd, stood before him, and bowed formally.

Both his expression and the way he carried himself seemed utterly sincere, and not the least bit an act. He was acting completely and utterly respectful.

“Grandmaster Bai, I’m completely convinced! I concede defeat!”

Murmurs began to ripple through the crowd. At the same time, the chosen up above began to get nervous.

“Grandmaster,” Zhou Hong said, “you--”

“Your Highness, please, it's fine. I, Sun Yifan, am a person who understands his place. When it comes to skill in conjuring flame, I am no match for Grandmaster Bai!” Sun Yifan’s words were spoken with incredible decisiveness. He truly did not want to offend Bai Xiaochun. He knew that it was extremely likely that he would eventually become an earthly necromancer… a position vastly above himself and virtually everyone else.

Now that he was on that path, he couldn’t be restrained, and the best thing to do was acquiesce to him.

Sun Yifan wasn't the only one to reach this same conclusion. After a short moment of silence, Sima Tao got his breathing under control, stepped forward, and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun.

“Grandmaster Bai, I, Sima Tao, also concede defeat. I truly hope you can overlook my many previous faux pas.”

The audience swelled with even more conversation at this development. Up in midair, Zhou Hong and the other chosen looked on with ashen faces and sullen hearts.

Zhou Hong’s face was nearly purple with rage, but there was nothing he could do about what was happening. If Sun Yifan and Sima Tao conceded defeat, there was little he could do. Having no face to remain behind, he swished his sleeve and turned into a beam of light that shot out of Borough 89. Little Wolfgod, Li Tiansheng, and the others all followed suit. The second prince remained behind for a moment longer before also leaving.

Bai Xiaochun was actually surprised at what was happening. The situation had been resolved without him having to do a thing. Sun Yifan and Sima Tao took the initiative to work things out with him. In fact, Bai Xiaochun actually felt a bit bad for them. After all, everything had happened because he really did tamper with their soul medicine.

“Grandmasters, please, enough with this,” he said, hurrying over to pull them up from their bows. “When it comes to the Dao of necromancy, seniority is the most important thing. Without Senior members of the Wildlands necromancer community working hard from generation to generation, devoting their lives to their work, then we Juniors would have nothing to work with. It is only with the foundation of the previous formulas that we can create something new!

“I conjured that faint eighteen-colored flame completely on accident, and only because I happened to be next to you Seniors, and was able to catch a glimpse of the grandeur of the heavens.

“I definitely did not win the competition today, nor did you two grandmasters lose. It was with the help of you two that I made significant advancement. Without your assistance, Grandmasters, I would never have been able to conjure that faint eighteen-colored flame. Many, many thanks to you!” Bai Xiaochun really had a way with words when he needed to, and even felt a bit guilty about everything. Furthermore, as he spoke, he backed up and bowed deeply at the waist to Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, in even more sincere fashion than they had bowed to him.

The fact that this was happening in front of tens of thousands of spectators, and numerous streams of deva divine sense, caused the hearts of Sun Yifan and Sima Tao to tremble. Their earlier apologies had essentially been acts of helpless desperation. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun was sincerely humbling himself in a moment of great triumph. As a result, Sun Yifan and Sima Tao were so moved that they got a bit choked up.

Furthermore, not only would this resolve the issue of the soul medicine, but it would actually serve to improve their reputations a bit.

The two grandmasters looked at Bai Xiaochun, then each other, and then began to laugh heartily. With Zhou Hong out of sight and out of mind, they headed toward Bai Xiaochun’s shop to chat and exchange pointers about necromancy. The only thing they regretted was that they hadn’t done this earlier.

Everyone present, including the devas who were watching via divine sense, couldn’t help but praise Bai Xiaochun’s actions. His way of resolving the situation was truly admirable.

“Now that’s how grandmasters are supposed to act! The old expression says to *turn weapons of war into gifts of jade and silk*. It's not easy to do, but he pulled it off perfectly. Really incredible!”

“That’s the way to conduct oneself…. No wonder he became so famous in Giant Ghost City!”

“I bet the only reason he got that notorious reputation was because people spread false rumors.”

“I like this Bai Hao!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0744 awe-chapter-745

After Bai Xiaochun went inside with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, the crowd began to disperse, discussing the events as they did. Everyone was very excited, many of them using transmission jade slips to send the soul-shaking news to friends and family.

It was easy to imagine how short of a time it would take for the name Bai Hao to be the talk of Arch-Emperor City.

Furthermore, the smooth way he had worked things out in the end led to expressions of admiration high and low. However, it also caused a strange glint to appear in the eye of Chen Manyao, who up to this point had been vacillating about his identity.

“Wait a second…. From what I remember, that’s exactly how Bai Xiaochun usually does things! He's very smooth, and loves to resolve hostilities…. Back when the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect were about to go to war, and everyone was sure it was going to happen, Bai Xiaochun smoothed things out….” She continued to contemplate the matter as she left with the crowd, and was soon almost home. However, before she arrived, she suddenly stopped in place, her eyes shining.

“And then there was what happened with that soul medicine. It would make perfect sense if it were him…. After all, back in the Blood Stream Sect, people called him Plaguedevil…. However, the biggest clue is that what he did is exactly what the Celestial Sky Society did to him back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!!”

Chen Manyao stood there, shaken as she thought back to how he had acted in the Necromancer Kettle when she tried to probe him for information. When combined with the Celestial Sky Society clue, everything made perfect sense. She smiled.

Of course, Chen Manyao was a beautiful girl, so her smile was like the blossoming of a hundred flowers. Many passersby noticed, and their eyes sparkled.

“He’s… definitely Bai Xiaochun!!” she thought. For some reason, joy suddenly welled up in her heart, and she turned to look back toward Borough 89, and Bai Xiaochun’s shop. Another moment passed, and she left.

Bai Xiaochun had no way of knowing that his smooth behavior and unique tactics had revealed his identity. If he did, he would have been scared witless, and would have been marveling at how terrifying women were. That sort of careful attention to detail was something that men were almost powerless to defend against….

He was currently in his shop having a light conversation with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao. All three of them felt wonderful as they exchanged stories about their experiences with flame conjuring, and certain tricks they had come up with. In addition, the owners and clerks in the other shops and stores on the street were finally sighing with relief.

The next day, Sun Yifan and Sima Tao clasped hands respectfully to Bai Xiaochun. Very pleased with what they had learned recently, they cheerfully bid him adieu, and then headed back to Nine Serenities City and Spirit Advent City. They also invited him to come visit as soon as he could, whereupon they both would attempt to pay the debt they owed him because of the wager.

Bai Xiaochun agreed, and then Sun Yifan and Sima Tao left for the teleportation portal.

Bai Xiaochun sighed as he escorted them out the door and watched them leave. Their night-long discussion had been of benefit to Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, but had also been of great help to Bai Xiaochun. Bai Hao had been by his side the whole time as well. Overall, they had all received significant enlightenment regarding flame conjuring techniques.

Bai Hao was more impressed than ever with how his Master conducted himself, and was also convinced that he himself wasn’t capable of such things. If he had been the apprentice to a Master like this back when he was in the Bai Clan, then his situation would surely have been much better, and his prospects for the future would have greatly improved.

Sighing emotionally, Master and apprentice went back into the shop. Seven days passed in a flash. During that time, they discussed many things, and delved deep into their research. Bai Xiaochun pondered seventeen-colored flame, and Bai Hao continued to perfect his formula for eighteen-colored flame.

Of course, business was booming, leaving Bai Xiaochun feeling very pleased. By now, this little shop of his truly did feel like home.

Every time this Master and apprentice team clashed with any outsiders, the struggles they went through led to them becoming more famous in the city.

Not much time had passed, but they had experienced a lot together. Whenever Bai Xiaochun thought about all of the twists and turns, he sighed. And yet, he was coming to find out that, apparently, he wasn’t fated to be able to live a calm and peaceful life. Whenever he felt most pleased and content, that was when the unexpected always occurred….

In fact, before he could even enjoy more than ten days of peace and quiet, things got annoying again. And that was because of… Chen Manyao.

Three days before, she had come to his shop for the first time. He had been sprawled out on the counter, seemingly asleep, but actually wrapped up in thinking about seventeen-colored flame. He had suddenly experienced a strange feeling, and had looked up to find Chen Manyao looking at him. His first reaction was stunned shock.

She had given him an enigmatic smile, and instead of challenging him regarding his identity, had merely asked to have a spirit enhancement performed….

Scowling, he had considered refusing, but could tell that she wasn’t going to give up easily. Therefore, he braced himself and did the spirit enhancement. However, to his anxiety, she came back the next day….

Now, for the third day in a row, she was back. As soon as they opened for business, she glided into the shop, lighting it up with her incredible beauty.

As soon as he saw her, he said, “Big Sis Chen… what are you doing back so soon?”

Almost immediately, he felt like slapping himself for addressing her in that way.

“Oh, you’re calling me Big Sis now, huh? Alright. What’s wrong, Little Bro Bai…. Not happy to see me?” She looked very charming as she stood there in front of him, and he could smell the sweet fragrance of her perfume. However, he was in no mood to admire her looks, and merely smiled wryly.

At this point, it seemed highly likely that she knew who he was, and was simply not saying anything. And yet, he didn’t dare to bring up the subject, and therefore could only continue to play dumb.

Although most other people might be fooled by his act, Chen Manyao had observed his work up close in the past, and therefore, saw through him in an instant. Of course, she found it all very amusing.

She rather enjoyed not saying anything and watching him squirm in front of her. She was in no hurry. If Bai Xiaochun wanted to avoid her, then she was more than happy to just stick around the shop and help Bai Hao receive customers.

Of course, Chen Manyao was quite famous in Arch-Emperor City. Not only was she an apprentice of the Grand Heavenmaster, she was also spectacularly good-looking. Because of that, she had countless suitors in the city. And yet, here she was in Bai Xiaochun’s shop….

If she had only come once, it probably wouldn’t have caused any stir. But to see her here acting the way the wife of the shop owner would, taking care of new customers, was something that struck shock into the hearts of all of the soul cultivators who noticed. In fact, they were all struck by how this Bai Hao was even more incredible and manly than any of them had realized.

News spread rapidly, much to Bai Xiaochun’s alarm. It was also the same with Bai Hao. Everything had been going fine for the Master and apprentice team until this woman suddenly showed up. Not only was she beautiful, but Bai

Hao could tell from the way she looked at his Master that there was something between them….

“Don’t tell me she's Master’s wife!?” he thought, his anxiety mounting. However, he didn’t dare to try to get confirmation. Although he made some vague inquiries, Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to discuss the matter.

And yet, the frustrations were only beginning….

On the eighth day after Chen Manyao made her first appearance, another woman visited the shop.

She was just as beautiful as Chen Manyao, with a spectacular figure, and unique violet gloves. Although she appeared to be petite and delicate, there was something explosively violent about her….

This termagant was none other than that Spirit Advent City’s Princess Xu Shan!

Xu Shan was obsessed with Bai Hao. After her father the Spirit Advent King had taken her away from Giant Ghost City, she had immediately brought up to him the possibility of arranging a marriage…. The Spirit Advent King was stunned, and the whole thing caused his anger toward the Giant Ghost King to grow even more. In order to correct his daughter’s thinking, he had kept her activities restricted the entire time since.

But Xu Shan was persistent, leaving the Spirit Advent King completely helpless. Eventually, she managed to escape confinement. Her original intention had been to travel to Giant Ghost City to find Bai Hao, only to hear along the way about all the things that were happening in Arch-Emperor City. Exhilarated, she had immediately come over….

Xu Shan was good-looking in a different way than Chen Manyao, and had a unique, violent personality. As soon as she stepped into the shop, she looked over at Bai Xiaochun and yelled, “I love you, Bai Hao!”

Tears nearly sprang out of Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and as for Bai Hao, he immediately began trembling, especially because of how his Master had ruined his name so badly….

As for Chen Manyao, she simply frowned.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0745 awe-chapter-746

Xu Shan’s bluntness made Bai Xiaochun feel like his head might explode. Here he was, a major general from the Great Wall, the majordomo of Giant Ghost City, a famous celebrity in the Wildlands, kidnapper of a hundred chosen, fighter of devas, slapper of demigod kings… and yet completely flummoxed when it came to such matters of love.

He really had no idea how he was going to get through this day, and was fairly certain that conflict was going to explode between Xu Shan and Chen Manyao….

Although it was difficult, he managed to provide enough distractions to last until evening, when he closed the shop. After Xu Shan and Chen Manyao left, he stood there staring at the ceiling, his face a mask of grief and indignation.

“But I'm Love Saint Bai Xiaochun….” he moaned, thinking back to the title he had given himself. Unfortunately, at the moment, he had no idea what to do.

Beating his chest in lamentation, he continued, “How could this be happening? Years ago it was Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei who almost drove me to my grave…. Now here I am in the Wildlands, and despite how careful I've been, my outstanding nature continues to attract young women. I’m… I'm even using my apprentice Bai Hao’s face, which isn’t nearly as attractive as my own. Why…? Why does everyone fall in love with me…? Dear heavens, why do you have to treat me this way?” He truly felt as though his supplications to the heavens were falling on completely deaf ears.

Off to the side, Bai Hao looked on with wide eyes. Looking somewhat depressed and helpless, he rubbed his face with his hand, and pondered whether he should offer a response to his Master. In the end, he decided that considering how strange his Master was acting, it would probably be better to hold back.

“Could it be that I really am just too outstanding?” Bai Xiaochun mused aloud. “I look different, and it's a different time and place. I've cast the past aside! I can only rely on my mettle and my soul to strive forward. I guess that's what causes countless young women to go crazy for me....

“Don’t tell me that I, Bai Xiaochun, have really reached such a supreme, ultimate level.... What should I do? It's not my fault I’m so outstanding!” As he stood there shaking his head, Bai Hao finally reached the point where he couldn't just stand idly by any longer.

“Master,” he said, “Are you... are you really blaming yourself? Or are you just showing off!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun spun in place and cast a glare at his apprentice.

“Apprentice, can’t you see that Master is truly wrapped up in bitterness? Ai. You just don’t understand. Did you know that I even had to deal with annoying things like this back in the mortal world? All of the girls in my village liked me. There was Kitty, and Lassie, and even Blackie! They chased me constantly, and I had to reject them over and over again....” As Bai Xiaochun thought back to the past, his face filled with more bitterness.

Bai Hao stood off to the side, a bit stunned. For some reason, it sounded to him like Kitty was a cat's name and Lassie was a dog's name. However, he couldn't for the life of him figure out what family would name a daughter something like Blackie.

Completely unaware of what Bai Hao was thinking, Bai Xiaochun continued, “Originally, I thought that pursuing the path of immortality would free me from the curse of girls being attracted to me. But you know what happened? Almost immediately, Hou Xiaomei fell for me, and then my boo. I eventually went into hiding in the Blood Stream Sect. Who would have thought that that’s where Song Junwan would fall for me…?

“What was I supposed to do? I didn’t want any of it, and in the end, just left it all behind. But never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined that after I got back to the River-Defying Sect, tens of thousands of female disciples would give me love letters….

“Why, my apprentice? Why did the heavens make me so outstanding!? What’s the reason for it all?!?!” When Bai Xiaochun had first begun talking, he really had seemed upset about the situation. But the longer he talked, the more it seemed like he was savoring sweet memories.

Bai Hao smiled wryly. He didn’t actually believe much of what his Master was saying. And yet, little did he know that his Master had been waiting for that exact facial expression to appear. As soon as the disbelief touched his face, Bai Xiaochun smacked his bag of holding, and a loud rustling sound filled the air….

Thousands upon thousands of colorful love letters poured out, forming a small mountain right there on the floor. Many of them were even folded into the shape of hearts.

“See!” Bai Xiaochun said, masking the pride in his voice with bitterness.

Bai Hao was so startled that his jaw dropped and his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth. Mind spinning, he stared in disbelief at all of the love letters.

His vanity sated by the wonderful expression on his apprentice’s face, Bai Xiaochun carefully collected the love letters back up and contemplated how it would be possible to use them again in the future. He also mused about how important it was for his apprentice to view him with awe, and to realize how truly amazing he was.

Ignoring Bai Hao, he stood there disconsolately for a moment before moping into the back room. Despite spending much time in thought, he couldn’t come up with any ideas about what to do, so eventually, he sighed and went back to thinking about seventeen-colored flame.

However, this was not an issue that would go away by ignoring it. The next day, Xu Shan and Chen Manyao were back. Xu Shan was the more candid of the two, and simply walked in and sat down next to Bai Xiaochun. If he moved, she moved with him. She seemed to be announcing to everyone that he belonged to her. Occasionally, she would also cast threatening glances at Chen Manyao.

An unsightly expression could be seen on Chen Manyao’s face, and occasionally she made some biting comments. Of course, Xu Shan wasn’t a match for her in words, so she would simply curse back and then leap up to start fighting. Each time, Bai Xiaochun would struggle to pull her back, trembling in fear the whole time.

Bai Hao was also feeling quite apprehensive. However, he was supposed to be a ‘stiff’ soul slave, and therefore, didn't dare to interfere in matters between the two women.

“So,” he thought, “it seems this Xu Shan is *also* Master’s wife….” With that, he focused fully on maintaining the expressionless face of a soul slave.

Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to pay much attention to Bai Hao, and felt his hair turning gray from the effort of trying to keep the peace. After all, he had put his heart and soul into this shop, and if these women started fighting inside, it would cause a lot of damage! Perhaps he could keep things calm over the course of a few days, but if things kept going like this…. Half a month later, Bai Xiaochun felt like he was going insane, and the tension between Xu Shan and Chen Manyao was more intense than ever.

One day, the conflict finally erupted.

“What did you just say, Chen Manyao, you slut!?”

“Other people might worry about you because of your status, Xu Shan, but as far as I'm concerned, you’re nothing but a stupid girl who doesn’t know how to do anything except fight!” As they faced off angrily on the verge of blows, the soul cultivators in the shop dropped back to watch the scene. Even some of the passersby outside noticed, and craned their necks to see what was happening. Apparently, people had grown used to exciting things happening at Bai Xiaochun’s shop.

Bai Xiaochun was in the back room, working on seventeen-colored flame. When he heard the row outside, he shivered in fear, and almost started crying. But then, he hurried out and placed himself between Xu Shan and Chen Manyao, where he tried to calm the situation down. However, nothing he said worked, and it seemed like the two women were just about to start fighting. Bai Xiaochun had been holding things in for half a month already, so at this point, he finally lost control.

“Enough!!” he shouted, his voice echoing like thunder. The customers and other onlookers were in high spirits as they wondered what scene would play out now.

Stunned by the volume of Bai Xiaochun’s voice, Xu Shan and Chen Manyao both turned to look at him.

Taking a deep breath, he turned to Xu Shan first and said, “Xu Shan, tell me right now what it is you like about me….”

Originally, she had been fuming, but as soon as she heard his words, a flush touched her face, and she looked down shyly.

“But there are so many people watching….” she said softly.

Head pounding, he grabbed Xu Shan by the shoulder, looked her sternly in the eye, and said, “Tell me. What do you like about me? I’ll definitely change it….”

When the onlookers heard that, they couldn’t hold back from chuckling aloud.

As for Xu Shan, her eyes went wide, and suddenly, Bai Xiaochun felt like maybe this wasn’t how he should treat a girl who had fallen in love with him. But then, Xu Shan suddenly smiled.

“*This* is what I like about you!”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped….

Even as she spoke, she lifted her hand, causing him to lose his grip on her shoulder. Then *she* grabbed *him*, leaned forward and whispered into his ear, “From now on, you’re *mine*.”

Then she stepped back and cleared her throat. Bai Xiaochun truly wanted to weep. Xu Shan had thoroughly defeated him, and as he turned to Chen Manyao and saw the enigmatic smile on her face, he suddenly felt even more alarmed than before.

Sighing, he said, “If you want to fight… just do it outside….” When it came to matters of love like this, he was truly helpless. Turning dismally to return to the back room, he decided that he wouldn't come back out no matter how fierce the fighting got.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0746 awe-chapter-747

Strangely enough, after Bai Xiaochun made up his mind, Chen Manyao and Xu Shan did not start fighting. Instead, they staked out their own territory within the shop itself. From the look of it, they were less interested in paying attention to Bai Xiaochun, and more interested in having a competition between the two of them.

It was a simple type of competition.... They would see who could sell the most soul medicine.... The customers who entered the shop had two choices. Go with the beloved apprentice of the Grand Heavenmaster, or with the cherished daughter of one of the heavenly kings.

Thankfully, Bai Hao was also present, and was often swarmed with customers because of the situation.

That got him very nervous. Unfortunately, in this case, the act he was putting on for safety purposes actually ended up forcing him to stay right in the middle of a deadly situation. After all, he was supposed to be an expressionless soul slave. Such a soul slave would not retreat to the back room to ask for help, and therefore, he had no other choice but to brace himself, suppress the shivers he felt because of the incisive gazes of the two young women, and receive the customers.

The business was in utter chaos by this point.... Chen Manyao and Xu Shan were sticking to their guns, and were even calling on their connections both in Arch-Emperor City and Spirit Advent City. Many soul cultivators who would normally never patronize the shop were now flocking to it to buy soul medicine, many of them in boldly large quantities.

Of course, profits skyrocketed. Bai Xiaochun was always shocked to hear the nightly reports from Bai Hao about the day’s business. And considering how things were playing out, he was more determined than ever to not step out of the back room for even a moment. Thanks to his continued work with seventeen-colored flame, he was becoming more and more confident and proficient. He even did a few experiments, and although all of them failed, he was confident that success was just around the corner.

Unfortunately, the situation with Chen Manyao and Xu Shan only continued to escalate. Half a month later, the two young women had called upon so many friends to come buy soul medicine that even the nobility and aristocracy got involved.

Obviously, both Chen Manyao and Xu Shan were extremely influential. Whether it was their personal status, their place in the power structure of the Wildlands, their cultivation bases, or their good looks, they were both among the best of the best. It was only natural that women like them would have plenty of potential suitors.

Some people actually placed Chen Manyao and Xu Shan in the same league as Mistress Red-Dust, and regarded the three of them as the three celestial goddesses of the Wildlands. It wasn’t that there weren’t other women who were similarly good-looking, but when all of the factors were considered, those three occupied the pinnacle.

Even some of the imperial princes were taken with them. It was almost impossible to estimate how many young men had their eye on them.

When it came to Bai Xiaochun, many young women had originally discounted him because of his connection to

Mistress Red-Dust. They knew that the Giant Ghost King had intended for the two of them to be Daoist partners. However, that plan was clearly not working out very well. Now that Chen Manyao and Xu Shan were openly vying for him, many other young women finally began to make their own secret inquiries about the matter. And many of them went over to Borough 89 to confirm for themselves what was happening.

When they personally saw Chen Manyao and Xu Shan in such open and hostile competition, it really got people thinking. Many people realized that Chen Manyao was acting very differently than she usually did. At the same time, feelings of envy and jealousy toward Bai Xiaochun began to grow even more prominent. Thankfully, he had quite a reputation. Whether it was because of the incredible battle prowess he had put on display in the Necromancer Kettle, or the faint eighteen-colored flame he had produced, many people feared him.

However… it was roughly at this time that rumors began to spread. They started within the nobility and aristocracy, and slowly began to become more widespread. And of course, with each telling, they got more sensational….

According to one rumor, Chen Manyao *hadn’t* fought Bai Hao in the Necromancer Kettle. She had been captured by him, and then taken to a secluded location…. That alone might not have meant much. However, Bai Hao had a horrible reputation in Giant Ghost City. He was a wife-stealer, and clearly a perverted person. And according to what everybody said, those descriptions were no exaggeration. For a man like that to be alone with a sexy woman in a secluded location…. Well, there was little question as to what would happen.

And that was the perfect explanation for why Chen Manyao, who was normally a quiet and docile girl, would suddenly act so brashly after Bai Hao came to Arch-Emperor City.

Rumors spread about Xu Shan as well. Supposedly, Bai Hao had used some mysterious method to topple her defenses and win her heart.

Of course, it only went to prove how incredible he was. After all, he had actually vanquished two of the top three celestial goddesses in one fell swoop.

Although the rumors started out between only a few people, they spread rapidly until all of the chosen were talking about them!

In reaction, some of them howled in rage, and others gritted their teeth angrily. Overall, most of them hated Bai Xiaochun down to their marrow. Furthermore, whenever anyone refuted the rumors, there were always people who would vehemently assert that they were true.

“What kind of a person is this Bai Hao? He steals wives and then kidnapped the peerlessly beautiful Chen Manyao for several days? I think we all know what must have gone on between the two of them during that time.”

“Yeah, the evidence is conclusive. There’s no other explanation for the strange behavior of both Chen Manyao and Xu Shan. Dammit, this guy is a walking scourge!!”

The gossip intensified, until eventually there were people claiming that they had actual evidence. And of course, it didn’t take long for the rumors to spread beyond the circle of the nobility and aristocracy. Soon, even the lowliest soul cultivators had heard. It was a scandal that was the talk of the town….

When Chen Manyao and Xu Shan heard the rumors, they were enraged. However the explanations they provided did no more to stop the flood of rumors than a pebble could stop the tide from coming in.

Eventually, things reached a breaking point. The Spirit Advent King was so angry that he sent one of his subordinates, his deva-level earthly duke, to Arch-Emperor City to bring Xu Shan home.

Almost at the same time, Chen Manyao's Master, the Grand Heavenmaster, issued orders requiring her to return to him, after which he placed her on lockdown.

Although one might think that the matter would end there, the gossip only intensified. Eventually, the chosen members of the nobility and aristocracy in Arch-Emperor City reached the point where they couldn't control their rage.

"This Bai Hao has to die!! Rid the people forever of this evil scourge!!"

It was hard to say who took up the call first, but before long, all of the chosen were up in arms. Of course, not all of them were mindlessly going along with the mob. Some of them, such as Little Wolfgod and Li Tiansheng, knew exactly what was going on. They were actually hoping to take advantage of the situation to their benefit.

They egged people on, and also fanned the flames of the rumors. Before long, a crowd of chosen that was about half Nascent Soul cultivators and half Core Formation was marching toward Bai Xiaochun's shop in Borough 89, killing intent burning!

Zhou Hong was among them, his eyes glittering coldly. "Let's see how you fight back this time, Bai Hao! It won't matter how incredible your battle prowess is.... This isn’t the Necromancer Kettle, so if you hurt or kidnap people, their clans will definitely fight back with full force! If you piss off the upper echelons of leadership in Arch-Emperor Dynasty, then even if the Giant Ghost King wants to save you, he’ll have to pay a heavy price!

“And if you aren’t on top of your game, then this time… you’ll be cut down like the stray dog you are! Whether you make the first move or not, you’re going to lose, and nobody will be able to save you!”

Zhou Hong was more excited than ever. He was definitely the type who would seek revenge over the smallest grievance, and being crushed by Bai Xiaochun in the Necromancer Kettle was a humiliation and a nightmare that he could never be rid of. He hated Bai Xiaochun with a passion, and all of his efforts at revenge had failed. But this time, he was certain that he would succeed.

“I had almost nothing to do with this mob. I just got the ball rolling. If there’s an investigation, I won’t be implicated.... The truth is that he really just pissed too many people off. Maybe I did pull a few strings, but Bai Hao’s true killer won’t be me, it will be all of Arch-Emperor City! Heh heh!” Chuckling sinisterly, Zhou Hong sped along with the mob.

Hundreds of figures could be seen streaming through the city streets, completely ignoring the city guards as they descended onto Borough 89!

When people realized who made up that mob, they were completely shocked, even the city guards.

“Was that Chen Xiong?!”

“Hey, that’s Little Wolfgod, Li Tiansheng, and… Zhao Dongshan!! They’re all top chosen!!”

“What are they doing!? It looks like something really important!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0747 awe-chapter-748

It was late at night, and the moon shone down brightly over Arch-Emperor City. Coupled with the lamp light streaming out of various buildings, it didn’t quite reach the same level as daylight, but was perfectly sufficient for cultivators to see clearly.

Hundreds of people were rushing toward Bai Xiaochun’s shop, which had already closed for business. In the back room, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao were currently working together on conjuring some seventeen-colored flame.

Bai Xiaochun had resolved almost all of the current issues. Although several of his recent conjurings had failed, they had also served to increase his confidence.

The Flame Harmony state he had entered when conjuring the eighteen-colored flame had given him significant inspiration. He had also benefited greatly from the subsequent discussion with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao. Because of those factors, his work with seventeen-colored flame had sped up significantly.

The most important factor was Bai Hao’s help. Master and apprentice would discuss all of the problems that cropped up, and would work together to solve them. As Bai Xiaochun went about the actual conjuring, Bai Hao would watch with rapt attention, ready to point out any mistakes that he saw. By this point, Bai Xiaochun had reached the point where he made virtually no mistakes to begin with. However, Bai Hao continued to stand watch in all earnestness.

The sight of his Master working so hard at flame conjuring, his expression focused and serious, caused Bai Hao to sigh inwardly.

“Although Master usually seems fairly unreliable, he really takes flame conjuring seriously. That’s an area where a lot of other people fall short. He also has incredible levels of control. He won't even think about working on the actual conjuring until he completely understands it first. Then he focuses on solving every last little problem. That’s one of the reasons why he succeeds where others fail.” Bai Hao knew that, while it was true that he was offering a lot of valuable help, such help would not be very useful to another person. Only someone of his Master’s level and ability could benefit from it.

“Master, I’m definitely going to help you become… a heavenly necromancer!!” Bai Hao wasn’t even concerned about his own cultivation anymore. Although he couldn’t be sure if there were other ghost cultivators in the world, for all he knew, he was the only one. Because of that, no cultivation techniques existed for ghost cultivators. Bai Xiaochun was aware of that problem, and had even made some secret inquiries in Arch-Emperor City. Unfortunately, he hadn’t turned up any clues.

However, he had other ideas about what to do, and told Bai Hao not to worry. He would definitely find a set of ghost cultivator techniques for his apprentice to use.

When Bai Hao thought about that, he felt a lot better. Although he knew his Master was unreliable in some respects, if he made a promise, he would do everything he could to keep it.

Putting away such thoughts, he focused on helping his Master as he conjured the flame. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was at a critical juncture; the sea of fire was contained in a specific way, and the vengeful souls were being carefully fed into it. As time passed, a seventeenth color slowly appeared within the sixteen-colored sea of fire.

“It’s gonna work!” Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t contain his joy, and was just about to proceeded with the final bit of conjuring work when, all of a sudden, a huge boom shook everything. Then, enraged shouting could be heard that was clearly laced with killing intent.

“Your life is over, Bai Hao!!”

The front door of the shop exploded, and the roof caved in as more than a dozen cultivators blasted their way inside. Bai Xiaochun’s heart lurched with shock; this really was a critical moment in the conjuring of the seventeen-colored flame, and to have more than a dozen interlopers suddenly appear left him stunned.

The sea of fire was connected in some ways to Bai Xiaochun’s mental state, and immediately destabilized. And in the same moment that he lost control, the door to the back room of the shop was blasted open.

“Dammit!” Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, but there was no time to ponder what to do. As he lost control of the sea of fire, intense rumbling sounds filled the air. He had no time to do anything other than grab Bai Hao and then hide under his turtle wok!

In almost the same moment that the turtle wok settled down, the multi-colored sea of fire exploded outward in all directions.

More than a dozen chosen were in the middle of bursting into the back room, and before they could react, intense heat blasted against against their faces. Although they tried to leap backward, there was no time, and they were immediately swept over by a seventeen-colored sea of fire.

Miserable screams echoed out as the chosen burst into flames. Three of them had been so slow to pull out defensive items that the shocking intensity of the fire reduced their fleshly bodies to nothing but ash!

After that, the raging fire then wiped their souls completely out of existence!

They were dead!!

Those who had managed to retreat looked on in astonishment as the sea of fire engulfed the shop. In an instant, the back room, the courtyard, and the main part of the shop… were reduced to blackened rubble. Furthermore, other nearby shops were also affected.

As the glow of fire rose into the sky, shouts of alarm filled the area. Dozens more chosen were flying toward the area from further away, and when they saw what was happening, they gasped in shock. Never could they have imagined that something like this would happen, and yet, they had already started down this path, and couldn’t back down now.

Little Wolfgod was in the crowd. He had originally intended to hold back a bit, and then join in the action toward the end. But now, he gritted his teeth and shouted, “Attack together!”

However, that was when a roar of rage echoed out into the air that caused all hearts to tremble. Bai Xiaochun had lifted up the edge of the turtle wok to find his beloved shop a charred, smoldering ruin. Next to him, his apprentice was shaking in fear. At that point, Bai Xiaochun's eyes became so bloodshot with rage that he couldn't control himself.

This shop was his home, and the only place in the Wildlands that belonged to him and him alone. And now it was gone. A bunch of thugs had come and destroyed it.... Because of that, Bai Xiaochun began to descend into madness.

“Bullies!” he yelled, slowly rising to his feet. “Complete and utter bullies!!” Despite how he was shaking with rage, he first made sure to put Bai Hao away so that he was safe. Struggling for control, he sent his divine sense out and confirmed that there were a few dozen people in the area, with a few hundred more a bit further away, closing in.

That in itself confirmed to him that these people were attempting to kill him. It was made even more clear considering that there were people already preparing to attack.

However, instead of simply starting to fight, he pulled out a transmission jade slip and sent a voice message to the Giant Ghost King.

When the Giant Ghost King heard what was happening, he was initially stunned. However, he was fundamentally a domineering and haughty person, so after a brief moment of thought, he sent a reply.

“Bai Hao, you're the son-in-law of the Giant Ghost King! There's no way you can just stand around and let them bully you! Beat the crap out of them! I'll handle any consequences. Just make sure not to kill anyone. I'll tell Mo'er to go help, and will also send a message to the Grand Heavenmaster. Don't worry, I'll take all the responsibility....”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the Giant Ghost King’s response, his courage grew. Looking up, he no longer attempted to suppress his rage, and instead, let it burn as hot as possible. Without any hesitation, he blurred into motion, flying up out of what remained of the sea of fire.

“You cheated me in business, and destroyed my shop! You people have really forced my hand!” Even as his words echoed out like heavenly thunder, he moved with lightning-like speed to appear in front of an incoming Nascent Soul cultivator.

That cultivator was none other than Little Wolfgod, who saw nothing more than a flash of light before Bai Xiaochun was right in front of him, his face twisted with vicious rage.

Trembling, he backed up and said, “Wait, Bai Hao, let me explain! I--”

That was when Bai Xiaochun lashed out with a furious fist strike.

“Got your life force back, didn't you! Feeling a bit masochistic and decided to come back for more? Fine, get down on your hands and knees!” Little Wolfgod was completely helpless as a scene very similar to the Necromancer Kettle played out again. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, accompanied by an agonized shriek, as Bai Xiaochun’s terrifying fist strike knocked him out of midair to slam into the ground. His nascent soul was shaken so badly that it almost popped out into the open. Then, he passed out.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0748 awe-chapter-749

When Little Wolfgod slammed into the ground, a huge boom echoed out, and cracks spread out in all directions. As Little Wolfgod lay there, soaked with blood and completely unmoving, all of the other chosen in the area gasped in astonishment.

Before they could do anything, the enraged Bai Xiaochun vanished as surely as a ghost, to reappear in front of two other soul cultivators.

“You two get down there too!” he shouted angrily. The two soul cultivators prepared to fight back, but instantly realized that their Nascent Souls had been destabilized, and their cultivation base power was weakened. Even as they shouted out in alarm, booms rang out as Bai Xiaochun struck their shoulders with his fist. Cracking sounds could be heard as numerous bones were broken, and they were sent down screaming to slam into the ground next to Little Wolfgod.

Things weren’t over yet, though. Bai Xiaochun’s fury was now fully ablaze. It would be the same with anyone who watched the shop they had toiled tirelessly over be reduced to rubble. Besides, now that he had been given the go-ahead by the Giant Ghost King, he wasn’t scared of anything.

Obviously, he wasn’t even close to being done. He next appeared in front of a middle-aged chosen from one of the aristocratic clans, whose face immediately drained of blood as he began to back up.

“Do you truly dare to kill me, Bai Hao?!”

“No, I don’t!” Bai Xiaochun replied in an enraged shout. Of course, the words he spoke caused the middle-aged man’s jaw to drop. Then, Bai Xiaochun was on top of him, his right hand moving with lightning speed to grab the man by the neck and hurl him down to the ground.

A boom rang out as blood sprayed from the man’s mouth. His Nascent Soul had almost been crushed, and immediately tumbled out from inside of him. At the same time, his five yin organs and six yang organs were shattered, and he lapsed into unconsciousness.

“You think I'm an idiot or something? Killing you would be a waste of plenty of nice life force!” Bai Xiaochun was of the impression that his words were particularly impressive and went to show how incredibly mighty he was. Just when he was about to make another move, the dozens of people in the area finally started to recover from their initial shock at Bai Xiaochun’s terrifying actions so far.

All of these people had impressive cultivation bases. Although some of them were only in the Core Formation stage, they were top chosen from their clans, people who surpassed ordinary people at the same cultivation level. Although Bai Xiaochun was clearly mighty, it only took a moment before people started to cry out.

“Attack together!”

“Even if this Bai Hao was more powerful than he already is, it’s not like he’s superhuman!”

“He’s aroused public wrath, so we definitely have to make him pay the price!”

Dozens of people rotated their cultivation bases and performed incantation gestures to unleash divine abilities.

Multi-colored light formed something like a huge wave that surged toward Bai Xiaochun.

Within those magical techniques were three soul dragons, as well as numerous tornadoes. There were streams of blade light and sword projections, and even something like a huge peacock, whose tail turned into streams of glowing swords that shot through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

Further off in the distance were forty or fifty people who had not yet arrived at the scene of the fight, who were using magical items to shoot at top speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

Behind them were even more people, all rushing in the same direction. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun was thoroughly surrounded.

It was a deadly trap!

Bai Xiaochun was fully aware of the situation, and it caused his eyes to turn even more bloodshot than before. There was no time for thought or planning. Even if he tried to flee from the situation, he would be blocked by the crowd surrounding him.

There was only one option. And that was… to fight!!

He was now relying on his Tempered Bones and powerful defensive powers to fight against a virtual army of chosen cultivators!

Taking a deep breath, he reached out with his right hand, revealing the Eternal Parasol. Of course, because of the powers of his mask, it looked like something completely different.

Without any hesitation, he opened the parasol and thrust it forward to meet the wave of magical techniques and divine abilities. Whether it was the dragons, the tornados, the blade light, the sword projections, or anything else, they were all blocked by the power of the Eternal Parasol.

A tremor ran through Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes turned more bloodshot as he was shoved back a few paces, placing him right next to Little Wolfgod and the other three cultivators he had knocked down out of the air. Without pausing for a moment, he stabbed the Eternal Parasol into them, one after another.

Miserable shrieks rang out from their mouths as they regained consciousness to find their fleshly bodies withering up, and their life force pouring into the Eternal Parasol. After the life force was then passed into Bai Xiaochun, his place within the eighth stratum of the Tempered Bones grew higher.

Little Wolfgod had experienced this same thing before, but the other cultivators had not. They had only heard of Bai Hao’s vicious methods.

As for Little Wolfgod, he had it a bit better off considering that this was his second time. After the incident in the Necromancer Kettle, his clan had used numerous methods to help him recover the lost life force. But now that the entire thing was happening again, the bitterness and regret in his heart reached indescribable levels.

Bai Xiaochun’s method of using the Eternal Parasol to defend against the attacking magical techniques, and then absorb life force from Little Wolfgod and the others, worked perfectly. He took the life force in one smooth move, and then burst into action again.

The Mountain Shaking Bash exploded out, turning him into a series of afterimages and sonic booms. Then he slammed into a Nascent Soul cultivator, who coughed up a mouthful of blood as he was thrown backward. It was at this point that a particularly reckless and foolish Core Formation cultivator off to the side waved his finger in Bai Xiaochun’s direction. Instantly, a green, fist-sized pearl shot into the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered; the sudden appearance of this pearl caused a strange feeling to rise up within him. Obviously, this pearl was no ordinary item. As it neared, he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and then waved his finger, causing control power to wrap around the pearl and fling it back in the direction it had come from.

The Core Formation cultivator’s face fell as he realized that it was too late to try to flee. When the pearl slammed into him, it shattered, creating a green toxic gas of a sinister nature that immediately caused the entire area around the cultivator to twist and distort. Miserable screams rang out for the space of two breaths of time, after which the cultivator… had been reduced to nothing but blood and gore!

He had been destroyed in body and soul!

The surrounding cultivators gasped, and down below, Little Wolfgod’s eyes began to shine brightly!

“He's started killing people, huh…?”

An unsightly expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as well. He hadn’t set out to kill anyone. Although the explosion of the seventeen-colored flame had resulted in a few deaths, this mob was the one coming after him. He couldn’t truly be held accountable for either of those situations. However, he also knew that the clans of the people he had killed would not accept such an explanation.

His current situation was different from the Necromancer Kettle. Back then, he had been able to flee into the mists if he wanted. Furthermore, no soul cultivators from the elder generation had been present to interfere.

Now, he was in Arch-Emperor City, and everything was different. There was nowhere to hide, and furthermore, it wouldn’t be long before people from the elder generation showed up. That was why he had sent his message to the Giant Ghost King, and also why he had tried hard not to kill anyone.

But now… he was out of options.

“Fine, killing it is. So what?!?! You think that just because the tiger doesn't roar, it means it’s a fluffy kitten or something? I didn’t want to kill anybody, but you’re leaving me no choice!” This group of cultivators had destroyed his home, and because of that, killing intent finally appeared in his eyes. He was like a celestial warrior, or a primeval beast as he… unleashed killing moves!

More rumbling sounds could be heard as numerous magical techniques and divine abilities closed in. As they did, Bai Xiaochun clenched his hand into a fist, unleashing a fist strike that sent a sound wave out in all directions. Then, he was in front of another soul cultivator, whom he stabbed with the Eternal Parasol and sucked dry of life force!

He didn’t pause for a moment. Flashing into motion, he began to absorb more life force. Not a one of the dozens of soul cultivators in the area were a match for him at all. No amount of magical techniques or divine abilities seemed capable of doing anything to him, nor of piercing the defenses of the Eternal Parasol.

Wherever he went, he cut through his enemies like a hot knife through butter!

The glow of blood and fire illuminated all heaven and earth!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0749 awe-chapter-750

This would be no tranquil night for Arch-Emperor City!

That was especially true of Borough 89, which was currently shining with the light of fire, and filled with hoarse shouts. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were crimson as he looked around. The first wave of several dozen chosen were either dead or completely drained of life force to the point where they were seriously injured. As Bai Xiaochun stood there within the flickering firelight, he looked particularly terrifying!

He hadn’t set out to kill anyone, but they had forced his hand and given him no other choice!

He didn’t want to cause any trouble, but the trouble came to find him. And not just a single time!

He hadn’t been interested in fighting, either. However, they had him surrounded, and there were more enemies approaching every moment, making flight impossible. Besides, he wasn't very familiar with Arch-Emperor City, so even if he did manage to break free from the fighting, it would be impossible for him to escape.

“Bullying me… and pushing me into a corner!!” he murmured, shivering partly with rage and partly with fear. However, there was nothing he could do at the moment other than hope that the Giant Ghost King would be able to save him…. Things were just developing too quickly.

In fact, there were already countless divine abilities and magical techniques closing in on him, as well as the glow of magical items. The second wave of chosen was closing in, with the Core Formation cultivators in the back, and the Nascent Soul experts up front. Although they could already see that Bai Xiaochun was a brutal fighter, the event had reached a critical mass, and none of them were willing to retreat.

More than a hundred soul cultivators were closing in from all directions, and many of them were people familiar to Bai Xiaochun, including Zhao Dongshan, Li Tiansheng, and others.

It was too urgent of a situation for Bai Xiaochun to ponder what to do. Eyes burning with killing intent, he dashed forward, unleashing shocking energy as he charged forth in attack!

RRRUUUUMBLE!

Booms could be heard as fierce fighting broke out. Bai Xiaochun was unstoppable, and it didn’t matter who ended up in front of him, they all were thrown backward, blood spraying out of their mouths, completely shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s strength and ferocity.

“He’s even stronger than he was back in the Necromancer Kettle!”

“So this is Bai Hao, the legendary figure who defeated a hundred chosen!”

“He's strong, but we outnumber him. Besides, we’re in Arch-Emperor City!”

Everyone anxiously pressed the attack, and soon, the scene was one of utter chaos. Li Tiansheng was in the crowd, performing an incantation gesture that summoned clouds of toxic gas. He knew how incredible Bai Xiaochun was, and therefore hung toward the back, ready to flee if he had to.

However, before he even realized what was happening, Bai Xiaochun… was looking through the crowd directly into his eyes!

Scalp tingling, he suddenly thought back to how Bai Xiaochun had looked at him in exactly the same way back in the Necromancer Kettle. Bai Xiaochun blurred into motion, sidestepping a random cultivator to suddenly appear just up ahead of Li Tiansheng, looking like something from a nightmare.

Li Tiansheng’s heart leapt into his throat, and he immediately turned and fled. However, Bai Xiaochun laughed madly and used his Mountain Shaking Bash, unleashing extreme levels of fleshly body power to blast through the crowd. Using the Eternal Parasol to defend himself against the divine abilities and magical techniques, he… shot in pursuit of Li Tiansheng!

Bai Xiaochun was like a nightmare in living form to Li Tiansheng, who quickly slapped his bag of holding to produce an actual human heart, dripping with blood. Face twisting with a vicious snarl, he crushed the heart, causing a fragrant odor that resembled a woman’s perfume to explode out. Then, the image of a woman appeared, face twisted in agony as she shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered; he could tell that Li Tiansheng was not relying on some ordinary technique. The heart he had just crushed seemed shocking in every way; furthermore, the shadowy woman who was racing toward him seemed to have a hole in her chest where her heart should be.

Bai Xiaochun leaped backward to avoid the woman, but at the same time, threw the Eternal Parasol out in front of him, causing it to become a streak of light that shot toward Li Tiansheng.

Before Li Tiansheng could react, the Eternal Parasol had stabbed directly into his chest!

Life force spilled out, and as the pain filled him, Bai Xiaochun waved his finger, causing the Eternal Parasol to fly back toward him. Then he slammed his hand down into the ground, causing a barrier of sharp spikes to spring up from the ground to defend himself from the incoming divine abilities.

Considering how much life force power was pouring into Bai Xiaochun, his Tempered Bones were rapidly approaching the ninth stratum.

“Just a bit more... and I’ll break through!” Even as he reached this point in his train of thought, the spikes around him shattered, and dozens of cultivators shot toward him. Everything was a blur, but that didn't matter too much to Bai Xiaochun; he knew that everyone in the area was his enemy.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as he relied on incredible speed that bordered on teleportation. By not using his cultivation base, he conserved spiritual power, and could thus keep fighting longer. Besides, there were plenty of people in the area who could help keep his fleshly body power bolstered.

Fierce fighting could be heard, and at the same time, more soul cultivators appeared on the scene. It was getting difficult for Bai Xiaochun to block all of the incoming divine abilities and magical items with his Eternal Parasol, and some began to make contact with him.

However, the attacks landing on him didn’t cause him to pause for even a moment. He really was like an immortal devil incarnate; magical techniques from the Core Formation cultivators were like nothing to him, a fact which led quite a few people to gasp in shock.

Even the magical techniques and items of the Nascent Soul experts didn't affect him very much. At most, they caused him to frown slightly.

Considering that he was only dealing with dozens of incoming attacks, his Eternal Parasol could defend him well enough that he was also able to fight back. With each fist strike he used, he sent someone flying, and would then suck away their life force.

Clearly, none of these chosen had ever considered that a Nascent Soul cultivator could possibly be this powerful. It was unbelievable to an absurd level.

His fleshly body power was beyond imagination, and left them utterly shaken.

“Who is this guy? Doesn’t he have any weaknesses?!?!”

“Where are we supposed to hit him? His speed, his fleshly body, his endurance, his defenses… they’re all at the highest level! How do we fight this?!”

Considering that fewer and fewer people were left standing near Bai Xiaochun, wooden expressions could be seen on the faces of many of the Wildlanders. None of them dared to unleash any more attacks, and most of them even began to back up. Zhao Dongshan was there on the ground, his heart filled with regret as he fled, terrified that Bai Xiaochun would notice him.

“What was I thinking to come cause trouble for this fiendish killer? Please, *please* don't notice me!” Even as Zhao Dongshan prayed for a way to get out of the situation, another group of over a hundred chosen was closing in, with Zhou Hong in their midst.

When they got close enough, they could see the carnage in the area, the bodies of numerous chosen strewn on the ground around Bai Xiaochun, whose veins of steel were pumping, and who radiated an air of brutal madness.

Zhou Hong was shocked, but at the same time, delighted. “He finally killed some people!! Nobody can save you this time, Bai Hao!!”

Even as Zhou Hong arrived, Bai Xiaochun pulled the Eternal Parasol out of the body of one of the soul cultivators. With the life force he had just acquired, he could tell that his Tempered Bones were no longer in the eighth stratum, but rather… in the ninth!

With that, he looked up slowly at Zhou Hong.

“Zhou Hong!” he said, his eyes burning with killing intent as he blurred into motion!

Meanwhile, outside of Arch-Emperor City in the Giant Ghost Legion, Mistress Red-Dust was sitting in her red command tent, her brow furrowed grimly. In her hand was a transmission jade slip that sent the Giant Ghost King’s voice echoing into her mind.

“This Bai Hao is a complete disaster!” she murmured through gritted teeth. As far as she was concerned, she had already helped him once. Without her intervention, the heavenly duke from the Chen Clan would definitely have looked into the matter. Although she had been touched by the way she benefited from the situation, that feeling didn’t go very deep, and quickly faded. Now here her father was, yet again asking for her to go protect Bai Hao. Without even thinking about it, she refused.

“If he has a death wish, then just let him die!” Snorting coldly, she was just about to put the jade slip down when another message came from the Giant Ghost King. Only she could hear the furious words he spoke, and whatever they were, they caused her to sit there in grim silence for a moment before rising to her feet.

“I’ll just help him this one last time!” With that, she walked out of the command tent, called a few dozen Giant Ghost Legion soldiers over, and then headed toward Borough 89 in Arch-Emperor City!

By this point, the powerful experts from the noble and aristocratic clans were getting messages from their various princes, princesses, and other young cultivators.

“What incredible gall!”

That was especially true when word of the deaths began to filter through. The clans involved immediately sent people over, and some of the top powerful experts even went personally.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0750 awe-chapter-751

As both Mistress Red-Dust and the almighty figures from the nobility and aristocracy all took to motion, Bai Xiaochun was shooting through the air in a beam of light, his eyes bloodshot as he targeted Zhou Hong with deadly force.

Zhou Hong’s face fell. He knew Bai Xiaochun was powerful, and didn’t want to actually fight him unless it was absolutely necessary. Therefore, he immediately fell back.

“This Bai Hao has already killed people, and therefore must die. All we have to do is delay for a bit. Everybody, attack together and force him back!”

Everyone could see the truth in his words, especially those who had been a part of the incident in the Necromancer Kettle. They knew that this was the best chance they had to get their revenge. It only took the briefest of moments for another round of even more powerful magical techniques to fill the air, creating a wave that surged unstoppably toward Bai Xiaochun.

In response, Bai Xiaochun opened up the Eternal Parasol and, instead of slowing down, actually sped up! He also slapped his bag of holding, producing his sixteenfold spirit enhanced black spear. Letting out an angry shout, he charged onward, defending himself with the parasol in one hand and stabbing out with the spear in the other.

The spear caused a huge vortex to spring out, which provoked a gasp from Zhou Hong, who fell back again. Off to the side from Zhou Hong was a young man who had been accompanying him. Currently, his expression was grim, and from the look in his eyes, he seemed to be calculating something. All of a sudden, killing intent flared within his eyes, and he pulled out an ancient feng shui compass.

“Fellow Daoists, please pick a position to hold based on the indications of my feng shui compass!” Even as the words left his mouth, brilliant light shot out from the feng shui compass, creating a projected image of the compass surrounding Bai Xiaochun.

Over a hundred glowing dots could be seen, which moved along with him as he attacked. When the chosen in the area saw that, their eyes glittered, and they immediately began to take up the positions marked by the glowing dots.

The first soul cultivator suddenly found himself wearing a suit of shimmering armor. At the same time, the armor caused a misty fog to start building up around Bai Xiaochun. Almost as soon as he was in place, Bai Xiaochun could feel intense pressure weighing down on him.

Within moments, more and more people were arriving, and as they did, suits of armor appeared on them. Each suit of armor was linked to the others by streams of light, which simultaneously caused the misty fog to grow denser.

Incredible pressure was now weighing down on Bai Xiaochun from the spell formation, making it increasingly difficult to move. Furthermore, this was simply crushing weight, not a sealing, which meant that his Undying Hex was completely useless!

When Zhou Hong took a place in the formation, its power grew even more intense. However, not everyone present chose to join in, especially some of the people who had been part of the first two waves of attackers. For example, Zhao Dongshan. They were people who had been shaken by

Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess, and still hesitated to get close to him, even with a spell formation locking him down.

“What a bunch of useless fools!” Zhou Hong thought, snorting coldly. Ignoring Zhao Dongshan and the others, he focused on powering the spell formation and launching divine abilities and magical techniques.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his expression was unsightly as he remained in the middle of the rotating spell formation, the dense mist around him locking down all creation and making escape seemingly impossible. In addition, the pressure grew stronger by the moment. Then, a hail of sword light began to scream in his direction, provoking a frown on his part as he extended the Eternal Parasol to defend himself. Moments later, booms rang out, and he felt his qi and blood surging inside of him.

At the moment, he couldn't see anyone outside of the spell formation, but those people could see him. Zhao Dongshan and the others who weren’t participating watched as the more than one hundred soul cultivators who were part of the formation continued to move, causing the space around Bai Xiaochun to shrink down. It was easy to imagine that, once the spell formation shrank down to a certain point, a deadly attack would be unleashed.

“What formation is that?!?!” Zhao Dongshan thought with a gasp, stunned by what he was seeing.

Zhou Hong simply laughed coldly, feeling the power of his cultivation base being absorbed into the glowing dot of light, and at the same time, watching Bai Xiaochun hesitating inside. Then, his gaze shifted to the young man outside of the formation who held the feng shui compass.

“The young man the second prince sent to offer assistance really is an almighty master of spell formations,” he thought. “Bai Hao, ah, Bai Hao. It's too bad you’ll never have the chance to find out that, in addition to myself, the second prince and even the grand prince are all in on this. You offended far too many among the nobility and aristocracy. You even offended… the imperial clan!”

As Zhou Hong chuckled coldly, Bai Xiaochun’s facial expression turned more unsightly. Then, he blurred into motion, picking a direction and drawing on the Mountain Shaking Bash.

A boom echoed out, and the spell formation shuddered. However, a massive backlash also hit Bai Xiaochun, causing his expression to turn even more unsightly. Clearly, the defenses of this spell formation could not easily be broken!

“So it's pooling together the defensive powers of everyone outside the formation….” He continued to dodge the sword light that continued to slash at him, the aura of which was growing stronger every moment!

It wouldn’t be long before that sword light… was as strong as a deva!!

Bai Xiaochun sucked in a breath when he realized how powerful this spell formation was.

“This is a pretty spectacular spell formation to form so quickly…. Usually big, powerful formations like this take a long time to put into place.” Frowning, he thought back to the young man with the feng shui compass who had been standing next to Zhou Hong, the one who had set up the spell formation.

He was definitely a stranger to Bai Xiaochun, not one of the people who had been present in the Necromancer Kettle.

“Do you people really think that a crappy spell formation like this can hold me down?!?!” A wild look appeared in his eyes. He knew that this was not a moment to be sitting around wasting time. It was hard to say whether or not the Giant Ghost King could convince Mistress Red-Dust to come help him, and the power of the spell formation was building with every second that ticked by. That in turn meant that the danger to him was growing rapidly.

“Let’s see which is more powerful, your spell formation, or my Undying Emperor’s Fist!!” He took a deep breath, and as he did his aura, his cultivation base fluctuations, and everything else about him vanished. They shrank down, focusing all of his being, even his life force, back to its origin!

To any type of divine sense, Bai Xiaochun would appear to be without any aura whatsoever, almost as if he were a corpse.

Zhao Dongshan’s eyes widened, and Zhou Hong’s face fell.

“He's going to use *that* fist strike!!”

Zhou Hong and everyone else in the spell formation who had also participated in the events of the Necromancer Kettle were immediately alarmed by what they were seeing, and sent more power flowing out of their cultivation bases. After all, the things they had seen that fist strike do were things they would never forget for their entire life.

The only one who didn’t react in such a way was the young man with the feng shui compass. Although he could see how Zhou Hong and the others were reacting, he was fully confident that this spell formation… could not be broken by anyone under the Deva Realm!

“How could this measly Bai Hao possibly break the imperial clan’s secret spell formation!?”

Of course, there was no way for anyone, not even Zhou Hong and the others, to know that Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist was actually far different from the version they had witnessed in the past!

Back in the Necromancer Kettle, Bai Xiaochun had used the full power of his fleshly body to power the fist strike…. But now that he was in the ninth stratum of the Tempered Bones, his Undying Emperor’s Fist could actually unleash… double the amount of his full fleshly body power!

The previous amount had been shocking, but double… was a level of power that not even Bai Xiaochun was certain about. All he knew was that even Mistress Red-Dust could be injured by it!!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes seemed completely lifeless, and his body looked like a withered tree. However, it was in that moment that his hand clenched into a fist!

A black vortex sprang up around it, something like a black hole. Distortions spread out through the air, and the incoming beams of sword light were twisted out of existence!!

A terrifying aura sprang out of the black hole that seemed too mysterious to define. As soon as it began to spread out through the spell formation, the people inside felt their hearts pounding with fear, and sensations of deadly crisis.

The young man with the feng shui compass was clearly shocked, and as for the feng shui compass itself, it began to vibrate unstably.

“Impossible!!” he shouted. After all, his opponent had done nothing more than clench his fist….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0751 awe-chapter-752

Even as the young man with the feng shui compass, Zhou Hong, and numerous other chosen began to cry out in alarm, a massive, domineering air sprang up inside the spell formation!

A huge, shadowy figure appeared, clad in imperial robes, and wearing an imperial crown. Of course, thanks to the power of Bai Xiaochun’s mask, that image looked different to the people in the spell formation. However, the domineering air it exuded was still there, and caused even the minds of Zhao Dongshan and others further away to reel.

Gasps could be heard. Everyone felt as if, in front of this shadowy figure, they were nothing more than bugs, looking up with complete powerlessness.

Zhou Hong felt it most clearly of all. Back in the Necromancer Kettle, he had faced Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist, and could immediately tell that this shadowy figure was vastly more shocking than the one from before.

Not only was it more corporeal, it was also more domineering. In fact, the version he had faced in the Necromancer Kettle almost couldn’t compare at all to this new version.

“This… this….” Zhou Hong was physically trembling, as were the others who were powering the spell formation. Deep alarm and fear rose up from within their hearts to grip them relentlessly.

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, his face expressionless. Then he unleashed a vicious punch onto the fog in front of him!!

In his heart, he uttered three words.

“Undying… Emperor’s Fist!”

RUUUUMBLE! CRRAAAAASH!

The enormous, shadowy emperor also struck out with his fist. In fact, from a distance, it wasn’t even possible to see Bai Xiaochun. The only thing visible was the shadowy emperor, looking down with the scorn of a paragon as he unleashed a fist strike.

Massive energy erupted out that couldn't be put into words. To Zhao Dongshan, it looked almost like an actual god had descended; the wind screamed, and a powerful will rose up, a will like that which belonged to the heavens!

“D-deva….” he whispered, stunned. Everyone else present felt their hearts pounding in their chests. Intense rumbling sounds echoed out from the spell formation, along with sharp cracking sounds. Everyone who was powering the spell formation, including Zhou Hong, could only watch as the glowing armor that covered them began to shatter.

A mountain-toppling, sea-draining force smashed against them, making them feel like tiny rowboats on a raging sea, completely powerless to fight back.

One of the soul cultivators’ glowing armor shattered, leaving him bereft of any defenses. Then, an agonized shriek rang out; it was as if he had been smashed into by a mountain. Gobs of blood erupted from his mouth as he was sent flying down to slam into the ground, completely unconscious!

After all, in addition to the force being exerted by Bai Xiaochun, they also had to deal with the backlash from the spell formation, adding injury to injury in a way that was extremely difficult to sustain.

Soon, a second person was similarly affected, then a third and a fourth…. Within the mere blink of an eye, a twentieth was hit, then the fiftieth, the eightieth…. One by one, the more than one hundred people who had been powering the spell formation screamed miserably as they were sent slamming into the ground, qi and blood in chaos, internal organs smashed. Many of them nearly lost their cultivation bases from the force of impact. All were seriously injured, and left gasping for breath.

That included Zhou Hong. Although he held out for longer than most of the others, eventually blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he was sent tumbling backward. The spell formation… had been completely destroyed!!

The feng shui compass crumbled, sending a backlash attack into the young man that had been holding it, causing him to visibly age. His hair turned white, and blood sprayed out of his mouth, filled with chunks of internal organs. After all, he had been operating the spell formation, and therefore, was hit with a bigger backlash than anyone else. He had tried throwing his longevity into the spell formation to stabilize it, but failed. Moments later, a bloodcurdling scream rang out as he exploded, killed in body and soul!

A massive blast of wind exploded out from the destroyed spell formation, sweeping out in all directions as Bai Xiaochun took a step forward!

His hair was in complete disarray, and the domineering air which had surrounded him was gone. He didn’t seem terrifying like he had moments before, and yet… to everyone present, he was like an immortal devil!

The instant he appeared, Zhao Dongshan let out a shriek of alarm and began to fly backward, not daring to remain in place for even a moment longer. The other chosen who had been rushing toward the area all scattered. At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was simply too shocking and terrifying for them to deal with.

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored the fleeing Zhao Dongshan and other chosen. His use of the fist strike moments ago had completely emptied him, and drained his fleshly body power down to nothing. Thankfully, his cultivation base was still in place, and he could use it to control his body, otherwise he wouldn't have been able to lift a finger.

As he moved, he rotated his cultivation base, flying toward the nearest of the more than one hundred chosen who had been blasted by his fist strike. All of them were severely injured, and also shell-shocked by Bai Xiaochun's power. With one wave of his arm, he gathered them all together and deposited them onto the ground in front of him.

At the moment, he felt profoundly exhausted. When he let his cultivation base relax, his vision swam, so he bit his tongue to maintain lucidity. Panting, he glared at the more than one hundred chosen.

“Again and again and *again*!” he said in a hoarse voice. “You people push things too far!” As for the chosen, they stared back at him with completely ashen faces.

Never could they have imagined that this person would be so unbelievably powerful. It was outrageous!

“What divine ability was that…. He’s in the Nascent Soul stage! how could he possibly use a secret magic like that? Just what fist strike was that?!?!” Zhou Hong was cursing inwardly, but his face was still deathly ashen. In his bitterness, he realized that this Bai Hao had grown stronger since their last encounter, leaving him far, far behind.

That fist strike had already been the stuff of nightmares, and now, it was even more devilishly horrific than before.

He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. Everyone looked at Bai Xiaochun with scalps tingling from shock and horror. For many, it was their first time actually encountering the Bai Hao that they had heard so much about. And as of this moment, they were thoroughly convinced that his legendary strength was no joke!! He was completely inhuman!!

Bai Xiaochun was currently fighting to get his breathing under control, but to everyone else, it made him look like an immortal devil chanting forbidden scriptures as he stared at them with bloodshot eyes. He pulled out a Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill and popped it into his mouth. Its miraculous abilities instantly returned his cultivation base to top form, and also returned his body to good condition. Then he took a breath, hefted his Eternal Parasol, and walked over to the nearest terrified soul cultivator.

After stabbing the parasol into the cultivator, life force began to flow into him, further restoring his fleshly body power. The soul cultivator screamed as he withered up, but thankfully for him, Bai Xiaochun’s killing intent had ebbed significantly after using the Undying Emperor’s Fist. Therefore, after a moment passed, he extracted the Eternal Parasol and moved on to the next chosen.

Everyone looked on with scalps that tingled in terror, and that included both those who had not been present in the Necromancer Kettle, and those who had.

“Look, let’s talk this over, Bai Hao. Don't-- AAAAAGHHH…!”

“Don’t be like this, Bai Hao! You already sucked me dry in the Necromancer Kettle! You don’t have to… hey don’t, AGGHHH…!”

“Do you truly dare to kill me, Bai Hao?!?!”

“How dare you! My clan’s patriarch is a heavenly duke! This isn’t the Necromancer Kettle, Bai Hao. This is Arch-Emperor City!!”

Pleas, curses, threats and all other types of words could be heard. The doors of many nearby shops opened up a crack as people looked out to see what was happening, whereupon gasps could be heard. So far, nobody had dared to look out, but now that they could, a shocking scene met their eyes.

There Bai Xiaochun stood, pulsing with vitality, having single-handedly reduced his enemies to a completely pitiable state. All onlookers felt chills running up their spines. This Bai Hao was uncharacteristically, unfathomably profound!

The truth was that he actually wasn’t that indescribably powerful. If the entire group of several hundred soul cultivators had all attacked simultaneously, then he would have been seriously injured or even killed. But because they came at him in three waves, and because some like Zhao Dongshan had actually chosen to flee, he managed to defeat them soundly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0752 awe-chapter-753

In the end, the spell formation had been so troublesome for Bai Xiaochun that he had resorted to the Undying Emperor’s Fist to break it, and then used a Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill to recover. Without falling back on that strategy, he wouldn’t have been able to prevail.

Feeling more than a bit angry, he quickly went from one chosen to the next and stabbed the Eternal Parasol into them. He made sure to shove it especially deeply into Zhou Hong, and took plenty of life force.

Most people screamed, but Zhou Hong simply gritted his teeth and glared at Bai Xiaochun wordlessly.

“What?” Bai Xiaochun said. “Still think you were in the right? Fudge! You stirred up trouble with me back in the Necromancer Kettle, then you tried to get Sun Yifan and Sima Tao to do your dirty work for you, and now you pull this little stunt?” Bai Xiaochun really did want to just wipe Zhou Hong out of existence right here, but reminded himself that he couldn't forget how powerful Zhou Hong’s father was….

“If your dad wasn’t a demigod, Lord Bai would have already killed you!” Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly, and sucked even more life force out of him until there was almost none left. At that point, he felt his Tempered Bones beginning to thrum.

Extracting the Eternal Parasol, he cast his senses inward to observe something warm flowing through him, originating within his bones. A tremor ran through him, and then he felt both his defensive powers and his overall strength increase.

As of this moment, he was breaking out from the Tempered Bones level into… the Powered Bones level!

“Hmph! You people have powerful backgrounds, but so do I!” Normally, his breakthrough in the Undying Bones would have been a cause for joy. But right now, he didn’t feel excited at all. Furthermore, despite the words he had just uttered, he was actually feeling very nervous.

“You have to pull through for me this time, Giant Ghost King!” he thought. “I'm really in trouble! I might not be your son, but I’m your son-in-law, right? That counts as being half a son, at least!” Sighing, he pondered that he really had been maligned in this situation. He was innocent! He hadn’t done a thing! He had been minding his own business conjuring some flame when these crazy people burst onto the scene and started a fight.

“What was I supposed to do? If I didn't fight back, I would have gotten killed! And I didn’t want to kill anybody either. That was an accident!” The more he thought about it, the worse he felt. He wanted to simply flee, and yet knew that there was really nowhere to flee to.

If he was going to end up as a fugitive in the Wildlands, then he might as well just reveal his true identity as Bai Xiaochun.

“If it really goes that far… then I’ve been thoroughly defeated. The Wildlands beat me! I can’t believe that both of my identities are going to be put on the wanted list.” As Bai Xiaochun considered all these matters, he truly wished he could cry. Furthermore, he didn’t dare to try to perform another spirit enhancement on his nascent soul right now, otherwise people would easily be able to figure out who he really was.

“What do I do? Ai… what a headache!” Sighing, he finally sent a message to the Giant Ghost King explaining that he had killed a few people. The Giant Ghost King didn’t respond at first. Then he cursed Bai Xiaochun a bit, and then went to handle matters.

Bai Xiaochun actually felt a bit better after the Giant Ghost King cursed him, and mused that it was not in vain that he had been so loyal to the man….

“And then there’s Xu Shan and Chen Manyao, they’re the ones that caused this whole mess….” Throughout the course of the fight, many of the people who had come to attack him had specifically mentioned those two young women, which was very telling. “Those two caused the problems, then ran!”

Bai Xiaochun’s thoughts were causing him to feel more and more depressed. It was at this point that his expression flickered, and he looked up into the sky. Intense rumbling sounds were echoing out, and incredible pressure began to weigh down everywhere.

Two enormous faces appeared up above, one of them that of a middle-aged man, the other an older man. Deva auras also erupted out, sealing down the entire area and turning into something like a prison.

“Devas….” he thought, his eyes widening. Obviously, these were people from the clans of some of the chosen who had attacked him, and were two of the ten heavenly dukes of Arch-Emperor City.

In addition to them, there were also numerous auras belonging to half-devas. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered; it currently felt as if innumerable deadly weapons were all targeting him and him alone.

“Two devas,” he thought, heart pounding loudly in his chest. “Nine half-devas, and countless other soul cultivators….” Arch-Emperor City had the biggest collection of top experts in the entire Wildlands, and as such, devas weren’t exactly a rare sight. However, when considering the Wildlands as a whole, they were definitely not common.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling more nervous than ever. In contrast were Zhou Hong and the other chosen, all of whom sat there looking like nothing more than skin and bones. When they saw the two devas appear, the excitement in their eyes was immediately apparent.

The two devas looked down at Bai Xiaochun and the people around them. They saw how the life force of the chosen had been damaged, including many of the heirs apparent. At that point, unsightly expressions could be seen on the faces of the devas.

Soon, their gazes locked onto Bai Xiaochun, gazes that were filled with killing intent. Considering their status, they didn’t actually need to do anything in this situation; their mere presence here made their attitude clear.

“Seize this Bai Hao!” said the middle-aged deva, his voice booming with heavenly might.

In response to his cold voice, the nine half-deva heavenly marquises all surged with killing intent. Those heavenly marquises were clearly incensed by the sight of their chosen heirs reduced to such pitiable states. There were even two marquises who had members of their clans among the dead.

Within moments of the heavenly duke issuing the order, nine beams of light were shooting toward Bai Xiaochun!

There was no time for thought or planning; Bai Xiaochun immediately fled backward. As he did, the space he had just occupied collapsed into rubble in a crashing boom.

If he had been even a moment slower in evading, he would have been caught in that destruction.

His heart was racing, but at the moment, he couldn't think of what to do. He could only trust that the Giant Ghost King would be able to smooth things over. In the meantime, he had no choice but to flee in the face of the nine half-deva heavenly marquises.

Bai Xiaochun had faced a half-deva in the form of the Junior Champion King, but these people were different. During that fight, the Junior Champion King had just broken through into that level, whereas these nine heavenly marquises had long since stabilized their cultivation bases. They were fully and truly half-devas, and had been for years. They were elites among half-devas!

Each and every one of them would be a match for Bai Lin without question!

If Bai Xiaochun fought them one at a time, he might be confident enough to win. But to face all nine at once left him with no choice other than to simply run.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The nine heavenly marquises didn’t hold back at all. They directly used their trump cards, causing brilliant light to shine in the air as magical techniques and divine abilities shook heaven and earth. It was almost as if a bizarre, nine-fingered hand were reaching out to grab Bai Xiaochun!

The hand was so terrifying that Bai Xiaochun was shaking in fear. For some reason, he had the feeling that if that hand touched him, then not even his powerful fleshly body would be able to hold out. He would be killed in body and soul!

“If you don’t hurry up and fix this, Giant Ghost King, then my poor little life is going to be over!” He was shrieking inwardly, and sweat poured down his face. He couldn’t have been more aware that if he was even the least bit slow, then that nine-fingered hand would close around him!

“If you people have what it takes, come at me one by one!” he shouted angrily. Thankfully, he was capable of shocking speed which, when combined with his cultivation base, made him incredibly fast. Most importantly, he had broken through to the Powered Bones level, which gave him an added bit of speed.

Numerous afterimages appeared as he sped away, making it impossible for the divine abilities of the heavenly marquises to even touch him. However, he couldn’t fight back, only buy time.

The nine heavenly marquises frowned. The fact that they had attacked together showed how seriously they took this opponent, and yet, his incredible speed was making it temporarily impossible to deal with him.

It was at that point that the middle-aged heavenly duke up in midair snorted coldly. The face which represented him rippled inward on itself until it took the shape of the heavenly duke himself. Then, he waved his right index finger at the fleeing Bai Xiaochun.

Even as he began to move his hand through the air, though, Mistress Red-Dust’s enraged voice echoed out.

“Stay your hand, Chen Haosong!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0753 awe-chapter-754

The deva who was currently attacking Bai Xiaochun was someone from the elder generation of Chen Xiong’s clan. He was one of the ten heavenly dukes of Arch-Emperor City… Chen Haosong!

All ten heavenly dukes were in the Deva Realm, and none of them were ordinary devas…. they were all in the great circle!

Those ten dukes formed a critical reserve power for Arch-Emperor City, something vastly more powerful than Giant Ghost City’s three patriarchs and Duke Deathcrier. Not even Mistress Red-Dust was a match for them in terms of cultivation base.

Of course, Mistress Red-Dust was the Giant Ghost King’s daughter, which gave her quite a bit of extra confidence. Furthermore, she also had gifts given to her by her father, including… a precious treasure that could power her up to the level of the great circle of the Deva Realm!

However, that precious treasure could only put her in a position to tangle with other cultivators in the great circle. She could not transfer that power to someone else for defensive purposes. Therefore… the fact that Chen Haosong had already unleashed his attack meant that Mistress Red-Dust had no choice other than to try to simply block it.

As for Chen Haosong, his expression flickered into a slight frown. He had owed Mistress Red-Dust a favor before, but had already settled that account. However, despite the fact that she had come here to protect Bai Hao, he knew that she likely was not doing it of her own will, but rather, on the orders of the Giant Ghost King.

“I wonder,” he thought. “Will the Giant Ghost King really show up in person because of one person getting killed?” Although this was his first time actually seeing Bai Hao in person, he had long since come to loathe him. After all, the matter of the debt of 800,000,000 portions of soul medicine was something that rankled him deeply.

Ignoring Mistress Red-Dust, he not only didn’t pull back his finger, but instead stabbed it toward Bai Xiaochun with more speed than before.

Instantly, Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to reel. Earlier, before Chen Haosong had made his move, Bai Xiaochun had sensed that he was at least a bit more powerful than the older deva. But now, his attack caused his face to fall.

As far as he could tell, this was the most powerful deva he had ever encountered. Although the wave of his finger didn't seem to be drawing upon the will of the heavens, Bai Xiaochun was sure… that he would be completely incapable of avoiding the blow!

It was as if… the heavens were conforming to this deva’s will!

And that was exactly what was happening! *Deva Shapes Heavenly Will!* This was the ultimate level within the Deva Realm!

There was no time for Bai Xiaochun to ponder the situation, nor did he have attention to spare for the nine heavenly marquises. He could only concentrate on that monumentally shocking finger attack.

To him, all creation consisted of nothing but that finger, and as it descended upon him with the power to destroy heaven and earth, he felt as if even his soul were about to shatter.

In that moment of deadly crisis, he let out a hoarse shout; he knew that if he didn't manage to fight back against this finger… he would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!

Without the slightest hesitation, he pulled out the black spear the Giant Ghost King had given him, the one with the sixteenfold spirit enhancement. Then, he threw it with all his might, sending it like a black bolt of lightning toward Chen Haosong's finger attack!

However, there was more. Backing up, he pulled out the Eternal Parasol with one hand and grabbed Zhou Hong with the other.

Although all of these things take some time to describe, they happened within the blink of an eye. In almost the exact same instant that he grabbed Zhou Hong, a massive, ear-splitting boom echoed out.

That was the result of the black spear making contact with Chen Haosong's finger attack.

BOOOOM! CRAAACK!

That black spear was a precious treasure that not even an ordinary deva would be able to destroy. Unfortunately, Chen Haosong was in the great circle of the Deva Realm, and attacked with power that far surpassed regular devas. Therefore, the spear shattered into countless fragments, and as for the finger, although it wasn't destroyed, it was weakened significantly.

After the spear shattered, the weakened finger attack continued onward and then slammed into the Eternal Parasol.

Intense rumbling sounds filled the air as the Eternal Parasol’s defensive powers held for a brief moment. But then the parasol’s canopy began to rip into pieces. The enigmatically smiling ghost face that the powers of the mask had kept concealed let out a shriek as it ripped itself off of the crumbling canopy and bit down onto the finger, almost like a snake.

After that, the ghost face shattered, and the parasol’s canopy was destroyed. Thankfully, the shaft of the parasol was constructed from some unknowable material that survived.

Mourning the state of the Eternal Parasol, Bai Xiaochun put it away, simultaneously borrowing the force of the blow to shoot backward. The finger strike had been weakened twice in a row, and now it had almost completely faded away. Meanwhile, Zhou Hong let out a terrified shriek as Bai Xiaochun threw him out in front of him.

“I refuse to believe that you would dare to kill the son of a demigod!!” Bai Xiaochun roared. Even as his words continued to echo out, he pulled out another Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill.

When Chen Haosong saw that Bai Xiaochun was using Zhou Hong as a shield, an unsightly expression appeared on his face. Eyes flashing like lightning, he cut off his connection to the finger attack, causing the image of the finger to fade significantly before reaching Zhou Hong.

And yet, for some unknowable reason, the finger actually passed directly through Zhou Hong, not harming him in the least… to appear directly in front of Bai Xiaochun!

The finger attack struck after all!

In that same instant, Bai Xiaochun popped the Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill into his mouth, and then used his left hand to launch a fist strike at the incoming finger!

A deafening boom filled the air. Cracking sounds rang out from Bai Xiaochun, and blood sprayed out of his mouth as he fell back. However, as he did, the power of the Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill erupted out, healing his wounds even as they appeared. 300 meters back, he finally ground to a halt, where he looked up, ashen faced and panting… but completely recovered from all wounds!!

Despite the fact that he seemed to be in good condition, his mind was anything but calm. As of this point, he realized that his understanding of devas had always been incomplete. There was obviously a massive difference between devas of certain levels.

“This Chen Haosong… must be in the true great circle of the Deva Realm! That attack of his just now felt like it contained the weight of all the heavens. How terrifying!” As he looked up at Chen Haosong, his heart pounded with a very uneasy feeling.

“Like to bully your inferiors, huh?” he thought. “You just wait until I'm a demigod. Then you’ll be my inferior, and I’ll bully you!” Meanwhile, Zhou Hong was trembling in terror at having just stared death in the face. When he saw that deva-level finger attack heading toward him, he was sure that he was going to be killed. The fear still lingered inside of him, and at the same time, he felt more terrified of Bai

Xiaochun than ever. As far as he was concerned, he was nothing less than a crazy daredevil!!

It was at this point that a red blur of light shot toward Bai Xiaochun from off in the distance, and then Mistress Red-Dust appeared in front of him.

She had only been able to watch from a distance as he faced that finger strike alone, and it had left her feeling quite shaken. As of that point she realized… that she didn’t know much at all about this Bai Hao.

She was actually feeling very nervous about the situation herself. Turning her gaze away from Bai Hao, she suppressed her shock about what had just happened, then looked up at Chen Haosong and said, “Chen Haosong, I'm here on behalf of my father the king to protect Bai Hao!”

Silence reigned. The string of shocking methods Bai Xiaochun had used to neutralize the attack of a heavenly duke left the nine heavenly marquises completely flabbergasted.

Although each move he had used seemed ordinary in nature, the fact that he had seemingly instinctually called upon them was something that most ordinary people were incapable of. It required not only resourcefulness, but very quick thinking!

Furthermore, it was clear evidence of extensive experience in battle.

The fact of the matter was that Bai Xiaochun’s display of fighting instinct… was completely shocking to everyone present.

Even Chen Haosong’s brow was slightly furrowed in shock at Bai Xiaochun’s strength. Considering his status, it would only be appropriate for him to attack a single time in this situation. Furthermore, even if he was willing to keep acting aggressively, there was now Mistress Red-Dust to deal with, and she was backed by the Giant Ghost King. Therefore, it was with a very grim expression that Chen Haosong looked at Mistress Red-Dust and coolly said, “You don't have what it takes to protect him!”

A very serious glint could be seen in Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes, and the air around her seemed to turn cold as she said, “My father has already contacted Heavenmaster Hall about this incident. Without clear direction from the Grand Heavenmaster about what to do next, it doesn’t matter if I don't have what it takes. You will *not* make another move, Chen Haosong!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0754 awe-chapter-755

Chen Haosong’s pupils constricted slightly. If what Mistress Red-Dust had just said was true, and the Giant Ghost King had already brought the matter to the Grand Heavenmaster, then just as she had said, almost no one would dare to touch Bai Hao until the Grand Heavenmaster weighed in on the situation.

However, the reason for saying that *almost* no one would dare to touch him… was that there was still another person in Arch-Emperor City who qualified to disregard the Grand Heavenmaster.

He was, of course, the current Arch-Emperor!

However, the Arch-Emperor would not casually do such a thing.

As Bai Xiaochun looked back and forth between Mistress Red-Dust and Chen Haosong, he finally began to recover his senses after the sudden interchange which had just occurred. Only now did he start to get nervous, and sigh anxiously inside.

“How could I be this unlucky…? Is my poor little life going to be in danger…?” The fact that the matter had been escalated up to the level of the Grand Heavenmaster was not comforting at all, and in fact, had his heart beating rapidly.

Although Bai Xiaochun had never seen this Grand Heavenmaster, he knew exactly who he was!

He was Chen Manyao’s Master, whom Bai Xiaochun had encountered as a shadowy projection back in the River-Defying Sect. Because he had been in the Heavenspan River region at the time, it had been impossible to tell the man’s cultivation base level. But now that he thought about it, whatever methods he had used to accomplish that task back then had not been simple.

Heart thumping with anxiety, he began to brainstorm as many ideas as possible of how to escape Arch-Emperor City if things went south….

“What do I do, what do I do…?” he thought. At this point, Chen Haosong took out a transmission jade slip and sent a message to the Grand Heavenmaster. The other heavenly duke also took out a jade slip.

Silence descended onto the area, and with it, great pressure began to weigh onto Bai Xiaochun. As far as he was concerned, he was the unluckiest person in the entire world. From the moment he had arrived in Arch-Emperor City, he had kept his tail between his legs, and yet, had constantly run into trouble.

As the deadlock continued down below, it was high above the city in the imperial palace, in a location that represented the greatest power in all the Wildlands, that an old man sat cross-legged in a palace hall, thinking.

Although he was ancient in appearance, he radiated a bizarre aura that made him seem anything but old. It was almost as if his ancient features were a mere façade; clearly, if the power of his qi and blood erupted out, it could encompass all of Arch-Emperor City.

He wore simple garb, little more than a white robe. Although there was nothing luxurious about it, that robe would cause any person in the Wildlands who saw it to immediately feel nervous.

And that was because the robe revealed his status, a status so high that, despite wearing the most common of clothing, he looked like he was garbed in a river of stars.

He was the Grand Heavenmaster!

He was currently looking at a transmission jade slip, which abounded with information about what was happening in Borough 89. Quite a few people had messaged him about it, and although it wasn’t a very important matter in the grand scheme of things, it was enough to make the Grand Heavenmaster put a fair bit of thought into it.

“How amusing,” he said, a cold, bizarre smile spreading across his face. “This Bai Hao seems to whip up a storm wherever he goes…. The Giant Ghost King wants him as a son-in-law. The Spirit Advent King wants me to execute him so his daughter will forget about him. The Nine Serenities King’s son wants to assassinate him…. It seems that all of the four heavenly kings have been dragged into issues revolving around Bai Hao.

“And that’s not to mention that the incident in Borough 89 has dragged almost all of the heavenly dukes and heavenly marquises into it…. Even those who didn’t show up personally in Borough 89 have children involved.

“I can’t believe that one little Bai Hao managed to do all of this…. Very amusing. Of course, in addition to Bai Hao, there are other culprits. Namely… the two imperial princes….

“Did someone put them up to it? Did someone inspire them to pit Zhou Hong against Bai Hao, and cause so many lives to be lost in the process? I don’t think that those two princes could come up with a plan like that. The only person who could do something so ingenious… would be the Arch-Emperor himself.” Finally, he looked up, and his eyes glittered with cold light as he looked deeper into the imperial palace.

“You don’t want to be a puppet, and so you’re taking advantage of this situation to make a strike from the shadows…?

“Unfortunately, there is something of which you’re completely unaware. This Bai Hao that you so blithely thought to use has many other secrets, secrets so outrageous you couldn't even imagine them. The highest likelihood of all is that he’s actually Bai Xiaochun…. After all, when he was outside of Arch-Emperor City, back when I was preparing to investigate him, he unleashed… the Hell-Emperor Fist!!” The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes narrowed as an uneasy feeling rose up in his heart.

“Hell-Emperor, are you trying to tell me to trust him…?” With that, he closed his eyes and put out of mind the issues regarding Bai Hao’s true identity, and his connection to the Hell-Emperor. Then, he turned his thoughts back to what was happening in Borough 89.

“It seems to me that Arch-Emperor City has been quiet for too long. The Arch-Emperor is starting to get ideas…. Therefore, the question is, of all the nobility and aristocracy connected to the imperial court, which of them… are loyal to the Arch-Emperor?” A grim look appeared in the Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes as he looked back down at the jade slip.

“This Bai Hao… has offended just about all of the nobles and aristocrats in Arch-Emperor City. Even the events of the

Necromancer Kettle alone were enough to earn him public ire. In that case… I think having this Bai Hao alive would be much better for me than having him dead!” The Grand Heavenmaster smiled. The more people this Bai Hao offended, the more it meant that he was actually a free agent in the city, unconnected to anyone.

“Whether he’s Bai Hao or Bai Xiaochun doesn’t matter.” To the Grand Heavenmaster, it would be very valuable to have an unaffiliated government official on his side!

Furthermore, the hints given by the Hell-Emperor had the Grand Heavenmaster more interested in Bai Xiaochun than ever before. And the coincidence that he was backed by the Giant Ghost King made him even more enticing.

“If he actually becomes the Daoist partner of that Zhou Zimo, then that would cast some doubt onto my theory. But there’s no way the two of them will get together!” The Grand Heavenmaster knew that Bai Xiaochun was the perfect tool for him to use now that the Arch-Emperor seemed to be planning something. Furthermore, he had offended all the important people in the city. By giving him a chance, he could make him feel as if his only backer was the Grand Heavenmaster, a relationship which would only grow deeper as time progressed.

Furthermore, what he had heard about Bai Hao’s shakedowns in Giant Ghost City showed what kind of person he was. He would definitely make use of power to gain revenge. And that would help the Grand Heavenmaster seek out and sever any secret relationships that were developing between the aristocracy and the Arch-Emperor!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, the Grand Heavenmaster made his decision.

“Head immediately to Borough 89 with a Dharmic decree…. Bai Hao is to be appointed as inspections commissioner, and given command of 1,000 troops! And bring him to me immediately!”

Even as the Grand Heavenmaster’s words began to echo out, the air in front of him distorted, and a shadowy figure appeared. The figure seemed surprised when the position of inspections commissioner was mentioned, but bowed his head respectfully, voiced his assent, and then vanished.

Back in Borough 89, Bai Xiaochun was frowning as his mind raced with various thoughts regarding what was to come. Although he had a really bad premonition about what was going to happen, there was no way to escape at the moment, so he was forced to wait nervously.

“If I really have no other options, then I’ll find an opportunity to slip away. I still have a few Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills left, and I can also use my mask to change appearances again if I really have to.”

As time passed and his anxiety mounted, Bai Xiaochun felt the pressure mounting. He was so nervous his heart itched as though it had grown grass, and his mouth and throat were completely dry.

“I can’t rely on the Giant Ghost King either. If he wanted to save me, he could have used the teleportation portal to come here by now….” At this point, he was in no mood to try to do anything brave. Casting a sidelong glance at Mistress Red-Dust and Chen Haosong, he slowly began to edge backward.

However, in the instant that he moved, the faces of Chen Haosong and the other heavenly dukes flickered. Mistress

Red-Dust’s eyes glittered, and then all three devas suddenly looked in the same direction.

When Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, he followed their line of sight to find the air distorting, and a black-robed figure stepping out into the open.

The sight of this newcomer caused Chen Haosong’s eyes to widen, and it was the same with the other heavenly duke and Mistress Red-Dust.

The nine heavenly marquises’ hearts began to tremble with fear.

Bai Xiaochun was almost crazy with nervousness, to the point where his heart was about to burst out of his chest. He was even worried it might just stop beating.

It was at that point that the black, shadowy figure, whose facial features weren’t even distinguishable, looked at Bai Xiaochun with glittering eyes.

“So, you’re Bai Hao!” The coldness of the voice seemed to Bai Xiaochun to be filled with killing intent, making him as nervous as a scared bunny rabbit.

“I’m not Bai Hao….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0755 awe-chapter-756

Bai Xiaochun’s voice quavered as he spoke, and even as it rang out, he suddenly darted away as surely as a rabbit whose tail had been stepped on….

The speed with which he moved left everyone stunned. Never could anyone present have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would flee like this in the face of this black-robed, shadowy figure.

Even the black-robed figure seemed stunned. He actually hadn’t intended to frighten Bai Xiaochun, he just naturally had a grim and sinister way of speaking, the type that normally was filled with perilous killing intent. In fact, he wasn’t even aware that it was the killing intent in his voice that had prompted Bai Xiaochun to flee the way he had….

The moment Bai Xiaochun scurried away, Chen Haosong’s eyes flashed, and he took a step forward to give chase. As for Mistress Red-Dust, her expression flickered, and she lunged to block Chen Haosong’s path.

The nine heavenly marquises all flew into the air, shouting loudly.

“How dare you flee, Bai Hao!”

“If the Grand Heavenmaster wants you dead, then there’s nowhere in heaven and earth that you could flee to!!”

Even the chosen whose life force had been drained all got very excited, and even began to laugh uproariously. As far as Zhou Hong was concerned, the heavens did have eyes, and it was with profound satisfaction that he looked at the fleeing Bai Xiaochun. “You will be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt, Bai Hao!!”

As the scene devolved into chaos, the black-robed figure suddenly burst into motion, piercing through the air to pass Chen Haosong, and then appear right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao?!” he said in an angry voice.

Bai Xiaochun was on the verge of tears. By this point, it was obvious that this black-robed figure was a deva.

“Dammit, how come there are so many devas all of a sudden?!?!” Eyes bloodshot from terror at the deadly crisis, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout and drew upon the speed of his fleshly body to rocket off in a different direction.

At this point, the black-robed figure realized that he had scared Bai Xiaochun out of his wits. Unsure of whether to laugh or cry, he simply stood where he was and spoke in a gravelly voice.

“Hear the decree of the Grand Heavenmaster…. Bai Hao is hereby appointed as the inspections commissioner of Arch-Emperor City, and is given command of 1,000 troops!”

This was the most quickly and efficiently he had ever delivered a Dharmic decree in his entire life. Usually, he took his time, and spoke in a sinister fashion that put pressure on everyone who heard his words. But now, it was with a bitter smile that he spit the words out as quickly as possible.

Immediately, everything went completely quiet. The heavenly marquises who had been chasing Bai Xiaochun turned with wide eyes toward the black-robed figure, unsure if they had misheard.

“Inspections… commissioner?!”

Chen Haosong had been blocked by Mistress Red-Dust, but was just preparing to continue chasing Bai Xiaochun, when he heard the words and instantly stopped in place, turning to look at the black-robed figure with an expression of complete incredulity. The other heavenly duke was equally stunned.

Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes went wide at the sheer outrageousness of it all. Her original guess had been that if the Grand Heavenmaster wanted to give some face to the Giant Ghost King, then he would order Bai Hao to return to Giant Ghost City.

Never had she even considered the possibility that he would promote him to be the inspections commissioner!!

The inspections commissioner in the city was no small figure. He had the right to perform inspections on all the important people in the city, and was actually extremely powerful. Back when the Grand Heavenmaster had been in the middle of his rise to power, he had appointed an inspections commissioner who held that position for a hundred years. That inspections commissioner had presided over a reign of terror, and had slaughtered countless political rivals of the Grand Heavenmaster. He had struck fear into the hearts of everyone in the aristocracy, fear that lingered to this day.

After the Grand Heavenmaster consolidated his power, he removed the inspections commissioner from office and instead had him serve as a personal high counselor. And that man… was none other than this black-robed shadowy figure!

The position of inspections commissioner had been empty ever since he left it, but now, Bai Xiaochun had been promoted!

The powerful experts who had come from the various clans, as well as the bedraggled chosen down on the ground, were all completely stunned, their expressions frozen, at least until they began to cry out in alarm.

“How… how is this even possible?!?!”

“Inspections commissioner… in command of 1,000 troops….”

Bai Xiaochun was still fleeing at top speed, but when he heard the words that had just been spoken, he slowed down to a stop, his eyes wide.

“Huh?” Never in his wildest imagination could he have guessed that, not only would he come out of the situation unscathed… but he would also get a promotion! “Um….”

At this point, he still hadn’t turned around, and actually wasn’t convinced of what was really happening. However, considering that nobody was chasing him anymore, he turned to look at the black-robed figure.

When he found that the black-robed figure was staring back at him, he hesitated for a moment, then pointed at himself and asked, “*I'm* the inspections commissioner?”

The black-robed figure was looking at Bai Xiaochun, feeling a bit of a headache coming on as he wondered whether or not the Grand Heavenmaster might have issued the wrong

Dharmic decree. How could this fellow be the inspections commissioner, who was supposed to strike fear and dread into the heart of the aristocracy…?

And yet, he didn’t dare to go against the Grand Heavenmaster, and was forced to simply sigh and nod his head.

Not sounding polite at all, he said, “If you’re Bai Hao, then you’re the one. However, I really do want to know why you’re running away. Feeling guilty about something?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. Although he was now certain of what was happening, it almost seemed like a dream. He quickly pulled himself together, though. Taking a deep breath, he swished his sleeve, stuck his chin up, and proudly said, “Hahaha! I, uh… ahem, of course I know how important I am to the Grand Heavenmaster. My goal moments ago was to see who present would dare to violate the Dharmic decree of the Grand Heavenmaster and attempt to kill me anyway!”

As of this moment, not a trace of the fear from moments ago could be seen on Bai Xiaochun. He seemed righteous, and even stern as he stood there tall and straight.

“Hmmmphh! I will most certainly remember how everyone acted moments ago!” With that, his gaze slowly slid across the crowd.

Then he looked over at Zhou Hong and the other chosen down on the ground. Looking very stern and just, he said, “And don't think I didn’t notice how excited all of you were acting just now!”

Then he looked at Mistress Red-Dust, assuming the posture of an important figure, which was something he was very proficient at doing. “As for you, Zimo, please accept my thanks for your assistance today. I clearly misjudged you. You truly are a lovely woman.”

The truth was that he really did appreciate what Mistress Red-Dust had done.

An unsightly expression appeared on Mistress Red-Dust’s face when Bai Xiaochun called her a ‘lovely woman’, and she couldn’t refrain from gritting her teeth and letting out a cold snort.

The sudden turn of events had Chen Haosong looking very ill at ease. The nine heavenly marquises also seemed very apprehensive. As for Zhou Hong and the other chosen, they were cursing Bai Xiaochun inwardly for how shameless he was. He had clearly been fleeing like a frightened rabbit moments before, but now that he was the inspections commissioner, he immediately pretended that he was on the side of justice.

The black-robed figure seemed to understand Bai Xiaochun a bit better by this point. Although he was still a bit annoyed, he ignored Bai Xiaochun’s little speech and coolly said, “Very well, come with me to see the Grand Heavenmaster!”

Then he turned to leave, clearly not in the mood to stay in Borough 89 any longer. The mishaps of the day were simply too preposterous.

Now that disaster had been averted, Bai Xiaochun was finally starting to calm down. As it turned out, there really hadn’t been a reason to be so flustered to have all of these devas chasing him.

“I can’t believe I’m the inspections commissioner….” he thought. Although it seemed like his veins of steel were pulsing, he was still feeling very jumpy. Even his stomach felt a bit upset. However, he simply turned and swaggered after the black-robed figure, who took him flying… toward the imperial palace.

Everyone else who was left behind at first just stood there, either dazed or depressed. Then, having no options left, they simply left, taking their chosen with them back to their clans. At long last, Borough 89 was quiet again….

Zhou Hong was helped away, and despite his weak state, immediately went back to Nine Serenities City. He had no desire at all to remain behind in Arch-Emperor City, and was terrified by the mere thought that, not only had he failed to kill Bai Hao, but Bai Hao had also been promoted to inspections commissioner.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0756 awe-chapter-757

On two occasions, Bai Xiaochun had drained Zhou Hong of life force with absolutely no consequences. In fact, he had actually become famous, and even increased his overall standing as a result. And now, he had caught the attention of the Grand Heavenmaster, and had been given the matchlessly terrifying title of inspections commissioner.

Zhou Hong wasn’t the only one to be terrified by the situation. Virtually all of the aristocratic chosen were the same. Even their clans as a whole were shaken. A person who had once been a nameless nobody was instantly the focus of all attention, and someone that no one could afford to ignore.

It was a sudden turn of events that many people had trouble accepting. Of course, news spread rapidly, and before long, the wily old foxes in the aristocracy began to put the puzzle pieces together, and come to an understanding of what the Grand Heavenmaster was thinking….

“Something big is coming….” It was hard to say who came to this conclusion first, but soon, everyone was talking about it.

When the Spirit Advent King heard about the situation, he removed any restrictions on his daughter Xu Shan. As for the Nine Serenities King, after Zhou Hong returned, he treated his injuries and then gave strict orders that he wasn’t to set foot out of Nine Serenities City!

When the Giant Ghost King heard the news, he sat there on his throne for a long moment, various expressions playing out on his face. In the end, he sighed.

“If the Grand Heavenmaster wants him, can I really refuse…?” He shook his head, mixed emotions visible in his eyes.

Mistress Red-Dust returned to the Giant Ghost Legion, wrapped up in her own thoughts and speculations about what it all meant.

Because of one single order given by the Grand Heavenmaster, the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty was now astir. In fact, somewhere deep in the imperial palace, in a majestic hall, a man sat on an imperial throne, clad in imperial robes. As soon as he heard the news, his hands clenched down onto the dragon-shaped arms of his throne, and his entire body went stiff.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun followed the black-robed figure through the imperial palace. He was no longer strutting, but rather, looking around vigilantly. Although he was pleased by how things were playing out, he was still fearful and anxious about this Grand Heavenmaster.

Although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t make out the black-robed man’s face, he could sense how stern and sinister he was. It put quite a bit of pressure onto Bai Xiaochun, and he was just thinking of saying something to ease the tension between the two of them when the man seemed to realize what he was thinking.

“From now until the moment we reach the Grand Heavenmaster, keep your mouth shut!”

Bai Xiaochun was not very pleased at how impolite the response to his unspoken question had been. After all, he was now the inspections commissioner. However, considering that this person was a deva, and also had been sent personally by the Grand Heavenmaster, it seemed like a good strategy to just give in to him now. However, there didn't appear to be any need to actually fear him.

“This shadowy bastard tried to screw me over earlier. Back when he delivered the Dharmic decree, he intentionally made it seem like he wanted to kill me. All to frighten me.…” That made Bai Xiaochun even madder, but he knew what to say and how to say it, and therefore kept his expression calm as he followed the black-robed man through the imperial palace.

The palace was huge, and was as impressive as a celestial paradise, but Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in the mood to enjoy it. He focused on trying to keep track of the path they were following, until eventually, they arrived at the entrance of a grand hall.

It seemed ordinary, without any ornate decorations. It could even have been described as simple. There was something ancient about it, and in the main courtyard in front of the entrance, there was a cauldron with incense burning in it, the smoke spiraling high up into the sky.

Not a single person was present, making it seem like the type of place few people would be willing to come to.

“Wait here.” With that, the black-robed man proceeded forward a few steps before vanishing without a trace. Bai Xiaochun looked at the main door, which was closed, and then around at the silent courtyard. Finally, he stood there quietly waiting. For some reason, the huge hall seemed like an enormous beast staring down at him.

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard. It would be impossible not to be nervous in a moment like this. However, after mentally reviewing the situation, he still felt like he should be fine. After all, it wouldn’t be difficult for the Grand Heavenmaster to cause trouble for him if he wanted to. Considering they were in Arch-Emperor City, the man could have apprehended him at any time he wished.

As he stood there waiting, he tried to decide how to carry himself in this meeting.

“It probably wouldn’t be a good idea to resort to flattery. The Giant Ghost King likes that kind of thing, but I don’t know enough about the Grand Heavenmaster. What’s the first thing he's going to do? Act awe-inspiring? Or maybe chide me…?” As he sat there stewing in anxious thoughts, he suddenly realized that something seemed off, as if someone were looking at him from above. Slowly looking up, he saw that high up in the clouds, an enormous head was hanging down, looking at him with a curious expression. It was a dragon!

At the same time, intense pressure descended, pressure that Bai Xiaochun could tell surpassed Chen Haosong. Obviously, this dragon… was comparable to a demigod!

Bai Xiaochun had seen this very same dragon from afar when he had first arrived at Arch-Emperor City. But now, he was right in front of it, only about 300 meters away. He could see virtually every detail about it, including the sea of scales that covered its body.

Although Bai Xiaochun was a bit alarmed to be so close to a dragon, he quickly put a smile onto his face, waved, and called out a greeting.

“Hi there…!” Almost immediately, the dragon’s eyes glittered. Then, Bai Xiaochun sensed a wind blowing against his face, whereupon he discovered that the dragon had dropped its head down further, until it was only a bit more than a meter away from him.

Bai Xiaochun gasped in shock, and began to tremble at having something so huge right in front of him. He could even feel its breath on him, which was when he realized the dragon was actually sniffing him curiously.

At this point, he really felt like crying, and took a step back. As he did, the dragon moved forward! Scalp tingling, Bai Xiaochun kept the friendly smile on his face, and was about to say something else when the voice of an old man drifted out from inside the hall.

“He likes you.”

Bai Xiaochun turned to find that, at some unknown point, the door to the hall had opened, and visible in its depths was an old man.

He wore a long white robe, and somehow seemed like a god or divine being. His gaze was the type that seemed to make everything else unimportant, as though a mere glance from him could make the darkest places bright.

It was a sensation that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to tremble. This man was definitely the same man who had been projected into the River-Defying Sect… Chen Manyao’s Master!

In fact, even if he had never seen him before, Bai Xiaochun would have instantly been able to tell that this was the Grand Heavenmaster. Without any hesitation, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Your humble servant Bai Hao offers greetings, Grand Heavenmaster!”

“Come in,” the Grand Heavenmaster said with a slight smile. He wasn’t as intimidating as Bai Xiaochun had imagined, and after a moment, seemed like nothing more than an old man. In fact, after he smiled, that divine sensation on him faded away.

Obviously, he was very different from the Giant Ghost King, which actually got Bai Xiaochun more nervous as he scrambled to decide how to act. As he walked into the hall, the huge dragon watched him go, then slowly disappeared up into the clouds.

As Bai Xiaochun walked further into the hall, his anxiety mounted. He really wasn’t sure how to act, but was ready to play it by ear and adjust at a moment’s notice.

The Grand Heavenmaster didn't seem to care about how nervous Bai Xiaochun was. After looking him up and down, he said, “I asked you here so that I could ask you a question.… Do you or do you not dare… to investigate all the important people in the dynasty, and find out which of them… have interrupted the peaceful cultivation being practiced by the Arch-Emperor?!”

Although he spoke the words slowly, they caused a strange energy and pressure to build up in the entire hall.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, already starting to get excited by what he was hearing. Considering that he wanted revenge, the chance to investigate all of the important people in the imperial court was the perfect chance. If he said they were loyal to the Arch-Emperor, then that meant they were, whether they actually were or not!

Expression brightening, he slapped his chest and passionately declared, “Grand Heavenmaster, there’s no need to ask whether I dare or not. As long as you give the order, I will dare to do anything. Investigate the aristocracy? Ha! I’ll even investigate the Arch-Emperor!”

A strange, amused expression could be seen on the Grand Heavenmaster as he asked, “Aren’t you afraid of the Arch-Emperor?”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment before cautiously asking, “Well, um… what cultivation base does he have?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0757 awe-chapter-758

“The Arch-Emperor is a deva….”

After breathing a sigh of relief, Bai Xiaochun thumped his chest and decided he should probably use the same technique he had used to feel out the Giant Ghost King.

He didn't care about the Arch-Emperor, or a bunch of ministers and the aristocracy. After all, he had already offended just about everybody. In terms of what would happen long-run, he wasn’t too worried about it. As long as he could get his cultivation base high enough, then he would surely be able to find a way to escape the Wildlands and get back to the Great Wall and the Heavenspan River.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he felt not only a bit calmer, but also realized he was coming to like this Grand Heavenmaster more and more. With a mission like this, and a title like inspections commissioner, he would obviously have a lot of power. Getting more and more excited, and convinced more than ever that this Grand Heavenmaster was definitely a rare individual, he decided that he should probably take advantage of the situation to do a bit of brown-nosing….

“Grand Heavenmaster, you have shown me a mountain of kindness, and in fact, I owe you my life. Without you, I would very likely be buried in the depths of the Yellow Springs right now. A trifling deva might be able to crush me to death, but how could I ever bow my head to evil forces? Besides, Grand Heavenmaster, there’s no way that you would just sit around watching a loyal and devoted youngster like myself be bullied. Am I right?”

A strange expression could be seen on the Grand Heavenmaster’s face. He had heard that Bai Hao was like this in Giant Ghost City, but now that he saw his behavior with his own eyes, he realized the rumors were not accurate. Bai Hao wasn’t just a flatterer, he took advantage of every single opportunity to be a sycophant.

In any case, the Grand Heavenmaster was pleased by the answer he had been given. With that, he gave an enigmatic smile, looking at Bai Xiaochun as though he could read his heart.

“Go. You will be taken to the Inspections Manor. That… will be your new place of residence.” With that, he waved his sleeve, and Bai Xiaochun’s vision blurred. When it cleared, he was outside of the imperial palace, standing right in front of the black-robed man from earlier. The man didn’t seem surprised at all by Bai Xiaochun’s sudden appearance, and simply turned and walked off without saying a word.

Bai Xiaochun was stunned that the mere wave of a sleeve by the Grand Heavenmaster could move him to a completely different location. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun had prepared a whole slew of other things to say, but hadn’t been given the chance.

“I guess it doesn’t matter. I’ll just save them for next time. If I used up all my flattery in one shot, then what would I do afterward?” Fully convinced that this was the right way to look at things, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and swaggered after the black-robed man.

Meanwhile, back in Heavenmaster Hall in the imperial palace, the Grand Heavenmaster was looking toward a location further in the depths of the palace, a profound gleam in his eyes.

“The blood of the first generation Arch-Emperor runs in your veins… but why are you causing a stir now? Do you really want to bathe Arch-Emperor City in blood again?” The Grand Heavenmaster shook his head, and then closed his eyes to meditate.

The Inspections Manor was not in the imperial city up above, but rather, down below in one of the boroughs in the central district of the city. More specifically, it was located in Borough 4!

The black-robed man led Bai Xiaochun out of that city in the clouds, and down to an awe-inspiring manor complex.

The manor was large, and placed in a rather inconvenient location in the middle of the borough. However, the streets around it were all empty. People were apparently so terrified of it that they would take long detours just to avoid getting close to it.

It was pitch black, and radiated a cold, sinister aura that made it seem like some ferocious, primordial beast.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw it, he gasped in shock. Obviously, this was a very sinister and deathly place. Slaughters of all sorts had taken place here, leaving the air itself stained with a gloomy and eerie feeling that would never be dispelled.

From the outside, it looked very similar to how a governmental office in the mortal world would look, and yet, in some ways it was different. Two huge statues could be seen on either side of the main entrance, clad in suits of black armor. Powerful fluctuations rolled off of them, and although they were clearly statues, they seemed like they could leap into action at any moment to defend the manor. In fact, their eyes actually came to focus on the black-robed man for just a moment before returning to their original position.

That in itself gave Bai Xiaochun a better understanding of what the Inspections Manor was like. Although he couldn’t tell much about those two statues, he could tell from their fluctuations that they were as powerful as devas!

“Deva-level statues….” he thought, swallowing hard. If the black-robed man weren’t here, he would have been hard-pressed not to go over and touch the statues to see what they felt like.

The main gate to the Inspections Manor was also pitch black, and as soon as it opened, it was possible to see that the interior had limestone pathways and countless other buildings and structures inside. However, not a single person was present.

Even after the black-robed man led Bai Xiaochun inside, not even the tiniest sound could be heard. Bai Xiaochun looked around, and for some reason felt a bit terrified at how quiet everything was. It was just *too* quiet!

The black-robed man looked around with a glint of reminiscence in his eyes, and then tossed a black command medallion to Bai Xiaochun. “This is the Inspections Manor. You’re on your own now, Bai Hao.”

Bai Xiaochun caught the medallion and was about to ask some questions, when the black-robed man turned and vanished.

Bai Xiaochun was now alone. Looking around at his surroundings, and then at the command medallion, he shook his head.

“That’s it?” Bai Xiaochun was not very pleased. Considering how high his status was, the fact that the black-robed man had treated him in such a way seemed very negligent. However, considering that he was obviously close to the Grand Heavenmaster, Bai Xiaochun simply sighed.

“Ah, whatever. For the sake of the Grand Heavenmaster, I’ll let this slide.” Fingering the command medallion, he sent some divine sense out to check his surroundings. However, he quickly came to realize that there was an intense pressure in the area that limited his divine sense to roughly ten percent of its normal capacity.

“What kind of a weird place is this Inspections Manor?” he thought nervously. With that, he sent some divine sense into the command medallion, only to find that he needed to spend time activating it before he could use it. Considering the level of his cultivation base, and the current speed of the process, it seemed like it would take at least twenty hours before the activation process was complete.

With that, Bai Xiaochun looked around hesitantly, and then asked, “Anybody there? Hey, is anybody there?!”

He continued to shout in such a manner as he walked further into the manor. However, no matter how he shouted, not a single person appeared. Not only was Bai Xiaochun surprised by this, he was also starting to feel that something was off.

“This place can’t really be completely empty, can it...?” he sent some divine sense out, and began to hurry along a bit faster. After all, evening was about to fall. Before long, he had taken a look at most of the areas in the Inspections Manor.

He had peered into all of the grand halls, and all of the residences. However, no matter where he went, he didn't see a sign of a single other person.

By this time, he was really getting jittery at how strange this place was.

“There's no way that I, the inspections commissioner, am the only person inside of the Inspections Manor….” His intuition was indeed telling him that… there were other auras present. It was just that he couldn't find them, as if they existed somewhere between life and death.

“Don't tell me this place is haunted!” Shivering, he suddenly thought back to the Arch-Emperor's sepulcher, and the spine-tingling things that had occurred there. Spinning, he looked over his shoulder but there was nobody behind him, not even any paper people.

It was starting to get dark, causing shadows to fill the manor, and making it even more sinister. Flustered, he decided that he needed to leave, but quickly discovered that he couldn't!! The entire manor was completely sealed and locked down by some sort of restrictive spell.

By now, he was truly terrified, and was convinced that there was something very wrong with this Inspections Manor. After confirming that it was impossible to get out, he found a random building and pushed open the door. Seeing that there was no dust anywhere, he nervously sat down cross-legged.

“I guess I'll have to wait until the command medallion is completely activated before I can learn the secrets of the Inspections Manor.” Looking down, he confirmed that the command medallion was roughly thirty percent activated.

Gritting his teeth, he rotated his cultivation base to try to get the process to go faster.

“Come on, hurry up! I have a really bad feeling about this. It’s almost night. I'm worried… that this place is haunted!” Shivering, he cursed the black-robed man a bit, then thought about the crappy command medallion. Activating it shouldn’t be that hard, right? There had to be a way to get the blasted thing to activate faster.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0758 awe-chapter-759

It was dark outside as Bai Xiaochun frantically tried to activate the command medallion. It was so deathly quiet around him that it would have been possible to hear a pin drop.

Slowly but surely, his hair began to stand on end. He simply couldn’t remain calm, and was doing everything he could to activate the command medallion as quickly as possible. However, at some point during the night, his work was interrupted by the sound of footsteps coming from outside the building he was in.

Thump thump. Thump thump…. It almost sounded like a beating heart, although Bai Xiaochun was quite certain they were footsteps. However, after sending some divine sense outside to check, he couldn’t see anyone in the area.

That, of course, caused his scalp to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode.

“It’s really… really haunted….” He felt like crying; other than death, the thing he feared most in life was ghosts. It didn’t matter that he was in the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, he still couldn’t shake that deep-seated phobia. Without any hesitation he procured a big stack of paper talismans from his bag of holding and began to slap them down all over himself.

They were leftover talismans from his days back in the River-Defying Sect, which he had also used in the Arch-Emperor’s labyrinth. At the moment, he didn’t care at all that using them could theoretically reveal his identity, and he even forgot to use the powers of his mask to change their appearance. After plastering himself all over with them, he was still shaking in fear, and kept pushing the command medallion to activate. At the same time, he kept looking around anxiously, worried he would see a face looming in the darkness.

“I'm the inspections commissioner, and this is the Inspections Manor! How could this be happening…? It shouldn’t be like this…!” As he sat there nervously, he suddenly realized that he could hear more and more footsteps outside, until it sounded like an entire army was passing by.

By this point, he was virtually going crazy.

“So many ghosts….” he thought, his face white as a sheet. It was at this point that, without any warning, someone suddenly knocked on the door.

It was a rigorous, methodical knock that frightened Bai Xiaochun so badly he leaped to his feet and stared at the door, panting and trembling.

After a moment, the knocking stopped, and then the footsteps went off into the distance, as though whatever army was outside had move on.

Eventually, when Bai Xiaochun was sure that everything was quiet, he wiped the sweat from his brow. All of a sudden, he felt a bit embarrassed. After all, he was a powerful cultivator, a Wildlands necromancer who used countless vengeful souls to conjure magical flames. And yet, here he was being bullied by ghosts. All in all, he couldn’t help but feel a bit scornful of his own actions.

“Come on! Is Lord Bai really afraid of ghosts? Nah, I just don’t want to go out until I'm finished activating the command medallion. After all, I wouldn’t want to cause any misunderstandings.” Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best way to look at it, he no longer felt very embarrassed, and was just about to continue working with the command medallion when….

All of a sudden, a rumbling sound echoed out as some massive force pushed against the door, causing it to swing open. As it did, a chill wind rushed inside, startling Bai Xiaochun so much that he screamed and unleashed all the power of his cultivation base. Lunging backward, he shouted, “I'm the inspections commissioner! We’re all on the same team here….”

It was impossible to say whether or not it was because of what Bai Xiaochun had just shouted, but after the door opened, it was obvious that there wasn’t anyone standing in the doorway. It was completely empty.

Sweat poured down Bai Xiaochun’s forehead, and his aura trembled unstably. Outside, Arch-Emperor City seemed completely dark, which wasn’t how Bai Xiaochun remembered the place usually being at night. Back in Borough 89, it had always been a lively place. Furthermore, he was now in the central district of the city, in Borough 4, a place which should have been even more bustling.

In the center of the city, the streets were packed day and night. But strangely… even with the door open, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hear even a whisper of the hustle and bustle that he should have. Everything was dark and quiet.

Apparently, this part of the city center was aware of how things worked near the Inspections Manor, and turned off all of their lights at night.

“What the hell kind of place is this?!” Teeth chattering, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger, causing the door to swing closed. Looking around the area vigilantly, he scanned everything with divine sense, but again came up with nothing. Finally, he patted his bag of holding to produce a soulhoarding pagoda, out of which Bai Hao flew.

“You’re a ghost cultivator, my apprentice,” he said. “Help me look around and see if there are any other beings like you around here.” Bai Hao was a bit taken aback, but he looked around for a moment, then closed his eyes for a while. Eventually, he frowned.

“Master,” he said hesitantly, “there are definitely no ghosts around here that have mental faculties like I do…. However, there’s definitely something strange about this place, as if it exists somewhere between the realms of death and life. I really can’t put my finger on it. It’s like this place….” At this point he realized that his Master’s face had turned deathly white, and that he appeared to be completely terrified.

“What’s wrong, Master?” he asked.

Bai Xiaochun licked his lips and mused that he definitely couldn’t allow himself to look scared in front of his apprentice. Thumping himself on his chest, he said, “Hahaha! Nothing! I'm not scared at all, go on with your explanation.”

“Uh, Master… I never said you looked scared.”

“Huh? Oh. Hahaha! Well, let’s not talk about that. You were just saying something but didn't finish. What about this place?”

Looking oddly at Bai Xiaochun, Bai Hao continued, “To me, this place doesn’t feel like it’s empty at all…. In fact, it’s like there are people all around us… hidden figures in large numbers….”

His words caused goosebumps to cover Bai Xiaochun’s skin, and he looked around left and right to see if he could see anything. He couldn’t.

“Master, um… are you sure you’re not scared?” All of a sudden, Bai Hao found the situation somewhat funny. This was his first time seeing his Master looking scared like this. He hadn’t even been afraid when going up against hundreds of chosen.

Inside, Bai Xiaochun was wailing in fear. However, on the outside, he simply glared at Bai Hao.

“Nonsense,” he said loudly. “Me? Scared?! I'm not scared of anything!”

After that, he decided to change the topic again. Pulling Bai Hao a bit closer, he continued to work with the command medallion, and simultaneously began to chat randomly with Bai Hao.

“So, my apprentice, how have you been doing lately? Um… oh, how is the eighteen-colored flame coming along? We won't be going back to our shop, you know, so we need to think of a new way to get our hands on some more souls.”

Bai Xiaochun chattered on, changing the conversation topic constantly. Although an odd expression could be seen on Bai Hao’s face, he continued to answer the questions. As the two chatted, time passed, and eventually Bai Xiaochun started to run out of things to talk about. That was when he related to Bai Hao what had occurred during his meeting with the Grand Heavenmaster.

Earlier, Bai Hao hadn’t dared to let even the slightest fluctuation out, for fear that he be detected. Therefore, he wasn’t privy to what had gone on between Bai Xiaochun and the Grand Heavenmaster. As Bai Hao listened, his expression turned very somber.

“Investigate who is loyal to the Arch-Emperor….” Bai Hao was shocked, and at the same time, realized that his Master had been dragged into an enormous web of intrigue.

Eyes flickering with intelligence, he provided his analysis of the situation, “Master, this is no small matter. Not only did the Grand Heavenmaster defy the wishes of the majority by not killing us, but he then went on to appoint you as the inspections commissioner…. Obviously, he's using the fact that you offended so many people to use you as a tool!”

“I thought of that too,” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyebrows dancing up and down. “Master is just too outstanding, don’t you say?” Although Bai Xiaochun had temporarily stopped thinking about what an eerie place he was in, he didn't stop using the powers of the mask to conceal himself.

As for Bai Hao, he continued to ponder the matter, using his superior intellect to analyze how the situation would be most beneficial for his Master.

“Master, this situation might be a good opportunity for us. All of it will come down to the Grand Heavenmaster’s stance…. He obviously took a liking to you because of how you offended everyone. In that case… he probably wants to use you, not just like an ordinary tool, but like a sharp knife! Master, from here on out, the more people you offend, the safer we’ll be!”

Bai Xiaochun had long since become convinced that Bai Hao was extremely intelligent, most especially because of the incident with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao. Therefore, after hearing his analysis, he nodded in agreement.

Bai Hao was very pleased to have the approval of his Master. Eyes flickering with strange light, he continued to think about the matter for a moment. Then he leaned closer to Bai Xiaochun, lowered his voice, and said, “Master, I think I have an idea of what the Grand Heavenmaster is thinking. First you need to smooth out the internal crises. After that, you need to weaken the aristocracy…. In terms of smoothing out the internal crises, I don’t have any plan for how to do that. But as far as weakening the aristocracy… when the time comes, I have a plan that will completely crush the influential clans and other powers, and at the same time, make you more valuable than ever to the Grand Heavenmaster!”

With that, he went on to elaborate his plan.

“So ruthless….” Bai Xiaochun murmured, his eyes widening.

“Master,” Bai Hao replied quietly, “since we've started down this path, we need to walk it to the end….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0759 awe-chapter-760

Bai Hao’s plan was so ruthless that Bai Xiaochun was already hesitant to pull it off. However, if he ended up in the right circumstances, it might work. Right now, though, things were too unstable. “We’ll talk about that more later. Right now, the most important thing is for me to do a good job at being the inspections commissioner.”

Looking even more serious, Bai Hao said, “Master, we also need to start making some secret plans to make sure that we don’t get disposed of once our usefulness has passed!”

“Don’t worry,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Your Master has a lot of experience with that kind of thing.”

Then he laughed heartily. If he hadn’t said that, Bai Hao would have felt a lot better, but now, he had a very ill premonition. Whenever his Master felt this confident, bad things always happened. However, he still couldn’t come up with any way to remedy that situation other than to continue to offer advice to Bai Xiaochun.

And thus the night passed without anything strange happening. Bai Xiaochun continued to focus on activating the command medallion and chatting with Bai Hao.

At dawn, he went outside and confirmed that the restrictive spell was still in place, and that he couldn’t leave the Inspections Manor. The only way to do so would be to completely activate the command medallion!

He kept working, and before long, evening fell again, which was when he finally activated the medallion. It had taken twenty-six hours, which was longer than he had originally anticipated.

As soon as the medallion was activated, he sent some divine sense into it, whereupon a sound like heavenly thunder filled his mind. Then, his divine sense merged with the medallion, and… he saw a complete image of the Inspections Manor!

At that point, his eyes went wide, and his entire body thrummed with joy. Despite exerting all of the willpower possible, he couldn't hold back from gasping and then releasing a shout of surprise.

"This… this…."

What he could see in his mind's eye was a miniature version of the entire Inspections Manor. And from this vantage point, it was possible to see that the entire place was filled with numerous coffins!

In fact, the manor seemed to be built on top of a huge collection of the things. There were fully 100,000 of them, densely packed together into roughly nine levels. Each one of those coffins emanated terrifying fluctuations. The deeper the levels got, the fewer coffins they had, and yet the more terrifying the fluctuations. Bai Xiaochun's shock mounted as he studied the situation.

The ninth level only had a single coffin, but by means of the command medallion, Bai Xiaochun could tell that it had… the aura of a demigod!!

"Heavens…." Bai Xiaochun murmured, chest heaving as he realized that he must be holding, not just a command medallion, but rather, a magical device that could be used to control these 100,000 coffins!

He actually felt as if he could use a single thought to cause all 100,000 coffins to open up, and then do the same to the eyes of all the corpses that lay therein!

“So, that’s the true Inspections Manor….” Bai Xiaochun thought, stunned. After a long moment, he retracted his divine sense and looked down at the black command medallion. By now, he was convinced that what he held was not the master command medallion. There was no way the Grand Heavenmaster would simply hand over such heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power.

“This must be an auxiliary medallion…. the master medallion is surely in the hands of the Grand Heavenmaster. He is the one who can command the army beneath the Inspections Manor to do anything he wishes!

“However, that doesn’t really affect me. I'm on the Grand Heavenmaster’s team, after all. Even using a bit of this power is good enough!” After getting his breathing under control, he sent some divine sense into the command medallion and focused it on the subterranean coffin nearest him.

“Awaken!”

As soon as the thought rippled out, the limestone slab nearest the door of the building he was in shattered, and an ancient coffin shot up into the air. It was made of black iron, and as soon as it thudded down onto the ground, the lid was pushed open from within.

An aura of death and rot erupted out, along with… a burly man clad in black armor, wearing a black mask, and pulsing with a murderous aura!

Based on the intensity of the murderous aura, he had killed too many people to count! It immediately caused Bai Xiaochun's expression to flicker with shock.

As the man slowly looked up, glowing red eyes could be seen behind the mask. He took a step forward toward Bai Xiaochun, the fluctuations of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage rolling off of him. The black-armored corpse trooper walked up to Bai Xiaochun, then bowed his head and knelt on one knee.

“Greetings, exalted one!” he said in a rumbling voice that contained respect and veneration.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes sparkled, and Bai Hao's jaw dropped.

“So, this is the true power hidden within the Inspections Manor!”

Bai Xiaochun poured some more divine sense into the command medallion, and then called out to another of the coffins to awaken.

Before long, the entire Inspections Manor was rumbling as one coffin after another opened up, and more black-armored men flew out. Soon, there were fully a thousand!

The weakest among them were equivalent to the mid Nascent Soul stage, and a few were at the level of half-devas. The murderous aura they emitted affected the wind and clouds, and they were surrounded by the perpetual wailing of ghosts and wolves.

And that was just a small portion of the force hidden beneath the Inspections Manor. Bai Xiaochun wanted to call upon more, but knew that his command medallion was limited in usage, and could only be used to summon 1,000.

Furthermore, he could only call on the coffins in the top seven levels. The eighth level only had ten coffins, all of which had deva-level power. Of course, none of them contained souls; it was only fleshly body power.

“A thousand is good enough!” Bai Xiaochun was by no means disappointed. In fact, he was elated. After looking over the 1,000 black-armored corpse troopers, he threw his head back and laughed heartily. All of a sudden, he felt like he was back on the Great Wall, where the wave of a finger could send an army of thousands into battle.

“If I was in this position back when everyone was coming to cause trouble for me, I wouldn’t have had to do anything. I could have just waved my hand, and all of those chosen would have been crushed!” Bai Xiaochun was feeling very happy and very confident. Also, he was coming to the conclusion that this Grand Heavenmaster was much more reliable than the Giant Ghost King. After all, the rewards the Giant Ghost King gave him were all honorary, whereas the Grand Heavenmaster had given him command of an army.

There was another function to the command medallion other than being able to summon the army of 1,000 troops. It was also filled with reports about all of the aristocracy within the Wildlands, and especially Arch-Emperor City. It was as if hidden eyes were watching everyone at every moment, reporting back all of the events which occurred in their lives, and then storing it in this command medallion. Whoever possessed this command medallion would be privy to countless secrets.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun immediately began to browse through some of the reports, and soon realized that the reason he had been attacked by the hundreds of chosen was that someone had been propagating false rumors.

Those rumors had aroused such anger among the masses that eventually, the chosen decided to simply attack him directly.

In terms of the culprits, Zhou Hong was only one of many. Virtually all of the people Bai Xiaochun had captured in the Necromancer Kettle had played a part. However, there were clues pointing to the people who had truly instigated the matter… two of the imperial princes….

Bai Xiaochun’s anger was beginning to grow. Everything was now starting to become clear. And that was especially true regarding the young man with the feng shui compass who had accompanied Zhou Hong that day. A quick bit of investigating using the command medallion quickly identified him.

He was none other than a vassal of the grand prince!

“Complete and utter bullying!” Bai Xiaochun said through gritted teeth. With that, he pondered the mission the Grand Heavenmaster had given him, and then thought about how all of these aristocrats and nobles had sought to kill him, and his eyes began to shine with cold light.

When Bai Hao realized that his Master was getting angry, he asked what the problem was. Upon hearing the explanation, he quickly advised, “Master, just keep your cool for a bit. If your personal matters cause problems for the Grand Heavenmaster’s main plan, it could--”

“There’s no need to keep my cool,” Bai Xiaochun interrupted with the wave of a hand. “The two issues are one and the same. After all, the Grand Heavenmaster doesn’t know who is truly loyal to the Arch-Emperor, and he didn’t prohibit me from investigating anyone!” He was now in a position of power, backed by the Grand Heavenmaster, and sure that his poor little life would not be in danger. Considering what type of person he was, there was no way that he wouldn’t seek his revenge.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun also knew that, even with the Dharmic decree of the Grand Heavenmaster to back him, and the level of power he wielded, he still had to have evidence on his side if he wanted to act. That way, he wouldn’t stir up any unnecessary trouble.

Evidence like that might be difficult to gather for an ordinary person, but not for Bai Xiaochun. Back when he had been an inquisitor in Devil Penitentiary, he had acquired all sorts of secrets during the interrogations he performed.

“Let’s go,” Bai Xiaochun said proudly. “We’re paying a little visit to the prison!” With that, he and Bai Hao flew up into the air, followed by 1,000 burly men in black armor.

It was evening, but Arch-Emperor City in general was still quite alive, so when Bai Xiaochun appeared on the streets with his army of black-armored corpse-troopers, looking very grand and magnificent, he attracted instant attention. After all, the corpse-troopers radiated murderous auras filled with death, and were sinister to behold.

“Who are those people…? Look at that incredible murderous aura!!”

“Hey, isn’t that Bai Hao? How come all of those black-armored soul cultivators behind him seem so rife with death?!?!” Conversations rippled out in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased at being the center of attention like this. With a thousand troops at his command, who would ever dare to provoke him?!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0760 awe-chapter-761

Back when the Grand Heavenmaster had appointed Bai Xiaochun as the inspections commissioner, many people in Arch-Emperor City had turned their attention to the Inspections Manor in Borough 4. Therefore, a lot of people noticed when he led the 1,000 black-armored men out into the open, and they trembled with fear.

All of them suddenly recalled what was now something of a legend. In the past, this army had caused blood and gore to rain down on Arch-Emperor City, and had come to be known as….

“The Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion!!”

“In the past, they caused blood to rain down for seven months straight…. the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion!!”

Countless eyes were focused on Bai Xiaochun, and the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion soldiers that followed him. The nobility and aristocracy were shaken, not because of any fear of Bai Xiaochun himself, but fear of the army of corpse troopers. Furthermore, they feared who that army represented… the Grand Heavenmaster!!

There were many stories about this army of corpse troopers. In one version, they had been assembled by the third generation Arch-Emperor, a sort of black ops force that the arch-emperors had controlled from generation to generation. Now, though, that army had fallen into the hands of the Grand Heavenmaster.

However, other people said that the so-called corpse trooper army had not existed before the rise of the Grand Heavenmaster. Supposedly, he had created the army using the corpses of the nobles and aristocrats who had resisted him!

Virtually every possible origin story for the army existed, but all of them were connected to the Grand Heavenmaster!

As news of the reappearance of the corpse troopers began to spread, many people were shaken, and began to pay close attention to what was unfolding.

Everyone knew… that something big was about to happen!!

Most importantly, everyone also knew that the person who now led the Grand Heavenmaster’s army was… Bai Hao!!

He had offended countless chosen, and although he didn’t have direct dealings with every almighty person among the nobility and aristocracy, he was connected to virtually all of them.

The bloody event from just a few nights ago was still the subject of much discussion, and everyone knew that the vengeance Bai Hao would wreak would be a major event!

Everyone’s minds were racing as they pondered what would happen, and at the same time, everyone was completely on guard.

Bai Xiaochun actually had no idea that his going out at the head of 1,000 black-armored soldiers was causing such a stir. He just felt wonderful to be the center of so much attention, and couldn’t help but revel in his success.

“Ah, it's been a long time… too long, in fact, since I've basked in such glory…. Back in Giant Ghost City, I was the majordomo, and yet, had no true military power!” As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun truly felt as if he had the right to look down on all creation. Sticking his chin up, he slowed down a bit as he flew through the air.

His destination was Arch-Emperor City’s Grand Asylum, which was not located in the central district. Rather, it was in Borough 49. As Bai Xiaochun flew along with his 1,000 black-armored soldiers, the city guards just looked at him from a distance, not daring to get close. As such, Bai Xiaochun was able to go directly to the Grand Asylum.

The Grand Asylum was constructed to look like an enormous, coiled python. The entrance was the python’s mouth, and as soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared there, the warden and other important prison officers flew out to meet him. The sight of Bai Xiaochun and his 1,000 black-armored soldiers caused all of them to shiver in fright.

Obviously, they had heard that this Bai Hao had been appointed by the Grand Heavenmaster to serve as the inspections commissioner. Trembling, they clasped hands, bowed, and said, “Greetings, Inspections Commissioner!”

“You recognize me?” Bai Xiaochun said coolly, keeping his hands clasped behind his back and his chin stuck up.

The warden of the Grand Asylum was a middle-aged man who was so fat he was almost a ball. Smiling nervously, he said, “Inspections Commissioner Bai, you have unbounded integrity, and are spectacularly famous. Nobodies like us can only gaze upward at your splendor. Only a few months ago, your humble servant gazed at you from afar, sir, and was impressed to no end by your imposing bearing. For whatever reason you’ve come, oh exalted one, your humble servant will do everything in his power to help you.”

The warden was feeling very nervous. The fact that this was the first location Bai Xiaochun had chosen to visit after taking command of the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion left him feeling very unsettled.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't very pleased with the overt flattery, and didn’t get any sense at all that the warden was being sincere. However, considering his current status, it would be a big loss of face to cause problems for lowly figures such as the warden. Snorting coldly, he said, “Enough jibber-jabber. Just follow me and do what I say!”

Hands clasped behind his back, he swaggered into the Grand Asylum.

The warden and the other officers were stunned by Bai Xiaochun’s response, and immediately began to shiver even more than before. Hearts racing, and sweat pouring down their backs, they hurried after him.

Although this was Bai Xiaochun’s first time in the Grand Asylum, considering the time he had spent as a guard in Devil Penitentiary, much of it as the number one dark inquisitor, he immediately identified with the musty odor of a prison that entered his nose. It was all very familiar.

Eventually, they were in the warden’s grand hall, where Bai Xiaochun sat down and said, “Bring out all of the records regarding the current prisoners.”

The nervously sweating warden immediately voiced his assent, and then arranged for all of the prisoner records to be brought over. Those records soon arrived in the form of a jade slip, which the warden personally handed to Bai Xiaochun.

Looking very stern, Bai Xiaochun took the jade slip and then said, “Arrange a private chamber for me!”

With that, he began to study the jade slip.

The warden immediately arranged for the nicest chamber in the entire Grand Asylum to be cleared out for Bai Xiaochun’s use. He just hoped that he could get Bai Xiaochun out of the prison as quickly as possible. To have the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion present had him feeling extremely nervous.

Considering the experience he had gained in Devil Penitentiary, Bai Xiaochun was quickly able to search for and identify the prisoners who were connected in some way to the aristocracy and nobility in Arch-Emperor City. “This prisoner…. And this one. Him too…. Bring them all to me one at a time!”

Because of their connections, such prisoners couldn’t gain their freedom, but had relatively good lives inside of the prison, and roughly the same access to cultivation resources as they had on the outside.

Many of them lorded it over their fellow prisoners, and some were even treated with great respect by the guards. Therefore, when Bai Xiaochun issued his order, the warden hesitated.

Irritated, Bai Xiaochun glared at the warden and said, “Warden, could it be that you want the inspections commissioner to personally go get the prisoners?”

At the same time, the black-armored corpse-troopers at his side began to radiate murderous auras that made the area instantly seem like a hell filled with malevolent asura spirits.

Trembling in terror, the warden unhesitatingly issued the proper orders.

Almost immediately, the prison was thrown into complete chaos as the guards found the prisoners Bai Xiaochun had named and grabbed them with maniacal fury.

“What are you people doing!?”

“I work for Heavenly Marquis Zhou! What gall you have!”

“Stay your hand!!”

In response, the guards simply surrounded them, vicious expressions on their faces as they sealed their cultivation bases and dragged them over to the private chamber that had been set aside for Bai Xiaochun.

Soon, dozens of prisoners were lined up outside, trembling in fear and unsure of what was happening. When the prisoners began to talk amongst themselves to try to figure out what was going on, the guards immediately silenced them.

The area grew very quiet, and the guards all bowed deeply in a certain direction down the corridor. The prisoners looked over nervously and saw the warden, a fawning expression on his face as he walked down the hall alongside a young man.

The young man was handsome, with his chin stuck up and his hands clasped behind his back. Of course, he was Bai Xiaochun, and he was followed by a contingent of black-armored soldiers who struck fear into the souls of anyone who saw them.

“As the inspections commissioner, I’ve come here to personally interrogate these prisoners. Bring them in as I call for them. Furthermore, no one is allowed to disturb me as I carry out the interrogations!” After coming to a stop at the door, Bai Xiaochun looked around with a stern expression. The warden immediately voiced his assent.

Moments later, Bai Xiaochun was in the private chamber with the first prisoner. Outside, the black-armored soldiers stood guard, preventing anyone from getting close.

The warden stood there, terrified and anxious, still unsure of why Bai Xiaochun had picked this place as his first location to visit.

“What is the purpose of him coming here…?” the warden thought, confused. That was when the first bloodcurdling screams erupted from the secret chamber. The faces of everyone present fell, and all eyes went wide, especially those of the guards who ranked as inquisitors.

“That screaming… what methods could provoke such a reaction…?”

The guards were alarmed, and the prisoners even more so. Many of them gasped in fear. As for the warden, his heart filled with emotions of both shock and reverence.

The screaming lasted for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. After that, the door of the private chamber opened, and a trembling figure was thrown out, who was of course the prisoner who had gone into the room with Bai Xiaochun. His eyes were glazed over, and he seemed to be on the verge of collapse.

“Next!” Then, Bai Xiaochun’s voice broke the silence as he spoke from the private chamber.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0761 awe-chapter-762

Bai Xiaochun had long since made his decision. He wanted revenge, but he needed to have evidence to justify his actions. Even if that evidence wasn’t completely conclusive, he would at least need to provide some sort of explanation to the Grand Heavenmaster.

As far as he was concerned, this was the only way to get that evidence. Furthermore, there was no way that other people would have been able to guess that he would come to the Grand Asylum to perform interrogations. Few people in the world had ever served as prison guards, and fewer as inquisitors. Therefore, almost no one… would ever realize that the Grand Asylum was a place where countless shocking secrets were held!

To Bai Xiaochun, the Grand Asylum was the greatest weakness in his enemies’ armor. After all, back in Giant Ghost City, it had been in Devil Penitentiary that he had learned about the rebellion being planned by the three great clans.

One unique aspect to Wildlander soul cultivators was that it was difficult to perform soulsearches on them as they got more powerful. However, that wasn’t a problem for Bai Xiaochun.

The prisoners he had selected for interrogation were perfect sources of the evidence he needed. All of them had committed heinous crimes, and all of them were deeply connected to the nobility and aristocracy. Due to various random reasons, though, none of them had been sentenced to death.

As time passed, more and more prisoners went into the private chamber, and endless screaming filled the halls of the prison. Everyone present was shaken, especially the inquisitors, whose eyes began to shine with bright light.

“The exalted inspections commissioner… is also a dark inquisitor!!”

“You’re right! You know what, I remember now! I heard that Bai Hao was vicious and merciless, and that he actually became the number one dark inquisitor back in Giant Ghost City!!”

Soon, the warden heard what the inquisitors were saying, and he began to tremble inwardly, filled with fear at the techniques Bai Xiaochun was using.

Although the warden didn't even qualify to be the type of person who was directly connected to the Arch-Emperor, he had heard the stories of what had happened many years ago, when the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion instigated a seven-month reign of terror. Back then, not everyone who had been dragged into the calamity had actually been guilty.

That mere thought caused the warden to shiver. Looking at the black-armored corpse troopers standing guard over the private chamber, the warden decided that he would fulfil Bai Xiaochun’s every request, no matter what it was.

After a full day of dozens of interrogations, Bai Xiaochun got plenty of clues. At that point, he walked out of the private chamber, an unsightly expression on his face as he held out another jade slip. This one was filled with the names of over a hundred new prisoners.

“Bring them to me!”

The warden didn’t hesitate for even a second. Loudly voicing his affirmation, he immediately arranged for the second group of prisoners to be brought to Bai Xiaochun for interrogation.

Eventually, a third group was called for, then a fourth and a fifth….

As Bai Xiaochun was focusing on performing interrogations to get the evidence he needed for his revenge, the outside world was being shaken by the events playing out.

With clouds in place, it is impossible to see the sun or moon. But if a pair of hands spread the cloud cover, then everyone could see. As soon as word started to spread about Bai Hao’s background, many people began to speculate as to what exactly he was doing.

“What? He went to the Grand Asylum?”

“What did Bai Hao go there for…?”

“This isn't good. He was a dark inquisitor back in Giant Ghost City! Don't tell me he’s going to go rifling for secrets among the prisoners in the Grand Asylum…?”

However, what was particularly marvelous about Bai Xiaochun’s plan was that, even if a given prisoner had access to important information, people on the outside of the prison who also had access to the same information would often not believe that said prisoner truly knew what they knew.

After all, if the people on the outside were aware that any given prisoner had access to that sensitive information, the prisoner would have long since been silenced in death.

It was in the fourth group of prisoners that Bai Xiaochun finally found the information he was looking for. One of the prisoners revealed that a certain heavenly marquis had been maintaining secret communications with the grand prince.

Bai Xiaochun even remembered the name of that heavenly marquis. His son was particularly close to Zhou Hong. Pulling out his inspections commissioner command medallion, he did a bit of research, and confirmed that this very person had helped Zhou Hong spread rumors about Chen Manyao and Xu Shan.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly, and then continued with more interrogations. All-in-all, he was in the Grand Asylum for half a month. During that time, he interrogated all suspicious individuals, and yet, was not satisfied. Therefore, he went on to interrogate some of the other random prisoners who had committed heinous crimes. Some of them were prisoners who had been so shaken by the previous string of interrogations that they told what they knew without having to use any special methods, which was a good thing, considering that his supply of Aphrodisiac Pills was limited.

Most shocking of all was that it was during the last interrogation of a prisoner who didn't seem important at all, that he got the most shocking bit of evidence!

“Li Tiansheng’s father…? He’s the heavenly marquis in the Li Clan, right?” Bai Xiaochun knew that he had hooked a big fish, and was delighted. Ending the interrogations, he walked out of the private room, waving his black-armored corpse-troopers to his side as he flew out of the Grand Asylum.

Respectful expressions could be seen on the faces of the guards as he left, and many of them even looked at him with reverence. The efficiency with which he performed interrogations was shocking, and because of it, many of the guards wouldn’t hesitate to leap to do Bai Xiaochun’s bidding.

As for the warden, he breathed a sigh of relief. He had felt a lot of pressure over the last half a month, and had been worried that the slightest slipup on his part would get him dragged into a huge mess.

After reverently escorting Bai Xiaochun out of the prison, he hurried back inside and went into secluded meditation, well aware that another bloodbath was coming to Arch-Emperor City.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted, but didn’t immediately go to cause a scene with Li Tiansheng’s father, the heavenly marquis. Instead, he went to the imperial palace to pay a formal visit to the Grand Heavenmaster.

“How dare they provoke me! Hmph! I'm going to make sure they realize that Bai Xiaochun is *not* so easy to deal with!” As he headed toward the palace, he pondered the situation and realized that he still didn’t have enough manpower. Therefore, he contacted Zhou Yixing again, and told him to return to Arch-Emperor City with his men. Around then, he arrived at Heavenmaster Hall, where he clasped hands and bowed.

“Your humble servant Bai Hao offers greetings, Grand Heavenmaster! I have a matter to discuss!”

As soon as his voice echoed out, the dragon stuck its head down from the clouds and looked curiously at Bai Xiaochun. However, before it could do anything else, the door of the hall opened, revealing the Grand Heavenmaster sitting there looking at Bai Xiaochun.

Settling his aura, Bai Xiaochun hurried inside.

“Grand Heavenmaster, your humble servant accomplished his mission smoothly! I’ve already dug up evidence of two heavenly marquises who disturbed the cultivation of the Arch-Emperor.” With that, he produced a jade slip that he offered to the Grand Heavenmaster.

The Grand Heavenmaster took the jade slip and looked at with a smile. Then he rubbed his thumb over its surface and muttered to himself for a moment.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, wondering if the Grand Heavenmaster would have him take care of the two heavenly marquises. After all, the evidence wasn’t completely conclusive, and even extensive analysis could only produce middling speculation about the results. However, after all of the interrogations in the Grand Asylum, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain he understood those two heavenly marquises.

Neither of them were good people. For example, the entire Li Clan all practiced poison cultivation. The main technique they used was called Heart Of A Woman, which involved collecting the hearts of women to use as part of the technique.

It was an evil technique to begin with, and the more powerful the cultivator got, the more womens’ hearts were needed. The Li Clan had essentially been built on a foundation of bloodshed.

And then there was the Chen Clan, which was even worse in some ways. They funded their clan by selling life force. That life force was harvested from cultivator slaves that the clan kept in pens like animals. Furthermore, all of those slaves were cultivators captured from the Great Wall.

The Chen Clan was one reason why all of the noble and aristocratic chosen had recovered so quickly after having been captured and drained of life force by Bai Xiaochun.

As he thought about these two evil clans, Bai Xiaochun looked furtively at the Grand Heavenmaster.

The Grand Heavenmaster's face was expressionless, and he wasn't saying even a single word, which caused Bai Xiaochun's nervousness to mount. It was really impossible to tell what the Grand Heavenmaster was thinking. Enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, whereupon his thumb flexed, and the jade slip transformed into ash.

"Go find Heavenly Marquis Li and Heavenly Marquis Chen… and arrest them!" In response to the Grand Heavenmaster's words, the air next to Bai Xiaochun rippled, and that familiar black-robed man stepped out. After voicing his assent, he bowed and vanished.

Bai Xiaochun was startled, but at the same time, felt a bit excited.

"I heard that you're good at shakedowns," the Grand Heavenmaster said. "You have four hours to go handle the Li and Chen Clans!" With that, he closed his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun's heart immediately began to race, and he felt all the blood in his body rushing to his head. Although he was excited that he would be able to profit from performing some more shakedowns, what was more important was that he could have his revenge. Furthermore, he could use his public office to do so, which was an amazing thing. As it turned out, this Grand Heavenmaster was turning out to be a great guy!

He immediately voiced his assent, then turned and flew out of Heavenmaster Hall. Obviously, the Grand Heavenmaster wanted him to do as the old saying said. *Kill the chickens to scare the monkeys!* Punish some people to serve as a warning to others!

He didn’t even need to have any hard evidence, just some clues! Even speculation was enough for the Grand Heavenmaster… to give him the go-ahead to take lives!

“With someone like him to rely on, nobody would ever dare to provoke me!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he proudly waved his sleeve to summon his 1,000 corpse troopers. Then, he headed toward the Li Clan.

“Get ready, Li Tiansheng. Lord Bai is coming!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0762 awe-chapter-763

It was an exhilarating feeling to be leading the 1,000-strong Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion out from the imperial palace. All of the imperial guards trembled in fear at the sight, to the point where they didn’t dare to even breathe, much less get in the way.

By now, everyone in the city knew about Bai Xiaochun’s appointment to the position of inspections commissioner. The additional fact that the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion had been awakened led to widespread fear.

In fact, word had even spread out into the Wildlands and beyond. Not even Bai Xiaochun knew how famous he was at this point.

Even the four great riversource sects in the Heavenspan River region, the sects who controlled the Great Wall, had heard of the name of Arch-Emperor City’s Inspections Commissioner, Bai Hao.

In Arch-Emperor Dynasty, Bai Xiaochun was the newest dragon to walk the face of the earth, a razor-sharp knife in the hand of the Grand Heavenmaster!

Before long, people were gossiping about Bai Hao’s past in Giant Ghost City. People talked about how he was vicious and merciless, how he had killed members of his own clan, and his daredevil act of kidnapping a demigod expert. Then there were his shakedowns, the fact that he was a wife-stealer, and countless other details. In the end, everyone was left gasping in disbelief at all the stories.

Most people believed him to be… a lunatic. His battle prowess was astonishing, to the point where he had both attacked and captured more than a hundred chosen. Later, he even fought back against a group of hundreds of chosen at the same time.

A person like that could already be considered stunning without even mentioning that he had the backing of both the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster. In fact, he was also the son-in-law of the Giant Ghost King!

Because of all of these various aspects, Bai Xiaochun was now… a very, very important person in the Wildlands!

He was far more famous than Zhou Hong, Gongsun Yi and the other chosen like them.

And now, emboldened by the Grand Heavenmaster, it was with a completely haughty air that he set out with his corpse troopers and their intense murderous aura. A thousand beams of light merged together, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as they shot… toward the Li Clan, right in the middle of Arch-Emperor City!!

“Li Tiansheng, you and Zhou Hong worked together with all those other chosen to cause me endless trouble. You tried your best to see me dead, and I let you off the hook over and over again. But now you’ve gone and really pissed me off. Well let me tell you, when I get pissed off, I frighten even myself!” Bai Xiaochun didn’t have a care in the world, and his eyes shone with keen anticipation as he imagined the reactions of all of the people who had tried to kill him in the past.

“And you’re first on the list, Li Tiansheng!” With that, he accelerated, causing the rumbling sounds to intensify as his 1,000 corpse troopers got closer and closer to the Li Clan.

The sight of Bai Xiaochun brazenly speeding through the air attracted a lot of attention, and many gasps. Furthermore, when people realized what direction he was heading in, coldness gripped their hearts, and speculations began to run wild.

“He’s not doing anything to suppress that murderous aura! What is Bai Hao going to do...?”

“Look at the direction he's heading in. It seems like… Borough 9?”

“Borough 9? That’s where the Li Clan is….”

The Li Clan occupied roughly twenty percent of Borough 9. They had risen to power because of the heavenly marquis in their clan. Not only was their clan populous, they had many outside soul cultivators who were willing to work for them because of how powerful they were. It was a snowball effect that had quickly turned them into a mighty group that few people would ever dare to trifle with.

Even as everyone looked on in shock, Bai Xiaochun led his 1,000 corpse troopers into Borough 9, toward a sprawling courtyard complex, from within the middle of which rose a 300-meter-tall tower!

That tower was a heavenly marquis pagoda! Within Arch-Emperor City, only heavenly marquis clans had structures 300 meters tall. As for the heavenly dukes, they had pagodas 3,000 meters tall!

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of the Li Clan’s pagoda, the people in the Li Clan realized that he was heading in their direction. It led to a small-scale commotion, with countless cultivators flying out of the clan to observe his approach.

Li Tiansheng was in the crowd. He was the heir apparent of the clan, and also a chosen, with a very high position. Unless his father was present, he was essentially the clan chief.

“Bai Hao!!” At first Li Tiansheng was startled, but his expression soon twisted into a vicious snarl. The venomous look in his eyes was clear; he had paid a steep price to the Chen Clan to restore his life force after the most recent incident, and the person responsible for that was none other than Bai Xiaochun.

His hatred for Bai Hao was part of his heart, but he was also aware that he was in a very different position now. He was the inspections commissioner, backed by the Grand Heavenmaster, and the fact that he had come surrounded by a murderous aura caused Li Tiansheng’s heart to begin to pound in his chest. Without any hesitation, he issued orders to activate the clan’s defensive spell formation.

Even as he issued the orders, a piercing whistling sound filled the air as Bai Xiaochun arrived with his 1,000 corpse troopers. The murderous aura seething off of the corpse troopers formed something like a black cloud that hovered above the Li Clan.

There were already other soul cultivators showing up in the area to see what was going to happen. All of them were filled with shock, and were starting to come to their own conclusions about how events would play out.

“Could it be that the Grand Heavenmaster is actually going to make a move?! And the Li Clan… is first on the list!!”

“No way! It’s probably just Bai Hao using his status to exact revenge!”

As numerous individuals looked on in astonishment, Bai Xiaochun hovered there grandly, flanked by his 1,000 corpse troopers, looking over the Li Clan cultivators, who were clearly ready for a fight. Then his gaze came to rest on Li Tiansheng, around whom were clustered an unusually large number of clan cultivators.

Glaring, Bai Xiaochun said, “Li Tiansheng, why haven’t you come out to pay respects to the inspections commissioner!?”

As his voice echoed out like thunder, the corpse troopers’ murderous auras grew even more intense.

The Li Clan cultivators’ expressions flickered, many of them growing fiercer. By this point, Li Tiansheng was panting a bit, and his mind was spinning. However, he didn't let that show on his face. Instead, he scowled and yelled, “You’ve got a lot of guts coming here and offending your superiors, Bai Hao. This is the manor of a heavenly marquis, not just some random place where you can go make a scene. Back down immediately!!”

Sticking his chin up, Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back and brazenly said, “The manor of a heavenly marquis? Heh heh. The main reason Lord Bai came here today is because the Li Clan is the manor of a heavenly marquis. I heard you have a lot of wealth in this clan of yours. I'm just worried that some of your treasures are forgeries, and would like to help you inspect them.”

Inside, he was bursting with happiness, and was very pleased with how amazing his little speech had just been. It was the type of feeling that came with occupying the position of superiority and justice.

Cultivators of the Li Clan were accustomed to being arrogant people, and immediately responded with boisterous, impolite words.

“What gall!!”

“Do you have a death wish or something, Bai Hao? What makes you think you have the right to come cause trouble for our Li Clan?!”

“What a joke! I guess Bai Hao is just a complete moron!”

As for Li Tiansheng, his expression was unsightlier than ever, and he was getting more anxious by the moment. He could tell that something was off about the situation, but was convinced that there was little likelihood the Grand Heavenmaster was interested in making a move against the Li Clan. The most likely possibility… was that Bai Hao had come here to enact personal vengeance. As such, Li Tiansheng’s eyes flickered with cold light.

“That means this is a chance to exterminate this guy once and for all….” Although he was afraid of the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion, the reserve powers of the Li Clan, along with the fact that his father was Heavenly Marquis Li, gave him plenty of confidence.

“Li Clan cultivators, hear my orders. Anyone who enters Li Clan territory shall be executed immediately!”

The Li Clan cultivators snarled viciously, and their killing intent soared. More people were flying up into the air from inside the clan, many of them clan members, but others being hired soul cultivators. Before long, there were more than 10,000 people visible, all of them surging with the desire to kill. Overall, they actually seemed a bit more impressive than the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion.

The surrounding onlookers gasped in shock, and even Bai Xiaochun was a bit startled. However, he knew his status, and had his orders from the Grand Heavenmaster. Obviously, the fact that the Grand Heavenmaster had sent him here meant that he didn't intend for the Li Clan to kill him.

Feeling a bit more confident with that thought, he glared at Li Tiansheng, convinced that he had been acting a bit too softly before. Looking away from Li Tiansheng and the cultivators around him, he turned his gaze to the pagoda.

“Heavenly Marquis Li, I've come here today with orders from the Grand Heavenmaster. I'd like to ask you a question…. Do you admit to your crimes!?!?”

The entire atmosphere in the area changed, and countless gasps could be heard among the onlookers. The Li Clan cultivators were all visibly shocked, and Li Tiansheng's heart was beginning to pound.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0763 awe-chapter-764

As the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, Li Tiansheng’s father sat in a private chamber in the highest level of the enormous pagoda. He was a majestic heavenly marquis, and yet, his expression was profoundly grim.

Despite being a half-deva, his mood was so foul that it had destabilized his cultivation base to a certain degree.

There could be no misunderstanding Bai Xiaochun’s words. Furthermore, Li Tiansheng’s father had been paying close attention to Bai Xiaochun’s arrival, and during the entire time, his expression had been slowly transforming, until it was now profoundly grim.

Even his breathing was in chaos. He was a heavenly marquis, and was therefore even more profoundly insightful than Li Tiansheng and the other cultivators in the clan. He could tell… that this Bai Hao would not have brought his troops here without the express permission of the Grand Heavenmaster.

It wasn’t a matter of strength in arms, but of position and standing. There were 108 heavenly marquises in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and for the inspections commissioner to visit one with such brazen audacity spoke volumes about the Grand Heavenmaster’s stance.

“Is it a threat…?” Heavenly Marquis Li thought. At the moment, he was feeling profoundly uneasy, which in turn had him more vigilant than ever. As he thought about everything he knew about the Grand Heavenmaster, beads of sweat began to pop out on his forehead, and terror rose up in his heart.

“The Grand Heavenmaster… wants to kill me!” As soon as Heavenly Marquis Li came to this conclusion, a vicious snarl appeared on his face, and he began to pant. He knew that if the Grand Heavenmaster really did want him dead, then he had no other choice than to try to escape before the calamity fell!

And yet, he couldn't quite reconcile himself to doing that. He had practiced cultivation for many, many years to reach the position of heavenly marquis, and led one of the most powerful clans in the Wildlands. He refused to just sit around passively waiting to be killed. He had to fight! He had to figure out a way to resolve this deadly situation!

“I need to buy time!!” That was his decision. His only chance at resolving the issue was to buy time. If he could make a big enough scene in the meantime, then the other heavenly marquises and the heavenly dukes would have a chance to react. Maybe even the four heavenly kings.

After all, he was a heavenly marquis, and the other heavenly marquises would not be happy about one of their kind being casually disposed of. In fact, they would likely come to his aid. In some senses, they would actually be saving themselves!

If he could get all of the important people in the imperial court to rise to action, then even the Grand Heavenmaster would have to take the matter seriously.

“And what about the Arch-Emperor… no. No, I can’t go to the Arch-Emperor!” All of a sudden, a tremor ran through Heavenly Marquis Li, and he suddenly had an inkling of where the true issue lay.

“If the Grand Heavenmaster wanted to kill me, he could just issue a decree ordering my execution. Why would he send Bai Hao to do the deed…? He’s using the pretext of killing me to see who else in the court would speak up for me. He’s trying to lure the snakes out of their holes!!” Such thoughts filled Heavenly Marquis Li’s mind, along with a bitter coldness. The more he thought about it, the more it seemed that this was the case, so he quickly decided that he had to do two things. First, buy time so that people would come to his aid. Second, figure out a way to escape!

“Buy time. Cause a big scene….” Eyes glittering, he sent a message to Li Tiansheng.

“Kill the corpse troopers! And do anything necessary to cut down this Bai Hao!!”

Even as everyone in the Li Clan was trembling, Li Tiansheng got the orders from his father. His immediate reaction was that things didn’t seem to have escalated to that level, and yet, now was not the time to ponder the situation. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he yelled, “Bai Hao’s orders are forged! This is a conspiracy! Cultivators of the Li Clan, kill him immediately!”

The other cultivators under his command hesitated for a moment, but knew that if the Li Clan fell, they would likely be killed along with it. Snarling, they shouted and charged into battle.

Within the briefest of moments, over 10,000 cultivators were howling and flying toward Bai Xiaochun.

In response, Bai Xiaochun glared and waved his hand, sending his 1,000 black-armored corpse troopers flying to meet the charge.

Booms immediately rang out in all directions. As for Bai Xiaochun, he didn't actually join the fighting, but remained further back, guarded by a contingent of corpse troopers. His poor little life was the most important thing to consider, and he wouldn't casually put it in harm's way.

This was his first time seeing the corpse troopers in action, and it was a shocking sight. They didn't seem to feel pain at all, and clearly relied on body refinement techniques. They fought fiercely wherever they went, slaughtering foes left and right.

Neither magical techniques nor the effects of magical items seemed to have any effect on them. They charged into the fighting without any hesitation. Within the space of a few breaths of time, agonized shrieks began to rise into the air. Clearly, the cultivators of the Li Clan were no match for the corpse troopers. In fact, many of them were literally ripped to pieces in the blink of an eye!

The reek of blood filled the air, and before long, the clan's spell formation rumbled to life, sending a blood-colored screen of light shining up, accompanied by what sounded like the beating of a heart.

As the heartbeat echoed out, black, toxic gas began to erupt from the Li Clan cultivators. Furthermore, many of them pulled out actual human hearts, which they then crushed while simultaneously shouting out bizarre words.

As the hearts were crushed, the shadowy images of women appeared, mournful and venomous as they floated forward to fight the corpse troopers.

Those shadowy women were highly toxic! As for the hearts which had just been crushed, they were none other than the manifestation of Heart Of A Woman!

This was the poison technique cultivated by the Li Clan, which had been derived from the ancient saying, *the most vile poison cannot compare to the heart of a woman*!

However, based on what Bai Xiaochun could tell, what was vile here was not the hearts of the women. It was the poison technique the vicious Li Clan cultivated after extracting the hearts and using them for cultivation purposes.

The poisonous effect was shocking, and was the first thing that caused any problems for the corpse troopers. Their bodies even began to show signs of decay, and they were forced to slow down. Even their black suits of armor were affected. Bai Xiaochun immediately pulled them away from the fighting, and yet, that also exposed him.

Killing intent seethed in Li Tiansheng’s eyes as he shouted, “Kill Bai Hao!!”

Even as his words echoed in the air, he shot at top speed toward Bai Xiaochun, flanked by ten Li Clan elders, all of whom had Nascent Soul cultivation bases. Toxic gas swirled around all of them, which took the form of shadowy women, all of whom had holes in their chests where their hearts should have been. Almost as soon as they appeared, a sensation of imminent crisis filled Bai Xiaochun’s heart, and his face fell.

Just when he was about to back up, a mysterious light shone in the eyes of the nearby corpse troopers who had been affected by the toxic gas. Simultaneously, they all opened their mouths and breathed in deeply.

That caused a dramatic wind to spring up, which immediately sucked the toxic gas in the area into their bodies! If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but the shocking thing was that after inhaling the toxic gas, their cultivation bases skyrocketed!!

Clearly, that toxic gas was actually beneficial to them, and could temporarily increase their cultivation! The rise in cultivation base power immediately negated their previous injuries, leaving them completely whole!

Bai Xiaochun was quite pleased by this, and could see how incredible this army of corpse troopers was. Clearly, there were still more secrets about them that he had yet to discover.

And that was most definitely the truth. The black-armored corpse troopers could absorb harmful magical techniques, and use them to catalyze their own cultivation bases. Essentially, it turned them into an army… that could get stronger the longer they fought!

Bursting with excitement, Bai Xiaochun pointed at Li Tiansheng and the people next to him.

“Kill them all!”

Bursting with murderous auras, the corpse troopers immediately charged in Li Tiansheng’s direction.

“Not good!” Li Tiansheng thought, his face falling as he prepared to fall back. However, he wasn’t fast enough, and before he could even move, both he and the ten clan elders were set upon by the corpse troopers. Blood immediately began to spray out of their mouths, and they were quickly left with severe injuries.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was laughing heartily.

“This is what happens when me and you fight, Li Tiansheng! When I make a move, even god in the heavens hides his face!” Bai Xiaochun immediately marveled at how good he was with words.

However, in the same moment he finished speaking, the bloodied and injured Li Tiansheng looked back at him and viciously shouted, “Organ Sacrifice!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0764 awe-chapter-765

As soon as the words left his mouth, the shield of light distorted as… an enormous blood-colored heart appeared!

At first glance, it didn’t appear to be illusory at all. Furthermore, it was actually made of 1,000,000 actual human hearts! Those hearts represented 1,000,000 women who had died!

This was the most powerful function of the Li Clan’s spell formation. The instant the gigantic heart appeared, it collapsed, becoming an ink-like cloud of black smoke that spread out in all directions.

It began to corrode everything it touched, even some of the hired soul cultivators. Those who were too slow screamed and were transformed into globs of blood that spattered down on the ground.

Only the members of the Li Clan who cultivated the Heart Of A Woman were unaffected. In fact, expressions of madness could be seen on their faces as they opened their mouths and breathed in the gas, which instantly healed them. Then, they went back to fighting the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion.

The sight of what was happening with the poison gas caused Bai Xiaochun’s scalp to tingle, and he started to back up. However, that was when Li Tiansheng’s father took advantage of the chaos to take a step forward, becoming something like a bolt of lightning that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Your life is over, Bai Hao!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted as he looked at the incoming Heavenly Marquis Li. Up to this point, he hadn’t participated in any of the fighting, mostly because he wanted to be on guard for something just like this. Therefore, as soon as the heavenly marquis appeared, his cultivation base surged with power.

However, before he could make a move, a sinister voice suddenly rang out into the area.

“So, you’ve finally emerged from your heavenly marquis pagoda! I guess it was worth it for me to hold back until this moment!”

“Hei Ming!!” Heavenly Marquis Li snarled and tried to back up. However, he was too late. The instant he tried to reverse momentum, a huge hand descended from above with incredible speed, crushing through the Li Clan’s defensive spell formation and grabbing Heavenly Marquis Li!

“Heavenly Marquis!!”

“Father!!”

Everyone in the Li Clan began to cry out in alarm, especially Li Tiansheng, who seemed so terrified that he lost all of his will to even move.

At the same time, eyes went wide among the crowd of onlookers, and many of them gasped.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked up to see that familiar, black-robed figure up above in the air.

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy about this development, especially considering that *he* was the inspections commissioner.

“Hey, you black-robed freak,” he shouted, “we're on the same team here, aren't we? It's not very nice to stick around hiding and then jump into things at the last minute! I worked hard to reel in this big fish, and now you’re trying to hook him yourself?! You’re trying to steal my thunder!!”

The black-robed man looked down at Bai Xiaochun for a moment before coolly responding, “He can easily self-detonate when inside the heavenly marquis pagoda. Besides, the Grand Heavenmaster told me to arrest him, and that’s exactly what I'm going to do. As far as stealing your thunder... well, allow me to bestow you with some good fortune.”

With that, he pointed his finger downward, causing a gale force wind to sweep through the Li Clan. Instantly, the previously damaged spell formation completely and utterly shattered!

Popping sounds rang out as numerous cultivators within the clan who had been powering it experienced a backlash, causing blood to spray out of their mouths. At the same time, the toxic gas in the area swirled together into 1,000 separate strands that shot toward one particular corpse trooper who was at the half-deva level. Upon reaching him, the strands of smoke poured into him, a baptism of sorts.

The corpse trooper immediately began to tremble as he absorbed the smoke, and although he appeared to be corroding, that only caused him to absorb the smoke more quickly, until it was rushing into him through his pores.

Then he threw his head back and howled as his cultivation base power skyrocketed. Shockingly… he was now no longer at the half-deva level. He had broken through! His power grew and grew until he was only a hair away from the Deva Realm. The toxic gas provided by the hearts of 1,000,000 women only provided a temporary boost, and didn't make him a complete deva…

But he could still crush any other half-deva!!

Bai Xiaochun was stunned by what he was seeing. Although the upgrade to the corpse trooper was not permanent, only temporary, it was still a shocking thing.

"What kinds of monsters are these things…?" he thought. What was happening surpassed even what he could imagine, and in truth, the word 'monster' really wasn't sufficient to describe the black-armored corpse troopers.

"There are a total of 100,000 corpse troopers…. In that case, does it really mean… that they could turn into 100,000 devas? Or even 100,000 demigods? How is that even possible…?" It almost seemed like it was some big joke. The power on display that the Wildlands was capable of completely exceeded all imagination.

However, by this point, he also realized that these black-armored corpse troopers must have some sort of big weakness! For example, a lack of resources to power them!

"This is the true reserve power of the imperial court…." Hei Ming said, sounding a bit regretful. "Unfortunately, they have some fatal flaws!" With that, he shook his head and vanished, taking Heavenly Marquis Li with him.

Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun looked at his two corpse troopers who were now almost on the same level as devas.

It didn’t take long before his eyes were shining with delight.

“Who would have ever thought I would end up controlling an army this powerful!?!?” Excited, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Then, he sent out a thought that recalled the newly-upgraded deva corpse trooper, who stood at his side like a Dao protector.

Feeling very pleased, and very proud of himself, he looked over at the Li Clan forces and waved his hand, sending his corpse troopers over to crush them. Meanwhile, Li Tiansheng was trembling as he realized what Bai Xiaochun was thinking.

“We’re willing to heed the imperial decree from the inspections commissioner!” he shouted urgently, clasping hands and bowing deeply in fear of displeasing Bai Xiaochun. “Please help us to inspect… all of our treasures….”

The rest of the Li Clan cultivators all looked as pale as death. Their spell formation had been broken, and their heavenly marquis arrested. None of them had any will left to fight. Therefore, it was after only a slight moment of hesitation that they bowed their heads in acknowledgement of Li Tiansheng’s words, and then clasped hands in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped at the sight of so many people all bowing to him. Then he looked over at Li Tiansheng, and was not very pleased. Li Tiansheng had reacted far too quickly to the sudden change. Furthermore, he even went as far as to copy Bai Xiaochun’s earlier words from before the fighting started. The fact that there was an audience to all of this had Bai Xiaochun feeling even more irritated than before.

Snorting, he ignored Li Tiansheng and the rest of the Li Clan cultivators, and immediately set to work with his shakedown. The Li Clan had a heavenly marquis, and profound reserve savings that obviously surpassed the resources of the three great clans from Giant Ghost City. After all, even though those three great clans had deva patriarchs, this was Arch-Emperor City, the seat of power in the Wildlands, and a place where the resources surpassed all other locations.

There were soulhoarding pagodas and countless portions of soul medicine, as well as magical items that formed the reserve power. The sight of it all was quite dazzling to Bai Xiaochun.

There was a 9-meter-long spirit bone which emanated pulses of spiritual energy that closely resembled the spiritjade statue from back in Giant Ghost City.

There were numerous magical items with thirteen or fourteenfold spirit enhancements. There was even a whole collection of Heavenspan River water. And even spirit stones….

It was a vast pile of treasure, almost a mountain. It was in the middle of the shakedown that Zhou Yixing finally arrived, and when he saw the growing pile of treasure, he was stunned. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun gave the word, he quickly set to work organizing it and packing it away.

The vast amount of wealth that was building up was shocking, but it was what Bai Xiaochun found in the rear courtyard, protected in a restricted area, that caused him to rub his eyes in disbelief.

“Am I seeing things...?” There, right in the middle of the restricted area, protected by multi-layered restrictive spells.... was a flower with seven leaves on it!

“Rainbow spirit thistle!!” he murmured, shaken. Rainbow spirit thistle was a type of medicinal ingredient he had read about back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. It was the primary ingredient in a type of spirit medicine that could be used to break through from the Nascent Soul stage into the Deva Realm!

It could increase one’s chances of success by thirty percent!!

Although it would only help when aiming for the weakest tier of devas, it would still be helpful. After all, the patriarchs of the Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions back in the River-Defying Sect had gone into secluded meditation to make a breakthrough, but had not succeeded as far as Bai Xiaochun was ever aware. If either of them had possessed a rainbow spirit thistle, though, they would have had a much greater chance of succeeding!

It was a spirit plant that was very rare in the Heavenspan River region, and would lead to bloody conflicts if it appeared. Countless people would fight madly over them, and yet, here was one right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

The Wildlands was not a suitable place to grow spirit plants, and therefore, it was a complete shock to see one here!

Gasping, Bai Xiaochun looked around, and realized that there was something unusual about this rear courtyard.

Clearing his throat, he tried to seem very calm as he said, “What a wonderful flower. Men, come dig it up for me. And do not under any circumstances deliver it to my mansion.

I’m going to get very angry at anyone who does that. Even though I very, very, very, very much like to grow flowers, as the inspections commissioner, I definitely could not embezzle things in that way!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0765 awe-chapter-766

“Never are the rich benevolent. This Li Clan really knew how to rake in the money! And all by climbing on the backs of the common people….” Of course, it helped Bai Xiaochun’s shakedown efforts to categorize the Li Clan in this way. It was with complete righteous indignation that he stood off to the side, watching Zhou Yixing uprooting the rainbow spirit thistle.

Glancing at the flower, he said, “Be careful with that flower! Don’t damage it. Ai. Growing flowers is the only hobby I have, so although that flower doesn’t belong to me, I simply can’t stand to allow anyone else to harm it.”

Zhou Yixing looked a bit embarrassed. It would be obvious to anyone who looked at it that this flower was anything but ordinary. As he worked, he muttered to himself that it seemed too obvious that Bai Xiaochun was trying to avoid responsibility and have Zhou Yixing take the flower to his mansion for him….

After Zhou Yixing dug up the rainbow spirit thistle, Bai Xiaochun pointed at the ground and, eyes glittering, said, “There’s something really strange about this place. Yixing, let’s go a bit deeper and see what we can see.”

In response, Zhou Yixing stomped his foot forcefully onto the ground, which caused the dirt to collapse and whoosh away, revealing something buried further down. A beast hide!

It was impossible to say exactly what kind of beast it had come from. It was completely black, and seemingly ordinary in nature. It did not emanate spiritual energy, and seemed almost like an ordinary animal skin. However, as soon as it appeared, Bai Xiaochun could sense his Eternal Parasol inside of his bag of holding suddenly getting excited.

Back in Borough 89, the Eternal Parasol had helped Bai Xiaochun defend against the deva-level attack of Chen Haosong. However, the parasol’s canopy had ended up being destroyed, leaving behind only the damaged main shaft.

The fact that the base of the parasol was now vibrating caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to widen. He quickly sent some divine sense into his bag of holding, which enabled him to sense that the parasol had suddenly begun to thrum with desire. Clearly, it wanted that beast hide.

Not having noticed Bai Xiaochun’s reaction, Zhou Yixing said, “It's just a beast hide.”

Curious, he picked up to look at it, but didn't see anything unusual about it. He looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun rubbed his eyes, immediately causing them to redden and tear up. Looking at the hide, he sighed and said,

“That animal skin makes me think back to my childhood, and my constant companion Blackie.... Ah, whatever. Hand it over to me. I’ll keep it as a remembrance. I doubt the Grand Heavenmaster will object to me keeping an ordinary beast hide.” Sighing and shaking his head, he accepted the beast hide from Zhou Yixing. After feeling it in his hands, he placed it into his bag of holding, a look of reminiscence and grief on his face. Then, he turned to leave.

Zhou Yixing looked suspiciously at him as he left. Smiling wryly, he shook his head and continued on with the shakedown. Before long, the Li Clan had been completely cleaned out….

The hearts of the members of the Li Clan dripped with proverbial blood, and that was especially true of Li Tiansheng. He could do nothing but watch as case after case of wealth was hauled away. Despite the pain he felt, there was nothing he could do about the situation. At the moment, his desire to survive outweighed everything, and he was sure that if he did the slightest thing to irritate Bai Xiaochun, he would likely have his life force drained away again.

The entire time, he actually kept a smile plastered on his face, although it was the type of stiff smile that looked worse than someone crying. After the Li Clan had been cleaned out, Bai Xiaochun looked over at Li Tiansheng, and couldn’t help but feel a bit of admiration.

“Quite a bit of willpower, I see,” he thought. “He actually smiled during the entire shakedown. It seems Li Tiansheng is able to deal with difficult situations better than the average person….” All of a sudden, he felt more vigilant than before, and quickly made a decision to make advance preparations to forestall any future problems.

“Men, arrest them all and throw them into Grand Asylum. And tell the warden that this Li Tiansheng has unusual willpower, and should be given a particularly severe sentence!” With that, he ignored the secretly fuming Li Tiansheng, and led the larger portion of his Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion up into the air.

“Next target, the Chen Clan! There’s not much time left, I definitely need to hurry!” With that, he pressed forward at top speed toward the location of his next shakedown, which was the Chen Clan in Borough 13!

Everyone who had been present to watch him and the corpse troopers shake down the Li Clan were shocked, and even trembling. The fact that the mighty Li Clan had met such a fate was no small matter in Arch-Emperor City.

Clearly, the Grand Heavenmaster was wielding a sharp knife to instigate major changes in the city!

As people analyzed the matter and spread word, the various nobility and aristocracy in the city were all informed. Even the four heavenly kings learned about the matter. Everyone was shocked to the core, and many, many eyes came to focus on Bai Xiaochun to see what he would do next.

As Bai Xiaochun proceeded along toward the Chen Clan, his thoughts were focused on his bag of holding, and the Eternal Parasol, which was now experiencing a dramatic transformation!

That seemingly ordinary beast hide was obviously something that had to do with the growth of the rainbow spirit thistle. After Bai Xiaochun had put it into his bag of holding, an enigmatic, half-laughing, half-crying ghost face had appeared on the surface of the damaged parasol shaft. Then, it greedily absorbed the beast hide, fusing with it as one!

As it did, the beast hide became the new canopy of the parasol. Furthermore, an aura began to emanate from the parasol that got Bai Xiaochun very excited.

It was apparently refining itself and growing more powerful! Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more excited. After all, the

Eternal Parasol had been of great help when it came to cultivating his Undying Bones.

He had been worrying about how to fix the damage to the Eternal Parasol, but now, it was fixing itself, and even becoming stronger in the process. As of this point, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that the shakedowns were already worth it.

“The Li Clan has helped me get my Eternal Parasol back. I wonder… what surprises do the Chen Clan have in store!?” Excited, he retracted his divine sense from his bag of holding and pushed toward Borough 13 with greater speed.

Many people were paying attention to his progress, and soon, it was to their shock that they realized that Boroughs 12, 13, and 14 all had heavenly marquises in them! Considering what had happened to Heavenly Marquis Li, they could only imagine was to come.

“Who is he going for this time?!?!”

“Dammit. I didn’t offend Bai Hao, nor the Grand Heavenmaster….”

When Bai Xiaochun passed by Borough 12 in grand fashion, the heavenly marquis there breathed a sigh of relief. However, the Chen Clan in Borough 13 was beginning to get nervous. Then, he came to a stop in the air just outside of their clan.

“Heavenly Marquis Chen, come out to see me immediately!” The heavenly marquis from Borough 14 was immediately a bit relieved. Meanwhile, Heavenly Marquis Chen sat in the top of his heavenly marquis pagoda, gripped with foreboding. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he shivered in anxiety.

“The best thing to do is get out of here as soon as possible!” Without the slightest hesitation, he crushed a jade slip, which caused his body to immediately begin to fade away.

Everyone in the Chen Clan was scared witless, including that chosen who had accompanied Zhou Hong in his efforts to spread rumors about Chen Manyao and Xu Shan. By now, everyone had gotten some news about the fate of Li Tiansheng, and therefore, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had come here was terrifying beyond measure.

Silence reigned in the Chen Clan, with the exception of the nervous panting of the clan members. Countless eyes were fixed on Bai Xiaochun, hovering there in the air surrounded by black-armored corpse troopers.

His hands were clasped behind his back, and his chin stuck up proudly, impressed by his own grandeur. However, after waiting for a moment and not seeing Heavenly Marquis Chen, he waved his hand to his men and said, “So, he has the audacity to despise the majesty of the Grand Heavenmaster? Shake down this Chen Clan! If anyone resists, execute them on the spot!”

Malevolent auras sprang up from the corpse troopers as they flew into the Chen Clan. As for the two deva-level corpse troopers, Bai Xiaochun kept them by his side as bodyguards.

Zhou Yixing was at Bai Xiaochun’s side, and when he saw how powerful and amazing Bai Xiaochun was, he was once again convinced that he had made the right decision.

As the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion began to invade the Chen Clan, the power of teleportation suddenly sprang up from pagoda in the middle of the clan. However, as it did, a cold harrumph also filled the air.

“Where do you think you’re going?” That familiar black-robed figure once again appeared. Ignoring the heavenly marquis pagoda, he strode off into the distance, then reached out into thin air. Instantly, the air distorted, and an image appeared of Heavenly Marquis Chen, who was obviously attempting to flee the clan.

When the clan members saw that their own heavenly marquis was trying to escape, it struck dread into their hearts, and left them feeling crushed. They had absolutely no will to fight, and simply watched as the corpse troopers entered and began to ransack the clan.

The Chen Clan was actually a lot wealthier than the Li Clan. Even Bai Xiaochun, with his extensive experience performing shakedowns, was left gasping at the sight of all the wealth.

However, just as he was approaching to take a closer look, a howl of delight erupted from further in the clan in an area where the corpse troopers had just taken control.

“I knew you would get what you deserved eventually, Chen Clan! Even if I die here this day, I, Song Que, can close my eyes in death, content that you’ve earned your fate!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0766 awe-chapter-767

The words were spoken with lively passion, as though the person behind them truly did not fear death. They were also alive with hatred, as if they had been spoken by a person who had suffered indescribable torments at the hand of the Chen Clan, pain the likes of which could never be forgotten.

No one in the Chen Clan paid any attention to the words, though. All of them were staring nervously at Bai Xiaochun, their faces ashen and grim.

Not even the black-armored corpse troopers showed any interest.

However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the words spoken, and especially the name *Song Que*, his eyes went wide, and a strange expression appeared on his face. He seemed amused, incredulous, and happily surprised, all at the same time.

“Song Que….” he murmured. Then he cleared his throat and intentionally cleared his face of all expression as he turned to look in the direction of the rear courtyard.

Clasping his hands behind his back, he stuck his chin up and loudly said, “Whoever it is that’s yelling over there, bring him to me!”

In response, one of the corpse troopers sped out from the rear courtyard and tossed a person onto the ground in front of Bai Xiaochun. Then he stood there, murderous aura seething, clearly ready to kill the person he had just thrown onto the ground if Bai Xiaochun gave the word.

The person the corpse trooper had brought from the rear courtyard was not a soul cultivator, but an ordinary cultivator from the Heavenspan River region!

At a single glance, it was possible to tell that he should have looked like a healthy young man. Instead, he was bedraggled and broken-down, hardly more than skin and bones. He also had a scraggly beard that made him look much older than he actually was.

His clothing was ripped and torn, making him look worse than a beggar. He was covered with what appeared to be soot and ash, and even had wisps of black smoke rising from his dantian region.

He was clearly weak beyond measure, hovering right on the brink of death. And yet, despite that, his cultivation base fluctuations revealed him to be… in the early Nascent Soul stage!

The black wisps of smoke coming from his dantian region also spread out to cover his nascent soul. Furthermore, with every rotation of his cultivation base, spiritual energy would seep out through the black smoke….

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw all of this, he gasped in shock….

This cultivator was none other than… Song Que!!

He had been a chosen in the Blood Stream Sect, and one of the elites of the River-Defying Sect. He had traveled with Bai Xiaochun to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect as a Dao protector, and had also gone into the labyrinth outside the Great Wall. From there, he had been teleported out into the Wildlands just like Bai Xiaochun, Master God-Diviner, Zhao Long, and many others.

Some of the lucky ones who were teleported out into the Wildlands had managed to make their way back to the Great Wall, but Song Que hadn’t been so fortunate…. He had been teleported right into Arch-Emperor City. Unlike Bai Xiaochun, he had not become famous and popular, but rather, had been captured and enslaved, sold into service to the Chen Clan.

Because of his extraordinary cultivation base and natural talents, the Chen Clan had used a brutal secret magic to forcibly propel his cultivation base all the way into the early Nascent Soul stage.

Although it could be considered a breakthrough, it was actually very harmful to Song Que, and had involved incredible pain and danger. And yet, that wasn’t even of any importance. The worst thing of all was that he had been turned into something like livestock. The black smoke which had been inserted into him forced his cultivation base to rotate, and then sucked away the spiritual power from inside of him…. In the end, he had become a living spirit stone used by the younger soul cultivators in the Chen Clan to further their cultivation!

In addition, the effects of his cultivation base were limited by the black smoke, and could not be used externally. They had also placed numerous restrictive spells on him. As such, he was no threat at all to anyone around him, and also lived in constant pain.

Furthermore, in order to force his cultivation base to rotate more rapidly, and release more spiritual power, the younger members of the Chen Clan had frequently tortured him.

The torture had pushed Song Que to the point where he wished to die, and yet, there was no way the Chen Clan would allow a living spirit stone like him to perish. As the years passed, Song Que gradually slipped into mental darkness. Therefore, when he saw how terrified the Chen Clan cultivators were of these black-armored corpse troopers, he felt more joy than he had in years, and even threw his head back to laugh at the top of his lungs.

As soon as he was thrown down onto the ground in front of Bai Xiaochun, he looked around at the terrified Chen Clan cultivators, many of whom he recognized. As for the corpse troopers, their auras were enough to cause his mind to reel from shock.

And yet, even more of note than those things… was the fact that everyone was clearly focusing solely on Bai Xiaochun.

The person Song Que saw standing in front of him was a handsome young man wearing luxurious clothing. He was clearly an elite of some sort, someone with an incredibly high standing. In fact, his bodyguard was a black-armored corpse trooper whose aura left Song Que feeling completely stunned. He seemed as if he existed as one with the heavens, and made him feel so weak in comparison that a single thought on his part could surely end his life.

“Deva Realm!! This guy has deva bodyguards? Who is he….?” Song Que felt incredible pressure weighing down on him from this unknown young man, a person who struck terror into the hearts of the cultivators of the mighty Chen Clan, and who had a deva as his bodyguard. He was obviously someone very important.

“There can’t be very many people like this guy in the Wildlands. And he’s so young. Is he… an imperial prince?!?!” Considering how long Song Que had been living in Arch-

Emperor City, he had come to know a bit about how the Wildlands worked.

As he looked up at Bai Xiaochun, his chest heaving, his heart suddenly filled with bitterness.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked down at Song Que and sighed, wondering what exactly Song Que’s problem was. It seemed like every time they ran into each other, Song Que was always in a really bad situation. Perhaps there was something wrong with him mentally?

Although Bai Xiaochun was initially inclined to poke fun at Song Que, such thoughts quickly vanished as various memories rose up in him, leading to feelings of pity. However, he couldn’t poke any holes in his identity, so he quickly suppressed such thoughts, waved his hand, and said, “This living spirit stone doesn't seem half bad. Send him to my residence for use in my cultivation.”

Zhou Yixing immediately hesitated, and almost seemed like he wanted to say something, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun gave him a meaningful glare.

It was a look that caused Zhou Yixing to tremble. He immediately voiced his assent, and stepped forward to grab Song Que. However, before he could, Song Que suddenly went crazy.

“If you people are really that tough, then just kill me! I’d rather die than exist as a living spirit stone!!”

His raving didn’t cause Zhou Yixing to pause for even a moment as he hurried forward. Before he could lay hands on him, though, Song Que turned his bloodshot eyes onto Bai Xiaochun and shouted, “My… my uncle… he’s Bai Xiaochun!!! He’s in 1st place on the Hell-Emperor Stele. If he becomes a deva, then he'll be the new Hell-Emperor. If you dare to do anything to me, then my uncle will get revenge for me! None of you will be able to escape!"

Song Que was feeling desperate, but had no other way to threaten someone with deva-level power. Not able to bear the thought of being a human spirit stone, he decided that he had to call on the name of Bai Xiaochun.... As for the matter of Bai Xiaochun's name being on the Hell-Emperor Stele, it was something he had heard the younger members of the Chen Clan talking about recently, and was something that left him with very mixed emotions.

As soon as the words left Song Que's mouth, Zhou Yixing's hands began to tremble. As for the surrounding Chen Clan cultivators, many of them gasped and looked over at Song Que. This was something that Song Que had never mentioned before. If he had, they would surely have extracted more use out of him!

After all, the name of Bai Xiaochun was a taint on all of the Wildlands. The fact that he was in 1st place on the Hell-Emperor Stele was something that defied imagination. If it remained there until the end of the trial, and Bai Xiaochun actually became the successor of the Hell-Emperor, it would be a clear slap in the face to the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty....

As Song Que's words echoed out, the expression on Bai Xiaochun's face turned even more strange. The truth was that he was feeling very pleased with the whole situation, and was even thinking about how angry Song Que had been in the past when he called him Que'er. Now, with the prospect of being a living spirit stone, he actually went so far as to call on his name....

“Silly boy,” he thought to himself. “Even if I weren’t your uncle, I would still save you for the sake of the River-Defying Sect. And besides, considering everything that’s gone on between your aunt and I….” Sighing, Bai Xiaochun looked at Song Que and had to resist the urge to walk over and tousle his hair.

“Take him away!” Bai Xiaochun said, flicking his sleeve. In his opinion, his gains here in the Chen Clan had been significant.

Song Que let out an angry, agonized shriek as Zhou Yixing gritted his teeth and rendered him unconscious. As he carried him away, he stewed anxiously about the unexpected fact that Song Que was actually connected to Bai Xiaochun….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0767 awe-chapter-768

The entire time, Song Que did not realize that the almighty government official he was speaking to… was the very uncle he had just referred to….

If he ever found out the truth one day, he would likely vomit buckets of blood, and would be filled with unending regret over what he had just said. But Bai Xiaochun was very used to operating under cover, and had a mask that made accidental slip-ups in his disguise virtually impossible.

As Song Que was taken away, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the Chen Clan, sighing in his heart.

“Who would have thought that I would actually run into Que’er here…. He really does get himself into the worst situations. How did he end up as a living spirit stone?” Clasping his hands behind his back, he stuck his chin up and looked around at the main square of the Chen Clan which stretched out around him, sighing even more deeply.

Bai Xiaochun was really starting to think of Song Que as one of his lucky stars. Every time he ran into him, he would save Song Que from an abyss of suffering. Whether it was in Sky City, on the Great Wall, or here, he was always able to get Song Que to call him *uncle*.

“Don’t tell me that it’s just because of how outstanding I am, is it…?” Sighing, he continued to relish the pleasure of shaking down the Chen Clan.

Before long, all of the wealth of the Chen Clan’s reserve savings had been gathered up by the corpse troopers, and piled into a small mountain in the middle of the square. As for the cultivators of the Chen Clan, they stood there trembling and not daring to say even a single word.

After all of the wealth was extracted, and the clan had been swept through thoroughly to make sure it was safe, Bai Xiaochun finally strutted inside to do his own inspection, and make sure nothing had been missed.

Escorted by his quasi-Deva Realm corpse trooper bodyguard, he went here and there within the sprawling clan estates, occasionally making observations.

“There’s something strange about that ornamental rock formation. Blast it open! I’d put money on the fact that there’s a secret chamber inside!”

“Look at the pearls inlaid into the eaves of that building. They’re obviously spirit pearls! Pry them out and take them away.”

“There’s something odd about the ground here. Men, come dig this area up and see if there is any treasure hidden underground. If so, take it. If not, then we’ll make do with the limestone slabs.” As he walked along, the surrounding corpse troopers obeyed his every word.

The Chen Clan cultivators were all very jumpy, and could tell that Bai Xiaochun was clearly going to clean them out completely.

Unfortunately for them, there was nothing they could do except bow their heads and accept the fact that… the Chen Clan was finished.

Rumbling sounds filled the clan as Bai Xiaochun went here and there performing his final inspection. When he was fairly satisfied, and was even preparing to leave, his expression suddenly flickered.

His divine sense was currently far beyond the Nascent Soul stage, and was actually comparable to a deva’s. Therefore, his final scan of the clan revealed that some distance away, there was actually a subterranean cavern.

It was rather large, fully 3,000 meters from one side to the other. It was locked with numerous restrictive spells, and various other defenses that made it seem almost like an enormous chamber of holding. In fact, his divine sense was actually incapable of penetrating inside.

“Eee?” he murmured, eyes glittering. The truth was that he was still hoping to find something in the Chen Clan that would be of personal use to him, just as he had in the Li Clan.

Flying over to the area, he pointed down and excitedly said, “Dig that area up!”

Instantly, corpse troopers flew over and got to work.

As the rumbling sounds echoed out, many of the Chen Clan cultivators’ faces drained of blood. They knew that, deep within that pit was hidden, not a magical item, but rather… the foundation of the Chen Clan’s ability to sell life force!

Under normal circumstances, if anyone had dared to touch that area, they would have attacked with deadly force. But now, they could only watch silently as the buildings covering it were leveled.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of soul cultivators had gathered in the area to watch this unprecedented, momentous event playing out. Two heavenly marquises had fallen, an event which was shaking all of Arch-Emperor City, and prompted more and more people to come and witness the matter personally.

As the buildings in the rear of the Chen Clan collapsed, the ground beneath was eventually revealed, which then began to crack and split under the force of the magical techniques and divine abilities of the corpse troopers. Eventually, the lid of the chamber of holding was out in the open, and then it was removed, revealing the pit beneath!!

Immediately, a vile, indescribable odor was released, an odor so noxious that it made many people involuntarily vomit.

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand in front of him to clear the air, and then peered inside the pit. As he did, a tremor ran through him, and he let out a yelp of surprise.

“This….” He almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing; it caused his mind to spin, and made his eyes completely bloodshot.

At the same time, everyone else who could see the pit all began to cry out in shock.

“That’s… heavens….”

“So, this is the secret of the Chen Clan!!”

“So that’s how the Chen Clan is able to sell life force….”

The 3,000-meter-wide pit was filled with what appeared to be 10,000 people!!

It was actually a pit of foul, necrotic water, within which could be seen so many corpses that 10,000 was probably too small of a number to describe them. Some of the corpses were completely decomposed. Others were only partially decomposed, and there were some… living people!!

The clothing visible was not the clothing of Wildlanders. Bai Xiaochun could immediately tell… that these were Heavenspan cultivators!!

They were skinny and emaciated, their expressions listless, as though they lacked souls. Black strands of smoke wriggled and writhed beneath their skin, constantly extracting their life force…. Obviously, these were cultivators who had been captured and then viciously soulsearched!

Because of the force of the soulsearch, their souls had been destroyed, leaving behind only their physical bodies. After undergoing some special treatment, they were then thrown into this pit and sealed up, whereupon their life force was slowly extracted!

After they were sucked away into nothing more than dried up corpses, however, their agony was not yet over. The foul liquid that resulted would be filtered and turned into the primary medicinal ingredient that the Chen Clan used to refine life force!

Although the Wildlanders who saw the pit were shocked, they were not as deeply affected as Bai Xiaochun. He was not a Wildlander; he was an ordinary cultivator from the Heavenspan River region, and therefore, he immediately began to tremble and sink into a very grim mood. After a moment passed, he even closed his eyes, worried that he might not be able to control his emotions.

After a long moment passed, he opened his eyes and sighed. The war between the Wildlands and the Heavenspan River region was not something that he could change. After all, the conflict he had solved between the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects had been between two forces that were fundamentally on the same side.

Without saying a word, he clenched his hand into a fist. Drawing upon his cultivation base and the full power of his fleshly body, he then unleashed a fist strike onto the pit.

Everything trembled as a massive force slammed into the corpses in the pit, instantly transforming them into flying ash.

As for the people who were technically alive, for all intents and purposes, they were already dead. Only their physical bodies lived on. For them, Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike was actually something of a release….

Although he couldn’t be sure, he thought that some of those living bodies actually smiled in the moment before they faded away into nothing….

Expression grim, he flicked his sleeve and coldly said, “Arrest all members of the Chen Clan and send them to the Grand Asylum!”

The corpse troopers immediately went to work, and the Chen Clan cultivators did nothing to resist.

Bai Xiaochun was in a very grim mood. Although he had collected a lot of wealth from the Li and Chen Clans, he didn’t feel very much like he had exacted personal revenge, mostly because of the matter of the huge pit.

He stood there for a long moment, wrapped up in his thoughts. Then he sighed, and turned and left with his corpse troopers.

There was nothing he could do to change the overall situation. Furthermore, he knew that if he did anything to reveal his true identity, he might end up just like the people in that pit. After all, he wasn't in the River-Defying Sect right now. He was in the Wildlands, in Arch-Emperor City….

Now that he had handled the Li and Chen Clans, it was in his role as the inspections commissioner that he went to the imperial palace to see the Grand Heavenmaster… and provide an official debriefing.

Along the way, he struggled with his bad mood, and kept thinking about that pit. When he arrived at the palace, he took a deep breath and pushed all of his gloomy thoughts into the bottom of his heart.

“I need to focus on my flame conjuring. Once I make that cultivation base breakthrough, I can leave this place….” At the moment, he really missed home.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0768 awe-chapter-769

When Bai Xiaochun arrived outside of Heavenmaster Hall in the imperial palace, he immediately noticed that it was not devoid of people like it had been in the past. There were several dozen cultivators present who had come to offer formal greetings to the Grand Heavenmaster.

The rest of the people present were all heavenly marquises. Four of them Bai Xiaochun recognized as people from the group of nine who had besieged him.

All of them had unsightly expressions on their faces as they waited for the Grand Heavenmaster to summon them for their audience. As soon as Bai Xiaochun arrived, all of their gazes came to rest on him.

“Bai Hao!!” many of them growled through gritted teeth.

Chen Haosong’s eyes glittered especially coldly, and he clearly desired to kill Bai Xiaochun. After all, he was close to the Heavenly Marquis Li, and at the moment, it was unclear whether the man was alive or dead!

All of the nobility and aristocracy in Arch-Emperor City had been shaken by the fact that two heavenly marquises had been arrested by the Grand Heavenmaster. After inquiries were made, and it became clear that Bai Xiaochun was behind it all, their hatred for him grew, although they didn’t dare to do anything about it directly.

When the gazes of five devas, and a whole group of half-devas, all came to rest on Bai Xiaochun, it made it feel as if countless mountains were weighing down on top of him.

The coldness of the gazes caused Bai Xiaochun’s mood to sink even lower, and at the same time, he started to get nervous.

“I can't believe how badly these people want to kill me! They don’t dare look at the Grand Heavenmaster this way, but they have no qualms when it comes to me. They’re clearly bullying me because they have superior cultivation bases!” Heart shivering with fear, he looked back at the group.

It was at this point that Chen Haosong spoke.

“How dare you hoodwink the Grand Heavenmaster, Bai Hao! If you have proof that Heavenly Marquises Li and Chen are traitors, then hand it over immediately for me to see!” His words were accompanied by an explosive killing intent, and a dangerously incisive gaze that made it clear that he would cut Bai Xiaochun down in cold blood if he could.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered as he struggled to deal with the pressure crushing down onto him. The energy rolling off of Chen Haosong was like a mountain slamming into him. Ears ringing, he took a few steps back, his face turning pale in the process, and even his cultivation base teetering unstably.

All of a sudden, an intense sensation of deadly crisis rose up inside of him, causing his heart to tremble. However, that was also when a glint of hatred appeared in his eyes as he thought back to the tragic scene of that pit filled with 10,000 corpses. Instead of trying to stabilize his cultivation base, he actually bit his tongue as he staggered backward, and then sent the resulting blood spraying out of his mouth.

“What gall you have, Heavenly Duke Chen!” he shouted. “Are you trying to kill the inspections commissioner right in front of Heavenmaster Hall!?!? Don’t tell me you’re planning to mutiny right here and now!?” A mere thought on his part reached out to the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion, causing numerous corpse troopers to fly over with killing auras surging.

Another cold flash of light passed through Chen Haosong’s eyes, but he knew how to hold his tongue when necessary. Although he had put some cultivation base power into his words moments ago, he had only hoped to intimidate Bai Xiaochun a bit, not hurt him. Of course, the only reason he had held back from intentionally hurting him was because they were all standing right outside of Heavenmaster Hall.

Never could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would actually accuse him of something he hadn’t done! And on top of that, he used it as an excuse to summon the Corpse Trooper Blood Battalion.

Chen Haosong frowned, as did the other four heavenly dukes at his side.

A light of madness sprang up in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. He was convinced that these people wouldn't dare to kill him here. After all, what would have been the point in the Grand Heavenmaster using him to issue a warning, if he then simply allowed people to kill him?

Either way, Bai Xiaochun was not worried about actually facing a threat to his life right here. He was still in a foul mood, and felt like venting a bit, so therefore, he decided he might as well perform a bit of a test.

“I dare you to try that again, Heavenly Duke Chen!!” he shouted. At the same time, the murderous aura roiling off of his 1,000 corpse troopers grew even more intense. All of their gazes were focused directly on Chen Haosong, as if they would attack him at the slightest provocation.

“You wouldn’t dare!” Chen Haosong said, his expression flickering as he yet again realized how devious Bai Xiaochun was.

“I wouldn’t dare? There’s nothing I won’t dare to do! I smacked the Giant Ghost King across the side of the head! I kidnapped more than a hundred people in the Necromancer Kettle! I personally fought hundreds of chosen simultaneously in Borough 89. So, tell me again what it is that I don’t dare to do! Make one more move, and you’ll see for yourself!”

“Are you threatening me!?” Chen Haosong said through narrowed eyes that burned with killing intent.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun decided to completely throw caution to the wind. Rage surging, he looked at the rest of the people who had gathered, and angrily shouted, “And if any of the rest of you dare to make a move, then I won't let it drop! Fudge! If I can threaten a heavenly duke, then what makes you think I’m scared of some heavenly marquises!? You people listen to me. From here on out, you’d best be careful around me. As the inspections commissioner, I’m going to be keeping my eye on all of you!”

Although the heavenly marquises simmered with rage, when they saw that Chen Haosong was simply holding his ground and didn’t dare to move… then they obviously had no choice but to simply glare angrily at Bai Xiaochun.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t scared at all when it came to people simply staring at him, and looked back at them unflinchingly.

Chen Haosong’s expression grew more unsightly, and even as he seemed to be on the verge of losing control of his anger, someone cleared their throat inside of Heavenmaster Hall. Then, the door slowly opened, and the Grand Heavenmaster strolled out.

“How can we maintain a united front with all of this squabbling!?” he said in a hoarse voice.

Everyone, including Chen Haosong, turned, clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Grand Heavenmaster!”

As he stood there in front of Heavenmaster Hall, the Grand Heavenmaster seemed a bit stooped. He looked old, and not very threatening at all, and yet, everyone gazed at him with terror lurking in the depths of their eyes.

“Presumably you've come here in such a large group because you have something important to discuss. Am I right?”

Sounding very respectful, Chen Haosong said, “Grand Heavenmaster, we will take your words of counsel to heart. The reason Junior has come here today is to report that things are not going well in the fighting at the western Great Wall. I would like to request the use of one of the secret treasures, the Heavenspan Thorn….”

The other heavenly dukes went on in similar fashion, reporting which tribes were having problems, or what precious treasures had appeared. Some offered news from the Heavenspan River region.

Most of the heavenly marquises followed suit. They reported about random things that didn’t have anything to do at all with Heavenly Marquis Li or Chen. Although Bai Xiaochun learned a bit more about the situation in the outside world from listening to their reports, he knew that all of these people were wily old foxes, and didn’t really need to state their true goal outright. All of them coming here today in unison was enough to send a very clear message.

Furthermore, it didn’t make it seem like they were loyal to the Arch-Emperor. The position of inspections commissioner had been left vacant for many years, but now that it was filled, two heavenly marquises had been apprehended almost immediately. That was enough to get all of the nobility and aristocracy jittery, and it was only normal that they would try to get some more clarification about the situation.

However, not everyone seemed to be willing to let things go at that. One of the heavenly marquises seemed to be slower on the uptake than everyone else, and after everyone else had given their reports, said, “Grand Heavenmaster, um, about Heavenly Marquis Li….”

In response, everyone else looked over at him in shock, and many of them even began to sweat nervously. As for the Grand Heavenmaster, he turned toward the person who had just spoken, a dark look in his eye.

“Speak up,” he said slowly. “I couldn’t quite hear that.”

“Um, I--”

“Louder!” the Grand Heavenmaster repeated.

Sweat began to pour down the heavenly marquis’s face. Trembling, he blurted, “Your humble servant… has no questions to ask!”

The Grand Heavenmaster nodded, and then looked around at the group silently. After a few painful moments ticked by, Chen Haosong took his leave, and then one by one, the rest of the group left.

At that point, only Bai Xiaochun and the Grand Heavenmaster were left outside of Heavenmaster Hall.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. The scene which had played out just now was something the likes of which he didn't often see.... The Grand Heavenmaster had only spoken a few short sentences, and yet had come off sounding incredibly impressive.

Even as Bai Xiaochun pondered the subject, the Grand Heavenmaster broke the silence.

“Sometimes I really have to admire that Celestial on Heavenspan Island.... I really don’t measure up to him!” With that, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun. “So among the group just now, who do you think are the ones loyal to the imperial clan?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0769 awe-chapter-770

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even blink a single time in response to the Grand Heavenmaster’s question. Considering how serious the man was acting, he unhesitatingly said, “Grand Heavenmaster, I’d say there’s a high likelihood that *all* of them are loyal to the imperial clan. And especially Chen Haosong. That bastard is definitely on the side of the Arch-Emperor!”

Bai Xiaochun was still angry at how much Chen Haosong seemed to want to kill him, and figured this was the perfect opportunity to do something about it.

Clearing his throat slightly, the Grand Heavenmaster said, “Oh? Do you have any proof?”

“Proof? Of course! Just moments ago, Chen Haosong clearly wanted to kill me. Grand Heavenmaster, you personally appointed me as the inspections commissioner, and I’m completely and utterly loyal to you. The fact that he actually wants to kill me does a lot to show what he's thinking. Grand Heavenmaster, why don’t we just get rid of them all!”

The Grand Heavenmaster looked at Bai Xiaochun out of the corner of his eyes. He knew of the petty differences between Chen Haosong and Bai Xiaochun, and also knew what type of person Bai Xiaochun was. Therefore, he simply ignored his urgings, and looked thoughtfully toward the depths of the imperial palace.

When Bai Xiaochun realized that the Grand Heavenmaster was ignoring him, he sighed inwardly at how indecisive the man was. When you had to kill, it needed to be done without hesitation!

“If I were him,” he murmured to himself, “I would definitely kill Chen Haosong immediately. There’s no reason to be so wishy-washy about it.” After a bit more time passed, Bai Xiaochun realized that the Grand Heavenmaster was still ignoring him, and seemed lost in thought. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun decided to temporarily forget about what had just happened outside.

As he did, he began to ponder other matters, such as all of the wealth he had plundered from the Li and Chen Clans. That was when he started wondering if the Grand Heavenmaster was being like the Giant Ghost King, and waiting to get his split.

“Grand Heavenmaster, the Li and Chen Clans were swimming in wealth. I got a lot of treasure from them, a shocking amount really. I can’t believe some measly heavenly marquises actually had so much money. Obviously, they were well-connected to the Arch-Emperor.” His testing words had absolutely no effect whatsoever. The Grand Heavenmaster still seemed lost in thought, leading Bai Xiaochun to wonder what he was thinking about.

After a moment of hesitation, he said, “Grand Heavenmaster, I’ll send some people over right away to deliver all of the confiscated treasure….”

However, the Grand Heavenmaster still didn’t respond. By now, Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel a lot of pressure, and started to wonder if the Grand Heavenmaster suspected him of having taken some things for himself during the shakedowns….

Clearing his throat, he said, “Um… Grand Heavenmaster, I just remembered that the Li Clan had a sort of spirit mountain….”

Shockingly, though, the Grand Heavenmaster continued to ignore him.

Scowling on the verge of tears, Bai Xiaochun said, “Grand Heavenmaster, I just recalled that the Chen Clan had a piece of spirit jade….”

It was around this time that the Grand Heavenmaster finally looked back at Bai Xiaochun, although he didn't seem to be focusing his eyes, as though he were still staring into space.

It almost made it seem like he was privy to all of the secrets in the world, a thought that caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to start thumping.

“Grand Heavenmaster, it just occurred to me that there was a big batch of soul medicine in the Li Clan….”

As his words trailed off, the Grand Heavenmaster suddenly spoke in his hoarse voice.

“Do you know what is the most difficult thing to understand, Bai Hao?” With that, his eyes came into focus, and he turned to look off into the distance.

His words had Bai Xiaochun feeling more nervous than ever as he tried to determine the meaning of them. Could he be suspecting that Bai Xiaochun had actually embezzled more than what he had just admitted to?

In his unease, he even contemplated whether or not he should hand over the Rainbow Spirit Thistle from the Li Clan. It was actually very irritating that the Grand Heavenmaster was being so stingy. He hadn’t embezzled that much, and yet the man kept digging away at him.

Even as he stood there trying to decide what to do, the Grand Heavenmaster continued.

“The hearts of men! Nothing in the world is more difficult to understand. Wouldn’t you agree, Bai Hao?” There seemed to be some strange power at work within those words. As soon as they entered Bai Xiaochun’s ears, he felt like crying. He almost couldn't believe that the Grand Heavenmaster was being even more stingy than the Giant Ghost King. After all, Bai Xiaochun had done all the work, and yet, the Grand Heavenmaster was taking all the rewards.

Not daring to hide anything else, he quickly said, “Grand Heavenmaster, it turns out my memory is a bit bad. I just now realized that the Li Clan actually had a stalk of--”

However, before he could finish, the Grand Heavenmaster interrupted him, his voice hoarse and his pupils as black as night.

“The hearts of men are unfathomable. And not just the nobility and aristocracy of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, or the Arch-Emperor himself. I am the same. You know, if it hadn’t been for me, when the Arch-Emperor failed to step into the Demigod Realm all those years ago, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty would have fallen apart.... I cowed the four heavenly kings, and I kept the dynasty in one piece. I repelled the invading forces from the Heavenspan River.... You know, sometimes I think I should follow the example of the Celestial from Heavenspan Island, and just completely eradicate my enemies. Remove the sun and the moon, and leave the sky open and clear!” As these words left his mouth, he straightened up. He was no longer stooped, but rather, stood tall and straight. He pulsed with an energy that was difficult to put into words, and seemed like a completely different person than before. Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and even the light of the sun and moon seemed to fade.

All of a sudden, the Grand Heavenmaster didn't seem at all like an old man to Bai Xiaochun. He seemed like a giant who could prop up the heavens, as though a single thought on his part could cause the sun and moon to perish, and cast all heaven and earth into darkness!

The energy was so intense that Bai Xiaochun was forced to take a few steps backward, his heart pounding the entire time. However, the effect only lasted for a moment before the Grand Heavenmaster stooped back down, bowed his head, and sighed.

The sky returned to normal, and all heaven and earth went still. However, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was still racing, and he was panting. At this point, the Grand Heavenmaster turned to look at him.

“What did you just say? The Li Clan had a stalk of what?”

Bai Xiaochun stared back at him in mute shock, proverbial tears welling up in him. At this point, he realized that he had misjudged the situation. The Grand Heavenmaster didn’t care at all about the wealth which had been confiscated during the shakedowns. He had been sighing and thinking, not about the treasure, but rather, about his personal issues. Furthermore, the words he had spoken had never had anything to do with the confiscated wealth.

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard as he raced to come up with an idea of how to make sure he could keep everything he had earned during the shakedowns. To have the Grand

Heavenmaster's gaze leveled on him caused beads of sweat to appear on his forehead as he nervously said, “Um… what was it the Li Clan had? Ah, that doesn’t matter. Grand Heavenmaster, you are completely right that the hearts of men are unfathomable. However, that's not important! In fact, it doesn't really matter whether or not people are loyal to you, or to the Arch-Emperor!”

At first, what he said didn't make much sense even to himself. However, as the words left his mouth, an idea began to form more clearly in his mind, and he continued, “The most important thing is what they will do if both you and the Arch-Emperor are present at the same time! Who cares if Chen Haosong and the others are actually loyal to the Arch-Emperor?! Which of them will actually admit that openly?

“Even if all of the nobility and aristocracy in the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty are loyal to the Arch-Emperor, why does that matter?! None of them would ever dare to admit to that in your presence! That goes to show that you have them under your thumb!” The more he spoke, the more everything made sense, and the more excited he looked.

“Grand Heavenmaster, perhaps you can’t force everyone to be loyal to you, nor can you determine for sure who is disloyal. However, what you can do, sir, is make everyone fear you!

“Grand Heavenmaster, your loyal servant is of the opinion that you don’t need to try to figure out who is loyal to whom. You just need to figure out who they fear the most!” In the end, he was talking so loudly that he was almost yelling. At the same time, the Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes slowly began to narrow in thought. That in turn caused Bai Xiaochun to feel very proud of his words. Not only did they sound wonderful, they were actually packed with many levels of truth.

Considering that the Grand Heavenmaster was now thinking seriously about his words, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but sigh at how unparalleled he was under heaven.

“In order to protect that medicinal plant from the Li Clan,” he thought, “and also Que’er, I have to go for broke.” Clearing his throat, and feeling like the picture of outstanding righteousness, he struck while the iron was hot.

“Grand Heavenmaster, your humble servant has a plan….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0770 awe-chapter-771

The Grand Heavenmaster’s expression had returned to normal, and it was impossible to tell what he was thinking. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, he coolly said, “Tell me your idea.”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and then began to explain.

“Grand Heavenmaster, I can give you an opportunity to have all of the nobility and aristocracy show for themselves how they feel!

“Your humble servant is not perceptive enough to tell what those wily old foxes are thinking. But you, Grand Heavenmaster, can likely discern that from both their wording and the fluctuations of their divine souls.”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s idea had come together. Eyebrows dancing up and down, he continued, “Your humble servant’s plan is the type that will shake heaven and earth to the point where ghosts and gods will weep! It's simply amazing! Call it a deadly move, if you’d like, something that can pierce through the hearts of men!” He even thumped himself on the chest to emphasize his words. Then he waited for the Grand Heavenmaster to ask him to explain the plan in detail.

However, after a long moment passed, the Grand Heavenmaster’s expression was still placid. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun started to feel a bit awkward. Clearing his throat, he shook his head and kept on speaking.

“To employ this deadly move of mine, it’s important that all of the nobility and aristocracy be present. In fact, the Arch-

Emperor also needs to be there. Grand Heavenmaster, is there any upcoming event or ceremony that everyone will need to attend?” Heart pounding in anticipation, he looked at the Grand Heavenmaster.

The Grand Heavenmaster peered back at him for a moment before his eyes widened.

“Next month, we have the ancestral sacrifices! Since you’re so confident, we can try out your so-called deadly move then, and see what happens.” The Grand Heavenmaster didn’t ask for any more details about the plan. He flicked his sleeve, causing Bai Xiaochun’s vision to swim for a moment. When things became clear, he was outside of the imperial palace.

“He didn’t even ask any details…? Don’t tell me he thinks I'm just grandstanding or something?” Looking back in the direction of Heavenmaster Hall, he snorted coldly in his heart.

“When Bai Xiaochun makes a move, he frightens even himself! Ah, whatever. When the time comes, I’ll show the Grand Heavenmaster and everybody else exactly how terrifying I am!” Brimming with confidence, he began to review his plan, and before long, could visualize a whole series of scenes involving what would happen. He could hardly wait. He even laughed aloud at the mere thought of the wonderful things to come. Feeling splendid, he led his 1,000 corpse troopers back to the Inspections Manor.

Back at the manor, he summoned Zhou Yixing over to give a debriefing. Then he assigned a location in the Inspections Manor to him, and went into his own hall to meditate.

At the moment, he had no time or energy to spend on Song Que. He was fully focused on his upcoming plan. In fact, as soon as the door of his hall closed, he called Bai Hao out of his soulhoarding pagoda and began to explain the plan to him in full detail.

As Bai Hao listened, his eyes grew wider and wider. In the end, he gasped.

“Master… did you really think up this plan?” he asked, sounding a bit uncertain.

Bai Xiaochun was actually very pleased with Bai Hao’s reaction.

“Of course Master thought it up!” he said, thumping himself on the chest. “What do you think? Awesome, huh?!”

“This plan… is ruthless!” Bai Hao replied with heartfelt admiration. “Especially considering that the Arch-Emperor will be there. I bet the nobility and aristocracy are going to go crazy…. Of course, the key to it all lies, not in the plan itself, but in how perceptive the Grand Heavenmaster is.” With that, he and Bai Xiaochun worked together for a bit to perfect the plan even more. In the end, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with it all.

“Time just moves too slowly sometimes. I wish the sacrifices were being held tomorrow!” Although he was feeling very excited, he managed to calm down eventually. Considering that he had just taken care of the heavenly marquises from the Li and Chen Clans, he knew that the city in general would be in a bit of an uproar. Obviously, now wasn’t the time to go about making any further trouble. Therefore, he decided to go into secluded meditation for the next month.

Back during the competition with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao, he had reached the Flame Harmony realm and gained much enlightenment of seventeen-colored flame. He had also made further advancement because of subsequent tests. Therefore, during his month of secluded meditation, he spent time to make even more progress.

The month went by very quickly. During that time, panic built within Arch-Emperor City. The fact that the Grand Heavenmaster had arrested Heavenly Marquis Chen and Heavenly Marquis Li, and that their clans had been shaken down, was shocking news to say the least.

All of the heavenly marquises in the city were nervous, and even the heavenly dukes were feeling the pressure. It was as if all of them could smell the reek of blood wafting through the streams of time from that original occasion in which the inspections commissioner had wreaked havoc.

Although all of them had been prepared for something to happen after Bai Xiaochun was appointed as the inspections commissioner, none of them could have guessed that it would happen so soon!

The Grand Heavenmaster had moved with lightning-like decisiveness. Four hours. Four hours was all it took for two heavenly marquises to be implicated, and two entire clans to be shaken down and then imprisoned.

The name of Bai Hao rocked Arch-Emperor City as violently as a windstorm. In fact, to many people in the know, it was obvious that the city had completely changed since he had arrived.

“This Bai Hao… is a star of calamity that brings disaster with him….”

“Ruthless! I was there when Bai Hao shook down those two clans, and let me tell you, he took everything, down to the grass!”

“Well, you can’t blame Bai Hao. There was always friction between him and the aristocracy. Eventually it reached the point where only one party could come out on top.”

All sorts of talk spread, not just in Arch-Emperor City, but in the Wildlands in general. The news even reached the cities belonging to the four heavenly kings.

All of the chosen who had butted heads with Bai Xiaochun in the Necromancer Kettle were trembling in fear. The tragic fate of Li Tiansheng had them all on edge. Furthermore, their clans all instituted severe restrictions on them, forbidding them from going out into the city. Everyone knew that although they could secretly plot against Bai Xiaochun, they couldn’t make any open moves against him.

Most of the parties involved all felt bad for each other, and were acting with full vigilance. At the same time, their desire to kill Bai Xiaochun grew more and more intense.

Furthermore, because no one dared to offend the Grand Heavenmaster, all of their killing intent came to be focused fully on Bai Xiaochun. Normally, the nobility and aristocracy were always at each other’s throats, but at the moment, they were all part of a strange alliance.

It didn’t matter whether or not they were truly loyal to the Arch-Emperor. The fact that two heavenly marquises had been taken out had them all nervous to the extreme. Although some parties hoped that going to offer greetings to the Grand Heavenmaster would help, many of them were trying to figure out a way to have Bai Xiaochun killed.

Unfortunately for those people, he stayed out of sight for an entire month. The people who wanted him dead couldn't very well storm the Inspections Manor, and therefore, they could only watch time go by as the day of ancestral sacrifices neared.

Everyone in the Wildlands took the matter of ancestral sacrifices very seriously. Whether it was the clans or the tribes, that day was a day of grand ceremony for the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

The Arch-Emperor was always present for such sacrifices, and that was an important factor, even though he was a mere puppet. Furthermore, unless there were some unforeseen circumstances, all of the nobility and aristocracy had to show up as well.

The only major players who wouldn’t be present were the four heavenly kings. They wouldn't come to Arch-Emperor City unless some sort of heaven-shaking, earth-shattering event occurred.

Of course the reason for that… was their very delicate relationship with the Grand Heavenmaster. Although things seemed to be calm between the heavenly kings and the Grand Heavenmaster, if the heavenly kings ever came to Arch-Emperor City, and something went wrong, the implications could be very severe.

Instead of coming personally, they would usually send their heirs apparent to represent them.

The person to whom the sacrifices were offered… was none other than the first generation Arch-Emperor. It didn’t matter how many years had passed since his time, to the people of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, that very first Arch-Emperor was the most ultimate of entities.

Apparently, the ancestral sacrifices also had some connection to the Hell-Emperor. After all, whenever the sacrifices were carried out, heaven and earth would be split open to reveal the Underworld River inside of a massive vortex.

The vortex would cover all of Arch-Emperor City, and would be filled with countless souls which would descend onto the city for the benefit of the people, who could simply reach out to take them.

According to the legends, a deva soul had once descended in such a fashion. Furthermore, it wasn’t just the nobility and aristocracy of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty who would participate in the event; the common people could do so as well.

Of course, although the nobility and aristocracy would reach out and take the souls, most didn't focus too much on that part of the event. To them, it was merely a good omen.

When the day came to offer the sacrifices, all of Arch-Emperor City was filled with a very somber air. Families emerged from their houses and dropped to their knees on the street to kowtow to the heavens. At the same time, bells tolled in the imperial palace, filling the city with their sound.

The heavenly marquises and heavenly dukes all donned their most formal attire and headed to the main square in the imperial palace, tranquil expressions on their faces the entire time....

That was when Bai Xiaochun emerged from secluded meditation. As he did, it was impossible for him to conceal the expression of excitement and anticipation that appeared on his face as he looked up at the city in the sky.

“I finally succeeded with seventeen-colored flame. And now, it’s time for the ancestral sacrifices....” Sighing, he flew up into the air, followed by 1,000 corpse troopers.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0771 awe-chapter-772

As the bells tolled, the streets of Arch-Emperor City filled with a sea of people. It was the same up above, too, with countless figures flying up to the imperial palace.

The city guard was out in full force to keep order and make sure that nothing unexpected happened on this day of ancestral sacrifice.

Of course, there was little chance of something like that; the city guard carried out their duties with the utmost loyalty. In fact, the area near the Inspections Manor was especially heavily guarded.

The matter with the two heavenly marquises the previous month had been monumental. The new inspections commissioner had made a huge splash, and was the target of almost universal animosity in the dynasty. If any mishaps occurred regarding him, it could affect the ancestral sacrifices, and that was something the city guard couldn’t let happen.

Even as the city guard paid special attention to keep the Inspections Manor safe, Bai Xiaochun flew up from inside of it, surrounded by a thousand corpse troopers.

As he did, the nearby nobles and aristocrats noticed, and many gazes came to be fixed on him. They all contained mixed emotions, with everything from hatred to fear.

When Bai Xiaochun sensed so many people looking at him, he cleared his throat, clasped his hands behind his back, and stuck his chin up. He even glared back at the people who looked at him with hateful expressions, making it look like he wasn’t afraid of anything in the world.

His haughty expression said it all: *If you’ve got what it takes, then bring it on!*

And that was the truth! He had the backing of the Grand Heavenmaster, as well as 1,000 corpse troopers. That meant that Bai Xiaochun could stare down the heavenly dukes if he wanted to, much less the heavenly marquises.

When the noble and aristocratic cultivators flying in the air sensed Bai Xiaochun’s attitude, they frowned, then looked fearfully at his corpse troopers before returning their focus to the imperial palace and flying onward.

“What a bunch of wusses. All shaking in their boots at the sight of the inspections commissioner!” Feeling very pleased, he continued to swagger his way slowly onward toward the imperial palace.

Of course, it wasn’t just the nobility and aristocracy flying through the air who noticed Bai Xiaochun. The common people down below in the city, countless soul cultivators and savage giants, all watched Bai Xiaochun flying upward.

“Inspections Commissioner Bai Hao!”

“That’s him! Last month, he shook down the clans of two heavenly marquises….”

“Nobody’s seen him for a month, but now that it's time for the ancestral sacrifices, here he is. He’s definitely going to cause another scene….”

In response to the buzz of conversation, the city guards in the area grew more vigilant. Although they didn’t flock to surround Bai Xiaochun, they did look around with killing intent, ready to leap to intervene if anything unexpected happened.

Feeling very well protected, Bai Xiaochun continued onward with keen anticipation of what was to come. The mere thought of his plans for the ancestral sacrifices had him so excited he could hardly control himself.

“My month of secluded meditation was very productive. I finally succeeded with seventeen-colored flame… and Hao’er made significant progress in his auguries of eighteen-colored flame. I bet it won’t be long before the formula for eighteen-colored flame is complete.

“Once I have that formula, and succeed in conjuring that flame… then I’ll finally be an earthly necromancer!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he shivered in anticipation. At the moment, it seemed as if the sky were the limit, and it was truly a wonderful feeling.

“There are only three earthly necromancers in all of the Wildlands. If I succeed, then I’ll be the fourth!” In the Wildlands, earthly necromancers were so rare that their position was roughly the same as the heavenly dukes!

In fact, in some ways, they actually surpassed the heavenly dukes. As long as such a person didn’t betray the Wildlands, they could do anything they pleased. They could even commit grave offences that were normally punished with the death penalty, but be exempt because of their position!

After all… there were dozens of devas in the Wildlands, but there were only three earthly necromancers!

“But that’s only secondary. The most important thing is that if I can conjure eighteen-colored flame, then that means I could perform spirit enhancements on my nascent soul! In one fell swoop, I could push my cultivation base all the way to the late Nascent Soul stage!!” Such thoughts made Bai Xiaochun even more excited. After all, he was currently in the mid Nascent Soul stage, but could defeat half-devas in battle. If he reached the late Nascent Soul stage… then he could most likely win against a true deva!

“Even if I can’t, well, just wait until I’m in the great circle. Then I’ll definitely be able to defeat devas!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been in higher spirits. He even picked up speed as he headed toward the imperial palace. He and his corpse troopers were bright beams of light that shot toward the east gate of the palace.

As he approached, a middle-aged man could be seen off in the distance. He was threatening without being angry, dressed in a long golden robe embroidered with images of suns, moons, and clouds. Overall, he looked extremely impressive.

Furthermore, whenever people passed him by, they would respectfully clasp hands and bow in greeting.

That man was none other than one of the ten heavenly dukes, Chen Haosong!

He wasn’t standing there alone. Next to him was a tall, well-built man wearing an official robe embroidered with a golden python. From his burly frame, it was possible to tell that he possessed extraordinary fleshly body power, and yet, he stood respectfully a full pace behind Chen Haosong.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of Chen Haosong, he snorted coldly in his heart. As for Chen Haosong, a cold gleam passed through his eyes, along with an expression of revulsion that he did nothing to conceal.

Bai Xiaochun had seen the burly man before as well. He closely resembled Zhao Dongshan, and was in fact one of the senior members of Zhao Dongshan's clan. He was not an ordinary heavenly marquis, but rather, one of the nine extremely powerful heavenly marquises who had ganged up on Bai Xiaochun!

The burly man glanced at Bai Xiaochun, and then laughed coldly.

"The ancestral sacrifices are for heavenly dukes and heavenly marquises," he said in a booming voice. "What is this trash doing here?"

His voice was so loud that all of the assembled nobility and aristocracy near the east gate could hear him quite clearly.

None of those people had a very good impression of Bai Xiaochun, so they immediately broke out into scornful glances as they looked over at him.

Bai Xiaochun's anger flared, and he glared back at them. Considering that he had the full support of the Grand Heavenmaster, he wasn't scared of these people at all. In fact, he immediately pointed at the burly man.

"This person has disrespected the Grand Heavenmaster! Arrest him!" His 1,000 corpse troopers immediately looked up, and then 100 of them charged toward the burly man.

Never could this man have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would dare to take action here, at the east gate of the imperial palace, on the day of the ancestral sacrifices. Expression flickering, he was just about to back up when Chen Haosong interrupted with a cold snort.

“Enough with the melodrama!” he said, taking a step forward.

His voice echoed with explosive might, causing the advancing corpse troopers to tremble visibly, and then lurch to a stop, as if they had been sealed in place.

At the same time, Chen Haosong’s foot landed, and explosive energy surged out from him. A windstorm immediately kicked up, grabbing the 100 corpse troopers and hurling them back toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a deeper glare, and he was just about to say something when Chen Haosong spoke.

“Zhao Xionglin is a heavenly marquis, and is within his rights to berate you! If you won’t bow your head and accept it, fine, but how dare you go and slander--”

“The Grand Heavenmaster himself appointed me as the inspections commissioner!” Bai Xiaochun interrupted loudly, sticking his chin up. “He expressly ordered me to participate in the ancestral sacrifices. For Zhao Xionglin to speak so rudely, and even berate me, is equivalent to him countermanding the decrees of the Grand Heavenmaster! For me to say that he is showing disrespect is actually letting him off the hook lightly!”

“You!!” Zhao Xionglin blurted angrily. Although he had heard that this Bai Hao was relatively sharp-tongued, he had never imagined that he could so easily twist matters to make it seem like Zhao Xionglin himself was insulting the Grand Heavenmaster.

“Is that all you can say? ‘You’? If you’ve got what it takes, then see if you can fight all 1,000 of my corpse troopers! If 1,000 is too much, then how about 100? Pick any 100 you like, and see if you don’t end up dying by my hands!” As Bai Xiaochun spoke, the murderous aura coming from his 1,000 corpse troopers grew even more intense.

“How shameless!” Zhao Xionglin growled through gritted teeth. Although he was one of the strongest among the heavenly marquises, there was no way he could defeat 100 corpse troopers in a fight, much less 1,000. The corpse troopers didn’t fear death at all, and had the toughest bodies imaginable. When they attacked, they caused blood to splash, and didn’t stop until the battle was over.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0772 awe-chapter-773

“Did you just say that I'm shameless? How could the Grand Heavenmaster appoint a shameless person to be the inspections commissioner, a position which requires uprightness and resistance to flattery? You’re basically saying that the Grand Heavenmaster is blind, aren’t you?!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with delight. If this Zhao Xionglin had just kept his mouth shut, it would have been a lot better for him. Everything he said could be found fault with.

“Zhao Xionglin, you clearly suspect me, the Inspections Manor as a whole, and the Grand Heavenmaster himself! Could it be that you are in fact an accomplice of the traitorous heavenly marquises from the Li and Chen Clans?!?!”

With that, he waved his hand and said, “Men, take charge of the entrance to the imperial palace. Let everyone in except for this miscreant Zhao Xionglin!”

A large contingent of corpse troopers immediately rushed over to block the east gate of the imperial palace.

The other nobles and aristocrats in the area couldn’t help but gasp at the sight of Bai Xiaochun’s ruthless tactics. For many, it provided a very clear picture of this person whom they had never actually witnessed in action. It also went to further how threatening he seemed to them.

As for the city guards, they looked on with wry smiles. After all, this was not a situation they could interfere with. The only thing they could do was report the matter to their superiors.

The entire thing was a huge headache as far as Chen Haosong was concerned. To him, Bai Xiaochun was like a stick covered with thorns; although he should have been easy to snap in half, the thorns made him very difficult to deal with.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But Bai Xiaochun was completely sharp-tongued. He turned black into white if he wanted, and if one wasn’t extremely careful with one’s wording, he could easily twist words into weapons.

Seeing how furious Zhao Xionglin was, Chen Haosong frowned and said, “Enough!”

Waving his sleeve, he sent another blast of wind out to sweep away the corpse troopers Bai Xiaochun had just sent to block the door. Even Bai Xiaochun was hit by the wind, and was pushed backward a few dozen meters.

In the instant that Bai Xiaochun was pushed back. Chen Haosong blurred into motion, entering the east gate. As for Zhao Xionglin, he gritted his teeth and followed, casting a murderous glance at Bai Xiaochun over his shoulder as he did.

The rest of the nobility and aristocracy were all essentially on the same side in the matter, and had no good feelings regarding Bai Xiaochun whatsoever. They also took to motion, flying through the east gate.

Bai Xiaochun was not pleased at all with what was happening.

“Using a high cultivation base to trample people below you, huh?” he said loudly. “Well, if you were as tough as you think you are, then you would fight my corpse troopers!” While Bai Xiaochun grumbled to himself a bit, the city guards averted their gazes and sighed. It was really an awkward thing to hear the inspections commissioner, who was backed by the Grand Heavenmaster, complaining about people relying on high cultivation bases to accomplish things….

After everyone else entered the imperial palace, Bai Xiaochun clasped his hands behind his back, stuck his chin up, and headed toward the east gate. His corpse troopers followed. However, when the city guards saw that, one of them braced himself and stepped in the way.

Although he wasn’t very happy to have to do this, he had no choice but to say, “Exalted Inspections Commissioner… uh… on the day of ancestral sacrifices, your subordinates aren’t permitted to enter.”

With that, he stood there looking nervously at Bai Xiaochun.

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, taken aback. After confirming that he had heard correctly, he stood there, flabbergasted.

“They can’t go in? Wait a second, there are a whole bunch of people in there with cultivation bases higher than me! And they all want to kill me! If I go in alone, I’ll be in way too much danger!” Nervous, he tried to negotiate with the city guard, but the man could only smile wryly and shake his head.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. If he had known that things would be like this, he would have just held his tongue earlier…. As he stood there hesitating, he realized that the bells were about to stop tolling. Sighing, he ordered the corpse troopers to stand guard near the gate, and then cautiously entered the imperial palace.

Once inside, he did not look like he had moments ago, like the type of person who wasn’t afraid of anything in the world…. Instead, he exercised the utmost caution, and even walked as quietly as was possible.

Thankfully, because he was actually arriving a bit late, all of the members of the nobility and aristocracy were already in the main square. Furthermore, there were plenty of guards around to show the way. As such, he arrived at the square just as the bells finished tolling.

The square was huge, and featured eighteen enormous pillars with coiling dragons on them that were so high that they seemed to touch the heavens above. The ground was covered with green limestone slabs that emanated spiritual energy. In the middle of the square was a huge bell, which was still reverberating from the tolling moments ago.

A ring of soul cultivator guards surrounded the bell, all of them wearing somber expressions. In two positions of honor on the left side of the square were Mistress Red-Dust and Zhou Hong.

In the positions of honor on the right side were the Junior Champion King Gongsun Yi, and the heir apparent of Spirit Advent City, the older brother of Xu Shan.

Clearly, these four represented the four heavenly kings. Not a single one of them acknowledged Bai Xiaochun’s presence, and merely stood in place with their eyes closed.

Behind those four were the ten heavenly dukes, including Chen Haosong, who stood third from the left.

Behind the ten heavenly dukes were the more than 100 heavenly marquises. Among them was Zhao Xionglin, who cast a frosty glance at Bai Xiaochun, and snorted coldly.

All of the heavenly marquises and heavenly dukes were organized by rank. Behind them were other important government officials, who were all high-ranking and powerful. There were several thousand of them, and each one wore an expression of devout respect.

Bai Xiaochun had a spot among the larger group. However considering that he was more important than any of the other officials, he actually stood in front of them, just behind the heavenly marquises.

Few of the important officials had ever seen Bai Xiaochun, although most had heard stories about him. They knew that he was different from the heavenly marquises and heavenly dukes, and actually, few of them had ill feelings toward him. In fact, many of them wished to ingratiate themselves to him.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that most of the officials were looking at him with goodwill in their eyes, he sighed with relief, and even gave a few smiles and nods to them. Then he looked over at the main hall of the imperial palace, and a strange feeling rose up inside of him.

“The Arch-Emperor.... Although the Grand Heavenmaster holds all of the power, the Arch-Emperor... is the true representative of the imperial clan. He is the official ruler of the Wildlands....” For all he knew, he was the first person from the Heavenspan River region to stand in this square in the imperial palace. And perhaps he would be the last.

The fact that his journey through the Wildlands had landed him in this spot caused him to sigh with pride.

“Just wait until I get back to the River-Defying Sect and recount all of my stories to Xiaomei, Junwan, Big Fatty Zhang and Uncle Li.”

Then, he blinked and refocused on the violet-colored main hall. The hall itself was built from nine golden dragon statues that looked so lifelike they seemed they might fly up into the sky at any moment.

Just looking at the place caused pressure to weigh down on Bai Xiaochun. He could also sense that those nine golden dragons were a spell formation of some sort.

“All the other times I came to the imperial palace, I visited Heavenmaster Hall. This is my first time visiting the main hall of the palace. I wonder what the Arch-Emperor actually looks like.”

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the previously silent bell once again rang out loud and clear. Then, the door of the main hall slowly opened, and the nine golden dragons opened their eyes. Incredible energy surged out, and everyone in the audience could hear something like the roaring chant of dragons. Those who listened closely soon found themselves slipping into a daze.

Bai Xiaochun was no exception. Even as he looked on, the opened door revealed a dozen extremely good-looking soul cultivators. Some were men and some were women, but all of them wore extravagant robes. One of them was none other than the second prince.

These were the princes and princesses of the imperial clan, although not all of them. They were only a small group who represented the whole.

In front of that group were two old men whose hands were tucked into the opposite sleeves of their voluminous robes. They were stooped over, and didn’t seem very impressive, and yet there was something very sinister about them.

Beyond the two old men, at the very end of the hall, were two thrones, one large and one small. The large throne was completely golden in color, and was of course the dragon throne. Sitting upon it was a middle-aged man wearing imperial robes and an imperial crown.

Although it was impossible to make out his features clearly at first, there was something grand and noble about him; his appearance, coupled with the chanting roar of the dragons, made him truly seem like the most paragon entity in all creation!

This god-like figure was none other than the reigning Arch-Emperor!

Bai Xiaochun was shaken. Although he couldn’t make out the expression on the face of the Arch-Emperor, he could sense the man’s eyes. They seemed to contain stars and heavenly bodies, and were the type that would leave a person’s mind reeling to simply gaze upon them.

However, that sensation quickly passed as his gaze was drawn to the smaller throne. Although that throne was smaller, it was actually placed on a higher level than the Dragon Throne itself!

It was pitch-black, and seemingly ordinary in all aspects. It was empty at the moment, but everyone in the square, including all of the ministers and generals of the imperial court, were all looking at it!

That throne… belonged to the Grand Heavenmaster!

Even as everyone stared at that black throne, one of the stooped old men called out in a piercing voice, “Grand Heavenmaster, your presence is requested!”

As his voice rang out, the clouds above seethed, and the enormous dragon that had been so curious about Bai Xiaochun in the past suddenly lowered its head. Then it roared, a roar that suppressed the call of the nine dragons down below as, at the same time, the Grand Heavenmaster mysteriously appeared on the black throne!

Everyone present was shaken, even the heavenly dukes. Simultaneously, they all averted their gazes, clasped hands, and bowed.

“Greetings, Grand Heavenmaster! Greetings, Arch-Emperor!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0773 awe-chapter-774

The thousands of people gathered outside of the hall clasped hands in formal greeting, their voices ringing out to shake heaven and earth.

Inside the hall, the second prince and the other members of the imperial clan didn’t dare to reveal a trace of defiance, and also offered formal greetings.

Only the Arch-Emperor himself didn’t join in. His hands tightened onto the arms of the dragon throne for a moment, but then relaxed.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was measuring up both the Arch-Emperor and the Grand Heavenmaster.

“So, this is the Arch-Emperor?” he murmured to himself. “Doesn’t seem like much when compared to the Grand Heavenmaster.”

The echo of the voices lasted for a moment before fading away. As for the Grand Heavenmaster, he sat on his throne, face completely expressionless, seemingly there only to observe the ancestral sacrifices, and not inclined to speak at all.

The Arch-Emperor let the moment stretch out for a bit, then looked at the two stooped, sinister old men, and nodded slightly.

Having been given this vague order from the Arch-Emperor, the two old men exchanged a glance, and both of them could see in the other’s eyes that they were fearful of the

Grand Heavenmaster’s reaction. After a moment, one of them turned to face the square outside of the hall and began to recite the sacrificial invocation. As his words echoed out, they seemed to contain a bizarre resonance which caused the clouds up above to churn into the form of a vortex.

As the vortex spun and grew larger, the enormous dragon from earlier vanished.

The strange portents didn’t provoke a reaction from the crowd, as though they had been expecting all of this. However, it was Bai Xiaochun’s first time witnessing the event, and he couldn’t help but stare in shock. Gradually, the vortex grew so large that it covered all of Arch-Emperor City.

As it did, it was possible to see something inside of the vortex, an enormous river….

Bai Xiaochun held his breath in shock as he realized that the river inside the vortex was emanating a powerful aura of death….

“The Underworld River!” he murmured. By this point, despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was all the way up in the sky in the imperial palace, he could actually hear the droning sound of the common people down in Arch-Emperor City, offering expressions of worship and praise.

Because the vortex was so enormous, it was possible to see the Underworld River very clearly, even the flowing water which made it up.

The aura of death which flowed out of the vortex gradually filled the entire area, leaving Bai Xiaochun feeling quite shaken. It was a very shocking sight. It almost looked as though an enormous eye had opened up, allowing everyone to peer through it to view the Underworld River. At the same time, it was as if that eye were looking out at all creation in the outside world.

It was a very strange sensation, the likes of which Bai Xiaochun had never experienced before.

Even as Bai Xiaochun stared in shock, the old man finished the sacrificial invocation. As he uttered the concluding words, he waved his sleeve.

“Let the ceremony begin!”

His words rang out like the sounding of a bell, and as they did, shocking rumbling sounds could be heard from the vortex. It was almost as if an enormous, invisible hand had slapped the Underworld River, causing a huge wave to rise up. It was a frothy wave composed of countless souls… which then poured through the vortex!

It was in spectacular and magnificent fashion that a rain of souls began to pour down!

Endless numbers of souls began to fall onto Arch-Emperor City…. They covered everything, and most importantly of all, they all seemed to be sleeping! Even if a deva soul appeared, it would also be in a state of slumber, and could be grabbed by whatever hands were lucky enough to reach it!

A cheer rose up from Arch-Emperor City as the excited commoners sprang into action, hoping to benefit from the favor offered during the ancestral sacrifices.

The guards in the imperial palace reached out to grab falling souls, as did Mistress Red-Dust and the other powerful people like her.

The heavenly dukes, heavenly marquises, and even the government officials all did the same. Of course, to them, in this collecting of souls during the ancestral sacrifices, what was most important was not the number of souls harvested, but the type. Anyone who managed to get a deva soul would be benefiting from an incredibly good omen.

However, deva souls didn’t always appear during the ancestral sacrifices, only every so often.

The scene playing out caused Bai Xiaochun to gasp. He looked around with a strange light gleaming in his eyes, and even anticipation; now was the time for him to carry out his plan. Afterward, it was likely that the nobility and aristocracy would hate him even more than they already did.

“Well, I can’t worry about all that. They never liked me to begin with. Even if I didn’t go through with this plan, they would eventually make another move against me.” Gritting his teeth, he leaped into the air, trembling with both excitement and nervousness.

When Bai Xiaochun took to motion, the Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes opened just a crack to look at him.

It only took a moment after Bai Xiaochun flew up into the air that he reached out and grabbed one of the descending souls!

It was a Foundation Establishment-level soul….

As soon as his hand closed around it, his eyes went wide, and he gasped. An expression of disbelief filled his face, but it quickly turned to joy. He even threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Heavens! I can’t believe I actually got a soul like this!!”

His laughter was loud enough to begin with, but he actually amplified it with some cultivation base power, which attracted quite a bit of attention. Before anyone could see clearly what had happened, though, he flew back down toward the area of the main hall in the imperial palace.

It was with lightning-like speed that he landed back in the square, right in the same location of honor as Mistress Red-Dust and the other heirs of the heavenly kings. It was there that he spoke out in a voice that crashed like heavenly thunder.

“Many thanks to you, Your Majesty! Your humble servant Bai Hao managed to snatch a deva soul!” With that, he thrust the Foundation Establishment soul high up into the air for everyone to see clearly.

Because of how loudly and suddenly he had spoken, virtually all of the nobility and aristocracy in the square all looked over at him. As for Mistress Red-Dust, she was the closest, and when she heard his words and saw the soul he was holding, her expression flickered.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao!?” Mistress Red-Dust said in a berating tone. “Get back to your place!” Off to the side, Zhou Hong looked on with wide eyes. As for the Junior Champion King and the heir apparent from Spirit Advent City, they were all stunned by what they were seeing.

The soul Bai Xiaochun was holding was clearly a Foundation Establishment-level soul, and not a deva soul....

They weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. Chen Haosong and the heavenly dukes were all completely taken aback. However, within moments, their gazes turned as sharp as blades, and the same thought ran through all their minds.

“Could it be that he wants to force the emperor to abdicate?!”

The heavenly marquises began to react as well, and were clearly flustered. No one had any idea what exactly was going to happen next.

“A deva soul?”

“That’s not a deva soul….”

“Is Bai Hao an idiot or something?”

Discussion began to spread within the square. As for Zhao Xionglin, he clearly didn’t see that something fishy was going on, and loudly said, “Did your eyes fall out, Bai Hao? That’s a Foundation Establishment-level soul, not a deva soul! If you think that’s a deva soul, then you’ve obviously gone crazy! Why don’t you just say it’s a demigod soul!?”

Mocking laughter could be heard among the crowd, but Bai Xiaochun ignored it. His gaze was fixed solely on the Dragon Throne, and the Arch-Emperor.

As for the imperial princes and princesses, various expressions could be seen on their faces. Among them was the second prince, who knew Bai Xiaochun a bit better than the others. He couldn’t help but look over, alarm written on his face.

“What is he doing? Don’t tell me he’s going to try to get father to bow his head in submission?!”

The Arch-Emperor sat there on his throne, his eyes shining brightly as he stared at Bai Xiaochun.

Although Bai Xiaochun seemed excited, he was actually profoundly nervous, and the Arch-Emperor’s shining eyes had his heart pounding. However, before he could say anything, one of the two stooped, sinister old men spoke in a voice that thrummed with killing intent.

“What gall you have! That’s obviously a Foundation Establishment-level soul! How dare you try to deceive His Majesty!” Even as the old man spoke, he stepped forward in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, and the aura of a deva exploded out.

He was attacking with full force, clearly intending to kill Bai Xiaochun in one move, drawing on full force and full speed to cut him down on the spot!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0774 awe-chapter-775

The sinister old man attacked with lightning-like speed, to the extent that Mistress Red-Dust and the other heirs apparent didn’t even have time to react. In fact, Mistress Red-Dust was actually inclined to do something, but simply wasn’t fast enough to.

The old man’s cultivation base erupted with deva fluctuations as he appeared right in front of Bai Xiaochun. There, he called upon the powers of a deva to become one with all creation and take the shape of an enormous magical symbol.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was shocked, and immediately tried to back up. From what he could tell, this old man was more terrifying than Chen Haosong. A single strike from him… would be completely catastrophic!

“I say one thing he doesn’t like, and he tries to kill me!?!?” Bai Xiaochun was scared to death. However, even as he tremblingly backed up from the sinister man, the Grand Heavenmaster smiled. It was a profound and meaningful smile, and at the same time, a flicker of praise could be seen in his eyes. Reaching out, he waved his right finger in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Instantly, a shield of black light appeared around Bai Xiaochun, almost like a bubble that completely surrounded him.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually took place in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint.

Then, the enormous magical symbol that was the incarnation of the sinister old man slammed into the bubble.

A huge boom rang out, and the entire imperial palace quaked.

The bubble collapsed, and the old man appeared, face ashen as he coughed up a mouthful of blood. The backlash sent him tumbling backward to slam into the ground inside the main hall, where he coughed up some more blood. Then he turned to look at the Grand Heavenmaster.

“Grand Heavenmaster, you--” Before he could finish speaking, the Grand Heavenmaster looked at him, causing him to tremble. Whatever else he had planned to say stuck in his throat.

“Calm down and let Bai Hao finish speaking,” the Grand Heavenmaster said coolly. As for the Arch-Emperor, he was now gripping the arms of the dragon throne so tightly that blue veins could be seen bulging out on the backs of his hands!

Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard. The black bubble from moments ago had ensured that he came out of the incident completely unharmed. However, the sensation of deadly crisis he had felt still lingered, causing his heart to tremble. And yet, he had already started down this path, and there was no turning back. A cold gleam in his eye, he calmed himself and spoke in a loud voice.

“Listen, you ignoramus. I'm not trying to deceive His Majesty. This is a deva soul! Are you blind or something? Furthermore, I didn’t ask your opinion about the matter. Grand Heavenmaster: would you mind providing an assessment? What type of soul is this, sir?”

The mysterious smile on the Grand Heavenmaster’s face was visible for everyone to see as he replied, “A deva soul!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the imperial princes and princesses gasped, and their faces flickered with various emotions. Some of them, such as the second prince and the grand prince, went completely pale.

“The Grand Heavenmaster is trying to get father to bow his head in submission!! He’s going to force him to say that it's a deva soul!! The Grand Heavenmaster is reasserting his authority!!”

Even the most unintelligent of the officials and aristocracy could see what was going on. In response… the facial expressions of everyone present changed immediately, with few becoming excited or happy.

Mistress Red-Dust took a deep breath and looked over at Bai Xiaochun with a complicated expression. Zhou Hong’s eyes were lit up with fear as he realized that the Grand Heavenmaster was going to force the Arch-Emperor’s hand. The more Zhou Hong thought about how Bai Xiaochun was going about this task, the more terrified he became.

The Junior Champion King stood there quietly, and the heir apparent of the Spirit Advent King bowed his head. Chen Haosong and the other heavenly dukes stood in silent introspection, clearly hoping that they didn’t get dragged into what was happening.

Bai Xiaochun could see the veins bulging out on the Arch-Emperor’s hands, and could sense the killing intent in his eyes. Although it was a frightening sight, Bai Xiaochun reminded himself that he was on the side of the Grand Heavenmaster. Furthermore, he couldn’t help but think back to how the imperial clan had been behind the attack on his spirit enhancement shop.

Gritting his teeth, he said, “The Grand Heavenmaster said that it's a deva soul. Your Majesty, what do you say, sir? What kind of soul is this…?”

In response, the Arch-Emperor sat there on his Dragon Throne, his eyes growing colder than ever. All of the heavenly marquises and heavenly dukes stood there with hearts pounding, averting their gazes downward.

The veins on the Arch-Emperor’s hands bulged larger than ever, and his eyes were colder than the coldest winter wind. It looked like he desired wholeheartedly to skin Bai Xiaochun alive!

The person to speak next was the second sinister old man. Inside, he was grumbling bitterly, but as a servant to the imperial clan for many generations, he felt that he had to speak up. “What gall you have, Bai Hao! This is complete hogwash! That’s obviously a Foundation Establishment-level soul. How could anyone think it's a deva soul?!”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun took in a casual, lazy breath. Then, he glared at the old man and raised the Foundation Establishment-level soul high into the air. Slowly turning to look at the assembled aristocracy and officials, he cleared his throat.

“Heavenly Marquises. Heavenly Dukes. Would you mind helping out a bit? Is this a Foundation Establishment-level soul, or a deva soul!?” Bai Xiaochun was really starting to get excited, as he had finally reached the end goal of his plan. Everything that he had done up to this point had been a feint. He had intentionally let everyone believe that he was going to try to force the Arch-Emperor to abdicate, or at least bow his head. But the truth… was that his goal was not to force the hand of the Arch-Emperor, but rather… all of the government officials and aristocrats!

All of this had stemmed from his assertion that he could give the Grand Heavenmaster a chance to see what Bai Xiaochun could not; what everyone was thinking.

Bai Xiaochun’s unexpected words caught everyone off guard. All of a sudden, veins bulged out on the Arch-Emperor’s face as he realized that things were far worse than he had initially taken them to be. As for the two sinister old men, their faces completely drained of blood.

The imperial princes and princesses trembled, and some of them were even sighing inwardly. All of the aristocrats and officials suddenly felt like they were suffocating. Earlier, they had hoped to stay out of what had appeared to be the Grand Heavenmaster and the Arch-Emperor butting heads. And at first, it had seemed that they were succeeding. But then, with no warning at all, this damnable Bai Hao turned everything around and targeted them!

Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes went wide, as if this was her first time truly seeing Bai Xiaochun. The Junior Champion King and the heir apparent of the Spirit Advent King were both gasping in terror.

Bai Xiaochun’s act from earlier, and the way he had controlled the flow of events, had been masterful, to say the least. Almost no one could have been prepared at all for the realization that Bai Xiaochun’s true goal was actually the officials and aristocrats!

However, there were a few in the audience who had not been caught completely off guard. Chen Haosong and the other nine heavenly dukes had actually begun to speculate from the very beginning that Bai Xiaochun was putting on an act.

Some of the heavenly marquises had also begun to work things out earlier on. And yet, that understanding didn’t help them resolve the issue they now faced, and all of them were cursing vehemently in their hearts.

As for everyone who had had issues with Bai Xiaochun in the past, the sudden turn of events caused their faces to fall, and their hatred of him to grow even more intense.

By this point, everyone could tell that the Grand Heavenmaster was helping this Bai Hao, and was using the soul in question to determine the attitudes of everyone present!

It was an issue that everyone present wished to avoid, but now they were stuck in a dead end. As such, the hatred they felt toward Bai Xiaochun penetrated all the way to their marrow. In the past, they had been able to take advantage of the general political instability to their own advantage. But now, they had to publicly reveal their loyalties. And that was not an easy choice to make. If they stated that Bai Xiaochun was holding a Foundation Establishment-level soul, the Grand Heavenmaster would most definitely not forgive and forget. But if they said it was a deva soul, then the Grand Heavenmaster would have his hooks in them well and good. And that meant that if the Arch-Emperor ever managed to gain power back, they and their clans would definitely be purged by death.

Of course, some could consider attempting to secretly maintain loyalty to the Arch-Emperor, while simultaneously proclaiming themselves for the Grand Heavenmaster. But that would not be easy, considering that they were speaking out publicly. Whether or not the Grand Heavenmaster believed their act or not wouldn’t matter. Nor would it matter that the Arch-Emperor might understand their actions. Not only would it be a big embarrassment, but they would be giving their enemies an opportunity to use against them. The slightest slip-up later on in the future could lead to terrible results.

Most important of all in the situation was the fact that there was no way the Grand Heavenmaster would actually trust any proclamations of loyalty made here today. And yet, that wasn’t what he wanted.... He wanted the power that would come with everyone siding with him, whether they were sincere or not.

With that power, he could easily crush all of the influence the Arch-Emperor had secretly built up. Not only would everyone realize that they had once again been dominated by the Grand Heavenmaster, but anyone who had once felt loyalty to the Arch-Emperor would now be struck with terror.

This was a show of strength, and at the same time, a threat!

“This Bai Hao is a good-for-nothing wretch!! How shameless!!”

“So ruthless. Dammit!!”

“He’s forcing us to publicly reveal our stance!” Hatred swelled in the hearts of all present, and at the same time, fear of Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0775 awe-chapter-776

In the current Arch-Emperor Dynasty, the Arch-Emperor was actually only a figurehead. The Grand Heavenmaster held the true power, and controlled both the Son of Heaven and the aristocracy. However, that was mostly what happened behind the scenes.

Furthermore, in the grand scheme of things, it didn’t matter too much that the Arch-Emperor was weak; he was only the current reigning Arch-Emperor. Nobody could say for sure what would happen when the next Arch-Emperor rose up. Furthermore, the Grand Heavenmaster had not followed the example of the Celestial from Heavenspan Island, and turned himself into an emperor. As far as many people were concerned, the Grand Heavenmaster was actually being quite benevolent and merciful.

Even more people hoped to just keep their distance from the issue. Not daring to get involved, they kept their true feelings vague, allowing the Grand Heavenmaster and the Arch-Emperor to handle things on their own, as long as the Arch-Emperor Dynasty itself continued.

Therefore, the events playing out right now were like a bolt out of the blue, and had placed the problems surrounding the issue of the Grand Heavenmaster and the Arch-Emperor right smack dab in the open!

Everyone in the square was cursing Bai Xiaochun inwardly for being so vile as to drag them into a situation they had been working so hard to avoid. In fact, most of them greatly regretted having come to attend the event to begin with.

Of course, the Arch-Emperor was also caught completely unprepared by what was happening, and was aware that the events of this day would determine once and for all how powerful he was!

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, his heart trembling with nervousness. However, he knew that his hand had been forced. The second prince and the grand prince had already made a move against him, and were it not for the Grand Heavenmaster, he would surely have been dead and buried here in the Wildlands.

“You can’t blame me for this, Arch-Emperor. If you want to blame somebody, blame those two sons of yours….” By this point, his mind was made up; his fate was now completely tied to the Grand Heavenmaster.

At the moment, the entire square was silent. The heavenly marquises and dukes were all standing there looking down at their feet. For the first time ever on the day of ancestral sacrifices, the entire imperial palace was completely silent.

It made quite the sharp contrast with the raucous, celebratory noise coming from the common people down below in the city.

The Arch-Emperor wasn't saying anything, nor was the Grand Heavenmaster. Everyone in the hall stood there without making a peep. The princes and princesses had bitter looks on their faces as they looked down at the ground, hearts filled with hatred for Bai Xiaochun at the disaster he had caused, and dread of the Grand Heavenmaster.

However, the silence didn’t last for very long. Eventually, one of the heavenly marquises gritted his teeth and stepped forward. Clasping hands, he bowed to the Arch-Emperor and Grand Heavenmaster, then spoke out in a loud voice.

“It’s very clear to me that Inspections Commissioner Bai Hao is holding a deva soul!”

Now that the first person had stepped forward to make a statement, a second followed. Then a third. One by one, more than a hundred heavenly marquises did the same.

“That’s definitely a deva soul!”

“Correct! If you look closely, it’s obviously a deva soul!”

Each and every person said the same thing; that it was a deva soul!

Some of the people who stepped forward really were loyal to the Grand Heavenmaster, but not all of them. And yet, none of them hesitated for even a moment to make their stance clear!

And of course, many of them were cursing Bai Xiaochun to death. However, their faces were covered with somber expressions as they made their statements regarding the deva soul. Even the nine heavenly marquises who had attacked Bai Xiaochun did the same, including Zhao Xionglin. Although he was swearing in his heart, it was with a booming voice that he said, “Anyone can see that it’s definitely a deva soul!”

As the heavenly marquises made their statements, the faces of the imperial princes and princesses grew paler and paler. Bitter smiles spread out on the faces of the two sinister old men. As for the Arch-Emperor, he sat there calmly, watching the heavenly marquises and dukes. The coldness in his eyes from earlier was gone, and his face was expressionless. However, deep in his eyes, it was clear that he was branding this image of Bai Xiaochun into his mind for all time.

That struck coldness into Bai Xiaochun’s heart, but he reminded himself that he was one of the Grand Heavenmaster’s men, and that the Arch-Emperor couldn’t hurt him even if he were more powerful than he already was.

“Stupid Arch-Emperor! I've smacked the Giant Ghost King across the side of the head, fool! Hmm, I wonder what it would feel like to smack an Arch-Emperor?” Swallowing hard to work up some courage, he waited for the heavenly marquises to all step forward.

Before long, all of them were finished, every single one of them having uttered the words *deva soul*. Next came the ten heavenly dukes, and not a single one hesitated about what to do.

“A deva soul!”

“A deva soul!”

Chen Haosong was no exception. By this point, the imperial princes and princesses were trembling, although whether from anger or fear it was impossible to tell! In terms of Mistress Red-Dust and the other representatives of the four heavenly kings, they too acknowledged that Bai Xiaochun had a deva soul. At that point, the square once again fell into silence.

It was a silence that indicated that the Grand Heavenmaster’s overall power had once again skyrocketed, surpassing his previous level of power by far. After all, this was the first time that he and the Arch-Emperor had ever clashed publicly!

One statement from the Grand Heavenmaster had caused everyone to bow their heads in submission. That was a type of power that defied description. Just as Bai Xiaochun had said, the Grand Heavenmaster didn’t need to know what everyone was thinking. He just needed everyone to fear him. That was enough.

Within the hall, the grand prince, the second prince, and everyone else present looked as ashen as death. Yet again, they were drowning in humiliation, and fear… of the Grand Heavenmaster. At this point, they knew that it didn’t matter what secret schemes they had been working on. In front of the Grand Heavenmaster, they were so weak they could be defeated with a single blow. It was truly terrifying.

More than anything though… they felt grief that the imperial clan had fallen to this level….

At this point, the Arch-Emperor looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun, then rose to his feet. Without casting a glance at anyone else, not even the Grand Heavenmaster, he walked out of the hall. The two sinister old men took deep breaths, glared at Bai Xiaochun, and then followed.

The imperial princes and princesses scrambled after him, not speaking a word. However, all of them looked over at Bai Xiaochun before departing.

The assembled officials and aristocracy were completely silent as they all looked over at the Grand Heavenmaster on his black throne, who looked back at them with a dark gleam in his eyes.

The truth was that he had been paying very close attention to everyone outside of the hall, including the heavenly marquises and the heavenly dukes. He had been studying the slight changes in their facial expressions, and even the fluctuations of their souls.

Although he didn’t say anything, that dark gleam in his eyes was very telling. At this point, he rose to his feet, prompting everyone in the square to clasp hands and bow.

“Farewell, Grand Heavenmaster, Arch-Emperor!”

“You’re all dismissed,” the Grand Heavenmaster said. Then he looked approvingly at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Bai Hao, you come with me.”

With that, he turned and headed into the back of the grand hall.

Noting the approval in the Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes, Bai Xiaochun loudly said, “You’re dismissed! All of you!”

At the same time, he sighed inwardly, and also started to get excited at the prospect of having done something so momentous!

From beginning to end, he had controlled the initiative, and that was a very thrilling thing. Although he still felt a bit of lingering fear, the fact that he had the approval of the Grand Heavenmaster had him trembling with excitement.

“I really performed some meritorious service this time! I wonder how the Grand Heavenmaster is going to reward me?!” Even as he hurried forward to follow the Grand Heavenmaster, he realized that everyone was looking at him. Turning, he saw that many of the heavenly marquises and dukes were looking at him with the contempt of someone looking at a petty person who had unexpectedly achieved a position of power.

And that wasn’t very pleasing to Bai Xiaochun at all.

That was especially true of Zhao Xionglin, who was glaring at Bai Xiaochun so fiercely that it seemed he wanted nothing more than to rip him limb from limb!

“How dare you glare at me!” Bai Xiaochun thought.

Then he flicked his sleeve, stuck his chin up, and loudly said, “Now that you’ve all confirmed that I got a deva soul, I guess that means I got really lucky today!”

With that, he suddenly threw the Foundation Establishment-level soul toward Zhao Xionglin.

“Heavenly Marquis Zhao, I have business with the Grand Heavenmaster, so I'm leaving this deva soul with you for safe keeping. Tomorrow morning at first light, I’ll go to your clan to retrieve it. Don’t lose it! After all, that’s a deva soul!”

Zhao Xionglin didn't even have a chance to react before Bai Xiaochun was gone.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0776 awe-chapter-777

“You!!” Zhao Xionglin was both taken aback and infuriated. However, the Grand Heavenmaster was still present, so he didn’t dare to lose his temper. He could only stand there panting, face twisted with rage, cursing inwardly at this blatantly open attack.

“Damn this Bai Hao!” he thought. “He gave me a Foundation Establishment-level soul and is going to demand that I give him a deva soul in return!!” Zhao Xionglin was overwhelmed with anger, grief, and pain. To him, a deva soul was the type of treasure that could be encountered by chance, but never searched for and found.

After all, deva souls were very useful for anyone attempting to become a deva, and could increase the chances of success significantly. Therefore, what Bai Xiaochun had just done was like adding injury to insult.

Zhao Xionglin stood there trembling at how horrible things had just become….

The other aristocrats in the area were stunned as they watched Bai Xiaochun walking off. They could almost feel cold chills running down their backs as they realized that Bai Xiaochun was the type of person who would take any opportunity that came his way.

“Totally ruthless….”

“He’s clearly screwing Zhao Xionglin over….”

“When he goes to get that soul tomorrow… Zhao Xionglin will have to give him a deva soul….”

Although the Grand Heavenmaster was already some distance away, with his back to the square, he was aware of everything that was happening. When he realized what Bai Xiaochun was doing, his cheek twitched.

“Ah, whatever,” he thought. “Chalk it up as a reward for him.” Bai Xiaochun’s performance had been spectacular, and left the Grand Heavenmaster feeling very pleased. Therefore, he simply shook his head and continued to leave.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that the Grand Heavenmaster wasn’t interfering, his eyes lit up with excitement, and he strutted the entire way to Heavenmaster Hall. When they arrived, the Grand Heavenmaster didn’t say much. He just asked Bai Xiaochun to produce his Inspections Manor command medallion, whereupon he waved his finger, sending a black glow into it.

“Henceforth, you command 3,000 troops! Head back and rest up a bit. Before long… your 3,000 corpse troopers can be mobilized, and then you can go get your reward yourself.” With that, he entered Heavenmaster Hall, not having even turned to look at Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, he had never said a word about the objects Bai Xiaochun had secreted away from Heavenly Marquises Li and Chen. That alone spoke to the profits Bai Xiaochun would have after shaking down more clans.

Excited at the prospects, Bai Xiaochun clasped hands and loudly said, “Grand Heavenmaster, for you, Bai Hao will go through hell and high water!”

After the Grand Heavenmaster disappeared into the hall, Bai Xiaochun turned, feeling profoundly pleased as he left the imperial palace, taking his 1,000 corpse troopers with him. Looking very grand and magnificent, he quickly made his way back to the Inspections Manor.

As for the heavenly dukes and marquises, and all the other nobility and aristocracy, although they hated him so much their gums itched, when he passed by, they didn't dare to even look at him the wrong way.

Back at the Inspections Manor, the first thing he did was use the command medallion to make connections with more of the subterranean coffins.

Rumbling sounds filled the entire Inspections Manor as 2,000 coffins shot up into the air!

“Awaken, my army of corpse troopers!” he shouted excitedly. Cracking sounds instantly rang out as the 2,000 coffins opened up, and numerous black-armored, burly men appeared.

All of them emanated auras of rot, and the weakest among them were in the mid Nascent Soul stage. Furthermore, this time, there were four who were half-devas!

As the eyes of the corpse troopers opened, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering murderous auras erupted out!

A black vortex appeared in the air above the Inspections Manor, which instantly attracted much attention from the people nearby.

“There are more corpse troopers over in the Inspections Manor?!?!”

“Is that… 2,000 of them? In addition to the original 1,000, Bai Hao now controls an army of 3,000!!”

“3,000 corpse troopers! That level of power… is terrifying. He alone could start a large-scale war!!”

Many among the nobility and aristocracy of Arch-Emperor City realized what was happening, and they were shaken. Grim expressions appeared on their faces as they realized that Bai Xiaochun was building up terrifying levels of power.

Bai Xiaochun was so excited he was trembling, and his eyes shone with bright light. Looking at his 2,000 new corpse troopers, he waved his hand, causing the original 1,000 to fly out. They quickly formed ranks, whereupon the black vortex above the Inspections Manor grew even larger.

In addition to that, further inspection of the command medallion revealed that, in addition to the 2,000 new corpse troopers, he now had access to a new divine ability.

After studying it briefly, he sent some divine sense into the medallion, which caused a black glow to appear. The black glow shot toward the corpse trooper who had absorbed some of the toxic gas created by the Heart Of A Woman, and then risen to level of a deva. As soon as the black light touched the corpse trooper, he trembled, and his energy rose. Even as Bai Xiaochun waited in eager anticipation, he threw his head back and roared.

As he did, his aura returned to the quasi-Deva Realm. However, Bai Xiaochun could tell that, if necessary, he could absorb the auras of other corpse troopers to temporarily go back to that peak level of power!

This was one of the powers of the inspections commissioner command medallion which he had been gifted!

“Nobody will dare to provoke me now!” he exclaimed, laughing heartily. Although it wouldn’t be correct to say that he was invincible, it would be as easy for him to take out a deva as it would be to flip over his hand!

He currently had a quasi-Deva Realm corpse trooper, five who were half-devas, and nearly 3,000 in the Nascent Soul realm. That was enough power… that if Bai Xiaochun returned to the eastern Heavenspan region, he could challenge the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

“It was definitely the best choice to side with the Grand Heavenmaster!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more smugly happy. All of his worries about being glared at by the Arch-Emperor had vanished.

“I'm definitely a big shot in the Wildlands now! Not very many people are as important as me!” Feeling almost intoxicated, he was just preparing to take his 3,000 corpse troopers out for a stroll in the city to make sure everyone knew how awesome he was, when all of a sudden, Bai Hao’s voice could be heard from inside his bag of holding, and he sounded overjoyed.

“Master! I finally finished the formula for eighteen-colored flame!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide with excitement, and he even laughed aloud. Today was truly a wonderful day, so wonderful that he decided not to go for a walk. Instead, he set his 3,000 corpse troopers out to stand guard in the area, then went into secluded meditation and sealed himself up tight. At that point, Bai Hao flew out into the open.

Bai Hao quickly inscribed the formula into a bone slip, then handed it over to Bai Xiaochun, who began to study it with intense anticipation.

A moment passed, and he retracted his divine sense from the bone slip. After some thought, he looked over at Bai Hao, thinking about how priceless this formula would be anywhere in the Wildlands.

It would be considered even more valuable than a deva soul!

Countless people wanted to have that formula. However, it was something that only belonged to clans with earthly necromancers. And clans like that would not lightly hand over the formula!

“Well done, apprentice,” Bai Xiaochun said sincerely. “If Master can become an earthly necromancer, it will count as an enormous service on your part. What would you like as a reward? Name anything!”

Bai Hao’s heart swelled at having pleased his Master. To him, Bai Xiaochun was a Master, but more importantly, his only family. Just being able to help him, and see him happy, was enough.

“Master, I don’t want any reward right now. Let’s worry about that later. The most important thing now is to follow this line of reasoning on to the formula for nineteen-colored flame!” From the determination in Bai Hao’s eyes, it was obvious that he was confident in being able to succeed. Furthermore, he was shaking with excitement at the thought of his Master dominating the Wildlands with that formula.

“I'm going to do everything in my power to help Master become... a heavenly necromancer!” Having sworn this oath in his heart, he clasped hands formally to Bai Xiaochun, then returned to his soulhoarding pagoda to start working.

Bai Xiaochun was moved as he looked at the soulhoarding pagoda and sighed. He knew that ghost cultivator techniques were something of great importance to his apprentice, and yet, he had no idea where to get such techniques.

“Where would I be able to get some ghost cultivator techniques…? There are all types of techniques available in the Heavenspan River region. I bet I could find some there.” Having decided this was the best angle to pursue, he sat down cross-legged and began to get familiar with the formula for eighteen-colored flame.

The night passed quickly.

This formula was actually very complicated, but because of his experience within the Flame Harmony realm, in which the faint eighteen-colored flame had become visible, he had a foundation upon which to work.

Therefore, he actually gained a lot from that single night of study. The mere thought of actually trying to conjure that flame and become an earthly necromancer caused his heart to start racing.

“However, if I really want to conjure it, I’ll need to do a lot of practicing….” At this point, he looked outside and realized that it was light outside, and remembered that Zhao Xionglin owed him a deva soul. Putting the bone slip away, he stood up, stretched a bit, then stuck his chin up.

“Alright, Zhao Xionglin, Lord Bai is coming for you!”

Even as Bai Xiaochun reveled in his success, he had no idea that back in Giant Ghost City, the Giant Ghost King had made a decision.

After receiving the report from Mistress Red-Dust about what had occurred during the ancestral sacrifices, his eyes had begun to shine brightly.

“What a genius. I definitely didn’t misjudge this Bai Hao. It’s impossible to say how far he’ll go. He's definitely the perfect son-in-law. I don't care what his background is!

“Unfortunately, Mo'er’s temper is a problem.... If things keep going the way they have between the two of them, it will be hard for them to get along.” After some thought, his eyes gleamed with a strange light, and he cleared his throat. Then he sent a message to Mistress Red-Dust.

First, he asked some general questions about her cultivation base, and then he said, “Mo'er, I have a certain technique you can cultivate that will give you a seventy percent chance of breaking through into the mid Deva Realm. However, you’ll need to go into secluded meditation and cultivate it secretly!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0777 awe-chapter-778

Mistress Red-Dust was surprised. It seemed obvious to her that there was more to the story, but after receiving the technique and looking it over, she couldn’t figure out what it was. Besides, the giant ghost king was her father, and couldn't possibly be out to harm her. And yet, she couldn’t shake the feeling that there was something fishy going on.

She did a bit more research, but in the end, she was simply too anxious to achieve a cultivation base breakthrough to hold back. Her previous fight with Bai Xiaochun had left her feeling very unsatisfied with her current cultivation base. Therefore, she went into secluded meditation and began to cultivate the technique secretly, just like her father had suggested.

“Good girl!” the giant ghost king thought. “Father isn’t trying to hurt you. The technique won’t do anything bad. However, after you emerge from meditation, you’ll be a bit muddle-headed, and much easier to influence. In some ways, you can almost be brainwashed…. Well, there’s nothing else that can be done. You’re just too smart, and if we let the situation stand, things will never develop between you and Bai Hao.” The giant ghost king felt a bit guilty, but in the end, reminded himself that he was doing all of this for the betterment of his daughter. And that made him a very good father.

Now that the first step of the plan was underway, the giant ghost king’s guilt began to turn into excitement. As soon as his daughter entered her secluded meditation chamber, he called all of her personal guards over and instructed them to let him know as soon as she emerged.

He spoke so strictly that the guards were very nervous, and instantly agreed to follow his instructions.

Having accomplished these things, the giant ghost king sighed.

“Success or failure now depends on fate. If they’re not destined to be together, then nothing will work.”

**

The Zhao Clan was located in Borough 19. Considering that Zhao Xionglin was a heavenly marquis, their clan was very similar to the Li and Chen Clans. The buildings were exquisite and beautiful, and the entire place was so grand that it was very conspicuous within Borough 19.

There were two enormous statues located in the main square of the clan, one on either side. They were dozens of meters tall, pure white, and depicted beastly creatures. Although the statues weren’t made from spirit stones, they had been created using a unique method of equipment forging and special materials, which made them extraordinary, to say the least.

Right in between the two statues was the Zhao Clan’s heavenly marquis pagoda, which emanated powerful fluctuations that ensured that anyone nearby felt a threatening sensation.

At the moment, the various princes and princesses of the clan were practicing fighting techniques on one of the clan’s training grounds, sparring with magical techniques and divine abilities. The eldest son of the clan, Zhao Dongshan, sat cross-legged in the position of honor. Although he seemed to be paying attention to the sparring going on on the training grounds, he was actually preoccupied with other thoughts, to the point where his brow was slightly furrowed.

Occasionally, he would look up into the sky and sigh. The mere thought of how his father Zhao Xionglin had returned the previous day looking extremely angry caused Zhao Dongshan to sigh anxiously. He knew some of what had occurred the previous day in the imperial palace, and it caused his hatred toward Bai Xiaochun to grow even stronger than before.

“So ruthless….”

“He gave our Zhao Clan a Foundation Establishment-level soul and is expecting a deva soul in return! What a vile attack!” Zhao Dongshan sat there grinding his teeth angrily, and yet feeling completely helpless. Yesterday evening, his father had given him a deva soul and instructed him on what to do with it, then had grimly gone into secluded meditation.

“Father, you think this is a loss of face, but so do I….” Zhao Dongshan sighed painfully. After all, the Zhao Clan only had one deva soul to their name, which had been given to them by Heavenly Duke Chen Haosong because of the good relationship between him and Zhao Xionglin.

But now, they had to give it up…. Zhao Dongshan’s mood continued to sink the more he thought about it, and yet, there was nothing he could do. About this time, he suddenly heard a whistling sound up above in the air.

As soon as he heard it, his eyelid twitched. Looking up, he saw several thousand beams of light flying toward him, accompanied by a dramatically murderous aura.

“This shameless Bai Hao just has to go and make a huge scene, all to collect a single soul!” Zhao Dongshan was cursing inwardly, and his expression was extremely grim as he watched the thousands of figures coming to a stop right above the Zhao Clan.

In the lead position was none other than Bai Xiaochun, who flicked his sleeve proudly and spoke in a voice that echoed through the entire clan.

“Heavenly Marquis Zhao! Oh, Big Bro Zhao! Thank you *so* much for taking care of that deva soul for me. Uh… well, I'm back today to get it, so could you please hand it over?” Bai Xiaochun was feeling very pleased with the whole situation. Furthermore, after noticing that the person present to receive him was Zhao Dongshan, he didn’t feel it appropriate to address him directly, not considering how lofty Bai Xiaochun’s position was. A junior like Zhao Dongshan wasn’t worthy to be greeted.

Zhao Xionglin was inside the heavenly marquis pagoda, meditating fitfully. As soon as he heard what was happening outside, his face twitched, but he forced himself to ignore it.

Down below, Zhao Dongshang gritted his teeth and said, “Take this soul and leave, Bai Hao!”

With that, he flicked his sleeve, sending a piece of crystal flying out. There was something bizarre about the crystal and the way it shone with flickering light. There was also an incredible pressure that it sent out, making it seem completely extraordinary. Inside of the crystal was a ball of flame, which was none other than a fire-type deva soul!

The crystal became a beam of light which shot toward Bai Xiaochun, who grabbed it out of the air. Smiling broadly, he looked down at Zhao Dongshan.

“Hey there, young lad, you must be Dongshan, correct? Hahaha! How courteous of you people! You actually encased my deva soul in some crystal. Not bad. Not bad at all. Very well, young lad. Uncle Bai is in a good mood today, so hurry over and offer formal greetings, and I’ll give you a reward.” Zhao Dongshan had offended him multiple times in the past, so there was no way he would let him off the hook today.

Zhao Dongshan was so angry he could hardly breathe straight, and the fact that Bai Xiaochun had called him *young lad* was even more infuriating. However, the mere thought of Bai Xiaochun’s incredible battle prowess, and the fact that he was the inspections commissioner, with a force of 3,000 corpse troopers behind him, ensured that he managed to keep his anger in check.

“You have your soul, Bai Hao. Just leave, alright? You’re not welcome here!”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard that, his broad smile vanished, and his eyes widened into an angry glare. Pointing at Zhao Dongshan, he said,

“What do you mean by that, young lad? I'm not welcome here? I represent the grand heavenmaster! By saying that I’m not welcome, you’re also saying that the grand heavenmaster isn’t welcome!”

“You….” Zhao Dongshan was so frustrated he wanted to explode, and was even about to explain himself. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t give him the chance.

“By not welcoming the grand heavenmaster, you’re showing contempt for the entire court, and the arch-emperor himself! Don’t tell me that your Zhao Clan has something to hide!?!?” Even as Bai Xiaochun yelled, his 3,000 corpse troopers emanated such a powerful murderous aura that it created a black vortex in the sky above the Zhao Clan.

“No!” Zhao Dongshan blurted. After becoming the inspections commissioner, Bai Xiaochun had come to fall in love with labeling people with false accusations. All they had to do was open their mouth, and he would strike instantly. After all, Zhao Dongshan’s own father had suffered the same treatment.

Even Heavenly Duke Chen Haosong had fallen victim, and had eventually chosen to just keep his mouth shut.

“Eee? Feeling guilty or something?!” From the gleam in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, it seemed that he believed himself to have found some important evidence. Up in the pagoda, Zhao Xionglin’s hands were trembling with rage. However, this time, Zhao Dongshan reacted a bit more quickly than before. He quickly stepped forward, took a breath to suppress his anger, and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun with clasped hands.

“Senior…. Dongshan… offers greetings…. Greetings, exalted Inspections Commissioner!” Zhao Dongshan felt like he was going crazy, to the point where he might cough up blood. However, this Bai Hao was not the same Bai Hao from before. Not even Zhao Dongshan’s father dared to anger him, and therefore, Zhao Dongshan had no other choice than to submit.

Bai Xiaochun looked discontentedly at Zhao Dongshan, wondering how he had managed to recover his composure so quickly. It was a real pity, considering that he had hoped to take advantage of the situation to extort the Zhao Clan a bit more.

“It’s no fun if they give in so easily,” he thought. Unfortunately, he had no excuse to keep going. Muttering to himself angrily, he looked around the clan until he noticed the two pure white beast statues.

“Those beast statues look a bit suspicious,” he announced. “Men, take them away. Deliver them to my manor so that I can study them more closely.” Instantly, hundreds of black-armored corpse troopers flew toward the statues, completely ignoring the Zhao Clan cultivators. Blue veins bulged out on Zhao Dongshan’s face and neck. However, considering that his father hadn’t issued any orders, he knew he had to simply hold his tongue. The hundreds of corpse troopers quickly took those two statues which the Zhao Clan viewed as priceless treasures, and ripped them up out of the ground….

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few more times as he looked around. Finally, his gaze came to rest on the heavenly marquis pagoda. Obviously, Zhao Xionglin was not planning to make an appearance. Feeling a bit irritated, Bai Xiaochun snorted and then turned to leave with his corpse troopers and the two statues.

“How dare they provoke me! Zhao Dongshan attacked me multiple times! These statues are just going to be interest on what he owes me.” Sticking his chin up, he began to strut away.

After he left, an enraged roar echoed out from the heavenly marquis pagoda. Zhao Xionglin was enraged, but his anger was not sated, and could only be vented by continuing to howl in anger.

Zhao Dongshan sat there bitterly, terrified of Bai Xiaochun. If he had known that things would turn out this way, then he would never have dared to offend him.

And thus, Bai Xiaochun returned to the Inspections Manor, deva soul in hand, with two new statues carried by his corpse troopers. After arranging for his corpse troopers to stand guard, he went into his secluded meditation facilities and pondered what the grand heavenmaster had said to him yesterday.

“I’ll just wait for some new orders. I wonder how many clans the grand heavenmaster will have me shake down this time….” Heart pounding with anticipation, he was just about to go back to studying eighteen-colored flame when his expression flickered. A moment later, Zhou Yixing appeared right outside of his secluded meditation facilities.

“Zhou Yixing seeks an audience, exalted one!”

Because Zhou Yixing had been acknowledged by Bai Xiaochun as a member of the Inspections Manor, the corpse troopers often gave him sharp looks, but wouldn’t cause any problems for him as long as he didn’t harbor ill intent.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with Zhou Yixing’s service so far. Therefore, he waved his hand, causing the door to the facility to open. Zhou Yixing took a deep breath, and walked in, a very serious expression on his face. Stopping in front of Bai Xiaochun, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Trying to imitate the style of the grand heavenmaster, Bai Xiaochun coolly said, “Yixing! Make sure to get good and ready. The Inspections Manor is going to be very busy soon!”

Zhou Yixing immediately voiced his assent. Then, he hesitated, looked left and right, and quietly said, “Exalted one, um… what should we do with Song Que?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0778 awe-chapter-779

“Song Que?” Bai Xiaochun was initially stunned, and it actually took a moment of thought before he realized that he had forgotten about Song Que….

“Yeah, him,” Zhou Yixing said in a low voice. “He was the… um, guy who claimed to be the nephew of Bai Xiaochun, who you picked up in the Chen Clan. Song Que.” Zhou Yixing looked at Bai Xiaochun for a moment and then cast his gaze back downward.

“Oh, *him*. Ai. Silly me. If you hadn't said something, I would have totally forgotten.” Bai Xiaochun actually felt a bit bad. Not only was Song Que one of his big lucky stars, as a member of the older generation, Bai Xiaochun had a responsibility to take care of the younger ones.

“Exalted one,” Zhou Yixing replied hurriedly, “you have a myriad of state affairs to attend to, and an entire nation to look after! Every decision you make is the type that can shake all of heaven and earth. You are constantly at the beck and call of all Arch-Emperor City, and spare no efforts in your duty. Your humble servant shouldn’t have bothered you with such a trivial matter as this. My apologies exalted one. Please, watch your health. I won’t bother you with things like this anymore.”

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased by the sincerity in his words, and how much they reminded him of the way he himself talked. Nodding approvingly at Zhou Yixing, he said, “Never mind all that, bring him to me.”

“Sir, yes sir!” Zhou Yixing replied loudly, then turned and hurried away. Moments later, he returned with Song Que, who he plopped down in front of Bai Xiaochun.

Zhou Yixing knew that there was some relationship between Song Que and Bai Xiaochun, and therefore, Song Que was currently not wearing the same raggedy clothes he had been back in the Chen Clan. He was dressed in a rough spun cloth garment, and had been cleaned up quite a bit. However, his eyes were just as intensely stubborn and maddened as ever.

After being thrown onto the ground, he crawled to his feet, where he stood ramrod straight as he glared at Bai Xiaochun and yelled, “If you’re that tough, just kill me!! My uncle will never let you off the hook!!”

Although Bai Xiaochun was a bit startled by how he had yelled, his words nearly caused him to laugh. However, he covered it with a dry cough. Keeping his face straight, he circled Song Que a bit to measure him up.

His gaze caused Song Que’s heart to tremble. As far as Song Que could tell, it was a gaze of terrifying profundity. However, what was worse was how Bai Xiaochun poked and prodded him a bit here and there, leading Song Que to shiver and think about what vile intentions he had. Stiffening, he once again resorted to a shout when he said, “Even if I die, I’ll never yield!”

“Alright, enough with the yelling. Allow me to ask you something. Who is this Bai Xiaochun to you?!” Inside, Bai Xiaochun was smiling broadly, but he kept his expression somber, and even made it seem like he was afraid of this *Bai Xiaochun*.

The truth, of course, was that he was eagerly awaiting Song Que's response.

Song Que was a bit surprised to see the expression on Bai Xiaochun's face. Obviously, *not* dying was the optimal outcome if it was possible, and therefore, the gears were already turning in Song Que's head.

"Bai Xiaochun is my uncle!"

Blinking, Bai Xiaochun kept his smile hidden away, and instead plastered an even more serious expression on his face. "What did you just say? I didn't hear clearly…."

Eyes glittering, Song Que raised his voice and said, "Bai Xiaochun… is my uncle!!!"

Bai Xiaochun's heart was racing with excitement, and he coughed dryly again to keep himself from laughing. He also tried to look a bit more scared.

"Are you talking about the guy in 1st place on the Hell-Emperor Stele, the one with the shocking cultivation base, the one who countless women are enamored with, and who innumerable men admire? The man who everyone in the Wildlands is searching for? That Bai Xiaochun?"

Song Que was stunned to hear all of this, and Zhou Yixing placed his face into the palm of his hand at how obvious it all seemed… and the shamelessness of it all….

Of course, there was no possible way for Song Que to realize that the person he was standing in front of was actually Bai Xiaochun. However, he was a bit worried by the expression of fear he saw on Bai Xiaochun's face.

"Yeah, that Bai Xiaochun…."

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t fully satisfied yet, so he plastered a look of disbelief onto his face and said, “Hold on, I want you to be very clear about this. *Which* Bai Xiaochun? Are we really talking about the same person?”

So far, he was feeling very pleased with the act he was putting on.

Song Que was starting to get a strange feeling, but he proceeded with another explanation. “I'm talking about the guy in 1st place on the Hell-Emperor Stele, the one with the shocking cultivation base, the one who countless women are enamored with, and who innumerable men admire! The man who everyone in the Wildlands is searching for. *That* Bai Xiaochun!!”

By this point, he was starting to feel like maybe they actually weren’t talking about the same person.

However, this was when Bai Xiaochun gasped and backed up a few steps. Eyes wide, he pointed at Song Que with disbelief. “Heavens! I can’t believe that you’re actually the nephew of *that* Bai Xiaochun!!”

Zhou Yixing stood there in a near daze, staring at Bai Xiaochun. However, he quickly looked down again, unable to keep watching….

Song Que was now starting to get a bit excited.

“That's right! I *am* Bai Xiaochun’s nephew, and his only nephew at that. He really likes me, and has a lot of hopes for me for the future. He’s my aunt's Daoist partner, so he’ll definitely be coming to save me. If you touch a hair on my head, my uncle will definitely get revenge for me!” He couldn’t have stated it any clearer. Anyone who was listening would be very certain that Bai Xiaochun cared a lot about him. Furthermore, anyone who was interested in catching Bai Xiaochun would obviously not want to kill Song Que.

That in turn would make things a bit safer for him.

Although Bai Xiaochun had no idea what anyone else might think of what Song Que said, as for himself, it made him incredibly happy.

“How could I ever have guessed that, contrary to all expectations, you were actually telling the truth! Your uncle is none other than the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering Bai Xiaochun, whose cultivation base is matchless in all creation…. Well, in that case… alright. Yixing, let’s keep this guy here in the Inspections Manor. Start him out as a servant. And give him some resources to practice cultivation.

“Hmph. With him around, the notorious Bai Xiaochun, who is the ultimate chosen in the world, a person that countless individuals are infatuated with, will definitely walk right into the trap I'm planning for him!” He emphasized his righteous, sincere words with the flick of a sleeve.

When Song Que heard this, he breathed a sigh of relief. Although he still had a strange feeling about the whole situation, he still couldn’t put his finger on what exactly it was. Before anything else could happen, Zhou Yixing grabbed him and hauled him away.

With that, Bai Xiaochun closed his door, sealed the place up, and then let loose a stream of uproarious laughter.

“Oh, Que’er! I can only imagine the look on your face if you ever find out who I really am….” The mere thought was exciting, but Bai Xiaochun also decided that he definitely couldn't ever let that happen.

After all, he was a circumspect person in general, and also had to be on guard against Song Que. Considering that he was deep undercover, he obviously couldn't reveal the truth to anyone. Besides, it was wonderful to hear Song Que lavishing Bai Xiaochun with praise. From now on, if he was ever in a bad mood, he could simply call Song Que over, scare him a bit, and then bask in the resulting praise.

Now that Song Que had been taken care of, though, Bai Xiaochun thought about Master God-Diviner.

“I wonder where he is now.... Probably somewhere else in the Wildlands, I suppose.” It was another mission on his list. After all, Master God-Diviner had been one of his followers, and was likely in a horrible situation. Therefore, it was definitely important to find him and save him.

Unfortunately, he had absolutely no clues to work with. After thinking about the matter for a bit, he sighed and put the matter to rest temporarily. Just when he was about to start working with eighteen-colored flame, his expression flickered, and he looked down at his bag of holding. Eyes lighting up, he produced the Eternal Parasol.

The canopy of the parasol had been destroyed by Chen Haosong, leaving behind only the shaft. Thankfully, the beast hide he had found when shaking down the Li Clan had been a perfect fit.

Now, it was completely recovered. As soon as it was out in the open, it glowed with black light. As for the beast hide which formed the new canopy, it caused the parasol as a whole to emanate fluctuations which were many times more powerful than before. As of this moment, the parasol seemed completely different from before.

As he held it, he could sense an incredible, shocking power inside of it. Unable to contain his excitement, he snapped it open.

Rumbling sounds filled the room, and at the same time, the ghost face appeared on the canopy, with its enigmatic smile, and half-laughing half-crying ghost face.

The ghost face was much clearer than before, and was actually a bit frightening to Bai Xiaochun. However, upon rotating his cultivation base, the feeling went away.

“My Eternal Parasol is finally fully repaired!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0779 awe-chapter-780

Ten days passed by in a flash, during which time Bai Xiaochun never went outside. He remained in seclusion in the Inspections Manor, getting familiar with the formula for eighteen-colored flame.

With Bai Hao’s help, he was gradually making progress. He had even attempted to do a few conjurings. However, the resource wastage was incredible.

The formula for eighteen-colored flame was different from other formulas, and took a lot more resources. In fact, to conjure a single eighteen-colored flame required that he first conjure ten seventeen-colored flames.

Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun had access to vast wealth, he still couldn’t sustain such losses.

“What am I supposed to do now…?” he thought. However, even as he pondered the issue, the Grand Heavenmaster did something major!

After ten days of thought and contemplation, he acted in lightning-like fashion to arrest nine of the heavenly marquises!

The arrests shook everyone in the Wildlands, even the four heavenly kings. All of Arch-Emperor City was abuzz, and the remaining ninety or so heavenly marquises were panic-stricken.

Although no action had been taken against any of the heavenly dukes, they were also filled with dread. In fact, all of them chose to go into seclusion, and refused to see anyone who called on them. They simply did not want to get involved in what was happening.

Even Chen Haosong knew that he was in a very dangerous position, and simply kept his mouth shut and went into seclusion.

After the nine heavenly marquises were apprehended, their clans were left behind, trembling in terror. Furthermore, without express permission from the Grand Heavenmaster himself, none of them were permitted to leave the city.

While everyone in Arch-Emperor City was shaking in fear, Bai Xiaochun finally got his orders from the Grand Heavenmaster. He was to go shake down the offending clans!

At long last, Bai Xiaochun was able to make full use of his skills. He had been waiting for this day for some time. After the destruction of his spirit enhancement shop, he had been cut off from cultivation resource income. Now that he had been ordered to shake down some clans, he would finally get some money back.

As soon as he had the Dharmic decree in hand, he was filled with excitement.

“It’s going to take a lot of souls to practice with eighteen-colored flame. Too many to even calculate. There is really no trick I can use other than to simply practice over and over again!

“Ah, shakedowns…. If I shake down nine heavenly marquis clans, then I can get to work conjuring some flame!!” Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun took his army of 3,000 corpse troopers and immediately went to work with the list the Grand Heavenmaster had provided him. The time had come to do something that he was starting to get a bit entranced with… perform some shakedowns!

“Fudge. I started shaking down clans almost as soon as I got to the Wildlands. First in Giant Ghost City, and now here in Arch-Emperor City. In terms of shakedown skills, if I ranked 2nd in the Wildlands, then there wouldn't be someone who ranked 1st!” Looking very proud and even disdainful, he headed toward the first clan on the list.

As soon as he emerged from the Inspections Manor, it caused a big stir in the city. Even the most wicked and vile characters in the city got out of his way. The city folk trembled, and as for the nobility and aristocracy, they felt like they were in a nightmare from which they couldn't awaken.

One after another, he took his terrifying army of corpse troopers to the clans and shook them down. He cleaned them out, down to the grass on the ground. Anything of value was taken, even building decorations. A storehouse of grain attacked by starving rats wouldn’t have ended up as empty.

However, the star of the entire show actually wasn’t Bai Xiaochun, but Zhou Yixing. He was a true genius when it came to clan shakedowns, with eagle eyes that could find the most hidden of treasures. Thanks to him, every little thing was taken away.

In order to make sure that he had plenty of resources to work with when concocting flame, Bai Xiaochun even woke up the little turtle. The little turtle was also very fond of shakedowns, and when he worked together with Zhou

Yixing, they created a windstorm of calamity for anyone in their path….

Quite an audience went along with Bai Xiaochun to watch him shake down the nine heavenly marquis clans, and the sight left them stunned. Soon, all sorts of stories began to spread.

“This Bai Hao was born to shake down clans…. How heartless!”

“Heavens! He doesn’t even let the houses stand… he tears them down!!”

“What eyes he has! Every time he points his finger, he finds hidden treasures!! This Bai Hao… could he have been a packrat in a previous life?!?!”

The entire city was abuzz. Even more shocking to the people who were paying close attention was that Bai Xiaochun’s first shakedown took six hours. However, by the time he got to the fourth, he only needed four hours to clean the entire clan out, and even leave most of the buildings in ruins….

By the time he reached the seventh clan, he acted with explosive efficiency. He only took two hours to leave the seventh clan as little more than a crater in the ground….

And yet, that almost didn't count for anything. Most shocking was the ninth clan…. It only took a single hour, and when he departed, not even a grain of dust was left behind…. It was a stunning event to anyone who could see it.

Although Bai Xiaochun had experienced many things in his life, the amount of wealth he was amassing by shaking down these nine clans caused even his heart to pound. In fact, he managed to get his hand on quite a few complete fifteen-colored flames, and even some flames of higher quality!

Those completed flames were extremely important, because they would enable him to cut down on the souls necessary to practice with eighteen-colored flame.

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, seventeen-colored flames were like precious treasures.

By the time he reached the ninth clan, it took a lot of restraint on his part not to go shake down the clan located just across from them.

When the members of that clan saw his greedy, bloodshot eyes, they hurried out to confirm that their clan wasn’t on the list. After all, it would only take a single order on the part of Bai Xiaochun to send his 3,000 corpse troopers into their clan and ruin it completely.

Because of his frenzied shakedown of the nine clans, the name of Bai Hao grew even more infamous in Arch-Emperor City. In fact, it also spread throughout the Wildlands to certain almighty figures in the sects in the Heavenspan River region, who were privy to some of the things that went on in the Wildlands.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was basically addicted to shakedowns, and thankfully, it was at this point that the Grand Heavenmaster issued another set of arrest warrants. Seven more heavenly marquises were apprehended!

When the Dharmic decree came down, Bai Xiaochun was delighted. Laughing heartily, he descended upon the offending clans in a storm of shakedowns. As a result, the nobility and aristocracy in Arch-Emperor City began to use every means they could think of to reach out to the Grand Heavenmaster and express their loyalty.

For the first time ever, the Arch-Emperor voluntarily went into secluded meditation, which seemed to be a clear message that he was trying to protect the aristocracy and officials. However, the truth was that he was bowing his head in an attempt to win public favor.

The Grand Heavenmaster knew that, but didn’t care. He didn’t want public favor; he wanted people to fear him. And that was exactly what he was accomplishing.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased, and shook down the next seven clans with even greater efficiency. The spoils caused his eyes to shine as if they were made from gold.

He was not a person who cared much about wealth, and yet, was struggling against the impulse to go shake down all of the heavenly marquis clans in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty…. However, he was always careful to send ninety percent of the goods to Heavenmaster Hall, with one main goal being… helping the Grand Heavenmaster understand how fabulously wealthy these heavenly marquis clans were.

Furthermore, that wealth was one of the reasons for their wild ambitions!

Sadly, after striking twice against the heavenly marquises, the Grand Heavenmaster didn’t do so again.

Bai Xiaochun waited for a while, and then sighed sadly as he thought about the remaining ninety or so clans.

“The Grand Heavenmaster is far too merciful. It would be way better to keep shaking down more of those clans!” However, this session of shakedowns was over, and Bai

Xiaochun had no choice but to go back to the Inspections Manor, where he once again went into secluded meditation.

Thanks to all of the multi-colored flame he had acquired, he began to get more and more familiar with eighteen-colored flame. In fact, he advanced by leaps and bounds, to the point where it was almost impossible to calculate how much time and effort he was saving.

The fall of those sixteen heavenly marquises pushed the Grand Heavenmaster's power to new heights. The Arch-Emperor was now in seclusion, and so were the imperial princes and princesses. Nobody from the imperial clan dared to even take half a step out of their official residences.

Even the four heavenly kings chose to submit to the Grand Heavenmaster in this situation. None of them did anything to provoke him. The Grand Heavenmaster was currently the most powerful and glorious person imaginable, even more so than when he had become a demigod and forced the Arch-Emperor to become his puppet.

Three months passed by. Because of the shakedowns, and because of the Grand Heavenmaster's power, Bai Xiaochun was more famous than ever. In fact, there were few people in the Wildlands who hadn't heard of the name *Bai Hao*. Savages in tribes both large and small feared him, and his notoriety grew as the stories about him spread….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0780 awe-chapter-781

“So you’ve also heard of Inspections Commissioner Bai Hao? He kills people without batting an eyelid. He’s vicious and merciless, and a complete madman!”

“He’s a self-proclaimed wife-stealer who cheats his superiors and defrauds his subordinates! Everyone says that he’s an unabashed brown-noser who even managed to hoodwink the Giant Ghost King!”

“He’s very skilled with shakedowns, to the point where he doesn’t even leave the grass behind! He’s shaken down eighteen clans in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and is so ruthless everyone hates him!”

“He's a complete villain who cultivates an evil technique that absorbs life force! You can find people all over the place in Arch-Emperor City who had life force stolen away by him!’

According to the stories which were spreading through the Wildlands, this Bai Hao was a person who was wicked beyond redemption. In fact, in many of the savage tribes, his name was a very effective tool used to frighten naughty children.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t really care at all about that. However, his apprentice did! Bai Hao would occasionally go out into the city, thanks to the infinite shapeshifting abilities that came with being a ghost cultivator. Furthermore, since he was acting as Bai Xiaochun’s soul slave, he could go out and about without attracting any attention, as long as he maintained a stiff appearance. Besides, Bai Xiaochun had arranged for him to be escorted by corpse troopers wherever he went, and therefore, no one ever dared to cause problems for him.

Bai Xiaochun’s flame conjuring was a very expensive thing. Even with everything he had acquired in the shakedowns, he still couldn’t sustain the work for too long. After all, each attempt required ten tongues of seventeen-colored flame.

As such, both Bai Hao and Zhou Yixing would often go out to acquire more souls for him to use.

It was because of such frequent outings that Bai Hao continued to hear more and more stories with his name in them. From what he could tell, his Master really was ruining his name….

Furthermore, many of the rumors were the type that got Bai Hao worried about potential dangers.

As for Bai Xiaochun, as his resources drained away, he became more and more confident with eighteen-colored flame. In fact, he was fairly certain that with only a few more sessions of practice, he would succeed!

He was actually starting to get anxious, and was worrying about the same dangers that Bai Hao had already begun to worry about. After all, he had behaved with complete madness on the day of ancestral sacrifices, to the point where it clearly put him in a position of extreme danger!

Before, he had been a sharp knife wielded by the Grand Heavenmaster, and had thus benefited from his protection. But now, the Grand Heavenmaster was at the peak of power, and had suppressed everyone. Therefore, the position of inspections commissioner wasn’t as important anymore, and would in fact soon be unnecessary. When the world was at peace, there was no need for razor-sharp knives!

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but worry that the Grand Heavenmaster would eventually just discard him to earn back favor with the nobility and aristocracy. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao had discussed the matter, and both agreed that, considering the level of his cultivation base, no matter how great the danger he faced, there was one way he could save himself.

And that was… to become an earthly necromancer!

By becoming an earthly necromancer at just the right moment, he could definitely get out of even the most difficult situation!

“However,” he thought, “both Hao’er and I agree that the Grand Heavenmaster probably won’t get rid of me any time soon.… Maybe I'm just reading into things too deeply. Maybe the Grand Heavenmaster will continue to approve of me more because of everything I've done. Besides, even Hao’er thinks that his attitude might change soon.…

“After all, I was very careful to make sure that ninety percent of what I acquired in the shakedowns was sent to him. I refuse to believe that doing all that didn't make an impression on him. Although those heavenly marquis clans weren’t rich enough to fund the entire nation, they were still fabulously wealthy.…” With that, he looked down at the tongue of fire he held in his hand.

“All of that will be what I rely on for protection.… Maybe nothing will happen. But if there is even the slightest sign of danger, I can rely on the ruthless plan Hao’er came up with.… That plan could buy me some time, but it really is ruthlessly harmful. Although I don’t care too much about my reputation here, it would be best to avoid it if at all possible….

“However, if the Grand Heavenmaster forces my hand… then I’ll have no other choice but to do it!” Taking a deep breath to still his thoughts, he continued with his flame conjuring.

Even as Bai Xiaochun was worrying about potential danger, and doing everything he could to succeed with eighteen-colored flame, a pair of eyes like those of a viper had come to focus… on Bai Hao!

Certain forces had begun to gather every bit of information they could about him, and at the moment, a meeting was taking place somewhere in Arch-Emperor City, in an unassuming private chamber!

“The soul has no name, but is always at Bai Hao's side….

“The investigation in Giant Ghost City has concluded, and nobody knows where the soul came from….

“The first time anyone saw it was in Bai Hao’s spirit enhancement shop….

“It looks stiff and numb, like ordinary soul slaves usually do….”

There were thirteen shadowy figures floated within the darkness of the private chamber. It was impossible to see their features clearly, but all of them were gazing steadily at a person who sat in the very middle of them all. She was a beautiful young woman, and she was currently revealing all of the information gleaned from recent investigations into the soul-form Bai Hao.

If Bai Xiaochun were here, he would immediately recognize this young woman. She was Miao Lin’er!

She had fought Bai Xiaochun back in the Necromancer Kettle, and had also plotted against him after he arrived in Arch-Emperor City. However, none of her plotting had come to fruition so far.

“After Bai Hao became the inspections commissioner, the soul disappeared from public view, and remained heavily guarded inside the Inspections Manor. No one was able to get any information about it….

“However, during the past three months, the soul has been seen out in the city more often. Normally, it is acting on the orders of Bai Hao to purchase souls….

“It was last seen three days ago…. According to our calculations, that soul will appear at least one more time during the next two weeks!

“However, it is always escorted by at least 100 corpse troopers. It's the same with Zhou Yixing.” Miao Lin’er spoke slowly and clearly so that everything she said was very easy to understand. Furthermore, she was no longer dressed in the revealing way she had been before, but rather, more modestly.

“Therefore, I suggest… that we make our move the next time that soul appears out in the open!” With that, she clasped hands and bowed to the thirteen shadowy figures.

The thirteen figures remained silent for a long moment before one of them spoke.

“Are you sure that this soul is actually intelligent? If so, how intelligent? Has it been merely putting on an act to fool outsiders?”

Without the slightest hesitation, Miao Lin’er replied, “Although I’ve only personally seen the soul a few times, I am absolutely certain!”

Another protracted silence followed, after which another of the shadowy figures spoke in a raspy voice.

“This soul slave of the mad dog Bai Hao is obviously very important to him.... Therefore, you need to be absolutely certain that it can be used... to conjure eighteen-colored flame!!”

Miao Lin’er didn't respond at first. Instead, she produced thirteen bone slips from her bag of holding, which she sent flying to the thirteen shadowy figures.

After catching the jade slips, the shadowy figures studied their contents, and then soon, their eyes began to shine brightly. Clearly, the information they were seeing confirmed the answer to the question that had just been posed.

With that Miao Lin’er went on, “To our clan, the most important factor to consider in eighteen-colored flame is the flame spark.... With the flame spark, my grandfather can rise to the rank of earthly necromancer! Only after that point would he be able to conjure eighteen-colored flame without the use of this type of soul!

“Seniors, I can guarantee that all of you will get the formula for eighteen-colored flame afterward. In fact, my grandfather will even swear a Dao oath to that effect!

“Seniors, clearly you can see that Bai Hao’s days are numbered. The only reason the Grand Heavenmaster is still hesitating about him is that he hasn’t found the right opportunity…. In any case, that doesn’t matter. Bai Hao is already a toothless tiger. If he can’t reign himself in, then we won’t need to do anything. We just need to add a bit of fuel to the fire, and the Grand Heavenmaster will definitely kill him to appease the masses. At that point, Bai Hao's reign of terror will finally be over!”

Smiling faintly, Miao Lin’er looked around at the silent figures and said, “What the Grand Heavenmaster wants now is stability. Furthermore, what need would he have to get rid of people who have outlived their usefulness, if those people are already dead?”

Miao Lin’er wasn’t feeling anxious at all as she stood waiting for a response. She was extremely confident, and was sure that nothing unexpected would happen in the plan. The truth was that she hadn’t paid much attention to the soul-form Bai Hao. Because of the powers of Bai Xiaochun’s mask, Bai Hao had always looked like any other soul slave would. It was only when he and Bai Xiaochun were alone together that he would show any signs of being alive.

However… something had happened during the flame conjuring competition with Sun Yifan and Sima Tao! In the moment that Bai Xiaochun created a faint eighteen-colored flame, Bai Hao had been so emotional that not even the protection of Bai Xiaochun’s mask had been able to conceal it. In that moment, Miao Lin’er had looked over and noticed the change to his facial expression. Furthermore, the technique she cultivated had something to do with souls, which made her even more perceptive than the average cultivator in that regard.

Miao Lin’er did not belong to the clan of a heavenly marquis, but rather, a heavenly duke. Furthermore… her clan had once given rise to an earthly necromancer!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0781 awe-chapter-782

The earthly necromancer who had risen up in Miao Lin’er’s clan had long since perished. However, before that, he had been spectacularly famous, and had only been half a step away from becoming a heavenly necromancer. Before his death, he had managed to create a magical device linked to the bloodline of the clan, which made it impossible for anyone outside of the clan to acquire their formula for eighteen- or nineteen-colored flame. Not even a demigod would be able to acquire them without their consent.

Therefore, the good fortunes of the clan continued even after the death of that earthly necromancer. Although they had experienced something of a decline, they still had their reserve savings. Furthermore, Miao Lin’er’s grandfather was already at the peak of the celestial rank.

His main goal was to rise from the celestial rank to the earthly rank, and then restore the glory which had been brought to the clan by that earlier earthly necromancer. Their clan would shake the Wildlands, and would have a position higher than the clans with heavenly marquises and dukes. They would actually be on the same standing as the Grand Heavenmaster.

Unfortunately, their clan’s method for reaching the earthly necromancer rank was unique, and required a very intelligent soul to use as the primary ingredient. Only in that way could the requisite flame spark be created! Because of that, and because of the technique cultivated by the clan as a whole, they were particularly sensitive to the fluctuations of souls.

Unfortunately, intelligent souls were a rarity. Although their clan had managed to produce some throughout the years, none of them were perfect. Without a soul that met all the standards, any attempts to make eighteen-colored flame would be useless.

After Miao Lin’er noticed something different about the soul-form Bai Hao, she had immediately notified her grandfather. That prompted the clan to do more careful tests, whereupon it was confirmed that Bai Hao was exactly the type of soul they needed to make their flame spark!

Were it not for Bai Xiaochun himself, Miao Lin’er’s clan would already have made a move and snatched Bai Hao. Later, Bai Xiaochun skyrocketed to the position of inspections commissioner, and shook everything under heaven. At that point, they didn’t dare to provoke him, and simply bided their time.

But now… they saw the perfect opportunity. Although they still feared Bai Xiaochun, their desire to have an earthly necromancer pushed them to make a decision. They spared no cost to propose an alliance with thirteen other clans within Arch-Emperor City. They had showered them with gifts and even offered to swear a Dao oath to make it happen. With the full power of the alliance focused together, they were sure… that they could spirit Bai Hao away without leaving a trace of evidence!

At this point in the meeting, Miao Lin’er felt more confident than ever.

Some time passed, during which the thirteen shadowy figures took more time to think. Then, one by one, they swore Dao oaths and placed them into the bone slips, formalizing the alliance.

Miao Lin’er smiled a beautiful smile, then clasped hands and bowed.

“Excellent. The next time that soul appears, we’ll make our move! According to the strategy put in place by my grandfather, we will plan for the worst-case scenario. After we have the soul, our clan members will scatter and go into hiding in your thirteen clans. Three months later, my grandfather will be able to conjure the flame spark! And now, I’ll take my leave.”

With that, she gave a curtseying bow, turned, and glided out of the private chamber. Actually, Miao Lin’er was of the opinion that her grandfather was being too careful in all of this. Not even she had any idea where he would go into hiding after the clan dispersed. She didn't even know who the thirteen clans were that she had just been speaking to.

“Well, as long as grandfather is confident in being able to prevent the other clans from backstabbing us, then I guess we should be fine.” Although she couldn’t quite wrap her mind around what her grandfather was thinking, she was sure that Bai Xiaochun’s days were numbered, and that he would soon be dead.

Half a month flew by in the briefest of moments. Bai Xiaochun was now only a short step away from successfully conjuring an eighteen-colored flame!

His speed in progress was thanks in part to the extravagant wastage of resources, but also because Bai Xiaochun had begun to apply Bai Hao’s theories to the formulas of everything from fifteen-colored flame and above. That made things go even more smoothly.

Most importantly, he had already succeeded with a very faint eighteen-colored flame during the competition with

Sun Yifan and Sima Tao. Because of that, he was able to save a huge amount of time!

“This time, I'm definitely going to succeed!” he thought excitedly, his hair in disarray and his eyes bloodshot. He had hardly rested at all during the past several months, but he was still in extremely high spirits.

“It *has* to work! I’ve wasted virtually all of the resources from all of those clans.... After this current attempt, I’ll only have enough for two more tries....” During the recent period of intense work, Bai Hao and Zhou Yixing had been very busy selling items from Bai Xiaochun's bag of holding and using the profits to get more souls. In fact, both of them were currently outside, gathering the ingredients he needed for his final batches.

Bai Xiaochun took a very deep breath, closed his eyes, and then settled his qi and cleared his mind. After a long moment passed, he slapped his bag of holding and produced ten seventeen-colored flames.

Immediately, his hands flew out to either side, flashing with incantation gestures. At this point, all of his concentration was focused on the ten tongues of seventeen-colored flame, as he oh so slowly began to merge them together!

He had already attempted to do this on several occasions, and was quite familiar with the process. Gradually, the ten tongues of flame transformed into a sea of fire.

Incredible levels of heat rolled off of it, although it was contained within a 300-meter area. Anything beyond that wasn’t affected at all.

That was a trick Bai Xiaochun had come up with during his many sessions of practice!

“And now, it's time to start compressing it….” He unleashed the power of his cultivation base, and focused his divine sense. Nothing else in the world mattered to him in this moment; he was completely focused on compressing that seventeen-colored sea of fire.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

His secluded meditation facilities shook as the power being exerted onto the seventeen-colored sea of fire caused it to start shrinking down. From 300 meters, down to 270 meters. Then 240 meters, 210 meters, 180 meters….

And it kept going!

Beads of sweat popped out on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead, and he began to pant from the exertion. The fluctuations of his divine sense were somewhat disorderly, and yet, the sea of fire continued to shrink down. Soon it was 150 meters. Then 120 meters, 90 meters….

“This was where I failed so many times before….” He thought, working hard to maintain full focus. Soon, the sea of fire had shrunk down to 60 meters!

And things weren’t over yet! 45 meters. 30 meters. 15 meters!

By this point, the seventeen-colored sea of fire seemed like the sovereign of all types of fire! Intense rumbling sounds echoed out, and the fire leaped and danced as though it didn’t wish to be constrained.

However, all of the explosive activity was limited to that 15-meter area. As the shrinking continued, shocking transformations were beginning to occur. The fire began to burn hotter, and the seventeen different colors inside of it were beginning to overlap. It was a dazzling sight that not even Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense could make out clearly.

Furthermore, as the seventeen different colors flickered, it was possible to see… another color!!

“This is the last, critical moment!” he murmured excitedly. According to the formula, it was within the 15-meter area that the eighteenth color would appear. It was in that all-important juncture that, despite how his vision swam, he had to locate that additional color!

When he located it, he would have to lock his divine sense on it, causing that color to expand, to grow, to become… the eighteenth color!

At that point, he could make a portion of eighteen-colored soul medicine, or, if he compressed the flame all the way down, an eighteen-colored flame!

He would only have one chance, and if he failed… the flame would vanish.

The smaller the sea of fire got, the more slowly the colors would flicker, which would make it easier to spot and lock onto the new color. Unfortunately, he needed to exert more force to do that, which meant that the chances of dangerous instabilities were even greater!

This was another point where he had often failed in the past.

“I can’t fail again….” Forcing his breathing under control, he stared at the 15-meter sea of fire and tried as hard as he could to locate the additional color. Unfortunately, every time he sent his divine sense deep into the fire, it was rebuffed.

Time passed, and he was beginning to lose focus.

“I’ll compress it more!” he said with full determination. At this point, he abandoned his search efforts, and began to push the flame down to a smaller size. It was now 12 meters across, and the flickering of the colors was growing slower.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0782 awe-chapter-783

The slowdown compared to the 15-meter size was miniscule. In fact, most other people wouldn’t even be able to notice the difference. However, Bai Xiaochun was so focused on the sea of fire that he could immediately notice the difference.

And yet, even with that change, the flickering colors within the 12-meter sea of fire were still impossible to penetrate with divine sense. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bloodshot, and he was trembling physically from the exertion. By now, his cultivation base, his mental faculties, and his ability to shrink the sea of fire were all reaching the limit.

And yet, he didn’t attempt to shrink the sea of fire down again. He tried yet again to find the eighteenth color. Then he tried a second time, and a third time…. In the short time it takes an incense stick to burn, he was able to glimpse it a total of fourteen times.

“So, I was right. This time, things are going better. The last time, I was only able to glimpse it nine times. This time, that number has increased to fourteen.”

His spirits were lifted. However, despite having glimpsed it clearly so many times, he still wasn’t able to reach it with his divine sense. He sighed, then gritted his teeth and gave up on trying to form the eighteen-colored flame with a 12-meter sea of flame. Instead, he chose… to shrink it down again!

It was almost as if a huge pair of hands were physically pushing the sea of fire in on itself. It began to fluctuate, and even seemed to be teetering on the verge of destabilizing. Bai Xiaochun immediately adjusted his method of control, and when it stabilized, he forced it to shrink from 12 meters… to 9 meters!

Sweat poured down his forehead, but quickly evaporated into steam thanks to the intense heat of the sea of fire.

By now, Bai Xiaochun was panting nervously. Shrinking the sea of fire down to 9 meters was something he would only do if absolutely necessary. It was very draining on him mentally, and also caused the sea of fire to behave even more wildly than before.

Worse of all, his numerous practice sessions had led him to the discovery… that 9 meters was the absolute limit!

Although it was possible to shrink the fire down to 6 meters, if he did, it would be destroyed moments later.

After all of his experiments, he was fully convinced that although it was technically possible to shrink the sea of flames down to a size of 6 meters, and that doing so would slow the flickering colors so much that, if he then sent divine sense into it, the result would be the same as had occurred when he was conjuring in the presence of Sima Tao and Sun Yifan. He would create only a dim wisp, not a true flame!

It was only because of the powers of his mask that, over the course of the past few months, no one had ever sensed it when he created such flame wisps.

And in the end, what Bai Xiaochun wanted was, not a flame wisp… but a complete eighteen-colored flame!

“9 is the limit….” he murmured, eyes shining with focused determination. He knew that he couldn’t keep going for very much longer, so he focused all of his mental faculties on searching within that sea of fire for the new flame.

He did it in methodical fashion, not blindly. After the initial attempt failed, he tried a second time, then a third time…. On the fourth time, when he was certain he had identified the newly added color, he unhesitatingly sent his divine sense exploding out.

His eyes shone with glittering light as his divine sense fused with his vision, pierced into the 9-meter sea of fire… and latched onto the newly added color.

As his divine sense merged with the new color, the color became brighter, as though it were struggling with the other seventeen colors. The 9-meter sea of fire rumbled loudly as the other seventeen colors fought as viciously as a nation defending against an invading army!

But Bai Xiaochun was in control of everything, and refused to allow the other seventeen colors to interfere. Within the shortest of moments, the eighteenth color grew brighter and more shocking.

The entire room shook violently as… the eighteenth color appeared in full in the 9-meter sea of fire!!

As of this moment, it was crystal clear that the sea of fire had risen… to the level of eighteen-colored flame!!

Although it was still in the sea of fire state, all Bai Xiaochun had to do was use his flame conjuring techniques to return it to a state of flame, and that was nothing incredibly difficult!

For all intents and purposes, he was now looking at an eighteen-colored flame!

In the instant the eighteenth color appeared in the sea of fire, it was almost as if the fire itself had fused with heaven and earth, instantly causing drastic transformations.

They were clear signs and portents pointing to the fact that an eighteen-colored flame had been brought into existence!

Any given eighteen-colored flame was enough to shake all creation, and gave rise to something like heavenly tribulation. If Bai Xiaochun closed his fist down to create the actual flame, then those signs and portents would grow more intense, until visible manifestations could be seen in heaven and earth.

Even now, in the sea of fire state, there were still incredible fluctuations, although they were currently being covered up by Bai Xiaochun’s mask.

“It worked!!” he exclaimed, trembling. He had been waiting for this day for a very long time, had spent months doing research, had performed unending experiments, and had spent outrageous amounts of resources. And it had all been for this moment.

Although his heart was going wild with excitement, he took a few deep breaths, and calmed himself. Then, he began to close his fingers into a fist.

The 9-meter sea of fire churned and writhed, almost as if something inside of it were screaming. As it began to shrink down into his palm, though, certain fluctuations appeared that caused him to hesitate.

Those fluctuations were coming from his mask, and were an indication its powers were wavering…. If that happened, and Bai Xiaochun pulled the sea of fire all the way into his palm to create an eighteen-colored flame, then the drastic transformations that resulted would notify everyone in Arch-Emperor City of what had occurred.

And that would cause problems for his upcoming plan. Eighteen-colored flame was one of his trump cards, and to reveal it too soon would give his enemies the chance to prepare for it.

Eyes glittering, Bai Xiaochun committed every aspect of this conjuring session to memory, so that he could be completely confident in replicating it in the future. He wouldn't necessarily be able to succeed every single time, but he would at least have a sixty percent success rate!

Considering how confident he was feeling, he had to force himself not to go ahead and take the chance and form the flame. However, he could not afford to gamble in this situation. A trump card like this was far too important.

Therefore, he sighed in regret, then grabbed the sea of fire in a way that caused it to transform… into a portion of soul medicine!

It was something even more rare in the Wildlands than eighteen-colored flame… supreme-grade soul medicine!!

In some ways, this portion of soul medicine actually did prove that Bai Xiaochun had broken through to become an earthly necromancer!

He now had a higher standing than the heavenly marquises and dukes, and was someone even the Grand

Heavenmaster would have to treat with respect. He was one of only four… earthly necromancers!!

“Eighteen-colored flame…. Dammit, if it weren’t for that Hell-Emperor Stele, I would enhance my nascent soul right now…. It's been a long time since I did. That would put me right in the late Nascent Soul stage!” However, doing that would come with other risks. Therefore, he decided to simply wait for the right moment to skyrocket to prominence in one fell swoop.

It was a lot less glorious to be a powerful person who nobody knew about, and it immediately dampened some of Bai Xiaochun’s excitement over being an earthly necromancer. However, at least he could tell his apprentice. Feeling very proud of himself, he drew upon his mental connection with Bai Hao to call out to him.

“Apprentice, guess what Master--” However, before he could finish speaking, Bai Hao replied in an anxious voice!!

“Master, help m--”

Before he could finish speaking, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s utter shock that their connection… was severed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0783 awe-chapter-784

There was no possible way that Bai Xiaochun could have been prepared for the sudden and unexpected severing of his connection to his apprentice.

“Hao’er!!” he shouted, leaping to his feet, mind reeling with a sense of deep foreboding.

There was clearly no time to ponder the situation. All of the joy about becoming an earthly necromancer was cast deep into the back of his mind, which was now filled with only one subject: Bai Hao!

Without pausing for even a moment, he walked out of his secluded meditation chamber, flew up into the air above the Inspections Manor, and then shot with lightning-like speed in the direction he knew Bai Hao to have been in moments ago.

He even resorted to teleportations, moving with dramatic speed that caused whistling sounds to echo about. He vanished in the blink of an eye, and when he reappeared, he was on a crowded street near the edge of the borough that was home to the Inspections Manor, which was right in the middle of the city center!

It was a bustling street with many stores, and countless pedestrians walking every which way. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary about the area, but Bai Xiaochun’s sudden appearance, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds, caused countless people to look over in shock. Many even backed away reflexively.

“It’s Bai Hao!!”

“What’s he doing here…?”

As soon as people realized who it was, they started to get nervous. After all, everyone had been talking about Bai Hao recently.

Even more unsettling than his mere presence was the fact that his expression was profoundly grim, and he was even trembling physically, as if from rage. As soon as he arrived, his divine sense spread out to fill the area, and the killing intent present within it was like an angry wave that swept out in all directions.

In response, countless faces fell, and many people even gasped.

“What’s wrong with Bai Hao?!?!”

“Heavens, what is he going to do?!?!”

“What happened?!?!” Everyone was shaken by the murderous aura radiating off of Bai Xiaochun, and many of them immediately felt as if they were in danger!

It was a rare thing to see him like this; at the moment, he almost seemed out of control. His heart overflowed with anxiety, concern, and self-blame, a combination which pushed him into utter madness. He looked like he was ready to unleash a bloodbath!!

It was with bloodshot eyes that he scanned the street, his gaze soon coming to rest on one particular shop that specialized in selling souls. However, he couldn’t detect any evidence of fighting in the area, not even the fluctuations of magical techniques.

There were absolutely no clues present, and yet, Bai Xiaochun was certain that this was the area from which Bai Hao had messaged him urgently! As for the one hundred corpse troopers who had been assigned to protect Bai Hao, they were not harmed in any way. However, they appeared to have been tampered with in some way, as they simply stood in place unmoving.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and let loose a howl that shook all creation. It was a hoarse cry filled with fury and madness, that swept out like a mad tempest.

“Corpse troopers!!”

Instantly, the corpse troopers back in the Inspections Manor all shivered, and then shot toward Bai Xiaochun in beams of light, their murderous auras raging like vortexes around them.

Dramatic rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as 3,000 corpse troopers converged on Bai Xiaochun’s location.

“Lock down this entire area! Search every person, every shop, every alley. Search everything!! Find my soul slave!!” The 3,000 corpse troopers’ eyes began to shine with red light, and their murderous auras grew more intense as they fanned out and began to follow the orders Bai Xiaochun had just issued.

They even began to magically seal the entire area, including the soul cultivators, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, their background, or their status.

They searched the shops, and searched the cultivators, even their bags of holding. The shop Bai Xiaochun had identified as Bai Hao’s last known location was of particular focus in the investigation.

Of course, everyone was infuriated, and some began to angrily protest, and even refused to cooperate.

Bai Xiaochun remained in place, unmoving, seemingly not possessing any aura at all, only an intense, frigid coldness that caused frost to start to build up in the area.

His face almost looked like that of a corpse, his eyes growing more bloodshot by the moment, until they were almost pure red.

Coupled with his disheveled hair, he looked like a devilish god. Furthermore, the murderous feeling of the icy coldness made it seem like, if this person went crazy, he could eradicate worlds!!

He seemed completely oblivious to the commotion, immune to the shouting. In fact, he didn’t even see anything around him. He was completely wrapped up in memories.

First was an image of himself teleporting into the Wildlands and finding Bai Hao’s corpse.

Second was when he assumed Bai Hao’s identity, went to the Bai Clan, and found Bai Hao’s notes written on the floor of his hut….

Third was the Necromancer Kettle, when he actually found Bai Hao’s soul….

Fourth was when Bai Hao awoke, then kowtowed and called him Master.

Fifth was in the spirit enhancement shop, where the two of them had relied upon each other for survival, with Bai Hao constantly giving him advice….

There was a sixth and a seventh....

When he finally reached the last of the memories, his heart was as black as the night, and Bai Hao's voice rang in his ears....

“Master, help m--”

As he stood there with a blank look in his eyes, his corpse troopers were causing a huge scene as they searched the area. The commotion was growing more and more intense.

“What are you doing? Do you know who I am?!?!”

“Dammit! Even if you are the inspections commissioner, you don’t have the power to do this! I come from Heavenly Duke Situ’s clan! How dare you search me!!”

At one point, an old man furiously made his way through the crowd to stand in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao, I'm an honor guard from Heavenmaster Manor! If you want to go crazy, fine. I can’t believe you’re using your corpse trooper army like this all because of a soul slave. I'm definitely going to report this to the Grand Heavenmaster. Let me go immediately so that I can return to Heavenmaster Manor!” Other people feared the Inspections Manor, but this old man was a member of the Heavenmaster Manor. As far as he was concerned, the Inspections Manor was nothing more than an attack dog used by the grand heavenmaster.

Heavenmaster Manor was indeed a very special place. It was actually the clan of the Grand Heavenmaster, and this so-called honor guard was essentially a personal attendant of the Grand Heavenmaster.

Even as the old man was yelling angrily, Bai Xiaochun looked up, and without saying even a single word, stepped forward and punched him right in the chest!

It happened so quickly and suddenly that the old man couldn’t even react. Bai Xiaochun possessed battle prowess equivalent to a half-deva, power which completely overwhelmed this honor guard from Heavenmaster Manor.

A miserable shriek erupted from his mouth, followed by a stream of blood. He flew backward like a kite with its string cut, and before he could even land, the power of the fist strike caused him to explode into bits! A rain of blood and gore then descended onto the city….

Everyone was completely shocked by the sight, and looked over incredulously at Bai Xiaochun. That old man had been from the Heavenmaster Manor…

And yet Bai Xiaochun had killed him without uttering a single word!

“If anyone resists, kill them immediately!” he said in a hoarse, cold voice that echoed out for everyone to hear.

No one dared to offer any further resistance. It was at this point that Zhou Yixing finally arrived, just in time to see the old man getting killed. Then he looked around at the army of corpse troopers, and finally at Bai Xiaochun. The expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face instantly struck fear into his heart; he had never seen him like this before.

“Milord--” he began.

Before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun looked over and cut him off. “Find my soul slave!”

His gaze caused Zhou Yixing’s mind to reel, and even fill him with intense coldness. Without any hesitation, he joined the search effort.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0784 awe-chapter-785

The search didn’t last for long. The corpse troopers were like fiendish monsters, who demanded cooperation even if it wasn’t offered. Before long, all of the shops had been thoroughly searched, as had all the people.

Zhou Yixing’s efforts were particularly speedy and thorough. Because of all the shakedowns he had participated in, he was able to leave virtually no stone unturned.

Soon, the corpse troopers began to check in.

“Nothing here.”

“No clues at all!”

“Nobody here....”

After all 3,000 corpse troopers gave their reports, Zhou Yixing nervously approached Bai Xiaochun, lowered his voice, and said, “Milord, we weren’t able to find any clues at all.... We checked all the shops and all the people.... Nobody even saw that soul.... We looked especially closely at those shops over there....”

The more Zhou Yixing spoke, the softer his voice got, until he trailed off nervously and bowed his head.

As of this moment, all of the happiness and glory that Bai Xiaochun had felt were gone, replaced by intense coldness and bitter madness.

And of course, he blamed himself. His best guess was that someone had come to suspect his identity, and had taken

Bai Hao in an attempt to get evidence. He also felt guilty; if he hadn’t been so distracted and negligent, he wouldn’t have failed to provide Bai Hao with sufficient protection.

Most bitter of all was the realization that if he hadn’t been so immersed in flame conjuring, he wouldn’t have needed to send Bai Hao out to get souls.

“My apprentice… has done so much for me….” Bai Xiaochun’s heart hurt, and it was impossible to keep his emotions under control. He could not comfort himself, and could not even breathe steadily. It was very obvious that this was not just some random misunderstanding, and yet, he had no idea who exactly was targeting him.

With that, he took out his Inspections Manor command medallion and used its special ability to check the records of Arch-Emperor City going back several months.

However, no amount of searching produced any clues. The Inspections Manor had access to all of the intelligence reports in the entire city, and yet… he found nothing helpful.

After all, the Inspections Manor would usually have clues build up after an event occurred, and Bai Hao had gone missing only moments ago. If the Inspections Manor did manage to get some clues, they would likely filter in through reports that would come in days later.

But Bai Xiaochun couldn’t wait that long. Every breath of time that passed was a moment of danger for Bai Hao, and Bai Xiaochun knew that if he didn’t rescue him, he would live in regret for the rest of his days.

Anxiety rising to maddening levels, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and took out a transmission jade slip. For the first time since becoming the inspections commissioner… he took the initiative to contact the Giant Ghost King!

It wasn’t that he hadn’t thought to do so on previous occasions, or that he couldn’t. It was just that, as the inspections commissioner working directly for the Grand Heavenmaster, it wasn’t very appropriate for the two of them to have dealings. After all, the heavenly kings and the Grand Heavenmaster weren’t exactly on good terms. However, he had never forgotten the feelings that had grown between them. And right now, Bai Xiaochun didn’t care about the detriment of direct contact with the Giant Ghost King!

The events that had played out were too strange, and Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t come up with any ideas about what might have happened. And for some reason, he had the feeling… that considering not a single scrap of a clue had been left behind, he needed the help of someone with the experience and cultivation base of the Giant Ghost King. A demigod!

Back in the royal palace in Giant Ghost City, the Giant Ghost King was currently dining with Mrs. Chen. Even as the two of them laughed and chatted, he suddenly frowned and pulled out a jade slip.

Snorting, he transmitted his voice into the jade slip. “Well, if it isn’t the exalted Inspections Commissioner Bai Hao. What could possibly have caused you to think of me today? If you have something important to say, spit it the hell out.”

“Your Highness, I’ve run into some trouble….” As soon as Bai Xiaochun’s hoarse, maddened voice reached the ears of the Giant Ghost King, his jaw dropped, and his expression turned serious.

“Calm down, you little brat. What happened. Tell me everything!” As the Giant Ghost King listened, his eyes began to glow, and intense pressure began to radiate off of him. Gradually, he rose to his feet and walked out onto a balcony overlooking the palace. A grim look could be seen in his eyes as he stood there for a moment, and then responded to Bai Xiaochun.

“No evidence. No fluctuations. No clues… Those three facts alone are very telling. I know what happened! A demigod made a move against you. It seems unlikely that it would be the Grand Heavenmaster. After all, if he wanted to do something to you, he wouldn’t do so in such a complicated way. He could just wave his hand!

“However, considering that you’re in Arch-Emperor City, the fact that the deed was done with such seamless perfection indicates that it wasn’t just the work of a demigod. There must have been multiple clans working together to provide support…. That would be the only way to do it without leaving behind even the slightest evidence or clue!

“Bai Hao, you’ve offended so many people that I don’t think even I can figure out who was behind it….

“But at the moment, the more you get involved in this situation, the worse it’s going to get…. You’re a smart person, Hao’er…. Why don’t you just come back to Giant Ghost City? Leave that nest of vipers. Let’s see who would dare to plot against you with me around!” Not once during his little speech did the Giant Ghost King ask why this particular soul slave was so important to Bai Xiaochun, or who the soul slave was….

He had no desire to know, and actually felt that being left in the dark about the matter was the best thing.

The Giant Ghost King’s message caused a warm feeling to rise up in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. However, he knew that if he went back to Giant Ghost City, that it would cause the hatred of all the nobility and aristocracy to fall upon the Giant Ghost King himself. That was something he didn't want to happen.

Furthermore, he couldn’t just accept the fact that Bai Hao had gone missing. In fact, his killing intent only continued to grow stronger, and the intense coldness around him more biting.

“Hang in there, Hao’er,” he said in his heart. “I don’t care what storms arise because of it… Master is going to find you!!”

He swore this oath with the last bit of warmth that existed in his heart, after which it turned completely ice cold.

“I don’t care who did this… even if it’s a demigod. When I find out who it is… I’m going to exterminate their entire clan!!”

Without the slightest hesitation, he flew up into the air, followed by his corpse trooper army and Zhou Yixing. His destination was… the imperial palace!

Considering that this was a matter which affected all of Arch-Emperor City, the only person who could truly resolve it… was the Grand Heavenmaster!

Although Bai Xiaochun knew that the Grand Heavenmaster’s stance toward him had changed recently, and that the Inspections Manor was actually relatively weak within the power structure, he currently had no other alternatives.

“The Grand Heavenmaster treated me well in the past. Perhaps all the things I worried about before are unfounded. Maybe he doesn’t really want to get rid of me….”

A blood-colored glow could be seen in his eyes as he shot at top speed through the city toward the imperial palace. Upon arrival, he left most of the corpse troopers outside, and only took his Quasi-Deva Realm guard with him as he headed toward Heavenmaster Hall.

As of this moment, only two hours had passed since his connection to Bai Hao had been severed!

Most of that time had been wasted while the corpse troopers performed their search. Even still, Bai Xiaochun was reacting about as fast as was possible.

The Grand Heavenmaster wasn’t alone in Heavenmaster Hall. He was joined by eight other individuals, who were seated in front of him, respectful expressions on their faces as they talked in low tones.

Two of them were heavenly dukes, with one being Chen Haosong, and the other a middle-aged man with a beautiful, flowing beard. Behind those two were six heavenly marquises.

Currently, the person speaking to the Grand Heavenmaster was none other than the beautifully bearded man.

“Grand Heavenmaster, the sects from the Heavenspan region have been particularly active this year. They’ve been building up forces along all four sections of the Great Wall…. According to the clues we’ve unearthed, and the information provided by our spies, we are certain that the Celestial from Heavenspan Island… is preparing for an assault the likes of which comes around only once in a thousand years!”

It was in this moment that Bai Xiaochun requested to see the Grand Heavenmaster.

The request was granted, and Bai Xiaochun entered the hall and stood off to the side. As for the bearded man, he glanced briefly at Bai Xiaochun, and the continued speaking to the Grand Heavenmaster.

“Although the four heavenly kings have their mission to defend the border lands, they can do more than just be a passive threat. They can actively cast fear into the hearts of the enemy! I would like to propose placing more emphasis on watching all four sections of the Great Wall. Furthermore, your humble servant hereby requests to go to the front lines on the northern section of the Great Wall to offer military consultation!”

The Grand Heavenmaster didn’t respond at first. Instead, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, whose murderous aura and bloodshot eyes made him seem very different from usual. The Grand Heavenmaster’s brow furrowed….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0785 awe-chapter-786

The Grand Heavenmaster looked away from Bai Xiaochun and coolly said, “We’ll discuss your request in a moment.”

When the bearded man heard that, he held his tongue and looked over at Chen Haosong.

Heavenmaster Hall was very quiet. At this point, Bai Xiaochun looked up, took a deep breath, and prepared to speak. However, the Grand Heavenmaster didn't let him.

Looking over at Chen Haosong, he said, “Heavenly Duke Chen, did you also come to speak about the Great Wall?”

Chen Haosong’s expression was the same as ever as he took a few steps forward, clasped hands and bowed.

“Grand Heavenmaster, the situation at the Great Wall is urgent. The slightest unexpected circumstance there would have grave ramifications in the Wildlands. I also believe that we should beef up the defenses. We need to send more soul cultivators and more necromancers to hold the line!

“However, an effort like that would require much soul medicine and other resources. Grand Heavenmaster, would you please consider granting permission for this? Furthermore, I would also be willing to go to the front lines to supervise the war effort!” With that, he clasped hands and bowed again.

Considering that two heavenly dukes were essentially offering the same advice, even the Grand Heavenmaster would need to take it seriously.

“How much in terms of resources?”

Without the slightest hesitation, Chen Haosong said, “8,000,000,000 portions of soul medicine, as well as roughly 1,000,000,000 other items necessary for routine cultivation and spell formation construction. With those resources, I am confident in being able to prevent the Heavenspan River cultivators from taking even a single step into the Wildlands!”

No expression could be seen on the face of the Grand Heavenmaster, although he happened to be tapping the arm of his throne with his index finger. Inwardly, he was feeling very angry. The amount of resources being requested to shore up the defensive lines was much more than usual.

And yet, there was little the Grand Heavenmaster could do about that. Even though much of the aristocracy was loyal to him, everyone had their own personal ambitions, and wanted to further the glory and honor of their clan. That was why war efforts always involved significant expenditure, and also one reason that the Grand Heavenmaster couldn’t outright forbid the clans from accumulating wealth.

Again, Heavenmaster Hall fell into silence. Nobody spoke. Even Bai Xiaochun could tell what the Grand Heavenmaster was thinking, that the resources being requested were vast. On any other occasion, he would have been shocked to hear such numbers, but right now, he was so worried about Bai Hao that he didn't have time to think about the matter. Furthermore, every moment that ticked by meant more danger for his apprentice.

However, he could also tell that, to the Grand Heavenmaster, the matters at hand were more important than requests from himself. He couldn’t just interrupt. In fact, doing so would most likely make things worse.

He could only hope that the current discussion would be wrapped up as quickly as possible, after which he could ask for the Grand Heavenmaster’s help.

Countless thoughts ran through Bai Xiaochun’s mind, and because of his worry and anxiety, he didn’t even notice that the Grand Heavenmaster had turned to look at him.

The Grand Heavenmaster could tell that Bai Xiaochun was very anxious, and that he clearly had some important matter he wished to discuss. At this point, his eyes glittered, and an expression of displeasure appeared on his face.

“From the moment you arrived, Bai Hao, it was clear that you had some urgent matter on your mind. Could it be that the Inspections Manor has come up with some important new evidence?”

Shaken, Chen Haosong and everyone else in the room looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun could hardly breathe as he stood there and looked back at the Grand Heavenmaster. The clear displeasure in the Grand Heavenmaster’s gaze shattered any notions within Bai Xiaochun that the the man wasn’t interested in discarding him. Heart trembling, he decided that since things were bad, he would just have to hope to get lucky.

“Grand Heavenmaster, this matter doesn’t have to do with the Inspections Manor. Your humble ser--”

Before he could say anything further, the Grand Heavenmaster waved his hand to interrupt. “Since it’s not an Inspections Manor matter, then keep it to yourself.”

His words struck Bai Xiaochun like lightning, causing his mind to reel. What little bit of hope had existed in his heart was washed away with bitterness. Although he had long since come to suspect that the Grand Heavenmaster’s attitude had changed, to have that suspicion confirmed still caused him to shiver inwardly.

“If you want to get rid of me, fine, but you don’t have to be so obvious about it….” At this point, it was clear that he wouldn’t be getting any help from the Grand Heavenmaster in the matter of Bai Hao’s disappearance.

As for the two heavenly dukes present, their eyes flickered in response to the Grand Heavenmaster’s words, and Chen Haosong even smiled coldly.

From what he could tell, the Grand Heavenmaster was sending a clear message here that his previous tool was about to be discarded.

Various expressions could be seen on the faces of the six heavenly marquises, and all of them were chuckling coldly in their hearts. From what they could tell, it was obvious that this Bao Hao was about to be discarded, which would be cause of rejoicing for all of the nobility and aristocracy.

They were all very familiar with the Grand Heavenmaster, and knew that Bai Xiaochun was now like a rowboat in a stormy sea, who could capsize and sink at any moment.

What was occurring right now only provided more evidence of that very fact.

“Bai Hao’s days are definitely numbered!”

“It seems he will suffer a much different fate than the last inspections commissioner, Hei Ming…. Let’s see if he knows his place. If he's smart, he’ll simply resign, and hope that the Grand Heavenmaster gives him a chance to live. If he continues to serve as the inspections commissioner, then he’ll definitely end up dead!”

“Hmph. Even if he does resign, the Grand Heavenmaster won’t just let him go. He’s offended too many people. Everybody wants him dead! Without the inspections commissioner title to protect him, he’ll be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

Everyone in the hall was thinking something different, but all of them were looking at the situation with coldness. Although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see it in their eyes, he knew their general attitude.

He was having trouble breathing smoothly, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. Anxiety and worry regarding Bai Hao had completely consumed him. It was only made worse by thoughts of what would happen if his identity were revealed. And then there was the sudden change in the Grand Heavenmaster’s stance.

Furthermore, it seemed obvious that news of what had just happened would rapidly spread through Arch-Emperor City. Soon, all of the nobility and aristocracy would know. Before long, their fear of him would diminish, and they would begin to test and challenge him. It wouldn’t take long before he would have no way to make it out of the situation alive.

By now, it was obvious why people had felt confident enough to make a move on Bai Hao. Obviously, they had guessed that the Grand Heavenmaster planned to get rid of his inspections commissioner.

If he didn’t do something about the situation, then when the people who had taken Bai Hao learned of it, whatever fear they still felt would vanish. Bai Hao’s situation would be more hopeless than ever, and Bai Xiaochun would be in extreme danger.

If he wanted to save Bai Hao, he had to stabilize his position. He needed even more power than before. Only then could he strike fear into the hearts of Bai Hao’s captors, and at the same time, use his newfound power to get the clues he needed!

Everything revolved around the Grand Heavenmaster. No matter how he did it, he had to convince the Grand Heavenmaster not to get rid of him. And more than that, he needed to make himself more important!

Only then would he have a chance!

“You people are forcing me to do this!” he thought, gritting his teeth as he stood there trembling. At this point, he had to throw caution to the wind. He had to flip the table over! It was now time to follow the plan Bai Hao himself had come up with when Bai Xiaochun had first been appointed to be the inspections commissioner!

Bai Hao had come up with the plan based on speculations regarding what the Grand Heavenmaster would eventually do. Now, the Grand Heavenmaster was doing just that. In the past, Bai Xiaochun had felt the plan to be too ruthless.

After all, whatever killing intent the nobility and aristocracy felt toward him right now was only temporary, and would likely fade as the years went by. But if he went through with Bai Hao’s plan, then the nobles and aristocrats would hate him for the rest of their lives. It would be a hatred that seeped down into their bones, and even their souls!

That was why he had always hesitated to go through with it. But right now, he needed to be more important to the Grand Heavenmaster than ever. And he had to find Bai Hao! And since he couldn’t do it by himself, he needed the help of a benefactor. The Grand Heavenmaster! Furthermore, he needed the help of numerous people throughout the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, people who would act as his agents among all of the various clans.

He needed to know about everything that happened in all of the clans. Only then could his investigation produce the results he needed, and reveal the party who had captured Bai Hao!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he took a deep breath. Eyes bloodshot, he took a step forward in the direction of the Grand Heavenmaster. Clasping hands and bowing deeply, he spoke in the coldest, most sinister of voices.

“Grand Heavenmaster, your humble servant came here today because I have a plan. A plan to solve all of your problems!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0786 awe-chapter-787

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, all eyes in Heavenmaster Hall shifted to focus on him. The six heavenly marquises were clearly taken by surprise, and all of a sudden, they realized that Bai Xiaochun was the epitome of ruthlessness. Maybe he was a toothless tiger, but even still, he left them feeling very unsettled.

Chen Haosong and the beautifully bearded heavenly duke were visibly displeased, and their hearts were beginning to pound.

The grand heavenmaster looked over at Bai Xiaochun. When it came to his plan to cast him aside, it wasn’t the cause of even an iota of guilt within him. As far as he was concerned, everyone in heaven and earth was a pawn to be used at his leisure, and could be classified into only two types: useful, and not useful.

Before, this Bai Hao had been a useful tool. Now, he was not very useful. Of course, he hadn’t planned to kill him. Furthermore, the fact that he wasn’t useful at the moment didn’t outweigh the fact that he was important to both the Hell-Emperor and the Giant Ghost King. As such, he knew that he could potentially be made useful again later.

Furthermore, the words he had just spoken immediately sparked the grand heavenmaster’s interest. After all, he had not forgotten that Bai Xiaochun was the one who came up with the plan carried out during the ancestral sacrifices!

“Grand Heavenmaster,” Bai Xiaochun continued in a near growl, “your humble servant’s plan is the type which should not be made privy to too many people who are not part of it.”

Smiling, the grand heavenmaster waved his hand, and before the six heavenly marquises could react, they began to fade away, and were soon gone, removed to a location outside the imperial palace.

Unsightly expressions could be seen on their faces as they exchanged glances and then snorted coldly.

“He’s bluffing, that’s all it is. It seems this Bai Hao just won’t give up!”

“Hmph! Struggling all the way into the grave! Well, the more he does that, the worse off he’ll be!”

Meanwhile, back in Heavenmaster Hall, the grand heavenmaster’s expression was exactly the same as before as he said, “Go ahead.”

Other than he and Bai Xiaochun, the only people present were Chen Haosong and the bearded heavenly duke, who stood there motionless as they looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he looked over at the two heavenly dukes. As of this moment, he knew for sure that these two were trusted confidantes of the grand heavenmaster.

“Who would have thought that Chen Haosong is actually a close adviser to the grand heavenmaster….” His brow furrowed slightly as he thought back to everything he knew about Chen Haosong. Something about the whole situation seemed off, but there wasn’t time to ponder the situation right now.

Sighing softly, he looked at the grand heavenmaster and continued, “Your humble servant disagrees with Heavenly Duke Chen about what should be the priority right now!!”

Immediately, the grand heavenmaster’s eyes flickered, and the gazes of the two heavenly dukes turned sharper than ever.

“According to the traditions of the dynasty, there are 108 heavenly marquises, ten heavenly dukes, and four heavenly kings.... They are hereditary positions held in perpetuity, meaning that if a heavenly marquis dies, then as long as his clan isn’t exterminated, or some other drastic situations arise, then there is virtually no chance of someone outside of that clan taking on his mantle. Furthermore, only a direct descendant of the previous heavenly marquis can succeed him!” Bai Xiaochun spoke in an icy cold voice, and his eyes were both bloodshot and ruthless-looking. At the moment, he had decided to throw caution to the wind. Because he had no suspects in the disappearance of Bai Hao, he currently had to be suspicious of everyone!

“Even if there are no suitable successors because of cultivation base issues, the position will still remain with that bloodline, and they will simply wait for an appropriate person to rise up!

“That is why all heavenly marquises select their successors long in advance, and only from the direct bloodline of their clan. Special attention is given to that person in their cultivation, so that they can be groomed to be the perfect successor!

“That is how the arrangement works for heavenly marquises, and it’s the same with the heavenly dukes and heavenly kings!” Bai Xiaochun spoke with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron, and the grand heavenmaster listened with rapt attention. Clearly, he was very interested to hear what was to be said next.

Chen Haosong and the bearded heavenly duke were frowning, and were clearly completely in the dark about what Bai Xiaochun was getting at.

Flicking his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun raised his voice and continued speaking at a breakneck speed. “Because of this tradition, there are a bit more than a hundred clans who have an eternal place within the dynasty. Furthermore, they only grow more powerful as time passes, and accumulate staggering amounts of wealth!

“That wealth is the true source of their power, and their confidence! It is the foundation of everything! As long as everything goes their way, things are smooth. But with the right spark, they could erupt into violence with the resources of a whole nation at their disposal!

“In fact, if drastic upheavals ever struck the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and more than one hundred such clans joined forces, their profound resources would make them far too powerful!”

At this point, Chen Haosong realized what was going on. Eyes cold, he said, “Shut your mouth, Bai Hao. This is complete and utter hogwash!

“Perhaps the heavenly kings are exceptions, but the heavenly marquises and heavenly dukes run huge clans! They have to take care of every clan member, and make sure they have sufficient battle prowess, not for themselves, and not to rise up as independent forces, but as the reserve power of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!

“In fact, you have simply no idea how expensive it is to take care of a clan and increase its battle prowess. And that's all to maintain the reserve powers of the dynasty!” As far as he was concerned, what Bai Xiaochun was currently saying was very dangerous.

“I don’t know?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking over at him. Although Bai Xiaochun generally feared death, and was usually a coward, he knew that now was not the time to fall back on such tendencies.

“I think there are probably few people in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty who know more than I do about such things. How many clans have you shaken down, Heavenly Duke Chen? And how many have I?

“Do you know how much wealth I saw in each of those shakedowns? How much reserve savings?

“Well let me tell you. In fact, I’ll spell it out very, very clearly. I’ve shaken down eighteen heavenly marquis clans!! And you know what? Every single one of those clans had amassed wealth that could only be described as sufficient to shake heaven and earth!

“The Li Clan had saved up 1,000,000,000 portions of soul medicine, 279 soulgrounds, and 1,000 inactive large-scale spell formations. And how about the Chen Clan? 2,000,000,000 portions of soul medicine! That alone could fund thirty percent of the military expenditures you just referred to, Heavenly Duke Chen! Can you imagine how many cultivators it would take to use up that many resources?

“In the third wave of shakedowns, the clan of Heavenly Marquis Gongsun Dao turned out to have hundreds of thousands of sets of materials to create spell formations!

Plus, they had 10,000,000 soul bombs! If those bombs detonated, they could destroy most of Arch-Emperor City!

“If the heavenly marquis clans are like that, then what do you think the heavenly dukes’ are like?! In this matter, I will not be shutting my mouth. *You will!”* By the time he finished speaking, he was yelling. Chen Haosong’s chest heaved as he glared angrily at him, and yet, he was incapable of offering a retort. As for the grand heavenmaster, he simply sat there quietly, looking at Bai Xiaochun with shining eyes.

The one to speak next was the bearded heavenly duke. “Even if the heavenly marquis clans have deep reserve savings and power, Bai Hao, that only goes to show how strong the Arch-Emperor Dynasty is. One of the main reasons the Celestial can’t invade us easily is because of how intrepid and valiant we are. The resources we have help us groom our successors, and pass on their strength from generation to generation. They protect the glory of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and also ensure that there are only 108 heavenly marquises! In fact, that is also why the number of heavenly dukes and kings is limited!

“When you have a sharp blade, you keep it that way, you don’t grind it down until it’s dull!”

Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively at the two heavenly dukes. Focusing on the grand heavenmaster, he said, “Wrong! I believe that the most important principle in the world is fairness. Fairness is the only way to ensure the continued growth of the dynasty. That is the only way to guarantee that a dynasty can stand strong and tall!

“Why do these clans only view their certain heirs as important? Why do those heirs get all the resources? Why are other children of the clan so vastly unimportant? It's not fair to the other children, and it’s especially unfair to the bastards!

“Why is only a designated successor allowed to take over for a dead heavenly marquis, and thus control the wealth of the clan? It’s simply not fair to both the other members of the direct bloodline, and the bastard children!

“Therefore, I suggest… that the wealth of the clans that make up the aristocracy be equally distributed…. Give that wealth to all heirs, regardless of their status in the bloodline, and regardless of whether or not they are bastards. Everyone should have the chance to become a successor, and everyone should have an equal share of the resources!

“Heavenly marquises. Heavenly dukes. Heavenly kings…. Their wealth and resources should be equally divided among all their children!

“That would be a gift to the people, and grace to the commoners. Only in that way can the Arch-Emperor Dynasty grow stronger than ever. I hope that in the future, we won’t just have 108 heavenly marquises. I hope that we will have many more. And more heavenly dukes too!

“At the same time, everyone will proclaim the glory of the grand heavenmaster, thank him eternally, and offer oaths of unending loyalty!!” As his voice echoed out with thunderous volume in Heavenmaster Hall, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve to add emphasis to his words.

This was… a truly vicious plan!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0787 awe-chapter-788

It was a vicious plan through and through!!

In fact, it was vicious to a completely shocking degree, to a level that would leave many people bristling with anger. Chen Haosong felt like his heart was being struck by hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts. Face falling, he actually staggered slightly as he stood there.

“Grand Heavenmaster, you mustn’t do such a thing!!” he said, trembling. He had many heirs, and if this plan were carried out, it could shatter his entire clan!

Furthermore, nobody would be able to revolt against the Grand Heavenmaster because of it. After all, he wouldn’t be the one to take away the resources! The chaos which would result in each and every clan would force them all to do everything in their power just to remain stable!

In the end, it would essentially take all the biggest clans and reduce them to dozens of smaller clans!

With no clans able to maintain a dominant position, it would be hard to even state what the political situation would be in the years to come. Chen Haosong didn’t even dare to think about it.

“This Bai Hao is completely ruthless!” he cursed inwardly. “Why won’t he just go and die already!?!?”

This vicious plan was clearly an extenuation of the shakedowns. However, the ones to be shaking down the clans wouldn’t be Bai Xiaochun, it would be the children in the clans, and those people in the clan who were loyal to them!!

Bai Xiaochun was asking to hand a sharp blade to the bastard sons and the members of the direct bloodlines who had no right of succession. Then he would have them raise that blade up over the heads of the clan as a whole!

It was a very crafty plan. It would sow chaos within all of the nobility and aristocracy by turning the clans on themselves internally. The people who currently held power would be badly burned, and no one else….

After all, all of the children were members of the direct bloodline, and carried the requisite blood of the clan. Short of exterminating all descendents, any given marquis, duke, or king would be incapable of smoothly resolving all of the resulting conflicts.

Contrariwise, it would be a boon to the bastard sons and other children with no right of succession. Although such people normally did get access to better cultivation resources than the average cultivator, it was nothing compared to the true successors. For the most part, they only slightly benefited from the vast wealth of their clans.

But if this plan were to be carried out, everything would change…. Everyone would have equal access to the wealth, successors, non-successors, and bastards alike!

How could people like Chen Haosong not go mad!? How could they not be passionately opposed to it? Of course, unluckiest of all… were the current appointed successors!

They would be suffering catastrophic blows, and their futures would essentially be ruined! One could only imagine how much they would hate Bai Xiaochun. Whatever hatred they already felt would increase exponentially, and would permeate their very marrow.

As for the people currently in power, they would be skating on even thinner ice. All of the wealth they had worked so hard to build up, all of their savings, would be divided up in the clan. It would make it impossible for them to say if they could continue to bask in their previous glory.

On top of that, such people would then be forced to watch helplessly as their chosen successor squabbled and fought with the other children. Their hatred for Bai Xiaochun would reach towering heights, to the point where they would desire nothing more than to drink his blood, dine on his flesh, and crush his bones to bits.

Before, Bai Xiaochun had been a dangerous knife that could be directed at anyone, which was why everyone had wanted him dead. But now, that knife was threatening everyone!

“This is complete insanity!!” the bearded heavenly duke said, chills running up and down his spine. Although he was loyal to the Grand Heavenmaster, the mere thought of how terrifying this plan was left him in utter terror of Bai Xiaochun!

Scalp tingling in fear, he clasped hands toward the Grand Heavenmaster and bowed deeply. “Grand Heavenmaster, you mustn’t do such a thing!”

As for the Grand Heavenmaster, he sat there in his throne, breathing unsteadily, which was a rare thing. As he looked at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shone with brilliant light.

Never could he have anticipated that Bai Xiaochun would come up with a plan like this. From beginning to end, he had explained everything in perfect detail. As far as the Grand

Heavenmaster was concerned, there was no downside. And the upsides… virtually defied description. It was a plot that was tailor-made for him!

Although it wouldn’t necessarily resolve the issues of the military expenditures, it would solve the crux of the issue. The greed of the nobility and aristocracy would be ended. Furthermore, any profits they made in the future would be evenly distributed, which would lead to the overall strengthening of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty as a whole. Plus, everyone who benefited from the new arrangement would be deeply loyal to the Grand Heavenmaster, who would be the source of everything they had gained!

At the same time, it would prevent any one clan from becoming so powerful that they could eventually threaten his position!

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes were shining brightly. Before, the only use he had found in Bai Xiaochun was how he caused a big scene, striking fear into the aristocracy, and forcing the Arch-Emperor to go into secluded meditation. He had also pushed the Grand Heavenmaster to the peak of his current power.

But now, he thought back to all of the wealth Bai Xiaochun had sent to him during the clan shakedowns, and immediately understood the main point of the argument. And then, the gears in his head started to turn.

Now that he thought about it, the reserve savings of these clans… really were inappropriately large. He also understood that the very extreme circumstances in which he had exterminated eighteen heavenly marquises recently were very unique. At any other time, they would likely have led to a rebellion.

Furthermore, taking out eighteen heavenly marquises was the limit of what he was capable of. If he continued on with such action, it would lead to complete revolt.

That was another reason why he had been contemplating expelling Bai Xiaochun: to sate the anger of the masses.

But the plan which had just been presented was flawless. He didn’t have to take any risks, and would come out victorious without ever having to fight. He could dismantle the aristocracy with almost no effort.

If the plan were carried out, not only would people be unable to use it as an excuse to revolt, but most people would be delighted by it. Just as Bai Xiaochun had said, their profound gratitude would be given to the person who had given them the biggest chance of their lifetimes, the Grand Heavenmaster! Supporting him would be the same as safeguarding themselves!

As for the possibility of some unknown factors coming into play, the Grand Heavenmaster was confident in being able to handle them.

With such thoughts on his mind, the Grand Heavenmaster looked at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining with praise. As of this moment, he realized that his previous plan of getting rid of Bai Xiaochun didn’t make much sense. He was a rare genius!

He could cut down the enemy, handle important matters, and put good plans and ideas forward!

His heart was beginning to pound, and soon, he simply couldn’t cover up his pleasure. He began to laugh uproariously, a laughter which filled the two heavenly dukes with incredible terror.

“Grand Heavenmaster, you mustn’t do such a thing!”

“Please reconsider, Grand Heavenmaster!!”

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored the two heavenly dukes, and focused completely on the Grand Heavenmaster. And when he saw the praise in the man’s eyes, and heard his laughter, he breathed a sigh of relief.

He also knew… that not only had he resolved a major crisis, he had also pushed himself to new heights of power!

And yet, he felt no joy. His heart was still as cold as eyes, and his murderous aura continued to grow stronger.

“Just hold on a little bit longer, Hao’er….”

Laughing, the Grand Heavenmaster ignored the two heavenly dukes and turned to Bai Xiaochun. “A blessing for all living creatures. Divine kindness from above! From the mortals to the nobles, Wildlander clans will no longer be divided by age or bloodline. All wealth will be evenly distributed! Call it a Proclamation of Universal Grace!

“This is a wonderful thing for the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. In fact, I will support the new arrangement myself. Let it begin in Heavenmaster Manor, and spread to fill the entire dynasty. Heavenly marquises. Heavenly dukes. Heavenly kings. All will comply!” Continuing to laugh heartily, the Grand Heavenmaster rose excitedly from his throne.

“Bai Hao, hear my command!” he said, waving his hand dramatically.

“Your humble servant awaits his orders!” Bai Xiaochun said decisively.

“Henceforth, you will command 5,000 troops in your role as inspections commissioner. You will also be responsible for enforcing the Proclamation of Universal Grace. Take your leave and get to work!” With that, he flicked his sleeve, causing Bai Xiaochun and Chen Haosong to fade away from Heavenmaster Hall.

Only the bearded heavenly duke remained behind, frowning and sighing bitterly. He knew that there was no way to change what was happening, and that the plan was actually perfectly suited for the Grand Heavenmaster.

Taking a few steps forward, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Grand Heavenmaster, you can’t leave that kid alive. He’s truly venomous, a clan-reviling brute! First was the matter with the ancestral sacrifices, and now this…. The nobility and aristocracy all hate him! Even I can’t help but feel coldness in my heart!

“Furthermore, there are some questions about his identity. I think there is a strong chance… that he’s actually Bai Xiaochun!! His heart truly knows no bounds when it comes to evil!” Clearly, this bearded heavenly duke had truly been frightened by Bai Xiaochun’s plan.

“There are going to be a lot of people who support this new arrangement. The bastard sons and auxiliary bloodline cultivators are going to go wild with joy. The worst off of all will be the arrogant heirs apparent, and the chosen who already have a problem with him. He’s basically killing them by proxy!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0788 awe-chapter-789

The Grand Heavenmaster smiled, and a profound gleam appeared in his eyes. “This isn’t a matter of him getting someone else to do his dirty work for him. He’s going crazy trying to find his soul slave!”

“Soul slave?” the bearded heavenly duke said in surprise.

“Someone just captured that soul slave of his. Whoever it was knew how to do it in just the right way so that I wouldn’t notice in time. Furthermore, no evidence was left behind….”

The bearded heavenly duke was clearly stunned.

“Go look into who did it.” The Grand Heavenmaster knew that whoever had done the deed had planned on him not interfering. And the truth was that, before Bai Xiaochun revealed his plan, he wouldn’t have. But now he was hesitating.

The bearded duke hesitated for only a short moment. “I suspect that only *those* four would be able to do something like this. Your humble servant… will look into it immediately!” He paused, then added, “However, I still think Bai Hao is a ruthless schemer who must not be left alive!”

“You’re only looking at things on the surface,” the Grand Heavenmaster said with a profoundly intelligent smile. “The Giant Ghost King only has a single daughter, and therefore, Bai Hao’s plan won’t affect him. The fact that his plan protects the Giant Ghost King shows that he knows how to be grateful!

“If he was the completely ungrateful type, I wouldn’t dare to use him. However, considering that he is, I think I’ll bless him just the same as the Giant Ghost King has! If he follows the Giant Ghost King, his prospects will be limited. But if he follows me, he will have no such limitations!

“He is definitely a ruthless dagger, but the important thing is that I hold him in my hand. The Giant Ghost King doesn’t qualify, only I do.

“The Giant Ghost King tried to get him together with Zhou Zimo, right? Well, he likes Chen Manyao, so if he manages this upcoming affair properly, then I’ll give him her hand! Afterward, he can become my stepson!” Although the Grand Heavenmaster did not speak in a loud voice, there was something profoundly meaningful to his words. In response, the bearded heavenly duke simply voiced his assent and left.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun had appeared outside of the imperial palace, a very grim look on his face, his eyes shining with cold light, and his murderous aura seething. He looked like he had gone mad, and was now so tightly wound that he seemed ready to snap and kill someone at a moment’s notice.

He sent out a thought, which caused his army of corpse troopers to fly over, along with Zhou Yixing, who was feeling very apprehensive. It was without a single word that he followed Bai Xiaochun all the way back to the Inspections Manor.

He reached the place with blinding speed, and instead of descending and landing inside, he hovered in the air above it and pulled out his command medallion. After sending some divine sense into it, an image of the area below the manor appeared in his mind.

He saw more than 90,000 coffins, all of them visible in complete detail, and surrounded by a sinister and cold aura.

Without the slightest hesitation, he sent his divine sense sweeping over them, selecting 2,000 and saying to them, “Awaken!”

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The intense sounds which erupted out from the manor caused the ground to shake and the sky to flash with bright colors. Virtually all of the soul cultivators in the area could feel what was happening.

“Something is happening at the Inspections Manor again!?”

“What… what is that black cloud?!?!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe that so many coffins are visible! How is this even possible?! Isn't everybody talking about how Bai Hao is in big trouble?!?!”

Amidst the resulting commotion, quite a few people flew up into the air and saw what looked like a black cloud above the Inspections Manor, radiating a shocking murderous aura.

Even as everything in the area shook, the coffins began to swirl about through the air.

There were 2,000 of them, a shocking sight, and yet things weren’t over yet. At this point, the coffins began to open up, and numerous black-armored corpse troopers emerged from within them.

Especially noteworthy was the fact that five of the coffins were unique. All of them had ornate designs on them, and as for the last of that group, it was a different color: silver!!

From within the first four of those coffins emerged… hulking, black-armored corpse troopers who had half-deva cultivation bases!

Most shocking, though, was the figure which emerged from the silver coffin, a middle-aged soul cultivator… with silver armor!

Just like all the other corpse troopers, his face was completely expressionless, and he was surrounded by a shockingly cold air. However, as soon as he opened his eyes, thunder crackled in the air above, and the fluctuations of a deva erupted out from him.

At the same time, the command medallion in Bai Xiaochun’s hand vibrated a few times. There was something completely obstinate and unyielding about this silver-armored warrior that the command medallion instantly identified and connected with.

As the deva fluctuations erupted out, the burly man’s murderous aura erupted out, and it was so strong that it immediately caused the other roughly 5,000 corpse troopers to tremble, as if they were matchlessly weak.

As for the nine half-deva corpse troopers, they were also trembling. The only one who didn’t was that one corpse trooper who always accompanied Bai Xiaochun. As he looked up, his eyes shone with a strange light, and he also erupted with the shocking fluctuations of a deva. Clearly, he and the silver-armored corpse trooper were equally matched!

Everyone who saw that gasped and was completely taken aback!

“Heavens! He has two deva corpse troopers, nine half-devas, and an army 5,000 strong!!”

“Dammit! Whoever was just saying that Bai Hao is in trouble was obviously just trying to start rumors! He’s not in any trouble. He’s gotten more powerful than ever!!”

“He's already at the same level as the previous inspections commissioner, Hei Ming! 5,000 corpse troopers….”

“That’s the same level of power as the four heavenly kings and the Grand Heavenmaster! Bai Hao is the number one figure under the Demigod Realm!!”

Shocked, people began to take out jade slips to spread the news. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun hovered in the air above the Inspections Manor, looking at the two most powerful corpse troopers facing off. Clearly, the silver-armored corpse trooper didn’t want to be controlled. Under normal circumstances, Bai Xiaochun might have been inclined to talk things over, and maybe figure out another way to get the silver-armored corpse trooper to submit.

But right now, he was in a very bad mood, and was in the grips of madness. The silver-armored corpse trooper’s obstinacy only served to get on Bai Xiaochun’s nerves. Eyes growing colder, he reached out and pointed at the corpse trooper.

Instantly, his Quasi-Deva Realm corpse trooper burst into action, as did his nine half-deva troopers, murderous auras raging as they attacked the silver-armored corpse trooper.

Of course, that wasn’t enough. The rest of the 5,000-man-strong army all howled as they attacked along with the others.

Rumbling booms immediately filled the air. At the moment, it didn’t matter that the silver-armored corpse trooper was a deva, he could only last for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, whereupon he slammed down into the ground. At first, he still seemed defiant, but the most powerful of the black-armored corpse troopers bashed him with another divine ability, whereupon he shivered and finally showed compliance.

With that, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve and paid no more heed to the matters of the corpse troopers. Flickering into motion, he headed into his secluded meditation chamber, where he sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes.

He was waiting for the official announcement of the Proclamation of Universal Grace!

From what he could guess, it wouldn’t be much more than a few hours before that happened. The Proclamation of Universal Grace… would definitely shake the entire city, and quickly shock all of the nobility and aristocracy in the Wildlands!

Furthermore, the news that he had 2,000 additional corpse troopers had been witnessed by many people in the area of the Inspections Manor, and as they began to spread the news, all of the aristocracy in the city heard.

“Wait a second…. What happened? How could this have happened?!”

“I thought he was in trouble and couldn’t defend himself! As it turns out, he’s as aggressive as ever! Something fishy is going on!”

“Why do I suddenly have a very, very bad feeling?!?!”

“Something big is about to happen!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0789 awe-chapter-790

The appearance of a whole new group of corpse troopers in the Inspections Manor was a source of complete shock to many people, especially the nobility and aristocracy, among whom numerous speculations began to run wild.

“This doesn’t make sense….”

“Bai Hao is supposed to be stuck in an inescapable quagmire!”

“The only option he had was to resign as the inspections commissioner…. But now, he's not only fine, he’s actually stronger than before!”

Everyone in Arch-Emperor City was completely shaken, and the nobility and aristocracy immediately poured all the resources they could into investigating what was happening. That was especially true of the leaders of the various clans who had banded together to capture Bai Hao.

Although they felt like something was off about the situation, they could find no explanation. Furthermore, they didn’t dare to make too much of a scene, and could thus only wait, stewing in their speculations until the truth came to light.

The chosen who had been in conflict with Bai Xiaochun were all grinding their teeth furiously that he had unexpectedly extricated himself from a deadly situation, and even come out stronger than before.

“How come he’s not dead!?!?”

“It must be a bluff!”

Virtually all of those chosen soul cultivators were from the direct bloodlines of various important clans, and many of them were the successors selected by the older members of the clan. They were the very ones who had access to vast amounts of cultivation resources, and had thus reached their current level of cultivation.

There were many bastards and other siblings and relatives who were eclipsed by their glory, people who were vastly separated from them both in terms of cultivation base and the resources they had access to.

Of course, such people were still members of great clans, and thus surpassed ordinary soul cultivators in most aspects. But in terms of cultivation resources, their only hope to truly benefit was to make sure they stuck closely to the chosen successors in the clans.

This had been the state of affairs in the aristocracy of the Wildlands for many generations. Although occasional situations arose in which people rebelled against their clan’s arrangements, they usually suffered miserable fates.

When Zhao Dongshan heard the news about Bai Hao, he was in a courtyard in his clan. He was so angry that he lashed out at a nearby tree, which shattered into countless fragments that peppered other nearby members of the clan. However, none of them dared to dodge to the side, and merely stood there quietly.

Many of the people present were siblings of Zhao Dongshan, many of them bastards. Outside the clan, they could act in grand and domineering fashion, but inside the clan, they had to bow their heads and act fawningly to the successor, Zhao Dongshan.

At the moment, Zhao Dongshan’s face was extremely grim, and his eyes burned with unyielding light.

“Bai Hao!!” he growled through gritted teeth. He feared Bai Hao, but even more so, was jealous of him. Bai Hao had trampled him underfoot from the Necromancer Kettle all the way to Arch-Emperor City. Furthermore, it had only been a few months since Bai Hao had forced him to offer formal greetings the way a junior would to a senior. His anger still burned hot because of that incident.

However, he could only suppress his killing intent in his heart, at least until Bai Hao was thoroughly and utterly defeated. After all, he couldn’t ever forget the fate of Li Tiansheng.

“I refuse to believe that he’ll remain in power forever!” Angrily flicking his sleeve, he looked around at those siblings of his who had been born out of formal wedlock. He was a fundamentally irritable person, and because he was the appointed successor in the clan, he often acted in overbearing fashion toward the other clan members.

“All of you line up. I want to do some sparring!” He immediately headed toward one of the younger members of the clan, who was a sibling of his. The young man’s expression flickered, but he didn’t dare to refuse to fight. However, almost as soon as he made a move, it was obvious that he wasn’t a match for Zhao Dongshan. A boom rang out, and the young man tumbled backward, blood spraying out of his mouth.

The other clan members’ expressions flickered, and their scalps tingled in fear. However, they had no choice in the matter. One by one, more booms and crashes could be heard as dozens of Zhao Clan cultivators were flung this way and that, coughing up blood.

“Useless trash, all of you!!” Zhao Dongshan shouted. Although his words angered all of the other clan members, they knew that he was venting his frustration, and that they had no option of resisting. They simply had to endure.

Zhao Dongshan was aware that they were only enduring because they had no other choice, and yet, he didn’t care. He was the clan’s successor, its future heavenly marquis. No matter how angry the other clan members got, they had to simply bow their heads, lest they be accused of rebellion.

Zhao Dongshan snorted coldly and prepared to vent a bit more frustration when, all of a sudden, a bright beam of light shot toward them from some distance away. It was none other than an old servant, who had an expression of alarm on his face, and was panting furiously, as though he had just experienced some terrifying ordeal.

He was actually preparing to fly right over Zhao Dongshan and head directly to the heavenly marquis pagoda. However, Zhao Dongshan frowned and shouted, “What’s got you in such a hurry, Sun Fu? Some disaster or something?!”

The old man apparently didn’t hear him, which led to no small amount of irritation on Zhao Dongshan’s part. In fact, he waved his hand, causing a rumbling sound to fill the air as the old man was knocked out of the air. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he looked around, surprised. That was when he noticed Zhao Dongshan looking at him with a grim expression.

“Something big has happened, Crown Prince!!” the old man said in a shaky voice. “Everybody outside is talking about it.… The Grand Heavenmaster is about to issue a Dharmic decree, something called a Proclamation of Universal Grace. At its core… it will force all the clans to distribute their resources evenly among all the potential heirs in the clan…. It doesn’t matter if you’re a bastard or a non-successor, as long as you have the right blood in you, you’ll be treated equally!!”

Zhao Dongshan felt completely and utterly thunderstruck. It seemed too incredulous to believe, so much so that he stepped forward and grabbed the old man. “What did you just say?!”

“I'm not making it up!” the old man said, shivering. “Everybody outside is talking about it….”

Zhao Dongshan was just about to start yelling again when, all of a sudden, the sound of bells could be heard from the imperial palace, ringing out to fill all of Arch-Emperor City.

Whenever those bells tolled, it meant something extremely important was happening.

As the bells tolled, a somber voice could be heard speaking, reaching the ears of everyone in the city!

“The founder of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty once said…

“That all living things should be treated equally….

“From this day forward, from the imperial court on down, the children of the clans, whether they be bastards or non-successors, will have equal access to the wealth and resources of their clans!

“A new golden age is about to begin for our imperial dynasty!”

Everyone who heard the words felt as though their hearts were leaping in their chests. Zhao Dongshan was gasping for breath, his eyes shining with disbelief as he stood there trembling, his mind a blank. All of a sudden, he looked around at all of his siblings.

Before, they had averted their gazes, but now, they looked back at him with blazing eyes. Zhao Dongshan recognized that fire… it was ambition!

“Impossible. This is completely impossible….” he said, shivering. Meanwhile, all of the other clans in Arch-Emperor City had descended into deathly silence. As for the heavenly marquises, their expressions flickered, and their minds felt like they were about to explode.

“This Proclamation of Universal Grace is going to be the end of the dynasty!!”

“This is absurd! What does the Grand Heavenmaster think he’s doing!?!?”

“Dammit. Dammit! Whose idea was this? Why does this Proclamation of Universal Grace seem like just as vicious a plan as what happened on the day of ancestral sacrifices!?!?”

The immediate response to the Proclamation of Universal Grace was for Arch-Emperor City to go completely silent. But then, a huge commotion ensued. That was when the crushing demigod might of the Grand Heavenmaster descended from the imperial palace.

At the same time, the auras of five heavenly dukes joined the Grand Heavenmaster’s to fill the city….

That was when Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes within his secluded meditation chamber in the Inspections Manor. Slowly rising to his feet, he took a step forward to appear in midair above the manor, his bloodshot eyes shining with cold light.

Swishing his sleeve, he loudly said, “Corpse troopers, assemble immediately…. The time has come to enforce the Proclamation of Universal Grace!”

As his voice rang out, all of his 5,000 corpse troopers flew over, murderous auras burning with intense power.

“We’ll start with the heavenly marquis clans!” With that, he flew up into the air, followed by the corpse troopers. His first destination… the Zhao Clan!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0790 awe-chapter-791

The nobility and aristocracy in Arch-Emperor City were deeply shaken. Despite the fact that the Grand Heavenmaster and five heavenly dukes had unleashed incredible pressure, there were still other heavenly marquises and dukes who flew out of their clans and headed to the imperial palace to offer formal greetings to the Grand Heavenmaster.

As far as everyone was concerned, this Proclamation of Universal Grace was incredibly malevolent. Furthermore, everyone believed that it mustn’t be allowed to stay in effect for very long. If it did…

The consequences would be unimaginable!

However, even as the heavenly marquises and dukes joined forces to head to the imperial palace, Bai Xiaochun was leading his army of fierce corpse troopers toward the Zhao Clan.

He was in a state of madness, moving at top speed, and thus, it didn’t take long for his 5,000 corpse troopers to descend on the clan, surrounded by a black vortex that was their murderous aura.

Although the Zhao Clan seemed peaceful and quiet, the bastard children and non-successors of the bloodline couldn’t have been more excited. After the Grand Heavenmaster’s Dharmic decree came down, the ambitions they had forced to keep hidden for their entire lives suddenly blossomed, causing their hearts to race!

Everyone was to be treated equally! Everyone was to have fair access to resources!

It was a beautiful prospect that had everyone affected bursting with excitement. The only angry one was Zhao Dongshan, as he realized that the assets that were his inheritance by right would soon be divided up equally among everyone else.

Although he was furious to the point of going crazy, he didn't dare to go against the orders of the Grand Heavenmaster. All of his hopes rested with his father, who had gone to the imperial palace with the other heavenly marquises.

“This isn't a Proclamation of Universal Grace! It's Proclamation of Clan Shakedowns!!” As he stood there gritting his teeth, he glared around angrily at the bastards and auxiliary bloodline cultivators.

He was just starting to get restless from anger when Bai Xiaochun arrived. He hovered in the air above the clan, expression grim and eyes cold. With every moment that ticked by, his anxiety and madness grew stronger. All of the clan members down below who looked up at the black vortex of the corpse troopers' murderous aura were shocked. However, many of them had actually been waiting for Bai Xiaochun to show up, and were feeling more excited than ever.

They felt very differently from the last time Bai Xiaochun had come. As for Zhao Dongshan, he looked up, expression flickering, and prepared to speak. Before he could, though, Bai Xiaochun's cold voice rang out to fill the entire Zhao Clan.

“The Grand Heavenmaster has spoken. He has issued the Proclamation of Universal Grace, which all subjects of the dynasty are required to comply with, regardless of rank or status.... I have come here in my role as the inspections commissioner, to represent the Grand Heavenmaster in enforcing the proclamation!”

Numerous soft gasps could be heard in the clan, many of them filled with excitement. The bastard children and non-successors all looked on with brightly shining eyes.

Zhao Dongshan’s face fell even further, and his eyes widened. “It was you!! Dammit. It was you! This vicious plan was yours all along! That's why you were able to consolidate your power with the Grand Heavenmaster!!”

Zhao Dongshan understood everything in an instant. After all, it wasn’t a very difficult puzzle to solve. The recent stir from the Inspections Manor happened right before the Proclamation of Universal Grace was issued. The slightest amount of thought into the matter would reveal the underlying truth.

Zhao Dongshan’s madness, and his previous hatred, made it so that he couldn’t hold back from shouting. “Bai Hao, you’d--”

But he had picked the wrong time to react in such a way. The madness in Bai Xiaochun’s own heart had reached the point that he could erupt with brutal violence at any moment.

“Hmm?” Bai Xiaochun said, a cold light flickering in his eyes. He took a step forward, vanishing and then reappearing right in front of Zhao Dongshan. Without the slightest hesitation, he then clenched his hand into a fist and punched out!

The fist strike seemed to be filled with all the fury that existed in his heart. It caused the air to vibrate and shatter, and although the shocked Zhao Dongshan tried to defend himself, his battle prowess was vastly inferior to Bai Xiaochun's. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was flung backward several hundred meters, where he slammed into a building that then collapsed on top of him.

Although some of the other nearby clan members had instinctually stepped forward to interfere, most of them subsequently stopped in place. Then, they simply watched with glittering eyes as Bai Xiaochun took another step forward, placing him right in the middle of the collapsed building, directly in front of Zhao Dongshan, who had been struggling out of the rubble. Zhao Dongshan's eyes went wide with terror at the realization that Bai Xiaochun had come after him again, and he immediately tried to back up.

But Bai Xiaochun was too fast. His hand exploded out with lightning speed to grab Zhao Dongshan by the throat and lift him up into the air. Then, he sent some cultivation base power pouring into him to seal him.

“Was it you?!” Bai Xiaochun asked, his eyes as cold as midwinter snow as he stared at Zhao Dongshan. The way his gaze stabbed into Zhao Dongshan's eyes made it seem like he was capable of seeing all the secrets inside of him. Zhao Dongshan's heart immediately began to pound, and he started panting.

Without even thinking about it, Zhao Dongshan tried to struggle free, but couldn't. The strength of Bai Xiaochun's right hand was completely terrifying. “What are you talking about? Don't do anything rash.…”

That was what he tried to say, but actually couldn’t. The only thing which came out of his mouth were some indistinct gurgling sounds. By this point, a sense of imminent deadly crisis had risen up in his heart.

“He’s crazy!” he thought. “Dammit, this Bai Hao is a madman!!” Zhao Dongshan’s heart pounded in his chest as he realized that he was likely moments away from death.

Bai Xiaochun looked at Zhao Dongshan for a moment, then slowly closed his eyes. Zhao Dongshan’s expression had revealed nothing but fear of death. Considering how hot-headed he was, if he had been involved with the incident with Bai Hao, then the fact that he knew something about it would have shone in his eyes.

“So he’s not in on it…?” he thought, his anxiety mounting. However, he didn’t release Zhao Dongshan. Instead, he turned to look at the young clan members in the area, the ones who were obviously Zhao Dongshan’s siblings.

“The Proclamation of Universal Grace *will* be enforced, and I’m here to supervise…. All of you should have fair and equal access to the resources of your clan!

“The people to benefit from the proclamation are those of you who never had any hope of becoming the successor of the clan, and those of you who were born bastards. If you refuse to support the proclamation, then the only people you will be hurting are yourselves!

“If you want the proper amount of resources, then I need you to tell me everything you know about your clan. Tell me about your parents, the members of the elder generation, the heavenly marquis…. The extent of the wealth of your clan will determine how much resources you get!

“The more you tell me, the more information I’ll have for my records. That’s the only way to ensure that the resources are distributed evenly. And in the end, you will get the fairest division of the clan assets!

“I have the power to grant rewards during the carrying out of the Proclamation of Universal Grace. Therefore… whoever among you gives me the most information will get the biggest rewards!

“As all of you can tell, this entire thing is for your benefit. That is why… I need to know everything about the Zhao Clan. And sometimes, the clan’s assets are not physical items, but rather information, reports, and secrets. Such things are oftentimes far more valuable than the material assets!!” The other clan members were getting more excited by the moment, and their eyes were already shining with greed.

They were bursting with excitement and ambition, to the point where some were on the verge of going crazy. From what Bai Xiaochun had just said, they could all tell that the Proclamation of Universal Grace really had been issued to benefit them!

If they wanted to get their share of the assets, then it was important to have a true understanding of what the clan possessed…. And when it came to that, no one on the outside could possibly know as much as the people inside the clan itself.

By this point, Zhao Dongshan’s terror had reached the point of panic. On the one hand, he was terrified at the prospect of dying, but on the other hand, if people took the clan assets, they were basically taking away his inheritance.

Although it was driving him into madness, his cultivation base had been tightly sealed, and he was being physically held by Bai Xiaochun. He had no choice but to wait and see what would happen, his heart filled with mixed emotions of all sorts.

Bai Xiaochun could see how excited everyone was. Looking back at Zhao Dongshan for a moment, he then tossed him into another nearby building, which also collapsed on top of him. Then he flew into motion, taking his 5,000 corpse troopers with him as he went on to his next target… the next heavenly marquis clan!

As he left, Zhao Dongshan crawled out of the rubble of the second building, staggering a bit as he looked around at all of the familiar faces around him. These were his siblings, who he had known for many years, but now, they looked like a pack of wolves….

His heart trembled, and suddenly, the sky seemed dark.

“I'm finished….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0791 awe-chapter-792

Bai Xiaochun took action at the perfect time: the very moment that the Grand Heavenmaster's Dharmic decree was sent out, shaking Arch-Emperor City and causing all of the heavenly marquises to band together and go to the imperial palace.

It was a time when the nobility and aristocracy were completely unstable, and because of that, Bai Xiaochun swept across them like a windstorm. The successors were struck with fear, and the bastards and direct bloodline non-successors were shown staunch support. For the latter… they now had a justification to be ambitious, as well as something they had never even been able to dream of before: hope!

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun hadn't planned out his timing at all. He had simply been anxious, and hadn't dared to delay any longer than necessary. He would have shown up at the clans even if the heavenly marquises hadn't left. After all, he had two deva corpse troopers, four half-devas, and 5,000 in the Nascent Soul stage. He could even assault the manors belonging to heavenly dukes, much less those of the heavenly marquises.

It was with rapid speed that he began to move out from the Zhao Clan into the other boroughs, toward the other heavenly marquis clans.

There were roughly ninety of them, scattered throughout Arch-Emperor City. Virtually every borough in the city had one, and as soon as Bai Xiaochun arrived, he would immediately take action and grab the appointed successor of the clan.

And he would ask the same question of each one. *Was it you?*

He accompanied the words with raging killing intent, casting fear into the hearts of the clan successors he grabbed. However, he didn’t turn up any clues, which caused his anxiety to grow, and his voice to grow more filled with rage.

At every clan, he would address bastards and direct bloodline non-successors alike, repeating the words he had first spoken in the Zhao Clan. The only difference was that he began to speak more and more directly.

“Tell me everything about your clan!

“Tell me what assets your clan has!

“Tell me about your clan’s reserve savings!

“And tell me about your clan’s troop movements. Did anyone new show up recently? Was there any suspicious activity among the elder generation? What has your heavenly marquis been up to…? Tell me your clan’s secrets, your hidden resources, your intelligence reports!!

“The more you tell me, the greater your share will be!!

“Whoever tells me the most will receive personal backing from me!!” He spoke such words in clan after clan.

Of course, no matter how quickly he moved, making his way through all ninety of the clans was not something he could accomplish in a short time. Eventually, he split up his force of 5,000 corpse troopers, sending them to other clans with explicit instructions on what to do and say.

Before long, news of what was happening filtered up to the heavenly marquises, who were waiting outside of Heavenmaster Hall to see the Grand Heavenmaster.

They were infuriated, but had no idea what exactly to do. Some stamped their feet and returned to their clans to try to restore order, others remained behind in the hopes of getting an audience with the Grand Heavenmaster.

It didn’t take long before the ambitions in the hearts of the bastards and non-successors began to grow like weeds in a field!

The waiting heavenly marquises began to grow more and more anxious, and were constantly sending and receiving messages to stay up to date on what was happening in their own clans. The fact that their children were all starting to go completely mad had their hearts pounding with anxiety.

“This good-for-nothing Bai Hao!!”

“He was the one that came up with this vicious plan!!”

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!”

Expressions of madness appeared on their faces as they realized that things had already reached the point of no return. The storm had come, and calming it would be no easy task!

Once ambitions arose in the heart, they could not be erased easily. Although it wouldn’t be completely impossible, for all intents and purposes, it was.

None of them had actually met with the Grand Heavenmaster, and yet thanks to Bai Xiaochun, their clans were all descending into chaos. It was already worse than an enemy invasion!

Some clans had it better off. But for those who were truly in pandemonium, their respective heavenly marquises eventually had no choice but to head back to put out the proverbial fires.

By the time the doors of Heavenmaster Hall opened, there were only about twenty heavenly marquises left behind, who then entered the hall with bitterness written on their faces.

It was impossible to say what exactly they talked about, or how the Grand Heavenmaster managed to placate them. But in the end, they all left, unsightly expressions on their faces as they chose to simply hold their tongues on the matter.

By that time it was night, and Bai Xiaochun was waiting anxiously in the Inspections Manor. At a certain point, his transmission jade slip vibrated, and messages began to filter in from some of his most important contacts out in the clans.

After the heavenly marquises had returned, they quelled much of the chaos, and cast fear into the hearts of all their children. Because of that, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t getting a huge amount of news.

However, he wasn’t willing to resign himself to fate. Virtually every day, he would take his army of corpse troopers out to visit the clans, and reinforce the ambitions which had taken root in the hearts of the people there!

Although he experienced some friction with various heavenly marquises, considering he had 5,000 corpse troopers at his command, he didn’t have much trouble dealing with it. Furthermore, he had Zhou Yixing go out and spread more information to boost the confidence of the bastard children.

Things went on like this for three days. The Proclamation of Universal Grace still stood, and the Grand Heavenmaster didn’t seem likely to rescind it. Despite the threats of the heavenly marquises, Bai Xiaochun’s transmission jade slip continued to vibrate as more information and secrets came in.

Another three days passed, and the heavenly marquises continued to quell the chaos in their clans using all sorts of methods. Some used callous techniques, others were more conciliatory. Whatever they did, it was exhausting. After all, they not only had to prepare for what happened if Bai Xiaochun showed up, but they also had to work hard to control internal affairs.… Everyone involved had the blood of the clan in them, which meant that no outsider could be relied upon for help. The marquises had to handle everything personally. Some of them even resorted to executions.

Because of that, more and more people began to act in secret. As a result, Bai Xiaochun’s transmission jade slip vibrated with increasing frequency.

Soon, when word spread that some of the heavenly marquises had brutally killed or imprisoned some of their own children, Bai Xiaochun took his corpse trooper army over and fought them openly as punishment.

The fighting got other heavenly marquises worked up, and they joined in the fighting. However, the bastard sons of the clans, who had been suppressed viciously for more than ten days straight, and who had also been incited into action by Zhou Yixing, finally made a move!

At this point, true chaos erupted in many clans.

Things had reached a boiling point, and all of Arch-Emperor City was being shaken. Eventually, the Grand Heavenmaster took action to stop the fighting. The heavenly marquises couldn’t worry about Bai Xiaochun anymore, and returned to their clans to prevent more chaos from erupting.

Of course, things had only calmed down on the surface. The clans were buzzing with activity. And at the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s transmission jade slip began to vibrate almost nonstop. There were more than 10,000 bastards and other direct bloodline non-successors who were sending him messages.

“My clan has 3,700,000,000 portions of soul medicine!!”

“Exalted Bai Hao, my clan has a secret treasure room. Normally, only the successor is allowed in!”

“I once saw our heavenly marquis with a deva soul! It was metal-type!”

“My clan has a 100,000-man-strong personal army!”

Although the bastards and other direct bloodline non-successors all seemed shaken, they were secretly going crazy, and were beginning to reveal all of their clan secrets to Bai Xiaochun.

By now, Bai Xiaochun basically had spies in all of the clans. And before long, he not only knew everything that was happening in the clans, but could also directly influence the course of events!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0792 awe-chapter-793

Many of the bastard children and direct bloodline non-successors had hated Bai Xiaochun in the past. But now, he stood on their side, and even represented them! As the person enforcing the Proclamation of Universal Grace, they were all on the same team!

It wasn’t that none of the heavenly marquises had thought of defying the order. However, as time progressed, the truly vicious aspects of the Proclamation of Universal Grace only became clearer. Each clan had one successor. However, the heavenly marquises were all people with profound cultivation bases, as well as multiple wives and concubines. It was only natural that they would have many children. Furthermore, all of those children were members of their clans. And now, all of the bastards and direct bloodline non-successors were on the side of the Grand Heavenmaster!

Unless the heavenly marquises completely exterminated their own bloodlines, the unrest inside their clans would never be completely quelled, and there was no way they could defy orders in rebellion!

Furthermore, in the final analysis, the Proclamation of Universal Grace kept all clan resources within the clan itself, and also within the bloodlines of the various heavenly marquises. As such, the Grand Heavenmaster could only be said to be acting reasonably!

Justice and reason were on his side, and thus, everyone supported him. Thus, the truly ferocious nature of the entire plan was revealed. And what was even more terrifying… were the common citizens of Arch-Emperor City!

The nobility and aristocracy were vastly removed from the common people. Therefore, when the Proclamation of Universal Grace was announced, the common people staunchly supported it!

Although it wouldn’t directly benefit them, they were generally envious of the nobility and aristocracy, and especially the successors. Therefore, they were very happy to see everyone within the nobility and aristocracy treated the same.

It would immediately cause very powerful people to fall, and although they would likely rise to prominence again, the disparity between them and the common people would be greatly reduced.

As such, the common citizens in Arch-Emperor Dynasty were all very excited about what was happening.

Furthermore, they supported the Grand Heavenmaster more than ever. Yet again, the Grand Heavenmaster’s prestige rose to a higher level, a level that was completely and utterly unprecedented!

In fact, he was now in the position to smoothly establish his own new dynasty if he wished to!

That filled the heavenly marquises with dread and bitterness. The heavenly marquises were all profound schemers, and therefore, it didn’t take long for them to realize how truly terrifying the Proclamation of Universal Grace was!

And yet… that realization did them no good. Knowing the facts and being able to do something about them… were two very different things.

“If Bai Hao really did come up with this idea… then he's completely terrifying!!”

“His ability to craft and scheme could terrify even ghosts and gods! He’s a complete master at manipulating people!”

“What kind of person do you have to be to come up with a vicious plan like this…? Wait a second…. This Bai Hao was born a bastard! Dammit! I bet he came up with this idea all the way back in Giant Ghost City, in the Bai Clan!!”

And yet, the storm was only just beginning. Things had started in Arch-Emperor City, but they soon spread to other parts of the Wildlands. It wasn’t just the heavenly marquis clans who were affected. Many necromancer clans erupted into pandemonium.

And the person responsible for all of it was Bai Xiaochun, who currently sat cross-legged in the Inspections Manor. He did nothing to cover the exhaustion in his eyes. Up to this point, he still hadn’t rested. Instead, he read each and every message that came his way, analyzing it and hoping to piece together any clues he found.

About half a month had passed since Bai Hao had gone missing, and Bai Xiaochun’s madness had become like a raging sea of fire that threatened to burn both the people around him and himself.

He simply couldn't stop worrying about Bai Hao and his safety. Unfortunately, none of the information he had received up to this point had been of any help. He was deeply worried and sick at heart, to a level he had never experienced before.

The only time he could keep his breathing straight and his aura steady was when he was immersed in looking for clues.

Although he had plenty of information stored in his jade slip now, none of it was comprehensive. He knew that any hope of finding Bai Hao rested in getting more clues.

“The wildfire caused by the Proclamation of Universal Grace… needs to burn a bit hotter!!” With that, he looked up, focusing his gaze on a certain direction…. Arch-Emperor City’s Borough 5!

Borough 5 was the location of a heavenly duke clan!

“The time has come to make a move against the heavenly dukes. Not only will I be able to get more good information, I can also instill a bit of confidence in the cowards there!” Gritting his teeth, he flew into the air, and was soon leading his corpse troopers toward Borough 5!

Many, many people were paying attention, and noticed what was happening. Countless eyes tracked the army of corpse troopers as it flew through the sky, and before long, people realized that he was heading to Borough 5, which was the location of a heavenly duke clan. At that point, people began to gasp in excitement.

“A heavenly duke clan!?!?”

“This Bai Hao is too gutsy. He’s actually going to a heavenly duke clan to enforce the Proclamation of Universal Grace!!”

As the conversation buzzed, 5,000 corpse troopers descended on Borough 5, with Bai Xiaochun in the lead position. He was flanked by two corpse troopers who emanated deva fluctuations, one in silver armor and one in black. Next in the procession were nine half-deva corpse troopers in black armor.

They didn’t even pause for a moment after entering Borough 5. They headed right for the heavenly duke clan.

Bai Xiaochun vaguely recalled this heavenly duke as being an old man with whom he had had a few relatively cordial dealings. Unfortunately, he was running out of options at this point. As he neared the clan, a glowing shield of light suddenly appeared to block his path.

A face appeared on the surface of the shield, a middle-aged man who looked at Bai Xiaochun with cold eyes.

“Inspections Commissioner, if you have something to say, go ahead and say it. However, you are not permitted past this point!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed as he looked through the shield at the clan, where numerous clan members were staring up at him. Although they all looked calm, he could see glints in the eyes of some that revealed to him that even many people in this heavenly duke clan were looking forward to the effects of the Proclamation of Universal Grace. Unfortunately, they could not act out in any way because of the unbelievable power of the heavenly duke himself.

After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun chose not to try to use force. He simply hovered there and projected his voice with his cultivation base so that it passed through the shield.

“I'm here on the orders of the Grand Heavenmaster, to supervise the enforcement of the Proclamation of Universal Grace!

“Heavenly marquis clans and heavenly duke clans alike must comply. Even the four heavenly kings are not exempt!

"Clan resources must be split fairly within the clan. Whether you are bastards, or direct bloodline members with no right of inheritance, all of you….” With that, he proceeded on with his usual speech.

When he was finished, the expressionless middle-aged man looked at him and said, “Finished? Please see yourself out!”

With that, the face of the man faded away, and Bai Xiaochun was left hovering there, a slight frown on his face. After a moment passed, he turned and headed to the second heavenly duke clan.

After that was the third, and the fourth…. Before long, he had visited every clan between Borough 1 and Borough 5. He had visited nine heavenly duke clans, and they had all treated him the same way as the first one he had visited!

Not a single heavenly duke allowed him to enter their clan. They permitted him to speak outside of their spell formation shield, and then unceremoniously asked him to leave.

It was cooperation of a sort, but their attitude left Bai Xiaochun with a very unsightly expression on his face. As for everyone who had gathered to follow him and watch the show, various thoughts ran through their heads.

Furthermore, the children in the various clans were also watching, and it caused their hearts to sink.

“Don’t tell me that the Proclamation of Universal Grace isn’t going to last much longer….” All of them were wondering about the potential profits and losses at hand.

The nobility and aristocracy watched as Bai Xiaochun grimly arrived at the location of the final heavenly duke clan, the Chen Clan!

Chen Haosong’s clan took up nearly half of the entire borough, and had a heavenly duke pagoda that rose up far higher than any of the heavenly marquis pagodas.

Everyone in the clan sat silently waiting. As for all the children of the clan, the events which had played out among the heavenly marquis clans because of the Proclamation of Universal Grace had been very exciting to them.

And yet, none of them had dared to act. After all, the difference between a heavenly marquis clan and a heavenly duke clan was difficult to even put into words!

Back in the initial bloodbath, the Grand Heavenmaster had put an end to eighteen heavenly marquises. However… not a single heavenly duke had been affected. Generally speaking, as long as the heavenly dukes didn’t openly betray the dynasty, their positions were unshakable. They were devas, and whether it was in the Wildlands or the Heavenspan River region, such people existed on a higher level than everyone else!

As Bai Xiaochun arrived at the Chen Clan, the glowing shield sprang up, preventing him from entering. Then, a voice echoed out loud and clear.

“Speak. And when you’re done, get the hell out of here!” The scorn and loathing in that voice couldn’t have been more clear.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed as he looked through the shield at the heavenly duke pagoda, and then suddenly… he smiled!

It was a cold smile, a smile… filled with unrestrainable madness!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0793 awe-chapter-794

The audience that had built up looked on silently. The fact that the ten heavenly dukes wouldn’t even let Bai Xiaochun in was something that led to all sorts of varied thoughts on their part.

News had been spreading, and more and more people in Arch-Emperor City were paying attention to what was happening.

Within the shield, the numerous members of the Chen Clan had placid expressions on their faces as they looked through the shield at Bai Xiaochun.

As various similar thoughts ran through the heads of many other clan members, Bai Xiaochun smiled coldly on the other side of the shield, and his eyes burned with madness. He had known from the very beginning that the heavenly duke clans would be much more difficult to handle than the heavenly marquis clans.

Therefore, he had already made up his mind to throw caution to the wind, and leave the Chen Clan for the very last. After all, he had butted heads with this clan before.

His plan all along had been to see what happened with the other clans, and if things didn't go well, to go crazy on the Chen Clan!

And now, he didn’t even need to find an excuse. The Chen Clan’s attitude was enough to set him off. Pointing dramatically at the clan, he said, “Corpse trooper army, break down that spell formation shield!”

Countless jaws dropped when people heard his words. Whether it was the people in the Chen Clan or the audience who had gathered, no one even had a chance to react before Bai Xiaochun’s 5,000 corpse troopers howled at the tops of their lungs and charged forward in attack!

The silver-armored corpse trooper moved especially quickly, and was the first to slam into the shield.

Even as the shield shook, the nine half-deva corpse troopers arrived, unleashing heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power!

Things weren’t over yet, though. Next came the rest of the 5,000 troops, who unleashed a torrent of magical techniques and divine abilities. This was like warfare, as 5,000 attacks became like a huge wave that slammed into the Chen Clan’s spell formation shield!!

“What are you doing, Bai Hao?!?!” shouted the same voice as before, except this time there was no scorn in it, only fury. As for all of the Chen Clan cultivators inside, their faces fell.

The audience looked on with incredulity.

“This Bai Hao… he….”

“Heavens! He’s actually ordering an attack on a heavenly duke clan!!”

“I can’t believe he dares to do such a thing!!”

The onlookers were starting to get very enthused, and quickly began to spread word through the city. Everyone else who had been watching events play out from other locations in Arch-Emperor City had strange expressions on their faces.

Many of the heavenly marquises flew out from their pagodas and looked over at the Chen Clan with expressions of complete disbelief.

The other nine heavenly dukes were all shocked, and sent streams of divine sense over to observe what was happening directly. When they realized that no reaction at all could be seen from the imperial palace, they grew more taciturn than ever.

The bastard children in the clan were all as shocked as wooden chickens, and a single thought ran through all of their heads.

“He’s insane!!”

Even if the Chen Clan’s spell formation shield was stronger than it was, it couldn’t withstand a sea of divine abilities like this. Under the battery, it quickly began to fragment, and then eventually just exploded!

Chaos immediately swept through the Chen Clan, and a roar of rage echoed out from the heavenly duke pagoda.

“Do you have a death wish, Bai Hao?!” Powerful fluctuations surged out from the heavenly duke pagoda, rushing forward to meet the sea of magical techniques and divine abilities that were entering the clan.

A huge boom resulted that was distinctly audible even in the imperial palace. The sea of invading attacks shattered, and the 5,000 corpse troopers were shoved backward, with the exception of the silver-armored corpse trooper and the nine half-devas. All of them shot toward the heavenly duke pagoda!

Before they could arrive, the air around the pagoda swirled dramatically as a projected version of Chen Haosong's face appeared. Looking at the silver-armored corpse trooper and the other corpse troopers it led, he uttered a curse in a shouting voice.

"Cleaving!"

Suddenly, numerous mountains formed out of thin air, descending from above to slam into the corpse troopers. Moments later, Chen Haosong's face twisted and distorted, and then a violet beam of light shot out, slashing through everything in its path as it headed directly toward Bai Xiaochun!

Cheng Haosong was actually trying to kill Bai Xiaochun! However, at this point, deva fluctuations rolled out from the black-armored corpse trooper who had stayed behind to defend Bai Xiaochun.

Without the slightest hesitation, that corpse trooper took a step forward and launched a fist strike at the beam of violet light. The light shattered, and the corpse trooper shuddered as he staggered backward several paces. At the same time, his entire right arm was shredded out of existence!

If he had possessed a flesh and blood body, then it would have been a very serious injury. However, corpse troopers were essentially impossible to permanently injure. A moment later, the area where the arm had been severed began to wriggle and grow, as a new arm appeared!

Having failed to destroy Bai Xiaochun, Chen Haosong stepped out of the heavenly duke pagoda, where he waved his sleeve, sending a blast of wind at the silver-armored corpse trooper, and the other nine who followed him.

The nine half-deva corpse troopers trembled and tumbled backward, but the one in the silver armor only took a single step back. That caused Chen Haosong's face to fall, and he even began to pant slightly.

The deva fluctuations rolling off of Chen Haosong grew even stronger. Never before could he have guessed that this Bai Hao would actually dare to attack him and his clan! Although there had been friction between them in the past, he had always been of the opinion that Bai Xiaochun only looked like a force to be reckoned with, but was actually cowardly at heart, and mostly put on a show of false bravado. He had also come to the conclusion that although he could act in ruthless fashion, he valued his own life too much to do anything risky.

Therefore, Bai Xiaochun's sudden decisive action left him feeling very shocked.

"Do you know what you're doing, Bai Hao?!" he said coldly.

Bai Xiaochun looked back at him, waving his hand to cause all of the corpse troopers to stop moving. And yet, his killing intent only grew more and more intense.

Chen Haosong's eyes slowly narrowed. Although his cultivation base surpassed the silver-armored corpse troopers by quite a bit, he knew that he was surrounded by a huge group of them, and that they all had undying bodies, as well as further unknown abilities. And that was not to mention Bai Xiaochun's quasi-Deva Realm corpse trooper. All in all, it was a shocking force arrayed against him!

Bai Xiaochun's expression was as cold as ice as he looked at Chen Haosong. Then he took a step forward, and another, until he passed the point which had once been defended by the shield, and was now inside of the Chen Clan!

“According to the Proclamation of Universal Grace, everyone must be treated equally!

“The bastard children of the Chen Clan, as well as the direct bloodline members with no right of succession, are all welcome to send me what information they know. I will guarantee that they get their fair share of the clan assets. It is only fair and just!

“If you are cowardly, and don’t take advantage of this opportunity, if you allow the distribution to be unfair, and allow the so-called successor to get the majority of the assets, then the results will be obvious. What little you gain, will also be taken away from you!

“At the moment, none of you have to actually *do* anything. Just… tell me everything you know about your clan. What secrets are there? What resources exist? Has anyone new shown up recently? All you have to do is secretly pass word to me about these matters.

“I’ll do all the dirty work!” Although Bai Xiaochun spoke calmly, it was also with great power, allowing everyone in the Chen Clan to hear him. Immediately, the hearts of many clan members began to race.

An unsightly expression could be seen on Chen Haosong’s face as he hovered there in the air. However, when he looked up at the imperial palace and saw absolutely no reaction, he realized that no one would be interfering with the day’s events.

After Bai Xiaochun finished speaking, he gave a piercing look to the assembled crowds, then turned to leave. However, after only taking a few steps, he looked back at the Chen Clan, his eyes shining with cold light.

“Oh right. Just now, who was it that so brazenly defied the Proclamation of Universal Grace of the Grand Heavenmaster, and even told me to ‘get the hell out of here’?” Almost immediately numerous bastard children within the clan all looked over at one particular old man. Even Chen Xiong joined in that group.

The old man’s face fell, and before he could even say anything in response, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand.

“Execute him!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, all 5,000 corpse troopers attacked simultaneously. A scream echoed out as the old man was killed in body and soul. Chen Haosong’s face grew so grim it was almost as black as iron. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun was ready to fly off the handle at the slightest provocation. Considering how delicate the situation was, Chen Haosong had no choice but to simply bite his tongue and stare with narrowed eyes at Bai Xiaochun as he walked off.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0794 awe-chapter-795

Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to do this to every single one of the heavenly duke clans. All he needed to do was show his general stance. The children of the other nine heavenly dukes would immediately begin to ponder the significance of what had happened, not to mention the children in the heavenly marquis clans.

What he had done was enough!

In fact, the very day he left the Chen Clan, he got more messages than he had during the past half month!

Some information was genuine and some was not. When reports came in about the assets of the various clans, Bai Xiaochun merely glanced at them. What he was more interested in was information about what unusual events had transpired in the clans recently.

During the following days, information poured in, and Bai Xiaochun immersed himself in it, searching for clues. Many things were happening behind the scenes in the heavenly duke clans because of the Proclamation of Universal Grace.

The storm was building up to the point that the heavenly marquis clans were starting to lose their grip of control. It was also at this point that, at long last… the four heavenly kings were affected.

The War Champion King got off somewhat lightly, because he had fewer children. Other than the Junior Champion King, he only had five, and was able to keep them under control without resorting to any violent methods.

The Giant Ghost King came off almost completely unscathed. His only daughter, Mistress Red-Dust, didn’t even know what was going on; she had not yet ended the session of secluded meditation her father had encouraged her to begin after the ancestral sacrifices.

However… the Nine Serenities King had it very rough. He had over a hundred children, all of whom were thrilled about the situation and instantly sided with the Grand Heavenmaster and Bai Xiaochun. Zhou Hong wanted to cry. After all, if he wanted to eventually take over the position of king, then he needed a demigod cultivation base. And his only hope of doing that was by using all the resources the clan had built up. But now… his hopes were dashed. And of course, he came to detest Bai Xiaochun more bitterly than ever.

The Nine Serenities King was a bit worried about the matter. Considering he had a demigod cultivation base, he initially didn’t pay much attention to it, but the squabbling and fighting among his children quickly became quite a headache to deal with. However, all he had to do was think about the Wildlands’ famous Spirit Advent King, and suddenly, he realized that his concerns were of little note.

The Spirit Advent King… was the one going most crazy of all!

Currently, he was shouting so loud that his voice echoed out from Spirit Advent Hall to fill the entire city.

“Damn that Bai Hao! That little punk is too ruthless!! All I did was break up him and Shanshan, right? Aghhhhh! I didn’t do anything that bad! What, I'm not even allowed to watch over my own daughter?! This revenge of his is obviously targeting me!!!” He was so angry he was shaking, and the mere thought of how many children he had caused him to howl with grief.

He just had too many offspring…. Considering sons alone, he had over 3,000. And if you added in the daughters… well it was roughly double that. In fact, even he wasn’t sure exactly how many children he had.

The thought of his life savings being divided up among roughly 6,000 children was so infuriating and distressing that not even his demigod cultivation base could keep him calm. And of course, his countless children were very excited by the Proclamation of Universal Grace.

And the fact that they were all siding with the Grand Heavenmaster and Bai Xiaochun was monumental. After all, if the Spirit Advent King resisted the proclamation, it was entirely possible that all his children could join forces and actually fight him.

Spirit Advent City was already in complete chaos, with 6,000 of the king's own children pooling all of their resources and power structure together.

The Spirit Advent King had no options at hand. He couldn’t kill all of his children to save his own clan assets…. And therefore, he simply stared morosely in the direction of Arch-Emperor City.

“That Bai Hao is definitely doing this on purpose!”

Most furious of all was the official heir apparent in Spirit Advent City, who sat with gritted teeth and bloodshot eyes, his hatred for Bai Xiaochun rising into the heavens.

Xu Shan lay on her bed gazing in the direction of Arch-Emperor City, sighing constantly. As far as she was concerned, there was something fishy going on with Bai Hao. She really wanted to go find him and talk about it, but her father had her on complete lockdown, making it impossible for her to leave the city.

As far as Chen Manyao was concerned, she was still in secluded meditation on the orders of the Grand Heavenmaster.

As the four heavenly kings dealt with the situation in various ways, Bai Xiaochun was sifting through volumes of information, trying to find that needle in a haystack that was the clue he needed.

“Miao Lin’er went missing…. Her clan used to have an earthly necromancer…. Her entire clan is missing….” All of a sudden, his killing intent surged, but he quickly suppressed it. Now was not the time to act impulsively.

He could only take action when he was absolutely sure of the facts. That was his only hope of saving Bai Hao.

After all, if he made his move, and then failed, then his enemies would be even more on alert, and it would be almost impossible to track them down.

“I'm only going to have one chance! I just don’t have enough clues! However, I definitely need to figure out where the Miao Clan went!” With those thoughts on his mind, he sent a message to Zhou Yixing and had him start searching for Miao Clan cultivators, with orders to keep eyes on those he found, but not make any sort of contact.

“The only people I haven’t touched now are the four heavenly kings…. Who exactly was it that did the deed that day!? Once I find that out, then I can use all of the information I’ve collected to figure out… where Bai Hao is!”

Although he was clearly exhausted, his heart still burned with intense madness.

He hadn’t rested at all for nearly a month, and his nerves were stretched taut. However, he continued working, using the resources of the Inspections Manor to reach out to the children of the heavenly kings.

His instructions were for them to personally come to the Inspections Manor within three days so that he could deliver the Proclamation of Universal Grace to them personally.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun knew that, considering this wasn’t an order from the Grand Heavenmaster, the heirs apparent could simply ignore it. However, he didn't care about that, or how much they hated him.

He wanted to see how many of the children who had no right of inheritance would come. Those people would be his eyes and ears within the palaces of the heavenly kings!

The Giant Ghost King ignored the message, as did the War Champion King and his children. But the children of the Nine Serenities King and the Spirit Advent King rushed excitedly toward the teleportation portals in their city to meet with Bai Xiaochun at the Inspections Manor!

When the day came, Bai Xiaochun emerged from his private chamber to find a shocking number of people waiting for him. Furthermore, the fact that ninety-seven percent of them were from Spirit Advent City left him feeling stunned.

As soon as all these royal children caught sight of him, they clasped hands passionately and bowed.

“Greetings, Inspections Commissioner!”

“You are a true hero of the ages, Inspections Commissioner. The Proclamation of Universal Grace is a sign of the coming golden age of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!”

All sorts of talk could be heard from the mouths of the thousands of people present. In response, Bai Xiaochun gave a slight nod. He was in no mood for chit-chat. Looking out at the crowd, he somberly said, “Ladies and gentlemen, the Arch-Emperor himself has ordered that from this day forward, everyone from the Grand Heavenmaster to the royal officials will no longer have solitary heirs apparent!

“Everyone will now have the chance to win the position of king, even if you don’t have a demigod cultivation base. According to the stipulations of the Proclamation of Universal Grace, all of you now have the right to start out on equal footing to become the appointed heir apparent!

“However, the true judge of how fair this will all be is your own understanding of your clans. Tell me everything you know about them. The more information I get, the more likely that I can make you all happy!

“As of this moment, I have sufficient information from the heavenly marquis clans and the heavenly duke clans, as provided to me by the bastard children and those from the direct bloodlines who have no official right of inheritance. The only people I need information from now… is you here.” Everyone present was already roughly familiar with what had been happening, and took his words in stride. In fact, all of them felt very grateful.

It was only natural for them to support an arrangement in which they could secretly pass the information to him, and he would do the dirty work. When it came to information about clan assets, such things wouldn’t normally be passed to outsiders. But he'd already done this same thing with the heavenly duke clans, and no one had come to be in any danger. And when it came to the demigod clans, no one would punish these children, not even if they were considered to have betrayed the clan by revealing secret information.

After all, they had the blood of heavenly kings in them, even if they weren't heirs apparent. Normally speaking, they could do whatever they wished without fear of any reprisal. As such, the very day that everyone left the Inspections Manor, news began to filter in to Bai Xiaochun.

As of this point, Bai Xiaochun now had an information network that filled the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty. Reports came in almost every moment. Even the common people joined in, sending him information about virtually everything.

Bai Xiaochun couldn't have been busier. Eventually… after five days passed, he suddenly looked up, and his hand clenched down so hard on the transmission jade slip that it nearly shattered. At this point, the killing intent in his eyes burned with complete insanity.

He had found the clue he needed to fit all the pieces together. The impenetrable fog that had surrounded the disappearance of Bai Hao faded away!!

"Their clan used to have an earthly necromancer…. Thirteen clans working together…. The Nine Serenities King…. Miao Lin'er's grandfather…. He's hiding in one of those thirteen clans!" Killing intent surging, he looked down at the transmission jade slip and found a message from one of the children of Heavenly Marquis Zhou!

“There’s a celestial necromancer in our clan that I’ve never seen before. He's very mysterious. Supposedly he’s in secluded meditation performing spirit enhancements on some magical items, but I doubt that’s true!”

Bai Xiaochun looked up again, and his eye were crimson. “This is what I needed!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0795 awe-chapter-796

“Zhou Wudao!” The coldness in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes was such that the entire private chamber suddenly seemed as frigid as the dead of winter!

Although he didn’t fully understand the reason Bai Hao had gone missing, he now had a general idea. A patriarch in Miao Lin’er’s clan was a necromancer at the peak of the celestial rank, who planned to use Bai Hao’s soul in a flame conjuring to achieve a breakthrough!

Out of fear of Bai Xiaochun, he had allied with thirteen other clans, and had also somehow called upon the aid of the Nine Serenities King. That was how they had managed to snatch Bai Hao the previous month without leaving a single trace of evidence behind!

Afterward, the Miao Clan patriarch had gone into hiding in one of the clans, a clan where no one would think to look. After all, when it came to the heavenly marquises of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, Zhou Wudao was neither among the ten most powerful, nor among the ten weakest. He was somewhere in the middle. He wasn’t a very well-spoken person, and thus didn’t have many dealings with others. He was basically the quiet type.

He was one of the people in the dynastic court who almost never spoke. If he was ever forced to speak, he would always go along with the majority. He was so unassuming that many people even forgot he existed.

Bai Xiaochun had never heard of him before the Proclamation of Universal Grace. However, it was a bastard son of Zhou Wudao who secretly sent the critical information. Never could Bai Xiaochun have guessed that Bai Hao would be in that clan!

Of course, Zhou Wudao’s clan was one of the thirteen who had helped the Miao Clan. As for who the other twelve clans were, Bai Xiaochun had still not yet unearthed any clues.

However, he wasn’t very concerned with that information. All of his efforts during the past month had been focused on finding Bai Hao.

As far as what he had just learned, he had no intention of reporting it to the Grand Heavenmaster.

The matter was simply too important, and he couldn't risk the chance that the Grand Heavenmaster would refuse him the right to act. If word leaked out, and if his enemies were alerted, then it might very well become impossible to track Bai Hao down again.

He couldn’t gamble when it came to something this vital!

As he rose to his feet, his murderous aura grew stronger. The time had come to vent all of the madness which had been building up over the last month. The time had come to do some killing!

Without the slightest hesitation, he sent a message to Zhou Yixing with certain instructions. Then he strode out into the open and flew up into the air above the Inspections Manor. With the wave of a sleeve, he sent some divine sense out, and then headed at top speed toward the location of Zhou Wudao’s clan.

At the same time, rumbling sounds could be heard as countless corpse troopers flew up to follow him. In this case, he didn’t take 5,000, but rather, 4,000!

The other 1,000 were in Zhou Yixing’s hands to handle other matters!

Bai Xiaochun plus 4,000 beams of light shot through the air, surrounded by a black vortex that was the most powerful of murderous auras. The sky rippled, and a screaming wind kicked up, attracting the shocked attention of numerous individuals in Arch-Emperor City.

Bai Xiaochun ignored all of the gazes which came to focus on him, nor did he attempt to prevent his eyes from being completely bloodshot. He looked completely mad, and engulfed by a shocking killing intent.

His veins of steel pulsed explosively, as though he had become a devilish god!

As he raced along, the anxiety in his heart mounted. He felt guilt, frenzy, nervousness, apprehension, and all sorts of other emotions, all of which shoved him deeper into madness!

Very rarely in Bai Xiaochun’s life did he ever wish to kill people, but in this situation, he had been pushed too far. He had just spent a month searching for clues, and now that he had a target, it was impossible for him to dispel that killing intent.

Of course, through it all, he reminded himself that his main goal right now was not revenge; it was to save Bai Hao.

He and his 4,000 corpse troopers sailed over dozens of boroughs until they closed in on Borough 61, where a heavenly marquis pagoda rose high into the air. When Bai Xiaochun saw it, his eyes flashed with sharp light.

This place was the Zhou Clan!

After scanning the place with divine sense but finding nothing, he turned and transmitted a message to his silver-armored corpse trooper. “Can you detect a hidden chamber anywhere in the Zhou Clan? A chamber containing a celestial necromancer?!”

The silver-armored corpse-trooper’s eyes flashed, and he studied the Zhou Clan. After a moment, he shook his head. “There must be some unique secret magic at work that defies divine sense….”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed, and yet he didn’t hesitate. As soon as he was outside the Zhou Clan, he loudly said, “I want 2,000 corpse troopers to form a perimeter. No one is allowed to enter this clan from the air or the ground. Nor may anyone leave!!” Instantly, 2,000 of the corpse troopers flew out and formed ranks, locking down everything around the Zhou Clan!

They… were completely surrounded!

The 2,000 corpse troopers quickly created a spell formation which caused black smoke to roil out and cover the entire Zhou Clan, sealing it completely!

Cries of alarm rang up from inside the clan, especially from the appointed successor in the clan. As for the marquis himself, he looked up angrily at the corpse trooper army, at the seal locking down the clan, and at Bai Xiaochun with his murderous aura.

It only took a moment for the heavenly marquis to realize what was happening. He was one of the very few people in the clan who knew that Miao Lin’er’s grandfather was hiding amongst them, and that his clan had been one of the people involved in the abduction of the inspections commissioner's soul slave.

Therefore, his anger regarding the Proclamation of Universal Grace had mostly been a mask to cover his anxiety.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had suddenly shown up caused his face to fall and his mind to reel with the realization that… he knew the truth!!

“Activate the formation!” he said. Then he bit down on his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. That blood was a key aspect needed to activate the clan's spell formation. A moment later, a huge blood-colored shield sprang up, instantly spreading out to protect the clan.

That was the exact moment in which Bai Xiaochun and his 2,000 corpse troopers arrived. Without the slightest hesitation, he immediately had the corpse troopers violently attack the shield!

Most shocking of all though, were not the brutal corpse troopers, but Bai Xiaochun, who had a vicious snarl on his face as he attacked with the explosive violence of an erupting volcano.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Heaven and earth shook violently, and a huge shockwave blasted out in all directions, causing many nearby structures to rock back and forth.

The blood-colored shield immediately began to twist and distort, and then, after only a few breaths of time passed, it shattered into countless fragments that rained down onto the clan below.

The clan was thrown into a huge commotion, with many cultivators coughing up blood and looking up with incredulity. Some even began to cry out.

“What are you doing, Bai Hao?!?!”

“Our clan didn’t break any rules, nor did we offend you! What are you doing!?!?”

The heir apparent of the clan was also present. Eyes flashing with anger, he shouted, “This is an abuse of power, Bai Hao! You’re using your public office to get revenge for personal matters! The Grand Heavenmaster is going to find out about this, and the rest of the nobility and aristocracy too! Nobody will be able to protect you then. You’ll die for sure!! Fellow clan members! Join forces! If we stand against him for long enough, someone will definitely come to rescue us!!”

However, even as he spoke these words, he fled in the direction of his heavenly marquis pagoda!

Although not everyone in the clan leaped to obey the orders of the heir apparent, many of the senior generation flew angrily up into the sky toward Bai Xiaochun. Even some of the most loyal of the clan servants joined them.

There were more than a thousand in total. And yet, as soon as they met Bai Xiaochun’s advancing corpse troopers, fierce fighting broke out, along with agonized shrieks.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0796 awe-chapter-797

The Zhou Clan was fundamentally incapable of resistance. Blood sprayed out of the mouths of those who came forth to fight, and they were sent tumbling backward. Then, a chilling voice rang out, which belonged to none other than Bai Xiaochun.

“That’s right, I am here for personal revenge. But I only want to kill three people. And if anybody tries to stop me, I’ll cut them down!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t care less whether the other members of the Zhou Clan lived or died. However, there were two people who had long since been on his list to kill. One was Zhou Wudao, and the other was Miao Lin’er’s grandfather. Now, there was a new person on that list… the heir apparent!

Without pausing for a moment, Bai Xiaochun shot with lightning-like speed toward that very heir apparent!

The heir apparent’s face was pale white as he sped toward the heavenly marquis pagoda. Just when he was about to reach it, Bai Xiaochun suddenly appeared in front of him and unleashed a fist strike!

That fist strike contained all of Bai Xiaochun’s anger and madness; it ripped the air apart, and provoked a shrill scream from the heir apparent. A profound sensation of deadly crisis filled him, as though he knew that there was no longer a place for him to live in this world.

This was his clan, where he was supposed to be safe, and yet, unprecedented deadly danger had found him!

“Father!! Save me!!!” he shouted.

At this point, a beam of dazzling light shot out from the heavenly marquis pagoda, accompanied by a cold and sinister voice.

“If you dare to kill my son, Bai Hao, then your soul slave will be destroyed beyond the shadow of a doubt!!”

Currently sitting in the heavenly marquis pagoda was a middle-aged man of average height and appearance. He was a half-deva, but among half-devas, could not be considered particularly strong. However, with the power of his heavenly marquis pagoda, he was capable of battle prowess roughly equivalent to a full deva.

That was why, despite how Bai Hao had attacked his clan and destroyed their shield, he had waited patiently inside of the heavenly marquis pagoda.

At the moment, he felt hesitant and fearful, not of Bai Xiaochun, but of his corpse troopers, especially the one wearing silver armor.

At the same time, he still felt confident in some aspects. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had come here showed how important his soul slave was to him. And therefore… Zhou Wudao was confident that he wouldn't kill his son. He was just trying to create some pressure, or perhaps bring about a scenario in which he could offer a trade for his soul slave. Whichever was the case, the inspections commissioner definitely wouldn’t resort to killing!

After all, Zhou Wudao was a heavenly marquis, and this was Arch-Emperor City. The inspections commissioner still answered to the grand heavenmaster, and despite how crazy he was acting, he hadn’t become irrational.

“I just need to buy some time!!” he thought. With that, he produced a transmission jade slip to send a message asking for help.

However, in Zhou Wudao’s moment of confidence, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned more bloodshot than before. Ignoring the beam of light shooting down from the heavenly marquis pagoda, he sent his fist flying forward with even greater speed than before!!

It pierced through the air like the gust of a storm wind, landing directly onto the back of the fleeing heir apparent.

The heir apparent had a mid Nascent Soul stage cultivation base, whereas Bai Xiaochun had battle prowess similar to a half-deva. How could this heir apparent possibly defend himself against that? Intense rumbling sounds filled the air as a scream escaped the young man’s lips that vastly surpassed anything from before.

However, the scream didn't last for long. The explosive power of the fist reduced him to nothing more than a haze of blood and gore!

Even his nascent soul was incapable of escape, and was ripped to pieces. The heir apparent… was destroyed in body and soul! Not even his bones remained behind!!

As for the beam of light from the heavenly marquis pagoda, the silver-armored corpse trooper stepped forward and took the blow for Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao!!!” Zhou Wudao shouted in apoplectic rage as he leapt to his feet. “How… how dare you kill a child of mine!!!”

Never in his wildest imagination could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would actually be so decisive, and also so uncompromising.

The other members of the Zhou Clan who had just witnessed what happened were left shaking physically. His chilling words from earlier had already prompted a large number to give up thoughts of interfering with him, but now, all of them were terrified to the extreme.

It wasn’t just them. A crowd had already begun to build up in the area beyond the perimeter created by the corpse troopers, and when they saw what had just occurred, many of them gasped.

To kill a heavenly marquis’ son in this way… showed how deep his enmity went!

“I guess I haven’t killed enough people since coming to Arch-Emperor City,” Bai Xiaochun said in a fierce and brutal tone. “Well, since you and your friends decided to attack me personally…. Then not only will I kill your son… I’m going to kill you too!”

Even as his words continued to echo in the air, he burst forward with explosive speed toward the heavenly marquis pagoda.

As he closed in, several beams of dazzling light shot out from the pagoda toward him. Simultaneously, the side of the pagoda rippled as a shadowy figure emerged.

That shadowy figure was one of the miraculous abilities of the heavenly marquis pagoda, a magical clone which immediately shot toward Bai Xiaochun in attack.

It was at this point that the corpse troopers, including the silver-armored one, split off and began to search the buildings for Miao Lin’er’s grandfather.

Obviously, Bai Xiaochun had given them the order to do so. He didn’t need the help of his corpse troopers for this fight. In fact, he wanted a chance to vent the anger, madness, and guilt which had built up over the last month!

Rumbling booms could be heard as the dazzling beams of light landed on Bai Xiaochun, and yet, he didn’t even blink in response. He only picked up speed, hurtling toward the magical clone at top speed. As he closed in, he shoved out his right hand.

An explosive blast of wind spread out in all directions in response. In response, the magical clone of Zhou Wudao snorted coldly and performed an incantation gesture, summoning a horde of illusory pythons to attack Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression didn’t change at all. He clenched his right fist, which caused a black vortex to appear, along with a terrifying gravitational force. It was as if all of the energy in the entire area were being sucked into that vortex!

Even Bai Xiaochun’s aura vanished, until it almost seemed like he didn't exist. However, that was when a domineering figure appeared behind him!

This was none other than… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

It was an attack that had left Mistress Red-Dust visibly surprised, and was very close to the power of a deva!

A massive amount of force was building up around Bai Xiaochun. It almost seemed like night was falling in his area as all of the light was sucked into that black vortex!

Zhou Wudao’s shadowy clone felt an intense sensation of deadly crisis building up, and let out a shout, simultaneously performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused the pythons to all form together into a 300-meter wide defensive formation.

However, that defensive formation was as effective against Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist as a mantis was against a war chariot!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

The python formation was ripped to shreds, becoming a cloud of gore and bones which rapidly transformed into nothing more than ash!

Zhou Wudao’s clone couldn’t have looked more shocked at how wildly destructive the Undying Emperor’s Fist was!

Things weren’t over yet, though. As the darkness of night grew stronger in the area, the heavenly marquis pagoda began to shake. Inside, Zhou Wudao coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his face turned as white as a sheet as he spared no effort to fight back with the powers of the pagoda.

“Time to double it up!” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes glittering. Clenching his hand into a fist, he unleashed the Undying Emperor’s Fist again, this time with double the level of power!

The darkness in the area converged on itself, making a huge black fist that caused everyone who saw it to gasp in shock. Then that fist slammed into the heavenly marquis pagoda!

Heaven and earth shook violently; all of Arch-Emperor City trembled!

A moment later, the Undying Emperor’s Fist faded away, and the heavenly marquis pagoda still stood!

Bai Xiaochun hovered just outside of it, his expression as cold as ice.

Inside the pagoda, Zhou Wudao was coughing up more blood, and had visibly aged, and yet was laughing madly.

“So what if you have a deva-level fist strike? This is a heavenly marquis pag--” However, before Zhou Wudao could finish speaking, cracking sounds could be heard. His face fell, and then drained of blood as he saw… a crack appear right beneath him!

“Impossible. Impossible….” Zhou Wudao felt like his mind had been struck by lightning, and his face was covered with an expression of unmitigated horror.

Then, more cracking sounds could be heard. More and more cracks began to spread out through the pagoda, as, within the space of a few breaths of time… it collapsed!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0797 awe-chapter-798

As the heavenly marquis pagoda collapsed, complete silence filled the area. Everyone in the clan felt like their minds were being struck by lightning from the heavens. To a heavenly marquis clan, their heavenly marquis pagoda was a symbol of how lofty and amazing their clan was!

It was the most important legacy in their clan, passed on to each successor as a means to defend the clan.

And right now, the Zhou Clan’s heavenly marquis pagoda… was collapsing into pieces!!

Although this was not the first such pagoda to be destroyed after the Arch-Emperor Dynasty relocated to the Wildlands… it was the only one to meet such a fate in the past thousand years! The significance of this event defied imagination!

If that was how the Zhou Clan reacted, then there was little need to wonder how everyone else in the audience was reacting. There were countless people observing events on behalf of other powerful groups, and also just random people interested in watching, and all of them were dumbstruck.

“The Zhou Clan’s heavenly marquis pagoda… is collapsing….”

“This Bai Hao actually dared to destroy a heavenly marquis pagoda!!”

Zhou Wudao emerged from within the collapsing pagoda, blood spraying out of his mouth, and looking visibly older than before. The instant he appeared in the open, he didn't charge toward Bai Xiaochun in attack, but rather… turned and fled!

He had no other choice than to do so. Bai Xiaochun's fist strike had been unimaginably shocking, so powerful that it actually destroyed a lofty and magnificent heavenly marquis pagoda!

To Zhou Wudao, it was almost inconceivable. Most people only knew a little bit about how heavenly marquis pagodas actually worked, but as a heavenly marquis, he had complete control over his own pagoda, and was thus deeply struck by what had just occurred.

He knew that the so-called heavenly marquis pagodas were not created by heavenly marquises. Instead… they had been built along with Arch-Emperor City itself! More specifically, they were shocking magical devices that could focus and release the power of an unseen spell formation!

After all, what was visible of Arch-Emperor City right now was actually only a part of the true extent of the city. There was more buried underground. And as for the heavenly marquis pagodas, they could enable a half-deva heavenly marquis to unleash battle prowess equivalent to a full deva.

And of course, the heavenly duke pagodas were even more impressive!

The power of the pagodas was limited to some extent. After all, they were expensive to fully power up, and that would not be permitted unless the Arch-Emperor Dynasty were under direct threat.

Even still… they were powerful enough that no ordinary person could possibly attack them successfully. In fact, the one which had been successfully destroyed a thousand years ago… had been during a battle of demigods!

Because of that, there was no way that Zhou Wudao could ever have guessed that his heavenly marquis pagoda would collapse. Although he wasn't sure how it was happening, he had his suspicions, and they terrified him.

“If it isn't his cultivation base, then it must be some special divine ability…. That fist strike is actually a magical technique! But what?” Zhou Wudao's face was ashen as he realized that he had provoked someone he was most certainly not powerful enough to have provoked. Thus, it was without the slightest hesitation that he fled as quickly as possible.

An icy glint appeared in Bai Xiaochun's eyes. He didn't know much about heavenly marquis pagodas, and therefore, was a bit confused by Zhou Wudao's reaction.

It was with lightning-like speed that he immediately gave chase, when suddenly… a shadowy blur appeared from within the rubble of a collapsing building at the edge of the Zhou Clan. The figure was partially translucent, and was moving directly toward the corpse troopers who had the area locked down.

Not only was the figure moving quickly, it was using some sort of divine ability that slowed the corpse troopers down. As a result, it seemed to be just on the verge of breaking through the blockade.

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun stopped, turned, and vanished. When he reappeared, he was right in front of the shadowy figure!

It was almost as if he had been waiting for this person to make a break for it!

“So, you finally show your face!” he said, his eyes radiating icy coldness and killing intent. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the air around him began to swirl like a vortex.

Unexpectedly, the intensity of his killing intent actually surpassed what had appeared when he had attacked Zhou Wudao!

“You!!” the shadowy figure blurted, suddenly backing up. At that point, it resolved into the image of an old man. He seemed alarmed; clearly, he had believed himself very clever for attempting to flee when the heavenly marquis pagoda fell, and Bai Xiaochun went chasing after Zhou Wudao.

By fleeing at that time, and using his special technique to slow the reactions of the corpse troopers, he had been very confident in being able to make his escape.

Never could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would be prepared for just something like this. The old man was caught completely unaware.

The truth was that as soon as Bai Xiaochun had arrived at the Zhou Clan and found that neither he nor his silver-armored corpse trooper could use their divine sense to find this old man, he had come up with his plan.

One of the reasons he had killed the heir apparent was to vent his anger, but the other was to prevent Zhou Wudao from buying time and getting help.

The whole point to his offensive had not been to kill anyone, but to give Miao Lin’er’s grandfather what he believed was a chance to escape. Only by pushing things to the very limit, and by making his opponent think that he was completely mad, would the man be confident enough to try to escape.

That was why he had attacked with such ruthless efficiency, and had immediately resorted to the Undying Emperor’s Fist. The whole time, his divine sense had been spread out through the clan, and especially focused on his corpse troopers!

He knew that the old necromancer would attempt to escape by breaking through the sealing blockade, and that was exactly what he had been waiting for!

Now that the old man was backing away from him, Bai Xiaochun stepped forward. At the same time, he sent a thought out to his corpse troopers, causing them to reinforce and shrink the perimeter. Meanwhile, the silver-armored corpse trooper unleashed the power of his deva cultivation base and headed toward the old necromancer!

It only took moments to lock down everything above and below. As of this point, it didn’t matter what special technique this old man had, he would not be escaping!

Zhou Wudao was also affected, and had to start backing away from the corpse troopers. There was simply no way he could break through that barrier.

Miao Lin’er’s grandfather could see that it was a critical moment. Eyes flickering with madness he suddenly looked over at Bai Xiaochun and shouted, “Let me go, Bai Hao! If you don’t, then a single thought from me will wipe your soul slave out of existence!”

Apparently worried that Bai Xiaochun might be convinced that his soul slave was dead, the old man performing an incantation gesture, causing a soul shadow to appear on his forehead.

That soul shadow was Bai Hao, who was trapped in the old man’s forehead, slowly being burned and clearly in critical danger.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place, trembling inwardly as he looked at Bai Hao’s soul shadow. The corpse troopers also stopped, including the silver-armored one, although his deva fluctuations grew more intense.

“If you let me go,” the old man said nervously, “I’ll give you back your soul slave!” His eyes darted back and forth between Bai Xiaochun and the silver-armored corpse trooper with the deva cultivation base. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had stopped moving instantly boosted his confidence; he could clearly see how important this soul slave was to him. “Back down now! I’ll give you ten breaths of time!”

The old man’s eyes were glittering more brightly than ever, and off to the side, Zhou Wudao’s heart leaped with anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun looked away from Bai Hao’s soul shadow and into the eyes of the celestial necromancer. Although he was very nervous, he was feeling more merciless than ever. Voice cold, he said, “I’ll give *you* ten breaths of time to decide. Either you die, or every last member of the Miao Clan dies. The choice is yours!”

Waving his hand, he summoned a screen of light, within which was an image!

It depicted the Inspections Manor, within which were tens of thousands of soul cultivators. There were men and women of all types, and they were all trembling with fear. Miao Lin’er was there, her face pale and covered with dread.

They were surrounded by an army of corpse troopers who pulsed with murderous auras, their leader being none other than Zhou Yixing!

Miao Lin’er’s grandfather was clearly shocked by the image. Even more shocking was that the people in the image could see him. They quickly began to call out in anxious voices.

“Save us, Patriarch!!”

“Help me, grandfather!!”

“Patriarch, it’s me, Tan’er! Help me!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0798 awe-chapter-799

Shockingly, these were all of the members of the Miao Clan!

They only represented about seventy to eighty percent of the clan as a whole, but that was still a large number. Furthermore, many of them were chosen of the clan, people who the patriarch had spent blood, sweat, and tears, not to mention significant cultivation resources, to groom as necromancers.

They represented the reserves of the entire Miao Clan, as well as its future!

This Miao Clan patriarch had carefully split his clan into smaller groups and hidden them away where he thought no one would be able to find them. Never could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would have the resources to track them all down!!

Actually, that was one of the first clues Bai Xiaochun had found, and a task he had immediately assigned to Zhou Yixing. Furthermore, the reason he had ordered him not to do anything at first was for fear of alerting his enemies.

The reason he finally made a move on the Zhou Clan was because he had gathered all the clues he needed, and he had decided to close the net. Of course, the ordinary cultivators of the Miao Clan weren’t necessarily very useful on their own. But Bai Xiaochun had long since come to the conclusion that if Bai Hao were still alive, then he would end up in this very situation, where the Miao Clan patriarch would use Bai Hao to threaten him.

And therefore… he would use the Miao Clan itself to threaten the patriarch, as his trump card! That was another of the reasons why he had unhesitatingly cut down the heir apparent of the Zhou Clan. That menacing action would be even more powerful than a mere spoken threat.

“Bai Hao! You!!!” The Miao Clan patriarch’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and his mind was reeling. Within that projected image, he saw Miao Lin’er and all of the other young ones in the clan that he had not just painstakingly groomed, but also dearly loved.

He thought back to life in his clan, how these young ones had been so attached to him, and suddenly he began to breathe raggedly. At the same time, a look of struggle appeared in his eyes.

As of this moment, their life or death would be decided by one simple action on his part!!

“This isn’t everyone in your clan,” Bai Xiaochun said, slowly and clearly, “but don’t worry. If my soul slave perishes, then trust me, I will do everything in my power to track down every last child of the Miao Clan, no matter where they are hiding, and put them to death! I will ensure that the Wildlands never again has a hint of a clan named Miao! Every bloodline will be wiped away!”

Bai Xiaochun knew that the fact that the Miao Clan patriarch was using Bai Hao to threaten him indicated that his identity had not been revealed. If it had, the patriarch wouldn't need to threaten him. He could overturn Bai Xiaochun’s entire world with ease, and place him in the most dangerous of deadly situations!

Something else that made Bai Xiaochun tremble in anger was the knowledge that the Miao Clan patriarch could not easily soulsearch Bai Hao. And yet, the patriarch would obviously have wanted to know exactly how Bai Hao had come to be. Because of that, Bai Xiaochun could only imagine the suffering and torment he had undergone. And yet… the Miao Clan patriarch had failed in his efforts!

Bai Xiaochun had already been unwilling to abandon his apprentice before, but that added realization bolstered his convictions!

The Miao Clan patriarch’s lips quivered, and his eyes grew increasingly bloodshot. He was even finding it hard to breathe. It was almost like he had split into two people, one of whom represented his clan, and the other of whom represented himself. And the two of them were fighting back and forth for the superior position. Would his desire to become an earthly necromancer outweigh his duty to his clan?

It was in that exact same moment that Bai Xiaochun once again spoke.

“Under no circumstances will I allow you to leave here today. And I don’t need to rely on luck to make sure that happens. You will die today, no matter what. Either give me my soul slave, and be the only person to die, or… you, your clan, and my soul slave… can all die together!

“There is no escape for you, and no one will come to your rescue. Don’t bother trying to buy time. I’ll say it only once more. You have ten breaths of time!

“After that, I will give the order for my corpse troopers to attack. Then, you can watch the blood of your clan flow in rivers toward the Netherworld as you die along with them!” Although Bai Xiaochun’s heart was racing in anxiety, his face didn’t show it. He seemed cold, ruthless and emotionless, and his voice contained decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

With that, he flicked his sleeve, looked at the image of Zhou Yixing, and said, “Start the countdown, Zhou Yixing. After ten breaths of time, execute the Miao Clan!”

“Ten!

“Nine!

“Eight!”

The Miao Clan patriarch shivered and panted more than before. Bai Xiaochun’s words were like sharp knives that stabbed deep into his heart and mind, pushing him to the brink of complete collapse.

That was especially true considering that Bai Xiaochun had said that he would die no matter what. And he only had ten breaths of time to make his decision. By this point, he was convinced that Bai Xiaochun truly had made a decision to kill him, and that there was no way out of the situation.

“What do I do?” he thought. “What am I supposed to do!?!?”

As the Miao Clan patriarch chuckled bitterly, and Zhou Yixing counted down loudly, the Miao Clan cultivators began to beg and plead even more loudly than before. “Save us, Patriarch!!”

“Five!”

“Four!”

Zhou Yixing’s words blasted into the Miao Clan patriarch’s ears like thunder. The patriarch stared at Bai Xiaochun, hoping to get some clue from him to indicate that perhaps he was bluffing. But no matter how he looked at him, he seemed cold and ruthless. He looked like he would go to any lengths necessary to see the patriarch dead!

“He cares about this soul,” he thought, his heart pounding, “but not enough that it can be used as a threat against him….” Clearly, Bai Xiaochun either wanted the soul for himself, or didn't want anyone else to have it!

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun was actually far more nervous than the Miao Clan patriarch. And yet, he had to keep that hidden, down to the tiniest scrap.

He knew that if he let the Miao Clan patriarch go, he would lose the initiative, and his opponent would be in control of Bai Hao’s life. At that point, if the other twelve clans and the Nine Serenities King took action, it would be virtually impossible for him to save Bai Hao!

Delaying matters wouldn’t do any good. He needed to decisively end matters right here and now.

His only hope was to see which of the two of them was more vicious. He had to make it seem like he wanted the man dead no matter what. Only by destroying his opponent’s hope for life could he possibly awaken his sense of responsibility toward his clan. At that point, the man would be forced to choose who died: himself, or his clan. In the end, most ordinary people… would pick the former!

The former was not death, it was… sacrificing oneself for one’s people!

If the patriarch somehow saw through Bai Xiaochun’s act, and realized that he cared about the situation even more than the patriarch, then Bai Xiaochun would be forced to compromise, and let him go….

“Three!” Zhou Yixing’s killing intent grew stronger, and the murderous aura of the 1,000 corpse troopers raged.

“Sacrifice yourself to save your clan?” Bai Xiaochun said coldly. “Or be buried along with them? The choice is up to you!” He raised his hand up into the air, and everyone could see that, if he dropped it, it would indicate that the executions were to be carried out!

He didn’t need to make lengthy speeches. In fact, saying too much right now could actually be counterproductive.

“Two….” Zhou Yixing said. The pleading of the Miao Clan became like a sound wave that battered at the patriarch’s heart and mind. He was on the verge of complete mental and emotional collapse. With the weight of death looming over him, his sense of duty toward his clan was now starting to outweigh his own selfish interest!

To some extent, the scene playing out was a mockery. Although the patriarch seemed to be ready to sacrifice himself for his clan, the truth was that if he could sense the slightest bit of hesitation in Bai Xiaochun, the slightest chance that he might make it out alive, he would make a very different decision!

“One!” As the word left Zhou Yixing’s mouth, the Miao Clan patriarch smiled bitterly. Then he reached up to his forehead, grabbed Bai Hao, and threw him toward Bai Xiaochun!

“Let my clan go,” he said. “A man must take responsibility for his actions; therefore, my life is yours for the taking!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding so hard that his veneer of coldness shattered. His anxiety erupted as he reached out to grab Bai Hao.

Bai Hao was clearly very weak, but as soon as Bai Xiaochun grabbed him, he opened his eyes and stared in shock and incredulity.

“Master….” he said. Then he passed out.

Heart trembling, Bai Xiaochun sent some divine sense out to confirm that Bai Hao was merely unconscious. Then he put him into his soulhoarding pagoda in his bag of holding.

When the Miao Clan patriarch saw all of that, his eyes went wide, and his mind began to spin. He heard Bai Hao call Bai Xiaochun Master, and saw how much Bai Xiaochun cared about him. Finally, everything suddenly clicked into place. The patriarch began to gasp for breath as the sacred feeling of having sacrificed himself for his clan was replaced by pure humiliation.

“You tricked me, Bai Hao!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0799 awe-chapter-800

The Miao Clan patriarch’s howl was one of utter defeat. He had lost many things a moment ago. His wisdom. His judgement. Bai Hao. And his own life!

He had been completely and utterly vanquished!

“Kill those two!” Bai Xiaochun said coldly, flicking his sleeve.

All of the corpse troopers, even the one in silver armor, took to action, murderous auras raging.

The silver-armored corpse trooper alone would have been enough, but they all attacked. Therefore, there was nothing that the Miao Clan patriarch or Zhou Wudao could do to fight back. They were killed in body and soul.

They had been able to struggle a bit while Bai Hao was still in their custody to use as a threat. But right now, their screams and curses filled the air as their bodies were ripped to shreds. Blood and gore exploded out in all directions, and their nascent divinities were shattered!!

For the Zhou Clan, it was the end of an era. Although they still existed, for all intents and purposes, they were dead!

Their heavenly marquis pagoda had been destroyed, and their heavenly marquis killed. Their heir apparent was dead, and the Zhou Clan… would be stricken from the list of the heavenly marquis clans!

The Miao Clan had once been one of the most powerful clans in the Wildlands with their earthly necromancer. But now, they had no pillar of strength to support them.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun did not go back on his word. He said that he would spare the Miao Clan, and he did. However, he had Zhou Yixing secretly place branding marks on all of them. Although they escaped with their lives, if Zhou Yixing ever needed to, he would have a way to easily threaten them. And if they ever harbored truly ill intentions, he could easily kill them.

Not all the Miao Clan cultivators got off easily, though. Bai Xiaochun had Miao Lin’er imprisoned in the Grand Asylum. Her incredible good looks would obviously cause wicked thoughts to rise up in the men in the prison, but at the moment, Bai Xiaochun wasn't feeling merciful.

The events of the day immediately caused a stir in Arch-Emperor City. There wasn’t a single person who didn’t hear about what had occurred. As for the heavenly marquises, they were stricken with fear down to the last one.

Although all of them had had conflicts and even some fights with Bai Xiaochun, so far, none of the interchanges had ever escalated to the point of people dying. But now… a heavenly marquis and his successor had both been cut down!!

Even a heavenly marquis pagoda had been destroyed. After the initial gasps of shock, everyone assumed that what had happened had been ordered by the Grand Heavenmaster.

However, it didn’t take long before the Grand Heavenmaster expressed his anger about the matter! At that point, the heavenly marquises realized… that the inspections commissioner had been acting for personal reasons!!

“This Bai Hao is crazy! I can’t believe he actually killed people!!”

“He actually went and killed a heavenly marquis without the consent of the Grand Heavenmaster?!?!”

“This defies all laws and principles, even those of the heavens!!”

“This guy cannot be tolerated any longer! The inspections commissioner has too much power! If he can go crazy and kill Zhou Wudao, then who will be the next person he targets for death!?!?”

“This Bai Hao is a traitor! This is Arch-Emperor City! Who does he think he is, the second Grand Heavenmaster!?!?” The heavenly marquises were all enraged. Their previous hatred, especially that caused by the Proclamation of Universal Grace and the losses they had sustained because of it, caused them to detest Bai Xiaochun with all their being.

Because of their hatred and fear, there was no way that they would let Bai Xiaochun’s one enormous illegal act just go unanswered. It didn’t take long before the heavenly marquises were heading en masse to the imperial palace!

“This time he’s going to die beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

“There’s no way that this Bai Hao will escape by the skin of his teeth this time!!”

“No superhuman abilities will help him this time. He won’t even have a corpse left!”

“Nobody can save him! The inspections commissioner’s power comes from the Grand Heavenmaster. Today… he will face major tribulation!”

The heavenly marquises weren’t the only ones to take action. The ten heavenly dukes left their heavenly duke pagodas and also headed to the imperial palace. Chen Haosong took the lead, a cold smile on his face. He knew… that not even the Grand Heavenmaster would be able to protect Bai Hao this time!

Bai Hao’s crime was far too dramatic, and had crossed a bottom line that nobody in Arch-Emperor Dynasty could accept!!

All of the nobility and aristocracy were up in arms. As for the common people, when they heard about what had happened, they gasped at the enormity and insanity of it all.

It didn’t take long for the news of Bai Xiaochun killing a heavenly marquis to reach the farthest corners of the Wildlands.

When the Giant Ghost King heard of it, his anger flared. He quickly pulled out a jade slip to send a message to Bai Xiaochun, but after a moment, put the jade slip away. Then he stamped his foot in anger, causing the entire royal palace to shudder.

“Too reckless!!”

When the Nine Serenities King got the information via jade slip, he frowned. He didn't care much that Zhou Wudao and the Miao Clan patriarch had been killed. The only reason he had helped them to begin with was because it benefited him. Although he didn’t particularly care for Bai Xiaochun, he viewed him like an ant whose life or death didn’t matter at all.

However, he did care about the fact that a heavenly marquis pagoda had been destroyed.

“Strange….” he murmured.

Meanwhile, in another part of Nine Serenities City, Prince Zhou Hong heard the news and immediately broke out into delighted laughter.

“Bai Hao, ah, Bai Hao. How will you possibly avert disaster this time!?”

Virtually everyone felt the same, that the situation was completely unresolvable.

As the Wildlands was shaken by the news, Bai Xiaochun was back in the Inspections Manor, where he had gone immediately after the events in the Zhou Clan.

He tossed his inspections commissioner medallion into his bag of holding, and dismissed Zhou Yixing with orders to lay low until things calmed down. As for his corpse troopers, they stood in ranks, motionless.

At the moment, the only thing Bai Xiaochun cared about was Bai Hao, who lay in his soulhoarding pagoda, slowly recovering. Eventually, his eyes fluttered open, and the first thing he saw was his Master, looking very haggard.

“Finally awake!” Bai Xiaochun said, a smile on his face. “You need to be more careful in the future. Come, come. Let Master tell you what's happened in the last month. Hmmmphh! You have no idea how awesomely your Master handled things. No one dared to provoke me! I even went and accused devas!”

Smiling, he went on to explain everything that had happened. To him, things already seemed like they had been a month before, with he and Bai Hao together, depending on each other for survival.

However, the more he talked about everything, the more Bai Hao's eyes began to glaze over.

"Master…." he said, trembling. When he heard that his Master had enacted the Proclamation of Universal Grace for him, and then learned of everything after that, he was suddenly struck deeply with a feeling of warm gratitude. Eventually, he flew out of his soulhoarding pagoda and dropped to his knees to kowtow to Bai Xiaochun.

"I never thought I would see you again, Master…." he said, his heart surging with emotions that he couldn't even express. After being captured, he had endured a month of torment, and yet had never revealed any of his Master's secrets. As of this moment, it all seemed worth it!

After all, the person Bai Hao cared about most in his heart was his Master!

To Bai Hao, the past month had been one of endless darkness and pain. He had felt himself being slowly burned away as the Miao Clan patriarch refined him. There had even been times when the patriarch attempted to soulsearch him. The Miao Clan's flame conjuring techniques required that they soulsearch and torment the intelligent soul until it submitted. Only then could the flame be conjured successfully. It was only possible to imagine how much pain Bai Hao had experienced!

During that time, he had been completely powerless to do anything. There were times when he had almost wished he could die, but in his determination, he had refused to give in. His Master had not yet conjured nineteen-colored flame, and in fact, he had not yet seen him succeed with eighteen-colored flame! And he had sworn an oath that he would make sure his Master fulfilled his dream of becoming a heavenly necromancer.

Therefore, he couldn't die. Nor did he want to! Maybe he would die one day, but it would only be after he helped his Master accomplish everything he needed to. Only then could he close his eyes in that final rest.

There were just too many things left to be done. Furthermore, he was also worried about what his Master would do without someone to watch over him. Presumably, he would get himself in all sorts of dangerous situations, and Bai Hao knew he needed to be there to give advice, and to help solve the problems!

That was his focus and determination, and it kept him going the entire month. He wasn't sure how much longer he would have been able to hold out, and eventually, he simply lapsed into unconsciousness. And then, he opened his eyes to see… his Master.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the look in Bai Hao’s eyes, he felt very pleased with himself, and mused that he really was a trustworthy and inspiring Master. Tousling Bai Hao’s hair, he said, “Hahaha! Moved? Well, didn’t Master tell you that after you become his apprentice, you wouldn’t regret it…?”

Bai Hao immediately kowtowed deeply and said, “Master, you have shown me incredible kindness. You saved my life! I will never forget this for the rest of my life!!!”

It was almost exactly the same as the scene which had played out in that mountain cave when he had just regained his mind after being a vengeful soul…. He kowtowed with no regrets and with full sincerity!

Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and flicked his sleeve.

“You’re my apprentice,” he said grandly, “and if anyone dares to lay a hand on you, they’re basically slapping me in the face! Proclamation of Universal Grace? Ha! If that hadn’t worked, my next plan was to get the lands of Heavenspan to invade the Wildlands to save you!”

As of this moment, he didn’t look at all like the cold and ruthless person he had been in the past month. He was finally back to normal!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0800 awe-chapter-801

Bai Hao was deeply moved, and his lips moved as if he wished to say something, but couldn’t find the words. But then… Bai Xiaochun looked curiously at him, and asked a question which he couldn’t hold in any longer.

“Hey, that plan with the Proclamation of Universal Grace worked pretty good. I've been wondering ever since you came up with it if your inspiration was being a bastard son of the Bai Clan?”

“Uhh….” Bai Hao was quite taken aback. His Master really was very changeable. In one moment he was domineering and heroic, and then, he switched to asking embarrassing questions.

After seeing how curious his Master seemed, Bai Hao hesitated for a moment, and then nodded.

When Bai Xiaochun saw his apprentice admit the truth, he sighed, then reached out and tousled his hair again.

“Now it makes sense why Madam Cai wanted to get rid of you…. That plan was really vicious….”

“Uhh….” Bai Hao really didn’t know whether to laugh or cry.

Bai Xiaochun had other questions he wanted to ask, but before he could, his expression flickered, and he looked up to see a red beam of light flying in his direction.

Even as it was still approaching, a voice rang out to fill the Inspections Manor!

“Bai Hao, you shameless lowlife! I'm gonna kill you!” It was the voice of a woman. Soon, she came into view, wearing a crimson robe, her fair face contorted by murderous rage. It was none other than Mistress Red-Dust, Zhou Zimo.

Earlier, Zhou Zimo had been in secluded meditation trying to break out from the early Deva Realm, and had thus been unaware of the commotion caused by the Proclamation of Universal Grace.

Moments ago, she had come out of meditation, depressed at having failed to break through. Furthermore, she found that her thoughts seemed sluggish and unclear, although she wasn’t sure why. Chalking it up to a reaction from failing in her breakthrough, she decided not to worry about the matter. That was when she had heard about the Proclamation of Universal Grace, and immediately erupted in anger.

She had already detested Bai Xiaochun, and although some of the issues between them were misunderstandings that had eventually been resolved, she still hated him. That was especially true considering how he seemed to have tossed the Giant Ghost King to the wayside after being appointed as the inspections commissioner.

And now there was the issue of the Proclamation of Universal Grace. On any other occasion, Mistress Red-Dust would have been able to see past the surface of the situation, but right now, she wasn’t thinking clearly. In her current state, she had somewhat of a one-track mind, and therefore, without taking the time to think about the situation, she flew up into the air. On the way, the Giant Ghost King sent her some messages, but she was so wrapped up in her determination to teach Bai Xiaochun a lesson that she ignored them.

Bai Xiaochun was startled. Initially, he had assumed the Grand Heavenmaster had sent people to apprehend him. Never could he have guessed that it would actually be Mistress Red-Dust, whom he hadn’t seen in quite some time. Backing up, he tried to offer an explanation.

“Zimo, you need to listen to--”

“Shut up!” she yelled angrily. Landing in the Inspections Manor, she pointed accusingly at Bai Xiaochun and continued, “You ungrateful cur! Are you the one behind that Proclamation of Universal Grace?!?!”

Deva fluctuations erupted out from her, becoming a crimson beam of light that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Quicky putting Bai Hao away, he dodged the beam of light and said, “Listen, I can expl--”

However, before he could say anything further, Mistress Red-Dust attacked again.

She was at the peak of the early Deva Realm, and was attacking with full force, which meant that Bai Xiaochun was no match for her. That was even more the case considering he had already used the Undying Emperor’s Fist twice today. Although he seemed fine on the outside, he actually needed more time to recover.

Mistress Red-Dust seemed very angry that he was dodging out of the way. Next, she performed an incantation gesture to summon a magical item, a red lotus, which began to rotate rapidly and cast bright light out in all directions.

As rumbling sounds filled the air, Bai Xiaochun backed up more. The fact that Mistress Red-Dust was attacking with full force, and not even letting him explain himself, caused his anger to spark.

“You crazy old biddy! Do you really think that I, the inspections commissioner, am afraid of you!?” A mere thought on his part caused all of his corpse troopers to look up, and bristle with murderous auras. Although none of them attacked, the silver-armored one stepped forward, his deva cultivation base surging with power. A moment later, the Quasi-Deva Realm black-armored corpse trooper also stepped forward.

The two corpse troopers began to fight with Mistress Red-Dust, who used her red lotus to slowly push them back. However, the apparent backlash from her failed breakthrough seemed to get worse, and her head suddenly began to swim. Snorting coldly, she contemplated the fact that she couldn’t actually kill the damned Bai Hao. However, he was definitely a thankless wretch and an ungrateful cur who fully deserved a good beating.

Considering how extraordinary these two corpse troopers were, she finally backed up and even turned to leave. However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t willing to simply let things drop.

“Activate formation! Seal that woman in place!” Instantly, his nine half-deva corpse troopers flew out into the open to surround Mistress Red-Dust. The rest of the 5,000 also joined, creating a huge net-like seal that made it impossible for Mistress Red-Dust to escape.

An unsightly expression could be seen on Mistress Red-Dust’s face as she realized that she was trapped. At the same time, her hatred for Bai Xiaochun grew stronger. Calling upon the power of her red lotus, she managed to break an opening into the lines of corpse troopers, and yet the moment she did, the backlash from her failed breakthrough worsened. Her divine sense didn’t seem capable of keeping up with her desire to fight, which also caused her red lotus to lag.

On any other occasion, even that wouldn’t have been a big problem. But she was facing the two most powerful of the corpse troopers, and they immediately detected her weakness. They pressed the attack, and booms rang out as Mistress Red-Dust’s face drained of blood. At this point, it didn’t matter how muddled her thoughts were, she realized that she was acting recklessly. She definitely should not have come looking to cause problems for Bai Xiaochun right after having failed at a breakthrough, and still suffering a backlash because of it.

Furthermore, she'd had no idea that Bai Xiaochun’s corpse troopers were at this level. Before, he had commanded 3,000, but now he had 5,000. Plus, the silver-armored one was fully in the deva level.

“Too many things happened while I was in secluded meditation….” she thought, frowning. She began to back up, an unsightly expression on her face, but as she did, the net created by the 5,000 corpse troopers tightened around her.

That was when Bai Xiaochun saw his opportunity to take action. Jumping forward, he clenched his right hand into a fist and unleashed a fist strike in her direction!

“You’re not going anywhere!” he shouted. The two most powerful corpse troopers attacked, backed up by the rest of the 5,000. Mistress Red-Dust was completely trapped, incapable of breaking free, and even her cultivation base was being sealed.

Not pausing for even a moment, Bai Xiaochun reached out, grabbed her arm, and pulled her down toward the ground. The two of them fell down, and by chance, she landed on her back, with him on top. Immediately, he could feel her soft curves, which instantly lit a fire inside of him. Without even thinking about it, he looked down at her beautiful, enticing lips.

“How dare you, Bai Hao!!” she shouted, her heart bursting with regret and alarm as she began to struggle against him. However, her cultivation base was sealed, an effect which would last for at least the time it took half an incense stick to burn.

The more she struggled, the more Bai Xiaochun’s body tingled in response to what he was feeling. He even took a few deep breaths as he marveled at how attractive she was. However, externally, he put the fiercest expression possible onto his face and glared at her.

“Don't even think of trying to seduce me!!”

“You!!” she yelled angrily, her face flushing bright red and her eyes burning as if with fire. And yet, she could also see how her struggling was affecting her captor, so she stopped moving.

“You walked *right* into this trap, Zhou Zimo,” he said harshly. “Fudge! Don’t tell me you *really* want to get into my bed?!”

“Shut up, you shameless jerk! You ungrateful cur! You villain! How dare you treat me like this after how well my father took care of you!”

Bai Xiaochun frowned, examining her to try to determine if this was just an act…. From what he remembered, Mistress Red-Dust didn’t usually behave like this. How could she really be confused by the situation with the Proclamation of Universal Grace? Unable to hold back, he reached out and place his hand on her forehead.

“No fever? Have you just gone stupid?” All of a sudden his eyes lit up. “Wait, does that scoundrel the Giant Ghost King actually have other children out there in the world? Ohhhhh.” He clicked his tongue disapprovingly. "You’re not the only one? No way…. How many secrets does the old man have?” The more he thought about it, the more it made sense.

“Shut up! I’m my father’s only daughter!” She was about to continue cursing him, when all of a sudden, her jaw dropped as she realized the truth of it all.

“Um… is this some kind of joke?” he asked. “If you’re the only one, then you can’t seriously expect me to believe that you didn’t realize the Giant Ghost King was the person least affected by my plan! The other three kings all have multiple children, and now they’ll be weakened. When the time comes, our family can easily take them out!”

With that, Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. He had intentionally used the words ‘our family’ as a way to test things out. If this woman was going to come and pretend to be stupid, then he at least had to play along in some way.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0801 awe-chapter-802

“Shut your mouth! What do you mean *our* family? It’s *my* family!” As she glared at him angrily, her flush deepened. Despite how muddled her thoughts were, she still felt humiliation and anger rising up inside of her.

First of all, she was currently pinned by Bai Xiaochun, and was very displeased at being touched in such a way. Second of all, she was coming to the realization that something strange was going on. Her thinking was too clouded. Furthermore, if she focused on an issue, it seemed that she would instantly make a decision about it and stick obstinately to that decision no matter what.

“How could this be happening? It’s not that complicated of a situation. How come I didn’t get what was going on…?” Mistress Red-Dust was really starting to feel suspicious. In all her years of cultivation, she had never experienced anything like this before. All of a sudden, she thought back to the technique her father the giant ghost king had encouraged her to cultivate. However, merely thinking about the technique suddenly caused her thoughts to grow murkier, and her heart to feel more obstinate….

“It was definitely father….” she thought, gritting her teeth.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun looked into her phoenix-like eyes, and suddenly felt his heart seize as surely as if a tiny hand had grabbed it. He swallowed hard, thinking about how Mistress Red-Dust’s body wasn’t bad at all. Furthermore, the way her cheeks flushed when she was angry made her even more attractive than usual.

Mistress Red-Dust was fundamentally beautiful, and to see her confused and out of sorts only enhanced that beauty. All of a sudden, his heart began to race.

There was something different about Mistress Red-Dust. Hou Xiaomei tended to glare, and Song Junwan was soft on the outside but filled with dangerous thorns. But Mistress Red-Dust was like a beautiful serpent that you just wanted to reach out and touch to see what would happen….

“She’s more of a vixen than Junwan!” he thought, gasping slightly. He immediately tried to get himself under control, but it was difficult considering that he was laying on top of her. Furthermore, although she wasn’t struggling as fiercely as she had been before, she was still moving here and there in a way that caused his heartrate to increase by the moment.

“Ai, what powerful demon magic! Well, whatever. I, Bai Xiaochun, cannot let the Miao Clan patriarch outdo me in being willing to sacrifice. I guess I just need to put this demoness in her place!” Heart bursting with righteous intentions, he placed his right hand… onto her chest, just below her collarbone… and pushed down.

“Time to get put into place, demoness!” he shouted righteously. The fact that Bai Xiaochun was pushing his hand down onto her chest at first caused Mistress Red-Dust’s jaw to drop. Then she screamed.

“Get your hands off me!!”

“So, the demoness dares to fight back!” he said grimly. “Good! Excellent! Just watch and see how I put you in your place!” For the sake of righteousness, he then placed his other hand onto her chest and pushed down….

“Do you have a death wish, Bai Hao?!?!” she yelled, her rage burning to incomprehensible heights.

The corpse troopers stood around them, no expressions on their faces whatsoever as they watched the struggling man and woman whom they had surrounded.

It was a charming scene that, if any random passerby happened to glance at without understanding the circumstances, would seem like….

However, the charming scene didn’t last for very long. Perhaps it was because Mistress Red-Dust was being upset in a way that she never had been before, or perhaps it was some other reason. In either case, the sealing which had been placed onto her suddenly shattered.

When her cultivation base erupted with power, Bai Xiaochun immediately leaped away from her and backed up. As for Mistress Red-Dust, her eyes shone with cold light as she lunged forward to try to grab him.

Thunderous booming sounds filled the air, as well as a screaming wind. Bai Xiaochun shrieked as he fled, and Mistress Red-Dust chased him, her hair flying around crazily, and her face covered with a murderous look.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Hao!!”

“Men, stop this demoness!” Immediately, the previously stiff-faced corpse troopers leaped to intercept Mistress Red-Dust, their murderous auras seething.

Mistress Red-Dust’s rage seemed to have increased her battle prowess quite a bit, and she managed to send quite a few corpse troopers flying out of her way. However, the silver-armored trooper was still a match for her, and before long, it was to her frustration and anger that she realized she couldn't get past him. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun was encircled by a ring of corpse trooper bodyguards, who were escorting him further and further away from her.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was blushing a bit, and realized that, considering the level of his own willpower, he shouldn’t have acted like that just now. Apparently, Mistress Red-Dust’s demon magic was just too powerful. Unwilling to admit that openly, though, he said, “What are you doing, Zimo? I was trying to help you! Um… it’s obvious that you were ensorcelled by some demon magic! I was just trying to get rid of it!”

“Shut up!” Mistress Red-Dust retorted furiously. She was so angry she couldn’t even come up with words to speak. She simply hovered in the air, staring at Bai Xiaochun behind his protective ranks of corpse troopers, and gnashed her teeth angrily.

Feeling a bit guilty, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. Flustered, he began to babble a bit. “Um… look, this was just a misunderstanding. What were we just talking about? Oh, right. You said that it wasn’t *our* family it was *your* family…. Zimo, you’re being to standoffish. Come on. Your family, my family. It's the same thing!”

Mistress Red-Dust glared at him coldly, but was aware that she had instigated the situation. Furthermore, it was just as Bai Xiaochun said: the Proclamation of Universal Grace did take the Giant Ghost King into consideration. However, when she thought of the humiliation which had just occurred, she couldn’t suppress her fury.

Just as she was about to begin shouting again, her expression flickered, and she looked up into the air.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted as he did the same. Up above, the air was distorting, and soon, a dark, shadowy figure stepped out of thin air.

He wore a black cloak that covered even his face. From the perspective of Bai Xiaochun and Mistress Red-Dust, he looked like little more than a black shadow!

His face was impossible to make out, and he was surrounded by inky darkness that seemed to be part of him, and him of it.

This man was none other than… the Grand Heavenmaster’s most trusted aide, the previous inspections commissioner, Hei Ming!

When Mistress Red-Dust realized it was Hei Ming, she was clearly taken aback. As for Bai Xiaochun, he took a deep breath as he realized that… the moment he had been waiting for had arrived.

No one could see Hei Ming’s expression. The only things anyone could see were his eyes, deep within the hood of his cloak. And yet, they didn’t contain even a hint of emotion. After studying the Inspections Manor for a moment, he ignored Mistress Red-Dust and focused on Bai Xiaochun.

“Give me the command medallion,” he said in the most sinister of voices, a voice which made the Inspections Manor seem to descend into the depths of winter.

Mistress Red-Dust’s expression flickered, and Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly for a moment. Although it was no surprise that the inspections commissioner medallion was being taken away from him, he was still very nervous. And yet, he was also confident in being able to make it through the coming trouble.

Pulling the medallion out, he looked down at it for a moment, then tossed it out in front of him. It immediately became a streak of violet light that shot toward Hei Ming.

Hei Ming caught the command medallion and put it away. Then he spoke yet again in that sinister voice of his.

“Come with me, Bai Hao. The Grand Heavenmaster is awaiting an explanation!”

With that, he turned and flew up toward the imperial palace. Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and quickly reviewed the preparations he had made for this moment. Then, he flew up after Hei Ming.

Mistress Red-Dust watched all of this happen, and although she was still angry with Bai Xiaochun, she also felt hesitation in her heart. After they left, she pulled out a transmission jade slip.

There were quite a few messages from the giant ghost king in the jade slip, but Mistress Red-Dust wasn’t in the mood to check any of them. Instead, she sent an urgent message.

“Father, Hei Ming took away Bai Hao’s inspections commissioner medallion. Then he led him away….”

Back in Giant Ghost City, the Giant Ghost King was sitting there anxiously. According to his original plan, he was supposed to have brainwashed Mistress Red-Dust a bit after she came out of secluded meditation. Instead, she had headed toward Bai Xiaochun with murderous intentions.

He had sent her several urgent messages, but she was completely focused on her own desires, and had ignored him. The Giant Ghost King was left with no other option than to smile wryly and sigh. But then, he got a message back, and after he saw it, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“Bai Hao is not the type of person who makes decisions rashly…. I wonder what secret weapon he has up his sleeve?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0802 awe-chapter-803

As the Giant Ghost King sat there in silence, Bai Xiaochun followed Hei Ming up toward the imperial palace, trying as best he could to look calm and collected.

Of course, inwardly, he was anxious to the point of being terrified. He frantically reviewed his plan to make sure there were no holes in it; after all, if he made the slightest mistake, there would be no hope of making a comeback.

“I doubt anything will happen that I couldn’t adjust for…. I couldn’t have prepared any better….” He felt a bit better after a thorough analysis, but still couldn’t stop wondering about what might or might not happen.

And thus, he and Hei Ming proceeded along in silence.

From the moment Bai Xiaochun had chosen not to consult the Grand Heavenmaster, but instead to attack the Zhou Clan with deadly force and lightning-like speed, he had known that it would cause a huge commotion!

But he had no regrets. He didn’t trust and rely on the Grand Heavenmaster like he had in the past, and Bai Hao’s safety had been of paramount importance. If even the slightest word had gotten out to alerts his enemies, the consequences could have been unimaginable.

And just as the Giant Ghost King had surmised, he had dared to act in the way he had because he had a secret weapon ready to go!

“I bet all of the heavenly marquises and dukes are there in Heavenmaster Hall, demanding that I be put to death….” Although he had his secret weapon, he still couldn't help but feel a bit anxious. However, it was an anxiety mixed with anticipation!

He couldn’t wait to reveal his secret weapon to all of the important officials in the dynasty. And when that happened, the more they had antagonized him in the past, the louder the sound of the figurative slaps to their faces would be!

“In the past, I always relied on the power of the Grand Heavenmaster to fight with the aristocracy. But now… I'm not going to rely on anybody except myself! I'm going to personally slap them all, right upside the face!

“89 heavenly marquises. 10 heavenly dukes…. 99 important members of the aristocracy. I wonder what it will feel like to slap them….” The more he thought about it, the stronger his anticipation grew, to the point where he had trouble breathing calmly.

Before long, he and Hei Ming were in the imperial palace, and heading toward Heavenmaster Hall. As he walked along, his heart rate increased, and his nervous anticipation grew more intense.

At one point, when they were very close to their destination, Hei Ming suddenly stopped in place.

Bai Xiaochun was so wrapped up in his thoughts of what was to come that he was taken completely by surprise, and almost walked right into Hei Ming.

After a moment passed, Hei Ming said, “You acted… recklessly.”

Although his voice was just as sinister as it normally was, if one listened carefully, one would be able to detect a bit of concern!

When Bai Xiaochun realized that, he looked surprised. Hei Ming had always acted very cold and detached, and therefore, this sudden presence of concern was totally unexpected!

Hei Ming didn't turn around. Back facing Bai Xiaochun, he said, “All the heavenly marquises and all the heavenly dukes… are working together. Even if the Grand Heavenmaster wanted to shield you from them, it would be very difficult.”

Although no one was there to see it, mixed emotions were in his eyes.

He could tell that a storm of extermination was brewing in Heavenmaster Hall, a potential catastrophe for Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, many of the things Bai Xiaochun had done in his time as the inspections commissioner caused Hei Ming to think back to when he had held the same office.

As such, it would be hard to find someone else in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty who could sympathize with how Bai Xiaochun felt better than Hei Ming.

They had both been inspections commissioners. And right now, the events which were playing out closely resembled what had occurred to Hei Ming all those years ago. The main difference was that Hei Ming had a very close personal relationship to the Grand Heavenmaster, and as such, had been protected. He had escaped death in that situation, and had stuck like a shadow to the Grand Heavenmaster ever since.

Most importantly, he had actually not committed a crime as serious as killing a heavenly marquis!

So in many ways, Bai Xiaochun’s situation was different.

“Your only hope is the Grand Heavenmaster…. Bai Hao, you must… look out for yourself.” Sighing, he proceeded onward.

Bai Xiaochun looked at Hei Ming as he walked off, and was moved. He had always taken Hei Ming to be cold and distant, but now, when Bai Xiaochun was facing imminent calamity, the fact that he had offered comforting words warmed his heart.

He peered intently at Hei Ming’s back for a moment, then nodded softly and continued onward… to Heavenmaster Hall!

Not a sound could be heard from the closed door of the hall. However, as soon as he got close, he could sense that a complex, violent aura pulsed inside.

Hei Ming faded away into nothing, and Bai Xiaochun stood there waiting. A long moment passed, whereupon a voice echoed out from inside.

“Come in, Bai Hao!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered and took a deep, long breath. He knew that the show was about to begin, which made him nervous, but at the same time, more excited.

“Fudge, what do I have to be scared of? My secret weapon is so awesome that I’ll be able to slap those dukes and marquises until they look as ugly as pigs! They’re just waiting inside for me to go beat them up, right?! If they’re not afraid, then what am I afraid for?! Heck, it would be a shame to *not* hit them considering they're sticking their faces out right in front of me and just waiting around!"

Gritting his teeth, he stepped forward and pushed the door open.

Immediately, more than a hundred gazes locked onto him!

The weakest of those gazes belonged to a half-deva, and the strongest belonged to a demigod. All of the aristocracy of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, all of the most powerful experts, were gathered here, their gazes fused together to create pressure that could shake all creation. Even with his secret weapon, Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but lose much of his nerve thanks to all of those gazes.

The Grand Heavenmaster sat on the Heavenmaster Throne at the head of the hall, a grim look on his face. The ten heavenly dukes stood beneath him, their expressions icy cold.

Then came the 89 heavenly marquises.... they were now all of the heavenly marquises remaining in Arch-Emperor City, and all of them were looking coldly at Bai Xiaochun. Some had cold smiles, some had sneers, and other had eyes filled with pure killing intent.

Bai Xiaochun's heart was pounding, and sweat began to pop out on his forehead. For the first time in his life... he found himself at a disadvantage in a staring contest.

But there was little he could do about it. After all, he was single-handedly facing more than a hundred people!

"What shameless bullies!" he thought, shivering inwardly. However, he couldn't let them defeat his spirit before he even walked through the door. Gritting his teeth, he looked through the crowd until he found Zhao Xionglin staring viciously at him.

“It doesn’t matter how many they have on their side!” he thought. “Lord Bai can at least defeat one of them! No surrender!” With that, he glared back steadily at Zhao Xionglin.

Zhao Xionglin was clearly taken by surprise, and couldn’t help but think of the friction which had occurred between the two of them. All of a sudden, he felt uneasy.

“With all these people staring at him,” he thought, “why did he have to latch onto me! What’s he doing?!” He was immediately enraged. Unfortunately for him, though, he was definitely not as skilled in staring contests as Bai Xiaochun was. Bai Xiaochun’s gaze looked like it was filled with blade light and sword projections, a windstorm of blood and carnage, a type of madness that seemed to be willing to die fighting with the enemy! Zhao Xionglin was shaken, and could only assume that in the face of death, this mad dog was somehow going to try to kill him as he went out....

Then he thought about all the incredible things Bai Xiaochun had accomplished so far, and how, despite being faced with so many enemies in one place, he was still acting like this. That in itself was very telling. Before long, Zhao Xionglin was completely convinced of his earlier theory, and considering how dangerous that made things for him, he finally just looked away.

Seeing that Zhao Xionglin didn't dare to look at him caused Bai Xiaochun’s spirits to soar. “Think you can take me on?” he thought. “Yellow-bellied wimp!”

Feeling very impressive, he stepped into Heavenmaster Hall, clasped hands and bowed to the Grand Heavenmaster.

“Your humble servant Bai Hao offers greetings, Grand Heavenmaster!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0803 awe-chapter-804

The Grand Heavenmaster wore a grim expression, and was feeling very irritated. He was actually very angry at what Bai Xiaochun had done, and especially his timing; right at one of the most important moments of the Proclamation of Universal Grace.

Everything had been going well and according to plan. The important clans in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty were beginning to fall. But now… thanks to Bai Xiaochun, the aristocracy was now more united than ever!

Earlier in the meeting, they hadn’t said it outright, but had clearly implied that if Bai Xiaochun didn’t die, they would reject the Proclamation of Universal Grace!

Although the Grand Heavenmaster was the type who would normally agree to such a demand, the fact that Bai Xiaochun’s two vicious plans had benefited him so much caused him to hesitate.

A moment passed, and then the Grand Heavenmaster said, “Bai Hao, I've called you here today to provide an explanation regarding the matter of Zhou Wudao. Please clarify the situation.”

Obviously, he was giving Bai Xiaochun a chance to try to resolve the situation on his own, which would save himself a lot of effort and frustration.

“Grand Heavenmaster,” Bai Xiaochun began, “your humble serv--”

Before he could get any farther than that, one of the heavenly marquises laughed coldly and then cast a murderous gaze at him. Stepping forward, the man clasped hands formally to the Grand Heavenmaster!

“There’s no need for you to try to defend yourself, Bai Hao,” he said. “The penalty for murder is death! It’s a law of the heavens! Grand Heavenmaster, I would like to submit an official request to the court that Bai Hao be stripped of his title of inspections commissioner and executed on the spot. Only in this way can justice be served to Heavenly Marquis Zhou’s spirit in the heavens!”

Bai Xiaochun glared at the man, and yet, before anything else could happen, another heavenly marquis stepped forward.

“I completely agree. Grand Heavenmaster, this Bai Hao acted without any official permission to kill one of the heavenly marquises of our grand imperial dynasty. It was a foolhardy and illegal act that should be punished by death!”

“Grand Heavenmaster, I would like to submit an official request to the court that Bai Hao be executed!”

“Grand Heavenmaster, I would also like to submit an official request to the court to have Bai Hao put to death immediately!!”

The heavenly marquises were acting like hornets whose nest had been disturbed. It only took a brief moment for eight of them to step forward with biting words, using the incident with Zhou Wudao to demand that Bai Xiaochun be put to death.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were already starting to get tired from all the glaring, so eventually he looked away, and just waited for them to submit their requests. The entire time, his anger continued to burn hotter and hotter.

Gritting his teeth, he murmured to himself, “It seems that I didn’t visit enough clans during my rescue of Hao’er. I should have gone to a few more!”

The Grand Heavenmaster sat there silently, and the wily old foxes who were the heavenly dukes didn't say anything. A moment passed, and some more heavenly marquises stepped forward to make requests. One of them was named Liu Yong.

“Grand Heavenmaster,” he said, “according to my calculations, this Bai Hao has committed over 100 serious crimes. I would like to take this opportunity to recite that list in front of all the other government officials here today!”

Everyone gasped in response to his initial words. Heavenly Marquis Liu Yong was actually ranked in the middle of the heavenly marquises in terms of his cultivation base, roughly the same as Zhou Wudao. However, he was an outgoing person, and was actually very excited to be participating in this rare alliance of the aristocracy.

Therefore, he hoped to take advantage of this moment to make a big scene, and hopefully earn a bit of respect.

Even the heavenly dukes were paying attention to him now. As for the Grand Heavenmaster, he looked him over, both intrigued and shaken by the idea of hearing Liu Yong list all of the supposed 100 crimes.

Bai Xiaochun was startled, and couldn’t hold back from gasping slightly. Looking over at Liu Yong, he noted that he seemed familiar. However, he couldn’t place his face, and was very surprised to hear that he planned to list out 100 supposed crimes.

When Liu Yong saw that he was now the center of attention, his excitement grew, and he took a few steps forward.

“This Bai Hao killed members of his own clan,” he began loudly, “and gravely breached social norms. This is the crime of clan rebellion!

“In Giant Ghost City, he was known as a wife-stealer who was completely devoid of conscience. This is the crime of aggravated robbery!

“He actually took the soulgrounds of the Cai Clan by force, and inflicted grave injuries in the process! This is the crime of larceny!

“He plundered the treasures of the Chen Clan, causing them to sustain grievous losses. This is the crime of burglary!”

Liu Yong talked at high speed and without stopping. His words filled Heavenmaster Hall, until everyone’s eyes slowly began to glaze over.

As Bai Xiaochun listened, he began to pant, and to stare at Liu Yong with gritted teeth. Obviously, Liu Yong had done a lot of research in preparation for this moment, otherwise he wouldn’t have been able to list off all of the crimes so quickly.

“In the Necromancer Kettle, he absorbed the life force of a whole host of chosen by means of an evil cultivation technique. This is the crime of taboo cultivation!

“Furthermore, after coming to Arch-Emperor City, he threw the Giant Ghost Legion into chaos, and set the entire place on fire. This is the crime of arson!”

The more excited Liu Yong got, the louder his voice grew. In fact, as he looked around and saw the other heavenly marquises and dukes looking on in complete silence, he became more confident, and spoke even louder.

“In his spirit enhancement shop, he charged exorbitant rates for soul medicine and spirit enhancements. This is the crime of price gouging!

“After becoming the inspections commissioner, he stuffed his own pockets by shaking down clans. This is the crime of embezzlement!”

As Liu Yong listed out crime after crime, time ticked by. Eventually, enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, and yet, he still wasn’t finished. Furthermore, instead of slowing down as he spoke, he actually began to speak faster and faster.

Everyone was shaken, and Bai Xiaochun was completely stunned. In fact, he even began to admire Liu Yong a bit….

A strange expression could be seen on the Grand Heavenmaster’s face, and he had to admit that Heavenly Marquis Liu’s ability to dig up information and compile it was completely beyond ordinary.

“…. This is the crime of dereliction of duty!”

“…. This is the crime of abuse of power!”

“…. This is the crime of accepting bribes!”

“And finally, he slaughtered an innocent heavenly marquis, in the most brutal fashion imaginable. This is the crime of murder!!”

Another incense stick’s worth of time had passed, and Liu Yong was finally finished. After catching his breath, he looked around proudly, then clasped hands to the Grand Heavenmaster.

“Grand Heavenmaster, this concludes my report. Bai Hao is the amalgamation of all types of evil. Any one of those hundred crimes could be punished by death with a thousand cuts. Therefore, I would like to submit an official request to the court that this supervillain Bai Hao be executed on the spot! Let him be hacked into a million pieces to serve as a warning to any who would follow in his vile footsteps!!”

Everyone was completely and utterly shaken. For many, a new world had just been opened up, and they felt like they were coming to know Liu Yong for the first time. A moment passed, whereupon more people began to step forward and clasp hands toward the Grand Heavenmaster.

“I second the motion!”

“I also submit the same request to the court!”

“The 100 crimes listed by Heavenly Marquis Liu are damning evidence! I also second the motion!”

It wasn’t just one or two people; dozens of heavenly marquises all stepped forward to say similar things. As of this point, more than half of the heavenly marquises had joined in the effort.

As for everyone else, they exchanged glances, then clasped hands and, in unison, said, “We second the motion! Execute Bai Hao!”

Their voices were like a sound wave that crashed back and forth in all directions. Bai Xiaochun looked around at the group, and especially at Liu Yong, and suddenly felt fear rising up inside of him.

“Can this guy shapeshift into a rat or something? I can’t believe he scurried around and dragged up all of that information about me!!” Bai Xiaochun immediately decided that he would not forget this Liu Yong, and would be sure to teach him a good lesson.

The Grand Heavenmaster frowned. The entire aristocracy was united in opposition to a single person. Before, he might have been able to think of a way to resolve the situation. After all, Bai Xiaochun was now completely and utterly isolated, which meant that if the Grand Heavenmaster managed to save him, he would earn eternal loyalty.

But right now, the Proclamation of Universal Grace was the most important thing to consider. If the dynasty truly became unstable, it would have a big effect on the Grand Heavenmaster. Only by having an unassailable position of reason could he save Bai Xiaochun. Even if Bai Xiaochun was his adopted son, it would still be difficult to defend him.

Inwardly, he was sighing, and was also cursing Bai Xiaochun for getting himself into this situation. Furthermore, he began to hesitate and waver about what to do.

And yet, things still weren’t over. After the heavenly marquises finished speaking, Chen Haosong’s eyes glittered at the sight of the Grand Heavenmaster hesitating. Stepping forward, he clasped hands formally.

“I was a bit stunned to hear what Heavenly Marquis Liu just had to say. Our Arch-Emperor Dynasty has lasted for many generations, and in any generation, a person who committed 100 serious crimes would definitely suffer the penalty of clan extermination. Therefore, I would also like to submit an official request to the court that Bai Hao be killed!”

The bearded heavenly duke, as well as the other eight, also stepped forward and clasped hands. Although none of them said anything, their actions alone spoke to their stance.

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes flickered, and the hesitation vanished. Just as he was prepared to state his decision… Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out!

“Is your little show over now? It’s my turn!”

He didn’t seem anxious or nervous at all because of what he had seen, and in fact, a cold smile could be seen on his face.

**

Note from Er Gen: Ahem, this chapter has a secret in it….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0804 awe-chapter-805

Bai Xiaochun’s words had the same effect as a cup of water thrown into a vat of boiling-hot oil. The heavenly marquises all exploded in rage.

“What incredible gall you have, Bai Hao!”

“You committed 100 crimes! How dare you act so impudently here in Heavenmaster Hall!!”

Liu Yong’s eyes shone especially brightly. Apparently thinking he had Bai Xiaochun in a no-win situation, he pointed at him and yelled, “You have no respect for elders and superiors, Bai Hao! In this hallowed place, you go so far as to reduce our righteous indignation to nothing more than a show? These are the crimes of defaming royalty, of weaving lies, and of outright slander! As of this moment, you have committed, not 100 crimes, but 103!”

Everyone else in the hall seemed enlivened by what they were hearing, and as far as they were concerned, Liu Yong was like an immortal god in their little alliance.

Everyone began to join in the shouting and clamoring.

Smiling coldly, Bai Xiaochun ignored the enraged heavenly marquises, and turned to clasp hands and bow to the Grand Heavenmaster.

“Grand Heavenmaster, I have something I’d like to give you!”

Everyone else in the hall began to chuckle coldly, and most of them were thinking the same thing: “What, is he going to pull out proof that Zhou Wudao was a traitor or something? Even if he did, he still couldn’t avoid the death penalty!”

After all, Bai Xiaochun was not the one who would be making the decision about what happened!

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes narrowed slightly as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. He had been watching him this entire time, and had noticed that, while he did seem nervous, there was no despair in his eyes. That went contrary to what the Grand Heavenmaster would have expected, so therefore, he nodded, curious about what Bai Xiaochun planned to give him.

Having acquired permission from the Grand Heavenmaster, Bai Xiaochun slapped his bag of holding to produce a portion of soul medicine. It was bright and colorful, dazzling to say the least, with the light it cast instantly filling all of Heavenmaster Hall. It almost looked like a precious gem, a gem that emanated soul power fluctuations of the ultimate level!

This was none other than… a portion of supreme-grade soul medicine… which required the watershed ingredient of eighteen-colored flame to produce!!

Upon seeing the soul medicine, the Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes began to shine brightly. And he wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. Chen Haosong and the other heavenly dukes all looked shocked, and the heavenly marquises’ eyes went wide.

The heavenly marquises immediately began to shout out loud in surprise and shock.

“Supreme-grade soul medicine!!”

“You need eighteen-colored flame to concoct that…. It’s supreme-grade soul medicine!!”

“Supreme-grade soul medicine can also be called earthly soul medicine. Even a single portion of it can be considered extremely rare! And yet this Bai Hao actually has one….”

Almost immediately, though, they began to wonder the same thing. “What does that portion of earthly soul medicine have to do with the death of Zhou Wudao?”

At this point, Liu Yong spoke out loud, a cold expression on his face. “Offering a portion of soul medicine isn't enough to wipe out more than 100 grave crimes! What are you trying to say, Bai Hao?! Don’t tell me you’re going to say that you concocted it!?”

In response to his words, the faces of many of the heavenly marquises began to flicker. Then, all sorts of expressions of shock and astonishment could be heard within Heavenmaster Hall, along with expressions of anger.

“He did make a very faint eighteen-colored flame before….”

“Impossible! Earthly necromancers don’t just show up out of nowhere!”

“Don’t even think of trying to pull a fast one, Bai Hao. Do you think that pulling out a portion of soul medicine will make you an earthly necromancer or something?! Completely preposterous!”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun threw caution to the wind and shouted, “All of you shut the hell up!”

His sudden outburst caused many people to look at him in shock.

Obviously, his plan was not to use the soul medicine itself to try to convince people that he was an earthly necromancer. He actually wanted them to question him and accuse him. That way, when it came time to slap them with the truth, it would be even more thrilling.

His secret weapon was none other than his status as an earthly necromancer!

Since these people were trying to use the laws of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty against him, then he would pull the rug right out from under them, and strike back with those very laws!! In the current age, there were only three earthly necromancers in the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty. In fact, even in the distant past, around the time when the dynasty had just been transplanted into the Wildlands, there had only been five.

It was easy to imagine the status that earthly necromancers occupied, and it went without saying that in the codified laws of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, earthly necromancers… had the power to do anything they wanted, as long as they didn’t betray the dynasty itself!

This was the power that Bai Xiaochun had to rely on, the authority of an earthly necromancer!

“Since you people don’t believe that I made this portion of soul medicine, then on this day, right here in Heavenmaster Hall, in the presence of everyone here, I… will conjure an eighteen-colored flame!!” He accompanied his words with the proud flick of a sleeve, and he also bolstered his words with his cultivation base. As a result, the clamoring heavenly marquises were instantly silenced.

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes began to sparkle brightly. As for the ten heavenly dukes, and especially Chen

Haosong, their breaths caught in their throats. Obviously, they found it hard to believe that this Bai Xiaochun could actually be an earthly necromancer.

“A cornered beast will still fight,” Chen Haosong said with narrowed eyes. “You’re bluffing!”

The other heavenly dukes quickly began to suspect that Chen Haosong was right. As for the heavenly marquises, despite being shaken, they gritted their teeth and began to speak out in anger.

“That’s a big claim, Bai Hao. If you can concoct an eighteen-colored flame, then I, Zhao Xionglin, will drop to my knees and kowtow to you!”

“That's right. Struggle on your deathbed if you wish. Becoming an earthly necromancer isn’t a simple thing!”

“You overestimate yourself!”

They were all completely confident that this was the end of the line for Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun smiled coldly as he looked the group over, his gaze lingering on Zhao Xionglin. Then he ignored them, slapping his bag of holding to produce ten tongues of seventeen-colored flame!

These seventeen tongues of flame had been acquired by Zhou Yixing, with the help of many of the bastard children in the city, while Bai Xiaochun had been looking for Bai Hao.

Actually, this was only a portion of the stockpile he had. In order to be fully confident in his secret weapon, he had put together three full sets of the ingredients necessary to conjure eighteen-colored flame. That way, he could be confident in success even if some mishap occurred. Right now, it was without the slightest hesitation that he sent all ten of the seventeen-colored flames flying out. He also made sure to send the flames perilously close to Zhao Xionglin, Liu Yong, and some of the others who had been particularly vocal against him.

Everyone backed up, even the heavenly dukes. Only the Grand Heavenmaster remained in place, and in fact, he actually leaned forward, his eyes sparkling.

“If he actually conjures an eighteen-colored flame,” he thought, “and becomes an earthly necromancer… then this so-called tribulation facing him will be completely nullified!” The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes narrowed as he paid close attention.

Bai Xiaochun knew that it was a critical moment, and was also confident that no one would dare to interrupt him. After all, this was Heavenmaster Hall, and he was attempting to rise to the rank of earthly necromancer.

“You just watch how I cause all your jaws to drop. I’ll strike you mute with shock! Maybe your eyes will even pop out of your skulls!” At the moment, he was filled with intense, seething anticipation.

After all, he really liked being the center of attention like this….

At the same time, he knew that although he couldn’t afford to make any mistakes, he was actually in a fairly safe position at the moment.

Therefore, he tuned out everything except for the flame. Performing a double-handed incantation gesture, he looked at the flames, and then pushed his hands down.

Instantly, the tongues of seventeen-colored flame began to merge together. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more focused. Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, during which time the ten tongues of seventeen-colored flame turned into a seventeen-colored sea of fire!

At the moment, his expression was utterly serious as he performed more double-handed incantation gestures, causing his cultivation base power to erupt out. He was moving on to the next step of the process… compressing the flame!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Intense rumbling sounds filled Heavenmaster Hall as the majestic seventeen-colored sea of fire caused everyone who looked at it to be filled with shock. And yet, none of them were yet ready to believe that Bai Xiaochun really would become an earthly necromancer!

In fact, they couldn’t afford to believe it!

However, what happened next caused many unsightly expressions to appear on the faces of those present, especially Zhao Xionglin and Liu Yong. Gasps and curses alike filled the air.

Such curses did little good. After all, Bai Xiaochun had already succeeded once at this. Perhaps it was because of that, or perhaps because he knew his life was on the line, but either way, his conjuring efforts were going much more smoothly than last time.

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the sea of fire was compressed to a size of 90 meters. And it kept shrinking.

84 meters. 78 meters. 72 meters!!

Even as everyone looked on with various suspicions and doubts, the sea of fire reached a size of 60 meters!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0805 awe-chapter-806

As the sea of fire was compressed, it writhed madly. But Bai Xiaochun’s hands contained the power to seal and suppress anything in existence, so even had the fire reacted more violently, he would still have been able to control it.

The rumbling sounds continued as the sea of fire shrank down to 51 meters. Then it continued on… 45 meters. 39 meters…. Howling, Bai Xiaochun pushed it down smaller and smaller. The sea of fire continued to react with explosive violence, but at this moment, Bai Xiaochun was a sovereign of flame. Under his control, the power of the fire didn’t erupt outward, but was re-focused inward to continue the compression.

In the shortest of moments, it shrank from 39 meters… to 24 meters!!

Within moments, it would surely be at 15 meters!!

As it shrank down… the flickering beginnings of an eighteenth color could be seen!

Everyone in Heavenmaster Hall waited with bated breath to see what would happen. Although the heavenly marquises couldn’t necessarily see what was happening within the fire, the heavenly dukes and the Grand Heavenmaster absolutely could….

It was hard to say who did it first, but hisses of amazement could soon be heard.

When the heavenly marquises heard such sounds, they were taken aback and looked over at the heavenly dukes. Soon, they realized that the ten heavenly dukes all wore expressions of unprecedented solemnity. It was even true of Chen Haosong, whose hands were clenched so tightly into fists… that blue veins bulged out on the backs of his hands!

The heavenly marquises’ eyes went wide, and yet, before they could even wrap their minds around what it all meant, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout at the top of his lungs.

“Compress!” His eyes were completely bloodshot as the power of his cultivation base erupted, sent out through both of his hands as he pushed the flame down again, compressing it to a size of… 15 meters!!

15 meters was a line of demarcation. After this point, as long as he found the new color and latched onto it with his divine sense, then the eighteenth color would appear in full, and an eighteen-colored flame would appear!

At the moment, it was possible to see that eighteenth color flickering within the 15-meter sea of fire. By now, everyone could see that unimaginable and indescribable new color….

Although it would only appear for the briefest of moments, it was enough for the heavenly marquises to realize what was happening, and it caused their minds to reel.

“This… this….”

“It’s not going to work. He has to fail!”

“He absolutely must fail!!” The heavenly marquises were starting to get very nervous. Today was the first time they had all joined forces and worked together, and yet something was happening that surpassed anything they could have ever imagined. Although not all of them lost control, many of them couldn’t hold back from shouting in alarm.

At some point, Hei Ming had come to stand nearby the Grand Heavenmaster. When he heard everyone talking, he waved his hand swiftly through the air, causing the babbling heavenly marquises to shiver and bite their tongues.

The Grand Heavenmaster looked over at Hei Ming, but didn’t say anything. A moment later, his gaze was back on Bai Xiaochun, the strange light in his eyes growing stronger by the moment. As for the ten heavenly dukes, they could hardly breathe as they waited to see how things would turn out.

As everyone looked on with rapt attention, Bai Xiaochun sweated profusely and stared deep into the 15-meter sea of fire. After a few breaths of time passed and he failed in his attempts to grab the eighteenth color, he decided that there was no need to waste time. Without any hesitation, he braced himself, and then shrank the sea of fire down again!

Without any stopping, it compressed to a size of… 9 meters!!

The 9-meter sea of fire struggled with violent force, causing intense and shocking rumbling sounds to echo out. The flickering of the flames was slowing down, making it possible for people to see it more clearly. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shone with joy as he sent his divine sense shooting into the fire!

In the blink of an eye, his divine sense was all the way inside the flame, where it latched onto… the eighteenth color!!

An ear-splitting noise rang out, causing everything to shake. The eighteenth color had seemed weak moments before, but as soon as Bai Xiaochun's divine sense entered it, it exploded with dazzling light. It was as if that color had desired to rise to prominence no matter what the other seventeen colors thought!!

It was almost like fireworks. Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously as the eighteenth color grew strong and stable within the 9-meter sea of fire, shining with dazzling intensity alongside the other seventeen colors!!

Also in that same moment, in the sky above Heavenmaster Hall, the clouds began to swirl as numerous bolts of lightning began to slash back and forth.

Thunder boomed, shaking all of the imperial palace. Even the golden dragon high in the clouds was shocked, and flew some distance away.

The booming thunder also reached Heavenmaster Hall. And yet, nobody paid any attention to it at all. They might as well have been deaf. Everyone was filled with waves of shock, completely ignoring everything in the outside world as they focused fully on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling quite excited. Even he had never thought that everything would go so smoothly. And because he didn’t use his mask to cover up the effects, everything turned out vastly more shocking than anyone could have imagined. And that was exactly what he wanted!

Struggling to control his breathing, he flashed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the eighteen-colored sea of fire to slowly stabilize. Laughing heartily, he reached out toward the 9-meter sea of fire and made a grasping motion.

“Form!!” he said. The sea of fire rushed down into his hand, and the thunder outside Heavenmaster Hall grew more intense. As for everyone inside the hall, they had seemingly lost the ability to even think, and they stared wordlessly as Bai Xiaochun… collected up the sea of fire!

It started out at 9 meters, and swirled around and around until it was 6 meters. 3 meters. 2 meters. 1 meters. Half a meter….

Shouting at the top of his lungs, Bai Xiaochun then slowly closed his fingers around the sea of fire!

“Time for eighteen-colored flame!!” he shouted, his voice surpassing the heavenly thunder to shake the entire hall. At the same time, the fire disappeared within his fist!!

The moment that his fingers closed around the fire was one of profound anxiety for everyone inside Heavenmaster Hall. It was almost as if what he held in his hand was not fire, but rather… the hearts of the 89 heavenly marquises, the 10 heavenly dukes, and even the Grand Heavenmaster!!

All eyes were fixed on his hand, and not a single voice could be heard. The grand hall was completely silent except for the rumble of the heavenly thunder. It was almost as if it existed outside of the passage of time….

Bai Xiaochun thrummed with excitement and nervousness, and his bloodshot eyes were alive with joy.

That was especially true when he noticed how everyone was staring at his right hand. He could see the serious look in the eyes of Chen Haosong and the dukes, and the nervousness of Zhao Xionglin and the other marquises. The pride Bai Xiaochun felt in this moment simply couldn’t be described with words.

He took a deep breath, and under the watchful eyes of all of the surrounding aristocrats, he very, very slowly began to open his fingers…. However, even that tiny motion revealed some of the flame inside, and it provoked sharp gasps.

Bai Xiaochun could not have been more pleased with the sound. Heart swelling, he continued to move with utmost slowness as he opened his fingers, revealing more and more of the flame, and causing even more gasps to ring out.

Although he was hoping for more gasps, he could only move his fingers so slowly. Eventually… the full flame was revealed, floating above his palm!

Raising his voice, he said, “Would anyone like to tell me… how many colors you see in this flame?!?!”

The words were spoken in an overbearing and domineering tone, the type that brooked no disrespect, and was filled with incredible arrogance!

The flame in his hand was visible for everyone to see, clear and there for all to behold!!

Within his pupils, vivid and clear and beautiful, was the reflection of an eighteen-colored flame!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0806 awe-chapter-807

The entire hall was as silent as death.... Bai Xiaochun's words, plus the scintillating eighteen-colored flame, caused all hearts to pound with indescribable levels of shock. The heavenly dukes and marquises were so stunned that they felt like their minds were being struck by 100,000 bolts of lightning!

In fact, it was almost as if everyone present had been slapped in the face by a gigantic hand!!

It didn't take long for the silence to be broken by exclamations of shock.

“Impossible. This… this is impossible!!”

“Eighteen.... eighteen-colored flame....”

“He's an earthly necromancer!!”

“The heavens have no eyes! There's no way that this is really happening!!”

The first voice to ring out in the hall was like an ice cube thrown into a vat of boiling oil. Almost immediately, a cacophony of shouting filled the hall. The heavenly marquises' faces were all as ashen as death, their expressions those of utter disbelief!

“This isn't real!!”

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT! I can't believe he's actually an earthly necromancer!!”

“How could this be happening?! He was backed into a corner, faced with deadly calamity, and yet managed to come out on top!?!?!? Where hath gone the laws of the heavens? Where hath gone the truths of the great Dao!?!?”

The heavenly marquises felt as though their psyches had been battered by entire mountain ranges, and some of them even collapsed mentally.

It wasn’t that they lacked willpower, or that they were completely brainless. It was merely the fact that Bai Xiaochun had done something completely unexpected and heaven-defying. The decisive and dazzling way he had completely turned the situation around was something that they fundamentally couldn’t accept!

A moment ago, they had all been absolutely, positively confident that Bai Xiaochun would end up dead. Then, a moment later, that supreme confidence had been crushed into absolutely nothing!

This was especially true of Zhao Xionglin, who was trembling and twitching, his eyes so bloodshot they were crimson. He looked crazed, possessed, as though the disbelief in his heart was so intense that he literally couldn’t believe what Bai Xiaochun had just done.

Then, in a rare moment of intelligence, he shouted, “You were always an earthly necromancer, Bai Hao!! You did this on purpose!! You knew before you killed Zhou Wudao that you could conjure eighteen-colored flame. That’s why you were so confident. You did it all on purpose! Dammit! You conned all of us!!”

Liu Yong was equally unwilling to accept the situation.

“Shameless! Despicable!!” he shouted. Of course, fear had already come to grip his heart. In his attempt to earn a bit of glory for himself, he had been the one to offend Bai Xiaochun more than anyone else.

Although not all of the heavenly marquises were completely bowled over, most were. As they shouted, Bai Xiaochun stood there, proud and aloof, looking around with pride as everyone experienced a mental breakdown. Then he thought about how much difficulty they had brought him, and how they had done everything possible to get him killed, and he felt more and more pleased.

“Now you people know what it really means to be slapped silly, don’t you?!” he said with a thunderous harrumph. “Think you can fight with me?!?! Think you can casually say that my eighteen-colored flame is a counterfeit?! All of you fools can just shut the hell up!” His voice echoed like thunder into the area, causing all of the heavenly marquises who had been shouting and yelling to suddenly close their mouths.

“With the snap of a finger, I, Bai Xiaochun could reduce all of you to ashes!” Of course, that was what he said in his heart, although he emphasized the unspoken words with the flick of a sleeve.

He was feeling so pleased that it caused his skin to tingle. He was now free and uninhibited in a way that he had never been before, not even in the Heavenspan River region.

With such thoughts on his mind, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. It was laughter that acted like needles stabbing into the hearts of everyone present, leaving them feeling so mocked that they almost couldn’t handle it.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun didn’t care how maddened they felt. He wanted them to feel that way…. In fact, he felt like he should actually be even more pleased than he already was. Continuing to laugh, he suddenly pointed at Zhao Xionglin.

“Heavenly Marquis Zhao, what did you say you would do if I conjured an eighteen-colored flame!?!? Come come. Get over here, drop to your knees, and kowtow!”

By this point, Zhao Xionglin’s face was a dark reddish-purple, and he was gritting his teeth so hard they were about to shatter. At this point, he wished that there were cracks in the ground that he could simply squeeze down into and disappear.

The heavenly marquises weren’t the only ones to be driven into madness by the eighteen-colored flame. Chen Haosong and the other heavenly dukes were panting in shock. In fact, there were even some who were looking at Bai Xiaochun with expressions of admiration!!

Although they had their differences with him, as of this moment, they simply couldn’t help but feel some reverence for what he had done!

Even they had assumed that there was no way for Bai Xiaochun to get out of the situation alive, and yet he had, and in shocking fashion! Now he had earned the respect that they would only give to someone more powerful than themselves.

In fact, to them, it didn’t matter if it was true that Bai Xiaochun could already conjure eighteen-colored flame before everything happened. In fact, that just went to show how terrifying he really was!

Not all of the heavenly dukes felt that way. Some had very grim expressions, especially the bearded duke and Chen Haosong, who could do nothing but grit his teeth and refrain from speaking.

The frustration he felt was driving him mad. He was a powerful expert in the great circle of the Deva Realm. He was a heavenly duke in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, one of the highest positions possible. And yet, he had been thwarted over and over again by Bai Xiaochun, and then in the moment in which he was sure he would end up dead, *this* happened. One could only imagine how defeated he felt.

“I can’t believe that this kid beat me!!” he thought bitterly. By now, he knew that it would not be possible to make a move against Bai Xiaochun casually. All he had done was kill a heavenly marquis. Most people would have to pay a heavy price for such an act, but not an earthly necromancer…… Although he would face some type of punishment, he would definitely not lose his life!

To be an earthly necromancer meant that he had a dazzling level of protection that no one could do anything about!

In fact, not even the Grand Heavenmaster would be able to kill Bai Xiaochun, not unless he did it secretly. If he did, the common people in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty would all revolt violently!!

After all, in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, earthly necromancers were like rare and valuable gems!

At the moment, there were only three other earthly necromancers in the Wildlands. They were divine dragons who could only occasionally be glimpsed from afar, wanderers who constantly strove to break through to the next level of necromancy. They were legends! They were all focused solely on doing that which had never been accomplished after Arch-Emperor City moved out into its current location: break through to the heavenly necromancer rank!!

When an earthly necromancer appeared, the heavenly dukes would treat that person with incredible respect and courtesy, and so would the Grand Heavenmaster. Anyone who dared to kill an earthly necromancer would be messing with the very foundation of the Wildlands!

Such thoughts were now running through the minds of the heavenly marquises and dukes, as well as the Grand Heavenmaster. The Grand Heavenmaster was looking at Bai Xiaochun, thinking about the two great services he had performed in the past, and feeling profoundly moved and grateful.

“Completely stunning!!” he murmured inwardly.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very, very pleased. This was his most glorious moment so far in the Wildlands, and in fact, he was just preparing to do some more things to aggravate the crowd, when suddenly, a deafening boom rang out!

It was so loud that it shook the entire imperial palace, and was so shocking that everyone inside Heavenmaster Hall looked up, their gazes piercing through the ceiling to observe the sky overhead.

What they saw caused everyone’s faces to fall!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he could immediately sense that something extremely dramatic was occurring in the sky over the imperial palace!!

“Lightning tribulation!” someone cried out.

“It’s… Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation!”

“Hey, wait a second. Bai Hao isn’t actually an earthly necromancer yet! You can only be an earthly necromancer after you transcend Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation!!”

“Hahaha! We still have a chance!!” Before long, Zhao Xionglin and many of the heavenly marquises were shouting aloud in joy.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0807 awe-chapter-808

When Bai Xiaochun heard what people were saying, he angrily yelled, “Like hell you have a chance!”

He made sure to memorize the faces of all of the heavenly marquises who looked excited, and then took a moment to glare angrily at Zhao Xionglin.

Considering how vile Zhao Xionglin was, he immediately decided that from now on, he would make him kowtow every time he saw him!

However, now was not the time to be overly worried about Zhao Xionglin. Up in the sky, the clouds had vanished, to be replaced by countless lightning bolts!

They looked like tens upon tens of thousands of angry serpents, filling the sky with deafening thunder.

The sky now looked like a sea of lightning, covering Arch-Emperor City in a fashion that attracted the attention of everyone in the city.

“What’s going on?!?!”

“Heavens! What is that!”

“How come… how come that looks like… like the legendary….”

An aged necromancer in the city suddenly began to tremble violently, and then cried out in disbelief and agitation: “Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation!!!!”

The city was instantly gripped by a huge uproar. The eyes of all necromancers began to burn with passion and excitement as they looked up at the forming soul flame tribulation.

“Heavens, that really is Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation!! The only time soul flame tribulation will show up is when someone forms an eighteen-colored flame for the first time, and becomes an earthly necromancer!!”

“Whoever passes a tribulation like that will then be able to conjure eighteen-colored flames without ever provoking tribulation again!”

“Who is it…? Which grandmaster… is stepping into the earthly rank!?!”

“It’s going to happen! It *has* to happen! And then… our Arch-Emperor Dynasty will have a fourth earthly necromancer!”

The uproar created something like a sound wave that filled the entire city. And soon, word also began to spread to the rest of the Wildlands, leading to similar scenes elsewhere.

When Sun Yifan and Sima Tao heard about it, they both rushed outside and headed toward the nearest teleportation portals. They were actually more excited than anyone else.

“It’s definitely Grandmaster Bai!!”

“It must be him!!”

Throughout the Wildlands, all of the celestial necromancers were rushing crazily toward teleportation portals to go to Arch-Emperor City. It was almost as if some great pilgrimage were beginning.

Being able to personally witness Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation would be of great benefit to them!

As the Wildlands was being shaken, a serious look overtook Bai Xiaochun’s face. Although he had been aware that conjuring eighteen-colored flame would provoke lightning tribulation, he hadn’t ever guessed… that it would be so monumentally shocking.

“If I really fail at this tribulation… then I’m finished for sure!” That thought instantly caused his heart to tremble with anxiety.

As for everyone else in the hall who had just witnessed the spectacular turn of events, they had now reverted from a state of despair to a state of hope.

Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun pulled out a Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill and popped it into his mouth, pushing his cultivation base to its peak. “I refuse to believe that a trifling soul flame tribulation can hurt me now that I can conjure eighteen-colored flame!”

He was confident, the reason being, not himself, but… the fact that he was in Heavenmaster Hall!

The heavenly tribulation provoked by eighteen-colored flame was the type that could shake heaven and earth. A few rare celestial necromancers like the Miao Clan patriarch would have ancestral legacies that they could use to deal with such tribulation. But most other celestial necromancers would attempt to conjure their first eighteen-colored flame in a secluded meditation facility, with spell formations and trusted associates nearby to help them stay safe.

To a necromancer who planned to conjure eighteen-colored flame, it would be an easy matter to get trusted people to help. After all, many powerful experts would be willing to do so as a way to build up good will.

From the time the Arch-Emperor Dynasty had moved locations, down to the modern day, none of the various necromancers who had reached the earthly rank had faced tribulation in the way that Bai Xiaochun was doing!

He was actually using Heavenmaster Hall as his primary defense!

Even as he looked up at the sea of lightning which filled the sky above Arch-Emperor City, it began to pulse, and then slowly shrink.

As it shrank, the snake-like bolts of lightning formed together, gradually creating one enormous lightning bolt as thick as a bucket! Then, that lightning bolt descended toward Heavenmaster Hall!

This… was the true Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation!

The massive lightning bolt thrummed with shocking power, and when it slammed into Heavenmaster Hall, the entire thing trembled, and then glowed with a spectacular, multi-colored light.

That light was a powerful defensive mechanism which fought back against the heavenly lightning!

Heavenmaster Hall wasn’t damaged at all, and as for the heavenly lightning, it transformed into countless silver sparks, every single one of which faded away.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then looked over at the Grand Heavenmaster, who sat on his throne with a slight smile on his face. All of the surrounding heavenly marquises had looks of blank shock on their faces, especially Zhao Xionglin, who looked as pale as a sheet.... All of them were cursing, but only in their heads; none of them dared to say a single word.

“Morons!” Chen Haosong murmured to himself. It didn’t take much thinking to realize the reality of the situation. The Grand Heavenmaster would obviously be delighted to have another earthly necromancer in the Wildlands, and would naturally support that person.

And such support would be of monumental importance in a moment of crisis like this!

Bai Xiaochun also understood that, and was deeply moved. Turning to the Grand Heavenmaster, he clasped hands and bowed. By now, the pride and joy he had felt earlier were gone. The things which had occurred with Bai Hao had caused him to grow up a bit. He also knew that he was now very important to the Grand Heavenmaster!

However, just when everyone assumed that the heavenly tribulation was over, the lightning up above seethed and began to grow more intense.

Then it shrank down again, so much so that, instead of covering all of Arch-Emperor City, it only covered the imperial palace.

Everyone’s breath stuck in their chest. It was already obvious that the newly forming lightning bolt would vastly surpass the original one. Intense rumbling sounds could be heard as countless lightning bolts merged together into something like a ball!

As the ball of lightning formed, and the various bolts merged together… they turned black!

A power similar to the early Deva Realm began to weigh down from the black heavenly lightning, growing stronger and stronger until it was equivalent to the great circle!

Everyone in Arch-Emperor City who could see it gasped in shock.

“This Earthly Soul Flame Tribulation seems different from the way it's described in the records….”

“Heavens, how did past earthly necromancers deal with tribulation like this!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun was stunned, but didn’t worry about it too much. With Heavenmaster Hall to protect him, he assumed he would be fine. Of course, he didn’t drop his guard, and in fact, rotated his cultivation base madly as the lightning bolt began to fall.

As the black lightning approached, the light surrounding Heavenmaster Hall didn’t just act as a shield. It actually exploded out to attack the incoming heavenly lightning.

When the two met, a deafening explosion filled all of Arch-Emperor City!

Heavenmaster Hall’s shield twisted and distorted, and was even shoved downward significantly. However, the heavenly lightning clearly suffered a massive backlash, and soon shattered into countless sparks of electricity that showered down onto the imperial palace….

At this point, the sea of lightning began to show signs that it would soon disperse, so Bai Xiaochun decided that it was the perfect opportunity to show off a bit. Looking up with pride, he pointed at the sky and shouted, “Hey! If you’ve got what it takes, bring it on!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0808 awe-chapter-809

In the instant that Bai Xiaochun’s words left his mouth, the sea of lightning up above suddenly emitted intense rumbling sounds, and then began to rotate at high speed.

At the same time, it started shrinking down. Furthermore, something like a black hole appeared right in the middle of it!

The black hole almost resembled an eye, which was staring down at Bai Xiaochun there in Heavenmaster Hall.

At that point, the fluctuations emanating out went beyond that of the great circle of the Deva Realm!

Clearly, the lightning really was going to *bring it on*!!

Even the Grand Heavenmaster had a very serious look on his face as he sat there on his throne, frowning slightly.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked up at the shrinking lightning, and the black hole, and his heart began to pound with fear.

“Me and my big mouth…. Oh God, I… I didn’t do it on purpose. Please, don’t bring it on. Don’t bring anything on at all….”

He had no idea how previous earthly necromancers had successfully fought back against tribulation lightning like this. As of this moment, he realized that the first bolt was simple, and the second was the type that he could probably defend himself against if he held nothing back. However, the process would have left him very weakened, to the point where the third lightning bolt… would be impossible to fight back against. Even a deva would be struck chill in the heart by the sight of it.

Everyone else in the hall was gasping, and had strange expressions on their faces. As far as they were concerned, Bai Xiaochun really did have a big mouth. Just when the tribulation was about to vanish, he actually invited it to strike again.

Many of the heavenly marquises were feeling quite pleased. However, Chen Haosong and the heavenly dukes were shaken, even more so than when Bai Xiaochun had initially conjured the eighteen-colored flame.

“How is this even possible!?!?”

“He says one thing… and the heavenly tribulation came back for him? What… what kind of heavenly tribulation is this? It’s like it’s playing games!?!!”

“This Bai Hao… has some other secrets. Incredible, unfathomable secrets! Something strange is going on….”

Even as the heavenly dukes pondered the matter, the sea of lightning up above shrank down into the black hole area. Then, to Bai Xiaochun's shock and terror… a violet-gold lightning bolt appeared!

It wasn’t as large as the other two lightning bolts, and looked ordinary in nature. And yet, as soon as the soul cultivators of Arch-Emperor City laid eyes on it, their minds began to spin.

The heavenly marquises all gasped, and even the heavenly dukes’ faces flickered!

“Demigod-level lightning tribulation!!” The Grand Heavenmaster was the one to speak the words. Then he shot to his feet, vanishing to reappear outside of Heavenmaster Hall.

In that same moment, the golden dragon which had fled off into the distance let out a roar as it became a golden beam of light that shot toward the Grand Heavenmaster. As it neared, it shrank down, transforming into a golden trident which the Grand Heavenmaster grabbed.

Even as those things happened, the violet-gold lightning bolt from up above began to shoot toward Heavenmaster Hall!

As it did, deafening rumbling sounds echoed out, and the air around the lightning bolt was destroyed!

The Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes narrowed. Hefting the golden trident, he blurred into motion, heading directly toward the lightning bolt!

BOOM!

A sonic boom rolled out in all directions. At the same time, the image of an enormous, illusory trident appeared behind the Grand Heavenmaster. Fully 30,000-meters tall, it seemed large enough to fill all creation as it slammed into the violet-gold lightning bolt.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Arch-Emperor City was shaken by intense rumbling sounds as the violet-gold lightning bolt began to shatter bit by bit. Before long, it was gone, and the Grand Heavenmaster remained there, not having been injured in the least bit!

However, as the lightning bolt dissipated, it created a massive tempest that blasted out in all directions.

At this point, the ten heavenly dukes, despite not wanting to help, realized that they had no choice. They all vanished, to reappear in various locations around Heavenmaster Hall. There, they performed double-handed incantation gestures, and then unleashed vicious attacks to neutralize the blast of wind!

As of this point, not a bit of lightning could be seen in the sky. Everything had gone back to normal….

Back in Heavenmaster Hall, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and didn’t dare to again provoke God in any fashion. He simply watched as the Grand Heavenmaster and the ten heavenly dukes returned.

Bai Xiaochun rushed forward, clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Many thanks, Grand Heavenmaster. You are truly mighty and grand!”

At this point, he pondered whether or not he should go into a bit more flattery, but the Grand Heavenmaster waved his hand to stop him.

“Congratulations on reaching the earthly rank, Grandmaster Bai,” he said, a politeness in his tone that hadn’t been present before. “As of this point, the position of inspections commissioner doesn’t befit you anymore. It would be much better for you to go practice cultivation in one of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty’s five restricted areas, all of which would be ideal locations for you to seek further enlightenment.

“Grandmaster Bai, I think it would be wonderful for you to go the Underworld River Restricted Area. Don’t you agree?”

Bai Xiaochun was now an earthly necromancer, and although he would not be put to death because of what happened with Zhou Wudao, he would still have to provide some sort of compensation.

There was no death penalty for earthly necromancers, and it truly didn’t make sense for him to remain as the inspections commissioner. Sending him to the Underworld River Restricted Area would solve the problem of so many people being angry with him, and would also get him out of a major vortex of intrigue.

However, the Grand Heavenmaster was worried that Bai Xiaochun might not view this as an expression of goodwill. Leaving the aristocracy completely out of the loop, he transmitted a message directly to Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Hao, I have a personal division of troops in the Underworld River Restricted Area, 3,000 men in total. I’ll give you command of them. Lay low for a bit until I call on you. After all the arrangements are made, you can return.”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times in displeasure. It didn’t seem right that he should be made to leave right after becoming an earthly necromancer and achieving new heights of glory.

However, what the Grand Heavenmaster said made sense. Furthermore, he had already used up his secret weapon. And as the ancient saying went, *it is easy to dodge the spear in the open, but hard to avoid a stab in the dark*. He couldn't constantly be on guard against every possible conspiracy.

Although leaving Arch-Emperor City would cause him to lose out on a bit of glory, it was definitely the best option.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, clasped hands and bowed to the Grand Heavenmaster.

“I will follow any arrangement you wish, Grand Heavenmaster!”

The Grand Heavenmaster smiled and then looked over at the heavenly dukes and marquises.

“What do you think?” he asked them.

As for Chen Haosong and the heavenly dukes, although they were sighing inwardly, none of them hesitated for even a moment to clasp hands and say, “We will follow any arrangement you wish, Grand Heavenmaster!”

Considering that the heavenly dukes had already agreed, there was no way the heavenly marquises could dare to voice any displeasure. Bowing their heads, they agreed.

As of this point, the conspiracy to have Bai Xiaochun killed had been completely defeated. As everyone left Heavenmaster Hall, Bai Xiaochun looked up into the sky and felt freer than ever.

Not only had he won a victory, he had done so in spectacularly beautiful fashion!

He had entered Heavenmaster Hall as the inspections commissioner, a person feared by countless individuals, and had left it as an earthly necromancer, someone that everyone in the Wildlands would support with wild enthusiasm!

“Hmmmphh! The Grand Heavenmaster called me a grandmaster…. Looks like we’re both fellow masters!” More pleased than ever, he began to walk away. However, it was at this point that he remembered something, and looked back to see Zhao Xionglin, still in Heavenmaster Hall, clearly trying to hide from him. Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun… decided to stay right where he was, blocking the doorway.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0809 awe-chapter-810

Zhao Xionglin was feeling so frustrated it was a torment. And when he realized that Bai Xiaochun was blocking the way out, his heart swelled with curses, and his face began to turn a reddish-purple color. Obviously, neither staying nor leaving was a viable option….

Eventually, the Grand Heavenmaster got tired of the situation. Waving his sleeve, he sent Zhao Xionglin flying out of Heavenmaster Hall, and the imperial palace in general.

Bai Xiaochun grumbled to himself about that, and then strutted out the door. However, he had already decided that he wouldn’t let Zhao Xionglin off the hook so easily.

“And then there’s that guy Liu Yong. Just wait till I catch up with him!” Snorting, he hurried away.

When Zhao Xionglin appeared outside of the imperial palace, he was very moved that he had been spared at the last moment. Employing the greatest speed he could, he hurried toward his clan, stewing in more frustration than he had ever felt in his entire life. The thought of how he had loudly declared in front of all of the aristocracy that he would kowtow to Bai Hao if he conjured an eighteen-colored flame was like a slap in his face.

By the time Zhao Xionglin got back to his clan, word of Bai Xiaochun becoming an earthly necromancer was already beginning to spread through Arch-Emperor City.

In the briefest of moments, everyone was talking about it!

“We finally have a fourth earthly necromancer in the Wildlands!!”

“A fourth! Even back in the golden age, we only had five!”

“Bai Hao. Grandmaster Bai. Even back when he conjured that faint tongue of eighteen-colored flame, it was obvious that he would eventually reach the earthly rank!”

It wasn’t just Arch-Emperor City that was shaken. All of the Wildlands was in a huge stir as the news spread. That was especially true of the necromancers. Virtually all of the necromancer clans began to do everything in their power to try to reach out to the new earthly necromancer and establish relations.

News even reached the Heavenspan River region, and left many people stunned. The four great riversource sects all placed the name Bai Hao onto their Execution List!

The reward for his head was incredible. After all… he was now one of only four earthly necromancers in existence. To the four riversource sects, the fact that someone so young had reached such heights ensured that they all felt the need to see him dead!

Unfortunately, he was too far away for any of them to do anything about it other than sigh regretfully.

If people in the Heavenspan River region got wind of the news, there was no need to even mention Zhou Yixing’s clan. Although they were located far, far away from Arch-Emperor City, when they heard about the matter, and learned that Zhou Yixing was one of this Bai Hao’s followers, they were ecstatic. In fact, the clan chief issued immediate orders promoting Zhou Yixing to the position of crown prince!

The clan elders agreed with his decision, and it didn’t matter how disgruntled Zhou Yixing’s clan siblings were. In the world of necromancers, being the subordinate of an earthly necromancer was a very important thing.

Furthermore, with Bai Xiaochun’s help, Zhou Yixing’s necromancy had advanced by leaps and bounds; he was now just a hair away from the celestial rank himself.

Of course, the Proclamation of Universal Grace had not been rescinded. However, Zhou Yixing had enough power to ensure that there was no fighting or backlash from his relatives in the clan. After all… everyone in the Wildlands also knew that this Bai Hao was the one behind the Proclamation of Universal Grace.

Zhou Yixing didn’t just rise to prominence in his clan. Wherever he went in Arch-Emperor City, people would clasp hands in greeting, leaving him feeling very pleased. By now, he was absolutely, positively convinced that his original decision to side with Bai Xiaochun had been the best one!

If Zhou Yixing was reveling in glory, then there was no need to even mention Bai Xiaochun. Although he was supposed to be heading to the Underworld River Restricted Area, he delayed and delayed, giving him plenty of time to stroll through the city and appreciate the worshipful gazes people cast in his direction. Furthermore, he would constantly be swamped by visiting necromancers, who showered him with congratulatory gifts. All in all, Bai Xiaochun felt wonderful about how everything was going.

He also went back to visit the street where his spirit enhancement shop had been located, where he received loads of adoration and worship. Eventually, when he had gone to just about all of the important places in Arch-

Emperor City, he thought back to Zhao Xionglin and Liu Yong.

Unfortunately, Liu Yong was very crafty…. Aware that Bai Xiaochun would try to get revenge, he had long since left Arch-Emperor City and enlisted in the army at the Great Wall. Although Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised by that, he had to admit that it proved Liu Yong to be a very decisive person.

Zhao Xionglin was not as decisive. He merely went into secluded meditation, and assumed that Bai Xiaochun would forget about him. Unfortunately for him, he underestimated Bai Xiaochun's tenacity. Bai Xiaochun took daily trips to the Zhao Clan, causing problems for everyone, much to the delight of the bastard children.

Considering his new status, he was the center of attention wherever he went. All sorts of rogue cultivators sought to become his followers. Most importantly, news of the altercation between him and the aristocracy right before his rise to the earthly rank began to spread. From that point on, whenever bad things happened in Arch-Emperor City, everyone pointed their fingers accusingly at the nobility and aristocracy!

Also, because he was the subject of wild devotion by all Wildlander necromancers, even heavenly dukes who had problems with Bai Xiaochun were forced to simply endure the situation.

At the moment, he was safer in his position than he ever had been. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun refused to give up on Zhao Xionglin. Unfortunately, the man was like a turtle with his head hidden in his shell; he remained in his heavenly marquis pagoda and wouldn’t come out no matter what Bai Xiaochun said.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun started to get angry.

“Alright, you coward. Do you really think that Lord Bai will just let you hide away from him?” Bai Xiaochun glared up angrily at the heavenly marquis pagoda, grumbling about how ridiculous Zhao Xionglin was acting. He had clearly lost, and yet continued to act shamelessly.

“If you were a real man you would do like Liu Yong and go hide on the front lines of the war at the Great Wall! That would at least earn you some of my respect. But instead you hide in a wimpy heavenly marquis pagoda! Well, you just wait and see how I get you to come out!” Flicking his sleeve, he went on to visit the other heavenly marquis clans. Whenever he ran into one of the heavenly marquises, he would bluster and brag to the point of inducing nausea. Furthermore, he made a point to hint that as long as Zhao Xionglin didn’t come out and kowtow to him, he would stay in Arch-Emperor City. Gradually, the heavenly marquises began to get extremely frustrated and angry with Zhao Xionglin.

Eventually, after Bai Xiaochun had threatened virtually all of the heavenly marquises, Chen Haosong sighed and sent a message to Zhao Xionglin urging him to just give in. Zhao Xionglin wanted to cry, but no tears would come. Guts twisting with regret, he braced himself and went to find Bai Xiaochun, to whom he kowtowed in dramatic fashion.

Bai Xiaochun was very happy with what he saw. Afterward, he decided to let the other heavenly marquises off the hook. Swishing his sleeve, he took Zhou Yixing with him on his way out of the city. They didn’t go to the teleportation portal, but rather, used Arch-Emperor City’s heavenly airship, accompanied by a contingent of the Grand Heavenmaster’s personal guard, as they headed toward… the Underworld River Restricted Area.

A huge group of necromancers came out to escort Bai Xiaochun away. As for all of the heavenly marquises, they breathed sighs of relief, and hoped that after he left, he would never come back.

Zhao Xionglin had to hold back from breaking out drums and gongs to express his excitement.

There were many varied reactions within Arch-Emperor City. As Bai Xiaochun left, he thought back to everything that had occurred there, looked back at the city, and sighed.

“I shall miss all of you....”

When he came to Arch-Emperor City, he was a nobody from Giant Ghost City. Upon leaving, it would have been difficult for it to be in a grander fashion. He was now the opposite of a nobody, one of the most important people in all the Wildlands.

Many other people in the city were thinking the same thing, and it caused them to sigh.

“He's the kind of person who you might hate, but simply have no choice but to admire!” Chen Haosong said with a sigh.

“He’s the kind of person that only appears every so often in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. Someone who causes waves wherever he goes, someone who reaches the highest pinnacles, someone who no one dares to trifle with!” All of the heavenly marquises were sighing deeply.

He had kidnapped the heavenly king of Giant Ghost City, and subdued a crowd of chosen in the Necromancer Kettle. He had dueled celestial necromancers, and shaken down the most powerful clans in his time as the inspections commissioner!

He threw all creation into chaos during the ancestral sacrifices, incited the rage of heavenly marquises, made enemies of the entire aristocracy with the Proclamation of Universal Grace, and had become an amazing earthly necromancer!

The stories of those things did not fade away because Bai Xiaochun left Arch-Emperor City. In fact, they continued to be told with even more fervor. As he departed, the Grand Heavenmaster looked at him go and murmured to himself, “I really want to know… why the Hell-Emperor picked him!?”

Standing next to him, Hei Ming murmured, “I have no idea!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0810 awe-chapter-811

The Underworld River Restricted Area was one of a few restricted areas in the Wildlands…. The reason such areas came to be called ‘restricted’ was that ordinary soul cultivators would have a difficult time even getting into them, and if they succeeded in that effort, would most likely die as a result. The only way to safely traverse such areas was with special command medallions.

Not surprisingly, the Underworld River Restricted Area actually contained a river. During the day, it looked like nothing more than an ordinary, dried up riverbed. However, after midnight passed… the Underworld River would manifest, flowing through the area for some distance before disappearing off into the night.

Thus, the area came to be a restricted area. After all, the Underworld River was normally illusory, and would only appear in the world of men under special circumstances or using special techniques.

But in this area, the Underworld River would naturally appear every night after midnight!

Of course, all of the Wildlands’ restricted areas had unique objects which would appear. Such objects were used in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty both for cultivation purposes, and also as a means of repairing the enormous magical device that was Arch-Emperor City.

For example, in the Underworld River Restricted Area, there were underworld rainbows which would appear over the river at night. They were illusory, and also temporary, but by using special techniques, it was possible to harvest them.

Because of this general state of affairs, the restricted areas were encamped by military forces from Arch-Emperor City year-round. As for the Underworld River Restricted Area, there was a brigade of 3,000 men garrisoned there.

The most powerful of the soldiers was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. He was not a heavenly marquis, but rather, one of the Grand Heavenmaster's private guards. Most of the other soul cultivators were in the Core Formation stage.

Although it might seem like a stretch to say that these 3,000 could protect Bai Xiaochun, the truth was that since they reported directly to the Grand Heavenmaster, they were more powerful than they appeared based on cultivation base alone. Although there were definitely members of the nobility and aristocracy who would secretly make a move against Bai Xiaochun, not even the four heavenly kings would casually cross the Grand Heavenmaster.

Wiping out that force would be equivalent to declaring war on the Grand Heavenmaster.

As for the brigade's general mission, it was simply to harvest underworld rainbows.

Bai Xiaochun and Zhou Yixing spent a few days traveling to the Underworld River Restricted Area. Bai Xiaochun wasn't in a hurry, and proceeded along at a steady pace in the heavenly airship. Although the landscape in the Wildlands was barren and bleak, that didn't dampen Bai Xiaochun's mood at all. In fact, he took time to visit many of the necromancer clans along the way, and they would always shower him with gifts. Overall, it was a lovely trip.

When they finally reached the Underworld River Restricted Area, it was evening. The 3,000 soldiers stationed there had been notified that he would be arriving, and were waiting in ranks to receive him.

There were five men standing out in front of the brigade, all of whom were Nascent Soul experts. One of them was a middle-aged man, who was none other than the colonel in command of the brigade. Standing a pace behind him were the four other Nascent Soul experts, two of whom were in the late stage, and two in the mid stage.

They were already well-informed as to who Bai Xiaochun was. They knew that he was not only an earthly necromancer, but he was also the type of person who could shake all of the Wildlands with a single stamp of his foot.

Furthermore, because they were from the Grand Heavenmaster’s private guard, and had received special orders from him to do anything that Bai Xiaochun said, none of them hesitated for even a moment to treat him with the utmost respect.

As the group waited, Bai Xiaochun's heavenly airship appeared off in the distance and then floated toward them through the air. When it came to a stop, Zhou Yixing flew out, landed on the ground, and then looked around vigilantly, the way that a loyal attendant would. When his gaze came to rest on the brigade of 3,000 men, he looked surprised.

After studying the situation more closely to ensure that there were no hidden dangers, he took a few steps backward, then turned to the heavenly airship and clasped hands.

“Grandmaster Bai, your presence is requested!” he said in a loud voice. The colonel of the brigade hesitated for only a moment before clasping hands and calling out in similar fashion. Afterward, the entire brigade gave voice to the same words.

“Grandmaster Bai, your presence is requested!”

At that point, Bai Xiaochun appeared up above on the deck of the heavenly airship, his hands clasped behind his back. After giving an approving glance at Zhou Yixing, he flew out and landed in front of the 3,000-man brigade.

“I am your humble servant Wu Dao,” the colonel said. “Greetings, Grandmaster Bai! If you have any requests, then your humble servant will do anything and everything possible to see them fulfilled!” With that, Colonel Wu Dao clasped hands and bowed even more deeply than before.

Bai Xiaochun felt wonderful about how everything was playing out. Laughing heartily, he hurried forward to pull the colonel up from his bow.

“There’s no need for all that, Fellow Daoist Wu,” he said with a sincere smile. “I actually have a very weak cultivation base! The Grand Heavenmaster sent me here to work on my necromancy, and I'm sure that I'm going to need a lot of help from you in the days to come!” This was just how Bai Xiaochun was. When people treated him courteously, he would treat them even more courteously in return.

Of course, Wu Dao responded by looking even more respectful and awestruck than before. Inwardly, he was actually a bit impressed with this Grandmaster Bai. Despite being an earthly necromancer, he wasn’t arrogant at all. The colonel could immediately tell that there was more to him than met the eye. He had first mentioned his own weakness, then brought up the Grand Heavenmaster, and had then gone on to imply that he was only here to work on necromancy, and not stay long-term. That went to show that he wasn’t interested in usurping the colonel’s position or power.

Actually, even Wu Dao himself didn't feel that the force he commanded was worth much, therefore he was very pleased to be treated in such a way.

Bai Xiaochun had already succeeded at making a good impression. The soldiers quickly clustered around him and led him toward the military base in the Underworld River Restricted Area.

After all the formalities were taken care of, Wu Dao gave Bai Xiaochun the best residence, as well as a detailed explanation about everything to do with the Underworld River Restricted Area. Eventually, evening began to fall, whereupon he handed over two command medallions and then took his leave.

Bai Xiaochun’s residence was not out in the open; it was enclosed by high walls. That, coupled with the fact that it was in the middle of a military base, made it seem particularly safe and secure.

Furthermore, it didn’t consist of just a single room, but rather, a main room and two side rooms.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased. After Wu Dao left, Zhou Yixing set up some spell formations to secure the area. Then he reported in to Bai Xiaochun.

“Wu Dao was telling the truth, milord,” he said, keeping his voice down. “Every night at midnight, the Underworld River manifests here. When that happens, you can only get close to the river itself if you have a special command medallion.

“Supposedly, this location isn’t the source of the Underworld River, but it’s still a powerful convergence between life and death. That’s why the Underworld River appears here. In fact, it’s the only place in all of the Wildlands where the river will manifest naturally.

“Because of its unique properties, this area is a perfect place for necromancers to seek enlightenment. Whenever the Underworld River manifests, countless souls will appear, which can be harvested using special methods. Of course, there is danger involved, as one might expect.” All of these things had been told to Bai Xiaochun by Wu Dao. However, Zhou Yixing had used his own special ways of verifying the information to make sure it was true.

Bai Xiaochun nodded. He was already feeling a lot more relaxed now that he was away from the maelstrom that was Arch-Emperor City. No longer did he have to constantly worry about how to deal with the aristocracy, nor did he have to be on guard all the time. Although he didn’t have his corpse trooper army to rely on, he was still in high spirits.

After a moment passed, Zhou Yixing lowered his voice even more and said, “Milord, um, what about Song Que…?”

Bai Xiaochun smacked himself on the forehead when he realized that he had once again forgotten about Song Que. Back when they had left the city, he had instructed Zhou Yixing to put Song Que in a bag of holding to take along, but in the months since then, he hadn’t released him into the open even once.

“What a bad uncle I’ve been!” he thought guiltily. He immediately told Zhou Yixing to bring Song Que out of the bag of holding. When he appeared in the open, he looked a bit pale, and was even gasping for breath. Being stuck in a bag of holding for so many months had almost suffocated him. After getting his bearings, he glared resentfully at Bai Xiaochun.

In response, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat in embarrassment and then reached out to tousle Song Que’s hair. Although this felt very strange to Song Que, he didn't dare to dodge out of the way.

Actually, he had come to realize that, from the moment he had arrived in the Inspections Manor, this Bai Hao had actually treated him quite well. Not only had he given him cultivation resources, as well as a measure of safety, but he had also allowed him quite a bit of freedom.

After all the time that had passed, he had mostly recovered from his previous ordeals. In fact, his cultivation base had even progressed some. He was even convinced that, although he had not yet surpassed Bai Xiaochun, as long as he continued to follow this Bai Hao and benefit from the cultivation resources he provided, it was entirely likely that he soon would.

“Hmph! Even if I can’t surpass Bai Xiaochun right away, I'm definitely in a much better position than he is. He might be well-known, but he’s obviously scurrying around like a mouse, running from everybody and scared to even show his face! In fact, if he does show his face, he’ll definitely be killed within the blink of an eye!” All of a sudden, Song Que came to the conclusion that meeting this Bai Hao had been a stroke of good luck. Even if he was being treated somewhat like a pet, it was worth it, and he would do everything he could to stick with Bai Hao.

“A pet? So be it. This is the Wildlands, and nobody knows who I am anyway…. Hmph! Maybe I'm a pet, but at least I'm the pet of an earthly necromancer! Bai Xiaochun doesn’t even qualify to be a pet right now!” Comforting himself in this way, he pushed his head up a bit farther so that Bai Xiaochun could tousle his hair a bit more deeply….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0811 awe-chapter-812

Of course, Bai Xiaochun could immediately tell what he was thinking.

“Is this guy really thinking about stomping me beneath his feet…?” Blinking a few times at how amusing the situation was, he contemplated what would happen if Song Que ever found out who he really was…. What kind of expression would appear on his face?

However, even Bai Xiaochun felt that such a thing would be too evil.

“Ah, whatever. I'm his uncle after all, and the type of person who is very pure at heart. I can't tell him the brutal truth right now.” Sighing, he mused about how wonderful of a person he was, and also about how loyal and devoted he was to Song Junwan. In the end, it was just like the old saying: *if you love me, you have to love my dog too*.

“Very well then. You’ll be living here now. Focus well on your cultivation.” After offering a few more words of advice, he had Zhou Yixing arrange for Song Que to act as a spirit servant.

Song Que took a deep breath, clasped hands and bowed deeply. Sighing, he reminded himself that as long as he stuck close to Bai Hao, then Bai Xiaochun didn’t count for anything!

Although he couldn’t consider himself to truly be on Bai Hao’s side, he knew that right now, he had to do anything he could to stay alive.

After sending Song Que away, Bai Xiaochun looked around the main courtyard. As the darkness of night deepened, the Underworld River Restricted Area grew increasingly quiet.

Back in Arch-Emperor City, the city would be bustling at this time of night. Although the Inspections Manor itself would be quiet, even the areas around it would be alive.

But here, everything was dead quiet. Considering how unused Bai Xiaochun was to such a thing, he quickly patted his bag of holding and produced a soulhoarding pagoda, from which Bai Hao flew out.

Bai Hao could tell that this area was very unique. After looking around, he lowered his voice and said, “Master, this Underworld River Restricted Area seems very similar to the Necromancer Kettle.... The aura... is like that of life and death at the same time. It's very strange, and also, very nourishing to souls.”

“Nourishing?” Bai Xiaochun said, looking over at Bai Hao and noticing how he looked a lot more corporeal than normal.

Surprised himself, Bai Hao nodded, then sat down cross-legged and began to breathe deeply. Almost immediately, he could sense some sort of energy in the area that Bai Xiaochun was oblivious to, which quickly began to pour into his soul body.

Bai Xiaochun was very happy about this. Although this whole Underworld River Restricted Area seemed like a boring place so far, if it was helpful to Hao’er, then that would make things a bit more bearable.

As Bai Hao continued with his cultivation, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense out into the Underworld River Restricted

Area. It actually wasn't a very large area. It consisted of an expansive bluff, at the top of which was the military base. From the military base, the ground sloped down gradually, until a dry riverbed was visible off in the distance.

After midnight, that riverbed was where the Underworld River would appear. Retracting his divine sense, Bai Xiaochun sat down cross-legged next to his apprentice to stand guard. As he did, he reviewed the steps necessary to conjure eighteen-colored flame, and mentally rehearsed them to attempt to get more familiar with the process.

Time passed. Before long, midnight was approaching. Zhou Yixing had gone out earlier to confer with Wu Dao about a few matters pertaining to the defenses of the military base. Upon returning, he saw Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao both sitting there cross-legged, with Bai Xiaochun clearly standing watch.

The night deepened, until the only light visible was that of the stars and the moon. It was at that point that a knocking sound could be heard on the door of the residence. Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and watched as Zhou Yixing stepped over and opened the door. After he did, Wu Dao entered, then clasped hands in Bai Xiaochun's direction.

"Grandmaster Bai, the Underworld River will become visible soon. Considering it happens every day, we soldiers are used to it. But since this is your first time, Grandmaster Bai… I suggest you not miss it."

"You're absolutely right, Fellow Daoist Wu," Bai Xiaochun replied. "Considering I've never seen it before, I should definitely take a look. How about you stay here, and we can observe it together?" In response to Bai Xiaochun's friendly invitation, Wu Dao sat down next to him and offered some further explanations.

“The first time I saw the Underworld River, I was completely shaken,” he said, an entranced gleam appearing in his eyes. “It was almost as if heaven and earth were being opened up in front of my very eyes. It was really shocking.” Just when he was about to say more, rumbling sounds could be heard from the sky.

It sounded like heavenly thunder, and immediately caused Bai Xiaochun and Zhou Yixing to both look up into the sky. Wu Dao was the only one whose expression didn’t change.

“Ah, it’s midnight. The Underworld River is about to appear!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, another intense rumbling sound filled the air. The sky distorted, sending ripples out for tens of thousands of meters in all directions, filling nearly half the sky.

Gurgle, gurgle, gurgle….

Something like the sound of water could be heard, which rapidly grew louder and clearer. At the same time, a mist began to fill the Underworld River Restricted Area…. It was a mist that seemed to be filled with an aura of death, the type which could cause frost to appear wherever it went.

In fact, it quickly became so cold that the impure vital energy which everyone breathed out transformed into white clouds that floated up into the air….

Bai Xiaochun could immediately tell that the aura of death in the area was unprecedentedly strong. In any other location, such a strong aura of death would indicate that a huge number of vengeful souls was present.

But at the moment, Bai Hao was the only soul body visible anywhere.

As Bai Xiaochun looked around curiously, the sound of rushing water grew stronger, and the rippling in the sky more intense, as if both space and time were being distorted. The ripples reached the dry riverbed, and then suddenly, river water exploded out from nowhere….

Incredible rumbling echoed out as a majestic river came into being right in the middle of that dry riverbed. Surging and seething, it flowed off into the distance.

The river wasn’t clear, but instead, black. As it surged, the restricted area was filled with an even more intense aura of death, and the mists grew denser. The military base on the bluff wasn’t affected, though, allowing Bai Xiaochun and everyone else present to have a very clear view of what was happening.

Shockingly, masses of vengeful souls were now visible in the water. Some screamed, some slept, some struggled viciously, some laughed. However, all of them moved with the flow of the river to disappear off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked, and even Bai Hao had opened his eyes in surprise.

Zhou Yixing’s response was a sharp gasp. However, Wu Dao was clearly used to the scene. Expression the same as ever, he smiled and said, “We traced the river to its end, a few dozen kilometers away. There’s an ordinary mountain there that the river simply disappears into. This is what happens every night, and it lasts all the way until dawn….”

Focusing his attention on the river, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet. He was already very curious about the matter. He had heard many things about the Underworld River since he’d come to the Wildlands, but this was his first time hearing about anything like this.

“According to the legends,” Zhou Yixing muttered, “at the true end of the Underworld River… is the Hell-Emperor Palace, within which is that figure which everyone in the Wildlands worships…. The Hell-Emperor!” Bai Xiaochun also thought about the legends of the Hell-Emperor, and couldn’t help but peer through the mists at the Underworld River.

As soon as he did, a tremor passed through him, and his eyes widened in disbelief. Pointing down at the river, he gasped and said, “There’s… someone there!!”

Zhou Yixing and Wu Dao were both shocked, and looked down at both banks of the river. However, neither of them could see anyone.

“I don’t see anybody….” Zhou Yixing said.

“You guys don’t see him? Look, right there! It's an old man…. He’s wearing a black robe… and just sitting there….” Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes for a moment, and then reopened them. Sure enough, sitting right there on the bank of the river was an old man in a black robe, with his back to them. It looked like he was… fishing!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0812 awe-chapter-813

Zhou Yixing was convinced that Bai Xiaochun was not simply trying to frighten them, and was thus deeply shaken. And yet, no matter how he looked, he couldn't see anything along the bank of the river.

Wu Dao’s expression flickered, and after a moment of hesitation and further examination, a strange expression appeared on his face.

“Grandmaster Bai, um… there really isn’t anyone there.”

Stunned, Bai Xiaochun looked at Zhou Yixing for confirmation, who simply smiled and nodded. Heart pounding, Bai Xiaochun looked back. The black-robed old man was still sitting there just like before. By this point, Bai Xiaochun realized that there was something familiar about him, although he couldn’t quite put his finger on what it was.

“Am I the only one who can see him?” he said, face turning pale and scalp tingling. However, it was at this point that Bai Hao’s nervous voice was transmitted into his mind.

“Master, I… I can see him too…. There’s an old man there, fishing….”

After a moment, Wu Dao took his leave, still a bit suspicious about everything. He even took some subordinates over to the Underworld River bank to search around, but none of them found anything.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he could clearly see an old man sitting next to where Wu Dao was now standing by the riverbank, and yet, Wu Dao didn't seem to be able to see the old man at all.

Feeling very nervous, Bai Xiaochun watched the old man the entire night. He simply sat there, fishing until dawn came, whereupon he faded away along with the Underworld River.

The next day, Bai Xiaochun was completely jumpy, and even plastered himself with some paper talismans he had in his bag of holding. And yet, that didn’t make him feel much better.

When Bai Hao saw how nervous his Master was, he hesitated for a moment before saying, “Master, why don’t we go over tonight to take a closer look? It almost seems like he’s calling me….”

“You really have the guts to go for a closer look?” Bai Xiaochun said nervously. “Hao’er, you listen to me! That guy’s not a soul, he’s a ghost! Souls aren’t very scary. After all, I’ve used a lot of souls in my necromancy. No, that’s a ghost!! Don’t let him hypnotize you! In fact, considering that old ghost has shown up, we need to get out of here. This place is dangerous.

“Hao’er, back when your Master was in the Fallen Sword Abyss, I saw a girl ghost…. Even thinking about that causes chills to go up my spine.”

Whenever Bai Xiaochun thought about it, he realized that one of the main reasons he was so afraid of ghosts was because of that little girl back in the Fallen Sword Abyss.

Then he thought about how that girl had possessed Gongsun Wan’er, and then done all those strange things in the labyrinth, and his heart trembled with even more fear than before.

Bai Hao hesitated for a moment, and then said, “But I'm a ghost too!”

“You’re different. That’s… an *old* ghost! Old ghosts like that who have existed for many years are always very vicious!” Even as he spoke, he smacked a few more paper talismans down onto himself.

Bai Hao blinked a few times, but didn’t say anything more to try to convince Bai Xiaochun. And thus the day passed in relative agony for Bai Xiaochun. Eventually, midnight came again… and the rumbling sounds filled the sky. The sky rippled, and the Underworld River began to rush through the riverbed. And then… once again, Bai Xiaochun saw that black-robed old man sitting on the river bank.

“There he is again!!” he gasped, his face falling. Turning, he called out to Zhou Yixing, absolutely convinced that this evil place was haunted and that they shouldn’t stay there. “I’m an earthly necromancer! Any ghost that would dare to appear in front of me must be incredibly powerful….”

With that, he immediately sent Zhou Yixing and Song Que to work packing bags to get ready to leave. However, moments later, he realized that their small party was missing someone.

“Where’s Hao’er!?” he blurted. Spinning, and eyes widening, he noticed that Bai Hao was floating down toward the Underworld River, seemingly in a trance!

He was almost halfway to the bank, and was only a few hundred meters away from the black-robed old man.

“This is ridiculous bullying, you old ghost!!” Bai Xiaochun growled angrily. Although he was afraid, his anger over the fact that this old ghost was hypnotizing his apprentice caused him to start shaking physically. Letting out a shout, he began to speed toward the Underworld River.

As he moved, he smacked his bag of holding, producing numerous paper talismans, which he smacked down all over himself.

“Let go of my disciple, you old ghost!”

Although he was moving quickly, it was to his surprise that he found he couldn’t perform any teleportations. Even still, he was like a beam of light that shot toward Bai Hao, who was now only about 300 meters away from the old man. After closing in, he reached out and grabbed him.

Bai Hao shivered as he came to his senses. Then his face fell. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was relieved to see Bai Hao regain his senses, and yet, it was only a moment later that his terror spiked as he realized that the old man had noticed him. Oh so slowly, the man began to turn around. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun felt a sensation of terror that was impossible to even comprehend. Gripping Bai Hao tight, he screamed and prepared to flee.

However, that was when the old man’s face became visible, and although his expression was cold and sinister, as soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of his features, his scream died, and he stood there with an incredulous look on his face.

“Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper….” he blurted.

This old man was none other than the mysterious black-robed figure who had saved him back in his Spirit Stream

Sect days! During the fighting in those nameless mountains, he had been mortally wounded by a chosen of the Luochen Clan, and had then encountered this very black-robed old man!

This old man had not only saved his life, he gave him part of… the Undying Codex!

Never could Bai Xiaochun have imagined that after all the years that had passed, he would encounter this benefactor right here on the banks of the Underworld River!

Instantly, his fear vanished, and was replaced with joy. Meanwhile, the gravekeeper looked at Bai Xiaochun coolly for a moment, then looked back toward the river and started fishing again.

“Master, you… you know him?” Bai Hao had been struck with fear merely by looking at this old man; were it not for his master, he would probably have fallen right into the Underworld River because of the daze he had entered.

“Of course I know him! This is the benefactor that I've told you about so many times!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were already shining. He could tell that this gravekeeper was an incredible individual; after all he had been able to pull Bai Xiaochun back from the very brink of death.

Despite how his own cultivation base had climbed far beyond the level it had been that year, even now he couldn't ascertain the gravekeeper’s level.

That was saying a lot, considering that Bai Xiaochun had encountered demigods before. And yet, the feeling he got from the gravekeeper… was that he was beyond the demigod level.

“More powerful than a demigod…. Heavens! What level of cultivation base does Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper have?!” Enthused, he hurried over to the gravekeeper’s side.

“Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper,” he said, “it’s me, Bai Xiaochun! Um… I'm wearing a mask, so you can’t see my real face. Sir, do you remember what happened back in those mountains…?”

It seemed like the gravekeeper hadn’t even heard him; he simply went on fishing.

Bai Xiaochun was nervous, but also knew that he had to seize this rare opportunity. After a moment of hesitation, he said, “Um… Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper, can you help me out here? Send me back to the Heavenspan River? Whaddya say…?”

However, the gravekeeper didn’t seem to be listening. No matter what Bai Xiaochun said, he didn't respond at all. Bai Xiaochun kept talking until his mouth turned dry and dawn was approaching. And yet, the entire time, the gravekeeper never even looked at him. Eventually, he faded away along with the Underworld River.

“What do we do now, Master?!” Bai Hao said. He had been standing there the entire time while his Master uttered countless words.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and waved his hand dismissively.

“Master is going to teach you a lesson today, my apprentice. It’s called *if you set your mind to it, you can crush rocks and tear apart metal!”*

During the course of the following half month, Bai Hao came to fully understand exactly how focused his Master could be.

Every single night at midnight, Bai Xiaochun would go find the gravekeeper and go through another round of entreaties just like he had the first night.

Zhou Yixing and Wu Dao were completely taken aback by what was happening. Of course, all they could see was Bai Xiaochun acting like a maniac, standing by the bank of the river talking to himself. And since they couldn't hear what he was saying, it made the whole scene even stranger.

On one occasion, an underworld rainbow appeared near Bai Xiaochun, and when Wu Dao and the others went to harvest it, they could see up close what it looked like when he muttered to himself. It was really shocking, and they left as soon as they could.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0813 awe-chapter-814

Bai Xiaochun ignored all of the stares. After all, he knew that the remarkable powers of the gravekeeper made him vastly more powerful than even the Grand Heavenmaster.

However, not even half a month of fawning prompted the gravekeeper to pay him even an iota of attention. By this point, Bai Xiaochun felt like a ball of fire that was starting to sputter out.

It was also obvious that only he and Bai Hao were able to see the gravekeeper, who simply sat there the entire time fishing. Of course, what he was fishing for was vengeful souls, not fish.

The vengeful souls would always struggle mightily to take the bait, and yet, the gravekeeper only took away one vengeful soul per day.

Bai Xiaochun sighed and looked at the gravekeeper, then turned with a frown to glance at the Underworld River. Next to him was Bai Hao, who had witnessed his Master working hard for an entire month, with no results to show for it.

Lowering his voice, he said, “Master, this member of the senior generation is anything but ordinary. Don’t feel discouraged….”

“I know,” Bai Xiaochun replied through gritted teeth. “This guy is definitely anything but ordinary. However, you don’t need to worry. Master has a lot of experience dealing with old guys like this!” Bai Xiaochun was mostly convinced that he had just taken the wrong angle. Therefore, the next night, he found a fishing pole, sat down next to the gravekeeper, and started fishing with him.

“Becoming kindred spirits with someone can work wonders!” Fully convinced, he sat there fishing with the gravekeeper for another half a month while Bai Hao looked on, not sure what to make of the situation.

By this point, an entire month had gone by, and yet no matter what Bai Xiaochun did, the gravekeeper didn’t pay him any attention. Finally, Bai Xiaochun sighed and decided to just give up.

Scowling, he said, “Hao’er, in this instance I've chosen to teach you an important lesson via my own actions. It’s true that *if you set your mind to it, you can crush rocks and tear apart metal!* However, sometimes the wrong person comes along, and you’ll end up wasting your time.”

Bai Hao blinked a few times, but ended up holding his tongue and nodding in response.

And yet, despite Bai Xiaochun claiming that it was time to give up, he simply couldn’t bring himself to actually do it. Not wanting to waste time, though, he decided to practice working with nineteen-colored flame.

“Well, sometimes when you want to get something done, you have to do it yourself. If this old codger is going to be too stubborn to help, then my only other option is to improve my flame conjuring ability, and achieve a cultivation base breakthrough. Once I step into the Deva Realm… then I can easily cross the Wildlands on my own.” He sighed inwardly. Despite the fact that nineteen-colored flame could only be conjured by earthly necromancers, the fact was that Bai Hao’s formula still wasn’t complete.

Over the following few days, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao discussed flame conjuring and nineteen-colored flame, right there next to the Underworld River and the gravekeeper. Although, as far as they were concerned, the gravekeeper might as well have not been there.

Bai Hao had his theories, and Bai Xiaochun had his experience. Working together, they began to make progress. Not quickly, but not slowly either.

Unfortunately, there were certain areas that left them stymied and at an impasse, no matter what new angles they came up with.

“This isn’t going to work,” Bai Xiaochun said. “When conjuring eighteen-colored flame, I can only get it to work in the 9-meter state. However, if I do things the same with nineteen-colored flame, then its seems to me that it would only work in a 3-meter state. That's the only way I would be able to spot the new color. And that would be so difficult it would basically be impossible.”

Bai Xiaochun was getting frustrated, and Bai Hao was lost in thought.

“If only there were a way to get those colors to stop flickering so quickly....” Bai Hao muttered. “Unfortunately, it would probably require a lot of outside force.” His eyes flickered with the light of augury, but even after a protracted period of time, he didn’t come up with any new ideas. Bai Xiaochun also wracked his brains, and yet, it was to no avail.

Another seven days went by, during which time they continued to remain stuck in the same place. That night, Bai Xiaochun finally began to consider giving up on his work with nineteen-colored flame, and just let the ideas come naturally over time. However, it was in that exact moment that the gravekeeper, who hadn’t said a single word during all of these weeks, suddenly spoke in a gravelly voice.

“Why are you trying to get the flames to flicker more slowly? Why don’t you try to split the new color into multiple parts? That way, you’ll have more chances of spotting it.”

His words struck both Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao like a bolt of lightning. Master and apprentice both stared at each other, their eyes shining brightly!

It all made complete sense! In Bai Xiaochun's attempts to conjure eighteen-colored flame, he had always worked with a single portion of that new color. However, if there were a hundred such portions of color, or even ten, then even if the flickering occurred more quickly, he would still have plenty of chances to get lucky and latch onto the new color!

“That’s right! It makes perfect sense! Master, let’s rework everything from fifteen-colored flame upward. Then, by the time we get to nineteen-colored flame, there will be plenty more of the new color to work with!!” Delighted, Bai Hao’s eyes began to flicker with even more augury light. Clearly, he was very moved.

Bai Xiaochun was equally excited. It seemed like a simple idea, the type that anyone would be able to understand upon first hearing it. But considering how much of a rut they had been stuck in, without someone to point it out to them, they might have wasted a huge amount of time coming up with it on their own.

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, stood, and then clasped hands to the gravekeeper, as did Bai Hao. However, the gravekeeper didn't have anything more to say, and simply continued fishing.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have the time to ponder the gravekeeper. He continued to contemplate the matter as Bai Hao performed auguries. Several days later, they resolved the issue. That didn’t mean that Bai Xiaochun was completely ready to work with nineteen-colored flame, but it did provide immense help to his ability with eighteen-colored flame!

In fact, it immediately improved his success rate. Now, the only main limitation he faced was getting all of the seventeen-colored flame he needed to create an eighteen-colored flame. From now on, he wouldn't be able to use any type of seventeen-colored flame other than tongues conjured by himself.

Generally speaking, the whole method needed to be started from fifteen-colored flame. However, that wasn’t necessarily a huge problem for Bai Xiaochun. Although he had only come up with this new idea recently, the boost it gave him when working with eighteen-colored flame was worth it.

After all, each failure with eighteen-colored flame meant a massive loss of resources.

A few words from the gravekeeper had resolved a major issue for this Master and apprentice team. Therefore, after exchanging a glance, they began to continue their discussion about various issues regarding nineteen-colored flame, all right there in front of the gravekeeper.

“When you take ten tongues of eighteen-colored flame and combine them, the fluctuations and instabilities make it difficult for them to merge together….”

“The pressure created after merging them, and the way they contract, are both big problems. What are we supposed to do? It would be difficult considering my current cultivation base level….”

“Also, I wonder if nineteen-colored flame comes with lightning tribulation….”

All sorts of questions poured out of their mouths, and after each one, they would cast sidelong glances at the gravekeeper. As long as he didn’t say anything, they could continue the discussion along related subjects.

Eventually, it was with a bit of a begrudging expression that the gravekeeper offered some more advice. Every time he did, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao were thrilled. Slowly but surely, all of their issues were being resolved.

With the help of the gravekeeper, Bai Xiaochun’s skill in flame conjuring slowly improved, and Bai Hao’s understanding of the theories involved grew more profound. In fact, Bai Hao seemed to benefit even more than Bai Xiaochun. Everything the gravekeeper said seemed to strike him like lightning, leaving him more confident, and his formulas more complete.

Eventually, he realized that what he was doing was very specific and unique. The formulas he was creating were all based on Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, divine sense, and strong suits.

In all of the Wildlands, Bai Xiaochun would be the only person who would actually be able to use this formula to concoct flame.

Another few months sped by. Bai Xiaochun was completely immersed in his flame conjuring research, as was Bai Hao. Although they still took time to rest when necessary, they worked so hard that Bai Xiaochun’s skill grew significantly on a daily basis!

Master and apprentice both advanced by leaps and bounds in a very short period of time. It was almost impossible to describe how much they were benefiting. And although no expression could be seen on the gravekeeper’s face, deep within his eyes was a gleam of a smile. He appeared to be ignoring Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao, but the truth was that he was actually paying more attention to them than to his fishing.

As Master and apprentice discussed various matters, it was impossible for Bai Hao to hide the reverence and love in his eyes. At the same time, it was also impossible for Bai Xiaochun to disguise how much he cared for his apprentice. When the gravekeeper saw that, the smile deep within his eyes grew wider.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0814 awe-chapter-815

Time became a blur as several months passed. The better part of a year had now passed since Bai Xiaochun came to the Underworld River Restricted Area, and most of that time, he and his apprentice had been completely immersed in their flame conjuring research. In fact, neither of them really had any idea how much time had passed.

During the day, they would discuss nineteen-colored flame, and during the evening, they would hurry over to the bank of the Underworld River to continue their discussion in the presence of the gravekeeper, making sure to emphasize all of the difficult areas they had been unable to resolve earlier.

Sometimes the gravekeeper wouldn’t help them with a certain issue. But when that happened, they would continue to chatter about the matter until he gave in and offered some advice.

Both Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao experienced an increase in their flame conjuring skill, and also grew more confident when it came to nineteen-colored flame. That was especially true of Bai Hao, who knew that he was just on the verge of producing the formula.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was so immersed in the process that… he knew that as soon as the formula appeared, he would be able to conjure a nineteen-colored flame immediately!

In the past, Bai Xiaochun could never have imagined that he would reach the point of being able to conjure nineteen-colored flame so quickly after mastering eighteen-colored flame. Despite his strong faith in Bai Hao, he had assumed the process would take years.

Nineteen-colored flame was even more rare than eighteen-colored flame. In fact, it was possible to say that while eighteen-colored flame might occasionally be seen at huge auctions in the Wildlands, as for nineteen-colored flame… it only came around once in a hundred years!

For all intents and purposes, nineteen-colored flame was a thing of the past. Any such flames which currently existed would have been conjured by previous generations of earthly necromancers and then hidden away like buried treasure.

Currently, there were only three people in the Wildlands who could conjure eighteen-colored flame. Of those three, two were actually stuck at that level, with only one of them ever having succeed with nineteen-colored flame!

From this it was possible to see how incredibly rare nineteen-colored flames were!

If Bai Xiaochun succeeded, and word spread out into the Wildlands, it would cause a major stir. In fact, it might even cause a greater stir than when he had reached the earthly rank. That mere thought got him even more excited than before.

After all, never before in history had an earthly necromancer made progress as quickly as Bai Xiaochun right now!

However, he wasn't really thinking about such things at the moment, nor did he have time to feel pleased with himself. He was completely focused on nineteen-colored flame, to the exclusion of almost everything else.

By now, Zhou Yixing, Wu Dao, and the others present were used to seeing Bai Xiaochun muttering to himself on the banks of the Underworld River. Occasionally, people would go eavesdrop, but all they would hear was talk of nineteen-colored flame, most of which was unintelligible even to necromancers such as Zhou Yixing.

Thanks to Bai Xiaochun's mask, Wu Dao didn't even notice Bai Hao. The better part of a year passed, and talk of Bai Xiaochun's escapades within Arch-Emperor City was finally starting to die down.

Of course, all it took was for someone to mention necromancers, or heavenly marquises and dukes, or for someone to say the name of Bai Hao, and it would be easy to see how much he had shaken the city.

During the time which passed, there were certain people in Arch-Emperor City who continued to scheme against him. After all, their hatred for him was not something that would easily dissipate because of a bit of time passing.

That was especially true because… the Grand Heavenmaster continued to enforce the Proclamation of Universal Grace throughout the Wildlands. Slowly but surely, things were stabilizing. Unless something very drastic happened… it would only take a few more years for the very structure of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty to completely change!

No one could say for sure whether that change would be a good thing for the dynasty, or a bad thing. Although the influential clans had seemingly been dismembered, the truth was that the constant struggles of the bastard children and the common people showed… that the Wildlands' overall battle prowess was as formidable as ever.

There were some people, for example those from the direct bloodlines of important clans, who were becoming more desperate than ever to do something to Bai Xiaochun. However… whenever they tried to send people into the Underworld River Restricted Area, those people went missing!

Not even Wu Dao and his men were aware of that fact. They didn’t even know people had infiltrated the area. If they didn’t know, there was even less need to mention Zhou Yixing or even Bai Xiaochun. No one had any idea how many people had come to the Underworld River Restricted Area to harm Bai Xiaochun, only to vanish.

That was quite a shock to the people who had been plotting against him, and soon none of them dared to do anything further.

No one disturbed Bai Xiaochun as he worked on his flame conjuring. Several more months went by. One night, a look of excitement lit up Bai Hao's face.

Bai Xiaochun was also so excited he was trembling.

“It worked!! Master, we did it!! We created the formula for nineteen-colored flame!! This formula belongs to you and you alone, Master. Even with the formula, no one else would be able to conjure this type of nineteen-colored flame. It's yours, Master!”

Not only was Bai Xiaochun excited, he also knew that the past year had been one of drastic progress in flame conjuring skill. And of course, the main reason for it all was the help of the gravekeeper.

“Many thanks, Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper!” he said, bowing deeply. Bai Hao also excitedly clasped hands and bowed to the gravekeeper.

The gravekeeper sat there, face expressionless as he continued to fish.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao were used to that. Bursting with excitement, they continued to discuss the finer details of nineteen-colored flame for a bit. Then Bai Xiaochun calmed himself and prepared... to actually conjure a nineteen-colored flame, right there next to the Underworld River!!

There was no tribulation that came with nineteen-colored flame!

That was something that the gravekeeper had explained recently, and which Bai Xiaochun didn’t doubt at all. Besides, even if some sort of tribulation came, he was sure that it wouldn't count for crap with the gravekeeper there….

It was with complete and utter confidence that Bai Xiaochun went on to begin conjuring nineteen-colored flame. Eyes glittering, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture to produce a vast quantity of fifteen-colored flame.

These flames had been conjured during his research and study during the past year or so with Bai Hao. As for other necessary ingredients... although he had ceased to be the inspections commissioner after rising to the earthly rank, and had thus been incapable of performing shakedowns, he had still been showered with gifts by well-wishers.

Everyone from Sima Tao to Sun Yifan had come, as well as many other outstanding individuals. Therefore, when the time had come to leave Arch-Emperor City, he did so with no less wealth than he had accumulated after all the shakedowns.

Beyond that was everything he had been given by the clans he had visited when taking the heavenly airship trip. It was really impossible to count how much he had built up before actually arriving at the Underworld River Restricted Area.

And that was what he would rely on to build up to a nineteen-colored flame. He settled his qi and cleared his mind, then began to slowly work with the fifteen-colored flames….

His process was completely innovative. He was taking an entirely new path to get to nineteen-colored flame, to the point where he even used new methods to conjure the sixteen- and seventeen-colored flames. Before long, he actually had ten tongues of seventeen-colored flame hovering around him, which he then began to compress.

When he merged the flames together, creating a huge sea of fire, immense pressure began to weigh down on him. However, he clearly knew exactly what he was doing. He casually compressed the sea of fire down to a size of 15 meters. The flames began to flicker, and yet, that was exactly what he had been expecting. Furthermore… eighty percent of them were made up of the eighteenth color!

It almost wasn’t even necessary to look at them. Bai Xiaochun sent some divine sense out, and the flickering of the flames didn’t bother him at all. Almost instantly, he found the eighteenth color, and then reached out and grabbed it.

The sea of fire began to shrink down into his palm, after which he opened his fingers, revealing a full eighteen-colored flame.

After breathing a sigh of relief, he marveled at how smoothly it had gone, then threw his head back and laughed heartily. He now felt more confident than ever about conjuring nineteen-colored flame!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0815 awe-chapter-816

Things didn’t stop here. Bai Xiaochun immediately began working on a second tongue of eighteen-colored flame. Time passed. Throughout the course of the night, he conjured a total of ten eighteen-colored flames!!

Every single one succeeded. He didn’t even come close to a failure!!

If word of this got out, the entire Wildlands would be shaken, and countless necromancers would be thrown into a frenzy. No one had ever seen anything like it!

And yet, here, on the banks of the Underworld River, it was happening!!

It would have been impossible for Bai Xiaochun to do this all on his own. And although some of it had to do with the formula, most of it was because of the advice given by the gravekeeper!!

When coupled with Bai Xiaochun’s ability to focus, and his familiarity with medicine formulas, it made things go even more smoothly. In the end, he did something that could shake all of heaven and earth!

He conjured ten high-level flames in a row, without making a mistake!

Perhaps it was because of Bai Xiaochun’s mask, or perhaps because of the gravekeeper, but when those eighteen-colored flames appeared, the only other person who could see them was Bai Hao.

And of course, Bai Hao was overwhelmed with joy. Although he knew that his Master had already succeeded twice in the past, he hadn’t been present the first time, and the second time, he hadn’t dared to come out to observe.

But this time, he could see clearly, and it led him to the realization that nobody in all of the Wildlands could possibly stand on equal footing as his Master. Not even the other three secretive and elusive earthly necromancers could hold a candle to him!

To be able to casually conjure such flame ten times in a row was a completely and utterly shocking matter!!

Bai Xiaochun now had full and unshakable control over eighteen-colored flame!

He was very excited, and yet, he knew that this was only the first step. The ten tongues of eighteen-colored flame that he had just conjured… were the building blocks with which he would conjure a nineteen-colored flame. Unfortunately, those ten tongues of flame represented a massive amount of resources.

Furthermore, he had lost his source of income. Right now, he only had enough to try one time. Although he would still have some resources left over in the end, they would only be about ten percent of what he needed to make another attempt.

“No wonder earthly ranked flames are so rare. It’s not just because of the number of earthly necromancers, it's because of the vast amount of resources required to make them….” Although he wasn’t sure how other earthly necromancers conjured flame, based on his current skill and experience, he knew that, regardless of what technique was used… the cost would be roughly the same.

Bai Xiaochun sat there quietly for a moment, looking at the ten tongues of eighteen-colored flame. Suppressing his excitement, he closed his eyes for a moment to settle his thoughts. He knew… that the moment of truth had arrived!

“Nineteen-colored flame…. I’ve done months upon months of research, and had help from Bai Hao and Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper. I… have to make it work!!” A moment later, his eyes snapped open. Spreading his hands wide, he pulled the ten tongues of flame together.

Although it didn't seem difficult to merge them into one, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao had spent a huge amount of time working on the various details and steps required. The entire process had been mapped out via augury, with numerous critical issues resolved with advice from the gravekeeper.

Only with hard work and a bit of luck did Bai Xiaochun reach the point where he could so smoothly conjure flame. And thus it was that the ten tongues of eighteen-colored flame slowly merged together in front of Bai Xiaochun, right above the surface of the Underworld River.

His hands flashed constantly with various incantation gestures. Occasionally he would pull out a special soul to add into the mix according to the method that he and Bai Hao had devised. As he made these constant adjustments, the sea of flames gradually became more and more perfect.

Time marched on, and everything went according to plan. However, conjuring a nineteen-colored flame was still no easy task. It required utter concentration on Bai Xiaochun’s part, to the point where his eyes were completely bloodshot. Not daring to make the slightest slipup, he proceeded along carefully for about two hours until all ten tongues of eighteen-colored flame had been perfectly combined.

Although the heat of this sea of fire vastly surpassed that of an eighteen-colored flame, Bai Xiaochun’s ability to control the heat had also increased.

The beads of sweat which popped out on his forehead quickly evaporated. Taking a breath, he drew upon the power of his cultivation base to crush the sea of fire down!

“Compress!”

Rumbling sounds filled the air, and yet, neither Zhou Yixing nor anyone else in the area noticed. As far as they were concerned, the scene on the banks of the Underworld River was the same as ever!

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t aware of that, though. He was fully concentrating on the process of compressing the sea of fire. Meanwhile, Bai Hao remained off to the side, watching nervously.

“Considering all of the auguries we performed, there shouldn’t be any problems….” Although Bai Hao was constantly worrying about what would happen, he didn’t let that show on his face, for fear of it affecting his Master.

His eyes remained fixed on the sea of fire, which writhed defiantly like some primordial beast. However, no matter how it struggled, it couldn't break free from Bai Xiaochun, and was forced to be tamed.

It took time for the sea of fire to compress, although Bai Xiaochun actually had no idea how much time had passed. All he knew was that his exhaustion was rapidly mounting. Before long, the sea of fire was only 300 meters across!!

That was his limit! His cultivation base had been almost completely sucked dry, and he was so tired that his mind was about to shut down.

“Hao’er!” he cried out.

In almost immediate response, Bai Hao flicked his sleeve, sending a medicinal pill flying out into Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, which he consumed in one gulp!

Warmth immediately began to flow through him, returning his cultivation base to its peak, and settling his mind.

Enthused, and eyes shining brightly, he sent out more cultivation base power, and also shoved his hands closer together. As a result, the beast-like sea of fire struggled as it shrank.

270 meters. 240 meters. 210 meters…. Bai Xiaochun didn’t hold anything back from his cultivation base. The sea of fire struggled mightily, and yet nothing changed. It continued to shrink all the way until it was only 120 meters across!

After that, it shrunk to 90 meters. 60 meters… 30 meters!!

By this point, his cultivation base was again almost completely drained. And yet, that was exactly what his apprentice’s auguries had predicted would happen.

“When it gets down to 24 meters,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “I’ll consume another Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill. That should be enough! It’s too bad that I can only consume a total of nine Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills. After that, they won't work….”

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about the matter now. He had to take advantage of this opportunity. If he could enhance his nascent soul and thus increase his cultivation base, then eventually he wouldn’t need any Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills! He could just directly conjure nineteen-colored flames!

“Compress!” he growled, his eyes blood red. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the sea of fire shrank down until it was 24 meters across!!

“Hao’er!” Bai Hao knew exactly what to do, and sent a second Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pill over to Bai Xiaochun. After consuming it, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone, and he continued to work on shrinking the fire.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

21 meters. 18 meters. Finally… 15 meters!!

It was at 15 meters when the sea of fire began to struggle most viciously. Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was being drained rapidly, and his exhaustion was again mounting. However, it was at that point that… another color appeared within the 15-meter sea of fire!!

The fact that he had begun his endeavor with fifteen-colored flames was no waste! As of this moment, there wasn’t a single portion of the nineteenth color, but rather, ten!

That ensured that the chances of success were increased significantly. Although Bai Xiaochun was panting nervously as he stared at the new color, he used the method devised by Bai Hao's augury to analyze it.

After studying it for about ten breaths of time, his eyes began to shine, and it was without the slightest hesitation that he sent some divine sense power into the fire…. He didn’t make the slightest mistake! His divine sense immediately locked onto the nineteenth color.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

The nineteenth color began to shine with blinding brightness, like a dragon flying up into the heavens. That nineteenth color… soon completely distinguished itself from the other eighteen colors!

“It worked!!” Bai Hao shouted excitedly.

Bai Xiaochun laughed hoarsely, but with passion as he reached out to grab the flame.

“Come to me, nineteen-colored flame!” he shouted. Rumbling sounds echoed out loudly as his hands closed around the fire.

The flame sank down into his hand until it couldn’t even be seen. His fingers trembled slightly, and Bai Hao looked on, completely nervous. Although Bai Hao was convinced that his Master couldn’t fail, he was still worried about what would happen.

Master and apprentice exchanged a glance, and then Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and… slowly opened his fingers!

As he did, a tongue of nineteen-colored flame was clearly visible above his palm!

Nineteen-colored flame… success!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0816 awe-chapter-817

No one knew that he had conjured a nineteen-colored flame. After coming to realize this, Bai Xiaochun came to the conclusion that it wasn’t his mask which had concealed the fact, but rather, the gravekeeper.

Furthermore, after the nineteen-colored flame appeared, the gravekeeper himself was nowhere to be seen. The Underworld River also vanished.

It was almost as if his presence during the past year had only been in order to give advice to Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao. Now that Bai Xiaochun had succeeded in conjuring nineteen-colored flame, there was no further need for the gravekeeper to stay.

However, the night before disappearing, he had broken from his usual practice of being tight-lipped to give extensive advice about flame conjuring. Therefore, although Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao felt a bit strange to be alone, they were moved by all of the information he had imparted.

“Master, all of the advice from Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper was incredible. Twenty-colored flame is the peak of the earthly rank, and although it will be very difficult, I feel quite confident that I can create the formula for you! In fact, I'm going to go into secluded meditation to work on it.” Clasping hands, he bowed and said, “Master, take care of yourself while I'm away, sir!”

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, patted him on the shoulder, and nodded. Then, Bai Hao became a beam of glowing soul light that vanished into his soulhoarding pagoda.

A few more months went by, but the gravekeeper never returned, and Bai Hao remained in seclusion.

Bai Xiaochun didn't have enough ingredients to practice with any multi-colored flame, but he was able to perform auguries, and spent a lot of time doing research in that fashion.

“The only reason I succeeded in one shot was because of the Heavencleaving Good Fortune Pills.... If I try again, it won’t work as smoothly.” Patting his bag of holding, he contemplated the fact that although he was running very low on resources, he at least had everything from thirteen- to nineteen-colored flame on hand.

Some flames he only had one of, whereas he had multiple tongues of others. It was a collection that, if it were to be placed on public auction in the Wildlands, would cause a massive commotion. In fact, even earthly necromancers would likely scramble to get their hands on it. After some thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that trying to auction his flames off wasn't a good idea. He could really only sell them directly.

On another note, Bai Xiaochun had not forgotten his earlier promise to Zhou Yixing. In recent months, Bai Xiaochun had given him enough help and advice that he was now able to conjure his own fifteen-colored flame!!

That indicated that Zhou Yixing was now a celestial necromancer, which put him in a very excited and happy mood.

In Zhou Yixing’s clan, the only other celestial necromancer was one of the patriarchs. In fact, before meeting Bai Xiaochun, he wouldn’t even have been able to dream of reaching that rank.

But here he was, only a handful of years later, at that very level. Zhou Yixing knew that all of it… was because of Bai Xiaochun’s kindness. That filled his heart with gratitude, and further reinforced his conviction that he had made the right decision!

As for Song Que, he had spent the year or so of time resting and continuing to use soul medicine to advance his cultivation, something he was able to do because of how the Chen Clan had forced his earlier breakthrough. Although he was still in the early Nascent Soul stage, his foundation was actually much stronger than before.

Although he didn’t have much hope of becoming a deva, with his foundation back to normal, there was still a possibility. Therefore, he felt extremely grateful for the chances he had been given, and felt more closely tied to the Wildlands than ever.

A few more months went by. Bai Xiaochun had been in the Underworld River Restricted Area for far more than a year now, and was starting to get bored. He had avoided opportunities to make a scene, and was starting to wonder if he should send a message to the Grand Heavenmaster and ask to return to Arch-Emperor City.

Even if he couldn't, he at least hoped he could get back to Giant Ghost City.

However, even as Bai Xiaochun contemplated the subject, something happened in the Wildlands… which nobody could ever have anticipated!!

It all happened because of a single person, a young man who appeared first in the northern part of the Wildlands. He wore a white robe, and had flowing black hair and fair skin. He was always expressionless, and seemed profoundly arrogant. Bitter coldness surrounded him wherever he went, and his mere presence would cause gusts of wind and other heavenly phenomena.

His cultivation base was very strange. Sometimes it seemed to be in the Nascent Soul stage, and other times… not!

Wherever he went, slaughter ensued. In a short three-day period, he exterminated seven mid-sized tribes, and even one large tribe. On top of that, he wiped out a whole necromancer clan.

He had already killed tens of thousands!!

It was a brutal type of slaughter. Everyone who died ended up as desiccated corpses, as though all of their life force had been completely drained away. Even their souls were completely gone.

The northern Wildlands were immediately thrown into chaos. However, most shocking of all was that on the fourth day, the culprit vanished without a trace, only to appear in the eastern Wildlands, where more slaughter ensued.

Days passed, and the death toll rose close to 100,000. The entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty was enraged; this was clearly a bald-faced provocation!!

Most shocking of all was that the person carrying out these acts looked exactly like one of the most wanted people in the Wildlands. Bai Xiaochun!

It didn’t take long before just about everyone came to the conclusion that this person really was Bai Xiaochun, who occupied 1st place on the Hell-Emperor Stele, who had enhanced his own nascent soul to crush all other chosen beneath his feet!

“Bai Xiaochun has appeared again!!”

“He's been holed up for years. Finally, he shows his face again!!”

“Dammit. This is so brutal! He slaughtered 100,000 people! Bai Xiaochun has to die!!”

“Kill Bai Xiaochun!!”

The news spread like storm winds, and it didn't take long before everyone in the Wildlands had heard. It quickly became the main subject of discussion in both Arch-Emperor City and the cities of the four heavenly kings.

However, despite the slaughters which were being carried out, none of the four heavenly kings, nor the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, felt inclined to muster troops to do something about it. Considering the level of cultivation base of the most powerful experts, they felt it wouldn’t be difficult at all to take care of the issue.

“Now that he’s out in the open, it’s time to just kill him!”

“If he had remained in hiding, it would have been difficult to find him. But now he has the impertinence to do this? Does he really think the Wildlands couldn’t handle a measly Nascent Soul cultivator like him!?”

Such word spread quickly among the nobility and aristocracy. As for Mistress Red-Dust, she was particularly agitated by the news, and immediately requested of the Grand Heavenmaster that she be allowed to take action to put an end to Bai Xiaochun!

The Grand Heavenmaster was busy with the Proclamation of Universal Grace. However, he knew about the bad blood between Mistress Red-Dust and Bai Xiaochun, so after only a short hesitation, he agreed to her request.

Shortly thereafter, Mistress Red-Dust took to action. She didn’t go after Bai Xiaochun alone. After all, her fight with him in the past made her realize that he was very crafty and had many trump cards at his disposal.

Therefore, she mustered nearly half of the Giant Ghost Legion that was garrisoned at Arch-Emperor City to go track Bai Xiaochun down and kill him.

“This time you’re definitely going to die by my hands, Bai Xiaochun!” she said through gritted teeth as she left Arch-Emperor City.

Eventually, Zhou Yixing caught wind of the situation. He had been close to Bai Xiaochun for more than a year, but had many subordinates on the outside constantly feeding him information. Therefore, he was actually one of the first people to hear the news. At first, he was shocked, but managed to get himself under control. Although he wasn’t sure about all the details, he knew that this was a very important matter, and immediately went to Bai Xiaochun to break the news.

“Bai Xiaochun?!?!?!” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes widening with disbelief. Then he simply stared mutely at Zhou Yixing.

Zhou Yixing was equally stunned, and was also well aware that the news spreading about Bai Xiaochun must be false…. There was no way that the person in front of him could have just killed 100,000 people.

“Yeah,” he said. “After appearing in public, he killed more than 100,000 people. Zhou… Zhou Zimo took nearly half of the Giant Ghost Legion to go kill him….” With that, he went on to explain everything he knew.

The more Bai Xiaochun listened, the more surprised he became. It seemed completely unbelievable.

“Who’s impersonating me?!” he thought. Something definitely seemed fishy. This was clearly an imposter who was intentionally causing problems for him! The fact that someone was killing tens of thousands of people in his name instantly made Bai Xiaochun furious.

“You’re trying to screw me up one side and down the other!! No. No way. I have to go see what bastard is doing this!”

Anger burning, he made his decision about what to do.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0817 awe-chapter-818

One of the reasons he wanted to go see who was impersonating him was because he was angry. The other was because he was worried. As far as he was concerned, there could only be two types of people who might impersonate him: either a friend, or an enemy!

If it was a friend, he might still be angry, but would still need to determine who it was, and why they were doing something so stupid. If that person was still alive, and deserved saving, then he would save them.

If this person was an enemy… then he still wanted to know who exactly it was!

Furthermore, he was confident that after all the spirit enhancements his mask had received, it was definitely powerful enough that a demigod wouldn’t be able to see through it. As long as he didn’t slip up accidentally, no one would be able to determine his true identity.

At the moment, he was a very important person in the Wildlands. He was the former inspections commissioner of Arch-Emperor City, as well as an earthly necromancer. Either one of those positions was one that would put him in a position to trample the Wildlands beneath his feet.

“I can’t just go off by myself. The best thing would be to go with Mistress Red-Dust and the Giant Ghost Legion. Going with them… will make my cover impossible to break.” Having made his decision, he calmed himself down, and then left with Song Que and Zhou Yixing, borrowing the

Underworld River Restricted Area brigade’s heavenly airship.

He didn’t pause for even a moment along the way. The Underworld River Restricted Area was located in the central Wildlands, not very far from the eastern regions. In the very moments in which Mistress Red-Dust was making her final preparations for departure, he transmitted a polite message to her indicating that he wished to escort her along her way.

At first, she was inclined to ignore him. However, she was still angry about what had gone on between her and Bai Hao in the Inspections Manor, and decided that this would be the perfect opportunity to teach him a lesson or two.

Smiling coldly, she agreed to meet up. And thus, only a few days later, Bai Xiaochun arrived at the appointed meeting location with Mistress Red-Dust.

It was one of the many ordinary teleportation portals scattered throughout the Wildlands, a place guarded year-round by powerful soul cultivators. As soon as Bai Xiaochun arrived, everyone recognized him, and offered respectful greetings.

Bai Xiaochun was completely wrapped up in thoughts about who was impersonating him, and was in no mood for chatting. He simply waited outside of the teleportation portal for some time until it began to shine with bright, flickering light. Moments later, numerous figures began to pour out of it, who were none other than the soldiers of the Giant Ghost Legion.

They all nodded in greeting upon seeing him, after which they fanned out to seal down the area. After everything was secured, the teleportation portal flickered again, and more forces poured out to reinforce the perimeter. Soon, there were more than 10,000 people present.

Last to emerge were Mistress Red-Dust and her private guard. As soon as Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on Mistress Red-Dust, he thought back to what had occurred back in the Inspections Manor, and cleared his throat. Of course, he was a different person than he was back then. He was now an earthly necromancer, and therefore, he looked over at Mistress Red-Dust and gave her a friendly smile and nod.

She looked at him coldly and let out a snort. She knew that if she wanted to teach him a lesson, she needed to be patient. Furthermore, her main priority was to find Bai Xiaochun. Therefore, she sent some divine sense out into the area to inspect it, and after confirming everything was in order, flew up into the air.

The more than 10,000 members of the Giant Ghost Legion followed her. Under normal circumstances, the fact that she was ignoring him would have prompted Bai Xiaochun to cast a glare back at her. But right now, he was in a precarious political situation. Furthermore, he was very anxious about the matter of the Bai Xiaochun imposter. Therefore, he simply endured the situation and followed the soldiers.

Nobody spoke as they sped along behind Mistress Red-Dust. Anger burned in her beautiful eyes as she proceeded along, a jade slip in hand which constantly gave her updates and news. After a few hours passed, she suddenly pointed off into the distance.

“All clues point to the fact that Bai Xiaochun is still in the east Wildlands. He was last seen in a location roughly 5,000 kilometers from Mount Amity…. Clearly, his next target is none other than that very mountain!” With that, she picked up speed, as did the grim soldiers she led. They became thousands of beams of bright light which streaked through the air at top speed.

“This Zhou Zimo is no good at all at leading soldiers!” Bai Xiaochun thought. “Unless the imposter Bai Xiaochun is a complete idiot, there’s no way he would just stick around waiting for people to come after him....”

He was just about to offer his opinion on the matter when Mistress Red-Dust looked at him with cold eyes.

“The villain Bai Xiaochun has already been in this area for about half a month,” she said. “Every time he shows up, he sticks around in the same area for a certain period of time before leaving. So whatever it was that you were about to say, just stow it!”

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit awkward. It was obvious that Mistress Red-Dust was still brooding over the events in the Inspections Manor. However, he couldn’t help but be shocked by what she had just told him, and, feeling that he had no other choice, he hurried over to speak with her more privately.

“Something's off here!” he said. “Why would he stay in one place? What if he’s waiting for us? Zimo, this sounds like a trap!” The more he thought about it, the stranger it seemed. Based on what he had been told before, he assumed that the imposter Bai Xiaochun was randomly going around committing crimes. Therefore, this new information seemed very disconcerting.

Mistress Red-Dust snorted coldly. “Of course it's a trap! That’s why I didn’t come alone. I brought an army with me!”

Now that Bai Xiaochun was getting a better idea of the details of the situation, he was feeling more and more nervous. Taking a deep breath, he decided to offer some more advice, “Hold on. No, something is really off. Zimo, I recommend you hold back. Send in the army to scout around first. Or maybe ask his highness the king to come!”

“Shut up!” Mistress Red-Dust said with an impatient wave of her hand. “Nobody asked you to come along. You came on your own! Besides… who knows Bai Xiaochun better, me or you?”

Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun rolled his eyes about a hundred thousand times. He really wished he could point out to this Zhou Zimo that *of course* she didn’t understand Bai Xiaochun better than Bai Xiaochun himself!

However, there was no way he could say such a thing, and he merely had to let the fires of frustration burn in his heart as Mistress Red-Dust flew off into the distance.

Of course, it wasn’t as if Mistress Red-Dust hadn’t made any advance preparations. In fact, she felt herself to be completely and utterly prepared. Furthermore, she hated Bai Xiaochun deep in her bones, and wanted nothing more than to kill him. At the moment, she was completely confident that, even if he did have some unknown superhuman abilities, considering she herself was a deva, she should definitely be able to crush him!

“Maybe if he were somewhere else I could ignore it. But this is the east Wildlands! My father the king is right around the corner in Giant Ghost City. If anything unexpected happens… father will come immediately to help me!” Laughing coldly inside, she felt more confident than ever about what was going to happen. Ignoring Bai Xiaochun's words of warning, she continued on toward Mount Amity.

Bai Xiaochun was already starting to regret how things were turning out. The intelligence reports he had read earlier had been very vague, leaving him mostly in the dark. But now that he knew more, he was in a very tough position. Finally, he stamped his foot in frustration and followed after Mistress Red-Dust, his vigilance growing by the moment.

"If anything weird happens, I'm out of here…." he thought nervously. As he proceeded along, he surveyed the area constantly, both with eyesight and divine sense. To him, everything in the area seemed cold and sinister, which caused a sensation of imminent crisis to rise up in his heart.

"It's so cold…. It's a frigid qi that seems… familiar…." Even as he pondered the matter, Mount Amity appeared up ahead!

Mount Amity featured five mountain peaks that looked almost like a hand. It rose up out of the dense jungle into the evening sky, creating a stark silhouette that immediately filled one with a sense of foreboding.

The jungle was extremely quiet, even after the Giant Ghost Legion arrived. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked around, scalp tingling at the realization that all of the trees in the jungle… were withered up and dead!!

It was almost as if all of their life force had been completely sucked away!

Mistress Red-Dust and the Giant Ghost Legion also noticed this fact, and their expressions turned even more serious than before. However, they didn't slow down. Instead, they shot out over the jungle toward Mount Amity!

Before they could reach the mountain, however, sinister laughter suddenly erupted from the third of Mount Amity’s looming peaks!!

“Hehehe…. You people certainly took your time…. So few of you…. I'm actually still a bit hungry….” It was impossible to tell whether the voice belonged to a man or a woman. It was piercing, and almost sounded like a man, woman, and child all talking at the same time. Even as the voice erupted out into the open, a figure appeared on the third mountain peak.

It was a young man in a long white robe, with flowing black hair. Shockingly, he had two pupils in each eye, and his mouth was twisted in a bizarre smile. Then, he stuck his tongue out and licked his lips.

As for his facial features, he looked exactly like… Bai Xiaochun!!

However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun saw this person, his mind was battered by tsunamis of shock! He even shivered, and his pupils constricted as he breathed, “Gongsun Wan’er!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0818 awe-chapter-819

This person was none other than… Gongsun Wan’er! She looked different, as she was impersonating Bai Xiaochun. But as soon as he laid eyes on her, he recognized her!

It was mostly because of her smile, the way she licked her lips, and the way she talked about being hungry. The enormity of it all struck him like a lightning bolt.

He suddenly thought back to the labyrinth, and all of the indescribably terrifying things he had seen there….

“A ghost….” he thought, shivering uncontrollably. In fact, he almost screamed. Back in the labyrinth, Gongsun Wan’er had revealed everything to him, confirming that she was the very same young girl from the Fallen Sword Abyss, the one with the little teddy bear!

“Where’s Lei Shan…?” he thought.

In almost that exact moment, a figure appeared behind Gongsun Wan’er, a tall, burly man!

However, he was bright red, because of the fact that he had no skin on his body. His face was expressionless, as if he couldn’t even feel pain. As he stood there next to Gongsun Wan’er, he emanated the most terrifying of auras.

He was none other than… Lei Shan, whom the girl had captured and skinned alive in the Fallen Sword Abyss!!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was beginning to pound even harder. He knew how terrifying Gongsun Wan’er was, and was sure that Mistress Red-Dust was not a match for her. Without any hesitation, he pulled out a jade slip to send a message, only to find that the jade slip wouldn’t work.

His breath stuck in his throat, and he considered whether or not to just flee. From what he could tell, Gongsun Wan’er hadn’t recognized him, and therefore, getting away and sending word to the Giant Ghost King seemed like the best plan at this point.

However, before he could even begin to flee, Mistress Red-Dust narrowed her eyes and made a grasping motion to summon a red lotus.

“So, you finally show your face, Bai Xiaochun. Prepare to die!” Although Mistress Red-Dust could tell that there was something different about this Bai Xiaochun than before, she didn’t have time to think about the matter. She quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing deva fluctuations to roll out. Then she waved her finger, and the air rippled as the enormous illusory image of a finger appeared and shot toward Mount Amity.

In the instant that the finger appeared, Lei Shan looked up, and a brutal gleam could be seen in his eyes. Throwing his head back, he howled, a heaven-rending, earth-crushing sound which rolled out in a wave-like attack. Then he stamped his foot down, causing the third peak of Mount Amity to collapse as he shot upward into the air!

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out as the sky went dim. Amidst the rushing wind, Mistress Red-Dust’s pupils constricted, and she performed another incantation gesture.

“Deploy formation!” she shouted.

Instantly, the more than 10,000 soldiers of the Giant Ghost Legion fanned out around Mount Amity, creating a massive spell formation.

In order to avoid attracting attention, Bai Xiaochun tried to stick close to one of the soul cultivator soldiers. However, it was in that moment, when the third peak was still crumbling to the ground, that Gongsun Wan’er vanished. When she reappeared, she wasn’t near Mistress Red-Dust, but rather, next to a Core Formation soldier who was powering the spell formation.

She moved with such incredible speed that the Core Formation soul cultivator couldn’t even react. Gongsun Wan’er breathed in, and the soul cultivator shivered. In the briefest of moments, his body withered up, and soul light emerged from his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. At that point, he was nothing more than a desiccated corpse….

His life force, his soul, and everything else about him had been absorbed by Gongsun Wan’er. At that point, eerie laughter rang out over the battlefield, causing all hearts to shudder.

Bai Xiaochun already felt like he was going crazy from fear, and was wailing inwardly. As for Mistress Red-Dust, her face fell as she performed another incantation gesture, unleashing deva power in a deadly attack on Gongsun Wan’er.

However, before she could move very far, the burly Lei Shan blurred into motion, striking at her with a meaty fist.

Booms rang out as Lei Shan and Mistress Red-Dust began fighting. As for Lei Shan, he seemed almost indestructible; although Mistress Red-Dust’s magical techniques slammed into him, his expression didn’t change at all, and he continued to attack without letup.

“Dammit!!” Mistress Red-Dust said, her expression flickering. Gongsun Wan’er’s laughter continued to float out across the battlefield as she flitted back and forth between the soul cultivators, transforming each and every one into a withered corpse.

As she did, her aura grew stronger and stronger!

At this point, Gongsun Wan’er’s voice began to float out. “Your people have just the qi and blood I was looking for, and cultivation base too. The tribal savages have incomplete spiritual and physical souls. Even a hundred of them don’t match up to a single one of you!”

The Giant Ghost Legion soldiers’ expressions flickered with shock as they realized that their spell formation was completely useless. Furthermore, when their divine abilities landed on Gongsun Wan’er, they didn’t affect her or slow her down at all.

No one could fight back against her! The soldiers could only watch helplessly as their comrades were shriveled up into corpses and absorbed!

It was a terrifying sight. Within a very short period of time, hundreds of people had been transformed into dried-up corpses. Even more horrifying was that after absorbing so many soul cultivators, Gongsun Wan’er was transforming. Chuckling bizarrely, she no longer had to teleport back and forth, but instead, sent her hair flying out in all directions, simultaneously attacking nearly a thousand people at once.

In the blink of an eye, numerous strands of hair had stabbed into the foreheads of the soul cultivators, and began to suck them dry. Screams rang out, but were quickly silenced as everyone became a withered corpse!!

Gongsun Wan’er’s face glowed more healthily than ever, and her eyes shone with a bizarre light.

“Still a bit hungry….”

The remaining Giant Ghost Legion soldiers were visibly shocked, and began to fall back, not willing at all to face this creature in battle. Bai Xiaochun was among them, his heart pounding with vigilance. However, as of this moment, Gongsun Wan’er still didn't seem to have noticed him.

Gongsun Wan’er retracted her hair from the nearly one thousand corpses, and then took a breath. Meanwhile, Mistress Red-Dust, her eyes shining with red light, performed a double-handed incantation gesture, summoning an enormous figure behind her, a Dharma Idol that bore her visage.

“Get the hell out of here!” she shouted. The Dharma Idol radiated a murderous air as it performed an incantation gesture, causing it to shine with boundless light and then transform into an enormous red spear which was launched toward Lei Shan.

Not even Lei Shan could defend against that spear, which stabbed directly into his chest, then carried him flying toward Mount Amity.

A moment later, he and the spear slammed into the mountain, whereupon a bright red light exploded out, along with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds. All four of the remaining peaks of the mountain shattered, sending out a shockwave that turned the surrounding jungle into nothing more than ash….

A moment later, the dust cleared, revealing an enormous crater, at the bottom of which lay Lei Shan, completely motionless, a head-sized hole in his chest!!

Mistress Red-Dust was left ashen-faced and gasping for breath after unleashing this particular divine ability. However, her phoenix-like eyes shone with murder as she unhesitatingly shot toward Gongsun Wan’er.

The surrounding soldiers were enlivened at the sight, but not Bai Xiaochun. He knew that Lei Shan was nothing more than a puppet, and that if it took a divine ability the likes of which Mistress Red-Dust had just unleashed to kill him, then that only went to show how difficult it would be to take out Gongsun Wan’er.

“Well, let’s see what happens,” he thought nervously. “If Mistress Red-Dust can seize the advantage, maybe I’ll jump in and help her…. If not, then I’ll try to get her to escape!” Bai Xiaochun had long since begun to think about making his own escape. However, he had the feeling that unless he did it with the entire group, it would attract unwanted attention from Gongsun Wan’er.

It was very worrisome that not only had she been following him for such a long time, but she had also begun impersonating him. If Bai Xiaochun didn’t grasp the implications of that, then he didn’t deserve to have practiced cultivation for so long.

“She’s fishing. Fishing for me!!” The mere thought caused his scalp to tingle violently, and his heart to pound with regret.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0819 awe-chapter-820

Bai Xiaochun was trembling in fear. It was obvious that Lei Shan was vastly more powerful than he had been in the past, although it had clearly come at incredible cost. However, whether or not he had been killed in the interchange just now, one thing was clear; he had already died in battle in the past.

“Can dead people… die again?” he thought, terrified as he looked over at Lei Shan’s corpse. However, Lei Shan wasn’t moving at all, whereas Mistress Red-Dust and Gongsun Wan’er were fighting more fiercely than ever.

By this point, Mistress Red-Dust realized that she was up against a formidable opponent, and was performing constant double-handed incantation gestures to send out beams of red light that seemed capable of slashing the air into bits.

The red lotus that was her magical item swirled around her, occasionally sending out bursts of flower petals. As a result, she was constantly surrounded by deva power that could exterminate anything it touched.

And yet, that was only secondary. Most important was her own deva cultivation base, which sent out pressure that could crush onto Nascent Soul cultivators like a mountain. Whether physically or mentally, that pressure would be difficult to bear. Most opponents who faced it would likely be destroyed in body and soul without even being able to fight back.

However, Gongsun Wan’er was no ordinary opponent. The magical technique she currently employed was bizarre; she launched rings of black light out into the air, each and every one of which was filled with destructive power that sucked away at Mistress Red-Dust’s life force.

One of the most shocking things was Gongsun Wan’er’s speed. She moved so indescribably quickly that she was little more than a blur that left a string of afterimages behind. As the battle progressed, more and more black rings began to build up around Mistress Red-Dust.

Rumbling sounds echoed out without cease. Clearly, Gongsun Wan’er’s cultivation base was not at the level of a deva’s, and yet, she didn’t seem to feel any pressure at all when fighting Mistress Red-Dust. Even more strange was that Bai Xiaochun could just barely make out a Dharma Idol behind the afterimages of Gongsun Wan’er. The Dharma Idol depicted a woman in a black robe, spectacularly beautiful, with a look of incredibly arrogant contempt in her eyes.

The fight was actually getting closer to Bai Xiaochun, and the magical techniques they were using made the area very dangerous. Shockwaves blasted out constantly, making it impossible for him or any of the other soldiers to even get close.

Bai Xiaochun actually had it better off than many of the other soldiers. Some of them were being affected by some sort of gravitational force that sucked away at their life force, turning their hair white.

If people nearby were having trouble, then there was little need to mention how badly things were going for Mistress Red-Dust. She had a very unsightly expression on her face, and yet, had no time to even speak. Every bit of her concentration was focused on the fighting.

This Bai Xiaochun that she was fighting was far more difficult to deal with than she had anticipated. He almost didn’t seem like the same person she had fought in the past. In fact, although he looked physically like Bai Xiaochun, when it came to his aura, he seemed like a different person.

He was definitely very different from anything she remembered.

Mistress Red-Dust's divine abilities didn’t seem capable of harming him at all. Furthermore, the black rings of light being sent against her actually affected her mentally.

“He’s definitely not in the Nascent Soul stage!!’ she thought, shocked. The entire time, a strange smile could be seen on Gongsun Wan’er’s face, and her eyes flickered with a strange light. She continuously licked her lips, as though she were thinking about how delicious Mistress Red-Dust was, and how wonderful it would be to consume her.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked by what he was seeing, and began to back up as quickly as possible. As he watched the women fight, he noticed that the Dharma Idol from before was now nowhere to be seen. He even wondered if he had actually been seeing things. By now, he had come to the realization that Mistress Red-Dust was not going to be able to keep the fight going for very long. Heart pounding, he began to consider how to convince her to flee.

However, it was at that point that the situation suddenly changed. Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes erupted with a murderous light, and she suddenly lurched backward. In response, Gongsun Wan’er smiled, and was about to charge after her, when her expression suddenly flickered, and she backed up.

As she did, Mistress Red-Dust’s chest heaved, and her eyes shone with a light of madness. Suddenly, deva fluctuations rolled out of her with explosive force and speed, merging with creation around her, making her seem like she was the overlord of all heaven and earth.

“You will be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt, Bai Xiaochun!” she shouted, seemingly filled with a sudden burst of determination. With that, she performed an incantation gesture, causing her face to turn pale as a drop of blood flew out from her index finger.

The blood glittered as brightly as a precious treasure, and as it appeared, all light in the area went dim. It was clearly no ordinary blood. In fact, this was a magical technique of Mistress Red-Dust’s, something that combined the power of her cultivation base and her life essence to create a drop of… magical blood!

It wasn’t soul blood. However, this magical blood contained elements of Mistress Red-Dust’s enlightenment regarding the great Daos of heaven and earth. As soon as it appeared in the open, it transformed into a blood-red spear!

At first glance, it was far more shocking that the spear she had just used to cut down Lei Shan. In fact, it even caused Gongsun Wan’er’s expression to flicker, which caused a bit of hope to rise in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. Without any hesitation, Mistress Red-Dust hefted the spear and then launched it at Gongsun Wan’er.

Sonic booms echoed out as the spear pierced through the air, appearing almost instantly right in front of Gongsun Wan’er. And yet, Gongsun Wan’er then erupted into a blur of speed, dodging out to the side so that the spear stabbed halfway into the ground behind her.

Bai Xiaochun gasped. The mere sight of the spear filled him with a sensation of danger, and he almost couldn’t believe it had failed to hit its mark.

Even as Gongsun Wan’er backed up from the spear, Mistress Red-Dust hovered in midair, her eyes shining with red light as another drop of blood appeared at the tip of her middle finger.

It was… a second drop of magical blood!

It immediately turned into a second spear, which shot forth in attack. Then blood emerged from her ring finger, pinky finger, and thumb. In the end, four more spears were flung out, and although Gongsun Wan’er managed to evade all of them, they ended up stabbing into the ground in a rough semi-circle!

They were like a barricade that caused Gongsun Wan’er’s expression to flicker. Just when she seemed inclined to flee, a sixth spear appeared, and then a seventh…. More spears of magical blood flew out, stabbing into the ground around Gongsun Wan’er until… they formed a complete circle!

By the time this was accomplished, Mistress Red-Dust was breathing heavily, and her face was virtually devoid of any color. Using magical blood to power such techniques was very draining, and wasn't something she could use in a protracted fight.

However, the results were shocking. Gongsun Wan’er was clearly in trouble, and wanted to flee, but as soon as she got near any of the spears, black mist would begin to rise up from her, almost as if she were beginning to melt, and she would be forced to back up.

The surrounding Giant Ghost Legion soldiers were enlivened, and began to edge forward to offer assistance, Bai Xiaochun among them.

However, that was when the trapped Gongsun Wan’er glared over at Mistress Red-Dust and let out a shrill scream that pierced into the minds of everyone present, filling them with pain.

As for the ten spears, they suddenly began to crack and splinter.

Mistress Red-Dust’s expression flickered, and yet, she didn’t seem alarmed. Phoenix-like eyes shining with murderous intent, she performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then waved her fingers toward the spears!

“Shatter and destroy!” she said. Blood-red light erupted from the ten spears as they ripped out of the ground and shot toward Gongsun Wan’er. Before she could do anything, they stabbed through her, and then circled back around for another attack!

From Bai Xiaochun’s perspective, it was like countless beams of red light forming a blood-colored net around and through Gongsun Wan’er! Obviously, she would soon be killed in body and soul!

At the same time, Gongsun Wan’er’s screams echoed across the battlefield.

It was a frightening sight to Bai Xiaochun, and suddenly he was struck by how powerful Mistress Red-Dust was. Clearly, she was about to win this fight, and it caused both her and everyone else present to sigh with relief….

And yet, for some reason, Bai Xiaochun felt like it was all a bit too ruthless.

“After all, Gongsun Wan’er never did anything to hurt me….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0820 awe-chapter-821

As Bai Xiaochun stood there hesitating, the ten spears stabbed through Gongsun Wan’er over and over again. Blood sprayed everywhere, and she seemed to be hovering on the brink of exploding completely. Her screams grew more intense, and powerful fluctuations began to roll off of her.

Everyone in the crowd seemed very worked up by what was happening.

“Die, Bai Xiaochun!” Mistress Red-Dust growled through gritted teeth. Then she bit her tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. Performing an incantation gesture, she waved her finger and sent the ten spears whizzing forward with increased speed, to the point where they burst into flames.

The blood-colored spears shot toward Gongsun Wan’er, who was teetering on the verge of collapse, and then suddenly exploded, releasing a terrifyingly destructive force right onto her.

As everyone watched, Gongsun Wan’er’s body collapsed into pieces!!

The force of the explosion was so intense that not even Mistress Red-Dust was able to control it fully. Everything in the area was destroyed, and all of the Giant Ghost Legion soul cultivators were sent tumbling away.

Many of them were even coughing up blood. Bai Xiaochun wasn't affected very much, but he didn't want to stand out, so he screamed miserably and sent himself tumbling backward before staggering to a stop.

However, deep in his eyes, a complicated expression could be seen that was a mixture of pleasure and concern. Looking over at the area where Gongsun Wan’er had fallen to pieces, he murmured, “Is she really dead? It couldn’t have been that simple….”

His heart pounded with suspicion as exclamations of joy rose up around him.

As for Mistress Red-Dust, her face was pale white, but she forced a smile onto it. Then she took a breath, and was about to go inspect the dead Bai Xiaochun, when suddenly her face fell, and she backed up.

“You….”

Without any warning, an intense beam of blood-red light erupted up into the air from the spot where Gongsun Wan’er had collapsed. It was a vicious, abominable light, accompanied by a terrifying aura that seemed to pulse with rage!!

The sky was stained red, making the entire world seem like a vile ocean of blood!

Mistress Red-Dust had reacted a moment too late, and was affected by the beam of light, causing her to tremble as blood sprayed out of her mouth.

As shouts of alarm filled the air, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened to the point where they seemed like they might pop out of his head. Earlier, he had been pretending to be staggering around, but now he really could hardly stand up.

Screaming, he fell backward, his heart pounding as he tried to get his mask to make it seem like he was dead….

As Bai Xiaochun tried to fake his death, the blood-red beam of light began to contract. In the blink of an eye, it became a shadowy, blood-colored figure standing right on the spot where Gongsun Wan’er had fallen to pieces. Then, that figure pounced on a nearby Giant Ghost Legion cultivator with speed that vastly surpassed anything which had been on display before.

As the light stabbed through the soul cultivator, he shivered, and his hair turned white. Then his teeth began to fall out, wrinkles filled his skin, and a moment later, he was nothing but a desiccated corpse.

His soul, life force, cultivation base, and everything else that made him up had been absorbed by the blood-colored figure…. And yet, that was only the beginning. The figure became a red streak of light that began to stab through one soul cultivator after another….

Every cultivator it touched screamed before shriveling up into a corpse….

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it actually happened within the blink of an eye. In the shortest of moments… the blood-colored figure that was Gongsun Wan’er stabbed through numerous soul cultivators.

1,000. 2,000. 3,000….

5,000. 6,000. 7,000….

Little more than a red streak was visible, which was almost like an embroidery thread that stabbed through countless soul cultivators, seemingly linking them together.

Bai Xiaochun lay on the ground pretending to be dead, but he could see everything clearly, and his scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. Any mixed emotions he had felt because of the possible death of Gongsun Wan’er earlier had now completely vanished.

“She can’t see me. She can't see me…. I'm already dead….” That was what he kept muttering to himself as he tried to get the mask to keep up his facade of death. By now, it was very obvious that Gongsun Wan’er… was not someone that Mistress Red-Dust could fight!

“Dead! Only a few people are left of nearly 10,000…. The rest… were killed in an instant!! I told you people! You should have listened to me!” Bai Xiaochun was so nervous he almost couldn’t take it. The sight of Gongsun Wan’er killing so many people had him trembling inwardly, filled with a sensation of deadly crisis to the point where he simply lay there trying not to move, hoping that Gongsun Wan’er wouldn’t notice him.

Perhaps it was because of the mask, or perhaps it was his excellent acting skills, but either way, the red streak that was Gongsun Wan’er didn’t pay any attention to him. Nor did she pay any attention to the handful of people who had been injured earlier and were lying motionless on the ground.

Eventually, the red streak of light shot back up into the air, where it formed back into the image of Bai Xiaochun.

However, by this point, the fluctuations emanating out were no longer that of the Nascent Soul stage, but rather, those of a deva!!

The sky went dim, and winds screamed. Half of the sky was now magenta, and was trying to consume the other half of the sky, which was blood-red.

Of course, the entire sky had once been in the control of Mistress Red-Dust’s will, but now, that control was being wrested away!

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Mistress Red-Dust cried, trembling visibly. The fact that her mind was being driven out of heaven and earth caused a backlash that sent blood spraying out of her mouth. Her eyes shone with murderous light; it wasn’t that she didn’t want to save the men under her command, she was just too slow. Furthermore, the attack she had just sustained from the red beam of light had completely destabilized her own qi and blood. She barely had time to wrest herself under control, let alone go save anyone else.

When Bai Xiaochun heard Mistress Red-Dust yelling his own name, he sighed bitterly inside at how unfair it was that he was being made the scapegoat….

“I have to get out of here,” he thought, his heart pounding. “Fudge! I'm gonna enhance my nascent soul immediately and get into the late Nascent Soul stage…. That way I can keep my poor little life out of danger….” Although the fact that Gongsun Wan’er had shown up wasn’t necessarily a good thing for him, there were at least some benefits to be had.

For example, if he enhanced his nascent soul, then few people would suspect his true identity. After all, they already had their sights set on someone they believed to be him….

“Well there’s no use fantasizing about what will happen. First things first: I have to figure out a way to escape.” Unfortunately, he was currently surrounded by corpses, which meant that if he moved, he would stick out more than ever.

He could only try to keep up his act of being dead, and hope that things ended soon. Once Gongsun Wan’er left, he would probably be able to flee. Or perhaps some other circumstances would arise that would give him a chance to make an escape.

Even as Bai Xiaochun stewed in his anxiety, Gongsun Wan’er looked up and smiled broadly at the shivering Mistress Red-Dust.

“My profound thanks! I'm finally feeling a bit sated. If I eat a few more of you… then I’ll finally be full.” With that, she blurred into motion toward Mistress Red-Dust.

She didn’t move quite as quickly as she had when she was a red streak of light, but she still moved with lightning-like speed. As she closed in, Mistress Red-Dust performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing her red lotus to swirl around her. However, the mere wave of Gongsun Wan’er’s hand caused blood to spray out of Mistress Red-Dust’s mouth, and she was shoved backward several dozen meters.

“You’ve lost a lot of blood,” Gongsun Wan’er said. “That’s not good. If I eat you now, you won’t taste very good.” As Gongsun Wan’er’s voice drifted eerily across the battlefield, Bai Xiaochun lay there looking at her out of the corner of his eye, his heart gripped with coldness.

Mistress Red-Dust wasn’t a match for Gongsun Wan’er at all. Booms rang out one after another as she was shoved backward again and again, blood spraying out of her mouth constantly until she was in very bad shape.

The magical item that was her red lotus was shattered by Gongsun Wan’er, and eventually turned into ash. Mistress Red-Dust was now pale-faced and teetering back and forth.

By now, it looked like she wanted to flee, and yet it was obvious that Gongsun Wan’er was so fast that escape was impossible!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0821 awe-chapter-822

It was clearly a moment of grave crisis, and yet Bai Xiaochun understood that if he revealed himself now, it wouldn’t do any good. Not only would he fail to save Mistress Red-Dust, but he would also most likely end up perishing.

However, it was very troubling to see Mistress Red-Dust continuously shoved backward by Gongsun Wan’er’s attacks. Mistress Red-Dust was clearly getting weaker and weaker, and was hovering on the brink of death.

As Bai Xiaochun struggled over what to do, Gongsun Wan’er continued to get closer to Mistress Red-Dust, and was just about to launch another attack when she suddenly stopped in place. Then, her eyes glittered as she shot backward.

Even as she did, the weakened and suppressed Mistress Red-Dust suddenly looked up. Her beautiful features were ashen, but her eyes glittered with something dark, sinister, and icy cold!

“You finally got close enough….” Mistress Red-Dust said. Then, her arms shot out to either side as two images appeared, one in each pupil! They were images that depicted, not a person, but a city!!

It was a city that was every bit a match for Giant Ghost City in terms of size and splendor. It was perfectly constructed, with four towering walls and, if one looked close enough, countless bustling residents.

“Red Dust….” Mistress Red-Dust said. As soon as the words left her lips, rumbling filled the sky, and a shocking energy erupted from her eyes.

At the same time, the air beneath Gongsun Wan’er’s feet suddenly began to transform. An illusory, hand-sized city appeared which was an exact copy of the cities within Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes. Out of the city shot numerous illusory iron chains, which instantly wrapped around Gongsun Wan’er….

Gongsun Wan’er’s face fell as she realized that she was locked in place and couldn't even struggle. Then, the city began to drop down to the ground, dragging her and the chains with it.

As she descended, she… began to shrink!!

From the look of it, she would soon become so small that she would actually fit inside the city, and then be eternally sealed inside of it! This magical technique was Mistress Red-Dust’s trump card!

However, what had been unleashed so far was only half of the trump card; there was still more to come before its true power would be fully manifest.

This trump card was vastly more terrifying than the magical blood from earlier, and also came at great cost to Mistress Red-Dust. She had to waste a significant amount of longevity to power it, plus, she was using it after having been significantly injured. Blood sprayed out of her mouth as she seemed to weaken further. She almost couldn’t breathe, and even staggered backward. Biting down on her tongue to try to remain conscious, her hands flashed with a double-handed incantation gesture as she prepared to complete the technique!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he lay there, transfixed by the sudden shift in the tide of battle.

In that moment, though, Gongsun Wan’er, who was continuing to shrink as she dropped toward the city, suddenly smiled.

The lands quaked and the sky seethed as a huge black ring of light suddenly materialized around Mistress Red-Dust. Instantly, Mistress Red-Dust began to tremble, and life force began to pour out of her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. It even came out of her pores, a white mist which began to surge toward the black ring!! She could hardly breathe properly, and her face was as pale as death. She quickly performed an incantation gesture, sending a blast of red light out against the black ring, weakening it but not destroying it.

Its gravitational force continued to tug at Mistress Red-Dust, no matter how she struggled or attacked it. Apparently, she couldn’t destroy it!

The fact was that she was too heavily injured, and had reached her limit. It had been a huge drain to begin to use her trump card, dropping her longevity to the point where she was like a candle flickering in the wind.

At this point, Mistress Red-Dust smiled bitterly. She knew that she had been careless, and had believed that, despite heading directly into a trap, the addition of over 10,000 soldiers from the Giant Ghost Legion would give her the advantage. Never could she have imagined that the deaths of those soldiers would actually give her opponent even more deadly power!

Before consuming all of the Giant Ghost Legion soldiers, Gongsun Wan’er had possessed a Nascent Soul cultivation base. Afterward, though, she rose to the deva level, making her strong enough to not only defeat Mistress Red-Dust, but prevent her from even fleeing!

Upon coming to this place, there was no way Mistress Red-Dust could have ever predicted that it would be where she died!

She had hoped to rely on her Red Dust Violet Road technique to at least seal her opponent, even if she herself died in the process. And yet, so far, she had only been able to use part of it.

The gravitational force exerted by the black ring of light was too strong, and was sucking away her life force without any signs of slowing down. In fact, her hair was already white, and her skin covered with wrinkles. Right now, she actually looked like an old woman.

Her life force, her soul, her cultivation base, everything about her was now being taken away. Her vision began to grow dim, and she began to gasp for breath. She couldn't bear to give in, and yet, had no options at her disposal; she had only been able to unleash half of her trump card.

“Am I really going to die like this…?” she murmured to herself. Her eyelids began to grow heavy, and she knew that it would only be moments before she couldn’t keep them open.

Gongsun Wan’er was continuing to shrink down, and yet, her bizarre chuckling still filled the air.

Other than that, silence filled the air. There were only a few dozen people still left alive, and all of them were sinking into despair. However, from Bai Xiaochun’s unsteady breathing, it was possible to tell how conflicted he was. As his eyes remained fixed on the image of Mistress Red-Dust turning old and decrepit, he made his decision. Whether it was for her, or for himself, he knew that he couldn’t just lay there faking death any longer.

Even if it ended up exposing his true identity, he had to do something. If he didn't, Mistress Red-Dust would die, and Gongsun Wan’er would be released, after which she would surely slaughter any remaining survivors.

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!” he thought, his eyes turning bloodshot. Suddenly, he leaped to his feet, shouting at the top of his lungs, blue veins bulging out on his face and neck as he shot toward the shrinking Gongsun Wan’er with all the speed he could muster.

His hand clenched into a fist, around which appeared a black vortex. He drew upon all of his fleshly body power and all of his life force, causing a figure to appear behind him, a figure wearing imperial robes and an imperial crown, a figure that seemed like a paragon entity in all heaven and earth!

A domineering aura erupted around him as he howled, accelerating madly until he was right on top of the black ring of light that had Mistress Red-Dust trapped. There… he unleashed his fist strike!!

This was none other than… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

It contained double his normal amount of fleshly body power, a mad level of strength that caused the entire area to tremble, and send the clouds above churning. Dirt and pebbles began to rise into the air off the ground as a huge vortex formed.

The shadowy emperor behind Bai Xiaochun, and the fist strike that was being unleashed, caused a domineering will to fill the area. As of this moment… there was now a third will present!

“Be destroyed!!”

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

Gongsun Wan’er’s face fell as an enormous booming sound exploded out. The black ring of light surrounding Mistress Red-Dust had already been weakened, so when Bai Xiaochun unleashed a deva-level fist strike against it, it immediately crumbled into pieces and collapsed!!

All of the life force it had absorbed from Mistress Red-Dust was released. In the blink of an eye, much of it returned to her, with another large portion entering Bai Xiaochun. Because of that, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Bones immediately broke through all the way to the third stratum of the Powered Bones!

Mistress Red-Dust’s hair returned to its previous black color, and the wrinkles vanished from her skin. She was beautiful again, and her eyes flickered with the excitement of having passed through a life-or-death struggle. Without any hesitation, she threw her arms out and performed incantation gestures, then pointed at the tiny city down on the ground.

“Violet Road!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0822 awe-chapter-823

Blood sprayed out of Mistress Red-Dust’s mouth as her finger dropped. Then, unable to maintain control of her mind and body, she lapsed into unconsciousness.

Red Dust Violet Road!

Even Mistress Red-Dust could only utilize this technique by overdrawing on her deva cultivation base and also draining her longevity. As the final words left her mouth, and she was beginning to collapse, red light shot out from her finger, becoming a red smoke that instantly enveloped Gongsun Wan’er.

Gongsun Wan’er shrank down and down, dragged by the chains until she was inside of the tiny city!

To any observer, that city would be the size of a hand, but to Gongsun Wan’er, it now looked like any ordinary city. In fact, as she looked, a horse cart sped by, sending dust roiling up to cover everything in sight.

This was none other than… Red Dust Violet Road!

It was a city that was both illusory and corporeal, and was in reality… a shocking sealing magic!

Anyone sealed in that city would be locked inside of an illusion from which they could not escape. In fact, even if they managed to break free from the city, they wouldn’t find themselves free, but rather, outside of the city in another world!

As the dust from the passing horse cart filled Gongsun Wan’er’s vision, she calmly looked up into the sky at the gigantic forms of Bai Xiaochun and Mistress Red-Dust. Then she smiled.

Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun had been protected by his mask, when he had attacked just now, she… had sensed his true aura!

“Sweetie….” she said with an odd smile. Then she began to chuckle, the sound of which floated out of the city to fill the area.

The sound of the chuckling filled Bai Xiaochun’s heart with dread. Obviously, even the powerful sealing magic at work could not contain Gongsun Wan’er for very long. Furthermore, with his own current battle prowess, he was obviously nowhere near a match for her.

Therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that he picked Mistress Red-Dust up into his arms and shot away with blinding speed.

As he disappeared, Gongsun Wan’er was back in the tiny city, about to be covered over by dust. And yet, she was still chuckling. As she did, she extended her right hand, performed an incantation gesture, and waved her finger.

In response, the burly Lei Shan, who had remained unmoving at the bottom of the nearby crater this entire time, suddenly opened his eyes, which were expressionless and dark. Then, he rose to his feet!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as he flew up into the air, the massive wound in his chest rapidly healing. Then, he looked in the direction of the fleeing Bai Xiaochun, his face expressionless

“Bring him back to me!” Gongsun Wan’er said from within the city, even as the dust settled down onto her. At that point, with her voice still echoing out into the world, it was for the first time that her eyes turned blank.

She was now completely immersed within the sealing of the Red Dust Violet Road technique!

Outside of the city, Lei Shan’s eyes flickered with dark light as he unhesitatingly drew upon all the power he could muster to shoot after Bai Xiaochun with lightning-like speed!

A piercing whistling sound filled the air as he flew along, and the air around him even distorted! Several thousand kilometers ahead of him, Bai Xiaochun gasped for breath as he sped along, carrying the unconscious Mistress Red-Dust on his back.

Afterimages spread out behind him as he pierced through the air.

At one point, he pulled out a transmission jade slip and tried to send a message to the Giant Ghost King. However, the entire area was still locked down by some unknown technique employed by Gongsun Wan’er.

Even as he huffed and puffed, he could feel Mistress Red-Dust’s lithe, supple body suddenly turn stiff. At that point, he realized that she had regained consciousness.

When Mistress Red-Dust awoke to find herself laying on Bai Xiaochun’s back, it felt very strange. Struggling a bit to speak, she said, “Put me down. I don’t need your help!”

“Shut up!” he said angrily. “This is all your fault. I told you I had a bad feeling. Don’t waste my time, woman! You don’t need my help? Can you even stand on your own?!?!” With that, he reached back and spanked her on the rear end….

In his dismay and anxiety, the feeling of his hand bouncing off of her caused a strange heat to rise up inside of him.

“You!!” Zhou Zimo spat. Considering how weak and anxious she was, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had berated her and then struck her rear end caused anger to burn in her heart. However, she was so weak that she could barely breathe, so the spike of emotion actually caused her to pass out again, whereupon she lay motionless on his back.

“Hmph. If it weren’t for the sake of my old pal Giant Ghost, do you really think I would have saved you? You’re always looking at me like you want to kill me, you know. What, do I owe you money or something?!” With another cold snort, he ignored Mistress Red-Dust and focused on speeding along as quickly as possible.

By this point, he had already detected Lei Shan following him a few thousand kilometers back. Bai Xiaochun had mixed feelings about Lei Shan. He knew that he was obviously dead, and had been transformed into something like his own corpse troopers.

And corpse troopers were virtually impossible to kill!!

Unless one was vastly more powerful than a corpse trooper, and could literally rip it to pieces and transform it to ash, it would be impossible to wipe out.

“Ah, Lei Shan. We tangled once when you were alive. Now, even after you’re dead, you still want to keep at it…. I guess my only option is to pick up some extra speed!” Sighing, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a heavenly airship, and then began to head in the direction of Giant Ghost City!

As soon as he leaped onto the deck, he tossed Mistress Red-Dust off to the side and then poured all his cultivation base power into the airship. It immediately began to glow with bright light, and then shot forward with speed that vastly surpassed the speed he himself was capable of.

However, even as Bai Xiaochun accelerated, Lei Shan threw his head back and let out a shocking howl. Suddenly, he burst into flames, and then picked up speed at an alarming rate. In the blink of an eye, he was moving far faster than the heavenly airship, a bright beam of light that bore down right onto Bai Xiaochun!

With every moment that passed, he got closer! 1,000 kilometers. 750 kilometers. 500 kilometers. 250 kilometers. In a flash, he was only about 50 kilometers away!

The sight caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to turn as wide as saucers. Gulping, he muttered, “What kind of medicine did this guy take!? I can’t believe he’s so fast!!”

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness mounted, Mistress Red-Dust woke up again and looked over at him with mixed emotions in her eyes. Then she noticed Lei Shan closing in on them, whereupon her eyes shone with decisive light.

“Get this heavenly airship going faster, Bai Hao! With enough speed, you won't have to worry at all about that puppet!”

“Shut the hell up, would you!?” Bai Xiaochun shouted back in frustration. Mistress Red-Dust’s bossy tone was really getting on his nerves. At this point, he was the one who had saved her, and yet she still dared to toss around orders like she was in charge.

It left him feeling far from pleased.

“You!!” she said, glaring daggers. By this point, she had actually realized that her tone of voice wasn't completely appropriate, and yet considering how proud she was, there was no way she would admit it openly.

Before she could say anything else, Lei Shan burst forward with another flash of speed, putting him… right above the airship!!

There, he shoved his right hand down!

Instantly, a massive force erupted out from him, becoming a blast of wind that descended onto the airship.

“Screw the hell off!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. By now, his veins of steel were pulsing, and his murderous aura seethed. Clenching his right hand into a fist, he leapt up into the air and punched!

Rumbling sounds spread out that could shake heaven and earth. The wind attack collapsed, and Bai Xiaochun, who hadn’t even slowed down a bit, continued onward toward Lei Shan!

As for Lei Shan, his eyes flickered with black light as he shot downward, slicing his hand in a deadly attack toward Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0823 awe-chapter-824

When they made contact, a massive boom rippled out that almost tore the sky open. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as the force of the blow sent him plummeting back down onto the deck of the heavenly airship, which shuddered violently.

Aura flickering unstably, Bai Xiaochun looked up to find that he had only shoved Lei Shan back upward a few paces.

Not pausing for a second, he shot back toward Lei Shan, whereupon the two began to fight back and forth fiercely. As they did, the heavenly airship continued to shoot along at top speed until it was a good distance away.

At that point, Mistress Red-Dust struggled up to take the helm, whereupon she slowed the airship to a stop. The way she gasped from the effort made it obvious how weak she was. Turning, she looked back nervously at Bai Xiaochun and Lei Shan fighting in midair.

Rumbling booms echoed out constantly through the sky as Lei Shan relied, not on magical techniques, but only on his fleshly body. However, that alone made him an opponent the likes of which Bai Xiaochun had never faced!

“Deva-level fleshly body, huh?!?!” Bai Xiaochun’s murderous aura grew stronger as he was shoved backward by attack after attack. None of the blows he landed on Lei Shan seemed to have any effect, and yet every blow he sustained was shockingly damaging.

“This Lei Shan has some really uncanny power…. I can’t keep this up. I have to end things quickly! Even if I can’t kill him, I at least need to slow him down!” He was mostly worried that if things went on too long, Gongsun Wan’er would break free, and that any advantage he had built up would disintegrate. At that point… he would almost surely die!

His eyes were completely bloodshot as he contemplated whether or not to reveal who he was. After all, it wouldn’t make any sense to lose his poor little life just to keep his identity secret!

Furthermore, Gongsun Wan’er still looked like him. Therefore, anything he did to reveal his true identity wouldn’t cause any problems immediately.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he threw his head back and roared, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that was unlike anything he usually did. Immediately, the splendor of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul sent spiritual power coursing through his body, nearly an ocean of if that then spilled out into the open.

That spiritual power immediately transformed into frigid coldness. Cracking sounds rang out in all directions as the area around Bai Xiaochun froze over! The entire area instantly became like a frozen lake!

This was none other than… the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation!

Bai Xiaochun had never dared to use this divine ability, not even with the power of his mask to disguise what it was. But now, madness flickered in his eyes as frigid qi poured out around him. Then, he extended his right hand and pointed at Lei Shan, who was already being slowed down because of the frigid coldness!

“Seal!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. All of the frigid qi in the area exploded into motion toward Lei Shan. It took only a moment to completely inundate him, covering him with frost so rapidly that, a moment later, he was completely covered with a layer of sealing ice.

More cracking sounds rang out over the course of the following few breaths of time. Soon, Lei Shan was covered with multiple layers of ice. Although he struggled, with each layer that he damaged, more layers piled on top, until he was like an enormous ice statue!!

He was a huge chunk of ice hovering in midair, hundreds of meters tall, completely unmoving. Of course, closer inspection would reveal many cracks filling the ice; clearly, the sealing would only last for a short time.

Although Mistress Red-Dust was shocked by what she was seeing, the technique didn't actually make her think of Bai Xiaochun.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he threw his head back and roared in shocking fashion as his fleshly body power spiked dramatically. Intense fluctuations rolled out in all directions, along with shocking energy.

Everything in the area shook violently, and small pebbles began to rise up into the air. Even some enormous rocks began to float up into the air. Fissures appeared on some nearby low-lying mountains, and they began to collapse into rubble, which also floated up into the air.

Moments later, large boulders began to rise up, almost as if Bai Xiaochun’s body had become a black hole dragging everything toward him.

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

In the blink of an eye, the rocks began to form up around Bai Xiaochun, layer upon layer. A 300-meter tall giant appeared… right there in the middle of the Wildlands!

This was none other than… the Living Mountain Incantation!!

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t dared to use this technique in the Wildlands up to this point. But now was not the time to worry about such things. Fueling it with the power of his cultivation base, he grew larger and larger until he was not 300 meters tall, but rather, more than 2,100 meters tall!!

Although he currently wasn’t powerful enough to literally shake all of heaven and earth, he certainly came close to that level. His fleshly body power combined with the Living Mountain Incantation put him at his very peak!

Since he was currently incapable of unleashing the Undying Emperor’s Fist, he needed to close some of the gap between his own level and Lei Shan’s, and this was the only way!

“Get ready to die!” he shouted through the mouth of the gigantic stone golem. With that, he lunged forward to bash at the sealed Lei Shan!

This was none other than… the Mountain Shaking Bash!!

Bai Xiaochun couldn't bother to conceal the effects of the Mountain Shaking Bash. He unleashed all of the explosive power he was capable of, becoming something like a stone beast that lunged forward with astonishing madness.

Meanwhile, the cracks in the ice had grown more plentiful. Even as Bai Xiaochun closed in, the ice suddenly exploded!!

Lei Shan burst out into the open right as Bai Xiaochun arrived, incarnated as the stone golem giant from the Living Mountain Incantation.

The moment of collision caused a boom that shook everything in the area. The heavenly bodies went dim, and doughty Lei Shan was flung backward violently, leaving loud cracking sounds echoing behind him. However, things weren't over yet. Relying on the power of the Living Mountain Incantation and the divine ability of the Mountain Shaking Bash, Bai Xiaochun continued forward, reaching out with his thumb and index finger. As he did, black light appeared, and he pinched his fingers together in the direction of Lei Shan's throat!

This was none other than… the Throat Crushing Grasp!!

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it actually happened in the briefest of moments. Starting with the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, he had quickly and smoothly unleashed a whole series of techniques. And now, as the Throat Crushing Grasp bore down onto Lei Shan, he howled and threw his hands out in front of him to block the thumb and index finger of the stone golem that was Bai Xiaochun!!

Cracking sounds rang out from inside of Lei Shan, and the black light in his eyes grew stronger. Even as he fought back, Bai Xiaochun went all out to unleash the power of the Throat Crushing Grasp.

Then, he unhesitatingly jerked his hand to the side, sending Lei Shan flying down toward the ground, where he slammed into the dirt and opened up a huge crater. Before Lei Shan could react, Bai Xiaochun dropped down and delivered ten fist strikes in quick succession!

The ground quaked as fissures and crevices snaked out from within the crater.

At that point, another shocking howl erupted out from within the crater as Lei Shan blocked Bai Xiaochun's final fist strike. The backlash sent Bai Xiaochun's fist swinging backward, and yet, Lei Shan was now covered in wounds, his hair in disarray and black blood seeping out all over his body. However, the black light in his eyes caused his fleshly body power to rocket once again to new heights.

Even as he prepared to leap up into the air, a mark suddenly appeared on the forehead of Bai Xiaochun’s stone golem form. Meanwhile, inside the golem, Bai Xiaochun’s true self likewise had a mark on his forehead, which opened up… into a third eye!

The Heavenspan Dharma Eye!!

Instantly, the power of that third eye erupted out from the stone golem’s forehead, and latched onto Lei Shan!!

Lei Shan shivered as an indescribable force enveloped him, taking control of his entire body! His pupils quivered as he was suddenly stuck in place in midair, unable to move!

In that exact moment, Bai Xiaochun sent his stone golem form leaping up. A roar could be heard as he then reached out and slapped Lei Shan, sending him hurtling back toward the ground!!

As the blow landed, Bai Xiaochun unleashed his… Undying Hex!!

The Undying Hex became countless black threads that flowed out from his palm and into Lei Shan. As Lei Shan slammed down into the crater below, Bai Xiaochun’s stone golem form collapsed, sending numerous rocks and boulders falling down. Within the space of a few breaths of time, those rocks covered Lei Shan as surely as a mountain!!

Inside of the mountain, black threads swirled, completely locking Lei Shan in place!!

Having accomplished these things, Bai Xiaochun staggered backward a few paces before retreating to the heavenly airship. There, Mistress Red-Dust stood, her mouth agape as Bai Xiaochun took control of the ship and sent it screaming through the air like some wild beast!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0824 awe-chapter-825

As the heavenly airship sped through the air, Mistress Red-Dust continued to glance over at Bai Xiaochun, her mood fluctuating unstably. Conflicting emotions appeared in her eyes as she thought back to the battle prowess and techniques he had just put on display.

In the end, she decided not to say anything. Instead, she closed her eyes and focused on trying to recover as quickly as possible. She had received serious injuries, and wouldn’t be back to normal any time soon. Although she could temporarily suppress the effects, that would only work for a short time before she experienced an intense backlash.

As she sighed bitterly in her heart, Bai Xiaochun focused on piloting the heavenly airship. At one point, he suddenly looked over his shoulder in the direction of Lei Shan.

That was when the sound of a shocking explosion could be heard. Everything behind the heavenly airship shook violently as a massive shockwave rolled out.

Several thousand kilometers back, the mountain of boulders exploded out in all directions as the Undying Hex collapsed… and a tall, burly figure appeared!

It was none other than Lei Shan!

No expression could be seen on his face, but he was visibly injured, and seriously at that. Gaping holes could be seen all over him, some of which passed through his entire body. This time, although the wounds continuously healed themselves, it caused the black light in his eyes to begin to fade. And yet, that didn’t stop him from flying up into the air to give chase.

“Impossible!” Mistress Red-Dust blurted in shock. “All those divine abilities you used just now injured that corpse trooper even more than I did! How could he still be chasing us!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything in response, but his expression turned grimmer. Inwardly, he already knew the answer to the question: it had everything to do with Gongsun Wan’er herself. Although he wasn’t sure of the exact details, he was convinced that it was the case.

“Gongsun Wan’er probably isn’t free yet… hopefully….” However, he couldn’t be sure. Eyes bloodshot from mounting anxiety, he released the helm of the heavenly airship, allowing it to slowly come to a stop. Then he turned and went to stand at the stern, where he looked out at Lei Shan, who was closing in on them from a distance of several hundred kilometers away.

“If I don’t kill him,” he thought, “it’s going to be hard to get away. The longer he continues to hound us like this, the more danger we’ll be in.”

Calming his aura, he reached out with both hands. Eyes glowing, he drew on the power of his cultivation base and simultaneously said in his heart, “Waterswamp!”

Instantly, mist began to roil out in all directions, covering the airship and spreading out to fill a 500-kilometer area!

At the same time, because of how the airship had stopped moving, Lei Shan entered that very 500-kilometer area, and was within the world of mist!

As he entered, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered with killing intent. Dropping his hands, he uttered the next word in his heart.

“Kingdom!!”

Waterswamp Kingdom!

As soon as the full technique was called upon, the entire 500-kilometer area became an enormous, watery swamp. At the same time, the howl of some beast could be heard, seemingly echoing from the distant past, filling the area with power that would be shocking to anyone who could hear it!

Lei Shan’s eyes flickered with black light as he suddenly stopped in place and prepared to back up. However, before he could, the howling of the beast grew more intense, and spikes like enormous mountain peaks began to rise up in the entire 500-kilometer area!

Each and every spike contained mountain-toppling, sea-draining power which filled the air with rumbling sounds as they sped madly toward Lei Shan.

Lei Shan shivered violently, and all of the wounds which had been in the middle of recovery split open, causing black blood to spray out everywhere. He tried to fall back, but before he could, five curved spikes encircled him!

Those five spikes looked like mountain peaks, and they were not arranged in a neat row, but rather, were staggered! Furthermore, as soon as the spikes shot up in to the air, they were followed by what appeared to be an entire continent!

If one looked carefully, it would be possible to see… that it was the clawed hand of some enormous beast!!

The spikes that were the mountain peaks grew off of the clawed hand, and considering how big they were, one could only imagine how huge the hand was!

Those so-called mountain peaks were actually the talons!

As for the ‘continent’, it was actually… the palm of the hand! Although it was clearly visible, it was only a portion of it. And despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun had already glimpsed his life essence spirit on numerous occasions, he was just as shaken this time as he always had been in the past.

As of this moment, that enormous clawed hand seemed to surpass heaven and earth as it closed around Lei Shan!!

The events playing out virtually defied description! No matter how Lei Shan struggled, no matter how he tried to flee, he couldn't escape. He howled in defiance, and the black light in his eyes grew more intense. Black smoke even began to rise up off of him, which formed into the shape of a young girl's head, hovering above his own.

That head let out a miserable shriek as the enormous beast hand slammed into Lei Shan!

A deafening boom echoed out. The ground quaked violently, and then shattered into countless pieces. As for Bai Xiaochun, he coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward. He had already used his Undying Emperor’s Fist to save Mistress Red-Dust, and now he was using this divine ability. This combination had him completely and utterly drained and exhausted.

The clawed hand faded away, leaving behind… nothing but an enormous crater!

It was hundreds of meters wide, and was devoid of mountains, of plants, of vegetation, of anything! It was completely shattered and empty, except for… the corpse of Lei Shan!

He was completely shattered. He lay there unmoving, his legs crushed, his head twisted oddly to the side, his body hardly recognizable as human. And yet, that black glow still flickered in his eyes. It was almost as if the blow Lei Shan had just received was stimulating to him, and actually caused him to recover faster. In the blink of an eye… he yet again flew up into the air!!

The black glow had clearly been reduced by almost half. Furthermore, his aura was greatly weakened compared to before. And yet, the fact that he was still in the fight caused Bai Xiaochun's heart to fill with despair.

“What kind of recovery power does he have?!?!” he thought, his eyes flickering with madness. Lei Shan could be beaten down relatively easily, but could not be killed. It was enough to leave anyone bristling with anger. Anyone, even a deva, who sustained such injuries would be teetering on the verge of being wiped out for good. And yet here Lei Shan was, rapidly recovering.

Mistress Red-Dust remained silently off to the side, looking at the rapidly recovering Lei Shan as he flew out of the crater. As of this point, she knew that he could not be killed, and that it would be difficult to escape him. Time was of the essence, and she wasn't sure how long the sealing effect of her Red Dust Violet Road would last.

As soon as that person who bore the visage of Bai Xiaochun emerged, then Mistress Red-Dust knew that she and Bai Hao… would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt.

With such thoughts on her mind, she looked over at Bai Xiaochun. The divine abilities and magical techniques he had used, including the Waterswamp Kingdom, had caused the gears in her head to begin to turn. But now was not the time to ponder the issue deeply. As of this moment, both of their lives were on the line! She closed her eyes for a brief moment, then forced them to open again. When they did, they shone with the desire to do battle. Without any hesitation, she forcibly suppressed all of her injuries and leaped up into the air.

Instantly, her deva cultivation base roared to life. All of a sudden, she seemed back to normal, like she was once again the sergeant major of the Giant Ghost Legion. Flicking her sleeve, she coolly said, “Get out of here, Bai Hao. The sealing effect limiting communications can only stretch for so far. You absolutely must report this matter to my father the Giant Ghost King. And notify the Grand Heavenmaster too. The person controlling this puppet… has consumed vast amounts of life force, and is clearly intent on bringing disaster to the Wildlands!!”

Not bothering to wait for a response from Bai Xiaochun, she flew off of the heavenly airship toward Lei Shan!

A tremor passed through Bai Xiaochun. All of a sudden, a familiar feeling filled him. Watching Mistress Red-Dust flying off made him feel like he was back in the Luochen Mountains, nothing more than a trifling Qi Condensation cultivator!

A moment later, he spoke, his veins of steel audible in his voice as he said, “Give me the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Zhou Zimo! After that… I’ll take care of everything!”

Instead of piloting the heavenly airship away, he quickly entered a private chamber below the main deck, set up a spell formation, and sat down cross-legged. Then… he took out his turtle wok!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0825 awe-chapter-826

It had been some time since Bai Xiaochun performed a fifteenfold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul, breaking through to the mid Nascent Soul stage. Fearful of pushing things too far, he hadn’t dared to go any further than that. Considering that his name was listed on the Hell-Emperor Stele, everyone in the world would have known if he performed even a single more enhancement.

Later on, as he came to acquire everything from sixteen- to nineteen-colored flame, he had been forced to do nothing more than look at the product of his hand. He hadn’t dared to enhance his nascent soul, at least not until he found the right opportunity.

His original plan had been to wait until he could advance directly into becoming a deva. But now… it was a moment of deadly crisis, and there was no time for lengthy consideration about the consequences.

When it came to keeping his poor little life safe, revealing his identity was of secondary importance. Even more importantly… Gongsun Wan’er was impersonating him. Considering that everyone was paying attention to her, Bai Xiaochun hoped that further enhancing his nascent soul wouldn’t attract as much attention and suspicion.

“I don’t have time to think about all that stuff!” he thought, his eyes bloodshot. As for how Mistress Red-Dust would react, at the moment, they were both in the same predicament. There would be time to worry about her later. He simply felt too much pressure because of Gongsun Wan’er. She could free herself at any moment, and if she chased them down… the consequences were too grim to contemplate.

Right now, Bai Xiaochun knew that he had to become as powerful as he possibly could. He needed to cut down the seemingly unkillable Lei Shan, which would give them the opportunity to truly escape.

Time was extremely limited, and Mistress Red-Dust was severely injured. In fact, every moment that she fought with Lei Shan was one of extreme danger to her. A grim look could be seen on Bai Xiaochun's face because of the booming sounds of combat from outside. Gritting his teeth, he patted his bag of holding to produce a sixteen-, seventeen-, eighteen- and nineteen-colored flame.

The appearance of so many multi-colored flames caused the private chamber to instantly turn bright red from the heat. Bai Xiaochun quickly performed an incantation gesture and then touched his head, causing his nascent soul to fly out into the open!

After reaching the mid Nascent Soul stage, and especially after the fifteenfold spirit enhancement, his nascent soul was much stronger and solid. No longer was it so easily shaken by being outside of his body, nor was it affected by the cold.

In fact, there was little difference between it and his fleshly body. However, Bai Xiaochun wasn't really paying attention to that. As soon as he was out in nascent soul form, he sat down cross-legged in his turtle-wok, and then waved his hand in very practiced fashion toward the sixteen-colored flame.

When the sixteen-colored flame touched the turtle-wok, countless complex designs sprang up on the surface of the wok, and golden light rose up to cover Bai Xiaochun's nascent soul.

Intense, ear-splitting rumbling sounds filled his ears. However, it didn't spill out into the open, where Mistress Red-Dust and Lei Shan were continuing to fight.

Back in Arch-Emperor City, there weren't very many cultivators gathered around the Hell-Emperor Stele. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had performed a fifteenfold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul and taken 1st place left everyone in a state of despair. Afterward, few people had the spirit to try to compete....

As far as most people were concerned, it was a complete miracle that anyone could survive fifteen spirit enhancements.... Virtually no one alive would have the gumption to risk their lives for a competition.

Although there weren't as many people around the Hell-Emperor Stele as there had been in the past, there were still a few present. Four or five soul cultivators were in the area, and although they initially weren't paying attention to the stele, when it suddenly began to shine with black light, all of them looked over with odd expressions in their faces. When they did, their eyes nearly popped out of their skulls.

“Bai Xiaochun…? He… he did another spirit enhancement on his nascent soul!?!?”

“This… this….”

“Sixteenfold. After all this time, he's actually doing another spirit enhancement? Is he crazy!?!?” None of them could understand why Bai Xiaochun, who already was in 1st place, and who had vastly surpassed the sevenfold spirit enhancement of the 2nd place holder, would continue to risk his life!

Although they were puzzled, it didn’t stop them from sending messages to people they knew, and before long, word was spreading. It took only a short time for everyone in Arch-Emperor City to be talking about it.

“Sixteenfold??”

“Didn’t Goddess Red-Dust go after Bai Xiaochun just recently? How could he be performing spirit enhancements right now!?!?”

However, even as Arch-Emperor City was rocked by surprise, Bai Xiaochun’s name once again began to glow with black light. When the light faded away, the number next to his name had changed. Instead of sixteen, it read seventeen!!

“Heavens! He’s doing more enhancements?!”

“Maybe Goddess Red-Dust has him pushed into a corner so badly that he decided to risk death to perform more spirit enhancements!!”

Meanwhile, back in the private chamber on the airship, Bai Xiaochun’s nascent soul had seven golden designs on it! Clearly, his aura was more powerful than before, and he was rising up to the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage!!

As of this point, he was only a short step away from breaking through to the late Nascent Soul stage. Without the slightest hesitation, he waved his finger, causing the eighteen-colored flame to fly over. As soon as it touched the turtle-wok, a brilliant golden design appeared that surpassed anything up to this point, and filled Bai Xiaochun's ears with deafening rumbling sounds.

When the light faded away, Bai Xiaochun's nascent soul radiated heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy that caused a whirlwind to pick up in the room. At that point, Bai Xiaochun in nascent soul form opened his eyes. He had achieved a cultivation base breakthrough!

He was no longer in the mid Nascent Soul stage; he had risen to the late stage!!

Of course, he could have achieved this breakthrough long ago, even before he left Arch-Emperor City. However, he had been holding back. Now that he had achieved this drastic transformation, his eyes shone with brilliant light, and his aura surged as mightily as the sea. As for his battle prowess, it was far, far higher than before.

However, things weren't over yet. Since he had decided to perform spirit enhancements on his nascent soul, he figured he might as well… perform as many as he could. Waving his finger, he pulled the nineteen-colored flame over, which, as soon as it touched his turtle-wok, caused golden light to spill out that was even more dazzling than that from the eighteen-colored flame!

In fact, the private chamber he was in almost seemed like it had become gold!

Outside, Mistress Red-Dust's eyes widened in surprise, and even Lei Shan looked over. Neither of them could sense the fluctuations of spirit enhancement. However, both could tell that a drastically powerful force was brewing in the heavenly airship, something that would likely explode out at any moment.

Lei Shan’s eyes flickered with black light, and he was just about to fly past Mistress Red-Dust in an attempt to stop whatever was about to begin. However, Mistress Red-Dust seemed enlivened by the newfound hope, and immediately did everything she could to block his way.

As the rumble of battle grew more intense, countless individuals back in Arch-Emperor City were expressing their shock. A massive uproar was sweeping through the city as people found out that Bai Xiaochun had gone from a fifteenfold enhancement all the way to an eighteenfold one. It was a commotion no less intense than that caused by Bai Xiaochun using Bai Hao’s identity to become an earthly necromancer.

Countless soul cultivators were flying over to the Hell-Emperor Stele, where they gasped at the sight of Bai Xiaochun’s name at the top of the list, glowing with black light.

Soon, the light faded away, and yet again, the number next to his name was different. As it became clear, people could see that it read… nineteen!!

Silence prevailed for only a moment before a massive uproar began!

“Nineteenfold… that’s impossible!!”

“Forget about nascent souls, even ordinary magical items are hard to perform nineteenfold spirit enhancements on. In all the Wildlands, there are probably only two or three!! Any one of them would be considered a precious treasure of antiquity in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!!”

“Where did this Bai Xiaochun get an eighteen-colored flame, let alone nineteen-colored flame?!?! The only person in the

Wildlands who can conjure nineteen-colored flame is Earthmaster Wan Pin!!”

No greater commotion could have occurred. The Grand Heavenmaster was affected, as was the Arch-Emperor. There was little need to even mention the four heavenly kings. Perhaps such people could overlook the fact that Bai Xiaochun had performed a fifteenfold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul, but a nineteenfold enhancement was something completely awe-inspiring.

Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster were both aware that the situation involved Mistress Red-Dust, and began to make inquiries.

However, as they tried to make contact, the Grand Heavenmaster frowned, and the Giant Ghost King’s expression flickered. Then both of them rose to their feet in shock.

They… couldn’t reach Mistress Red-Dust!!

“Something's gone wrong!!” The Giant Ghost King’s eyes flickered with a dangerous light as he flew out of Giant Ghost City and sent his divine sense streaming out in all directions. Then, he shot off into the distance, heart gripped with fear and anxiety as he tried to locate his only daughter!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0826 awe-chapter-827

Normally speaking, Bai Xiaochun would have realized that performing spirit enhancements on his nascent soul would automatically alert people about the danger he and Mistress Red-Dust were in.

However, because of drastic circumstances he was in, the main thing on his mind was figuring out how to get away. Therefore, that plan never even entered his head. As he sat there in the turtle-wok in nascent soul form, his eyes snapped open, and they shone with explosively brilliant light!

They looked like suns shining there within the private chamber, which echoed with sounds like rumbling thunder.

Intensely powerful fluctuations filled the area as his power rose from that of the mid Nascent Soul stage to the late stage!

Furthermore, because he had gone all the way to a nineteenfold spirit enhancement, he was actually very, very close to the great circle.

If he performed a twentyfold spirit enhancement, then he would break through into the great circle. After that… was the legendary twenty-onefold spirit enhancement, which would make him a deva!

Of course, that was only a legend. To date in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, no one had ever done it. Whether it was because people lacked the information about how to do it, or whether there were other obstacles, it was impossible to say.

In fact, throughout the history of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find another person who had done the same thing Bai Xiaochun had by performing a nineteenfold spirit enhancement on their nascent soul.

Already, Bai Xiaochun could tell that enhancing his nascent soul to this level had somehow caused him to be linked to heaven and earth.

“Twenty-onefold.... Well, maybe it’s not like the legends say, where you automatically break through. Maybe it just dramatically increases your chances of becoming a deva!” However, now was not the time to ponder the issue. His nascent soul rose to its feet, leaped out of the wok, and returned to his fleshly body.

He took three breaths, and then slowly opened his eyes, whereupon intensely powerful cultivation base fluctuations rolled out of him in all directions!

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

Not only did the power of his cultivation base cause everything around him to tremble, his battle prowess also rose dramatically. Before, he had been in the mid Nascent Soul stage, and had been capable of fighting with devas. Although he might not have been assured of victory, he could at least survive to make an escape. But now… he had broken through, and was half a step into the great circle. As of this moment, he… could definitely crush anyone in the early Deva Realm!!

That was because of the power of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, and also the boundless strength provided him by the Undying Codex!

“Lei Shan!” he growled. Taking a deep breath, he put his turtle-wok away and burst out of the private chamber like a bolt of lightning, leaving the chamber in ruins behind him.

In the moment that he dashed out into the open, Lei Shan was glittering with black light as he unleashed a fist strike onto Mistress Red-Dust.

Blood sprayed out of Mistress Red-Dust’s mouth as she finally lost control of her injuries. Immediately, her vision began to grow dim, and she groaned. Exerting all effort possible, she once again tried to suppress her injuries. However, it was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun shot out into the open, scooped her up into his right arm, and then shoved his left hand in Lei Shan’s direction.

“Screw off!!” The movement of his hand seemed like an ordinary motion, but it caused all the light in the area to go dim, and a huge wind to kick up as a powerful attack swept toward Lei Shan.

Lei Shan’s eyes flickered with black light, and he tried to back up, but was just a bit too slow. Before he could move, the wind slammed into him.

Intense rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as Lei Shan coughed up a massive mouthful of black gore. Cracking sounds echoed out from inside of him as fissures opened up all over his body. Simultaneously, he was sent spinning backward by several hundred meters before landing hard onto the ground.

Mistress Red-Dust was already in a bit of a daze as she looked up at Bai Xiaochun holding her. She seemed like she wanted to say something, but before she could, blood oozed out of her mouth and she lapsed into unconsciousness.

Bai Xiaochun descended to the ground and gently put Mistress Red-Dust off to the side. Then he looked up, his expression grim, his murderous aura raging in such a way that the sky distorted, and black clouds roiled above him.

A terrifying aura pulsed out of him as he began to walk slowly toward Lei Shan.

The black light in Lei Shan’s eyes flickered with increasing rapidity. Only enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, and yet Bai Xiaochun was completely different. Despite the fact that Lei Shan couldn’t die, he suddenly felt an instinctual reverence inside of him.

“Undying body?” Bai Xiaochun said slowly. Then he suddenly launched himself forward with incredible speed, leaving only a string of afterimages behind him. It was almost like a teleportation! In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of Lei Shan, his right hand rocketing forward in a fist strike!

Lei Shan raised both hands in front of himself in defense, and for the first time, let out a growling shout like that of a cornered animal.

A huge boom filled the area when Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike made contact with Lei Shan’s crossed arms. Instantly, Lei Shan realized that he couldn’t defend against this blow, and before he could even react, began to shatter!

Within the blink of an eye, his arms were shredded to pieces, and he was shoved backward across the ground.

Then, before he could do anything else, Bai Xiaochun stepped forward again, placing himself right in front of Lei Shan.

“Undying body?” Bai Xiaochun repeated. Then he smashed his right foot into Lei Shan’s left leg. To Lei Shan, it felt like the weight of the heavens, and it was so powerful that his leg immediately exploded into a cloud of blood and gore. And that was when Bai Xiaochun headbutted him!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Black gore exploded out of Lei Shan as more than half of his torso was destroyed. By now, the black light in his eyes was on the verge of flickering out.

“I refuse to believe that you have a truly undying body!” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes as cold as the winter wind. With that, he clenched his right hand into a fist, stepped forward, and struck the bedraggled Lei Shan yet again!

Heaven and earth filled with a sound like booming thunder. The clouds above churned violently, and rain even began to fall down to the ground. As for Lei Shan, he stood there trembling, the black light in his eyes fading away. As it did, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “My owner will come looking for you....”

With that, more rumbling sounds could be heard, and then Lei Shan exploded into bits. Blood, flesh, and bones scattered about in all directions to land on the ground.

The black blood soon began to be washed away by the rain. Meanwhile, the thunder above grew more intense, and the rain... fell harder.

Bai Xiaochun’s aura slowly grew steadier as he looked off in the direction where Gongsun Wan’er was still sealed. A moment later, he went back to pick up the unconscious Mistress Red-Dust, then flew back to the heavenly airship. Beneath the falling rain, the airship rumbled to life, and became a bright beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of kilometers in a different direction, a muffled boom could be heard in the location where Mistress Red-Dust had sealed Gongsun Wan’er with her Red Dust Violet Road technique.

A shockwave spread out in all directions, razing the ground as it went along. At the same time, the hand-sized city suddenly shattered!

Black smoke rose up from the remnants of city, which quickly formed together into the shape of a young girl. A moment later, the girl was gone, replaced by Gongsun Wan’er. And then, she yet again became Bai Xiaochun.

“Why did you run away, sweetie? All I needed for my plan to be complete was for you to show up.” Covering a smile with her mouth, she blurred into motion. A short while later, she appeared in the location where Lei Shan had been killed!

As she hovered in the air, looking down at the ground, a frown grew on her face.

“So, you went and broke my teddy bear.... Well, I guess I’ll have to get a new one.”

When she looked up, her eyes shone with mysterious killing intent. Looking in the direction Bai Xiaochun had fled in, she began to move!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0827 awe-chapter-828

The moment that Gongsun Wan’er looked in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, he was tens of thousands of kilometers away, fleeing in the heavenly airship. Suddenly, he shivered and looked over his shoulder. Although he couldn’t see anything, from the cold chill that ran up his spine, he was convinced that Gongsun Wan’er was looking at him.

“She’s coming!!” Expression flickering, he looked over at the unconscious Mistress Red-Dust. Then he pulled out a transmission jade slip, only to find that it still didn't work.

At this point, he was getting truly flustered and anxious. Whether because of the events in the Fallen Sword Abyss or in the labyrinth, he was completely terrified by the grim specter that was Gongsun Wan’er.

Worst of all was that he couldn’t tell the true level of her cultivation base. At first, she hadn’t seemed very strong, but the more cultivators she consumed, the more powerful she got, until she reached an unbelievable level.

She had soundly defeated Mistress Red-Dust, and had even escaped her trump card sealing technique. Bai Xiaochun could only imagine how terrifying she would get as she got stronger.

“Just where did she come from? Back when she showed up in the Fallen Sword Abyss, she seemed just like all the other banesouls. All she did was eat one of my medicinal pills….” By this point, his heart was filled with regret because of it all. Drawing deeply on his cultivation base, he sent the heavenly airship accelerating forward with greater speed.

However, despite that great speed, he was fairly certain that he could hear the sound of chuckling behind him. It started very faintly, but then grew more and more clear.

Heart trembling, he looked over his shoulder and saw a black stream of smoke far off in the distance. As the smoke roiled and churned, it gradually turned into a face… that of Bai Xiaochun!

However, there was something bizarre and even sinister about it as it closed in with incredible speed. It almost looked like an evil ghost.

“Ah, so you’re hiding over here, sweetie.” More bizarre chuckling echoed out.

“I'm not your sweetie!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice quavering. “Um… you’re just seeing things!” Despite having battle prowess that could crush the early Deva Realm, he was still convinced that he wasn’t a match at all for the bizarre Gongsun Wan’er.

“What do you mean, seeing things? I've worked hard trying to track you down, sweetie. But then you went and broke my teddy bear! You need to pay me back.” The face of black smoke continued to chuckle, accelerating until it was only a few hundred meters behind the heavenly airship!

To see it close up had Bai Xiaochun scared out of his mind. His scalp was tingling so violently his hair nearly stood on end, and he was actually shaking down to his toes.

“No, you’re really seeing things!” Suddenly, he pointed off in a certain direction. “Oh, hey. Arch-Emperor City is right over there! There’s a guy there named Chen Haosong! I bet that’s who you’re looking for…. Oh, there’s also someone named Zhao Xionglin. He’s really tough-looking. One glance, and you’ll be convinced he’s the perfect teddy bear. If you hurry, you’ll be able to find him!”

Gongsun Wan’er smiled, a sinister smile that caused waves of terror to batter Bai Xiaochun’s mind. At this point, the enormous face’s mouth opened, and the smoke seethed, making the face rapidly grow larger. In the blink of an eye, it was thousands of meters tall, surging forward as if to consume the entire heavenly airship!

The face seemed to supersede heaven and earth as it lunged forward. Shrieking, Bai Xiaochun grabbed up Mistress Red-Dust and shot away as the mouth closed around the airship.

From a distance, the heavenly airship was so small that it looked like a scrumptious pastry entering the huge mouth. Then, crunching sounds could be heard as the heavenly airship… was crushed to pieces!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was a blur that sped away in the opposite direction, Mistress Red-Dust in his arms.

“Why are you always so naughty, sweetie? You always have to play hide-and-seek, don’t you…?” More chuckling from Gongsun Wan’er reached Bai Xiaochun’s ears, causing goosebumps to spread out across his skin. He tried to accelerate, but after the enormous face destroyed the heavenly airship, it grew larger, until it was fully 30,000 meters tall!!

30,000 meters is a size easy to describe with words. But to depict it visually is a different matter. The face was shocking to the extreme as it surpassed all heaven and earth, its ghastly mouth opening wide as it moved toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, an astonishing gravitational force appeared, causing everything in the area to tremble and shake. Even hills and mountains were ripped up out of the ground!

Bai Xiaochun shuddered as he tried to push forward, but no amount of speed on his part could fight the gravitational force, and he began to inch inexorably back toward the mouth.

He wanted to scream and cry, especially considering that the face resembled him in every aspect. The idea of being eaten up by himself was terrifying, to say the least.

“Complete and utter bullying!!” he shouted, his eyes bloodshot as he held Mistress Red-Dust tight in his arms. As of this moment, a profound sensation of deadly crisis gripped his heart; he knew that he couldn’t rely on luck to save him, and that he couldn’t hesitate. If he didn’t put everything on the line right now, his poor little life would definitely be lost.

“Do you really think Lord Bai is scared of you, Gongsun Wan’er!?!?” he roared. Although he was still trembling, his veins of steel were now pulsing. The energy in his Powered Bones began to thrum as he called upon his fleshly body power and his late Nascent Soul stage cultivation base. The sky dimmed, and a screaming wind kicked up, sending rocks and dirt flying around everywhere. Although he was not truly a deva, as of this moment, his energy was powerful enough to interfere with the will of the heavens in this area!

His right hand clenched into a fist, and a black vortex appeared, which immediately sucked away all of his aura. Then, the image of a shadowy emperor appeared behind him.

Intense rumbling sounds filled the area because of that shadowy figure, which seemed to possess a power of will like that of a deva! It could fuse with the heavens and alter the natural laws of all creation.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it took place in the short amount of time it took Bai Xiaochun to turn in place.

Roaring, Bai Xiaochun suddenly leaped toward the incoming 30,000-meter-tall face… upon which he unleashed a fist strike of mountain-toppling, sea-draining force!!

The Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

With double his normal fleshly body power!!

The shadowy emperor also punched out, and the domineering energy which began to surge was so incredible that the emperor himself began to fade away. Everything was focused on that fist, which Bai Xiaochun directed to land directly onto the huge face.

A deafening boom erupted out, along with a massive blast of wind. It was almost like earth dragons were spasming under the surface of the ground, which quaked violently as far as the eye could see.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he tumbled backward several hundred meters. Even as he did, he righted himself, and then sped away as fast as he could.

As for the face, cracks and fissures appeared on its surface, and then… it collapsed into pieces!

Those pieces became black smoke, which rapidly formed back together…. to reveal Gongsun Wan’er, disguised as Bai

Xiaochun!

A mysterious light could be seen in her eyes, and a strange smile covered her face.

“I knew I recognized that smell. You… definitely have traces of that old codger on you….” Chuckling, she prepared to give chase.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was speeding along, anxious and ashen-faced.

It was at this point… that Gongsun Wan’er’s face fell. Turning her head in a certain direction, she saw an enraged figure piercing through the air in her direction.

“Who is it that dares to lay a finger on my beloved daughter and honorable son-in-law!?!?”

It was none other than the Giant Ghost King!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide with joy, and he immediately shouted, “Father-in-law, save me!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0828 awe-chapter-829

An enormous, invisible hand ripped the sky open. Then, an enraged shout echoed out as the Giant Ghost King himself appeared!

He wasn’t alone. Flanking him were Duke Deathcrier and the patriarchs from the Bai and Chen Clans. Clearly, those two patriarchs had been thoroughly brought under control by the Giant Ghost King after the rebellion.

Further back were six half-devas, and beyond them, tens of thousands of ordinary soul cultivator troops. For all intents and purposes, this was the full reserve power of Giant Ghost City! The Giant Ghost King had come out in full force!

He had begun trying to track down his daughter earlier, but despite being a demigod, was still a single person. Therefore, he had also ordered some of his subordinates to join him.

The stir Bai Xiaochun had caused in Arch-Emperor City had attracted the Giant Ghost King’s attention, and had caused him to hasten his search. Worried that he might not be able to handle the situation on his own, he had brought all of these subordinates with him, hoping to use their divine abilities and magical techniques to bolster his own power.

As soon as the Giant Ghost King arrived, the might of a demigod weighed down in the area, causing all heaven and earth to shake. Furthermore, a sound like a shattering mirror could be heard as a semi-transparent shield of light suddenly appeared, fracturing and cracking. Then the shield exploded!!

That shield was the sealing method Gongsun Wan’er had used to prevent any outside communication or interference. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he suddenly felt like a great weight had been lifted off of his shoulders.

As Bai Xiaochun’s spirits lifted, Gongsun Wan’er’s face became very serious. However, that greedy gleam in her eyes didn’t go away, and she even licked her lips as if she were looking at a delicious snack.

“Ah, finally…” she said, her voice vibrating in bizarre fashion, “at long last, I’ve hooked a really big fish….” Then she began to speed in the Giant Ghost King’s direction!!

Bai Xiaochun gasped at the realization that Gongsun Wan’er was going so far as to directly attack a demigod! Mind reeling, his newfound hope suddenly faded away.

“Father-in-law, be careful!” he shouted. “This creature is bizarre, and really powerful!!”

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes narrowed as his heart burned with fury. He could see his daughter lying there unconscious, and could see Bai Xiaochun standing over her protectively, and it only made his rage grow.

However he couldn't afford any distractions at the moment. As soon as he had arrived, he could sense powerful fluctuations coming from Gongsun Wan’er, as well as an aura that struck even him with fear!

“You must be the soulclone of some almighty being. Am I right? Well, whether you come from this heaven and earth, or from the beyond… it doesn’t give you the right to run amok here!” As the Giant Ghost King spoke, his words transformed into a magical symbol which rushed toward Gongsun Wan’er, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds.

At the same time, the Giant Ghost King strode forward, extending his right hand in a way that caused all heaven and earth to grow dark. An enormous ghost hand appeared, stretching down from the sky with all-destructive power, heading toward Gongsun Wan’er and simultaneously locking down the entire area.

This was power that surpassed that of a deva, and caused all creation to tremble violently. Devas could insert their will into heaven and earth, and supplant the will of the heavens. But demigods could surpass the will of the heavens, and bend it to their own desires. They could replace the sun and moon, and create their own version of creation!

Intense rumbling sounds assaulted the ears of all present as dozens of lightning bolts appeared, all of them filled with power that could destroy devas. Before anything else could happen, the lightning bolts all began to shoot toward Gongsun Wan’er.

Strangely, Gongsun Wan’er didn’t do anything to dodge. She allowed the heavenly lightning to strike her, and let the gigantic ghost hand crush down onto her!

A boom could be heard as her body shattered into countless pieces!

The sight of it caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to go wide. Although this wasn’t his first time seeing a demigod in action, it definitely surpassed anything he had experienced so far.

Demigods… were people whose single attack, an attack that wasn't even on the level of a trump card… could cut down a deva!!

And yet, Bai Xiaochun had the feeling that things couldn’t be that simple. It didn’t make sense that Gongsun Wan’er would be taken out so easily….

Even as he wondered about that, the Giant Ghost King’s expression flickered, and his eyes began to shine. At that point, it was possible to see something like strands of red muscle growing within the giant ghost hand!!

The muscles seemed to be building up from inside of the hand itself, and yet, even as it squirmed… the entire ghost hand began to wither!

“What gall!” the Giant Ghost King roared. With that, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing the ghost hand to explode. As the resulting shockwave spread out, giggling laughter joined it as Gongsun Wan’er yet again appeared in her guise as Bai Xiaochun, completely unharmed!

In fact, not only was she unharmed, she seemed remarkably healthy. On top of that, the greedy gleam in her eyes remained. Licking her lips, she murmured, “Finally… I feel a bit full….”

The Giant Ghost King’s heart was beginning to pound, and a very unsightly expression could be seen on his face. In fact, this was the first time that fear had ever been seen in his eyes. All of a sudden, he seemed to put all the pieces together, and slowly said, “That was the Ghostform Lifedraining technique! Who exactly are you!?”

Gongsun Wan’er seemed surprised by his words. She looked closely at him, her eyes turning pitch black for a moment. Then the blackness faded away, and she smiled.

“Oh, you actually cultivate an incomplete form of the Ghostform Lifedraining technique.... Interesting.... Heh. I wonder if my true self has some secrets that even I don’t know about....” She chuckled, and the greedy glint in her eye grew stronger.

The Giant Ghost King’s expression grew more unsightly, and his breathing became irregular. Clearly, what Gongsun Wan’er had just said was incredibly shocking. The truth was that the technique he cultivated, the Giant Ghost Incantation, had been passed down orally by his predecessors from one generation to the next. No one other than the Giant Ghost Kings knew the truth, which was that… the Giant Ghost Incantation had been created by the first generation Giant Ghost King when he came across some incomplete ancient records from beyond the heavens.

The very fact that it was incomplete was why it contained a fatal flaw. At the same time, it made the Giant Ghost Incantation so powerful that it gave birth to the line of Giant Ghost Kings in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!

“As for who I am,” Gongsun Wan’er continued, “well that’s simple. I'm Bai Xiaochun.” Laughing, she blurred into motion as she sped toward the Giant Ghost King!

Although their small interchange had been somewhat confusing to all of the Giant Ghost King’s subordinates in the area, they could tell that there was some enormous secret at play.

Furthermore, the fact that Gongsun Wan’er was this strong had them all gasping in astonishment.

However, Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to go crazy, and could hardly control his emotions. Although he didn’t completely understand everything they had said either, he did know that the little girl came from the Fallen Sword Abyss, and that that sword… had fallen from beyond the heavens….

“She’s from beyond the heavens!! And did she just say something about her true self…?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound. As of this moment, he felt convinced that the little girl had actually come from beyond the heavens. Furthermore, she wasn’t complete. She was actually the soulclone of some almighty being!!

It was a shocking thought. Furthermore, it explained why Gongsun Wan’er hadn’t even needed to use her full power to handle both him and Mistress Red-Dust earlier. She had really been… fishing!

That mere thought caused him to shiver in fear, look up at the sky, and wonder what exactly existed beyond the heavens…. It was also in that exact moment that the Giant Ghost King waved his hands violently out in front of him.

“Get out of here, all of you! And keep back!” A massive wind sprang up that pushed away all of the Giant Ghost King’s subordinates, as well as Bai Xiaochun.

At that point, the Giant Ghost King’s expression turned unprecedentedly serious. Lifting his right foot, he stamped down, causing a powerful boom to echo out. At the same time, he began to grow larger. In the shortest of moments, he went from the size of an ordinary person to being 30 meters tall. Then he was 300 meters tall. Then 3,000! In the end… he reached a height of 15,000 meters!!

In addition to becoming an enormous giant, a vortex sprang up around him that sucked in all of the energy of heaven and earth in the area.

Beyond that, his skin turned green, he grew enormous tusks, and two curved horns grew out of his forehead. As of this moment… he looked exactly like the statue back in the city which bore his name. He looked like… a giant ghost!!

The explosive energy which surrounded him caused all heaven and earth to shake. Lightning bolts danced across the surface of his body. And most shocking of all was that, after fully powering up, it was as if he had touched something that acted as a limit of the world in which he lived.

Unexpectedly, numerous magical restrictive symbols appeared in the sky, forming something that looked almost like a net. They were blood-red, enormous, and seemed to contain the most ancient of wills.

It was as if they were the guardians of this world!!

With them in place, this world would always stand firm and stable!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0829 awe-chapter-830

The instant the enormous restrictive sealing spell appeared in the sky above, the Giant Ghost King roared and unleashed the full power of his cultivation base in the form of a trump card….

“Giant Ghost World Extermination!” He threw both of his enormous hands up into the air, whereupon a black sun appeared!

It contained terrifying power that was clearly capable of destroying all heaven and earth, and anyone who saw it, deva or demigod alike, would be shaken down to their very soul.

The Giant Ghost King was putting everything on the line, and was completely ignoring any effects this attack might have on the world around him. Apparently, if he didn’t wipe out this bizarre opponent, the consequences would be too severe, even more so than the possibility of his trump card destroying the world!

Bai Xiaochun was so shocked that his tongue stuck to the top of his mouth. The spectacular nature of the Giant Ghost King’s divine ability defied description, and Bai Xiaochun could actually sense the rage in the aura that emanated off of him. And there was little need to even mention that black sun!

When Bai Xiaochun looked at the sun, he could visualize endless charred lands filled with agony and death!!

If that sun landed onto the surface of the ground, he couldn't be exactly sure of what would happen, but he was fairly certain that a large portion of the Wildlands would end up in complete ruins!!

“How… how could this be happening!?!?” he thought, his face draining of blood. Stunned by the Giant Ghost King’s dramatic choice, his heart began to pound, and then he quickly transmitted a message. “Your Highness, be careful if she explodes! She’ll turn into a blood shadow that absorbs life force!!”

Although the Giant Ghost King didn’t show any sign of having heard, his eyes flickered slightly.

Even Gongsun Wan’er gasped, and a very serious expression appeared on her face.

“Well, this is what I would expect of a demigod…. It hardly took you any time at all to find… my one weakness….” Although her pupils constricted with shock, it was still possible to see the same glimmer of greed therein. Letting out a high-pitched shriek, she leapt up into the air, performing an incantation gesture that caused a spinning black vortex to appear in her palm!

“I'm an indestructible soul! Nobody can kill me! All divine abilities and all living things are nothing more than food for me…. I get stronger with each fight, and the only way to kill me is to make me absorb so much energy that I explode…. Alright, let’s see what happens. Will you exploit my weakness to kill me, or… will you help me get rid of that weakness!?!?”

A crafty smile could be seen on her face as she flew forth and then slammed directly into the black sun.

As they connected, the terrifyingly destructive power released by the black sun was actually absorbed into the black vortex in Gongsun Wan’er’s palm!

As it happened, Gongsun Wan’er trembled, and was pushed backward relentlessly. And yet, she continuously absorbed the destructive power, her eyes flickering with bizarre light as she did.

When the Giant Ghost King saw what was happening, his expression flickered. And yet, a cold smile touched his eyes, and he waved both hands out in front of him.

“Since you like it, I’ll help you absorb your fill!!”

With that, he shoved the black sun toward her. At the same time, black smoke roiled off of him, merging into the sun and lending it more power.

The process caused the Giant Ghost King to shrink. And yet, his goal of making the sun more powerful was met. Intense rumbling sounds spread out, causing heaven and earth to grow dark, and a massive wind to kick up. All spectators in the area began to fall back, their faces pale with fear.

From a distance, it was possible to see the Giant Ghost King shrinking down and down while the black sun grew larger and larger. In the blink of an eye, it was thousands of meters across, and the Giant Ghost King was the size of a normal person, pushing the sun toward Gongsun Wan’er.

A scream escaped Gongsun Wan’er’s lips. Her body seemed to be swelling from the influx of destructive power, and as she struggled to maintain control, she lost her ability to maintain the appearance of Bai Xiaochun.

Cracks spread out across her face, and then the rest of her body. In the blink of an eye, the surface of her body… shattered like a mirror!

As the pieces fell, Bai Xiaochun’s face disappeared, revealing that she was not a man, but rather, a beautiful young woman!

She had smooth, fair skin, and a sinister gleam in her eyes. Furthermore, anyone who could look closely enough would see that she had a second pair of smaller pupils within her pupils!!

All onlookers gasped in shock.

“That’s not Bai Xiaochun!”

“Who is that?!?!”

By this point, Mistress Red-Dust had regained consciousness, and her face was a mask of shock at the bizarre nature of Gongsun Wan’er.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at her nervously, aware… that now everyone knew she wasn’t him!

More intense rumbling sounds echoed out as the black sun began to shrink down rapidly. The Giant Ghost King was focusing all of its destructive power onto Gongsun Wan’er, forcing her to absorb it whether she wanted to or not!

Soon, the black sun was only 3,900 meters across, and Gongsun Wan’er, who was inflated almost like a balloon, trembled violently. Cracks appeared on her face, neck, and body, as she began to yet again crumble like a shattering mirror. It only took a moment before she let out a shrill shriek… and collapsed into pieces!!

This time, as the pieces fell away, something else appeared… a young girl wearing a red robe, with a face so pale it seemed to be completely devoid of blood!!

As soon as that girl appeared, the entire world seemed to grow colder. Furthermore, ice appeared everywhere, causing everyone in the audience to shiver from the nearly unbearable cold.

“She has another body!!”

“Who is she!?!?!”

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp felt like it was being stabbed with pins and needles, and he gasped. He would never be able to forget this little girl, whom he had first seen in the depths of the Fallen Sword Abyss.

At this point, the Giant Ghost King’s eyes glittered, and he quickly performed an incantation gesture with both hands, causing the 3,600-meter black sun to enter the girl’s body with explosive force!

The girl panted, her eyes gleaming with bone-like sinisterness. Then she let out a scream that cause the souls of all present to tremble as, for the third time, cracks began to spread out over the surface of her body!!

At the same time, the black sun continued to shrink. Soon it was only 1,500 meters. 1,200 meters. 900 meters… 300 meters. 150 meters. When it was only 30 meters across, the Giant Ghost King roared and shoved it forward with even more force!

The little girl trembled violently as cracks filled the surface of her body, and then, she finally collapsed!!

Revealed beneath the crumbling pieces was a shadowy form that looked like a conglomeration of fresh blood. Almost immediately, that blood exploded into something like a sea, that emanated a vile aura as it swept out rapidly in all directions.

The Giant Ghost King bore the brunt of the attack. Even with his demigod cultivation base, he still coughed up a mouthful of blood, and flew back at top speed.

“Get out of here!!” And yet, the crimson sea of blood spread out faster than even the Giant Ghost King’s voice. It didn’t matter how quickly everyone fell back, it only took the blink of an eye for the sea to overwhelm them. As it did, any soul cultivators who it touched, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, were instantly transformed into desiccated corpses!

Their life force, cultivation base, soul, and everything else about them were absorbed by the sea of blood. As for Bai Xiaochun, he had been relatively far away to begin with, and had been on guard, so as soon as the sea of blood appeared, he fled at top speed.

However, his heart was pounding with even more shock and fear than before.

“Not even a demigod can kill her!!” he thought, terrified. He knew that this ghostly girl had taken an interest in him on more than one occasion. It was all very mysterious, and in fact, upon analysis, it really seemed as if the girl should be thankful.

“Biting the hand that feeds you!!” Looking back at the corpses in the sea of blood, he saw the deva patriarch of the Bai Clan, which caused him to tremble and accelerate.

Others were near him in the same area, and were also fleeing in terror.

Even as everyone fled, an enormous face appeared within the seething sea of blood. It was the face of the young girl, and she had a crooked smile on her face as she looked up at the grim Giant Ghost King.

“You… lose!!” she said in a bizarre voice that sounded like a combination of men, women, old ones, and young children!

The Giant Ghost King suddenly smiled. “Oh really?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0830 awe-chapter-831

The Giant Ghost King was a profound schemer and expert strategist. That much was possible to see from the game he had played with the three great clans back in Giant Ghost City.

Heart pounding with fear, Bai Xiaochun turned back to watch what was happening on the battlefield. After all, he found it hard to believe that the Giant Ghost King would so blithely shoot himself in the foot.

“My old pal Giant Ghost is a wily old fox, that’s for sure….” he told himself. However, he hoped that the Giant Ghost King could actually be a bit more wily than he normally was. Otherwise, Bai Xiaochun was certain that he would end up losing his poor little life.

Even as he pondered the possible outcomes, the Giant Ghost King’s cool voice echoed out into the area.

“How’s that speed of yours doing?!”

Even as the words left his mouth, the girl’s pupils constricted, and her face fell. In the process of absorbing the full destructive power of the Giant Ghost King’s black sun, she had lost several bodies. Although she had survived… even she could not quickly absorb all of that power. As a result, she was now much less quick and agile than she had been before.

Furthermore, she was now spread out into the form of a sea of blood, which essentially meant that she was locked in place. Although that wouldn’t last for long, at the moment, she was incapable of going anywhere. She might as well have been sealed!

And that had been the Giant Ghost King’s plan all along. This opponent was too powerful, and shockingly fast. Furthermore, her origin was too terrifying to ponder deeply at the moment. He had known all along that ordinary methods could not be used to defeat her, and therefore, he had to take a bit of a risk. That was why he had summoned his world-exterminating sun. If the sun ended up destroying her, then all would be well and good. But if it didn’t… then it would show that he was absolutely incapable of defeating her on his own, and that… he needed help!

And the truth was that the Giant Ghost King had long since used a demigod secret magic to send word to the Grand Heavenmaster!

Therefore, he only needed to buy enough time for the Grand Heavenmaster to come with reinforcements. If he could keep the girl locked in one place for long enough, that would give enough time for his allies to arrive and then join him in cutting her down!

And yet, all of that was only two thirds of his full plan.

The final step of the plan had not yet been enacted…. It was at this point that the Giant Ghost King suddenly reached out, summoning yet another gigantic ghost hand that stretched down from the sky toward the sea of blood.

A vicious expression appeared on the face of the girl as she suddenly caught on to what the Giant Ghost King was doing. Feeling both humiliated and enraged, she let out a piercing shriek, causing the sea of blood to seethe as it surged toward the ghost hand.

Bai Xiaochun was watching all of this happen, and when he heard what the Giant Ghost King just said, breathed a sigh of relief as he realized what he was up to.

“The Giant Ghost King really does deserve his reputation….” he thought excitedly. Everyone else in the area also seemed to be filled with hope. A moment later, four figures suddenly stepped out of thin air!

The first one wielded a massive battle-axe. He was burly and tall, with a frightening murderous aura. He wore a black suit of armor, and a helmet with two long, curved horns sticking out on either side. He was the type of person who caused the air to shatter around him wherever he went.

He was none other than… the Nine Serenities King!

The second figure was like a pile of flesh, fat to the extreme. And yet, that didn’t seem to make him any less nimble. Every step he took caused windstorms to spring up. It was as if the will of the heavens would bow to him wherever he went, and make way for his passage.

This person was none other than Xu Shan’s father, the Spirit Advent King!!

The third figure moved with incredible quickness, and radiated a fearsome desire to do battle. He was surrounded by countless sword projections that seemed capable of crushing worlds. Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions, and in the middle of it all was a middle-aged man in a long green robe. He was handsome, and stood tall and straight, with features that somewhat resembled Gongsun Yi’s. This man was none other than… the War Champion King!!

The fourth figure came from Arch-Emperor City. He had white hair, and a wrinkled face, and yet his aura clearly placed him at the forefront of the other four. He was the person whose every deed and thought could shake the Wildlands. He was none other than… the Grand Heavenmaster!!

Behind the Grand Heavenmaster were the ten heavenly dukes, including Chen Haosong. All of them had extremely grim expressions as they strode forward!

A short time earlier, they had received messages from the Grand Heavenmaster, with information that caused dread to fill all of their hearts.

“A soul has appeared which is suspected to be from beyond the heavens!! It has terrifying powers of absorption and consumption!! It has an unknown cultivation base that can consume demigods!!”

It was a matter that left the Grand Heavenmaster feeling very shaken. Never could he have imagined that the person suspected of being Bai Xiaochun would be so powerful. After receiving the report from the Giant Ghost King, he hadn't wasted a moment to summon all of the most powerful experts to go deal with the situation!

Although it all takes some time to describe, they all began to arrive in the roughly same moment that the Giant Ghost King once again began to fight with the young girl. The first person to reach the scene wasn’t the Grand Heavenmaster, it was… the green-robed War Champion King with his towering sword energy!!

A sword slashed through the air, creating an opening through which he stepped. The first thing he saw was the young girl in the form of a sea of blood, locked in place down below.

“Aberrant soul, how dare you cause trouble in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!” The War Champion King’s voice was as cold as ice, and as he spoke, he extended his right hand. Immediately, the sky behind him grew blurry, and then a massive green greatsword materialized, which he grabbed and slashed down toward the sea of blood!

A gold sword light appeared that seemed capable of ending all forms of life. Anyone who saw it would be shocked, regardless of the level of their cultivation base. Even devas. They all knew that if they were the ones to face this sword, they would be powerless to defend against it, and would surely perish!

The Giant Ghost King chuckled. Although his face was pale from all the exertion, he immediately joined the War Champion King to attack the enemy.

The girl’s expression flickered, and she began to howl piercingly. The sea of blood began to surge as two blood-colored hands stretched up from within it toward the War Champion King and the Giant Ghost King!

Intense rumbling sounds filled the air as that shocking sword made contact with the blood-colored hand. The hand grabbed it, but subsequently shattered into pieces. And yet, even as it shattered, it reformed!

Bai Xiaochun was so shocked his scalp had gone numb. Every time he assumed this girl had reached her limit, she would do something even more shocking than before. Astonishingly, she was using these two blood-colored hands to fight against two demigods!

“She absorbed that black sun, which made her stronger…. Although she fell into a bit of a trap, it could be that she did it intentionally… all to be able to consume more energy!” Forcing his thoughts into order, he grabbed the recently awakened Mistress Red-Dust and began to flee again. However, that was when a howl ripped through the air, along with a black battle-axe, which slashed down toward the sea of blood.

The power of that battle-axe defied description. Bai Xiaochun could tell just from looking at it that it had the power to destroy the heavens and extinguish the earth. Clearly, any deva who tried to accept a blow from that axe would be destroyed in body and soul.

And yet, as the axe fell, the girl in the sea of blood let out another soul-trembling scream, whereupon a third arm rose up to meet the attack of the Nine Serenities King!!

Three demigods were fighting this young girl!!

Things weren’t over yet, though. The battle caused the sky to darken and winds to scream, and yet, that was when a cold snort ripped through the air. A gigantic sealing mark appeared, larger even than the sea of blood. As it descended from the sky, the eyes of the young girl finally… focused into a very serious look.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as a fourth and fifth blood-colored arm stretched up to deal with the sealing mark. That was when the Grand Heavenmaster himself stepped out into the open from within the sealing mark!

Heaven and earth trembled in response to his appearance. Fluctuations that vastly surpassed ordinary demigods rolled out as he extended his right hand and pushed down, causing afterimages of the magical sealing symbol to appear as more than 100,000 duplicate layers of it came into being!

“Be destroyed!” he said, his eyes narrowed. Then he pushed his hand down, and the 100,000 sealing marks descended toward the blood-colored hands with mountain-toppling, sea-draining power.

When the hands met the sealing marks, the hands shattered instantly. The sealing marks destroyed them like a boulder crushing a drinking glass!

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound with excitement. For the first time, he finally felt hope!

“Nice one, Giant Ghost King. Your scheming powers are terrifying! You got the enemy stuck in place. Then the War Champion King and the Nine Serenities King attacked with full force. And yet, just in case they couldn't complete the job, the deadliest blow was launched… by the strongest of all, the Grand Heavenmaster!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0831 awe-chapter-832

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time ever seeing multiple demigods joining forces to attack like this, and it wasn’t quite what he had expected. After all, the political climate in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was very delicate, and the demigods all had tenuous relations with each other at best.

He could never have imagined that they would all join forces so quickly to deal with a foreign enemy. In fact, the Giant Ghost King had paid a huge price just to buy an opportunity for the others to gain victory!

Then, the War Champion King and the Nine Serenities King were willing to play mere supporting roles, using their battle prowess merely to keep their opponent in check for a short moment. They even risked being injured to do so. Even the Grand Heavenmaster, who already had the ultimate level of prestige in the Wildlands, didn’t hesitate at all to unleash his most powerful blow to cut down the enemy!

Although the fight seemed to be happening very quickly, there was clearly a high level of cooperation between these various demigods. Although they all had separate goals in their political struggles, when it came to fighting a foreigner, they were all on the same page!!

Bai Xiaochun was both moved and enlivened. Everything around him was shaking and rumbling, and there was also the shriek of the young girl as her blood-colored hands collapsed. Then, the sealing mark descended onto the sea of blood!!

The lands quaked, and yet the effect didn't spread very far; the Grand Heavenmaster controlled everything perfectly to keep the effect localized. Even still, the resulting shockwave blasted out for tens of thousands of meters, destroying all plants and vegetation in the area.

In the face of the blast, Bai Xiaochun and the others near him all fell back even further. At the same time, he anxiously craned his neck to see whether or not the girl had been destroyed.

Even as he looked over, the Grand Heavenmaster’s 100,000 sealing marks caused the sea of blood to shatter. However, as it happened, a terrifying aura erupted out that sent Bai Xiaochun’s emotions spinning!!

The Grand Heavenmaster’s face fell, as did the faces of the Giant Ghost King, the War Champion King, the Nine Serenities King, and the ten heavenly dukes!

Without the slightest hesitation, all of them prepared to fall back. And yet, before they could, an eerie, sinister voice spread out that seemed to be composed of countless other voices….

“Unfortunately, you couldn’t quite pull it off….” As the voice rang out, the sea of blood erupted. In the blink of an eye, it transformed into something like a blood sphere that grew larger with every moment that passed. Rumbling sounds echoed out, filling the Wildlands to the point where it seemed like they might collapse as a result!

Despite being some distance way, blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, as well as from everyone around him. As for the Giant Ghost King, he had been severely drained, and was very weak, so he was sent tumbling backward, blood also spraying out of his mouth.

Blood oozed out of the mouths of the War Champion King and the Nine Serenities King, with the Grand Heavenmaster being the only one who seemed less affected. However, he was clearly having a tough time dealing with it, and his face turned a paler shade of white.

But then, the exploding blood sphere suddenly began to shrink back down. Soon, it was a sea of blood again, and then it was half of its previous size! And yet, it was far more viscous than before!

The young girl's face appeared again, and she laughed in sinister fashion.

“Truly a pity…. However, I have to offer you people my thanks. You really helped me to absorb a lot…. Well, you still have one more chance. If you don't take it… then I won’t have any weakness at all.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly popped out of his skull. What was happening seemed almost completely unbelievable.

“Four demigods, including the Grand Heavenmaster… and they can’t kill her!?!?”

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s mind reeled, the injured Giant Ghost King looked up with shining eyes. Then he reached out and waved his finger at the girl.

Although he didn’t speak even a single word, the War Champion King, the Nine Serenities King, and even the Grand Heavenmaster all unhesitatingly unleashed the full power of their cultivation bases, causing demigod fluctuations to spread out as they charged again toward the sea of blood.

The Grand Heavenmaster, who actually occupied the most prominent position among them all, didn't seem to be paying attention at all to his status as he joined forces equally with everyone to try to kill the enemy!

As the three demigods closed in, the Giant Ghost King waved his finger. In response, ten blood-colored arms stretched up from the sea of blood. At the same time, the face of the young girl suddenly changed, going somewhat slack, as though her thoughts were muddled.

Gasping, she looked at the Giant Ghost King!

“You!!”

Another flicker of blankness passed through her eyes, and her thinking seemed to slow even further. In fact, the blood-colored hands also appeared to decelerate.

This was the third part of the Giant Ghost King’s plan, after the unleashing of the black sun!!

The black sun contained part of the Giant Ghost King’s cultivation base power. After consuming that power, the girl couldn’t digest it quickly, and therefore, the Giant Ghost King could use a special technique… something that the first generation Giant Ghost King had created, a divine ability used to control the Giant Ghost Incantation!

Bai Xiaochun was unfamiliar with that technique, but the weakened Mistress Red-Dust was not. In fact, it was the very same technique that the Giant Ghost King had told her could help her achieve a cultivation base breakthrough!!

Now, the very same thing that occurred with Mistress Red-Dust was occurring with the girl. Furthermore, the Giant

Ghost King was exercising even stronger control; he was affecting all of the girl's thoughts!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened as he got an inkling of what was happening. Even as the young girl’s mind was cast into chaos, and her blood-colored arms slowed down, the War Champion King, Nine Serenities King, and Grand Heavenmaster unleashed the full power of their cultivation bases to attack her, joined by the ten heavenly dukes! It was a deadly trump card attack!!

And yet… they weren’t the ones to be delivering the final blow!

By combining all of their divine abilities and magical techniques, they managed to shatter the blood-colored arms, which collapsed back down into the seething sea of blood. That was when, all of a sudden, a massive mountain of flesh appeared on the ground beneath the sea!!

That ball of flesh contained the power of a demigod, violent and explosive as it shot up into the air, destroying the ground that it left behind. The Grand Heavenmaster and other demigods and devas attacked from above, and the ball of flesh attacked from below. There was no way for the sea of blood to avoid the blow!

The ball of flesh smashed into the sea of blood, causing it to explode out into countless bits!

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the ball of flesh sped up higher into the air, transforming into an enormous, fat man who was… the Spirit Advent King!!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he was once again shaken by how these demigods all worked together.

“This time she's definitely going to die!” Even as Bai Xiaochun looked on nervously, the Grand Heavenmaster and the other demigods and devas called upon their previous experience to prevent the sea of blood from scattering. Instead, they unleashed intense power to reduce it to flying ash!

And yet, even as they destroyed the blood, all of a sudden, one particular clump of violet-colored blood suddenly rose up, moving with such incredible speed that it left behind nothing but afterimages. As it moved, it seemed possible to see something like an arm inside of it. Moments later, the arm vanished, to be replaced by the young girl’s face, which was twisted with rage!

“All of you are going to die!!” she shrieked, creating an indescribable sound wave that rolled out in all directions.

The sound was like the wailing of a ghost, and filled the entire 500-kilometer area, seemingly cutting it off from the rest of the Wildlands as surely as if an invisible blade had severed it!

From the pressure radiating down, it didn't seem like a magical technique that originated from this world. The sky began to shatter, and the intense noise caused the air to ripple and distort!

And yet, that wasn’t even the most terrifying thing. As the ripples of the sound filled the area, numerous shadowy souls appeared…. None of them seemed to possess intelligence, but they instinctually began to move toward that 500-kilometer area of sound, as if it were a holy place!

In fact… all of the souls in the Wildlands that were not controlled by some owner or master… began to fly in the same direction!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0832 awe-chapter-833

The Wildlands was a huge place, and there were so many vengeful souls there that no one could ever possibly count them. Furthermore, even with all of the soul cultivators in the Wildlands using them in necromancy and cultivation, their numbers would continually be replenished, or even increase.

Right now, all of the unfettered vengeful souls in the Wildlands, regardless of where they were, all looked up and let out soundless shrieks. Then, they began to fly in the same direction, almost as if they had been summoned!!

It didn’t matter how close or how far away they were. They seemed to be acting on instinct as they drew upon all the power they could to fly through the air. Some of them even began to teleport, lending them even greater speed than before!

The place that all the souls in the Wildlands were heading toward, as if it were a holy place… was the conglomeration of blood with the face of the young girl on it, and the 500-kilometer-area that had become a lake of soundwaves!

The fact that a collection of soundwaves in a 500-kilometer area could affect all of the Wildlands was hard to even imagine!!

The Giant Ghost King’s face fell. “Ghost Harmonization!!”

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he staggered backward, helpless to do anything other than rotate his cultivation base to protect himself from the sound!!

He was trembling, seemingly hovering on the verge of collapsing completely, and it was the same with the War Champion King, Nine Serenities King, and Spirit Advent King, although all of them seemed to have it a bit better off than the Giant Ghost King!

The intense level of the sound battered at the demigods… to the point where they almost couldn’t handle it.

“She’s just a soulclone! How could she be so powerful!? And… what is the cultivation base of her true self!?!? It must be beyond the Demigod Realm!!”

“This magical technique doesn't belong to our world!!”

The War Champion King panted, madness rising up in his eyes, his sword qi erupting out to defend himself, and yet was completely suppressed by the sound.

The Spirit Advent King’s body was shrinking down, his fat disappearing, his facial features changing; clearly, he wasn’t holding anything back in his attempt to defend himself.

If they were affected in such a way, there was little need to mention Chen Haosong and his compatriots. The ten heavenly dukes were all trembling and withering up, their eyes filled with disbelief and terror. They were obviously completely powerless to defend themselves against this sound.

The face of the girl in the violet glob of blood shrieked continuously, and as she did, a look of scorn appeared in her eyes.

“This is legendary Archaean divine magic…. You’re the subordinate of an archaean from beyond the heavens? But which one?!” The Grand Heavenmaster gritted his teeth as a glittering defensive shield of light sprang up around him. Although he was still capable of movement, he could only do so with great difficulty, and every movement of his feet made him feel like he had mountains attached to them.

In response to his words, the little girl’s pupils constricted. Then, despite the fact that she continued to scream, that voice which seemed to contain many voices rang out from within the conglomeration of blood.

“You’re very well-informed….”

Even as the power of the sound within the 500-kilometer area continued to surge, a sea of vengeful souls was converging on the area. None of them hesitated for a moment to pour into the sound and then into the young girl, making her even stronger than before.

Everyone on the outside was shivering with terror, their faces pale and their minds reeling as if they had been struck by lightning. Never could they possibly have imagined that the most powerful forces in the Wildlands, five demigods, would all join forces in attack, and yet fail to destroy this one strange girl!!

In fact, not only did they fail to kill her, but they were all placed in mortal danger!

“Father!!” Mistress Red-Dust shouted, trembling in anxiety. She tried to wrest herself out of Bai Xiaochun’s arms, but he held her tight.

“Get your hands off me!!” she yelled. But she was too weak, and no matter how she struggled, she couldn't break free. She could only watch her father stuck in a position of imminent death within that lake of sound.

Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King had been injured and weakened more than anyone else, and was clearly not going to be able to hold out much longer.

“Calm down!” Bai Xiaochun barked, his eyes bloodshot. “If you go over there now, you’re dead for sure!”

Tears filled Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes. At the moment, she didn’t seem at all like a mighty deva. She seemed heartbroken. Turning to Bai Xiaochun, she angrily said, “My father showed you immense kindness, Bai Hao! If you don’t want to save him, fine, but how dare you stop me! You--”

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, unable to prevent the anxiety in his heart from showing in his bloodshot eyes. Perhaps he could ignore what was happening to everyone else, but not the Giant Ghost King. Staring bitterly at the 500-kilometer lake of sound, he wracked his brain trying to come up with ideas. At that point, the Giant Ghost King coughed up some more blood, and then swayed weakly. Mistress Red-Dust began to struggle even harder, and tears began to pour down her face.

“Father!!”

Apparently, the Giant Ghost King heard her. He opened his weary eyes and looked over at Bai Xiaochun and Mistress Red-Dust, and a faint smile could be seen. He opened his mouth as if to speak, and yet, just like everyone else in the same predicament as him, was working too hard to fight back against the sound to say anything.

Mistress Red-Dust redoubled her efforts to free herself. However, it was at that point that Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and roared. Depositing Mistress Red-Dust off to the side, he shot through the air toward the 500-kilometer lake of sound.

He simply couldn’t stand idly by and not try to save the Giant Ghost King. The Giant Ghost King had treated him too well, and now was the time to try to repay that kindness. He couldn’t just watch him weaken and die right there. Furthermore, the little girl actually didn't seem to be moving!

“I’m gonna go for broke!” he shouted. “Go for broke!” As he closed in on the 500-kilometer lake of sound, the Giant Ghost King noticed. Although his gratitude was visible, he mostly seemed anxious.

“Get back, Bai Hao!! This ghostess is using a magical technique from beyond the heavens! We can’t move, nor can she! Just get out of here! Go back to the Underworld River Restricted Area!!”

Speaking out loud caused his defensive powers to waver. A tremor ran through him, and blood sprayed out of his mouth.

All of the onlookers got even more nervous than before, especially Mistress Red-Dust, who trembled, and seemed like she wanted to speak, but was too overwhelmed by tears. However, Bai Xiaochun continued on as if he hadn’t even heard the Giant Ghost King. Soon, he was at the border of the lake of sound. Not bothering at all about what secrets he might reveal, he sent his turtle-wok flying out from inside of him. Hefting it overhead, he charged into the lake of sound.

As soon as he was inside, he dropped to the ground and put the wok on top of him. It was exactly the same method he had used back when he was in the River-Defying Sect, when the Middle Reaches sects had been fighting each other in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s legacy zone.

It was the only tactic he could think of that might work. Of course, as soon as he stepped into the area of the sound, it affected him, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. However, when he dropped down and placed the turtle-wok over himself, all of the sound around him disappeared!!

“No sound?” After a moment of feeling stunned, his blood-spattered face lit up with delight. At first it almost seemed too good to be true, but after a moment, he began to cautiously move forward. When the Giant Ghost King and everyone else saw what was happening, they were completely taken aback. Everyone observing from afar was so shocked they forgot to breathe.

As for Mistress Red-Dust, she began to gnaw on her lips in anxiety.

As he moved along, Bai Xiaochun realized that since he was on his way to save someone, he should try to make himself seem a bit braver. For that purpose, and in order to forestall any suspicions, he lifted the corner of the wok up and began to shout out as if in pain, making sure to be loud enough that everyone could hear him.

“Ow… Oww…! Dammit…. OWW…. I’m not holding back anything for you, father-in-law!! Ow…. Oh father-in-law… ow! Your son-in-law’s poor little life is going on the line to save you…. Owwww….”

And thus it was that on that bitter and somber battlefield, Bai Xiaochun’s voice echoed out for all to hear. He looked like a turtle as he crawled along, getting closer and closer to the Giant Ghost King. As for the onlookers, whether they were inside the lake of sound or outside, they all stared in complete shock.

Even the girl in the conglomeration of violet blood was stunned. The Giant Ghost King was the closest to the turtle shell…. Despite the intensity of the sound waves battering him, he could clearly hear the exaggerated cries of pain coming from inside, and it caused his jaw to drop slightly.

“Don’t worry, Zimo. Even if I die, I’ll definitely… ow…! I’ll definitely save our father!! Ow… Oww…!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0833 awe-chapter-834

Everyone present was dumbfounded, including the Giant Ghost King, the War Champion King, and even the Nine Serenities King. Although they were exerting all their effort to fight back against the sound attack, strange expressions still appeared on their faces. That was saying a lot, considering that this was a deadly battle in which no one knew who would come out alive and who would end up dead.

Everyone felt incredible pressure weighing down on their hearts because of the bizarre little girl, and they were all wondering about what serious consequences there could be depending on how things turned out.

And yet… in the middle of such a dramatic and bitter struggle, Bai Xiaochun showed up… yelping in exaggerated fashion as he crawled along underneath a turtle shell. It left everyone completely flabbergasted.

The Giant Ghost King’s tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth, and the Spirit Advent King’s jaw hung wide open. There was little need to mention how shocked the Grand Heavenmaster was.

All eyes were glued to the hollering Bai Xiaochun as he and his turtle shell got closer and closer to the Giant Ghost King.

“Bai….” the Giant Ghost King began. And yet before he could even think of what to say, Bai Xiaochun grabbed his leg, turned around, and began dragging him away.

The Giant Ghost King was already weak enough as it was. When Bai Xiaochun began pulling on him, he didn’t resist. He was like a statue underneath the eyes of all present, being inexorably pulled toward safety.

“Ow… Oww…! I’ll get you out of here even if I die in the process, father-in-law!! Owe… Oww…!”

Of course, Bai Xiaochun continued to shout as he dragged the Giant Ghost King along.

“Whatever works….” That was what everyone was thinking, whether they were inside of the lake of sound or outside. As for the little girl, her eyes were blank with shock. Not even she could ever have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would use a method like this to drag someone to safety….

If he only saved the Giant Ghost King, it might not have been a very big deal. However, just as he was closing in on the border of the lake of sound, the Spirit Advent King, who was being shrunken down with every moment that passed, took a deep breath and shouted, “Bai Hao, uh… how about you drag me out too!?”

The expressions of blank shock on the faces of the onlookers grew even more pronounced, and many jaws dropped. Although the bitter and tragic feeling that had gripped the battlefield still remained, it was fading.

Bai Xiaochun ignored the Spirit Advent King. Pushing forward with all the speed he could manage, he physically threw the still-shocked Giant Ghost King out of the lake of sound. Mistress Red-Dust hurried forward excitedly to catch him.

Seeing that the Giant Ghost King was now safe, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief and prepared to crawl out to safety.

“Hey, Bai Hao. Um… don’t you remember Shanshan? She's waiting for you back in Spirit Advent City!” More odd expressions appeared on the faces of the onlookers. Feeling a bit annoyed, Bai Xiaochun looked out from under the turtle-wok at the Spirit Advent King. Then he thought about how nothing had been done to block his path to the Giant Ghost King, so, gritting his teeth, he turned around and headed back in.

More cries of pain could be heard as he approached the Spirit Advent King and then grabbed his leg just as he had the Giant Ghost King. Amidst the battering sound waves, he dragged the Spirit Advent King toward the edge of the lake and then threw him out.

Grumbling curses echoed out from beneath the turtle-wok the entire time.

“Spirit Advent King you… ow! You’re so fat!! Can’t you lose a bit of weight!? I can barely move you… ow!”

The Spirit Advent King was feeling very embarrassed about it all. However, he continued to shrink as he moved along, until he was roughly the size of an ordinary person. That was when Bai Xiaochun threw him out of the lake of sound.

By this point, the ten heavenly dukes were feeling extremely anxious. Their cultivation bases were too low, making it impossible for them to even speak. All they could do was cast piteous, imploring glances at Bai Xiaochun. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, his heart softened.

“Ah, whatever. You people all hate me, but I'm a generous guy. Besides, as the saying goes, *if you’re going to herd sheep, you might as well collect the whole flock*….” Sighing at how important his mission was, he continued to shout and holler as he crawled back and forth through the lake of sound.... Before long, he had dragged away the dumbfounded Grand Heavenmaster and the proud and arrogant War Champion King, as well as Chen Haosong and the other devas.

Everyone watched as Bai Xiaochun saved them all one by one. Before long, the only person left within the 500-kilometer area... was the Nine Serenities King, who stood there with a blank look on his face.

He had long since begun to curse inwardly; however, he quickly realized that Bai Xiaochun seemed to be ignoring him and saving everyone else.

Although he knew about everything that had gone on between Bai Xiaochun and his son Zhou Hong, he didn’t think that it would earn him treatment like this. At least a few people should have been left behind to accompany him....

By this point, the little girl was about to go crazy, and her face was twisted with fury. She might have been able to accept the fact that her technique didn’t affect him, but then he had gone and rescued everyone else....

Even as she began to sink into hysteria, the Grand Heavenmaster and everyone else settled down cross-legged and began to recover. By use of demigod secret magic, the process went very quickly. Soon, the Giant Ghost King didn’t look weak anymore, and was mostly recovered.

If nothing happened to interfere, it wouldn't be long before all of the demigods were back at peak battle prowess.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” the girl screamed. Everyone in the area went stiff at the sound of her voice, and Bai Xiaochun shivered anxiously. However, before anything else could happen, the Grand Heavenmaster, War Champion King, Spirit Advent King, and Giant Ghost King all opened their eyes. Four demigods all rose to their feet and strode forward to attack the 500-kilometer lake of sound.

Meanwhile, the Nine Serenities King howled at the top of his lungs and went all out to join the other four demigods in the assault.

Shocking booms rang out in all directions as the 500-kilometer lake of sound began to tremble and collapse. After only ten breaths of time, it completely shattered. Blood sprayed out of the mouth of the Nine Serenities King as he staggered backward, visibly aged, and obviously seriously injured.

As soon as the lake of sound collapsed, the Grand Heavenmaster and the other demigods attacked in full force, unleashing one divine ability after another. In response, the little girl screamed, and the violet conglomeration of blood writhed as it took human shape. Then the girl waved both of her hands up into the air.

As she did, the sky distorted, and intense rumbling sounds echoed out everywhere. All of the Wildlands souls which had been rushing in her direction increased their speed significantly, hundreds upon hundreds of millions of them all closing in on the girl.

The sky grew dim from all of the howling vengeful souls. Soon, there were billions of them, swirling around the little girl like a cyclone!

The souls soon began to take the shape of a face, a face that filled the entire sky. It was the little girl, her eyes sinister and filled with anger and resentment that caused the entire world to tremble.

“Nobody can save you!” she howled, borrowing the voices of all of the countless vengeful souls to speak. At the same time, she opened the mouth of the face of souls, and a black wind sprang out.

Shocking power filled the gusts of wind, power that caused the Grand Heavenmaster and the other demigods to look on in shock. Bai Xiaochun also gasped, and began to back away.

That wind carried the power to destroy everything in existence, and yet, before that could happen… a sigh echoed out, a sigh of profound ancientness!

A figure appeared within the swirling black winds. He wore a long black robe, and at first, it was impossible to see his face. He was so old that anyone who looked at him would immediately come to the conclusion that he had just stepped out from profoundly ancient times.

“Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper!” Bai Xiaochun said, stunned.

“Hell-Emperor!!” cried the Grand Heavenmaster and the other demigods, expressions of profound reverence on their faces.

When Bai Xiaochun heard what they were calling the gravekeeper, his jaw dropped.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it all happened in the briefest of moments. The gravekeeper seemed to exist in a different dimension than the black wind, which didn’t affect him at all. He strode forward until he was right in front of the enormous face of the young girl. Then he reached out with his ancient, withered hand, and pushed down onto it.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0834 awe-chapter-835

When the gravekeeper pushed his hand out, there was no screaming wind, nor any smoke or fire. However, the entire world seemed to go completely still and silent.

The sky didn’t tremble. The lands didn’t quake. The winds which had surrounded the gravekeeper vanished. As for all of the countless vengeful souls, their resentment seemed to vanish, and they prostrated themselves in worship to the gravekeeper.

Everyone who saw what was happening was shaken. As for the little girl, the souls which made up her face scattered as they too prostrated themselves to the gravekeeper.

Then, an enormous manifestation of the Underworld River appeared, waves glistening as it filled the world. The countless souls which filled the area then began to float toward the river, like stars returning to their place in the sky.

The face of the girl faded away, revealing the violet conglomeration of blood. A moment later, the face reappeared in the blood, eyes shining with strange light as she looked at the gravekeeper. Then, she unleashed the very same technique that had destabilized the divine souls of the demigods, that which the Grand Heavenmaster had referred to as… Archaean divine magic!

“So you finally decided to show up, Hell-Emperor!! I knew it! I could sense traces of you on that Bai Xiaochun over there! I knew that if I followed him around long enough, he would lead me to you!!”

Shocked looks appeared on the faces of all present in response to her words. At the same time, the same sound waves appeared as last time, except instead of spreading out for 500 kilometers, they were focused in an attack on the gravekeeper.

The girl had previously mentioned Bai Xiaochun, but that had been a dramatic and frenzied moment, leaving people little time to contemplate the implications. But now, he who was like a god to the Wildlanders had appeared, the Hell-Emperor. Therefore, the words which had just been uttered by the girl caused everyone to turn their gazes onto Bai Xiaochun.

“Bai Xiaochun!?!?”

“Grandmaster Bai is Bai Xiaochun?!”

The soul cultivators from Giant Ghost City were all completely shocked, to the point where their jaws hung open….

“Bai Xiaochun…?” Chen Haosong and the other heavenly dukes had strange expressions on their faces as they looked over at him.

The Nine Serenities King, War Champion King, and Spirit Advent King were all stunned.

Only the Grand Heavenmaster and the Giant Ghost King didn't have any reaction, as though this news wasn’t surprising to them at all…. However, mixed emotions could be seen on Mistress Red-Dust’s face.

Although this possibility had existed in the bottom of her heart for a long time, she hadn’t been willing to devote any thought to it. But now, having heard the little girl essentially say the same thing twice, it caused Mistress Red-Dust to begin to pant. The fact that her own father had given her hand in marriage to Bai Xiaochun… turned her world completely upside down.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound because of all the eyes looking at him. However, there was nothing he could do to change how events were playing out. After blinking a few times, he put on a blank expression, as though he didn’t understand what was being talked about. Then he looked around as if trying to figure out who in the crowd was really Bai Xiaochun…. In response, many strange looks could be seen on the faces of the others present.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have time to worry too much about what exactly everyone was thinking. At long last, he had realized why this ghostly girl had been following him for such a long time… she had been using him to find the Hell-Emperor.

“No wonder….” Although it was a bit of a shock to find out that the gravekeeper was the Hell-Emperor, when he thought about how mysterious the man was, it all made sense.

“When she said she noticed traces of Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper on me, was she referring to how he saved me from the Luochen Clan?”

As Bai Xiaochun was wrestling with these thoughts, the girl’s Ghost Harmonization erupted out, causing the sky between her and the gravekeeper to shatter. The gravekeeper sighed, waving his hand to cause the shattering sky to transform into a huge black hole. The black hole began to explode, releasing power that seemed capable of destroying the entire world. Thankfully, the same world-sealing net existed as had appeared when the Giant Ghost King unleashed his black sun. The illusory net easily dispersed the world-destructive power, and it faded away!

The gravekeeper shook his head and spoke in an ancient, weary voice, “I’ve been avoiding you at every turn. Why do you insist on hounding me?”

“If you want me to stop hounding you, then open the Worldgate! Allow me… to leave this place!!” Sound waves continued to stream out, destroying the air as they went along. However, the young girl's bizarre, echoing voice could still be heard.

Her eyes were filled with focus, determination, and madness. Furthermore, there was no deceit in her words. She was not a person of this world. She had come from beyond the heavens, a discarnate soul who had fallen down into the world along with an enormous sword.

She had once been confused and unintelligent, with no hope of ever regaining her senses. But then Bai Xiaochun had entered the Fallen Sword Abyss, and she had consumed his medicinal pills. Her soul body had been stimulated, and her mental faculties had recovered. At that point, she remembered everything about her past!

She found the world she was in a very strange place, and instinctively wanted to keep Bai Xiaochun next to her, considering that he had been the one to restore her mental faculties.

However, despite the fact that her soul body was indestructible, her battle prowess wasn’t sufficient. Because of that, Bai Xiaochun escaped. She had later escaped the Fallen Sword Abyss to roam the world on her own, whereupon she learned more about the truth of where she was. She eventually came to realize… that if she wanted to escape, if she wanted to get home, she needed the gravekeeper to open the gate to this world.

Unfortunately, she wasn’t powerful enough to locate the gravekeeper. However, she remembered the traces of the gravekeeper that she had sensed on Bai Xiaochun!

At that point, she came to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun… had been looked upon kindly by the gravekeeper. And she also realized that if she followed Bai Xiaochun for long enough, that she would likely find the person she was looking for.

And that was what led to the entire situation…. It was also why she had sometimes even protected Bai Xiaochun. Unfortunately, after the labyrinth spell formation was activated, something unexpected happened. She lost track of Bai Xiaochun!

No amount of searching had turned up any clues. Therefore, she eventually decided to impersonate him, all with the goal… of luring him out into the open, and thus, getting access to the gravekeeper!

It almost didn’t matter how things played out, she would succeed. Furthermore… when Bai Xiaochun had attempted to flee earlier, she had not unleashed the killing techniques she was capable of, all because her true goal was to force the gravekeeper out into the open!

When the demigods attacked, it was to further her main goal that she had summoned all the souls of the Wildlands, in order to shake the foundation of the world.

It was something she could not do in the Heavenspan River region. After all… the souls that existed only in the

Wildlands were the best tool for her to aid her recovery, and also the best advantage she had in a fight!

More important than anything else… she had another friend out there somewhere….

With such thoughts on her mind, she chuckled. Even as her Ghost Harmonization continued, she opened her mouth, causing the air behind her to distort as the enormous head of an evil ghost appeared behind her. The ghost immediately opened its mouth and lunged toward the gravekeeper.

The evil ghost radiated battle prowess equivalent to a demigod, which left the Grand Heavenmaster and everyone else in the area completely shocked.

However, the appearance of the gigantic evil ghost only caused the gravekeeper to shake his head. With that, he extended his ancient right hand and pointed at the ghost head.

All creation began to tremble. The air around the evil ghost then began to collapse, creating what appeared to be the shape of an enormous mouth, which instantly gobbled up the ghost!

At the same time, the gravekeeper performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger at the girl.

“Wind!” he said. It was one simple word, but when it came out of the mouth of the gravekeeper, it seemed to contain the power of the natural laws of heaven and earth. Almost immediately, the entire sky filled with a wind capable of destroying all living things!

The terrifying power in that wind surpassed that of a demigod, and caused even the little girl’s face to fall. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes went wide, and he gasped at how unbelievably powerful the gravekeeper was!!

“The Hell-Emperor….” he murmured to himself.

Massive energy surged, energy that surpassed the ability of all onlookers to even react to it. When the gravekeeper uttered that single word, wind, it was as if all the wind in the world reacted with explosive fury.

The world became a place of wind, with the gravekeeper being the eye of the storm, a mountain-toppling, sea-draining vortex that crushed toward the little girl!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0835 awe-chapter-836

From a distance, it was possible to see that the vortex of wind filled most of the sky, and caused rumbling sounds to be heard in all corners of the earth. Down below, the lands quaked. As for the Grand Heavenmaster and everyone else who could see what was happening, they were profoundly shaken.

The vortex of wind spun dramatically, unleashing power that struck fear into the hearts of all onlookers. As for the little girl, she was like a rowboat in a sea of violent waves, teetering on the verge of capsizing.

And that was what everyone was hoping would happen. Unfortunately, that was when the girl suddenly looked up, her eyes as red as blood. Then she opened her mouth wide. In fact, her mouth opened wider and wider in exaggerated fashion, to the point where, in the blink of an eye, she seemed like nothing more than a gigantic mouth!!

The mouth became like a vortex, with a shocking gravitational force that spread out in all directions!

BOOOOM! CRAAASH!

When that gravitational force locked onto the gravekeeper’s wind vortex, an ear-splitting boom filled the air. Then, the wind vortex began to slow down, and even tilt to one side… as the girl began to consume it!!

The hearts of the onlookers seized, and Bai Xiaochun gasped. This was a battle that surpassed the level of demigods, and was the most shocking thing he had ever seen in his life. This little girl seemed almost completely unkillable, whereas the gravekeeper seemed to have infinitely powerful techniques.

The thought that this terrifying girl had been following him around since his days in the Heavenspan River region left him feeling both frightened and also relieved that nothing bad had happened along the way.

“It’s a good thing I didn’t offend her too badly in the past. If I had, she could have killed me as easily as breathing….” Even as he shivered in fear, intense booming sounds filled the air. By this point, the wind vortex had completely collapsed, and… had been consumed by the little girl!!

The faces of the onlookers fell. However, the gravekeeper simply sighed, as though this was no surprising development for him. With that, he waved his finger, and yet again spoke in an ancient voice.

“Rain!”

It was one simple word. However, as soon as it left his mouth, countless dark clouds sprang into being, stretching out to fill almost all of the Wildlands!

Those dark clouds contained absolutely no lightning, only water!!

Great, bean-sized drops of rain began to pour down, almost as if there were a giant far above, overturning a huge bucket. In the very shortest amount of time possible, the entire world became a world of violent downpour!!

Furthermore, this was not ordinary rain, this was… magical rain!!

The rain contained shocking force, almost like a divine ability or magical technique…. There was so much rain, it was almost impossible to see. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned wide at the mere shocking feeling of how much energy it contained.

“So… so awesome!!” He wasn’t the only one to be shaken. The Grand Heavenmaster and all the other powerful experts were completely bowled over by how shockingly strong the gravekeeper’s rain was.

The little girl’s face fell. This rain filled her with an intense sensation of deadly crisis, and she immediately fell back. Unfortunately, no matter how quickly she moved, she couldn't escape it!

In fact, none of the rain actually reached the ground. Each drop spun in the air and began to race directly toward the girl.

Her hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a defensive shield to spring up. Then, booms rang out like that of an enormous drum being beaten as countless drops of water slammed into the shield!

The sound grew louder and louder, and the rain fell harder and harder! Before long, the rainwater had formed into something like a solid sheet that shot forward in attack!

A sphere of water began to form around the girl, causing her expression to flicker. Her defenses were crumbling, and the sphere was growing larger, filling with more and more water.

300 meters. 3,000 meters. 15,000 meters….

From a distance, it was like a terrifying ball of water surrounding the little girl, crushing her defenses and growing larger by the moment.

Bai Xiaochun could hardly keep his breathing in check. The girl’s defensive shield was almost completely destroyed, and all of the onlookers were getting excited. However, it was in that moment that the girl's face twisted and shrank as she transformed into…

A sword!!!

It was the most ancient and archaic of swords, so much so that rust was visible on its surface. It almost seemed ordinary in nature, and yet, as soon as it appeared, billowing waves began to sweep across the surface of the sphere of water.

No one present recognized the sword, except for Bai Xiaochun! As soon as he saw it, his eyes went wide.

“The fallen sword!!” he shouted in shock. Back when Bai Xiaochun had reached Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment… it had been in the eastern Lower Reaches of the Heavenspan River… in a huge sword!!

That was the place where this strange girl had first appeared!!

Although the sword was vastly smaller than the first time he had seen it, Bai Xiaochun recognized it immediately. In the same moment that the words escaped his lips, the girl in fallen sword form spun in place and then slashed through the remnants of her destroyed shield at the sphere of water!!

As the sword descended, a gigantic sword materialized in the sky up above. It was so huge that only part of the blade was visible, streaking down from above, filling the vision of everyone present as it attacked the sphere of water!!

A massive boom rang out as the water sphere collapsed. Countless drops of rain showered out, filling the lands below with mist. As for the girl, she was clearly weaker than before, and could not maintain the form of the fallen sword for very long. Amidst the swirling mist, she quickly reverted to her normal appearance, and then shrieked, “I'm an unkillable soul, gravekeeper! Since you can’t cut me down, I might as well consume you right here and now!!”

The faces of the onlookers fell, and Bai Xiaochun began to tremble. He even thought about trying to escape. However, that was when the mist which filled the world began to rush toward the girl, as if it were under her control.

A sea of mist began to converge on her in shocking fashion, gradually taking the shape of a gigantic ghost head!

Despite being made of mist, it was very lifelike, with a vicious expression and curved horns. Furthermore, closer examination revealed that it did indeed resemble the young girl in some fashion. Just like the enormous sword from moments before, it filled the sky, obscuring the sun as it looked down at the grounds below and then sucked in a breath!!

In response, the sky distorted and the lands shifted. It was as if all creation were about to be absorbed into the mouth of this huge ghost head. Some people felt their bodies beginning to move beyond their control, something that left Bai Xiaochun feeling completely stunned.

Even the Grand Heavenmaster and the other demigods were shaken.

However, the gravekeeper merely shook his head, and then murmured something in a voice that only he could hear.

“Still hiding your face, huh...?” With that, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then waved his finger again.

“Lightning!”

The instant the word left his mouth, a bright red bolt of lightning appeared in the twisting sky. As soon as it appeared, another followed it....

In the briefest amounts of time, there were three lightning bolts. Then 100. Then 10,000.... There was no sound to accompany them, and yet they were so densely packed that they looked almost like the rainwater had moments before. The entire world slowly began to glow with the red light they cast!!

Then, the countless red lightning bolts shot toward the misty ghost formed by the little girl. As Bai Xiaochun looked up, what he saw was something that almost looked like a hand formed from lightning... reaching toward that gigantic ghost head!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0836 awe-chapter-837

Although the ghost head was huge, the enormous hand made of bright lightning was bigger!

It almost looked like the hand of an adult compared to the head of a baby! And as that hand reached out, intense rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, as did the sensation of crackling lightning!

It seemed like the hand didn’t care at all that the girl was attempting to consume heaven and earth. The ghost head’s mouth suddenly ceased breathing in, and screamed as though it were going all-out to avoid the lightning hand. But the surging energy of the hand contained the pressure of all creation, allowing it to easily wrap around the misty head!

The hand clenched into a fist, and cracking sounds rang out. The ghost head tried to fight back, but couldn’t, and collapsed. As it did, the girl appeared, fleeing backward at top speed. Terror was visible in her eyes, fear of the converged power of heaven and earth contained in that hand of lightning.

However, no matter how fast she fled, it didn’t seem enough to evade the hand, which clearly aimed to blot her out of existence!!

The entire area seemed sealed, leading to complete terror on the part of the girl. Her hands flashed with a double-handed incantation gesture, causing countless shadowy ghosts to appear around her. However, the ghosts were quickly dissipated by the crimson lightning.

The onlookers were enlivened; what was happening now was profoundly shocking, a battle which surpassed the Demigod Realm. Bai Xiaochun’s heart raced as his eyes tracked the huge hand, and the shadowy ghosts. As for the girl, she shrieked as the huge hand came closer and closer.

That was when, all of a sudden, an enormous rift appeared in the sky. It was fully 3,000 meters long, and looked almost like a gigantic eye!!

As the eye stared out at the gravekeeper, cold and emotionless, a second rift opened up. Then a third, and a fourth….

In the briefest of moments, countless rifts opened up in the sky, revealing numerous eyes!

All of them were cold and emotionless, and all of them stared directly at the gravekeeper!

This sudden development led to widespread shock among the onlookers. As for the Grand Heavenmaster, his face fell, and he blurted, “The Celestial!!”

In the same moment that his voice echoed out, the countless eyes blinked, sending numerous beams of sword light shooting out toward the gravekeeper!

It was impossible to count exactly how many beams of sword light there were. The sky seemed filled with them, until that light surpassed everything else. It was like a web of swords that immediately slashed into the enormous lightning hand and began to tear it to pieces!

That hand contained the converged power of heaven and earth, and therefore, only similar power could affect it. And in this world… there was only one person other than the gravekeeper who could use such power.

He was…

The Celestial from Heavenspan Island!

Rumbling booms filled the Wildlands, causing the ground to shake and the sky to vibrate. The innumerable beams of sword light sliced the gigantic hand apart, saving the girl, and then proceeding on to attack the gravekeeper himself!

Although all of these things take some time to describe, from the moment the sword light appeared until it destroyed the hand and then proceeded on toward the gravekeeper, only a single breath of time passed.

Any one of those beams of sword light would be enough to kill a deva, and yet here were countless beams, interlocking into a gigantic pillar of light!

Massive waves of shock battered Bai Xiaochun’s mind. From the moment this fight had begun until now, he felt like he had been made privy to some of the most important secrets in the entire world!

But it was an urgent moment, and there wasn’t time to ponder the implications right now. He could only watch as the gravekeeper turned his head, his eyes flickering with profound light. He didn’t seem surprised at all, as though he had been expecting the Celestial to arrive. Lifting his hand toward the incoming sword light, he spoke again in an ancient voice.

“Thunder!” Again, it was only one word. However, as it left his mouth, it grew in volume until it was like a roar uttered by countless voices. Vengeful souls and living beings alike, Bai Xiaochun included, voluntarily or not, shouted the same word in their hearts!

The Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, Chen Haosong and the other demigods and devas… all of them did the same!

The sound reached an unbelievable level in a short time. Heaven shook, the earth trembled, and ripples spread out everywhere. As for the incoming sword light, as soon as it encountered those sound waves, it began to shatter into something that looked like innumerable tiny stars!

Innumerable beams of sword light all collapsed at the same time, and yet, the sound waves did not disperse. They continued on with heaven-rending, earth-crushing power, assailing the little girl’s ears, causing her to tremble violently and begin to grow transparent. Meanwhile, in another part of the sky, the air began to distort, as though a veil were being lifted to reveal… a person who had been concealed there!!

He was a spectacularly handsome middle-aged man wearing a suit of golden armor, with sword-like eyebrows. He seemed threatening without being angry, with eyes that shone like the sun and moon!

He wore an imperial crown, and had flowing black hair that swirled around him. In sharp contrast to his black hair, he had one lock of red hair which curled down across his forehead. Now that he had been revealed by the parting of the veil of heaven and earth, he stepped forward, reached out, and pushed his hand up into the air!

Thunderous crashing filled the sky, as though an enormous, invisible hand were ripping it apart. At the same time, a bright blue spear appeared from within the resulting rift. It didn't fly toward the armored man, though. Instead, it shot with lightning-like speed to stab down into the ground.

The lands quivered, and cracks spread out left and right. The sound of the impact, combined with the previous sound of the thunder, became like an invisible attack that blasted out in all directions.

Although Bai Xiaochun was rather far away, the blast of energy hit him and caused blood to spray out of his mouth as he tumbled backward. Chen Haosong and the other devas staggered back, blood oozing out of their mouths. Even the Grand Heavenmaster and the other demigods were forced back, their faces turning pale.

As for the soul cultivators from Giant Ghost City whose cultivation bases were below the Deva Realm, they had no time to react, and most were instantly transformed into ash....

Mistress Red-Dust would likely have been killed too, were it not for the fact that the Giant Ghost King stood protectively in front of her.

“The Celestial!!” The Giant Ghost King looked up at the armored man, his eyes flickering with fear.

The War Champion King, Spirit Advent King, Nine Serenities King and the Grand Heavenmaster, as well as the heavenly dukes, were all staring at the same person, their hearts pounding with fear!

“The Celestial!?” Bai Xiaochun thought, gasping in shock. He wasn’t quite sure what to think as he looked up at that shocking figure who looked down from the sky with arrogance and disdain!

He was none other than the ruler of all of the Heavenspan regions, the Celestial from Heavenspan Island!!

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time actually seeing him, and at first glance, he could see that he was the type of person who had become one with the world. In fact, the man’s eyes were as piercing as the sharpest of blades or needles.

Even as Bai Xiaochun looked on, the little girl flew over to the Celestial. Keeping her distance, she said, “You’re late, Daoist Heavenspan!”

The Celestial smiled. Ignoring the girl, and everyone else, he kept his gaze fixed on the only person he had been looking at the entire time, the gravekeeper.

“You knew what I was planning all along, didn’t you old man?”

“As clear as day,” the gravekeeper replied calmly, his expression the same as ever. However, his eyes flickered with profound light, and his words were thought-provoking to the extreme.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding. Obviously, the little girl and the Celestial had been in league for a long time. As for this day’s battle, it wasn’t just one being fought by the little girl. She was allied with the Celestial in opposition to the gravekeeper!

As for why, it was presumably because of what the girl had mentioned earlier… that mysterious Worldgate!

“So many secrets….” he thought. At the moment, he felt himself to be in a very awkward position. In fact, he almost wanted to yell out loud to the Celestial that everyone here was basically on the same side…. However, such thoughts were immediately crushed when he thought about how the girl had been following him to find the gravekeeper, and that the Celestial must have known that.

“I was being used....” he thought, his heart trembling as he looked at the three powerful entities floating up above in the sky.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0837 awe-chapter-838

Even as Bai Xiaochun scowled on the verge of tears, the Celestial looked at the gravekeeper and coolly said, “So what if you knew? Whether I lured you into the open, or you did it to me, in the end… it will all come down to who wins the fight!”

Even as he spoke, a domineering air exploded out from him that made him seem like the ultimate entity in heaven and earth!

In the moment that he finished speaking, the little girl chuckled oddly and began to blur into the form of a black hole. At the same time, that odd voice of hers which seemed to be composed of countless living things spoke.

“Void Devouring Grand Magic!!”

Black light erupted from the black hole that was the little girl, filling a 30,000-meter area and pulling everything toward it. Plants, vegetation, rocks, mountains; everything began to fly through the air toward her.

The gravekeeper was in that 30,000-meter-area, and was actually the focus of her Void Devouring Grand Magic. From the look of things, it had him locked in place and incapable of moving!

Even as the girl attacked, the Celestial took a step forward. He knew that this battle needed to be ended quickly, and was prepared to make that happen. As his foot descended, the lands quaked. At the same time, he reached out with his right hand and made a grasping gesture.

“Heavenspan Sea!” he said coolly. Rumbling sounds could be heard, and ripples filled the air, along with a golden color that bore the appearance of a sea!

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped and his mind began to reel. He immediately identified that golden, illusory body of water. It was none other than… the Heavenspan Sea!

“What kind of magical techniques are these?” he thought, his heart racing. “He’s actually using the Heavenspan Sea as a weapon?!” As of this moment, he came to the conclusion that the techniques being used by these three were true divine abilities. In fact, they made the magical techniques he usually used seem almost embarrassing. But then he reminded himself how amazing the Waterswamp Kingdom and Undying Emperor’s Fist were, and felt a bit better. If he had a higher cultivation base, his Waterswamp Kingdom would probably crush these people like dry weeds.

“Ai, my cultivation base is really just too weak.” he thought with a scowl. At the same time, he backed up as quickly as possible. The Grand Heavenmaster and the other powerful experts all had very serious expressions on their faces. They too realized that the Celestial was making drastic transformations to heaven and earth by using a projection of the Heavenspan Sea itself!

The entire sky became a huge sea, with churning water and huge waves. Within moments, that golden water transformed into the shape of a massive hand, which began to crush down toward the gravekeeper!

The sky had become a sea, and the sea had become a hand. With the little girl’s Void Consuming Grand Magic locking the gravekeeper in place, it seemed impossible for him to evade that all-destructive attack.

It was a moment of crisis that had Bai Xiaochun’s heart leaping into his throat. However, that was when the gravekeeper looked up, his eyes flickering with profound light as he lifted both hands above his head and spoke in a gravelly voice.

“Underworld River!”

A powerful aura of death sprang up around him, along with raging black river water that quickly filled all creation. Then he took a step forward, and the river water roared forth like a black dragon!

The gravekeeper was like the source of the Underworld River water, which erupted like a fountain, growing more numerous by the moment. The water seethed madly around him as he climbed into the sky to meet the gargantuan hand that was the Heavenspan Sea!

They grew closer and closer together, and then collided with force to shatter mountains, destroy the sky, and crush the land. Countless lines spread out across the surface of the hand as deafening rumbling sounds filled the air. It was an attack in which the gravekeeper and the Celestial were facing off using the Underworld River and the Heavenspan Sea as their weapons.

A black dragon was fighting a golden hand!

The golden hand was the first to lose out. It shattered into pieces which, as they fell apart, revealed the sinister Celestial floating up above!

As for the Underworld River, it was clearly stronger. After destroying the hand, it continued onward like a black lightning bolt, striking directly at the Celestial, with the gravekeeper in the forefront!

A boom rang out as the Celestial backed up. However, in the moment before impact, the gravekeeper turned to the side, revealing that his target wasn’t actually the Celestial, but instead, the little girl!

The girl’s face fell, and she immediately fell back with incredible speed. Unfortunately for her, her shocking speed still wasn’t a match for the gravekeeper. A moment later, a huge boom rang out as the majestic Underworld River slammed into the unkillable soul that was the little girl.

The girl screamed as the river made contact with her, and she shattered into countless motes of light. The light shot off into the distance and reformed into a soul shadow. She had not been destroyed. After all, she called herself unkillable. However, the gravekeeper’s blow had clearly wounded her seriously!

In fact, it seemed likely that if she sustained enough blows of that level, she actually could be destroyed!

The Grand Heavenmaster and other powerful experts were all enlivened by that revelation. Furthermore, it was now possible to see how powerful the gravekeeper truly was. If he hadn’t had another purpose in mind requiring the Celestial to be present, he very likely could have defeated the young girl.

When the Celestial saw that the gravekeeper in Underworld River form was shooting toward the newly reformed girl, his expression turned very grim. He couldn’t just look on while the girl was killed; not only were they allies, but he had an oath binding him. Most importantly, he wasn’t confident in being able to take on the gravekeeper by himself. He needed help!

Therefore, his eyes immediately began to shine with fierce determination.

“If the Heavenspan Sea can’t put you in your place, then how about… the Heavenspan continent!” His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and then he pointed at the sky. Instantly, the sky began to peel back, layer by later, as if it were completely transforming!

Then… the Heavenspan Sea appeared again!!

This time, it was even more magnificent, shining with boundless golden light. Shockingly, a black island was visible in the middle of the sea. Furthermore, there were four mighty rivers stretching out from it in four directions. Land surrounded those rivers, which contained rolling mountains, vast plains, and thick jungles!!

Close examination would even reveal the four enormous sect headquarters at the mouths of the rivers. But that wasn’t it. The Middle Reaches, the Lower Reaches, and even the delta regions were all clearly visible!

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock as he realized that even the River-Defying Sect was there! Projected right there in the sky… were all the lands of Heavenspan!

“Gravekeeper! You said in the past that you wouldn’t open the Worldgate for me because I was illegitimate! But all you are is a gravekeeper! You’re an old ghost who watches over the Worldgate. I might not have the blood of the Arch-Emperors in me, but the lands of Heavenspan approve of me! What right do you have to withhold your approval!?!? You will either open that gate for me right now, or die!!” The Celestial blurred into motion, merging into the projection of the lands of Heavenspan, becoming something like their soul!

Massive energy began to build up, as if the will of the Celestial were drawing upon all the power of the entire world!

At that point, a gleam of madness appeared in the eyes of the little girl. Seemingly ready to put everything on the line, she shrieked loudly as she transformed into a paper crane!

Black mist surrounded her, within which existed innumerable howling ghost projections. In fact, it was obvious to Bai Xiaochun that this was… power from beyond the heavens!

Such power did not conform to the nature of this world. It was like a black glob of ink on a white sheet of paper. It was instantly obvious!

The black paper crane surged with power from beyond the heavens, joining the Celestial in an attack on the gravekeeper.

“Are you gonna open that gate or not, you old ghost?!?!”

The Grand Heavenmaster and the other experts were all completely shocked by the divine abilities and energies on display. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was wailing inwardly, filled with incredibly uneasy feelings as he fell back at top speed.

The gravekeeper looked up at the Celestial, his expression the same as it had been the entire time. However, there was a certain exhaustion visible within his eyes as he sighed and said, “You still don’t understand. You are illegitimate, not because of matters of bloodline or approval, but because… you lack the legacy!”

For some reason, the retreating Bai Xiaochun suddenly had the feeling that upon uttering those words, the gravekeeper… was looking at him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0838 awe-chapter-839

“That can’t be right….” Bai Xiaochun thought, his heart pounding. If the gravekeeper really had looked at him, it would mean he was in great danger. That would mean he was part of this dangerous fight between the gravekeeper and the Celestial!

“A little nobody like me couldn’t possibly matter to almighty people like that!” He immediately ducked his head down and hurried backward even faster. As he focused on fleeing, the battle above once again reached a fever pitch. Behind the projected image of the lands of Heavenspan, a figure appeared.

It was none other than the Celestial, and he appeared to be controlling every aspect of the lands of Heavenspan. Waving both hands out in front of him, he sent those lands rumbling toward the gravekeeper!

At the same time, the little girl in paper crane form erupted with black mist as she also shot toward the gravekeeper.

All onlookers were shaken to the core by what was happening. As for the gravekeeper, he sighed, and a glint of determination appeared in his eyes. He knew he had reached the point where hesitation wasn’t an option. The Celestial had manipulated things to provoke him into coming out into the open, and yet, it was also an opportunity for the gravekeeper to put an end to something profoundly problematic for the Heavenspan Realm.

“It's ahead of schedule, and will disturb the balance. It will also harm the world itself. But my time… is limited. I need to do this for the future generations.” The gravekeeper sighed in his heart, but his eyes gleamed with decisiveness. Even as the paper crane and the projected lands of Heavenspan closed in, he closed his eyes!

As he did, an intense, explosive rumbling sound filled the Wildlands and the lands of Heavenspan alike. All sects, all living things, all cultivators, all beasts, even the mortals could hear it!

RUMBLE!!

The volume seemed too intense for the world to sustain. The ground in the Wildlands shook as intense force erupted from the ground beneath Bai Xiaochun’s feet, causing his face to fall. In Arch-Emperor City, in the four kingly cities, in countless tribes and clans, everyone was shocked by the violent quaking.

“What is that sound?!?!”

“The ground is shaking.... Don’t tell me that earth dragons are on the move!?!?”

It wasn’t just the Wildlands. The enormous Great Wall that had been built by the four riversource sects began to tremble. The armies encamped on the four major sections of the wall were rocked by astonishment, especially when they realized that the restrictive spell formations built into the wall itself were filled with cracks and vibrating dramatically.

“What’s going on?!?!”

“The enemy is attacking!!”

The effect wasn’t limited to the Wildlands and the Great Wall. Everywhere in the Heavenspan River region, from the delta regions, to the Lower Reaches, to the Middle Reaches, all the way to the riversource sects and even the rainbow structure of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, began to shake.

Countless individuals were in an uproar. Every living thing in the entire world was filled with shock!

As of this moment, there was only one way to describe the shocking divine ability that the gravekeeper was using… it was shaking the entire world!

The Celestial’s face fell, and the little girl in paper crane form lurched to a halt, a sensation of deadly crisis filling her heart.

“What magical technique is this?!?!” The girl didn't dare to fly any closer to the gravekeeper, and in fact, began to fall back rapidly. However, even as she did, cracking sounds filled the sky as an enormous rift opened up. It quickly spread out, reaching the nearly indescribable length of 300,000 meters!!

Everyone in the Wildlands could see it. Everyone on the Great Wall could see it. And as for the sects in the lands of Heavenspan, although they couldn’t see it directly, they could sense that drastic transformations were underway!

The rift almost looked like a wound… that would remain eternally in place in the heavens of the Heavenspan Realm!

The instant the rift appeared, the gravekeeper’s eyes snapped open, and he spoke in a voice that echoed like thunder!

“Spleen. Earth!”

The moment the words left his lips, the rift widened, and a buzzing sound filled the air as… a huge mountain descended!!

It was so enormous that it seemed like a heavenly body. It was such an unbelievable sight that Bai Xiaochun and everyone else were completely taken aback.

“There’s a mountain… falling from the heavens?” Not too far away from the stunned Bai Xiaochun, Mistress Red-Dust and the Giant Ghost King were also looking on in complete astonishment.

The mountain was not a mountain from anywhere in the land around them. It was truly… descending from the heavens!

Deafening rumbling sounds echoed into the ears of all onlookers as the pitch-black mountain began to drop down aggressively toward the Celestial’s projected lands of Heavenspan, and the girl in paper crane form!

The Celestial’s face fell; this was not his first time fighting with the gravekeeper, but it was his first time ever seeing a divine ability like this. His hands began to flash in a double-handed incantation gesture, sending the projected lands of Heavenspan flying forth in a deadly counter attack.

However, when the lands of Heavenspan reached the enormous mountain, they simply passed right through it! It was as if they existed in different dimensions from each other! The mountain proceeded along as if nothing had happened, until it was directly above of the girl in paper crane form.

A scream escaped the girl’s lips; she knew that she couldn’t avoid this blow. Eyes shining with naked ferocity, she sent the paper crane flying toward the mountain, surrounded by dense black mist.

When the two of them made contact, Bai Xiaochun could see firsthand what was meant by the expression a *mantis trying to stop a war chariot!*

The girl simply didn’t qualify to challenge the weight of that enormous mountain. Her paper crane shattered into fragments, and the soul of the little girl screamed miserably as… the mountain crushed her back down onto the ground!

Her soul collapsed into motes of light. This time… only about half of the motes of light survived the blow, and when they formed back into the shape of the girl, she was even more blurry than before. She looked like the slightest wind might blow her away, and her eyes were filled with profound terror. Turning her head and not looking back, she fled.

The gravekeeper glanced at her, then ignored her. Voice cool, he spoke for a second time.

“Kidneys. Water!”

A second world-shaking sound echoed out, astonishing all living beings in the world. Many mountains crumbled, and vast gulches and ravines were opened up in the land. More cracks appeared on the surface of the Great Wall, and many mountain ranges in the Heavenspan River region began to shake violently.

At the same time… a second wound-like rift opened up in the sky. Cracking sounds could be heard again, and the Celestial gasped as… a huge river descended!!

This was neither the Heavenspan River nor the Underworld River. It was… a river of blood!!

Fresh, flowing blood shot toward the Celestial, who roared as he sent the projected lands of Heavenspan out to defend himself.

However, as soon as the two made contact, the Celestial’s projection proved completely powerless. The lands of Heavenspan were destroyed as easily as twigs!

Bai Xiaochun stared in mute shock at what was happening. First a huge mountain descended from the heavens, and then a river….

By now, the Celestial was alone up in the sky, an unsightly expression on his face that was a mixture of disbelief and shock. However, unlike the little girl, he didn’t flee, he shot toward the gravekeeper!

Voice cold and filled with mad killing intent, he said, “Let’s see how many times you can unleash a divine ability that eternally harms the world itself!”

As he closed in, he waved his hand in the direction of the gravekeeper.

Expression bitter, the gravekeeper sighed and spoke a third time.

“Heart. Fire!”

A third immense sound filled the entire world. As it did, the four sections of the Great Wall which separated the Wildlands from the Heavenspan region began to shake. Countless cultivators had been rushing in an attempt to repair the cracks that had begun to spread out on the Great Wall, but at this point, the wall couldn’t hold any longer. The Great Wall… collapsed!!

From the time the four sections of the Great Wall had been constructed until now, they had been breached and even broken in places. But they had never collapsed. But now, in the east, south, west, and north… the four sections of the Great Wall fell!

Countless cultivators stared in terror and shock at what was happening.

“Celestial phenomena!”

“The Great Wall… is collapsing….”

It wasn’t just the Great Wall. Many of the mountains in the Heavenspan region shook so violently that they began to collapse. At the same time, back in the Wildlands, Bai Xiaochun watched as… a third wound-like rift opened up!

From within that rift descended… not a mountain, and not a river, but rather… a globe of fire!!

More precisely, it was a sun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0839 awe-chapter-840

“The sun is falling?!?!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly bulged out of his head as he watched the sun shooting down from the rift toward what remained of the Celestial’s projected lands of Heavenspan.

It didn’t matter how the Celestial tried to avoid the blow, it was impossible. It only took a moment for the sun to slam into the projection!

The projection trembled violently, and immediately collapsed into fragments. The Celestial himself was revealed, his face ashen, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. This time, it was without the slightest hesitation that he turned and fled.

Although he could hardly bear to do so, he knew that his plan had failed. Even he and the little girl working together had not been a match for the gravekeeper, which caused rage to burn in his heart.

“Dammit! I already suppressed him in the past. But this time he resorted to a divine ability that can eternally damage the world! He clearly… will stop at nothing to kill me! What makes me illegitimate isn’t bloodline or approval, it’s the legacy? I knew that a long time ago!” However, the Celestial didn’t dare to stick around any longer.

The gravekeeper seemed to not care that he was trying to make a getaway. Voice cool, he spoke a fourth time.

“Lungs. Metal!”

A fourth world-shaking sound erupted into the Heavenspan Realm, and a fourth wound-like rift opened in the sky. Even as the Celestial began to accelerate, golden light spilled out of the rift and… a huge golden cauldron descended!

The cauldron emitted blinding light, along with intense rumbling sounds. It seemed capable of locking down everything in the air around it, which made it impossible for the Celestial to flee. It was a critical moment, and a fierce gleam appeared in the Celestial’s eyes as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, a multitude of eyes appeared around him, which all blinked, sending streams of sword light blasting toward the cauldron.

The powers of the cauldron were mysterious and enigmatic; when the countless streams of sword qi from the Celestial slammed into it, they were like eggs slamming into a boulder. They shattered, and the golden cauldron wasn’t harmed at all. A moment later, the cauldron then slammed into the howling Celestial himself.

A huge boom echoed out in all directions, and a shockwave blasted out. Blood sprayed out of the Celestial’s mouth; he instantly withered visibly, and his eyes turned completely bloodshot. However, he was the Celestial, the most powerful person in this world other than the gravekeeper.

It didn’t matter that the huge golden cauldron had slammed into him, all it did was cause him to cough up some blood. Without hesitating, he continued to speed away into the distance.

Everything was happening so quickly that Bai Xiaochun and the other onlookers had no time to react. The little girl fled, the Celestial ran away, and it seemed as if the fight was already over!

However, it was in this moment that, for the first time, a cold light appeared in the gravekeeper's eyes as he spoke for a fifth time.

"Liver. Wood!!"

A fifth world-shaking noise echoed out. Most of the mountains in the Wildlands collapsed, along with all of the cities connected to them. By this point, there were absolutely no barriers between the Wildlands and the Heavenspan River region!

Countless cultivators had been rocked over and over again by what was happening, and now, many began to cry in alarm and flee from the region of the Great Wall.

Many of the mountains in the Heavenspan River region also collapsed, and one of the branches of the river itself was blocked off by changes to the land!

The entire world had been severely wounded, not to mention the sky, which now had four gaping wounds in it, the likes of which would strike fear into the hearts of anyone who could see them.

However, it was in this moment that a fifth wound-like rift opened up. Then, cracking sounds could be heard as a 3,000-meter-thick vine began to droop down. It was covered with countless leaves, and brimmed with life force as it slashed toward the area where the northern Great Wall had once stood.

It moved with blinding speed, shattering the air around it, and filling the world with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering noise.

It was an attack that completely shattered the air, landing directly onto the Celestial and forcing him out into the open!

More blood sprayed out of the Celestial’s mouth. His ashen face was a mask of fear and dread. Never could he have imagined that the gravekeeper would use a divine ability this incredibly powerful!

“Gravekeeper, you old ghost!!” he howled angrily. He turned and attempted to flee in a different direction, but the vine immediately slashed at him again!

Even the Celestial was shocked by the speed with which it moved. His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, causing golden light to spring out around him, which was none other than Heavenspan Sea water! The water rapidly formed together into the shape of a huge spear, which he stabbed toward the incoming vine!

The attack caused all light in the world to grow dim. Furthermore, the Heavenspan Sea off in the distance howled as the water within it began to rise up into the air!!

The entire Heavenspan Sea became an empty basin!

All of the water had risen into the air, and began to move with vast power and speed toward the north section of the Great Wall. Apparently, that spear within the Celestial’s hand was the nucleus of the Heavenspan Sea; wherever it was pointed, the sea would follow!!

Countless cultivators in the Heavenspan River region saw the Heavenspan Sea flying overhead, and began to cry out in shock!

“That’s….”

“Heavenspan Sea water!!”

“Heavens, what’s going on?!?!”

Only the cultivators in the north could clearly see what was happening. They saw the Celestial, they saw his spear, and they saw that huge vine!

Although all of this takes some time to describe, it happened in the briefest of moments. As the Celestial stabbed out with his spear, Heavenspan Sea water filled the air behind him, rolling forward like a wave, with shocking power that defied description.

The resulting collision with the vine sent out a boom that shook the entire world. As it happened, more than half of the vine was completely destroyed!!

However, the vine also managed to slash the Heavenspan Sea water in two!!

The Celestial remained in between the two halves, trembling and coughing up blood. Furthermore, the red lock of hair hanging down his forehead was severed, and began to float down. He reached out to grab it, but before he could, it vanished, seemingly grabbed up by someone else.

“No!!” he screamed in rage, his eyes flashing with madness, terror, and fear.

The source of all that emotion was the fact that the red lock of hair had been severed!! That was no ordinary hair. It was a life-saving blood-hair that he had spent his entire life cultivating, a precious treasure filled with life force that could be used almost like a second life!!

In fact, the blow he had sustained just now had actually been enough to kill him…. He had used the blood-hair in the last moment to save his life!

Had he been able to catch the hair before it vanished, he could have continued to cultivate it. It would have been very costly, but once he absorbed it back into his body, he would have been able to use it again.

But now, that critically important blood-hair had been snatched by someone else. As a result, the Celestial was left trembling and in a rage. As of this moment, he didn't dare to stay in the Wildlands. Filled with frustration and rage, he fled back to Heavenspan Island to recover.

As he did, he looked at the collapsed Great Wall and then waved his hand, sending some of the Heavenspan Sea water streaming out to form a barrier that protected the lands of Heavenspan. For now, that barrier would act like the Great Wall had, and create a restrictive spell that would prevent the Wildlands from entering!

Because he had personally set the restrictive spell in place, only someone higher than a demigod, with a cultivation base as powerful as the Celestial, would be able to get past it!

Face ashen and unsightly, he shouted, “Gravekeeper, you old ghost, you win this round. But next time, I refuse to believe that you’ll be able to use that divine ability again. Next time, I’ll cut you down!!”

With that, he vanished to begin the lengthy and difficult process of recovery.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0840 awe-chapter-841

Back on the battlefield in the Wildlands, the Grand Heavenmaster and the other powerful experts stood there with very serious expressions on their faces. Bai Xiaochun's mind was still reeling from the sight of that huge vine. However, the northern part of the Great Wall was too far away, so he hadn't been able to see how the vine defeated the Celestial.

However, the Celestial's enraged voice had echoed out to fill the Wildlands, and therefore, everyone back on the battlefield had gasped and looked over at the gravekeeper.

Bai Xiaochun had known before that the gravekeeper was powerful. But to see it with his own eyes was a different thing. Now, he truly knew that the gravekeeper's battle prowess was at an unimaginable level!

"That girl joined forces with the Celestial… but in the end, they were both injured and forced to flee…." Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun swallowed hard. He wished he could run over and grab onto the gravekeeper's leg. After all, his identity had been revealed to everyone.

After thinking about everything he had done in the Wildlands, his heart began to pound with anxiety. His actions as Bai Hao had caused countless people to hate him, and now that they knew he was the notorious fugitive Bai Xiaochun, there would be no shortage of people who wanted to kill him even more than before. In fact, if they lined up and took turns, it would probably take over a hundred years to get through them all….

“The only person who can save me is Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper…. I have to think of a way to get him to pay attention to me….” Muttering to himself, he took advantage of the fact that nobody was paying attention to him to start inching toward the gravekeeper.

Everyone else was still stunned from the shocking battle they had just witnessed. As for the gravekeeper, he sighed and declined to pursue the Celestial. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to; he simply couldn’t. If possible, he wished to avoid that level of conflict with the Celestial right now!

The truth was that he actually didn’t have very much time left….

He had been very reluctant to use that divine ability of his which inflicted eternal injuries onto the world itself. There were now five gaping wounds up in the sky.

And on the ground, there was a huge mountain, a river of blood, a golden cauldron… and a sun!

All of them were eternal objects. And of course, the gravekeeper knew that it was just as the Celestial had said; he couldn't use that divine ability again.

The five elements of metal, wood, water, fire, earth, which were closely connected to the five yin organs, were unique, but were also classified as a trump card even for the gravekeeper.

“What a pity that I only managed to hit that blood-hair,” he murmured to himself, “and didn’t manage to kill him completely….” He looked much older than he had earlier, and his aura was clearly fading away in a way that could not be replenished.

The Celestial had laid a trap for him, and he had turned that trap around into a deadly ambush!

But in the end, neither of them had completely succeeded in their aims.

The fact that the little girl had escaped wasn't very important to him, and in fact, he had let her go. He knew exactly where she came from, and it was actually a safety precaution to refrain from killing her. Besides, he had another goal in mind, and knew that he could get her to unwittingly help him.

The main thing he cared about was the Celestial!

Even as the gravekeeper sighed and contemplated these things, the cold voice of a woman suddenly echoed out, breaking the silence.

"You think you can get away, Bai Xiaochun!?!?" It was none other than Mistress Red-Dust, who had finally awoken from her reverie. When she looked over and saw Bai Xiaochun slinking away from her, she thought back to their encounter back in the labyrinth, and immediately grew angry.

Her shout caused everyone else to come to their senses, and all of them turned to look over at Mistress Red-Dust and Bai Xiaochun. A strange expression could be seen on the Giant Ghost King's face. A glimmer passed through the Grand Heavenmaster's eyes, and he looked over at the gravekeeper. As for the War Champion King and the Nine Serenities King, they both wore frowns on their faces. The only person who was smiling was the Spirit Advent King, and it seemed like a genuine, jovial smile.

Chen Haosong and the other heavenly dukes had unsightly expressions on their faces. Back during the shocking battle which had just played out, they had not been able to spare any attention for Bai Xiaochun. But now that the fighting was over, they thought back to how he had been using the name Bai Hao, and how he had wreaked bloody havoc all through the Wildlands. That caused gleams of ill intent to appear in their eyes.

Terror gripped Bai Xiaochun’s heart, and his expression flickered. Rushing backward a few paces, he cried out loudly, “Everybody calm down! I can explain!”

The demigods didn’t move, nor did the heavenly dukes. However, the rage on Mistress Red-Dust’s face couldn’t have been more dramatic. When she thought back to what he had done to her in the labyrinth, and how he was now her fiancé, it made her so angry that she couldn’t hold back from racing directly toward him.

“You owe me an explanation, Bai Xiaochun!!” she screamed.

“Zimo, you… I saved your life! I’m your greatest benefactor!!” Anxiety mounting by the moment, he backed up even faster.

Turning to the Giant Ghost King, he shouted, “Father-in-law, save me!!”

His words caused even more strange expressions to appear on the faces of the demigods. The Giant Ghost King cleared his throat in embarrassment and pretended he hadn’t heard. However, Mistress Red-Dust’s rage increased.

“Shut up!!” she shot back, accelerating as she headed toward Bai Xiaochun. Wracked with nervousness, Bai Xiaochun turned and started running in the direction of the gravekeeper.

“Master, save me!!”

When he said the word *Master*, the Grand Heavenmaster gasped, and the Giant Ghost King’s jaw dropped. The expressions of the Nine Serenities King, War Champion King, and Spirit Advent King all flickered, and the hearts of Chen Haosong and the heavenly dukes began to pound.

Even Mistress Red-Dust was caught off-guard, and lurched to a stop. Eyes wide, she watched Bai Xiaochun hurry over to the gravekeeper and then offer him formal greetings the way an apprentice would to a Master.

The gravekeeper wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. He looked at Bai Xiaochun staring at him in melodramatic fashion, and couldn’t help but shake his head. Waving his sleeve, he declined to say anything, and simply vanished, taking Bai Xiaochun along with him.

The Grand Heavenmaster and everyone else stared at the spot the gravekeeper had just disappeared from, their hearts shaking with shock. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had used the word *Master* left them deeply and profoundly shocked.

Chen Haosong suddenly felt profoundly nervous, and dispelled any thoughts of causing problems for Bai Xiaochun in the future. Although the gravekeeper hadn’t admitted the truth with words, the fact that he had taken Bai Xiaochun away with him explained everything.

Of course, the Grand Heavenmaster had long since come to the realization that the gravekeeper had taken an interest in Bai Xiaochun. After a short moment of silence, he transmitted messages to the four heavenly kings. Out of respect for the Hell-Emperor, they all agreed to keep the matter of Bai Xiaochun’s identity a secret!

The only news which would be allowed to spread was that the little girl had been impersonating Bai Xiaochun. His true identity would not be revealed.

After making the agreement formal, everyone departed. The battle which had just been fought had been too sudden, and too important. Troops needed to be deployed. After all, the fact that the Great Wall had fallen… meant that big changes were coming.

The last to leave were the Giant Ghost King and Mistress Red-Dust. Mixed emotions could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face as he turned to his stunned daughter. He sighed.

“Mo'er, I didn’t think things through carefully enough. About the marriage agreement… let’s just cancel it, alright?”

Mistress Red-Dust stood there quietly, looking off into space. She didn’t say anything. Her mind was filled with an image of Bai Xiaochun pulling her to safety in a moment of deadly crisis. Instead of just fleeing on his own, he had taken it upon himself to protect her….

Eventually, everyone was gone, and silence filled the lands. However, the five wounds in the sky were still there, and the vast gulches which had been hewn in the lands during the course of the fighting remained. The evidence of the world-shaking battle was still there.

Back in the Underworld River Restricted Area, two figures stepped out of thin air onto the bank of the river. They were none other than the gravekeeper and Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling as nervous as ever. He knew that the matter of his identity had been declared a secret, and at the moment, he was clasping hands in formal and very polite fashion to the gravekeeper.

“Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper…. Um… it’s not that I wanted to trick everyone. You understand, right, sir? I, Bai Xiaochun, am a very kind-hearted person! I don’t like causing problems! I'm very well-behaved. I just want to get back to the River-Defying Sect. They're the ones who all want to kill me. I disguised myself to try to be able to get home safely. Proclamation of Universal Grace? Inspections commissioner? Shakedowns? I never meant to do any of those things. Ai. Sometimes in life, you just have to make some compromises!” As he spoke, he kept his eye on the gravekeeper to try to assess his attitude. However, the more he went along, the more he really felt like he had the short end of the stick. He had just been going with the flow, which ended up forcing him to do a lot of things he didn’t really want to do.

No expression could be seen on the gravekeeper’s face as he listened to Bai Xiaochun. Finally, he waved his hand, summoning a black command medallion that he tossed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“The Celestial used Heavenspan Sea water to create a barrier where the four sections of the Great Wall once stood. No one will be able to get through that barrier any time soon. I am unable to leave the Wildlands, so I can’t escort you home. If you really want to get back to the River-Defying Sect, you’ll need to go through the Deadmire. And the only way you’ll get through it safely is with this command medallion.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0841 awe-chapter-842

Surprised, Bai Xiaochun accepted the command medallion. As soon as it touched his skin, intense coldness rushed into him. Clearly, it was some sort of precious object. Bai Xiaochun had heard of the Deadmire before. There were even some people who called it the Emptymire, as it was a location between the Heavenspan region and the Wildlands that was completely empty of all life.

There were only four areas where the Deadmire was accessible, all of which were near the Great Wall. With the command medallion he now possessed, he could enter it, and thus leave the Wildlands. Furthermore, it would actually speed up his journey back to the River-Defying Sect. After all, his original plan had been to cross the Great Wall, which would have eventually required that he travel back to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect by boat.

The fact that the gravekeeper was treating him so well was moving. Obviously, the command medallion was no fake; if the gravekeeper wanted to get rid of him, he wouldn’t have needed to resort to some trap to do it.

“Great-Grandpa… you really are like my own great-grandfather…. Well, I guess I’ll take my leave now!” With that, he prepared to leave. After all, the Wildlands was a dangerous place, and considering that everyone was currently a bit stunned by who Bai Xiaochun’s Master was, it seemed like the perfect time to get away.

Of course, the Celestial’s attitude gave him pause. But considering that he was a very unimportant person in the grand scheme of things, it seemed unlikely that important people like the Celestial would pay much attention to him. Besides, he hadn’t done anything to offend the Celestial directly.

“If I just slip back quietly, it should be fine.” Although he felt a bit hesitant, now that his identity had been revealed, the Wildlands was definitely much more dangerous than the River-Defying Sect.

However, just as he made his decision, the gravekeeper suddenly started talking again. He stood there on the bank of the Underworld River, his hands clasped behind his back as he said, “Do you remember how I answered you all those years ago when you asked for my name…?”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun said, stopping in place and looking back.

“This world is basically a huge tomb, buried within which is a sovereign known as the Arch-Lord…. I am he who watches over his grave. The gravekeeper.” For some reason, the gravekeeper looked older than ever as he spoke.

“Upon that sovereign’s death, he closed the Worldgate and left instructions that only someone who cultivated his legacy all the way to the Mahayana Realm, a celestial, could open that gate. Until then, no one is permitted to leave this world!” He spoke softly, an ancient gleam in his eyes as though he were contemplating the past.

“A tomb?” Bai Xiaochun said with a soft gasp. Although he had learned a bit about the world in scattered bits throughout the years, this was his first time getting such a detailed explanation. The fact that the world he lived in was actually a tomb caused his eyes to widen, and his heart to race.

“His descendants became the imperial clan,” the gravekeeper continued. “And that is the origin of the Arch-Emperors, and also why this world's true name is… the Arch-Emperor Realm!” The gravekeeper wasn't looking at Bai Xiaochun, which made it seem like he was talking to himself as he contemplated ancient times.

“Were it not for certain unexpected events, this world should have long since seen an emperor who rose from the Demigod Realm to the Mahayana Realm…. Unfortunately, unexpected events *did* occur. A cultivator with spectacular talent created a new technique, a type of celestial magic. He forged his own path of cultivation, and eventually toppled the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!” Although the Gravekeeper was speaking very quietly at this point, Bai Xiaochun could tell that there was a touch of praise in his voice when he mentioned this certain cultivator. Obviously, that cultivator was so spectacular that he was deserving of praise by the gravekeeper. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun knew exactly who he was.

“I was unable to interfere with the matter. In fact, there are many things that I can’t interfere with. I'm just a gravekeeper after all. I watch over the sovereign’s tomb, I tend to the cycle of reincarnation, and I defend the Worldgate. The first time I took any action at all was to ensure that the imperial clan wasn’t exterminated, and that the Joss Flame of the world continued to burn here in the Wildlands. However, the price I paid for interfering was that my time of existence was cut in half.

“That cultivator I mentioned spent years trying to find me. When he did, he asked me to open the Worldgate. He was illegitimate, so naturally I refused, but I did tell him the proper method to achieve his goal!

“However, the Arch-Lord’s legacy was not suitable for him. He came to me over and over again, and tried many ways to convince me. But in the end, he finally came to the conclusion that the only way to leave this place would be to kill me.

“Presumably, you know who that cultivator is. He is Daoist Heavenspan, also known as… the Celestial.” At this point, the gravekeeper turned and looked at Bai Xiaochun.

The gravekeeper’s words already had Bai Xiaochun reeling in astonishment, and yet, that astonishment grew more intense when Bai Xiaochun saw the gravekeeper’s face.

“Great-Grandpa, you….”

The gravekeeper seemed even older than before, so much so that he looked like he had just climbed out of a grave. He was very different from before, and fairly radiated a sense of weakness.

“I'm very old…. I've been around for far too long. I suspect that when that sovereign created me, he didn’t expect for me to exist for this much time. My original fate was to perish along with the opening of the Worldgate.” It seemed as if the gravekeeper didn’t mind the fact that he was growing extremely old at all.

“I don’t have much time left, so I decided to take action earlier. Unfortunately… not even calling upon forbidden magic was I able to kill him.

“Acting in the way I did reduced my time even further…. In addition, the wounds caused by the forbidden magic have pushed the world closer to the brink of collapse.” The gravekeeper shook his head, regret shining in his eyes.

As of this point, Bai Xiaochun felt like he understood everything. The gravekeeper was not just regretful for having failed in killing the Celestial in the recent battle. He regretted not having done so earlier. Because of the various limitations he faced, he had allowed the Celestial to keep living and grow into what he was today.

In fact, he had taken action today in the hopes of making up for some of those past mistakes!

“I knew from the beginning that I might fail to kill him. But I decided to try anyway…. The truth was that, even before you came to the Wildlands, I had already begun to make arrangements for what happens after I die.” The gravekeeper sighed and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“The successor of the Hell-Emperor?” Bai Xiaochun asked hesitantly, his heart beginning to pound. The gravekeeper nodded, causing Bai Xiaochun’s heart rate to increase even more. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, if he hadn’t been able to put the puzzle pieces together, it would have meant he was a complete idiot. After all, it seemed obvious that the gravekeeper had noticed how outstanding he was, and that he wanted him to accept his legacy and become the next Hell-Emperor!

The mere thought of becoming the Hell-Emperor got Bai Xiaochun profoundly excited. However, he cleared his throat and humbly said, “Um… Great-Grandpa, the truth is that I’m not really that outstanding…. However, I can say that I’m ready! Uh, right. What does the successor of the Hell-Emperor actually have to do?”

The gravekeeper looked deeply into Bai Xiaochun’s eyes and said, “He will enter the Underworld River, and deliver his soul to the Underworld Palace. He will guard the sovereign’s tomb and watch over the cycle of reincarnation. He will defend the Worldgate, and refuse to open it for anyone who is illegitimate!”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback. The last part of what the gravekeeper had just said seemed interesting, but there was something a bit unsettling about the first part.

“Great-Grandpa, what do you mean by ‘deliver his soul to the Underworld Palace’? If his soul goes into the Underworld River, doesn’t that mean… that he has to die?” When he saw the gravekeeper nod in response, he gasped, and his face turned as white as a sheet.

“Great-Grandpa, er…. Look, I'm really not very outstanding. I'm just a regular person! I get restless easily, and have a lot of faults. If I’m in charge of the Underworld River, bad things will probably happen. It’s too big of a responsibility for a kid like me. Um… why don’t you pick someone else? I’ll… I’ll see you later, Great-Grandpa!” He took a step back, but before he could do anything more, the gravekeeper’s hand shot out toward him as if to grab him.

Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp.

“I'm really not the best choice, Great-Grandpa! Wherever I go, I accidentally cause huge disasters! I don’t want to cause a disaster for you! I--”

“Pipe down! I’m not so much of an idiot that I would pick you to be my successor!” As it turned out, what the gravekeeper had grabbed was not Bai Xiaochun, but his bag of holding. All of a sudden, Bai Hao’s soulhoarding pagoda flew out into the open and came to rest on the gravekeeper’s palm.

“The person I've picked to be my successor isn’t you,” he said coolly, “it’s Bai Hao.”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun replied, visibly stunned.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0842 awe-chapter-843

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to be stunned. Bai Hao sat there inside his soulhoarding pagoda, his jaw hanging open and his mind spinning.

The sudden dramatic turn of events was almost too much to take. During the dramatic battle, Bai Hao hadn’t dared to come out into the open. Upon returning to the Underworld River, he had cautiously peered out into the world, listening to the gravekeeper and even feeling excited that his Master was about to become the Hell-Emperor.

Never could he have imagined that the gravekeeper would suddenly grab him… and then say that *he* was the one who was supposed to be the successor.

Worried that Bai Xiaochun might misunderstand the situation, he anxiously said, “Senior, sir… you must have made a mistake, I--”

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochun looked on, stunned. Actually, he wasn’t displeased at all. In fact, there was only one thing he was thinking. “My apprentice is going to be the next Hell-Emperor? Heavens, is this really happening…? If my apprentice becomes the next Hell-Emperor, then nobody in the Wildlands will ever dare to provoke me!!”

He was feeling very excited about the whole thing. Obviously, nobody would ever dare to cause problems for him from now on. If they did, he could have his apprentice wave his hand and crush them! He was essentially going to become invincible….

“Nine Serenities King? Grand Heavenmaster? Chen Haosong? Who will dare to provoke me? Who will dare to glare at me!?!” Profoundly pleased, he slapped his thigh, threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Wonderful!” he said loudly. “You have made an excellent choice, Great-Grandpa. This apprentice of mine is the perfect fit to be the Hell-Emperor! In fact, nobody in all the Wildlands is more suitable!” Seeing that Bai Hao was about to jump in and say something, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively in the way that a Master should.

“As your Master, Bai Hao, I will represent you to accept the offer. It's set!”

A profound gleam could be seen in the gravekeeper’s eyes as he looked at Bai Xiaochun and then Bai Hao. No one would ever have been able to guess the gravekeeper’s plan ahead of time. The truth was that he had never considered Bai Xiaochun as a possible successor. Furthermore, Bai Hao was only one of several that he had been watching!

For example, there was Zhou Yixing, and the soul of the Luochen Clan chosen that Bai Xiaochun had killed. And there were others…. He had many candidates, including the people on the Hell-Emperor Stele. However, the reason that Bai Hao had risen up from among all those candidates to become the official successor had less to do with the gravekeeper and more to do with… Bai Xiaochun!

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun was more important to the gravekeeper than any of the other people on the list of candidates. Naturally, the gravekeeper didn't want him to become the Hell-Emperor. He had a more important mission in mind for Bai Xiaochun….

It was for this reason that Bai Xiaochun happened to encounter Bai Hao when he was teleported into the Wildlands. Back then, when Bai Xiaochun had made his departure, the gravekeeper had appeared, with a very profound look in his eyes.

It was also for this reason that Bai Xiaochun ended up encountering Bai Hao’s soul in the Necromancer Kettle….

The gravekeeper wanted Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun to meet, and to make that happen, he had interfered behind the scenes several times. Although Bai Xiaochun had been suspicious about certain things over the years, the clues had been too vague for him to come to any conclusions.

Of course, not even the gravekeeper could have anticipated that Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao would become apprentice and Master, would accomplish so many things, and would develop such deep feelings for each other. All the gravekeeper had done was ensure that they met. And if Bai Hao could gain Bai Xiaochun’s approval… well then, he would become the chosen successor!

If he was unable to do that, then the gravekeeper wouldn’t have hesitated to discard him and pick another candidate. He would have then ensured that the next candidate encountered Bai Xiaochun and got to know him. And he would have continued to do that until he found a successor that Bai Xiaochun approved of.

In fact, as far as he was concerned, Bai Xiaochun’s approval was the only main requirement to become his successor!

Of course, he didn’t explain that to Bai Xiaochun. After looking closely at Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun, he turned his attention to Bai Hao, to whom he spoke in a voice that seemed to echo out from ancient times.

“Bai Hao, are you willing to become my successor?”

Looking very nervous, Bai Hao looked over at Bai Xiaochun. “Master....”

Bai Xiaochun was worried that the opportunity might pass. Besides, he really did feel that this was a wonderful thing for Bai Hao. “Hurry up and agree, my little apprentice,” he said. “This is good fortune for you!”

Bai Hao hesitated for a moment, mixed emotions in his eyes as he looked at his Master. The truth was that he didn't care too much about the supposed position of being the successor to the Hell-Emperor. What he was more worried about was losing out on the happiness he felt by being able to accompany his Master.

His Master was his only family, and the only person he truly liked. That relationship was the most important thing in his entire life.

However, he also realized that his Master had offended too many people in the Wildlands. By becoming the Hell-Emperor, he could make sure that no one ever dared to cause problems for his Master.

Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best way of looking at the matter, he gritted his teeth and looked back at the gravekeeper.

“Senior, I am willing to become your successor. However, sir… I can’t view you as my Master. For all eternity, I will only ever have one Master!!” Both his voice and his eyes brimmed with determination. He was willing to become the next Hell-Emperor so that he could protect his Master, but that didn’t mean that he could change his allegiances.

Bai Xiaochun was shocked to hear Bai Hao’s words, and his gaze turned even softer as he looked at his apprentice. However, he knew his apprentice well, and understood how importantly Bai Hao viewed their Master-apprentice relationship.

Although no expression could be seen on the gravekeeper’s face, he was smiling inside. The truth was that despite what he knew about Bai Hao, he still wasn’t absolutely convinced that he was the perfect person to be the next Hell-Emperor. After all, it was a very important position. As such, he was still performing a few tests.

However, Bai Hao’s answer conformed perfectly with what the gravekeeper was looking for. There were no false feelings in them, and they caused the gravekeeper to be even more satisfied.

“Good!” the gravekeeper said, nodding. Although Bai Hao had a lot of questions, the gravekeeper didn't give him an opportunity to ask them. He waved his hand, causing a streak of red light to fly out toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes widened as he reflexively reached out to catch… a lock of blood-colored hair!!

As soon as it was out in the open, intense rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth. The sky dimmed, and a whirlwind sprang up around Bai Xiaochun!

It almost seemed like the hair was trying to escape his grasp, prompting him to quickly clasp his hand down to hold it. As he did, he was certain that he could sense something howling, and even detected a dramatic thrum of life force from inside of it.

The gravekeeper’s eyes sparkled. He waved his sleeve, and the howling ceased. An invisible seal had been placed on the lock of hair, making it impossible for it to flee, not even if it had more life force than it already did. All it could do was lay there meekly on Bai Xiaochun’s palm!

A mere brush with the life force inside the hair caused Bai Xiaochun’s entire body to thrum. Of course, he recognized this hair. It was... the very same blood-hair which he had seen on the Celestial!

“The life force in that hair should push your Undying Bones to the peak. Think of it as a gift of good fortune from me to you!” The gravekeeper then took Bai Hao with him as he stepped toward the Underworld River. The water surged as they entered, and then they floated off into the distance until they were gone.

The Underworld River slowly faded away, revealing the dry riverbed. Everything in the area was completely quiet....

Bai Xiaochun was alone on the dry riverbank, holding the blood-red hair, looking off in the direction his apprentice had just vanished in.

Everything had happened so quickly. Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested in becoming the Hell-Emperor, he did hope that his apprentice would succeed at it. However, to have Bai Hao gone so suddenly had him feeling a bit lonely and disappointed.

“When the baby eagles grow up, they have to leave the nest eventually, and soar in the sky....” He sighed, reminding himself that at least he had become someone very important because of everything that had happened. “There’s nobody more powerful than me in the Wildlands now.... My Daoist partner is a deva, my father is a demigod, and my apprentice is the Hell-Emperor! Not even the Grand Heavenmaster could match up to me!”

When he thought about it in this way, his heart began to race with excitement.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0843 awe-chapter-844

Happy for his apprentice, and excited about his new status, he looked down at the hair he held, and his heart yet again began to thump.

“A lock of the Celestial’s hair… It was the only red hair on his head…. I can only imagine how important a treasured item like this would be to the Celestial….” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun glanced around subconsciously.

The cultivators that had previously been stationed here to guard the Underworld River Restricted Area were nowhere to be seen, leaving him completely alone. Perhaps it was the doing of the gravekeeper, or perhaps they left because of the shocking battle and the destruction of the Great Wall. The entire structure of the Wildlands would be changing. At this point, he gritted his teeth.

“Fudge. What the hell am I afraid of? Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper gave this to me! It's mine now! Besides, according to what Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper said, if I absorb this life force, my Undying Bones will climb to the very peak. Even if this hair belonged to someone more powerful, I would still absorb it!”

After the tempering he had experienced in the Wildlands, Bai Xiaochun had become somewhat more courageous than he had been in the past. Therefore, he found an area in the Underworld River Restricted Area that was suitable to hew out a temporary immortal's cave, and then went into seclusion to cultivate!

**

Somewhere else in the Wildlands, in what seemed like a different dimension, there was a huge black river that was none other than the Underworld River.

It was as black as night, and yet, it was still possible to see a huge palace at the very end of the swirling river water.

The palace was also black, and very sinister in appearance as it rose up over the river water. There was something consummately powerful about it, and there was a constant stream of souls which flew toward it, encircled it, and then vanished on their way to being reincarnated.

This was none other than the Hell-Emperor Palace!

This place controlled reincarnation, and determined matters of life and death!

In one of the grand halls in that palace, two rows of statues could be seen lining the walls, that looked like underworld generals. At the very end of the hall, beyond the statues, was a huge throne made of black bones!

Suddenly, the gravekeeper appeared, walking through the hall until he was at the throne, upon which he sat down. He was surrounded by a domineering aura, making him seem like a paragon or a god. He wore an imperial crown, as well as a black robe embroidered with an underworld dragon!

With the wave of a sleeve, he caused Bai Hao to materialize right in front of him.

He was clearly ill at ease. He looked around at the awe-inspiring hall with its profound aura of death, and then turned to look at the gravekeeper, who sat there on his throne, face completely expressionless. Bai Hao quickly bowed his head and clasped hands in greeting.

“Bai Hao!” the gravekeeper said, his eyes shining brightly, and his voice echoing like heavenly thunder.

The gravekeeper seemed very different than he had when talking with Bai Xiaochun earlier. Right now, he absolutely seemed like the mighty Hell-Emperor!

Bai Hao could tell that, and a very serious expression overtook his face.

“Listen well, Bai Hao!” the gravekeeper continued, his voice thrumming with mysterious power that pierced into his soul body and resonated with his very soul. Because of this, the gravekeeper would be able to see the tiniest fluctuations in Bai Hao’s soul, and would know instantly whether or not he was lying or telling the truth!

“Bai Xiaochun is currently your Master, and will be in the future! Although I took it upon myself to change your fate, all I did was place you at Bai Xiaochun’s side. He was the one who took you as an apprentice; it was not my arrangement. It was simply your destiny!

“Furthermore, the reason you have become my successor is not because I approve of you, but rather… because your Master Bai Xiaochun approves of you!

“Remember well: your mission is not to guard the Underworld River, nor is it to look over reincarnation. Instead… you are to help your Master in caring for the Underworld River. You are to defend your Master! And if you ever betray him, the Underworld River itself will ensure that you are killed in body and soul!” As he spoke, the gravekeeper’s voice grew louder and louder until it was a crashing boom that caused everything to shake violently, and even caused the water of the Underworld River to vibrate.

Countless souls began to tremble and shake, and then offer obeisance to the Underworld Palace.

Bai Hao was shaken, but it was without the slightest hesitation that he said, “The word *betray* doesn’t exist for Bai Hao!”

His words were spoken with the utmost solemnity and honesty. In his world, nothing was more important than his Master Bai Xiaochun, who was his only family!

In fact, he wasn’t offended or worried at all by what the gravekeeper had said. In fact, it conformed perfectly with how he felt. And his answer could not have been more forthright!

A flicker of praise passed through the gravekeeper’s eyes. This had been his final test of the Bai Hao. The position of Hell-Emperor was too important, and he had to ensure that he didn’t make any mistakes. As of this point, he was convinced that Bai Xiaochun had made the right choice!

“Next month… you will be the Hell-Emperor!” With that, he waved his finger at Bai Hao, sending his legacy and his divine abilities into him!

Furthermore, outside of the Underworld Palace, countless magical symbols could be seen, flickering brightly until they transformed into a huge vortex. The spinning of that vortex indicated… that the passing of the legacy had begun!

As the Hell-Emperor’s legacy began to be passed on, Bai Xiaochun was in his immortal's cave in the Underworld River

Restricted Area, absorbing the life force from the Celestial’s blood-hair.

The Undying Codex was divided into Skin, Muscle, Tendons, Bones, and Blood!

Bai Xiaochun had started from the foundation and worked all the way up to the fourth volume. And right now, he was in the Powered Bones level. After that came Heavenly Bones, and in the end, the true Undying Bones!

The key to cultivating his Undying Technique was life force. Only by having access to enough life force could one achieve the meteoric rise that one sought!

In the past, he had relied on his Eternal Parasol to absorb life force from the Wildlander chosen. That was what had helped him to break through from the Tempered Bones level to Powered Bones.

But now… with the life force that the Celestial had gone through countless trials and tribulations to cultivate into his blood-hair, Bai Xiaochun was making shocking progress.

Intense rumbling sounds could be heard, and he shook physically as his bones creaked and cracked. It was as if he were completely changing his skeleton, causing him to rise rapidly through the fourth volume of the Undying Codex.

In fact, he immediately broke through to the Heavenly Bones level!

He became like a black hole, absorbing all of the life force from the blood-hair, and then using the Undying Codex techniques to send it rushing into his bones, utterly transforming them!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

No one outside could hear any of the shocking sound, but Bai Xiaochun could hear it as clear as day. Furthermore, he could sense his Heavenly Bones rapidly absorbing the life force that continued to pour into them.

His Heavenly Bones instantly went into the third stratum, then the fourth, fifth, seventh… and ninth!!

It was skyrocketing!

Another breakthrough!

He was now in the first stratum of the Undying Bones, and yet, had only absorbed a portion of the life force from the Celestial’s blood-hair. Now, that life force continued to propel him through the Undying Bones level!

The final level of the Undying Bones required a massive amount of life force, more than all three of the previous levels put together. Furthermore, once he reached the peak… it meant that his fleshly body would be at an astonishingly high level!

His fleshly body would be comparable to a deva! His skin, muscles, and bones… would be at a level that would make them almost impossible to destroy!!

Later on would come the Undying Blood, which came with dramatic restorative powers. At that point, his fleshly body would be very close to the truly undying level…. Then, he would be at the same level as the Blood Ancestor back in the River-Defying Sect!

At that point… his cultivation of the Undying Codex would be complete!

Right now, he relied on the blood-hair of the Celestial to advance by leaps and bounds. His Undying Bones advanced from the first stratum to the fourth, and then continued!!

Fifth stratum, sixth, seventh....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0844 awe-chapter-845

The blood-hair was slowly transforming into ash, and Bai Xiaochun was completely wrapped up in his cultivation. As such, he didn’t even know how much time was passing. By the time he reached the seventh stratum of the Undying Bones, half a month had gone by.

There was simply too much life force within that lock of blood-hair, and as it poured into Bai Xiaochun, he continued to advance through the levels of the Undying Codex.

In fact, it seemed possible that, by the time he reached the peak of the Undying Bones, there might still be life force left over, which he could then use as fuel for his future Undying Blood!

Meanwhile, word was spreading through the lands about how the Celestial, along with an imposter Bai Xiaochun, had fought with the Hell-Emperor. The news spread like wildfire, and was the subject of discussion among soul cultivators, necromancers, and savage tribes alike.

It was a monumental event, and anyone who heard about it for the first time would gasp in response.

Although not everyone in the Wildlands and the Arch-Emperor Dynasty knew who the Celestial was, many did. He was widely understood to be the emperor ruling in the Heavenspan River region, someone similar in status to the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, with a cultivation base that surpassed the Demigod Realm.

He was the reason that, years ago, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty had relocated to the Wildlands. Despite how many years had passed since then, the two sides of the conflict had continued to fight.

The endless sieges of the Great Wall had created seas of blood, as well as constant enmity. Although the conflict hadn’t reached the point where no resolution was possible, it was nearly at that point.

The common people of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty yearned to fight their way back into the Heavenspan River region and reestablish the glory of their dynasty. And now… the emperor of that Heavenspan River region had joined forces with a ghost to fight the Hell-Emperor. It was truly a shocking matter.

Even more astonishing was how the ghostess who had impersonated Bai Xiaochun ended up being seriously injured, and fleeing. The Celestial was also hurt. It was a matter of great excitement to the Wildlanders, and caused their morale to soar.

The fact that the four sections of the Great Wall had collapsed caused countless people in the Wildlands to be filled with the urge to charge forth in battle! In fact, many suggestions and proposals were made to that effect.

But the Grand Heavenmaster was a wise person, and knew that a world war like that would be very costly. Besides, upon making his escape, the Celestial had placed temporary defensive measure in the place of the collapsed Great Wall.

Those defenses… could not be broken through!

However, that didn’t hold the Grand Heavenmaster back from taking advantage of the opportunity to begin preparing for war!

It would be a war in which even the common people fought. Furthermore, it gave the Grand Heavenmaster a further reason to continue the enforcement of the Proclamation of Universal Grace. That made him more popular than ever among the people. In a rare turn of events, the four heavenly kings supported him. The truth was that the coming war would be vastly important. And one of the main things on the minds of the Giant Ghost King and other demigods was that they knew very well who the current Hell-Emperor was… but weren't sure about who the next one would be….

Because of the support offered by the four heavenly kings, the entire Wildlands was shaken, and everyone thirsted to do battle.

It was at around this time that a third bit of news began to make the rounds. It was hard to say where it started, but the nature of the news was even more shocking than the first two. Whether it was in Arch-Emperor City, the four kingly cities, or in the various clans and tribes, soon, everyone was talking about it.

The news pertained to Bai Xiaochun. Supposedly, he had another identity in the Wildlands, and although no one knew the exact details, they were sure that it was a position of incredible power and authority!

“If that ghostess who fought the exalted Hell-Emperor was impersonating Bai Xiaochun, then… where has the real Bai Xiaochun been hiding all these years?”

“Hey, that's right! Bai Xiaochun must have been in hiding somewhere here in the Wildlands! But who exactly is he disguised as!?”

As this news spread, people began to speculate about the matter, and before long, people were saying that Bai Xiaochun… was actually the former inspections commissioner of Arch-Emperor City, the earthly necromancer Bai Hao!

It was a shocking concept that shook the whole Wildlands. Heavenly marquis clans, heavenly duke clans, and the countless other people who had formed grudges with Bai Xiaochun over the years, especially the direct bloodline successors and the chosen, almost couldn’t believe what they were hearing. However, they were also elated. As far as they were concerned, whether Bai Hao really was Bai Xiaochun or not, it gave them the perfect chance to kill him. Even being an earthy necromancer wouldn’t keep him safe!

“Hahaha!! I knew that Bai Xiaochun was up to no good. He impersonated Bai Hao! How evil-minded and devious!”

“It doesn’t matter whether you’re really Bai Hao, or Bai Xiaochun! I refuse to exist under the same sky as you! I’ll never forget the humiliation of that Aphrodisiac Pill!!”

“Kill Bai Hao!!” The direct bloodline successors were particularly riled up, and immediately began searching high and low for Bai Xiaochun.

The marquises such as Zhao Xionglin and Liu Yong were particularly excited, especially Zhao Xionglin. After he heard the news, he laughed so loud that it filled the entire Zhao Clan mansion.

As for the people who had developed close relationships with Bai Xiaochun over the years, they were simply stunned. That was especially true of many people in Giant Ghost City.

The Spirit Advent King’s daughter Xu Shan was completely flabbergasted.

As for Zhou Yixing, he had long since gone into hiding, his heart filled with bitterness. He took Song Que with him. When Song Que heard the speculation that Bai Xiaochun was Bai Hao, he felt completely and utterly thunderstruck!

However, many people noticed that neither the Grand Heavenmaster, nor the four heavenly kings, nor the ten heavenly dukes would say a single word about the matter of Bai Xiaochun.

Before long, the heavenly marquises mysteriously stopped talking about the matter, and they even restricted their clan members from discussing it. Zhao Xionglin appeared to be frightened by something, and unhesitatingly went into secluded meditation.

As these two wild situations regarding Bai Xiaochun’s identity appeared, a fourth bit of news spread, news that surpassed everything else and shook the Wildlands to the core!

In fact, it was something that struck every Wildlander deep in the soul!

“The Hell-Emperor picked Bai Hao… to be his successor!!”

“Bai Hao isn’t Bai Xiaochun. He’s the next Hell-Emperor!!”

This news was like an invisible slap to the face to countless individuals in the Wildlands who had longed to kill Bai Hao. They felt the world spinning around them as they realized that they would never again be able to give voice to any thoughts about killing Bai Hao.

“Heavens! He’s the next Hell-Emperor! This… this means that no one in the Wildlands will ever dare to offend him!”

“Dammit! Why does it have to be this way!? The Bai Clan from Giant Ghost City wanted to kill him, but in the critical moment, the Giant Ghost King protected him! The chosen of Arch-Emperor City wanted to kill him, but in the critical moment, the Grand Heavenmaster saved him!”

“Then he committed the grave offense of killing a heavenly marquis, and all of the aristocracy in the entire dynasty teamed up against him. But then, his status as an earthly necromancer saved him. Now… when his identity was brought into question, and everyone wanted to kill him… Fudge! I can’t believe he's going to be the next Hell-Emperor!!” Everyone who had grudges with Bai Xiaochun harbored similar thoughts upon hearing the news.

Whether it was Zhou Hong, Little Wolfgod, Zhao Xionglin, or others, they were struck mute with fear, and could do little more than wail inwardly in grief.

Furthermore, they couldn’t stop from wondering what would happen now that someone like him, someone who had caused trouble wherever he went, now had such a position of authority….

Bai Xiaochun had rocked the Wildlands and established a legend…. In fact, many people now viewed Bai Xiaochun as so fantastic… that he was like a god!!

Of course, Zhou Yixing was beyond delighted. Song Que breathed a sigh of relief, and was very glad that everyone had been wrong in their speculations. Clearly, it had been the right decision after all to follow Bai Hao. He was going to be the next Hell-Emperor!

“Hmph!" Song Que said arrogantly in his heart. "How could Bai Xiaochun possibly be Bai Hao? He doesn’t even qualify to polish his shoes!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0845 awe-chapter-846

Only the Grand Heavenmaster and the other most powerful figures were privy to the general truth of the matter. To them, the matter of the Hell-Emperor’s successor was no big surprise. The main thing they weren’t sure about was whether the Hell-Emperor would arrange for Bai Xiaochun to continue to use the identity of Bai Hao.

After all, the name *Bai Xiaochun* was very sensitive, and therefore, having someone named Bai Hao as the next Hell-Emperor would resolve many issues.

As the news was still rocking the Wildlands, roughly a month into Bai Xiaochun’s session of secluded cultivation, the Underworld River materialized in the sky above the Wildlands!

It took only a moment for everything to turn dark, and massive pressure to weigh down.

Everyone looked up into the sky and saw the huge Underworld River, churning and seething as countless souls inside turned in a specific direction and prostrated themselves in worship!

They weren’t the only souls to do so! All of the souls in the Wildlands in general all did exactly the same thing!

The direction they bowed in was none other than Arch-Emperor City!

Numerous structures in Arch-Emperor City had begun to shine with black light, including the heavenly marquis pagodas, the heavenly duke pagodas, and the imperial palace. The old dragon in the clouds above the city let out a massive roar, but didn't dare to fly up into the sky.

The common people, the nobility, the aristocracy, the Grand Heavenmaster, and even the Arch-Emperor, all walked out into the open and looked up at the river.

Gasps could be heard in the city, as well as in other locations in the Wildlands….

Everyone knew exactly what was happening….

The Hell-Emperor’s legacy was being passed onto his successor!

With the Underworld River having taken over the sky, everything was cast into darkness. Neither sun nor moon were visible, although, there was something like starlight that spilled down onto the lands below.

Anyone who looked closely would see that the supposed starlight actually came from innumerable souls within the Underworld River. Soul fire burned on them, which from a distance, made them look like stars. It was something most people were seeing for the first time in their lives!

It was with bated breath that everyone stared up at the huge river. They felt pressure that seemed to come from within their bones, or their souls, a pressure that resulted in feelings of reverence. Soul cultivators and savages alike, regardless of the level of their cultivation bases, including even the Grand Heavenmaster and other powerful experts like him, all felt their hearts pounding with awe.

It was something instinctual, something branded into their blood, something that even the wild beasts in the Wildlands possessed.

It was hard to say who did it first, but soon, endless crowds of people were dropping to their knees in worship. Everywhere in the Wildlands, people bowed in the direction of Arch-Emperor City. Common people and aristocrats alike, the Grand Heavenmaster and the four heavenly kings, all bent over in worship!

All living things offered obeisance!

It was a show of respect to the Underworld River, and an expression of reverence for the Hell-Emperor!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t participate, because he was still in secluded meditation. And there was one other person who refrained from offering worship. The Arch-Emperor! Despite being a mere figurehead in the modern age, he was still the Arch-Emperor, and he was the only person who qualified to continue to look up somberly into the sky.

Gradually, a figure appeared within the seething, howling Underworld River up in the sky. It was the gravekeeper, and this was the first time he had ever shown his face to the throngs of living beings in the Wildlands!

He didn’t look at all like he had when dealing with Bai Xiaochun. He wore a black robe, but this one was decorated with swirling underworld dragons. It made him seem like a supreme and venerable being, an effect which was enhanced by the imperial crown he wore. He truly seemed like an emperor, the type who could shake all of the Wildlands!

The people in the Wildlands were all deeply shaken by the sight of the gravekeeper. Gasps could be heard, and many eyes began to shine with passion and veneration. The truth was that, to these people… the Hell-Emperor was in some ways more important than the Arch-Emperor!

After all, the position of Arch-Emperor was hereditary, and passed down from generation to generation. But up til now… there had only been a single Hell-Emperor in heaven and earth!

To the people of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, the Hell-Emperor… was like a divine figure, a god to whom they prayed!

“Hell-Emperor!”

“Hell-Emperor!!”

“Hell-Emperor!!!”

The sound of their voices joined together, rolling out across the Wildlands and causing everything to tremble.

Their god was present, causing everyone to be deeply moved!

As the thunderous sound of their voices filled all creation, the gravekeeper waved his right hand, causing a silence to fall.

At that point, the Underworld River seethed, and a second figure came into view!

He was young and handsome, with fair skin, wearing a long black robe, and emanating an energy that seemed capable of suppressing the boundless light of the soul fire. As he stood in front of the gravekeeper, there was nothing about him that seemed out of place. In fact, it almost seemed… like he *belonged* there.

The instant he came into view, countless people in the Wildlands gasped in shock, and there were many who couldn’t hold back from blurting out their thoughts.

“Bai Hao!”

“Earthly Necromancer Bai Hao!!”

“So the rumors were true! Bai Hao… is going to be the next Hell-Emperor!!”

Zhou Hong, Little Wolfgod, and the other chosen were all shaking visibly, their hearts filled with bitterness. If they had such a reaction, there was little need to mention the others who had had conflicts with Bai Xiaochun. Thankfully, most people had been prepared for this outcome, otherwise there would have been many more people who lost their composure.

However, the Grand Heavenmaster and the four heavenly kings, those who were more familiar with Bai Xiaochun than the average person, were actually stunned by what they were seeing.

“That’s not Bai Xiaochun! That's the soul slave who always kept him company….” The Grand Heavenmaster was the first one to understand the truth. It was for the sake of this Bai Hao that Bai Xiaochun had killed a heavenly marquis! That was how the Grand Heavenmaster had come to learn that Bai Hao was Bai Xiaochun’s apprentice!

“His apprentice is going to be the Hell-Emperor!!” Even the powerful Grand Heavenmaster was shaken by the development.

The four heavenly kings had similar reactions, especially the Giant Ghost King.

They had seen Bai Xiaochun close up. That, coupled with their powerful cultivation bases, ensured that they detected the differences between Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun!

Although such differences might not be visible with the naked eye, they were as plain as day to the acute divine sense of the demigods.

“They're not the same person!” the Giant Ghost King thought with a gasp. This turn of events was something he could never have predicted. He had assumed that Bai Xiaochun would be the one to succeed the Hell-Emperor! He was also aware of who Bai Hao was, and therefore, was just as stunned as the Grand Heavenmaster!

Chen Haosong and the other top most powerful experts were also incredibly perceptive, and were thus able to come to the conclusion that Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun were not the same person!

As for Zhou Yixing, he knew Bai Xiaochun better than anyone in the Wildlands. Although his cultivation base wasn’t sufficient to perceive the truth, there were other ways for him to tell!

“That’s… milord’s apprentice Bai Hao?!” Zhou Yixing was stunned. In contrast, Song Que didn’t notice any differences at all, and remained as excited as he had been before.

Of the people who had witnessed that spectacular battle recently, some did not notice the clues, and had mixed feelings as a result. Others did notice the clues, and were shocked. Regardless not a single person wasn’t shaken in some way as they looked at those two figures high up in the sky! At the same time, the Hell-Emperor Stele in the middle of Arch-Emperor City slowly faded away into nothing.

It was in that exact same moment that, back in the Underworld River Restricted Area, in Bai Xiaochun’s temporary immortal's cave, a tremor ran through him, and intense rumbling sounds filled his body as the Celestial’s blood-hair transformed into ash.

Indescribable levels of life force coursed through him, pushing his Undying Bones all the way to the very peak!

When that happened, his eyes opened. He currently felt power swirling within him the likes of which defied imagination! And it was ready to explode out into the open at any moment.

When it did, he could topple mountains and drain seas!

“The great circle of the Undying Bones!”

His eyes began to shine like heavenly bodies, illuminating the entire immortal’s cave!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0846 awe-chapter-847

The qi and blood inside of him was powerful to an indescribable degree!

Furthermore, he yet again felt as though a mountain were crushing down onto him from above, which was none other than… the fourth of the five shackles inside of him!

He couldn’t break through that shackle right now. He would need to wait until he became a deva!

At that time, he would finally be able to cultivate the last level of the Undying Codex…

Undying Blood!!

“I finally mastered the Undying Bones!” He laughed heartily, but before he had a chance to feel very pleased with himself, he sensed that the passing of the Hell-Emperor’s legacy was occurring up in the sky.

Stunned, he blurred into motion, appearing outside of his immortal's cave to see the gravekeeper up above, as well as… his apprentice, Bai Hao!!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide with anticipation and well wishes.

High up in the Underworld River Restricted Area, Bai Hao suddenly sensed that Bai Xiaochun was looking at him. Shivering, he turned his head to look at Bai Xiaochun down in the Wildlands, and his eyes shone with respect and deep emotion. Furthermore, there were many people who noticed that, and were quite taken aback.

It was at this point that the gravekeeper reached up, took off his imperial crown and then tossed it over to Bai Hao.

When it landed on Bai Hao’s head, he had no choice but to look away from Bai Xiaochun.

As the crown settled down, Bai Hao shivered, and his energy suddenly skyrocketed. Intense pressure weighed down, pressure that surpassed that of devas or even demigods!

Intense rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and the Underworld River churned madly, as though the source of that river were being changed. Instead of coming from the gravekeeper, it came from Bai Hao!

At the same time, nine underworld dragons appeared on Bai Hao’s black robe, all of them howling as Bai Hao’s energy continued to rise!

As for the gravekeeper, as soon as he took the crown off, his robe turned into an ordinary black garment. His aura suddenly seemed vastly weaker than before, and he looked like an old man rotting away into death.

Smiling, he looked at Bai Hao, who in turn looked out over the Wildlands and then spoke four words.

“I am the Hell-Emperor!” After speaking the words, he added a line in his heart!

“And I shall protect my Master!”

Shocking rumbling sounds echoed out as if to bear witness to his words. At the same time, the countless souls in the Underworld River all bowed to him, their eyes shining with passion as they cried out in piercing voices.

“Greetings, Hell-Emperor!” The living beings who could hear the sound were all shaken. And then, one by one, they joined in, until their voices caused all heaven and earth to tremble.

“Greetings, Hell-Emperor!!”

Everyone from the Grand Heavenmaster to the four heavenly kings all clasped hands and bowed in Bai Hao’s direction. They knew that for many years to come, this person would be the Wildlands’ Hell-Emperor!

Zhou Yixing’s heart trembled as he bowed, and Song Que was filled with excitement. Although Song Que was still loyal to the River-Defying Sect, the fact that he was the pet of the Hell-Emperor meant that from now on, no one in the Wildlands would ever dare to provoke him.

Even the Arch-Emperor and the gravekeeper now bowed their heads respectfully to Bai Hao!

Not only was it a show of respect to the reigning Hell-Emperor, it was a long-standing tradition within the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!

Soul cultivators and wild beasts alike, all living things, did the same thing. With the exception of one person….

One person didn’t bow.

He stood there looking up with a smile on his face. Bai Xiaochun! He was the only person in all of the Wildlands who didn’t offer formal greetings!

After all, despite the fact that Bai Hao was now the Hell-Emperor, he was still Bai Xiaochun’s apprentice. Of course, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more pleased for his apprentice. And in terms of his own life, it really felt like he had reached another major milestone.

“My Daoist partner is a deva. My father-in-law is a demigod. And my apprentice is the Hell-Emperor….” A wonderful feeling of smug contentment filled his heart. It was almost like he was the secret overlord of the Wildlands!

“What a pity that hardly anyone knows Bai Hao is my apprentice.” He sighed regretfully. Although he didn’t know about how the Grand Heavenmaster had recently issued orders to quell the talk about him, he did know that very few people were aware that he had actually been impersonating Bai Hao.

Even as he stood there sighing, Bai Hao, the gravekeeper, and the Underworld River all faded away, and the sky returned to normal.

Although the ceremony of succession had been short, it was profoundly significant. Furthermore, it was easy to imagine how, from this day on, stories about Bai Hao would abound. As time went on, his position as the Hell-Emperor would ensure that everyone in the Wildlands revered and respected him.

After watching his apprentice fade away, Bai Xiaochun sighed and then looked down at the transmission jade slip he had in his hand. That jade slip had vibrated numerous times during his session of cultivation, but he hadn’t had time to pay much attention to it. But now, he was in the great circle of the Undying Bones, and his apprentice had become the Hell-Emperor. Therefore, he now had time to take it out for inspection.

The instant he looked closer, his jaw dropped. Almost all of the messages were from Zhou Yixing, and provided all of the details of what had happened while he was in seclusion.

After perusing the messages, Bai Xiaochun came to the realization that his identity… had not been revealed!!

“I can’t believe people don’t know!” he thought, his eyes widening. He immediately drew the conclusion that it was the work of the gravekeeper. Either that, or the Grand Heavenmaster had taken steps to make sure that the public didn’t realize who he was.

When he saw what Zhou Yixing had said about how some people had guessed that he was Bai Hao, but that the rumor had not gone very far, he realized the truth.

It was all a protection for him!

After all, he had done many momentous things in the Wildlands, things that could be detrimental to him after returning to the Heavenspan River region. If word got back there about who he was, it could make things difficult. On the one hand, it was a bit disappointing to have done so many amazing things but not be able to brag about them.

On the other hand, the people who really needed to know, did know. The upper echelons in the Wildlands all knew his true identity, and also knew who his apprentice was.

“As long as the important people know, I guess that’s enough. Hmmmphh! If I have the chance, I’m going to go visit the Grand Heavenmaster. This time he’ll be the one offering greetings to me! And as for that Nine Serenities King, I’ll have to make sure my apprentice teaches him a lesson sooner or later!

“Otherwise, how could I possibly remain safe in the Wildlands?” At this point, his heart began to pound a bit harder. When all was said and done, he was still tied to the River-Defying Sect. Although there were some people in the Wildlands that he would miss dearly, there were even more people in the River-Defying Sect. Whether it was Li Qinghou, Hou Xiaomei, Song Junwan, Big Fatty Zhang... all of them were faces that popped up in his thoughts constantly.

“I've been away for a long time....” he thought, sighing. Actually, the more he thought about it, it wasn’t the Heavenspan River region in general that he cared about, it was the River-Defying Sect.

“Ah, whatever. I guess I should just get back to the River-Defying Sect. If I end up missing the Wildlands too much, I can always just figure out a way to bring the River-Defying Sect back here....” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he patted his bag of holding to produce the command medallion the gravekeeper had given him, which would allow him passage through the Deadmire.

“There are still a few things I have to take care of before leaving. And now that I think about it, it wouldn't be good to use my apprentice’s face to do them.” It was a bit frightening to think about going back to his true appearance. However, considering his high status, he decided that the time had come. Flicking his sleeve, he took off his mask.

As of this moment... his true face was visible for all to see!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0847 awe-chapter-848

“Zhou Yixing has been my follower for years now. Since I'm leaving, I’ll need to make sure he's taken care of.

“And then there’s Song Que. Since I'm his uncle, I have no choice but to take him with me.

“And what about the Giant Ghost King…?” He wanted to go say his goodbyes to the Giant Ghost King, but the thought of Mistress Red-Dust made his head swell with frustration. After some thought about the matter, he sighed.

“Ah, whatever. I'm going to see my sweetie again later anyway.

“I brought a reign of terror to the Wildlands that lasted for many years. Now it's time to leave… and there’s no need to make it a solemn occasion.”

Shaking his head, he clasped his hands behind his back and contemplated how it actually made him a lot more mysterious to vanish without a trace. Enjoying his ability to revel in his success, he sent a message to Zhou Yixing, telling him to come to the Underworld River Restricted Area.

**

Zhou Yixing was currently holed up in Giant Ghost City, and when he got the message, his jaw dropped, and his heart began to race. He was suddenly struck with the premonition that Bai Xiaochun… was going to leave.

Obviously, now that Bai Xiaochun’s apprentice had become the Hell-Emperor, he was going to go home. And the fact that he was asking Zhou Yixing to come see him beforehand was very telling.

Zhou Yixing’s excitement began to build. He felt more than ever that his decision all those years ago had definitely been the best decision he had ever made!

Filled with anticipation, he tossed Song Que into his bag of holding and then hurried off in the direction of the Underworld River Restricted Area.

While Bai Xiaochun waited for Zhou Yixing, he sat down on the bank of the river and thought back to everything he had done in the Wildlands. Then started reminiscing about the River-Defying Sect, and before long, he felt his heart tugging him in the direction of home.

Eventually, it was midnight, and vast quantities of mist appeared, as well as an intense aura. The Underworld River… once again became visible, seething and churning right there in front of Bai Xiaochun.

For the first time, Bai Xiaochun actually felt some connection to the Underworld River water. He could just barely sense the aura of his disciple, which then began to grow stronger and stronger. A moment later, Bai Hao materialized right in front of him.

He wore an imperial crown, and imperial robes, but in every other way, looked just like he always had. An emotional look could be seen in his eyes, as well as a gleam of respect. As soon as he appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Master!”

Bai Xiaochun could see that his apprentice's feelings toward him had not change just because he had become the Hell-Emperor. He wasn't surprised at all that his apprentice had shown up, and in fact, would have been surprised if he didn't.

"What does it feel like to be the Hell-Emperor?" he asked, smiling broadly.

"I have a lot to learn from Senior Gravekeeper," Bai Hao replied softly. It was clear in his eyes that he already missed Bai Xiaochun. "I'm still not able to unleash the divine abilities of the Underworld River yet, and--"

Before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand dismissively and interrupted, "Make sure to treat Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper with the same respect you treat me. Pay good attention to what he teaches you, that way you can learn to be a good Hell-Emperor. Unfortunately, Master has to leave. Otherwise I would pass on some more of my special divine abilities to you."

He sighed, already realizing how much he missed his apprentice.

Bai Hao stood there silently for a moment, his mind filled with all sorts of memories of the things he and his Master had done. However, he knew that his Master was from the Heavenspan River region, and that getting back home to his sect had been his goal all along.

"Master," he said in a serious tone, "you need to be careful on your way back…. The Heavenspan River region is a very different place. I'll do my best to master the Underworld River divine abilities, and before long, I'll be able to send my mind anywhere in the world!"

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily. The two of them chatted a bit more. Obviously, the moment of departure was coming. Bai Xiaochun spent most of the time exhorting Bai Hao to become a good Hell-Emperor. As for Bai Hao, he was obviously worried that the trip back to the Heavenspan River region wasn't going to be safe, and offered a lot of advice about what to do.

It was just like old times when they would work on various problems and issues together. After a bit of time passed, Bai Hao suddenly said, "Master, remember Zhao Xionglin and Liu Yong? And that Chen Haosong? They treated you disrespectfully on multiple occasions. I'll definitely make sure they regret that!

"And as for… Sect Mother Xu Shan, and Sect Mother Chen Manyao, and Sect Mother Zhou Zimo… I'll watch out for them for you. If anybody dares to harbor any evil intentions, I'll take action immediately!

"Apprentice will also take good care of the Giant Ghost King.

"About those chosen like Zhou Hong, well, they provoked you over and over, Master! Don't worry, I won't let them get away with what they did!" Bai Hao had clearly paid very close attention to everyone who had either caused problems for his Master, or who had treated him with kindness.

Most other Masters in the world would remind their apprentices of the old saying *a great man does not bear petty grudges*. But Bai Xiaochun was actually very pleased by what he was hearing, and his eyes gleamed with approval.

"Excellent. Don't let any of those people off the hook easily! And don't forget that codger the Nine Serenities King. Make sure to find an opportunity to give him a good thrashing!"

Master and apprentice went on to have a long discussion about how to teach all of these people a lesson. In the end, Bai Xiaochun was very pleased, and couldn’t help but marvel at how well his apprentice understood him.

“Oh right, Master, I almost forgot. With the power of the Underworld River that I have at my disposal, and with the advice of Senior Gravekeeper, I’ve already created the formulas for twenty- and twenty-one-colored flame!” Although he spoke the words casually, the truth was that one of the reasons he hadn’t mastered the Underworld River divine abilities yet was that he had been spending so much time using the Underworld River power to work on those flame formulas.

He had produced both formulas in only a month!

“Unfortunately, it seems that twenty-one-colored flame is the limit. I'm not sure why, and I think you won’t be able to tell for sure until after you actually conjure that flame. As for twenty-two colored flame, even Senior Gravekeeper didn’t have anything to say about it. Twenty-two colored flame is just too difficult for me right now. Hopefully you can give me some more time to work on it.” Bai Hao made a grasping gesture, and a jade slip materialized out of thin air.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken. Considering how high his skill in flame conjuring already was, he knew that things got more difficult as they went along. The fact that Bai Hao had been able to create these two formulas in such a short time meant that he must have expended significant effort.

A warm look could be seen in his eyes as he accepted the jade slip and then looked at his apprentice.

“How thoughtful of you, Hao’er!” he said softly.

Bai Hao was very pleased with these words. Although he had become the Hell-Emperor, in his heart, everything was just like before. A kind word of approval from Bai Xiaochun was enough to make him very happy.

“Master, it’s still early. Since nobody understands twenty-colored flame better than me right now, let’s take advantage of this opportunity to conjure it together. What do you say?”

After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun nodded. Right there on the banks of the Underworld River, Master and apprentice worked on their last flame conjuring together. Everything went very smoothly. After all, they had been thinking about this type of flame for a very long time. And now that Bai Hao commanded the Underworld River, he had plenty of souls at his disposal.

In only a few days’ time, Bai Xiaochun successfully conjured a twenty-colored flame, which caused bright light to fill the sky, and the lands to shake.

Twenty-colored flame was the highest level for earthly necromancers. In the current Arch-Emperor Dynasty, there was only one other necromancer who could conjure it. With Bai Xiaochun able to do so, there were now two!

If he pushed past this level and conjured a twenty-one-colored flame, then he would become a legendary, never-before-seen… heavenly necromancer!

According to the legends, if one could use a twenty-one-colored flame to perform a spirit enhancement on a nascent soul, one could immediately break through to the Deva Realm. Of course, it was just a legend. No one had done it successfully.

Filled with excitement, Bai Xiaochun went on to work on a twenty-one-colored flame.

However, twenty-one-colored flame was very difficult. Even with the formula and Bai Hao’s help, Bai Xiaochun could do nothing more than start to get familiar with the process. Success was not something that could be had in a few short days.

In order to make sure that his Master could continue to work on flame conjuring after leaving the Wildlands, Bai Hao hid the fact that he was gritting his teeth from effort, and finally called upon the Underworld River divine abilities he knew. He summoned a mind-boggling number of souls from inside, which he gave to Bai Xiaochun to use in flame conjuring.

Even Bai Xiaochun gasped at the number of souls. As long as he didn't fail too many times, he definitely had enough to eventually conjure a twenty-one-colored flame.

It was at just about this time that Zhou Yixing finally showed up.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0848 awe-chapter-849

Bai Xiaochun sensed Zhou Yixing almost as soon as he stepped into the Underworld River Restricted Area. As for Zhou Yixing, he immediately caught sight of both Bai Xiaochun… and Bai Hao!

In that instant, Zhou Yixing’s heart leapt. He knew exactly who Bai Hao was; he was a figure of unparalleled power and importance in the Wildlands.

“So, Bai Hao really is the Hell-Emperor…. And milord really is his Master!” Although he had speculated all of these things before, to see it confirmed with his own eyes caused his heart to tremble with shock.

Normally speaking, he would never be able to even enter the presence of someone as important as the Hell-Emperor. Trembling, he hurried forward toward the two. However, he didn't forget the relationship between Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao. The first person he offered formal greetings to was Bai Xiaochun, and after that, Bai Hao.

“Yixing offers greetings, milord! Greetings, exalted Hell-Emperor!” He ducked his head nervously, unable to conceal his excitement.

Zhou Yixing’s respectful and excited attitude was quite pleasing to Bai Xiaochun. Although he couldn’t go and tell everyone how important he was now, to be so adored by people close to him was good enough.

“What about my Que’er?” he asked. “Did you bring him along too?”

Of course, he couldn’t wait to see how Song Que would react upon finding out who he was.

As for Bai Hao, a strange expression could be seen on his face. However, he understood his Master well, and cooperated in full, allowing the impressive aura of the Hell-Emperor to erupt out in full force. Zhou Yixing gasped, his respect deepening as he quickly pulled Song Que out of his bag of holding.

Song Que had only been in the bag of holding for a few days, so when he came out, he wasn’t gasping for breath like he often had in the past. He had grown used to spending time inside bags of holding, and actually liked it to some degree. Besides, considering all of the cultivation resources he had benefited from, all traces of his previous ordeal were gone, and his cultivation base had even made progress. He was now very close to the mid Nascent Soul stage.

As soon as he was out in the open, he plastered an expression of respect onto his face, laying eyes, not on Bai Xiaochun, but Bai Hao.

He was aware of the fact that Bai Hao had become the Hell-Emperor, and it filled his heart with excitement. However, it was at this point that he noticed a familiar face next to Bai Hao.

His eyes widened, and he even wondered if he was seeing things. When he looked closer, he began to tremble, and then slowly reached out and pointed at Bai Xiaochun.

Zhou Yixing remained off to the side in silent introspection, not daring to interfere with this reunion. As for Bai Hao, his expression grew more awkward. However, he knew that Bai

Xiaochun was obviously relishing this moment, and therefore, he held back from saying anything.

“You….” Song Que breathed. He really had not expected to see Bai Xiaochun here; it was so unexpected that it threw his mind into chaos. In fact, because of that, he didn’t notice at all how Zhou Yixing and Bai Hao were reacting.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, smiled, and said, “Hi, Que’er!”

Inside, he was feeling incomparably wonderful.

As soon as Song Que heard himself being called Que’er, he was pushed to the point of exploding. However, after everything he had experienced in the Wildlands, he felt as if he had grown up quite a bit. Therefore, he suppressed his displeasure and, brimming with confidence, he yelled, “How dare you show up here in the Hell-Emperor’s presence!”

After all, he and Bai Xiaochun were both fellow disciples of the River-Defying Sect. Although he was not very happy to see him, and in fact didn’t even speak his name, he at least decided to vaguely point out that Bai Hao was the Hell-Emperor.

“I gave him his chance,” he thought. “If he’s smart, he’ll flee immediately, or at least figure out a way to resolve the situation. If not, then he’ll be dead, and it won’t be my fault.” With that, he simply stared at Bai Xiaochun, inwardly shaking his head at how the two of them now existed on totally different levels.

The fact that he had come to be the Hell-Emperor’s pet gave him a status that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t even compare to. In fact, it was highly likely that he would soon have the chance to crush Bai Xiaochun underfoot, just like he'd always wanted to.

“It’s just fate,” he said to himself. “Bai Xiaochun, ah, Bai Xiaochun. You’re just unlucky. You never managed to be anything more than a fugitive in the Wildlands, with everyone running around trying to kill you. As for me, I managed to become the pet of the Hell-Emperor! Considering my important position, I'm more powerful than you can even imagine.” A look of pity appeared in Song Que’s eyes as he looked down his nose at Bai Xiaochun. Then he sighed inwardly. Considering their past, he knew that if he could manage to save Bai Xiaochun, he probably should. After all, they were both from the River-Defying Sect.

It was roughly at this point that, all of a sudden, he began to wonder why it was that Bai Xiaochun was right here in Bai Hao’s presence, and that there didn’t seem to be any conflicts or tension. Just when he was about to ponder the subject, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. By this point, Bai Xiaochun could tell based on what he knew about Song Que that he wasn’t going to try to do anything villainous.

Considering that, his impression of Song Que improved. Furthermore, considering that they were at a critical moment, and that he was Song Que’s uncle, he suddenly felt a bit protective.

“Ah, whatever,” he thought. “I guess I can do without his respect.” Feeling very much like he was acting in the best interests of his nephew, he glanced at Bai Hao and then pointed at Zhou Yixing.

“Hao’er, this Zhou Yixing has been my follower for years. He was always there to support me, and did many things for me. Since I'm leaving, I hope that you can accept him as a follower.”

When Zhou Yixing heard that, it was like music to his ears. His heart trembled with joy, and he felt like he had been struck with the greatest luck in the world. Profound gratitude welled up in his heart, to the point where his knees began to shake.

“Milord… many thanks! Many thanks, milord!!”

He was a true Wildlander necromancer, and therefore, felt complete adoration and fervor for the Hell-Emperor, more so than Bai Xiaochun would ever be able to comprehend. Therefore, when he heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, he simply couldn’t remain calm.

He knew that if he worked for the Hell-Emperor, he would essentially be like an emissary in the world of the living. It was an extremely high honor that would put him very close to the level of the four heavenly kings.

In fact, from now on, his clan would never again dare to treat him as the crown prince of the clan. That title wouldn’t befit someone of his standing.

He would be the person his clan relied on, both patriarchs and ordinary clan members alike! Everyone would treat him with the utmost respect!

As Zhou Yixing went wild with joy, Song Que stared with eyes as wide as saucers. In that moment, his confidence and arrogance all faltered, and he suddenly felt like he might collapse mentally. A sensation of disbelief rose up in his heart, and he actually began to wonder if he was hallucinating….

“Did you… just call the Hell-Emperor *Hao’er*?!” he asked. Then turned from Bai Xiaochun to look at Zhou Yixing. “And did you… just call him *milord*?!

“Is this some sort of mistake? This… this seems off….” He drifted off into speechlessness, grabbing his head in his hands to stop it from spinning. He was feeling so profoundly and utterly shaken that he could hardly take it.

Startled, and a bit worried, Bai Xiaochun realized that this was clearly a huge blow to Song Que, and quickly tried to come up with a way to explain the situation.

Despite how excited Zhou Yixing was, Song Que’s words caused a strange expression to appear on his face. Sighing inwardly, he suddenly felt very sorry for Song Que….

Bai Hao felt the same. However, he smiled wryly, turned to Bai Xiaochun, and offered formal greetings with clasped hands.

“Orders received, Master!” When it came to who was his emissary in the world of the living, if anyone else had provided the suggestion, Bai Hao would have put a lot of thought into the matter. But since Bai Xiaochun had suggested it be Zhou Yixing, he didn’t bother to worry about it.

Furthermore, he accepted the instructions from Bai Xiaochun in the same way that he always had in the past. And his response struck Song Que like zillions of lightning bolts!

“Did you… just call him *Master*?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0849 awe-chapter-850

Song Que wasn’t even aware that he was talking. He stood there, staring blankly at Bai Hao, shaking physically and almost forgetting to breathe.

“No. This has to be a mistake….” The world seemed to be spinning around him, as though he had broken through some barrier of incredulity that he hadn’t even realized existed.

He didn’t want to think to deeply about how these three people were connected, but… he simply couldn’t control his own train of thought.

Bai Hao was the only person who Zhou Yixing would call *milord*. And the fact that Bai Hao had called Bai Xiaochun *Master* made everything even more clear…. Bai Xiaochun was Bai Hao’s Master, and was Zhou Yixing’s lord.

Song Que felt like his mind was filled with crashing bolts of lightning, leaving him standing there with a blank look on his face. As for Bai Xiaochun, he couldn’t let that happen, so he hurried forward to explain.

“Calm down, Que’er, let me explain….”

“You… you….” Song Que pointed at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes turning red. Before Bai Xiaochun could offer any sort of explanation, Song Que shouted, “Bai Xiaochun!! Tell me the truth. Were you impersonating Bai Hao before?!?!”

Song Que was teetering on the verge of madness as the question of Bai Hao’s identity pounded at his mind. If it was true that Bai Hao was Bai Xiaochun, and that he had become Bai Xiaochun’s pet, and had even stretched his head out to have his hair tousled more deeply by him, then Song Que’s world would surely collapse.

“Absolutely not!” Bai Xiaochun said without a moment of hesitation, shaking his head vigorously. Worried that Song Que wouldn’t believe him, he pointed back at Bai Hao and Zhou Yixing.

“I'm serious! Ask them. I wasn’t impersonating Bai Hao at all. And this is my first time seeing you here in the Wildlands. I'm not joking! It's the truth!” As he spoke, he didn’t blink even a single time, making his words seem very sincere.

Panting, Song Que glared at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, and then turned to look at Bai Hao.

Bai Hao blinked a few times. He knew that Bai Xiaochun was Song Que’s uncle, and therefore didn’t dare to tell him the truth. He quickly nodded, which caused Song Que to relax a bit. However, he still wasn’t completely convinced, and looked to Zhou Yixing for further confirmation.

Zhou Yixing was actually feeling quite stunned himself, although not as much as Song Que. Bai Hao’s words of ‘orders received’ were still ringing loudly in his mind.

Neither Bai Hao nor Bai Xiaochun had thought very much about that. It was the way Bai Hao usually spoke. But when Zhou Yixing heard it, it filled his heart with pounding waves of shock that threatened to overwhelm him.

In fact, he almost wondered if he had been hearing things. Bai Hao was the Hell-Emperor! As far as Zhou Yixing was concerned, even if he did accept directions from Bai

Xiaochun, there was no need for him to say anything more than ‘alright’ or something like that. Maybe he could even just nod. Never could Zhou Yixing have imagined that Bai Hao would outright say that he would follow orders!!

In fact, just about anyone in the Wildlands who heard that would be stunned. It immediately led Zhou Yixing to the realization that the true overlord of the Wildlands was… Bai Xiaochun!

Zhou Yixing simply couldn’t get control of himself at the moment. Therefore, when Song Que looked over at him and realized that he wasn’t saying anything, his heart suddenly began to pound, and he started shaking again. White steam even began to rise from the top of his head.

Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness mounted. Worried that Song Que had been offended too deeply, and couldn’t handle the truth, he glared over at Zhou Yixing.

“What are you doing, Zhou Yixing?!” he shouted. “I said that I wasn’t impersonating Bai Hao, and this is my first time seeing Song Que in the Wildlands. Back me up here!”

Bai Xiaochun’s shout tore Zhou Yixing out of his reverie. He immediately began to nod, and in fact, worried that Song Que wouldn’t believe him, he thumped himself on the chest and loudly said, “I, Zhou Yixing, hereby swear that milord never once impersonated Bai Hao!”

When Song Que heard Zhou Yixing’s words echoing back and forth, he relaxed some more. His mind was in chaos, and he could hardly think straight. Therefore, the ‘evidence’ provided by Bai Hao and Zhou Yixing was like a branch extended to a drowning man. He didn’t even want to think about the matter too closely.

Bai Xiaochun was very relieved to see Song Que finally calming down a bit.

“Ah, Que’er,” he said, “there’s no need to get so excited. It's just fate that the two of us have met here in the Wildlands. You’ve grown up quite a bit, Que’er. Getting worked up like this really isn't good for you. Look, you even have steam coming off the top of your head!” Without even thinking about it, he reached out to brush Song Que’s head free of steam.

It was exactly the way he had reached out to tousle Song Que’s hair in the past, and Song Que even reflexively stretched his head forward to meet Bai Xiaochun’s hand....

However, in that instant, both of them froze....

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound wildly, and he pulled his hand back. And Song Que instantly let out a howl that could shake heaven and earth.

“This feeling... it’s *you*, Bai Xiaochun! You tricked me!! It was you all along!!!”

By this point, Song Que was fully convinced that everything had been an act for his sake. The speed and familiarity with which Bai Xiaochun reached out toward his head had revealed the truth. And the idea of himself being Bai Xiaochun’s pet, and that he had reflexively stuck his head out to have his hair tousled, caused masses of white steam to explode from the top of his head. Mind reeling, he let out a howl and then passed out.

Stunned, Bai Xiaochun hurried over, pried open his mouth, and shoved a medicinal pill inside. Then he looked over helplessly at Bai Hao and Zhou Yixing.

Bai Xiaochun already felt a headache coming on. “It’s not my fault… You two help me figure out what to do!”

“Um… Master, I've already been here for quite a while. I’m pretty sure Senior Gravekeeper is waiting for me…. See you later!” Bai Hao simply couldn’t take anymore, and had convinced himself that he had already followed his Master’s orders…. A strange look appeared on his face as he flew toward the Underworld River.

Zhou Yixing quickly clasped hands to Bai Xiaochun and then followed Bai Hao. The instant he reached the Underworld River, both he and Bai Hao began to fade away. As they did, Bai Xiaochun’s voice echoed behind them.

“Hao’er, remember to help me track down the other cultivators who were teleported out into the Wildlands!”

Bai Hao voiced his assent in the moment before vanishing.

After watching the two of them rush off, Bai Xiaochun looked back down at the unconscious Song Que. Tousling his hair, he sighed.

“Ah, whatever. The child just got too worked up, and passed out. That’s all. In any case, it's not the first time. Once he wakes up, he’ll be fine.” After setting up some defensive spell formations around Song Que, he went back into his immortal's cave and sat down cross-legged.

“He just needs some time to recover. Now that I have twenty-colored flame, it’s time to push my cultivation base to the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage!” Without any hesitation, he produced his turtle-wok and then sent his nascent soul into it. Then he produced his twenty-colored flame, which he looked at for a moment, eyes shining with anticipation.

As soon as the flame touched the wok, dazzling golden light shone out, enveloping his nascent soul. Then, a shocking energy of heaven and earth began to pulse.

Rumbling sounds could be heard, but quickly passed. At the same time, the golden light faded away, revealing a shining, crystalline nascent soul!!

The nascent soul looked like Bai Xiaochun in every respect, and pulsed with Heaven-Dao fluctuations. This was the great circle of the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage!

It was a state of power that could not be compared to anything else in heaven and earth!

The air rippled and distorted around the nascent soul as a tenth golden design appeared!

Each and every one of the designs on its surface pulsed with shocking magical fluctuations. Furthermore, it was possible to imagine what would happen after the twenty-onefold spirit enhancement was performed. Those golden designs would merge into a single… violet design!

In that moment, something legendary and unheard-of would occur. He would become… the perfect deva!

“The legends say that a twenty-onefold spirit enhancement on your nascent soul will break you through to the Deva Realm…. Whether it's true or not, I'm going to try!” Eyes flickering with anticipation, he continued, “Once Que’er wakes up, we’ll leave the Wildlands. And since there’s no Great Wall to go through, we’ll have to traverse the Deadmire!

“After that, I need to get familiar with the formula for twenty-one colored flame, and find an opportunity to become a deva!” At this point, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more filled with excited anticipation.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0850 awe-chapter-851

“I'm so close to being a deva!” The idea of becoming a deva somehow made the world a more perfect place for Bai Xiaochun. That was especially true when he thought about the fact that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, a majestic riversource sect, only had five devas. Any one of those five devas could be considered supremely important.

“Just wait until I’m back. It won’t be long before I'm a deva. And then… hmmmphh! It’s been decades, but it’s still not too late to get my revenge, Chen Hetian!” Bai Xiaochun felt extraordinary. His time in the Wildlands had propelled him toward the very peak of life. As of this moment, it would be very difficult to find very many chosen in heaven and earth who could match up to him.

“What a lonely feeling!” Clasping his hands behind his back, he shook his head and savored the wonderful sensation. Then he swaggered out of his immortal's cave and walked over to the unconscious Song Que.

Just looking at Song Que caused his head to ache. After a bit of thought, he waved his finger, sending a stream of spiritual energy into him. Song Que shivered and slowly opened his eyes. At first, his expression was blank, but when he saw Bai Xiaochun, he began to tremble. His eyes turned bloodshot, and his mind began to spin as he recalled everything that had occurred before he had passed out.

Bai Xiaochun quickly said, “Let me explain, Que’er, I--”

However, before he could say anything more, Song Que shouted, “You… you…!”

The thought of him having become Bai Xiaochun's pet was the most horrific thing to ever happen in his life. The anger and resentment he felt because of it had him teetering on the verge of completely exploding.

Bai Xiaochun's headache worsened. Seeing that Song Que was about to erupt, he scrambled to come up with a plan for what to do. Suddenly, his expression flickered. Instead of looking like he was trying to provide an explanation, he seemed somber, even sorrowful. Before Song Que could say anything, he spoke with such enormous volume that Song Que's madness was stifled.

"Song Que, I know you refuse to accept this. But. *Why* won't you accept it!? It's true that I, Bai Xiaochun, have reached incredible heights, in the Blood Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the Great Wall, and here in the Wildlands. But you've only seen me in my best moments! Do you know how I got to those moments? I'll tell you. Fudge! The only reason I reached such heights was by sacrifice!" This sudden outburst by Bai Xiaochun caught Song Que completely off-guard. He had never seen Bai Xiaochun acting like this before.

"In the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, you people all abandoned me! I had only my own skill and ability to rely on. I started an inn, and even got you promoted to the rainbow district. I didn't owe you anything back then!

"At the Great Wall, it was my skill with medicinal pills that saw me reach the rank of major general. Do you think the deva there was a complete idiot? Do you think the sect is full of fools? Do you think they just randomly allowed me to become a major general? No! I earned that rank with my success!" He swished his sleeve to emphasize his words, and his voice thrummed with intense decisiveness. Despite the fact that Song Que was hovering on the verge of madness, he couldn’t help but be shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s words.

“You saw for yourself how many people in the Wildlands want to kill me, right? Do you know how many deadly crises I faced? All of the nobility and aristocracy hate me down to their marrow! I even risked exposing myself to save you!

“So what if I tousled your hair? What’s so wrong with that? I'm not allowed to touch your head or something? I don't qualify? Not only am I your uncle, I have a demigod for a father-in-law! I'm the Master of the Hell-Emperor! I'm the overlord of the Wildlands! You want to talk status? I'm on the same level as the Celestial! Who out there dares to talk to me about qualifications?!” By this point, he was shouting. Song Que’s face was devoid of blood, and his humiliation and rage were collapsing. Bai Xiaochun’s tirade caused him to edge backward, his eyes bloodshot, but his heart pounding as if with thunder.

He had to admit that everything Bai Xiaochun had just said was true. Bai Xiaochun didn’t owe him anything, and yet had blessed him with good fortune. He had even saved him on multiple occasions. In fact, if it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun, Song Que would either be dead, or at the very least, wallowing in abject misery.

His refusal to accept the truth came mostly from his own pride. And the fact that he didn’t like Bai Xiaochun was because of his own inability to measure up to him!

As for the last thing Bai Xiaochun had just said, about qualifications, there was literally nothing Song Que could say by way of retort. All he could do there was stand there, his chest heaving.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Song Que had been cowed, he breathed an inward sigh of relief. He really had had no other choice than to say what he had. And the fact that it had worked had him feeling quite pleased with himself. However, he kept that somber expression on his face.

“You don’t have to like me, Song Que. In fact, just think of me as a mountain that you will overturn one day in the future! Bai Xiaochun… will be waiting for you! But… before you acquire the proper qualifications, you *will* behave!” With that, he waved his sleeve dramatically. His voice resonated in profoundly domineering fashion, and in fact, he even secretly threw in a bit of energy from the Undying Emperor’s Fist. That, coupled with the actual words he had spoken, made him seem like a powerful king or emperor, the type who everyone would respect.

His devastating verbal attack slammed into Song Que’s mind, causing him to back up a few more paces. Trembling, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and suddenly realized that there was a bit of respect rising up in his heart!

“I'm going to be leaving the Wildlands and going back to the River-Defying Sect,” Bai Xiaochun continued. “So, Song Que… do you want to come with me? If not, I won’t force you!” Snorting coldly, he looked away from Song Que and began to float slowly up into the air as he waited for a response.

“Everything I said should work,” he thought. “Ai… what a headache! Oh, Junwan, how truly I care for this nephew of ours!” Blinking a few times, he rubbed the bridge of his nose and sighed.

As for Song Que, he stood there on the bank of the Underworld River, mixed emotions playing out in his eyes.

Finally, he sighed and closed his eyes for a moment. When he opened them, they shone with determination.

“Sooner or later, I'm going to surpass him!” The truth was, even he didn't believe that. However, he was used to saying such things, and it would feel too strange to not say them. Snorting coldly, Song Que flew up into the air after Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he breathed another inward sigh of relief. The truth was that he felt bad about the mistake he had made in reaching out to to touch Song Que’s head….

“Well, I didn’t ask him to stick his head out toward me. He did that on his own!” Of course, he didn’t say that out loud. If he did, Song Que would likely explode, and he had just worked hard to calm him down.

“Ai, he flies off the handle too easily.” Shaking his head, he began to fly off into the distance, Song Que in tow. The two of them flew along silently for some time, heading toward the location where the eastern and northern sections of the Great Wall had once met. That was the location where they would head back to the River-Defying Sect. Their pathway home led through… the Deadmire!

Based on the speed they were capable of, it would only take a few months for them to reach it!

Two months passed in the blink of an eye. They didn’t see any cities, only rugged and crumbling mountains and sprawling jungles. There were few soul cultivators, and only the occasional tribe of savage giants.

Bai Xiaochun was already beginning to sigh at how quietly he was making his departure. It was almost as if no one cared about him….

“Ah, whatever. Keeping a low profile is always the best thing to do.” Sighing again, he looked off at a distant mountain range. According to the map he had, after passing through those mountains, they would be on the very border of the Wildlands.

However, even as he was preparing to lead Song Que in that direction, he stopped in place. Song Que, whose expression had been very grim during the last two months, suddenly looked off in a certain direction, his pupils constricting.

At this point, the two of them realized that, standing right there at the peak of one of the nearby mountains, was a woman! She had long hair and a red robe, and was as beautiful and elegant as an immortal!

She was none other than… Mistress Red-Dust, Zhou Zimo!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0851 awe-chapter-852

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw Mistress Red-Dust, his heart began to pound, and he scowled.

Of all the people he feared in the Wildlands, Mistress Red-Dust was at the top of the list. Furthermore, thanks to the Giant Ghost King playing matchmaker between the two of them, things were even more complicated.

At first, he had found the whole thing to be a bit exciting. But after everything that happened with Gongsun Wan’er, and afterward, matters with Mistress Red-Dust came to be a big headache.

He wasn’t even sure how he should act around her. On the one hand, he felt like he should attack her. It wasn’t as if she were a match for him in combat. But on the other hand, he felt like he couldn’t bring himself to do such a thing….

“I'm trying to leave, and Zhou Zimo is actually blocking my path….” His initial reaction was to just flee.

In fact, as soon as that idea popped into his head, he found it impossible to get rid of.

“Que’er, this person isn’t up to any good. She’s probably here to try to capture you. Let’s skirt around her.” With that, he turned and headed off in a different direction.

Inside, Song Que was sneering in ridicule. After all, he knew about some of the things that had gone on between Mistress Red-Dust and Bai Xiaochun. However, he didn’t say anything, and even slowed down a bit. He didn’t want to get involved.

Mistress Red-Dust stood atop the mountain, looking coldly at Bai Xiaochun, complex emotions in her eyes. She wasn’t any more certain of how to view things between herself and Bai Xiaochun than he was. Everything that had gone on had her feeling very confused.

She also knew that she shouldn’t have come here. And yet, here she was. Then, she saw him looking at her with a scowl, and an indescribable fire began to burn inside of her. Moments later, she realized that he wasn’t even going to come talk with her. Instead, he turned and headed in a different direction. Her anger erupted.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” she screamed, her voice echoing like a clap of thunder. In response, Bai Xiaochun shivered and picked up speed. As for Song Que, he backed up.

Mistress Red-Dust became a beam of red light that shot off of the mountain toward Bai Xiaochun, indescribable rage filling her as she whistled through the air. Then she waved her right index finger in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, causing the sky to turn red as her will filled the area, locking everything down.

Bai Xiaochun frowned, but didn't slow down in the slightest. The air around him shattered as the power of a deva descended, and yet, it could do nothing to hinder him!

In the past, it would have required him to rely on some divine abilities to get away. But now, he was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and was fully capable of fighting someone in the early Deva Realm!

In fact, he could even fight someone in the mid Deva Realm if he used his most powerful divine abilities!

As soon as Bai Xiaochun blasted through the barrier of deva power, Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes shone with cold light, and she performed an incantation gesture, causing the power of her Red Dust Violet Road technique to appear.

It was a consummate divine ability, a giant ghost secret magic that she had previously used to seal Gongsun Wan’er. Instantly, a miniature version of Giant Ghost City appeared around Bai Xiaochun, stifling his aura and preparing to seal him.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. He knew that this magical technique was a trump card of Mistress Red-Dust’s, and that it required a significant wastage of longevity. It was a hexing magic that most ordinary devas would never have access to.

“Are you crazy or something, Zhou Zimo!?” he shouted angrily.

In response, Mistress Red-Dust picked up speed. As she closed in, her hand flashed with an incantation gesture, causing the sealing powers of Red Dust Violet Road to grow stronger.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as an immense gravitational force sprang up around him. The truth was that he had no desire at all to tangle with Mistress Red-Dust.

“Just what do you think you’re going to accomplish, Zhou Zimo?! Do you really think I'm scared of you or something?!” Even as the gravitational force gripped him, he spun in place, and began to grow larger! At the same time, countless rocks began to fly in his direction as he transformed into a stone golem.

It was none other than the Living Mountain Incantation!

He launched into motion, his fleshly body power bursting out. This was the great circle of the Undying Bones, which surpassed the Nascent Soul stage, and was similar to a deva. As soon as he attacked the Red Dust Violet Road illusion, it shattered, completely decimated by his fleshly body power.

“You owe me an explanation, Bai Xiaochun!” Zhou Zimo yelled. Not pausing for even a moment, she performed an incantation gesture and spat out a mouthful of blood, which transformed into ten blood-colored spears. Then, the ten spears became streaks of red light that swirled through the air at top speed toward Bai Xiaochun!

Seeing the dangerous situation caused Bai Xiaochun to sigh. He waved his hands out in front of him, causing the stones surrounding him to explode outward, and then speed to meet the ten blood-red spears. The instant they met, a boom echoed out, and the spears were sent spinning off to the side.

Bai Xiaochun was now in the open, and instead of fleeing, he blurred into motion, shooting directly toward Mistress Red-Dust, hand clenched in a fist!

“Can you just not flip out!?” he yelled as his fist strike landed.

A boom rang out as Mistress Red-Dust was shoved backward several paces. When she came to a stop, her expression looked more complex than ever. Bai Xiaochun’s progress was shocking; although she had not attacked with full force right now, it was obvious that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t either. The complexity of her emotions deepened as she apparently remembered something important.

Phoenix-like eyes radiating rage, she looked at him and coldly said, “I’m not flipping out! We’re engaged, remember!? My father arranged it. Maybe you can just up and leave, but what do I do then?! And what does my father do?! Look at you! I didn’t even say a single word to you, and you upped and ran? Are you even a man, Bai Xiaochun?!”

Bai Xiaochun’s headache grew more intense as he rushed to offer an explanation.

“Listen, Zimo. You’re a beautiful, outstanding girl. You can definitely find another Daoist partner better than me. And as for my old pal Giant Ghost, this was all just a misunderstanding! The old man will definitely understand.… Look, I wasn’t running away from you, I'm just in a hurry to get home.… Oh, and yeah, I'm definitely a man. I--”

Before he could say anything else, Mistress Red-Dust exploded again. “Bai Xiaochun!! Do you really not get it? Or are just pretending to be thick? Well?! Everybody in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty thinks that my Daoist partner is your apprentice, Bai Hao! And that means they think I'm an empress! Everybody’s watching me! What do you want me to do, marry your apprentice!?” Mistress Red-Dust was very angry, and therefore, her shouting echoed out very loudly in all directions.

Some distance away, Song Que had been watching the two of them fight. Although he had been aware that Bai Xiaochun was strong, to see it with his own eyes left him shaken.

And then he heard what Mistress Red-Dust just said, and a strange expression appeared on his face. He even started to get a bit excited.

“Bai Xiaochun, ah, Bai Xiaochun. You’ve had this coming for a long time!” With that, he simply stood there, watching the fireworks.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was standing there, feeling a bit taken aback. The truth was that he hadn’t put much thought into the matter that Mistress Red-Dust had just brought up. And everything she had just said made sense, leaving him feeling more than a bit awkward.

“Zimo, I--”

As soon as the words left his mouth, Mistress Red-Dust flicked her sleeve, gritted her teeth, and said, “You either stay here in the Wildlands and take my hand in marriage, or... you give me a damn good explanation!”

Feeling very much in the wrong, and very embarrassed, Bai Xiaochun promptly tried to calm her down.

“Zimo, just calm down. I *swear* that I’ll come back. Really.... Don’t worry. I’ll definitely return!” Worried that she might not believe him, he thumped himself loudly on the chest to emphasize his words.

However, both his wording and his gesture seemed a bit too exaggerated.... Mistress Red-Dust immediately realized that he was just putting on a show, and it caused the rage in her heart to slip out of control.

“Bai Xiaochun!” she said through gritted teeth. Then she burst into motion, unleashing all of the power she could muster to attack him. The will of a deva spread out into the area, causing Song Que to gasp and back up further.

Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp as he retreated. On any other occasion, he would fight back, but right now he actually felt very guilty, and simply couldn’t retaliate. All he could do was dodge left and right and throw out some more explanations.

“Zimo, you need to listen to me….”

“I’ll come back, really….”

“You have to trust me….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0852 awe-chapter-853

No amount of explanation on the part of Bai Xiaochun could resolve the situation. Mistress Red-Dust refused to believe anything he said. As she attacked and he evaded, they got closer and closer to the distant mountains.

Song Que watched them go, his heart quivering in both fear and excitement. To see Bai Xiaochun in a predicament like this significantly reduced some of the frustration and humiliation that had been festering there.

Although he was interested in getting closer to see what exactly was happening, Mistress Red-Dust was on a rampage, and she was a deva. Song Que knew that his own cultivation base wasn’t high enough to get close safely, therefore, after a moment of hesitation, he decided to stay put. Before long, Bai Xiaochun and Mistress Red-Dust vanished into the mountains.

That particular stretch of mountains was covered with a lush jungle. Currently, booms rang out in the jungle, as well as flashes of bright red light, as Bai Xiaochun fled pell-mell.

Each and every beam of red light that Mistress Red-Dust launched was powerful enough to severely injure an ordinary cultivator in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. But Bai Xiaochun had immense fleshly body power. Therefore, the attacks that hit him didn’t do very much other than destroy portions of his clothes. Before long, he was looking very bedraggled.

“Don’t be like this, Zimo....” he cried anxiously. Seeing that nothing she did was having any effect, she snorted coldly and then spat out some more magical blood, summoning a host of spears that she sent flying in his direction.

As the spears flew through the air, they interlocked, creating something like a net of blood. Shocked, Bai Xiaochun fled at top speed; the danger had suppressed the guilt that he felt, and his anger was starting to burn. It was at this point that Mistress Red-Dust performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the numerous blood spears to accelerate rapidly toward him.

Enraged, Bai Xiaochun unleashed a fist strike with his right hand, causing a tempest to spring out and destroy more than half of the spears. However, a portion made it through and slammed into him.

Shaking physically, he fell back several paces. Although he wasn't seriously injured, his clothing couldn’t stand up to the force, and was mostly destroyed. Some of the blood spears even stabbed into his bag of holding!

A boom could be heard as his bag of holding was torn open, allowing countless objects to spill out from inside.

There was multi-colored flame, countless soulhoarding pagodas, and boxes of soul medicine, plus a variety of medicinal pill bottles, pill furnaces, medicinal pills, command medallions, and hosts of other magical items. All in all, there were tens of thousands of items.

“This is ridiculous, Zhou Zimo!” Waving his sleeve angrily, he began to pull back all the items that had fallen out of his bag of holding.

Mistress Red-Dust seemed to be on the verge of running out of breath. She knew that she had gone a bit too far, but was too thin-skinned. But to hear Bai Xiaochun insult her the way he had, and the thought of all the bitterness of her recent days, made it impossible for her to calm down.

“Is all that crappy stuff important to you?” Snorting coldly, she waved her sleeve at some of the miscellaneous items that he hadn’t collected up yet. Instantly, some of the weaker medicinal pills exploded.

“My medicinal pills!!” he shouted angrily, gritting his teeth. “Y-y-you…!”

Seeing him reacting in this way was exactly what Mistress Red-Dust wanted. Without paying much attention, she reached out and grabbed a random pink medicinal pill. Considering she had no skill in the Dao of medicine, she had no idea what kind of pill it was.

However, Bai Xiaochun recognized it immediately, and it caused his eyes to go wide. Gasping, and having no time to worry about the medicinal pills which had just been destroyed, he immediately shouted out, his voice rising a few octaves past normal.

“Zimo! You need to be very, *very* careful! Do not crush that pill! If you do, something really bad could happen!!” Tears threatened to leak out of Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. After all, the pill that Mistress Red-Dust had picked up was none other than… an Aphrodisiac Pill!!

Bai Xiaochun had drawn deeply on his stockpile of Aphrodisiac Pill during his time in the Wildlands, and didn’t have very many left. And yet, somehow, Mistress Red-Dust had managed to grab one of them.

It was a very weak pill… the slightest pressure would cause it to explode, sending a pink mist out that would affect anything it touched. It was a fact Bai Xiaochun was very well aware of. Based on his experiences in the prisons of the Wildlands, he knew that virtually no one could resist that power. Instantly, his heart began to pound.

Mistress Red-Dust was taken aback by his reaction, and his words. Looking down, she saw what appeared to be nothing more than an ordinary medicinal pill.

The moment Mistress Red-Dust looked down, Bai Xiaochun anxiously opened his third eye. When the power of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye erupted out, he immediately used it to wrest control of Mistress Red-Dust’s movements.

Without the slightest hesitation, he shot forward, using all of the power of his cultivation base and fleshly body. In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of Mistress Red-Dust, reaching out to grab the Aphrodisiac Pill.

However, a gleam passed through Mistress Red-Dust’s eyes as she slipped out of the control of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye!

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was trying to grab the pill, Mistress Red-Dust immediately began to draw her hand back. However, it was in that moment that their two hands collided.

“No!!” Bai Xiaochun screamed. He had been too late to retract his own hand, and when he saw it slam into Mistress Red-Dust’s, his eyes went wide, and his mind began to spin. As for the Aphrodisiac Pill… it burst open….

“I'm finished. Kaput….” he wailed inwardly as he lurched backward. However, no matter how fast he moved, he couldn’t avoid the pink mist which spread out to envelop both he and Mistress Red-Dust.

Bitterness filled his heart, but no amount of screaming could do anything about what was happening. In fact, a moment later, he began to pant…. As for Mistress Red-Dust, her face fell; she wasn't sure what medicinal pill she had been holding, and did everything she could to avoid breathing in the pink mist. However, there was some strange property to the mist that allowed it to be absorbed through the skin. Almost immediately, a flush covered her face.

She began to pant, and her eyes opened wide, revealing an expression of terror as she suddenly thought back to the things Bai Xiaochun had done at the Great Wall.

"What pill was that!?!?" she shrieked, immediately backing away. However, as she moved, she began to tremble; she had been at the epicenter of the pill explosion, and the mist had instantly been absorbed through the palm of her hand.

She suddenly staggered in place as the mist continued to spread out, enveloping her, causing her mind to spin. At the same time, an uncontrollable heat rose up within her….

Bai Xiaochun was also in the mist, breathing heavily, struggling against its effects. His bag of holding did not contain an antidote to the Aphrodisiac Pill, but he did have some broad-spectrum neutralization pills. Unfortunately, his bag of holding had exploded, and he hadn't had the time to gather everything back…. Flying toward the edge of the mist, he began to search frantically for the specific medicinal pills.

Unfortunately, the Aphrodisiac Pill was simply too powerful. A wave of dizziness hit him, along with a powerful heat inside his body. He was halfway out of the mist by now, and could see a neutralization pill over in the nearby bushes. However, that was when a hand reached out and grabbed his tattered clothing. Moments before, that hand had been as white as jade, but now it was flush from heat. Even as Bai Xiaochun screamed… the hand dragged him back into the mist.

“No! Aaaiiiieee! Don’t rip my clothes off…. This… this is my first time!!

“Be more gentle! Aiieee… it hurts….”

Hair-raising screams escaped Bai Xiaochun’s lips, as though he were experiencing the most dangerous of crises….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0853 awe-chapter-854

Time passed….

The pink mist lasted for a few hours. When it finally began to dissipate, the first person to become visible was Mistress Red-Dust.

Her face was flushed, and a slight frown could be seen on her face. She seemed out of sorts, with mixed emotions in her eyes. After a moment, she looked over her shoulder at the fading pink mist, and then stamped her foot. That prompted a slight hiss of what might have been pain to escape her lips. Then, looking a bit shy, she turned into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

An incense stick’s worth of time passed, whereupon the mist faded completely away, revealing… a scene of complete chaos.

Bai Xiaochun lay propped up against the trunk of a tree, staring listlessly into the sky, his face occasionally twitching.

“So rough….” he murmured, wishing he could cry, but finding no tears to do so. A moment passed, and he began to gather his clothing. “She definitely did that on purpose! Well, that’s what I get for being so outstanding. I can’t believe I actually awakened the beast within her. She even went so far as to use an Aphrodisiac Pill against me….”

At this point within his bitterness, he finally began to feel a bit pleased with himself. Then he thought about the enchanting scene which had just played out, and his heart actually began to beat a bit faster.

“Ah, whatever. I guess that will have to count as the explanation Zhou Zimo asked for.” Sighing, he began to collect all of his scattered items from the jungle around him. Then he got a new robe from his bag of holding, and made his way off.

“Those Aphrodisiac Pills are really too dangerous….” This was his first time experiencing the Aphrodisiac Pill which he himself had created. Normally, he gave the pill to others to consume, but having done so himself now, he finally understood how terrifying it was. At the same time, his admiration for Zhou Yixing grew.

“I guess Yixing is more formidable than me in this area. Despite consuming multiple pills back then, he still kept himself under control when I put that pig-beast in front of him!”

After flying out of the jungle, he tracked down Song Que, who had been waiting nearby. When Song Que saw the flush on his face, and the wry expression he wore, he wasn’t quite sure what to make of it.

Of course, he knew it must have had something to do with Mistress Red-Dust. And based on the way Bai Xiaochun looked, it didn’t seem likely that anything good had happened to him.

And thus it was that Bai Xiaochun and Song Que flew through the mountains, drawing ever closer to the Deadmire.

Another half a month went by, and they were in a very remote locale. Although they saw the occasional soul cultivator, the mere cultivation base fluctuations rolling off of them caused any such people to immediately flee.

There were only a few savage tribes, who immediately dropped down to offer obeisance when they saw Bai Xiaochun and Song Que flying through the air.

These remote border regions were actually where most savages tribes originated. Song Que even saw a few tribes that were clearly matriarchal in nature. The women of the tribe were extraordinarily ferocious and mighty, and also physically large.

It was Song Que’s first time being in such a place and seeing things like this, and his gaze often lingered on the stunning things he was seeing. As for the savages, they viewed Bai Xiaochun and Song Que almost like gods.

Before long, Song Que realized that Bai Xiaochun seemed to be lost in a daze most of the time. In his curiosity, he couldn’t help but wonder what had happened. Obviously, only Bai Xiaochun had returned from the fight with Mistress Red-Dust.

“Don’t tell me he actually killed her?” The mere thought struck him with fear, but he didn’t dare to ask any further questions. The only thing he could do was be more on guard in case there were repercussions.

And thus they proceeded onward, Bai Xiaochun in a daze, and Song Que on full alert. At one point when they were roughly four or five days away from the Deadmire, Bai Xiaochun suddenly stopped in place. Then, his blank expression turned into a curious one as he looked off toward a savage tribe located at the foot of a nearby mountain.

It was a small, matriarchal tribe. Whether it came to the warriors in the tribe, or the other important people, they were all women. The men seemed weak, and were apparently kept only for reproductive purposes.

The tribe wasn't very populous either. There were less than a hundred members, ninety percent of whom were women. The men all seemed gaunt and weak. Although they were big-boned like most savages, they seemed listless and exhausted. Most of them were gathered in one location in the tribal lands, where they lay quietly, occasionally chatting with each other.

Some distance away from them was a stack of hay bales. Leaning up against them was a man who was clearly not a savage. He looked more like a soul cultivator. However, he was clad in a grass skirt, and was incredibly weak, little more than skin and bones. He clearly hadn’t bathed in some time, and lay there staring at the sky with listless eyes, seemingly resigned to his fate.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of him, his jaw dropped.

“Que’er, does something seem familiar about his aura?!”

Surprised, Song Que sent his divine sense out to check, after which his eyes went wide. “Master God-Diviner!!”

Song Que gasped in incredulity. Although Bai Xiaochun had asked Bai Hao to help track down the other Heavenspan cultivators who had been teleported into the Wildlands, the truth was that Bai Hao had only just succeeded as the Hell-Emperor, and could not fully wield the powers of the Underworld River. Tracking down all those cultivators was not something he could easily do in a short time.

“It really is Master God-Diviner!” Bai Xiaochun said, smiling. He immediately flew over to the tribe, followed closely by Song Que. Within moments, they were in the air over the tribe.

Of course, the savages were immediately thrown into a frenzy. They all scrambled to offer obeisance as if to gods, including the many burly and rather ugly females.

It was an interesting and unique tribe, but it didn’t take long for Bai Xiaochun to identify one female savage as the leader. Based on the fluctuations rolling off of her, she was comparable to the Core Formation stage.

When Master God-Diviner’s previously listless eyes came to rest on Bai Xiaochun and Song Que, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes widened. Seemingly worried that he might be hallucinating or dreaming, he rubbed his eyes, then looked back. At that point, he leapt to his feet.

“Song Que! “Bai Xiaochun!!” His voice quavered, and he was clearly too excited to control himself. Tears began to stream down his cheeks as he cried out in a hoarse voice. “Save me! Save me!!”

The savages were shocked, and Bai Xiaochun was delighted. Waving his hand, he caused Master God-Diviner to fly up into the air. As for the savages, they trembled in reverence, and didn’t dare to do anything to hinder him.

“You’re finally here!! I… I almost went crazy! Heavens! Is this really happening? I divined some time ago that people would come to rescue me… I've been waiting for years and years. I thought I wouldn’t be able to hold out until you got here.…” More tears of excitement welled up in Master God-Diviner’s eyes as he chattered on. Close up, it was possible to see how terrifyingly gaunt he had become, to the point where bones were visible everywhere beneath his skin.

Bai Xiaochun was deeply shaken by the condition Master God-Diviner was in. As for Song Que, considering that he and Master God-Diviner were both from the Blood Stream

Division, his face turned particularly grim. Then he turned toward the savages, and seemed about to take action, when Master God-Diviner hurriedly got in his way.

“Let them be…. Many of them are my own blood.” Years ago, when Master God-Diviner had been teleported into the Wildlands, he had been so severely injured that his cultivation base had dropped to the Qi Condensation level. Then this matriarchal tribe captured him, and the leader laid a restrictive spell onto him, making it impossible for his cultivation base to recover. Furthermore, because he was a cultivator, they viewed him with great importance, and made him a reproductive slave of the tribe….

He had worked so hard at his job that he was slowly drained empty and driven to despair. It was made worse by the fact that the savage women were extremely ugly, and very rough. At the same time, the savage men were extremely jealous of him. Master God-Diviner had a hard time not collapsing mentally. If it weren’t for the fact that he had divined that someone would come and save him, he might have killed himself.

And it was finally here on this day that he saw Bai Xiaochun and Song Que again, both of whom were clearly doing much better than him.

Song Que’s jaw dropped in response to what Master God-Diviner had just said, and soon, feelings of sympathy rose up within him. As for Bai Xiaochun, he suddenly realized that compared to Master God-Diviner, he didn’t have it very bad at all. When it came to being forced, nobody could match what Master God-Diviner had dealt with….

“I understand, Master Snortsnort!” Bai Xiaochun said. Sighing in compassion, he clasped Master God-Diviner’s gaunt shoulder.

End of Book 5: The Peak Of Life

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0854 awe-chapter-855

Book 6: The Strongest Deva

Bai Xiaochun felt great compassion for the gaunt and bedraggled Master God-Diviner. At the same time, he couldn’t help but compare Mistress Red-Dust with the female savages of this matriarchal tribe.

When he did that… he suddenly felt blessed.

Of course, he didn’t show that on his face. Instead, his compassion grew more obvious. And thus, he took Song Que and Master God-Diviner, and left the tribe.

By means of medicinal pills, Bai Xiaochun helped Master God-Diviner remove the restrictive spell that had been placed on him, and helped him recover from his injured and weakened state. Gradually, the color returned to his face, and more importantly, excitement filled his heart because of his escape from calamity.

It was as if new life had been breathed into him. He was in a wonderful mood, to the point where the sky even seemed bluer than normal, and the sunshine brighter. Everything was going well. However… that good mood only lasted for a few hours…. After the group of three was a short distance away from the matriarchal tribe, Bai Xiaochun began to talk.

“Master God-Diviner, you really ended up in a rough situation! Ai. Before running into you, I thought that Que’er had it worst. Who would have thought that you…?” As he sighed, Song Que snorted coldly in his heart, convinced that

Bai Xiaochun was preparing to show off to Master God-Diviner.

And that was exactly right. However, even after the hours which had passed, it was to Bai Xiaochun's irritation that Master God-Diviner didn't ask any questions about how he had fared in the Wildlands. His heart itched with the sensation of having his exploits unlauded, and he was starting to get jumpy in the hopes that Master God-Diviner would make some inquiries.

A strange expression appeared on Master God-Diviner's face. It had been many years since he had been around Bai Xiaochun, but he knew him well. Furthermore, although he hadn't looked closely at the cultivation bases of Bai Xiaochun and Song Que earlier, when he did now, he was shocked at their progress. Then he thought about all of the events which had played out back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect and the Great Wall, and at that point, he decided to change the subject.

"Ah, don't worry about me. I'll recover fine after I do a bit of cultivation." With that, he laughed heartily and rotated his cultivation base a bit.

Bai Xiaochun was less than pleased at Master God-Diviner's complete lack of loyalty. All Bai Xiaochun wanted was to show off a bit, and yet the man wasn't cooperating at all. That made him suddenly think about Xu Baocai. Xu Baocai would definitely have cooperated!

Song Que, on the other hand, was very pleased with how Bai Xiaochun was reacting. Time passed, and the three of them got closer and closer to the Deadmire.

Eventually, when they were only a day away, Master God-Diviner, who still had not given Bai Xiaochun any chances to revel in glory, finally couldn’t hold back from asking a certain question.

“Um… where exactly are we going?”

The question caused Song Que’s heart to thump, and he was just about to jump in to provide the answer when Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up. Leaping to his feet, he loudly said, “We're going to the Deadmire! That's the way back to the River-Defying Sect. Have you heard of the Deadmire? It's super dangerous! Devas won’t even step inside a single pace, let alone Nascent Soul experts!”

“The Deadmire?” Master God-Diviner said, his eyes widening. He had indeed heard of the Deadmire, and knew that what Bai Xiaochun had said was no exaggeration. According to what he had heard, not even demigods would dare to set foot inside!

It was a forbidden region where life did not exist!

“Why don’t we just go to the Great Wall…?” Master God-Diviner asked, swallowing hard. Although he had divined that he would be saved, he hadn’t come up with any information regarding what would happen afterward. After escaping the greatest calamity of his entire life, he couldn’t help but worry about his fate.

Off to the side, Song Que sighed. He knew… that nobody would be able to stop Bai Xiaochun from showing off now. And he was right. As soon as the second question left Master God-Diviner’s mouth, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine even more brightly.

“Hahaha! So you *have* heard of it! Alright, Master God-Diviner, listen up while I explain!” Feeling very pleased with himself, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a command medallion.

At this point, Master God-Diviner’s eyes went a bit blank as he realized that he had given Bai Xiaochun the opportunity he had been looking for….

“See this? With this command medallion, we can get through the Deadmire easily and safely!” Bai Xiaochun waved the command medallion in front of Master God-Diviner’s face, his eyebrows jumping up and down with excitement.

“I know what you’re wondering. What kind of command medallion is this? And how did I get it? Well, it’s a long story, but we have plenty of time. I’ll explain everything in detail. It all started back when we were teleported here into the Wildlands….”

Bai Xiaochun spent most of the following day recounting his adventures in great detail, putting special emphasis on the status and position he had attained.

At first, Master God-Diviner sighed in regret. However, by the time it got to the part where Bai Xiaochun kidnapped the demigod Giant Ghost King, his eyes nearly popped out of his skull. And eventually, he came to realize that the Giant Ghost King kidnapping was like nothing compared to the rest of the story!

“Did you just say… that you kidnapped all of the chosen in the Wildlands?!?! And the Giant Ghost King gave you Mistress Red-Dust’s hand in marriage!?

“You… you actually became the inspections commissioner of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty? And performed countless shakedowns?!?!

“You helped the Grand Heavenmaster enact a Proclamation of Universal Grace? You’re an earthly necromancer?!?!

“You…. Heavens! You’re not kidding about this, are you? Your apprentice is the Hell-Emperor?!?!?!” Master God-Diviner was thoroughly shaken, and could hardly believe what he was hearing. The story was so unbelievable it was almost like a fairy tale.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with the look in Master God-Diviner’s eyes. At this point, he finally felt he could leave the Wildlands without any regret in his heart.

However, he also decided it would be better to err on the side of modesty.

“Yeah, I did okay. Actually, I wasn’t even trying very hard.” Swishing his sleeve, he stuck his chin up and said, “You know I can reduce most things to ashes with the swish of a sleeve. It’s not the first time.”

To Master God-Diviner, it felt like thunder crashing in his ears, and the truth was, he didn’t really believe it. But… then he noticed the unsightly expression on Song Que’s face, and how he wasn’t saying anything at all. At that point, Master God-Diviner’s heart was struck by great waves of shock. That was especially true considering the final part of the story regarding Bai Xiaochun’s apprentice being the Hell-Emperor.

It was to Master God-Diviner's grief and shock that he realized the cruel truth: Bai Xiaochun really did rock all creation wherever he went!

In the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he formed a powerful underworld organization!

At the Great Wall, he fought his way to the coveted rank of major general!

And in the Wildlands, he shockingly ended up as the Master of the Hell-Emperor!

Master God-Diviner almost couldn’t wrap his mind around it all. Even just one of the things Bai Xiaochun had done would be enough to shake anyone to the core, let alone all of them together.

It was roughly evening when the group of three, including the dazed Master God-Diviner, arrived at the location where the Heavenspan River region’s northern and eastern Great Walls had once met. This was the entrance to… a land devoid of life!

It was actually a towering and winding mountain range that, upon being entered… led to a location no one had ever been to. The Deadmire!

As soon as they caught sight of the mountains, Bai Xiaochun patted his bag of holding, confident that the gravekeeper had been telling the truth. Gritting his teeth, he flew into the mountains!

Song Que took a deep breath. He didn’t particularly feel like going into the Deadmire, but knew he had no choice. The Great Wall had collapsed, and the Celestial had sealed the area, making passage back to the Heavenspan region that way impossible.

If they didn’t go through the Deadmire, it would be impossible to say how long they would have to wait to get home. Eyes flickering with determination, Song Que followed Bai Xiaochun.

Master God-Diviner shook off his daze, and as he did, his eyes were filled with awe and veneration. To him, Bai Xiaochun actually seemed like a god. As of this moment, he was far more confident in Bai Xiaochun's ability to traverse the Deadmire than Song Que was, and therefore, it was without hesitation that he followed along!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0855 awe-chapter-856

There were many stories and opinions about how the Heavenspan Realm’s Deadmire had been formed. No consensus had ever been reached, and it was entirely likely that only a handful of people in the entire world knew the truth about its origin.

For one thing, it was an enigma as to why any living being that entered the area would die. Neither devas nor demigods who entered the Deadmire ever came back… that much was confirmed fact.

Although there were people who had taken an interest in the Deadmire, and devised certain ways to study it, the only thing that they came to find out was that it was filled with a white sea.

It was a sea composed, not of water, but… bones!

From the peaks of the mountains that bordered the Deadmire itself, all one could see was vast, endless fog. Beneath the fog was an endless stretch of white bones that looked almost like a sea of water.

There were human bones and beast bones, although in general, it was difficult to distinguish exactly what types of bones there were. Furthermore, the entire area was deathly quiet, and filled with a palpable rancor.

No living beings existed. No sound existed.

And the silence was terrifying.

Many of the legends regarding the Deadmire involved some war of epic proportions that was fought even before the world came to exist. Supposedly, the battlefield upon which that war had been fought eventually came to be the sea of bones that was the Deadmire.

There were actually four Deadmires in the world, and they were all the same….

In the Deadmire that existed on the border between east and north, it was possible to see three figures. The first was Bai Xiaochun, who trembled in fear and anxiety as he walked across the bones. The crunching sounds that came with each step broke the silence, echoing out in bizarre and eerie fashion.

Despite his confidence in the gravekeeper, Bai Xiaochun was still terrified, and gripped his command medallion until his hands were white. Following behind him were Song Que and Master God-Diviner, both of whom trembled in anxiety.

Thankfully, as soon as they had stepped into the Deadmire itself, the command medallion had lit up like a candle, sending light out for dozens of meters in all directions, and pushing the fog away from them.

That had eased their fear to some extent. As they walked along, the odd crunching of their footsteps echoed out constantly. Considering that they were new to this place, they didn’t dare to attempt flying, and moved along on foot, casting vigilant glances around them as they went.

Because of the thick fog, it seemed to Bai Xiaochun and his companions that they were walking along through the dead of night, with their small, lit area making them very conspicuous….

Bai Xiaochun’s face was ashen as he crunched along. Based on what he could tell so far, there really were no living things in the Deadmire.

Three days passed. Although they weren’t flying, they still moved along quickly. By this point, Song Que seemed used to the crunching of the bones, and the stifling pressure of the fog and darkness. His expression was actually somewhat calm. Master God-Diviner also seemed to be doing well. Bai Xiaochun was the only one who was on full alert.

Song Que couldn’t help but snort coldly in his heart at Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety. It also seemed to fuel his own bravery, and he began to stomp his feet down a bit louder. However, Bai Xiaochun was not pleased with that.

Master God-Diviner also happened to feel that his actions were a bit extreme, and quickly said, “Keep it down, Song Que!”

Song Que snorted, and was just about to offer a retort when, all of a sudden, the hyper-vigilant Bai Xiaochun blurted, “Did you guys hear that?!?!”

Song Que stopped walking, as did Master God-Diviner. Everyone focused on listening, and although they couldn’t hear anything at first, it only took a moment for both of their faces to fall. Somewhere off in the fog… there was singing!?!?

It sounded like a woman. However, she was apparently so far away that they couldn't quite make out what she was singing. Regardless, the mere presence of the singing caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to drain of blood.

“No way. There’s no way that Gongsun Wan’er could have fled to this place, is there!?!?” However, as the singing continued, he realized that it didn’t actually sound like Gongsun Wan’er.

Song Que and Master God-Diviner looked around nervously, trying to identify the direction the singing was coming from. After a moment, Master God-Diviner’s eyes widened, and he pointed in a certain direction.

“There!”

Bai Xiaochun and Song Que immediately turned to look in that direction, which was when they saw… countless corpses! These corpses were not just bones laying around among the other bones, they were walking upright. There were thousands upon thousands of them, bent at the waist, black ropes strung over their shoulders, making them look almost like boatmen pulling a huge galleon!!

Behind the more than ten thousand human-sized corpses were more than a thousand corpses of giants! All of them had black ropes strung over their shoulders too, and were tugging them along!

However, there was more! Behind the thousand giants were more than a hundred beast corpses, each one more than 3,000 meters tall! All of the beasts looked different. Shockingly, in the very back, there were three bone dragons!

To the astonishment of all three cultivators, what next appeared before their eyes, right behind the three bone dragons… was a massive galleon, fully 30,000 meters in length, and crafted entirely of bone!!

The galleon was pitch black, and in very bad condition, with tattered flags attached to dilapidated flagpoles. However, despite its condition, it still radiated a shocking energy!

Strangely, despite the fact that the corpses were pulling the galleon across the surface of the sea of bones, no resulting sound could be heard. The entire Deadmire was still completely quiet… with the exception of the sound of singing coming from within the galleon itself!

Bai Xiaochun was already trembling with intense fear, and had begun to back up.

“Something's off here,” he said nervously, his face pale white. “What’s a warship like this doing in the Deadmire?! And what are all those corpses pulling it for? This is terrifying! Why don’t we go back. I think… maybe the Great Wall is a better idea after all!” However, even as he words left his mouth, the enormous galleon suddenly vanished….

The corpses went with it, and even the singing was gone, as if it had never existed to begin with.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped.

Song Que and Master God-Diviner were also frightened. There was something very strange about it all. As for Song Que, when he looked over at Bai Xiaochun and saw how scared he was, his own fear vanished. Snorting derisively, he said, “The Deadmire is supposed to be strange. What’s so scary about some boat?! It was just an illusion, that’s all. Just ignore it and it goes away. What, Bai Xiaochun, are you scared or something?”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he glared back.

“Me? Scared of ghosts?” He swished his sleeve. “I'm virtually a heavenly necromancer, and the most important ghost in the world is my apprentice. Why would I be afraid of ghosts? Are you kidding me!?”

Song Que chuckled coldly, but didn’t say anything else. Grabbing Master God-Diviner, he continued on the way they had originally been heading. Master God-Diviner looked back and forth between Song Que and Bai Xiaochun, but did nothing more than smile wryly and follow Song Que.

“Maybe it really was an illusion….” Bai Xiaochun thought, feeling a bit embarrassed. How could he have ever guessed that a galleon like that would appear so randomly, and then just vanish? Rubbing his nose, he reminded himself that he outranked Song Que, and therefore, needed to watch out for him. Sighing, he hurried along after the other two so that they would remain in the protective perimeter created by his command medallion.

An entire month flew by, during which time the strange galleon never appeared again. Gradually, Bai Xiaochun was starting to calm down. At the same time, the group began to pick up speed.

However, only a few days after that, their faces all fell when they yet again heard the sound of a woman singing!

This time, the song was much clearer. In fact… they could hear the lyrics clearly!

It was a strange song, the type that could not be forgotten once heard. It told the story of a mother whose arm was eaten by her own child!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0856 awe-chapter-857

The song and its lyrics caused Bai Xiaochun’s hair to stand on end. Song Que and Master God-Diviner were visibly shaken. That was when the enormous bone galleon appeared again, and this time, it was much closer to them!

It was only about 1,500 meters away, allowing them to see it very clearly. Even as they stared, reeling in shock, the singing ended, and the galleon vanished.

This time, Song Que didn’t offer any cold snorts. Even his face was a bit paler than usual. The group of three exchanged glances, and clearly, they were all convinced that something very strange was going on. The first time they had seen the boat, it had vanished roughly 3,000 meters away from them. The second time, it was only 1,500 meters away.

None of them dared to ponder… how close it would get the third time!

By now, it would take a full month to retrace their steps, and furthermore, they had no way to guarantee that something might not happen on the way back. According to the map of the Deadmire Bai Xiaochun had, it would only take them a total of about three months to cross.

That meant that they were very close to being at the halfway point.

Finally, Song Que gritted his teeth and said, “That ship showed up twice in a month. If we pick up some speed, we can probably make it out of here before it comes again!”

In response, Master God-Diviner nodded vigorously. Bai Xiaochun muttered to himself a bit, still convinced that the gravekeeper wasn't out to harm him. Finally, he agreed, whereupon the three of them finally flew up into the air, becoming beams of light that shot off into the distance.

Another half a month went by, during which time the galleon never reappeared. However, Bai Xiaochun didn't let his guard down at all. He looked around vigilantly as they sped along. Master God-Diviner wasn't capable of the same speed as Bai Xiaochun and Song Que, so Bai Xiaochun had to pull him along.

One evening after the half-month of travel, they suddenly heard that bone-chilling song for a third time!

The singing was even more clear, and shockingly, the bone galleon appeared in front of them again, less than a thousand meters away!

It was now very clear. In fact, Bai Xiaochun could clearly see the three flags flying on the galleon, each of which was embroidered with a ghost face!

The one in the middle had green skin and long fangs, and appeared to be glaring ferociously straight at them.

Song Que and Master God-Diviner were both visibly shaken as the huge galleon was dragged closer and closer to their group. 900 meters. 600 meters….

As it neared, Bai Xiaochun could see the corpses more closely. Although their faces were completely expressionless, they emanated a deep-seated aura of resentment!

Some of the corpses were little more than bones, but some had rotting flesh attached to them, and even clothing. There were all different types of clothing present, some from modern times, some from ancient. Clearly some of these corpses had been soul cultivators, and some had been ordinary cultivators….

Furthermore, as for the pitch-black galleon itself, Bai Xiaochun could now see that it was riddled with holes, as though it had been involved in some dramatic battle.

After the initial shock, the group of three all began to back away from the galleon. However, that was when the song ended, and the galleon faded away.

This time, it vanished when it was only 300 meters away from them!!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and Song Que and Master God-Diviner were trembling. By this point, sensations of imminent crisis were alive in all of them.

“It’s only been half a month!” Song Que said. “And it got even closer. The next time, it will probably hit us!!”

“Dammit, what the hell kind of place is this?!?!” Master God-Diviner added. “I don’t want to be one of those corpses pulling that galleon!!”

Glaring, Song Que continued, “Didn’t you say that we would be safe with that command medallion of yours, Bai Xiaochun!?”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bloodshot. Spinning, he yelled at Master God-Diviner and Song Que, “Stow it, you two. We’ve been going too slow. I’ll carry you. That way, we can definitely get out of here in half a month!”

Bai Xiaochun still trusted the gravekeeper, but considering the current circumstances, his fear was getting the better of him. Grabbing Song Que and Master God-Diviner, he unleashed speed comparable to a deva and shot through the air along their original path.

He flew without stopping for seven days!

And yet, it didn’t matter how incredibly fast Bai Xiaochun was moving. On evening of the seventh day, the group of three... yet again heard that bizarre song!

It was so loud and clear it almost seemed like the woman was singing it right into their ears. At the same time, the enormous bone galleon appeared, only 300 meters away in the fog.

This time, none of the group of three even had time to look at it. A massive gravitational force sprang out and grabbed ahold them. At the same time, the corpses pulling the galleon tugged it forward at incredible speed. To the shock of Bai Xiaochun, Song Que and Master God-Diviner, the corpses slammed right into them!

Bai Xiaochun screamed as his vision blurred. Then things became clear again, and he found himself standing on the deck of the galleon along with Song Que and Master God-Diviner!

The corpses down below pulled the galleon through the fog, with them standing right there on it!

As they stood there on the ghost galleon, something else was happening far away from the Deadmire. In the eastern Heavenspan River, in the Middle Reaches, the sound of bells filled the River-Defying Sect.

The sound was like a great weight pressing down onto the numerous cultivators in the sect. Everyone knew that the River-Defying Sect was in a very precarious position.

Up to this point, not a single one of the sect’s patriarchs had been able to break into the Deva Realm. Because of that fact, the other great sects in the Middle Reaches, the Starry River Court, the Dao River Court and the Polarity River Court, had become restless. Frictions had increased, and conflicts grew more intense, until some River-Defying Sect cultivators were even killed.

Back when the River-Defying Sect had first arrived in the Middle Reaches, they had disturbed the other three great sects’ profits. And then there was the matter of Bai Xiaochun causing problems in the legacy zone, which led to the River-Defying Sect taking away vast amounts of resources from the other sects. Worse was how the chosen from the other three sects all had turtle marks on their bodies that couldn’t be removed. Because of all this, the other three sects’ hatred of Bai Xiaochun and the River-Defying Sect eventually seeped down into their bones.

It was now nearing the time when the legacy zone would be opened again. Therefore, the other three great sects had secretly contacted the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect and received tacit approval… to begin a war of sect extermination!!

Bells were being rung in the River-Defying Sect because of information recently sent by spies, informing them of what was happening. In the past, the River-Defying Sect had sent emissaries to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to plead for leniency. After all, Bai Xiaochun had been a major general, and there were certain people in the sect who owed him favors. Those people had managed to care for the River-

Defying Sect to some extent. Had they not, the other three Middle Reaches sects would have made a move earlier.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was nowhere to be found. Although stories about his exploits in the Wildlands had circulated, and people knew he was alive, it was as the ancient saying went, *distant water won't put out a fire close at hand*.

And thus, the patriarchs all emerged from secluded meditation, activated the sect's grand spell formation, and prepared to fight to the death!!

No one in the River-Defying Sect was confident in being able to hold their own.... After all, the other sects had three devas on their side. Although they had used the easiest and least powerful method to become Mortal-Dao devas… they were still devas!

“The sect's survival will be decided during this war!”

“We'll defend the sect to the death!!”

As the bells tolled, and the River-Defying Sect cultivators let out battle cries, a powerful roar erupted out from somewhere in the sect. A huge beast appeared, hundreds of meters long, completely violet in color, with black flames spreading out beneath his feet. He looked like a mix between a dragon and a qilin, and had soaring energy that even the patriarchs in the great circle of the Nascent Soul found exciting. Those fluctuations… were those of a beast king!

It was Bruiser!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0857 awe-chapter-858

The River-Defying Sect had been at odds with the other three great sects for years, and now, open conflict was imminent. Even as the fighting was just about to break out, Bai Xiaochun, Song Que and Master God-Diviner were in the Deadmire, struck with terror even as they longed to be back in that very same sect.

The three of them stood on the deck of the battered and damaged ghost galleon, their expressions flickering as they sized up their surroundings.

There were holes in the pitch-black deck itself, evidence of what must have surely been a fantastic battle fought at some point in the ancient past. Despite the galleon’s dilapidated state, it still thrummed with a powerful aura that filled Bai Xiaochun with the same type of fear he had experienced when in the presence of the Celestial. In fact, the galleon seemed even a bit more powerful than that!

It shook him all the way down to his soul!

After looking around nervously for a moment, Bai Xiaochun blurred into motion, heading toward the side of the galleon, where he planned to simply leap over the edge. Song Que and Master God-Diviner joined him, and yet, as they got close to the edge, a black shield of light sprang up, which they thumped into!

It didn’t matter that Bai Xiaochun could crush early Deva Realm cultivators, and fight toe-to-toe with those in the mid stage. As soon as he made contact with that shield, he simply bounced right off of it.

He bashed into it again, and the same thing happened.

It was the same with Song Que and Master God-Diviner. Panting, they all began to look around, extremely serious expressions on their faces.

The deck of the galleon was almost completely empty, with no major structures on it whatsoever. There was what appeared to be a cabin or bridge, which was the only way to get to the lower decks. From the look of it, other structures had once existed on the deck, but had long since been destroyed!

Sticking up from the cabin was the flagpole with those three ghost face flags. And above the doorway was a primitive eight trigrams mirror.

Other than that, there was nothing else visible.

Song Que had a very unsightly expression on his face as he began to walk around and inspect the galleon. As for Master God-Diviner, he was gasping for breath and shivering. He had already been in a weak state before, and once on the deck of the galleon, felt something like a boundless coldness seeping into him.

“Hurry up and do some divinations, Master God-Diviner,” Bai Xiaochun said. “See if you can figure out a way off of this galleon!” He glanced over at the cabin door, and was struck with the feeling that the ghost galleon was in control of his very life. Furthermore, he was convinced that the galleon wanted the three of them to enter the cabin door!

Master God-Diviner’s terror mounted with every moment that passed. After hearing Bai Xiaochun’s suggestion, he reached into the fold of his robe and pulled out a copper coin, which was a magical item that he used to perform divinations. Normally speaking, he was very protective of the copper coin. In fact, back in that savage tribe where he had been held captive, he had been allowed to keep the coin on his person when performing his duties. As soon as he pulled it out, he drew upon the various magical techniques and divine abilities that he used for divination.

Unfortunately, it was in that moment that flag with the green-skinned, long-fanged ghost face suddenly rippled.

As a result, Master God-Diviner’s hand trembled, and the coin slipped through his fingers! It landed on the deck, rolled on its side, and then fell into one of the cracks and disappeared!

“My magic coin!” Master God-Diviner shrieked. “It's completely one-of-a-kind! It’s my life essence magical item, with my name engraved on it!” He rushed over to the crack into which the coin had fallen, but could see only darkness below. It was impossible to determine where exactly his magic coin had landed. Master God-Diviner immediately began to weep. Even during his torment in the savage tribe, he had managed to keep his copper coin safe, only to lose it on this bizarre galleon.

The sight of Master God-Diviner losing his copper coin right before trying to divine some important information instantly caused Bai Xiaochun’s mood to drop. After looking around, he finally came to focus on the cabin.

As for Song Que, he had surveyed the deck and found nothing, and also turned his attention to the cabin. Walking over, he stood in front of the door and examined it with a frown.

Master God-Diviner had a scowl on his face and tears in his eyes, and was feeling very irritated at Bai Xiaochun.

However, he didn’t dare to say anything. Eventually, his gaze came to rest on the cabin, whereupon his eyes lit up.

His attention was especially drawn to the eight trigrams mirror. The mirror was dark, and did not seem capable of projecting any light or images. Furthermore, there was something eerie and sinister about it. From what Master God-Diviner could tell, it was clearly something extraordinary.

“That must be some sort of treasure!” he thought. Master God-Diviner’s understanding of the arts of divination led him to the conclusion that this eight trigrams mirror was perfectly suited to him. That was especially true considering how depressed he was at the loss of his magic coin. Eyes widening, he hurried over and reached out toward the mirror.

“Hold on!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, surprised at Master God-Diviner’s fearlessness. However, he was too late to interfere. Master God-Diviner had already grabbed the mirror.

Bai Xiaochun felt his head spinning from how dangerous everything seemed. Even Song Que was struck with fear by Master God-Diviner’s impulsiveness.

“What are you doing, Master God-Diviner?!” he said, rotating his cultivation base at full readiness. However, nothing unusual happened. The corpses outside continued to pull the galleon along at the same speed as before.

When it was clear that nothing would happen, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. As for Master God-Diviner, he realized he had acted rashly, and felt a bit guilty. However, he quickly put the eight trigrams mirror into his bag of holding.

“My magic coin fell into that crack,” he said defensively, “so I’m going to take this copper mirror as a replacement.”

Bai Xiaochun rubbed the bridge of his nose, and Song Que glared briefly at Master God-Diviner before scanning the deck once again. Then, his eyes flickered with determination.

“We're on a weird boat that is taking us who-knows-where,” he said. “And it's not letting us off. I say… let’s go below decks and explore a bit. Maybe we can figure out what exactly is going on!” With that, he ignored Bai Xiaochun and Master God-Diviner, and stepped toward the cabin door.

“Wait a minute, Song Que!!” Bai Xiaochun said loudly.

However, Song Que completely ignored him, and disappeared into the cabin.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get angry at how impulsive Master God-Diviner and Song Que were being. Bai Xiaochun was the leader of the group, right? They should definitely be listening to his orders.

“Are these guys crazy or something? One glance at some stupid mirror and he puts his life on the line? And the other one runs right off into the jaws of death?!” As Bai Xiaochun stood there feeling anxious, Master God-Diviner hesitated for a moment. The truth was that he was still feeling bad about his magic coin, and for all he knew, it was there below decks, waiting to be found. Gritting his teeth, he walked toward the cabin door.

“Song Que is right. It doesn't seem like this galleon wants to hurt us. If it did, we would be dead already. The best thing is to check things out below decks.”

With that, he disappeared into the cabin, leaving Bai Xiaochun completely alone on the main deck.

His expression grew more unsightly by the moment as he stood there staring at the cabin door. For some reason, it seemed like the sinister and vicious mouth of some evil ghost.

Suddenly, a cold chill ran up his spine. “Wait a second,” he thought. “Song Que has never been very impulsive. And neither has Master God-Diviner.... If they were, they wouldn’t have survived for so long in the cultivation world. Why did they start acting so unusual on this weird galleon!?”

He looked around, but didn’t see anything unusual. Off in the distance, the fog was as thick as ever, and everything was as quiet as it usually was.

After a long moment of hesitant thought, he finally clenched his jaw and made his decision. Since the galleon wasn’t letting him leave, he would enter the cabin. He couldn’t just watch as Song Que and Master God-Diviner delivered themselves up to calamity. Eyes bloodshot, he slapped his bag of holding to produce some spare paper talismans, and then slapped them down all over his body. He also pulled out some suits of armor, which he donned. Then he charged through the door!

After Bai Xiaochun disappeared into the cabin, the green-skinned, long-fanged ghost face on the middle flag suddenly smiled!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0858 awe-chapter-859

Just inside the cabin was a staircase leading down. Upon entering, Bai Xiaochun couldn't see Song Que, but did catch a glimpse of Master God-Diviner at the bottom of the stairs.

He hurried forward and then climbed cautiously down the stairs, which put him on the first deck below the main deck!

The instant he stepped onto deck 1, he caught sight of both Song Que and Master God-Diviner, looking around with wide eyes.

The fact that they were both there unharmed caused Bai Xiaochun to breathe a sigh of relief. Without any hesitation, he hurried over to their side.

Deck 1 wasn’t very large, and much like the main deck, was completely empty, except for another staircase off in the distance, leading further down.

However, the bulkheads were covered with a massive mural!

It depicted the sky. It was not an ordinary blue sky, but rather, looked more like an ocean covered with waves. In fact, were it not for the occasional clouds floating about, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t even have been able to tell that it depicted a sky.

Most shocking of all was that the enormous mural also depicted a huge hand. The hand occupied nearly half of the sky, and was pushing down from it toward the land below!

Just looking at the mural caused Bai Xiaochun’s mind to start spinning. For some reason, it instantly filled him with a pressure that was difficult to put into words.

Furthermore, he experienced a sensation of utter despair, as though this hand contained the power… to destroy the world!!

The ground in the mural was parched and cracked. Standing upon it were three astonishing giants, whose expressions didn’t contain even a hint of the fear of death. All of the giants’ hands were stretched up to fight back against the enormous hand descending from the sky!

There was nothing else in the mural except for that. Bai Xiaochun had no idea exactly what it meant, nor did Song Que or Master God-Diviner. However, it was a shocking sight to look at.

A long moment passed. Bai Xiaochun was the first to come to his senses. Face ashen, he backed up a few steps, mind spinning with both fear and pain.

“How can a mural have such shocking power!? It stabs you all the way to the heart and soul!!” At this point, he realized that Song Que and Master God-Diviner were just standing there trembling, their eyes bloodshot and filled with despair. Therefore, he swished his sleeve and sent a burst of power into them.

Song Que shivered, blood oozing out of his mouth as he regained his senses. He staggered backward, his expression one of confusion. As for Master God-Diviner, his cultivation base wasn’t even close to the level of Song Que’s right now, so he coughed up a mouthful of blood and sagged in place.

“What kind of mural is this!?!?” he said, gasping for breath and not daring to look at it again.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun looked at his companions and, realizing that Master God-Diviner was a bit closer, edged over to his side. “This place is too weird!” he said. “Let’s go back. We can look for a way off the galleon back on the main deck. I have the feeling things will only get more terrifying the further down you go!”

However, even as the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, Song Que suddenly burst into motion, heading directly toward the stairs leading to deck 2. It only took him a moment to reach them, whereupon he instantly began to climb down.

Master God-Diviner did the same thing, completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed Master God-Diviner, but the moment he did, Master God-Diviner spun in place, a vicious expression on his face as he let out a soundless howl.

As he did, a green-skinned, long-fanged ghost face appeared on top of Master God-Diviner’s face. Bai Xiaochun felt a blast of power pushing his hand away, and then Master God-Diviner was gone down the stairs!

Bai Xiaochun was shaken, and an unsightly expression could be seen on his face. His heart was also starting to pound. After all, his words from moments ago had actually been a test!

He had noticed on the main deck that something odd was going on, and decided to see if he could figure out what it was. Obviously, this galleon was controlling both Master God-Diviner and Song Que!

“That green-skinned, long-fanged ghost just now… looked exactly like the one on that flag outside!”

With that, he turned to go back up the stairs to the main deck, only to find that… the staircase was gone!

Goosebumps broke out all over him, and his face turned as ashen as death. All of a sudden, this place seemed even more sinister than before, and his heart was pounding so hard and loud it was like a drum.

“What do I do, what do I do!?” All he could do was grip tight the command medallion the gravekeeper had given him. That was where all his hope lay.

“I'm the Hell-Emperor’s Master! There aren’t any ghosts or souls in this world that would dare to provoke me!!” Scowling on the verge of tears, he tried to work up some confidence by pulling out a tongue of multi-colored flame. Then, he gritted his teeth and headed toward the staircase leading to the next deck.

It was really too terrifying to be alone. Furthermore, he couldn’t just sit around and watch Song Que and Master God-Diviner be controlled.

“Dammit. If I had known things would turn out like this, I would have gone back to the River-Defying Sect alone!” Regret pricking at his heart, he advanced cautiously toward the staircase, at the bottom of which… was deck 2!!

As soon as he arrived, he exercised the utmost caution possible. He rotated his cultivation base and sent some divine sense out in all directions in the hopes of detecting anything unusual. He absolutely did not want to be surprised by anything like that mural.

However, deck 2 was a bit different than he had imagined. There didn’t seem to be anything dangerous about it all. Furthermore, it was a lot bigger than deck 1.

There were no murals, only flickering, yellow candlelight that made the area a bit dim.

Furthermore, right in the middle of the deck, there was a rocking chair!

It sat there, still and unmoving, seemingly completely ordinary in nature. Right in front of the rocking chair were two corpses which were little more than skeletons!!

They were on their knees in front of the chair, one corpse apparently that of a man, the other, a woman. One skeleton appeared to be made of gold, the other crystal. Although they were kneeling, from their posture, it looked like they had been embracing each other.

It was a terrifying scene to begin with, but it was made more bizarre… by the fact that the two embracing corpses’ heads… were fusing together! The process wasn't complete; they were only half-fused. But it was bizarre nonetheless!!

The mere sight caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to seize with fear. To top it all off, Song Que and Master God-Diviner were standing motionless right in front of the two corpses.

“Are they going to get fused together too!?!?!?” Bai Xiaochun had no idea what was going on, but he was convinced that this place was terrifying and bizarre beyond reason.

Something seemed very strange about the whole situation, and it had his heart pounding. After studying the scene for a moment, his gaze slid from Song Que and Master God-Diviner to the corpse with the golden skeleton.

After looking at it more closely, his eyes widened dramatically!

“That's the aura of the Undying Live Forever Technique!! It’s… the manifestation of the complete Undying Codex!!” Bai Xiaochun’s adam's apple bobbed up and down with fear as waves of astonishment crashed around in his mind. He was by no means mistaken. After all, he cultivated the Undying Codex of the Undying Live Forever Technique, just like the Blood Ancestor and this golden skeleton!

“If this golden skeleton mastered the Undying Codex, then… the corpse with the crystal skeleton must have cultivated….” Almost immediately, he realized that the corpse with the crystal skeleton still had abundant life force left in it, as if it were the type of thing that could live forever!!

“The Live Forever Codex!!” Bai Xiaochun had known from the very beginning that the Undying Live Forever Technique was broken up into the Undying Codex and the Live Forever Codex. However, he had never encountered the latter, only the former. Never could he have imagined that he would unexpectedly encounter two corpses that had both cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique!!

His mind felt like countless bolts of lightning were striking it. However, he still didn’t understand why these two people, who had cultivated the Undying Codex and Live Forever Codex respectively, would be fusing their heads together….

But then, a chill ran up his spine, and his hair began to stand on end as… the previously unmoving rocking chair… suddenly began to rock back and forth!!

Furthermore, it was just possible to make out the shadow of a person sitting in it....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0859 awe-chapter-860

Deck 2 of the ghost galleon was as silent as death. As the rocking chair slowly began to rock back and forth, a sensation of dire creepiness immediately filled Bai Xiaochun.

He shivered from head to toe, and almost couldn’t hold back from screaming.

There was obviously nobody sitting in the chair, and yet, it was acting as if there were. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun was almost certain that he could see the shadowy image of an old woman there, face pale, staring at him with a ghastly smile.

“A ghost!!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked. Heart pounding, he reached out, grabbed Song Que and Master God-Diviner, and pulled them away with him as he rushed away from the rocking chair.

His two companions seemed completely bereft of their senses. Their eyes were blank and their bodies were stiff, and they did nothing to resist Bai Xiaochun as he pulled them away.

At the same time, the rocking chair began to rock back and forth with increased urgency.

Even more shocking, the two corpses began to quiver, and glow with both golden and crystalline light.

Bai Xiaochun was wailing inwardly. The sight of the rocking chair going back and forth caused his scalp to tingle madly. Tossing both Song Que and Master God-Diviner into his bag of holding, he fled back to the staircase and ran up to the deck above.

He moved with blinding speed, and within the blink of an eye, was at the top of the staircase. Just as he lunged past the last step, his vision blurred, and before he could even breathe a sigh of relief, his eyes widened as much as a cat’s whose tail had been stamped on.

Shockingly, he found himself looking at two corpses and a rocking chair. He… was still on deck 2!!

The rocking chair was rocking back and forth rapidly, and this time, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s utter shock that he could hear a strange moaning howl coming from it.

“How could this be happening!?!?” Spinning in place, he ran back down the stairs, drawing upon both his cultivation base and fleshly body power. However, at the bottom of the stairs, his vision blurred again, and when he could see clearly again, he was looking at the corpses and the rocking chair!

It was still deck 2!!

Clearly, he would end up back on the same deck no matter what he did. By now, the rocking chair was rocking back and forth so vigorously that it was edging forward, as if it were trying to catch him!

Bai Xiaochun was so scared he was about to collapse. Letting out a shout, he waved his hand, sending out a blast of air toward the rocking chair.

However, the air simply passed right through it. By this point, he was sure that he was in a moment of deadly crisis. There was no time for thought or planning. He needed to get out of here immediately, before the rocking chair got too close to him and ended his life!

“Time to go for broke!!” Yet again, he burst into motion, leaving a trail of afterimages behind as he raced back up the stairs. This time, though, he didn’t go to the end of the stairs. Instead, he clenched his hand into a fist, which caused a black vortex to spring into being!

The air around him immediately distorted. It didn’t matter that he was in a ghost galleon in the Deadmire, there was still some energy of heaven and earth present. Thanks to the gravitational force created by the black vortex, that energy was sucked in, along with the power of his cultivation base, his qi and blood, and even his soul!

A shadowy image appeared behind him, wearing imperial robes and an imperial crown. At the same time, a domineering aura erupted out.

This was none other than… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Bai Xiaochun was already in the great circle of the Undying Bones, and therefore, his urgent unleashing of this fist strike contained, not just the previous double level of power… but five times!

Five times his normal fleshly body power gave him terrifying battle prowess that even late Deva Realm experts would gasp at.

“Open up!!” he shouted, slamming his fist into the stairs!

As he punched out with his fist, the shadowy emperor joined him, their fists superimposing in a massive attack!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A huge blast of wind erupted out, along with a roaring sound like that of an enormous dragon. As his fist landed on the staircase, it shattered like a mirror, and he leapt through the resulting hole.

His vision swam, and when it cleared, he was in an unfamiliar location!

Seeing that he was no longer on deck 2, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“What the hell kind of place is this? I shouldn’t have come here! I shouldn’t even have come to the Deadmire!!” His heart was filled with regret, and he was finally starting to think that the gravekeeper had actually screwed him over. If he had known that the Deadmire had a weird ghost galleon like this, he would never have come here!

However, he had few options at hand. Song Que and Master God-Diviner had clearly lost their minds; if he hadn’t grabbed them and put them in his bag of holding, they would probably still be back on deck 2.

“What am I supposed to do…?” he thought, scowling on the verge of tears. Using the Undying Emperor’s Fist had drained his fleshly body power; thankfully, now that he was in the great circle of the Undying Bones, he didn’t feel dangerously weak like he had been in the past.

Although he had just breathed a sigh of relief, that only lasted for a moment before he started to tremble again. His eyes widened, and his mind reeled with even more terror than before at the fact that… he was not on deck 2, or even deck 1!

He wasn’t on any specific deck at all, but rather, a private cabin. It was… a woman’s dressing room!!

The room contained a dilapidated bed covered with dust and spiderwebs, next to which was a vanity!

The vanity looked ancient, and was also covered with dust. It also had cracks on its surface, and one of the corners looked like it had been chopped or broken off. Furthermore, closer examination revealed that there was also black, dried-up blood on it!

There was a mirror propped up on the vanity, which was also covered with countless cracks. The strangest thing of all was that… the mirror was the only thing in the room that didn’t have even a speck of dust on it!

The dressing room had only a bed, a vanity, and a mirror, nothing else. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun looked around, he started to tremble violently.

And that was because, as soon as he laid eyes on the vanity… he heard singing!!

It was that same song about the mother whose arm was eaten by her own child!!

He could hear the song with absolute clarity, as though it were being sung in the very room in which he stood.

“Whoever you are, stay put! My apprentice is the Hell-Emperor!!” He felt like he was about to cry, and quickly turned to leave. Apparently, after having left deck 2, he ended up in the very nucleus of the entire ghost galleon!!

This dressing room was where the singing originated!

In fact, it came from the vanity!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0860 awe-chapter-861

Bai Xiaochun looked back at the dilapidated vanity, and all of a sudden… he saw a woman!

Her back was to him, making it impossible to see her face. She wore a red gown, and was combing her long, black hair. And she was singing a song….

Shockingly, the woman… only had one arm!!

Along with the woman came a coldness like the depths of winter. Worried that he might shriek with terror and interrupt the woman's singing, Bai Xiaochun clamped his hands down over his mouth.

He couldn't have been more terrified. He could immediately sense that his cultivation base wasn't high enough to fight this woman; she made him feel like he was being crushed by a mountain from the heavens.

Tears welled up in his eyes and then began to drip down his cheeks as he wondered why he always ended up encountering such bizarre situations. He wanted to flee, but after looking around the room, he realized that there were no doors or exits.

"What do I do, what do I do!?" he wailed inwardly. Suddenly, the woman seemed to realize that she wasn't alone, and stopped combing her hair. She also stopped singing.

Bai Xiaochun's heart began to race.

"It's not what you think, Senior!" he blurted. Then he began to gush incoherently. "I didn't mean to interrupt you…. Hey, I’m an important person too. My apprentice is the Hell-Emperor. Do you know the gravekeeper? He sent me here….”

The pressure he felt from this woman actually surpassed that which he had felt from the Celestial.

Worried that he wasn't explaining things clearly enough, he went on to say, “I didn’t even want to come here! Don’t mind me. You… you sing really well! Very pleasing to the ear….”

It was at this point that the women turned her face, provoking a shrill scream from Bai Xiaochun!

Her face… had no nose, no eyes, no mouth, nothing!!

It was a complete blank!!

Bai Xiaochun felt like his head was about to explode. Shrieking, he stumbled backward and shoved his command medallion out in front of him. Black light spilled out, causing his vision to blur….

At the same time, he began to fade away, vanishing from within the private cabin!

Even as he reappeared in another location, countless hairs slashed through the air into the spot he had just occupied, causing popping sounds to ring out.

Each and every one of those hairs thrummed with power that surpassed the Deva Realm.

Clearly, if Bai Xiaochun had stayed behind and been hit, he would have been killed!

A moment later, the hairs wriggled and vanished. Meanwhile, the faceless woman at the vanity turned back to face the shattered mirror, and slowly began to comb her hair again… and sing.

When Bai Xiaochun appeared, he was on top of the sea of bones, only about two days away from the eastern delta region of the Heavenspan River.

As he materialized, a blank look could be seen in his eyes. However, that look slowly faded into clarity. Gasping, he looked around to find himself off of the galleon. Everything which had just occurred seemed almost like a hallucination or dream.

And yet, he knew it was no hallucination. Whether it was the ghost galleon or the faceless woman combing her hair, it had all been very, very real. At this point, he suddenly realized that he had been extremely lucky.

“So, Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper wasn’t lying after all!!” Looking down at the command medallion with lingering fear, he realized that it was the only reason he had escaped death.

“This Deadmire is really an evil place. And what was that ghostess all about!?!?” The mere thought of her caused terror to grip his heart. With that, he slapped his bag of holding to pull out Song Que and Master God-Diviner.

“This was all your fault!” he said. “If it weren’t for me going to save you two, I wouldn’t have been in any danger at all!!”

As soon as Song Que and Master God-Diviner were out in the open, they began to regain their senses.

Rubbing the bridge of his nose, Song Que said, “What happened? We’re out? How come I don't remember anything…?”

Master God-Diviner hesitated for a moment, then looked quizzically at Bai Xiaochun. “I remember being on the main deck, but after going in the door… I don’t remember anything at all.”

Bai Xiaochun sighed and then told them everything that happened below decks. As he did, their eyes widened, and they even gasped.

Not only was the story completely stunning, they could tell that he wasn’t lying.

“I was the first one to go in?” Song Que asked. Next to him, Master God-Diviner shivered as he heard about the green-skinned, long-fanged ghost face appearing on top of his own face.

Bai Xiaochun snorted and said, “If it weren’t for me, you two would still be on that galleon!”

He was just about to go on berating them for a bit when he remembered that they were still in the Deadmire.

“Look,” he said hurriedly, “we’ll talk about it more when we're out of this place. This place is just too evil!” With that, he sped off into the distance, followed by the terrified Song Que and Master God-Diviner.

Considering the speed they maintained, it didn’t take long before they were closing in on the border of the Deadmire. Soon, fewer and fewer bones could be seen, and eventually, Bai Xiaochun was sure that they only had about a day left to go!

“How far did we get when we were on that galleon?” Based on what he recalled, they had only been on the galleon for three or four hours, and yet, it had taken them almost all the way to their destination. Based on that, a quick calculation revealed that the galleon itself could likely traverse the entire Deadmire in only a day.

**

As Bai Xiaochun, Song Que and Master God-Diviner were preparing to leave the Deadmire, war broke out in the Middle Reaches of the eastern Heavenspan River!

It was a war in which the three other great sects joined forces against the River-Defying Sect, who was simply incapable of fighting back. It was a war of sect extermination!!

Rumbling booms filled the air in the regions surrounding the River-Defying Sect. A glittering spell formation shield protected the sect, which was powered by the Dire Skybanyan. Countless divine abilities and magical techniques battered the spell formation, which was already twisting and distorting on the verge of collapse!

Outside of the spell formation were two suns, one white and one black, as well as a scarecrow which flitted back and forth. All of that, combined with the power of almost all the disciples of the River-Defying Sect, ensured that fierce fighting went on everywhere!

However, it was very obvious who had the upper hand. There were more than 100,000 cultivators besieging the sect, who were organized into three armies that attacked from three directions. Each army had a terrifying aura backing it, an aura that seemed to surpass the will of the heavens.

Those auras belonged to powerful experts in the early Deva Realm. They were only Mortal-Dao devas, roughly comparable to Mistress Red-Dust, the type of people Bai Xiaochun would fight without even getting nervous. However, to the River-Defying Sect, they were like insurmountable mountains.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0861 awe-chapter-862

Hordes of Blood Stream Division disciples entered the body of the Blood Ancestor and began to power it with their cultivation bases. The patriarchs of the Blood Stream Division were preparing to send the Blood Ancestor into the action!

On top of the Blood Ancestor’s head was a rabbit, who stared out at the deva fluctuations on the other side of the spell formation.

The disciples of the Spirit Stream Division did things a bit differently. Depending on which faction of the sect they belonged to, they formed different types of spell formation giants. Enormous swords in hand, the giants fought fiercely beyond the spell formation.

The Pill Stream Division offered auxiliary support, often stepping in to relieve disciples from the Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions. Last was the Profound Stream Division, whose primary task was to ensure that the Dire Skybanyan continued to maintain the spell formation shield.

Because of the vast resources the River-Defying Sect had at its disposal, Song Junwan had already reached the great circle of Core Formation. Currently, her hair was in disarray, and her face smeared with blood. She was clearly in bad shape. Xuemei fought next to her, and was also seriously injured. They were flanked by dozens of guards as they fell back into the protective perimeter of the spell formation, whereupon more disciples rushed over to help them.

“Pill Stream Division,” someone shouted, “get people over here to treat Sect Aunt Song!! Hurry!!”

Song Junwan waved her hand dismissively and said, “I’m fine, take care of Xuemei first!”

Eyes flashing with anger, she refused any help, and instead sat down cross-legged on one of the leaves of the Dire Skybanyan. As her injuries recovered, she surveyed the battlefield, and her eyes flickered with despair.

Patriarch Limitless of the Blood Stream Division wielded a shining, blood-colored blade that destroyed anything that got in his way. He was actually one of the most powerful patriarchs in the entire River-Defying Sect. However, at the moment, he was being ganged up on by a total of three Nascent Soul patriarchs from the other sects!

Most of the other Nascent Soul patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect were in various locations on the battlefield, fighting fiercely. Because of the spell formation shield, the fighting was somewhat at a deadlock. However, it was easy to imagine what would happen if the spell formation fell. The River-Defying Sect would be crushed as surely as if by Mount Tai!

Sighing, Song Junwan murmured, “Xiaochun… I don’t know if I’ll be able to hold out long enough to see you again….”

Her injuries weren't completely healed, but she was the most powerful expert of the Blood Stream Division’s Middle Peak, and therefore, she was the only one who could wield that peak’s enormous blood sword. There was no time for rest; the fight had to continue!

Each of the Blood Stream Division’s five mountain peaks of the past had all contained powerful precious treasures, and now, they were all being used in the fight. Animated corpses and gargoyles alike were all fighting without mercy!

There was one particular animated corpse with long, green hair, who caused particular frustration for the cultivators of the three sects. That corpse possessed shocking fleshly body power, and could also control other corpses. On top of that, it was being supported by hordes of gargoyles.

Generally speaking, gargoyles weren't intelligent. However, there was one particularly wily gargoyle among the group who took it upon himself to lead the gargoyles into battle, making them a very effective fighting force.

As for the Spirit Stream Division, their spell formation giants were mighty, and wreaked havoc among the enemy wherever they went. One of them bore the semblance of Shangguan Tianyou, and another, Beihan Lie. All of them fought with valiance and bravery, and drove the enemy backward constantly.

Spirit beasts of all types howled as they fought alongside the Spirit Stream Division. One of them was an ancient, mighty dragon, who was flanked by a phoenix, a lizard, and a ghost.

Perhaps because of the Spirit Stream Division's impressive showing, the Dao River Court sent three Nascent Soul patriarchs against them, like razor-sharp knives ready to take the heads of anyone they encountered.

However, in the instant that they began their charge, a howl erupted from inside the spell formation that could shake the heavens.

A huge beast appeared, dozens of meters long and growing larger by the moment. He moved as quickly as lightning, and had a sea of flames beneath his feet. As soon as he appeared out in the open, fluctuations rolled out which bordered on the deva level.

The cultivators from the other three sects were all shocked. As for the Nascent Soul experts who had just been preparing to attack the Spirit Stream Division, their eyes went wide, and they turned to flee. However, before they could, that beast pounced on them!

A boom rang out as one of the Nascent Soul experts exploded. His nascent soul flew out into the open, but before it could flee, was consumed by the beast. The other two cultivators were severely injured, and immediately began to retreat.

However, before they could do little more than move, a stream of sword qi, a huge hand, and a beam of black light shot out from the three sects, and headed toward the beast!

The will of the heavens filled the area: these were deva-level divine abilities!

The beast spun in place, dodging the huge hand and avoiding the black beam of light. Unfortunately, the sword qi slashed right into him!

Blood sprayed out of a wound on his back! In fact, closer examination would reveal that he had many wounds on him already, some which had healed and scarred over, but others which were fresh. Most shocking of all was one of the fresher wounds which went from one side of the beast's neck all the way to the other. It was a sword wound that had clearly been inflicted by the very same sword blast that had just been unleashed.

If the sword which had hit the beast’s neck had been moving any faster, it would likely have decapitated him!

Thankfully, the beast was incredibly quick, and was soon back in the safety of the spell formation. He resembled a qilin in some ways, and had large, charming eyes. He was none other than… Bruiser!

Serious expressions could be seen in the eyes of the three deva patriarchs from the three great sects.

“It’s him!”

“He’s just like the spies described….”

“It took him less than a sixty-year-cycle to reach the deva level…. He’s a paragon beast king!!”

“It’s too bad he’s so fast. In any case, that beast will be mine! He’ll either submit, or die!”

Back in the River-Defying Sect’s spell formation, the current sect leader, the Spirit Stream Division’s Zheng Yuandong, was anxiously treating Bruiser’s wounds.

“Don’t go back out into the fighting, Bruiser,” he said. “The only thing we can do is buy time right now. We don't even know if Qinghou is alive or dead, so if something bad happened to you, what would I tell Xiaochun?!” Zheng Yuandong’s eyes flickered with sorrow at the sight of all the wounds and scars covering Bruiser.

Bruiser didn’t care much about his wounds. However, when Zheng Yuandong brought up Li Qinghou and Bai Xiaochun, he shivered, and grief filled his eyes. His neck wound had come when he had tried to save Li Qinghou, an effort which had failed, and ended with him watching Li Qinghou being taken away to the Dao River Court.

Bai Xiaochun's name caused his eyes to be even more bloodshot. Warm feelings rose in his heart, and at the same time, he remembered how Bai Xiaochun had entrusted him with the job of defending the River-Defying Sect!

Even as he gasped for breath, he cast a hostile glance at the three sects, his eyes glittering with both hatred and fear because of the three devas.

The battle was reaching a fever pitch. It was a war of extermination in which differences could never be resolved. Meanwhile, on the invisible ninth mountain of the River-Defying Sect, Patriarch Spirit Stream stood there with a bitter look on his face. He knew that the three devas were beyond his ability to fight, and that the only reason they were currently holding out was because of the sect's reserve powers. Because the River-Defying Sect had no deva, they had to pull out all the stops to even threaten someone in the early Deva Realm.

Clearly, they were calling upon their reserve powers one by one, and only using them when they were absolutely sure that they would be successful!

"Master, do you think… that a miracle will occur?" Even as the words left Patriarch Spirit Stream's mouth, a monkey appeared behind him, hands clasped behind his back as he looked off into the distance, wisdom and foresight gleaming in his eyes.

"Definitely!"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0862 awe-chapter-863

As the River-Defying Sect was being besieged by the three great sects of the Middle Reaches… Bai Xiaochun, Song Que and Master God-Diviner were making their way through the Deadmire, completely unaware of the war. Because of the lingering terror they felt about of the ghost galleon, they flew along as quickly as startled sparrows.

Their journey was almost over; only a few more hours, and they would be free of the Deadmire. There were so few bones down below that they were already able to see patches of dark soil.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more excited. And as for Song Que and Master God-Diviner, the way they had temporarily lost their minds still had them trembling in fear.

However, as they flew along, Bai Xiaochun’s face suddenly fell as… he yet again heard that singing echoing in the fog behind them!

The strange sound of it caused everyone’s hair to stand on end. Song Que and Master God-Diviner nearly choked from fear.

“Dammit, what is the ghost galleon doing back!?” Scalp tingling with fear, Bai Xiaochun grabbed Song Que and Master God-Diviner and pushed forward at top speed.

This time, they only caught a glimpse of the galleon about 3,000 meters behind them. However, it was still a terrifying moment.

The first time the ghost galleon had appeared to them, it disappeared 3,000 meters away. The fourth time, it teleported them on board. The fact that it had appeared again at 3,000 meters away was something they didn’t really want to think about. Furthermore, they had to wonder if they might see the galleon again in the following few hours.

It was a lot of pressure, so much that none of them felt like talking. Expression grave, Bai Xiaochun put all the energy he could into flying along. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, though, the singing once again reached their ears.

“What's going on!? Why is it back so soon!?!?” Looking over his shoulder in terror, he saw that the galleon was now 500 meters away. Then it vanished.

Looking at the galleon this time, he realized that there was no way the massive thing only had two decks. At the very least, it probably had five. As for what would happen if they got teleported on board again, not even the gravekeeper’s command medallion left him feeling very confident.

There was little need to mention Song Que and Master God-Diviner, whose hearts were pounding with anxiety.

“Hold on a second,” Bai Xiaochun muttered, “something is off here!” Unfortunately, there was no time to ponder the situation. Heart as taught as a bowstring, he continued to flee, feeling more under pressure than ever. Song Que and Master God-Diviner were actually more nervous than Bai Xiaochun.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the galleon appeared again. And this time it was only 300 meters away!!

The corpses pulling the galleon led it directly toward Bai Xiaochun, and this time, it didn’t seem at all like the galleon was going to fade away. In fact, as it barreled toward them, the three flags on the cabin flapped, and the green-skinned, long-fanged ghost face suddenly began to laugh noiselessly.

Despair filled Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and yet, that was when he happened to look at the cabin door. When he did, his eyes went wide, and an idea popped into his head. Considering the danger they were in, he didn’t hesitate to follow through on the idea. Turning to Master God-Diviner, he shouted, “Master God-Diviner, give back that eight trigrams mirror you took!!”

As soon as Song Que heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, he thought back to how Master God-Diviner had taken the mirror, and immediately yelled similar words.

There was no time for Master God-Diviner to even worry about how much it pained him. He quickly pulled the eight trigrams mirror out of his bag of holding and hurled it at the huge galleon with all the force he could muster.

The mirror became a beam of light that shot directly toward the galleon and, in a very strange coincidence, perhaps because of some unknown power, landed in the exact spot where it had been taken from!

When that happened, the three wildly flapping flags all suddenly drooped down motionless, and the green-skinned, long-fanged face on the middle flag let out a noiseless howl of defiance.

At the same time, the countless corpses and the ghost galleon itself all faded away into the fog.

Bai Xiaochun, Song Que and Master God-Diviner all looked back jumpily to confirm that the galleon was finally gone, whereupon they breathed sighs of relief. Then, Song Que spun and angrily grabbed Master God-Diviner.

“You nearly got us killed!!” he shouted.

“What are you yelling for!” Master God-Diviner shot back, his voice quavering a bit. “It’s not like I did it on purpose…. Who knew that ghost galleon would be so stingy? It took my copper coin, so I took the mirror in exchange, that’s all….” As he spoke, his voice became quieter and quieter until it faded away.

Bai Xiaochun wiped the sweat from his brow. It had been a very dangerous close call, and if he hadn’t thought to remind Master God-Diviner about the mirror, then all three of them would likely have been dragged on board the galleon, never to return.

Glancing at the angry Song Que and the dispirited Master God-Diviner, he said, “Alright, enough is enough. Let’s worry about it after we’re out of this place!”

Then he blurred into motion. Song Que gave Master God-Diviner another good glare, then let him go and followed. As for Master God-Diviner, he rubbed his nose in embarrassment and joined them.

The galleon never returned. An hour later, not a single bone could be seen beneath their feet. They shot out of the mountains, and were in another world. All of them felt as if a big weight had just been lifted from their shoulders.

As of this moment, they knew… that they were out of the Deadmire!

“Finally free!” Master God-Diviner whooped. Song Que took a long, deep breath of fresh air. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked around at the lush vegetation and smiled. There were no vicious plants or terrifying creatures like back in the Wildlands. It almost looked like a celestial paradise, complete with singing birds and blooming flowers.

Off in the distance, a charming, deer-like animal suddenly looked up at the three of them, and then sprang off into the trees.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with what he could see. Furthermore, there was something here that was very different from the Wildlands.... Spiritual power from the Heavenspan Sea!!

Although it was faint, it was indescribably stronger than in the Wildlands. He took a deep breath, and cracking sounds filled him as his energy-starved body was repaired.

“Ah, spiritual energy. It’s been a long time since I could absorb it so freely.” He had been in the Wildlands for so many years that he had almost forgotten what the Heavenspan River region looked like. Even here in the delta region, it was still a wonderful place.

Master God-Diviner and Song Que both shivered at the sensation of spiritual energy, and complicated emotions could be seen in their eyes.

“We’re back!” Song Que said.

“River-Defying Sect, here we come!!” Master God-Diviner said loudly.

Laughing heartily, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, sending a flying airship out into the open. It was something he had acquired long ago in the River-Defying Sect, but which didn't work in the Wildlands because of the lack of spiritual energy. “Hahaha! Que’er, Master Snortsnort, my genius has done it again. I'm going… to take you home!”

Now that the ship had access to spiritual energy, it began to shine with brilliant light. Bai Xiaochun leaped up and took the helm. In rare fashion, Song Que didn’t bristle at all because Bai Xiaochun had called him Que’er. He was simply too excited to get back to the River-Defying Sect, and shot like an arrow onto the airship.

Master God-Diviner reacted similarly. Moments later, Bai Xiaochun sent his near-deva-level cultivation base power into the ship, and it sped through the air until it was over the horizon!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0863 awe-chapter-864

The airship moved so quickly through the delta region that it left sonic booms behind it as it flew along.

The sound startled countless beasts, many of whom flew up into the air to investigate. However, when they sensed the cultivation base fluctuations coming from Bai Xiaochun and the others, they immediately retracted their auras and went into hiding.

As for the cultivators who occupied the sects in the delta, they wouldn’t even dare to provoke the animals in the area, let alone Bai Xiaochun and his party.

The delta sect cultivators trembled in fear, and a few of them went out to offer formal greetings as the airship passed.

All of them could tell that the ship was being piloted by someone of incredible power and status, whose cultivation base fluctuations left them feeling deeply shocked.

A few hours passed, and the airship was approaching the Lower Reaches.

Bai Xiaochun felt like every tree and every bush was familiar to him. After all, his path in life had begun in the delta area close to the Spirit Stream Sect.

When he was finally in Spirit Stream Sect territory, everything felt even more familiar. He saw the Heavenspan River, and he saw a mountain-sized giant laying there, who was awoken by his passage!

The giant's eyes opened, and he was about start howling when he sensed Bai Xiaochun’s aura, whereupon he closed his mouth, shivered, and put his head down.

Bai Xiaochun recognized that giant, whom he had seen when he left the Spirit Stream Sect on a training mission all those years ago. Back then, he had been very cautious about the giant, but now, he could see that its battle prowess was only around the Nascent Soul level.

However, the blood of Wildlands savages ran in its veins, which, in combination with the energy of the Heavenspan River, allowed it to grow very large.

“Hahaha! I'm so much more powerful now!” he thought, feeling very pleased with himself. As they sped through the territory that had once belonged to the Spirit Stream Sect, Song Que and Master God-Diviner were extremely excited. They were almost jumping up and down in anticipation of getting back to the River-Defying Sect.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun actually caught sight of the Luochen Mountains!!

Emotions roiled up in his heart, but they quickly passed as he focused on the road ahead. Spirit Stream Sect territory had once seemed like an enormous place, but with his current cultivation base, it wasn’t very large at all.

It only took about two hours… to go from one end of Spirit Stream Sect territory to another. It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun began to frown. Something seemed off.

Song Que also noticed the same thing. Frowning, he said, “What’s going on? There were cultivators in the delta. How come nobody’s around here in the Lower Reaches? I haven’t seen a single person!”

Master God-Diviner’s eyes widened. Unfortunately, without his copper coin, his divinations weren’t very effective, and didn’t provide any information. Suspicions built as they finally reached the location of the Spirit Stream Sect’s former headquarters!

When Bai Xiaochun caught sight of the mountains on both banks of the river, he was shocked to see that the sect’s defensive spell formation was active!

Numerous cultivators could be seen inside, many of them disciples that had been left behind by the River-Defying Sect because of their low cultivation bases. Their charge was to protect the foundation of the Spirit Stream Sect!

The Blood Stream Sect, Pill Stream Sect and Profound Stream Sect had all done the same thing. The disciples left behind were supposed to guard the foundation of the four divisions of the River-Defying Sect, and also serve as a place to groom new disciples.

But right now, the Spirit Stream Sect seemed like they were anticipating the arrival of a major enemy. Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound. As for Song Que and Master God-Diviner, they were from the Blood Stream Sect, but they could well imagine that similar circumstances were playing out there.

As the airship approached, the disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect looked up with vigilant expressions on their faces.

There were a few disciples in the Core Formation level who flew up out of the crowd and gave instructions to strengthen the spell formation. The one who was clearly in a leadership position was a middle-aged man who was in mid Core Formation. He seemed weak, perhaps even sick, as he anxiously sized up the airship.

It looked familiar to him, and he quickly identified it as having come from the River-Defying Sect. But the River-Defying Sect… was not in the position to be sending out airships right now. Therefore, his vigilance did not lessen.

Bai Xiaochun instantly recognized that middle-aged man. “Big Bro Hou!”

This man was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s Elder Brother Hou Yunfei, who was the older brother of Hou Xiaomei!!

Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun leapt off of the airship.

When his voice reached the ears of the disciples in the spell formation, their jaws dropped. Hou Yunfei looked especially surprised. He stared at Bai Xiaochun for a long moment, and the incredulity in his eyes grew. Then he shouted, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

The other Core Formation cultivators were clearly shocked. Although the name ‘Bai Xiaochun’ sounded familiar to them, neither they nor any of the other disciples in the Spirit Stream Sect were quite sure what was happening.

Even as everyone looked on in confusion, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, blurring for a moment and then reappearing inside the spell formation, right in front of Hou Yunfei!

The spell formation hadn’t hindered him in the least. It may as well have not existed.

The Core Formation cultivators all braced themselves for an imminent attack, and all the other disciples waited nervously. Bai Xiaochun's actions just now had been very shocking, to say the least.

“Xiaochun, it's really you!!” Hou Yunfei said loudly. As he looked Bai Xiaochun over, his excitement began to build as he realized he couldn’t assess his cultivation base. All he could tell was that the fluctuations seemed even more shocking than those of Patriarch Spirit Stream, whom he had met in person in the past.

Bai Xiaochun was very excited at being able to see such a close friend after all these years, and was just about to begin talking, when Hou Yunfei suddenly said, “Xiaochun, what’s the level of your cultivation base?!”

“Huh? Uh, the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage....” Even as the words left his mouth, Song Que and Master God-Diviner flew off of the aircraft to hover in the air.

An excited expression appeared on Hou Yunfei’s face, only to be replaced by a bitter smile. “You need to get away from here, Xiaochun. Don’t stay here, and don’t go to the River-Defying Sect. Get as far away from the eastern Heavenspan River as you can.”

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and his heart began to pound. “What happened?!”

Hou Yunfei shook his head bitterly. He knew that he couldn't keep the information from Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun’s status in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect actually gave Hou Yunfei a bit of hope. After a moment of hesitation, he explained the danger the River-Defying Sect was in!

When Bai Xiaochun heard that the three great sects had joined forces to try to exterminate the River-Defying Sect, his eyes turned crimson, and his killing intent began to burn. Trembling, he flew out of the spell formation and back to the airship. Ignoring Song Que and Master God-Diviner, he unleashed the full power of his cultivation base to send the airship speeding… toward the River-Defying Sect!

“Xiaochun!!” Hou Yunfei shouted, but he was too late. Bai Xiaochun moved so quickly that he was gone in the blink of an eye. As for Song Que and Master God-Diviner, when they heard what Hou Yunfei had just said, expressions of madness appeared on their faces, and they also began to fly in the direction of the River-Defying Sect.

As they sped off, Master God-Diviner turned to Hou Yunfei and, aware of his close relationship with Bai Xiaochun, yelled, “Elder Brother Hou, don’t worry. Once Bai Xiaochun gets there, those three sects… won't count for crap!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0864 awe-chapter-865

“But they have three devas!” Hou Yunfei said remorsefully.

“Three… devas?” Master God-Diviner replied, suddenly not so convinced.

However, that was when Song Que turned back and said, “As long as they aren’t in the late stage, Bai Xiaochun will demolish them!”

Few people knew how terrifying and powerful Bai Xiaochun had become in the Wildlands. In fact, even Master God-Diviner assumed that most of the stories Bai Xiaochun had told him were exaggerations. But Song Que was different. Although he didn’t know every single detail about how powerful Bai Xiaochun was, he had a fairly good idea.

His father-in-law was a demigod, and his apprentice was the Hell-Emperor. In Arch-Emperor City, he had fought bitterly with devas, and had made enemies of the entire nobility and aristocracy. Not only did he come out of all of that unscathed, but his cultivation base had climbed the entire time. A person like that… couldn’t possibly be afraid of three little devas.

Besides, Song Que had seen Bai Xiaochun fighting Mistress Red-Dust. Although neither of them had been using full force, considering that Song Que himself was in the Nascent Soul stage, he could easily tell that Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess surpassed that stage, and made him equivalent to a deva!

After all, Mistress Red-Dust was a chosen in the Wildlands, the daughter of the Giant Ghost King, and very close to the mid Deva Realm!

Although Song Que still didn't like Bai Xiaochun very much, the urgency in Hou Yunfei’s voice was very telling. Song Que knew what to say and how to say it, and therefore it was with iron determination that he spoke his words of confidence. In response, all hearts were shaken, and many eyes went wide with incredulity!

To these people… devas were paramount entities in all creation, people who could shake heaven and earth, and crush all opponents!

“That’s right,” Master God-Diviner added. “As long as Bai Xiaochun gets there in time, he’ll fix everything!” With that, he turned and raced after Song Que in the direction of the River-Defying Sect.

Back in the Spirit Stream Sect’s spell formation, Hou Yunfei’s mind rang with the words Song Que had just spoken. On the one hand, he was sure that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t do anything rash. But at the same time, he could see that Song Que was already in the Nascent Soul stage, and yet didn’t seem fazed at all by how Bai Xiaochun seemed to view the three mighty devas of the Middle Reaches. However, it was still difficult to believe.

“Is it real…?” Hou Yunfei thought. It was roughly at this time that one of the other Core Formation cultivators suddenly started, his eyes going as wide as saucers.

“I remember now! That… that was the legendary… Bai Xiaochun!! I heard that a whole bunch of spirit tail chickens went missing because of him!”

“Heavens, I remember now too! That was Bai Xiaochun?!?! 10,000 Snakes Valley is completely empty because of him!”

“He was the one who combined the four great sects into the River-Defying Sect! He’s the soul and the hope of the River-Defying Sect, their number one chosen.... He was eventually taken as a hostage to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, where he went to the Great Wall and became a major general! Eventually he went missing in the Wildlands.... Bai Xiaochun!”

More exclamations of shock could be heard. Before long, all of the disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect began thinking about that familiar name, and recalled the various stories they had heard about him. After all, Bai Xiaochun was still very famous in the Spirit Stream Sect.

His deeds were retold almost like myths among the new, low-ranking disciples.

Even as the disciples of the Spirit Stream Sect reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun was flying through the air toward the River-Defying Sect, moving with incredible speed, his eyes bloodshot and his breath coming in ragged pants.

“Uncle Li. Elder Brother Sect Leader. Patriarch Spirit Stream. Patriarch Blood Stream.... Hang in there, all of you!! Junwan. Xiaomei.... Bruiser....” Countless faces flashed through his head, causing his madness to increase. At the moment, he wasn’t thinking at all about matters of life and death. Although he feared dying, he would never run for his life when his sect was in peril.

Back when he was young and powerless, the sect had protected him. But now… he qualified to protect the sect!

Because he didn’t have to worry about Song Que and Master God-Diviner being injured by the process, he was capable of adding teleportations to his movements, lending him even greater speed.

Rumbling booms filled the air as he relied on teleportation after teleportation!

The result was shocking speed which surpassed anything ordinary devas were capable of. Not even someone in the mid Deva Realm would be able to achieve it.

He was soon closing in on the border between the Lower Reaches and the Middle Reaches, and beyond it… the River-Defying Sect!

The situation was bad in the River-Defying Sect. The glow of magical technique rose high in the sky, and rumbling booms echoed far and wide. The army of 100,000 cultivators from the other three sects was pushing the offensive hard from three directions.

The River-Defying Sect simply wasn’t a match. They were forced to fall back over and over again, relying on their spell formation to hold out. Even still, casualties mounted.

The sect itself was like a wounded giant who only had a bit of energy left to keep fighting!

The spell formation shield cast by the Dire Skybanyan was heavily damaged, constantly distorting, and filled with rapidly spreading cracks.

With every new crack that appeared, the Profound Stream Division disciples who powered the formation would cough up mouthfuls of blood. And yet, howling, they would hold nothing back to repair and sustain the formation.

Unfortunately, despite their efforts, it didn't seem like the shield would hold out for more than the time it takes an incense stick to burn.

The disciples of the Pill Stream Division were so exhausted they were hovering on the brink of collapse. And yet, they continued to roam the battlefield both inside and outside the spell formation, healing disciples from the other divisions, and occasionally getting involved in deadly conflicts themselves.

The Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions had it most bitter of all. They were the powerhouses of the River-Defying Sect, and took the brunt of the attacks. Less than thirty percent of the Spirit Stream Division’s spell formation giants still stood, and those disciples who powered the remaining giants were spattered with blood.

Shangguan Tianyou’s eyes were bloodshot, but he had many kills to his name. Beihan Lie was in similar condition; tears flowed from his eyes as he howled in savage fashion.

The disciples of the Spirit Stream Division were fighting with full madness. The Blood Stream Division was in a similar state. Animated corpses, gargoyles, and even the blood masters, all had suffered casualties!

Only the blood sword from Middle Peak remained strong. Song Junwan, Master Limitless and Xuemei led the fight against their enemies, and did their best to save whatever fellow disciples they could.

Song Junwan was exhausted and seriously wounded. She had consumed numerous medicinal pills provided by the Pill Stream Division, and yet, was reaching the limits of her ability to endure. Despair had already begun to shine in her eyes.

The scarecrow had been destroyed. The black and white suns had been crushed, the crows inside of them killed. The old dragon was gasping for breath. Only Bruiser continued to fight viciously, breaking holes in the enemy lines left and right.

In the Nascent Soul battles, the River-Defying Sect had been defeated at every turn. Unable to hold their own when it came to one-on-one battles, the Nascent Soul experts stayed in groups, and inflicted as many casualties as possible on the enemy.

From a distance, the armies of the three great sects were like three enormous hands crushing down onto the River-Defying Sect. High up in the sky, the fluctuations of the three devas caused heaven and earth to shake violently.

“Their spell formation will fall shortly….”

“We can’t let things drag out any longer. There were differing opinions back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. If we don’t secure victory soon, something unexpected could happen.”

“At this point, why don’t the three of us just attack? We can destroy the spell formation, and then… wipe the River-Defying Sect off the map for good!”

After a bit more discussion, their eyes began to shine, and they attacked! A destructive stream of sword qi, a massive hand, and a black thundercloud all shot toward the spell formation!

The speed of the attacks left the River-Defying Sect in despair. When they slammed into the Dire Skybanyan’s spell formation, it held out for only a moment before collapsing!

In response, the enemy army shouted in delight and then charged forward in attack. The River-Defying Sect was immediately shoved backward across the battlefield. Worse, the three devas shot toward the sect, with only Bruiser to stand in their way.

It was at this point that the Blood Ancestor’s eyes opened, and he leaped into action. He was joined by a rabbit, a monkey, and Patriarch Spirit Stream! They were going all out to defend the sect!

Everyone was in critical danger!

The disciples of the Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions were being shoved backward by the enemy forces, their faces covered with despair. Five Nascent Soul cultivators were closing in on Song Junwan, hoping to destroy her blood sword, and then kill both her and Master Limitless!

Song Junwan smiled bitterly at the sight of the five Nascent Soul enemies. Master Limitless was coughing up blood and could hardly defend himself. At this point, both of them knew that they were about to die…. However, that was when a voice rang out that caused heaven to shake and the earth to tremble. The clouds churned, and a thunderous roar filled the entire battlefield.

“How dare you people!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0865 awe-chapter-866

Virtually the entire Middle Reaches began to shake because of the voice. Countless embattled cultivators felt their minds reeling. Before anyone could react, Bruiser suddenly shivered, then threw his head back and let out a howl of joy.

Song Junwan's jaw dropped, and the despair of death that had existed in her eyes was replaced by incredulity. She suddenly turned to look at the horizon, where an airship was speeding through the air, with a person just barely visible on the deck!

Of course, a battlefield with tens upon tens of thousands of combatants would obviously be filled with shocking levels of noise. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun's voice was like a rock dropped into a lake, which only sent a few ripples out. The enemy forces didn't take it very seriously.

In fact, a group of several hundred cultivators from the three sects spun and then began to fly toward Bai Xiaochun to block his path. Two in that group were Nascent Soul cultivators, who closed in on him from two different directions.

Even Song Junwan, after her initial excitement, came to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun wouldn't make much of a difference in the fight. Furthermore, the five Nascent Soul cultivators who had been closing in, after their initial pause, snorted coldly and pressed the attack. Two of them focused on Master Limitless, and three on Song Junwan!

Because she wielded Middle Peak's blood sword, Song Junwan was able to fight back against Nascent Soul experts.

Furthermore, she led a group of Middle Peak disciples who were adept at sword formations that could inflict injuries on anyone under the Nascent Soul stage.

They were a formidable force that the enemy disciples knew they had to completely crush before they could proceed onward into the sect headquarters.

The three Nascent Soul experts who were targeting Song Junwan closed in with immense speed. Even at peak condition, the Middle Peak disciples that Song Junwan commanded wouldn’t be able to stop them. Therefore, they could only watch helplessly as Song Junwan… was put in imminent life-or-death danger!

No one was capable of turning the situation around….

When Bai Xiaochun saw what was happening, and realized what critical danger the River-Defying Sect was in, he was gripped with uncontrollable madness. Eyes crimson, he pushed the airship forward with such speed that it began to burn up. Then, he slammed into the group of hundreds of disciples who were besieging Song Junwan.

Rumbling booms echoed out. Of those hundreds of disciples, none could even get close to Bai Xiaochun. In fact, because of the intense flames which surrounded the airship, the entire group was instantly transformed into ash, killed in body and soul!

The airship shot through the sky like a deadly sword, crushing anything in its path as it descended toward the ground.

No one could block it, or even get close to it. Any who tried to were wiped out of existence! And then… he arrived right in the middle of the battlefield, next to the Blood Stream Division and Song Junwan!

He moved so quickly that he arrived just when the three Nascent Soul experts were bearing down on Song Junwan. Before they could actually unleash their attacks, an ear-piercing sound assaulted their ears. Two of them were in the early Nascent Soul stage, and one in the mid stage. They only had time to turn their heads, whereupon they saw nothing but the image of an enormous, burning airship.

The airship didn’t slow down at all. It slammed into the three Nascent Soul experts, a destructive force that didn't even allow them to cry out in pain. They were engulfed by flame and force, and transformed into nothing more than ash!

The two cultivators who had been focusing on Master Limitless coughed up blood. Expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces, and their eyes nearly bulged out of their skulls as they began to fall back.

Bai Xiaochun strode out from the flaming wreckage of the airship to appear in front of Song Junwan. Wrapping his arm around her waist, he waved his hand, isolating nearly a thousand streams of destructive power that had been unleashed by the destroyed airship. Then he sent those streams of destruction smashing into anyone in the area who wasn't a member of the River-Defying Sect.

Not even the two Nascent Soul cultivators could escape, and were enveloped by pure death.

Miserable screams erupted onto the battlefield as thousands of cultivators were engulfed by flames, and then burned down to ash!

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it happened in the briefest of moments. It took only the blink of an eye for Bai Xiaochun to kill five Nascent Soul experts, and thousands of other cultivators.

It happened so quickly that nobody could even react. Shock immediately began to spread across the battlefield, and countless gazes shifted to focus on Bai Xiaochun.

After an initial hush, the cultivators from the three sects began to gasp and cry aloud.

“Heavens!! What just happened!?”

“Dammit, who is that?!?!”

“He looks familiar….”

As the enemy cultivators reacted in shock, the River-Defying Sect disciples began to cry out loud in excitement.

“Bai Xiaochun! It’s Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Sect Uncle Bai! It's Sect Uncle Bai!!”

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

Before long, everyone was crying Bai Xiaochun’s name. Shangguan Tianyou, Beihan Lie, Patriarch Spirit Stream, Patriarch Blood Stream, the monkey, the rabbit, and countless other people were shaken to the core.

Powerful experts who had once been chosen in the three sects were now pillars of their respective organizations. Hatred existed in their eyes, for on their faces and other body parts… existed the mark of a turtle!

The three deva patriarchs all wore frowns, but at the moment, didn’t have time to deal with Bai Xiaochun. Although they were shocked by his sudden appearance on the battlefield, and his unusual battle prowess, they were still confident… that he was only in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage.

“Ignore him. Once we destroy the foundation of the River-Defying Sect, then we can kill him!” Having made their mutual decision, the three devas looked away from Bai Xiaochun and continued on with their original plan.

Patriarch Starry River was the one using the sky-obfuscating hand to unleash crushing power onto Patriarch Spirit Stream, the monkey, the rabbit, and the Blood Ancestor.

Patriarch Dao River bristled with sword qi, and his eyes glittered with greed as he eyed Bruiser!

Then there was Patriarch Polarity River, beneath whose feet roiled a black cloud. Under his destructive attacks, the main entrance to the River-Defying Sect was already on the verge of being reduced to ruins!

Those three devas had already surpassed the will of the heavens, causing the sky to vibrate and the clouds to churn.

Song Junwan was deeply shaken as she looked up at Bai Xiaochun, her mouth hanging open, but no words coming out. She felt like she was dreaming.

There were a million things Bai Xiaochun wanted to say to her, but currently, it was a moment of grave crisis for the sect, and there was no time. Waving his hand, he summoned a shimmering shield to surround her, something that not even a deva would be able to break through. Then, he looked over at the three devas who were unleashing unbridled destructive power onto the River-Defying Sect. He knew that they were the key to everything. If he could crush them, the tide of battle would be turned!

“They’re only in the early Deva Realm. How dare they behave rudely in front of me!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot, especially when he saw all of the streams of sword qi surrounding Patriarch Dao River, and how he was trying so hard to cut down Bruiser. Bai Xiaochun opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, sending violet light spilling out. Then, he blurred into motion, moving faster than lightning in the direction of the sect headquarters itself.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0866 awe-chapter-867

Bruiser was there in the sect headquarters, bursting with excitement despite the danger he currently faced. His enthusiasm even seemed to give him an extra burst of power, and yet, he knew how to refrain from being impulsive. The black sea of flames beneath his feet roared to life, surrounding him as he backed away from the fighting.

At the same time, Patriarch Dao River performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the sword qi around him to converge into the shape of an illusory greatsword, which thrummed with the will of the heavens as it slashed toward Bruiser!

Patriarch Dao River didn’t deign to pay any attention to Bai Xiaochun, nor the violet beam of light that shot out from his third eye. The man simply waved his sleeve, sending a portion of sword qi out to intercept it.

However, the instant the sword qi touched the violet light, the sword qi shattered, completely incapable of standing up to the violet light. Shocked, Patriarch Dao River tried to back up, but couldn’t avoid the light. It latched onto him, and instantly took control of his body.

His face fell, and his heart began to pound as Bai Xiaochun blurred to a stop… right in front of Bruiser!

Bruiser let out an excited howl, unable to prevent the joy from burning in his eyes. Bai Xiaochun was essentially Bruiser’s father, someone who could solve any problems!

Bruiser depended on Bai Xiaochun in the way that only relatives could!

Bai Xiaochun immediately let out a shout, shoving his right fist out toward the greatsword. When Patriarch Dao River saw that, he immediately relaxed a bit, and his eyes began to shine with coldness.

“This violet light is strange, but this kid is too young and inexperienced. I can’t believe he didn’t take the opportunity to try to injure me. For him to make contact with my incisive sword qi is simply courting--” However, before he could even finish his inner monologue, his eyes bulged as surely as if he had seen a ghost.

When the sword qi in which he had placed so much confidence struck Bai Xiaochun’s fist, a popping sound could be heard, and the sword qi shattered!

It couldn’t have collapsed more surely if it had encountered a metal wall. As for Bai Xiaochun, he wasn't harmed at all as the remnants of the sword qi scattered in all directions.

Patriarch Dao River shivered and gasped. The fact that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t harmed at all by power comparable to the will of the heavens was shocking, to say the least.

“You’re a deva too!!” he blurted. When the people in the area heard that, they were immediately shaken, and looked over with disbelieving eyes. As for the River-Defying Sect disciples, their excitement began to mount.

Inside the Blood Ancestor, Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream were both delightedly shocked, as was the monkey. In contrast, Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Polarity River were both shaken, and their killing intent grew more pronounced.

“Have a death wish?!” Bai Xiaochun growled, his eyes completely bloodshot because of all the wounds and scars he could see on Bruiser, especially that vicious neck wound. Howling in rage, he shot toward Patriarch Dao River.

Patriarch Dao River’s heart sank. However, he was a deva. It didn’t matter that he was only in the Mortal-Dao level, he was still proud and arrogant. Therefore, he performed an incantation gesture with both hands, causing more streams of sword qi to erupt out. Numerous greatswords appeared, fully 100,000 of them, which then descended onto Bai Xiaochun like rain.

Any one of those swords could seriously injure a Nascent Soul cultivator. They contained Patriarch Dao River’s will, which surpassed that of the heavens, and also contained a huge convergence of the energy of heaven and earth. His goal was obviously to kill Bai Xiaochun as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, Patriarchs Starry River and Polarity River began to rush over to help cut this cocky Bai Xiaochun down to size!

As the two other patriarchs took to motion, Patriarch Dao River’s 100,000 greatswords bore down on Bai Xiaochun.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he strode forward, unleashing the explosive fleshly body power of the great circle of the Undying Bones! With that power, he utilized… the Mountain Shaking Bash!!

It was an incredible level of energy that caused heaven to shake and the earth to rumble. He shot forward with blinding speed, looking very much like a vicious beast from primordial times.

The air shattered around him as he moved, and to the shock of Patriarch Dao River, he was right in front of him before the rain of swords could even land!

A boom rang out, and blood sprayed from Patriarch Dao River’s mouth. He tried to fall back, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the momentum he had built up to reach out with this thumb and index finger. Black light flashed, along with a powerful gravitational force.

It was none other than… the Throat Crushing Grasp!

A tremor passed through the retreating patriarch, and his eyes lit with terror as Bai Xiaochun closed in on his neck with lightning-like speed.

It was a critical moment, and Patriarch Dao River had no time to ponder what to do. It wasn’t that he had never fought with other devas before; it was that he had never encountered someone as shockingly fast as Bai Xiaochun. He seemed brutal, as though he had veins of steel that made him willing to die fighting with his enemy. It was a madness that seemed bereft of any and all reason. And yet, at the same time, there was something crafty and intelligent within his killing intent, something that was like battle instinct!

The massive waves of shock that battered at Patriarch Dao River’s mind caused him to gasp loudly. Patriarchs Starry River and Polarity River had no time to offer backup. Roaring, Patriarch Dao River sent the 100,000 greatswords swirling through the air to try to block Bai Xiaochun.

As the rain of swords closed in, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he completely ignored them! Instead, he dashed forward, reached out, and grabbed the patriarch’s right arm. Then, he squeezed down!

The shocking power of the Throat Crushing Grasp caused cracking sounds to fill the air as the deva’s arm was ripped to shreds! His entire arm was completely destroyed!

A shrill scream escaped his lips, and his face turned ashen. Madness lit up his eyes, and yet, within that madness was shock; this was the most powerful enemy he had encountered since becoming a deva!

All of a sudden, he had no desire to fight Bai Xiaochun one-on-one. Taking a deep breath, he burned longevity to power a secret magic that propelled him backward at incredible speed.

However, in the moment that he took to motion, Bai Xiaochun unhesitatingly utilized his Undying Hex. Everything in the world suddenly slowed down, with the exception of himself. Then, he burst into motion as he chased after the fleeing Patriarch Dao River!

What everyone else saw was Bai Xiaochun seemingly moving faster than sound as he pursued the patriarch!

He caught up in the briefest of moments, whereupon he clenched his hand into a fist and then punched out with deva-level fleshly body power, adding in energy from his cultivation base.

Blood sprayed out of the deva’s mouth as his chest caved in. His life force was fading rapidly, and his expression was one of complete terror. He immediately began to contemplate other ways to flee.

As of this moment, he could clearly sense… the shadow of death!!

Patriarchs Starry River and Polarity River were urgently rushing over, but Bai Xiaochun had attacked with such unbelievable speed that they still hadn't arrived. Unfortunately, they were very close. Realizing that, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and a tremendous burst of frigid qi appeared, filling everything within a 3,000-meter area!

It was like a frigid lake, or… a frigid domain! Furthermore, within that domain… appeared nine projections of Bai Xiaochun!

They shot like lightning toward Patriarch Dao River, and before he could do anything, pierced through him multiple times, provoking a bloodcurdling scream!

Booms rang out as the patriarch’s head flew through the air, and the rest of his body exploded. He remained in existence only in nascent divinity form, utilizing a secret magic and other life-saving magical items to evade destruction. Flickering weakly, and screaming in terror the entire time, he flew away, leaving behind the shattered remnants of his fleshly body.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0867 awe-chapter-868

Bai Xiaochun knew that he couldn’t chase Patriarch Dao River any further at the moment. Snorting coldly, he sent the nine projections of himself down to the battlefield below.

Wherever they went, they cut down their enemies with impunity. The Nascent Soul cultivators were especially targeted, and it only took a short time for roughly ten to be slaughtered.

That was the limit of Bai Xiaochun’s frigid domain when in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. He could create multiple powerful projections, but they could only last for so long.

And yet, it had only taken a few short breaths of time for him to cut down more than a dozen Nascent Soul experts on the battlefield below, and also destroy Patriarch Dao River’s fleshly body, leaving him fleeing in nascent divinity form.

Everyone felt as shaken as if they had been struck by numerous bolts of lightning.

“This is impossible!!”

“Patriarch, this… how… how could this be happening?!?!”

“What’s the level of his cultivation base? It only took a few breaths of time for him to cut down multiple Nascent Soul experts, and even defeat a deva!!” The cultivators from the three sects were completely astonished, and were trembling in disbelieving fear. To see Bai Xiaochun handily defeat the deva patriarch from the Dao River Court, who then ran away like a stray dog, left them on the verge of collapsing mentally.

That was especially true of the cultivators from the Dao River Court, who were the most terrified of all.

In the past, Bai Xiaochun had marked all of the chosen from these three sects with turtle marks. Now, he had them shaking in terror, hardly able to believe what they were seeing.... The fact that their patriarch had almost been killed, and fled in bedraggled fashion, proved that... Bai Xiaochun was now unimaginably powerful!

The morale of the three sects’ cultivators was dropping rapidly. In contrast, the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect began to cheer at the tops of their lungs.

They simply couldn’t control their excitement. The River-Defying Sect had been under great pressure for too long. For years, they had been bullied by the other three sects, even when disciples went out for training. The friction had become so bad that some disciples had been killed in the resulting conflicts.

Unfortunately, the River-Defying Sect just wasn’t strong enough. For the sake of the bigger picture, in the hopes of preventing things from escalating too quickly, and especially to avoid giving the three sects an excuse to attack, they had simply endured.

But despite how they had endured, the three sects had managed to get tacit approval from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to exterminate the River-Defying Sect. And therefore, the hatred the River-Defying Sect disciples felt toward the three sects had reached an unimaginable degree. They simply couldn’t exist under the same sky together.

Now, a mighty deva patriarch had been beaten and sent running. It was so exciting that the River-Defying Sect disciples couldn’t contain themselves. Most important was Bai Xiaochun. He was the spirit and heart of the River-Defying Sect; he had even come up with the name of the sect! He was their pride and joy, someone who truly deserved to be referred to as a consummate chosen!

“Sect Grandfather Bai!”

“Sect Grandfather Bai!!”

“Sect Grandfather Bai!!!”

It was hard to say who called it out first, but soon everyone in the River-Defying Sect was shouting the same thing, creating sound waves that rolled out in all directions.

Song Junwan was completely swept up in the excitement. To see Bai Xiaochun standing right here in front of her was like a dream that caused tears of joy to well up in her eyes.

Shangguan Tianyou said nothing. He looked exhausted, and had mixed emotions in his eyes. However, many years had passed, and he had changed. He was no longer the type to be easily excited.

Beihan Lie’s hands were clenched into fists as he glared hatefully at the disciples of the three sects. A corpse lay nearby, the corpse of a black dog.... Shortly before Bai Xiaochun had arrived, that black dog had fought to the death to protect him.

Within the sect headquarters, Patriarch Blood Stream was inside the Blood Ancestor, trembling with excitement. Even he had been despairing moments ago, but now, he suddenly found himself thinking about what Bai Xiaochun had looked like as Nightcrypt all those years ago on Middle Peak.

The rabbit stood on the Blood Ancestor’s head, looking at Bai Xiaochun, muttering in a voice too low for anyone to hear.

Patriarch Spirit Stream, Zheng Yuandong, and the monkey were all looking at the hope of the sect!

“This is the miracle I was talking about!” the monkey murmured, his eyes shining with brilliant light.

As the River-Defying Sect brimmed with excitement, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the destroyed fleshly body of Patriarch Dao River, and at his fleeing nascent divinity. Then he turned to look at Patriarchs Starry River and Polarity River, who were so shaken by the defeat of the other deva that they didn’t dare to continue their advance.

Because they were devas, and understood the Deva Realm well, they were more flustered than anyone else.

They knew that although Patriarch Dao River had only been in the early Deva Realm, the techniques he used made him the strongest of all of them. And yet, he had been defeated within a few breaths of time by Bai Xiaochun.

They could tell that, were it not for the fact that the chaos of the battlefield prevented Bai Xiaochun from giving chase, Patriarch Dao River would have a hard time escaping with his life!

Bai Xiaochun could kill devas! It was a realization that shook the two remaining patriarchs to the core. Because devas could supplant heavenly will, the spiritual power they had access to, as well as their magical techniques and divine abilities, all contained the might of creation. They were like gods to all lower cultivators, and were beings that were virtually impossible to kill.

Only someone who was also in the early Deva Realm would have a chance at beating someone like that. Furthermore, it would be difficult to end the fight with a kill. Therefore, what they had just seen play out in front of them seemed almost impossible. As Bai Xiaochun looked over at them, they both unleashed the power of their cultivation bases.

“Why don't we stop fighting for today, Bai Xiaochun…?” Patriarch Starry River said.

“We only made a move because the River-Defying Sect had no deva,” Patriarch Polarity River added in. “But seeing that you do, well, I guess this was all a big misunderstanding….”

Neither of them wanted to keep on fighting. The truth was that they weren’t confident in being able to handle the terrifying Bai Xiaochun. Therefore, they both tried to play on his concern for the River-Defying Sect to end things.

“Don’t just think about yourself, Bai Xiaochun. You have to consider the other disciples of the River-Defying Sect. They’ve been fighting for a long time as it is. There really isn’t a need for any more fighting and killing….”

“That’s right. Our three sects still have the advantage. If we keep going, it won’t benefit the River-Defying Sect. Besides, your people are all exhausted. If they keep going now, there will surely be more injuries and deaths. You have to think of your fellow disciples!”

As Bai Xiaochun hovered there looking at them coldly, Patriarch Spirit Stream looked up from within the sect headquarters and shouted, “If we don’t crush the enemy, how could things be over!? Can the blood of the River-Defying Sect be spilt so casually? This place… is not one they can blithely intrude upon, and then just waltz away!”

The eyes of the other disciples turned crimson, and they began to shout in rage.

“Patriarch, do something! We’re all willing to keep fighting!”

“They invaded our River-Defying Sect, now they have to pay the price. In blood!!”

As the shouting grew more intense, the army from the three sects began to tremble. At the moment, they had no desire to fight at all, and in fact, began to edge away.

When Bai Xiaochun saw what was happening, his killing intent began to burn with even more intensity. Then, rumbling sounds echoed out as he shot toward the two remaining devas. Although he wasn’t a fan of killing, he knew that it was just as Patriarch Spirit Stream had said. These people had attacked the River-Defying Sect, and they had to pay the price!

Taking the fleshly body away from one measly deva was not enough!

Patriarchs Starry River and Polarity River felt their hearts pounding in their chests. Their faces fell as they realized… that they could not avoid this fight!

Considering that, they took solace in the fact that, although they might not be able to defeat Bai Xiaochun if they fought him one-on-one, they could still join forces. Eyes flashing with determination, they unleashed their most powerful divine abilities!

Heaven and earth shook violently as countless heavenly bodies materialized around Patriarch Starry River.

As for Patriarch Polarity River, he knew he was facing a formidable opponent. A devilish will erupted around him as he summoned a massive devil projection with 1,000 arms!

Then, both of them charged toward Bai Xiaochun in attack!

A grand battle of devas was about to begin!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0868 awe-chapter-869

The instant Patriarchs Starry River and Polarity River attacked, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered. Although it couldn’t be said that he had copious amounts of experience fighting devas, he had fought more than a few during his time in the Wildlands.

Whether it was the three patriarchs in Giant Ghost City, the heavenly dukes in Arch-Emperor City, Mistress Red-Dust, who he had fought on more than one occasion, or even that spectacular battle of battles, they had all had a very profound effect on him.

It was because of all that experience that he actually didn’t feel very apprehensive when facing devas. Furthermore, as he prepared to fight these two devas, his mind was alive with various thoughts.

His thoughts moved so quickly that he was virtually acting on instinct. He could immediately sense that, although he could fight these two, it would be dangerous. Furthermore, if they attempted to distract him by attacking and killing other disciples in the area, the consequences could be dire, to say the least.

In fact, if the three of them had done that from the very beginning, things might have turned out very differently. Even if Bai Xiaochun had been more confident than he was, it would have been a difficult situation to deal with. After all, this was the River-Defying Sect; Bai Xiaochun could not simply flee the battlefield, whereas his opponents could.

That was one reason why he had attacked like lightning and crippled one of his opponents right off the bat!

Now there were only two devas left, and yet, he still had many concerns to deal with.

The entire River-Defying Sect was a battlefield now, with booms and bangs echoing out everywhere. It was only by achieving a spectacular and decisive victory in the first exchange that he could inspire the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect, and shake the hearts of the three sects.

All of these things occupied his thoughts. However, by this point in his life, he had developed exceptional awareness of how to do battle, and therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that, as the two devas closed in on him, he utilized his Undying Hex. He suddenly moved with a speed that surpassed teleportation, veering away from Patriarch Starry River and bearing down on Patriarch Polarity River.

At the same time, he opened his third eye, and rotated his cultivation base at full measure, focusing his Heavenspan Dharma Eye directly on Patriarch Starry River.

That patriarch shivered physically as the shocking power of gravitational repulsion became like fetters, like a giant invisible hand that grabbed him and held him in place!

As Patriarch Starry River’s face fell because of the shocking effects of the magical eye, Bai Xiaochun approached Patriarch Polarity River with lightning speed!

Patriarch Starry River had his black mist incarnated as a starry sky filled with heavenly bodies and asteroids. It was something that could affect a wide area, and although it wasn’t necessarily a big threat to Bai Xiaochun, he knew that if the patriarch turned it onto the River-Defying Sect disciples, the consequences would be unimaginable!

As for the devilish god that the Polarity River Court deva had summoned, it had shocking battle prowess, and yet Bai Xiaochun didn’t even pause for thought before rushing in that very direction!

Everything happened in the mere blink of an eye. As soon as Patriarch Starry River was locked down, Bai Xiaochun accelerated rapidly, arriving right in front of Patriarch Polarity River. There, he clenched his hand into a fist and unleashed a fist strike.

The fist strike shook heaven and earth, unleashing explosive fleshly body power in a massive whirlwind that bore down on the patriarch!

The patriarch’s face fell. Howling, he performed an incantation gesture, causing the devilish god to take a step forward and merge with him! Then, devil qi erupted out wildly, forming a buckler which he thrust out to defend himself.

A boom rang out as Bai Xiaochun’s fist made contact with the buckler of devil qi. The buckler emitted cracking sounds for a short moment before collapsing, and yet, even as it did, a second buckler appeared, and then a third.

Bai Xiaochun had no time for thought or planning. Instead of backing up, he performed an incantation gesture and lunged forward.

“Living Mountain Incantation!”

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

Countless rocks and stones in the area flew up into the air, forming around Bai Xiaochun until he was an enormous stone golem!

He was now hundreds of meters tall and bursting with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy. In addition, the Living Mountain Incantation augmented his fleshly body power, making him seem supremely disdainful of everything in sight. Striking out with his fist, he destroyed the second buckler, as well as the third and the fourth.

Shock covered the face of Patriarch Polarity River because of how quickly everything was happening. Before he could do anything else, Bai Xiaochun, still in Living Mountain Incantation form, unleashed his Mountain Shaking Bash.

As the devil-form Patriarch Polarity River lunged backward, Patriarch Starry River struggled furiously against the bonds which held him. Finally, they broke, and he prepared to join in on fighting Bai Xiaochun.

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked over his shoulder, once again focusing the gaze of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye on Patriarch Starry River.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as, to the madness and frustration of the patriarch, he was once again locked in place by this vile opponent. As he struggled, Bai Xiaochun continued onward toward Patriarch Polarity River, using the Living Mountain Incantation to full effect in another attack.

Bangs rang out as, in the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun unleashed dozens of punches, all of which landed on Patriarch Polarity River’s devilish god form. Again and again he was shoved backward, slowly pushing him away from Patriarch Starry River.

It was a profoundly shocking sight that had many observing cultivators reeling, not only from Bai Xiaochun’s shocking display of power, but from how instinctively he fought!

In the shortest of moments, he had used magical power to lock down one opponent, and fleshly body power to unleash devastating force on another!

Patriarch Polarity River was teetering on the verge of insanity. Bai Xiaochun’s devastating windstorm of an attack had his qi and blood in chaos. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and yet, things were not over yet! Just when he was about to prepare a counter attack, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, and he let out a powerful shout.

As he did, his Living Mountain Incantation form collapsed, and all of the rocks shot out in front of him to create a gigantic fist. It was that fist that landed onto Patriarch Polarity River’s devilish god form!

An ear-splitting boom filled the battlefield. The devilish god body shattered, revealing the patriarch’s true self, blood spraying out of his mouth, his expression that of shock. At this point, Bai Xiaochun again turned and unleashed the power of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, reinforcing the bonds locking down Patriarch Starry River, who had been just about to free himself!

Patriarch Starry River was filled with indescribable anxiety and frustration. He immediately began to resort to any means necessary, even those that caused dangerous backlashes, to try to escape. Aware that he wasn’t a match for Bai Xiaochun, he knew that his only chance was to start attacking the bystanders in the hopes of distracting him.

However, it was in that very moment that intense killing intent flickered in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. Taking another step toward Patriarch Polarity River, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger, yet again summoning his frigid domain.

The entire 500-kilometer area iced over, and nine shadowy projections appeared, which slashed toward Patriarch Polarity River like nine sharp blades.

“You’re a useless bastard, Patriarch Starry River!!!” Patriarch Polarity River screamed. The two patriarchs had agreed to work together, but Patriarch Starry River had been bound in place multiple times, making it completely impossible for him to help. As a result, Patriarch Polarity River had come to hate Patriarch Starry River even more than he hated Bai Xiaochun….

Unlike Patriarch Starry River, he didn’t have a special divine ability to protect his nascent divinity from a deadly attack. If he were to be cut down in battle, he would die beyond the shadow of a doubt. It was a moment of deadly crisis, and as such, madness lit up his eyes. Even as Bai Xiaochun's nine frigid clones closed in on him, he chose to resort to…. fleshly body self-detonation!

BOOM!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0869 awe-chapter-870

Upon self-detonating, he could send the resulting ripples of force out to destroy the nine frigid clones. Few people would have the resolve to make a decision like that in the mere time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. But devas were the type of people who had experienced countless battles, and could react on an instinctual level in many situations.

As Patriarch Polarity River exploded, the resulting shockwave shattered the 500-kilometer frigid domain and overwhelmed the nine frigid clones. At the same time, the patriarch's nascent divinity shot out and began to flee at the highest speed possible.

He was afraid. More afraid than he had ever been before in his life. Furthermore, his hatred for Patriarch Starry River only continued to grow more intense. As far as he was concerned, if it wasn’t for that useless patriarch, they would have been able to achieve a victory. But now… Patriarch Starry River was unharmed, whereas Patriarch Polarity River had destroyed his fleshly body, leaving behind only his nascent divinity.

His heart throbbed with animosity and terror, and he already had begun to wish that Bai Xiaochun’s magical eye had locked onto him instead….

As all of those things happened, Patriarch Starry River drew dangerously upon his cultivation base to break free from the power of Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenspan Dharma Eye. He could hear the howls of rage coming from Patriarch Polarity River, and the truth was that he was equally furious. But at the same time, he was deeply astonished. Panting, he looked at Bai Xiaochun, a person who attacked with unbridled madness, whose mountain-toppling, sea-draining blows had destroyed a deva’s fleshly body and forced him to flee in nascent divinity form.

If it had only been once, he might have been able to accept it. But in defiance of all imagination, he had witnessed it a second time. Shivering, he chose to not even try to help Patriarch Polarity River, and instead turned around and fled in the opposite direction.

The scene which had just played out left him shaken and filled with fear, to the point where he didn’t care at all about his reputation, or the fact that tens upon tens of thousands of cultivators from the three sects were watching.

As he fled, he reminded himself that Bai Xiaochun was absolutely terrifying, and that if he didn’t flee, he would be in deadly danger.

The sight of Patriarch Polarity River being reduced to a nascent divinity, and Patriarch Starry River fleeing in fear, caused shouts of alarm and rage to rise up from the cultivators down on the ground.

The shouts of alarm came from the Dao River Court and the Starry River Court, whereas the shouts of rage came from… the Polarity River Court!!

“Patriarch!!”

“Patriarch Starry River, you….”

Bai Xiaochun was quite taken aback. He had assumed that Patriarch Starry River would instantly attack him after freeing himself, or at least try to stop him from pursuing the other patriarch. He never could have guessed that the man would just up and flee.

“How shameless of you, you bastard!!” Patriarch Polarity River howled. At this point, his nascent divinity felt unstable, and his spiritual energy weak to the point of near-collapse.

One of them was fleeing to the east, and the other to the west. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes burned with killing intent. Had Patriarch Starry River come after him, he would never have been able to finish off Patriarch Polarity River. But now that both of them were fleeing, that meant… he did have a chance to kill a deva!

It was without hesitation that he ignored Patriarch Starry River, and locked his gaze onto the nascent divinity form of Patriarch Polarity River. Killing intent seething, he threw his arms up into the air.

“Waterswamp!!”

Water vapor erupted out in all directions, instantly enveloping both of the fleeing patriarchs.

From a distance, it looked as if all heaven and earth had transformed into a watery swamp!

Mist roiled, and heaven-shaking, earth-shattering pressure weighed down everywhere, provoking gasps from the cultivators in the area. Up in the air, Patriarch Polarity River suddenly felt the most intense, terrifying sensation of imminent danger that he had ever felt in his entire life!!

“No!!” he shrieked, the pleading, begging tone in his voice clear for all to hear. The fleeing Patriarch Starry River was shocked, but he simply bit his tongue and focused on picking up speed as he fled.

Under the shocked gazes of everyone present, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed, and he threw his hands down.

“Kingdom!!”

RRRUUUUMBLE!

The sound which exploded out surpassed heavenly thunder. As Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom was unleashed, curved mountains shot up into the sky. All of a sudden, the entire world seemed to be taken over by some shockingly large beast who wielded mountain-toppling, sea-draining power!

The sky went dim until it was almost black. However, it was still possible to see that, stretching out from within the watery swamp, clear for all to see, was the clawed hand of a beast!

“That’s… that’s the Waterswamp Kingdom!” The eyes of the Spirit Stream Division cultivators went wide, especially those who had come from the former north bank. What they were seeing completely defied all expectation and imagination.

As the enormous, clawed hand shot out from the watery swamp, minds went blank as both Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Polarity River… were struck by the claws!

RRRRUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Mixed in with the deafening crash was the miserable shriek of Patriarch Polarity River. He attempted teleportations and other techniques to try to evade the clawed hand, but nothing did any good. In the blink of an eye, he was struck!

Before his scream could be fully voiced, his nascent divinity's eyes went wide, taking in his last view of the world. Then his nascent divinity was destroyed, and the patriarch… was wiped off of the face of all creation!! He had been killed in body and soul!!

Patriarch Starry River still had his fleshly body, and furthermore, was on the very edge of the watery swamp. Therefore, he wasn’t as badly hurt. Roaring, he summoned countless stars and heavenly bodies to defend himself, and managed to escape, coughing up blood and terrified, but alive.

Upon seeing the other patriarch’s nascent divinity destroyed, he was frightened, but at the same time convinced that his action of fleeing so decisively was the main reason he had escaped with his life!

He also considered himself lucky that he had been the one Bai Xiaochun picked to bind with fetters…. If it had been the other way around, he would likely be dead right now.

“You died, Fellow Daoist, and I lived…. If you want to blame someone, Patriarch Polarity River, don’t blame me for not saving you, blame yourself for being too weak….” Feeling profoundly lucky, the patriarch sped away.

Bai Xiaochun hovered there over the battlefield, watching the patriarch flee off into the distance. The man was moving too quickly to catch up with, and besides, although he didn’t look tired at all after crushing two devas in a row and killing one of them, it had taken all of his cultivation base and fleshly body power to do it. He was mentally and physically exhausted. Although defeating someone in the early Deva Realm was not very difficult, killing someone of that level was.

Furthermore, he had used his Heavenspan Dharma Eye three times in a row to lock a deva down. That alone had his qi and blood in chaos, kept in force only by the power of his fleshly body.

The truth was that he couldn’t have done it a fourth time. Furthermore, if Patriarch Starry River had attacked him, then he would have only had one trump card left… his Undying Emperor’s Fist.

That would have left him completely and utterly powerless, without a scrap of energy left to battle. At that point, if Patriarch Dao River had come back, he would have been in serious danger.

Although he looked majestic as he hovered there, he was actually in bad shape, and extremely tired. However, when he looked down at the deathly pale faces of the cultivators of the three sects, he realized that this was a good opportunity to shake them a bit more. Glaring off into the distance at Patriarch Starry River, he swished his sleeve.

“I’ll give you three breaths of time to get out of my sight, Patriarch Starry River. If you don’t, then I’ll swish my sleeve again… and reduce you to ashes!”

When Patriarch Starry River heard that, terror gripped his heart, and his mind began to spin. Holding nothing back, he drew upon his longevity for another burst of speed, and then disappeared over the horizon….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0870 awe-chapter-871

Of the three devas, one had been killed, one was crippled, and one fled. All cultivators from all four sects were completely stunned, their minds having been battered by tsunami after tsunami of shock!

As for the cultivators from the three allied sects, they were trembling in despair, especially those from the Dao River Court.

Because Patriarch Starry River hadn’t been killed, the cultivators from his court had it a bit better off. However, a single statement from Bai Xiaochun had sent their patriarch fleeing with no concern for anyone else. The sight of him holding nothing back to escape within three breaths of time filled the disciples from his sect with utter hopelessness.

Worst off… were the cultivators from the Polarity River Court. Their patriarch was dead, which meant that the Polarity River Court was destined to fall. In fact, they would likely not even qualify to remain in the Middle Reaches cultivation world.

Those disciples were in complete despair, their eyes bloodshot, and yet strangely, they didn’t hate the River-Defying Sect.

After all, they were the invaders, and although they were shocked and even terrified by Bai Xiaochun’s level of strength, they couldn’t possibly dare to hate him. They hated… the Starry River Court!

Patriarch Polarity River’s dying breath had been a curse upon Patriarch Starry River, and that was what kindled the hatred in the hearts of the cultivators from the Polarity River Court.

However, now was not the time to try to wipe out the Starry River Court. The Polarity River Court had no heart to continue fighting, and instead, began to flee. The Starry River Court and Dao River Court cultivators were also sapped of their will to fight, and their hearts were seized with alarm and terror.

The patriarchs of all the sects had been routed, and the sects themselves were in imminent danger of collapse. Therefore, they could only think of one thing to do….

Flee!!

The three sects were like mountains collapsing into rubble. None of them dared to unleash a single attack as they went. They just ran.

Song Junwan looked over at Bai Xiaochun in his radiance. The sight of him cutting down devas with impunity, and dominating all creation, left her feeling more than a bit dazed. He seemed to be growing powerful so quickly that he would soon leave her far behind.

Master Limitless had similarly mixed emotions in his eyes as he recalled past scenes from the Blood Stream Sect. Next to him, the weak and injured Xuemei reacted in the same way. In recent years, she had often thought back to the misunderstandings of past years, and sighed emotionally.

The Blood Stream Division was completely shaken, and yet, even more shaken was the Spirit Stream Division. Many elders and disciples were familiar with Bai Xiaochun, and yet, he had grown to a level that filled their hearts with astonishment.

That was especially true of the disciples who were followers of Li Qinghou.

Shangguan Tianyou bowed his head, bitterness gnawing at his heart. Beihan Lie stood there silently, filled with complicated emotions. In the sect headquarters, the rabbit, the monkey, and the other powerful experts all reacted with zeal and excitement.

That was especially true of Sect Leader Zheng Yuandong, who was so excited he could hardly control himself.

Cheering soon broke out. And then, the cultivators looked around at the fleeing enemies from the other three sects. At this point, the sect elders began to shout loudly.

“Kill them!”

“Kill them all!!!”

The River-Defying Sect disciples zealously shouted battlecries as they poured out of their headquarters in pursuit!

The Spirit Stream Division’s spell formation giants formed up again, hundreds of them, lunging forward with greatswords in hand, unleashing magical items to strike at the Starry River Court!

The injured Heavenhorn ink dragon roared and began to thrash into the enemy with deadly force.

The Blood Stream Division reacted similarly. Patriarch Blood Stream took the lead, followed by Song Junwan with her blood sword, as well as Master Limitless and the other leaders. They held nothing back to attack the Dao River Court!

Bruiser let out a howl, galvanizing the spirit beasts, animated corpses and gargoyles. Along with the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions, they attacked the army from the Polarity River Court.

The River-Defying Sect had quashed their despair, and were unleashing their might onto the enemy!

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. The burden he had shouldered in this battle had been beyond heavy. The slightest mistake, the tiniest slipup… could have led to the gravest of situations!

After all, the three sects’ forces still numbered roughly 100,000, whereas the River-Defying Sect had been cut down to only about 20,000. The slightest misstep could have led to the River-Defying Sect truly being wiped out.

It didn’t matter how amazing Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess was, he couldn’t single-handedly fight an army of 100,000!

That was why he had taken such a big risk to deal with all three devas at the same time, and was also the reason why he was currently so exhausted.

Another reason why he had been able to eke out a victory was that the three deva patriarchs all came from different sects, and had fundamental differences and disagreements. Any one of them could turn on any of the others at any time.

With a relationship like that, it was easy to cooperate when the going was good. But when adversity struck… they could easily split apart!

Had the three of them cooperated fully, without any hesitation, then although they might not have been able to kill Bai Xiaochun, they would definitely have been able to grievously wound him, and most likely destroy the River-Defying Sect in the end!

If the Wildlands’ four heavenly kings and Grand Heavenmaster had been reduced to the early Mortal-Dao Deva Realm, and then fought Bai Xiaochun, things would have been very different. Considering how well they cooperated and strategized, even if Bai Xiaochun had fought to the death with every trick in his book, they still would have come out alive.

It would have been nothing like what had happened here, with one deva being killed and two injured, and their fighting forces left completely demoralized…. When Bai Xiaochun considered all of these things, he suddenly realized he had come out quite lucky. Eyes flashing, he strode toward the fighting.

Him joining the fight demoralized the three great sects even more. They had been trying to fight back earlier, but now, they simply dropped their weapons and fled with all the power they could muster.

The entire battlefield was a scene of chaos. The cultivators of the three sects had few routes of escape, and the River-Defying Sect cultivators were cooperating well under the leadership of their elders, and were striking with deadly force!

Bai Xiaochun focused on the three sects’ Nascent Soul cultivators. He shook the battlefield wherever he went, saving everyone he could, but specifically looking for… Li Qinghou and Hou Xiaomei.

However, the field of battle was large, and in complete disorder. The fact that he couldn’t find them caused unease to rise up in his heart, but around then, Bruiser came bounding over. He had shrunk down to normal size, and excitedly thumped his head into Bai Xiaochun’s leg.

Bai Xiaochun smiled as he rubbed Bruiser’s head. He had missed him terribly, and when he saw the scars and wounds criss-crossing him, anger began to burn in his eyes.

“Who dared to injure my Bruiser!?” he said through gritted teeth. “This… will not go unanswered!” With that, he reached out to touch the particularly eye-catching scar on Bruiser’s neck.

“Over the next few days, Bruiser, we’ll go find all the people who gave you these scars, and they’ll have to answer to me!” Bruiser let out a long howl in response. However, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had touched the scar on his neck reminded him of something, and suddenly his eyes flickered darkly with grief.

Bai Xiaochun noticed the change in his expression, and his eyes widened. He knew Bruiser well, and was aware of the speed he was capable of. Even the devas of the three great sects should not have been able to wound him unless there was some sort of ambush involved.

Therefore, the only other explanation for how he could have been wounded in such a way was if he was in the middle of saving someone. Based on the state of the scar, it must have happened months ago.

Under what circumstances could Bruiser have been so anxious that he failed to defend himself…?

In what situation would he have chosen not to flee to safety, and ended up surrounded…?

With such thoughts on his mind, Bai Xiaochun began to pant. Eyes widening, his uneasy feeling from before suddenly grew more intense!

“Bruiser, where is Uncle Li? And Hou Xiaomei? Where are they?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0871 awe-chapter-872

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s question, more grief filled Bruiser’s eyes. He couldn’t hide anything from Bai Xiaochun, and in fact, didn’t even have the desire to. All he did was let out a few braying sounds.

The sadness in his voice made Bai Xiaochun’s heart feel like it was being torn apart. The world suddenly grew dark, as though it had become stained with blood!!

“You don’t know where Hou Xiaomei is…? But Uncle Li… was captured?!?!?!” Bai Xiaochun’s expression twisted with rage, not toward Bruiser, but simply pure anger birthed from anxiety and madness. Seeing Bai Xiaochun like this caused Bruiser to emit a few more yipping sounds.

Bai Xiaochun was shaking visibly. Bruiser was no cultivator, and although he was a beast king with extraordinary intelligence, it was difficult for him to express himself clearly in certain matters. Ignoring the surrounding disciples of the three sects, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense spreading out in all directions.

Heaven and earth rumbled as he scoured everything in a 500-kilometer area. It only took a moment for him to have the entire locale under his command. His current goal… was to find Zheng Yuandong or other patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect, and get all of the details about Uncle Li!

As his divine sense spread out, all cultivators, both those of the three sects and those of the River-Defying Sect, suddenly felt immense pressure weighing down on them. At the same time, a windstorm sprang up around Bai Xiaochun.

In that same moment, a middle-aged woman appeared off in the distance in the sect headquarters. Her face was pale from serious injury, and she appeared to have just awoken from a coma. She seemed so weak that a breeze might carry her away, and could only walk by being supported on either side by younger female disciples.

Her gaze quickly came to rest on Bai Xiaochun, and a gleam of excitement appeared in her eyes. At the same time, she seemed deeply anxious. Without the slightest hesitation, she raised her voice and cried out, “Xiaochun, hurry up and save your Uncle Li!!”

The instant Bai Xiaochun heard her voice, he jerked his head to look in her direction. He instantly recognized her. She was none other than the former peak lord of Violet Cauldron Peak, the Master of Big Fatty Zhang, and the woman who had fallen in love with his Uncle Li. She was… Xu Meixiang!

“Aunt Xu!” he cried. Trembling visibly, he vanished, to reappear a moment later in front of her. Reaching out, he sent gentle energy streaming into her body, which caused the color to return to her face. However, she still seemed as fragile as before, and her voice was hoarse and scratchy as she went on to provide further explanation.

“Get to the Dao River Court! Your Uncle Li was taken captive by the patriarch from there, about half a year ago!!” Xu Meixiang's sudden outburst caused her injuries to flare up. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and if it weren’t for the fact that she was being bolstered by Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base power, she would have perished instantly!

Her words struck Bai Xiaochun like a lightning bolt, causing him to shake violently where he stood. About this time, the patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect, as well as Zheng

Yuandong and some other important people, could sense the violent outburst brewing in Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, Xu Meixiang’s words woke them all from the delighted happiness they had been reveling in moments ago because of the sect being saved.

It wasn’t that they had intended to hide things from Bai Xiaochun, it was just that everything had occurred too quickly. He showed up out of the blue, devastated three devas, crushed the morale of the three sects, and then sent the River-Defying Sect cultivators onto the counter attack. Many people were in a daze from everything that was occurring, and just hadn’t yet thought to inform Bai Xiaochun of certain matters.

Patriarch Spirit Stream hurried over to provide a more thorough explanation!

The true reason everything had happened actually didn’t have anything to do with Li Qinghou. After all, Li Qinghou was only in the Nascent Soul stage. Despite how incredibly talented he was, he wasn’t so outstanding that a deva patriarch would attack him.

The reason for everything… was Bruiser!

The patriarch from the Dao River Court, the very one who had experienced fleshly body destruction and now existed as a nascent divinity, had coveted Bruiser for some time. However, Bruiser was always very careful, and normally never left the sect. Because of that, the deva patriarch had never had a chance to act on his desires.

However, half a year ago, that patriarch… had set up an elaborate trap to kidnap Li Qinghou, and use him to get to Bruiser!

The reason he had targeted Li Qinghou was obvious…. It all had to do with the relationship between Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser. The fact that Li Qinghou was like family to Bai Xiaochun and Bruiser was no secret. And thus, he was the perfect person to use to lure out Bruiser!

And that was exactly what had happened. Bruiser put everything on the line to try to save Li Qinghou, and had come out of the affair with an ugly scar on his neck. In the end, the River-Defying Sect’s patriarchs had interfered, along with the reserve powers of the sect, including the Blood Ancestor.

In the end, the Dao River Court’s ambush was foiled, and Bruiser was saved. Unfortunately… Li Qinghou was taken away. Even now… they weren’t sure if he was alive or not!

The reason they couldn’t tell if he was alive or dead had to do with the special technique he cultivated. He drew his existence from plants and vegetation, and had been studying a way to reconverge his life force. Because of that, he had no life slip in the sect. That made it impossible to determine his current state.

Patriarch Spirit Stream, Zhao Yuandong, and the others used the fastest means possible to impart all of this information to Bai Xiaochun. In the end, his mind crashed as if with thunder, and his heart burned with raging killing intent.

“ARGGGGHHHHH!!” he howled, causing the sky to vibrate and the lands to tremble. Eyes crimson, he didn’t bother to offer any explanation. He simply turned… and began to fly at top speed toward the Dao River Court!!

“Feeling suicidal, Dao River Court!? I'm gonna kill you, Patriarch Dao River!!!” The insane killing intent that raged in his heart and mind was the likes that rarely appeared in him. In fact, it had only been seen once before in his life, when his apprentice went missing in the Wildlands. This… was the second time.

However, this time was actually worse than when Bai Hao had gone missing. Bai Xiaochun almost seemed like a different person, a person who had descended into pure madness.

There was no other reaction he could have. After all… this was Li Qinghou!

His Uncle Li had brought him from Mount Hood to practice immortal cultivation, and had even taught him the fundamentals….

He had passed his magics of plants and vegetation on to Bai Xiaochun, and had sheltered him from one disaster after another related to pill concocting….

The truth was that… they had a relationship like that of a son and a father!

Not even Bai Xiaochun was exactly sure when it was that he had come to view Uncle Li as family!!

There were many people he cared about in the River-Defying Sect, but there was only one who he viewed like a blood relative…. Li Qinghou!

Therefore, how could Bai Xiaochun possibly *not* go mad!?

His thunderous roar filled the air as he shot off into the distance, followed by Bruiser…. As for Patriarch Spirit Stream and the other leaders, they were shaken by his shout. However, the patriarchs quickly issued orders for a squad of roughly 1,000 River-Defying Sect disciples to follow along as emergency backup.

As far as Patriarch Spirit Stream was concerned, it didn’t matter how powerful the reserve powers and spell formation of the Dao River Court was, they probably couldn’t handle Bai Xiaochun’s towering cultivation base. However, as a member of the older generation, Patriarch Spirit Stream still had to look out for him.

More than 1,000 disciples immediately flew after Bai Xiaochun. Of course, they weren’t a match for him in speed, so Patriarch Spirit Stream gave them airships to use, which whistled through the air at top speed toward the Dao River Court.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun was still the fastest. He drew deeply on his cultivation base, as well as his fleshly body power. He even used the Undying Hex to teleport rapidly through the air!

At his current speed, it would only require the time it takes an incense stick to burn for him to reach his destination!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0872 awe-chapter-873

Bai Xiaochun’s mind was almost a complete blank. He didn’t dare to descend into reminiscence. Instead, he focused on one thing!

“Uncle Li… you *have* to be alive….”

Anxiety gripped his heart, profound nervousness generated, not from fear for himself, but from the possibility that he might hear news that could crush him.

Mental pressure began to mount, and his cultivation base was going crazy. All of the anxiety and madness swirled together, making a cyclone that dimmed heaven and earth.

Bai Xiaochun moved so fast that not even Bruiser could keep up. He shot through the air alone, leaving thunderous sonic booms behind him as he went.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The massive sound caused by his passage attracted the attention of local cultivator clans, small-scale sects, and city after city. Everyone looked up in shock, and yet, they couldn’t see Bai Xiaochun! They only saw a long wound-like streak appear above them in the sky!

Countless gasps and exclamations of shock filled the air.

“What was that sound?!”

“The sky… is being ripped open?!?!”

From a distance, the streak he left behind really did look like a rift opening up in the sky!!

Time ticked by. In the end, it took less time than an incense stick takes to burn. In his rage and anxiety, Bai Xiaochun appeared… in the mountains containing the Dao River Court!!

The sect headquarters was made of seven mountain peaks, each one a different color!

Because the routing of the three sects back on the battlefield had happened so quickly, the Dao River Court in general wasn’t fully aware of what had happened. In fact, most of them didn’t even know that their patriarch had lost his fleshly body. Only a few people had been informed, who then ordered that the sect’s grand spell formation be activated.

Therefore, when Bai Xiaochun arrived, he saw a glittering light shield surrounding the sect, preventing anyone from entering!

It was a powerful shield which radiated intense pressure. After all… it was the grand spell formation of the number one sect in the Middle Reaches cultivation world of the eastern Heavenspan River!

But no matter how powerful that spell formation was, it couldn’t compare to the spell formation that had protected the former Great Wall. Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Hex had been able to pierce through that spell formation, and therefore, this trifling formation belonging to a Middle Reaches sect couldn’t possibly do anything to him, not even if it had been created by a deva!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t slow down for even a moment. In fact, he sped up. Rumbling sounds filled the air as he bore down on the Dao River Court, which currently housed several tens of thousands of cultivators who hadn’t been mobilized during the war. That group included three Nascent Soul experts and many in the Core Formation stage. When they saw something streaking toward them through the sky, their eyes went wide.

“What’s that?!”

“The sky… is being ripped open? But how?!”

“What’s going on? That rift is actually heading right toward us!!”

No one in the group, not even the Nascent Soul experts, were able to see Bai Xiaochun. He was moving too quickly! The only thing they could see was that rift being slashed open in the sky!

Even as they began to cry out in alarm, the rift reached the grand spell formation. And yet, bizarrely, the spell formation didn’t react at all. There wasn’t even the slightest ripple! Bai Xiaochun pierced right through it!

That was the power of the Undying Hex!

As soon as he was inside the Dao River Court, he slammed into one of the mountains, causing the sky to tremble and the land to vibrate.

RRRUUUUMBLE!

The mountain immediately began to crumble, with countless bits of rock and rubble showering down. Tens of thousands of cultivators dashed out of the way, crying out in alarm.

Only at this point did the figure which had previously been impossible to see suddenly become clear in midair above the crumbling mountain!

Even as he hovered there, terrifying fluctuations rolled out, as well as a massive vortex which seemed capable of destroying the world.

The disciples of the Dao River Court gasped and trembled. Even the Nascent Soul cultivators were shaking in nervousness. However, this was their sect headquarters, so no matter how scared they were, they had to brace themselves and attack. Instantly, countless beams of light that represented magical techniques began to slash through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, deadly beams of light shot from the other mountain peaks in his direction.

“Get the hell out of my way!!” Bai Xiaochun roared, waving his hands out in front of him. A blast of wind spread out in all directions, slamming into the beams of light and magical techniques. All of them were crushed as easily as dried weeds, and yet, the blast of wind didn’t stop.

The sect headquarters trembled, and blood sprayed out of the mouths of countless disciples. Screams echoed out as they fell back, and yet, before they could get anywhere, Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense shot out. In the blink of an eye, it filled the entire Dao River Court. Not even restricted areas and places locked down by spell formations were able to remain hidden. It was at this point that, deep underground beneath the Dao River Court… he found Li Qinghou’s aura!

There, in a dank dungeon beneath the sect, were numerous prisoners, one of whom was the unconscious Li Qinghou… who appeared to be gasping on the verge of death!

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Li Qinghou was still alive, he breathed a sigh of relief. However, it was then that he realized what bad shape Li Qinghou was in, and his rage mounted. Without the slightest hesitation, he blurred into motion, unleashing a fist strike directly at the ground!

Crevices snaked out as the earth was ripped open. Numerous Dao River Court disciples were sent tumbling away from the force of the blow, their minds reeling and their hearts shivering in shock.

“Who is that?!?!”

“That’s Bai Xiaochun. He’s the one… who beat the three devas! He killed one, devastated the other, and sent the third running away!!”

“Dammit, what is he doing here…?”

Bai Xiaochun had already destroyed one of the seven mountains that comprised the sect headquarters. Now, his blow caused a second mountain to be ripped up and transformed into rubble.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun realized that one of the strange features of the Dao River Court’s headquarters was its unusually thick ground. The seven mountain peaks of the sect were all connected at the base, which meant that to get to the underground area, all of the mountains had to be destroyed.

Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to go about it one at a time. Rapidly performing an incantation gesture, he let out a shout, utilizing the Living Mountain Incantation to cause countless rocks in the area to rush toward him and transform him into a gigantic stone golem!

That stone golem’s face looked exactly like Bai Xiaochun's! Without the slightest hesitation, he unleashed a second fist strike, which shattered more of the lands below. At the same time, two of the remaining five mountains began to collapse. Cries of alarm and terror filled the air as countless disciples fled in terror, unwilling to stay behind in their own sect headquarters.

As they fled, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout that caused the sky to distort. A third fist strike landed like a meteor falling from the heavens.

BOOOOOOOOOM!

The remaining three mountain peaks collapsed amidst deafening rumbling sounds. The Dao River Court… had been reduced to rubble!!

From the time Bai Xiaochun arrived until the deed was done, not even sixty breaths of time had passed!!

As of this moment, the only thing that remained in the ground was a massive crater!

At the bottom of that crater was the Dao River Court’s dungeon!

Without pausing for a moment, Bai Xiaochun blurred into motion, vanished, and then reappeared outside of Li Qinghou’s cell!

The intense noise from moments ago caused Li Qinghou’s eyes to flutter open. His aura was profoundly weak as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun. When he saw who it was, his eyes widened.

“Xiaochun?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0873 awe-chapter-874

It was with uncertainty and open confusion that Li Qinghou said *Xiaochun*. At the moment, he wasn’t sure whether or not he was dreaming. After being taken captive to the Dao River Court, he hadn’t been tortured, but rather, been left to wallow in misery.

Although he didn’t care too much about whether he himself lived or died, he hated the idea of himself being used as a trap to lure out Bruiser. In the end, he had been powerless to change the outcome. He hadn’t even been able to kill himself.

He could only watch as Bruiser was ambushed. Afterward, his guilt began to consume him.

Thankfully, during the half year which had passed, Patriarch Dao River had never succeeded in getting his hands on Bruiser. However, the sword wound which had been inflicted on Bruiser’s neck was something that Li Qinghou blamed himself for constantly. At the same time, his hatred of the Dao River Court grew more intense.

Although he had become nothing but a worthless prisoner rotting away in a dungeon, his hatred kept him going. As long as the Dao River Court stood, he could not allow himself to die!

He had gritted his teeth and endured the strange powers of the dungeon, which sucked away at his cultivation base and life force. He had grown weaker and weaker, and yet continued to hang on.

Thankfully, he cultivated a special technique based on the power of plants and vegetation, which offered him special protection. In this most critical of times, his complete focus kept him going, as did his hatred of the Dao River Court. And… Bai Xiaochun!

He had often thought about that young boy he had picked up from that mountain all those years ago. Although Bai Xiaochun had been gone for a long time, he wanted to see him again. He wanted to protect him! He was worried that, unless he was there to look out for him, the boy would cause disasters the likes of which could never be resolved.

That became part of his focus, and therefore, despite the pain he faced, he endured.

Now, when he heard deafening booming sounds outside, he opened his eyes, and wondered if he was seeing things when he saw Bai Xiaochun right there in front of him.

As for Bai Xiaochun, when he heard *Xiaochun*, a tremor ran through him, and tears welled up in his eyes. Li Qinghou’s voice was weak, but filled with a warmth and kindness that caused Bai Xiaochun's heart to leap in his chest.

“Uncle Li!!” he said, tears flowing down his cheeks. Although he had battle prowess that could crush devas, as well as the highest of statuses, when he was with Li Qinghou, he became the same Bai Xiaochun he had been back on Mount Hood, so afraid of lightning that he had lit a stick of incense thirteen times.

He reached forward and pulled Li Qinghou into an embrace. Weeping, he sent cultivation base power pouring into him, healing some of his injuries. At the same time, he realized how weak Li Qinghou had become, and his tears flowed even harder.

There were white hairs on Li Qinghou’s head now, and he had wrinkles on his face, making him look middle-aged. Obviously, the half year of confinement had taken its toll.

He no longer looked like Bai Xiaochun remembered him, elegant and refined, a legacy echelon cultivator, the proud and unyielding peak lord of Fragrant Cloud Peak!

Li Qinghou was still a bit confused as he pulled back and looked at Bai Xiaochun. Ignoring his own weakness and injury, he reached out and… gently put his hand onto Bai Xiaochun’s cheek.

“Is it really you…? You’ve grown up, kid. Alright, no crying now….” He wiped the tears off of Bai Xiaochun’s face, fully convinced that this was the same young boy he had brought back to the sect from Mount Hood.

“It's me, Uncle Li…. I'm back!” Bai Xiaochun dried his eyes and helped Li Qinghou to his feet.

Thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s help, Li Qinghou was already getting back some energy. He grinned.

“As long as you’re back, that’s all that matters….” Within his smile was approval, happiness, and kindness. He was a Nascent Soul cultivator, so despite the emotions which surged inside of him, he kept himself in control, and simply smiled at Bai Xiaochun.

Before he had a chance to ask Bai Xiaochun any questions about what he had been up to all these years, he looked out at the crater which surrounded them. With Bai Xiaochun’s help, they climbed out… whereupon Li Qinghou saw the crumbled ruins of the seven mountain peaks that made up the former Dao River Court, and the terrified Dao River Court disciples who were still fleeing off into the distance.

At that point, Li Qinghou couldn’t contain his excitement. Continuing to peer around, he said, “Did one of the patriarchs finally break through? Where is he?”

His first reaction was to assume that one of the patriarchs had finally reached the Deva Realm and come to break him out of the Dao River Court’s dungeon.

And yet, he immediately hesitated. After all, even after making a breakthrough, a single patriarch shouldn’t have been able to reduce the Dao River Court to this condition. At that point, he started to wonder if two patriarchs had broken through to become devas.

However, that seemed even less likely than his original guess.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, then cleared his throat. “Uh… Uncle Li, none of the patriarchs broke through…. Nobody else is here… except for us two.”

Now that he had rescued Li Qinghou, his stress was fading away, and his personality was going back to normal. As such, he held back from sounding a bit pleased with himself.

Li Qinghou’s jaw dropped. He looked around at the ruins, and then back at Bai Xiaochun, and suddenly laughed loud and clear. Slapping him on the shoulder, he said, “Good. Great. Excellent!”

He didn’t ask any details. He didn’t need to. The excitement he felt in his heart was all he needed. The child that he had brought to the sect from Mount Hood had grown up into a shocking figure.

The only disappointment he felt was that the fledgling had left the nest to fly in the endless sky, and that he no longer needed someone else around to take care of him. It was a feeling of both happiness and disappointment mixed together.

Li Qinghou’s reaction got Bai Xiaochun even more excited. Feeling very pleased with himself, he swished his sleeve and said, “This is nothing, Uncle Li. You have no idea how awesome I was back in the Wildlands. I--”

Before he could continue, a whistling sound filled the sky, which was Bruiser, who had only just caught up. As soon as he arrived, he saw the ruins of the Dao River Court, and Li Qinghou.

He didn’t seem surprised at all that Bai Xiaochun could destroy the entire Dao River Court. He excitedly shrank back down to normal size, rushed over to Li Qinghou, and began to rub him with his head.

Li Qinghou’s heart swelled with both warmth and remorse. Softly stroking Bruiser’s head, he looked at the scars covering him, and sighed.

“I'd always hoped I would be able to help you get your revenge, Bruiser, but I guess I don’t need to now. Your dad’s already helped you.” Chuckling, Li Qinghou looked around at the ruins, and then back at Bai Xiaochun, his heart bursting with pride. “Let’s go, Xiaochun. The Dao River Court might be able to survive this somehow, but it will take them a long time to recover. If they ever do!”

“Calm down, Uncle Li, there’s more to do.” After measuring up the scene around them, Bai Xiaochun turned to Bruiser. “Bruiser, there were a bunch of other disciples following us, right? What’s the delay? Why don’t you go back and lead them here?”

Bruiser wasn't quite sure what he had in mind, but never refused to do what Bai Xiaochun asked him to do. He shot off, then returned a moment later with more than a thousand airships following him. The cultivators piloting the airships soon saw the dismal state of the Dao River Court, and couldn't help but gasp. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun with reverent gazes, they clasped hands.

“Greetings, Patriarch! Greetings, Elder Li!”

Their words confirmed what Li Qinghou had already suspected. Smile widening, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who shook his head and cleared his throat. Feeling a bit embarrassed, he waved his hand.

“Alright, enough of that. Hurry up and clear all this rubble away. The Dao River Court got destroyed too quickly, and everyone ran away. They definitely left some treasures behind. Let's clean this place out!” By this point, his heart was pounding as he thought back to all of the shakedowns he had performed in the past. However, all of those had been clan shakedowns. This was his first time overseeing a sect shakedown!

In response to his words, the surrounding 1,000 disciples' eyes glittered. Without any pause, they began to clear away the rubble and search the Dao River Court for treasure.

Li Qinghou's eyes shone with even deeper praise as he mused about how much this child had grown up. Even he himself had forgotten to loot the routed enemy.

“You're absolutely right, Xiaochun. The Dao River Court has years of reserves that will be of great help to the River-Defying Sect!”

However, even as the words left Li Qinghou’s mouth, Bai Xiaochun frowned. Looking around at the River-Defying Sect disciples, he said, “You people don’t know how to shake a place down! Aiya! Look, there are more rocks over there than anywhere else. It only takes a single glance to tell that there’s some treasure there. Clear that rubble!

“Look at this! Get over here, people. This boulder is obviously fluctuating with magical power. There’s definitely some kind of valuable treasure buried under it!

“Aiya! Look at you! What do you think you’re doing? Pry up those floor tiles! They’re obviously made from spirit stones!!” It was to Bai Xiaochun’s great frustration that none of these people knew how to shake a place down….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0874 awe-chapter-875

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get nervous. Therefore, he hurried up to the front lines. Considering that nobody knew what they were doing, he decided to take charge. Waving his hands and gesticulating wildly he said, “No, don’t dig there. Look at the ground. Who would put treasure there?! Look at that oversized vase right next to you. Now that’s a treasure!

“Look at all of you! Seriously...? Come come. Let me tell you how to do it. You 300 go and clear out those boulders over there. And you 300 get rid of the rubble of that temple over there!

“Now, for *you* 300, well, you have an even more important mission. You head to that restricted area over there and take everything you can get your hands on. Know what it does? Take it. Don’t know? Take it!

“The final 100 of you, come with me and just pick up whatever I tell you to. Oh, hey you… that’s actually not made from spirit stones. It’s just an ordinary floor tile….”

Considering the extensive experience he had shaking down clans in the Wildlands, it didn’t take long before he had the entire group of disciples sweeping over the sect like a hurricane… wiping everything away….

Eventually, he couldn’t help but sigh.

“Listen to me everyone, when you're shaking a place down, you have to pay attention. Do you understand that…? I mean, put some thought into it! If you were a sect patriarch, where would you hide all the treasure?!

“Too complicated? Alright, I’ll summarize. When you're shaking a place down, you have to remember three key words: *Fast. Ruthless. Precise.* Those are my Three Words of Wisdom I created to pass down as part of my legacy!

“*Fast*. You have to move quickly in everything you do. Have you people seen locusts before? When you shake a place down, you have to become like locusts!

“*Ruthless*. Well, that’s simple. Your eyes need to be bloodshot, and you need to grab anything you see. Just imagine you're in a treasure shop where everything is free. The more you can grab, the more you’ll profit. Our motto is… *we take everything down to the grass and the roots*!

“Finally, is *Precise*. Like I said, you need to pay attention. To shakedown amateurs who haven’t learned how to pay attention, well, let me tell you the trick. You have to… take everything you see even if you don’t know what it is or whether it’s valuable!

“Just wait until we get back. Then we can appraise everything properly. We just need to make sure we have everything to appraise to begin with.” He spoke loudly, and his eyes danced up and down as he provided this crucial training. His words echoed about in the ruins of the Dao River Court, leaving the rest of the disciples temporarily dumbstruck, and gasping inwardly.

“How can the patriarch be so good at shakedowns?”

“This is my first time hearing the Three Words of Wisdom of shakedowns….”

“He’s… he’s so familiar with shaking places down….”

Strange and even blank expressions could be seen on the faces of everyone present. No one had ever heard of someone making up three words to summarize how to perform a shakedown. Furthermore, it was obvious that such wisdom could only come from someone who had a huge amount of experience in such matters. That would be the only way to distill the action down into three words of wisdom.

In fact, it was something only a professional could do….

The disciples weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. Li Qinghou stared with blank eyes as Bai Xiaochun scurried back and forth, giving direction and pointers everywhere he went.

Thanks to his timely instruction, the disciples quickly excavated all of the treasures of the Dao River Court. As it turned out, the Three Words of Wisdom were truly powerful.

Li Qinghou was both confused and also felt a bit of a headache coming on. Rubbing the bridge of his nose, he looked on helplessly with the realization that… no matter what cultivation base level Bai Xiaochun reached, there would always be something about him to worry about.

“He actually created a summary of how to shake places down…. I guess… he just has a knack for it….” Li Qinghou sighed, unsure of what to even say.

One thing he didn’t notice was how closely Bruiser was paying attention to everything. Years ago, it was the teachings of the black dog which had enabled Bruiser to attract so many female beasts to his side. And it was also from Bai Xiaochun that he had learned the ways of pride.

All of a sudden, a new world seemed to be presented to him, causing his eyes to shine with veneration. In his opinion, this dad of his was simply too awesome. Who could have ever imagined that he had mastered a skill like this?

After observing this special technique of shakedowns first-hand, Bruiser immediately realized that he had a new mission in life, and committed it to memory.

It took about two hours for the disciples to wipe the Dao River Court clean. By the end, their feelings for Bai Xiaochun had changed. Although they still felt deep awe and admiration, there was something else that they just couldn’t put their finger on as well.

Many of them suddenly recalled stories they had heard about things Bai Xiaochun had done years ago, stories that placed them right in the middle of laughter and tears....

“So, this is what Bai Xiaochun is like....”

“Patriarch Bai... ah whatever, I’ll just keep calling him Bai Xiaochun....”

Although all of the disciples were muttering similar things, with Bai Xiaochun’s instructions, they were enlightened regarding the Three Words of Wisdom, and cleaned out the Dao River Court until there wasn’t even any grass left anywhere....

They took most of the boulders, and the remains of most of the buildings.... If the disciples of the Dao River Court ever returned, they would surely be stunned, and would likely think they had taken a wrong turn somewhere.... They would definitely not recognize their sect.

Bruiser ended up helping out quite a bit. Not only was he a quick learner, he could change the size of his body at will, making it easy to get through tiny cracks to find special treasures. Bai Xiaochun sighed in admiration at how smart his son Bruiser was.

“Excellent! You've got real talent, Bruiser. From now on, our shakedown abilities are going to improve dramatically, all thanks to you!” Bai Xiaochun’s words of praise caused Bruiser to virtually glow with pride.

However, as he watched, Bai Xiaochun actually felt a bit displeased. He really missed Zhou Yixing. Zhou Yixing could have dug out all of the treasures much more quickly….

“This isn’t going to work….” he thought. His expression suddenly turned serious. “Yep. It seems I need give them some more training. Everyone in the sect needs to understand the quintessence of shakedowns!

“That way, the River-Defying Sect will have more wealth than ever. All disciples will have plenty of cultivation resources. It will be good tidings for everyone in the sect!” Although it meant that things would be a bit more stressful, at least it gave him a new mission to work on.

People started realizing that Bai Xiaochun had a thoughtful expression on his face, even Li Qinghou. Li Qinghou massaged the bridge of his nose again, a wry smile on his face as he realized that Bai Xiaochun must be coming up with some more plans. Finally, Li Qinghou cleared his throat.

“Alright, Xiaochun. Let’s get back home to the River-Defying Sect.”

Bai Xiaochun agreed, temporarily putting aside his previous thoughts. Waving his sleeve, he led Bruiser, the 1,000 disciples, and Li Qinghou through the air in a grand procession back to the River-Defying Sect.

On the way back, Li Qinghou finally asked Bai Xiaochun about how the fighting had fared in the River-Defying Sect. It was with sparkling eyes that Bai Xiaochun went into vivid detail about the story. When Li Qinghou heard that Bai Xiaochun had fought three devas, and ended up killing one, crippling another, and sending another one fleeing, his heart trembled. Although he had guessed that things played out something like that, to hear the truth personally was still astonishing.

After a bit of time spent chatting, they were closing in on the River-Defying Sect.

Meanwhile, Patriarch Dao River had finally managed to sneak home in nascent divinity form. Actually, he had been waiting some distance away while everything happened in the sect.

It wasn’t until Bai Xiaochun actually left that he dared to actually go back into the emptied sect. There, he looked around in confusion, wondering if he was hallucinating.

“Is this really… the Dao River Court?” After staring around blankly for a while, a tremor ran through him, and he threw his head back and screamed, “You’re pushing things too far, Bai Xiaochun!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0875 awe-chapter-876

Very little time had passed in the River-Defying Sect since Bai Xiaochun’s shocking performance. In fact, even including the shakedown, it had only been a handful of hours.

The cultivators of the three sects were still fleeing, and the disciples of the River-Defying Sect were still chasing them down. The area surrounding the River-Defying Sect was in complete chaos.

There was nothing the patriarchs could do to get the disciples to calm down. Earlier, they had been in a situation of deadly crisis, and under the most incredible stress imaginable. Now, they were finally able to vent!

250 kilometers. 500 kilometers. 1,000 kilometers….

Before long, the cultivators of the three sects were completely driven away. Those who could not escape chose to surrender.

After the chase reached the 1,500-kilometer-mark, the enthusiasm of the River-Defying Sect cultivators began to fade. They were also starting to get exhausted. Eventually, at that 1,500-kilometer mark, the patriarchs issued orders to cease the pursuit!

The fleeing cultivators of the three sects could finally breathe sighs of relief, and scatter in terror.

All of them knew… that the River-Defying Sect was going to rise to prominence!!

Bai Xiaochun had completely turned the tables on them, and although the River-Defying Sect had sustained heavy losses, in the end, they had achieved victory!!

Any disciples from the other sects who ran into River-Defying Sect cultivators in the future would be filled with terror, and not dare to do anything to provoke them. The battle had seen them completely defeated, both physically and in spirit!

As could be imagined, news of the conclusion of the battle spread like wildfire throughout the cultivation world of the Middle Reaches. The Lower Reaches were shocked, and the general structure of the Middle Reaches was already changing.

Obviously, it created a stir back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect as well. After all, the three great sects had obtained their tacit approval before making their move.

In addition to that, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t just a member of the River-Defying Sect. He was a disciple of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect as well, and had also served as a major general at the Great Wall.

Historically speaking, major generals would always join the Hall of Steel Veins, and become the most powerful of elders back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. And that was not to mention the fact that Bai Xiaochun had friends in the sect. For example, there was Zhao Tianjiao and his Daoist partner Chen Yueshan, as well as Bai Lin from the Great Wall, among others.

In the past, before Bai Xiaochun made his return, such friends had done their best to keep the River-Defying Sect safe. Now that Bai Xiaochun was back, one could only imagine what the reaction would be in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect on the part of his friends!

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would definitely be very interested in Bai Xiaochun’s explosive battle prowess. Furthermore, he knew that it wouldn’t be long before orders came down about what was to happen next.

However, regardless of what stance the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect would take, the River-Defying Sect currently needed stability after its huge fight. They needed to rest and recuperate; their victory had come at great cost.

The spell formation cast by the Dire Skybanyan had been almost completely destroyed, and required extensive repairs. The reserve powers of the four divisions had been either seriously damaged or completely eradicated. Most of the sect headquarters had been destroyed. Of the mountain ranges belonging to the four divisions, two and a half had collapsed, and would need significant help from the patriarchs to rebuild.

By the time Bai Xiaochun and Li Qinghou got back, the repair work was already underway. Many people were thrilled to see Li Qinghou, including Zhao Yuandong, Patriarch Spirit Stream, and many other friends. Xu Meixiang was especially happy. She had been in despair before, so to finally see Li Qinghou again caused tears to stream down her face.

Li Qinghou was deeply moved to finally see Xu Meixiang after more than half a year of being locked away. As soon as their gazes locked, Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then smiled. On the way back, he had given Li Qinghou a deva soul, and had done more work treating his injuries. Therefore, he felt comfortable leaving him alone with Xu

Meixiang, and instead took Bruiser on a tour through the sect.

As soon as he saw the extensive damage close up, and all of the wounded disciples, his mood sank.

The truth was that the sect had sustained bitter casualties and many deaths. However, they had made gains as well. They took tens of thousands of captives, and had also seized numerous magical items and other resources.

Even better than that were the numerous reserve powers and precious treasures belonging to the three sects, items that their deva patriarchs had left behind, and which had been collected by River-Defying Sect disciples.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to have performed dramatically in battle. Although he had been the one to turn things in the favor of the sect, Bruiser was actually one of the main ones who had kept the sect going until Bai Xiaochun got there.

Bruiser’s cultivation base was already in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and he was a beast king, meaning that he could fight with devas if he really needed to. Although he couldn’t come out on top in such a fight, his battle prowess was still shocking.

Furthermore, since he was a beast king, as long as enough time passed, he would eventually reach the Deva Realm, which would be of indescribable benefit to the sect as a whole!

In addition to Bruiser, Song Junwan had performed spectacularly. Although she wasn’t in the Nascent Soul stage yet, only the great circle of Core Formation, she had wielded the Middle Peak blood sword with precision and valor. She had surpassed the leaders of the other mountain peaks to become a virtual blood fiend, leading the entire Blood Stream Division in their fight against the enemy!

There were also chosen from the Spirit Stream Division who had fought valiantly. Shangguan Tianyou was one of them. He was now in the pseudo-Nascent Soul stage, and forgetting Bai Xiaochun and the most powerful experts, was the strongest disciple in the sect, and quite famous. After all, the patriarchs said that Shangguan Tianyou was the reincarnation of a sword immortal! Furthermore, his personality had changed dramatically. He was much more silent and serious, something that made the other disciples respect him even more.

And then there was Beihan Lie. Although he had never been the strongest of the chosen, he had risen to prominence in the Fallen Sword Abyss by reaching Earthstring Foundation Establishment. He was now in the late Core Formation stage, and although he couldn’t surpass Shangguan Tianyou, was still considered far beyond the others of his generation!

The other divisions also had chosen who had risen to the heights of glory. It went without saying that the sect would soon dole out rewards for them, and that they would have a bright future in the days to come.

As Bai Xiaochun saw one familiar face after another, and saw everyone looking back at him with fervor and passion, he suddenly felt a warm feeling rise up within him. It was the feeling of being home.

It was something he had never really felt back in the Wildlands. And that was because… for all eternity, this would be the place he called home.

As the sect went about the repair work, Bai Xiaochun joined in. At one point, he ran into the Heavenhorn ink dragon, who had been seriously injured and was gasping for breath. Others in the sect had attempted to treat him, but at the moment, he seemed like he might slip into death at any moment. Bai Xiaochun immediately went to work, calling upon the power of his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul to gradually heal his wounds.

Bruiser had disappeared, but he came back around the time Bai Xiaochun finished treating the old dragon. When Bai Xiaochun saw him, his eyes went wide. Bruiser was flanked by a large number of strange spirit beasts. Some were large and some were small, but without exception, all were female….

“Are these your wives?” Bai Xiaochun asked, stunned. Bruiser made a whinnying sound, which caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to tremble in shock.

“And them…?” Bai Xiaochun continued, pointing at… a group of more than a thousand strange-looking little beasts behind the females.

An expression of pride appeared on Bruiser’s face, and he made a few chuffing sounds. Although many people in the sect had already come to guess the truth, none of them understood the situation better than Bai Xiaochun….

“Well damn…. Those are all your children?” Tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth, Bai Xiaochun looked at the female beasts, and then all the tiny beasts, and was suddenly completely convinced of how amazing Bruiser was.

Bruiser was very pleased to see Bai Xiaochun reacting this way. Looking back at all the female beasts, he made a few barking sounds. Immediately, all of the spirit beasts dropped down onto their knees and howled at Bai Xiaochun.

There was nothing fierce about it. It was a cry of respectful greeting given to someone of the senior generation.

Bai Xiaochun smiled wryly, fully aware of what Bruiser was trying to say. Bopping Bruiser on the head, he sighed. Since Bruiser was his son, then these beasts… were his daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun patted his bag of holding to produce some Wildlands soul medicine to give out as a gift of greeting. After all, soul medicine could be used like spirit stones by soul cultivators, but could also be very effective for spirit beasts. Furthermore, it was very rare in the Heavenspan River region.

The spirit beasts were all very excited to receive soul medicine from Bai Xiaochun, and began to cry out in joy. Bruiser was obviously very happy, and looked exactly like someone from the senior generation who had been given a lot of face.

Seeing Bruiser so happy put a smile on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and he sighed.

“Yeah, I really am home….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0876 awe-chapter-877

The entire sect was bustling. The air buzzed with conversation as Patriarch Spirit Stream and the other powerful experts utilized mountain-hurling, sea-draining magical techniques to repair the damage done to the four mountain ranges that made up the headquarters.

The Pill Stream Division used all of their power to save the Dire Skybanyan, and also had all disciples working around the clock to concoct medicinal pills.

The Profound Stream Division was hard at work repairing the spell formations that protected the sect, as well as the countless magical items that disciples of the sect had damaged during the course of battle.

The Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions had taken the lead in the actual fighting, and therefore, many of them went into secluded meditation to recover. Those who were able assisted in the repair work to the sect itself.

When Bai Xiaochun found Song Junwan, she was busy administering the affairs of Middle Peak. Although she very much wanted to spend some alone time with him, and speak of various matters of the heart, her current duties were more important.

Because of Bai Xiaochun’s current status in the sect, as soon as he showed up, the disciples gazed at him with fervor and adoration. In fact, the way they clasped hands in formal greeting caused the repair work to slow down.

Bai Xiaochun savored the wonderful sensation, and was preparing to leave when he realized that he really should offer some words of encouragement. However, before he could even open his mouth, Song Junwan glared at him and shooed him away.

He rubbed his nose awkwardly as he walked off. Although he was inclined to defy Song Junwan, merely looking at her caused him to think back guiltily to what had occurred in the Wildlands with Mistress Red-Dust. The prospect of what could happen if Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei found out caused his heart to tremble with fear.

As far as Hou Xiaomei went, Bai Xiaochun had learned from Li Qinghou that both she and Ghostfang had been taken away by the Celestial over half a year ago, to serve as special guards on Heavenspan Island.

Apparently, Heavenspan Island occasionally recruited special guards to serve on the island.

To the sects in the Heavenspan River region, any cultivator selected for a position like that was being bestowed with good fortune. Furthermore, not everyone who was initially recruited would end up serving on the island. Many of them would be sent back after a short period of time. Even those people would experience a significant boost in cultivation base, though. As for those who remained to serve, they ended up earning extremely high status, and would be treated with the utmost courtesy even by the riversource sects.

Bai Xiaochun felt uneasy about the whole thing, although he wasn’t sure exactly why. For one thing, based on his calculations, he was fairly certain that Hou Xiaomei had been taken away at roughly the same time that the dramatic battle had been fought back in the Wildlands.

“Or am I just thinking too much into it?” After some thought, he decided that the best thing would be to use this as an excuse to go see Hou Xiaomei.

Even as he pondered these matters, he happened to catch sight of Shangguan Tianyou.

He stood at the edge of a cliff, his face touched with grief and reminiscence, his eyes somewhat blank as he looked off into the distance. For some reason, he seemed older and more mature.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised to see an expression like this on Shangguan Tianyou’s face. After a moment of thought, he walked over, and then followed Shangguan Tianyou’s line of sight until he noticed what appeared to be a log cabin in the jungle below the cliff.

Next to the log cabin… was a grave mound.

Shangguan Tianyou held a strip of blue cloth tightly in his hands. His hands were clenched so tightly around it that it seemed he would never let go of that cloth, even if he died. And there he stood, murmuring to himself as he looked at the distant grave.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the grave thoughtfully, and suddenly realized that there was one old friend he hadn’t seen after returning to the sect. He shivered.

“That’s Xinqi’s grave,” Shangguan Tianyou said quietly, his voice hoarse and tinged with bitterness. There was no trace of his former jealousy and hatred of Bai Xiaochun. Such things had been wiped away with the passage of time, along with his hot-headedness.

“Elder Sister Zhou….” Bai Xiaochun breathed. He thought back to what he remembered of Zhou Xinqi, who had once been Li Qinghou’s apprentice, the famed Elder Sister Zhou of Fragrant Cloud Peak…. He thought about how he had leaped at the chance to help her hunt down the Chicken-Thieving Fiend of years past… and how he had made fun of her by calling her ‘Sect Niece Xinqi’.

They were memories that Bai Xiaochun would never be able to wipe away. His breathing suddenly turned ragged, and he began to tremble. There was nothing that would cause his heart to be weighed down more than a friend his own age passing away.

She would be an eternal part of his memory, and yet, everything she had ever said and done was now gone forever….

When Shangguan Tianyou saw how Bai Xiaochun was reacting, the grief in his eyes grew more intense. Shangguan Tianyou wasn’t sure when it had happened, but he had fallen in love with Zhou Xinqi, and she with him. However, even after she died, he had never spoken his feelings out loud.

Ten years ago, Zhou Xinqi had been out on a mission for the sect when she ran into some cultivators from the Polarity River Court. A fight broke out, and she was killed. Although Shangguan Tianyou had avenged her death, he had never been the same afterward.

He had become quieter, and less impulsive. He worked hard on his cultivation, and had slowly but surely become the strongest cultivator of his generation in the River-Defying Sect.

And yet, Zhou Xinqi’s face was always there in his heart. The blue strip of cloth he held in his hands now had been a gift from her, and was something he would keep with him for all eternity.

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly, looking at Zhou Xinqi’s grave. After a long moment passed, he clasped hands and bowed deeply at the waist....

Shangguan Tianyou closed his eyes. After some time passed, he opened them again, and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“Thank you, Bai Xiaochun....” With that, he turned and walked off, looking profoundly bleak....

Bai Xiaochun watched him leave, then stood there for a long time looking at Zhou Xinqi’s grave, his heart heavy. He simply couldn’t stop thinking about what she had looked like all those years ago.

He suddenly realized where those white hairs on Li Qinghou’s head had come from; the death of one of his beloved apprentices.

“Why…? Why does cultivation have to be all about fighting and killing…?” It was the same question he had been asking himself from the moment he entered the cultivation world.

After everything he had seen and experienced, you would think he would have found an answer already. But… he hadn’t.

Eventually, he left, thinking about how there were still so many things he didn’t understand. Although the sect had won a great victory, it came with many tears. As he walked along, he sent his divine sense out to examine the home he had been away from for so long.

One of the first people he noticed was Beihan Lie….

In a remote location in the sect was a huge graveyard, within which were buried countless heroic souls who had fallen in battle…. That was where Beihan Lie stood, in front of a gravestone that he had personally carved.

There was no name on the gravestone. There was only a carving…. Of a big, black dog.

Beihan Lie held an alcohol flagon in his hand. The passage of years was clearly visible on his face. The hair at his temples was white, and he seemed much older. The aroma of alcohol surrounded him as he looked at the grave, mixed emotions playing out on his face.

That big black dog had died saving his life.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart yet again filled with complex emotions. He suddenly realized that many things had happened of which he wasn’t aware. Although the fact that the black dog was dead filled his heart with grief, he decided not to interrupt Beihan Lie. Instead, he sent his divine sense sweeping over the countless other graves in the area.

Some of the names were familiar, others were not, but they all caused him to tremble.

It was around this time that Gongsun Wan’er’s brother, Gongsun Yun, happened to find Bai Xiaochun. Gongsun Yun was visibly older than before. He had reached Core

Formation, but only the early stage. By now, he was no longer the famous person he had been back during the chosen battles between the north and south banks of the Spirit Stream Sect.

Both Beihan Lie and Ghostfang had long since left him behind. However, he never lost his dignity, nor his pride because of his little sister.

Although his sister had become very cold and distant after returning from the Fallen Sword Abyss, and had seemed very different, the fact that she ended up being taken away to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect proved how incredible she was. Unfortunately, she had ended up being teleported out into the Wildlands, to parts unknown. That had been a heavy blow to Gongsun Yun, and a source of constant anxiety.

Gongsun Yun was trembling with nervousness, and yet he braced himself, clasped hands, and said, “P-Patriarch Bai… you’re back, sir. Song Que and Master God-Diviner too. Um… do you have any news about my sister?”

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly, complex emotions flickering in his eyes as he looked at Gongsun Yun. After a moment of hesitation, he decided not to tell him the truth.

“Wan'er died in battle at the Great Wall… She gave her life to save a friend….”

Gongsun Yun stood there stiffly for a long moment, tears welling up in his eyes before they poured down his cheeks. Although he had long since suspected that this was what had happened, he had still held out hope. But not anymore. Clasping hands, he walked off, tears streaming down his face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0877 awe-chapter-878

Even after seeing Gongsun Yun’s sorrow, Bai Xiaochun still didn’t tell him the truth. There was no way he could. How could he possibly explain that Gongsun Wan’er had actually been killed long ago in the Fallen Sword Abyss?

It would be too cruel to tell Gongsun Yun that the little sister he had seen afterward was really that bizarre girl. Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t bear to deliver such a bitter blow.

Instead, he told Gongsun Yun a story in which his sister sacrificed her life as a hero.

The story he told wasn’t without its flaws, and apparently Gongsun Yun realized that. But he didn’t ask any follow-up questions….

“Little sis, was that really you who came back to the sect…?” he thought. The truth was that he had asked himself that same question on many occasions, and didn’t really want to know the answer….

After Gongsun Yun left, Bai Xiaochun felt even worse than before. He didn’t like feeling like this. He liked being happy and having fun. However, as he grew up, he realized that such emotions were inescapable.

Oftentimes in the past, he was able to bury such feelings, but right now, all the graves he had seen caused Zhou Xinqi’s face to float in his mind even more clearly than before, as well as many other familiar faces. They were images he simply couldn’t dispel.

**

At the moment, no other patriarch in the sect had a better chance of becoming a deva than Patriarch Spirit Stream. He was in a better position than even Patriarch Blood Stream.

Patriarch Spirit Stream could sense the bleakness of Bai Xiaochun’s mood. As he looked at him from a distance, he could tell from the fluctuations of his divine sense how sorrowful he was. Although he didn’t understand Bai Xiaochun as well as Li Qinghou did, he had been there to watch him grow into the person he was.

At some indefinite point, he appeared next to Bai Xiaochun, although he didn’t interrupt him. He just stood there, looking at all of the graves of the River-Defying Sect.

Eventually, when the time was right, he spoke in a hoarse voice filled with age.

“Xiaochun, look around.... Can you tell what’s different about the sect...?”

Bai Xiaochun had long since become aware that Patriarch Spirit Stream had come to stand next to him. However, he was in too bad of a mood to say anything. In response to the patriarchs words, he looked around.

The sect was filled with a buzz of noise as all sorts of repair work went underway. Everyone was toiling away. Although nothing dramatic was happening, close examination revealed that the sect was rapidly returning to its previous state. It wouldn’t be long before it thrummed with just as much life as before.

As for all of the disciples of the three sects who had been captured, they were important bargaining chips that could either be absorbed into the sect as new disciples, or traded with the three sects for remuneration.

“Do you know what’s different?” Patriarch Spirit Stream asked again. “Do you know why all of the disciples are working so hard? Do you know why they are all so focused…? Because this isn’t just their sect. It’s their home!

“Spirit Stream Sect. River-Defying Sect. It doesn’t matter. They’re the same. The good fortune of the disciples is the good fortune of the sect. That’s the most important thing. As long as the disciples have enough faith and trust in the sect, then… the sect will be their home!

“And the truth is that our sect… is a home to all of us, patriarchs included!” Patriarch Spirit Stream was very, very old, and in fact, if it weren’t for the fact that he relied on a special secret magic, he would have long since perished. Perhaps because of that secret magic, or perhaps because of the dramatic events that the River-Defying Sect had seen in recent years, his face was covered with even more wrinkles than ever, making him seem even more ancient.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s mood stopped sinking. However, there was still something gnawing at his mind. Slowly but surely, he looked over at the patriarch.

“Patriarch… don’t we cultivators practice cultivation so that we can live forever? Why do we have to go around fighting and killing all the time? As long as we're alive, there are endless possiblities! But once we die… then what’s the point of it all…?” This question had been lodged deep in Bai Xiaochun’s heart for many years, and would not go away.

It was a profound question, and in response, Patriarch Spirit Stream simply stood there quietly for a moment. The truth was that he didn’t have an answer. A long moment passed, and he seemed to grow a bit older. Then he looked back at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes warm but tinged with pain.

It was pain because of the sorrow he felt for his most outstanding of all the Spirit Stream Division disciples. After all, he knew that from the first day Bai Xiaochun had joined the sect, he had feared death and dreamed of being able to live forever.

Patriarch Spirit Stream had watched this disciple tackle the brutal cultivation world, and yet never forget his dream of living forever. There was a purity and innocence in that which was very, very rare.

“Xiaochun…” he said softly. “You’re right. As long as we’re alive, there are endless possibilities. But just because we die doesn’t mean that our hopes and dreams die with us!

“I can’t speak for anyone else, but I can say that when I look at all of these graves, I'm absolutely certain… that these disciples who died in battle did it because of the Dao that existed in their hearts!”

“What do you mean Dao?” Bai Xiaochun replied, confused. He had been asked a similar question back in the rainbow trial by fire in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. And although he had never answered the question, he had the vague feeling that his Dao… was to live forever.

“The word *Dao* is profound and deep,” the patriarch answered. “No one can really explain it perfectly…. As for me, only by living for many, many years have I been able to experience what it means….

“Dao is *focus*. Think about all of these heroes who fell in battle. Do you think they weren’t afraid of death? Do you think they didn’t want to live forever? They were afraid. And they did want to live forever! But the sect was their home, and they were fighting to defend and protect it. They were willing to sacrifice their own lives, even to the point of giving up on their own wishes and desires. No matter how much it pained them, they swore to die defending their home!

“As for me, I long since made up my mind. Even if everyone else managed to escape, I would stay behind. If our sect goes down in flames, I will go with it!

“Isn’t it the same with you, Xiaochun…? Back in that battle in the Luochen Mountains, why did you go back to save your fellow disciples? Didn’t you know that if you went back, you might die?

“What would have happened if, instead of facing three devas earlier, it was three demigods…? Would you have come to fight? Or would you have lingered in the distance, watched us die, and then fled?”

The words struck Bai Xiaochun’s heart like a lightning bolt. He had never thought of questions like this before, and wasn’t even sure how to answer them. The truth was that in the sect’s moment of impending doom, he hadn’t been thinking of anything. He just couldn’t stand to watch it be wiped out in front of him, and had felt he had no choice but to advance into battle.

As he pondered these matters, he was suddenly struck by a revelation. Although his focus in life was to live forever… there were too many other things in the world he cared about. He couldn’t simply forget about those things, and that meant that, even if he didn’t like it, sometimes he had to resort to fighting and killing. It was like a natural law of heaven and earth.

When danger threatened his friends, his family, his sect, or his home, then it didn’t matter how much he wanted to live forever. He would always do the same thing!

He would always make the same choice!

“Life and death….” Considering how many years Patriarch Spirit Stream had lived, and the state of his longevity, when he talked about life and death, it somehow seemed more meaningful.

“Sometimes, you might be alive… and yet be dead to certain people….

“And sometimes, you might be dead, and yet be alive…. Zhou Xinqi perished, but she lives for all time in Shangguan Tianyou's heart! That black dog is dead, but exists eternally for Beihan Lie!

“Look at all the names on these graves, Xiaochun. These disciples died in battle, but from now on, everyone in the River-Defying Sect will remember them! Who will ever dare to forget them!?” Patriarch Spirit Stream spoke with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron. His words were like a thunderclap that resonated in Bai Xiaochun’s mind and heart, causing a tremor to pass through him. It was almost as if a door had been opened inside of him, making certain thoughts and feelings which had once been obscured to suddenly be as clear as day.

His eyes flickered with enlightenment at the profound implications of the words which had just been spoken. He suddenly felt as if he understood the meaning of life and death, and also understood why he would always make that one particular choice. It was because… of focus!

Although grief still existed in his heart, the more he thought about his new understanding, the more that grief resembled respect. Then he clasped hands and bowed deeply to all of the graves! Even after a long moment, he didn’t rise from his bow.

“I understand now, Patriarch….” he murmured. He was bowing to those who had died in battle, to their sacrifice, to their fearlessness. He was bowing… to the souls of true heroes!

As long as the sect existed… then these disciples who had fallen in battle would live in the hearts of the sect, for all eternity!

They had died, but would exist for all time!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0878 awe-chapter-879

Upon seeing that Bai Xiaochun’s reservations had been cleared up, a smile broke out on Patriarch Spirit Stream’s face. The truth was that he cared very much for Bai Xiaochun, and not just because of how he had just defeated the three enemy devas.

Bai Xiaochun was the heart and the soul of the River-Defying Sect. It didn’t matter that the Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions were now fully integrated; there was no one who could replace Bai Xiaochun!

Most importantly, Bai Xiaochun had the most orthodox and proper background within the Spirit Stream Division!

All of a sudden, the patriarch seemed to remember something. “Xiaochun, you were missing for a long time in the Wildlands. Now that you're back, I have to ask: did you hear about the matter of the Celestial selecting a new apprentice?”

“The Celestial is picking a new apprentice?” Bai Xiaochun said, a look of shock appearing on his face.

The patriarch nodded. “Even I'm not too familiar with what happens in this situation. However, the entire affair should be kicking off soon. All four of the riversource sects are making preparations.

“According to what I heard, any Nascent Soul cultivator can join the running. As long as they’re from the Heavenspan River region, it doesn’t matter if they belong to a sect, a clan, or even if they’re a rogue cultivator. All Nascent Soul cultivators qualify to go to Heavenspan Island!” Patriarch Spirit Stream sighed. Considering how old he was, he knew that he wasn’t suitable for such a position. After all, there was no shortage of Nascent Soul cultivators in the Heavenspan River region.

For one Nascent Soul cultivator to beat so many others to win a spot would be like a mortal being able to ascend to the heavens!

However, there was hope for Bai Xiaochun. Despite the fact that he could clearly defeat almost anyone else in his generation, he clearly had not yet become a deva.

Despite being merely a half-deva, he had killed one true deva, crippled another, and forced a third to flee. Patriarch Spirit Stream had never heard of anything like that happening in the eastern Heavenspan River, and although he couldn’t be sure if something as heaven-defying had occurred in the other three major rivers, he knew it was definitely unprecedented.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing about the Celestial taking a new apprentice, but all it did was cause him to shake his head. Because of what he had witnessed in that spectacular battle in the Wildlands, he just didn’t have a very good impression of the Celestial….

The mention of the Celestial immediately got him thinking about Hou Xiaomei, so he asked the patriarch about her.

“Hou Xiaomei and Ghostfang were both taken to Heavenspan Island about a decade ago, along with several thousand others. That was accomplished, not by battle, but by assessment of talent and other factors. Hou Xiaomei apparently had unusual talent in certain areas. Assuming she follows instructions and excels in cultivation, she’ll have a chance to become a special guard there!

“This sort of thing only happens once every few hundred years. Out of those 10,000 cultivators, only a few hundred will end up as special guards.” Patriarch Spirit Stream clearly didn’t know a lot about the situation, but obviously had high hopes for the outcome. At the moment, there was a lot of work to do to get the River-Defying Sect back in order, and therefore, Patriarch Spirit Stream turned to leave.

As he did, he recalled how close Hou Xiaomei and Bai Xiaochun were, and looked back to say, “If you want more details, you should go ask Song Junwan. The selection formalities occurred in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and Song Junwan was there as well. Unfortunately, she wasn’t selected.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded, choosing to keep his reservations about the Celestial to himself. It wasn’t that he didn’t trust Patriarch Spirit Stream, it was just that his suspicions were too shocking. Still feeling a bit unsettled about the whole thing, he took another moment to look out at the graves, then took a deep breath and left.

Before long, it was evening, and a bright moon hung high in the sky. Most of the disciples of the River-Defying Sect were practicing cultivation. After all, the repair work couldn’t be completed in a day, and they needed time to recover from the weariness of battle.

It was at this time that Bai Xiaochun finally took the opportunity to go find Song Junwan. On the one hand, he had been missing her badly for years, and on the other hand, he also wanted to find out more about what happened to Hou Xiaomei.

Song Junwan had finally taken a break, and was in her immortal's cave, recovering from her weariness with medicinal pills. However, there was one person who went to see her before Bai Xiaochun. And that was Song Que.

Considering that Song Que was a chosen of the Song Clan, it was only natural that Song Junwan was very concerned about him. And the fact that he was now in the Nascent Soul stage was wonderful for the clan.

Despite the fact that Song Junwan held seniority over Song Que, as soon as he arrived, she rose to her feet to meet him. However, Song Que didn’t dare to rely on his cultivation base to act like the ranking cultivator. Hurrying forward, he said, “There’s no need for that, Aunt Junwan. Que’er has come to offer greetings.”

Acting with the utmost courtesy, he clasped hands and bowed, just like he had back when his cultivation base was far inferior to hers.

Song Junwan was very pleased with how circumspect he was being. However, that didn’t stop her from offering some advice.

“Que’er, now that you have a Nascent Soul, it’s only proper for me to receive you formally. Although we can’t forget matters of protocol, in the cultivation world, strength demands respect.”

Song Que smiled bitterly, reminding himself that if it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun, things would be very different. Considering that he was very close to the mid Nascent Soul stage, everyone in his clan with the exception of the patriarch himself would bow in greeting to him.

However… considering who Song Junwan was, and her relationship with Bai Xiaochun, Song Que had no choice but to suppress his bitterness. Although he was a bit pleased to see how depressed Bai Xiaochun was recently, he didn’t dare to reveal that openly. Not only had his time in the Wildlands forced him to grow up a bit, but it had also instilled a deep reverence for Bai Xiaochun that even he wouldn’t admit existed.

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun had repeatedly brought up the matter of himself being Song Que’s uncle. Because of that, matters of seniority relating to Song Junwan were far from simple.

If it weren’t for that, his first visit wouldn’t have been to Song Junwan, but rather, to the Song Clan patriarch.

“There’s no need for that, Aunt Junwan. In your eyes, ma’am, Que’er will always be the same boy he was years ago.” With that, Song Que took a deep breath and then bowed formally to Song Junwan.

Song Junwan’s smile grew wider, and her eyes warmer. She was proud that a qilin son like this had risen up in the clan, and immediately asked him about his adventures in the Wildlands.

In response, he hemmed and hawed, giving a vague, awkward recounting of what happened after he went missing. If it had been anyone else, he would have acted a bit more arrogantly. But right now, he wasn’t quite sure how to behave around Song Junwan.

Song Junwan could tell that something was off about Song Que. She frowned, which made her seem both more beautiful, and also more grim. Just when she was about to ask some more pointed questions, she heard Bai Xiaochun’s voice outside the immortal's cave.

“Wan’er, my darling,” he said passionately, “I'm back!”

The instant his voice entered the immortal's cave, Song Que’s heart began to pound. As for Song Junwan, her face flushed, and her eyes flickered with a bit of anger. For him to act romantically with her in front of someone from the younger generation not only caused her heart to start racing, it was also a bit embarrassing. She quickly waved her hand, causing the immortal's cave door to slam open.

Bai Xiaochun strode in and immediately saw Song Que.

“Eee?! Que’er! What are you doing here?”

Song Que’s face darkened.

When Song Junwan saw Song Que’s expression, she suddenly looked a bit apologetic. She knew that it was partly her fault that Bai Xiaochun was treating Song Que like this, and was about to say something when Bai Xiaochun cut her off.

“Wan'er, you have no idea what kind of place the Wildlands is. It’s incredibly dangerous. Deadly situations crop up no matter where you go. In order to save Que’er, I almost revealed my secret identity! I even offended a bunch of aristocrats, and ended up shaking down some heavenly marquis clans!

“Did you hear that? Heavenly marquises! The Wildlands is huge, but they only have 108 of them. Every single one is a really important and famous person!” Sighing in reminiscence, he thought back to the heavy price he had paid to rescue Song Que.

“I’ll never forget how bad of a situation Que’er was in when I first found him out there in the Wildlands. He was poked full of so many holes he looked like a sieve! One of those heavenly marquis clans had turned him into a living spirit stone!

“Do you know what a living spirit stone is, Wan'er? They force them to eat all kinds of medicinal pills and stuff, forcing their qi passageways to expand. That increases their cultivation base, which they then force to rotate, sending cultivation base power through all the holes they poked in them. That in turn creates a small area abundant in spiritual energy!

“And then… that clan’s junior generation can practice cultivation without any spirit stones!” Bai Xiaochun’s vivid description caused Song Que to involuntarily think back to the dark times of the past. At the same time, Song Junwan gasped, and her expression turned grim.

“That’s outrageous!” she said furiously. She looked over at the bitter expression on Song Que’s face, and could tell that Bai Xiaochun was not exaggerating. All of a sudden, she realized why Song Que had been stumbling for words earlier.

“Thank you for what you did, Xiaochun!!” she said. Earlier, she had intended to prevent Bai Xiaochun from saying anything to Song Que. Instead, she looked at him emotionally, and then gave a curtseying bow at the waist.

“There’s no need for all the formality!” Bai Xiaochun replied. “I did all of that for you, after all.” Clearing his throat, he stepped forward, slipped his arm around her supple waist, and then thumped himself on the chest. “You’re Que’er's aunt, and I’m his uncle. We’re family! If I didn’t help him out there in the Wildlands, who would? If I didn’t save him, who would? It was the proper thing to do, and not a big deal at all.”

Although Song Junwan’s face turned scarlet, she didn’t push him away. In fact, her expression softened. Before, she had felt as if they were growing apart, but now, with his hand around her waist, that feeling was gone.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0879 awe-chapter-880

When Song Que saw the entranced look on his aunt's face when she looked at Bai Xiaochun, he sighed. By this point, he regretted coming early to visit. The truth was that if he had known Bai Xiaochun would show up, he would rather have been beaten to death than come at this time.

Although in some ways he wished he could do something to interfere with Bai Xiaochun’s skills in seducing women, he also couldn’t help but admire him a bit because of it.

He had been there to hear all the details Bai Xiaochun had explained about the Win Character Enchantment, which helped Zhao Tianjiao win over Chen Yueshan. And Song Que had also been there to witness the confusing relationship that had developed between Bai Xiaochun and Mistress Red-Dust.

And that wasn’t even mentioning Chen Manyao….

Now that he thought about it, all of the most beautiful female cultivators seemed to be in some sort of relationship or another with Bai Xiaochun…. In the end, Song Que could only sigh and muse about how the heavens apparently favored Bai Xiaochun….

He considered revealing the truth to his aunt, and telling her about Chen Manyao and Mistress Red-Dust. But then he realized that Bai Xiaochun was giving him a glare of warning, and his heart seized up. Sighing, he looked at the entranced expression on his aunt’s face, and finally realized that it was a really awkward situation. After blurting out a random excuse, he left.

Outside, he felt much better. Shaking his head, he noticed some nearby Blood Stream Division disciples looking at him. At that point, he straightened up, feeling the pride that a chosen Nascent Soul cultivator should feel. The disciples bowed in greeting, and his confidence began to return.

Bai Xiaochun and Song Junwan were now alone in her immortal's cave. It was a rare situation. Before, the fighting had been fierce in the battle, but now that they were together, Song Junwan abandoned any attempts to prevent her feelings from showing.

That was especially true considering what Bai Xiaochun had told her about Song Que’s situation, and how much danger he had faced to rescue him.

Song Junwan could tell that Bai Xiaochun had done all of those things for her sake. And in the end, he had brought Song Que back, not only safe, but also having broken through to the Nascent Soul stage.

Gaze warm, she smoothed out some of the wrinkles in his garment, and spoke some sincere words of concern. Considering they were now alone, most of the flush had left her face.

Bai Xiaochun felt very relaxed in her presence, and could tell how much she cared for him. Eventually they sat down on a divan, whereupon Bai Xiaochun began to brag about some of the details of how he’d rescued Song Que.

Of course, he emphasized his own role in the situation, making sure it was clear that without him, Song Que would probably never have escaped. The entire time, he kept on measuring up Song Junwan.

Although they hadn’t seen each other for years, Song Junwan was as spectacularly beautiful as ever. Her makeup was applied perfectly, emphasizing eyebrows that curved as gracefully as willow leaves. Her eyes glittered like pools of deep water, making it seem as if she were waiting for him to guess what she was thinking. Bai Xiaochun’s heart suddenly began to race.

Song Junwan was curvaceous and smoking hot, with mouth-watering curves everywhere. There was something shockingly bewitching about her, especially considering how provocatively she dressed. Bai Xiaochun swallowed a few times, marveling inwardly at what a vixen she was. Without even thinking about it, he began to compare her to Mistress Red-Dust, and eventually sighed in the realization that in terms of physique and beauty, Song Junwan clearly came out on top.

Suddenly, he realized something. After being thrown down onto the ground in the jungle by Mistress Red-Dust, a new world had opened up to him….

When Song Junwan realized that Bai Xiaochun was secretly checking her out, her heart began to beat more rapidly. A flirtatious expression appeared on her face, and she looked at him closely, pretending she hadn’t noticed the look in his eyes. She also leaned forward a bit, revealing even more curves than before.

However, after a long moment, it was clear that Bai Xiaochun was merely looking at her, and wasn’t going to make a move. A spark of anger rose up in her heart, quenching some of her passion. A cold expression even appeared on her face.

“Well,” she said primly, “since there’s nothing better to do, I guess I’ll go meditate.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened in shock. Everything had been going well moments ago, to the point where Song Junwan seemed gripped by passion. But in the blink of an eye, it all changed. It was very strange. Suddenly, he realized that asking about Hou Xiaomei right now probably wouldn’t be the best idea….

Blinking a few times, he decided to feel the situation out.

“Well, I guess I’ll head out?”

Heart burning with anger that she couldn’t control, Song Junwan glared at him for a moment, and then let out a cold harrumph. “See yourself out!”

Bai Xiaochun was really confused. Sighing, he mused that women were definitely very strange creatures, both Mistress Red-Dust and Song Junwan alike.

“Could it be that all older women are like this?” Convinced that this was the case, he decided that he really missed Hou Xiaomei. She was definitely the most well-behaved of them all.

Rubbing his nose, he rose to his feet and said, “Well, I guess I really will take off!”

As he did, Song Junwan closed her eyes and ignored him.

Bai Xiaochun’s awkwardness was now starting to turn into a bit of anger. Flicking his sleeve, he turned to walk off. However, he only got about seven or eight steps before Song Junwan's voice rang out.

“How long are you going to stick around this time?”

In no mood to deal with her antics, he replied, “Oh, I don’t know. After all the sect matters are taken care of, I need to take a trip to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.”

Then he continued on his way.

Song Junwan opened her eyes and looked at him walking away. As of this moment, she realized that, considering Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base and talent, it wasn’t reasonable to expect him to stay in the River-Defying Sect forever, even if it was his home. Furthermore, she couldn’t help but wonder… after he left, how long would it be before she saw him again?

When she thought about that, and about how distant he had seemed when she caught sight of him on the battlefield, she began to struggle inwardly. If she couldn’t hold on to him right now… then as time passed, they would grow further apart, and their relationship would definitely cool. Eventually, it would probably become nothing more than a memory.

The sect had faced many dramatic situations over the years, and she had seen many couples parted by death. Besides, she had no idea if she would be able to break out from the Core Formation stage and into the Nascent Soul stage, which meant that she had no idea how long she would actually live.

The only thing she knew was that, over all the years, Bai Xiaochun was the only person to have tantalized her without sickening her. After everything that had gone on between the two of them, he was the one person she could never stop thinking about.

At that point, the struggle in her eyes transformed into determination. She was the devilwitch of the Blood Stream Sect, not a member of the righteous and orthodox Spirit Stream Sect!

As her hesitation vanished, decisiveness enveloped her. She stretched out on the divan, making sure every inch of her beautiful figure was on display. Then she spoke in a voice that would stab deep into the heart of anyone who heard it.

“Xiaochun, come here. I want to show you something.”

As soon as her voice entered his ears, it felt like a hand had grabbed onto his heart. After shivering for a moment, he snorted coldly.

“Whatever it is, I don’t want to see it!” Those were the words which left his mouth, and yet, he stopped walking, and even turned around, to see Song Junwan reclined sultrily on the divan. His heart began to pound even harder. However, he reminded himself that in the face of a vixen like this, he had to control himself and act like normal.

Eyes glittering, she beckoned at him with her finger. “Be a good boy, now. Why won’t you come over here? I'm not going to bite you!”

Heart racing, Bai Xiaochun gave another cold snort. Glaring, he strode over to her, stuck his chin up, and loudly said, “Me? Afraid of you?! I think not. Alright. What do you want to show me?”

Covering a smile with her hand, she looked up at him, snagging his gaze as surely as if with a hook. Even as he gasped in surprise, she patted her bag of holding, producing a medicinal pill which she held up in two fingers.

“Do you see what this is?”

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped, a bit displeased that *this* was what Song Junwan wanted to show him.... It turned out it was just a medicinal pill. Sighing, he looked a bit closer, drawing upon his skill in the Dao of medicine to identify it.

“Oh, it’s an Aphrodisiac Pill. Hey, how did you get--” Suddenly he gasped, and thought back to Mistress Red-Dust.

And yet, before he could do anything… a flush spread out across Song Junwan's face, and her eyes flashed as…

She crushed the pill!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0880 awe-chapter-881

Poof!

When Song Junwan crushed the Aphrodisiac Pill, it made a very familiar sound, a sound which stabbed into Bai Xiaochun’s ears and went deep into his mind.

Pink mist roiled out in all directions, enveloping both him and Song Junwan before he could even react.

“Aaaiiiiieee!” Without even thinking about it, he began to back away, but before he could take more than a few steps, a bewitching, soft, and curvaceous form grabbed him.

He suddenly realized that somewhere deep inside of him was a profound sense of anticipation. Blinking, he shouted, “No, don’t…! Wait, Wan'er! What are you doing? Aaagh! Don’t tear my clothes off! This is my first time…!”

His shrieks were particularly exaggerated, and although he seemed to be struggling to fight against the effects of the pink mist, he obviously wasn’t putting much heart into it.

The main thing he was afraid of was that Song Junwan would figure out what had occurred between him and Mistress Red-Dust back in the Wildlands…. Suddenly, he screamed with renewed fervor.

“Stop it! At least let me get ready….” Piteous wails erupted from within the mist, but clearly, he was just putting on a show. The look in his eyes and the way he held himself actually made it easier for Song Junwan to tear his clothing off….

Panting, Song Junwan said, “Shut up! This is exactly what I want! Your first time!”

Along with her words came the brutal sound of clothing being torn. At that point, Bai Xiaochun’s shrieking ceased, and a sharp intake of breath could be heard from Song Junwan. And then… the mist began to seethe and burn.

Two hours went by….

When the mist vanished, Song Junwan seemed to be thinking clearly again. Her clothing was back on, but a deep flush covered her face. Next to her was Bai Xiaochun, an expression on his face that was a mixture of pride and tenderness. Arms wrapped around his knees, he looked off into space.

The expression on his face was very pleasing to Song Junwan. In fact, if he had looked any other way, she might have become suspicious. Adjusting her clothing, she smiled and said, “Alright, hurry up and put some clothes on. Don’t worry, I’m not going to abandon you now or something.”

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun’s daze was only thirty percent real and seventy percent a show…. He didn’t dare to do anything other than look like he was in a daze. Otherwise, Song Junwan might have guessed at the truth. In his mind, he was comparing Song Junwan and Mistress Red-Dust.

In the end, he decided that both of them were perfect. One was wild and barbaric, the other was shockingly beautiful. The truth was that all sorts of different flowers had their upsides.

However, he kept a strange look on his face, and after a bit of thought, even shivered a few times to make it really seem like it was his first time….

Inside, he was sighing endlessly at the fact that, twice in a row, he had been trapped by an Aphrodisiac Pill….

“Is the Aphrodisiac Pill the bane of my existence?! If there was a first time, and a second time, does that mean there will be a third, fourth, and fifth time…?” Although it was somewhat of a dismal thought, for some reason… he actually looked forward to it….

Song Junwan was completely pleased by the strange look on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Patting her bag of holding, she produced a new set of clothing, which she handed over to him. Considering the blank look that was on his face, she offered a few tender words and then helped him get dressed.

Of course, although the blank look remained on his face, inside he was feeling wonderful, and couldn’t help but marvel at the wonderful act he was putting on.

At the same time, he kept wondering why he was so outstanding. If he weren’t, why would Mistress Red-Dust and Song Junwan have both intentionally used an Aphrodisiac Pill to bewitch him?

“I can’t blame them. I can only blame my outstanding nature.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he sighed helplessly at his amazing qualities.

Feeling prouder of herself than ever, Song Junwan rubbed his shoulder and offered some more tender words. It was at that point that Bai Xiaochun finally broached the subject of Hou Xiaomei.

Earlier, Song Junwan might have answered such questions, but would have felt somewhat uncomfortable doing so. Now, considering how pleased she was, she didn’t mind at all, and explained everything she knew.

Several thousand cultivators from the River-Defying Sect had gone to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to participate in the selection process. In total, there were tens of thousands from the eastern Heavenspan River who had participated in the trial.

Song Junwan hadn’t passed the test. And in fact, of all the other River-Defying Sect disciples, only Ghostfang had succeeded. However, during the talent portion of the assessment, Hou Xiaomei was shown to be particularly suited to the divine abilities and magical techniques of Heavenspan Island.

Therefore, both she and Ghostfang had proceeded on to Heavenspan Island. Actually, Hou Xiaomei wasn’t the only one to receive such treatment. According to Song Junwan, there were a total of eight other disciples who had been selected because of how well they conformed to certain legacy magical techniques.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that Hou Xiaomei was one of several disciples to go to Heavenspan Island, he felt a bit better about the situation. And he felt even better when Song Junwan pointed out that such arrangements had been made many times throughout history. In fact, it had been this way for thousands of years. Furthermore, most cultivators who served as special guards on Heavenspan Island eventually returned to their home sects.

“Maybe I'm just worrying too much….”

Having received all of this information, he looked over at Song Junwan and noticed how exhausted she seemed. In fact, both of them seemed to be a bit out of sorts.... Clearing his throat, he offered some words of departure.

Before leaving, though, he gave her a deva soul!

He had never been able to collect another full set of five deva souls. However, even only one of the souls he had could be considered a precious treasure in the Heavenspan River region.

One of those souls could be traded into a sect for a set of deva beast souls, and would be of immense help to Song Junwan when it came time for her to create her nascent soul. Furthermore, if she succeeded, she would have a nascent soul that put her on the same level as the chosen from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

It would definitely be beneficial to her cultivation!

Song Junwan was completely shaken by the gift. It was the first time in her life that she had ever laid hands on something so precious. She looked up at Bai Xiaochun, the entrancement in her eyes growing deeper. She didn’t try to persuade him to stay. However, when he turned to leave, she walked over and embraced him.

The feeling of her soft curves pressing into him caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to start racing again. Although he had just gone through an incredible experience, being held by her immediately caused him to recall everything that had just happened. Worried that he might reveal some information he didn’t want to, he mumbled a few words and then hurried away.

Outside of the immortal's cave, he felt his heart still pounding, and muttered a few more times about how much of a vixen she was. Sighing, he realized that he really had changed….

This time, he wasn’t nearly as depressed as he had been the last time.

“Wait. No. No way! I can’t be like this. Oh, and I definitely can’t let Hou Xiaomei find out!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he suddenly started wondering if Hou Xiaomei had somehow come across an Aphrodisiac Pill. If not, then perhaps he would need to figure out a way to make sure she did….

“Hold on. No! How could Bai Xiaochun be a person like that!?” After all, he was a very pure person, and therefore, such thinking didn’t befit him.

Eventually, he looked up into the sky and sighed.

“Why? Why am I so outstanding!?”

Sighing, he made his way to the immortal's cave that had been prepared for him. Once inside, he sat down cross-legged and got his thoughts under control.

“It's hard to say where the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect stands when it comes to the River-Defying Sect. To be safe… I really need to become a deva as soon as possible….” At that point, his eyes lit up with determination. “I need to conjure a twenty-one colored flame!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0881 awe-chapter-882

Bai Xiaochun had killed one deva, crippled another, and forced the third to flee. Because of that, he could tell that the issues facing the River-Defying Sect... were not yet fully resolved. Although he had temporarily ended the crisis, the truth was that everything could be traced back to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Without the tacit approval of the riversource sect, the other three great sects would never have dared to try to exterminate the River-Defying Sect.... Perhaps few people in the sect understood the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect well, but Bai Xiaochun had spent a lot of time there, and was very familiar with its inner workings.

For example, there were five deva patriarchs in the sect. One of them was from the Hall of Steel Veins, but the other four were powerful experts connected to the four river branches!

For example, there was the child-like deva who controlled the Sky Quarter. The other branches all had deva patriarchs who watched over them, and were connected to them in numerous ways. Oftentimes, clan interests played a factor. The truth was that the Middle Reaches sects were all extensions of the power bases of those devas.

The moment the River-Defying Sect became part of the Middle Reaches, they began to pay tribute to the child deva. In fact, their tribute surpassed that which had been paid in the past by the Sky River Court.

From that, it was easy to ascertain that the actions of the three sects against the River-Defying Sect was not a war of incursion... but rather, a game being played amongst the devas of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Also… the child patriarch from Sky Quarter was in a weak position, and wasn't capable of contending with the other three devas.

In the end, he was essentially forced to abandon the River-Defying Sect, which led to the situation of three devas joining forces to exterminate the sect.

Although Bai Xiaochun had appeared and decimated the alliance of three sects, the truth was that the figurative slaps he had unleashed actually landed on the faces of the other three devas in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

It was easy to imagine that the result would be nothing good. The other three devas would surely be infuriated, and would come to unleash their wrath!

Such an outcome had never been Bai Xiaochun's aim, and yet, in the face of sect-wide calamity, he had been presented with no other choice.

"I hope the fact that I rescued Chen Hetian's apprentice and daughter will prevent him from going overboard….

"And I sure hope that Bai Lin's grandfather remembers how close I am to his grandson…" Bai Xiaochun rubbed the bridge of his nose. The truth was that he couldn't rely on anyone else, and he knew it. The only thing that could ensure the safety of the River-Defying Sect was to make it as strong as possible.

"I have to become a deva!" Bai Xiaochun was already feeling under a lot of pressure. After all, the only true way to resolve the situation… was for him to reach the Deva Realm!

With a deva cultivation base, his battle prowess would be even more significant. With that level of strength, he could strike fear into the hearts of his opponents, and truly protect the River-Defying Sect!

As he sat there in his private chamber, eyes shining with determination, he pulled out the formula for twenty-one-colored flame and began to study it closely. The formula required a huge amount of resources, something even more daunting considering he was now in the Heavenspan River region. Thankfully, his apprentice Bai Hao had given him plenty of souls to work with before he left the Wildlands.

He currently even had enough souls to cover numerous failures.

In the blink of an eye, several days passed. Bai Xiaochun had already slipped into his usual maddened state. His hair was disheveled, but he didn’t care. His mind and heart were completely immersed in the formula for twenty-one-colored flame; he had analyzed every single step and every procedure, down to the minutia.

Perhaps it was because of the pressure he felt, or perhaps something else, but either way, he had exploded into action, and his thoughts raced from one aspect of the formula to another. Furthermore, because he had access to plenty of the spiritual power of heaven and earth, he was able to work continuously without stopping at all. To keep in top shape, he would occasionally consume medicinal pills provided by the River-Defying Sect.

As time passed, he grew more and more familiar with the formula. Three more days passed, whereupon Bai Xiaochun waved his hands, summoning a large quantity of souls to begin his first attempt!

He was under no illusions that he would succeed on this attempt. What he wanted was not success, but the experience that came with failure.

Progress through practice led to shocking results, and was something that Bai Xiaochun alone was able to accomplish. No other necromancers would be able to sustain the unimaginable cost.

After all, Bai Xiaochun’s apprentice was the Hell-Emperor, which enabled him to go to extravagant lengths when working on flame conjuring.

Time slipped by slowly but surely. With each failure he experienced, his understanding deepened. Occasionally he would stop, analyze, and make adjustments. Although he looked physically exhausted, his eyes only continued to shine more and more brightly.

As he slipped more and more deeply into flame conjuring, the very things he had worried would happen in the outside world began to happen. Word about the River-Defying Sect’s spectacular comeback, and Bai Xiaochun’s fight with the three devas, began to spread. All cultivators in the Middle Reaches were completely shaken, and stories even began to spread in the Lower Reaches and the delta regions.

Of course, there was little need to mention the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Many individuals there had heard reports of what had happened, leading to widespread shock and astonishment.

It was around that time that Patriarch Dao River, the one who had lost his fleshly body, decided to throw caution to the wind. He contacted Patriarch Starry River, and the two of them rushed to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect along with a Nascent Soul elder from the Polarity River Court.

They were struck with fear by the presence of Bai Xiaochun, but at the same time, couldn’t get over their jealousy and anger. As soon as the three powerful experts reached the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, they split up and went to find the powerful patriarchs associated with their various sects.

The patriarch associated with the Dao River Court was none other than Chen Hetian, Master of Zhao Tianjiao. He had been in secluded meditation, but when he heard about the matter with the River-Defying Sect, and the news of Bai Xiaochun, his first reaction was that the stories were simply too unbelievable!

However, as more and more accounts began to spread, he came to realize the truth of the matter, and his anger burned!

Although he remembered Bai Xiaochun, he had never cared too much about him. In fact, not even the fact that he had been involved with the rescue of his own apprentice and daughter counted for much with him. Chen Hetian was the arrogant type who was always condescending toward others.

Back when everyone had been teleported out into the Wildlands, Chen Hetian had gone to great lengths to find his apprentice and daughter. Eventually, he had succeeded. As far as Bai Xiaochun went, though, he completely ignored him.

But now, he had to dredge up that name which he had so long been buried in the depths of his memory. The fact that

Bai Xiaochun now possessed such shocking battle prowess caused him to frown.

Even as he pondered those matters, the crippled Patriarch Dao River arrived. Looking profoundly wronged, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to Chen Hetian.

“Senior, please help me!!”

He was a deva expert who Chen Hetian had entrusted with defending a Middle Reaches sect. But now, he only existed in nascent divinity form, a fact that caused Chen Hetian’s face to turn very grim. A windstorm of anger was already brewing inside of him as he asked, “Just what exactly happened!?”

Even as the words left his mouth, shocking pressure weighed down in all directions.

Patriarch Dao River’s nascent divinity shivered, and he quickly began to recount the details of the battle, not holding back anything.

When Chen Hetian heard that Bai Xiaochun hadn't defeated all three patriarchs at the same time, but rather successively, he snorted coldly.

From his perspective, Patriarch Dao River and the other Middle Reaches devas were all Mortal-Dao devas, essentially the weakest of all types of devas.

Chen Hetian had reached the Nascent Soul stage with deva beast souls, which had enabled him to then reach the Earth-Dao Deva Realm. Because of that, it would be a simple matter for him to beat those same three devas by fighting them in succession.

Trembling, Patriarch Dao River paused for a moment, and then said, “This Bai Xiaochun is completely outrageous! He even went so far as to take advantage of my absence to loot all of the wealth in the Dao River Court…! There was tribute in there that I had amassed for you, sir….”

When Chen Hetian heard that, his eyes flashed with cold light.

“What gall this dog has!” he said in an icy voice. “Is he looking to die?!” With that, he sent his divine sense out to contact the deva patriarchs in Starry Quarter and Polarity Quarter.

As far as he was concerned, the person in the worst position because of everything wasn’t himself, but rather… the patriarch from Polarity Quarter, whose subordinate had been killed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0882 awe-chapter-883

The patriarch from Polarity Quarter was none other than… Bai Lin’s grandfather!

His name was Bai Zhentian, and he had a cultivation base that could shake heaven and earth, as well as a very bad temper. Flames currently danced in his eyes as he stared at the Nascent Soul elder from the Polarity River Court, who was trembling physically as he prostrated in front of him.

“So, you’re telling me that the rumors are all true? And the patriarch of your Polarity River Court was the most useless of all and got killed?”

Shivering in fear, the elder replied, “It was all because of Patriarch Starry River! He--”

Before he could continue with his explanation, Bai Zhentian interrupted him with a furious shout, “Screw off!”

The rainbow outside trembled, and the elder tumbled backward, blood spraying out of his mouth as he was flung out of Bai Zhentian’s residence.

It was roughly at that time that Chen Hetian’s divine sense reached out, projecting his sinister voice into Bai Zhentian’s ears.

“Brother Bai, how do you want to handle this situation?!”

“How do I want to handle it?” Bai Zhentian replied coldly. “We’ll make that bastard pay with his life!”

At the moment, Bai Zhentian didn't care at all about what his grandson Bai Lin thought about the situation. When it came to matters pertaining to the clan as a whole, it didn’t matter that Bai Zhentian liked Bai Lin. He couldn’t just ignore a threat because of Bai Lin’s feelings.

The truth was that when Bai Zhentian had given tacit approval for the Polarity River Court to attack the River-Defying Sect, Bai Lin had come to protest, and the two of them had a huge argument about the matter.

The same thing had happened with Chen Hetian. Zhao Tianjiao and his Daoist partner Chen Yueshan had come to beg him to change his mind, but in the end, he had ignored them.

Now that something dramatic had occurred, there was no way that Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian would let the matter drop!

“Count me in!” came an ancient voice, transmitted through divine sense to Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian.

It was none other than the patriarch from Starry Quarter. He was the grandfather of Li Yuansheng and the ultimate backer of the Celestial Sky Society. His name was Li Xiandao!

Bai Xiaochun’s actions against the three sects had affected his interests, and although the Starry River Court had incurred the least losses of all, it was not something that Li Xiandao could simply overlook.

After all… he had given tacit approval for the three sects to act. Furthermore, the alliance had been designed to suppress the child-deva from Sky Quarter. Therefore, how could Li Xiandao simply allow Bai Xiaochun to ruin everything?

“Very well,” Chen Hetian said, his eyes flickering with cold light. “Since you agree, Brother Li, then there’s no time to lose. After all, we’ve had Fellow Daoist Li Yuantian suppressed for years now. We don’t want him to get any thoughts now.”

In response to Bai Zhentian’s words, Li Xiandao nodded. Then, the three of them communicated a bit more, whereupon powerful deva fluctuations erupted from the rainbows of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Li Xiandao, Bai Zhentian and Chen Hetian all became bright beams of light which shot off into the distance. Following them were the patriarchs of the Dao and Starry River Court. In total, there were five devas, three in the front, two in the back, streaking through the sky!

Their destination was the River-Defying Sect, and their intention… was to punish Bai Xiaochun!

The fact that five devas had burst out into the open caused quite a commotion in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Countless disciples were shaken, and many cries of alarm rang out.

“What’s going on!?”

“That was Patriarch Chen, Patriarch Bai and Patriarch Li… Then there were two other devas who I’m pretty sure are from Middle Reaches sects….”

Even as the disciples began to discuss the matter, Zhao Tianjiao shot up into the air, looking anxiously off into the distance after his Master. He too had heard that Bai

Xiaochun was back, and that the River-Defying Sect had made a spectacular comeback.

He had already been feeling guilty about everything, so when he saw his Master and the other devas heading toward the River-Defying Sect, his heart began to pound with nervousness, and his eyes turned crimson.

“I don’t care what happens, Bai Xiaochun is my brother. He didn’t do anything wrong! Don’t tell me it’s against the rules to defend oneself! Don't tell me it’s wrong to save your sect!” Shouting in anger, Zhao Tianjiao shot toward the River-Defying Sect. Although he knew he couldn't do anything to stop his Master, he was determined to stand by Bai Xiaochun’s side!

His Daoist partner Chen Yueshan flew by his side, as resolute and determined as him!

Even as Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan took off, someone else in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was reacting with complete madness to the situation. It was none other than Bai Lin!

When Bai Lin sensed that his grandfather was heading to the River-Defying Sect on a killing mission, Bai Lin’s anger exploded.

“Bai Xiaochun is one of *my* major generals, grandfather! Maybe I couldn’t do anything to stop you from trying to exterminate the River-Defying Sect when he was missing. But now that he's back, I can’t believe you're going to do this.... Well... you’re forcing my hand!” Bai Lin had a short temper to begin with, so once it sparked, he flew into the air... and headed toward the Hall of Steel Veins!

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t just a subordinate of Bai Lin. He was also… a member of the Hall of Steel Veins! The major generals of the five legions were *all* part of the Hall of Steel Veins!

In the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, there were four devas attached to the four major branches of the river. But they weren’t the only devas. There was another! He was… Patriarch Steel Veins, a person who took orders only from the sect’s demigod patriarch!

It was impossible to say how Bai Lin went about making his report. However, moments later, fluctuations began to roll out that far surpassed those which had come from Chen Hetian and the other devas. The source: the Hall of Steel Veins!

At the same time, a middle-aged man appeared, clad in blood-colored armor that made him look like he had climbed mountains of corpses and swam through seas of blood to reach his current state.

“Summon the five legions!” he said coolly.

As his words echoed out through the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, countless figures suddenly appeared, speeding through the air in his direction. Hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands…. Within the space of a few breaths of time, nearly 100,000 people appeared. They were none other than… the cultivators of the five legions!

Many of them personally knew Bai Xiaochun, and many had fought alongside him in battle. In fact, many of them had been part of the 10,000-man corps he led as a major general.

At the same time, Bai Lin also appeared, clad in a suit of armor, flanked by his fellow generals, all of them looking very grim.

Patriarch Steel Veins looked around, and then spoke in a voice that echoed like thunder into the ears of the tens of thousands of cultivators. “If someone wants to attack the River-Defying Sect, we can’t do anything about that. But when someone makes a move against a major general of the Hall of Steel Veins… is that something we can stand for?”

“Never!!” came the response, a swell of voices that shook the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. With that, the patriarch waved his hand.

“Very well. Let’s go take a look… and see who dares to trifle with one of our major generals!”

Terrifying battle cries filled the sky as the massive army from the Hall of Steel Veins followed their patriarch into action.

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was completely and utterly shaken by what they were seeing. Countless disciples looked up with shocked expressions….

“Something big is about to happen!!”

“River-Defying Sect? Bai Xiaochun? Wait, I remember. Bai Xiaochun used to be a major general at the Great Wall!!”

“This… this is a battle amongst devas!”

As everyone devolved into chaos, the child-deva sat in a private chamber on Sky Quarter Rainbow, his eyes flickering with hesitation.

The truth was that he was actually the main reason all of this was happening, and at the moment, was weighing the pros and cons of taking action. In the end, he shook his head.

“Forget it. If I interfered and won, then it wouldn’t matter. But if I lost….” With that, he closed his eyes and went back to meditating, ignoring all of the clamor outside.

The truth was that he had long since abandoned the River-Defying Sect in his heart. As far as he was concerned, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had returned didn't mean anything. And from what he could tell, although the Hall of Steel Veins might protect Bai Xiaochun, they wouldn’t protect his sect.

Even if Bai Xiaochun could get out of the situation alive… the River-Defying Sect would not be able to escape.

Four of the five devas in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had taken action, causing the sky to fill with ripples.

Devas could move with incredible quickness, especially Chen Hetian and his companions. It didn’t take long before… they were in sight of the River-Defying Sect’s headquarters!

Chen Hetian and the other devas exchanged glances, and then began to transmit a conversation among themselves.

“It’s no surprise that the Hall of Steel Veins took action. But they can only do so much. Even if they save Bai Xiaochun, they can't get too involved with other sect affairs!!”

“Patriarch Steel Veins is just going through the motions. If he had come alone, he could have caught up with us already. The fact that he’s bringing the five legions with him shows that he’s actually giving us time to take care of things before he gets here.”

“Since he’s making a show of it, we should probably give him some face. Fine, let’s cripple Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, but leave him alive. That should be fine!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0883 awe-chapter-884

It was evening, and the disciples of the River-Defying Sect were busy at their repair work. By now, the four mountain ranges that made up the sect headquarters were mostly back to normal. Buildings once again rose up near and far. Although traces of damage still existed, for the most part, the sect was on its way to a complete recovery.

Morale was very high. The sound of jovial laughter and conversation could be heard everywhere, and the entire sect seemed to thrum with life.

After fighting side-by-side, the four divisions had grown closer than ever, making the general atmosphere in the sect better than ever.

Nothing seemed out of place among the patriarchs, and yet, their hearts were weighed down by one looming fact. Their repeated attempts to contact the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had failed. Not even the child deva of the Sky Quarter had responded to them.

Patriarch Spirit Stream and the others were all very worried about what that meant. However, they didn't let that show, worried that the River-Defying Sect would fare badly if they knew that impending catastrophe loomed on the horizon.

“We can’t let Xiaochun bear all the burden!” Patriarch Spirit Stream said.

The Nascent Soul patriarchs were currently in a grand hall in the sect, serious expressions on their faces as they discussed the matter. Of course, Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream took the lead in the meeting.

In response to Patriarch Spirit Stream’s words, Patriarch Blood Stream sat in silence for a moment, then said, “If worst comes to worst… we can always leave the Middle Reaches and go back to the Lower Reaches!”

They wouldn’t do such a thing unless there were no other options. However, there was no way to tell what the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was thinking at the moment, and therefore, they had to plan for the worst-case scenario.

Patriarch Blood Stream’s words were met with silence in the grand hall. The only thing that could be heard was the laughing and chatting coming from the disciples outside.

That only served to emphasize the gravity of the situation. If things got worse, and the River-Defying Sect really did retreat from the Middle Reaches, it would be a devastating blow to both patriarchs and disciples alike.

Patriarch Spirit Stream sighed, and was just about to say something more, when a shadow blurred into the room. It was none other than the Spirit Stream Sect’s monkey. Even as he took form, another shadowy form appeared, which was the Blood Stream Sect’s rabbit!

Both of them began to speak in high-pitched tones, making it impossible to determine which of them began speaking first.

“Devas are invading!!”

“Activate the spell formation!!”

As the urgent voices of the monkey and rabbit echoed out, Patriarch Spirit Stream’s face fell. Without the slightest hesitation, he performed an incantation gesture, activating the sect's defensive spell formation. Patriarch Blood Stream and the other two patriarchs offered assistance. In the blink of an eye, rumbling sounds filled the air in the sect’s four mountain ranges. At the same time, shield after shield rose up to create defensive barriers.

The Dire Skybanyan, which had just been brought back from the brink of death, shivered. Magical symbols erupted from its leaves, and in the blink of an eye, green light shot out from it, creating even more protective shields for the sect.

It all happened so quickly that, before the shocked disciples could react, the spell formation had been fully activated…. And that was when intense rumbling sounds could be heard as five beams of light shot toward the sect!

It was none other than Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, followed by Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River!

The will of the five devas immediately spread out to fill heaven and earth, causing crackles of thunder to rip across the sky!

Their will replaced the will of the heavens, locking down the entire area and making it a world unto its own!

When the disciples of the River-Defying Sect saw the five figures up above, they gasped, and their faces fell!

“Patriarch Dao River!”

“That’s Patriarch Starry River!”

“I've never seen those other three… but their auras seem even more terrifying than the first two!!”

Shangguan Tianyou’s throat tightened, and Beihan Lie shivered. Song Que and the other chosen were immediately wracked with nervousness, as were Song Junwan and the other leaders in the sect.

Even with the spell formation activated, the pressure from the five devas was intense enough that everyone was left completely shaken.

The pressure was like mountain after mountain crushing down onto the hearts and minds of the disciples, stifling them and filling them with terror.

An anxious commotion broke out; everyone got the sense that disaster was pending. Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream were both half-devas, and were the strongest cultivators in the sect besides Bai Xiaochun. They both flew up toward the border of the spell formation, grim expressions on their faces as they faced the five devas.

None of the other disciples recognized Chen Hetian and his compatriots, but Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream did.

Suppressing his anxiety, Patriarch Spirit Stream clasped hands and bowed. “Greetings Patriarchs Chen, Bai, and Li! Honored sirs, I'm not sure the reason for your visit, hopefully you can forgive any breaches in etiquette!”

Next to him, the equally nervous Patriarch Blood Stream similarly bowed in greeting.

When the River-Defying Sect disciples saw their two patriarchs acting so respectfully, it only caused their anxiety to grow.

As for Chen Hetian and the other two devas, they completely ignored the two River-Defying Sect patriarchs. Looking down coldly at the spell formation shield, they began to transmit a conversation among themselves.

“This River-Defying Sect certainly reacted quickly.”

“Well, that Bai Xiaochun is a deva after all. It only makes sense that he would detect our arrival.”

“It doesn’t matter. At worst, we’ll have to do a bit of work.”

When the two River-Defying Sect patriarchs realized that they were being ignored, their anxiety mounted, and their eyes grew more bloodshot.

The other disciples in the sect were completely shocked, and had begun trembling in despair. After all, even with Bai Xiaochun there to help, this was a collection of five devas they were facing!!

Patriarch Spirit Stream gritted his teeth and once again spoke. “Patriarchs, would you--”

“Pipe down!” Li Xiandao interrupted. Snorting coldly, he waved his hand, summoning a 300-meter-wide illusory hand that shot down toward the spell formation shield.

Massive rumbling sounds filled the air as the hand landed onto the shield, which erupted with brilliant light. The shield bent inward, and cracks spread out across its surface, but in the end it held, whereas the hand shattered.

However, one of the shield layers had been broken. When that happened, the mountain ranges in the River-Defying

Sect trembled, and countless bits of rubble crashed down their sides. The newly-repaired mountains were already on the verge of collapsing again.

Eyes bloodshot with madness, Patriarch Spirit Stream looked at Chen Hetian and the other devas and shouted, “Patriarchs, what crime did the River-Defying Sect commit that has you so set on exterminating us!?!?”

The other disciples in the sect couldn’t hold back any longer either, and began to shout out in anger.

“What crime did the River-Defying Sect commit!!”

“Why must you try over and over again to exterminate our sect!?!?”

Their cries became a sound wave that rolled out in all directions across the landscape. Finally, Chen Hetian snorted coldly. Ignoring the River-Defying Sect, he turned to Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River.

“You have the time it takes half an incense stick to burn to break open that spell formation shield. If you don’t… then the two of you can forget about continuing on as devas.”

The two patriarchs shivered. Eyes bloodshot, they rotated their cultivation bases in preparation to take action. They knew that what Chen Hetian had said was no empty threat. In the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, his words were like law, and they didn’t dare to defy him.

Shouting at the tops of their lungs, Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River unleashed all the power they could muster onto the River-Defying Sect.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0884 awe-chapter-885

“How dare you people!!” Patriarch Spirit Stream shouted, simultaneously pouring more power into the spell formation. Patriarch Blood Stream also gasped under the power of the attack, but at the same time, his murderous aura erupted violently.

“Complete and utter bullying!! What crime has our River-Defying Sect committed?!?!”

The one to provide the response was Patriarch Starry River. “When the time came for you to be exterminated, you dared to fight back! That is your crime!”

The patriarch was feeling very excited. He couldn’t help but think about the bedraggled state he had been in when he fled from Bai Xiaochun, and how his revenge was now nigh.

“Get the hell out here and show your face, Bai Xiaochun!!” he shouted.

Gritting his teeth with anger, Patriarch Dao River said, “You listen to me, Bai Xiaochun. I'm going to empty out your River-Defying Sect in the exact same way you emptied out the Dao River Court!”

At the same time, the two patriarchs slammed into the spell formation, causing the River-Defying Sect’s headquarters to tremble violently!

The sect's grand spell formation seemed mighty, but it couldn’t defend against a sustained barrage by multiple devas. As it teetered on the verge of collapse, and the disciples of the River-Defying Sect felt despair gripping their hearts, a voice was suddenly transmitted into the ears of Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream. It was Bai Xiaochun!

“Buy me some time!”

Instantly, Patriarch Spirit Stream waved his hand and sent his voice into the ears of the disciples of the sect.

“All disciples, merge your spirits with the Dire Skybanyan!!”

Shouts filled the air as all River-Defying Sect disciples shot toward the skybanyan and sent cultivation base power pouring into it.

As the disciples fell into place, scintillating light erupted from the huge tree, repairing the cracks in the spell formation shield.

It wasn’t just the lower-ranking disciples who joined in the effort. The Nascent Soul cultivators helped as well, including Patriarch Spirit Stream. The only ones who didn't participate were Patriarch Blood Stream and the Blood Stream Division disciples, who flew into the body of the Blood Ancestor.

Moments later, the Blood Ancestor’s eyes snapped open, and he threw his head back and roared. With the Blood Ancestor awake, he and the glittering shield were the last lines of defense for the sect!

Bruiser was there as well, standing in front of the Blood Ancestor, glaring murderously at the five devas.

Chen Hetian and the other devas stared back with narrowed eyes at the River-Defying Sect. The sect's reaction was shocking to them, both in terms of the speed of reaction, and their tactics. Clearly, they were superior to any of the other Middle Reaches sects!

With the full support of all the disciples of the River-Defying Sect, the shield created by the Dire Skybanyan was something that caused even Chen Hetian and the other devas to frown.

And although Bruiser and the Blood Ancestor weren’t any major threat, they could certainly cause the devas a frustrating delay.

However, all of these were simply minor distractions. As far as Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian were concerned, this curious turn of events wasn't much to worry about. Although it seemed as if they were in a rush, they were actually still feeling very confident.

Furthermore, with Bai Xiaochun around, they knew they had to be careful of a trap related to the spell formation. However, since they had Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River to take care of that, they weren’t very worried.

One thing they were paying close attention to was a possible escape effort by Bai Xiaochun. If a deva like Bai Xiaochun escaped, it wouldn't be a huge disaster, but could cause complications down the line. However, they didn’t feel that such a thing was likely to happen.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was seated cross-legged in his secluded meditation chamber, seemingly on the verge of weeping blood. He couldn’t have been more nervous about what was happening outside; he knew that the River-Defying Sect was in a moment of critical danger.

And yet, he had no other options at the moment. If he went out right now to fight against five devas, he would have no hope of winning. And if he were killed, then the River-Defying Sect would definitely be exterminated.

The only chance… was to successfully conjure a twenty-one-colored flame. The flame of a heavenly necromancer would help him achieve a cultivation base breakthrough, and would enable him to step into the Deva Realm. Only then could he resolve this deadly crisis!

Of course, there was another option…. He could flee. If he escaped, then his existence would be a threat that could likely safeguard the River-Defying Sect to some extent.

But that wasn’t something he would do unless he had no other choice. It was simply too risky. Besides, if his estimation of the situation were incorrect, it could lead to the River-Defying Sect being wiped out.

“Time to conjure some flame!” he said. In recent days, he had attempted to conjure so many twenty-one-colored flames that he’d lost count.

The vast collection of souls he had in his bag of holding was already beginning to run low.

With the skills he had built up as an earthly necromancer, he was able to perform flame conjurings in a very short period of time. Furthermore, all of the failures in the recent days had given him extensive experience. Every time, he had made progress. Now, he was very familiar with the formula, and the process itself. His string of failures had enabled him to solve all of the problems, or at least come up with theories on how to.

“I should be able to succeed!!” Eyes bloodshot, he began working again. He knew that the sect would not be able to hold out for very long, and could hear the rumbling sounds outside.

Taking a breath to calm himself, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a vast group of souls to spread out around him. The time had come to begin the conjuring!

As the souls merged together and the sea of fire appeared, he took control of it, preventing it from expanding out into a large area. However, it was in that moment that an intense boom reached him from outside. Although he wished to maintain complete focus, he had to send his divine sense outside to see what was happening.

Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River had joined forces to attack the sect's grand spell formation, causing immense rifts to open up in the shield. As a result, blood sprayed out of the mouths of the River-Defying Sect disciples.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he slipped further into madness. The sea of fire destabilized, and immediately lurched toward collapse. Without the slightest hesitation, he flew out into the open, which attracted the attention of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian.

The instant they looked over, their faces fell as they realized that Bai Xiaochun held a ball of flame that filled their hearts with intense sensations of danger.

“Bruiser, get out of the way!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. Rotating his cultivation base at full speed, he drew upon the power of his fleshly body to hurl the sea of fire out in front of him. It instantly transformed into a massive fireball that passed through one of the cracks in the spell formation shield.

“Get back!” Chen Hetian shouted at Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River. At the same time, he and the other two most powerful devas rushed forward to try to suppress the fire.

Unfortunately for Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River, they reacted a bit too slowly. Thunderous rumbling sounds erupted out as the ball of fire exploded, unleashing heaven-shaking, earth-shattering power.

From a distance, it was possible to see the terrifyingly powerful sea of fire transforming everything outside of the River-Defying Sect into blackened ash!

Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River trembled violently. Blood sprayed out of the mouth of the former, and the nascent divinity of the latter trembled unstably. Both flew backward, but were sustained by the power of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian. Were it not for that help, both of the two weaker patriarchs would have been grievously injured.

Considering this was Bai Xiaochun’s first time using a fireball in this way, and he had aimed very carefully, the attack had been quite successful. If the enemy had been more prepared, it might not have worked as well.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Patriarch Starry River shouted. However, even as he looked over, Bai Xiaochun vanished. Back in his secluded meditation chamber, he anxiously began to work on conjuring another flame.

At the moment, he suddenly felt less pressure.

“What an idiot I've been. Who cares if I fail!? When I fail, I can just throw them outside right before they explode!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but marvel at his quick-wittedness.

Any other person in his situation would have to be completely focused, and would only appear out in the open in the final glorious moment.

But he was more awesome than that. He didn’t need to wait until he succeeded. With every failure, he would shock everyone on the outside….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0885 awe-chapter-886

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that he truly was a rare genius.

“That’s right. If they’re really unlucky, then I’ll fail every single time! Fudge! I’ll blow them all to bits!” Excitement surging, he continued on with more conjuring attempts. Everyone else in the River-Defying Sect was enlivened by what they had just seen, and poured all of the power they could into the spell formation, causing the cracks to rapidly repair themselves.

Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River both hesitated, fearful of the sea of fire they had just encountered.

“Damn that Bai Xiaochun!” Chen Hetian gritted his teeth and thought back to the exploding pill furnaces back at the Great Wall. Frowning, he took a step forward, appearing in front of the spell formation shield. Eyes flashing with cold light, he shoved his hand out toward the shield.

Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao joined him, both of them stepping forward to attack the spell formation as well.

Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River immediately felt less nervous, and joined in. It only took the briefest of moments for five devas to be simultaneously unleashing attacks onto the spell formation shield.

Patriarch Spirit Stream’s face fell, and the anxiety of the River-Defying Sect disciples grew. The Blood Ancestor and

Bruiser both flew toward the shield and bolstered it with all the power they could.

Booms rang out. Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian were all in the mid Deva Realm, far beyond compare to the other two patriarchs. All three of them unleashed attacks that became enormous hands which pressed down onto the shield.

The spell formation shuddered, and distorted ripples spread out across it. More cracks opened up, causing numerous River-Defying Sect disciples to cough up mouthfuls of blood. It was all the spell formation could do to stand up to the attack of five devas, and obviously, it would only be able to hold out for a few moments longer before collapsing.

In his private chamber, Bai Xiaochun was virtually going mad. He currently had five tongues of sixteen-colored flame and three tongues of seventeen-colored flame, which he unhesitatingly threw out beyond the shield.

By careful use of his divine sense, he destabilized all of them, instantly causing them to explode.

Massive booms filled the air as a huge sea of flames spread out. Although it couldn't compare to the previous one, it was still shocking. Of course, Chen Hetian and the other devas had been prepared, and were able to evade the attack.

“Hmph!” Chen Hetian snorted. “Just trying to buy time, huh? Well… let’s see how much of that fire you have!” He was just about to press another attack when the Blood Ancestor pushed his hands down onto the Dire Skybanyan. Bruiser did the same.

In fact, all of the spirit beasts in the sect rushed over, using all of their energy to assist in the defense of the sect!

Even as the sea of fire faded away, the spell formation shield once again knitted back together.

Chen Hetian and the other devas blurred back into motion, yet again attacking the spell formation. However, the spell formation had stabilized greatly, and Bai Xiaochun continued to toss out fireballs.

Chen Hetian’s rage was mounting, and it was the same with Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao. That was especially true of Li Xiandao, who was shocked to realize that he was actually seeing multi-colored flame.

For Bai Xiaochun to have accumulated so many types of multi-colored flame in his time in the wildlands was shocking to the extreme, and was proving to be a big headache.

“Dammit, even one of those tongues of multi-colored flame could be considered priceless. I can’t believe he’s being so extravagant!!”

“How did this Bai Xiaochun get so much multi-colored flame in the Wildlands!?!?”

Not only were the devas shocked, they were being kept away from the spell formation because of the constant explosions. As a result, the River-Defying Sect’s shield continued to grow stronger by the moment.

The fact that five devas were incapable of blasting through the spell formation shield of a single Middle Reaches sect caused their fury to burn.

In his private chamber, Bai Xiaochun was both worried and filled with anticipation. At the moment, he was splitting his concentration between his efforts to conjure twenty-one-colored flame, and his attempts to pay attention to the battle outside, and toss out multi-colored flame.

Although he had built up stockpiles of multi-colored flame, they didn’t run too deep. However, he had no other ways to buy time. He was doing everything possible to conjure his twenty-one-colored flame, and although he was somewhat distracted, he was already working on compressing the flame he was working with.

As it shrank down, the numerous colors in the flame flickered madly. Even as Bai Xiaochun held his breath and looked for the additional color, Chen Hetian and the other devas unleashed another round of attacks on the spell formation.

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of the River-Defying Sect cultivators, and many began to list in weakness. The spell formation clearly wouldn't last for much longer. Shouting, Bai Xiaochun threw out three tongues of eighteen-colored flame, and a tongue of nineteen-colored flame!

Eighteen-colored flame was shocking enough to begin with, so when it exploded, the intense heat it generated forced Chen Hetian and the others to back up.

“Dammit,” Bai Zhentian shouted. “How can this guy have so much multi-colored flame!?!?”

“Get this spell formation down!” Chen Hetian bellowed. “Even if he has more multi-colored flame, he won’t dare to use it inside of his own sect.”

“Break this formation!” Li Xiandao yelled.

Without any hesitation, all three of the devas blasted the spell formation shield, joined by Patriarch Starry River and

Patriarch Dao River.

Braving the intense heat, they closed in and launched powerful divine abilities into the shield.

Booms rang out as, at long last, the shield couldn’t hold any longer, and collapsed!

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of all the River-Defying Sect forces, from the low-level disciples all the way up to Patriarch Spirit Stream and Bruiser.

As despair filled the hearts of the River-Defying Sect cultivators, Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River excitedly advanced into the sect.

However, it was in that very moment that Bai Xiaochun found the new color in the sea of fire. He quickly sent his divine sense inside, and successfully completed… the twenty-first color!!

An air of ultimate supremacy erupted out from the sea of fire, causing the heavens to dim and a wild wind to kick up. The will of the five devas, which had taken over from the will of the heavens, was suddenly driven back as if by a massive hand.

Multicolored light erupted out into the night, causing the faces of the devas to fall as they sensed a sudden, intense feeling of deadly crisis!

The origin of that crisis was one of the River-Defying Sect’s secluded meditation facilities, which was none other than the location where Bai Xiaochun was conjuring the flame. Although the devas didn't want to fall back, the bright light shining out from the area filled them with such a sense of danger that they had no other choice.

Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River were deeply shaken, and immediately began to retreat. It was in that moment that the most profound and maddening energy possible erupted out.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

“What is that?!?!”

“What is this Bai Xiaochun doing!?!?”

“This feeling… heavens! It feels like heaven and earth are about to be destroyed!!”

Even as the devas were completely and utterly shaken, something like an enormous net appeared high in the sky. It was impossible to determine what existed on the other side of that net, but Bai Xiaochun could tell that this was the very same world seal that he had seen during the spectacular battle in the Wildlands!

In his private chamber, Bai Xiaochun panted, and the sweat which popped out on his head instantly transformed into white steam. He was now fully concentrating, completely focused on the sea of fire.

“Form together, twenty-one-colored flame!!”

RRRRUUUUUUUUMBLE!

As the sea of fire shrank down into his hand, the intense energy caused deafening rumbling sounds to fill the air. Strangely, though, there was no sign of any form of tribulation.

The process lasted for the space of a few breaths of time. When the surging energy reached its peak, Bai Xiaochun closed his hand around the sea of fire.

Heart pounding, he took several deep breaths, then slowly opened his fingers. Brilliant light erupted out, causing the sky to vibrate and the lands to quake. There in the middle of his hand… was a twenty-one-colored flame!!

Heavenly fire!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0886 awe-chapter-887

Heavenly multi-colored flame could only be conjured by a heavenly necromancer. Whether it was the flame itself, or the heavenly necromancer, both were things of legend.

Neither had appeared within the Wildlands for countless years, and in fact, not even the formula for twenty-one-colored flame could be found.

Besides, Bai Xiaochun only did it with the help of his apprentice and a huge collection of souls. There had also been a chance set of circumstances that led up to a situation where Bai Xiaochun made his attempt without even being completely confident in succeeding.

As soon as the twenty-one-colored flame appeared in the open, and the dramatic signs appeared in heaven and earth, Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian gasped in shock. They had lived for a long time, and valued their own lives. Therefore, the sensation of imminent danger gave them no other option than to back away.

Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River Court had similar reactions, their eyes bulging and their hearts pounding as they retreated.

The despairing River-Defying Sect disciples saw the bright light, and could feel the pressure radiating out from Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation facilities, and instantly, their hearts surged with excitement.

“Patriarch Bai!”

“It’s Patriarch Bai!!”

“We have hope! With the patriarch here, who will dare to offend our River-Defying Sect!!”

Bai Xiaochun was just as excited as all the other cultivators in the sect. As he sat there looking at the tongue of twenty-one-colored flame he had just conjured, he had the strong feeling… that the world around him couldn’t contain something this powerful.

He looked up at the world seal net high above, and suddenly remembered something his apprentice had said, that he suspected twenty-one-colored flame was a limit within the world!

“This world… can only contain twenty-one-colored flame. Twenty-two-colored flame is an impossibility!!” Although it seemed a bit much to take in, he finally understood.

Back in the trial by fire in the labyrinth, he had seen twenty-one-colored flame. However, that had been an illusion, whereas the fire in front of him now was very real. He could clearly feel the terrifying fluctuations coming off of it, and could tell that it was a limit within the world. It was as if the world were using all the power it could to suppress the flame.

In fact… the recently conjured twenty-one-colored flame was already beginning to show signs of fading, as though the world around him… were trying to extinguish it!

There was no time for thought or planning. Without any hesitation, he pulled out his turtle wok, his eyes flashing with both madness and determination. It was only a legend that twenty-one-colored flame could push someone into the

Deva Realm, and it was something that no one had ever done.

Bai Xiaochun was the only one throughout all the years who had met the requirements. And now, in the River-Defying Sect’s moment of peril, and in the face of the twenty-one-colored flame teetering on the verge of being extinguished, Bai Xiaochun had no time to ponder what to do.

“Time to go for broke!!” he shouted, a fierce expression twisting his face. Although taking this risk was not something he would normally do, at the moment, he had no choice!

The instant the turtle wok was out in the open, his nascent soul flew out into it. At the same time, he waved his hand!

The twenty-one-colored flame flew into the wok, fusing into it, causing it to tremble violently. Blinding light erupted out, causing heaven and earth to shake, and forcing incomprehensible levels of spiritual power to converge.

It was as if the River-Defying Sect had become a massive vortex, sucking in all the spiritual power of heaven and earth!

The faces of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian fell dramatically, and they flew backward as quickly as possible, ill premonitions filling their hearts.

“Dao River, Starry River,” shouted Li Xiandao, “get over there and bust open his meditation chamber!”

The hearts of Patriarch Dao River and Patriarch Starry River surged with madness, but they didn’t dare to defy the orders they had been given. Seeing that Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian weren’t offering any other instructions, they gritted their teeth and charged at full speed toward Bai Xiaochun's private chamber.

Bruiser howled anxiously, and Patriarch Blood Stream sent the Blood Ancestor forward with him to intercept. Although neither of them were at the deva level, they could at least buy some time.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the two deva patriarchs knocked Bruiser and the Blood Ancestor out of the way, and then closed in on the meditation chamber, toward which the massive quantities of spiritual energy surged.

“Open up!” Patriarch Dao River roared, hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture that sent tens of thousands of beams of sword light out to form the shape of an enormous great sword.

As the sword slashed down toward the meditation chamber, shocking energy filled the area. Patriarch Starry River also went all-out to unleash a similarly devastating attack.

“Starry Meteorite Subjugation!!”

Ear-splitting rumbling sounds filled the air, along with enraged shouts from countless River-Defying Sect cultivators, as countless meteorites materialized around Patriarch Starry River and then began to rain down toward Bai Xiaochun's secluded meditation facilities!

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in the shortest of moments. In the blink of an eye, the meteorites fell, and the sword slashed down, causing the River-Defying Sect to shake violently. The mountains that contained Bai Xiaochun's meditation chamber shattered, sending rocks and rubble flying out in all directions before transforming into ash!

Even the meditation chamber itself was destroyed!

“Xiaochun!!” Song Junwan cried. Even as Bruiser howled, Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian all shot down into the River-Defying Sect.

However, a moment later, their faces flickered with wild emotion.

“The will of a deva!!”

“That only happens when someone rises to the deva level, and fuses with the heavens. Bai Xiaochun… actually wasn’t a deva before?!?!”

“How is this even possible!?!?” Crying out in alarm, all three of them fell back rapidly. And yet, even as they did, a shocking will erupted out from the rubble of the recently destroyed meditation chamber.

It was so powerful that as it merged with the heavens, the sky trembled. All previous ripples, all peals of thunder, all of the clouds, were instantly suppressed.

The will of Chen Hetian and the other devas, which had previously locked the area down, were instantly driven away!

Only one will was left, a domineering will that demanded that the wills of all other devas retreat!!

An enormous face materialized in the sky, a face with eyes closed, a face that filled all of the heavens, a face which caused the hearts of everyone in the River-Defying Sect to tremble with unbridled excitement. It was… Bai Xiaochun!

Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao, Bai Zhentian, Patriarch Dao River, and Patriarch Starry River all looked grim and even sick as they retreated. As for the latter two, they felt a sensation of impending death that surpassed anything they had felt in their previous encounter with Bai Xiaochun!!

It was in that moment that the eyes of the enormous face in the sky opened. The eyes locked onto Patriarch Dao River’s nascent divinity, simultaneously causing all color in the world to dim!

Wind screamed and lightning danced, all of which coalesced into a shocking voice.

“Be destroyed!”

The face of Bai Xiaochun twisted, transforming into a beam of light that shot toward Patriarch Dao River. It moved so quickly that Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian couldn’t even react.

To the shock of Patriarch Dao River, before he could even plead for mercy, that beam of light stabbed through his nascent divinity….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0887 awe-chapter-888

The beam of light that had been Bai Xiaochun’s face moved with indescribable speed, more quickly than anything the disciples of the River-Defying Sect had ever seen!

Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian were all shocked to the core! Not even they had ever seen anything like it!!

The bright beam of light shot down and stabbed through Patriarch Dao River’s nascent divinity before he could even react…. He shivered, and his eyes went wide with disbelief as he looked down at his own chest.

As he did, a huge boom rang out, and his nascent divinity form exploded into absolutely nothing!!

He had been killed in the blink of an eye!!

The entire battlefield went deathly silent. The River-Defying Sect, Chen Hetian and the devas, and everyone else was looking at the spot where Patriarch Dao River had been killed. Waves of shock filled everyone present…. It was at this point that everyone realized that, right behind where Patriarch Dao River had previously existed… a person was materializing!

He had long hair and fair skin, and wore a simple robe. He seemed noble and magnificent, and yet, his eyes were as sharp as the sharpest of swords. He was none other than… Bai Xiaochun!

“Impossible!!” Chen Hetian gasped.

Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao felt as though their minds were being struck by lightning, and their faces fell dramatically in the face of the power on display by Bai Xiaochun!

“This…” Bai Zhengtian gasped. “Even if Dao River was only in nascent divinity form, he should have been able to evade that blow. Such speed… how is it even possible!?!?”

“He wasn’t a deva before,” Li Xiandao murmured, “but he most certainly is now!!”

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had previously not been a deva meant… that it was as a half-deva that he had injured one deva patriarch, crippled another, and killed the last! It was simply terrifying!

The horrifying significance of it all left Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian completely aghast!

Patriarch Starry River was shaking violently; his shock surpassed that of Chen Hetian and the others. After all, this was his second time seeing Bai Xiaochun kill a deva!

In fact, this time, it went even more smoothly than last time. The mere thought of what he had just seen struck him deeply with fear, and caused him to flee as quickly as possible. The last scrap of courage he had possessed was now gone, and if he had his way, he would never again do anything to provoke Bai Xiaochun.

Even as everyone present reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun reached out and made a grasping motion in the direction of where Patriarch Dao River had been killed.

As he did, it was to the utter amazement of all onlookers that a soul shadow appeared. It had a blank look in its eyes, and clearly resembled Patriarch Dao River.

As it appeared, it began to float up, as if it were about to merge into some unseen vortex. After all, when souls died in the lands of Heavenspan, they would be taken away into the cycle of reincarnation.

However, before the soul of Patriarch Dao River could float up into the heavens, Bai Xiaochun grabbed it!

Although no one else present was capable of seeing it, Bai Xiaochun could see that there really was a vortex up above. And in the moment that he reached out to grab the patriarch’s soul, the vortex vanished, as though it had no intention of interfering with his attempt to grab the deva soul!

As soon as he had it in his hand… he closed his fingers down, causing a yellow crystal to appear!

Sealed within that crystal was none other than… an earth-type deva soul!

The cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were both shaken and excited. Patriarch Spirit Stream was bubbling over with joy, and Patriarch Blood Stream’s eyes shone with unprecedented madness.

“Patriarch Bai!!”

“Patriarch Bai!!!” The cries of joy which rang out from the River-Defying Sect seemed loud enough to fill all of the eastern Middle Reaches.

Bruiser howled in delight at how incredibly powerful Bai Xiaochun had become.

Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream, the patriarchs from the other two divisions, Li Qinghou, and

Zheng Yuandong were all beside themselves with joy.

“The River-Defying Sect finally has a deva!!” All of the powerful experts in the sect were virtually jumping with delight. Although they had been shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s previous level of power, back then, he hadn’t been a deva. Although most people in the sect hadn’t been aware of that fact, Patriarch Spirit Stream had.

He hadn’t been a deva, but possessed the battle prowess of one. And yet, the leadership of the sect still hadn’t been able to rest easy…. But now, powerful fluctuations filled heaven and earth as Bai Xiaochun’s will surpassed the will of the heavens. Because of that, Patriarch Spirit Stream and the others knew… that Bai Xiaochun was now a deva!!

The River-Defying Sect cultivators were beside themselves. As for Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, as well as Patriarch Starry River, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had just harvested a deva soul filled them with such profound shock that their minds went blank.

“Impossible!!” Chen Hetian breathed. Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao gasped in astonishment. All three of the devas were filled with fright and terror that defied description.

What Bai Xiaochun had just done struck them to the deepest level. After all, the only type of person who qualified to both kill a deva and then prevent that person’s soul from entering the cycle of reincarnation was a demigod!

Neither Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao nor Bai Zhentian could accomplish such a thing. And yet, Bai Xiaochun had done it right in front of them!

It was almost impossible to describe the levels of shock and fear they felt as a result!

Astonishingly, Bai Xiaochun seemed to possess energy that could force heaven and earth to capitulate to his desires!

The truth was that, to most other devas, it would be completely impossible for them to prevent a deva soul from entering the reincarnation cycle of heaven and earth. But to Bai Xiaochun, it took almost no effort. After all… the cycle of reincarnation was part of the Underworld River, and his apprentice was the reigning Hell-Emperor. If he wanted a deva soul… how could the Underworld River possibly vie with him for it?

Although no one was able to tell, not even Chen Hetian and the other devas, from the way that Bai Xiaochun had attacked and killed Patriarch Dao River, it was clear that he was a rare… Heaven-Dao deva!

Furthermore, he had broken through using heavenly multicolored flame to perform a twenty-onefold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul!

Because of that, all early Deva Realm cultivators were beyond weak when compared to him. Even mid Deva Realm experts could be put in their place by him!

Perhaps he couldn’t be considered the most powerful among all devas, but he was on that path. Throughout all the years which had passed, the only other person to become a Heaven-Dao deva was Daoist Heavenspan, who was also known as the Celestial!

Now, Bai Xiaochun was the second!

However, Bai Xiaochun had done something that the Celestial had not. He had performed a twenty-onefold spirit enhancement on his nascent soul using the peak level of flame that could exist in the world. That made Bai Xiaochun the ultimate type of deva!

He was the only person in all of history to do such a thing!

Some of it was coincidence, and some of it was because of Bai Xiaochun's hard work. All of it came together into something beyond belief! In fact, it had been somewhat of a gamble on his part. He hadn't been completely confident that a twenty-one-colored flame would make him a deva!

After sensing Bai Xiaochun's energy, Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian exchanged glances and then retreated en masse, leaving Patriarch Starry River conspicuously out in the open.

Terrified, Patriarch Starry River made to retreat, simultaneously rejoicing that Bai Xiaochun had chosen to strike down Patriarch Dao River and not himself.

However, even as the four devas began to back away, Bai Xiaochun turned his head, and his eyes flashed like lightning.

"You trespassed on the River-Defying Sect… do you really think you can leave without offering compensation?" The coldness and rage in his voice couldn't have been more apparent. The River-Defying Sect had just been in the deadliest of crises, and everyone knew that if he hadn't become a deva, the results would have been unimaginable.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0888 awe-chapter-889

As soon as Bai Xiaochun’s words echoed out, the eyes of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian flickered. The three of them hadn’t actually communicated about what to do; they had just fled as quickly as possible.

Their departure made Patriarch Starry River even more conspicuous, placing him right in between them and Bai Xiaochun.

To Bai Xiaochun, it seemed like they were putting Patriarch Starry River out as bait, to lure him out, see how strong he actually was, and then decide whether or not to join forces against him.

After all, they were all still members of the same sect. Because of their status and position within the sect, they wouldn’t pick a fight that they weren’t certain in being able to win!

Patriarch Starry River could also see what was happening, although that realization did him little good. All he could do was bite his tongue, spit out some blood, and draw upon a secret magic to try to flee….

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun sprang into motion. He had keen intuition when it came to battle, and therefore, he headed directly toward… the isolated Patriarch Starry River!

“Let’s see who’s faster, you people, or me!” Eyes flashing, he accelerated with blinding speed.

The instant Bai Xiaochun sped into motion, Patriarch Starry River let out a desolate shriek and tried to speed up. At the same time, Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian looked on with coldly flashing eyes.

“Turns out he really is too young and inexperienced,” Chen Hetian said with a cold snort. “Far too impulsive!” He quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing red light to spring up around him, which rapidly became an enormous, blood-colored fist.

The 300-meter fist was surrounded by a madly spinning wind of blood-colored devastation. Countless vicious faces floated inside of it, shrieking madly as endless quantities of the spiritual power of heaven and earth poured into it. In the blink of an eye, the fist became almost completely corporeal, and was bearing down directly onto Bai Xiaochun.

The air shattered around it, and a reek of blood filled the area, tugging at the qi and blood of everyone in the River-Defying Sect.

“Blood Fiend Fist!!” Patriarch Blood Stream gasped. This was one of the trump cards at the disposal of Chen Hetian, something that, despite not being eternally indestructible, was very close to that level! In fact, once it was unleashed, it grew more powerful with every moment that passed!

The instant that Chen Hetian made his move, Bai Zhentian performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a black horn to sprout out from his forehead. As it did, a black beam of electric light shot out, and grew larger with each moment.

The black light caused wild colors to flash in heaven and earth. Simultaneously, numerous lightning bolts formed overhead, becoming something like a huge net that shot down toward Bai Xiaochun!

As the net descended, it caused the air to vibrate with astonishing sealing power!

Numerous eyes were visible within the net, all of them as black as night! Furthermore, the net absorbed all of the surrounding lightning, causing it to split into 10 duplicate layers, then 100, then 1,000.... Eventually, it had over 10,000 layers!!

This was a trump card belonging to Bai Zhentian, and was something he could only unleash with difficulty. However, considering how shocked he had been by Bai Xiaochun earlier, he knew he had to attack with his most deadly move!

Things weren’t over yet. Last was Li Xiandao. Eyes shining with strange light, he opened his mouth and spat out a beam of white light, which grew larger and larger until it materialized into… an enormous chess board!

The illusory chess board seemed to fill all creation! It was as if the heavens were the chess players, the earth was the chessboard, and the magical power of Li Xiandao were the chess pieces!

Towering figures appeared within the cosmic chess board, celestial soldiers and generals clad in shocking armor.

In the blink of an eye, the three devas unleashed supreme, destructive power that threatened to overwhelm both Bai Xiaochun and Patriarch Starry River!

Patriarch Starry River’s eyes were bloodshot, and he was breathing heavily. He knew that he couldn’t retreat now; if he did, he might escape death, but would surely incur the wrath of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian.

He had no options to choose from. Spinning in place, he decided to stall Bai Xiaochun in the hopes that the divine abilities of the three other devas would kill him in time.

Everything was happening very quickly. Bai Xiaochun sprang into motion, and the divine abilities closed in on him. However, he didn’t back down; instead, he accelerated.

As he moved, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing countless rocks and rubble in the area to fly toward him, clumping around him until he was a towering stone golem!

This was the Living Mountain Incantation backed by a deva cultivation base!

As soon as his stone golem took shape, the net of lightning approached. And yet, despite how much destructive power was in the net, Bai Xiaochun was moving too quickly. His stone golem form was damaged, but he evaded most of the attack and closed in on Patriarch Starry River.

Without the slightest hesitation, he utilized the Mountain Shaking Bash!

The Mountain Shaking Bash increased Bai Xiaochun’s speed dramatically. He evaded the cosmic chess board, dashing through the five celestial soldiers, and appearing right in front of Patriarch Starry River. Even as the patriarch let out a bellow of shock, Bai Xiaochun bashed into him.

A whump sound echoed out, accompanied by boundless ripples. Blood sprayed out of Patriarch Starry River’s mouth as he was shoved backward. At the same time, Chen Hetian’s trump card arrived, the enormous blood-colored fist.

As Patriarch Starry River fell back, Bai Xiaochun lunged forward, his enormous stone hand reaching out, black light shining off of the thumb and forefinger. It was none other than… the Throat Crushing Grasp!

A deafening boom rang out as Bai Xiaochun’s Throat Crushing Grasp latched onto Patriarch Starry River. A strangled scream could be heard as the patriarch’s fleshly body was torn to pieces, and his nascent divinity flew out into the open, expression that of terror and despair. Ignoring any thoughts of cooperating with Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, he fled.

That was when Chen Hetian's enormous, blood-colored fist arrived, preventing Bai Xiaochun from chasing after Patriarch Starry River.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed. Even the slightest pause in his part would allow the three devas’ divine abilities and magical techniques to land on him. And yet, he didn’t hesitate at all to perform an incantation gesture, sending frigid qi erupting out in all directions.

Nine frigid projections appeared, which flanked Bai Xiaochun in a phalanx position as he shot forward toward the blood-colored fist.

When the nine frigid projections met the fist, they shattered with a boom. However, the blood-colored fist also lurched to a halt.

That brief pause was all Bai Xiaochun needed. He immediately stepped forward, utilizing the Undying Hex! The stone golem form crumbled as he passed through the enormous net, across the battlefield… to appear right in front of the Patriarch Starry River's fleeing nascent divinity.

In exactly the same way that he had cut down Patriarch Dao River, he became a beam of light that slashed all the way through Patriarch Starry River's nascent divinity!

A miserable scream rang out as… Patriarch Starry River's nascent divinity collapsed into pieces!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0889 awe-chapter-890

This was the third deva cultivator Bai Xiaochun had killed in his life!!

Each kill happened more smoothly than the last, and struck more fear into the hearts of those who looked on. Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian had tossed out bait, but Bai Xiaochun had acted with incomparable decisiveness, disregarding the divine abilities they had sent against him to strike down Patriarch Starry River!

The three remaining devas were shocked to the core. However, all of them were veterans of many battles, and therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that they poured even more power into their divine abilities and magical techniques. The innumerable vicious faces that made up Chen Hetian's blood-colored fist shrieked ferociously as the fist grew larger and larger.

The lightning net of ten thousand layers sliced through the air as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun, locking down all avenues of escape!

And the cosmic chessboard grew more corporeal than ever. The celestial soldiers and generals attacked with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force.

Bai Xiaochun was being assaulted with deadly force on all fronts and from all directions!

The three devas had to admit that they had been careless earlier. Never could they have imagined that, before, Bai Xiaochun wasn't actually a deva, their carelessness would lead to both Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River perishing. It was a heavy blow to their self-confidence.

Having reached this point in the battle, they felt they had no choice other than to push things to the extreme. If they killed Bai Xiaochun in the process, then at worst, they would lose some prestige in the process of explaining away the situation.

If they didn't come out on top, then not only would they have lost their deva subordinates, but they would also lose massive amounts of face, not to mention that they would have to deal with the future ramifications of having Bai Xiaochun alive and well in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

After all… if they came out on the bottom, Patriarch Steel Veins would surely use that fact to his advantage.

"Dammit!!"

"If we'd known this guy would be so hard to deal with… we wouldn't have come!"

However, *if you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off*. Therefore, Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian had no choice but to grit their teeth and intensify the power of their attacks. Since they had already committed some offenses… then they absolutely had to kill this opponent of theirs! That was the only way to resolve the situation!

Deafening booms filled heaven and earth as Bai Xiaochun turned in place. There was no time for him to harvest Patriarch Starry River's soul in the face of this deadly attack!

Although he was a Heaven-Dao deva, his opponents were three cultivators in the mid Deva Realm. There was no room for carelessness. A stern and awe-inspiring gleam could be seen in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes; as of this moment, he wasn’t thinking about his actions at all. He was acting on pure instinct. He took a step forward, waving his hand to summon frigid qi, and within it, nine frigid projections.

When the nine projections collided with the divine abilities of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, they collapsed. And yet, cracks appeared on the blood-colored fist, the lightning net began to unravel, and the cosmic chessboard began to fall apart.

That wasn’t enough to stop the attacks moving against him, and yet, it had slowed them down, giving Bai Xiaochun time for his next move. Blurring into motion, he performed another incantation gesture with both hands, causing deva power to erupt out.

“Violet Qi Cauldron Summoning!” he shouted. Instantly, violet light filled the sky as a gigantic violet cauldron appeared. In the blink of an eye, it transformed from illusory into corporeal!

The truth was that it wasn’t actually a violet cauldron. It was more than a hundred cauldrons, overlapping to create a glowing violet shield.

The instant the shield formed, Chen Hetian’s blood-colored fist arrived, along with the lightning net and the chessboard.

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

Bai Xiaochun shivered as his one hundred violet cauldrons collapsed one by one, causing intense fluctuations to roll out in waves. As he fell back, he resorted to the Living Mountain Incantation, as well as nine more frigid projections.

More cracks than ever covered the surface of Chen Hetian’s blood-colored fist, and one of the fingers was already collapsing into pieces. The lightning net was in similarly bad shape, and had only about 7,000 layers left. As for the cosmic chessboard, the five celestial soldiers were almost completely destroyed, and the heavenly generals were close behind.

However, the three divine abilities looked just as impressive to anyone observing the fight from the outside, and seemed to be on the verge of wiping Bai Xiaochun out of existence!

Before he had become a deva, he wouldn’t have been able to hold out, not even by drawing upon every last technique he was capable of. Even his Undying Emperor’s Fist wouldn’t have been enough to save him.

But now, things were different. Eyes flashing with strange light, he threw his hands first up, and then down.

“Waterswamp Kingdom!!”

A howl as if from another world erupted out, filling all creation. At the same time, water vapor roiled about, filling everything in sight!!

The area involved was vastly larger than anything which had been seen before when the Waterswamp Kingdom was unleashed. The sky went dim, and winds screamed as curved mountains rose up. The mountains soon became claws, which grew larger and larger… until an enormous hand was visible!

The scaled, pitch-black hand descended toward the divine abilities of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, smashing into them, and causing the devas’ faces to fall.

“What is this?!?!” they shouted in alarm. Before they could react, the huge clawed hand smashed into the divine abilities.

Three more fingers on the blood-colored fist were destroyed, leaving behind only a single finger. Even the palm was completely shattered!!

Massive ripping and tearing sounds could be heard from the 7,000 layers of the lightning net as almost all of them were destroyed. Only 2,000 remained! Nearly eighty percent of the troops atop the chessboard were transformed into ash, and the chessboard itself was badly damaged.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it happened with incredible abruptness. In the blink of an eye, the clawed hand was gone, and the three divine abilities were drastically reduced. Although none of them had been completely destroyed, they were significantly weakened, and as they bore down on Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t do anything to evade them. Instead, he reached out with his right hand.

A massive wind erupted out, slamming into the remaining finger from the blood-colored fist. When that happened, a tremor passed through Bai Xiaochun. Then the wind touched the lightning net, and he breathed in heavily, and took a step back. Lastly, he looked up as the wind smashed into the chessboard and its forces.

Massive booms could be heard as the fist collapsed, the net shattered, and the chessboard exploded. Blood oozed out of the corners of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he staggered backward several steps. However, he wasn't significantly injured. He had mastered the Undying Bones, and as such, his eyes shone radiantly. His energy surged, causing all creation to tremble as an enormous, illusory version of his face appeared up above, and looked down menacingly at Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian.

“That’s all you’ve got? Alright. Now it’s my turn!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0890 awe-chapter-891

“How is this even possible!?” Chen Hetian gasped, his mind spinning. The three divine abilities which had just been unleashed were powerful trump cards, any one of which should have been fully capable of inflicting grievous injuries on someone in the early Deva Realm.

Because of how seriously they viewed Bai Xiaochun, they hadn’t hesitated to join forces and unleash such high-level techniques. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had killed Patriarch Starry River was only secondary as far as they were concerned. What was more shocking was how afterward, he used one magical technique after another to fight back against them!

Bai Zhentian was flabbergasted, and at the same time, had a very bad feeling. Li Xiandao was reacting similarly, and realized that, although he had accepted from the beginning that this enemy was powerful, he had actually completely underestimated him.

“Dammit! This guy isn’t an Earth-Dao deva!!” That was what all three devas were thinking. However, there was no time for thought or planning; the enormous face of Bai Xiaochun which filled the heavens had already driven away their will, and was now causing immense pressure to weigh down on them!

They began to fall back, madness gripping their hearts. By this point, Bai Xiaochun had come to realize that his will had driven away the wills of the other devas, and was causing pressure to weigh down on them.

After his breakthrough, he had sensed himself fusing with heaven and earth. However, in the urgency of the moment, he had been able to do little more than fight back against his opponents.

But now, as his energy surged, and his face filled the sky, he finally felt… what it was like to be a deva!

Devas could completely fuse with heaven and earth, whereupon their every action would draw upon the power that existed in creation around them. A single breath could absorb spiritual power from vast distances. In fact, it would be very difficult for someone in the Deva Realm to actually run out of spiritual power under ordinary circumstances.

It was for that reason that some trump cards which required vast amounts of spiritual power could actually be used over and over again in quick succession by devas. For example, Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom. In the past, it had been difficult for him to use that technique twice in a row, but now, things were very different.

And yet, that was of secondary importance. More importantly, he could fuse with heaven and earth, effectively becoming the will of the heavens. His thoughts became the thoughts of the heavens! If he wished to punish his enemies, then the heavens wished to punish them as well!

That was the highest realm that devas could reach… Deva Shapes Heavenly Will!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun’s face grew larger, thunder rumbled, and the ground quaked in all directions.

The faces of the three devas’ flickered as sensations of profound crisis filled their hearts. Yet again, they fell back. However, they were in the mid Deva Realm, and had been devas for many years. They had extensive experience in combat, and thus were able to suppress their fear, and use their moment of retreat to perform incantation gestures, unleashing divine abilities with incredible speed.

Blood qi erupted from Chen Hetian, transforming into an enormous blood-colored giant, who wielded a long, blood-red spear. Howling, the giant charged straight toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Zhentian was just as fast in his actions. Clouds roiled out from his hands, becoming a nine-story pagoda that crushed downward toward Bai Xiaochun.

The strangest technique of all belonged to Li Xiandao. When he extended his right hand, a sword appeared in it, and at the same time, his eyes suddenly went blank, as if he were unconscious. However, he suddenly accelerated with blinding speed, becoming a beam of sword light that stabbed toward Bai Xiaochun.

The attacks of the three devas shook heaven and earth, and left everyone in the River-Defying Sect reeling in fear and anxiety. Many of them even began to pray in their hearts.

It was almost too much for many people to process mentally. However, only enough time had passed for a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed, and his energy surged. He took a step forward, simultaneously clenching his hand into a fist!

All creation shook as a black hole appeared! That black hole seemed to suck in all of Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body power, and all of his life force. Although he didn’t look any different physically, he felt like he was being torn apart inside. In the blink of an eye, everything about him was gone. At the same time, the enormous face up in the sky grew dim and difficult to see.

The only thing of him left behind… was the fist inside of that vortex!

As soon as the fist appeared, the faces of the three devas fell, and a sensation of imminent peril rose up in them that surpassed anything from before.

“What divine ability is that!?!?”

“What terrifying pressure!!”

Despite their terror, they hadn’t reached the point where they felt helpless. In fact, their abundant experience in battle was telling them that they absolutely could not flee. If they did, they would be crushed out of existence!

The only chance they had was to break this attack, and thus, their enemy’s momentum. If they didn’t, his will would grow stronger.

“Die!” Chen Hetian shouted. Unexpectedly, he merged into the blood-colored giant, hefted the spear in its hand, and stabbed it with more urgency toward Bai Xiaochun.

The nine-story cloud pagoda accelerated, and as for Li Xiandao, he appeared right in front of Bai Xiaochun, his sword stabbing directly toward his forehead!

However, even as the three counter attacks closed in, Bai Xiaochun looked up, and an enormous, shadowy being materialized behind him.

It was a man in imperial robes, with an imperial crown, face completely expressionless, and yet, resembling Bai Xiaochun in every way!

There was an incomparably domineering air to him. This was none other than the manifestation of… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

When that domineering, shadowy emperor appeared, Bai Xiaochun… unleashed his fist strike!!

Heaven shook and the earth trembled. Furthermore, since Bai Xiaochun was merged with all creation, becoming the will of the heavens, the pressure of a destructive heavenly punishment appeared!!

Now that he had mastered his Undying Bones, he was able to easily unleash this peak level of fleshly body power!

It was… a quintuple power Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

It was a supreme level of destructive power, causing the air to ripple and distort. The gigantic, shadowy emperor fused into Bai Xiaochun’s fist, which, despite not growing any larger, shot toward the three devas, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds!

“We can’t stand up to this!!” Chen Hetian blurted. That was what his instincts were telling him. And that was when Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist slammed into Li Xiandao.

The sky shuddered, and a tremor passed through Li Xiandao. Then, a massive stream of blood sprayed out of his mouth. His sword shattered, and he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, as surely as if a huge mountain had slammed into him. In fact, he couldn’t even stop the blood from erupting from inside of him.

Terror consumed him. His fleshly body was on the verge of falling apart, and his cultivation base was being dramatically destabilized as roughly thirty percent of the qi passageways inside of him were destroyed!!

“Impossible!!” he shrieked. And yet, even as he fell back, the Undying Emperor’s Fist continued on without pause toward Chen Hetian, who was embodied as an enormous blood-colored giant.

First, the blood-red spear shattered, and then the giant's body exploded. Chen Hetian himself appeared, blood spraying out of his mouth as he was flung backward, a look of blank shock on his face.

Last was Bai Zhentian. As soon as his nine-story cloud pagoda was hit by the Undying Emperor’s Fist, it shattered layer by layer. Bai Zhentian himself escaped narrowly, and yet, still ended up coughing up blood. Face ashen and filled with disbelief and alarm, he staggered backward, aura in shambles.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0891 awe-chapter-892

The Undying Emperor’s Fist was currently the most powerful divine ability at Bai Xiaochun’s disposal. Especially the quintuple strength version. After all, even back when he wasn’t a deva, he could still use it to fight with someone in the mid Deva Realm.

Now, he was in the early Deva Realm, and although he had not yet stabilized his cultivation base completely, he could still fuse with heaven and earth. Furthermore, he was a rare Heaven-Dao deva, which in itself made up for many of the weaknesses caused by not having a chance to stabilize his place within the realm. As such, he had just unleashed… what was essentially a perfect attack!

With it, he completely blasted away three devas. Of course, these were not ordinary devas, and they had been working together. Although they had been grievously wounded, they had not yet reached the point where they couldn’t keep fighting. However, the shocking attack they had just sustained didn’t just wound them physically; it was a severe blow to their courage!

The drastic phenomena caused by the fist strike caused everyone in the River-Defying Sect to be shaken to the core, regardless of their rank in the sect.

The shockwave from the attack was still spreading out, and yet, things weren’t over yet. Even as blood sprayed out of the mouths of the three devas, and they fell back in terror, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. Although he didn’t look any different from before, the truth was that he had been significantly drained in terms of fleshly body power. He hadn’t been completely emptied out, but was vastly weaker.

And yet, no one would be able to discern that from his facial expression. He had no special plan in mind, and yet, took another step forward.

As he did, his cultivation base surged, and his will strengthened. The enormous face in the sky above grew clear, and seemed to radiate the energy of the Undying Emperor’s Fist, causing the lands below to quake violently. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s foot landed, and he growled, “The River-Defying Sect is not the type of place that you can visit uninvited, and then leave without permission!”

The same words roared out from the mouth of the face up in the sky, making Bai Xiaochun seem dramatically impressive to everyone watching.

Except for Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, whose eyes suddenly glittered.

“Something’s off here!”

“What’s the point of being so wordy in the middle of a fight…? Wait, don’t tell me that he’s actually out of power because of that fist strike?”

“Is he trying to get us to retreat?”

The three deva’s spirits lifted. Without hesitation, they all spun in place, transforming into flashes of light that, instead of fleeing, shot directly backward toward Bai Xiaochun.

Their energy surged as they prepared powerful attacks. Although they were still being cautious, they were not holding back in terms of deadliness.

However, in almost the same moment as they began to speed back toward Bai Xiaochun, he smiled. And as soon as the devas saw that smile, their hearts lurched in their chests.

“Not good!”

“Dammit, he tricked us!!”

Suddenly, a mark appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s forehead, which opened up into a third eye. The power of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye erupted out, sending violet light shooting toward the three devas.

Before they could react, the light surrounded them, making them feel as if a huge, invisible hand had grabbed them. Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with both hands and then waved them out in front of himself.

“Frigid domain!”

Rumbling sounds could be heard as indescribably cold air erupted out from Bai Xiaochun. Everything in the area began to freeze over, and at the same time, 27 frigid projections materialized.

Each of the 27 projections looked exactly like Bai Xiaochun, and as soon as they appeared, they pounced on the three devas!

From the murderous aura which surrounded the projections, it was easy to imagine what would happen if they reached them. Although they wouldn't be killed, they would definitely suffer grievous fleshly body injuries.

Now was not the time for the devas to ponder the situation. Thunderous rumbling sounds erupted from Chen Hetian as he drew upon a secret magic that caused three rifts to open up on his face. Bone was visible beneath those rifts, and after they were fully open, Chen Hetian was suddenly given access to immense power.

He struggled mightily against the power of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye, and then suddenly shot backward 3,000 meters, placing him a safe distance from any of the frigid projections.

Only he knew the true price he had just paid to evade that attack. The three rifts which had been sliced open onto his face reduced his longevity by at least a sixty-year-cycle, and also dropped his cultivation base by roughly half a realm.

It caused his heart to drip with figurative blood, and yet, he had had no other options. In fact, he wasn't the only one to make such a decisive, drastic decision. Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao both used similar secret magics, and paid extremely heavy prices to retreat from the frigid projections.

As a result of their quick retreats, the frigid projections pounced on nothing but thin air, and then faded away into nothing!

Although they had seemed impressive and dangerous earlier, the truth was that they weren't backed by very much power. That caused extremely unsightly expressions to appear on the faces of Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian.

However, as of this point, they already weren't willing to trust their senses. Originally, they had taken Bai Xiaochun to be strong in appearance only, which was why they had attacked. Although he had counter attacked with what was essentially a feint, they were now too unnerved and hesitant to try again.

The threat of Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist was simply too great, and they currently had no way of assessing his true strength.

Even as they hesitated, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up, waved his sleeve, and looked at them with cold, domineering eyes.

“Chen Hetian. Eccentric Bai. And you, third guy who I don’t know. Do you want to fight, or not? If not, then screw the hell off!” As his voice echoed like thunder, the cultivators of the River-Defying Sect looked up with looks of profound excitement.

The three devas had very unsightly expressions on their faces, and had hearts filled with anxiousness. On the one hand, they feared escalating the fight, but on the other hand, didn’t want to back down.

It was in that very moment of hesitation that the three devas suddenly looked up. There, off in the distance, the clouds churned as numerous beams of light appeared. Within moments, a massive formation of troops became visible.

One figure after another shot out into the open. Thousands. Tens of thousands. Soon, it was fully 100,000!! Battle cries filled the air, making it clear that a shocking army was incoming.

It was none other than Bai Lin, Zhao Tianjiao, Patriarch Steel Veins… and the armies of the five legions!

“Who dares to harm one of my major generals!?!?”

“The Hall of Steel Veins campaigned for years at the Great Wall. Now that one of my major generals is back, who dares to cause him grief!?!?”

“You’ve pushed things too far, Patriarch!”

“Master…”

As the voices rang out, the newcomers suddenly caught sight of the battlefield, and their eyes went wide with disbelief.

Those who had cultivation bases at the level of Bai Lin or higher could sense the lingering fluctuations that would result from the death of a deva’s nascent divinity. And those who could not sense such things could see the shattered fleshly body of Patriarch Starry River, as well as his severed head!

Even more shocking was the current state of Bai Xiaochun and the other three devas…. Bai Xiaochun hovered there in the air looking completely domineering and arrogant, facing Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, all of whom had blood dripping down their faces, and were clearly weakened and in very bad shape.

Furthermore, it was obvious that the three devas had been working together… and yet weren’t a match for Bai Xiaochun!

Everyone, Bai Lin included, was left gasping in shock. Most taken aback of all was Patriarch Steel Veins.

“He struck fear into the hearts of three devas?!” he thought. “He actually injured all of them!?”

His eyes flickered in a way that no one would be able to detect. As a powerful deva expert, he was able to clearly sense the evidence of the deaths of Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River.

Furthermore, he could easily see how badly wounded the three devas were, as well as the evidence of how the fight had ended!

“They… just used secret magics!?! This Bai Xiaochun actually forced Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian… to use dangerous escape magics!?!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0892 awe-chapter-893

Silence reigned on the battlefield. The cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins were all staring blankly at Bai Xiaochun, their hearts battered by waves of shock.

As for Bai Lin and Zhao Tianjiao, it looked like their eyes might pop out of their skulls at any moment.

Down below, the numerous cultivators of the River-Defying Sect were bubbling with excitement at how valiant Bai Xiaochun had been in defeating Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian.

The three defeated devas’ expressions flickered. Not only were they in very bad shape after their fight, there were plenty of fellow sect cultivators who had witnessed the affair. It was a big loss of face, and a huge embarrassment. And yet, they were truly in fear of Bai Xiaochun’s strength.

At the same time, the three devas were relieved that the Hall of Steel Veins forces had arrived. *If you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off*, but now they had the perfect opportunity and excuse to retreat.

Bai Xiaochun hovered there, feeling very pleased at the exclamations he had heard from Zhao Tianjiao, Bai Lin, and everyone else. Looking over, he could see that the three devas wished to withdraw. After blinking a few times, he kept his exhaustion hidden and unleashed some cultivation base power.

“Chen Hetian and you other two. You really pushed things too far. I, Bai Xiaochun, have performed great services for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! I've shed blood for it!!

“I slaughtered countless enemies at the Great Wall, and yet, you tried to exterminate my sect. Nobody could stand for such a thing!

“You owe me some compensation! If you don’t kowtow immediately in apology, and swear an oath to stay out of the way of all River-Defying Sect disciples in the future, then this matter will not be over. Even if you escape, I’ll track you down and fight my way into your clans!” He emphasized his words with the flick of a sleeve. After all, he had justice on his side.

When Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian heard his words, they very nearly coughed up more mouthfuls of blood. Bai Xiaochun’s words were biting to the extreme. Earlier, he had simply told them to either fight or screw off, but now that he had some friends to back him up, he was acting even more extravagantly. Not only was he demanding compensation, he was also forcing them to lose face publicly.

“Don’t go overboard, Bai Xiaochun!” Li Xiandao growled, his eyes completely bloodshot. After all, he had just worked very hard to extricate himself from this situation, and now that easy exit was being removed.

That was when Patriarch Steel Veins took a deep breath and blurred into motion. In the blink of an eye, he was next to Bai Xiaochun, although he kept a good distance from him.

Eyes flashing with incisive light, he looked at the other three devas and spoke in a sinister voice as cold as winter wind.

“Overboard? Chen Hetian. Bai Zhentian. Li Xiandao. Do you really think you can go and bully people from the Hall of

Steel Veins any time you like?!?!

“My old pal Bai is exactly right. The Hall of Steel Veins slaughters enemies without count, and yet you sneak around trying to exterminate sects!? Who could possibly stand for such a thing!? Although Brother Bai hasn’t yet been made an elder by the demigod patriarch, considering that he was a major general, and is a member of the Hall of Steel Veins, then that puts him under my protection!

“So, let’s see who here today dares to do a thing to anyone from the Hall of Steel Veins!” As the deva patriarch spoke, the cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins unleashed murderous auras that formed something of a spell formation, locking down any paths of escape for Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian.

Bai Xiaochun’s spirits were lifted even more, and it was the same with the River-Defying Sect. In contrast, the three devas were grumbling bitterly, and their expressions were extremely unsightly.

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun realized that this was a great opportunity! If he made a move right now, then all of his allies would obviously support him.

However, just when he was about to break into motion, the sky suddenly filled with intense rumbling sounds that surpassed heavenly thunder. The sky went dim, and distorted. Spasms rolled out across the surface of the land. At the same time, a powerful blast of energy appeared, shoving Bai Xiaochun backward.

The same energy hit Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, sending them flying backward by several hundred meters. As for the murderous aura being emitted by the Hall of Steel Veins, it winked out instantly.

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Shocking pressure began to weigh down from above, pressure that caused the faces of the devas to fall. The Nascent Soul cultivators present began to tremble, and anyone under that level felt like they were being strangled!

Furthermore, the wills of the all the devas were completely driven away down to the tiniest scrap as an enormous figure of light appeared up above!

It appeared to be made of starlight, and was threatening without being angry. Large enough to prop up heaven and earth, it caused everyone who could see it to be shaken deeply.

It appeared to be a middle-aged man, who was looking down on everyone present, heavenly bodies gleaming in his eyes. The fluctuations rolling off of him vastly surpassed those of a deva. They were demigod fluctuations, and were not being restrained in even the least bit.

When all of the other four devas saw the figure of light, they clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Greetings, Patriarch Starry Sky!”

They weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. The Nascent Soul cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins trembled as they offered formal greetings. Then, everyone else who didn’t recognize the glowing figure, but heard the words of the other powerful experts, gasped and followed suit.

Bai Xiaochun’s breath caught in his throat, and he shivered inwardly. Obviously, this glowing figure of light was none other than… the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s most powerful expert, the demigod patriarch!

“The demigod is stepping in!” Although Bai Xiaochun was a bit nervous, he reminded himself that he had seen his fair share of demigods, and thus managed to suppress his anxiety. However, he put an expression of deep fear onto his face as he clasped hands in formal greeting.

It only took moments for everyone on the battlefield to be bowing in reverence to Patriarch Starry Sky, as if he were the most eminent figure in all heaven and earth.

No expression could be seen on his face as he looked over the crowd, ignoring Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian. In fact, he even ignored the deva from the Hall of Steel Veins. Instead, he fixed his gaze on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had just suppressed his anxiety, only to have it flare up again. He immediately thought back to some ways that he had dealt with demigods back in the Wildlands, and yet quickly realized that this was a totally different situation. Even as his anxiety mounted, and he scrambled to come up with new ideas, the figure of light looked away from him.

Then, an ancient, profound voice rumbled out to fill the entire area.

“Let Bai Xiaochun be appointed as an elder in the Hall of Steel Veins. He shall be given an elder’s command medallion, an immortal's cave on the blue rainbow, and will select a date to make an official return to the sect! Henceforth, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect has six devas!”

As his words echoed out with thunderous intensity, the cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins became visibly excited. As for Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian, their faces grew deathly pale, and they bowed their heads.

They knew that, with the approval of the demigod patriarch, there would be nothing they could do from preventing Bai Xiaochun and the River-Defying Sect from rising to prominence in the eastern Heavenspan River.

If the Hall of Steel Veins was excited, there was almost no need to mention the River-Defying Sect. They were so swept up in the moment that they began to cheer out loud. As for Bai Xiaochun, he breathed a sigh of relief, and wondered why he had been so scared before….

“Who cares about demigods! I absorbed one of the Celestial’s hairs! And I'm supposed to be scared of a demigod? My apprentice is the Hell-Emperor, and my father-in-law is a demigod!” And thus he continued to encourage himself, and muse excitedly about how perfectly he had fought back earlier.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0893 awe-chapter-894

The demigod patriarch gazed at Bai Xiaochun with a profound and enigmatic look before slowly fading away into nothing.

He took Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian along with him when he went, which was a good thing for them. If he hadn't, Bai Xiaochun wouldn't have let them leave unscathed. He had already been glaring at them menacingly before acquiring the open approval of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

To see them fading away with the demigod patriarch was a bit irritating.

"So stingy! It's not like I would actually kill them or something." However, he was so flushed with success that he didn't dwell on such negativity. After all, Zhao Tianjiao, Bai Lin, and the cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins were all still present, and he needed to thank them.

Patriarch Steel Veins wore a broad smile when he spoke, treating Bai Xiaochun, not with superiority, but as an equal.

Bai Lin seemed to have endless sighs in his heart, and the truth was, he couldn't stop thinking about everything that had happened back at the Great Wall. Zhao Tianjiao reacted similarly. Both men seemed to have been deeply affected by what Bai Xiaochun had accomplished, and both of them were determined to return to the sect and go directly into secluded meditation to work on their cultivation!

Among the tens of thousands of other cultivators who had come, many were war buddies from the Great Wall. Some had also been Bai Xiaochun's direct subordinates. All of them were very excited to see him, and didn’t hesitate to accept his invitation to stay in the River-Defying Sect to celebrate.

The patriarchs of the River-Defying Sect were thrilled about what was happening, and threw a feast to thank everyone who had come to offer their aid.

That night was like a dream for most of the disciples of the River-Defying Sect. Their nervousness from earlier became joy, and of course, their esteem for Bai Xiaochun grew even greater.

At the same time, their anticipation for what was to come for the sect grew more intense!

The patriarchs reacted similarly. It was as if an enormous weight had been lifted off their shoulders, and their faces were covered with smiles for the entire night.

The following morning, the cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins left.

After seeing them off, Bai Xiaochun sighed, relieved that he had at long last settled all of the issues that the River-Defying Sect faced.

He could well imagine how, in the coming days, the River-Defying Sect… would be the number one sect in the eastern Middle Reaches cultivation world of the Heavenspan River. From now on, the other three sects… would be subsidiaries of the River-Defying Sect!

“But… it's still not enough!” he thought. He glanced down at his bag of holding, and his eyes began to shine with determination. If the River-Defying Sect truly wanted stability, they couldn’t just have a single deva. If one of the current patriarchs could become the sect’s second deva, even if it was only the Mortal-Dao Deva Realm, then the River-Defying Sect could be considered truly stable in its position.

After all, the demigod patriarch’s Dharmic decree had made clear that Bai Xiaochun would need to return to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect soon. That meant that his time in the River-Defying Sect was limited.

Considering his skill in the Dao of medicine, he was sure that, with the cooperation of the Pill Stream Division, he could use that rainbow spirit thistle to concoct… a Deva Pill!

Deva Pills were very rare, and extremely difficult to concoct. Although he was confident that he could produce one, he didn’t have enough ingredients to make multiple copies.

As for which patriarch he wanted to become a deva, he decided not to worry about it. Although he would surely be able to give input, it was a sensitive subject, and therefore, the best thing would be to let the patriarchs decide among themselves.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he sent a message to Patriarch Spirit Stream and Patriarch Blood Stream, informing them of his plan. Then he went into his secluded meditation facilities to start working.

**

The entire River-Defying Sect was abuzz with talk of Bai Xiaochun. As for Song Junwan, her position in the sect had already changed. In the past, people knew that she was close with Bai Xiaochun, and because of that, she had been treated differently. However, it hadn’t been very obvious.

But now, things were very different. Elders and patriarchs alike treated her with the utmost respect.

In fact, everyone who had good relationships with Bai Xiaochun were being treated differently. Especially… Li Qinghou!

Since Bai Xiaochun was effectively the ultimate leader of the sect now, and Li Qinghou was his uncle, that put him in a very high position. In fact, after some discussion, the patriarchs agreed that when the time came… Li Qinghou would be the next sect leader!

Shortly after that, the patriarchs got word from Bai Xiaochun that he planned to concoct a Deva Pill, which would make it highly likely that one of the half-deva patriarchs would finally be able to break out from the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. Of course, the patriarchs were both delighted and deeply thankful.

Their first thought was to give the honor to Li Qinghou. Unfortunately, his cultivation base was not in the great circle, and they were worried that it would take him too long to get there. They urgently needed a deva patriarch in place in the sect, and therefore, after discussion with Li Qinghou himself, they decided that Patriarch Spirit Stream would be the one to take the pill.

After all, Patriarch Spirit Stream had lived for many, many years, even longer than Patriarch Blood Stream, whose cultivation base was at the same level as his…. Reaching the Deva Realm would give him significant longevity, and Patriarch Spirit Stream had his secret magic that further increased longevity. Even Patriarch Blood Stream had to admit that if he himself became a deva, he would eventually perish, whereas Patriarch Spirit Stream could potentially live for much longer.

Naturally, having Patriarch Spirit Stream as the deva in the sect would be the most beneficial.

Furthermore, with one deva permanently in the sect, it would make it easier for others to reach that level.

As the patriarchs discussed all of these matters, Bai Xiaochun was in his secluded meditation facilities doing the initial work in preparation to concoct the Deva Pill. The sect had acquired the formula long ago, but had never possessed the primary ingredient, and had thus been unable to concoct it.

Bai Xiaochun’s work caused the entire sect to fill with a lovely, sweet fragrance.

Bruiser particularly liked the smell, and plopped himself down in front of Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation chamber to breathe it in. All spirit beasts benefited from it, and even cultivators would experience a certain refinement of their cultivation bases by breathing it in.

This unexpected phenomenon caused everyone in the River-Defying Sect to be in even further awe of Bai Xiaochun. However, the aroma didn’t last for long, as Bai Xiaochun emerged from seclusion seven days later.

He immediately sent word to the patriarchs, whereupon the Pill Stream Division sent over a few dozen grandmaster apothecaries, as well as Li Qinghou, to help Bai Xiaochun in his work. They immediately set up a medicinal spell formation which allowed Bai Xiaochun to begin the final stages of his work.

His concocting session lasted for an entire month. Unfortunately, he met with failure in each attempt, losing some of his primary ingredient every time.

He was starting to get anxious, but managed to suppress his nervousness, and took the opportunity to learn from every mistake. As the saying goes, *everything comes to him who waits*.... It was on his seventh attempt… that he succeeded, just when he ran out of ingredients!

On that day, illusory thunder crackled, and a spirit fragrance filled the entire sect, causing a mist to spring up. The entire River-Defying Sect looked like a celestial paradise as a result.

“I finally did it!” Bai Xiaochun was a bit gaunt, but his eyes sparkled with excitement. As his laughter rang out, the patriarchs hurried over to find him holding a white, glowing medicinal pill.

A single glance at that pill caused deep desire to rise up in the hearts of the patriarchs. All of them could sense how the pill almost seemed fused with the world around it.

After a long moment, the patriarchs managed to suppress their feelings. A very serious expression could be seen on the face of Patriarch Spirit Stream as he accepted the pill. He nodded at Bai Xiaochun, clasped hands and bowed deeply to the other patriarchs, and went into secluded meditation.

The pressure he faced was immense. After all, he only had one Deva Pill, and therefore, only had one chance to succeed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0894 awe-chapter-895

Bai Xiaochun had finally resolved all of the crises facing the River-Defying Sect. He himself was now a deva patriarch of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and had put the River-Defying Sect in the position of being the absolute overlord of the Middle Reaches cultivation world.

On top of that, he had successfully concocted a Deva Pill for the extremely long-lived Patriarch Spirit Stream, giving him a very good chance of reaching the Deva Realm. Bai Xiaochun was very satisfied with everything.

At the moment, he stood outside of his immortal's cave, petting Bruiser’s head and looking around at the sect. The disciples were still busy with the renovation work, and were in very high spirits.

“I never wanted to go back to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, but as you saw, the demigod patriarch personally asked me to go. What a headache!

“I'm also an elder in the Hall of Steel Veins, which is a really rare thing. I guess I have no choice in the matter. All my old friends and war buddies are there. I really just have to accept my status.

“What do you think, Bruiser…? Why am I just such a genius? Ai….” A scowl of helplessness slowly spread out across his face.

Bruiser blinked a few times and looked around, only to find that they were alone, prompting him to snort quietly. After all, Bai Xiaochun usually only acted depressed like this when he knew people were around to see him.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the reaction he was getting, he cleared his throat and then bopped Bruiser on the head.

“Play along!” he said with a glare. “You know what that means? From now on, whenever you hear me talking like this, you need to *play along*. That’ll make me like you even more, alright?”

At first Bruiser whimpered, but then he quickly changed his expression to match Bai Xiaochun’s. When Bai Xiaochun saw how depressed he looked, he frowned and added a few more words.

“No, that’s not the right expression. Listen, when you hear me say things like I just said, you need to look excited! Sigh deeply and with meaning! Make it seem like you’re resigning yourself to a truly bitter fate!” After receiving a few more pointers, Bruiser finally got the right expression onto his face. With that, Bai Xiaochun started over with his act, and Bruiser played along.

“Hahaha! Great job, Bruiser. Alright, come along with dad as I take a walk. Remember, when you hear me say those things, put that expression on your face immediately!” In very high spirits, Bai Xiaochun led Bruiser on a stroll through the sect. Wherever they went, the people they encountered would offer respectful formal greetings.

Whenever there was a big enough of a crowd, Bai Xiaochun would sigh and monologue a bit. The disciples who didn’t know much about him would be shocked. The ones who knew him, though, would simply sigh; this was not their first time seeing him act in a way like this.

Bruiser played along perfectly, and worked very hard at it. As Bai Xiaochun sighed, he would wail and wrap himself around Bai Xiaochun’s leg, eyes shining with a look of comfort. It was as if he were saying to Bai Xiaochun…

It’s simply your fate to be such a genius….

Those who saw this happening were shocked, and many a strange expression could be seen. As for Bai Xiaochun, his delight mounted, and he dragged Bruiser from one place to another for an entire day. The more people who called out greetings to him as a patriarch, the more strange expressions could be seen.

“Uh… how come the patriarch is acting so strange…?”

“Maybe all devas are like this?”

“Oh, you guys have no idea…. Bai Xiaochun, er… Patriarch Bai was always like this. Um… you just need to get used to it, that’s all.”

Talk like that followed Bai Xiaochun wherever he went in the sect…. The next day, his enthusiasm had not yet waned, and the same scene played out again….

He went to see Beihan Lie three times, nearly driving him mad. Beihan Lie would always greet him with the utmost respect, and then be forced to listen to Bai Xiaochun’s endless sighs. On the second day, Beihan Lie chose to go into secluded meditation.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit saddened by that, but then he went to find Shangguan Tianyou…. In fact, he went to see all of the people he knew in the Spirit Stream Division. After that, he went to the Blood Stream Division….

It was in that fashion that three whole days passed, until everyone in the River-Defying Sect came to fully understand Bai Xiaochun’s personality. Wry smiles could be seen everywhere, and many people began to avoid him as soon as they saw him off in the distance. After all, he didn’t seem anything like a deva patriarch in person.

Bai Xiaochun did not get discouraged. Actually, he became more focused. In fact, he had just decided to go look into the specifics of why Beihan Lie was in secluded meditation when Song Junwan finally had enough. Rushing over angrily, she rebuked him up and down until he finally rubbed his nose and gave up on acting like a patriarch.

“All I was doing was sighing and saying a few things.… Ah, whatever. I guess if I’m not even allowed to sigh, I’ll just go into secluded meditation.” After all, he would be in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect soon, and nobody there would care if he went around sighing.

Filled with aspirations for what was to come, he went into meditation.

For one thing, he needed to wait until Patriarch Spirit Stream achieved his breakthrough. And also, he had still not yet stabilized his cultivation base after his recent breakthrough. And then there was the Undying Codex. Having mastered the Undying Bones, and having achieved a breakthrough, he was now in the position… to break through the fourth shackle of the human body!

Once that happened, he knew that his fleshly body power would increase. Most importantly… he would be able to cultivate the final part of the Undying Codex.…

The Undying Blood!!

“The Undying Blood is the true essence of the Undying Codex. If I succeed with that… I won’t necessarily be truly undying, but… I definitely won’t be dying anytime soon!” With that thought on his mind, he got to work.

After sitting down cross-legged, he cast his senses inward to the shocking spiritual power of heaven and earth that flowed through him constantly. It almost made him feel as if he were a part of the world around him!

Every move he made could be filled with heavenly might, and every breath he took could rumble like thunder!

“So this is what it’s like to be a deva…. It’s totally different from the Nascent Soul stage. A complete transformation!” The more he probed his cultivation base, the more excited he got. Furthermore, he could tell that after becoming a deva, his longevity had grown vastly more vigorous.

“I wonder if… I could live for 5,000 years now?” The thought excited him, and he began to do some calculations, but was soon disappointed to realize that he probably couldn’t reach 5,000….

“Ai. I'm still very far away from my goal of being able to live forever.” After examining his cultivation base for a bit longer, he sank into a trance and began to work on his fleshly body power.

Cracking sounds could be heard inside of him, which came from his bones. The power of his qi and blood erupted out, causing the air in his secluded meditation chamber to twist and distort as a vortex sprang up around him.

Based on the fluctuations, Bai Xiaochun was sure that he could sense… the fourth shackle!

It felt much the same as the previous three shackles. Although the sensation wasn’t particularly clear, he was sure that something like an enormous mountain was weighing down on him with profound heaviness.

All of a sudden, he felt the impulse to smash into that mountain!!

Eyes widening, he shouted, “It's time to break the fourth shackle!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0895 awe-chapter-896

No one but Bai Xiaochun could hear the thunderous rumbling sound that filled him. It surpassed heavenly thunder as it echoed through his body, causing him to shake where he sat, blue veins bulging out on his neck and face.

It really did feel to him like there was a huge mountain pressing down on him. Drawing upon his incredible fleshly body power, he pushed back against that mountain in an attempt to break it.

The power of qi and blood surged inside of him, and as the rumbling sounds grew more intense, he shouted, “Break!!”

At that point, the invisible mountain that was the fourth shackle of the human body shattered. All of a sudden, he felt lighter and freer, like a wild stallion who had been unharnessed and let run free.

There were no bounds or restrictions in place anymore, allowing his qi and blood to flow strong and hard. His meditation chamber began to tremble, and beyond it, the River-Defying Sect as a whole.

The power of his Undying Bones could be no higher. It surged through him like flood waters, pushing at him, screaming, until he realized that…

He was about to break past the Undying Bones level!!

He had truly reached the peak!

As the saying goes, *when one is focused and works hard, good fortune is sure to follow*. At this point, the mnemonic for the Undying Blood suddenly appeared, as though it had been branded in his soul and waiting for this moment.

As he went to work with the mnemonic, the remaining power of the Celestial’s blood-hair sprang into motion. A tremor passed through him, and he withered visibly, growing incredibly gaunt within only a few breaths of time.

If he hadn’t been prepared for this very outcome, it would have been a big fright.

“It’s gonna wither me to death!!” He immediately ceased the operation of the Undying Blood. Thankfully, there was nothing about the technique that made that impossible. Even the short moment that had passed left his face ashen, his vision dim, and his ears ringing.

After a long moment passed, he recovered. However, his face was still pale, and his heart still twitched with lingering fear. After examining himself inside and out, he almost cried.

“My life force….” His previously thriving life force had been drained by more than half in that brief few breaths of time.

“It wasn’t this exaggerated before! This… this is even more frightening than Mistress Red-Dust and Song Junwan combined!” Scowling, he contemplated simply giving up on cultivating the Undying Blood.

He was truly worried that he would accidentally kill himself before mastering it….

“Don’t tell me I'm going to have to go through another whole situation of using the Eternal Parasol…?” He smacked his forehead in irritation.

“This Undying Codex is the worst technique ever. Seems to me the point is to turn good people into villains!” Depressed, he thought back to how he had once been a pure and naïve youngster, only to start cultivating the Undying Skin, and turn into the Chicken-Thieving Fiend….

And then there was his time in the Blood Stream Sect, when he snuck around other people’s immortal's caves, stealing qi and blood for the Undying Heavenly King….

After that came the Undying Tendons, where he had used pill concocting at the Great Wall as a front to embezzle everything he needed….

And finally, out in the Wildlands, he had become a vicious hunter of life force to finish the Undying Bones….

“Is it all worth it? I'm a good person, after all! Maybe mastering the Undying Bones is good enough. It’s pretty awesome on its own….” Sighing, he once again began to review the mnemonic for the Undying Blood.

The Undying Blood was the final level of the Undying Codex, and was the last step to mastering the full technique!

The Undying Skin provided incredible defensive powers. The Undying Flesh increased fleshly body power to shocking levels. The Undying Tendons provided explosive speed and power, although that was really only the first step. The Undying Bones was the second in that same vein!

The effects of that second leap upward were even more obvious. After he had mastered the Undying Bones, his defenses, his speed, his strength, and everything else had reached the peak!

At that time, he had possessed deva-level fleshly body power, to the point where, combined with his cultivation base, it would have been very difficult for a deva to catch him if he wanted to flee.

However, at that point, his Undying Codex had not been without flaws, nor had he been unkillable. After all, despite the shocking level of power he commanded, he could be easily drained. Calling upon just his Undying Emperor’s Fist would leave him almost powerless.

Although he had been tough, and difficult to wound, he still required recovery time if he did get injured. Furthermore, most injuries that affected him would be extremely serious.

But… now that he could cultivate the Undying Blood, those weaknesses were disappearing.

Cultivating the Undying Blood was a process in which all of the blood in one’s body was replaced, one drop at a time.

It might sound dramatic, but once that happened, a person who cultivated the Undying Codex would have a hard time running low on power!

It was easy to imagine how heaven-shakingly, earth-shatteringly powerful the Undying Emperor’s Fist would be in that situation!

Of course, the Undying Blood also brought a significant boost in overall fleshly body power. But that was secondary. The most significant benefit was the dramatic improvement of recovery power!!

After analyzing the information, Bai Xiaochun thought back to what it was like when he used the Undying Emperor’s

Fist. And then, he couldn’t help but anticipate what it would be like to use it with the benefits of the Undying Blood.

And then there were the regeneration benefits. Couple that with the shocking power he would have at his disposal, and he would be a person few people in heaven and earth could kill….

“Demigods would flee from me, and I could even cause a big headache for the Celestial….” Bai Xiaochun’s anticipation continued to grow. If he could just overcome the difficulties that came along with this type of cultivation, then one day, he would truly be *undying*. The thought of that caused his eyes to turn completely bloodshot.

“I don’t care how I do it. It’s all for my goal of being able to live forever…. I'm gonna go for broke!”

His eyes shone with complete determination. However, he didn’t continue with cultivation at the moment; right now wasn’t the proper time.

That didn’t mean he couldn’t seek enlightenment of the technique. After all, that would be the best way to ensure that his efforts proceeded smoothly.

“The Undying Blood… isn’t divided up into levels like the other parts of the codex!

“Essentially, the point of the Undying Blood is to replace the current blood in one’s body. At that point, every drop of blood inside me will be as boundless as a huge lake!

“The blood is divided into percentages… Once I replace one hundred percent of my blood… I will have eternally indestructible, Undying Blood!”

His thorough study of the information and mnemonic of the Undying Blood took several days. At that point, he looked up for a moment, then slapped his bag of holding to produce some medicinal pills.

“I’m going to try one more time! But this time, I’ll be extra careful!” From his attitude, it almost seemed like he was about to go into a dangerous duel. Eyes bloodshot, he drew upon the power of his fleshly body.

As he did, he found that, instead of a whirlpool inside of him… there were many whirlpools! Every drop of blood was a whirlpool that ravenously devoured his life force!

He almost cried when that happened. That was especially true when he found that the power of any medicinal pills he consumed were instantly sucked away by the vortexes.

He quickly ended the session of cultivation. However, that was when his jaw suddenly dropped, and he looked in the direction of the Blood Stream Division, and… the Blood Ancestor!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0896 awe-chapter-897

Because Bai Xiaochun had been so involved with the Undying Blood, and the shocking speed with which it drained his life force, he had failed to notice something happening with the Blood Ancestor.

As of this moment, he felt a sensation of grief and anger inside of him, as well as a profound level of focus!!

Furthermore, a heaven-shaking howl suddenly erupted into his ears.

“Hold my breath today, awaken tomorrow. When I arouse… I will fight!!”

Those few short words caused a sensation of profound astonishment to fill Bai Xiaochun. In fact, he almost felt as if the words had originated within himself.

The qi and blood fluctuations within the words were the same as his own. Whoever spoke those words also cultivated the Undying Codex!!

“The Blood Ancestor!” This was the first time he had ever been able to sense any emotions from the Blood Ancestor, despite the fact that he had taken control of his body on multiple occasions in the past.

All of a sudden, he felt the desire to do battle, and could sense his blood coursing madly through his veins. For some reason, it seemed like the Blood Ancestor was calling out to him!

In addition to that, he was almost sure that he could sense… other similar fluctuations! They were weaker, and in different areas, but they absolutely contained the same fluctuations!

Those fluctuations were coming from two different areas… both within the River-Defying Sect. It only took a moment for him to realize that one of those sources… was the monkey in the River-Defying Sect!

The other was… the talking rabbit in the Blood Stream Sect!!

This realization struck him to the core. As he continued to study the situation, he realized that there were other life force fluctuations in other areas that matched the Blood Ancestor… and all of them were familiar!

In one location, he saw a bird. In another, a tiger with wings. He saw a huge goose standing guard over something…. How could he ever forget those animals!? They were the very same creatures that had transformed after he fed them his special medicinal pills!!

“How is this even possible!?!?” he said with a gasp. He sagged in place, beads of sweat popping out all over his forehead as he ended his session of cultivation.

After ceasing all activity related to the Undying Blood, his connection to the Blood Ancestor and all of the small animals vanished. A long moment passed, and yet, the look of confusion on his face remained.

“Are all of those animals connected to the Blood Ancestor somehow?” All of a sudden, he realized that there was some profound mystery wrapped up in that matter from years ago.

“What exactly is going on here…?” he thought. After some more thought, he rose to his feet and rushed over to the Blood Stream Division. Soon, he was standing on the Blood Ancestor’s shoulder!

Normally speaking, only patriarchs would qualify to get this close to the venerated Blood Ancestor. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun was completely alone. Panting, he reached down and put his hand onto the Blood Ancestor’s skin, and yet, no amount of probing revealed any trace of life force. Bai Xiaochun even began to wonder if what he had sensed earlier had been an illusion.

“There’s no way I was mistaken!” he murmured. After a moment of silence, he actually entered the Blood Ancestor’s body, following the familiar route from the past until he was in the heart cavity.

Sometime later, he emerged out into the open. His journey… had been completely fruitless.

“Hold my breath today, awaken tomorrow…. Did the Blood Ancestor… not perish after all?” Mixed emotions filled Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. After the gravekeeper had passed on the mantle of the Hell-Emperor to Bai Hao, and after coming to know the Celestial’s story, Bai Xiaochun’s understanding of the world had changed. He had come to know that there were many secrets he was not privy to.

But now he came to find out that there were even more secrets!

“And what about Du Lingfei? What was she doing in a tiny place like the Spirit Stream Sect? Was it something to do with the Frigid School of the north? If so, why did she go to the Blood Stream Sect afterward…?” That question had been gnawing at him for years. Although he had come to the conclusion that it had something to do with the true spirit of the Spirit Stream Sect, that baby girl, now he wasn’t so certain.

He stood there in thought, a haze of thoughts running through his head. Time passed, although he wasn’t sure how much. At one point, a sound like muffled thunder could be heard from one of the mountain peaks in the Spirit Stream Division.

As the sound spread out, countless disciples looked up in shock. It also interrupted Bai Xiaochun’s train of thought, and he looked over at the Spirit Stream Division, his eyes shining.

“Patriarch Spirit Stream....” he murmured. The noise was coming from the secluded meditation facilities, where Patriarch Spirit Stream was attempting to reach the Deva Realm.

Shocking fluctuations erupted out, as well as an astonishing aura that grew stronger with each passing moment!

“The patriarch is going to break through!!”

“The River-Defying Sect is going to have another deva!!”

“He’s definitely going to succeed!” The elders of the sect all hurried over to stand as Dharma protectors, Li Qinghou included. Patriarch Blood Stream and the other two patriarchs were also present.

Patriarch Spirit Stream’s breakthrough was a matter of the utmost importance to the sect. Thankfully, the grand spell formation had just been repaired, and it was activated to ensure that no mishaps occurred.

The disciples were trembling with excitement, and praying that everything would turn out well.

Bai Xiaochun buried his thoughts and questions concerning the Blood Ancestor, and focused on the important matter of Patriarch Spirit Stream.

Because of the unique way he had achieved his own breakthrough, he had not experienced what Patriarch Spirit Stream was currently experiencing, and therefore, couldn’t provide any advice. All he could do was rely on the power of his cultivation base to pay close attention, and be ready to provide any support necessary.

However, it was not for naught that Patriarch Spirit Stream had lived for so many years. After all, he had single-handedly led a tiny sect out of the delta region to the Lower Reaches, a sect which had grown and thrived until it was in its current position in the Middle Reaches. He was the top patriarch in that sect, a person with deep experience, and profoundly qualified in terms of cultivation base.

The only thing he had lacked in the past was the right opportunity!

Bai Xiaochun had given him that opportunity, and of course, he seized it without hesitation. Rumbling thunder echoed out as Patriarch Spirit Stream’s aura grew stronger. By now, his will had reached the point of being able to almost completely fuse with heaven and earth.

Seventy percent. Eighty percent. Ninety percent….

His cultivation base fluctuations grew more intense with every moment that passed. As everyone in the River-Defying Sect paid close attention, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, and smiled.

As he did, Patriarch Spirit Stream’s will fused completely with heaven and earth!

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLLLE!!

The clouds seethed, but no heavenly tribulation appeared. There was only a huge face floating high in the sky.

It was… Patriarch Spirit Stream’s face!

Emotion was visible in his eyes as he stared down at all the living creatures below….

“Henceforth… I shall always protect… my home…. The River-Defying Sect!” His voice was filled with determination, focus, faith, and sincerity!

Patriarch Spirit Stream… had just sworn a Dao oath!!

Even as his voice continued to echo out, his will retracted from heaven and earth. He was only a Mortal-Dao deva, but with the extensive preparations he had made over the years, he now surpassed that level by far. He was actually as powerful… as the early Earth-Dao Deva Realm!

“Patriarch!”

“Patriarch!!”

“Patriarch!!!”

The disciples of the River-Defying Sect erupted into cheering. And they weren’t the only ones. The Nascent Soul elders joined in, as did the patriarchs from the Blood, Pill, and Profound Stream Divisions. Then, expressions of veneration appeared on their faces as they clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0897 awe-chapter-898

In the Spirit Stream Division’s mountains in the River-Defying Sect, the monkey sat there with an alcohol flagon, sipping occasionally, a glint of pleasure in his eyes as he looked up at the face of Patriarch Spirit Stream.

“To be able to see this makes it all worth it. Even if I end up paying a steep price for returning… it was all worth it!” The monkey laughed heartily, and then looked in the direction of the Blood Stream Division, not at Bai Xiaochun, but rather… at the rabbit, who was on one of the mountains, a blank look in his eyes.

Occasionally, the rabbit came to his senses, and at other times, he was muddle-headed. At the moment, he was clearly in possession of his faculties, and was feeling deeply moved.

Cheering filled the sect. Bai Xiaochun was feeling very pleased. Plus, now that Patriarch Spirit Stream was a deva, it took a lot of the pressure off him.

He could now leave the River-Defying Sect and go to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect without worrying too much about what would happen in his absence. Of course, considering his own high position within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, that made the River-Defying Sect’s position as a subsidiary sect even more stable.

With Patriarch Spirit Stream there, the only thing that could possibly be a threat to the sect would be a demigod. Anyone else would think twice, three times, or even four times before causing problems!

Furthermore, demigod experts were not common at all. In all of the Heavenspan River region… there were only four, all of them being patriarchs in the riversource sects.

Three days passed by in a flash. As news about Patriarch Spirit Stream spread through the Middle Reaches cultivation world, the other three great sects, none of whom currently had a deva, didn't dare to cause any trouble. In fact, in their veneration, they sent tribute to the River-Defying Sect, and willingly bowed their heads in acquiescence….

If the three other largest sects acted in such a way, it almost wasn't necessary to mention the other smaller sects and cultivator clans. Word also spread to the Lower Reaches, where veneration for the River-Defying Sect grew more widespread.

Of course, in the Lower Reaches, many of the sects fell under the jurisdiction of the other three Middle Reaches sects. But right now, the River-Defying Sect was the number one sect in the Middle Reaches, and therefore, the small sects in the Lower Reaches knew that there would be dire consequences for offending them.

Although the River-Defying Sect hadn't completely unified the Middle Reaches, Lower Reaches, and delta regions, they had most certainly reached the ultimate level of power.

The matter was of course noted by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Under normal circumstances, they probably would have interfered to prevent a single organization from having so much power. After all, a situation like that would influence the resources available to the other deva patriarchs in the sect.

Unfortunately for them, Bai Xiaochun had accumulated so much glory in battle that he had received acknowledgement by the demigod patriarch himself. Because of that, Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian could do nothing other than grit their teeth and accept the situation. None of them offered even a single word of disagreement, not because they didn't consider it, but because they feared Bai Xiaochun too greatly.

There was another deva who was very torn about the situation, and that was the child deva from Sky Quarter. Theoretically speaking, the River-Defying Sect was under his control. However, when war had broken out, the child deva came up with endless excuses to refrain from offering help.

Later, a second crisis developed, and the Hall of Steel Veins took action, whereas the child deva did not. After it was all over, the child deva pondered whether or not to increase his yearly tribute requirement from the River-Defying Sect.

After much consideration, he sighed and abandoned such thoughts. After all, he had heard about how terrifyingly powerful Bai Xiaochun was, and feared he might regret the consequences of trifling with him.

Without anyone causing any problems for the River-Defying Sect, it thrived, growing more powerful and expanding its territory. Two months passed.

Bai Xiaochun spent most of that time in secluded meditation, researching the Undying Blood, and thinking about what new technique he should cultivate now that he was a deva. After all, the River-Defying Sect was only a Middle Reaches sect. If he wanted deva techniques, he really needed to go to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to get one.

Although the Spirit Stream Division had once been the Frigid School from the northern Heavenspan River, they had only escaped to the east after suffering heavy losses. The fact that the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation had survived was almost a miracle.

Although the sect did have some incomplete deva techniques hidden away, Patriarch Spirit Stream refused to give any of them to Bai Xiaochun, stating that they weren’t suitable. Instead, he urged Bai Xiaochun to go to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to make his choice.

Although he had no good deva technique, he did make progress with his Undying Blood, and actually succeeded in creating an entire drop.

That drop of invincible blood was not red, but gold, and as it flowed through his veins, it glittered brightly, and sent a holy aura out through him that left him feeling very pleased.

“Those medicinal pills made up for just about all the life force I have in me, and yet, that only got me one drop of blood….” He frowned. On the up side, he was neither very fat nor very muscular. If he was… then he might not have any hope of completing the Undying Blood.

Thankfully, the Undying Blood also came with a secret magic!

The other levels of the Undying Codex had the Throat Crushing Grasp, Mountain Shaking Bash, Undying Hex, and Undying Emperor’s Fist. As for the fifth level’s secret magic, it was called… the Godkiller!

The point of the Godkiller was… to kill demigods!

With the Godkiller technique, he could accelerate with indescribable speed. In much the same way that the Undying Emperor’s Fist could quintuple his fleshly body power, the Godkiller technique could increase his speed. It was almost impossible to imagine what such speed would be like.

And of course, the path to such god-slaying was… his indestructible blood!

When cultivating the Undying Blood, one’s blood did not become eternally indestructible until reaching the great circle. Before then, it was possible to fuel the Godkiller technique with Undying Blood, and use that blood magic to reach indescribable speeds!

With such speed, he wouldn’t even need to make an actual attack. As he accelerated with shocking speed, the blood qi which surrounded him would ensure that he could rock mountains by simply running into them. Even more shocking was that if he hit any living thing while using the Godkiller technique, he would be able to absorb some of their life force.

That nearly caused his eyes to drop out of their eye sockets. The Undying Codex really was an evil technique!!

“I almost can’t believe that a simple, pure, honest and kindhearted person like me… would end up cultivating an evil technique like this!” Frowning and sighing, he began to think of how to combine the Godkiller with the other techniques he already had.

For example, if he used the Godkiller and the Mountain Shaking Bash together… well, the mere idea caused his heart to start racing.

“What if I used it with the Throat Crushing Grasp…? If my opponent was still alive, I could follow up with the Undying Emperor’s Fist…. And if the fight kept going, I could combine my Undying Hex with the Godkiller, and nobody would be able to catch me!

“And that’s not even mentioning my divine abilities. If I threw in the Waterswamp Kingdom, my Heavenspan Dharma Eye, or perhaps the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation….” He couldn’t help but sigh at the realization of how awesome he was at this point.

“However, using the Godkiller technique wastes Undying Blood…. And right now, I only have one drop in me….” To think of wasting the Undying Blood that required so much difficult work to produce caused him to hesitate about whether to even use the Godkiller.

“The Godkiller obviously isn’t meant to be used in a fight. It’s supposed to be for getting life force!” A few more days passed, and eventually, he decided that the time had come to leave the River-Defying Sect and head for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

After all, there was still the issue of his deva technique.

After making his decision, he said his farewells to Song Junwan, who had long since prepared herself for his departure. She didn’t say much. She gently adjusted his clothing, and then embraced him.

Before he left, Patriarch Spirit Stream came to give him something very important from the Spirit Stream Division!

It was a crystal coffin, within which was… the body of a baby girl!

It was the Spirit Stream Division’s most secret reserve power, the Frigid School true spirit!!

“Keep her safe,” the patriarch said softly. “You’re the only one in the Spirit Stream Division who can do it.... Keep her safe. That is our most important mission!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0898 awe-chapter-899

“Patriarch….” Bai Xiaochun said, a look of shock on his face. He had assumed the patriarch had come to give him a magical item, or perhaps some other rare object. Never could he have imagined that the gift would actually be the Frigid School’s true spirit….

“Um… Patriarch, I don’t think it’s really appropriate for you to give me this true spirit. She’s so important, and I’m so clumsy! What if I accidentally drop her or something? If something bad happened…. Why don’t you give her to someone else?” He really had a strange feeling about the patriarch giving him a coffin as a parting gift….

Although the coffin contained a true spirit, it was still very odd, and didn't seem very auspicious as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned.

“Take her with you….” Patriarch Spirit Stream repeated. The reason he was giving the coffin and the true spirit to Bai Xiaochun was because of all the deadly close calls the River-Defying Sect had been through. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun’s return ensured that everything worked out fine in the end. But Patriarch Spirit Stream was still worried about what could happen in the future.

He didn’t want to gamble with the true spirit. Therefore, he gave the coffin to Bai Xiaochun, which he felt would be safer than keeping it in the River-Defying Sect. Most important was the fact that it was a suggestion by his Master, the monkey. Even though Patriarch Spirit Stream was now a deva, he still held eternal respect for his Master.

Bai Xiaochun could see how determined Patriarch Spirit Stream was. It didn't seem that he would take no for an answer! Feeling a headache coming on, Bai Xiaochun looked at the coffin.

“Why don’t we talk this over a bit, Patriarch? I really don’t think it’s appropriate. What if there’s a mishap…?”

“There won’t be any mishaps, and there’s no need for discussion. Take her with you, Xiaochun!” With that, Patriarch Spirit Stream clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun shook his head and looked at the baby girl in the crystal coffin. Her eyes were closed, making it seem almost as if she had already perished. However, Bai Xiaochun knew that she wasn’t dead… just sleeping deeply.

Back when he had united the Lower Reaches sects to attack the Sky River Court, that baby girl had woken up and transformed into a god-like young woman!

Before falling back asleep, that young woman had looked deeply into Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and then revealed to him the secret formula for the River-Defying Pill.

“I can barely take care of myself, let alone a true spirit!” he thought, frowning at the thought of essentially becoming a stay-at-home dad. However, he knew that this little girl was extremely important to the Spirit Stream Division. After all, Patriarch Spirit Stream had told him long ago that the original reason why the Spirit Stream Sect wanted to make their way upriver was for the sake of this girl.

After more vacillating, Bai Xiaochun looked at Patriarch Spirit Stream and then back at the crystal coffin. Finally, he nodded reluctantly. No matter how much he wanted to avoid accepting the coffin and the profoundly mysterious baby girl, he really had no choice.

When Patriarch Spirit Stream saw that Bai Xiaochun was agreeing, he sighed in relief. After looking one last time at the baby girl in the coffin, he left Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave.

“Ah, whatever,” Bai Xiaochun thought, shaking his head and sighing. He waved his sleeve, pulling the coffin into his bag of holding. As he did, he suddenly remembered something, and shouted, “I know you’re in there, little turtle! You listen up. Behave! You’re absolutely not allowed to bother the girl in that coffin!”

Although he didn’t get any response, he was sure that the little turtle had heard him. After putting the coffin away, he meditated through the night, and then rose to his feet at dawn. Flying up into the air above the River-Defying Sect, he looked down and sighed, then transformed into a beam of light that shot in the direction of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“Back when I left the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, not very many people knew me. But things are going to be different now.” Thinking smugly about his deva cultivation base, and how he was the sixth deva in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he couldn’t help but start to get excited.

“I wonder how my inn is doing. And what the hell have Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai been up to? Back when the sect was in danger, why didn’t they come back to help?” He suddenly started to feel a bit uneasy. It didn’t make sense for Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai to act like that.

“Did something happen to them?” he thought, speeding up a bit.

Considering the level of his cultivation base, it didn’t take much time or effort for him to get through the Middle Reaches. Before long, he was on the border of Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. As he neared, he sensed three auras reaching out to scan him. Almost immediately, they shrank away in shock.

Moments later, three people flew out from a nearby mountain, where they clasped hands and bowed in his direction.

“Well met, Patriarch Bai!”

They wore the garments of Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect disciples, and were tasked with standing watch over this border region of the sect. They had heard the news about Bai Xiaochun, and considering that they were the closest spot between the main sect and the River-Defying Sect, they had been waiting for Bai Xiaochun to show up. At a single glance, it was possible to see how nervous they were.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t know them, but was pleased with how they were treating him. Clasping his hands behind his back, he struck the pose of someone of the elder generation, and nodded magnanimously before speeding along his way.

Upon his departure, the three disciples breathed sighs of relief and then exchange glances. All of them could see the veneration in each other’s eyes.

“Who would have thought that somebody like him, a nobody from a tiny sect, a simple hostage, would end up as a deva patriarch from the Hall of Steel Veins…?”

“You make it sound like becoming a deva patriarch is an easy thing. I heard that right after Patriarch Bai became a deva, he defeated three other experts who were in the mid

Deva Realm. Then the sect’s demigod patriarch looked with favor upon him.”

“Yeah, that’s right. It’s too bad we weren’t friends with Patriarch Bai back when he first came to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. If we had, we would already be on the path to fame.” Sighing, the three disciples took out transmission jade slips and sent news back to the sect about Bai Xiaochun’s arrival.

Word soon began to spread that Bai Xiaochun was on his way. The Hall of Steel Veins was the first to react, and emerged en masse to form ranks and wait for his arrival.

All 100,000 members of the Hall of Steel Veins were present, including many soldiers from the five legions. It was a shocking sight to anyone present to see it.

Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian were not happy at all. After returning to the sect, all of them had gone into secluded meditation. Considering that, some of the disciples under their command also went into meditation, whereas others went out to receive Bai Xiaochun.

For the most part, though, the disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect emerged to greet Bai Xiaochun upon his arrival. Some knew him, but most were strangers. However… even the strangers knew of his name.

“Patriarch Bai was once a hostage from the River-Defying Sect. He instituted a reign of terror as soon as he arrived in Sky City.”

“He also caused a big stir when he made it into the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars!”

"You've never heard of Bai Xiaochun? Well, you've heard of that inn over in Sky City, right? That's his! That entire 5-kilometer area is his personal property!"

A buzz of conversation soon filled the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Of course, there had been a lot of talk about him after he was bestowed a title by the demigod patriarch. Therefore, as soon as the Hall of Steel Veins went out to prepare for his arrival, the talk intensified.

Of course, there was one patriarch in the Hall of Steel Veins who looked particularly happy. He waved his hand, causing bells to ring out to fill the entire sect!

They tolled eight times, which indicated that someone of incredibly high status was coming. In fact, the only higher number of bell tolls was nine, which was reserved for demigods. Eight bell tolls meant a deva was coming!

As the bells tolled, ripples spread out through the sky, causing immense pressure to weigh down on the disciples. At the same time, everyone looked off into the distance, where a beam of light appeared, shooting at top speed toward the sect!

In the four cities beneath the rainbow structure were countless people looking up at that beam. Whether or not they knew Bai Xiaochun, they were all deeply shaken.

As for the cultivators from the Hall of Steel Veins, they were the most prepared of all. As soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared, they joined their voices together into one mighty, thunderous greeting. "We offer respectful greetings, Patriarch Bai!"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0899 awe-chapter-900

It was with this solemn reception that Bai Xiaochun entered the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

The demigod patriarch didn’t appear, but he had already issued a Dharmic decree giving Bai Xiaochun an area of his own on the blue rainbow. That was where his immortal's cave was located.

In the past, there had only been five people who qualified to live on the blue rainbow, but now there was a sixth!

What left the disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect even more shaken was the knowledge that this Patriarch Bai Xiaochun was no ordinary deva. Even after having just reached the Deva Realm, he dominated three of the other deva patriarchs, and also killed three devas from the Middle Reaches. Battle achievements like that were essentially heaven-defying in nature.

Few people would be willing to provoke someone that strong. Besides, the newly-appointed Patriarch Bai Xiaochun had another role in the sect that made him even more domineering. He was a deva patriarch in the Hall of Steel Veins!

The Hall of Steel Veins had always been a very powerful force within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. They were warrior cultivators who had fought for years in bloody campaigns along the Great Wall, and had shockingly murderous auras. They were the type of people who no one would dare to provoke.

Bai Xiaochun had incredible battle prowess, and an extremely high position in the sect. A deva patriarch like that was the type who would naturally leave the whole sect feeling shaken, and would be the subject of much respect and adoration.

Because of that, he had absolutely no spare time after his return. Every day, crowds of visitors flocked to his immortal’s cave on the blue rainbow.

Patriarch Steel Veins was the first to arrive. The two chatted merrily for a bit, and eventually agreed to form a loose alliance between the two of them. Afterward, the patriarch left, smiling the entire time.

The second person to visit was the child deva from Sky Quarter Rainbow. It was a bit awkward at first. They made some small talk, and then he expressed his goodwill, hoping to put behind them the fact that he hadn’t stepped in to help the River-Defying Sect.

Next came numerous Nascent Soul cultivators, who offered respectful greetings, as well as gifts, in the hopes of forging a good relationship with Bai Xiaochun. Some of them were experts from Sky Quarter Rainbow, former rivals and enemies who, despite having mixed feelings, expressed nothing but friendly respect.

Bai Xiaochun handled all of these situations with ease. After all, he had built up a lot of experience with this kind of thing over the years. He had become especially used to having a high position of authority back in the Wildlands, and had grown very used to conducting himself properly. He put pressure on some people, and treated others coldly. He greeted certain individuals warmly, and joked with others.

Of course, everything that was happening was being closely observed by the devas who were his neighbors.

Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian all snorted coldly in their hearts, and yet could do nothing other than sit there quietly. They knew that it wouldn’t be wise to stir up trouble right when Bai Xiaochun was making his big debut.

There were a few people who Bai Xiaochun treated with particular warmth and sincerity when they came to visit. One of them was the hallmaster from the Hall of Devil Slayers, who had received hints from Du Lingfei to watch out for Bai Xiaochun. His name was Feng Youde!

Feng Youde had prepared a lavish gift for Bai Xiaochun. As far as he was concerned, he had struck it very lucky over the years. After doing as he said he would do, and taking care of Bai Xiaochun, Du Lingfei had kept her promise. Although Feng Youde had not quite reached the Deva Realm because of her help, he was very close.

How could he ever have imagined that his decision all those years ago would benefit him a second time? After hearing that Bai Xiaochun had actually become a deva, he had immediately become very excited.

“Virtue has its rewards!” he thought, sighing emotionally. He treated Bai Xiaochun with the utmost respect, and was personally escorted out, which was a huge honor. After he left, he felt more wonderful than ever.

After three days passed, the stream of visitors slowed down, causing Bai Xiaochun to sigh a bit. He had very much enjoyed the busy three days.

Thanks to having so many visitors, Bai Xiaochun learned a lot about what had gone on in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity

Sect during his many years of absence.

He was also reminded that patriarchs from the Hall of Steel Veins were considered elders in the sect, and not just ordinary elders, but prime elders.

Furthermore, there were only six prime elders in the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! Underneath those prime elders were nearly a hundred Nascent Soul elders. Collectively, they made up… the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s Cabinet of Elders!

Unless the demigod patriarch interfered, the Cabinet of Elders essentially made all the decisions in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

Because of their place in that organization, Chen Hetian, Bai Zhentian, Li Xiandao, and the child deva Li Yuanda had the power and authority to manage all aspects of the sect. Whether it was affairs downriver, alliances with other riversource sects, or communications with Heavenspan Island, it was within the scope of their responsibilities.

Matters both big and small were determined by those four devas. However, the one thing they had no say in… was war!

War… was the jurisdiction of the Hall of Steel Veins. Before, it had been the sole responsibility of Patriarch Steel Veins. But now, Bai Xiaochun was being added to the mix. The two of them were the only ones who could send the ancient and powerful Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect into battle.

Of course, the demigod patriarch could overturn any order. However, when it came to the fighting at the Great Wall, or other conflicts in other areas, the Hall of Steel Veins always took the lead.

Because of the incredibly high status that Bai Xiaochun now had, he qualified to look into many areas of inquiry that had been closed to him before.

For example… Heavenspan Island!!

For example… Du Lingfei’s status as Heavenspan emissary!

For example… Hou Xiaomei and Ghostfang!

Based on everything that he had seen in the Wildlands, matters pertaining to Heavenspan Island weren’t as much of a mystery anymore. Although he didn't understand everything fully, he had a pretty good idea.

The Celestial really was the emperor of the Heavenspan River region!

The four riversource sects corresponded to the Wildlands’ four heavenly kings, and acted like regional governors!

Heavenspan Island was where the Celestial’s Palace of the Dao was located.

And when Du Lingfei went out on missions… she ranked the same as a demigod!

In terms of the selection process which had ended up taking Hou Xiaomei and others to Heavenspan Island, Bai Xiaochun was now able to confirm that it really was just a matter of course.

“Du Lingfei… left the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect quite a few years ago. She went back… to Heavenspan Island.” Bai Xiaochun currently held a jade slip of information in his hand. By now, he had some speculations regarding why Du Lingfei was the Heavenspan emissary.

As soon as the idea popped into his head, he tried to suppress it. However, a strange expression gradually took over his face. After some more thought, he blinked a few times and then cleared his throat.

“If I’m right… that would be terrifying.” He rubbed his nose, then waved his hand to put the jade slip away. Now that he was a deva and prime elder, no secrets could be kept from him in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, except secrets protected by other devas with equal standing to himself.

From that, it was possible to see how important he was now. He truly was an important person whom all disciples looked up to in awe.

Bai Xiaochun was more than pleased by that, and would normally have taken time to strut around and bask in the adoring gazes of everyone in the sect.

But right now, he wasn’t in the mood for that. Despite having so many people come to visit him during the past three days, he still had not heard any news about Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.

It was almost as if they had gone missing. Even Feng Youde was baffled by the situation. He only knew that both of Bai Xiaochun’s friends had simply disappeared a year earlier.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he immediately came to the conclusion that… a deva was behind the situation!

Only people like that would qualify to do something like this and make sure he couldn’t find any information about it.

Both Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai both had life slips in the River-Defying Sect, and therefore, he knew they were alive.

But that didn’t stop his anxiety from mounting. Sticking up his chin, he snorted coldly.

“It doesn’t matter if I can’t track them down. I’ll just go visit Chen Hetian. Hmmmphh! From now on, if anyone bothers me, I’ll take it out on him!” Of the three devas, Chen Hetian was the one he disliked the most, feelings which stretched all the way back to the Wildlands and the Great Wall.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0900 awe-chapter-901

“I swore all the way back in the Wildlands that I would get my revenge!” A proud expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he made his decision. Back at the Great Wall, Chen Hetian had acted with utter impunity. Completely ignoring how important Bai Xiaochun was, he had sent him into that labyrinth, and yet, that was not the end of his persecution. He then went on to oppress the River-Defying Sect.

“Hmmmphh! Alright, Chen Hetian, this isn’t me looking for revenge, it’s you being an intolerable bully. The matter’s set. When anyone bothers me, I’ll take it out on Chen Hetian!” Swishing his sleeve, he marveled at how important of a figure he was now.

“I can’t find Big Fatty Zhang, so I’ll take it out on Chen Hetian!

“If someone thinks about trifling with the River-Defying Sect, I’ll take it out on Chen Hetian!

“If someone looks at me the wrong way, I’ll take it out on Chen Hetian!

“If someone plots against me, I’ll take it out on Chen Hetian!”

Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he was so marvelous, no one would ever truly be able to comprehend the full extent of it.

That was especially true when he pondered how Chen Hetian would probably go crazy after what he was about to do. He chuckled excitedly.

And the truth was that was exactly how things would play out. Although he couldn’t kill Chen Hetian, his plan of venting his anger on him if anyone caused problems for him would drive the man crazy.

Although Chen Hetian was in the mid Deva Realm, in terms of battle prowess, he didn’t match up to Bai Xiaochun at all. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had single-handedly fought five devas, killing two and seriously injuring three, left Chen Hetian completely struck with fear.

Were that not the case, he wouldn’t have gone into secluded meditation after returning from the River-Defying Sect. And it was the same with Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao.

And yet, Chen Hetian clearly didn’t understand how Bai Xiaochun operated.... Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that going into hiding wouldn’t stop Bai Xiaochun from coming to cause problems....

With the swish of a sleeve, Bai Xiaochun shot across the rainbow toward Chen Hetian’s residence.

Chen Hetian had a sprawling, luxurious estate in the south of the blue rainbow district. Furthermore, he didn’t live there alone; he had quite a few members of his clan in the estate with him.

All of the devas lived in such a way.

In the very middle of the sprawling estate was a lake of crystal-clear water, within which lazed a whole school of goldfish. The lake was actually part of the rainbow itself, which was a marvelous thing in and of itself.

Next to the lake was an ordinary-looking log cabin, which was actually a holy place to the Chen Clan. And as the patriarch of the clan, and a deva, it was only natural that Chen Hetian lived there.

As Bai Xiaochun whistled through the air, rumbling booms echoed out, and the clouds churned up above. Rippling distortions spread out in all directions from him.

It immediately attracted a lot of attention from the other disciples. Furthermore, because of the close proximity to where the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials were held, many people from there looked over as well.

“What’s that sound?!”

“That’s… Patriarch Bai?”

Within the Chen Clan estate were numerous clan members who noticed the thunderous roar, much to their shock. When they looked over, they saw something like a shooting star rocketing toward them with incredible speed. A moment later, it was right there in the air above them.

Instantly, the pressure of a deva weighed down in all directions like the will of the heavens, casting the cultivation bases of everyone down below into full chaos.

The person up above was pure and fair, with a proud expression on his face, and his hands clasped behind his back. His chin was stuck up as though he were the most powerful expert in the world. He was none other than… Bai Xiaochun!

The fact that so many people were paying attention to him caused Bai Xiaochun to feel very pleased. Raising his voice, he said, “Chen Hetian, get the hell out here and greet Lord Bai!”

He had intentionally fused with heaven and earth and surpassed heavenly will, which made his voice boom especially loud. It was almost like an attack, a shockwave that caused many Chen Clan cultivators’ faces to fall as they staggered backward.

Even the disciples by the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials could hear his words, and it caused quite a commotion.

“Elder Bai… went to cause problems for Elder Chen?”

“From the tone of Elder Bai’s voice, it sounds like he wants to fight!!” The cultivators in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect almost couldn’t believe what they were seeing, and many of them flew up into the air in the hopes of getting a closer look. After all, conflicts between devas, although not completely unheard of, rarely progressed past simple friction.

As Bai Xiaochun’s voice echoed out, Chen Hetian was seated cross-legged in the log cabin, meditating. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and an expression of wrath appeared on his face.

Before the events at the River-Defying Sect, if anyone had done something like this, he would have snorted coldly, rushed out, and killed the offender immediately. But now, he simply gritted his teeth; after all, he knew that because of Bai Xiaochun’s shocking battle prowess, the two of them weren’t on the same level.

However, the fact that Chen Hetian was biting his tongue actually made Bai Xiaochun more irritated. Once again, he raised his voice and said, “What’s going on, Chen Hetian? You're a deva, I'm a deva. Here I am at your front door. Don’t tell me you aren’t going to come out and say hi? How insolent!” With that, Bai Xiaochun took an angry step forward, heading into the Chen Clan and toward the log cabin.

The other Chen Clan cultivators were trembling in their boots, and didn’t dare to interfere.

Within moments, Bai Xiaochun’s incredible speed had him closing in on the log cabin. In fact, ripples spread out across the surface of the lake, and even the goldfish began to tremble in fear.

At this point, Chen Hetian couldn't hold back his anger any longer. He blurred into motion, flying up into the air and waving his hand to send a blast of wind at Bai Xiaochun.

“What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun unleashed a fist strike, striking the wind blast and sending a terrifyingly loud boom out in all directions.

Chen Hetian grunted and fell back a few paces. However, Bai Xiaochun’s expression remained exactly the same as ever. His fleshly body was so powerful it didn’t seem necessary for him to defend himself. In fact, he continued forward and prepared to unleash another attack.

“What am I doing? You brought this upon yourself, Chen Hetian! You know exactly what you did!” In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of him.

Chen Hetian’s face was a mask of grimness as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture to send another attack at Bai Xiaochun. A boom rang out, and Chen Hetian fell back further. However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t slow down at all.

Bai Xiaochun’s performance so far had Chen Hetian grumbling bitterly in his heart. His anger continued to burn, and yet, he still held back. As he retreated, he said, “The demigod patriarch already issued his orders about the River-Defying Sect, Bai Xiaochun. You’ve already killed Patriarch Starry River and Patriarch Dao River. What are you acting like this for!?!? What happened back at the Great Wall was a misunderstanding!”

“This has nothing to do with the River-Defying Sect or the Great Wall, Chen Hetian. Don’t play dumb!” Bristling with anger, Bai Xiaochun utilized his Undying Hex, blasting toward Chen Hetian. Performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, he waved, sending frigid qi blasting out, and summoning nine frigid projections. The projections immediately surrounded Chen Hetian on all sides.

Chen Hetian’s face fell. He quickly waved his hands out in front of him, causing a black shield of light to spring up and block the nine frigid projections. Falling back again, he angrily yelled, “What exactly are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!?! I'm not playing dumb! Explain yourself!”

When Bai Xiaochun realized that Chen Hetian’s voice was louder than his own, he felt very displeased. With even greater volume than before, he shouted, “You’re the culprit here, and you want *me* to explain?! I'm not leaving until things are settled, Chen Hetian!”

“Y-you… YOU!!” Chen Hetian was absolutely enraged by this point. He could tell that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t come about the

River-Defying Sect, and yet, couldn’t think of what it might be about. After returning to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, Chen Hetian had gone directly into secluded meditation, and had done nothing to provoke Bai Xiaochun since. Therefore, when Bai Xiaochun called him a ‘culprit’, it caused his anger to burn even hotter.

It was a strange feeling. Chen Hetian was used to bullying other people, but now… he was the one being bullied….

“Bai Xiaochun!” he raged. “This is complete and utter bullying!!” Even still, he had no idea what he had done to provoke Bai Xiaochun.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0901 awe-chapter-902

“Complete and utter bullying!? How dare you, Chen Hetian!” Bai Xiaochun roared, clearly not ready to give up. Booms rang out over and over as they began to fight back and forth.

Everyone in the Chen Clan was completely shocked by what was happening, and the other cultivators watching from other locations were similarly astonished.

In fact, the other four devas on the blue rainbow sent their divine sense over to watch as well. However, neither Patriarch Steel Veins nor Li Xiandao or Bai Zhentian did anything to interfere.

Of course, both Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian were completely taken aback by the fact that Bai Xiaochun had Chen Hetian at a complete disadvantage. Furthermore, because of everything they had witnessed in the River-Defying Sect, both of them were leery of Bai Xiaochun, and currently didn’t dare to get involved.

“This doesn’t have anything to do with us….”

“What was Fellow Daoist Chen thinking? This is Bai Xiaochun’s moment of triumph! What is he doing causing problems for him right now?”

“Oh well. He's the one who went and pissed off Bai Xiaochun, so he’ll just have to resolve the situation on his own.”

After conferring briefly, both Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao agreed that it was really Chen Hetian’s fault for being so obtuse.

As for Chen Hetian, he was on the verge of going completely mad. If he were aware of why Bai Xiaochun was going all out to attack him, he might have been able to deal with the situation. But he really had no idea what was going on, and to make things worse, when he asked Bai Xiaochun to explain, Bai Xiaochun sarcastically responded that he already knew.

As Bai Xiaochun circled back around for another powerful attack, Chen Hetian gritted his teeth, shot backward, and cried, “Did someone from my clan offend you? Is that what happened? If so, then it doesn’t have anything to do with me!!”

“Someone from your clan?” Bai Xiaochun shouted. “Like hell! It was you, Chen Hetian! Still trying to act dumb? You think I’m three years old or something!?!?”

Chen Hetian wanted to scream out loud in rage. It seemed completely impossible to communicate with Bai Xiaochun, and no matter how he wracked his brains, he couldn’t think of what he had done recently to provoke an insane reaction like this.

Chen Hetian’s expression couldn’t have been more unsightly as he backed up again. Bai Xiaochun was just too strong, and his defenses were virtually impenetrable. Chen Hetian simply had no way to deal with him.

It was about this time that an urgent voice rang out from a short distance away.

“Stop it, Xiaochun!!”

Two beams of light approached, containing a man and woman. They were none other than Zhao Tianjiao and Chen Yueshan.

Chen Yueshan seemed very anxious, whereas Zhao Tianjiao had a bit of a begrudging expression on his face. As soon as they had heard that Bai Xiaochun was going to see Chen Hetian, they had rushed over. They really had no choice but to come. On the one hand, Bai Xiaochun was their friend, but on the other hand, Chen Hetian was a Master and father to the two of them respectively….

If anyone else had come to interfere, Bai Xiaochun would have been able to simply ignore them. But he and Zhao Tianjiao had shared quite a few trials and tribulations. Plus, Zhao Tianjiao had done a lot for the River-Defying Sect, and had even defied Chen Hetian in his attempts to help.

Bai Xiaochun had long considered him a close friend. Therefore, instead of continuing to attack Chen Hetian, he backed up a bit and looked over at Zhao Tianjiao.

Seeing that, Chen Hetian breathed a sigh of relief. However, he kept a very grim expression on his face as he stared coldly at Bai Xiaochun.

Zhao Tianjiao flew over at top speed, planting himself between Bai Xiaochun and his Master. Looking both anxious and slightly irritated, he said, “Xiaochun, you--”

“Eldest Brother,” Bai Xiaochun interrupted, “your Master has gone way too far this time. The reason I came here today has nothing to do with the River-Defying Sect. Your Master has committed a wicked and immoral act, and has bullied people to an outrageous degree!!”

When Chen Hetian heard that, he gritted his teeth even harder, and then loudly said, “You need to explain the situation clearly, Bai Xiaochun. What did I do to you?!”

“You want me to explain clearly?” Bai Xiaochun said, glaring back at him. “You did the deed, and yet you don’t know?! Fine. I’ll just beat the explanation out of you!”

His energy flared, and he made to advance. However, the irritated Zhao Tianjiao quickly interfered.

“Xiaochun!!” he said loudly.

Bai Xiaochun looked over at him, and stopped in place.

“Eldest Brother,” he said angrily, “this doesn’t have anything to do with you. Your Master has really just gone way overboard. Remember Big Fatty Zhang? And Xu Baocai? They’re good friends of mine, and fellow disciples to the both of us. However, your Master kidnapped them, and when I asked for them back, he pretended to not know what was going on!”

Zhao Tianjiao’s eyes widened with surprise. He had heard of Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai, and what Bai Xiaochun had said was true; neither of them had been seen or heard from in quite a while. To hear Bai Xiaochun accuse his Master of snatching them actually caused Zhao Tianjiao to hesitate for a moment, and then look over at Chen Hetian.

Chen Hetian’s eyes were as wide as Zhao Tianjiao's as he stared blankly at Bai Xiaochun. He really had no idea what was happening, and in fact, had never even heard of Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.

Struggling to contain his wrath, he grated, “I didn’t do anything to those two. I don’t even know who they are! You have the wrong person, Bai Xiaochun!” The truth was that he really didn’t want to have Bai Xiaochun pissed off at him, so therefore, he added, “That’s not how I do things!”

“Well if you didn’t do it, then who did!?” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes narrowing angrily. Looking back at Zhao Tianjiao, he said, “I won’t let this drop, Eldest Brother. Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai are good friends of mine, and right now, I don't even know if they’re still alive. If this is really my fault, then I’ll apologize later!”

With that, he dashed past Zhao Tianjiao toward Chen Hetian.

Moments later, booms rang out as the two of them began fighting again.

Zhao Tianjiao smiled bitterly as he looked at Bai Xiaochun and then Chen Hetian. Finally, he sighed. Obviously, he wasn’t in a position to try to separate them, and furthermore, he actually suspected that his Master could be lying….

Chen Hetian felt like he was going crazy.

“I told you I didn’t do it, Bai Xiaochun! Why are you acting like this!?!?”

Not willing to be out-shouted by Chen Hetian, Bai Xiaochun raised his voice even more as he shouted, “You’re the only person in the sect who I have a grudge with. If it wasn’t you, then who was it? Drop the act, Chen Hetian! If you don’t hand over Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai right now, then I’ll escalate this to the demigod patriarch!”

Chen Hetian felt like blood was about to spray out of his mouth. Never before had he experienced this level of humiliation, and yet, he knew that he couldn’t explain himself in a few short words. With that, his hand blurred as, instead of unleashing a divine ability, he pulled out a transmission jade slip to contact Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao.

“Which of you two did it!?!?” he transmitted. “Dammit, you’re completely throwing me under the bus!! The two of you had better explain yourselves!!”

When Bai Xiaochun realized that Chen Hetian was sending some messages, he stopped in place and blinked a few times, anticipation rising in his heart.

Earlier, both Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao had been paying attention, and realized what was going on. Bai Zhentian didn't seem very fazed, but as for Li Xiandao, his face fell when he realized the truth.

Before he could do anything though, Chen Hetian’s message came in.

Li Xiandao immediately began to wail in his heart. Although he was inclined to deny that he was involved, he could see how crazy Chen Hetian was going, and knew that lying now would only make things worse. So he sent a message back.

“Brother Chen… it’s just a misunderstanding. Really… I asked around just now, and apparently one of the elders in my clan… accidentally kidnapped Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.”

As soon as the message came in, Chen Hetian whipped his head around to look at Bai Xiaochun. Eyes crimson, he threw the jade slip out and cried, “See that! Well, do you?! Your two friends weren’t taken by me! I didn’t do it!! I didn’t!!! It was Li Xiandao! You got the wrong person, Bai Xiaochun!!!”

Bai Xiaochun caught the jade slip and looked at it, and immediately, anger began to burn in his heart. However, he kept that from showing on his face. Sticking his chin up, he snorted.

“Well, you can't blame me. Nobody forced you to go around looking like a villain all the time. Ah, whatever. Next time I have any problems like this, I’ll just come to you for help. Alright, see you later.” With that, he turned and blurred into motion toward Li Xiandao’s residence.

If Chen Hetian hadn’t put the pieces of the puzzle together by this point, then he didn’t deserve to have lived for so many years.

“Heaven-damned Bai Xiaochun! Does he mean he’s going to come cause problems for me whenever he has the slightest inconvenience?! He's going to force me to help him whether I'm actually involved or not?!?!” Chen Hetian’s mood sank further. Were it not for the fact that he was a deva, he would already have been coughing up blood.

Off to the side, Zhao Tianjiao looked on, shaking his head and smiling wryly.

“This Bai Xiaochun is a complete scoundrel!!” Chen Hetian grumbled angrily. The mere thought of Bai Xiaochun coming to cause problems again in the future caused his vision to go dim. If he had known things would end up like this, he would never have done anything to offend him....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0902 awe-chapter-903

“What did I do to deserve this…?” Chen Hetian mourned, wishing he could weep. He felt even worse when he looked around at the devastation caused by the fighting earlier, including countless destroyed buildings and structures.

“Someone else kidnapped his friends, but he came looking for me….” he grumbled angrily. The main thing he was worried about was the possibility of this scenario playing out again, and then another time after that, and so on….

“However, this is also a good opportunity. If he gets into a fight with Li Xiandao, I can make a big fuss about it…. The demigod patriarch has surely noticed that Bai Xiaochun came to cause trouble. Although he didn’t say anything, if Bai Xiaochun keeps up with this sort of thing, the patriarch will *not* be pleased!” Eyes flashing brightly with anger, he sent a message to Li Xiandao, hoping to secure his cooperation in turning the situation into a disaster for Bai Xiaochun.

“You’re setting yourself up for a catastrophe, Bai Xiaochun!”

Even as Chen Hetian plotted, Bai Xiaochun was weighing matters over in his heart. He hadn’t forgotten that the demigod patriarch was in charge of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, which meant that it wouldn’t be a good idea to push things too far….

Now that he had determined who the true culprit was, he knew how he would handle the situation. Pushing forward with incredible speed, he left a string of sonic booms behind him as he headed toward Li Xiandao’s residence.

As he closed in, a stream of deva will erupted out from the Li Clan.

Li Xiandao appeared and said, “Calm down, Fellow Daoist Bai. This is a misunderstanding, that’s all. A misunderstanding…. I’ve already sent for your two friends. All you have to do is wait for a moment.”

With that, he clasped hands and bowed, a friendly smile on his face. Considering how short of a temper he had, if this were any other person he was dealing with, he would have attacked immediately and killed them. But he truly feared Bai Xiaochun, and his heart still trembled with terror based on what he had seen back in the River-Defying Sect.

In retrospect, he wished he could go back and do something to put Bai Xiaochun in check before he reached his full potential. But now he was a true chosen of the sect, with a limitless future. He was not the type of person to provoke, and thus, smoothing things out with him right now was obviously the best choice.

By now, he had received Chen Hetian’s message, and actually agreed with the other deva’s plan. And yet, he still wasn’t sure of exactly what to do. Until he decided for sure, the best thing was to still put on a show of deference in front of Bai Xiaochun. That way, Bai Xiaochun would look even more unreasonable and domineering to the demigod patriarch.

Based on what Li Xiandao knew of the demigod patriarch, the man might not necessarily intervene immediately when a deva started throwing his weight around, but he definitely wouldn’t be happy.

Furthermore, showing deference to Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t be a loss of face. After all, they were both devas, so taking the initiative to bow his head was an appropriate thing to do.

To Li Xiandao, anyone beneath the Deva Realm was nothing more than a bug. Only people in the same cultivation level as himself counted as powerful experts!

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Li Xiandao was acting deferentially, his eyes flickered, and he immediately came to the conclusion that something fishy was going on.

“You kidnap my friends and then tell me to calm down? What the hell, Li Xiandao?!”

Li Xiandao’s eyes flickered, and he backed up a few paces.

Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed.

“Taking the initiative to bow his head, and trying to goad me into making a mistake? Well played, Li Xiandao!” Racing to come up with his next move, he accelerated, and then unleashed an attack. A moment later, he and Li Xiandao were fighting back and forth.

All of the cultivators on the other rainbows had shifted their attention from Chen Hetian to this new area. As for Chen Hetian himself, his divine sense was locked onto the area as well.

Chen Hetian really couldn’t contain himself. He hated Bai Xiaochun so much, and was so invested in plotting against him, that he began to chuckle coldly as soon as the fighting broke out.

“Beat him! The harder the better!” Feeling wonderful about how things were going, he kept his focus directed completely on the scene playing out.

Least under pressure was Bai Zhentian, who was also pleased with how things were playing out between Bai Xiaochun and Li Xiandao. At the same time, he was feeling very glad that, other than the River-Defying Sect incident, he had never done anything to build up a grudge between himself and Bai Xiaochun.

“What an unreasonable lunatic!” he thought, sighing. By this point, he realized that something seemed to be a bit off about Li Xiandao’s actions. But then he thought about what he knew of Chen Hetian, and quickly speculated as to what was going on. It actually made the current situation even more intriguing.

As the booms rang out, Li Xiandao fell back over and over again. Despite being in the mid Deva Realm, he found Bai Xiaochun to be a very tough opponent, with seemingly boundless energy. The divine abilities and magical techniques that Bai Xiaochun had at his disposal were as troublesome for Li Xiandao as they were for Chen Hetian, and left him feeling almost completely helpless.

What had him feeling even more frustrated was that, as a deva patriarch, there was no way that he would go around causing problems for measly disciples who weren’t even in the Nascent Soul stage. From what he remembered, it was an elder from among his subordinates who had taken Bai Xiaochun’s friends. Later, the man had sent one of Li Xiandao's own grandsons to ask for his approval in the matter, and for help to make sure that no sect rules were violated.

By this point, he truly detested that grandson of his. Although, what irritated him the most was not the trouble itself, but the fact that his grandson hadn’t come to remind him of the situation after Bai Xiaochun rose to power.

That lack of a reminder was what had led to the current situation. If the matter had been pointed out to him earlier, he could have resolved the situation by numerous means.

As he considered all of these things, he decided that since Bai Xiaochun seemed inclined to push things too far, then the best thing was to go along with Chen Hetian’s plan. Therefore, he put an even more deferential expression onto his face.

“Listen to me, Bai, old pal. I already took care of the situation with your friends. They’ll be here any moment! There’s no need for this fighting! I’ll definitely compensate you for everything!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he snorted coldly in his heart. Taking a step forward, he said, “That’s not how this is going to work. Ai. I don’t really want to beat you up either. But I treated Chen Hetian unfairly earlier, and got in a big fight with him. Now that I have the real culprit in front of me, if I don't beat him up a bit, how would Chen Hetian feel? It just wouldn’t be fair! And what would other people think?!”

Many jaws dropped among the onlookers in response to his words. Strange expressions appeared, and many people even chuckled. At first, Bai Xiaochun’s words seemed to make sense, but after thinking about it, most cultivators in the audience realized how nonsensical they were….

“What… what is that supposed to mean?”

“He had a misunderstanding with Elder Chen, and therefore has to go beat up Elder Li?”

Meanwhile, a stream of divine sense from the violet rainbow up above was focused on the events down below. It was the demigod patriarch, who earlier had been a bit irritated at Bai Xiaochun's actions. However, the words he had spoken just now caused the patriarch to smile. All of the irritation he had felt earlier quickly melted away.

The patriarch shook his head. He didn't like it when his subordinates started throwing their weight around too much, which could easily get out of control. However, Bai Xiaochun's words just now had revealed his true attitude!

Perhaps he had planned all along to word things that way, which would just go to show that Bai Xiaochun was somewhat audacious. People like that were often easy to control. Perhaps he hadn't planned the words out, but that would actually just make the situation more amusing.

The truth was that the demigod patriarch was actually very curious about Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, the reason why he had been so quick to confer him with a title had to do with Du Lingfei.

In response to the words Bai Xiaochun had just uttered, Chen Hetian gasped.

As for Li Xiandao, he gazed deeply at Bai Xiaochun, and suddenly felt more on guard than ever. At the same time, he abandoned any thoughts of going along with Chen Hetian's plan.

"This guy doesn't just have incredible battle prowess, he's also a profound schemer! Not only did he resolve the situation, he did it brilliantly!" A smile broke out on Li Xiandao's face, and he clasped hands respectfully.

"Don't worry, Fellow Daoist Bai. Whatever misunderstanding you had with Fellow Daoist Chen has nothing to do with the two of us. Maybe this little conflict can be the start of a new friendship!”

At the moment, Li Xiandao actually wasn’t very afraid of Bai Xiaochun; in fact, he actually felt no need to cause any problems for him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0903 awe-chapter-904

Bai Xiaochun had already received the approval of the demigod patriarch, and was now just like the other devas, a prime elder of the sect. A single remark from him completely foiled Chen Hetian’s plan, a fact that Li Xiandao refused to believe the demigod patriarch didn’t realize. The fact that the patriarch had still not intervened went to show what was really going on.

“Well,” Li Xiandao thought, “this is probably the best opportunity to work things out with Bai Xiaochun.” He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing a screen of light to spring out, covering the both of them and giving them a certain level of privacy. Then he patted his bag of holding to produce a jade pendant.

The surface of the pendant was carved with three dragons and six phoenixes, and possessed a remarkable aura. The dragons and phoenixes almost seemed alive, and caused a swirling mist to spring up in the area.

A single glance at the pendant would reveal that it was an extraordinary item. Furthermore, it seemed to pulse with the will of the heavens. It was obviously…. a deva-level magical item!

“Fellow Daoist Bai, is this your jade pendant? I happened to pick it up earlier, and just realized that, based on the fluctuations, it must belong to you.” Smiling, he waved his hand, sending the jade pendant flying over to Bai Xiaochun in a beam of bright light.

Although none of the lower-level cultivators could see what was happening, Bai Zhentian and Chen Hetian were able to observe easily. Bai Zhentian seemed slightly confused about it, but not Chen Hetian, whose eyes went wide.

Never could he have imagined that Li Xiandao would use this method to try to work things out with Bai Xiaochun. It actually caused his heart to sink even further.

“How could this Li Xiandao ignore propriety so brazenly!? I can’t believe he would do something so shameless!” As far as Chen Hetian was concerned, Li Xiandao was showing how much of a complete rogue he was!

Bai Xiaochun seemed surprised as he reached out to grab the pendant. Then he looked back suspiciously at Li Xiandao for a moment, before his eyes glittered.

“This old man isn’t that bad after all!” he thought. Giving gifts to resolve a situation was oftentimes a good method, but could easily come across as insincere. Thankfully, Li Xiandao had worded things perfectly, making the situation much more palatable.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to calm down quite a bit, and actually resolved to use this method himself in the future. Clearing his throat, he tossed the jade pendant into his bag of holding.

“Eee? What do you know, this *is* my jade pendant! I knew I dropped it somewhere. It turns out *you* found it, Fellow Daoist Li!” Laughing heartily, he decided to see if he could push the envelope a bit. “You know what, Fellow Daoist Li? I happen to remember that, back when I lost that jade pendant, I also happened to lose a flying sword. A really expensive flying sword.”

When Li Xiandao heard this, his expression turned a bit stiff. However, he patted his bag of holding to produce a small blue sword that sent intense frigid qi out in all directions. As it hovered there in midair, it began to turn translucent, as if it might disappear at any moment.

Feeling very pleased, Bai Xiaochun quickly said, “Hahaha! That sword is a family heirloom! Many thanks, Fellow Daoist Li!” He made a grasping motion, causing the sword to fly over to him. After fondling it admiringly for a moment, he put it into his bag of holding.

“Congratulations, Fellow Daoist Bai,” Li Xiandao said, chuckling. “At long last, your belongings have been returned to you. By the way, the elder who snatched your friends did it without permission, and had help from someone else from the junior generation. Don't worry, I’ll definitely provide compensation to make up for their mistake!” As far as Li Xiandao was concerned, material things, and even the two culprits, were not worth anything when compared to resolving the grievance with Bai Xiaochun.

By now, Bai Xiaochun realized that he couldn’t continue to cause problems. In fact, he was just about to say something more when his expression flickered. Then, he and Li Xiandao both looked down at the Li Clan ancestral mansion below.

There, Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai had just stepped out into the open. Their faces both shone with healthy glows, and they wore sumptuous garments. Not a single wound or injury could be seen on either of them. They were escorted by a throng of Li Clan cultivators, who treated them with the utmost respect.

However, both of them had blank expressions on their faces, as if they had been caught completely unprepared by what was happening. Clearly, the Li Clan had scrambled to make all of this happen.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were both in good condition, he breathed a sigh of relief. Smiling, he looked over at them, waved his hand, and called out a greeting.

Big Fatty Zhang looked back at him in shock, seemingly unwilling to believe his own eyes. As for Xu Baocai, when he caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, he gasped, and his eyes went wide in disbelief.

“Xiaochun!!”

“You’re not dead!!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, flicked his sleeve, and loudly said, “How could there possibly be anything in this heaven and earth that could lead Bai Xiaochun into death!?”

A strange expression appeared on Li Xiandao’s face. However, Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang were used to Bai Xiaochun saying things like this. Therefore, it was at this point that the joy of being reunited with their old friend overtook their faces.

“You’re finally back, Xiaochun!!” Big Fatty Zhang rushed forward and embraced Bai Xiaochun. He had gained weight recently, and although he didn’t quite look like a mountain of flesh, he was still not thin by any means. In fact, his fat quivered with excitement as he hugged Bai Xiaochun.

When Xu Baocai recovered his composure, he hurried forward and instinctively began to offer some flattery.

“Junior Patriarch, you are definitely the most ultimate of chosen. Unmatched and unparalleled in the world! There is absolutely, positively nothing in this heaven and earth that could possibly lead Sect Uncle Bai into death. What’s so amazing about the Wildlands anyway?!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the excitement in Big Fatty Zhang’s voice, and the flattery of Xu Baocai, warm happiness rose up inside of him. Back when he was out in the Wildlands, he had worried constantly about his friends Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai, who he had left behind in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Clearing his throat, Li Xiandao interrupted Bai Xiaochun’s reunion to warmly say, “Your friends are back, Bai, old pal. Don’t worry, I’ll definitely provide you with handsome compensation for all of this!”

Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were both taken aback by what Li Xiandao had just said. After all, despite the many years they had spent in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, they hadn’t had many dealings with devas, and thus didn’t immediately recognize Li Xiandao.

However, they could tell that he was someone important. Otherwise, why would they have been escorted like royalty out of the Li Clan? Not only had they been given urgent treatment of their injuries, they had been treated with utmost respect. In fact, they had also been showered with gifts, along with pleas not to take their imprisonment to heart.

Neither of them could ever have imagined that they would be given so many gifts. However, when they realized that it was because Bai Xiaochun had used some unknown means to secure the help of someone extremely important in the sect, they were deeply shaken.

Bai Xiaochun glanced at Li Xiandao, then looked back at Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai. Thumping his chest, he said, “Eldest Brother, Brother Baocai, what do you two think? You must have had it pretty bad off recently. If there’re any points of discontent you have, or anything in particular that you want, just say the word.”

Li Xiandao smiled wryly, but didn't say anything. Instead, he looked expectantly at Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.

All the other Li Clan cultivators also looked over nervously at Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai, pleading looks in their eyes.

The two of them blinked awkwardly, and exchanged glances, simultaneously rubbing their bags of holding. After all, they already had been given copious amounts of treasure.

Then they thought back to their imprisonment. Although it had been somewhat humiliating, they hadn’t been in any mortal danger. It had only lasted for about a year, and in exchange, they had been given nearly a hundred years’ worth of cultivation resources.

With such thoughts on their minds, they looked back at Bai Xiaochun and shook their heads. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t inclined to let things go so easily, especially considering the weak position Li Xiandao was in. However, it didn't seem appropriate to push the matter. Nodding, he clasped hands to Li Xiandao, and then took Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai with him as he left.

Afterward, the Li Clan cultivators finally breathed sighs of relief. At the same time, Li Xiandao’s expression turned very grim and cold.

“Bring Li Yuansheng and that elder over here immediately!” The rumbling thunder of his voice struck fear into the hearts of everyone in the clan. Obviously, the time had come to settle accounts. Furthermore, it wouldn’t just be Li Yuansheng who was punished for what had occurred, it would be his entire bloodline.

Considering how angry the patriarch was, no one dared to try to beg for mercy. Besides, nobody wanted to incur the further wrath of the most glorious figure in the sect right now, the deva patriarch, Bai Xiaochun!

After all, not even their own Li Clan patriarch had been able to stand up to him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0904 awe-chapter-905

Bai Xiaochun was bursting with happiness as he slowly led Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai across the blue rainbow toward his immortal's cave, reminiscing the entire way. It almost felt like they had gone back in time to when they had first arrived in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Although Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were happy to be reunited, they also couldn’t stop thinking about how suddenly everything had just changed for them.

Finally, Big Fatty Zhang asked, “Xiaochun, which member of the senior generation was that just now?”

He could tell that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base has made significant advancement. However, despite the fact that he himself was in the late Core Formation stage, he still couldn't assess its exact level.

Xu Baocai was only in early Core Formation, and as such, had even less of an idea of how strong Bai Xiaochun was. However, he could tell that there was something different and mysterious about him. In fact, if he closed his eyes, it was literally impossible for him to detect Bai Xiaochun’s presence.

“Him? Bai Xiaochun blinked, and his eyebrows shot up. “Oh, that was Li Xiandao.”

“Li Xiandao? Why does that name sound familiar?”

Big Fatty Zhang couldn’t place who the name belonged to. However, Xu Baocai had a reputation for being able to know everything about a place, no matter where he went. Therefore, when he heard the name ‘Li Xiandao’, his eyes went wide, and he gasped.

“Li Xiandao!?!?” he blurted. “One of the five deva patriarchs of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect? *That* Li Xiandao!?!?”

In response to Xu Baocai’s words, Big Fatty Zhang’s jaw dropped.

“I remember now!” he said. “Li Xiandao is the deva patriarch of the Li Clan! He was the one who ordered Xu Baocai and me to be arrested! Xiaochun, you have no idea how wicked the Li Clan is!!” Shaken, Big Fatty Zhang went on to explain to Bai Xiaochun everything which had occurred in the years he had been gone.

Back when Bai Xiaochun left for the Great Wall, Big Fatty Zhang had been forming his Will Core. Neither he nor Xu Baocai had qualified to leave the sect, and thus had no choice but to stay behind in Sky City to manage the business at Bai Xiaochun’s inn.

With guidance from Feng Youde, Big Fatty Zhang had eventually succeeded in his breakthrough. Because of his unique Will Core, he had achieved even greater success with his spirit enhancements. Furthermore, his battle prowess actually surpassed ordinary cultivators in his same cultivation level.

Eventually, he rose through the ranks of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars and came to be viewed as one of the top chosen in the sect.

Perhaps because of Big Fatty Zhang’s rise to prominence, Xu Baocai also achieved a higher level of success. He never truly became one of the superstars. However, he was careful to make the right friends in the sect, and avoid offending anyone important.

Things had proceeded like that for some time, with Big Fatty Zhang making the most progress in his cultivation base. Eventually, word came back to the sect that Bai Xiaochun had gone missing, which was very upsetting to Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai. Although they wanted to go back to the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was not the type of place where they could come and go whenever they wanted.

Therefore, they continued to act with the utmost caution within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. However, because Bai Xiaochun was missing, the Li Clan chosen Li Yuansheng finally came back for revenge. With Bai Xiaochun out of the picture, he felt confident enough to strike at Bai Xiaochun’s inn in Sky City, and take it away from Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.

During the process, he injured Xu Baocai so badly that, if Big Fatty Zhang hadn’t been there to save him, he would have been killed.

The grudge with Li Yuansheng had started many years ago, and his act of taking the inn away made it even worse. Unfortunately, Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai weren’t strong enough to do anything about it, and were forced to simply grit their teeth in frustration. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun’s old friend Zhao Tianjiao had come back to the sect by that time, and was able to look out for them.

The two of them were aware of the friction between the River-Defying Sect and the other three sects in the Middle Reaches, but being mere Core Formation cultivators, they couldn’t get back to the sect easily. Therefore, Big Fatty

Zhang had focused hard on his cultivation in an attempt to break into the top 20 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars.

According to the rules of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the disciples in the top 20 were considered official chosen within the sect. If Big Fatty Zhang could reach that rank, then he would qualify to return to the River-Defying Sect.

Big Fatty Zhang went crazy with his cultivation. One year, he finally achieved his breakthrough and reached the late Will Core stage. That was when he went to make his attempt at the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. However, it was at around the same time that Li Yuansheng also reached late Core Formation, leading to a big competition between the two of them.

Li Yuansheng was a chosen, but in terms of battle prowess, he couldn’t match up to Big Fatty Zhang with his Will Core. Therefore, Big Fatty Zhang defeated him, breaking into the top 20 and leaving Li Yuansheng behind in 21st place.

The conflict between them grew more intense after that, until it reached the breaking point. Ignoring the possibility of offending Bai Xiaochun’s old friends, Li Yuansheng called upon the power of his clan to frame Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai. He even begged for help from his patriarch Li Xiandao, and a Nascent Soul elder, which ended up with Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai being arrested!

If Big Fatty Zhang hadn’t broken through into the top 20 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars, then Li Yuansheng would have gone so far as to have him killed. But Big Fatty Zhang had achieved a high enough status that not even deva patriarch Li Xiandao dared to end his life. Instead, he had the two of them imprisoned. Li Yuansheng hadn't been willing to give up, and called upon his connections in the sect to have their sentence officially set at a full sixty-year-cycle!

That was the reason why Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai hadn’t returned to the sect to help during the war; they had both been imprisoned, and didn't even know about what was happening on the outside.

When Bai Xiaochun heard about all of this, his expression turned grimmer and grimmer. Now that he knew the truth about everything the Li Clan had done, his heart turned as cold as ice.

And it all stemmed from the years-long grudge between himself and Li Yuansheng.

“Eldest Brother, Xu Baocai,” he said through gritted teeth. “I’m definitely going to get you some major compensation for this! Let’s wait and see how exactly Li Xiandao handles the matter. If it doesn’t meet with my approval, or if he tries to cover for Li Yuansheng, then… I’ll just go beat the crap out of him!” With that, he snorted coldly.

In response to his words, Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai exchanged awkward glances. A moment passed, and then Xu Baocai said, “Junior Patriarch, um… Li Xiandao is a deva….”

Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and flicked his sleeve.

“Who gives a crap that he’s a deva!?” he said proudly. “I'm a deva too!”

Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were visibly stunned. In fact, his words were so shocking that they didn’t actually dare to believe him.

Big Fatty Zhang stepped forward nervously and felt Bai Xiaochun’s forehead. “Xiaochun… are you okay?”

“I really am a deva!” Bai Xiaochun said, not sure whether to laugh or cry.

“Oh, Xiaochun, you don’t need to explain. We believe you!” Changing the subject, Big Fatty Zhang said, “Oh, right. Who did you get to convince Li Xiandao to let us go?”

“Nobody, Eldest Brother, I--” However, instead of finishing his sentence, he looked up at a group of seven or eight disciples who had just come out from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials, and were preparing to leave the rainbow.

“Hey you, come over here and tell my friends who I am!”

The disciples were initially taken aback, but then quickly flew over and offered respectful bows.

“Greetings, Patriarch Bai!”

Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were stunned. They actually knew two of these disciples, who were both in the top 50 of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars. One of them was actually a top chosen who was in the teens in terms of the rankings.

“Um… stop joking around, Xiaochun….” Big Fatty Zhang said, panting a bit, still not quite able to convince himself that it was true. As for Xu Baocai, he was trembling, and his eyes shone with profound shock.

“I really am a deva! I'm the sixth deva of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!” Having no other way to convince them, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base. Everything began to shake, and crashing sounds filled the air like thunder. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s face appeared high above in the air, looking down superciliously at all creation!

His will descended from above like the will of the heavens!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0905 awe-chapter-906

As Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base thrummed with power, the face up above emitted more and more pressure. A moment later, he retracted his cultivation base power, and the face vanished.

“Y-you... you....” Big Fatty Zhang could hardly breathe, to the point where his face turned crimson. Utter disbelief shone in his eyes, and his mind spun as surely as if someone were hitting him in the head.

Xu Baocai’s reaction was similar. As he thought back to everything that had just happened, suddenly, it all made sense. Li Xiandao’s politeness, and the fact that the Li Clan had suddenly treated him and Big Fatty Zhang like royalty… was all because of Bai Xiaochun’s status in the sect!

“Bai Xiaochun… is a deva….” Big Fatty Zhang’s heart began to pound with excitement, and then his eyes started shining. He slapped his thigh. “Hahaha! From now on, nobody in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will dare to mess with me!!”

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased to see Big Fatty Zhang so excited. Thumping himself on the chest, he said, “That’s right. Nobody in the sect will ever cause problems for either of you, ever again!”

Xu Baocai had obviously already reached the same conclusion. He couldn’t help but think about all of the female cultivators he had taken a liking to over the years, none of whom had ever paid much attention to him. But things were different now….

“Now that the junior patriarch is a deva,” he thought, “the fact that I'm so close to him means that those girls will start banging down the door to get to me!” His excitement about what was to come began to soar to epic heights.

As for Big Fatty Zhang, his heart was racing, both with excitement for Bai Xiaochun, and also anticipation for the future.

He had endured quite a bit of hardship in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, mostly because he had no powerful person backing him. He and Xu Baocai had been forced to swallow their anger and act with the utmost caution in everything.

But now everything had changed. His close friend was a deva patriarch, which meant he had free reign to act however he wanted to in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

And thus, Bai Xiaochun led the elated Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai back to his immortal's cave on the blue rainbow. Now that he was a sect elder and a deva, he had a residence that was roughly the same as those of the other devas.

The only difference was that he had no clan to occupy the area. And thus, he immediately invited Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai to live with him.

His residence was filled with countless spectacular buildings and structures, as well as strong spiritual energy from the Heavenspan Sea. As far as Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were concerned, they were living in a dream now.

“Xiaochun, I’ve made a decision,” Big Fatty Zhang announced. “We need to have a powerful faction of our own within the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. The other five deva patriarchs all have a bunch of powerful experts working for them, and we need the same thing! I’ve gotten to know a lot of people over the years, so we should have plenty to pick from!”

“That’s exactly right,” Xu Baocai said. “There are plenty of disciples in the sect who have yet to realize their dreams. Now that you’re a deva, Junior Patriarch, it's the perfect way to give them their shot at glory.” With that, he pulled a little notebook out of the folds of his robe and started flipping through it to identify potential recruits.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with how enthusiastic Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were acting. After some thought, he decided that they were exactly right. After all, he already missed his army of corpse troopers from back in Arch-Emperor City. Therefore, he immediately gave Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai authorization to start gathering people to form a new faction.

In fact, at Xu Baocai’s request, he issued a Dharmic decree, giving the two of them the power and authority to do it officially.

With that, they hurried away, Dharmic decree in hand, eager to make contact with their network in the sect, both to show off, and also to gather people to their side to go harass their enemies.

With an official Dharmic decree, the sky was the limit!

Now that he had rescued his friends, Bai Xiaochun could finally relax. Most of the important tasks he had set out to do had now been accomplished.

With Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai tasked with building up power within the sect, he could relax and start thinking about his cultivation.

“I need to keep working on my Undying Blood, but that requires a lot of life force.... Now that I'm a deva patriarch, that shouldn’t be too hard to accomplish. But I still need a deva technique.” After some thought, he stood up and vanished, to reappear in a central location on the blue rainbow, where a seven-story pagoda rose high into the air.

It was called the Starry Sky Pavilion, and was a repository for many of the legacies in the sect. Quite a few divine abilities and magical techniques were kept there. As for the deva-level Daoist magics, they were specifically stored on the seventh story.

An ordinary disciple could visit the lower six stories if they had a high cultivation base and plenty of merit points.

But Bai Xiaochun was a prime elder, which meant he had free access to the entire Starry Sky Pavilion. Furthermore, there were no merit point requirements for him. Including him, there were only seven total people in the sect who had such access: the devas, and the demigod patriarch.

Bai Xiaochun materialized directly on the seventh story of the pagoda. The only thing present there was a simple, unadorned table, in the middle of which rested nine ancient bamboo slips.

They were clearly items which had existed for countless years, and all of them had cracks covering their surfaces. Obviously, they were all originals, and not copies.

Surrounding the nine bamboo slips were three rings of jade slips, which contained several dozen different techniques. Obviously, the jade slips were inferior to the bamboo slips, and contained incomplete techniques.

He sent some divine sense out to scan the various slips, and was shocked by what he discovered. “They're all deva-level Daoist magics?”

Back in the River-Defying Sect, they only had two deva-level Daoist magics, which were both incomplete.

But the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had many. Bai Xiaochun now had a much clearer understanding of how deep the reserve powers of the sect ran.

After scanning all of the techniques with divine sense to get a basic idea of what they were about, he confirmed his previous conjecture that the nine bamboo slips were the most complete of the various techniques. He saw Li Xiandao’s sword technique, Chen Hetian’s devil technique, and Bai Zhentian’s cosmic chessboard.

Of course, before selecting a given technique, he could only see its basic description, and none of the important details.

The three concentric rings of jade slips all contained incomplete techniques, with the outermost of the rings containing the least complete of all. Some of the techniques he recognized as ones used by Patriarchs Starry River, Dao River, and Polarity River. There were also some that he had never heard of before.

“The ones in the middle of the table are the best….” he thought, frowning. After looking at the nine bamboo slips again, he realized that, despite how complete they were, they were all in completely different categories than the techniques he had cultivated up til now. They were core deva-level Daoist magics of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and in order to cultivate them, one needed to have a certain foundation of techniques to work upon.

“Back in Core Formation, I worked on the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation. In the Wildlands, I reached the Nascent Soul stage by using spirit enhancement techniques, and therefore didn’t get a special technique. Now that I’m a deva, it’s very important that I get an appropriate Daoist magic.” After more thought, he examined what was available, until something caught his eye on the outermost of the three rings. The only downside to it was how incomplete it was.

It was called the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation!

Just as its impressive name indicated, cultivating it allowed one to produce an additional sun and moon in the sky!

Supposedly, it was a technique that came from the ancient Arch-Emperor Dynasty. It had been incomplete when discovered, and its true origins had never been determined. However, after much research, it was determined that cultivating it all the way to the ninth level would allow one to break into the Demigod Realm, and consume suns and moons!

“It’s too bad that this version of the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation only goes up to the third level…. That would get me to the mid Deva Realm. The rest of the technique… has been lost to the sands of time.” Bai Xiaochun was torn about what to do.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0906 awe-chapter-907

Also inscribed on the jade slip was information from three deva patriarchs of the past, people who had long since perished, but who had cultivated the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation.

That information contained tips and bits of enlightenment from those three patriarchs. Most of them expressed regret at not having the full technique. One of them even pointed out that the full technique would be powerful even after breaking through to the Demigod Realm!

It truly was a domineering technique, and very different from other, ordinary deva-level Daoist magics. By refining the spiritual power of heaven and earth, one could create a sun and a moon inside oneself. When those heavenly bodies emerged out into the open, they would truly be a second sun and moon in the vast sky!

It was a level of power that was shocking to even contemplate! The technique didn’t require any specific foundation, only a deva cultivation base. It contained countless variations within it, and could be used in combination with any other technique.

The main downside was that it only consisted of the first three levels…. Furthermore, the third level had been added by a past patriarch, and was therefore a derivative technique, and not authentic. The second level was the highest authentic level in the entire technique.

Anyone who cultivated it would eventually have to change to another technique after reaching the mid Deva Realm, which was exactly what the other three patriarchs who had cultivated it ended up doing.

“None of the other techniques will work for me, so I guess I’ll pick this one…. Although it will only work for so long, considering that my apprentice is the Hell-Emperor, and an omnipotent genius, it’s always possible that I might be able to work out the higher levels on my own.” After a bit more thought, he gritted his teeth, grabbed the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, and left the Starry Sky Pavilion.

He reappeared moments later back in his residence, where he went into secluded meditation and poured himself into the study of his new technique. The more he learned about it, the more he realized it was truly astonishing.

“This thing shouldn’t be called the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. It should be called the Sun-Moon Super-Overpowered Incantation!

“The first three levels are devoted to summoning a moon inside oneself. After reaching the third level, that moon can emerge into the world to hang in the sky!

“The missing middle levels are about summoning a sun….

“From what I can tell, the final three levels must be about bringing both the sun and the moon out into the open, and illuminating all creation with their brilliance!” Sighing, he set to work at cultivating the first level.

In terms of the life force he needed to work on his Undying Blood, now that he had such a high status in the sect, it was easier for him to request large amounts of plants and vegetation that had life force in them.

In fact, as a prime elder, he could set sect missions for apothecary cultivators in the sect to concoct medicine for him.

Although he happened to be of the opinion that the medicinal pills concocted by others would be of lower quality, after wrestling with the issue for a while, he sighed and made up his mind.

“I can’t do the concocting myself. Whenever I do that, accidents happen. Now that the demigod patriarch is my direct superior, it would be a big headache if I caused some disaster.” It was with a bit of regret that he decided to have lower-ranking disciples do the concocting for him. One upside was that it led to large amounts of pills flowing in, and allowed him to advance by leaps and bounds with his Undying Blood.

His regret at not being able to personally make the pills could only be shoved down to the bottom of his heart.

In the blink of an eye, three months passed.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun focused only on cultivating his Undying Blood and the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. As he did, he came to realize what it meant to occupy one of the highest positions in the sect, and have access to so many cultivation resources.

In fact, he used so many resources that, if he had been back in the River-Defying Sect, he would have bled them dry. To the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, though, such usage of resources was considered negligible.

After all, back before the Great Wall had collapsed, the resources required to man it had vastly surpassed anything that Bai Xiaochun could match. Even that level of expenditure had not been a problem for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s reserves, which had been built up over tens upon tens of thousands of years.

Another thing Bai Xiaochun came to realize was that the four demigod heavenly kings in the Wildlands actually couldn’t compare at all to the demigods in the riversource sects of the Heavenspan River region, at least in terms of wealth.

The resources at the disposal of the riversource sects vastly surpassed the heavenly kings. Of course, the Heavenspan River region wasn't without its weaknesses. There was something the Wildlands had that was sadly lacking the Heavenspan River.

And that was… fighting spirit and valiance!

In the Wildlands, soul cultivators lived hard and difficult lives. In contrast, the Heavenspan River cultivators were like flowers in a greenhouse. Whether it was in terms of bravery or ambition, they didn't even come close to comparing to the Wildlanders.

Perhaps that was why the two sides had been at a deadlock for so long. Now that the Great Wall had fallen, it was difficult to say which side would have the advantage.

It was a big headache to consider the matter for even a short time. Therefore, he put it aside and focused on his cultivation.

Another thing that happened during the three months that passed was that his faction grew with shocking speed.

Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai had not wasted their years in the sect. Although they had conducted themselves with the utmost caution over the years, they had also worked hard to expand their network of contacts.

It didn’t take long for them to gather a group of disciples who had previously never had a chance to rise to prominence. They were the ones who formed the backbone of Bai Xiaochun’s faction now that he was a prime elder.

They even had nine Nascent Soul elders, one of them being Feng Youde.

There were even more Core Formation and Foundation Establishment cultivators, and overall, they formed a very powerful group. After all, Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai had gained a lot of experience back in Sky City, which they drew upon to grow their organization both quickly and with great strength.

Li Xiandao followed through with his promise of compensation. Originally, he had planned to keep things low key, but after finding out the truth of the matter, he realized that if he didn’t act decisively, the truce he had worked out would crumble, and his relationship with Bai Xiaochun would be grievously damaged.

As a deva patriarch, he had many descendants, and therefore, he acted with brutal decisiveness. The first thing he did was deliver up the head of the Nascent Soul elder who had been the primary culprit.

Then he crippled Li Yuansheng’s cultivation base and locked him up in the very same prison where Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai had been held. Bai Xiaochun had no complaints about how the matter was handled, and Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were both quite pleased.

After all was said and done, the relationship between Li Xiandao and Bai Xiaochun ended up relatively warm, and the friction from the matter of the River-Defying Sect was smoothed over.

At the same time, because of Bai Xiaochun’s position, and the growth of his faction, there was no need for any requests or negotiations regarding his inn in Sky City. The Celestial Sky Society took the initiative to return it to him.

The Celestial Sky Society had the same boss as many years ago. Trembling with fear, he personally went to visit Bai Xiaochun to handle matters.

The man’s heart was filled with endless sighs. Never could he have imagined that the same Bai Xiaochun with whom he had squabbled over resources in Sky City would, only a handful of decades later, become the sixth prime elder in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, a person of utmost power and authority.

Bai Xiaochun had an audience with the boss of the Celestial Sky Society, but didn't say much. After all, he had learned a lot from them. In fact, it was his experiences with the Celestial Sky Society that had enabled him to deal with the Nine Serenities King’s heir apparent back in Arch-Emperor City. And it was by copying their tactics that he routed the two celestial necromancers who had plotted against him.

However, the fact that Bai Xiaochun didn’t say much in the meeting caused the man’s nervousness to mount, until he was soaked with sweat. Eventually, Xu Baocai gave him a good glare, frightening the man so much that he offered even more copious gifts of compensation than he had initially intended to. At that point, Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai were finally pleased with the outcome.

More months passed.

Bai Xiaochun now had a very solid foundation in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and his faction was so big and powerful that people all over the Heavenspan River region had heard of them, including the other three riversource sects.

Rumors even began to spread in the Wildlands about the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s sixth deva, Bai Xiaochun. Many people gritted their teeth in frustration at how Bai Xiaochun seemed to move about so mysteriously. After all, he had roamed the Wildlands for many years, without a single person ever being able to track him down.

Only the most powerful elites in the Wildlands knew who Bai Xiaochun really was, and they were all shocked by the rumors. That was especially true of the Grand Heavenmaster, who was struck speechless by the intelligence reports from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

Back in Giant Ghost City, the Giant Ghost King heard the news, and muttered, “The little punk didn’t even say goodbye to me when he left. Next time I see him, I’ll definitely give him a good thrashing!”

Also in the Wildlands was an illusory river high in the sky, in the depths of which was a pitch-black palace. Bai Hao was there, clad in his imperial robes and wearing an imperial crown. Normally speaking, a cold expression covered his face. However, whenever he looked in the direction of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, his eyes shone with warmth and respect.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0907 awe-chapter-908

The vast resources available in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect allowed Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation to advance smoothly and quickly. By the time he had been in secluded meditation for the better part of a year, the River-Defying Sect had united the Middle Reaches cultivation world.

Of course, the River-Defying Sect knew how to maintain propriety. They didn’t exterminate the Starry, Polarity, and Dao River Courts. They kept them around, but in check. In fact, in addition to the yearly tribute given to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, those three sects also gave tribute to the River-Defying Sect.

Although Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian weren’t happy about that, they had enough experience in life to know when to keep their heads down. They were fairly certain that they would have their chance at a comeback eventually, and besides, considering how young Bai Xiaochun was, it wasn’t likely that he would stay in the sect for very long.

Bai Zhentian had remained in secluded meditation the entire time, whereas Li Xiandao had smoothed out his relationship with Bai Xiaochun, and therefore didn't feel the need to remain in seclusion. As for Chen Hetian, he had no choice but to leave the sect indefinitely.

From all of that, it was possible to see how much of a name Bai Xiaochun had made for himself in the battle for the River-Defying Sect.

He had almost unlimited resources at his disposal, and because of that, was initially excited to be able to work on his cultivation.

However, after some time passed, he started to get bored. Eventually, he began to go for walks in the sect, and yet, because of his high standing, people would only treat him with formal respect.

Although he enjoyed that type of thing, eventually, it started to get annoying.

“This is so boring! There’s nothing fun to do in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect at all…. The whole sect is so prissy and old-fashioned…. It was way better back in the Wildlands!” Sighing, he thought back to everything that had happened since he got back to the Heavenspan River region. Things had been interesting in the River-Defying Sect, but after returning to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he realized that it really was a very humdrum place.

He thought about going to hassle Chen Hetian, but two things held him back. First of all, he lacked a good excuse. Second of all, and of even greater significance, was the fact that Chen Hetian had left the sect.

Bai Zhentian was next on his list, but apparently Bai Lin knew Bai Xiaochun too well. Sensing what was about to come, he hurried over to reminisce about old times, until eventually, their conversation ended with Bai Lin gazing at him with helpless anxiety.

By that point, Bai Xiaochun realized that he couldn’t go cause problems for Bai Zhentian.

That left only Li Xiandao. Unfortunately, Li Xiandao had been behaving himself perfectly…. He had compensated him for the matter with Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai, and that meant it would be very awkward to go bully him.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was so depressed and bored that he felt like he was starting to grow mold…. At one point, he went out looking for some attractive female disciples, but the problem was that his status was too high, and he enjoyed carrying himself like someone from the senior generation. And for someone like that to try to seduce pretty female disciples didn’t seem very appropriate.

“Ai,” he sighed. “How come none of them will make the first move? Well, I can’t just sit around practicing cultivation all the time. I’ll end up cultivating myself into a moron.” All of a sudden, he realized that, while he had missed the Heavenspan River region during his time in the Wildlands, now that he was back, he actually missed Arch-Emperor City.

Eventually, he came to the conclusion that he had nothing else to do other than work on cultivation. Unfortunately, he really was not happy using medicinal pills concocted by random disciples. And yet, he was still torn about whether or not to do his own medicine concocting.

“Don’t tell me that a grand and mighty deva like myself will end up having to slink outside of the sect to concoct some pills….” He sighed again. “No. I have to concoct some pills of my own. If worst comes to worst, I’ll just have to be extra careful….

“In the past, people would always come to cause problems for me when I concocted medicine. But now I'm a prime elder! Chen Hetian ran away, Bai Zhentian is in secluded meditation, and Li Xiandao doesn’t dare to cause problems for me…. My bro in the Hall of Steel Veins is on my side….

“In the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the only person who can tell me what to do is the demigod patriarch.” The more he thought about it, the more antsy he got, until he finally made a decision.

“As long as I'm careful, everything should be fine.” Encouraging himself in this way, he sent a list of required materials to the Internal Affairs Pavilion.

The list included medicinal ingredients and a large number of pill furnaces. Considering his standing in the sect, he had a sizable stipend that could get him things like this without having to provide compensation.

The staff at the Internal Affairs Pavilion immediately set to work filling the orders, sending large quantities of medicinal plants and pills to Bai Xiaochun. He was delighted to see the huge accumulation of resources, and quickly went into seclusion to start working.

East Wind Life Force Pill!

Intoxication Life Force Pill!

Spirit Flower Life Force Pill!

Nine Transformations Life Force Pill!

He immediately began to think back to all of the medicine formulas he knew that related to life force. He tried out each formula, but the resulting pills all had the same problem. They simply didn’t provide the level of life force that he needed. However, he was very pleased to discover that no accidents were happening. As a result, his confidence grew, and he began working, not just with one pill furnace, but ten. Then thirty. Then fifty….

All the successes got him feeling very excited, and also lucky.

“I guess that all the trials I went through in the Wildlands ended up pushing my Dao of medicine to a much higher level. Yeah, that must be the explanation!” Feeling prouder of himself than ever, he continued adding pill furnaces until he was working with eighty at the same time. Slowly but surely, he was immersing himself in his concocting efforts.

Perhaps his skill in the Dao of medicine really had improved. Or perhaps it was because he was worried about the demigod patriarch, and was thus being very careful. Either way, his concocting went very smoothly, and not a single accident occurred.

The worst things that happened were the occasional explosion, which would release some black smoke. There was also an occasional bout of lightning. However, considering the level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, he was able to negate these effects easily.

Few disciples even noticed what was happening, and of those who did, none dared to say anything....

A few months later, he was in the middle of a concocting session when a message came down from the demigod patriarch. It was actually a group message sent to all of the prime elders.

The patriarch explained that he had received a summons from the Celestial, and had to take a trip to Heavenspan Island. While he was gone, he was entrusting the safety of the sect to the devas.

It was something the other devas were used to. It was not a rare occurrence for the demigod patriarch to take a trip outside of the sect and leave them in charge.

However, this was Bai Xiaochun’s first time experiencing such a thing. Although it was par for the course for the other devas, it was different for him. As soon as he heard the news, he gasped, and his heart started to race. He was so excited he almost jumped up into the air. He suddenly felt as if anything in the world was possible for him.

“The demigod patriarch… left?” For the first time… there was no one in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect who could tell him what to do!

“The demigod patriarch is gone….” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously. He had always been extremely careful when he went about concocting medicine. After all, there had been too many occasions when people chased him down angrily as a result of his work. The mere thought of what it was like trying to explain himself to an angry mob caused him to sigh incessantly.

But now… all obstacles had been cleared from his path. Furthermore, he had the strong feeling that things were going so well that no accidents could possibly happen.

“Concoct medicine. Concoct medicine! I'm going to concoct medicine to my heart’s content!!

“I can finally perfect my Lightning Detox Grand Magic!

“I can refine my Aphrodisiac Pill. I can improve on my Fantasy Pill! And I can come up with some more mystery pills too!” Filled with excitement and anticipation, he jumped directly from eighty pill furnaces to three hundred!

Worried that it wasn’t enough, he added several hundred more. Only when he had eight hundred pill furnaces going at the same time was he happy.

“I’m using my deva cultivation base to operate eight hundred furnaces at the same time! If word got out, people would admire me to no end!” He looked around proudly at all the pill furnaces, beneath which burned supreme-grade flamestones, causing ripples of heat to fill the air.

It was a sight that would surely strike fear into the hearts of anyone who saw it. After all, if eight hundred pill furnaces exploded simultaneously… then it would probably destroy most of the blue rainbow….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0908 awe-chapter-909

On the morning of the third day after the demigod patriarch left, a huge boom erupted from the blue rainbow, startling numerous disciples in the sect.

“What was that sound?!”

“Scared me half to death! What’s going on?!”

“Dammit! Who did that? I was in the middle of cultivation, and nearly experienced energy deviation!!” Countless angry curses filled the air, and dozens of cultivators actually flew up into the air angrily to determine what was happening.

However, when they realized that the noise came from the blue rainbow, their eyes went wide with shock, and they flew back down to where they came from....

The boom came when ten pill furnaces exploded, and startled Bai Xiaochun so badly that he immediately sent out some divine sense to see if anyone was going to come berate him. He even instinctively began to come up with an explanation.

However, after a long moment passed... the clamor in the sect died down.... Nobody came looking for him. The people who did fly up into the air only looked in his direction, then went back to where they had come from.

Only at that point did he finally realize what was happening.

“Hahaha! I was just being too jumpy, that’s all. I forgot that nobody in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect can tell me what to do!” Feeling quite emboldened, he went back to concocting medicine.

A few days later, another boom rocked the sect. To most disciples, an occasional explosion like that wasn’t anything to get upset about.

However, the booms continued every few days. On one particular day, there were eight in a row. Soon, the disciples on the rainbow were starting to go crazy.

It only made sense for them to react in such a way. The sect was usually a quiet place, like a celestial paradise. But now, startling explosions were interrupting them all the time, making it almost impossible to focus on cultivation.

Normally speaking, a person in the sect who did such a thing would be attacked and likely killed. But… the noise was coming from the blue rainbow. Soon, people began to ask around, and found that Patriarch Bai was concocting medicine.

Therefore, nobody dared to complain openly.

If the only thing they had to deal with were booms, it might have been possible to get used to the situation. But two days later, smoke began to drift out, smoke that caused tears to well up in the eyes of everyone it touched.

“Agggghhhhh! What kind of medicinal pill is Patriarch Bai concocting!?!?”

“No. No! I can’t take this!!”

It wasn’t just the ordinary disciples who were affected. Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian were included, and yet, neither of them dared to interfere.

If they couldn’t do anything about what was happening, then there was no need to even mention the lower-ranking disciples. All they could do was stare up resentfully at the blue rainbow.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was too thoroughly engrossed in his work to have any idea that all of that was happening. His face was gaunt, but filled with excitement as he worked to make every type of pill he could think of that had something to do with life force. As he became more familiar with the various formulas, his skill in the Dao of medicine increased.

He made all varieties of pills, and eventually started to get bored with life force pills. As his confidence grew, he came to the conclusion that he had turned over a new leaf in his pill concocting ability.

“I need to make… a treasured pill that can counteract the effects of the Aphrodisiac Pill!” He had already been ensnared twice with Aphrodisiac Pills, and although he had to admit that he had actually enjoyed the results, it was still quite a loss of face.

“Hmmmphh. How ridiculous that other people would use my own medicinal pill against me! That won’t do!

“I'm going to make a new pill that I’ll call the… Turn Off Pill!” The more he thought about it, the more pleased he was with the idea. Furthermore, the name of the pill couldn’t have been better.

“It's definitely a good name!” Feeling supremely proud of himself, he started concocting!

“You know what’s a real turn off? Those uncaring fruits! They’re disgusting! Only by adding that type of fruit into the formula can I truly quench the fire which burns deep inside one’s heart!” Slowly but surely, a medicine formula was forming in his mind. After settling on an initial direction, he decided to run some tests. He started with thirty medicinal pills.

He was so engrossed in his work that he forgot to eat or sleep, and watched over the pill furnaces constantly for three whole days. Soon, the pills inside the furnaces were beginning to form. Unfortunately, just as the process seemed on the verge of concluding, one of the pill furnaces suddenly showed signs of instability.

Bai Xiaochun quickly placed sealing marks on it, only to find that a second, a third, and a fourth furnace were similarly destabilizing. Before he could do anything about it, all thirty pill furnaces were teetering on the verge of exploding!

“Not good!” Bai Xiaochun slapped down more sealing marks, and sent his divine sense out to try to keep any danger to a minimum. Actually, because there was no one in the sect who could tell him what to do, he had kindly decided that, as a sect patriarch, he should manage himself.

However, when the pill furnaces exploded, a black smoke erupted out that not even he could control. It completely negated his divine sense! Thankfully, there wasn’t much of the smoke, and all it did was cover part of the blue rainbow.

One of the affected areas, though, was where the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Superstars trials were held…. Quite a few disciples were there, and before any of them could react, the smoke had covered them.

Bai Xiaochun anxiously looked over to see what was going to happen. However, the smoke simply faded away, and the disciples looked around with quizzical expressions on their faces. As for Bai Xiaochun, he initially stared in shock, and then breathed a sigh of relief.

“Wait, nothing happened? Well, no harm no foul.” Rubbing his nose a bit, he continued to watch until he was sure nothing bad had resulted. Then he started thinking about why he might have failed, and decided to try a different approach, this time with a hundred pill furnaces.

Worried about the lower-ranking disciples who had been hit by the smoke, he sent his divine sense out and prepared to react protectively at the slightest sign of danger.

Three more days passed, and soon, the second batch of pills was nearing completion. Up to this point, no unusual behavior had cropped up among the disciples from earlier.

However, it was on the night of the third day that some strange things started to happen….

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a huge sect with many disciples, so it was only natural for many of them to get together as Daoist partners. Among those disciples who had been at the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect trial, those who had no Daoist partners weren’t affected at all, except that they were less interested in romantic relationships than before.

However, those who did have Daoist partners, whether they were men or women, found that, as the sun set on their immortal's caves….

“Junior Sister, we’re just not suited for each other. From now on, you do your thing, and I’ll do mine. Let’s break up!”

“Elder Brother, why are there so many good-looking people in the world, but so few interesting souls? From now on, stay away from me!”

“I'm sorry, but we're just not meant for each other. My destiny is to pursue the great Dao! What’s the point of romantic relationships? Don’t even bring the subject up again!”

Quite a few people were taken aback by the breakup scenes going on. And of course, Bai Xiaochun noticed almost right away, and his heart began to pound.

“Wait a second, that's not right!” All of a sudden, he had a very bad feeling. After all, the primary ingredient in his Turn Off Pill was uncaring fruit. Using that in combination with some other medicinal plants he knew of, he had hoped to create a medicinal pill that would counteract the Aphrodisiac Pill. And Aphrodisiac Pills affected a person first physically, and then mentally.

Therefore, his plan for the Turn Off Pill had been to affect a person mentally first, and after that, to cleanse them physically. The current situation went totally beyond what he had imagined would happen.

And of course, it caused worry to gnaw at his heart.

“I wanted a Turn Off Pill, not a Breakup Pill.... I can’t just let this happen. I have to do something!” With that, he settled his mind. After all, considering that only a few people had been affected three days ago, the situation shouldn’t be very hard to remedy.

However, even as he made his decision about what to do, cracking sounds reached his ears, and his face fell as he looked at the one hundred pill furnaces, which had all reached the critical moment of the concocting process. Ten of those hundred pill furnaces had cracks spreading out over their surfaces.

“Noooo….” he screamed, rushing forward to try to contain the situation….

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0909 awe-chapter-910

The pill furnaces exploded!

Not just a handful, but all one hundred of them, one after another in a rapid-fire chain reaction.

It happened in a single breath of time, and despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun had been prepared, he simply wasn’t fast enough to contain the effects of a hundred pill furnaces all exploding at the same time! The force unleashed was shocking. Thankfully, he had his deva cultivation base, and very tough skin, otherwise… he would either have been killed, or at the least, badly injured.

“Noooo!” he screamed. His immortal's cave shook violently, and yet, that was not what worried Bai Xiaochun most. Most hair-raising was… the thick black smoke that blasted out at high speed in all directions.

The medicinal efficacy of this smoke vastly surpassed that of the previous smoke. Because of the deva power that Bai Xiaochun surrounded himself with, he was protected from its effects… but others nearby did not have that luxury.

As he let out a long cry of misery, the smoke covered the blue rainbow in its entirety. But things didn’t end there. The smoke spread out toward the other rainbows, completely covering three of them before finally coming to a stop.

Bai Xiaochun’s vision went dim, and his mind felt like it was being struck by heavenly lightning. He knew… that he had caused a major disaster.

“I'm finished. Kaput....” This was definitely not how he had envisioned things turning out, and it felt very unfair. Why did he, an awesome apothecary with incredible skill in the Dao of medicine, always cause strange things like this to happen?

Meanwhile, the disciples who were on the three affected rainbows stared around in shock. Some reacted quickly enough to speed away in the face of the black smoke, but others were inundated.

“Dammit, what is this stuff?!?!”

“Smoke? Heavens! How could there be toxic smoke inside the sect?!?!”

“Wait, are we under attack!?!?”

The three rainbows instantly devolved into chaos. Li Xiandao, Bai Zhentian, and Patriarch Steel Veins were all shocked, and rushed out to provide aid. When they saw how three of the other rainbows were covered in the smoke, their hearts were gripped with madness.

Thankfully, the smoke went away rather quickly. The entire thing only lasted for a bit more than ten breaths of time. Then, everything went back to normal.

It was only at that point that people realized that the sound of the explosion had come from the blue rainbow.

“Elder Bai is definitely concocting medicine again!!”

“Heavens! When is this going to end? Elder Bai isn't concocting medicine, is he? He’s trying to destroy the entire sect!”

It only took moments for countless angry gazes to fall onto the blue rainbow. “Can't anyone stop him? If things keep going on like this, what are we supposed to do?!"

However, there was nothing more that they could do than glare. Any other person, even a Nascent Soul expert, would already have been surrounded and attacked, but Bai Xiaochun’s status in the sect was too high. After all… he was a deva, and one of only six prime elders, a fact which filled the hearts of all disciples with fear.

Li Xiandao hesitated about what to do, and finally decided to do nothing. Bai Zhentian reacted similarly. However, Patriarch Steel Veins smiled wryly, and then sent Bai Xiaochun a message of inquiry.

Bai Xiaochun replied immediately. “This was the last time. I guarantee it!”

Deeply worried, he did his best to explain the matter, and then sank down into thought.

Although no one else had any clue at the moment, he was very well aware that, despite the fact that the smoke had dissipated without seeming to affect anyone, it would be, at most, three days… until the effects were seen. At that point, tens of thousands of disciples… would all break up with their Daoist partners.

Bai Xiaochun knew that a disaster like that was simply too much.

“People say that if you break up someone’s relationship, you shorten their lifespan. Heavens! I might have just ruined the relationships of tens of thousands of disciples…. If I don't fix this, nobody in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect will be able to get a Daoist partner…. This generation of the cultivation world will be significantly harmed. And it will all be my fault!”

That thought made Bai Xiaochun feel like his head was about to explode. Scowling on the verge of tears, he gritted his teeth and murmured, “No! I can’t let that happen. I have to concoct an antidote!”

He took a few deep breaths, and then nervously pulled out some more medicinal plants. His goal: create a medicinal pill that could dispel the effects of the uncaring fruit.

“I didn’t want this to happen!” he grumbled guiltily. “I was just trying to concoct that Turn Off Pill….” He suddenly realized that not having someone around to tell him what to do wasn’t that good of a thing after all….

Although his position in the sect ensured that no disciples would curse or attack him, he still felt bad. In fact, it had actually been better back when people did come after him.

Besides, he didn’t even want to think about what would happen if the demigod patriarch happened to come back right now…. Shivering, he headed back into his private chamber to start working on a new pill formula.

One day. Two days. Three days…. On the afternoon of the third day, only about six hours before the uncaring fruit’s effects would begin to manifest, Bai Xiaochun leaped up, hair disheveled, and eyes flashing with madness. Staring at the jade slip he held in his hand, he cried, “I did it! I created the antidote formula!!”

He threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Fear not, Fellow Daoists of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. I am here to save you!” With that, he ignored his exhaustion and set to work concocting the medicine.

In order to maximize the chances of succeeding, he used three hundred pill furnaces. He was putting everything on the line in the hopes of negating the effects of the uncaring fruit.

As time passed, he concentrated fully on the three hundred pill furnaces. None of them showed any signs of exploding, and whenever the slightest irregularity cropped up, he would make adjustments immediately. Finally, when there was only one hour left until the effects of the uncaring fruit manifested, the three hundred pill furnaces turned bright red, and sent a pungent odor out in all directions.

When Bai Xiaochun detected that odor, he finally relaxed a bit.

“Excellent. In order to negate the effects of the uncaring fruit, I added in black crabapple, which can affect all sorts of various human emotions and desires. By combining those effects with certain other types of plants and vegetation, I can definitely negate the uncaring fruit!” Although he was excited, he hesitated for a moment. According to his calculations, the effects of the uncaring fruit would begin to manifest at any moment. One last time, he sent his divine sense out through the sect, and could already see some disciples heading toward their Daoist partners with somber expressions on their faces….

There was no time to waste, and neither was there time to hand out pills one by one. Eyes burning with determination, he waved his hand out in front of him.

Immense force erupted out and landed on the three hundred pill furnaces… which exploded, resulting in a thunderous boom that vastly surpassed any of the previous explosions. At the same time, a massive shockwave spread out in all directions!

Everyone in the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect heard the deafening boom, and many felt their cultivation bases destabilizing as a result. Quite a few were even struck senseless.

“Heavens! Don’t tell me Elder Bai is concocting medicine again!?!?”

“I can’t hear anything! Did you just say something?”

“I'm gonna go crazy!!”

As the cries of surprise and alarm rose up, the blue rainbow shook violently. Worse, a massive wave of black smoke rushed out from Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave!!

This time, even the violet rainbow, where the demigod patriarch lived, was affected. Everything was covered with black smoke!

The entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was enveloped in blackness, striking shock and fear into the hearts of all present.

“Heavens! What… what kind of smoke is this!?!?”

“Where did you guys go? I can’t see anything….”

“Run! This smoke is so acrid, it must be poison! Aggghhhh!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0910 awe-chapter-911

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had been plunged into chaos. Thankfully, the black smoke only affected the rainbow, and not the cities on the ground. The sudden sharp contrast between the two areas caused the disciples down below to stare up in complete astonishment.

As of this moment, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect seemed to be covered with an obscuring darkness filled with cries and shouts of alarm.

The disciples down below were left feeling very unsettled.

“What’s…. that?”

“Heavens! What divine ability is that?!?!”

The crowds in the four big cities down below were all gasping in shock. However, there were a few hundred people in Sky City who were frightened, but at the same time, rejoicing. They even began to express their gratitude verbally to two other disciples who stood in their midst. Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai.

“Brother Zhang, I have only you to thank for this. You have my complete and utter gratitude!”

“Brother Baocai, words can't express how thankful I am. If you ever have any problems in the future, come look for me, and I’ll be sure to find a way to repay you!”

Xu Baocai and Big Fatty Zhang were trembling in fear just like everyone else was. They knew Bai Xiaochun far too well, and when they had learned earlier that he was concocting medicine, they had immediately fled in fear. After all, when Bai Xiaochun made up his mind, it was impossible to dissuade him, and therefore, the best option was to just leave.

Neither of them had felt that staying on the rainbow was safe, and therefore, they had gritted their teeth and gone all the way down to Sky City. Only then did they finally feel safe.

Of course, they couldn’t bear to leave all of the people they had recruited into their faction behind, and had therefore sent messages warning them that something big was about to happen, and that the safest thing was to temporarily move down to Sky City.

Some had assumed that they were making a mountain out of a molehill, and had ignored them…. Others had been a bit hesitant, but still came down anyway.

After seeing the black smoke completely covering the rainbow structure, the group who had heeded the warnings couldn’t help but rejoice at their good fortune.

“We’re all bros here,” Big Fatty Zhang said, his face still pale from fear, “so don't even mention it. Like I told you before, when Elder Bai concocts medicine, even gods and ghosts will run for cover!”

Xu Baocai took a deep breath, frowned in concentration, and then said, “Furthermore, you listen to me. Based on what I know about Elder Bai, and the things I've experienced… I can tell you that things aren’t over yet. You absolutely, positively must not go back up there yet!”

Back up on the rainbow, the disciples were all descending into madness. As for Bai Xiaochun, he flew up to hover in the air above the blue rainbow, where he looked around anxiously at all the black smoke.

“I'm a deva, whose will can surpass that of the heavens. And yet I can’t do anything about the smoke from some exploding pill furnaces…. Something seems off about this!” He really couldn’t stop wondering about the whole thing. He had been working very hard to control the situation, and yet had been powerless against the smoke.

“You know, it's been like that ever since I started this concocting session…. I'm a deva, and yet I haven’t been in control at all. It doesn’t make sense. Even if something unexpected occurred, I should have been able to prevent anything bad from happening. And yet… the bad stuff just keeps happening.” He couldn’t come up with any answers, something that he found hard to accept.

“Ah, whatever. I caused the problem, but I fixed it. I guess I should be happy.” With his divine sense, he could confirm that all of the disciples who had been affected by the uncaring fruit were showing no symptoms at all thanks to the black smoke.

As for any disciples who had not absorbed any of the aura of the uncaring fruit, he had planned for that as well, and made sure that they wouldn’t even feel the slightest discomfort.

“That black smoke doesn’t have even an ounce of poison in it!” As the smoke began to dissipate, a smile broke out on Bai Xiaochun’s face. He had already decided that, for as long as he couldn’t identify the source of the problem and fix it, he wouldn’t concoct any more medicine.

It was around this time that three beams of light suddenly shot through the air toward Bai Xiaochun. They were none other than Li Xiandao, Bai Zhentian, and the deva patriarch from the Hall of Steel Veins.

Li Xiandao and Bai Zhentian both had very grim expressions on their faces. Originally, they hadn’t planned to interfere at all, but the matter had reached the point of affecting the entire sect, leaving them no other choice. As for Patriarch Steel Veins, he had a relatively good relationship with Bai Xiaochun, and yet, still had a wry smile on his face as he approached.

“Bai, old pal, didn’t you say there wouldn’t be another time...?”

Now that the danger had passed, Bai Xiaochun once again bore the demeanor of a deva as he replied, “I'm really sorry, my friend. You see, last time there was an accident that infected some of the disciples with a dangerous substance. Because I was so worried about that, I intentionally sent this smoke out to deliver the antidote to them. If you don’t believe me, just watch. None of the people who the smoke touched will even get uncomfortable.”

Smiling faintly, he gestured out at the crowds below.

The three other devas looked down, and immediately saw that Bai Xiaochun was telling the truth. Although most of the disciples were muttering curses and complaints, none of them seemed harmed in the least.

The three devas breathed sighs of relief. After all, if some problems had occurred, then all of them would have been in trouble when the demigod patriarch returned.

Bai Zhentian was hesitant, but Li Xiandao and Patriarch Steel Veins sat down and began to chat. Seeing that, Bai Zhentian steeled himself and also sat down.

Patriarch Steel Veins was a fellow prime elder, and had helped Bai Xiaochun back in the River-Defying Sect. Therefore, the two of them were actually rather close, so it was only natural that he wanted to make sure the incident with the smoke was smoothed out. “Bai, old pal, your Dao of medicine is shocking. You’ve really shown me a new world today!”

Feeling a bit guilty, Bai Xiaochun gave a dry laugh and said, “Oh, I'm just an amateur. My skill isn’t even worth mentioning.”

Li Xiandao chuckled and said, “Amateur? Are you kidding? You’re so skilled you can transform the Dao of medicine itself! Brother Bai, you really are incredible.”

Bai Zhentian was the only one who didn't say anything. As the group chatted, the incense stick continued to burn down until only about a third of it was left….

By now, much of the smoke had dissipated, revealing the buildings and cultivators beneath. It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered; something seemed off. Unable to believe what he was seeing, he rubbed his eyes vigorously and then looked around again.

He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. The other three devas all stared blankly at the areas being revealed by the dissipating smoke.

Although there was almost no smoke left at all…. The blue rainbow… from top to bottom, was now… black!

Beads of sweat popped out on Bai Xiaochun’s head, and the other devas gasped.

“Calm down. There’s no need to get antsy here. We still have some time left. Trust me, everything will be fine.” In no mood to drink tea, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, trembling. The smoke continued to dissipate, and as it did, the seven rainbows, which had all been very colorful in the past…. were now completely black. Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to reel.

Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Cyan, Blue, Violet…. Before, the seven rainbows that made up the rainbow structure had been seven colors…. But now, they were completely black, buildings and all…. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was now as black as night!

It was around this time that the disciples began to notice that they were standing on black ground. Jaws dropped, and cries of alarm filled the air.

“Why… why is it black?!?!”

“Heavens! This is supposed to be a rainbow! Where did the color go?!”

“Don’t tell me it got poisoned!!”

“Something big is about to happen!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0911 awe-chapter-912

A cacophony of voices thundered out to fill the rainbow structure. After all, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had existed for countless years, with the seven rainbows being its identifying standard.

Not only was that rainbow structure famous in the eastern Heavenspan River, but it was also praised by the other three riversource sects.

In terms of beauty and splendor, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect took first place among all the branches of the river, which was a major source of pride to the demigod patriarch and ordinary disciples alike.

But now… the seven-colored rainbow structure was completely black. Even the buildings which covered its surface were pitch black, driving the disciples into near madness.

“Our rainbow!!”

“Is this still our sect?!?!”

“The rainbow!”

“Calm down everyone. We need to get out of here right now! Can’t you tell that the rainbow has been poisoned!? I have the feeling that if we don’t escape immediately, we’re all dead!”

Down below, the cultivators in the four cities gasped, expressions of astonishment covering their faces as they looked up.

“Heavens! Who would have thought that it would be so terrifying for Elder Bai to concoct medicine!!”

“How did he do it?! I’ve never heard of pill concocting sessions going like this!!”

“The rainbow… is black now….”

Big Fatty Zhang and Xu Baocai exchanged stunned glances. Although they had more experience in this regard than anyone, and had assumed earlier that the true disaster was yet to come, even they were nearly struck mute by what they were seeing.

They swallowed hard, their hearts racing madly as they stared at the pitch-black rainbow. The other cultivators who were with them were equally shocked.

About this time, the cultivators who were on the rainbow itself exploded into action like a hive of wasps. Shouting and clamoring, they raced off of the rainbow structure with all the speed they could muster.

They were absolutely terrified by the thought of Bai Xiaochun concocting medicine, and were convinced that the best thing to do was just move away….

From top to bottom, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s rainbow began to empty out. Those who couldn’t fly fast enough used secret magics to get away as quickly as they could.

From the day the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had been founded until now, nothing like this had ever happened before….

Before long, all seven rainbows were completely and utterly empty….

Back on the previously blue rainbow, Bai Xiaochun stood there, his jaw hanging open, trembling as he looked around at what was happening. And of course, his anxiety continued to build.

“Why is this happening? Dammit! I did everything to make sure no accidents happened! Something fishy is going on. Something very fishy!!” Terror and madness rising in his heart, he looked over at the Patriarch Steel Veins, a bitter smile on his face. “Fellow Daoists, you were here to see it all, right? I was fixing my previous mistake! I didn’t want to change the rainbows’ color….”

The other three prime elders were stunned into silence at the moment. Their eyes were blank, and they were so taken aback that they had no idea what to do.

It was around this time that transmission jade slips began to buzz in all three of their bags of holding. When they scanned them with divine sense, they immediately heard pleas of help coming from their fellow clan members.

“Patriarch, everyone else is evacuating the rainbow. We need to leave too!!”

“We can’t stay here, Patriarch. It’s too dangerous!!”

“Patriarch, Elder Bai is terrifying when he concocts medicine. Let’s get out of here…. If we don't leave now, we might get destroyed along with the rainbow….”

When Bai Zhentian heard the messages from his clan members, he didn’t say a single word. He just took a step forward and vanished. After arriving at his clan, he gathered up all the cultivators and left….

Although he was fairly certain the black rainbow hadn’t actually been poisoned, he was still fearful of Bai Xiaochun’s concocting methods. And since he couldn’t do anything about it at the moment, he had no choice but to care for his clan members.

Bai Zhentian truly couldn’t have been more shaken. “This Bai Xiaochun’s pill concocting is even more terrifying than his battle prowess….”

He had already decided that if it came down to it, he would rather die fighting Bai Xiaochun in battle than allow him to concoct medicine outside of his front gate….

“Dammit, I can't believe a walking disaster like this has lived long enough to become a deva!” Wrapped up in depressed thoughts, Bai Zhentian hurried away as quickly as possible.

Li Xiandao was essentially thinking the same thing as Bai Zhentian. The only difference was that he was more profoundly afraid. He had the feeling that if Bai Xiaochun were given enough time, and the right circumstances, then he… could actually destroy the entire Heavenspan Realm.

“It’s a good thing that when he came to cause trouble, he just beat me up, and didn’t decide to concoct medicine instead….” Heart pounding with lingering fear, Li Xiandao quickly turned to say one last thing to Bai Xiaochun.

“Um… Fellow Daoist Bai, I have an errand to run, see you later!” With that, he turned and blurred into motion to begin moving his clan away.

By now, the only person left was Patriarch Steel Veins, toward whom Bai Xiaochun stared, nearly on the verge of tears.

Patriarch Steel Veins was inwardly cursing Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao for fleeing with such haste. Smiling wryly, he looked back at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Bai, old pal, there’s really nothing I can do about the situation. You… um, take care of yourself. I think… the demigod patriarch should be back in four or five days at the most.”

With that, he hurried away to move the Hall of Steel Veins off the rainbow.

Soon, the previously bustling rainbow only had one person left on it. Bai Xiaochun.

“I just wanted to concoct a Turn Off Pill…. I never thought it would end up like this…. I know it’s my fault….” As he stood there looking around with a weepy scowl, he found that he couldn’t calm down. It was just like the old saying went: *his heart was beating like fifteen buckets in a well--eight going down while seven were coming up*. Earlier, he had thought it was great that no one came after him with violent intentions because of his pill concocting. But now that he was all alone, he suddenly felt guilty.

“The demigod patriarch will be back in four or five days….” The mere thought of how the patriarch would react left Bai Xiaochun shaking in terror.

“Will he end up regretting what he's done for me…?” The mere thought caused his face to drain with blood. A moment later, he was rushing back toward his immortal's cave.

“No! I still have four or five days. I can still fix the problem!! I can do it! I can definitely get the colors back into the rainbow!”

The total population of the four cities skyrocketed in the briefest of moments. At the same time, numerous bitter gazes were directed at the black rainbow up above.

“Good. Let Elder Bai stay up there by himself….”

“But when will it end? We can’t live down here forever!”

“What do we do now? Even the other prime elders have moved down into the cities! From that, you can see how terrifying Elder Bai’s medicinal pills are!”

“Let’s hope things wrap up soon. If things go on like this, Elder Bai is going to run the sect completely into the ground….”

The next day, Bai Xiaochun burst out from his immortal’s cave. He looked gaunt, with his hair in disarray, and his clothes in tatters.

“I figured it out,” he muttered. “When black crabapple gets mixed with miluo wood, it creates a unique sediment…. That's what made the rainbow change color. Dammit. I did plenty of research ahead of time and never heard anything about that sediment. Why did it pop up after I started concocting…? Getting rid of it won’t be easy, but I should be able to come up with a way!

“If I use the pollen of spiritpure daisy toward the end of the concocting process, I can drive out the black color. If I bolster the effect with my cultivation base power, then it should do the trick!”

His excitement surged as he was convinced that he had come up with a solution to the problem. But he quickly suppressed his excitement. Worried that he might end up causing yet another problem, he quickly concocted a single batch and then performed some tests. Afterward, when he was sure that there would be no side-effects, he excitedly set to work on a larger batch.

At first, he planned to take things slow and steady. He did some quick calculations, and came to the conclusion that it would take three days to finish the job of cleansing the rainbow.

And that was when he got a message from the Hall of Steel Veins. The demigod patriarch… would be back in only two hours….

As soon as he heard that news, he felt like he was about to explode.

“I have to put everything on the line!!” He pulled out all of the pill furnaces he had left, and even personally went to the Internal Affairs Pavilion. There wasn’t anyone on duty, but as a prime elder, he could easily unlock the storage warehouse and take out more than a thousand new pill furnaces!

In addition to the several hundred he already had, it was a total of about 1,500 furnaces. He quickly set them all up in the courtyard of his residence, and then went about madly concocting… 1,500 batches of pills made from spiritpure daisy pollen!

Because time was limited, he pushed the concocting process along with his cultivation base. In the end… when about two hours had passed, all 1,500 pill furnaces had turned bright red.

“It worked!” He knew that time was running out, so he threw his hands out in front of him, sending a blast of cultivation base power into the furnaces and causing them all to explode!

The resulting explosion, bolstered by his cultivation base, caused the seven rainbows to return to their previous color!

It was at that exact same moment that the pressure of a demigod began to weigh down on the area.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0912 awe-chapter-913

Moments before....

The demigod patriarch of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a tall, thin man with long, steel-gray hair. He wore a white robe, and while handsome, currently flew along with a completely expressionless face. Furthermore, a glint of anxiety was just barely visible deep in his eyes.

Apparently, he was somewhat unsettled by whatever it was he had learned on his most recent trip to Heavenspan Island.

Although he was currently still above the Heavenspan Sea, he could clearly see the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect off in the distance.

Every time he left the sect and then came back, he liked to spend a bit of time marveling at the seven scintillating rainbows that made up the sect.

This time, though, when he finally caught sight of the sect up ahead, his jaw dropped, and he stopped flying.

No longer did he see seven dazzling rainbows. Instead, he saw seven black, shadowy objects floating on the horizon. In fact, his first reaction was to mistakenly think that he had gone to the wrong sect.

And yet, before he could even react, an intense boom echoed out from what had once been the blue rainbow. The sky trembled as if from thunder, and a huge wave began to roll out across the Heavenspan Sea and River!

The demigod patriarch’s face fell, and he took a step forward, placing him right above the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

**

Mere moments had passed since Bai Xiaochun had let out a powerful shout as more than a thousand pill furnaces exploded, sending a blast of pollen out in all directions.

Almost immediately, color had begun to spread out across what had once been the blue rainbow. A look of joy had erupted on Bai Xiaochun’s face, but as of this moment, he went deathly pale.

“Not again....” Perhaps it was because of how many pill furnaces had exploded on the rainbow recently, weakening it, or some other reason. In any case, the explosion of this latest group of 1,500 pill furnaces, along with the influx of power from Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, was simply too much for the rainbow to take.

Even as the shockwave of the initial blast still continued to echo out, the rainbow… began to crumble!

From a distance, it was possible to see a huge crater open up, into which tumbled the structures which had existed on top of it moments before. As that happened, the demigod patriarch up above, and the countless cultivators down below, all stared in mute shock....

The crater widened into a hole, consuming even Bai Xiaochun’s immortal's cave....

Meanwhile, rumbling sounds continued to echo out as the incredible power of the pollen cleansed the other parts of the rainbow, and restored their color.

However, all the disciples in the four cities could look at was the rubble of the immortal's cave falling down through the enormous hole which had been punched in the blue rainbow. As for Bai Xiaochun, he hovered there watching the same thing happen, trembling in fear….

Soon, the shocked silence in the cities gave way to a huge commotion.

“It… it collapsed?”

“Dammit, how did he restore the colors? Hmph! Like I said from the beginning, the River-Defying Sect is nothing but a backwater sect. This Bai Xiaochun isn’t one of us! This was actually a good chance to see him punished. How the hell did the bastard manage to turn things around at the last minute?”

“What right do these River-Defying Sect interlopers have to run amok in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!? Bai Xiaochun got lucky, that’s the only way he became a deva. If he kept his head down it would be one thing, but look how brazen he is! He completely looks down on our Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect! We definitely need to join forces and submit an official request to the court to have his cultivation base crippled!” When the demigod was gone, no one would have dared to say such things aloud. But now, they couldn’t hold back any longer.

Bai Zhentian, Li Xiandao, and Patriarch Steel Veins all had varying expressions on their faces. They could sense that the demigod patriarch was back, and after exchanging nervous glances, they flew up into the air together.

At that point, a voice erupted that caused the sky to turn dim, and the lands to quake.

“What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!?! Do you have a death wish or something?!”

Bai Xiaochun currently hovered at the edge of the 300-meter wide hole in the blue rainbow, looking down at the lands on the other side. Profound anxiety currently gripped his heart, and his mind raced as he scrambled to come up with an explanation.

Thankfully, the pollen had the desired effect of cleansing the rainbow, and by now, the seven colors of the seven rainbows had been restored. Furthermore, the disciples who had been previously affected by the smoke from his medicine concocting were now coming to realize that their cultivation bases had actually been refined because of the torment they had been through.

Bai Xiaochun realized that too, and it alleviated a bit of his guilt. However, before he could say anything in his defense, the gaze of the demigod patriarch fell upon him, as sharp as the sharpest sword. Clearly, the man was furious beyond belief.

As the demigod’s divine sense continued to spread out, and he heard all the things the disciples down below were saying, he came to realize what had occurred while he was away.

He also realized almost immediately that all seven of the rainbows were completely unoccupied, and that everyone had moved down into the cities below.

He almost couldn’t believe that Bai Xiaochun’s pill concocting could be so powerful and dangerous. But then he looked at the gaping hole in the blue rainbow, and his fury spiked.

“Cat got your tongue?!” he yelled in a voice that rumbled like thunder. He emphasized his words with a flick of his sleeve, which caused the seven rainbows to tremble, and left the disciples down below shivering with both fear and anticipation.

The other devas hesitated for a moment, with both Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao thinking back to how, considering the disasters Bai Xiaochun had caused, it might be a good time to hit him while he was down.

Patriarch Steel Veins also held back, trying to decide whether or not to try to help Bai Xiaochun explain himself. But then he looked at the gigantic hole in the rainbow, and merely smiled bitterly.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart pounded as he looked back at the furious demigod patriarch. Steeling himself, he prepared his reply.

“Hey, Patriarch. I, um… well this is what happened: I didn’t really like my old immortal's cave. Yeah. That's what caused this!

“My old immortal's cave wasn’t a very good place to stand guard over our Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Therefore, I decided to tear it down completely and replace it with this hole. This way, I can look up at the violet rainbow to bask upon your glory, sir, but at the same time, can look down to the four cities down below. Now, I can keep track of everything that goes on in the entire sect!

“Only by doing this can I truly feel at ease, and it goes to show that in my heart, I care only about the patriarch up above, and the disciples down below. My entire being is devoted to our Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

Although he had started out somewhat haltingly, as the words came out, he spoke more confidently, even thumping himself on the chest to emphasize his words. It really seemed like he would spare no effort to work hard for the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

When the disciples in the four cities hear his words, they immediately erupted in anger….

“Shameless!!”

“Completely incorrigible!!”

“He obviously wants to destroy our entire sect! It's a crime deserving of ten thousand deaths!”

The lower-ranking disciples weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. The other three devas had strange expressions on their faces. However, the demigod patriarch actually seemed amused. He considered providing a harsh reprimand, but then he thought back to his trip to Heavenspan Island, and how Du Lingfei had once again reminded him to care for Bai Xiaochun.

That reinforced his impression that the two of them had a special relationship, and it caused him to hesitate over how to resolve the current situation.

After a moment passed, he snorted and said, “If you ever think of concocting medicine inside the sect again… I’ll personally make you wish you hadn’t!”

With that, he swished his sleeve and turned to leave.

When Bai Zhentian and Li Xiandao saw the demigod patriarch turn what everyone had expected to be a high crime with a severe punishment into a minor offense, they gasped in shock.

Patriarch Steel Veins was also taken aback.

Even Bai Xiaochun was stunned. Never could he have guessed that the demigod patriarch would say something like that, and in fact, not even ask any questions about what had happened. His heart began to race at the improbability of it all. Then he started wondering if, perhaps, the patriarch was doing it all because of his potential for future growth….

The disciples down below were flabbergasted.

When the demigod patriarch noticed how people were reacting, he realized that he might have let Bai Xiaochun off a bit too lightly. Looking back at him with a glare, he said, “Since you like this hole of an immortal's cave, then go ahead and keep living inside of it!”

With that, he headed back up to the violet rainbow.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the gaping hole, and his face fell. He had originally assumed he would be getting off scot-free. Instead, it turned out his punishment was to live inside of a big hole….

“Ah, whatever. This really was my fault, so I’ll just grin and bear it….” Bai Xiaochun had been so nervous because of the demigod patriarch that he didn’t notice at all how angry everyone was down below.

As for the other devas, they couldn’t help but look at Bai Xiaochun a bit more closely. Based on what they knew of the demigod patriarch, they were sure that if any of them had done something like what Bai Xiaochun had just done, they would have faced severe punishments.

And yet, with Bai Xiaochun, he played everything down.... That led all three of them to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun had some mysterious and unprecedented backers!

The disciples down below were all crestfallen. They had been itching to see Bai Xiaochun struck with bad luck, and some had even hoped he would be killed.

However, in the end, most people realized that no one had actually been hurt. The truth was that Bai Xiaochun, originally a nobody from the River-Defying Sect, had truly risen to prominence in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. That became the source of quite a bit of jealousy.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0913 awe-chapter-914

Now that the demigod patriarch was back, the disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect began to make their way back from the four cities and onto the rainbows again.

After being cleansed with pollen, the rainbows’ color had been restored. However, the enormous hole remained in the blue rainbow. In fact, anyone who looked up at that hole would be able to see Bai Xiaochun inside of it….

Bai Xiaochun felt like leaving, but every time he was about to, a terrifying stream of divine sense would descend from the violet rainbow, forcing him to bow his head and remain in place, floating there cross-legged….

“If I’d known things would end up like this, I would have said I was planning to rebuild the immortal’s cave instead of talking about how much I cared about the sect.” He sighed. Being forced to live like this was just as bad as being strung up in front of the entire sect. It was very embarrassing.

“At least the color came back to the rainbows, and none of the disciples were hurt….” When he contemplated those things, his guilt lessened a bit.

To Bai Xiaochun, it was a big loss of face. However, that was only because he didn’t know the demigod patriarch very well. The truth was that the man was extremely cruel and strict. Everyone who had ever had dealings with him had been under the impression that he would dole out severe sanctions!

“That’s no punishment! That’s not even a slap on the wrist…. It's clearly someone from the senior generation favoring someone from the junior generation!”

“Why does Bai Xiaochun get this kind of treatment?! He’s not even one of us! It would be one thing if he kept a low profile in the sect, but instead, he does the opposite!”

“What a pity. Even after all that, he didn’t get killed. You know, I never really liked the River-Defying Sect. What gave them the right to rise to prominence? And what gave this Bai Xiaochun the right to do what he did? Hmph! They’re nothing but country bumpkins. Even the lowest person in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect is better than them!”

Talk like this had been spreading secretly from the moment Bai Xiaochun was appointed as a prime elder. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was a riversource sect, and its disciples were a very proud lot. They always looked down on the sects from downriver, and viewed them as little more than rustic villagers. Therefore, it was only natural that Bai Xiaochun’s rise to prominence would lead to some jealousy.

Before, no one had ever dared to speak such things in the open. But after he started concocting medicine, they simply couldn’t keep their feelings inside anymore. In fact, they were so upset that they didn’t even consider the fact that the pill concocting didn't actually harm them.

Now, new jealousies and grievances were piled onto the old. Soon, word about how everyone hated this ‘country bumpkin’ reached Bai Xiaochun himself, leaving him feeling both bitter and stunned.

“I guess there was no need to be so worried about them!” he thought. Yet again, he was reminded that the Starry Sky

Dao Polarity Sect was not his home. No, he only had one home. The River-Defying Sect!

However, before the gossip could intensify too much, new news was broken, something that deeply shocked everyone.

The Celestial… was taking in a new apprentice!!

The news spread like wildfire, especially on the rainbows of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. At the same time, the enormous battleship on the Heavenspan Sea began to rumble with noise, causing the talk to spread even faster.

Bai Xiaochun was actually the first to notice the noise coming from the battleship. Shocked, he sent some divine sense out, and could immediately sense that the huge thing was powering up by sucking in the energy of heaven and earth in the area.

Back when his cultivation base was lower, he would never have been able to detect such a thing. But now that he was a deva, he picked up on the clues immediately. The battleship was clearly some ancient magical device that could operate only by absorbing large amounts of spiritual power from the surrounding sea water.

However, it needed a bit of time to power up. From what he could tell, it would be several days before it could set sail.

“The Celestial is accepting a new apprentice?” he murmured, eyes narrowing. “And the battleship is powering up?”

This was not his first time hearing the rumors about the Celestial taking in a new apprentice. Patriarch Spirit Stream had mentioned something similar, and in fact, that was one of the reasons Bai Xiaochun had returned to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to begin with.

“Isn’t the Celestial doing fine as it is? What does he need a new apprentice for?” Bai Xiaochun already found the thing suspicious. Three days later, the noise from the battleship ceased, and fluctuations began to roll out from it, indicating that it could set sail at any time.

Around that time, cultivators began to arrive from the Middle Reaches and Lower Reaches. Even delta cultivators came.

All of them acted very cautiously, and none dared to enter the sect itself. Instead, they camped in the surrounding regions. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect did nothing to stop them, and as time went by, more and more arrived.

These were people from all over the eastern river region, people whose cultivation bases… were at the Nascent Soul stage!

Those who were friends with Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect disciples were able to enter the sect. All such people were from the Middle Reaches. None of the Lower Reaches or delta cultivators had friends in the riversource sect, and so none of them dared to do such a thing.

This influx of cultivators fueled all sorts of rumors about the Celestial taking in a new apprentice. The disciples in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect gossiped nonstop about the matter.

“It seems the rumors are true!”

“I can’t believe the Celestial is actually accepting a new apprentice!! Heavens! This is basically a chance to rise to the highest heights in a single bound! The ultimate good fortune!!”

“You know what I heard? The Celestial is going to pick this new apprentice at any moment! And the apprentice could come from any of the four river branches. Up to now, he's only accepted four apprentices….”

“I heard the same thing. Supposedly, the Celestial’s four apprentices… are the four demigod patriarchs from the four riversource sects!!”

Of course, Xu Baocai was on top of the situation from the very get-go. Before long, he had compiled a detailed report, which he brought to Bai Xiaochun.

After hurrying over to the gaping hole in the blue rainbow, he found Bai Xiaochun and said, “Junior Patriarch, something big is happening!!”

Bai Xiaochun was currently holding a jade slip in his hand, a message from Patriarch Steel Veins which contained detailed information about the matter of the Celestial accepting a new apprentice.

When he heard Xu Baocai’s voice, he put the jade slip away, looking clearly shaken.

“Did you hear me, Junior Patriarch?” Xu Baocai gushed. “The Celestial is taking in a new apprentice!!

“Up to now, the Celestial has only ever had four apprentices, and one of them is the demigod patriarch of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

“Now he’s accepting a fifth apprentice. As you can imagine… whoever becomes that fifth apprentice will also become a demigod expert one day!!

“I also heard that whenever the Celestial accepts a new apprentice, he’ll do so, not just from the eastern part of the river, but from all four branches. The main limitation is that only people in the Nascent Soul stage or above can participate. Other than that, anyone can come register at one of the riversource sects. The riversource sects are prohibited from interfering, and in fact, are responsible for making sure that everyone who registers gets to Heavenspan Island!” Xu Baocai held nothing back, and told Bai Xiaochun everything he knew.

The reason Bai Xiaochun looked shaken was that all the information Xu Baocai had just told him was information he had already been made privy to in the jade slip that Patriarch Steel Veins gave him.

There was another bit of news that Xu Baocai hadn’t uncovered, and in fact, very few people were aware of yet.

And that was… the Celestial planned to pick his new apprentice by means of a trial by fire. Apparently, there was an arcane pocket realm on Heavenspan Island that could be entered by anyone from the Nascent Soul stage to the Demigod Realm!

No one knew exactly what would happen inside that pocket realm, but they did know that there was one main requirement…. The first person to get out of it would become the Celestial’s fifth apprentice!

Furthermore, the top 100 people who emerged from the pocket realm but didn’t become an apprentice would get a special reward!

The mere chance to become an apprentice of the Celestial was viewed by countless people as a matter of unheard-of good fortune. That alone was enough to drive people crazy, even devas.

However, what captured Bai Xiaochun's interest was not the matter of becoming an apprentice, but rather, the special reward!

The runners up… would get a medicinal pill!

They were pills personally concocted by the Celestial, pills that were extremely rare, pills that were called… Millennium Longevity Pills!!

A single such pill would give a person an extra 1,000 years of longevity, and it was no exaggeration to call them immortal pills. Despite being a grandmaster apothecary, not even Bai Xiaochun would be able to make pills like that.

One of the reasons was that among the ingredients was a marvelous type of vegetation that had long since gone extinct!

Bai Xiaochun could tell that Millennium Longevity Pills would be extremely valuable, even to the Celestial!

For cultivators who were at a bottleneck with their cultivation, and had limited time, a Millennium Longevity Pill would be a crucial way to buy more time to make a breakthrough.

It could help Nascent Soul cultivators become devas, and could help devas prepare to become demigods!

As could be imagined, Bai Xiaochun was especially attracted to such pills. After all, his main focus in life was to live forever. Therefore, to have Millennium Longevity Pills dangled right in front of him caused his eyes to go bloodshot and even twitch because of the internal struggle.

How could a thousand years of longevity not profoundly affect him?

Unfortunately, his encounter with the Celestial back in the Wildlands had left him with a very bad feeling. For him to accept an apprentice at this particular critical moment… seemed very suspicious!

Had the Celestial not received a grievous injury, it might seem less odd. But Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but wonder why he would suddenly be interested in an apprentice, given his current state.

Xu Baocai could see that Bai Xiaochun felt torn about the matter, and couldn’t help but wonder why. From what Xu Baocai could tell, Bai Xiaochun could participate and not even try to win. Even considering that it was a competition among chosen from all four of the river branches, Xu Baocai was still convinced that Bai Xiaochun would fare extremely well.

Bai Xiaochun didn't feel comfortable explaining his hesitation to Xu Baocai. He simply sat there, unable to prevent his heart from racing. After sending Xu Baocai away, he sighed.

“To go? Or not to go?” He shook his head, pondering what the best decision was.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0914 awe-chapter-915

Bai Xiaochun sat there stewing about the matter for three more days. On the afternoon of the third day, a Dharmic decree came down from the demigod patriarch that was spread to all corners of the eastern Heavenspan River region.

The decree contained two announcements. The first declared that a battleship would be setting sail for Heavenspan Island in one month. Anyone who wished to participate in the trial by fire to become an apprentice of the Celestial needed to be on that ship by then!

The second announcement was that… in addition to selecting an apprentice, the Celestial was holding the trial by fire… to award medicinal pills to increase longevity!

The 1st place winner of the trial would become the Celestial’s apprentice!

The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place winners would be given a Millennial Longevity Pill.

The 5th through 10th place winners would win a Quincentennial Longevity Pill, which would bestow 500 years of longevity. Everyone else down to the 100th place winner would receive a Centennial Longevity Pill!

The announcement caused a huge stir, especially among the cultivators who were camped outside of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. And many of the sect disciples who had been on the fence about the matter were immediately thrown into a state of madness.

“Millennial Longevity Pill!?!? With that pill, I could definitely realize my dream of becoming a deva!”

“I might not be able to win one of those Millennial Longevity Pills… but I could definitely get a Centennial Longevity Pill! I’m gonna go for it!!”

Commotions spread to the most remote mountains of the eastern Heavenspan River. Even many eccentric rogue cultivators were so excited that they decided to participate!

Longevity pills were especially attractive to aging cultivators, who would go to almost any lengths to get them.

As the eastern Heavenspan River went crazy, the other three riversource sects sent out similar news, leading to similar results in the other river branches. It wasn’t just chosen disciples who responded. Anyone who held even the slightest bit of confidence decided to participate in this trial by fire!

Even the other devas in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect were excited, as well as experts from the Middle Reaches sects. The Nascent Soul cultivators from the Starry, Dao, and Polarity River Courts all hurried in the direction of the main sect….

The Nascent Soul cultivators in the River-Defying Sect, such as Song Que, were equally excited. Even Master Limitless decided to participate!

Li Qinghou hesitated over the matter for a short time before deciding to stay put.

When Bai Xiaochun realized that even more cultivators would be participating than he had originally imagined, he began to vacillate even more.

About a week later, Big Fatty Zhang came and asked if he would be willing to help. Big Fatty Zhang was worried that his cultivation base was too low, and yet still wanted to search for good fortune in the trial by fire.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun sighed and gritted his teeth. He obviously couldn’t become the apprentice of the Celestial. How could he possibly do something like that, considering that he was the Hell-Emperor’s Master!? However, he had been losing sleep and forgetting to eat recently because of those longevity pills.

“Fine, I’ll go for it! Even if I don’t get a Millennial Longevity Pill, maybe I can get one of the 500-year ones!”

Having made his decision, he decided to start getting ready. For one thing, he needed to be ready to help Song Que, Master Limitless, and the others from the River-Defying Sect. On the other hand, he also needed to prepare plenty of medicinal plants and pills.

“There’s definitely going to be a bunch of fighting and killing in that trial by fire. Ai… I have to go in *extra* prepared.” Thankfully, his status as a prime elder gave him easy access to plenty of resources.

Because he didn’t know how long he would be gone, he also decided to put together an even bigger stockpile of life force pills than he had already built up.

And then there was the matter of Big Fatty Zhang. Unlike Song Que, Big Fatty Zhang was in late Core Formation, and didn't quite meet the requirements to participate. Although helping him make a breakthrough ahead of time would be difficult, Bai Xiaochun was certain he could do it.

Even after all the potential risks were explained to him, Big Fatty Zhang was still determined. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun nodded and prepared to help him push toward a breakthrough.

Unfortunately, they only had about ten more days until the battleship set sail. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun had to use his authority as a prime elder to secure Big Fatty Zhang a place onboard. The plan was for Big Fatty Zhang to achieve his breakthrough either on the ship or after reaching Heavenspan Island. Then he would be able to secure his spot.

If he didn’t achieve a breakthrough, he could simply wait on the battleship until the trial by fire was over, and then return to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

As Bai Xiaochun went about his various preparations, the days ticked by, and more cultivators poured into the region around the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to wait for the battleship to set sail.

One morning at dawn, the Nascent Soul experts outside the sect flew up into the air and looked in the direction of the battleship with deep anticipation.

The battleship began to rumble as surely as if it were some ancient beast coming to life. Slowly but surely, the prow of the ship turned.

At the same time, the archaic voice of the demigod patriarch echoed out from the violet rainbow.

“Everyone who plans to participate in the trial shall board the ship now!”

Instantly, all of the Nascent Soul cultivators flew toward the battleship!

10. 20. 50... 100....

Not all of the Nascent Soul cultivators from the east were present, but most were. In the end, more than 200 beams of light descended onto the battleship.

Among them were Song Que, Master Limitless, and three other Nascent Soul cultivators from the Profound and Pill Stream Divisions. There were many others from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect as well, including Bai Lin, Zhao Tianjiao, and others.

As for Bai Zhentian and the other devas, when they heard that Bai Xiaochun was going, they decided not to go. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun was the only deva to join the group.

As the only prime elder, he was responsible to act as the guardian of the battleship, and the leader of the forces onboard. Most of the cultivators who followed him onboard looked at him with the utmost level of awe, and offered respectful greetings as soon as he looked at them.

Although Bai Xiaochun was mostly used to his high status, and had started to tire a bit of everyone bowing and scraping all the time, to see so many Nascent Soul experts awestruck by him was quite pleasing.

“Ai. I guess I really am too outstanding. I didn’t even try very hard, and yet, here I am, a prime elder.” Clearing his throat proudly, he waved his sleeve. Then a wistful expression appeared on his face as he thought back to the last time he had boarded this ship, as a mere disciple. Back then, Chen Hetian had been the ship’s guardian.

Now, Chen Hetian avoided him at all costs….

Song Que and Zhao Tianjiao also reacted emotionally upon boarding the ship. The main difference was that, upon seeing Bai Xiaochun there, Zhao Tianjiao sighed, whereas Song Que lowered his head and cursed inwardly.

“What's all the fuss about Bai Xiaochun and his deva cultivation base!? And what is he doing here!?!?”

Bai Xiaochun unhesitatingly arranged for everyone from the River-Defying Sect, as well as Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Lin, to be given the best cabins. With the exception of Song Que.

“Que’er!” he shouted into the crowd, waving his hand back and forth. “Come over here and share a cabin with uncle!”

Song Que’s expression turned very dark, and he ducked his head down further. He had hoped to completely avoid Bai Xiaochun, and yet, still ended up being singled out.

“Dammit, Bai Xiaochun just won’t give up, will he!? If I’d known he would be here, I would have beaten myself to death before coming along.” Although he was nearly going mad with frustration, he couldn’t resist the temptation of being able to stay in the biggest cabin on the ship. Steeling himself inwardly, he strolled over in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, much to the envy of all the other Nascent Soul cultivators.

Before long, all the arrangements had been made, and Bai Xiaochun waved his hand in grand fashion.

“Set sail!”

In response, the disciples who had been assigned to power the ship set to work. Intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the ship then sped up, cutting through the waves as it headed deep into the Heavenspan Sea.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0915 awe-chapter-916

The instant Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, and the enormous battleship sped off into the distance, the disciples who remained behind on the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s rainbows erupted into excitement.

“Finally! He’s finally gone!!”

“The heavens do have eyes! The freak Bai Xiaochun has left the sect! Every day that he’s around is one lived in abject fear! I just hope he perishes over there. Let god take him as an apprentice!”

“That damned country bumpkin is finally gone! Hahaha! Keep the hell away from our Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!”

The disciples were so excited that some even had tears in their eyes. A few even pulled out gongs and drums, and began to celebrate as enthusiastically as they did during New Year’s.

An atmosphere of joy filled the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and the gongs and drums were soon joined by cheering and delighted laughter.

After all, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was simply too high. Nobody could fight him, and everyone was jealous of him. Therefore, they normally couldn’t give vent to their feelings, and were forced to keep them bottled up. Now that he was gone, they couldn’t hold back from rejoicing.

Although the battleship was some distance off already, it was still close enough… that Bai Xiaochun was able to hear the commotion back in the sect.

He blinked a few times, and then cleared his throat, feeling very moved. Yet again, it was proven how outstanding he was. If he weren’t, then why else would people give him such an enthusiastic farewell?

As thick-skinned as ever, he turned to Song Que, Zhao Tianjiao, and his other friends and said, “It's been a long time since I've heard that sound. See? Everyone hates to see me go. And when I do, they always throw me a big farewell party.”

Song Que said nothing in response, and a strange expression could be seen on Zhao Tianjiao’s face. As for Bai Lin, he simply smiled wryly.

However, it was at this point that Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and said, “Hold on! If they want to see me off, then as a prime elder, how could I possibly ignore them!? Men! Stop the ship!”

Although he was making a show of accepting the ‘praise’ of the disciples, the truth was that inside, he was feeling very prickly, and had decided that he couldn’t let such behavior slide.

As the most powerful expert on the ship, no one dared to countermand his orders. Within moments, the ship had lurched to a halt.

Back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the disciples were in the midst of cheering wildly when, all of a sudden, someone noticed that the ship had stopped.

“Hey everybody, look! Why did the ship stop moving?!?!”

“Heavens, what’s going on?!?!”

“There’s no way that he decided not to leave, is there…?”

It only took a few moments for the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to go quiet. Countless eyes came to lock on the battleship, and innumerable hearts began to pound with restless anxiety.

On the battleship, Bai Xiaochun stood there, looking back at the sect, which was now completely empty of any sounds of gongs or drums. He cleared his throat.

“Seems they all really are going to miss me. Ah, whatever. I might as well turn the ship around and say some goodbyes.” Marveling at what a master of etiquette he was, he smiled contentedly. Zhao Tianjiao, Bai Lin, and his other friends all exchanged awkward glances….

Under Bai Xiaochun’s orders, the ship… slowly turned around and headed back toward the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect….

The disciples there suddenly felt like their heads were going to explode. Their faces fell, and their minds filled with thundering rumblings.

“What… what is he doing? Why is he coming back?!?!”

“What happened? What is he doing?!?!”

“This is all your guys’ fault! You shouldn’t have gone so overboard! He’s not leaving. Oh, what are we going to do!?”

Even as everyone descended into trembling anxiety, the voice of the demigod patriarch erupted out from the violet rainbow.

“No dillydallying, Bai Xiaochun! Do you have a death wish or something!? Turn that ship around!”

The voice echoed out with such thunderous volume that the sky trembled, and huge waves broke out on the surface of the Heavenspan Sea.

“I just wanted to go say goodbye to everyone....” Bai Xiaochun shouted. “Ah, whatever. Fine, turn this thing around and head for Heavenspan Island.”

There were no other options. He couldn’t beat the demigod patriarch in a fight, after all.

It didn’t take long for the ship to turn around again, and then sail off into the depths of the Heavenspan Sea. Soon, it vanished over the horizon.

At that point, when the disciples of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect were absolutely certain that Bai Xiaochun was gone, they sighed in relief, and then started to get excited again.

Bai Zhentian finally ended his session of secluded meditation, and walked out into the open, a smile on his face because of how wonderful life was now.

Although Li Xiandao had warmed up to Bai Xiaochun to a certain degree, he was also relieved to see him gone. At long last, his usual look of detachment appeared on his face again.

As for Chen Hetian, he had been living like a rogue cultivator outside of the sect. As soon as he heard that Bai Xiaochun was gone, he immediately grew very excited.

“The damned bastard is finally gone!” Brimming with anticipation, he headed directly back in the direction of the sect.

Golden waves rolled across the surface of the Heavenspan Sea. It was so beautiful that, even at night, cultivators would go out to take in the scenery. This was a very different scenario than when all of the chosen of the sect had gone to participate in deadly training. Therefore, everyone onboard was feeling quite relaxed.

Many people took the chance to get to know new friends. After all, they would likely be facing dangerous situations when encountering cultivators from the other three branches of the river, people with different techniques and customs.

By working in teams, they would be able to increase their chances of success. Besides, they were all from the eastern Heavenspan River. If one of them ended up as the Celestial’s new apprentice, it would mean great benefits for everyone.

Of course, the Nascent Soul cultivators treated Bai Xiaochun very respectfully. However, the scene which had played out when they were leaving the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had been somewhat unsettling, and therefore, none of them dared to go request an audience and offer formal greetings.

Bai Xiaochun was already feeling bored. Back when he had sailed to the Great Wall, the trip had taken about half a year. Based on his current calculations, this trip would take even longer.

After considering how long the trip would take, he decided that he needed to decide on something to do to pass the time. At the moment, the best thing to do was help Big Fatty Zhang with his breakthrough.

If he succeeded, then he would be able to participate in the trial by fire, and have a chance to become an apprentice of the Celestial.

With that, he headed toward Deck 2, where he had arranged for a very nice cabin for Big Fatty Zhang to stay in.

He found Big Fatty Zhang on the balcony, gazing out excitedly at the Heavenspan Sea.

The furthest he had ever traveled in his life was first from the Spirit Stream Sect to the River-Defying Sect, and after that, to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. He had never actually left the Heavenspan River.

Although he had been in secluded meditation when Bai Xiaochun and the other chosen went to the Great Wall, when he emerged later and learned that he wouldn't have been able to go, he felt very down. Starting from that point, he had a big goal in life.

"I want to travel to the farthest corners of the earth!" That dream was one of the reasons he had been so set on taking this trip to Heavenspan Island. However, there was another reason. Only about half a month ago, he had suddenly dreamed a very peculiar dream.

In that dream, he saw a strange world. After waking up, it was for some strange reason that he felt certain that the trip to Heavenspan Island would be a lifechanging event for him.

"After I formed my Will Core, I very rarely experienced any premonitions like this. However, whenever I did… they turned out to be true. This trip is definitely going to bring me incredible good fortune!” Even as he stood there, eyes shining with determination, Bai Xiaochun arrived.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0916 awe-chapter-917

“I'm definitely going to reach the Nascent Soul stage, Xiaochun. Oh, by the way, let me tell you about this dream I had….” Looking very serious, he went on to explain everything about his dream.

As Bai Xiaochun listened, his eyes widened with shock. A strange expression overtook his face, and by the time Big Fatty Zhang finished, he couldn’t hold back from reaching out to clasp his shoulder.

“You can do it, Eldest Brother!” Inside, however, he was a bit worried that Big Fatty Zhang was too obsessed with trying to make this particular dream come true. However, worried that he would discourage his Eldest Brother, he offered some more random encouragement. “Wow, Eldest Brother, if you really end up in that strange world you saw, then remember to tell me all about it. I’d like to go see it also.”

Big Fatty Zhang laughed heartily. Then, he sat down cross-legged to meditate according to Bai Xiaochun’s instructions.

Bai Xiaochun had come well-prepared to help Big Fatty Zhang with his breakthrough. Before leaving the sect, he had traded one of his deva souls for a set of five elements deva beast souls. After all, he didn’t have enough deva souls to make the full set needed for a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul.

Of course, even Earth-Dao Nascent Souls were incredible, and were considered the peak level of power among devas. As of this moment, Big Fatty Zhang was getting access to resources that only top chosen of the sect would normally see.

Big Fatty Zhang was very well aware of that, and was deeply grateful.

Three months passed relatively quickly. With Bai Xiaochun standing as Dharma protector, and also providing plenty of medicinal pills, Big Fatty Zhang's breakthrough was going along smoothly.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun had only heard about Will Cores when Feng Youde brought them up all those years ago.

As for Feng Youde, he had only come to know about them by randomly coming across some information about them when perusing the sect's ancient records. Later on, Big Fatty Zhang came to find that, despite the boost in battle prowess it gave him, the sect in general didn't care too much about his unique type of core. That went to show how unusual it was for people to form Will Cores.

However, because Bai Xiaochun had been anticipating helping Big Fatty Zhang with this breakthrough, he did some of his own research in the ancient records. In fact, he had found the very passages that Feng Youde had come across.

The information wasn't very comprehensive, but he was able to confirm that, in the past, Will Cores had been commonly cultivated by spirit enhancers. In terms of battle prowess, they were roughly equivalent to Earth-Dao Violet Cores. Unfortunately, after being converted into nascent souls, they were merely average.

Furthermore, it was much more difficult for cultivators with Will Cores to achieve breakthroughs.

Because of that, many people viewed them as being of little value or interest. After much research, they were eventually abandoned as a subject of pursuit.

However, because he was so concerned about Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun had done some intensive investigation, and had found something of note.

He discovered that within the spiritual power that existed in Big Fatty Zhang’s body, there was a unique strand of energy. Most people who saw that strand of energy would find it unusual, but wouldn’t think much about it. However, when Bai Xiaochun saw it, he gasped in shock.

The reason for his surprise was that he had seen the exact same strand of energy when he formed his Gold Core!

Thanks to his study of the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, he realized that the strand of energy was actually Willpower!

Back when he had ascended to the Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul stage, that seemingly indestructible strand of Willpower had mysteriously vanished. It was something he had never understood, not even after becoming a deva.

Upon returning to the River-Defying Sect, he had asked Patriarch Spirit Stream about it, but hadn’t received any new information. Eventually, he had stopped thinking about it. But now that he was working with Big Fatty Zhang, and saw the same type of energy inside of him, his eyes began to glitter.

“Could it be that the Willpower inside of me didn't actually vanish? What if it became an intrinsic part of the spiritual power in my cultivation base?” He did some more checks, but didn't find any evidence to support his theory.

“Just what exactly is this Willpower?” As of this point, he realized that his understanding of Willpower was very lacking. Therefore, he would have to carefully use a trial-and-error method to help Big Fatty Zhang.

Another month passed. Occasionally, the Heavenspan Sea would get choppy. Sometimes, strange and bizarre sea creatures would appear, leading to a buzz of excitement among the Nascent Soul cultivators onboard. However, after enough time passed, most of them went into meditation to further their cultivation.

Eventually, it came time for Big Fatty Zhang to go into seclusion himself. Based on what Bai Xiaochun could tell, his breakthrough would happen in the coming two months.

There was no need for Bai Xiaochun to constantly stand as Dharma protector. As far as the subject of Willpower went, he still didn’t have any good ideas, and finally stopped worrying about it.

Because everyone was focused on cultivation, the ship was very quiet. After a bit of thought, Bai Xiaochun decided that he should also do the same. Whether it was his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation or his Undying Blood, he had packed plenty of supplies before leaving the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. After sending out a sliver of divine sense to keep an eye on Big Fatty Zhang, he went to work.

His Undying Blood was progressing much more slowly than his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. After all, it required lots of life force, which made significant progress impossible.

He had acquired plenty of types of plants and vegetation that had life force. The best thing would have been to concoct them into medicinal pills. However, Bai Xiaochun had grown very leery of concocting anything he hadn’t concocted before. Besides, doing so on a ship wasn’t very appropriate. Therefore, he tended to just directly consume the medicinal plants he had stockpiled.

The profound levels of life force in those particular medicinal plants would make them impossible for any ordinary person to consume safely. But Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to worry about such things. He was like a huge black hole that seemed impossible to satiate. As soon as he added any life force, it would immediately be sucked away.

After consuming enough life force, the black hole would glow bright red, and his blood would become more scintillating.

Finally, after an entire month of work, he added a second drop of Undying Blood!

Because of the presence of that second drop, the rest of the blood in his body became more vibrant.

At that point, he opened his eyes, his expression one of slight disappointment.

Even as he was trying to come up with a way to speed things up, he suddenly looked in Big Fatty Zhang’s direction, then vanished. When he reappeared, he was inside of Big Fatty Zhang’s cabin.

Big Fatty Zhang was trembling, had sweat pouring down his body, and thrummed with powerful energy. Bai Xiaochun looked at him closely, and immediately realized that his core was in the process of crumbling.

To step from Core Formation into the Nascent Soul stage, one needed to break down the core and transform it into a nascent soul!

Deva beast souls were used to assist the process, and refine the ultimate form of the nascent soul.

Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, sending a stream of white light out that formed a protective shield around Big Fatty Zhang. Big Fatty Zhang ceased to tremble as violently, and his energy surged even stronger. Finally, loud cracking sounds rang out!

His core was crumbling!

All of a sudden, dark clouds began to gather in the sky above the battleship. Lightning bolts began to crackle, causing many of the cultivators onboard to rush out to see what was happening.

“Tribulation clouds?”

“Someone is achieving a cultivation base breakthrough and making a nascent soul?”

Even as the shocked discussions began to play out, a piercing sound filled the air as… a huge face appeared right above the roiling tribulation clouds!

The face depicted Bai Xiaochun!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as he opened his mouth and directly swallowed the tribulation clouds!!

The tribulation clouds were clearly no match for him!

Everyone who saw this event play out was completely stunned.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0917 awe-chapter-918

“He… ate the tribulation clouds?” The Nascent Soul cultivators on the deck were completely and utterly taken aback. They had never even imagined that something like this was possible.

“So that’s what devas can do….”

It would be hard for any of these people to be more shocked than they already were!

There were only a handful of devas in the eastern Heavenspan River region, and few cultivators ever had dealings with them. For most of the people present, this event was something they would commit to memory for a lifetime.

However, the cultivators from the other three great sects in the Middle Reaches were even more shocked than those from the delta and Lower Reaches.

After all, they had had close dealings with devas in the past, namely, their sects’ former patriarchs. And what was shocking was that none of them remembered those patriarchs doing anything like this!

This was heavenly tribulation!!

To devas, Nascent Soul tribulation lightning wasn’t anything particularly incredible, and yet, it was still tribulation sent by heaven and earth. It was a supreme level of power that few people would ever be able to interfere with.

And yet today… Bai Xiaochun had directly consumed it!

Of course, everyone was shaken, but there were a few in the crowd who were even more shaken than the experts from the Middle Reaches sects.

They were Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Lin!

After all, they had much closer relationships with devas than the other cultivators. One had a Master who was a deva, and the other, a grandfather. Therefore, they knew much more about devas than the average person, to the point where there were very few Nascent Soul cultivators alive who could match their knowledge regarding devas.

And that made the entire situation even more unbelievable, as both knew that neither Bai Zhentian, Chen Hetian, nor any of the other devas could do anything like this!

Most likely, the only person who could possibly do it would be the demigod patriarch!

After the shocking scene played out, the projection of Bai Xiaochun’s face faded away, and back in the cabin, his eyes suddenly snapped open.

Even he was surprised by what had occurred. Looking up into the sky, he murmured, “Was that Hao’er helping me?”

One thing he had been wondering about for a while now was why no heavenly tribulation had appeared when he conjured his twenty-one-colored flame.

Actually, despite how terrifying the heavenly tribulation had looked moments ago, Bai Xiaochun had realized almost immediately that the explosive power inside of it had begun to disperse almost as soon as it formed.

It had been almost on a whim that he attempted to consume it, after which he absorbed the power into his own body as quickly as he could.

Even that little bit caused his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation to stir. Although he couldn’t reach the second level, he made significant progress, and actually saved years of cultivation time because of it.

All of that caused him to think about his apprentice, who had become the Hell-Emperor, and actually controlled the cycle of reincarnation in this heaven and earth.... He was likely the only person who could affect matters such as this.

“It's too bad that Hao’er can probably only do that a handful of times. Otherwise, it would make my future cultivation just too easy.” Although he couldn’t be sure that his conjectures were correct, he still felt a fuzzy warmth inside of him when he thought back to his wonderful apprentice.

Of course, as for all of the Nascent Soul cultivators out on the deck, they were awestruck by what they had seen. The image of Bai Xiaochun consuming tribulation clouds would be imprinted into their minds and hearts for as long as they lived.

Because of how Bai Xiaochun got rid of the tribulation lightning, Big Fatty Zhang’s breakthrough proceeded very smoothly. Soon, a Nascent Soul aura erupted out from him, which caused a smile to break out on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

At this point, Big Fatty Zhang was past any danger. He simply needed time to stabilize his nascent soul, and then end the session of cultivation.

Feeling extremely pleased, Bai Xiaochun set up some restrictive spells to keep Big Fatty Zhang safe, then swaggered out of the cabin. When he reached the deck, the numerous Nascent Soul cultivators there all cast gazes of deep veneration at him as they clasped hands and bowed to him.

Bai Xiaochun had already been in a good mood because of Big Fatty Zhang's breakthrough, and it only got better to see so many people looking at him worshipfully.

“My apprentice really is incredible,” he thought. “Not only did he help me speed up my cultivation, he made sure that everyone here adores me. He completely understands me!” For some reason, the weather seemed particularly good today, so he decided it was a perfect time to stay on the main deck and enjoy the sunshine. As he looked around, he noticed Song Que step out from deck 2, see him, and then try to duck back through the door.

“Que'er!” he cried. “Come over here. Uncle is in a good mood today, and wants to take you fishing!” Of course, Bai Xiaochun spoke the words much more quickly than Song Que could react.

Song Que stopped in his tracks. He had been working hard to avoid Bai Xiaochun throughout the entire trip so far, and had been caught completely off guard.

Not daring to refuse to comply, he gritted his teeth in frustration and walked over to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't bothered by Song Que's bad mood. Flying up into the air, he shoved his hand in the direction of the Heavenspan Sea. The water sank down so rapidly that a few dozen fish were too slow to react, and were left hanging in the air. Bai Xiaochun quickly made a waving motion with his hand, sending them all flying onto the ship.

Strange power existed within these fish, power that could be of great benefit to cultivators. Although Song Que was in a bad mood, when he saw them flopping there on the deck, his heart started to thump in his chest. Without even needing prompting from Bai Xiaochun, he walked over to pick them up.

The other cultivators looked on enviously, but, fearful of Bai Xiaochun, hesitated to step forward.

Bai Xiaochun was not the stingy type, though. As far as he was concerned, when he was happy, he liked everyone to be happy too.

“Come on, everybody!” he cried. “It's time for a fish feast!”

The Nascent Soul cultivators were thrilled.

“Many thanks, Senior Bai!” All of them began to rush around and pick up fish.

Some of them even flew up to where Bai Xiaochun was and joined in the fishing attempt. One of them was a Nascent Soul elder from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect who had been sent along because of his knowledge of the sects from the other three river branches. Although he wasn’t planning to participate in the trial by fire, this chance to advance his cultivation base along the way was very pleasing.

And thus, everyone on board the huge battleship had a rare chance... to feast on golden fish pulled right out of the Heavenspan Sea.

In the following days, Bai Xiaochun continued the practice. Sometimes he would fish, and sometimes he would capture other sea beasts that could even be used as ingredients for medicinal pills. He would also spend time practicing cultivation, and consulting with that one particular elder who knew so much about the other three river branches.

By helping to propel the ship with his deva power, he ensured that they made impressive time. All in all, the Nascent Soul cultivators made cultivation base advancement, and felt profound gratitude toward Bai Xiaochun because of it.

“Don’t worry about it,” he said in response to the expressions of thanks. “We're all from the eastern Heavenspan River, right? We’re all on the same team! You know, now that I think about it, considering that there are so many longevity pills up for grabs in this trial by fire, we should definitely split up into teams. Let’s not give the cultivators from the other three river branches any chances to get their hands on those pills!”

Sticking his chin up, he swished his sleeve and continued in a loud voice, “Remember, everyone, when we get to the trial by fire, stick together! And if you see anyone from our side getting picked on, roll your sleeves up and get into the fray!”

The Nascent Soul cultivators all laughed heartily. With every moment that passed, their impression of Bai Xiaochun improved, and they felt closer to him. At the same time, their sense of competitiveness toward their comrades on the boat lessened.

Although Song Que wasn’t too happy about everyone coming to like Bai Xiaochun, he also realized why it was happening, and approved. Bai Xiaochun was doing everything he could to make sure the people on their side remained safe.

Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Lin were also reminded of the old Bai Xiaochun they had come to know.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased to see everyone getting along and even making friends. The truth was that he had a bad feeling about this trial by fire organized by the Celestial. It seemed dangerous for some reason. The fact that he could get the eastern Heavenspan River cultivators to team up was a good thing. Even if they didn't actually manage to get more medicinal pills because of it, at least everyone would be safer.

Another month passed. Big Fatty Zhang finally emerged from secluded meditation, revealing his extraordinary Nascent Soul battle prowess. Relationships were forming among the cultivators on board, and fish feasts were held constantly.

And thus, the ship gradually approached its destination. Heavenspan Island… was getting closer and closer.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0918 awe-chapter-919

The closer they got to their destination, the less relaxed Bai Xiaochun felt. Not only was Hou Xiaomei on Heavenspan Island, so was that very same figure whom he hadn’t seen for many years. Du Lingfei.

The truth was that, other than the chance to get some longevity pills, one of the big reasons he had agreed to come to this event was his desire to make sure that Hou Xiaomei was safe. He had missed her for a long time.

Another reason… was Du Lingfei!

As he stood there on the deck of the ship, looking off into the distance, he murmured, “Back before I left for the Great Wall, she said… that the next time we met, she would explain everything.”

He had met many women throughout the years, and although they all had left varying impressions on him, there was something unique about Du Lingfei. Although he came to know her after meeting Hou Xiaomei, there was something about Du Lingfei that made her more unforgettable than anyone else.

They had faced death together in the Luochen Mountains. After the events of the Fallen Sword Abyss, she had suddenly vanished, only to reappear again in the Blood Stream Sect, in the trial by fire for the position of blood master. When the mask fell from her face in the heart chamber of the Blood Ancestor, they had gazed into each other’s eyes, both of them shocked to the core….

When he came to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, she had secretly protected him from the shadows, and then gave him a parting gift in the form of a deva soul….

All of those things were unforgettable memories. And yet, by this point, not even Bai Xiaochun was very certain of the true nature of their relationship.

Perhaps they had once had feelings for one another, but now… he wasn't sure.

Years ago, he had been obsessed with finding out how she truly felt about him. But as time passed, such desires slowly faded. Although they had never vanished completely, based on everything that had happened throughout the years, there seemed to be only one explanation.

"I can pretty much guess who you really are," he murmured, closing his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't the only one to lapse into solemn silence as Heavenspan Island neared. Everyone onboard felt the pressure building, and slowly became quiet.

No one missed any chances to look at the horizon in the hopes of catching sight of their destination. One day, it was Bai Xiaochun… who noticed a vague form off in the distance.

It looked like an island….

Soon, gasps could be heard on the battleship. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to glitter.

He could see things more clearly than anyone, and thus was able to make out many more details about the island.

It was actually gourd-shaped, with the larger of the two circles forming the main part of the island, and the smaller of the two circles made by the docks. Connecting them was a huge mountain range that rose up like the spine of a dragon.

Lush greenery and ornate buildings covered the place. Particularly noteworthy were three mountain peaks, all of which were covered by spectacularly shocking palaces. The middle peak was the largest, with the two mountains on either side being slightly smaller.

Steep stone staircases wound down the mountain like snakes, leading to various smaller palaces that dotted the mountains. Overall, the island looked like a combination of a beautiful garden and an imperial palace!

This was none other than Heavenspan Island!

The Celestial’s Palace of the Dao!

Each and every palace on the island radiated terrifying pressure, and there were so many of them that they were difficult to count. After a short examination, Bai Xiaochun guessed that there were probably over a thousand.

The combined pressure of all those palaces was enough to topple mountains and drain seas, to overturn the world. It was almost as if this island were an enormous, almighty being, gazing down with impunity upon all living beings in the world!

In a grand hall on the primary palace in the middle of the three mountain peaks was an enormous throne crafted from pitch-black crystal. The crystal that made up the throne actually grew up from the very base of the mountain itself, apparently connecting it to the Heavenspan Sea. Black sparks of electricity danced across the surface of the throne, to eventually be absorbed by the mighty figure who sat upon it.

He was none other than the Celestial!

As Bai Xiaochun and his group neared the island, the Celestial opened his eyes, looked at the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s battleship, and frowned slightly.

“Thanks to my wounds, I almost completely forgot…. That’s the same kid the gravekeeper managed to reel in, the one rife with Willpower. What trouble is he here to stir up?

“Who would have thought that the old ghost actually let him come back to the lands of Heavenspan…. As calculating as ever, gravekeeper. Well, I’ll use him just the same way I used the Blood Ancestor. I’ll do everything the same. When all other plans fail, he will be my most powerful tool. Not only will I not harm him for the time being, I will protect him until he matures….

“You know me well, you old ghost…. The truth is that, unless I have absolutely no other choice… I won’t take that final step….” After a long moment passed, the Celestial closed his eyes again.

Despite that, the pressure radiating out from Heavenspan Island grew even more intense!

It was at that exact same moment that Bai Xiaochun’s gaze shifted to another location on the Heavenspan Sea.

Before long, three ships appeared, each one coming from one of the cardinal directions…. They were battleships, much the same size as the one from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, although each one looked somewhat different in design and style. All of them were speeding toward the docks on Heavenspan Island.

The ship coming from the west was made of green stone, and seemed ancient beyond belief. It radiated power to shake mountains and dry up rivers as it sped through the sea water.

Bai Xiaochun could just barely make out a crowd of people on the deck of the ship. Furthest toward the prow was a person who attracted immediate attention. He was old, with the demeanor of a transcendent being, and profound deva fluctuations.

The ship coming from the south caused Bai Xiaochun’s pupils to constrict. It was made of pitch-black wood, and was surrounded by sinister black smoke. Occasionally, a black dragon could be seen in the smoke, the mere sight of which caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to start racing. Clearly, that dragon was the soul automaton of the battleship!

Seated cross-legged on the head of the dragon was a figure too obscure to be seen clearly. Only a vague outline was visible, and yet, it was possible to tell that his hair was actually the source of all the black smoke!

Even more eye-catching than the ships from the south and west was the battleship coming from the north. It seemed to be made of pure ice, which radiated a strong frigid qi. Furthermore, countless bolts of lightning danced within the ice, causing booming thunder to echo out in all directions, terrifying thunder that shook the soul.

Most conspicuous of all was the person standing on the prow of the ship from the north. He was a burly man that looked as tall and strong as a tower. In fact, he was at least

9 meters tall, powerfully built, with an aura that caused Bai Xiaochun’s pupils to constrict.

It didn’t take any consideration or thought to realize that these three ships… were cultivators from the other three branches of the Heavenspan River!

All of the other ships had set sail at roughly the same time as the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s, and had moved with similar speed. Thus, they all arrived at about the same time.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time actually laying eyes on cultivators from the other river branches. Although he had been given a lot information from that Nascent Soul elder, it was still different to see them personally. Even as he looked them over, the other cultivators on the ship around him did the same.

The pressure they felt immediately mounted. At the same time, the four different ships continued on their way toward Heavenspan Island’s docks.

As the ships got closer to each other, the cultivators on the decks became more clear.

It was at that point that the Nascent Soul elder who was an expert on the other three river branches began to provide more detailed introductions to everyone about the various cultivators!

“Everyone, watch out for the Exalted Zodiac Moon Domination Sect from the west. That old man with a transcendent air is known as Guru Spirit Immortal, and is adept with the Daoist magic of mountains and stones. He can transform living beings into nothing more than soil and rock! He’s very formidable. In general, the Exalted Zodiac Moon Domination Sect is adept with the Daoist magic of the five elements. Although that might not seem like anything extraordinary, their skill has reached the level of being completely terrifying.

“I'm unfamiliar with most of the other Nascent Soul cultivators from the west. But there’s one that all of you should pay close attention to. See that young man standing next to Guru Spirit Immortal? His name is Shi Yan, and he’s widely known as the top Nascent Soul expert in their entire sect. He once fought a shocking battle with someone in the early Deva Realm, and came out alive in the end!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0919 awe-chapter-920

After hearing this information, Bai Xiaochun looked over at Guru Spirit Immortal and the arrogant-looking young man standing next to him.

“Another person to watch out for is from the southern Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect. See that cultivator sitting on top of the black dragon soul? He’s Master Thousand-Ghost. His Daoist name comes from the fact that he was once an old ghost who had existed for a thousand years. By cultivating the Dao of ghosts, he achieved something completely heaven-defying, and became a deva. His battle prowess surpasses his cultivation level, and each of the one thousand strands of smoke that make up his hair contain a deadly Daoist magic!

“The Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect is skilled in shapeshifting arts. When they transform into vicious beasts, their battle prowess skyrockets. Furthermore, just like Master Thousand-Ghost, the disciples all cultivate the Dao of ghosts, giving them bizarre and unfathomable magical techniques.

“Although many people on that boat are rogue cultivators, the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect definitely has one particular chosen who rises above everyone. His name is Sun Wu, the same ‘wu’ character from the word centipede. Look, he’s standing right there on the main deck! His skin is as green as an evil ghost’s! That’s him!”

Looking at the ship coming from the south, Bai Xiaochun could see Master Thousand-Ghost sitting there on top of the black dragon. He seemed partially illusory, and emanated a sinister coldness. As soon as Bai Xiaochun looked at him, he seemed to sense it, and looked over with eyes that pierced like a sharp sword. At the same time, his aura seemed to weigh down on everyone on the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect's battleship.

“Want to stare at me? Fine. But why try to intimidate everyone else with me?” Bai Xiaochun was not convinced that this person was truly that impressive. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun viewed himself as the type of person who could not be easily cowed. He instantly glared right back. When it came to high-level staring contests, Bai Xiaochun had never truly lost, and as such, was supremely confident.

Whether it was in the Spirit Stream Sect, the Blood Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, or the Wildlands.... he was convinced that no one came even close to his skill in staring contests.

Perhaps some people might not believe that to be the case. But whenever he met people like that, he would simply use his gaze to remind them of how dangerous he truly was!

Bai Xiaochun's eyes almost seemed to contain lightning. There was even rumbling thunder, although no one would be able to hear it except himself and the person whose gaze met his.

Because of that terrifying lightning, Bai Xiaochun suddenly seemed profoundly more intimidating than before. All of his energy was focused on his eyes, which became like two sharp blades slicing through the air, cutting down anything in their path, crushing any life that got in his way until they stabbed directly into the pupils of Master Thousand-Ghost.

“A staring contest it is!” he thought, heart swelling with confidence in his world-wide supremacy in this field.

Master Thousand-Ghost was completely taken aback. Despite the fact that he had existed for a thousand years as an old ghost, he was still shocked to the core. This was his first time seeing this deva from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and the two of them had no feud. And yet, he was glaring at him like some sort of fiendish monster. His fierce gaze, and the way he gritted his teeth, filled Master Thousand-Ghost with a profound sense of unease, something he was not used to in any sense of the word.

He held his gaze for a moment, then cleared his throat and looked away.

When Bai Xiaochun confirmed that Master Thousand-Ghost was no match for his stare, his heart swelled with pride. As he stood there on the deck of the battleship, he flicked his sleeve, stuck his chin up, and radiated the lonely air of an invincible hero.

“Of course he’s no match for me. Ai…. I wonder if I’ll ever run into someone on my level? I can only hope that, one day, someone will defeat me!” As he stood there sighing, none of the other cultivators realized that Bai Xiaochun and Master Thousand-Ghost had just engaged in an epic staring contest….

Except for Song Que. Song Que knew Bai Xiaochun very well, and had stolen a glance at him moments ago. When he realized what was going on, a strange expression had appeared on his face, and he had to hold back from facepalming.

“They’re both devas… and they’re still into staring contests…?” Song Que simply couldn’t understand the world Bai Xiaochun lived in.

Meanwhile, the Nascent Soul elder from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect continued with his introductions.

“Last is the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect from the north.

“I once went on a mission to gather intelligence on this sect, so I happen to know that although they have a lot of territory, it's actually very sparsely populated. The climate there is horrible, not as bad as the Wildlands, but so intensely cold that the people from there have incredible physiques. The best in the world, actually!

“Their unique location makes them different from the rest of us in the east, west, and south. For all intents and purposes, all of the lands in the north are controlled by one sect. The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. There are a good number of cultivator clans in the area, which is where the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect recruits their disciples from.

“The sect is organized by a delineation of heavens. Disciples start out in the first heaven, and rise through the ranks to the ninth heaven.” At this point, the Nascent Soul elder providing the explanations lowered his voice. “Look over at the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect’s battleship. See the burly fellow up at the front…? He might look like a single person, but he’s not! Look more closely, and you will see the evidence…. He’s really two people combined into one!” Shocked, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect with narrowed eyes. As he did…

He realized that the burly man on the deck of the battleship was indeed not a single person. He was in fact two people combined together in bizarre fashion.

One of them had an extremely burly left side. Whether it was his left hand, left leg, or the left side of his torso and head, all were very powerfully built. However, his right side was withered up and shrunken. Because of that, he looked very misshapen and odd.

The other person was exactly the same, except with the sides switched. His right side was powerfully built, and his left side was withered. When those two people stood together, they almost looked like a single person.

Furthermore, their facial features matched perfectly!

As Bai Xiaochun looked over, he realized that, shockingly, both people had mid Deva Realm cultivation bases.

“Together, they form the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect’s illustrious… Master Cloud Lightning!

“Supposedly, Master Cloud Lightning used to be a single person. However, because of cultivating a heaven-defying magic, he failed in his attempt to break through to the late Deva Realm. The resulting backlash split him into two halves, each one of which contains a separate consciousness!

“However… the twin Master Cloud Lightnings possess a secret magic that allows them to temporarily combine back into the true Master Cloud Lightning. When they do, his cultivation base rises… to the late Deva Realm!” As Bai Xiaochun listened to the introduction, his eyes grew wider and wider. The devas from the other two sects were both in the mid Deva Realm, which wasn’t very intimidating. However, when the twin Master Cloud Lightnings combined and rose to the late Deva Realm, that was something to pay close attention to.

After all, despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun could defeat someone in the mid Deva Realm, he wasn’t quite sure about the late Deva Realm.

“Now take a look at the three people standing behind Master Cloud Lightning. Those are all ninth heaven experts in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. They are Han Yuemei, Zhong Zhenshan and… Master Lightning Origin! Master Lightning Origin is the one and only elite apprentice of Master Cloud Lightning. See, he’s right there behind Master Cloud Lightning, the skinny one that's hunched over like a monkey….

“You have to be very careful around him. He’s far more powerful than Han Yuemei and Zhong Zhenshan. Very dangerous! Furthermore, he's the type to seek revenge over the smallest grievance, and has a reputation for being vicious and merciless. He’s not the type you want to mess with blithely!” By this point, everyone was getting much more familiar with the other three sects.

Bai Xiaochun took a bit longer to look over the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. He had never forgotten what Patriarch Spirit Stream told him many years ago…. The Spirit Stream Sect had once been the Frigid School from the north. The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect formed only after destroying the Frigid School, and was their biggest arch-enemy!

Bai Xiaochun did not have a good impression of this sect at all. Lip curling, he murmured, “Their deva cultivated himself into two separate psychos…. Of the ninth heaven cultivators, the most dangerous, Master Lightning Origin, looks like a monkey…. What kind of a freak sect is this?!”

Around this time, the four battleships neared the docks. Then, rumbling sounds filled the air as they settled into place!

After the ships came to a full stop, the cultivators from the four river branches began to disembark, shivering apprehensively.

Even more than before, the various cultivators looked around to measure up their rivals from the other sects. Of course, the other three river branches also had Nascent Soul elders who were giving introductions to their compatriots.

Considering how many people were looking at him, Bai Xiaochun's curiosity was piqued. Sending some divine sense out, he began to eavesdrop on what people were saying….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0920 awe-chapter-921

“Everybody pay attention to Bai Xiaochun from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Just because he’s a deva doesn’t mean that he’ll hold back from fighting Nascent Soul cultivators. You’d be gravely mistaken if you thought he would. According to our intelligence report, he’s a twisted individual who takes delight in bullying people weaker than him. He’s definitely the most powerful deva from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and yet, for his entire life, he’s done nothing but oppress those with lower cultivation bases than himself! He’s the epitome of shamelessness, and all of you need to be very careful around him!”

“All of you need to be on guard against Bai Xiaochun. He's done a lot of very strange things in his life. He served on the Great Wall, then disappeared into the Wildlands for several decades. When he came back safely, he was a deva! What’s most terrifying about him, however, is not his cultivation base. It’s his medicinal pills! According to the limited information we have access to, if he's given the right opportunity, his pill concocting methods can destroy an entire riversource sect!!”

“Perhaps you people might not have heard of Bai Xiaochun. However, you’ve surely heard of the Fantasy Pills that come from the eastern Heavenspan River. Remember the catastrophes that resulted years ago because of those pills? Well… this guy is the despicable villain who created them!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard what the people from the other three river branches were saying about him, a strange, embarrassed look appeared on his face. Then he shook his head.

“I can’t believe I’m so famous…. When did my Fantasy Pill end up reaching the west? Are they the same as the ones from Sky City? And who said I like to bully people with a lower cultivation base than me!? That’s just called playing it safe!!” Despite being slightly irritated, he was generally pleased by how famous he was. Even he hadn't been aware of how far his name had spread.

“Hmmmphh! If they knew that the Giant Ghost King is my father-in-law, and that my apprentice is the Hell-Emperor, then they would definitely be scared out of their minds!” Thinking in that way made him feel even more pleased.

However, it was at about this time that he suddenly heard the sound of people talking… from the direction of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.

“Bai Xiaochun? Hmph. He just got lucky, and became a deva earlier than expected. It won’t be long before I become a deva, and then I’ll definitely defeat him in battle!”

“He’s pretty good-looking. Too bad he’s a guy.”

The people who were speaking were Nascent Soul cultivators, and their words were not pleasing at all to Bai Xiaochun. He immediately glared over in their direction, which attracted the attention of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, who looked back in his direction.

The instant their gazes met, Bai Xiaochun’s spirits lifted.

“Hey hey! Another staring contest, huh?!” Obviously, Bai Xiaochun would never willingly be outdone at his own favorite hobby. Therefore, he intensified his glare. However, it was only moments later that he was shocked to find how incredibly intimidating Master Cloud Lightning was.

“Dammit, there are two of them!”

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings looked at him coldly with two sets of eyes. Their gazes were incredibly intense, which made it difficult for Bai Xiaochun to stand up to them alone. He quickly called Song Que over to help him. However, before they could team up, the cultivators from the four different battleships all fell silent.

That was when Bai Xiaochun noticed that a group of people had stepped onto the docks, having just emerged from the majestic mountains that linked to the main part of Heavenspan Island.

In the lead… was a beautiful young woman wearing a long, violet gown embroidered with nine phoenixes. She had a crimson mark on her forehead, and there was something about her that seemed profoundly noble. When she looked out at everyone, her gaze seemed like the type that no one could defy.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw her, a tremor passed through him, and complicated feelings rose up in his heart. He suddenly had no interest in the staring contest with the twin Master Cloud Lightnings. All he could do was look quietly at the young woman.

She was none other than Du Lingfei.

They hadn’t seen each other in a very long time, and for some reason, she seemed more noble than she had in the past. As she stood there, it was clear that she was the focus of all the eyes present.

There was definitely something different about her, and it couldn’t help but make him feel that she was a bit of a stranger.

Flanking Du Lingfei were two groups of cultivators. On her left side was a group of female cultivators in red clothing, while on her right side were males cultivators in blue clothing. All of them were spectacularly good-looking.

A mere glance at the two groups of cultivators would cause anyone’s eyes to glitter. They were dressed alike down to the smallest detail, and were arranged in perfect ranks. Furthermore, they pulsed with incredible energy, as though all of them were capable of drawing upon the might of Heavenspan Island itself. Overall, they were very impressive.

Bai Xiaochun quickly spotted Hou Xiaomei in one of the groups, and Ghostfang in the other.

In almost the same moment, Hou Xiaomei caught sight of him, and the faintest shadow of a smile appeared on her face. A sparkle of joy could also be seen in her eye; if it weren’t for the solemn responsibilities she held, she would clearly have run over and hugged Bai Xiaochun.

Ghostfang also noticed Bai Xiaochun, but his face remained expressionless, and he barely glanced at him.

When Bai Xiaochun saw Hou Xiaomei safe and unharmed, he breathed a sigh of relief. However, he couldn't shake the mixed emotions that had risen up inside of him because of Du Lingfei.

At this point, Du Lingfei smiled and said, “Greetings, Fellow Daoists, and welcome to Heavenspan Island.”

There was a dignity within her voice that was backed by the might of Heavenspan Island, something magical that caused it to penetrate deep into the hearts and minds of everyone present.

Somber expressions could be seen on the faces of all of the cultivators present. The deva experts all stepped forward, clasped hands and bowed.

“Well met, Emissary.” The polite words were uttered by the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Guru Spirit Immortal, and Master Thousand-Ghost. None of them had ever seen Du Lingfei before, but knew that she had a special status, and didn’t dare to say anything that might offend her.

Bai Xiaochun almost didn’t want to step forward. But considering that he was the deva in charge of the group from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he knew he had to. Sighing, he clasped hands and bowed. However, he truly couldn’t think of the right words to speak.

The other devas noticed this, and were inwardly shocked. However, Du Lingfei's expression softened into a smile when she saw Bai Xiaochun bowing to her. However, she didn't say anything. Instead, she arranged for her special guards to formally receive all of the visitors from the four rivers.

Each river branch had brought a few hundred people. Added together, there were about a thousand, which made the docks relatively crowded at the moment. However, thanks to Du Lingfei’s arrangements, there was no chaos or confusion.

“Fellow Daoists, it’s already getting late, so please follow these special guards to your accommodations. Rest up, for early in the morning, when the bells toll seven times, people will come to take you for an audience with the Celestial.” After a moment of thought, she added, “By the way, there are many restricted areas on Heavenspan Island. In order to prevent any unforeseen circumstances, I would like to ask you to remain indoors through the night. Otherwise… the guards in those locations might injure or kill you, and we wouldn’t want that.”

There was nothing threatening about the way Du Lingfei spoke. In fact, her voice was kind and warm. However, the words themselves struck fear into the hearts of all the cultivators present.

Even the devas were shaken.

Heavenspan Island was the nucleus of all the lands of Heavenspan, and although the Celestial’s Palace of the Dao wasn't particularly large, it was clearly as dangerous as a dragon’s pool or a tiger’s den. In fact, even demigod experts who acted improperly would be killed instantly!

Because of that, the visitors didn’t even need any reminders from Du Lingfei to keep them in line.

The accommodations that had been arranged for them were not on the large part of the island, but rather, in the buildings which surrounded the docks. Four main areas had been set up, with large buildings set aside for people who had come on formal visits.

As for the main part of the island, no one was allowed there without the express invitation of the Celestial himself. The only thing they could do was gaze from afar at the three mountain peaks, and the occasional patrols of special guards that wound their way among the countless palace buildings.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything as the Heavenspan Island special guards made their arrangements. Clearly, Hou Xiaomei wanted to come over, but she had been assigned to a different group, and could only gaze at him through the crowd.

By evening, the more than 1,000 Nascent Soul cultivators had been taken to their various accommodations by the special guards. As a deva, Bai Xiaochun had a special courtyard residence to himself, which was much closer to the main entrance leading to the mountains of the island.

The spiritual energy here was strong beyond belief, far stronger than in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. However, Bai Xiaochun was not in the mood for cultivation. As the sky grew dark, he sat there cross-legged, waiting.

He was sure that… Du Lingfei would come to visit him this very night!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0921 awe-chapter-922

Night fell. The only sound to be heard was the gentle lapping of waves against the island, making everything very peaceful.

As Bai Xiaochun sat cross-legged in meditation, his heart slowly grew calm. He had made his decision way back on the battleship. His trip to Heavenspan Island was for the purpose of getting a longevity pill, making sure that Hou Xiaomei was safe, and also… to find out why he had been so obsessed with Du Lingfei.

He didn’t sit reminiscing about the past. He just waited quietly.

The same pressure from before weighed down on the island, and in fact, the lack of any sound other than the waves made that pressure seem even more intense. As a result, all of the visitors felt more awe and fear than ever.

Such feelings were more intense among those with higher cultivation bases, the reason being that they could more clearly sense… an aura that destabilized their cultivation bases and left their minds reeling. That aura could crush them out of existence at will!

It was the most paramount of auras, the type that could not even be threatened by the heavens. In fact, the heavens even seemed ready to bow to the source of that aura!

An aura like that, something completely domineering and elevated… could only belong to one person in the Heavenspan Realm… the Celestial!

That knowledge made the cultivators of the four rivers even more enthusiastic than before. The mere idea of becoming the apprentice of the Celestial was profoundly exciting.

Not even the devas could control their emotions. After all, the rules had not stipulated that only Nascent Soul cultivators could win the chance to become an apprentice.

The only qualification… was to be the first person to emerge from the trial by fire.

Although the level of one’s cultivation base could play into that, luck was a larger factor. And therefore, although devas did have an advantage, that advantage would only help them to a limited extent.

As the night grew darker, most of the visiting cultivators sank into trances as they practiced cultivation. No one left their living quarters. It wasn't that they didn’t want to; they didn’t dare to.

Not only had Du Lingfei offered that warning of hers, but the pressure that weighed down made it clear that only someone suicidal would go out into the open.

Bai Xiaochun made the same decision, and simply sat waiting.

Late in the night… he opened his eyes and looked over at the front door.

In almost the same moment, an entrancing voiced drifted in from outside.

“Can I come in?”

Only that one sentence was spoken, nothing else. Bai Xiaochun sent some divine sense over to the door, and could see Du Lingfei standing outside. She wasn’t dressed like she had been during the day. She wore a white gown that was not ostentatious like her earlier garb, and made her seem just like she had been back in the Spirit Stream Sect days.

That gave Bai Xiaochun pause for thought. A moment later, he waved his hand, and the door opened, revealing Du Lingfei standing there with a smile on her face.

Their gazes met.

They were the same people that they had been all those years ago. However, on this occasion, Bai Xiaochun chose not to call her ‘boo’.

“It's been a long time,” she said. When she saw that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t inclined to say anything in response, she laughed softly and then walked inside. Tucking a stray strand of hair back over her ear, she said, “Why aren’t you saying anything?”

As the moonlight tumbled down onto her from above, it made her look as delicate as fine jade. There was something beautiful, pure, and holy about her.

When Bai Xiaochun caught the fragrance of her perfume, his heart began to beat a bit faster. After a moment of hesitation, he decided to just tell the truth. “I don't know what to say.”

Seeing that he was remaining seated, she sat down cross-legged in front of him and placed her hands on her knees.

“Why don’t you tell me about your time in the Wildlands?” she said, not sounding the least bit irritated.

He took a breath, and smelled her perfume again. Then he went on to give a brief overview of his time in the Wildlands, leaving out the details of his secret identity.

In the end, he looked her in the eye, took a deep breath, and said, “Thank you for that deva soul.”

He didn’t tell her that he had ended up forming a Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, and only casually mentioned some of the main events during his Wildlands adventures. She didn’t press for details. It was almost as if both of them were holding back from saying the things they truly wanted to say.

Eventually, they lapsed into silence. Although they made a pretty picture, silhouetted against the moonlight, both of them felt like they were strangers to each other.

The sound of the waves surrounded them, seemingly attempting to draw them closer together, and yet failing.

After some time passed, Bai Xiaochun suddenly asked, “Who exactly are you…?”

It was the same question he had asked before leaving for the Great Wall. Way back then, she had told him that when he returned, she would tell him the truth.

Therefore, he finally decided to simply ask the question.

Du Lingfei didn’t seem surprised at all, as if she had been waiting for him to ask. She didn’t respond at first, and didn’t even look at him. But after a moment passed, she looked up into his eyes.

“The Celestial… is my father.”

Although Bai Xiaochun had suspected for a long time that this was the case, to hear the words spoken directly, and to have his suspicions confirmed, caused waves of emotion to surge in his heart.

He couldn’t control his breathing at first. Despite the fact that he had considered the possibility, now that he knew the truth, there were many things that suddenly made sense.

It made sense why Du Lingfei had such a special status in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. If the rumors were true that the demigod patriarchs of the four riversource sects were the apprentices of the Celestial, then that made Du Lingfei their Junior Sister!

With an identity and background like that, Du Lingfei had an extremely unique status in the Heavenspan Realm. She was like a pearl of matchless quality!

However, there were still unanswered questions. As the Celestial’s daughter, a person with incredible standing, what had she been up to in the Spirit Stream Sect? And why did she appear later in the Blood Stream Sect…?

Such questions popped into his mind, and they led to more questions. And then, all of a sudden, he remembered something that caused him to tremble involuntarily….

He had absorbed a blood-hair from the Celestial.

Back when he did it, he had hesitated. But the Celestial had been such a distant figure at the time, and the hair had been given to him by the gravekeeper. Therefore, he had simply braced himself and gone through with the plan to absorb it.

But now, he was on the Celestial’s doorstep… and Du Lingfei was the Celestial’s daughter.

“I see,” he thought. “Now it makes sense why the demigod patriarch of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect only let me off with a warning when I caused so much trouble with my pill concocting….”

Settling his thoughts, he asked, “Did you arrange for Hou Xiaomei to be brought here?”

She actually didn't answer his question directly. She simply looked at him and smiled, much the same way she had back in the Luochen Mountains. She rose to her feet, walked over, and arranged his clothing like a wife would her husband’s.

Her proximity made the smell of her perfume even stronger, and caused his heart to beat faster.

After smoothing out his robes, she looked into his eyes, mixed emotions swirling in her own. Immediately, Bai Xiaochun could sense that her life had not been as happy and carefree as might be expected considering who she was. In fact, she seemed exhausted, and even forlorn.

The way she looked at him dredged up memories from the past that suddenly caused him to address her the way he had so long ago.

“Boo….”

She shivered as memories of her own overtook her thoughts. A moment passed, and then she leaned over, put her lips right next to his ears, and spoke in the quietest of voices.

“Xiaochun… be careful… of Hou Xiaomei.”

With that, she looked him in the eyes one more time, then turned and faded away into the air....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0922 awe-chapter-923

As Du Lingfei’s words rang in his ears, Bai Xiaochun suddenly went slightly stiff. Turning his head, he looked in the direction in which she had just vanished. Despite the fact that she had used the power of Heavenspan Island to fade away, he could still make out the faint shadow of her figure.

He felt like going after her to ask more questions, but before he could, she entered the depths of the island.

“What did she mean by that…? I'm supposed to be careful of Hou Xiaomei?” The more he thought about it, the more suspicious it seemed. Furthermore, he couldn’t tell if she had been sincere or not.

Either way, his uneasiness at the fact that Hou Xiaomei had become a special guard on Heavenspan Island only grew more intense than it had been before.

“Why do I need to be careful of Hou Xiaomei?” He thought back to when he had seen her earlier that day, and from what he remembered, she hadn’t seemed any different than she had in the past. And the happiness in her eyes when she spotted him had seemed real.

However, he couldn’t stop thinking about what Du Lingfei had just said. As he did, his vexation grew. The truth was that, the entire time he had been on Heavenspan Island so far, he had felt uneasy.

After some more thought, he sighed. The best thing to do would be to find a chance to go talk with Hou Xiaomei. Even as he thought such things, his expression flickered, and he looked up.

Moments later, he saw a beam of light streaking through the darkness toward him.

It came to a stop outside his residence, converging into the form of a person who spoke in a sweet, sentimental voice.

“Big Bro Xiaochun!”

It was none other than Hou Xiaomei! She wore the same long, red garment that she had worn earlier in the day. She was beautiful, her normally fair face flush with joy, and her eyes sparkled with excitement.

Seeing Hou Xiaomei caused the things Du Lingfei had just said, and the suspicions they had aroused in his heart, to vanish for the moment. Hou Xiaomei looked exactly like she had earlier in the day, and the same as he remembered her from the past. This was the very same girl who had stuck so close to him in his early days in the Spirit Stream Sect. She was Xiaomei, and she really was like the perfect *girl next door*.

In sharp contrast to his somber reaction to seeing Du Lingfei, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and excitedly threw his arms wide. Blinking, he smiled mischievously and said, “Long time no see, Xiaomei. Come come, give your Big Bro Xiaochun a hug!”

The light flush of joy which had covered her face instantly transformed into scarlet. Then she glared at him angrily, and yet, at the same time, rushed over and embraced him, burying her face in his neck.

At first, she didn’t hug him very hard, but as the moments ticked by, and she thought back to how lonely she had been since coming to the island, her grip tightened, as though she didn’t wish to let him go.

When he felt how tightly she was hugging him, his mischievous smile faded into one of tender affection. He wrapped his arms around her, stroked her long black hair, and breathed in deeply. She smelled completely different than Du Lingfei.

He suddenly thought back to the first time he had ever laid eyes on Hou Xiaomei. She was the first girl that had ever truly captured his attention, although he had always been confused about how he felt toward her. All he knew was that right now, he was sure that he liked her, even though he didn’t know why.

Throughout the years he had known her, he had seen her act like a hot pepper around other people, but charming to him. That had always made him feel very good about himself.

As he held Hou Xiaomei, he came the conclusion that there was nothing out of the ordinary about her. She had not changed. She was exactly like she had been before.

As she lay nestled in his arms, she murmured, “Big Bro Xiaochun, after all the years that have passed, I wasn’t sure if you would even remember me….”

Already, her mood seemed to be sinking.

Bai Xiaochun quickly sat down with her and started telling her his stories about the Wildlands. He didn’t go into all the details, only some of the most interesting parts. Soon, Hou Xiaomei’s mood improved, and she even started laughing.

Covering her smile with her hand, she said, “Come on. There’s no way that you bossed devas around.”

When Bai Xiaochun realized that she didn’t believe him, he gave up on being so humble. Glaring at her, he thumped himself on the chest and said, “That was nothing! A demigod gave me his daughter’s hand in marriage! All of the nobility and aristocracy in Arch-Emperor Dynasty were scared of me!”

Hou Xiaomei laughed. “Alright, alright. I believe you. I do, alright? You were definitely awesome! My Big Bro Xiaochun is the most awesome person under heaven!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard her laughter and saw the gleam in her eyes, his heart suddenly began to race, and he realized that he had been mistaken. Hou Xiaomei had changed. Her immaturity was gone, to be replaced by a certain charm and charisma.

“Another vixen!” Bai Xiaochun exclaimed inwardly. “How could I have not seen it before…?” Swallowing hard, he contemplated how Hou Xiaomei might actually end up surpassing Song Junwan….

However, the fact that his heart had begun to race simply because she was looking at him was actually a bit embarrassing. Clearing his throat, he decided to change the subject, and asked Hou Xiaomei about how she had ended up being picked to go to Heavenspan Island.

She immediately gave a snort of irritation.

“What, you think I'm Song Junwan or something? That old crone has been plotting for years to get you, Big Bro Xiaochun. She might have put on a show of taking care of me, but she used her status as the leader of the Blood

Stream Division’s Middle Peak to beat me down over and over again!”

“What?” Bai Xiaochun blurted in shock. He couldn’t envision Song Junwan being a person like that, and even opened his mouth to try to explain. However, Hou Xiaomei apparently realized what he was going to do, and continued speaking before he could.

“Big Bro Xiaochun, you really have no idea. That old hag Song Junwan always shows off every chance she can get. I can’t even stand talking with her. As far as she's concerned, I'm just an annoyance!

“Back in the competition to come here, she and I fought a duel in the semi-finals. Her cultivation base was higher than mine, and she had already won several victories. Even if she lost to me, she would still have a chance to go on. But it was my last chance! If I lost, then I would be out. Can you believe that she didn't show the slightest mercy!? I even explained everything to her, and she still beat me.” The more Hou Xiaomei talked, the madder she got.

“Thankfully, the elder in charge from Heavenspan Island saw something special in me, something that makes me suitable to the divine abilities of Heavenspan Island. That was the only reason that in the end, I got chosen, and that old crone didn’t.” As Hou Xiaomei blurted out all her accusations against Song Junwan, Bai Xiaochun’s head started to swell.

From what he could tell, Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei simply couldn’t see eye to eye on anything….

And apparently, it all stemmed back to the days of the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects, after the war was fought and the two of them helped nurse him back to health….

He suddenly thought back to how both of them would brew medicine for him, and then watch closely to see which one he would pick. Then his heart trembled as he remembered how, on one occasion, they had waited to see which foot he would use to step outside the door….

He quickly changed the topic, worried that a bigger problem could arise if the current conversation continued.

Hou Xiaomei was just happy to see him, so she didn't mind that he changed the topic. She sat next to him and softly told him about some of the interesting and funny things that had happened while he was gone.

She also told him a few things about Heavenspan Island. Bai Xiaochun smiled, occasionally gasping in praise, and occasionally throwing in a few boasts of his own. Eventually, dawn approached, and Hou Xiaomei reluctantly left.

Soon, the cultivators from the four rivers would go to offer their respects to the Celestial, an important event in which Hou Xiaomei had her own duties to attend to.

After seeing Hou Xiaomei off, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and thought back to her visit. No matter how he looked at it, he couldn't think of anything that had seemed suspicious at all.

In fact, that made him suspect Du Lingfei's words!

"Why would she tell me to be careful of Hou Xiaomei?" No amount of thought brought any insight. Eventually, the sun rose.

As the first rays of light shone out across the golden Heavenspan Sea, the sound of an ancient bell rang out across the island….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0923 awe-chapter-924

The bell tolled seven times, which was the summons for the cultivators from the four rivers to go see the Celestial.

The sound of the bell, coupled with the dazzling sunlight reflecting off of the golden sea water, made for a spectacular scene.

In the middle of the main island, the three mountain peaks caught the sunlight and reflected it, making for a particularly eye-catching scene. At the same time, the silent pressure weighing down grew more intense.

At about this time, the special guards who were tasked with leading the groups of cultivators into the main island appeared outside of the various residences. The person who had come to lead Bai Xiaochun was a beautiful female cultivator, and was not the same person that had led him to the residence the day before.

It was impossible to tell which river branch she had originally come from. However, considering that Bai Xiaochun was a deva, she treated him with the utmost deference. Even though she was an initiate special guard here on Heavenspan Island, she still didn't dare to act inappropriately in front of a deva.

The initiate special guards were only in the Core Formation stage, but even Nascent Soul experts would treat them politely. Despite that, the guards would not dare to use their status as an excuse to treat a deva improperly.

After all, devas were very important people to the Celestial, far more important than an initiate special guard.

The woman led Bai Xiaochun along a winding path deep into the mountains.

Their destination looked like a celestial paradise, complete with singing birds and blooming flowers. Lush vegetation grew everywhere, and spiritual energy abounded. There were also spirit beasts that dashed to and fro among the greenery.

Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun noticed quite a few varieties of extremely rare spirit plants!

In the outside world, they would be almost impossible to find, but here on Heavenspan Island, they grew everywhere!

He was quite taken aback. He even noticed some shocking medicinal plants which were supposedly extinct. If he took one of those plants outside, everyone in the world would go crazy….

“Such extravagance….” he thought. Although he had seen many extraordinary things in his life, he still had to swallow down his astonishment, and work hard to resist the urge to reach out and harvest some of the plants.

As he walked along, he saw more and more rare spirit plants, and also… extraordinary magical items!

Some of them even had spirit automatons, and flew about in groups as if they were alive. It was truly a shocking sight.

Occasionally, rivulets and streams could be seen, within which flowed water that wasn’t golden, but rather, violet…. Based on what Bai Xiaochun could sense, the spiritual energy in that violet water surpassed even the golden sea water!

He could also sense auras near the streams and rivulets that were shockingly impressive. From what he could tell, they belonged to plants, magical items, or possibly… deva-level spirit beasts!

Everything that he saw reinforced his assessment that this was a shocking and extravagant place. Although Arch-Emperor City in the Wildlands had been impressive, it couldn’t compare to this at all.

This really was a celestial paradise!!

The initiate special guard who was leading him glanced over occasionally to size him up. When she saw how shocked he was, she felt very pleased. She was proud to be an initiate special guard, and thirsted for the day when she might get a promotion to being a full special guard.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t notice her change in attitude. All he could think about was how he was on a virtual mountain of precious items. Just about everything around him could increase his cultivation base or add to his longevity. He almost couldn’t resist the urge to reach out and touch them.

Eventually, they reached the very depths of the island, a location very close to the three mountain peaks. At one point, Bai Xiaochun got the distinct sensation that they had just passed through some invisible barrier.

A sound met his ears like a rushing waterfall, and he looked up to see something completely unexpected!!

Waterfalls poured down from the summits of the two mountains on the right and left. It was almost like water cascading from the highest heavens, which then collected in a huge lake in the middle of the island!!

The very center of Heavenspan Island wasn’t a flat plain…. It was actually an enormous lake!

It was a lake of violet water, and the three towering mountain peaks rose up from the very middle of it! The waterfalls from the two side mountains fed the lake, and created not only a thunderous roar, but also, a vast quantity of water vapor.

Numerous palaces could be seen within the mists, which rose up along with the three mountain peaks.

There were so many luxurious palaces constructed on the three mountains that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t even count them all.

There was an enormous statue on the central mountain peak, which Bai Xiaochun instantly recognized. It depicted… the Celestial!

At the feet of the statue was the largest and most magnificent palace in all of the Heavenspan Realm!

The Palace of the Celestial!

The entire area had come to be known by a special name…. The Palace of the Dao!

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken. Because of how much mist filled the area, the Palace of the Dao was difficult to see clearly. However, it was still possible to make out countless palace maids and numerous special guards, all of them standing silently with looks of proud arrogance in their eyes.

The female cultivator led Bai Xiaochun to a huge public square at the edge of the lake, just across from the main mountain peak. From this location, it was possible to look up and see the huge statue of the Celestial, which seemed to prop up the very heavens.

There were already quite a few cultivators gathered in the square, all of whom were looking up at the statue, eyes burning with veneration.

Big Fatty Zhang and Bai Xiaochun's other friends were there, all of them seemingly overwhelmed with emotion. When they and the other cultivators from the eastern Heavenspan River noticed Bai Xiaochun, they hurried over.

“The Palace of the Dao is the most extravagant palace I’ve ever seen in my life!”

“Did you guys see the medicinal plants? I saw an immortal asura orchid on my way over! Heavens! Those orchids only grew in ancient times! Supposedly, if a mortal ate one, he would immediately rise to the Core Formation stage!!”

“That’s nothing. I saw a two-headed dragon! Did you hear me? A dragon! With two heads! You almost never see those in real life!”

Everyone was very excited, and couldn’t stop talking about everything they had seen.

The truth was that the Palace of the Dao really was a profoundly shocking place.

Bai Xiaochun looked up at the huge statue of the Celestial, which was remarkably lifelike. Based on what he remembered of the Celestial, this statue looked exactly like him in every way.

In fact, he happened to notice that there on the statue’s forehead… was a lock of blood-red hair!

He suddenly shivered. At the same time, he heard a voice speaking loudly from among the nearby cultivators from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. It was the twin Master Cloud Lightnings!

“Do you see that blood-hair on the exalted Celestial’s forehead? According to the legends, that’s actually a precious treasure of life force, forged by the Celestial himself. It contains boundless power, and is a rarely-seen type of good fortune containing unfathomable mysteries!”

The instant Bai Xiaochun heard the twin Master Cloud Lightnings introducing that blood-hair to the other cultivators, his anxiety and guilt grew.

He couldn’t help but have a bit of a guilty conscience. Besides, if the Celestial found out that he had actually absorbed the blood-hair… he might very well refine Bai Xiaochun to replace it!

“That blood-hair wasn’t as amazing as the twin Master Cloud Lightnings makes it sound. All it did was push me to the great circle of the Undying Bones!” All of a sudden, he thought about what would happen if his relationship with Du Lingfei went to the next step, and the Celestial ended up as his father-in-law.

If it was his father-in-law who found out later that he had absorbed that hair… it probably wouldn't be as big of a deal….

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he blinked a few times, and then looked around for Du Lingfei.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0924 awe-chapter-925

Even as Bai Xiaochun started to look around for Du Lingfei, someone inside the grand hall on top of the main mountain peak looked down, casting a gaze onto the lands below that caused the sky to grow dim and a huge wind to kick up.

The Heavenspan Sea went still, as did the waterfalls and the surface of the lake. Because of that gaze, the entire island began to tremble.

Everyone in the square, including Bai Xiaochun, felt their minds reeling madly. All talk ceased, and all hearts began to race as an indescribable pressure suddenly weighed down on all of them.

It was so intense… that none of them could move a muscle!!

Not even Bai Xiaochun and the other devas could move. The level of pressure weighing down on them was so intense that rumbling sounds filled their bodies.

“The Celestial!” This was not Bai Xiaochun’s first time sensing the might of the Celestial. Back in the Wildlands, he had felt this very same pressure.

Now, though, things were different than in the Wildlands. The Celestial’s aura seemed more explosive and violent, to the point where Bai Xiaochun felt his internal organs trembling.

It was energy that surpassed the Deva Realm by many times, and even the demigod level. This was the absolute peak level of power in this world!

“He's not injured?!?!” Bai Xiaochun thought, shivering. The other devas were shaking uncontrollably, so there was little need to mention the Nascent Soul experts, whose minds were almost complete blanks.

It was at this point that a young woman walked out from the palace at the foot of the huge statue. She wore garments adorned with phoenixes, and radiated nobility. She was none other than Du Lingfei!

As she floated there in midair, with the enormous statue behind her, she spoke in a mighty voice that echoed out in all directions.

“Bow!”

In immediate response, everyone in the square, including Bai Xiaochun, involuntarily clasped hands and bowed deeply to the statue of the Celestial.

“Greetings, Celestial!”

Their combined voices created a sound wave that caused heaven and earth to tremble. Their voices quavered with zeal and fervor, the raw adoration for someone who commanded the ultimate level of power!

As everyone bowed, Du Lingfei turned to the side in deference. Then, when the crowd below had finished offering formal greetings, she turned back and looked over the crowd. Her gaze lingered on Bai Xiaochun for only the slightest moment, and didn’t reveal any sign of recognition.

“Fellow Daoists, you already know the rules of this trial,” she said coolly. “The first person to emerge will become the

Celestial’s next apprentice.

“In terms of the time limit… there is none!” With that, she waved her hands, whereupon the special guards in the square began to distribute jade slips to all the cultivators present.

“These jade slips will record your activities in the trial by fire, and when you find the exit, they will act as authentication devices to bear witness to your success!” After finishing her explanation, she extended her hand to summon a violet rock. Waving her hand, she sent the rock flying down toward the lake below.

The rock became a violet beam of light that, just before it hit the surface of the lake, exploded. Water sprayed out in all directions, and then… a huge stone gate rose up from the bottom of the lake!

It was fully 300 meters tall, and radiated an aura of profound ancientness. It was engraved with countless vicious and snarling faces, lifelike to the extreme, to the point where it was almost possible to hear them howling.

Black mist swirled off of the surface of the gate, transforming into ninety-nine black dragons whose howls shook heaven and earth. Each dragon was 3,000 meters long, and they all twisted and spun up into the sky, as though they wished to break through to the area beyond the heavens.

Compared to the dragons, the stone gate was so tiny as to be insignificant.

Everyone in the square was shaken to the core by what they were seeing.

As the dragons howled, a cold snort suddenly echoed out from the enormous statue of the Celestial, a snort that was as heaven-rending and earth-crushing as a bolt of lightning from the heavens.

The dragons’ howls of rage transformed into piteous wails of despair and defiance, and then they shattered into pieces.

The entire process only lasted for a few breaths’ worth of time. The dragons collapsed into black mist that swirled around the stone gate and transformed into an enormous vortex.

As the vortex spun, immense levels of power gripped the stone gate, tugging at it… until cracks began to spread out on its surface!

At the same time, a dark and sinister aura began to seep out from the cracks, making it seem as though all the lands would be plunged into wintery cold!

It was a frigid qi that seemed capable of freezing souls. Even Bai Xiaochun shivered as he looked at the cracks which, despite not seeming very big, were actually dozens of meters wide.

Not even by calling upon the full power of his deva cultivation base was he able to see the world that existed beyond those cracks clearly.

Despite that, both Bai Xiaochun and everyone else present could tell… that this trial by fire would be very difficult. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Master Thousand-Ghost and Guru Spirit Immortal all had very serious expressions on their faces, and it was the same with all of the various Nascent Soul cultivators.

Song Que, Bai Lin, Zhao Tianjiao, Heretic, and everyone else present was completely shaken.

The gate leading to the trial by fire was completely bizarre, and at the same time, led almost everyone to the same question: why was the Celestial using these rules and this dangerous trial by fire in order to select a new apprentice?

After all, the Nascent Soul cultivators who were participating in the trial were cunning foxes whose understanding of the art of scheming surpassed cultivators of lower levels. It would be almost impossible for them to avoid being suspicious of situations like this.

Everyone in the crowd was so shocked that none of them noticed how Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes were wider than anyone else's. And that was because… he had seen this stone gate in his dream!!

“One last reminder….” Du Lingfei said softly. Instantly, the cultivators in the square looked over at her.

“The trial by fire consists of an enormous land that, despite not being endless, is so huge it defies description…. It consists of four main areas: a deep marsh, a wild jungle, a vast plain, and a barren desert!

“Whatever magical items you bring with you into the trial by fire will not function…. Pay attention to your spiritual power. In the land of the trial by fire, spiritual energy is scarce….

“To come out on top in the trial by fire, and in fact, to simply survive, you will need to carefully control your spiritual power. However… there are many unbonded magical items inside. If you can acquire them, they will increase your battle prowess and make it much easier for you to succeed!

“You won’t be the only ones inside the trial. I will lead a group of Heavenspan Island’s special guards inside, and we will be tasked with supervising, appraising, and adjudicating disputes!” Du Lingfei’s words caused most of the crowd in the square to relax a bit. Now that they knew they wouldn’t be alone, but would have Heavenspan Island’s special guards in the trial with them, they felt much safer.

Furthermore, Du Lingfei, who was the Heavenspan emissary, would also be going in. Because of all of that, everyone felt much less nervous. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Master Thousand-Ghost and Guru Spirit Immortal were also relieved.

Although they weren’t personally aware of all the details of Du Lingfei’s identity, they had been devas for many years, and had many speculations. The fact that Du Lingfei was personally entering the trial by fire led them to the conclusion that, although there would be danger, it truly was being held to pick an apprentice for the Celestial!

When Du Lingfei saw everyone breathing sighs of relief, she reached out and pointed at the stone gate.

“Let the trial by fire… begin!”

A gravitational force sprang out from the vortex, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air. At the same time, the cracks on the door widened, sending even more frigid qi out.

Although the frigid qi was intense, it couldn’t match the burning passion in the hearts of the trial-takers. Without any hesitation, they began to fly into the air, and then pass through the stone gate!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0925 awe-chapter-926

The cultivators from the west, south, and north made for a total of over 600 people. There were also several hundred special guards from Heavenspan Island. All of them flew into the air toward the stone gate.

The group from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect exchanged glances, then took deep breaths and did the same. Big Fatty Zhang hesitated for a moment, then looked over at Bai Xiaochun, nodded, and also headed toward the gate.

As Song Que, Zhao Tianjiao, Bai Lin, and many other familiar faces headed toward the gate, Bai Xiaochun's eyes flashed with determination, and he also headed forward. However, before entering, he noticed a group of seven or eight special guards approaching.

One of them was Hou Xiaomei.

“Good luck, Big Bro Xiaochun!” she said, keeping her voice down, but smiling broadly. Bai Xiaochun was actually a bit surprised. Although he had seen Hou Xiaomei in the special guards earlier, it hadn't occurred to him that she would actually be participating in the trial by fire.

Hou Xiaomei was only in Core Formation, so as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, going into the trial by fire would be a very dangerous thing for her.

“You're coming too?” Bai Xiaochun said nervously. “Well, why don't you go in with me? It's going to be dangerous!”

She blinked a few times, and then covered a smile with her hand. “Okay, sure! It would be great to have you there to protect me, Big Bro Xiaochun.”

There wasn’t anything particularly strange about her words, but for some reason, Bai Xiaochun felt that there was something odd about her. In fact, he could even detect an unusual, sinister aura on her that felt distinctly uncomfortable.

However, there wasn’t any time to think about it right now. After all, the frigid qi from the stone door had filled the area, and he couldn't quite tell for sure if what he was sensing was that, or something specifically coming from Hou Xiaomei. Either way, it put him on guard.

It was difficult to see anything in the area, but it was possible to detect a powerful force of teleportation building up. As the teleportation formation inside of the stone gate was activated, intense rumbling sounds erupted into the ears of everyone present.

It felt as if the air were being ripped open around them, as though powers of both gravitation and repulsion were being exerted at the same time. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s vision swam.

When it cleared… he was in a completely unfamiliar world!

A desert stretched out around him, and off in the distance, he saw a sandstorm that looked like a massive ocean of sand. And it was heading in his direction! It was so shockingly powerful that any dunes it encountered were instantly razed flat!

Shockingly, he could see a cultivator tumbling through the air inside of the sandstorm. Although he couldn’t see the man’s face, based on his clothing, he was from the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect. At the moment, he was letting out a bloodcurdling scream.

A moment later, the cultivator exploded, sending blood spraying out in all directions, and staining the sand around him bright red. However, in the blink of an eye, the screaming winds erased any evidence of the blood!

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken by what he was seeing. Looking around, all he could see was endless desert, without a single person visible anywhere.

The sky was violet, and yet the light it cast down didn’t make anything difficult to see. Right now didn’t seem to be the time for protracted thought, so Bai Xiaochun immediately began to edge backward.

As he did, twinges of pain shot through his leg, only to vanish moments later. It only took a moment to realize that the pain had come when he moved backward, and the sand shifted against his leg.

When that happened, he came to a shocking conclusion about how the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect disciple he had just seen ended up dying. He simply couldn't fight back against the power of the sand storm, and had been shredded to pieces.

Shockingly, each grain of sand in this desert contained the power of a divine ability from the early Nascent Soul stage. Every single bit of sand contained deadly power if it hit a person, not to mention if someone was tossed into an entire storm of it.

The sandstorm also exerted a powerful gravitational force that would make it very difficult to escape once sucked in.

As Bai Xiaochun realized these things, he gasped in shock. Although he had a deva cultivation base, and shocking fleshly body power, both of which made it possible for him to shrug off an attack from an early Nascent Soul stage cultivator, his keen senses told him that the power of the sandstorm increased the further one went inside. In fact, he wasn't sure how long he would last if he got sucked in that far.

“What the hell kind of trial by fire is this? How come this place is so dangerous!?” Already, the gravitational force was tugging at him. Furthermore, the haze of the sand being kicked up into the air made it difficult to see very far.

A Nascent Soul cultivator, or even a half-deva, would have almost no hope of surviving in this area. However, Bai Xiaochun was a deva. Despite being shaken, he unhesitatingly called upon his Undying Hex, and began to flee at incredible speed.

Because of the conflict caused by the gravitational force and his incredible speed, intense rumbling sounds rang out. Thankfully, though, he shot like an arrow off into the distance, buffeted by the wind and pelted by sand and rubble.

Even after breaking free, he kept flying at top speed for several hundred kilometers. Only then did he stop and look back at the distant sandstorm, his heart pounding with residual fear.

Only at this point did he realize that occasional lightning bolts danced through the sandstorm, releasing muffled cracks of thunder.

“This trial by fire is terrifying!” he thought, his eyes wide. As of this point, he was absolutely certain that the sandstorm would be the death of any Nascent Soul cultivator who was unlucky enough to encounter it, and didn’t have any special means of fleeing.

“I felt like I was almost ripped to pieces by the teleportation power of that gate. That was much more power than any ordinary teleportation. That means that we’ve either ended up in a very distant location… or had to pierce through an indescribably powerful barrier!” Already, he was starting to regret coming here.

And yet, the thought of the longevity pills caused him to grit his teeth and push forward. Along the way, he tested some of his magical items. Unfortunately, accessing his bag of holding wasted spiritual power, and furthermore, anything he brought out seemed locked down in some way, making it completely useless.

The teleportation had sent the nearly one thousand cultivators from the various river branches to different locations within the enormous land that made up the trial by fire. Because of that, the only way they could run into each other was by blind luck.

One upside was that his transmission jade slip still worked. Sadly, based on the fluctuations coming from it, he could tell that, even with his deva cultivation base, it would only have a range of about 500 kilometers.

Messages that weren’t received by another jade slip within that area would simply vanish.

Another disquieting fact was that the spiritual power… was far weaker here than in the outside world. To most of the cultivators present, that would be very difficult to deal with.

Of course, to Bai Xiaochun, it wasn't a problem at all. After all, there was actually more spiritual power here than in the Wildlands, where he had lived for many years. He had long since grown used to the practice of conserving energy, and only using it in bursts when necessary.

Furthermore, his impressive fleshly body made it so that he didn't actually need to use divine abilities powered by his cultivation base to unleash deva-level battle prowess.

“This place is so dangerous! Hou Xiaomei, Big Fatty Zhang, Song Que, Bai Lin, and everyone else… are in great danger!” Then he thought about that strange, sinister feeling he had sensed from Hou Xiaomei earlier, and he started to get more nervous. He pulled out his transmission jade slip and sent some messages. Unfortunately, only people within 500 kilometers would get them. When he didn't receive any replies, he picked up speed and proceeded along anxiously.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0926 awe-chapter-927

The lands that made up the trial by fire were split into four major areas, a desert, a swamp, a plain, and a jungle. They didn’t interlock, but rather, were separated by enormous mountain ranges and other terrain features.

Although the lands were not endless, they were certainly vast.

Furthermore, hidden dangers lurked everywhere. That included both natural occurrences like the sandstorm, and bizarre entities of every sort. All of them could be extremely deadly.

Before entering the trial by fire, the cultivators from the four major rivers had all assumed it would be dangerous. Even still, now that they were inside, they were completely shocked by what they were facing.

In fact, the word ‘danger’ couldn’t be used to describe the place. It was more like… a land of death!

Currently, Shi Yan, chosen from the Exalted Zodiac Moon Domination Sect in the west, was traversing the swamp area of the trial by fire. Despite being in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, his face was ashen with terror as he proceeded along with the utmost caution.

His clothing was ripped and torn, and also stained with blood. After teleporting into the trial by fire, he had seen three people killed right in front of him. Most terrifying of all… was that the creatures responsible for those deaths were a variety of leech that lurked in the marsh waters.

They traveled in swarms numbering in the thousands, which could, in only a single breath of time, completely cover a cultivator. Upon vanishing back into the swamp, they would leave behind only a dry and desiccated corpse.

Within moments, countless larvae would burrow into the desiccated corpse and nest inside of it....

Because of that, Shi Yan was gripped with terror as he proceeded along.

He wasn’t the only one in the swamp. Sun Wu from the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect was present as well. He was also a chosen, with a cultivation base in the great circle of the Nascent Soul, who bore the physical appearance of an evil ghost. Although he wasn’t currently wounded, he trembled as he stood in place... unwilling to take a single step forward.

The reason he refused to move was that he was surrounded by more than 10,000 shocking mosquitos!

The mosquitos were human-sized, and created a thundering rumble with the buzzing of their wings. Were it not for the fact that Sun Wu had a secret magic to keep himself invisible to them, they would have long since sucked the life completely out of him.

The monkey-like Master Lightning Origin from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect was in a similar position in the jungle. An unsightly expression could be seen on his face, which dripped with sweat as he rushed along, chased by a troupe of crimson-eyed monkeys who thrummed with shocking power.

Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Lin, Zhao Tianjiao, Heretic, Song Que, and many other friends of Bai Xiaochun were in similarly terrifying situations.

The level of danger in this trial by fire surpassed what anyone could have imagined. Right now, they had no other options than to flee for their lives!

It was the same with Bai Xiaochun, who sped through the desert at top speed. So far, he had spotted seven sandstorms, all of which radiated incredible power that left his heart pounding in his chest.

If all he had to deal with were natural disasters, then it might not have been as terrifying. However, Bai Xiaochun's deva-level divine sense had long since revealed to him that there were terrifying fluctuations hidden within the desert. There were some brutal entities there which seemed to be on the same level as devas. Even worse, there were certain creatures which seemed to be trailing him, as if they were predator and he was prey!

"This trial by fire is not suitable for Nascent Soul cultivators at all! Only people with deva cultivation bases could possibly be of use here!

"Dammit! The Celestial used the pretext of selecting an apprentice to gather a whole group of Nascent Soul cultivators to come into a place like this…? Just what is he up to!? This… is definitely not an arcane pocket realm!"

Bai Xiaochun was really starting to feel nervous, both for Big Fatty Zhang and his other Nascent Soul friends, and also, for Hou Xiaomei.

Thankfully, Hou Xiaomei was a special guard, and therefore, would likely be in a much safer position than the other cultivators. However, Bai Xiaochun still couldn't stop worrying about her.

Even as he sped along, his heart suddenly leapt up into his throat. Without any hesitation, he utilized the Mountain Shaking Bash, bursting forward with speed that bordered on teleportation. In the blink of an eye, he was 300 meters away.

In almost that exact same instant, numerous booming sounds echoed out as eight crimson figures blurred through the spot he had just occupied.

As soon as they flew back up into the sky, Bai Xiaochun could see them clearly. Shockingly, they were eight enormous sandworms!

They looked like crimson maggots, hundreds of meters long, with no eyes, but terrifying, gaping maws, within which glistened row upon row of razor-sharp teeth!

One of the sandworms had a red aperture on its head that emitted a strange power in the form of a loud cracking sound. From the nature of that aperture, it was obvious that some incredible magical device was imbedded inside of the sandworm. It was the strongest of the bunch, being comparable to the mid Deva Realm. The others were similar to the early Deva Realm. As soon as the entire group regathered up in the air, they turned back in Bai Xiaochun’s direction and shot toward him again, screeching in bizarre voices.

Bai Xiaochun was already panting in anxiety. If he only had these eight sandworms to worry about, it might not have been a big deal. But he could sense countless similar fluctuations in the surrounding area, all of them rushing toward him at high speed.

It wouldn’t be long before even more sandworms were upon him.

The idea of innumerable sandworms beneath the surface of the desert, all closing in on him, caused him to shiver and push forward with renewed speed.

Unfortunately, no matter how he zigged or zagged, a sandworm would end up bursting out of the ground to block his path. It continued to happen over and over again, until he started to really get angry.

“Complete and utter bullying!” He knew that he couldn’t keep up this same tactic, otherwise he would never escape, not unless the sandworms just gave up.

He only had one option… strike fear into their hearts!

With that, he gritted his teeth and spun to face the group of eight. Howling, he singled out one of the sandworms that was in the early Deva Realm and unleashed a vicious fist strike!

He didn’t draw upon his cultivation base, only his fleshly body. And yet, that still enabled him to strike with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force. A cultivator in the early Deva Realm would be crushed by this attack, much less a sandworm the likes of these.

Rumbling sounds echoed out into the far distance as the front half of the sandworm exploded, and the back half dropped down with a thud onto the desert floor, sending sand flying out in all directions.

When the other sandworms saw that one of their own had been destroyed, they reacted with utter madness. Opening their mouths, they sent countless bolts of lightning shooting out. However, it was at that exact same moment that a figure blurred onto the scene from off in the distance.

It was none other than one of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. If one considered them to be brothers, then the older brother was the one whose left side was withered, with the right side being strong.

The younger brother was the opposite. He made a bizarre sight as he shot forward with astonishing speed that seemed even faster than Bai Xiaochun. After all, he was in the mid Deva Realm, and used a secret magic from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect to add further speed to his movement. He sped through the desert, pursued by more than 10,000 sandworms, who were dogging him relentlessly, making escape impossible.

When Master Cloud Lightning noticed Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittered, especially because of the sandworm with the red aperture on its head.

He stopped for a brief moment, until the sandworms behind him were almost right on top of him. Then, he turned and shot toward Bai Xiaochun!

Clearly, he hoped to pass his huge group of sandworms onto Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0927 awe-chapter-928

Bai Xiaochun noticed Master Cloud Lightning almost as soon as he appeared, and most especially, the horde of sandworms following him.

“So, this Master Cloud Lightning is trying to pull a fast one on me, huh?!” He could immediately sense Master Cloud Lightning’s ill intentions, especially because of the way the man was eyeing the sandworm with the red aperture on its head.

“He wasn’t originally heading in this direction. He changed directions when he saw that one particular sandworm….” Having reached this conclusion, Bai Xiaochun immediately attacked that same sandworm.

“See me coming, and refuse to stand down?” Master Cloud Lightning said with a growl. “Well, you’re just looking to die!” His eyes shone with cold light as he accelerated in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, bringing countless howling sandworms with him.

As Master Cloud Lightning closed in, Bai Xiaochun spun, changed directions, and then headed, not toward the sandworm he had been fighting, but toward Master Cloud Lightning!

Master Cloud Lightning’s lips turned up into a sneer, as if he had anticipated Bai Xiaochun’s actions. Even as Bai Xiaochun closed in, he suddenly blurred, making him impossible to see with the naked eye, and almost impossible to detect with divine sense.

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered in surprise, the vast number of sandworms that Master Cloud Lightning had brought over locked onto him. Howling, they opened their mouths and swept forth to encircle Bai Xiaochun.

An unsightly expression could be seen on his face. The divine ability that Master Cloud Lightning had just used had already affected him dramatically. Although most of the more than 10,000 sandworms were at the Nascent Soul level, there were some who were in the Deva Realm, which meant that it would be very difficult to handle the entire group.

That was especially true… considering that Master Cloud Lightning was lurking menacingly in the vicinity.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the shadowy form of Master Cloud Lightning backed away, a sneer on his face the entire time.

“Measly rookie deva! They might say he has incredible battle prowess, but rumors like that are usually just fabrications. If he had fled the moment he saw me, he might have had a chance. Unfortunately for him, he’s just an idiot.” Chuckling coldly, Master Cloud Lightning watched through narrowed eyes as the hordes of sandworms closed in on Bai Xiaochun.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun was starting to get very angry at how this Master Cloud Lightning seemed to abound with wickedness. They had no beef with each other, and yet he had acted with utter viciousness, all because of a sandworm!

“Maybe if I were a Nascent Soul cultivator, this would make sense. But I'm a deva too! This Master Cloud Lightning is obviously looking down on me! The bully!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed. Blurring into motion, he unleashed attack after attack, blowing up sandworms with each one.

“Based on the speed he used earlier to fall back… he's obviously no ordinary deva…. If I simultaneously used my Undying Hex and the Mountain Shaking Bash, I might be able to get close to him. But if he kept running afterward, the sandworms would still be after me, and that would put me in a bad position. I need to get him to come a bit closer to me….” Scrambling to come up with an idea, he took a deep breath, then shot forward toward Master Cloud Lightning with a burst of speed.

As he did, a faint smile of ridicule could be seen on Master Cloud Lightning’s face as he accelerated away. After a few such exchanges, Bai Xiaochun not only didn’t catch up to him, but actually seemed to be getting himself into a worse situation with each moment that passed.

Finally, a vicious expression overtook Bai Xiaochun’s face. Gritting his teeth angrily, he ignored Master Cloud Lightning and spun to attack the sandworm with the red aperture.

Booms rang out as the sandworms spat lightning out of their mouths, filling heaven and earth in such fashion that it seemed it would be impossible for Bai Xiaochun to fight back. However, it was at this point that the sandworm let out a terrifying shriek; it had been battered so badly by Bai Xiaochun’s divine abilities that it seemed on the verge of collapsing completely.

Master Cloud Lightning noticed what was happening, and it caused his eyes to flash with bright light. Although he couldn’t be sure whether Bai Xiaochun was feigning weakness or not, he was supremely confident in himself either way.

“The point here isn’t to kill this guy, it’s to get the magical item in that sandworm’s body....” Eyes narrowing, he began to search for an opportunity. At this point, Bai Xiaochun landed a fist strike onto the sandworm, causing it to shriek and fall back.

That was when Bai Xiaochun made his move. He shot forward with such incredible speed that it bordered on teleportation, leaving a string of sonic booms behind him. In the blink of an eye, he was on the sandworm, reaching out with his right hand, the fingers of which glittered with black light.

However, just before his hand landed on the sandworm, his eyes glittered with gold light, and he utilized the Mountain Shaking Bash. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he accelerated with shocking momentum, surpassing the sandworm.

Any sandworm in his way was bashed to pieces, allowing him to shoot as straight as an arrow toward Master Cloud Lightning.

The speed was such that Master Cloud Lightning was struck with absolute shock. Snorting coldly, he gave up on his designs for the sandworm, and shot backward, still confident that not even someone in the late Deva Realm would be able to catch him. At the same time, he reinforced the secret magic he was using to make sure the sandworms couldn’t detect him.

In that moment in which Master Cloud Lightning accelerated again, Bai Xiaochun utilized his Undying Hex. In the blink of an eye, his speed broke past its previous limit, causing him to shoot after Master Cloud Lightning like a bolt of lightning.

Because they had already been relatively close, he didn’t hesitate to follow through with… the Throat Crushing Grasp!

Considering that Master Cloud Lightning was in the mid Deva Realm, Bai Xiaochun’s goal with the Throat Crushing Grasp wasn’t to kill him, but rather… to limit his speed and drag him in with gravitational force.

As soon as he unleashed the technique, the gravitational force erupted out, and Master Cloud Lightning’s face fell with the realization that he was decelerating.

“This Bai Xiaochun really is a strange one!” he gasped. Everything happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off a piece of flint. There was no time to ponder what to do, so Master Cloud Lightning bit his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood. Despite the difficult situation he was in, he still managed to speed up again!

A faint buzzing sound could be heard as he faded away even more; it almost seemed like he had limitless stores of energy to draw upon. A single step backward took him 3,000 meters away, and yet, even as he moved away, a smile appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

This was just what he had been waiting for; for Master Cloud Lightning to use a trump card to gain more speed.

It was in that exact moment that Bai Xiaochun’s Heavenspan Dharma Eye opened, causing violet light to spill out and latch onto Master Cloud Lightning like fetters.

Master Cloud Lightning could tell that trouble was brewing, and it caused his face to fall. It suddenly felt like he was stuck in sludge, and in fact, was temporarily incapable of moving at all.

Although it only lasted for a short moment, when devas fought, many things could happen in that amount of time.

“Undying… Emperor’s Fist!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. A black vortex sprang up around his hand, and a shadowy emperor appeared behind him. Then, the fist strike was unleashed!

It was a quintuple strength Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Sand blasted out in all directions, and the nearby sandworms trembled and screamed. At the same time, Master Cloud Lightning’s eyes widened.

Never could he have imagined that a single lapse in judgement on his part would lead him into such a deadly moment of crisis!

“What divine ability is that!?” All of a sudden, the burly right side of his body swelled, erupting with black light. At the same time, he drew upon as much spiritual power from his cultivation base as he could, causing the black light to take the shape of an enormous devilish god!

The devilish god radiated extraordinary energy, the type that could crush even the heavens. However, it only had half a body! It wasn’t complete! Even still, it lunged forward to defend against Bai Xiaochun.

In the blink of an eye, it slammed into the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

A huge boom erupted out in all directions!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0928 awe-chapter-929

RUMBLE!!

Nearly half of the desert area was shaken by the intense boom. Master Cloud Lightning let out a miserable shriek as his devilish god collapsed into pieces, and the black light which surrounded him was destroyed.

Blood spraying out of his mouth, he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut. Even as he did, he touched his forehead, causing a stream of black light to fly out.

Shockingly, it transformed into a semi-translucent buckler, which he grabbed and threw out in front of him.

“Detonate!!” he shouted, and the buckler exploded, sending a blast of energy out to meet Bai Xiaochun’s heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing fist strike. That brief opportunity was what Master Cloud Lightning needed to shoot away at top speed, coughing up blood the entire time.

Most of the energy passageways in his body were destroyed, and his vision swam. Mentally, he was completely shaken.

“How could he be so strong?!?! I'm in the mid Deva Realm, and he’s only in the early realm!!” Master Cloud Lightning felt like he was going crazy, and still couldn’t keep the blood from spraying out of his mouth.

For the first time, he regretted his earlier conceit, and realized that he should never have been so impulsive as to provoke the terrifying Bai Xiaochun, all because of a simple magical item.

Some of it stemmed from the fact that the buckler he had just destroyed was a treasure he had only just recently acquired, which was what had enabled him to maintain a state of near-complete invisibility. It was that shield that made him realize that this trial by fire… was full of hidden treasures!

After seeing the glowing red aperture on the sandworm, his greed had been awakened.

Meanwhile, the shockwaves caused by his exchange of blows with Bai Xiaochun caused many more sandworms hidden beneath the surface of the ground to be reduced to nothing more than ash.

Even the sandworm with the red aperture on its head, having been damaged by both Bai Xiaochun and Master Cloud Lightning, finally couldn’t hold out any longer, and was destroyed.

As it collapsed into pieces, a red glow shot out from inside of it, coalescing into the form of a flying shuttle. Astonishingly, the shuttle was covered with magical symbols that clearly did not originate in the Heavenspan Realm.

The symbols almost looked like tadpoles, wriggling in bizarre, lifelike fashion. As soon as the flying shuttle was out in the open, it swiveled as if to spin off into the distance. However, Bai Xiaochun had been watching it the entire time, and quickly reached out to grab it.

The shuttle struggled a bit, but to no avail. As soon as Bai Xiaochun had it, he sent some divine sense inside to study its structure. It was different from any other type of magical item he had ever seen before, and yet, he could still leave a branding mark on it, allowing him to control it.

As soon as the branding mark settled down inside, the flying shuttle became calm, and then, began to power up as if to unleash an attack!

“An assault treasure!” Master Cloud Lightning blurted, his eyes going wide, and his heart dripping with figurative blood. The only things he had acquired so far were utility treasures. The fact that this flying shuttle was an assault treasure meant that its value was beyond compare.

Now was not the time for jealousy, though. He was already seriously injured. And considering how terrifying Bai Xiaochun was, he decided to use a secret magic that drew upon his longevity in order to put some distance between the two of them.

Lightning and thunder crackled as Master Cloud Lightning became a lightning bolt that shot off toward the horizon, leaving a trail of frozen air behind because of the frigid qi that surrounded him.

The faster he moved, the less likely it would be that anyone would be able to attack him. As such, he managed to escape with his life.

Unfortunately, the drainage was significant, and potentially dangerous.

In the hopes of not wasting too much longevity, he looked over his shoulder and shouted, “This was a misunderstanding, Fellow Daoist Bai! Our sects have been friends for years, and therefore, I can offer an explanation for--”

“Explanation my ass!” Bai Xiaochun roared.

At the moment, he was really angry. He hadn’t done anything to provoke anyone. Master Cloud Lightning had been the one to attack him. It might have been one thing if he just tried to unload a bunch of sandworms on him. But then there was his overt sneering, and the fact that he had tried to steal that magical item.

Bai Xiaochun cared about his poor little life more than just about anything else, and therefore, it was something sacrosanct as far as he was concerned. The fact that Master Cloud Lightning had plotted against him in deadly fashion was something he couldn’t ignore.

Furthermore, he had been forced to use his Undying Emperor’s Fist, something he had hoped to avoid in the early stages of the trial by fire. His plan had been to conserve as much power as he could, but thanks to Master Cloud Lightning, he had done the opposite.

Because of how furious he was, there was no way he would just let his enemy escape. Cursing, he unleashed his top speed as he gave chase. Although he had already wasted significant fleshly body power, he was now in the Undying Blood level, not the Undying Bones.

Therefore, his regenerative capabilities were shocking, to say the least. As his qi and blood returned to normal, he used his Undying Hex to close in on Master Cloud Lightning with incredible speed.

Master Cloud Lightning was wailing inwardly, but had few options at his disposal. He could only steel himself, and draw further upon his longevity to try to escape.

And thus, the two of them sped through the desert in a deadly chase.

Before long, half a day had gone by, and evening was falling. Bai Xiaochun was amazed by how things were going.

“So the old guy is fast, I can accept that. But how can he keep it up for so long?” Bai Xiaochun had always thought himself to be fast, so it was nothing less than shocking to find that Master Cloud Lightning was actually outdoing him.

Bai Xiaochun had his Undying Hex, but that could only give him bursts of speed. It was the same with the Mountain Shaking Bash.

The only thing he had been left which he still hadn’t used was the Godkiller.

He only had a few drops of Undying Blood, and every time he used the Godkiller, he would lose one. As far as he was concerned, each of those drops of blood was as valuable as a deva soul.

And it was impossible to say whether or not Master Cloud Lightning’s soul would count as a complete deva soul.

Were anyone else chasing Master Cloud Lightning, that person would already have given up. But after some thought, Bai Xiaochun snorted and thought, “Maybe I can’t kill him, but I can scare him to death. I refuse to believe that he can flee like this for so long without wasting a bunch of energy.”

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he shouted, “Hey, you old punk. Better use a trump card now, or you’re dead!”

Then he used his Undying Hex and Mountain Shaking Bash to accelerate dramatically.

Master Cloud Lightning had built up a bit of distance between the two of them, but when he heard what Bai Xiaochun had just shouted, and saw that distance being eaten up, he bit down on his already mangled tongue, spitting out some blood to build up more speed.

However, as soon as he did that, Bai Xiaochun slowed down.

Realizing that he had been played, Master Cloud Lightning grumbled angrily, then gritted his teeth and continued onward.

However… how could Bai Xiaochun end things so casually? He suddenly let out a shout as if he were about to accelerate, which immediately pushed Master Cloud Lightning closer to the brink of madness.

However, he didn’t accelerate. Then, moments later, he did. Slowly but surely, Master Cloud Lightning was being driven insane. After all, whether Bai Xiaochun accelerated or not, every time he shouted, Master Cloud Lightning had no choice but to use his secret magic.

Before long, the man’s hair was white, and his face was covered with wrinkles.

“How could this Bai Xiaochun be so difficult to deal with?” he despaired. “If things keep going on like this, he’ll kill me without even having to catch up to me!!” Finally, he slapped his bag of holding and began throwing random things out left and right in the hopes of distracting Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted by this development, and felt prouder of himself than ever. After all, he was so awesome…

that his enemies resorted to throwing random magical items out in the hopes of slowing him down.

“This is definitely the ultimate level of giving chase. Nothing tops this!” Sighing, he began to collect the random items. Finally, distance began to build up between the two of them, and Master Cloud Lightning sighed in relief.

And yet, despite the distance being built up, Bai Xiaochun was still chasing him, and therefore, he didn’t dare to stop using his secret magic….

“He's still not giving up! What’s the big deal? I just ambushed him, that’s all! And it didn’t even work! Devas do that kind of thing to each other all the time!” Master Cloud Lightning felt like he might collapse mentally at any moment. As of now… he deeply regretted provoking the heaven-damned Bai Xiaochun.

At the same time, he used a different secret magic to try to make contact with the other Master Cloud Lightning. Unfortunately, his other half was too far away to provide any help.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0929 awe-chapter-930

Three days passed in a flash. The distance between Master Cloud Lightning and Bai Xiaochun continued to grow. Eventually, they were nearing the border of the desert area.

Master Cloud Lightning’s mood continued to sink, and he cursed constantly in his heart. His hair was now so white, and his skin so full of wrinkles, that it seemed likely he had lost an entire sixty-year-cycle of longevity during the last three days alone.

The mere thought of all that longevity caused Master Cloud Lightning to slip further into madness.

“Three days! This guy has been chasing me for three whole days!” Master Cloud Lightning’s hair was disheveled, and his eyes completely bloodshot. The longer he fled, the worse off he was. And yet, Bai Xiaochun’s regenerative capabilities made it so that taking part in this protracted chase wasn’t difficult at all for him.

Master Cloud Lightning felt like weeping, and yet, had no choice but to continue running away.

Bai Xiaochun knew that he wouldn’t be able to catch up, but hoped to instill even more fear into Master Cloud Lightning’s heart, and also force him to waste as much energy as possible.

“It’s too bad Chen Hetian didn’t come along. This would be the perfect situation to vent on him a bit.” Sighing, he prepared to shoot forward with another burst of speed, when all of a sudden, his expression flickered. Just now, he had noticed a familiar figure within the range of his divine sense.

Other than Master Cloud Lightning and some corpses, he hadn’t seen anyone for several days, so he was immediately delighted.

As he got closer, and he confirmed the identity of this newcomer, his delight grew, and he even shifted directions to head in their direction.

Before long, five people came into view, speeding along near the border of the desert.

Among those five… was Du Lingfei!

Her four companions all wore the garb of special guards. Three of them flew in defensive positions, scanning everything in the area for signs of danger. As for the fourth, he was a young man who seemed ordinary in every aspect, and yet flew very close to Du Lingfei.

Although Bai Xiaochun still wasn’t quite sure how he felt about Du Lingfei, the fact that he had suddenly run into fellow cultivators after so many lonesome days ensured that he was still very happy.

Just when he was about to call out a greeting, Du Lingfei’s group noticed him. As for the young man who was in position next to Du Lingfei, he merely glanced over, and then looked away indifferently.

A smile broke out on Bai Xiaochun’s face. The truth was that he was getting tired of scaring Master Cloud Lightning. Reaching up with his right hand, he waved enthusiastically in greeting.

A look of surprise flitted across Du Lingfei's face. Then, she seemed to suddenly recall something, and cast a surreptitious glance at the young man positioned next to her.

Bai Xiaochun noticed that, and looked at the young man in surprise. As soon as he looked at him closely, he didn't like what he saw.

The young man was very good-looking, with sword-like eyebrows and eyes that shone as brightly as stars. Based on his energy fluctuations, his cultivation base was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. And yet somehow, he seemed to be on somewhat intimate terms with Du Lingfei.

The fact that Du Lingfei's first reaction was to glance at that young man caused a prickly sensation to rise up in Bai Xiaochun's heart, which he suppressed with a cold snort. After all, this young man was in the Nascent Soul stage, while he himself was a deva. The young man might be good-looking, but he obviously couldn't compare to him.

Suddenly feeling very confident, he flew over to Du Lingfei's group.

“Hey, boo!” he called out in a loud voice. “You know, this desert is a really dangerous place. If you plan to cross it, you need to be very careful. Besides, I've been all over the place, and didn't find an exit of any kind.”

The three special guards with Du Lingfei all clasped hands respectfully toward him upon his approach. After all, even as Heavenspan Island special guards, they still had to show respect to devas.

However, the young man who seemed to be so close to Du Lingfei didn't react at all. He didn't so much as look at Bai

Xiaochun, much less clasp hands in formal greeting.

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been too pleased with him to begin with, and was even less pleased by the treatment this young man was giving him now.

However, he was worried about possible misunderstandings, so he decided to probe for a bit of information. “Who's this, boo? Your brother? He seems familiar for some reason.”

Du Lingfei hesitated slightly. Glancing subconsciously at the young man, she looked back at Bai Xiaochun, shook her head, and said, “Just be on your way, Bai Xiaochun. You never know where the exit to this trial by fire might be. I hope that you can find it and win all the rewards.”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit taken aback by the strange tone of Du Lingfei’s voice. Just when he was about to inquire further, the young man spoke up.

“Let’s go,” he said, and then proceeded forward. Du Lingfei hesitated for a moment, then chose to follow along. She even reached out, touched the young man’s arm, and quietly offered some sort of explanation to him. The other three special guards fanned out into defensive positions as they began to move.

Bai Xiaochun’s anger from before had not yet died down, and now Du Lingfei was acting intimate with this young man right in front of him?

“I can’t believe this is happening right in front of my own eyes!” he thought. At this point, he gave up on any effort to hold back. Heart feeling even more prickly than before, he looked up in thought for a moment. Then his expression brightened, and he hurried after the group of five.

Pointing at the young man, he exclaimed, “Eee! Hey, I remember now! You're… you’re Little Fei from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, aren’t you!?”

Du Lingfei’s expression flickered, and the young man’s brow furrowed as he looked over coldly at Bai Xiaochun.

“Get out of here, Xiaochun!” Du Lingfei said. “He's not the Little Fei you’re thinking about!”

“Huh? Wait, did I really mistake him for the wrong person?” Hurrying forward, he looked the young man up and down a bit more carefully. Then, he gave a wry smile and gestured for them to continue on their way.

“Sorry about that. I guess I really mistook you for someone else….”

In response, the young man remained as expressionless as ever as he said, “Well, if you really mistook--”

However, before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun lunged forward and smacked him directly across the side of the head.

It happened so quickly, and so unexpectedly, that neither Du Lingfei, the three special guards, nor the young man himself could even react.

Bai Xiaochun’s movement was smooth and skilled, as though he had a lot of practice doing this type of thing, which was true, considering how many times he had slapped a demigod. Even as the smacking sound rang out, everyone looked over at him in astonishment.

Du Lingfei gasped, and the young man, who had just been interrupted right in the middle of his sentence, stared at Bai

Xiaochun in shock. Never could he have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would do something like that, nor that he would accomplish it with such utter smoothness.

For this young man, it was a unique set of circumstances. His reaction speed was slower than normal, and therefore, the slap hit him with perfect accuracy….

“Hahaha! Are you still going to pretend you’re not Little Fei? I’d recognize the feeling of slapping you in any circumstance! Little Fei, it’s me! Xiaochun! We're good friends, remember!?” Although Bai Xiaochun kept a delighted expression on his face, inside, he was shocked. His slap had landed just as expected, but how could he have ever guessed… that it would hurt his hand so much?

“This guy is definitely not a Nascent Soul cultivator,” he thought. “What’s his head made of anyway!?”

By this point, the young man was beginning to pant, and was staring at Bai Xiaochun with icy coldness. There also seemed to be a shocking pressure rolling off of him that he couldn’t control.

Du Lingfei’s face had drained of blood. Grabbing the young man’s arm, she began to pull him away.

“What do you think you’re doing, Bai Xiaochun!?” she said. “Why are you being so rude? He said he’s not Little Fei! You're mistaking him for someone else! Get out of here!” She blinked at him meaningfully as she dragged the young man away.

Bai Xiaochun could tell that something was very off, and was already starting to come up with an idea of what exactly it was.

“Uh… I guess I really did confuse you with someone else. Aiya! My apologies! A real case of mistaken identity, I guess….” As he turned away, he glanced at the young man out of the corner of his eye, and suddenly, his heart trembled as he thought back to the stinging sensation he had felt when slapping him. That head seemed even harder than the Giant Ghost King’s….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0930 awe-chapter-931

“Who is that guy?” That was what Bai Xiaochun was thinking as Du Lingfei and her group left. His hand still hurt from delivering that slap.

It was only now that he realized that the energy passageways in his hand seemed dangerously close to collapsing.

“Don’t tell me he’s a demigod? But demigod’s aren’t *that* tough. Besides, I'm a deva now.… Wait, could he possibly be… the Celestial?!?! Did he slip into the trial by fire to check out the trial-takers first-hand, and see who would be a good apprentice?” The mere thought caused him to shiver with fear.

“Impossible. If he were really the Celestial, then why was it so easy to slap him…? Also, if he were really the Celestial, wouldn’t he have exterminated me instantaneously?” After putting some more thought into it, he calmed down a bit, and told himself that he was overreacting, and that the young man couldn’t possibly have been the Celestial.

Either way, he realized that his actions before had been too impulsive.…

Sighing, he turned and made his way off in a different direction. A few days later, he had left the desert, and was staring out at a seemingly endless swamp.

The ground was made up of either sludge, or puddles of bubbling water. When those bubbles popped, they released turbid mist that swirled in the area.

As a result, even the sky above the swamp was overcast and murky.

He hesitated before entering the swamp; something about it seemed very odd, and the entire place fairly thrummed with vile fluctuations. He immediately felt the need to be more on guard than ever.

“This trial by fire is completely bizarre.” He thought about trying to go around it, but the desert was dangerous in its own way, so in the end, he proceeded forward.

At the same time, he continued to send out messages with his transmission jade slip. In terms of his own safety, he wasn’t too worried. As long as he was careful, he should be fine. But he couldn’t stop thinking about Big Fatty Zhang, Hou Xiaomei, and his other friends. Every day that they were in the trial by fire alone meant more danger for them.

He proceeded through the swamp with the utmost caution, and as a result, didn’t encounter any risks to his life. Before long, half a month had gone by.

He did see some dangerous situations. For example, he saw a flock of vicious-looking birds flying in the air. Moments later, an entire horde of leeches shot up into the air and ate the birds alive.

He saw tiny larvae swimming in the swamp water, and also saw seven or eight corpses….

Once he saw a huge spider, fully 300 meters tall. It glared at him, but could sense that he was not worth provoking, and eventually sank back down into the waters of the swamp.

“This place could be completely deadly to someone in the Nascent Soul stage!” Even as he proceeded along, his mood sinking, he faced the first truly life-threatening situation.

A huge, rotten hand burst out of the water like the hand of a giant. Rotten flesh and chunks of coagulated blood flew off of it as it rocketed with lightning speed toward Bai Xiaochun.

If it had only been a hand, it might not have been as shocking. But an arm followed the hand, and it was only by drawing upon significant fleshly body power, his Undying Hex, and his newly acquire flying shuttle that he was able to extricate himself from the danger.

After reaching safety, a defiant howl echoed through the swamp behind him.

“Forget the Nascent Soul stage. This place is even dangerous for devas!” His nervousness and anxiety continued to mount. In the following days, he ran into some other cultivators from the four rivers. Only a few were from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. However, so long as they weren’t from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, he would still help them as best he could.

They were always profoundly grateful, and he would always ask them about Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends. He would even show them pictures he had stored in jade slips.

Finally, after relentlessly asking everyone the same questions, he finally found someone who gave him a clue about Big Fatty Zhang!

“Senior Bai, I saw that person about two days ago. It was to the west of here, and I’m pretty sure that Master Lightning Origin from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect was chasing him!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes immediately began to glitter with cold light.

“Two days ago… to the west….” After expressing his thanks, he sped off as fast as he could to the west, sending repeated messages to Big Fatty Zhang along the way.

As a deva, Bai Xiaochun could move much more quickly than a Nascent Soul cultivator. Sonic booms stretched out behind him as he shot through the swamp.

Not being exactly certain of where Big Fatty Zhang had been, or where he was heading as he was chased, his only option was to search blindly.

**

Big Fatty Zhang was in an area not too far from Bai Xiaochun, huffing and puffing as he sped along, picking leeches off of himself as he went, which was a very painful process.

At the moment, he didn’t dare to fly in the air. After being teleported here, things had started out safe enough. With the residual power his Will Core had provided to his nascent soul, he had been able to evade any major dangers.

Unfortunately, his actions had attracted the attention of Master Lightning Origin, who mistakenly believed him to be in possession of some extraordinary magical item. No matter how Big Fatty Zhang had attempted to explain himself, Master Lightning Origin didn’t believe him.

Master Lightning Origin’s cultivation base was much higher than his, plus he was accompanied by two other cultivators from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. Just when it seemed like they had been about to catch up with him, he had taken to running on foot through the swamp, and thus escaped them.

Unfortunately, running through the swamp caused countless leeches and other vicious entities to swarm him. Thankfully, his Will Core power kept him mostly safe, although he still ended up getting injured, and was still in danger because of Master Lightning Origin and his companions, who continued to give chase by flying through the air.

It was now the third day of the chase, and Big Fatty Zhang was starting to lose hope. He was tired, his eyes were bloodshot with fury, and his cultivation base was teetering unstably. He was almost out of energy.

Furthermore, things were made more difficult by the fact that he didn’t want to fly through the air higher up, and thus had to brave the dangers of the swamp. On more than a few occasions, he had nearly been killed by leeches….

“What the hell kind of place is this? And what’s the deal with that Master Lightning Origin!? He’s such a bully!!” Big Fatty Zhang was infuriated, but had no options at his disposal. As he fled, he would occasionally try to send messages to fellow cultivators from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

He was reaching his limit. If it weren’t for the fact that his pursuers didn’t want to go down into the swamp to find him, he would likely already have died.

Furthermore, none of the messages he had transmitted had received any responses.

He was like an oil lamp sputtering on the verge of going out. Chuckling bitterly, he realized that his speculations had been off, and that he likely wouldn’t make it out of this trial by fire alive.

However, that was when a tremor passed through him. His Will Core intuition was telling him that a profoundly powerful entity was making its way through the swamp toward him, and that it was only about 3,000 meters away.

From what he could tell, this newcomer seemed like a deva, which meant… that he had no chance of surviving!

“Well, if I'm going to die, I’ll take some of them with me!” Eyes flickering with madness, he shot up into the air, which was right about the time that the monkey-like Master Lightning Origin approached, flanked by two other cultivators wearing northern-style robes.

At the same time, the air several hundred meters away rippled as a 300-meter-tall spider suddenly reared up from within the swamp!

Master Lightning Origin and his companions were clearly shocked, and prepared to flee. As for Big Fatty Zhang, he was just about to try to block their path when, all of a sudden, the transmission jade slip in his bag of holding vibrated.

“Where are you, Eldest Brother?!?!”

Big Fatty Zhang’s jaw dropped. Facing this sudden chance to escape, he ignored Master Lightning Origin and his companions, threw his head back, and roared at the top of his lungs.

“Help me, Xiaochun!!”

His cry echoed out into the ears of Bai Xiaochun, who was some distance away. Stopping in place, he jerked to face the direction of the sound. Then, energy surging, he shot like a lightning bolt in that direction. The will of the heavens stirred, and a huge version of his face appeared in the sky as he closed in on Big Fatty Zhang!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0931 awe-chapter-932

When Bai Xiaochun’s face appeared up in the air, the Master Cloud Lightning whom Bai Xiaochun had not yet encountered happened to be flying along through the swamp in another location, his expression very grim.

When he sensed the deva fluctuations rolling out, his eyes flashed with cold light.

He was essentially the older brother of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, who had once existed as one person with one body. Although a cultivation accident had split them into two, their minds were still connected, and they could communicate with each other via a secret magic.

The older brother already knew about everything which had occurred between Bai Xiaochun and his other half. As the fight had been playing out, he was in the plains area, separated from the desert by the swamp.

At that time, he had been too far away to be of any help, but had immediately begun to race toward the desert. Now that he was here in the swamp, and had suddenly detected Bai Xiaochun’s aura, he called out to his younger brother via their secret magic.

“Bai Xiaochun is in the swamp! Hurry over, and we can fuse together and kill him!”

The younger of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings was just about to leave the swamp and enter the plains. However, upon receiving the message, his eyes flashed angrily, and he turned and headed back into the swamp.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was shooting like a meteor toward Big Fatty Zhang.

Because they hadn't been very far apart to begin with, his aura was already able to descend on the area around Big Fatty Zhang.

As it did, the huge spider that had just risen up suddenly shivered. From the look in its eyes, it apparently viewed Big Fatty Zhang as being special for some reason. Ignoring the pressure from Bai Xiaochun, it leaped into the air, howling as it shot toward Big Fatty Zhang.

Shocked, Master Lightning Origin and his companions fell back. However, before they could move very far, the spider shot out several strands of black silk, which wrapped around the entire group. Blood sprayed out of Big Fatty Zhang’s mouth as he was then dragged down into the waters of the swamp.

Master Lightning Origin and his companions reacted with utter despair, and struggled to free themselves, but were unable. Just like Big Fatty Zhang, they were dragged down. At the same time, black mist began to pulse on all of their faces. From the way it wriggled and writhed, it almost looked like they were covered with black spiders.

Big Fatty Zhang was the weakest of the group, and was the most adversely affected. He immediately passed out, whereas the more powerful cultivation bases of Master Lightning Origin and his companions enabled them to fight back a bit longer.

As the spider sank down into the swamp and dragged Big Fatty Zhang and the others with it, a sound like heavenly thunder burst through the air. Bai Xiaochun’s enraged face appeared up above, and shouted, “How dare you!!”

The swamp below immediately sank down because of the pressure, revealing Big Fatty Zhang and the others.

As for the huge spider, it shivered and tried to escape.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s expression distorted as he transformed into a beam of light that shot down toward the depression in the swamp.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t thinking at all about conserving spiritual energy or the power of his fleshly body. Waving his hand, he sent his flying shuttle whooshing out in front of him.

The shuttle sent the swamp water shooting out in all directions, simultaneously destroying countless leeches and larvae. By this point, Big Fatty Zhang and the other captives were completely out in the open, albeit tied up with black silk.

Without any hesitation, he grabbed the silk attached to Big Fatty Zhang and yanked him upward. That in turn caused the huge spider to be pulled up out of the swamp, to hang in midair.

The spider stared at him with hateful, crimson eyes. Aware that it couldn’t escape, it sprayed a huge amount of black silk at him.

“Have a death wish?!” Bai Xiaochun shouted angrily. Back before he had arrived, it might have made sense for the spider to ignore him. But now that he had unleashed the power of his cultivation base, it made sense for the spider to give up on its prey. And yet, it went beyond that and attacked him.

Bai Xiaochun was not happy at all that it had tried to take Big Fatty Zhang away so forcefully, and the matter was even worse considering the black spider marks on Big Fatty Zhang’s face, which were clearly venomous. Although many people would be unable to assess such a bizarre poison, as a grandmaster of the Dao of medicine, Bai Xiaochun instantly realized that it was a type of venom which affected the soul!

And its function… was to kill the host!

Eyes flashing with cold light, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture, sending his flying shuttle forth to sever the silk threads that bound Big Fatty Zhang.

At this point, the image of a crescent moon appeared in one of Bai Xiaochun's eyes. He was well aware that there were many entities in this swamp that should not be provoked, and that if a fight broke out, it needed to be ended quickly. Therefore, he called upon… the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation!

The first level of the incantation involved summoning a moon. At the moment, he had cultivated the technique to the point where he could summon a partial moon. As he utilized the technique, a shocking crescent moon appeared up in the sky.

Moonlight instantly spilled down in astonishing fashion, causing all of the lands to turn silver.

When that light touched the black spider silk, it melted away. A look of shock and terror appeared on the spider’s face, and it tried to sink down further into the swamp. However, it was too slow! An image of a moon had already appeared on its back!

“Fallen Moon!” Bai Xiaochun growled. Brilliant light shot down from the moon onto the spider, causing the moon mark on its back to expand rapidly. An agonized shriek could be heard from the spider as the moon symbol dug deep into it. The spider trembled, and then green, viscous fluid began to seep out from inside of it. Then, even as it hoped to try to escape into the swamp, it exploded!

It had been destroyed in body and soul!

Only when the spider died did the black marks on Big Fatty Zhang and the other cultivators vanish.

Master Lightning Origin and his three companions had not yet lost consciousness, so they were able to see everything which had just happened. When they saw the traces of the venom vanish, they immediately turned and fled in three different directions, their faces as ashen as death.

Never could any of them have imagined that chasing Big Fatty Zhang would end with a deva patriarch from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect coming over in a fury.

“You pick on my Eldest Brother and then think you can just leave?” There was no way Bai Xiaochun would simply let them escape. Pulling the still unconscious Big Fatty Zhang with him, he took a step forward and waved his finger, sending the flying shuttle shooting toward the first of the three cultivators from the north.

A scream echoed out as, in the blink of an eye, the shuttle stabbed through the man, and then headed toward the second. After cutting down the second, it shot at high speed toward Master Lightning Origin.

It was in this very moment that the enormous face of Master Cloud Lightning appeared up above in the sky.

“Do you dare, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

Bai Xiaochun was not surprised at all at the sudden appearance of Master Cloud Lightning, and in fact, had detected his impending arrival earlier. However, in his urgency to save Big Fatty Zhang, he had ignored him. Now, he glared up at the face and said, “Are you egging me on or something?! I absolutely hate it when people egg me on!”

Without any hesitation, he sent the flying shuttle shooting forward with greater speed.

Even if the monkey-like Master Lightning Origin had been more nimble, he wouldn’t have been able to dodge out of the way. Expression that of despair, he shrieked, “Master, save--”

Before he could finish speaking, the flying shuttle stabbed through his forehead.

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t set out with the intention of killing these people. However, their actions would have led to Big Fatty Zhang’s death if he hadn't come to save him in the nick of time.

The sight of his apprentice being killed caused Master Cloud Lightning to howl, “Bai Xiaochun!!”

His face swirled together into a beam of light that shot directly toward Bai Xiaochun with deadly, destructive power!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0932 awe-chapter-933

If Heavenspan Island was the imperial palace, and the Celestial was the emperor, then the demigod patriarchs from the riversource sects would be analogous to the four heavenly kings, such as the Giant Ghost King.

As such, Bai Xiaochun and Master Cloud Lightning were like two powerful subordinates of two heavenly kings. Although they were technically on the same side, in truth… there was enough tension between them to lead to deadly conflict. On the outside, the demigod patriarchs would ensure that their followers didn’t get into conflicts such as the current one.

But inside a trial by fire like this, where deaths were expected, then even if one killed the other, they could easily explain it away after leaving.

Master Cloud Lightning had been forced to simply watch as Bai Xiaochun pushed his other half to near destruction. Then, that same person went on to personally kill his apprentice.

Because of these grievances both old and new, Master Cloud Lightning was furious. As he supplanted heavenly will with his own, the huge face in the sky began to send crushing pressure down.

Master Cloud Lightning howled at the top of his lungs, shooting through the air toward Bai Xiaochun with such shocking speed that lightning bolts began to rise up around him!

It only took the blink of an eye for more than 100,000 lightning bolts to build up, making it seem as if the entire world had become a world of lightning, with Master Cloud Lightning as its sovereign!

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted. He could immediately tell that this Master Cloud Lightning was much stronger than the other he had faced. Both were in the mid Deva Realm, but the one from before had apparently just made his breakthrough. The one he faced now seemed to have been in the mid Deva Realm for quite some time, and was actually very close to stepping into the late realm.

From that, Bai Xiaochun could tell that single-handedly dealing with this version of Master Cloud Lightning would be similar to handling someone even more powerful than Chen Hetian, Li Xiandao or Bai Zhentian.

In fact… this was the most powerful enemy he had ever faced in the Heavenspan region!

There was no time for thinking or planning. Bai Xiaochun shot backward, throwing the unconscious Big Fatty Zhang into his bag of holding. Even as he did, tens upon tens of thousands of heavenly lightning bolts slammed into the spot he had just occupied.

As heaven and earth shook violently, the enraged Master Cloud Lightning performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the heavenly lightning to begin to compress and converge on in his hand in the form of an enormous bow!

“Time to die!!” he howled, pulling back on the bowstring, which caused an arrow of blackish-violet lightning to form. This was no magical item; it was a divine ability unique to Master Cloud Lightning. Thunder crackled as a supremely destructive power began to build up, and then pierced through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually took place in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem worried at all. Not only did he not regret killing Master Lightning Origin, his wrath was now completely focused on Master Cloud Lightning.

“You really think I'm afraid of you, fool?!” he shouted. Although he feared death, after all of the things he had experienced in life, he had come to know that now was the type of situation in which to put his poor little life on the line!

If he didn't, then it would surely be lost....

Instead of backing up, he advanced, waving his hands out in front of him as he barked, “Living Mountain Incantation!”

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Countless rocks and bits of rubble shot forth to adhere to his body. In the blink of an eye, he had transformed into a 300-meter-tall stone golem.

Bursting with energy, he clenched his hand into a fist and punched out, landing a blow directly on the blackish-violet arrow of lightning.

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out as, at the same time, the enormous face of Bai Xiaochun slammed into the enormous face of Master Cloud Lightning. As the ground quaked violently, the blackish-violet lightning arrow collapsed, and cracks spread out over Bai Xiaochun’s Living Mountain Incantation form.

In the end, the arrow was no match, and was destroyed, allowing Bai Xiaochun in stone golem form to continue on toward Master Cloud Lightning.

Master Cloud Lightning took a deep breath, and cold light flashed in his eyes. Waving his left hand out in front of him, he gritted his teeth and said, “Cloud Lightning Forefather: First Transformation!”

Almost instantly, Master Cloud Lightning’s body began to twitch and writhe, almost as though snakes were dancing about beneath his skin. A vicious expression gripped his face, and he let out a howl like that of a wild beast.

At the same time, he began to grow larger, until he was fully 30 meters tall. No longer did the right and left halves of his body look so disparate. Although one side was burlier and more filled in than the other, he looked much more proportional.

At the same time, his aura transformed, filling with an explosive energy that made him seem at least three times as strong as before!

Shockingly, a red halo of light sprang up to surround his person, which was clearly a powerful defensive ability.

After completing his transformation, Master Cloud Lightning looked up, and both of his mismatched eyes were bright red. Radiating madness and animal ferocity, he lunged toward Bai Xiaochun's stone golem form.

Bai Xiaochun was so startled that his eyes nearly popped out of his skull.

“He can actually shapeshift!! And this is just the first transformation? That must mean there’s a second and a third.... Dammit! There’s nothing I hate more than fighting shapeshifters!” However, now was not the time to ponder the situation. Eyes burning with ferocity, he jumped forward to meet his enemy’s attack.

“I’ll fight you so fast and hard you won’t be able to transform a second time!” Utilizing the Mountain Shaking Bash to accelerate rapidly, he shot toward Master Cloud Lightning.

When they collided, a massive boom rocked all heaven and earth. The shockwave sent water flying up everywhere in the swamp, and caused numerous creatures to flee in all directions. Nothing dared to get close to Master Cloud Lightning and Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s stone golem form was significantly damaged, but at the same time, the red halo surrounding Master Cloud Lightning was about to collapse. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he staggered backward from the force of Bai Xiaochun’s attack.

“I can’t believe this guy got so strong after transforming!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his qi and blood churning madly inside of him. However, he continued to press the attack. As for Master Cloud Lightning, he looked up, his hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Second Transformation!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyelids twitched as Master Cloud Lightning again grew larger. Now he was 60 meters tall, and his body looked even more symmetrical than before! Furthermore, he was three times as strong again!

This time, instead of a red halo surrounding him, it was orange! This level of defense left Bai Xiaochun stunned.

“Another transformation?” Not only was Master Cloud Lightning much more powerful, but it was very irritating to Bai Xiaochun that, despite what he had said moments ago about not providing an opportunity for a second transformation, Master Cloud Lightning had gone and done just that.

“Well, you won’t get an opportunity for a third transformation!” he shouted. Even as he prepared to attack, Master Cloud Lightning spoke in a loud voice.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Third Transformation!

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Fourth Transformation!!

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Fifth Transformation!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0933 awe-chapter-934

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

It was impossible to determine whether he intentionally did it in response to Bai Xiaochun’s words. Either way, Master Cloud Lightning transformed several times in a row, causing intense, thunderous rumbling to echo out as he grew from a height of 60 meters to 90 meters.

Then, he went from 90 meters to 120 meters, and finally 150 meters. Although the two halves of his body were not perfectly symmetrical, they now matched much better than before.

His surging energy had reached a shocking level, and as he hovered there in the air, he actually looked like the forefather of all humanity, burly and tough, emanating intense pressure that would shake the minds of anyone who could sense it. Clearly, this version of Master Cloud Lightning was vastly more powerful than before.

Furthermore, he was surrounded by a glittering shield of light that was so dazzling that it seemed… completely impenetrable!

Bai Xiaochun was stunned…. And he was also convinced that Master Cloud Lightning had intentionally transformed multiple times in a row to mock him.

“It’s time for you to die, Bai Xiaochun!” Master Cloud Lightning shouted in a voice that shook all heaven and earth.

Bai Xiaochun shivered, his eyes crimson from the humiliation he had just suffered, and his rage mounting by the second.

“You’re pushing things too far, Master Cloud Lightning. If you can do all that shapeshifting, why not do it all from the start? There was no need to wait until now and then intentionally humiliate me!” Without any warning at all, he launched into the Throat Crushing Grasp, backed by the Mountain Shaking Bash.

In the blink of an eye, he was blasting forward with lightning speed. He even used the Undying Hex, adding more speed, and placing him directly in front of Master Cloud Lightning.

A thump sounded out as the Throat Crushing Grasp landed on the multicolored shield of light surrounding Master Cloud Lightning. Then, indescribable force shot back into Bai Xiaochun’s arm, like a wave of power that completely destroyed the power of the Throat Crushing Grasp!

He actually pierced through three layers of the shield, only to be stopped by the fourth.

In almost the same moment, Master Cloud Lightning attacked in quick and violent fashion. He waved his arms, causing numerous lightning bolts to shoot out, which transformed into silver snakes that slammed into Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s stone golem form couldn’t stand up to the force, and collapsed, sending countless bits of rubble and rock showering out in all directions. Even as Bai Xiaochun’s true form was revealed, the lightning bolts lashed toward him.

Shaken by how perilous the situation was already, Bai Xiaochun quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then waved his hand out in front of him. Frigid qi exploded out, and nine frigid projections appeared, which leaped to intercept the lightning. Bai Xiaochun didn’t retreat by even a step; he currently wasn’t really thinking, and was acting on fighting instinct alone. Ignoring the lightning, he took a step forward, and simultaneously clenched his right hand into a fist!

A black hole sprang up that sucked in all of his aura, all of his qi and blood, all signs of life. His body twisted and distorted, withering in bizarre fashion.

He was unleashing… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

The intense pressure that suddenly weighed down on the area caused Master Cloud Lightning’s face to fall. Panting, he gave up on any thoughts of fighting, and began to back up as quickly as possible.

Even as he began to move, intense rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as a huge, shadowy figure appeared behind Bai Xiaochun. He wore imperial robes and an imperial crown, and seemed to be looking down condescendingly on all creation.

Master Cloud Lightning’s heart began to pound, and his mind spun. The shield of light around him flickered as he sped away, and yet, his retreat had begun too late….

The fist struck!

A projection of Bai Xiaochun’s face filled the sky, and a paramount energy spread out. Rumbling filled heaven and earth, and all of the lightning bolts which had surrounded him shattered into pieces!

The image of a fist appeared, an image which caused Master Cloud Lightning’s mind to be overtaken by madness. Crushing all the lightning in its path, it sped forward and then slammed into the multi-colored shield!

The shield was capable of rebuffing Bai Xiaochun’s Living Mountain Incantation, even when combined with the Mountain Shaking Bash and the Throat Crushing Grasp. But… it was incapable of standing up to a quintuple-power Undying Emperor’s Fist!

A massive boom echoed out as the shield shattered into bits! Then, the fist went on to smash into Master Cloud Lightning, sending him tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying out of his mouth. As he flew backward, he shrank from his previous 150-meter height down to 120 meters.

Apparently, that was his only way of standing up to the domineering, destructive power of Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist.

And yet, that wasn’t enough! As Master Cloud Lightning skidded to a halt, he coughed up another mouthful of blood, simultaneously shrinking from a height of 120 meters down to 90 meters. Then he coughed up a third mouthful of blood… and shrank to 60 meters, 30 meters… and then returned to his original size! Finally, he coughed up a fifth mouthful of blood! It took all of that to survive Bai Xiaochun's Undying Emperor’s Fist!

300 meters away, he finally righted himself and looked up, eyes flickering with venom. Then, he chuckled coldly.

“That was what I was waiting for. The fist strike my other half described…. Very strong indeed. But… not strong enough to kill me. Next… I’m going to combine with my other half. When that happens, Bai Xiaochun… you’re dead!” His eyes flickered as he snorted coldly, then suddenly shot away with a spectacular burst of speed.

He left some divine sense behind though, apparently waiting for a response from Bai Xiaochun. He was also prepared for a situation in which Bai Xiaochun started to chase him. However, he was confident in making him regret such a decision by severely injuring him with another trump card.

“Based on what my other half told me,” he thought, “if he gives chase, he’ll be doing so in a severely weakened state…. In that case, I might not even need to combine with my other half to kill him!” Even as he plotted about what to do next, Bai Xiaochun heard the words he had uttered moments ago, and his pupils constricted.

This version of Master Cloud Lightning was far stronger than the last one he had faced. Therefore, it was easy to imagine what level of cultivation base and battle prowess he would achieve by combining. He would definitely be very difficult for Bai Xiaochun to deal with.

His best option was to end the fight right now.

Just when he was about to start moving, though, he hesitated. “Did he say that on purpose to try to trick me?”

But then, his eyes shone with determination.

“Even if it’s a trick, I still need to do something. I can’t give him a chance to combine with his other half!” Considering what type of enemy he was facing, he knew that he only had one option, no matter how much it pained him to resort to it. Without the slightest hesitation, he locked down on one of his drops of Undying Blood, and then used the method described in the Undying Codex… to crush it!

As the Undying Blood shattered, a shocking blood qi erupted, filling his entire body. A red mist surrounded him as… he felt himself accelerating at rapid speed.

At the same time, his current state allowed him to rapidly absorb the energy of heaven and earth in the area, turning him into something like a black hole that could absorb all living things.

The air around him distorted and cracked, and at the same time, his energy surged. Master Cloud Lightning nearly let out a shriek of terror. Trembling, he realized that the sensation of deadly crisis which was rising inside of him vastly surpassed what he had felt when facing the Undying Emperor’s Fist.

“What divine ability is that? Dammit! That fist strike of his actually wasn’t his trump card!!” Master Cloud Lightning felt like every inch of him was screaming in terror. There was no time for thought or planning. Even as Bai Xiaochun closed in, surrounded by swirling red mist, Master Cloud Lightning drew upon every ounce of energy he could muster to flee in the opposite direction!

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun looked up at him. His eyes were red, almost like blood. He looked completely different from before, a vicious predator… whose eyes shone with bloodthirsty light!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0934 awe-chapter-935

When Bai Xiaochun looked up, it was as if the entire world had turned the color of blood. Waves began to roll out across the water that made up the swamp, and the countless entities which lived within it sensed Bai Xiaochun’s aura, and instinctively began to tremble!

Master Cloud Lightning’s heart was racing faster than it ever had in his entire life, and his mind was spinning in terror.

“Dammit, how could this Bai Xiaochun be so strong!?!?” he howled in his heart. “He’s not in the early Deva Realm!!”

All of a sudden, he realized how arrogant he had been, and cursed his decision to anger Bai Xiaochun. Even worse was his childish decision not to flee when he could have.

He felt like slapping himself in the face over and over again, and yet, all he could do was try to flee at top speed.

It was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun looked up. Because of the red mist which surrounded him, it was impossible for anyone to see his blood-red eyes clearly.

And the voice with which he spoke almost didn't seem to be his own….

“God... killer!”

As soon as the words escaped his lips, he suddenly vanished, becoming a streak of blood-colored light that pierced through the air at indescribable speed. In fact, it moved so quickly that it seemed capable of moving through time!

It was much faster than any type of teleportation. In the blink of an eye, he was upon the fleeing Master Cloud Lightning, and before the man could even react, slammed into him!

A scream echoed out into the air, and Master Cloud Lightning trembled violently. He immediately began to wither up, a sensation that filled his heart with indescribable terror.

“How… how can he move so fast!?!? He’s… he’s absorbing my life force!!” Multicolored light flared as Master Cloud Lightning tried to fight back, and yet, he was no match at all for Bai Xiaochun’s Godkiller technique.

Within moments, Master Cloud Lightning was nothing more than skin and bones, his face ashen and tinged by the shadow of death. The flame of his life force was already flickering on the verge of being extinguished.

It happened too quickly. A single blow, and almost all of his life force was sucked away in shocking fashion. Trembling, Master Cloud Lightning let out a shriek of despair.

“No!!”

Immense regret filled him, and yet, in that moment of ultimate calamity, he suddenly realized that there was something strange going on with Bai Xiaochun. He seemed dazed within his blood mist, as though he weren’t even conscious.

A tremor passed through Master Cloud Lightning as hope suddenly appeared within his despair. Knowing that now was not the time to ponder the situation, he took a deep breath and unleashed another divine ability which reversed the withering from before. Then, multicolored light shone brightly as he gritted his teeth and shot downward toward the swamp below!

In an instant, he was inside of the swamp, and yet a moment later, Bai Xiaochun looked down… and followed him!

The entire swamp vibrated. In the briefest moment, hordes of leeches were killed, not by the vibration, but by Bai Xiaochun’s blood mist, which sucked away at all the life force around it.

It wasn’t just the leeches, but the larvae and other entities in the swamp as well. Anything that got too close to Bai Xiaochun ended up dead!

“So, there is something strange going on with him,” Master Cloud Lightning thought. “That magical technique is completely terrifying! It has to have a weakness!!” He was delighted to have escaped with his life; obviously, Bai Xiaochun was in some sort of semi-conscious state, and had descended into the swamp itself, not to chase Master Cloud Lightning, but to absorb the life force that it contained.

That gave Master Cloud Lightning the chance he needed. As Bai Xiaochun absorbed the life force in the area, Master Cloud Lightning began to speed through the swamp itself. Although doing that was dangerous, it wasn’t as dangerous as dealing directly with Bai Xiaochun.

There was clearly something strange going on with Bai Xiaochun, and yet, he didn’t even think about looking over his shoulder to try to determine what it was. Bai Xiaochun’s magical technique was simply too terrifying, and left Master Cloud Lightning with only one thought in his head… unless he managed to combine with his other half, he had to stay away from Bai Xiaochun at all costs!!

After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the bedraggled Master Cloud Lightning was quite a distance away. At that point, he burst out from the swamp water. He was covered with leeches and larvae, but didn’t even take the time to remove them. Gasping for breath, he shot forward as quickly as possible, glancing over his shoulder, a look of terror on his face.

“That Bai Xiaochun is a complete monster! He just won’t die! He's definitely one of the biggest enemies of the north!! But even if he turns out to be stronger than he’s already shown himself to be, he still isn’t in the mid Deva Realm. Once I combine with my other half… I’ll definitely be able to kill him!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he once again made contact with his other self, and then sped off into the distance.

Meanwhile, now that Bai Xiaochun had dropped down into the swamp itself, a dramatic vortex had begun to spread out in all directions….

The leeches in the swamp were fleeing madly this way and that, as were the larvae.

Even more powerful life forms were doing the same, including spiders, giants, and other terrifying creatures.

As the storm spread out in all directions, all life forms that it touched had their life force drained away, leaving them withered in death….

It lasted for the time it takes two incense sticks to burn….

Then, a boom filled the swamp as Bai Xiaochun shot up into the air. There was no blood mist around him any longer. His face was ruddy, and a look of incredulity could be seen on his face. He was also trembling uncontrollably.

At the moment, he wasn’t even thinking about Master Cloud Lightning. Instead, he shot off to a location with some land where he could sit down cross-legged and examine himself closely.

After a long moment passed, his eyes opened, and they flickered with terror.

“Dammit! What just happened? How come I lost consciousness when using the Godkiller technique? What’s the deal?!?!” As he thought back to what had just occurred, his heart shivered with fear.

One thing he was certain of was that after he lost consciousness, his mind was not taken over by any other entity. His body had been acting of its own accord… to absorb as much life force as possible from around it.

The mere thought of that caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver in anxious fear.

“No way. Before, I had no idea how the Godkiller actually worked. But now that I do, I can’t use it. It’s too dangerous.” The feeling of having just lost control of his own body was completely horrifying.

A long moment passed. Suddenly, a look of surprise appeared on his face, as he realized that the destroyed drop of Undying Blood was now fully recovered!

He could only imagine how much life force he had absorbed in those two incense sticks’ worth of time in the swamp….

“If only I could control it, then it would be a much better divine ability.” Feeling torn, he looked down at the swamp and then scanned it with divine sense, only to find that it didn’t contain any life force at all….

Even distant reaches of the swamp were completely vacant of any life force fluctuations.

“How much did I absorb...?” Shaken, and eyes wide, he suddenly felt a bit excited.

“Hahaha! Who would have thought that I'm so awesome! Even after losing consciousness because of the Godkiller, I still accomplished a lot!” He then began to travel through the swamp a bit, whereupon he discovered that there were indeed some signs of life force here and there. However, as soon as he neared, they would vanish, clearly in an attempt to avoid him.

That only got him more excited though. At one point, he patted his bag of holding, pulled out Big Fatty Zhang, and touched his forehead. Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes opened, and he looked around blankly for a moment before noticing Bai Xiaochun. At that point, he immediately jumped up and prepared to say something.

However, Bai Xiaochun beat him to the punch. Clasping his hands behind his back and sticking his chin up, he said. “Eldest Brother, you were ambushed in this swamp. I got so mad that I forced all of the living beings in the swamp to apologize to you. As a result, from this moment on, they will avoid us at all costs. Don’t believe me? Go around a bit and see what happens!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0935 awe-chapter-936

Big Fatty Zhang was a bit taken aback. He looked at Bai Xiaochun, then looked around them at the swamp, a strange expression on his face. As far as he was concerned, only an idiot would believe what Bai Xiaochun had just said. After all, he knew Bai Xiaochun well, and was used to how he would brag and try to show off. And yet, that same understanding of Bai Xiaochun also caused him to hesitate for a moment.

“Although Xiaochun does like to brag,” he thought, “he doesn’t usually exaggerate things too much. Could it really be true that all the weird bugs and things in the swamp… will avoid us?” After a moment of hesitation, he sent some divine sense out, and was shocked to find that there wasn’t a single life force fluctuation in the area.

To Bai Xiaochun’s pleasure, the two of them proceeded forward through the swamp, with Big Fatty Zhang feeling more shaken with every moment. Before long, he sensed a flicker of life force up ahead. However, as soon as he detected it, it raced away in the opposite direction.

After that same thing happened a few times, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, a strange expression on his face.

“What do you think, Eldest Brother? It’s like I said, I gave them all a strict warning. Hmmmphh! How dare they ambush my Eldest Brother! It was a kindness on my part to hold back from wiping out the entire swamp.” Bai Xiaochun felt prouder of himself with every moment that passed. Although the Godkiller technique was somewhat perverse, it was very effective.

That was just how Bai Xiaochun was. No matter what situation he found himself in, he could always find the bright side.

To Big Fatty Zhang’s continued shock, the two of them proceeded along through the swamp as smoothly as if it were their own front yard. Everything was quiet, to the point where Big Fatty Zhang even began to daydream a bit here and there.

At one point, a leech didn’t flee in timely fashion, and Big Fatty Zhang managed to grab it. Being so close to Bai Xiaochun caused the leech to let out a shriek of despair, and it even seemed to be pleading for its life. When Big Fatty Zhang relaxed his hand, it whooshed away, vanishing in the blink of an eye.

They also ran into another spider, the same type which had ambushed Big Fatty Zhang earlier. As soon as the spider saw Bai Xiaochun, it shivered and fled in the opposite direction….

Not even Bai Xiaochun could ever have guessed that the creatures in the swamp would end up so terrified of him.

“Could it be that, because of some strange quality of the swamp, when I was unconscious, I let out… even more of that blood mist than I realized was possible?” Eventually, he came to the conclusion that this must be the case. He actually had no idea how much life force he had absorbed, but the fact that it was enough to re-form a drop of Undying Blood was terrifying to think about.

Thankfully, Master Cloud Lightning had been frightened so badly that he fled. A craftier opponent might have taken advantage of that moment of unconsciousness to attack him.

One of the most exaggerated things to unfold in the swamp after the main incident was when they happened across a pack of gaunt wolves that were relying on their incredible speed and dexterity to harass a cultivator. That cultivator happened to be Sun Wu from the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect!

Cultivators from the south were adept at shapeshifting, and at the moment, the green-skinned Sun Wu was using that ability to full effect. Occasionally, he would change into the shape of a vicious, brown centipede that would weave in and out of the attacking wolves.

No matter what he did, however, he couldn’t escape the more than 1,000 wolves, who kept him completely surrounded. Visible in the area were a few dead cultivators, which bore testimony to how long the fighting had been going on.

Off to the side was the leader of the pack, a wolf who was little more than a skeleton, with cold, sneering eyes, and energy comparable to a deva.

Sun Wu was already sinking into despair, and was fairly convinced that he wouldn’t be able to escape from this calamity. From what he could tell, the only reason the wolves hadn't killed him already was in the hopes of using him to lure out more prey.

He knew that unless a deva came to rescue him, nobody would be able to help him. He was going to die one way or another, and furthermore, was not the type of person who would violate his own principles simply to save his life. Therefore, he was shifting in and out of centipede form in the hopes that the shapeshifting fluctuations would serve as a warning to any other cultivators in the area.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun and Big Fatty Zhang approached, the wolves began to shiver and howl. Then, the entire pack of 1,000 turned and fled with their tails between their legs.

The leader of the pack was the first to start running, and moved especially quickly. However, before it could get very far, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out sonorously.

“Stay! The rest can go, but you stay!” The rest of the wolves vanished into the swamp. In the blink of an eye… only one wolf out of 1,000 was left behind.

That wolf stood there trembling, the cold arrogance in its eyes replaced by fear. However, it didn’t dare to flee, and instead dropped down onto its belly and tried its best to wag its tail.

Big Fatty Zhang was used to scenes such as this, but Sun Wu was completely stunned. Panting, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and almost immediately recognized him.

Even still, he was shocked. Although it made sense for a deva to be able to scare the wolves away, it was completely astonishing that a single word could cause the leader of the pack to not only refrain from fleeing, but also to grovel on the ground.

Filled with gratitude at having just been rescued, Sun Wu hurried over to Bai Xiaochun, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

“Many thanks for saving my life, Senior Bai!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat. He had begun to feel a bit awkward showing off constantly for Big Fatty Zhang, so now that he had someone new to work with, he definitely had to make a good impression.

Therefore, he made a beckoning motion with his right hand, prompting the shivering wolf to hurry over in front of him. The wolf didn’t do anything at all when Bai Xiaochun bopped it on the head. It even wagged its tail vigorously.

Sun Wu’s jaw dropped in exaggerated fashion; he was almost incapable of reconciling the image of the tail-wagging wolf with the cruel and vicious beast he had seen earlier. They didn’t seem like the same creature….

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the surrounding corpses and found that none were eastern cultivators. Therefore, he snorted and said, “I’ll spare your life this time!”

The wolf shivered, although it was impossible to tell whether it was from fear or joy. It gave a few whimpers, then turned and fled into the swamp.

Having driven off the wolves, Bai Xiaochun turned to Sun Wu, who shivered and once again bowed formally.

Off to the side, Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat, looked at Sun Wu, and then looked back at Bai Xiaochun.

“You’re from the south?” Bai Xiaochun asked.

“Yes indeed, sir. I’m from the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect.”

Bai Xiaochun thought back to Master Thousand-Ghost, whom he had defeated with a single stare. He nodded.

“Very well. You can follow me out of the swamp if you’d like.”

Sun Wu was overjoyed. So far, the swamp had been a nightmare for him, so as far as he was concerned, being able to join Bai Xiaochun was a stroke of good fortune. Bowing incessantly, he said, “Many thanks, Senior Bai!”

Laughing heartily, Big Fatty Zhang hurried over and lifted him up from his bowing.

“We must be connected by destiny,” he said with a smile. “Come come. Why don’t you tell us how you southerners have been doing in this trial by fire?” Big Fatty Zhang was very curious about the south, and Sun Wu was very eager to speak. Other than confidential matters, he was very free with his words.

After going on for a bit, his expression suddenly flickered.

“Oh, I just remembered something! Three days ago, I saw an eastern cultivator trapped in a dangerous location. Although I wished I could save him, not even I dared to get too close…. I think saving him would have required an entire team working together…. He called himself Song Que, and he asked me to tell anyone from the east that he needed help….”

“Que’er?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, a look of shock appearing on his face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0936 awe-chapter-937

The trial by fire was made up of four separate lands: a desert, a swamp, a plain, and a jungle, each of which was filled with all sorts of hidden dangers. As for how many people remained alive from the four rivers, no one knew.

By now, it was very obvious to Bai Xiaochun why the requirement to enter the trial by fire was set at the Nascent Soul stage…. Anyone under that level wouldn’t even be able to move around.

Even Nascent Soul cultivators… faced deadly peril at every turn!

For example, Sun Wu was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and was considered a top chosen. He was widely viewed as the most likely disciple in his sect to become a deva, and yet he had been placed into a situation of almost certain death at the hands of those wolves.

Considering how dangerous the trial by fire was, as soon as Bai Xiaochun heard Sun Wu mention the name Song Que, and how he had asked for help, he began to pant. Song Que had always been testy with Bai Xiaochun, and didn’t like him very much, but he was his nephew. That was even more the case now that Bai Xiaochun had taken the next step with Song Junwan.

If the situation weren’t more dire, Bai Xiaochun might have been inclined to pull a prank on him. But this place was too dangerous. Therefore, he immediately asked Sun Wu to take him to the location where he'd seen Song Que.

Sun Wu didn’t dare to be deceptive in any way. He immediately told Bai Xiaochun all the details, after which Bai Xiaochun shot in that direction. Sun Wu and Big Fatty Zhang followed along nervously.

The three of them became bright beams of light that shot through the sky over the swamp.

Bai Xiaochun was so nervous, and was moving so quickly, that he left Sun Wu and Big Fatty Zhang behind. About half a day passed, and he was already closing in on the location where Song Que was trapped.

As the fluctuations of his aura spread out into the area, he sent some divine sense out to ascertain the situation. Afterward, he sighed in relief.

“Que’er sure is a fortunate child!” Sticking his chin up, he mused about how truly lucky Song Que was. After all, whenever he got into danger, Bai Xiaochun always seemed to come rescue him.

Song Que was currently in a violet pool of water, surrounded by countless floating eyes, each one of which was several meters wide.

Shockingly, there were cultivators sealed inside many of the eyes….

There were men and women from all four of the river branches, most of them already skeletons, although a few were in a partial state of decomposition….

Two of them were still gasping for breath, one of those two being… Song Que.

Black tendrils of smoke were wrapped around him, almost like snakes, slowly absorbing him. Thankfully, the Song Clan patriarch had given him a legacy treasure from the clan that had kept him alive so far. Without it, he would have long since died.

The legacy treasure was a cloak, the soft light of which prevented the black smoke from piercing into his body.

It was clearly a fantastic, powerful item, and yet, as time went on, it was clearly being worn down, and the light it emitted was beginning to grow faint.

In fact, given the level of Song Que’s cultivation base, not even that cloak should have enabled him to hang on this long. However, for some unknown reason, only a few days ago, the eyes had suddenly become much weaker, almost as if they had aged.

That had given Song Que some hope, and had helped him use the power of the cloak to hang on a bit longer.

However, he knew that unless someone came to save him… he would not be able to unseal himself and escape. And that meant that he would definitely meet his end eventually.

“Don’t tell me that I, Song Que, am actually going to perish in this trial by fire!” he thought bitterly. Already, his joints were growing stiff, and his cultivation base was beginning to fade.

“I refuse to give in! I still haven’t defeated that damned Bai Xiaochun! I still haven’t trampled him beneath my feet! I still haven’t had my revenge on him! I survived for year after bitter year in the Wildlands, I refuse to believe that a measly trial by fire is going to be the death of me!!

“I, Song Que, am a person blessed by luck. No matter what deadly crises I’ve faced in my life, I always come out on top. From Qi Condensation all the way to the Nascent Soul stage, it was always like that. I’m not going to die here!” Howling, he struggled to free himself until he went blue in the face. That was when he noticed that, all of a sudden, the surrounding eyes were trembling.

The eyes who had no cultivators in them blinked in terror, and then turned and vanished into the swamp.

The violet pool had once contained so many eyes it was impossible to count them all. But now, ninety-nine percent of them were gone…. The few dozen that remained began to blink rapidly to unseal the cultivators and corpses inside of them, spit them out, and then flee.

The eye which held Song Que seemed particularly hesitant. However, after a moment, Song Que felt a powerful force gripping him, and he was thrown out into the open. Within moments, the eye which had held him sealed for so many days had vanished into the swamp.

Song Que stood there with a blank expression on his face, looking around in confusion. Everything had happened so quickly that he wasn’t really sure how to react.

One moment ago, the area had been filled with innumerable vicious eyes, but now… not a single one was in sight. It was almost as if the events of recent days had been a dream.

“Could it be… could it be that those eyes can only exist for a certain period of time, after which they vanish?” Although he couldn't be sure if his speculation was true, his heart was currently pounding with joy at having escaped certain death. Excited, he began to study his surroundings when, all of a sudden, he looked up into the sky, and his eyes went wide.

Much of the spiritual power inside of him had been drained away, but he could still focus enough on his eyes to see very clearly that, there, off in the distance… was Bai Xiaochun, smiling broadly.

It was at that point that Bai Xiaochun's voice reached Song Que’s ears.

“Hi, Que’er….”

Song Que’s expression darkened. Then he saw that two people were following Bai Xiaochun, one being Big Fatty Zhang, and the other being Sun Wu, whom Song Que had previously begged for help.

If by this point Song Que didn’t realize why the eyes had vanished, it would have revealed him to be a complete idiot. Therefore, he simply turned to fly away.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Song Que was flying away, he was not happy at all.

“How could you be so impolite, Que’er!? I can’t believe you didn't even say hello to me!” With that, he made a grasping motion, causing Song Que’s expression to turn even grimmer as he was grabbed by an invisible force and dragged over to Bai Xiaochun.

Upon seeing Bai Xiaochun, Song Que acted as though he had just caught sight of a diseased animal. That increased Bai Xiaochun’s displeasure, and was also a big loss of face, considering that there were other people present.

“Que’er, I am a member of the elder generation, and am also your uncle. You know, I’m well within my rights to criticize your actions if I want to!”

Song Que was feeling very frustrated and depressed. As far as he was concerned, being captured by those vicious eyes had actually been a lot better than being trapped by Bai Xiaochun. After all, the eyes could inflict physical pain, but Bai Xiaochun inflicted mental torture.

And yet, Song Que didn't say anything. He actually wasn’t sure what to say. His action of turning to leave had actually been instinctual. He hadn’t put any thought into it whatsoever.

He could tell that Bai Xiaochun was displeased, and therefore, he braced himself and prepared to offer an explanation. It was at around this time that Big Fatty Zhang and Sun Wu arrived. Sun Wu didn't seem to notice the awkwardness of the situation, but Big Fatty Zhang knew Song Que fairly well, and could guess what was going on. He had also heard some of Bai Xiaochun’s words. Therefore, his eyes lit up, and he leaped forward.

“Xiaochun, Que’er is still just a child. He’s always been the filial type, so what happened just now was probably just a misunderstanding…. Que’er, you need to listen to your Uncle Fatty. What you did just now was wrong. Your Uncle Bai came here to save you, and yet you didn’t even say hello? Look, I know that you’re a good kid. Come offer greetings to your uncle, and then… well, your uncle’s close friends are also members of the senior generation….” From the look in Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes, it was clear that he very much looked forward to what was going to happen next.

Song Que’s expression turned grimmer as he glared at Big Fatty Zhang. He almost felt like his blood was about to start flowing backwards. For Bai Xiaochun to take advantage of him was one thing, but for Big Fatty Zhang to do the same pushed Song Que to the point where he felt like his head was about to explode.

And then he thought about the possibility that he would have to call all of Bai Xiaochun’s friends Uncle and Aunt, and his mind began to spin.

“Big Fatty Zhang!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0937 awe-chapter-938

Song Que’s shout seem to vent all of his depression and frustration. However, Big Fatty Zhang had simply been too biting, and even though Song Que didn’t want to, he suddenly envisioned himself greeting all of Bai Xiaochun’s friends.

“Uncle Baocai…. Uncle Tianyou…. Aunt Xiaomei…. Uncle God-Diviner….” As far as Song Que was concerned, it would be worse than heavenly tribulation. Trembling, he glared with bloodshot eyes, not at Bai Xiaochun --didn’t dare to do that-- but rather, at Big Fatty Zhang. From the look on his face, if one more wrong word was uttered, he would fly into a rage and attack.

Big Fatty Zhang was actually startled by Song Que’s shout, and started to get a bit nervous. After all, Song Que had quite a reputation in the Blood Stream Sect. However, considering that Bai Xiaochun was standing right there, it didn't seem likely that Song Que would actually do anything. Besides, Big Fatty Zhang really looked forward to the prospect of being addressed as an uncle.

That having been said, he was still surprised at Song Que’s reaction to such a small thing.

Off to the side, Sun Wu was stunned by what he was seeing. He had no idea of the backstory involved, and only knew that Bai Xiaochun was a deva patriarch.

From Sun Wu’s perspective, a Nascent Soul cultivator like Song Que was a junior to Bai Xiaochun, something completely and utterly natural….

“No wonder Senior Bai was so anxious to get over here. As it turns out, his Daoist partner is Fellow Daoist Song’s aunt….” Considering that, Sun Wu also felt that Song Que was acting a bit disrespectfully.

“Senior Bai hurried over here as quickly as he could to save Song Que, who didn't even offer greetings? And then he just turned to leave? No wonder Senior Bai is angry….” Although Big Fatty Zhang’s demands had seemed a bit excessive, Sun Wu could still understand them.

Finally, he put a warm smile onto his face, looked at Song Que, and said, “You did well to put your trust in me, Fellow Daoist Song. Clearly, the heavens have blessed you. Who would have thought that you were so close to the exalted Senior Bai? I can only be envious of the fact that you are a junior to him!”

Song Que wished he could say something, but couldn’t think of anything to say. Big Fatty Zhang was trying to take advantage of him, and Sun Wu was making it worse. Although he wanted to start arguing, the truth was that Sun Wu really had saved his life.

Song Que’s frustrations built and built, until he felt like he was about to go crazy. Finally, he simply threw back his head and howled at the top of his lungs. As he did, Bai Xiaochun sighed.

To see Song Que acting this way actually left Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit bad.

“Alright, Big Fatty Zhang. Leave Que’er alone. The child has had it very rough. Que’er, you shouldn’t be going around alone. Come with me, alright? It will be a lot safer that way.”

Song Que felt like crying when he heard that. Bai Xiaochun’s words had touched directly on the most sensitive part of his heart. In the face of such bald-faced provocation from Big Fatty Zhang, it was very moving to see Bai Xiaochun being so kind.

However, even in the moment that his gratitude swelled, Bai Xiaochun looked over and said something that ruined everything....

“Calm down, Que’er. Be a good boy, now. I'm not going to let anyone bully you!” Fearful that Song Que was taking everything the wrong way, Bai Xiaochun reached out and tousled his hair.

“AAAAGGGGGGHHHHHHHHH!” Song Que howled, his heart overcome by madness and humiliation at having eight generations of extremely bad luck heaped upon his head.

From the moment he had met Bai Xiaochun to now, his life had been an endless stream of frustration. As he howled, his weak spiritual power and tenuous hold on his emotions caused a stream of blood to spray out of his mouth. Then he flopped down onto the ground, unconscious.

“He passed out again…?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, feeling a headache coming on. Big Fatty Zhang stared down at him in shock, puzzled at how poorly Song Que took a simple joke....

“Look at how mad you got him, Eldest Brother. Ai… Well, you just carry him on your back for now.”

Big Fatty Zhang was also scowling on the verge of tears at the strangeness of it all. From what he could remember, Song Que was definitely not like this. Hoisting Song Que onto his back, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun, what did you mean when you said that he passed out ‘again’? He’s passed out before in the past?”

“Oh, you have no idea. The poor child was harmed mentally back in the Wildlands. Whenever he gets too excited, he passes out. It's fine.... He’ll wake up in the next two or three days.” Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun quickly changed the topic of conversation, and then led the shocked Big Fatty Zhang and Sun Wu off into the distance.

As the group flew along through the swamp, ten days passed by. Soon, they were getting close to the edge of the swamp, beyond which was a vast plain covered by a sky as overcast as the swamp’s.

Although things had remained peaceful and quiet during their journey through the swamp, Bai Xiaochun had not come out without certain gains. In his hand, he held a seed.

It was emerald green, and pulsed with a frigid qi that turned his entire hand cold as he held it.

The seed had once been a flower, which he had encountered a few days ago.

The petals of that flower had resembled moons, and despite being somewhat stunted in appearance, looked very unique growing alone in the middle of a swamp. Upon approaching the flower, Bai Xiaochun had noticed how it seemed to notice him, and then try to shrink down into the ground below. Curious, he had gone closer, which was when he had noticed that the frigid qi emanating from the flower closely resembled the frigid qi that came from cultivating the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation.

Surprised, he had expended a bit of effort to dig up the flower. By the time he got to it though, it had shriveled up into a seed.

After some study, Bai Xiaochun realized that in the process of blooming, the flower would absorb frigid qi from the surroundings. Unfortunately, there wasn’t much frigid qi in the swamp, which had prevented the flower from growing to its full potential.

“Maybe with enough study, I can put this flower to use in my own cultivation of frigid qi. I think I’ll call it a moonflower.” With that, he continued to lead his small group along. Along the way, they saw corpses here and there, some from the other three rivers, and some from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

The sight of the corpses caused everyone’s moods to sink. Song Que had long since regained consciousness. Originally, his expression had been very grim, but after traveling along and seeing all the corpses, his attitude changed.

“What kind of trial by fire is this…?” That same question floated in the minds of everyone present. As for Big Fatty Zhang, Song Que, and Sun Wu, they knew that without Bai Xiaochun there to protect them, they would all have likely died inside the swamp….

“Maybe this so-called trial by fire isn't actually about finding an apprentice for the Celestial… but all about that exit!” Such were the thoughts of Bai Xiaochun. By now, they had been within the trial by fire for about two months.

During that time, he had confirmed that ordinary Nascent Soul cultivators simply could not survive. Even those who were in the great circle could only rely on incredible battle prowess and pure luck to pass through any of the four main areas.

Because of that, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain… that even if the Celestial really wanted an apprentice, it wasn’t necessary to pick one via such a deadly trial by fire.

That left only one obvious solution to the riddle….

“The Celestial’s true goal is to find that so-called exit….

“In that case… it would mean that even he doesn’t know where it is. And that means… that not even the Celestial is truly familiar with the lands in this trial by fire!!

“This supposed trial by fire is merely a casting out of pawns. He’s just hoping that if he throws enough people into the mix, someone will find the exit!

“There must also be some other secret at play here. Otherwise, why would the Celestial make up a story about accepting an apprentice? That was just… to trick people into coming!” The more Bai Xiaochun analyzed the situation, the more unsightly his expression became. Of course, he also couldn't be certain that his analysis was correct.

Either way, the trial by fire was very dangerous. Both the desert and the swamp left him feeling very jumpy.

Without his Godkiller technique, he would have been in even more danger in the swamp.

All of these thoughts got him even more worried about the other people left in the trial by fire. Originally, there had been over a thousand, but now, it was likely that more than half were dead.

As for the others, they would surely have come to the realization that the trial was dangerous beyond imagination, and that something fishy was going on.

However, such realizations did little good…. Clearly, until someone found the exit, everyone would be facing death at every corner.

Even the supremely powerful Bai Xiaochun was still feeling a lot of pressure. Although he had calmed the swamp down, he knew that was only on the surface. During his travels, his divine sense had revealed on numerous occasions that there were things hiding in the depths.

Such entities didn’t reveal any hostility when his divine sense touched them, but he also knew that without his Godkiller technique, they would have been deadly threats.

“What the hell kind of place is this?!” Even as he pondered the situation, he finally left the swamp and entered the endless plain.

Wind scraped across the plain, which seemed to be filled with nothing more than an undulating sea of grass, interspersed with occasional corpses that had been gnawed at by unknown teeth….

The sight caused Big Fatty Zhang, Song Que, and Sun Wu to feel jumpier than ever. From the sight of the few corpses they could see, it was obvious that the plain was a very dangerous place.

After flying over the grass for about ten days, Bai Xiaochun’s face suddenly fell. He had just detected a burst of killing intent, something that caused the air to grow cold around him. Backing up, he shouted, “Eldest Brother, get everybody out of here. Don’t worry about me!!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, a sound like rumbling thunder echoed across the plain, and two huge faces appeared up above in the sky.

They belonged to none other than… the twin Master Cloud Lightnings!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0938 awe-chapter-939

When Bai Xiaochun saw the two enormous faces of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings up in the sky, his heart began to pound. He had already tangled with them more than once in this trial by fire, and now here they were together. It had the potential to be a big problem, and therefore, he immediately sent Sun Wu, Big Fatty Zhang and Song Que away.

“This time, you’re *dead*, Bai Xiaochun!” howled the faces up above, their voices echoing like heavenly thunder. Subsequently, one of them shot toward Bai Xiaochun, and the other headed in the direction of Big Fatty Zhang, Sun Wu and Song Que.

Obviously, they didn't just plan to kill Bai Xiaochun, but also the people under his protection.

This new development occurred in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. When Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, his anxiety spiked. Knowing that his three companions would never be able to escape, he swished his sleeve to gather them into his bag of holding.

As he did, cold gleams flickered through the eyes of the faces high in the sky. Clearly, their hatred for Bai Xiaochun ran very strong and deep!

It didn't matter that Bai Xiaochun had used his Godkiller technique on Master Cloud Lightning. Now that his two halves were able to team up, they were more confident and prepared than ever. Therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that they attacked.

The younger brother of the two was adept in matters of speed, so he shot through the air toward Bai Xiaochun. As for the older brother, he was at the peak of the mid Deva Realm, and his attack consisted of countless bolts of lightning that transformed into a shocking hand which reached out toward Bai Xiaochun as if to grab him!

“DIE!!” they howled simultaneously.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling quite nervous, and could tell that the situation was already very dangerous. There was no time for thought or planning. As he backed up, he performed an incantation gesture with both hands, and then waved them out in front of him.

“Waterswamp!!” he shouted. Instantly, water vapor roiled out across the plain, turning it into an enormous swamp.

“Kingdom!!”

It sounded as if the world were being ripped open. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings’ faces both flickered. Considering that both of them had fought Bai Xiaochun before, they had assumed that they had already seen all of his techniques. Never could they have imagined that they would encounter another unfamiliar move.

Furthermore, the watery swamp around them filled them with a sensation of profound danger. Rumbling sounds echoed out as a row of spikes rose up from below. Mountain-toppling, sea-draining force roiled out as the spikes transformed into claws, which were attached to a huge hand. At this point, a shocking howl erupted into the air.

The energy shaking the area made the sky quiver, seemingly on the verge of collapse. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings were both stunned. Because of his speed, the younger brother was a bit closer, and bore the initial brunt of the blow. Blood sprayed from his mouth as he was sent tumbling backward. Meanwhile, the other half of Master Cloud Lightning went all out with his lightning attack. In the blink of an eye, his lightning hand made contact with the claws.

The sky shook and the lands quaked as the lightning palm shattered in the face of the all-powerful Waterswamp Kingdom's claws. However, this opponent of Bai Xiaochun's surpassed Chen Hetian and the other devas he had fought in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Therefore, the Waterswamp Kingdom rapidly faded away.

As it did, Bai Xiaochun retreated with lightning speed. After all, he knew that he would never be able to win against the combined force of both Master Cloud Lightnings, especially considering that he couldn't control his Godkiller.

Taking advantage of the moments in which the Waterswamp Kingdom was still fading away, Bai Xiaochun fled, and was soon heading toward the horizon.

"Now we'll make *him* enjoy the bitterness of being chased!" The twin Master Cloud Lightnings gritted their teeth. Eyes shining with killing intent, they became bright beams of light that shot after Bai Xiaochun, thunderous sound waves rolling off of them in all directions.

From a distance, it almost looked like they had combined with each other, but closer examination would reveal that the process was not complete yet. However, even their current level enabled them to surpass the limits of the mid Deva Realm, and achieve speed… comparable to the late realm!

What made Bai Xiaochun even more nervous was that the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were continuing to merge together, and as they did, the resulting aura contained power that caused his scalp to tingle with fear.

“What complete bullying! They bullied me in the staring contest, but couldn’t beat me in a fight, so now they're ganging up! The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect is full of bullies!” Heart pounding, he called upon the Undying Hex for a burst of speed. Behind him, rumbling sounds echoed out as the twin Master Cloud Lightnings continued to merge, and also send attacks his way.

From a distance, it was possible to see lightning bolts slamming repeatedly into Bai Xiaochun, with the resulting explosions sending black smoke billowing out around him, which would reduce his speed. And with every moment that passed, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings got closer.

Feeling very nervous, Bai Xiaochun called out, “Uh… Fellow Daoists Cloud Lightning, don’t push things too far, okay? I have a trump card designed specifically for you two. Even I'm afraid of what will happen if I use it.”

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings snorted coldly and continued to close in, their murderous auras raging. Bai Xiaochun was a blur as he used his Mountain Shaking Bash to avoid the lightning attacks, and the Undying Hex to buy speed.

Unfortunately, his anxiety only continued to mount. When he had used the Waterswamp Kingdom moments ago, he had clearly seen how incredibly powerful the twin Master Cloud Lightnings would be if they fully combined. And that was now happening as he watched!

“I can’t let things go on like this. I need to prevent them from combining…. Damnation! What technique can actually split a person in two? I need to prevent them from getting together… I need to split them up… hey!”

In that critical moment, an idea struck him without any warning.

“Split them up?!” he thought excitedly. Maintaining full speed, he secretly pulled out a Breakup Pill, and at the same time, produced his flying shuttle. After using a secret magic to conceal the pill inside the shuttle, he hurled it back at the twin Master Cloud Lightnings.

“Eee? Fellow Daoists Cloud Lightning, that’s your flying shuttle, right? Aiya, I randomly happened across it a while back, and based on the aura, I can tell it's yours. Alright, just take it back!” Both of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were visibly taken aback by his words.

Never could they have imagined that Bai Xiaochun, who had previously acted so imperious and disdainful, would go and say something like this.

However, before they could do anything other than be surprised, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture and shouted, “Detonate!”

The flying shuttle exploded, sending out a shockwave that completely enveloped the twin Master Cloud Lightnings.

The detonation also burst the Breakup Pill, sending a black mist roiling out in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun didn't bother to even look back at the result, and simply picked up more speed. As he did, a violet bolt of lightning shot out from the black mist and the fragments of the flying shuttle.

That lightning bolt was none other than the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, their expressions unsightly and their murderous auras boiling.

“A hidden poison pill? You think trash like that can hurt me? In my combined state, I'm impervious to all poisons!” Both of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings spoke at the same time, their voices combining in bizarre fashion. It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun realized there were soul fluctuations within the voice that gave a bit of insight into the twin Master Cloud Lightnings’ current state. Clearly, they were not yet fully combined, and needed more time to complete the process.

“The Breakup Pill didn’t work?” he thought, disappointed. “Don’t tell me that it only works between men and women? Or was the dose too weak?”

He considered turning to fight, but also had the feeling that if there were any major weaknesses because of their partially-combined state, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings wouldn’t be pursuing him so aggressively.

“They must be trying to trick me!” he thought. Not willing to risk it, he gritted his teeth and continued onward.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings frowned and exchanged a glance. Yet again, they found Bai Xiaochun’s behavior to be incongruous. In their estimation, the fact that the combining process was not complete should have prompted Bai Xiaochun to turn and fight. Of course, the truth was that… they could finish combining with each other at any time they wished.

The only downside was that their combined state would only last for a short time. Therefore, they hoped to wait until close-quarters fighting actually broke out before starting the clock.

“It doesn’t matter if this Bai Xiaochun is clever. He's going to die beyond the shadow of a doubt!” Snorting coldly, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings picked up speed, and began to close the distance.

And thus the true chase began….

The day passed, then the night…. Bai Xiaochun had a powerful fleshly body, and incredible restorative powers. Therefore, he could maintain top speed for a long time. Occasionally, he would toss out some Breakup Pills, although it wasn’t possible for him to hit Master Cloud Lightning directly….

“Fudge! I refuse to believe that my Breakup Pills aren’t working!” Unwilling to accept defeat, he continued to throw out pills….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0939 awe-chapter-940

“After all this running, he’s still got energy left?!” The twin Master Cloud Lightnings both frowned at the sight of Bai Xiaochun fleeing. “We can’t stretch things out any longer!”

Taking a deep breath, they decided that now was the time to finish combining their two halves. However, it was also in that moment that their expressions flickered, and they looked up into the sky.

Bai Xiaochun sensed the same thing they had. Gasping for breath, he turned back to see that an enormous face had taken shape up above, surrounded by so much swirling black mist that it was difficult to make out its facial features. However, it was profoundly sinister as it looked at the three other devas.

“Master Thousand-Ghost!” the twin Master Cloud Lightnings exclaimed. However, they didn’t slow down in their pursuit of Bai Xiaochun.

This newly-arrived deva was none other than Master Thousand-Ghost, who had been searching for other southern cultivators on the vast plain. After detecting the fluctuations of battle, he had sent his divine sense over to see what was happening.

Now that he had assessed the situation, he decided to continue on with his own affairs. As far as he was concerned, friction between the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect and the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect had nothing to do with him. Almost as soon as it appeared, his face began to fade away.

Seeing that Master Thousand-Ghost was leaving caused the twin Master Cloud Lightnings to both breathe sighs of relief. After all, if Master Thousand-Ghost interfered, it could very well make it impossible for them to get to Bai Xiaochun.

However, it was in that moment that Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up, and he cried, “Hold on a moment, Fellow Daoist Thousand-Ghost! There’s a chosen from the south named Sun Wu, right…?”

When Master Thousand-Ghost heard that, he stopped in place. Then, mysterious, sinister light shone in the eyes of his huge face as he turned to look at Bai Xiaochun again.

Bai Xiaochun immediately slapped his bag of holding, pulling Sun Wu, Big Fatty Zhang and Song Que out into the open.

“Fellow Daoist Thousand-Ghost, your disciple Sun Wu was in big trouble, and I rescued him. Doesn’t that mean the Dragon Totem Ghost Sea Sect owes me a favor?!”

Master Thousand-Ghost was taken aback. Sun Wu was indeed a chosen from the southern river, and if Bai Xiaochun had rescued him, it meant that the south truly did owe him a favor.

At any other time, Master Thousand-Ghost would have immediately nodded in agreement. However, he could see that the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were just about to combine forms. Considering the weakened state Bai Xiaochun was obviously in, even if he joined forces with him, the two of them would still not be a match for Master Cloud Lightning.

And thus, he hesitated.

In that moment of hesitation, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings' faces fell, and they both cried out, "Master Thousand-Ghost. This is a personal issue between us and Bai Xiaochun. Please refrain from interfering, and we will give you a wonderful gift after everything is over!"

In response, Master Thousand-Ghost's eyes flashed with determination. Waving his right hand, he pulled Sun Wu away, along with Big Fatty Zhang and Song Que. At the same time, his voice echoed out, as bizarre and mysterious as an evil ghost.

"Fellow Daoist Bai, you saved Sun Wu, and I will repay you by saving these two disciples from your sect. In fact, not only will I save them, I will ensure that they leave this trial by fire in safety."

Bai Xiaochun smiled bitterly in response. However, he had known that Master Thousand-Ghost would not just interfere without good reason. And for him to have offered to save Big Fatty Zhang and Song Que left Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit more at ease. Flicking his sleeve, he quickly transmitted an explanation to Big Fatty Zhang and Song Que.

And thus, the three lower-level disciples were all whisked away by Master Thousand-Ghost.

It only took a moment for Master Thousand-Ghost to be far away in the distance. At that point, the eyes of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings flashed with cold light, and they proceeded with their earlier plan of completing the process of combining.

The withered sides of their two halves merged together, and in the briefest of moments, they became a single person!

In that moment, a burst of energy swept out in all directions, creating a shocking windstorm.

A 3,000-meter-wide tempest ravaged heaven and earth as, at its very center… a man appeared, tall and burly, like an immortal devil!

His eyes flickered with anger as his black hair whipped about. There was something netherworldly about him now, something indescribably monstrous!

Rifts were torn open into the air around him, as though it couldn't handle the pressure radiating off of him. The slightest movement of his hand would cause thunderous rumbling sounds, and his will was so powerful that it was already beginning to drive Bai Xiaochun's will away.

He was strong!

Very, very strong!!

Bai Xiaochun could clearly sense that the combined Master Cloud Lightning's cultivation base far surpassed the mid Deva Realm. It was in the late realm, and in fact, very close to… the great circle!!

Feeling deeply shaken, Bai Xiaochun began to back up. However, that was when the combined Master Cloud Lightning looked over at him with a derisive smile.

Then he took a step forward, a step which seemed to bend space, instantly bringing him directly next to Bai Xiaochun, where he waved his hand.

That casual motion sent out terrifyingly destructive power in the form of a black spark of electricity. Bai Xiaochun's scalp tingled in terror, and all of his flesh seemed to be screaming along with it. Without any hesitation, he performed an incantation gesture to send out a defensive blast of energy.

A huge boom rang out as he flopped backward like a kite with its string cut, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. He flew more than 3,000 meters away before finally grinding to a halt.

“I can’t believe this guy got so powerful after combining his two halves!” Bai Xiaochun thought. If it weren’t for his incredible fleshly body power, he would have already been torn to pieces. All of a sudden, he realized that it was a really good thing he had only tried to use Breakup Pills, and not Aphrodisiac Pills. That would have been far too dangerous….

Before Bai Xiaochun could even stand up straight, Master Cloud Lightning’s voice echoed out, as cold as the dead of winter.

“I said you’ll die this day, Bai Xiaochun. And that means you won’t have a chance to see the light of tomorrow!” With that, Master Cloud Lightning took another step forward, and was just about to unleash another attack when….

All of a sudden, his face fell, and a second, unique voice spoke from his mouth!

“Brother, I don’t think the two of us are meant for each other. We’ll never be happy if we forcibly try to stick together!”

A spasm ran through Master Cloud Lightning’s perfectly combined body. Unexpectedly… a second version of himself suddenly appeared! Apparently, the younger of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings wasn’t willing to remain in a combined state.

A look of shock and horror overtook Master Cloud Lightning’s face, combined with an expression of intense disbelief.

“What’s going on?!?!” Nothing like this had ever happened to Master Cloud Lightning. It was as if there were two different consciousnesses within him that were rejecting each other…. His aura was destabilizing, and seemed like it might collapse at any moment. Even worse, his left hand began to struggle with his right hand….

Bai Xiaochun was overjoyed, and if it weren’t for the intense fear which still gripped his heart, he would have begun to dance wildly.

“The Breakup Pills are finally working!!”

Even as Master Cloud Lightning began to split apart, Bai Xiaochun howled, causing an enormous, shadowy figure to appear behind him!

The figure wore an imperial crown and imperial robes, and exuded the most domineering of airs. Bai Xiaochun clenched his hand into a fist, causing a black hole to appear that sucked in all of his life force, making him seem almost like he was dead.

However, the intense fluctuations that rolled off of his fist caused the air to distort with destructive power. Ripples spread out over the plain, crushing the grass flat as a fist appeared!

Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

Quintuple power!

Bai Xiaochun began to thrum with incredible energy as the shadowy emperor behind him merged with his fist, which then shot directly toward Master Cloud Lightning!

In that critical moment, Master Cloud Lightning’s heart pounded like mad. As the two consciousnesses within him struggled, Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike approached. Any advantage Master Cloud Lightning had seized earlier was now gone, and it had happened so fast that he didn’t have any time to contemplate how to respond.

However, he was a veteran of many battles, and thus wasn’t caught completely off guard. Crackling sounds could be heard, like that from a fire. Master Cloud Lightning’s hair then turned white as he burned his longevity to temporarily negate the effects of the Breakup Pills.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Sixth Transformation!!”

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Seventh Transformation!!”

“Cloud Lightning Forefather: Eighth Transformation!!”

Master Cloud Lightning’s energy suddenly surged in heaven-shaking, earth-shattering fashion. He rapidly grew larger, until he was 240 meters tall, with a savage aura that made it truly seem as if the forefather of all humanity had appeared in the flesh!

He was burly and broad-shouldered, with wild, disheveled hair, and eyes that shone with madness. The sky trembled above, and the vast plain quaked around him. As of this moment, he had surpassed the will of the heavens, and was an embodiment of magical laws!

“Be destroyed!” he shouted, his voice crackling like heavenly thunder.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0940 awe-chapter-941

It was almost like heaven was colliding with the earth. Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist engulfed everything in the area, unleashing quintuple his ordinary fleshly body power to create a force that was like a meteor that could destroy the world!

Master Cloud Lightning’s Forefather Transformation was similarly a peak-level divine ability, something that could fundamentally alter the structure of one's body!

The forefather of all humanity was none other than the legendary ancestor of everyone in the Heavenspan Realm. Of course, the forefather’s body that was created by this technique couldn’t compare at all to the actual forefather. And yet, even a sliver of that forefather’s strength could give Master Cloud Lightning the ability to crush everything in his path.

As the meteor and the lightning slammed into each other, a huge boom echoed out!

A massive shockwave roared out across the vast plain, destroying all of the plants and vegetation it touched!

There were also many living things hidden underneath the grass which were transformed into nothing but ash....

Many other cultivators in the trial by fire also noticed what was happening.

“What’s going on?!?!”

“Heavens! Those fluctuations…. Don’t tell me some devas are fighting!?!? But even a fight between devas shouldn’t cause fluctuations like that!”

Everyone was completely and utterly shocked. As for Master Thousand-Ghost, he suddenly stopped in place and turned to look back in the direction of the battlefield he had just left, his pupils constricting.

“Master Cloud-Lightning is strong. Everybody knows that. But this Bai Xiaochun… I can’t believe he’s able to fight back, and send out fluctuations like this….” A thoughtful look suddenly appeared in his eyes.

Meanwhile, in a location near the border between the jungle and the vast plain, Du Lingfei and that strange young man were together with their team, traveling along.

They had already explored the desert, the swamp, and the jungle, and were now working on the plain.

When the fluctuations reached them, Du Lingfei suddenly turned and looked over her shoulder.

“Ignore it,” the strange young man said coolly. Not even those shocking fluctuations seemed worthy of his notice.

Du Lingfei nodded in response. All she could tell at the moment was that the fluctuations were coming from some distance away. There was no way for her to tell any detailed information about what was happening. Without putting much more thought into the matter, she proceeded along deeper into the plain.

As the shockwave rolled out from the point of impact between Bai Xiaochun and Master Cloud Lightning, the lands were ripped to pieces, and a huge crater appeared. As for Bai Xiaochun, blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was flung violently backward.

His vision swam and then began to fade, and he could feel stabs of pain throughout his body. He currently felt so weak that he wasn’t sure he could even lift his hand.

His fleshly body power was mostly drained, but his cultivation base was still in place. Drawing upon its power, he turned into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

His aura was unstable, and his heart was pounding. The backlash from his attack had been significant. Master Cloud Lightning’s divine ability had been shockingly powerful, so strong that, for the first time, the Undying Emperor’s Fist couldn’t stand up to the force, and had been vanquished.

However, Master Cloud Lightning’s forefather incarnation had also been crushed. Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist could destroy someone in the mid Deva Realm, and could still be shocking to someone in the late realm!

Unfortunately for Master Cloud Lightning, were it not for his misgivings, he could easily have dispelled the attack. But instead… he ended up in worse state than Bai Xiaochun.

He was trembling from head to toe, and his combined form was beginning to split apart again. At the same time, strange words were spilling from his mouth.

“Brother, let’s split apart. From now on, you’re you, and I'm me!”

“Little brother, you can’t be like this! We're the same person….”

Master Cloud Lightning felt like he was about to go crazy. When in his combined state, his divine soul was complete. And yet despite that, he still seemed to have split into two parts who were arguing and rejecting each other.

At the same time, his body seemed to be going back and forth between wanting to split apart and wanting to stay together. The overall sensation had him hovering on the verge of mental collapse.

Finally, he threw his head back and roared, drawing fully upon his secret magic to suppress the second consciousness within him and maintain his combined state. However, his aura was weakening, and he was now barely as powerful as he had been when he had first started the process.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!!” he howled, shooting after Bai Xiaochun at rapid speed.

Bai Xiaochun gasped at how powerfully Master Cloud Lightning was being affected by the Breakup Pills. It was a good thing he had concocted such pills to begin with, otherwise, it would have been a terrifying challenge to face the combined Master Cloud Lightning.

The man really was too strong after combining, and seemed far too powerful to deal with.

“Not even my Undying Emperor’s Fist did any good. Don’t tell me I'm going to have to use the Godkiller again....” The vile repercussions of using the Godkiller technique were almost too painful to think about.

“Complete and utter bullying. He ganged up on me in the staring contest, and now he's ganging up on me again!!” He was very displeased by the whole situation, and yet was helpless to do anything about it. It was quite depressing.

“Dammit! I guess the Breakup Pill dosage was too low. I need to up the strength!” Even as he scrambled to think of what exactly to do next, numerous lightning bolts shot down toward him.

Scalp tingling with fear, he dodged out of the way, and then threw out a Breakup Pill. Master Cloud Lightning’s eyes widened, and he leaped off to the side. By now, he truly feared Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pills.

“This guy’s pills are completely malicious!!” he thought. Obviously, he had long since connected the dots, and come to realize that his current difficulties were because of the medicinal mist that Bai Xiaochun’s pills had created earlier.

The thought of how Bai Xiaochun’s pills could affect him caused his killing intent to grow stronger by the moment. By this point, the chase had led to the border of the plain, where it began to give way to the jungle.

Master Cloud Lightning’s relentless pursuit had pushed Bai Xiaochun into a state of madness, and he was just preparing to go all out by using his Godkiller technique.

However, just as he was about to destroy a drop of Undying Blood, he suddenly saw a group of people off in the distance….

He recognized them immediately. Du Lingfei was there, as well as that strange young man, the two of them flanked by a handful of special guards. By now, it had been several months since he had first encountered them.

Almost as soon as he caught sight of them, Du Lingfei saw him, and her eyes widened at the sight of Master Cloud Lightning chasing him with murderous intentions.

Master Cloud Lightning also noticed Du Lingfei and her group.

Having been a deva patriarch in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect for many years, he was very well aware of Du Lingfei’s status. Even if he were more powerful than he currently was, he wouldn't dare to do anything rash in front of her. Therefore, he slowed down a bit in his pursuit of Bai Xiaochun, although he didn’t stop completely.

In his opinion, the grudge between himself and Bai Xiaochun was a personal matter, and Heavenspan Island usually didn’t interfere in such things. As long as he acted respectfully, he could continue his chase. However, he did prepare a quick explanation.

Not forgetting to clasp his hands as he continued to give chase, he addressed Du Lingfei in respectful fashion and said, “Goddess Du, this matter between Bai Xiaochun and myself is--”

However, before he could finish his statement, Bai Xiaochun interrupted him with words that nearly caused him to fall out of the sky….

“Wifey, save me! Save me, oh my wifey of mine!”

Then he shot toward Du Lingfei and her group at top speed.

His voice rang out loud and clear for everyone to hear, and brimmed with profound passion and sincerity.

As soon as Du Lingfei heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, her jaw dropped. And there was little need to mention the special guards around her. Their eyes went wide with disbelief as they stared at Bai Xiaochun rushing toward them.

As for the young man in the group, he looked at Bai Xiaochun with a cold gaze.

However, the shock Master Cloud Lightning felt surpassed the combined shock of everyone else. He was dumbfounded, completely swept away, even more so than he had been by the chaos of the Breakup Pill. Shivering incredulously, he tried to determine whether or not he had just heard correctly….

Stammering, he said, “Wh-what… what did you just call Goddess Du…?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0941 awe-chapter-942

The words Master Cloud Lightning had just heard seemed almost completely impossible.

To see him reacting with such fright was very pleasing to Bai Xiaochun. Feeling very proud of himself, he hurried forward until he was right in front of Du Lingfei.

Puffing his chest out pompously, he turned to look at Master Cloud Lightning and loudly said, “Didn’t you hear what I just said!? This is my wifey! Hmmmphh! In that case, do you know who my father-in-law is?! Let me make it clear, Master Cloud Lightning. The reason I never mentioned this before is that I, Bai Xiaochun, am the type of person who likes to keep a low profile! But you had to go bully me left and right, leaving me no choice in the matter! I could only ask for my wifey to come save me. By this point, you’ve probably figured out who my father-in-law is, right? Yeah, exactly. He’s the master of Heavenspan Island, the exalted Celestial!”

Bai Xiaochun’s words crashed into Master Cloud Lightning like a mountain. His face fell, and his eyes bulged on the verge of popping out of his skull. His mind spun out of control, and his heart began to pound violently in his chest….

Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that the quarry he had been harrying would have an identity like this, a status and background of such import…. The idea that he had been trying to chase down and kill the son-in-law of the Celestial left him completely bowled over.

And yet, he still couldn’t quite accept the situation.

“I was just about to catch him! I was just about to put him to death…. Why? Why did this have to happen?!?!” Master Cloud Lightning felt like his head was about to explode.

He wouldn’t have believed it was true at all, except… that Du Lingfei simply stood there looking shocked, not offering a single word of rebuttal. In fact, what was worse was that a slight flush could be seen on her face as she looked over at Bai Xiaochun, a slight glare visible in her eyes.

The look on her face dashed any last strand of hope Master Cloud Lightning had left. Of course, there was no way he could have noticed the strange glint that flashed through the eyes of the young man when Bai Xiaochun mentioned that the Celestial was his father-in-law.

Bai Xiaochun was getting more excited at how stunned Master Cloud Lightning looked. At the same time, he wished that he could go on with more information and explain that he also had a demigod for a father-in-law, and that his apprentice was the Hell-Emperor. That would probably scare Master Cloud Lightning to death!

“Hmph! Now do you dare to provoke me?” The frustration and fear he had felt during the chase had now vanished, to be replaced by joy and delight.

He had truly been put into a bad position by Master Cloud Lightning, and had been unable to escape. In fact, he had nearly met his death, only to make a stunning comeback in which he seized the ultimate advantage.

“Things are *not* over between us, Master Cloud Lightning!” he said proudly, swishing his sleeve. “Were it not for the fact that I didn’t want to reveal my identity, I would have long since killed you. And yet you repeatedly bullied me over and over again! I will not forget this. You just wait and see what happens in the end!”

As Bai Xiaochun spoke, louder and louder, Master Cloud Lightning’s face drained of blood, and his eyes began to turn blank. To him, it was like existing inside of a dream.

“I… I offended the Celestial’s son-in-law….” He was afraid, truly afraid, so much so that he wanted to cry! After all, the Celestial was basically the emperor of the lands of Heavenspan, which meant that his son-in-law was essentially on the same level as a demigod. Master Cloud Lightning, on the other hand, was a lowly deva, a person who could be disposed of by a mere thought from a person like that.

“I….” Considering his current mental state, Master Cloud Lightning was incapable of maintaining his combined form. His two halves split apart, and then, ashen-faced and despairing, stepped forward with clasped hands. Bowing, they tried to offer explanations.

At around that time, the young man next to Du Lingfei cleared his throat and continued along as he had been before, completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun. Du Lingfei had recovered, and gave Bai Xiaochun an enigmatic smile. Then she turned to Master Cloud Lightning, the smile gone. Looking extremely lofty, she said coolly, “Fellow Daoist Cloud Lightning. Xiaochun loves to play pranks, so don’t take him too seriously. In terms of whatever grudge you have with him, the best thing would be to resolve the matter as soon as possible.”

Her words were spoken in a very formal tone, and seemed to imply that Bai Xiaochun’s words from moments ago had been a joke.

But Master Cloud Lightning didn’t take them that way. After all, he didn’t miss the fact that Du Lingfei had addressed him as *Fellow Daoist Cloud Lightning*, but had referred to Bai Xiaochun as… *Xiaochun*.

That revealed the truth about everything, and sent a tremor through Master Cloud Lightning. As for Du Lingfei, she was apparently worried that her message hadn’t come across clearly enough. Therefore, she walked over to Bai Xiaochun, straightened up his clothing, and then whispered a few words into his ear. Then, she ignored Master Cloud Lightning as she caught up to the young man and the special guards.

The matter couldn’t have been more clear now to Master Cloud Lightning, whose vision was beginning to go dim from the shock and terror.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he simply stood there and blinked a few times. Du Lingfei hadn’t said anything special to him moments ago, just to stay safe, and that she still had some important business to attend to.

However, he was very pleased with the show she had put on. Crossing his arms, he stuck his chin up and looked arrogantly at the twin Master Cloud Lightnings.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings were feeling completely overwhelmed with bitterness. They exchanged glances, neither of them quite sure about what to do now. They had been caught completely unprepared by this unexpected turn of events. In one moment, they had been shouting in triumph as they closed in for the kill, only to find the situation completely reversed the following moment.

Both of them howled with grief in their hearts, extremely displeased with how Bai Xiaochun had blatantly led them on. After all, if they had known the truth from the beginning, they would never have ended up in this horrible situation.

“This Bai character’s true trump card isn’t that fist strike, or that blood mist which causes him to lose consciousness. It's not even those weird medicinal pills of his. It’s his relationship with the Celestial!

“What are we supposed to do now…?” As the twin Master Cloud Lightnings stood there feeling torn about what to do, Bai Xiaochun casually remained in place watching them, arms crossed. Occasionally he would snort coldly, but wouldn’t say anything. In that way, he allowed the pressure to build up for the twin Master Cloud Lightnings.

Under normal circumstances, they would have just turned and left. But they knew that they had offended Bai Xiaochun too deeply. Now that his identity had been revealed, they had to take their sect into consideration as well.

“Um… Bai, old pal, that was just a misunderstanding earlier….”

“Yeah, exactly. Hahaha! Our Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect has been good friends with your Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect for a long time….”

Both of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings felt very embarrassed at this point. Very rarely would they ever give up face in this manner, a fact which was obvious from both their words and the way they pursed their lips.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare. Obviously, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were not being very sincere. However, he knew what to say and how to say it. These two were feeling very bitter about their loss, and therefore, it was probably best to quit while he was ahead. He cleared his throat.

“Very well. Since it was a misunderstanding, there’s no need to bicker. However, that little chase of ours left me in pretty bad shape. I also lost a deva soul, as well as a manual for something called the One Hundred Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations. Ai.” Clearing his throat in meaningful fashion, he looked over at the twin Master Cloud Lightnings.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings’ hearts crumbled, and inwardly, they cursed Bai Xiaochun for his shamelessness. The divine ability to which he referred was a secret magic from the north, and wasn’t something they could simply hand over to him, not even if they were in a passive position like they were now. However, they also realized that if they didn’t surrender it, the situation would be difficult to resolve. Therefore, one of the twins produced a crystal from his bag of holding, within which was sealed a deva soul.

“Eee? Oh, you *did* find my deva soul!” As it turned out, the Li Xiandao method actually worked quite well. Bai Xiaochun took the deva soul, examined it briefly, then frowned. “Fellow Daoists Cloud Lightning, you shouldn’t have! Oh, by the way, in addition to the lost deva soul, I also happened to lose a bunch of spirit stones. And seven or eight precious treasures. Plus a whole bunch of medicinal pills!” With that, he looked up unblinkingly.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings felt like they were about to explode. However, they had no choice but to suppress their anger at the excessive demands.

“Dammit, why couldn’t this guy just die? With all the things he supposedly lost, he could fill a whole treasure house!”

No matter how frustrated they were though, they could only grit their teeth and gather all of the things he had demanded.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling quite proud. Just when he was about to continue on in this fashion, the ground suddenly trembled as surely as if an earth dragon were moving about below.

Then, a massive, thunderous crash filled the air.

The energy released vastly surpassed that which had been released during the fight between Bai Xiaochun and Master Cloud Lightning. By about ten times! The plain, the jungle, the swamp and the desert… all began to shake violently!!

Something really big was happening!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0942 awe-chapter-943

The entire trial by fire shook violently, including the desert, the swamp, the plain and the jungle!

Of the hundreds of Nascent Soul cultivators who had survived all of the dangers thus far, most had either gotten lucky, or possessed extraordinary cultivation bases or intelligence.

However, all of them were deeply shaken by what was happening. They weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. The other living beings who existed within the trial by fire were trembling at the realization that a huge catastrophe was imminent. Soon, screams and cries began to rise up from within the lands of the trial by fire.

“What’s happening?!?!”

“The lands are quaking, and even the sky is churning. What’s going on!?”

By now, most of the surviving cultivators had gathered into groups of three, four, or five. Furthermore, many such groups had already set up methods of communicating with each other. After all, in a dangerous place like this where no one knew what exactly was going on, it was more important than ever to stay abreast of events elsewhere.

Therefore, many people began to pull out transmission jade slips and send messages back and forth.

Before long, shocking news began to spread….

“Someone… found the exit to the trial by fire. It's in the desert! However, a wall is blocking the way out, and we need to join forces to break through it!!” It was astonishing news. After all, because of how dangerous this trial by fire was proving to be, many people had already begun to give in to despair.

Now that the exit had been found, countless eyes went bloodshot. Some people were still thinking about the prizes at stake, and others just wanted to escape. Either way, all of them began to head toward the desert.

Bai Lin, Zhao Tianjiao, and various other powerful experts from the other rivers all began to head in the same direction.

Master Thousand-Ghost was currently in the swamp when he got the news. His eyes flickered as he suddenly transformed into a mist of ghosts that headed toward the desert, taking Sun Wu, Big Fatty Zhang, and Song Que with him.

In the jungle, Guru Spirit Immortal from the Exalted Zodiac Moon Domination Sect transformed into a shooting star that split the air in the direction of the desert.

On the vast plain, Du Lingfei and her group all looked in the direction of the desert. The young man in the group was clearly very excited, and his eyes began to shine brightly.

“There it is… at long last!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, his energy surging, although he kept it suppressed. Finally, he flicked his sleeve, picking the rest of the group up with power far beyond that of a deva as he flew up into the air.

In that same moment, a young woman could be seen in the desert, sitting atop a huge sandworm, a broad smile covering her face. She waved her finger at the sandworm, which immediately withered up and transformed into black smoke that she absorbed into her finger. Shockingly, she was surrounded by tens of thousands of sandworms, although instead of their usual vicious deportment, they all were trembling in terror at her aura.

“I used to raise you little earthworms to feed my three ghosts. Who would ever have thought that you would grow up to be so big?” A smile spread out across the young woman’s fair face.

She was none other than… Hou Xiaomei!

However, if Bai Xiaochun were here to see her, he would immediately recognize that her aura was not that of Hou Xiaomei!

“Well I guess it doesn’t matter… as long as I'm back.” She covered her smile with her hand, and yet, that didn’t conceal… her bizarre dual pupils!! Chuckling, she blurred into motion, heading toward the location of the exit that had been found in the desert.

As everyone in the trial by fire stirred into motion, Bai Xiaochun and the twin Master Cloud Lightnings both received messages via jade slip.

“Someone found the exit!” The twin Master Cloud Lightnings’ eyes went wide. Ignoring Bai Xiaochun, they both turned and blasted off into the distance.

The news had come to Bai Xiaochun from Big Fatty Zhang, who, thanks to Master Thousand-Ghost, was now able to send messages at a much greater range. Bai Xiaochun looked at the information, and his heart began to thump in his chest.

“The exit is in the desert? But I went through the whole desert and never found a thing!” He suddenly felt bad that he hadn’t taken a bit more time to thoroughly search the desert….

“Well, too late to worry about it now….” he thought, sighing. Of course, by this point, everyone in the entire trial by fire would be hurrying in the same direction.

Considering how far away he was right now, it didn’t seem there would be much of a chance to come out as a winner. Of all the places the exit could have appeared, why did it have to show up in the desert?

“Wait. No. There should still be time! I have to at least go check it out!” Gritting his teeth, he also began to speed toward the desert.

As he traveled along, strange things began to happen long before he even got close to the desert. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and a shocking aura began to fill the air.

Off in the direction of the desert, the sky had begun to turn yellow, and furthermore, a brilliant light appeared that was apparently some sort of defensive shield.

The color of the sky and the defensive shield seemed to be connected in some way.

“What kind of place is this exit? Why does it have a shield?”

In almost the same moment that the shield appeared, the swamp, plain, and jungle all began to rot and wither!

In the plain, over which Bai Xiaochun currently flew, the grass began to dry up and die, revealing black soil beneath. The living beings that remained in the plain all trembled and passed away. The entire plain… was transforming into a land of death!!

Even the black soil seemed to lose any life that was in it. It began to dry up and crack….

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken by what he was seeing.

It wasn’t just the plain. Any living beings that remained in the swamp were dying, and the swamp itself was going dry. Cracking sounds could be heard as crevices opened up everywhere….

It was also the same in the jungle.

It only took a few breaths’ worth of time for the entire trial by fire, with the exception of the desert, to be transformed into a realm of death!

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to be shocked by this. All of the cultivators hurrying toward the desert felt very ill premonitions because of the withering, dying lands around them.

“What the hell kind of place is this?!”

A powerful aura of death began to fill the air, causing the entire world they were in to begin to grow dark and sinister, as if it were a realm of ghosts!

Everything was happening too quickly. Within moments, no clouds were visible in the sky, only turbid darkness filled with the faint images of evil ghosts, who looked down on the land with greed and hunger!

Because of how the other three areas were withering and dying, the brightly lit desert became more eye-catching than ever.

By now, the cultivators flying toward the desert had abandoned all thoughts of becoming some apprentice of the Celestial. They just wanted to escape with their lives!

Bai Xiaochun was so nervous he was panting. Furthermore, he was actually familiar with this particular sinister aura, although right now he was too flustered to think about that. After a few hours passed, he was in the swamp, continuing on toward the desert, when he noticed something off in the distance!

A spot of white light could be seen on the ground, very eye-catching because of the darkness around it. Before, the swamp had been filled with murky liquid and decomposing soil. Because of that, this light hadn’t been visible. But now… with the lands withering away, and crevices opening up everywhere… that white light was very conspicuous.

“What's that?” Bai Xiaochun thought, surprised. He changed directions, flying over until he was above the very spot with the light. At that point, the ground shook, shifting the soil to reveal… a magical device!!

It was… a copper coin!!

The instant Bai Xiaochun saw that, his eyes went as wide as saucers, and his mind began to spin!

“Impossible!!”

Note from Er Gen: Guess whose copper coin that is? It's been there for a while now. Hahaha!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0943 awe-chapter-944

Bai Xiaochun hovered there panting, his mind reeling and his heart racing. Never could he have imagined that something like this would happen. It was true that he was shocked by how dangerous the trial by fire had turned out to be, but this new development surpassed anything and everything in terms of how astonishing it was.

The truth was that… this copper coin left him completely and utterly flabbergasted, to the ultimate degree!

Even after a very long moment passed, he wasn't even close to calming down. Eventually, he made a beckoning gesture with his right hand, causing the copper coin to fly up into his palm. Then he looked at it closely, during which time his expression flickered with a variety of thoughts.

"How is this even possible…?" he murmured. The copper coin that rested in his palm was none other than… the copper coin which had once belonged to Master God-Diviner!!

Engraved on the surface of the coin was his very name! Master God-Diviner!

Bai Xiaochun clearly remembered the moment in which Master God-Diviner lost this coin, and how he had howled in grief….

As his fingers closed around the coin, he began to shiver uncontrollably, and think back to the moment when he, Master God-Diviner, and Song Que had been traversing the Deadmire. They had been sucked onto the strange bone galleon, whereupon Bai Xiaochun suggested to Master God-Diviner that he perform a divination to figure out how to escape. Master God-Diviner had pulled out this very copper coin, but had dropped it, whereupon it fell into a crack on the deck of the ghost galleon….

Even after descending into the lower decks of the galleon, Bai Xiaochun had never seen the coin again. It had vanished without a trace.

But now… here in this trial by fire, he found it!

Shivering and shaking, he looked up into the sky, feeling as cold as ice.

“What is this place…?” he thought, swallowing hard as he looked at the murky, leaden sky. All of a sudden, an idea popped into his head, an idea which, as he continued to think about it, caused his face to drain of blood.

“Don’t tell me that this trial by fire… is actually located… inside of that bone galleon?!?!” Mind reeling, he tried to convince himself that it couldn’t be possible. After all, Heavenspan Island with its trial by fire, and the Deadmire with its bone galleon, were two different locations.

No matter how he tried to reconcile it, it seemed impossible to connect the two together. How could the bone galleon and the trial by fire possibly be linked?

But… the presence of the copper coin seemed to indicate otherwise!

“If this place is part of that bone galleon, then that could explain why the Celestial sent the cultivators from the four rivers here to find an exit. It would also explain that extremely jarring teleportation we experienced.” The more he pondered the subject, the more alarmed he became, and the more he came to be convinced that there was a monumental secret tied up within this trial by fire.

But what was the secret?!

The truth was that he actually didn’t want to know. He couldn’t ever forget what he had seen on deck 3 of that bone galleon: a vanity, with… a faceless, one-armed ghostess sitting in front of it!

“It’s a good thing I had Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper’s command medallion to protect me!” He absentmindedly rubbed his bag of holding, where that very same command medallion still resided. At that point, he breathed a sigh of relief. However, the thought of the ghostess still caused his hair to stand on end.

“Maybe I'm overthinking things….” he thought, scowling on the verge of tears. However, it was at this point that he remembered seeing the bone galleon later on in the Deadmire, and realizing that it clearly had more than three decks….

At that point, his fear grew more intense, and he looked up at the sky again, expression that of disbelief.

“Don’t tell me… that we’re below deck 3?” Not wanting to sit around thinking about the matter, he hurried onward. And yet, he couldn’t clear his thoughts.

“It must be a coincidence…. Wait, hold on. If this is really the bone galleon, and the copper coin fell down through a hole in the deck, then that hole should still be there. If I can’t find any hole, then… then it means I’m just thinking too much into it….” Taking a deep breath, he cautiously flew straight up into the sky.

Feeling so nervous he almost couldn’t breathe, he continued upward, higher and higher.

He didn’t move too quickly, and kept his divine sense spread out around him at all times to look for danger. At the same time, he searched for any holes or rifts that would indicate a passage to another location.

However, after searching about for some time, he didn’t find any such rift in the murky sky. Gradually, he began to relax a bit.

“Hahaha! I knew it was just a coincidence!” Forcing a smile onto his face, he continued to search back and forth for a bit, but didn’t find any evidence to support his theory. Even that couldn’t fully dispel his suspicions, though.

“Maybe it’s a different coin. Or maybe someone found it and brought it here.” Neither option seemed very likely. However, he didn’t have any other evidence to work with. So after a bit more thought, he decided that the best thing would be to go see what was happening in the desert.

Having made up his mind, he took a deep breath and began to fly toward the desert. But then, a tremor ran through him, and his eyes widened.

Face falling, he craned his neck to look at a certain spot up ahead in the sky!!

Although that spot seemed ordinary in nature, when scanning it closely with divine sense… a rift was clearly visible!!

It wasn't very large, and it actually flickered in and out of existence. Without getting very close to it, and examining it with powerful divine sense, it wouldn't be visible. In fact, to Nascent Soul cultivators, it wouldn’t be detectable at all.

Only a powerful deva expert like Bai Xiaochun, who was closely searching the area, would ever notice it.

“There really is a hole….” he thought, his heart starting to pound. He looked at the rift, and then looked down toward the general area where he had discovered the copper coin. After making a quick calculation, he threw the coin down in the same trajectory he guessed it would have fallen if it emerged from the rift. Sure enough, it landed only a few meters away from its original location….

His mind began to spin even more violently.

“It really is the bone galleon!!” he shrieked. To him, that rift was like a fiendish monster. After all, the bizarre nature of the bone galleon had left a deep and terrifying impression on him.

Whether it was the three ghost faces on the flags on the deck of the ship, the mural on deck 1, or the skeletons and rocking chair on deck 2, they all left him trembling in fear….

There was also how Song Que and Master God-Diviner had lost their minds, and the most nerve-wracking thing of all… the ghostly mother on deck 3!!

Bai Xiaochun was absolutely certain that, without the gravekeeper’s command medallion, he would have most certainly died on the bone galleon.

“The thing about accepting a new apprentice was a complete smokescreen. The Celestial obviously had some other reasons for bringing the cultivators of the four rivers here to help him find the exit. He obviously couldn’t get onto the bone galleon by going into the Deadmire, thus the use of teleportation. Furthermore, he apparently didn’t dare to just come here by himself….

“All the evidence points to the conclusion that… he wants something inside the bone galleon, and is using the lower-level cultivators to get it!! In turn, that means… that the Celestial has been in the trial by fire all along!!” Shivering, he thought back to the young man who had been traveling with Du Lingfei.

“Back when I slapped that guy across the side of the head, I could tell that he didn't feel like a demigod….” Sweat began to pour down his face. “I actually slapped the Celestial….

“Wait, if the Celestial is here… then that means Gongsun Wan’er is probably here too!” The only person Bai Xiaochun feared more than the Celestial was Gongsun Wan’er. All of a sudden, he had no desire whatsoever to get out of the desert. He needed to find Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends, and then hide somewhere until the dust settled.

Even as he came to this conclusion, a mysterious and sinister voice suddenly echoed out from the rift he had just discovered.

“Now that you're here, why don’t you come in and look around…. After all, this isn’t your first time aboard.”

Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp of shock, then began to stammer, “This is a misunderstanding. That’s all, a misunderstanding…. Um… I took a wrong turn….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0944 awe-chapter-945

Even as Bai Xiaochun attempted to flee, a powerful gravitational force emerged from the rift.

It didn’t affect the air, or the ground below, or anything else in the entire world. Neither did it emit fluctuations that would be noticed by anyone else.

However… it did exert massive force on Bai Xiaochun, so much so that it felt as if his soul and cultivation base would be ripped out of him!

He could struggle against it, and perhaps escape, but in the process, his soul would be torn away from him and swallowed up by the rift!

To Bai Xiaochun’s horror, he found that it was the same with his cultivation base, and even his blood. In fact, as he struggled, blood began to ooze out of his pores and fly through the air toward the rift.

It seemed like he might be torn to pieces at any moment. At the same time, though, the sinister, female voice continued to speak into his ear, describing what she clearly envisioned to be a most wonderful image.

“By all means, keep struggling. That will make it easier for me to absorb your divine soul, and your blood… and eventually, the only thing left behind will be a skeleton….

“Save me some effort. Help me turn you into a most delectable feast….”

Bai Xiaochun screamed inwardly as he suddenly visualized… himself, with his divine soul sucked away, his cultivation base gone, bereft of blood, flesh, internal organs, and even his head…. The only thing left behind was a skeleton which crashed down onto the ground, held in place only because it was made of Undying Bones….

Years later, a passerby would be overjoyed to find such a precious treasure, and would turn his skeleton into medicinal pills, or a magical item, or perhaps even a skeleton puppet….

“Nooo….” Slowly, his mind went blank because of the intense gravitational force. Soon, the power reached a point that defied imagination, and in despair, he stopped struggling. At that point, he became of streak of bright light that shot into the rift.

With Bai Xiaochun gone, the rift closed up and disappeared. The entire time, nobody noticed what had occurred, neither Du Lingfei nor the young man with her, both of whom were trying to break through the shield of light in the desert.

Also near that shield was Hou Xiaomei, her eyes gleaming with anticipation, but her brow slightly furrowed as she looked off in the direction of the swamp. A moment later, the shield in the desert trembled as though it might collapse, and Hou Xiaomei looked over at it, the anticipation in her eyes growing more intense.

“At long last… I can return…. I wouldn’t be doing this unless there were no other choice, Ghostmother…. I very much look forward to the joy on your face when you see me again….”

As the shield shook violently back in the desert, Bai Xiaochun’s vision was finally growing clear, revealing a very familiar scene….

He was in a room that looked very much like a lady’s bedchamber….

There was a bed covered in dust and cobwebs, a vanity, and a cracked mirror….

A scream escaped his lips, and he spun to leave, only to find that there was no exit in sight….

Seated at the vanity was a woman in a long, red gown. Her back was to him as she combed her hair and softly sang that familiar, spine-tingling song….

Tears of terror threatened to spill out of Bai Xiaochun’s eyes….

“What do I do, what do I do…!?” he thought. He felt like his scalp was about to explode, and wished for nothing more than to escape. And yet, there didn’t seem to be any way to do that. Without any hesitation, he pulled out the gravekeeper’s command medallion and gripped it tight in his hands.

“Don’t eat me, Big Sis….” he blurted in a quavering voice. Not quite sure of what to say, he began to babble a bit. “Uh… do you know the gravekeeper? He’s my Master! You and I are probably on the same team….

“Oh, right. There are some people outside who mean you harm, Big Sis. Why don’t you go check the situation out? No need to worry about me…. I didn't want to come here. You… you dragged me here, Big Sis….”

It was at this point that the woman’s shoulder moved, as though she were about to turn and look at him.

“Don’t look back!” he shrieked. “Just… don't look back. If you have anything to say, you can--”

In the middle of his sentence, the woman stopped singing. Continuing to comb her hair, she quietly said, “This *is* your first time here.”

“Huh?” he replied. Then, he began to nod his head vigorously. “Um, if you say it’s my first time here, Big Sis, then of course it’s my first time….”

“Now that you’re here,” the woman said, her voice undulating in bizarre fashion, “I can’t help but wonder what you’re thinking about as you stand there….”

A look of confused surprise appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. “Wait, first time? No, this is my *second* time. And you’re the one who brought me here!”

“Nobody brought you here…. And your two friends are still right above us.” She waved her finger at the mirror, causing an image of the bone galleon’s deck 2 to appear. There, Song Que and Master God-Diviner stood on either side of the rocking chair, completely unmoving, blank looks on their faces.

The image, combined with the woman’s words, struck Bai Xiaochun like a thunderbolt, causing him to gasp.

“Impossible! How could this be happening…? I left this place. I went back to the River-Defying Sect. I went back to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. I… I was in a trial by fire. That’s how I got here….” Not only did he not trust the woman’s words, he refused to believe that everything that had happened after he left the bone galleon, including the events in the River-Defying Sect and the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, were all mere fantasies….

And yet, there was something strange about the woman’s voice which made it almost impossible to control his mind, and forced him to start thinking about the past.

As he did that, he unknowingly began to relax his grip on the command medallion….

“You never left….” the woman continued in her bizarre voice. Her shoulder trembled, and she slowly began to turn her head. However, she didn't stop combing her hair. In fact, she started combing it faster and faster….

She almost seemed to want to rip the hair out of her head! It was a bizarre scene that left Bai Xiaochun feeling profoundly shocked, but at the same time, somewhat blank.

“Anyone who looks at my face will descend into a fantasy of their own making…. This really is your first time here. However, it is not your first time… seeing my face.” As she spoke, her head continued to turn. Within moments… she would be facing him directly!

Bai Xiaochun’s face was completely blank, and he was shivering. As he descended into chaotic memories, his grip on the command medallion loosened!

The command medallion dropped to the ground, and the woman turned completely around! Her face was featureless, to the point where it almost looked like a blank sheet of white paper!!

But then a slit spread out on her face, which opened into something like a bizarre mouth. Then she lunged toward Bai Xiaochun as if to swallow him.

In that moment… Bai Xiaochun suddenly stooped down and picked up the command medallion. When he looked up, his expression wasn’t blank at all, and he was shoving the command medallion out toward the mouth!

“Since you're scared of this thing, let’s see if you dare to eat it!” Everything from moments before had been an act! He had decided to throw caution to the wind and create an opportunity for himself!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0945 awe-chapter-946

It all happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Furthermore, the long-haired woman had clearly never considered that her powerful divine ability actually wouldn't affect Bai Xiaochun.

However, she was an extraordinary being, and despite the fact that it seemed to Bai Xiaochun that she couldn’t possibly avoid his strike, she actually chuckled, and then vanished into thin air.

A moment later, she reappeared back at her vanity, combing her hair. It was almost as if everything that had happened moments ago had been an illusion. As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there, his face ashen and his heart pounding in his chest.

Actually, her divine ability hadn’t been completely ineffective. Bai Xiaochun had indeed begun to slip into a strange state of thought. However, it had only lasted for a moment before the scrap of Willpower he had inside of him, which he had feared lost when he formed his Heaven-Dao Nascent Soul, suddenly reared up for a brief moment.

That brief moment was all the time he needed to recover his mental faculties. That was also when he quickly came up with the plan to make an opportunity for himself, and unleash a counter attack.

However, not even such preparations were effective against this woman. The fact that she had simply vanished and then reappeared back at the vanity left Bai Xiaochun feeling quite shaken.

“She didn’t vanish because of her speed. No… she… looked like she actually went back in time to the moment from before!” The mere thought that this woman had such an incomprehensible magical technique filled him with even more alarm than before. Scowling on the verge of tears, he decided that he should try to work things out with her.

Just as he opened his mouth, though, the woman chuckled.

“Interesting. No wonder the gravekeeper of this world picked you.... Your Will… is a bit different from the other people I've seen here.... Including you, there are two people on this ship that I'm particularly interested in....”

Bai Xiaochun stood there, confused by what exactly the woman was talking about. Suddenly, she turned her head again, not to look at him, but to look at a spot on the ground between the two of them!

Although the wood of the deck seemed ordinary in nature, as soon as she looked at it, it began to blur....

“Finally here....” she said, and her featureless face suddenly distorted, almost like a piece of paper being crumpled up. Gasping, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the ground.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

It was almost as if someone was attacking the ground from beneath. Massive force struck it, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out as the floor of the bedchamber rocked violently. Then, another boom could be heard, and it shattered!

To Bai Xiaochun’s shock, the woman began to laugh a bizarre, ghostly laugh. And at the same time, several beams of light shot up through the floor!

Although they looked like huge beams of light, they were actually thin threads, within which were cultivators! At first, they were very small, almost like miniature people, but moments later, they grew to normal size.

There were seven or eight of them, and all of them wore expressions of profound excitement.

“I'm first!!”

“Hahaha! I'm going to get a Millennial Longevity Pill!”

However, even as their voices and laughter continued to echo about, they looked around and saw where they were standing. They saw the vanity and the woman, and then the broken mirror. The woman turned, opened her gaping maw, and lunged at the entire group.

She was on them in the blink of an eye, and before they could even shout in alarm, they were swallowed up.

Then, crunching sounds rang out, sounds that caused Bai Xiaochun’s spine to tingle, and his face to drain of blood.

Things weren’t over yet, though. A moment later, a few dozen more people flew out, a second wave of cultivators.

“This place is dangerous!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, looking over this second group. Then, it was to his profound anxiety that he realized he recognized one of the faces. “Xiaomei! Get out of here!!”

He was about to rush over to Hou Xiaomei when he realized that there was something very strange about her aura. And when he looked into her eyes, it was to his profound shock that he realized she had two pupils!

A bone-chilling laughter rang out that he found very familiar.

“I'm finally back!” Hou Xiaomei said. When he heard her voice, his eyes went wide with incredulity, and he stopped in place, beads of sweat popping out all over his head.

“That voice. That laughter…. You’re… you’re not Hou Xiaomei! You’re Gongsun Wan’er!! What did you do to Hou Xiaomei!?!?”

The girl who appeared to be Hou Xiaomei was none other than Gongsun Wan’er, whose eyes shone with sinister light as she smiled and said, “You still remember me, sweetie? Don’t worry, how could I possibly hurt your Xiaomei? I'm just standing in for her to play with you a bit.”

At this point, Gongsun Wan’er slowly turned to look at the woman sitting at the vanity, who was still combing her hair. Brow furrowed slightly, she said, “I really hate it when people use my vanity.”

“This vanity is mine,” the woman replied in a raspy voice. “And you… are also mine. Did you think that if you hid your soul in that body, and then masked your aura, I wouldn’t know you had come?” Suddenly, that gaping maw appeared again, to lunge toward Gongsun Wan’er this time.

However, the instant the mouth appeared, Gongsun Wan’er chuckled, and sent out a stream of black smoke that became a gaping maw of its own.

Then, the two of them began to fight back and forth, right there in the bedchamber!

Booms rang out, and the room began to rock back and forth. The shockwaves of the fighting caused the newly arrived cultivators to cough up blood and stagger backward, their expressions filled with shock and confusion.

None of them understood why, after finding the exit to the trial by fire, they were suddenly in a lady’s bedchamber, a bedchamber that was profoundly dangerous.

Bai Xiaochun’s mind was in chaos; events were unfolding too rapidly to process. Despite his confusion, though, he could sense that there were two souls within Hou Xiaomei’s body. One belonged to that bizarre girl, and the other, was Hou Xiaomei’s true soul, although it was currently sealed and suppressed!

“Xiaomei....” Despite how anxious he felt, he knew that there was nothing he could do right now. The force being unleashed by the fighting flung him backward, where he slammed into the wall. Then, cracking sounds filled the air as the wall shattered!

Revealed beyond the wall was… a severely damaged staircase that led to the deck above!

It was in this same moment that a third wave of cultivators shot up through the hole in the bedchamber. Included in that group were Du Lingfei and the young man.

In the moment that they burst onto the scene, an energy erupted out that seemed to shake the entire battleship, and it came from that young man.

In that moment, the young man's skin began to split and fall apart, as if he had been wearing it as an outer layer. A face appeared that seemed threatening without being angry, with eyes that contained heavenly bodies, and an aura that surpassed the most paragon entities in all heaven and earth. He was none other than…

“The Celestial!!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked in his heart. Although he had guessed that this would happen, to see his suspicions confirmed right in front of him caused him to suddenly think about what he had done so recently.

“I… I actually smacked the Celestial on the side of the head?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0946 awe-chapter-947

Bai Xiaochun was feeling torn in countless directions. On the one hand, he was worried about Hou Xiaomei. On the other hand, his palms itched at the mere sight of the Celestial….

It would be hard for him to be more anxious and more unsure of exactly what to do.

As the Celestial’s energy rose higher and higher, he turned into a series of afterimages that shot toward the faceless woman. Snorting coldly, he said, “Did you think that hiding in the Deadmire would keep you safe, Ghostmother, you old bitch?! Did you really think I wouldn’t be able to get to you?!”

The Celestial attacked, summoning a projection of the entire Heavenspan Realm and sending it shooting toward Ghostmother!

Gongsun Wan’er did the same thing. Together with the Celestial, she attacked Ghostmother with full force!

The sudden turn of events was too sudden. The vanity was instantly blasted to bits, and the resulting shockwave swept out, catching any cultivators who were too slow to react with deadly force. Miserable screams rang out as they were shredded to pieces!

However, Ghostmother managed to evade the attack. Vanishing, she reappeared off to the side, her face featureless, and yet contorted with rage.

“You’re nothing but a quasi-celestial, Daoist Heavenspan. You aren’t even capable of imagining what true celestials are like. The fact that you sacrificed your own people, and came in here in disguise, shows that you don’t even deserve to be a true celestial. True celestials protect their people! Because of that point alone, it’s clear the gravekeeper made the right decision to reject you.

“However, I do have to thank you for bringing this clone back to me, this clone formed from the very arm of mine that Gu Tianjun severed with his sword!

“The whole reason I entered this place to begin with is because of this clone. She is the reason I was suppressed and limited by the gravekeeper and the will of this world. Here in the Deadmire, I’m unable to communicate with the world beyond, and unable to leave…. But now, things are coming to an end. You people have been waiting for me… and I’ve been waiting for you!” Ear-splitting laughter rang out from Ghostmother as she skirted the Celestial, and then shot toward Gongsun Wan’er. Although it was impossible to see her face, she seemed to radiate an air of excitement and anticipation.

“You deserve to be *my* clone, not the other way around!” shrieked Gongsun Wan’er. “We both want to get out of this world. We both want to get home! This time, I’m going to consume *you*, and I’m going to become the *new* Ghostmother!” Instead of evading, she actually sped up toward Ghostmother.

As the two of them began to fight back and forth, the Celestial snorted. He didn’t seem at all affected by Ghostmother’s snide comments from moments ago. Unfazed, he joined in the fighting, causing massive booms to rock the entire battleship. The bedchamber was being destroyed, and any cultivators who attempted to enter it and were struck by the fluctuations were instantly killed.

The battle between these three was the type that was far too dangerous for anyone to be present for. Even Bai Xiaochun, a deva with an incredibly tough fleshly body, was still coughing up blood, and was currently scrambling for the staircase.

That seemed to be the only exit. In fact, the surviving cultivators who could see it were all doing their best to reach it.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings were among them, as was Guru Spirit Immortal from the Exalted Zodiac Moon Domination Sect. Both of them seemed to be in bad shape.

The fighting between the Celestial, Gongsun Wan’er, and the Ghostmother continued to intensify. At the moment, Heavenspan Seawater was forming into a fist-sized sphere that then began to accelerate toward Ghostmother.

Gongsun Wan’er, for whom this battle was supremely important, suddenly opened her mouth and spat out… a rusted sword! Intense pressure erupted off of the sword as it then shot toward Ghostmother.

This was the third time Bai Xiaochun had seen this sword. The second was during Gongsun Wan’er's battle with the gravekeeper, and the first time… was when he was a Foundation Establishment cultivator! It was… a sword which had fallen from beyond the heavens!!

It was the enormous sword… that contained the so-called Fallen Sword Abyss!!

“So, you took Gu Tianjun’s sword and made it your own…. How amusing.” Chuckling, Ghostmother waved her hands out in front of her, causing ghost qi to erupt out in the form of a huge black hole which expanded out toward the Celestial and Gongsun Wan’er.

As the booms of battle rang out, Bai Xiaochun finally scrambled onto the staircase and, without the slightest hesitation, began to run up it.

Based on the conversation he was hearing, Bai Xiaochun was now getting a fairly good idea of what was going on.

“The Celestial never had any intention of accepting a new apprentice. And this didn’t have anything to do with him restoring his cultivation base. In fact, it didn’t even have anything to do with the four rivers. It was all… a plot revolving around the bone galleon!!

“Because the galleon is in the Deadmire, the Celestial can’t reach it by ordinary means. Therefore, he sent the cultivators of the four rivers into its depths… to find a way to get onto the main part of the ship by other means, and at the same time, remain undetected!”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was also fairly certain of the origin of the bone galleon, and it left him completely and utterly shocked. After all, it was back in the Wildlands that he had learned… that another world existed beyond the heaven and earth in which he lived!

Many years ago, in that wider world outside, this Ghostmother had been sailing this bone galleon near the border of the Heavenspan Realm, and was then attacked by someone named Gu Tianjun. In the end, she took his sword, but not before he severed her arm!

Because of some strange circumstances, her severed arm somehow fell down into the Heavenspan Realm. That was also how the Fallen Sword World came to be….

Despite losing her arm, and having her cultivation base fall a bit, Ghostmother managed to escape. However, she couldn’t bear to part with her arm, and had paid a spectacular price to re-enter the Heavenspan Realm and begin a search for it.

However, her interference was immediately detected by the gravekeeper, who embodied the will of heaven and earth. Calling upon his profound powers, he had sealed the vicious and crafty Ghostmother in the Deadmire!

There, she had been unable to communicate with the outside world, let alone return to it. At the same time, she was unable to search for her severed arm…. And thus she had remained sealed in the Deadmire for countless years…. Most likely, the gravekeeper had been at the peak of his power and strength when he created the seal which imprisoned her.

As for the enormous sword which had fallen from the heavens, and the Heaven-Dao aura it contained, it ended up the eastern Lower Reaches, were it became a training ground for Foundation Establishment cultivators!

The countless souls that the sword had killed in the past were the banesouls which inhabited the Fallen Sword World. And one of them… was the incarnation of Ghostmother’s arm!

That was the little girl that had possessed Gongsun Wan’er!

The soul that was the severed arm of Ghostmother had long remained inside the sword, unable to awaken, and unable to access its old memories. However, thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s medicinal pills, that girl woke up!

After she recovered her memories, she wished to leave, and yet, had not been willing to return to her true self in the Deadmire. Instead, she entered into an alliance with the Celestial!

That huge battle which had been fought in the Wildlands had all been in the hopes of returning to her home in the outside world while her true form remained sealed!

It was a good plan, until the gravekeeper called upon the Five Yin Organs Secret Magic. That had been enough to seriously injure the girl clone, and send her fleeing from the scene of battle.

The gravekeeper had simply let her go, the reason being… that he had already made an agreement with Ghostmother! The two of them… would give that girl clone no choice but to opt for a second path!

That second path was another plan in which she and the Celestial would somehow sneak into the Deadmire and open a way into the depths of the bone galleon.

Then they would find an opening that led to deck 3! Their end goal was for the clone to consume her true form, become the new Ghostmother, and repay the Celestial in the only way she could…. After returning to her own peak cultivation base state, she would take her ship and the Celestial… to the world beyond!

Clearly, the Celestial had reservations about the clone, and was worried she might have secret plans of her own. Therefore, he had sent a large group of cultivators into a supposed trial by fire. Not only would there be more people to find the passageway they were looking for, but the Celestial would be able to hide among them. In all aspects, it was much safer for him this way!

Furthermore, the reason why he had brought Hou Xiaomei to Heavenspan Island was because she was perfectly suitable to help Gongsun Wan’er hide her aura and arrive undetected by Ghostmother.

And of course, little did the Celestial and the clone know that the entire thing was an elaborate trap!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0947 awe-chapter-948

That was Bai Xiaochun's assessment based on everything he had heard just now, as well as the things he had learned back in the Wildlands.

Even if his analysis was not completely accurate in every aspect, he was confident that it was relatively correct….

And he couldn’t help but think about the gravekeeper…. The truth was that, even back in that spectacular battle in the Wildlands, everything had gone according to the gravekeeper’s plans!

“He really set everything up perfectly!!” Bai Xiaochun knew that the gravekeeper had actually hoped to kill the Celestial during that battle. Now, it seemed obvious… that the gravekeeper’s killing intent was showing through in this backup plan!

This situation with the bone galleon had only unfolded because of the original failure to put an end to the Celestial!

“That’s why he gave me his command medallion. It was to keep me safe as I passed through the Deadmire, but also… to make sure I wasn’t killed during the final phase of this plan with the Celestial!” Bai Xiaochun was completely shocked, and simply couldn’t imagine what kind of mind could come up with such a convoluted and meticulous plan!

“The Celestial… is definitely going to lose again!” After all of these realizations, Bai Xiaochun was feeling more and more uneasy. He didn't care about the Celestial, and was fairly certain that the man would be able to keep Du Lingfei safe. What Bai Xiaochun was worried about was Hou Xiaomei.

“Back when I saw Hou Xiaomei on Heavenspan Island, I don't think she had been possessed. But the next day… that strange, sinister aura I sensed was no illusion!

“Just now, there were definitely soul fluctuations inside of her body, which means she hasn’t been completely consumed…. The only way to save her is to get her soul out of that body!” Unfortunately, it was to his bitterness that he realized that his current cultivation base wasn’t high enough for him to participate in the fight.

Even the shockwaves from the fighting were too destructive for him to handle. Vision swimming, he stumbled up the staircase, leaving deck 3. At the top of the stairs, he looked around and found that he was on deck 2!

He almost turned to head back down the stairs. However, based on the fluctuations coming from the fighting down there, he knew that he couldn’t go back. Even as he stood there trying to decide what to do, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings stumbled out of the staircase, followed by Guru Spirit Immortal. As for the other Nascent Soul cultivators who had entered the bedchamber during the fighting, most had been killed by the destructive shockwaves of the battle.

The Celestial had placed Du Lingfei and her group into his bag of holding, keeping them safe.

Deck 2 was just like Bai Xiaochun remembered it. The rocking chair was there, slowly moving back and forth, with the two corpses kneeling in front of it in their strange, partially-fused state. Everything else was rife with sinister frigid qi.

But there was something different about the situation this time. Bai Xiaochun was no longer in the Nascent Soul stage. After glancing at the scene, he sent his divine sense out and onto the rocking chair. In that instant, it stopped moving.

He took a step closer.

Last time, he had been very interested in the two corpses, and had been almost fatally attracted to the auras of the Undying Codex and the Live Forever Codex which remained on them.

Unfortunately, at that time, he had not possessed a deva cultivation base, and had been virtually overwhelmed by fear and a sensation of crisis. As a result, he had eventually just fled for his life.

But this time, things were different. He was well aware that he would most likely not get a third chance to observe this scene, and therefore, he needed to take advantage of the moment.

Without any more hesitation, he hurried over toward the rocking chair. As for the twin Master Cloud Lightnings and Guru Spirit Immortal, they reacted differently. This was their first time here, so as soon as they stepped out into the room, they looked around in shock.

By the time they noticed Bai Xiaochun, he had already reached the skeletons and grabbed ahold of them. In that moment, his expression flickered.

The moment he touched the skeletons, he could sense the Undying Blood inside of him suddenly surge to life. At the same time, a majestic sensation of qi and blood erupted from the golden corpse which had cultivated the Undying Codex. That aura immediately rushed into his hand, and a moment later, he had another drop of Undying Blood inside of him!!

He couldn’t have been more shocked by what happened. However, now was not the time to think about practicing cultivation. Therefore, he suppressed his surprise and quickly put the two corpses into his bag of holding.

“What was that you just grabbed, Bai Xiaochun!?” Guru Spirit Immortal said, his eyes glittering. Despite the fact that they were in a moment of critical danger, the old man still could not suppress his greed.

As for the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, if they hadn’t already come to know a bit about Bai Xiaochun’s background, they would have reacted the same way. But right now, with the Celestial only one deck below, they didn’t dare.

Bai Xiaochun completely ignored Guru Spirit Immortal. After putting the corpses into his bag of holding, he shot toward the next staircase. Last time, he had been unable to return to deck 1, but now that he had a deva cultivation base, he was able to identify the method to do so.

However, even as he began to move, Guru Spirit Immortal stepped over to block his way.

“We’re all devas here, Bai Xiaochun! Since we all arrived at the same time, we should split any treasure evenly! You think you can just take it all for yourself?!”

“Screw the hell off!” Bai Xiaochun was worried about Hou Xiaomei, and was also privy to many other secrets that no one else was aware of. Therefore, he had no patience to deal with an irritating old man like this.

He immediately utilized his Mountain Shaking Bash, shooting forward with incredible speed, and simultaneously unleashing shocking pressure. Guru Spirit Immortal’s face fell, and he quickly dodged to the side.

With that, Bai Xiaochun passed him and sped up the staircase.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings followed behind, and Guru Spirit Immortal did as well, with various expressions flashing across his face.

In almost the exact same instant that Bai Xiaochun stepped onto deck 1, deck 2 exploded, sending wood splinters flying around in all directions. At the same time, the fight between the Celestial, Gongsun Wan’er, and Ghostmother spilled over into the former location of deck 2.

Deck 1 looked just like it had before, without the slightest change. The fascinating, life-like mural could still be seen on the bulkheads. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had already looked at it in the past. Therefore, he barely glanced at it before rushing toward the next set of stairs, which led up to the main deck.

As soon as the twin Master Cloud Lightnings and Guru Spirit Immortal reached deck 1 though, they were immediately drawn into the mural.

Bai Xiaochun ignored them. In the blink of an eye, he was in the cabin above deck 1, and then… out on the main deck of the bone galleon!

The sky was murky and dim, and the ship was surrounded by a sea of bones. There were three flags visible, with three enigmatic ghost faces on them, rippling despite the lack of any wind…. Because of everything he had seen, because of the pressure weighing down on him, and because of the aura of the Deadmire that he recognized, the final, last bit of hesitation in him disappeared.

“We really are back in the Deadmire….” he murmured. Even as he looked around, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings and Guru Spirit Immortal stumbled out onto the deck, coughing up mouthfuls of blood.

Moments later, three other figures burst out onto the main deck!

“You can’t escape, Ghostmother!” Gongsun Wan’er shrieked. “I *will* consume you!!” As she shot toward Ghostmother, the expressionless Celestial also advanced. Between the two of them, they continued to shove Ghostmother backward across the battlefield!

Moments later, the handful of lucky cultivators who had survived the trial by fire began to emerge. When they found themselves on the main deck, and saw the fight going on in the air above them, they trembled with shock, and some even cried out loud in alarm.

“Heavens! That’s… that's the Celestial!!”

“Where… where are we?!”

“The exit led to a ship? How is that possible?!?! What is this place? Are we even still in the lands of Heavenspan…?” Bai Lin and Zhao Tianjiao were present, although they were badly injured, and were being held up by Big Fatty Zhang.

The only one who didn't react with complete surprise was Song Que…. Trembling, he looked around in disbelief, and then glanced over at Bai Xiaochun for confirmation.

“We're in the Deadmire.” Bai Xiaochun said, his mood dropping rapidly with every moment that passed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0948 awe-chapter-949

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, the surrounding cultivators gasped in shock.

“The Deadmire?!?!”

“That region which connects the Heavenspan region and the Wildlands? That Deadmire?!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe we ended up here!!”

These were all Nascent Soul cultivators who had experienced the deadliness of the trial by fire, and were now bearing witness to a battle involving the Celestial himself. Therefore, to hear that they were also in the Deadmire pushed them toward the brink of mental collapse.

The danger they had come to face surpassed anything they could have imagined before setting out on this endeavor.

No one could possibly have known that the supposed trial by fire was actually taking place in the depths of an enormous bone galleon, much less that the Celestial’s proclamation of accepting a new apprentice was actually a complete sham!

Perhaps to call it a 'sham’ was a bit of an exaggeration. Presumably, the Celestial would indeed select an apprentice after the matter was ended. But for all intents and purposes, the cultivators who had been brought here were being used through and through. It was a feeling that left them feeling profoundly cold inside, although they didn’t dare to reveal that openly.

Now they were here in the Deadmire, a fact that caused despair to stab deep into their hearts. Meanwhile, up above them, the Celestial and Gongsun Wan’er were teaming up against Ghostmother in a battle of completely epic proportions.

Booms rang out constantly, causing the bone sea that filled the Deadmire to ripple and distort. Many of the bones shattered, as did the sky above.

The Celestial’s Daoist magic sent a shocking projection of the Heavenspan Sea into action, and Gongsun Wan’er was going all out, fighting with even more ferocity than she had displayed in her battle with the gravekeeper. She was holding nothing back in her attempt to consume Ghostmother.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very nervous as he craned his neck to observe the fighting overhead. Of course, he didn’t care at all about Ghostmother and the Celestial, only Hou Xiaomei. Unfortunately, he didn't qualify to participate in the battle.

Even as he looked on, the Celestial’s eyes glittered, and he shouted, “Don't forget our agreement! I'm going to do everything in my power to make sure you complete your fusion!”

As his words echoed about like thunder, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, which caused the Heavenspan Sea projection to transform into a sealing mark that shot toward Ghostmother.

This was the most powerful move the Celestial had used so far. The truth was that he had actually been significantly injured during the fight with the gravekeeper, and although he had suppressed those injuries, his battle prowess had been significantly reduced because of it.

But now, he was sparing no cost to attack with full force.

As the weight of the Heavenspan Realm weighed down, massive winds screamed, and the Deadmire trembled. Meanwhile, the converged waters of the Heavenspan Sea seemed to have locked Ghostmother in place. Although she had no facial features, her face was clearly contorted with rage.

Reaching out to point at Ghostmother, the Celestial said, “You are within my world now, and you *will* be weak!”

The projection of the Heavenspan world flickered, causing Ghostmother’s aura to slowly weaken.

“You’re mine, Ghostmother!” Gongsun Wan’er shrieked, turning into a blur of afterimages that shot through the air to appear directly in front of her rival. There, she spat out masses of black smoke, which formed into the face of a girl. Looking profoundly excited and greedy, the girl opened her mouth and lunged at Ghostmother.

In that critical moment, Ghostmother’s voice suddenly floated out, soft, but somehow sly and treacherous. “Are you talking to me, Daoist Heavenspan? Or her?”

Then she performed a double-handed incantation gesture, sending black smoke pouring out of her hands to form countless evil ghosts, which smashed into the world projection.

Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes flickered, and the Celestial frowned.

“Another useless move?” the Celestial said, snorting coldly. Taking a step forward, he waved his right arm out in front of him, causing the air to distort and winds to scream as an enormous hand appeared. Radiating shocking power, the hand shot directly toward Ghostmother.

The world projection began to shrink down, and the Celestial’s all-destructive hand closed in. Ghostmother’s aura was weakening by the moment. In that dangerous juncture, Ghostmother went still, then let loose a piercing scream.

“Heavenly Ghosts Slaughter the World!” Suddenly, her body shattered into pieces, which became roiling black smoke that spread out in a ring, in two rings, then in three rings. Soon, nine rings of black smoke had formed, in the middle of which was an evil ghost.

Looking profoundly shocking, the ghost roared and began to charge forward. At the same time, the rings of black smoke began to spin rapidly, transforming into something like a tornado!

The nine-layered tornado emanated a terrifying aura that struck fear into Bai Xiaochun’s heart. It seemed like the type of thing that could destroy all magical laws in heaven and earth, including the world projection that had been unleashed by the Celestial.

When the Celestial’s enormous hand slammed into the tornado created by Ghostmother’s divine ability, it was the Celestial’s attack that shattered. Then, the black smoke from the tornado swirled back into the shape of Ghostmother.

However, she looked blurrier than before, and was also retreating at top speed.

“So, Daoist Heavenspan, you really can call upon the power of this world. I underestimated you!” Even as Ghostmother retreated, Gongsun Wan’er picked up speed, becoming almost nothing more than a huge mouth of smoke as she got closer and closer.

Moments later, the weakened Ghostmother began to fight with Gongsun Wan’er, a sight which was completely riveting to both Bai Xiaochun and the rest of the crowd.

Bai Xiaochun was actually less shocked than everyone else. After all, this was not his first time witnessing the Celestial, and the way he wielded the power of the world via projection.

Clearly, the Celestial had managed to weaken Ghostmother enough to give Gongsun Wan’er an advantage. Gongsun Wan’er continued to try to consume Ghostmother, whose aura weakened with every moment that passed!

Normally speaking, Gongsun Wan’er would never have been a match for Ghostmother. If control over one’s soul could be described with percentages, then Gongsun Wan’er only had about twenty percent control, whereas Ghostmother had eighty.

But now… as Gongsun Wan’er harried Ghostmother, she rose from twenty percent to thirty. And then forty. And finally… fifty percent!

Ghostmother was clearly feeling very anxious, and was having a very difficult time escaping because of the pressure of the world projection.

As for the Celestial, he hovered in midair watching the scene with cold eyes. He didn’t step in to help directly, but continued to send pressure weighing down through the world projection. This same technique had been unable to control the gravekeeper, the reason being that both the Celestial and the gravekeeper were of this world. But when it came to people who were not of this world, the power of the world had the advantage.

Various emotions flickered across Bai Xiaochun’s face. The truth was that he didn't know who he supported in this fight. The only thing he did know was that he feared for Hou Xiaomei’s safety.

Before long, Gongsun Wan’er had sixty percent control, as well as the clear advantage. At that point, a cold smile appeared on the Celestial’s face.

“It seems Ghostmother really is weakening,” he murmured to himself. “If this is some sort of trick, then I have to say, it's a very daring one. And if I lose to it, well, I’d have no choice but to accept it.” After a moment, his eyes flashed with determination. Then, in the moment in which Gongsun Wan’er reached seventy percent control, he spread his arms wide and spoke in a voice that seemed to represent the world itself!

“Slave Seal, activate!” The world projection twisted and distorted, and in the blink of an eye, transformed into an enormous sealing mark that descended toward Gongsun Wan’er!

The sealing power on display was fearsome to say the least, and even contained the power of time. Clearly, there was energy at play which had been building up for a long time!

Bai Xiaochun could sense that fact, and was shocked. Although he didn’t recognize this sealing mark, he could tell that if it landed on Gongsun Wan’er, there would be no way for her to resist it, and she would definitely become the Celestial’s slave!

And that was the Celestial's true plan. A person as arrogant as him, the ruler of an entire world, couldn’t possibly put all his hopes in a person who might not win in the end. After all, how could he be sure that Gongsun Wan’er would actually take him with her when she left? However… if he sealed her and made her his slave, then he could be completely certain of the final outcome!

The sealing mark was incredibly powerful, and truly had taken a long time to prepare. In fact… he had begun to prepare it years ago, back when they first met and had begun working out the plan that culminated in this epic battle in the Wildlands!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0949 awe-chapter-950

As the sealing power erupted out, the world projection became like a dome, both enveloping Gongsun Wan’er, and rapidly shrinking down around her.

As could be imagined, once it shrank down enough, Gongsun Wan’er would become a slave of the Celestial!

Strangely, Gongsun Wan’er didn’t seem surprised at all by what was happening. Eyes shining with strange light, she said, “You've been preparing for quite some time, haven’t you, Daoist Heavenspan, you bastard. You were waiting until the moment I began to consume my primary form?

“But did you really think I wouldn’t be ready for something like this…? You’re a real joke, you know that? Remember… the reason for your defeat is that you don’t truly understand the world you exist in, and also… because you have no idea how powerful the bone galleon really is!!” Shrill laughter rang out from Gongsun Wan’er’s lips as the bone galleon beneath the feet of Bai Xiaochun and the other cultivators suddenly trembled.

Black light began to spill out from every bone that made up the galleon, which swirled and formed together into a beam that shot toward the eight trigrams mirrors above the cabin door.

“I didn’t need to even prepare for this moment, Daoist Heavenspan, you bastard. Back when we were fighting the gravekeeper, you didn’t dare to try to seal me, but now… you feel confident. Unfortunately, you had no idea that… all I needed was this very bone galleon! I am Ghostmother’s severed left arm, and that left arm… controls the sealing magic contained within this battleship! The truth is that I’ve also been waiting… for you to attack me!

“Devil-Conquering Mirror! I summon thee!”

More laughter erupted from Gongsun Wan’er as the black light from the ship was sucked into the eight trigrams mirror. Then the mirror began to vibrate, after which it shot into the air, a streak of black light that headed directly toward the Celestial.

A grim expression overtook the Celestial’s face as he waved his right hand out in front of him. Heaven and earth trembled, and yet, the intense black light did not shatter. However, it was shoved backward, whereupon it formed together into an enormous figure!

It was a hulking warrior clad in black armor, with green, flaming eyes. Based on the fluctuations rolling off of him, this figure did not originate in the Heavenspan Realm.

After forming, the warrior immediately closed in on the Celestial again.

“Power. Energy. Harmony. Healing….” After uttering these words, the black-armored warrior’s energy began to rise rapidly. At the same time, he shot toward the world projection sealing mark.

Energy radiated out that could end the heavens and crush the earth as, to the shock of Bai Xiaochun and all the onlookers, the world’s sealing power began to weaken!

An extremely unsightly expression appeared on the Celestial’s face. Although he had known all along that, while he was plotting against Gongsun Wan’er, she would likely be plotting against him, he had never imagined that her plan would be to use the bone galleon itself against him!

If he hadn't been so badly injured back in the Wildlands, he would have had many tools at his disposal to deal with the situation. But his cultivation base was currently unstable, and his battle prowess significantly weakened. As such, his rage continued to build.

"Well, even still, it doesn't matter…. It's not like I only have one trick up my sleeve!" Eyes flashing, he waved his right index finger… which flew off of his hand and rapidly transformed into an enormous boulder!

It was dark violet, and other than being one of the Celestial's actual fingers, didn't seem extraordinary in any way. However, it did emanate an aura that led everyone who sensed it to gasp!

It was an aura that seemed capable of crushing all types of fiends and devils!

It immediately flew up to the world projection seal, fusing into it to bolster its power. Then, the incredible sealing power shot toward the black-armored warrior, who was incapable of standing up to it, and was forced backward across the field of battle.

"Heavenly devil stone!" Gongsun Wan'er blurted, her face falling dramatically. "Dammit! Even outside of this world, heavenly devil stones are rare! How did you get one?!?!"

Even where she came from, heavenly devil stones were objects not often seen, and using them required a massive wastage of resources.

Using such an object on one’s own people was useless. But using it on cultivators from other worlds was especially effective, and could easily suppress them!

It was a moment of profound crisis, forcing Gongsun Wan’er to abandon her attempts to consume Ghostmother. Howling, she performed an incantation gesture with her right hand and then waved her finger through the air to summon the ancient sword of Gu Tianjun, which came from beyond the heavens. Grabbing it in her hand, she slashed it at the incoming sealing mark!

At the same time, the black-armored warrior erupted into flames, and his green, fiery eyes burned hotter than ever.

Apparently, it was actually burning itself up to acquire an explosive burst of power to use in a deadly attack!

As the warrior began to grow blurry, his energy rose up into the sky, where a huge vortex formed. Through that vortex, it was possible to see what could only be the world beyond this heaven and earth. By destroying itself, the black-armored warrior was able to draw upon magical law that did not conform to the Heavenspan Realm!

If that magical law arrived and collided with the magical and natural laws of the Heavenspan Realm, even for the slightest moment… the resulting detonation could very likely be enough to break the world projection seal!

The scene playing out for Bai Xiaochun and the others on the battleship was almost too much to take in. In one moment, the Celestial and Gongsun Wan’er had been working together, only to have the situation suddenly reversed.

Ghostmother seemed too weak to do anything, whereas Gongsun Wan’er, who was Ghostmother's left arm, and could control the sealing power of the bone galleon, was going to the lengths of destroying the treasure that was the eight trigrams mirror. By combining the power from beyond the heavens with the sword she held in her hand, she was preparing to break the sealing mark that continued to descend onto her.

As for the Celestial, despite having been so badly wounded in the Wildlands, he had come to this conflict fully prepared. Not only had he unleashed the sealing mark that was the world projection, but he also had a heavenly devil stone. Both of those were weapons specifically targeting Gongsun Wan’er, and were things that he was confident she couldn’t evade while in the middle of consuming Ghostmother.

At the moment, it was impossible to say who had the advantage. As the black-armored warrior collapsed to pieces, and the natural and magical laws from the outside world descended, Gongsun Wan’er drew them into her sword and prepared to slash at the sealing mark….

Which was when everything suddenly changed!!

A scornful smile spread out on the Celestial’s face as he coolly said, “Considering how long that sword has been in my world, did you really think… that you could control it so easily? I just let you think you could!”

His eyes suddenly shone with bright light, light that seemed to perfectly match the light shining off of the sword! Then, he extended his left hand and waved his finger at the sword!

Gongsun Wan’er’s face flickered, but before she could actually do anything in response, she lost control of the sword! The point suddenly swiveled and flew, not toward her, but toward the huge vortex up in the sky!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were wide as saucers. The moment was so tense that he forgot to breathe. The twists and turns in this battle were almost too much for him to process. Everyone had so many plots and schemes going that it was hard to understand it all. It was especially shocking that the Celestial had actually secretly gained control of the fallen sword years ago, but left it there and allowed Gongsun Wan’er to awaken and fuse with it….

Bai Xiaochun shivered at how adept the Celestial was at hatching complex plots. It was really terrifying!

“Just how many years has he been planning all of this? Don’t tell me he knew that Gongsun Wan’er would wake up from the very beginning?”

“No!!” Gongsun Wan’er screamed despairingly. The sword moved with incredible speed, like an arrow shooting up to pierce the sky. And as soon as it reached the vortex, it exploded!

Terrifying destructive power erupted out, completely wiping out the magical and natural laws that were descending from beyond!

Although the vortex seemed unwilling, it began to fade away. The black-armored warrior’s eyes began to turn dark, and with a sigh, it collapsed into pieces!

Yet again, a shocking reversal had taken place. The Celestial had perfectly countered every one of Gongsun Wan’er’s moves. And now, the world projection sealing mark began to shrink down over her once again!

“You will become my Dharma slave, who I will use to pilot this battleship…. I will draw upon the magical and natural laws of the outside world to open the gate, and leave this place! There is a new Hell-Emperor now, and he isn’t strong enough to get in my way. As for the gravekeeper, he grows weaker every day. Who can possibly stop me!?!?” The excitement was clear in the Celestial’s voice. As the sealing mark shrank down and down, it seemed obvious… that victory was at hand!

But then….

A profound, mysterious voice suddenly rang out in Gongsun Wan’er’s mind!

“You have a choice to make now, left arm of mine. Become the Dharma slave of Daoist Heavenspan. Or… come back to me, and allow me… to take you home!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0950 awe-chapter-951

“You….” The instant the voice echoed out into Gongsun Wan’er’s mind, she understood everything. Bitterness filling her heart, she replied to the voice in her mind. “So, you were gambling this entire time…. That’s not like us….”

“You’re right,” Ghostmother replied, “it's not like us. But… the gamble paid off!” Ghostmother couldn’t help but think back to the agreement she had made with the gravekeeper all those years ago, and how he was the one who had come up with this entire plan…. He was definitely a person worthy of deep respect.

“I wouldn’t expect anything less from the last remaining bit of will from that most ancient individual….” The truth was that from the moment she had arrived in this world, she had been gambling!

After losing her left arm, her cultivation base had dropped, making it difficult for her to control the bone galleon. Even worse… without the sealing power available in her left arm, she couldn’t activate the Devil-Conquering Mirror to draw upon her most powerful divine ability… her Three Ghost Flags!

Those three flags were one of the main reasons she had become Ghostmother to begin with. In the world beyond this world, she had paid a heavy price, and also called upon the help of a powerful expert, to capture three evil ghosts whose cultivation bases were analogous to the celestial level, and seal them into three conjoined flags.

When combined, those three flags constituted the most powerful magical item she possessed, especially the middle one with the laughing-crying ghost face. Before being sealed, that ghost had been only one step away from breaking out of the Celestial Realm. Although it never had reached the Archaean Realm, it could definitely be considered half-archaean!

All three of the evil ghosts’ cultivation bases had been reduced because of being sealed, but when the three flags were used together, they could push Ghostmother’s battle prowess to a level that was shocking even in the world beyond the heavens.

Unfortunately, the three evil ghosts were unstable and difficult to control, which was why she had asked an archaean to forge the Devil-Conquering Mirror. Normally speaking, that mirror was enough to keep the evil ghosts in check, although there was still some level of difficulty in controlling them fully. And that was why she had used a secret magic to brand herself with an eternal magical symbol, placed onto her left hand, which allowed her to summon and control the three evil ghosts.

After her left arm was lost, Ghostmother experienced a significant drop in her overall power. She couldn't control the sealing mark in the Devil-Conquering Mirror, and therefore… when the Celestial returned her left arm to her, she could only gamble on the outcome!

She had gambled that the ever-suspicious Celestial wouldn’t trust anyone fully, and would eventually make a move on Gongsun Wan’er. And of course, this was all based on information given to her by the gravekeeper, based on his personal analysis!

She had also gambled that her left arm, personified in Gongsun Wan’er, would have made other preparations. Therefore, the moment when the Celestial began to fight Gongsun Wan’er was the moment for Ghostmother to make her comeback!

In truth… it wasn’t quite correct to say that she had been unable to fight back against the Celestial’s world projection. Instead, she had allowed Gongsun Wan’er to begin to consume her in order to create all of the opportunities needed!

“You win…” Gongsun Wan’er replied in her mind. “Take me home….” Of course, that conversation happened in the brief time it takes to snap a finger.

There were no other options available to Gongsun Wan’er. She didn’t want to become a slave of the Celestial, and therefore, she simply closed her eyes and lapsed into silence.

The instant she closed her eyes, the black smoke around her took the shape of Ghostmother.

“You…!” the Celestial gasped, his face falling. He had gone all out to bolster the strength of his sealing mark, but in the moment before it completely locked down Gongsun Wan’er, Ghostmother appeared next to her.

“Ghost Trio, your time has come!!”

Intense rumbling sounds filled the air, the source being one of the three flags on the bone galleon, which exploded violently.

A roar of rage erupted out as a huge ghost face materialized, radiating shocking energy that surpassed the

Demigod Realm and came close to the Celestial Realm!!

The ghost had three horns, dark violet skin, and was fiendish in appearance!

The instant the ghost face appeared, it shot toward the world projection sealing mark, causing the Celestial's face to flicker. The Celestial prepared to intervene, but before he could....

A rumbling sound even more intense than the previous one erupted into the air. The second flag exploded, and a second ghost face flew out!

This ghost was green, with numerous eyes! Furthermore, when it opened its mouth, even more eyes were visible inside!

Its energy was just as close to the Celestial Realm as the other ghost's, and in fact, was a bit more powerful! It was like a fiendish monster that, upon being unleashed, charged directly toward the world projection sealing mark!

The Celestial was clearly very anxious by this point, and was just preparing to take defensive action to block the two ghost faces when… a third appeared!

The third flag exploded, unleashing even more brutally powerful fluctuations, along with vicious, cackling laughter.

“You finally freed me, Ghostmother....” said a voice that shook all heaven and earth. It was like a combination of countless evil ghosts all roaring at the same time, causing everything in the area to tremble violently.

This ghost face was half black and half white. It was clearly laughing, but at the same time, seemed to be crying. Or perhaps it would be better to say that it was clearly crying, but seemed to be laughing at the same time.

It was bizarre to the extreme, to the point where anyone who looked at it would be so shaken they began to tremble physically!

The Nascent Soul cultivators on board felt their life force being sucked out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths, and no matter what they did to try to defend themselves, it was useless.

Bai Xiaochun gasped, and began to tremble in fear. He actually recognized this most powerful of the ghost faces. It was the very same face that had smiled ferociously at him from within the flag back when he first saw the bone galleon!

This ghost face was so shockingly powerful that… it seemed to be perfectly on par with the Celestial!!

Bai Xiaochun wasn't the only one to be visibly taken aback. The Celestial was clearly struck with profound anxiety at the sight of these three ghost faces shooting toward his world projection sealing mark.

They were moving so quickly that it was obvious there was no way to stop them from reaching their target!

When they struck, the resulting boom was so loud it threatened to shatter the world. A huge depression appeared in the sealing mark, which clearly could not stand up to a celestial-level strike. Cracks spread out across its surface, and then it shattered….

Even more shocking to Bai Xiaochun was that, as the sealing mark shattered, the laughing-crying ghost face's eyes lit up with a gleam of greed, and he began to consume the destroyed fragments.

With every piece that he swallowed, the excitement in his eyes grew more intense.

“Delicious…. Hahaha! It’s been a long time since I've enjoyed flavor like this…. This world seems full of tasty things. I want to eat them all!!”

“How dare you, you vile thing!!” the Celestial howled. He was just about to step forward to attack when the laughing-crying ghost face turned and looked at him, eyes shining with bizarre light.

“Ah, a quasi-celestial…. I think I’ll eat you too!” Laughing loudly, the ghost face abandoned the shattered remnants of the sealing mark and shot toward the Celestial. The other two ghost faces looked on, clearly terrified of the laughing-crying ghost face. However, after a moment, they joined in to attack the Celestial.

Everything was happening too quickly. Everyone on the bone galleon was having their life force sucked away from them, and as a result, were completely ashen-faced and in despair. The devas had it a bit better off, and in fact, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t losing any life force at all.

However, his eyes were completely bloodshot as he stood there glaring at Ghostmother! He looked like he was about to explode!

Now that the world projection sealing mark had been destroyed, and the three ghost faces were harrying the Celestial, Ghostmother once again turned into a huge mouth that turned to consume Gongsun Wan’er. And of course, Gongsun Wan’er was still occupying Hou Xiaomei’s body!

Hou Xiaomei shivered, and black smoke began to pour out of her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. It rapidly transformed into the image of a young girl, who looked around bitterly at the world around her, and then glanced back at Hou Xiaomei.

“Don’t hurt her….” she murmured. Then she closed her eyes, and her soul body was swallowed up by Ghostmother.

At that point, another soul body emerged, which belonged to none other than Hou Xiaomei. It too began to float toward Ghostmother….

Bai Xiaochun felt like his heart was being torn apart. Blue veins bulged out on his neck and face, and his eyes turned more bloodshot than ever. Then, he shouted out in a voice that even attracted the notice of the Celestial and the three ghost faces!!

“Ghostmother!! If you want to consume Gongsun Wan’er, that’s your business. But if you hurt Hou Xiaomei, then I, Bai Xiaochun, swear an oath that, whether I have to go to the highest heavens or the deepest hells to do it, I will kill you!!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0951 awe-chapter-952

Bai Xiaochun's voice was hoarse, despondent, and yet filled with indescribable determination. As he spoke, it seemed as though his words resonated with the natural laws of heaven and earth, causing them to echo out in explosive fashion.

Ghostmother was currently absorbing Gongsun Wan’er, and as a result, her facial features were becoming clear. Her eyes, nose, and mouth all appeared, revealing the face of a lovely young woman!

She had fair skin and entrancing eyes, and overall, was incredibly beautiful!

Her previously severed left arm was growing back, and within moments, looked as ordinary as ever. At the same time, a devastatingly powerful aura sprang up from her.

“Are you threatening me?” she asked, looking at Bai Xiaochun with eyes as entrancing as the stars in the sky.

However, Bai Xiaochun was not entranced in the least. Seemingly hovering on the brink of insanity, he grated, “No. Not a threat. Just… a promise!”

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t really thinking about what he was saying. If he were, then considering his personality, he wouldn’t ever dare to say something like this to Ghostmother. But… that was just one of the contradictions that was part of Bai Xiaochun.

Although he feared death, whenever he saw someone he considered to be a friend or family member in trouble, he would not flee or act with cowardice!

In this moment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t even know what fear was. All he knew was that Hou Xiaomei’s life was on the line. In fact, he had already decided that, if he had to, he would call upon his apprentice, and even summon the gravekeeper if necessary, to stop Ghostmother!

From the madness in his eyes, it was possible to tell what he was thinking, and how determined he was.... Ghostmother could see it, and it shook her deeply. She could already sense the will of the world around her thrumming in response to the oath that he had just sworn!

For some reason, her heart began to pound. In her eyes, Bai Xiaochun was nothing but a mere deva. Were it not for the gravekeeper’s command medallion that he had, she could crush him to death without even thinking about it. However, her intuition was telling her... that if she consumed Hou Xiaomei’s soul, then one day in the future, she would end up facing an incredibly powerful foe because of it!

In response to that sudden feeling, Ghostmother’s eyes flickered, and the huge mouth she had summoned to consume Hou Xiaomei’s soul suddenly vanished. Waving her hand, she sent Hou Xiaomei’s soul flying back into her body.

“Not a bad physical body. Plus she’s strangely connected to this kid. I guess she would make a good choice for an apprentice.” Having made her decision, she waved her arm, sending the unconscious Hou Xiaomei flying into her sleeve. With that, she turned back to the bone galleon.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly welled up with tears of blood, and he was panting heavily.

Meanwhile, the Celestial continued to fall back in the face of the three ghost faces.

“Ghostmother!” he cried urgently. “We had an agreement! We--”

“We had an agreement?” she interrupted. She laughed. “What a joke!”

The scorn in her eyes couldn’t have been clearer. Before, she had been forced to put on an act, but now, there was no one in this world other than the mysterious gravekeeper who she would possibly fear.

She didn’t even care about this quasi-celestial. Were he not so tied together with the power of the world around him, she might have killed him and turned him into a fourth flag!

“Unfortunately, he is bolstered by the power of the world, which would make him very hard to kill right now…. If only I could break out of the Celestial Realm and into the Archaean Realm…. Then I could ignore the natural laws and kill him. Right now, though, only someone from these lands could kill him without worrying about the blessing of the world.”

To be openly scorned by Ghostmother in front of so many other cultivators caused an unsightly expression to appear on the Celestial’s face.

He was really having a hard time accepting this. Moments ago, victory had been in sight, but now the tables had been completely turned. Not only did his plan to make Gongsun Wan’er a slave fail, but now, Ghostmother was back in a position of power.

“Gravekeeper, you bastard, you’ve blocked me at every turn,” he growled to himself. “You did it in the Wildlands, and now here I can see the traces of your hand…. I refuse to accept this! I vow to escape from this world!! I *rule* this world!!” He truly felt like going mad. After all, if it weren’t for his serious injuries, things would have turned out very different this day.

Before he could say anything else, Ghostmother touched down onto the bone galleon. Although she looked spectacularly beautiful, she also was profoundly scornful.

“Now the time has come to leave his world… and go home. Vile Celestial Bone Galleon: set sail!” With that, she waved her hand, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air, and the entire ship to vibrate. At the same time, the sea of bones surrounding it was transformed into ashes….

Crevices snaked out across the surface of the Deadmire, from within which bone spikes emerged…. In fact, from one of the largest crevices emerged… a sinister bone tail!!

It was almost as if some enormous creature were about to climb out from under the ground! Many of the cultivators that remained felt a massive force slamming into them, causing blood to spray out of their mouths as they were hurled off of the ship!

Bai Xiaochun was included among them….

At the same time, the bone galleon began to rise up into the sky. Countless gasps could be heard as… the main body of the ship, which up to this point had never been seen… became visible!

“This… this….”

“Heavens! The bone galleon is actually only part of something larger! The bigger part… was hidden beneath the surface of the ground!!” Bai Xiaochun was just as shocked as everyone else to see an even larger bone ship rising up from the ground!

More precisely, what had been visible before was only part of the larger bone galleon. Now that the bone sea was destroyed, and the Deadmire was falling apart, the full, ancient ship was being revealed!

Shockingly, it was… an enormous lizard made from bones!!

It was so large that it was almost impossible to look at from one end to the other! Furthermore, the bone galleon which had been visible before… was only part of the lizard’s head!

This shocking development went beyond what anyone could have imagined!

Numerous cultivators, including Bai Lin, Zhao Tianjiao, and others familiar to Bai Xiaochun, were so astonished they coughed up blood.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as Ghostmother threw her arms wide, causing the sky to distort and a vortex to appear.

Through that vortex, Bai Xiaochun could see what appeared to be another world…. Although it wasn’t clear enough to make out any details, he could sense it beyond the shadow of a doubt!

“Time to go home!!” Ghostmother cried. The Deadmire began to collapse as the huge bone lizard shot up toward the vortex!

From a distance, it almost looked like that lizard was punching a hole into the sky!

It was at that exact same moment that Bai Xiaochun realized that, not only was Hou Xiaomei being taken away, but there were other cultivators stuck on the bone galleon as well. In fact, there were dozens!

And one of them was… Big Fatty Zhang!

Big Fatty Zhang stood on the deck, trembling as he looked up at the vortex. Then he looked at Ghostmother with her upraised arms. At that point, a tremor passed through Big Fatty Zhang, and he recalled the dream he had experienced….

“Is this the new world…?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0952 awe-chapter-953

As the bone lizard rose up into the sky, the three ghost faces were tugged unwillingly away from the Celestial and toward the vortex.

However, the laughing-crying ghost face seemed far more defiant than the other two.

“I like this world… I don’t want to leave! I want to stay….” However, no matter how hard it struggled, it couldn’t escape from the control of the bone galleon, and was dragged ever upward.

Soon, the bone lizard was only moments away from entering the vortex. Down below, a look of indescribable longing could be seen on the face of the Celestial.

In terms of attitude, his was the polar opposite of the laughing-crying ghost face. He had long yearned to be able to reach the peak of the world he lived in, and then step beyond it. However, after all this time, he was still stuck in the same place. It was almost as if he were in a huge prison!

He didn’t want to live in this world. He wanted to leave it. If he forced his way out… the world would be destroyed, and everyone in it killed. And yet, he still wanted to leave!

Big Fatty Zhang and the other cultivators stuck on the bone galleon were heading into extreme danger. But for the Celestial, that ship and that vortex represented the future.

The Celestial burst into motion, becoming a beam of bright light that shot toward the vortex!

However… not only did he feel pressure pushing at him from above, but the lands below also tugged him down. It was actually impossible for him to even get close to the vortex!

In fact, the will of the world which was part of him recognized what he was doing, and began to tremble on the verge of collapse. At that point, a howl of defiant rage escaped the Celestial's lips.

"Gravekeeper, you bastard! One of these days… I *will* escape this place!!" His words shook the world like heavenly thunder, and even caused lightning bolts to appear in the air around the huge bone lizard.

A sea of lightning appeared, almost like a huge hand that then grabbed at the lizard.

The Celestial was using his last bit of power to try to prevent the bone galleon from leaving!

Tinged with the power of the Heavenspan River, the lightning hand was golden as it closed in on the bone lizard.

However, before the hand could actually touch the lizard, Ghostmother chuckled coldly and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, black smoke erupted from the lizard and shot toward the golden lightning hand.

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the two made contact. Clearly, the lightning hand was no match for the smoke, as it began to tremble and fall to pieces. Before it could be completely destroyed, though, the laughing-crying ghost face suddenly used an unknown technique to change directions and shoot toward the hand.

This sudden turn of events caught Ghostmother by surprise, and a murderous aura sprang up from her. Even the

Celestial was shocked. However, he reacted quickly, and sent the golden hand speeding toward the laughing-crying ghost face!

A huge boom rang out as the laughing-crying ghost face… was snatched up by the Celestial’s huge hand.

Then… as the hand descended back toward the Celestial, and then opened up, the laughing-crying ghost face was nowhere to be seen….

The Celestial stood there, eyes flickering with thought.

When Ghostmother saw what had occurred, her murderous aura grew even more intense, and yet, she didn’t say anything. Looking back down at the world below one last time, she turned her attention away, and sent the bone lizard into the vortex….

However, it was in that moment that something happened that not even the Celestial could ever have predicted. Down in the destroyed bone sea, a figure shot up into the air at high speed!

It was none other than… Bai Xiaochun!

“Ghostmother, give Hou Xiaomei and my Eldest Brother back to me!!” He had long since decided to throw caution to the wind; he simply couldn’t stand idly by as Hou Xiaomei and Big Fatty Zhang were taken into that vortex.

He moved with incredible speed, shooting up toward the disappearing bone lizard. As for the cultivators who remained down below, they looked on with surprise and astonishment.

The Celestial’s eyes narrowed. From what he could tell, everything that was happening reeked of the gravekeeper’s meddling, and he couldn’t help but be suspicious about why the gravekeeper hadn’t made an appearance.

“The old ghost’s schemes run too deep…. I refuse to believe that he did all this simply to hurt me. There must be some other goal he's working toward!”

Ghostmother looked down from the bone lizard at Bai Xiaochun, and could see the bloodshot madness in his eyes. However, it didn’t matter how fast he was going, there was no way for him to catch up to the bone lizard. Before he could even get close, it was in the vortex and fading away!

In the last moment before it was gone, Ghostmother’s lips moved as she transmitted a message to Bai Xiaochun.

“Don’t worry, I have an agreement with the gravekeeper. Because of that, I will keep your friends safe. The girl has unique qualities that conform to the techniques I cultivate. I will take her as an apprentice. As for the other cultivators onboard, I will keep them safe.”

Bai Xiaochun hovered there in midair, looking powerlessly at the disappearing vortex.

“Xiaomei… Eldest Brother….” At the moment, he felt completely helpless and lonely.

He suddenly thought back to the dream Big Fatty Zhang had told him about…. Clearly, his Eldest Brother had anticipated this moment for a long time.

Bai Xiaochun could only hope… that Ghostmother was telling the truth….

As he grew older, as he advanced his cultivation base and increased his longevity, Bai Xiaochun was coming to realize… that growing up came with a price.

This wasn't his first time feeling it. He had experienced this same sensation often in the past. And it always left him feeling powerless. The only thing he wasn't sure about was whether to blame himself or the world around him.

He just wanted to practice cultivation and be happy. He just wanted to live his life and smile and laugh….

Pain and bitterness gripped his heart as he wondered if he would ever see Big Fatty Zhang and Hou Xiaomei again….

"Hopefully so…." he murmured to himself. He was so wrapped up in his thoughts that he didn't notice how, as the vortex vanished and the Deadmire collapsed, the restrictive spells in the area began to unravel.

There was now nothing in the Deadmire to cause problems for cultivators. Perhaps, after many years passed, the area would return to its normal state… and people would be able to pass through it freely!

The Celestial left to chase the laughing-crying ghost face, and didn't take anyone with him, not even Du Lingfei. Du Lingfei looked up at Bai Xiaochun, mixed emotions visible on her face. She seemed to be in a bleak mood as well, but she managed to take a deep breath, fly up, and grasp Bai Xiaochun's hand.

"Xiaochun, don't be sad…. I'm sure that you'll see them again one day."

Bai Xiaochun looked over, and could tell that, as she clasped his hand, she was trying to pass all of the warmth and hope she could into him. After a long moment, he nodded.

There were less than 200 cultivators left on the shattered bones below. All of them were wounded in one way or another. Even Du Lingfei, despite having been in her father’s bag of holding, had been affected by the battle with Ghostmother and Gongsun Wan’er.

No one was hurt too badly, but all of them would need time to recover. Soon, the entire group began making their way toward the exit of the Deadmire.

Not only did they need to get to a place where they could focus on recovering, but they also needed to determine where exactly they were. Whichever branch of the river was nearest, they would make their way to the riversource sect there, and then use teleportation portals to get home.

They traveled in silence, their hearts heavy. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Guru Spirit Immortal and Master Thousand-Ghost were devas, and as such, leaders within the group, but even they were wounded, and were still trembling in shock from everything that had happened. The trial by fire was not at all how anyone had expected it to be. Profound secrets had been laid bare, secrets which surpassed the imaginations of everyone present.

Eventually, they reached the end of the Deadmire, and found themselves looking at a world of snow and ice. When the twin Master Cloud Lightnings felt the frigid qi in the area, their jaws dropped. They weren’t the only ones. The other cultivators from the north all looked around, eyes sparkling with delight.

“The north! We're in the north!!”

“I can sense the frigid spiritual energy of the north!!”

This part of the Deadmire… was attached to the northern Heavenspan River region!

Bai Xiaochun was still dispirited and downcast. However, it was in that moment that his expression flickered, and he looked down at his bag of holding.

“Is something wrong?” Du Lingfei asked curiously.

“No. It’s nothing….” he replied, avoiding the topic. However, waves of shock were battering his heart. Just now, he had sensed that, within the coffin that Patriarch Spirit Stream had given him, the sleeping baby girl… had murmured something to him!

“The aura of home….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0953 awe-chapter-954

Bai Xiaochun was quite certain that he wasn’t hearing things. Whether it was the voice in his head, or the fluctuations coming from his bag of holding, he was certain that…

“She’s awake!!” Shaken, he sent a stream of divine sense into his bag of holding to check on the coffin. However, all observations indicated that the baby girl was sleeping, her eyes closed, not a trace of life force on her whatsoever.

Because of how many people were around, he couldn’t very well take out the coffin and examine it closely in front of them. Therefore, he buried his questions in his heart, looked over at Du Lingfei, and shook his head.

“No. It’s nothing.…”

Before Du Lingfei could respond, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings chuckled coldly. “Of course it’s nothing. What, you find out you’re in the north, and you're scared all of a sudden?!”

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings had been suppressing their anger for too long now. Bai Xiaochun had killed their beloved apprentice, creating a grudge that could only be resolved by death. However, the details of Bai Xiaochun’s identity had caused intense fear to spring up in their hearts. Not only had they not dared to try to kill him, but being worried that he would try to get revenge on them, they had already considered giving him some gifts to smooth things over.

But after everything which had occurred later, and given that the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were devas, they were easily able to see… how the Celestial actually viewed the situation.

“The Celestial doesn’t really view him as a son-in-law…. Although he’s in some sort of relationship with Du Lingfei, unless the Celestial approves of it, he’s just like any other deva. In any of the other rivers, I might need to fear him, but this is the north! Even if he’s a dragon normally, he's a worm to me here!”

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings chuckled coldly, and did nothing to mask the cold gleams in their eyes. The truth was, just as they had been musing, in the north, which was controlled by their sect, they would have the upper hand when dealing with Bai Xiaochun.

In response to the twin Master Cloud Lightnings’ words, the other surrounding cultivators’ expressions flickered. The cultivators from the south and the west didn’t say anything; they didn’t want to get involved in any posturing right now. But things were different with the northerners.

Virtually all of the northern cultivators’ eyes glittered. Now that they were surrounded by frigid qi, their cultivation bases could rotate more rapidly than before. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun and the other easterners, they adopted the same, hostile attitude as the twin Master Cloud Lightnings.

The eastern cultivators wanted to make a stand of sorts, but the dangers they had faced recently, and the fact that they were now in the north, sapped them of any ability to do so.

As for Bai Xiaochun, under normal circumstances, he would not have simply accepted the twin Master Cloud Lightnings’ ridicule, and the hostility of the northern cultivators. But right now, he was in no mood for such things. His heart still hurt because of Hou Xiaomei and Big Fatty Zhang. Furthermore, he was still feeling shaken that the baby girl had spoken to him.

The only thing he wanted to do was go to the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect’s teleportation portal and leave this place. Furthermore, he had no desire to go back to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. He wanted to go back to the River-Defying Sect, and take some time to calm down and recover.

Therefore, it was in rare fashion that he didn’t even respond. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings said more snide things, and the northern cultivators continued to glare at him in hostile fashion, but he just walked onward.

He felt like returning to the east on his own, and the truth was that he had his ways to do that if he wanted to. But he couldn’t leave the other eastern cultivators behind on their own. If he did, they could very well end up suffering because of it.

When the twin Master Cloud Lightnings saw Bai Xiaochun’s reaction, they laughed coldly, but ceased any sarcastic jibes. After all, the visiting cultivators were just passing through, and would reach the teleportation portal soon.

“He’s just lucky!” The truth was that the twin Master Cloud Lightnings had hoped that Bai Xiaochun would start arguing with them, and provide an excuse to fight. Although they probably couldn’t kill him, they could at least injure him in a way that would take dozens of years to recover!

Du Lingfei never got to reply to Bai Xiaochun. However, the look in her eye when she saw the northerners’ hostility was noticed by the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, and was another main reason why he didn’t take any action.

And thus, the cultivators left the Deadmire and headed into the northern Heavenspan River region. The northerners were all very excited, whereas the cultivators from the other three river branches were much more reserved.

The lands around them were frozen, the sky was dark, and an icy cold breeze blew constantly, providing the only sound to be heard...

There were ice mountains everywhere, jagged and sharp, and profoundly cold. Occasional flurries of snowflakes would rise up, but considering the cultivation bases of the travelers, they would melt as soon as they touched them.

In surroundings like these, mortals would quickly freeze to death. But even the weakest of these cultivators were in the Nascent Soul stage, and thus, they were unharmed.

Before long, they caught sight of a mighty, golden river which flowed off into the distance. It was none other than the northern Heavenspan River!

In the north, where it was so cold that virtually nothing could live, the Heavenspan River water flowed eternally, and was not frozen....

“So this is the north....” Bai Xiaochun murmured, looking around and thinking about the Spirit Stream Sect, and the Frigid School....

There was little talk as the cultivators turned into bright beams of light and shot through the freezing lands toward the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.

Before long, that mighty and majestic sect was on the horizon. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun looked up and saw… an enormous and shocking waterfall at the end of the Heavenspan River!

Just like the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the waterfall connected the sea above with the river below, fueling the flow of the river.

At the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the area surrounding the waterfall was filled with lush vegetation. But the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect was different. The area surrounding the waterfall was a vast expanse of frozen white.

Furthermore, flanking the waterfall on either side were two enormous statues of ice!

They were majestic to the point of defying description, and radiated a shocking energy and profound pressure.

The statue on the left depicted a scholarly and refined middle-aged man. He was gazing up into the heavens, and even stretching out his right hand out toward the sky!

His hand was empty of any physical object. However… it propped up a majestic white cloud, so large that it appeared to be a land mass of some sort.

In fact, countless buildings existed on the cloud, and beams of light could be seen flying to and fro between them. Those beams of light were obviously cultivators!

Bai Xiaochun gasped at the sight of it. Based on what he remembered learning of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, he realized that the cloud in the hand of that statue must be… the sect’s Cloud Order!

“In that case, the Lightning Order must be on the right.” He shifted his gaze to the statue on the right, which also depicted a middle-aged man. However, this man was by no means scholarly and refined. He looked like a warrior, with blazing, threatening eyes. Furthermore, lightning danced to and fro all over him.

There was a cloud in his upraised left hand as well, but this cloud was black. It looked like a storm cloud, and much like the white cloud on the other side of the river, was covered with buildings and filled with cultivators.

In addition to the difference in color, this cloud appeared to be filled with silver lightning bolts, as well as the muffled rumble of thunder.

It was none other than the Lightning Order!

“The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect ranks their disciples by cultivation base. First heaven disciples are the lowest ranked, with ninth heaven disciples being the highest.... Furthermore, their sect is split into two orders, those being the Cloud Order and the Lightning Order....” At this point, his gaze drifted upward, beyond the clouds being held up by the statues... to two coffins, one large and one small!

The large coffin was pitch black, and emanated an air of extreme ancientness, as though it had existed for countless years within the stream of time. Within that coffin, Bai Xiaochun could just barely make out deva fluctuations....

“That must be the equivalent of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s blue rainbow. That's where their devas reside.... That means the smaller coffin must be the home of the demigod.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he focused his gaze on the ultimate pinnacle of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect….

There, was a crystal coffin!

It was only thirty percent the size of the pitch-black coffin, but it occupied the highest location in the sect, and emanated a shocking aura.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings looked around at the shocked expressions on the faces of the surrounding cultivators, smiled, and said, “Welcome to the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.”

The northern cultivators were all visibly excited to be home after such a deadly ordeal. In almost the same moment that the twin Master Cloud Lightnings spoke, piercing whistling sounds erupted from within the sect, and numerous beams of light shot down from the two clouds, as well as from the black coffin.

There were also deva fluctuations! One, two, three, four!!

Four sets of deva fluctuations pushed away the will of the heavens as four enormous faces appeared up above, to stare down at the newly arrived crowd!

The gazes of one of those faces suddenly shifted to focus on Bai Xiaochun, and then spoke in a voice that echoed like the roar of heavenly thunder!

“You… killed a disciple from the north, didn’t you… Bai Xiaochun!?!?”

This deva clearly had ill intentions, and was domineering to the extreme.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyelid twitched….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0954 awe-chapter-955

Of these four northern devas, three were men and one was a woman. The woman was not middle-aged, but neither was she young. However, she was very beautiful, albeit grimly frightening. Of the three men, two were older, and one was middle-aged. The latter was very handsome, with sword-like eyebrows and eyes that glittered like stars. Bai Xiaochun had seen quite a few handsome male cultivators in his time, but had to admit that none of them could compare to this man in terms of good looks.

In fact, it left him feeling a little prickly. This middle-aged cultivator was just *too* handsome. Plus, he had a very high cultivation base. Considering how his eyes glittered, he was clearly the type who female cultivators would find incredibly attractive.

By this point, the cultivators from the west and south, including Master Thousand-Ghost and Guru Spirit Immortal, had all backed away from the eastern cultivators.

Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Lin both had nervous expressions on their face. As for Song Que, he wasn’t quite sure how to feel. Although he was nervous, he was also itching to see what Bai Xiaochun would do.

After all, it seemed like an irresolvable situation. The northern devas probably wouldn't dare to actually kill Bai Xiaochun, but it seemed unlikely that they would hold back from unleashing their fury on him.

Song Que was right in his assessment. The twin Master Cloud Lightnings had sent messages on their way back, which led to the northern devas immediately coming to cause problems for Bai Xiaochun upon his arrival.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings chuckled coldly, their eyes flickering with icy light. “Hmph! Maybe we can’t handle him alone, but with everyone together, it should be easy!”

Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt the pressure building up. Although he was in a despondent mood, this sudden development with the devas caused his heart to begin to pound. Without the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect had four devas. However, if the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were counted….

Then Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure if that meant they had six devas or five…. Either way, he would be completely dominated. And that wasn’t even mentioning the fact that there was a demigod in that crystal coffin up above.

To have four enormous deva faces staring down at him caused him to groan inwardly. In fact, if the twin Master Cloud Lightnings weren’t present, he would definitely look around in confusion and ask who Bai Xiaochun was….

But now, he had no choice but to take a deep breath and stare back with bloodshot eyes.

“I'm a mighty and majestic deva!” he thought. “Even if my bones get broken and my blood gets spilled, I can’t let myself look scared!” Heart thrumming with madness, he stepped forward, looked up at the faces and… slipped his arm around Du Lingfei’s waist.

Du Lingfei had already been trying to think of a way to resolve the situation, but before she could even do anything, Bai Xiaochun stepped forward and put his arm around her.

Shocked, she looked over. To any observer, Bai Xiaochun would look impressive to the extreme, the type of person who looked down condescendingly on all creation…. Then, in front of all of the cultivators from the north, west, and south, and as the eastern cultivators looked on nervously to see how things would play out, Bai Xiaochun leaned over and kissed Du Lingfei loudly on the cheek….

Song Que’s eyes went blank with shock, and the twin Master Cloud Lightnings frowned. The northern devas looked on in shock… especially the handsome cultivator, whose eyes began to burn with anger.

“Wifey,” Bai Xiaochun said loudly, “since our dad, the exalted Celestial, is gone, that leaves it up to us to patrol the north. Oh, I seem to remember that you have an Elder Brother here, right? Could you put in a good word for me with him? Actually, since we’re already here in the north, we should probably go offer some formal greetings!”

Song Que gasped out loud. Zhao Tianjiao and Bai Lin stared with eyes as wide as saucers. As for Master Thousand-Ghost and Guru Spirit Immortal, they looked on with expressions of complete disbelief.

Although the twin Master Cloud Lightnings had been aware of the general situation, they could never have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would so shamelessly bank on his tenuous connection to the demigod patriarch.

The other northern devas were clearly hesitating. The truth was that even they were scared of Du Lingfei. At the same time, they were profoundly struck by how shameless Bai Xiaochun was!

“A mighty and majestic deva who seeks help from a woman! What kind of a clown is this guy?!”

“This Bai Xiaochun is exactly like the rumors say he is! He’s treacherous, crafty, and has no sense of shame!!”

Bai Xiaochun couldn't care less what the crowd was thinking, and even gave a proud harrumph. As far as he was concerned, only an idiot would start a fight in a situation like this.

Du Lingfei was feeling very out of sorts. Face scarlet, she glared over at Bai Xiaochun, opened her mouth, and was about to say something when an enraged shout interrupted her from above.

“Get your filthy hands off of her, Bai Xiaochun!!” It was none other than the handsome, middle-aged deva, who became a bright beam of light that shot down toward Bai Xiaochun.

He had a mid Deva Realm cultivation base, and drew fully upon it, becoming a destructive meteor that bore down on Bai Xiaochun in the blink of an eye.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised by this handsome cultivator’s outburst, but there was no time to ponder the situation. Without any hesitation, he clenched his left hand into a fist and punched out into the air toward the man.

A rumbling boom could be heard, and Bai Xiaochun fell back a few paces, as did the handsome cultivator. At the same time, a murderous aura sprang up from Du Lingfei, and she shouted, “What do you think you're doing, Feng Chen!?”

Pointing angrily at Bai Xiaochun, Feng Chen said, “Lingfei, I can’t believe this cretin would dare to sully you in my presence! I'm going to kill him!”

Bai Xiaochun was more than a little surprised at how this handsome Feng Chen addressed Du Lingfei. Blinking a few times, he looked at Du Lingfei and said, “You two know each other?”

Before Du Lingfei could reply, Feng Chen blurred into motion, attacking Bai Xiaochun yet again. At the same time, the other devas began to move in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Bai Xiaochun gasped at the sensation of so much killing intent directed at him. There were four devas coming at him from all directions, making escape impossible. No matter which way he dodged, he would be facing a dangerous attack. At this point, cracking sounds filled the air as he roared and drew upon the Living Mountain Incantation!

Without any hesitation, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash, the Undying Hex, and a quintuple-power Undying Emperor’s Fist!

The frigid coldness in the area suddenly grew more intense. The four northern devas were clearly surprised by this shocking fist strike, and yet none of them backed up. Instead, they continued on with full force to meet it.

A huge boom rang out, and Bai Xiaochun staggered backward. At the same time, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings leaped into the fray. Now there were six devas working together. As they closed in, they sealed off the spiritual power in the area, making it more difficult to utilize divine abilities.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout as he got ready to crush one of his drops of Undying Blood. After all, he had no other options at his disposal; these people were being complete bullies, leaving him with only his Godkiller technique, which he couldn't control very well!

"Cultivators from the other three river branches," he said, "back up immediately!" It was a critical moment in which Bai Xiaochun was just about to use the Godkiller. Only a few breaths' worth of time had passed since the northern devas made their move, and already, it was a dangerous situation.

At this point, Du Lingfei looked up at the crystal coffin and spoke in a loud voice, "Elder Brother Zhou, is this how you treat your Junior Sister when she brings people for a visit?! According to the rules my father set for the trial by fire, deaths would be unavoidable. Don't tell me the north plans to use governmental authority to avenge private grudges?!"

The instant Du Lingfei finished speaking, laughter rang out from the crystal coffin. Then, the sky flashed with bright colors as a young man appeared out of thin air. He waved his hand, and although it didn't seem like he exerted any power to do so, massive force exploded in the air between Bai Xiaochun and the other devas!

The six northerners' divine abilities were instantly suppressed, and a gentle force shoved them backward. Things didn't go as smoothly for Bai Xiaochun, though. His divine abilities were forcefully crushed, and a powerful force slammed into him.

He grunted, coughing up a mouthful of blood as he staggered backward several steps. Gasping for breath, he looked up with bloodshot eyes at the young man hovering up above, radiating demigod fluctuations.

A very grim expression overtook Bai Xiaochun's face. Were it not for his unusually strong fleshly body, the blow from just now would have seriously injured him.

The young man glanced at Bai Xiaochun, then shifted his gaze to Du Lingfei, toward whom he smiled and said, "Little

Junior Sister, do you really need to talk to your Fourth Elder Brother like that? Well, I guess I shouldn’t get into any bickering. Men, activate the teleportation portal and send these cultivators back home to the other three river branches!”

Immediately, elders from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect activated the teleportation portal, causing rumbling sounds to fill the sect. Master Thousand-Ghost and Guru Spirit Immortal offered respectful greetings to the demigod patriarch, and then led their subordinates to the teleportation portal. Within moments, they vanished.

Bai Xiaochun suppressed his rage, and led his own people toward the teleportation portal, surrounded by the sarcastic gazes and cold comments of the northern cultivators, as well as the naked killing intent of the devas.

However… it was in that moment that intense fluctuations which surpassed the demigod’s suddenly descended onto the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. The demigod’s face fell, and even Du Lingfei looked surprised. Bai Xiaochun and the easterners looked up to see an enormous magical symbol descending from the sky. At a certain point, the symbol shattered, and a solemn voice echoed out in all directions!

“Bai Xiaochun is hereby appointed as a special guard to the emissary. He will assist Heavenspan Emissary Du Lingfei… in an inspection tour of the north!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0955 awe-chapter-956

It was a Dharmic decree from the Celestial himself!

Bai Xiaochun was visibly stunned, as were the northerners and easterners. Thoughtful expressions could be seen on the faces of Du Lingfei and the demigod.

Silence prevailed for a long moment before Bai Xiaochun finally regained his senses. At that point, sweat began to drip down his forehead. After all, he knew that everyone in the north disliked him.

“Uh… I'm probably not a good fit. Let’s just go back to the east.” Feeling like he might start crying at any moment, he made a beeline for the teleportation portal.

However, in the moment he started moving, the demigod snorted coldly and waved his hands, causing powerful invisible bonds to wrap around Bai Xiaochun and prevent him from taking another step.

Bai Xiaochun could then do nothing but watch anxiously as all of the easterners hurried over to the teleportation portal, and then disappeared.

As of this point, Bai Xiaochun was now the only person left from one of the other sects, and he was surrounded by countless glaring northerners.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings and the other devas were all cracking sarcastic jokes amongst themselves. After all, it would have been one thing if Bai Xiaochun had been promoted to the position of emissary. But he was now nothing more than a guard. Therefore, there were plenty of ways the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect could cause problems for him.

“Who would have thought that you would end up staying here, Bai Xiaochun? Well, I hope you enjoy your stay in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.”

“It doesn’t matter how you threw your weight around back in the east. Here in the north… you’ll have no choice but to bow your head!”

The devas had already decided that, even though they couldn’t kill Bai Xiaochun, considering they were on home ground, they would definitely come up with plenty of ways to torment him.

All of the other lower-ranking cultivators were laughing and joking as well. After all, it was a rare thing to be able to make fun of a deva without fearing any consequences.

It all made sense. Bai Xiaochun had killed Master Lightning Origin, sowing a deep personal grudge between himself and the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, a grudge which extended to include all of the north.

Bai Xiaochun knew that there was no getting around it.

“I don’t want to stay here….” he wailed inwardly. As for Du Lingfei, a wry smile appeared on her face. Although she wasn’t sure exactly what her father was thinking, she did have business here in the north. Although she hadn’t anticipated having Bai Xiaochun around at the same time, there was nothing she could do to change it.

At this point, Feng Chen cast a cold glare at Bai Xiaochun, then walked forward and clasped hands in formal fashion to the demigod patriarch and Du Lingfei.

“Patriarch,” he said loudly, “I can accept the fact that this Bai Xiaochun has been appointed as a Heavenspan special guard, and will be stationed here in the north. But… considering how dangerous of a person he is, I suggest that we place some limitations on him, effective immediately!”

Bai Xiaochun wanted to offer a retort, but at the moment, the bonds placed on him by the demigod made it impossible to speak. All he could do was curse inwardly.

The other devas, especially the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, agreed immediately, and began to voice their assent.

“It makes perfect sense! He might be a special guard, but he's also a foreign deva. We can’t just let him do whatever he wants in our sect!”

“That’s right. Patriarch, a mere glance at this Bai Xiaochun and one can see that he harbors ill intentions. The best thing would be to put some rules in place to keep him in check.”

Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety began to mount, and Du Lingfei frowned.

Although the demigod patriarch hadn’t openly agreed with Feng Chen, neither had he interrupted or refused. Therefore, Feng Chen smiled and clasped hands again.

“Patriarch, I suggest that as long as Bai Xiaochun is in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, he must abide by a three-point covenant!

“First, he will not be allowed to reside in the black coffin. He can stay in the Cloud Order, and will not be allowed to step off it a single pace. If he does… he’ll be confined in the Lightning Order’s Lightning Penitentiary!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was racing like mad, but all he could do was curse madly inside.

Feng Chen could guess how Bai Xiaochun was reacting, and even went so far as to look over and stare at him as he continued speaking.

“Second. He will not concoct pills while in the north. His Dao of medicine is bizarre, and so powerful that it can destroy even a riversource sect. Therefore, he must abide strictly by this second point. If he does not, he will not just be locked up in Lightning Penitentiary, but he will also be placed on death row and executed!”

The words were spoken with utmost solemnity, and caused a bit of humiliation to enter into the madness that raged in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. After all, considering what had happened recently in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, he hadn’t planned to do any pill concocting….

“And now the third point…. Hmph! The spiritual power of heaven and earth in the north belongs to us northern cultivators. How could we possible just give it to a foreigner to use in cultivation? As long as Bai Xiaochun is in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, if he absorbs the slightest sliver of spiritual power, he will be locked up in Lightning Penitentiary!”

This three-point covenant was cruel and harsh, to say the least. All of the surrounding northern cultivators were convinced that it would have Bai Xiaochun completely locked down and bereft of hope. Even the twin Master Cloud

Lightnings were shocked, and looked over at Feng Chen with complete approval.

Everything Feng Chen had said made sense, and seemed to be designed for the benefit of the north. Even the somewhat unreasonable third demand met with the approval of all of the surrounding cultivators.

After all, the spiritual energy in the north did belong to the northerners, so for a person from the east to take it was basically theft!

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was going insane, and was even trembling. However, he was still incapable of doing anything other than scream in his heart.

“Bullies! Complete and utter bullies!!”

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about the situation. And although he wasn’t sure what exactly Du Lingfei was tasked with doing up here, he was fairly convinced that the Celestial was doing this in revenge for being slapped in the trial by fire.

Du Lingfei was currently looking coldly at Feng Chen, and doing nothing to conceal her anger and murderous aura.

“This is absurd,” she said coolly. “To enforce a three-point covenant like this on a Heavenspan special guard is a complete joke!”

Feng Chen hesitated, but didn’t respond. A moment passed, and the demigod chuckled.

“I think it's a wonderful idea,” he said. “Let’s do it.”

“Fourth Elder Brother,” Du Lingfei said, “you--”

“I'm not sure about the details of your relationship with Bai Xiaochun, Little Junior Sister. But you can rest at ease. As a special guard, he will not lose his life here so long as he doesn’t kill any northern cultivators. By the way, I need to remind you… that this is the north.” Chuckling again, he turned and vanished.

As he left, the bonds holding Bai Xiaochun in place faded away. He had seen how Du Lingfei leapt to his defense, and had also seen the cold attitude of the demigod patriarch, and it filled him with a sense of hopelessness.

“Ah, whatever,” he thought, sighing. “I’ll just do my best to behave. I hope boo’s inspection tour will end soon….”

Du Lingfei looked very anxious. Considering that her father was still injured, and given how badly the trial by fire had gone, it wasn’t just the demigod from the north who was feeling displeased with the Celestial….

And thus, with no way to change the outcome of events, Bai Xiaochun scowled on the verge of tears as he was ‘escorted’ to the white cloud above the statue of the refined and scholarly man. There, he was given the same residence that a first heaven disciple of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect would get.

It was simple and crude, and in a remote location on the cloud. When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he sighed and tromped inside, scowling the entire way.

Days passed, and soon Bai Xiaochun felt like he was going crazy. Wherever he went in the Cloud Order, people glared at him, even ones with very low cultivation bases. These were people he could kill without any effort, and yet they looked at him with the same scorn they would show a prisoner with a lower cultivation base than their own.

If he ever got close to the border of the Cloud Order, a stream of deva divine sense would lock onto him.

Obviously, if he stepped off of the cloud, he would be imprisoned.

He also couldn’t practice cultivation. He could sense that he was constantly being monitored, and therefore, if he absorbed some of the spiritual power of heaven and earth, he would be violating the three-point covenant, and would be punished.

He had never been restricted in this way before, and it was reaching the point where he couldn’t take it. For the first time in his life, he actually wished he could do some pill concocting. In this place, he wouldn’t feel a scrap of guilt if anything strange happened. In fact, he would hope for it to….

“And yet… these bastards actually said I can’t concoct pills!!”

--

Trivia note: The “three-point covenant” is a common Chinese idiom that literally refers to some laws made by Emperor Gaozu of the Han Dynasty. Later, the idiom came to refer to general rules and agreements. Here, it's being literally used to mean a rule with three stipulations

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0956 awe-chapter-957

“How is a person supposed to live like this?!?!” To Bai Xiaochun, it felt like being trapped in a pit of despair. By this point, he was absolutely furious at the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about the situation. He couldn’t beat six devas in a fight, and that wasn’t even mentioning the demigod patriarch. Therefore, he simply had to endure.

“Grin and bear it!” he growled, tugging furiously at his hair. He had never been in such torment in his entire life, a situation in which all he could do was sit there and stare off into the sky.

He couldn’t cultivate his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. And when it came to his Undying Blood… he didn’t have enough life force to work with.

Other than sitting around bored, the only thing he could do was… sit around bored. Eventually, Du Lingfei came over to see him, and could tell from his disheveled state how dispirited he was, and that he was having a difficult time enduring.

“Xiaochun, just wait a little bit longer,” she said comfortingly. “And absolutely, positively do not do anything rash. I have an important mission to accomplish here for father. I’ll try to get it done as quickly as possible, and then we can leave this place.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded dully, not even glancing at her as he continued to stare out into nothing.

Du Lingfei sighed, looked at him for a long moment, and then flew out of the sect.

Several more days passed, during which Bai Xiaochun simply sat around with nothing to do. Eventually, the northern devas realized that he was going to behave himself. However, they simply snorted coldly and proceeded to keep a very close eye on him.

There was nothing else Bai Xiaochun could do other than stare off into the distance. The truth was that he really had no idea of what else to possibly do. He tried reaching out to the little turtle, but didn’t get even a single response.

As for the baby girl in the coffin, he didn’t dare to bring her out, not with so many eyes monitoring him day and night.

Eventually, he had been sitting around bored for about half a month. One evening, he was sitting there as listless as usual, watching the deep red sunset, and the moon climbing up into the sky.

It was in that very moment that, without any warning, he heard a faint sigh.

Along with the sigh, he sensed certain fluctuations in his bag of holding….

“The aura of home….”

Bai Xiaochun very nearly gasped, but managed to keep himself under control. Despite the tsunamis of shock battering at his heart, he kept the expression of boredom on his face.

Without the slightest hesitation, he spoke into his mind, “Are you speaking to me, true spirit?!”

A long moment passed in which he got no response. Anxious, he was just contemplating taking the coffin out to look at, when the same faint voice was again transmitted into his mind.

“It’s me.... Thank you for letting me once again feel... the aura of home....”

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very deeply shaken. To have the baby girl awaken in his moment of profound boredom had him feeling extremely excited. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to respond.

“How are you able to wake up without a River-Defying Pill?”

“My body isn’t awake,” continued the voice, “only my mind.... The north used to be my home, and the spiritual energy here is very beneficial to me.... If I can absorb enough of it, then it will be just as effective as a Hundred Breaths River-Defying Pill.... Unfortunately, even my mind can’t stay awake very long right now....”

Worried that she would fall asleep soon, he quickly went on with the conversation. “The aura of home? Patriarch Spirit Stream once told me that the Spirit Stream Sect used to be a riversource sect from the north... the Frigid School. Is that what you’re talking about?”

“The Frigid School....” The baby girl laughed softly, a bitter laughter that seemed filled with reminiscence. “You’re right. The Frigid School.... Once upon a time, I was the Celestial’s top apprentice. In his campaign against the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, I killed multiple heavenly kings. I eventually helped him drive the dynasty completely out of the Heavenspan

River region…. Later, it was to help him defend the northern river region that I founded the riversource sect here… the Frigid School!”

“What?” he said, stunned. He had originally been interested in talking mostly because he was so bored. Never could he have imagined that a single question on his part would reveal astonishing secrets! It seemed almost unbelievable that this baby girl had once been the Celestial’s top apprentice. After all, the current apprentices of the Celestial were the demigod patriarchs of the four riversource sects.

“How did….” he began, but then hesitated.

“You want to know how I ended up like this, and why the Frigid School was replaced by the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect…?

“Well, the answer is simple…. The Celestial wanted it that way. Otherwise, there is no way that Zhou Daoyi… could have possibly been a match for me, even if he was a demigod!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he began panting. This new information from the baby girl was simply too astonishing. He simply couldn’t imagine what the Frigid School’s demigod expert could possibly have done to cause the Celestial to ignore the Master-apprentice bond and kill her. And why was she still around, a discarnate soul in the form of a baby girl?!

The baby girl could sense what Bai Xiaochun was thinking. After a moment of silence, she continued, “Child, I’m prepared to give you some spectacular good fortune, if you dare to take it!”

After a moment of hesitation, he asked, “Is it dangerous?”

This time, half an incense stick’s worth of time passed before her voice thrummed in his mind again.

“I'm very curious why the Spirit Stream Sect would possibly give my coffin to you….”

Feeling a bit embarrassed, Bai Xiaochun decided to explain himself a bit. “Uh… I guess it must be because I like to play things safe. Hahaha….”

Ignoring him, the baby girl continued. “Back when I realized the Celestial was planning to kill me, I made plenty of preparations. Although my true self died, I managed to send out a soulclone…. The soulclone possessed the body of a true spirit, and erased all traces of my aura from it. Because of that, it was impossible for the Celestial to detect me.

“However, I only possessed the true spirit because my first plan failed. I originally wanted to possess a world treasure! The world treasure was not completed in time. If it had, then given the Celestial’s cultivation base at the time, I might have been able to take him out!”

Unable to hold back, Bai Xiaochun asked, “World treasure?”

“The lands of the north in their entirety form the foundation of a world treasure. It was forged starting from the very depths of the ice here…. Do you understand what type of magical item I’m talking about? A *world treasure!”* In this moment, the baby girl seemed completely domineering and powerful!

As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes were nearly popping out of his skull.

“You took all of the lands of the north and used them to create a treasure? But… the north is so huge….” After all, the north was just like the east, almost like a continent in terms of size.

And yet, here this baby girl was saying that those lands were used as the foundation of a magical item, albeit one that was never completed….

Despite being a deva, this sounded like nothing more than a fairy tale to Bai Xiaochun.

“Heavens!” he thought. “I was just bored and wanted someone to talk to! Who would have thought that the conversation would be as monumental as this!?” He couldn’t help but look down at the ground below and think about the idea of it being part of a huge magical item.

At this point, the baby girl continued speaking. “I can sense that after all the years which have passed, the magical item… has fully taken shape. I need your help to finish the process. Once I become the spirit automaton of the treasure, I can repay you… by bonding the item to you!

“The only requirement I have… is that you kill the Celestial!

“The treasure will be incredibly powerful. It will take all of the lands of the north, remove them from the Heavenspan Realm, and transform them into… a frigid greatsword!

“The cultivators who live in the north, as well as any other living beings who have proliferated here, will not die. They will live in the world of the magical item. And once the sword is bonded to you… you will be its owner and master!

“At the same time… when I fuse with the world treasure, I can give you access to the boundless spiritual energy of heaven and earth that has built up in it over the years. In a very short period of time, your cultivation base… may very well jump all the way into the Demigod Realm!

“That is the good fortune I wish to give you… And now, you need to tell me whether or not you dare to take it!” The baby girl spoke with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0957 awe-chapter-958

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t control his breathing, and his eyes shone with intense brightness.

The mere thought of this good fortune caused him to visualize himself wielding a massive sword forged from the northern lands. He would sweep across all creation, and countless individuals with weaker cultivation bases than himself would gaze at him with awe and fervor.

That would truly be the peak of life! He could imagine how he would throw his head back and laugh uproariously, then flick his sleeve, stick his chin up and coolly say, *With the flick of a sleeve, I, Bai Xiaochun, reduced all heaven and earth to ashes....*

As he continued to imagine the scene which would play out when he became the ruler of the north, he saw the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, the furious Feng Chen, and even the demigod patriarch, all standing next to him, their hands tucked into opposite sleeves as they bowed and scraped....

Already, his excitement was building. However, after a moment, he hesitated. To have something amazing like this just fall out of the sky into his lap seemed a bit odd. At the same time, he figured that it wouldn’t be good to seem too eager.

Therefore, he cleared his throat and hesitantly said, “Well, the thing is--”

However, before he could say anything else, the baby girl interrupted. “I can’t stay awake for very long before needing to sleep again…. Tell me your answer the next time I wake up….” Then her voice faded away into nothing.

“Huh?” Surprised, he called out into his mind a few more times, but got no answer. Shaking his head, he came to the conclusion that the baby girl really had fallen unconscious again.

“She passed out way too quickly! I wasn’t even finished talking!” At this moment, his heart was itching with anticipation. The good fortune the baby girl had offered him was simply too enticing.

Sadly, there was nothing he could do about it now. The baby girl was too weak, so he would have to wait until the next time she woke up before continuing to discuss the matter. Sighing, he tried to figure out if the girl had intentionally fallen asleep right at that moment….

After analyzing the matter a bit, he couldn’t be sure, so he started thinking about what he would say the next time he could talk to her.

In the following days, he continued to look bored, but the truth was that with this new topic to ponder, he had plenty to think about.

Ten days passed by in a flash. Bai Xiaochun waited and waited, but the baby girl never woke up. It reached the point where he was so anxious for it to happen that it felt like ants were marching across his heart day and night.

At the same time, he had gotten used to life in the north. He followed all the rules, neither leaving the Cloud Order, concocting pills, or absorbing any of the energy of heaven and earth in the area.

Because of how well he behaved himself, the northerners, while they still didn’t like him, also couldn’t find anything to complain about.

He was still kept under close watch, though. Even the six devas would occasionally keep tabs on him. Countless disciples in the Cloud Order would talk about him, and even laugh coldly sometimes as they looked at his residence from afar.

“Bai Xiaochun has a reputation for being really aggressive, but now that he’s here in the north, he had no choice but to bow his head! You know, it feels great to be able to bully a deva like this.”

“Deva? Ha! Here in the north, he can’t do anything! You guys should have seen it when he got put in his place. It was hilarious!”

“You know, I heard stories about Bai Xiaochun before. Supposedly, he causes disasters everywhere he goes. I’d always assumed he was some kind of superhuman monster, but I guess those were just exaggerations!”

Talk like this floated around the entire time. Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested in listening to it, his keen deva divine sense made it almost impossible not to.

“This is outrageous! I can’t believe they’re being so sarcastic even though I'm behaving myself!” The more he heard, the angrier he got. Furthermore, considering that the baby girl wouldn’t wake up, it eventually got the point where time seemed to slow to an agonizing crawl.

“Enough is enough! I don’t care if I have no freedom, I have to work on my cultivation!” Bai Xiaochun had never thought of himself as a person who was truly into cultivation. But now that he was in the north, he had really begun to miss it.

After all, whenever he was in seclusion practicing cultivation, it was almost like being asleep. Time would fly by incredibly quickly.

“My Undying Blood needs life force, but I don’t have access to any cultivation resources, and I can’t bring that golden skeleton I found out into the open.... My Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation requires the energy of heaven and earth, but the northerners won’t let me absorb any....” It was a really frustrating situation, like an endless useless cycle. No matter what ideas he came up with, nothing seemed viable. There had to be a way to circumvent the three-point covenant and figure out a way to work on his cultivation!

A few days later, he looked up, hair disheveled and eyes bloodshot, yet shining with bright light. Smacking his thigh, he laughed loudly.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, am a complete genius!! Hahaha! Won’t let me leave the Cloud Order? Fine, I won’t! Won’t let me absorb the energy of heaven and earth! Fine, I won’t! Won’t let me concoct pills? Fine, I won’t! I can always go sell medicinal pills!”

He was already starting to get excited at the prospect of selling some medicinal pills to earn spirit stones.

Then, he could use those spirit stones to work on his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. As far as how quickly he could progress, it would all come down to how many spirit stones he could get.

“Ordinary medicinal pills won’t be easy to sell. However, I have two types of pills that will definitely work!” With that, he excitedly slapped his bag of holding to produce two medicinal pill bottles.

Looking down at them, his eyes began to burn with passion and pride.

“Everybody needs an Aphrodisiac Pill once in a while! And once you consume a Fantasy Pill, you’ll never want to go back!” Sighing, he mused that it was a good thing he had concocted so many medicinal pills in his spare time back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Without the stockpile he had built up, he would really be at a dead end here in the north.

He had already figured out the best way to go about selling pills. Obviously, he couldn’t just sell these two types, so therefore he would add in some other miscellaneous items as well, and sell everything together. After getting everything ready, a bit of hesitation lurked in his heart. But then the thought about how outrageous the northerners were being, scorning and ridiculing him constantly. And then there was the blood feud between the Frigid School and the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. At that point, he gritted his teeth.

“You people are forcing me to do this!” he murmured, rushing out the door.

As soon as he was out in the open, the gazes of countless northerners locked onto him, gazes of ridicule and mockery. Just as many of them had said openly, it was their first time being able to openly bully a deva, and it was something many of them had come to enjoy.

Because they had the tacit approval of their demigod patriarch, none of the disciples were worried about any consequences. However, at this point, Bai Xiaochun didn't care. In fact, the more people who were paying attention to him, the better.

After swaggering around a bit to make sure plenty of people had noticed him, he selected a public square near where people in the Cloud Order gathered for trials by fire.

Within the square were nine gates that led into nine separate arcane pocket realms. It was very similar to the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect in that the disciples who went into the pocket realms would be ranked according to their performance. As a result, it was a big center of competition for the disciples.

After finding a suitable location, he sat down, spread a white cloth out in front of him, and started pulling things out of his bag of holding. In front of him on the white cloth, he arranged magical items, medicinal pills, and other random items. At the moment, he didn’t put any Aphrodisiac Pills or Fantasy Pills up for sale.

After arranging everything properly, he waited for customers.

His actions had garnered quite a bit of attention, and before long, disciples were heading over to see what was happening. When they did, jaws dropped, and many of them began to openly laugh.

“He set up a vendor stall? A mighty deva is selling stuff on the street? Hahaha!”

“Looks like we really drove him crazy. He can’t leave, can’t concoct pills, and can’t practice cultivation. Now he has no option other than to sell random stuff on the street!”

The cultivators in the public square weren’t the only ones to notice and start poking fun. Even the devas in the black coffin noticed, and sent down streams of divine sense to observe.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0958 awe-chapter-959

However, the devas didn’t have the time to literally watch over Bai Xiaochun every hour of every day. And considering the three-point covenant which was in place, it didn’t matter how shockingly powerful Bai Xiaochun was. He wouldn’t be able to do much.

Another half a month went by. Every day, Bai Xiaochun would set up his vendor stall, and although he didn’t do much business, he worked as hard as he could to attract the northern disciples, providing loud descriptions of the various magical items and medicinal pills he was offering for sale.

On one particular day when he was sure that there was no deva divine sense watching him, he leaned forward to a burly fellow who was browsing through his medicinal pills.

“Hey man,” he said quietly, “I have some special medicinal pills right over here. Want to have a look?”

This was the burly man’s third visit, and Bai Xiaochun had been observing him carefully. It was only after confirming that he didn’t seem suspicious that he finally decided to make him an offer.

“What medicinal pills?” the man asked, instantly on guard.

With a flourish, Bai Xiaochun produced a Fantasy Pill.

The unique aura which emanated off of the pill caused the burly man’s eyes to widen. Eyes glittering, he grabbed it. Not even bothering to ask how much it cost, he tossed Bai Xiaochun a spirit stone, then walked off.

One spirit stone for one Fantasy Pill wasn’t even enough to cover the production costs. Clearly, the burly man felt that Bai Xiaochun was lucky just to be able to sell things in the north. Actually, that attitude was prevalent among almost all of the northerners.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed as he looked down at the one spirit stone. However, he didn’t mind. He simply sat there, occasionally hawking his wares to the passersby. As time went by, he would identify disciples he deemed trustworthy, and would offer them Aphrodisiac or Fantasy Pills.

“As hostile as these northerners are, I still treat them in very moral fashion. I only sell Aphrodisiac Pills to the female disciples, and not to the men. As for the Fantasy Pills, they only go to the male disciples, not the women.”

He sighed at the realization that his greatest weakness was how good and honest he was.

Even as he shook his head, a particularly burly and fierce female cultivator appeared in front of him.

“Is there a male cultivator you've taken a liking to?” he asked. “All you need is one Aphrodisiac Pill, and he’ll be yours forever.…”

When the woman grabbed the Aphrodisiac Pill, her particularly meaty fingers nearly crushed it, scaring Bai Xiaochun half to death. Grabbing her hand to stop her from breaking it, he said, “You can't crush it here! Ai, maybe this pill isn’t for you.…”

The female cultivator immediately threw him a bag of spirit stones, turned, and hurried off.

Bai Xiaochun stared in shock before putting the spirit stones away. Soon, he began to sell Uncaring Pills, which were a byproduct of his experimentation with the uncaring fruits back in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

“Have you heard of my Aphrodisiac Pills? Don't worry, this is the antidote. If you take an Uncaring Pill, it will keep you safe from the effects of an Aphrodisiac Pill!”

“Listen… your Cloud Order has a lot of really tough female cultivators, and pretty much all of them have come to buy Aphrodisiac Pills from me. Just… be careful out there!”

He was very careful about who he sold the three different pills to, and would only pick from repeat customers that he had observed carefully. Because of that, the pills didn’t cause a big commotion in the sect. However, slowly but surely… they began to make their way out into the sect.

Virtually everyone who bought a Fantasy Pill would come back a few days later, enchanted and excited, hoping to buy more.

Of course, every time they came back, Bai Xiaochun charged more than the last time. He also made sure to explain the downsides of the pill. After all, as an apothecary, he had a duty to act morally, and thus, would not withhold his mercy, even from the northerners.

“I can’t control the strange, unexplainable things that always happen during the concocting process. However, when it comes to the completed pills, I absolutely have to tell my customers what to watch out for.” Bai Xiaochun was fully convinced that this was the right thing to do.

He did the same with the Aphrodisiac Pills and the Uncaring Pills, which were slowly becoming more popular. It was almost shocking how much cultivators wanted pills like that.

Aphrodisiac Pills stimulated instinctual behavior, whereas Fantasy Pills fulfilled one’s dreams. As for the Uncaring Pills, they counteracted Aphrodisiac Pills, and at the same time, also served to negate the effects of Fantasy Pills. Because of that, the Uncaring Pills actually sold a bit better than the other two.

Before long, the cultivators in the Cloud Order came to the realization that the Aphrodisiac Pills and Fantasy Pills were almost like poison in terms of how vicious they were. And yet, there were still quite a few people who weren’t convinced, and eventually reached a state in which they were nearly addicted, and would buy them by any means possible, even secretly.

There were a few grandmasters of the Dao of medicine in the Cloud Order who managed to get their hands on the pills to research them…. One of them was Ouyang De, who was considered to be the top apothecary grandmaster in the Cloud Order. As such, he came to understand the Fantasy Pills and Aphrodisiac Pills better than anyone else.

“Even before Bai Xiaochun came to the north, I wanted to have a chance to research some of his medicinal pills. Finally… my opportunity has arrived!” Chuckling coldly, he looked down at the Fantasy Pill resting on his palm.

“Let’s see if this lousy Fantasy Pill really works!” Considering his skills with medicinal pills, his research had led him to the conclusion that there wasn’t anything particularly special about the pill.

“The only way to know the truth is to try it personally!” Although he was confident in his own Dao of medicine, he had also acquired an Uncaring Pill, just in case something unexpected happened.

As soon as he popped the Fantasy Pill into his mouth, it melted, and a tremor passed through him. He closed his eyes, and suddenly felt like he was floating. As for the Uncaring Pill in his hand, his grip went slack, and it tumbled off to the side.... Three days later, his eyes opened. He was covered in sweat, and his expression was blank for a very long moment before he murmured, “I achieved my Dao and became an immortal....”

The same thing happened to many cultivators in the Cloud Order. Virtually everyone who consumed a Fantasy Pill would completely ignore the antidote, and would instead revel in the absurd and wonderful experiences that they experienced.

Soon, the Fantasy Pills outpaced the Aphrodisiac Pills in terms of sales. In fact, the Fantasy Pills became like a brewing storm that grew larger and larger in the Cloud Order.

More and more disciples were secretly buying them. Eventually, it reached the point where the whole thing was out in the open. Ouyang De even went and bought a huge stockpile of Fantasy Pills, all in one shot.

Bai Xiaochun’s profits increased rapidly. Much to his excitement, he soon reached the point where he could cultivate the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation.

However, he was also aware that the matter of selling pills couldn’t be kept a secret for very long. It wouldn’t be long before the devas caught wind of the matter.

And that was exactly what happened. Fantasy Pill sales had gone through the roof. Almost everyone who tried one got addicted. In a short half a month, almost all of the Cloud Order disciples fell in love with Fantasy Pills.

It reached the point where there were simply too many people involved, and soon, accidents started happening. Some disciples weren’t able to control themselves after consuming a pill, and would ignore Bai Xiaochun’s instructions to always stay in their immortal's caves when under the influence.

“Fly, fly, fly… I'm a mighty bird….”

“Hahaha! Hahaha! I finally became a demigod!!”

“Hit me! Come on, do it. Hit me!!”

The devas finally noticed what was going on. The crazed behavior of a few of the disciples led to an investigation, and the truth was revealed. In less than a month, almost all of the disciples in the Cloud Order had begun consuming Fantasy Pills on a regular basis!

It was a huge affair, and the northern devas were immediately enraged!

They quickly issued orders that Fantasy Pills were prohibited in the sect, and anyone who consumed one would be expelled. The disciples were initially alarmed, but as they awoke from their reveries and began to put the pieces of the puzzle together, they came looking for Bai Xiaochun.

“How shameless of you, Bai Xiaochun! You tricked us into taking Fantasy Pills!!”

“That’s right. This is all because of Bai Xiaochun. Dammit! Give me back my spirit stones!”

“He made me take the pills. If it wasn’t for him, I would never have even tried one. Damn those Fantasy Pills!”

Some people were afraid, and others regretted spending their spirit stones on the Fantasy Pills. For other reasons as well, everyone started blaming Bai Xiaochun.

Even as the angry mob formed, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Feng Chen, and the other devas came to the Cloud Order.

“You violated the covenant, Bai Xiaochun!” Feng Chen shrieked. “Do you have a death wish or something?!?!”

A boom rang out as a powerful divine ability slammed into Bai Xiaochun’s residence, sending him stumbling out into the open.

“I violated the covenant?” Bai Xiaochun yelled angrily, finally glad to be able to let off some steam. “Oh really? Tell me, Feng Chen, which part of the three-point covenant did I violate?! Did I leave the Cloud Order? Did I concoct pills? Did I absorb any of the energy of heaven and earth from the north? Which point in the covenant did I violate, huh? Come on. Tell me!”

“You….” Feng Chen said, pointing at Bai Xiaochun. However, after a long moment, he realized he had nothing to say. Just as Bai Xiaochun had said, he hadn’t violated any of the rules set forth in the three-point covenant….

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings were extremely angry, and yet, had no way to vent their anger.

Bai Xiaochun glanced at the devas, who were all standing there unable to say a single thing, then looked around at the Cloud Order disciples, his eyes sparkling.

“And what about all of you? Let me ask you… did I actually force any of you to buy my pills?

“Didn’t I tell you of all the possible consequences?

“Didn’t I offer to sell you an antidote?

“Didn’t I remind you to be careful where you consumed the pills?

“Are you just too used to bullying me or something? Did you forget that I'm Bai Xiaochun? I'm also a deva, remember? You northerners always push things too far!!” Bai Xiaochun finally released all of the frustration that had been building up over the past months. His voice echoed out like thunder as a huge version of his face appeared overhead, striking fear into the hearts of all the disciples.

In that moment of deadlock, the voice of the demigod patriarch suddenly echoed out from the crystal coffin high above!

“Henceforth, there is no three-point covenant. Instead, we will have a four-point covenant!

“Bai Xiaochun is not permitted to sell anything in the north. If he violates this rule, he will immediately be imprisoned in Lightning Penitentiary!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0959 awe-chapter-960

Along with the demigod patriarch’s words came a powerful force that spread out through the sky and drove away the enormous face of Bai Xiaochun. In response, Bai Xiaochun grunted and staggered backward several paces.

Aura teetering unstably, he looked up at the crystal coffin high above. Meanwhile, Feng Chen, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, and other devas stared at Bai Xiaochun with slight smiles on their faces.

The surrounding disciples breathed sighs of relief. They had been feeling very shaken by Bai Xiaochun moments ago, but the words of the demigod patriarch had driven away his aura. Now that the disciples were completely recovered, they looked at Bai Xiaochun with expressions of loathing.

Although most of them would secretly take more Fantasy Pills if they could, now that the devas and the demigod were present, the only thing they dared to do was show implacable hatred toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Now that you’re in the north, it doesn’t matter that you’re a deva!” That was what most of the people were thinking. In terms of the three-point covenant having a fourth stipulation added to it, it indicated that the matter with the medicinal pills had come to an end.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun was still confined to the Cloud Order and couldn't concoct medicinal pills left everyone feeling very pleased.

“Fudge!” he thought. “One of these days, I’ll make sure these northerners sweat bullets when they're in front of me!”

As his anger built, he couldn’t help but think about the world treasure the baby girl had mentioned. Although he had been on the fence before, his mind was now mostly made up.

At the moment, however, he had nothing else to do but use his spirit stones to start doing a bit of cultivation. They wouldn’t last for too long, but he was out of other options. Therefore, he set to work cultivating. Ten days went by, but even after plenty of thought during that time, he didn’t have any ideas on how to get out of this new impasse.

It was at that point… that the baby girl woke up for a third time.

Even as he was working on his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, her voice echoed quietly into his head.

“Have you made a decision yet?”

Taking a deep breath, he gritted his teeth and spoke out into his mind.

“There are a few things I want to say. First of all, let me just point out that this whole thing is very sudden. I find it hard to believe that you plan to just give me this good fortune and let me become your master. You must have another goal you’re working toward. However, considering where you come from, I guess I have no choice but to just trust you.

“By the way, I want to know why exactly the Celestial wanted you dead. You never explained that.

“Another thing. Patriarch Spirit Stream called you a true spirit, and said that the mission of the Spirit Stream Sect is to keep you safe. But I'm not him…. *My* mission is to keep the River-Defying Sect safe, keep my friends safe, and keep myself safe. If you do have some other goals you’re working toward, don’t use me to get them! If you try something like that, then let me tell you, you will be bringing a huge amount of trouble on yourself. And it will mean trouble for me too, which I don’t want. Worse, you would turn the thousands of years of protection that the Spirit Stream Sect gave you into an absurd joke!” There was a determination in his words that he was sure would strike a bit of fear into the heart of the baby girl.

Actually, he wasn’t really sure about any of the things he had just said. He just knew that this baby girl seemed suspicious. Therefore, he had long since come up with this little speech to give her.

The baby girl didn’t respond at first. After a long moment passed, she said, “Trouble onto myself? What do you mean?”

Bai Xiaochun had anticipated this turn in the conversation. Eyes brightening, he decided to truly frighten the baby girl, and said, “Do you know who my Master is?”

“No….” the girl responded, sounding a bit surprised.

“The gravekeeper!” Bai Xiaochun replied dramatically.

He was fairly certain that the baby girl was completely shocked by this news. However, before she could say anything else, he continued to speak.

“Do you know who my apprentice is?”

Before she could reply, he provided the answer. “The reigning Hell-Emperor!”

The baby girl was clearly shocked, that much was obvious by the fluctuations he could sense.

At that moment, he felt very proud of his background and status. Of course, it was very disturbing that, despite having such qualifications, and never using them to go around bullying people, the first thing that happened when he came here to the north was that he ended up being severely bullied.

“Therefore, if you lie to me, then you would have an enemy, not just in the Celestial, but in two other powerful people.” The threat in his words was very clear. In response, the baby girl maintained her silence for a moment. The truth was that she had a secret magic which allowed her to assess whether or not his words were true, and therefore, didn’t even need to try to figure out if he was being honest.

A long moment passed. When she spoke into his mind again, her voice was completely calm.

“I am a discarnate soul with incomplete memories. Only by becoming one with the magical item will I be able to recall the true reason why the Celestial wanted me dead.

“As far as you becoming my master, view it as an agreement between the two of us, with the main stipulation being that you have to kill the Celestial!

“I'm not keeping anything secret from you. As for the thousands upon thousands of years that the Spirit Stream Sect has kept me safe, well… I won't bite the hand that feeds me. The only thing I want… is revenge!!”

In response to the baby girl’s strongly spoken words, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine with determination.

“Very well,” he said. “I agree. I’ll help you fuse with the world treasure. As far as killing the Celestial goes, that will have to wait until my cultivation base is high enough. Besides, I have no personal enmity with him. To be perfectly honest, I'm not sure how I’ll be able to make it happen.”

“You will….” the baby girl said, her voice tinged with a profound smile.

Somewhat taken aback, Bai Xiaochun was about to ask what she meant when she changed the subject to explain more about the world treasure.

“The north is my home…. Back when it was a flourishing place, the frigid qi here was the best thing in the world for me.

“In order to fuse with the world treasure, I need to do two things. First… get to the entrance, which is not in the sect itself, but is out in the northern ice plains. When the time comes, I can tell you the specific location.”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. He always liked to have everything planned out in detail before doing anything, and it was only because of how badly the northerners were treating him that he made this decision so quickly. The truth was that he still had some reservations.

The main thing he was curious about… was what the baby girl meant when she said *you will*.

There was something about her words that he found very unsettling.

“The second thing I have to do is open the entrance. I need this true spirit body of mine to awaken for one hundred breaths of time. That will be enough for me to open the entrance.

“To prepare for that… I need you to collect plenty of northern frigid qi….” Even as she spoke into his mind, his bag of holding vibrated. He quickly sent some divine sense inside, and found that a green leaf had appeared out of nowhere. It floated up from the coffin, out of his bag of holding, to appear right in front of him.

“Frigid qi?” he said hesitantly. The four-point covenant stipulated that he couldn't absorb the spiritual energy of heaven and earth. But after some thinking, he realized that frigid qi probably didn't count. After all, spiritual energy came from the Heavenspan Sea, whereas frigid qi naturally filled all of the icy lands of the north.

As he considered this, the baby girl continued to speak into his mind.

“Collect the frigid qi into that leaf. When it becomes an ice leaf… then that means it has enough frigid qi to keep me awake for a hundred breaths of time!

“When you’ve done that, we can go open the entrance to the world treasure. As for how exactly you collect the frigid qi, I’ll leave that up to you.” By this point, the baby girl’s voice sounded very weak.

“My divine soul is very weak. I need to sleep again. Once you create that ice leaf, send it into this coffin, and I’ll awaken…. All my hope rests in you…. You’re on your own now….” With that, the baby girl’s aura faded away.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then sighed. The truth was that he hoped his attempt to frighten the baby girl hadn’t caused any friction between them.

The whole matter was actually a good thing for her, for him, and for the River-Defying Sect.

After she was gone, he looked at the leaf and began to consider what to do next.

“How does this leaf absorb frigid qi?” He looked down at the ground beneath his feet. The Cloud Order was built on a massive cloud, a cloud that contained frigid qi. After a bit of thought, he put the leaf down on the ground, but even after waiting for quite some time, he didn't see any frigid qi going into it.

If it weren’t for the four-point covenant, he would have many ways to collect the qi he needed. But now, things weren’t so easy.

Eventually, he sighed and prepared to put the leaf into his bag of holding. However, as he did, his eyes suddenly went wide as he noticed something in his bag of holding that he'd forgotten about. It was… a seed.

“Moonflower…. I can graft the leaf onto a moonflower!” He had discovered the moonflower on the bone galleon, and after some research, had come to realize that it grew by absorbing frigid qi.

“The four-point covenant doesn't say anything about planting flowers….” At this point, his eyes sparkled with excitement.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0960 awe-chapter-961

Smacking his bag of holding, he produced the moonflower seed. “The bone galleon and Ghostmother both come from beyond the heavens. I guess these flowers must come from there too.”

Examining the seed for a long moment, he began to perfect his plan. Eventually, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“Hahaha! The heavens never truly bar one’s way!” He couldn’t feel more pleased about the fact that the four-point covenant really didn't say anything prohibiting him from planting flowers.

Feeling very exhilarated, he walked out of his residence and looked around for a good place to plant the seed. Eventually, he rubbed his chin and murmured, “It probably isn’t safe to plant it outside. These northerners are all so unreasonable.... Ah, whatever. I’ll just plant it inside.”

Fully convinced that this was the best way to do it, he walked back inside and got to work. Although the ground in the Cloud Order was different from ordinary ground in some ways, in most ways, it was the same. It took a bit of work, but he managed to dig a sizeable hole right in the middle of the room.

Before long, he reached the white, fluffy soil that made up the land of the cloud, which also caused a bit of frigid qi to emanate up into the room. Eyes sparkling, he carefully placed the moonflower seed down into the cloud soil.

Having accomplished that, he sat off to the side, eye sparkling with anticipation and excitement. Almost as soon as the cloud soil was piled back over the seed, it began to tremble as if it were alive.

It was a trembling that stemmed, not from fear, but from excitement. Even Bai Xiaochun could sense how emotional the seed was, and it caused his eyes to shine even more brightly.

“Be a good little moonflower, now. Grow fast and strong….” Licking his lips, he spent the whole night standing watch. Very shortly after planting the seed, he could see the frigid qi streaming up from the cloud, nourishing it. By morning, the seed had sprouted.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun really felt like he was on an important mission, and spent day and night tending to the newly sprouted moonflower.

Half a month went by in a flash, and he didn’t leave his residence even once during that time. Meanwhile, the talk around the sect hadn’t died down at all, and the cultivators were watching his residence closely.

He wasn’t in the mood to eavesdrop; he was completely focused on the moonflower. It was already about a hand high, and even had some tiny leaves. Bai Xiaochun was very happy.

In terms of the leaf the baby girl had given him, he had already grafted it onto the moonflower. As the moonflower grew, the leaf began to build up frigid qi.

Everything was going according to plan, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but laugh out loud at how things were going.

“Hahaha! There’s nothing that Bai Xiaochun can’t figure out how to do!” Feeling more proud of himself than ever, he waited for another seven days to pass. At this point, he started to feel slightly discontent.

He had come to find that after grafting the leaf onto the moonflower, it was growing much slower.

“So slow! If things keep going like this, it’ll never get enough frigid qi!” Shaking his head, he contemplated the situation for a bit until he came up with an idea of how to catalyze the plant into faster growth.

Normally speaking, catalyzing plants was easy to do. There were plenty of methods within the Dao of medicine to do such a thing. The easiest way was to use specific medicinal pills. After thinking about it for a bit longer, he looked around carefully, and then sent his divine sense outside.

“The four-point covenant says that I can’t concoct pills, or sell them. It doesn't say anything about feeding them to flowers.” With that, he fished around in his bag of holding for a handful of medicinal pills, which he crushed and scattered over the moonflower.

As soon as the powder landed, the flower twitched and began to glow with bright light. Almost immediately, it began to suck in the powder.

As it did, the moonflower began to visibly grow faster. In fact, its roots actually extended further down into the cloud.

That, in turn, allowed it to absorb more frigid qi, which instantly caused the temperature in Bai Xiaochun’s residence to drop.

Eyes shining with confidence, he took out some more medicinal pills, crushed them, and dropped them onto the moonflower. The moonflower was like a bottomless pit when it came to medicinal pill powder. It continued to grow larger, sending its roots even further down and out, until they filled a 300-meter area.

Brimming with confidence, Bai Xiaochun continued to feed the plant medicinal pill powder.

“You like everything! What a precious little flower!” Over the three short days which had passed, the moonflower had consumed over a hundred different types of medicinal pills, and was now over a meter high.

Its stalk was as thick as an arm, and it had hand-sized leaves. There was also a bud at the top of it which had not yet bloomed. Under Bai Xiaochun’s care, the flower was growing at incredible speed.

As for the leaf he had grafted onto it, one of its veins now looked like ice, which he was thrilled about. Soon, the moonflower’s roots spread out to fill a 1,500-meter area, which caused Bai Xiaochun’s smile to beam radiantly. Then, he pulled out more medicinal pills and began to crush them.

If this were the River-Defying Sect or even the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, Bai Xiaochun might have taken some time to think about the effects of the flower on the surroundings. But here in the north, he wasn’t worried about it at all, and in fact, it didn’t even occur to him to check….

“I'm not violating the four-point covenant!” he told himself. For the following half month, he continuously crushed pills and fed them to the moonflower….

The moonflower had already reached a shocking height and size, taking up almost all of his residence.

He couldn’t help but gasp at the sight of it. At the same time, he realized that, thanks to his constant care… the flower looked different from before.

It almost seemed conscious in a way, and at the same time, apparently liked him. Every time he touched it, the flower would wriggle contentedly.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, his eyes glittered.

“You’re conscious? Alright, be a good flower, now. You need to stop growing, otherwise my room is going to fall apart! Things aren’t easy here in the north, so if you destroyed my house by growing too big, it could really cause some problems.” After offering some more strict warnings, he took out some more medicinal pills to feed the flower. By this point, he didn't even need to crush them. He would just toss them to the flower, which would grab them with its leaves and absorb them directly.

The flower apparently understood what Bai Xiaochun had told it. From that day on, it didn’t grow any larger within the room. However, its roots continued to expand constantly, voraciously even. By now, its roots had spread throughout the Cloud Order. Furthermore… because moonflowers were not from the Heavenspan Realm, there was something special about them that made them almost impossible to detect. Therefore, no one noticed what was happening.

However, as it grew, it absorbed more and more frigid qi, to the point where the cultivators in the Cloud Order began to notice that something was off…. First of all was the mere fact that there seemed to be less frigid qi than usual.

In fact, in some places, the frigid qi was so lacking that the snow began to melt.... Eventually, the devas took notice of what was happening.

Bai Xiaochun occasionally checked what was happening outside, and when he realized the stir, he patted the moonflower and said, “Moonflower, baby, we don’t have much time left. Sooner or later, something bad’s going to happen. Not that I care about that, but we can’t delay the plan. Is there any way you can grow a bit more quickly? We really need more frigid qi in that leaf.” The moonflower quivered, and sent a very vague message back to him. Bai Xiaochun immediately understood. Eyes shining with determination, he pulled a big stack of medicinal pills out of his bag of holding and began handing them over.

The moonflower’s leaves eagerly swept up the medicinal pills, after which… a massive rumbling sound filled the entire Cloud Order!

All of a sudden, green sprouts shot up from the ground all over the Cloud Order. Almost as soon as they appeared, they began to suck in the frigid qi, and at the same time, blossom with tiny flowers that looked like moons.

Almost immediately, the frigid qi in the Cloud Order experienced a sharp decline!

The Cloud Order cultivators looked around at the moonflowers, dumbfounded. Within moments, people began to cry out.

“How could there be plants growing in the Cloud Order?!”

“What… what kind of flower is that?”

“Heavens! I’ve never heard of plants appearing in the Cloud Order before…. Aren’t all the plants and vegetation that appear in the north specially adapted for the cold?”

Soon, the entire Cloud Order was devolving into a huge commotion.

“It's so hot… why… why am I sweating?!?!?!”

“Hold on, the frigid qi in the Cloud Order… is so weak!!”

“Heavens! My igloo, it’s… it's melting!!”

Because of the sudden decline in frigid qi, the entire Cloud Order was starting to melt. In fact, the resulting liquid began to drip down the arm of the huge ice statue that held up the white cloud.

The entire sect was soon astir. The devas flew over, expressions of incredulity on their face.

Before they could even get to the Cloud Order, though, the frigid qi declined so rapidly that all of the ice buildings began to collapse. And that was only the beginning. To everyone’s stupefaction, the thumb of the enormous ice statue, which was now filled with roots… suddenly… began to melt, sending water pouring down the statue….

That caused the entire white cloud to tilt to one side. As for the devas, they stared at the thumb of the statue in utter shock.

“Am I… am I seeing things...?” the twin Master Cloud Lightnings murmured.

Shocked, Feng Chen said, “The pride of the north… the ice statue of the northern battle god… his thumb… is gone?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0961 awe-chapter-962

Massive rumbling sounds filled the Cloud Order as buildings collapsed, and freezing water poured down in all directions. Countless disciples flew out into the air and then stared down at the ice statue with its missing thumb.

After a momentary silence, there was a huge uproar.

“How could this be happening…?”

“What is that plant…?”

“Heavens! What’s going on here? How come so much strange stuff is going on…? First it was those Fantasy Pills, and now the battle god’s thumb is gone….”

Moments later, the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Feng Chen, and the other devas shivered. Expressions flickering with madness, they erupted with rage.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

“It was definitely you, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering roars could be heard as the furious devas shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s residence.

When the other cultivators from the Cloud Order heard the shouts of the devas, their eyes lit up with ferocious expressions, and they turned to look in Bai Xiaochun's direction.

“Dammit! This was definitely Bai Xiaochun’s handiwork!!”

“He’s a walking disaster! If he has it out for us disciples, that's one thing, but how could he possibly go so far as to damage the Cloud Order’s battle god statue!?!?”

“Kill Bai Xiaochun!!”

Amidst all the shouting, the devas arrived in full fury. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was inside his residence, nervously watching the frigid qi pouring into the leaf.

In the blink of an eye, the leaf was seventy percent ice. Clearly, if he had enough time, then it would be a simple thing for him to create the ice leaf the baby girl had asked for.

Unfortunately, there wasn’t enough time. When he heard the shouting outside, he quickly grabbed the leaf and threw it into his bag of holding. At the same time, he urgently told the moonflower, “Get back into seed form!”

The moonflower didn’t need any prompting. It could sense the critical danger, and within moments, it wilted and went dry. All of the life force in the plant was sucked back in until it was nothing more than a seed.

There was no time for Bai Xiaochun to look at it closely. Grabbing it, he threw it into his bag of holding along with the leaf.

It was in that very moment that a huge boom rang out, and his residence exploded.

Bai Xiaochun tumbled off to the side, looking very bedraggled. Surrounding him were countless furious Cloud Order disciples, plus the twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Feng Chen, and all the other devas. Everyone looked like they were out for blood.

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Xiaochun?!?!” the twin Master Cloud Lightnings raged. Now that Bai Xiaochun’s residence was destroyed, the withered husk of the moonflower was out in the open, visible to everyone present.

“We didn't kill you for selling those Fantasy Pills, so then you went and struck at the foundation of the north! You will die this day, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Feng Chen was so angry that his eyes overflowed with killing intent. Without any hesitation, he shot toward Bai Xiaochun and unleashed a divine ability of the trump card level.

Bai Xiaochun dodged out of the way and then shouted out in a loud voice, “Are you northerners rebelling against the lands of Heavenspan or something?!

“You’ve had it out for me from the moment I arrived! First you had your three-point covenant, and I just endured. Then after I sold some medicinal pills, you changed it to a four-point covenant!

“Now I just planted a flower, and you’re trying to say I broke the agreement?”

By now, he had decided to throw caution to the wind; he really had reached the point where he couldn’t stand the north.

“You want to attack me, so you have to come up with a bunch of excuses, don’t you!?” Unleashing the power of his cultivation base, he caused a huge face to appear up in the sky.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings and Feng Chen were both frustrated to the extreme by the unspeakable suffering they were enduring. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more annoying to them, especially Feng Chen, who had come to find that his idea of the three-point covenant was turning out to harm himself more than anyone.

Back when he came up with the idea, he could never have imagined how much of a disaster Bai Xiaochun could be. A three-point covenant wasn’t nearly enough to contain him, and in fact, it seemed to make him worse.

Even more frustrating was how sharp-tongued Bai Xiaochun was, and how special his status was. They obviously couldn’t kill him no matter how much they hated him, a fact which was profoundly vexing to all of the devas.

By now, their hearts were filled with regret. If they could go back in time, they definitely wouldn’t have placed any restrictions on Bai Xiaochun, and would have just let him do whatever he wished….

The devas weren’t the only ones who felt so torn. The ordinary disciples were both enraged, but at the same time, were wailing in their hearts. Only now did they truly realize how much of a catastrophe Bai Xiaochun could be.

“This is all Feng Chen’s fault! He started out in the Lightning Order. That's why he had Bai Xiaochun put in the Cloud Order! He’s had it out for us all along!”

“That’s right! Send Bai Xiaochun to the Lightning Order! Release the Cloud Order from this torment! Our battle god… is missing a thumb!!” The Cloud Order disciples were truly enraged, and soon, many such shouts filled the air.

When Feng Chen heard what everyone was saying, a very unsightly expression appeared on his face, and his hatred for Bai Xiaochun deepened.

When the demigod patriarch saw the deadlock, he sighed and rubbed the bridge of his nose. Even he was starting to feel very annoyed with Bai Xiaochun.

However, it was exactly as Bai Xiaochun had said. He hadn’t violated the covenant in any way….

“I shouldn't have agreed to any covenant…. We can't keep this up. Whenever we tell him not to do something, he thinks of a way to cause a bigger disaster.” Frowning, the demigod considered kicking Bai Xiaochun out of the sect. However, considering all the restrictions they had placed on him, if they simply let him go after what he had done, it would be a huge loss of face for the north.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, a cold flicker appeared in the demigod’s eyes. Instead of making a personal appearance at the Cloud Order, he sent out a Dharmic decree!

“Henceforth, we will have a five-point covenant! Within the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, Bai Xiaochun will not tend flowers, plants, animals, or ghosts. He will not forge equipment or concoct pills. He will not plant, refine, raise, or work with anything!!”

His voice echoed out like heavenly thunder, filling the entire sect. However, the cultivators from the Cloud Order and the devas did not react like they had in the past. Instead they were worried, and couldn’t help but wonder how long it would take before the covenant needed a sixth point, and then a seventh….

Every time Bai Xiaochun found a loophole, they would be in deep trouble. Eventually… they could even imagine a scenario in which Bai Xiaochun managed to kill them all, and destroy everything in the northern Heavenspan region.

The northerners weren’t particularly happy with the demigod’s Dharmic decree, and neither was Bai Xiaochun. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, these northerners were completely outrageous. How could they possibly have added another stipulation to the covenant!?

Gritting his teeth, he decided to throw caution to the wind yet again. He opened his mouth to speak, in the hopes of getting the demigod to simply kick him out.

However, that was when a second Dharmic decree was issued!

“Heavenspan Special Guard Bai Xiaochun, despite not having violated our agreement, harmed the foundation of the Cloud Order. For this crime, he shall be exempt from the death penalty, but will not escape all punishment. Lock him up in Lightning Penitentiary! Until the Heavenspan emissary leaves, all of his freedoms will be restricted! If he resists, take his life!”

Bai Xiaochun tried to speak up in his defense, but as soon as the Dharmic decree echoed out through the sect, a burst of power shot down from the crystal coffin. It transformed into an enormous hand of lightning that grabbed him and forcibly threw him into the black cloud on the other side of the waterfall.

The devas were very excited by this, especially Feng Chen, whose eyes shone brightly. There was little need to mention the ordinary disciples, who went wild with joy upon hearing Bai Xiaochun’s fate.

“He’s finally gone!!”

“Even demigods would be tormented by the lightning in Lightning Penitentiary! Bai Xiaochun brought this upon himself!”

“This is exactly how it should be!”

Cheering filled the Cloud Order, and the devas all sighed in relief as they looked over at the black lightning cloud.

A scornful gleam passed through the eyes of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings. “No matter what heaven-toppling abilities he has, in the north, he has no choice but to bow his head!”

Meanwhile, the demigod patriarch in the crystal coffin finally breathed a sigh of relief. Looking over at the Lightning Order’s black cloud, he decided that he really had managed to save face for the north. Furthermore, he was absolutely certain that Bai Xiaochun wouldn't cause any problems in Lightning Penitentiary.

After all, the worst prisoners imaginable were locked up in Lightning Penitentiary. Although the prison wasn’t very full, even demigods who were locked up inside would be tormented to no end, much less devas.

“Things are finally going to quiet down.” The demigod patriarch closed his eyes.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0962 awe-chapter-963

The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect had two ice statues, one holding up the pure white Cloud Order, the other holding up the pitch black Lightning Order!

At the moment, a piercing shriek was echoing out deep within the black cloud that housed the Lightning Order. Of course, it was Bai Xiaochun.

“I hate the north!!”

It was a shriek filled with bitterness and defiance. However, no matter how loudly he screamed, his voice did not go beyond… Lightning Penitentiary, where he had been imprisoned for three days already.

He was already wracked with despair. Within the depths of the black cloud, he was surrounded by layer upon layer of restrictive sealing spells, creating a cell that was only about 30 meters of space in which he could move around.

Beyond the borders of the cell were innumerable lightning bolts, each one as thick as an arm and abounding with so much destructive power that it caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to go pale.

“Complete and utter bullying!!” he muttered, shivering as he sat there, looking out at the darkness and the lightning. Calling out to the heavens and cursing the hells brought not even the slightest response. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, this was the unluckiest he had ever been in his entire life.

“Completely ridiculous. Three-point covenant, four-point covenant, five-point covenant.... All of that I could deal with. But I can’t believe they actually locked me up!” He felt like he was about to go crazy, and couldn’t come up with any effective methods to do anything about the situation.

Not only could he not escape, every few hours, lightning would gather around his cell and then strike him repeatedly.

There was only one way to deal with the shocking lightning, and that was to draw upon his cultivation base power. Unfortunately, Lightning Penitentiary was cut off from the spiritual energy of heaven and earth, which led Bai Xiaochun to the conclusion that, eventually, he would run out of power to stave off the lightning.

“What am I supposed to do?” he sighed. Right now, his main hope was that Du Lingfei would finish her mission soon and come to free him.

“I'm gonna remember this, you northerners!” he said loudly. “You just wait. After I become a demigod, I'm going to get my revenge!” With that, he let out a roar of frustration.

However, as soon as he did, a sarcastic chuckle could be heard from off to the side.

“Become a demigod? Even then you won’t be able to get revenge.”

“Who’s there?!” Bai Xiaochun said, looking around. His divine sense had been restricted as soon as he was thrown into his cell, but his ordinary senses had not. However, during the past three days, he hadn’t detected any signs of life anywhere nearby.

As he looked around vigilantly, he saw the clouds off to the side seething, and then gradually turning translucent, revealing another cell roughly 300 meters away.

It was also thirty meters across, formed by countless restrictive spells. Just like his own cell, it was surrounded by dancing lightning, which occasionally shot into the cell to strike at an emaciated figure who sat there cross-legged!

It was an old man wearing threadbare garments. He was little more than skin and bones, and his aura was very weak. Whenever the lightning struck him, he would shiver slightly, and yet, his expression never changed. Apparently, while he couldn’t stop the physical torment of the lightning bolts, his mind had long since grown used to the pain.

His hand was currently settling back down onto his knee; apparently, not even the restrictive spells could completely hold his will in check, allowing him the basic ability to control the clouds around him.

When Bai Xiaochun looked into the old man’s eyes, it felt like his eyes were being stabbed, eliciting a gasp.

“Listen, kid, I'm a demigod, and even I'm stuck here. So my advice is that you adjust that little oath of yours. Maybe you can aim for becoming a celestial?” The man grinned, and as his yellowish teeth were illuminated by the lightning, he looked particularly sinister. Bai Xiaochun shivered.

“I’ve been in here for years now,” the man continued, “and I can tell you that people who get locked up here don’t tend to last for long. Now that I think about it, it's been a while since anybody new came around.

“Come come, kid. Can you dance? Do a sexy little dance for me, and if I like it, I might just give you a secret magic that can help you deal with the pain.” The old man eyed Bai Xiaochun up and down, eyes shining with a bizarre light as he chuckled.

Bai Xiaochun had been startled by the man’s sudden appearance, but had now recovered. And he could sense that he and this man were similar in that, after having been locked up, they both got a bit braver.

Glaring at the man, he said, “Shut up, old man. I worked as a prison guard in the past, and eventually I lost track of how many prisoners like you I mopped the floor with.” Snorting coldly, he stuck his chin up and looked away.

The old man laughed heartily. “The stubborn type, huh? I really like young bucks like you. You know, 3,000 years ago there was another stubborn punk who got locked up here. He only lasted a month before he was twisting and turning in front of me, begging for my secret magic. Whenever you’re ready, I’ll be waiting for you.”

Apparently, he was very pleased at the additional amusement that Bai Xiaochun had brought into his life

Bai Xiaochun was already feeling quite annoyed at this man’s gaze and laughter. After giving him another good glare, he ignored him. After all, he just needed to wait for Du Lingfei to finish her mission, and then she would come back and think of a way to get him out.

Two hours later, the lightning around his cell began to build up more and more, creating something like a lightning storm around him.

When the lightning storm struck, he drew upon his cultivation base to defend himself. The sight of all that lightning was really shocking. After all, the destructive power in only one bolt wasn’t anything to really worry about, but from what he could tell, there were hundreds of thousands of them.

He wasn’t the only one to have to deal with the lightning in that moment. The old man was also struck. However, the man’s expression didn’t so much as flicker because of it. Instead, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun with ill intentions flickering in his eyes.

“You still have spiritual power now, so you can defend yourself. But in another ten days or so, you’ll run out.... And that’s when you’ll really start to ‘enjoy’ yourself.

“The power of the lightning builds up over time, you know. Eventually, it reaches the point of being the most horrific suffering in heaven and earth.” Although the old man trembled physically as he spoke, it didn't affect his voice at all.

“You know what I love to hear the most? The screams of people getting struck by lightning. I just close my eyes and revel in the beauty of it....” Licking his lips, he gazed at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes brimming with malice.

Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to pay any attention to the man. The lightning continued to strike him for a full hour before finally fading away. In the process, a large portion of his spiritual power was drained away.

He now only had seventy percent left, a fact that caused an unsightly expression to appear on his face.

“This isn’t going to work....” he thought, looking around apprehensively at all the lightning. After some calculations, he came to the conclusion that his spiritual power really would be drained in about ten days.

Although he was confident in his fleshly body power, the fact that this old man, a demigod, was in such tattered shape, left him worried that he wouldn’t be able to match up.

Five more days flew by. Whenever the lightning struck, his spiritual power levels got lower and lower, and the cackles of the old man grew louder.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very frustrated. On the sixth day, however, he suddenly looked up, his eyes bloodshot as he stared at the surrounding lightning bolts.

He had considered many options, but none had seemed viable. That meant he only had one choice left….

“Back on the Heavenspan Sea, when Eldest Brother was going through his tribulation, I actually consumed the tribulation cloud. That cloud had lightning in it… and in addition to the destructive power it contained, it also had life force!

“I’m pretty sure my apprentice was helping me back then, so it’s hard to say… if I can do the same thing in here.” After vacillating for some time, he saw the lightning building up into a storm, and he gritted his teeth.

“Might as well give it a shot!” He rose to his feet, drawing upon his cultivation base, although not in a way to defend himself.

Hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts swirled into a massive storm than then pierced into his cell and appeared right in front of him. Just as it was about to smash into him, he roared, opened his mouth, and sucked in a breath!

The old man was initially stunned, but then began to laugh in mocking fashion.

“Another fool who thinks he can consume the lightning. Looking to die, huh? Years ago, I called myself the Lightning Ancestor, and was the only rogue cultivator demigod in the north. But not even I dared to try to consume lightning bolts. Over all the years that I’ve been here, I've seen a lot of-- uh… what?” All of a sudden, the old man’s eyes bulged so wide that they nearly dropped out of his head.

“Freaking… w-w-what… what are you doing?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0963 awe-chapter-964

Despite the crashing lightning which surrounded him, the Lightning Ancestor was so shocked he very nearly leaped to his feet.

As Bai Xiaochun inhaled, he sucked in ten lightning bolts. He did so with the utmost caution, and after breathing them in, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base to protect himself from further attacks.

Afterward, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s delight that he found that he could easily break the lightning down inside of him, sending shocking power coursing through his energy passageways.

The ten bolts of lightning were equivalent to ten days of ordinary cultivation!

His eyes began to shine brightly, and he was already panting in excitement. Looking around at the lightning, he no longer seemed scared, but instead, worked up.

“I actually did it!” Reining in the power of his cultivation base, he took another deep breath, this time sucking in a hundred lightning bolts.

From a distance, it looked like numerous glowing dragons roaring and howling as they were consumed by Bai Xiaochun. A healthy flush covered his face as crackling sounds filled him, which came from spiritual power equivalent to a hundred days of cultivation.

That much spiritual power caused his heart to begin to race with excitement. Without the slightest hesitation, he began to work on his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. By this point, the outline of a moon was rapidly forming inside of him.

Furthermore, his aura was now much stronger than before.

The Lightning Ancestor watched with a blank expression on his face as this unimaginable scene played out. He had been born and raised in the north, and was a demigod. Back in his glory days, he had called himself the Lightning Ancestor because of his deep and profound skill with thunder and lightning. However, not even he would dare to consume lightning.

He knew better than anyone that the lightning bolts in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect were extraordinary, and were reflections of the will of heaven and earth. The destructive power they contained was enough to shatter virtually anything in creation.

Therefore, the scene playing out right now caused his mind to spin, and made it difficult for him to breathe.

“Don’t tell me that I was wrong all along… and the lightning… really can be consumed?” He suddenly wondered if all of his time in incarceration had been a huge lie. Barely able to think straight, he suddenly opened his mouth and tried to breathe in some of the surrounding lightning bolts.

A few dozen bolts entered his mouth, whereupon his eyes nearly exploded. A bloodcurdling scream erupted out, and then he began to shake violently and cough up blood. He only recovered after a long moment passed, whereupon he looked over with hidden bitterness at Bai Xiaochun, who was in the middle of breathing in a third batch of lightning bolts.

This time, he breathed in several hundred bolts… and looked like he was nearly drunk with enjoyment….

The clear difference between himself and Bai Xiaochun caused the Lightning Ancestor’s heart to be slammed by waves of shock. Furthermore, the unfairness of it all almost drove him to madness.

“How could this be happening…? It’s impossible…! I'm a demigod! I'm the Lightning Ancestor of yore….” Even as he descended into madness, the current lightning storm faded away.

After consuming several hundred lightning bolts, Bai Xiaochun could tell that he was almost finished with the first level of the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. Licking his lips, he sat down and began to wait eagerly for the next lightning storm.

“This Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect is actually treating me pretty well. They locked me up in a place most people find a torment, but for me… is a truly blessed land!” The more he thought about it, the more excited he got, until he finally stood back up and started laughing out loud.

When the Lightning Ancestor saw that he really wasn’t hurt at all, and that his cultivation base had actually progressed, a wave of excitement rose up in him. Eyes shining, he cried out, “Hey, old pal….”

Eyebrows dancing up and down, Bai Xiaochun looked over and said, “Whaddya want, ya old monkey?”

The Lightning Ancestor’s face twitched at having been called ‘old monkey’, which was obviously payback for how he had called Bai Xiaochun a ‘young buck’.

“So, um… how did you do that, old pal?” The Lightning Ancestor tried to make sure that he was the picture of amiability, as though he didn’t mind being called old monkey at all. After he finished speaking, he simply sat there, looking at Bai Xiaochun with anticipation.

The truth was that he had been locked up in this place for many years, and had seen far too many people killed by the lightning. He had seen some people try to swallow the lightning just the way Bai Xiaochun had, except that they all died as a result. Others had been unable to take the torment, and committed suicide. This was his first time seeing anyone succeed at swallowing lightning. Not only had Bai Xiaochun come out unscathed, his cultivation base had been refined in the process….

“Come come, old monkey,” Bai Xiaochun said proudly, swishing his sleeve. “Can you dance? Do a sexy little dance for me, and if I like it, I might just give you a secret magic that can help you deal with the pain.”

“You!!” the Lightning Ancestor shouted angrily. He was a demigod, and despite having been locked up in prison for so many years, still had his pride. Not even the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect’s demigod patriarch had ever treated him disrespectfully.

But in response to his anger, Bai Xiaochun glared right back at him.

Veins began to bulge out on the Lightning Ancestor’s face and neck, and his eyes turned as dark as night. A moment passed, and then he stood up and clenched his fists. Although he had long since been drained of spiritual power, he still emanated the pressure of a demigod, which caused rumbling sounds to echo out.

In response, the clouds in the area began to churn and roil, startling Bai Xiaochun to the point where he backed up a few steps. Then the gaunt, almost emaciated Lightning Ancestor took a deep breath, and began to twist and turn according to some peculiar rhythm. There was actually something lithe and elegant to his movements….

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide at the sight of it, and he almost forgot to breathe.

Almost unable to take the sight, he backed up and said wryly, “You’re… you’re really dancing!”

Upon hearing such a reasonable argument, which was clearly backed by conviction, a look of admiration appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. All of a sudden, he realized that this Lightning Ancestor was clearly a genius. Most people would go crazy after being imprisoned for so many years, but this old man had figured out a way to pass the time.

“Senior,” he said with complete sincerity, “considering your dancing abilities, I think that after I get free, I'm definitely going to give you a nice collection of medicinal pills.”

At that point, the Lightning Ancestor looked over at Bai Xiaochun with shining eyes. “Alright, cut the crap. You called me an old monkey and I danced for you. Now, are you going to teach me how to consume that lightning?”

Seeing how hard the old man had worked to get what he wanted further increased the admiration Bai Xiaochun felt in his heart. With that, he went on to explain a little bit about the lightning. Leaving out any guesses about Bai Hao, he explained that he had once consumed some heavenly tribulation, and had sensed that it contained life force. That was what gave him the inspiration to consume the lightning bolts here in Lightning Penitentiary.

The Lightning Ancestor didn’t believe that at all, but to his frustration, no further questioning got anywhere. Eventually, another lightning storm built up, and Bai Xiaochun excitedly consumed more lightning and proceeded on with more cultivation. That in turn caused the Lightning Ancestor’s envy to grow.

After ten days passed, Bai Xiaochun had consumed enough lightning to get his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation to the great circle of the first level. He was now just on the verge of breaking through to the second level.

Finally, the Lightning Ancestor couldn’t take it anymore. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he said, “Hey, old pal, it seems to me that the two of us were destined to meet each other here. You know, I can tell that you hate the north quite a bit, and so do I.... We’re essentially allies.... How about you teach me that lightning absorption technique, and I’ll promise to help you take care of the north after we get out. What do you say?”

Bai Xiaochun glanced at the Lightning Ancestor but didn’t respond. Continuing to absorb lightning, he pushed his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation closer and closer to the next level.

According to his calculations, it would only take a few more lightning storms to achieve his breakthrough!

When the Lightning Ancestor realized that he was being ignored, he gritted his teeth and loudly said, “Listen, my friend, I have a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering divine ability. Want to trade?”

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t even look over at him, causing his anxiety to mount.

“It’s really an incredible divine ability! It's called the One Hundred Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations! The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect has it too, but it’s an incomplete version. Cultivating that version will cause your divine soul to split apart. However, I have the full version, and it’s beyond belief!”

Stunned, Bai Xiaochun looked over at him. “What did you say it’s called?”

“The One Hundred Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0964 awe-chapter-965

Bai Xiaochun was more than a little surprised. He knew of this divine ability, and had personally fought against it; it was Master Cloud Lightning’s trump card. After combining into his united form, he had used the eighth transformation to become the forefather of all humanity, which was the first time that Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist had ever been defeated.

That memory remained fresh in Bai Xiaochun’s mind, and in fact, he often thought about that technique, which had been used against him. Sadly, it was a secret magic of the north that was never passed on to foreigners. Besides, even among northerners, the people who qualified to cultivate it could be counted on one hand.

And yet, contrary to all expectation, this old man said that the technique actually encompassed one hundred transformations. Bai Xiaochun very nearly gasped as a result, but managed to keep his true reaction concealed. Glaring over at the Lightning Ancestor, he said, “Who do you think you’re fooling, you old monkey? Do you think I've never seen the Cloud Lightning Forefather divine ability before?!”

The Lightning Ancestor blinked a few times. However, he didn’t show any of the embarrassment he might have if he had been trying to pull a scam. Actually, he had hoped that the name of the technique would attract Bai Xiaochun’s attention. Smacking his forehead, he laughed dryly and said, “I’m getting old, and my memory isn’t what it used to be. I just remembered that it’s actually the Eleven Cloud

Lightning Forefather Transformations. I'm definitely not mistaken this time. It has eleven transformations!”

In order to prove that what he was saying was completely and utterly trustworthy, he went on to add some more information.

“The first nine transformations allow a cultivator to form a Dharma Idol of the forefather of all humanity. Then they can merge with that Dharma Idol to become the forefather. The tenth transformation turns one’s left eye into a shining moon, and the eleventh transformation, which is the most shocking of all, turns the right eye into a blazing sun!

“Although there are eleven transformations, the final two transformations are far more powerful than the others. In fact, they each have an additional three levels of transformation power. That means that if you cultivate the technique in its entirety, it essentially has the power of seventeen transformations!”

By this point, Bai Xiaochun was completely stunned, and his heart was racing.

“The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect coveted my technique,” the Lightning Ancestor continued, “and used contemptible means to steal it from me. However, they never got the final two transformations. In fact, that's why they imprisoned me here, in the hopes of getting them.” As of now, he could see that Bai Xiaochun was intrigued, and therefore he went on to brag a bit more. As to whether his boasting was truthful or not, only he could tell.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very convinced that the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect would imprison this person just to get two transformations. There were simply too many methods that could be used to extract such information. For example, they could put a person like Bai Xiaochun into the prison as a mole, and fool the Lightning Ancestor into giving up the information willingly.

But he was still intrigued, especially by what the Lightning Ancestor had said about the eleventh transformation… that it could transform the left eye into a bright moon.

“I cultivate the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, but it’s incomplete…. It only contains the moon incantation. If I could break through to the great circle, I could get my cultivation base to the mid Deva Realm…. But that’s impossible, since it’s incomplete.

“But this eleventh forefather transformation… has to do with a moon. I wonder if I could combine them….” Having reached this point in his train of thought, his heart began to beat even faster. Although he couldn’t be sure of whether or not it would work, he decided that he had to try.

However, he also realized that he couldn’t let that show. This old monkey had been locked up for long enough that his brain seemed to be a bit addled, but he was still a demigod expert, after all.

Getting the technique from him would come at a price, and Bai Xiaochun knew that if he wasn't careful, he could end up with a flawed version. If that happened, it could cause problems for his cultivation base. Furthermore, he had no idea how exactly he was able to consume lightning, and therefore had no way to pass that information on to the old man as payment….

“I need to convince him that he doesn’t need the technique itself, only the spiritual energy….” Since it was impossible to pass on the lightning consuming technique, he would need to think of a way to take the energy of heaven and earth that he had absorbed and transfer it to the Lightning Ancestor.

The key to that would be to alter the structure of the lightning. Ignoring the Lightning Ancestor, he continued consuming some lightning, and worked on a way to do just that.

The Lightning Ancestor waited for some time, but when it became clear that Bai Xiaochun wasn't very interested, he began to get more anxious.

Another seven days went by. Bai Xiaochun continued to work on his cultivation, and his aura continued to grow more powerful. The endless amount of lightning bolts in the Lightning Penitentiary were the perfect fuel for cultivation, and over the week which had passed, he had consumed well over ten thousand bolts.

A quick calculation revealed that he had already accomplished a whole sixty-year-cycle’s worth of cultivation. It was so shocking that he almost couldn’t believe it was true.

“The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect is truly the ultimate land of good fortune for me!” At this point, his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation had reached the great circle of the second level.

“At this rate, it will only be half a month… before I break through to the third level, and reach the peak of the early Deva Realm!!” He was so excited that, even if the demigod patriarch of the sect came to free him, he would definitely come up with a way to make sure he stayed locked up.

“In fact… if I can break out of the third level, then my cultivation base should reach the mid Deva Realm!!”

“If I reach the mid Deva Realm, then Master Cloud Lightning wouldn’t count for crap against me!! And that numbskull Feng Chen couldn’t touch me. I wouldn’t even be scared of all of the northern devas put together!” His eyes glittered as he imagined that glorious scene, and then he mused about how much he had fallen in love with this lightning.

Another thing he had worked on was the ability to remove the destructive power of the lightning and leave behind only the spiritual energy. So far, he was only able to succeed with one out of ten lightning bolts, and even that was difficult.

Meanwhile, the Lightning Ancestor sat there watching the excited Bai Xiaochun’s aura get stronger and stronger as he consumed the lightning bolts. Eventually, he couldn’t hold back any longer.

“Hey, old pal....” he said. “Come on, why don’t we trade techniques? You teach me how to consume the lightning, and I’ll teach you the Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations!”

“Not interested!” Bai Xiaochun replied, not even looking over as he continued to consume lightning bolts.

“This is a classified secret magic!” he said anxiously. “There are only a few techniques in all of the lands of Heavenspan that can compare to it!”

“I said I’m not interested. Can you quiet down a bit? Don’t even think about getting my lightning consuming technique. There’s no way!” Frowning in annoyance, he continued to work on absorbing lightning.

The Lightning Ancestor was so angry he almost started blurting out curses. In fact, he had already decided that he would try to get Bai Xiaochun to unwillingly cultivate his transformation technique in a way that would get him to split into two parts. However, on the outside, he could only continue to smile. By this point, he had come to the conclusion that it wasn’t so much that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t interested in his technique. Rather, he prized his lightning consuming technique so much that he wasn’t willing to trade it for anything.

And he had nothing else to bargain with. Gritting his teeth, he said, “If you can’t give me the technique, can you… maybe pass some of the energy of heaven and earth over to me? I’ll trade my technique for that!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to pound. However, he continued to pretend to be disinterested. The Lightning Ancestor continued to pepper him with questions, though, until he finally waved his hand, causing one of the lightning bolts to sweep through his body, dispelled its destructive nature, and then returned it to the palm of his hand.

“I'm somewhat interested in that technique of yours, but I don’t have the time to cultivate it now. You want some consumable lightning, right? Here, take a bolt. And then shut up, keep quiet, and don’t bother me.”

A rumbling sound echoed out as the bolt of lightning he had just cleansed passed through the restrictive spell and shot toward the Lightning Ancestor. The Lightning Ancestor was stunned. Never could he have imagined that the spiritual energy he had worked so hard to get would be thrown over to him so casually. In fact, he didn’t even need to give up his technique to get it, just leave Bai Xiaochun alone.

There was no time to contemplate the matter at length right now. He could tell that there was something different about this bolt of lightning, and therefore, he quickly breathed it in. Instantly, cracking sounds rang out as his parched insides were suddenly enlivened. Although there wasn’t much spiritual energy in the lightning bolt, it had been 10,000 years since he had absorbed even the slightest bit. To him, it was such a beauteous thing that he immediately began to shiver.

“Hey, old pal....”

“Can you please just stop annoying me!? Argh!!” Looking very angry, Bai Xiaochun threw over another lightning bolt.

Worried that he would irritate Bai Xiaochun too much, the Lightning Ancestor quickly absorbed the lightning and then kept his mouth shut. A few more days passed, but Bai Xiaochun never even looked his way, causing his anxiety to grow.

If he hadn’t been given any of the spiritual energy to begin with, he might have continued to be jealous, but would have been able to control himself. But now, having tasted the sweet taste of that energy, his thirst was growing more and more intense.

“Um....” he began cautiously. Bai Xiaochun looked over with a glare and threw him another bolt of lightning. And that was how the following several days went.

Eventually, it reached the point where Bai Xiaochun had given him eight lightning bolts. The Lightning Ancestor’s desire mounted, and he came to be more and more convinced that Bai Xiaochun really didn’t care about the divine ability.

If he did, why would he never say anything about it? All he asked for was silence. From the way Bai Xiaochun threw the lightning bolts out, it was like he was a rich moneybags, and the Lightning Ancestor was a beggar.

During the time that passed, Bai Xiaochun reached the third level of the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation. His aura was now more powerful than ever, and finally, he began to think about the Lightning Ancestor’s Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations.

One day after just having thrown out another lightning bolt, he casually said, “Hey, old monkey. Tell me more about this supposed One Hundred Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations or whatever it is that you’re always bragging about.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0965 awe-chapter-966

The Lightning Ancestor hesitated, not very pleased with how Bai Xiaochun was looking at him.

“Listen, ya old monkey. Times are different now. That technique of yours really isn’t that interesting. Think about it. The spiritual energy I’ve given you so far is like a drop in the ocean to me. If you want to be stingy, then you can go ahead and just keep wishing for my spiritual energy. Even if I get more, I won’t give you any!”

The Lightning Ancestor immediately started to get nervous. Smiling wryly, he sighed and thought, “Little punk! I guess it doesn’t matter whether or not you’re doing this on purpose…. Fine, you win!”

Although he had come to be a bit muddle-headed after all the years of confinement, if he couldn’t see what Bai Xiaochun was doing by this point, he didn’t deserve to have lived for so long.

No matter how he thought the matter over, there didn’t seem to be any other option for him. Besides, the spiritual energy he wanted so badly was under the complete control of Bai Xiaochun. And that couldn’t possibly be the handiwork of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.

Most importantly, although the Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations was powerful, it didn’t seem likely that the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect’s demigod patriarch would hatch a plot this complicated to get it.

In fact, the more he thought about it, the more he had to praise Bai Xiaochun for doing things this way. After all, not only had he come to hold the Lightning Ancestor’s fate in his hands, but he had also manipulated his feelings perfectly. First he had done his work with the lightning, and had then hooked him and reeled him in with the lure of spiritual energy.

From beginning to end, he had controlled things masterfully.

After coming to all of these realizations, the Lightning Ancestor finally sighed and looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

“Ah, whatever,” he said. “Alright kid. I don’t need that much energy from the lightning. A hundred bolts will do. Enough to create a spirit seed inside of me!

“As far as my divine ability goes… well, listen up!” Eyes shining, he went on to explain the full mnemonic for the Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations.

He didn’t hide any aspect of the technique. He explained it all in full. He acted like a true demigod, explaining everything in minute detail. After all, he was worried that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t give him the one hundred lightning bolts he needed.

It was a valid concern. The Lightning Ancestor knew that when dealing with a moneybags like Bai Xiaochun, he needed to be generous.

Bai Xiaochun felt a bit embarrassed at how shameless he had been. Clearing his throat, he quickly fixed the Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations mnemonic into his mind.

The more he studied it, the more excited he got, and by the time he finished, his eyes were shining brightly with excitement.

“Even right now, I can tell that it’s possible to combine it with my Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation!!” Delighted, he started tossing lightning bolts in the dozens over to the Lightning Ancestor. He only stopped when he reached fifty.

Choosing not to hide anything, he politely explained his intentions. “I hope you can understand, Senior. I need to be cautious. I’ll give you the rest when I leave."

The Lightning Ancestor completely understood. Snorting, he closed his eyes and went about absorbing the spiritual energy from the lightning bolts and beginning work on his spirit seed.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. It had been exhausting to both work on his cultivation and also figure out a way to get the divine ability from the Lightning Ancestor.

Now that he had succeeded, he could focus fully on consuming lightning and furthering his cultivation.

He had been incarcerated for about two months now, and during that time, had pushed his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation all the way from the first level to the third. His cultivation base had also progressed, and his aura was stronger, very close to the mid Deva Realm.

Anyone outside who heard that would be completely shocked, and also overcome with envy.

“Right now, I have two main goals. First is to break out of the third level of the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, and thus step into the mid Deva Realm!

“After that… I need to cultivate the Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations, and fuse it with the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation!” After taking a moment to examine the crescent moon that existed inside of himself, he sent his divine sense out and waited for the next lightning storm.

As the lightning bore down on him, he opened his mouth and inhaled deeply!

He breathed in with all his might, causing the lightning to distort as it headed into his mouth.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

In one breath, he sucked in several hundred lightning bolts. Deafening crashing sounds filled him, and intense energy of heaven and earth began to course through him. The crescent moon glittered, and his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation pushed closer to breaking through.

“Just a bit more!” His hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture, and then waved through the air in front of him. Hundreds more lightning bolts then shot toward him. Before long, an hour had passed.

At that point, the lightning in the area began to thin. Although Bai Xiaochun had consumed quite a bit of lightning this time around, when compared to the boundless amounts that had gathered, the number was not very significant.

Although he wasn’t thrilled that the lightning was fading away, he knew that it would come back in about four hours. That was how things had gone consistently throughout the past two months. All of a sudden, he realized that if he changed his method, he might be able to speed up his cultivation.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he shot to his feet and performed another double-handed incantation gesture. His cultivation base immediately began to rotate at top speed, forming a huge vortex.

As the vortex spun and rumbled, a significant gravitational force spread out. He also opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, and threw in the powers of gravity and repulsion that he had researched so many years ago.

Before long, more than half of the dissipating lightning was actually moving toward him.

The intense rumbling sounds that resulted attracted the attention of the Lightning Ancestor, who opened his eyes, looked around, and gasped.

“What are you trying to do?!”

Bai Xiaochun had no attention to spare for the Lightning Ancestor. He kept his cultivation base rotating at top speed, drawing in hundreds of lightning bolts every time he opened his mouth.

As a result, his cultivation base continued to climb. Four hours passed, during which time he absorbed roughly ten percent of the total amount. At that point, a new lightning storm began to build.

After absorbing as much as he could from the new storm, the lightning began to dissipate, so he used the same method to force it to stay behind.

Because of that, a sea of lightning built up around him, fully 5 kilometers across, and terrifying to behold.

As for the Lightning Ancestor, he used a special technique to move his cell further away from Bai Xiaochun.

“This guy’s crazy! That’s not cultivation, that’s suicide!” Outside of the 5-kilometer lake of lightning, he looked back, heart trembling with fear.

Bai Xiaochun was also feeling very apprehensive. However, *if you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off*. Despite having dispelled his cultivation base vortex, the sea of lightning had reached critical mass, and begun to swirl on its own, and also attract more lightning to it.

“What did I do this time…?” he thought nervously. “Well, no time to worry about it now. Gotta absorb this lightning!”

Howling, he absorbed the lightning like mad, which caused massive amounts of spiritual energy to surge through him.

However, he could only breathe in a few hundred lightning bolts at a time, and had to close his mouth after doing so…. Therefore, there were still plenty of lightning bolts left to strike him!

He tried to dodge, but it was too little, too late….

Massive rumbling sounds could be heard as over 10,000 lightning bolts slammed into him, provoking an agonized shriek. There was simply no way for him to consume all of the lightning, and now it felt like the lightning was actually eating him!

The pain caused tears to spring out of his eyes. Even as he tried to dodge the lightning strikes, he realized that the massive influx of spiritual energy had pushed the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation toward the very limits of the third level!

His cultivation base rose rapidly, pushing him far beyond the early Deva Realm, and very close to the mid Deva Realm!

“Who cares about that!? My poor little life is the most important thing of all!” Trembling, he backed away from his original spot, but his movement tugged at the lake of lightning, causing an imbalance that sent tens of thousands of lightning bolts in his direction. A bloodcurdling scream rang out as they slammed into him.

Even as he screamed, his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation broke through, and his cultivation base climbed up into the mid Deva Realm!

Off in the distance, the Lightning Ancestor stared in complete shock.

“I guess times really have changed. Why are young people nowadays… so reckless in their cultivation?

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0966 awe-chapter-967

The Lightning Ancestor was completely flabbergasted to see the lightning slowly dissipating from around Bai Xiaochun, who stood there trembling, smoke rising up from him. He almost looked like he had been fried to perfection by the tens of thousands of lightning bolts.

However, his cultivation base was no longer in the early Deva Realm… he had stepped into the mid Deva Realm!!

His incomplete Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation had reached its great circle. His left eye now had a bright moon in it that seemed ready to fly out of him at any moment, and appear in the sky as a second moon!

The manifestation of this divine ability would cause any ordinary person to feel as if their heart and mind were being replaced by a moon.

But all it did to Bai Xiaochun was leave him trembling physically and mentally. The truth was that he normally wouldn’t ever use a method like this to achieve a cultivation base breakthrough.

The mere thought of being slammed by so much lightning struck terror into his heart….

“I'm done with cultivation….” he said, scowling on the verge of tears. As of this point, even the slightest crackle of thunder caused him to flinch…. Right now, he couldn’t have been more afraid of another convergence of lightning.

Even as he looked around anxiously, and tried to decide whether or not to start moving around, a new lightning storm began to build up. Perhaps because of the influence of the previous convergence of lightning, the gravitational force generated this time was massive. Within moments, more lightning had built up than the last time, covering everything with sparkling brightness.

Bai Xiaochun screamed and scrambled backward, and yet that didn’t stop the lightning from descending toward him.

“I don’t need it….” he shrieked. The Lightning Ancestor was long gone, huffing and puffing as he propelled his cell far off into the distance. Upon looking over his shoulder, he began to curse. “Dammit! No consideration for the elderly! Does he think it’s easy for me to move this cell at my age!?!?”

**

Shortly before….

Something big was happening outside in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. The black cloud that housed the Lightning Order was beginning to move.

It was almost like an earthquake, something strong enough that all of the Lightning Order cultivators felt it immediately.

“Did the ground just move?”

“There’s no way. We’re on a big black cloud! How could that black cloud move…?”

“Do you guys get the sense… that our Lightning Order’s lightning reserves seem low…?”

Ever since Bai Xiaochun had been incarcerated, the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect had been oddly at peace. The Cloud Order cultivators had felt at ease from the beginning, whereas the Lightning Order cultivators had initially been worried. However, as time passed, they gradually calmed down as well. After all, everyone had complete and utter faith in Lightning Penitentiary.

Even the devas felt no apprehension whatsoever. At long last, they were able to experience what life had been like before Bai Xiaochun arrived in their sect, and it left them sighing with heartfelt relief.

However, even as people sighed in contentment, the Lightning Order's black cloud suddenly trembled, which immediately attracted attention. What was even more astonishing to the Lightning Order cultivators was how, moments later, the cloud shifted beneath their feet yet again!

At the same time, muffled rumbling sounds could be heard, leading to cries of alarm within the Lightning Order.

"It *did* move!!"

"Something's wrong!!"

"The lightning… guys, look at that lightning…."

Everyone looked down at the black cloud, and could see that fewer lightning bolts danced beneath its surface than before. Furthermore, every few moments, some of the remaining lightning bolts seemed to disappear into the depths of the cloud.

Almost immediately, ill premonitions rose up in the hearts of many Lightning Order disciples. Up in the black coffin high above, the devas’ expressions flickered, and they suddenly started to get very nervous.

“Don’t tell me it’s Bai Xiaochun again!!”

“Dammit! It couldn’t possibly be him! He’s been locked up....”

It was at this point that the Lightning Order’s black cloud trembled yet again, even more violently than before. At the same time, loud rumbling sounds could be heard.

It was at that exact same moment that, deep within the black cloud, in the middle of that massive convergence of lightning, Bai Xiaochun screamed and fled as quickly as possible. The restrictive spells that made up his 30-meter cell had long since been destroyed, giving him free access to attempt to escape. And yet, that did him no good. No longer were there tens of thousands of lightning bolts around him. Now, there were hundreds of thousands!

No matter where or how he fled, the lightning followed, and if he slowed down for even a moment, he would be enveloped.

And if he stopped moving, then even more lightning would build up. By this point, he was going crazy.

“How could this be happening...?” he moaned. It was a moment of deep crisis, and therefore, he finally just gritted his teeth and said, “Dammit! Fine, I'm going to go for broke. That lightning is made of spiritual energy, right? Who the hell would be scared of that!?!?” Letting out a roar to psyche himself up, he drew upon the mnemonic the Lightning Ancestor had taught him, and began to cultivate the Eleven Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations!

He suddenly lurched to a halt, which instantly allowed tens of thousands of lightning bolts to hone in on him, then smash into his body.

Having his body slashed by lightning in this way was painful, but because of how tough he was, was easy to endure for the time being. At the same time, massive amounts of spiritual power began to flow through him, until he began to swell up like a balloon….

“Cloud Lightning Forefather, First Transformation!” His vision swam as he was wracked with pain, but he focused on the divine ability, using the spiritual energy to fuel the transformation.

Instantly, rumbling sounds filled him as he grew to a height of 30 meters, and began to exude a wild and barbaric air.

He had already succeeded at the first transformation!

But things weren’t over yet. As massive amounts of spiritual energy went wild within him, he began to work on the second transformation! Furthermore, he bolstered the effect with the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, and the power of his left eye!

He could only attempt a true combination by carefully analyzing everything one step at a time. Furthermore, there was always a chance of failure.

Under normal circumstances, a failure would require him to stop and build up more spiritual energy before trying again. After all, combining these two powerful techniques demanded that he be in peak condition.

But now, with boundless amounts of spiritual energy at his disposal, he didn’t need to sit around waiting. As soon as he failed, he could try again.

He tried again and again, over ten times, until suddenly his left eye began to shine with dazzling moonlight. As it did, his 30-meter-tall forefather form looked very different than Master Cloud Lightning’s had.

An indescribable aura emanated out from him, and the moon sigil within his eyes shone with such powerful light that it seemed capable of controlling all of the darkness of the night!

“It worked!” However, now was not the time to revel in excitement. The spiritual energy inside of him drained rapidly, almost beyond his control. Howling, he began the second transformation of the Cloud Lightning Forefather technique!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as he grew to a height of 60 meters! The second transformation… was a success!

And of course, he was not finished. Next was the third transformation, and then the fourth!

As the innumerable lightning bolts surrounded him, rumbling sounds could be heard as he grew to a height of 90 meters, and then 120 meters!

Furthermore, the wild and barbaric aura of the technique, combined with a fleshly body that had mastered the Undying Bones, made his transformed form even more powerful. By now, he had surpassed the limits of fleshly body power!

If the twin Master Cloud Lightnings were here to see what was happening, they would be shocked to the core. After all, the power Bai Xiaochun was capable of with this transformation far surpassed them!

That was especially true because of the moon sigil in his left eye, which further added to his power!

Under normal circumstances, Bai Xiaochun would be very excited. But right now, he could tell that his body was reaching a limit in its ability to absorb the lightning from the black cloud. It had nothing to do with the divine ability, only his own body. In some ways, it was exactly the same as when consuming medicinal pills.

When that critical point was reached, the lightning would no longer be nourishing, but instead, harmful, and even destructive!

As Bai Xiaochun grew stronger, the lightning bolts grew more numerous. By now, hundreds of thousands of them were showering down onto him.

Tears of fear leaking out of his eyes, he decided that he had no choice but to hope that one more transformation would fix the situation.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather, Fifth Transformation!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0967 awe-chapter-968

Rumbling sounds erupted as Bai Xiaochun’s 120-meter form grew to a height of 150 meters! The fifth transformation of the Cloud Lightning Forefather was complete!

He now radiated a terrifying aura, and the moon sigil in his left eye gave him additional power equal to three transformations. In total, he now wielded the power of… the eighth transformation!

Back when Master Cloud Lightning had actually reached the eighth transformation, his power surpassed the late Deva Realm and came close to the great circle.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was now even more shockingly powerful than that!

However, that brought him no joy, only fear, because after the fifth transformation was complete, his body reached the point that it could not accept any more of the lightning from the black cloud.

The lightning writhed madly as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun, driving fear into his heart as he scrambled backward. He was now much faster than before, and yet, far more lightning had gathered.

Now, instead of having to deal with hundreds of thousands of lightning bolts, there were over a million….

It was a profoundly shocking scene. Off in the distance, the Lightning Ancestor was completely gobsmacked, and was shaking physically. By this point, he had completely forgotten about the fifty lightning bolts that Bai Xiaochun still owed him, and was doing everything he could to get his cell as far away as possible.

“You absolutely, positively must not get close to me…. don’t do it!! My old body can’t take this…. Kids nowadays are all psychos….” However, it was in that exact moment that Bai Xiaochun happened to look over, and caught sight of the Lightning Ancestor.

When their eyes met, the Lightning Ancestor screamed, and drew upon all the strength he could muster to send his cell shooting in the opposite direction. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked like the picture of grief and indignation as he did everything he could to get out of the range of the lightning. Sadly, more and more lightning was building up with every moment that passed….

As Bai Xiaochun fled, his eyes wide with terror, he suddenly sensed that the lightning was starting to tremble with dangerous instability….

“It's gonna blow?!?!?!” His scalp tingled madly as he screamed and pushed forward with greater speed.

Off in the distance, the Lightning Ancestor’s eyes were about to pop out of his skull. However, at the same time, he was starting to get a bit excited.

“It's gonna blow? Great! The crazier the better. Maybe… this will be my chance to get out of here!!”

**

In the outside world, the black cloud was shaking nonstop. Virtually no lightning bolts were visible at all from the outside, and the cloud was starting to emanate an unsettling aura, as though something explosively dangerous were brewing deep inside of it.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings, Feng Chen, and the other northern devas were all racing toward the cloud, and when they saw what was happening, their faces fell dramatically.

They tried to send divine sense into the cloud to determine what exactly was happening, but because of the unusual properties of Lightning Penitentiary, they were unable to make out any specific details.

“What exactly is going on here!?!?”

“Dammit! This is definitely Bai Xiaochun’s doing!!”

Of course, the other three devas were quick to cast blame on Master Cloud Lightning and Feng Chen.

“It’s your fault, Feng Chen! You should never have come up with the idea for the three-point covenant!!”

“And you’re to blame too, Master Cloud Lightning! This Bai Xiaochun is a walking disaster! Why the hell did you bring him here to begin with!?!?”

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings and Feng Chen had very unsightly expressions on their faces, but there was nothing they could say in response. As everyone looked on nervously, a stream of divine sense erupted from the crystal coffin which shook the hearts of even the devas. It quickly entered the black cloud, whereupon an enraged roar erupted out that shook heaven and earth.

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

At the same time, the demigod patriarch materialized in midair. He looked extremely anxious, and didn’t even take the time to say anything. He simply waved his hand out into the air!

A powerful blast of wind erupted out, swept over the black cloud, grabbed all of the cultivators on it, and then teleported them off into the distance.

In the exact moment that the demigod patriarch accomplished that, a shocking boom erupted out, the likes of which had never been heard in the north before. The source? The black cloud which made up the Lightning Order, which had just exploded!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

The noise was so loud that countless cultivators immediately began to cough up blood. Even the devas were shaken, and were shoved backward through the air.

All of the buildings which rested on the black cloud land mass were reduced to ash as innumerable lightning bolts erupted out in all directions. It almost looked like a dragon made of lightning were climbing up into the sky.

Then came the screaming shockwave, which rolled out in all directions, causing the sky to dim. As for the black cloud itself… much of it was reduced to nothing more than rubble.

Cracks began to spread out in the Lightning Order’s battle god statue…. It was almost as if the entire Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect had come under attack. The Cloud Order’s statue was missing a finger, and now the Lightning Order’s statue was visibly damaged.

The twin Master Cloud Lightnings hovered there in complete shock. Feng Chen’s jaw was hanging open, and his eyes were wide. The other devas reacted in similar fashion. As for the demigod patriarch, he was so angry that he was shaking, and his hair was standing on end.

The Lightning Order cultivators who had been teleported away were stunned to the extreme. The Lightning Order now looked completely different from before, and the change had occurred so quickly that they had no chance to even react.

In contrast, the Cloud Order cultivators were all feeling very blessed that Bai Xiaochun had not been locked up in their part of the sect….

At the same time, they were even more terrified by his ability to cause catastrophes!

“This Bai Xiaochun… must *not* be provoked….”

“The deva patriarchs are out of their minds. Everything was fine until they had to go and confine him to the Cloud Order. First, he went and sold medicinal toxins to our Cloud Order cultivators, and then he destroyed half of the Cloud Order with his flower….”

“Then they had to go and lock him up in Lightning Penitentiary, which is supposedly strong enough to keep even demigods in check. But this guy… actually blew the entire place up!! And look, almost half of the Lightning Order’s black cloud has now been destroyed!!”

“Heavens, is this guy even human?!?! How did the cultivators in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect manage to stay alive all this time!?!?”

“Everybody says that his pill concocting is the stuff that can shake heaven and earth. But he never even concocted medicine here in the north. And look how it ended up.... I bet if he had concocted medicine, he would have destroyed all of the northern Heavenspan River!!”

Before long, a cacophony of conversation filled the air. The entire Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect was abuzz. And that was when... people began to take notice of a bedraggled figure climbing up from within the rubble of the black cloud....

Bai Xiaochun’s face was pale, and he was dripping with sweat. After all, he had very nearly been fried to a crisp just now.

“I’m definitely never going to absorb any more lightning ever again. It's way too dangerous!!” Even as he crawled out into the open, he heard a howl of rage echoing from above.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” It was the demigod patriarch, whose rage surpassed heavenly might, and startled Bai Xiaochun so much that he jumped up into the air. The demigod patriarch took a step forward toward Bai Xiaochun, and yet, before he could do anything else, suddenly looked off in a different direction.

“How dare you try to escape, Lightning Ancestor!!” The demigod patriarch shoved his hand out, causing the air off in the distance to shatter, revealing the emaciated Lightning Ancestor who, without pausing for even a moment, spun in place and shot off into the distance like a bolt of lightning.

The demigod patriarch had no time to worry about Bai Xiaochun. Face turning very grim, he sped off in pursuit of the Lightning Ancestor. Catching him was far more important than punishing Bai Xiaochun.

The events playing out had Bai Xiaochun sweating nervously.

“I'm not sticking around the north any longer than I have to. I need to get out of here!” At this point, he completely ignored the Dharmic decree of the Celestial, and fled from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.

However, as he did, Feng Chen let out a cry of rage and shot after him.

Feng Chen actually had taken a liking to Du Lingfei, and therefore, hated Bai Xiaochun even more than could be imagined. He had been very proud of this three-point covenant, and had imagined that it would be a big torment to Bai Xiaochun. Never could he have imagined that instead, Bai Xiaochun would turn the tables and throw the entire sect into chaos. And that only served to fuel Feng Chen’s hatred.

Immediately drawing upon a trump card, he transformed into a crimson bolt of lightning that brimmed with destructive power as it shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

However, Bai Xiaochun was just as angry, and spun in place to face him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0968 awe-chapter-969

“I've had enough of you, Bai Xiaochun!” Feng Chen howled. His crimson lightning bolt form moved with incredible quickness, bringing him to appear in front of Bai Xiaochun in the blink of an eye. He radiated the cultivation base fluctuations of the mid Deva Realm as he sent a devastating attack directly toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead!

“Yeah, well I've had enough of you, Feng Chen!!” And that was absolutely the truth. The instant he arrived in the north, he was hit with the three-point covenant, which was then upgraded to a four-, and then a five-point covenant….

Normally, Bai Xiaochun was not the type of person who liked fighting and killing, but he had been pushed so far that the personality he had developed in the Wildlands finally showed through.

His eyes flashed with anger as Feng Chen closed in, to the point where the moon sigil in his left eye began to shine brightly. Then he waved his hand, causing the previously blue sky to suddenly turn as dark as night.

The darkness covered up the sun, but at the same time revealed a bright moon, whose light illuminated everything down below. All of the northerners who were touched by that light suddenly felt as if their hearts, minds, and even their divine souls were being absorbed.

Feng Chen gasped as a sensation of imminent crisis swept through him. He even backed up a bit, and yet, that was when Bai Xiaochun grimly spoke two words.

“Fallen Moon!”

The sky turned even darker than before, and intense rumbling sounds filled the air. At the same time, a moon sigil appeared on Feng Chen’s red lightning bolt, which began to absorb the surrounding moonlight, causing it to shine brighter and brighter.

RUUUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Suddenly, the lightning bolt exploded, revealing Feng Chen’s human form. However, the moon sigil was still visible on him, as though it had been branded on him, all the way down to his bones!

As the moon sigil began to grow larger, Feng Chen screamed in terror at the realization that he was being harmed, not just physically, but in his cultivation base!!

The function of the moon sigil was to assimilate the spiritual energy of heaven and earth that existed inside of the human body. And when it completed its work, that person would be killed in body and soul!!

“What divine ability is this!?!?”

Feng Chen felt like entire mountain peaks were battering him. There was simply nothing he could do to fight back against Bai Xiaochun’s Fallen Moon technique. Bai Xiaochun didn’t even need to touch him. As long as the moonlight hit Feng Chen, his injuries would mount, something he had only ever witnessed demigods accomplish.

And yet here Bai Xiaochun was doing that very thing. It left Feng Chen profoundly shaken, blood spraying out of his mouth as his eyes shone with terror and disbelief.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, from the moment Feng Chen transformed into a crimson lightning bolt, to the instant that lightning bolt shattered and he was severely injured, only a brief span of time elapsed. None of the onlookers had a chance to react before Feng Chen’s bloodcurdling screams filled the air.

Not even Bai Xiaochun could have guessed that his Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation would be so shockingly powerful. However, that didn't stop him from performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then waving his finger out in front of him!

Instantly, the bright moon in the darkness above glittered dazzlingly, and the moonlight seemed to focus and shine directly onto Feng Chen. That in turn caused the moon sigil burned into Feng Chen to spread out to cover his entire body.

His screams intensified. It was a moment of deadly crisis in which Feng Chen was shaking violently, unable to even wrap his mind around what was happening. Without any warning, he was placed in a moment of life or death, something that seemed impossible, considering that he was in the mid Deva Realm. He had always been a chosen in the north, a person who had won countless battles, and yet… he was totally powerless against Bai Xiaochun’s divine ability!

“I refuse to accept this!!” he howled, eyes shining with madness. However, he was beginning to fade from existence as shafts of moonlight stabbed out of him. He almost seemed to be turning into moonlight itself.

Of course, Feng Chen wasn’t the type to just sit around and wait to die. Although his fingers were almost completely gone, he still managed to raise his hand and touch the top of his head.

A boom rang out as his body exploded, sending the fluctuations of a deva-level self-detonation rolling out in all directions.

Borrowing the force of the explosion, his nascent divinity shot into the open and prepared to flee. However, that was when, to his utter astonishment, he discovered that… his nascent divinity also had a moon sigil on it!!

“Impossible!” Feng Chen cried. “This is impossible!!”

He couldn’t have been more astonished. By now, the sensation of crisis had intensified to the point where he was now certain he was about to die!!

“It's a true Daoist magic!!” the twin Master Cloud Lightnings shouted urgently. “Get to the crystal coffin, Feng Chen! Hide there! Bai Xiaochun, how dare you kill people here in the north! Things are not finished between us and you!!”

Flying forward at top speed, they began to combine their two forms, causing the fluctuations of the late Deva Realm to roll out in all directions.

He wasn’t the only one; the other three devas could also tell that it was a critical moment. Unleashing their cultivation bases, they turned into four beams of light that all shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Trembling, Feng Chen heeded the advice of Master Cloud Lightning, ignoring the burning state of his nascent divinity to shoot at top speed toward the crystal coffin. His hope was to take advantage of the interference provided by the other devas to get into the demigod’s immortal's cave, and cut himself off from the light of the bright moon.

His plan worked, but by the time he evaded the moonlight, causing the moon sigil to vanish, his nascent divinity had been eaten away by nearly half. Although he would eventually recover, he had experienced an indefinite drop in cultivation base!

There he sat in the crystal coffin, shivering in fear. He had just barely evaded death, and even though he didn’t want to admit it, he now felt utter terror at the mere thought of Bai Xiaochun.

“His cultivation base is definitely not in the early Deva Realm. He’s… in the mid Deva Realm!! But, even in that level… how could he be so incredibly strong!?!?”

Meanwhile, the other four northern devas were trembling in shock, and the ordinary cultivators who were watching the events play out much more so. All of them were both shocked and terrified by what Bai Xiaochun had done.

“Heavens! This Bai Xiaochun… he… he’s so strong!!”

“I made fun of him a while back. I laughed at him openly! I….”

“Hold on a second. If he was this strong before, why would he let himself get pushed around? What if… what if he actually experienced a breakthrough after arriving in the north?”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was dodging attacks from Master Cloud Lightning and the other devas, his expression grim, and his eyes bloodshot.

“Alright you northerners, I'm done. Lord Bai has had enough of you people! Bring it on! Let’s fight!”

Since he had already attacked one of them, he decided to throw caution to the wind. Without any hesitation, he unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, causing Mid Deva Realm fluctuations to erupt in all directions. By now, the darkness was fading from the sky as it returned to normal, making it very easy to see a huge face up above, which radiated the might of heaven and earth.

“Mid Deva Realm.... Dammit, he really did have a breakthrough!!” After sensing Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base fluctuations, Master Cloud Lightning felt like he was going crazy.

He felt completely and utterly powerless in the face of Bai Xiaochun’s power. Back in the trial by fire, he had tried to kill him, only to be flummoxed first by his medicinal pill, and then by him addressing Du Lingfei as ‘wifey’. He had started out with the complete advantage, but had eventually reached the point of being completely trampled on by Bai Xiaochun.

His original assumption had been that, once in the north, in his home sect, he would definitely be able to heap torment onto Bai Xiaochun. Never could he have guessed that, despite his extreme hatred of Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun would first sell medicinal pills, then plant flowers, and then even force the demigod patriarch to step in and imprison him.

But then....

“Is this Bai Xiaochun even human? Not only did he destroy Lightning Penitentiary, he achieved a cultivation base breakthrough? How could he possibly have done something as difficult as breaking through to the mid Deva Realm? He… he really did break through!?!?!” The other three devas were reacting with madness similar to Master Cloud Lightning. However, despite their rage, they could do nothing but watch helplessly as Bai Xiaochun avoided everything they sent at him.

“He's a hedgehog! No matter how you try to grab him, you end up getting poked…. Fine, then forget his weird techniques. Let’s just overpower him!” Eyes flashing with loathing, Master Cloud Lightning shot toward Bai Xiaochun. Apparently, the other devas understood what he was thinking, as they too advanced, their murderous auras raging.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0969 awe-chapter-970

Four devas were joining hands to attack Bai Xiaochun with deadly force. The cultivators from the Cloud Order and the Lightning Order were all watching with rapt attention. Based on what everyone could tell, it didn’t matter if Bai Xiaochun were even stronger than he had already proven to be, he would still die for his brazenness!

“This Bai Xiaochun is strong, but he's forgotten that he isn't in the east anymore. This is the north!”

“Hmph! How dare he throw his weight around here in the north. We’re definitely going to show him a thing or two!”

“I refuse to believe that Master Cloud Lightning and the other devas all working together can’t kill that one measly Bai Xiaochun!”

Everyone was now starting to calm down, and were showing nothing but open disdain toward Bai Xiaochun. Meanwhile, Master Cloud Lightning and the other devas were closing in rapidly.

Cold light flickered in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. He had been restraining himself ever since he arrived in the north, but now that he had four devas all showing open killing intent, his anger erupted in full.

Instead of backing up, he advanced, waving his hand to summon the Waterswamp Kingdom. Water vapor roiled in all directions as a huge clawed hand shot out.

Everything shook violently, catching all of the devas completely by surprise. Master Cloud Lightning wasn't affected very deeply, but the three other devas gasped, and one of them even coughed up blood.

“Bai Xiaochun!” Master Cloud Lightning, the top deva in the north, roared in rage at this. Transforming into a beam of bright light, he shot directly toward Bai Xiaochun, simultaneously shouting, “Cloud Lightning Forefather: Seventh Transformation!!”

An ear-splitting rumbling sound spread out as Master Cloud Lightning rapidly grew to a height of 210 meters. He truly looked like the forefather of all humanity, with a cultivation base and battle prowess that skyrocketed seemingly without limit. In an instant, he was past the late Deva Realm, and was like a tempest bearing down on Bai Xiaochun.

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed, and he shouted, “Super Suppression Forefather, Fifth Transformation!”

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Bai Xiaochun also grew rapidly in size, until he was 150 meters tall, with a wild and barbaric aura, and a burly, savage appearance. Within his left eye was a moon sigil that shone with dazzling light, which made his fifth transformation… as powerful as the eighth!

“This is impossible!!” Master Cloud Lightning’s eyes bulged on the verge of popping out of his skull. The reason he hadn’t resorted to his eighth transformation was that it was too draining. Furthermore, how could he possibly have ever guessed that Bai Xiaochun would actually use the exact same divine ability as him!?

They slammed into each other, and a massive boom echoed out in all directions. The air vibrated as Master Cloud Lightning tumbled backward, blood spraying out of his mouth.

Although he was shaken physically, he was even more shaken mentally, and was panting in disbelief. The Cloud Lightning Forefather technique was a secret magic that belonged to the north. And yet, in completely unexpected fashion, Bai Xiaochun had used it right in front of him, a fact that instantly shoved him further toward madness.

Even worse was the fact that he had only used the fifth transformation, and yet had completely overpowered his own seventh transformation. It was utterly maddening.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he roared, “how dare you steal a secret legacy technique of the north!!” Without any hesitation, he utilized his eighth transformation, reaching a height of 240 meters, whereupon he charged back into the fray.

“That’s bullshit and you know it!” Bai Xiaochun shot back. “You’re using the *Cloud Lightning* Forefather technique, and I'm using the *Super Suppression* Forefather technique! The names are totally different! What are you, blind? Or deaf? Or both?!” Snorting coldly, he launched forward, slamming into Master Cloud Lightning.

As they separated from the exchange, Bai Xiaochun’s qi and blood was boiling. Eyes shining with the desire to do battle, he lurched backward, performed a double-handed incantation gesture, and then shouted out at the top of his lungs

“Living Mountain Incantation!”

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

Countless rocks and boulders began to fly through the air, covering Bai Xiaochun's 150-meter frame and causing him to grow larger and taller. Within moments, he was a 300-meter-tall stone golem.

The combination of the Forefather Transformation with the Living Mountain Incantation produced shocking results, and shook everything in the area due to the sheer stunning levels of energy involved. All of the northern cultivators gasped, and began to cry out in alarm.

Furthermore, the energy of the Living Mountain Incantation caused a massive wind to spring up, a wind so powerful it stung the faces of all cultivators it touched. Master Cloud Lightning couldn't help but gasp in shock.

He suddenly had the intense premonition that Bai Xiaochun… was too much for him to handle!

"Dammit. Dammit! How could he have become so strong?!?!?! Only someone in the great circle of the Deva Realm could possibly be a match for him. And he hasn't even used that trump card fist strike yet…." At that point, Master Cloud Lightning's pupils constricted, and he began to back up as quickly as possible. However, even as he did, Bai Xiaochun began to stride forward!

As he went after Master Cloud Lightning, Bai Xiaochun let out a low-pitched growl that contained heavenly might, forcing the other devas to brace themselves and fight back against it.

One of them transformed into a black lightning bolt, another split up into nine cloud projections, and the third summoned an enormous furnace. Then all three of them shot forward to block Bai Xiaochun's path.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even look at them.

“Get the hell out of my way!” Roaring, he waved his hand, sending a blast of wind out to meet them.

The black lightning bolt shattered, the nine cloud projections were ripped to pieces, and the enormous furnace broke into countless fragments. The three devas all coughed up blood, expressions of disbelief overtaking their faces as Bai Xiaochun flew right past them.

“Too… too strong!!”

Bai Xiaochun hadn’t slowed down at all. As he closed in on Master Cloud Lightning, he clenched his hand into a fist, causing a black vortex to spring up around it.

“You ambushed me in the trial by fire, Master Cloud Lightning. And afterwards, you were completely unreasonable! And now you want to rely on your late Deva Realm cultivation base to kill me?

“You've been pestering me constantly since I got to the north. Well now, on this day, we’re going to settle all our debts and grudges!”

Master Cloud Lightning’s mind was reeling, especially considering that he could plainly see Bai Xiaochun’s fist, and the black vortex spinning around it. Face flickering wildly, he flew backward and screamed, “What are you people standing around for!? Activate the sect’s grand defensive spell formation!!”

The other three devas all began to shout orders.

“Activate formation!!”

“Power up the grand spell formation!!”

As for the surrounding northern cultivators who had been standing around in stunned shock, they finally recovered from their reveries. Faces pale, they immediately began to go about activating their sect’s grand spell formation!

It wasn’t a process that took a lot of time. Even as Bai Xiaochun closed in on Master Cloud Lightning, a massive force sprang out from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, creating a misty shield that emanated a formidable force of expulsion. Not only was Bai Xiaochun stopped in his tracks, but he was even pushed backward out of the sect.

Bai Xiaochun frowned as he was shoved in the opposite direction, completely beyond his control.

When Master Cloud Lightning and the other devas saw that, they finally breathed sighs of relief. The fight had spun out of control too quickly, leaving them more shaken with every second that passed.

However, even as they breathed sighs of relief, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered.

“Spell formations don't work against me!” Drawing upon the Undying Hex, he bypassed the force of expulsion and pierced back through the spell formation shield. Shockingly, there was nothing that could stand in his way!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as he appeared in front of Master Cloud Lightning, the black vortex around his fist rapidly devouring the spiritual energy in the area. An enormous, shadowy emperor appeared behind him, which then merged into his fist. The Undying Emperor’s Fist!

When that fist struck, anything in creation could be destroyed!

Master Cloud Lightning’s pupils constricted, and his mind spun crazily. There was no time to ponder what to do, and no way he could dodge out of the way. He could only howl at the top of his lungs and draw dangerously upon his energy to unleash his ninth transformation!

In the blink of an eye, he was 270 meters tall and bracing himself for Bai Xiaochun’s blow!

A boom rang out that surpassed anything from before. All sound in the area was crushed, to the point where it almost seemed silent.

Then the shockwave erupted, shaking the entire Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect to its foundations. At the same time, Master Cloud Lightning’s eyes went wide, and he screamed uncontrollably.

“Noooo!!” Blood erupted from his mouth like a waterfall as he was flung backward head over heels. He could no longer maintain his transformed form, and he shrank back down and then split apart into two people, both of whom continued to tumble backward, blood spraying out of their mouths….

The older brother among the two had it better off than the younger one. The younger brother simply couldn’t withstand the force, and was ripped to shreds….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0970 awe-chapter-971

The younger of the twin Master Cloud Lightnings had no time to even feel the terror of impending destruction. His body was simply destroyed by the massive, explosive attack!

His nascent divinity flew out into the open, eyes blank as he stared around at the devastation. It was in that moment that a stream of divine sense appeared that far surpassed devas. It descended in the form of a huge hand that grabbed the nascent divinity.

As the explosive force of Bai Xiaochun’s attack was dissipated by that enormous hand, a grating voice echoed out from nowhere.

“Bai. Xiao. CHUN!!!” Each of the characters that made up his name was uttered in a voice that crackled like heavenly thunder. The words exploded into the minds of everyone present as a gigantic figure appeared up above.

It was the demigod patriarch, who held the listless and dispirited Lightning Ancestor in his hand. The demigod drove away the will of the heavens in the area, ensuring that he was the only paramount entity in all creation!

When Bai Xiaochun heard his words, and felt the pressure weighing down on the area, his previous brazenness and momentum vanished, to be replaced with profound nervousness.

“The old monkey turned out to be useless!” he wailed inwardly. “Couldn’t he have stretched things out for a bit longer? I was just about to get away…. Now I’m really in for it. What do I do…?”

As Bai Xiaochun hovered there nervously, Master Cloud Lightning double checked that his other self’s nascent divinity was safe, and then clasped hands and bowed deeply to the demigod patriarch.

The other northern devas all breathed sighs of relief. Bai Xiaochun really had been putting on too dramatic of a display of strength, leaving them completely shaken. As they clasped hands in greeting, the bedraggled Feng Chen emerged from the crystal coffin to also excitedly offer greetings.

Scowling on the verge of tears, Bai Xiaochun began to edge backward, scrambling to come up with a way to resolve the situation. Meanwhile, the demigod patriarch, while unable to suppress his rage, was also feeling a major headache coming on. The truth was that he was relatively helpless in this situation.

There was basically nothing he could do about Bai Xiaochun, not because of Du Lingfei, but because of the Celestial!

There was evidence that the demigod could detect on Bai Xiaochun that Bai Xiaochun himself could not. Based on the conclusions that evidence pointed to, and on certain other matters that the demigod patriarch was aware of, he had an inkling that the Celestial had something important planned for him.

Because of those speculations, he knew that he couldn’t do anything too harmful to Bai Xiaochun. Furthermore, he now knew that locking him up wouldn't do any good. After all, he had already destroyed Lightning Penitentiary, and very nearly freed the Lightning Ancestor.

The patriarch didn’t dare to incarcerate him, and had finally woken up to the truth of matters. At long last, he realized that Bai Xiaochun could cause disasters without any warning. Therefore, the best thing to do was keep him at a distance….

“Dammit. How did I ever agree to keep this damned disaster confined in the sect!? He’s like an unstable lightning bolt just sitting in your pocket, ready to explode without warning!” In the end, he sighed. Never before in his life had he ever met anyone who could be as frustrating as Bai Xiaochun.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was feeling profoundly nervous. His heart pounded as he tried to think of some way to get out of trouble, and yet, he couldn’t. Finally, he braced himself, looked up at the demigod, and hesitantly said, “Hey there, Eldest Brother demigod, um… would you like to attend me and Feifei’s wedding…?”

Despite Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness, he had to marvel at his own quick-wittedness. After all, his one simple sentence actually emphasized three important matters.

First, that he had an intimate relationship with Du Lingfei… and that they would likely marry in the future.

Second, that the Celestial would become his father-in-law….

Third, that he hoped to calm the situation down….

It didn’t matter whether the demigod would actually pick up on all three. As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, it was really an amazing play on his part.

In response to his words, the demigod patriarch slowly looked up and fixed his gaze dead on Bai Xiaochun. Waving his hand, he spoke in a very irritated voice.

“If I ever see you in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect again, then it won’t matter if you’re the Celestial’s son-in-law. I’ll skin you alive! Now screw off!” His words exploded like thunder, especially the last two. Heaven and earth shook violently as a massive force wrapped Bai Xiaochun up, ripped him up into the air, and then hurled him out of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.

A miserable shrieked echoed out as he flew through the air off into the distance….

The northern cultivators were a bit let down, but at the same time, were all breathing sighs of relief. They hated Bai Xiaochun, and yet feared him, Master Cloud Lightning included. In addition to the bitterness that most of them felt, the majority regretted that any limitations or torments had been placed on Bai Xiaochun, he who should never, ever, ever, ever, ever be limited or tormented.

“He is truly the epitome of a walking disaster. His most powerful divine ability is his ability to cause disasters! We were real fools back at the beginning…. A guy like that should never be allowed to stay inside the sect!” Master Cloud Lightning chuckled bitterly and sighed endlessly, but at the same time, was profoundly shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess.

Furthermore, when it came to the Cloud Lightning Forefather technique, the fact that the demigod patriarch had the Lightning Ancestor in his custody suddenly caused Master Cloud Lightning to realize what had happened.

Although the Lightning Ancestor was in bad shape, he wasn’t unconscious, and the twisted smile on his face revealed the truth. Clearly, he was very pleased at all of the chaos which had been caused in the sect.

“So, that kid’s name is Bai Xiaochun?” the Lightning Ancestor said. “Not bad. Not bad at all. He’s definitely going to go places in this world!” He chuckled loudly.

The demigod patriarch ignored the Lightning Ancestor, and instead turned toward the devas.

“You, a group of powerful, majestic devas, all joined forces against Bai Xiaochun, and ended up in this miserable state. Useless fools!” After cursing the devas a bit more, he turned grimly and dragged the Lightning Ancestor with him back to his crystal coffin.

The devas accepted the criticism in bitter silence. Afterward, they exchanged awkward, helpless glances.

“Ah, whatever. At least he was kicked out….”

“This Bai Xiaochun is a legend…. I've never seen anything like him. Even when locked up in prison, he still managed a cultivation base breakthrough….”

“I don't ever want to see him again as long as I live!! And you know what, the rest of you had best never even mention his name around me!!"

The devas weren’t the only ones to react like that. The disciples from the Cloud Order and Lightning Order were all sighing deeply, and thinking back to how they never should have tried to keep Bai Xiaochun suppressed. Back then, they had chuckled proudly at how the supposed dragon that was Bai Xiaochun had become nothing more than a worm after arriving in the north.

But now… Bai Xiaochun had used his actions to deliver a message loud and clear to the northerners. Maybe he was a worm… but he could still poke the north full of holes. In the end, everyone was basically thinking the same thing….

“That walking disaster had better not *ever* come back here….”

As the northerners were sighing in exhaustion because of Bai Xiaochun, he was flying through the air off into the distance, almost like a meteor. Eventually, he landed, smashing into the icy plain far away from the sect.

The ice shivered, and his landing made a huge crater, which he eventually crawled out of, his hair disheveled, his robes in tatters.

Scowling in indignation, he turned to look back in the direction of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. Finally, he sighed.

“If you wanted me to leave, you could have just said so. Why the hell did you have to seal my cultivation base and throw me through the air…?” From what he could tell, these northerners were all completely unreasonable, and scoundrels through and through. They were essentially villains, especially the demigod patriarch. He was the worst of all.

“Ah, whatever. If they don't want me there, then that’s fine. Besides, if they hadn’t restricted me in the first place, I would have left a long time ago.” Sighing again, he reviewed everything he had accomplished in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, and actually felt quite proud of himself.

“Hmmmphh! They sure know how awesome I am now, don’t they?! How dare they limit Bai Xiaochun with a five-point covenant!” He took a deep breath of icy air, feeling very excited to, at long last, be free of any restrictions. It was a wonderfully relaxing feeling.

“Well, nobody’s here to tell me what to do. I guess I can plant my moonflower again, right?” After all, the ice leaf he was working on was only about half-finished. After looking around, he found a nice place to hew out a temporary immortal's cave. He spent a few minutes organizing it a bit, then took out his moonflower seed and then dug a hole in the ground.

“Moonflower, baby, nobody’s here to tell us what to do now. Hurry up and grow as fast as you can!” Face glowing with anticipation, he dropped the moonflower seed into the hole.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0971 awe-chapter-972

There were no restrictions in place, and thus, no need to be cautious. This was the moonflower’s third chance to grow, and it held nothing back. In a short three days, it grew more than it had in a month back in the Cloud Order.

Most of the immortal's cave that Bai Xiaochun had created was now filled with moonflower branches. As for the main stalk of the flower itself, it was already over a dozen meters tall.

Were it not for the fact that Bai Xiaochun had started to feel cramped, and voiced his dissatisfaction by clearing his throat, the moonflower would have taken over the whole cave. However, after sensing his irritation, it had left an area aside for his use.

Eventually, the moonflower began to spread out on the icy plain, until it filled the entire 5-kilometer area….

Bai Xiaochun had grafted the ice leaf onto the flower from the very beginning.

Back in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, there had been too many people keeping a close eye on him. Coupled with the five-point covenant, he had been too nervous to do any cultivation. But now, he was making slow progress with his Undying Blood.

Since he finally had an opportunity to practice cultivation away from any prying eyes, he pulled out the two skeletons he had in his bag of holding…. These were the skeletons that he had taken from deck 2 of Ghostmother’s ship, the ones which were partially fused at the skull!

Back when he had first touched the skeletons, he had sensed a powerful life force within the skulls that caused his Undying Blood to surge.

Unfortunately, there had been no time to do anything with them. But now that he had a chance to study the gold and crystal skulls together up close, he began to reach certain conclusions.

“I’m working on my Undying Blood, which means that I’ve almost finished cultivating the Undying Codex…. Unfortunately, I never found any information about the Live Forever Codex. These skeletons are the only clue I've ever come across.” With that, he reached out and placed his hands onto the two skeletons.

The instant he did, a powerful life force rushed into him.

He shivered. This life force was very different from the type he had acquired through medicinal pills that were concocted from plants and vegetation. The life force from the skeletons was perfectly suited for his Undying Blood, and in fact, didn’t need to be refined at all. It immediately caused drop after drop of blood inside of him to be converted to Undying Blood.

It only took a few breaths’ worth of time for the first drop to form, and then another.

“So fast….” he murmured, eyes shining with excitement. Now that he was in the mid Deva Realm, his battle prowess had shot to a much higher level. And yet, it would only get stronger if he upgraded his Undying Blood.

An entire month went by in which he was completely focused on cultivation.

During that time, no one bothered him. He spent all of his time absorbing life force from the skeletons, and building up more and more Undying Blood….

Soon, he had converted twenty percent of his total blood supply into Undying Blood!

And it kept going!

There seemed to be no end to the supply of life force in the skeletons. To Bai Xiaochun, it felt just like when he had been cultivating the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation in Lightning Penitentiary.

“Don't tell me that these two skeletons will push my Undying Blood all the way to completion!?!?” The mere thought had him itching with excitement, and so focused was he on cultivation, that he didn’t even spare a moment to check on the moonflower.

During the past month of wild, unchecked growth, the moonflower plant had expanded in shocking fashion. It was now several dozen meters tall, and extremely conspicuous in its location on the plain.

In fact, there were many locations on the ice in which little moonflowers were now visible…. The plain itself seemed to be shrinking, with moonflower roots filling an area hundreds of kilometers across.

The moonflowers seemed to pulse with life, causing countless wild beasts that inhabited the plains to flee in terror.

As the plant grew, absorbing more and more frigid qi, it never forgot what Bai Xiaochun had asked it to do. It continued to send the frigid qi into the leaf, which grew more and more complete.

Another entire month went by, during which Bai Xiaochun remained just as focused on cultivation. Only by this point did the life force within the two skeletons show signs of drying up. After he finally absorbed it all, he opened his eyes.

He almost immediately noticed the differences within himself. Although he looked the same, he now had a shockingly abundant life force within him. He could also sense that his powers of regeneration had improved. He even pulled out a sword and cut himself as a test.

The wound immediately closed… and a moment later, no sign of the injury could be seen.

“The Undying Blood’s greatest power has to do with regeneration.…” Gasping, he cast his senses inside to check his blood, and soon found that in his two months of absorbing the life force from the skeletons… forty percent of his blood had become Undying Blood!!

“So fast!!” Almost unable to believe that it was true, he did some more checking, and then finally began to laugh loudly.

The two skeletons were now much darker than before. “But, I might still be able to use them.”

He put them away, musing about what good fortune they had turned out to be.

He rose to his feet and shook out his arms and legs, then sent his divine sense out to check on the moonflower.

Almost instantly, his eyes went wide. The once icy plain was now covered with dark soil… and was more than half filled by moonflower roots!

Although it didn’t count for much when compared to the north as a whole, Bai Xiaochun was still shocked by how much it had grown.

The plain was now covered with moonflowers…. Furthermore, the sky was also filled with the flowers, which had grown together to make a larger form that looked like a crescent moon.

In the very middle of that crescent moon was a huge flower.

After staring in shock for a moment, he murmured, “Moonflower, baby, is that you…?”

There was a crystalline leaf on the huge flower which was particularly eye-catching. In response to Bai Xiaochun’s question, the flower shivered, sending the ice leaf floating down toward him.

Even as the leaf settled onto his palm, the moonflower’s mind reached out and spoke to him. Not with words, but with thoughts alone. It was both thankful, and said that it would miss him….

It couldn’t grow any further on this ice plain, and hoped that Bai Xiaochun would agree to let it move on to another ice plain to grow even more.

Considering how many little animals Bai Xiaochun had fed medicinal pills to in the past, it was no surprise to him that the flower had become intelligent to a certain degree.

After all, it was a very mysterious flower that came from beyond the heavens.

In terms of the flower’s request to go out on its own, Bai Xiaochun was initially hesitant, but in the end, agreed. However, he gave the flower strict instructions not to harm any people.

When the moonflower received his answer, it shivered in excitement. Then, Bai Xiaochun watched as the enormous flower shriveled up into a multitude of dandelion-like seeds that floated out of the plain and headed in random directions.

For some reason, the sight of the innumerable dandelion-like seeds filling the sky seemed very familiar, although he couldn’t quite remember when he had seen anything else like it….

It was almost as if, somewhere deep in his soul… there was some sort of eternal memory that would always be a part of him….

“Maybe I saw something like this when I was a kid?” He shook his head as the seeds drifted off into the distance. A moment later, a bright beam of light appeared, within which was a young woman. Du Lingfei had returned….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0972 awe-chapter-973

At first, Bai Xiaochun was shocked, but a moment later, a smile split his face.

“Boo!”

Even from a distance, Du Lingfei could see that Bai Xiaochun was not injured, and in fact, was jumping up and down in lively fashion. Looking as though she were slightly annoyed by something, she flew down to him.

“Xiaochun, I can’t believe what you did in the Nine Heavens--”

“Stop, boo. Stop right there. Let’s just enjoy the happiness of finally being reunited! Don’t even bring up those bastards in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. You have no idea how horrible those people are!” With that, he went on to give a very detailed account of the humiliation he had endured in the sect.

Du Lingfei sighed. She had originally intended to talk with him about what had occurred, but in the end, she just listened.

Actually, Du Lingfei had been out on the mission for her father the entire time, and had only returned to the sect a few days before to check on Bai Xiaochun.

When she arrived, she almost couldn’t believe the situation, and that was even considering how much she knew about Bai Xiaochun and his affinity for causing disasters.

Furthermore, the disciples in the sect had all given her very strange looks. Therefore, she had gone out to try to find Bai Xiaochun, only to discover that he wasn’t returning any of her messages.

Eventually, she noticed that one of the ice plains was melting, a curious scene which led her to suspect that Bai Xiaochun might be involved.

And that was what had led to their reunion.

Seeing how worked up Bai Xiaochun was getting, Du Lingfei sighed and said, “Alright, alright. I won’t bring it up again. Happy?”

Then she stepped up to him and began to smooth out his disheveled hair and robes. “I'm almost done with the tasks at hand, but I still have a few things left to do.... You can’t just sit around here, why don’t you come along?”

She was so close that he instantly caught a whiff of her perfume, causing him to blink a few times in a row. Her skin was as fair as freshly fallen snow, and to have her beautiful face so close to him caused his heart to start beating a bit more rapidly. Although he actually did like the idea of tagging along with her, he also knew that for a true, manly man like himself to be following a woman around wasn’t really proper, unless he was her bodyguard or something similar. Another acceptable reason would be if she asked him several times.

Sticking his chin up, he said, “I'm doing fine right here. You just go take care of your business.”

Covering her smile, she looked him up and down. Then she took a step closer and rested her hand on his shoulder.

“Xiaochun, I’m really very lonely on my own. Come along! Why not?”

Bai Xiaochun was both very pleased and also quite enjoyed hearing her talk to him like this. However, he maintained his aloof expression.

“I’ll think about it.”

Keeping the smile on her face, she lowered her voice a bit and said, “Considering how much that Feng Chen from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect is scared of you, as long as I have you around, then he definitely won’t come bothering me. What do you say, Xiaochun?”

“Well, you got that right!” he replied, feeling even prouder of himself than ever. “If that Feng fellow dares to appear in my presence, I’ll beat him to death! He’s already lost his fleshly body, and exists only as a divine soul. If Master Cloud Lightning and the other devas hadn’t stopped me, I would already have killed him!” With that, he laughed heartily. “Ah, whatever. Since you put it that way, I guess I might as well join you. That will be the easiest way to keep you safe.”

At this point, Du Lingfei couldn’t hold back any longer, and started laughing. “Of course, of course. My Xiaochun is the most awesome of all. He dared to call the Celestial his father-in-law right to his face….”

Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt a bit awkward.

“Well if you want to be my bodyguard,” she said, casting a seductive glance at him as she turned, “then you’d better keep up….” That got Bai Xiaochun’s heart beating even faster. He had always assumed that Song Junwan was the greatest vixen of all, but as it turned out, the seemingly-upstanding Du Lingfei was actually even worse.

“Get back here, you demoness!” he said loudly, hurrying after her.

Laughter rang out across the ice plains as the two of them made their way off into the distance.

It was almost as if they were back in the Spirit Stream Sect…. Above them stretched an azure sky, and around them, endless fields of ice. They were the only living beings visible as they traveled along in that world of silver whiteness.

Occasionally they would laugh, and occasionally they would lower their voices as they spoke of serious matters. They talked about their experiences and their stories. Eventually, that sense of distance that Bai Xiaochun had felt was gone.

Du Lingfei was once again the same *boo* that he remembered from years ago….

A month later, when they were in the depths of the ice plains, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hold back from asking a question that had been on his mind for a long time.

“Boo, what is this mission that dad sent you on?” From the direct way he asked the question, he didn’t seem to feel that it was an inappropriate topic at all.

“You know,” Du Lingfei said with an enigmatic smile, “I’d really like to see you address him that way the next time you see him in person.”

Bai Xiaochun laughed dryly. He very much wanted to thump himself on the chest and declare that he absolutely would dare to do exactly that. However, whenever he thought about that blood-hair that he had absorbed, he couldn’t help but feel guilty and nervous. Clearing his throat, he once again asked about what Du Lingfei was doing in the north.

Du Lingfei was hesitant to answer the question. Her mission was top secret, and the details were not to be discussed. However, Bai Xiaochun’s curious expression got the better of her.

“I’ll tell you, but you have to promise not to tell anyone else….” Lowering her voice, she continued, “My father sent me here to investigate… some things connected to my Eldest Sister….”

“You have an Eldest Sister?” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding surprised. Of course, he immediately thought back to the baby girl.

“You see,” Du Lingfei said, “The Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect wasn’t always the riversource sect here in the north. There used to be another sect called the Frigid School! The demigod matriarch of the Frigid School… was my father’s top apprentice. That’s why I call her Eldest Sister.

“The Frigid Matriarch betrayed my father, and committed some heinous crimes. Because of their Master-apprentice relationship, my father intended to capture her, not kill her. However, she turned out to be the epitome of malevolence, and continued to plot against him. In the end, it was to his great bitterness that he realized he had to kill her….” Of course, these were things that Du Lingfei had only heard about, not witnessed personally.

“However, my Eldest Sister was a person of spectacular talent and ability. Years later, my father began to suspect that something peculiar had occurred. Therefore, he sent me here, to where the Frigid School had once existed, to perform a thorough investigation…. He wants to know whether or not that Eldest Sister really did die!

“The truth is that I’ve been investigating this matter for many years now…. In fact, that’s why I was in the Spirit Stream Sect. The Spirit Stream Sect… was originally founded by the surviving disciples of the Frigid School, who escaped to the east to start a new sect.” She looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who was secretly shaken to the core that she was here in the north because of the baby girl!

Also, he now understood why the daughter of the mighty Celestial had been in the Spirit Stream Sect!

“But what were you doing in the trial by fire for blood master in the Blood Stream Sect?” Looking over, he asked another question that had been burning in his heart for a very long time.

Du Lingfei took her time to respond.

“Because… the Blood Stream Sect’s Blood Ancestor was… the Daoist partner of my Eldest Sister! If my speculations are correct, the Blood Ancestor died, but my Eldest Sister didn’t. And most likely, she would want to accompany her husband after his death….”

Her words struck Bai Xiaochun’s mind like countless bolts of lightning. All of a sudden, so many things were made clear.

Why had the Celestial left the Blood Ancestor in place for so many years?!

Why had the spell formation protecting the baby girl in the depths of the Spirit Stream Sect been weakened after Du Lingfei left the sect?!

He now knew the answers to those questions.

However, there was still one big question that he didn’t know the answer to, and didn’t dare to ask right now…. Why had the Celestial sent his daughter to investigate these matters, instead of doing it himself?

Considering the shocking level of the Celestial’s own cultivation base, he could easily turn the world upside down to get the information he wanted!

Furthermore… was the Celestial truly unaware of the existence of that baby girl….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0973 awe-chapter-974

Secrets. Everyone has secrets. Whether a person is a brother, sister, friend, lover, or even a parent… everyone has secrets that they wish to keep from others.

Secrets are one thing, but when those secrets turn deadly, they can cause even two people with the closest of relationships to drift apart.

That was what had occurred between Du Lingfei and Bai Xiaochun.

He had his secrets regarding the Spirit Stream Sect, the baby girl, and the world treasure of the north…. All of them were things that he definitely couldn’t talk about.

Du Lingfei could see that there were things he wanted to keep to himself, and she didn’t press him. And thus, they proceeded along silently for a while. Eventually, Du Lingfei said something seemingly completely out of the blue.

“In the past, I used to tell my father everything. But after the Spirit Stream Sect, I stopped doing that. When it comes to observations or speculations, I tell him some things, and keep other things to myself.”

Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked over at her. The meaning behind her words was clear; she wouldn’t tell the Celestial all of the details about matters between the two of them.

After another protracted silence, Du Lingfei lowered her voice again and said, “My father… has changed in recent years.”

Bai Xiaochun’s mood had sunk deeply. The closeness he had felt with Du Lingfei earlier was now changing, and it was in complete silence that they continued on their way through the ice plains.

He wasn’t sure exactly where they were headed, and didn’t know if Du Lingfei even had a destination in mind.

At a certain point, the wind picked up, and it started snowing. It began to grow dark, and eventually, the entire sky was filled with snow.

It fell on his clothing and hair, and also into the footsteps he left behind him as he walked, until they were covered, making it seem as if he hadn’t even passed by….

The snowfall grew heavier, and the wind louder, until it seemed like the shrieking of countless evil ghosts. It was starting to get unsettling.

After some hesitation, Bai Xiaochun turned to Du Lingfei, and when he saw the snow that had built up on her hair and shoulders, said, “Why don’t we find a place to--”

However, before he could finish speaking, his expression flickered as a profound sensation of deadly crisis rose up in him, causing his hair to stand on end. Without a moment of hesitation, he grabbed Du Lingfei in his arms and pulled her backward.

Du Lingfei gasped, allowing Bai Xiaochun to fly backward with her, and simultaneously performing a double-handed incantation gesture. Then she reached up with her right index finger and touched her forehead.

In that moment, a shadowy figure appeared within the snow in the spot she had just occupied. It was almost as if the thing had teleported into place, and along with it came an explosively deadly aura.

As soon as the shadowy figure appeared, it shot forward in a blast of wind toward Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei.

Of course, all of this takes some time to describe, but happened as quickly as light bouncing off of a mirror. As the shadowy figure pounced, Du Lingfei’s finger touched her forehead, and a golden blast of light shot out to envelop both her and Bai Xiaochun. Then they vanished, to reappear a moment later, 300 meters away.

Seemingly furious, the shadowy figure let out a piercing cry as it spun and shot toward them again. By now, Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei were able to see clearly what they were facing, despite all of the snow blowing in the air!

The shadowy figure… was a ball of black smoke, in the middle of which was a face that appeared to be laughing, but not, crying, but not. It possessed a shocking ghost qi as it shrieked and again tried to pounce on the two of them!

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw that face, his mind spun, and he cried, “Y-you…. It’s you!!”

This ghost face… had once been part of the Three Ghost Flags on Ghostmother’s bone galleon. He had intentionally allowed himself to be grabbed by the Celestial so that he would be separated from the ghost galleon and remain in the Heavenspan Realm!

The Celestial had chased after him, but the laughing-crying ghost face had used an unknown divine ability to vanish into thin air.

And now, here he was, radiating a murderous aura as he tried to kill Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei!

“What is he doing here!?” Bai Xiaochun thought. There was no time for thinking or planning. The laughing-crying ghost face closed in, staining the snow black with its ghost qi, and transforming it into countless blades that shot forth in attack.

Letting out a shout, Bai Xiaochun unleashed the fifth of the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations, bolstered by the Living Mountain Incantation. Moonlight spilled out of his left eye as his left hand utilized the Waterswamp Kingdom, and his right hand punched out with an Undying Emperor’s Fist.

He was leading… with his strongest state, and two of his biggest trump cards!!

He felt a huge amount of pressure from this ghost face, which surpassed the Deva Realm by far. In fact, he wasn’t even sure exactly how strong the ghost face was!

As Bai Xiaochun made his move, Du Lingfei took a breath and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing more golden light to erupt out from her, which took the form of a golden phoenix. Golden flames erupted off of the phoenix as it soared over the ice plain to meet the ghost face.

Upon seeing Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei joining forces to fight it, the ghost face cackled as though all of this were some hilarious joke. Then, he suddenly twisted and distorted, transforming into a clawed hand!

It was pitch black, with razor-sharp claws that sliced the air open as it slashed forward!

The clawed hand hit the Waterswamp Kingdom first, causing a deafening boom to fill the air. As for the clawed hand summoned by the Waterswamp Kingdom, it was instantly destroyed!

A defiant howl echoed out, and Bai Xiaochun shuddered violently, coughing up a mouthful of blood. That was when Du Lingfei’s golden phoenix hit the ghost claw.

The fiery, golden phoenix was also destroyed almost effortlessly, and emitted a miserable shriek as it faded away from existence. Du Lingfei also coughed up blood, and three gaping wounds appeared on her shoulder that cut all the way down to the bone!

That was when Bai Xiaochun’s right hand, powered by the Forefather Transformation and the Living Mountain Incantation, landed an Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Heaven and earth shook violently as Bai Xiaochun’s Forefather Transformation vanished, and his Living Mountain Incantation form was destroyed. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as his Undying Emperor’s Fist was summarily vanquished!

He and Du Lingfei acting in unison could unleash incredible power, and yet that ghost hand destroyed all of their divine abilities, and barely paused in the process.

However, that slight pause was all the time Du Lingfei needed to perform another incantation gesture. Golden light swept out, covering both her and the bleeding Bai Xiaochun, and then whisking them away.

This time, they appeared 3,000 meters away. However, Du Lingfei didn’t hesitate to unleash yet another divine ability, causing flickering light to spread out which took them

30,000 meters away. And then, more light glittered as they vanished again.

It all happened in the blink of an eye. A moment later, the clawed ghost hand once again transformed into a laughing-crying ghost face, his eyes shining with both scorn and avarice.

“You can’t escape....” the ghost face said, his voice like a combination of countless other voices. Smiling crookedly, he began to speed through the air, following the auras of Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei, which he could sense as surely as a torch on a dark night.

Off in the distance, Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei were wrapped up by golden light as Du Lingfei used her secret magic over and over again to teleport away.

“What is that thing doing here!?!?” Wracked with anxiety and unease, Bai Xiaochun took out some medicinal pills for both himself and Du Lingfei. As for him, his Undying Blood was already at work, ensuring that his fleshly body power was already almost completely back to normal.

Even still, it was clear that he was absolutely no match for that ghost face, who was clearly far beyond the level of a deva!!

After all, he and Du Lingfei working together would be virtually invincible to anything under the level of a demigod!

“I think I might know why he’s here,” Du Lingfei said. “I'm guessing... that my father is coming.” A cold gleam passed through her eyes, and yet, when she said the word ‘father’, she shivered as though in pain.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0974 awe-chapter-975

In response to Du Lingfei’s words, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered with surprise. Something seemed very odd with how she felt about the matter. When a daughter was in trouble, it was the most natural of things for her father to come help her, at least as far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned. However, he didn’t say anything. As his body continued to recover, he grabbed her arm and pulled her along.

Adding the Undying Hex in gave them a bit more speed. When combined with the golden light of teleportation that Du Lingfei used, it gave them enough speed to at least flee from the laughing-crying ghost face, who was capable of speeds similar to the Celestial himself.

Unfortunately, despite being able to achieve speeds that surpassed the Deva Realm, they were still roughly comparable to a demigod, therefore, the ghost face continued to close in no matter what they did. Soon, they heard the sound of screaming winds behind them, as well as the shrieks of evil ghosts.

Du Lingfei was in worse shape than she was letting on. When her golden flame phoenix was ripped apart by the clawed ghost hand earlier, she had received three shocking wounds. Although she was able to suppress the effects to some degree, as soon as the sound of the ghost’s voice reached her, the wounds began to leak black smoke.

The smoke itself formed countless ghost heads, who laughed in profoundly sinister nature.

She began to cough up blood, and her face was a sickly ashen color. However, her eyes continued to shine with cold light. She was the daughter of the Celestial, and possessed powerful life-saving magical items, and yet, she knew that this ghost face had come from beyond the heavens on Ghostmother's bone galleon, and therefore, there was no way she could stand up to him. Her best bet now was to rely on her golden light to flee as quickly as possible.

In terms of both speed and defenses, it would be hard to find someone that was her match in the lands of Heavenspan. Not even a demigod would be able to harm her in any short amount of time.

Unfortunately, she wasn't dealing with a demigod, she was dealing with… a ghost face from beyond the heavens, someone roughly as powerful as her father, the Celestial!

Bai Xiaochun felt hurt at heart to see blood oozing out of her mouth, and the black smoke rising up from her shoulder. He quickly patted his bag of holding to produce some medicinal pills that could help.

"There's no time for that now," she said through gritted teeth. "We need to get out of here *now*." With that, she employed another teleportation.

Unfortunately, this teleportation was too much for her to handle. Her injuries worsened, and the black smoke began to pour out in greater volume.

"You're hurt too bad!" Bai Xiaochun said urgently. "Even if we don't have time, we have to do something to treat you!" Without any further explanation, he reached out and ripped her garment a bit, exposing what was now the pitch-black skin of her shoulder, and three deep wounds that exposed white bone in their depths, with rotting and necrotic flesh on the surface.

Another stab of pain hit Bai Xiaochun in the heart, but it was without any hesitation that he made a grasping gesture, which caused all of the rotting flesh to be ripped out of her shoulder, exposing more bone.

Shockingly, her bones were not like those of ordinary people!

Her bones looked like crystal, and emanated an aura that Bai Xiaochun found to be very familiar, so familiar… that his jaw dropped.

Due to the urgency of the situation, there was no time for thought or planning. He quickly pulled out a medicinal pill, crushed it, and placed the powder into the wound. Then he rotated his cultivation base and began to directly treat her wound.

As the golden light flickered around her, and as Bai Xiaochun offered assistance, her wound began to heal up. Without any hesitation, she performed another teleportation, causing them to reappear further off in the distance.

Once out in the open, they sped onward.

The screaming wind and the howling of the ghost behind them was obviously getting closer, and yet, Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t stop thinking about the sight of the crystal bones from moments ago.

After hesitating for a bit, he finally decided that it didn’t matter that they were so focused on fleeing. He simply had to ask the question. “Your… your bones. How come they’re crystal…? They weren’t like that back in the Spirit Stream Sect, were they?”

Du Lingfei didn’t seem surprised by the question. If anyone else had asked it, she would have ignored them, but since it was Bai Xiaochun, she lowered her voice and said, “My father had me cultivate something called the Celestial Incantation, which forms Celestial Bones.”

“Celestial Bones….” Bai Xiaochun replied. He was fairly certain that she wasn’t deceiving him, and yet, couldn’t drive the picture of those crystal bones out of his mind.

Of the two skeletons he had acquired back on the bone galleon… one had golden bones, and the other… had crystal bones, a result of cultivating the Live Forever Codex.

The aura from the crystal bones of the Live Forever Codex was very similar to Du Lingfei’s crystal bones, and yet… was also slightly different.

Bai Xiaochun’s thinking was instantly thrown into chaos. And yet, he had no choice but to try to still his mind and focus on helping Du Lingfei to flee.

In some ways, it seemed as if a long time had passed since they began their escape. However, the truth was that only enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn.

Du Lingfei performed another teleportation, after which, they were surrounded by a screaming wind, and the wailing, cackling voice of a ghost.

“You run pretty fast….” It sounded like a host of voices all speaking at the same time, and was spoken in the playful tone of a cat playing with a mouse.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and Du Lingfei suddenly spun in another direction. However, before they could do anything else, the sky went dim, and thunderous rumbling echoed out as a huge black ghost hand appeared and shot toward them.

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of both Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei. They managed to avoid the blow directly, but they both felt stabbing pain as they lost connection with their cultivation bases and fell out of the sky.

Even as they landed on the ground, the black smoke that made up the ghost hand began to spread out, filling the entire 3,000-meter area and creating something like a prison, separated from the rest of the world.

Innumerable evil ghosts could be seen weaving in and out of the smoke, snapping at Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei. Thankfully, the golden light surrounding Du Lingfei held strong, although it did ripple and distort under the assault.

From high above in the sky, that 3,000-meter area of black smoke… looked like a huge ghost face! And Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei… were actually in its mouth!

“What a lovely flavor…. Delicious…. It was definitely worth it to chase you here. Once I digest the two of you, I should be back to my peak level of power…. This golden light is pretty annoying, but in the end, it's just too weak!” Meanwhile, the evil ghosts surrounding Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei continued to rush toward them.

Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei both had shocking battle prowess, but within that 3,000-meter area of black smoke, they simply couldn’t stand firm against the countless evil ghosts. Every time they destroyed some with a fist strike, more would take their place.

As for Du Lingfei's golden sphere of light, it was getting very weak, and was even starting to tremble on the verge of collapse.

Once it was gone, it was easy to imagine how the surrounding evil ghosts would pounce on them!

"When is your father getting here!?" Bai Xiaochun asked nervously. It was a deadly moment of crisis, and if the Celestial didn't show up to save them, Bai Xiaochun could only think of one way to get out of it. He would have to use the ice leaf to wake up the baby girl. However, he wasn't even sure if the ice leaf would wake her up right now, and if it did, whether or not she could defeat the ghost face.

"He's already here," Du Lingfei said quietly.

"What?" Bai Xiaochun replied, a look of shock appearing on his face.

In that very moment, the golden light that surrounded them finally collapsed, and the evil ghosts howled as they prepared to attack. However, before they could, the shattered golden light converged to form a golden lightning bolt.

The golden lightning bolt slashed out into the black smoke, crushing all of the evil ghosts it encountered as easily as a boulder crushing a drinking glass!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

The black smoke was cut into two parts, which then spilled out in all directions and reformed into the laughing-crying ghost face. The ghost face looked over at the golden lightning bolt, eyes flashing with anger as he yelled, "Celestial!!"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0975 awe-chapter-976

In almost the exact same moment that the ghost face spoke, the golden lightning bolt distorted, and a man walked out, clad in a green robe, an imperial crown on his head.

He seemed threatening without being angry, and had such profound energy that he could be none other than the Celestial!

“You managed to keep yourself hidden for a long time. At long last, I’ve found you!” Smiling excitedly, the Celestial blurred into motion toward the ghost face.

The ghost face let out a piercing cry; he knew that he couldn’t escape this fight, and therefore, he charged directly into battle.

In the shortest of moments, deafening booms were ringing out.

Bai Xiaochun had just barely escaped with his life, and yet, wasn’t happy about that at all. In fact, coldness gripped his heart. He couldn’t stop thinking about how unhappy Du Lingfei seemed at the idea of her father coming, and that was very strange.

Just now… the Celestial had emerged from the golden light surrounding Du Lingfei. Furthermore, she had said that he was “already here.” That in turn seemed to imply that the Celestial had intentionally allowed both of them to be put into extreme danger within that black smoke, all to get the opportunity he sought.

Clearly… he had been after a chance to strike at the ghost face.

And that opportunity… was worth more to him than the safety of his own daughter!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun looked over at Du Lingfei, and could see the bitter disappointment in her eyes.

Much of what Bai Xiaochun knew about the Celestial was only speculation and conjecture. But as the man's daughter, Du Lingfei knew him well.

She had originally assumed that her father really had sent her and Bai Xiaochun into the north to find out the truth about whether her Eldest Sister was alive or not.

But now, she realized that the matter of her Eldest Sister had apparently been secondary in importance. The Celestial had thrown both her and Bai Xiaochun out as bait to try to reel in the ghost face from the bone galleon!

Although she couldn't be sure why her father thought that she and Bai Xiaochun would be enough to entice the ghost face, clearly, it had worked.

"Father," she thought, "everything you do is to leave this world. But… is it all worth it? Is the mere act of leaving more important than family…?" Du Lingfei felt like her heart was being torn apart as she watched her father fighting the ghost face.

By now, the Celestial's injuries had recovered significantly, and for some unknown reason, the ghost face was not able to get the upper hand. Snorting coldly, the Celestial advanced and said, “It wasn’t easy tracking you down. Don't even think about trying to get away!”

The ghost face chuckled coldly. “Using your own flesh and blood to lure me out? You definitely live up to your reputation of being ambitious and ruthless!”

“Yeah? So what?!” Apparently, the Celestial didn't see anything wrong at all with using his daughter the way he had. After all, she was still alive. And the enigmatic ghost face was almost impossible to track down once it went into hiding.

He was absolutely determined to capture him, and so to him, using Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei as bait was well worth it. Not only did he plan to use the ghost face to come to a better understanding of the world beyond, but he also hoped to refine him into a personal treasure.

Success would give him a boost in battle prowess that might help him force the gravekeeper to open the Worldgate. If not, perhaps the knowledge he gained would allow him to do that on his own.

The truth was that the Celestial had been overcome with despair when the bone galleon left. And the fact that the ghost face had stayed behind of his own initiative gave him one final possibility to succeed before resorting to the final method that he wished to avoid!

The Celestial and the laughing-crying ghost face rose higher and higher into the sky as they fought, and also began to move off into the distance, until they weren’t even visible.

At that point, the screaming wind that battered the ice plain finally died down, and everything went calm.

However, Bai Xiaochun simply could not calm his heart and mind. And unfortunately, he didn’t know how to comfort Du Lingfei. Sighing, he walked over, slowly wrapped his arms around her and picked her up.

She went stiff at first, but as she felt the warmth of his arms and chest, she slowly sagged into his arms, as if from exhaustion.

“He was never like this before….” she murmured. All of a sudden, she seemed profoundly weak, causing Bai Xiaochun to sigh.

After a while, she seemed to pull herself together. Looking up at him, she softly said, “What do you think, Xiaochun? Is it really that important to leave this world?”

“I don't really know….” he said, shaking his head. “But I do know that if it were me, I wouldn't want to leave. I like the lands of Heavenspan, and I even like the Wildlands. Why the hell would I want to leave?” He spoke the truth from the bottom of his heart. The Celestial made it seem like the lands of Heavenspan were a prison that he couldn’t wait to escape from, an attitude that Bai Xiaochun just couldn’t understand.

As far as he was concerned, as long as he had enough longevity, and had his friends and family with him, then the lands of Heavenspan were wonderful…. Furthermore, Ghostmother had made it obvious that the world beyond was a strange and dangerous place.

Why would anyone want to jump headfirst into danger…? Although, to be fair, Bai Xiaochun also felt like the gravekeeper was being a bit unreasonable. If the Celestial wanted to leave, why not just open the Worldgate for him?

Du Lingfei smiled in response to his words, a beautiful smile that seemed to brighten the surrounding darkness of night. As the moonlight fell down onto them, surrounded as they were by ice, it was a lovely scene.

“I don’t want to leave here either,” she murmured. “I'm the same as you. I just want peace and quiet, and my friends and family. A simple life….

“Except… I don’t even have any friends…. Xiaochun, look at me. After all the years I’ve lived, I don’t have even a single one…. And I don’t even know what my own mother looked like….”

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything in response. Holding her even tighter, he began to walk forward aimlessly through the night.

Eventually the sun rose off in the distance, casting its warm radiance across the lands. Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei had walked the whole night, but now they stopped in place.

All of a sudden, a golden lightning bolt appeared up in the sky, which pierced through the air for a time until it resolved into the form of a man in a green robe.

The Celestial had returned!

He held a ball of black smoke in his hand, which was none other than the laughing-crying ghost face. It did not struggle, and could not escape. Clearly, his efforts to capture the thing had been a success. The Celestial’s expression was grim and unsightly as he scanned the area with divine sense until he located Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei.

It was only after capturing the laughing-crying ghost face that the Celestial realized he wasn't complete. It was only a soulclone!

The true soul was still missing! Clearly the ghost face was a profound schemer, and although he had been somewhat moved by the bait the Celestial had cast out, he had still decided to rely on a secret magic to split off part of himself in the form of a soulclone, just to be safe.

Although the Celestial had successfully captured the soulclone, he had also alerted his enemy, which would make it even more difficult to get the true soul. Furthermore, it was obvious that, for the time being, his opponent would remain in hiding, and would make sure not to leave any clues as to his location.

However, at least he had not come out completely empty-handed. Although the soulclone wasn't a complete soul, it was better than nothing.

With such thoughts on his mind, the Celestial took a deep breath and looked down at Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei. Waving his hand, he sent a medallion flying downward.

Eyes flickering, Bai Xiaochun slowly reached out to grab it.

"Don't think too much into it," the Celestial said. "It's just a command medallion. Now you can go back to the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect and use their teleportation portal to return to the eastern Heavenspan region."

With that, he ignored Bai Xiaochun and turned his gaze to Du Lingfei.

"Let's go, Fei'er," he said softly.

Du Lingfei hesitated for a moment, but didn’t refuse. Hugging Bai Xiaochun tightly, she said her goodbyes.

However, Bai Xiaochun refused to simply let her go. Looking up at the Celestial, he gritted his teeth and said, “Celestial, Feifei and I--”

Before he could finish speaking, the Celestial’s eyes glittered with cold light, and he interrupted, “I know what you want to say. You want me to leave my daughter here with you. Unfortunately, you don't qualify. We can talk about it when you're a demigod!” With that, he turned and vanished into thin air.

Du Lingfei shook her head and took a deep breath to calm her heart. Then she followed the Celestial and vanished into thin air.

Bai Xiaochun stood there for a while, complicated emotions filling him. Once upon a time, he had assumed that as the daughter of the Celestial, Du Lingfei would have a very high standing, and as a result, plenty of happiness.

But after what had just occurred on the icy plains of the north, he realized how bitter her life was, and how coldly the Celestial treated her….

“Demigod, huh…?” he murmured. His eyes suddenly glittered with unswerving determination.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0976 awe-chapter-977

Back when Bai Xiaochun had first become part of the cultivation world, he had never even heard of demigods, let alone had it as a goal to become one. But now that he was in the mid Deva Realm, he was actually very close to that level.

Furthermore, back in Giant Ghost City in the Wildlands, he had acquired a drop of soul-blood from the Giant Ghost King, which had temporarily allowed him to experience what it was like to be a demigod!

Even more important was how the baby girl had told him that the lands in the north were the foundation of a magical item, and were filled with countless reserves of the spiritual energy of heaven and earth.

Although he couldn’t be sure if that good fortune would allow him to achieve a full cultivation base breakthrough, he did know that it would enable him to crush anyone in the Deva Realm!

Furthermore… he might even be able to fight a demigod!

Finally, he took a deep breath and transformed into a bright beam of light that shot over the horizon. A few days later, he found a suitable ice river in which to carve out an immortal's cave, where he sat down cross-legged.

Worried about repercussions from the Celestial, he didn't immediately call out to the baby girl, but instead, decided to wait.

After half a month went by without the Celestial returning, Bai Xiaochun finally started to feel confident. However, he still waited for another three months.

Finally, he couldn’t wait any longer. His eyes opened, and he took a deep breath as he pulled the coffin out of his bag of holding. Looking at it hesitantly, he said, “Everything that needs to be said between myself and the Frigid Matriarch… has been said. It won’t do her any good to try to pull a fast one on me!”

Gritting his teeth, he pulled out the ice leaf and placed it gently down onto the surface of the coffin.

The leaf instantly sank down into the coffin, and landed onto the baby girl’s forehead. Dazzling light flashed, and the leaf disappeared.

Even as Bai Xiaochun looked nervously at the coffin, an excited voice that he hadn’t heard in quite some time suddenly spoke into his mind.

“The aura of the north… frigid coldness… the aura of awakening….

“You've done well…. When I fully awaken, it will only last for a hundred breaths. I can’t do it now. Follow my directions to the entry node…. Once there, I can wake up fully, and the countdown of 100 breaths will begin. That will be the time to open the entrance to the magical item!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered with apprehension. He had put a lot of thought into this matter over the past months, but since he had made his decision, he rose to his feet and began to follow the baby girl’s directions. He left the immortal's cave, and then began to trek deep into the ice plains of the north.

Before long, he was led to a mighty ice river. After looking around the area briefly, he stomped his foot on the ground, which caused an enormous crevice to open up.

He looked down at the crevice, then flew inside. On occasion, he found barriers of ice blocking his way, which he would simply destroy. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he was far beneath the surface of the plain.

He was now in an enormous ice cave that was filled with strong frigid qi. Ice spikes jutted out everywhere, as well as smaller rivers of ice, making the entire place seem very dangerous.

As soon as he was in the cave, he realized that, far below on the ground was a huge lake that looked like a mirror!

The surface of the lake was covered with smooth ice that radiated a feeling of extreme age. Everything was silent as he floated down and landed on the lake, within which he could see his reflection. The entire place seemed profoundly mysterious.

“I'm here…. You know what the consequences will be if you’re lying to me, right? I'm not going to fight you for control of the magical item. As long as you don’t do anything to hurt me, we’ll be fine. But if you have any ill intentions, you’re dead! I'm sure you know which is the best choice for you to make!”

At this point, the baby girl’s excited voice sounded in his mind. “This is the place! Hurry up and take out the coffin!”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t hesitate to do just that. He took out the coffin and gently placed it down onto the surface of the mirror lake.

Almost immediately, the coffin began to shine with bright light, and powerful fluctuations began to roll off of it.

At this point, the baby girl’s voice again rang out into his mind.

“Thank you for your help, Bai Xiaochun. Don’t worry. You won’t regret this. And no, I'm not lying to you!

“I left this sole entrance node into the magical item years ago. This is the only location to get into the world that exists inside of it!

“I need 100 breaths of time to open the node. Once it’s open, we’ll both be sucked into the magical item!

“After we’re inside, I’ll need some time to fuse with the magical item and become its spirit automaton…. As for you, feel free to absorb the energy of heaven and earth that has built up inside over the innumerable years which have passed!

“Trust me. When the two of us come out again…you will not regret your decision!” The baby girl couldn’t suppress the excitement in her voice. As she finished speaking, the coffin began to shine with dazzling light, and at the same time, to melt!

As the coffin melted, Bai Xiaochun could see the baby girl growing larger! In the blink of an eye, she was a beautiful young woman! Then, she began to shine so brightly that it was impossible to see anything of her beyond her outline!

A powerful aura began to radiate out from her which didn’t rise up into the air, but rather, shot down toward the mirror lake.

The lake became water, which started rippling back and forth as the young woman sank down into it.

That caused the ripples to grow more intense, and sent rumbling sounds echoing out in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart raced as he looked on nervously. One breath of time after another ticked past as the ripples grew more intense, and the young woman sank into the resulting vortex.

The vortex spun slowly at first, but after 20 breaths of time, it was spinning quite rapidly. As the vortex connected with the power of the energy node, a tunnel was forming that led into the magical item!

At 40 breaths of time, the rumbling grew so intense that it was impossible to hear anything else. Many of the ice spikes and ice rivers couldn’t sustain the intense sound, and shattered.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t paying attention to that. All of his attention was focused on the vortex.

50 breaths. 60 breaths. 70 breaths….

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as the vortex spun with utter madness. By this point, he was fairly certain that he could see something that resembled a cave-like tunnel inside of the vortex!

Beyond that tunnel was… another world!

“30 breaths of time left!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but take a few steps closer. However, even as he did, a familiar voice suddenly echoed out.

It sounded like a screaming wind mixed with laughter and wailing. As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the voice, his face fell, and he spun to see a shadowy figure blurring into the cave through the crevice above!

“You? Didn’t the Celestial capture you?!?!” Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to spin at the possibility that the Celestial might also be present.

“The Celestial!? He only got a soulclone!” This shadowy figure was none other than the laughing-crying ghost face!! The ghost face cackled as he looked down at the vortex, his eyes shining with greed.

Although Bai Xiaochun found the ghost face’s response to be shocking, at least it indicated that the Celestial wasn’t present. Unfortunately, he also knew that he wasn’t even close to being a match for this ghost face, and the fact that he had a greedy gleam in his eyes caused his heart to begin pounding.

“Dammit! How did the Celestial screw up like that? He only got a soulclone?!” Bai Xiaochun immediately began to edge backward.

“So,” the ghost face said loudly, “it turns out there’s a world treasure hidden beneath these ice plains. Hahaha!! The Celestial doesn’t realize it, but you can't fool me! It turns out that shadowing you was a good choice after all. Sacrificing a soulclone will definitely be worth it if I can sow destiny with a magical item like this. With it... this whole world can be mine!!” Eyes shining with unprecedented brightness, and radiated terrifying cultivation base fluctuations, he advanced!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0977 awe-chapter-978

“Dammit, there are still 20 breaths left!” Face pale, Bai Xiaochun backed up nervously. He was very well aware that, even despite being incomplete, the laughing-crying ghost face still had battle prowess equivalent to a demigod, and was something he couldn’t possibly fight against.

As he backed up, the ghost face floated down, eyes gleaming with greed. Ignoring Bai Xiaochun completely, he headed toward the center of the vortex.

“This world treasure is mine!” the ghost face cackled excitedly.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes had already begun to blaze with anger. Although he couldn’t be exactly sure of what would happen if the baby girl’s efforts were interrupted, even the stupidest person in the world could guess that it would be bad.

“I can't let this happen!” he thought, his eyes turning bloodshot. If the ghost face took control of the magical item, not only would he and the baby girl fail at the last minute, but it was possible he could lose his poor little life. After all, there was no way the ghost face would let him leave to spread word of what had occurred.

There was no time to consider what to do, or to worry about what might happen. Bai Xiaochun howled, immediately resorting to the Forefather Transformation to charge toward the ghost face. He only took three steps, but had already reached the fifth transformation!

His left eye shone with moonlight, providing an explosive increase to his power. Then he added in the Living Mountain Incantation. All of his combined cultivation base and fleshly body power temporarily gave him a level of power that surpassed the late Deva Realm!

Although he wasn’t quite in the great circle, he was very close! A blast of wind echoed out as he used his Undying Hex to shoot forward and appear directly in front of the ghost face.

“You’re not going anywhere!” he roared in a voice that crackled like heavenly thunder, simultaneously unleashing the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

He didn’t hold anything back. He poured all of his fleshly body power into the blow, forcing the ghost face to turn and look at him. However, a gleam of scorn appeared in the ghost face’s eyes as, instead of retreating, he lunged forward to meet Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Emperor’s Fist.

A massive boom echoed out.

Blood sprayed from Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he tumbled backward, his Undying Emperor’s Fist routed, his Living Mountain Incantation shattered, and his Forefather Transformation vanquished.

“You think a bit too much of yourself!” the ghost face said with a cold snort. Turning, he headed back toward the center of the vortex. However, thanks to the power of his Undying Blood, Bai Xiaochun’s injuries were already recovering rapidly. As the ghost face continued onward, Bai Xiaochun roared and used his Mountain Shaking Bash to shoot forward.

He performed a double-handed incantation gesture, calling upon his Waterswamp Kingdom. At the same time, he sent frigid qi roiling out, within which appeared numerous frigid projections that lunged at the ghost face.

Worried that it wasn’t enough, he slapped his bag of holding and produced a handful of multi-colored flame, which he also threw out in front of him.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Cracks spread out in the surrounding ice, and the intense heat of the sea of flames that resulted from the detonation of the multi-colored flame caused much of it to melt. Even the laughing-crying ghost face, who currently had demigod battle prowess, couldn’t help but frown.

Normally speaking, the ghost face could deal with these attacks with ease, and could also kill Bai Xiaochun fairly easily. However, he was worried about the fluctuations of the battle attracting attention. Furthermore, he had noticed… that there appeared to be something within the vortex, fusing with the magical item.

He was in no mood to tangle with Bai Xiaochun. What he needed to do was get into the magical item before the fusing process was complete, and make sure that he was the one to fuse with it.

“I’ll handle you in a moment!” he said with a cold snort. Then, he unhesitatingly called upon a bizarre curse, uttered in a language that did not originate within the lands of Heavenspan. As he did, the black smoke which surrounded him transformed into nine magical symbols, which swirled through the air toward Bai Xiaochun.

Those nine magical symbols seemed to contain the power of Essence, and although they were weaker than they had been when the ghost face used them in the past, they still shone with dazzling light.

Despite unleashing the nine magical symbols, the ghost face didn’t stop for a moment. He continued onward, ignoring Bai Xiaochun’s Mountain Shaking Bash, the Waterswamp Kingdom, and the shocking sea of flames. As for the magical symbols, they swirled around him, piercing through all of Bai Xiaochun’s divine abilities to appear directly in front of him.

When the magical symbols slammed into him, his chest caved in, and he coughed up gobs upon gobs of blood. It was a grievous injury that caused his vision to swim as he was thrown violently backward.

As Bai Xiaochun was flung away, the greed in the ghost face’s eyes grew more intense, and he closed in on the center of the vortex.

If he entered the vortex, the consequences would be unimaginable. In his madness, Bai Xiaochun opened his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, sending out a beam of light that wrapped around the ghost face.

The ghost face paused for a moment, but regained motion a moment later. He was angry and frustrated, but didn’t have time to spare worrying about Bai Xiaochun. He continued forward until half of his head was in the vortex itself. At that point, a voice echoed into Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

“There are only a few breaths of time left! Stop him!!”

Eyes bloodshot, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “You’re forcing me to do this, ghost face!”

Bai Xiaochun had no options left. He quickly crushed a drop of Undying Blood, causing a towering level of blood qi to surge through him from head to toe. His eyes suddenly looked profoundly evil as he took a step forward, energy pulsing.

He was already beginning to lose control of his consciousness, and act on instinct alone. As the Godkiller was unleashed, he suddenly became voraciously interested in any type of life force.

Before the ghost face could even sense the surging blood qi of the Godkiller, Bai Xiaochun was right in front of him. Bai Xiaochun reached out with his right hand and grabbed onto him viciously.

Instantly, a tremor ran through the ghost face, and a sensation of deep crisis rose up inside of him.

And then, he was ripped out from the vortex!

Howling, the ghost face spun to see Bai Xiaochun pulsing with blood qi. “Dammit, is this… blood magic?!”

The ghost face couldn’t have been more shocked by how dangerous Bai Xiaochun seemed in this moment.

In the moment that the ghost face was hauled out into the open, the baby girl reached the end of the 100 breaths of time. The vortex surged mightily as a powerful gravitational force erupted out, dragging everything in the area toward the opening!

Neither Bai Xiaochun nor the ghost face had any control over their own bodies as they were swept up.

“Maybe I failed on my first attempt, but once I'm inside that magical item, I’ll figure out another way to take control!” The ghost face was furious, but at the same time, could see that something was off about Bai Xiaochun.

“This guy’s divine soul is weak, making it difficult for him to use that blood magic properly. Otherwise, he would be really difficult to deal with!” The ghost face snorted coldly as he was dragged into the vortex. However, he still managed to send his magical symbols shooting toward Bai Xiaochun again.

“How dare you make things difficult for me. Now that you've lost consciousness and are acting on instinct, it’s the perfect time… to seal you!”

Mysterious light shot out from his eyes as the nine magical symbols surrounded Bai Xiaochun, overlapping with each other as they sent out mountain-toppling, sea-draining power. Layer by layer, the power of sealing settled onto Bai Xiaochun.

Even as the sealing marks fell into place, the vortex rumbled with thunderous intensity, and both Bai Xiaochun and the ghost face were dragged inside!

As they were, the lake and the ice cave began to crumble!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0978 awe-chapter-979

In the depths of the northern Heavenspan River region was an ice plain that was currently collapsing in on itself. The affected area grew deeper and wider, until an enormous ice crater appeared.

It almost looked like a huge fist had punched down onto the ice, creating an eye-catching scar in the landscape.

The trembling of the land was detectable at great distances, ensuring that the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect noticed. Master Cloud Lightning and the other devas investigated it, and even the demigod patriarch came for a personal visit.

However, no amount of searching provided any clues as to what had caused the event. All evidence had been sucked away by that vortex.

“Troubling times….” the patriarch said with a sigh and a shake of his head. Normally speaking, he would have been more focused on digging and digging until he figured out what had occurred. But now he wasn’t in the mood for that.

He turned to look in the direction of Heavenspan Island, and then back in the direction of the Wildlands. Deep in his eyes, the glint of exhaustion could be seen.

The truth was that he was not very happy about the matter of the trial by fire, and the Celestial’s so-called search for an apprentice. In fact, that dissatisfaction was why he had so openly emphasized in front of Du Lingfei that the north was a powerful, autonomous entity.

Of course, even if he were more dissatisfied than he already was, he could never express it openly to the Celestial. However, he knew that he wasn't the only dissatisfied one…. After the apocalyptic battle in the Wildlands, and the failure of the venture inside the bone galleon, the Celestial only had one choice left.

"It seems the war… will be starting soon," the patriarch murmured. Sighing, he turned and left.

After the cultivators from the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect left, the area surrounding the crater was very quiet. Snow began to fall again. In the years to come, the falling snow would turn into hard-packed ice, which would slowly build up. Eventually, the crater would be filled in, and although it would always look odd, it would eventually be more a part of the landscape than the gaping wound it was now.

Far, far beneath the surface, in a place that demigods and likely not even the Celestial would notice, was the world treasure. Inside of that treasure existed a unique world.

It was a magical item whose form reflected the north as a whole, with an interior that was only about thirty percent as large as the northern Heavenspan River region itself.

Only the middle region of that interior world was icy like the north. In the east, there was a huge sea that was as clear as the rainwater which occasionally fell out of the sky.

There was no lightning or thunder with that rain, as though it fell out of nowhere for all eternity, constantly filling in a sea which never overflowed….

There was a sea in the west as well, but not a sea of water. It was a sea of raging fire that cast a crimson glow into the sky, a light which was visible from far in the distance. The way the sky burned in unison with the sea below would shock anyone to the core. In terms of size, the eastern sea of rainwater and the western sea of fire were about the same.

The seas to the east and west weren’t the only strange things about this world. In the south and north were the thunderclouds and the wind valleys!

In the south, the land itself was dry and parched, not because of fire, but because of the endless thunderclouds in the sky. The thunderclouds were so thick and numerous that they were almost black, and were filled with endless bolts of lightning. The lightning contained terrifying power that would decimate the ground wherever it landed. It was really a shocking sight, even from a distance.

As for the north, it was filled with numerous intersecting mountain ranges that looked almost like twisting, coiling dragons. The mountains created countless valleys which would fill with explosive wind, thus turning the north into a land of wind valleys.

The screaming wind in the north was loud enough to shake the soul of anyone who heard it, especially when considering the barren landscape. Apparently, any living thing that tried to stand up to that wind would be transformed into rubble.

In sharp contrast to those four other areas was the central region, which seemed much safer and calmer. At the moment, a person could be seen crossing the ice plain. Shivering with cold, he would move along, occasionally looking around to size up his surroundings. He looked very nervous. He was none other than… Bai Xiaochun!

“You tricked me, Frigid Matriarch!!” he growled, scowling on the verge of tears. He had been dragged into this world two days before. Despite being pulled in along with the ghost face, the two of them ended up in completely different areas.

His Godkiller technique had ended as soon as he entered, and he had recovered his senses. Furthermore, the ghost face’s sealing technique had been dispelled. The first thing he did was find a place to hide, after which he began to carefully explore the area. However, after two days, he was already beginning to understand what this world was like, and it left him with a very bad feeling.

“There’s no accumulation of spiritual energy here! You’re a liar, Frigid Matriarch!!” One of the main reasons he had worked so hard to help the Frigid Matriarch, and to fight the terrifying ghost face, was so that he could use the supposed spiritual energy of heaven and earth in here to further his cultivation.

But now that he was inside, he didn’t see even a scrap of energy! Worse, the ghost face was also somewhere inside, and encountering him would make things very difficult. Bai Xiaochun felt like he was already going mad with frustration.

The more he thought about the situation, the worse his mood got. Even stranger was that he couldn’t perform any teleportations. Eventually, he threw his head back and howled, “Don’t play dead, Frigid Matriarch. Get out and face me!”

In the two days since his arrival, he hadn’t heard the voice of the baby girl in his mind even once. She seemed to be completely ignoring him.

That added in anger to his depression. However, he didn’t dare to yell too loudly.

“I'm definitely going to tell the gravekeeper about this! And my apprentice! And you know what, I’m going to tell the Celestial too!” Eventually, he simply sighed and proceeded along his way through the ice plain.

The main thing he wanted to do was avoid the laughing-crying ghost face. Unfortunately, despite how large the ice plain was, he was actually lucky to have not encountered him in the first two days. On the third day, even as he proceeded along cautiously, a sensation of imminent crisis caused him to shiver, and then push forward with incredible speed.

Off in the distance was a dense patch of black smoke, which rapidly resolved into the image of an enormous ghost face, which was looking at Bai Xiaochun with a cold smirk. Apparently, it had noticed him much earlier.

“You caused me a big delay, you little punk. I think I’ll skin you alive and turn you into a kite! That'll make me feel a bit better!” With that, the smoke seethed as the ghost face shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Senior Ghost Face, you have to listen to me!” Bai Xiaochun shrieked in terror. “I'm a victim here too! That Frigid Matriarch is a total scoundrel! Look, why don’t we join forces!?” However, even as his words continued to echo out, the ghost face opened his mouth, revealing a gaping, smoking maw that appeared right above Bai Xiaochun’s head.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp was tingling so hard it felt like it might explode. Not having any time to think, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base to fight back when, all of a sudden, he heard the Frigid Matriarch speaking in his ear.

“Don’t worry, I’ll get you out of there!” All of a sudden, he sensed a teleportation power wrapping around him. Right before the ghost face swallowed him up, rumbling sounds echoed out, along with dazzling light, and he vanished.

When he reappeared, he was 500 kilometers away. Just as he was about to breathe a sigh of relief, another burst of teleportation power rose up, and he began to fade away again.

In the moment before he vanished, the air ripped open, and the ghost face appeared. Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was about to escape, the ghost face howled, “Where do you think you’re going?!?!”

The ghost face pursued him madly, and yet, even relying on his own teleportations, he still couldn’t catch up.

“Killing that kid isn’t that important. I need to get control of this magical item first!” Realizing that he wouldn’t be able to catch up to Bai Xiaochun any time soon, the ghost face stopped chasing him, and instead flew up into the sky to try to figure out how to gain control of the magical item!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0979 awe-chapter-980

Bai Xiaochun lost track of how many times he was teleported, but he felt like all of his five yin organs and six yang organs were about to be ripped to shreds.

Eventually, he appeared in an ice cave somewhere on the ice plain. Even he wasn’t sure exactly where he was.

If it weren’t for his powerful fleshly body and the regenerative capabilities of his Undying Blood, he most likely would be dead. In fact, he was so dizzy it took him several breaths of time to recover.

However, despite the fact that he was still a bit angry, some hope had finally appeared.

Worried that the Frigid Matriarch might have heard his dialogue with the ghost face, he decided that it would be best to try to smooth things out. “I thought you had just used me and dumped me, Frigid Crone….”

At this point, the Frigid Matriarch’s voice echoed out into his mind yet again. “That old ghost caused some problems with the fusion process…. I'm afraid it's going to take quite a bit of time. I need four or five years at least….”

“Four or five years?” Bai Xiaochun replied, stunned. “Are you kidding me?”

All of a sudden, he got a very bad feeling about where things were going.

“This is no joke,” the Frigid Matriarch continued. “I can’t reopen the entrance before I finish the process. Therefore, you need to live here for the next few years!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard her explanation, he nearly exploded.

“So, you did screw me over after all!!” he shouted, forgetting about trying to be safe. “There’s no spiritual energy at all in this damn place! How am I supposed to practice cultivation? And what about that ghost? How am I supposed to survive for five years with him around? I want out of here. Now!”

“Technically speaking, there is no spiritual energy,” the Frigid Matriarch said coolly. “But in the east, there is a sea of rain. In the west is the flaming sky. In the south are the thunderclouds. And in the north are the wind valleys. Those areas formed through convergences of spiritual energy. Just go there, and you shouldn’t have any problem absorbing the energy!

“I can’t do anything about that old ghost right now, and I can’t expel him. However, as I gain further control of the magical item, I’ll be able to slowly suppress him and lower his cultivation base!

“Take advantage of the good fortune here, and your cultivation base should progress by leaps and bounds. Just hang in there for a few years, and before long, you’ll be strong enough to deal with him yourself!

“After I completely fuse with the magical item and become its spirit automaton, I’ll need to sleep for a bit of time before fully activating it. Don’t worry, before I sleep, I’ll make sure you can leave. After fully activating the treasure, the north will rise to prominence, and our agreement will be fulfilled!”

Unfortunately, this explanation only made Bai Xiaochun more frantic and nervous. Waving his hand urgently, he said, “Hold on, let me get this straight…. You mean I need to wait four or five years until you become the spirit automaton. Then, you’ll open the entrance and let me out. But afterward, you need to sleep for a bit more time to be able to fully activate the magical item?”

“Exactly.”

After hearing this, Bai Xiaochun felt even more than ever like he was about to go crazy. “Well how come you didn’t explain that beforehand? Why’d you wait until we were inside before telling me?!”

“How was I supposed to know that some old ghost would follow you and sneak inside?! Look, it is what it is. I need a few years to become the spirit automaton, and before then, nobody can leave. You’re on your own now, alright?” With a cold snort, the Frigid Matriarch retracted her consciousness, leaving Bai Xiaochun completely alone.

“Hey, hold on a second!!” he shouted. However, no amount of shouting and yelling got any response. In the end, he tugged at his hair in frustration and bitterness and said, “Liars! Everyone’s a liar! I guess I'm just too pure and simple.”

The idea of being stuck in this place for four or five years filled him with despair. Maybe if the old ghost wasn’t stuck inside along with him, it might have been endurable.

Forget four or five years! Keeping his poor little life safe for four or five months seemed difficult to do, let alone years.

After stewing in frustration for a bit, he realized that he really had no options at hand, and that he would have to just deal with the situation. Finally, he crept out of the ice cave to try to figure out exactly where he was.

Almost as soon as he was out in the open, he heard the crackle of thunder, and could see that, not too far off, endless thunderclouds filled the sky, along with... never-ending lightning.

“Lightning....” he murmured, his eyes flickering with hesitation. He suddenly thought back to the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, and how the lightning bolts there had increased his cultivation base. However, he had also reached a point where the lightning bolts didn’t aid him, and he had been unable to consume them. At that point, he had nearly been fried to death.

He was torn over what to do, and was trying to decide what decision to make when, all of a sudden, he saw a strand of black smoke a few dozen meters behind him on the ice.

The instant that smoke appeared, it converged into a fist-sized ghost face, which looked over at him.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he lurched into motion with a shriek of anguish.

“Found you at last!” the ghost face said, smiling cruelly. At the moment, more than 10,000 similar wisps of black smoke in other locations on the ice plain all formed into ghost faces that spoke the exact same words.

The more than 10,000 ghost faces rose up into the air and began to speed in the direction of the one that was closest to Bai Xiaochun. It took only a short moment for them to converge and transform into a towering ghost face.

“You’re always messing things up for me, you little punk!” the ghost face roared. “I'm not going to give up until I skin you alive!!” With that, it began to pursue Bai Xiaochun. Earlier, after abandoning the chase, he had made an attempt to wrest control of the magical item. Unfortunately, he found that the other divine soul which he had been competing against had been a bit faster, making his own efforts completely useless.

Furthermore, his cultivation base level didn’t qualify him to interrupt the process. The only option he could think of was to destroy the entire magical item, but that was something he could only have succeeded at when at his peak level of power.

In his frustration and anger, he decided that he would first kill Bai Xiaochun, and then come up with a way to solve the problem later. After using a secret magic to split into 10,000 parts, he had spread out in all directions… and finally found Bai Xiaochun.

“The first time, the Celestial showed up!” he said angrily. “The second time, I didn’t have the attention to spare to kill you! The third time, that damned spirit automaton teleported you away…. You’re pretty lucky, punk. But I refuse to believe that on this fourth time, you’ll escape into a bunch of lightning that even I'm fearful of!” Although the ghost face was coming to find that this Bai Xiaochun was relatively hard to kill, he still snorted coldly and shot after him as quickly as possible in the direction of the thunderclouds.

As he closed in, he spit out a burst of black smoke that transformed into a clawed hand that attempted to grab Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun's heart was filled with a sensation of deadly crisis. Without any hesitation, he spit a beam of black light out of his mouth, which was the turtle wok. Pushing it out almost like a shield, he used it to defend against the clawed ghost hand.

A boom rang out, and Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood. The force of the blow sent him flying backward, flesh torn and bleeding, cultivation base unstable. However, the fearsome regenerative power of the Undying Blood immediately began to heal him.

In fact, he even borrowed the momentum to shoot forward, simultaneously using his Undying Hex.

“Another treasure?” the ghost face said, shocked by the sudden appearance of the turtle-wok. Then his face lit up with delight.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes were now completely bloodshot. Even defending himself with the turtle-wok had resulted in significant injuries, which made sense considering the vast difference in battle prowess between himself and his opponent.

Given how closely he was being pursued, he realized that he only had one chance… the thundercloud region!

Although the lightning constantly smashed the ground to bits in terrifying fashion, and the horrors of Lightning Penitentiary were still fresh in mind, he had no other options.

“Time to go for broke!!” he roared. Even as the ghost face closed in, Bai Xiaochun… blurred into motion toward the thunderclouds!

The instant he entered the region, a lightning bolt locked onto him and shot down.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0980 awe-chapter-981

When the lightning bolt struck Bai Xiaochun, he felt an explosive force coursing into his head and then erupting throughout his body.

Sparks of electricity showered off of him in all directions.

It was a terrifying sight that caused him to shriek in terror. But then, he looked around, blinking for a moment before his eyes lit up.

“I'm fine?” Not only was the electricity not hurting him, but it was actually causing his cultivation base to advance.... “I can absorb it!”

This lightning had a different type of life force power than the lightning in Lightning Penitentiary, an energy that caused his Undying Blood to leap as if with joy.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted. Clearly, this lightning existed on a different, higher level than the stuff in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. It was much the same way that certain medicinal pills were of higher quality than others, and could help advance one’s cultivation in a different way.

Although he was very happy, the ghost face was right behind him, just about to enter the area of thunderclouds. Therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and let out a bellow of agony, as if he were experiencing the most horrific torture. The mere sound of it caused the ghost face to shrink back.

“Is the lightning that powerful?” the ghost face wondered. “I feel like allowing him to get struck by lightning is actually letting him off the hook a bit.” The ghost face quickly realized that it was impossible to send his divine sense into the lightning or the thunderclouds. Therefore, he could only wait on the outskirts for Bai Xiaochun to be killed, then dash in to retrieve his body.

After all, he was very interested in that turtle-wok he'd seen.

As the ghost face waited for Bai Xiaochun to be struck to death by lightning, Bai Xiaochun was still moving forward, being struck over and over again by lightning. Despite how lovely it felt, he continued to emit blood-curdling screams left and right.

After discovering that the cowardly ghost face wasn’t going to chase him, he couldn’t help but feel a bit of scorn. Apparently, his acting really was doing the job.

“That bastard is too cautious. That won’t do. I need to give him something to work with!” With that, he slowed down a bit, and when the next lightning bolt struck, screamed at the top of his lungs and staggered in place, as though he might not be able to continue forward.

The ghost face’s eyes flickered. He had been watching Bai Xiaochun closely this entire time, but still had not dared to enter the field of lightning.

When Bai Xiaochun saw his reaction out of the corner of his eye, he gritted his teeth, allowed some more lightning to strike him, and then sagged visibly as he took a shaky step forward.

“He’s almost dead!” the ghost face thought with a cold chuckle. However, a moment later, he frowned as Bai

Xiaochun, who he assumed would be killed at any moment, took another lurching step forward. Then he took another step as he began to walk off into the distance….

Eventually the ghost face's eyes began to flicker with suspicion. However, it was at that point that more lightning bolts struck Bai Xiaochun, causing him to shudder and then flop over onto the ground, where he lay twitching.

Finally, the ghost face unhesitatingly blurred into motion, shooting through the lightning toward Bai Xiaochun. However, even as he closed in, Bai Xiaochun struggled to his feet, his eyes bloodshot as if with exhaustion.

"Bring it on!" he shouted hoarsely. "Bai Xiaochun will never give in!!" Then he took another step forward.

The ghost face's suspicions were dispelled by Bai Xiaochun's act, and he pushed forward with greater speed. "He's a tough cookie, that's for sure!"

However, as he closed in, much of the lightning began to focus on him, and no matter how he dodged back and forth, he couldn't avoid being hit.

Furthermore, it was to his shock that, despite how powerful he was, the lightning struck him all the way down to his divine soul. Worse, it actually weakened his life force to a certain degree.

"This lightning is very strange!" he thought. He immediately started to get nervous. After all, he was sort of like a tree with no roots; although he had a huge reserve of life force, he had no way to rebuild it once it was used up.

"This isn't worth it. I'll just go back, wait until he's dead, and then come get his corpse!" With that, the ghost face prepared to turn back.

Just as he did, though, Bai Xiaochun let out a trembling scream that was like the tiny burst of flame an oil lamp would emit before winking out. Then, instead of staggering unstably, he lurched forward with a burst of speed, going nearly 3,000 meters in one shot.

That attracted even more lightning than usual, which all struck him at once. Twitching spasmodically, he screamed and toppled over onto his face, where he lay unmoving.

The ghost face stopped in place and looked over. Unfortunately, divine sense didn’t work within the lightning, forcing him to examine the scene with his physical sight only. A moment later, his eyes shone with determination as he headed in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Despite how the lightning struck him, he endured, getting closer and closer. When he was only about 3,000 meters away, Bai Xiaochun suddenly let out a muffled cry.

“I refuse to go out like this! I still have a bit of energy left!!” It was as if he were shouting out with the last bit of life he had left in him. Then, to the complete incredulity of the ghost face, he rose shakily to his feet, and then began to trudge forward like the walking dead.

“How come you’re not dead!?!?” the ghost face growled angrily. He had been moving fairly quickly, but at the same time, keeping his speed in check. After all, the more quickly one moved in this area, the more lightning one attracted!

But now, in his irritation, he decided to go all out. Just as he was beginning to pick up speed, Bai Xiaochun suddenly began to chuckle bitterly, as if he were about to throw caution to the wind.

“I know what you’re after, you old ghost! You want my Heaven-Earth Dao-Polarity Nine-Provinces Wok! But even if I die, I'm going to make you pay the price to get it!!” Cackling madly, he smacked himself on the chest and spat up a huge mouthful of blood to unleash a secret magic. Making it seem like he was burning the last bit of life he had left, he shot forward with a burst of speed, heading directly into a huge convergence of lightning.

In the blink of an eye, he was several tens of thousands of meters away, and being struck by numerous lightning bolts. Finally, he collapsed to the ground, dropping the turtle-wok down next to him.

The ghost face was initially stunned, and his suspicions were starting to grow. After all, the coincidences were really starting to pile up. Now he was faced with a decision: believe, or not believe?

“Maybe he's trying to lure me further in, all in the hopes that I get killed along with him, or at the very least, that I pay a bitter price. Hmph! Well, it’s hard to say for sure. And in the end, there’s no reason to rush things!” Eyes flickering, he began to back up. Eventually, he was free from the life force-draining lightning, where he turned back to look at Bai Xiaochun.

“If you’re dead, then considering the strange properties of this place, I can understand why your corpse would remain there the same as before. But if you’re not dead, then I refuse to believe that you can just lay there motionless with that lightning striking you!” Chuckling coldly, the ghost face decided to wait for a whole month.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun didn’t so much as twitch. At that point, the ghost face was finally convinced.

“That treasured wok is mine now!” Eyes shining with greed, he entered the lightning for a second time. This time, he didn’t hold back at all. He allowed the lightning to strike him constantly as he sped toward Bai Xiaochun.

The area where Bai Xiaochun lay was particularly dense in terms of lightning, striking a bit of fear into the ghost face. However, he ignored his fear, and actually picked up speed.

It was at that point that a voice could be heard that caused the ghost face’s mind to spin.

“I refuse to die…. I still have a bit of energy left!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0981 awe-chapter-982

As Bai Xiaochun's weak voice echoed out, he oh-so-slowly struggled to his feet, moving for the first time in an entire month.

Of course, he was feeling more proud of himself than ever. During his month of lying there motionless, the repeated lightning strikes had advanced his cultivation base significantly.

Were it not for the fact that he had long since determined to plot against the ghost face, he would have stood up and started walking around much earlier.

When the ghost face heard Bai Xiaochun talking, he let out a bellow of rage.

"You tricked me!!" he shouted, his mind spinning on the verge of insanity. If he had possessed a fleshly body, he would definitely have been coughing up blood by now. He truly couldn't understand how Bai Xiaochun could lay there for an entire month, and yet not die. Infuriated, he completely ignored the lightning to rush toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the face of the enraged ghost face, Bai Xiaochun began to back up.

"That's right, I tricked you, you old ghost!!" he said proudly. He began to pick up speed, moving even faster than before. Not only did the lightning bolts that struck seem to not hurt him at all, they actually served to bolster his speed.

“You… you….” The ghost face was completely shaken that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t harmed at all. However, there was no time at the moment to contemplate why that was. As of this moment, he had made his decision: he would not chase Bai Xiaochun. He would flee!

“Dammit,” he thought, “how can this guy be so uncanny?!?!” Regret and hatred mingled in the ghost face’s heart, rising to an incredible degree. Obviously, he could not tangle with Bai Xiaochun in the thundercloud region. At the moment, he had already slipped down to the demigod level, which meant that going further into the lightning would put him in great danger.

And based on previous encounters, he knew that despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was only a deva, it would require an all-out effort to kill him.

“Don’t even think about running, you old ghost,” Bai Xiaochun hollered. “Come on, let’s fight it out to the bitter end!” Of course, he didn’t actually approach the ghost face. Instead, he unleashed the power of his Heavenspan Dharma Eye, sending a beam of violet light out to grab him.

The ghost face trembled for a moment, quickly recovering, but unable to avoid the lightning bolts which filled the area. In that brief moment of pause, he was struck by dozens of them.

Despite how powerful he was, that many lightning bolts provoked a miserable shriek before he began to flee in rage. But how could Bai Xiaochun let an opportunity like this pass? The backlash from using his Heavenspan Dharma Eye caused him to cough up blood, but his Undying Blood was already at work. Within moments, he was recovered, and back at work!

The ghost face lurched to a brief halt yet again, and this time, more than a hundred shocking lightning bolts crashed into him. His screams shook heaven and earth, and even caused the sky to go dim.

“I'm gonna kill you! Kill you, you hear?!?! I’ll skin you alive! I’ll eat your flesh! I’ll suck the marrow from your bones!!” The ghost face trembled as his life force was rapidly drained away. Finally, he howled, paying a steep price to break up into ten thousand separate streams of black smoke that fled in all directions.

That finally broke him free of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye. However, despite being in the form of ten thousand separate streams of black smoke, he still couldn't avoid the destructive lightning. Having no other options, he simply tried to get out of the thundercloud region as quickly as possible!

“Well aren’t you fast! Hmph!” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very happy, but had no other tricks up his sleeve at the moment. He could only watch as the more than ten thousand streams of black smoke escaped the thundercloud region, then formed back together into the laughing-crying ghost face.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun came to the conclusion that he finally had the upper hand. Looking at the ghost face off in the distance, his battle spirit surged, and he decided to imitate how the gravekeeper had spoken during the standoff with the Celestial. Pointing directly at the ghost face, he coolly said, “Do you have the guts to come in here, old ghost? Why don’t you and I fight a spectacular battle to the death?!”

The laughing-crying ghost face was so angry he was about to explode. However, he didn’t have the courage to enter that sea of lightning. In the brief interchange just now, he had lost about ten percent of his total life force!

It had taken countless years to build up that life force, and here it was being drained away in the blink of an eye.

“Shut your damn mouth, Bai Xiaochun. Do you have the guts to come out?!” From the way the ghost face was cursing at Bai Xiaochun, it was obvious how mad he was.

“I’ll be here as long as this lightning is!” Bai Xiaochun replied coolly, emphasizing his words with the flick of his sleeve.

“You….” The ghost face very nearly descended into insanity because of those words alone. He truly had never encountered anyone this shameless, and he was almost unable to hold back from rushing in to try to kill Bai Xiaochun, regardless of the cost.

Unfortunately, he simply couldn’t afford to lose that much life force, and therefore, he had to endure the deadlock with gritted teeth.

“If you even come close to having what it takes, Bai Xiaochun, then come out and fight me. I’ll definitely kill you!!” With that, the ghost face spun angrily, worried that he might give in to impulse if he stuck around locking horns with Bai Xiaochun.

“If you've got any skill, you spineless ghost, then come in here and fight!” With that, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve, stuck his chin up, and sighed deeply. “With the flick of a sleeve, I, Bai Xiaochun, caused this demigod ghost to flee at the sight of me.”

When the ghost face heard that, he gritted his teeth in fury, but reminded himself that he couldn’t let himself be goaded, and continued to depart at top speed.

And thus, the thundercloud region became the line of demarcation.... One party wouldn’t enter it, and the other wouldn’t leave it....

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with that. Feeling wonderful, he began to speed further into the depths of the thundercloud area, absorbing lightning every step of the way.

Eventually, he reached the very center of the region, where there was so much lightning that it was almost impossible to see clearly. There, he sat down cross-legged, and began to work on his cultivation.

“One of these days I'm going to show that old ghost a thing or two!” Snorting coldly, he closed his eyes and began to meditate.

The lightning here contained both life force and the energy of heaven and earth. To Bai Xiaochun, it was even more beneficial than the lightning in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, and caused his cultivation base to make constant progress. In addition, his Undying Blood was getting very close to the fifty percent level.

As for the ghost face, he left and cooled down a bit. Then he spent some more time trying to think of a way to take control of the magical item. However, in the end, he could only sigh and dispel such thoughts.

“What’s done is done! The only thing I can do now is get out of here and try to take control of it from the outside!” Eyes glittering, he went about trying to determine if the magical item had an exit.

Time passed. A year flew by.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun was completely focused on cultivation. It wasn’t that he was particularly interested in cultivation at the moment, but rather, that he had nothing else to do. And considering that he didn’t dare to leave the thundercloud region, he was basically stuck with cultivation as his only option.

The laughing-crying ghost face continued to descend into madness. He had come to the realization that there was no exit, and no way out, no matter what he did.

Now that he realized he was trapped, his mood only got worse. If that were all there were to the situation, it might not have been a big deal. After all, he was confident that he would be able to get out sooner or later.

However… he soon realized that his cultivation base was slowly being suppressed. By now, he had slipped from having demigod battle prowess, all the way down to the quasi-demigod level. To his anxiety, he realized that it was likely the spirit automaton of the magical item that was doing this to him. And worse… this was only the beginning. As time went on, the limitations would grow more severe.

“How could this be happening!?!?!?” he howled in panicked rage. All of a sudden he realized that his luck had taken a turn for the worse from the moment he encountered Bai Xiaochun….

Meanwhile, neither the ghost face nor Bai Xiaochun had any way to know that while they were trapped in the world of the magical item, things were happening out in the lands of

Heavenspan. The Celestial had issued orders that the four riversource sects, as well as the sects from the Middle and Lower Reaches… begin to prepare for war!!

10,000 years had passed since the last great war with the Wildlands, and the time had come for another one to begin!

This time, the Great Wall had collapsed, and the Deadmire was no longer what it used to be. It was easy to imagine… how deadly and destructive this war would be!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0982 awe-chapter-983

In reality, it was a war that had begun much earlier. If the Celestial had won that spectacular battle in the Wildlands, the fighting would have broken out immediately.

But he had lost that showdown, and then met defeat again on the bone galleon. These successive losses ate away at the Celestial’s patience. And it was made worse by the fact that Big Fatty Zhang and some other lower-level cultivators had actually left the world, while he remained behind, stuck.

“Gravekeeper, you bastard, I know you have even more backup plans. But I'm done playing games!” Eyes flickering with madness, the Celestial issued his Dharmic decree!

The Wildlands were to be destroyed! The gravekeeper was to be killed! The Hell-Emperor was to be executed!

Perhaps it would destroy the heavens and crush the earth. Perhaps it would end the world. But at least the Celestial would finally become the true ruler of it all, and thus achieve his long-cherished wish of opening the Worldgate.

The Celestial’s Dharmic decree sent all of the lands of Heavenspan into action. Whether they wanted to or not, all cultivators in all sects were to participate in the war effort.

Only a few people knew the true reasons for what was happening. For the rest, it was enough to know that the Wildlands and the Heavenspan River had a feud that went back many years.

As the sects in the lands of Heavenspan prepared for war, the Grand Heavenmaster in the Wildlands finally relinquished official control of the empire to the Arch-Emperor. Countless tribes of savage giants were mobilized, and the four heavenly kings marshaled their four enormous armies. It was with great fanfare that all of the Wildlands prepared to go to war.

The ten heavenly dukes, the more than one hundred heavenly marquises, and countless necromancer clans were all marshalling their forces!

As the sergeant major of the Giant Ghost Legion, Mistress Red-Dust had already donned her battle armor, and stood at the front of an endless army of cultivators, bristling with a murderous aura as she stared in the direction of the lands of Heavenspan.

However, deep within her eyes, in a place where no one could see, were complicated emotions and thoughts.

She wasn’t the only one thinking about Bai Xiaochun. Chen Manyao, the Hell-Emperor, Zhou Hong, and many other people who now knew who Bai Xiaochun really was were all thinking about him.

The truth was that from the moment the Great Wall fell, many people had been waiting for this war to come.

And now… it was here!

In the shortest of times, both the Wildlands and the Heavenspan River region were completely abuzz.

One of the only peaceful places in the world was inside the magical item in which Bai Xiaochun was currently stuck. To him, it was a holy land of cultivation. To the laughing-crying ghost face, it was a hellish prison.

Whether it was the stifling pressure of the magical item, or the despair the ghost face felt at not being able to find an exit, he was sure that he was about to be driven completely insane. Even worse was that the lightning seemed to be growing weaker, and Bai Xiaochun’s aura, stronger.

The ghost face could sense that Bai Xiaochun was nearing the late Deva Realm, which caused his mind to reel.

“Why does it have to be this way?!?! How come that bastard can absorb the spiritual energy here, but I can’t?!?! Dammit. If he were stuck just like me, it wouldn’t be a big deal. But he can actually increase his cultivation base!!” The ghost face howled to the heavens in madness, but it did no good. With every day that passed, he grew weaker, and his opponent grew stronger. Obviously, it would eventually reach the point where he wasn’t a match in a fight.

“It’s not fair!!”

The mere thought of what might happen caused the ghost face to shiver in despair. Filled with a sense of madness, he began to desperately search for an exit again, which suddenly caused him to think of the Celestial, who was apparently in a very similar state of mind.

“I have to get out….” he thought, nearly weeping as he searched and searched.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was doing everything he could to increase his cultivation base. As he did, less and less lightning was visible. The spiritual energy in the magical item had built up for countless years, but now, Bai Xiaochun was slowly absorbing it into himself.

Under most circumstances, he would have had a difficult time focusing solely on cultivation for so long. But in the world of the magical item, with the ghost face as such a huge threat, he was very anxious, and was working harder than ever.

“That ghost face is terrifying!” he sighed. Considering the pressure he was currently feeling, he was going all out, much the same way he had back in the Spirit Stream Sect when he was studying plants and vegetation. As he absorbed the lightning, his cultivation base increased, and before long, he could push his Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation all the way to the sixth transformation!

However, things weren’t over yet. Before long, he reached the seventh transformation, which simultaneously pushed him closer and closer to the peak of the mid Deva Realm.

As his aura grew stronger, colors flashed in the sky of the world, and a powerful wind screamed.

“I'm so strong now! Once I break through to the late Deva Realm, I should be able to fight that ghost face!” Filled with excitement, he went on to absorb more lightning.

In contrast, the ghost face’s trepidation grew more intense with every day that passed. As he saw himself growing weaker and weaker, he sank deeper and deeper into despair.

In addition to the spiritual energy that was in the lightning, there was also abundant life force, which Bai Xiaochun didn’t hesitate to absorb.

It had a shocking effect on his Undying Blood. As his cultivation base broke through into the peak of the mid

Deva Realm, his Undying Blood… reached the fifty percent level!

When that happened, his eyes shone brightly with pride.

However, before he could revel in his excitement, rumbling sounds echoed out as all of the lightning vanished completely.

Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and looked around to find the entire area empty. At the same time, the ghost face was visible at the edge of the thundercloud region, looking equally shocked.

In that instant, the ghost face went mad with joy. Cackling loudly, he burst into motion.

“This time, you’re *dead*, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Bai Xiaochun shivered in fear and began to back up.

“Dammit, why is this thundercloud region so unstable? After absorbing lightning for so long, it went empty, just like that?!?!” The sight of the ghost face rushing toward him caused his scalp to tingle so hard it felt like it might explode. Without any further hesitation, he began to flee at top speed, using his Undying Hex to vanish, reappear off in the distance, and then continue onward in a blur.

Behind him, the ghost face was virtually going crazy. Despite having his cultivation base suppressed, he was going all out to get to Bai Xiaochun. He could tell that if he didn’t take advantage of this chance to kill the damnable Bai Xiaochun now, and his cultivation base dropped further, then the next time they met, he wouldn’t qualify to fight him.

That terrifying possibility fueled the ghost face’s mad rush forward.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he howled in madness, teleporting out of the thundercloud region to appear only about 300 meters behind Bai Xiaochun. Then he focused all of the demigod power he could, sending out crushing force in the hopes of smashing Bai Xiaochun to bits.

Nearly overwhelmed by the sensation of crisis, Bai Xiaochun unleashed the power of his mid Deva Realm cultivation base, combining it with all of the energy from his Undying Blood. Then, he used it to power his Undying Hex, ensuring that he vanished before the ghost face’s blow could land!

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he reappeared, which he quickly wiped away. The truth was that it actually didn’t matter what injuries he sustained like this. His Undying Blood was so powerful that he almost completely recovered in only moments. In fact, he had even been able to borrow some of the momentum of the incoming attack to flee more quickly.

He shot away in a bright beam of light, moving at incredible speed as the ghost face chased after him, attacking relentlessly. One glob of black smoke after another shot out, but Bai Xiaochun avoided them all. Although he ended up coughing up blood as a result, overall, he wasn’t even starting to feel tired. As for the ghost face, he was so depressed he felt like collapsing mentally.

“Dammit. Dammit!! Even though I'm weaker than normal, I still don’t get how can this guy run away from me so quickly!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0983 awe-chapter-984

Bai Xiaochun was so focused on fleeing for his life that he wasn’t paying any attention to how much faster he was than his pursuer. He was only thinking about getting away as quickly as possible.

Whooshing and whistling sounds echoed out in all directions as he became a blur of afterimages that split the air. In fact, it was actually impossible to tell which one of them was his true form.

The ghost face was going so crazy that he even used a trump card divine ability, causing the smoke which surrounded him to condense down into a sphere. However he simply couldn’t close the distance as Bai Xiaochun headed to… the wind valleys!

“Noooo!!” he wailed. He pushed forward with a burst of cultivation base power, causing the black sphere to transform into numerous black arrows that shot toward Bai Xiaochun!

There were so many of them that they were impossible to count, a sight which caused Bai Xiaochun to scream in fear when he noticed.

He was using the Undying Hex, the Mountain Shaking Bash, and every other magical technique he could think of, even the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation!

Even as the black arrows were about to hit him, he entered the wind valleys. At that point, the arrows exploded, creating a powerful attack that shot into the wind valleys after him.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, but he didn’t even look over his shoulder. He just shot deeper into the wind valleys, to immediately be assailed by the powerful, biting winds. However, as soon as any wind touched him, it transformed into a shocking energy of heaven and earth that entered his pores and began to flow through his body.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was in no mood to even notice that. He continued to speed along, coughing up blood over and over. Only when he was deep in the wind valleys did he finally stop, panting, and look around to make sure he was alone. At that point, he turned around and realized that the ghost face hadn't pursued him into the valleys. Finally, he sighed in relief.

“Think you can kill Lord Bai, you old ghost? Stop dreaming!!” At this point, he looked around more closely, and realized that the screaming winds were doing exactly what the lightning had done: filling him with both spiritual power and life force.

Immediately, he brightened up.

“Hmph! A gentleman can wait for a decade to get revenge if he needs to. And since I, Bai Xiaochun, am a gentleman, I’ll just wait until I have my cultivation base breakthrough, and then I’ll go beat the crap out of that old ghost!” The mere thought of the scene which had just played out caused his heart to tremble in fear. And yet, there was also something odd about it.

“Now that I think about it, that old ghost seemed weaker than before! He couldn’t even catch up to me.” Shaking his head, he thought back to how the baby girl had said that as she gained more control over the world, she would suppress the ghost face.

“One factor must be that my improved cultivation base gives me greater speed. The other is that the ghost face is being suppressed!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he started to get so excited that his eyes lit up.

“Until the baby girl wakes up, there’s no way to get out of here. That means the old ghost is trapped just like me, and getting weaker constantly. Meanwhile, I'm getting stronger….” The more he thought about it, the more excited he got.

Finally, he looked off into the distance and shouted, “You just wait, you old ghost! Once I break through, I’ll beat you so badly that Ghostmother won’t even recognize you! If I don’t, then my name’s not Bai Xiaochun!”

He powered his voice with his cultivation base power so that it echoed out of the wind valleys and all the way to the livid ghost face.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he howled in frustration. After chasing Bai Xiaochun to the wind valleys and then seeing that the wind didn’t affect him, the ghost face truly felt himself descending into insanity. The winds seemed to almost treat Bai Xiaochun like their own ancestor!

At this point, the ghost face decided to try to step into the winds himself, only to find that they almost tore his soul body to shreds, and also took away some of his life force. He immediately backed away.

Bai Xiaochun had fled as quickly as a mouse with its tail on fire, and was soon in the depths of the wind valleys, leaving the ghost face feeling completely helpless, and cursing heaven and earth for the vile way they treated him.

He knew that if things kept going this way, then he was truly finished…. The mere thought of Bai Xiaochun experiencing a breakthrough in the wind valleys caused the ghost face’s expression to turn very grim.

“This guy will seek revenge over the smallest grievance! If he breaks through….”

The ghost face couldn’t have felt more regret. By now, he realized that he really shouldn’t have come into this damned magical item with Bai Xiaochun.

“How can this guy be so unreasonable?!?!?!” Turning around, he fled to yet again try to find a way out.

If the ghost face had ever met any disciples from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect or the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect, perhaps those disciples would have told him that what was truly terrifying about Bai Xiaochun wasn’t any so-called unreasonableness, but rather… his infinitely powerful ability to cause disasters!

After all, both riversource sects had borne witness to the fact that, given the right circumstances and resources, he could very nearly destroy the world.

Before long, half a year had gone by….

During that time, the war preparations were completed, and the campaign that the Celestial wanted finally began!

The forces of the Heavenspan River Region invaded the Wildlands on four fronts. The four massive armies were led by the riversource sects, and filled in with the forces of the Middle and Lower Reaches.

The Wildlands fought back primarily with the armies of the four heavenly kings, each of whom faced one of the riversource sects. The war… had begun!!

Neither Bai Xiaochun nor the ghost face were aware of this development. If Bai Xiaochun had known, he would have been profoundly nervous, and would likely have been incapable of focusing on cultivation. As for the ghost face, if he had known, he would have been filled with even more regret at having followed Bai Xiaochun into this desolate place.

In the outside world, a war between the Wildlands and the Heavenspan forces would have been a goldmine for him. He could have consumed people left and right, and would have eventually reached a peak level of cultivation base power that would have enabled him to manipulate the war to his own benefit.

Instead, the ghost face was hiding in a low-lying mountain, his heart filled with humiliation, viciousness, and terror.

The reason for that was that during the past half year, his cultivation base had continued to drop. As of this point, he was no longer as strong as a demigod, but rather, in the great circle of the Deva Realm!

It was like a living nightmare that he almost couldn’t believe was real. After dropping so far in his cultivation base, he finally reached the point where he didn't dare to go outside. Therefore, he had remained in hiding for a full three months.

A while back, he had been wavering on whether or not to simply go into the wind valleys and try to find Bai Xiaochun.

However, he would now be incapable of killing him even if he found him. Even worse was the aura he could sense in the wind valleys, which was now getting very close to the late Deva Realm.

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!” Grief and indignation filled him as he thought about how powerful Bai Xiaochun was now. After all, his own power level was now equivalent to the great circle of the Deva Realm. If Bai Xiaochun broke through… the consequences would be unimaginable.

“Why does it have to be this way?!?!” he moaned, grabbing the smoke that made up his hair and tugging on it viciously. In his fear, he could only cautiously focus on Bai Xiaochun’s aura and its progress.

A few more months passed, and the ghost face's cultivation base dropped further. He was now in the late Deva Realm…. Worse, he could sense the raging aura in the wind valleys, and it caused him to shiver in fear.

“Fail! Fail!! I curse you to fail!!” And thus the ghost sat there, nervously cursing Bai Xiaochun.

Unfortunately for him, Bai Xiaochun’s aura only continued to get more powerful. In the end, he achieved his breakthrough, and stepped into the late Deva Realm. At that point, the ghost face wailed in despair.

It was also in that moment that a pleased voice erupted from within the wind valleys.

“Alright, you old ghost. Lord Bai is coming for you!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0984 awe-chapter-985

As soon as the ghost face heard those words, he shivered, causing countless streams of black smoke to spread out in all directions.

However, after a long moment passed, and Bai Xiaochun still hadn’t come out from the wind valleys, the ghost face looked over in shock, then began to curse inwardly.

Back in the wind valleys, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, savoring the feeling of his breakthrough, and the majestic cultivation base power that he now possessed.

“Late Deva Realm!!” he thought. “I, Bai Xiaochun, am finally in the late Deva Realm!”

Eyes shining with excitement, he once again raised his voice and said, “Alright, you old ghost. Lord Bai is really coming for you this time!”

Outside, the ghost face’s expression turned dark with rage. However, since he was made from black smoke, it was difficult to see how dark it actually was….

By now, Bai Xiaochun could tell that he could reach the eighth of the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations.

“My eighth transformation is actually equivalent to the eleventh!” Although he couldn’t say that he was invincible in all creation, he was definitely close.

“And my Undying Blood….” Licking his lips, he studied his Undying Blood, and confirmed that he had broken through in that regard as well. As of this moment, sixty percent of the blood in his body was Undying Blood!

That made his powers of regeneration even more shocking than before. In terms of his own life force, he was now fairly certain that, even if heaven and earth were destroyed around him, he would not be destroyed.

“This is unheard-of strength!” he thought, feeling more confident in himself than ever. “Nobody under the level of a demigod could beat me!”

In his pride, he couldn’t help but raise his voice again.… “Alright, old ghost, this time, I really am coming over there!”

At that point, his eyes suddenly flickered.

“Why isn’t the old ghost responding to me? It seems his cultivation base really must be dropping.…” During the time he had been working on reaching the late Deva Realm, he hadn’t stopped paying any attention to things outside of the wind valleys.

Because of that, he could sense that, thanks to the pressure of the magical item, the ghost face’s cultivation base had dropped. That, coupled with his taunts from earlier, confirmed everything.

Eyes shining with determination, he shot into motion, leaving the wind valleys and appearing in the world beyond them.

Bai Xiaochun seemed like the wind itself, a hurricane that blasted across the lands with explosive power.

Although he looked quite impressive, he was actually being very cautious, and was ready to fall back at a moment’s notice. But after emerging into the open and blinking a few times, he realized that the ghost face was nowhere to be seen.

Eyes lighting up, he sent some divine sense out, causing heaven and earth to distort from the sheer force. Within moments, the entire world of the magical item was visible via his late Deva Realm divine sense.

It only took a moment before he found the ghost face, fleeing in the opposite direction.

The instant Bai Xiaochun's divine sense locked onto him, he confirmed that he had dropped into the late Deva Realm.

Bai Xiaochun immediately roared with laughter, causing all of the anxiety that had built up since he had arrived in the magical item to drain away. He suddenly felt carefree and excited as he began to give chase.

"Want to race with Lord Bai, eh, you old ghost?" With that, he drew upon the full power of his cultivation base, using the Undying Hex and the Mountain Shaking Bash together to rocket through the air and appear right behind the ghost face.

The ghost face's expression was unsightly to the extreme, and fury burned in his heart. Even as he fled in absolute disgrace, he opened his mouth and shouted, causing countless smoke mouths to suddenly shoot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun backed up and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, sending frigid qi out to meet the gaping mouths.

As soon as the two met, the seemingly shocking mouths collapsed into bits of black smoke. Meanwhile, the blast of frigid qi proceeded directly toward the ghost face.

Cursing bitterly, the ghost face continued to flee. In contrast, Bai Xiaochun's eyes were shining brightly. Laughing heartily, he clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out.

Rumbling booms filled the area as the blow hit the ghost face, causing the smoke he was composed of to roil unstably.

"Don't push things too far, Bai Xiaochun!"

"Do you dare to fight with Lord Bai, you old ghost?!?!" With that, he used the eighth Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation, growing to a height of 240 meters and bursting with energy.

The moon sigil in his left eye shone radiantly, pushing his battle prowess to even higher heights. Although he wasn't quite at the demigod level, he was certainly very close.

Waving his hand, he attacked again, and the ghost face was powerless to fight back. The situation between the two of them had been completely reversed, and despite the fact that the ghost face had known this would happen, it was still difficult to accept it. A boom rang out, and the ghost face was shattered by Bai Xiaochun's fist strike.

The innumerable strands of black smoke quickly formed back into the image of the ghost face, who was experiencing something he had never before experienced. Long ago, Ghostmother had relied on the backing of an archaean to capture him, and had also treated him very politely. Here… Bai Xiaochun, a person the ghost face could crush easily were his cultivation base not suppressed, was smacking him around with deadly force.

The ghost face was so angry that his voice quavered as he shouted, “Don’t force my hand, Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Fudge, I'm not forcing you to do anything. I'm just beating you!” Bai Xiaochun felt wonderful at having all the stress from before melt away, to be replaced by remarkable joy. Shouting at the top of his lungs, he strode forward and unleashed another fist strike.

More booms rang out.

“Who forced you to try to kill me before?!?!” Another fist strike!

The ghost face couldn't dodge out of the way in time. No amount of shrieking or divine abilities or magical techniques did any good. Yet again, his body collapsed, to be reformed a moment later.

“Who forced you to chase me into this place?!” Bai Xiaochun struck out with his fist again!

“Who forced you to keep chasing me once we got stuck inside?!?!

“I ran into that thundercloud region, and you still wouldn’t let me go!

“The lightning dispersed, and you started chasing me again!” He emphasized everything he said with a fist strike, each of which caused the ghost face to shatter and reform.

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!” the ghost face howled madly. Finally, he couldn't take it anymore, and lunged at

Bai Xiaochun.

However, before he could get close, Bai Xiaochun leaned back and kicked out, planting his foot directly onto the ghost face.

“Quite the bragger, aren’t we? Still think you can kill me?!” The ghost face broke apart and then formed back together, whereupon Bai Xiaochun shattered him again.

Finally, he reached out, grabbed the ghost face by his smoke hair, and smashed him down onto the ground. He wasn’t even using divine abilities, only his fleshly body power, and the force of the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation.

Screams rang out as Bai Xiaochun trampled on the ghost face, which shattered and reformed the entire time. Eventually, it burned some life force to try to flee.

Flicking his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun stuck his chin up and proudly said, “Think you can just run? If I don’t beat the crap out of you until you cry uncle, then my name isn’t Bai Xiaochun!”

With that, he continued to give chase.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0985 awe-chapter-986

Rumbling booms filled the entire world of the magical item, mixed in with the shrieks of the ghost face, whose heart was filled with both madness and humiliation.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he howled. “If I get out of here, I’m gonna slaughter your whole clan! I'm gonna skin you alive and make you into a sky lantern!!”

Of course, he knew that shouting in this fashion was useless, and might make Bai Xiaochun want to kill him even more. But he was simply too frustrated, and if he didn’t vent somehow, then he would likely explode physically before Bai Xiaochun even killed him.

“Quite the temper!” Bai Xiaochun said with a glare. Snorting coldly, he accelerated, and more booms rang out. The ghost face shattered and reformed over and over again. Eventually, when it was obvious that he couldn’t escape, his eyes lit with madness, and he began to burn his divine soul to fuel a secret magic. A popping sound rang out, and he vanished into thin air.

“Eee?” Bai Xiaochun murmured. He sent some divine sense out to try to track down the ghost face, but after sweeping the entire world of the magical item, he couldn’t find even a trace of him.

“He comes from beyond the heavens, and was strong enough to fight the Celestial. I guess he must have some other strange techniques at his disposal....” After some contemplation, he still wasn’t willing to accept defeat so easily. He was convinced that his opponent might be able to hide, but wouldn’t be able to do so forever, and definitely wouldn’t be able to escape from the world of the magical item.

That, in turn, meant that he would be able to find him sooner or later.

“Ah, whatever. I’ll let him off the hook for now. Later on when I get bored, I can track him down and mop the floor with him. I can’t believe he dares to fight me! When I, Bai Xiaochun, get pissed off, I frighten even myself!” Snorting coldly, he put the ghost face out of his mind and returned to the wind valleys to continue his cultivation. At the moment, beating the ghost face nearly senseless had improved his mood significantly.

Meanwhile, in a random mountainous region far in the distance, the air rippled and distorted, and the ghost face cautiously appeared in the open. At first, he was somewhat blurry, as though he were still within the world, but separated from it by a layer of obscurity.

That diaphanous barrier was the key way he had evaded Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense. However, he was clearly in a very weakened state; the secret magic he had used came at a very steep price.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he growled bitterly through gritted teeth. At the moment, he felt hopeless and lost; despite putting everything on the line, he had failed, leaving him on the verge of weeping.

An entire month flew by, which the ghost face spent in abject terror. With every moment that passed, he worried that Bai Xiaochun might suddenly pop up in front of him. It was a true torment.

In sharp contrast, Bai Xiaochun felt more blessed than ever. As he continued to practice cultivation in the wind valleys, his place in the late Deva Realm grew very stable. Sadly, the winds were also beginning to weaken, until one day, they vanished.

After his experience in the thundercloud region, it was no surprise to Bai Xiaochun. Eyes shining with anticipation, he looked in the direction of the sea of rainwater.

“I wonder… if I’ll become a demigod in here?” Excited by the mere thought, he headed toward the rain region.

Soon, he arrived, and didn’t even pause before entering the area.

Just like the lightning and the wind, the falling rain was filled with spiritual energy and life force. Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily as he headed to the depths of the region, sat down cross-legged, and began to absorb the spiritual energy there.

The world of the magical item was growing very quiet and calm. Months passed, and the ghost face continued to stew in bitterness and fear at the prospect of Bai Xiaochun suddenly trying to kill him. It was all made worse by the fact that Bai Xiaochun was getting more powerful by the day, whereas the ghost face… continued to experience a drop in cultivation base.

By now, he was fully in the mid Deva Realm, a level of weakness that filled his heart with increasing levels of terror. He didn’t ever dare to go out in the open, and could only pray that Bai Xiaochun continued to spend all his time working on cultivation.

Despite hoping that Bai Xiaochun had forgotten about him, he also continued to curse him in every vicious way imaginable.

“I curse you to die by spontaneous explosion!!”

“I curse you to experience energy deviation, and be destroyed in body and soul!”

“I, once a mighty quasi-archaean… could once kill an entire horde of worms like Bai Xiaochun with a mere wave of my finger. This level of bullying is ridiculous! I will definitely have my revenge one day!!!”

The ghost face looked up into the sky and reminisced about his past glories, which were the only things that gave him the courage to keep going in this situation.

Perhaps it was the ghost face’s sharp-tongued cursing, or perhaps there was some other reason, but that afternoon, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes.

He suddenly felt uncomfortable, as though something wicked were lurking outside of the sea of rain. After only a short moment of thought, he came to the conclusion that it must be the ghost face.

“That old ghost is definitely saying bad things about me!” After looking off into the distance, he sped out of the rain region. Instead of sending his divine sense out, he simply relied on that sensation of wickedness to begin to track down its source.

The ghost face was hiding in the mountains, gritting his teeth, when suddenly his face fell. Then he burst into motion.

In the following instant, a boom echoed out from the spot he had just occupied, accompanied by a massive shockwave. Shrieking, the ghost face fled, popping into countless strands of black smoke that fled in all directions.

That was when Bai Xiaochun stepped out of nowhere.

“So, it really was you cursing me, you old ghost!” With that, he used the Undying Hex in combination with a fist strike.

His target wasn’t the ghost, but rather, a random spot in the air. The blow caused a black hole to spring up, the gravitational force of which caused all of the fleeing strands of black smoke to stop moving.

That brief pause was all the time Bai Xiaochun needed. Waving his sleeve, he unleashed the power of the late Deva Realm, creating a tempest that filled the entire area.

The black smoke shattered, reforming moments later into the full ghost face, who then tried to escape in a different direction. Yet again, he used that costly secret magic of his to vanish.

Irritated, Bai Xiaochun decided not to go back to the rain region, but instead spent the next several months thoroughly searching the world of the magical item. Occasionally, the ghost face’s secret magic would expire, and Bai Xiaochun would find him, whereupon he would be forced to use the secret magic again.

And thus Bai Xiaochun harried the ghost face without letup. After another month with no rest, the ghost face was on the verge of complete collapse, and was convinced that if things kept going on this way, his divine soul would eventually expire without the need for Bai Xiaochun to attack.

“He’s not going to give up until I'm dead, is he…?” The ghost face had already descended so far into madness he was almost dead inside. Again he used his secret magic, and when Bai Xiaochun found him this time, he spun, eyes bloodshot. Flames burst out around him, and he howled as though he were ready to fight to the death. Throwing caution to the wind, he did something he had never done so far. Whereas normally he existed only in the form of a head, all of a sudden, he sprouted a torso and four limbs. In the blink of an eye, he had become a pitch-black statue!

It was no illusory statue. It was corporeal, and possessed a powerful aura, like that of a god of battle. Without any hesitation, the statue lunged toward Bai Xiaochun.

“I am a mighty quasi-archaean! I've lived longer than you can imagine! It would be better to be dead than be tormented by the likes of you! Maybe you’re using underhanded means to gain the upper hand, but… I simply can’t endure anymore! Perhaps I’ll die, but at least I’ll die with dignity! Alright, if you want me dead, Bai Xiaochun, then bring it on!!”

The ghost face closed in, cackling madly, clearly intent on going out in a blaze of glory. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittered as he clenched his right hand into a fist and unleashed the Undying Emperor’s Fist.

Heaven and earth trembled violently as the shadowy emperor appeared behind him and also clenched his fist. When his blow landed on the pitch-black statue, it exploded into pieces!

The aura of death spread out in all directions, and the rubble that remained of the statue scattered onto the ground.

Not a scrap of life force could be sensed, as though the ghost face had truly died!

The backlash of the blow caused Bai Xiaochun’s entire body to vibrate as he staggered backward about 300 meters. There, he looked up in the direction of the rubble, a suspicious look on his face.

“Dead?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0986 awe-chapter-987

“That was too easy, wasn’t it? He’s dead, just like that?” Bai Xiaochun walked back up to the shattered pieces of the statue and examined them closely. Sure enough, they emitted a strong aura of death.

His divine sense didn’t reveal any traces of life force, and not even picking up some of the pieces of the statue and studying them closely provided any evidence that the ghost face was still alive.

After all, the ghost face had been suppressed all the way down to the mid Deva Realm, whereas Bai Xiaochun was in the late Deva Realm. It was no exaggeration to say that killing someone in the mid Deva Realm would be easy for him.

What made Bai Xiaochun suspicious was that, before being suppressed, the ghost face had been able to fight with the Celestial.

“He was a tough opponent, and a quasi-archaean at that!” He pursed his lips in thought as he considered just going back to his cultivation. However, he simply couldn’t dispel his suspicions, so he sent his divine sense out to fill the entire world of the magical item. Only after finding no further evidence did he decide to leave.

Despite having seen the ghost face die with his own eyes, he still couldn't quite believe that it was true. In the end, though, he wasn’t too worried about the situation. The world of the magical item was still sealed, and therefore, there were only three possibilities. First, the ghost face was really dead. Second, he had somehow managed to escape the magical item. Third, he had faked his death.

As for the rubble of the statue, he decided not to take it with him. If the ghost face was really dead, then the rubble would be useless. If he were alive, then perhaps it might have some hidden function. But in the end, there was no one else in the world with them who could take it away.

Another month went by. Every few days, Bai Xiaochun would go back to the rubble of the statue and study it closely.

It never moved, and the aura of death around it was slowly dissipating. Clearly, the remains of the statue were slowly transforming into nothing but ordinary debris. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense couldn’t even pick up any traces of the ghost face’s aura of death.

“No way. He really died? I was still having fun!” Bai Xiaochun’s suspicions were starting to fade. Another month went by, and he couldn't detect any of the ghost face’s aura.

“If I remove the second possibility from the list, then that means he's either really dead, or… he faked his death. I guess I need to do some tests.” After rubbing his chin in thought, he waved his hands and gathered all of the rubble together.

“Let me tell you, you old ghost, faking your death isn't going to do any good. If that’s what’s going on here, you’re going to regret it.” He made a few more threats, but got no response from the rubble. Finally, he snorted coldly, gathered the rubble up, and returned to the rain region.

Considering how much spiritual energy Bai Xiaochun had absorbed, the rainwater was growing weaker and scarcer.

By the time he brought the rubble of the statue back, it was little more than a drizzle.

Simply allowing some water to sprinkle on the rubble didn’t seem like a good plan, so he found a pond, which he tossed the rubble into. Then he performed an incantation gesture, funneling large amounts of rainwater into the pond until it was full to the brim.

Then he sat there and watched the rubble closely, hoping that this method would be able to confirm or deny his suspicions. After all, he remembered how harmful the lightning had been to the ghost face back in the thundercloud region.

It was the same with the wind in the wind valleys. Based on what he could guess, the rain from this area should have a similar effect.

After the rubble was submerged in the water, it remained motionless for a time. However, after a while, wisps of life force appeared, and the rubble began to twitch and vibrate. Then, a moment later, a hoarse scream erupted out.

“Things aren’t over between us, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Eyes shining, Bai Xiaochun replied, “So you really did fake your death, you old ghost!”

A moment later, the rubble in the rainwater simply vanished.

“Faking your death will do no good when Lord Bai is around!” Laughing heartily, he sent his divine sense out, and could immediately detect the ghost face’s aura. Without any hesitation, he began to chase it.

Just outside the rain region, the rubble of the statue faded into existence, collapsed into black smoke, and then formed back into the ghost face.

He was much, much weaker than before, and his eyes shone with fear, as well as suppressed anger that couldn't possibly be vented.

Having been convinced that Bai Xiaochun wouldn't stop until he was dead, he had faked his own death. It was the only plan he had been able to come up with. In order to make the entire thing seem realistic, he had actually died. After all, he existed as a soul body, and cultivated ghost magic. Therefore, as far as he was concerned, there was little difference between real death and fake death.

If everything had gone as expected, then no matter what Bai Xiaochun chose to do with the rubble, it would eventually have turned into ash. After a sixty-year-cycle passed, the ghost face would have awoken from within the ash.

Unfortunately… the unbelievably skeptical Bai Xiaochun had actually taken him into the rainwater region, and submerged him in a massive accumulation of spiritual energy. That energy subverted his state of fake death, and then inflicted horrendous pain on him as it ate away at his actual life force. At that point, he had been forced to awaken.

He had been given no other choice but take action, lest his life force truly be drained.

In the very end, he had again used that secret magic of his to escape the rain region. Of course, every time he used the secret magic, it was harmful and exhausting. And yet, no amount of exhaustion could surpass the despair he felt.

“Heavens!” he wailed bitterly. “What did I do wrong in my life?! Why did I have to get wrapped up with this heaven-damned Bai Xiaochun!?!?” By this point, he could already sense the raging aura of Bai Xiaochun closing in. Shivering in despair, he again called on his secret magic to flee.

Bai Xiaochun stepped out of thin air a moment later, looked around, and then cleared his throat.

“Hey little ghost,” he said loudly. “Hurry up and hide. I’m coming for you!” Vanishing, he once again began to track down the ghost using his previous methods.

A few more months passed, during which time Bai Xiaochun enjoyed himself thoroughly, and the ghost face wallowed in misery.

Bai Xiaochun would work on his cultivation a bit, and then track down the ghost face and beat him up a bit. Eventually, the ghost face would use his secret magic to flee. When Bai Xiaochun was in a good mood, he would only chase the ghost face down a few times before letting him get away.

When he was in a bad mood, he would chase him relentlessly to the point of capturing him and bringing him back to the rain region. Either way, the howls of the ghost face filled the world of the magical item on a daily basis.

The months that passed were like lifetimes of misery to the ghost face.

By this point, his cultivation base had dropped down to the early Deva Realm.

In contrast, Bai Xiaochun was making constant progress. His Undying Blood was now seventy percent complete, and his cultivation base was getting very close to the great circle of the Deva Realm.

More months passed, and the rain vanished. Perhaps he was starting to get tired of messing with the ghost face, or perhaps it was because of his impending cultivation base watershed, but in either case, he spent less time harrying the ghost face, who was so excited about the development that he wept in delight.

Meanwhile in the outside world, the forces of the Heavenspan River region were at war with the Wildlands. The fighting was building up to a climax. Nearly fifty percent of the cultivators from the Upper, Middle, and Lower Reaches had been deployed, a massive force that shook heaven and earth.

The Heavenspan forces were the invaders in what was a very bloody conflict. The Wildlands didn’t have the same resources as the Heavenspan cultivators, but had far more troops. All tribes, all clans, all heavenly marquises and dukes, and each of the four heavenly kings fought with bloodshot eyes.

Fierce fighting played out everywhere!

Both sides had lost devas in battle. Every time such a thing happened, the heavens trembled. However, what was even more shocking was that… the demigod experts on both sides had begun to take part in the conflict!

The battlefield was the Wildlands, and by this point, the four heavenly kings were facing off with the demigod patriarchs from the four riversource sects!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0987 awe-chapter-988

As the war outside raged like an unstoppable wildfire, the rain vanished within the world of the magical item. Although Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base didn’t experience a breakthrough, his Undying Blood was now seventy percent complete!

When that happened, Bai Xiaochun became so powerful that the world seemed different to him. It was as if merely looking around caused the light around him to grow darker.

He thrummed with life force to the point where he was fairly certain that although he couldn’t quite live forever… he was very close to that level.

The only sad thing was that there was no way to test his strength. The ghost face was now so weak that he shivered in fear at the mere sight of Bai Xiaochun; doing experiments on him wouldn’t be particularly effective.

However, after some self-examination, he was confident enough to assess himself.

“Even if I only used thirty percent of my cultivation base and fleshly body power, I would be just as strong as I was in the past…. Maybe I'm even strong enough… to fight with a demigod?” He took a deep breath of anticipation at the thought of leaving the world of the magical item and shocking everyone.

“I can still get stronger!” he thought. Exhilarated, he rose to his feet and headed to the last of the four areas in the world, the fire region. Now that the world was bereft of lightning, rain, and wind, it seemed very different from before. Although Bai Xiaochun couldn't be sure, he was fairly certain that, when he went into a trance, he could sense the aura of the baby girl.

“Now that I think about it, she should be close to finishing her work.” After entering the fire region, he found one of the many volcanoes there, where he sat down cross-legged to begin cultivation.

The energy of heaven and earth rushed toward him, slowly pushing his Undying Blood to the eighty percent level. As for his cultivation base, he was now creeping closer and closer to the great circle of the Deva Realm.

By now, he had reached the point where every time he sucked in some of the surrounding spiritual energy, it caused the entire fire region to tremble.

The ghost face could sense what was happening, and it gave birth to increased despair and fear within him. His cultivation base was at the point where he was about to drop from the deva level to the Nascent Soul stage. When that happened, it was likely that if Bai Xiaochun messed with him, he would be killed.

“I have to get out of here....” he thought, weeping. Yet again, he couldn’t help but sympathize with how the Celestial must feel.

“On the outside, I can make mincemeat of this damned Bai Xiaochun!!” The ghost face knew that, once outside of the world of the magical treasure, he would not be restricted and suppressed. He could recover his cultivation base, and be back at the same level he had been at when he had fought the Celestial. And he had long since sworn an oath that, when that happened, he would get payback for all the pain and suffering he had endured by venting on Bai Xiaochun.

As the ghost face wallowed in bitterness, Bai Xiaochun furthered his cultivation, and another year passed.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun did not kill the ghost face…. However, the ghost face wished on many occasions that he could die. The mere fact that he had held on for an entire year seemed like pure luck.

He couldn’t even count how many times Bai Xiaochun had come to beat him up during that time. When Bai Xiaochun was in a good mood, he would beat him once. But if he was in a bad mood, he would beat him over and over again.

It reached the point where the ghost face stopped using his secret magic. Whenever Bai Xiaochun came for him, he would simply lay down and close his eyes in despair….

He had long since reached rock bottom. The more he fought back, the more Bai Xiaochun seemed to enjoy himself, whereas the more he resigned himself to his fate, the more bored he became.

He had now been stuck with Bai Xiaochun for more than two years, and the resulting torment had burned the image of Bai Xiaochun deep into his divine soul, along with a sense of indescribable terror.

As far as he was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was the most fear-inspiring individual he had ever encountered.

Regret plagued him constantly. He regretted even getting close to Bai Xiaochun, and regretted foolishly staying behind when Ghostmother left….

That decision was most likely the worst decision he had ever made in his entire life!

When he had been captured by Ghostmother in the world beyond, he had never experienced torment like this. She had mostly just used him to cast fear into the hearts of her enemies.

On many occasions, he had thought back to that moment when he allowed the Celestial to grab him. At that time, he could never have guessed that fleeing the control of Ghostmother and escaping the Celestial would end up with him being in the clutches of the terrifying Bai Xiaochun.

He had wanted to die on many occasions, and the bitterness he felt had him constantly recalling his past glories to keep himself going.

“This guy is completely inhuman….” Those were the words that echoed in his mind whenever he thought about Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun noticed how the ghost face had given up, and wasn’t even fighting back, he started to feel a bit bad. On the other hand, he enjoyed having turned the tables and being able to beat his own persecutor. On a few occasions, he considered refraining from beating the ghost face, but then he realized that this was a quasi-archaean expert who had relentlessly tried to kill him. The thought of this ghost face very nearly causing him to lose his poor little life ensured that he couldn’t hold back from beating him.

“Now that I think about it, my life is actually pretty legendary. I smacked a demigod, I smacked the Celestial, and now I've smacked a quasi-archaean to the point where he can’t even fight back.” Sighing, he mused that his cultivation base really had become incredibly powerful in the past year.

By now, the flames in the fire region were almost gone. His cultivation base was on the verge of a breakthrough, and his Undying Blood was eighty percent complete.

He was relatively certain that after absorbing the rest of the sea of flames, he would reach the great circle of the Deva Realm!

During the past year, he had sensed the baby girl’s aura growing stronger and stronger. Based on what he could tell, as he had absorbed the spiritual energy from the four main regions in the world, her fusion with the magical item had grown more complete.

“The moment I absorb all of the fire and achieve my breakthrough will definitely be the moment when she fully fuses with the magical item.” Eyes flickering, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and waved his hands out in front of him.

What remained of the flames began to swirl toward him, surrounding him.

Of course, the fire didn’t hurt him at all. It transformed into spiritual energy which rushed into his pores, converged in his energy passageways, and coursed throughout his body. Then, he used it to fuel the tenth Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation.

The first nine transformations would lead to the late Deva Realm, with the tenth and eleventh transformations being legendary in nature, and very difficult to cultivate. However, because of how Bai Xiaochun had combined it with the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, he was easily able to master it.

Now, if he wanted to achieve his breakthrough, he needed to succeed with the final transformation!

When he did, a blazing sun would appear in his right eye, which would be the perfect foil to the bright moon in his left eye. That would be the ultimate manifestation of the power of the Cloud Lightning Forefather.

Because it was a combination with the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, it varied somewhat from Master Cloud Lightning's version. However, it still surpassed the limits of the technique, and would even be shocking to the person who had originally invented it.

"Cloud Lightning…." Bai Xiaochun murmured, his eyes glittering as the fire rushed toward him.

"Forefather…." Rumbling sounds filled the world of the magical item as Bai Xiaochun trembled, breathed in ragged pants as his cultivation base surged. Suddenly, his right eye turned into something like a black hole that sucked in all of the surrounding flames.

Moments later, the fire region had no flame at all within it!

"Eleventh Transformation!!"

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

The world shook violently as his right eye brew brighter and brighter until the image of a sun appeared. At the same time, his cultivation base skyrocketed, breaking through into… the great circle of the Deva Realm!

Bai Xiaochun's energy rose to incredible heights, shaking the world, causing the ghost face to tremble, causing the lands to quake, and causing the sky to distort. As all of that happened, a face appeared up above.

It was not Bai Xiaochun’s face, but rather… the baby girl’s!

Her eyes were closed, as though this were a critical moment in her journey to becoming the spirit automaton.

Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, ignoring the baby girl and instead lifting his right hand. Upon clenching it, cracking sounds erupted out, and he felt his blood surging through his body. At the same time, he began to glow with crimson light, as though he had become some sort of blood divinity!

An indescribable pressure began to weigh down around him, crushing everything in the area. If any disciple from the Blood Stream Division had been here to see him, they would have been shaken to the core, and would have been convinced that they were looking at… their Blood Ancestor!

“Undying Blood… eighty percent complete!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0988 awe-chapter-989

The war between the Heavenspan region and the Wildlands continued to intensify. At this point, nearly seventy percent of the cultivators from the four rivers had been deployed.

Such a large number of cultivators ensured that the four enormous armies were like sharp arrows that could pierce anything that stood in their way. They stabbed deep into the Wildlands, crushing everything in their path. The Wildlands had been at a disadvantage from the beginning, and now they were being defeated at every turn!

Not even the participation of the four heavenly kings could change the overall tide of the war. As the demigod patriarchs from the four riversource sects bombarded them with divine abilities, they were forced to cede more and more territory. The front line began to shrink as the Wildlands forces fell back, both to buy some breathing room and to look for a chance to strike back.

As the riversource sects advanced from both east, west, south and north, they occupied more than thirty percent of the Wildlands, and essentially had the Wildlanders surrounded!

From then on, the war involved tightening the encirclement, and marching onward toward what would be the final battle!

The fighting in this war was far more bitter than in any war of the past. Normally, things would never have reached this level. However, the Celestial was dead set on this outcome, and gave the four riversource sects no other option than to fight with all the power they could muster.

Another factor that played into the situation was that the gravekeeper was old and weak, and could not protect the Wildlands like he had in the past. And the new Hell-Emperor had not yet fully matured in his role, and could only act passively.

Considering everything, it was only natural that the fighting would be more desperate than it ever had been in previous conflicts.

As the Wildlands ceded more territory, conflicts between devas became more common, and more casualties resulted.

By this point, more than ten devas had been killed collectively. Furthermore, the fighting between the demigods had escalated to a deadly nature. Although no demigods had perished as of yet, it probably wouldn't be long before that happened!

The casualties were especially high among the Wildlanders. Entire tribes of savage giants had been wiped out, leaving vast swaths of the Wildlands littered with corpses and the vestiges of war.

The armies of the four heavenly kings had not fared well either. They were exhausted, and yet, gritted their teeth and fought on. It seemed clear that this war would only end with one side being completely wiped out!

There would be no surrender. There would be no mercy. There was only one outcome for the loser: death!

That was the ultimatum the Celestial had given to the gravekeeper!

Either open the Worldgate, or… watch the bloodline of the Arch-Emperor be destroyed, along with every Wildlander cultivator!

At the same time, countless chosen rose to prominence in the Wildlands. Gongsun Yi. Zhou Hong. Chen Manyao. Xu Shan. They all experienced baptisms by blood and fire, and by means of such deadly situations, grew into true men and women.

It was the same with Mistress Red-Dust, who led the Giant Ghost Legion in a spectacular campaign to resist the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. All of the other three riversource sects were completely shaken by the results of that fighting.

Of course, heroes rose up among the Heavenspan sects as well, people who accomplished amazing deeds and inspired their fellow cultivators.

It was almost as if… the entire world were a withered flower that, by means of destruction, used its last bit of energy to bloom in radiant glory.

Devas. Nascent Soul cultivators. Core Formation experts. It was the same with all of them!

In the River-Defying Sect, it happened with Song Que, Shangguan Tianyou, Xu Baocai, and their deva, Patriarch Spirit Stream.

People died every day, until the Wildlands ran red with blood!

**

In one particular valley in the Giant Ghost King’s territory, the Wildlanders were fighting a coalition of great sects from the Middle Reaches. Patriarch Spirit Stream was there, as well as Song Junwan and Bruiser.

The River-Defying Sect cultivators weren’t particularly enthusiastic about this war, nor were the Wildlanders from the Giant Ghost Legion. Although neither of them were very interested in fighting to the death, they had no choice in the matter….

After all, the Heavenspan forces were being led by Bai Zhentian from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

At the moment, his eyes were bloodshot from anxiety. Although the Heavenspan forces had the advantage, and were winning the war in general, there were often isolated incidents in which the Wildlanders would catch them by surprise and inflict heavy casualties.

And that was exactly what was playing out right now. The Giant Ghost Legion had lain in wait in this valley, and managed to surround the Heavenspan cultivators, who were unable to extricate themselves.

On one side of the valley, the exhausted Mistress Red-Dust stood looking at the Heavenspan cultivators, mixed emotions in her eyes. Throughout the course of the war, she had done her best to avoid fighting cultivators from the River-Defying Sect. But as the fighting ground on and on, that became more and more difficult.

Flanking Mistress Red-Dust were numerous cultivators from the Giant Ghost Legion, whose eyes were blood red as they stared into the valley. All it would take was a single command from Mistress Red-Dust, and they would attack with deadly force.

Also among the Wildlands forces were cultivators from Arch-Emperor City, including several heavenly marquises and two heavenly dukes. Although they technically outranked

Mistress Red-Dust, during times of war, they would usually abide by the orders of the army leaders.

Mistress Red-Dust could sense that everyone around her was itching to fight, and that the lives of the people within the valley were essentially in her hands. She closed her eyes for a long moment. After taking a deep breath, she opened them again.

“Kill them, but… spare as many as you can from the River-Defying Sect.” This was her first time openly stating that the River-Defying Sect cultivators should not be killed. Her words caused an almost immediate uproar.

It was one of the heavenly marquises from Arch-Emperor City that spoke up the loudest. “Fellow Daoist Zimo, I don’t know why you favor the River-Defying Sect, but I can tell you that if we hold back, they won’t be the only ones who’ll escape!”

As for the other heavenly marquises, they frowned and looked over at Mistress Red-Dust.

Only the heavenly duke seemed to have already guessed what she was thinking.

Eyes blazing, Mistress Red-Dust coolly said, “Bai Xiaochun comes from the River-Defying Sect! If you don't care about pissing him off, then go ahead and kill his people!”

“Bai… Bai Xiaochun!?!?” The instant that heavenly marquis heard the name ‘Bai Xiaochun’, he shivered visibly, and even gasped. By this point, it was no big secret that Bai Xiaochun had masqueraded as Bai Hao in the past.

The other heavenly marquises were similarly shaken, and thought back to all of the things that had occurred when Bai

Xiaochun was in Arch-Emperor City. Some of them had even come close to experiencing the shakedowns. All of them had nearly worshipped him back in the old days, and of course, they all knew that he was the Master of the Hell-Emperor….

After exchanging glances, the heavenly marquises smiled bitterly, but held their tongues. And when the fighting started… they heeded Mistress Red-Dust’s orders.

The truth was that similar scenes would begin to play out in other locations in the Wildlands.

Eventually, the fighting in the valley was over. Under the leadership of Patriarch Spirit Stream, the River-Defying Sect cultivators escaped off into the distance. Mistress Red-Dust quietly watched them go.

“Where are you, Bai Xiaochun?” she murmured. “Why are you doing this…?” Sighing, she turned and left.

In that very moment, Bai Xiaochun was back in the world of the magical item, his Undying Blood having just reached the eighty percent level. His cultivation base was now in the great circle of the Deva Realm, and the entire world around him was shaking.

His aura now surpassed that of an ordinary cultivator in the great circle. For example, Chen Haosong couldn’t possibly measure up to him now, not any more than a firefly could compare to the full moon!

“I wonder what's going on in the outside world…?” he thought, taking a deep breath. Now that the fire region was empty, and there was no more spiritual energy around him, he wished more than ever that he could leave soon.

Looking up at the face of the baby girl overhead, he sent out some divine sense and confirmed that at the most… it would take three more days before the fusion process was complete!

“Three days, huh…?” Eyes flashing he looked off into the distance… to where the ghost face was hiding.

“The old ghost is weak now, but once he gets out of here, his cultivation base will go back to normal…. Right now, he has a lot of life force left. It sure would be a pity to let it go to waste.

“I wonder… if I could use his life force to push my Undying Blood to an even higher level. Perhaps one hundred percent…? At that point, I would be in full control of the Godkiller technique!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he smacked his bag of holding to produce his Eternal Parasol. Then, he began to walk toward the ghost face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0989 awe-chapter-990

The ghost face lay in his hiding spot, staring blankly into the sky at the face of the baby girl. After a moment passed, he sighed, his heart filled with both bitterness and excitement. “So, the detestable Bai Xiaochun finally broke through....”

It had not been an easy thing to endure through all of these years of torment. But now that Bai Xiaochun had broken through, and the spiritual energy from the four regions in the world was depleted, the ghost face was certain that a critical moment had arrived.

“That soul is about to become the spirit automaton.... When that happens, that damned Bai Xiaochun is definitely going to have the automaton open the world....” The ghost face’s expression was one of excitement and anticipation. After all, he knew that once he was free and in the open, his cultivation base would return to normal.

When that happened, he would finally be able to make Bai Xiaochun regret his own existence.

Right now, he needed to do everything in his power to make Bai Xiaochun believe that he was so harmless he wouldn’t even be threatening to a fly. In fact, he even hoped that he could get Bai Xiaochun to come try to capture him. If that happened, he would cooperate fully, all because of his confidence that his secret magic would enable him to escape later.

“However, I can’t place all my hopes in that damned Bai Xiaochun. If he's a complete waste of brains that can’t see my value, and doesn’t plan to capture me, well… I'm still not afraid!” A cold gleam flickered deep within the ghost face’s eyes. The truth was that he had been preparing for his moment for two years already.

Although his cultivation base had been suppressed all the way down to the Nascent Soul level, he had still managed to build up a reserve of divine soul power that he could use in one powerful attack.

It was an attack based, not on battle prowess, but on the power of teleportation. It would cost him nearly half of his divine soul, but in a situation in which Bai Xiaochun didn’t try to capture him, he could use it to break out into the open on his own!

“Two plans. Whichever I go with, I’ll succeed for sure, and restore my cultivation base! You just wait, Bai Xiaochun!!” Even as his heart surged with excitement, his expression flickered.

“He’s coming!” he gasped. Bai Xiaochun's terrifying aura was now closing in at top speed! He quickly suppressed his trembles of excitement and plastered a blank look on his face as he stared up into the sky. Anyone who looked at him would think that his expression was one of dazed despair. However, his heart was alive with the utmost levels of caution and prudence.

Before long, heaven and earth trembled, and even the air distorted as Bai Xiaochun appeared. He stopped above the ghost face, hovering in the air, a proud expression on his face as he flicked his sleeve.

“There’s something I need your help with, you rascally ghost.”

The ghost face’s heart twitched at being called a ‘rascally ghost’, but he didn't dare to let that show on the outside. Trying to look as dazed as possible, he continued to stare blankly up into the sky.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that the ghost face didn’t seem to have any intention of responding, he cleared his throat and then resorted to a more threatening glare.

“Look at me, you rascally ghost!” he growled, unleashing some cultivation base fluctuations of the great circle of the Deva Realm. Instantly, wild colors flashed in the sky as Bai Xiaochun’s will filled the entire area.

His will was so strong it affected the whole world of the magical item, making it seem as if his every thought and action was backed by magical law! His gaze was the gaze of heaven, and the pressure weighing down from him was heavenly might!!

In fact, he seemed like the very personification of all heaven and earth!

He also glowed with glorious light that almost seemed to clothe him as he hovered there in the air, spectacular in every aspect.

Although many ordinary people would not be able to see the evidence, and would only be awed by his general appearance, the ghost face could see more deeply….

“Deva Shapes Heavenly Will…. World Raiment….” The ghost face shivered. After all, Deva Shapes Heavenly Will was the ultimate expression of the Deva Realm, and indicated that the cultivator in question truly had merged with heaven and earth. That cultivator’s will had become the will of the heavens, and his very thoughts were the thoughts of all creation.

“This damned Bai Xiaochun does have some shocking talent. Not every deva reaches Deva Shapes Heavenly Will, nor are many capable of summoning the World Raiment…. That usually appears only when someone is about to step into the Demigod Realm.” The ghost face was feeling quite torn. After all, the only thing that lay beyond Deva Shapes Heavenly Will was the Demigod Realm!

In the Deva Realm, a cultivator would merge his will with heaven and earth, borrowing the power of creation to accomplish what they wished. But demigods… opened up a world of their own. When their spiritual soul became a true divine soul, their demigod will could outshine heaven and earth, and in fact, could even suppress them!

When Bai Xiaochun noticed that faint glimmer of shock in the ghost face’s eyes, he felt quite pleased with himself. It was a wonderful thing to be so eye-catching, especially when the person looking at him was capable of fighting the Celestial, and also wanted to kill him.

There was a flicker of motion, and Bai Xiaochun appeared next to the ghost face. Suddenly, it was possible to see the dark glow of the Eternal Parasol in his hand.

“I'm lacking a bit of life force for my cultivation. You, a mighty quasi-archaean, would likely have a lot of life force. Mind lending me a bit? Although, I guess it's not like you can refuse, right?” Licking his lips, he stabbed the Eternal Parasol toward the shivering ghost face.

The ghost face wanted to fight back, but knew that it wouldn’t do any good. Furthermore, considering that the entrance to the magical item would be opening soon, he gritted his figurative teeth and focused on his anticipation of future revenge. Slowly and calmly, he closed his eyes.

“Just hang in there… for three more days. I lasted for two years already. Only three more days!”

However, the ghost face vastly underestimated the power of the Eternal Parasol to drain life force. As soon as it entered his body, a massive gravitational force erupted from inside the parasol.

The ghost face’s eyes snapped open and shone with disbelief as a scream escaped his lips. At the same time, his life force began to charge into the Eternal Parasol as rapidly as a wild mustang.

Within only a few breaths of time, a full two percent of his total life force was gone. It was so startling that his immediate reaction was to start struggling. However, after reminding himself that it would only be three days until the spirit automaton woke up, he held back.

“I have to hang in there!!”

When Bai Xiaochun realized how much life force was flowing into him through the Eternal Parasol, his eyes began to shine brightly. Although he had known that the ghost face would have exceptional life force, it definitely surpassed his expectations.

Immediately, his Undying Blood, which was currently roughly eighty percent complete, began to seethe madly.

“This guy is basically a huge Life Force Pill. Maybe I should just consume him like an actual medicinal pill….” Heart pounding, he shoved the Eternal Parasol in a bit deeper, causing the life force to flow even more freely. Meanwhile, the ghost howled inwardly as a full ten percent of his life force faded away.

Terrified, he was about to start struggling when he noticed the look in Bai Xiaochun's eyes, and shivered.

"He's gonna gobble me up!! Heavens! Why is he doing this!? Dammit! Go eat someone else, why don't you?!?! I… I have to just hang in there!!" The ghost face was scared out of his mind, but thankfully for him, Bai Xiaochun had come to the conclusion that consuming the ghost face like a pill would be too dangerous.

Sadly for the ghost face, Bai Xiaochun's facial expression didn't match his decision, causing the ghost to hover on the brink of complete mental collapse.

Time passed. Soon, forty percent of the ghost face's life force had been absorbed by Bai Xiaochun. The ghost face's divine soul was already showing signs of instability and withering. On several occasions, he considered putting up a fight, but the look in Bai Xiaochun's eyes scared him too much.

After reaching the forty percent point, Bai Xiaochun took a break. Extracting the Eternal Parasol, he went off to find a suitable location to do some meditation, and properly utilize all the life force.

At that point, the ghost face sighed with relief. Looking around bitterly at the world, he focused on his anticipation of the end of the three-day period….

"Bai! Xiao! Chun! Just wait until I get out of here! I'll definitely take back all of that life force, with interest! I can't believe you want to eat me! Are you even human!? I'm gonna eat *you!!"*

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0990 awe-chapter-991

Even as the ghost face cursed inwardly, Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged in meditation, continuously absorbing the explosive life force into his bloodstream, fueling the growth of his Undying Blood.

Gradually, his Undying Blood neared the ninety percent level.... Then, the following morning, his eyes snapped open.

A blood-colored light gleamed therein, and cracking sounds emanated out from inside of him. At the same time, he radiated an intense energy.

The air around him rippled and distorted, seemingly incapable of withstanding the force, and even the world as a whole trembled.

“Ninety percent!!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with exuberant delight as he slowly rose to his feet. Because of his progress with his Undying Blood, he could tell that although his blood was still red, his bones were almost completely golden.

According to the description in the Undying Codex, he would reach a point where heaven and earth could be destroyed, but his body could not. As of this moment, he could clearly sense that, not only was his fleshly body powerful to an extreme degree, his regenerative capabilities were astonishing beyond description.

“Unless someone was able to kill me in one shot… I can basically recover from any injury, given enough time!

Heavens, so much power….” His heart was already racing with the thought of having one hundred percent Undying Blood in his veins.

“If I'm this strong at ninety percent, I wonder what the great circle of Undying Blood will be like…?” Brimming with excitement, he flew back over to the ghost face.

The ghost face had assumed that the nightmare was over, and had been cursing Bai Xiaochun ever since, and simultaneously swearing oaths of revenge. However, when he saw Bai Xiaochun approaching, his expression flickered dramatically. Then he saw the Eternal Parasol, and his madness transformed into bitter despair….

“Noooo….”

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the Eternal Parasol stabbed into the ghost face, who screamed unceasingly as his life force began to flow out of him. There was nothing he could do to fight back, and as the process continued, his divine soul continued to fade.

On the first day, he had vowed to hang in there. But this time, he couldn’t hang in any longer. Sadly, despite how he tried to struggle, the only thing he could do was scream.

“I hate you, Bai Xiaochun….”

“I was wrong, Lord Bai! I was truly in the wrong….”

“No, it hurts….”

Glaring, Bai Xiaochun bopped the ghost face on the top of his head.

“Calm down! What are you shrieking for!? You were fine yesterday, weren’t you? It’s just a bit of life force. Once you get used to it, you won’t even notice.” The ghost face hollered until he ran out of energy, whereupon he lay there twitching, filled with more grief than could fit into the Heavenspan Sea….

Yet again, he deeply regretted leaving Ghostmother. He regretted letting the Celestial grab him, and regretted delivering himself up to Bai Xiaochun….

“Why is my life so horrible!?!?!? And how can this heaven-damned Bai Xiaochun be so merciless…?” The ghost face’s heart now had enough tears built up to flood the world with torrential downpours….

“I swear, with my last bit of life, with all of my cultivation base, with all of my being, that if I get out of here, then I’ll slowly slice Bai Xiaochun into pieces. I’ll torture him for 10,000 years!!” At some unknown point, the ghost face eventually just passed out.

When he woke up, Bai Xiaochun was gone. The ghost face examined himself, and was shocked to find that he was almost completely empty. He only had about ten percent of his original reserve of life force left.

In the first session, Bai Xiaochun had only taken about ten percent. But in the following two days, he took a full eighty percent. The ghost was simply floored.

His divine soul seemed like it might shatter at any moment, as though it had been trampled underfoot by millions of soldiers.

“Merciless people like him should be killed at birth!!!!!” the ghost face howled.

The truth was that the ghost face wasn’t quite looking at the situation properly. After he passed out, Bai Xiaochun could easily have just taken all of his life force. But Bai Xiaochun couldn’t bring himself to do something that heartless, and had left him with ten percent.

“Well, I’ve tormented the old man quite a bit over the past two years,” Bai Xiaochun had said. “I guess I should show a bit of compassion. Ah, whatever. I’ll let him recover a bit, and then take some more later.” Sighing at how kind he was, he had left to meditate and push his Undying Blood to the great circle.

After absorbing enough life force, his Undying Blood experienced explosive advancement. At long last, the last drop of blood inside of him became Undying Blood, and his entire body filled with intense rumbling sounds.

Undying Blood! One hundred percent!!

Stabbing pain filled every corner of his being, causing his eyes to widen and turn completely bloodshot.

Cracking sounds emanated out from him until it almost looked like his skin was being ripped apart. Underneath the ripped skin, it was actually possible to see his blood flowing in his veins.

His bones, his energy passageways, and everything else about him began to transform, almost as if he were acquiring a brand new body.

After about ten breaths of time passed, the pain grew so intense that he threw his head back and howled. A moment later, his entire body seemed to wither up, and then, explode!

What exploded was merely the surface, though. As the bits flew out in all directions, a brand new Bai Xiaochun was revealed beneath. He was sparkling and almost translucent, like a piece of fine jade. However, the process wasn't over! He withered again, and then exploded.

Then the process happened a third time, a fourth time, and a fifth time....

Eight times in a row, he withered and then exploded. By that point, he shone with blinding light, and seemed something completely out of the ordinary. If anyone had been able to lay eyes on him in that moment, they would have been completely shocked.

He was clearly not a mortal, and in fact, had surpassed a fleshly body limit for cultivators!

“Demigod… fleshly body!!” he murmured, slowly looking up. His eyes shone like the sun and moon, making him look like a god descended onto the world!

“That means, there's still one more step....” Eye shining with anticipation, he cast his senses inward… to detect the fifth shackle of the human body, like an enormous mountain weighing down on him.

“After all these years, I've finally cultivated the Undying Codex… all the way to the great circle!” He threw his hands up into the air, causing his blood, his bones, his tendons, his flesh, and his skin to all thrum with terrifying, explosive power.

His energy surged like angry waves of the sea, causing heaven and earth to suddenly grow dim in response!

Then he spoke, his voice echoing like heavenly thunder.

“Fifth shackle: break!!”

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

The massive, mountainous weight on his shoulders suddenly shattered into pieces, causing the entire world of the magical item to shake violently. Yet again, cracks spread out over his skin, and he withered rapidly. Then, he exploded for a ninth time!

When he reappeared, he had the most perfect of perfect bodies.

“What aura is that?!?!” the ghost face cried in alarm.

In that exact same moment, the face of the baby girl up in the sky opened her eyes and looked over at Bai Xiaochun in shock, apparently recalling complex memories of the past….

His breakthrough in the Undying Codex even affected the outside world. The sky in the north transformed into an enormous vortex which caused all of the lands of Heavenspan to tremble!

Out in the Wildlands, both opposing armies could sense the drastic transformations, and looked over to see massive rifts spreading out in the sky from the north!

It almost looked like the sky was about to shatter!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0991 awe-chapter-992

Even the earth seemed like it was about to crack into pieces!

On numerous battlefields throughout the lands, cultivators from the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region all looked around, all of them equally shaken by the premonition that the world was about to be torn apart.

“What’s going on?!?!”

“Heavens! Why is the sky crumbling?!?!”

Core Formation cultivators, Nascent Soul experts, and even devas were shaken. Many from the River-Defying Sect were included. Demigod experts from both sides gasped in open shock.

Mistress Red-Dust was caught completely unprepared. She, like most other Wildlanders, assumed that the Celestial was responsible.

Only a handful of people knew the truth. For example, in Arch-Emperor City, deep within the third part of the city that was buried underneath the ground, in a crumbling pagoda, was the gravekeeper. As he sat there cross-legged, he opened his weary eyes.

He looked particularly old, and fairly radiated an aura of decay. By now, he was like an oil lamp on the verge of winking out, his eyes cloudy as he slowly raised his head skyward.

“The Undying Codex… mastered…. I think I know what the Celestial plans to do. Bai Xiaochun, I hope that in the end… you don’t hate me…. There’s nothing else I can do…. This is my mission, the entire point of my existence….”

In the illusory Underworld River was the reigning Hell-Emperor, Bai Hao. As he stood there looking out on heaven and earth, he murmured, “Master….”

In addition to those two, there was another person who understood what was happening. He was… the reigning Arch-Emperor!

Although he had been made little more than a puppet by the Grand Heavenmaster, he was still the Arch-Emperor. The blood of the imperial clan ran in his veins, and as he sat there on the Dragon Throne in the imperial palace, he shivered.

It was a reaction that came from sensing someone else who cultivated the same technique as him. It came from his blood, and even his soul. After all, the Arch-Emperors also cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique!

“Someone… has succeeded the Blood Ancestor, and reached the great circle of the Undying Codex!” The despair that had filled the Arch-Emperor’s eyes was suddenly replaced with hope.

Those three were the only ones in the Wildlands who knew the truth of what was happening. When it came to the forces from the Heavenspan Region, as the sky seemed to crumble, a shocking aura erupted out from Heavenspan Island.

“The great circle of the Undying Codex….” The Celestial rose to his feet within the Palace of the Dao. Throwing his head back, he laughed uproariously. At the same time, tears began to stream down his cheeks, and they were not tears of joy. However, the determination in his eyes did not fade.

“The strategy I didn’t wish to employ is playing out perfectly…. Is it destiny, gravekeeper…?”

In the sect headquarters of the River-Defying Sect, the enormous Blood Ancestor shivered imperceptibly. Had Bai Xiaochun been there, he would have been able to hear a voice speaking that almost seemed to be an illusion.

“I held my breath yesterday, to awaken today!”

The world shook for what seemed like a never-ending moment. As for Bai Xiaochun, he took a deep breath as he rose to his feet, the fragments of his old self crumbling off of him. The magical item around him trembled violently, as though it were trying to keep him in check, an instinctual response of the world itself, and the will of the baby girl.

“The great circle of the Deva Realm…. I've mastered the Undying Codex….” Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes to feel the boundless life force flowing within him. After a moment, he opened his eyes, which shone with the only color that existed in the world around him.

“Time to go home….” he said softly. He looked up at the face of the baby girl, and met her gaze. He didn’t say anything. Everything that needed to be said was visible in his eyes.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun didn’t care if she had some other plans that she hadn’t explained to him. With his cultivation base and shocking fleshly body power, he was fairly certain that he could handle her if necessary.

Mixed emotions could be seen in the eyes of the baby girl as she quietly said, “Congratulations…. The great circle of the Undying Codex…. I will abide by our agreement for the rest of my life. You may use the magical item of the north three times. If you can kill the Celestial, then you will be my master for all time!”

The baby girl didn’t waste any more time. Her eyes began to shine with mysterious light, causing the entire magical item to tremble. The lands cracked as a huge stone gate suddenly rose up from nowhere!

As the majestic stone gate rose up, the world around it crumbled away into emptiness, until nothing existed except for the gate!

“From here,” the baby girl said slowly, “you can return to the northern ice plains!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the gate, his eyes shining with anticipation. He had been waiting for this moment for a long time. At the moment, he felt more than a little nervous about what the world outside might be like, considering how much time had passed.

“I wonder how the River-Defying Sect is doing…?” With that, he blurred into motion, heading directly toward the stone gate.

As for the ghost face, he was weak and nervous, but at the same time, excited. As the world collapsed around him, he fixed his gaze on the gate and began to fly toward it, more focused on escaping than the Celestial was focused on escaping the lands of Heavenspan.

However, because of all the life force which had been drained from him, he was very weak, and could no longer use the teleportation secret magic he had prepared. If he did… he would destroy himself in the process.

“Take me with you!!” he wailed. “You can put any restrictive spells on me that you want. I’ll… I’ll be your ghost slave! Once my cultivation base is back, that would mean you had a quasi-celestial ghost slave at your command!!”

In response, Bai Xiaochun stopped in place and looked back at the ghost face. He had considered this possibility before, but had abandoned the idea. After all, he wasn’t completely confident in using such methods of enslavement.

Without the magical item to suppress the ghost face’s cultivation base, there was no saying what he could do. And Bai Xiaochun didn't want to put himself face-to-face with one of the most powerful enemies in the world.

After some more consideration, he simply turned and continued on toward the gate.

“Take me with you, Bai Xiaochun!!” the ghost face shrieked anxiously. He tried to fly forward, but the world of the magical item suppressed him. The baby girl looked at him, and he suddenly felt as if he were about to be crushed. There was no way for him to even move. All he could do was watch wide-eyed as Bai Xiaochun slowly approached the gate.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” he shrieked.

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun said with a frown, turning to look at the ghost face. “I’ll never trust you, no matter what you say. Just wait here. After I'm a demigod, then I’ll let you out.”

“You… you….” The ghost face felt like he was about to collapse mentally. After all of the hanging in there, all with the goal of escaping, he was now having his hopes dashed to pieces. Considering the determination he saw in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, he knew that there was no hope left.

“Heaven damn you, Bai Xiaochun! Curse you!!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed loftily, musing to himself that only a fool would trust anything the ghost face said.

Now that he had achieved his cultivation base breakthrough, and was in the great circle of the Deva Realm, with a demigod fleshly body, he couldn’t have been in higher spirits.

“I could crush you to death with a single slap of my palm, Chen Hetian! And I'm not afraid of any of you northerners anymore either. Not even your demigod!” Filled with excitement at the thought of how shocked everyone would be to see him, he stepped forward into the stone gate.

Instantly, the gate began to emit rumbling sounds, and then, he vanished.

When he reappeared, he was back on the plains of the north. A warm breeze suddenly touched him, not anything like a heatwave, but enough to be considered pleasant.

He could immediately sense the spiritual energy of the Heavenspan Sea, which was a wonderful feeling.

“Hold on, I should be in the north.... How come the wind isn’t cold?” When he examined his surroundings further, his eyes nearly popped out of his head.

“Did the Frigid Matriarch send me to the wrong place? Is this… really the north?” He found himself looking around at a jungle filled with lush vegetation....

Furthermore, visible throughout the greenery were countless little moonflowers. Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered.

“Moonflower, baby….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0992 awe-chapter-993

After flying along for a bit in somewhat of a daze, he confirmed… that he really was in the north. During the few short years which had passed, the north had changed so much that it was almost like a dream….

Roughly eighty percent of the north… no longer had any ice plains. Instead, it was covered with rich soil and… a dense jungle.

The entire jungle was actually made of… moonflowers.

Beads of sweat now covered Bai Xiaochun’s forehead as he realized the enormity of what he had done so many years ago…. Although he had known that the moonflower was powerful, he could never have imagined that in a few short years, it would occupy the entire northern Heavenspan River region.

What was even more strange was that the northerners had apparently just let the moonflowers grow freely, and hadn’t cleared them away….

Of course, he had no way of knowing that the northerners had tried many times to do just that. But nothing did any good. Furthermore, as war loomed, the northern demigod and devas eventually didn't have time to worry about moonflowers. All of their thoughts had been occupied with the upcoming invasion of the Wildlands.

Who could ever have guessed how dramatically the moonflowers would grow in only a few years? Perhaps if action had been taken early on, the northerners might have been able to do something about it. But the matter of the war made that impossible.

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken. He proceeded along for a while until he caught sight of the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect.... The changes there weren’t as dramatic as elsewhere. The sect was still surrounded by plains of ice; apparently, it was the only location in the north that still remained that way.

However, the sect was surrounded by countless moonflowers. As for the two ice statues that formed the sect headquarters, they were significantly melted. It was no longer possible to make out their facial features, and they looked like little more than columns of ice....

Bai Xiaochun already felt a bit guilty. Unfortunately, it wouldn’t be very convenient to return to the River-Defying Sect without using the teleportation portal in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. Bracing himself, he continued onward.

As he neared, it was to his surprise that he couldn’t sense a single deva in the sect. Neither was the demigod present. In fact, nearly eighty percent of the cultivators were apparently gone....

Most of those left behind were Foundation Establishment cultivators and Qi Condensation disciples.... Because of how few cultivators were present, it made the enormous, mighty sect seem somewhat like a wasteland.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, virtually all of the scattered cultivators who remained in the sect seemed very unsettled, and were sighing constantly.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound with a very ill premonition. Without the slightest hesitation, he sped toward the sect. As he neared, the sect’s grand spell formation activated to prevent him from getting too close. At the same time, a sound like an echoing alarm claxon filled the entire sect.

Of course, a huge commotion ensue

“What’s going on?!?!”

“The enemy is attacking!!”

Although the sect’s defensive spell formation was powerful, to Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Hex, it posed little obstacle. In fact, he didn’t even slow down, and a moment later, was in the middle of the sect.

Countless terrified gazes locked onto him, and soon, people recognized who he was, leading to shouts of alarm.

“It’s Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Heavens! What is he doing back? I thought he was missing!?!?”

“Dammit! The demigod patriarch and the devas are all on the battlefield, and now Bai Xiaochun shows up here with killing intent?! What’s he planning to do?!?!”

The buzz in the sect caused Bai Xiaochun’s uneasy feeling to grow stronger. Looking around at the panic, he shouted, “All of you shut the hell up!!”

His voice roared through the sect like heavenly thunder, a deafening sound which instantly silenced all of the clamor.

Pointing urgently at one of the cultivators who was in the great circle of Foundation Establishment, he said, “Tell me immediately why there are so few of you here! Where is Master Cloud Lightning? Where’s the demigod patriarch? Where did everyone go?!”

The cultivator trembled in fear, but immediately clasped hands and bowed in formal fashion. Not daring to hold anything back, he quickly began to provide an explanation.

“The four riversource sects have gone to war with the Wildlands. Everyone else… is in the Wildlands, fighting….”

“WHAT?!?!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, so completely thunderstruck that he didn’t even wait for any further explanation. All of a sudden, his mind was overwhelmed by the thought… of the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region at war!!

Everyone else here was used to the fact that the war had been going on for years now. But this was Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing about it, and the news immediately caused him to feel very nervous. He thought about his apprentice Bai Hao, the Giant Ghost King, and Mistress Red-Dust. There was no time to waste here in the north. He immediately began to hurry toward the teleportation portal.

Of course, he was already famous in the Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. The disciples viewed him as some sort of demonic god of pestilence. Therefore, they did everything they could to activate the teleportation portal as quickly as possible. Only after the light began to fade away along with Bai Xiaochun did they breathe sighs of relief.

The teleportation portals in the riversource sects could send people all the way across the Heavenspan Sea to the other riversource sects. Therefore, it only took a short moment for

Bai Xiaochun to go from the north to the east, and arrive… in the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s teleportation portal was located on the blue rainbow. As soon as it began to shine with light, the disciples manning the portal were shaken, and looked over to see who it was that was arriving.

Xu Baocai was sitting there cross-legged within the group. His cultivation base was high enough to join in the war effort, but he had been seriously injured and sent back to the sect for rest and recovery. However, he knew that it wouldn't be long before he was sent back to the battlefield.

By this point in the war, he was already weary of all the fighting. He had seen many people die, to the point where any fear in him had burned away, replaced by simple exhaustion.

His injuries had been severe, and were it not for the fact that his opponent had recognized him as being from the River-Defying Sect, and thus held back, he would likely have died.

Despite being shown mercy, Xu Baocai’s cultivation base had been severely damaged, sending him all the way back down to the Foundation Establishment level. Although he had recovered some since then, it seemed unlikely that he would ever return to his previous level.

That realization filled Xu Baocai with grief. He also wondered how much longer the war would go on. It had already been years now, and both sides had suffered casualties.

From what he could tell, the next time he went to the battlefield might be his last. Perhaps he would never return to the east, and would end up dead and buried far from home....

When the teleportation portal began to light up, Xu Baocai noticed, but didn’t pay much attention. After glancing over, he looked away.

Before anyone could even see who was teleporting in, a terrifying pressure filled the air. Divine sense swept out from the teleportation portal in all directions, filling the entire Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect.

It was a divine sense so powerful that nothing in the entire sect could be hidden from it.

Everyone began to tremble where they stood, and Xu Baocai even gasped. He had encountered divine sense like this before on the battlefield, and was certain that this was someone who surpassed a deva. It could only be a demigod patriarch!

“The demigod is back?” Even before Xu Baocai could do anything, a familiar voice entered his ears.

“Xu Baocai?”

“Huh?” Xu Baocai replied, jaw dropping. His mind almost immediately went blank as the air rippled, and Bai Xiaochun stepped out into the open.

Xu Baocai stared in complete shock, unable to do anything as Bai Xiaochun walked up to him. Bai Xiaochun frowned and waved his hand, sending warm energy into Xu Baocai. A moment later, cracking sounds could be heard as Xu Baocai’s injuries were all healed.

When Xu Baocai felt the warmth inside of him, and sensed the fluctuations of his cultivation base, the despair he had felt for so long vanished. His eyes brightened as he rapidly rose back into the Core Formation stage… prompting him to shout, “Bai Xiaochun…? Junior Patriarch!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0993 awe-chapter-994

The last time the River-Defying Sect had heard from Bai Xiaochun, he had sent a message about staying in the north with Du Lingfei. After that… they heard nothing.

Then the war broke out, with casualties mounting on both sides. Eventually, no one in the River-Defying Sect had the time or energy to worry about Bai Xiaochun. As the days wore on, the only thing that occupied their thoughts was the fighting!

It was the same with Xu Baocai. Only occasionally would he think about the spectacular junior patriarch of the sect. They had met each other as rivals for a spot in the Ovens, which was when Xu Baocai had written a blood notice and furiously delivered it to Bai Xiaochun….

Destiny was usually impossible to fight against. That was something that Xu Baocai had come to sigh about quite often, especially after being injured in the war.

As of this moment, however, all such sighs were driven away, replaced by utter astonishment. Not only were his injuries completely healed, but he was now standing right in front of the missing Bai Xiaochun!

Especially noteworthy was Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base fluctuations. To Xu Baocai’s astonishment, Bai Xiaochun was even more powerful than he had been in the past.

Although he couldn't assess the level of his cultivation base, there was something profound about it that Xu Baocai had only sensed in demigods before.

“Junior Patriarch… you….” Xu Baocai’s mind was so blank that he couldn’t even speak.

“What happened while I was gone?” Bai Xiaochun asked urgently. “Where did everybody go? And… how are they?!?!”

From the bloodshot state of Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, Xu Baocai could tell that now was not the time to chat idly. Shooting to his feet, he immediately began to explain the situation.

“Junior Patriarch, the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region have gone to war….” With that, he began to give a full report. Xu Baocai had always been inclined to gathering information, and that was even more the case considering that he had personally been on the front lines of battle.

He went on to give a very detailed accounting of what had happened while Bai Xiaochun was in the world of the magical item. The more Bai Xiaochun heard, the more his heart began to swell with emotion.

He came to know that the Celestial had issued orders for the four great riversource sects, as well as all their subordinate sects, to wage war on the Wildlands!

He heard that the fighting was intense and bitter. The Wildlands had been forced into a slow retreat, causing their territory to shrink and shrink. They now only occupied about forty to fifty percent of their original lands. In order to put as much pressure on the Wildlanders as possible, the Celestial had mobilized roughly eighty percent of the total cultivators from the lands of Heavenspan. As a result, the war being fought now defied comparison to any other war in history!

Bai Xiaochun also learned that about half a year ago… the fighting had begun to grow even more intense than before. The Celestial seemed impatient, and was willing to pay any price to achieve victory. He didn't even seem to care how many lives were lost! In fact, he had recently issued orders pushing all of his armies toward a final showdown!

The four riversource sects were attacking from four directions, giving the Wildlanders no options for retreat! As a result, the numbers of deaths and injuries had reached incalculable levels! Blood and corpses covered the lands!

According to Xu Baocai’s description, the ground in the Wildlands was the color of blood, and the number of dead souls that filled heaven and earth was impossible to describe. Apparently, the cycle of reincarnation had been broken, making it impossible for souls to enter the Underworld River! They could only haunt the battlefields to no end!

It was no longer a rare thing for a deva to be killed in the fighting. Nine deva experts from the four riversource sects had perished, and on the Wildlands’ side, six of the heavenly dukes had been killed!

And there was little need to mention the Nascent Soul experts and Wildlander heavenly marquises. It had already reached the point where a death among their numbers would hardly cause a ripple of shock on either side.

“The Wildlands’ four heavenly kings and the Heavenspan region’s four demigod patriarchs have fought each other on numerous occasions. Grievous injuries resulted each time, and once, one of them almost perished!

“If things keep going on like this, you can easily imagine a scenario… in which one of the demigods dies. In fact, it will likely be more than one. I'm afraid that in the end, both the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region will have sustained terrible losses….” It was with great bitterness that Xu Baocai explained everything he knew.

“None of us in the River-Defying Sect feel like fighting. And we’re not the only ones. I've heard that a lot of disciples from other riversource sects feel the same. But that doesn't matter…. The only one who has the power to stop the fighting is the Celestial. If he wants to keep going, we have no choice but to follow his orders.

“The River-Defying Sect… had no other option but to follow the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect into battle. It's been going on for years now. And the main opponent of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect… is the Giant Ghost Legion, led by one of the Wildlands’ four heavenly kings, the Giant Ghost King!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled at what he was hearing. He had long hoped that this moment would never come, but come it had. He didn’t want anyone from the River-Defying Sect or the Giant Ghost King’s forces to be hurt.

It was just like back in the days of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect….

“It's a good thing that the Giant Ghost Legion is led by Mistress Red-Dust. Nobody knows why, but she has shown mercy to the River-Defying Sect over and over again. If it weren’t for that, there wouldn't be many of us left….

“The downside is that it has led to the rest of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect being suspicious of us. In fact… the deva patriarchs issued orders making us the vanguard of the army….” By this point, Xu Baocai couldn’t prevent his frustration and madness from erupting.

“Junior Patriarch, it was only three days ago that I got a new intelligence report. The Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect’s main army has the Giant Ghost Legion trapped inside of Giant Ghost City! It’s the final showdown! What are we supposed to do?!?!”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and his bitterness seemed to know no end. Although no one else might know why Mistress Red-Dust was showing mercy to the River-Defying Sect, he knew.

Although he was moved, the fact that the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect had taken advantage of that fact to put the River-Defying Sect on the front lines caused his anger to burn. However, he knew that now was not the time for passion, but for calmness and clarity.

“The River-Defying Sect is my home. I can’t allow my family to be hurt…. But the Giant Ghost King and I are good friends. And Zimo… well, I can’t let her get hurt either…. What do I do? What am I supposed to do!?!?” His eyes were bloodshot, and his chest heaved as he stood there trying to make a decision. Xu Baocai’s words had turned into something like a tempest inside of him.

Although he had always known that the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region would eventually devolve into all-out war, it had happened too suddenly. He had been caught completely unprepared. Worse, he had wasted years inside of the world of the magical item, to the point where the final battle was already close.

“Why…? Why does there always have to be this fighting and killing?!?! Immortal cultivation is about living forever! Why does it always get made into a matter of people ending each others’ lives!?!?” His hands were clenched so tightly that they were shaking.

“Well… I stopped the war between the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect. And now… I can do the same thing with the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region!!

“Yeah, that’s right! Plus, the Celestial said that when I’m a demigod, I can be with my boo….

“And I’m Hao’er’s Master! I can definitely stop this!!

“It’s all because the Celestial wants to leave this world. Well, if he wants to leave, just let him leave! I’ll talk to the gravekeeper! I’ll hash things out with Hao’er! We’ll just open the Worldgate and let him go!!”

Bai Xiaochun was thinking a thousand things at the same time, and was grasping at any idea he could, not even bothering to think about whether they were realistic. Without any more contemplation, he shot up into the sky.

“I’m going to stop this war!!” With that, he resorted to the fastest speed possible, causing the air to ripple and distort around him. Peals of thunder exploded out as he vanished… in the direction of the Deadmire!

Instead of wasting time sailing a ship across the Heavenspan Sea, he would go as quickly as he could to the battlefield. He would traverse the Deadmire, enter the Wildlands, and head directly toward Giant Ghost City!

Bai Xiaochun knew the way well. Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions as he unhesitatingly headed to the Deadmire, and then entered it!

There was no time for coming up with complicated plans. He only had one thought in mind.

“Faster! I have to go faster!”

RUUUUUUUUMBLE….

After an indeterminable period of time in the Deadmire, he shot out… into the Wildlands!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0994 awe-chapter-995

As soon as he entered the Wildlands, the reek of blood and gore assailed his nostrils. Looking around, he saw that the already barren and infertile terrain looked even more desolate. Everything seemed stained deep crimson, and was filled with a sensation of rot.

Although the clues of magical combat could not be seen literally everywhere, it was so pervasive that it was almost omnipresent. Severed limbs, broken bones, and other evidence bore testimony to the countless small-scale skirmishes that had taken place here and there.

The Wildlands had already been devoid of vegetation in most places, and now it was even more so. In fact, the desolate landscape was now covered with rifts and crevices, with many mountains having been completely destroyed.

He passed one area with a diameter of 500 kilometers, which was filled with a muddy slush that emanated an aura of death, and was filled with countless corpses from both sides of the conflict.

Carrion birds congregated among the corpses, picking away at gore and flesh, only to be frightened into the air by Bai Xiaochun’s passage.

Masses of them began to fill the sky, staring at Bai Xiaochun with gray, frightened eyes.

The sight of all the corpses caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver. He had seen too many such battlefields in his life. After all… he had fought in quite a few wars. Whether it was the war of the four sects in the Lower Reaches, the numerous fights in the Middle Reaches, or the fierce combat at the Great Wall, Bai Xiaochun was well-acquainted with the savagery of warfare.

But nothing he had ever seen could compare to this.

In the wars he had experienced, the battlefields were usually tended to after the fighting. But in this great war between the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region, no one was going around cleaning up after the fighting.

It was hard to say how long these particular corpses had been here. However, the state of decay they were in caused a gory, fetid aroma to fill heaven and earth….

After merely glancing around, Bai Xiaochun turned and continued to head toward Giant Ghost City.

After he left, the carrion birds calmed down, and eventually went back to their feasting….

Time flew by, although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very conscious of exactly how much. All he knew was that there was no time to waste. Therefore, he used all the means and power at his disposal to speed toward his destination. Any other demigod would have had trouble matching such protracted speed. But Bai Xiaochun had mastered the Undying Blood, and thus had unimaginable powers of regeneration. Even after sustained periods of explosive speed, both his fleshly body and his cultivation base were still at their peak.

He moved so quickly that, from a distance, he was nothing more than a beam of light streaking through the air.

As he got deeper into the Wildlands, he passed one abandoned battlefield after another, causing him to tremble more and more.

The first 500-kilometer-wide battlefield was actually nothing compared to what he saw later. He saw some which were thousands of kilometers across…. There was one which was more than 5,000 kilometers from end to end. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure what to think about that. All he knew… was that he had never seen such a scene of bloody slaughter.

Craters and ravines covered the landscape. Areas which had once been jungles or forests were now burned to the ground, leaving behind little but cinders and ash.

The savage tribes which had dotted the area were no more. Furthermore, the oversized corpses of the giants were particularly conspicuous on the battlefields.

“Why…?” Bai Xiaochun murmured. The closer he got to Giant Ghost City, the more his anxiety and madness built.

Eventually, when he was actually within the territory that was controlled by Giant Ghost City, he saw… a glowing golden shield that pulsed with the aura of Heavenspan Seawater. Clearly, that shield was keeping the entire area locked down.

In the very middle of the area protected by the shield… in a location far away, but close enough for Bai Xiaochun to see… was a sight that brought back many memories. Giant Ghost City!

The golden shield was obviously created by a spell formation, and was designed to prevent anyone from interfering. The Heavenspan forces wanted Giant Ghost City trapped and isolated. As long as the Giant Ghost Legion managed to hold the line, they would be fine, but if they were defeated, then that golden shield would become like an enormous prison that no Wildlander would be able to escape. All of them would be exterminated.

That shield couldn’t have made it more obvious that the Celestial was intent on wiping out the heart and soul of the Wildlands.

The sight of it caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to become even more bloodshot. Just as he was about to use his Undying Hex to pierce through the shield, it shimmered, and three faces appeared on its surface.

They were all old men, one of whom had a golden horn protruding from his forehead. All three thrummed with deva fluctuations!

Two seemed to be in the late Deva Realm, but the third, the old man with the horn, was in the great circle, just like Chen Haosong.

When they saw Bai Xiaochun approaching from off in the distance, their pupils constricted. They could sense that he was in the great circle of the Deva Realm, and that he pulsed with the spiritual energy of heaven and earth.

Eyes flashing sharply, the old man with the horn coolly said, “He’s not a Wildlander heavenly duke.... But nobody from the four rivers is in the great circle....

“Halt! I am Arcane Guard Ouyang Chen from Heavenspan Island! I'm here on orders from the Celestial to maintain this life-severing spell formation. I don't care which sect you come from, deva, leave immediately, or you will be executed!”

These old men were actually not from any of the four riversource sects. They were from Heavenspan Island, and worked directly for the Celestial. They were a type of guard that outranked the special guards. They were arcane guards!

Arcane guards were recruited from throughout the Heavenspan region, and then propelled into the Deva Realm by means of a secret magic. No one knew exactly how many of them there were, not even the demigod patriarchs from the four rivers. They were yet another secret weapon that the Celestial used to maintain control.

There was even a rumor of a group that outranked the arcane guards. The divine guards!

All of the special and arcane guards from Heavenspan had been deployed, not only to root out and execute enemy resistance, but also to act as a sort of military police. In fact, their life-severing grand spell formation was part of their mission to carry out the final extermination of the enemy.

As far as these arcane guards were concerned, other than the demigods, no one from the four rivers qualified to deserve their respect. Devas from the four riversource sects were the type of people the arcane guards could berate at any time they wished.

Under any other circumstance, Bai Xiaochun would have provided a polite explanation. But right now, he was gripped by anxiety. He knew that the Giant Ghost King was at war with the River-Defying Sect and the other eastern sects. Therefore, there was no time to waste giving explanations to people who wanted to block his path. Therefore, instead of slowing down, he actually accelerated.

He was like a bolt loosed from a crossbow, shooting toward the golden shield at incredible speed.

“Suicidal recklessness!” said the old man with the horn, his eyes flickering with disdain. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base rippled with the fluctuations of the great circle of the Deva Realm, the old man still snorted coldly. “Kill him!”

The other two arcane guards chuckled, and the enormous faces which represented them shrank down into two shadowy blurs that flew out from the spell formation and headed toward Bai Xiaochun. From the way they glowed with the same golden light as the spell formation, it was obvious that they had clearly been powered up by it!

The spell formation contained shocking power that, when focused onto a deva, could push his or her battle prowess very close to the level of the great circle.

Clearly, the power provided by the spell formation was the reason why the horned old man and his companions were so confident and arrogant.

“It doesn’t matter who tries to attack the life-severing grand spell formation,” shouted one of the incoming arcane guards, his voice echoing like thunder, “anyone who violates the orders of the Celestial will be killed!”

As the two devas closed in, they performed incantation gestures, summoning a huge golden scorpion that charged toward Bai Xiaochun, radiating killing intent.

“Get the hell out of my way!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, pushing forward with even greater speed. His voice became a shockwave that rumbled out with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force.

The two arcane guards had no time to even get close to Bai Xiaochun. The power of his shout slammed into them, causing blood to spray from their mouths as massive force crushed into them. Their golden scorpion couldn't fight back, and to the shock of the two devas, completely exploded!

“You….”

“He’s no deva….”

The two arcane guards’ expressions were those of complete shock, to the point where their eyes were about to explode.

Bai Xiaochun’s voice had been propelled by his cultivation base and battle prowess, and resulted in destructive force… that could decimate any other deva!

He was… the most powerful of all devas!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0995 awe-chapter-996

The two arcane guards only had the wherewithal to let out cries of alarm before instinctively retreating.

They knew that they couldn’t possibly fight back against the power of Bai Xiaochun’s shout!

The destructive power contained in his voice surpassed anything they could imagine, and left them overwhelmed with horror!

Unfortunately, no matter how fast they reacted, it wasn't fast enough. Expressions of unimaginable terror and despair filled their faces as they were overwhelmed by the deadly soundwave!

They were simply too weak to stand up to it…. They exploded, their bodies turning into ash… and their nascent divinities unable to escape. Being trapped within their fleshly bodies, their nascent divinities… were also wiped out of existence!!

It happened too quickly for anyone to process. Two proud arcane guards were exterminated in the blink of an eye…. The old man with the horn almost couldn't believe what he was seeing.

“He’s… he’s not a deva!!” In his estimation, there was simply no deva who could exterminate two other late Deva Realm experts simply by shouting…. Only a demigod could do that!!

So terrified that he was instantly bereft of courage, the old man with the horn unhesitatingly backed up. His level of speed was too slow when it came to Bai Xiaochun, but thankfully for him, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in the mood to pay him even a bit of attention. He was only concerned with getting to the battlefield as quickly as possible!

As he shot head-first toward the golden life-severing grand spell formation, the old man with the horn looked on in complete shock. However, it was also in that moment that a spark of hope appeared in his heart.

“So, he’s going to break through…. However, even a demigod who gets inside will still be suppressed. He’s definitely courting death!!” The old man stopped retreating, and his eyes began to shine with killing intent. After all, he was in the great circle of the Deva Realm, and an arcane guard from Heavenspan Island. He was a shrewd schemer, the type who could kill others without hesitation. Suddenly more confident than before, he flew toward Bai Xiaochun as if to block his way.

However, even as he closed in, Bai Xiaochun used his Undying Hex, enabling him to shoot forward as though the spell formation didn't even exist.

The old man with the horn couldn’t react in time. Face filling with far more terror than before, he tried to back away. Unfortunately for him, it was now too late to start retreating again….

Bai Xiaochun used the Undying Hex and the Mountain Shaking Bash without even thinking about it. In the briefest of moments, he slammed into the horned old man.

A boom rang out as the man felt something like an infinitude of heavenly mountains slamming into him.

Screaming miserably, he exploded. His nascent divinity had no time to flee before it was also sucked into the blast of power, and was completely destroyed.

This was Bai Xiaochun at his peak!!

After piercing through the spell formation, Bai Xiaochun didn't so much as look back to see what happened to the horned old man. The man had blocked his path, and had thus rushed to his own death. Furthermore, the encounter didn’t slow Bai Xiaochun down at all.

With his Undying Hex, the life-severing grand spell formation might as well have not existed. Without the slightest pause, Bai Xiaochun appeared… 25,000 kilometers away from Giant Ghost City!

His ears could already detect the sounds of shouting and fighting far off in the distance. Furthermore, it was possible for him… to see the battlefield!!

Immediately, he was shaken to the core!

Countless cultivators from the eastern Heavenspan region were there, eyes bloodshot as they fought with madness. Savage giants and soul cultivators were present in abundance. Everyone seemed to have been pushed to their limit, and were fighting with the understanding that one side would come out alive, and the other would be dead.

Some would resort to self-detonation before being killed, taking their opponent with them into death!

The explosions on the battlefield were deafening, and yet, that didn’t matter…. Hearing was not required to kill the enemy!

Virtually the entire area from his current location to Giant Ghost City, a stretch of 25,000 kilometers, was all a huge battlefield. Bai Xiaochun had never seen any sort of fighting on this scale before.

Shouts, screams, wild laughter, and a cacophony of other sounds melded together into a symphony of death. It was as if the will of heaven and earth was simply holding back and watching… as the mountains of corpses built up!

It was already hard to find intact corpses. The enemies tore each other apart… and blood flowed in rivers….

There were hundreds of thousands of cultivators fighting madly, making the battlefield like a giant millstone that was constantly crushing life out of existence.

There were no troop formations, nor any officers issuing orders. Everyone was simply fighting like wild animals.

Nascent Soul experts almost didn't count for anything in this type of fighting, much less Core Formation cultivators, who could be exterminated in the blink of an eye.

War chariots and other precious treasures of war were visible, most tattered and damaged, but still capable of unleashing destructive power!

The most terrifying fighting went on high in the air, where the demigods were locked in combat. The Giant Ghost King’s enormous frame was covered with wounds and scars. In one place, a spear had stabbed right through him, which currently belched out black smoke that formed nine black dragons that stabbed at him constantly. Despite the grievous nature of his injuries, the Giant Ghost King continued to fight with bitter madness against the demigod patriarch from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect!

The demigod patriarch was in equally bad shape. His chest was partly caved in, and one of his arms was missing. He was rife with an aura of death, and yet, his killing intent continued to rage as brightly as ever.

Every time the demigods came back around for another volley, their fighting would cause rifts to spread out in the sky, and would cause all the lands to tremble.

The mere shockwaves spreading out from their attacks were like tempests that could destroy everything in their path

Below the level of the demigod fighting were the devas from Giant Ghost City and the eastern Heavenspan region. Their deadly battle caused thunderous booms to fill heaven and earth at every moment.

Mistress Red-Dust was there, as were Patriarch Spirit Stream, Bai Zhentian, Chen Hetian, and the child deva!

Patriarch Steel Veins was nowhere to be seen, nor was Duke Netherworld!

There were four devas from the Heavenspan side, and only two on the Wildlands side: Mistress Red-Dust, and a heavenly duke that Bai Xiaochun remembered from Arch-Emperor City.

The fighting between the six devas had reached a deadly crossroads, and was actually the focus of much attention within the life-severing grand spell formation.

In the moment that Bai Xiaochun arrived, a deafening explosion filled the air. The source was the heavenly duke, who, in the face of death, chuckled bitterly and chose to self-detonate. As the destructive power of his death swept out, the child deva from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect was too slow to escape… and was killed in body and soul!

As the two devas met their end, Mistress Red-Dust coughed up a mouthful of blood under the combined attack of Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian. Injuries worsening, she laughed sadly and tried to back up.

Gasping for breath, Chen Hetian shouted, “Frigidsect, if you keep holding back like this, then after the fighting is over I’ll exterminate your River-Defying Sect!!”

With that, he and Bai Zhentian began to chase Mistress Red-Dust. Clearly, their goal was to cut down the daughter of the Giant Ghost King, the sergeant-major and leader of the Giant Ghost Legion!

“Killing her will distract the Giant Ghost King! That will give the patriarch the chance he needs to kill him!!”

Patriarch Spirit Stream looked on bitterly as Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian began to chase down Mistress Red-Dust. The River-Defying Sect had suffered the least casualties of all thanks to her mercy, although the patriarch wasn’t sure why that was. However, at this moment, he was on the side of the lands of Heavenspan, and as such, his hands were tied. Sighing, he took a step forward.

As the three Heavenspan devas began to make their move, and as Mistress Red-Dust sighed and prepared to use her most powerful divine ability. However….

That was when a howl of rage split heaven and earth, shattering the air.

“Stay your hand!!”

Along with these words came a bright beam of light that shot across the battlefield, bursting with energy that could shake heaven and earth.

It was only moments away!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0996 awe-chapter-997

The explosive voice preceded the arrival of the speaker!

It was so loud that even Chen Hetian felt his ears vibrating and his mind reeling on the verge of collapse. Blood began to ooze out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and before he could react to what was happening, he felt as though his brain had been hit with a sledgehammer.

Bai Zhentian was in equally bad condition. His five yin organs and six yang organs quivered on the verge of collapse, and as he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood, his soul twitched as though it might shatter.

Only Patriarch Spirit Stream wasn’t affected. However, his shock at hearing that familiar voice caused an expression of disbelief to cover his face. Even as he contemplated whether to look over his shoulder at the source, the air in the area rippled and distorted.

Bai Xiaochun shot onto the scene with speed that seemed capable of ripping apart heaven and earth. In the blink of an eye, he was upon Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian, who were combining forces to try to kill Mistress Red-Dust!

He seemed like a razor-sharp arrow that could pierce through anything that got in his way. Before anyone could react, he was next to Mistress Red-Dust. Wrapping her up in his right arm, he waved his left index finger at Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian!

He was not attacking in full force, but instead, merely waving his finger. Even still, the sky went dim, and a huge wind kicked up. At the same time, battle prowess that surpassed the level of a deva cultivation base exploded out.

A deafening boom filled the entire battlefield, accompanied by miserable shrieks from Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian.

Blood sprayed out of Chen Hetian’s mouth as an unimaginable force entered him. It was so powerful that he became like a bag of water, with his blood being the water! Under the intense power of that force, the water was immediately ejected out of the bag!

Blood began to rush out of his eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and even his pores….

He was thrown backward beyond his control, accompanied by cracking sounds as his bones broke and shattered. Chen Hetian wasn’t even able to stand up to a single attack from Bai Xiaochun!

His entire body began to break apart, until even his bones were nothing more than powder. At that point, there was nothing left to sustain his physical form, and he became little more than a lump of flesh and blood!

And yet, things weren’t over yet! Having no bones or blood left, he could do nothing other than scream as the rest of his body shattered to pieces!

He now existed only in nascent divinity form! Screaming in fear, he fled, mind gripped with terror and shock.

“You’re… Bai Xiaochun!? You’re… a demigod?!?!” He could only speak incoherently, shocked as he was that a single wave of Bai Xiaochun’s finger could be so terrifying.

Of course, Chen Hetian wasn’t the only one to be injured. Bai Zhentian suffered a similar fate. His blood exploded out of his body, and his bones shattered as he was thrown backward violently. No amount of defensive magical items or magics did anything to help him.

Luckily for him, he only lost about half of his body. Even as his blood showered down onto the ground, he backed up, having survived in fleshly body form, unlike Chen Hetian.

Although devas could survive in nascent divinity form, that didn't mean that their fleshly bodies weren’t important. Not only would the loss of a fleshly body significantly reduce their battle prowess, the process of forming a new body would be extremely costly. For all intents and purposes, existing in such a state meant that their overall cultivation base level was greatly weakened.

“Bai Xiaochun!?!?” Bai Zhentian shouted, trembling in disbelief.

Everything happened in the blink of an eye. Bai Xiaochun arrived, waved his finger, and within a few breaths of time, completely reversed the situation on the battlefield. Everyone who was present to witness it was completely bowled over.

Furthermore… this was him showing restraint. Although he was furious, he hadn’t come here to kill anyone. No, he wished to do the same thing he had done with the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects. He wanted to end the war between the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region!

Therefore, he didn’t exterminate Bai Zhentian and Chen Hetian. Although he hated Chen Hetian with a vengeance, he spared his life. He had only added a bit more power into the attack against him, ensuring that his fleshly body was destroyed.

“Xiaochun....” Patriarch Spirit Stream murmured, his heart battered by waves of shock as he hovered there in midair, looking over at Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun had been missing for years now, and hadn’t sent back any word at all. Although Patriarch Spirit Stream would never say it out loud, he had missed him during that time. But he could never have been prepared to see him back all of a sudden, and with such shocking battle prowess.

Patriarch Spirit Stream was also a deva, and thus knew exactly how powerful Chen Hetian and Bai Zhentian were. The fact that both of them had been so grievously injured, simultaneously, and with only the wave of a finger… led him to the only possible explanation.

Bai Xiaochun must be a demigod!

It seemed completely absurd. Patriarch Spirit Stream had always had faith in Bai Xiaochun, and had long looked forward to seeing him grow into his potential. But what good fortune could he possibly have come across that propelled him, in only a few short years, from the early Deva Realm… into the Demigod Realm!?!?

Equally shaken was Mistress Red-Dust, who rested against his shoulder looking up at him, her eyes both exhausted and confused. She almost didn’t dare to believe that what was happening was real.

Looking down at her with mixed emotions, he softly said, “I'm back.”

When she heard his words, and felt the warmth of his body against hers, she smiled. Suddenly, the weight of all the years of battle seemed to fade a bit. Then, the exhaustion hit her with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force, and she lapsed into unconsciousness.

To see her pass out from fatigue in such a way caused prickles of pain to hit Bai Xiaochun in the heart. He put her down carefully, then looked up at Patriarch Spirit Stream.

“Greetings, Patriarch!” he said, clasping hands and bowing.

Patriarch Spirit Stream could hardly breathe straight, and his expression was that of complete incredulity. He opened his mouth to speak, and yet couldn't find any words to do so. The level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was so preposterous that it almost seemed like a dream.

“Patriarch, please call together all the disciples of the River-Defying Sect. We… will not be fighting in this war!” Bai Xiaochun had been in a bad mood to begin with, but it was only made worse by the situation around him on the battlefield.

Patriarch Spirit Stream gasped in response to his words, but then his eyes began to shine. Considering the level of his own cultivation base, he had not been able to lead the River-Defying Sect in a show of conscience in this war.

But with Bai Xiaochun back with a cultivation base as lofty as the starry sky itself, a person who could unleash shocking power with a mere wave of his hand, all of a sudden, Patriarch Spirit Stream’s heart was filled with hope.

Without the slightest hesitation, he spoke out over the battlefield, bolstering his voice with the power of his cultivation base.

“Disciples of the River-Defying Sect. To me!”

Moments before, his voice would hardly have been heard on the battlefield. But now, even though there was still fighting going on, Bai Xiaochun’s shocking appearance had caused many people to pause in place and look up. Furthermore, the words that Bai Xiaochun had spoken moments ago had been heard by many.

The River-Defying Sect disciples’ hearts began to pound as they flew into the air toward Patriarch Spirit Stream. Numerous beams of light appeared, within which were many familiar faces, such as Shangguan Tianyou, Beihan Lie, Song Que, Master God-Diviner, and… Song Junwan.

Few people had as complex of an expression as Song Junwan, who couldn't stop looking at the unconscious Mistress Red-Dust. Bai Xiaochun noticed her glances. In fact, he had locked onto her with his divine sense much earlier, and had noted that Song Que was doing his best to keep her safe.

Although he felt somewhat proud of how things were going, he knew that now was not the time to let his guard down. Moments ticked by, and the River-Defying Sect disciples began to gather together.

No one dared to get in their way.

Chen Hetian only existed in nascent divinity form now, and was still trembling in fear. However, when he saw what was happening, his hatred for Bai Xiaochun bubbled up, and he said, “What is the meaning of this, Bai Xiaochun? Don’t tell me you’re rebelling against the Heavenspan Realm?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0997 awe-chapter-998

Off to the side, Bai Zhentian gasped for breath as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Merely thinking about what that simple wave of a finger had done to him caused his heart to tremble with foreboding.

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was ignoring him, Chen Hetian's eyes blazed with anger, and he said, “You can't stop this war, Bai Xiaochun. You can't possibly deal with the consequences of betraying the Celestial!!”

Bai Xiaochun looked over at him coldly. “Unless you feel like dying... shut up!”

His gaze caused Chen Hetian to shiver in fear. Despite his fury, he didn't dare to keep speaking. Furthermore, he also realized that it had been quite impulsive of him to run his mouth. Bai Xiaochun was obviously the type of person he couldn't afford to provoke.

Ignoring the livid Chen Hetian, Bai Xiaochun picked Mistress Red-Dust up again and then handed her over to Song Junwan.

“Wan'er, take care of Zimo for me.... After everything's taken care of here, I'll explain.” With that, Bai Xiaochun looked up into the sky!

Up above, the Giant Ghost King was fighting the demigod patriarch of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect. Although both of them were aware that Bai Xiaochun had come, they didn't have time to pay much attention to him. Both demigods knew that the slightest lapse in concentration could lead to terrible consequences.

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun had the beginnings of an idea regarding how to stop the war, but wasn’t completely confident in being able to succeed. Whether it was the Celestial or the gravekeeper, there was little he could do other than try to persuade them to agree with his viewpoint.

Regardless, he couldn’t allow the River-Defying Sect to participate in the fighting. Furthermore, he needed the fighting in the immediate vicinity to stop first.

“Everybody, stop fighting!” he said loudly. His voice sounded like millions upon millions of thunderclaps, and caused everything in the area to shake violently. The entire battlefield filled with the echoing sound of his voice, almost like the combined shouting of an innumerable host of people.

“Stop fighting!!”

“Stop fighting!!!”

“Stop fighting!!!!”

The cultivators on both sides of the conflict were deeply shaken, and could sense something in those words that seemingly surpassed heavenly might. On an instinctive level, they were forced to stop in place and obey the words they heard.

However, even after forcing everyone to stop fighting, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was still in chaos. He knew that the most important aspect of the fight was not on the battlefield below, nor was it the conflict between the devas…. The most important fight was overhead, between the two demigods. Forcing himself into a state of calm focus, he looked up and spoke in a voice even louder than before.

“Giant Ghost, old pal. Patriarch Starry Sky. Listen to me for a moment. Stop fighting!!”

His voice was propelled by urgency, sweeping up into the sky to form a tempest of violent wind. Earlier, the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky had been able to sense some of Bai Xiaochun's level of power, and had also noticed how he stopped everyone from fighting. But now that they heard his voice in their own ears, how it thrummed with focus and determination, both of them gasped in shock.

However, considering how involved they were with fighting each other, they couldn’t afford to be distracted. The Giant Ghost King was right in the middle of waving the hand of his gargantuan giant ghost form, which caused it to collapse into black smoke that re-formed into a larger, autonomous ghost hand that shot forward toward Patriarch Starry Sky.

Patriarch Starry Sky waved his remaining arm, causing an illusory starscape to materialize behind him, making it seem as if he were shouldering the entire starry sky. Eyes burning with killing intent, he performed an incantation gesture and then pointed out, sending countless stars from behind him shooting toward the Giant Ghost King.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that they were just continuing to fight, his eyes flashed, and his fury built. Holding his breath, he shot up into the air.

As he did, he unleashed all of the power of his cultivation base, causing the fluctuations of the great circle of the Deva Realm to roll out. At the same time, he began to pulse with fleshly body power, his qi and blood merging with his cultivation base to reveal… power that surpassed that of a deva. This was… demigod power!

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun… was not technically a demigod, but in terms of battle prowess… was no different than one!

He became a vertical beam of light that shot up like a reverse falling star, heading right toward where the demigods were fighting!

Down below, Patriarch Spirit Stream and everyone else from the River-Defying Sect watched with visible excitement. All of them were thinking back to the scene in which Bai Xiaochun raced out to stand between the Spirit and Blood Stream Sects.

“Can he do it again…?” Patriarch Spirit Stream murmured. Considering how exhausted everyone on the battlefield was, if the fighting truly stopped… it would be a blessing to both the Heavenspan cultivators and the Wildlanders.

The River-Defying Sect cultivators weren’t the only ones who felt that way. After the lull in the fighting created by Bai Xiaochun’s shout, all of the cultivators down below were now looking up into the sky with keen anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun accelerated rapidly until he was like a burning ball of fire, streaking up into the sky, surrounded by wave-like ripples.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation!”

As he climbed to the heights of the firmament, he began to grow larger and larger!

60 meters tall. 90 meters. 120 meters….

As he grew taller, his frame filled in with muscle, and he began to radiate a powerful energy. Even as everyone looked on, he reached a height of 210 meters!

“Cloud Lightning Forefather, Eighth Transformation!” he shouted, continuing to grow until he was 240 meters tall, powerfully built, with a wild and barbaric air.

270 meters.… 300 meters.… 330 meters.…

Things weren’t over yet! 360 meters. 390 meters.…

By the time he reached the area where the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky were fighting, he had reached the last of the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations!

“Eleventh Transformation!!”

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out that were so loud it that seemed like they might end the heavens and crush the earth. At that point, Bai Xiaochun was 510 meters tall, and truly looked like the forefather of all humanity.

Each of the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformations increased one’s height by thirty meters. Therefore, normally speaking, the eleventh transformation would push a cultivator to a height of 330 meters. However, because Bai Xiaochun cultivated the Sun-Moon Vast-Sky Incantation, each of his eyes added the power of an additional three transformations. By adding that power of six further transformations, he was propelled to a height of… 510 meters!

His cultivation base surged, and his fleshly body power caused boundless blood-colored light to surround him like clothing. In all respects, he was completely eye-catching.

Furthermore, the entire world had begun to tremble, and a new energy appeared that only the demigods could sense. It was as if… the entire world approved of Bai Xiaochun!!

It was something that, previously, only the gravekeeper, the Hell-Emperor, and the Celestial had been able to wield… the power of the world itself!

The Giant Ghost King’s face fell, and Patriarch Starry Sky looked over in complete disbelief as Bai Xiaochun, completely oblivious to any divine abilities being unleashed… lunged in between the two of them!!

“Stop fighting!” Bai Xiaochun growled. Because of his Forefather Transformation, he looked completely barbaric. Face twisting viciously, he clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out at Patriarch Starry Sky’s divine ability, the dazzling starry sky!

A deafening boom could be heard as his fist smashed into the countless heavenly bodies, sending all of them spinning away!

Bai Xiaochun shivered from the force of the blow. After all, this was a demigod he was dealing with. However, thanks to the regenerative powers of his Undying Blood, it took only a single breath of time for him to be back at his peak level.

“I said stop it!!” he shouted, clenching his left hand into a fist and striking out at the black smoke hand coming from the Giant Ghost King!

Winds screamed as the black hand of smoke was ripped to pieces.

And yet, things still weren’t over! Even as his Undying Blood healed him, Bai Xiaochun waved both of his hands out in front of him, shoving both of the demigods apart. For the third time… he spoke in a voice that echoed like thunder in the ears of the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky.

“I told you two… to stop fighting!!!”

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

The two shocked and injured demigods could do nothing other than fall back!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0998 awe-chapter-999

The cultivators on both sides of the conflict all gasped reflexively. Although they had already been shaken by Bai Xiaochun’s power, none of them could ever have imagined that he would reach such an unbelievable level!

“This… this is impossible!!” Chen Hetian in nascent divinity form was shaking uncontrollably. Although he had already guessed that Bai Xiaochun was a demigod, he had assumed that he would be on roughly the same level as the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky, and could potentially fight one of the other two demigods. How could he have ever guessed… that Bai Xiaochun could actually sustain divine ability attacks from both of them, and not even be injured!?!?

Only the most powerful among demigods could possibly attempt to interfere with two other fighting demigods, much less forcibly stop them from fighting!

Bai Zhentian was equally shaken. He was also well-versed in knowledge of demigods, and thus, was completely terrified by Bai Xiaochun.

“How could this be?” Bai Zhentian murmured to himself. “He's only been away for a few years….” His mind was in complete chaos, and he could hardly think straight.

Few people in the River-Defying Sect knew much about the subject. However, Patriarch Spirit Stream had a much better understanding of things, and was being battered by waves of shock. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had demigod battle prowess was so preposterous that he almost wondered if he was seeing things.

More shocked than anyone down below were the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky. The Giant Ghost King was especially taken aback; his eyes nearly bulged out of his skull as he pointed at Bai Xiaochun and said, “You little punk! How... how did you change so much!? You’re so strong!!”

Patriarch Starry Sky was not as familiar with Bai Xiaochun as the Giant Ghost King was. However, Bai Xiaochun was a member of the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, and had made a deep impression on the sect after becoming a deva.

Therefore, Patriarch Starry Sky was just as shocked, and was even trembling with apprehension!

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had reached such a level of power so quickly was astonishing to the ultimate level.

“He’s not a demigod!” Patriarch Starry Sky murmured, his pupils constricting. As a demigod himself, his keen senses enabled him to detect that, despite having the battle prowess of a demigod, he had not formed a true demigod divine soul.

Patriarch Starry Sky wasn’t the only one to reach this conclusion. The Giant Ghost King could also see the clues. And yet, that didn’t reduce the level of shock that either of them felt: it actually increased it!

“He’s... not actually a demigod!!”

“The great circle of the Deva Realm.... How is this possible? In my entire life, I've never seen anyone in that level as strong as him!!”

Even as the two demigods reeled in shock, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, then hurried to clasp hands in formal greeting to both of them.

After rising from his bow, he spoke in a bitter voice. “My old pal Giant Ghost. Patriarch Starry Sky. Stop fighting. Enough people have been killed. There’s no point in this war between the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region!!”

Both the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky frowned, but didn’t respond immediately. A long moment passed, whereupon Patriarch Starry Sky snorted coldly. Eyes flashing, he said, “Fellow Daoist Bai, if the River-Defying Sect wishes to stay out of the war, fine. I have the authority to make a decision on the matter. Take your people and leave. However, even with your demigod battle prowess, you can’t end the war just by telling everyone to stop fighting!”

Although it didn't seem like Patriarch Starry Sky was being particularly polite, anyone who was familiar with him would realize that he was actually restraining himself to a considerable degree.

He had no choice but to admit to how powerful Bai Xiaochun was. Furthermore, as the demigod patriarch who controlled the entire eastern Heavenspan region, he had the power to allow a Middle Reaches sect to be exempt from the fighting. As far as he was concerned, that was more than enough of a concession.

It was also a method to prevent Bai Xiaochun from defecting to the Wildlands.

Even as Patriarch Starry Sky spoke, the Giant Ghost King looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun. Visible within his eyes was a flicker of warmth; he knew that Bai Xiaochun had the best of intentions, and hoped to stop the war. However, the Giant Ghost King happened to agree with Patriarch Starry Sky. The war couldn’t be stopped just because Bai Xiaochun demanded it.

“The enmity between the Arch-Emperor Dynasty and the lands of Heavenspan goes back many years, Xiaochun,” he said. “I know you mean well, but you should just leave. And please, take Zimo with you….” With that, he turned to face Patriarch Starry Sky.

When the gazes of the two demigods met, they both flashed as if with fire. Neither of them had prevented their words from echoing down onto the battlefield. Down below, the cultivators from both sides, whether they wanted to or not, no matter how bitterly they felt about it, began to stoke their killing intent.

Bai Xiaochun could see that fighting was only moments from breaking out again. At that point, the determination in his eyes grew more intense. He knew that if he couldn’t even stop this one battle, then he couldn’t possibly do anything to make the Celestial and the gravekeeper agree to stop the war as a whole.

Furthermore, he couldn’t allow the situation to end in an unbalanced way…. If he did, then it would make it even more impossible to convince the Celestial and the gravekeeper to agree with him.

Lowering his head, he spoke in voice that pulsated with determination. “You people want a fight…? Well then… fight me! Kill me in whatever way you’d like. I’m done with all this!

“But, if you can’t beat me… then I don’t care if you’re a ‘majestic’ demigod, you’d better not try to fight anyone else in my presence!

“You’re up first, Patriarch Starry Sky. If I can’t convince you with words, then I’ll have to beat you into submission. And as for you, Giant Ghost, old pal, you just wait until I'm done putting Patriarch Starry Sky in his place. Then you’ll have your turn!” Chuckling coldly, he looked up at the two demigods, his eyes completely bloodshot.

Both Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky were visibly taken aback. However, the Giant Ghost King knew Bai Xiaochun better than his demigod counterpart. Although he wasn’t very happy with what Bai Xiaochun had just said, he did nothing more than glare at him.

But Patriarch Starry Sky did more than that. He began to laugh with increasing volume, until the sky vibrated and distorted. Moments ago, the sun had been shining brightly, but now it seemed as dark as night. Furthermore… an unfamiliar starry sky was visible overhead!

This was Patriarch Starry Sky’s Daoist magic, something that could replace the starry sky overhead. It was as if his will had surpassed the will of the world itself!

“What you just felt a moment ago was only a tiny fraction of the power of my divine ability, Bai Xiaochun. Other than the Celestial and the gravekeeper, no one alive qualifies to talk about beating me into submission!”

“Time will tell,” Bai Xiaochun replied coolly. Based on his brief interchange with the two demigods, and seeing the regenerative powers of his own Undying Blood in action, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain… that he was even stronger than he had thought before.

“Fine!” Patriarch Starry Sky said. Chuckling angrily, he pointed up at the starry sky above him, and then waved his finger down. In response, the stars began to shine dazzlingly, and then, seemingly in response to Patriarch Starry Sky’s orders, sent streams of starlight down from above.

It was a majestic sight to behold. Everyone below shivered nervously at the seemingly transcendent power of this demigod patriarch. It was as if the power of a divine being were on display, power that could rock the foundation of the very world!

“Spear of the Starry Sky!” he said coolly. In response to his words, the swirling starlight converged in front of him, radiating intensely powerful energy as it took the shape of an enormous spear!

The spear seemed to fill the entire sky, and as Patriarch Starry Sky pointed his finger in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, the spear began to rotate, and then stabbed toward him!

An intense sensation of imminent crisis filled Bai Xiaochun’s heart. At the same time, the ground trembled, causing rocks and rubble to rise up into the air, and filling the hearts of the cultivators with profound sensations of dread.

“Be destroyed!” Patriarch Starry Sky said, his eyes shining with cold light.

Intense energy exploded out, causing cracking sounds to fill the air around Bai Xiaochun. Almost immediately, his skin began to sink in, revealing countless spinning vortexes. His hair began to whip about, and as the spear closed in, his eyes began to shine with blood-red light!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

0999 awe-chapter-1000

“You might qualify to tangle with demigods, Bai Xiaochun. But you certainly don’t qualify to prevent us from fighting!” Patriarch Starry Sky’s voice echoed like thunder from the highest heavens. His hand flashed with incantation gestures as he sent his Spear of the Starry Sky speeding closer and closer to Bai Xiaochun!

The air around Bai Xiaochun couldn’t withstand the force, and shattered, and even the land far beneath him began to quake.

No one on the battlefield uttered a single word. Everyone was looking up to see what would happen. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun took a slow breath, and the burning, blood-colored glow in his eyes began to intensify. At the same time, his energy began to rise!

Rumbling sounds filled the air, and his hair whipped about him, making him seem like a god of battle. Directly facing the enormous spear… he extended his right hand!

“Like I said. Time will tell whether or not I can beat you into submission.” With that, he violently clenched his hand into a fist.

At the same time, the moon sigil in his left eye shone with dazzling light, and the sun mark in his right eye blazed to life. With his Cloud Lightning Forefather incarnation, and the full power of his fleshly body and cultivation base at play… he had battle prowess that could transform the heavens and temper the earth!

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but happened in the mere blink of an eye. The Spear of the Starry Sky closed in with indescribable energy, until it was right in front of Bai Xiaochun!

The spear was impossibly huge, fully 30,000 meters long. It radiated intense levels of energy that made it seem like countless heavenly mountains were about to crush Bai Xiaochun out of existence. In fact, it seemed strong enough to end the world. It was easy to imagine a scene in which that spear hit Bai Xiaochun and crushed him out of existence as easily as a dried weed.

However, it was in that moment that, instead of backing up, Bai Xiaochun actually shot forward, becoming a meteor that headed directly toward the Spear of the Starry Sky.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather… Sun-Moon Binary Brilliance!”

A wild and barbaric aura erupted out of Bai Xiaochun, along with a howl that truly seemed to come from the forefather of all humanity. At the same time, each of his eyes shone with the brilliance of both a sun and a moon! Dazzling light erupted out as Bai Xiaochun… slammed into the Spear of the Starry Sky!

The Giant Ghost King was visibly shaken, and Patriarch Starry Sky had a very serious expression on his face. The cultivators down below forgot to breathe as they watched the spectacular scene playing out up above!

An indescribably loud boom echoed out, shaking everything in the entire area, and causing the air to vibrate in shocking fashion.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

The 30,000-meter-long Spear of the Starry Sky stopped in place. Then, cracks spread out across its surface, making it obvious from the very outset that it couldn’t sustain a single blow from Bai Xiaochun. However, it lasted for several breaths of time, during which the rumbling sounds grew more intense. Finally… the spear collapsed into pieces!

Innumerable starry sparks showered out everywhere as Bai Xiaochun was thrown backward by the force of the impact. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and his chest was mostly caved in. His cultivation base was also in chaos, and his skin was covered with countless rips and tears.

However, when he planted his foot in an attempt to stop his backward motion, the rips and tears in his skin closed up, and his chest was no longer caved in. He took a second step back, whereupon his cultivation base stabilized, and his fleshly body power was back at its peak.

Then he took a third step, stopping his momentum and looking up. As he did, his energy surged mightily…. It was as if he hadn't even been hurt to begin with!

Eyes glittering brightly, he looked at Patriarch Starry Sky, still surrounded by the cascades of shattered starlight.

“That’s all you’ve got?” Bai Xiaochun said. Countless gasps could be heard from the congregated cultivators below, many of whom also cried out in shock….

“He’s not hurt at all!!”

“Heavens! This Bai Xiaochun… he recovered almost immediately from Patriarch Starry Sky’s divine ability!!”

“This… this….”

They weren’t the only shocked ones. The Giant Ghost King was equally stunned.

He looked over at Bai Xiaochun, eyes wide with disbelief, completely taken aback by what he was seeing.

“With regeneration abilities like that… who could possibly kill him?!”

Patriarch Starry Sky was nearly overwhelmed by massive waves of astonishment, and immediately began to pant.

As a demigod, he had been able to see how badly Bai Xiaochun had been injured by his spear. Although the destruction of the spear was not surprising, it was most certainly a shock to see Bai Xiaochun recover in the time it took to step backward a few times.

It defied belief, and at the same time, cause fear to bubble up deep in his heart.

“His battle prowess is that of a demigod, but… his regeneration abilities surpass even the Celestial’s!! Dammit, where did he get regeneration abilities like that!? I refuse to believe that he can keep doing it over and over! He has to have limits!” Patriarch Starry Sky stared at Bai Xiaochun through narrowed eyes as he rotated his cultivation base. A moment later, he threw his hand out, causing even more spectacular energy than before to fill the air.

“So, you can stand up to the Spear of the Starry Sky. Very well, try this!” He bit his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood, which exploded into a blood mist. After the blood mist merged into the starry sky above, the stars began to shine with such intensity that they seemed as bright as daylight!

As the starlight spilled down, it converged upon itself into something ten times as majestic as the Spear of the Starry Sky. The energy which radiated out surpassed anything from before as… a 300,000-meter-long dragon appeared! It was… the Dragon of the Starry Sky!

Roar!

The dragon’s eyes shone like the most brilliant of heavenly bodies, shaking the entire sky as it looked in Bai Xiaochun’s direction and roared.

As it began to speed toward him, Bai Xiaochun looked at it, his own eyes shining brightly.

“Patriarch Starry Sky, it doesn’t matter what divine abilities you use on me. They’re all… useless!” With that, he strode forward, becoming a blazing meteor that shot toward the Dragon of the Starry Sky just as he had gone to meet the spear moments ago.

As he blurred into motion, his right hand clenched into a fist, and he punched out. A black hole sprang into being, sucking in all of the power of his cultivation base and fleshly body. At the same time, a shadowy emperor appeared behind him.

The emperor’s head seemed to touch the top of the sky, and his feet were planted firmly on the ground. All creation trembled violently, causing Patriarch Starry Sky’s face to fall.

The domineering air which radiated out from that shadowy emperor was terrifying to the ultimate degree!

Bai Xiaochun’s fist rocketed toward the Dragon of the Starry Sky, joined by the fist of the shadowy emperor!

This was none other than… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Mountain-toppling, sea-draining energy was unleashed onto the seemingly unkillable dragon, which let out a howl that shook the entirety of the Wildlands!

The cultivators below were deafened, and their minds spun. Many began to cough up mouthfuls of blood.

Furthermore, the power of Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike was so incredible that, apparently, it neared the limits that governed the entire world. As a result, the very same world net appeared in the sky as had appeared during the battle between the gravekeeper and the Celestial!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1000 awe-chapter-1001

The Dragon of the Starry Sky howled beneath the world net. Despite how powerful it was, it still felt like it was trembling on the verge of collapse.

However, as it exerted control to keep its body intact, and even prepared to counterattack… Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flashed, and his regenerative powers kicked in. Instead of falling back in the face of the dragon, he clenched his fist and… in completely unprecedented fashion, unleashed another Undying Emperor’s Fist!

After mastering the Undying Blood, Bai Xiaochun could tell that his Undying Emperor’s Fist was not limited in the way it had been in the past. Thanks to his regenerative powers… he could unleash it over and over again!

Three punches. Four punches. Five punches!!

A series of five domineering fist strikes was more than the Dragon of the Starry Sky could take, and its entire 300,000-meter body exploded, sending a blast of energy raging onto Bai Xiaochun.

The force of the detonation shocked even the Giant Ghost King, who considered trying to interfere, but couldn’t react quickly enough. This was one of Patriarch Starry Sky’s trump cards, something he had planned to use on the Giant Ghost King, but was now forced to use on the troublesome Bai Xiaochun.

From a distance, it was possible to see that the detonation of the Dragon of the Starry Sky created a massive vortex, almost like an enormous mouth that loomed over Bai Xiaochun to swallow him up. The destructive power of that vortex would be shocking to even a demigod, much less any cultivator under that level.

The disciples of the River-Defying Sect were getting very anxious. Song Junwan’s face was ashen, and she trembled in fear and disbelief. Patriarch Spirit Stream panted as he stared nervously at the huge vortex.

However, even as everyone watched in anxiety and anticipation, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out from inside of the vortex.

“That’s all you’ve got?” he said, striding out into the open. His hair was in complete disarray, and he was seriously injured. However, with each step he took… his aura grew stronger, and his wounds healed.

By the time he emerged fully from within the vortex, he wasn’t harmed at all, and his aura was all the way back at its peak.

“Impossible!!” Patriarch Starry Sky gasped, staggering backward in complete disbelief.

He could accept that his Spear of the Starry Sky had been defeated. And he could even handle the destruction of his Dragon of the Starry Sky. But the fact that even the detonation of that dragon hadn’t killed Bai Xiaochun was something that seemed to defy all reality. He didn’t even look like he had been hurt!

Patriarch Starry Sky’s scalp tingled in fear, and his heart pounded in terror. He finally had to admit that this was an enemy he couldn’t defeat. Even worse, he was finally coming to the realization that Bai Xiaochun might actually be able to beat him into submission!

“This guy can recover from any injury! None of my divine abilities can do anything to him…. I guess… I've lost the initiative, which means that the next thing which will happen is… he’ll attack me….” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Patriarch Starry Sky’s eyes began to shine with terror and fear.

All of a sudden, he thought back to a powerful expert from years past, a person who all of the demigods in the lands of Heavenspan had feared. That person… was very much like this Bai Xiaochun, a person with terrifying regenerative capabilities.

“The famed Blood Ancestor….” Patriarch Starry Sky murmured.

He could well imagine that, with regenerative abilities like this, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t necessarily be invincible in this heaven and earth. However, the only people who could possibly be a match for him would be the Celestial or the gravekeeper.

No demigods could possibly qualify to tangle with Bai Xiaochun, not even the most experienced and qualified of them. In fact… it wouldn’t even be a certainty that demigods could team up to defeat him!

“The only way to beat him would be to defeat his regenerative powers, or handle him like the Blood Ancestor…. Have the Celestial crush him, pierce through the power of his undying body to directly slaughter his nascent divinity!”

The Giant Ghost King was reacting similarly, and simply couldn't control his facial expression. Bai Xiaochun's powers of regeneration surpassed all imagination, and left the Giant Ghost King completely aghast.

Furthermore, if Patriarch Starry Sky suddenly thought about the Blood Ancestor, then it made even more sense for the Giant Ghost King, one of the four heavenly kings of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, to… think of exactly the same thing!

Years ago, the Blood Ancestor… had vied for the throne with one of the Arch-Emperors, but had eventually ended up dying in the lands of Heavenspan!

Bai Xiaochun could see how shocked the two demigods were. Taking a deep breath, he looked at Patriarch Starry Sky and said, "Any more divine abilities you want to try out? If not, then I guess I'll take my turn."

"Oh, yes, I have more," Patriarch Starry Sky said, his eyes bloodshot. Suddenly, he reached up and touched his forehead, causing his divine soul to fly out into the open and shoot up into the starry sky above.

As his divine soul merged with the starry sky, starlight that was even more blinding than anything before began to shine down.

"This is my most powerful divine ability, Bai Xiaochun. Let's see if your regeneration powers can save you from this!" In the blink of an eye, Patriarch Starry Sky began to descend in the form of a starry sky!

It was as if the heavens were embodied, and falling down toward the earth!

“Most powerful divine ability, huh…?” All of a sudden, the desire to do battle surged strong in Bai Xiaochun. His previous two clashes with Patriarch Starry Sky had been defensive in nature. He hadn’t even tried to unleash a counter attack. But now… he was done holding out. Without any hesitation, he shot up to meet the descending starry sky.

Shouting, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash and the Undying Hex to pick up speed.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the power of countless heavenly bodies came to focus on Bai Xiaochun. He was shaking on the verge of collapse, and yet, after only a breath of time passed, was fully recovered. And that was when he unleashed his Undying Emperor’s Fist!

If one fist didn't work, he would use ten!

If ten failed, he would use a hundred. Then a thousand. Then ten thousand!

“You will be destroyed!” he shouted. Fist after fist struck, causing the starry sky to tremble violently. Inside, Patriarch Starry Sky’s divine soul was rapidly reaching a point of instability. Gritting his teeth, he rotated his cultivation base to try to hang on, causing destructive power to surge out to meet Bai Xiaochun. However, no matter how badly Bai Xiaochun was injured, his Undying Blood made him terrifyingly resilient!

He quickly recovered from any injury, and his aura always returned to the peak. He seemed completely indomitable, utterly domineering. Everyone watching the scene was dumbstruck. The Giant Ghost King’s jaw hung open, and Patriarch Starry Sky was as shocked as if the heavens had collapsed!

Finally, the starry sky shattered…. The stars exploded, and Patriarch Starry Sky's divine soul fled out into the open, terrified!

Bai Xiaochun also appeared, moving so quickly that he transformed into a series of afterimages… that headed directly toward Patriarch Starry Sky's divine soul!

His goal was not to kill him, but to beat him into submission!

Patriarch Starry Sky looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who seemed to be clad in World Raiment, with his will having surpassed the will of the world itself. He seemed impossible to defend against, to the degree that Patriarch Starry Sky's battle spirit immediately vanished. As of this moment, he truly feared Bai Xiaochun!

“Fine, I agree, I agree! It's too tiring fighting you. Truce! A truce!! No fighting!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1001 awe-chapter-1002

Patriarch Starry Sky couldn’t help but feel a bit depressed about the situation. After all, under normal circumstances, Bai Xiaochun would be so far beneath him that he would likely be able to kill him, given enough time.

But… these were not normal circumstances. Bai Xiaochun’s terrifying powers of regeneration essentially negated any injuries. And although his divine abilities and magical techniques were not impossible to defend against, getting hit with them over and over again was profoundly frustrating.

“Fighting with him isn’t worth it…. You can’t even hurt him!” Patriarch Starry Sky sighed, fairly certain of how the fight would end if it continued to play out.

With that, he flickered into motion, falling back a bit while his divine soul returned to his body. Clearly, he was agreeing to a ceasefire while here outside of Giant Ghost City.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he sighed, and then looked over at the Giant Ghost King.

“Now it’s your turn, Giant Ghost, old pal.”

The Giant Ghost King smiled wryly and shook his head, feeling very much the way that Patriarch Starry Sky did.

“No, I’ll do whatever you say. A cease fire it is….”

With the two demigods having made their decision clear, the cultivators on the battlefield began to back away from each other, mixed emotions on their faces.

The cultivators from the River-Defying Sect likewise stood down. As for the disciples from the Spirit and Blood Stream Divisions, they couldn’t help but think back to how Bai Xiaochun had single-handedly stopped a battle between their sects all those years ago.

“But can he really stop this war…?” Patriarch Spirit Stream thought.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the two sides backing away from each other, he sighed in relief. At the same time, the hope in his heart grew stronger.

“Stopping this battle is only the first step. The next thing I need to do is go talk to the gravekeeper….” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he turned to leave. However, it was at that point that the entire world shuddered, and massive pressure suddenly began to weigh down on the entire area!

The cultivators from both sides of the conflict were all shocked. Everyone, including the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky, all looked up into the sky.

There, high above everyone’s heads, was… a gigantic eye!

The enormous eye was looking down at the battlefield, and specifically… at Bai Xiaochun!

The presence of the eye made the pressure weighing down seem even more intense. All of a sudden, the countless cultivators down below began to tremble, and felt terror rising up from within their very souls. In fact, they were so shaken that their minds went completely blank.

It was as if the entire world had gone still, and ceased to exist. The only thing that existed was that gigantic eye!

The gaze of the eye was cold to the extreme, like the biting freezing iciness of winter!

It was a gaze that could pierce through anything, and could see into the hearts and minds of everyone, even the devas.

The powerful Giant Ghost King was actually panting as a result of the eye.

“The Celestial....” he murmured, backing up, a look of madness appearing in his eyes. He rotated his cultivation base immediately, as though the gaze of that eye put him in such unprecedented danger that he instinctively had to protect himself from it.

Patriarch Starry Sky was shaking visibly, but in contrast to the Giant Ghost King, he immediately bowed formally to the eye.

Bai Xiaochun looked up, his aura already unstable, his entire person trembling in terror. He could already tell that the Celestial was more powerful than the last time he had seen him in the north. Although he still was not back to the level he had been when he had fought the gravekeeper, he was close.

Clearly, acquiring the clone of the laughing-crying ghost face had been of great benefit to his recovery.

“Well met... Celestial.” Bai Xiaochun felt as if the Celestial could see every aspect of him, inside and out. Thankfully, he wore the World Raiment, and thus somehow had a bit of the will of the world with him. Because of that, he was able to resist the assault of the gaze to some degree. Clasping hands respectfully, he bowed.

In response to his bow, the gaze of the Celestial suddenly changed. Instead of being ice cold, it became warm in a way that Bai Xiaochun had never experienced before. “Bai. Xiao. Chun….”

When the Celestial spoke, his voice contained… something encouraging, as well as other mixed emotions!

Not only could Bai Xiaochun detect those mixed emotions, but the others in the area could as well.

Far, far away from Giant Ghost City, in the middle of the Heavenspan Sea, right on Heavenspan Island, there at the peak of the mountain, in the Palace of the Dao, the sound of heavy breathing could be heard. Also, two eyes lit up with the brightness of suns.

The aura of the entire world seemed to tremble as those eyes looked out, and waves began to surge on the surface of the Heavenspan Sea.

“So… he’s appeared. Of all the times to show up, he picks now.” The Celestial sat cross-legged in the Palace of the Dao, a blood-colored flag stretched out in front of him, within which was the sealed soulclone of the ghost face. The laughing-crying appearance of the face inside the flag was bizarre, to say the least.

“So those fluctuations I sensed really did indicate that someone mastered the Undying Codex. This Bai Xiaochun… actually did it!

“He’s ready…. I don’t need to push him anymore. He’s truly ready, even before I've made my final decision….

“It seems… that when he went missing, he must have gone into hiding somewhere in the north…. And that apprentice of mine is not dead after all… although that's not important now….

“I really don’t want to take that final step…. She’s my only flesh and blood, after all….” Looking torn, the Celestial cast his gaze out of the Palace of the Dao in the direction of one of the other mountain peaks on Heavenspan Island. Standing there was Du Lingfei, who seemed so forlorn that she was like a mere husk of her old self, as if her divine soul was dead, and only her physical body remained.

“The war is nearing its end… and I'm not sure if I’ll be able to open the Worldgate. After that damned gravekeeper perishes, will I be able to open the door on my own? Or will it remain closed for all eternity because of his departure? There’s no way to tell ahead of time….

“Perhaps… this really is my last chance… and my best possibility to succeed… an opportunity just waiting to be taken advantage of….” After a long moment passed, the Celestial’s eyes turned as red as blood, and his expression twisted ferociously.

“I have to get out of here! Even if the price were higher, I would still pay it. Considering my talents and qualifications, if I were in the world beyond, I could easily make another breakthrough. Then I would reach the true Mahayana Realm. In fact, the Archaean Realm might not even be impossible to reach!

“And my current longevity… can no longer be increased by the use of longevity pills….” His expression twisted into an even more ferocious display of determination and madness. Having made his decision, he rose to his feet.

“You’re forcing me to do this, gravekeeper!” He threw his head back and roared, causing the entire world to tremble.

The waves on the Heavenspan Sea reached frightening heights. As for Du Lingfei, she shivered, and tears began to stream down her face.... If one looked closely, it would be possible to see two magical symbols hovering deep within her vacant eyes....

“Xiaochun… I'm sorry....” she murmured, her face as pale as death as tears streamed down her cheeks.

In that moment, the Celestial reached out in the direction of Giant Ghost City and made a grasping motion!

A massive vortex sprang into being, with one side on Heavenspan Island, and the other… in the air above Giant Ghost City!

What had once appeared to be the eye of the Celestial transformed into that other vortex, which span furiously as a huge hand reached out of it toward Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1002 awe-chapter-1003

The Celestial’s hand was descending from the heavens!

It seemed to supplant all creation, as though the only things in existence were that vortex… and that hand, which thrummed with enough power to destroy the world!

The hand grew larger and larger, until it seemed that it would surpass the vortex. The lands quaked from the pressure, and crevices began to open up everywhere.

It was even possible to see the fingerprints on the hands, which were almost like enormous mountains and valleys, all of which threatened to crush the world.

Intense fluctuations spread out in all directions, causing all the cultivators to be so shocked that they could do nothing other than stare blankly.

It wasn’t just the people near Giant Ghost City who could see this amazing scene. In the cities belonging to the three other heavenly kings, cultivators on all sides of the conflict could see what was happening!

Although the vortex and the hand were not large enough to cover all of the Wildlands, they were large enough to cover nearly seventy percent of it. It was truly an astonishing sight.

“What is that?!?!”

“Heavens! That’s… that’s a huge hand….”

“The Celestial! It's definitely the Celestial!!” Cries of alarm rose up from both Wildlanders and Heavenspan cultivators alike. However, it only took a moment for the Heavenspan cultivators to start getting excited.

“The Celestial is making a move! We’re definitely going to win the war!!” As such cries rang out, the soul cultivators and savage giants suddenly looked profoundly worried.

In fact, their eyes began to glitter with despair.

The Nine Serenities King, War Champion King, and even Xu Shan's father, the Spirit Advent King, were all deeply shocked. As for their opponents, the demigod patriarchs from the other three riversource sects, they couldn't control their reactions.

“That’s… the direction of Giant Ghost City!”

“What’s happening in Giant Ghost City!?!?”

“Something strange is going on!!”

Virtually everyone in the Wildlands was completely focused on that enormous hand emerging from the vortex.

A very serious expression could be seen on the face of the Grand Heavenmaster as he stared out of Arch-Emperor City and up into the sky. As for the reigning Arch-Emperor, he stood in the imperial palace, eyes flickering with intense hatred.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun hovered in the air above Giant Ghost City, hardly able to breathe as he stared up at the vortex and the hand. Already, a sense of deep foreboding filled him.

As that sensation grew more and more intense, it reached the point where he was sure something catastrophic was about to happen.

“The Celestial… is going to attack me!!” Bai Xiaochun had no time to try to figure out why the Celestial would do such a thing. Without any hesitation, he prepared to flee.

However, the hand was too big. It was far larger than Patriarch Starry Sky’s magic of the starry sky. After all, that starry sky was a Daoist magic, whereas the Celestial’s hand contained the power of the world itself!

Even as Bai Xiaochun prepared to flee, the hand began to close in on him. Clearly, it didn’t matter where in the world he went, that hand would catch him!

A look of shock could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face, and Patriarch Starry Sky was stunned. By now, both of them could tell that the Celestial’s hand… was going after Bai Xiaochun!!

“The Blood Ancestor….” All of a sudden, both of them thought back to what the Celestial had done to the Blood Ancestor years ago. Of the two demigods, the Giant Ghost King reacted the most dramatically.

“Get to Arch-Emperor City!!” he shouted. “The Celestial is going to try to kill you!!”

Bitterness gripped Bai Xiaochun’s heart as he thought about how he had never done anything to offend the Celestial too badly. Furthermore, he was in a relationship with his daughter, Du Lingfei. He just wanted to stop this war, and had been just getting ready to go talk to the gravekeeper about opening the Worldgate to let the Celestial leave.

Although he had made an agreement with the Frigid Matriarch, Bai Xiaochun had pointed out from the beginning that he didn’t have any beef with the Celestial, and therefore, wouldn’t take the initiative to try to kill him.

He didn’t like fighting and killing. He only wanted to figure out a way to resolve all of the issues everyone had with each other….

“He… wants to kill me!” However, despite his bitterness, he wasn’t very surprised…. It was as if, based on all his experiences, he had somehow been prepared for this on a very deep level.

Whether it was his relationship with the gravekeeper and Bai Hao, or the matters pertaining to the world treasure and the Frigid Matriarch… the Celestial had plenty of reasons to want to attack him.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the hand got closer and closer, filling the sky. In turn, Bai Xiaochun fled, although it didn’t seem to do him any good.

In that critical moment, he drew upon the full power of the Cloud Lighnting Forefather Transformation.

“Damn you, Celestial!!” he howled. Aware that fleeing would do no good, he decided to do the only thing possible: fight back.

Meanwhile, in the most ultimate reserve power of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, the magical treasure that was Arch-Emperor City, deep in the third subterranean level of the city….

Within the ruins, in a place that had been buried ever since the original war between the Heavenspan region and the

Arch-Emperor Dynasty, there was a crumbling pagoda. Inside of that pagoda sat an old man.

He wore a long black robe, and had hair so white and old that it emanated an aura of decay. His face was crisscrossed with wrinkles, and he emanated a powerful aura of death. Were it not for the fact that his eyes were open, and glittering dully, he could easily be mistaken for a corpse.

However, despite the glittering of his eyes, he still seemed like he was mostly dead, an oil lamp just on the verge of winking out. He might be able to survive for a bit longer, but soon, would return to dust.

He was none other than… the gravekeeper!

He had lived for many, many years, as if he had been born along with the very world in which he lived. He had seen many changes throughout his life, and had seen many generations come and go. Generations were born, and generations died… but he remained. It was an enormous weight to bear.

In his spectacular battle with the Celestial and Ghostmother’s soulclone, heaven and earth had been significantly damaged. He had used his magic of the Five Yin Organs, calling up metal, wood, water, fire, and earth in a way that weakened him even more than he already had been.

Afterward, he had passed his title on to Bai Hao. At the moment, he only had a tiny bit of energy left… energy which might vanish at any moment. In fact, he couldn’t even move. He could only sit there cross-legged.

That was the reason why he hadn’t appeared during the true battle between the Celestial and Ghostmother on the ghost galleon. It wasn’t that he didn't want to; he simply couldn’t.

However, in the moment that the Celestial made his move in the Wildlands, the decrepit gravekeeper took a breath. Then he slowly looked up. It seemed to take profound effort, but as he did, his eyes began to shine with increasingly bright light.

He was like kindling that had been sparked into flame. His lips twitched as though he were speaking, although no words could be heard.

Back outside of Giant Ghost City, the Celestial’s hand continued on toward Bai Xiaochun, who was struggling to fight back.... But then, the lands shook, and powerful fluctuations spilled out everywhere as... the earth broke apart, revealing an enormous hand that reached upward!

This new hand seemed comparable to the Celestial’s hand in all ways. As the lands collapsed, the hand shot up and slammed into the Celestial’s hand!

The Wildlands shook violently as a huge boom echoed out. A massive shockwave rippled out into all the cultivators watching the event. Thankfully, the demigods and devas were there to absorb some of the energy, otherwise all of the other cultivators would have been either seriously injured or killed.

“Gravekeeper, you old bastard!!”

“Celestial....”

Two voices filled all creation, one shaking with rage, the other quivering with extreme weariness!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1003 awe-chapter-1004

As the two voices echoed out through heaven and earth, it felt very much like the last time the Celestial and the gravekeeper had fought each other. And this time, they were fighting a battle the likes of which could end the world!

The Celestial was returning to the Wildlands in much different circumstances than when he had left. He had recovered from his injuries. Furthermore, the gravekeeper was now extremely exhausted.

However… despite how weak he was, he was still the gravekeeper!

As the enormous hand stretched up from the earth and slammed into the Celestial’s hand, a massive shockwave rippled out. The sky went dark, and tempests screamed across the lands. Yet again, a certain limit of power was reached, and the protective world net appeared up above!

As the net appeared to fill the sky, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered. He could clearly sense that because of everything that the world net had experienced throughout the years, it was weakening in many places.

Because of the explosive power being unleashed by the gravekeeper and the Celestial, the only people who could remain in the area were Bai Xiaochun, the Giant Ghost King, and Patriarch Starry Sky.

Only those three could bear witness to the shocking spectacle of the Celestial and the gravekeeper fighting!

However, Bai Xiaochun didn’t wish to remain behind. He actually borrowed the momentum of the blast to fall back. The Celestial’s hand shifted as if to follow him, but the gravekeeper’s hand moved to intercept it again.

The cultivation base power backing those two gargantuan hands vastly surpassed the Demigod Realm. They were in the Mahayana Realm, which was also referred to by some as… the Celestial Realm!

Years ago, Ghostmother had mentioned that Daoist Heavenspan called himself “the Celestial”, but was in fact only a quasi-celestial. Even still, he could unleash power that could change the face of heaven and earth. Therefore, not only did Bai Xiaochun attempt to flee the area, but the Giant Ghost King and Patriarch Starry Sky also began to back away.

They could all tell that the gravekeeper was on his last legs, and wouldn't be able to hold out for very much longer. Patriarch Starry Sky hesitated for a moment as he considered whether or not to stop Bai Xiaochun from fleeing. However, considering how the Giant Ghost King was glowering at him, he simply sighed and decided not to make things complicated….

After all, even he was a bit frightened by the sudden and unexpected appearance of the Celestial.

“You are weak, gravekeeper,” the Celestial said, his voice laced with arrogance. “You should be in the Underworld River, waiting to die. How dare you show up here and try to interfere with my plans!” The golden light of Heavenspan River water shone out in all directions as the Celestial’s hand once again shot toward the gravekeeper’s hand.

As the resulting boom echoed out, and Bai Xiaochun accelerated in the opposite direction, a fourth boom could be heard. Looking over his shoulder, he was shocked to see that the earthly hand of the gravekeeper was collapsing into pieces.

As for the Celestial’s golden hand, it once again filled all heaven and earth as it headed toward Bai Xiaochun.

“You can’t escape, Bai Xiaochun…. The gravekeeper is forcing me to do this…. It is not my wish, but I have no choice. Therefore… you will submit, and become the medicinal pill I need!”

Bai Xiaochun knew that he couldn’t escape, and as he stared back at the Celestial’s enormous hand, he had no time to think of anything other than fight!

“Godkiller!!” Eyes bloodshot, he called upon the trump card that came with his Undying Blood. Now that he had mastered the Undying Codex, he could control the Godkiller technique, and would not lose consciousness when using it.

As blood qi surged in his body, and he accelerated rapidly, the Celestial laughed coldly.

“The Arch-Ancestor's secret Undying Codex…. If you had the Live Forever Codex, then not even I would be able to fight you…. But without it, you have no way of escaping the destiny I have prepared for you!” The enormous hand formed from Heavenspan Seawater sent golden light shining out that suppressed Bai Xiaochun’s blood qi and completely ignored the Godkiller technique.

“Damn you, Celestial!!” Bai Xiaochun howled, throwing his hands out in front of him. Instantly, water vapor erupted out in all directions, turning the area into a huge swamp.

Suddenly, a howl erupted into the air that seemed to come from the ancient past, a howl that combined with Bai Xiaochun’s shout to shake everything in the area.

Curved mountain peaks rose up from that swamp, the manifestation of none other than… the Waterswamp Kingdom.

Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base now was in the great circle of the Deva Realm, which meant that his Waterswamp Kingdom was vastly more powerful than before. As the mountain peaks arced through the air, a huge beast hand appeared in full, rushing to meet the golden hand of the Celestial.

Unfortunately… the fact that Bai Xiaochun was a deva meant that he was vastly below the Celestial. When the Waterswamp Kingdom met the Celestial’s hand, a huge boom echoed out. The Celestial snorted coldly, and the beast hand shattered. A howl of pain and rage erupted out from the watery swamp, which roiled violently, as if the creature inside wished to free itself.

But the Celestial’s hand was too powerful. Thrumming with energy, it continued onward toward Bai Xiaochun!

Soon, the entire 5,000-kilometer-area around Bai Xiaochun was nothing more than that hand, closing around him!

The air shattered as though it were corporeal, causing cracking sounds to echo out. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s vision was obscured, allowing him to see only the five, mountain-like fingers surrounding him.

Compared to the size of that hand, he was like nothing more than a bug!

If the world were likened to a sea, then the Celestial’s hand would be reaching down into that water to pick up the tiny shrimp larva that was Bai Xiaochun.

There was literally nothing he could do to fight back or resist!

Blood sprayed out of his mouth because of the intense pressure weighing down on him, and cracking sounds rang out as his bones began to shatter. The watery swamp around him was thoroughly defeated by the golden hand, and simply collapsed!

There was simply no way for Bai Xiaochun to escape, and as such, a feeling of despair began to grip his heart.

However, even as the hand closed in around him… black water suddenly appeared out of nowhere!

In the blink of an eye, it created a shocking Underworld River! A stream of energy erupted from the river, wrapping around Bai Xiaochun as if to take him away.

“The new Hell-Emperor?” the Celestial said. “If you had 10,000 years to prepare, you might qualify to face me, but right now… you’re simply courting death!” The Heavenspan Seawater that made up the enormous hand exploded, creating a powerful attack that slammed into the Underworld River and crushed it. Bai Xiaochun could even hear a muffled cry of anguish and pain from Bai Hao.

“Hao’er!!”

In the blink of an eye, the Heavenspan Seawater overwhelmed the Underworld River water and drove it away. The only thing left was the Celestial’s huge hand, closing in around Bai Xiaochun!

As it closed into a fist, it seemed prepared to crush anything within its grasp out of existence!

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun went mad. Although he was already grievously injured, his powers of regeneration defied imagination. Without any hesitation, he resorted to the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation!

“Eleventh Transformation!!”

As he grew larger, rocks began to fly toward him as he used… the Living Mountain Incantation!

His fleshly body power skyrocketed, combining with his cultivation base to somehow manage to keep him going. However, he couldn’t hold on for very long. A moment later, his Forefather Transformation and Living Mountain Incantation collapsed, and he was badly injured. With his regeneration powers, he recovered, but in a moment, was back to being injured.

It was a seemingly endless cycle. In the briefest of moments, he went back and forth from being injured to his peak state about a hundred times! And there seemed to be no end in sight!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1004 awe-chapter-1005

“The Undying Codex truly is extraordinary!” When the Celestial saw how Bai Xiaochun was able to fight back against someone vastly more powerful than himself, and consistently regenerate despite his injuries, he was quite moved.

“Thankfully, this isn’t my first time encountering someone who has mastered the Undying Codex….” Back on Heavenspan Island, the Celestial’s eyes suddenly flickered with a crystalline glow.

As he did, Du Lingfei shivered. Even as she stood there, as mute and numb as the walking dead, a crystalline light suddenly shot out from the depths of her eyes, and the two bizarre magical symbols that existed there.

There was a strange power inside of her that the Celestial seemed capable of drawing upon because of those magical symbols. Back outside of Giant Ghost City, as his hand remained closed around Bai Xiaochun, a crystalline glow suddenly appeared.

In the blink of an eye… the entire hand turned crystal, and then crushed down harder!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun, his hair wild and disheveled, called out to the world treasure of the north. Unfortunately, the Frigid Matriarch was still sleeping, and didn’t respond. Worse, it seemed that because of the incredible pressure weighing down on him, his regenerative powers were faltering!

Whatever magical technique was involved with this crystal seemed to be at complete odds with the Undying Codex!

Without his regenerative powers working fully, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t stand up to the raw power of the Celestial. A popping sound rang out, and he was crushed!

At that point, he couldn’t remain conscious, and passed out.

The Celestial began to slowly retract his hand. As it headed back toward the vortex… everyone in the area looked on, completely shaken.

Devas and demigods alike were completely floored!

Everyone from the River-Defying Sect was trembling, and many of them had their hands clenched tightly into fists at their sides. Song Junwan’s face was wet with tears, and yet there was nothing she could do except watch while everything happened. When the vortex disappeared, she coughed up a mouthful of blood and then toppled forward, unconscious.

As the Celestial’s hand vanished, his voice rang out to fill the Wildlands, cold and emotionless in all aspects.

“All Heavenspan cultivators are to join forces… and exterminate every living thing in the Wildlands!”

The Celestial did not like being in a passive position. He preferred to be in control. That much was possible to see from how things had played out with the bone galleon.

This current matter was playing out exactly the same. All of his hopes were wrapped up with Bai Xiaochun, and although he was only about eighty percent confident in being able to succeed, that didn’t mean he would let his guard down.

Since there were still two paths available… he would leave both open to pick from!

“If neither path works… then since my longevity is running out, I will just bury this world along with me!” With that, his hand vanished completely.

The cultivators from the Heavenspan region were shaken. However, no matter how tired they were from all the fighting, they had to follow the orders of the Celestial. And of course, there were some who were very enthusiastic about following such orders, and immediately began to fight with murderous fervor!

The morale of the Wildlanders had suffered a severe blow upon the defeat of the gravekeeper. From what they could tell, there was absolutely no way out for them now….

The lands of Heavenspan would accept no captives. The Celestial wanted everything in the Wildlands dead, all the way down to the grass and the roots!

Savages and soul cultivators alike, even the animals, would all be killed.

The only choice the Wildlanders had now… was to fight to the death!!

The sound of battle resumed, accompanied by bitter chuckling, roaring laughter, and the sounds of self-detonation…. Blood once again began to stain the ground, and the death count rose…. It seemed as if the end of days had come; the sky was dark, and the lands were shattered. It wouldn’t take long before Giant Ghost City fell, as well as the other three kingly cities. When that happened, the Wildlanders would be forced to retreat… all the way to Arch-Emperor City!

**

Far beneath the surface of Heavenspan Island was… an enormous necropolis!

In the depths of the necropolis was a pool of black liquid surrounded by a huge spell formation, fully 30,000 meters from side to side. It was a spell formation created, not by spirit stones, but by human bones!

Some of the bones were golden, and some were crystalline… and despite being dead, all of them seemed to radiate an air of holiness!

Around the perimeter of the pool of liquid were three deep pits, each of which contained a skeleton!

Shockingly, all of those skeletons were partially gold and partially crystal. Although none were perfectly fused together, the pressure they emitted was enough to cause even demigods to tremble. That pressure… was extremely close to the level of the quasi-celestial Daoist Heavenspan.

Although none of them were quite as powerful as him, all of them were only about half a step from being in the true Mahayana Realm!

If the reigning Arch-Emperor were able to see this place, he would instinctively recognize who those three corpses were.

They were… the remains of the three most powerful Arch-Emperors of the past!

Clearly, the Celestial had located their sepulchers and exhumed their skeletons, then used them to create the most ultimate of spell formations!

The rotting, holy bones had been collected throughout the years from people who had cultivated either the Undying Codex or the Live Forever Codex!

In the very middle of the spell formation, within the black pool of water, Bai Xiaochun sat cross-legged, his eyes closed. He was breathing, but not conscious. The water swirled slowly around him, rippling as magical symbols slowly floated about within.

The magical symbols almost seemed alive, and many of them would crawl up onto Bai Xiaochun and move around on the surface of his body.

It was a very ghastly scene, made even worse by the flickering lamps which lit the area.

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun shivered, and then opened his eyes. As soon as he did, the magical symbols that had been crawling all over him flew back into the water, apparently having been startled.

At first, his expression was blank. However, as he breathed, his eyes began to glitter. Then he looked around at the pool of water, and the bones that made up the spell formation.

He wanted to rise to his feet, but soon found that he couldn’t control his own body. It was impossible for him to leave the pool of water. Apparently, the energy of the Undying Codex and Live Forever Codex in the bones around him created an aura that disturbed his mind.

At that point, a raspy voice filled the air. “Don’t struggle. This pool of water… is made from the blood of countless descendants of the Arch-Emperor, back when I drove his dynasty out of the lands of Heavenspan. It's been fermenting here for many, many years.” Bai Xiaochun then saw the air up ahead ripple, and the Celestial walk slowly out into the open.

The Celestial’s eyes burned with excitement and anticipation as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, as if he were some consummately important medicinal pill to be consumed.

Panting, Bai Xiaochun looked at the Celestial, his heart pounding with foreboding. Just when he was about to say something, the Celestial looked around at the bones and kept talking.

“I killed many of these people myself in the final battle at Arch-Emperor City. And some… are cultivators I ran tests on after I started researching the Undying Live Forever Technique.

“Sadly, despite the fact that the Undying Live Forever Technique is something that anyone can cultivate, for some reason, I am not able to. Perhaps it's because I've killed so many people with the blood of the Arch-Emperor in them.

“I can only research it by having other people cultivate the technique. I even exhumed the corpses of these three Arch-Emperors, and brought their skeletons here to learn a thing or two from them.

“You see, I stole the Live Forever Codex from the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. And as for the Undying Codex, the gravekeeper made it public for some reason. Perhaps it was an attempt to resist me, or perhaps an attempt to continue the line of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. In any case, I added fuel to the fire by making sure the Undying Codex was available in the lands of Heavenspan as well…. The trickiest thing was the Live Forever Codex. It is very, very difficult to cultivate. In fact, few people have ever managed to master it. Most would fail along the way, after which I would place their remains in here to make the best use of them.

“Over all the years, only two people have ever completely cultivated it. One of them was an apprentice of mine, and the other… is my daughter.” By this point, the Celestial didn't really seem to be talking to Bai Xiaochun, but rather, muttering to himself.

As Bai Xiaochun listened, his shock mounted until he felt like his head was being struck by lightning. After seeing Du Lingfei’s bones years ago, he had already begun to suspect the truth. But to hear the Celestial say it out loud was a different matter.

“Sadly, I wasn’t quite prepared last time. Furthermore, my apprentice discovered what was going on. Therefore, my first attempt to concoct an Undying Live Forever Pill was a failure before I even started. But that doesn’t matter. I have a second chance now….”

With that, he turned to look at Bai Xiaochun with glittering eyes.

“Fei’er,” he said.

At that point, Du Lingfei stepped out from behind the Celestial.

Upon seeing Du Lingfei, a bitter smile spread out across Bai Xiaochun’s face. He understood. He understood everything….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1005 awe-chapter-1006

Or perhaps the truth was slightly different. Upon seeing Du Lingfei, Bai Xiaochun smiled bitterly, and was fairly certain that he understood.

Many years ago, the Celestial rebelled, waging war against the entire Arch-Emperor Dynasty. The forces of the Arch-Emperor were soundly defeated, losing not just the lands of Heavenspan, but also one of their most important legacies, the Live Forever Codex from the Undying Live Forever Technique!

After relocating to the Wildlands, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty only had the Undying Codex. Perhaps in an attempt to resist the Celestial, or perhaps just to foster hope… the gravekeeper had taken steps to allow people who were not direct descendants of the Arch-Emperor to cultivate the Undying Codex. And as the technique became more widespread, incomplete copies eventually showed up in sects in the lands of Heavenspan.

As a result, the Undying Codex lived on. At the same time, everyone in the Heavenspan Realm had a chance to cultivate a secret magic that had once belonged only to the Arch-Emperor.

The Celestial didn’t do anything to stop it, focused as he was on the Live Forever Codex. However, it was only after attempting to actually cultivate the Live Forever Codex, and failing, that he came up with an idea that could only be described as insane.

He would encourage more and more people to cultivate both the Undying Codex and the Live Forever Codex. Then he would fuse those people together and use them to concoct an Undying Live Forever Pill. By consuming that pill, he would then get access to the hidden power offered by the Undying Live Forever Technique.

Both the bones scattered in the necropolis, and the remains of the three Arch-Emperors, had all been used in his extensive research.

Unfortunately for him, the Live Forever Codex was much more difficult to cultivate than the Undying Codex, and also more powerful. Despite all the years which had passed, none of the countless cultivators who had cultivated it had ever succeeded. At most, some of them made superficial progress.

But then his top apprentice came along.... She was the Frigid Matriarch of the north, and once she mastered the Live Forever Codex, the Celestial’s heart began to burn with avarice.

It was at around that time that a mighty hero rose up in the Wildlands, a person called the Blood Ancestor. Perhaps it was his own spectacular talent, or perhaps he had the blood of the Arch-Emperors in him. Either way, he mastered the Undying Codex, and made a spectacular breakthrough, reaching the fleshly body level of a demigod!

If it wasn’t for the fact that the Celestial had brought ruin to the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, it was entirely possible that the Blood Ancestor would have eventually gone on to cultivate the Live Forever Codex.

If the Blood Ancestor had succeeded with both codices, then he would have been able to break through to the Celestial

Realm!

He would have met the qualifications enforced by the gravekeeper to leave the Heavenspan Realm!

The Frigid Matriarch should have been the Blood Ancestor’s greatest enemy. But somehow, they fell in love with each other. And when they discovered the truth of the Celestial’s schemes… well, Bai Xiaochun had already been told that story by the Frigid Matriarch herself.

The Frigid Matriarch betrayed her Master, and joined with the Blood Ancestor to try to kill him!

In the end, the Blood Ancestor died, and sank to the bottom of the Heavenspan River, with only one, defiant hand stretching out above the surface of the water…. The Frigid Matriarch also perished. However, she managed to create a soulclone that possessed a true spirit. Afterward, she remained hidden in the Spirit Stream Sect, forever gazing into the distance at the Blood Ancestor… her Daoist partner.

Because of how things played out… the Celestial’s first chance to concoct the pill he desired ended in a failure.

But the Celestial didn’t give up. In the years that passed, he tried to come up with other ways to escape the world in which he was trapped. But at the same time, he kept the Undying Live Forever Pill in his back pocket, ready to use as a last resort.

If no one else came along who could master the Live Forever Codex, then perhaps the Celestial would have been forced to eventually abandon his insane plan. But then, his daughter, Du Lingfei… became the second person who was able to cultivate the technique!

Du Lingfei's bones slowly became crystal. And although she didn't advance by leaps and bounds like Bai Xiaochun had done with the Undying Codex, her rapid advancement in her cultivation proved that she wasn't very far behind him.

After all… she had the backing of the Celestial, and therefore, it was only natural that her cultivation would go easier than it would for others.

The Celestial was not completely cold-hearted when it came to the fact that his daughter was succeeding with the Live Forever Codex. On the one hand, he deeply desired to escape the Heavenspan Realm. But on the other hand, he still hesitated at the thought of sacrificing his own child.

It was that hesitation which led to the spectacular battle in the Wildlands, and his alliance with Ghostmother's soulclone. All of it had been an attempt to either kill the gravekeeper, or escape to the world beyond by using Ghostmother's battleship.

Unfortunately for him, all of his plans had failed. The Celestial began to descend into utter madness, and at the same time, constantly muttered, “Gravekeeper, you bastard, you're forcing me to do all of this!!”

As far as the Celestial was concerned, the gravekeeper really was forcing him down this path. It wasn't what he truly wanted, but he felt that he had no other choice. And thus, he had gone to war with the Wildlands.

He would end all life in the Wildlands, kill the gravekeeper, dispel the Underworld River, and end the bloodline of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. In the middle of all that, Bai Xiaochun became the next person after the Blood Ancestor to master the Undying Codex!

In the end, the Celestial had two choices. Sacrifice his own flesh and blood, or watch his longevity run out, and his hopes of escaping the Heavenspan Realm be dashed to pieces. Finally, he picked the former…. And considering how his initial attempt at this plan had failed, as soon as he made his decision, he placed a magical slave seal on Du Lingfei!

Then he simply waited for Bai Xiaochun to show up. After confirming that Bai Xiaochun had succeeded with the Undying Codex, he made his move. There was no one to stand in his way, and thus, he brought Bai Xiaochun from the Wildlands to Heavenspan Island.

Bai Xiaochun watched bitterly as Du Lingfei stepped out from behind the Celestial. Her expression was vacant, making her seem almost like a marionette or puppet. Furthermore, deep within her eyes, it was just possible to see the flickering slave seals.

“Boo….” he said, thinking back to how the Celestial had used the both of them to lure out the ghost face. He would never forget the disappointment and bitterness he had seen in her expression back then.

“Don’t hate me….” the Celestial said. “I never wanted to do this. It’s all the fault of the gravekeeper!!” Suddenly, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously, although it was possible to detect bitter sadness within the laughter, as well as madness.

The Celestial had truly gone crazy. It was visible in his eyes, as well as his smile, which looked completely different than it had in the past. Eyes bloodshot, he performed a right-handed incantation gesture and then pointed at Du Lingfei!

In response, Du Lingfei shivered and looked up slowly. Expression blank, she began to walk slowly toward Bai Xiaochun, who could do nothing other than watch her approach. When she stepped into the blood in the pool, it immediately stained her white garments black. At the same time, the greedy magical symbols began to crawl onto her and pass to and fro on her skin.

She stopped right in front of him, where she slowly reached out… and put her hand on top of his head. As she did, she began to glow with crystalline light….

At that point, the aura of the Live Forever Codex erupted out.

Chuckling endlessly, the Celestial shoved his right hand down onto the ground, causing the entire necropolis to tremble. The spell formation began to radiate dazzling light, and the bones which formed it melted. Even the remains of the three Arch-Emperors started melting away….

The melting of the bones caused the spell formation to glow even brighter. At the same time, the black blood began to bubble and seethe, sending more magical symbols wriggling onto Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei!

They began to pour into their eyes, ears, noses and mouths. The pain caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver, but what was worse was the anguish and rage he felt!

His anguish was because of what was happening to Du Lingfei, and his rage was because of the cruelty of the Celestial!

“Am I going to die…?” he thought. Again, he tried to call out to the Frigid Matriarch, but there was no response. Magical symbols rushed into him, causing him to glow with golden light that seemed to correlate perfectly to the crystalline glow coming off of Du Lingfei.

A resonance formed with the light of the spell formation, whereupon a shocking gravitational force erupted from Du Lingfei!

The gravitational force spread through Du Lingfei and into Bai Xiaochun, causing him to shiver. Looking dully at Du Lingfei, he… slowly closed his eyes.

However, when that happened, a look of intense struggle appeared in Du Lingfei’s eyes. A tremor ran through her, and suddenly she seemed like she might lift her hand off of his head. Apparently, despite the slave seal that had been placed on her, she instinctively refused to harm Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1006 awe-chapter-1007

The human body was still capable of reacting even under the control of a slave seal. Clearly, Du Lingfei had a tenacious determination in her heart to avoid hurting Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun felt the hand on the top of his head trembling, he opened his eyes to see Du Lingfei’s face twitching. Furthermore, the magical slave seals in her eyes were flickering dramatically…. A moment passed, and then, she moved her hand away!

“Boo….” he murmured. Off to the side, mixed emotions could be seen in the Celestial’s eyes. However, he quickly wiped them away with madness. Reaching his hand out, he pointed at his daughter.

She shivered, and the slave seals overwhelmed any sensation of pain she felt. She went still, and then… calmly put her hand back down on Bai Xiaochun’s head.

She looked at him with eyes that didn’t contain even a scrap of emotion, and yet, Bai Xiaochun could still sense her inner pain.

His lips parted as if he were about to say something, but instead, he stayed silent. This time, he didn’t close his eyes. He knew that his life was nearing its end, and therefore, in that final moment before he died, he would create an eternal memory of what he was seeing.

Rumbling sounds filled the necropolis as the bones melted into the spell formation. Then, an explosive force left Du

Lingfei’s hand and entered Bai Xiaochun’s head.

Intense pain raged through him as his life force, cultivation base, flesh, blood, and soul all began to rush toward Du Lingfei!

It was as if his body were being destroyed. His bones, blood, energy passageways, and everything else that made him up were being transformed into the ultimate type of life force….

That life force was what the Celestial needed, and what was currently rushing toward Du Lingfei….

Bai Xiaochun was the undying medicine, and Du Lingfei… was the pill furnace that could live forever….

After that pill furnace sucked in the medicine, it would sacrifice itself, withering up into death to produce… an Undying Live Forever Pill!

“Soon,” the Celestial muttered. “Very soon now…. I've been waiting my whole life to get this Undying Live Forever Pill….” He began chuckling loudly, his expression twisted and distorted in bizarre fashion as he watched his daughter absorbing Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was shaking violently, and was wracked with unprecedented levels of pain. He had endured much pain to cultivate the Undying Codex, but none of that could even come close to comparing to what he was feeling now.

He was beginning to wither up. His hair was even turning dry and brittle. His Undying Blood began to fade away, and his Undying Bones were turning dull and dark. His Undying Tendons, Undying Flesh, and Undying Skin… were all melting….

He couldn’t struggle or fight back. As he was emptied out, as his life force was sucked away, he slowly began to lose consciousness.

He suddenly thought back to everything he had done in the Wildlands. He thought of Bai Hao, the Giant Ghost King, Mistress Red-Dust and Zhou Yixing…. Then he thought of the River-Defying Sect….

He pictured Li Qinghou, Song Junwan, Master God-Diviner… and so many other faces. They seemed so vivid to him that he was sure he could reach out and touch them.

“The River-Defying Sect….” he murmured in a voice that only he and the dead could hear. As he weakened, his hair began to fall out, transforming into dust before it could even touch the surface of the black blood.

By now, he was so withered that he was like a candle flickering on the verge of winking out….

He wasn’t thinking about the River-Defying Sect anymore…. He was thinking about the eastern Lower Reaches… and the Spirit Stream Sect. It was as if all the memories of his life were flowing past him. He saw himself in front of the stone steles of plants and vegetation. He saw himself licking his lips as he eyed some spirit tail chickens….

He saw himself with Big Fatty Zhang. He saw his Master, who had perished before even taking him as an apprentice. He saw Hou Xiaomei. He saw so many things….

By now, he couldn’t breathe. He looked like brittle skin wrapped over dry bones. Rotting patches of death were spreading out to cover him… and his teeth began to fall out. As of this moment, he looked like a desiccated corpse that had been left in the grave for years and years….

The hand on top of his head was like a black hole sucking away at everything that was him, and filling him with a pain that he had already grown used to.

The Undying Codex was now eighty percent extracted from him, and it was the same with his life force. In his fading consciousness, he no longer saw the Spirit Stream Sect, but instead… Mount Hood.

On top of the mountain was a boy who was somehow holding seven or eight axes and cleavers, all at the same time. At the top of the mountain, he tossed the weapons aside… and even as thunder crashed in the sky, he lit a stick of incense.

It was a comical sight that made him want to smile. But he couldn't control his body, and was thus incapable. Perhaps that was a good thing, considering his current appearance. Smiling would have made him look even more horrifying.

As his consciousness continued to fade, he was fairly certain he could sense his soul beginning to rise up from inside of him, toward an all-consuming vortex….

He only had about ten percent of his life force left…. Cracks had begun to appear on his dried-up skin, to the point where the slightest brush of a hand would likely turn it into ash. It was the same with his five yin organs and six yang organs.

The power of the Undying Codex was now almost completely gone. Only a tiny scrap of it remained in his bones, which caused the faintest glimmer of gold to be visible through the ragged openings in his skin….

In that moment, he saw what would likely be the last image he ever saw…. A child crouched next to a bed, tears streaming down his face. As his parents began to breathe their last breaths, he began to weep, and then to wail….

“Xiaochun,” a weak voice murmured, “don’t be afraid….” A cold hand came to rest on his forehead. “Take this stick of incense…. Haven't you always dreamed of becoming an immortal…? Here, take it….”

The boy looked up through his tears to take the incense. Then, the hand which had moments ago lifted the incense up to him slowly dropped down. The boy’s tears flowed even harder.

The boy remained at the bedside in a daze. Eventually, the neighbors came into the room and carried him out. He saw many sympathetic gazes as his parents’ bodies were carried away…. The boy sat down in a corner, wrapped his arms tightly around his knees, and looked at the incense….

“Why do people die…? I… I want to live! I want all the people around me to live…. I want everyone to be happy! I want… to live forever!”

The boy's voice echoed away into silence inside of Bai Xiaochun’s mind, a figment of eternity….

He felt more tired than he ever had been in his entire life….

However, in that moment right before his consciousness disappeared… a teardrop fell down onto the parched skin of his arm. As it was absorbed into his skin, it seemed to merge into his rapidly devolving consciousness.

“A teardrop….” he murmured. He could sense the bitterness in it. Using his last scrap of energy, he opened his eyes, and could just barely make out… Du Lingfei, struggling against the slave seal. Even if it destroyed her, she was determined to remove her hand from the top of his head! Oh so slowly, her hand began to rise up!

Then she spoke in a voice laced with the utmost despair. “Daddy… I beg you….”

Although her words were spoken softly, they struck the Celestial like lightning. He began to tremble.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1007 awe-chapter-1008

The Celestial’s heart felt like it was about to be ripped to pieces. Things which had once been the most important in his life, but had vanished along the way, were suddenly brought right back to the forefront thanks to Du Lingfei’s words.

He suddenly saw her as a child, tugging at his garments and calling him *daddy* in her cute, girly voice…. He wasn’t sure exactly when it happened, but somewhere along the line… she had stopped calling him *daddy*, and started calling him *father*.

“Fei’er….” he said, trembling physically, his pupils constricting.

After all… this was his daughter, his own flesh and blood.

The Celestial was the mighty ruler of the entire world, and yet, had never had many Daoist partners. Over all the years, he had never had a son. Du Lingfei was his only daughter, and in fact, his only child.

The Celestial had been so focused on escaping the Heavenspan Realm that Du Lingfei’s mother had never meant much to him. She had long since passed away.

The Celestial’s heart was currently being ripped two ways; in one direction by his humanity, and in the other by his desires.

The part that represented his humanity was screaming at him furiously. “You’re really willing to sacrifice your own flesh and blood just to live a bit longer? Just to get off of this world? Is it really worth it…?”

On one side was his daughter, and on the other was his longevity, and his deep, insane desire to escape this prison he was in….

Du Lingfei was currently in the middle of a struggle… and so was the Celestial!

“Daddy… please….” Du Lingfei had begun to weep. She trembled physically as she fought against the slave seal. Every time she pushed against the magic of the seal, intense force slammed into her mind, making it feel like her soul might collapse at any moment. “Daddy, is it worth it…? I'm your daughter!! I beg you, daddy. I beg you....”

And yet, she wouldn’t give up. She didn't want to hurt Bai Xiaochun, and also didn't want to see her father like this. In her pain, she was like a helpless child who could do nothing more than beg and plead….

The father she remembered was not like this. Worse, she couldn't remember when he had changed…. When had he become a stranger, a person who would actually hurt her?

Upon parting with Bai Xiaochun in the north, she had returned to Heavenspan Island. Gradually, she came to find that her mind was slowing down, and eventually, she heard a complex, emotional howl from the Palace of the Dao. It was her father, the Celestial. That was when she lost control of her own body. And yet, she never lost her consciousness. Eventually, she watched herself consuming Bai Xiaochun’s life force, and watched him dying, and the pain became too much to bear.

“Daddy….” she said, trembling as the slave seal began to slowly collapse as she fought back against it. However, it was at this point that the Celestial looked up, his eyes burning with madness.

“Shut up! Shut the hell up!!” As his shout echoed out like thunder, the madness in his eyes grew even more intense, and all the warmth of humanity that existed inside of him was wiped away!

He shoved his memories of Du Lingfei away as surely as if he had cut them with a blade!

He was no longer Du Lingfei’s father. He was the Celestial, someone who didn’t care about anything other than his longevity and his hopes for the future!

“Fuse with Bai Xiaochun. That is your mission. Combine the *undying* with that which can *live forever*. That is the entire purpose of your existence!” Face twisting with vicious coldness, he waved his finger out in front of him.

The slave seals in Du Lingfei’s eyes glowed so brightly they turned red. It was as if her mind was being suppressed, and as she lost control, she slowly reached back out toward the top of Bai Xiaochun’s head.

As her hand neared, it trembled, and Du Lingfei’s eyes twitched. Despite how furiously the slave seals were controlling her, she was still trying to resist. Crystalline light shone brightly as she murmured, “I… won’t….”

Tears streamed down her face and fell onto Bai Xiaochun. Blue veins bulged out on her face from the effort of speaking, and bloody wounds could be seen as her skin ripped and tore from the effort of fighting against the slave seals. She looked like she was about to collapse both physically and in terms of her divine sense. And yet, she wouldn’t stop fighting.

As of this moment, it was possible to see Du Lingfei’s unswerving determination. She had made her decision. She would rather destroy herself than betray what she believed in!

Bai Xiaochun could barely see what was happening. Virtually all of his life force was gone, and his mind was in chaos. His lips parted to speak, and yet, he didn’t even have the energy to say a single word.

The tears falling onto his parched skin created rippling waves in his heart….

When the Celestial saw that Du Lingfei was about to destroy herself, his anger flared.

“Unfilial bitch!” he shouted, striding forward into the black pool of liquid.

The black liquid began to swirl about even faster, and the magical symbols all shied away from the Celestial.

Ignoring them, he stepped up to Du Lingfei and put his left hand onto her head, and then placed his right hand onto Bai Xiaochun’s.

Tightening his fingers, he pushed both of their heads toward each other!

“You know, according to my original plan, after I refined you into an Undying Live Forever Pill and left this prison of a world, I would eventually become an archaean, and then figure out a way to resurrect you….

“Why must you rebel against me? Why?!?!

“Why do you go so far as to defy me?!?!”

The Celestial’s twisted expression was terrifying. He radiated a sensation of complete madness. As for Du Lingfei, she tried to fight back, but was powerless to do so. With the Celestial forcing her head toward Bai Xiaochun’s, there was nothing she could do, not even kill herself.

As the Celestial forced Du Lingfei and Bai Xiaochun closer to each other, the radiant golden and crystalline lights began to swirl together with glittering radiance.

“All I wanted you to do was consume Bai Xiaochun!” the Celestial raged. “All I asked you to do was become an Undying Live Forever Pill…. If I had any other choice, I wouldn’t do this!” Apparently, it was only by shouting at the top of his lungs that the Celestial could convince himself that what he was saying made sense.

“I can’t simply gamble that the Worldgate can be opened after the gravekeeper dies. What if it’s sealed for all eternity? At that point, it wouldn’t matter if I got the technique! Therefore, I have no choice but to refine you two into a pill *now*. Then, I can finally acquire the Undying Live Forever Technique, and be unstoppable!

“I can’t bet on what I don’t know! If the world ends up sealed, I’ll never be able to change it. I have no choice here. If you were in my position, you would do the same thing!!

“With that pill… I will no longer be a quasi-celestial. I will be a true celestial! I will conform to the requirements of the will of this world, and will be able to leave!

“Why are you defying me!?!? You’re just like your Eldest Sister! She defied me too! Why!?!? She did it for the Blood Ancestor, and you for Bai Xiaochun? *Why?!?!*

“All I have to do is get out of here and become an archaean! Then I can resurrect you!!

“How can the two of you… be so selfish!!?” The Celestial was screaming so loudly that in the outside world, wild colors flashed in the sky, and raging winds screamed across the Heavenspan Sea, causing huge waves to rise up.

In the depths of the Palace of the Dao, the Celestial’s energy radiated out, provoked by his emotions. The spell formation was reaching its pinnacle of power, and as the black liquid in the pool spun faster and faster, the bones in the necropolis melted, and began to fuse with Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei!

Apparently, the spell formation was now acting like an enormous pill furnace, refining the ingredients therein to create…

An Undying Live Forever Pill!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1008 awe-chapter-1009

This was the most intense moment of deadly crisis Bai Xiaochun had ever experienced during his entire life. There was nothing he could do to stop what was happening. He didn't even have the strength to struggle. With the Celestial having physically taken matters into his own hands, it seemed a foregone conclusion how things would end up.

Bai Xiaochun’s path of cultivation would end with Du Lingfei, the two of them refined into a medicinal pill by this enormous spell formation, which the Celestial would then use to transcend the bounds of the world in which he lived.

Never could he have imagined that things would end up like this, not even after having been told by the Frigid Matriarch that he would eventually have a falling out with the Celestial.

Bai Xiaochun had always naively believed that because of Du Lingfei, the Celestial wouldn’t do anything too harmful to him. Furthermore, he had the gravekeeper and Bai Hao on his side, and a vast array of secret weapons that had filled him with confidence.

Except… all of that had been as realistic as the reflection of the moon on a shimmering lake….

He was losing consciousness, yet strangely, Du Lingfei’s aura also gave him a strange sense of clarity.

“What if all of this… is part of the gravekeeper’s plan…?” he murmured.

Seemingly in concert with Bai Xiaochun’s speculation, the gravekeeper, who sat cross-legged in the pagoda in the ruins of the third level of the subterranean Arch-Emperor City, opened his turbid eyes.

“Bai Xiaochun,” he murmured bitterly, “I hope… that you won’t hate me. This is my mission… and the mission of the Hell-Emperor.” His gaze penetrated the void, passing to the ends of the Wildlands, to a huge river that no one could see. There in the inky, endlessly flowing darkness was the antithesis of all of the life force of the Heavenspan Sea. This river… represented death.

Its waters were filled with infinite vengeful souls, all of them howling and screaming as they were carried along by the river water into the cycle of reincarnation….

Its name: the Underworld River.

At the furthest end of the Underworld River… was a pitch-black palace, rife with an aura of death. It was cold beyond belief, without even the slightest hint of a flame anywhere.

It was… the Underworld Palace!

Sitting inside of the palace, clad in imperial robes, was the reigning Hell-Emperor, Bai Hao. Radiating off of him was an intense aura of death.

He normally wore a stern expression, but now, his face was a mask of anxiety. His mood affected the Underworld Palace and the Underworld River, causing waves to spread out across its surface.

He had personally witnessed the Celestial’s enormous hand defeat the gravekeeper, as well as his own attempt to interfere.

He had watched helplessly as the sinister Celestial took Bai Xiaochun away, and although he couldn’t be sure of all the details, he was convinced that his Master was in critical danger!

And he knew that the only person in the world who could save his Master… was himself!

He well knew how weak the gravekeeper was, and that he could pass away into death at any moment. Sadly, Bai Hao also knew that, despite being the Hell-Emperor, he was currently not a match for the Celestial….

“Master….” he murmured bitterly. Many memories floated up in his mind, memories of the time he had spent with his Master in the Wildlands.

Bai Xiaochun was his only family, and there was no one who Bai Hao felt more gratitude to than him. He had even sworn an oath to protect him with his own life….

His days spent with his Master… were the happiest he had ever experienced.

The memories faded away… leaving behind a single image, an image that would always be a part of his soul.

It was an image of Bai Xiaochun standing there with his back to him, calmly accepting him as an apprentice….

“Master….” Bai Hao murmured, smiling. It was a smile filled with staunch determination!

He knew that if he wanted to go to Heavenspan Island and take his Master away from the Celestial… then there was only one way to do it!

And that was… to concoct something that could break through the limitations of the world itself…. Twenty-two-colored flame!

It hadn't mattered to Bai Hao that Bai Xiaochun was already a deva. He had continued his auguries and research into twenty-two-colored flame. Eventually, he had come to the realization that in this world, the limit for flame conjuring was twenty-one-colored flame.

With the exception of some special circumstances, it would be impossible to succeed with twenty-two-colored flame. According to the limitations of the world, everything from twenty-one-colored flame and below was considered mortal fire. However, everything from twenty-two-colored flame onward was immortal fire!

There could be nothing more powerful in this world than a twenty-two-colored flame, if it appeared. In fact, it could burn anything that existed.

Fire like that could be used to fight the Celestial, and could enable Bai Hao to rescue Bai Xiaochun!

Unfortunately… there were no souls within this world that could be used to concoct a twenty-two-colored flame. Even using all of the souls within the Underworld River would yield nothing more than the limit of twenty-one.

"There's only one way…." he thought, shivering with fear. After a moment, though, the determination in his eyes grew stronger!

It was a method Bai Hao had come to understand due to two reasons. The first was that Miao Lin'er's clan had attempted to use him to conjure a flame. The second was that he was now the Hell-Emperor. That method was to use his own soul… to conjure that most consummate of flames… a twenty-two-colored flame!

That was the only way!

And since Bai Hao was the Hell-Emperor, and had complete control of the Underworld River, that meant that he controlled all of the souls that were part of the cycle of reincarnation!

“Master… I *can* save you….”

As he smiled, tears streamed down his cheeks, but his decision had been made.

The price to pay was enormous, but he could accept it… without any regrets!

Soon, Bai Hao… would cease to exist. And yet… he had no complaints!

Bai Xiaochun was his Master. In the moment that he had kowtowed to become an apprentice, he had decided… that he would do anything to pay back that kindness!

His tears were not corporeal. As they fell from his face, they became a part of the Underworld River. Sighing, he rose to his feet, then threw his hands wide.

“Souls, come to me!” The endless torrent of vengeful souls outside of the Underworld Palace surged and began to head in his direction, forming a massive vortex.

Bai Hao performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, then touched his forehead, which caused his entire body to burst into flames!

It was a one-colored flame….

His hands began to blur with incantation gestures as the surrounding sea of souls spun and spun. One soul after another entered Bai Hao, causing the flames that surrounded him to flicker in astonishing fashion.

Two-colored flame. Three-colored flame. Four-colored flame….

In only a few breaths worth of time, the sea of fire surrounding Bai Hao reached epic proportions. It was soon featured sixteen colors!

And things kept going!

If there was anyone in the entire world who could surpass Bai Xiaochun when it came to conjuring flames… then that person was his apprentice, the Hell-Emperor Bai Hao!

Rumbling sounds continued to echo out as the flames burned around Bai Hao. Countless souls dove madly into him as a seventeenth color appeared, then an eighteenth and a nineteenth….

Things weren’t over yet!

The determination in Bai Hao’s eyes couldn’t have been more intense. Waving both arms out in front of him, he caused the entire Underworld River to shudder from beginning to end.

Twenty colors!

Twenty-one colors!

At that point, Bai Hao looked out into the void and unleashed an incredible howl.

At that point… his soul began to burn. With that power, along with the souls from the Underworld River, and with the river itself as the base, Bai Hao's eyes slowly lit up with twenty-one colors…. And then, another color appeared!

It was… a twenty-two-colored flame!

Nothing happened out in the Wildlands when the twenty-two-colored flame appeared. Everything seemed normal. The cultivators continued to fight, and yet, their hearts suddenly quivered. It was as if their souls were trembling due to the imminent arrival of some powerful, invisible force!

Nascent Soul cultivators. Devas. Even the demigods…. All of them were so shaken that they gasped!

It wasn’t just in the Wildlands that such things happened. All living beings in the lands of Heavenspan, from cultivators to animals, even the vegetation and the mortals, all reacted similarly. Then, high in the sky appeared… the world net!!

At that point, all beings in the world heard a voice. Although it was only a murmur, the pressure weighing down on them was impossible to even describe!

“Master… I’m coming to save you!”

--

Er Gen released this picture of Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao around when this chapter originally came out, so I thought it was good to save this one for here. It depicts the moment recalled in this very chapter. I'll add this to the AWE art page after this chapter gets released publicly.

耳根

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1009 awe-chapter-1010

It was a voice filled with the deepest faith!

It was a voice filled with fearless madness!

It was a voice that revealed a deep reverence for a Master, the type that could not be erased even by the destruction of the body!

Heaven and earth rumbled as flames spread out across the sky of the Wildlands. Cultivators from both sides of the conflict looked up in utter shock, with many of them gasping aloud!

“The sky… is on fire?!?!”

“The heavens are aflame! How… how could this be happening?!?!”

“Look… there’s a person inside that fire!!”

The enormous figure which appeared inside of the flame slowly looked up, fixing his gaze on the distant Heavenspan Sea. As he did, his features became clear to the cultivators down below in the Wildlands.

Soon, the savages, soul cultivators, heavenly marquises and heavenly dukes began to cry out in astonishment.

“That’s… the Hell-Emperor!!”

“The Hell-Emperor!!”

As everyone in the Wildlands reeled in shock, Bai Hao began to speed toward the Heavenspan Sea with mountain-toppling, sea-draining energy radiating around him in the form of the sky-wide sea of fire!

The fire was spectacular to an indescribable degree, to the point where anyone who looked at it would assume that it could burn the entire world to a crisp.

As for the Heavenspan Sea, the incoming fire instantly whipped it up into a frenzy, as though it wished to block its path. However, any such efforts were useless!

The fire closed in from the direction of the Wildlands, covering the entire sky above the Heavenspan Sea. The flames, which contained Bai Hao’s will, then began to rush toward Heavenspan Island!

The sea didn’t seem capable of standing up to the burning heat of the fire, and began to evaporate, releasing boundless energy of heaven and earth.

It was so unprecedentedly strong that it quickly spread out into the entire world, reaching even as far as the Wildlands….

Plants suddenly sprouted, and flowers bloomed. Animals roared, and all living things were deeply shaken!

However, they also felt instinctively uneasy. After all, these levels of spiritual energy were clearly not a natural occurrence. They were more like when a cultivator burned his or her own soul to gain dangerous levels of power!

The Heavenspan Sea was not without end, and as it evaporated and poured incredible spiritual energy out into the world, it did so in a way that couldn’t be replenished!

And yet… Bai Hao didn’t care about that. He had surpassed the limits of the world by creating twenty-two-colored flame, and had even placed his own soul on the road to sacrifice to do it.

And there was only one reason for all of that….

Bai Hao knew that he didn’t have much time to work with!!

Just like the evaporation of the Heavenspan Sea, using his own soul to conjure twenty-two-colored flame was a path that could not be returned from. Now that his soul was aflame, it would only be a short period of time before it was burned into nothing. At that point, the twenty-two-colored flame would vanish!

Time was of the essence, and therefore, Bai Hao immediately made his move on Heavenspan Island!

If this moment were frozen in time and depicted artistically, the sky would not be visible, nor would the Heavenspan Sea. The only thing visible would be… an endless sea of fire, descending with ultimate madness onto Heavenspan Island!

As of this moment, Heavenspan Island did not exist within the Heavenspan Sea. Instead, it existed within heavenly flame! Its beaches melted, its lands were scorched black, and crevices ripped open everywhere!

A roar like that of a furious giant echoed out in all directions as the fire completely engulfed the entire island.

Many parts of the island began to explode, sending rock and rubble flying about, which was almost instantly transformed into ash!

It was as if Bai Hao’s plan to save Bai Xiaochun was to simply burn Heavenspan Island completely away!

Rumbling sounds filled the world as the sea of fire became a huge mouth which consumed Heavenspan Island!

The plants on the island vanished…. Mountains turned bright red and then shattered, the resulting debris instantly becoming ash!

There was little need to mention the beautiful buildings which filled the island. They were burned away within moments. The valuable medicinal plants that had once grown in abundance were destroyed, as was the lake of Heavenspan Sea water, and the waterfall.

Thankfully, Bai Hao was by nature a kind person, and controlled the fire in a way that spared the special guards, who fled in complete astonishment.

“This… this….”

“Someone’s attacking Heavenspan Island…?”

There were two old men among the special guards who were actually demigods! They were none other than the famed Heavenspan Island divine guards! And yet even they were completely flabbergasted by this raging fire. They couldn’t even approach the flames, and were forced to watch from a distance as the flames engulfed the island, and rushed specifically toward… the huge statue of the Celestial, his Palace of the Dao!

The two mountains to either side turned bright red, and then exploded into ash. At the same time, the flames engulfed the statue of the Celestial.

Everyone watching could see it melt. Within a few breaths of time, the statue which had stood for so many years was reduced to a lump of slag, which then dissolved into ash….

The entire Palace of the Dao… was wiped out of existence!

The moment the Arch-Emperor Dynasty had been driven out of the lands of Heavenspan, this island had become a holy land…. But now, fire rained down from the heavens and wiped it out of existence….

On what was left of the island, many of the flames converged together, revealing… an enormous flame giant, radiating an aura that caused the entire world to tremble!

The giant wore imperial robes made of flame, and a fiery imperial crown. When he spoke, it was in a roar that caused everything in the area to shake violently.

“Master, I’m here to save you!”

The special guards were struck to the core, and their minds began to spin out of control.

And yet, the burning destruction wasn’t over yet!

As the giant roared, the rest of the sea of fire, having destroyed everything on the surface of the island, began to pour into the crevices which had opened up in it!

Their destination was none other than the huge spell formation in the necropolis!

The spell formation was in full operation at the moment. The bones, and the remains of the three Arch-Emperors, had fully melted, and were now part of the spell formation.

Roughly half of the black liquid was gone, having turned into countless magical symbols that crawled over Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei.

As for the Celestial, he stood there, a vicious expression on his face as he kept his hands locked onto the heads of Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei.

“Fuse! Fuse!! Fuse, dammit!!!”

Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei were trembling nonstop, and seemed just on the verge… of fusing together….

And that was when the necropolis began to split apart. It was as if doomsday had arrived! The rock walls began to glow red, and then simply exploded, allowing torrents of fire to burst inside!

It was as if… the world were descending into a fiery apocalypse!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1010 awe-chapter-1011

How could the Celestial not be aware of what was occurring outside of the necropolis? However, the critical moment in the fusion process had come, and he couldn’t afford to be distracted. At the moment, he wouldn’t care if the entire world and everyone in it died, much less Heavenspan Island. To him, only the task at hand was important!

“Fuse, dammit!” he shouted, sending some of his cultivation base power out to block the sea of fire, and using some of it to try to force Bai Xiaochun and Du Lingfei to fuse together.

“Master!!” Bai Hao cried from within the flames. The first thing he had seen upon entering the necropolis was his Master, unconscious and in the hands of the Celestial, who was trying to force him to fuse with Du Lingfei….

It was a scene that almost immediately drove Bai Hao into utter madness. Howling, he advanced toward Bai Xiaochun with increased speed from within the twenty-two-colored flame. As he did, the rock walls melted, and intense rumbling sounds echoed out.

The burning heat and shocking aura of the flame immediately caused the Celestial’s expression to flicker.

Shockingly, the defensive measures he had thrown up with his cultivation base were absolutely powerless against these flames.

“What kind of fire is that?!?!” The Celestial’s heart was already starting to pound because of this intense flame, the power of which surpassed anything he could ever have predicted.

In the blink of an eye, the fire was inside of the Celestial’s defenses, past Du Lingfei… and right next to Bai Xiaochun!

Then… it let out a blast of power!!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

Power which surpassed the limitations of the world created something like a wall of fire that shoved violently against the Celestial!

The Celestial’s face was one of vicious fury, and his eyes blazed with cruelty and madness.

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Hao?!” he roared, unleashing the energy of a quasi-celestial. He hoped to destroy the fire, but it was too hot, and in fact, filled him with a sensation of imminent, deadly crisis!

“Just… just what kind of fire is this?!” Even the Celestial was forced to retreat in the face of the heat. Also pushed away was… Du Lingfei!

She had long since lost consciousness, so as soon as the force pushed against her, she was ripped away from Bai Xiaochun and thrown off into the distance!

Rumbling sounds echoed out continuously as the wall of flames continued to push the Celestial away. Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it actually happened in only a split second!

After Du Lingfei and the Celestial were pushed away, the flames once again formed into the shape of Bai Hao, who stood there… right in front of the unconscious Bai Xiaochun!

Because of the shock which came from the interruption of the fusion process, as well as the heat of the flames, Bai Xiaochun suddenly regained a bit of consciousness.

He forced his eyes open, and although they were listless and mostly blank, when he saw the fire and Bai Hao, he weakly murmured, “Hao’er….”

In response, Bai Hao shivered, and his eyes flickered with profound grief. As for Bai Xiaochun, it seemed that his life force was on the verge of being completely exterminated, and he slowly closed his eyes. At that point, the pain Bai Hao felt in his heart reached the ultimate pinnacle.

“I’ll take care of everything, Master!” he said through gritted teeth. By this point, he could sense that his soul was on the verge of vanishing, which meant that the twenty-two-colored flame would only last for a bit longer.

Right now, the most important thing to do was save his Master. And Bai Hao could sense that Bai Xiaochun’s injuries were unprecedentedly severe…. His life force was ninety-nine percent gone!

He only had a tiny scrap of energy left….

Any delay could lead to Bai Xiaochun being killed in body and soul! His body would cease to live, and his Dao would vanish forever!

It was the most critical of moments, and therefore, Bai Hao didn’t hesitate for even a moment. Howling, he retracted the wall of flames, which caused a sudden burst of teleportation power to appear.

He was using twenty-two-colored flame, something that surpassed the limitations of the world itself, to perform a teleportation, and whisk Bai Xiaochun away!

“How dare you, Bai Hao!!” To see all of his hopes about to be taken away caused the Celestial to descend into further rage and madness.

How could he possibly just sit there and watch as Bai Hao saved Bai Xiaochun?!

“Disperse, you trifling sea of fire!”

The Celestial was shocked by the power of the flame, but that didn’t stop the pressure of his will from exploding out. It caused the air to split and rip, and the sky overhead to shake. In fact, all of the lands of Heavenspan began to tremble.

At the moment, the Celestial possessed the power of an entire world, as well as its fury!

His energy skyrocketed, and in the blink of an eye, the seawater began to seethe, and the lands began to quake so hard that crevices opened up everywhere!

The Celestial’s aura, his cultivation base, and all of the pressure roiling off of him reached a fever pitch as he lifted his right foot and then took a step forward!

As he did that, his aura, his cultivation base, and the pressure took physical form. An enormous Dharma Idol materialized, which then lunged toward the flames!

Radiant color shone off of the Dharma Idol, which seemed to encompass the power of wind, rain, thunder and lightning! Shockingly, this was the will of the world itself, which was now attempting to contest with the twenty-two-colored flame!

Energy levels like this could destroy the heavens and extinguish the earth!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

The fire which surpassed the limitations of the world suddenly trembled. Inside of it, Bai Hao was shaking visibly, as though an enormous invisible hand were closing around him to crush him out of existence!

Bai Hao wanted to keep his soul burning to power the flame, but the power of the Celestial was too incredible. With every step the Celestial took, the twenty-two-colored flame was forced backward, and also shrank down!

“Nobody can stop me from saving my Master! Not even you… Daoist Heavenspan!!” As the Celestial approached, Bai Hao howled and stretched his arms wide. He glanced back at Bai Xiaochun with a look of sorrow and departure, then decisively waved both hands through the air in front of him!!

“Burn! Burn my soul! Burn all of me!!” Laughing loudly, Bai Hao… ignited the forty percent of his soul that remained!!

He was going all out! He was holding absolutely nothing back!!

The twenty-two-colored flame which the Celestial had been battling against suddenly flared to life with madness. The Celestial’s face fell.

“Noooo!!” he screamed. But the twenty-two-colored flame was just as fear-inspiring as before, despite how he had suppressed it to a certain degree. And now that Bai Hao was burning his entire being, even the Celestial was forced to back away.

His eyes were completely bloodshot, and filled with madness as he watched the power of teleportation building up inside of the sea of fire. At that point, a howl of rage erupted from his lips that everyone in the world could hear.

“Four rivers form the heavenly bones!” All of a sudden, the Heavenspan Realm began to tremble, and ghost images of the four rivers and the lands that bordered them rose up into the sky, almost like enormous souls!

“A golden sea to act as flesh!” Blue veins bulged out on the Celestial’s face and neck as he waved both hands through the air. Instantly, the waters of the Heavenspan Sea began to float up. In the blink of an eye, they connected with the souls of the four rivers. Shockingly, the souls of the four rivers were like bones, and the seawater was like flesh, creating an enormous, golden hand!

The hand emitted an aura that caused all living things in the Heavenspan Realm to tremble. This was… really and truly, the hand of the world!!

And it was now moving toward Heavenspan Island!

It blotted out the heavens as it moved with incredible speed toward the sea of fire on the island, which had still not teleported away!

Despair rose up in Bai Hao’s heart, and he smiled bitterly. Although his burning soul was powerful enough to contend with the hand of the world itself… he couldn’t evade it. The teleportation would be interrupted, and his soul… would be gone. There would be no second chance for escape….

However, it was in that very moment that… from the direction of the eastern Heavenspan River, or more precisely, from the sect headquarters of the River-Defying Sect, a blood qi suddenly appeared…

That raged into the highest heavens!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1011 awe-chapter-1012

Along with the raging blood qi, a blood-red beam of light appeared in the air over Heavenspan Island. It came from the east, causing all the lands to tremble and quake as it pierced through the air!

Within that blood-colored light was… an enormous blood spear!

It was fully 30,000 meters long, and as it closed in, it became clear that its target was not the island itself. Instead, it was the enormous world hand formed from the souls of the four rivers and the Heavenspan Sea!

It moved with shocking speed, and when it slammed into the world hand, it unleashed a deafening boom.

“Blood Ancestor!” the Celestial howled, his face twisted with rage. “You’re not dead!?!?”

Unfortunately for him, his shout could do nothing to prevent the blood spear from hitting the world hand. The spear began to crumble into pieces upon impact, and yet, it caused the hand to falter slightly on its path toward Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun!

That slight pause was enough!

Bai Hao, who had been in the middle of smiling bitterly, suddenly caused his soul to burn with even more intensity, instantly completing the buildup of teleportation power!

Bai Hao’s flame form wrapped Bai Xiaochun up and then vanished from Heavenspan Island!

The unconscious Bai Xiaochun struggled to open his eyes, but all he could see was vaguely flickering flames. And yet… he was still able to detect a raging blood qi that was very similar to his own!

Back on Heavenspan Island, the Celestial howled with rage and madness, causing the world to shake, and icy coldness to spread out in all directions!

“Damn you, Blood Ancestor! You… you’re not dead!?!?” The Celestial was filled with so much rage it defied description. He had sacrificed his own flesh and blood, had paid the highest of prices, and yet, in the end… he yet again failed in the critical moment.

He failed every time, a fact that pushed him into pure insanity.

“Damn all of you! I hope you all die!! You won’t escape, Bai Xiaochun!!” As the Celestial howled, the world hand began to grow larger, and simultaneously speed in the direction of the Wildlands in pursuit of Bai Hao.

However, it was in that very moment that another surge of blood qi erupted from the sect headquarters of the River-Defying Sect! And this time, the levels of energy involved vastly surpassed the last eruption!

The entire world turned the color of blood, and the source was…

The eastern Heavenspan region!

The sect headquarters of the River-Defying Sect!

All of the disciples who were still in the sect were completely and utterly shaken. In fact, they began to flee, their expressions those of incredulity and shock. The focus of their gazes… was something towering up in the very middle of the River-Defying Sect, something that was viewed as a precious treasure of the sect itself… the fleshly body of the Blood Ancestor!

He was matchlessly tall, a giant who stood right next to the Dire Skybanyan, and had remained in place for countless years without moving of his own volition. For all intents and purposes, he was a corpse.

But right now, the Blood Ancestor was actually moving! Soil and dirt that had built up on his skin over the years began to crack and fall off in pieces, falling down to the earth far below.

His hand, once the home of the Blood Stream Sect, twitched, causing more dirt and soil to crumble down toward the ground.

Deep within the Blood Ancestor, his withered heart suddenly began to beat….

Thump thump! Thump thump!

The pounding of his heart echoed out as blood-colored light poured from it into his blood vessels. Streams of fresh blood then began to flow out into his body!

His blood vessels were… regenerating!

The process happened extremely quickly, with maddening speed. Soon, the beating of his heart became so loud that it was audible outside of his body!

The cultivators in the River-Defying Sect all gasped, and began to cry out in alarm.

“The Blood Ancestor… the Blood Ancestor… he….”

“Heavens, what’s going on here?!?!”

“He’s... he’s alive?!”

The Blood Stream Division was especially shocked. After all, this was their reserve precious treasure, something that had aided all of them in their cultivation over the years. They had imitated the Blood Ancestor, and used him to create all sorts of divine abilities. And now… he was coming back to life!!

In the past, the Blood Ancestor could move when the disciples of the Blood Stream Division pooled their power to control him. But now… no one was controlling him. Therefore, the sound of his heart beating cause waves of shock to rise up within all of the disciples who were present to observe.

Soon, the sound was as loud as thunder from the heavens. Even more shocking was the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering life force which began to burn inside of him!

Because of it, and because of the raging blood qi, all heaven and earth became stained as if with blood! The Blood Ancestor was coming back to life!

No longer did he radiate an aura of death. Instead, he thrummed with astonishing fleshly body power!

However… it was only a resurrection of his fleshly body. The Blood Ancestor was coming to life physically, but… he had no soul!

And yet… as the Blood Ancestor's fleshly body awoke, and his life force flourished, a monkey appeared on a mountain in the Spirit Stream Sect. This monkey had first appeared years ago when Bai Xiaochun concocted medicinal pills in the Spirit Stream Sect!

An unprecedentedly serious expression could be seen on his face right now, as well as a look of determination.

“It’s time for me to pay back what is owed…. I should be dead, so it's been a true blessing to be able to come back for these short years…. The gravekeeper wants me to restore your soul? That’s a fair trade!” The monkey laughed as his body withered up and then transformed into ash, revealing a soul!

It was not the monkey’s soul, but rather, the discarnate soul of some unknown entity. And it immediately began to fly toward the Blood Ancestor!

In another location in the River-Defying Sect was a rabbit. A wistful smile could be seen on his face as he closed his eyes and collapsed into ash, revealing another soul that also began to fly toward the Blood Ancestor!

It wasn’t just the monkey and the rabbit that did this. In another location in the lands of Heavenspan was a winged tiger, crouching in a mountainous valley. A tremor ran through it, after which it threw its head back and howled. As it did, it collapsed into ash, and a discarnate soul flew out!

The same thing happened with a certain flock of birds, a colony of ants, and a group of geese…. All of the bizarre entities that had come into existence thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s pill concocting efforts all transformed into ash….

As they did, the souls they had been carrying in their bodies flew up into the air and headed toward the River-Defying Sect!

Countless discarnate souls flew into the River-Defying Sect, and then entered the body of the Blood Ancestor. When the final one arrived, the Blood Ancestor shivered.

Then, a growling sound echoed out from his throat to fill the entire world!

“I held my breath yesterday, to awaken today.... Finally, I'm back!” In that moment, the Blood Ancestor... opened his eyes!

A shocking murderous aura erupted out like a tempest, a murderous aura filled... with tempestuous hatred!

“I've come back for you... Celestial!!!” All of the soil and dirt which had once existed on the Blood Ancestor was gone, revealing a god of battle who leaped into the air and began to fly in the direction of Heavenspan Island, seething with hatred and madness!

It was in that moment that, in the imperial palace of Arch-Emperor City, the Arch-Emperor stood looking in the direction of Spirit Advent City, which had fallen, and was burning to the ground. In fact, streams of soul cultivators were fleeing from there toward Arch-Emperor City.

All of a sudden, at tremor passed through the Arch-Emperor, as he sensed a type of blood qi which existed in legends.

“That’s... that’s....” The Arch-Emperor was so shocked he almost couldn’t speak.

Far below, in the third level of Arch-Emperor City, within the ruined, crumbling pagoda, the gravekeeper sat there cross-legged in meditation. Yet again, his eyes slowly opened to look at Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao, who were materializing in front of him, wreathed in flames.

“The final phase of the plan… can now begin….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1012 awe-chapter-1013

Everyone in the River-Defying Sect was completely stunned as the Blood Ancestor launched into the air, radiating an astonishing blood qi that caused all creation to turn the color of blood.

Within his eyes burned madness and vengeance that originated from countless years in the past. He was a bright beam of light that cut through the air and headed directly toward… Heavenspan Island!!

Mountains crumbled because of his passage, and the Heavenspan Sea parted as surely as if it had been cut with a gigantic blade. A huge line appeared, stretching directly from the eastern river all the way to Heavenspan Island!

It was so deep that the seafloor was visible at the bottom, with two cliffs of water on either side!

Even the powerful Celestial was shocked, and instantly ceased any attempt to chase after Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun!

However, there was something different to this blood qi compared to Bai Xiaochun’s. Although the Blood Ancestor had reached the great circle of the Undying Codex, he currently had no cultivation base to back it up. And yet, because of his bloodline, his fleshly body power was even more shocking…. He was a descendant of the original Arch-Emperor, and therefore, the power he could draw upon from the Undying Codex actually surpassed Bai Xiaochun’s!

After all, the Undying Codex had originally been designed for use by the Arch-Emperor’s descendants!

Furthermore, the Blood Ancestor had been famous for many years. He had built up much more blood qi throughout his extended cultivation of the Undying Codex. And back when he had died, although it seemed like his blood qi vanished, it had actually remained hidden, deep within him. Bai Xiaochun, who had just made his breakthrough, couldn’t possibly compare to that.

Now, all of that power erupted out into the open, and it was far greater than the power of an ordinary demigod. It was very close to the great circle, and created an aura that even Daoist Heavenspan was surprised by!

If that were all there were to it, it might not have been a big deal. However, when the Blood Ancestor awoke, he could sense Bai Xiaochun’s existence, and could tell that he was not a descendant of the Arch-Emperor. Because of that, he immediately had an idea of what the gravekeeper was planning to do. It was a different plan than the gravekeeper had explained to him on the eve of his own death. But the Blood Ancestor didn’t care about that.

“If the gravekeeper picked him… then that’s fine…. I brought shame to the original ancestor. I don’t deserve to lead the people of this world out into the heavens…. I don't deserve to fulfil the founder’s wishes… I just wanted to live an ordinary life with Ling'er….

“The Celestial murdered Ling'er right in front of me. But now I'm awake…. I won’t stay alive for long… but I *must* see the Celestial dead!!” The Blood Ancestor was laughing and crying at the same time, his eyes shining with madness!

“Maybe I can’t kill him myself… but I can prevent him from ruining the gravekeeper’s plan. I can stop him… from gaining control of the world treasure that Ling'er is fusing with!” Rumbling sounds echoed out as the Blood Ancestor burst into flames. Shockingly… he was burning every aspect of himself to further increase his battle prowess!

“My only regret… is that I can tell that Ling'er’s soulclone is asleep inside the world treasure of the north….” After casting a glance in that direction, the Blood Ancestor pushed forward with greater speed.

He was a burning giant that pulsed with battle prowess that surpassed the great circle of the Demigod Realm. He was very close to being… a quasi-celestial!

Within mere moments, he caught sight of Heavenspan Island, as well as an enormous hand whose bones were made of the souls of the rivers, and whose flesh was seawater. In front of that hand was none other than… the Celestial!

“Celestial!!” the Blood Ancestor howled, accelerating.

The Celestial’s eyes narrowed, but they still pulsed with a murderous aura. The frustration and hatred he felt for the gravekeeper in this moment defied description. Although the gravekeeper’s cultivation base had declined in recent years, the man had not lost any of his ability to scheme. In fact, every twist and turn in which the gravekeeper came out on top caused the Celestial to sink to further depths of failure.

To be deprived of hope over and over again had pushed the Celestial into a state of insanity. Growling, he waved his arm, causing the enormous world hand to shoot toward the Blood Ancestor!

10,000 years ago… these two had fought a battle to the death. And now, 10,000 years later… the same spirit of battle could be seen!

This would be a shocking fight the likes of which the world rarely saw!

As it began, the gravekeeper was in the depths of the precious treasure that was Arch-Emperor City. He had been looking out in the direction of the Heavenspan Sea, but now he retracted his gaze… and looked at Bai Hao and Bai Xiaochun.

There had been nowhere else in the world for Bai Hao to flee to. This was the only place where he felt he could escape the deadly pursuit of the Celestial!

Although the gravekeeper was hovering on the brink of death… he was still the previous Hell-Emperor. And despite his age… he was still the gravekeeper of this entire world!

After the teleportation finished successfully, Bai Hao breathed a sigh of relief. The twenty-two-colored flame being fueled by the burning of his soul was now starting to fade away.

Bai Hao knew that his remaining time… was very, very limited….

He didn't want to leave, but had no choice. He looked at his Master, sitting there cross-legged, his life force as weak as could be, his skin like wrinkled parchment and his hair fallen out, and Bai Hao wept.

“Master….” he murmured. As a soul body, he would normally not be able to truly shed tears. But now, in this final moment of his life, a miracle occurred, and tears began to roll down his face.

As they fell, they turned into fire. And yet, the stabbing pain in Bai Hao’s heart ensured that they only continued to flow.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun apparently heard his apprentice. Groggy and weak, he barely managed to crack open his eyes. The mere effort caused a fresh wave of exhaustion to sweep through him.

Although he could barely open his eyes, he was still able to see his apprentice standing there in front of him.... Bai Xiaochun was mostly in a daze, almost soulless, and yet, his gaze locked directly onto Bai Hao.

“Master!!” Bai Hao said excitedly, kneeling down in front of Bai Xiaochun. As he did, his soul began to fade away, and yet, a happy smile could be seen on his face.

It was the pure smile of a young one looking at the most important person in his life. It was a smile of respect that originated from deep within his body and soul. And as he smiled, he placed his hands onto the ground and kowtowed.

One kowtow!

“Thank you, Master… for saving my soul....” Even as he murmured the words, his head touched the ground, and he thought back to the moment he had regained consciousness, and seen Bai Xiaochun standing there. *I'm your Master*, he had said.

It was an eternal memory for Bai Hao.

Bai Xiaochun shivered, sensing that something unusual was happening. He struggled against his confused state, wishing he could think clearly, and wishing he could open his eyes further.

Bai Hao straightened from his kowtow and looked deeply at Bai Xiaochun. His smile was radiant, but at the same time, contained the sorrow of departure. With that, he kowtowed again.

Two kowtows!

“Thank you, master… for keeping me company….” Bai Hao's voice was weak now, and his soul had almost completely faded away. The twenty-two-colored flame was now almost completely gone.

In his mind, he saw the spirit enhancement shop back in Arch-Emperor City. He thought about all the things that he and Bai Xiaochun had done there, memories which would never leave him.

It had been the first time in his life that he had truly experienced familial love. The warmth he had felt then was something that would always be part of him….

Bai Xiaochun shivered. It was as if, deep within him, his consciousness was struggling to free itself. A deep feeling of unease had overtaken him, the type that came when someone realized that something supremely precious was about to disappear. Despite his weakness and the befuddlement that gripped him, Bai Xiaochun was starting to regain his senses!

Bai Hao looked up at Bai Xiaochun for the final time. His gaze was deep, as if he hoped to burn this image into his mind for all eternity. He didn’t want to leave, but now, his time was up. As his soul began to fade away for good, he kowtowed for the last time….

Three kowtows!

“Thank you, Master….” he murmured. He wasn't able to finish speaking the sentence. In the middle of his kowtow, he faded away. It started with his feet… and spread to his legs… and then his torso. Finally, his head disappeared from view….

Three kowtows of gratitude!

The rest of his sentence would only ever exist within his mind.

If I get another life after this one, Master… I hope I can be your apprentice again….

In the moment that Bai Hao faded away, Bai Xiaochun suddenly reached out with his withered hand….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1013 awe-chapter-1014

His hand… grasped at nothing but air….

“Hao’er!!” Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness began to rise up from within the blankness, pushed by an indescribable wave of grief!

His eyes snapped open to see… nothing. The twenty-two-colored flame was gone, and Bai Hao along with it.

Only a tiny wisp of the fire remained, a spark, the last trace of Bai Hao that remained in the world. As it fell onto the back of Bai Xiaochun’s hand, it burned him, leaving a small mark.

Bai Xiaochun shivered, his hand frozen in midair in front of him, his eyes filled with tears.

Although he had not been able to see Bai Hao’s final moments clearly, he could sense that his apprentice was now no more….

Tears fell down onto his withered skin, and the ground beneath his feet, as more grief than he ever imagined could exist overwhelmed him.

It wasn't that Bai Xiaochun had never experienced the death of a friend or loved one. But this was different. Bai Hao’s passing filled his mind with a deep, deathly stillness….

It was a grief the likes of which led, not to screaming and yelling, but to silence and the shedding of tears….

He thought back to the first time he had ever seen Bai Hao. He thought back to the moment when his soul awakened. He thought back to how they had relied on each other to survive in the Wildlands….

From now on, Bai Hao, I'm your Master!

Hao’er, how do you think Master did this time around!?

Hahaha!! Don’t worry, your Master has a lot of experience with this kind of thing.

As the memories flitted through his head, he shivered uncontrollably. He still couldn’t pull his hand back, and in fact, made another attempt to grab hold of Bai Hao. He refused to believe that his apprentice had truly perished….

“Hao’er….” he murmured, tears streaming down his face. Then he began to weep, the sound of which echoed out with the most profound grief and pain possible….

“Why? Why are people always fighting and killing each other…? Why do people have to die…? Why…? Immortal cultivation is about living forever, isn’t it…? Why…?”

As he wallowed in his tears and grief, he couldn’t help but ask the same questions he had wondered about from the moment he started down the path of cultivation. Time passed, and his voice grew weaker and weaker.

He only had the tiniest scrap of life force left in him. Bai Hao’s departure had inundated him with grief, a grief that was not the type that could be expunged with mere tears.

And thus, the grief built upon itself, becoming a cold wind that extinguished the last spark of warmth left inside of him.

It became a tempest that sealed away anything and everything….

In the moment before the tempest sealed away his life itself, Bai Xiaochun looked up at the gravekeeper, and within his gaze… was profound grief and… hatred!

By now, he understood that, whether it was Du Lingfei or Bai Hao, the person responsible for how everything had turned out… was the gravekeeper….

He didn’t know why the gravekeeper had done all these things, but it didn't matter. There was no way he could forgive him!!

The hatred within Bai Xiaochun’s eyes was something that had never before appeared, or even existed within him!

He was a happy-go-lucky person, with a simple heart. And yet, all of that was now overwhelmed by the hatred, locked away and sealed within his memories.

He chuckled, and then closed his eyes.

The gravekeeper saw the hatred, and could sense the life force in Bai Xiaochun withering like an unbloomed flower because of the grief…. The gravekeeper sat there in the crumbling pagoda, and he sighed.

Had it been possible, he would never have let Bai Hao perish. But not even he could save Bai Hao’s soul after it became the fuel for a twenty-two-colored flame. He might have been able to secretly feed a bit of life force into him in the end… but even he wasn’t sure if that would have done anything.

“Bai Xiaochun….” he murmured, his ancient voice echoing out into the ruins of the third portion of the city, which was spread out around him.

“Please know that, although I came up with this plan… I didn’t orchestrate every single detail….

“The reason why all of this is happening is… the Undying Live Forever Technique….

“The *undying* aspect corresponds to Yang, and the *live forever* aspect corresponds to Yin….” Although his voice entered Bai Xiaochun’s ears, it could not reach his grief-stricken consciousness.

It almost was as if the gravekeeper wasn’t directing his words at Bai Xiaochun… but rather, himself. It was as if he was attempting to bolster his own convictions and faith.

“These two codices of Arch-Emperor’s magic were passed down for many years. They are partly that which is eternal, and partly that which is tribulation. Perhaps both, perhaps neither. They represent… hope….” The gravekeeper seemed more ancient than ever in this moment..

“Sadly, one codex alone is difficult to master. It would be rare to find someone who could succeed even among those with a strong bloodline tracing back to the Arch-Emperor, much less those in the world today, in which the bloodline is weak…. And even if someone succeeded… they would be unable to combine the Yin and the Yang, and achieve the next breakthrough. After mastering one codex, there could be no more progress.

“To cultivate the Live Forever Codex after the Undying Codex would be difficult beyond imagination…. From ancient times until now, no one has ever done it…. After all, the only way to practice such cultivation… would be to die first!

“The reason for that is… the opposite of that which is undying, is that which dies. And the opposite of that which lives forever is that which lives for a short time. Both of those equate to death….

“The connection between that which is undying and that which lives forever… is death! However, that death is not a true perishing. For example, the Blood Ancestor. He held his breath in the past to awaken today!” Normally speaking, the gravekeeper would not give voice to words such as these. But there was little need for propriety now. Bai Hao was dead, and thus, the Hell-Emperor was dead. Because of that, the gravekeeper knew… that the end of the world was at hand.

From this moment on, there would be no cycle of reincarnation. Dead souls would roam the lands now that the Underworld River had dried up, and Bai Hao had passed away….

As for any souls which had remained in the river, they would be unleashed on the world….

“Only by experiencing death can someone who has mastered the Undying Codex build the bridge…. Only then can that person qualify to cultivate the Live Forever Codex. However, to truly master that codex… requires time. Too much time….” The gravekeeper sighed.

Time was not something he had in abundance. Nor did he have any way to predict what other unforeseen circumstances could arise that would destroy his hopes and plans.

Before Bai Xiaochun, there had been the Blood Ancestor. The gravekeeper and the Blood Ancestor had only been able to discuss this plan, not carry it out…. But now that Bai Xiaochun was here, and had mastered the Undying Codex, things were different.

He had given up on the Blood Ancestor, and focused all his hope on Bai Xiaochun!

Because of that, and because of other important factors, the gravekeeper had adjusted his plan, and was now more confident than ever.

“Ah, Daoist Heavenspan…. If you ignore his evil, he is truly spectacular…. I would never have thought of his plan to concoct an Undying Live Forever Pill….” The gravekeeper closed his eyes.

He wanted Bai Xiaochun to take the Blood Ancestor’s place, to become the new hope. He would have Bai Xiaochun cultivate… the Live Forever Codex!

It would not be done in the usual fashion, but… it would work!!

Even the gravekeeper marveled at Daoist Heavenspan’s plan to create an Undying Live Forever Pill. It was a technique he had learned from, and modified! He had made a new plan, to plant the scrap of an aura from the Live Forever Codex into Bai Xiaochun!

That aura would be a seed that the gravekeeper could use other methods to catalyze, and push to completion faster than ordinary!

The gravekeeper opened his eyes and looked at Bai Xiaochun.

“In the end…” he murmured, “it was Daoist Heavenspan’s desire to leave this world, and the way I foiled his efforts, that forced him to resort to his final backup plan….

“In his madness, he went so far as to sacrifice his own child…. And I… will take this opportunity to make use of the Celestial and Du Lingfei…. I will plant just a bit of the aura of the Live Forever Codex into Bai Xiaochun….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1014 awe-chapter-1015

“Your fusion already reached a certain critical point…. It doesn’t matter that your body has run out of life force, you still have a bit of the aura of the Live Forever Codex in you!” Although the gravekeeper’s eyes were cloudy, they still glittered with bright light as he looked into Bai Xiaochun. There, inside of Bai Xiaochun’s withered flesh and blood was… a scrap of the aura of the Live Forever Codex.

“That… is the seed! I will make that seed sprout, and turn it into the most towering of trees!” With that, the gravekeeper slowly rose to his feet. As he did, the cloudiness in his eyes vanished, and all of a sudden, he pulsed with a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering energy!

“Everything I do is for this world and the people who live in it. And also, for my true self… the first generation Arch-Emperor!

“Even more so, I do it for that which is eternal…. The only person I am letting down is you, Bai Xiaochun…. Therefore, allow me to bestow upon you the most beneficial of good fortunes, the type that can allow you to span the heavens!

“Once you leave this world, you’ll come to understand everything!”

The gravekeeper began to laugh, a laughter filled with both anticipation and shocking focus!

As his aura grew stronger, an unimaginably powerful life force erupted out of him, apparently a burst of energy like the final radiance from a setting sun. It was so intense that it seemed likely he would burst into flames at any moment.

As the gravekeeper’s aura skyrocketed, a massive wind kicked up in the ruins of the third level of the city. Buildings and structures began to crumble away into nothing.

Eventually, the third level of the city was in such a state of ruin that it seemed likely that it would collapse. At the same time, though, the entire precious treasure that was Arch-Emperor City began to tremble.

“I'm not strong enough anymore. And although I can’t completely control this precious treasure left behind by my true self, I can definitely extract the magical power stored inside of it!” With that, he waved his finger at Bai Xiaochun, who seemed completely bereft of any life.

Just as the final tiniest drop of Bai Xiaochun’s life force seemed about to wink out, the gravekeeper waved his finger, and Arch-Emperor City vibrated. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun suddenly spasmed bodily.

His heart had already gone still in death, but now, it twitched. And then, his bag of holding opened of its own volition, and the two skeletons he had acquired on Ghostmother’s battleship flew out into the open!

As the gold and crystal skeletons shone with scintillating light, the gravekeeper spoke in a voice that echoed like heavenly thunder,.

“Eternal Turtle regnant! You are the companion spirit of the Eternal Mother! Get out here immediately!”

The little turtle immediately flew out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding, although whether or not it did so willingly was impossible to tell.

“Dammit, you old fogey. I knew something fishy was going on. That’s why I've been hiding recently. Who would have thought… that you would actually recognize me!?” The little turtle looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and an expression of guilt could be seen in his eyes.

Ignoring the little turtle’s words, the gravekeeper reached out with his right hand. In response, the little turtle shrieked and tried to dodge out of the way.

“Your fate is on the line here too, Eternal Turtle,” the gravekeeper said. “If you weren’t asleep just now, then why the hell didn't you show your face?!”

The little turtle seemed to be struggling about what to do, but a moment later, he sighed, as though resigning himself to his fate.

“Fine. Fine!” he shouted. "What do you want from me!?”

“Your blood!” the Gravekeeper replied, his eyes flashing with sharp light. The little turtle clenched his jaw, stuck his head as far as he could out of his shell, then twisted around and bit down hard on his own neck.

He bit down so hard that his head flew off to the side, and a geyser of blood erupted out from the gaping wound. His body immediately began to turn dark, until his head flew back and attached to his neck again. Within moments, there wasn’t even a trace of any sort of wound.

“There you go, you old bastard!” he said weakly. Then, he turned into a white beam of light, ignoring the gravekeeper as he shot back into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. A moment later, his head popped back out. “You know what, you old bastard? Based on what I know of Bai Xiaochun, it’s not a common thing for him to hate somebody. But once he does, he hates them for all eternity….”

The gravekeeper looked coldly at the little turtle, then waved his right hand, causing the blood that had just spilled out to converge into a blood sphere. Next, he sent the blood sphere toward the two skeletons. As it merged into them, the golden and crystalline light shining out grew more intense.

At the same time, the auras of both the Undying Codex and the Live Forever Codex flared to life!

These two skeletons had a very extraordinary background. Back when Ghostmother originally came to the Heavenspan Realm, she ended up trapped in the Deadmire, and thus, made a deal with the gravekeeper.

The terms of that deal stipulated that, one day, the gravekeeper would help Ghostmother leave this world!

In return, Ghostmother agreed to keep these two skeletons on deck 2 of her ghost galleon. There, they could absorb the spiritual energy present in the ship, spiritual energy which came from beyond the heavens.

Because of that specific spiritual energy, the two skeletons grew much stronger than they had been originally. In some ways, they became refined! Another part of the deal between the gravekeeper and Ghostmother was that she would occasionally use her Celestial Realm cultivation base to personally advance the fusion of the two skeletons!

Many years passed during which, although no physical change could be detected, those two skeletons actually did merge together and became… a consummate high-level medicine!!

The reason for the gravekeeper’s complicated plan was that he had gained an inkling of what the Celestial would attempt to do. And the gravekeeper’s ability to understand matters relating to an Undying Live Forever Pill surpassed the Celestial’s.

Furthermore, he had selected two very specific skeletons to be used in this plan of his. Somehow, he had acquired the skeletons of two Arch-Emperors, and kept the matter hidden from the Celestial!

Unfortunately, the skeleton with the Live Forever Bones was lacking in the requisite energy, which was why he had asked for assistance from Ghostmother.

Now, as the gravekeeper watched the little turtle’s blood fuse with the skeletons, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Eyes shining brightly, he thrust his hands out and pushed them down onto the skeletons.

“Merge!!” he shouted. The little turtle’s blood ignited, fully fusing the two skeletons on an internal level. Impurities were expelled, and then, the skeletons began to transform into ash….

The only thing left behind was the raw life force power of the Undying Live Forever Technique!

It was visible in the form of golden and crystalline streams of smoke, which curled and twisted together. It almost looked like what happened when a pill was concocted! As the smoke intertwined, and the blood vanished… a medicinal pill appeared that existed halfway between illusory and corporeal!

It looked both golden and crystalline at the same time, and its aura was that of the undying, and that which can live forever!

This pill… was the very pill that the Celestial thirsted for. An Undying Live Forever Pill!

The Celestial had failed in his attempts to make it, but the gravekeeper, thanks to his astounding plotting and preparations, succeeded!

When the gravekeeper saw the pill form, he chuckled hoarsely. From the look in his ancient eyes, he was preparing to say goodbye to the world around him. Waving his hand, he sent the medicinal pill flying toward Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun had no control over the matter whatsoever. The pill hit his forehead and merged into his body, causing massive rumbling sounds to explode out into his mind!

A tremor passed through him as life force similar to his own Undying Live Forever Technique began to course through him!

He had been as immobile as if he had been sealed moments ago. But now that freezing seal shattered, and his eyes snapped open. Gasping, he looked over at the gravekeeper.

“Why?!” he asked.

“You can hate me, Bai Xiaochun,” the gravekeeper replied. “But once you leave this world, you will understand everything…. To me, there is nothing more important than my mission!” With that, the gravekeeper reached out and placed his hand onto the top of Bai Xiaochun’s head.

His cultivation base erupted with power, and all of the remaining life force he had, all of his remaining latent energy, left his body! All of Arch-Emperor City trembled violently as everything that made up the gravekeeper… poured into Bai Xiaochun!

Not only was the gravekeeper giving up his life to heal Bai Xiaochun, he was also catalyzing the Live Forever seed that existed within him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1015 awe-chapter-1016

Rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun's mind and spread through his entire body. His expression flickered as he realized that boundless life force was flowing through him.

This life force conformed with his Undying Live Forever Technique, and therefore, met no obstacle within him. It almost seemed like it belonged with his cultivation base, and as a result, it only took a brief moment for his withered and nearly destroyed body to be almost completely healed.

During the process, his fleshly body power skyrocketed. In the blink of an eye, he went from Qi Condensation to Foundation Establishment, and then Core Formation!!

As it happened, his Undying Skin, Undying Heavenly King, and Undying Tendons… all recovered completely. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun could sense that this version of the Undying Codex was somehow different than what he had cultivated before!

It was… stronger! The life force was more vibrant, and its energy was the type that could shake heaven and earth!

Were it not for his previous experiences, it would have been difficult to detect. But considering how many years he had cultivated the Undying Codex, the sensation of fusing with this new energy left him completely shocked!

If his previous mastery of the Undying Skin had led to him to a level of one hundred percent of his possible battle prowess, then after recovering now, it had increased… to one hundred and fifty percent!!

It was a terrifying upgrade which would make him vastly more powerful than anyone in the same cultivation level as himself. It could only be described as heaven-defying!

And it all came from the two skeletons which had turned into ash, and then become a consummate Undying Live Forever Pill!

Apparently… this amazing pill was not just helping him recover his fleshly body and life force. It was also refining him in an incredible way. Now, his fleshly body power didn’t just match someone who had the pure blood of the Arch-Emperors, it surpassed it!

Cracking sounds echoed out as his Undying Tendons solidified, and he rose rapidly through the levels of the Undying Bones. Within mere moments… he had reached the great circle!

He looked almost completely recovered. His hair was now back, long and full, and instead of being skinny and emaciated, he thrummed with vitality.

The cracks on his skin were gone, and furthermore, he glowed with golden light. Anyone who could see him in this moment would definitely be shaken by the holy air that he exuded.

At this point, he passed from the Undying Bones into the Undying Blood level!

More cracking sounds echoed out as his blood once again transformed into Undying Blood. That in turn aided in his regeneration, making it speed up even more.

The entire third level of the city around him was stained the color of blood, mixed within which was a tinge of gold!

After about ten breaths of time passed, his veins were completely filled with Undying Blood, and a tremor passed through him. As of this moment, the sensation of fleshly body power that existed within him surpassed anything from before!

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!!

Early Demigod realm. Mid realm. Late realm.... Great circle!!

As the cracking sounds continued, his battle prowess rose higher and higher, to degrees difficult to even imagine.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be absolutely sure, but he was fairly certain that, despite the fact that he currently had no cultivation base, his fleshly body power… was far, far higher than it had been before!

The last time he had reached the great circle of the Undying Codex, he had only become a demigod in fleshly body, and only the early realm at that. But now.... things were completely different! It came very close to being the same as the difference between heaven and earth!

Although he could feel the pressure of the world weighing down on him, it wasn’t very shocking at all. Furthermore, he felt like, if he wanted to, he could will himself to grow to incredible physical height!

He could become as large… as the original Blood Ancestor!

This was the true Undying Codex!

This was what the descendants of the original Arch-Emperor had cultivated, a technique which gave them the power to prop up heaven and earth!

Bai Xiaochun was even fairly certain… that he was now stronger than the Blood Ancestor himself!! Normally speaking, these developments would have elated him. However, at this moment, his heart was as cold as ice. The death of Bai Hao had filled him with pain that couldn’t possibly be wiped away.

“Things aren’t over yet!” the gravekeeper said softly. “After the Undying Codex is… the Live Forever Codex!”

Even as the words left his mouth, Bai Xiaochun spasmed. Although the medicinal pill had been eighty percent absorbed, there was still twenty percent left, which contained energy that did not belong to the Undying Codex. And now… that power erupted!

It was the energy of the Live Forever Codex!

As that power spread through him, Bai Xiaochun realized that it was familiar. A twinge of pain stabbed through him, the source being that scrap of power from the Live Forever Codex!

“Boo….” he murmured. The life force from the Live Forever Codex poured into the scrap of energy inside of him, which then began to grow.

Within only a few breaths of time, the Live Forever power caused his energy passageways to thrum, and his cultivation base to rise to the Foundation Establishment level!

This type of Foundation Establishment surpassed his previous Heaven-Dao Foundation Establishment. This was… Live Forever Foundation Establishment!

The moment he reached the level of Live Forever Foundation Establishment, he sensed… the five seals of the human body!

A boom echoed out, and the first seal was destroyed!

At that point, the remaining twenty percent of the power of the medicinal pill continued to flow through him, propelling him toward a Live Forever Core!

“Listen well, Bai Xiaochun!” the gravekeeper said as he passed his cultivation base, life force and everything about himself into Bai Xiaochun. Thanks to the power of the magical item that was Arch-Emperor City, he was able to continue to push Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base higher, even beyond what the energy of the medicinal pill could do.

Then, his voice echoed with focus and determination as he spoke his last words.

“I know you have many questions. And I know you hate me. Furthermore, you are surely curious… why I didn’t just comply with the Celestial, and let him leave this world!

“The reason is that… this world… actually has no Worldgate!

“The so-called Worldgate… is nothing more than a fabrication I invented specifically for the Celestial!!!” His words echoed out like peals of heavenly thunder into Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

“WHAT?!?!” Despite the fact that his cultivation base was rising rapidly, his mind was in complete chaos.

“If there was a Worldgate,” the gravekeeper continued, “I would have opened it long ago, and let the Celestial leave.

There would have been no need for this complicated plan of mine!

“The whole reason for all of this is because there is no Worldgate!

“It is entirely possible for the living beings in this world to leave it. In fact… there are actually two ways!

“The first would be for someone with the blood of the Arch-Emperors to cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique all the way to the Mahayana Realm, and become a celestial. The world net which binds this world would not be able to resist a true celestial, and would collapse!

“However, what would also collapse in that scenario… would be the entire world in which we live! All of the mountains and rivers, all of heaven and earth!

“At that time, the celestial-level Arch-Emperor would gather up all of the living beings from the destroyed world, all of his people… and bring them with him as he left!

“In the wider world outside, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty would then continue to prosper!” The gravekeeper spoke quickly, ensuring that his words battered at Bai Xiaochun’s mind without stop.

Furthermore, they were finally revealing… a profound and tightly-kept secret!!

It was in this moment that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base broke through from the Live Forever Foundation Establishment level. At that point, something new appeared within him. It was… a Live Forever Core!

As his Live Forever Core took shape, the second of the seals appeared, and was destroyed!

It was also in that moment that the power of the medicinal pill began to falter. Clearly, it could not push him to the level of a Live Forever Nascent Soul!

Therefore, it was now the gravekeeper’s cultivation base that erupted with power and continued to bolster the power within him that could live forever!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1016 awe-chapter-1017

The Undying Codex surpassed all other body refinement techniques in this heaven and earth. Similarly, the Live Forever Codex... surpassed all other divine abilities and cultivation practices!

Even someone as confident as the Celestial would have no choice but to stay silent in the face of the Live Forever Codex....

From the Frigid Matriarch and Du Lingfei, it was possible to see how shocking the Live Forever Codex was. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had never fought Du Lingfei, but he was now very familiar with her energy and power.

Now, as the energy of the Live Forever Codex flowed through him, he couldn’t help but gasp. For one thing, the gravekeeper’s words were shocking to the core. In addition to that, though, with the power of the Live Forever Codex inside of him, the spiritual energy of heaven and earth that existed in this world suddenly seemed weaker!

In fact, Bai Xiaochun also got the sensation that, with this power, he was like the monarch of all the peoples of this world!

All he had to do was exercise a single thought, and all entities in the world would lend him their cultivation base power!

Although it wouldn’t increase his own cultivation base, it would allow him to crush almost any opponent!

Clearly… neither Du Lingfei nor the Frigid Matriarch had ever cultivated the Live Forever Codex to the point of manifesting a divine ability like this. This… was something that came only if someone mastered the Undying Codex first!

As the gravekeeper had said… before Bai Xiaochun, the only people to have ever cultivated this technique were the Arch-Emperors!

As Bai Xiaochun reeled in mute shock, the gravekeeper continued, his voice weak and hoarse. “There is a second way to leave….”

“And that is with… the battle prowess of a celestial! One wouldn't need to be a true celestial, but would need power of that level. Someone that powerful could simply destroy the world… and thus leave it!”

Bai Xiaochun only continued to feel more shaken with every moment that passed, to the point where he almost didn’t notice that he had reached the Live Forever Nascent Soul stage.

The third seal appeared, even more resilient than the previous ones, and yet it was also absolutely powerless to prevent itself from being destroyed!

As his cultivation base rose higher and higher, Bai Xiaochun was certain that a mere thought on his part could cause winds to scream in the area, and the sky to grow dim!

The gravekeeper was trembling as his energy faded. He panted for breath as his eyes grew cloudier. And yet, he continued to pour everything he had into Bai Xiaochun, causing his cultivation base to rise higher and higher!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Bai Xiaochun's Live Forever Nascent Soul emerged… and began to climb toward the Live Forever Deva realm!

"Both methods involve destroying the world. As for all of the living beings within the world… they would be ejected out into the wider world beyond…." The gravekeeper was weak beyond measure now, but he gritted his teeth and continued with his explanation, as if to provide a defense for everything he had done in his life!

"There are only two options, Bai Xiaochun. So you tell me… could I really just destroy the world to let the Celestial out?!?! As for Ghostmother, she possessed the coordinates to this world all along, which was why she could leave! It would not have been possible for her to take someone as powerful as the Celestial past the world net!

"My mission is still not complete. I must create a celestial via the Undying Live Forever Technique, or perhaps a quasi-celestial. Without that person… how could I possibly agree to destroy the world!?!?"

As his voice echoed out, he began to fade away. Despite how his energy flagged, he gritted his teeth and drew upon his scant remaining cultivation base and life force, as well as the powers of the precious treasure that was Arch-Emperor City, to transform his own energy into Live Forever power that Bai Xiaochun could absorb!

As a result, Bai Xiaochun broke through into the Live Forever Deva realm… a level which surpassed his previous Heaven-Dao level by far!

At this point, the fourth sealing mark of the Live Forever Codex appeared… and was destroyed!

After his breakthrough, the Live Forever power within him continued to surge!

The next watershed mark was… the Live Forever Demigod realm!

“Live Forever Demigod realm… Live Forever Demigod….” The gravekeeper chuckled weakly. Although he was fading away into nothing, he still refused to give up, a fact which was evidenced by the happiness and contentment within his laughter!

“Bai Xiaochun, I will use my last bit of energy… to push you into the Live Forever Demigod realm!

“I only regret that I cannot use the power of this world to push your Undying Live Forever Technique all the way into the true Celestial Realm…. I suppose… that a quasi-celestial will still do!” Laughing contentedly, he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand and pointed out.

“Arch-Emperor Treasure!”

All of Arch-Emperor City began to tremble, filling the hearts of the people inside it with shock. That included the Grand Heavenmaster, the Arch-Emperor, and the four heavenly kings, as well as the heavenly dukes and marquises!

Even more shocking was that all of the heavenly marquis pagodas and heavenly duke pagodas… simultaneously collapsed!!

A shocking energy burst into the third portion of the city, pouring into the gravekeeper and then passing through him into Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun felt like his mind was being struck by lightning, and he could barely breathe. Massive amounts of energy pushed into him, causing his Live Forever power to climb higher and higher. In the blink of an eye, he went from the early Deva Realm to the great circle!

Then, the Live Forever power converged and prepared for a final assault!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

Bai Xiaochun felt like the world was spinning. Crashing booms filled him with heaven-rending, earth-crushing intensity as his cultivation base… broke through again!!

The Live Forever Demigod!!

This was the final level of the Live Forever Codex!

The final sealing mark of the Live Forever Codex appeared, and was crushed with impunity! Bai Xiaochun trembled as every portion of his body seemed to link to each other perfectly!

The time had come for the gravekeeper to meet his ultimate end; his right hand was already transforming into ash. The magical power of Arch-Emperor Dynasty seemed incapable of fully transforming into Live Forever power….

Bai Xiaochun's place in the Live Forever Codex was equivalent to the early Demigod Realm, and seemed incapable of progressing further. However, things were not over yet. It was at this point that Bai Xiaochun’s demigod cultivation base began to fuse with his Undying Codex fleshly body!

When that fusion was finished, the Undying Live Forever Technique would be whole!

If he had achieved all of this by normal cultivation, there would have been no need to fuse them. That process would have occurred naturally along the way. But now… a proper fusion was vitally important!

Bai Xiaochun trembled violently, a look of fear flickering on his face as he sat there cross-legged, incapable of moving. He was fully concentrated on fusing the complete Undying Live Forever Technique, to the point where his consciousness began to fade. The Undying Live Forever Technique became like a vortex trying to suck him into it, to completely transform him, to make him… the ultimate successor of the Undying Live Forever Technique!

He was not an Arch-Emperor… he surpassed the Arch-Emperors!

As his consciousness faded, his heart filled with complicated emotions. At that point, he looked over at the gravekeeper, and noticed that the man was smiling.

As he smiled, the gravekeeper began to fade away as surely as if some huge hand were erasing him out of existence.

“Mission… accomplished….” he murmured. Looking at Bai Xiaochun for the final time, he clasped hands in respect.

He felt guilty about what he had done to Bai Xiaochun, but not guilty about his overall success. He knew that the day would soon come when Daoist Heavenspan realized the truth about how to leave the world. At that time, a deadly battle would surely take place, which would end in the destruction of the world.

The gravekeeper’s mission had been to ensure that, before the world ended, a celestial appeared who had cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique to completion. Or at the very least… a quasi-celestial.

He couldn’t stop Daoist Heavenspan, but he could ensure that such a quasi-celestial appeared before the end of the world. It was all to simply accomplish his mission.

To do that, he would use anyone and everyone in any way he could….

He clasped hands respectfully, and bowed. It was a bow he never rose up from. Bai Xiaochun watched as he transformed completely into ash.

A long moment passed. Bai Xiaochun was wrapped up in the Undying Live Forever Technique, and yet, he still managed to murmur, “I still… hate you!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1017 awe-chapter-1018

As the process of completing the fusion of the Undying Live Forever Technique was going on… war still raged outside!

And the fierce fighting at Heavenspan Island had not yet ended!

The entire world was gripped with madness and slaughter!

Although this war between the lands of Heavenspan and the Wildlands had only been going on for a few years now, in terms of the bitterness of the struggle, it was something the likes of which had never occurred before in the history of this world!

A great war had been fought when Daoist Heavenspan rebelled against the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. The dynasty had fallen, and what remained of it had fled to the Wildlands. But not even that war could compare to this one.

Never before had a war been fought in which so many cultivators died in such a short period of time. It virtually defied imagination!

The Wildlands was the battleground, and it had long since been stained crimson with blood. The aura of death and the stench of gore was so intense… that not even the most powerful of winds could dispel it.

More than half of the cultivators from the four regions of the lands of Heavenspan… were dead. Were it not for the strict control maintained by the Celestial, such a high death rate would have already destroyed the morale of the Heavenspan cultivators.

Devas fell in battle left and right, to the point where among the Heavenspan forces, only half of their original force of devas remained…. As for the four demigod patriarchs, so far, none had been killed. However, all of them had taken severe injuries.

Considering that the Heavenspan forces had suffered such mind-boggling casualties, and yet still maintained the upper hand, it was possible to imagine… how disastrous this war was for the Wildlands!

Of the savage tribes that had once made up the bulk of the Wildlands forces, most had been wiped out….

Seventy percent of the heavenly marquises had perished, and nearly half of the heavenly dukes had been killed in body and soul….

All of the cities of the four heavenly kings had been burned to the ground. The Giant Ghost King’s army was mostly intact, but the armies of the other three heavenly kings had suffered roughly eighty percent casualties….

The vast difference between the Giant Ghost King’s forces and those of the other heavenly kings was all because of Bai Xiaochun. Not only had he stopped the fighting between the eastern Heavenspan cultivators and the Wildlanders at Giant Ghost City, but he had also killed three of the Heavenspan arcane guards, and destroyed their spell formation.

The other three cities had been routed, and the flight of their armies hampered because of the spell formations. And thus, those battles had nearly turned into massacres.

By now, the Wildlanders were completely surrounded, with ninety percent of their territory lost. The only thing that remained… was Arch-Emperor City!

Arch-Emperor City was where the Wildlanders would make their final stand. If that city fell… then it would mean that the bloodline of the Arch-Emperors was gone forever!

The cultivators from the four rivers were encamped around Arch-Emperor City. Of course, the Heavenspan cultivators still couldn’t help but feel exhausted, and were filled with mixed emotions.

It was an exhaustion that ran so deep that most of them were expressionless and numb….

As the years of fighting wore on, virtually all of the cultivators had lost friends and loved ones…. However, there was another death that none of the cultivators from either side of the conflict were aware of. Bai Hao…. Because of his death, the Underworld River had dried up, and the dead souls within it could no longer return to the cycle of reincarnation. They had no choice but to wander heaven and earth…. It was easy to imagine how such a situation quickly became another catastrophe to plague the world.

It also became a powerful portent…. Eventually, the Wildlander soul cultivators began to speculate about what it meant….

“The new Hell-Emperor… must have perished!!” Such speculations inundated the soul cultivators like floodwaters, causing them to tremble and sink further into the darkness of despair. To them, it seemed like the end of the world was nigh. Even the Grand Heavenmaster and the demigod experts felt their hearts being overtaken by anxiety and gloom.

The four heavenly kings’ cities had been routed. Ninety percent of their armies were dead. The Heavenspan forces had Arch-Emperor City surrounded. To the people of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, those things all became a massive blow to any hope for survival that anyone had.... But the death of the Hell-Emperor was even more unimaginable. It was like an attack that landed directly on their hearts and minds!

Those two heavy blows had the Arch-Emperor Dynasty reeling.... In fact, if the Celestial had offered an opportunity for surrender, the Grand Heavenmaster and the other leaders would have definitely been tempted to take it.

Except… the Celestial didn't seem to care about human life at all. He would accept no surrender. He wanted the Wildlands wiped away, all the way down to the grass and roots!

Such orders had long since been passed down to the demigod patriarchs of the four riversource sects. In their exhaustion, they had begun the assault on Arch-Emperor City with all the power they had at their disposal. Their task… was to completely destroy it!

The decisive battle… was beginning!

Booms rang out constantly outside of Arch-Emperor City. It was a precious treasure with powerful defensive shields, but they were being worn down, and could not stand forever against the divine abilities and magical techniques that battered them.

The Giant Ghost Legion, and the armies of the other three heavenly kings, bolstered the innate defensive powers of Arch-Emperor City, giving it the power to make its final stand!

Bloodcurdling shrieks rang out. Booms of self-detonation filled the air. Shouting and howling could be heard all over the battlefield!

The corpse troopers that had once struck fear into the hearts of the Wildlanders were now fully deployed onto the battlefield, and yet, they didn't seem to have much effect on the conflict as a whole.

High above, the demigods fought with utter desperation. The four heavenly kings and the Grand Heavenmaster had all suffered horrific injuries, and yet, were still going all out. As for the Heavenspan forces, they had their four demigod patriarchs, as well as two divine guards from Heavenspan Island!

A total of eleven demigods clashed above, causing the entire world to tremble as if it might collapse….

The Arch-Emperor stood in the highest tower of the imperial palace, looking out at the fighting. A gloomy expression covered his face, but he had a bit of hope in his eyes, hope that the gravekeeper would eventually show his face.

He had no idea that Bai Xiaochun was already in Arch-Emperor City. In his mind, the gravekeeper… was the only hope of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty….

The Arch-Emperor wasn't the only one who waited with such anticipation. The Grand Heavenmaster and the four heavenly kings all harbored a similar hope, as did many of the soul cultivators fighting down below.

The new Hell-Emperor Bai Hao was important in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. But to the soul cultivators, he was like the earth, whereas the gravekeeper… was like the vast heavens!

Only if the gravekeeper appeared… could the tide turn!

But even as the cultivators of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty continued to place their hope in the gravekeeper… all of Arch-Emperor City suddenly shook violently. The lands around it quaked, and massive crevices snaked out everywhere. In the blink of an eye… an aura of death spread out from Arch-Emperor City, filling all of the Wildlands….

And things were just beginning. That aura of death… continued on to fill all of the lands of Heavenspan….

Mountains seemed to lose their strength and collapse…. Jungles began to wilt and crumble into ash….

It was as if the surface of the world were collapsing! Although it didn't explode… the aura of death that filled it was plain for everyone to detect!

It wasn’t just the ground that was affected. The sky in the Wildlands and in the Heavenspan region… began to turn as gray, as if no life force existed in it at all!

Apparently… the entire world… was dying!!

Cultivators, mortals, and all other living beings were suddenly filled with the most profound unease. It felt as if… the entire world were about to fade away into eternity….

All of the cultivators in and around Arch-Emperor City suddenly stopped fighting, and looked around in shock. Those from the Heavenspan region seemed confused, whereas the Wildlander soul cultivators were so stunned that many of them staggered in place. Looks of terror could be seen in their eyes, as well as profound grief that soon turned into rage.

The Arch-Emperor shivered, his eyes lighting up with disbelief as he murmured, “The gravekeeper… has perished. The world… is dying!”

Then he began to laugh bitterly for a moment before a wave of exhaustion overcame him. Staggering backward, he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood.

“There will be no more Arch-Emperors…. We will burn along with the imperial city….” He closed his eyes.

The Grand Heavenmaster and the four heavenly kings looked around with blank expressions and blanker minds. They had all known that the gravekeeper was very weak, but the realization that he had actually perished filled them with despair.

It was made worse by the fact that, along with the death of the gravekeeper… the world itself seemed to be crumbling.

The demigod patriarchs of the four riversource sects were all shaken to the core. However, after looking around momentarily, their eyes lit up with determination. Taking advantage of the sudden blow to the morale of the Wildlanders, they joined forces in a final salvo to destroy the city!

In the briefest of moments, fierce fighting broke out again…. Mountain-toppling, sea-draining force… slammed into Arch-Emperor City!

The defensive shields of the city finally shattered, and the city walls began to fall. The Wildlanders were being pushed back by defeat after defeat. As for the Heavenspan cultivators, most of them just wanted to be done with the fighting, and thus, killing intent once again rose from within their numbed minds and hearts.

The four demigod patriarchs and the two divine guards reacted similarly. Blood sprayed out of the mouths of the four heavenly kings, and even the Grand Heavenmaster was shoved backward.

There was no hope for the Wildlanders. Only despair. There was no way they could defend themselves from this onslaught. At this point, their minds and wills began to collapse, forcing them to howl in madness.

Even as Arch-Emperor City seemed to be on the verge of falling… fluctuations exploded out from within it that seemed to affect the rapidly spreading aura of death!

Down below in the third section of the city, Bai Xiaochun… opened his eyes!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1018 awe-chapter-1019

His left eye was golden, and his right eye was crystalline!

They were eyes that were no longer pure and innocent!

After opening, heaven and earth went dim, and the entire world quaked, as if from the hatred contained therein!

As Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, a blast of wind filled the third level of the city, which rose higher and higher, and then erupted out into the open!

The intensity of the fluctuations caused everyone outside… to be shaken to the core!

On Heavenspan Island, the Blood Ancestor was still fighting the Celestial, but had been seriously injured, and was hovering on the verge of death. But when he felt those fluctuations, he suddenly began to laugh hoarsely.

“Heavenspan, you lowlife, do you feel that…?”

The Celestial’s face had already been green and livid, and now, it turned even more unsightly. Turning to look in the direction of Arch-Emperor City, he said a single name through gritted teeth….

“Bai Xiaochun….”

In Arch-Emperor City, the Giant Ghost King shivered. Expression flickering with disbelief, he looked down toward the ground, clearly more shaken than he had been when he had detected the death of the gravekeeper.

He wasn't the only one to react in such a way. The Spirit Advent King, Nine Serenities King and War Champion King all gasped and looked down at the ground, their expressions those of disbelief.

The Grand Heavenmaster was also shocked, and despite the level of his willpower, couldn’t stop from uttering an exclamation.

“This aura….”

The entire world shook as the grayness of death which filled the sky began to swirl into a huge vortex. It was as if the world, in its final death throes, was using its last bit of energy to cry out for the final time….

The demigod patriarchs of the four riversource sects, as well as the divine guards from Heavenspan, were visibly taken aback. All six suddenly felt profoundly uneasy, a feeling which rapidly transformed into terror!

Patriarch Starry Sky was especially terrified. Glancing down at the ground in astonishment, he realized that this aura was very familiar to him.

“Bai. Xiao. Chun….”

Meanwhile, the Arch-Emperor was in the imperial palace, his eyes shining with astonishment. He could sense much better than everyone else that, deep beneath the ground, there were fluctuations… that resonated with the aura of his own blood!

In fact, the intensity of these fluctuations surpassed his own…. To the Arch-Emperor, it seemed completely impossible, and yet… it was happening right here and now!

As the world was shaken, winds screamed in the lower regions of Arch-Emperor City. Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged, his eyes open, unmoving. Instead of rising to his feet, he simply took in a long, deep breath.

With that breath, his Undying Live Forever Technique completed the last of its fusion. His cultivation base was now in perfect condition. He was at the peak of the demigod level when it came to his fleshly body, and his cultivation base was in the early Demigod Realm. When those powers merged, his aura seemed ancient and archaic, and so powerful… that the entire world was willing to acquiesce to him!

He felt like… the ruler of the entire world! It felt like… the entire world approved of him!

A single thought from him could cause all living things to submit. His gaze could cause mountains and rivers to rise up out of nothing!

It was a level of power Bai Xiaochun had never experienced before. And yet, it didn’t make him happy. Instead, his complicated feelings grew even more gloomy.

This power had come at the sacrifice of Du Lingfei and Bai Hao. In fact, countless other lives in the world had been cast away. Had he been given the choice, Bai Xiaochun would never have chosen to do this.

But the gravekeeper made the choice for him. The gravekeeper had been willing to sacrifice anyone and everyone to accomplish his mission. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun was both grateful, and at the same time, filled with hatred. The emotions he felt were profoundly complicated and conflicted. He was grateful to the gravekeeper for saving his life, and for bestowing incredible good fortune onto him. But that gratitude could not make up for the death of Bai Hao and the misery of Du Lingfei.

And thus, he was filled with hatred. Hatred at his own powerlessness, and hatred toward the gravekeeper for everything he had done to accomplish his so-called mission. And yet, that hatred could not wipe away his gratitude for having his own life saved, and for being blessed with good fortune. In the end… he could only be battered by complicated and mixed emotions.

However, in the final analysis, it was Daoist Heavenspan who had truly orchestrated the greatest villainy. And therefore, Bai Xiaochun's hatred for him towered to the heavens!

Bai Xiaochun knew that with the gravekeeper having perished… it wouldn't be long before the entire world crumbled. When that happened… it would truly become an enormous tomb for everyone who lived on it.

He could sense the epic battle being fought on Heavenspan Island… and he could sense the bad condition Arch-Emperor City was in.

A long moment passed, and then he spoke in a voice that surpassed heavenly thunder in its intensity. "So many people dead…. Daoist Heavenspan, why… are you still alive?!?!?!"

Energy surging mightily, he slowly stood up!

As he did, the cultivators outside of Arch-Emperor City felt as though earth dragons were writhing beneath the ground. Everyone was so shocked that they didn't dare to keep fighting; they all began to back away from each other.

They instinctively began to feel terror and dread, regardless of the level of their cultivation base. Even the demigods felt that way!

As the ground quaked, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward!

The instant his foot touched the ground in front of him, he vanished, to appear… in midair above Arch-Emperor City!

In that same moment, the vortex up above began to emit intense rumbling sounds. Even as the world seemed to be descending into the gray of death, multi-colored light erupted out from Bai Xiaochun to shine on everything around him!

This light filled the world, deeply shaking all cultivators. Gasps could be heard as everyone looked up at Bai Xiaochun, their cultivation bases trembling, their souls shaking. Deep within the very being of everyone present, they suddenly felt something tugging at them, as if from within their blood!

It was… reverence for the first generation Arch-Emperor!

Within the imperial palace, the reigning Arch-Emperor trembled, and his eyes began to shine. He more than anyone else could sense that he was not looking at the same Bai Xiaochun that he had seen in the past. This Bai Xiaochun seemed like… the first generation Arch-Emperor!

“Arch-Ancestor….”

It was a reverence and respect that came from within his blood! Because of it, the reigning Arch-Emperor immediately… dropped to his knees!

Although he had been turned into little more than a puppet ruler by the Grand Heavenmaster, and would never have bent the knee to the man, he was now kneeling to Bai Xiaochun! In the past, the only person he would ever have done the same thing to was… the gravekeeper!

As the Arch-Emperor dropped to his knees, other figures flew up into the air to offer enthusiastic greetings, all of them descendants of the Arch-Emperor bloodline.

Their cries rolled out into Arch-Emperor City, to be heard by the soul cultivators, heavenly marquises, and heavenly dukes…. As they heeded the instinctual calls from their souls, they began to drop down and kowtow to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, Arch-Ancestor!”

“Greetings… Arch-Ancestor!!”

As the fanatical cries of the soul cultivators filled the air, the Giant Ghost King and his fellow demigods, as well as the six demigods from the lands of Heavenspan, all reacted with open shock. Even they, mighty demigods, felt their souls tugging at them, telling them to do what all of the other cultivators down below were doing.

It was something that was branded into their souls as people of this world, a mark left upon anyone and everyone from the moment they were born. As of this moment, it was telling them that Bai Xiaochun was their emperor!

The power radiating out from Bai Xiaochun’s blood caused their hearts to fill with reverence, and left them totally shaken by the unprecedentedly powerful pressure that weighed down from him.

The Giant Ghost King was the first to react. Bowing deeply, he said, “Greetings, Arch-Ancestor!”

Next came the Spirit Advent King, the Nine Serenities King, and then the War Champion King. After that was the Grand Heavenmaster, whose eyes were filled with profound emotion, and deep respect!

There was even more pressure crushing down onto the six experts from the lands of Heavenspan. They trembled both from the pressure of the Celestial, and the instinctual reverence that came from their souls. All six were almost immediately overwhelmed.

They struggled for a long moment, until Bai Xiaochun looked over at them, seemingly connecting to their souls, and filling their reeling minds with waves of shock.

At that point, all of them, even Patriarch Starry Sky, averted their gazes… and bowed in respectful greeting!

As they did, all of the cultivators from the Heavenspan region felt similar prompting from their souls, and began to bow…. Mighty waves of sound filled the entire Wildlands….

“Greetings… Arch-Ancestor!!”

Bai Xiaochun had long dreamed of having so many people looking at him, to have crowds worshipping his glory. But right now… these things gave him no pleasure. He looked around at the groveling masses for a moment, then turned his attention to Heavenspan Island.

Almost immediately, his eyes turned as red as blood, and began to radiate an intense murderous aura. Ignoring everyone else, he blurred into motion, becoming a blast of wind that left even the demigods shaken as he headed toward Heavenspan Island.

As he closed in, he spoke in a voice that battered the ears of everyone in the world, a voice filled with hatred and madness.

“Daoist Heavenspan, why… are you still alive?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1019 awe-chapter-1020

Rumbling sounds echoed out without cease!

Crevices and ravines continued to open up everywhere in the Wildlands, made worse by the shocking energy radiating out from Bai Xiaochun. Countless mountain peaks crumbled, and numerous plains caved in. The entire world seemed to be breaking apart!

The energy at play here seemed to be more than the world could handle, to the point where even the sky began to crack into pieces. All living beings were overwhelmed by the sensation that they were experiencing an apocalypse.

Cities trembled, and sects were shaken. Living creatures everywhere sensed that the end was nigh!

Cultivators from both the Wildlands and the Heavenspan region all sensed the same thing… that the world was dying around them….

Unless someone or something intervened, it wouldn’t be very long… before the world cracked to pieces!

It actually had nothing to do with Bai Xiaochun himself. The process began… in the moment that the gravekeeper died!

As everyone in the world looked around in astonishment, Bai Xiaochun sped through the Wildlands toward Heavenspan Island, his energy skyrocketing the entire way….

There almost seemed to be no end in sight, as though the hatred and anger in Bai Xiaochun’s heart would continue to push his energy higher and higher no matter what happened!

Soon, he was in the Deadmire. There were no longer any restrictive spells locking the area down or protecting it, and as such, it was also beginning to fill with crevices and rifts....

Heaven and earth were changing. The end of days had come! Bai Xiaochun could tell that beyond the shadow of a doubt!

The hatred and anger in his heart manifested as a virtually undispellable murderous aura. His killing intent toward the Celestial burned with the ultimate madness.

He yelled at the top of his lungs as he shot through the air, his eyes crimson with rage. He had never been like this before in his life, so consumed with hatred that it didn’t even occur to him to be scared of death. He didn't care about his desire to live forever. The only things he could think about... were Du Lingfei’s bitter tears, and how Bai Hao had kowtowed to him before passing away....

Those two images were like sharp knives that stabbed through his heart all the way into his soul!

He was truly insane!

“Daoist Heavenspan!!” It was as if Bai Xiaochun had been reborn out of death, and none of his happiness had been passed on to the new version of him. The only thing that had been passed on... was his desire to kill the Celestial!

He demanded blood. The blood of the Celestial!!

Never could he forget the look in Du Lingfei’s eyes when the Celestial pushed her head toward his. She hadn’t wanted to hurt him, but had been given no choice. He could never forget how Bai Hao had burned himself into nothing to save him. Bai Xiaochun wanted to cry, but at the moment, there were no tears. Rage and enmity had burned them away, turning him into a being that sought only vengeance!

Although he had been driven into madness, he still possessed all his faculties. He knew that the Celestial was incredibly powerful, and that although he himself had reached the great circle of the Undying Live Forever Technique, he would probably die if he fought him.

Unless he achieved a cultivation base breakthrough, and truly stepped into the Mahayana Realm… he wouldn’t have the battle prowess to crush the Celestial!

But that didn’t reduce his killing intent by even an iota. After all… he still had a trump card at his disposal, that being the world treasure of the north. Normally speaking, he wouldn’t use it, considering the heavy price that would be paid to do so. But now, the world was already crumbling around him….

“I have other tools at my disposal as well… other than the world treasure of the north!” Even as Bai Xiaochun burst out of the Deadmire and entered the lands of Heavenspan, his mind spun with numerous ideas and plans.

“The Undying Codex has five secret magics. As for the Live Forever Codex… it also has five powerful divine abilities. However, they’re manifested in a different way. Once someone has mastered the entire Live Forever Codex, then the magic will take shape according to their personal Dao!” Within Bai Xiaochun’s mind floated five divine abilities that he had created after mastering the Live Forever Codex, divine abilities which were powerful enough to destroy anything in creation!

Each person who cultivated the Live Forever Codex would produce different divine abilities. As for Bai Xiaochun’s, they were an amalgamation of his subconscious mind, and the Daoist magics that he had cultivated in his life. And he was confident that... by combining them with the fleshly body power provided by the Undying Codex, they would make him far more formidable than anyone who had mastered a single one of the codices!

“And I also have… my moonflower!” Eyes shining as he pierced through the air, he suddenly waved his finger in the direction of the north, and sent a stream of divine sense in that very direction!

“Moonflower, baby!”

In response to his call, countless moonflowers suddenly burst into the air from the jungles and ravines in the north.

They became like a cloud of dandelion seeds that streamed high up into the sky….

From what he could tell, there were millions upon millions of them, filling the sky as they swirled together into the shape of an enormous moon.

At a certain point, they vanished… to appear right next to Bai Xiaochun!

Seemingly delighted, the moonflowers swirled around Bai Xiaochun, each and every one of them radiating a sense of familiarity and love. For the first time, Bai Xiaochun’s freezing heart warmed slightly.

“Moonflower, baby, are you willing… to help me fight!?” The response from the massive collection of moonflowers was a burst of fearless battle spirit!

Bai Xiaochun smiled in response. However, his eyes were fixed on Heavenspan Island, and they were as cold as ice. Without the slightest hesitation or anxiety, he suddenly summoned his turtle-wok!

In response to the calling of his will, the millions upon millions of dandelion seeds began to converge together, eventually transforming into a single seed, which shot toward the turtle-wok!

Bai Xiaochun had already made the decision that, in order to make his moonflower stronger… he would bless it with a spirit enhancement!

Although he couldn’t conjure a twenty-two-colored flame, considering the level of his cultivation base, producing a twenty-one-colored flame was nothing difficult!

He waved his hand, causing countless vengeful souls to stream toward him. As they did, he started with a one-colored flame, and conjured all the way up to a twenty-colored flame, using them to push the moonflower all the way to a twentyfold spirit enhancement. Then he conjured a twenty-one-colored flame!!

He didn’t hesitate for a moment to throw that flame into the turtle-wok. Instantly, rumbling sounds echoed out, and bright light began to shine out of the lines on the wok. Gradually… the design of the spirit enhancement appeared on the moonflower!

Its aura was now vastly different than before. As its energy surged, it began to grow larger and larger, until it was a 30,000-meter-tall, shocking flower….

Even more astonishing was the fact that it radiated the aura of the great circle of the Demigod Realm!

However, it still seemed to view him just as lovingly as before. Accelerating, he had the moonflower shrink down, and then tossed it in his bag of holding. Soon… he was flying over the Heavenspan Sea!

Cracks could be heard as rifts were torn open into the air, none of which showed any signs of closing back up!

As he passed over the sea, the nearby water froze up…. Bai Xiaochun’s explosive aura was reaching a pinnacle!

And his eyes were completely fixed on Heavenspan Island!

As he closed in, he could see the Blood Ancestor, his entire body wreathed in flames, going all out to deliver a shocking fist strike. When the blow landed, a huge vortex sprang up, and the Blood Ancestor began to fade away.

“You’re finally here, Bai Xiaochun! My mission is accomplished…. Help me… to take care… of her….” The Blood Ancestor threw his head back and laughed uproariously. He had given his life to lock down the Celestial, and therefore a gleam of contentment could be seen in his eyes as he looked in the direction of the north, and then faded out of existence….

He didn’t specify who he wanted Bai Xiaochun to take care of. He was sure that Bai Xiaochun already knew.

Bai Xiaochun nodded at the Blood Ancestor as he faded away. Then, he fixed his bloodshot, livid gaze… at the Celestial, who hovered in the air above the island!

“Daoist Heavenspan!” he said, the words crackling like heavenly thunder!

Heaven and earth crumbled around them!

The most breathtaking battle of all time was about to begin!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1020 awe-chapter-1021

Daoist Heavenspan was in the nastiest of moods. Originally, he had assumed that the Blood Ancestor wouldn’t be able to delay him for more than a short moment. However, the Blood Ancestor had been saving up life force for 10,000 years, and also had some secret methods imparted to him by the gravekeeper. Combined with his madness and the fact that he had ignited himself for a final burst of power, he had been able to keep Daoist Heavenspan completely locked down.

“Bai Xiaochun!” Daoist Heavenspan said through gritted teeth. He seemed supremely frustrated, and also no less furious than Bai Xiaochun. Over and over again, he had watched his ultimate desires crushed by the gravekeeper at the last minute, turned into nothing more than pipe dreams.

However, this time, things were playing out slightly differently!

In addition to the anger in his eyes, there was something else shining brightly.

“Who would have thought that you would come here of your own volition? At least you've saved me the trouble of tracking you down myself. At last… I can refine you into an Undying Live Forever Pill!” Licking his lips, he chuckled and waved his hands out in front of him, causing rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth as the will of the world itself converged on his person. Then, he began to walk toward Bai Xiaochun.

With every step he took, the will of the world grew stronger, until it became a mountain-toppling, sea-draining pressure that weighed down on Bai Xiaochun.

Earlier, not even the Blood Ancestor, a descendant of the Arch-Emperors, had been able to stand up to this.

In fact, it was because of the will of the world that the Blood Ancestor had burned his own blood to get the power he needed to drive his Undying Technique. That was what had enabled him to lock Daoist Heavenspan down for so long.

But now… the will of the world didn't seem to affect Bai Xiaochun at all! He had mastered the Undying Live Forever Technique, and could now accept the title of Arch-Ancestor. He also conformed to the will of the world, and in fact… was also the ruler of this heaven and earth!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were bright red as he stared at the Celestial walking toward him. His killing intent raged as he too took a step forward, whereupon the will of the world began to bless him!

It was as if the entire world had been split in two because of Bai Xiaochun and the Celestial. They strode toward each other until they were only 300 meters apart, both of them surging with different aspects of the power of the very world in which they lived!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

When they slammed into each other, it was like mountains and rivers colliding, creating a deafening boom that echoed out across the frozen Heavenspan Sea. Seemingly incapable of sustaining the force, the sea began to split apart….

At the same time, Heavenspan Island, which had already been mostly destroyed by Bai Hao’s flames, had reached the point where it couldn’t stand any longer, and collapsed!

It was a holy land that represented the ultimate authority and power in the Heavenspan Realm, but now… it sank down into the Heavenspan Sea. As it did, a huge whirlpool formed, like a giant mouth of seawater.

“How amusing!” the Celestial said. With that, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Despite having just fought bitterly with the Blood Ancestor, he was clearly just as powerful as before. Striding forward, he pointed up into the sky!

“Four rivers form the heavenly bones! A golden sea to act as flesh!” His voice seemed to contain the might of the heavens, a boundless power that would force reality to conform to his wishes. All of a sudden, what appeared to be the soul projections of the four rivers of the lands of Heavenspan shot toward the Celestial.

At the same time, Heavenspan Seawater began to rise up into the sky, taking shape around those souls…. to shape the enormous hand that had caused despair to rise up in Bai Hao’s heart, and kept the Blood Ancestor in check!

Unfortunately for the Celestial, the gravekeeper had died, and the world was withering away. Because of that, his Daoist magic had faltered during his battle with the Blood Ancestor, and had been destroyed.

But now, the gravekeeper was gone, along with his influence. As a result, there was now nothing to interfere with the Celestial’s control of the will of the world, despite how it was split. Furthermore, he was far more familiar with that will than Bai Xiaochun.

The Celestial waved his arm, and the gigantic hand began to fall down onto Bai Xiaochun from above!

Bai Xiaochun looked up with a very somber expression. He could sense the pure power of the four rivers within that huge hand, as well as the aura of the Heavenspan Sea. Although it looked like nothing but a hand, in truth… it was like all of the lands of Heavenspan combined!

He could not withstand such a blow! It didn’t matter how powerful his fleshly body was, he would be felled by such power!

At the same time, he knew that he couldn't compare to the ancient Celestial when it came to control over the power of this world. However, he did not shrink back. Eyes crimson, he looked up at the huge hand, threw his head back and shouted, “Who cares if I can’t match up to you, Celestial!?!?”

The power of the Live Forever Technique coursed through him, which he then channeled into a Daoist magic called… the Waterswamp Kingdom!

“Waterswamp!” he said, waving his arm through the air. He was confident that, with his powerful cultivation base, the mysterious divine beast… would come forth with more power than ever before.

Rumbling sounds immediately echoed out as the Heavenspan Sea… transformed into a vast, watery swamp!!

“Kingdom!!” Without any hesitation, he slapped his hands together, a sound which was accompanied by the roar of a beast from another world. Heaven and earth trembled from the sound of it, a sound that even the powerful Celestial was shocked to hear.

It was a howl of excitement and joy, as a moment came which that mysterious beast had been waiting a long time for! Thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s current cultivation base, he could now open a true gap to allow the beast into the world!

The entire Heavenspan Sea seemed to become a huge mouth that howled with deafening volume. This time, instead of mountain peaks rising up… an entire continent became visible!!

It was pitch black, not because it was covered with soil, but because it was covered with a forest of scale-like ridges! This continent was so large it was almost impossible to describe!

Each scale that covered the continent was as large as Heavenspan Island had been! As the continent rose up into the air, it was possible to see that, on its bottom, were row upon row of what looked like inverted mountain peaks!!

If one looked closely, it was possible to see that this was actually not a continent. And the mountain peaks… were not mountain peaks! They were actually razor-sharp teeth! This continent… was the upper jaw of an enormous beast!!

Next came the lower jaw…. When it was all visible, it looked like the mouth of a gigantic crocodile, rising up from within the Heavenspan Sea! Furthermore, its eyes were bright red… making them look exactly like Bai Xiaochun’s eyes!!

The crocodilian head rose up and opened its mouth; compared to it, Bai Xiaochun and the Celestial were like tiny bugs! Howling, the crocodilian head lunged toward the enormous hand of the world… and chomped it up!!

Bai Xiaochun was deeply shaken by what he was seeing. Looking at the enormous crocodilian head, he couldn’t help but marvel at how everything was playing out. Never could he have imagined that his life essence spirit was so big… that it seemed capable of almost filling the entire world he lived in!

On any other occasion, he might have been happy, but right now, there was no time for such thoughts. He looked up as the enormous hand of the world met his Waterswamp Kingdom beast, whereupon a heaven-rending, earth-crushing boom erupted out!

The shockwave created a tempest that filled the entire Heavenspan Sea region as… the hand of the world collapsed into pieces!

As that happened, almost all of the mountains in the four river regions collapsed. However, Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit also couldn’t sustain the force. After chomping down on the hand of the world, it faded away.

It was gone, not dead, of that Bai Xiaochun was certain. Up til now, his life essence spirit had only come as a projection; he would need a higher cultivation base to summon it in full.

Eyes glittering, he considered summoning it again, but before he could, the Celestial threw his hands up, an unprecedentedly serious expression on his face. On the finger of one of his hands was a ring which he took off and threw down toward the Heavenspan Sea!

“Seal!” he shouted coolly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1021 awe-chapter-1022

As the words left the Celestial’s mouth, the falling ring erupted with seven-colored light, which spread out to illuminate all of the Heavenspan Sea, and the collapsing heaven and earth seemed to solidify. However, this was not because of any show of goodwill on the part of the Celestial. No, he just wanted to seal the world!

Even he was shocked by the Daoist magic Bai Xiaochun had just unleashed, and therefore, he would ensure that no strange gates to other worlds could be opened, and no enormous beasts could appear!

“Apparently I underestimated the Daoist magics that can be unleashed here.... Waterswamp Kingdom....” The Celestial’s eyes glittered with bright light as he spoke. “Unfortunately for you, that magic won’t work now!”

With the wave of his hand, the Celestial unleashed the sealing power of the ring, causing it to rush in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Bai Xiaochun had an equally serious expression on his face. He knew that the Celestial had been the lord of this world for many years, and had all sorts of reserve powers at his disposal. Not only could Bai Xiaochun not match up with him in terms of control of the power of the world, but he could also tell that the Celestial had so many techniques and items that it defied imagination.

The ring he had just used emanated the most ancient of auras, something that left Bai Xiaochun with no doubts that it was a precious treasure. Although it likely couldn’t match up to a world treasure, it surely had a very shocking origin.

The sealing power which was currently descending onto him had a will of extermination in it, and yet, Bai Xiaochun didn’t shrink back. Instead, he stepped forward… and used the Undying Hex to slip past it!

Virtually all types of seals and restrictive spells were useless against Bai Xiaochun. Even as he passed through the sealing power, he utilized his Mountain Shaking Bash, which caused him to accelerate rapidly toward the Celestial. Then he unleashed the Throat Crushing Grasp.

However, it was at this point that Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered. Without any hesitation, he suddenly danced backward! However… he was too slow. A cynical smile spread out on the Celestial’s face.

“You really think someone like me would be scared of that life essence spirit of yours?! And how could I not know that the Undying Hex of the Undying Codex can allow you to pierce through all types of sealing magic…? You might be able to avoid the sealing mark, but you can't avoid the true power of my magical item! You’ve fallen right into my trap!” Laughing uproariously, he waved his arms, causing the sealing power to suddenly fragment and shatter…. As it did, it became a destructive force that rushed toward Bai Xiaochun from all sides.

The use of the sealing power had just been a ruse! The Celestial’s true goal had been to distract Bai Xiaochun, get him close, and then use the true power of his precious treasure!

If one could view the scene from high above, they would see that Bai Xiaochun was now surrounded by mountain-toppling, sea-draining force that formed something like a huge ring around him, growing smaller and smaller with every passing moment….

The destructive power skyrocketed with every moment that passed, causing Bai Xiaochun’s face to fall from the sensation of deadly crisis that filled him.

There was nothing he could do to fight back. The ring closed down in the blink of an eye, and the only thing he could do was reach out with his right hand, using it as a stand-in for his entire body!

Intense pain stabbed through his right arm as the ring closed in around his flesh. As it did, the powers of regeneration within his flesh fought back against the ring.

The Celestial frowned at how quickly Bai Xiaochun had reacted in this moment of crisis. Not only was he frustrated because of how difficult Bai Xiaochun was to deal with, he was left marveling at the shocking powers of the Undying Codex.

“So, I still need to pay a bit of a price to end things….” The Celestial shook his head, then blurred into motion. Even as Bai Xiaochun’s powers of regeneration worked against the binding of the ring, the Celestial unleashed another spectacular divine ability!

Booms rang out as Bai Xiaochun fought back, and shockwaves spread out in all directions. However, Daoist Heavenspan’s energy continued to rise; despite only being a quasi-celestial, he had plenty of reserve powers that could push his battle prowess very close to the true Mahayana Realm.

Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base was lower than his, and he also had his right hand bound up. He shouldn't have been a match for Daoist Heavenspan, and yet, because of the heaven-defying powers of regeneration that came with the Undying Live Forever Technique, he could recover from injuries far more quickly than even the Blood Ancestor. As a result… he was on equal footing with the Celestial in a fight!

Blue veins bulged out on Bai Xiaochun's face and neck as his right hand clenched into a fist. By pouring all of the powers of regeneration he had at his disposal at the ring, as well as the full might of his fleshly body, he was finally able to overwhelm the precious treasure until it exploded!

When that happened, Bai Xiaochun's battle prowess began to rise rapidly yet again. Clenching his hand into a fist, he struck out, causing a huge vortex to rumble toward the Celestial.

The Celestial snorted coldly and backed up. Performing a right-handed incantation gesture, he waved his finger and spoke in a cold voice.

"Gluttonous flood snake!"

All of a sudden, from within the depths of the significantly depleted Heavenspan Seawater, a roar erupted that shook heaven and earth, accompanied by a shocking aura.

Water showered down in all directions as a 30,000-meter-long creature appeared. It was very much like a flood dragon, with the body of a snake, and a huge 3,000-meter-long head that was vaguely dragon-like in appearance. Overall, it looked fierce to the extreme!

Instantly, powerful fluctuations rolled out in all directions!

“Fantastic crocodile!”

Things weren’t over yet. The Celestial performed another incantation gesture, causing roars to echo out from all four of the Heavenspan Rivers. Along with the roars came four golden crocodiles, which merged together to form a single… 30,000-meter-long, four-headed golden crocodile!

“Gloom bird!”

All of a sudden, a huge roc appeared in the sky, howling in such a way that it caused everything to tremble!

Closer inspection revealed that the roc was covered with rotting flesh, beneath which were dry bones! This bird… was actually a creature that had been dead for countless years!

“Sludge giant!”

Next, the lands in the southern part of the Heavenspan region exploded, and an enormous stonebeetle crawled up from their depths. Everything around it immediately fossilized, causing massive white streaks to be left behind it as it crawled forth.

“I fought the gravekeeper for many years, Bai Xiaochun. I have profound reserve powers the likes of which no one in the world could possibly contend with. As for you… what the hell makes you think you can come fight me!?”

The Celestial waved his finger at Bai Xiaochun, sending all four of the beasts rushing in his direction!

Three of the animals were of little note to Bai Xiaochun. However, he had seen one of those golden crocodiles on numerous occasions. Of course, he could never have imagined that there were four of them… and that they belonged to the Celestial!!

Shockingly, all of these beasts pulsed with the power of the great circle of the Demigod Realm!

Clearly, the fact that the Blood Ancestor had fought with the Celestial for so long was suspicious, considering how powerful the former was…. Granted, the Blood Ancestor was extraordinary, and had succeeded in buying time. However, the Celestial couldn’t possibly have been so out of sorts after fighting him. Obviously… the Celestial had been waiting for the gravekeeper to succeed with his plan!

The gravekeeper had been plotting against the Celestial, but the Celestial… had also been plotting against the gravekeeper!

He had been waiting for Bai Xiaochun to arrive, but more importantly, had been waiting for the gravekeeper to die! The person the Celestial feared the most was the gravekeeper, a fear that had only grown deeper over the years in which the gravekeeper, despite growing weaker and weaker, had defeated him at every turn.

Now that the gravekeeper was dead, the Celestial could finally breathe a sigh of relief. Everything had been complicated before, but now, all he had to do was consume Bai Xiaochun to get his Undying Live Forever Pill!

Such thoughts flashed through Bai Xiaochun’s mind in the shortest of times.

“Considering how much of a schemer Daoist Heavenspan is,” he thought, “he must have something up his sleeve to make him completely and utterly confident in being able to win in the end! And there’s no way… that his true secret weapon is these four beasts!” He immediately began to back up. In this life-or-death battle with the Celestial, he had to maintain complete concentration. The Celestial… was the paragon entity in this world, and Bai Xiaochun knew that there was no room for slip-ups. If he made a mistake now, he would be dead forever!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1022 awe-chapter-1023

Unfortunately, only the gravekeeper had the ability to outthink the Celestial. Bai Xiaochun had only spent a few short years on the path of cultivation, making it impossible for him to compare to the Celestial in terms of plotting and scheming. Although he had somewhat of an idea of what the Celestial was thinking, there were too many clues that he couldn’t pick up on.

Furthermore, there was no time to sit around thinking about the matter. The fight between the two of them was one in which life and death hung in the balance at every moment. Bai Xiaochun couldn’t afford to be distracted, and therefore fully concentrated on the four beasts that were currently charging toward him.

The gluttonous flood snake and the fantastic crocodile were both fantastically large, and were currently coming at him from the left and the right, clearly intent on ripping him to shreds!

At the same time, the sludge giant and the gloom bird were coming at him from the front and behind, their piercing cries shattering the air around them!

All of them radiated the fluctuations of the great circle of the Demigod Realm, giving birth to windstorms that could change the face of heaven and earth. From the look of things, they were not going to give Bai Xiaochun even the shadow of a chance to escape!

In that moment of crisis, Bai Xiaochun unhesitatingly slapped his bag of holding and said, “Moonflower!”

The instant the words came out of his mouth, an aura erupted out that, even on its own, surpassed the auras of the four incoming beasts!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as nine bright green vines shot out at high speed. Following the vines... was an enormous moonflower made of an infinitude of flower petals!

An aura from beyond the heavens shook the entire area as the huge flower towered overhead! If the gravekeeper were alive, and the world was not withering to death, the world would instinctively attempt to crush this flower. But now… the will of the world was fragmented, and the moonflower erupted with shocking, otherworldly power!

In fact, it seemed to pulse with something like a Heaven-Dao aura!

RUUUUUUUUMBLE!

It was fully 30,000 meters tall, and radiated an aura of complete savagery. In addition, it glittered with brilliant designs.… In that moment, a shocking roar erupted from the moonflower!

Roar!

Everything in the area began to shake, and the tempest that the four beasts had created was ripped to shreds!

The moonflower didn’t even need any direction from Bai Xiaochun. Even as the roar echoed out, the flower broke up into countless petals that streamed out in order to wipe all traces of the beasts out of existence!

In the blink of an eye, the moonflower and the four beasts began to fight with utter ferocity.

Daoist Heavenspan’s eyes glittered in surprise because of Bai Xiaochun’s moonflower. However, he merely glanced at it for a moment before heading directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun also began to head toward Daoist Heavenspan, and the two of them began to fight. Surrounded by the battling moonflower and four beasts, they performed incantation gestures and unleashed shocking divine abilities and Daoist magics!

It only took a short time for all parties involved in the fighting to have exchanged thousands of blows.

Although the moonflower was powerful, it was fighting against four opponents, and was gradually losing ground. Eventually, a howl erupted from inside of the flower, and it exploded, creating something like a sea of dandelion petals that surged toward the four beasts.

The four beasts’ expressions flickered as they lurched away. Unfortunately for them, they were too slow. In the blink of an eye, they were overwhelmed. The flying seeds slammed into them, boring into their bodies and seemingly drawing them up as food!

When the four beasts began to scream miserably, Daoist Heavenspan noticed, and frowned. The sight of his four beasts rapidly withering away caused his heart to pound in his chest.

“What an incredible seed from beyond the heavens!” Snorting coldly, his eyes flashed with determination as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Voice as cold as ice, he said, “World relics, to me!”

As the words left his mouth, the four beasts suddenly shuddered and exploded into bits!

From inside of the four beasts emerged millions upon millions of streams of sword energy, which screamed through the air like a tempest and then slashed into Bai Xiaochun. Wounds opened up everywhere, and although his powers of regeneration went to work immediately to heal him, his eyes still widened….

Then, the sword energy shot back, and became six beams of light that swirled around Daoist Heavenspan. Shockingly… six colorful swords could be seen, all of them unique in design and appearance.

They seemed incomparably sharp, and Bai Xiaochun could tell from just looking at them that they were ancient and powerful to the extreme!!

“Were those four beasts embodiments of the Celestial’s magical items…? Wait, no. Maybe the Celestial hid the six ancient swords inside of them…?” Even as he shot backward, the countless flying seeds swirled back, converging into the shape of a damaged and bedraggled moonflower. Its aura was weak, and it looked to be in bad shape thanks to the injuries inflicted by the explosion of sword energy.

“Interesting….” Daoist Heavenspan said, hovering in midair, looking at Bai Xiaochun with coldly shining eyes.

“No wonder the gravekeeper chose you…. In all the years, no one other than him has ever forced me to use my life essence Daoswords!

“The Undying Live Forever Technique has its five shackles and five sealing marks…. Spectacular, to say the least. However, the very reason why I can change my own fate in heaven-defying fashion is… the nine Daogates that I created!

“I have cultivated these Daogates for my entire life, and they require the use of these six Daoswords to employ…. In fact, it was by using the Daoswords to open the Daogates that I was able to kill the Arch-Emperor and slaughter countless numbers of his people!

“Today… I will similarly use my life essence Daoswords to open the Daogates and… end your life!” Even as he spoke, his energy began to rise higher and higher. Rumbling sounds filled all creation, and wild colors flashed in the sky. Massive waves covered the surface of the Heavenspan Sea.

It was as if he had become the origin of all energy and power in the world, as if his every action or move could cause the Heavenspan Realm to respond!

Bai Xiaochun panted, a sensation of danger filling him the likes of which he had never experienced before. And the source was none other than the Celestial. Based on what he could sense, not even his powers of regeneration would allow him to recover from the next attack!

And yet, he did not show any signs of backing down. The Celestial had a trump card… but so did Bai Xiaochun!

The Celestial’s energy caused the entire world to shake around him. Strange light erupted from his eyes as he threw his arms wide and spoke in a voice that filled the world!

“Daogate… Palace of Water!”

His words seemed to thrum with the power of a great Dao! As they did, his six swords flew forth, linking together to form a design with three rows!

The top row featured two swords in a line, with a gap between them!

The second row featured two swords together, with no gap!

Even as the design was completed, seemingly infinite streams of water vapor began to rise up from the withered lands of Heavenspan. It was as if all the water in the world… were forming together into an ocean. That much water carried indescribable weight, and all of it began to fall onto Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun backed up in the face of the seemingly endless amount of water filling the sky. It was water that thrummed with destructive power, power that seemed capable of eradicating any life force that got in its way.

“Celestial magic? Nine Daogates…? Am I supposed to be impressed?!” Eyes bloodshot, he threw his head back and roared, clenching his right hand into a fist that caused a black hole to explode into existence. At the same time, a shadowy emperor appeared behind him, bursting with a domineering air.

“Undying… Emperor’s Fist!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1023 awe-chapter-1024

The Daogate Palace of Water was part of the Nine Ruins!

The water of the Nine Ruins made the Palace of Water boundless!

The endless amounts of water around Bai Xiaochun thrummed with explosive, destructive power, and seemed indefatigable. It was seemingly capable of crushing anything and everything, and absorbing it to become part of the water.

Water was innately a Yin and feminine element, but Bai Xiaochun still unleashed the Undying Emperor’s Fist. It was an attack backed with unyielding, dominating might, and was a convergence of both his fleshly body and cultivation base power!

No longer was this a quintuple power fist strike, but at the moment, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have time to calculate exactly how powerful it was. His only thought was that he needed to break this seemingly endless flow of water around him!

Even as his fist struck out, the fist of the shadowy emperor also struck out!

Colors flashed and winds screamed. The world shook as a tremor ran through the water, which turned into vibrations that increased in intensity with every moment!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot as he then shouted, “Stronger this time!”

Howling madly, he unleashed another Undying Emperor’s Fist, which was even more shockingly powerful than before!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

An indescribably powerful tempest erupted out into the ocean of water created by the Yin powers of the Palace of Water. Within moments, a limit was reached, and a series of explosions occurred!

The enormous sea immediately began to break up!

As it did, heavy rain began to fall in all parts of the world!

The Wildlands was no exception, nor Arch-Emperor City. Countless individuals looked up to see rain falling down toward them as the world shook beneath their feet.

Back at the Heavenspan Sea, Daoist Heavenspan’s eyes narrowed. Over and over again, Bai Xiaochun’s might caused his unease to build.

Snorting coldly, he didn’t hesitate to say, “Daogate: Palace of Mountains!”

At that point, his six swords once again began to move toward each other.

However, before Daoist Heavenspan could finish creating the Palace of Mountains, Bai Xiaochun turned into something like a meteor that shot forward in attack.

In response, Daoist Heavenspan snorted and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the six swords to rapidly lock together in the form of a design different from the last!

Shockingly, it caused a mountain to materialize out of nowhere, which then slammed into Bai Xiaochun!

It was thousands upon thousands of meters tall, and thrummed with shocking energy. The moment of impact caused a deafening boom to ring out, and also caused Bai Xiaochun's expression to flicker. Howling, he unleashed another fist strike, only to find that more and more mountains were falling down toward him!

Each one was larger than the last! In the blink of an eye, more than a hundred mountains filled the sky, with the last one being tens upon tens of thousands of meters high! And all of them were smashing down toward Bai Xiaochun, clearly giving him no room to evade!

Even more shocking was that the Heavenspan Sea began to rumble as a mountain rose up from beneath its surface. More mountains appeared on either side of him as well! As of this moment, countless mountains became like magical items under the control of Daoist Heavenspan, to attack Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun could destroy one mountain. But as soon as he did, ten more appeared, and then a hundred, and then more! Each mountain was larger and more powerful than the one before it!

Bai Xiaochun's eyes continued to flicker with shock. Daoist Heavenspan's Daogates were virtually beyond compare! It was something the likes of which Bai Xiaochun had only seen during the spectacular battle in the Wildlands, when the gravekeeper had used his five elements Daoist magic!

Bai Xiaochun's expression was unprecedentedly serious as his Undying Blood began to burn. Blood qi immediately began to swirl out from his skin, and a maddened, bloodthirsty look sprang up in his eyes. And yet, he didn’t even come close to losing consciousness!

He now had complete and full control of the Godkiller technique!

As he unleashed the Godkiller, blood qi towered to the heavens. Bai Xiaochun howled at the top of his lungs as he sent the burning blood mist out to meet the mountains!

Every mountain that touched the mist shattered, its energy completely drained away as it transformed into ash....

The blood mist began to grow stronger, casting the whole world into red light. Even as the mountains shattered, the Celestial frowned. Snorting coldly, he waved his sleeve and said, “Daogate: Palace of Lightning!”

The booming of heavenly thunder exploded out, along with numerous black lightning bolts. In the blink of an eye, they filled the sky, and then began to fall onto Bai Xiaochun!

There was so much lightning that it seemed to have no end, like the most ultimate of heavenly tribulations! As this Daogate opened, Daoist Heavenspan seemed to become the monarch of all lightning and thunder!

This was a celestial magic that Daoist Heavenspan had personally created, and was one of the reasons why the gravekeeper had described him in such dramatic terms to Bai Xiaochun in the past!

This celestial magic that bordered on a great Dao was also one of the reasons that Daoist Heavenspan had been able to overthrow the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. It was the reason he was so confident that, if he left this world and went to the world beyond... he would be able to become a true celestial.

He would definitely make his breakthrough! Furthermore, he would eventually be able to reach the peak level of power, the likes of which were as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns even in the world beyond. He would become an archaean!

“With my talent, I am destined to become an archaean! Why do I have to be stuck in this cramped bug's nest of a world!? Why do I have to struggle on death’s door, just waiting for my longevity to run out...? I… refuse to accept this!!” A vicious, insane expression covered the Celestial’s face as he strode forward, surrounded by crashing thunder and lightning. 100,000 bolts. 1,000,000 bolts. 10,000,000 bolts of lightning!

Bai Xiaochun had his Godkiller technique, and had previously consumed lightning to advance his cultivation. But this… was lightning created by the Celestial’s Daoist magic, and was something he could not simply shrug off.

As the boundless sheets of heavenly lightning dropped toward him, Bai Xiaochun looked up at them, his eyes shining with no less madness than Daoist Heavenspan’s.

“Nice magical technique,” he growled. “But… I have something just like it!” Eyes burning with killing intent, he threw both hands out in front of him! Drawing all of the blood qi back into him, he unleashed the power of the Live Forever Codex.

The Undying Codex had its five divine abilities. But the Live Forever Codex had five Daoist magics!

As of this moment, he was using the first of the magics that he himself had created as part of the Live Forever Codex. They were… world-shaking Daoist magics of his own creation!

“One Glance Abyss Crystallization!” As Bai Xiaochun’s voice rolled out, it sounded like an expression of the Dao, as though a great bell had been struck that resonated through all heaven and earth…. This was the heavenly reverberation of a true Daoist magic!

In the briefest of moments, the entire Heavenspan Sea… emitted loud cracking sounds as it transformed into crystal!

All the waves and ripples in it became solid and crystallized! Inside and out… the Heavenspan Sea was now as transparent as glass!

The Heavenspan Sea now looked like a land of ice, glowing with radiant and shocking light!

That blinding light shot up to meet the lightning above… whereupon more cracking sounds rang out. Suddenly, it was in completely shocking fashion that the entire crystalline sea shattered into millions upon billions upon trillions of crystalline swords!

Shining with boundless light, and multitudinous razor-sharp manifestations of sword energy, the crystalline swords all turned upward and shot toward… Daoist Heavenspan!

At this point… Daoist Heavenspan’s face fell!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1024 awe-chapter-1025

Countless crystalline swords began to rise up into the air from the crystallized abyss that was the Heavenspan Sea, creating a screaming whistle that filled the world.

The swords cast dazzling light in all directions, to such blinding effect that Daoist Heavenspan’s face fell from the shock of it all.

Although he was very familiar with how the divine abilities of the Live Forever Codex worked, this was his first time seeing one of Bai Xiaochun’s personalized Daoist magics.

Furthermore, Daoist Heavenspan was very well aware that the power of the Daoist magics of the Live Forever Codex surpassed any other ordinary techniques by far. In addition, the specific way that such divine abilities were created had to do with the Dao and will of the individual cultivator.

Each cultivator had a different Dao and a different will, and thus, the Daoist magics they could create would all be different. Therefore, it didn’t matter how deeply Daoist Heavenspan had researched the Live Forever Codex, there was no way he could be familiar with Bai Xiaochun’s Daoist magics before they were revealed!

“What will Bai Xiaochun’s Daoist magics accomplish in the end?!” Daoist Heavenspan didn’t dare to look down on Bai Xiaochun in this moment. Looking around at the endless cloud of crystalline swords, he prepared to flee.

However, the swords were too fast, and before he could do anything, they were upon him.

Looking slightly nervous, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the lightning from the Palace of Lightning to shrink down. Instead of using that lightning to attack Bai Xiaochun, he threw it up as a shield against the crystalline swords.

Rumbling sounds filled all heaven and earth as the millions upon billions upon trillions of crystalline swords smashed into the lightning shield. The Dao Gate: Palace of Lightning was immediately weakened and began to shrink down, and yet, managed to stand against the assault of swords.

The crystalline swords slammed against the shield and then toppled down, falling one on top of the other to create a huge pile underneath Daoist Heavenspan!

The pile of swords grew higher and higher until finally, the lightning shield shattered. By the time it was all over, the masses of swords had created something like a small mountain beneath Daoist Heavenspan’s feet.

“So, *that’s* your Daoist magic, Bai Xiaochun?!” Although Daoist Heavenspan was panting a bit as he stood there on the mountainous pile of swords, his eyes shone with piercing light.

Bai Xiaochun looked back at him coldly, then extended his right hand, pointed out with his finger, and said, “Heavenly Canopy Lampshade!”

As soon as the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, the sky began to tremble and grow murky. Then, the sky seemed to break up into numerous layers, almost like cloth!

In the blink of an eye, the lowermost of the layers began to drop down and cover Daoist Heavenspan!

The heavenly canopy was difficult to see clearly at first, and was identifiable mostly by how it twisted and distorted the air around it. In response, the Celestial’s expression flickered, and he quickly performed an incantation gesture to unleash the Daogate: Palace of Wind. As he did, a black wind sprang out of nowhere to block the descending heavenly canopy.

However, even as the Celestial’s Daoist magic was unleashed, a second heavenly canopy began to fall, and then a third. Soon, the sky itself was starting to seem thin! Before long, the eighth canopy had dropped down toward the Heavenspan Sea, and seemed just on the verge of sealing Daoist Heavenspan!

Daoist Heavenspan now stood on a pile of crystal, surrounded by a black wind, struggling to escape. Meanwhile, the eight heavenly canopies dropped down, spreading over him just like a lampshade!

Despite being a manifestation of the fallen sky, the lampshade wasn’t blue, but rather light gray. By this point, enough of the sky had peeled away from above that it was possible to see the black void beyond!

Daoist Heavenspan panted heavily, his heart filled with unease and a sensation of crisis. Bellowing, he sent the black wind to batter this way and that, and yet, it did no good.

Even as Daoist Heavenspan’s shock intensified, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned even icier. Performing an incantation gesture with his left hand, he waved his finger and spoke in a voice that echoed like thunder.

Although the characters were very small, they all pulsed with the aura of the Live Forever Codex. Furthermore, there were literally too many to count! In fact, there were far, far more than the crystalline swords from before!

A moment later, rumbling sounds could be heard as the longevity characters shot toward the heavenly canopy lampshade that covered Daoist Heavenspan, and merged into it!

As they fused with the lampshade, the characters emanated a shocking aura which strengthened the lampshade and made its sealing powers vastly more incredible than before!

Inside, Daoist Heavenspan was starting to get very nervous. All of a sudden, he had the premonition that if he didn’t get out of this heavenly canopy lampshade… he would be in profound danger!

“I have to get out of here. Now!!” He tried to move, but no matter what he did, he was incapable of freeing himself. Overwhelmed by a sensation of danger, he howled and performed an incantation gesture to unleash the Daogate: Palace of Fire.

Instantly, Daoist Heavenspan was surrounded by majestic heavenly fire that sent indescribable heat out in all directions, setting the heavenly canopy ablaze!

It was in that moment that the killing intent in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes blazed. Ignoring the blazing heavenly canopies, he reached out to point at the sealed Celestial.

“Thou Art The Candle!!”

His voice crashed like deafening thunder, and slammed directly into Daoist Heavenspan’s body!

Daoist Heavenspan let out a miserable shriek. His eyes were crimson, and his hair in complete disarray as… without any warning whatsoever… a layer of wax appeared all over him!!

It was sinister and white, and in the blink of an eye, it covered him completely. With every moment that passed, it grew thicker and thicker, as did the Celestial's unease. Unleashing the power of his cultivation base to try to protect himself, he shouted, "Daogate: Palace of Marshes!"

The Palace of Marshes didn't summon water, but rather, a swamp!!

As Daoist Heavenspan opened his mouth to utter the words, white wax spilled into it! However, the area surrounding him still turned into a marshy swamp, filled with decay and rot. It was the type of thing that could melt anything within its bounds, and apparently, he hoped that it would neutralize the wax and cause the seal of the heavenly canopy to melt away!

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the power of the rotting swamp combined with the effects of the previous Daogates, causing the heavenly canopies to begin to break apart. However… with the bolstering of the longevity characters, the lampshade held!

No matter what techniques Daoist Heavenspan used, no matter how strong his Daogates were, as of this moment, he simply couldn't fight Bai Xiaochun's Live Forever Daoist magic!

Despite being counteracted to a degree by the rotting swamp, the wax continued to build up around Daoist Heavenspan. Soon, he was completely white, and looked like… he was made of wax!!

“Dammit. DAMMIT!!” he shouted, his expression twisting ferociously. Drawing on what appeared to be an even more powerful magic than before, he blasted away at the white wax, which began to crumble and crack. At the same time, the heavenly canopy lampshade also seemed to be on the verge of shattering….

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and closed his eyes for a moment. When he opened them… fire blazed to the heavens!!

“Live Forever Lamp, Integrate!”

The Celestial’s body was the waxy candle, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes… were the spark!!

This was none other than the personalized divine ability that Bai Xiaochun had created after mastering the Live Forever Codex. It was… the Live Forever Lamp!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1025 awe-chapter-1026

Bai Xiaochun was panting, and his face was ashen. This was his first time unleashing his Live Forever Codex Daoist magic, the Live Forever Lamp. However, he had visualized the process numerous times, and therefore, felt quite proficient in its use. This was one of the things that made the Live Forever Codex so unique: the fact that it could create a peerless Daoist magic based on the individual cultivator .

However, it was difficult to deal with how draining it was. After unleashing it only once, the power of the Live Forever Codex within him had been drained by more than seventy percent!

Cultivation base drainage was not something that the powers of the Undying Codex could help with. The Undying Codex only helped him recover from injuries of the fleshly body. The cultivation base could only be restored by means of breathing exercises or similar means.

The power of this Daoist magic was shocking even to Bai Xiaochun. His eyes flashed like lightning as his gaze fell on the Celestial. As of this moment, the entire world… looked very different!

The pile of crystal was… the lampstand!

The massive size of the lampstand was enough to cause pressure to weigh down on anyone who looked at it. Furthermore, the gravitational force it emitted ensured that no entity in existence would dare to get too close to it.

The heavenly canopy from above had descended, surrounding the lampstand to act as… the lampshade!!

Countless longevity characters were visible on the lampshade, which represented long life!

However, all of those things only constituted part of the Live Forever Lamp. The most important part… was right in the middle. The white, glowing candle!

Daoist Heavenspan's life force, his body, and everything else that made him up became that white candle! The final bit of the lamp was the spark from Bai Xiaochun's eyes, which lit the candle, providing the fire and the light!

As Daoist Heavenspan's body burned, fiery radiance spilled out, hitting the lampshade and accenting the longevity characters. Furthermore, the powerful gravitational force from the lampstand made it impossible for the Celestial to move a muscle.

Shockingly, Daoist Heavenspan had become the Live Forever Lamp!

He trembled violently, his mind and heart assailed by waves of shock. The indescribable sensation of imminent crisis that filled him was stronger than anything he had ever experienced. He could sense that his life force, his body, his cultivation base, and even his soul, were being burned by the Live Forever Lamp. He was wasting away rapidly, and in fact, it was to his shock that, only moments later, he felt unprecedentedly weak.

"This divine ability…. This Daoist magic…." At this point, he howled like a wild animal. "Insignificant Live Forever Lamp! How dare you burn my soul!!"

Amidst his struggling, he threw his head back and howled, and Bai Xiaochun stood there looking at him coldly.

“Alright, Daoist Heavenspan,” he murmured to himself, “it’s about time to use your final trick. The one you thought would earn you the win!”

Daoist Heavenspan glared back at Bai Xiaochun, burning, his skin and flesh slowly melting until bones became visible beneath. His hair was pure white, and his face was covered in wrinkles, and yet, the madness and insanity in his eyes had not been reduced by even a smidgen.

“Watch and learn, Bai Xiaochun. Pay attention to how I break your Daoist magic!” He extended both of his burning hands and pushed them together, palm to palm, as if he were praying!

“Seventh Daogate: Palace of Earth!” As the words left his mouth, a muffled rumble echoed out that seemed to come from far beneath the surface of the ground. Moments later, the energy of the land erupted out!

The Palace of Earth represented all of the lands in the world!

Energy poured from every square inch of the ground, which then began to stream toward Daoist Heavenspan!

The energy of the earth swirled around him, causing the flame to show signs of weakening. As for the crystalline lampstand, it began to darken, as though it would soon turn into ordinary stone!

It wasn’t just the lampstand that was affected. The lampshade was also affected by the earth energy, and began to turn brown. Within a few breaths of time, it looked like soil! And then, Daoist Heavenspan no longer looked like white wax, and the burning of his life force… ceased!

A boom rang out that seemed capable of rending heaven and earth in two! The Live Forever Lamp, which had been created with Daoist Heavenspan… exploded into bits!

“Did you really think you could trap me with that Daoist magic of yours, Bai Xiaochun!?!?” Daoist Heavenspan appeared to be in very bad shape, and was even gasping for breath. But after a moment, he threw his head back and began to laugh maniacally.

Bai Xiaochun stood in place, not moving, his eyes flickering with cold light, and also… derision.

“You really think you broke free?” he said, gesturing casually up at the sky.

In that instant, Daoist Heavenspan’s face fell as he realized that his life force, his cultivation base, and his soul… were still fading away! He suddenly looked up into the sky, his mind reeling as he staggered backward.

“How is this even possible!?!?”

High up in the sky… countless Live Forever Lamps had appeared. They stretched to the farthest corners of the Heavenspan Realm, to the point where it was impossible to see where they began or ended….

And in each of the Live Forever Lamps was a tiny version of Daoist Heavenspan, laughing and crying simultaneously, snarling and howling at the same time!

The bizarre nature of the sight was terrifying to behold!

Daoist Heavenspan’s aura suddenly flared to life, and he burst into motion, flying up into the sky and throwing both of his hands out wide.

“Eighth Daogate: Palace of Heaven!!

As he unleashed the eighth of his Daogate magics, the entire world went dim, and a massive wind kicked up. At the same time, the Celestial’s hand transformed into a massive, illusory hand that reached up and began to tear open a huge rift.

As the rift opened, it was as if the sky were being sliced open by an enormous, razor-sharp blade.

Shocking energy fluctuations poured out, causing the Live Forever Lamps to tremble. Simultaneously, the miniature versions of Daoist Heavenspan within the lamps all howled at the tops of their lungs and joined together… to power the magic of the Palace of Heaven!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

One by one, the countless Live Forever Lamps began to explode. Within moments, they were gone, and Daoist Heavenspan hovered there, gasping for breath. He was clearly exhausted and profoundly weak, and yet his eyes glittered brightly. As the moments passed, he began to recover, and he turned his gaze to Bai Xiaochun, looking very much like the most domineering figure in all heaven and earth.

“Unless you have some other trick up your sleeve, Bai Xiaochun, then… the time has come for you to be a good boy and transform into the high-level medicine I need!”

Bai Xiaochun looked as calm as ever, except for the raging killing intent in his eyes. Then he spoke, and it sounded as if he were saying the funniest thing in the world. “You really think you broke free?”

Based on what he could tell, the secret move that Daoist Heavenspan believed would gain him victory had still not been employed.

As for Daoist Heavenspan, a look of blank shock appeared on his face. Backing up, he looked up, and realized that the world net had appeared overhead.

Then he looked down and realized that the lands below looked almost like an enormous lampstand….

Countless emotions flickered across his face, and he began to tremble. For the first time, bitterness and regret began to rise up in his heart.

“This Live Forever Lamp is truly amazing. And the Live Forever Codex, even moreso!”

As of this moment, the entire Heavenspan Realm had been turned into a gargantuan, unparalleled Live Forever Lamp!!

The lands below were the lampstand, and the world net was the lampshade. And Daoist Heavenspan… was still the white candle. He… was still burning, providing the lamplight!

This was… the third form of the Live Forever Lamp!

First, the self. Second, the heavens. Third, the world!

It was a peerless Daoist magic!

Breathtaking and unrivaled!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1026 awe-chapter-1027

“Apparently I underestimated the Live Forever Codex…. Or perhaps I underestimated *your* Live Forever Codex, Bai Xiaochun!” Daoist Heavenspan looked around at the world, which had become an enormous Live Forever Lamp, and suddenly his heart was awash with numerous complicated emotions. He knew quite a bit about the Live Forever Codex, and yet neither his top apprentice, nor his daughter Du Lingfei, had ever been able to do anything as shocking as this during their cultivation of the same technique.

The world was the Live Forever Lamp, and Daoist Heavenspan was the flaming candle. As he burned, his control over the will of the world began to slip away. Apparently, the Live Forever Lamp was causing him… to lose his place as the ruler of the world. Instead of acknowledging him, the world now wanted to crush and kill him!!

Bai Xiaochun remained in place off in the distance, looking on with a slight frown. As of yet, he had still not seen anything that seemed like something Daoist Heavenspan would rely on to gain ultimate victory!

“You definitely have a true trump card! I refuse to believe that you’ll continue to hold it back in the face of my Live Forever Lamp!” Eyes flickering with cold light, he waved his hand, causing the world-level Live Forever Lamp to begin to shine even more brightly.

“I still have one Daogate left of the nine, Bai Xiaochun!” Eyes completely bloodshot, Daoist Heavenspan threw his head back and roared, simultaneously throwing his arms out, placing one hand above and one below, with the palms facing each other.

“Daogate… The Palace Within!!” Howling, he shoved his hands out in front of him, causing the six swords to produce another strange design with three sections. As soon as it appeared, it radiated an air of both life and death. One half of it was alive, the other dead, and as they swirled around each other, they created an image that seemed to encompass the entire circle of life. Then, rumbling sounds echoed out as that image of life and death shot toward the enormous world lamp.

As soon as the air of life and death began to fill the world, the area around Daoist Heavenspan was demarcated into two halves. One half withered away into death, and in the other half, life force flourished.

If anyone were able to look at the scene from far above, it would be possible to see the entire world of Bai Xiaochun’s Live Forever Lamp transforming, with one half dying and the other half growing.

As this bizarre scene played out, Daoist Heavenspan ripped his hands apart from each other!

“Open!” he shouted. If the world represented both life and death, then Daoist Heavenspan was ripping the two halves apart, and thus tearing the Live Forever Lamp in two!

“If this is your secret weapon, Daoist Heavenspan,” Bai Xiaochun said slowly, “then I'm afraid you’re doomed to perish this day!” Even as the Celestial ripped the world to pieces, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes for a moment. When he opened them, the world-scale Live Forever Lamp… was extinguished!!

In that instant, all of the light in the world vanished, leaving behind only Daoist Heavenspan, who still burned with fire. Before, it had been difficult to make out with the naked eye, but now, with the entire world cast into darkness, it was more obvious than ever!

“Extinguish the lamp, extinguish the person!” Bai Xiaochun murmured. As the words left his mouth, the entire world of darkness filled with an unimaginably powerful will of extermination. Then that darkness rushed toward Daoist Heavenspan with mountain-toppling, sea-draining power, ignoring the Palace Within, ignoring all defensive measures, ignoring the will of Daoist Heavenspan himself. This darkness would extinguish the fire! It would snuff out the flame of his life force!

“Noooo!!” Daoist Heavenspan shrieked. His life was about to end, and therefore there was no time for thinking or planning. His right hand shot up in a blur to touch his forehead, from within which he extracted an iron sword!

It was none other than… the fallen sword of Gu Tianjun!

Hefting the sword which had fallen from the world beyond, Daoist Heavenspan howled and slashed at the darkness of extermination which threatened to darken the flame of his life force!!

The slash of his sword split open the darkness, causing cracking sounds to erupt out. However, it was within the blink of an eye that, to the utter disbelief of Daoist Heavenspan, the fallen sword… shattered into pieces!

The darkness couldn't be blocked! In the briefest of moments, it poured into Daoist Heavenspan, inundating him… and extinguishing the candle flame!

The lamp was extinguished, and the person was extinguished, killed in body and soul!

The entire world went silent. Gradually, the darkness faded away, and light once again began to fill the world. The Live Forever Lamp was gone, and Bai Xiaochun hovered there above the Heavenspan Sea. However, there was no joy on his face. Instead, he was staring at the spot where Daoist Heavenspan had been wiped away. It was only at this point that… he suddenly realized why he had been feeling so uneasy. He now realized why he had begun to speculate that there was a hidden truth at play!

“That laughing-crying ghost face that he snatched… still hasn’t shown up yet….” Gaze sharpening, he looked down at the nearly dried up Heavenspan Sea, performed an incantation gesture, and waved his finger. In response, the surface of the sea suddenly bulged, as though some boundlessly powerful force were inside of it, just about to emerge.

All of a sudden, a whirlpool erupted in that very spot, spinning rapidly until the seawater around it screamed loudly.

In the very center of the whirlpool appeared… Daoist Heavenspan, striding up from the bottom of the sea!!

“You are very near the level of being able to kill my true self!” Daoist Heavenspan’s aura was back to normal, but his eyes were bloodshot, and within them could be seen a glint of lingering fear. In the very last moment, he had switched places with the discarnate soul of the laughing-crying ghost face. Were it not for that substitution magic, the might of the Live Forever Lamp would have definitely wiped him out of existence.

“Discarnate soul life replacement!” Bai Xiaochun said, his face unsightly to the extreme. The sight of Daoist Heavenspan rising up from the bottom of the sea… confirmed that he had always had a trump card to rely on!

He had used a discarnate soul to stand in his place, just as he had used his blood-hair to survive his world-shattering battle with the gravekeeper in the Wildlands.

Daoist Heavenspan took a deep breath, his eyes shining with intense killing intent, as well as madness. Oh so slowly, he raised his hand up toward the sky.

“Now that I understand your Live Forever Lamp, the time has come… for my own ultimate Daoist magic! Call it survival of the fittest! Call it the law of the jungle! The world is withering away, and will die soon. Instead of simply allowing all the living things therein to die along with it, it would be better… to take those lives for myself. I created a Daoist magic long ago that I’ve never used, a Daoist magic that can destroy the world! It is… my tenth Daogate!”

Daoist Heavenspan’s voice was like the final crack of thunder to hit the world. A massive vortex appeared in his outstretched hand, pitch black and spinning madly. An indescribably powerful gravitational force then erupted out to fill the entire world.

The sky had already been damaged severely, and was bereft of almost all life force. And now, it began to wrinkle and crumble….

Within the already withering world, the plants and vegetation all began to die. Every bit of life left in the mountains and lands began to vanish. The rivers and lakes began to go dry. Even the Heavenspan Seawater started evaporating.

Next were the animals, the cultivators, and all other living things…. All of the sects, including those in the east, west, south and north. Everything in the Wildlands, and everyone inside and near Arch-Emperor City. The Grand Heavenmaster. The Giant Ghost King. All the cultivators from the lands of Heavenspan, and the demigod patriarchs.

Everyone began to tremble as their life force began to seep out of them and float through the air….

As all of this happened, Daoist Heavenspan’s vortex began to turn from black to red. At the same time, a heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing energy began to build up. Underneath the red glow, the Celestial’s face looked particularly vicious.

“This is my last move, Bai Xiaochun. Open, my tenth Daogate!!” In concert with his voice, the vortex began to pulse with the most destructive of airs.

Bai Xiaochun could sense the vortex pulling away at the life force of all living things in the world. He could sense the River-Defying Sect in the Wildlands, as well as everyone else he knew, trembling and withering up. At that point, it was with completely bloodshot eyes that, without any hesitation, he reached out in the direction of the north!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1027 awe-chapter-1028

The world treasure of the north was Bai Xiaochun’s trump card!

In response to the movement of his hand, the northern Heavenspan River region, which had long since ceased to be a land of frozen ice, began to crack and crumble. The mountains which were falling because of Daoist Heavenspan’s magic transformed into ash.

Deafening cracking sounds erupted out from the entire broken landmass, spreading out to fill the world.

Crevices spread up and down the length of the parched Heavenspan River, stretching all the way to the Wildlands!

Then the lands of the north began to tilt, sending a multitude of rocks and rubble crumbling down. The place where the northern lands of Heavenspan connected to the Wildlands broke, and then… began to rise high into the air.

As this happened, everyone in the world was able to see it, and they gasped in shock. Despite how their life force was flowing away from them, this was still one of the most shocking images they had ever seen in their entire lives.

“Heavens! What… what is that?!?!”

“Is that… the northern Heavenspan region?”

As the landmass that was the northern Heavenspan region rose up, it began to shine with brilliant blue light. Anyone who looked closely would be able to see countless crevices appearing in the land, from which the blue light spilled.

Simultaneously, any living beings who remained in the north vanished, taken away into the interior of the world treasure. As the moments passed, the earth and soil began to crumble and fall down, until… an enormous sword was revealed!

This was… the world treasure, the Greatsword of the North!

The bright blue greatsword cast its light throughout the dying world around it, and illuminated the crumbling sky, causing indescribable pressure to radiate out in all directions.

Now that it had truly become a world treasure, it was possible to see a huge face on the surface of the sword. It was the Frigid Matriarch, clearly awake, her eyes shining with grief as she looked in the direction where the Blood Ancestor had burned to death. She appeared to be murmuring something in a voice that only she could hear. And then, a moment later, the enormous sword turned into a blue streak that shot toward… the Heavenspan Sea!

Considering how large it was, it took only a brief movement for it to appear right above the sea. However, along the way, it shrank down rapidly until it was just large enough… for Bai Xiaochun to grab it by the hilt!

As soon as Bai Xiaochun grabbed the world treasure of the north, his cultivation base surged, and he began to radiate unprecedented dignity. Eyes harsh and cold, he turned to the red vortex held by Daoist Heavenspan, and…. violently slashed at it with his sword!!

“DIE!”

The sword became a glittering blue streak. At the same time, a projection of the full-sized sword appeared, rumbling directly toward Daoist Heavenspan.

The sensation of deadly crisis that Daoist Heavenspan felt couldn’t have been greater. Although he had been aware of the existence of the Greatsword of the North, he could never have imagined that it would be this powerful.

He was still in the middle of trying to absorb the lives of everyone in the world, but now was not the time to worry about how the job wasn't finished. Without any hesitation, he sent the full power of his cultivation base into the vortex, causing it to rapidly increase in size.

Battle prowess that was very close to the level of a true celestial raged as Daoist Heavenspan let out a shout. Then he thrust out his right hand, sending the vortex flying to meet the Greatsword of the North.

Time seemed to slow down. The withering heavens, the wasting earth, the minds of all living things… they all slowed. Slowly but surely, the spinning vortex and the Greatsword of the North approached each other… and then made contact.

Then, a massive, deafening, ear-splitting boom rang out, the volume of which surpassed anything that anyone had ever heard in all of history…. The Greatsword of the North slashed into the vortex, sending out fluctuations that surpassed the quasi-celestial level, and reached the point of a true celestial!!

If you likened this world to a paper model, then the fluctuations of the true Celestial Realm were like flames that would engulf it!

The crumpled heavens couldn’t sustain the force anymore, and a massive rift opened up. Then a second rift appeared, and a third. More and more appeared, until there were eight in total, ensuring that the sky above… had been torn into nine parts!!

It was possible to see through those rifts into what lay beyond… a strange world….

An aura that did not belong to the Heavenspan Realm then began to seep in through the rifts and spread about.

As that was happening, the lands were equally shaken. Intense rumbling sounds filled the Heavenspan Realm, including the Wildlands, as the ground was ripped into ten parts.

As of this moment, the Heavenspan Realm… had nine heavens and ten earths!

The entire world was being torn to pieces!

The living beings throughout the realm were trembling, their gazes blank as the world was destroyed around them. Indescribable terror filled them from the destructive fluctuations they felt.

Meanwhile, the Greatsword of the North finished slashing through the vortex, which was powerless to fight back, and in the end, exploded!

When Daoist Heavenspan was hit by the devastating blow, it was like an enormous mountain had slammed into him. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his hair whipped about in wild fashion as he was flung away. Blue light was reflected in his eyes as he dodged to the side, and yet, his efforts couldn’t prevent his right arm from disappearing in a haze of blood!

“Impossible!!” he screamed, blood splattering his lips and chin. He simply couldn’t accept how powerful Bai Xiaochun was, and how majestic the Live Forever Lamp had been. Worse was that his top apprentice of years past had finished forging the Greatsword of the North, a fact that drove him into further madness.

Although he had recently come to be certain that his top apprentice hadn’t really died, and had also known of the supposed world treasure, he hadn’t particularly cared. After all, he knew of one important fact. A demigod… could not unleash the full might of a world treasure!

However, the shocking sword energy which had just been released was almost impossible to believe.

“Impossible. This is impossible!!” Trembling in terror, he suddenly thought back to a point he had overlooked…. Backing up, he said, “The laughing-crying ghost face’s true form!! Dammit, it must have been him!!”

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was just as blood-spattered as Daoist Heavenspan. It didn’t matter how strong his powers of regeneration were, they couldn’t immediately heal him from the backlash of using the Greatsword of the North, which contained true celestial fluctuations.

The injuries were inconsequential. Nor did he care that his consciousness was fading. He bit his tongue to maintain clarity, and then, bursting with killing intent and a murderous aura, hefted the Greatsword of the North and transformed into a bright beam of light that shot directly toward Daoist Heavenspan.

“Time to die, Daoist Heavenspan!!”

Even if the heavens were being destroyed and the earth was being decimated, his killing intent had not lessened.

Daoist Heavenspan’s anxiety skyrocketed as he saw Bai Xiaochun using every last bit of energy in this final attack. The blue beam of light which descended upon him was not the type he could fully avoid. Pupils constricting, he dodged to the side, only to have his left leg wiped out of existence.

The pain caused a wild shriek to erupt from his lips, and yet the maddened Bai Xiaochun didn’t slow down at all. Taking advantage of having gained the upper hand, he attacked again.

The look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes made even the powerful Daoist Heavenspan shiver in fear.

“Du Lingfei isn’t dead!” he shouted in a thunderous voice. Although it was a shocking revelation to Bai Xiaochun, he was so maddened that he didn’t slow down for even a moment.

Seeing that his tactic had failed, Daoist Heavenspan gritted his teeth and self-detonated. Massive force erupted from his battered body, and a glowing ball emerged, a mass of magical symbols that almost looked like a seed. Moving with incredible speed, it shot away from Bai Xiaochun and headed up into the crumbling sky.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t willing to just let the Celestial destroy his own fleshly body for a burst of speed to escape. Coughing up blood, and his injuries worsening with every moment that passed, he shot off in pursuit. Unfortunately, Daoist Heavenspan achieved a final burst of speed… and massive rumbling sounds could be heard from the sky as the nine pieces which now made it up… crumbled into nothing!

The heavens were destroyed!

A massive shockwave spread out in all directions. Bai Xiaochun had been struggling just to keep his injuries in check, and was unable to evade the force. As it hit him, his mind began to spin, and he began to tumble through the air, completely out of control.

Even as his consciousness began to fade, he jerked his eyes in the direction of Daoist Heavenspan, only to see him being overwhelmed by the shockwave. It was impossible to tell if he survived or died….

Bai Xiaochun wanted to see for himself, but couldn’t control his own body. Slowly but surely, he began to lose consciousness. The last thing he saw was…

As the heavens were destroyed… a massive black hole sprang into being high above. Intense gravitational force erupted out, which rapidly transformed into teleportation power. That power descended into the Heavenspan Realm and reached out to all of the living beings within it. In the blink of an eye, they vanished, to reappear in random locations in the world beyond, although Bai Xiaochun had no way to know that.

Everyone from the River-Defying Sect. Everyone from the Wildlands. Every person from the Heavenspan Realm was teleported away….

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were completely bloodshot as the heavens were destroyed and the earth decimated. In his bitter blankness, he thought back to everything that had happened, and wondered if it was all real. It didn’t seem like it.

“My home… is no more….” he murmured. The future seemed like a blank as he slowly descended toward unconsciousness. He fell through the air, and the light of teleportation wrapped around him…. Then he vanished.

In the last moment before he passed out, he heard a cacophony of voices ringing out from the world beyond the heavens. Some were excited. Some sounded greedy. Some seemed profoundly sinister.

“It broke open! The Arch-Sovereign’s body broke open!!”

“Hahaha! We've been waiting a long time for the people from that world to come out! Quick, notify the Vile-Emperor! The people of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty are going to be teleported to all sorts of random locations in the Eternal Lands! There’s no time to waste! Enslave all of them!!”

“Hmph! The Saint-Emperor is obviously going to covet the bloodline of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, the sanctimonious bastard. But he won’t be able to outdo us! Once our Vile-Emperor Dynasty enslaves everyone from the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, then the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty are done for! It's a good thing we went to war over the issue of setting up teleportation formations all over the body of the Arch-Sovereign!”

“Of the three sovereigns, he was the last to blow! Sure took long enough! Originally, everything was supposed to be split three ways, but it’s way too late for that now. The people from the Arch-Emperor’s world are destined to be the slaves of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!”

“Fellow Daoists from the Arch-Emperor’s world. We are from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty! We’re here to help you! Join us in resisting the Vile-Emperor Dynasty! Remember, we are the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Come look for us!!”

“The Saint-Emperor Dynasty is the only force in the Eternal Lands that can resist the Vile-Emperor Dynasty! Fellow Daoists from the world of the Arch-Emperor, and especially the reigning Arch-Emperor, you really have no choice! Join the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!!”

**

In the Eternal Lands, there were five immortal domains, as well as a misty sea. Within that sea was an enormous, ancient statue, which seemed capable of propping up the very heavens. Suddenly, a massive boom erupted from that statue, to fill all of the Eternal Lands as….

The statue collapsed!

End of book 6: The Strongest Deva

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1028 awe-chapter-1029

Book 7: The Eternal Immortal Domains

Time passed.

Half a year had already gone by since the destruction of the Heavenspan Realm.

Strange skies, strange lands. Strange cities, strange people….

These lands were actually made up of five enormous land masses which were called… immortal domains.

Any one of the immortal domains was dozens of times as large as the Heavenspan Realm or more. On one of them, in the eastern part of the domain, was a vast, winding mountain range that resembled a sleeping dragon. Many cities could be seen within those mountains, around which were numerous towns.

In one such town was a young man in a rumpled white garment, with a smudged and dirty face. He seemed to be laughing and muttering to himself as he stumbled drunkenly down the street, a jug of alcohol clutched in one hand, from which he occasionally took long swigs.

“Immortal domains, huh…?” he murmured. From the way he trudged along, he seemed completely despondent.

It was autumn, and a biting wind swept through the mountains, sending yellow leaves rustling along down the street. This particular town wasn’t very heavily populated. It was located in a relatively remote area, and for the most part, the people in it kept to themselves. Because of how bitingly cold the wind was, the few people who did walk down the street all wore thick, warm clothing, and hurried to their destinations as quickly as they could.

Clearly, no one wanted to be out on the street on such a chilly evening. And anyone who did have to be out wanted to get back home as quickly as they could, to where it was warm, and to where their friends and families waited for them.

However, this drunk young man didn’t seem to have any concept of home. He wandered in seemingly aimless fashion, a blank look in his eyes, completely ignoring the biting wind. He didn’t seem to mind the wind at all, and in fact, it matched the loneliness in his heart. As he walked along through the evening, he seemed incredibly melancholy....

Brittle yellow leaves floated in the air around him, and they seemed to have found a kindred spirit in him that they didn’t wish to leave.

“Immortal domains…? Who gives a shit…?” The aroma of alcohol surrounded the young man as he staggered onward, lifting the jug up for another drink. However, at that point, he realized that the jug was empty. Cursing, he lifted it up and jiggled it a bit to get the final remaining drops out. After swallowing them, he smacked his lips.

As the amber light of evening shone in his listless eyes, it revealed the bitterness and loss contained deep inside.

“Out of booze again.... At least the alcohol in this world is good stuff.” Ducking his head, he began to mutter incoherently as he stumbled off in the direction of the tavern he frequented, his only company the biting autumn wind.

The tavern wasn’t very far off, but the young man almost seemed to be walking through knee-deep water as he went along. It took him the time it takes an incense stick to burn before he reached his destination. By that time, not much of the amber sunset remained. He pushed the door open and lurched inside, simultaneously allowing a blast of cold wind to enter with him.

There were only about seven or eight tables in the tavern, but they were all full. Even the random seats that weren’t attached to tables had people in them. There were quite a few young ones present, running about amongst the tables playing while their parents sat chatting and drinking. There wasn’t much to do in this remote town, and therefore, this tavern, which sold Drunken Immortal liquor, had long since become a center of activity.

It was here that people exchanged local gossip, rumors about the rich people in town, and even stories about immortals. Sometimes, people got drunk and told their secrets out loud, leading to much laughter from their fellows.

For most of the people in town, their greatest entertainment was to come to this tavern and enjoy each other's company.

As soon as the young man entered, some of the regulars pointed at him and chuckled. “Well, if it isn’t Scholar Bai! Hey, shopkeep, looks like you've got another one hooked on your Drunken Immortal!”

Considering how drunk the men were, it was hard to say whether they were being friendly or not.

No one in town knew this young man, but the regulars at the tavern recognized him. He had shown up out of nowhere a few months before. He never talked with anyone, and nobody even knew his name. However, he was clearly different from the somewhat rough and uneducated townsfolk. He wore a long, white robe, and seemed to wallow in melancholy and pain. None of that did anything to forestall the speculation about who exactly he was.

He looked like a scholar, specifically the type who had only passed the town-level scholar examinations.

“Scholar Bai must have failed in the imperial examinations, and doesn’t have the face to go home. That’s why he’s drunk all the time….”

“Nah. You listen to me. Scholar Bai’s family all died, and then he got robbed by bandits. The pain of everything he's been through is why he looks so depressed.” The crowd in the tavern had noticed how often he came to buy alcohol in the tavern, and considering how despondent he looked, they couldn’t help but sigh and come up with various guesses about his past.

The young man could hear much of what was being said about him, but didn’t seem to care. He stumbled over to the counter, put the alcohol jug down, and then spoke in a somewhat incoherent voice.

“Another jug, shopkeep…. Drunken Immortal. This Drunken Immortal of yours… it’s good stuff.”

The shopkeeper, an older fellow in green garments, looked back at the young man and sighed.

“Scholar Bai, it’s nearly the end of the year. Why don't you save your silver and go back home?”

“Home…?” The young man chuckled, a blank look in his eyes that seemed tinged with pain. Reaching into the fold of his robe, he pulled out a stack of silver and placed it on the counter. “What, you think I'm poor or something?!”

The old shopkeeper frowned at the young man’s apparent inability to accept a kindness. Looking a bit annoyed, he scooped up the silver, plopped a new jug of alcohol onto the table, and then proceeded to ignore the young man.

It was with somewhat glazed eyes that the young man grabbed the jug of alcohol and then took a long drink. Smiling foolishly, and face flushed red from the alcohol, he swayed his way toward the door.

By this point, the children playing around in the inn had taken notice of the young man, and considering how he was stumbling around, began to jokingly call him a drunkard.

The young man didn’t care. By the time he walked out of the tavern, it was already dark, and the wind was even colder. He looked around at the lantern light flickering in the windows of the houses, and his heart grew even darker.

As the darkness in his heart spread to encompass his eyes, he stumbled off in the direction of a temple where he usually slept. Upon arriving, he slumped down against the wall and continued to drink….

The only sound he could hear was the whimpering of the wind, and the rustle of the leaves that occasionally landed on him.

At one point, a leaf landed on his hand… highlighting a scar there that looked like a spark.

“Hao’er….” he murmured, the pain in his voice clear. Right now, the only thing he could think of to do was drink, to use Drunken Immortal to descend into a muddle-headed daze. Only by being drunk… could he forget about all of the pain and confusion.

This young man was Bai Xiaochun.

Once upon a time, he had been happy and full of laughter. But in the same way that summer will change into autumn… those things were gone, and he had changed.

Also gone was his home. Just before passing out, he had heard the deafening boom, and watched as the Heavenspan Realm was destroyed.

Later, he woke up in a strange, unfamiliar land to find that everyone from his past was gone….

His home was no more.

The River-Defying Sect. Li Qinghou…. Mistress Red-Dust. Song Junwan…. They were all gone.

Thankfully, Daoist Heavenspan was also gone. However, that fact brought him no joy, only sadness. An ocean of sadness with him at the bottom of it.

He wanted to cheer up. And in fact, after being teleported to this immortal domain, he had spent months searching. He had used everything in his power, including all of the power of his cultivation base, and all of his divine sense.

But the only things he had found… were corpses. One after another, he tracked down people from the lands of Heavenspan who had been teleported to this unfamiliar world. None of them had been able to survive the process, and reached their destinations as corpses. It was like a nightmare for him, and led to a moment of weeping in which he simply couldn’t hold on any longer.

During his months of searching, he had found corpses that included Nascent Soul cultivators and even devas. Eventually, he didn't dare to search anymore. He feared that one day he would find Li Qinghou, Mistress Red-Dust, Song Junwan or some other familiar faces… as corpses.

Bai Hao’s death. The gravekeeper’s plan. Du Lingfei’s tears. The destruction of the world. One corpse after another. Eventually… Bai Xiaochun couldn’t take it.

Exhausted in all senses of the word, he reached this town, where he ended up in a drunken stupor….

He was not the ruthlessly ambitious type like Daoist Heavenspan. He was Bai Xiaochun… a simple person who wanted to be happy and live forever.

“If all of you are still alive, then where are you…?” he said, his voice slurring a bit as he slowly closed his eyes and passed out.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1029 awe-chapter-1030

Dawn.

The distant sky was misty white, with dark clouds overhead. Gradually, the sun climbed up, turning the clouds violet, and then bright red.

Eventually, sunlight pierced through the clouds, illuminating the world in a riot of colors. At around that time, an old man and a youngster appeared, walking through the forested mountain.

The old man wore a Daoist robe, and although he kept his cultivation base mostly concealed, from the way his eyes sparkled like lightning, it was obvious that he was in the Core Formation stage. The child who walked with him was a mere Qi Condensation cultivator.

Eventually they entered the town and reached the temple. Outside the entrance, the youngster caught sight of Bai Xiaochun slumped up against the wall. He frowned.

“The world is a bitter place,” the old man said. “Those who fail to understand the great Dao live their lives like insects. Pay him no heed.” Shaking his head, he led the child inside. Some time ago, the temple had caught fire and nearly burned to the ground. It was in terrible shape.

“Master, is this the place?”

The old man nodded. “Yes. Years ago, fire fell from the heavens and landed right here. Immerse yourself in this place, and your Fire Kindling Incantation will rise to the next level.” Looking around at the ruins of the temple, he sighed. “This was once a temple to the Eternal Mother. Before you begin meditating, make sure to pay your respects.”

“The Eternal Mother?” the child said, clearly surprised. He quickly clasped hands and bowed respectfully. Then he looked up at his Master and asked, “Master, the story about the Eternal Sons and the Enemy from Beyond is true, isn’t it? And we can see the Enemy from Beyond when we look up into the sky, right?”

The truth was that the boy already knew the answers to his questions, but he still wanted to hear his omnipotent, omniscient Master explain the answer.

By this point, the conversation between the Master and apprentice had reached Bai Xiaochun’s ears, and he slowly opened his bleary eyes. He was hungover, and his head was pounding. At the moment, he couldn't even see clearly. But that didn’t stop his memories from rising up and filling his heart with pain and confusion.

He thought about how he had been forced to fuse with Du Lingfei, and about how his apprentice had died right in front of him. He thought about all the plots and schemes that had played out, and how the entire world had been destroyed in front of his very eyes.

The things he had experienced were things that most people of his generation could never even imagine happening.

Because of all of that, he now felt confused, bitter, and in pain. He was lost.

Only in his drunken dreams could he once again feel happy and blessed…. But after sobering up, and looking into a sky that was not the sky of the Heavenspan Realm, depression would grip him tight once again.

After his months of wandering in this strange world, he had heard enough from the local inhabitants to know that he was in… the Eternal Lands.

Even the mortals here knew the beautiful legends about this place…. The truth was that they actually resided on a gargantuan flower.

The Eternal Flower was vast beyond imagination, with its five petals forming enormous districts, which were called immortal domains.

People usually referred to the flower as the Eternal Mother, whom they worshipped with pious devotion. Even small, remote towns like this one had temples erected in her honor.

According to the legends, people had lived on the petals of the Eternal Flower for too many years to even count. In fact, it had been this way from the moment life began in this world….

In between the five immortal domains was something called the Eternal Sea…. It was a sea of mists that mortals couldn’t even approach safely. According to the stories… within the depths of the Eternal Sea, there had once existed three enormous statues!

People called the statues the Eternal Sons. In the legends, those three Eternal Sons had once fought a spectacular war with the Enemy from Beyond. In the final battle, the Enemy from Beyond fell into slumber, and the three Eternal Sons became statues.

It was a story that had been told in the Eternal Lands for many years. Oftentimes, stories that get passed down through the ages are eventually forgotten or changed. More commonly… people stop believing them.

And yet… the story of the three Eternal Sons and the Enemy from Beyond had never been forgotten. Even the mortals had full faith that the story was no legend. It was the truth!

Bai Xiaochun put the jug of alcohol to his lips and took a long drink. As he listened to the Master and apprentice talking in the temple, he looked up into the sky. Back when he had first arrived in this world more than half a year ago, he had awoken, looked up and been struck with astonishment.

This sky looked very different from the sky he was used to. Now, as he listened to the Master talking about the history of the Eternal Lands, he gazed up into the sky with that same sense of wonderment.

On each side of this sky… hung five enormous mountains. At the bases of the two sets of five mountains were two enormous land masses, each of them just as large as one of the immortal domains!

The mountains and the land masses did not rise up from the Eternal Lands, they just hung there… as if they were a part of the heavens!

“Mountains? Landmasses?” Bai Xiaochun murmured. “No… those are obviously two gigantic hands! The hands of… a gargantuan giant!!” That had been his initial reaction months ago upon first looking up into the sky.

The truth was that even the children in the Eternal Lands knew the history of such matters…. After all, in addition to the two enormous hands in the sky, there was also… a face!

The face existed far away in the heavens, but it was still clear for everyone to see. It was awe-inspiring, harsh and cruel, and generally speaking, terrifying!

That face hovered there at all times in the sky above the Eternal Lands!

If it were true that the mountains and land masses were really hands, just as Bai Xiaochun had assumed from the beginning, then it was obvious to conclude that, because of the huge face, there must be a spectacularly unfathomably large giant in the void outside of the Eternal Lands.

The giant was so large that even half of its face would be large enough to fill most of the sky above the Eternal Lands. And its hands… seemed poised to crush the Eternal Lands into dust!

“And he,” said the old man in the temple, “is the Enemy from Beyond who fought the three Eternal Sons.”

According to the legends, the Enemy from Beyond had destroyed the starry sky, but had been stopped outside of the Eternal Lands by the three Eternal Sons. Those three sons had sacrificed themselves in death to seal the Enemy from Beyond in a state of slumber.

The stories said that one day in the future, the giant would awaken, open his eyes, and try to destroy the Eternal Lands.

Bai Xiaochun took another long drink.

“People say… that after the three Eternal Sons sealed the Enemy from Beyond, destructive fluctuations filled the world. Because of that, the Eternal Sons brought all of their people into their own bodies, and then transformed into three enormous statues that stood in the depths of the Eternal Sea.

“It is also said that the Eternal Sons used their last bits of life force to give birth to all the living things that inhabited the worlds formed by their bodies…. Their descendants became the imperial clans. And it was the emperors who led their people, spread knowledge of the world, and imparted the ways of cultivation….

“The legends also speak of how, many years later, the first statue shattered…. People emerged from that world and were the first to lay eyes on the Eternal Lands. When they saw the strange things in the sky, they were not as happy as they had been when they first emerged into the open. However, under the direction of their emperor, they settled down and began to multiply….”

As Bai Xiaochun listened to the story being told in the temple, he wanted to smile, and yet couldn’t. This was not his first time hearing the tale, and yet, every time he did, it shocked him to the core.

Note from the author, Er Gen: There are four main emotions; happiness, anger, sorrow, and joy, and those emotions appear in the stories we read. I’ve seen some people predicting that this story will end as a tragedy. In response, I flick my sleeve and shout, “Who dares to say such a thing! Impossible! I’d stake my handsome good looks that it won’t!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1030 awe-chapter-1031

“Eventually… the people from that world created a mighty nation that has existed from generation to generation down to this very day. That is our nation… the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, one of the two imperial dynasties that exists in the Eternal Lands, and also… the most powerful!

“Eventually, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty took note of the other two statues of the Eternal Sons. They knew that one day, the two statues would break open, and the hosts of living beings inside would emerge.

“Originally, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had intended to welcome the people from the other statues, and join forces with them to fight the great enemy. But before they could prepare properly, the second statue… unexpectedly shattered. The people inside were teleported to all sorts of locations in the Eternal Lands. Unexpectedly, they were not interested in fighting the great enemy. They were bent on conquest, and in the end, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had no choice but to go to war…. It was around that time that an archaean appeared from within the newly arrived imperial clan. Thankfully, the Vile-Emperor was already in that same cultivation level. In order to prevent a horrific situation for their peoples, they eventually made peace.” As the old man sighed in the temple, Bai Xiaochun took a swig of alcohol, and then chuckled.

Bai Xiaochun could see through to the truth almost immediately. The Vile-Emperor Dynasty had hoped to control all of the Eternal Lands, but the second Eternal Son statue had opened before they were in a place to do so. The people from within the second statue regrouped and fought back until the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had no choice but to declare a truce.

Obviously, that other major force was the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!

“Originally, there should have been three imperial dynasties….” the old man said with another sigh.

“I know, Master. The third imperial dynasty was supposed to be the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. Hasn’t everyone been saying that the third Eternal Son statue shattered recently?”

When Bai Xiaochun heard the boy’s words, he looked down at the alcohol jug, his hand trembling.

“Sadly, the third Eternal Son statue was supposed to produce the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. But it shattered far, far too late…. Right now, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty essentially controls three of the immortal domains. There are two immortal domains that are mostly under the control of Saint-Emperor City, which the Vile-Emperor Dynasty can’t do anything about!

“The only thing the Arch-Emperor Dynasty people are good for now is to bolster the forces of the other two imperial dynasties. In any case, the end goal of it all is to deal with the great Enemy from Beyond. Of course, the sanctimonious Saint-Emperor Dynasty is weak and useless. Our Vile-Emperor Dynasty is the true strength of the Eternal Lands, and its only hope!” By the time the old man got to the last part of his speech, his voice resonated with devotion and zeal.

Bai Xiaochun lay there slumped against the wall, hand trembling as he lifted the alcohol jug and took another drink, hoping that he would soon be numb to the bitterness that dwelled in his heart.

This town was in the third immortal domain, which was controlled by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. The five immortal domains in the Eternal Lands were all roughly the same size, each one vastly larger than the Heavenspan Realm. In fact, the Heavenspan Realm would only count as one of the many prefectures that existed within a given immortal domain.

Each immortal domain had dozens of prefectures. Within the prefectures were dozens of counties, and within the counties were hundreds of cities and towns of varying sizes….

The little town that Bai Xiaochun was in was just such a place.

In the Eternal Lands, the relationship between cultivators and mortals was somewhat different than in the Heavenspan Realm. Here, the cultivators took care of the mortals, as well as the land itself.

Each immortal domain was ruled by a celestial, whose subordinates, the demigods, would oversee the prefectures.

Of course, the demigods had subordinates too, devas who ran the various counties. Usually, Nascent Soul experts would be in charge of the larger cities, with the smaller locations occasionally being run by Core Formation cultivators.

Not every celestial would be appointed to serve as the ruler of an immortal domain. For example, in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, there were only three celestials with such responsibility, while the other handful remained stationed in Vile-Emperor City.

And the Vile-Emperor himself was in charge of Vile-Emperor City and the areas surrounding it!

“The Eternal Lands….” Bai Xiaochun murmured. Whether it was in terms of sheer size, or the number of powerful experts present, the Eternal Lands vastly surpassed the Heavenspan Realm. People like Daoist Heavenspan who had not yet become true celestials… were by no means rare.

Only by reaching the Mahayana Realm and becoming celestials could someone truly be counted as a powerful expert in the Eternal Lands.

Above the Celestial Realm was the Archaean Realm…. That was a terrifying level, and in all of the Eternal Lands, there were only two such people, the two emperors.

From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, quasi-archaeans were people in the great circle of the Celestial Realm, or people who had failed to actually become archaeans.

“I wonder where that laughing-crying ghost face came from originally….” he thought. Then he shook his head. Every time his thoughts strayed to such matters, many images would appear in his mind.

He would see friends and family from the Heavenspan Realm, people… that he had been unable to find.

During his first few months of searching, it had been easy to track down the aura of the Heavenspan Realm. He had found corpses of strangers, and some who were familiar faces. Each time he had trembled and looked up into the sky, heart wracked with grief.

At some point, the old man and the boy moved on from the temple. When they did, the boy couldn’t conceal his excitement at having gained enlightenment of his magical technique.

Eventually, the sun set. Bai Xiaochun was still lying there against the temple wall, as drunk as ever. He almost looked like he was asleep.

Usually, he would only leave this spot when he ran out of alcohol. Then he would stagger over to the tavern to buy more, then come back to the temple, lean up against the wall, and watch the sun rising and setting, or look up at the strange hands and the evil face in the sky.

Days turned into a blur. Bai Xiaochun had no idea how much time had passed. He had a scraggly beard now, and his clothing was so dirty it threatened to turn black.

He no longer thought about the past. Unwilling to deal with the pain, he entered a state of almost complete mental blankness.

Sometimes a dried-up leaf would land in front of him, and he would stare at it for the entire day…. It was almost as if by looking at the leaf, he could see all of the happiness, anger, sorrow, and joy it had experienced in its life.

One thing he loved was when night fell and, from his spot at the temple, he could see lamplight filling the little town. Each of those flickering lamps represented a family….

He looked at them until his tears ran dry. Sadly, the lamp of his heart seemed impossible to spark to life.

One autumn night, thunder rumbled in the sky, and great, bean-sized drops of rain began to fall, almost as cold as ice. Clearly, winter was on the way.

Bai Xiaochun looked up into the night, and the rain splashed onto his face. For the first time, he actually felt cold. However, it was also in that same moment that he looked down at the back of his hand, to the spark-shaped scar that was the spot where Bai Hao had perished.

“It’s warm….” he said. It had been a long time since he spoke out loud, and the feeling was strange. As he looked down at his hand, his disheveled hair fell down to cover his face, and yet, it couldn't cover the confused shock in his eyes. He suddenly began to pant.

“It's warm?” Shivering, he lifted his hand up until it was right in front of his nose. For the first time in a long time, his eyes were not cloudy and dim, but rather, shone with the bright light of surprise.

Deep within his gaze, a stubborn determination suddenly erupted to life.

“It's warm!” he exclaimed in a quavering voice. Unable to stop his hand from shaking, he sent some divine sense into it, and specifically, the spark-shaped mark on it.

He had done this on numerous occasions before, but his divine sense had never detected anything in particular. But now it did. All of a sudden, his dry eyes began to overflow with tears.

“Hao’er… you’re not dead!!” All of a sudden, mad excitement rose up inside of him. Up above, thunder crashed, but it was like nothing compared to what was happening inside his mind and heart. He could sense Bai Hao’s aura! Deep inside the mark on his hand, he could sense Bai Hao as an incredibly weak discarnate soul!

He was as fragile as a candle flickering in the wind. And yet, within that weakness, he showed a tenacious refusal to be destroyed. Unfortunately, it would be many years before he managed to grow strong, and recover.

Shaking physically, Bai Xiaochun grabbed one hand with the other and then pushed them both up against his chest. Considering his unkempt hair and scraggly beard, he looked very much like a destitute beggar who had just found the most precious of gems. As the rain fell down on him, it was for the first time since he arrived in the Eternal Lands… that he smiled.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1031 awe-chapter-1032

“Hao’er….” he murmured in excitement. He smiled as excitedly as a child would, a smile that had appeared often in the Heavenspan Realm, but after everything he had experienced, had become as rare as a jewel.

In his state of despondency, the fluctuations of Bai Hao’s soul became something like a burning lantern on a dark night. Despite how wet and freezing it was that night, Bai Xiaochun felt warm.

Back in the Wildlands, Master and apprentice had depended on each other for survival as they ran their little spirit enhancement shop, and it was that memory which suddenly brought Bai Xiaochun to his senses. It was almost like the sun rising up from the horizon.

He looked back down at his hand, and suddenly wondered if he was dreaming. Therefore, he probed at the scar on his hand over and over again to make sure. Finally, he breathed a long sigh.

Bai Hao was definitely not dead!

Or perhaps it was most appropriate to say that his soul had not fully dispersed. Perhaps it was something the gravekeeper had done, or perhaps it was Bai Hao’s own determination. Either way, he had somehow survived as a discarnate soul.

It was so weak that it seemed it might vanish at any moment. And yet there it was, inside the scar. Due to the string of catastrophic events that had ended in the destruction of the Heavenspan Realm, Bai Xiaochun had never sensed the oh-so-weak fluctuations of the soul.

But now, in this tiny town, in his moment of quiet despair, as he sat there watching the sun rise and set… he suddenly sensed something in the mark on the back of his hand.

“You’re still with me….” he murmured. A bit of pain and bitterness could be seen in his smile as he lifted his alcohol jug up to take another drink. It was almost empty.

“This Drunken Immortal is good stuff, Hao’er.” Rubbing his aching temples, he began to head toward the tavern again. As he walked along, talking to himself and drinking, the other people on the street would look at him with strange expressions, and hurry to get out of his way.

“Scholar Bai is crazy!”

“He’s started talking to himself!? Who is this Bai Hao fellow? His assistant or something?”

“You can’t help but feel sorry for him.”

Bai Xiaochun ignored all the townsfolk pointing and whispering about him. Before, he had been all alone in the world, but now, he had Bai Hao to accompany him.

His whole day was spent drinking and talking to his apprentice, until he eventually staggered back to the temple and leaned up against the crumbling wall. There, he stared up blankly into the sky again.

The fluctuations of Bai Hao’s soul were like a lamp on a dark night, casting light out into the world. Before, Bai Xiaochun had been unwilling to consider what the future held, but now, he began to ponder just that.

“Hao’er, what do you think Master should do…?

“Maybe I should look for people from the Heavenspan Realm. But… I already looked. From the moment I woke up, I started looking. All I found… were corpses.

“Hao’er, do you remember Beihan Lie? Oh right, you never met him. Well, I found his corpse….” Bai Xiaochun shook his head and smiled bitterly. Then he took another drink.

“I don't want to keep looking…. But what else am I supposed to do in this strange, unfamiliar world…? I wish you could wake up. You would definitely have some great ideas! You always do.” Bai Xiaochun sighed and looked up at the setting sun, and the amber glow which it cast out across the sky.

It was almost dark when he decided that he needed more alcohol. Like usual, he crawled to his feet and headed toward the tavern, where he got another jug. By the time he headed back out into the dark, he was already drunk again.

“Ah the drunken life. That’s how to be happy….” He threw his head back and laughed heartily, then suddenly started crying. By the time he staggered back to the temple he was out of energy, and collapsed face-first onto the ground. His jug rolled off to the side, spilling quite a bit of alcohol.

There were a few lamps lit within the little town, but none of them were strong enough to illuminate the ruins of the temple. A biting wind kicked up, and whether it was the rustling of the withered leaves that blew through the air, or the whisper of the bamboo forests around the village, it all sounded very desolate.

The night grew darker, and the wind picked up. Eventually, one particularly strong gust of wind pushed the empty jug of alcohol into motion. It rolled off to the side and down into a nearby ditch, where a foot suddenly stepped down onto it, crushing it into the mud.

“That drunkard is going to drink himself to death sooner or later!”

“You know, he must be pretty rich. Think about it! He's been drinking for months and months, but still has money to spend.”

“We're actually doing a good thing here. His money would do a lot more good in our pockets than it would be being wasted by him, drinking himself to death. Let’s just send him off early to reunite with his dead family!” Three local ruffians emerged from the nearby bamboo forest, joking greedily amongst themselves as they tromped over to the temple.

They were members of a local gang, mortals who had long since taken notice of Bai Xiaochun. Originally, they hadn’t given him much thought, but when they realized that he continually bought Drunken Immortal and never seemed to run out of money, their interest was piqued.

To ruffians like this, a drunkard with deep pockets was like a fat sheep waiting to be slaughtered. Only one of the ruffians actually approached Bai Xiaochun. The other two fanned out to act as lookouts. As far as they were concerned, any of them could single-handedly take care of a single drunken scholar.

One of the ruffians standing watch chuckled and said, “Hurry up and kill him, Sun Wu! Then we can take the loot to the Pink and Lace Pavilion and have a real good time!”

The one they called Sun Wu didn’t hesitate. He walked over to where Bai Xiaochun lay on the ground outside the temple and squatted down next to him.

“The sooner you die, Scholar Bai, the sooner you can be reincarnated. I’m just helping you out here!” With that, he reached into the fold of his robe and pulled out a dagger, which he placed right over Bai Xiaochun’s heart.

Because of the life of crime they had led, these three ruffians had done things that most ordinary people had not. They had taken lives in the past, and although they couldn’t be considered particularly powerful or dangerous, were vicious and merciless to the core.

They had never even considered sparing Bai Xiaochun’s life. He was an outsider, so if he died, no one would care too much. On the other hand, if they robbed him but left him alive, and he reported the theft to the authorities, it could cause them a big headache.

The moonlight caught the dagger, causing it to glint in sinister fashion. Sun Wu smiled coldly, but then realized that considering the scholar might awaken from the pain, he reached down and clamped his hand over his mouth.

He had killed people in this way before. However, something different happened this time. As he tried to plunge the knife into Bai Xiaochun’s chest, it felt like he had struck a slab of metal. He pushed harder, but then let out a yelp of shock and pain as the dagger snapped in half.

To Sun Wu’s shock, his forefinger was cut by the broken dagger, and began to bleed.

It was too dark for the other ruffians to see what was happening, so one of them called out, “Hurry it up, Sun Wu.

What are you doing?!”

Sun Wu took a deep breath. He looked at the broken dagger, and then the sleeping Bai Xiaochun, who reeked of alcohol. Assuming that it was a problem with his dagger, he borrowed a saber from one of his fellows and then hacked it down onto Bai Xiaochun’s neck.

A cracking sound rang out, and Sun Wu shrieked and staggered backward, his arms vibrating so hard he worried his bones might break. He even lost his balance and fell onto the ground, the shattered remnants of the saber scattering around him.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was snoring just as loudly as before, and hadn’t reacted at all. To him, both the dagger and the saber had felt like little more than a mosquito landing on him.

Sun Wu and his companions immediately began to sweat profusely, and their eyes went as wide as if they had seen a ghost.

“He… he….”

“How is this even possible!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1032 awe-chapter-1033

The cold wind was no different than it always was. And yet, as it blew on the three shivering ruffians, they were soaked with sweat.

“An immortal!” Sun Wu blurted. “He’s definitely an immortal!!” The mere thought that he had struck an immortal made Sun Wu feel like crying. In fact, he was certain that his life was about to end.

“So what if he's an immortal!” one of the other ruffians said. “I saw an immortal a few years ago, and he got gutted like a pig!” Perhaps this fellow was confused about what he had seen in the past, or perhaps he was just so terrified that he wasn’t thinking straight. Either way, he quickly pulled out an axe and aimed it at Bai Xiaochun’s head.

“If he is an immortal, we’re dead anyway, so we might as well go for broke!” Howling, the ruffian swung the axe down with all his might. When it hit, a cracking sound could be heard as the haft of the axe shattered into pieces. As for the axe blade, it might as well have struck a boulder, and it turned into a blur of light that whizzed back and embedded itself into the ruffian’s face.

Before the blood could even drip down from the wound, the ruffian staggered backward, and then flopped down onto his back, dead.

Sun Wu and the other ruffian were scared out of their minds. Screaming, they turned to run away.

Terrified, they didn’t dare to stay in the town for another night. After stealing some horses, they rode off into the night.

Back at the temple, the cold wind blew over the corpse with the axe head embedded in its face. Eventually, the blood from the wound pooled around the unmoving body.

Some time passed, and Bai Xiaochun managed to open his eyes. He looked at the bamboo forest, and the corpse lying next to him, and then struggled to his feet. Annoyed at having been woken up hungover, he stumbled to the tavern to buy some more alcohol. After returning, he slumped down against the wall, oblivious to his own filthy clothes and hair as he started drinking again.

Before long, the alcohol allowed him to revel in his fancies, and forget any painful and bitter memories.

As he drank, the sky turned dark. Soon, hints of dawn could be seen on the horizon, and the inky darkness began to retreat. It was at that point that Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered with disbelief. Straining his eyes to focus, he looked at the bamboo forest not too far away, and suddenly began to tremble.

In fact, his hand started shaking so hard that he dropped the jug of alcohol.

There, striding out of the bamboo, was a tall man clad in a black robe. He almost seemed at one with the night, wrapped up in a sinister, ghostly energy that transformed the temple and its surrounds into an underworldly hell.

The man walked up to Bai Xiaochun, loomed over him, and then let out a sigh of regret. When he spoke, it was in a voice that seemed profoundly ancient.

“Got any more left in that jug? Can I have some?”

“Big bro… Giant Ghost…?” Bai Xiaochun could do little more than stare blankly at this tall man in black.

Sure enough, he was none other than the Giant Ghost King!

This was the first living friend Bai Xiaochun had encountered after arriving in the Eternal Lands!

He looked much, much older than he had back in the Heavenspan Realm. He had scars on his face; clearly, he had experienced many trials in the more than half a year since he had been teleported to the Eternal Lands.

Looking very tired, he sat down next to Bai Xiaochun. After leaning up against the temple wall, he reached out, grabbed the alcohol jug, and took a long, hard swig.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly jumped to his feet and sent some divine sense out into the area.

“Don’t bother,” the Giant Ghost King said, not even bothering to look over. “I have no idea where Zimo is, or anybody else. The only person here… is me.” With that, he continued to drink.

Bai Xiaochun suddenly seemed to lose even the power to stay standing. He flopped to the ground, snatched the alcohol jug back from the Giant Ghost King, and took a drink. However, it was empty. He shook it back and forth a bit to get the last drop or two out, and then threw it off to the side.

The Giant Ghost King didn’t say anything.

“How did you find me?” Bai Xiaochun asked, his voice hoarse.

The Giant Ghost King produced a jug of alcohol from his bag of holding, took a long drink, then tossed it to Bai Xiaochun. “By looking for half a year!”

In the moment when the world collapsed, Bai Xiaochun had been severely injured because of his fight with Daoist Heavenspan, and thus lost consciousness upon being teleported away. However, the Giant Ghost King had not lost consciousness. He had been there to watch as Bai Xiaochun was whisked away to the third immortal domain in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, just as he had been.

He had begun his search almost immediately. Just like Bai Xiaochun, he had found so many corpses that he eventually began to sink into bitterness and despondency. However, he had held fast to his belief… that Bai Xiaochun was alive.

That faith pushed him through many months until this very day… when he finally found Bai Xiaochun, wasting away outside of the temple.

The truth was that the Giant Ghost King was in just as bad a state as Bai Xiaochun. After the war in the Wildlands, the world had been destroyed, and his daughter went missing. He had once been a mighty heavenly king in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, but now, everything had changed.

The wife he had taken in Giant Ghost City was also nowhere to be found. And thus, the heart of the mighty Giant Ghost King eventually went dark.

The people he had once ruled, and his previous glory, were gone in the blink of an eye.… They were a thing of the past.

Here he was, alone in the Eternal Lands… starting over from scratch.

Considering how old he was now, the idea of being back at square one caused him to sigh bitterly. It was just when things seemed to hit rock bottom that he realized that the alcohol in the Eternal Lands was a wonderful thing.

This alcohol could get mortals drunk… and could also get immortals drunk!

Bai Xiaochun took a drink, then stared off into the distance for a moment. Eventually he said, “Did you see…?”

Certain that the Giant Ghost King would know what he was talking about, he didn't finish his sentence.

A moment passed, and then the Giant Ghost King replied. “Did I see anyone else alive? You’re the only one I've encountered so far. However, I'm certain that even though a lot of people died in the teleportation, there are some who survived. I saw many of them flying through the starry sky!”

Bai Xiaochun looked quietly up into the night sky….

As he did, there were other people on the other immortal domains of the Eternal Lands doing the same thing. They were in different domains, different continents, different counties. Some were in cities, and others were out in the wilderness. But all of them had the blood of the lands of Heavenspan in their veins, and all of them were looking up into an unfamiliar night sky.

They were like a vast multitude of stars, flickering with their own desires, not willing to resign themselves to fate.

Li Qinghou. Patriarch Spirit Stream. Master God-Diviner. Xu Baocai.

Zhou Zimo. Song Junwan....

Bruiser was out there as well. Because of the insanity to which Bai Xiaochun had sunk, he had forgotten about Bruiser during the final hectic moments of the fighting. After being teleported into the Eternal Lands, Bruiser found himself among strangers, and was scared. He couldn't sense Bai Xiaochun’s aura, but he could sense some familiar fluctuations. And after searching for a time, he found Song Junwan....

That was when he realized that the familiar fluctuations were not coming from Song Junwan, but rather, from inside of her belly....

The blood was familiar, but the aura was not. Bruiser didn’t understand. However, when he saw Song Junwan’s beaming smile, he knew that he had to protect her, and protect that aura inside of her!

Bruiser knew that sooner or later, he would find that familiar face, which he longed to see in this strange land....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1033 awe-chapter-1034

The following day, the corpse was gone. The ruffians who had stolen horses and disappeared into the night would never again be seen in the world.

Although Bai Xiaochun didn’t care about them, the Giant Ghost King wanted to make sure there were no loose ends. Although the people in the town were all mortals, he still didn’t want to risk word spreading that could cause trouble.

The gang in town lost three members, and although they investigated the matter, they didn’t turn up any evidence about what had happened, and quickly forgot the matter. As for Bai Xiaochun, he continued with his usual routine.

However, now he didn’t drink alone. Whenever he went to the tavern, he was joined by an old man.

The man was tall and tough-looking. Although he was old, he was mighty and heroic, and made quite the contrast to the slim, fair Bai Xiaochun. In fact, his burly frame, the scars on his face, and his overall manly appearance made him quite attractive to many of the women in town.

Eventually, a month had gone by. The Giant Ghost King never tried to force Bai Xiaochun to cheer up. The two of them spent their days drinking, and their nights dreaming drunken dreams. They talked a lot. The Giant Ghost King recalled his past glories, and bragged about how incredible he had been. He even talked about how many young noblewomen had crawled into bed with him throughout the years. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun started to get bored with such stories, and began to throw in some sarcastic comments here and there.

At one point, he yawned and said, “Hey, remember that woman from that one clan? I forgot which clan it was. Have you forgotten who told me to go get her, and then made me the scapegoat in the whole thing? You old pervert. Nobody in the Wildlands ever found out the truth!”

Although he wasn’t as talkative as the Giant Ghost King, every time he said something sarcastic, it would catch the man by surprise. After a moment passed, the Giant Ghost King would then angrily resort to reminding Bai Xiaochun who he was.

Grabbing the alcohol jug out of Bai Xiaochun’s hand, he glared at him and growled, “Listen, fool, I'm your father-in-law! You think I don't know about you and Zimo?! If it hadn’t been for me secretly playing matchmaker, that would never have happened!”

Snorting coldly, he guzzled down some alcohol.

Upon hearing Zhou Zimo’s name, Bai Xiaochun sighed despondently.

When the Giant Ghost King saw that, he felt a bit bad. Sighing, he said, “Hey, Xiaochun. Do you know why the Arch-Emperors never had many children?”

Somewhat taken aback, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the Giant Ghost King.

“Few people know the truth, but as a heavenly king, I know many things that ordinary people don’t. You see, people who cultivate the Undying Live Forever Technique have much stronger male energy than ordinary cultivators. Because of that, it’s impossible for them to get mortal women pregnant. And even if they get a female cultivator pregnant, it will take dozens of years or more for that masculine energy to cause the baby to form!”

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time hearing anything like this, and although he was a bit shocked, he actually didn’t find it very surprising. As he took another drink, the Giant Ghost King went on to another conversation topic. Before long, Bai Xiaochun was as silent and depressed as he had been earlier. The Giant Ghost King sighed, and deep within his eyes, it was possible to see a glint of worry.

He knew that Bai Xiaochun had suffered a much greater blow than he had. Furthermore, when it came to how many years the two of them had lived, the Giant Ghost King really did count as an old man compared to Bai Xiaochun.

However, he wasn’t hoping to immediately light a fire in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. He wanted to help him recover slowly. And in fact, a month later, it was already possible to see that Bai Xiaochun was different from before. He talked a bit more, and would smile more often.

Another half a month went by.

The regulars at the tavern were now used to Bai Xiaochun and the old man coming to buy alcohol. Furthermore, the old man was quite different from Bai Xiaochun. He liked to talk, and before long, people got comfortable around him.

Some people even noticed that the old man referred to himself as Scholar Bai’s father-in-law. Eventually, people in tavern formed their own version of Bai Xiaochun’s background.

“So, Scholar Bai's wife died!”

“His own wife! No wonder he’s been so down in the dumps!”

“Now the two of them are relying on each other to survive! You have to admit, the world is a crazy place right now.”

Most of the people in the tavern would sigh sadly at the story.

Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King began to argue more often as time went on. One evening in the temple, as the Giant Ghost King lounged against the wall, guzzling some alcohol, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Xiaochun, I’m telling you, there’s no flower up in the sky, just that ugly face! We're out of alcohol. Go get some more.”

Bai Xiaochun frowned at having his reverie interrupted. Glaring, he threw the jug over to the Giant Ghost King.

“You go!” he said.

The Giant Ghost King sat up straight and yelled, “Bai Xiaochun! Don't think I’ve forgotten how you slapped me and kidnapped me! We never settled that debt. All I want you to do is go get some booze, but you come up with a million excuses. Don’t forget that I'm your father-in-law!”

After hearing the Giant Ghost King call himself ‘father-in-law’ for over a month, Bai Xiaochun felt like his ears were about to fall off. Glancing mischievously out of the corner of his eyes, he said, “Oh yeah, well I'm the Arch-Ancestor!”

Bai Xiaochun’s words apparently caught the Giant Ghost King completely by surprise, and he couldn't think of anything to say. Even as he sat there, eyes turned up in thought, Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered. Then, the two of them looked at the door of the temple.

Before long, the voice of a woman could be heard from outside.

“Squire Zhou. Scholar Bai. I have some good news for the both of you!” From the way the woman spoke, she sounded very happy and excited. Even as her words continued to echo out, she stepped into the temple. Neither young nor old, she was dressed in fine clothing, and was flanked by several handmaidens.

“Well, if it isn’t Madam Sun,” the Giant Ghost King said, his eyes sparkling. Ignoring Bai Xiaochun, he rose to his feet. “Please, let's talk over here!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed. The Giant Ghost King had made quite a few friends since coming to town. Bai Xiaochun had been in the town for a lot longer than him, and yet wouldn’t even have been able to guess what this woman’s name was.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the Giant Ghost King and the woman standing there off to the side talking back and forth, and couldn’t help but marvel. Here was the Giant Ghost King, a mighty demigod, a heavenly king, acting just like a mortal. Although that in itself wasn’t necessarily amazing, the fact that he even knew how to deal with mortals on the romantic side left Bai Xiaochun mostly speechless.

All of a sudden, Madam Sun gently pushed the Giant Ghost King away from her.

“You devil!” she exclaimed. Eyes flashing charmingly, but expression serious, she continued, “Squire Zhou, I'm being serious here. Widow Zhang has a shop in the east part of town. Her husband died years ago, and ever since then has maintained the propriety of a widow! She’s also one of the most good-looking women in town, and very rich!

“You’re lucky to have a woman like that take a liking to you, Squire Zhou. She asked me to come here and see if you would be willing to marry into her family! If you are, then she’ll give you thirty percent of her shop as her dowry!”

In response to Madam Sun’s words, the Giant Ghost King’s jaw dropped. Never could he have imagined that something like this would happen to him in a little town like this….

After all, he was a mighty demigod. To marry into the family of a mortal widow… would be very embarrassing.

However, the truth was that despite how old he was, he was still tall and well-built, and also very handsome. To most older women, he would be considered very attractive.

Bai Xiaochun was also stunned. He looked at Madam Sun, and then at the Giant Ghost King, and despite how depressed he still was, couldn’t help but slap his thigh and start laughing.

“Congratulations, father-in-law!” he said. All of a sudden, he felt the sadness and bitterness inside of him melt away a bit.

The truth was that all the bickering with the Giant Ghost King had been slowly chipping away at the ice which held his heart locked up. And now, his laughter caused those cracks to widen and begin to fall away.

In contrast, the Giant Ghost King was very depressed by Bai Xiaochun’s words.

However, even as Bai Xiaochun stood there laughing, Madam Sun looked over at him with narrowed eyes.

“Oh, Scholar Bai,” she said with a smile. “I’m glad you approve of the matter. Silly me, I forgot about the good news for you. Widow Zhang said that if Squire Zhou accepted her proposal, then her daughter, whose husband just died last month, and who is also very beautiful, would be the perfect match for you. If both of you agree to marry into the family, she’ll give you fifty percent of the shop!

“I guess her daughter must have just been born under an ill star. Her husband was a ruffian of sorts, a real plague on the village. Supposedly, he got what was coming to him, and was tossed out into the wilderness for the animals to eat. Obviously, he's nothing like the well-educated and cultured man you are, Scholar Bai.”

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun’s laughter screeched to a halt. Then, a moment later, the Giant Ghost King started laughing.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1034 awe-chapter-1035

The leaves of autumn had all fallen, and the cold of winter had set in. Although the coldest days of the season had not yet come, it was still cold enough that most people didn’t want to go outside. The bite of the wind was like blades against the face.

It was still possible to see a few leaves on the ground, but they were all dry and yellow, and would collapse into fragments at the slightest touch. Only once in a while would a leaf be seen dancing in the wind. But now that winter had arrived, none of them seemed willing to stay in the town, and would fly off into the distance as quickly as possible.

It was in such weather that Madam Sun had left the warmth of the buildings in town and come to the dilapidated temple to talk with the father and son that lived there. After all, if she succeeded in her task, the compensation she would receive from Widow Zhang would be considerable.

Because of that, she wouldn’t give up easily. She tried over and over again to convince Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King to agree to the deal. She emphasized that for the two of them, it was the kind of rare chance that would only come around once in a blue moon, and that they definitely should not allow the opportunity to slip by.

She talked up the good looks of the younger widow, and repeatedly pointed out how profitable the shop was. Over and over again, she explained out how much they would be losing out if they didn’t agree.

The Giant Ghost King wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. Despite being a demigod cultivator, there was no reason for him to be cruel in his refusal. All he could do was tell Madam Sun that they would think about the proposal, and then ask her to be on her way.

After she left, he turned back to Bai Xiaochun and sighed.

“See? I’m just too dashing. This is how it was back in Giant Ghost City. It was so bad I preferred to stay indoors. Whenever I went out, the women would all go crazy! Young and old alike!” Although his words were spoken as if in frustration, it was impossible for him to hide how pleased he was with himself.

“Who would have thought that in a little town like this where nobody even knows I'm a cultivator, the same thing would happen again? I guess it’s really my fault.” He sighed.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t exactly pleased to see the Giant Ghost King moaning and groaning about how amazing he was. It was worse that Widow Zhang had obviously been using Bai Xiaochun as a bargaining chip to try to gain the Giant Ghost King’s approval. Otherwise, why else would she have offered her daughter to Bai Xiaochun in marriage after she had only been widowed for a month?

“I can’t believe that I, Bai Xiaochun, am not even as attractive to these mortals as this old fogey.” Not willing to accept the truth of it, he looked at the preening Giant Ghost King out of the corner of his eye and snorted coldly.

“Congratulations, father-in-law! Who would have thought that you would put down roots in this little town? I'm sure you’ll really prosper here! You absolutely, positively must not refuse the offer. Oh, you’ll also need alcohol for the wedding. So why don’t you go get another jug?”

By force of habit, the Giant Ghost King glared at Bai Xiaochun, and prepared to start arguing. But then he rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

“Now that I think about, I remember seeing this Widow Zhang before. I'm pretty sure I passed her on the street on the way to get alcohol. If I remember… she blushed when she saw me. She’s actually pretty good-looking. Nice figure, attractive rear end… a real hottie!” The Giant Ghost King’s eyes began to shine brightly, especially upon describing what Widow Zhang looked like.

“Wait, hold on a second. I should head over to that shop to double check. After all, she’s making an offer in good faith, and I've always been a straightforward and candid person. I can’t take advantage of her good faith.”

The Giant Ghost King had been somewhat of a pervert even back in the Wildlands, especially when it came to attractive women of his own age. That much was obvious from how he had secretly asked Bai Xiaochun to bring him that one particular woman from the clan outside of Giant Ghost City.

Here he was, down and out in the Eternal Lands, and yet his personality hadn’t changed. Now that his passions were aroused, he didn't care what kind of sarcastic things Bai Xiaochun said. Full of zest, he hurried out of the temple.

“Xiaochun!” he called over his shoulder. “You’ll have to drink alone today. I’ll be back later.”

Bai Xiaochun was a bit stunned. Although he knew of the Giant Ghost King’s lecherous nature, he would never have been able to guess that the man would even be attracted to mortal women. How could a demigod expert be like that…?

Bai Xiaochun smiled wryly at how eagerly the Giant Ghost King rushed out of the temple, and was about to yell something after him when, all of a sudden his eyes flickered, and then began to shine with a light much more intense than anything which had appeared in them in recent days.

He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. The Giant Ghost King suddenly stopped in his tracks and looked up. Instead of the fiery light of passion which had just been burning in his eyes, his expression was now as cold as Bai Xiaochun’s.

The biting winter wind wasn’t even close to being as cold as their gazes, and in fact, it didn’t dare to remain, and died down.

Moments later, a whistling sound filled the air, along with three distant beams of bright light. As they got closer to the town, it was possible to see that within them were… three deva cultivators, natives of the Eternal Lands!

Two of them simply continued to fly overhead, but the third, a middle-aged man with an intimidating expression on his face, came to a stop in midair above the town. As he did, he unleashed a deva aura that caused rumbling to fill the air like heavenly thunder.

All of the mortals in the town began to tremble in fear, and no matter where they were or what they were doing, dropped to kowtow to the figure up above.

In the Eternal Lands, mortals didn't view the immortals as figures of legend and myth. Although they didn’t necessarily see them every day, they were by no means rare. In fact, even this small town had an official residence set aside for them. As the deva fluctuations filled the town, four figures emerged from a rather large pagoda. They quickly flew up into the air toward the deva, and then kowtowed in greeting.

One of them was the old man who had taken his apprentice to the temple some time ago, the Core Formation cultivator. Another of the four was that very apprentice, the boy who was in the Qi Condensation level. The other two were young men, both of whom had Foundation Establishment cultivation bases. The entire group was visibly sweating as they greeted the deva.

“Greetings, Immortal!” the old man said respectfully.

The deva looked at the man with a piercing gaze, then clasped his hands behind his back and spoke in a voice that echoed out like thunder in all directions.

“I bear orders from the demigod preceptor of Crosspeak Prefecture, Master Dust-Origin. All inhabits of Crosspeak Prefecture are hereby commanded to participate in the manhunt for people from the Heavenspan Realm!

“Every single one of them must be tracked down and delivered to the local prefecture, even the corpses!

“Anyone who harbors or assists refugees from the Heavenspan Realm will be severely punished, and possibly have their clan exterminated! If anyone is found guilty of negligence by allowing Heavenspan cultivators to reside in the area, they will have their cultivation base crippled! There will be no leniency in this regard! And anyone willfully violating any of these orders will bring greater disaster onto themselves than they can possibly imagine!

“Of special importance are any Heavenspan cultivators in the Foundation Establishment level or higher. Hold nothing back to capture them! Anyone who does will be handsomely rewarded by the Vile-Emperor!”

His words were spoken in callous and grim fashion, and left everyone in the town trembling, especially the Core Formation cultivator. Wiping the sweat from his brow, he said, “We will follow the orders of the preceptor down to the smallest aspect! If any Heavenspan denizens appear in our area, we will put our lives on the line to do just as the Vile-Emperor and the preceptor command!”

The deva nodded slowly, then scanned the area with divine sense. Finding nothing unusual, he turned and sped off into the distance to the next location on his list of places to make the announcement. Generally speaking, a voice transmission would have been sufficient, but in order to emphasize the importance of the matter, this deva and his compatriots were personally taking the announcement to everyone in Crosspeak Prefecture, and simultaneously inspecting the area.

After the deva left, the town did not simply go back to business as usual. No one would dare to take the words of a deva lightly, and thus the old man in the Core Formation stage immediately passed down orders, instructing the gang in town to perform a thorough search.

Back in the temple, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with cold light, as did the Giant Ghost King’s.

“I could smell the blood of Heavenspan cultivators on him,” Bai Xiaochun said. The Giant Ghost King snorted and flew up into the air.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1035 awe-chapter-1036

Some distance away from the town, the deva who had just made such an impressive showing was currently flying through the air over Crosspeak Prefecture.

“This is all the fault of those vermin from the Heavenspan Realm!” he muttered.

He was the youngest deva in Crosspeak Prefecture, a fact of which he was very proud, arrogant even. Considering that he had already made such achievements, it seemed likely that his future prospects were considerable.

Although reaching the Demigod Realm might not be realistic, he was confident that he would eventually get to the great circle of the Deva Realm.

“Why don’t the Heavenspan people just hand themselves over to be slaves? Why resist? What’s the point of struggling?!” The man chuckled, thinking back to the search for Heavenspan cultivators which had already gone on over the past half year or so in Crosspeak Prefecture. A flicker of scorn passed through his eyes.

“From what I heard, the legacy of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was never passed on. They had some guy called the Celestial? How dare he call himself that without ever having reached the Mahayana Realm! And what about that Arch-Ancestor?” The man shook his head arrogantly.

“Although, people with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm are supposedly really good at spirit enhancement.... That’s pretty amazing.” At this point, his eyes began to burn with anticipation. After all, the rewards offered by the Vile-Emperor were quite attractive. Pushing forward with greater speed, he thought, “The best would be to capture one of the Heavenspan devas….”

Even as his heart surged with excitement, the air around him suddenly distorted. It happened so quickly that he had no time to react. A hand suddenly appeared out of nowhere, which then reached out and grabbed him by the neck!

“You--” The man’s eyes went wide, filling with terror and shock as he realized that he was powerless to struggle against this hand. In fact, he could sense that all the hand needed to do was squeeze down a bit, and he would be crushed out of existence.

“Demigod!?!?” He didn’t even have time to transmit a message before that very power he feared erupted into him. However, it didn’t kill him, it merely shoved him into unconsciousness. Then, he was dragged away by the hand, vanishing without a trace.

From the moment the hand appeared until both of them were gone, only a brief moment passed. No evidence was left behind of what had occurred, not even a tiny energy fluctuation.

Back in the temple, a cold, grim expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he sat there against the wall. A moment later, the giant Ghost King entered, his expression equally grave, a limp deva held in his hand the same way he might hold a chicken.

After walking over to Bai Xiaochun, he dumped the deva down onto the ground. The deva shivered and opened his eyes. After looking around and seeing Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King, he began to pant.

“Who are you people?!?!” he blurted, his mind and heart battered by waves of shock as he realized that his cultivation base was sealed, making him little more than a mortal. As for the old man who had captured him, he had his cultivation base fluctuations masked to a certain degree, but the deva could tell that he was no ordinary demigod!

The pressure the deva felt when looking at him was even more terrifying than those of Crosspeak Prefecture’s preceptor, the demigod Master Dust-Origin!

Then he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, sitting off to the side with a blank face. When Bai Xiaochun looked back at him, he sensed something intangible stabbing into him, causing his head to spin, and shaking him down to the depths of his being. It was as if that gaze contained divine sense which could peer at every aspect of him, inside and out. At this point, the deva cultivator felt ten times more shaken than he had before.

“C-cel… celes… celestial…!” he stammered. Years ago, he had accompanied the demigod preceptor to visit the celestial who presided over the third immortal domain, and back then, he had experienced this same feeling.

It was as if the person sitting in front of him wasn’t a cultivator, but rather, a god!!

As of this moment, he had no need to ask who this person was….

“You’re… Arch-Ancestor Bai Xiaochun!” he said in a quavering voice. He had now fully resolved to not do anything to resist.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with cold light and killing intent. The fact that this person knew who he was would actually make certain matters easier to handle.

Narrowing his eyes, the Giant Ghost King said, “Where are you from?!”

Knowing who Bai Xiaochun was, the deva could already begin to speculate who this old man was that kept him company, although he couldn’t be certain. In any case, considering that he was a demigod, there was no way to conceal anything from him. The deva knew that if he didn’t talk quickly enough, the man would have plenty of ways of making him talk.

When he saw Bai Xiaochun frown in response to what he had just said, his heart began to pound, and he added, “Junior’s name is Li Hai. I am a subordinate of the preceptor of Crosspeak Prefecture, the seventeenth prefecture of the third immortal domain of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

“There are a total of six celestials in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, who rotate leadership of the second and third immortal domains. Currently overseeing the third immortal domain is Celestial Ghostmother.”

In response to the man’s words, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed, and the Giant Ghost King’s heart began to pound. Both of them were familiar with the name Ghostmother. The huge fight between the gravekeeper and Gongsun Wan’er in the Wildlands was something the Giant Ghost King could never forget.

The divine abilities and Daoist magics of Ghostmother were of the same line of cultivation as the Giant Ghost King’s. Despite how down-and-out both he and Bai Xiaochun had been during the past several months, they had still come to know a lot about the third immortal domain. For example, the celestial in charge of it should not have been

Ghostmother, but someone with the Daoist name of Virūpākṣa, which meant *all-seeing*.

Upon hearing different information from this Li Hai, the Giant Ghost King frowned, walked over, and clamped his hand down onto the top of the man’s head. Instead of wasting time speaking, he decided to simply resort to a soulsearch.

Screams erupted from Li Hai, but none of them went beyond the confines of the temple. He twitched, blood oozing out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. It wasn’t that he didn’t think to end the pain by self-detonating, but rather, he couldn’t. In much the same fashion as the numerous Heavenspan cultivators that he himself had soulsearched in recent days, he eventually began to lose consciousness.

Eventually, the Giant Ghost King removed his hand, whereupon Li Hai coughed up a mouthful of blood and then flopped down onto his back, dead.

“Any information about Hou Xiaomei, Big Fatty Zhang, or any of the others?” Bai Xiaochun asked quietly.

“No. I just know that Ghostmother took over for Celestial Virūpākṣa last month.” The Giant Ghost King actually didn't know Hou Xiaomei or Big Fatty Zhang, but hadn’t seen any information about them in Li Hai’s mind.

“Ghostmother is in charge now. She has seventeen demigod preceptors, who in turn oversee seventeen prefectures here in the third immortal domain. Every preceptor has numerous devas under their command….

“The Vile-Emperor has ordered a full-scale manhunt to track down everyone from the Heavenspan Realm, and

Ghostmother is going all out to scour the third immortal domain.

“They’re even trying to bring in all the corpses….

“One reason for the search is that the Vile-Emperor Dynasty wants to bolster their own forces. But even more importantly… they figured out that we people from the Heavenspan Realm have something special about us. We have a type of Daoist magic that no one from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty or the Saint-Emperor Dynasty can match. And that is… spirit enhancement!

“Only Heavenspan cultivators can perform spirit enhancements. No amount of research by cultivators from either of the other two dynasties provide any help in that regard. The only way it can be accomplished is with Heavenspan blood!

“Therefore, all three of the immortal domains controlled by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty are being searched, and it’s the same in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. The main difference is that the Vile-Emperor Dynasty is openly revealing their intent to enslave the Heavenspan cultivators. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty is at least proclaiming a desire to offer help.” Having finished his analysis from the soulsearch, the Giant Ghost King looked at Bai Xiaochun with sparkling eyes.

“Xiaochun, the time has come to stop sitting around wasting time!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1036 awe-chapter-1037

It was a dark night, and the winter wind only continued to grow stronger.

The wind sobbed, growing colder as it scraped over the lands, the towns, and the millions upon millions of residents in the land. As the wind rose into the sky, it met the black clouds above… and thunder rumbled.

Based on the thunder, anyone could tell… that rain would fall soon, or perhaps snow.

And so it did. It was either rain mixed with snow, or snow mixed with rain. In this, the beginnings of winter, it was difficult to tell….

The dilapidated temple could do nothing to keep out rain or snow, and before long, it began to drip down onto Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King.

The precipitation caused the withered leaves to rustle, as if they wished the falling snow would simply become rainwater, having forgotten that oftentimes freezing rain is colder than snow.

Bai Xiaochun reacted to the Giant Ghost King’s words in similar fashion. Although he didn’t shiver, it was hard to say whether his heart became as cold as falling snow, or as cold as freezing rain.

“You’re right,” he murmured. “We can’t let things go on like this. The time has come to attack. Kill as many as we can….” Out of reflex, he reached out, grabbed the nearby jug of alcohol, and prepared to take a drink. However, the Giant Ghost King stepped forward, eyes blazing with anger as he slapped the jug out of Bai Xiaochun’s hand.

It spun off to the side, where it shattered, the alcohol quickly mingling with the rain and snow.

“Drinking?!” the Giant Ghost King said, nearly shouting. “Is that all you know how to do?!

“I know you’ve been through a lot, but so what? Did nobody else lose people? Who lost the most? You? Me? What about everyone else? Everybody from the Heavenspan Realm lost friends and loved ones!

“If these Eternal Lands were completely filled with malice and evil, then you could drink yourself to death and I wouldn’t care. But that’s not the case!

“Did you ever think about Zimo? Did you ever think about the elder generation from your River-Defying Sect? What about all your friends? What about everybody who looks up to you?!” Although the Giant Ghost King was yelling at Bai Xiaochun, to some extent, he was also speaking to himself. He too had become somewhat lost.

“Attack them?! What, you and me? How many do you think we can kill? Don’t you remember what you used to be like back in Arch-Emperor City in the Wildlands? Where did that Bai Xiaochun go? Remember your clever plots? Remember the Proclamation of Universal Grace? Remember how you made a Foundation Establishment-level soul into a deva soul? You got the Grand Heavenmaster to back you, and then you forced all of the nobility and aristocracy to cower in front of you!

“Slaughter should always be the last part of the plan. That’s what you do when you go crazy and have nothing else to lose. You don’t go around attacking people as your opening move!” The Giant Ghost King looked truly disappointed. He had long since come to the realization that, at this point, Bai Xiaochun was not the same old Bai Xiaochun who feared death. It was like he had gone crazy, shifting from one extreme to the other!

Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King knew that someone who was only interested in slaughtering enemies would never be able to rise to prominence in these Eternal Lands.

“What we need to do now is look for people from the Heavenspan Realm!” he said, flicking his sleeve. Then he continued to speak, driving each word home like a hammer slamming into a nail. “No attacking. No drinking. No more wallowing in despair!”

Bai Xiaochun sat there quietly. He was now trembling visibly, and his eyes were bloodshot. The Giant Ghost King’s words had struck him deeply, stabbing into his heart like a sharp knife. A moment passed. Then he looked up.

“I'm not wallowing in despair!” he said, his voice hoarse. “And I already went looking for them!”

Waving his hand, he caused a small pile of medallions to pour out of his bag of holding and pile up next to him.

They were identity medallions from Heavenspan cultivators. Clearly, these were not from rogue cultivators, but rather, cultivators from powerful organizations in the Wildlands and the four Heavenspan Rivers. They were objects that cultivators would normally use to transmit messages or prove their identity.

“You know what I found? Corpses! All I could do was bury them and take their identity medallions!” Bai Xiaochun's eyes bulged as he spoke, as though all of the anger and resentment he had been building up inside of him were finally being released.

“I want to keep looking too,” he continued hoarsely, “but what if all we find is more corpses? I know.... I know I shouldn't give up. But the Eternal Lands are huge! Just one prefecture is as big as the entire Heavenspan Realm! The third immortal domain alone has well over a dozen Heavenspan Realms inside of it! How am I supposed to search through all of that?!”

The Giant Ghost King looked at the pile of command medallions for a long moment. Then he shifted his gaze back to Bai Xiaochun and said, “If we can’t find them, maybe we can get them to find us!”

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes began to shine even more brightly. “That would also give them hope. And if they have hope, they can endure. *That’s* what we need to do!”

“Hope....” Bai Xiaochun murmured. As he looked at the Giant Ghost King, his eyes finally began to come to life.

“That’s right. Hope!” Eyes glittering, the Giant Ghost King began to pace back and forth in the temple. “Xiaochun, we need... to seek asylum with the Saint-Emperor!

“The Vile-Emperor wants slaves. Working out a deal with him doesn’t seem possible. Supposedly the Saint-Emperor is a bit sanctimonious, but at least his dynasty openly proclaims themselves to be kind. That gives us a basis to try to work out a deal!

“However, if we seek asylum, we can’t go empty-handed. Just showing up and asking for help isn’t impressive at all. We need to bring the Saint-Emperor… a blood tribute!

“Yes! The head of an enemy!” The more the Giant Ghost King thought about his idea, the clearer it became.

“Xiaochun, if we want to prepare a blood tribute, then we need to accomplish something major in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. We need to get famous! We need to do something… that will shake, not just the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, but all of the Eternal Lands!

“If we can’t find all of our people, we can at least let them know we’re here! Let them know where we are! In the darkness of night that these Eternal Lands are for the people of the Heavenspan Realm, the two of us… can be blazing torches!

“The brighter and more dazzling we are, the easier it will be for them to find us. And at the same time… we can gain stronger positions. Shake the other two imperial dynasties, and buy some breathing room for the people of Heavenspan!

“When someone is powerful, no one will dare to bully him or his people!”

Bai Xiaochun was panting, clearly deeply shaken by what the Giant Ghost King was saying. At long last, his eyes were no longer blank, but rather, filled with hope!

Hope for the Heavenspan Realm, and hope for himself!

“If we offer a blood tribute to the Saint-Emperor, he’ll have no other option than to give us official positions in the government! And then we can use the power of the Saint-

Emperor Dynasty to forge a new place in the Eternal Lands for the people of Heavenspan!”

The Giant Ghost King’s booming voice resonated back and forth inside of the temple. Outside, the rain and snow continued to fall harder and harder. The tattered temple walls and ceiling did nothing to conceal the weeping of the wind. Water and snow continued to build up inside of the temple, to the point where the scattered leaves were covered.

Bai Xiaochun stared at the leaves for a long moment, then looked up. All of a sudden, his aura changed, and his eyes began to glitter brightly.

“What kind of blood tribute should we prepare?!”

When the Giant Ghost King saw the anticipation in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, his own heart began to pound.

“How about the heads of a few of the Vile-Emperor’s demigods?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1037 awe-chapter-1038

“The third immortal domain has seventeen demigod experts,” the Giant Ghost King said. “The locals call them preceptors.

“But before we make our move, we should make sure we have an escape route planned. I saw a map of the third immortal domain within the memories of that deva cultivator. Some distance to the northwest, about halfway across the prefecture, is a majestic sea!” With that, he pulled out a jade slip, branded it with some information via divine sense, and then tossed it over to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun grabbed it out of the air and looked at it. Not only did it have a general map of the third immortal domain, it also had information about the demigods who oversaw the various prefectures. Although the information wasn’t extremely detailed, it was at least fairly comprehensive.

Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun noticed the details that the Giant Ghost King had just mentioned.

Eyes flickering with killing intent, the Giant Ghost King said, “What if each of us goes to a different prefecture, take out a demigod, and then meet back up?

“Master Dust-Origin of Crosspeak Prefecture is only in the early Demigod Realm. I’m a hundred percent certain that I can handle him. Next to Crosspeak Prefecture is Cloudsea Prefecture, ruled by a preceptor named Li Luohai. He’s in the late Demigod Realm. Xiaochun, how about you handle him?”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t give a specific answer; the killing intent in his eyes said everything that needed to be said. The Giant Ghost King nodded and prepared to continue with some more information when Bai Xiaochun said, “Ghostmother runs this entire area, and she's definitely going to notice. We need to act fast. And we need to pick a good location to meet back up. If either of us are late, we don’t stick around waiting. We leave the third immortal domain and head directly toward the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!”

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had begun to participate in the planning caused the Giant Ghost King’s expression to brighten visibly. After all, he had always been impressed by how Bai Xiaochun handled everything in the Wildlands. Over the next few minutes, the two of them continued to discuss and refine the plan further. Finally, the Giant Ghost King took a deep breath and looked at Bai Xiaochun.

“Safety first!” he said. Then he turned and vanished.

With that, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the dilapidated temple in which he had spent the better part of a year. He looked at the snow and rain, and at the broken jug of alcohol.

Finally, he sent his divine sense out, covering the entire town. His eyes shone brightly now, as if the flame of his life force had finally been reignited!

“The time has come to leave.... My old pal Giant Ghost was right. I get it now.... Hope.... Hope for the people of Heavenspan. Hope for myself. Hope for Hao’er!”

He looked down at the scar on the back of his hand, and seemed completely different than he had been for the last several months. He was now like an unsheathed sword that would soon cast fear into seventeen prefectures.

“My Dao has always been to live forever. It has always been… to give all my friends and family that same chance…. To live forever!!

“No more doubts about the fighting and killing. If I want to live forever, then I have to face the difficulties and obstacles along the way. Without a sword in hand, how could I ever cut through the thorns and thistles that block my path!?

“I’m still afraid of dying. But being afraid… is useless. The only thing that does any good is to get stronger! I need to be the kind of person nobody can kill! That is the way to protect my great Dao!” He lifted his foot to take a step forward, and when it landed, the rain and the snow seemed to pause.

It was as if some undetectable fluctuations had suddenly rolled out in all directions!

“People back in the Heavenspan Realm always said that in the right circumstances, I could destroy all heaven and earth…. Well, here we are with one imperial dynasty that wants to enslave the people of Heavenspan, and another that wants to assimilate them. I guess the time has come to see if I can really destroy them both!” With that, he vanished, to reappear high above.

With his aura masked, not even someone at the peak of the Demigod Realm would be able to detect him. The only person who might notice something… would be a celestial.

By now, Bai Xiaochun had surpassed that peak level. Furthermore, to say that he was a quasi-celestial would actually not be completely correct. After all, even a quasi-celestial… would be no match for him!

Although he was not quite at the level to fight a true celestial, for all intents and purposes, his battle prowess… was that of a celestial!

“Get that blood tribute, and head to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty…. With the resources I’ll gain access to there, I can achieve my breakthrough and become a true celestial!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he buried all of his despondency and depression. Then, he blurred into motion.

**

Cloudsea Prefecture was right next to Crosspeak Prefecture. Instead of the numerous mountain peaks which filled Crosspeak Prefecture, Cloudsea Prefecture was made of a vast plain. The spiritual energy of heaven and earth there surpassed most other prefectures, and made it one of the best places in the third immortal domain to practice cultivation.

Because of that, the preceptor here would obviously not be an ordinary early Demigod Realm expert. Only someone in the late Demigod Realm could possibly be trusted to watch over such an area.

There were also more devas in Cloudsea Prefecture than there were in the surrounding prefectures. There were nine counties and over a hundred cities and towns, all of which had vast tracts of medicinal plant fields surrounding them.

Preceptor Li Luohai’s official residence was located at the very center of Cloudsea Prefecture, in the bustling capital city. That was also where the largest medicinal plant farms were located!

Even Arch-Emperor City back in the Wildlands couldn’t match up to this capital city in size. Right now, in the shadows of dusk, the glimmering lamplight which filled the city made for a particularly lively scene.

People hurried about every which way, cultivators and mortals alike. Flight was restricted, and squads of patrolling soldiers could be seen in numerous locations throughout the city.

Bai Xiaochun soon appeared in the air off in the distance, where he could both see and hear the bustle of the city.

This was not his first time seeing a large city in the Eternal Lands, and yet, it was still a shocking sight.

“The Eternal Lands… really are huge.” Keeping his eyes on the path directly ahead of him, he continued on. In terms of the restrictive spells preventing flight, considering Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Hex and cultivation base, they were essentially useless against him. Within moments, he was in midair above the city, looking down at an area right in the middle of it!

A huge stone gate had been erected there that was guarded day and night by the local cultivators. Inside of that stone gate… was a spatial dimension created by Li Luohai that contained his personal immortal's cave.

Li Luohai spent most of his time in secluded meditation, and was rarely seen publicly. He would only emerge when the Vile-Emperor sent decrees specifically for celestials. After the people of Heavenspan were teleported into the Eternal Lands several months prior, he came out more often. Like many others, he was particularly interested in the blood of Heavenspan. Any cultivators with that blood in them who were captured in Cloudsea Prefecture would be sent directly to him.

After identifying the stone gate, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward, placing him directly in front of it. Three devas sat there cross-legged, keeping watch. Unless someone showed them a Dharmic decree from a celestial, they would not permit that person to enter.

However… they didn’t even realize Bai Xiaochun had appeared among them. It was as if he existed in a different dimension.

Ignoring them, he walked calmly into the stone gate. Not a single ripple or energy fluctuation resulted. It was with complete and utter silence that he appeared… inside of a sprawling immortal's cave!

It was actually only a fragment of a spatial dimension. In the middle of it was a medicinal plant farm roughly 30,000 meters across. All sorts of medicinal plants grew there, many of which Bai Xiaochun had never seen before. A hunchbacked old man stood in their midst, performing a double-handed incantation gesture as several hundred bodies floated through the air around him. It was impossible to tell whether those bodies were living or dead!

He seemed excited, almost laughing as he loudly said, “Upgrade my medicinal spiritualization into spirit-blood fertilization. If this works, then when I go to offer tribute at the imperial city, I’ll receive a handsome reward!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1038 awe-chapter-1039

Medicinal spiritualization was used to describe techniques in which the spiritual power of heaven and earth was used to extract the life force from plants and vegetation, which was then used to create stronger medicines. It was something that, as an apothecary himself, Bai Xiaochun would sometimes do.

In terms of *blood-spirit fertilization*, it was very much as the name indicated. It involved burying people alive in the soil so that the spirit plants could absorb that person’s spirit and blood to grow faster and stronger.

Only unscrupulous and evil apothecaries would use such methods. Bai Xiaochun had actually seen such evil before in the Wildlands, for example, when Song Que had been turned into a living spirit stone.

Another blood-spirit fertilization technique he had seen once was a vile method in which a seed was planted into a person’s body, which would then grow inside of them and take them over.

But what he was looking at right now… was different from either of those two methods he had seen in the past. Growing right in front of the hunchbacked old man… was a crimson plant fully 90 meters tall.

Despite its size, it only had nine leaves, each of which had serrated edges that almost looked like teeth. In addition to the leaves, there were hundreds of vines, each of which was stabbed into the forehead of one of the bodies, and was sucking its life force away.

Most of the bodies that floated in the air attached to the vines were severely withered, as though they had been sucked dry by the blood-colored plant.

All of them had expressions of pain and rage on their faces, their mouths open as if they had been crying out right before death.

Ninety percent of them truly were dead. However, the remaining ten percent had a bit of energy left. They were like oil lamps flickering on the verge of winking out, the flames of their life force just barely there.

Some of them had the aura of the Heavenspan Realm on them, but the majority had a unique, holy air that Bai Xiaochun had never encountered before. Presumably, those were people from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense also revealed to him that deeper in the immortal's cave was an enormous pit filled with skeletons and corpses, most of which had that same holy feeling to them. That enormous pit was the main reason that the plants in the immortal's cave grew so well.

When Bai Xiaochun detected the Heavenspan aura among the hundreds of bodies hanging in the air, his eyes turned as cold as ice.

“Have a death wish?!” he said, his voice like a biting winter wind that had swept from Crosspeak Prefecture all the way to Cloudsea Prefecture.

The excited Li Luohai shivered, his expression flickering.

“Who’s there?!” he blurted, his heart already pounding. Then he took a step forward, as if to leave. Although he had been caught completely by surprise, the fact that a voice had spoken out in this place where no one could possibly enter was extremely telling.

Considering the level of Li Luohai’s cultivation base, he knew that in all of the third immortal domain… there were no more than three people who could possibly enter his immortal's cave so stealthily!

And they were all celestials!

Even as he began to step forward, he could sense something behind him, something whose mere energy fluctuations created a pressure that could shake the world. It was something that could devour even demigods, something that could topple mountains and drain seas. And that energy immediately engulfed him.

“Noooo!!” It was to his shock and terror that he realized his divine soul was shaking violently. Countless streams of frigid qi entered him through his eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and pores, causing cracking sounds to ring out as his flesh and blood were frozen and shattered, then his energy passageways, and even his bones!

It only took a few breaths of time before a bloodcurdling scream erupted from Li Luohai’s mouth. Then came a stream of blood as his vision blurred. And finally, he realized that a hand was clamping down onto the top of his head.

The last thing he heard was the sound of crunching bone!

Starting with his head, his entire body shattered into pieces. It only took the blink of an eye!!

Because he was a demigod with abundant life force, it was not easy for him to simply pass out. And therefore, he experienced every single last bit of pain!

The entire time, Li Luohai never even had a chance to look back to see who it was that had entered his immortal's cave, nor did he have time to send out any divine sense. He had absolutely no idea who it was....

As his body shattered into bits, and before his divine soul could do anything, a massive pressure crushed down in the area, suppressing the power of reincarnation. As a result, he was unable to enter the cycle of reincarnation, and was snatched up by Bai Xiaochun. He was Bai Xiaochun’s first demigod soul from the Eternal Lands!!

He wouldn’t have been able to do such a thing in the past. However, after arriving in the Eternal Lands, despite the fact that he had not practiced any cultivation, the powerful energy of heaven and earth had entered him, and caused his cultivation base to advance some.

It was actually the same with all cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm. After encountering the spiritual energy in the Eternal Lands, all of them slowly began to grow stronger!

After snatching up the demigod soul, Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve to throw it in his bag of holding, then turned his gaze toward the corpses attached to the enormous crimson plant.

The plant was close to being sentient, and shrank back from Bai Xiaochun. However, the powerful fluctuations emanating off of him caused it to simply wither away into death.

As it did, the corpses began to drop to the ground. Bai Xiaochun walked over to examine them, and among the several hundred, found a single familiar face.

“Zhou Hong, heir apparent to the Nine Serenities King!” Zhou Hong had plotted against him over and over again in the Wildlands. Bai Xiaochun had thwarted him at every turn, until the point where he reached such a high standing that Zhou Hong was powerless to even plan a strike against him. At that time, Zhou Hong had simply gone into hiding.

Zhou Hong had not yet breathed his last breath, but unfortunately, the flame of his life force had already gone out. In his last moments, the death of the plant caused a slight backlash of energy that forced his eyes opened, allowing him to see Bai Xiaochun.

He was surprised, excited, and also sad….

Both gratitude and grudges alike could be seen in his eyes. He opened his mouth as if to speak, but only managed to smile, and then he closed his eyes forever….

Bai Xiaochun stood there silently for a long moment. He had hoped to come to the rescue of the people he had seen here, but had clearly come too late. Sighing, he waved his hand to collect Zhou Hong’s corpse, then turned to leave. He left the immortal's cave in a sea of fire.

Everything inside the cave became ash, with the exception of the valuable medicinal plants. Although they had been grown with the blood and spirit of countless Saint-Emperor Dynasty cultivators, they could still be useful in concocting medicine. It was a true windfall for Bai Xiaochun!

Eyes flashing with determination, he left.

“I’ve come late, but I’m going to take all of the people of Heavenspan in this city with me!” As soon as he was out in the open, he sent his divine sense spreading out through the entire city.

Everyone present, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, shivered, and then their minds went blank. For them… it was as if time had stopped!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1039 awe-chapter-1040

Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base surpassed the ordinary quasi-celestial level. That, combined with his powerful Daoist magics from the Live Forever Codex, ensured that his divine sense was actually very close to the level of a true Mahayana Realm celestial.

Although there was a slight gap, only a true celestial would be able to tell. When it came to anyone under the celestial level, Bai Xiaochun would appear to be an actual celestial.

In the third immortal domain, the capital city of Cloudsea Prefecture was often referred to as the Medicine Storehouse. And right now, the minds and souls of all cultivators in that city went blank, leaving them completely unaware of their surroundings.

From the moment that Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense spread out, to the moment that they regained consciousness, from their perspective, no time would have passed!

This was one of the dramatic, domineering and terrifying things that powerful experts in the Mahayana Realm were capable of doing.

The innumerable cultivators in the capital city all remained in place, completely unmoving. The only person who could act as normal was Bai Xiaochun!

As he walked away from the huge stone gate that was the entrance to the immortal's cave, he ignored the deva guards and used his divine sense to locate the auras of the more than 100 Heavenspan Realm cultivators in the city.

Sadly, all of them were strangers to him. But that didn’t stop him from vanishing and reappearing in the northern part of the capital city, where a prison was located.

The Heavenspan cultivators in the prison were also immobilized and rendered unconscious by Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense. However, they weren’t hurt. He considered sending them into the Greatsword of the North, but after some thought, waved his sleeve, and put them in his bag of holding.

Blue light glittered as the Greatsword of the North then appeared in his hand. After examining it closely, his eyes glittered.

From what he could sense, the laughing-crying ghost face has been subjugated by the world inside the greatsword, which would explain why his strike at Daoist Heavenspan had been so shocking.

Furthermore, he could tell that, now that he was in the Eternal Immortal Domains, the three-use-limitation that had been placed on the sword was now gone. Unfortunately, it had still not accepted him as its master. Therefore, he could only use it as a weapon, and could not access its divine abilities in order to send people inside.

On top of all that, the spirit automaton, the Frigid Matriarch, was not responding to his divine will.

“Do I not yet meet all the requirements…?” he thought. He knew that there were people living inside the world of the sword, those being the northern cultivators who hadn’t been mobilized in the war. In fact, considering that they were inside the world of the sword, they would have no idea of the events which had occurred on the outside, or that the Heavenspan Realm had been destroyed.

Still contemplating the matter, he vanished. When he reappeared, he was next to another Heavenspan cultivator, who he quickly put into his bag of holding. Then he went on to another, and another. After he had them all, his eyes flickered.

“I can’t let any of the medicinal plants here go to waste.” With that, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and used the power of the Live Forever codex, as well as Frigid School energy, to summon nine frigid clones. Without the slightest hesitation, he then sent them out in nine different directions into the city.

Wherever they went, they took the medicinal plants they saw, regardless of whether they recognized them or not.

They were like ravenous locusts who, in a very short time, cleared out all of the medicinal plant farms in the entire capital city. And yet, even after doing that, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t finished.

“That Li Luohai mentioned something about tribute….” After a bit more searching, his frigid clones found exactly what he was looking for: a treasure storehouse deep beneath the surface of the capital city!

Other than Bai Xiaochun, few people would be able to open it. But with his Undying Hex, it was little challenge. Once inside, he took all of the medicinal plants and spirit stones that were stored inside.

There were also ten crystalline strongboxes that radiated such a powerful energy of heaven and earth that it was obvious they contained shocking, high-level medicinal ingredients!

One of them was an ingredient that Bai Xiaochun recognized.

“Nine hells apparition leaf!” His eyes immediately began to shine with passion. He had read about nine hells apparition leaves back in the Heavenspan Realm. They were a legendary medicinal plant that had long since gone extinct. Supposedly, only one leaf would sprout on the plant every five hundred years. These leaves were so beneficial to cultivators that they were considered heaven-defying.

Inside of the box, Bai Xiaochun could see more than thirty such leaves, provoking a loud gasp.

“That's 15,000 years’ worth of leaves!!” For the first time since arriving in the Eternal Lands, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with delight. After all, the nine boxes all contained medicinal plants, and although he didn’t recognize any of the others, considering how valuable the nine hells apparition leaves were, he could only imagine what the other plants were.

As for the crystalline boxes, he got the sense that they had been crafted by refining countless spirit stones! Furthermore, the boxes were sealed with strips of paper that had the character *emperor* on them. Obviously, these medicinal plants were the tribute that Li Luohai had spoken of!

After collecting the boxes, Bai Xiaochun called his frigid clones back, then looked around at the city one last time, sighing.

“Too bad time is so limited. Otherwise, I would spend more time cleaning this place out.” Shaking his head, he was forced to hold back the skills that he had honed in the

Wildlands. Turning into a blur of motion, he left the capital city.

He took his divine sense with him, removing the pressure which had been weighing down on the cultivators. They didn’t awaken immediately; it took about an hour. At that point, everyone simultaneously shivered, and then went about with whatever they had been doing before losing consciousness.

The cultivators within the city walls had it better off. To them, nothing much seemed different. However, the cultivators in the farms that surrounded the city were stunned to find that not a single plant or even root could be seen. Everything around them was nothing more than bare soil.

“Where… where am I?”

“This place seems familiar….” As the stunned cultivators muttered and looked around, they eventually noticed a city off in the distance….

When they recognized the city, and then looked back at the bare earth, they began to gasp in shock and cry out in alarm.

“Heavens, what’s going on?!?! This… this is crazy!! Did locusts sweep through or something?!?!”

“No way. Even if locusts came through, they wouldn’t wipe things as clean as this. I just blinked, and then… everything was gone!!” As the commotion built up, some of the more quick-witted among the farm workers came up with logical explanations.

“Calm down, everyone. The preceptor probably just came and harvested the plants….” However, such voices of reason were soon drowned out by angry shouts.

“Like hell! If the preceptor harvested the plants, he would only take the leaves…. Look, even the roots are gone!! I’ve been tending medicinal plants for my entire life, and I've never seen a field as empty as this! It couldn’t be cleaner if it was licked clean by dogs!! And look over here! Dammit… the medicinal soil levels here are lower!!”

“That’s nothing. Look at this, guys. When I blinked just now, the medicinal plant I was holding in my hand… vanished!!” Soon, the commotion spread to the city itself.

By that time, Bai Xiaochun had already left Cloudsea Prefecture, and was closing in on the rendezvous spot.

“I wish I’d had more time. What a pity I had to leave all those bricks behind. They weren’t exactly spirit stones, but they had a lot of spiritual energy in them. And what about the floor tiles? And the building foundations….” Shaking his head, he flew along until he saw a sea that was vastly more majestic than the former Heavenspan Sea!

Waves rolled and crashed on its surface, creating a sound like thunder from the highest heavens.

Compared to this sea, the Heavenspan Sea was more like a lake.

Far, far off in the distance, just off the shore, there was a huge mountain that seemed to hold command over the waters around it. Visible on the surface of that mountain were words!

Eternal Sea!

This was the appointed rendezvous location with the Giant Ghost King. After sending his divine sense out and ensuring there was no danger, Bai Xiaochun flew up to the top of the mountain.

“The Giant Ghost King should be coming along any moment now.” Sitting down cross-legged, he sat there listening to the crash of the waves and looking off in the direction of Crosspeak Prefecture. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, he breathed a sigh of relief as he caught sight of the Giant Ghost King heading toward him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1040 awe-chapter-1041

After confirming that the Giant Ghost King was unharmed, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and prepared to offer greetings. But before any greetings left his mouth, he unexpectedly vanished!

As for the Giant Ghost King, he was feeling very proud of how smoothly everything had gone, and was especially pleased with how he had killed the preceptor of Crosspeak Prefecture without anyone noticing. “Xiaochun, this is--”

Before he could finish speaking, Bai Xiaochun materialized right next to him and slashed out with his hand. The Giant Ghost King immediately shot forward with a burst of speed, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that summoned a black mouth of smoke that shot into the air behind him.

Even as rumbling sounds echoed out, the Giant Ghost King spun in place to find a child-sized little ghost behind him that had just been slashed into two pieces.

The green-skinned ghost let out a shriek of pain, and then the two halves of its body faded away into nothing.

At that point, an unsightly expression appeared on the Giant Ghost King’s face.

“Dammit! That Crosspeak Prefecture demigod secretly hit me with some ghost magic!”

“No.” Bai Xiaochun said, his expression somber. “Not the Crosspeak Prefecture demigod!” The Giant Ghost King followed his gaze to a point off in the distance, whereupon his expression flickered. Approaching rapidly was a massive tempest made of innumerable evil ghosts, a tempest that raged with wildly destructive power.

Atop the tempest of ghosts was a huge bone lizard that seemed to fill half the sky. It was vicious and cruel, and on top of its head was a crest that looked like a galleon!!

Two flags flew on the bone galleon, upon which vicious ghost faces could be seen. Their aura combined with the aura of the galleon and the lizard created a ghost qi that filled all heaven and earth!

Seven demigods stood on the deck of the bone galleon, all of whom looked with icy yet excited eyes at Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King!

However, what had captured Bai Xiaochun’s attention was not the demigods, but rather, someone else who stood on the deck. It was a beautiful young woman who seemed like a paragon entity within heaven and earth!

She had an attractive figure, fair skin, and delicate features. Her phoenix-like eyes sparkled with extraordinary brightness, making her seem like the awe-inspiring type of person that no one would ever dare to offend.

She wore an ornate orange court gown that made her look particularly dazzling. Her long, slender fingers and milky arms made her incredibly entrancing to anyone who could see her. As the bone lizard sped through the air, her orange gown fluttered in the wind, especially the wide, violet-embroidered sleeves.

Her gown was embroidered with something that looked like a black underworld city, featuring an enormous gate, out of which flowed an endless stream of howling evil ghosts.

“Ghostmother!!” the Giant Ghost King said with a gasp. Although he had never seen the true Ghostmother, he had seen Gongsun Wan’er, and considering how ghostly and sinister this young woman seemed, and the familiar aura, it only took him a moment to guess who she was.

She was none other than Ghostmother!

“Impossible! How could she have possibly detected our actions so quickly!?!? Did she just happen to be in the area?!” The Giant Ghost King was already starting to devolve into a panic. After all, his previous encounter with Gongsun Wan’er in the Wildlands had left a deep impression on him.

“It’s not a coincidence….” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes shining with dangerous light as he stared at the incoming bone lizard.

“She figured out some time ago that we were hiding here.” After all, both he and the Giant Ghost King were strangers to the Eternal Lands, and although they had been very careful, it was no surprise that someone had been able to track them down.

“If she knew, then why weren’t the demigods in the local prefectures lying in wait for us to--” The Giant Ghost King was very intelligent, and a profound schemer. Therefore, before he even finished giving voice to his question, he came up with the answer, and it caused an unsightly expression to appear on his face.

“She knows more about the Heavenspan Realm than anyone else in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty,” Bai Xiaochun said. “It’s only natural for her to be a bit greedy because of that.”

It wasn’t difficult to guess at Ghostmother’s plan. She was confident in being able to handle Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King, and hoped to capture and consume them.

It caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to sink, and nervousness to prickle at the back of his mind. But it was an unavoidable fight, and he had one advantage: he could pick the battlefield.

Eyes flashing, he backed up rapidly, joined by the Giant Ghost King. Both of them felt their battle spirit rising, and clearly, both were thinking the same thing. The battle would be best fought… not on the third immortal domain, but out on the Eternal Sea!

In addition, they would fight and flee at the same time. That would be the best way to prevent reinforcements from arriving, and would increase their chances of avoiding defeat.

Even as Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King fled, Ghostmother’s eyes flashed with bright light, and she waved her finger.

In response, the seven demigod experts flew off the deck of the bone galleon, becoming beams of bright light that shot forward with incredible speed. They were like sharp swords that could slice through any obstacles as they headed directly toward Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King!

“Bai Xiaochun….” Ghostmother said, her eyes radiating determination. Despite having taken Hou Xiaomei as an apprentice, and also having had dealings with Bai Xiaochun, as soon as she was assigned to oversee the third immortal domain last month, she had made her decision.

She was the only person from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty to have ever entered the Heavenspan Realm, and then come back out alive. Because of that, and the fact that she was in the early Celestial Realm, the Vile-Emperor valued her highly. In fact, that was why he had assigned her with the task of overseeing the manhunt for Heavenspan cultivators!

Although she had only arrived in the third immortal domain recently, that was because, for the previous better part of a year, she had been in the first and second immortal domains. Because of her familiarity with the aura of Heavenspan cultivators, she had developed a technique to hunt them down that only she could employ.

And the entire time, she had been trying to locate Bai Xiaochun!

Her experiences in the Heavenspan Realm, as well as her cooperation with the gravekeeper, ensured that she knew just about everything about Bai Xiaochun!

All of that led her to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun… was a rarity among rarities!

In the end, not even the Vile-Emperor could possibly know as much about Bai Xiaochun as Ghostmother.

Therefore, whether it was the secrets of spirit enhancement that she had extracted from the blood of Heavenspan cultivators, or the authority conferred upon her by the Vile-Emperor, she had decided to focus the majority of her search efforts on locating Bai Xiaochun.

When she finally confirmed his general whereabouts several days ago, she had refrained from mobilizing the prefectural forces that she had suddenly taken over from Celestial Virūpākṣa. Instead, she headed in his direction with her own personal subordinates, in the hopes of capturing him secretly.

How could she have ever guessed that, in the few days it would take her to reach him, Bai Xiaochun would do something so daring!?

The death of a demigod was not some insignificant matter. As a celestial, Ghostmother could theoretically sweep the matter under the rug, but it wouldn’t be easy. But then there was the matter of the medicinal plant farms in Cloudsea Prefecture’s capital city. The dramatic theft of those resources was something that affected the prefecture as a whole. Therefore, the matter had instantly turned into a big headache.

Most important of all was the fact that…. the tribute to the Vile-Emperor had been stolen. Nothing like that had ever happened before, and there was no way Ghostmother could hide the news. She knew that, as of this point, consuming Bai Xiaochun wasn’t an option. She had originally had the initiative, but had now lost it, and therefore, it filled her heart with extreme anger!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1041 awe-chapter-1042

Numerous thoughts raced through Ghostmother’s mind as the bone lizard sped through the sky toward Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King.

From a distance, it was possible to see the fearsome energy of the bone lizard distorting the air around it as it moved.

In the Heavenspan Realm, a mighty bone lizard like this could cause mountains to crumble and the land to shatter with its passing. But these were the Eternal Immortal Domains, and therefore, the mighty energy fluctuations did little to the surrounding landscape, much less the roiling Eternal Sea.

Compared to the huge lizard, Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King were like tiny bugs.

As the intense energy of the lizard got closer and closer, the Giant Ghost King’s heart began to race as he sensed his cultivation base beginning to grow unstable.

“What kind of ship is that?!?!” he said, his scalp tingling in shock. At that point, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing a moon-shaped flash of light to emerge from his bag of holding. It was his moonflower, the same one which had appeared during his fight with Daoist Heavenspan.

After spending the better part of the past year in recovery, the moonflower was mostly back to normal. Furthermore, the aura of its home, and the familiar spiritual energy of heaven and earth here, ensured that it was bursting with excitement. Directed by Bai Xiaochun, the moonflower shot toward the Giant Ghost King and coiled protectively around him, defending him against the pressure from the bone galleon to some degree.

When the Giant Ghost King saw the moonflower, his eyes went wide, especially considering that it emanated fluctuations equivalent to the great circle of the Demigod Realm.

“What the hell is that…? Fudge, the great circle of the Demigod Realm?! It’s… it’s stronger than me!!”

The added boost from the moonflower helped the Giant Ghost King speed up, and together with Bai Xiaochun, he flew deeper into the Eternal Sea.

As the two of them sped along, black flames suddenly rose up in the eyes of the bone lizard that made it seem intelligent to a certain degree. At the same time, Ghostmother performed an incantation gesture, causing the lizard’s mouth to open and emit a howl in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

Along with the howl came black flames that also bore down on Bai Xiaochun!

It was a raging sea of fire, its heat so intense that it seemed it could melt anything that got in its way!

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered at the terrifying power he sensed in the sea of flames. Without any hesitation, he spun, clenched his hand into a fist, and unleashed a punch!

The power of his fleshly body erupted, and numerous shockwaves rolled out as his fist made contact with the sea of flames.

A deafening boom filled the air as the sea of flames suddenly lurched to a halt as surely as if it were a person who had been grabbed by the throat!

Ghostmother snorted coldly, sending another command to the bone lizard. Another howl erupted from its mouth, accompanied by a second sea of flames. However, this one was vastly more powerful than the last, and it immediately destroyed the tempest that had been created by Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike. Then, it coalesced into the shape of an enormous, fiery ghost face, which lunged forward ravenously.

It was at this point that the seven demigod cultivators closed in like seven shooting stars. In the blink of an eye, they were right on top of Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King.

Three of them performed incantation gestures to summon huge, flaming birds that let out ear-piercing shrieks. The birds merged with the demigods, giving them additional speed that they used to attack the Giant Ghost King.

An unsightly expression could be seen on the Giant Ghost King’s face as he fell back and waved his hand, sending a mist of ghosts out to defend himself. At the same time, the moonflower held nothing back to aid him.

Already, a major battle was underway right over the Eternal Sea!

As the fiery ghost face closed in, Bai Xiaochun used the power of the Live Forever Codex to fuel his Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation. Roaring, he transformed to a height of more than 300 meters. Looking like the forefather of all humanity, the original Arch-Ancestor, he leaped forward, throwing his arms out wide as he slammed into the ghost face.

The ghost face howled in response, and yet, was powerless to defend itself, and shattered into innumerable black sparks that fell down to the Eternal Sea below.

“No wonder the gravekeeper picked him,” Ghostmother thought, looking down coldly at Bai Xiaochun. “And he was able to defeat Daoist Heavenspan too. He must have plenty of trump cards at his disposal!” Instead of impulsively rushing into the fighting herself, she waited on the deck of the bone galleon.

During the months in which she had been hunting down Heavenspan cultivators, she had collected quite a few clues that gave her a fairly good understanding of the final, spectacular battle between Bai Xiaochun and Daoist Heavenspan.

She was still completely and utterly confident that, since she was in the early Celestial Realm, she was superior to Bai Xiaochun. And yet, she still maintained caution. Her bone lizard was the envy of the other celestials in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and therefore, she relied on it to carry out the initial attack on Bai Xiaochun.

Chuckling coldly, she performed another incantation gesture, causing yet another black sea of flames to erupt out. Within it was a nine-meter column of light that shot directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

And yet, things weren’t over yet. Ghostmother now performed an incantation gesture with her left hand, causing a magical symbol to appear there. At that point, the two ghost flags on the deck of the battleship began to wave, and the ghost faces emerged, joining the sea of flames in the attack.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression was unsightly to the extreme. He had known all along that Ghostmother would not be easy to deal with. Her bone lizard and its seas of flame contained terrifying destructive power, and only three bursts of it had already filled the area with a deadly miasma.

Although Bai Xiaochun had shocking powers of regeneration, the way the miasma constantly ate away at him caused him to frown.

Then there was the beam of light, which he could instantly tell was too powerful for him to face directly.

And last were the two ghost faces. Although they didn’t match up to the laughing-crying ghost face, they still radiated the power of the quasi-celestial level, and were obviously very intelligent.

“Ghostmother must already know about my fight with Daoist Heavenspan. That’s why she's being so careful. She wants me to use my trump cards early on.… However, I can’t do that this close to the borders of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.…” Gritting his teeth, he faced the beam of light, the sea of flames, and the ghost face, and clenched his hand into a fist. Instantly, a black vortex sprang up around it.

Then, rumbling sounds echoed out as a shadowy emperor appeared, radiating domineering energy left and right!

“I've never fought a true celestial before. Let’s see how far away I actually am from the Mahayana Realm!” His eyes were completely bloodshot as wild energy fluctuations erupted from his fist!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1042 awe-chapter-1043

On the bone galleon, Ghostmother’s phoenix-like eyes narrowed. Despite having been in the Heavenspan Realm for many years, she had been stuck in the Deadmire for most of that time. Furthermore, Bai Xiaochun had progressed significantly since the last time she had encountered him, on the eve of her departure.

Therefore, she didn’t have a thorough understanding of all of his divine abilities and magical techniques. Nor was she aware of all of his trump cards. Because of that, she wouldn’t make the mistake of underestimating him. Although she didn’t quite view him as being on the same level as herself, she did think of him as being stronger than Daoist Heavenspan.

As soon as she saw the vortex springing up around his hand, her eyes flashed.

At the same time, a howl erupted from the mouth of Bai Xiaochun’s Forefather Transformation form. Stepping forward, he gathered the power of the black vortex… and punched out toward the incoming beam of light!

It was a quintuple-power Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

Massive rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the shadowy emperor also punched out. The two fists overlapped, and then mountain-toppling, sea-draining power smashed into the black beam of light!

A huge boom rang out as the black beam of light struggled to fight back, but then shattered. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s

Undying Emperor’s Fist went on to hit the sea of flames.

It was like a raging dragon had sliced through the middle of the fire, cutting the sea of flames into two halves. Then, the fist strike continued on toward the ghost faces!

By that point, though, it was getting weaker. And given how extraordinary the ghost faces were, when they collided, the Undying Emperor’s Fist was vanquished.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun’s expression didn't even flicker in response, although he was panting for breath.

“If quintuple won’t work, then I’ll double it! Decuple power!!”

An even more shocking pulse of fleshly body power erupted out, becoming a wildly destructive windstorm that slammed into the two ghost faces.

It was at this point that Ghostmother’s expression flickered. The power of Bai Xiaochun’s decuple-power Undying Emperor’s Fist was something that could be considered rare even among the divine abilities of the Eternal Lands.

The two ghost faces were completely shaken, and had no choice other than to twist to the side to try to avoid the blow.

With the two ghost faces out of the way, Bai Xiaochun was now facing the huge bone lizard. Without any hesitation, he used his Undying Hex, becoming a series of afterimages that appeared right above the bone galleon a moment later. Making eye contact with Ghostmother, Bai Xiaochun clenched his right hand into a fist, and then punched at her with another decuple-power Undying Emperor’s Fist!

As for Ghostmother, although she was clearly shocked, there was a bit of a scornful look in her eyes.

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike closed in, a powerful blood qi sprang up around the bone lizard, which rapidly formed into a defensive shield.

It wasn’t a spell formation, but rather a divine ability connected to the bone galleon, and it formed just in time to meet Bai Xiaochun’s incoming fist strike.

And although a massive boom echoed out, the shield did not fall. Furthermore, a significant backlash attack hit Bai Xiaochun, causing his face to fall.

Unlike the beam of light or the sea of flames, this blood mist shield was powerful in defensive strength. In fact, it seemed to be on a completely different level. Cracking sounds rang out inside of Bai Xiaochun as he was thrown backwards, his five yin organs in chaos to the point where he felt like he might explode.

“How arrogant!” Ghostmother said scornfully. Waving her hand, she summoned two enormous ghost hands, which lunged toward Bai Xiaochun as if to grab him.

Simultaneously, the bone lizard spat out another sea of fire, cutting off any path of escape.

As all of this happened, Bai Xiaochun’s powers of regeneration kicked in, and his backlash injuries began to disappear. Then he burst into motion, piercing through the sea of flames and punching out toward the ghost hands.

Within moments, he was completely back to normal, provoking a slight gasp from Ghostmother.

“Such powers of regeneration!!!” As of this moment, she finally understood how it was possible that Daoist Heavenspan had been defeated.

“That is his true secret weapon! But what other trump cards does he have?!” By now, Ghostmother’s heart burned with true greed.

Based on their very short interchange, Bai Xiaochun already understood a lot more about the battleship than before. “Now *that’s* a battleship!” he thought. “It’s actually stronger than Ghostmother herself.... Especially its defenses. Absolutely terrifying! And it’s so fast....” By now, he was relatively certain that even a blow from the Greatsword of the North wouldn’t do much to this ship.

Nor would Ghostmother give him the time to prepare to do so....

“Ghostmother has true celestial battle prowess, but not enough to make her a major problem for me!” Having reached this conclusion, he decided that at the moment, the true threat was not Ghostmother, but rather... the battleship.

Meanwhile, Ghostmother took a deep breath. The greed in her eyes hadn’t faded a bit; performing an incantation gesture, she waved her finger, causing screams to erupt from the two ghost faces that had just evaded Bai Xiaochun moments ago. Driven by the torment of the restrictive spells inside of them, they turned and headed toward Bai Xiaochun again.

At the same time, the battleship began to vibrate, causing the air around it to distort. Apparently, it was building up power to unleash one massive attack.

Bai Xiaochun's eyes flickered with the realization that he couldn't fight this battleship. However, it wouldn't necessarily be impossible to lock it down temporarily. Completely ignoring the two ghost faces, he unleashed his frigid domain and summoned nine frigid clones, which he sent toward the ghost faces, not in the hopes of defeating them, but just delaying them.

Then he howled, unleashing another Undying Emperor's Fist with decuple power, directly toward the bone galleon itself!

As the fist shot out, a massive vortex appeared!

He didn't pause for even a moment. Relying on the regenerative powers of his Undying Blood, he unleashed a second fist strike, then a third and a fourth!

Boom, boom, boom! Relentless attacks!

And the vortexes only continued to grow stronger!

Ghostmother's face fell as, in the space of a few short breaths of time, Bai Xiaochun unleashed… ten decuple-power Undying Emperor's Fists!

Even with his powers of regeneration, it was a level of wastage so intense that it created something like a black hole of spiritual energy, which almost instantly drained everything in a wide area. All of a sudden, the bone battleship was deprived of its fuel source, and was incapable of moving.

Although it was only temporary, and would last no more than ten breaths of time, that was plenty of time for Bai Xiaochun to work with. Without pausing, he flew back toward the Giant Ghost King, who despite having the moonflower to help him, was being battered soundly by the seven other demigods. Before any of the demigods could react, Bai Xiaochun reached out and clamped his hand down onto the head of the one nearest him.

He moved so quickly that the man had no chance to dodge or evade. Then, terrifying might erupted from his hand, filling the demigod with a sensation of deadly crisis. Howling, he immediately resorted to self-detonation to try to block Bai Xiaochun.

As his nascent divinity attempted to flee, the moonflower shot out and gobbled it up!

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun grabbed the Giant Ghost King and rocketed off into the distance.

In the blink of an eye, he was far, far away. Only six demigods remained on the battlefield, their scalps tingling in fear at the way Bai Xiaochun had just attacked. For the moment, none of them seemed willing to chase after him.

In their moment of hesitation, the bone battleship erupted with a mist of blood. No longer affected by what Bai Xiaochun had just done, the ship sprang into motion again.

As the bone lizard broke free, Ghostmother’s expression flickered grimly, and yet at the same time, with greed. Pointing off into the distance, she said, “Catch him! Or die trying!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1043 awe-chapter-1044

Bai Xiaochun was already 5,000 kilometers away, his heart pounding. He could sense that the vortex he had created was gone, which meant that the battleship was likely closing in at top speed.

“Complete and utter bullying!!” the Giant Ghost King grumbled. His face was pale, and he looked quite bedraggled. Without the help of the moonflower just now, he would have suffered a bitter defeat at the hands of the other demigods. “If I had the Grand Heavenmaster and the other heavenly kings to back me up, we five could definitely have stood up to them!”

The Giant Ghost King was actually feeling quite embarrassed by how the fight had played out.

“It’s a good thing we hatched our plan and left that town,” Bai Xiaochun said. “If we had been caught by Ghostmother there, we would have been like fish in a barrel.” At the moment, he was feeling very irritated. Considering the look of wild ambition he had seen in Ghostmother’s eyes, he was sure that she would chase him down to the bitter end.

If he were in the Heavenspan Realm, things would have been a bit easier, with plenty of options and places to go to remain safe. But in the Eternal Lands, and on the border of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, it was too dangerous to allow any delays to occur.

“If only I could get Ghostmother off of that battleship,” he thought with a sigh. Unfortunately, Ghostmother was being very careful, and hadn’t made any slipups. Right now, he had no options. Sending his divine sense out, he scanned the Eternal Sea, and yet saw nothing but endless water, with no places to hole up.

As Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King anxiously tried to come up with a plan, massive rumbling sounds could be heard coming from the bone lizard behind them.

When the howls of the evil ghosts that made up the black cloud reached Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King, their pupils constricted.

A moment ago, the bone lizard had used the blood mist to gain an additional burst of speed that sent it rocketing forward even faster than before.

Bai Xiaochun only had the time to flick his sleeve to separate himself and the Giant Ghost King, then turn to face the bone lizard.

Cracking sounds could be heard as rifts opened up everywhere. However, these were the Eternal Lands, and therefore, the rifts healed almost immediately.

Meanwhile, a sea of flames had erupted out of the mouth of the bone lizard, sending intense heat out in all directions.

Yet again, the black beam of light shot out, filled with deadly power.

The two ghost faces were also present, and were fanning out as if to block Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King’s path.

It was a moment of deadly crisis, and there was no time to contemplate the situation. Bai Xiaochun immediately threw his hands out.

“Waterswamp!”

Water vapor roiled out, turning the world hazy. Even as Ghostmother’s eyes narrowed up on the battleship, Bai Xiaochun threw his arms down.

“Kingdom!!”

Roar!

Heaven and earth trembled as a beastly howl filled the air that seemed to come from countless years in the past. As it echoed out, a huge black landmass rose up from within the watery swamp!

Blood scales and bloodshot eyes could be seen, along with a fishy odor as… a gigantic crocodilian head appeared!

By the time the lower jaw was visible, the demigods present were so stunned that their jaws dropped.

As for the bone lizard, it was huge, but compared to this crocodilian creature, it actually looked insignificant.

“What is that?!?!” That was what all the demigods were thinking as they rushed backward in retreat. Meanwhile, the huge crocodilian mouth opened… and snapped toward the bone lizard.

The Giant Ghost King knew Bai Xiaochun well, but when he saw this, he was so shaken his eyes nearly popped out of his skull.

“Is that really a divine ability?” he thought, his heart pounding with fear. He also backed up, doing everything in his power to get as far away as he could. Bai Xiaochun did the same thing, not even waiting to see what would happen behind him as he fled with the Giant Ghost King.

The bone lizard wanted to give chase, but it was too late as the huge crocodilian mouth snapped down onto it. From a distance, it almost looked like the crocodilian creature had risen up out of the Eternal Sea and swallowed the lizard!

The battleship seemed powerless to fight back. Not even the blood mist shield could help it to flee out of the closing crocodilian mouth.

The enemy demigods were terrified to find that they couldn’t get out of the affected area; the mouth slammed shut, causing intense rumbling sounds to fill the air. Then, the crocodilian creature sank back down, making it seem almost like it was going down into the waters of the Eternal Sea.

When the crocodilian head disappeared, the watery swamp faded away. After about ten seconds passed, the rumbling sounds were gone.

Then, a rift broke open, and the bone lizard shot out, howling the entire way.

It was visibly damaged! Although the Waterswamp Kingdom hadn’t destroyed it, it had inflicted serious injuries! Apparently, the Waterswamp Kingdom was even stronger when unleashed within the Eternal Lands!

Although Ghostmother looked slightly anxious, her eyes glowed with excitement.

“So, I finally got you to pull out a true trump card! And don’t you dare think that using it on me a second time will have the same results!” She chuckled, a sound filled with both avarice and anticipation.

Bai Xiaochun was even stronger than she had hoped, and now that he had revealed his true trump card, she felt confident enough to attack him directly!

Smiling a radiant smile, she turned the battleship in his direction and began to chase him down!

She only had three demigods left, but was confident that if she could get her hands on Bai Xiaochun, it would all be worth it!

“You’re mine, Bai Xiaochun, all mine!”

Ghostmother licked her lips slowly, a sight that, if anyone could see it who didn't know the current circumstances, would have jumped to very different conclusions about what was going on….

Several thousand kilometers away, Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King were fleeing across the Eternal Sea. Grim expressions covered their faces, and neither was saying much. As for the Giant Ghost King, bitterness and unease filled his heart. The terrifying strength of Ghostmother had already sapped his hope of reaching the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

“What do we do?” he murmured inwardly. “We have to think of something?!” Of course, he hadn’t noticed that a strange light that had begun to glitter in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes.

Bai Xiaochun simply wasn’t willing to give up. He was now confident that if it weren’t for the bone galleon, even a celestial like Ghostmother wouldn’t be able to kill him. Ghostmother’s only strength lay in that battleship.

“I wonder how Hou Xiaomei is doing…?” he thought. After all, Ghostmother had brought Hou Xiaomei and Big Fatty Zhang with her to the Eternal Lands, and yet, he hadn’t seen any hint that they were currently with her. Presumably, Ghostmother would remain tight-lipped if he tried to get any information about them from her.

“You know… two measly demigods is not a very good blood tribute…. We need to do something far more shocking!” Expression flickering, and eyes turning more bloodshot, he began to build on an idea he had just come up with moments before.

After some more thought, he turned and grabbed the Giant Ghost King’s shoulder.

“Hey, old pal. What do you think… about kidnapping Ghostmother?! What kind of reward do you think the Saint-Emperor would give us for her!?”

The Giant Ghost King had just been thinking about ways to escape the situation when Bai Xiaochun grabbed him. When he looked over and saw the wild look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and heard his suggestion, he was completely taken aback.

“Kidnap Ghostmother?” Something about the whole situation seemed very familiar, but there was no time to think about that now. The mere idea left the Giant Ghost King feeling stunned. After all, there were a total of six celestials in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, all of whom were shocking figures. If one were to be kidnapped, it would send shockwaves through all of the Eternal Lands. That would be a blood tribute that defied the imaginations of everyone.

“We shouldn’t do anything impulsive, Xiaochun….” he began. After all, the two of them were currently fleeing from certain death. To the Giant Ghost King, Bai Xiaochun’s suggestion seemed almost ludicrous.

“Come on! Yes? Or No?” Bai Xiaochun said, glaring. If the Giant Ghost King had immediately agreed, he might have hesitated. After all, the idea really was a bit crazy.

But when he saw how nervous the Giant Ghost King was, he felt more than a little annoyed.

Forehead veins bulging, he gritted his teeth and said, “Giant Ghost, old pal, didn’t you say you wanted to do something momentous? What could be better than kidnapping a celestial? You want big? If we do that, it’ll shake all of the Eternal Lands!”

The Giant Ghost King’s heart began to pound as he thought, “Why not kidnap an archaean then…?” But then he suddenly realized why the look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes seemed so familiar…. “Fudge! That’s what he looked like… when he kidnapped me! He’s a kidnapping expert!”

A wry smile broke out on the Giant Ghost King face. Then he gritted his teeth and said, “Alright, let’s do it! How do we pull it off?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1044 awe-chapter-1045

Bai Xiaochun’s face was a bit flushed, and his heart was pounding. The realization that he was considering kidnapping a celestial… confirmed that he had changed a lot from his old self.

After all, this was a true celestial, not a quasi-celestial like Daoist Heavenspan. This was Ghostmother, a Mahayana Realm expert with an astounding bone galleon at her command.

“Fudge! What’s there to be scared of? I’m the Arch-Ancestor, a quasi-celestial with the Greatsword of the North. Besides, when I was in Core Formation, I kidnapped a demigod. When I was a deva, I smacked Daoist Heavenspan across the side of the face. This wimpy Ghostmother… should be easy to kidnap!”

It all seemed completely crazy, and yet that only served to get Bai Xiaochun’s heart racing in excitement.

It really was just like that time all those years ago in the Wildlands when he and the little turtle had kidnapped the Giant Ghost King. It was the exact same feeling, except stronger! Taking a deep breath, he turned to look at the Giant Ghost King, his eyes crimson.

“Don’t worry, Giant Ghost, old pal,” he said through gritted teeth, “I have a lot of experience kidnapping people.”

The Giant Ghost King’s eyes were just as bloodshot, and to be honest, he wasn’t very happy about what Bai Xiaochun had just said, particularly the ‘have a lot of experience’ line…. Expression unsightly, he barked, “What, you think I'm scared of some old shrew like Ghostmother?”

Ignoring him, Bai Xiaochun stroked his chin, eyes glittering as countless ideas raced through his mind, especially thoughts about what had worked so well when he had kidnapped the Giant Ghost King all those years ago….

Lowering his voice, he said, “Based on my kidnapping experience, I think the best thing to do is get it all done in one shot. Sort of like how I did with you. Strike like lightning!” He was so wrapped up in his ideas that he didn't notice how the Giant Ghost King was clearly sinking into a very angry mood.

“Hit the battleship hard, get inside, grab Ghostmother, and then get out of there. Either that… or get Ghostmother to come out of the galleon…. Just like when I dragged you out of the spell formation in that big stone turtle.” The Giant Ghost King snorted coldly as he thought back to what it had been like being kidnapped. Every time such memories floated up into his mind, he felt the impulse to beat the crap out of Bai Xiaochun. Right now was no exception. However, the differences in their cultivation bases ensured that all he did was sigh.

“Once she's off of that bone galleon, I can distract her temporarily. And that’s where you’ll come in, Giant Ghost, old pal. You see, we're not just going to kidnap Ghostmother, we’re going to steal her bone galleon! And all her magical items too! If we're going to do something monumental, then monumental it’s gonna be!” With that, he went on to explain the plan in detail, especially certain critical aspects that required particular attention.

As the Giant Ghost King listened, his eyes got wider and wider, and he suddenly realized how unlucky Ghostmother was to have encountered Bai Xiaochun….

At the same time, hearing the plan laid out eased a bit of his nervousness. Although it wasn't a perfect plan, it seemed highly likely that it would work.

Before long, black mist filled the sky behind them, and the bone lizard appeared, racing toward them from off in the distance.

Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth as the moment of truth arrived. When it came to kidnapping Ghostmother, he knew that his battle prowess was a problem. Therefore, as the bone lizard approached, he smacked his bag of holding to make contact with the Greatsword of the North. Then he sent his thoughts inside to try to contact the Frigid Matriarch.

A moment later, his eyes lit up. Although the Frigid Matriarch wasn't responding, he sensed a reaction from the laughing-crying ghost face.

Suddenly, blue light flashed inside of his bag of holding as the sealed laughing-crying ghost face was released.

Bai Xiaochun had left the laughing-crying ghost face inside of the world of the sword, and had never given him much thought later. However, after the Frigid Matriarch became the spirit automaton, she simply couldn't *do nothing* about the old ghost that had competed with her to become the spirit automaton. She didn't torment him endlessly, but did enslave him.

Once the ghost face was out in the open, it was clear that he had changed. There was no trace of a smile on his face, only a frown. However, as soon as he came into contact with the aura of the Eternal Lands, he began to recover from his previously weakened state.

“This… this….” he stammered excitedly, then turned and noticed Bai Xiaochun.

He immediately shivered as he recalled the dark memories of what Bai Xiaochun had done to him. Then he noticed the bone lizard closing in.

“Heavens! Everybody’s here….” Never could the ghost face have imagined that, right upon being released, he would run into so many familiar faces. His initial instinct was to run, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun glared at him.

“Didn’t you say that you’re a quasi-archaean? With a cultivation base like that, what are you scared of?” He emphasized his words with a cold snort that resonated with the enslavement seal that had been placed onto the ghost face by the Greatsword of the North. Before the ghost face could even react, he spun in place and then shot toward the bone lizard.

“Noooo!! I haven’t fully recovered yet! And I was exaggerating back then…. When the Vile-Emperor captured me, I was a quasi-archaean, but then he refined my soul, and Ghostmother imprisoned me. And later, Daoist Heavenspan ripped a part of me away! I'm not a quasi-archaean anymore! I'm sorry for everything. I can’t do this. Aiiieee….” Unfortunately for the ghost face, he couldn’t control himself at all, and immediately closed in on the bone lizard.

Meanwhile, the Giant Ghost King let out a shout as he became a bright beam of light that also charged toward the bone lizard.

The moonflower joined him, radiating the fluctuations of the great circle of the Demigod Realm, as well as boundless ferocity.

Then Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth, drawing upon fleshly body power that surpassed the quasi-celestial level!

When Ghostmother saw the sudden, coordinated attack, she frowned. She had already seen the Giant Ghost King and the moonflower fighting earlier, but was very surprised to see the laughing-crying ghost face.

“I can’t believe Bai Xiaochun has that old ghost working for him!” Eyes narrowing, she performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a sea of flames to erupt from the lizard’s mouth.

The laughing-crying ghost face was the first to meet the sea of flames. He seemed to be on the verge of weeping as he howled, forced to go all out. Opening his mouth, he sent out an evil wind that slammed into the fire and cut it completely in half.

This ghost had once existed as the primary flag on the bone lizard battleship, and therefore had a good understanding of it. After slashing the sea of flames in two, he found himself facing the black beam of light. Roaring, he slammed into it, consuming the light in one huge gulp. Meanwhile, the other two ghost faces were so scared that they struggled against Ghostmother’s control to back up.

Without anything blocking the way, the laughing-crying ghost face and Bai Xiaochun appeared right above the main deck of the bone galleon. As for the ghost face, he had no control of himself, and lunged forward to slam into the ship.

Chuckling coldly, Ghostmother said, “So, that old ghost is another of your trump cards!”

Waving her hand, she summoned the crimson defensive mist, which could block all divine abilities launched by Bai Xiaochun and his allies.

The laughing-crying ghost face hit the crimson mist and suffered a significant backlash attack that sent him flying backward, screaming. Next up was the moonflower!

A second boom rang out as cracks spread out on the moonflower’s stalk! Howling, the Giant Ghost King put everything on the line to transform into a giant ghost that head-butted the shield.

After sustaining three blows one after the other, the blood mist was beginning to weaken, which was exactly when Bai Xiaochun unleashed his Undying Emperor’s Fist.

A thunderous boom rang out as the blood mist sent out another backlash attack. However, it was not very strong, considering the repeated attacks it had just taken.

Blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth, Bai Xiaochun extended his right hand to once again summon the Greatsword of the North!

The blue sword radiated the aura of a world treasure as… he slashed it into the blood mist!!

Ghostmother gasped, and a strange light appeared in her eyes. She had been waiting for some time for Bai Xiaochun to use the Greatsword of the North; in the last several months, she had heard many stories about it, and had come to a basic understanding of what it was.

“So, you’ve finally pulled out that sword!” Chuckling, she performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then shoved both hands down toward the bone galleon!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1045 awe-chapter-1046

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in only a split second. Howling, Bai Xiaochun slashed the enormous Greatsword of the North down toward the bone galleon!

Blinding blue light shone out in shocking fashion as the aura of a world treasure shook everything. The sky went dim, and massive pressure weighed down. Within the massive eruption of blue light, it was possible to see a projection of the landmass that was the northern Heavenspan region!

Massive rumbling sounds could be heard as the sword made contact with the blood mist which, because of its weakened state, was incapable of holding firm.

As the blood mist shield exploded with a huge bang, the Greatsword of the North continued on unhindered to slash into the battleship!

However, it was also in that moment that Ghostmother’s hands hit the surface of the ship! The galleon shuddered as all of the bones which made it up turned crimson. Blood-red mist then began to pour out of it, which then settled onto the bone lizard… in the form of flesh!

The bone lizard howled as flesh began to build up on it. In the blink of an eye, it was no longer made from bones, but rather, flesh and blood!!

Even the battleship was covered with flesh, as well as a blood membrane that protected it like a physical shield. Both the lizard and the battleship began to thrum with shocking, unparalleled levels of energy that… blocked the Greatsword of the North!

A deafening boom exploded out because of the backlash, and blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth. The Greatsword of the North was flung away, and he along with it, seriously injured, and unable to stop coughing up blood.

The Giant Ghost King was also hit with a backlash, and was severely hurt as he tumbled backward, coughing up blood.

The moonflower and the laughing-crying ghost face similarly retreated, also clearly in bad shape.

“Dammit! Dammit!!” wailed the ghost, whose form had already dissipated by more than half. “The Vile-Emperor personally upgraded this battleship for Ghostmother. How could we possibly do anything to it?”

However, the combined attack of Bai Xiaochun and his allies was not something the lizard could escape unscathed. Howling, it lunged backward by 3,000 meters, during which time a gaping wound opened up on its head. Blood poured out of the huge wound, and yet despite that, the blood membrane had not been penetrated!

On the other side of the membrane, Ghostmother looked out with shining eyes. Bai Xiaochun and his team had put everything on the line, and yet were now seriously injured. Bai Xiaochun had even pulled out his Greatsword of the North, and yet, it had done no good.

“Time's running out,” Ghostmother murmured to herself. “Any more delays could result in unexpected developments.…

“Bai Xiaochun has most likely gone through all of his trump cards. Even if he has a few more, they won’t change the final outcome of the battle!” Killing intent burning in her eyes, Ghostmother performed an incantation gesture with her right hand, sending the lizard flying straight toward the injured Bai Xiaochun.

However, even as the lizard began to move in his direction, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up and shoved his arm out viciously!

Water vapor roiled out in all directions, which was none other than the Waterswamp Kingdom! Yet again, the crocodilian head rose up, accompanied by a howl that seemed to originate in ancient times. Opening its mouth wide, the crocodilian creature snapped at the lizard battleship.

Using the Waterswamp Kingdom again so soon caused Bai Xiaochun’s injuries to worsen. His powers of regeneration simply couldn’t keep up. Coughing up blood, he lurched to the side, and then began to fall down toward the Eternal Sea.

From the look of it, he was out of tricks, and was going to try to flee under the surface of the water!

Normally speaking, the cautious Ghostmother would handle the Waterswamp Kingdom first before giving chase. But in this situation… if she maintained direct control of the battleship, it would cost her several breaths of time.

That would be enough for Bai Xiaochun to disappear into the Eternal Sea, and then perhaps use some unknown escape magic to get so far away she couldn’t catch up.

Worse, Bai Xiaochun would get some breathing room to recover a bit. Considering the level of his powers of regeneration, Ghostmother didn’t feel that she could afford such a delay.

“I can’t be any less vigilant,” she thought, “but there are also times to be decisive. Clean and efficient! Besides, I'm a celestial, and since he’s used most of his secret weapons already, I know that I can handle all of them!” Eyes flickering with decisiveness, she blurred into motion…. Ignoring the gaping crocodilian maw that was the Waterswamp Kingdom, she unleashed the power of her celestial cultivation base, leaving the battleship and appearing above the Eternal Sea, right behind Bai Xiaochun! This was… her first time stepping off the battleship!

Without any hesitation, she reached out toward Bai Xiaochun.

“You’re mine, Bai Xiaochun!” she said, her eyes glittering with anticipation.

In the instant that she reached out, the bedraggled and blood-soaked Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, his eyes shining with strange light.

“So, finally got you out in the open!” The moment he spoke his words, his injuries all healed.

Then, Ghostmother’s face fell as he reached out, not toward her, but toward the lizard battleship! Pointing at it with his finger, he softly said, “One Glance Abyss Crystallization!”

All of the Eternal Seawater that was visible in the area was sealed, causing cracking sounds to ring out as it turned into crystal.

The crystal then shattered, becoming crystalline swords that exploded up from the sea, smashing into the lizard before crumbling back down to pile up below it. They became… an enormous, crystal lampstand!!

“You!!” By now, Ghostmother realized that everything up to this point had been a ploy to get her off of her battleship! Then, her mind reeled as Bai Xiaochun spoke a second time.

“Heavenly Canopy Lampshade!”

Rumbling sounds echoed out as a huge, invisible hand seemed to rip apart the sky of the Eternal Lands and transform it into a lampshade. As the lampshade covered the battleship, sealing it, Ghostmother’s face fell further. Now she wanted to get back to her ship, but wasn’t able to. Suddenly struck with unease, she unleashed the power of her cultivation base, summoning countless evil ghosts to try to break through to her ship.

“Boundless Longevity, Endless Life!” Countless *longevity* characters filled the world, settling into place on the lampshade, causing its sealing power to skyrocket in intensity! As of this moment, Ghostmother was completely incapable of penetrating that seal!

“Thou Art The Candle!!” The lizard battleship, which had been sealed in place on top of the crystalline lampstand, and covered with the heavenly canopy that was the lampshade, suddenly turned white… like wax!!

“Live Forever Lamp… Integrate!”

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the lizard battleship transformed into a huge Live Forever Lamp. As the intense power of the Daoist magic erupted out, it created something that not even a celestial like Ghostmother could defeat quickly!

That was the main reason Bai Xiaochun had used it on the ship instead of Ghostmother herself. After all, Ghostmother wasn’t Daoist Heavenspan, and Bai Xiaochun didn't want to bet on how much time it would take her to break out from it.

If she escaped too quickly, and then returned to her battleship, he would be doomed to be defeated.

Therefore, instead of sealing her, he sealed the lizard battleship. After all, he was quite confident that, without Ghostmother to control it… the battleship would not be able to escape easily from the Live Forever Lamp.

And of course, he would not give Ghostmother the chance to go to its aid!

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Ghostmother shrieked, her expression unsightly to the extreme. Furious at the realization that she had been plotted against, she suddenly began to chuckle. “Maybe I don’t have my battleship, but I'm still a celestial, and I can crush you with ease!”

Throwing her arms wide, she sent mist roiling out in all directions, creating something that looked like an enormous ghost city.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1046 awe-chapter-1047

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as his eyes shone with the desire to do battle. With each second that ticked by, his conviction in being able to kidnap Ghostmother grew stronger.

“Step A is accomplished. Now… it’s time for step B!” He clenched his right hand into a fist, causing his fleshly body power to surge. At the same time, the aura of both the Live Forever Codex and the Undying Codex rose up, merging together into something that surpassed an ordinary quasi-celestial…. He now thrummed with energy that was very close to the level of a true celestial!

The sky went dim, and the area was further darkened by the cloud of ghosts. But nothing could conceal how dangerous Bai Xiaochun looked at this moment, like an unsheathed sword filled with endless fury. He took a step forward, and then blurred into a streak of light that headed directly toward Ghostmother.

“Ghost Gate: Open!” Ghostmother’s slender fingers blurred in an incantation gesture, and then she pointed at Bai Xiaochun, causing the boundless cloud of ghosts to suddenly form together into a huge vortex. As soon as the vortex opened, endless evil ghosts poured out of it toward Bai Xiaochun.

There seemed to be no end to them!

“Ghost Dao: Arise!” And yet, things weren’t over yet. Even as the ghosts began to pour out, Ghostmother performed another incantation gesture. In response, the ghosts fell upon themselves, consuming and augmenting each other so that, in the blink of an eye, they became a gigantic 3,000-meter-tall ghost king!

This ghost king was covered with ghost eyes from head to toe, making him look bizarre to the extreme. Radiating quasi-celestial energy, he began to run toward Bai Xiaochun!

“Ghost Mirroring: Initiate!” But there was still more to come. Ghostmother performed another incantation gesture, causing an afterimage to spring up as a second ghost king stepped out of thin air. Then a third, and a fourth! Within moments, four ghost kings were in formation, barreling toward Bai Xiaochun.

These Daoist magics vastly surpassed anything that Daoist Heavenspan had used. And yet, Bai Xiaochun simply chuckled coldly, accelerating forward to smash through all four ghost kings, none of whom were even close to being a match for him.

However, the scorn had still not left Ghostmother’s eyes. Her right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and she pointed out.

“Ghost Gate: Imprison!”

In response, the four ghost kings, who were in the middle of tumbling backward, exploded into bits, and then formed back together into the shape of a huge gate.

This ghost gate then swung toward Bai Xiaochun, radiating intense pressure that caused even him to gasp. There was no time for him to react; the gate slammed down on top of him, trapping him right on the surface of the Eternal Sea.

She made no further attacks. At the moment, she actually didn’t fear his world treasure as much as his terrifying powers of regeneration. Although she had put on a front of being wildly domineering and arrogant, the truth was that she was very frustrated by his ability to heal himself.

No matter how hard she hit him, he wouldn’t die. And worse, she couldn’t think of any way to overcome that strength of his. Now that he was temporarily confined by her ghost gate, she immediately headed toward the lizard bone galleon to attempt to free it from the Live Forever Lamp.

As she closed in, she drew fully on her celestial cultivation base, summoning a host of ghost hands that seemed capable of ripping apart any barrier. The hands flew forward, latched onto the Live Forever Lamp, and then began to rip at it!

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out as the Live Forever Lamp was torn to shreds. And yet, even as Ghostmother’s face lit up with joy, a multitude of smaller Live Forever Lamps could be seen, each of which contained a projection of the lizard bone galleon.

“Dammit!!” she growled angrily. Never could she have guessed that the Live Forever Lamp would have a second form. Just as she was preparing to unleash another attack, her ghost gate suddenly exploded, and Bai Xiaochun shot up from the surface of the Eternal Sea!

He seemed a bit ruffled, but not injured in any way.

Gritting her teeth in anger, Ghostmother slapped her bag of holding to summon a small bell.

As the crisp chime of the bell echoed out, countless dead sea beasts that had been buried on the seafloor for endless years suddenly shot up in response to the call.

From a distance, it was possible to see countless bones suddenly erupting from the surface of the sea!

“Bone Miasma!” Ghostmother said in a grating voice. In response, the bones exploded, transforming into a toxic powder that filled the area!

“Strong fleshly body? I’ll just corrode it!” Snorting coldly, she performed an incantation gesture with her right hand and then waved her finger. As a result, the bell began to toll faster and faster, causing more bones to rise up from the Eternal Sea.

Far off in the distance, where the third immortal domain met the Eternal Sea, cracks appeared in the ground, and then bones flew up into the air, where they would shatter and turn into a bone miasma!

“Miasma Burial!” Eyes flashing with killing intent, Ghostmother performed a sealing gesture, causing the bone miasma to turn corporeal, becoming like soil that rushed forth to bury Bai Xiaochun!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as he was buried by the bone miasma. At the same time, Ghostmother looked on, panting a bit as her trump cards played out. Having sealed Bai Xiaochun again, she turned and shot up into the sky, throwing her hands wide and letting out a piercing scream, a soundwave that battered the heavens, causing one Live Forever Lamp after another to shatter. In the blink of an eye, they were all destroyed!

However, before a smile could even appear on her face, her expression flickered with shock; after the Live Forever

Lamps vanished, their aura appeared again, surrounding the lizard bone galleon!

This time, the entire world was the lampshade! The lands beneath all served as the lampstand! This Live Forever Lamp… could not be destroyed!

“How is this even possible!?!?” Ghostmother gasped. As far as she was concerned, not even true celestials should be able to utilize a Daoist magic this powerful, let alone a quasi-celestial like Bai Xiaochun.

Even as she reeled in shock, the soil of bone miasma exploded, and Bai Xiaochun appeared in the open again.

He looked a bit roughed up, but… was uninjured!

“How very disappointing, Ghostmother,” he said coolly.

Ghostmother glared at him, her chest heaving. By now, she had given up on her idea of destroying the Live Forever Lamp. It might have been one thing if she were in control of the battleship, but since she wasn’t, it didn’t seem possible to free it any time soon.

In her fury, her killing intent grew stronger.

“Do you really think I can’t handle you? I just didn’t want to cause a big scene and attract other celestials!” Eyes flashing with determination, she suddenly extended her right hand. As she did, her eyes began to flicker with mysterious light that, on close inspection, looked like the images of ghosts.

“In the Celestial Realm, you can form a Daoseed, which contains the Will of the world…. Feel free to take a look at true celestial-level Daoist magic!” As she finished speaking, her left hand shot out and grabbed at Bai Xiaochun!

Everything began to tremble, including all three of the immortal domains controlled by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. All prefectures, all counties, all cities, all cultivators, all mortals. Everyone looked around in shock as… they suddenly realized their left hands were reaching out in the direction of the Eternal Sea!

Also in that moment, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty’s only archaean, the reigning Vile-Emperor himself, suddenly opened his eyes as he sat there in meditation. He wasn’t the only one to react in that way. The other five celestials in Vile-Emperor City, regardless of what they were doing at the moment, suddenly turned to look in the direction of the Eternal Sea.

“Someone is using celestial magic!!”

“That aura belongs to… Ghostmother!”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s face flickered with anxiety. Earlier, he had come to the conclusion that the Celestial Realm didn’t seem very much different from the Demigod Realm. It just seemed more powerful.

But now, he realized that he had been wrong. All of a sudden, he felt like… he was surrounded by an infinitude of hands!

There were simply too many of them. It was as if every living being in all of the immortal domains of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty were reaching out to grab him! It was something he couldn't fight against.

He couldn’t even control himself as he began to inch toward Ghostmother! For some reason, it was actually a familiar sensation….

“I didn’t want people to know about what was going on here, but since things have reached this point, I guess I’ll just have to extract some profit from your soul. Your fleshly body is undying, and has heaven-defying regenerative capabilities. But let’s see if your soul is the same!

“Ghost Dao Soul Magic!” As she spoke the words, her left hand suddenly turned translucent, as though it suddenly didn’t quite exist in the world. And at the same time, she pushed it closer to Bai Xiaochun.

Apparently, she was going to bypass his fleshly body to grab his divine soul!

And yet, before she could touch his forehead, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as his left hand shot up to grab Ghostmother’s left hand!

As a flash of shock appeared in Ghostmother’s eyes, his right hand suddenly blurred, the Greatsword of the North appearing in it, which he… chopped directly toward her left arm!

“I’ve been waiting this whole time to get close to your left arm! Time to wake up, Gongsun Wan’er!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1047 awe-chapter-1048

The sword descended, sundering the heavens and crushing the earth!

Blood sprayed out like a geyser, accompanied by an agonized shriek from Ghostmother. Fear filled her eyes, but even more so, astonishment at the sharpness of Bai Xiaochun’s Greatsword of the North.

“How dare you, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Dazzling blue light shone out in all directions as she tumbled backward, screaming, her expression distorted with rage, her hair disheveled… and her left arm severed!!

“I'm gonna kill you, Bai Xiaochun!!” It wasn’t the intense pain that pushed her toward madness, but rather… the words that Bai Xiaochun had just uttered!

The plan was playing out perfectly. Step A had been to get Ghostmother off of her bone galleon. Step B had been… to figure out a way to sever her left arm!

Not everything had gone exactly as planned, but close enough. Ghostmother’s celestial Daoist magic had been unexpected, and powerful. Unexpectedly, she had called upon all of the living beings in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, controlling their minds in a way that Bai Xiaochun could never have planned for. At long last, he had come to realize how truly powerful the Celestial Realm was.

However, it was also in that moment that he remembered being in a similar situation once…. Years ago, in the bedchamber on the bone galleon, Ghostmother had used a similar Daoist magic to control, not Bai Xiaochun’s body, but his mind. She had attempted to play with his memories!

Back then, Ghostmother had been both incomplete and far from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and therefore, had only been able to exercise rudimentary control. But here, in her element, she had used the ultimate level of that celestial magic to actually control his body.

Both times… the same thing had happened. The scrap of Willpower inside of Bai Xiaochun had come to life and enabled him to move!

It was something that should not have skipped Ghostmother’s mind. But here in the Eternal Lands, with the full power of her celestial magic, she simply didn’t take the time to consider that Bai Xiaochun would be able to free himself from her grasp!

Much less could she have predicted that he would sever her left arm!!

Bai Xiaochun glanced coldly at the screaming, retreating Ghostmother, then reached out and grabbed her left arm. Not pausing for a moment, he sent some divine sense into it, hoping to stimulate the discarnate soul that existed inside of it.

A moment later, the arm collapsed into a blood mist that then resolved into a person….

It was… the very same little girl whom Ghostmother had consumed back in the Wildlands!

She opened her eyes and looked around blankly, seemingly confused…. But then she heard Bai Xiaochun speaking to her, his voice bolstered by his cultivation base so that it slammed into her like floodwaters.

“Gongsun Wan’er!!”

Who is Gongsun Wan’er? Sounds so familiar. I think I used that name before…. She looked at Bai Xiaochun blankly, and then looked around again.

“You lost,” Bai Xiaochun said, “and were consumed by your true self. Now… I've called you back. I'm giving you another chance… to become the dominant soul. All you have to do is help me steal that battleship, and do what I tell you on the way to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!!”

The girl shivered as memories began to slide into place in her mind. And yet, she just wasn’t able to fit them all together properly.

Bai Xiaochun could see how torn she seemed, as if she were in pain, and confused. Frowning, he reached out and put his hand on the top of her head. Then, he poured more divine sense into her, hitting the discarnate soul’s memories like a lightning bolt!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

The rumbling in the girl's mind caused the fragments of her memory to converge rapidly. She shivered, and then began to pant as the blank look in her eye faded away. At the same time, a hair-raisingly terrifying and cold aura erupted out of her!

“Hi, sweetie….” she said, smiling. Gongsun Wan’er was back!

It all happened within a few short moments. Despite being stronger than a quasi-celestial, the sight of Gongsun Wan’er’s smile caused Bai Xiaochun’s hair to stand on end. It looked exactly like the smile he had seen so many times back in the Heavenspan Realm of the past.

As the girl hovered there directly in front of Bai Xiaochun, she slowly turned her head to look at Ghostmother, bereft of her left arm, gasping for breath and clearly in bad shape.

“And hello to you… Ghostmother!”

Gongsun Wan’er chuckled, a cold, piercing chuckle of utmost bizarreness. Although her aura was still weak, from the nature of her laughter it was very clear… that she really had returned!!

There wasn’t even a hint of confusion or blankness in her eyes. It took her only a moment to assess the situation and ascertain the basics of Bai Xiaochun’s plan. Back when she had agreed to merge back into Ghostmother, she had been filled with intense regret, but had had no choice in the matter. Therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that she agreed to ally with Bai Xiaochun now!

Furthermore, she knew that even if Ghostmother were kidnapped, she was a celestial, and therefore, the Saint-Emperor wouldn’t kill her. If he did, then the Vile-Emperor would never let the matter rest!

Although there was friction between the two imperial dynasties, and they occasionally squabbled over territory, they were not interested in destroying each other. Most importantly, in either of the imperial dynasties, a celestial with a Daoseed could be resurrected by the Archaean Realm expert who they served!

Such a resurrection would come at a heavy cost, and there were limitations involved. But for all intents and purposes, archaeans could not die, and celestials could not be killed!

Therefore, the Vile-Emperor would definitely pay a hefty ransom to get a kidnapped celestial back from the Saint-Emperor. And therefore… the little girl knew that if she were the one to be taken hostage, then as part of Ghostmother, she would also be valued by the Vile-Emperor. Furthermore, the Vile-Emperor wouldn’t deign to interfere in matters between a soulclone and its true self.

Such thoughts ran through Gongsun Wan’er’s mind in a flash. Smiling radiantly, she burst into motion, heading directly toward the battleship. The Giant Ghost King followed, eyes shining brightly, moonflower in tow. The ghost face, still under the control of Bai Xiaochun, also came along.

This was all part of the plan that Bai Xiaochun had described. They were all to board the battleship together with Gongsun Wan’er, to forestall any unforeseen circumstances!

In response to all of this, Ghostmother was devolving into madness. Yet again, she felt weak like she had been in the past. Hatred burning in her heart, she realized she couldn’t keep this fight up, and as she fled, she called out to the other celestials for assistance.

Unfortunately for her, the Eternal Lands were huge, and not even celestials could simply show up within moments.

And there was no way Bai Xiaochun would give her the chance to flee. Without hesitation, he began to chase after her.

As he thought about the chase which had just played out, and the events of the past, he began to feel very irritated. “You old ghost biddy! You scared me half to death in the Deadmire, and bullied me to no end! And just now, you had to go and be all arrogant! Well let me tell you. I've changed a lot since the last time we met. Watch!”

Snorting coldly, he began to unleash attacks, until Ghostmother was coughing up blood and clearly in very bad shape.

None of her Daoist magics or divine abilities did any good against him. As of this moment, he was chasing her in much the same way that she had chased him.

The only thing she could do was use special soul magics to try to get away as fast as possible. Until… the bone lizard battleship suddenly began to speed in their direction, with Gongsun Wan’er at the helm, smiling. At that point, Ghostmother began to laugh in bitter despair. Her hopes were completely crushed.

Almost effortlessly, Gongsun Wan’er sent a sea of flames, a black beam of light, and three vicious ghost faces after Ghostmother! Within moments, she was defeated and captured!!

Gongsun Wan’er delightedly transformed into a black mist that poured into Ghostmother’s eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. With Bai Xiaochun assisting her, she quickly took control. Then, the bone lizard battleship blasted away at top speed over the Eternal Sea, toward the Saint-Emperor Dynasty….

“This is my blood tribute! With the flick of a sleeve, I, Bai Xiaochun, reduced a measly celestial to ashes!” Bai Xiaochun no longer felt even a little bit depressed. The mere thought of what he had just accomplished caused his spirits to soar.

He had kidnapped a celestial and an entire group of demigods!

From the moment the Saint-Emperor Dynasty had been founded until now, no one had ever provided tribute like that!

It was unprecedented!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1048 awe-chapter-1049

It was a huge matter that Bai Xiaochun didn’t even need to go to the trouble of trying to announce publicly. Because of the celestial-level Daoist magic that Ghostmother had used, all of the celestials in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had been paying attention, as well as the Vile-Emperor himself. Not long after the bone lizard departed, streams of divine sense began to converge on the location where the battle had occurred on the Eternal Sea.

There were five in total, which belonged to the five celestials of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. As they scanned the area, and noticed the residual auras, they found themselves completely thunderstruck.

That was especially true because of Celestial Virūpākṣa. He had a special Daoist magic that was capable of taking images of the final moments of the battle and dragging them back through time to be viewed again. When he and the other celestials saw what had happened, they were both flabbergasted and enraged.

“One of our celestials was kidnapped?!”

“He’s going to give Celestial Ghostmother to the Saint-Emperor as a blood tribute?!?!”

“What outrageous gall! This is a humiliation of our entire dynasty!!”

The rage of the five celestials caused the sky to distort, and a huge wind to kick up. As a result, massive waves began to roll out across the surface of the Eternal Sea.

“Catch him!” Five streams of divine sense began to give chase. Although they were not present as their true selves, Bai Xiaochun was only a quasi-celestial, and could not possibly stand up to the divine sense of five true celestials.

Rumbling sounds echoed out over the screaming Eternal Sea.

The matter of a celestial being kidnapped was simply too monumental. Even as the five celestials came to understand what had happened, the demigods from the third immortal domain began to use various means and methods to spread the news, leading to even more shock.

The news spread like wildfire, passing from the third immortal domain to the rest of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and soon, to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!

Of course, the Vile-Emperor himself had been aware of the situation from the moment that Bai Xiaochun actually kidnapped Ghostmother. Anger had burned in his eyes, and he immediately rose to his feet as if to take action. However, as he did… he stopped, and looked in the direction of Saint-Emperor City.

There, he could sense an aura that was no weaker than his own suddenly explode with full ferocity.

He could tell that if he left Vile-Emperor City and entered the Eternal Sea, then the Saint-Emperor would interfere. The consequences of that… could bring massive changes to the two imperial dynasties. What was currently minor friction between the two could escalate into all-out war.

Neither the Vile-Emperor nor the Saint-Emperor wanted that right now. Although the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was weaker than the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the price the latter would have to pay to come out on top in such a conflict would be immense. At the moment, the Vile-Emperor simply could not bring himself to do something like that.

After a tense face-off, the Vile-Emperor slowly sat back down, his eyes flashing with more coldness than ever.

When the Vile-Emperor chose to back down, it was in another immortal domain, in Saint-Emperor City, that laughter suddenly echoed out. Then, a warm voice issued orders from the imperial city, orders that resounded into the ears of everyone in the city!

“Fellow Daoist Gu Tianjun, please take a trip to the border to receive… a spectacular tribute from a Fellow Daoist from the Heavenspan Realm!”

Even as the voice continued to echo out, a stream of sword qi erupted from within Saint-Emperor City. Visible within it was a handsome middle-aged man with white hair and a white robe, with a greatsword strapped to his back.

After clasping hands in the direction of Saint-Emperor City, he turned and sped off into the distance, flanked by several demigods.

Many people were surprised by this turn of events, and soon, inquiries were made. Before long, news began to spread throughout the city, leading to widespread shock.

“A cultivator from the Heavenspan Realm actually kidnapped Celestial Ghostmother from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty?!”

“He’s bringing her here to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty as a blood tribute?!?!”

“Heavens! How could these Heavenspan people be so daring?!?!”

“He kidnapped a celestial?!?!”

The commotion continued to rock the two imperial dynasties for a few days. Even at top speed, the bone lizard still needed time to get across the Eternal Sea. And considering it could move faster than Ghostmother’s true form, it meant that the streams of divine sense from the five celestials could not easily catch up.

Before long, they were further from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty than they were from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, at which point their anxiety began to mount.

Based on their analysis, they would probably be able to catch up to the ship, but… they would be so close to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty that they wouldn't be able to do much.

Soon, the Vile-Emperor himself ordered them to cease pursuit. The five blurry figures formed from divine sense came to a stop above the Eternal Sea, staring off into the distance with cold gazes.

“Bai Xiaochun, huh?” The Vile-Emperor wanted more information about him, and it didn’t take long for him to get it.

“The Arch-Ancestor of the Heavenspan Realm!”

As the five celestials in divine sense form faded away, Gongsun Wan’er was pushing the bone lizard forward at top speed. She could control the ship just as well as her true self could. After all, she was the discarnate soul from her left arm, and the left arm was key to controlling the ship.

Therefore, under her control, it was capable of shocking speed.

Waves rolled out across the sea beneath the ship as it shot along. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun stood there, looking off into the distance, his heart pounding with excitement.

“Fudge. The Eternal Lands… aren’t so intimidating after all!!” Flicking his sleeve, he took a deep breath. As of now, he had completely emerged from his previous dispirited state.

“And who cares about some celestials? I already kidnapped one! Hm, what about archaeans…? I kidnapped a demigod when I was in Core Formation, and slapped a Mahayana Realm expert when I was a deva. Now that I'm a demigod myself… I’ve already taken care of a celestial!”

As the Vile-Emperor Dynasty disappeared far behind them, he looked down at the spark-shaped scar on the back of his right hand, and his eyes began to shine.

“Hao’er isn’t dead. I’ll figure out how to wake him up sooner or later. What I need to do now is establish a rock-solid foundation here in the Eternal Lands!

“My Dao has not changed. I want to live forever. I want the same things I’ve always wanted… I want all of my friends and family to live forever with me!!

“And there’s something else I need to do… I need to find a permanent home for the people of the Heavenspan Realm!” Bai Xiaochun had always thought of himself as somewhat of a nobody, and definitely not a hero. But as he proceeded through life, he had slowly come to acquire a sense of duty and responsibility.

His world had been doomed to be destroyed, regardless of whether he got his revenge on Daoist Heavenspan or not. After awakening in the Eternal Lands, he had found corpse after corpse, and had slowly descended into bitter depression.

With the exception of Daoist Heavenspan, he now felt a deep connection to anyone who had survived the destruction of the Heavenspan Realm. All previous grudges were a thing of the past.

“It’s too bad I can’t see the looks on their faces when they hear about what I just did. Well, I’ll see them all eventually!” As the wind buffeted his face, his eyes glittered with determination. He had his memories, and he had his hope for the future. His choice had been made!

At around this time, the Giant Ghost King walked out from the cabin, and saw Bai Xiaochun standing at the prow of the ship. At long last, the Giant Ghost King sighed in relief.

“The Bai Xiaochun I know is finally back....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1049 awe-chapter-1050

The news continued to spread. It was such a shocking event that in both the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it reached the point where everyone had heard about it. It only took a few days for the entire world to be affected.

Among those who heard of it were the scattered refugees from the Heavenspan Realm. In response, eyes went wide, and gasps could be heard. And for the first time, hope blazed within their hearts!

“Bai Xiaochun!” In one huge huge city in a prefecture in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was an old man in an ordinary-looking robe. He was eating in a restaurant, listening to people talking about a Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestial being kidnapped. Although he didn’t react visibly, inside, he was bursting with excitement.

He looked down to prevent his eyes from shining too brightly, and raised a jug of alcohol to his lips to keep himself from laughing out loud.

“It was the right thing to pay special attention to him all those years ago. I’m waiting for you here in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Bai Xiaochun!” That old man was none other than… the Grand Heavenmaster from Arch-Emperor City!

Both because of his demigod cultivation base, and his profound ability to scheme and plot, he had managed to keep his identity secret, and was completely safe. From the

Saint-Emperor Dynasty, he had been keeping his eye on both of the imperial dynasties that ruled the world.

There were others throughout the Saint-Emperor Dynasty who, much like the Grand Heavenmaster, heard about what had occurred. For example, in another of the immortal domains, in a small county, was Zhou Yixing. Nowadays, he spent much of his time bowing and scraping. By relying on his skills in spirit enhancement, he had managed to build up a small accumulation of spirit stones in his bag of holding.

After all, he wasn't the Grand Heavenmaster, and couldn't keep his identity a secret. Therefore, he had chosen to simply take advantage of the so-called benevolence of the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to somehow earn a living.

But now, the news he was hearing had him far more excited than the spirit stones he had saved up.

“Milord really knows how to live. If he hides, he hides, but when he makes a scene… he does something monumental!”

All of a sudden, Zhou Yixing couldn't wait to build a solid foundation for himself, and then eventually earn his own glory here in the Eternal Lands.

“Nobody here can perform spirit enhancements…. I'm going to become a person of virtue and prestige in this place. I'm going to become a grandmaster that nobody will ever dare to offend!” Taking a deep breath, he strode forward with a bit more confidence, as though his new dream gave him the courage to stand a bit straighter.

In another prefecture quite a distance away from Zhou Yixing was a luxurious courtyard residence. There stood

Master God-Diviner, his hands clasped behind his back as he looked up into the sky, a dispirited expression on his face.

“Why am I always down on my luck…?” he thought. “I can't believe that it was like this in the Wildlands… and here too! I wish I could be like you, Bai Xiaochun, and go around kidnapping celestials. I don’t want this life of luxury….” Even as he sighed regretfully, a flirtatious voice drifted out from the room behind him.

“What are you doing out there, honey?”

Master God-Diviner sighed. Although he looked frustrated, he was actually feeling quite pleased with himself as he turned and entered the room….

The Heavenspan cultivators who had been teleported into the Saint-Emperor Dynasty had it better off than those who ended up in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. In one of the immortal domains controlled by the latter, in a certain mountainous valley, Patriarch Spirit Stream and Li Qinghou were recovering from a recent battle. They were both weak and wounded, but their eyes shone with excitement.

“That’s him for sure!” Li Qinghou said, looking particularly stirred up. “That’s my Xiaochun! Kidnapped Celestial Ghostmother from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!”

Patriarch Spirit Stream began to laugh uproariously, and at long last, his eyes flickered with hope.

“You head to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Qinghou,” Patriarch Spirit Stream said, “I’ll take care of things here.” However, even as he finished speaking, he began coughing, and blood oozed out of the corner of his mouth.

Li Qinghou shook his head. Looking anxiously at Patriarch Spirit Stream, he said, “Xiaochun can take care of himself. He’s doing this to give people hope! We need to hurry up and find as many people as we can!”

“With Big Fatty Zhang to help me, I’ll be fine,” Patriarch Spirit Stream said, his eyes shining with determination. “The Vile-Emperor Dynasty people are definitely going to be worked up into a frenzy because of Xiaochun. Now is the perfect time to strike! I'm the patriarch of the River-Defying Sect! Even here in the Eternal Lands, that hasn’t changed. Our home is gone, but our sect still lives on! It’s my job to find all of our scattered disciples and bring them together!”

Somewhere else in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, in a wilderness area, a bedraggled Song Que was fighting a desperate battle with a local cultivator. After getting the upper hand, he broke the man’s neck, and then sagged in place, gasping for breath.

Wiping some blood off his chin, he looked around at the corpses piled up around him, his murderous aura seething. When he thought about the news he had just learned from the group that now lay dead at his feet, he smiled. Of course, deep within that smile was a bit of a stubborn obstinance.

“Wherever Bai Xiaochun goes, he always gets famous…. The Blood Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the Wildlands… and now here in the Eternal Lands. Even in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty! Well, I still have a chance to catch up. I can make my own place in this world!” Song Que actually liked how things worked in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. He enjoyed the fighting and the struggling, and liked how everything usually boiled down to a live-or-die battle!

“Other than people from the Heavenspan Realm… I’ll kill anybody I see!” Taking a deep breath, he prepared to move on, but before he did, he turned to look in a different direction.

Off in the distance was a person he knew, the daughter of the Giant Ghost King and also Bai Xiaochun’s Daoist partner, Mistress Red-Dust. Just like him, she had chosen the path of slaughter and struggle!

As a deva, she had made even more of a scene than him, and had killed even more enemies.

“Sooner or later, I’ll be a deva too!” Adjusting his black robe, he turned and sped off into the night.

In the direction he had just looked, some distance away, was a temple to the Eternal Mother, located high in the wild mountains. Mistress Red-Dust sat there cross-legged, drinking a medicinal liquid that looked almost like blood. A handful of Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators surrounded her, kowtowing in fear.

“When the cultivators from the nearby city come, I could simply escape, and leave you all dead behind me. Or I could protect you. You know which choice to make.

“I'm running low on life force elixir. Go get me some more immediately. If you can’t find any, bring me life force from your apprentices!” She spoke in a voice as cold as the coldest winter wind, causing the cultivators in her presence to shiver. After voicing their assent to her demands, they hurried away, eyes bloodshot. Their only hopes to stay alive rested in their ability to please this she-devil.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty was huge, and evil sects such as theirs existed everywhere. To have one wiped out wouldn’t cause too many waves.

“She’s more of a villain than us!” Her methods left even cultivators such as these nearly weeping.

After they left, Mistress Red-Dust took a deep breath and then looked down at her belly. When she did, all of her coldness vanished, to be replaced by warmth and hope.

“I don’t know where the hell that crappy dad of yours is now, but don't worry, mother will take good care of you!”

Out over the Eternal Sea, Bai Xiaochun sat on the bone lizard battleship. Suddenly, he sneezed.

“Is someone else cursing me now?” Sighing, he looked over at Gongsun Wan’er.

“Wait, are you saying that Big Fatty Zhang is in Vile-Emperor City, and that people are calling him Grandmaster Zhang?”

“That’s right,” Gongsun Wan’er said with a smile. “There’s a lot of detailed information in Ghostmother’s memories about Big Fatty Zhang. After arriving in Vile-Emperor City and revealing his skills in spirit enhancement, he caused a huge stir. Even the Vile-Emperor was shaken. Back then, the Arch-Sovereign’s body hadn’t shattered, and therefore, Big Fatty Zhang quickly became extremely important. Supposedly, he actually performed a spirit enhancement on Vile-Emperor City itself.

“After the Arch-Sovereign's body shattered, the people of Heavenspan emerged into an abyss of suffering. But by that time, Big Fatty Zhang had already established himself and acquired a significant standing.

“Oh, don’t worry about Hou Xiaomei. Ghostmother did indeed take her as an apprentice. For some reason, she showed particular talent when it came to the Dao of ghosts. In fact, Ghostmother began to groom her to accept the legacy of her unique Daoist magic. She really took a liking to her, so she definitely won’t use her to threaten you.

“However, you won’t be able to see her any time soon. She’s currently practicing secluded cultivation in Ghostmother’s immortal's cave in Vile-Emperor City. She’s preparing to break through to the Deva Realm!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1050 awe-chapter-1051

Bai Xiaochun was stunned to hear that Big Fatty Zhang had actually done so well in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. As for the Giant Ghost King, although he had never heard of Big Fatty Zhang before, he was also taken aback.

At this point, the Giant Ghost King suddenly seemed to think of something, and excitedly said, “Um… hey, Celestial Gongsun, does Big Fatty Zhang have a Daoist partner?”

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy, and immediately cast a glare in the Giant Ghost King’s direction. He knew how much the Giant Ghost King liked to play matchmaker. After all, he’d pushed his own daughter on him. Now he was asking about Big Fatty Zhang, leading to an obvious question: did he have another illegitimate daughter out there somewhere?

When the Giant Ghost King noticed Bai Xiaochun staring at him, he chuckled guiltily. The truth was that he had no illegitimate daughters. However, he had become quite used to being connected to powerful people through female relatives.

Just now, he had been considering trying to adopt a new daughter, and then somehow get her together with Big Fatty Zhang as a Daoist partner. That would give him a new son-in-law, and *if* that son-in-law could go on to subjugate the world, and *if* his daughter could subjugate her husband, then that would put the Giant Ghost King in a position unparalleled under heaven.

Bai Xiaochun could guess much of what the Giant Ghost King was thinking, and was of the opinion that it was a complete disgrace. At the same time, he felt bad for Big Fatty Zhang. Gongsun Wan’er had only provided a brief description of where he ended up, but it was easy to imagine the difficulties and dangers he had faced along the way.

After all, Big Fatty Zhang had started out in a strange world, away from his friends and family, with only a Nascent Soul cultivation base. Step by step, he had established himself and earned a place in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, all because of his spirit enhancement abilities. It was something that not every spirit enhancer could do.

As for Hou Xiaomei, Bai Xiaochun could finally rest at ease. Although he didn't quite consider himself friends with Gongsun Wan’er, they were at least allies. And it didn’t seem like she was hiding anything from him. Therefore, he actually felt happy with how things had turned out for Hou Xiaomei.

In the Eternal Lands, where danger abounded, Hou Xiaomei had managed to stay safe the entire time. And considering her talents, whether it was Ghostmother or Gongsun Wan’er, both would have good reason to take care of her in the future.

Feeling a bit better about things, Bai Xiaochun looked at the clouds whizzing by, and thought back to his other friends and family from the Heavenspan Realm.

“Wan'er, you’re a celestial, so… can you tell me what’s involved in becoming like you?” Although Bai Xiaochun was currently a quasi-celestial, his situation was not ideal.

He had reached the great circle of the Undying Codex, but not the Live Forever Codex. And his cultivation base was still in the Demigod Realm. Even he wasn't quite sure of where he stood in terms of cultivation ranking.

He did know that when he reached the great circle of the full Undying Live Forever Technique, he could rise to the level of a celestial. But in terms of the exact process, he wasn't very clear.

Being in the early Celestial Realm, Gongsun Wan'er obviously knew a lot more about the situation than Bai Xiaochun. The Giant Ghost King's ears also perked up. Considering how long he had been a demigod, he knew a bit more about the subject than Bai Xiaochun, but was still very interested in learning more.

Gongsun Wan'er laughed softly and began to toy with a stray lock of her hair. That simple action made her seem even more beautiful than ever, perhaps even flirtatious. Her captivating eyes and long black hair would make anyone who looked at her itch with desire.

The licentious Giant Ghost King's eyes were already shining brightly.

Even Bai Xiaochun's heart was beating a bit faster. But then he thought about Gongsun Wan'er's past, and he reminded himself that he had to be vigilant. She was a demoness, and he was in a much different position than he had been in the past.

Then again, he couldn't let himself be intimidated just because she was a beautiful woman.

Opening his eyes wide, he looked at her solemnly. Then, after a moment of thought, he quickly sized up her body.

When Gongsun Wan’er realized that two sets of eyes were checking her out, she smiled charmingly. Looking a bit flushed, she then said, “Don’t look at me like that, sweetie. If you want to see more, why don't we go into the cabin, and I’ll let you have a closer look. What do you say?”

The Giant Ghost King shivered and swallowed hard, whereas Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened, and he subconsciously inched backward a bit.

“It’s a good thing I’ve got a lot of self-control!” he thought. “This Gongsun Wan’er is more of a vixen than Song Junwan or Mistress Red-Dust, but thankfully, I’m immune to this type of stuff. And I have a big sword!” Casting a contemptuous glance at the Giant Ghost King, he cleared his throat, smacked his bag of holding, and produced the Greatsword of the North in a blue flash of light.

With that, he jumped up and made a few practice swings before looking back at Gongsun Wan’er in what he hoped was a very intimidating fashion.

“What were you just saying? You wanted me to have a closer look at something?”

The Giant Ghost King wasn’t quite sure whether to laugh or cry, but at the same time, couldn’t help but admire Bai Xiaochun. To pull out the Greatsword of the North in such an intimate moment could not have been an easy thing to do.

A mix of fear and bitterness could be seen in Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes as she looked at the sword.

“The cultivation system in the Eternal Lands is the same as in the Heavenspan Realm,” she said quietly. “After Nascent Soul is the Deva Realm, then Demigod, and finally Celestial.

“What’s different is the source of power. In the Eternal Lands, the source of all power is Will!

“Devas overtake the will of the heavens, and use the power of heaven and earth. That process is what awakens Willpower within them. As for demigods, their will surpasses that of the heavens. They don’t borrow it, they take it! That further awakens their Willpower, and allows a Willroot to form!

“As for celestials… after breaking out of the Demigod Realm and entering the Mahayana Realm, they will take their Willroot and use it to form a Daoseed!

“During the course of cultivation, the Daoseed will eventually grow roots and sprout, merging with the body. In the final breakthrough, it will blossom, which creates Dao Will!

“When that happens, you break out of the Celestial Realm. If anyone accomplished that, they would become the third Archaean Realm emperor in the world!

“Unfortunately, that is extremely difficult. Right now, we only have two emperors, both of whom have Dao Will, and are Archaean Realm experts!”

Both Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King were completely shaken by what they had just heard.

“Willpower. Willroot. Daoseed. Dao Will!” Bai Xiaochun murmured.

“All things in the world have Willpower,” Gongsun Wan’er continued. “It’s a foundation that can come in infinite forms. Heaven, earth, the world, all living things that exist! All plants and all types of vegetation. The world is like a mountain, with those on the top easily crushing everyone beneath them. As for those on the bottom, they have to struggle relentlessly to climb higher. First, turn Willpower into a root, and bury it in the spiritual sea. Eventually, it becomes a Daoseed, which gives birth to Dao Will!

“There is no limitation to the divine abilities and Daoist magics that celestials wield, the reason being that anything in creation can be used as the basis for their magic. That is because of the Daoseed!

“Only when the Daoseed appears is a person a truly mighty celestial, a person who surpasses all heaven and earth!

“When it comes to the Willpower which exists as a fundamental part of all living things, from ancient times until now, there have been different understandings and explanations. Most people believe that Willpower is similar to faith. For example, when Ghostmother used her Daoist magic, she drew upon the power of the faith of all the people in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!

“Faith is also a fundamental reason why the imperial dynasties stand to begin with. Although I don’t fully understand how the Archaean Realm works, I do know that the more lands an archaean controls, and the more people live in those lands, the stronger that archaean can be!

“Also… Daoseeds are more important to celestials than their divine soul. It is the foundation of everything. Anyone who has a Daoseed, but dies, can be resurrected by an Archaean Realm expert!” Both Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King were visibly moved by her words.

“Resurrected?” the Giant Ghost King asked.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1051 awe-chapter-1052

“Resurrected!” Gongsun Wan’er repeated.

“That is why archaeans are emperors. Years ago, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was almost completely crushed. However, once the Saint-Emperor made his breakthrough, the Vile-Emperor had no choice but to back down!

“No one really knows how powerful archaeans really are. The two emperors have never fought each other directly. The only thing we know for sure is that they are strong enough to resurrect celestials!” Gongsun Wan’er looked at Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King, aware of how shocking her words must be to people who had never heard any of this information before.

And she was right. Bai Xiaochun was panting, and the Giant Ghost King felt like he was being struck with waves of shock. Only now were they coming to understand how truly powerful the two imperial dynasties were. What they had seen so far was only the tip of the iceberg.

“Any demigod cultivator who breaks through and becomes a celestial must form a Daoseed and then deliver part of it to the Dao palace of the imperial dynasty they serve. Then, if that celestial dies, the archaean emperor can use that Daoseed to perform the resurrection!” Gongsun Wan’er paused for a moment to give Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King a moment to digest everything she had said up to this point.

Then she continued, “Discounting the emperors, who normally do not take action, the celestials have the greatest battle prowess in the Eternal Lands!

“Of course, resurrecting a celestial does not come without a price. Not only is it very draining to the archaean, but the resurrected celestial will forever be weaker than before!

“Because of that, celestials will do anything in their power to avoid perishing.” At this point, Gongsun Wan’er stopped talking for a moment to think. There were more things to say that she could hold back, but they weren’t exactly secrets. And once Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King got to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, they would eventually learn of them.

Therefore, there was little reason for her to not tell them.

“As for my true self, even if you or the Saint-Emperor killed her, she would still come back to life. However, in order to keep the status quo, and to maintain the good will of the other celestials in the dynasty, the Vile-Emperor will almost certainly work out a deal to get her back!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining by this point. Not only had he learned much more about how to become a celestial, but he now also knew much more about the shocking nature of the two emperors. However, after hearing the talk about resurrection, he had another suspicion that was even stronger than before.

“Is Daoist Heavenspan dead or not!?” Back when the Heavenspan Realm had been destroyed, Daoist Heavenspan’s body exploded, and something that looked like a seed had flown out. “He was only a quasi-celestial. He couldn’t have formed a Daoseed, could he…?”

He also thought about how, after arriving in the Eternal Immortal Domains, he was able to use the Greatsword of the North without any limitations, and yet, the sword had no true master.

Eventually, he put such thoughts to the side and looked back at Gongsun Wan’er. He didn’t care too much about whether or not she was given back to the Vile-Emperor. He needed her to use as his blood tribute. He had long since guessed that there were reasons he hadn’t understood that prompted her to give herself up to him.

“What’s after the Archaean Realm?” he asked.

“After the Archaean Realm?” Gongsun Wan’er smiled, her eyes shining with what appeared to be anticipation.

“After the Archaean Realm is… the Sovereign Realm!”

“Up to now, there have only ever been three sovereigns in our lands. They all existed at the same time, and were the forefathers of all humanity!

“Presumably, you already know about them. After all, the myths and legends that we all talk about in the Eternal Lands are true!” Sighing, she looked up into the sky.

The Giant Ghost King silently did the same, peering up at the huge face and two enormous hands!

Every time the Giant Ghost King and Bai Xiaochun looked up at the strange sky overhead, their hearts and minds trembled.

“Not even I am sure about how to break out of the Archaean Realm and into the Sovereign Realm. Only the two emperors have any clue about that.” With that, she shifted her gaze to the Eternal Sea.

Down below, a mist could be seen on the surface of the sea, and beneath it, an enormous shape.

That shape… was the landmass that existed in the very middle of the Eternal Sea.

Perhaps ‘island’ was the best word to describe it. It was a holy location in the Eternal Lands, the place from which all people had originated!

In the past, three enormous statues had existed there!

After dying, the sovereigns became huge statues!

Bai Xiaochun looked over to where one of those statues had recently stood. The only thing visible there now was a huge footprint.

Back when the Arch-Sovereign had been standing, Bai Xiaochun had lived inside his body, which was the Heavenspan Realm.

No one spoke as the bone lizard battleship shot through the mists.

Eventually, they were past the island and speeding along over the waves of the Eternal Sea. At that point, Bai Xiaochun murmured a single word.

“Sovereign….”

The rest of the trip was made in silence. The Giant Ghost King was thinking about the Wildlands, Bai Xiaochun reminisced about the River-Defying Sect, and Gongsun Wan’er was filled with endless sighs.

After all, she was the focus of the current situation, and the closer she got to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, the more worried she got, although she didn’t let it show.

Eventually, they were closing in on the immortal domain belonging to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. At that point, Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet.

“We’re almost there. Gongsun Wan’er, please don’t take offense….”

Gongsun Wan’er frowned slightly and nodded. She had known all along that she would be sealed eventually, not to harm her, but to send the right message, and also to make sure that she was eventually traded back to the Vile-Emperor.

Smiling at Bai Xiaochun flirtatiously, she said, “Be gentle, sweetie… don’t make it hurt.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled in response, and the Giant Ghost King began to pant.

Looking at her, Bai Xiaochun muttered a few words under his breath, then quickly performed an incantation gesture to send an invisible sealing mark into Gongsun Wan’er. After being restricted, her energy faded slightly, and she sat down, ashen-faced and gasping for breath.

And yet, her pitiful state only made her look more attractive.

Not daring to lay eyes on her, Bai Xiaochun kept his eyes focused on the distant immortal domain.

As the land mass grew larger and larger, he shivered inwardly, and then narrowed his eyes. He had just sensed a powerful aura up ahead, something explosive and dangerous, like an unsheathed sword!

In response to it, the sky vibrated, and a screaming wind kicked up, causing the waves on the Eternal Sea to rise to incredible heights. At the same time, a beam of sword qi shot out from the immortal domain!

It was fully 30,000 meters across, and powerful enough to crush anything in its path. As it closed in, the bone lizard shivered, and its eyes began to shine brightly.

The air around the battleship was instantly sealed, causing intense pressure to weigh down that seemed capable of reducing anything and everything beneath it to a bloody paste!

A serious expression appeared on the Giant Ghost King’s face, and blood began to ooze out of his mouth. Gongsun Wan’er’s expression flickered, and Bai Xiaochun looked out, his heart pounding. A moment later, the sword qi resolved into the shape of a handsome, middle-aged man in a white robe, with long white hair!

It was with ice-cold eyes that he studied the battleship in front of him!

That gaze was as explosive as heavenly lightning!

In response to his presence, the sky shuddered, and the Eternal Sea went still. As for the bone lizard, it didn't dare to keep flying, and immediately came to a halt.

“Gu Tianjun!” Gongsun Wan’er said. She no longer looked cute and charming. Instead, her eyes shone with mysterious light, but at the same time, terror!

The white-robed, white-haired Gu Tianjun looked at Gongsun Wan’er, and then at Bai Xiaochun. Voice utterly calm, he said, “Delivery accepted. Now, please leave.”

Rage immediately rose up in the Giant Ghost King’s heart, and Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with cold light. The pressure weighing down on them, and the words which had just been spoken, crossed the bottom line for the both of them! Gu Tianjun had come… with ill intentions!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1052 awe-chapter-1053

Gu Tianjun had always looked down on people from the Heavenspan Realm. Back before the body of the Arch-Sovereign collapsed, he had somewhat looked forward to the arrival of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. But after the collapse, as more people from the Heavenspan Realm became part of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, things changed.

As time progressed, he learned more and more about what had gone on in the Heavenspan Realm.

“Endless chaos and disorder. And they never even raised someone to the Mahayana Realm. Considering how late they are, they’re doomed to be little more than servants. Completely useless.” Gu Tianjun was the type of person who looked up to those who were more powerful than him, but at the same time, wanted to defeat them and take their place. That was something about him that not even the Saint-Emperor could find fault with.

After all… when it came to bloodlines, Gu Tianjun was also a direct descendant of the original Saint-Emperor.

As for people who were weaker than him, he viewed them like bugs. And there were plenty of bugs in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. As for people from the Heavenspan Realm…

He placed them beneath the bugs.

A lot of people talked about their abilities with spirit enhancement, and although that was of slight interest to Gu Tianjun, he still viewed it as a mere skill, like pill concocting or equipment forging. With such skills, the people of Heavenspan still only qualified to serve the other two great powers in the lands.

They were doomed to be slaves!

As far as the people he was dealing with right now, they were just two Heavenspan people who didn’t even count as bugs. Due to some lucky break, they had managed to kidnap a celestial, but that did nothing to reduce the disdain that Gu Tianjun felt for them.

“They just want help from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!” After a few breaths’ worth of time, Gu Tianjun began to get impatient at the fact that his words were still hanging in the air.

Taking a step forward, he completely ignored Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King, used his shocking sword qi to rip apart the defensive shield protecting the bone lizard battleship, and then landed on the deck in front of Gongsun Wan’er.

One reason for the ease with which he passed through the defenses was the fact that Gongsun Wan’er had already been sealed.

“Hello, Ghostmother,” he said, smiling. In contrast to the two Heavenspan cultivators, he was very interested in Ghostmother. Years ago, he had severed her arm, and this was his first time seeing her again since then. Although she was currently in a very weak state, since she was a celestial, he viewed her as being slightly above the other bugs in the world.

Bai Xiaochun stood there staring coldly and quietly at Gu Tianjun. As for the Giant Ghost King, considering how long he had lived, he could easily discern from the coldness being shown how this person looked down upon them. Furthermore, it was obvious that he had no intention of letting them into Saint-Emperor City to hand Ghostmother over.

From the look of things, the supposed blood tribute was turning out to be nothing more than a joke.

Struggling to control himself, he stepped forward, clasped hands, and bowed.

“Greetings, exalted Celestial. We plan to personally escort Ghostmother into--”

“Shut up!” Gu Tianjun said, waving his hand dismissively. “You want a reward, right? Well go back to where you came from and wait. Your reward will come eventually!”

With that, he reached out to grab Gongsun Wan’er. However, before he could, Bai Xiaochun suddenly started laughing coldly.

Inside, he was very nervous. After all, he could sense that Gu Tianjun was on a different level than Ghostmother. He was actually much stronger! But even if he were stronger, Bai Xiaochun would not tolerate him intruding and condescending in this way. And there was no way he would simply let Gongsun Wan’er be taken away.

He didn’t waste any time speaking. Blue light flashed as the Greatsword of the North appeared, unleashing heaven-shaking, earth-shattering pressure. Then, he blurred into motion, slashing the sword at Gu Tianjun!

Gu Tianjun’s expression flickered as he turned his head to see what was happening. When he saw the Greatsword of the North, his pupils constricted, and he swung his hand from Gongsun Wan’er toward the sword as if to grab it!

When the sword made contact with Gu Tianjun’s hand, a huge boom erupted out, along with a massive shockwave. Before Gu Tianjun knew what was happening, he staggered backward and off of the battleship!

Bai Xiaochun felt all of his qi and blood vibrating inside of him from the power of the sword. Any other demigod, and even an ordinary quasi-celestial, would have been seriously injured by it.

But Bai Xiaochun had his Undying Live Forever Technique, and could essentially recover from any injury in the blink of an eye. Therefore, he stood there on the battleship, staring up with a cold, grim expression at Gu Tianjun.

“What incredible gall!” Gu Tianjun said, eyes narrowing. Although he was shocked by Bai Xiaochun’s powers of regeneration, he also couldn’t help but look greedily at the huge sword he held.

As of this moment, the Giant Ghost King’s heart was in his throat. Off to the side, mixed emotions could be seen in Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes. Although Bai Xiaochun seemed to be standing there bravely, she knew that he was secretly nervous.

But at the same time, she also realized that he had changed. After all, she knew him better than the Giant Ghost King; in the past, whenever he faced an enemy more powerful than himself, he would try to resolve any tensions. But now, he simply drew his sword and attacked!

“Is he really going to take a stand…?” she thought. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun seemed as lofty as a mountain as he stood there in front of her.

Bai Xiaochun held his tongue for a brief moment. He knew that this was a very critical moment, and that he only had one chance to succeed. Therefore, he drew on everything he had learned in the Wildlands to quell his nervousness.

“Gall?” he said loudly. “Your name is Gu Tianjun, right? Well let me tell you: you’re right. I do have gall!

“If I had no gall, how could I have left a swath of blood and death behind me as I left the Vile-Emperor Dynasty? If I had no gall, how could I possibly have kidnapped a celestial and several demigods?! If I had no gall, I would have just let you steal what is mine!

“So, yes. I have gall. However, you also have quite a bit of gall yourself!” As he spoke, his voice grew louder and louder until his words echoed like heavenly thunder.

Gu Tianjun’s expression flickered from the incisiveness of Bai Xiaochun’s words. The truth was, there was nothing he could say to refute what had just been said. Eyes glittering with coldness, he prepared to say something, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun spoke in an even louder voice than before.

“I brought this Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestial here, and you blocked my path. Why? Because you lack integrity, Gu Tianjun! Let me ask you a question. Do you serve the Saint-Emperor? Or the Vile-Emperor?!” Gu Tianjun’s eyes grew even colder, and yet before he could say anything, Bai Xiaochun continued in thunderous fashion.

“I favor the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and came here to offer formal greetings. Not empty-handed, but with a gift. But you blocked my path at the front door, Gu Tianjun. And there is one word for that. Rude! Let me ask you another question. What logical basis do you have for your actions?!" With that, Bai Xiaochun took a step forward.

"I fought and killed my way here from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and now you want to steal my spoils of war? There is one word for that. Immoral! So now I'll ask you a third question, Gu Tianjun. What right do you have to steal my gift?!" Bai Xiaochun took another step forward, taking him off of the battleship and up into the air, where he pointed out with the Greatsword of the North.

"I am the Arch-Ancestor of the Heavenspan Realm. Therefore, in the Eternal Lands, there are only two people who rank as high as me. The Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor. How dare you try to boss me around, Gu Tianjun. There is one word for that. Disrespectful! Therefore, I will now ask you a fourth question. Considering that you are a rude, immoral, and disrespectful creature, and also lack integrity, where the hell did you get that gall of yours?!" As his words echoed out, blue light from the Greatsword of the North shone out to fill the area.

All of the demigods who had accompanied Gu Tianjun from the immortal domain were shaken, and even Gu Tianjun himself felt as if he had been stabbed to the heart by the words which had just been spoken.

"You!!" Never could Gu Tianjun have possibly imagined that this Heavenspan cultivator would have such a sharp tongue. There was literally nothing he could possibly say by way of retort. At this point, anything he said would come across as sounding like a flimsy excuse.

If he were in some remote location where no one was watching, he could simply shrug off what had just been said.

But he was here, with many celestials paying attention. Furthermore, he had to consider the reputation of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty as a whole. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun’s tirade forced him into a passive position, and caused his face to flush red with embarrassment and anger. And the killing intent in his eyes grew even stronger.

As for the Giant Ghost King and Gongsun Wan’er, they were both staring at Bai Xiaochun, astonished at how domineering he was!

Ignoring Gu Tianjun, Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve and looked in the direction of Saint-Emperor City. Sweeping his sword in grand fashion, he called out in a voice that boomed like the loudest thunder.

“Saint-Emperor, is this how you treat visitors who come to see you in good faith?!”

The truth was that he was more nervous than could possibly be expressed in words. In fact, he had already decided that, if necessary, he would unseal Gongsun Wan’er and try to flee on the battleship.

However, years of practice at this sort of thing ensured that not even a scrap of such feelings showed on his face. Instead, he looked confident and arrogant to the extreme.

A moment passed, and his anxiety mounted. His heart was pounding, and his scalp was tingling. Even as he prepared to turn and run, a warm, somber voice echoed out into heaven and earth.

“Forgive my negligence, Fellow Daoist Bai. Please, come in!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1053 awe-chapter-1054

The voice echoed about in a way that made it impossible to determine where exactly it came from. It almost seemed to surpass the flow of time itself. Those who heard it felt a connection to the voice, as though it contained a strange power that instantly calmed them down.

The Giant Ghost King shivered, and Gongsun Wan’er’s breathing began to steady. As for the demigods who had come from the nearby immortal domain, their eyes shone with reverence as they turned in the direction of Saint-Emperor City, clasped hands, and bowed.

Gu Tianjun’s expression flickered, and he closed his eyes momentarily. When they opened, there was no trace of killing intent or rage. The only thing that remained was frosty coldness.

“Come with me, Fellow Daoist Bai!” he said coolly.

Bai Xiaochun shivered inwardly at the strange qualities of the Saint-Emperor’s voice. At the same time, the sliver of Willpower which had awoken when facing Ghostmother’s celestial Daoist magic stirred yet again.

“The Saint-Emperor is so powerful!” he thought. However, he didn't let any emotions show on his face. Smiling broadly, he clasped hands and gave a slight bow in the direction of Saint-Emperor City. Then he returned to the battleship, and stood silently on the prow.

Gu Tianjun cast a cold glance at Bai Xiaochun, but didn’t say anything. A moment later, he turned into a beam of sword light that shot back toward Saint-Emperor City. As for the demigods who had come with him, they also looked over at Bai Xiaochun, but this time, their expressions looked very different from before.

“This guy… seems different from the other people of Heavenspan that I've seen!” That was what most of the demigods were thinking. Eventually, they looked away, and followed Gu Tianjun to formally escort the newcomers into the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

The battleship followed along, leaving the Eternal Sea and heading through the buffeting winds toward Saint-Emperor City.

Everyone felt a lot of pressure, and no one spoke. Two hours later, the effects of the Saint-Emperor’s voice began to fade from the Giant Ghost King, whereupon a look of astonishment appeared deep in his eyes.

“From distant Saint-Emperor City, he said a single sentence that put me in a daze for that long?!?!” The Giant Ghost King was shaken, and his fear of the archaean emperors suddenly grew far deeper.

“It's because this is your first time dealing with an archaean,” Gongsun Wan’er said, smiling faintly. “And you actually benefited from being a Heavenspan cultivator. Someone from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty would find their Willpower affected for days, during which time they would feel fanatical devotion!” Gongsun Wan’er currently had her cultivation base sealed, but that didn’t affect her overall level. She had her Daoseed, and was also from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and therefore recovered much more quickly, although not as quickly as Bai Xiaochun.

“If it ever happens to you again, you won’t be as severely affected, at least not unless the archaean intentionally makes it worse.” After finishing with her explanation, Gongsun Wan’er looked over at Bai Xiaochun, who still stood there at the prow of the ship. Curiosity flickered in her eyes; she was truly interested in Bai Xiaochun's uniqueness.

“I wonder if what he said is true,” she thought. “Does he really rank as high as the two emperors.... Or does he cultivate some technique that gives him the power to stand up to them!?” As Gongsun Wan’er pondered the matter, the Giant Ghost King regained more of his senses, and also looked over at Bai Xiaochun. All of a sudden, he realized that… maybe Bai Xiaochun really could become the hope of the Heavenspan Realm!

Bai Xiaochun could sense that the two of them were looking at him. Although his expression remained placid, inwardly he was feeling very pleased with himself. That calmness, and the way he remained steady under pressure earlier, was becoming something of a habit.

But then he considered that the emperors of the two dynasties were both experts in the Archaean Realm, and his nervousness mounted.

“This won’t do,” he thought. “If I start getting nervous every time I think about them, how am I supposed to stay in a good mood?” All of a sudden, his eyes lit up.

“Hold on. These two dynasties have funny names if you think about it. Vile-Emperor Dynasty? Instead of *vile*, how about *smile*! Yeah… the Smile-Emperor!

All of a sudden, he felt much more at ease. He also couldn’t help but turn to Gongsun Wan’er and ask, “Wan'er, does everyone from the Smile-Emperor Dynasty like to smile?”

“What?” Gongsun Wan’er replied, stunned. Then her eyes hardened into a glare, and any feeling of wonderment from before vanished. After all, never in her life had she ever heard anyone say *Smile-Emperor* before.

Gongsun Wan’er’s glare caused Bai Xiaochun to feel slightly awkward, so he quickly looked away and went back to trying to seem grand and proud.

Down below, mountains and rivers stretched out in all directions…. The immortal domain they had come to also contained the capital city of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Therefore, after a few days of travel, they crossed a wide plain and, as evening fell… caught sight of an enormous mountain off in the distance!

It rose up dramatically into the sky, and had a very distinct outline.

It was definitely the largest mountain Bai Xiaochun had ever seen before in his life, and took up more than half of the prefecture. In fact, it was roughly half the size of the entire Heavenspan Realm!

A mortal who tried to climb this mountain wouldn’t be able to reach the top in an entire lifetime!

It was no exaggeration to say that it connected the earth to the heavens!

At the very top of the mountain, there was no peak, only a massive heavenly pond!

Although the pond looked small when compared to the mountain as a whole, it was still huge. Dense mist roiled out from the pond, connecting it to the surrounding clouds and making the entire place seem like a paradise for immortals.

Lotus leaves floated on the surface of the water, each one seemingly as large as an island. In fact, upon closer inspection, all of the lotus leaves actually had spectacularly luxurious buildings on them!

There were thousands of such lotus leaves, all of them floating around something even more shocking, which lay at the very middle of the pond. It was a gargantuan lotus flower!

It was beautiful to the extreme, and emanated a shockingly pleasing aroma. Built onto the petals of the flower were buildings of the most flawless white jade imaginable. This was… the imperial palace!!

The lotus flower was the palace, the lotus leaves were the city. This was none other than the capital of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, a place known as… Saint-Emperor City!

This mountain, this pond, and this city surpassed anything Bai Xiaochun could ever have imagined.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to be shaken. When the Giant Ghost King caught sight of the heavenly pond, his jaw dropped. It was unlike anything that had ever existed in the Heavenspan Realm.

Gongsun Wan’er was the only one to have little reaction. She had heard of the wonders of Saint-Emperor City before, although in her heart, the capital city of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty was far grander.

Gu Tianjun didn't react to Bai Xiaochun’s shock, but the demigods were clearly very proud of their capital city, which was the most holy location in the land.

As the battleship got closer to the pond, Bai Xiaochun noticed numerous dragonfish swimming in the water. Occasionally, they would leap out of the water, and when the evening sun landed on their golden scales, it was a dazzling sight.

This city amongst the clouds actually surpassed any celestial paradise!

Soon, the cultivators who lived in Saint-Emperor City noticed the bone lizard battleship sailing through the air above them.

Within the imperial palace were all of the officials of the imperial court, whom the Saint-Emperor had summoned. When they looked up, some gazes were those of curiosity, while others were hostile. Most were arrogant to the extreme, as if they were the rulers of a massive country looking at common farmers from a tiny nation.

Even as Bai Xiaochun and his allies prepared to enter Saint-Emperor City itself, a piercing voice echoed out from the imperial palace.

“The Saint-Emperor has summoned Heavenspan Realm cultivators Bai Xiaochun and Giant Ghost for an audience!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1054 awe-chapter-1055

The Giant Ghost King's actual name was not Giant Ghost.

Clearly, in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it wouldn't be appropriate to speak the *king* part of his title aloud. Actually, few people knew the Giant Ghost King's real name, even in the Wildlands. As such, he had known all along that something like this would happen.

"My surname is Zhou, fools!" he muttered under his breath. After the imperial decree was issued, Gu Tianjun turned back to look at Bai Xiaochun. For the first time since their initial meeting, he spoke, his voice as cool as ever.

"The battleship can't go in, Fellow Daoist Bai. Please, follow me."

Bai Xiaochun looked at Saint-Emperor City, and especially the imperial palace on the lotus flower, and could sense that thousands of streams of divine sense were currently locked onto his position.

Taking a deep breath, he straightened out his robe, then waved his hand to send Gongsun Wan'er into his bag of holding. Followed by the Giant Ghost king, he proceeded onward toward the imperial palace.

Chuckling coldly, Gu Tianjun led the way, and soon the three of them were right outside the imperial palace. As they neared, an astonishing pressure erupted from inside, an aggressive blast that prevented Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King from entering.

It was not a deadly attack, but it was terrifying enough to make Bai Xiaochun feel like he was being crushed. At the same time, he realized that within the aura was something that reminded him of the Frigid Matriarch. It was a spirit automaton.

“A world treasure….” he thought, stopping in place. There was also a majestic divine sense that swept over him, confirming both his identity and the Giant Ghost King’s. A moment later, the divine sense vanished.

The intense pressure only lasted for a moment, but it caused the Giant Ghost King to begin to sweat profusely, and even gasp for breath. Then he and Bai Xiaochun entered the main gate of the imperial palace to find themselves at the bottom of a staircase so steep and tall it seemed like a mountain!

There were roughly 10,000 stairs, and at the top of them all… was the enormous palace hall!

A huge crowd was gathered, their backs to the staircase. A narrow path led straight through them to a location that Bai Xiaochun could not currently see. However, the aura he could sense surpassed any sort of god, as if that person were the lord of all living things!

“The Saint-Emperor… wait, no. The *Paint-Emperor!*” Muttering to himself in this way dispelled much of his nervousness. Having calmed himself down, he began to climb the stairs.

As for the Giant Ghost King, his cultivation base was not as high as Bai Xiaochun’s, nor did he have Bai Xiaochun’s tricks to calm his heart. However, he was one of the four heavenly kings of the Wildlands, so despite the pressure, and despite how much he was sweating, he took a few breaths and managed to calm down a bit.

As he followed Bai Xiaochun up the stairs, the palace hall was slowly revealed in full, including the huge amount of people who were gathered there.

When the two of them stepped off of the last step and into the hall, they found themselves in what was essentially a huge square. At the far end were nine columns decorated with extremely lifelike carvings of dragons and phoenixes.

In the middle of the nine columns was a gigantic green cauldron!

Green smoke curled up from the cauldron, rising into the sky to join the clouds….

There were thousands of people making up the group that filled either side of the hall, all of whom stood motionless, looking respectfully toward the front of the hall.

In front of the crowd were two stooped old men, their hands tucked into opposite sleeves, their heads bowed respectfully as they looked at… the person at the very front of the entire hall!

He did not wear imperial robes, but instead, what seemed to be an ordinary green garment. He sat on a throne, reading an ancient scroll. He was middle-aged and handsome, seemingly genial, as though his smile could cause the spring wind to blow gently through the air. In fact, he seemed so friendly that anyone who looked at him would willingly sacrifice their life for him.

Complete silence reigned. Apparently, until this man spoke, no one else in the hall would dare to do so. Not even Gu

Tianjun said anything. He simply clasped hands in formal greeting, then stood off to the side, his head bowed.

No one spoke or even moved, and no one looked at Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King. Everyone was waiting for the green-robed man to look up.

“Well he certainly knows how to show off!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his heart pounding. However, he reminded himself that he couldn’t give in to fear. In fact, this Saint-Emperor seemed to be going too far in his attempt to be dazzling.

Thankfully, he didn’t keep everyone waiting for too long. Once he sensed Bai Xiaochun’s presence, his gaze shifted away from the ancient scroll. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, he smiled radiantly.

It was like the blooming of a hundred flowers, like the most refreshing of breezes. The imperial palace seemed to brighten, and the clouds up above danced in delight. The lotus flower that made up the palace seemed to stretch upward, causing an even more wonderful aroma to spread out. Out in the heavenly pond, the dragonfish swam back and forth in joy.

“I’ve heard quite a bit about you, Fellow Daoist Bai!” His words seemed to thrum with warmth and friendliness, and his eyes shone with a sincerity that made it seem impossible to doubt him.

Bai Xiaochun held his breath as he was reminded of the first time he had laid eyes on the Arch-Emperor back in the Wildlands. Taking a few steps forward, he clasped hands and bowed deeply, then spoke in a loud voice.

“Bai Xiaochun from the Heavenspan Realm is here to offer greetings, Saint-Emperor! I would also like to offer sincere thanks for your magnanimity. You have my gratitude for keeping the people of Heavenspan safe in your territory, and helping them adapt to life in the Eternal Lands.

“Being unable to pay you back for this favor, Fellow Daoist Giant Ghost and I took a trip to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Originally, we planned to apprehend the Vile-Emperor himself and deliver him to you. Sadly, I am too unfamiliar with the Eternal Immortal Domains, and got a bit lost. Therefore, I took a random celestial to offer you as a gift. I know the gift isn’t very impressive, but I hope you’ll deign to accept it, Saint-Emperor.”

During his speech, Bai Xiaochun made sure to add appropriate sighing where necessary, and in the end, plastered a look of deep regret on his face.

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, the Saint-Emperor’s smile stiffened a bit. Despite being a mighty emperor, even he was a bit taken aback by what he had just heard.

If he reacted that way, then there was little need to mention how the rest of the officials responded. Many of them couldn’t help but look over at Bai Xiaochun with strange expressions on their faces. Some seemed contemptuous, and others, leery.

They had seen shameless people before, and in fact, being sanctimonious was a key feature of the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. But the way Bai Xiaochun unblinkingly bragged about himself in outrageous fashion… was something none of them had ever seen before.

“He went to capture the Vile-Emperor?!”

“But he didn’t know the way, and couldn’t find him?”

“How utterly shameless! I can handle a bit of bragging, but this is too much!”

The Giant Ghost King blinked a few times. He had been nervous a moment ago, but when he looked over and saw Bai Xiaochun standing there with a wistful expression on his face, that anxiety melted away. Looking around, he suddenly felt like he wasn’t in the Eternal Lands, but rather, back in the Wildlands….

“I bet… that it won’t be long before everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains realizes how shameless he is, and how good he is at causing disasters….”

When Bai Xiaochun caught the reaction of the crowd, and noticed how stiff the Saint-Emperor’s smile had become, he felt very pleased with himself. He had been in a completely passive position before, but as of this moment, he had the upper hand. And that meant he had a big bargaining chip in this interchange.

Just as he was trying to decide exactly how to word his next statement, a familiar voice could be heard from the group of cultivators on the left side of the hall.

“This is the Saint-Emperor’s Palace, Bai Xiaochun. Don’t even think about trying to run your mouth here!” All of a sudden, someone stepped out from the crowd and clasped hands in formal greeting to the Saint-Emperor.

“Your Majesty the Saint-Emperor, I can list 300 crimes that this Bai Xiaochun has committed. But the worst of them is that of deceiving the sovereign! Your Majesty, please punish this Bai Xiaochun for his crimes!”

Heavenly Marquis Liu didn’t even look at Bai Xiaochun. He simply stood there, heart pounding with excitement. Back when the people of Heavenspan were teleported into the Eternal Lands, he got lucky, and ended up right in Saint-Emperor City. He was also one of the first to offer his services to the dynasty. He revealed much valuable information to the Saint-Emperor, and was thus given an official position within the bureaucracy.

Although it wasn’t a very high position, he was still happy with it. And now here he was, facing the very same Bai Xiaochun who had forced him to flee to the Great Wall in fear. Now, he finally had a chance to finish what he had started in the Wildlands, and get his revenge.

“Even if a millennium passes,” he thought, “it is never too late for a gentleman to seek revenge. You slipped through my grasp in the Wildlands, Bai Xiaochun, but you won’t do the same here. I’ll list out 1,000 crimes if I have to!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1055 awe-chapter-1056

Never in Bai Xiaochun’s wildest dreams could he have imagined that he would run into this freakish Heavenly Marquis Liu again…. After all, the man had left a deep impression on him back in their original encounter.

Bai Xiaochun would never forget that list of 100 crimes. He could still visualize the man’s impassioned speech to the Grand Heavenmaster, and how, after the tables had been turned, he had ended up fleeing to the Great Wall

Much later… the Great Wall fell, and Bai Xiaochun had stopped thinking about the matter, only to have him show up here and proclaim he had a list of 300 crimes….

“Back when the Grand Heavenmaster sent me away from Arch-Emperor City, I was never able to track this guy down. What kind of luck does he have on his side? Fine, he survived the destruction of the Great Wall, and even the entire world. But how did he end up doing even better than Big Fatty Zhang, and becoming an important government official!?!?

“And also… he’s lost a lot of weight. His complexion is good, and he even looks younger. He looks even more dignified and imposing than he did in the past, handsomer even….” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but feel a bit jealous of this Heavenly Marquis Liu. Not only was the man very lucky, he was clearly living a great life here in Saint-Emperor City….

When Heavenly Marquis Liu noticed the expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and saw all of the other important people in the palace hall looking at him with expressions of praise, his heart swelled with pride. Just as he was preparing to launch into all 300 of the crimes, Bai Xiaochun swished his sleeve, causing Gongsun Wan’er and the other demigods he had captured to suddenly appear in front of him.

“Saint-Emperor, this is the gift I prepared for you.” Aware that he couldn’t out-talk the glib Heavenly Marquis Liu, he decided to simply jump straight ahead to the main point.

As soon as Gongsun Wan’er appeared, thousands of eyes came to focus on her, especially those in the front of the crowd, who were the other celestials of similar rank to Gu Tianjun.

Even the Saint-Emperor was so interested in Gongsun Wan’er that he forgot all about Heavenly Marquis Liu.

Seeing what had happened, Heavenly Marquis Liu rubbed his nose awkwardly and then melted back into the crowd.

“Fine, you’ve slipped through my fingers again, Bai Xiaochun. Well done. But sooner or later I’ll list out all 1,000 of the crimes I have prepared!”

Gongsun Wan’er looked around calmly at the crowd, and then gave a curtseying bow to the Saint-Emperor. However, she didn't say anything. As a celestial from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, she would show respect for other powerful and important people, but that was it. She was confident that she would not be harmed in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

In contrast, looks of despair could be seen on the faces of the trembling demigods. The pressure from the celestials and the Saint-Emperor left them feeling like they might collapse.

A moment passed, and then the Saint-Emperor began to laugh loudly. He rose from his throne, a look of excitement on his face. After all, this was the most impressive gift anyone had offered to him in the history of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!

He wouldn’t kill Gongsun Wan’er, but considering that she was a celestial, he would be able to trade her for significant land concessions. Considering that there were certain prefectures which were the source of much friction between the two dynasties, this was a great opportunity.

Best of all, it wouldn’t violate any of his agreements with the Vile-Emperor. After all, this gift had been sent to him, not sought out. Even if the Vile-Emperor wanted to seek revenge, he couldn't blame the Saint-Emperor for any of it.

“Good. Great. Excellent!” Laughing heartily, the Saint-Emperor looked over at Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King at the other end of the square.

“Giant Ghost, step forward to hear my decree!”

Eyes sparkling, the Giant Ghost King stepped forward, and then clasped hands to the Saint-Emperor.

“Henceforth, Giant Ghost shall be the preceptor of Godsifter Prefecture, and shall be given control of the Joss Flame of all the living beings there!”

In the Eternal Immortal Domains, a prefecture was roughly the same size as the entire Heavenspan Realm. As the preceptor of a Godsifter Prefecture, the Giant Ghost King’s words would be law!

Such a reward was very fitting for someone of the Giant Ghost King’s status, and he was very pleased with it. In fact, the main thing he had hoped to acquire in this venture was a proper location to begin harboring people from the Heavenspan Realm.

Clasping hands, the Giant Ghost King bowed excitedly.

“Thank you, Saint-Emperor!” When he rose from his bow, he somehow seemed different from before. As of this moment, he now had a foundation in the Eternal Lands. He was no longer a roving rogue cultivator, and would no longer be in a constant state of deadly crisis. It was exactly as he had discussed at the outset with Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun was also very excited. When he saw that the Giant Ghost King had been given an entire prefecture, he couldn’t help but wonder what his own reward would be, considering the greater nature of his role in the events.

With that, the Saint-Emperor looked at Bai Xiaochun, eyes flickering slightly as he said, “Bai Xiaochun, hear my decree!”

Bai Xiaochun put an extremely respectful expression onto his face. He knew when to bow his head at the proper time, and this was one of them. It was no loss of face to do so when reaching one's goal.

“Bai Xiaochun has performed a great service. He is someone of extremely high standing from the Heavenspan Realm, a person of such renown and prestige that none can compare to him!

“Henceforth, Bai Xiaochun shall be conferred with the title… Duke Heavenspan!

“In the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, only celestials may claim the title of king. Under the kings are the dukes. Therefore, Duke

Heavenspan shall be the leader of many people, second only to a king!

“Bequeath him with a blessed land within Saint-Emperor City, a single dragonfish from the celestial pond, a ducal robe, and a seven-colored, jeweled belt!” As the Saint-Emperor’s words echoed out, very serious expressions could be seen on the faces of the surrounding aristocracy.

It was a very impressive reward. Not only was Bai Xiaochun being named Duke Heavenspan, he was also being given a blessed land, as well as a dragonfish. The ducal robe was a magical item, and the seven-colored belt would ensure that he didn’t feel any pressure from the spirit automaton that controlled the imperial palace.

All of it seemed very impressive, and yet in the end… it was an empty reward!

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun really was in a very unique position. The Saint-Emperor had seen fit to give the Giant Ghost King an entire prefecture, but that wasn't a possibility with Bai Xiaochun. The Saint-Emperor didn’t want to give the people of Heavenspan an actual location to build a power base!

His goal was to absorb the Heavenspan cultivators into the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Obviously, it wouldn’t make sense to give Bai Xiaochun, the Arch-Ancestor, any substantial level of power!

He wanted Bai Xiaochun to stay in Saint-Emperor City and not cause any trouble. At best, he could be a figurehead. Later on, after all of the people of Heavenspan had been successfully absorbed into the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Bai Xiaochun’s usefulness would end, and he could be disposed of if necessary.

The truth was that, even if Bai Xiaochun hadn’t brought his blood tribute, his reward would have been the same. Although the Saint-Emperor was pleased that Ghostmother had been brought to him, inside he was really just sighing in regret.

After all, everyone would be paying close attention to what happened as a result, including the officials in his own dynasty, as well as people from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Considering the enormous value of the gift, the Saint-Emperor had to offer some sort of reward. And that was why he had given a prefecture and preceptorship to the Giant Ghost King.

Normally speaking, he would never have given the people of Heavenspan even the slightest chance to do things on their own.

“I’ll just wait until the time is right and come up with an excuse to strip this Giant Ghost of his title.” Although the Saint-Emperor was chuckling coldly in his heart, his gaze when he looked at Bai Xiaochun was one of deep warmth.

“This is your first time in Saint-Emperor City, Duke Heavenspan, I’m sure it will take you a bit of time to settle in. You don’t need to worry for a moment about the Heavenspan Realm or your people. I’ll take care of everything!

“Surely you’re tired from all the travel, Duke Heavenspan, so please feel free to go take a rest. From now on, you can focus peacefully on your cultivation. I’m sure you’ll achieve a breakthrough soon. Once you’re a celestial, I’ll be more than happy to give you the title of king!”

As the Saint-Emperor spoke, cold gleams could be seen in the somber faces of the crowd. By this point, even Bai

Xiaochun could tell that the reward he was being given was mostly a sham.

Of course, he and the Giant Ghost King had conferred with each other along the way, and had guessed that something like this might happen. And in the end, despite their faint hope, it turned out that the Saint-Emperor's plans for them weren't too different than the Vile-Emperor's.

He just went about things differently.

“I bet that without the blood tribute, though, the Giant Ghost King would not have been given a prefecture!” As of now, Bai Xiaochun was absolutely convinced these two emperors were weasels from the same nest.

“One is vicious, the other is a hypocrite....” he thought, smiling faintly. Although he was a bit disappointed, he wasn't too surprised. After all, there was one thing the Saint-Emperor had said that was absolutely correct.

“I'm definitely going to achieve a cultivation breakthrough soon!”

He clasped hands and bowed to the Saint-Emperor, and was just about to say his farewells to the Giant Ghost King, when all of a sudden, Heavenly Marquis Liu shouted, “Your Majesty the Saint-Emperor, you absolutely must not allow Bai Xiaochun to remain within Saint-Emperor City. It will put us all in grave danger!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1056 awe-chapter-1057

From the tightness of Heavenly Marquis Liu’s voice, he seemed extremely nervous. His words almost came out as a scream. In response, the thousands of court officials looked over at him with frowns on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun stopped in place and blinked a few times. As for the Giant Ghost King, his eyes shone with anticipation.

“So, the fellow finally speaks some truth!” Actually, the Giant Ghost King hoped that Heavenly Marquis Liu would convince the Saint-Emperor to change his mind. If Bai Xiaochun were able to avoid being confined in Saint-Emperor City, it would be much more beneficial to their cause.

For the first time, Bai Xiaochun wasn't very annoyed by Heavenly Marquis Liu, and actually looked forward to what he was about to say. He was even secretly cheering him on.

Although the Saint-Emperor wasn’t very pleased, he masked such feelings and turned his warm gaze onto Heavenly Marquis Liu.

“My dear Minister Liu. What exactly do you mean?”

Having received the nod of approval from the Saint-Emperor, Heavenly Marquis Liu bowed excitedly, and then spoke out in a much louder voice.

“Your Majesty, you have no idea the kinds of things this Bai Xiaochun did in the Heavenspan Realm. Sir, it didn't matter where he went, he would always cause a massive disaster, and wreak the cruelest of torments upon the people there!

“He toyed with the Spirit Stream Sect, toyed with the Blood Stream Sect, and toyed with the River-Defying Sect to no end! Later, he ended up in the Wildlands, where he shook down clans, stole wives, and accumulated a list of 100 major crimes! Afterward, he nearly destroyed the entire Nine Heavens Cloud Lightning Sect. Voices of discontent could be heard everywhere! Men and gods alike were outraged!” Heavenly Marquis Liu was clearly very worked up, and actually had a lot more to say. But by this point, the gathered officials had begun to laugh openly.

Although they didn’t believe Heavenly Marquis Liu to be lying, they most certainly assumed that he was exaggerating. Besides, although Bai Xiaochun had a quasi-celestial cultivation base, he came from a very small world.

In sharp contrast, Saint-Emperor City was the capital city of an entire dynasty!

There were multiple celestials here, as well as the Saint-Emperor himself. Even if Bai Xiaochun were more powerful than he actually was, they didn’t see how anything he could do would possibly cause any major problems.

The Saint-Emperor gave a hollow chuckle. He felt the same as everyone else. If you threw a monkey into little garden with no other animals in it, then the monkey would definitely seem tough. But throw that same monkey into a lion’s den, and the monkey would have a very different fate.

Waving his hand to interrupt Heavenly Marquis Liu, he rose to his feet, indicating that court was adjourned.

Both the Giant Ghost King and Bai Xiaochun were very disappointed. To some extent, Bai Xiaochun was also nervous. He knew that he had the strange ability to cause major disasters, even when he didn't want to. Therefore, he decided that the best thing to do would be to make sure he had some insurance.

Rushing forward, he called out,

“Your Majesty, wait a moment!”

The Saint-Emperor stopped in place and turned to look at him, as did all of the other court officials.

“Your Majesty,” he said cautiously, “what Liu Yong just said is actually true. To be honest, I’m a bit worried that I might break some rules in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. In fact… if I, Duke Heavenspan, accidentally violate some rules, what would the punishment be?”

The Saint-Emperor’s eyes narrowed as he looked back and forth between Bai Xiaochun and Heavenly Marquis Liu, trying to decide if they were working together. From the look of things, both of them were trying to come up with an excuse to get Bai Xiaochun out of Saint-Emperor City.

“As a duke who has performed meritorious service, as long as you don’t betray the nation, you will not be punished for any action!” Inside, the Saint-Emperor was chuckling coldly. Considering how important Bai Xiaochun was in controlling the people of Heavenspan, there was no way he would simply let him leave.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with the answer he had just been given, but didn’t let it show on his face. Frowning and sighing, he left with the Giant Ghost King.

As everyone departed, Heavenly Marquis Liu stood there, crestfallen. As far as he was concerned, the Saint-Emperor had just led the wolf right into the henhouse. In the coming days, Saint-Emperor City would likely descend into tragedy, at least until the drums and gongs were broken out, and the Plague God Bai Xiaochun was driven away.

“Don’t say I didn’t warn you!” he sighed, bemoaning the state of the universe, and pitying the fate of mankind.

Court was adjourned, and the Saint-Emperor had bestowed the rewards. Before Bai Xiaochun left, the two old men who had been standing at the front of the hall approached him.

One of them gave him a jade slip which was essentially a key to the blessed land he had been given.

The other was a colorful belt which would ensure that he didn't feel any pressure from the spirit automaton of the world treasure that was the imperial palace.

He was also given a ducal robe of the finest quality, a magical item with an impressive aura. Lastly, he was given… a dragonfish!

The dragonfish was fully three meters long, and was still alive. It had been bound up so that it couldn’t move, and yet its sharp teeth and glaring eyes seemed particularly ferocious.

Bai Xiaochun looked over the rewards and sighed.

“This Saint-Emperor is so stingy…. I guess the robe, immortal's cave, and belt are okay, but what did he give me a fish for…?” Shaking his head, he used the jade slip to go find his blessed land, taking the Giant Ghost King with him. It was located on a lotus leaf that had plenty of buildings on it. His blessed land was right in the middle, in a relatively tranquil and quiet locale.

Although it was called a blessed land, it was actually just a mansion residence. On the upside, the spiritual power of heaven and earth was strong in the area. There were beautiful ornamental rocks, and lovely buildings built in a very impressive and imposing style.

Bai Xiaochun was happy with the residence. Although it was relatively empty and unfamiliar, he didn’t mind, and therefore just sat down to meditate and familiarize himself with the spiritual energy of heaven and earth here. As for the Giant Ghost King, he looked around briefly, and then left.

The Giant Ghost King and Bai Xiaochun were very different in some ways. For example, back in the town he had ended up in, Bai Xiaochun never got familiar with anybody. Some of it had to do with the depression he had been in, but some of it was his personality. In contrast, the Giant Ghost King had made friends quickly. From that, it was possible to see how good the Giant Ghost King was at expanding his network. In fact, he could put Xu Baocai to shame.

And that was exactly what he planned to do here. Even as he made preparations to go to Godsifter Prefecture, he made enquiries and gathered information.

Before long, the moon hung high in the sky, and Bai Xiaochun awoke from his meditative trance. After looking up into the sky, and then glancing around at the unfamiliar buildings, he realized that he had truly taken his first major step in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Sighing, he began to think of many familiar faces.

“Uncle Li…. Bruiser…. Patriarch Spirit Stream….

“Song Junwan…. Mistress Red-Dust….

“Master God-Diviner…. Xu Baocai….” In the end he sighed, thinking about one final name.

“…Du Lingfei….” Bai Xiaochun wasn’t even sure if Du Lingfei was still alive. Back in the final moments, Daoist Heavenspan had claimed that she was.

But then the world was destroyed. And the immortal domains were vast and filled with countless people. How could he possibly find her in such an environment?

“What I need to do now is work hard on my cultivation and break through to the Celestial Realm! In terms of cultivation, I need medicinal pills and the spiritual energy of heaven and earth…. I guess I need to familiarize myself with what type of cultivation resources are available in the Eternal Immortal Domains.” As he settled his thoughts, his eyes began to shine with both anticipation and focus.

As the night deepened, the Giant Ghost King returned, looking very excited.

“The fish! That dragonfish!”

Surprised, Bai Xiaochun looked over at the dragonfish, which was off to the side, still flipping and flopping a bit. From the look in the Giant Ghost King’s eyes, it was like some sort of precious treasure.

“Xiaochun, that’s no ordinary fish! The Saint-Emperor really wasn’t holding back at all…. Heavenly dragonfish are native only to this heavenly pond. They drink heavenly pondwater, and thus naturally absorb the spiritual energy of heaven and earth. They are also fed with all sorts of precious materials! They’re considered the personal property of the Saint-Emperor!

“Any cultivator of the celestial level or lower who eats a heavenly dragonfish will experience a major cultivation base boost. As much as from an immortal pill!!”

“Immortal pill!?” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes shining. He had just been wondering about where to get the spiritual energy he needed to work on his cultivation. And thus, he and the Giant Ghost King went about roasting the fish….

As it turned a lovely golden-brown color, a wonderful aroma filled the air. Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King salivated as they waited for it to finish cooking. And then… they began to eat.

When he was finished, Bai Xiaochun licked his lips in complete satisfaction and said, “Delicious! Tastes just like spirit tail chicken!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1057 awe-chapter-1058

Bai Xiaochun suddenly realized that he missed spirit tail chickens, and yet, the fact that he had found something similar to them in the Eternal Lands was a wonderful thing….

The Giant Ghost King smacked his lips, and then eyed a fish bone for a moment before tossing it into his mouth and crunching it to bits. He then prepared to speak, but before he could, he shivered, and a searing heat rose up inside of him that caused white mist to build up in the area.

“An immortal fish!” he exclaimed. He quickly settled down cross-legged to begin doing breathing exercises.

After the Giant Ghost King experienced such success, Bai Xiaochun waited for a long moment to see if something similar would happen with himself. However, no heat appeared inside of him.

“What’s going on? It worked for the Giant Ghost King. Why not me?” Then he looked around, and realized that there were a lot of bones around that they hadn’t eaten. After randomly picking up a few, he crunched them up in his mouth and swallowed them, which was exactly when the warm current began to flow through him.

Delighted, he closed his eyes. Soon, the warmth turned into something like a huge wave that pushed his Live Forever Codex further toward completion.

Suppressing his excitement, he focused on the energy in his body. Time passed. Soon, roughly six hours had gone by since Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King began meditating.

At that point, the Giant Ghost King opened his eyes, threw his head back and laughed uproariously. In that short six hours, the Giant Ghost King had made significant progress toward the late Demigod Realm.

“It’s too bad we only had one,” he said. “If I could eat fish like that more often, I could reach the great circle in no time!”

At that point, Bai Xiaochun also opened his eyes, and they glittered with bright light.

Although he hadn’t made as much progress as the Giant Ghost King, that was because he was already further past him in general. Even still, the little bit of progress he had experienced was very exciting.

If he wanted to break through to become a celestial, then he needed to reach the great circle of the Live Forever Codex. Unfortunately, he was still some distance away from that level. And unfortunately, the Live Forever Codex differed from the Undying Codex in that he had not actually personally cultivated it. It had been consecrated upon him.

Although he had developed the divine abilities of the technique all the way to creating his Live Forever Lamp, the truth was that he still didn’t really understand how to actually cultivate the technique.

After the gravekeeper consecrated him, he came to the Eternal Immortal Domains and achieved a bit of progress. But it was slow to the point of being almost nothing. At the moment, his Live Forever Codex had reached the point where it was holding him back. He was basically at a major bottleneck.

Based on what he could tell, if he practiced ordinary cultivation with the spiritual energy in Saint-Emperor City, then he couldn’t achieve in ten years or more what he had just achieved by eating half of a heavenly dragonfish.

Considering that, it was almost impossible to calculate how long it would take him to break out of the Demigod Realm by ordinary cultivation alone!

His original plan had been to acquire some special medicinal pills or something similar. But now, looking around at the handful of fish bones that were left over, he realized that a new path had just been opened up.

“One fish is worth at least fifteen years of cultivation!!” All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine as brightly as a mouse that hadn’t eaten for several years. “If I could get enough of those fish… breaking through this bottleneck would be super easy! I could become a celestial very soon!!”

He was already getting very excited. For one thing, he would have much more longevity and life force after becoming a celestial, and for another, he would have his Daoseed, which meant he could be resurrected if he died. All of a sudden, he had the desire to reach the absolute pinnacle of this strange new world he was in. And it all came down to the heavenly dragonfish.

“I need fish!!” He immediately began to look around and grab up all fish bones he could see. However, the Giant Ghost King seemed to have come to the same conclusion as him, and lunged to interfere!

“Hey, Giant Ghost King, the Saint-Emperor gave me this fish as a reward. Don’t you dare fight me over it!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare.

“Like hell! I'm your father-in-law, fool! Haven’t you heard of filial piety!?”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun furiously resorted to a trump card. “This is one of *my* leftovers! I actually licked it already!!”

“Oh yeah? Well I licked all the other ones you already ate! We’re related anyway, so it doesn’t matter!” Not willing to be outdone, the Giant Ghost King leaned forward and spat toward the fish bones on the ground….

Perhaps it was because of some divine ability that he cultivated, but that one bit of spittle somehow managed to spread out and cover all of the bones….

Bai Xiaochun stood there, stunned at the Giant Ghost King’s despicable and yet devastating tactics. Although he had to admit that the man was definitely thicker-skinned and a much better schemer than himself, that didn’t explain how he was able to spit out so much saliva in one shot….

As he stood there hesitating, the Giant Ghost King waved his sleeve, collecting all of the fish bones up and depositing them into his bag of holding. With that, he smiled complacently.

“You’re too inexperienced to fight with me, kid.” With that, he laughed heartily.

Dumbfounded, Bai Xiaochun sighed and was about to say something when both he and the Giant Ghost King realized that someone was approaching the blessed land. A moment later, they heard someone speaking outside.

“Duke Heavenspan, it's Chen Su, here for a visit.”

This was the first official visit Bai Xiaochun had received in Saint-Emperor City, and shockingly, the visitor was a celestial! Not only was Bai Xiaochun curious to see who it was, he also didn’t want to cause any offenses, so he hurried over, waving his hand to open the main gate. Revealed outside was an old man with gray hair.

He wore a long, blue robe, and bore the demeanor of a transcendent being. Smiling faintly, he clasped hands in formal greeting.

“I was wondering why the birds were singing so happily earlier!” Bai Xiaochun said. “It was because an honored guest was on his way! I never imagined it would be you, Fellow Daoist Chen! Please, come in!” Bai Xiaochun’s broad smile and clearly spoken words made him seem completely different than he had moments ago, struggling with the Giant Ghost King over fish bones.

Chen Su laughed heartily at Bai Xiaochun’s pleasing words. Nodding, he stepped into the blessed land.

The Giant Ghost King was also curious about this visitor. Neither he nor Bai Xiaochun were cultivators of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and were considered foreigners. Although they both had official government positions, based on the information he had gathered earlier, he knew that most of the other government officials viewed them with a certain measure of contempt.

And yet, almost overnight, someone had come to pay their respects. Furthermore, Chen Su was one of the four kings of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, someone with a rank similar to Gu Tianjun. Shocked, the Giant Ghost King quickly clasped hands in a greeting of his own.

Chen Su nodded at the Giant Ghost King, but then ignored him. After looking around the courtyard, he made some small talk with Bai Xiaochun, until finally clearing his throat.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, where is the heavenly dragonfish that His Majesty rewarded you with?”

“Heavenly dragonfish?” Bai Xiaochun had been curious about the nature of the visit, so when Chen Su brought up the heavenly dragonfish, he was a bit taken aback.

“Yes, the heavenly dragonfish,” Chen Su replied warmly. “If you’d be willing to part with it, Fellow Daoist Bai, I’d love to take it in trade.” Chen Su, despite being a celestial, actually had no heavenly dragonfish. After all, they were considered the personal property of the Saint-Emperor, and were rarely given out as rewards. In fact, throughout all history, only a few hundred had ever been distributed.

Each one was considered beyond priceless, and they were commonly referred to as national treasures, which was no exaggeration. In the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, people would pay astronomical prices to acquire even one. One of the main reasons for that was that their blood could be used as an immortal ingredient to concoct immortal pills.

Chen Su was convinced that his proposal would not be rejected. Bai Xiaochun was a newcomer to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and wouldn't want to offend a celestial over a fish.

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment, then said, “Uh… sorry, Fellow Daoist Chen, you’re a bit late. I ate it already.”

When Chen Su heard Bai Xiaochun's response, his eyes nearly popped out of his skull.

“Did you just say… you ate it?”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then nodded. “Yep. Ate it.”

As far as Chen Su was concerned, Bai Xiaochun was obviously making up excuses. Voice cold, he said, “Come on, Fellow Daoist Bai. Don't treat me like I'm three years old or something. If you don't wish to part with it, just say so directly. Heavenly dragonfish are national treasures, and precious beyond imagination. Nobody who acquired one would ever possibly eat it! The best thing to do is keep it in a pond and extract its blood occasionally!”

With that, he flicked his sleeve as if to leave.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun sighed and gave the Giant Ghost King a look. The Giant Ghost King, despite not really wanting to, produced some fish bones from his bag of holding.

“See these fishbones, Fellow Daoist Chen….”

When Chen Su looked back and saw the bones, his eyes went wide. When he opened his mouth to speak....

“........”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1058 awe-chapter-1059

The fish bones, and the aura of a heavenly dragonfish coming from them, caused Chen Su's heart to seize, and his mind to spin.

As a celestial in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, he had seen heavenly dragonfish given out as rewards before. Whenever it happened, the recipients would keep them in ponds and take good care of them.

This was his first time hearing of someone doing something so shocking as eating a national treasure....

In fact, he almost couldn't process it mentally. After staring blankly at the fish bones for a moment, he shook his head and sighed.

"What a reckless waste!" Unsure of exactly how he felt, he slowly left the blessed land.

After he was gone, Bai Xiaochun and the Giant Ghost King looked at each other in shock.

"It's just a fish, right?" the Giant Ghost King said. "These Saint-Emperor Dynasty people are real weirdos." The truth was that he was actually feeling a bit guilty at having gathered incomplete information the night before. Clearing his throat, he looked up into the evening sky.

"Well, Xiaochun, it's actually a long way to Godsifter Prefecture. I really need to get going. Who knows when we'll meet again." He sighed. The two of them had accomplished a lot since their initial reunion in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and as he thought back, he realized that there had been many twists and turns in their journey.

The upside was that he now had a firm foundation, and his own path to tread.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling a bit emotional as well as he escorted the Giant Ghost King all the way to the teleportation portal. After the Giant Ghost King faded away, Bai Xiaochun sighed, and then turned to head back to his blessed land.

“With the Giant Ghost King gone, I'm all alone now. I guess it's time to start working hard on my cultivation base breakthrough.” A glint of determination could be seen in his eyes as he proceeded along. There were other pedestrians, mostly cultivators, although the occasional mortal could also be seen. And yet, even the mortals seemed to have arrogance baked into them all the way down to their bones.

Everyone in the capital city seemed to have a very high impression of themselves, and the truth was that Bai Xiaochun didn’t mind that. As he walked along, he looked around at the buildings, and thought about how Saint-Emperor City rested on enormous lotus leaves. It all made him sigh.

“And to think that it’s all built on top of a huge mountain and a heavenly pond.” At one point, his path took him toward the very edge of the lotus leaf, where he took the opportunity to look over at the water below.

Heavenly dragonfish swam there, and would occasionally leap up out of the water, their golden scales glistening in the sunlight and making them look particularly beautiful.

Quite a few people were in the area. Although the locals were used to heavenly dragonfish, they were still such an amazing sight that people would come to scenic spots like this to look at them. And of course, passing visitors would always come to do the same thing.

“These are the national treasures of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, heavenly dragonfish!”

“These heavenly dragonfish are the most beautiful spirit creatures I've ever seen in my entire life! If the Saint-Emperor gave one to me as a gift, I would take care of it in my home forever. What an honor to my ancestors that would be!”

Many such expressions of praise could be heard. However, as Bai Xiaochun stood there in the crowd, he was thinking something very different. His mind was occupied with thoughts of how delicious the heavenly dragonfish were, and how beneficial they were to his cultivation base.

He couldn’t help but lick his lips. Considering the level of his cultivation base, it was easy for him to get a general idea of how many fish there were in the heavenly pond, and there were a lot. Even as he pondered if it might be possible to catch one, a visiting cultivator in the crowd turned to a friend and asked, “Considering that the heavenly dragonfish are precious national treasures, what would happen if one of them went missing…?”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his eyes glittered.

“Missing?” Laughter rippled through the crowd, causing the cultivator who had asked the question to flush in embarrassment.

Standing nearby was an old man with a Nascent Soul cultivation base, a person who had clearly lived in Saint-Emperor City for many years. Looking naturally pompous, he provided an answer.

“All of the heavenly dragonfish here are the personal property of His Majesty the Saint-Emperor. They're all branded with his mark. Who would possibly dare to try to steal one?! It would never happen, trust me. If someone did steal a fish, they would meet a horrific and grisly fate! In fact, forget stealing. It’s forbidden to do anything that would even come close to harming a heavenly dragonfish!” In response to the old man’s explanation, the visiting cultivator nodded vigorously.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he frowned, slightly frustrated by what he was hearing.

When the old man realized that he was now the center of attention, he proudly continued, “Of course, His Majesty the Saint-Emperor is generous and benevolent, and is not the type to become overly attached to his personal property. Furthermore, he pays close attention to matters regarding destiny. Therefore, he made a proclamation long ago stating that, in addition to acquiring heavenly dragonfish as a personal gift from him, anyone can take them as long as they do so by fishing!”

“Fishing?” blurted one of the other nearby cultivators.

“That’s right. Fishing. With a hook and line! Magic isn’t allowed. Only ordinary fishing techniques!” The old man cleared his throat before continuing. “Dragonfish are intelligent, and if you are connected to one by destiny, it will allow you to hook it and even eat it.” Stroking his beard, the old man pointed to another location at the edge of the lotus leaf, where it was just possible to see someone seated in meditation, but with a fishing pole in his hand.

“Look, over there. That’s Preceptor Seadeep. He’s been fishing in that exact same spot for over a hundred years. He hasn’t changed fishing spots by even an inch. I guess it just goes to show that he isn’t connected by destiny to any of the dragonfish.” Most of the people in the crowd actually knew all of these things already, and were clearly very proud of them. Eventually, the visiting cultivator offered profound thanks, and the crowd dispersed.

Bai Xiaochun remained behind, peering down at the heavenly dragonfish, and occasionally looking at the demigod, who had been sitting there fishing for over a hundred years.

“This Saint-Emperor really is stuck up!” he thought, rubbing his chin.

Although the Saint-Emperor’s decree seemed like an expression of benevolence, the truth was that… it was close to impossible to hook a dragonfish. One would probably be lucky to catch one after fishing for a few decades.

After all, they were intelligent, and were used to eating precious materials of heaven and earth, making them almost like immortal creatures. According to the Saint-Emperor’s decree, anyone who was connected by destiny to a fish could eat it, except… that was not something that would happen for most ordinary cultivators. The more Bai Xiaochun thought about it, the more obvious it was. And likely, there were other powerful experts in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty who would realize that such matters of destiny made the prospect of catching a dragonfish basically impossible.

Few people could have the raw determination of Preceptor Seadeep.

Bai Xiaochun was already starting to feel a bit let down. He really wanted to eat some heavenly dragonfish, but it seemed like getting his hands on one would be too difficult.

After thinking about the matter for a while, he decided that it was possible he was thinking too deeply into the subject. Therefore, he went and bought some fishing gear and found a good place to try his hand at it. After several failures, he sighed and gave up.

“There’s no way you can hook one of those fish!” The fish in the water would simply pass by his line. Sometimes they would look up at him, and although he couldn’t be sure, he was fairly convinced that they were mocking him.

“How dare some fish make fun of me!!” he thought angrily, glaring down into the water as fiercely as he could. However, he soon shivered in defeat.

He usually won staring contests, but now… the mocking gazes of the heavenly dragonfish had him scowling on the verge of tears. Eventually he stomped away from the water’s edge.

“Complete and utter bullying!” he thought bitterly. However, he was out of options. Throwing his fishing pole down, he returned to his immortal's cave.

A few days later, an emissary came from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty to discuss the matter of Ghostmother with the Saint-Emperor. In the end, three prefectures were ceded to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to get her back.

By the time Bai Xiaochun heard about it, the bone lizard battleship was flying off into the distance. He just barely made out Gongsun Wan’er on deck, toward whom he clasped hands and bowed, wishing her well after she got back to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

After all, the person returning to the Vile-Emperor was both Ghostmother and… not Ghostmother!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1059 awe-chapter-1060

Everyone in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was both proud and elated with how Ghostmother was traded away.

After all, the Vile-Emperor had given up three prefectures to seal the deal, prefectures which had belonged to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to begin with, but had been lost over the years of minor conflict between the two dynasties.

To cultivators who were not in the know, it might seem like a major victory in the overarching conflict between the dynasties.

But the powerful and influential individuals in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and of course the Saint-Emperor himself, knew that the three prefectures in question had been reduced to virtual wastelands over the course of the occupation.

To the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, they were now of little value or interest. But to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, anything was better than nothing. Furthermore, the Saint-Emperor knew that if he pushed things too far, the Vile-Emperor could very well just abandon Ghostmother and refuse to offer any concessions at all.

If that happened, then the onus would be cast on the Saint-Emperor Dynasty for being greedy, and would ensure that not even the Vile-Emperor would take blame from his subordinates.

After all factors were considered, an agreement was reached that appeased both sides, and prevented greater issues from arising.

None of it had much to do with Bai Xiaochun. In fact, neither side mentioned him at all during the negotiations. Although he had played a critical role within the entire affair, it was in the interests of both parties to just pretend as if he hadn’t.

Bai Xiaochun didn't care about that. At the moment, he was sitting in his blessed land, scowling on the verge of tears, a thousand thoughts running through his head as he contemplated the issue of the heavenly dragonfish.

In an attempt to stop thinking about them, he took some time to make inquiries regarding pill concocting in Saint-Emperor City. What he came to find was that the techniques used here were in the same vein as those in the Heavenspan Realm. However, there were also some major differences that made the concocting process very difficult. They were also very expensive to produce.

In terms of medicinal pills that were appropriate for demigods, not only were they rare, they were ridiculously overpriced.

Another problem was that Bai Xiaochun didn't exactly have a huge savings built up. Worse, although he had some medicinal plants, he had no pill formulas, and creating new formulas from scratch was a very gruelling and expensive process. Unless he could think of some ways to earn a lot of spirit stones, he would definitely go broke trying to rely on medicinal pills.

“The best way to save money would be to use heavenly dragonfish!” It was with bloodshot eyes that he stared in the direction of the heavenly pond, which seemed the only viable path to further his cultivation. Gritting his teeth, he said, “I'm not gonna just give in. Considering those fish dared to despise me, I'm definitely going to teach them a lesson!”

Grabbing his fishing pole, he hurried over to the edge of the lotus leaf. Picking a different area than last time, he spent a few days fishing, but in the end, sighed and gave up again.

The fish really were like immortal beings. No matter which fishing spot he picked, they would just swim right past his line, and would often gaze at him with contemptuous looks in their eyes.

Several days passed in which Bai Xiaochun was eyed disdainfully by thousands of individual fish. Eventually, his world began to grow dark. At the same time, people noticed what he was doing, and gossip began to spread.

“Duke Heavenspan is fishing?”

“Well he is a barbarian foreigner after all. Back when he was talking himself up at court, he really sounded like some amazing figure. But it turns out he’s just a moron who doesn’t understand the true meaning of the Saint-Emperor’s rule about the heavenly dragonfish. I’ll tell you what, if that guy manages to catch a fish, I’ll change my surname to match his!”

“Seems the lotus leaves of Saint-Emperor City have gained another obsessed fool like Preceptor Seadeep.”

Not a single kind word could be heard among the aristocracy. Everyone was making fun of Bai Xiaochun.

After all, they looked down on the people of Heavenspan to begin with, just like Gu Tianjun did.

As far as they were concerned, the only thing the people of Heavenspan were good for was to be servants. At best, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty would pity them and take them in for charity’s sake.

The Saint-Emperor eventually heard what was happening, and shook his head.

“It doesn’t matter,” he said with a smile. “If Duke Heavenspan just spends his time fishing, that will save me a lot of effort down the road.”

The only person who reacted differently was Liu Yong. When he heard about the matter, he was initially shocked, but then he penned a formal request to the Saint-Emperor, in which he begged him to prohibit Bai Xiaochun from fishing.

Sadly for him, the fact that he was from the Heavenspan Realm ensured that everybody ignored him. The Saint-Emperor merely looked at the written request and then tossed it to the side.

Whether it was the fish in the pond, or the officials in the city, they all looked at Bai Xiaochun with contempt. Eventually, it reached the point where he couldn’t take it anymore.

“Fudge! Fine, screw this fishing business!” As he glared at the scornful fish, a vicious smile suddenly played out on his face. After sending some divine sense out to make sure that no one was watching him, he produced a Fantasy Pill from his bag of holding and threw it into the heavenly pond.

No one noticed, and the pill melted as soon as it hit the water. Within moments, it was absorbed by the nearby fish.

Giving them a final look, Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly and left. Over the course of the following days, he would frequently go to the edge of the lotus leaf and surreptitiously toss some Fantasy Pills into the water.

In order to avoid attracting notice, he was careful to only throw two or three pills in each time, and occasionally just one. He knew that some things could only be accomplished over time, and required patience. And thus, more than half a month slipped by....

Gradually, more and more of the heavenly dragonfish began to react to the Fantasy Pill.

Eventually, it reached the point where all Bai Xiaochun had to do was walk up to the water, and a large group of them would swim over in the hopes of getting some of the water affected by the Fantasy Pills....

Two things worked to his advantage. The first was that it was common for heavenly dragonfish to congregate near someone who was fishing, and cast contemptuous glances at them. The second was that Bai Xiaochun made sure to find remote locations where he was less likely to attract any attention.

To play things extra safe, he also pretended to be fishing as he went about his work.

As the days went by and he watched the heavenly dragonfish gobble up his pills, his heart swelled with more pride than ever.

“Measly heavenly dragonfish! I’ll show you how awesome Lord Bai is! Everybody who gets a taste of my Fantasy Pills gets addicted. I refuse to believe that you will be any exception!”

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very proud and confident in his pills. He was absolutely sure that the fish in the pond were developing a dependency on Fantasy Pills.

Eventually, he stopped throwing the pills in the pond, and waited for the heavenly dragonfish to begin showing signs of withdrawal.

One day as he was strolling near the edge of the lotus leaf, he saw a crowd forming, and people crying out in alarm.

“Heavens! The heavenly dragonfish are so smart! Look, guys! That one knows how to go fishing!!”

Bai Xiaochun hurried over and saw one particular heavenly dragonfish with a long string of seaweed in its mouth, acting just like a cultivator holding a fishing pole. Excited, he realized that the crucial moment had arrived.

Excitement surging, he pulled out his fishing rod, which he had already prepared for this very moment by coating the hook with the aura of a Fantasy Pill. Looking around, he realized that he was very close to Preceptor Seadeep, who was sitting there as motionless as usual. Hefting his fishing pole, he hurried over and sat down next to him, then prepared to cast his line.

The first thing Preceptor Seadeep did was frown. He knew that Bai Xiaochun was Duke Heavenspan, and yet, was as contemptuous of the people of Heavenspan as everyone else in the city. Clearly, he wasn’t happy that Duke Heavenspan had come to his fishing spot to fish without first asking permission.

Even worse was that Bai Xiaochun’s fishing rod looked completely ordinary in nature. Preceptor Seadeep’s was made from soft jade, making it incredibly flexible. It was also filled with spiritual energy. To top everything off, the look of anticipation on Bai Xiaochun's face was very annoying.

As a demigod expert of the same age as Gu Tianjun, and someone who had even deigned to give advice to the younger Chen Su, Preceptor Seadeep was profoundly qualified in all respects.

“Well met, Duke Heavenspan,” he said, his eyelid twitching a bit. “Fishing requires patience, you know. As the ancient saying goes, *luck brings achievements, fate brings failure*. Understand that, and it will help you remain tranquil and even-tempered. Fix heaven and earth within your heart and mind. There are countless living beings within creation, all of which are intelligent in their own way. Remember, everything is connected; if a heavenly dragonfish has sown destiny with you, it will come to you. It's how life works.

“Many people think that I sit here to fish, but the truth is that I am contemplating life. With a temperament like yours, you probably shouldn't waste your time here.” As he spoke, he seemed to thrum with an otherworldly aura.

Bai Xiaochun was taken aback by how mysterious the old man sounded, although he didn't understand anything that had just been said. However, the man looked pretty cool as a fisherman, and therefore, Bai Xiaochun nodded a few times, and then cast his line out into the heavenly pond.

Upon seeing that Bai Xiaochun really was going to make an attempt at fishing, Preceptor Seadeep got even more annoyed, and the contempt in his eyes grew more intense.

“You….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1060 awe-chapter-1061

In the very instant in which Preceptor Seadeep’s eyes flickered with derision, Bai Xiaochun’s fishing hook hit the water. Before it could even sink down, and even as the sound of the splashing water was still echoing out, a 3-meter-long heavenly dragonfish appeared and bit down on the hook….

It clamped its jaws down very vicious fashion. Apparently worried that the hook might get away, it actually swallowed it down into its belly. Delighted, Bai Xiaochun yanked back on his fishing pole, pulling the entire 3-meter-long fish out of the water. Water droplets sprayed around in all directions, and the fish’s golden scales glistened dazzlingly.

The entire scene was quite eye-catching. As the heavenly dragonfish flew through the air, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed it with ease. Eyebrows dancing up and down with joy, he quickly put the heavenly dragonfish into his bag of holding.

It happened so quickly that some people who were watching wondered if they had been seeing things. Preceptor Seadeep’s mind began to spin, and he almost didn’t want to believe that what he had just seen was true. Rubbing his eyes, he looked at the spot where the fish had flown out of the water, and then back at the excited Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but marvel at how much of a genius he was. The heavenly dragonfish had dared to glare at him with contempt, and with almost no effort, he had put them in their place. Even as he contemplated such things, he remembered that Preceptor Seadeep had been about to say something further.

“Eee? What were you just saying?”

Preceptor Seadeep’s heart was already racing, and his mind was spinning so hard he could barely speak. After taking a few breaths to recover, Bai Xiaochun’s question registered. Rubbing his nose, he said said, “I… um… I guess you got pretty lucky, Duke Heavenspan.”

With that, he tossed his own line back out, hitting almost exactly the same spot Bai Xiaochun had just hit.

Considering how many heavenly dragonfish had gathered in the area, he couldn’t help but look at the spot nervously, wondering if he would get any bites….

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with Preceptor Seadeep’s response. Clearing his throat, he cast his own line out again, but in a different direction. This time, his hook landed right in front of Preceptor Seadeep.

The instant his hook hit the water, Preceptor Seadeep looked over at that spot, whereupon his eyes went wide.

It was with seeming madness that the heavenly dragonfish rushed toward the hook. Waves began to roll out over the water as they struggled with all their might to get to the hook. It only took the blink of an eye for one of them to bite down on it. The excitement in its eyes was completely evident….

Preceptor Seadeep felt like he was being struck by lightning. Nearly dropping his fishing pole, he jumped up and shouted, “Impossible!!”

Never before had he witnessed events as shocking as this. It was so unimaginable that he felt like he was about to collapse mentally.

He had been fishing in this same spot for more than a hundred years, and although he had seen people successfully hook a dragonfish before, it was usually a situation in which a particularly picky fish took the bait on purpose. It was more like the fish intentionally wanted to switch homes and owners....

But what he was witnessing now had him feeling completely bowled over. This wasn't fishing… this was the fish fawning over Bai Xiaochun, seemingly worried they might not have the chance to bite down on the hook he cast....

Completely dazed, Preceptor Seadeep looked at the water, and then at Bai Xiaochun, and opened his mouth as if to speak. However, no words came out.

Meanwhile, the people off in the distance who had been watching were all clearly shaken. Initially they were too stunned to say anything, but before long, cries of shock could be heard.

“I can't believe he actually caught a heavenly dragonfish!!”

“Heavens! He didn't just catch one. He actually caught two in a row!!”

“How lucky can this guy be? It's heaven-defying!!”

“It's not luck! He's connected by destiny to those dragonfish!!” Normally speaking, such a commotion would have scared all the dragonfish away. But right now, the exact opposite was happening, leading to even more shocked cries.

“Hey, look over there everyone…. Heavens! Look at how many dragonfish there are! Why… why are they all coming over?!?!”

Everyone looked over at what was a completely shocking scene. Waves rolled across the surface of the heavenly pond as one heavenly dragonfish after another rushed over from all directions….

At a single glance, it appeared as if there were several thousand of them, creating a spectacle that left everyone gasping.

Preceptor Seadeep looked on, gobsmacked at the sight of Bai Xiaochun tossing the second heavenly dragonfish into his bag of holding.

Bai Xiaochun was also feeling a bit taken aback. Considering how crazy the heavenly dragonfish were acting, it seemed like his Fantasy Pills were actually working much better than he had imagined they would.

It was probably made worse by the fact that, after days of feeding the fish Fantasy Pills on a daily basis, he had suddenly stopped for several days. When the withdrawal symptoms hit, the fish felt like they were completely starving. Therefore, even the scrap of the Fantasy Pill aura on the hook was enough to drive them crazy.

“This is big….” he thought nervously. Thankfully, his Fantasy Pills were colorless and odorless, and would not leave traces behind that could be detected.

Besides, medicinal pills from the Heavenspan Realm were different than those in the Eternal Immortal Domains. Their structure was different on a fundamental level.

Most importantly, he couldn’t ignore all of these fishes that were clearly connected to him by destiny. Considering that they apparently wanted to leap right into the fire and be devoured by him, he gritted his teeth and cast his line a third time.

Everyone looked on nervously. Preceptor Seadeep even stopped breathing.

This time, the result was even more dramatic than the first two times. In fact, it was so climactic that it instantly led to a huge commotion among the crowd, and caused Preceptor Seadeep to stagger backward as if he had been struck by lightning from the heavens!

This time, the fishhook never even reached the water. Dozens of dragonfish leaped up into the air to try to get it.

Water splashed out everywhere as the fish writhed and fought to try to be the first to reach the hook.

More and more dragonfish began to erupt from the water, causing the crowd to cry out in shock. Eventually one of them succeeded. It was with great excitement and pride that the fish bit the hook, and allowed Bai Xiaochun to reel it in. It was only with great effort that Bai Xiaochun managed to get the hook out of its mouth before putting it into his bag of holding.

In fact, the only reason he succeeded in getting the hook at all was because, in the struggle, the aura of the Fantasy Pill had been rubbed off it.

The crowd, of course, couldn’t keep quiet.

“Is… is this even fishing?”

“I've never seen anyone connected by destiny to so many heavenly dragonfish….”

“Something strange is going on here. Something very strange!!” After hearing what people were saying, Bai Xiaochun started to feel a bit guilty. He also felt bad by how profoundly shocked Preceptor Seadeep seemed. After putting away his third heavenly dragonfish, he decided that now was a good time to stop fishing.

“They… were actually fighting over the hook?!” Preceptor Seadeep muttered to himself, staring at Bai Xiaochun in dumbfounded shock. Then he thought back to his own hook, which not a single fish had ever even nibbled at…. All of a sudden, he realized that his over one hundred years of fishing experience seemed like nothing compared to Bai Xiaochun’s skills….

Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was about to leave, he suddenly lunged to block his path. As Bai Xiaochun looked at him warily, the man’s gaze slowly came to rest… on Bai Xiaochun's fishing pole.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, is that fishing pole for sale?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1061 awe-chapter-1062

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun was initially confused. However, after seeing the crazed Preceptor Seadeep’s bloodshot eyes shift to look at his fishing pole, he realized the truth. The man had clearly come to the conclusion that there was something special about his gear that enabled him to hook so many heavenly dragonfish.

“Well, I guess it makes sense,” he thought. “This awesome demigod fisherman has been fishing here for more than a hundred years, and obviously has really sharp eyes!”

From the way Preceptor Seadeep was breathing, it seemed he was having a hard time keeping himself under control.

“Name your price, Fellow Daoist Bai,” he said. “I want that gear of yours!”

If he had been dealing with anyone else, he would probably have just tried to forcefully take the fishing rod. But Bai Xiaochun was Duke Heavenspan. He had both a high position in the government and also a high cultivation base. Even more potentially threatening was the fact that he was the leader of the Heavenspan Realm.

Therefore, using force on him wasn’t an option. He could only try to work out a deal.

When the crowd heard what was being said, they suddenly looked at the fishing pole, and started to wonder if there was something suspicious about it. Soon, many eyes began to burn with passion over the thought of what it might be able to do.

Preceptor Seadeep was the type of person most people would avoid offending, and yet, there were still a few cultivators in the crowd who pulled out jade slips to send messages to important people.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, since you’re new to Saint-Emperor City, I wouldn’t be surprised if you’re a bit short on funds. How about this… I’ll pay you 1,000,000 spirit stones for that fishing pole. What do you say?!” With that, he stood there nervously, worried that others might try to jump in and outbid him.

“Uh….” Bai Xiaochun said, hesitating. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to sell the fishing pole, but rather, he knew that it wouldn’t work at this point. Whoever he sold it to would be completely screwed over.

As a good person, he wasn’t comfortable with the idea of conning people in such a way.

“Preceptor Seadeep,” he said, “even if I sold you the fishing pole, it wouldn’t work.”

Preceptor Seadeep was really starting to get anxious, and prepared to say something else, but Bai Xiaochun cut him off with the wave of a hand.

Slinging the fishing pole over his shoulder and tucking his other hand behind his back, he sighed loftily and said, “Preceptor Seadeep, fishing requires patience, you know. As the ancient saying goes, *luck brings achievements, fate brings failure*. Understand that, and it will help you remain tranquil and even-tempered. Fix heaven and earth within your heart and mind. There are countless living beings within creation, all of which are intelligent in their own way. Remember, everything is connected; if a heavenly dragonfish has sown destiny with you, it will come to you. It’s how life works.

“You saw me fishing just now, but the truth is that I was contemplating life. With a temperament like yours, you probably shouldn’t waste your time here.”

Preceptor Seadeep’s expression darkened as he heard the very words he had spoken to Bai Xiaochun parroted back to him. Although the detestation he felt toward Bai Xiaochun only continued to grow, he simply wasn’t willing to be refused.

“I’ll add in three Godbarrier Pills!” he said through gritted teeth. He was absolutely determined to get the fishing pole. Even if he could only use it to catch one or two heavenly dragonfish, it would be worth it.

Starting to feel frustrated, Bai Xiaochun said, “Preceptor Seadeep, I really can't sell it. It won’t work for you! Why are you making things hard for me?”

Eyes completely bloodshot, Preceptor Seadeep said, “Hogwash! I want it even if it won’t work! Look, I’ll add in ten Immortal Ruins Pills! Deal?! Think this through clearly. I'm a very important person in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. When Chen Su sees me, he calls me Master!” It was an obvious threat that Seadeep normally wouldn’t resort to. However, he was feeling very nervous at the moment.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he glared back at him.

“Alright, old man,” he said coldly. “If I sell you this fishing pole and it doesn’t work, then don’t blame me. Everybody here can bear witness to what I just told you!”

At this point, Preceptor Seadeep hesitated for a moment, but then got too nervous and said, “No problem!”

It was a huge amount of spirit stones and medicinal pills. To most demigods, it would be a ridiculous amount of wealth, but Preceptor Seadeep was very rich, so he could afford it.

With that, he pulled out his bag of holding and handed over what he owed. Bai Xiaochun inspected it, then gave Preceptor Seadeep a deep look before handing him the fishing pole. Then he swished his sleeve and walked off toward his blessed land.

After he left, Preceptor Seadeep carried the fishing pole over to the very spot where Bai Xiaochun had been standing earlier. Instead of casting his line, though, he simply studied the area for a bit, then turned and left.

Everyone watched as he walked away, anxious to know the truth about the fishing pole. However, they clearly wouldn’t get an answer now, and so the crowd departed.

Preceptor Seadeep took a long walk through the city until he found a spot where he had a bit of privacy. There, he performed a few tests. Unfortunately, every time he cast out the line, the heavenly dragonfish would just swim past the hook. Eventually, he pulled in the line, his face completely expressionless, but his eyes flickering.

“Does he think I'm an idiot or something? That money was nothing. Maybe the fishing pole doesn’t work anymore, but there’s definitely something suspicious about it. It might not be obvious right away, but I’ll figure out what it is eventually!”

With that, he studied the fishing pole a bit more closely. Eventually, his gaze came to rest on the hook, which he pulled closer to his face. He even sniffed it.

“Looks normal, but there’s definitely something unusual about it! Well, in the end, a lot of people saw this thing hook three heavenly dragonfish, and never saw it fail. If I play my cards right, I can probably sell it to someone and make some of my money back!”

Before long, news began to spread in Saint-Emperor City about the events of the day. Many of the court officials were shocked, especially when they heard about how Preceptor Seadeep ended up buying the fishing pole. That in itself led many people to come up with their own ideas about what had gone on.

Even the Saint-Emperor heard the news. Considering that the heavenly dragonfish all belonged to him, he knew more about them than anyone. Although the matter of being connected by destiny was ostensibly true, there was no way someone would be able to catch three fish in a row that way.

Curious, the Saint-Emperor sent his Archaean Realm divine sense into the heavenly pond to check on all the dragonfish. However, he didn’t detect anything unusual.

He eventually sent down orders to have the fishing pole brought from Preceptor Seadeep for him to inspect. But the fishing pole didn’t bear any unusual clues either.

Although the Saint-Emperor was still a bit suspicious, he decided that three heavenly dragonfish weren’t worth making a big fuss about. Besides, he was reaching a critical juncture in a certain Daoist magic that he was cultivating. Not wanting to be distracted any further, he entered a private chamber and began to cultivate in seclusion.

The night passed uneventfully. Bai Xiaochun was very nervous the entire time, but by the time the light of dawn came, his eyes began to shine.

“Nothing happened!” Laughing heartily, he licked his lips and got to work. One fish he roasted, the other he stewed, and the third he sliced up and ate in a hotpot.… By the time he finished his breathing exercises, it was evening. Opening his eyes, he excitedly grabbed another random fishing pole and found a good place to do some more fishing.…

In one fell swoop, he hooked more than twenty! The people in the area were as stunned as wooden chickens.

On the third day, after confirming that no one had come to cause problems for him, he gritted his teeth and hooked more than a hundred fish in one shot.… The court officials were stunned, but as for the Saint-Emperor, he was still in secluded meditation, and had no idea what was happening.…

On the fourth and fifth days… Bai Xiaochun’s courage grew. Soon, he was catching hundreds of fish every day!!

“Heavens! Something big is happening!!”

“Bai Xiaochun has already caught thousands of fish! There are only 20,000 or so left in the heavenly pond!!”

“He’s undermining the foundation of Saint-Emperor City!! The pond is going to run out of fish soon!”

By this point, news of Bai Xiaochun’s fishing was sweeping through the whole Saint-Emperor Dynasty!! All of the important officials were in a huge uproar. Even the celestials were shaken. And yet, Bai Xiaochun’s status was sensitive, and none of them could come up with any clues about what was happening. All they could do was brace themselves for the moment that the Saint-Emperor came out of secluded meditation.

Meanwhile, the crestfallen Heavenly Marquis Liu could only sigh and murmur, “Don’t say I didn’t warn you!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1062 awe-chapter-1063

The matter of the heavenly dragonfish was the talk of Saint-Emperor City. Not only were a lot of people grinning maliciously in their hearts, many even began to denounce Bai Xiaochun publicly.

Deep in the imperial palace was a cistern surrounded by a forest of ornamental rocks, where the spiritual energy was stronger than anywhere else in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

There were many restrictive spells in the area, as well as precious treasures. Close examination would reveal that the cistern was actually connected to the entire mountain upon which Saint-Emperor City and the heavenly pond was built. Anyone who even got close to this place would be physically and mentally shaken.

It was one of the most well-protected places in all of the Eternal Lands. Even if the Vile-Emperor came, he would be unable to get close without being affected by the restrictive spells.

Of course, there was little need to mention celestials such as Gu Tianjun. Unless the circumstances were absolutely dire, they would never even think of disturbing the Saint-Emperor’s secluded meditation. After all, cultivators would only seal their divine sense and go into absolute seclusion when a very critical cultivation step had been reached.

Although someone with a cultivation base as high as the Saint-Emperor’s would not likely experience a dangerous energy deviation if he were to be interrupted, distractions could lead to mistakes or failures.

But at this point, they felt that they had no choice…. Gu Tianjun, Chen Su, and a middle-aged man wearing a scholar's robe were all present, and currently in the middle of exchanging awkward glances. These were all of the celestials in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, with the exception of the fourth, who was currently stationed in the second immortal domain.

Gritting his teeth, Chen Su spoke in a loud voice laced with lamentation, “If things keep going this way, by the time the Saint-Emperor comes out of seclusion, his heavenly dragonfish… will be extinct.”

The scholar was inwardly despising Chen Su for his showy display of grief. However, his eyes shone with cold light as he loudly said, “That damned Bai Xiaochun! Maybe we should just arrest him and come up with some random crimes to charge him with….”

Gu Tianjun snorted coldly. Eyes flashing with killing intent, he said, “In my opinion, there’s no need to disturb the Saint-Emperor. I’ll just go cut down that traitor Bai Xiaochun myself!”

He hadn’t liked Bai Xiaochun from the beginning, and was just itching to do something to him. It was only Chen Su and this other middle-aged cultivator who had prevented him from doing so.

In the opinions of Chen Su and the scholar, they were the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, not the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. In the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it was important to follow the rules, and so far, Bai Xiaochun had not violated any. Plus, he had a special status. Despite being celestials, they couldn’t simply make a move against him.

Most importantly, they knew that Bai Xiaochun had a world treasure. Although all three felt confident in being able to handle him, the result of such a battle would not be determined quickly.

If they joined forces… the consequences could be severe, and if the heavenly dragonfish were affected as a result, that would be even worse.

Gu Tianjun had been listening to such lines of reasoning for days now, much to his annoyance. For one thing, he knew that the other two had other reasons for preventing him from taking action. And all of it made him even more anxious to do something about Bai Xiaochun.

Another factor was that all three of the celestials knew that if these heavenly dragonfish belonged to them, and Bai Xiaochun did something like this, they absolutely would not let the matter slide. They would already have done something. Unfortunately… the heavenly dragonfish belonged to the Saint-Emperor, not them.

And there was one final aspect, the most important of all…. Bai Xiaochun had been fishing every day for half a month, and despite the fact that all of the aristocracy was grumbling angrily about it… none of them did anything to stop him.

And that was because he never ate alone!

Every day, he would send some heavenly dragonfish to certain officials of the court. That included Chen Su, the scholar celestial, and even Gu Tianjun, to whom he had sent several.

Of course, all of them would have loved to get even more fish than they had. But they were clever schemers one and all, and did not hold back from expressing outrage over what was happening. Now they had come here to warn the Saint-Emperor about what was happening, which would also ensure that they weren't blamed for holding back.

Moments ago, they had made sure to speak especially loudly about their complaints, bolstering their voices with their cultivation bases in the hopes that they would be heard by the Saint-Emperor within his secluded meditation facilities.

Moments later, powerful fluctuations erupted from within the cistern, fluctuations that began to shake Saint-Emperor City as a whole.

Around that time, Bai Xiaochun was in his blessed land, in the middle of eating a roast fish. Suddenly, he shivered, and looked in the direction of the imperial palace.

“A few days ago, that wily fox Chen Su hinted that the Saint-Emperor was in secluded meditation.... Seems the Saint-Emperor is about to come out!” Bai Xiaochun was a bit nervous, but reminded himself that he had given away about thirty percent of the heavenly dragonfish he had caught in the past half a month or so.

“The law fails when too many people are guilty. Besides, I kidnapped a celestial for him. I doubt he'll care much about a few fish.” Rubbing his nose, he cleared his throat and ravenously devoured the rest of the fish he had roasted.

In the depths of the imperial palace, the cistern opened, and the Saint-Emperor slowly emerged, his green garments rustling in the wind. The three celestials who had gathered quickly bowed in greeting.

An unsightly expression could be seen on the Saint-Emperor’s face. Considering how loudly the celestials had spoken moments before, bolstering their voices with their cultivation base, it was impossible for him to have not heard what they were talking about. After sending his divine sense out into the city to check the situation, he knew exactly what was going on.

The entire thing had him feeling very shaken. After all, nearly twenty percent of the fish in the heavenly pond were gone, leaving him feeling stabbed to the heart.

“My fish….” he murmured angrily, doing his best to control his breathing as he glared at the three celestials. Naturally, he knew exactly what they were up to. They were trying to both benefit from Bai Xiaochun, and at the same time, make sure they weren’t implicated.

Then he considered how many fish Bai Xiaochun had gifted to other members of the aristocracy. Although he hadn’t given fish to everyone, he had made sure to include all of the most important people.

Face twitching, he realized that anything he did now would be as ineffective as punching a pillow. Not only was Bai Xiaochun’s status particularly unique, but he had given away fish to too many people. The Saint-Emperor could already feel a big headache coming on.

In terms of punishing Bai Xiaochun… he obviously couldn’t execute him. And locking him up didn’t seem like a viable option either. He could levy a fine, but at the moment, Bai Xiaochun had almost no wealth. Clearly, he didn’t have anything to fear in that department.

In terms of his special status… the Saint-Emperor had come to the conclusion that the best thing would be to just send him away from the capital city!

“Well played, Bai Xiaochun. You’re forcing me to let you go!” A moment later, the Saint-Emperor waved his right hand toward the heavenly pond, causing a frigid qi to erupt out from the imperial city.

In the blink of an eye, cracking sounds filled the air as the heavenly pond began to ice over. After ten breaths of time passed, the surface of the lake was solid ice!!

It was now completely sealed, making it impossible for anyone with a cultivation base lower than the Saint-Emperor’s to do any fishing!

“Let’s see how you fish now!” he growled to himself. Swishing his sleeve, he ignored the three celestials and went back into the cistern to continue his session of secluded meditation.

The celestials eyed each other, cleared their throats, and then left.

Soon, news was spreading everywhere about the pond having been sealed. Bai Xiaochun got word from the court officials that he had become friendly with. Although there was a bit of a commotion, it wasn't a huge deal.

In fact, despite not being very happy with how it had been handled, many people breathed sighs of relief that this particular crisis had now been resolved.

“So stingy!” Bai Xiaochun grumbled. “He’s a mighty Saint-Emperor! There are more than 20,000 heavenly dragonfish left in that pond! I only got about 3,000 so far. I'd say 10,000 would be a good limit. I invested a lot of Fantasy Pills into this venture!” Despite all of the heavenly dragonfish he had eaten so far, he was still quite a distance away from a cultivation base breakthrough. It was a real pity.

However, the sight of the heavenly pond covered in ice caused him to hesitate….

“Weird. Something about it seems off.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1063 awe-chapter-1064

Bai Xiaochun was already famous for kidnapping Ghostmother, as well as for his status as the Arch-Ancestor of the Heavenspan Realm. But now… he was even more famous, thanks to the heavenly dragonfish.

It was almost overnight that the name of Duke Heavenspan Bai Xiaochun rocked all of Saint-Emperor City.

“Did you hear? Duke Heavenspan caught over 3,000 heavenly dragonfish, but in the end, His Majesty the Saint-Emperor didn’t punish him at all!”

“Not only did he not punish him, the venerable Saint-Emperor actually sealed up the entire heavenly pond!”

“He actually forced the Saint-Emperor to seal the heavenly pond…? This Bai Xiaochun is totally unfathomable! I bet if you gave him another half a month, he would catch so many heavenly dragonfish they'd go extinct!” All sorts of talk spread within the city, and once again, Bai Xiaochun felt what it was like to be the center of attention. The number of eyes that locked onto him when he went out was now many times greater than before.

Wherever he went, people would point at him and whisper to each other….

“Seems I really am just too outstanding. Not even the cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains can restrain their emotions when looking at me.” He cleared his throat as he reveled in the sensation. To him, it didn't feel strange at all. After all, he had experienced situations like this many times before.

However, even as he was sighing in contentment, the Wildlander Heavenly Marquis Liu decided to take this opportunity to pen a long speech to deliver to the Saint-Emperor, in which he thoroughly excoriated Bai Xiaochun!

The next time court was in session, Heavenly Marquis Liu walked out in front of all of the court officials, and clasped hands formally to the Saint-Emperor. Then he delivered his speech, barely stopping to take a breath as he spoke.

“I, your servant, will explain the means by which Bai Xiaochun stole the heavenly dragonfish!

“Based on your servant’s extensive analysis, as well as my understanding of Bai Xiaochun, plus a significant expenditure on my part to purchase an actual heavenly dragonfish to study, I finally understand what happened!

“Your Majesty, Bai Xiaochun definitely used some type of medicinal pill!

“I don't know much about the medicine concocting techniques of the Heavenspan Realm, but I do know that they are different from those in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Therefore, I am convinced that he used some special medicine to wreak calamity on the venerated heavenly dragonfish, and steal them away!

“The heavenly dragonfish are innocent victims, and also national treasures. They are unfamiliar with the wickedness that lurks in the human heart. Thus, they were cruelly slaughtered, in the most egregious and unprecedented miscarriage of justice to have ever been perpetrated since the founding of the dynasty! Men and gods alike are angered, and thus, I wish to demand redress for the grievances of the heavenly dragonfish. Your Majesty, I implore you to throw Bai Xiaochun into the heavenly pond and let the fishes eat him!”

Bai Xiaochun gasped in response to his words. Court was held once a month, and this was his first time attending. He had been nervous at first, worried that someone would bring up the heavenly dragonfish. As the court session went on, it seemed like no one planned to. The Saint-Emperor was as warm as ever, and had seemingly calmed down.

But then, in completely unexpected fashion, Heavenly Marquis Liu had suddenly jumped out with his accusations. It was really infuriating.

“Alright, Old Liu,” he murmured inwardly. “I see how it is. Back when I was handing out heavenly dragonfish, I gave some extra to you, for the sake of the Heavenspan Realm. And now you want to feed me to the fishes? Oh, you just wait and see what I’ve got coming for you!” Chuckling coldly in his heart, he began to come up with a plan for how to teach Heavenly Marquis Liu a lesson. Back in the Wildlands, he'd ended up running away to the Great Wall, but now, he had nowhere to escape to!

Many strange expressions could be seen on the faces of the officials in the square. They looked at Heavenly Marquis Liu, and then at Bai Xiaochun, and nobody spoke. Quite a few people were frowning coldly at Heavenly Marquis Liu.

It wasn't that people had suddenly switched to siding with Bai Xiaochun. Normally speaking, they would have loved to hit him when he was down. However, they had all accepted gifts of heavenly dragonfish from him. Although they regretted doing that, what was done was done. Even the

Saint-Emperor didn’t want to bring the matter up again, and was a bit frustrated that this Liu fellow was so foolish as to bring the matter up in court.

A frown appeared on the Saint-Emperor’s face. After all, Bai Xiaochun was the ringleader of the heavenly dragonfish disaster, but almost all of the other important people in the aristocracy had joined in….

It was a big headache no matter what way he looked at it. Furthermore, in the past, he would never have even thought to eat a heavenly dragonfish. As they were national treasures, he only gave them out as gifts. But now….

As far as what Heavenly Marquis Liu had just pointed out, it was nothing the Saint-Emperor didn’t already know. After the main event played out, he did a deeper investigation of the heavenly pond, and found evidence pointing to that very conclusion. However, by that point, it didn't matter. Besides, Bai Xiaochun had been very careful, and only the most trace and vague evidence had been left behind.

If the Saint-Emperor had truly wanted to pursue the matter, he could have. But after considering everything, he decided not to. He did have a bottom line, though. If he unsealed the pond later, and Bai Xiaochun went back to fishing, then he would be courting death.

Stifling his annoyance, the Saint-Emperor coolly said, “Do you have any evidence, my dear subject?”

“Just do an investigation, Your Majesty!” Heavenly Marquis Liu replied excitedly. “You’ll definitely find evidence!”

“Very well. You're dismissed. I’ll arrange for an investigation.” With that, the Saint-Emperor rose to his feet, indicating that court was adjourned. As the crowds dispersed, many a cold glance was cast in Heavenly Marquis Liu’s direction.

Heavenly Marquis Liu could sense that something was off, and suddenly shivered as he realized the implications of what the Saint-Emperor had said.

“You people just don’t get it!” he cried in his heart. “You’re gonna regret this. Bai Xiaochun… is a natural-born disaster!!”

Heavenly Marquis Liu was filled with grief and indignation, whereas Bai Xiaochun was actually furious. Snorting coldly, he cast a burning glare at Heavenly Marquis Liu, more determined than ever to teach him a lesson.

It was currently late autumn. After leaving court and heading back toward his blessed land, Bai Xiaochun continued to ponder how to deal with Heavenly Marquis Liu, and at the same time, considered what to do about the frozen surface of the heavenly pond. Eventually, he sighed.

“Well, considering that the heavenly dragonfish were starting to lose effectiveness anyway, I guess it's fine if I don’t fish for them.” Shaking his head, he continued on his way to his blessed land. However, at one point along the way, he happened to look over at the thick layer of ice on top of the heavenly pond, and could just barely make out what appeared to be a heavenly dragonfish banging its head against the ice as if to break it. Unfortunately, the magical technique which had been used to seal the pond was far too powerful, making the ice impossible to break.

However, what Bai Xiaochun was seeing caused sweat to break out on his forehead.

“I knew I forgot something!” he thought, his eyes widening and his heart starting to race. He had just now realized that there was something he had overlooked….

“The fish… were already addicted to Fantasy Pills. Back when I was fishing for half a month, I would still occasionally toss some Fantasy Pills into the water to curb their craving.

“But now that the pond is sealed, the fish have absolutely no Fantasy Pills! They’ve basically gone off the pills cold turkey….” More sweat began to drip down his face.

“Well, it’s not like the fish will actually go crazy, right?” Heart pounding, he considered going to warn the Saint-Emperor. However, that seemed like it would just be asking for trouble.

“Well… he probably won't blame me for this, right? He’s the one who sealed the heavenly pond….” Muttering to himself in this fashion, he hurried back to his blessed land.

For the following few days, he stewed in anxiety. Even the slightest rustling leaf would startle him. For some reason, he was convinced that the heavenly dragonfish were going to go completely crazy at any moment.

“I should think of a way to get more Fantasy Pills to them!” Even as he sighed and pondered the issue… all of Saint-Emperor City trembled!

Everything shook, from the lotus leaves to the buildings on them. Even the imperial palace and the lotus flower trembled. Instantly, cultivators everywhere rushed out into the open to see what was going on.

“What just happened?!”

“Is the enemy attacking!?”

The court officials were all shaken. Chen Su and the other celestials sent their divine sense out to see what was happening. Divine sense also poured out from the imperial palace to sweep all heaven and earth.

“That’s….”

“Heavenly dragonfish!”

“They’re… they're going crazy!! They’re eating the lotus leaves!!!”

Because the fish couldn’t get through the layer of ice, they had begun to chew at the lotus leaves, the very base of the city!

When Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, his jaw dropped, and he nearly began to weep!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1064 awe-chapter-1065

All of the heavenly dragonfish in the pond were going violently crazy.

Although the heavenly pond had been sealed with ice by the Saint-Emperor, that only affected the surface of the water. Because of the magical technique used, the fish couldn’t break the seal. However… there were thousands of lotus leaves in the pond as well!

It wasn’t possible to seal the leaves. If the heavenly pond was the foundation of Saint-Emperor City, then the thousands of lotus leaves were the ground upon which the city was actually built. Countless buildings rose up from those leaves, and the flower in the middle of them all housed the imperial palace.

Because the lotus leaves weren’t sealed, when the heavenly dragonfishes’ withdrawal symptoms reached a certain point, they changed targets. Specifically, they began to ravenously attack the roots that sank down into the water.

It got so bad so quickly that some of the leaves began to tilt to the side.

Soon, holes were bitten in the edges of some of the lotus leaves as countless heavenly dragonfish attacked them….

From the look of things, Saint-Emperor City was about to be hit by a huge catastrophe….

Most shocking of all was that a significant amount of the heavenly dragonfish weren’t attacking the lotus leaves, but rather… the root of the lotus flower upon which the imperial palace was built!!

The crazed fish laid into it with such force that it began to visibly tilt to one side….

Massive waves of shock were battering all cultivators present. Soon, an enraged voice erupted from the imperial palace.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” All creation shook under the force of that voice. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun sat in his blessed land, scowling on the verge of tears, and also extremely alarmed.

“This isn’t my fault! I just ate some fish…. And I'm not the one who sealed the heavenly pond….” That much was true. The events which had occurred after he ate his fish had been beyond his control. He was even trying as best he could to come up with a solution to the situation.

“I performed a great service for the dynasty! All I did was eat some fish! The Saint-Emperor was the one who sealed the pond….” Unfortunately, he couldn’t think of any way to fix things.

By this time, all of Saint-Emperor City was astir. The Saint-Emperor appeared up in midair, his cheek twitching as he surveyed the city. Although he had no evidence which could prove that Bai Xiaochun was responsible for what was happening, it seemed obvious that it must have something to do with his fishing activities.

He really felt like killing someone, but had to suppress that desire. And right now, he had to worry about the safety of the city, not spend time thinking about Bai Xiaochun. Therefore, he extended his right hand and shoved it down toward the heavenly pond.

The boundless power of his archaean cultivation base erupted out, covering everything in sight. As it did, the frigid qi began to rush toward him from all corners of the Eternal Lands.

The sky went dim and filled with rumbling sounds as, in the blink of an eye, the frigid qi gathered in the area around the Saint-Emperor. Then, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, causing the frigid qi to pour into the heavenly pond!

Cracking sounds rang out as the ice began to spread from the surface down into the depths of the pond!

All of the violent heavenly dragonfish were rapidly sealed in place as the entire pond transformed into ice!

And things weren’t over yet! Grim-faced, the Saint-Emperor performed another incantation gesture, then waved his right index finger, transforming his archaean cultivation base power into a holy energy. At that point, the Saint-Emperor started to glow so brightly that he looked like a sun!

Dazzling sunlight shone out in all directions, and yet, it didn't contain any heat, only the most pure and holy of energies.

Holy purity filled all of Saint-Emperor City, entering the frozen heavenly pond and then reaching out to touch the thousands upon thousands of sealed heavenly dragonfish.

All hidden ailments and all violent tendencies within them, even scars from the fighting that had gone on between the dragonfish before Bai Xiaochun’s arrival, suddenly vanished…. In the shortest moment, the dragonfish were cleansed and purified.

Bai Xiaochun could sense what was happening, and he gasped in shock. As of this moment, he came to an even better understanding of how powerful archaeans were.

Everything happened very suddenly. The Saint-Emperor waved his hand, and the heavenly dragonfish calmed down. It only took a few breaths of time. After the dragonfish were purified, the ice melted, and soon, the fish began to swim about lazily just like they had in the past, without any trace of violence or madness in them....

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, as did all the other cultivators in Saint-Emperor City, the Saint-Emperor included. However, the magic he had just used did nothing to repair the damaged lotus leaves, or the lotus flower, which was still tilted at an angle. As such, anger still burned among the populace of the city.

The Saint-Emperor was so furious he had a hard time keeping himself under control and not smacking Bai Xiaochun to death.

Unfortunately, appointing Bai Xiaochun as Duke Heavenspan not only gave hope to the Heavenspan cultivators within the Eternal Immortal Domains, but it had also raised a banner of recruitment within the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

The Saint-Emperor was already getting reports that Heavenspan cultivators were flocking to offer their services to his dynasty. Because of that, he definitely could not kill Bai Xiaochun.

“One of these days, your usefulness will come to an end, and then we’ll settle accounts!” Gnashing his teeth, he took a moment to decide on what punishment to dole out because of what had happened. After a moment, he snorted coldly and issued a Dharmic decree.

“Duke Heavenspan’s salary shall hereby be reduced by a full rank for the next 10,000 years. Furthermore, he will henceforth be assigned to collect and dispose of the excrement of the heavenly dragonfish!

“The powers of his colored belt will be limited, and he will personally repair all of the lotus leaves in Saint-Emperor City!”

After he finished speaking, even the Saint-Emperor realized that this punishment wasn't very severe. And then he thought about everything Liu Yong had said, and realized that he had indeed been forewarned about everything.

“Appoint Liu Yong as the parole captain!” With that, he swished his sleeve and returned, grim-faced, to the imperial palace.

The entire city was angry with Bai Xiaochun, who currently sat sullenly in his blessed land. As for Heavenly Marquis Liu, he couldn’t have been more excited at his promotion. Clearly, the Saint-Emperor now knew how troublesome Bai Xiaochun could be, and had assigned Heavenly Marquis Liu to watch over him.

“Fear not, Your Majesty. Your servant will watch Bai Xiaochun like a hawk! And I will also make sure to create an official record of every single crime he has committed!”

As everyone seethed with anger, Bai Xiaochun sighed and looked in the direction of the imperial palace.

“I nearly cracked the foundation of Saint-Emperor City, and this is how I get punished?” He blinked a few times, thinking about how obvious it was that the Saint-Emperor really wanted to kill him. Thankfully, he still had a measure of safety.

Over the course of the following days, the scowling Bai Xiaochun had no choice other than to clean the excrement of the heavenly dragonfish, and simultaneously ignore all the people pointing and staring at him.

Of course there was an upside. While he was working hard, he had a chance to hear a lot of the gossip about the Eternal Lands as a whole. For one thing, he was able to confirm that Gongsun Wan’er had not been lying to him about nature of cultivation levels. After the Celestial Realm was the Archaean Realm, and beyond that, the Sovereign Realm.

He also got a message from the Giant Ghost King, confirming yet again that the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and Vile-Emperor Dynasty were unable to perform spirit enhancements, while the people of Heavenspan were. That was one of the reasons why both dynasties were eager to absorb the newcomers.

The Giant Ghost King also had some complaints. It turned out that Godsifter Prefecture was completely impoverished and sparsely populated. However, because of the public nature of how Bai Xiaochun had kidnapped Ghostmother, many Heavenspan cultivators had taken the initiative to go there.

Unfortunately, Godsifter Prefecture was located in the second immortal domain, and the celestial who ruled there stepped in to scatter many of the newly arrived Heavenspan cultivators into other random prefectures. The Giant Ghost King was worried that if things went on like this, they would eventually be assimilated into the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

Eventually, there would be no more so-called Heavenspan cultivators.

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy about the news. Perhaps it would be good for individual Heavenspan cultivators, most of whom simply wanted to settle down and live peacefully. However, Bai Xiaochun wanted to at least give them a choice in the matter.

Either assimilate into the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, or chose to remember their true home…. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty was not giving them an option, but Bai Xiaochun hoped to do just that.

And he would respect whatever they chose.

“The only way I can do that is to get stronger!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, his eyes began to glitter. Eating thousands of heavenly dragonfish had eventually reduced their effectiveness. However, the process had come with great benefits.

His Live Forever Codex was now only a hair away from the great circle!

Once he reached the great circle, he could make his attempt to leave the Demigod Realm and become a celestial by stepping into the Mahayana Realm!

“I need more spirit plants that can be used to concoct immortal pills!” Taking a deep breath, he looked around at Saint-Emperor City and tried to think of what he could use to increase his cultivation base….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1065 awe-chapter-1066

However, even after much consideration, he couldn’t think of anything that would help him speed up his cultivation progress. And the heavenly dragonfish weren’t really an option anymore.

“I guess I’ll have to concoct some pills,” he murmured under his breath. Although the techniques in the Eternal Lands differed from those in the Heavenspan Realm, and were very costly, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t think of any other options.

Most importantly, he had a lot of medicinal plants in his bag of holding.

“I also have some fish jerky left over….” He had actually caught too many fish to eat at once, and had therefore dried some of it out to save for later. “I bet people would pay a pretty penny for jerky like this!”

Although concocting some pills seemed like an exciting prospect, he also hesitated. After all, throughout all the years, it had become obvious that strange things happened whenever he concocted pills.

And if anything disastrous happened in Saint-Emperor City so soon after the heavenly dragonfish incident, it would likely be very bad for him.

Another half a month went by in which Bai Xiaochun went about his cleanup work. The dragonfish were completely back to normal, and he could only grit his teeth as he watched the days go by.

Eventually, he made his decision. He bought the equipment he needed to concoct medicine, and then spent several days making all the necessary preparations. Only then did he murmur, “I’ll just be really careful. Everything… should be fine….”

Perhaps it was because his skill in medicine concocting had improved, or perhaps it was because he was being overly cautious. Either way, even after concocting several batches of pills, nothing out of the ordinary occurred.

Bai Xiaochun was elated, but at the same time, had learned his lesson from all the times in the past in which he proudly assumed that he had succeeded. Therefore, he continued to be very careful. Although it made things take more time, it also ensured that things went very smoothly.

Time continued to go by. Bai Xiaochun would attend court every month, but most of the time, he just stood there bored, or even just closed his eyes and ignored what was going on. His only other main activity was concocting pills.

A few more months passed. His cultivation did not progress as quickly as it had when he was eating heavenly dragonfish, but it grew more stable, and did experience some progress.

From what he could tell, it would only take a few more years for him to reach the great circle of the Demigod Realm.

In the months that passed, the court officials and the Saint-Emperor noticed that he was keeping a low profile. There were no nasty incidents, and therefore, they began to breathe sighs of relief inwardly. On the outside, they were as sanctimonious as ever with both their smiles and words alike.

To the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it didn’t matter how much of a low profile Bai Xiaochun kept, he was still a foreigner.

Bai Xiaochun simply pretended to not understand their condescending way of speaking. He spent his days concocting pills and working on his cultivation. Eventually, Saint-Emperor City entered a period of protracted peace and quiet.

The only person who wasn’t happy was Heavenly Marquis Liu. He had been sharpening his proverbial swords as he waited for Bai Xiaochun to cause a problem, but even after all the time that had passed, nothing happened. All the peace and quiet was making Heavenly Marquis Liu very nervous.

“He must have hatched some big plot!!” Convinced of this, he began to watch Bai Xiaochun even more closely.

And thus the days passed. Autumn became winter, and cold settled onto the lands of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Eventually, lotus seed pods began to appear on the surface of the water.

When the cultivators of Saint-Emperor City noticed this, they got very excited, and word quickly began to spread.

“The lotus seed pods are out!!”

“Don't tell me we’re going to be blessed with a series of grand lotus banquets!?!?”

“The last time the lotus seed pods appeared was half a sixty-year-cycle ago! I heard that anyone lucky enough to eat some lotus seeds will have significant cultivation base advancement!”

“It must be because His Majesty the Saint-Emperor used that special divine ability on the heavenly pond earlier in the year. That’s why the lotus seed pods have appeared earlier than usual!”

As word spread, crowds would gather at the edge of the lotus leaves to look at the lotus seed pods, of which there were dozens. Along with the pods came a fragrant aroma which filled Saint-Emperor City, and would stimulate the cultivation base of anyone who inhaled it.

There was such a buzz in the city that Bai Xiaochun heard about what was happening even though he hadn’t left his residence. And before long, he was able to smell the unusual aroma.

“Lotus seed pods!” Curious, he went out and started to ask around. What he discovered caused his eyes to light up.

“I was too focused on the heavenly dragonfish before. How could I have forgotten that the heavenly pond also has these other precious materials in it!?” He simply couldn’t suppress the look of joy that appeared on his face.

The reason Saint-Emperor City had been built on this heavenly pond to begin with was because of the consummate immortal lotus which existed in it. It was the only lotus like it within all the Eternal Lands, and was the envy of the Vile-Emperor himself. It was considered a precious treasure belonging to the entire city.

Its roots spread far and wide, and although it only had one flower, it had many leaves. Furthermore, every hundred years or so, it would send lotus seed pods to the surface of the water.

The seeds in those pods were nothing like ordinary lotus seeds, and in fact, once they were harvested, were almost like immortal pills.

Such seeds were considered precious treasures within the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and of course, the Saint-Emperor had set strict rules regarding how they could be harvested. In fact, only he himself was qualified to do so. Furthermore, he would only harvest 1,000 seeds in total. Usually, from the time the first lotus seed pod appeared until the last, and all of the 1,000 seeds were harvested, only a few weeks would pass.

Another custom was that, when the lotus pods appeared, and the seeds were harvested, the Saint-Emperor would throw a series of banquets. All of the court officials would attend, and would sip on immortal alcohol while the Saint-Emperor graced them with a performance of archaean magic. Then, he would reward certain individuals with lotus seeds.

Of the total of 1,000 seeds, only about 300 or so would be given to individual members of the court. Another 200 would be given as rewards to people who had performed great services for the dynasty. An additional 200 would be sent out and sold at auction.

The remaining 300 would remain in the imperial palace to be used as ingredients for concocting pills.

A few dozen lotus pods had already reached the surface of the water, and therefore, everyone was already talking about the possibility of a series of lotus banquets. People throughout the two immortal domains controlled by the Saint-Emperor Dynasty were getting excited, and the major clans began to make preparations to send representatives to the capital city.

“Lotus seeds that are similar to immortal pills?!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but lick his lips as he thought about what he had learned.

“As Duke Heavenspan, I should receive one of them as a gift, right?” His anticipation grew as a few more days passed. Then, the sound of tolling bells echoed out from the imperial palace. The lotus banquets that the court had been waiting for were about to begin.

Trying to keep his excitement in check, Bai Xiaochun arranged his garments and headed toward the palace. Upon arriving, he saw that the huge square was filled with thousands of banquet tables, upon which was spread a variety of delectable alcohols and immortal fruit, which numerous palace handmaidens drifted about to serve.

Quite a few important cultivators were already present, seated at various tables and engaging in small talk. Chen Su was there, as was Gu Tianjun and the other celestials. When Gu Tianjun caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, he simply looked the other way. As for Chen Su, he didn’t really like him very much, but still plastered a warm smile onto his face.

Most of the other important cultivators reacted similarly. The disdain that flickered deep in their eyes was something that most people wouldn’t notice. But considering the level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, and his familiarity with the nature of people, he could see it clearly.

“Well, if it isn’t Duke Heavenspan. He’s usually late when he comes to attend court, but now he's early!”

“Duke Heavenspan comes from a very small world. Presumably, he's never even seen immortal lotuses before. Considering his rank, though, the Saint-Emperor will probably give him a seed as a gift.”

“Now that you mention it, I bet Duke Heavenspan is the first person from the Heavenspan Realm to have ever eaten one of these immortal lotus seeds. Few ordinary people could be as lucky as him. He'd better make sure to eat it slowly and savor the flavor.”

Bai Xiaochun heard all of the talk about him, but merely cleared his throat and pretended he hadn’t noticed. Laughing heartily, he found a spot near the front of the square, where he sat down in the crowd.

Clearing his throat, he said unblinkingly, “Now that I think about it, I really miss how, back in the Heavenspan Realm, I would constantly munch on 100,000-year-old lotus seeds. I would usually spit them out though. I mostly just put them in my mouth for the flavor. The aftertaste would last for a whole day, and was truly unforgettable. I’d assumed I would never enjoy that again. Who would have thought I would run into some immortal lotus seeds here?

“It's too bad there aren’t any spirit tail chickens here. You know, there was one kind of immortal fowl back where I come from that evolved directly from the natural laws of heaven and earth. We called them heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing spirit tail chickens. We would usually roast them with 10,000-year-old snow lotus seeds, and then add in a few 500,000-year-old immortal peppers. Ah, now that is a flavor that will go with you through reincarnation!

“Sadly, I was only important enough to eat a few thousand of them.” With that he sighed, the gleam of reminiscence flickering strongly in his eyes.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1066 awe-chapter-1067

Silence prevailed for a long moment as everyone nearby looked over at Bai Xiaochun, strange expressions on their faces. Bragging was nothing uncommon, but not this level of fakery….

Furthermore, he said it with such a completely straight face that it seemed very convincing. Then people started thinking back to how he had bragged that the Vile-Emperor essentially got lucky to not be kidnapped by him. At this point, Chen Su cleared his throat and changed the conversation topic, striking up a conversation about cultivation with Gu Tianjun.

The others present looked away, and began to chat and laugh amongst themselves again. No one brought up the lotus seeds again, apparently not wanting to give Bai Xiaochun a chance to brag. His boasting left them with goosebumps.

“A 100,000-year-old snow lotus…? I guess it got lucky to not be picked for that long!”

“Heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing spirit tail chickens…? Bragging is fine, but does he really need to take it so seriously? That name is certainly fancy enough! If that were true, then I bet if they had heavenly dragonfish, they would call them starry sky invincible immortal realm paragon unmatchable heavenly dragonfish!”

“The worst was the 500,000-year-old immortal peppers. Dammit! I've never heard of anything that's 500,000 years old!!”

Cursing silently, everyone ignored Bai Xiaochun, which left him feeling quite pleased. Looking proudly over the crowd, he snorted in his heart. Although he didn’t feel himself to be an accomplished braggart, if he was pushed far enough, he could unleash boasts the likes of which the Eternal Lands could likely not withstand.

More excited cultivators began to arrive, including Preceptor Seadeep.

Although Preceptor Seadeep hated Bai Xiaochun with a passion, he smiled and offered a polite greeting. Other people who Bai Xiaochun had given heavenly dragonfish also came up to chat a bit.

They all despised him with a prejudice that their smiles could not hide. However, considering how much time Bai Xiaochun had spent in Saint-Emperor City so far, he was used to it. In fact, if they ever changed their ways, he would find it odd.

Since he was used to their way of interacting, he plastered a smile onto his own face and chatted amiably, taking every chance he was given to brag and boast.

Soon, the seats were mostly full, and more bells tolled. Everyone went quiet as the Saint-Emperor entered, smiling warmly as the crowd rose to their feet and bowed in greeting.

After taking his place at the seat of honor, he looked around at the crowd and even gave Bai Xiaochun a nod.

“Sit, everyone. Ladies and gentlemen, today is the lotus banquet, in which I will bestow immortal lotus seeds upon many of you.”

“Thank you, Your Majesty!” everyone said in unison, and then sat.

Bai Xiaochun followed along, then looked around in anticipation as he waited for the Saint-Emperor to start doling out the rewards.

He didn’t have to wait long. Smiling, the Saint-Emperor waved his hand, causing a powerful wind to kick up as a huge, illusory hand appeared up in the sky.

It radiated a holy glow that caused shock to fill Bai Xiaochun’s heart. As everyone looked on, the huge hand began to descend toward the heavenly pond.

As it swept over the lotus pods that floated on the surface, they opened, allowing golden lotus seeds to fly out of them!

The pods which had been harvested remained intact after the seeds were taken out of them, and slowly sank back down into the heavenly pond.

The largest of the seeds were fist-sized, and the smallest were more like a walnut, or even smaller. In total, only a few dozen appeared within the palace in front of the Saint-Emperor.

The dozens of lotus seeds shone with golden light, and filled the entire hall with their fragrant aroma. At the same time, a thin mist appeared, making the imperial palace seem exactly like a celestial paradise.

The aroma lifted the spirits of everyone present, and as for Bai Xiaochun, it caused his cultivation base to vibrate in anticipation.

“Celestial Chen Su, Celestial Gu, Celestial Sima. You three are the protectors of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Without you, the dynasty would not exist. As I once said, it is important to share with those around us in creation, measly immortal lotus seeds included.” The three celestials all rose to their feet and clasped hands formally, then accepted the large collection of lotus seeds that flew their way.

“The heavenly kings defend the dynasty, assisted by the various dukes under their command. As I have sworn, the blessings of heaven will most certainly be shared with you as well!” The Saint-Emperor waved his hand, sending another group of immortal lotus seeds out. Those who received them all bowed deeply in thanks.

Of the first group of lotus seeds, only five remained, most of them smaller than a walnut. Clearly, these seeds were not fully ripe.

As Bai Xiaochun saw the lotus seeds disappearing without a single one going to him, he started to get anxious. Feeling a bit jealous, he held his head high and his chest out, hoping to attract the attention of the Saint-Emperor.

“Hey, I’m a duke too!” he thought. Apparently, his actions worked. The Saint-Emperor’s eyes flickered, and after looking over at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, he hesitated, then waved his right hand.

“The other dukes and marquises who have performed services for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty will not be left out!”

The five remaining lotus seeds flew out, with one of them heading toward Bai Xiaochun. He reached out excitedly and grabbed it, but afterward, frowned slightly.

It was impossible to tell if it was a coincidence or not, but it seemed like his lotus seed was the smallest and least ripe.

The truth was that because of the heavenly dragonfish incident, the Saint-Emperor didn’t have a good impression of Bai Xiaochun at all. However, because of his title, and the loyalty the Heavenspan cultivators showed toward him, the Saint-Emperor had to at least make a show of treating him well.

“On this first day, 49 immortal lotus seeds have been bestowed upon my dear subjects. There is no need to be anxious. All those who have performed services for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty will eventually be rewarded.” The Saint-Emperor didn’t actually need to be present for the entire banquet. After offering a few more words of encouragement, he turned and left.

After his departure, the buzz of conversation grew loud. Those who had received lotus seeds were of course congratulated by the cultivators around them, and before long, the sound of laughter filled the air.

People crowded around Bai Xiaochun as well, and when they saw how small his lotus seed was, they mocked him in their hearts. On the surface, though, they offered perfunctory congratulations.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling a bit depressed, but there was nothing he could do about it. After those around him finished with their congratulations, he looked around and noticed how some people were already consuming the lotus seeds they had been given. Therefore, he looked down at his and, seeing no reason not to, popped it into his mouth. Instantly, a pleasant aroma filled him, accompanied by a scorching heat.

All of the energy passageways in his body thrummed for a full ten breaths of time. After that, the heat vanished. And yet, he could sense that his cultivation base had risen with volcanic speed during that short time!

Although he hadn't yet broken out of the late Demigod Realm, the progress he had just made surpassed anything from the heavenly dragonfish.

“So incredible!” he thought, shocked. He had known that the lotus seeds were extraordinarily effective, but could never have guessed that they would provide all those benefits in only ten breaths of time.

Furthermore, the seeds contained no impurities whatsoever, and also conformed automatically to whatever techniques were used by the cultivator who consumed them. They were like consummate medicinal pills that didn’t contain even the slightest toxic element!

“Ten more… or maybe even five! With that many, I could break out of the late Demigod Realm!” His heart pounded and burned at how effective the lotus seeds were, and he couldn’t stop pondering how to get more.

Eventually, the banquet ended, and he went back home, where he sat down to think.

“The Saint-Emperor definitely won't give me any more….

“There are plenty to be had in the heavenly pond. But getting my hands on them would cause a huge scene…. If only I could harvest them secretly….” Frowning anxiously, he looked out at all the lotus pods on the heavenly pond, filled with seeds… that he couldn’t eat.

“I ate thousands of fish. I refuse to believe… that these lotus seeds will stump me!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1067 awe-chapter-1068

Bai Xiaochun felt like his ears were itching in frustration. He was determined to wolf down as many lotus seeds as he could, and yet, despite pondering the issue for an entire night, had nothing to show for it.

He had no interest in attending the second lotus banquet. Instead, he strolled along the edge of the lotus leaf, looking at the seed pods that floated on the lake’s surface, as well as those which were further down in the water, and had yet to rise.

“This Saint-Emperor Dynasty is way too rich,” he muttered to himself, his eyes bloodshot. “I can’t believe they just keep dragonfish and lotus seeds sitting around in this heavenly pond of theirs….

“You can see them… but you can’t eat them….” If he were capable of beating the three celestials in a fight, and the Saint-Emperor too, he would just have dived into the water and started grabbing seeds.

His desire only grew stronger as time passed. After the destruction of the Heavenspan Realm, and his arrival in the Eternal Lands, he had come to realize more than ever that getting stronger was the only way to achieve his goals.

It was going to take a lot to achieve a cultivation base breakthrough in these unfamiliar Eternal Lands. It would have been one thing if he had a lot of time on his hands, but right now, time was not something he had the luxury of wasting.

A few days passed in which his anxiety fermented, and the lotus banquets continued. All of his energy was focused on trying to figure out how to get more lotus seeds, to the point where he spent every day walking along the edges of the lotus leaves.

A lot of people noticed this behavior of his. But most people were wrapped up in thoughts about the lotus banquets. Besides, lotus seeds were not dragonfish, and everyone assumed it would be impossible for him to secretly harvest some.

Furthermore, the Saint-Emperor was no longer in secluded meditation. He was there every day, presiding over the lotus banquets. Because of that, the court officials who could guess what Bai Xiaochun was thinking didn't really give it much weight.

“We have rules in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Nobody, no matter how important they are, would ever think of taking an immortal lotus seed without permission. Anyone who did… would be breaking a very important rule!” Many a cold laugh echoed within the hearts of the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

Of course, they all knew that Bai Xiaochun was important to the Saint-Emperor. But even if he were more important than he already was, there were certain lines that could not be crossed. Bai Xiaochun had escaped any real punishment in the heavenly dragonfish incident both because of his usefulness to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and also because of the fact that he had been very careful. Because of that, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty chose to simply let the matter slide.

But the lotus seeds were inanimate objects that could not fly into Bai Xiaochun's hands of their own accord. The only way for him to get them would be to outright steal them!

And if he did that, he would be doomed, no questions asked!

Because of all of these things, most of the aristocracy didn't put too much thought into the matter.

With the exception of Heavenly Marquis Liu.

He had noticed Bai Xiaochun's odd behavior in recent days, and it immediately put him on guard. Filled with excitement, he began to surveil Bai Xiaochun even more closely than usual. Back when he had first been appointed parole captain, he had been very enthusiastic about monitoring Bai Xiaochun. But after a few months went by in which Bai Xiaochun behaved well, Heavenly Marquis Liu had begun to get nervous that nothing more would happen.

“You're as crafty as a rat, Bai Xiaochun. But you won't be able to evade my discerning eyes!” When it came to monitoring Bai Xiaochun, Heavenly Marquis Liu couldn't see what happened inside of his blessed land, but as soon as he went out into the open, he could watch him secretly from the shadows.

Another three days passed. The officials proudly continued to attend the lotus banquets, and Heavenly Marquis Liu maintained full vigilance. Bai Xiaochun eventually became aware that Heavenly Marquis Liu was shadowing him. But around the same time, he came up with a plan that he was fairly certain would succeed.

“This is the only way I can do it!” he thought. From that point on, he didn't go to the heavenly pond to look at the lotus pods anymore. He remained in his blessed land, where

Heavenly Marquis Liu couldn’t see him. There, he performed an incantation gesture to seal the area, and then settled down cross-legged to meditate.

Outside, Heavenly Marquis Liu found a good spot nearby to stake out Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land, where he remained, eyes glued to the immortal's cave for several days in a row.

He was so excited about what was to come that he didn't even get tired. He was absolutely sure that whatever evil plan Bai Xiaochun had come up with was about to be carried out…

“All I have to do is catch him in the act, and it will count as a huge service to the dynasty!” The mere thought got him more excited, and he poured all of his energy into making sure that Bai Xiaochun didn’t get a chance to harm even a single lotus seed.

“I don't care what your plan is. I know you’re after the lotus seeds. And with me watching you so closely, you’ll never be able to get them without being spotted!”

Eventually, Heavenly Marquis Liu was getting antsy with excitement, whereas Bai Xiaochun was still sitting there meditating. For several hours, he didn’t even move, until finally, night fell. At that point, he surreptitiously sent some divine sense into his bag of holding.

“Get out here, little turtle!” he said. However, there was no response. After the destruction of the Heavenspan Realm, Bai Xiaochun hadn’t seen the turtle, but was absolutely convinced that he was in his bag of holding. The end of the world would definitely not hurt him.

Impatient, Bai Xiaochun yet again called out with his divine sense. “Enough with the act! Get the hell out here!”

He snorted coldly, and yet, there was still no reaction. “Not gonna come out, huh? Fine. Fine, let’s settle accounts….”

Another long moment passed.

“You’re really not there?” he said, surprised. Shaking his head, he sighed. “Well, that's too bad. I guess he won’t have a chance at this treasure….”

Perhaps it was the word ‘treasure’ itself, which was too enticing. As soon as he spoke it, he got a reaction from inside his bag of holding.

“Treasure? What treasure?” The little turtle's voice was faint in his mind, as though he had been sleeping, and just woken up. However, it only took a moment for it to get back to normal

“Alright, little Xiaochun, you tell Lord Turtle what treasure you’ve found immediately!” At this point, the little turtle’s head popped out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding. Before Bai Xiaochun could even respond, he sniffed the air, and his eyes lit up.

“Aha! Lord Turtle has detected the aroma of treasure!! Dammit! I didn’t realize that all that blood I lost made me a lot less sensitive to treasure!!” Eyes widening with excitement, the little turtle prepare to burst into motion. Before he could, Bai Xiaochun grabbed him and shoved him back into the bag of holding.

“Keep your voice down!” he said urgently via divine sense. “We’re being watched!” In response, a spark of killing intent appeared in the little turtle’s eyes.

“Who? Who is watching the mighty Lord Turtle?! Who dares to try to steal Lord Turtle’s treasure?!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and said, “It's this guy named Liu Yong! He’s staking us out right now! He's the one who wants to steal our treasure!”

“How dare he! Lord Turtle will beat him to death!!” The little turtle hated nothing in life more than people who stole treasure from him.

“Hold on, we can worry about that later. Little turtle, look at how many lotus seed pods are in that heavenly pond out there. There are too many to count, and each one… is like an immortal pill!

“You sneak out there and keep yourself hidden. We split things 30/70. I get the 70. After all, I'm the one who came across this treasure. Plus, I’ll help cover for you!”

This was Bai Xiaochun’s plan. Since the lotus seeds were inanimate objects that lacked any intelligence whatsoever, all he had to do was figure out a way to get them.

However, because of who he was, and how many people were suspicious of him and watching him, he would get the stealthy little turtle to do his work for him. It was the perfect plan.

The most difficult part was coming to an agreement on the split. He and the turtle haggled for a bit, and eventually agreed to split everything 50/50. Then, the little turtle blurred into motion, vanishing from the bag of holding and leaving the blessed land.

Despite how closely Heavenly Marquis Liu was keeping watch, he didn’t even notice the turtle speed past him. Some distance away, the little turtle looked back proudly at Heavenly Marquis Liu there in his hiding place. Then he suddenly began to burrow down into the ground. Before long, he was in front of one of the underwater seed pods, which he sniffed at a bit before opening his mouth and taking a big bite. After chewing it up, his eyes glittered.

“So, little Xiaochun wasn’t lying. Crispy and delicious!” Licking his lips, he ate the entire seed pod. After that, he realized he needed to be more careful, and began to go around carefully extracting seeds without damaging the pods.

Before long, he was back in the blessed land, where he proudly threw eight lotus seeds over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Eat up!” he said. Then he burped. Clearly, he had stuffed himself before coming back….

The lotus seeds were very small, about the size of a fingernail. However, as soon as Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on them, his eyes lit up. Grabbing them, he stuffed them into his mouth.

Although they weren’t as strong as the one he had been gifted earlier, when they melted into his mouth, they gave birth to a huge blast of heat that roared through him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1068 awe-chapter-1069

The night went by peacefully. Soon dawn was approaching, and Heavenly Marquis Liu remained outside of Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land, unmoving and even unblinking. Although he was exhausted, he also couldn’t suppress his exuberance.

When the sky was bright, Bai Xiaochun swaggered out of his blessed land, causing Heavenly Marquis Liu to stir in excitement. However, he quickly realized that there was something strange about Bai Xiaochun.

“Huh?” he murmured to himself.

Bai Xiaochun seemed in extremely high spirits compared to normal. He didn’t go to the edge of the lotus leaf like he had in the past, but instead, hummed a little tune as he headed toward the imperial palace.

“Something’s wrong!” Heavenly Marquis Liu thought as he began to follow stealthily. Bai Xiaochun strolled happily to the imperial palace, where a lotus banquet was going on. Although not every government official went to a banquet every day, the banquets were still lively and exciting.

Like usual, snide and derisive comments could be heard when Bai Xiaochun came, but he ignored them like usual. Laughing heartily, he sat down to enjoy the delicious alcohol and wonderful immortal fruits.

The Saint-Emperor didn’t attend every single banquet. But through his archaean powers, he would always ensure that lotus seeds were distributed.

Bai Xiaochun was in a wonderful mood. Heavenly Marquis Liu shadowed him the entire day, convinced that something fishy was going on. However, he couldn’t pin down what exactly it was, and eventually, had to settle down again outside of Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land to keep watch overnight.

“It was an act!” he thought. “He’s doing all of this just to get the people used to seeing him!!”

Five more days flew by, and the same thing happened every time. It was nearing the end of the period of lotus banquets, and Bai Xiaochun was enjoying himself to the full. During the day, he would go to the imperial palace, and in the evenings, the little turtle would get some lotus seeds for the two of them to share.

Although the seeds were all fairly small, they were numerous.... In the few short days which had passed, Bai Xiaochun had already gotten his hands on over a thousand of them.

The sheer number involved outweighed how weak they were, and pushed Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base all the way into the great circle of the Demigod Realm.

However, he made sure to keep the aura of his breakthrough suppressed. Now, he was one step closer to being a celestial. In fact, he was sure that it would likely only take a few years to form his Daoseed and achieve his breakthrough.

Bai Xiaochun was aware that the little turtle had benefited even more than he had, although he wasn’t sure by how much. The turtle’s face glowed, and his shell looked smoother and shinier than ever. Considering how treacherous the little turtle was, Bai Xiaochun could only speculate that, if he had handed over a thousand seeds, he had most likely eaten thousands himself.

The more he thought about that fact, the more worried he got. Not that he felt bad for the Saint-Emperor, but rather, was worried that their lotus-seed-stealing activities might be discovered….

“Be careful down there, and don’t eat so many. Quit while you’re ahead!” The little turtle always agreed to comply with such repeated exhortations.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t feel any better about the situation, but… it was too late to go back now. The worst came when, a few days before the lotus banquets were to end, the little turtle didn’t return.

Bai Xiaochun was instantly on guard.

“Don’t tell me he got caught?” Considering what Bai Xiaochun knew about the little turtle, he didn’t have any confidence that he could keep a secret. Surprisingly, though, the Saint-Emperor never came knocking. A few days later, the banquets came to an end, and the turtle still was not back. Bai Xiaochun was extremely nervous at this point.

Ironically, there was one person who was even more nervous than Bai Xiaochun, and that was Heavenly Marquis Liu, who was still on watch outside of his blessed land.

“Dammit! What’s going on here? Why has Bai Xiaochun been so calm and quiet? My intuition can’t be wrong! He definitely has a secret master plan!!”

As the two of them sat there anxiously, the last formalities to end the banquets occurred.

Bells rang out from the imperial palace, drawing all of the officials for a final meeting in the palace hall. It would be the last distribution of lotus seeds by the Saint-Emperor, and would also involve a ceremonial expression of thanks by the citizens.

As people gathered, Bai Xiaochun was much quieter than everyone around him. He was in quite a perturbed state of mind, and was constantly glancing around at the expressions of the people around him, hoping to notice if anyone was looking at him strangely.

Eventually, the Saint-Emperor strode out and took his place in front of everyone. After looking around briefly, he smiled warmly.

“My dear subjects, I have already distributed 800 lotus seeds. Now, we will give all cultivators under the heavens a chance to acquire one of the final 200, by distributing them to the open market.

“It is my wish that our Saint-Emperor Dynasty will be just like lotus seeds that slowly grow into mature, beautiful lotuses that exist for all eternity!”

In response, the gathered officials all clasped hands formally and joined their voices to respond.

“May the Saint-Emperor Dynasty exist for all eternity!”

Despite how nervous he was, Bai Xiaochun joined in with them.

The Saint-Emperor’s smile grew even warmer when he heard the voices of the hosts of officials. Then he waved his hand, unleashing the power of his archaean cultivation base. Instantly, a holy aura swept out, causing an enormous hand to appear high above. The water in the heavenly pond rippled, and numerous lotus pods floated up to the surface.

The hand descended, sweeping over the pond to harvest the lotus seeds. However, this time… when the hand swept over the pods, no seeds came out!!

The pods opened to reveal… empty holes where the seeds should have been!!

The huge hand suddenly stopped moving.

“……..” The Saint-Emperor was stunned, as were all of the court officials. Eyes went wide, and numerous streams of divine sense suddenly sprang out to check the situation.

Chen Su, Gu Tianjun, and the scholarly celestial were all flabbergasted.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding as he sent his divine sense out. When he saw all of the numerous empty seed pods, he immediately plastered a look of shock onto his face.

The Saint-Emperor’s expression slowly sank into something very grim. Waving his hand again, he caused more of the seed pods to rise to the surface and open up.

Yet again, almost no seeds could be seen, only empty holes…. The court officials all gasped, and a moment later, devolved into a hubbub.

“This… this….”

“Where are the lotus seeds?”

“How could this be happening. Why are there no lotus seeds?!?!” All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rang out in extremely loud and exaggerated fashion.

“Heavens! How could this be happening!? Don't tell me the heavenly dragonfish ate them all!?!?!?”

Amid the cacophony of shocked exclamations, the Saint-Emperor’s expression turned even grimmer. Then, he performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger at the heavenly pond, sending a shocking stream of divine sense into the water. The sky went dim, and a huge wind kicked up as the water seethed and all of the lotus pods in its depths rose to the surface!

Whether they were mature or not didn’t matter. All of them rose up and then opened, over 10,000 in total. When the crowd saw the result, they were stunned.

Everyone was shaken to the core as they saw… that every single seed pod, without exception, was almost completely empty!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But the Saint-Emperor, the three celestials, all of the demigods, and even the devas saw… that on one of the lotus pods was the little turtle, munching away at a fist-sized lotus seed.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the little turtle, his eyes went wide, and his heart began to pound even harder. He had assumed the little turtle had secretly eaten a few thousand seeds. Never could he have imagined that he would have eaten this many.

“Dammit! What kind of turtle is that!? How dare he secretly eat the Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s immortal lotus seeds!!”

“Look at how many of the pods are empty! He must have eaten tens of thousands of seeds!”

“Dammit, I’m gonna turn him into turtle soup!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1069 awe-chapter-1070

The anger in the shouting of the crowd couldn’t have been more apparent, and the Saint-Emperor’s expression continued to turn grimmer. Suddenly, he reached out with his right hand. The little turtle was incredibly fast, and usually was able to vanish without a trace, but in this case, he was no match for the Saint-Emperor.

Even as the little turtle prepared to teleport away, a magical sealing settled down in the area surrounding him. He struggled, but to no avail. A moment passed, and then a powerful force grabbed onto him and sent him flying into the imperial palace in a beam of light, right into the outstretched hand of the Saint-Emperor!

The turtle was clearly frightened, and fought back with all four of his legs, but it did no good. As soon as he realized he had been captured by such a terrifying figure, he shrieked, “I was forced to do it! It was Bai Xiaochun! Bai Xiaochun made me do it! He's the ringleader in this whole thing! You people have no idea! He’s a walking disaster! He forced me to steal the lotus seeds! I'm completely innocent! I'm the victim!!”

When the cultivators in the infuriated crowd heard the little turtle’s words, they slowly turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

To have so many people staring at him caused Bai Xiaochun to break out into a cold sweat. Although he knew that the little turtle was a scoundrel who wasn’t exactly the trustworthy type, he had never imagined that it would immediately sell him out.

What was worse was that the little turtle had personally taken what was likely tens of thousands of lotus seeds, and had only given a thousand to Bai Xiaochun. Inwardly, Bai Xiaochun was cursing up a storm, but on the outside, he simply looked startled. Then he leaped to his feet and pointed an accusatory finger at the little turtle.

“Who are you? And how do you know my name?! Your Majesty, this is a conspiracy! Somebody is definitely framing me!!” From the rage that seemed to echo in his voice, he was clearly furious at being unjustly accused.

If it weren’t for the matter of the heavenly dragonfish, the surrounding cultivators would likely have been convinced. But now, it seemed obvious that this little turtle was working together with Bai Xiaochun!

The turtle was accusing Bai Xiaochun, whereas Bai Xiaochun was accusing the turtle. Obviously, they were the seed-thieves, and now, they had been caught red-handed!

Worse was that the Saint-Emperor had just been about to harvest 200 lotus seeds to be sold at auction to the general populace. The Saint-Emperor himself wouldn’t benefit from the resulting auctions, but many of the officials present would have.

There were numerous factors that played into the lotus seed auctions, factors which ensured that everyone involved profited. But now… there would obviously not be any auction. With seventy percent of the lotus seeds gone, the Saint-Emperor obviously wouldn’t be doing any more harvesting. The lotus pods had been so heavily damaged that it would be a long time before there were any more lotus banquets.

That realization caused fury to boil up in the hearts of the celestials, whose clans would definitely be affected negatively by this development. Important clans like theirs had huge operating expenses, and now, they would be losing out on a very important source of income.

“How brazen and reckless of you, Bai Xiaochun! How dare you steal the immortal lotus seeds!!”

“Saint-Emperor, I would like to submit an official request to the court that Bai Xiaochun be executed!”

“Your Majesty, I second the motion! This Bai Xiaochun must be punished immediately!”

The imperial palace instantly became like a hornet’s nest, with raw killing intent surging in all directions. If it weren’t for the fact that they were actually in the imperial palace, many of the cultivators present would have already started fighting Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was sweating hard, and gasped numerous times in response to what people were saying. Scalp tingling in fear, he was just about to open his mouth to speak when he suddenly noticed that the little turtle had just winked at him in odd fashion.

Then, the turtle cleared his throat and spoke in a high-pitched voice that cut through the crowd.

“My noble ladies and gentlemen, everything I did was on the orders of Bai Xiaochun. He is my master, and I have no choice but to follow his commands!”

Bai Xiaochun was glaring furiously at the turtle, but inside, he was actually a bit curious. After all the years of dealing with the little turtle, he had come to know him well, and could tell that there was something very odd about the way he had winked a moment ago.

And the fact that the turtle had immediately accused him in loud and public fashion seemed to indicate that he was planning something!

The entire place was in complete chaos. Numerous cultivators were submitting requests to the Saint-Emperor, the little turtle was yelling at the top of his lungs, Bai Xiaochun was shouting… it was a madhouse.

At this point, Gu Tianjun suddenly spoke in a voice as cold as ice. Killing intent was visible in his eyes as he stared at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Saint-Emperor, this Bai Xiaochun absolutely must be put to death! He has committed a capital offense of truly shocking nature! And I’d wager that the Giant Ghost fellow is in on the conspiracy! He should be killed too!!”

Heavenly Marquis Liu was there in the crowd, his eyes shining brightly. Ever since he had been put in charge of keeping an eye on Bai Xiaochun, he had been unable to find any incriminating evidence. No matter how hard he tried, not a single clue had ever turned up. But now that the little turtle had been discovered, everything made sense.

Heavenly Marquis Liu couldn’t help but get excited at the sight of Bai Xiaochun being cursed by everyone in the crowd.

“Ah, what a familiar scene!” he thought, trembling in excitement. “It’s just like what happened in the Grand Heavenmaster’s hall in Arch-Emperor City. That was also the first time I lost to Bai Xiaochun….

“The heavens do have eyes! The same thing that happened back then is happening today, but this time, I definitely won’t lose!” With that, he threw his head back and laughed maniacally.

Striding out into the open, he ignored the rest of the crowd to glare at the turtle for a moment. Then he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the Saint-Emperor.

As of this moment, Heavenly Marquis Liu felt like he was one with all creation. Raising his voice loudly, he said, “Your Majesty, I have summarized 500 crimes that this Bai Xiaochun has committed, and would like to take the opportunity today to list them out publicly. First is the crime of--”

However, before he could even speak out the first crime, the Saint-Emperor, who stood there in front of the crowd holding the little turtle, threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

His crisp, clear laughter filled all of Saint-Emperor City, causing heaven and earth to shake violently. Heavenly Marquis Liu was interrupted, and the fury of the gathered officials was suddenly suppressed.

“Good. Great! Excellent!!” The Saint-Emperor then laughed some more, his face a mask of joy and excitement as he eyed the little turtle.

Considering that he was an archaean, it was unusual to see him acting in such emotional fashion. Everyone was shocked, and had no idea what was going on, except for the three celestials. Their eyes flickered as they looked at the little turtle, and a moment later, looks of astonishment could be seen on their faces.

“The Eternal Turtle,” the Saint-Emperor said, his voice quavering a bit. “The Eternal Turtle! It’s the Eternal Turtle!! The legendary, one-of-a-kind, completely unique companion spirit of the Eternal Flower!

“To have the Eternal Turtle in Saint-Emperor City is a good omen! It shows that the Saint-Emperor Dynasty is the true and orthodox force in the Eternal Lands, something that will stand the test of time and endure forever!!”

Bai Xiaochun was stunned. Back when the gravekeeper had extracted blood from the little turtle to help Bai Xiaochun, he remembered hearing something about an Eternal Turtle, but he had been mostly unconscious, and had never pursued the matter.

Eventually, the Saint-Emperor flicked his sleeve and issued a proclamation!

“Let the Eternal Turtle be named the Saint-Turtle of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty! This turtle is now the symbol of our nation, and represents me wherever he goes! For offering this turtle as a gift, Bai Xiaochun will be given a seven-colored belt, and ten immortal pills!” Gasps could be heard from the gathered cultivators as they looked over at the little turtle.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1070 awe-chapter-1071

No one could ever have predicted that the little turtle who had secretly eaten such a vast number of lotus seeds would be appointed as the Saint-Turtle of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Although it seemed completely preposterous, it certainly resolved the issue of the lotus seeds.

The rewards given to Bai Xiaochun ensured that the matter was already a thing of the past. Everyone was effectively silenced as the Saint-Emperor departed the scene happily. However, unlike past incidents, the officials did nothing to cover up their frustration and anger at Bai Xiaochun as they glared at him.

After all, the Saint-Emperor hadn’t really lost out on anything in this incident. Only they had….

Bai Xiaochun was just as stunned by this turn of events as everyone else. However, after thinking about it, he realized that the little turtle must have planned on this from the beginning. He knew that the Saint-Emperor would recognize him immediately if he ever saw him in person.

That was why the little turtle had dared to so brazenly eat the lotus seeds, and was also why he had so openly declared his relationship with Bai Xiaochun.

There were still a few things he wasn’t completely sure about, but in the end, now that the incident was concluded, they didn’t really matter.

Clearing his throat, he looked around at the court officials, stuck his chest out and stood up taller and straighter, and finally, swaggered out of the palace.

The cultivators’ eyes glittered with cold light as they watched him go. At this point, many of them were coming to realize the reality of the situation…. Early on, they might have been able to come up with ways to have Bai Xiaochun punished, but now, that had changed.

The little turtle had been appointed the Saint-Turtle, which meant that Bai Xiaochun was even more important than before. As of now, there was no one in Saint-Emperor City who could do a single thing to him.

Although the Saint-Emperor still had his misgivings, the way events had played out spoke volumes.

The truth was that if the little turtle’s identity hadn’t been revealed, the Saint-Emperor would have crushed Bai Xiaochun the moment he saw the empty seed pods.

For the Saint-Emperor, enough was enough. Never before had any cultivator dared to do the things Bai Xiaochun had done in Saint-Emperor City. But the little turtle was too important. That was especially true considering that the Eternal Turtle was rumored to be able to give cultivators better control of Willpower. To the Saint-Emperor, that was beyond crucial, and could give him the edge he needed to break out of the Archaean Realm.

The mere thought of that caused his heart to race with joy.

The little turtle had worded things in a very clever way. Although some people might not have picked up on it initially, the Saint-Emperor had understood the implications immediately.

The Eternal Turtle belonged to Bai Xiaochun!

Once the Eternal Turtle bonded a master, it couldn’t be changed. Not even killing Bai Xiaochun would do anything, and would in fact enrage the turtle.

The only way to get the Eternal Turtle to willingly stay in Saint-Emperor City was… to get Bai Xiaochun’s approval!

The Saint-Emperor knew that everyone had value in some way. Whether they were celestials or demigods, it was the same. Bai Xiaochun was valuable because of his status in the Heavenspan Realm. In fact, in some ways he was even more important than a celestial. When you added in the matter of the Eternal Turtle, it made him so important that the Saint-Emperor even feared him to a degree.

Although the rest of the officials in Saint-Emperor City didn’t quite understand all of that, they could guess at it.

“This damned bastard ate tons of heavenly dragonfish, and then a bunch of lotus seeds, and in the end, everything worked out fine for him!”

“He really is a walking disaster! He defiled the heavenly dragonfish, and then nearly wiped out all of the lotus seeds. And yet his co-conspirator ended up being named the Saint-Turtle!!”

“He should never have been allowed to stay in Saint-Emperor City!!”

Filled with various negative thoughts, the crowd dispersed, until Bai Xiaochun was the only one standing there.

As for Heavenly Marquis Liu, he was already slipping into a major depression. He had just been preparing to list out the 500 crimes that Bai Xiaochun had committed when the

Saint-Emperor interrupted him with roaring laughter. He was more stunned now than he had ever been in his entire life.

“Just like back in the Wildlands….” he thought, shivering.

Another half a month went by.

News of the lotus seed incident spread throughout Saint-Emperor City. Furthermore, the fact that there would be no lotus seed auctions had major repercussions in both of the two immortal domains controlled by the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

What was even more shocking, though, was the news about the Saint-Turtle, which caused a stir even in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was uncharacteristically quiet, spending the entire month consuming lotus seeds and immortal pills to advance his cultivation base.

Although he didn’t achieve a breakthrough to become a celestial, he was getting closer and closer to that point. By the time the lotus seeds and immortal pills stopped being effective, he was at the very peak of the great circle. Now, it was as if he were right up against a huge, seemingly insurmountable barrier.

“So close….” he murmured sadly. At this point, he could tell that no amount of slow and steady progress would get him past that wall. He needed something amazing to help him break the barrier down in one shot.

Meanwhile, much attention was paid to the little turtle. The half a month passed in somewhat of a whirlwind for him. Of course, the Saint-Emperor didn’t cause any problems for him. He only asked that the turtle accompany him for three or four hours a day during cultivation. Other than that, there were no limitations placed on him.

The little turtle could go about freely in Saint-Emperor City. In fact, he could have or do just about anything he wanted. He could even eat heavenly dragonfish if he felt like it....

As far as the lotus seeds went... it all depended on the little turtle’s mood. Eventually, he went to talk with Bai Xiaochun about everything that had occurred earlier. When Bai Xiaochun heard the whole story, he was a bit jealous, but didn’t dare to say anything. Even worse, the little turtle’s shell seemed to shine more brightly every time he came to visit, an indication of how well he was eating....

And that wasn’t even mentioning how the turtle seemed to be gaining a lot of weight....

“Ai, there’s really nothing I can do, little Xiaochun. You have no idea how rough life is.

“I’ve eaten so many immortal pills I can hardly stand them anymore. The Saint-Emperor, and even that celestial named Chen Su, stuffs me with them.

“The worst of them is Gu Tianjun. Can you believe that he gave me an entire harem of female turtles? They’re completely shameless! All they want to do is fight over who will be the first to lay a batch of eggs!

“It’s so annoying!” Despite the turtle’s sighs, it was impossible for him to conceal how pleased he was with his wonderful life.

Despite the fact that the little turtle kept providing Bai Xiaochun with a supply of immortal pills and other such things, now that Bai Xiaochun was in the great circle, none of them were enough to break through the barrier that held him back.

Whatever item it was that could help him break through apparently didn’t exist in the Eternal Lands. If it did, then the Saint-Emperor Dynasty wouldn’t only have four celestials.

After seeing how proud the little turtle was with himself, Bai Xiaochun thought for a moment, then lowered his voice and said, “Hey little turtle, I know you can eat the dragonfish and the lotus seeds, but what about… the lotus roots down at the bottom of the lake? Can you eat those too?”

“Lotus roots!?” The little turtle’s eyes suddenly began to shine brightly.

“I bet they’re more effective than anything else!” Bai Xiaochun was licking his lips just thinking about it. "How about you go down and grab one? We can try it out together!”

The little turtle was already looking excited at the prospect. After all, it had only eaten the lotus seeds up to this point.

Seeing this reaction, Bai Xiaochun decided to strike while the iron was hot, and began to negotiate.

“50/50?” the little turtle said, glaring. “No way. 90/10!”

Bai Xiaochun sighed.

“Listen, little turtle, we’ve known each other for years now. From the Blood Stream Sect to the River-Defying Sect, then the Wildlands. And now here we are in the Eternal Lands. We have to rely on each other to survive! We're partners! You know, in some respects, we're basically family. You ate tens of thousands of lotus seeds, and I didn't say anything. Now I'm trying to achieve a cultivation base breakthrough! What's the point in you being so stingy?" It was with bloodshot eyes that Bai Xiaochun tried to appeal to the little turtle's emotions, even putting a look of pain into his own eyes as he spoke.

This was the little turtle's first time seeing Bai Xiaochun talk to him in this way, and he was clearly taken aback. Suddenly feeling a bit sorry, he sighed.

Sounding hurt, he said, "Ah, whatever. Look, 90/10 it is. 90 for you, 10 for me! I won't sneak any extra before you make your breakthrough!"

With that, he turned and blurred into motion toward the heavenly pond.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to shine.

"Who would have thought that *this* was the way to deal with the little turtle!?"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1071 awe-chapter-1072

Considering the speed the little turtle was capable of, and his current standing in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, unless the Saint-Emperor personally had divine sense locked onto him, it would be impossible for anyone to keep track of him.

Nobody even noticed as he slipped into the heavenly pond and headed down toward the lotus roots!

There were quite a few of them in the pond. They formed the foundation of the huge flower, as well as the numerous leaves up above. Most were imbedded in the silt at the bottom of the pond, but many floated in various positions within the water.

The little turtle didn’t need to do any searching. It took almost no time at all for him to find a lotus root several meters long. Although it was hard to say exactly how he accomplished it, he easily dragged the root up and out of the water.

It was evening, and not many people were out and about. Therefore, no one caught sight of him as he whizzed back to Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land.

A whooshing sound could be heard as he appeared right in front of the cross-legged Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining with anticipation.

“I did it! As you know, when Lord Turtle takes the field, he never loses!” A blur could be seen as the huge lotus root then appeared between the two of them.

Almost immediately, a fragrant aroma filled the air that lifted Bai Xiaochun’s spirits, as well as a strong spiritual energy that vastly surpassed anything from the heavenly dragonfish or the lotus seeds.

Excited, Bai Xiaochun quickly cleaned the root, then a crunch could be heard as he took a deep bite.

It was sweet and sticky, and altogether delicious. Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up, and a warm current began to flow through him.

When the little turtle saw how excited Bai Xiaochun was, he cleared his throat and said, “Ah, whatever. Lord Turtle won't fight with you over this one.”

After all, he had secretly munched on some other roots while down in the water. Blurring into motion, he left the blessed land and headed back to the heavenly pond.

Bai Xiaochun was very happy to see the little turtle acting in this way, and quickly went about munching down more of the lotus root. Heat flowed through him as, in a relatively short time, he consumed the entire lotus root.

The spiritual energy from the lotus root was first like a stream, and then a huge river, and then an ocean, raging through his energy passageways.

Rumbling sounds echoed out that only he could hear, making it seem as though he were in a world of his own, a place filled with boundless spiritual energy!

At this point, his cultivation base began to batter against that invisible barrier!

“That one lotus root was better than all of the lotus seeds and heavenly dragonfish put together! This is incredible!” His face glowed a healthy red, and his eyes shone with the glow of anticipation.

He very much wanted to get out of the Demigod Realm and into the Celestial Realm. After all the progress he had made, he finally seemed to be just on the verge of doing that. Closing his eyes, he rotated his cultivation base and focused his divine sense, controlling the flow of spiritual energy to batter at the barrier over and over again.

Soon, he began to tremble physically as an illusory vortex sprang up around him.

It was a very difficult thing to break the barrier that separated the Demigod Realm from the Celestial Realm. Even with the power of the lotus root, he was only able to strike at it unsuccessfully about ten times.

Time passed, and when the tenth attempt failed, blood oozed out of his mouth, and his eyes snapped open to reveal an unyielding defiance.

“Not a good enough of a foundation.... Or is it unusually difficult because of the Undying Live Forever Technique...?” Closing his eyes, he thought back to how he had broken out of the Nascent Soul stage and the Deva Realm, and slowly came to an understanding of what was happening.

All of his previous breakthroughs had to do with the Undying Live Forever Technique. All of them had been like approaching a gate, which he then simply opened.

But now both codices of his Undying Live Forever Technique were complete. He had reached the end, with no more divine abilities to unlock for either. And upon reaching the end of a road, there would be no more gates to open, only a barrier!

“So what if there’s a barrier? I’ll just break it down!” He gritted his teeth, and a moment later, a gleam of determination appeared in his bloodshot eyes.

“I can’t just keep trying over and over again. Despite my powers of regeneration, I can sense that making endless repeated attacks on the barrier will be harmful!” He sent out some divine sense to make contact with the little turtle, and asked him to bring more lotus roots.

“I need to succeed in one shot. I need to build up a huge reserve of power, and then launch a single decisive attack on the barrier!” He considered trying to use his turtle-wok. After all, he hadn’t used it to enhance either the heavenly dragonfish or the lotus seeds. But he wasn’t in the Heavenspan Realm any longer. These were the Eternal Lands, and if people found out about his turtle-wok, it could cause major problems. Therefore, he had made a decision not to use it unless absolutely necessary.

Giving up on any thoughts of breaking the barrier, he waited for the little turtle to return. When the little turtle saw the blood oozing out of his mouth, he immediately got a sense of how important the lotus roots were to him. Not bothering to haggle over the split, he gave him another lotus root.

Half a month passed by in a flash, during which time Bai Xiaochun didn’t make any more attempts to break the barrier. He kept building up energy, and the little turtle kept delivering lotus roots. Sometimes he would bring seven or eight, sometimes dozens. Whenever Bai Xiaochun asked for more, he got more, until a wild vortex rose up around him.

Clearly, his accumulation of spiritual power had reached an astonishing level.

He looked like he might explode at any moment, to the point where the little turtle’s scalp tingled with anxiety.

“Gotta be careful. Don't want to get fried if he blows up.” The little turtle then went on to place some magical sealing marks around Bai Xiaochun, creating some type of shield. Not only would it contain the force of any potential explosions, but it would also mask Bai Xiaochun’s aura from outsiders.

However, the little turtle was still feeling a bit nervous, especially when he realized that Bai Xiaochun’s body seemed to be growing unstable!

He was so frightened that he spent most of his time submerged in the heavenly pond munching on lotus roots. He would only occasionally head over and throw some extra roots at Bai Xiaochun.

The truth was that the little turtle had actually become somewhat addicted to the delicious roots, and couldn’t hold back from eating as many as he could.

Unfortunately, there was only one lotus flower in the heavenly pond. Although it had many roots, many leaves, and many seed pods, it was still just one plant.

If the little turtle had only eaten a few of the roots, it wouldn’t have mattered. And although Bai Xiaochun was consuming quite a few, when compared to the total amount, it wasn’t anything to mention. However… the little turtle was addicted, and in the half month that passed, he gave only a few more than a hundred roots to Bai Xiaochun, and yet ate several thousand.

Because of the decreasing supply of spiritual energy, the lotus leaves upon which Saint-Emperor City was built… slowly began to show signs of wilting. Some of the edges even began to turn yellow….

Most shocking was that the lotus flower which housed the imperial palace, which had already begun to tilt to the side thanks to the heavenly dragonfish incident, was now having its very foundation removed….

Gradually, it began to turn listless….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1072 awe-chapter-1073

The lotus leaves were turning yellow, and the flower itself was wilting. All of Saint-Emperor City was shocked to the core.

“The leaves are yellowing!?!?”

“Heavens! What could be causing *this* disaster? Dammit. What’s going on in Saint-Emperor City this year?!?!”

“Don’t tell me it’s that Bai Xiaochun again!?!?”

“Look everybody, it’s not just the leaves that are affected. Check out the flower! Something's definitely wrong with it!” The court officials were all shocked, and the three celestials were both enraged, and at the same time, exhausted.

After all, this year had been filled with one major event after another. However, all three celestials knew that the little turtle was to blame, and that they were absolutely helpless to do anything about it.

“That damnable Eternal Turtle! Does he have it out for our Saint-Lotus or something?!?! Eat anything you want, but keep your hands off of the lotus! Not even the heavenly dragonfish would eat it!!”

“It’s one thing to eat lotus seeds, but that turtle is actually eating the roots!!”

“Dammit, if this goes on, one of these days he’ll eat the whole flower!!”

To the Saint-Emperor, the little turtle was essentially a precious treasure, and therefore, no one else in the nation qualified to berate it. And unfortunately, he was in a session of secluded meditation, and could not be disturbed except under the direst of circumstances.

Eventually, he emerged, and when he saw the yellowed lotus leaves and the wilting flower, even he was stunned.

By now, he truly had a love-hate relationship with the little turtle. And of course he couldn't punish the turtle. He could only bring him back to the palace and try to persuade him with words.

Looking at the little turtle standing there on the palm of his hand, he said, "You… you can't eat the lotus roots."

"What?" the little turtle said, sounding guilty and looking like the picture of innocence. "Really?!"

Although the Saint-Emperor was actually furious, he didn't let any of that show. He would save that for Bai Xiaochun. Instead, he did a bit more work to persuade the turtle of the error of his ways, and then summoned Bai Xiaochun to the palace.

However, it was in that very moment that, in Bai Xiaochun's blessed land, his eyes suddenly snapped open!

"After months of building up spiritual energy from over a hundred lotus roots, I have exactly what it takes to break through!" Laughing heartily to the heavens, he sent cultivation base power coursing through his energy passageways and toward his divine soul.

The spiritual energy of over a hundred lotus roots erupted out, a virtual ocean of power that flowed through him toward the invisible barrier….

A huge boom echoed out inside of him, as well as something that got Bai Xiaochun very excited. It was… the sound of a barrier cracking!

“Be destroyed!!” He lowered his head, veins bulging as he put all of the energy reserves he had into the effort of attacking the barrier!

He had no gates to enter, no paths to walk. He could only… bash his way onto the great way of the celestial!

Pain filled him as his divine soul cracked and splintered. But he simply endured the pain, a vicious, maddened expression on his face as he stuck to his plan!

His cultivation base was now at the absolute limit of the Demigod Realm. In the blink of an eye, his divine soul shattered, and his fleshly body began to crumble. At the same time, that seemingly unbreakable barrier also began to fall apart!

By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s mind was almost a complete blank, devoid of thought or feeling. He could see what was happening, but it was almost as if he were an outside observer. Slowly, everything around him turned dark, with the only light coming from inside his body.

That light grew brighter and brighter as countless bright motes appeared, little spots that almost looked like wispy, flying seeds!

It was almost like a cloud of dandelion seeds…. They filled the area, floating and flying toward… one particular flying seed inside of him!

Everything seemed to go into slow motion for Bai Xiaochun. Meanwhile, in the instant that the barrier began to crumble, shocking fluctuations rolled out from his blessed land, as well as powerful rumbling sounds!

The vortex that had come to surround him swept up high into the sky and far out in all directions. All of the residents of Saint-Emperor City noticed, and were completely shocked.

After a brief silence, people began to cry out.

“Those fluctuations….”

“That aura….”

“Someone is breaking out of the Demigod Realm and into the Celestial Realm!!”

Numerous beams of light shot up into the air, and countless streams of divine sense came to focus on Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land.

After all, in all of the Eternal Lands… there were only ten celestials in total!

From that alone, it was possible to see how difficult it was for demigod experts to achieve breakthroughs. As of this moment, the Saint-Emperor was right in the middle of putting the little turtle out of mind and sending some divine sense to Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land.

Everyone was now completely focused on Bai Xiaochun, and the massive energy fluctuations that were coming from his direction.

As for the vortex, it continued to spin, causing strange signs and portents to appear in heaven and earth. All the while, Bai Xiaochun’s aura was roiling out in full madness.

Everyone in Saint-Emperor City was shaken, but the first to react was actually Gu Tianjun. He blurred into motion, appearing near the vortex that surrounded Bai Xiaochun. As soon as he examined it, his expression flickered.

“Bai Xiaochun is going to break through!!”

Chen Su and the scholarly celestial appeared out of thin air, their eyes sparkling at the thought of how long it had been since a new celestial had appeared in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

If the person breaking through was someone other than Bai Xiaochun, then it would have been a cause for rejoicing, and a stirring inspiration to all of the people in the nation. It would also have left the Vile-Emperor Dynasty quite shaken.

With another celestial, the power of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty would increase by thirty percent!

However, the person breaking through was not truly someone from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, but rather, Bai Xiaochun!

As people began to realize the implications of this fact, they were struck with mixed feelings. That was especially true of the three celestials, whose expressions turned very grim.

At this point, the scholarly celestial said, “When someone becomes a celestial, the Eternal Mother gets involved. Unless an archaean takes action… no one could possibly interfere!”

“This Bai Xiaochun is a crafty fox,” Chen Su said, his eyes flashing. “He knows that because he’s in Saint-Emperor City, the Saint-Emperor will have to assist. And the Vile-Emperor definitely won’t come to cause problems. There couldn’t be a safer place!”

“It doesn’t really matter,” Gu Tianjun said coldly. “Many cultivators throughout history have reached this step. But who can even count how many have been killed facing the three heavenly tribulations? All he’s done is break the barrier, which begins the first tribulation. He might not even survive it, let alone the two to follow!”

All of Saint-Emperor City was shaken, and the Saint-Emperor was paying close attention, as were the three celestials. In that moment, incredible rumbling sounds echoed out as the enormous vortex grew in size by a hundredfold!

Nearly half of the sky became a vortex, filled with countless bolts of dancing lightning. Saint-Emperor City was completely covered by the tribulation clouds, which roiled out to fill much of the surrounding immortal domain!

“The second tribulation is starting!” Gu Tianjun said, his eyes narrowing.

Beneath the epicenter of the vortex was Bai Xiaochun, who sat there cross-legged, trembling within a world of darkness. The only thing he could see were the countless floating seeds, which were oh-so-slowly forming together into one.

That process was the second tribulation to which Gu Tianjun referred!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1073 awe-chapter-1074

When a demigod became a celestial, they would endure three great tribulations. The first was the formless barrier, a heavenly obstacle that only demigods with abundant resources could break through. Each failure was harmful, and after too many such failures, success would become impossible.

After all, most people did not have the powers of regeneration that Bai Xiaochun did, and not even he had the ability to make unlimited attempts.

Of course, some demigod cultivators who had extensive backing and resources would actually pass the first tribulation on the first try!

After the first tribulation was the second, which was even more profound and abstruse. It had different names. Some people called it *Reattaining Purity and Simplicity*. Other people called it *Retracing Essence*. Whatever its name, it was about a fusion process!

The countless dandelion-like seeds needed to become one!

Although that process seemed simple, the reason it was known as a tribulation was that ninety percent of cultivators who made it past the first tribulation would fail at this point.

For many years, the cultivators of the Eternal Immortal Domains didn’t understand the second tribulation. It was only after the Saint-Emperor became an archaean, and gained control of the power of resurrection, that the secrets were unlocked.

This tribulation was a test of divine abilities!

At this critical point, the demigod cultivator would call upon all of the techniques he or she had cultivated in his life, and combine them in a unique way. It would be different every time, based on the specific techniques involved.

Only by combining fifty percent of one’s techniques could one pass the critical point. The first tribulation essentially had to do with building up enough energy, whereas the second… was not something that could be passed by having access to special resources. One could only succeed after having cultivated some of the ultimate Daoist magics that existed in the Eternal Immortal Domains. Without that foundation, the only option would be to destroy one’s cultivation base and start practicing cultivation from the very beginning again.

These two tribulations would weed out ninety-nine percent of all cultivators, although not necessarily by killing them.

However, the third tribulation could definitely be considered deadly in nature!

If one succeeded, one would become a celestial. If one failed, one would be reduced to ashes and become, as the legends said, *a part of the Eternal Flower*.

The third tribulation was about… approval!

The approval of the Eternal Flower, also known as the Eternal Mother, was absolutely required. It had nothing to do with access to resources, or the nature of one’s techniques. In fact, even the archaeans weren’t fully sure of how the process worked. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty all descended from the original emperors, and cultivated similar techniques. And yet, people from both dynasties had failed at the third tribulation in the past.

Right now, Gu Tianjun, Chen Su, and the scholarly celestial were all thinking about these various tribulations as they looked at the vortex surrounding Bai Xiaochun. It was the same with the Saint-Emperor.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had passed the first tribulation was no surprise to them. After coming to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Bai Xiaochun had consumed heavenly dragonfish and lotus seeds. As far as the lotus roots, all of them were fairly certain that he had been part of that as well.

With resources such as that at his disposal, it was only natural that he would pass the first tribulation.

The Saint-Emperor was obviously not very happy about that point. In fact, if he had known that things would turn out this way, he would never have let Bai Xiaochun stay in Saint-Emperor City.

“It would be inappropriate for me to interfere. It will all come down to Bai Xiaochun’s personal good fortune.” If Bai Xiaochun had been making his attempt at some other location, the Saint-Emperor might have interfered. But here in Saint-Emperor City, with so many people watching, he couldn’t meddle easily.

And thus, all eyes in the city were fixed on Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land, and the enormous vortex which surrounded it. With each moment that passed, the vortex grew in size, forcing the three celestials to inch away from it.

Suddenly, a bellow erupted from within the vortex. It was Bai Xiaochun, and he almost sounded like a dragon roaring in a voice that echoed to the highest heavens. The entire city trembled, and in the water of the heavenly pond, the heavenly dragonfish shivered and sank down as far into the water as they could.

Then, to the shock of the Saint-Emperor and the celestials, the vortex began to spin and expand with unimaginable speed. The sky seemed to be on the verge of tearing apart as the vortex spread out to cover, not only Saint-Emperor City, but also the ten prefectures which surrounded it!!

Any given immortal domain was vastly larger than the Heavenspan Realm had been, and right now, all of the cultivators in that area, all of the living beings, no matter what they were doing, were shaken down to their very souls as the vortex filled the sky.

Even the people from the adjacent immortal domains could see what was happening, and began to cry out in shock and alarm.

The celestials gasped from the utter shock of it all.

“Impossible!!”

“How did he pass the second tribulation so quickly?!?!”

“Even if he did cultivate the techniques of the Arch-Emperors, he shouldn’t have been able to fuse them with such speed!”

Suddenly, the Saint-Emperor vanished from within the imperial palace, to reappear in midair above the city, his expression very somber as he looked in the direction of Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land.

“Back when I became a celestial, it took me the time it takes an incense stick to burn to pass the second tribulation. The third tribulation took three days… but Bai Xiaochun used only ten breaths of time…. The Undying Live Forever Technique, huh…. I wonder how long it will take him to pass the third tribulation?”

Of course, there was little need to mention how shaken the other court officials and powerful experts in Saint-Emperor City were. But what caused even more visible shock was when… they suddenly heard a voice whispering in their ears!

It sounded like a host of living beings speaking at the same time! It was as if the Eternal Mother were calling to them, speaking into heaven and earth from countless ages in the past!

That was what would happen when the second tribulation was passed. An eternal murmuring would be heard, indicating that the Daoseed had been successfully formed!

It wasn’t just the cultivators in Saint-Emperor City who heard it, everyone beneath the massive vortex also heard it!

Even the people of Heavenspan who were in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty were included, and they were shaken!!

Although many people had no idea what exactly it meant, there were some who had been party to something similar in the past, and quickly realized what it meant.

“Someone… is becoming a celestial!!”

The news quickly began to spread through the prefectures of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, leading to widespread shock.

In the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the first person to understand what was happening was the Vile-Emperor himself. Deeply shaken, he looked in the direction of Saint-Emperor City, eyes flickering with shock. Gongsun Wan’er was also in Vile-Emperor City, where she led a vast army from her bone galleon. When she realized what was happening, her expression flickered with shock, and she looked in the direction of Saint-Emperor City.

“It’s my sweetie….”

The appearance of a new celestial was something that would rock the entire cultivation world!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun had no idea that any of that was going on. His mind was currently blank and calm, as he acted on instinct alone.

The fusion process, which to the shock of the Saint-Emperor and the other celestials had gone very quickly, wasn’t anything Bai Xiaochun had even worried about. He had felt himself split apart into numerous dandelion-like seeds, floating about aimlessly. At the same time, though, he sensed something like a hidden voice speaking within his soul.

It was like a voice speaking to him, and although he didn’t know what it was saying, it made him feel safe. It was like a mother speaking to a child. He forgot everything, as though he really had become a bunch of dandelion seeds floating within a void.

He wasn’t sure how long it lasted. A year. Perhaps a hundred or even ten thousand…. There was no time or thought within the void. But then, one day, he heard a very clear voice.

“Tell me your name, my child….”

“I'm… Bai Xiaochun!” The words he spoke echoed like heavenly thunder, destroying the void, and crushing the world around him. Bai Xiaochun suddenly woke up from within the dandelion seeds, to find himself within his blessed land in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

All of his memories flooded back as, right there in front of him… was something that looked like a dandelion seed!

It was none other than his Daoseed!!

In that moment, the clouds in the sky seethed. Then, everyone in Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and everyone in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, and regardless of who they were… heard a voice murmuring something in their mind!

An eleventh celestial exists in the world, named… Bai Xiaochun!

Also in that exact moment, outside of the Eternal Immortal Domains, next to the enormous sovereign, out in the darkness of the starry sky, was an enormous object that looked almost like a landmass. Closer inspection, though, would reveal that it was half of a fan!

Despite being damaged, it sped smoothly through the starry sky like a shooting star.

Originally, it had not been heading toward the Eternal Immortal Domains, but after Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base breakthrough, when that voice spoke to all living beings, a vortex sprang up which changed the trajectory of the damaged fan. As of this moment, it was clear that it would soon pass by the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1074 awe-chapter-1075

No one was aware of the impending arrival of the huge fan, not even the archaean emperors!

However, in the moment that Bai Xiaochun became a celestial, all living beings in the two dynasties heard the name *Bai Xiaochun* ringing in their ears!

It was as if the spirit of heaven and earth were announcing to all creation that a new celestial had arrived!

It was just as Gongsun Wan’er had explained some time ago. All living things proceeded through their lives as though they were climbing a ladder. Everyone had Will, and beyond that was the Daoseed, both of which could affect the wider world.

Back in Saint-Emperor City, the eyes of the three celestials glittered brightly as they looked over at Bai Xiaochun’s blessed land, and the boundless energy which currently swept out from it into the larger world.

Mixed emotions could be seen in the eyes of the Saint-Emperor. He knew that, as of this moment, Bai Xiaochun from the Heavenspan Realm had made a major step in pursuing his personal Dao. Furthermore, instead of there being two major factors that made him important to the Saint-Emperor, there were now three!

He was now a celestial!

The Saint-Emperor consciously suppressed the frustration and anger he had felt because of the lotus roots.

All of the officials in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, even Heavenly Marquis Liu, stood there in silence, shocked at how smoothly Bai Xiaochun had stepped into the Celestial Realm.

As for the Vile-Emperor, he was just as shaken as the Saint-Emperor was. And then there were the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm, scattered throughout the two dynasties, whose hearts surged with excitement as that mysterious voice spoke to them.

In Godsifter Prefecture, the Giant Ghost King had been sitting sullenly in his preceptoral manor, grumbling about how destitute he and his followers were. All of a sudden, he shot to his feet, his eyes shining with unprecedented brightness.

“Bai Xiaochun is a celestial!?!?” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

The Grand Heavenmaster was speeding along through the wastelands of a neighboring prefecture when, all of a sudden, he turned to look in the direction of Saint-Emperor City. Mixed emotions could be seen in his eyes, including relief, happiness, and determination.

“I need to go see the Giant Ghost King....” he murmured. Turning, he began to head toward Godsifter Prefecture.

The Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster weren’t the only ones to be excited. In the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, Bruiser had taken it upon himself to protect Song Junwan. No matter what insidious motives people had, with Bruiser there, she was safe.

Bruiser’s battle prowess had improved steadily, placing him within the Deva Realm. It was as the two of them were traveling along that both heard a voice speaking to them.

A tremor ran through Song Junwan, and Bruiser suddenly looked up in the direction of Saint-Emperor City.

“Bruiser, Xiaochun just became a celestial!” Song Junwan could not have been more elated. After arriving in the Eternal Immortal Domains, she had been significantly enlivened by three particular pieces of news.

The first was that the Saint-Emperor had appointed Bai Xiaochun as Duke Heavenspan. The second came not long after that. She got a message from Patriarch Spirit Stream, stating that he, Li Qinghou, and some others were banding together. The River-Defying Sect was being re-formed! In fact, she and Bruiser were right in the middle of heading to that very location.

It wasn’t that she hadn’t thought of trying to get to Saint-Emperor City. It was just too far away. Right now, the closest safe place was with Patriarch Spirit Stream.

There within the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, Patriarch Spirit Stream, Li Qinghou, and the others who had already gathered together were all extremely excited. They had a bitter life right now, but as of this moment, their hope only continued to solidify!

“The fact that Xiaochun is a celestial will inspire everyone from the Heavenspan Realm!” Patriarch Spirit Stream threw his head back and laughed, a laugh filled with relief and anticipation. “Qinghou, it was not in vain that we reached out to so many River-Defying Sect disciples. More and more will be joining us in the coming days! Saint-Emperor City is too far away for us to reach, but I have faith that Xiaochun will find us sooner or later!”

A broad smile covered Li Qinghou’s face, making him look almost as young as he had been when he first caught sight of that youngster atop Mount Hood….

Song Que had made much progress over the last year in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. He had participated in many deadly fights, causing a powerful murderous aura to build up in his bones. He had chosen not to go to Patriarch Spirit Stream. Instead, he was like a lone wolf, prowling the vast immortal domains of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty in a constant journey to grow stronger.

He was now on the cusp of a breakthrough, half a step into the Deva Realm!

When the voice spoke to Song Que about Bai Xiaochun becoming a celestial, he stopped in place. After a moment of silence, he smiled. And yet, the determination never left his eyes. Turning, he vanished into the night.

There were quite a few lone wolves like Song Que. For example, there was Zhou Zimo. Because of her deva cultivation base, as well as her extreme caution, no one had any idea who she truly was. Furthermore, she didn’t go around slaughtering people like Song Que. Instead, she gained power.

Over the course of the past year, she had come to control five entire sects. Despite that, no one was ever able to get any hint about who she truly was.

Because she had five sects under her control, Zhou Zimo was in a much better position than most of the other lone wolves from the Heavenspan Realm. Whether it was her cultivation, or her access to information, she was far beyond the masses. When she heard the voice murmuring Bai Xiaochun’s name, she was undercover in a sixth sect, one that she hoped to soon gain control of. A tremor passed through her, and she rubbed her belly, a radiant smile playing out on her face.

“Hey little buddy, that useless dad of yours is pretty awesome, isn’t he?”

In Vile-Emperor City was a certain immortal's cave that was kept under heavy guard. Inside, a middle-aged man sat cross-legged, listening to the voice speaking Bai Xiaochun’s name. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open.

“Bai Xiaochun.... You may be a step ahead of me, but that won’t matter in the end!” Taking a deep breath, he closed his eyes, whereupon energy began to build up to break a barrier within him!

As the Eternal Immortal Domains were shaken, Bai Xiaochun was there in his blessed land in Saint-Emperor City, bursting with excitement at the feeling of the dandelion-like Daoseed inside of him.

“I finally broke through!”

A long moment passed, after which he waved his hand, causing the Daoseed to float out from inside and hover in front of him. A strange light flickered in his eyes as he studied it closely.

“So this is a Daoseed, huh....” It was covered with innumerable magical symbols, and contained boundless Will. In fact, because he had cultivated the Frigid School Will-Evolving Incantation, it was easy for him to identify the strand of Willpower that had long existed in him, which was now part of the Daoseed.

After a long moment, he looked away, and the Daoseed floated back into him. At that point, he took a deep breath and assessed his cultivation base power, which now vastly surpassed the level of a demigod.

If he were to face Ghostmother right now, he was confident that he wouldn’t need to slowly whittle away at her. Given his current cultivation base, he would be able to cleave the defensive shields of her battleship apart with a single blow!

Furthermore, because of his level of control over his Willpower, he felt as if he were at the peak of all creation, and that a single thought of his could affect the minds of all living beings.

He suddenly thought back to the time over the Eternal Sea when Gongsun Wan’er had used her Daoist magic of Willpower. In that moment, it was as if all living things had been completely incapable of resisting her or fighting back. Were it not for the scrap of Willpower he had possessed back then, not even his heaven-defying powers of regeneration would have saved him!

As of this moment… Bai Xiaochun was absolutely certain about one particular thing he could now do!

Although it would be difficult, he could… control the Will within all living beings around him!

He closed his eyes for a long moment, and then opened then. “Before, I didn’t understand why there was no further path for the Undying Live Forever Technique after becoming a celestial….

“But now I know….

“The human body has five mountains, five shackles, that lead to the Undying Live Forever Technique. Although it seems to end with the Mahayana Realm, the truth is… that the final step comes by deepening the previously built foundation! Progress comes, not by advancing along a path others have already walked, but rather… by forging one’s own Dao!

“Even the powerful Arch-Lord was defeated by the sovereign from beyond. That just goes to show that following the methods that others have attempted will lead to a dead end.

“With the proper foundation, progress comes based on one’s personal experiences, thoughts, and decisions. Presumably, it would be the same, not just with the imperial clan from the Heavenspan Realm, but with the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor too!” At long last, Bai Xiaochun understood.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1075 awe-chapter-1076

“The Undying Live Forever Technique is like soil. What grows in that soil is up to one’s personal Dao….

“Above demigods are celestials, and above celestials are archaeans. If I want to become an archaean, then according to what Gongsun Wan’er said, I need to get my Daoseed to sprout, and become Dao Will. Those who have Dao Will are archaeans!

“Daoseed. Dao Will. That is the difference between celestials and archaeans!” Before his cultivation base breakthrough, his understanding had been somewhat muddled. But now that he had a Daoseed, he suddenly felt much clearer about the Dao Will of archaeans.

“Celestials can use their Daoseed to borrow Will from all living beings, and become one with them. But archaeans can use their Dao Will… to transcend heaven and earth! They can exist on a higher level than anything else, in a position that celestials cannot even touch. The Dao Will of an archaean can cover the whole world!

“Their Will can shape fate. That’s why they can resurrect fallen celestials….” Although he wasn’t sure if his analysis was absolutely correct in every aspect, he was confident that, overall, it was close enough.

“In other words, I have to create… my own third codex of the Undying Live Forever Technique!” At this point, his eyes began to shine brightly.

“The point of the third codex is to get my Daoseed to sprout, and bloom into Dao Will!” As he murmured these things, his aura, his cultivation base fluctuations, and everything else about him focused inward. Nothing was detectable on the outside. At the same time, he sank into a state of utter calm, without any traces of either joy or sorrow.

“Being *undying* is a state. Although regeneration seems like an important aspect, the truth is that it has more to do with time. Only by being indestructible for endless years can something be considered truly undying!

“Being able to *live forever* is a state of mind, and yet, also has to do with time, and the ability to continue to live…. In that case, what should the third codex be about…?”

Closing his eyes, he descended further into calm contemplation. He recalled years past, he recalled cultivating the Undying Codex, and he recalled acquiring the Live Forever Codex. He recalled the Heavenspan Realm, and he recalled his own history….

Those memories existed within him as clear as day.

As he worked on creating his own new technique, his cultivation base focused completely inwardly. Meanwhile, the vortex outside of his blessed land had vanished entirely.

The voice which had murmured into the ears of all living beings faded off into the distance. The world returned to normal. The three celestials still hovered in midair, looking down quietly at the blessed land. Although few other people knew what Bai Xiaochun was doing right now, the celestials obviously knew.

“He’s creating a new technique!” Chen Su murmured. All three of the celestials had done a similar thing back when they broke through. They knew how important this step was. Not only would it determine Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess as a celestial, but it could also… lead to a situation in which the Eternal Immortal Domains might have a third archaean emperor sometime in the future!

As for the court officials and other important cultivators in Saint-Emperor City, none of them knew exactly what Bai Xiaochun was doing at the moment, and yet, their eyes still flickered with fear as they looked in the direction of his blessed land.

Although there were no more powerful fluctuations rolling out from the blessed land, people could sense from the utter stillness and quiet there that something powerful was inside, like a wild beast with its eyes closed, that could open them and devour anything that got too close!

Back when Bai Xiaochun had been a demigod, they weren’t too worried about mocking or deriding him. But now… he had become a celestial. In all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, there were only ten others. As of now, he was not the type of person that others could point and laugh at.

Everyone lived in an imperial dynasty with laws and rules, but it was also the cultivation world, in which… people respected the powerful!

If Bai Xiaochun were not from the Heavenspan Realm, everyone would have been very excited and proud. But Bai Xiaochun was different, and therefore, it caused many mixed feelings to rise up in the hearts of the cultivators of Saint-Emperor City.

Many of them were thinking back in fear to how rudely they had reacted to the incidents with the heavenly dragonfish and the lotus seeds. Others had submitted official requests that he be executed.

If he had remained a demigod, it would have been one thing. But he was now a celestial, a fact that caused bitterness to grip the hearts of the officials. Now, none of them wanted him in Saint-Emperor City. For one thing, based on past events, they could only imagine what the future might bring…

“Back when he was a demigod, he nearly destroyed the foundation of Saint-Emperor City…. Looking forward, that means that the city is in grave peril!”

“We have to get him out of here. It’s been made clear that Parole Captain Liu was right! He's a walking disaster!”

“He’s only been in Saint-Emperor City for about a year, and during that time… more than half of the heavenly dragonfish vanished, seventy percent of the lotus seeds disappeared, and the lotus roots… suffered a serious blow!! The venerable Saint-Emperor might be able to weather such disasters, but we can’t!”

“I'm absolutely convinced that if things keep going on the way they have, this guy’s ability to cause disasters, backed by a celestial cultivation base, will leave us completely powerless! Even worse, he’s a master at quibbling his way out of problems! We’re in serious trouble!!”

Virtually everyone was thinking the same thing, and many people began to make petitions of the Saint-Emperor.

“Your Majesty, Duke Heavenspan becoming a celestial is a grand occasion for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty! I would like to submit an official request to the court. Based on Duke Heavenspan's status and meritorious services, it is not appropriate for him to be kept behind in Saint-Emperor City. He should be sent to take command of the second immortal domain!"

"Your Majesty, the second immortal domain is constantly at odds with the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Celestial Zhao Yuanhan has been stationed there for years now, working very hard and performing great services for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. The time has definitely come for him to retire!"

"That's right, Your Majesty. I would also like to submit an official request to the court that Duke Heavenspan be sent away…. We really shouldn't be such a disappointment to him. After all, he kidnapped a celestial to give as a blood tribute. Meritorious service like that deserves a truly substantial reward!"

The official requests began to pile up in front of the Saint-Emperor. Many people even petitioned for personal audiences in which they offered all sorts of persuasive arguments. In the end, the message was the same: no one wanted Bai Xiaochun to stay in Saint-Emperor City!

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun had even become a headache to the Saint-Emperor, who had also come to the realization that it had been a big mistake to keep him in the city. Never could he have imagined how much of a torment that would be.

Not only did he cleverly make sure that there was never any good evidence that could be used against him, he also managed to constantly make himself more important. The Saint-Emperor couldn't help but lament the loss of the heavenly dragonfish, and how it would be years before the lotus seeds could be harvested again. And then there were the yellowing lotus leaves and the wilted flower. The Saint-Emperor was absolutely convinced that if Bai Xiaochun remained behind, he would be the end of them all.

He also sympathized with all the other cultivators in the city, and could well imagine how scared they were about what would happen when Bai Xiaochun emerged from secluded meditation....

“Damn that Bai Xiaochun!” The more the Saint-Emperor thought about the situation, the angrier he got, and the more worried about the future he became. Finally he sighed, aware that *if you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off*. No matter what decision he made, it would have negative ramifications. And that was without even thinking about what the Vile-Emperor Dynasty would do to take advantage of the situation....

“Damn this Bai Xiaochun. How could he be such a torment!?!? If I’d have known things would end up like this, I would never have accepted his blood tribute!” Sighing, he was just about to make his decision when he realized that if he got rid of Bai Xiaochun in the way everyone was requesting... then the second immortal domain would be in great peril!

In the past, he would never have come to this conclusion. But the events of the past year, and his personal experience with Bai Xiaochun’s torments, caused fear to grip the Saint-Emperor’s heart. Unfortunately, now that Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, he couldn’t be put in charge of a prefecture. It could only be an immortal domain.

Even as the Saint-Emperor wrestled with the issue, and the court officials continued to submit requests, Bai Xiaochun was seated cross-legged in his blessed land, thinking about everything that had happened in his life. Eventually, his eyes opened, partly blank, partly alive with enlightenment!

“My memories of the Heavenspan Realm, from the time I was born until everything ended. All of the former things….

“The Daoseed needs to sprout roots, and eventually bloom into Dao Will….

“Put it all together, and you have…. *Former Will!”*

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1076 awe-chapter-1077

“Although the Undying Codex and the Live Forever Codex aren’t technically connected in any way,” Bai Xiaochun murmured, “they still conform to the same general idea. Therefore, my third codex….

“My memories of the past will be *Former Will!*

“My current Dao will be *Present Will!*

“And my upcoming destiny will be *Future Will!”* As he uttered these words, the enlightenment in his eyes grew clearer, and the blankness faded. Clarity began to take over.

His voice thrummed in strange fashion, as if with the power of natural law. It seemed as though his voice existed around him, beyond the heavens, in the past, and in the future.

Rifts opened up in the area, as well as a series of spinning vortexes. It was almost like a tempest, and yet, it was only visible within the blessed land, and nowhere outside!

Anyone who might have been able to cast their vision into the blessed land would have been able to sense time twisting and distorting, flowing in a different way than in the world outside!

It was as if the past, the present, and the future were all fusing together within that blessed land!

It was impossible to truly describe or understand, and was profoundly shocking!

The truth was that this technique Bai Xiaochun was making surpassed anything that anyone else could imagine. And if anyone could have it described to them, they would be deeply shaken.

After all, celestials could temporarily reverse time, but they could only do so by means of certain Daoist magics. And in some situations, it was only possible with the help of an archaean emperor. But Bai Xiaochun… was essentially probing the Dao of time!

As the rifts filled his blessed land, and the tempest raged with increasing intensity, Bai Xiaochun murmured, “Former Will. Present Will. Future Will…. When I master those three types of Will, then I will break through from the Celestial Realm and reach the Archaean Realm!

“This codex describes time immemorial. Therefore, it will be called the Time Immemorial Codex!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone as brightly as if they brimmed with lightning. Rumbling sounds filled the blessed land as Bai Xiaochun became what appeared to be an enormous black hole!

It was a black hole that existed in a different dimension than the Eternal Immortal Domains. As it spread out, it didn’t affect the blessed land in even the slightest aspect!

“From here on out, I cultivate… the Undying Live Forever Time Immemorial Technique!” He waved his hand, and heavenly thunder rumbled as the previously calm sky suddenly filled with flashing colors. Whether it was court officials submitting requests in the imperial palace, the three celestials, or the Saint-Emperor, all of them suddenly looked up into the sky.

The officials suddenly had very ill premonitions, and as for the celestials, they began to pant in shock.

“That aura... what kind of technique is Bai Xiaochun making?!?!”

The Saint-Emperor’s eyes shone with scintillating light, and although he managed to remain calm, a faint scrap of killing intent appeared within his heart.

“The Dao of time....”

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was unaware of all of that. He was wrapped up in creating his technique. Although he was now clear as to the nature of it, he still had much to do in the way of analysis and augury.

“The Time Immemorial Codex has three Wills, which cannot be created simultaneously. For now, I will work on that which comes from my past. I will use the countless memories of my life to feed my Daoseed. When that process is complete, the true Former Will will appear!

“When that happens, then even if I am killed, and cease to exist, my Daoseed will still remain, along with my memories and my obsessions.” A smile broke out onto his face.

“If I don’t take some of my Daoseed and give it to the Saint-Emperor, then I would have no hope of being resurrected. But with my Former Will, perhaps... to some extent, I will have achieved my Dao, and reached the point of being able to exist for all eternity.

“In the Heavenspan Realm, I experienced death, and thus, in some ways I also experienced reincarnation. Therefore, the divine ability associated with my Former Will shall be...

“The Sutra of Former Reincarnation!” All of a sudden, the light of augury faded from his eyes as he saw everything, from Mount Hood all the way to the destruction of the Heavenspan Realm!

“Spiritual power. Divine abilities. Willpower. My memories… they are all expressions of power!

“Henceforth, anyone who hears this sutra spoken aloud will find the memories of their lives transformed into magical sealing symbols. Those with deeper and more ancient memories will find the power of the magical symbols shocking to the extreme!

“The Sutra of Former Reincarnation can destroy memories and eradicate minds!!” Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, and in that instant, the black hole that seemed to exist in another reality expanded. In the blink of an eye, his blessed land seemed to fade, as though a shocking power was about to wipe it out of existence. A moment later, the air distorted, and everything went back to normal.

Rippling fluctuations spread out in all directions, causing both the living entities they passed, and even the inanimate objects like buildings, to flicker back and forth between being blurry and being clear.

Gu Tianjun and the other two celestials were still in the area, and were touched by the fluctuations. They had originally thought to evade them, but then decided that it would be a good way to test out the divine abilities and techniques that Bai Xiaochun had created, and perhaps get a sense for his battle prowess.

However, as soon as the fluctuations reached them, their expressions flickered dramatically, and they retreated at full speed. After they were out of the range of the fluctuations, it was impossible for them to conceal the shock they felt.

“Ordinary in terms of might, but the Daoist magic involved is peculiar to the extreme. It’s almost like I was just looking at my own past....”

“What did I just see? It was like my own memories, come to life in front of me!” The three celestials exchanged very serious glances.

Throughout the rest of the city, numerous cultivators felt their hearts pounding in fear. As for the Saint-Emperor, he retracted his vision, spent a moment in thought, and then prepared to issue a proclamation.

However, even as he did, a boundless energy suddenly descended onto the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Expression flickering, the Saint-Emperor suddenly vanished, to reappear high in the sky. He didn’t just hover there, he continued to rise higher and higher!

Something was happening now that was more shocking to him than Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base breakthrough, or the technique he was creating that was based on the Dao of time. Although other people would only be able to sense some faint pressure, as an archaean, the Saint-Emperor could tell that a very oppressive energy was approaching from the starry sky!

Outside of the Eternal Immortal Domains, behind the body of the gargantuan sovereign, out in the boundless void, the massive, damaged fan that had responded to the vortex that Bai Xiaochun created upon becoming a celestial was approaching with incredible speed.

As of this moment… it had entered the borders of the region considered the edge of the Eternal Immortal Domains. As it closed in, it adjusted its trajectory again, almost as if the shapeless vortex created by Bai Xiaochun was drawing it in!

After these adjustments, the fan was not going to just brush by the Eternal Immortal Domains… it was going to hit them!

More precisely, it was actually going to hit… the gargantuan sovereign right above them!

It moved with incredible speed, unleashing powerful fluctuations. Furthermore, it was moving so quickly that it trailed flames as it moved!

With every moment that passed, the fan got closer and closer to the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1077 awe-chapter-1078

Anyone who could view the scene from out in the void would see something that looked like a burning meteor, descending with shocking energy and momentum!

The speed involved defied imagination!

Earlier, despite the fact that the damaged fan had changed trajectory because of Bai Xiaochun, it hadn’t been on course to hit the Eternal Immortal Domains. Furthermore, its speed hadn’t been that shocking. As such, neither the Vile-Emperor nor the Saint-Emperor had noticed it. But now….

As the fan’s momentum built, and its trajectory became locked in, strange signs began to appear in the Eternal Immortal Domains. The first place to be affected was the Eternal Sea!

The water was tugged at as if by tidal forces, and rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions. Mist began to rise up from the sea, and the shores of the immortal domain were battered by massive waves.

The living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains were all struck with deep shock. Meanwhile, as the Saint-Emperor flew up into the sky, Gu Tianjun and the other two celestials looked up in astonishment. As for Bai Xiaochun, he had just completed his breakthrough and created his Former Will, and had been about to leave his blessed land. That was when he felt an incredible pressure, along with an indescribably intense sensation of crisis.

“Something dangerous is coming from above!” Blurring into motion, he flew high into the sky!

It wasn’t just the Saint-Emperor Dynasty in which such things occurred. In Vile-Emperor City, the archaean Vile-Emperor blurred into motion to appear up above, where he headed up to the very limits of the sky.

He was followed by four beams of light, which were the celestials of his dynasty. Two celestials did not come, one of them being Ghostmother. Of those present, all wore looks of incredulity as they peered high into the sky.

When people in both of the capital cities saw the dramatic events playing out with the emperors and the celestials, their hearts filled with sensations of unease.

“That… that’s….”

“What is that?!?!”

As people cried out in alarm, they began to look up into the sky, where something like a burning meteor was now visible. Based on their vantage point, it didn't seem to be moving very quickly, although that couldn’t have been less the case.

The Saint-Emperor and Vile-Emperor teleported to the limits of the world, until they were almost hovering out in the void itself. Their senses were more acute than those of anyone else in the world, and they could also physically see the bright, glowing light of the approaching fan. It was moving so incredibly quickly that it would arrive within only about ten breaths of time.

Both emperors could tell that the thing was going so fast that… neither of them could possibly stop it!

It was at this point that both of them breathed sighs of relief. No one else would be able to see it, but because of their incredible cultivation bases, they were able to pick up on clues which pointed to the fact that the fan would not strike the Eternal Immortal Domains, but rather, the enormous sovereign.

As the fan neared, their hearts calmed to some extent. However, they were still shocked as they realized that the aura of the fan seemed to be that of an archaean.

Despite the fact that the moment of crisis seemed to have passed, the two of them remained in place just in case something unexpected occurred.

The Vile-Emperor turned to look at the Saint-Emperor, and spoke in a sinister and cold voice. “It’s big, but it’s nothing more than a damaged archaean treasure. It won’t cause any problems. Now that it's here, though, I’ll take six spots!”

The Saint-Emperor smiled, and in response to the Vile-Emperor’s coldness, spoke in the warmest of voices. “It’s been a long time since any damaged treasures fell into the Eternal Immortal Domains from the void. If it weren’t for the vortex created by Bai Xiaochun upon becoming a celestial, it would never even have come. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty can claim credit for this damaged fan. Based on that, do you really think I’ll let you have six spots? Impossible!”

The Vile-Emperor chuckled coldly. Ignoring the Saint-Emperor, he focused on the incoming fan, which was now little more than a streak of light.

Anyone other than these two who were this close to the fan would likely have been killed. But they were archaeans, and were therefore qualified to observe it from this close distance.

Closer and closer….

After a few breaths of time passed, the huge fan slammed into the continent-sized hand of the gigantic sovereign, causing a massive rumbling sound to fill the Eternal Immortal Domains!

It was louder than heavenly thunder, and caused the five immortal domains to tremble. The Eternal Sea churned and heaved wildly.

Bai Xiaochun hovered in midair as the deafening sound rolled out, looking up in the direction of the enormous sovereign's right hand. There, teetering back and forth… was an enormous, damaged fan!

He could sense something otherworldly about the fan, and the aura which spread out from it into the Eternal Immortal Domains reminded Bai Xiaochun very much of what it felt like to be in the presence of the Saint-Emperor.

"That's…." Not too far off, Gu Tianjun and the other celestials were also in the air, shaken as they stared up at the fan.

"An archaean magical item…."

"That aura… is described in certain ancient records. It's the aura of the Immortal from before the great destruction!!"

It wasn't just Gu Tianjun and the other celestials who were shaken. The celestials in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty were equally stunned. Even Gongsun Wan'er, who was in a distant location at the moment, was taken aback.

There were also many demigod experts within the Eternal Immortal Domains who were now staring up at the enormous damaged fan, their eyes burning with passion.

The enormous hand was not harmed by the fan slamming into it, and in fact, didn’t even move at all in response. But as for the fan, it was severely damaged by the force of the impact. Cracks spread out on its already damaged surface, and then, chunks and rubble began to fall down off it, becoming like blazing meteorites that rained down onto the Eternal Immortal Domains.

There were millions of chunks of such rubble, all of which shot down with shocking speed and energy.

In that very moment, both the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor took action. Their hands blurred with incantation gestures, causing two immense fields of light to shoot out.

One field was blackish violet, the other was made of five colors, and wherever they went, they transformed the falling rubble into ash. Afterward, both of the emperors sent divine sense out to touch the huge fan.

Although the huge fan was severely damaged, both the face and the frame of the fan remained intact. As for the image depicted on the face of the fan, it was that of an entire world.

“It’s a world treasure. Sadly, its energy is fading. Who knows how many things it struck on its journey through the stars. It’s already crumbling and worthless.” Both the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor shook their heads as they continued to scan the fan.

In the end, they confirmed that the fan did not, in fact, have any of the aura of a sovereign on it. It only contained archaean fluctuations, much the same as the two of them emanated. In fact, it was a bit weaker than that.

Had the fan been a sovereign-level treasure, they would have been very excited, and would have gone to investigate it themselves. But it was not such a treasure, making it of little interest to the two emperors.

However, even as they retracted their divine sense, something else happened. Among all of the countless bits of falling rubble that were being destroyed by the divine abilities they had just unleashed, there was a mountain-sized building. When the building was shattered, a lump of decaying black stone shot out from it!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1078 awe-chapter-1079

The black rock was vastly smaller than the building around it. But as the building fell apart, the rock completely ignored the beams of light sent out by the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor, and continued downward toward the Eternal Immortal Domains.

As it descended, it burst into intensely hot flames!

The suddenness of the development caused the faces of the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor to fall. Both of them could tell that the rock didn’t come from the fan… it came from the enormous sovereign who loomed over the Eternal Immortal Domains!

“Dammit!” Eyes radiating anxiety, the Saint-Emperor burst into motion, heading directly toward the black rock. The Vile-Emperor also began to advance. However, at the same time, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then pushed it out toward the Saint-Emperor.

The Saint-Emperor immediately vanished, reappearing some distance away with a look of rage on his face.

“What are you doing, Vile-Emperor?!?!”

“What am I doing? Either one of us could use a chunk of that sovereign’s flesh for augury purposes. It could contain secrets about how to break through to the Sovereign Realm! You think I’ll just let you have it?!” Chuckling coldly, he began to rush toward the chunk of black stone.

Killing intent sprang up in the eyes of the Saint-Emperor as he too began to rush toward the rock again. Moments later, the two of them began to launch Daoist magics back and forth against each other as the black rock continued to speed downward. As it did, the rock suddenly split open and began to spew out a dark liquid, as well as something that sounded like a howling voice!

Then, a boom rang out as the rock and the liquid slammed into the surface of the Eternal Sea. As a massive wave rolled out, the rock began to sink down to the bottom of the sea.

The Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor rushed down into the sea to follow it, causing more massive waves to roll out across the surface of the water. Even the immortal domains trembled as a result of what was happening.

Thankfully, the process didn't last for very long. Moments later, both of the emperors emerged from the sea, grim looks on their faces as they exchanged murderous glances.

“You’d better compensate me for this, Saint-Emperor!”

“It got away! You should be the one compensating me!” They stared at each other icily for a few breaths of time, then turned and left the Eternal Sea to return to their respective immortal domains to search for clues about where the black rock was.

No one except for the two emperors knew exactly what it was they were searching for. After all, few people qualified to have been able to observe what happened with the black meteorite. Furthermore, the aura emanating from the teetering fan up above had completely attracted the attention of the celestials and demigods!

Much talk spread through the immortal domains of the two dynasties during the following weeks.

“Back when the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was surrounded and about to be defeated by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the Saint-Emperor suddenly reached the Archaean Realm. It was all because he found a palace that had been floating in the void for countless years!”

“No one knows exactly what he found inside of that palace, but after coming out from it, he was in the Archaean Realm!”

“According to the ancient records I've read, every ten thousand years or so, a ruined object from beyond the heavens will fall into the Eternal Immortal Domains. They’re always objects of good fortune for us cultivators!”

Quite a few cultivators began to eye the damaged fan with deep hope.

Demigods and celestials alike were all convinced that there was an archaean aura in the fan, which indicated… that there was a high likelihood that it could provide assistance in reaching the Archaean Realm!

Bai Xiaochun heard a lot of talk about the fan. Furthermore, now that he was a celestial, he had access to ancient records that most other cultivators could never peruse.

“According to the legends, that enormous sovereign destroyed all of the tens of thousands of realms that once existed in the starry sky….

“In that moment, the entire starry sky turned dark as countless worlds were exterminated. Nothing remained alive. The only things left behind were endless wilds and ruins, never-ending amounts of dust and bone….

“Occasionally, some of those ruins will float past the Eternal Immortal Domains…. It doesn’t happen often, but when it does, they become good fortune for the cultivators of the Eternal Immortal Domains!”

After studying the jade slip carefully, Bai Xiaochun was quite certain about the origin and nature of the fan.

“An archaean aura…. a damaged world treasure!” He looked up at the huge fan with excitement. From the way it was visibly teetering back and forth, anyone could see that before long, it would fall off the sovereign’s hand and then continue on its way through the starry sky!

For unknown reasons, neither the Saint-Emperor nor the Vile-Emperor seemed inclined to try to keep the fan. Nor did they issue any orders for their subordinates to explore it and search for good fortune. And without their help, not even celestials could possibly reach the fan!

The celestials from the two dynasties spent half a month waiting in eager anticipation, during which time neither the Saint-Emperor nor the Vile-Emperor even made public appearances.

A few more days went by, and finally, the Saint-Emperor returned. When he did, he sent his divine sense out into Saint-Emperor City and summoned the court officials for an audience.

It was impossible to tell what he was thinking, but there was definitely something grim to his expression. As the officials gathered in the imperial palace, they could see that, and began to get nervous.

Even Bai Xiaochun was acting especially cautious. Thankfully, he hadn’t done anything to arouse public wrath recently, which made him a bit more confident.

The Saint-Emperor currently stood in front of the Dragon Throne, looking around at the gathered cultivators. He didn’t bother with the warm expression he usually wore. It almost seemed like he had taken off a mask to reveal his true expression. His eyes were cold, and his cultivation base emitted powerful fluctuations that weighed down heavily on all of the cultivators in the imperial palace.

Gu Tianjun and the other celestials exchanged glances, their hearts pounding with sensations of foreboding.

The imperial palace was completely silent as the Saint-Emperor looked at his subordinates, and mentally reviewed everything he had done in the past half month. Unfortunately, no matter what he did, no clues had turned up.

As far as the damaged fan went, although it contained good fortune, it was nothing that the Saint-Emperor cared too much for. Furthermore, the black rock was a bad omen that he didn't want to have much to do with.

However, it demanded an investigation. Only after performing that investigation had he returned and summoned his subordinates to make arrangements to send people to the fan!

“Gu Tianjun. Sima Yunhua.” In response to his words, Gu Tianjun and the scholarly celestial both stepped forward and clasped hands respectfully.

“I would like to trouble the two of you to take a trip to the damaged fan up in the sky. If there is good fortune to be had, the two of you will have a chance to get it.” As Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua both looked up, the Saint-Emperor suddenly transmitted some words into their minds that only they could hear.

“Furthermore, you will check to see whether the damaged fan has anything to do with the gigantic sovereign! A chunk of the sovereign’s flesh and blood fell in the form of a stone, which landed in the Eternal Sea and then vanished.”

In response to his words, serious expressions overtook the faces of Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua.

Bai Xiaochun maintained full vigilance as this happened. Although he wasn’t sure what the Saint-Emperor had just said to Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, he had the feeling that it had something to with the fan, which only seemed to grow more and more mysterious.

As he pondered the situation, the Saint-Emperor began to list the names of some of the demigods who would assist Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua in their venture. Eventually, his gaze came to fall on Bai Xiaochun, who was trying to remain hidden toward the back of the crowd. Thinking about all of the official requests he had received half a month ago, the Saint-Emperor snorted coldly in his heart.

“Duke Heavenspan has become a celestial, so therefore, has earned the title of *King Heavenspan*. He will also participate in this mission.”

Bai Xiaochun’s heart leapt into his throat. A few days ago, he would have been excited by this opportunity, but now, he had a very ill premonition.

“Saint-Emperor, Your Majesty, um, I've been feeling a bit under the weather lately and--”

At this point, the Saint-Emperor turned and began to walk off.

“The matter’s settled!” he said with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron. “In three days, I’ll personally send all of you off!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1079 awe-chapter-1080

Bai Xiaochun scowled miserably as the Saint-Emperor walked off. By now, he could see that there was more to this damaged fan mission than met the eye.

That was especially true considering that the Saint-Emperor had essentially gone missing for half a month. Clearly, that had something to do with the fan. When you added in the grim look in the Saint-Emperor’s eyes, it caused Bai Xiaochun to feel very nervous.

Of course, the surrounding court officials were all delighting in Bai Xiaochun’s potential misfortune. By now, all of them were very clear about how well Bai Xiaochun could cause disasters. Whether it was the heavenly dragonfish, the lotus seed, or the lotus roots, all of them were convinced that if Bai Xiaochun stayed in Saint-Emperor City, it would definitely cause chaos.

As far as they were concerned, the Saint-Emperor was being very wise, intelligent, and courageous to send Bai Xiaochun away.

However, none of them allowed their true feelings to show on their faces. Some of them took the initiative to call out greetings to Bai Xiaochun, and even chat with him.

“Congratulations, King Heavenspan! You're a celestial now. Ha ha, how careless of me to have forgotten to congratulate you earlier! Please, I hope you take no offense!”

“Oh how the Saint-Emperor dotes on you, King Heavenspan! And how jealous I am that you get to search for good fortune in that treasure from beyond the heavens!”

“Best wishes, Heavenly King. I'm sure you’ll meet with instant success, and achieve great benefits!”

After clasping hands and offering such words, the cultivators would leave, chuckling sarcastically in their hearts.

Only Heavenly Marquis Liu seemed to think that the Saint-Emperor had made a bad decision, based on everything he knew about Bai Xiaochun. However, he also felt as though there was more to the story than he understood, and in the end, just sighed and left.

The truth was that the little turtle had come to be a source of much frustration. Although he had been in high spirits because of the incident with the lotus roots, considering he had no evidence to support his claims that Bai Xiaochun was at fault, he didn’t dare to say anything publicly.

After everyone left, Bai Xiaochun stood there miserably for a long moment, before finally shaking his head and heading back to his blessed land. There, he sat down and began to mull over the situation further.

“I'm a celestial, which makes me a lot stronger than before. But for some reason, the Saint-Emperor is in a really bad mood. Furthermore, that damaged fan is definitely going to be very dangerous.” The more he thought about it, the less at ease he felt about the Saint-Emperor’s orders. Furthermore, his final words had been spoken with extreme decisiveness, and also in very threatening fashion. Clearly, if Bai Xiaochun didn’t follow orders, he would be gravely punished.

“Maybe instead of being so cautious, I should go all out from the beginning?” After some more thought, he gritted his teeth and nodded. It wasn’t that he suddenly didn’t fear death. Rather, considering that he would be part of a large group of people, as long as he was careful and didn’t get greedy, his celestial cultivation base should be enough to protect him.

If he had been sent in alone, then he wouldn’t have agreed to go inside the fan no matter what.

“Well, since I'm going, I need to make sure I’m fully prepared.” His hair was already getting disheveled from all the worry. Not wanting to waste any time, he went out and began to spend all the resources he had built up during his time in Saint-Emperor City to start making the proper preparations. Talismans. Magical items. Medicinal pills. He bought all sorts of things.

Meanwhile, word was spreading both within Saint-Emperor City, and in the rest of the dynasty at large, that the Saint-Emperor was sending three celestials into the damaged fan.

There were many people who weren’t in the know that, upon finding out the names of the celestials who would be going to the damaged fan, reached out in the hopes of coming along. The Saint-Emperor didn’t stop that from happening. In fact, it wasn’t just the celestials who this happened to. Even demigod experts such as Preceptor Seadeep began to get groups of followers, all of whom would theoretically have a chance to benefit from going on the mission.

Word spread, and the fact that the mission was rumored to be very dangerous only made some people more interested than before. After all, many people in the cultivation world believed that rewards came only with risk. Therefore, a few days later, when the bells tolled in the imperial palace, Gu

Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, as well as the six demigods, including Preceptor Seadeep, each arrived with teams to back them up, teams that had dozens of devas in them.

Everyone was gathered, except for Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had just hurried out of his blessed land. Looking back over his shoulder at the place where he had lived for over a year, he sighed.

“I'm not sure when I’ll be back….” Slapping his bag of holding, he produced several suits of leather armor. If he had had more multi-colored flame, he would have performed more spirit enhancements. But right now, he couldn’t afford to even perform twentyfold enhancements on all of them.

As he walked along, he put on all of the armor, each piece of which was branded with a defensive magical symbol….

Still not happy, he checked around quickly to make sure no one was watching, and then took out his turtle-wok and hung it on his chest like a breastplate. Then he covered it with leather armor. From a distance, his normally thin frame now looked much the opposite. He almost looked like a big ball rolling along. In addition to all of that, he had a black helmet that glowed with the light of a defensive spell formation, as well as a second, larger wok that he strapped on his back.

Anyone from the River-Defying Sect would find this sight very familiar. But these were the Eternal Lands, and thus, everyone who saw him was stunned. The guards outside the imperial palace hardly recognized him.

And when he arrived in the palace square, Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, Preceptor Seadeep, and all of the others who were already there waiting were all visibly stunned. Only when he trundled to a stop next to them did people finally get around to reacting.

“Uh… why is he wearing so much stuff…?”

“Heavens! This Bai Xiaochun has enough defensive magical items to protect a hundred-man army!!”

“Look at that helmet! It’s so hot today, isn’t he uncomfortable…?”

“Forget the helmet. Look at that wok! Unbelievable! Where did he even get it?”

If Gu Tianjun and the powerful experts like him were stunned, then there was little need to mention the deva cultivators. At the same time, many of them suddenly started wondering exactly how dangerous this mission was going to be. Was it really so terrifying that a mighty celestial would go to the extent of preparing in this fashion?

When Bai Xiaochun saw the reactions of the crowd, he cleared his throat proudly. After all, if he hadn’t dressed up like this so many times in the Heavenspan Realm, he would probably have long since lost his poor little life.

“Maybe I am a celestial now, but that doesn’t mean I can just forget about danger! Caution can keep you alive for thousands of years!” Sighing, he prepared to say something when, all of a sudden, a cold snort rang out that caused all hearts present to tremble, including Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua. Everyone reflexively clasped hands and bowed respectfully.

The Saint-Emperor strode out into the open and glanced around. When he saw Bai Xiaochun and his getup, even he was taken aback.

“........”

Trying to pretend he hadn’t noticed, he took a deep breath and waved his right hand through the air. Instantly, the power of an archaean cultivation base erupted out into heaven and earth. The sky went dim, and a holy light erupted, not from the sky, but up toward it!

It moved with incredible speed, as though it intended to split apart heaven and earth. At the same time, intense fluctuations rolled out in all directions.

In the blink of an eye, the light turned onto a passageway connecting them to the damaged fan up above!

“Well, get going, men!” the Saint-Emperor said. Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua took deep breaths and then headed into the tunnel!

The others present flew up after them. As for Bai Xiaochun, he took a deep breath before joining them, being the last to head into motion.

As the damaged fan got closer and closer, Bai Xiaochun looked down to see Saint-Emperor City growing smaller and smaller. Before long, it was too small to see clearly. At the same time, the enormous sovereign grew larger and larger, emanating pressure that even celestials couldn’t resist. Because of that pressure, it was obvious that no one present could ever leave the Eternal Immortal Domains, even if they wanted to.

Only archean experts could theoretically resist it, and perhaps use their cultivation base power to get people past it!

Intense rumbling sounds could be heard, and Bai Xiaochun felt his body vibrating. Then, he suddenly felt lighter, as though he had broken free from some force that had been tugging on him. At that point, he looked around and saw…

A black void!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1080 awe-chapter-1081

A tremor passed through Bai Xiaochun, and his heart was pounding so hard it felt like it might explode.

This was the first time in his life he had ever personally seen the true starry sky! Except, it was no starry sky!

This was not what he had seen when looking up into the sky inside the world that existed in the Arch-Sovereign. Neither was it what he saw when looking up into the sky in the Eternal Immortal Domains. What he saw was an endless, black void.

Originally, he had assumed the Heavenspan Realm was as large as any place could be. Later, he found out that it was actually only as large as one of the prefectures in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Originally, he had assumed that what he was looking at from within the Eternal Immortal Domains was the true starry sky. He had known all along that it was large, but now that he could actually see it with his own eyes, he realized that the Eternal Immortal Domains counted for almost nothing compared to it.

He was so profoundly and deeply shaken that he completely forgot about any potential dangers. He forgot about everything except for the endless void, and… the shockingly large sovereign!

He wasn’t the only one to react in such a way. Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, Preceptor Seadeep, and everyone else felt profoundly shaken.

No one spoke. They simply looked around as they traveled through the tunnel of light that the Saint-Emperor had created.

Down in the Eternal Immortal Domains, it wasn't possible to feel the true pressure from the sovereign, but now that they were getting closer and closer, it was a very different story.

It was the type of pressure that caused the heart to tremble. There was something boundlessly evil about it, something filled with infinite madness.

It was like being in the presence of a deadly killer. The pressure was so intense that everyone was sure that if the giant opened his eyes and gazed upon them, all of them… would instantly be turned into ash.

His fleshly body radiated power and strength, and there was a slight sneer on his face that struck everyone to the core.

Even Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua unconsciously felt the desire to be more careful.

More so, they realized that this enormous sovereign who existed right outside the Eternal Immortal Domains was profoundly dangerous. If he were dead, then it probably wouldn’t matter. But if the legends were true, and he was just asleep, then if he ever woke up, he would likely bring an end to the world they lived in.

The pressure grew stronger and stronger, and yet, the target destination of the group was not the sovereign. The tunnel of light created by the Saint-Emperor led to the damaged fan, which had flown through the void for an indeterminable period of time before coming to rest on the hand of the sovereign!

Now that they were much closer to the fan, it seemed even bigger than when they had observed it from the Eternal Immortal Domains. It was an open fan, damaged to the point where only half of it existed. However, even that part was enormous. As for the ribs that made up the fan, there were more than a hundred, each of which seemed like a mountain range that was connected to the outer edge of the fan!

As for the fan’s face, it was decorated by an image of a mountain, a river, and other features, making it look like an entirely different world….

It was majestic to behold, and as they got closer and closer, their eyes began to shine with even greater anticipation.

Although they were still some distance from the giant sovereign, the pressure was still incredible. Thankfully, the divine ability the Saint-Emperor had used protected them to a large degree.

Bai Xiaochun and the others eventually reached the end of the tunnel, at a point where the ribs of the fan all intersected to create a half-circle handle!

The pressure of the damaged fan itself actually negated some of the pressure from the gigantic sovereign. Therefore, even after leaving the protection of the Saint-Emperor’s light, they were still not in danger.

However, the pressure was still uncomfortably strong, like numerous mountains weighing down on them. The specific level of pressure, of course, depended on the cultivation base of the individual cultivator.

In some ways, it was not so much because of the nearby sovereign, but rather, the incredible pressure of the fan itself. In fact, it was so powerful that no one could even send out divine sense!

Even their ordinary senses were limited to a certain degree, making it impossible to see others’ cultivation base fluctuations.

No one spoke. They just looked around, sizing up their surroundings.

From Bai Xiaochun’s perspective, this handle area where the fan ribs converged was like a public square of sorts.

As for the ribs, upon close examination, they didn’t seem like mountain ranges, but rather… like they were paths of some sort.

“This fan is strange…. The fan ribs are like paths. What exactly is this treasure supposed to be used for…?” There were many speculations, and many eyes glittered as people considered their own personal plans and motives. Of course, no one gave voice to such things out loud.

Soon, people began to move toward the ribs, intent on getting into the world inside of the fan. However, before they could even start moving, rippling fluctuations suddenly appeared around them, much to their shock.

The Archaean Realm aura on the fan itself caused the eyes of Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua to burn with anticipation, and yet, they hadn’t forgotten the instructions from the Saint-Emperor. Even as they sized up the fan, their eyes slipped to the end of it, where they could make out the right hand of the enormous sovereign!

“It’s not letting us in?” Bai Xiaochun thought, eyeing the fan ribs. He looked around vigilantly, and then tried to decide what exactly to do. It was in that moment that, all of a sudden, another beam of light appeared, shooting up in their direction from the Eternal Immortal Domains!

The eyes of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty cultivators widened as they realized where that beam of light was coming from. Its source was… the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!

Bai Xiaochun was not surprised at all. It was only natural that, if the Saint-Emperor dispatched people to the fan, the Vile-Emperor would as well. Figures began to materialize in the area, provoking cold, vigilant glances from the cultivators of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

The first to appear were three celestials.

One of them was an old man with a red tumor on his face that made him look like a vicious, fiendish killer. When he looked over the cultivators present, his eyes glittered with sinister light.

“Sima Yunhua!” he said, his eyes locking onto that very cultivator and then glittering with open killing intent.

“Reverend Devourer!” Sima Yunhua replied coolly, his eyes narrowing.

Before either of them could continue speaking, the second figure grew clearer. He was a young man who resembled Sima Yunhua in some ways, dressed as he was like a scholar. There was something elegant about him, and he was so handsome he almost looked like a woman. Although a smile covered his face, it somehow made him look very vile.

The young man chuckled as he looked around. When he noticed Bai Xiaochun, he looked at him for a long moment before saying, “Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua! Who would have thought you two would be here? It's too bad that my old Master, Chen Su, couldn't come along. I was hoping to see him.”

The person to respond to him was neither Gu Tianjun nor Sima Yunhua, but rather Preceptor Seadeep. “Hmph! From the moment you betrayed the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Prince Ur-Demon, you lost the right to call Chen Su your Master!”

Beaming from ear to ear, but eyes as cold as ice, Prince Ur-Demon looked back at Preceptor Seadeep and said, “Oh, you’re here too, Sect Grandfather? You listen to me, you useless fool. When royalty like me talks, people like you need to keep their mouths shut!”

His gaze shook Preceptor Seadeep down to the center of his being, and forced him to stagger backward, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. Clearly, he was shocked at how different Prince Ur-Demon was from the person he had known in the past.

Ignoring the grim gazes of Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, Prince Ur-Demon looked back at Bai Xiaochun, and was about to say something further when the third of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty’s celestials arrived!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as a towering, burly man appeared. When Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua saw this newcomer, their expressions flickered.

“Celestial Virūpākṣa!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1081 awe-chapter-1082

In response to Gu Tianjun speaking out the name ‘Celestial Virūpākṣa’, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. He had heard of Celestial Virūpākṣa before. The town that Bai Xiaochun had stayed in for a time in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had been in the immortal domain overseen by him.

Later, Ghostmother took over that immortal domain. If things had not suddenly changed, it would likely have been Celestial Virūpākṣa that he tangled with. And considering the level of his cultivation base at the time, it would have been difficult for Bai Xiaochun to kidnap him.

The man was built like a tower, and as he stood there, intense pressure radiated off of him that caused the pupils of Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua to constrict.

“The Vile-Emperor Dynasty sent three celestials…?” Bai Xiaochun thought, blinking a few times. “I guess they could only send six in total.”

Clearly, the two emperors had come to an agreement about how many people to send.

Even as Bai Xiaochun considered the matter, Celestial Virūpākṣa looked over at him. Then, he spoke in a cold voice that demanded answers from anyone who heard it.

“Are you that useless stray dog Bai Xiaochun?”

From the way the man singled him out, Bai Xiaochun could tell that he had nothing but ill intentions toward him.

Furthermore, it seemed highly likely that he hoped to start a conflict that would escalate into an actual fight.

Otherwise, why would he be so overtly insulting?

“Does he really want to attack me physically? Maybe use me to put pressure on everyone else?” Alarmed, he tried to decide what to do. Before he could, Prince Ur-Demon stepped forward and looked at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shining with strange light.

“I heard that the secret of spirit enhancement is locked inside the blood of the people of Heavenspan. Do you mind... giving me some of your blood to taste?” Bai Xiaochun sucked in a breath. First Celestial Virūpākṣa started causing problems, and now this clearly villainous Prince Ur-Demon was joining in. Bai Xiaochun already had a bad feeling.

And yet, before that bad feeling could even begin to fade, Reverend Devourer chuckled hoarsely, looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then licked his lips.

“I'm curious, not only about spirit enhancement, but also the unique flame conjuring techniques of the lands of Heavenspan. Supposedly you use souls as the main ingredient. I asked around, Bai Xiaochun, and everyone said that you are the only heavenly necromancer to ever exist.” A greedy gleam flickered within Reverend Devourer’s eyes.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding harder than ever, and his scalp was tingling like mad. With the vicious-looking Reverend Devourer in the mix, he now had three celestials all focused on him!

“Dammit! I haven’t even gotten to say anything! I was trying to keep a low profile! I didn’t provoke any of these lunatics, and yet they’re already teaming up to target me?!” Bai Xiaochun was nervous, and scared about being in such a passive position. Glancing over at Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, he could see that they were obviously not going to back him up.

From their perspective, this was the perfect opportunity to see what Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess was like now that he had broken through and become a celestial.

Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety mounted when he realized what they were thinking. Although he was scrambling to try to decide what to do, only a few breaths of time had passed so far. Seeing the three celestials all staring at him, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and stepped forward.

“Time to put everything on the line,” he thought. “I can’t be scared. In fact, I need to strike fear into *their* hearts. How to do it, though? If they join forces, they probably won't kill me, but would beat me up pretty badly. I guess one upside to this place is that neither divine sense nor ordinary senses work well in this place. I can’t see anything about their level, but they can’t see anything about mine either.” Inwardly anxious, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Flicking his sleeve, he stared at the other celestials, battle spirit flickering in his eyes, as well as a bit of derision.

Sneering, he said, “It's been a long time since anyone has dared to say such things in my presence.”

He almost seemed to regret that fact, as though he were thinking back to wonderful things from when he was younger.

“Now that I think about it, the last person who said something like that to me was another celestial from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Who was it? Oh, right. Ghostmother.”

Chuckling, and seemingly thrumming with battle spirit, he looked at the three celestials, pursing his lips as if to suppress his laughter. Although his heart was racing with anxiety, his eyes shone with utter madness.

“I've been restraining myself for some time now,” he sighed. “I’d hoped to keep a low profile here in the Eternal Immortal Domains, but, ah, whatever…. Come on. I’ll let one of you to try to make me cough up some blood. If even a drop comes out, then you can keep it!”

When Celestial Virūpākṣa heard Bai Xiaochun’s words, his eyes flickered with cold light. Smiling viciously, he blurred into motion, placing himself right in front of Bai Xiaochun, upon whom he unleashed a fist strike.

Bai Xiaochun didn't even attempt to dodge. He knew that he had to strike fear into the hearts of these three celestials from the Vile-Emperor City. If he tried to evade this strike, or fought back, the three of them would surely team up on him.

As for the damned Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, they seemed content to just watch the excitement. Unless they were personally threatened, they wouldn't do anything to stop it. There was no time for thought or planning. However, he didn’t need to. He had long since donned numerous layers of leather armor, beneath which lurked his turtle-wok….

He had been prepared from the very beginning to dodge if the fist strike wasn’t aimed at his torso.

But it was, and therefore, Celestial Virūpākṣa’s fist, which let out a string of sonic booms as it closed in, slammed directly into Bai Xiaochun’s chest!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even attempt to move out of the way, causing the eyes of all five of the other celestials to widen.

And of course, there was no need to even mention the reaction of all the other cultivators present. When the fist landed, Bai Xiaochun didn’t move. A huge boom rang out, and much of his leather armor was destroyed, but he himself was not harmed. Not even a drop of blood oozed out of his mouth.

In sharp contrast, the towering, burly Celestial Virūpākṣa grunted in pain. To him, it felt as though he had struck an immovable mountain. An indescribably powerful backlash hit him with devastating force, shattering his hand and sending him staggering backward several paces, blood oozing out of his mouth. His five yin organs and six yang organs vibrated dangerously, and his eyes widened as surely as if he had seen a terrifying ghost.

“How is this even possible!?!?” Celestial Virūpākṣa blurted in shock. “You just became a celestial! Even if you have a strong fleshly body, you shouldn't be able to stand up to a strike like that! You must have some precious treasure, don’t you!?”

Unfortunately for him, he couldn’t use his divine sense, and therefore had no way to even look for clues to figure out what had just occurred.

“So weak!” Bai Xiaochun sneered. “Don’t you have any defensive precious treasures to protect you from measly backlashes?!” The madness in his eyes seemed to flare brightly, and he even laughed in joy. That joy was actually real. After all, thanks to his terrifying powers of regeneration, the wounds that he had received moments ago were already healed. As for the turtle-wok, although it was easy to absorb back into his body, it could not be brought back out again so easily.

Looking very proud, he ripped off the tattered remnants of his leather armor and tossed them off to the side. Taking a confident step forward, he looked at the confused Celestial Virūpākṣa and then laughed maniacally.

“Come on. Bring it on! Hit me again!” He took a few more threatening steps toward Virūpākṣa, who backed up without even thinking about it. His right hand was completely destroyed, which meant that unless he called upon a unique celestial Daoist magic, there was no way he could do anything to Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body power, which seemed like a defensive treasure. Ordinary magical techniques and fleshly body power would be useless against him.

And the horrific backlash had Celestial Virūpākṣa shaking in fear.

Seeing that his opponent was backing up, Bai Xiaochun laughed madly. Waving his arm dismissively, he turned to Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer.

“You’re Prince Ur-Demon, right? Want some of my blood? Well, come on. Hit me and get some!

“And what about you, Reverend Devourer? Come on, hit me. Hurry up! Hit me!”

Prince Ur-Demon: “........”

Reverend Devourer: “........”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1082 awe-chapter-1083

More people were arriving from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and yet, nobody cared. After all, none of them were celestials, only demigod experts. And after they arrived, all of them looked over to the scene that was playing out.

Everyone was watching Bai Xiaochun mouthing off, almost as if he wanted someone to attack him....

“Bring it on! Hit me! Come on, Prince Ur-Demon. Come on, Reverend Devourer! Are you guys gonna hit me, or what? Hurry up! I'm ready. Bring it on!” He really seemed to be getting worked up.

Extremely unsightly expressions could be seen on the faces of both Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer. Just like Celestial Virūpākṣa, they couldn’t use their divine sense, and therefore couldn’t confirm what was really going on. Although they were relatively certain that Bai Xiaochun had a precious treasure of some sort, it was obvious that only a celestial-level Daoist magic could do anything to it. Ordinary magic could not.

And the mere backlash from hitting that defensive magical item was shocking to the extreme. Celestial Virūpākṣa’s shattered right hand, and the blood oozing out of his mouth, bore testimony to that. Neither Prince Ur-Demon nor Reverend Devourer had fleshly bodies at the same level as Celestial Virūpākṣa, so if such a backlash hit them, they would suffer even more.

Although it might not permanently cripple them, they would be badly hurt. And the whole point of this venture was to seek good fortune. Earlier, they had assumed that they could crush Bai Xiaochun to intimidate everyone else. Never could they have imagined that he would be so tough. The two of them were obviously not going to attack him casually at this point.

Worse, they had never seen any celestial that would go to these lengths to try to get someone to hit them….

“Completely incorrigible!”

“He obviously has some defensive precious treasure. That’s why he’s trying to get them to hit him again!!”

“He’s doing all of this on purpose!”

The people from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty were starting to get angry, and off to the side, the cultivators from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty were starting to get embarrassed. Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua exchanged awkward glances as, all of a sudden, their worldview changed….

Back before Bai Xiaochun had become a celestial, if Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua had learned that he had a precious treasure like this, they would have started scheming of a way to get it. But now that Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, everything was different. In fact, it might not even be possible for the Vile-Emperor or the Saint-Emperor to get that treasure easily.

After all… Bai Xiaochun was the only person in the Eternal Immortal Domains whose Daoseed was not under the control of someone else. Although that would place him in a certain amount of greater danger, it also meant that he had a lot more freedom!

Anyone else who betrayed the emperor they served would have to suffer the destruction of part of their Daoseed. But not Bai Xiaochun!

As everyone stood there with mixed feelings, Bai Xiaochun continued to make a huge scene.

“Alright, Virūpākṣa,” he shouted loudly, “they’re obviously not going to hit me. So it's back to you. Bring it on! Your right hand is broken, so I’ll ignore it for the time being. Use your left hand!”

Celestial Virūpākṣa was visibly livid. Snorting, he pretended that he hadn’t heard.

However, there was one particular demigod preceptor among the Vile-Emperor Dynasty forces who couldn’t hold back from chuckling coldly, a middle-aged man whose burly frame made it obvious that he was an apprentice of Celestial Virūpākṣa.

“Celestial Bai,” he said, “shouldn’t you act with a bit of propriety, considering your status? What’s with the hooting and hollering? You’re like an old woman! If you had any face at all, you would remove that defensive treasure of yours!”

Looking at the man askance, Bai Xiaochun said, “Who are you?”

Bai Xiaochun was already on guard. Although this man seemed like little more than a muscle-head, from the sharpness of his tongue, it was clear that he was quite clever.

“Your humble servant Li Donghao!”

“Alright, Li Donghao” Bai Xiaochun replied, glaring, “I’ll remove the magical item, and then you can come hit me! If you don’t hit me, then I’ll hit you!” This level of shamelessness was too much for even the people from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to take....

For a celestial to ask a demigod to hit them, even without a defensive treasure, was ridiculous. Given the power of a celestial’s Daoseed, any demigod would be severely injured by doing so.

It would be like a Foundation Establishment cultivator asking a mortal to hit them....

Li Donghao was enraged by Bai Xiaochun’s words, and was about to offer a furious retort when the last of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators teleported to the fan. By this point, there were more than fifty people present.... At that point, the damaged fan’s restrictive spells seemed to activate, and the ribs and fan face alike all began to glow with bright light!

It was so blinding that, in the blink of an eye, the minds of everyone present went blank!

Even the celestials were powerless. Everyone was instantly struck so deeply that they lost consciousness!

As of this moment, the damaged fan looked almost like a new star within the starry sky that people saw from down in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

This brightness caused the fan to surpass the gigantic sovereign, and provoked many shouts of alarm from the cultivators below!

“What’s that light!?”

“Heavens, what’s… what’s going on?!?!”

“It’s the damaged fan! Why is it shining so brightly!?!?”

Within the five immortal domains that made up the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, countless people noticed what was happening, and looked up in shock. They could all sense an indescribably powerful energy radiating from the damaged fan, an energy that filled all of the Eternal Immortal Domains!

After Chen Su, Gongsun Wan’er, and the other celestials sensed that energy, their minds and hearts leapt with shock.

“That energy… it surpasses the Archaean Realm!”

The Saint-Emperor and Vile-Emperor felt like they were about to collapse mentally, and their faces fell. Both of them instantly vanished, to reappear in the sky near the fan!

Unfortunately, the shining light made it impossible for them to get any closer, let alone enter the fan.

“The aura of a sovereign!!”

“Dammit! That’s not an archaean magical item! It belonged to a now-perished sovereign, left behind as a precious treasure!!”

The difference between archaean treasures and sovereign treasures was so vast that they almost couldn’t be compared to each other. An archaean treasure would be something that neither of the two emperors would care much about. But a sovereign treasure… would be the type of thing the two dynasties might be willing to go to war over!

Both emperors had been in the Archaean Realm for a very long time, and weren't even sure of how to advance beyond it. A sovereign-level precious treasure would give them much more hope of being able to break through.

To see such hope vanish right in front of them was a maddening thing. But nothing they did, no attack or technique, could do anything to the light that blocked their paths!

Eventually, the light faded, but it left behind a barrier that was just as impossible for anyone to get through. Only those on the inside could possibly acquire the good fortune of the damaged fan, forcing the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor to look on helplessly with bloodshot eyes.

The only thing that made them feel better was the possibility that some of the important celestials and demigods they had sent in could theoretically achieve breakthroughs.

But then the Saint-Emperor noticed Bai Xiaochun, and felt deep regret. "Dammit, I can't believe I let *him* go in!"

It was at around this time that the group who had already reached the fan began to come to their senses. When they did, they saw something like a mist around them that separated them from the piercing gazes of the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor!

It left them shaken, but at the same time, they trembled with anticipation as they looked over at the fan ribs.

Even the celestials among them were included. They had the strongest cultivation bases, and therefore, had a much better chance of coming out on top.

It was the same with Bai Xiaochun. Although the entire group seemed to have fully lost consciousness, the truth was that a message from the spirit automaton of the fan had been implanted into their minds. The nature of that message left Bai Xiaochun totally stunned. Never in his wildest dreams could he have guessed that his earlier judgement about the fan had been completely wrong. The fan was not a place of profound danger, but rather… a place of unprecedented good fortune!

“Someone will become… the new owner of the fan!?!” Bai Xiaochun thought, his chest heaving. It was at this point that everyone began to fly at top speed toward the various ribs.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1083 awe-chapter-1084

“The legends… are true….” No one, not even Celestial Virūpākṣa, was paying any attention to Bai Xiaochun anymore. Everyone was focused on entering one of the fan rib paths.

Bai Xiaochun joined them, his heart pounding, his mind ringing with the message that had just been transmitted.

This fan was not, in fact, an archaean precious treasure. It was… a world treasure that had once belonged to a sovereign!

The Sovereign Realm was something that could drive the countless cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains completely crazy. They would do just about anything to become that powerful!

Qi Condensation cultivators and archaean emperors alike would go to any lengths to achieve that goal!

From ancient times until this moment, there had only ever been three sovereigns in the Eternal Immortal Domains, all of whom had perished. After their deaths, the three dynasties had come to be: the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and Arch-Emperor Dynasty!

Obviously, the Sovereign Realm was supreme and unparalleled!

Of course, there were different levels within the Sovereign Realm. For example, the enormous sleeping giant outside of the Eternal Immortal Domains was supremely powerful among sovereigns. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to call him a paragon entity!

There used to be innumerable worlds out in the starry sky, all of which could have potentially given rise to sovereigns. But things were different now. A catastrophe occurred when the Enemy from Beyond, that enormous sovereign outside the Eternal Immortal Domains, personally destroyed the entire starry sky. All worlds and all living beings died, giving birth to endless darkness.

The damaged fan had once belonged to some unknown sovereign who was killed in body and soul. However, that sovereign’s legacy had remained behind. It was damaged, but… it was still a legacy treasure!

What was generally referred to as a legacy was essentially a set of core Daoist teachings and doctrines.

This fan… was a precious treasure that contained the legacy of a sovereign’s Daoist teachings and doctrines!

After that unknown sovereign died, this damaged fan kept floating through the dark, lifeless void. Years upon years passed, an endless cycle in which it traveled without cease. From the moment its journey began until now, it never found a second owner!

And there could only ever be one person to become the successor of that unknown sovereign, only one person to inherit that sovereign's core Daoist teachings and doctrines!

“Every rib on that treasured fan… is a path to the legacy. Every path contains a hundred levels. Whoever can get through the most levels in three months… will become the new owner of this magical item!

“According to the voice that spoke in my head, the one hundred levels within the various fan ribs are all the same. Furthermore, passing each level comes with a reward.... After all, the goal of the fan is to find a successor, not to kill people!” That last point was why all of the cultivators from the two dynasties were so excited.

And it was also why the devas were already filled with so much passion.

As of now, they realized that they could contend with celestials to gain ownership of the fan, and acquire the core Daoist teachings and doctrines of a sovereign. Even better, the levels all came with rewards. Although no one knew exactly what those rewards were, this item had once belonged to a sovereign, so any rewards would be significant, enough to drive the devas and demigods crazy.

And thus, everyone raced toward the paths in the fan ribs. There were already people disappearing inside as Bai Xiaochun hurried onward.

After selecting a fan rib, he was just about to enter when, all of a sudden, a different nearby fan rib glowed with bright light. A moment later, a deva cultivator from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty tumbled out, coughing up blood. After staggering backward a bit, he settled down cross-legged to meditate, a defiant gleam in his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun was obviously surprised by this.

“That guy failed? He’s a deva, but he couldn’t even get past the first level?!” All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun felt the need to be more on guard than ever. After a moment of thought, he turned and hurried over to the deva cultivator.

When the man saw Bai Xiaochun approaching, it didn’t matter that he was from the Heavenspan Realm, he was a celestial. The deva quickly rose to his feet and clasped hands formally.

“What happened in there?” Bai Xiaochun asked. “You failed? On the first level?”

The deva hesitated for a short moment. Not daring to hold back the truth, he lowered his voice and explained that he had come close to passing the first level, but had failed in the end.

According to his description, the first level featured five deva-level puppets.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. Meanwhile, seven or eight more devas emerged from the fan ribs in bad shape. All of them had various injuries, but none were life-threatening. At this point, Bai Xiaochun felt a bit more confident. After taking out a few more sets of leather armor and putting them on, he took a deep breath and headed back to where he had been about to enter the fan rib.

The moment his foot touched the rib, rumbling sounds filled his ears, and his vision swam. When he could see clearly again, he was in a ring-shaped arena.

Great pressure weighed down on the arena, at the front of which was a huge statue, half-human, half-beast, with a very vicious expression.

Five monkeys sat in meditation at the foot of the statue, their fur as bright as fire. When they opened their eyes, they were all equally crimson. Growling, they transformed into five beams of light that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was initially struck with fear. After all, it was impossible to use divine sense to check the cultivation base fluctuations of the monkeys, which looked incredibly fearsome.

But even as Bai Xiaochun began to back up, he blinked a few times.

“I can’t check their cultivation base, but… they’re so slow! So, I guess the levels don’t adjust to your cultivation base….” Eyes shining with confidence, he charged toward the five monkeys.

Raising his voice, he shouted, “Anyone who gets in my way… dies!”

Feeling very pleased with how heroic he sounded, he picked up speed, causing a tempest to spring up as he closed in on the monkeys.

He didn’t need to use any divine abilities or magical techniques. He had so much momentum that three of the monkeys exploded before he could even touch them, becoming nothing more than wisps of smoke.

The other two held on for a moment longer, but then similarly exploded into smoke as he passed.

Feeling very relaxed, Bai Xiaochun came to a stop on top of the head of the statue. Clasping his hands behind his back, he proudly swished his sleeve.

“All who dare to block the path of Bai Xiaochun, are doomed… to be reduced to ashes.” Just when he was about to continue onward, the wisps of smoke formed together into a medicinal pill, which he grabbed. It was translucent, and emanated a strange, fragrant aroma. Although he didn’t know the name of the pill, based on his Dao of medicine, he could quickly tell that this could be described as an immortal pill for people in the Deva Realm.

In fact, to people from the Eternal Immortal Domains, it would probably be more valuable than ten deva-level immortal pills.

Feeling wonderful, he put the medicinal pill away, whereupon the world around him vanished, and the fan rib appeared ahead of him. Without any hesitation, he proceeded on to the second level, and then the third….

He crushed each and every level as easily as dried weeds, until he found himself in the sixth level.

This level was different than anything before it. Ruins stretched out around him, along with nine steps leading upward. After lifting his foot off the eighth and final step, he realized that the secret of this level had to do with the pressure which would crush down, and was based on the level of one’s cultivation base!

“That can’t stop me!” Snorting coldly, he drew upon his boundless fleshly body power to place his foot down and complete the sixth level!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1084 awe-chapter-1085

Bai Xiaochun’s vision blurred as he left the world of the sixth level, and returned to the path on the fan rib. Upon rematerializing, he held a feather in his hand, which was the reward for passing the sixth level.

It seemed like nothing more than an ordinary feather, and not even a close examination revealed anything special about it. Bai Xiaochun could only guess that it might be part of some larger construct. Putting it away, he headed to the seventh level.

The seventh level was much harder than the previous levels. It was a test, not of the cultivation base, but rather intuition. After all, it was impossible to use divine sense here. The entire seventh level was… a maze.

“I hate mazes….” he muttered. Two hours later, he found himself teleported back to the square formed by the handle of the fan. He had failed, and currently felt his head swimming from having wandered back and forth in the maze without being able to find the right path.

As it turned out, there was a time limit to these lower levels. If one spent two hours within a given level without passing it, they would automatically be teleported away.

There were other devas and demigods who would be teleported out occasionally, most of them having been unable to pass the sixth level. Up to this point, only seven people had made it past the seventh level!

In addition to Bai Xiaochun and the other celestials, there was only one demigod among that group: Preceptor Seadeep.

Varied thoughts ran through the heads of the trial-takers.

“Dammit, this is hard! Especially the sixth level. It's impossible to get past!”

“These tests are definitely not designed for devas. The sixth level… is definitely suitable for celestials only! Maybe a demigod could pass it… but not many!”

“I have to get past it! These rewards are so incredible! Especially the reward for the fifth level. I got a bottle of Meridian-Tempering Serum of peerless quality! Back home, a bottle like that would go for over 10,000 spirit stones!!”

The cultivators of a given dynasty did not mix with those of the other. However, those of shared origins would gather after failing a level to discuss their results with each other. Up to this point, everyone was still excited about the situation, and didn’t worry too much about failing.

“If the reward for the fifth level is Meridian-Tempering Serum, then what do you think the rewards for the sixth and seventh levels will be? Whatever they are… they’ll probably be more unique and precious than Meridian-Tempering Serum!”

“We probably don't qualify to even find out. Although, I noticed that Celestial Virūpākṣa seems to be the fastest of us all. He’s already on the tenth level!”

“Yeah, I saw him going into the tenth level. So far, the rest of the celestials are in the seventh and eighth levels. Up to now, none of them have come back out.”

Bai Xiaochun was not very happy about what he was hearing, and also had a bad premonition about what was happening.

“How is that Celestial Virūpākṣa going so fast!? With muscles like that, there’s no way he’s very smart. How did he get through the maze?” The more he thought about it, the more he started to suspect what was happening.

If things kept going this way, it didn’t seem likely that he would be able to compete with Virūpākṣa. Although he wasn’t quite willing to just give up, in the end, he sighed.

“Ah, whatever. It just keeps getting harder the further along you go. And I just became a celestial. He has a lot of experience, so if I can’t beat him, I just won’t worry about it. I’ll go through the levels as best I can. Even if I don't get the fan in the end, I’ll at least get some of the other rewards.” It was in this manner that he tried to convince himself not to worry about the situation. Then he started to try to think of a way to get through the maze.

However, it was at this very moment that the light of teleportation appeared in both the seventh and eighth levels. When that light reached the square formed by the handle of the fan, Gu Tianjun and Prince Ur-Demon appeared.

Both of them wore very unsightly expressions as they sat down to think and recover. From what Bai Xiaochun had seen, Gu Tianjun had failed in the eighth level, while Prince Ur-Demon was stuck in the seventh.

“There’s something fishy about that eighth level!” he thought. Even as he pondered the situation, other celestials began to be teleported out.

One of them was Sima Yunhua, who was stuck in the seventh level, and another was Reverend Devourer, who was teleported back from the eighth level.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t dispel his confusion and suspicions. For a moment, he considered going over to Gu Tianjun to ask for some advice, but decided that, considering how much the man didn't like him, it probably wasn’t a good idea.

At this point, Sima Yunhua gritted his teeth and used some unknown method to communicate with Gu Tianjun and get some information on the seventh level. Afterward, his eyes shone brightly as he headed back into the challenges.

Prince Ur-Demon did the same thing with Reverend Devourer. After getting the information he needed, he did the same as Sima Yunhua, and headed back into the challenges.

Bai Xiaochun looked on anxiously to see what was happening, and was stunned to realize that both parties passed the level in the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. Laughing heartily, they then proceeded on to the next levels.

“So fast!?!?” Bai Xiaochun’s mind raced as he tried to analyze what was going on. Meanwhile, the tenth level suddenly began to shine with bright light.

All of a sudden, a voice spoke into the minds of all present.

“The first person to pass the tenth level has acquired Top Contender status, and will henceforth have four hours to pass every level!”

As the voice faded away, everyone observing on the outside looked around in shock. Meanwhile, the light of teleportation shot out to the square where everyone was standing, and then resolved into the form of Celestial Virūpākṣa.

As his hulking, tower-like frame came into view, the fan trembled, and the shield protecting the entire area rippled like water.

Those ripples were caused, not by Virūpākṣa’s cultivation base, but rather… because he had gained Top Contender status by passing the tenth level and gaining the approval of the sovereign’s damaged fan!

What was most shocking, though was that Celestial Virūpākṣa had been given extra time to pass the levels!

Based on that, it seemed likely that other privileges would be bestowed upon passing the twentieth level, which would make things even easier for Celestial Virūpākṣa. If things kept going like that, then by the time the three months were over, it was highly likely that Virūpākṣa would become the new owner of the fan!

If that happened, then not even the Vile-Emperor would be able to take it away from him easily. Perhaps Virūpākṣa could loan it to him or even sell it, but either way, it was good fortune that would likely give him a chance to become an archaean!

The crowd knew it, and Celestial Virūpākṣa knew it as well. Inside, he was beaming with joy and excitement, although he didn't let that show on his face. However, there was no question that he was very pleased to have acquired the approval of the fan.

The prickly feeling in Bai Xiaochun’s heart grew even stronger at this point. Snorting softly, he prepared to simply look away, and yet, was too slow. All of a sudden, Celestial Virūpākṣa looked over at him with coldly glittering eyes.

It was impossible to say what exactly he was thinking, but something like the light of augury flickered in his eyes, and he suddenly chuckled.

Raising his voice, he said, “You’re stuck at the seventh level, aren’t you Bai Xiaochun? Moron. You’re the only celestial who hasn’t passed it.”

Everyone else was taken aback. After all, this was Celestial Virūpākṣa’s first time returning from the challenges. And yet apparently, he knew how far everyone else had proceeded.

Even as suspicions arose, Bai Xiaochun looked sharply at Celestial Virūpākṣa, fully aware of the implications of his words.

Obviously, he had some unknown way of seeing how far everyone else had progressed.

Celestial Virūpākṣa could tell that Bai Xiaochun was on to him, but merely laughed coldly.

“Didn’t you ask me to hit you earlier, Bai Xiaochun? Don’t worry. As soon as I become the owner of this fan, I’ll be happy to oblige!” With that, he chuckled and sat down cross-legged to do some breathing exercises.

In the resulting silence, the cultivators from both the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty all came to realize that the Top Contender status gave more benefits than merely an extension of time.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was feeling more irritated than ever.

“What kind of legacy is this? He’s obviously cheating! Dammit! There’s nothing I hate more in life than cheaters!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1085 awe-chapter-1086

“What’s the point of winning by cheating!?” Bai Xiaochun grumbled angrily to himself.

“I, Bai Xiaochun, a mighty celestial, am straightforward and upright in everything I do! I absolutely detest anyone who cheats!” Gradually, the jealousy he had felt regarding his opponent’s tactics turned into anger.

What was worse was that he was being looked down upon. And Celestial Virūpākṣa had even threatened him!

“No,” he said through gritted teeth. “This is getting dangerous. I definitely can’t allow Virūpākṣa to succeed!” Eyes bloodshot, he pondered what to do. However, he knew that despite the fact that they were all celestials, and that he himself was particularly strong, he had only just become a celestial. Furthermore, if things did get down to a real fight with Virūpākṣa, the man wouldn't be afraid of being killed; he could just be resurrected by the Vile-Emperor.

In sharp contrast, Bai Xiaochun had not given part of his Daoseed to the Saint-Emperor. That meant that if a fight did break out, he would be in great danger.

“What shameless bullying!” The more he pondered the situation, the more incensed he was. After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, he still had not come up with any good ideas. Meanwhile, Celestial Virūpākṣa had risen to his feet from meditation. Glancing coldly at Bai Xiaochun, he then went back into the fan rib to head to the tenth level.

Everyone else looked on in envy. After Virūpākṣa disappeared, they too went back into the challenges.

Before long, only four or five people were left on the outside, Bai Xiaochun included.

“If I could fight all of these people one by one, it might be possible. But that's not going to happen. And Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua aren’t going to help me…. I guess the only option is to stop Virūpākṣa from winning the treasure! And the only way to do that is to become the owner of the fan before him!” After putting more thought into it, he came up with a variety of ideas, and yet none of them seemed particularly promising.

“There’s only one thing I can do! A tenfold spirit enhancement will erase any personal branding marks. If I enhance the fan, then maybe… I could brand it with my own divine sense! If it works, then I would become the new owner of the fan!” At this point, his heart was starting to pound a bit. In fact, he quickly forgot that his entire purpose in the matter was to stop Celestial Virūpākṣa.

“If I can become the owner of the fan….” His thoughts began to race in excitement for a while before he finally managed to calm himself down.

Unfortunately, the fan was huge. Bai Xiaochun usually enhanced things by putting them into the turtle-wok. Therefore, he wasn’t sure how he would go about enhancing the huge fan.

“The fan can’t shrink…. I wonder if just clamping the wok down onto it will work…?” Although his heart was itching with anticipation, he was still fully on guard. After all, if someone saw what he was doing, it could cause major problems.

Therefore, he put on a big show of snorting coldly and walking over to head back into the seventh level. Once inside the maze, he took out his wok, put it upside down on the ground, and then went about with a spirit enhancement.

Unfortunately, after putting a one-colored flame into the wok, and finding no reaction, he frowned. After all his years of using the turtle-wok, he could tell that the enhancement had failed.

Feeling very disappointed, he picked up the turtle-wok again and then sat there in a bit of a daze.

“Maybe it won’t work inside one of the challenges. It might work outside though....” Not quite willing to give up, he backed out of the seventh level and then sat down on the fan rib itself.

At the moment, the main square of the fan was still occupied by a handful of cultivators who were resting after having failed one of the challenges. Bai Xiaochun waited patiently for six hours until all of them finished resting and headed back into the challenges. The square was completely empty. At that point, he took the turtle-wok out and put it down in front him.

With that, he placed one hand onto the wok, and used the other to pull out another one-colored flame from his dwindling supply.

“It’s definitely going to work!” he murmured anxiously. The one-colored flame disappeared into the wok, and a single silver flash of light shot out and hit the fan!

As a result, the fan trembled!

“Did it work?” he thought excitedly. However, there was no time for an inspection, as the light of teleportation appeared, and someone was sent flying out from one of the levels. Quickly putting the turtle-wok away, Bai Xiaochun hurried into the seventh level.

Of course, he had no intention of trying to make his way through the maze. After staying inside for a while, he left, plastering a look of confused disappointment onto his face.

The truth was that his heart was pounding. Although there was nothing physically different about the treasured fan, he had definitely seen that silver flash of light. After paying very close attention to who was outside of the challenges, he found an opportunity when no one was looking, whereupon he took out the turtle-wok and a two-colored flame!

Almost immediately, a silver flash of light could be seen. Not pausing for even a moment, Bai Xiaochun quickly performed a third and then a fourth spirit enhancement. In nearly one breath of time, he completed six total enhancements. At that point, more people emerged from various trials, and he put the wok away and sat there sighing.

Inside, he was laughing cheerfully, and eagerly awaiting the moment when everyone was back inside the challenges. He was hoping for an incense stick’s worth of time, in which he could perform all of the rest of the enhancements in one fell swoop.

Seven days passed. By that time, Celestial Virūpākṣa was in the fifteenth level. He seemed to be crushing every level with impunity, and maintaining a clear lead.

The other celestials were in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh levels. As for the demigod Preceptor Seadeep, he had reached the eighth level, and seemed stuck there. However, he wasn't willing to give up, and went back in constantly to make further attempts.

Everyone else was roughly in the same situation, although no one else had proceeded past the seventh level. As for Bai Xiaochun, his lack of progress had become the butt of many jokes.

“Bai Xiaochun is a celestial, but he’s stuck on the seventh level just like the rest of us!”

“That makes it completely obvious that he’s the weakest of all the celestials. Even Preceptor Seadeep is stronger than him!”

“Well, he is from that backwater Heavenspan Realm. It makes sense that he would be embarrassingly weak even after becoming a celestial!”

It wasn’t just the demigods and devas who reacted with derision. Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua completely ignored him, and secretly scorned him. It was the same with the celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t have the inclination to pay them any more attention than they paid him. He could sense the ridicule in their eyes, but didn’t care. By this point, the treasured fan already had a seventeenfold spirit enhancement!

Upon performing the tenth enhancement, he had been excited, but found that no golden light appeared, nor was there any sign that the branding mark controlling the fan had been removed. Although he had hesitated about what to do after that, he decided that a twentyfold enhancement was probably the answer!

“Thirty is the limit for spirit enhancement, but this is an extraordinary sovereign-level magical item. I guess I just have to push things further. All I want to do is erase the branding mark. It shouldn’t be that hard. It will all be worth it in the end, considering how much I hate cheaters.” Bai Xiaochun worried constantly during the next three days. Eventually, he found his chance to perform the enhancements he needed.

Eighteenfold. Nineteenfold....

He had very few twenty-colored flames left in his bag of holding, but he took one out and pushed it down into the turtle-wok. The wok vibrated violently, and then the whole fan did the same. At that point, the light finally changed from silver to golden!

The power of the spirit automaton of the fan appeared, the same automaton that had previously spoken into the minds of the cultivators. However, the power of the spirit automaton was clearly in the process of dissipating, being erased by some other power that surpassed it!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1086 awe-chapter-1087

Bai Xiaochun sucked in an excited, nervous breath.

The two forces struggled, but the power of the spirit enhancement was clearly at a higher level, and began to gain dominance.

However, the spirit automaton was by no means weak. It was like a tiger cub fighting a full-grown dog. In fact, it fought with such ferocity that the spirit enhancement's power began to weaken, and was gradually driven away.

Gritting his teeth anxiously, Bai Xiaochun pulled a twenty-one-colored flame out of his bag of holding. He only had two such tongues of flame left, and thus, it was with a great deal of pain that he tossed it into the turtle-wok.

Golden light flared, and rumbling sounds echoed out, along with land-shaking, mountain-rocking power. The power of the spirit enhancement once again rushed out to erase the branding mark inside the fan. Yet again, a battle erupted between the automaton and the spirit enhancement.

The automaton could clearly not hold out for long, but was putting up a good struggle. At the same time, the spirit enhancement had reached a critical juncture.

As of this moment, twenty percent of the the branding within the damaged fan had been wiped away. That in turn allowed the restrictions on divine sense to loosen a bit.

Bai Xiaochun knew that time was of the essence. On the one hand, people might come out of the fan at any moment, and on the other hand, the power of the twenty-one-colored flame was growing weak.

“Dammit, I've got to go for broke!!” Taking advantage of the loosening of the restriction on divine sense, he sent his divine sense out.

As the spirit automaton and the power of the enhancement struggled mightily, he shoved his divine sense into the empty section of the fan!

Normally speaking, this was a thing that he could never do. Not even one of the archaean emperors would have been able to accomplish such a task. The only type of person who possibly could have would be another sovereign.

But now, the impossible was happening thanks to the heaven-defying powers of Bai Xiaochun’s turtle-wok. Whichever sovereign it was who had created this fan could never have dreamed that their treasure could possibly be stolen in this manner….

Bai Xiaochun howled from the effort, blue veins bulging out on his neck and face. As he pushed out madly with his divine sense, his own branding mark slowly began to take shape.

The spirit automaton struggled, and the power of the spirit enhancement began to fade, but Bai Xiaochun took advantage of every moment….

Although things were almost over, the automaton wouldn’t give up, and continue to drive away the power of the spirit enhancement. However, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of his authority over twenty percent of the fan to fight back relentlessly. Eventually, the automaton was forced to give up.

The branding mark faded away, and the fan went calm. It was almost as if nothing had happened. As for Bai Xiaochun, he had been holding nothing back, and was currently drenched in sweat. Quickly putting away his turtle-wok, he sat there panting.

Although this type of fight was different than magical combat, it had been extremely draining. He felt hollowed out, and yet at the same time, was extremely pleased.

As of this moment, he could feel a very faint connection to the fan, something almost dreamlike in nature.

“I can’t believe I did it!! Hahaha! I branded my own divine sense mark onto this fan!! Virūpākṣa, you cheater, this fan is *mine*. How do you think you’ll get it now!?” He was so excited that he began laughing out loud, a fact that some returning cultivators noticed, and looked over in shock.

To them, he looked a bit insane.

“Did he go crazy because he’s been stuck in the seventh level for too long?!”

As they chuckled coldly, Bai Xiaochun was recovering from the effort of the struggle. As he sat there cross-legged, his eyes shining, he took a moment to analyze the situation. He was already aware that although he had authority over twenty percent of the fan, he didn’t actually control the fan as a whole.

Essentially, the part of the fan that he had authority over was equivalent to the first through twentieth levels!

At this point, even if Celestial Virūpākṣa made it to the twentieth level, whatever rewards he got wouldn't compare to what Bai Xiaochun had acquired. One would have an empty reward that could be taken away, and one would have a substantial reward that could directly contend with the fan’s spirit automaton.

“Same as the twentieth level, huh. That's good enough for me!” Bai Xiaochun was very excited; this obviously made him the clear frontrunner in the competition. With this advantage, he was much more confident in being able to become the new owner of the damaged fan.

The main thing he needed to do was make sure nobody realized what he had done.

“Alright, Celestial Virūpākṣa. Bai Xiaochun hates cheaters more than anything. Let’s see you try and cheat now!” Calling upon his mysterious connection to the fan, he was now able to see images of all the cultivators participating in the various challenges!

He was also able to sense what the rewards were for the various levels. Some of the most enticing were the rewards for the thirtieth level and beyond, which were on the same level as world treasures such as the Greatsword of the North. Even more eye-catching was the reward for the sixtieth level, which was on the archaean level!

There were also plenty of medicinal pills to be had. As for the reward for the hundredth level, it was a glowing ball of light that pulsed with a sovereign aura. It was none other than… than the legacy itself!

Convinced that he would become the owner of the fan, he realized that all of these rewards essentially belonged to him!

“It’s not just the later rewards that are mine. Everything in the early stages is mine too!” Just when he was about to check specifically on Celestial Virūpākṣa, he happened to notice a Vile-Emperor Dynasty demigod in the sixth level who was having trouble reaching the eighth step there.

Bai Xiaochun recognized him! Back when he had been confronting Celestial Virūpākṣa, it was this burly demigod who had ridiculed him, Li Donghao!

He was currently looking excitedly at the last step in front of him. He had attempted this level over thirty times already, and had failed each time. However, he had learned from each failure, and had progressed significantly each time.

As of now, he was absolutely confident in being able to succeed!

As for the reward, a feather, he had already been told about it by some of his friends. It had been identified as belonging to a now-extinct immortal roc. If it were fused into a magical item, it would provide astounding benefits to it.

“Only one more step. I can definitely do it!” Li Donghao excitedly lifted his foot up and prepared to step onto the ninth step….

Even as he did, Bai Xiaochun’s gaze fell upon him. When Bai Xiaochun saw the situation, he thought about how, if Li Donghao succeeded, it would mean the reward for that level, the feather, would be gone.

Before, that fact wouldn’t have meant much to him. But now that he was destined to become the owner of the fan, it meant that the treasures inside of it all belonged to him. Therefore, Li Donghao was essentially preparing to steal from him. Although Bai Xiaochun didn’t view himself as being the miserly type, he really didn’t like Li Donghao, and therefore, was not happy at all about the idea of him stealing.

“I guess this guy’s just too lucky. Ai. If only the level could be a bit more challenging so that he fails.”

Back in the sixth level… the air rippled around Li Donghao.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1087 awe-chapter-1088

The ripples came because Bai Xiaochun was connected to the fan, and were something that no one else but him could notice.

In the sixth level, Li Donghao looked as confident and excited as ever. He was absolutely and completely focused on this next step. Heart filled with hope, he put his foot down!

“I've been waiting a long time for this!” he chuckled. “All of that work and improvement is for this moment! Only by working hard can you get good results! I’ve finally done it!”

He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, then sighed at the feeling of accomplishment after all the effort he had expended. He felt like he had experienced something completely life-changing in this sixth level, something that would make his future more wonderful than he could imagine.

“Next comes the seventh level. A lot of the other demigods are going to be quite shaken by my success. After all… I'm only the second after Preceptor Seadeep to pass the sixth level!” Amidst echoing laughter, he stretched his hands out wide in anticipation of the applause he would receive after being teleported out.

However, his smile soon grew stiff as he realized that something strange was going on.

Shocked, he looked around, and found that he was still in the sixth level. “Huh? Why haven’t I been teleported out?”

Based on everything he knew and had experienced, he should have been teleported out immediately.

“What's going on?” At this point, he looked down, and his eyes went wide as his mind was battered by massive waves of shock, and no less than 100,000 lightning bolts of astonishment.

“This… this….” To his complete and utter astonishment, he found that there was actually a tenth step in front of him!

It looked exactly like the ninth step, and from all points of view, seemed to have always been there. And yet, Li Donghao was absolutely certain that in the past, there had only been nine. In fact, he had talked with others about this level, and it had always revolved around nine steps. But now… there was a tenth!

“Could I have discovered some mysterious aspect to this level?” Panting, his uneasy feeling was replaced with one of excitement. Perhaps what was happening wasn’t bad! Perhaps it was fate!

However, even as he began to get excited, his jaw dropped in utter shock!

There, right in front of his eyes, another step appeared right after the tenth, radiating intense pressure!

11. 23. 35. 49. 67. 81…. All the way to 100!

“How could this even be possible? 100 steps!?!?” Li Donghao suddenly felt dizzy, as if he might fall over at any moment. The scene playing out in front of him was almost completely absurd, a massive staircase stretching out. Furthermore, the pressure he could sense from the final step was virtually beyond imagination.

Li Donghao was trembling, his eyes vacant, as though his mind had collapsed. He seemed completely bowled over by the sight of 100 steps.

“How… how could this be happening…?” he mumbled, his face ashen. Even as the massive pressure threatened to overwhelm him, the power of teleportation gripped him, and he was whisked out of the sixth level.

When he reappeared, he was back in the main square!

Because of the massive blow he had just taken, as soon as he appeared, he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood and staggered backward, his face completely overtaken by shock and disbelief. As of this moment, his previous confidence was absolutely gone.

“This is impossible…” he murmured. “How could this be happening…? There were only nine steps before….”

He actually didn’t believe what he had just seen, and was convinced that it was all an illusion. He even went to some of his demigod compatriots from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty to ask them their opinion.

Grabbing one of them by the arm, he asked, “Fellow Daoist Xu, um… how many steps are in the sixth level?”

When the man saw how bloodshot Li Donghao’s eyes were, he was quite taken aback.

The demigod hesitated for a moment, then said, “Uh, nine. Why, what’s wrong, Li Donghao?”

Li Donghao’s mind was spinning, and he began to pant. He quickly hurried over to another demigod who was stuck in the sixth level, and asked the same question.

“Nine!”

“Um, nine. Everybody knows that, it’s not a big secret or something.”

“What are you doing, Li Donghao? Do you really need to ask things like that? Just go look for yourself!”

Li Donghao was trembling violently by now, and felt completely and utterly humiliated. At the same time, he was getting angry.

“Nine? All of you? Why…? Why do I have a hundred!?!?”

Back within the level, he had been unsure, but now he was convinced that the damaged fan hated him! And that filled him with profound despair.

People were shocked to hear the information from Li Donghao, and were a bit suspicious. However, most of them assumed that the levels would occasionally become more difficult for some unknown reason.

“Ah, Li Donghao got really unlucky…. The levels probably don’t change very often, he just happened to be in there when it happened.”

“We’d better hurry. You never know when those hundred steps could appear in our version….”

Off in the distance, Bai Xiaochun was listening in. Of course, he had witnessed everything firsthand. And the truth was that even Bai Xiaochun was not confident in being able to handle a hundred steps like that.

At first, he was actually shocked by what had occurred.

But then, his heart filled with joy!

“I… I just thought about the level getting harder, and it did! A hundred steps appeared!” His eyes began to glitter brightly at the realization that a huge door had just been opened in front of him.

“So, now that I've successfully taken control of twenty percent of the fan, it means I can alter the first twenty levels!

“Heavens, how stupid of me! I don’t even need to think about how to pass the first twenty levels!

“Considering the powers I have to control the level of difficulty… fudge! I'm like a god in this place!!

“My original goal wasn’t to make things easy for myself, it was to prevent others from passing the twentieth level. Once this trial by fire ends… I'm going to come out in first place!!”

All of a sudden, this mission to the damaged fan seemed much more interesting than it had been before.

“Hahaha! I'm basically the guardian of this fan! I need to prevent everyone else from succeeding!” With his new mission having been made clear, he stuck his chin up and then sighed. Around this time, he could sense that Celestial Virūpākṣa had passed the seventeenth level.

Not even stopping, he then proceeded on to the eighteenth!

“So fast!?!?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, shocked. However, a sly smile quickly spread out on his face.

“Virūpākṣa, you villain. I absolutely hate cheaters like you. Well, if you make it past the eighteenth level, then I’ll change my name to match yours!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1088 awe-chapter-1089

Meanwhile, in the eighteenth level of the damaged fan....

A vast, scorching desert stretched out in all directions, covered by screaming winds that sent dust and grit scraping across jutting rock outcroppings.

Anyone who stood in that desert would be able to sense how barren and desolate it was. Barely visible within the never-ending sandstorm that filled it were numerous skeletons, apparently the remains of countless beings which had died here throughout the years.

It was actually impossible to tell whether the skeletons were indeed people who had been killed here, or whether they had simply been put here. In any case, as soon as Celestial Virūpākṣa entered this level, he felt a sensation of profound danger.

However, that didn’t slow him down at all. Instead, it made him feel even more grand and heroic.

“After snagging the position of Top Contender, I can get through each level before anyone else!

“It’s obviously destiny! It’s obviously good fortune belonging to me, Celestial Virūpākṣa. It’s obviously fated... that I will become the owner of this sovereign-level precious treasure!” As he stood there with his hands clasped behind his back, he looked like the picture of confidence.

And he was, in fact, completely confident that he would be the first to get through every level, including this, the eighteenth. Much of his confidence came from the fact that he was in the great circle of the Celestial Realm. The only other person in the entire damaged fan that could possibly be a cause for concern was Gu Tianjun.

Celestial Virūpākṣa wasn’t too worried about Bai Xiaochun. He had only recently become a celestial, and was little more than a clown. Celestial Virūpākṣa was fairly certain that, although he had been frustrating to deal with earlier, he could easily be killed if necessary.

“Although this eighteenth level will likely be more difficult than the previous levels, I won’t be stopped! I wonder what kind of powers I’ll receive after passing the twentieth level!” Smiling, he blurred into motion as he headed deeper into the sandstorm.

In almost the exact same instant, the countless grains of sand that made up the storm began to form together into an enormous head. Celestial-level cultivation base fluctuations erupted out, along with a powerful roar as the head then lunged toward Virūpākṣa as if to consume him.

Celestial Virūpākṣa’s eyes narrowed as, without pausing for a moment, he shot like an arrow toward the fearsome sand head.

The resulting boom caused the entire eighteenth level to shake violently.

As these things played out, something happened that Celestial Virūpākṣa didn’t notice. High above in the sky of the eighteenth level, two eyes were watching everything. Those eyes, of course, belonged to Bai Xiaochun.

No one had any idea what was happening, of course. And as for Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t rashly do anything in the eighteenth level. He first observed the situation.

Celestial Virūpākṣa was definitely a very powerful fighter. Booms rang out as he engaged the enormous head in combat, causing shockwaves to spread out in astonishing fashion. Soon, it became apparent that this head of sand with its celestial-level battle prowess was no match for Virūpākṣa.

“Observe how I bring you to ruin!” Bai Xiaochun murmured, snorting coldly. Although it felt wonderful to be in such a position of authority, he was actually shocked by Celestial Virūpākṣa’s battle prowess.

“This guy has actually surpassed me in terms of fleshly body!! Although his powers of regeneration don’t even come close to mine. And his divine abilities are way weaker.... Plus, there’s no way he can keep up this level of fighting for long!” Eyes flickering, he watched Celestial Virūpākṣa perform a double-handed incantation gesture to summon a massive tree, which he used to batter the head of sand.

One blow. Two blows. Three blows!!

Each blow caused the head to shriek in pain. As for Celestial Virūpākṣa, he advanced with each blow until he was actually inside of the head! Instead of resorting to any sort of magical technique, he was simply blasting the head in two!

The mere sight was enough to make Bai Xiaochun a bit uneasy. The destructive aura of that huge tree was so shocking that it caused the sky to go dim, and sent sand exploding out in all directions!

Finally, Virūpākṣa resorted to a divine ability that combined his fleshly body and cultivation base to unleash a devastatingly destructive blow.

The head of sand was destroyed, and the faint light of teleportation began to build up. Despite being shocked, Bai Xiaochun couldn't forget what he had said earlier about changing his name to match Virūpākṣa’s. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to call upon his connection to the fan to change the difficulty of the eighteenth level.

In that moment, Celestial Virūpākṣa’s uproarious laughter was echoing out through the desert as he looked at the two halves of the defeated sand head he had just fought. Although the battle left him seriously drained in both cultivation base and fleshly body power, his heart was bursting with pride.

“Perhaps Gu Tianjun or Reverend Devourer could deal with this little eighteenth level, but most other celestials could not! It gives a good indication of how difficult the nineteenth and twentieth levels will be!

“Very well. The harder things get, the better the rewards will be. It just goes to show that I truly qualify to contend for this legacy!”

Chuckling, he looked around at the light of teleportation that was building up around him, and prepared to go back to the main square to do some breathing exercises.

“Once I become the owner of the fan, the first person I’ll kill is Bai Xiaochun. His powers of regeneration are too strong! If he lives, he’ll definitely cause problems in the future!”

He quickly checked Bai Xiaochun’s progress, and upon seeing that he had still not passed the seventh level, snorted in derision. He was absolutely convinced that this damaged fan was a land of good fortune for him, and would likely be his ticket to reaching the Archaean Realm.

Celestial Virūpākṣa’s heart swelled with pride and courage. However, it was in that very moment that, with no warning whatsoever, the light of teleportation that had been building up suddenly went out.

“Huh?” He looked down at himself, and then at the desert around him. “What’s going on…?”

Before he could do anything else, the enormous sandstorm sprang up again, with even more fury than before. Furthermore, two enormous heads formed, each of them with battle prowess surpassing the previous solitary head!

Howling, they charged toward Celestial Virūpākṣa!

Celestial Virūpākṣa was struck with the feeling that something odd was going on, but there was no time for thought or planning. As the two heads closed in, he took a deep breath and unleashed his divine abilities and magical techniques, jumping into combat!

The fury of their battle was so great that the world seemed to tremble on the verge of being destroyed. Celestial Virūpākṣa held almost nothing back. With the exception of Daoist magics relating to Willpower, he called on everything he could, even all of his trump cards. After two incense sticks’ worth of time passed, he destroyed both of the heads. He was spattered with blood and trembling from the effort, but he had come out on top.

“So, I underestimated this eighteenth level. And yet… who cares if I did?!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

Bai Xiaochun was not happy at all to see Celestial Virūpākṣa laughing in such fashion. Eyes bloodshot, he murmured, “Such a savage! Come on, I want to see you in despair! Fine, I’ll push the difficulty as far as it will go!!”

The eighteenth level twisted and distorted, to the point where Celestial Virūpākṣa actually noticed what was happening. Expression flickering, he looked around, feeling very uneasy.

“Don’t tell me it’s still not over?” Even as he let out a gasp, the entire world around him filled with shocking rumbling noises.

The sandstorm yet again screamed into existence, filling the world and then transforming into… ten enormous heads!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But to Celestial Virūpākṣa’s profound astonishment, a 30,000-meter-tall hand also appeared, stretching up out of the ground. Then another, and another. As it turned out, several giants were crawling up from the depths of the earth!

There were a total of ten. The tops of their heads touched the sky as they surrounded Celestial Virūpākṣa, making him look like a helpless girl surrounded by a gang of ruthless thugs!

Their energy caused the entire world to vibrate and turn terrifyingly dark!

As for Celestial Virūpākṣa, he looked around trembling, and said, “……..”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1089 awe-chapter-1090

“Impossible…. This is impossible….” Celestial Virūpākṣa looked around, trembling, his eyes blank from the terrifying nature of the ten giants’ energy!

Although it wasn’t quite on the archaean level, it was immeasurably close. This was only a trial by fire, but at the moment, Celestial Virūpākṣa had completely forgotten about that point. The enemies he now faced were so outrageously powerful that he almost wondered if the damaged fan were playing a practical joke on him!

There was simply no way that he could fight enemies like this. Rumbling booms echoed out as the ten giants unleashed heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing power onto Celestial Virūpākṣa.

They were like ten vicious beasts, all of them stamping down without mercy….

It was such a fearsome sight that even Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but gasp….

Bloodcurdling screams filled the world of the eighteenth level, but thankfully, they didn’t last long. Celestial Virūpākṣa soon vanished. After all, this trial by fire was not deadly in nature, and did not permit fatalities. Anyone who failed would, at worst, be teleported out of the level.

As for Celestial Virūpākṣa, although he wasn’t dead, he felt like he was. All of his pride, all of the momentum he had built up through the levels, vanished.

He could only be grateful that the natural laws within the damaged fan kicked in and pulled him out. If that hadn’t happened, he would have been in a truly miserable and hopeless state.

Outside in the main square, teleportation light glittered, and Celestial Virūpākṣa appeared. The first thing he did was cough up a huge mouthful of blood, and stagger backward to look at the fan rib he had just come from, his eyes shining with disbelief.

“How could this be happening…? It’s impossible!! That level of difficulty… if the eighteenth level is really that hard, the levels after it would have to be outrageously difficult. There’s something strange going on here!” Not only was Celestial Virūpākṣa completely crestfallen, he was also starting to get a bit angry.

The others who were gathered in the main square could see how confused Celestial Virūpākṣa was, and how badly he was trembling. Obviously, it didn’t take much guesswork to come to the conclusion that he had failed to pass the level.

“Celestial Virūpākṣa is still on the eighteenth level? And he actually failed!?”

“There must be something unusual about that level. Otherwise, how could the incredible Celestial Virūpākṣa possibly have failed, and come out of it looking so out of sorts?!”

As the talk spread, Bai Xiaochun sat there, clearing his throat and blinking. Peeking out of the corner of his eye at Celestial Virūpākṣa, his heart swelled with excitement and pride.

“I guess you shouldn’t have cheated, huh? How dare you try to contend with Lord Bai!?” The corners of his mouth even turned up into a slight smile.

Celestial Virūpākṣa’s bedraggled state eased some of Bai Xiaochun’s anger. After all, the man had openly provoked him, and then even threatened him. Considering that, simply making the level a bit harder was actually going easy on him.

“Ai, that’s my biggest weakness. I'm too kind. In the cultivation world, the law of the jungle prevails! I really shouldn’t be this nice.” Sighing, he looked over again at the dazed Celestial Virūpākṣa for a moment before checking on the situation with some of the other trial-takers. In one fell swoop, he increased the difficulty level for all of them.

Before long, teleportation light began to flicker as demigod and devas from both dynasties were sent back to the main square. All of them were coughing up blood, and looking very confused.

“Impossible! Yesterday in the third level, I fought three beasts. But today, there were three hundred!!”

“Heavens! You guys have no idea what just happened. In the fifth level, I actually had to fight a celestial-level puppet!!”

“That’s nothing! Dammit. I was really getting places in the seventh level, but right before reaching the end, the maze came to life and started changing around me!”

Everyone was crazily talking at once until Celestial Virūpākṣa’s eyes suddenly began to turn very grim.

“The level of difficulty increased!” Even as everyone started to come to this conclusion, Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, Prince Ur-Demon, and Reverend Devourer all teleported out. That entire group of celestials had been stuck in the sixteenth level, a fact they could have lived with, until the difficulty increased. At the moment, all of them had very unsightly expressions on their faces.

Bai Xiaochun was obviously delighted, but didn’t let it show on his face. Instead, he wore a scowl. To further the act, he hurried into the seventh level as if to look around.

Upon emerging, he exclaimed, “The seventh level did change! Heavens! You people wouldn’t believe what I saw in there. Absolutely terrifying!”

On any other occasion, Bai Xiaochun’s exaggerated cries would have provoked cold laughter. But right now, everyone was so grim-faced that they didn’t even notice.

All of them were trying to figure out why, all of a sudden, all of them had experienced failures!

The trials of the damaged fan had only been open for half a month, and now all of them were feeling very dazed and bereft of any hope.

Bai Xiaochun’s plan was just to wait for the time limit to run out two months later. However, who could have predicted what was to come only half a month later? Suddenly, the spirit automaton of the damaged fan, which had faded away into slumber after being assailed by the power of the spirit enhancement, woke up!

Rumbling sounds filled the entire damaged fan, and all of the levels instantly went back to normal. None of them had increased levels of difficulty anymore!

Furthermore, after awakening, the spirit automaton locked its attention onto Bai Xiaochun, as though it wished to wrest full control of the fan back. That was quite startling to Bai Xiaochun, who sat there rotating his cultivation base and doing his best to maintain his strange connection to the fan!

He was like a rowboat on stormy seas, his mind reeling as his connection was attacked ferociously. If he had been in the Demigod Realm, his mind would have already collapsed, and his connection broken.

But Bai Xiaochun was a celestial now, and although he couldn't fight back, he could defend himself. Unfortunately, he didn’t know how long he could hold out!

No one in the area had any idea what was happening, not even the celestials. This was a level of combat that far surpassed them, and they couldn’t even detect it!

Four hours passed in which Bai Xiaochun trembled, his face slowly turning ashen. He was pushing his cultivation base to the limits, and was reaching the point where his mind couldn’t handle the stress. At that point, right when his strange connection to the fan was about to be severed, he heard a howl of defiance as the spirit automaton slowly faded away into slumber again!

Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes. He was drenched with sweat, and was mentally exhausted. It had been a vicious struggle in which he could clearly sense how much the damaged fan hated him.

“Thankfully, the spirit automaton is also damaged, and can’t stay awake for very long….” He took in a shaky breath. However, now that he had full control of the fan back, his face suddenly fell. “Dammit, they took advantage of me again!”

As of this moment, he realized that in the four hours that he had been struggling with the spirit automaton, quite a few people had gone back into the challenges!

Li Donghao had passed the sixth level! Preceptor Seadeep was in the ninth level! Gu Tianjun and the other celestials were in the sixteenth and seventeenth levels!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1090 awe-chapter-1091

What was most infuriating was that Celestial Virūpākṣa had somehow figured out a way to bring Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer with him into one of the fan ribs. The three of them had teamed up to challenge the eighteenth level!

Apparently, Celestial Virūpākṣa’s experiences in the fan allowed him to identify a loophole that not even Bai Xiaochun was aware of. As soon as that enormous celestial-level head appeared in the desert, they cut it down!

After easily passing the level, the group of three used the same method to get through the nineteenth level. As of this moment, they were already in the twentieth level!

Thankfully, the twentieth level was significantly harder than the previous levels. The three celestials were fighting a type of minotaur-like monster. Whether it was in terms of speed or fleshly body strength, the minotaurs were far superior to Celestial Virūpākṣa and his companions.

In addition, these were male minotaurs, all of them huge in size and violent in temperament!

The vast plane that made up the twentieth level was filled with their thunderous grunts and howls.

It went without saying that the minotaur monsters were extremely intelligent, and didn’t need to perform incantation gestures to unleash magical techniques. They were innately able to utilize various divine abilities, which manifested in the form of yellow halos of light that shot at rapid speed toward Celestial Virūpākṣa and the other celestials.

Any of them who got hit by one of the halos would be shaken all the way down to their soul.

Any demigod cultivators in this situation would be defeated instantly, and then teleported out of the level. In fact, even celestials on their own would have had trouble. Only by teaming up in a group of three were they able to hold their own.

Apparently, this twentieth level was a watershed mark, and therefore, was extremely difficult. In terms of the difficulty, none of the previous levels could even come close.

The only person who might have had a chance was Bai Xiaochun, with his incredible powers of regeneration.

Another factor that played into it was that these monsters were things that didn’t exist in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Clearly, they were native to whatever world the owner of this fan had come from!

Because of how difficult the level was, Celestial Virūpākṣa and his companions were not able to simply pass through the level. If they had, then Bai Xiaochun would have awoken to find them further along.

As Bai Xiaochun watched them fighting, he came to the conclusion that it would be very dangerous if they passed this level. Besides, he had worked extremely hard to acquire some level of authority over the fan, and there was no way he would just hand it over to someone else.

“It seems I really was too kind before. Alright, Virūpākṣa, you codger. You may be dead set on cheating, but I simply can’t allow it! Trying to compete with me in cheating? Want to see how badly I’ll torment you? Fudge! Bai Xiaochun hates nothing more in life than cheaters!” Not having time to concern himself with any of the other cultivators in the various challenges, he focused all of his mental energy on the three celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

There really was no way that he could possibly allow them to succeed in their effort. Calling upon his connection to the fan, he sent some divine sense into the twentieth level to set the difficulty level as high as it would go!

He held nothing back, and did not hesitate at all. Instantly, the air around the three celestials began to ripple and distort.

Celestial Virūpākṣa and his companions were in the middle of fighting ten of the minotaur monsters. The fighting was fierce, and intense booms filled the air, causing the three celestials’ eyes to flash.

“I have the feeling that if we can get past this level,” Celestial Virūpākṣa said with a growl, “then the levels after that will be much easier. As for who gets the legacy in the end, it will depend on luck!”

One of the reasons that Celestial Virūpākṣa managed to figure out the loophole in the levels was because of his status as Top Contender. More importantly, the damaged fan was incomplete, which influenced the levels within it.

After figuring out the secret, he made an agreement with the other two about how to go through the levels. At the moment, Prince Ur-Demon was laughing proudly, and even the cold-faced Reverend Devourer was having a hard time concealing his excitement. Although these minotaur monsters were very strong, all three of them were sure that, in the end, they would defeat every last one of them.

Although their level of cooperation couldn’t be described as perfect, they had all known each other for many years, and had worked together before. Celestial Virūpākṣa acted as the muscle, Reverend Devourer provided backup with divine abilities, and Prince Ur-Demon used the power of his spell formations to defend them as a group. Although they experienced setbacks throughout the battle, they still fought with skill and efficiency.

By now, the minotaur monsters were clearly running out of energy. Once they faltered, the three celestials would make their move and wipe them out.

Bai Xiaochun chuckled coldly. Earlier, he had been a bit nervous about adjusting the difficulty levels. But now he didn't feel nervous at all. Besides, he could sense that after his previous struggle with the spirit automaton of the fan, his own level of control had improved.

Furthermore, his divine sense was telling him that he now had the power to delay the activation of the teleportation function in the challenges....

“I wonder how long I can delay it…?” he thought, licking his lips. After a moment, he rubbed his bag of holding, and an evil glint passed through his eyes.

Meanwhile, back in the challenge, the ten minotaur monsters finally collapsed, indicating that Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon had met the requirements and finished the challenge.

“We did it!” Celestial Virūpākṣa said, smiling. Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer were both quite excited. However, as the three of them waited to be teleported out, a great weight suddenly pressed down on them from above.

“That aura....” Celestial Virūpākṣa was the first to feel uneasy, considering what he had experienced before. Backing up, he shouted, “Something strange is going on again!”

It was only at this point that Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer sensed the same pressure filling the twentieth level.

Faces flickering, they also started backing up. That was when rumbling sounds rolled out in all directions as monstrous figures began to materialize up above!

1.

10.

50....

Soon there were 100 minotaur monsters, all of them bursting with violence and energy as they stared at the three celestials. Then, howling, they charged forth in attack.

In the blink of an eye, the lands were shaking, and the nearby mountains were trembling. Celestial Virūpākṣa’s face fell, and both Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer were left gasping.

“Dammit, Virūpākṣa! Didn’t you say that nothing like this would happen?!”

“Ten of these minotaur monsters were exhausting enough, and now we have to deal with a hundred?!?!” It wasn’t that Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer weren’t willing to go all out in their fighting. But they had barely been able to defeat the minotaur monsters from before. And now, just when they had gotten their hopes up that things were over, they suddenly realized how wrong they had been.

As the celestials backed up, the minotaur monsters charged through the air toward them, and Bai Xiaochun chuckled coldly.

“Think you can just run? If a hundred aren’t enough, then I’ll add some more!” Gritting his teeth, he decided that he absolutely had to kill Celestial Virūpākṣa’s momentum. Otherwise, the next time the fan’s spirit automaton came back to struggle for control, he would definitely take advantage of the moment to pass the twentieth level.

Having made his decision, Bai Xiaochun followed through!

Rumbling sounds filled the twentieth level as, to the utter shock and madness of Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon, more minotaur monsters began to rise up from the grass around them. One after another, they howled with passion as they charged!

Even the powerful Celestial Virūpākṣa felt his scalp tingling on the verge of exploding.

“Heavens….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1091 awe-chapter-1092

“This is impossible!!” Prince Ur-Demon shrieked, so close to the verge of collapsing mentally that he could do nothing other than stare at the minotaurs around them.

Despite being a high-ranking celestial in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the type of person that countless individuals looked up to in awe, to be surrounded by more than 1,000 minotaur monsters was something he could hardly handle.

The truth was that this many minotaur monsters… was something that would cause even the Vile-Emperor to gasp if he were here. It was a level of power that could very well destroy the Eternal Immortal Domains as a whole.

And although they were actually illusory, to Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer, they seemed very real.

“Is this really the twentieth level?!?!”

“This must be the fiftieth or eightieth level. Or maybe the hundredth!!”

“Why is this happening? This level of difficulty is ridiculous!!”

Ironically, Celestial Virūpākṣa was taking things even worse than Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer.

Those two had never been specifically targeted by Bai Xiaochun, whereas Celestial Virūpākṣa had. His confidence had been crushed earlier, and that was not something that could be recovered from easily. And thus, the situation was even more terrifying for him.

The only comfort he had was that this time... he had someone to accompany him in misery....

In their dismay, they fled. Their goal was not to fully escape, but to wait for the teleportation function to activate. After all, despite being mentally crushed by the increase in difficulty in the level, they weren’t afraid of dying. Everyone knew that in this trial by fire, death wasn’t a possibility.

The worst outcome was failure and injury.

And these celestials were decisive people by nature. Therefore, they immediately took to flight, giving up on any hope of possibly winning. Besides, running away might help them to avoid some level of injury. As they fled, the minotaur monsters swarmed them.

However, not even Celestial Virūpākṣa could ever have guessed that the current situation was like nothing compared to the nightmare which was to come....

Bai Xiaochun was furious at how everything had played out, and furious at Celestial Virūpākṣa for figuring out a better way to cheat than him.... He was also worried about the implications of dealing with a celestial who could find loopholes within the damaged fan’s systems. Therefore, he decided that he absolutely, positively could not allow him to pass the level.

“It’s too bad you can’t kill people. I guess the best thing to do is trap him in there!” With every moment that passed, he became more convinced that this was the best thing to do. Meanwhile, inside the level, the light of teleportation had begun to build up, causing the three celestials’ eyes to brighten.

In sharp contrast, Bai Xiaochun was not happy at all. Eyes glittering, he called upon his connection to the damaged fan to limit the teleportation function. Even as Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon began to fade away….

Rumbling sounds echoed out, and they became clear again. Then, the light of teleportation vanished!

“Impossible!!”

“What’s going on?!?!” Gasping, they began to dodge the attacking minotaurs, intense unease rising up in their hearts. They were now more nervous than they had been when they first saw the 1,000 minotaur monsters.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with the level of control he had. Still not completely sure of what he could do, he began to carefully push harder to see what was possible.

“Lock down the teleportation power. Lock down the teleportation power!!” His thoughts were like orders to the fan. Immediately, ripples filled the twentieth level, to the point where Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon all noticed.

To their shock, rumbling sounds could be heard, and although it was impossible for the three celestials to understand why it was happening, all teleportation power in the twentieth level… was completely locked down!

Although it wasn’t permanent, until the spirit automaton awoke, there was no way that Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon would be able to leave the twentieth level!

“You wanted to challenge this level, right? Well fine then. You can challenge it day and night!” Gritting his teeth, Bai Xiaochun prepared to retract his divine sense, but then stopped.

“Wait, that’s not quite enough. I want to make sure that even when the spirit automaton wakes up and frees them, those three villains are too worn out to attempt any more challenges.” After some thought, he pulled out a handful of… Aphrodisiac Pills.

“It's too bad I don’t have many Aphrodisiac Pills left, otherwise I would use some more. Ah, whatever. This should be enough. I refuse to believe that when the dust settles, they’ll have the energy to do anything else!” Snorting coldly, he crushed the pills and sent the dust flying over to the minotaur monsters….

As the powder spread out… Bai Xiaochun retracted his divine sense. Although he wasn’t interested in watching the results, he couldn’t help but savor the knowledge of what a bitter place the twentieth level would shortly become….

Although Bai Xiaochun wasn't watching, Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon were right there. After a brief moment, the minotaur monsters suddenly began to charge them with greater fervor.

Their eyes were bright red, and their howling pants caused the celestials’ scalps to tingle.

“What’s going on with the minotaur monsters?!?!”

“Why… why do I have such a bad feeling about this!?!?”

“Dammit, have they gone crazy or something?”

To the shock of the celestials, even more bizarre things began to happen to the minotaur monsters. They began to grow larger, with blue veins bulging out all over their bodies. As this happened, their howls reached the point that the celestials were trembling violently in fear.

“Not good!!”

From he way the minotaur monsters looked at them, it seemed that they were the most beautiful and enticing things in all creation. Soon, the minotaur monsters began to fight amongst themselves in madness to get to the front of the group.

As for what happened after that, the story was never publicly revealed….

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay much more attention to the twentieth level. He occasionally sent some divine sense over to check on it quickly, and would usually shiver and look away.

“You can’t blame me. Those three bastards took it upon themselves to mess with me. And they even tried to compete in cheating!” Clearing his throat, he chose to focus his energy on the other cultivators. Over the following days, he got much pleasure from preventing them from advancing through any more levels. Soon, everyone was sighing.

Half a month passed by in a flash. By now, more than half of the total allotted time had passed. Eventually, people realized that Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon had gone missing, to the shock of everyone, and the unease of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators.

Even Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua had no idea what was going on, and felt the need to be more on guard than ever.

When Bai Xiaochun heard everyone whispering about the missing celestials, he started to feel a bit guilty. For a moment, he considered going to check on the twentieth level, but in the end, decided it wasn’t a good idea.

“I really am just too kindhearted. What would happen if I felt bad and then let them out…? That wouldn’t be good….” Sighing, he once again began to ponder why he had this big weakness….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1092 awe-chapter-1093

Bai Xiaochun had a very fulfilling life in the following days. Preventing people from passing the levels, and thus protecting his personal wealth, made him come to the conclusion that it had definitely been worth it to come to this damaged fan.

Furthermore, the fact that he really could prevent people from passing the levels seemed to indicate that he truly was the owner of the fan.

Such thoughts, and the anticipation that came along with them, kept him in very high spirits. Even better was that nobody knew what was going on. The dismal look he kept on his face, and his constant sighs, were a thing of habit now.

Another half a month passed by. Bai Xiaochun was simply counting the days until the time limit passed. However, that was when Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, who up to this point had almost completely ignored him, came for a talk.

They showed up so suddenly that he was startled. However, he kept his facial expression smooth. Heart pounding, he tried to discern if the other two celestials had picked up on any clues about what was happening…. That didn’t seem likely, though, as Gu Tianjun’s expression was as grim as it always was, whereas Sima Yunhua was smiling.

After shooing away any nearby cultivators, Sima Yunhua looked Bai Xiaochun up and down and then said, “Fellow Daoist Bai, we noticed that you’ve been stuck on the seventh level for two months now, and were wondering if you’d be interested in working out a deal?”

In response, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed.

Sima Yunhua didn’t take offense. In fact, his smile grew broader as he went on to offer further explanation.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, you must have heard that Celestial Virūpākṣa, Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer have disappeared!”

Those words caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to begin to pound. For one thing, he knew exactly where those three celestials were. However, there seemed to be some hidden implication in Sima Yunhua’s words that he wasn't picking up on.

Glaring a bit to cover up his guilty conscience, he coldly said, “Fellow Daoist Sima, if you have something you want to say, just say it!”

“Please, don’t misunderstand me, Fellow Daoist Bai,” Sima Yunhua replied, smiling just like before. “I bear no ill intentions. Fellow Daoist Bai, you’re originally from the Heavenspan Realm, but right now, we all represent the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

“Regarding the situation with Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon, well, I won’t keep anything from you. Fellow Daoist Gu and I already looked into the matter a while ago. Based on the clues we discovered… we are certain that the other three celestials found a loophole that let them enter the challenge levels together, and join forces to pass them!” Sima Yunhua spoke his words with much confidence, and then waited to see how Bai Xiaochun would react.

Bai Xiaochun quickly put a confused and suspicious expression on his face.

“Most likely,” Sima Yunhua continued, “the three of them are either stuck in one of the higher levels, or… have used another trick to get into a different part of the damaged fan!

“Either way, the time limit is rapidly approaching. We only have about a month left. If the three of us don’t join forces right now, then I’m afraid none of us will have a shot at the good fortune available!” By this point, Sima Yunhua was not smiling anymore, but rather, spoke in a very serious tone.

“I spent a considerable bit of time trying to figure out what loophole Celestial Virūpākṣa discovered. At long last, I’m confident that I can do the same thing. I can definitely get the three of us into the same level!

“As you may know, Fellow Daoist Gu and I are both in the eighteenth level. We've been stuck there for a while, unable to make any progress. And thus, we’ve come to ask for your help, Fellow Daoist Bai!

“We can help you past the seventh level, as well as all the levels after that. Then, once we get to the eighteenth level, the three of us can go all out for the rest of the month that’s left!” Back when Bai Xiaochun was a demigod, Sima Yunhua would never have directly asked him for help like this, nor told him the truth of matters. But now, Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, and although none of them had worked together before, it was obvious to Sima Yunhua that Bai Xiaochun was no weakling.

Clearly, he felt that it was important to tell the truth to someone he planned to work with, and therefore, revealed all of the details up front. Then, he waited to see what Bai Xiaochun would decide.

He was very confident that Bai Xiaochun would agree. In fact, after discussing the matter with Gu Tianjun, he was absolutely sure that Bai Xiaochun had no reason to refuse. After all, Bai Xiaochun was stuck in the seventh level, which had nothing to do with his cultivation base. It was a maze, and therefore, was difficult to pass through without a set strategy.

If Bai Xiaochun agreed to the proposal, then he would at least get to the eighteenth level without any problems. And considering he would be working with Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, it was very possible they would get farther.

As far as Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua were concerned, they would be the ones offering help up front. Therefore, they didn’t see any reason why Bai Xiaochun should refuse.

Bai Xiaochun sat there quietly for a moment. From Sima Yunhua’s perspective, it seemed he must be thinking about the possible benefits. However, what he was really thinking about was the frustrations that would come if he refused.

“These guys are just looking to cause trouble, aren’t they? Just let me stay in the seventh level! Then, when the month is up, the fan will be mine. Why’d they have to come looking to team up…?

“And I can’t really refuse, can I? That wouldn’t really make sense, and would only serve to rouse their suspicions. And considering how smart they are, they might start guessing what's really going on, and that could be a problem.” Although he didn’t really want to accept the offer, he knew that he couldn’t refuse.

“How do we split the rewards from the seventh to seventeenth levels?” he asked coldly. “And what about the rewards after that?!”

When Sima Yunhua heard this question, he smiled.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, you can keep the rewards for all of the levels you pass on your own. Once we start working together, we’ll just split things evenly! Do you agree, Fellow Daoist Gu?” With that, Sima Yunhua looked over at Gu Tianjun. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was not feeling very happy about the arrangement, but didn’t let that show as he also looked at Gu Tianjun.

Gu Tianjun said nothing in response. He merely snorted and nodded.

Sima Yunhua seemed very pleased to have achieved his goal, and was also convinced that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t regret joining them. And even if he did regret it, Sima Yunhua had ways of convincing him to change his mind.

Having no further compunctions, Sima Yunhua quickly told Bai Xiaochun the secret to passing the seventh level.

“You destroy the maze?” Bai Xiaochun said, stunned. The truth was that he hadn’t even thought about the seventh level lately. However, after hearing Sima Yunhua’s explanation, and thinking about it for a bit, he realized that it did seem like a good method. And it also explained why Celestial Virūpākṣa had passed the level so quickly; that conformed fully with his personality.

He couldn't find the exit, so he broke one open.

Of course, only a celestial cultivation base could be used to do that. Demigod cultivation bases wouldn't be able to.

Smiling, Sima Yunhua went on to explain how to pass through all of the rest of the levels from the eighth to the seventeenth. In fact, from how quickly he spoke, it seemed he was much more anxious that Bai Xiaochun get through them than Bai Xiaochun himself was….

Considering the power Bai Xiaochun had to control the levels, he could tell that Sima Yunhua was not holding anything back. In the end, although he still didn't really want to, he had no choice but to rise to his feet and head toward the seventh level.

However, he still did his best to kill as much time as possible. There was a whole month left, so therefore, every extra day he could buy was important.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun had underestimated how anxious Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun were. After three days passed in which he had only gotten as far as the eleventh level, the other two celestials lost their patience, and used a special secret magic to offer direct assistance.

Bai Xiaochun actually didn't need to do anything. With their secret magic, the level was vanquished like an ice cube crushed by a hammer. Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry as, in the shortest of times, he reached the seventeenth level in a single day.

Rewards in hand, he looked around blinking.

“Those two bastards really have it out for me, don't they?” he thought, maintaining full vigilance. If Sima Yunhua weren't so anxious, he would never have done things so blatantly. But Bai Xiaochun had just been going too slow. At that speed, it would have taken him half a month to get to the seventeenth level.

“This guy plays it too safe….” Sima Yunhua thought. “But even so, once he gets into the eighteenth level….” Although he was snorting coldly inside, his expression was one of enthusiastic friendliness.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I know you're a bit suspicious about all of this, but I’m being very honest. I really don’t think we can get past the eighteenth level unless we work together. Plus, the clock is ticking. Therefore, why don’t we go into the level immediately?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1093 awe-chapter-1094

Bai Xiaochun looked suspiciously at Sima Yunhua. As for Gu Tianjun, whether it was intentional or not, he was the type of person who always went around looking like his Daoist partner had just been killed, making it impossible to tell what he was really thinking.

“Maybe Gu Tianjun’s Daoist partner really was killed recently,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “But if not, what's the deal with that facial expression? Doesn’t his face get tired?” He cleared his throat. On any other occasion, he would have come up with some way of parting ways with Sima Yunhua.

But he was feeling particularly confident right now. Perhaps things might be different beyond the twentieth level, but up to that level, he wasn't worried about anything unexpected happening.

To make sure that neither of the other celestials suspected him in any way, he pretended to think about the matter a bit more before finally nodding.

At that point, Sima Yunhua finally breathed a sigh of relief. Smiling warmly, he clasped hands to Bai Xiaochun. Then the three of them headed toward the fan rib that Sima Yunhua had selected in the beginning. After reaching the entrance to the eighteenth level, Bai Xiaochun looked over at Gu Tianjun to see that his expression was as unreadable as ever. Up to this point, Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun had entered the levels to help him only after he had gone in ahead of them.

Therefore, he had no idea how they went about doing it.

However, after watching Sima Yunhua’s double-handed incantation gesture, he had an idea of what was about to happen. A glowing ball of light emerged from the man’s bag of holding. Before Bai Xiaochun could get a close look at it, it spread out, covering the three of them, and causing rumbling sounds to fill Bai Xiaochun’s ears. His vision blurred, and when it became clear… they were in the eighteenth level!

Yellowish desert sand spread out in all directions. A desolate, screaming wind hit their faces, and off in the distance, a sandstorm raged. At the moment, the only thing they could see was flying sand that seemed filled with killing intent.

“Did you see how I did that just now, Fellow Daoist Bai?” Sima Yunhua asked, casting an enigmatic smile in Bai Xiaochun’s direction. Inwardly, he was chuckling coldly. He had noticed Bai Xiaochun paying attention to him, and could tell that he was interested in the trick to entering the levels. However, he had long since taken precautions to make sure that no one, neither Bai Xiaochun nor Gu Tianjun, would be able to unlock the secret.

Bai Xiaochun also snorted inwardly, and was about to say something in response when, all of a sudden, a howling sound echoed out from within the sandstorm.

The ground quaked violently as, off in the distance, the sandstorm churned, slowly taking the shape of enormous head.

From the pressure radiating off of the head, it clearly had the power of a celestial!

Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua had somber looks on their faces as they looked at the head. As for Bai Xiaochun, he blinked a few times, but then quickly put a similarly serious expression on.

“That one little sand head has kept you stuck here all this time?” he asked, looking out of the corner of his eye at Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, sneering slightly.

“Don’t underestimate this eighteenth level, Fellow Daoist Bai,” Sima Yunhua said. “If there were only one sand head here, then either Fellow Daoist Gu or myself could have passed the level on our own. Once you defeat the first head, ten more appear. And after that, there are ten giants. That level of power is what has us stuck.

“The real point of the level is to defeat the ten sand giants!” He was about to add some further information, but the howling sand head had begun to charge toward them.

Gu Tianjun’s eyes flickered, and before either Bai Xiaochun or Sima Yunhua could act, he took a step forward and simultaneously reached out with his right hand. As he did, an illusory sword projection formed, which rapidly solidified into an ancient greatsword!

With the sword in hand, his energy surged to shocking levels. Even Bai Xiaochun was taken aback. The Gu Tianjun of this moment looked so powerful, and his sword so sharp, that he seemed almost unstoppable.

Staring through narrowed eyes at the incoming sand head, Gu Tianjun unhesitatingly slashed his sword through the air toward it!

The sound of the sword screaming through the air caused the sandstorm to lurch to a halt, and the sky to tremble on the verge of collapse. Then, a boundless stream of sword qi slashed forward, destroying all the sand and rock that it touched.

Crevices opened up in the ground as the sword qi moved with blinding speed, appearing directly in front of the sand head a moment later.

The head shivered, and then exploded from the forehead out. In a short few breaths of time, the entire head had been destroyed by the slashing blow from Gu Tianjun!

Afterward, Gu Tianjun stood there panting a bit. Obviously, this sword blow of his was something extraordinary, and not easy for him to unleash. As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood off to the side, stunned by what he had seen.

Based on the performances he had seen earlier from Celestial Virūpākṣa and the others, Gu Tianjun’s sword was far more incredible. Bai Xiaochun’s scalp actually tingled with a bit of fear after seeing it.

“I can't believe this guy is so powerful…. Although, some of it is because he keeps his secrets just as good as that villain Virūpākṣa…. Plus, Gu Tianjun is a sword cultivator, so when he unleashes an explosive attack, it's pretty unique.” Bai Xiaochun forced himself to calm down a bit. After the destruction of the sand head, another sandstorm sprang up, and it was possible to see numerous heads forming.

Then, the ground began to shake as hands and arms stretched up.

Even as Bai Xiaochun pretended to be shaken by what he was seeing, the gasping Gu Tianjun hefted his sword… and slashed it at Bai Xiaochun!

“What’s the meaning of this, Gu Tianjun!?” Bai Xiaochun blurted. Naturally, he was a lot quicker to react than the sand head, and managed to dodge out of the way of the sword qi.

Unfortunately, as he did, Sima Yunhua smiled and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, summoning a blinding globe of light.

“Captivating Radiance!” Sima Yunhua shouted, thrusting his hands in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, and causing the light to shoot toward Bai Xiaochun. Clearly, he had calculated the range and trajectory of Bai Xiaochun’s retreat to match his attack perfectly with Gu Tianjun’s sword.

They were giving Bai Xiaochun no opportunity for escape. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But it was at this moment, howls erupted from the sandstorm as the ten giants rose to their feet. Ignoring Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, and seemingly captivated by the dazzling light, they charged in Bai Xiaochun’s direction!

In the blink of an eye, the ten incredibly fast giants had Bai Xiaochun surrounded in much the same way that he had seen Celestial Virūpākṣa surrounded in the past.

If this had occurred before Bai Xiaochun performed a spirit enhancement on the damaged fan, he would have been in major trouble. But things were different now. And he had already guessed what was going on.

“This isn’t what you said was going to happen, Sima Yunhua!” he roared in rage.

“Calm down, Fellow Daoist Bai. The truth is that there is a problem with the teleportation function in the eighteenth level. Just hang in there for a short bit. Buy a bit of time for

Gu Tianjun and I. Afterward, our cooperation can continue.” He and Gu Tianjun backed up at top speed, both of them performing double-handed incantation gestures as they prepared divine abilities.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare. “You tricked me!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1094 awe-chapter-1095

These were two celestials of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and yet they had brazenly led Bai Xiaochun right into a trap.

Sima Yunhua wore a kind smile, and if you looked closely, he even seemed slightly apologetic. Of course, it was all for show. Inwardly, he was chuckling coldly.

What he was really thinking was that the best way for he and Gu Tianjun to pass the eighteenth level was either to have someone willingly sacrifice themselves, or somehow distract the sand giants. With the extra time that would give them, Gu Tianjun’s astounding sword qi, combined with Sima Yunhua’s long-range magical techniques, might be enough to succeed.

Up to this point, they had tried every option they could think of. Unfortunately, although the sand giants themselves were not very intelligent, making them relatively simplistic opponents, spell formations and restrictive spells didn’t work in the eighteenth level.

Getting a demigod to come in and help buy time didn’t seem to be an option. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun was their best shot.

“Don’t blame me!” Sima Yunhua thought. “I didn’t force you to get greedy for the rewards from level eighteen and beyond!” Sighing, he went about with his magical techniques, keeping an eye on Bai Xiaochun at the same time. Right now, he was just as confident that Bai Xiaochun could handle the sand giants as he had been that he would agree to the proposal to begin with.

After all, they were both anything but ordinary cultivators. Although his little scheme would cause a grudge, he was confident in being able to resolve that grudge later. And he wouldn't give up on the possible profits of the moment just because of that.

Furthermore, Sima Yunhua had also resolved that, if the plan worked out, and they passed the level, he would still give Bai Xiaochun the share he had been promised.

As he pondered the entire matter, his smile grew wider.

Bai Xiaochun saw that smile and snorted coldly. The truth was that if he wanted to get past this level, it would have been the simplest of matters. But that smile, and Gu Tianjun's look of scorn, caused him to pick a different course.

"Lord Bai has treated these two scoundrels with far too much benevolence. Considering what I did to Virūpākṣa and his buddies, the fact that I did nothing more than make it harder for these two to get through the levels clearly shows how easy I went on them. I didn't push them to the point of despair!

"After giving them a break like I did, they go and do this to me?!" Bai Xiaochun knew that without his authority over twenty percent of the damaged fan, if he got into this position, it would have been very, very bad. He would have been unable to escape, and worse, even if he managed to hold off the giants, he would have ended up seriously injured.

Even if he was given roughly thirty percent of the reward for the eighteenth level, it wouldn't be worth it. His injuries would have made him useless in the nineteenth and twentieth levels, and he would definitely have been prevented from going in.

“Well, whatever. Maybe if they had been honest about this from the beginning, I could have accepted it. But instead they try to take advantage of me? Do they really think that Bai Xiaochun is that easy to push around!?” Eyes narrowing, he backed away from the incoming sand giants. As they attacked, and he dodged, he could tell that unless he started using some divine abilities, he wouldn’t be able to hold out for much longer.

“This is my territory! How dare they try to screw me over here!” Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and decided not to leave. That would be going too easy on these two bastards. Letting out a shout, he shifted his momentum and began to rush toward the sand giants.

At the same time, he called upon his strange connection to the damaged fan. Ripples spread out around him in the air as he slammed into the giants, upon whose faces blank expressions appeared.

A moment later, a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering boom filled the air as Bai Xiaochun screamed, staggered backward and coughed up blood!

“I can’t handle it!” he shouted. “You two have to think of something! These giants are so strong! I’m hurt! I'm gonna die!” Then he toppled over, and lay there completely unmoving.

Apparently, the sand giants believed Bai Xiaochun to have perished. Ignoring him, they turned, looked at Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun, and began striding toward them, vicious expressions on their faces.

“Dammit, that bastard is actually feigning death!” Sima Yunhua’s scalp tingled at the sight of the ten giants rushing toward him and Gu Tianjun. There was no time to ponder why the sand giants believed Bai Xiaochun to be dead. He quickly finished his incantation gesture and unleashed the magical technique he had been preparing, sending a wall of flame out. At the same time, he began to back up at top speed.

Gu Tianjun acted similarly. As they fell back, Bai Xiaochun lay there, expression grim.

“We’re all celestials here!” Gu Tianjun shouted, his eyes glimmering with disgust. “If you didn’t want to work with us, you could have just said so. I can’t believe you’re pretending to be dead. How completely shameless! You might have a celestial cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun, but you don’t have the heart of a true powerful expert!”

As far as Gu Tianjun was concerned, a celestial shouldn’t feign death even in the direst of circumstances. In fact, he was so angry that he was just about to shift directions and try to head away from the giants and toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun lay there getting angrier by the minute. Sending out a thought, he caused a hundred giants to suddenly rise up out of the sand.

Roaring, they converged on Gu Tianjun before he could go through with his plan. When he saw what was happening, he gasped and fell back at top speed.

Sima Yunhua was equally stunned.

“There’s actually a third phase!!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he sighed at the fact that he had too few Aphrodisiac Pills in his bag of holding. Otherwise, he would have made sure there was a fourth phase too.

Meanwhile, more than a hundred sand giants were blasting Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua backward across the battlefield. Blood sprayed out of the mouths of the celestials, who despite being anxious, were simply trying to hold on for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, whereupon they would be teleported out.

If it had been ten sand giants, they wouldn't have had any problems holding out. But the sight of more than a hundred had their scalps tingling in fear. Unfortunately, they had no other ideas of what to do.

"Dammit," Sima Yunhua growled under his breath, "how could things have changed so quickly?!" Finally, he gritted his teeth and fell over, simultaneously causing his aura to vanish. Apparently, he was choosing to imitate Bai Xiaochun in feigning his death….

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with this. He immediately had the giants who had been attacking Sima Yunhua turn to the only other 'living' target in the level… Gu Tianjun.

Gu Tianjun's jaw dropped….

With Bai Xiaochun and Sima Yunhua both pretending to be dead, Gu Tianjun's fate was sealed. More than a hundred sand giants closed in on him with raging madness and terrifying energy. Just before they reached him, Gu Tianjun gritted his teeth, fell over, and retracted his aura. He had also chosen to feign death….

Sadly, his attempt to feign death didn't work. The sand giants apparently weren’t fooled, and before long, Gu Tianjun was screaming in agony. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was knocked back and forth across the battlefield, his heart filled with bitterness.

“Dammit. This isn’t fair! Look, Sima Yunhua isn’t really dead! Why don’t you go after him!?!?” Gu Tianjun was already hovering on the brink of madness.

When Bai Xiaochun heard Gu Tianjun’s words, he realized that they made sense. Therefore, he sent some of the sand giants charging back toward Sima Yunhua.

Sima Yunhua’s eyes nearly fell out of his skull, and he began to curse like mad. What was happening seemed completely beyond reason. The giants had never seemed very intelligent, but now it was almost as if they were toying with them!

It wasn’t that he didn’t suspect Bai Xiaochun had something to do with it, but rather… it never occurred to him that Bai Xiaochun could possibly already be the owner of the damaged fan!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1095 awe-chapter-1096

Because of the more than 100 sand giants, Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun had no way to cause any problems for Bai Xiaochun. In fact, they didn’t even have time to think about him.

If they lost focus for even a moment, they would be in real and profound danger. They alternated between coughing up blood and consuming medicinal pills until, finally, the teleportation power kicked in.

As the teleportation light built up, they suddenly felt the relief of having escaped a dangerous experience by the skin of their teeth. At the same time, their hope of getting past the eighteenth level vanished completely.

As they left, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and stood up, looking very pleased with himself. After brushing the sand and dust off of himself, he stuck his chin up, flicked his sleeve, and coolly said, “With the flick of a sleeve, I, Bai Xiaochun, reduced celestials to ashes. Their biggest mistake was pissing me off to begin with!”

Bai Xiaochun was extremely pleased with this latest addition to his usual monologue, and decided he should use it again in the future if he could.

Meanwhile, the sand giants had all stopped moving, and were just standing there, motionless. Bai Xiaochun looked them over, and felt a bit sad. It wasn’t that he hadn’t considered taking them with him. Sadly, based on the powers he had gained from the damaged fan, he knew that such puppets could exist only in the eighteenth level. Outside, they would be mere illusions.

“I wonder how the sovereign who made this fan was able to do all this.” At this point, Bai Xiaochun contemplated passing the eighteenth level just to annoy Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun.

After a bit of thought, he decided that doing so would be too suspicious. Therefore, he sighed and gave up on the idea. Moments later, he was teleported away.

The instant he reappeared outside, a beam of sword qi slashed toward him.

Thankfully, he had been prepared for such a thing. Glaring, he unleashed a fist strike right into the sword qi.

A boom rang out, and he staggered backward several hundred meters. However, the sword qi collapsed, and Gu Tianjun, who had already been injured and relying on the power of medicinal pills to keep going, was hit by the backlash, and sent tumbling several thousand meters away. When he ground to a halt, he looked up at Bai Xiaochun with a glare.

“You tricked us, Bai Xiaochun!” he growled.

Sima Yunhua appeared next to Gu Tianjun, eyes shining with cold light as he too stared at Bai Xiaochun.

If the two celestials hadn’t been injured, Bai Xiaochun would have played it a bit safer. But they were both badly hurt, so he wasn’t scared of them at all.

Glancing at them snidely out of the corner of his eye, he said, “First we need to clear up the issue of who tricked who! If the two of you want to keep causing trouble, then fine, bring it on! I’ve had enough of the likes of you.”

With that he raised his voice loudly. “Alright, everyone, pay close attention. I'm not picking a fight with these two, they’re bullying me! When we get back to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, I’ll ask His Majesty to make a fair judgement about it!”

Gu Tianjun could offer no response to Bai Xiaochun’s sharp words, other than a few guttural grunts. However, the killing intent in his eyes grew explosively strong. Sima Yunhua, on the other hand, was a bit more rational. After staring at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, he smiled.

“Apparently I underestimated you, Fellow Daoist Bai.” With that, he clasped hands and bowed, then turned and headed off to meditate.

Gu Tianjun remained standing there for a long moment. Eventually, he snorted coldly, suppressed his killing intent, and walked some distance away. For one thing, he knew that he was too badly injured to fight Bai Xiaochun. For another thing, he somehow had the feeling that, in this place, it didn’t matter that he had a higher cultivation base. He was still in great danger when it came to dealing with Bai Xiaochun.

After Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua backed down, the other cultivators who had gathered to watch the scene could already guess what had happened.

That was especially true of Preceptor Seadeep and the others from the Saint Emperor Dynasty. The fact that Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun had conceded, and also the sight of Bai Xiaochun’s fist strike, left them all shaken.

“Obviously there was some friction between those three.... And in the end, Bai Xiaochun came out on top!”

“He seems relatively harmless, but the truth is that from the moment Bai Xiaochun entered the damaged fan, he hasn’t lost any major conflicts!”

“And he just got all the way to the eighteenth level without expending any effort at all!!”

Everyone looked over at him with fear lingering in their hearts. When Bai Xiaochun realized that, his heart swelled with pride.

“Ai, what can I do? Wherever I go, I end up the center of attention. It’s not like I do it on purpose!” Shaking his head, he found a place to sit cross-legged and relish his victory. At the same time, he was starting to get antsy about the time limit ending. There was only about half a month left.

Things went just as Bai Xiaochun had prayed they would. Time flew by, and before long, it was only two days before the time limit ran out. By this point, just about everyone had given up on the challenges. Only four or five people refused to quit. For them, there was no longer any excitement to be found in their attempts, only dogged persistence.

Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua eventually recovered and went back to try to handle the eighteenth level again. But after failing a few times, they sighed and gave up.

Everyone was talking about Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon. They were still missing, and no one had any idea where they were stuck. Many people had come to the conclusion that they had come across some other good fortune. Even Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua seemed to believe that.

When Bai Xiaochun heard such talk, he merely cleared his throat.

Two days passed. It was at that point that, for the first time since the trial by fire began, everyone could use their divine sense again!

It was a strange and wonderful sensation for everyone.

Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua were particularly delighted. They had participated in too many trials by fire to count in their lives, but had never been as frustrated as they had in this damaged fan.

They could accept defeat, but this damaged fan almost seemed to hate them. No matter how hard they tried, the fan just wouldn't let them succeed.

Not a single person seemed to regret that the end of the trial had come. In fact, many of them breathed sighs of relief. The past two months had been like a torment for most of them.

“Maybe it's Celestial Virūpākṣa, Reverend Devourer or Prince Ur-Demon who will get the ultimate good fortune!” That was what many people were thinking.

When the final moment came, the fan's spirit automaton again awoke. It had been gone for a long time, and therefore, it was a bit startling. However… it was to everyone's shock that, in that very same moment, the light of teleportation rose up in the main square, and three people crawled out of it….

Yes, they literally crawled….

Their clothing was in tatters, and they had blank looks on their faces. They were also trembling, although they didn’t realize it, and were spattered with blood. These were the very three people that everyone had suspected of acquiring the good fortune of the trial by fire. Celestial Virūpākṣa. Prince Ur-Demon. Reverend Devourer.

Everyone stared over in shocked silence at the three celestials, who looked as if they had been trampled by an army of tens of thousands of men and horses. Moments later, people began to cry out in surprise and alarm.

“This… this….”

“Heavens. Wait, they didn’t actually get any good fortune? What happened to them!? I can’t believe they were tortured to this state!!”

“Look at their expressions. That’s what you look like when you fall into despair over and over again. And look at all the blood….”

Bai Xiaochun’s voice could be heard amongst the others. Sounding dramatically shocked, he pointed and said, “How could this have happened!? I thought I had it bad, but it turns out you three had it way worse!”

No one was really paying attention to him, though. The demigods from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, including Li Donghao, hurried over to help the celestials to their feet.

Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer seemed to be in a slightly better state. Although they were gasping for breath, they were already recovering mentally. However, Celestial Virūpākṣa seemed to have been the focus of special attention…. As soon as Li Donghao reached out to him, Celestial Virūpākṣa noticed his towering frame and shrieked, “Don’t touch me! I said don’t touch me…!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1096 awe-chapter-1097

Celestial Virūpākṣa recovered quickly. A moment later, he rose to his feet, his eyes blazing as he looked around at the crowd.

Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer did the same. Their eyes were filled with boundless madness and hatred, to the point where it seemed likely that, if they found out who was responsible for their plight, they would unleash insane rage.

The two months of torment they had experienced had frequently left them wishing they could die. At the same time, they had come to the conclusion that there was only one explanation for what had occurred: someone had been targeting them specifically.

They weren’t sure how the deed had been done, but they were sure someone was behind it.

The shocked onlookers could see that something strange was going on, and began to consider what it might be. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun was feeling a bit guilty, and was marveling at how powerful these three must be to have endured what they had.

“I can't let them find out it was me. Otherwise they’ll definitely go crazy.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he looked around quickly, and began to imitate the expressions on some of the other cultivators’ faces.

But then….

“It was definitely you, Bai Xiaochun!”

Bai Xiaochun whipped his head around to find Celestial Virūpākṣa glaring at him with bright red eyes.

His heart leaped with fear, but he simply frowned.

“What exactly do you mean?!” he said, slowly rising to his feet, and trying to look confused. Celestial Virūpākṣa took a step forward, but Prince Ur-Demon quickly reached out to block his path.

Prince Ur-Demon looked closely at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, then looked around at the crowd.

“Ladies and gentlemen, presumably all of you experienced some strange situations in this trial by fire. For example, in the trial that only had nine stairs, there was a moment when one hundred stairs appeared. And in another, one puppet became ten, or even a hundred!

“I’ll be honest with you all. We three celestials joined forces to get past the eighteenth and nineteenth levels. But in the twentieth level, we faced an unending horde of minotaur monsters. That might have been something we could accept, but then we found that we couldn’t perform teleportations. Fine, maybe we could accept that too. But after four hours passed, we were unable to leave. We were stuck in there all this time, up until a few moments ago!

“Clearly, something very abnormal is going on, something that should never have happened!

“Of course, anomalies are always possible, but there shouldn’t have been more than one such strange occurrence!” Everyone was shaken by what they were hearing, especially Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua.

It was definitely true that a lot of strange things had occurred within the past few months. Although everyone had suspected something strange was going on, no one had any proof, nor any way to provide an explanation.

Now that Prince Ur-Demon was speaking things aloud, people began to occasionally glance over at Bai Xiaochun, who simply blinked and tried to maintain a serious, suspicious expression on his face.

As for Prince Ur-Demon, he was virtually staring at Bai Xiaochun the entire time, his eyes flickering with hatred.

“I suspect that someone in our midst somehow became the owner of the damaged fan. In fact, that person has likely already secretly passed the twentieth level!

“That is the only explanation, the only way that someone could target all of us, *and* keep us three celestials trapped in the twentieth level!”

As everyone looked on in stunned silence, Gu Tianjun shivered and suddenly said, “The person most likely to be responsible is Bai Xiaochun!”

“I can’t be certain if Fellow Daoist Bai is the one responsible,” Sima Yunhua added coldly. “However, it wasn’t very long ago that Fellow Daoist Gu and I joined him in attempting to pass the eighteenth level. Once inside, the sand giants completely ignored him!” At this point, many in the crowd began fanning out, as if to surround Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was very nervous, and knew that if he wasn’t very careful, he could make a deadly mistake. Taking a deep breath, he tried to look furious as he shouted, “This is all because I'm from the Heavenspan Realm, isn’t it? It's because I’m the only celestial from the lands of Heavenspan!

“You two laid a deadly trap for me in the eighteenth level! And did you forget how the sand giants also ignored you, Sima Yunhua? It wasn’t just me!

“As for you, Celestial Virūpākṣa, *you* were the one targeting *me*, from the very beginning! That makes me the perfect person to frame!

“You think I passed the twentieth level already!? Well everyone can see the standings, and look, I never got past the seventeenth level!” Bai Xiaochun was just beginning to add some more when Reverend Devourer narrowed his eyes and cut in.

“We’ll all know very soon whether or not it was you,” he said. “The time limit is almost up, and soon everyone will find out who the new owner of the fan is! Then everything will be made clear!”

Everyone else in the crowd seemed to agree with Reverend Devourer.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling very nervous, but couldn’t think of anything to do. Not only was he surrounded here, but people would surely continue to be angry with him once they were back in the Saint Emperor Dynasty.

He actually didn’t want to have anything to do with the damaged fan now, but now that everyone had their divine sense back, his hands were tied.

As Bai Xiaochun stood there nervously, Virūpākṣa’s eyes glittered with killing intent, and Sima Yunhua chuckled coldly. A moment later, the fan began to vibrate, and a force of expulsion appeared, pushing the group out of the main square of the damaged fan.

As they were propelled in the direction of the Eternal Immortal Domains, the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor appeared. Although they were there to escort their people home, they also took advantage of the moment to try to get to the fan, which now seemed unprotected.

However, it was in that very moment that the fan tipped to the side and then flew off of the hand of the enormous sovereign. Instead of heading toward any given person, it began to sail off into the darkness of the void.

Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief, but at the same time was a bit shocked. Based on everything that had happened, he had assumed the fan would come to him.

Of course, he didn’t let his surprise show.

After all, the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor were speeding off into the distance, using unknown techniques to try to reach the fan and enter it.

Bai Xiaochun was nervous, but because of the presence of the two emperors, and also how everyone was suspicious of him, he didn't dare to try to reach out and connect with the fan. Feeling very frustrated, he glanced at Celestial Virūpākṣa, Prince Ur-Demon, and Reverend Devourer, and then settled his gaze onto Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua.

“Do you people see that?!?!” he said, almost shouting. “First of all, I didn’t perform any incantation gestures. Second of all, I didn’t use any divine sense. Third of all, I didn’t even move a muscle. That fan… didn't even move in my direction!

“The person who tampered with the trial by fire was obviously not me! And I clearly didn’t get past the twentieth level, much less become the new owner of the fan!

“I met with the same misfortune as all of you. Obviously, I’m not the one to blame!

“Someone used you, Celestial Virūpākṣa!!

“And you misjudged the situation, Prince Ur-Demon!

“What about you, Reverend Devourer? Why haven’t you said anything yet? And then there’s you, Sima Yunhua. Things aren’t settled between the two of us!”

His words were met with silence. None of the celestials could offer a single retort.

Everyone looked in the direction of the disappearing fan. Although Bai Xiaochun hadn’t directly mentioned either the Saint-Emperor or the Vile-Emperor, based on what he had said, and what was happening now… people had come to their own conclusions about the matter.

Unfortunately, there was no way to confirm the theory. Celestial Virūpākṣa said nothing. He simply turned and left. Mixed emotions could be seen in Prince Ur-Demon’s eyes, and Reverend Devourer’s face was extremely grim as the two of them left.

Sima Yunhua and Gu Tianjun exchanged a glance, then sighed inwardly. Shaking their heads, they left. Before long, everyone was taking advantage of the magical light left behind by the two emperors to return home to the dynastic capital cities in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

After returning to Saint-Emperor City, Bai Xiaochun finally breathed a true sigh of relief. The crisis had passed. However, the matter of who controlled the fan had him feeling very anxious.

“How come it didn’t come to me? Is it because I didn’t call out to it?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1097 awe-chapter-1098

“But it’s a sovereign precious treasure!” Bai Xiaochun felt his heart dripping with figurative blood. He considered trying to make contact with the fan, but in the end, decided not to. He would bide his time until the Saint-Emperor returned.

After all, if he tried to make contact and failed, it wouldn’t matter. But if he succeeded and the Saint-Emperor noticed, it could have major repercussions.

Sighing, he returned to his blessed land in Saint-Emperor City. All of the cultivators he saw were clearly edgy in his presence. And Heavenly Marquis Liu was obviously keeping a close eye on him. But he was in no mood to care about that. He simply sat there in his blessed land, waiting.

Half a month later, the Saint-Emperor had still not returned. That was when something happened that affected all of the Eternal Immortal Domains. A feeling descended upon all living beings, seemingly from the heavens above. Furthermore, a voice began to whisper into the ears of everyone alive!

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty and Saint-Emperor Dynasty began to stir in just the way they had when Bai Xiaochun became a celestial!

However, this time, the source was not Saint-Emperor City, but rather… Vile-Emperor City!

“Someone… is becoming a celestial!”

“Heavens! Two celestials in one year!?!?”

When the cultivators in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty realized what was happening, they looked in the direction of Vile-Emperor City, crying out in alarm and shock. Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua and Chen Su had all been meditating in their respective blessed lands. But now, their eyes were wide with astonishment.

Bai Xiaochun was also ripped out of meditation as a voice began to speak to him. He could also sense that all of the Eternal Immortal Domains were being shaken. Eventually, the voice speaking into the ears of all beings in the world became very clear!

A twelfth celestial exists in the world, named… Daoist Heavenspan!

The people in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty were shaken, and gasped in shock. As for those in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, they fell into wild jubilation.

“Another… another celestial!?!?”

“Daoist Heavenspan? That name… sounds familiar. That’s someone from the Heavenspan Realm, right? But I thought he was dead?!?!”

“Heavenspan Realm…. So in only one year, and only a few months apart, it produced two celestials!! What terrifying reserve powers they had built up. It’s a good thing the two of them don’t get along.”

As the buzz of conversation filled the world, Bai Xiaochun slowly rose to his feet, his expression grim and filled with insane killing intent!

His eyes were bloodshot as he stared off into the distance, and it was only after a long moment that he managed to get his killing intent under control.

“Heavenspan, you bastard,” he grated. “So… you really aren’t dead!!” All of a sudden, he thought back to everything from the Heavenspan Realm. He thought back to the climactic final battle. He thought back to Bai Hao. He thought back to Du Lingfei. He thought back to all of the other painful images.

No, Daoist Heavenspan was not dead!

Back when the Heavenspan Realm collapsed, his cultivation base was at the quasi-celestial level. However, he had spectacular talent. And because of his deep understanding of the Undying Live Forever Technique, he had already formed part of his Daoseed!

Bai Xiaochun had actually laid eyes on it! When Daoist Heavenspan’s body collapsed at the end of their final battle, he had seen a clump of magical symbols which was none other than a Daoseed!

Normally speaking, after the world was destroyed, and Daoist Heavenspan received a mortal blow, it shouldn’t have mattered that he had part of a Daoseed. He should have perished then. But it just so happened that he was teleported into one of the immortal domains controlled by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. And the first person to detect the fluctuations of his Daoseed was the Vile-Emperor.

The Vile-Emperor took him in, a secret that was kept from even the other celestials. As far as the Vile-Emperor was concerned, Daoist Heavenspan was like a rare treasure worth keeping in his back pocket.

Back when Bai Xiaochun had made his breakthrough, Daoist Heavenspan was trying to do the same thing, and had even sensed Bai Xiaochun’s breakthrough. For Daoist Heavenspan, making that breakthrough from demigod to celestial was extremely difficult. He got stuck in the third tribulation, and repeatedly failed to get the approval of the Eternal Mother.

However, at one point, the Vile-Emperor gave him a chunk of black stone that miraculously gave Daoist Heavenspan what he needed, right in the moment when he believed he had failed!

And therefore, when Daoist Heavenspan made his breakthrough and became a celestial, all people in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty became aware of his existence.

The voice of the Eternal Mother spoke into the ears of all living beings, leading to widespread shock in both of the imperial dynasties.

Most shocked of all though… were the people of Heavenspan scattered throughout the rest of the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Mixed emotions of all sorts rose up in their hearts.

Deep within a private chamber in Vile-Emperor City, Daoist Heavenspan opened his eyes, then threw his head back and laughed maniacally. Rising to his feet, he slowly looked in the direction of Saint-Emperor City, his eyes flickering with bizarre emotions.

Despite being separated by an entire world, he and Bai Xiaochun could somehow sense each other, and both of their eyes began to glow with icy coldness and killing intent!

“Bai Xiaochun…. You being a bit faster won’t matter in the end!” He waved his hand, causing a black robe to settle down over his shoulders, including a deep hood that covered his face.

“How wonderful that the Eternal Mother speaks of new celestials. That way, everyone who knows me… has been told that I’m back!” Looking away from Saint-Emperor City, he turned and vanished into the darkness.

It was at that exact same moment that, back in Saint-Emperor City, Bai Xiaochun also retracted his gaze.

“The fact that you’re alive just means that I can kill you again!” Closing his eyes, he settled back down cross-legged to continue meditating.

Time passed. Ten days later, the Saint-Emperor returned. No one knew if he returned with anything in his possession. Furthermore, he didn’t hold court. A few days passed, whereupon he issued a single Dharmic decree!

Bai Xiaochun was named a celestial guardian in the second immortal domain of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. He would hold authority over the entire immortal domain!

The truth was that the Saint-Emperor Dynasty only controlled most of that immortal domain, not all of it. Its northern prefectures had been occupied by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty for many years. That state of affairs had resulted from a situation similar to when the Saint-Emperor acquired a handful of prefectures in exchange for handing over Gongsun Wan’er. Therefore, although the Saint-Emperor Dynasty maintained control of the immortal domain as a whole, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had a foothold there.

That immortal domain had to remain on constant guard against the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Furthermore, small-scale warfare played out on the actual border regularly. Whoever was appointed the celestial guardian would be responsible for overseeing such war efforts. For many years, the person to hold that title was one of the most qualified celestials, Zhao Yuanhan, who bore the Daoist name Aged Spirit.

Celestial Aged Spirit had been in the second immortal domain for years, and had never rotated out to give the position to another celestial. And the Dharmic decree which had just been issued did not relieve him of his duties. Instead, both he and Bai Xiaochun would serve as celestial guardians at the same time!

Therefore, it was obvious to Bai Xiaochun what this ‘appointment’ really indicated.

It was essentially sending him to the second immortal domain with no actual power or authority. He could have access to cultivation resources, and could maintain a high status, but… wouldn’t have any power!

“It makes it seem like I'm there to defend one of the immortal domains, but really, it’s more just to keep me busy….” He wasn’t angry. In fact, it was actually a good thing. After all, the Giant Ghost King was in the second immortal domain, and it had been a long time since the two of them had seen each other.

He still felt the urge to try to contact the damaged fan, but being as cautious as he was, he forced himself not to. He would at least wait until he was away from Saint-Emperor City before giving it a shot.

Thus, he packed his bags, and without any fanfare, left the next day at dawn, a beam of bright light shooting through the air.

His departure led to many sighs of relief in Saint-Emperor City. Although there were no drums or gongs, there was much cheering and laughter.

“The walking disaster is walking away!!”

“Hahaha! Celestial Aged Spirit is in for a big headache!”

“Ah, what a pity. King Heavenspan has his upsides. It's too bad we couldn't send him to Vile-Emperor City! I’d be willing to bet that, if he were given the right set of circumstances, he could destroy the entire place!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1098 awe-chapter-1099

Some distance away from Saint-Emperor City, Bai Xiaochun hovered in midair, looking back over his shoulder. Considering the level of his cultivation base, it was easy for him to hear the sound of rejoicing behind him, although not perfectly clearly.

“Haven’t experienced this feeling for a long time!” He couldn’t help but clear his throat a bit. After all, he knew exactly what was going on, and it was somewhat embarrassing. Thankfully, he knew exactly how to deal with that embarrassment.

“It’s all my fault.” In his heart, he sighed deeply. After all, it had been a long time since he realized that no matter what he did in life, he couldn’t stop being outstanding.

“What other explanation could there be? How come whenever I stay anywhere for a bit of time, people always get so emotional?

“Mount Hood, the Spirit Stream Sect, the Blood Stream Sect, the River-Defying Sect, the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect, the Wildlands…. And now, even the people in the Eternal Immortal Domains realize how outstanding I am.” Swishing his sleeve, he turned around and continued on his way.

“Ah, whatever. Now that I’m heading into the second immortal domain, I definitely have to keep a low profile.” As he moved along, he thought about the Saint-Emperor’s decree, and no matter what angle he considered it from, it left him feeling like he had been kicked out into the cold.

“I'm afraid that if I reveal my outstanding nature to the people of the second immortal domain, the Saint-Emperor will just find another way to oppress me.” It was easy to see what kind of situation he was getting into.

“The second immortal domain already has a celestial in charge of it. If I end up having any problems with this other celestial… the Saint-Emperor definitely won’t take my side.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he realized more than ever that he had to keep a low profile.

“Being too outstanding isn’t a good thing. Well, I guess it’s like that old phrase. How does it go? *Everyone is jealous of the tallest tree in the forest!”* It caused him to think back to how everyone had targeted him in the damaged fan, and indignation grew stronger in his heart. However, he forced himself to calm down and proceed on his way.

Half a month sped by. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in a rush, so he kept a moderate pace and enjoyed the scenery. With his celestial cultivation base, there weren’t very many things in the Eternal Immortal Domains that could cause problems for him.

Nor was he worried about people trying to kill him. The number of people who qualified to try to do that could be counted with a few fingers. Another seven days went by, and he was finally in the second immortal domain.

At this point, it was getting very hard to stop thinking about the damaged fan. That was especially true considering that, based on his analysis, the danger involved in trying to reach out to it was minimal.

Furthermore, if he ended up losing the fan because he had ignored it, it would be a huge travesty.

“I can’t wait any longer!” he thought. After making his decision, he waited three more days, then gritted his teeth and reached out to the fan via the strange connection between the two of them.

At first, he was fidgeting with nervousness, but after a moment passed, his expression flickered. He made a few more attempts, and then started to get flustered.

“How come there’s no reaction at all?! Don’t tell me the fan flew too far away? Or did one of those emperors steal it? Dammit! I worked myself to the bone to get that fan and keep it safe!” Unwilling to give up, he tried a few more times. And thus, what should originally have been a journey of about half a month turned into a full month, as every day, he would spend time reaching out to the damaged fan.

Thankfully, his efforts were not in vain. On the tenth day, he was delighted to discover that he felt something stirring between himself and the fan, although the fan was clearly in a very distant location.

“So, I'm not too late!” Enlivened, he used more divine sense and spent more time trying to get a reaction. As he did, the capital city of the second immortal domain grew closer and closer.

He saw endless numbers of towering mountains, and countless flowing rivers. There were innumerable wild beasts, sects, and cities. It was almost like a veil being lifted, revealing all of the details of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Just as he had learned before, the second immortal domain was divided into northern and southern parts. The part closest to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was the south.

The immortal domain as a whole contained sixteen prefectures, with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty controlling eleven of them. The other five, those in the north, were sparsely populated, and were as separate from the others as if they had been cleaved away from them with a sharp blade. Those five were either occupied by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, or were disputed teritory.

Five prefectures in the north, and eleven in the south!

Every prefecture had different topography and terrain, but at the moment, Bai Xiaochun wasn't interested in looking at the scenery anymore. Although he appeared to simply be hurrying on his way, virtually all of his attention was focused on the damaged fan. Eventually, after repeated attempts, it was when he was only about three days out from the capital city that he finally made direct contact with the slip of divine sense he had left on the fan!

The instant it happened, it felt like his mind was being struck by lightning. He stopped flying through the air and began panting as, all of a sudden, he experienced a vision.

He saw a starry sky that was completely dark, and stretched on without end.

The enormous damaged fan was slowly floating through that starry sky, going in some unknown direction on a never-ending journey!

“My precious fan….” he thought, his heart pounding at the sight of it. At this point, the vision began to ripple. Worried that the fan might float too far away, he quickly added more power to his divine sense in the hopes of stopping it from moving.

Unfortunately, he had overestimated his level of control. Originally, he had assumed that after the trial by fire ended, the twenty percent control he had acquired would be enough to earn the fan's approval.

But now, it was obvious that that was not the case. The fan was still without an owner, and Bai Xiaochun’s control over it was minimal. In fact, his level of authority had apparently slipped down to ten percent. And within a few months, he would lose even that.

“It's definitely the spirit automaton of the fan! It’s taking advantage of my absence to erase my branding mark!” More anxious than ever, he exerted more effort. As he did, the previously smoothly-floating fan suddenly began to vibrate and shine with flickering light.

Excitement flooded through him, and yet, before he could do anything else, a roar of rage filled his ears, its source being the spirit automaton of the damaged fan!

Clearly, the spirit automaton had awoken after their previous conflict, and was now doing its best to fight back again. Once it succeeded, the mere ten percent of the fan that Bai Xiaochun occupied would be taken away from him.

Although his branding mark was indeed being slowly erased, that didn’t take away his control of the fan!

“Dammit!” he growled angrily. Despite the huge distance involved, he used his divine sense to fight with the spirit automaton. Although he knew he couldn’t win such a fight, as long as his branding mark remained, he wouldn’t just give in!

As howls of rage filled his mind, he found a convenient place to sit cross-legged, whereupon an indeterminable amount of time passed. It was evening when he finally opened his eyes, his robes soaked with sweat.

His eyes were bloodshot and exhausted, and he was gasping for breath. But there in his hand was a glowing sphere of light that gradually shrank down into the form of a command medallion.

That command medallion was what he had gained after this round of conflict with the spirit automaton of the fan, after it had been forced back to sleep.

“This spirit automaton is definitely tough. No wonder I don’t qualify to be the owner of the fan yet!

“If it weren’t for that automaton, I definitely would have been able to bring the fan back. This time, all I got was this command medallion.” He wasn’t very pleased about it, which was compounded by the fact that he didn’t understand it. However, he did get the feeling that it was some sort of key….

A key that represented his level of power!

After a long moment passed, he sighed and prepared to put the command medallion away. However, it was at that point that his expression flickered, and he looked down at the command medallion.

“That aura….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1099 awe-chapter-1100

“That aura… what is it?” Bai Xiaochun closely examined the aura of the command medallion, and as he did, was shocked to find that his fatigue was rapidly fading away.

This was different from the powers of regeneration of his fleshly body. This was mental fatigue, and at the moment, his mental state was rapidly returning to its peak.

Delighted, he continued to focus his attention on the command medallion, but wasn’t able to find any more detailed clues. All he knew was that its aura really could help him recover his vitality!

“It’s not spiritual energy….” he decided. From what he could tell, it was energy from the world that the previous owner of the fan had come from, and was similar to the spiritual energy in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

“I wonder if this energy has any other uses.” Eyes sparkling, he did a few tests, even performing some breathing exercises while holding the command medallion in hand. To his shock and delight, absorbing the energy from this command medallion helped him practice cultivation at a much faster speed.

Not only did it flow through him especially quickly, he was able to absorb it much faster than ordinary spiritual energy. Furthermore, the complete mental clarity it brought made it obvious that this command medallion was a valuable treasure.

“The energy in this command medallion is better than any medicinal pill I’ve ever seen. If this little command medallion is so awesome, you can only imagine how incredible the fan itself is. It’s too bad there were so many people in it last time, making it impossible to study closely.” The next day at dawn, he opened his eyes. He was now more excited than ever, and more determined to wrest the fan away from the will that existed in it.

He put the command medallion away and looked around to see where he was. A moment later, he was flying at rapid speed toward the capital city of the second immortal domain.

Three days later, he saw an enormous statue rising up in front of him, surrounded by crisscrossed mountain ranges, a huge city at its feet that looked like a crouching beast.

There were many cultivators in the city, and as evening fell, the din of their voices rose up high into the sky.

Bai Xiaochun eyed the city, and then cleared his throat. Although he was attempting to keep a low profile, he was a celestial after all, and one of the two most important and powerful people in this entire immortal domain. As such, keeping a low profile was really strange.

“Well, I guess I just need to get used to it. Low profile is the way to go.” Sighing, he kept his divine sense reigned in and headed toward one of the main gates of the city in the same manner that an ordinary cultivator would.

It was a very large city, with eight main gates. Usually, five of them were kept open to allow the hosts of traveling cultivators in and out. Squads of guards manned the gates, keeping an eye on the bustling throngs.

This was the capital city, where a celestial presided over the entire immortal domain, so no one would dare to act poorly here. Furthermore, the city guards all had extraordinary cultivation bases. As for the guards at the gates, they wore spectacular suits of armor, and were all in the great circle of Core Formation.

There were even deva fluctuations coming from the watchtower high above the gate. Clearly, a deva was inside who was tasked with watching over what was happening outside. It all formed a powerful threat that would surely intimidate any visitors into being very cautious.

Bai Xiaochun could see cultivators with all sorts of cultivation bases around him, waiting to pass through the strict inspection before entering the city. Although they kept their voices down, it was possible to overhear some of their conversations.

“I can’t believe they even have a deva inspecting people. I guess times really are unstable.”

“Ai, I wonder when we’ll have true peace.”

“Did you hear that war broke out in the north again…?”

“That Vile-Emperor Dynasty really is repulsive. It seems war breaks out every few years in the north….”

When he heard the things they were talking about, he blinked a few times. Most of what he knew about the second immortal domain came from reading the official records. As for the specific details of what was happening right now, he wasn't too clear. However, talk of war didn’t interest him much, so he paid little attention to that sort of gossip. As the line inched forward, he looked left and right to take in the new sights.

Occasionally, a particularly important cultivator would fly overhead and land directly in front of the gate. Even as such cultivators brushed the dust off of their shoulders, the guards at the gate would offer respectful greetings, and immediately let them in.

Such cultivators would always draw the envious attention of the crowd. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was itching to do the same thing, but continued to remind himself that he was keeping a low profile.

“I really need to get used to this low profile thing….” he thought. Gradually, the line moved along, and soon it was Bai Xiaochun’s turn. First, he paid some spirit stones, then he allowed the deva’s divine sense to scan him. Just as he was about to head into the city, beams of light suddenly began to streak toward the city gate from off in the distance.

As they neared, incredible pressure radiated out in all directions, causing clouds of dust to rise into the air. Soon, the beams of light faded, revealing dozens of figures.

Most were in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, but five of them were deva experts. They reeked of blood, as though they had just come from a battlefield. Leading them was a particularly burly fellow, stalwart and broad-shouldered, with a violet robe. He was the type who seemed threatening without being angry, and as soon as the guards saw him, their expressions flickered with shock. Then they treated him with even greater courtesy than any of the other important people they had let into the city earlier.

“Well met, Marquis Zi Lin!”

Suddenly, the deva flew out from the watchtower and approached. Clasping hands with utmost respect, he said, “Well met, Marquis Zi Lin!”

When the other cultivators lined up at the city gate heard this, they were visibly shocked, and even began to cry out in surprise.

“That’s Marquis Zi Lin? He serves as the preceptor of the northernmost prefecture!”

“Yeah, that's definitely him. I saw him from a distance once, when the Saint-Emperor bestowed him with the title *marquis!”*

Despite how shocked the crowd was, not even this burly Marquis Zi Lin was allowed to simply fly into the city. He also had to walk through the gate.

It was very thought-provoking to Bai Xiaochun, and really served to emphasize how different the capital city was. According to the rules, not even a demigod expert was allowed to fly inside of it!

Marquis Zi Lin smiled faintly, and quickly clasped hands in salute to the deva. Without saying anything else, he and his men walked toward the gate, fairly radiating murderous auras.

The guards turned to push everyone else to the side so that they wouldn't get in Marquis Zi Lin’s way. Of course, they didn’t actually need to do that; the crowd respectfully began to back up without any urgings.

Bai Xiaochun was right there in the crowd, but was already starting to feel a bit irritated. After all, he had already paid the spirit stone tax and been scanned, and therefore, should have been allowed to proceed into the city. As the crowd backed up, he remained standing in place, until he was conspicuously out in the open.

The guards were not pleased, and one of them yelled, “Hey, what are you doing standing there!?”

He even walked forward with the intention of pushing Bai Xiaochun back.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun glared at the guard, causing the man to shiver. His mind even went a bit blank. Although he didn’t recognize Bai Xiaochun, his gaze contained power that struck him all the way down to the soul, resulting in him simply standing there unmoving.

“I already paid my spirit stones!” Bai Xiaochun said loudly. “Why the hell should I have to get out of the way!” Swishing his sleeve, he ignored the crowd and turned to enter the city.

Everyone in the area was completely stunned, even Marquis Zi Lin. At the moment, none of them could assess his cultivation base, and yet, nobody seemed worried about that. In their shock, many of them began to look over at the deva expert who oversaw this particular gate.

The deva frowned. He knew that Marquis Zi Lin was a direct descendant of Celestial Aged Spirit, and therefore didn’t dare to offend him. Waving his right hand, he caused a glowing shield to spring up and block Bai Xiaochun’s way.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t do anything rash. He simply turned around, an enigmatic smile on his face as he looked at the deva and asked, “What are you doing?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1100 awe-chapter-1101

As Bai Xiaochun stood there, smiling enigmatically at the deva, no one even thought to consider who he was. Not a single person realized that he was one of the five celestials of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!

Bai Xiaochun suddenly realized that keeping a low profiles was great, and in some ways, was better than doing things the normal way.

“No wonder a lot of big shots like to secretly mingle with the common people. It's a really wonderful feeling.” It was truly nice to be in a situation like this in which he faced absolutely no danger.

When the deva saw his seemingly pleased smile, and heard his words, he suddenly got a very strange feeling. However, he didn’t pay too much attention to that feeling.

“This shady character is trying to sneak into the capital city!” the deva announced. “Arrest him for further inspection. If he checks out, send him on his way, and if he resists, execute him on the spot!” The crowd began to back up even further. Some of them were looking at Bai Xiaochun sympathetically, but more had looks of open scorn.

“Is this guy an idiot, or what? Who would dare to make a scene right here?”

“Why would he do this? That’s Marquis Zi Lin! All he has to do is step to the side. It’s not like they asked him to cut his own arm off or something.”

“He's finished. Nowadays, anybody who gets arrested like this ends up getting thrown in prison and never coming out again!” Cold gleams appeared in the eyes of the guards, all of whom, with the exception of the one who had already been stunned into immobility by Bai Xiaochun, hurried forward.

Bai Xiaochun actually hadn’t expected the deva to just immediately have him arrested. A strange expression appeared on his face as he sighed.

“What’s the point of all this? I just wanted to get into the city…. And I was trying to keep a low profile.” Shaking his head, he waved his hand. He didn’t reveal his celestial cultivation base, he just used some nascent soul-level power, one level above these Core Formation guards. A windstorm sprang up, pushing the guards so hard that they were shoved back across the ground. One of them even coughed up some blood.

“What gall!” the deva shouted. “Get on your knees immediately!” Blurring into motion, he shot forward, fueling his hand with a burst of deva power to slap Bai Xiaochun!

In the deva’s mind, this blow would probably not be deadly, but it would at least force this person onto his knees!

Derision filled his heart. If this person had simply backed down, he would have just been punished a bit. But since he decided to resist, then it meant he was foolishly asking to be killed. Therefore, the deva’s actions were all in accord with the strict laws of the capital city!

However, even as the deva’s hand began to move, Bai Xiaochun sighed and sent his right hand flying toward him.

“How about you kneel instead?” Even as the words left his mouth, a smacking sound filled the air. The deva’s vision swam as a massive, unavoidable force hit him. His mind went blank, and he was nearly deafened. Blood then sprayed out of his mouth as he was smacked out of the air to land hard on the ground, right in front of Bai Xiaochun, his knees shattered, and blood oozing out all over him!

The intense pain he felt prompted a hoarse scream. He wanted to stand up, but his broken knees wouldn’t permit it. Worse, his cultivation base was teetering on the point of collapse.

Everyone in the crowd was stunned, and many a gasp could be heard.

“Fine, you’re not a Nascent Soul cultivator!” the deva cried. “But even if you *are* a deva, you’re still dead!!” Trying to ignore the intense pain, he pulled out a jade slip, which he crushed.

Of course, that jade slip acted like an alarm trigger, and instantly caused numerous beams of light to rise up from within the city and head toward the main gate.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit at a loss as to what to do. He had just wanted to enter the city, but had already caused quite a scene. Shaking his head, he turned and prepared to pass through the shield and enter the gate.

However, before he could move, Marquis Zi Lin, who had been standing off to the side completely silently up to this point, finally spoke.

“Stop him.”

Immediately, his subordinates rushed forth with coldly gleaming eyes. Five devas and more than ten Nascent Soul cultivators all stepped forward, giving rise to shocking energy. For many of the onlookers, this was an incredible scene the likes of which they would rarely be able to see.

“What a pity you didn’t reveal your deva cultivation base earlier,” Marquis Zi Lin continued. “Clearly you’re trying to show off. Finished? My subordinates have all grown up on the battlefield. Each of them have killed more than 10,000 enemies!”

As some in the crowd sighed about what was surely to come, Bai Xiaochun’s anger flared. After all, he hadn’t caused any trouble for this Marquis Zi Lin. Yet despite that, the man was clearly singling him out.

“Think you can bully me?” Bai Xiaochun said, glaring. He waved his right hand, allowing the power of the great circle of the Deva Realm to sweep out across the incoming subordinates of Marquis Zi Lin. Immediately, their hearts filled with wild shock.

Deafening rumbling sounds filled their ears, and their vision swam as a mountain-toppling, sea-draining force assailed them. There was literally nothing they could do to defend themselves. The five devas in the lead position coughed up mouthfuls of blood as they were forced to the ground in a kneeling position.

As for the ten Nascent Soul cultivators, they were even less able to resist. As they slammed into the ground, bloodcurdling screams echoed out in all directions.

It all happened in the blink of an eye, much to the shock of the onlookers. It was almost unthinkable to see so many powerful cultivators kneeling, right there at the main gate to the city.

“How amusing,” Marquis Zi Lin said, his eyes sparkling, and a slight smile of derision appearing on his face. He strode forward, moving so quickly that a massive wind kicked up. Arriving in front of Bai Xiaochun, he unleashed an energy far more terrifying than what Bai Xiaochun had just unleashed. This was not the early Demigod Realm; it was the power of the great circle!

However, Bai Xiaochun’s expression remained the same as ever as he reached out with his right hand and casually waved his hand toward Marquis Zi Lin.

“You kneel too!” he said coolly. His hand became something like an all-destructive mountain that could crush everything. Marquis Zi Lin seemed like he had been moving quickly, but to Bai Xiaochun, it was nothing more than a snail’s pace. As for the wind he had kicked up, it felt like the breath of a child, and the massive force that caused the air to ripple was so weak he could dispel it with ease!

That was the difference between demigods and celestials, and showed how vastly superior a Daoseed was.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun’s palm hit, not the Marquis Zi Lin there in front of him, but something obscured behind him!

The air rippled and distorted as a second Marquis Zi Lin stumbled out. That was how Marquis Zi Lin operated. When he appeared in public, he would keep his true self hidden, and have a clone act openly. Of course, demigods in the Heavenspan Realm couldn’t normally create clones, and it was the same for demigods in the Eternal Immortal

Domains, which made this strategy particularly effective, and also rare.

Just now, he had sent his clone over to test Bai Xiaochun a bit!

Never could he have imagined that his test would be crushed as if by a mountain!

The buzz of conversation rose up as both Marquis Zi Lin and his clone had their cultivation bases nearly destroyed. The intense force he could now sense caused him to tremble, and his eyes to shine with disbelief. He wanted to ask this person who he was, but before he could, the energy slammed into him, forcing him down. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as well as his clone's mouth as both of them were slammed into the ground.

Thud!

Dust billowed out as the audience looked on, stunned. Marquis Zi Lin's subordinates were in a daze, but even more shocked was the deva in charge of this gate. Waves of shock battered him as he realized that there was only one explanation for this, as unbelievable as it seemed. As soon as the idea entered his head, it nearly drove him mad!

"Ce… celestial…."

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1101 awe-chapter-1102

Just outside of one of the main gates of the capital city….

Everyone stood dumbstruck, unable to believe their eyes. There Bai Xiaochun stood, looking like some kind of divine spirit, causing everyone to forget to breathe.

It had been shocking enough to see his one palm knock several Nascent Soul guards down only moments ago. At that point, they had assumed that he was some wandering master. Then another palm forced the deva expert to kneel, causing them to gasp with the realization that this young man was actually a powerful expert!

Subsequently, another palm forced five devas and a host of Nascent Soul experts to kneel, and the crowd was flabbergasted. At that point, they had assumed that Bai Xiaochun was a demigod. Never could they have imagined that he was actually a celestial…. After all, celestials were not a common thing. In all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, there were only twelve!

More shockingly, this person only needed one palm to deal with Marquis Zi Lin’s attack!

The sight of Marquis Zi Lin and all of the other powerful experts kneeling in front of the city gate caused the onlookers’ minds to simmer on the verge of exploding. They felt like they were being struck by a million lightning bolts, until their minds went blank…. None of them dared to even think. What was happening right in front of them was so profoundly shocking that they would never forget it for the rest of their lives!

At this point, the deva in charge of the gate muttered something, tearful words spoken as if in the ultimate despair. Because of the deathly silence that filled the air, his muttered words echoed like thunder into the ears of the already stunned audience, causing many of them to gasp.

“Ce… celestial….”

It took only a moment for the silence to be broken, replaced by a massive commotion.

“How is this even possible!?!?”

“Am I dreaming? Is this a hallucination? Am I actually looking at a celestial?!?!”

The gathered group of kneeling cultivators were all trembling, and some of the weaker ones, those in Core Formation, were so terrified that they simply passed out.

Marquis Zi Lin’s subordinates were so terrified their faces were as white as sheets, and they were soaked with sweat. Merely being looked at by Bai Xiaochun filled them with unprecedented levels of terror, and infinite regret.

“He’s… he’s a celestial….”

“Dammit! If he’s a celestial, why didn’t he say so earlier!? Why’d he have to do it this way!?!?”

They all felt like they were about to go mad. However, the one who was taking it worst of all was Marquis Zi Lin. His face was currently so red it was turning magenta, and the bitterness he felt in his heart knew no end.

Perhaps some in the audience were still unconvinced, and believed Bai Xiaochun to simply be in the great circle of the

Demigod Realm. But having actually been struck by Bai Xiaochun’s palm, Marquis Zi Lin was absolutely certain what level of cultivation base he was dealing with.

Only a celestial would be able to so easily deal with a group of Nascent Soul cultivators, devas and demigods. With one casual move, he forced all of them to kneel before him on the ground!

Now that he knew the level of Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base, he didn’t even need to put any thought into the matter to figure out who he was.

After all, it had only been a few months since the Saint-Emperor appointed King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun, as the second celestial to be stationed in the second immortal domain. Furthermore, Marquis Zi Lin had personally seen all of the other celestials in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Bai Xiaochun was the only one he had never laid eyes on.

After putting all of the pieces of the puzzle together, Marquis Zi Lin’s heart nearly shattered. He felt like he had just swallowed a whole cupful of bile, making him as bitter as bitter could be, inside and out.

Smiling bitterly, he gritted his teeth and, being unable to feel or move his legs, clasped hands and said, “I, Zi Lin… offer greetings, King Heavenspan!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the babbling of the crowd ceased. All eyes turned to fall on Bai Xiaochun. Silence prevailed for a short moment, and then the hubbub began again.

“King Heavenspan? He’s… Bai Xiaochun!?!?”

“The eleventh celestial!? Bai Xiaochun!?”

“Bai Xiaochun from the Heavenspan Realm!?!?”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun stood there looking at the people all lined up and kneeling in front of him. Inside, he sighed, thinking about how he really had a lot of progress to make in keeping a low profile.

But these people just had to go and refuse him entry. If that had been all there was to the matter, he might have been able to accept it. But then they attacked him. That was what got him really angry.

It was no surprise to him to hear Marquis Zi Lin saying his name out loud. In fact, Bai Xiaochun would have found it odd if the man didn’t finally realize who he was.

Glaring at the man, he said, “So, you *do* know who I am. And you attacked me anyway? Well, you’ve certainly got some guts, don’t you, Marquis Zi Lin?” It was all thanks to this Marquis Zi Lin that his plan of keeping a low profile had been completely ruined. If only he had come a bit earlier or a bit later, then none of this would have happened.

“Please, quell your anger, King Heavenspan….” Marquis Zi Lin wanted to explain things, but he knew that in this moment, all he could do was bow his head. At the same time, hatred for Bai Xiaochun took root in his heart, although he didn’t dare to reveal that.

“You celestials…” he thought, “always toying with people like me….” Although Marquis Zi Lin felt profoundly unlucky, the deva responsible for this gate felt even more unlucky. To him, it was like the entire world had been turned upside down, and all he could do was stare pleadingly at Bai Xiaochun.

It was at around this time that the people in the city who had received the distress messages approached. Before they even arrived, their voices rang out by the city gate.

“Who is it that wishes to die!?”

“How dare you try to invade the capital city! What outrageous gall!”

“Get on your knees immediately!!”

There were eight in total, five men and three women, all of whom were in the great circle of the Deva Realm. When they saw the host of people kneeling on the ground, their anger burned, but soon they noticed that one of those people was Marquis Zi Lin. At that point, they each felt like a bucket of cold water had been poured on their heads. They began to tremble, and immediately lurched to a halt and backed up a bit. Eventually, they caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, whereupon the shock in their eyes grew greater.

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun looked up at the eight new arrivals, and tried to decide whether or not to drag them down and make them kneel too. Even as he pondered what to do, the eight devas shot backward, and simultaneously pulled out and crushed jade slips.

Subsequently, a massive, majestic divine sense swept out from the city.

It was like a tempest that could shake the heavens and topple the earth, that could crush anything and everything in the area! It made the devas seem like ants, and the demigods like dogs.

All of the cultivators in the capital city were shaken to the core, and began to tremble as their cultivation bases were suppressed.

It was the same with everyone at the gate, including Marquis Zi Lin, who began to shake visibly. As a direct descendant of Celestial Aged Spirit, how could Marquis Zi Lin not recognize this divine sense? As for everyone else, it wasn't difficult for them to guess its origin. In the capital city, there was only one person on this level!

The entire world shook as everyone bowed their heads.

However… Bai Xiaochun stood apart. He simply looked into the capital city, toward the source of the divine sense. Clearly, the person who had sent it out was not happy. Sighing, Bai Xiaochun said, “Well met, Fellow Daoist Aged Spirit.”

Ten breaths of time passed. Finally, a cold voice echoed out into heaven and earth.

“Your way of making an entrance is quite out of the norm, Fellow Daoist Bai. Men, go escort King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun, into the city!”

Each of Celestial Aged Spirit’s words echoed like heavenly thunder, shaking the entire city. And in response, several beams of light shot up into the air.

Within those beams were ten demigod experts stationed in the capital city, and all of them shot directly toward the city gate!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1102 awe-chapter-1103

Ten demigods who served under Celestial Aged Spirit here in the capital city arrived in beams of bright light.

Seven were men and three were women, and they were a variety of ages. One was a beautiful woman. They all had somber expressions as they looked at Bai Xiaochun. Ignoring Marquis Zi Lin and the other kneeling cultivators, they clasped hands and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, King Heavenspan!”

Many gasps could be heard in the stunned crowd. What was happening right in front of their own eyes seemed completely unbelievable.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he sighed in his heart. He was no longer the puny cultivator he had been back when he first stepped into the cultivation world. He was a celestial, and although he couldn’t actually read people’s thoughts, it was easy for him to guess what they were thinking.

Although these ten demigods were acting with respect, from the way they addressed him, it was easy to judge their attitude. They were welcoming him to the city out of formality, but didn’t really want him there.

Moments later, a large number of devas approached, as well as tens of thousands of ordinary guards. As they formed ranks outside the main gate, the sound of tolling bells filled the city. Then, cultivators clustered around him to escort him inside.

Marquis Zi Lin never rose to his feet the entire time. Although people like him weren't necessarily required to follow the orders of someone like Bai Xiaochun, in his presence, they had to act with utmost respect.

Considering that Bai Xiaochun had personally punished him, no one would possibly show him any goodwill right now. After all, no one wanted to share in his punishment.

And thus, it was with a show of great pomp, and yet with little passion, that Bai Xiaochun was received into the city. Everyone was shaken as he was led to a location in the city center, where an extremely luxurious mansion sat.

It covered an area of at least 30,000 meters, and rose high into the sky. Its grounds contained ornamental rocks, deep pools of water, and small streams with bridges over them. Verandas existed everywhere. Intense pressure filled the entire mansion, as well as strong spiritual energy. There were also spell formations which would extract the earthstring energy from the second immortal domain. All-in-all, this place was a wonder.

There were more than a thousand menservants and maidservants lined up outside the entrance, who were tasked with caring for Bai Xiaochun's daily needs. Of course, all of the men were very handsome, and the women were beautiful. Any one of them could be described as extraordinary.

Bai Xiaochun couldn't find a single thing wrong with any of it. There were only two mansions like this within the capital city. One of them was his, and the other… had even more abundant spiritual energy. It was the home of the person who oversaw all of the second immortal domain, Celestial Aged Spirit!

The two mansions weren’t very far apart; in fact, they were within eyesight of each other.

All of the important cultivators from the city were very polite. After escorting Bai Xiaochun to his mansion, they bid him farewell. The entire time, Celestial Aged Spirit didn’t show up. Toward the end, he simply sent a greeting via divine sense.

That made it more than obvious to Bai Xiaochun that the man wasn’t very pleased with his presence. After all, the second immortal domain had once been home to only one celestial, but now, two were present. That meant that it would be difficult to avoid power struggles and conflicts.

Because of how many years Celestial Aged Spirit had been in charge of the second immortal domain, it was safe to assume that all of the devas and demigods worked for him. In some ways, this wasn’t the second immortal domain of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it was… Celestial Aged Spirit’s personal fiefdom!

Furthermore, it didn't matter that Bai Xiaochun had a similar rank and title to Celestial Aged Spirit, he was a foreigner. Therefore, if he caused disasters here like he had in Saint-Emperor City, whether it was intentional or not, Celestial Aged Spirit would definitely not stand for it.

“Ah, whatever. I wanted to keep a low profile, right? I was living under someone else’s roof before, and now I don't really have much authority. Although I’m not really in charge of anything… I doubt anybody will cause any problems for me.” Sighing, he thought about it, and decided that he was duty-bound to not cause any conflicts here in the second immortal domain. He would keep to himself and work on his cultivation.

“Sooner or later, I’ll get my chance to kill you a second time, Daoist Heavenspan!” That was the second reason he was so interested in furthering his cultivation, the first being to give the Heavenspan cultivators a choice about their future.

Having made his decision, he settled down quietly in his mansion. Although the mansion was large, there were a thousand servants there to tend to it, so it didn’t seem depressingly empty. Before long, half a month had gone by.

During that time, virtually no one came to visit him, and Celestial Aged Spirit didn’t send any messages. It was almost as if no one was even paying attention to his existence.

Normally, the ten demigods would tend to day-to-day matters in the second immortal domain, and then compile reports for Celestial Aged Spirit, which he would use to provide further direction.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay any attention to that. He remained in a private chamber, practicing cultivation with the command medallion from the damaged fan.

The cultivators in the capital city had originally assumed they were in for a big commotion. But eventually, they realized that didn’t seem likely. Obviously, this newly-arrived King Heavenspan was deferring to Celestial Aged Spirit.

That attitude earned Bai Xiaochun a bit of benefit. All he had to do was ask for something, and virtually anyone in the capital city would do everything possible to comply with his request.

For the cultivators in the second immortal domain, life seemed exactly the same as before Bai Xiaochun had arrived. He remained happily in seclusion, using the command medallion to advance his cultivation. He also had access to large numbers of immortal pills and spirit plants that helped his cultivation base.

In addition, he spent time researching flame conjuring techniques again. He hoped to find something in the Eternal Immortal Domains that could be used as a substitute for souls, and as it turned out, that wasn't very difficult.

The Eternal Immortal Domains had a complete cycle of reincarnation that made it difficult to get access to souls. However, there were other things which could be used instead. For example, there were combustible soulstones. Although they were somewhat rare, they could be altered to create multi-colored flame.

Actually, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to have come to this conclusion. There were other Wildlander necromancers in the Eternal Immortal Domains who had figured out the same trick. Even spirit enhancers like Big Fatty Zhang had come to use similar techniques.

One upside to this method was that it made performing spirit enhancements easier. However, there was also a downside. After a sevenfold or eightfold spirit enhancement, it was virtually impossible to find the necessary multi-colored flame.

Even back in the days of the Wildlands, it was possible to see how spirit enhancement and necromancy were connected, and now that fact was even more obvious.

“What a pity. There just aren’t enough souls.” Bai Xiaochun shook his head as he looked down at Bai Hao’s spark-shaped scar on the back of his hand. Bai Hao was still sleeping, and Bai Xiaochun was slowly coming to the conclusion that it was only by means of flame conjuring that he could wake him.

It wasn’t possible to create high-level multi-colored flame, but he did create plenty of eightfold-enhanced magical items and medicinal pills. He even refined the Greatsword of the North.

He didn’t have much free time. Before long, three months had gone by. One day when he was practicing cultivation with the command medallion, he suddenly heard the sound of bells ringing in the capital city!

There was an urgency to how they rang, and they instantly caused a commotion in the city.

Somewhat taken aback, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and left his private chamber. Almost immediately, one of his servants ran over, looking very alarmed. Clasping hands and bowing, he said, “Exalted one, only an hour ago, Celestial Ghostmother from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty led an army to attack the last northernmost prefecture we control!

“It looks like henceforth… not a single one of the five northern prefectures will belong to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!

“True war is about to begin!” From the way his voice trembled, it was clear how much despair he felt.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1103 awe-chapter-1104

“What are you so worked up for!?” Bai Xiaochun barked, glaring. The servant shivered, then took a deep breath in an attempt to calm himself down.

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, this wasn’t a big deal at all. Whether or not the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty went to war had nothing to do with him. Besides, it didn’t seem likely to him that the two dynasties would actually launch a full-scale war anytime soon.

If there was nothing else to worry about, perhaps they would. But the enormous sovereign visible in the sky was no mere myth. In a situation like that, why would the two dynasties possibly go to war with each other?

Besides, four prefectures had already been lost in the north of the second immortal domain, so if the final northern prefecture went too, why would anyone be surprised? Perhaps it was the fact that it had been a long time since any of the prefectures in question had changed hands that had people so wound up.

The truth was that his analysis of the matter was quickly proven correct. Celestial Ghostmother simply occupied that final prefecture, and didn’t make any other hostile moves, much less start a war. In fact, she didn’t even kill anyone. The demigod in charge of the prefecture, as well as many of the cultivators under his command, were summarily deported to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

“What is Gongsun Wan’er doing over here?” Bai Xiaochun thought. Matters of war didn't interest him, but he was definitely curious about what Gongsun Wan’er was up to. Whenever he thought about the fact that Ghostmother was actually Gongsun Wan’er, he felt very pleased with himself. And he couldn’t help but wonder how angry the Vile-Emperor must have been to find out what had happened.

Technically, Ghostmother and Gongsun Wan’er were one and the same, but not in all respects. Ghostmother was loyal to the Vile-Emperor, and was vicious and merciless. As for Gongsun Wan’er, she was also vicious and merciless, but considering everything that had gone on, she was much more closely connected to Bai Xiaochun.

“Why do I feel like I’ve heard about this prefecture before…?” Bai Xiaochun thought carefully about the matter before he realized the connection, and it caused him to laugh.

“That was where Marquis Zi Lin was stationed, wasn’t it?” Marquis Zi Lin had indeed been the preceptor of the last northern prefecture. After the incident at the city gate, Bai Xiaochun had been somewhat interested in his fate. A few days after he had been forced to kneel, Celestial Aged Spirit finally ordered him to leave the capital city.

From that, Bai Xiaochun could see Celestial Aged Spirit’s attitude in the matter. Although it seemed like he was respecting Bai Xiaochun’s feelings, that wasn’t really the case. Furthermore, Marquis Zi Lin’s hatred of Bai Xiaochun only continued to deepen.

As for the demigods in the other prefectures, they joined with their compatriot in hating him. It was something that couldn't be changed easily.

Bai Xiaochun was aware of all of this, and although he wasn’t too happy about it, he didn’t feel that it was appropriate to do anything. As far as he was concerned, he was the type of person who did monumental things. How could he possibly lower himself to the point of quibbling over minor grudges?

“Hmph. Back when I was a government official in the Wildlands, there were some people who called me the Venomous Magistrate!” Flicking his sleeve proudly, he ignored the matter and went back into his private chamber to continue his cultivation.

After a few days of tension due to the matter of that one northern prefecture, the people in the second immortal domain seemed to accept the matter, and things calmed down.

One afternoon as Bai Xiaochun was meditating in his private chamber, his transmission jade slip vibrated. After taking it out and scanning it with divine sense, his face lit up. Hurrying out of the chamber, he headed to the main entrance of his mansion, where he saw someone familiar, standing there tall and straight. It was the Giant Ghost King!

“Giant Ghost, old pal!” Bai Xiaochun said, laughing heartily. He quickly rushed over and embraced him. He had sent a message to the Giant Ghost King as soon as he arrived in the capital city, and although the Giant Ghost King had been very happy to hear from him, he had replied that he was unable to come visit. The prefecture he presided over was quite some distance away, and considering his responsibilities there, it wasn’t an easy thing to travel. Afterward, Bai Xiaochun had devoted himself to practicing cultivation with his command medallion, and hadn’t paid much attention to the passage of time.

He was obviously very pleased to see the Giant Ghost King, but the Giant Ghost King didn’t seem to respond the same way. After a long moment of hesitation, he forced a smile onto his face. Surprisingly, he didn’t correct Bai Xiaochun’s form of address. After all, in the past, he would often glare at Bai Xiaochun when he called him ‘old pal’, and then remind him that he was his father-in-law.

Bai Xiaochun quickly picked up on the awkwardness, but didn’t say anything. Grabbing the Giant Ghost King by the arm, he dragged him into the main hall, where the two of them sat down and were served some wonderful alcohol and fruit by the servants. After shooing the servants away, Bai Xiaochun raised his cup to the Giant Ghost King and said, “Father-in-law, allow your humble son-in-law to offer a toast. To your health!”

Hearing Bai Xiaochun address him in this way softened the Giant Ghost King’s heart to some degree. After offering some good-natured cursing, he accepted, and they drank together.

And thus they continued to drink and recall old times. At one point, they began to talk about the little village back in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty where they had reunited, and that one particular widow. Laughing, the Giant Ghost King went on to point out how, after being assigned a prefecture to manage, he was almost like an emperor himself. They drank and chatted some more, until eventually the Giant Ghost King thumped himself on the chest and said, “Let me tell you, Bai Xiaochun. Over in Godsifter Prefecture, your father-in-law is the top dog. All of the beautiful women have fallen in love with me!”

Bai Xiaochun rolled his eyes a bit, as if he didn’t believe the Giant Ghost King. However, he didn’t say anything, and just took a drink. The Giant Ghost King was not happy at this, and went on to angrily describe everything he had done in Godsifter Prefecture in very exaggerated and melodramatic fashion.

Bai Xiaochun tossed in the occasional sarcastic remark, provoking quite a few scolding taunts in return. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun began to tell his stories about Saint-Emperor City, starting with his fishing exploits, then moving on to the lotus seeds and then the seed pods. Finally, he finished with the lotus roots….

Although the Giant Ghost King had heard the stories from afar, to hear them right out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth caused him to slap the table in amazement on numerous occasions. More than ever, he was convinced that it didn't matter where Bai Xiaochun ended up, he always became a calamitous god of calamity….

They drank deep into the night, at which point they had both gone through most of their good stories. During the course of the conversation, it had become obvious to Bai Xiaochun that the Giant Ghost King wasn’t in good shape. It was almost as if he had suffered some great blow of some sort. Lowering his voice, he quietly said, “My dear father-in-law. Why don’t you tell me what’s going on? Is someone bullying you?”

The Giant Ghost King didn’t respond at first. He lifted his alcohol jug and swished it around to see how much was left, then downed it all. Finally, he took a deep breath and, his eyes bloodshot, viciously slapped his hand down onto the table.

“Complete and utter bullying!

“If Celestial Aged Spirit wants to imprison all of the Heavenspan cultivators he finds, so be it. I’m no match for him in a fight anyway.

“If he wants to completely ignore Godsifter Prefecture, so be it!

“He’s basically hinted that I'm supposed to be isolated from the other prefectures. And every time I'm summoned for official audiences, he always berates me left and right. Fine, so be it!

“But that bastard has gone too far this time!

“That moron Marquis Zi Lin lost the northernmost prefecture, and instead of getting punished for it, he was sent over to my Godsifter Prefecture. Fine. So be it!

“But fudge! That Celestial Aged Spirit went and appointed Marquis Zi Lin as the preceptor of Godsifter Prefecture! What the hell? What gives him the right to demote me from preceptor and force me to be Marquis Zi Lin’s assistant?!

“I put my heart and soul into running Godsifter Prefecture. I was going to make it the foundation of the new Heavenspan Realm! But now all that work is for nothing....” The Giant Ghost King chuckled bitterly, his hands clenching into fists as he told the story. Originally, he hadn’t planned to tell Bai Xiaochun the news, but now that Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, he had a very strong foundation. Furthermore, in this immortal domain, he had as much authority as Celestial Aged Spirit.

Bai Xiaochun would eventually hear about the matter, and the Giant Ghost King didn’t want that to cause more problems. However, after being prompted by Bai Xiaochun, the Giant Ghost King couldn't keep his bitterness locked inside.

After the Giant Ghost King finished speaking, Bai Xiaochun stood there, motionless. Not even his cup of alcohol moved an inch. However, his eyes began to shine so brightly that they seemed to catch on fire.

Startled, the Giant Ghost King said, “Hey, don't do anything rash, Xiaochun.”

He already regretted telling Bai Xiaochun the truth.

Bai Xiaochun shook his head, then turned to look in the direction of Celestial Aged Spirit's residence. Gradually, the fire in his eyes turned into an extremely grim expression.

“If I don't do something about this, father-in-law, then you can only imagine what will happen for the people of Heavenspan in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Things will only get worse and worse.

“This is bullying, plain and in the open. How could I possibly turn a deaf ear to it?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1104 awe-chapter-1105

When the Giant Ghost King saw the look in Bai Xiaochun's eyes, he suddenly got a bad feeling. Then he thought back to some of the things Bai Xiaochun had done in the past, and his heart began to pound. He definitely regretted telling him the truth.

"Xiaochun, don't do anything rash! Even without Godsifter Prefecture, we still have options. I got my position from the Saint-Emperor himself! There's no way that this Celestial Aged Spirit will push things too far! He'll surely give me some compensation…."

Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, slowly shaking his head.

The Giant Ghost King anxiously moved to block his path. "Xiaochun, even if you do something, we need to think of the long-term plan. Killing Celestial Aged Spirit won't solve anything."

At this point, a strange expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun's face.

"I never said anything about killing Celestial Aged Spirit," he said. "That bastard works in underhanded ways, so I'm going to go embarrass him a bit, that's all. Listen, old pal, you don't need to worry about anything at all. Just rest up a bit while I head out." With that, he sidestepped the Giant Ghost King and left. The Giant Ghost King couldn't quite envision what Bai Xiaochun planned to do, and before he could decide whether or not to try to continue to persuade him to stop, he was gone.

The Giant Ghost King stood there alone in the main hall, sighing. Finally, he stamped his foot. In the end, his cultivation base was too low to catch up to Bai Xiaochun, so therefore, he sat back down, grabbed an alcohol jug, and kept drinking.

Things had been so wonderful in Godsifter Prefecture at the beginning, but now, all of that was gone. Even his ambition had taken a significant blow because of what had happened. It affected him so badly that Bai Xiaochun was able to tell that something was wrong just by looking at him.

--

By now, Bai Xiaochun was far from the capital city, speeding northward!

Considering that he was a celestial, and that he was pushing all-out, there was nothing that could match him in terms of speed. Although the northern prefectures weren’t very close, they also couldn’t be considered to be very far away. Dawn hadn’t even come by the time Bai Xiaochun caught sight of the northern part of this immortal domain.

It was an icy and snowy place, incredibly cold. Snowflakes filled the air, and a bleak wind whimpered in the night air…. After arriving, Bai Xiaochun scanned the area with divine sense, and then locked onto one specific area.

In one particular city, in a seemingly ordinary immortal’s cave, Gongsun Wan’er sat cross-legged in meditation. As the celestial in charge of this northern part of the second immortal domain, she didn’t actually need to be present in the north all the time. But after returning to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty from being kidnapped, the Vile-Emperor had realized that she was slightly different than the old Ghostmother, and had become slightly suspicious of her.

In order to prove herself, and to solidify her position within the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, she had come here and taken over the fifth prefecture to prove her loyalty.

Even as she sat there in meditation, her heart stirred, and her phoenix-like eyes opened. She was inherently beautiful, an effect that was even more pronounced as she looked coldly out of the corner of her eye at the entrance to her immortal's cave. For some reason, despite her beauty, she seemed profoundly icy and cold.

Before long, Bai Xiaochun’s voice could be heard outside.

His only company as he stood outside of her immortal's cave was the gently falling snowflakes. As he looked at the entrance, he cleared his throat, not sure of what to say that would be completely appropriate. After all, he had come to ask for help. Therefore, he decided to try to play on their somewhat close relationship.

“Wan'er, you know it’s me. Why don’t you open the door?”

When she heard his words, she smiled. Although she was inclined to ignore him, she finally waved her hand, causing the entrance to swing open.

He hurried in to find Gongsun Wan’er smiling at him. None of the coldness from before was present, although her eyes were as mysterious as always.

“What are you doing here so late, sweetie?” she said, somewhat flirtatiously. “Don’t tell me you want to spend the night with me?” Eyes flickering with a mysterious light, she gently licked her lips.

“You’d let me spend the night with you?” Bai Xiaochun answered, his heart starting to pound. The truth was that if he didn’t need Gongsun Wan’er’s help, he would never have come to see her.

Before he could say anything else though, his expression flickered, and he backed up. At the same time, Gongsun Wan’er chuckled.

“You’re a celestial now, sweetie. I'm very interested to see if you qualify to spend the night with me.” She suddenly blurred into motion, appearing in the spot where he had just stood, her right hand flashing with an incantation gesture. A whooshing sound then rang out as the air began to distort around her, tugging the light toward her to form a vortex.

“What are you doing?” Bai Xiaochun blurted. “I'm not spending the night with you!”

However, Gongsun Wan’er didn’t even respond. Flashing a radiant smile, she closed in on him again.

“Are you crazy, Gongsun Wan’er?! I saved your life!” Heart pounding, he dodged out of the way again, only to find her coming around for another shot. At this point, he was starting to get angry.

“You psycho! We’ve known each other for a long time, have you forgotten? I don’t have any ill intentions! I saved your life! And I'm here to ask for your help!” Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes glittered in response to his words. However, having discovered that he continued to dodge her, she increased her speed, becoming like a shooting star that headed toward him, her right hand extended like a claw toward his forehead!

Now truly angry, Bai Xiaochun stopped evading. Performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, he imbued it with the power of his Sutra of Former Reincarnation, then struck out at her.

A boom rang out as Gongsun Wan’er was struck. She yelped in shock as a host of magical symbols appeared around her, which were none other than her memories. As they rotated, it felt to her like she was being struck by lightning.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in any better shape. Her meteor-like blow seemingly stabbed through him, creating something like an invisible black hole. Instantly, he was surrounded by streams of death energy that Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense revealed to be innumerable evil ghosts!

“Dammit, you know I'm afraid of ghosts! I can’t believe you’re trying to scare me!” However, because of how close Gongsun Wan’er was to him, and how she was bound in place by all the magical symbols, he quickly pulled his hand back and then slapped her on her attractive rear end….

A loud smacking sound rang out, and Gongsun Wan’er’s expression distorted. As a result, the evil ghosts stopped in place. Meanwhile, true killing intent appeared in Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes. Seeing that his strategy had been effective, Bai Xiaochun pulled his hand back again to deliver another blow.

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Xiaochun?!?!” she said furiously. However, how could Bai Xiaochun not take advantage of the fact that she was completely immobilized by his Sutra of Former Reincarnation? Therefore, he let swing another slap, and another, and another…. After spanking her ten times, Gongsun Wan’er’s anger suddenly vanished, to be replaced by a somewhat dazed expression.

That dazed look struck fear into Bai Xiaochun’s heart. However, as soon as he stopped spanking her, the killing intent appeared in her eyes again, so he quickly struck her rear end again.

And thus, she calmed down again. Soon, the dazed look turned into complete blankness, and she was even panting a bit. At that point, Bai Xiaochun was truly struck with fear.

“Wan'er, can you do me a favor? Tomorrow, find an opportunity to publicly announce that the reason you took over this prefecture is that the demigod preceptor Marquis Zi Lin has been secretly working for your Smile-Emperor Dynasty.”

“Forget it!” she said, the blank look in her eyes fading a bit. Feeling very anxious, Bai Xiaochun hardened his heart and spanked her another dozen or so times. By this point, she was starting to go a bit limp. In fact, without Bai Xiaochun holding her up, she would have just sagged down to the ground.

Heart racing, Bai Xiaochun growled, “Agree? Or not?!”

Panting for breath, Gongsun Wan’er gritted her teeth and refused to speak. After spanking her some more, her eyes went almost completely blank. Finally, she hissed, “Fine, I agree… now get the hell out of here!!”

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, this interaction with Gongsun Wan’er had been bizarre to the extreme. After finally getting her to agree, he quickly left her immortal's cave, feeling slightly guilty, but at the same time, almost in a bit of a daze.

“I can’t believe Gongsun Wan’er is so resilient….” he muttered to himself, blinking a few times. For some reason, there was some sort of vile fire burning in his heart now, something he couldn’t get rid of.

“Vixen! She just seduced me, didn’t she!?” In the end, he could only sigh at how outstanding he was. Sometimes, he frightened even himself.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1105 awe-chapter-1106

By the time Bai Xiaochun returned to the capital city, it was daytime. The Giant Ghost King hadn’t slept the entire night. He'd sat there drinking, occasionally looking up at the sky, and fretting over what Bai Xiaochun was doing. He couldn’t stop worrying that he would do something impulsive and cause some sort of disaster.

The Giant Ghost King detected Bai Xiaochun’s arrival, and hurried out to meet him. Grabbing him by the shoulders, he said, “You….”

Shrugging the Giant Ghost King off, Bai Xiaochun pulled out a jug of alcohol, took a drink, and then proudly said. “Calm down, old pal. Just wait a bit for the fireworks to start. When Bai Xiaochun makes a move, he never comes up short. Giant Ghost, old pal, you’ll have your position back within seven days!”

The Giant Ghost King was a bit taken aback by how confident Bai Xiaochun seemed. But then he thought back to all the things Bai Xiaochun had done in the Wildlands, and didn’t feel any more confident. In fact, he felt even more unsettled.

“You… you killed Marquis Zi Lin?” he asked.

“Are you kidding me?!” Bai Xiaochun said with a glare, irritated at how much the Giant Ghost King was underestimating him. “I just smeared some muck on his face that he’ll never be able to wash off.”

Bai Xiaochun’s plan was outrageous and seemingly beyond belief, and that thought made him chuckle. After all, Celestial Aged Spirit was being a real nasty fellow, and as a result, Bai Xiaochun didn’t even want to come up with some perfectly executed scheme. He just wanted to do a bit of muckraking.

The Giant Ghost King still had no idea what was going on, and for the life of him couldn’t figure out what Bai Xiaochun was up to. However, Bai Xiaochun was clearly not going to give him any details. Therefore, the Giant Ghost King simply had to hope that Bai Xiaochun’s self-confidence was warranted. Perhaps the clouds really would part soon to reveal the blue sky beyond.

Over the course of the following days, the Giant Ghost King stayed in Bai Xiaochun’s mansion, completely wrapped up in anxiety.

In contrast, Bai Xiaochun was edgy with excitement to see what would happen.

On the afternoon of the third day, in the north of the second immortal domain, the door of Gongsun Wan’er’s immortal's cave opened.

Her expression was the same as ever as she calmly walked out into the open. As a celestial, any public appearance she made would attract quite a bit of attention.

The first thing she did was issue orders summoning all of the preceptors and devas under her command for a meeting.

All of the demigods in the five prefectures she commanded jumped to follow her orders. Quickly abandoning whatever other tasks were at hand, they took their devas with them to the meeting.

Gongsun Wan’er sat in a throne in the position of honor, her eyes closed, her hands resting on the arms of the throne. She was tapping the throne with her index finger, creating a thumping sound that filled the area, causing great pressure to weigh down on her gathered subordinates. None of them even dared to breathe, and just waited there respectfully.

Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, during which time the pressure mounted. Finally, she opened her eyes.

“Thank you all for coming,” she said. “As you know, it was literally overnight that I took over this final northern prefecture in the second immortal domain!”

Although she spoke slowly and calmly, the truth was that inside, she felt extremely uncomfortable. The incense stick’s worth of time just now had been spent struggling internally, and it was almost an accident that she had begun speaking.

Her subordinates were immediately taken aback by her words, and were unsure of their implications. A few exchanged awkward glances, but none dared to speak. They just kept their heads bowed and waited for more to come.

Bracing herself, Gongsun Wan’er went on. “The only reason it went so smoothly is that… the preceptor previously in charge of this prefecture, Marquis Zi Lin of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, is secretly loyal to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. I will definitely report the matter to the Vile-Emperor… so that he gets the credit.”

Even she found these words to be particularly bizarre, but there was nothing else she could do. Rising to her feet, she left the main hall.

Silence reigned. The demigods and devas all looked around with wide eyes, their jaws hanging open. They had assumed that Ghostmother would summon them to a meeting for some important reason, and simply couldn’t imagine why she would call them here just to say this….

A long moment passed before everyone recovered enough to start talking. Many a strange expression could be seen on their faces.

“Did Marquis Zi Lin… offend the exalted Celestial?”

“That has to be it! And he must have offended her badly!”

“But considering she's a celestial, couldn’t she just directly kill a trifling figure like Marquis Zi Lin? Why the intrigue…?”

“Um… besides, isn’t accusing him publicly too obvious? Who would possibly believe it?”

The demigods and devas alike were all stunned, and no matter how they considered the situation, they could only come to the conclusion… that Ghostmother hated Marquis Zi Lin for some reason.

However, after talking the matter over, they all agreed that Ghostmother had clearly called them to this meeting because she wanted their help in spreading the information.

They didn’t need to worry about what happened afterward, they just needed to spread the news as quickly as possible.

Having come to this agreement, they quickly left and headed back to their respective prefectures, where they worked very hard to make sure the news traveled quickly.

Before long, all of the northern prefectures were abuzz with the rumor that Marquis Zi Lin was loyal to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Of course, the north was only a subsection of the second immortal domain. And of course, both dynasties had spies in the other. So it only took about four hours for the news to reach the southern prefectures, including the capital city.

It immediately caused quite a stir, and in fact, everyone who heard it was completely stunned.

Demigods, devas, Nascent Soul experts, and Core Formation cultivators alike were all completely taken aback.

The truth was that… this rumor seemed completely fabricated! It was ridiculous!

“Ghostmother called all of her preceptors together to tell them that? That’s… that’s crazy….”

“Marquis Zi Lin helped her take over the final northern prefecture? That’s total nonsense! Considering she's a celestial, who could possibly stand against her?”

“Celestial Ghostmother wants Marquis Zi Lin to get credit for taking over that prefecture? It’s not like Marquis Zi Lin is an idiot! If he wanted to turn traitor, he could have just gone to the other side. Why would he stay in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty?”

Word spread quickly through the southern part of the second immortal domain. It wasn’t that everybody disbelieved it. There were a few naive people here and there who thought it was true.

But they were in the minority. Most just turned up their noses disdainfully and assumed it was a smear tactic by

Ghostmother!

And unfortunately, this smear tactic didn’t have any weight at all. It was so ridiculously fake that it made everyone furious….

However, the incredibly fake nature of the news ensured that some intelligent people realized that there must be more to the story. And at that point, suspicions began to build.

Of course, the person who was most angered was the new preceptor of Godsifter Prefecture, Marquis Zi Lin himself. When he heard the news, his jaw dropped, and he wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. At first, he simply believed himself to have been wrongly accused, but then he realized that someone might be out to hurt him specifically.

Whoever it was, that person somehow got Celestial Ghostmother to make false charges. And whoever that person was, he would likely have realized that the ridiculous smear tactic wouldn’t work. And yet, he had done it anyway…. The whole situation made Marquis Zi Lin completely furious.

And of course, he already had his suspicions about who was behind it. Eyes flickering, he murmured, “Don’t tell me it was that King Heavenspan?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1106 awe-chapter-1107

As word spread through the capital city, more and more slanderous talk about Marquis Zi Lin could be heard.

When the Giant Ghost King finally caught wind of it all, his jaw dropped. Of course, he immediately assumed that Bai Xiaochun was responsible, and sighed at how useless it all seemed.

“Of course nobody would believe that,” the Giant Ghost King thought. Feeling a headache coming on, he headed over to ask Bai Xiaochun about it. However, as soon as he arrived, he saw Bai Xiaochun walking out of his private chamber, clad in a violet robe adorned with dragons. He wore a kingly crown, and fully radiated the aura of a celestial.

There was something profoundly magnificent about him that caused the Giant Ghost King’s breath to catch in his throat. For some reason, this version of Bai Xiaochun seemed completely different from anything he had seen before.

He seemed to radiate an aura that placed him above all other living beings. Furthermore, Willpower swirled in his eyes. It was as if everything else in existence were mere bugs compared to him. He stood on the peak of the highest mountain, wielding powers that could crush everything else in existence!

The Giant Ghost King was so profoundly shocked that all of the words he had been about to say completely escaped him. He simply stood there looking at this completely different Bai Xiaochun.

The clothing he wore was the Daoist robe of a celestial, which had been bestowed upon him by the Saint-Emperor after he became a celestial. In the entire Saint-Emperor Dynasty, only five people qualified to wear such clothing. However, they would normally only wear this specific Daoist robe every ten years, during special rites held in Saint-Emperor City.

The crown he wore was a similar item.

Upon donning this precious treasure of an outfit, Bai Xiaochun's energy transformed, making him very different from before.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the Giant Ghost King's reaction, he felt very proud of himself, and nodded grandly.

"Come with me," he said. With that, he headed out of his mansion.

Hardly able to breathe, the Giant Ghost King hurried after him. He had an inkling of what Bai Xiaochun planned to do, and although he still wasn't completely confident, Bai Xiaochun's current appearance… somehow made the Giant Ghost King think back to the first time he had ever seen the Arch-Emperor back in the Wildlands.

Back before the Arch-Emperor had been supplanted by the Grand Heavenmaster, he was the overlord of all the Wildlands, and his gaze could cause all creation to either tremble, or go completely still.

As the Giant Ghost King followed along, his eyes slowly began to shine. He even subconsciously bowed his head the way a government official would in the presence of an emperor.

As Bai Xiaochun walked along, his servants noticed him, and were struck to the core. Many of them forgot to breathe, and dropped to their knees to kowtow.

As he emerged from his mansion onto the street, his magnificence did not decline in the least. In fact, it grew more prominent as he walked… toward Celestial Aged Spirit's mansion.

Along the way, everyone who saw him was deeply shocked. Regardless of the level of their cultivation base, they gasped and bowed in greeting.

"Greetings, Celestial!"

"Greetings, Celestial!!"

"Greetings, Celestial!!!"

At first, the greetings were called out here and there, but eventually, a chorus filled the air. It wasn't necessarily that they wished to greet him this way, but rather, it was an instinct born from the pressure that weighed down on them!

Thankfully, his mansion wasn't very far from Celestial Aged Spirit's mansion, and even as his energy reached its peak, he arrived.

Ignoring the stunned devas who stood guard out front, Bai Xiaochun entered. Still shaken, the Giant Ghost King hurried along behind him. The guards' job was to stop people from entering, but at the moment, Bai Xiaochun's surging energy erased any thoughts in their minds of attempting to do such a thing.

And thus, he strolled casually into Celestial Aged Spirit's residence. Upon entering, he found that about a dozen or so people were engaged in a discussion in the main hall, Marquis Zi Lin included. One of them was intentionally masking their aura, but to Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, they stuck out like a torch on a moonless night.

Even as Bai Xiaochun determined who Celestial Aged Spirit was, that very same beleaguered celestial looked up. As he did, the doors to the main hall suddenly slammed open, attracting the attention of the demigods inside, as well as Marquis Zi Lin. All of them looked around, and what they saw struck them like bolts of lightning. Standing there at the entrance of the hall was Bai Xiaochun, clad in his celestial’s Daoist robe, wearing a kingly crown, and looking like a divine being.

Marquis Zi Lin reacted the same; he was completely stunned.

Ignoring all of the demigods, Bai Xiaochun focused his gaze on the old man who held the seat of honor!

He wore a violet robe, not the special Daoist robe of a celestial, but spectacular nonetheless. He radiated the aura of a celestial, and as he sat there, it was questionable whether he was corporeal or illusory. Anyone who looked at him for more than a moment would be convinced they were looking at a god!

The demigods all stood there, their minds reeling. None of them would ever have guessed that Bai Xiaochun himself would come here, nor that he would do so in a celestial’s Daoist robe. As of this moment, he looked exactly like the king that the Saint-Emperor had appointed him to be.

Even more difficult for them to take was the pressure that was building up between Bai Xiaochun and Celestial Aged Spirit. It left them wanting to scream.

Celestial Aged Spirit’s eyes narrowed as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, but other than that, his expression didn’t change. Despite all the time that had passed, this was their first time meeting in person.

“My apologies for coming late to this meeting,” Bai Xiaochun said calmly, keeping eye contact with Celestial Aged Spirit. Taking a few steps inside, he waved his hand, causing countless stones to suddenly materialize and form together into a huge throne!

Then he flicked his sleeve, sat down, and then turned his gaze back to Celestial Aged Spirit.

Now, there were thrones on either side of the hall, both of equal height and equal distance from the center!

“By all means, carry on,” Bai Xiaochun said coolly. “I'm just fulfilling my obligations to the Saint-Emperor. No need to pay attention to me.”

Everyone else in the hall felt like a catastrophic disaster was about to occur. None of them dared to talk, or even breathe. As for Marquis Zi Lin, when he saw the Giant Ghost King standing behind Bai Xiaochun and off to the side, he could only hope that Celestial Aged Spirit would be able to strike fear into Bai Xiaochun’s heart.

Celestial Aged Spirit looked coldly at Bai Xiaochun for a moment, and then suddenly laughed, a cold laughter filled with scorn. Then he looked away from Bai Xiaochun and said two words.

“Carry on!”

The demigods hesitated for a moment, but considering what Celestial Aged Spirit had just said, they had to brace themselves and continue their discussion.

“Exalted one, I’ve already begun to investigate the matter regarding Marquis Zi Lin. It’s definitely slander!”

“That’s right. It’s a tactic the Vile-Emperor Dynasty uses a lot. If we cast suspicion on Marquis Zi Lin, then we’ll be playing right into the Vile-Emperor Dynasty’s hands!”

“Your humble servant requests that we make an official proclamation in the second immortal domain, declaring Marquis Zi Lin’s innocence!”

After everyone had their say, Celestial Aged Spirit’s lips curled up into a cold smile.

“Request granted!” he said. Then he rose to leave.

However, it was at this point that Bai Xiaochun looked up and said, “Hold on!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1107 awe-chapter-1108

“This is very inappropriate, Fellow Daoist Aged Spirit!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice echoing back and forth in the enormous main hall. “We must act on evidence! Marquis Zi Lin has been slandered, and we need proof of who did it! I find it hard to believe that the mighty Celestial Ghostmother of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty would slander a trifling demigod!

“Unless… our Marquis Zi Lin managed to offend Celestial Ghostmother. But if he did, then it wouldn’t matter if he felt it was safe in Godsifter Prefecture. Ghostmother could easily slip in without anyone realizing it and just kill him!”

Bai Xiaochun left the demigods in the hall deeply shaken, including Marquis Zi Lin. As for Celestial Aged Spirit, he simply narrowed his eyes and allowed Bai Xiaochun to speak. He knew that Bai Xiaochun had been appointed to serve in the second immortal domain by the Saint-Emperor himself, and possessed the same official authority as himself.

At the moment, he didn’t regret demoting the Giant Ghost King to provoke Bai Xiaochun. In his opinion, the second immortal domain should only have one voice of authority, and in fact, the Saint-Emperor himself had hinted that he also felt the same. Regardless, Celestial Aged Spirit knew that he had to strike a blow to Bai Xiaochun’s credibility and reputation.

It didn’t matter that Bai Xiaochun had been keeping a low profile, and spending all his time practicing cultivation. To Celestial Aged Spirit, that wasn't enough. He wanted to actually make a move, and therefore, he stripped the Giant Ghost King of his title of preceptor. When Bai Xiaochun was then powerless to do anything about it, it would ensure that everyone in the second immortal domain knew that Celestial Aged Spirit was the only true authority.

However, he had to admit that in some ways, he had underestimated this King Heavenspan. That was something that he had begun to realize as soon as the rumors about Marquis Zi Lin reached his ears.

“Don’t you see how suspicious this all is!?” Bai Xiaochun said, forcefully slapping his hand down onto the arm of his throne. The demigods in the hall all struggled to breathe. Although Bai Xiaochun’s words weren’t particularly incisive, considering his status and the level of his cultivation base, they were still like deadly weapons that pierced all the way to the souls of the demigods.

“The ten of you oversee the capital city. Are you telling me you really can’t see how odd this all is? Just think for a moment!

“It’s a good thing I’m here. I can only imagine how things would be with only the ten of you around. Is this really how you usually handle affairs? Fine, let me ask the ten of you a question.... You say that Marquis Zi Lin hasn’t betrayed our country, but… would you stake your life on it?!” He virtually yelled his final sentence, causing something like a tempest to whip through the main hall. The ten demigods’ faces went pale in response, and they shivered and subconsciously stepped back a bit.

None of the demigods dared to act as a guarantor for Marquis Zi Lin. However, Marquis Zi Lin was under enough pressure as it was, so therefore, he braced himself, clasped hands, and said, “Celestial Bai, I'm innocent! Someone is slandering me!”

Inwardly, though, he was cursing. He might have had his doubts before, but as of this moment, he was convinced that Bai Xiaochun was the one responsible for the slander. He didn’t dare to say it, of course. Nor did anyone else in the hall, although they all had come to the same conclusion…. Everyone was thinking the same thing, but saying it aloud was a different story.

A demigod could not openly criticize a celestial, no matter the circumstances. And therefore… this interchange was doomed to be one-sided.

“I'm not qualified to pronounce your innocence," Bai Xiaochun continued. "We need proof. Perhaps in other situations we could let the matter slide, but this is different…. This is a matter of treason! A matter of losing an entire prefecture! Without evidence to rely on to judge the matter, we will have to let His Majesty the Saint-Emperor make the final judgement!” He didn’t even look at Marquis Zi Lin when he spoke; he stared straight at Celestial Aged Spirit.

Marquis Zi Lin was about ready to explode, but barely managed to keep control.

“The loss of that prefecture has nothing to do with me!” he said. “When a mighty celestial like Ghostmother makes a move, a demigod like me can’t do a thing about it!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes widened into a glare. “Shut up! It would have been better to keep your mouth shut. But now that you mention it, I'm curious why Celestial Ghostmother didn’t actually kill you! And not only did she not kill you, she just let you go!? You say you didn’t betray our nation. Fine. Where’s the evidence?!”

Marquis Zi Lin was truly about to go mad. He was trembling where he stood, blue veins bulging out on his face. He could sense the killing intent in Bai Xiaochun, and also realized that the other demigods seemed to be edging away from him. He opened his mouth to say something, but that was when Celestial Aged Spirit finally intervened.

“Enough!” Frowning, Celestial Aged Spirit looked at Bai Xiaochun with narrowed eyes. “I’ll be Marquis Zi Lin’s guarantor,” he said coldly. “Satisfied, King Heavenspan?”

Marquis Zi Lin couldn’t have been more excited, and immediately decided that he would devote his life to serving Celestial Aged Spirit!

“No, it’s not okay!” Bai Xiaochun replied. Although he hadn’t anticipated that Celestial Aged Spirit would do this, he was quick to make adjustments to his plan. Thanks to all of his experiences in recent years, he was quickly able to change the speech he had planned earlier.

Rising to his feet, he began to speak in a thunderous voice that seemed laced with pain and bitterness.

“I'm not satisfied with your attitude, Celestial Aged Spirit!

“I’m not satisfied that the Saint-Emperor Dynasty has apparently become a place where evidence doesn’t count for anything, and a simple guarantee can resolve all issues!

“I'm not satisfied that your trust is worth more than the safety of the countless citizens of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!!”

His words were spoken with courage and conviction. For most of the demigods present, it was as if a completely different Bai Xiaochun had come, and they were visibly shocked.

Celestial Aged Spirit’s eyes were as cold as ice as he stared at Bai Xiaochun. He opened his mouth to respond, but there was no way Bai Xiaochun would give him that opportunity. Flicking his sleeve, he continued with his speech.

“Now that this matter has come to light, it doesn’t matter whether or not you guarantee that Marquis Zi Lin is innocent. The door has been opened for many criticisms to be laid forth. For one thing, isn't it very suspicious that Ghostmother would say what she did, and that such a commotion would result?!

“You’re the guarantor, Celestial Aged Spirit? Very well. In that case, I won’t soulsearch Marquis Zi Lin. But until all of the investigations have been carried out, we need to prevent anything unexpected from happening. Therefore, to live up to the responsibilities assigned to me by the Saint-Emperor, and also to protect the safety of the innumerable citizens of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, I hereby order that Marquis Zi Lin be imprisoned immediately! Only after the investigations are complete and the truth comes to light can he be released!”

At this point, the gathered demigods realized what was happening.

“So, it's because Marquis Zi Lin took Giant Ghost’s position as preceptor of Godsifter Prefecture…. This is Bai Xiaochun’s counter-strike!” The ten demigods all bowed their heads and averted their gazes, hoping to avoid being drawn into a conflict between two celestials. Although they were all loyal to Celestial Aged Spirit, they also needed to avoid offending Bai Xiaochun.

Earlier, when Bai Xiaochun was keeping a low profile, they might have had the guts to say something offensive. But now, they realized that he was truly a wolf in sheep's clothing. His methods were a bit crude and cruel, but they were effective. Furthermore, he apparently had the ability to convince Celestial Ghostmother to help him.

His counter-strike was a bit too obvious, and very lacking in finesse. It was almost as if he had just picked up a glob of dog excrement and smeared it across the face of his opponent.

A person who would resort to such cruel methods was frightening to even think about, and was the type that no one would intentionally provoke.

Marquis Zi Lin also realized what was happening, and as a result, his eyes were bloodshot with panic.

He knew that if he was imprisoned as Bai Xiaochun had ordered, than there was no way he would be able to clear his name easily. In fact, who knew what other things could happen on the outside that would make things worse for him? His intuition was telling him that if he was imprisoned, there was probably an eighty percent chance he would never again see the light of day.

"Exalted Celestial," he said shakily, "I'm being unjustly accused! Really!" Perhaps if Bai Xiaochun had handled things with finesse, he wouldn't be as terrified as he was. But seeing how effective his bald-faced smear tactics were made him fear that Bai Xiaochun would go to any lengths to achieve his goals.

As his terror mounted, he looked over at Celestial Aged Spirit. After all, it was Celestial Aged Spirit who had sent him to Godsifter Prefecture to begin with. He had initially been leery of going there, but Celestial Aged Spirit had given the orders, and he had had no choice but to abide by them.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1108 awe-chapter-1109

Celestial Aged Spirit looked at Bai Xiaochun wordlessly, and Bai Xiaochun said nothing further. Meanwhile, the pressure in the main hall built higher and higher, until it seemed like a windstorm raged therein.

The ten demigods were particularly uncomfortable, and as for Marquis Zi Lin, he was just about to start crying.

The only calm one was the Giant Ghost King. He almost couldn’t believe the show that Bai Xiaochun had put on. Now, the Marquis Zi Lin who had put him in such a bad position was as weak as a bug. Of course, this was the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and Marquis Zi Lin was backed by a celestial.

And yet, everything that Bai Xiaochun had said made sense, making it impossible for Celestial Aged Spirit to offer a retort. Moments ticked by, and the Giant Ghost King was starting to feel very pleased with how things were going. However, that was when Celestial Aged Spirit’s vision shifted from Bai Xiaochun to him!

“Very well, lock him up. Master Dustcity, you shall serve as the preceptor of Godsifter Prefecture!” As soon as the words left his mouth, one of the demigods in the hall stepped forward, a fat man who was currently trembling in fear. Inwardly, he was grumbling about being dragged into the affair, and was even considering trying to refuse somehow…. But considering how livid Celestial Aged Spirit looked at the moment, he simply clasped hands and offered a thankful affirmation.

Despite feeling bad for Master Dustcity, the other demigods edged away from him.

Marquis Zi Lin looked like all the energy had drained out of him. His face was pale and his expression listless as he stood there trembling.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he frowned slightly. He had to admit that this Celestial Aged Spirit was not an easy opponent to deal with. Not only did he not bicker about locking up Marquis Zi Lin, but instead focused on the Giant Ghost King. Clearly, he had no intention of allowing the Giant Ghost King to have the title of preceptor ever again. Presumably, he would eventually make some other move against him in the future.

“Wily old fox!” Bai Xiaochun thought, snorting inwardly.

“Locking up Marquis Zi Lin isn’t sufficient,” he said loudly. “This matter pertains to the loss of a prefecture, to the endangerment of all of the citizens in the nation, as well as the trust of His Majesty the Saint-Emperor. Therefore, I'm afraid I must ask some further questions.

“If Marquis Zi Lin has indeed been falsely accused, I would be happy to personally clear his name. But if he is truly a traitor, then I refuse to believe that he was acting alone. He would obviously have some accomplices backing him up!

“His Majesty the Saint-Emperor stationed me here in the second immortal domain, and there is no more loyal official here than me!” With that, he flicked his sleeve and glared at Celestial Aged Spirit much like a tiger eyeing its prey.

When Marquis Zi Lin heard those words, he was suddenly paralyzed by despair.

The other demigods gasped inwardly. Naturally, all of them understood the hidden threat in Bai Xiaochun's words, and knew that they were all suddenly in danger. With Marquis Zi Lin in his clutches, he could easily drag anyone else into the situation in the name of justice. Trying to prove their innocence later wouldn't do much good. And who knew what sorts of things could happen after they were imprisoned.

In the end, Bai Xiaochun might suffer some negative repercussions if the truth came to light, but he was a celestial, and at worst would receive a minor punishment. All he would have to do was claim that he had misunderstood the situation, and the Saint-Emperor would likely praise him for his loyalty.

Bai Xiaochun had made his threat very clear. If Celestial Aged Spirit dared to do anything to the Giant Ghost King, then Bai Xiaochun would respond in kind. In fact, he might even make a move against Celestial Aged Spirit himself. Although it wouldn't result in any concrete harm, it would definitely be a big embarrassment.

It would also throw the entire second immortal domain into chaos. It was an alarming thought. After all, Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, so there was little they could do to him! And this wasn't his home, so he didn't care much about what happened overall!

By this point, Celestial Aged Spirit was quivering in rage, and there was even killing intent in his eyes. This new tactic was as crude and cruel as the way he had slandered Marquis Zi Lin. And yet, it was explosively effective, and profoundly threatening!

Celestial Aged Spirit would never even think of doing something like this. He was calculating and fastidious, and virtually epitomized the sanctimoniousness of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun's cruel, rude methods had caught him completely unprepared. They were also particularly effective.

After a long moment passed, Celestial Aged Spirit reigned in his killing intent. He closed his eyes momentarily, and when he opened them again, he looked completely calm.

“Preceptor Giant Ghost, you have done excellent work managing Godsifter Prefecture. Master Dustcity, are you absolutely set on going there?”

The demigod Master Dustcity was very excited. The truth was that he wasn't set on going to Godsifter Prefecture. In fact, he had no desire whatsoever to do so. Stepping forward, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Your humble servant can't even compare to Fellow Daoist Giant Ghost. Whether in terms of talents, virtues, cultivation base, governing ability, et cetera, I don't even come close to him. I am more than willing to forego the position of preceptor. In all of the second immortal domain, only Fellow Daoist Giant Ghost possibly qualifies to serve in Godsifter Prefecture.”

The other demigods quickly stepped forward and began to say similar things.

“Godsifter Prefecture simply cannot function without Fellow Daoist Giant Ghost there!”

“I truly hope that the two exalted Celestials present will agree that Fellow Daoist Giant Ghost is clearly the best option!”

“How wise and brilliant, oh exalted Celestial. Fellow Daoist Giant Ghost is a rare gem here in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and is obviously the best choice!”

After everyone spoke, Celestial Aged Spirit nodded his head.

“Let it be so!”

Finally, the Giant Ghost King had his position returned to him, although he didn’t take much pleasure in it. Having seen this confrontation with his own eyes, he knew that it meant Bai Xiaochun could no longer maintain a low profile in the second immortal domain.

Furthermore… there was likely more to come!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was shivering inwardly with apprehension. He would rather Celestial Aged Spirit fly into a rage. That would have been less nerve-wracking. Instead, he got very calm, which seemed far more sinister and foreboding.

But now that they had come to an agreement, it did no good to look back with regret. Looking around at the demigods, as well as Marquis Zi Lin, he smiled.

“After some thought, I've come to the realization that, considering all of the services Marquis Zi Lin has performed for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it seems silly to be so hard-hearted over such a small matter. Marquis Zi Lin, I for one believe that you were slandered!”

His words caused all of the demigods to breathe sighs of relief. All of a sudden, they realized that this King Heavenspan wasn’t impossible to work with after all. And he wasn’t the type to push matters to the bitter end.

Most excited of all was Marquis Zi Lin, who had been struck by one wave of misfortune after another this day. As of this point, he was furious with Celestial Aged Spirit, and although he had mixed feelings about Bai Xiaochun, mostly respected him.

Rising to his feet, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to Bai Xiaochun several times in a row.

Of course, Celestial Aged Spirit noticed all of this, and a grim look once again appeared in his eyes. As of this point, both he and Bai Xiaochun viewed each other as wily foxes.

Matters of face had just barely been handled properly in the interchange. However, both of them knew that they were now rivals, and that if the opportunity presented itself, a major conflict would result.

Finally, Celestial Aged Spirit turned and left. As for Bai Xiaochun, he wasn't somber like before. He smiled as he said a few words to the demigods, then took the Giant Ghost King with him back to his mansion.

Once inside, the Giant Ghost King let out a long sigh of relief. Bai Xiaochun had originally intended to ask him to stay for a few more days, but he was too anxious to get back to Godsifter Prefecture. After all, if he was gone for too long, who knew what problems might arise there?

Before leaving, the Giant Ghost King stepped forward and embraced Bai Xiaochun.

“Xiaochun, you’ve… you’ve really grown up.” With that he stepped back, threw his head back and laughed heartily. Then he became a beam of light that shot toward the capital city’s teleportation portal.

Bai Xiaochun watched him leave. For some reason, the Giant Ghost King seemed to be getting much older, causing Bai Xiaochun to sigh and think back to everything that had happened in Giant Ghost City.

Eventually, he headed back into his mansion, where he sat down cross-legged in his private chamber and pulled out the command medallion from the damaged fan. Even after studying it in much detail, he hadn’t found any other function to it than the spiritual energy it emitted.

“It seems like the spiritual energy is slowly running out. But what exactly does this thing have to do with that fan?” After thinking about it for a bit more, he went back to cultivation.

With the help of the command medallion, the immortal pills, and the spirit plants, his cultivation base had advanced significantly. He was now getting very close to the peak of the early Celestial Realm.

And much of that speed was because of the energy in the medallion!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1109 awe-chapter-1110

Days passed. The matter between Marquis Zi Lin and the Giant Ghost King didn't cause a huge controversy in the capital city. In fact, few people had even been aware that the Giant Ghost King had been stripped of his title and position.

The rumors about Marquis Zi Lin quickly died down. In accord with the approval of both Celestial Aged Spirit and Bai Xiaochun, all of the power and resources of the second immortal domain were employed to get rid of the rumors and any ill effects they had.

To people who weren’t in the know, the second immortal domain seemed very peaceful and quiet. However, the preceptors from the various prefectures, as well as the ten demigods stationed in the capital city, all knew that a storm was brewing.

At the center of that storm were Bai Xiaochun and Celestial Aged Spirit. They were like gods to everyone else, so the mere idea of them at odds with each other had people trembling in fear.

No one knew when the storm would hit. Perhaps it would be soon, or perhaps it would take some time. But they knew… that it would come sooner or later!

Pressure mounted, and everyone who was aware of the tension between the two celestials acted with extreme caution in everything, doing everything they could to avoid setting one of the celestials off.

As alarm built in the hearts of the people aware of the conflict, an old man in the capital city was paying close attention to everything.

He normally wore a nondescript green robe, and would sit at a table on the second floor of one of the taverns in the city. He would arrive in the morning, and would sit there sipping alcohol and staring off into the sky.

No one knew his name, but there was something tranquil about him that made it seem obvious his cultivation base was extraordinary.

Because of the gleam of intelligence that existed in his eyes, anyone who thought to probe him out and perhaps do him harm would give up on such thoughts immediately. After all, within his calm gaze, there was also something profoundly incisive.

There was something about him that surpassed ordinary cultivators. Clearly, he had once held a position of incredible power and authority. That was the only way he could possibly have the extraordinary air to him that he did.

He was none other than the Grand Heavenmaster!

He had originally been looking for the Giant Ghost King, but after arriving in Godsifter Prefecture, he found that there was a new preceptor. Thus, he had come to the capital city. Although he had not been there to personally witness Bai Xiaochun’s counter attack, he could pick up on the clues and hints. First there were the strange rumors. Then the Giant Ghost King’s position had been restored, and Marquis Zi Lin seemed to have fallen out of favor. From that, he could guess much of what had occurred.

Although he wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry at Bai Xiaochun’s methods, he had to sigh a bit. After all, Bai Xiaochun was a natural born trickster, and in that regard, was worthy of praise.

Although things seemed peaceful and quiet, after everything the Grand Heavenmaster had seen in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, how could he not tell that a storm was brewing? Therefore, he changed his plans. Instead of seeking out the Giant Ghost King, he took up residence in the capital city, both to keep an eye on Bai Xiaochun, and also to size up the city around him, which was the center of power in the second immortal domain.

On one particular afternoon as he sat there in the tavern, the Grand Heavenmaster put down his cup of alcohol, and his eyes began to glitter brightly.

“It’s just about time....” he murmured. With that, he left the tavern and headed toward Bai Xiaochun’s mansion.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t paying attention to the outside world. He was completely focused on the damaged fan’s command medallion. The energy within the medallion was slowly being emptied out, and as it was, a faint gravitational force was being revealed.

It wasn’t powerful enough to affect any physical objects around it, but Bai Xiaochun’s keen senses detected it. Shocked, he realized that the command medallion likely was an object that could be used to gain access to the fan.

It was in the midst of his study of the command medallion that he suddenly sensed a familiar aura outside of his mansion.

As soon as he detected it, his eyes snapped open.

“The Grand Heavenmaster?” There were a few people from the Heavenspan Realm who had left a deep impression on him. One was the aloof gravekeeper, and the other, the cruel, callous Daoist Heavenspan. And then there was the Grand Heavenmaster, who came in second only to Daoist Heavenspan when it came to ambition and ruthlessness.

He had turned the Arch-Emperor into a mere figurehead, and had even kept the four heavenly kings under control, despite the fact that they were so distanced from him physically.

In a time when the Wildlands’ true leader was weak, he managed to keep the place fully united. Of course, that only lasted until Daoist Heavenspan sent all four of his main armies against the Wildlands. Even then, they had fought back for years. Some of the Grand Heavenmaster’s success in all that had to do with the existence of the gravekeeper, but not much.

Any person like him, whether they were from the Heavenspan Realm or not, could be considered extraordinary even in the Eternal Immortal Domains. If he had thrown his lot in with the Saint-Emperor, he might not have ended up being as important as Bai Xiaochun, but would still have been shockingly valuable.

In fact, had he truly been willing to sell out, he could have caused major waves in either of the dynasties.

But now, here he was outside of Bai Xiaochun’s mansion. He was still in the peak of the Demigod Realm, but due to some good fortune he had come across in the Eternal Immortal Domains, when he concealed his aura, only a celestial who was actively probing him would be able to tell his level.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun put away the command medallion, vanished, and reappeared outside of his mansion!

The first thing he saw was the Grand Heavenmaster, standing there tall and straight in his green robe, his eyes glittering with wisdom and insight!

He looked like an ordinary old man, albeit somewhat older than before. As soon as Bai Xiaochun appeared in front of him, he smiled.

“Greetings, Celestial.” This was not at all how he had acted in the Wildlands, but it didn’t seem difficult at all for him to offer formal greetings to Bai Xiaochun in this way. The truth was that back in Arch-Emperor City, when Bai Xiaochun had become the Arch-Ancestor, the Grand Heavenmaster had immediately understood his own place in the grand scheme of things. Now here they were in the Eternal Immortal Domains, with Bai Xiaochun a celestial. And therefore, the Grand Heavenmaster knew exactly how he should treat him.

“Grand Heavenmaster!” Bai Xiaochun said, a smile of joy breaking out on his face.

The Grand Heavenmaster shook his head and sighed. “Oh, I wouldn’t dare go by my old form of address.... Just call me Situ.”

Bai Xiaochun laughed heartily. “Oh, that kind of stuff isn’t important. Come in, Grand Heavenmaster!”

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun really didn’t care much about forms of address. Grabbing the Grand Heavenmaster's arm, he led him into the mansion.

Along the way, a warm smile covered the Grand Heavenmaster’s face as he looked around. Eventually, they reached the luxurious and extravagant main hall. At this point, the Grand Heavenmaster couldn’t help but sigh again. Whether it was in terms of cultivation base or temperament, Bai Xiaochun had clearly changed a lot. The Grand Heavenmaster couldn’t help but think back to that cautious scoundrel of the past with all of his vicious plans. But now what he saw was a young man deserving of praise. In fact, he was the type of person that the Grand Heavenmaster was willing to forgo his own personal gain to assist.

Looking at Bai Xiaochun with his wise eyes, he slowly said, “Celestial, you currently have three major problems that I can help you solve!”

Moments ago, he had seemed like nothing more than an ordinary old man. But now, he suddenly seemed capable of doing anything! Anyone who saw him now would realize that he was absolutely an extraordinary individual!

“Please, tell me everything!” Bai Xiaochun said, eyes glittering expectantly.

“First. Your relationship with Celestial Aged Spirit is not particularly important, but you definitely need to establish a solid foundation in the second immortal domain!

“Second. The Eternal Immortal Domains are vast, and there are many obstacles preventing the people of the Heavenspan Realm from reuniting. If they aren’t gathered soon… they will be assimilated into the other dynasties!

“Third. Although it may seem that you are working toward a goal, the truth is that… you don’t have any specific direction!” With each of these three points, his voice grew louder and louder, until it rang back and forth in the hall.

“Celestial, did I get close to hitting the mark?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1110 awe-chapter-1111

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything. He sat there on his throne looking at the Grand Heavenmaster, a slight smile on his face that contained a hint of approval.

Bai Xiaochun had not always possessed this skill. He had learned it from the Saint-Emperor. Actually, Bai Xiaochun was a very quick learner, something that had benefited him a lot in his life. Whenever he encountered someone who was more outstanding than him in some way, he would imitate that facet of their personality or behavior.

Of course, he wouldn’t sit there quietly smiling if he were dealing with the Giant Ghost King, or other people he was close to. But this was the Grand Heavenmaster, an ambitious and ruthless political master. Although he had come to offer help of his own initiative, Bai Xiaochun knew that a powerful cultivation base alone would not be enough to keep him in check.

And thus, he subconsciously imitated the Saint-Emperor, smiling in warm and encouraging fashion.

When the Grand Heavenmaster saw that, he also smiled. It was a sincere smile, backed by an emotional sigh. Earlier, he had been committed to his plan, but now he was absolutely convinced that this was the right thing to do. Just like the Giant Ghost King, he truly felt that Bai Xiaochun had grown up.

Almost as soon as that thought entered his head, though, he realized that it wasn’t appropriate. Although he and Bai Xiaochun would not have a strictly formal political relationship, there was still a need to maintain propriety. If he always thought of Bai Xiaochun as a child who had grown up, then one day that could lead to a major disaster.

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes, and when he opened them again, the only thing they held was deep and sincere respect. Clasping hands, he bowed to Bai Xiaochun, and then somberly continued speaking.

“Celestial, the way to resolve the first problem, the key to establishing a firm foundation, is actually very simple. Whether it comes to winning the hearts of the people, or gaining the political upper hand, I can help you do that very easily.” From the way the Grand Heavenmaster spoke, and from the intelligent gleam in his eyes, it seemed he was absolutely confident in being able to do as he had said.

“The simplest method would be to call upon your authority as a celestial to issue a decree stating that every government official in the second immortal domain, from the Foundation Establishment stage up to the Demigod Realm, will have their monthly stipend doubled. And the expense will be paid by the capital city!

“If Aged Spirit refuses to agree, then it will arouse public anger. If he agrees, then your reputation will increase. He will definitely have a tough time deciding what to do. After all, the money actually isn’t yours, Celestial, you’ll just be delivering it.”

When Bai Xiaochun heard this, his eyes brightened. It was definitely a ruthless move. He could use someone else’s money to win the hearts of the people, and give his opponent an unsolvable dilemma. It seemed just as vicious of a plan as his smear campaign.

“That having been said, Celestial, I feel that establishing a foundation here is actually of little value. With Celestial Aged Spirit so close, no matter what advantage you gain, Aged Spirit can always figure out a way to bypass the law and attack you directly.

“Thankfully, your cultivation base gives you a measure of protection against petty plots and schemes. And that is also one of your greatest strengths.

“Therefore, I would like to ask you to consider carefully what you want to do. Our true goal is not to just establish a foundation here. We want to take advantage of your position to make plans for the future. We want to secure something truly beneficial, for example… the northern part of this immortal domain, which now no longer belongs to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty….” At this point, he gave Bai Xiaochun a meaningful look.

Bai Xiaochun thought about the vague words the Grand Heavenmaster had just spoken, but after a moment, still didn’t understand fully. However, he did get the point that their true goal should be… the north!

“Acquire more than just titular power,” he said.

The Grand Heavenmaster smiled and bowed to Bai Xiaochun again.

“Before getting into more details, allow me to address the second of the problems I mentioned earlier. Because of the interference of the two imperial dynasties, there is only one way to prevent the people of Heavenspan from being assimilated. And that is to achieve… independence!

“That is all we need. We don’t even need to ask for an equal split of the Eternal Lands with the other dynasties. We just need a place for the people of Heavenspan to gather.

“However, if you show even the slightest hint of having that goal, Celestial, it will bring sure disaster! Sadly, every day that goes by in which we don’t have our independence, the weaker our position gets!

“So, to return to talking about the first problem, if you can solve that one, Celestial, then we will have made major progress. At that point, we can easily do something to establish our independence!

“Furthermore, in order to avoid arousing the suspicions of the Saint-Emperor, I believe that we should strive, not for political independence, but rather… financial independence!

“The Saint-Emperor Dynasty won’t mind if a prefecture exists that is devoted to spirit enhancement!” A faint smile of confidence could be seen on the Grand Heavenmaster’s face. To him, it was almost being like back in his early days in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, when he had single-handedly shaken the world.

“In terms of the third problem I mentioned, in the world we live in, respect is given to the powerful. If one day you can become an archaean, then all of our problems will be much easier to solve. Therefore, I wish to wait for that day to truly make our move. Once you are an archaean, then you will have the power you need to succeed!” With that, the Grand Heavenmaster stepped back a few paces, clasped hands, and bowed.

“Celestial, if you approve of my plan, then please appoint me as a vice-preceptor in Plumflower Prefecture! Of all of the eleven prefectures controlled by the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Plumflower Prefecture is closest to the north, and is also the most suitable prefecture to act as a buffer between the two existing dynasties!

“It is like a bridgehead, a prefecture from which armies can easily march northward if necessary! I’ve already done a thorough analysis of the devas under the command of the prefecture there, and am confident of how to work with them. Within three months... that prefecture will belong to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty in name only. We will be the ones who truly control it!” The Grand Heavenmaster seemed completely and utterly confident in his plan.

A strange expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face. Although most of what the Grand Heavenmaster said made sense, the last part seemed the most credible. After all, when it came to seizing control and manipulating a puppet ruler, then if the Grand Heavenmaster was called second best in the Eternal Immortal Domains, there would be no one to occupy first place.

After a moment of thought, Bai Xiaochun nodded and said, “Let’s do it!”

As he did, the Grand Heavenmaster smiled and rose from his bow. Subsequently, Bai Xiaochun called upon his authority as a celestial to make the necessary arrangements for the Grand Heavenmaster. Earlier, it wouldn’t have been very easy, but right now, the demigods in the capital city were terrified of Bai Xiaochun, and were all scared of offending him. Therefore, all his demands were quickly met.

Surprisingly, Celestial Aged Spirit didn’t interfere either. Apparently, he was waiting for the right moment to strike his own fatal blow.

A few days later, the Grand Heavenmaster got his official appointment, and left the capital city for Plumflower

Prefecture. Before leaving, he offered Bai Xiaochun some advice based on his speculations about what Celestial Aged Spirit would do.

Bai Xiaochun considered the advice, and after the Grand Heavenmaster left, decided that he couldn’t sit around passively. Clenching his hands into fists, he said, “I can’t just let that Celestial Aged Spirit sit around waiting to make a move. I need to force him to come to a compromise!”

Having made his decision, he took action. The first thing he did was follow through with the vicious plan that the Grand Heavenmaster had come up with.

He was a celestial, so although he didn’t really have any direct subordinates of his own, it wasn’t a difficult thing to have news about something spread. Before long, everyone in the second immortal domain was talking about the same rumor.

“Did you hear? King Heavenspan suggested that all cultivators in the second immortal domain have their stipends doubled!!”

“Heavens! That means expenditures in the second immortal domain are going to skyrocket! There’s no way Celestial Aged Spirit will agree to that, is there!?”

“If this happens, I'm definitely going to go offer my thanks to King Heavenspan in person!!”

Talk spread so rapidly that it was like a windstorm. Some people tried to suppress it, but that turned out to be impossible.

Anyone who tried to quell the rumors became suspect…. After all, it was a matter that would benefit everyone involved!

The demigods in the capital city were quite alarmed. But this was an even more ruthless move than the matter with Marquis Zi Lin, and therefore none of them dared to do anything.

When Celestial Aged Spirit heard the news, his anger burned hot, and he very nearly erupted into a rage. Just as the Grand Heavenmaster had predicted, Aged Spirit would come out on the bottom whether he agreed to the matter or not!

“Damn that Bai Xiaochun!!”

When it came time for the next official governmental meeting in the capital city, Bai Xiaochun calmly proposed the matter openly!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1111 awe-chapter-1112

The ten demigods who served in the capital city all had their heads bowed and were staring at their toes. From the somber expressions on their faces, one might assume that there was some profound secret to be discovered within their feet.

As Bai Xiaochun’s words echoed in the hall, and as Celestial Aged Spirit’s fury rose, the ten demigods almost seemed to be in a trance, not willing to participate in what was happening right in front of them.

God-level conflicts like this were not the kinds of things they would interfere with even if they had ten times the guts they already had. In fact, most of them wanted to just run out the door.

Celestial Aged Spirit glared at Bai Xiaochun, unable to control his rage at how disgustingly he handled matters.

Whether it was the incident with Marquis Zi Lin, or this matter of increasing the stipend for cultivators, it made his guts twist as surely as if he had unknowingly eaten a pile of feces.

“What a vicious plan….” Celestial Aged Spirit thought, gnashing his teeth, and yet unable to give vent to his feelings. If he refused to go along with the arrangement, then he would be playing right into Bai Xiaochun’s hand. But if he agreed, the cost would be horrific. And since the second immortal domain didn’t actually belong to Bai Xiaochun, he obviously didn’t care about the expenditure. But Celestial Aged Spirit actually did view the second immortal domain as his own, and therefore, the thought of what was to come filled him with piercing pain.

Heart burning with nearly uncontrollable killing intent, he rose to his feet, flicked his sleeve, and walked out. He neither agreed nor disagreed. When Bai Xiaochun saw this, he felt quite pleased, and didn't even feel the need to press the matter, confident that Celestial Aged Spirit would provide a response sooner or later.

And that was exactly what happened. Not even three days passed before Celestial Aged Spirit issued a decree stating that all officials within the second immortal domain would have their stipends doubled.

It immediately caused a huge commotion, and countless cultivators felt profound gratitude toward Celestial Aged Spirit and King Heavenspan Bai Xiaochun. Of course, there were many people who were in the know, and realized that although it seemed like Bai Xiaochun had fought for the benefit of the people, the truth was that this was a battle between the two celestials!

And obviously, Bai Xiaochun had won this round. Gradually, opinions were shifting regarding Bai Xiaochun, and some people were even considering throwing their lot in with him.

And thus it was that with two major events, Bai Xiaochun made a deep impression on the cultivators in the second immortal domain. The key benefit for him was that when people talked about celestials, they didn't just talk about Celestial Aged Spirit like they had in the past. Bai Xiaochun too was now a frequent subject of conversation.

Celestial Aged Spirit noticed that, and it made him pause for thought. Earlier, when Bai Xiaochun had first arrived, he wouldn't have cared so much. Back then, he had assumed

Bai Xiaochun was essentially a naive member of the younger generation, someone who had caused some annoying problems in Saint-Emperor City, but who wouldn’t do much in the second immortal domain.

That was why, when Bai Xiaochun chose to keep a low profile, Aged Spirit had taken it as a sign of weakness. And thus, he had chosen to demote the Giant Ghost King, hoping to take advantage of that weakness to cut Bai Xiaochun down even further.

His attitude remained the same after the incident with Marquis Zi Lin. Although Bai Xiaochun had struck back at him, and it had been frustrating to the say the least, he still looked down on him. Back then, Celestial Aged Spirit has assumed that Bai Xiaochun’s crude methods were nothing to fear, and that he could slowly but surely put him in his place.

But then… Bai Xiaochun made a formal proposal that was in fact a vicious and decisive plot. Only then did Celestial Aged Spirit finally start to view Bai Xiaochun as somewhat of an equal to him.

At this point, he took the time to seriously consider what protracted conflict with Bai Xiaochun would entail. In the end, it wouldn’t really benefit either of them, and would in fact only help the Saint-Emperor.

As a celestial, he understood more than just how to crush others with power. He also knew how to compromise and make deals. Therefore, it was without the knowledge of anyone that he secretly projected an image of himself into Bai Xiaochun’s private chamber.

Bai Xiaochun was there meditating. When he opened his eyes and saw a ball of mist in front of him, and the smiling face therein, he knew that, at long last, Celestial Aged Spirit had come to negotiate.

After his chat with the Grand Heavenmaster, Bai Xiaochun knew what it was that he needed and wanted, and also knew that he couldn’t do it with only his own current status. And he also knew that the person who least desired for him to stay around in the capital city was Celestial Aged Spirit.

When the smoky form of Celestial Aged Spirit saw the smile on Bai Xiaochun’s face, it was confirmation that his assessment had been correct. As a result, he breathed a sigh of relief. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun didn’t have some complex ulterior motives. In fact, Celestial Aged Spirit’s impression of him actually improved a bit.

They were both celestials, and both knew that sometimes, a word and a smile could impart volumes.

A moment passed, and Celestial Aged Spirit asked a single question.

“What do you want?”

Bai Xiaochun replied with one short sentence. At that point, Celestial Aged Spirit’s eyes glittered, and he spent a thoughtful moment before fading away. He didn’t give his response right then and there.

No one knew that he had come to visit Bai Xiaochun, and he never came for a second visit. Everything appeared to go on as before. He and Bai Xiaochun still seemed to be at odds, and during the occasional meetings that Bai Xiaochun attended, they would always end up having big arguments. As a result, the demigods were constantly shivering in fear at the prospect of actual fighting breaking out.

A few months later, the preceptor of Plumflower Prefecture paid a visit to Celestial Aged Spirit. Sullen and depressed, he said that he wanted to resign. When Celestial Aged Spirit asked for the reason, he said that Bai Xiaochun had sent a demigod named Situ to serve in Plumflower Prefecture as a vice-preceptor.

This Situ was vicious and merciless, and profoundly crafty. By using a multitude of plots and schemes, he had turned almost everyone in the prefecture against the preceptor in only about three months. In fact, the preceptor was actually terrified of Situ, and thus, wished to resign and leave Plumflower Prefecture.

Upon hearing this, Celestial Aged Spirit began to pant in seeming rage. Apparently, this was a final straw of some sorts, pushing Celestial Aged Spirit to the point where he couldn’t hold on any longer.

“What incredible gall! You’re pushing things too far, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Without any hesitation, he issued orders that the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster were to lead armies from their respective prefectures to wage war in the north. Furthermore, if they failed to capture all of the northern provinces, they would be imprisoned!

When the news got out, the capital city began to simmer on the verge of exploding. The demigods were all left gasping, convinced that something big was going to happen between the two celestials!!

“Not good! Something crazy is going to happen!!”

“Heavens! The Saint-Emperor Dynasty has rules, right? Celestials aren’t allowed to fight with each other within the borders of the nation….”

As the news spread through the second immortal domain, Bai Xiaochun caught wind of it, and his eyes glittered. Then he put an enraged expression onto his face and burst out of his secluded meditation chamber, his celestial cultivation base raging out to fill the city. Without any hesitation, he aggressively headed over to Celestial Aged Spirit’s mansion.

“Aged Spirit, you villain, this level of bullying is outrageous!”

Even as Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense smashing forward, another stream of divine sense came out to meet his. When they clashed, a deafening boom filled the ears of all the cultivators in the capital city!

“Have a death wish, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

Apparently, the conflict between the two had finally reached a boiling point. Rumbling sounds filled the entire city, and clouds of dust screamed in the air. To the people in the city, it seemed like the end of days had come!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1112 awe-chapter-1113

Thankfully, the two celestials had apparently not yet reached the point of fully losing control. After the initial cathartic impact, both of them backed down. And yet, the residents of the capital city were still gripped with terror.

Everyone knew that if Bai Xiaochun and Aged Spirit truly came to blows, and didn't control themselves perfectly, then it could cause a cataclysmic catastrophe.

Of course, the Saint-Emperor was also notified of the tensions between the two, and Saint-Emperor City as a whole was shaken by the news.

There were rules prohibiting celestials from fighting each other, especially in their own territory. But rules could not govern self-control, and the consequences of violating such rules could be immense.

It was at around this time that official requests came in to the Saint-Emperor from both Bai Xiaochun and Celestial Aged Spirit. Then, perhaps because of the persuasiveness of Celestial Aged Spirit’s request, or perhaps of other secret methods he employed… the Saint-Emperor issued a decree!

“King Heavenspan is hereby appointed as the king of the north in the second immortal domain. As the immortal lord of the realm, he shall restore the glory of the five northern prefectures!”

Everyone in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was stunned by this sudden development, not because it was an amazing promotion for Bai Xiaochun, but rather… because none of the five northern prefectures in the second immortal domain were controlled by the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Bai Xiaochun would be the king of the north, but he would have no territory to rule over!

And that wasn’t even mentioning that his mission was to ‘restore the glory’ of the north. Some people were puzzled, but most shook their heads at the realization that because Bai Xiaochun was not well-liked in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, he was essentially being expelled from it.

That was the general consensus as word spread through the second immortal domain. However, the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster reacted differently. They were quite excited.

“The time has finally come!”

Equally excited was Bai Xiaochun. Although no one realized it, this new appointment was crucially important. Not only did it get him out of the capital city of the second immortal domain, but it also gave him quite a bit of ostensible freedom. Everything was going according to the Grand Heavenmaster’s plan!

Instead of wasting time locking horns with Celestial Aged Spirit, it would be better to start out on a new path in the north, where no one would be looking over his shoulder! That was where he would build his strong foundation!

It was a good plan. That was why, when Celestial Aged Spirit had come for his visit and asked Bai Xiaochun what he wanted, the answer had been simple.

I want the north!

It was no skin off of Celestial Aged Spirit’s back. He could get rid of Bai Xiaochun, and end the exhausting conflict between the two of them.

The two of them had put on a bit of a show of hating each other in order to reach their mutual goal. Furthermore, Celestial Aged Spirit had worked very hard to make sure that his request was granted immediately. After all, there were many intelligent people in the empire who could see through Bai Xiaochun’s plan, including the Saint-Emperor. In fact, the only reason the Saint-Emperor had agreed to the request so quickly was because of all the pressure from the groups Celestial Aged Spirit had called in favors from.

“This Celestial Aged Spirit isn’t a bad guy,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “It must not have been easy to get that request approved so quickly.” He sighed. Not only would staying in the capital city have made it hard to carry out his plan, it would have been a bit of a loss of face.

Therefore, two days after getting the Dharmic decree from the Saint-Emperor, he left. He didn't take anyone with him, nor did he say farewell to anyone. At dawn, he turned into a brilliant beam of light that shot off into the distance.

His destination: the north!

An army of cultivators had already begun to gather in Plumflower Prefecture, some of them from that prefecture itself, and others from the nearby Godsifter Prefecture.

This was the army that the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster had begun to gather in preparation for Bai Xiaochun’s arrival.

That was also part of the plan to resolve his differences with Celestial Aged Spirit. Because of Celestial Aged Spirit’s orders, it was possible for the Grand Heavenmaster and the Giant Ghost King to openly gather an army, and not worry about doing it secretly, as had been the original plan.

The army was already 50,000 cultivators strong. Although the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster were the only two demigods, they had quite a few devas under their command. There were also some cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm. Although it was difficult for them to seek asylum with the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster, some were able, and they were treated as precious gems.

The assembled armies didn’t have to wait for long. Bai Xiaochun soon appeared in a gust of wind, and as he hovered in the air, his celestial cultivation base rippling out, all of the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm looked up in both astonishment and reverence.

Bai Xiaochun looked over the group until his gaze came to rest on the Grand Heavenmaster. “Have the preparations been made, Grand Heavenmaster?”

Although neither the Grand Heavenmaster nor the Giant Ghost King had been in the capital city recently, they had been in communication with Bai Xiaochun the entire time. They already had a detailed plan in place, and the first phase of it was to take over a prefecture!

“Yes, exalted one. Everything is ready. We are confident in being able to take Mistysea Prefecture, as long as you can hold off Ghostmother. Exalted one, we should be able to achieve victory within one month!”

Bai Xiaochun gave the Grand Heavenmaster a long look, and then they looked at the Giant Ghost King, who seemed eager to start fighting. Then he nodded. And with that, he headed north, alone.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun was gone, the Grand Heavenmaster and the Giant Ghost King mobilized their troops and began moving. Clouds of dust rose into the air as they headed through Plumflower Prefecture… north toward Mistysea Prefecture!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he entered Mistysea Prefecture alone, and found a mountain peak where he sat down cross-legged to meditate. He didn't move, but he sent his celestial cultivation base fluctuations out to fill the prefecture. Within moments, he became like a blazing fire in the dark night, visible clearly even from a distance.

His energy instantly attracted the attention of the preceptor and other powerful cultivators in Mistysea Prefecture, as well as those beyond. As a result, the armies that had immediately mobilized with the intention of entering Mistysea Prefecture to bolster the Vile-Emperor Dynasty forces there were too scared to do anything!

None of them dared to even get close to Mistysea Prefecture.

With a celestial present, even demigods could do little more than bow their heads. None of them qualified to fight back!

At this point, a cold voice suddenly echoed through heaven and earth. “Bai Xiaochun!”

The hearts of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty troops swelled as this voice echoed through the air, and a red-robed woman appeared in Mistysea Prefecture. She headed… straight toward the mountain peak where Bai Xiaochun sat.

She was extremely beautiful, but at the same time, radiated an intense murderous aura that was like a mist of ghosts. She even had numerous ghost faces surrounding her, and rode upon a battleship that looked like a huge lizard!

She was Celestial Ghostmother!

As she sped through the sky, her mist of ghosts filled the air around her!

Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath as he saw her approaching. Ideally, he would like to refrain from fighting her. However, he was dead set on taking Mistysea Prefecture. This was where he intended to set down roots, and therefore, he gritted his teeth, looked up, and waved his hand through the air, causing blue light to flash.

The Greatsword of the North appeared in his hand as he slowly rose to his feet. Then, he slashed the sword out in front of him.

Rumbling sounds filled all creation as blue light erupted out. Backed by a celestial cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun could now fully utilize the power of the world treasure of the north. It was something that demigods couldn’t even comprehend. Sword qi erupted out that could sunder the heavens and crush the earth. As it slashed into the mist of ghosts surrounding Gongsun Wan’er, the entire world seemed to vibrate.

Then, an enormous ravine opened up in the ground between Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er!

“You will not pass this mark!” Bai Xiaochun said coolly, flicking his sleeve, and then putting his hand behind his back. In his opinion, he had worded things in a very domineering way, and couldn't wait to see Gongsun Wan’er’s reaction….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1113 awe-chapter-1114

The ravine split the lands apart, including even a mountain range. Currently, the intense rumbling sounds created by the hewing out of the ravine still echoed in the air.

Even the sky distorted, seemingly on the verge of cracking just like the earth below. Meanwhile, the blue light of the sword filled the ravine, rising up high like an enormous wall separating Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er!

Behind Gongsun Wan’er were the Vile-Emperor Dynasty troops who wished to enter the prefecture to come to the aid of their compatriots. Currently, they were all edging backwards, looks of fear on their faces as they watched events playing out. After all, the insignificant Mistysea Prefecture was definitely not worth giving up their lives for.

Besides, if they really wanted to enter the prefecture, they could simply go to another location to attempt do so. There was no need to enter it right here.

But as a celestial, Bai Xiaochun’s intentions were key to everything. Clearly, he wanted to keep everyone out of Mistysea Prefecture, and therefore… no matter how they tried to get in, the result would likely be the same.

The only chance they might get would come if Ghostmother kept him busy. Then they might be able to engage the forces of the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King.

But this enormous blue shield of light, and the greatsword Bai Xiaochun held in his hand, were shocking to the extreme. After all, he was one of only twelve celestials in the Eternal Immortal Domains, and was already quite famous.

“Is he holding… a world treasure?!”

“I heard that it was forged from one of the continents of the Heavenspan Realm….”

“Not every celestial has a world treasure. This means that King Heavenspan’s battle prowess is thirty percent greater than before!”

As the buzz of conversation spread, Gongsun Wan’er hovered there looking at Bai Xiaochun. A moment passed, and she smiled. However, the mysterious light didn’t leave her eyes. Waving her hand, she sent sinister ghost qi roiling out everywhere.

“Very well, sweetie. Let’s see how strong you are now that you’re a celestial!” Chuckling, she stepped off of her battleship, her red gown fluttering in the wind, as well as her long, black hair. She was stunning to look at, but at the same time, terrifying. The effect was only more pronounced when she licked her lips, which somehow caused Bai Xiaochun to think back to their last encounter.

Meanwhile, Gongsun Wan’er performed an incantation gesture with her right hand and waved her finger at him, causing intense rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth as a mist sprang up. Howling sounds erupted from within that mist as numerous ghost hands reached out toward Bai Xiaochun.

Then, she performed another quick incantation gesture and opened her mouth. Instantly, a bizarre sound filled the air. It was like the sobbing of a ghost, which caused everything in the area to twist and distort, and sent invisible sound waves flying toward Bai Xiaochun!

And yet, things weren’t over. She also thrust her right hand out, which began to grow larger and larger, transforming into the clawed hand of a ghost that snatched at Bai Xiaochun.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened in the shortest of moments. Shaken, Bai Xiaochun once again chopped out with his greatsword, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air. Simultaneously, he stepped forward and unleashed the Undying Emperor’s Fist with his left hand. The ghost mist was vanquished, and Bai Xiaochun accelerated, using the Mountain Shaking Bash for a burst of speed. He was like a mountain peak in bodily form, appearing directly in front of Gongsun Wan’er and sweeping his sword toward her.

Shockingly, Gongsun Wan’er didn’t dodge out of the way, but instead, opened her mouth wider. In bizarre fashion, her mouth grew impossibly wide, transforming into a black hole that began to drag Bai Xiaochun toward it.

To Bai Xiaochun’s surprise, he felt his life force being sucked out of him.

“Are we really doing this, Gongsun Wan’er?!” he said, drawing on the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation. In the blink of an eye, he was 300 meters tall, and using his formidable fleshly body power to fight against the gravitational force.

Just when he seemed about to break free, Gongsun Wan’er chuckled.

“You tell me, sweetie.” Even as her words floated through the air, she blurred into motion, moving so quickly it was almost impossible to see her. At the same time, her left hand became illusory, as though it were made from a mysterious mist. Anyone who could see it would see something like a viper, complete with fangs and forked tongue, that closed in on Bai Xiaochun’s chest with lightning speed.

Bai Xiaochun’s expression flickered as he fell back. From what he could tell, killing intent really did flicker in Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes. It was actually somewhat frustrating. All he wanted to do in this venture was take Mistysea Prefecture. Unfortunately, this area in the north had been a point of contention between the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty for many years.

“You’re forcing my hand, Gongsun Wan’er!” He quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, sending out power that could distort time. All of the dust and debris in the area was shoved away from him in bizarre fashion as he waved his hand at Gongsun Wan’er.

“Sutra of Former Reincarnation!”

“Dammit!!” Gongsun Wan’er blurted, her face falling. What she feared most about Bai Xiaochun was not his world treasure greatsword, but rather, this divine ability!

She had ways of handling the greatsword, but this marvelous divine ability that was somehow connected to time itself was something she didn’t know how to deal with. That was why she had taken the initiative in the fight, in the hopes that she could prevent him from unleashing it.

But Bai Xiaochun’s progress in the Celestial Realm was shocking, to say the least. Only a short time had passed, and he was already very close to the peak of the early Celestial Realm. Therefore, she immediately fell back. Unfortunately for her, she didn’t understand how this particular Daoist magic worked. Once it was unleashed, it was almost impossible to evade!

In the shortest of moments, Bai Xiaochun finished waving his finger, and countless flickering magical symbols appeared around Gongsun Wan’er. Instantly, Gongsun Wan’er began to tremble, and a dazed look appeared in the depths of her eyes!

It was almost as if her memories were being extracted and transformed into magical symbols!

Bai Xiaochun could see that Gongsun Wan’er was trapped by the magical symbols, and that she was looking dazed. And he didn’t actually want to hurt her. After all, that could cause problems in the future, and he didn’t want to damage their relationship permanently.

“I guess it only took that one move!” he thought. Not bothering with the fact that there were a lot of people around to see, he flew over to Gongsun Wan’er, reached his hand up, and to the wide-eyed shock of the people from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, he spanked her rear end.

The smacking sound echoed out in bizarre fashion, causing all onlookers’ minds to go completely blank.

Gongsun Wan’er shivered, and in her daze, tried to struggle.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” she screamed. Somewhat frightened, Bai Xiaochun spanked her again, causing her to spasm.

“Give me Mistysea Prefecture. Okay?” he yelled.

“You’re… completely shameless….” she began. With that, he spanked her again, leaving the Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators flabbergasted beyond belief.

Eventually, Gongsun Wan’er’s dazed expression turned into complete blankness. Seeing that, Bai Xiaochun let loose another flurry of spanks. It was at this point that Gongsun Wan’er apparently unleashed some sort of secret magic. A whoosh could be heard as her entire body transformed into black smoke, which shoved Bai Xiaochun away and then shot off into the distance.

“You just wait, Bai Xiaochun!!” she shrieked from within the smoke. However, she didn't dare to stick around any longer, and continued off into the distance.

Somewhat shocked, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat, and then looked over at the cultivators from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. After blinking a few times, he flew back to the mountain peak and sat down, as sober as ever. He even tried to look a bit cold and merciless.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty people exchanged awkward glances, and then slowly retreated. They really had no other option. Ghostmother was gone, so their presence was irrelevant. Besides… all of them could see that apparently, Bai Xiaochun and Ghostmother… had a very strange relationship….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1114 awe-chapter-1115

As they left, the Vile-Emperor cultivators began to discuss the matter in hushed tones.

“You know, I heard that when Bai Xiaochun kidnapped Ghostmother, some really unspeakable things happened.... I guess those stories were true!”

“Heavens! If that’s the case, then this Bai Xiaochun’s incredible!!”

“It seems highly likely! Otherwise, why would Ghostmother leave Vile-Emperor City of her own initiative, and set up camp all the way over here…?”

Regardless of their speculations, they left, and Mistysea Prefecture was virtually sealed to the outside. No one came to offer aid to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty forces within it, who were struck with fear by the fight between Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er.

With their will to fight having been sapped, the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King were able to easily crush any resistance they met. As for the demigod from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, he made a hasty retreat with his forces, worried that Bai Xiaochun might capture him. After all, such things were not uncommon.

And thus, the campaign which the Grand Heavenmaster had estimated might take a month… only took a few days.

When Bai Xiaochun came to the heart of the prefecture, Mistysea City, the Giant Ghost King was waiting for him there, hardly able to contain his excitement. Even the Grand Heavenmaster was having a hard time remaining calm.

Bai Xiaochun felt the same way. At long last, they really had a place where they could settle down, a place that no one would simply take away from them. After all, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty paid close attention to law and matters of face. Since Bai Xiaochun had conquered this territory in an open and aboveboard manner, anyone who wanted to challenge him over it would have to think twice.

The Giant Ghost King looked around at the city with open excitement. After all of the years he had been in the Eternal Immortal Domains, this was the first time he felt somewhat stable.

“Although we technically still belong to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty,” he said, “we’re no longer living on someone else’s charity!”

“Only the strong qualify to carve out their own destiny,” the Grand Heavenmaster said. “Exalted one, if you can achieve a cultivation base breakthrough, then Mistysea Prefecture… will only be the beginning!”

Bai Xiaochun nodded. He knew that the only way to truly have a stable foundation in the Eternal Immortal Domains was to get stronger. That counted both for him, and also for the people of the Heavenspan Realm.

“One’s cultivation base is the key to everything!” Bai Xiaochun thought, taking a deep breath.

No matter how boring or tiring it was to practice cultivation, the things he had seen in his life ensured that he would by no means slack in his cultivation. Furthermore, even he knew that he was not the most qualified person to manage the affairs of Mistysea Prefecture. That was the specialty of the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King.

After officially assigning all of the various responsibilities to those two, he went into secluded meditation. His goal: to finish absorbing the energy in the damaged fan’s command medallion, and then see if that caused any further developments.

Time passed. As Bai Xiaochun went about his work in seclusion, Mistysea Prefecture transformed on an almost daily basis. The Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King were the leaders and planners, and they worked perfectly together. Furthermore, as news spread that Bai Xiaochun had occupied the prefecture, Heavenspan Realm cultivators from all over began to head there.

In the past, Celestial Aged Spirit might have tried to interfere, but after his conflicts and dealings with Bai Xiaochun, he decided not to. In some cases in which large groups tried to make it to Mistysea Prefecture, he would stop them, but most of the time, he turned a blind eye to what was happening.

The Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King worked hard to improve relations with the surrounding prefectures, both those who were part of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and also the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. There were no personal grudges with either side, and most of the time, cultivators would prefer to keep a peaceful balance in situations like this.

Because Bai Xiaochun was stationed there, the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King usually took a hard line in negotiations, but that just earned them the respect of the surrounding prefectures.

And thus, in the second immortal domain of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, Mistysea Prefecture transformed on a daily basis. Although Bai Xiaochun remained in secluded meditation most of the time, he occasionally came out for a break. He could sense the changes in the prefecture, and could see the increasing number of Heavenspan cultivators bustling about. To many of them, it finally felt like they had a home again, and sometimes they even forgot that they weren't in the lands of Heavenspan.

However, Bai Xiaochun knew that despite how nice things seemed, they lacked stability. One day, if he ever possessed the power to actually stand up to the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor, then he would truly have a strong foundation. Only then… could he think about proactively seeking out all of the missing Heavenspan cultivators.

It was that thought that kept Bai Xiaochun completely focused on his cultivation. A few months later, when he was securely within the peak of the early Celestial Realm, he finally absorbed the last bit of energy from the command medallion.

It had taken nearly a year of study and hard work. In the very moment that the energy left the medallion, all Bai Xiaochun had to do was send some divine sense into it, and it began to vibrate.

His mind began to tremble, and if anyone else had been in the private chamber to observe him, they would have seen him suddenly turn translucent. Bai Xiaochun, in contrast, didn't notice it at all.

He was now completely sunk into a vision in his mind. It was like an out-of-body experience, in which he was flying through a starry sky!

The damaged fan was already far, far away from the Eternal Immortal Domains, drifting slowly through the void. Although it seemed to be moving slowly, it was actually moving faster than either of the two archaean emperors.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time encountering the fan in this fashion. As he continued to speed closer and closer to it, he realized that… he was probably going to enter it!

That feeling got stronger and stronger, until he started to imagine what it would be like. As soon as that thought appeared, his body in the Eternal Immortal Domains distorted, and then vanished from the private chamber!

There were no fluctuations or other signs. In fact, even if one of the archaean emperors came to investigate, they wouldn't find any evidence that he had vanished!

When he reappeared… it was to his shock that he found himself standing… in the main square of the damaged fan!

Everything looked very familiar. It was exactly the same place where he had spent those months with the others from the Eternal Immortal Domains. Except… that he was now alone!

It was almost too much to take in. Taking a few steps forward, he looked up, and saw the darkness of the void….

“I can’t believe I'm actually on the fan!” Almost immediately, his heart began to pound as he worried that he might not be able to get back to the Eternal Immortal Domains.

That made him extremely nervous. He quickly pictured himself leaving the fan and returning to his private chamber in the Eternal Immortal Domains, and as soon as the thought rose up, the command medallion in his hand turned into a black hole. His vision blurred, and when he could see again… he was back in the private chamber!

“This command medallion… is actually a key to enter the damaged fan!!” He rose to his feet and began to pace back and forth excitedly. After he calmed down, he pondered the significance of this development and realized… that he actually did fully qualify to acquire the legacy of the fan!

After all, he was the only one who could challenge the trial by fire now!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1115 awe-chapter-1116

After that, he made another attempt to use the key. However, nothing happened, no matter what he did. No sort of teleportation effect occurred.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and his heart began to pound.

“No way! Don’t tell me it will only work that one time…?” Immediately fretting about the implications, he tried a few more tests. When they all failed, his guts began to twist with regret.

Over and over again, he nervously tried to get the key to activate, all to no avail. The command medallion now seemed completely useless and unresponsive.

He spent an entire day and night scowling on the verge of tears, and filled with regret. As dawn approached, he was about ready to give up. Sighing defiantly, he performed one more test, which was when his face lit up.

After the passage of a whole day, he was now able to sense the same fluctuations he had sensed with the original teleportation. However, he decided to be more cautious this time. Retracting his divine sense, he began to study the medallion a bit more.

A few days later, he was certain he had come to understand the medallion as best he could. Apparently, the medallion could only be used once per day, at roughly the same time each day. If an opportunity was missed to activate the teleportation, the only option would be to wait for another day.

Apparently, the command medallion wasn’t powerful in and of itself, and needed to recharge by absorbing energy from its surroundings.

“Only once per day? That's not really enough.” He sighed, but then pursed his lips to suppress his laughter as he realized that if he wanted to take more trips to the fan in a given day, he could probably just perform a spirit enhancement on the medallion.

Sadly, after performing a few test enhancements, he didn’t notice any significant changes to the medallion. Eventually, he decided to give up on the idea.

“If once it is, then once it shall be….” Sighing, he focused his thoughts on entering the damaged fan, and instantly, his vision began to swim. When it became clear, he was yet again on the fan!

The void outside of the damaged fan was pitch black, with the only light visible coming from the fan itself. Although it wasn't very bright, it was plenty for a celestial like Bai Xiaochun to see.

Clenching his hands into fists, he took a breath, stilled his excitement, and examined his surroundings closely. Then he cautiously proceeded toward the same fan rib as he had before.

As soon as he stepped onto the fan rib, the fan flared with bright light, as did the command medallion in his hand.

As soon as that light shone on him, he lost the ability to move, and felt himself yet again having an out-of-body experience as he flew into the world inside the fan.

He could even see what lay at the very far end of the fan, after all of the one hundred levels. Shockingly, there was a stone platform, upon which was a gold-colored jade slip!

It shone with boundless, holy light that instantly attracted Bai Xiaochun’s attention.

As soon as he examined it more closely, he was as shocked as if his mind had been struck by lightning. Inscribed on the surface of the jade slip was a line of characters!

“Dao Essence of Life and Death!”

Bai Xiaochun had never seen these particular words before, but for some reason, he understood their implication. In fact, as soon as he looked at the jade slip, the voice of an ancient consciousness spoke into his mind.

“I am the only sovereign from the Immortal World. But the Immortal World has perished, and the dome of the heavens has gone dark. By the Joss Flame of my world, I leave this fan behind as my legacy. Anyone who is connected to it by destiny may learn of that which existed in the Immortal World, the Dao Essence of Life and Death.”

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun immediately attempted to peruse the contents of the jade slip, but unfortunately, it was all a blur. And any attempt to make closer contact with the fan itself resulted in a powerful force of repulsion pushing him away.

It was almost like a dream. Shivering, he opened his eyes, and realized that he was still standing in the same place as before on the fan rib, and that only a moment had passed.

However, after peering off toward the end of the fan rib, he realized that what he had seen was no illusion. After the one hundredth level, the legacy really was the Dao Essence of Life and Death.

“I can only get it if I become the true owner of this fan, huh…?” At that point, determination flashed in his eyes.

“I wonder if the levels will be the same as before…?” As it turned out, the first level was exactly as he remembered it. Eyes glittering, he proceeded on, and found that it was the same with the second, third and fourth….

It took no time at all to reach the twentieth level. Nothing posed even the slightest obstacle. These twenty levels couldn’t even be considered a challenge.

Soon, he was back on the fan rib, with the twenty-first level in front of him. At this point, his expression turned serious. He knew that the power he had gained earlier had been equivalent to the first twenty levels. Therefore, everything after this point would be a true test of skill.

“Thankfully I don’t have anyone to compete with, so I don’t have to worry about the time limit….” With such thoughts on his mind, he decided not to immediately enter the next level. Instead, he searched all of the previous levels to make sure there were no rewards that had gone unclaimed by previous challengers. After placing such rewards into his bag of holding, he felt very pleased.

“This way, even if I have to go back home without completely succeeding, this journey will have been worth it.”

With his preparations complete, he looked around calmly. But then, an expression of hesitation appeared on his face as he thought back to the spirit automaton he had squared off against in the past, and wondered if it was awake now.

After thinking about it for a bit, he gritted his teeth and strode forward into the twenty-first level. Almost immediately, the thunderous sound of a roaring wind filled his ears. Everything went blurry, and when things became clear, he was in a world of ice!

The sky was gray, and the lands that stretched out in all directions were white. A whimpering wind blew snowflakes everywhere.

Perhaps this place had once been a sea that ended up being frozen. There were no mountains or valleys, only a wide, flat plain.

The frigid qi was incredible, to the point where even Bai Xiaochun shivered. And that was with him being a celestial with an incredibly powerful fleshly body. Despite that, it felt like he was being stabbed all over, and he even wondered if the flame of his life force was going to be frozen. Any other ordinary cultivator would have been unable to take this level of cold.

“It’s freezing here!” he thought. Looking around, he tested to see if the power he had over the fan could help him here, but absolutely nothing happened.

Even as he sighed regretfully, his expression flickered, and he backed up a few paces. As he did, a hole opened up in the ice ahead of him, and a fish flew out of it in his general direction. It moved with blinding speed, brushing against his arm as it flew past. Strangely, it looked almost exactly like an arrow.

Despite the level of his cultivation base, if he hadn’t reacted quickly enough, he would likely have been stabbed through by the arrowfish!

Things weren’t over yet! His face continued to flicker with shock as more holes opened up around him. In the blink of an eye, numerous arrowfish were all flying toward him at incredible speed!

They were silver, and really did look like arrows as they flew through the air with incredible speed. Bai Xiaochun could tell that he absolutely had to dodge out of their way, and that if they touched him, it would have catastrophic consequences.

They moved so quickly it was almost like teleportation. And it only took moments until there were so many of them he couldn’t count them, a host of glittering silver fish that was shocking to behold.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1116 awe-chapter-1117

“What kind of fish are these?!?!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and despite the fact that he was on an ice plain, sweat broke out all over him. Back and forth he dodged as the air was ripped to shreds by the flying fish, who all seemed dead set on poking him full of holes.

It was almost like Bai Xiaochun was a huge target, and the arrowfish were countless arrows trying to hit it. No matter how he dodged or how fast he went, they kept coming toward him in full madness.

If it were a short-term thing, it wouldn’t have been a problem. But after dodging fish for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, it was to his shock that he realized the fish weren’t slowing down at all. In fact, it was at that point that he heard loud cracking sounds, which came from large portions of the ice plain collapsing, revealing even more arrowfish than before.

“Dammit,” he gasped, “why is this twenty-first level so hard!?” He had no choice but to keep trying to dodge. Soon an hour had passed. Then two hours. Then six hours….

Bai Xiaochun was beyond stunned. He distinctly remembered that the trials had a time limit of two hours, but by this point, more than half a day had gone by…. And yet, there seemed to be no end in sight.

From a distance, it almost looked like he was in a world of arrowfish, filled with silvery light that reflected the sun in dazzling fashion.

Bai Xiaochun really wanted to cry. Suddenly, he recalled the heavenly dragonfish, and wondered if perhaps this was happening because he had eaten too many of them. He continued to dodge the fish nonstop for another few hours. After an entire day passed without him being able to leave the level, he was starting to feel like he was going crazy.

“Something strange is going on here. Something very strange!!”

Meanwhile, high in the sky above Bai Xiaochun, invisible to him even if he had looked up, was a boy. He was good-looking, and might have seemed charming if it weren’t for the cold smile he wore. He seemed very pleased with himself as he hovered there with hands clasped behind his back, staring down at Bai Xiaochun dancing around like a monkey.

“I thought this brazen thief had left for good, and was a bit disappointed. And yet, he dared to return. Hmmmphh! Well, I might have been powerless in the first twenty levels, but from here on out, I’ll make sure you know the meaning of despair!” Looking a bit excited, the boy waved his hand, causing ripples to flow through the ice plain. Moments later, ten times as many arrowfish as before appeared!

Heaven and earth trembled under the storm of fish!

Bai Xiaochun was scowling on the verge of tears, and was considering just teleporting out of the level. However, he wasn’t quite willing to give up just yet. At one point, he got distracted, and one of the arrowfish pierced through his arm, causing unimaginable pain, and provoking a miserable shriek.

“Dammit! I didn’t want to resort to cheating, but you’re forcing my hand! Moonflower, baby, I need you!” Flying backward, he tapped his bag of holding, causing a thick stem to fly out. It only took half a breath of time for the stem to grow larger and larger, with a huge moonflower on top of it!

A howl rippled out from within the moonflower, and all of its petals shivered as if in anticipation. Apparently, whether it was the ice plain or the arrowfish, the moonflower considered them all to be food it could only find in its dreams.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased by this.

“Moonflower, destroy this place!” he shouted. At this point, he really couldn’t think of any other way to deal with the twenty-first level other than to place his hopes in the moonflower.

The truth was that not even Ghostmother was very sure about where the moonflower originally came from. After all, the battleship where Bai Xiaochun had found it was only a temporary dwelling place.

In the blink of an eye, the moonflower grew to an enormous size. However, it only took a moment for the countless arrowfish in the area to stab through it so many times that it exploded. It didn’t even seem to fight back. The resulting bits dropped down onto the ice, and then sank down into the water beneath.

The entire scene left Bai Xiaochun stunned.

“No way…. You were so strong before, moonflower, baby….” Crestfallen, he began to back up, and at the same time, decided that he might as well concede defeat. As far as he could tell, not even a cultivator in the great circle of the Celestial Realm could possibly pass this level.

After all, his fleshly body power was essentially unparalleled among celestials, and yet, these fish could actually pierce it. There was little need to mention other celestials.

However, just when he was about to throw in the towel, his eyes suddenly lit up.

All of the fragments of the giant moonflower that had fallen down into the ice and the water… began to bloom!

It happened with indescribable speed. Within moments, the entire ice plain was covered with moonflowers, and then began to melt!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But the moonflowers in the water began to send stems out, creating something like a huge net that prevented the arrowfish from flying out. There were simply too many of the moonflowers. They filled the entire world, growing and growing with every moment that passed. Soon, the ice plain was completely melted, and the water was almost completely full of moonflowers….

As the net widened and grew denser, more and more fish were unable to fly out of the water. Essentially, the water below was being completely sealed!

And yet, things weren't over. After the water was sealed tight, the moonflowers began to absorb all of the frigid qi in the area. Although the ice plain was gone, there was plenty of frigid qi in the water, as well as in the arrowfish!

It was almost as if there were a huge furnace underneath the water, causing it to grow hotter…. As for the arrowfish, they were completely flabbergasted….

Soon, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were as wide as saucers, as were the eyes of the boy up in the air. In a very short period of the time, not a single fish was able to fly out of the water!

Eventually, nothing was left of the water, not even water vapor. The arrowfish were completely powerless. By this point, the twenty-first level… was reaching the point of being a desert….

“Moonflower, baby, you really are awesome….” Bai Xiaochun was so excited he was almost dancing with joy.

High up in the air, the boy’s eyes were on the verge of exploding, and his heart trembled on the verge of collapse. What had seemingly been the perfect scenario had all been wrecked by a legendary immortal moonvine.

“An *immortal moonvine*!?!?!?” he exclaimed to himself. “How is this even possible!? Even in the days of the Immortal World, immortal moonvines were virtually extinct. According to the legends, they were very picky when it came to bonding with a master. They would only choose people who were pure and honest. Dammit! How could this shameless cheater qualify to bond with an immortal moonvine!?!?”

Despite how much it frustrated the boy, there was nothing he could do other than watch the twenty-first level turn into a scorching desert. And there was nothing he could do to prevent Bai Xiaochun from simply passing the level!

Upon watching the excited Bai Xiaochun fade away from the level along with his moonflower, the boy nearly burst into tears.

“Damn that shameless cheater! I hereby swear an oath that I won’t let you succeed! You’ll never become the successor of the sovereign. A person like you would only stain the glory of the Immortal World. And I would never, ever, *ever* acknowledge a person like you as my lord and master! You’re the most shameless person I've ever encountered in my entire life!! Next time I awake, I’ll definitely destroy you! I swear it!!” Of course, the boy was none other than the damaged fan’s spirit automaton. After swearing his oath, he ground his teeth as he faded away and went back to sleep.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1117 awe-chapter-1118

Naturally, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hear the oath sworn by the boy, nor had he seen him in the twenty-first level. However, he was very suspicious of how things had gone.

“I wonder if that spirit automaton changed the difficulty level on me?” Although he had his suspicions, he was pleased to have passed the level.

“It’s hard to say. The spirit automaton can’t stay awake for very long. I’ll wait a bit and then try another level, and see how hard it is. That should answer the question.” Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best idea, he sent out a thought and vanished from within the damaged fan. When he reappeared, he was in the north of the second immortal domain, back in the Eternal Lands.

Three months passed in which he mostly cultivated via breathing exercises, but also spent some time going out to check on things in Mistysea Prefecture. By now, it was very clear that, under the leadership of the Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster, the prefecture was making rapid progress.

It was also obvious that Mistysea Prefecture was becoming more popular in the region. People from the Heavenspan Realm showed up on almost a daily basis. Furthermore, just as the Grand Heavenmaster had planned, they began to promote Mistysea Prefecture as the best place to get spirit enhancements. Even now, it was possible to see that it would eventually be known as the Prefecture of Spirit Enhancements.

As Mistysea Prefecture developed, many merchants from the second immortal domain began to do business there. As a result, the booming prosperity of the prefecture was clear for all to see.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with it all, and was aware that none of it would have been possible without the hard work of the Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster. If he didn’t have them helping him, especially the Grand Heavenmaster with his profound administrative skills, things would have been a complete mess.

Also during the three months that passed, Bai Xiaochun would occasionally challenge the trials in the damaged fan. Soon, his previous speculations were confirmed. After the twenty-first level, he quickly passed six levels in a row. Although they were difficult, they all seemed to conform to the same general rule systems, unlike the twenty-first. The twenty-first had been a maddening fluke.

Sometimes, he would fail to pass a level immediately, but after challenging it a few times, would figure out the specific rules governing the level, and would pass it easily. That seemed to prove that something suspicious had been going on earlier.

“It was definitely that spirit automaton making mischief. It’ll just never be satisfied, will it?” After that, he was much more careful when challenging the trials. Another month passed, and he reached the twenty-ninth level. After that much time without any increase in the level of difficulty, he breathed a sigh of relief.

As Mistysea Prefecture continued to grow and develop, Bai Xiaochun encountered another problem.

Manpower!

Mistysea Prefecture's population was simply too low, and there weren't enough people from the Heavenspan Realm to perform spirit enhancements. Because of that, the Grand Heavenmaster's plan was not being carried out as quickly as it could have been.

Bai Xiaochun had an idea about what to do. In the following days, he didn't spend much time working on the challenges in the damaged fan. Instead, he spent some time discussing the matter with the Frigid Matriarch in the Greatsword of the North.

Back when he had initially summoned the Greatsword of the North back in the climactic battle with Daoist Heavenspan, all of the people in the north had been sucked into the sword.

Of course, most of the northerners had already been mobilized to fight in the war, but there were still more people inside the sword than were currently in Mistysea Prefecture. If those people could be brought out and added to the population of Mistysea Prefecture, then development would advance by leaps and bounds.

Excited, Bai Xiaochun spent a lot of time talking with the Frigid Matriarch about the subject. A month later, when his cultivation base reached the peak of the early Celestial Realm thanks to his gains made in the damaged fan, an agreement was finally reached.

The Frigid Matriarch approved of the level of his cultivation base, and although she didn't say it openly, Bai Xiaochun could sense that his control of the Greatsword of the North was now different than before.

Specifically, he could sense that a mere thought on his part could bring all of the northern cultivators out of the sword and into his presence.

After performing some initial tests, he excitedly summoned the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King. Together, they went to a wide, mountainous valley within Mistysea Prefecture, whereupon Bai Xiaochun produced the sword and prepared to free all the people therein.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as blue light spilled out of the Greatsword of the North. The entire valley trembled as one figure after another emerged into the Eternal Immortal Domains, confused expressions on their faces.

Of course, neither the Grand Heavenmaster nor the Giant Ghost King were familiar with any of these cultivators. But Bai Xiaochun had spent time in the north, and was essentially a household name there. Of course, these cultivators didn’t know about how the Heavenspan Realm was no more, and neither did they know anything about the enormous sovereign in the sky above. Therefore, they were all visibly confused and shaken.

In the end, the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King were actually more skilled in allaying the confusion of the masses than Bai Xiaochun was. Therefore, they sent their divine sense out to explain the situation. Half a month later, everyone was out of the Greatsword of the North, and whether they found the situation easy to accept or not, had no choice but to begin their new lives in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Actually, they were luckier than the rest of their fellow Heavenspan cultivators, who had experienced the destruction of heaven and earth, and had been teleported out into strange lands to be lost, enslaved, or worse.

The newly arrived cultivators had a long road in front of them, and the Grand Heavenmaster did his best to inspire and motivate them to help in the development of Mistysea Prefecture.

Although not as many of them were adept at spirit enhancement as there would have been if they were Wildlanders, there were still some. Furthermore, the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King were both connoisseurs of the art. And there was little need to mention Bai Xiaochun, who was the Heavenspan Realm’s only heavenly necromancer. All of that ensured that Mistysea Prefecture would only continue to develop rapidly in the days to come.

The prefecture flourished, and more merchants came to do business. Thanks to the promotional efforts of the Grand Heavenmaster, people were already starting to call it by the moniker Prefecture of Spirit Enhancements. People in the know all over the Eternal Immortal Domains were saying that Mistysea Prefecture was the only place to get spirit enhancements!

Although there were people from the Heavenspan Realm in other locations who could perform spirit enhancements, the Grand Heavenmaster convinced Bai Xiaochun to spread word that he was the Ultimate Enhancer in the Eternal Immortal Domains! And who could compete with that?

Once people began talking about the Ultimate Enhancer, it had a profound effect on Mistysea Prefecture!

It was virtually on a daily basis that people from the Heavenspan Realm came to join them. As for Celestial Aged Spirit, he and Bai Xiaochun already had a tacit agreement. As far as Celestial Aged Spirit was concerned, as long as the profoundly troublesome Bai Xiaochun didn’t interfere with his interests directly, then it wasn’t worth it to offend him.

And then there was the Saint-Emperor. He could only sigh at the news of Mistysea Prefecture’s development. Although he could guess what Bai Xiaochun’s ultimate plan was, in the end, it would benefit him as well. As such, there was little he could do. Perhaps if he wasn’t aware of how much of a disaster Bai Xiaochun could be, he might have tried to interfere. But those days were long gone.

Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, and could be profoundly dangerous. He was also the true master of the Eternal Turtle. The Saint-Emperor could only imagine what would happen if he stopped Mistysea Prefecture from progressing, and then Bai Xiaochun came to Saint-Emperor City for any length of time.... That was the final factor that made his decision.

“Let him do whatever he wants!”

And thus, Mistysea Prefecture buzzed with activity. More and more people were talking about the Prefecture of Spirit Enhancements, even in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. When Bai Xiaochun saw that nobody was coming to cause any trouble, he sighed with relief, and then focused more energy on the damaged fan.

In one incredible run, he got all the way through the twenty-ninth level. After catching his breath, he excitedly stepped into the thirtieth level. However, it was in that exact moment that the spirit automaton, which had been asleep for months now, woke up again.

“You shameless villain! I'm back! And this time, if I don’t destroy you, I’ll change my surname to match yours!! I swear it!” It was with narrowed eyes that the spirit automaton boy headed directly toward the thirtieth level.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1118 awe-chapter-1119

He was in the thirtieth level!

Leaden clouds filled the sky, and endless mountains stretched out in all directions. Occasionally, certain mountains would rise high above the others, almost like smokestacks. In fact, the thick smoke that belched from those mountains made the entire world murky and gray.

The smoke had a medicinal aroma to it, but the medicinal effects were varied and chaotic, almost toxic. Perhaps because of how that toxic gas filled the world, there wasn’t any life visible.

The lands were barren, and any plants which existed seem to be withered and stunted because of the toxins.

No birds could be seen flying in the sky, and countless skeletons of various creatures covered the mountains. The entire place seemed almost like a huge tomb.

Bai Xiaochun was stunned, both by the toxic smoke, and also a strange, thumping sound.

“That sound is so familiar… what’s this level about?!” There was indeed something very familiar about this place, and as for the toxins in the smoke, he remembered creating such elements himself on numerous occasions.

However, this toxic smoke seemed much stronger than the type he had created in the past. After only being in the level for half an incense stick’s worth of time, he felt as uncomfortable as if a sharp knife were slicing at his throat.

And then he realized what the thumping sounds were: exploding pill furnaces….

“Heavens! I can’t believe a place like this exists….” Shivering, he jumped out of the way of a passing cloud of toxins, and then began searching for a way out of this wasteland.

Because of how strange this level was, he was being even more careful than usual. Unfortunately, no amount of searching revealed an exit of any sort. Furthermore, his passage tended to kick up larger amounts of toxic smoke. On more than one occasion, he saw a mountain get covered with the stuff, and by the time the smoke cleared, all of the vegetation on the mountain had been melted.

And that was only the beginning. As time progressed, Bai Xiaochun came to find that the effects of the smoke were unbelievably dramatic.

For example, on one occasion, he saw a quaint little stream hit by the smoke, after which it turned pitch black, and began to emanate an aura of profound toxicity.

On a few occasions when he wasn’t paying close attention, he breathed in some of the smoke, which caused his guts to twist painfully. Face falling, he quickly ingested some antidotal medicinal pills to counteract the effects. Sadly, the rumbling sounds in his belly didn’t go away, and he was forced to find a random cave…. Sometime later he emerged, clearly physically weaker than before.

“Dammit! I can’t believe there are laxative properties in that smoke too! I'm a celestial! I mastered the Undying Codex! How could I possibly be affected by this kind of stuff!?” He was now nervous about running into some toxic smoke that had the same properties as his Aphrodisiac Pills. The consequences of that happening were simply unimaginable.

“Dammit! I’m supposed to be the one giving pills to other people! This thirtieth level is really strange. I can’t believe that it can actually hurt me!” Shaken by how difficult this level was, he cautiously sent out some divine sense to try to get a better understand of the place.

Before long, a strange expression could be seen on his face as he realized that there were tribes of living beings located in the mountains!

The reason he called them tribes was because they wore crude, ancient-style clothing, much like the savage giants in Wildlands had worn. And yet… the creatures in these tribes could concoct medicinal pills!

Even more unbelievable was that, although these living creatures resembled people, they were very small. They were imps, the largest among them only about the size of an average person’s hand.

Most of them were actually thumb-sized. Many of them, in the middle of their pill concocting, would suddenly jump up and dance with joy, seemingly crazed. They would also jabber in a way that he found impossible to understand.

It was actually a somewhat familiar scene, and reminded him of himself when he passed certain critical points in concocting medicine….

As for the streams of smoke, they were rising up from the tribes as a result of their pill concocting.

When Bai Xiaochun noticed the expressions on the faces of the imps, he was shocked, but at the same time, understood everything. This world had once been a wonderful place, but it had been ruined by the imps’ pill concocting. Countless living creatures had been killed by the toxic poison, and innumerable plants had been driven to extinction. Even the land and sky itself was withering because of it.

“Utterly terrifying,” he murmured, blinking a few times. Considering how horrifying his own pill concocting often went, he actually felt quite a bit of respect for these imps. At the same time, now that he had found someone on a similar level as himself, he was almost itching to see if they were a match for him.

Considering the types of problems that happened when he concocted pills, he had held back for a long time. But after catching a whiff of the toxic odor caused by the imps’ concocting efforts, he suddenly felt like he couldn’t control himself any longer. He really felt like he had to show these imp apothecaries how awesome he was.

“Wait. No. I have to control myself!” After all, his goal was simply to get past this level, so having a competition with the imps would be pointless.

Suppressing his impulses, he tried to think seriously about the level around him. Looking up at the toxic smoke, and then back down at the pill concocting imps, he murmured, “Is the point of this level just to survive in hostile conditions?”

Meanwhile, up in the air, the damaged fan’s spirit automaton was there in the form of a boy, invisible and undetectable by Bai Xiaochun. Hands clasped behind his back, and looking very pleased with himself, he eyed Bai Xiaochun down below.

“The Dark Concocters caused a big headache for the exalted sovereign years ago. Their natural talents in pill concocting are unrivaled, and each and every one of them is completely obsessed with concocting pills. Worse, the medicinal pills they concoct are the type that no one under heaven would dare to eat. Even they won't consume their own pills.

“Hmmmphh! Back in the day, the sovereign would say that if the Dark Concocters were given the right circumstances and resources, they could destroy the entire starry sky. Although this place is only an illusion created with the power of the Dao Essence of Life and Death, it’s almost the same as if it were real. Unless this shameless cheater has the cultivation base of a sovereign, then he definitely won’t last for long here!

“Normally speaking, the requirement is to stay in this land for three days. But I’ll change the requirement from three days to 10,000! Alright, you rogue. If you manage to pass this level, I’ll change my surname to match yours!! I swear it!” At this point, the boy couldn’t help but laugh uproariously.

This time, he was absolutely convinced that he would come out victorious. No one could last for long when dealing with the toxic smoke created by the Dark Concocters. And unless they were careful, one could die a horrifying death. Furthermore, because the entire place was bolstered by the Dao Essence of Life and Death, the Dark Concocters could not be killed by means of the cultivation base. They could only be affected by medicinal toxins similar to their own. That was actually the only weakness to the level. One could theoretically pass the level by forcing all of the tribes that made up the Dark Concocters to surrender. If they all agreed to expel Bai Xiaochun, then according to the rules that governed the level, not even the spirit automaton could interfere.

“But that’s impossible. The Dark Concocters have never surrendered to anyone. Even the sovereign of years past only managed to reach an agreement with them. They’re not the type who will bow their heads.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, the boy began to laugh even harder. He simply couldn’t wait to see a look of true despair on Bai Xiaochun’s face.

In order to speed things along, the boy decided to ‘help’ Bai Xiaochun by alerting the Dark Concocters to his presence.

“Hmmmphh. Tribulation is coming your way, you shameless cheater!” Feeling very excited about what was to come, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed at the ground, causing invisible ripples to spread out through the world of the level.

Almost immediately, the imps in the various Dark Concocter tribes shivered and looked up. Despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun was hiding his cultivation base, they all suddenly looked in his direction, and could see him clearly!

“Someone finally came!”

Countless Dark Concocters poured out into the open, excited looks on their faces as they clamored at the tops of their lungs.

“He’s mine! I need him to be a test tube for my medicine! Don’t even think of trying to fight me for him!”

“Get out of my way, all of you. This test tube belongs to *my* tribe!!”

“Don’t run, test tube, we’re coming for you!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1119 awe-chapter-1120

Some of the imps wielded wooden rods that they would normally use to mix medicines. Others rode atop vicious beasts who had blank eyes but moved with surprising quickness. A few of them even carried pill furnaces with them.

Many of them had flamestones in hand. All looked particularly excited as they raced toward Bai Xiaochun. Apparently, now that they had ruined the world in which they lived, they were very excited to see a new ‘test tube’ arrive.

Furthermore, considering how large of a test tube he was, it meant that countless medicinal pills they had created over years of research could finally be properly tested. The imps couldn’t keep from hooting and hollering in excitement.

They were looking at Bai Xiaochun like a wolf looking at a beautiful woman, their eyes shining with passion, as if they wished to experiment with him and learn every little thing about him.

They were even struggling with each other to be first among the crowd, to the point where fights were breaking out. It was really very dramatic.

Before, heaven and earth had only been filled with the muffled boom of exploding pill furnaces, and had been relatively peaceful and quiet. But now, the entire place was buzzing, filled with shouts and cries of all sorts.

Bai Xiaochun looked around at the countless imps rushing out of the mountains like mice. Most of them were so smudged with dark soot from the exploding pill furnaces that they were pitch black. After a moment, their shouts and cries brought Bai Xiaochun back to his senses.

“Test tube?” At first he thought perhaps he had heard wrong, but after hearing the same thing a few times in a row, he started to get angry. “They’re calling me their test tube? Dammit! You people are the test tubes! Everyone in your clan is a test tube!!!”

Most people wouldn’t get so angry at being called something like that, but Bai Xiaochun was a grandmaster in the Dao of medicine, and had performed countless tests on animals.

It would be like if a pig butcher faced a mob who said that he was a pig that needed to be butchered. It was a level of insult that caused his hair to stand on end.

Even as Bai Xiaochun began to devolve into a rage, the incoming imps smiled, revealing yellowish teeth. At the same time, they began to pull out medicinal pills to throw at him.

“Hey, test tube, why don’t you try this pill? It’s been passed down for nine generations in my family? It’s called a Yin-Yang Retroversion Pill!”

“Don’t even think of trying to steal what’s mine, you! Come over here, test tube. Try *my* pill. I just perfected the formula recently. It’s called a Burping Pill. After you consume it, your burps will smell like food you ate last year!”

“Get the hell out of my way! It took me a hundred years to successfully concoct this Nine Lives Reincarnation Pill!”

Although none of the imps seemed to get along, they were all pulling out medicinal pills and throwing them at Bai Xiaochun. Clearly, it was a skill they possessed, and they had experience doing this sort of thing. Because of that, the medicinal pills would explode before they actually reached Bai Xiaochun, creating a toxic cloud that threatened to envelop him.

Shivering, Bai Xiaochun backed up. And yet, before he could even move, another wave of medicinal pills shot in his direction.

Booms rang out left and right, forcing Bai Xiaochun to dodge as quickly as he could. Unfortunately, there were a lot of imps, and thus, a lot of medicinal pills. Within only a few breaths’ worth of time, the entire area was covered with a powerful cloud of medicinal powder that was virtually impossible to escape.

Some of the imps were too slow, and couldn’t get close enough to throw pills. When they saw that Bai Xiaochun was just about to be overwhelmed by the medicinal pills, they started to get very nervous.

“Hold on, test tube! Try *my* medicinal pill!”

“Dammit, take mine too!” The multicolored cloud was quite a shocking sight to behold.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was in a very tight spot, and was just about to make his escape, when the cloud caught him and rolled over him….

But that wasn’t all. Many of the imps were intent on capturing him alive, and were therefore a bit nervous about how things were playing out….

“You people are outrageous! Just when we got this great new test tube, you’re going to go and kill him!?”

“Hold on! If we can’t catch him alive, we should at least try out this pill I’ve been working on for my entire life. It's called a Resurrection Pill!!”

“Hang in there, test tube. Try out my Integrated Super-Tonic Pill! That should keep you going for at least an incense stick’s worth of time!” And thus… even more medicinal pills shot forth and exploded.

The imps looked at the shocking cloud, eyes burning with anticipation and passion. They truly wanted to see what would happen when Bai Xiaochun absorbed the medicines they had researched and created, and if there were any unexpected developments. They were so excited that they began to argue amongst themselves.

“Do you know how hard it is to come across new test tubes? This might be the last one!”

“Aiya. I just hope that before this test tube dies, he can inhale some of my medicinal smoke…. It’s all your fault, people. How embarrassing for us Dark Concocters. Have you never seen a test tube before or something?”

As the imps argued, the boy that was the spirit automaton gasped and backed up a bit. Although he didn’t need to fear the medicinal smoke, it was so terrifying that even he felt chills.

“The sovereign was right. The Dark Concocters really are horrifying. Give them the right circumstances and resources, and they could definitely destroy the entire starry sky! They should make short work of that shameless bastard!” With that, the boy excitedly looked on to see what happened to

Bai Xiaochun. Even just imagining what was to come was quite pleasurable to him.

The Dark Concocters likewise all craned their necks, causing countless gazes to fall on the roiling smoke. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, a boom rang out as smoke erupted out in all directions. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun shot out from inside, his hair disheveled, his face smudged with black patches. His face was a mixture of red, pink, and yellow colors, almost as if he had been dyed. He really didn’t look to be in good shape at all.

In addition to fleeing, he was sneezing loudly. Even more exaggerated was the noxious stench which spread out in all directions, and the fact that tears were streaming down his cheeks. Then he opened his mouth as if to shout, only to spit out a ball of fire....

He was itching everywhere, especially in his private parts, enraging him to the point where he was nearly senseless. All of these were things that he had never experienced before in life.

Worst of all was that a multitude of marks had appeared on his face.... There was a tortoise, a bird, a dog, a tree leaf, and many others. Some even looked like pill furnaces. Some were even repeats of other marks.

“That’s my mark! Hahaha! The test tube got one of my medicinal pills! I'm definitely the newest *Patriarch Mystery Pill!”*

“Hey, my mark is there too! See that little tortoise!? This is awesome!”

“Dammit! Why isn’t my mark there? *Why?!?!* I threw out over a hundred pills!”

“Don’t even try to compete with me. I'm definitely the Dark Concocters’ new *Patriarch Mystery Pill!!”*

Of course, the Dark Concocters had long since reached a point in the Dao of medicine where they could cause personal marks to appear on people who had consumed their medicinal pills. Thus, those who didn’t see any marks were beating their chests and stamping their feet in lamentation.

Bai Xiaochun was feeling all sorts of strange sensations, from tickling to torment. And then he heard the things the imps were saying, and his eyes turned crimson. Unheard-of levels of rage began to course through him as he descended into madness.

He was the one who used medicinal pills to deal with people! Now, for the first time, he was being harmed by the effects of unusual medicinal pills. It was a feeling that had him hovering on the verge of insanity.

Plus, as a grandmaster of the Dao of medicine, the vicious banter and ridicule of the imps was even more humiliating.

“Complete and utter bullying!!! Dammit, you people are forcing my hand! Let me tell you, when I get pissed off, I frighten even myself!! I’ll show you who’s the *true*… *Patriarch Mystery Pill!!!”* Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a handful of medicinal pills.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1120 awe-chapter-1121

Bai Xiaochun forced himself to simply deal with the incredible itchiness he felt. To deal with those areas where he couldn't scratch, he simply clamped his legs together tightly. His face was a purplish-red color, and tears continued to flow down his face as he sneezed over and over again. There was also a burning heat that filled him that was driving him crazy.

“This is ridiculous bullying! You people are all bullies!!” As he shivered, rage coursed through him, battering at his mind, filling him with thunderous rumbling sounds.

Finally, he howled and slapped his bag of holding to produce a handful of pills. He wanted revenge! He wanted these imps to realize that on the treacherous path of concocting mystery pills, Bai Xiaochun was the top expert!

And experts don't like to be challenged!

As it happened, the first thing he pulled out was the strange soul medicine he had used in the Wildlands when he was in conflict with the other two celestial necromancers. It was a toxic medicine that led to flatulence and even diarrhea.

However, as soon as he pulled the pills out, he realized that there was a problem. When inventing and concocting this type of medicine, he had never come up with a name for the pill. Now that he was using it in public fashion, it definitely needed a name!

“You people are going to know exactly what makes Bai Xiaochun terrifying!” he shouted. “Body-Purifying Filth-

Expelling Pill!!”

The pills flew forth, and then he waved his sleeve, causing them to explode and become a fine powder that spread out on the wind.

In order to make the best use of the effects of the medicine, he employed the greatest speed he possibly could to fly around and throw out as many of his Body-Purifying Filth-Expelling Pills at the Dark Concocters as he could.

Cracking sounds rang out, and the imps looked around in astonishment. After all, most of them had a hard time recalling how long it had been since someone had dared to use pill concocting to challenge them.

In fact, it actually got them excited, and many threw their heads back and laughed uproariously.

“Hahaha! Who would have thought that we would find a kindred spirit here? Nice job, test tube. Very nice job!”

“I like you, test tube. I think I’ll try your medicinal pill to see exactly what it can do!”

“Don’t even think of trying to steal this pill. This is a pill duel! I can’t believe that there's a cultivator who actually dares to take on us Dark Concocters. Hey, test tube, I really admire your bravery!” The Dark Concocters didn’t seem afraid at all, and excitedly struggled to be the first among their fellows to get to the medicine. It was with almost drunken passion that they tried to inhale the crushed powder.

Bai Xiaochun almost couldn’t believe what he was seeing. Furious, he threw out even more medicinal pills, not even bothering to worry how it might affect his overall supplies.

Before long, nearly the whole area was covered with the powder from the Body-Purifying Filth-Expelling Pills. The imps struggled excitedly to breathe in the powder, and then began to wait in anticipation to see what would happen. Soon, strange expressions broke out on their faces.

In the blink of an eye, *phhhhhhrt* sounds began to ring out, and some of the imps even clutched their stomachs and squatted into a sitting position….

“Ah, it causes diarrhea! Hey, test tube, you’re plagiarizing our medicinal pills! Is that all you can do?!”

“I'm impressed. Not a bad medicinal pill. However, definitely not on the level of our pills!”

“You think this kind of pill will earn you the title of *Patriarch Mystery Pill?* I can think of 1,600 different ways of neutralizing this thing.” Numerous imps began pulling out a variety of different antidotes, which they calmly consumed. Clearly, their level of endurance surpassed anything Bai Xiaochun could have imagined. Many of them continued to loudly expel noxious gas, and yet, simply stood there, looking completely calm and unfazed.

Furthermore, the derisive looks and sarcastic comments made the entire thing even more humiliating.

“Hold your horses!” Bai Xiaochun said, snorting coldly. “Do you really think I would challenge you with only one medicinal pill?!” With that, he waved his hand to produce some of the medicinal pills he had created in the Blood Stream Sect when trying to work with refined corpses, that caused long hair to grow out everywhere on one’s body.

A vast number of such pills flew out, followed by popping sounds as they exploded. As the powder spread out, the imps seemed to be taking everything completely in stride. They didn’t even attempt to prevent the medicinal power from landing on them.

Before long, they began to grow long, luxuriant hair of various colors. Within moments, many of the Dark Concocters looked like big balls of puffy fur.

“Eee?! This medicinal pill isn’t bad at all!”

“So, it grows hair. Heavens! How come I never thought of that? It’s a bit itchy though!”

“So, you do have a bit of skill after all, test tube. It won’t do you much good though. Check out this antidote!”

Although the imps were initially shocked, they quickly realized they could neutralize the medicinal pill, causing the newly grown hair to begin to shrink back.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very worried yet. He hated these imps quite a bit already, and was also a grandmaster in the Dao of medicine. Furthermore, he knew that using one medicinal pill wouldn’t be as effective as using many. Therefore, he began to throw out more pills.

Before the entire group of imps could completely deal with the previous pill, his eyes glittered as he resorted to using one of his three super-pills… the Breakup Pill!

Incredible rumblings sounds shook heaven and earth as the Breakup Pills exploded, transforming into a powder that filled the area. It didn’t even need the wind to move, and it was immediately absorbed into the bodies of any of the imps that it touched.

Breakup Pills were very unique, and the Dark Concocters almost immediately noticed this. Even from the way it disseminated, they could tell that there was something different about it.

And yet, they were still confident, and didn’t even back up. Some of them were even laughing loudly, and intentionally breathing it in. It didn’t take long before, among those who had intentionally breathed it in, strange expressions appeared.

“This medicinal pill… has some very strange qualities!”

“It actually affects your emotions! What pill is this!?” Before any of the imps could begin to study the matter closely, the medicinal effects of the Breakup Pills began to manifest.

“Get away from me! I've decided that my true love is the path of medicine! I'm not meant for you. Let’s break up!”

“Break up! From now on, you do your thing, and I’ll do mine. And by the way, give me back all those medicinal pills I gave you!” A buzz of conversation immediately filled the Dark Concocters. The emotional changes among the imps were clearly visible, and as for those who hadn’t been infected by the Breakup Pill, they were clearly shocked to see what was happening. Furthermore, they quickly took out various antidotes to see if they could neutralize the effects.

However, for the first time, their incredibly effective ability to neutralize medicinal effects did not go as smoothly as before. Although there was some success, it wasn’t possible to completely negate the effects in a short time.

By now, Bai Xiaochun’s strategy was starting to take effect. Not only did they have to worry about the growing hair, but there was also the effect of the Breakup Pills. And there were even some who were still dealing with diarrhea and flatulence.

As the cries of alarm rose up, the Dark Concocters finally began to show signs of fear. Even the spirit automaton up in the air was surprised, and was finally starting to realize that he might have underestimated Bai Xiaochun.

And yet, not a one of them had truly come to understand Bai Xiaochun. Of his three most powerful pills, he still had two more to choose from, both of which were so shocking that even ghosts and gods would fear them!

They were his trump cards when it came to medicinal pills, his Fantasy Pill and his Aphrodisiac Pill!

They were equally vicious, and it was hard to say which was more powerful. If he had greater reserve stocks, he wouldn’t have saved this pill, but now, he gritted his teeth and produced…

An Aphrodisiac Pill!

As soon as the pill appeared, it was as if the spirit of the world around him shuddered in terror. Thunderous rumblings filled the area, provoking a gasp on the part of Bai Xiaochun. But then, a look of pity appeared on his face as he flicked his sleeve and tossed some Aphrodisiac Pills out.

“Weep. Struggle. It will do no good. You think a lot of yourselves, Dark Concocters, but in a moment, you will know who your true patriarch is!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1121 awe-chapter-1122

The Aphrodisiac Pill, one of Bai Xiaochun three most powerful pills, had proved its formidability on numerous occasions; there could be no doubt that it was peerless in its ability to drive people to complete insanity. If it weren't for the fact that his stocks were running low, he would have thrown out even more than he had, just to make sure that these bastard apothecaries knew what it meant to tremble in despair.

Besides, whether it was in terms of the physical size of the pills, or their strength, they were far beyond anything that these diminutive Dark Concocters could bear. Even the relatively small amount that he had tossed out effectively counted for ten times what it normally would have!

With one flick of his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun deployed roughly one third of the total number of Aphrodisiac Pills he had left in his bag of holding. It was even as the Dark Concocters were still dealing with the Breakup Pills that this new pill arrived, a pill that would lead to a catastrophic tribulation the likes of which they could never conceptualize, even in their wildest imaginings!

Thumping bangs could be heard as the pills exploded, resulting in something quite different than the explosion of the Breakup Pill, or any other pill for that matter. This pill created a pink smoke that was somehow indescribably enticing. Thanks to repeated testing and improvement over the years, that pink smoke moved with freakish speed, almost instantly covering the entire area.

Even those imps who were quick to react still felt their hearts beginning to race in unusual fashion. They quickly performed incantation gestures, either utilizing certain techniques to negate medicinal effects, or producing medicinal pills that could create wind, which they hoped would drive the pink smoke away, or melt it. Unfortunately for them, the smoke created by an Aphrodisiac Pill was not the type that could be negated by ordinary wind!

As the Dark Concocters struggled in complete futility against the Aphrodisiac Pill smoke, time seemed to slow, and all heaven and earth came to be covered with pink smoke.

In the blink of an eye, it became apparent that no matter what techniques or medicinal pills the Dark Concocters used, they were like peasants meeting an emperor. They were the ones to be driven away as the entire world became pink!

Some of the imps tried to back up, but by the time they did, it was too late.... Some of them, upon inhaling the smoke, began to shiver in unprecedented fashion, and their eyes turned crimson. From the expressions on their faces, it seemed like they would lose their minds at any moment.

“What pill was that!?”

“Heavens! Something’s wrong. Very wrong! Why do I feel myself heating up? What’s going on here?!”

“Agggghhhh! I'm gonna lose my mind! I can’t control myself! I'm gonna blow. I'm gonna blooowww!”

Soon, the Dark Concocters had devolved into a complete uproar of madness and disbelief. Many of them simply began howling as if they had gone completely insane.

Bereft of thinking ability, they were overcome by waves of intense heat, and began to pant heavily. Those among them who were unusually tall and burly seemed to have transformed into something completely different than before. Howling, they turned and pounced on their fellows.

If everyone within the smoke caused by the Aphrodisiac Pill had been affected, it would have been less horrific.... But there were simply too many imps, and only a portion of them had breathed in the smoke. That meant that many of the imps who were pounced on had never ingested any of the Aphrodisiac Pills....

Bloodcurdling screams erupted out, as well as bellows of madness and terror!

“What are you doing? Hey! Y-y-you....”

“No! Get back! Heavens! How could you be doing this!?!?”

“Dammit! Five of you at the same time!? Get away from me! Get away!”

The world was thrown into complete and utter chaos, to the level that it defied description. Anyone who could see it would likely begin to question the meaning of life.

What was even worse was that many of the imps were still under the effects of the Breakup Pills. When those effects were combined with the effects of the Aphrodisiac Pills, there was no way to dispel them. It would push the victim back and forth between lucidity and mental derangement, a volcanic mental bombardment that few could withstand.

If that were all there were to it, it might not have been much to worry about. But at the moment, there were simply too many pills in the mix. When the pills that grew hair were added in, along with the Body-Purifying Filth-Expelling Pills, it was like pouring oil onto a fire. Howls of grief, swearing, cursing, agonized shrieks, and other sounds of struggle caused heaven and earth to shake violently.

Those imps who were some distance away, and had thus managed to avoid being affected as much, had it easier off. But those near the epicenter were in absolute pandemonium.

To those among the Dark Concocters who were still in possession of their mental faculties, it seemed like they were now in the depths of hell. As they looked around, they trembled, they gasped, and then they focused on Bai Xiaochun, their expressions those of both astonishment and rage.

“Are you looking to die, test tube?!?!”

“How dare you duel with us in medicines! You’re dead, test tube! You’re going to lose for sure!!”

“These medicinal pills might be terrifying, but we can negate them!”

The lucid imps were shaken, but they were a proud lot, and their confidence bolstered them. Although the Dark Concocters had long since broken up into numerous smaller tribes, they could still work together towards a common purpose when necessary. Therefore, the lucid ones among them began to pull out their most treasured medicines to neutralize the effects of the Aphrodisiac Pills.

True to their word, they were very skilled, and as the treasured pills flowed out, the toxins were slowly neutralized. The smoke from the Aphrodisiac Pills began to disperse, and its medicinal effects were being suppressed.

Slowly, the imps who had been affected by the Aphrodisiac Pills began to come to their senses, and when they realized what they were doing, screamed so loudly in rage that the sky went dim.

Things were going exactly as Bai Xiaochun had predicted. As he hovered there in midair, he laughed coldly, his expression that of complete pride as he waved his sleeve to produce another collection of medicinal pills!

“Oh Dark Concocters, do you really think that your patriarch would only have those pills on him? As I told you, when I get pissed off, I frighten even myself! Next up, Fantasy Pills!!”

With that, he tossed out all of the pills he had just produced!

Rumbling sounds filled the air as the Fantasy Pills were unleashed. Although Fantasy Pills weren’t necessarily as famous as Aphrodisiac Pills, they could technically be considered the first mystery pill that Bai Xiaochun had ever concocted!

If one said that Aphrodisiac Pills could unleash ultimate catastrophe, then Fantasy Pills could be said to unleash all of the potential of one’s desires. The smoke spread out in the blink of an eye, pushed by the power of Bai Xiaochun’s celestial cultivation base to rapidly fill much of the world around him!

Tribulation… was nigh!

Before, there had been some lucid Dark Concocters who could use their vast stores of medicinal pills to aid their maddened fellows. But now… as the smoke from the Fantasy Pills spread, all of them began to tremble, whether they had been lucid or not….

Gasps could be heard, and eyes went blank, and then… the Dark Concocters began to descend into hallucination.

One of the imps curled up into a ball and tried to throw himself around like a medicinal pill. “Throw me! I'm a medicinal pill! Hahaha! I'm the first godly pill in all creation!”

Another one began bashing his head against a nearby rock.

In another area, a group of five imps linked hands and began to sing.

They were all going crazy…. The Dark Concocters had gone mad. The final unleashing of the Fantasy Pills completely stripped them of their mental faculties. Because of the stacked effects of the pills, many had long hair, and some were still plagued by horrific flatulence. Those who had been temporarily saved from the Aphrodisiac Pill once again were gripped by its madness. Even powerful gods who saw this scene would be struck by the sheer preposterous nature of what was happening….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1122 awe-chapter-1123

Bai Xiaochun only looked at the scene for a moment before averting his gaze. And it almost wasn't necessary to mention the spirit automaton up in the sky. Originally, he had been proudly waiting for Bai Xiaochun to make a fool of himself.

But now, he was completely and utterly stunned, to the point where he almost didn't dare to believe that what he was seeing was true. The Dark Concocters had gone completely mad. The screams, the gasps, the bellows, and even the occasional sighs of contentment mixed together until the spirit automaton shivered and rubbed his eyes.

"This is impossible…" he muttered to himself. "I'm definitely seeing things…. Hahaha! That's right. It's an illusion. Just an illusion…."

As of this point, his understanding of life was changing completely.

Unfortunately for him, after double- and triple-checking, and even checking his ears to make sure they were working properly, he realized that the scene in front of him was real. At that point, he gasped, his mind reeling.

"They're… they're the Dark Concocters! Even the sovereign feared them! Dammit! They… they must not be the *real* Dark Concocters!" He wanted to cry. Never could he have imagined that the shameless cheater Bai Xiaochun would actually be more terrifying in pill concocting than the Dark Concocters.

“It’s fine. I’ll still be the victor here. The Dark Concocters’ true strength lies, not just in their ability to concoct mystery pills, but in their tenacity and unyielding nature. That is what makes them truly terrifying!

“I can say with absolute confidence that, once the Dark Concocters come back to their senses, they will work hard to rise to the top again. They will not allow anyone to pass this level!” The spirit automaton was almost going hysterical trying to comfort himself. After all, even though he wasn’t ready to admit it, Bai Xiaochun was almost too terrifying to deal with.

As for Bai Xiaochun, as he hovered in midair, he contemplated throwing out some more medicinal pills. However, after patting his bag of holding, he realized that his stores were running too low.

“No. As an apothecary myself, I understand how people like us think. Successful apothecaries have to be tenacious and unyielding. Giving up is not an option. You must have obsessive focus!” He glanced worriedly back at the Dark Concocters, well aware that although he could temporarily put them at a disadvantage, they would eventually regain their senses. And when that happened, the fact that he was running low on pills would be problematic. Eventually, he would run out, and then he would most likely suffer a defeat at the hands of these imps. And he could hardly stand to think about what that would entail.

After some thought, his eyes glittered, and he patted his bag of holding.

“How could I have forgotten that I have another outstanding asset other than my medicinal pills? And that is none other than my concocting methods themselves…. Strange things always happen when I concoct. In the past, I would have to work hard to avoid such scenarios, or contain the effects. But here… strange effects are exactly what I need!

“As far as the ingredients… I don’t have too many, but the Dark Concocters surely do….” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he burst into motion. Taking advantage of the how the Dark Concocters were in the grip of madness, he headed toward the nearest of their tribal headquarters.

Just as he had guessed, the mountain homes of the Dark Concocters were filled with endless supplies of medicinal ingredients. There were beast bones, medicinal plants, strange rocks and pebbles, and other things that he had never seen before. A quick glance proved that, although these things looked real, just like the entire world around them, they were actually partly real and partly illusory.

However, they would suffice to concoct some medicinal pills. As for what kinds of pills they would make, it was hard to say at the moment. But Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to spend time considering the subject. He just needed the Dark Concocters to surrender!

“If I want to get past this level, I have to make these Dark Concocters bow their heads!” Taking a deep breath, he sped from one tribal headquarters to another, using all of the skills he had developed in the Wildlands to perfect effect. He was like a locust that swept through the mountains, taking everything down to the grass and roots.

Unfortunately, there was a huge number of tribal headquarters, some large and some small. Despite how skilled he was at this sort of thing, he didn’t have time to visit them all. After about two hours passed, he had gone through about seventy percent, which was when the imps began to regain their senses.

As they regained lucidity, and thought back to all of the dreadful things that they had done in the past two hours, they began to shout loudly in rage.

“I'm gonna kill you!!”

“The Dark Concocters will destroy you or die in the attempt, test tube!!”

“You’re dead! Aaaaaagggghhhhh. I hereby swear that in the end, either you will exist, or the Dark Concocters will, but not both!!”

Innumerable imps raged with more madness than they ever had in their entire lives. It was a level of fury that reached into the heavens, spawned by a humiliation the likes of which could never be expunged!

By now, they no longer wanted Bai Xiaochun to be their test tube. The only thing they wanted to do was torment him for 10,000 years!

All of them began to produce mystery pills that had either been passed down through the generations in their clans, or that they had personally concocted. From the way their murderous auras raged to the heavens, it seemed they would be willing to destroy the world if it meant getting their hands on Bai Xiaochun.

One could only imagine the battle of medicinal pills that would erupt if they found him!!

However, by the time the Dark Concocters devolved into a maelstrom of anger, Bai Xiaochun had already taken steps to prevent them from finding him. Having learned from his initial mistake of staying in one place, he was now moving from place to place via teleportation. On the one hand, he was truly shocked by how quickly the imps had recovered, but on the other hand, wasn’t willing to just give up.

“Hmph! You people just wait. Things aren’t over yet!” He quickly produced a collection of small pill furnaces, as well as a few larger ones, and began to concoct.

“You think I’m afraid of a little war of attrition?” Gritting his teeth, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and began to divide the medicinal plants up and then throw them into the pill furnaces, which quickly began to vibrate.

Once Bai Xiaochun started concocting medicine, he would quickly sink into a state of madness. His eyes were already bloodshot as he focused, not on making pills, but on creating unusual side-effects.

Before long, the Dark Concocters found his current hiding place, where the pill furnaces were already bright red, and showing signs of imminent explosion. In the past, Bai Xiaochun would have been shocked and terrified at such a sight, but now, he was beaming with joy. Flicking his sleeve, he sent the pill furnaces flying out into the open.

He didn’t even aim them. He just sent them flying out randomly. Moments later, booms began to ring out one after another, followed by the enraged roars of the imps. At that point, he vanished, reappearing in another hiding place, where he continued his concocting work.

Three days passed, and the Dark Concocters were even more angry than before. To them, the past three days had been pure torment. Not only was the force of the exploding pill furnaces tremendous in general, but Bai Xiaochun had especially large pill furnaces that were extremely shocking to the diminutive Dark Concocters.

And there was more to it than that…. On the third day, dark clouds formed in the sky, and acid rain began to fall.

When the acid rain hit the imps, their clothing melted, and they were wracked with incredible pain. Even the ground began to corrode, as did the mountain peaks.

“Heavens! This is no ordinary acid rain. This stuff is hypertoxic!!”

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!”

The imps were completely swept up in raging madness. But then, violet lightning bolts began to fall from the sky, smashing into the ground over and over again in completely relentless fashion….

Soon, none of the Dark Concocters dared to even go out into the open. They could only cower in their mountain caves. And yet… the biggest tribulation of all had yet to come.

Mist began to seep into their caves….

It was extremely pungent, and to the horror of the Dark Concocters, it contained some of the effects of both Aphrodisiac Pills and Fantasy Pills. In the past, they had experienced this horror for two short hours, but now… it was happening without stop!!

“Heavens, how could this be happening!?!?”

“No, just let me die….”

“This is impossible! What sin did we Dark Concocters commit!? Why is God punishing us in this way!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1123 awe-chapter-1124

However, the Dark Concocters were tenacious to the core, and definitely not the type who would surrender easily. That was only to be expected from a people who had so thoroughly impressed the sovereign to whom the damaged fan once belonged.

Most other folk would have collapsed by this point. After all, the Dark Concocters had already suffered so many setbacks that it didn’t seem possible for it to get any worse.

First was the deluge of acid rain, then the violet lightning, both of which left the entire world riddled with pits and craters. It was so bad it seemed like the land might be wiped out of existence soon.

The mountain peaks were equally devastated, full of holes, and almost devoid of vegetation. The entire world had been severely damaged.

Furthermore, the medicinal mist which had begun to spread out now filled the mountains. It was like the final straw for the Dark Concocters, something that pushed them to the point of wishing they could die….

And that was not even to mention that pill furnaces continued to explode here and there, the noise and reverberations of which made it impossible for the imps to get any rest.

It was torment that most living beings would not be able to endure. And yet, despite that, and despite the moaning and groaning that could be heard constantly, the Dark Concocters endured!

For an entire month!

In the end, even Bai Xiaochun had to admit that he admired them. Although they were infuriating, each and every one had what it took to be a good apothecary.

“I should really show some respect to apothecaries like this.” Bai Xiaochun was fully convinced that he needed to use his remaining supplies to continue working, to continue researching new side-effects. Only by doing that could he show that he was a truly mighty apothecary.

And therefore… he sank deeper into his work, producing even more mystery pills and freakish side-effects. It was truly a thing of nightmares.

Three long months passed. By this time, the Dark Concocters wept on a daily basis. Some of them seemed to be gasping their last breaths, wracked by despair. During the months which had passed, they had used every trick in the book to try to negate the medicines assailing them, all to no avail. They were completely demoralized by the terrifying entity they were up against.

“We’re not afraid of dying. Nor are we afraid of our people being wiped out of existence. We're not even afraid of humiliation. But being crushed by medicinal pills in this way leaves us stripped of our ideals, stripped of our passion in life! This is truly the worst of all possible nightmares!”

“He’s not human! He’s a pill devil! He’s a monster of medicinal pills!!”

“We thought early on that he had shown his truly terrifying nature. How could he possibly have only become more and more terrifying?!”

“Oh, heavens! How could a person like this even exist?!?!”

“Why did we Dark Concocters have to meet this person?!?!” For the first time since this world was created, the leaders of the various tribes all met together. They braved the terrifying toxic smoke and mist, somehow controlling their impulses to have a short meeting.

During the meeting, the leaders all reached an agreement. Originally, none of them had been willing to surrender, but now, they all agreed that the mystery pill devil had to be driven away!

All of the Dark Concocters agreed on this point. As soon as the news broke, all of the imps, even the ones who seemed to be on their last legs, began to shout out at the tops of their lungs.

“Make him leave!”

“We can’t afford to provoke him anymore. Get him out of here!”

“Make him leave! We’ll do anything!”

This world was part of the damaged fan, and had been created by a sovereign from the Immortal World. Furthermore, it had been forged using the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and therefore, as long as the Dark Concocters all agreed, then not even the spirit automaton could do anything to change the result.

As for that spirit automaton, he had reached a state of madness even earlier than the Dark Concocters, and that was just from watching things play out.

He finally realized that he had underestimated Bai Xiaochun. Not only was Bai Xiaochun just generally shameless, but he was especially shameless in his pill concocting. In all the years the spirit automaton had existed, this was definitely the most shameless entity he had ever come across.

The mere thought of how the Dark Concocters had surrendered was profoundly shocking to him.

“They… they were even praised by the sovereign for the way they would never surrender. But now, they’re actually… giving up!!” The boy was almost crying. He had originally planned to trap Bai Xiaochun in this level for 10,000 years or so, but now, in only a few days, the Dark Concocters had given in, and the world around them was almost completely destroyed….

Even as the boy looked on begrudgingly, the Dark Concocters came to an agreement, and Bai Xiaochun, who was completely immersed in concocting pills, suddenly began to dematerialize.

“I refuse to accept this!!” the spirit automaton said through gritted teeth, feelings of depression exploding into being inside of him. “How shameless of you, Bai Xiaochun, you despicable bastard! How could you possibly be named Bai Xiaochun? You… you sully that name! Your surname should be Hei! And your given name should be Dawu! Damn you, Hei Dawu! You just wait until the next time I wake up. I’ll destroy you! I’ll end you! I’ll eradicate you for all time!!” The boy’s face twisted with the ultimate level of madness and rage.

Meanwhile, on the fan rib outside of the thirtieth level, Bai Xiaochun faded into being, a shocked look on his face.

“Huh? How did I get out?” Shaking his head in surprise, he quickly checked his bag of holding, and just as he had suspected, the pills he had successfully concocted during his time in the thirtieth level were nowhere to be seen.

“Well, I guess this means I passed the thirtieth level.” He couldn’t help but sigh. After all, the thirtieth level had been filled with people who had the same calling in life as himself. Being able to duel with them using medicine had been a real joy. He almost wished he hadn’t been teleported away.

“That was the perfect place to concoct pills. It’s an illusory world created by the will of the sovereign, in which I don’t have to bear any responsibility for the results of my pill concocting. That’s what I've always wanted…. Wait. Hold on. I should check to see if I can go back in.” He tried to do just that, but quickly found that there was a powerful force of expulsion pushing back at him that made it impossible for him to get inside.

Meanwhile, within that thirtieth level, the Dark Concocters looked up at the sky rippling, and began to tremble in fear. But soon, they realized that the mystery pill devil was unable to enter their world again. Sighs of relief could be heard, and many eyes brimmed with tears of excitement. Many of them even produced drums and gongs and began to celebrate loudly.

“Finally…. He’s finally gone. And he can't get back in!”

“The heavens do have eyes! That crazy devil was the worst plague to ever hit us. We Dark Concocters are always honest and kind-hearted. We’re good people! Good people aren’t supposed to be subjected to bullying!”

“What a nightmare. I can’t even bear to think of what happened over the past few months. And I've also decided to stop concocting mystery pills. I swear it! From now, I’ll only concoct ordinary medicinal pills!!”

As the Dark Concocters rejoiced, Bai Xiaochun slumped dejectedly outside on the fan rib. After thinking about the matter for a while, he sighed.

“Ah, whatever. One day when I'm the true owner of the fan, I’ll go back to have another pill duel with them.” Sighing, he realized that he had been in the damaged fan for quite some time. Wondering what might have happened in the Eternal Lands during that time, he prepared to leave. However, it was in that very moment that he realized that out in the void beyond the damaged fan, something was moving in his direction. It was… an enormous palace!!

It was severely damaged, but still emanated a grandiose aura, as well as dazzling blue light!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1124 awe-chapter-1125

Bai Xiaochun’s expression turned serious, and his heart began to pound with anticipation. Although he hadn’t spent much time on the damaged fan, on previous occasions when he was not inside one of the levels, he had often looked out into the inky darkness of the void.

At first, it had been with curiosity, but later with boredom. After all, it wasn’t even a starry sky; it was just darkness.

It was like an enclosed room in which all the candles had been extinguished. It was terrifyingly quiet, with nothing at all visible except the sea of darkness.

Therefore, this palace with its blue light seemed almost like a bright star, and was eye-catching to the extreme!

How could Bai Xiaochun not be excited by this sudden development? In fact, he blurred into motion, heading to the edge of the fan, where he stood and watched the huge palace flying closer and closer to him.

As it neared, he could see that it was actually only one corner of an even larger palace structure, as if it had broken off from the whole. And as it got closer, it was clear that the entire thing was hovering on the brink of falling apart.

Black bloodstains were visible, dried up for what must have been many, many years. All-in-all, it looked like this palace had undergone a catastrophe of world-destroying proportions.

After observing it for a bit, Bai Xiaochun felt the impulse to go explore it. But the cautious side of him quickly squashed that dangerous idea.

But out here in this strange, dark void, this sudden spot of light that was the palace was profoundly intriguing. And he couldn’t dispel the notion that it would be a real pity to abandon it.

“What if there’s some good loot inside?” he thought. After looking down at the damaged fan, and then up again at the palace, his eyes glittered as he came up with an idea.

“That palace is obviously not very sturdy. And definitely not as strong as this sovereign-level precious treasure.” With that, he drew upon his ability to control the damaged fan, which was now at thirty percent.

After all, he had already passed the thirtieth level, and was thus able to somewhat influence the direction the fan moved in.

As he sent his divine sense out, the fan vibrated a bit. Thankfully, the spirit automaton had already fallen into slumber, otherwise it would have been very difficult for Bai Xiaochun to succeed in this effort.

Just like that, the fan changed directions, and began to head directly toward the palace!

In that very moment, Bai Xiaochun could see that the previously calm and quiet palace suddenly began to tremble. The blue light that had been shining out of it was sucked back in, and then a moment later was projected back out in the form of an enormous, vicious head with two horns sticking out of it. Looking in the direction of Bai Xiaochun and the damaged fan, it let out a soundless roar.

At the same time, a burst of holy archaean power erupted out from the illusory head!

“An archaean soul!!” Bai Xiaochun blurted, his eyes going wide.

Few other people would be able to identify such a thing. But Bai Xiaochun was a heavenly necromancer, and had immense experience working with souls. Therefore, it only took a single glance for him to realize that the head being projected out of the palace by means of the blue light was none other than… an archaean soul!!

Presumably, some archaean expert of the past had died in this palace. Then, because of some unique characteristic of the palace, or perhaps because of other reasons, the soul of that dead expert remained behind, fused with the palace itself. Although the soul was no longer intelligent and aware of its surroundings, it still existed!

The blue light was obviously some sort of defensive trap. If Bai Xiaochun had blithely tried to enter the palace, he would have been attacked by the archaean soul. Instead, with the damaged fan barreling toward it, the archaean soul had no choice but to reveal itself.

As it howled noiselessly, ripples spread out through the void, a formless attack aimed at the damaged fan. Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, and he backed away from the edge of the fan. However, as soon as the ripples reached the fan itself, it was to his delight that he realized that they didn’t do anything to it at all, not even slow it down. In fact, they apparently suffered from an automated backlash attack by the fan.

The fluctuations which rolled out from the fan surpassed those of the archaean soul, filled with a power that caused

Bai Xiaochun to gasp. He was even slightly injured just from their presence. This… was something far, far beyond the power of an archaean.

It was something Bai Xiaochun had never felt before… the power of a sovereign!

The void vibrated in response, and the eyes of that enormous blue head went wide with shock. It tried to retreat, but couldn’t do so quickly enough, and the sovereign-level power slammed into the palace.

The enormous palace shuddered to a stop in the middle of the void. Then, to Bai Xiaochun’s shock, it rippled and distorted until it transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the fan. It was almost as if the fan was dragging it toward itself! Moments later, the palace vanished!

Bai Xiaochun looked around, barely able to breathe. He was fairly certain he knew what had happened. He looked down at the fan, beads of sweat dripping down his face as he realized that he had definitely underestimated this precious treasure!

Before, the image on the fan’s face had featured a mountain and a river with a boat in it, within which two people were playing Go. But now, at the source of that river… a palace was visible!!

“It became a part of the picture… it became a part of the face of the fan!” His eyes went wide, and his mind spun. This development completely surpassed his powers of imagination. After taking a moment to let it all sink in, his face fell.

“I just wanted to explore it and see if it had any treasures inside. Even if it didn’t, an archaean soul would be great to have. But this fan just went and ate it….” He almost felt like crying at how badly he had lost out. Not quite willing to give up, he sent some divine sense over to the palace, drawing upon the thirty percent of the fan that he could control to see if he could pull the palace out of the picture.

As soon as he sent his divine sense out, the river stopped flowing for a short moment. When it resumed flowing a moment later, a drop of water shot out from it and flew toward the palace. When it hit it, the palace flickered with bright light, and emitted what sounded like a defiant roar. The water spread out, covering the blue light. Then it began to wrench at the palace, ripping away fully a third of it. Then it vanished, to reappear in Bai Xiaochun’s hand!

Heart racing, Bai Xiaochun stared in shock at the drop of water floating above his palm, within which was a bit of blue light. Upon examining it closer, he could see a vicious head within that blue light, radiating an aura of anger and violence.

The head couldn’t escape from the water no matter how much it battered at it. Furthermore, based on the aura it emitted, Bai Xiaochun could tell that this was the archaean soul!

However, it was only about thirty percent as powerful as a true archaean soul!

For Bai Xiaochun, that was more than enough!

“I can’t believe I can do this!” he said, licking his lips. Then he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. “A fan that shares! I love it!”

He was very excited to understand how truly strong this fan was. And after it absorbed things, it would share those things with him in proportion to how much he controlled the fan!

One day, when he was truly its owner, he could easily dominate all existence! It was a truly exciting thought.

Yet again, he realized that everything he had done to get this fan was definitely worth it!

“Alright. I need to go back and get some rest!” Savoring the beauty of the fact that he had acquired a portion of an archaean soul, he sent out a thought, and vanished.

After reappearing in his private chamber in Mistysea Prefecture in the north, he sent some divine sense out to find that the Grand Heavenmaster had apparently sensed his return, and was hurrying over to talk with him.

“What happened?” Bai Xiaochun wondered, surprised.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1125 awe-chapter-1126

Bai Xiaochun couldn't help but be shocked. After all, Mistysea Prefecture had become a place of utmost importance. To the people from the Heavenspan Realm who now lived in the Eternal Immortal Domains, it was like a holy land!

As long as it stood, it was like a beacon of hope for them!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was already pounding as he sent his divine sense out to fill much of Mistysea Prefecture. However, everything seemed ordinary. Rising to his feet, he took a step forward, appearing in the grand hall, outside of which the Grand Heavenmaster stood.

“I, Situ, request an audience, exalted Celestial! I have an important matter to report!”

The Grand Heavenmaster’s voice quavered in almost completely undetectable fashion as he spoke, as though the matter of which he spoke was of the most weighty significance. Feeling more alarmed than ever, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing the door of the hall to open. When the Grand Heavenmaster rushed in, he was so anxious that he completely forgot to clasp hands in greeting.

“Celestial, something bad has happened, and Mistysea Prefecture is in incredible peril!! If we don’t solve this problem, then this foundation we have worked so hard to build will be lost for all time. In fact, it might even completely change our standing within the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!!” His forehead was covered with sweat as he apparently thought back to the recent days in which Bai

Xiaochun had gone missing, leaving him and the Giant Ghost King incapable of doing anything. And now, a most critical moment had been reached.

As far as Bai Xiaochun could remember, the only time an expression like this had appeared on the Grand Heavenmaster’s face was when Arch-Emperor City was being besieged. That fact in itself caused his heart to pound even harder.

“What happened?!” he asked immediately.

“Exalted Celestial, Mistysea Prefecture’s reputation as the best place for spirit enhancements has already spread far and wide. However, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty has come to covet us as surely as a hungry man might covet a juicy steak. Clearly, they are only waiting for the right time to swoop in and take control!”

Bai Xiaochun nearly gasped. Of course, he had long since assumed that something like this would happen, which was why he was trying so hard to achieve a breakthrough.

“Over the past few months,” the Grand Heavenmaster continued, “it has become apparent that we only have one path available in front of us. If we don’t move forward along that path, we will face profound difficulties. But if we do move forward, then it will only be a matter of time before the Saint-Emperor Dynasty comes for us! Worst of all is that recently, the Saint-Emperor issued a series of decrees that strongly suggest that he is thinking of taking action soon. We have no time to work with!!

“Exalted Celestial, you absolutely must reach the Archaean Realm in less than half a year. The only other option would be to create a second possible path of action, and do so as quickly as possible. The key to that second method would be to establish relations with the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. If we do that, the Saint-Emperor will have even more misgivings than before, and we can buy ourselves time!

“Unfortunately, we have no ways to establish relations with the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. That’s especially true considering that the other prefectures in the north all belong to them. And although our spirit enhancement abilities are important to them, that’s not enough for them to open up to us. The Vile-Emperor Dynasty is tightly locked down. The Giant Ghost King and I have been racking our brains recently about what to do, but haven’t been able to think of anything. What do you think, exalted Celestial?” The Grand Heavenmaster seemed to be virtually beating his chest in frustration and helplessness. Bai Xiaochun had also been very nervous throughout the explanation. However, upon reaching the end, he relaxed a bit. After all, although he was still a bit suspicious about his relationship with Gongsun Wan’er, he still knew that he could fall back on that.

“Ai, you really had me scared there for a minute,” he said. “But in the end, it’s all about the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, right? I’ll just go work out a deal with Gongsun Wan’er. After that… wait…. Hold on a second!”

However, before he could say anything else, the Grand Heavenmaster cleared his throat. No trace of his previous anxiety could be seen as he looked somberly at Bai Xiaochun, clasped hands and bowed. Speaking at a rapid-fire pace, he said, “Once a celestial speaks, his orders will be strictly enforced. Exalted Celestial, please establish business negotiations with Celestial Ghostmother as soon as possible. The best option would be to get to know her a lot better on a personal level. If things went well, you never know, the Heavenspan Realm might end up with another celestial on our side. In fact, the best thing would be for the two of you to become husband and wife!

“Well, exalted Celestial, I know that you have just emerged from seclusion. Please rest up a bit. I won’t bother you anymore. I’ll take my leave now….” Chuckling, he bowed his head, and then hurriedly departed from the hall.

Bai Xiaochun was left there standing by himself, his jaw gaping and his eyes wide.

“Situ, you old bastard, you conned me!!” Bai Xiaochun wanted to get mad, but somehow couldn’t. Apparently, there was no crisis at all in Mistysea Prefecture. All of the Grand Heavenmaster’s alarmist talk had just been a ruse to try to get Bai Xiaochun get closer to Gongsun Wan’er.

Clearly, he had heard rumors about their vague relationship. And being the wily fox that he was, he knew that if he made the suggestion directly, Bai Xiaochun would balk. Of course, the truth was that Bai Xiaochun was actually a bit terrified of Gongsun Wan’er.

The Grand Heavenmaster truly did want to get Gongsun Wan’er to join the Heavenspan Realm. With two celestials on their side, their position in the Eternal Immortal Domains would be stronger than ever!

Some of what he had said was very true. They couldn’t just rely on trade with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to keep Mistysea Prefecture going. Even if the Saint-Emperor wasn’t very happy about it, they had to establish trade relations with the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

And that was where the crux of it all lay. They needed to prioritize their safety. Otherwise, they could find themselves in a dangerous situation without even realizing it.

Of course, the Grand Heavenmaster’s other assessments of the danger they were in were not untrue. However, it would be some time before they were actually a material threat.

After analyzing the matter for a bit, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry at how the Grand Heavenmaster had handled the matter. After all, unless it was really important, he didn’t want to have any dealings with Gongsun Wan’er.

“I always end up having to spank her….” he sighed. What he worried about most was that, one day, the spanking might lead to something even more significant….

Unfortunately, thanks to the Grand Heavenmaster’s little trick, he had already opened his big mouth. Therefore, it was with a light sigh that he looked north, braced himself, and then disappeared via teleportation.

To an ordinary cultivator, the prefecture that housed Gongsun Wan’er’s palace of operations was so far away from Mistysea Prefecture that it could take a lifetime to go from one to the other. But for Bai Xiaochun, it only took a few hours.

Furthermore, thanks to his Undying Hex, no amount of sealing formations did any good to slow him down. By the time he arrived, it was evening. Even as he stood there frowning, trying to decide how to enter, he heard an overly sentimental voice drifting out from inside.

“Why are you here at such a late hour to see me, sweetie? Could it be that you actually do want to spend the night with me?” Her voice was so pleasant that Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately trembled. However, by now, he had come to realize that Gongsun Wan’er seemingly had two personalities. One version liked to call him sweetie, and the other was shrewish and murderous.

“She didn’t use to be like this. Could it be that fusing with Ghostmother changed her in some way?” He already felt a headache coming on. Fearful that the situation would progress like it had the last time he came to see her, he cleared his throat and said, “Stow it, Wan'er. I'm here on official business.”

“Official business? That’s what you said the first time you visited, but in the end, all you wanted was my help to slander a demigod. Later, we met in Mistysea Prefecture, and you also said it was official business. But then, you ended up taking over my prefecture.” Although her voice was still as flirtatious as ever, there was a bit of anger within it.

“What, aren’t you even going to come inside? Is the mighty Arch-Ancestor, a majestic celestial, really that cowardly? Ohhh, right. I forgot you’re afraid of ghosts.” Even as her words rang out into the evening, ghostly images appeared from within the palace, and Bai Xiaochun’s headache immediately got worse. The strange thing was that, considering he had his Sutra of Former Reincarnation, you would think she wouldn’t want him to get near her.

“Don’t tell me she’s bluffing?” he thought, growing more vigilant.

Sighing dramatically, he stared at the palace and said, “Come on, Wan'er, are you doing this on purpose? Are you really trying to piss me off so that I burst in there, use my Sutra of Former Reincarnation and then start spanking you?” With that, he slipped into a defensive stance of readiness, convinced that his words would provoke her into rushing out to fight him. However, after a moment passed, his jaw dropped when he realized that Gongsun Wan’er… wasn’t saying anything in response.

“No way…. Don’t tell me I hit the nail on the head?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1126 awe-chapter-1127

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, his heart racing. He still wasn't sure if he could believe how things were playing out, and also couldn’t understand why Gongsun Wan’er would act so strangely when it came to his Sutra of Former Reincarnation.

“Don’t tell me that my divine ability has some sort of fatal flaw?!” All of a sudden, he felt very nervous. The truth was that he had had suspicions very early on. Whenever he used his Sutra of Former Reincarnation, it seemed to result in very unusual and shocking results, and if word about that spread, it could damage the reputation of the technique.

“I created a grand divine ability, a magical technique that surpasses anything ordinary!” Not wanting to pursue that line of thinking too far, he decided that it must have something to do with Gongsun Wan’er herself, and her memories.

“That’s got to be it. I, Bai Xiaochun, am an upright and proper person. Of course the techniques I create are upright and dignified. How could I possibly make anything shady or underhanded?” Having comforted himself in this way, he looked back at Gongsun Wan’er’s palace of operations, and considered whether or not to go inside. As he did, the main door quietly slid open.

Panting a bit, he looked up at the evening sky, then back at the door, torn about what to do. Finally, he sighed.

“Ah, whatever. This is for the sake of all the countless citizens of Mistysea Prefecture, and for the good of everyone from the Heavenspan Realm! How could Bai Xiaochun ever put his personal issues above those things!?” Gritting his teeth, he threw caution to the wind and strode forward into the palace of operations, a very serious expression on his face.

As he entered the depths of the palace, he felt as if he were doing something very moving and tragic. Eventually, he found Gongsun Wan’er, sitting there clad in a pink garment, her face expressionless.

For some reason, this Gongsun Wan’er seemed completely different from the Gongsun Wan’er who had called him *sweetie* only moments ago. This version was staring at him with a gaze as cold as ice.

“Unless you can make that despicable magical technique of yours work forever,” she said grimly, “then don’t even think about using it on me again. If you do, I’ll immediately mobilize all of my forces in the north and destroy your Mistysea Prefecture!” Her eyes shone with frigid coldness, and she even rotated her cultivation base. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun realized that Gongsun Wan’er seemed almost exactly like the old Ghostmother!

“If you think I won’t follow through with the threat, then give it a shot and find out.” Her gaze remained icy cold, and her words were spoken with unwavering determination.

Bai Xiaochun frowned. This version of Gongsun Wan’er seemed exactly like Ghostmother, to the point where he began to suspect that something had gone wrong with Gongsun Wan’er’s efforts to absorb her. She was acting so differently from before that she almost seemed like a stranger.

“Although,” he thought, “I do have plenty of ways to deal with cold personalities. After all, Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo both started out that way.” He blinked a few times, but then his expression turned very somber, and he tucked his hands behind his back, his veins of steel pulsing to full effect.

All of a sudden, he looked completely different from before. His gaze hardened, and he spoke in a voice that sounded exactly like a celestial’s voice should.

“Yes, you could mobilize all of the north to destroy Mistysea Prefecture. But remember: back when I kidnapped you the first time, I was only a demigod. Do you really think… I couldn’t kidnap you a second time if I wanted to?!”

Before she could answer the question, he continued to speak.

“The reason I’ve come here, Gongsun Wan’er, is not to spar verbally with you. In Mistysea Prefecture, our spirit enhancement abilities are renowned under all heaven. We have a sterling reputation in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. I'm sure your northern prefectures could make use of such abilities, but right now, the borders are locked down, making it impossible for us to have any dealings with the northern cultivators!

“I’ve come here today to discuss a trade deal, not to beg or plead for anything! Therefore, you need to keep yourself in check as well!” Bai Xiaochun spoke very sharply, which had not been his original intent upon coming. Instead of asking Gongsun Wan’er for help, he was making it seem like she was the one who needed help from him.

Instantly, Gongsun Wan’er’s gaze sharpened, and she laughed coldly. “Are you kidding me? You take one of my prefectures away from me, and then come back to me and make it seem like you’re offering alms to the poor? Did you cultivate yourself into stupidity, Bai Xiaochun?!”

“Stop worrying about the loss of Mistysea Prefecture,” Bai Xiaochun replied confidently. “You lost a single prefecture, but the profit from the spirit enhancement trade that you can gain now will vastly surpass anything that you would ever have gotten from a single prefecture!”

“Trade?” Gongsun Wan’er replied icily. “You have your borders closed to us, not the other way around. And any trade deal would benefit Mistysea Prefecture, but would be useless to me!”

“Useless? Gongsun Wan’er, I know full well that you’ve lost the trust of the Vile-Emperor. You can pretend that you came here of your own volition, but the truth is that you are being marginalized. In fact, you’re in much the same position as me. And I refuse to believe that you’re happy with the situation. If you were content to leave things as they are, you wouldn’t have made such a scene in invading the north. In any case, I have a better solution, something that can allow both of us to advance our positions by leaps and bounds. And the key to it all is cooperation!

“Open up trade between Mistysea Prefecture and the other northern prefectures. Not only will it increase your overall power, it will also benefit you financially. Furthermore, you can be the sole agent for Mistysea Prefecture in the rest of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty! You would essentially control all spirit enhancement outside of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!

“I’m talking about good faith cooperation here. So tell me, Gongsun Wan’er, what possible reason could you have to refuse?” As Bai Xiaochun spoke, a thoughtful expression appeared in Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes. The truth was that everything he said made sense, and conformed with her needs. The development of spirit enhancement in Mistysea Prefecture was important to her, and furthermore, the potential profits of being an agent to the entire Vile-Emperor Dynasty defied imagination!

It could significantly change her standing within the dynasty. Because of all that, she had no choice but to calm down a bit and think about the trade proposal.

Although she could tell that he was spinning things to make it seem like everything was in her favor, it was also possible to tell that she could profit as well. Therefore, there was definitely room for negotiation.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that Gongsun Wan’er was considering the matter, he breathed an inward sigh of relief. He was glad to see her acting reasonable and willing to communicate.

After a long moment passed, she frowned and said, “I need to think about the matter in detail. I’ll give you an answer tomorrow!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered. By this point, his chances of success were high. The fact that she told him she needed to think about the subject and reply the next day was a show of good faith.

Nodding, he said, “For the time being, I won’t return to Mistysea Prefecture. I’ll wait in the city until tomorrow morning, then return here to get your answer.”

Just as he was turning to leave, Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes flickered, and she waved her hand. In response, a beautiful handmaiden walked out and clasped hands in greeting.

“Qing’er, we have a guest from afar. King Heavenspan. Please take care of him.” With that, Gongsun Wan’er rose to her feet and vanished. As for Bai Xiaochun, he rubbed his nose as he pondered that, although this version of Gongsun Wan’er was perfect for negotiating with, he actually liked the version of her that called him *sweetie*. Although she was less reasonable, he actually missed her.

“Hold on,” he thought. “No. I have to keep my distance from this Gongsun Wan’er. She’s changed too much.” Dispelling any such thoughts of missing her, he looked over at the pretty young Qing’er, who was nothing less than a feast for the eyes.

When Qing’er saw him looking at her, she seemed a bit frightened. Giving a curtseying bow, she led him out of the palace of operations and toward a tavern outside of it.

The palace was located on top of a huge mountain, and had other buildings and structures around it. Further down, at the base of the mountain, was the largest city in the prefecture, which was roughly the same size as Mistysea City. Despite being evening, it was still a lively and bustling place.

As they walked along, Bai Xiaochun looked down at the city below, and Qing’er would occasionally glance at him curiously out of the corner of her eye. As they reached their destination, a local tavern, Bai Xiaochun chuckled and looked at her.

“Is there something you wanted to ask me?”

Qing’er took a hesitant breath and then replied, “Exalted one, you are the number one most powerful expert from the Heavenspan Realm. I even heard that you’re a grandmaster of spirit enhancement. You see... I'm very curious about the subject of spirit enhancement. I've seen some enhancements performed, and it’s a very mysterious thing. Is it true what people say, that spirit enhancement runs in the blood of the people of Heavenspan?”

“You've seen spirit enhancements being performed?” Bai Xiaochun asked.

Qing’er nodded. Unable to prevent a look of worship from appearing in her eyes, she said, “Of course! Right here in this very city, we have Grandmaster Zhou. The only person more famous than him is you, King Heavenspan. If you have time, you should go watch him perform a spirit enhancement.”

“Grandmaster Zhou?” Bai Xiaochun replied, a look of shock appearing on his face.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1127 awe-chapter-1128

“Yeah! Grandmaster Zhou is super awesome! I'm sure you’ve heard of him before, Exalted Celestial.” Merely mentioning this Grandmaster Zhou caused Qing’er’s beautiful eyes to light up with reverence. Apparently, she believed this Grandmaster Zhou’s skill in spirit enhancement to be so incredible that he must be world-famous.

“People say that back in the Heavenspan Realm, Grandmaster Zhou was one of the most powerful spirit enhancers in existence. Everywhere he goes, the people of Heavenspan treat him with the ultimate respect.

“Furthermore, the natural laws of the Heavenspan Realm showed special favor to him. When his world was destroyed, he wasn’t hurt at all. Even more miraculous is that after he reached the Eternal Immortal Domains, his spirit enhancement abilities grew even more powerful.

“I also heard that Grandmaster Zhou has a dear acquaintance, a person whom he has been searching for ever since the destruction of his world….

“Oh, and there’s another thing. I did see him perform a spirit enhancement once. The sky went dim, and wild winds screamed across the lands. His every movement seemed to affect the entire world! And that was when he produced a spirit enhanced treasure!” Qing’er almost couldn’t stop talking about this Grandmaster Zhou, and the look in her eyes grew more and more intense the entire time. From all of that, it became obvious to Bai Xiaochun that she adored him.

At the same time, his curiosity was piqued, especially about why Qing’er, a cultivator of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, would be so entranced with a spirit enhancer. He almost couldn’t believe it.

“How many people are there like you,” he asked, “people who are interested in spirit enhancement?”

“Oh, tons! We don’t have many spirit enhancers in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, but every one of them has a very high standing. Any time they make public appearances, they attract huge crowds.

“Spirit enhancement is really a miraculous thing, and completely unheard-of in the Eternal Lands. It can change something rotten into something magical. It’s too bad that only people with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm can do it, otherwise I would definitely start studying it!

“In fact, I’ve already decided that when the time comes for me to pick a Daoist partner, I'm definitely going to find a spirit enhancer!” By the time she got to the last part, Qing’er’s face was a bit flush.

Bai Xiaochun was quite shaken. Back before he had started spending a lot of time in secluded meditation, he didn’t remember spirit enhancers being so popular. Apparently, a lot had changed in the world during his months of seclusion.

“The Grand Heavenmaster told me from the very beginning that he wanted Mistysea Prefecture to rise to prominence, and also elevate the position of spirit enhancers in the world. But man, he really outdid himself. I can’t believe he changed things so much in such a short time!” Seeing how flush Qing’er’s face was caused Bai Xiaochun to feel somewhat proud.

But then he realized that this might be the case because of how close this prefecture was to Mistysea Prefecture. Perhaps people in other immortal domains didn’t feel this way at all.

Either way, it was a good start. Bai Xiaochun was in a great mood, and realized that getting the cultivators of the Eternal Immortal Domains to like spirit enhancers was definitely a good thing. And the more he could do to promote that attitude, the better.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he was more interested than ever in this mysterious Grandmaster Zhou. Furthermore, he decided that by using his spirit enhancement abilities to elevate his own position, Grandmaster Zhou had also improved the view of spirit enhancers in general, which was a good thing. The more he thought about it, the more he wanted to meet the man.

“Qing’er,” he said with a smile, “you said you’ve seen Grandmaster Zhou before, right? Do you think you could take me to see him?”

Qing’er’s eyes glittered brightly in response. The truth was that if Gongsun Wan’er hadn’t asked her to take care of Bai Xiaochun’s housing arrangements, she would have already gone to watch Grandmaster Zhou perform a spirit enhancement.

“Sure!” she said, nodding eagerly. “You’re lucky, because today, Grandmaster Zhou will perform a public spirit enhancement. If you want to go watch, Exalted Celestial, I can definitely show you the way.” Bai Xiaochun could see how happy Qing’er was. She seemed like a simple and pure young woman, and all of a sudden, it made him realize that the cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains weren’t all unreasonable and fierce.

And thus, Qing’er led Bai Xiaochun from the mountaintop to the city below. As one of the handmaidens of Celestial Ghostmother, it was only natural that she had special privileges there.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he didn’t want to reveal his identity. After all, he was in Vile-Emperor Dynasty territory. Therefore, he disguised himself with a magical technique, ensuring that no one other than Gongsun Wan’er would be able to deduce his true identity.

It was evening, but the streets were still packed with crowds of people. It was very lively. Most of the inhabitants were actually natives to this prefecture, people from local cultivator clans. So to them, there was little difference between living under the Saint-Emperor Dynasty or the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Regardless of which government controlled the area, this was their home.

Although the laws of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty were somewhat different, in terms of daily life and cultivation practices, there were few differences. Of course, there were also cultivators who had come from far-off places with Celestial Ghostmother, who hoped to set down roots here in the north of the second immortal domain.

There was a buzz in the air. Shops were open, with patrons going in and out constantly. Laughter could be heard, as well as the shouts of peddlers hawking their wares.

In fact, if Bai Xiaochun had been forced to guess, he would have had a hard time determining if this place was under the control of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty or the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Despite the exciting atmosphere, he was very calm inside. He couldn’t help but think back to the Heavenspan Realm, to the sects he had been a part of, to Mount Hood and the little village at its foot. Back in the Heavenspan Realm, the atmosphere had often been like this as New Years approached.

Qing’er didn’t notice Bai Xiaochun’s absent-mindedness as she deftly led the way through streets and alleys until they arrived at a large public square.

On the right sight of the square was a newly constructed mansion residence, with a few hundred people gathered outside. Although most were whispering to each other as they stood there waiting, the collective volume was relatively loud. All eyes shone with anticipation as they stared at the door of the mansion.

The door was open wide, allowing a view of the main hall within, where a few dozen people waited respectfully. Occasionally they would look at the crowd outside, and occasionally they would look at the middle-aged man seated cross-legged in the position of honor at the far end of the hall.

He wore a Daoist robe, and despite his somewhat emaciated appearance, had brightly shining eyes. He had the demeanor of a transcendent being as he clasped hands and bowed to one of the people in the hall, who happened to be a demigod.

This middle-aged man was only in the Nascent Soul stage, and yet, the demigod treated him with utmost respect. Waving his hand, the demigod said, “Grandmaster Zhou, back when I was in Vile-Emperor City, I acquired a threefold spirit enhancement for this flying sword. Despite searching the nation high and low, I couldn’t find anyone to perform the fourth spirit enhancement. If you’re able to do it, Grandmaster Zhou, then I can pay any price you set!”

An enigmatic smile could be seen on Grandmaster Zhou’s face as he looked back at the demigod.

“Although I've never personally met Grandmaster Zhang Dahai, I've heard that he can perform fourfold spirit enhancements.”

Looking a bit embarrassed, the demigod said, “You’ve heard the old saying *you can see the divine dragon, but never from head to tail*, right? That describes Grandmaster Zhang perfectly. It’s almost impossible to get an audience with him. In fact, I've never even seen him.”

With that, he clasped hands and bowed again, then went on to promise handsome compensation for the job. After a long moment, Grandmaster Zhou nodded.

“Very well. Let me see the sword in question.”

Visibly enlivened, the demigod produced a crimson flying sword, which he handed to Grandmaster Zhou for inspection. It was at around this time that Qing’er and Bai Xiaochun appeared near the door of the mansion.

Considering the level of his cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to be in the hall to see everything going on inside, including Grandmaster Zhou.

The instant he saw him, he blinked a few times, and then the corners of his mouth turned up in a smile.

Qing’er was already gazing at Grandmaster Zhou with a bright expression. “Exalted One,” she said to Bai Xiaochun, “that is the incredible Grandmaster Zhou, our number one spirit enhancer. You must have met him before in the Heavenspan Realm, right?

“Unfortunately, no one knows his full name. He said long ago that if he ever found that long-lost dear acquaintance, then he would announce his name to the world.”

“Yeah,” Bai Xiaochun said, nodding. “I know him.” With that, he cleared his throat.

Perhaps because of a sudden hush in the crowd, the sound of Bai Xiaochun clearing his throat was a bit louder than he had intended it to be. It drifted into the hall, causing Grandmaster Zhou to frown. After all, when he performed spirit enhancements, he required peace and quiet, which was a generally known rule.

At this point, his eyes shifted from the crimson flying sword to the crowd outside. He looked irritated at first, but when he caught sight of Qing’er, his heart softened a bit. He had long since come to realize that she liked him, and it caused a smile to appear on his face. Then his gaze shifted to the person standing next to her… Bai Xiaochun.

Suddenly, Grandmaster Zhou’s eyes went wide, and his mind began to spin.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1128 awe-chapter-1129

“Bai… Bai….” Grandmaster Zhou almost couldn’t breathe correctly, and his eyes bulged so wide they looked like they might fall out of his skull. Waves of shock battered his mind like blasts of heavenly lightning.

The surrounding crowd was immediately taken aback by his unusual reaction. That was especially true of the demigod, whose expression flickered as he turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, hoping to identify him.

No one else in the crowd recognized Bai Xiaochun, but no one could miss the shock on Grandmaster Zhou’s face. Immediately, hushed discussions broke out.

“What’s wrong with Grandmaster Zhou?”

“I've never seen him look like that.”

Qing’er was also visibly taken aback. However, before she could do anything, Grandmaster Zhou jumped out of his chair and tossed the flying sword to the side. He hadn’t quite reached the point of being visibly out of his mind, but he was almost there as he scrambled toward the door.

Jaws dropped as he moved with blinding speed to appear in front of Bai Xiaochun. There, he flopped to the ground in front of Bai Xiaochun, grabbed his legs, and began to weep openly.

Voice quavering, he said, “Milord! Yixing has missed you to death!! I thought I would never meet you again, milord! The heavens do have eyes! They actually permitted me to see you once again!”

Grandmaster Zhou was none other than Zhou Yixing!

His words were spoken loudly and with the utmost sincerity, ensuring that everyone in the area could hear them clearly. Many gasps could be heard as audience members turned their attention to Bai Xiaochun.

“Grandmaster Zhou… called him *milord?”*

“Heavens! Grandmaster Zhou is awesome enough as it is! I wonder… how powerful his master is?!?!”

“Who is this person…? How come he seems so familiar…?”

Qing’er’s jaw currently hung wide open. Although she had paid lip service to the fact that Bai Xiaochun was the ultimate spirit enhancer, in her heart, the Grandmaster Zhou that she had become smitten with was the best in the world.

As of now, her thoughts were thrown into complete confusion, to the point where she almost couldn’t accept what was happening.

“Grandmaster Zhou… called him *milord*…?”

Zhou Yixing’s heart was pounding in unprecedented fashion. The truth was that he was very nervous. Obviously, he was aware of what was going on in Mistysea Prefecture, and also knew that Bai Xiaochun, the Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster were all there.

However, he had come to enjoy his current lifestyle, and couldn’t bear to part with it. He liked how people fawned over him, and even after much deliberation about the matter, had not yet been able to bring himself to go seek asylum with Bai Xiaochun.

As of this point, though, there was no need for deliberation. Bai Xiaochun was right here in front of him, and therefore, Zhou Yixing knew that his days of comfort were over. Now, he was worried that Bai Xiaochun would be displeased that he hadn’t taken the initiative to go to Mistysea Prefecture.

Zhou Yixing wouldn’t have given a moment's consideration to any other person. But he had been present to witness Bai Xiaochun’s rise to prominence in the Wildlands. Whether it was the chaos he caused in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, his path to becoming a heavenly necromancer, the fact that his apprentice had become the Hell-Emperor, or the fact that he had won over Mistress Red-Dust… all of it ensured that he felt deep reverence for Bai Xiaochun. It was something that reached down to his bones, and even his soul. And that was the reason for his nervousness, and why he was trying to make himself seem as pitiable as possible.

“I hope that Bai Xiaochun will go easy on me for old-times’ sake….” he thought, tears flowing down his cheeks as he stared up miserably at Bai Xiaochun.

“You have no idea how long I searched for you, milord,” he said. “I dreamed every night of how wonderful it would be to reunite with you!”

Although Bai Xiaochun was smiling at him, Zhou Yixing trembled and loudly added, “Milord, Yixing has missed you so much!”

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times. From the moment he had laid eyes on Zhou Yixing, it was obvious that he had come to enjoy life here, and didn’t want to bear the hardships that would come with living in Mistysea Prefecture.

Considering his dramatic performance, Bai Xiaochun could see that Zhou Yixing was obviously scared. However, Zhou Yixing had misjudged the situation. After all of the things Bai Xiaochun had experienced, he knew more than ever that the longer the people of Heavenspan lived in the Eternal Immortal Domains, the more people would make the same decision as Zhou Yixing.

He didn’t want to force people to join him in Mistysea Province. After all, they were not enemies. As long as they ended up living a life they enjoyed, Bai Xiaochun was content. That had been his stance all along.

When he saw how much Zhou Yixing was humiliating himself already, Bai Xiaochun sighed and revealed the power of his cultivation base. Instantly, something like a windstorm sprang up within the city.

Looks of shock appeared among the members of the crowd as they edged backward. As people sensed the cultivation base fluctuations, and realized what type of person was in their midst, cries of alarm began to ring out.

“A celestial!!”

“That’s Bai Xiaochun! He’s King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun!!”

“Heavens! It turns out Grandmaster Zhou’s lord and master is actually a celestial!!”

The crowd was completely shaken by his aura and cultivation base fluctuations. Furthermore, not a single one of them looked down on Zhou Yixing in the least. In fact, their reverence toward him increased!

Some people might look down on those who served another. But when one’s lord was a celestial…. That was no disgrace. In fact, most people wished to be able to have such a privilege.

Many gasps could be heard, and the envy in their eyes was clear. They now respected and revered Zhou Yixing even more than before!

However, Bai Xiaochun’s show wasn’t over yet. Reaching forward, he helped the dazed Zhou Yixing to his feet.

Smiling he said, “Yixing, I already told you that we’re Fellow Daoists and friends. There is no master-servant relationship between us anymore. I know you're grateful for what I did for you in the past, but from now on, I don't want see you acting like this. Not ever again! You’ve done well for yourself here, and I’m happy for you.”

He made sure to boost his voice with his cultivation base so that everyone could hear. Zhou Yixing wasn’t sure how everyone else was reacting to all of this, but he knew that Bai Xiaochun was intentionally wiping away any humiliation. In fact, Zhou Yixing’s reputation would increase because of this. Instantly, his heart began to tremble.

His eyes teared up even more, and he suddenly felt ashamed. He knew that Bai Xiaochun had seen through his act, but instead of reproaching him, had helped him. Zhou Yixing opened his mouth to say something, only to find that no words would come.

“Yixing, spirit enhancement is something special from the Heavenspan Realm. I hope that you can accomplish grand things with it here. And never forget: no matter where you are, I always have your back! Alright, I need to go now. If you ever have time, come to Mistysea Prefecture, and we can catch up on old times.” Thumping Zhou Yixing on the shoulder, Bai Xiaochun smiled, then turned and walked off.

Qing’er was still standing there with her mouth hanging open, staring in shock at Zhou Yixing. Then she looked over at Bai Xiaochun and hurried after him.

Meanwhile, Zhou Yixing stood there, watching Bai Xiaochun walk off, trembling. Everything Bai Xiaochun had said and done left Zhou Yixing feeling completely ashamed of his behavior. After a moment, just when Bai Xiaochun was about to disappear, Zhou Yixing gritted his teeth, and his eyes shone with determination.

With that, he severed any desires to stay where he was and enjoy life. Bursting into motion, he began to chase after Bai Xiaochun!

“Wait for me, milord. I want to go to Mistysea Prefecture!!” Bai Xiaochun stopped in place and looked over his shoulder to see Zhou Yixing hurrying toward him, conviction burning in his eyes.

Bai Xiaochun smiled and nodded. “Come… let’s go home!”

“Home…?” Zhou Yixing murmured, shivering. Suddenly he smiled; a pure, genuine smile. “Yes. Let’s go home!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1129 awe-chapter-1130

It was a life-changing moment for Zhou Yixing. His impression of Bai Xiaochun had changed, and he now felt profound hope for what was to come in Mistysea Prefecture.

Although he would miss the life he had come to enjoy, the truth was that despite the good position he had created for himself, he had always felt alone. There were many times late at night when he thought about how strange these lands were compared to the Heavenspan Realm, and he would sigh deeply.

Now, when he heard the words *go home*, his heart and mind trembled, and he hurried along after Bai Xiaochun.

From the very beginning, Bai Xiaochun had thought of Zhou Yixing as his lucky star, and as it turned out, his return did indeed bring great luck. The following morning at dawn, the negotiations with Gongsun Wan’er went very smoothly.

Not only would trade be allowed, but she would also permit a portion of each of the prefectures under her control to have an area in which Mistysea Prefecture could do business directly. They would all be under the supervision of Gongsun Wan’er, and she would get a large share of the profits.

Perhaps the advantage they had gained would not be obvious at first. But as trade flourished, Mistysea Prefecture would truly be forging its own path. Before long, the Grand Heavenmaster’s ultimate plan would come into effect, and they would rise to prominence!

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with how everything had played out. Not only did he establish trade relations with Gongsun Wan’er, he also brought Zhou Yixing back into the fold.

And thus, the two of them returned to Mistysea Prefecture. Everything in Mistysea Prefecture was new to Zhou Yixing. However, as soon as he got to Mistysea City, it was much to his delight that he recognized old acquaintances from the Wildlands. Bai Xiaochun knew that now would be a time for reuniting with friends, and therefore, left Zhou Yixing to his own devices, and headed back to his mansion alone to meet with the Grand Heavenmaster.

As Bai Xiaochun proudly recounted the details of his victory, the Grand Heavenmaster frowned slightly. After waiting for him to finish speaking, he asked, “What about things between you and Gongsun Wan’er? Any progress? Did you stay the night at her palace of operations?”

Bai Xiaochun frowned, well aware of what the Grand Heavenmaster was hinting at. However, there was no way that he would get closer to Gongsun Wan’er. “Progress? Uh… I guess you could say that. But why would I stay at her palace of operations? I stayed in the city, obviously.”

The Grand Heavenmaster sighed in response. The truth was that his main purpose in having Bai Xiaochun go see Gongsun Wan’er had nothing to do with trade. There was no way that she would refuse a business proposal that would be beneficial to both of them. What he truly wanted was for Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er to develop a romantic interest in each other.

If Bai Xiaochun had stayed the night at her palace of operations, the Grand Heavenmaster could have arranged for rumors to be spread that would cause the Vile-Emperor to distrust her even more. He even had a whole string of events planned for afterward that he was sixty percent sure would result in Gongsun Wan’er and Bai Xiaochun bearing a few children. Once that happened, Bai Xiaochun’s foundation in the Eternal Immortal Domains would be even stronger than before.

Unfortunately, despite all of his preparations, it seemed Bai Xiaochun wasn’t up to the task….

If something like this had happened back in the Wildlands, the Grand Heavenmaster would have been furious, and might have taken direct action to force Bai Xiaochun to go along with his plan. But now, their roles had been reversed. Bai Xiaochun was the ruler of the nation, and the Grand Heavenmaster was one of his ministers. Therefore, he could only sigh and try to come up with a new plan, one that would conform better to Bai Xiaochun’s style. Later on, when the moment was right, he could try to get him together with Gongsun Wan’er.

Sadly, coming up with a new plan would not be easy. Rubbing the bridge of his nose, he smiled wryly and took his leave, mind already spinning with ideas.

Had Gongsun Wan’er been aware that there was a wily old fox in Mistysea Prefecture plotting against her, she would have come after him and killed him, even if she died in the process….

Bai Xiaochun watched the Grand Heavenmaster leaving, and sighed. He knew what the man was thinking, and knew that everything he was doing was for the good of the Heavenspan Realm. He just wanted Bai Xiaochun to forge a strong foundation. But Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but balk at the plan; it just wasn’t the type of thing he did.

“Ah, whatever. I won’t let it bother me. The most important thing now is to improve my cultivation base!” Driving his worries from his mind, he took a deep breath and headed back to his private chamber. He knew that the key to raising the level of his cultivation base were the rewards from the damaged fan. He had acquired quite a few medicinal pills from the thirtieth level, not to mention the rewards from all the other levels. Plus, he now had an archaean soul.

All it took was a thought, and he was back in the void on the damaged fan. After the incident with the archaean soul, he had come up with the idea of trying to acquire other images from within the fan face. Unfortunately, it didn’t work.

Although he was a bit disappointed by that, he didn’t waste any time; he immediately began challenging the levels. The difficulty continued to increase, but he actually enjoyed the process of analyzing the situation and coming up with new strategies. If he failed, he would try again. If he failed again, he would try a third time. In a few short days, he had progressed from the thirty-first level to the thirty-ninth!

However, the thirty-ninth level turned out to be a nightmare….

The entire world was pink, including the sky and the lands. Even the mist which filled the air was pink. And then, Bai Xiaochun noticed figures walking toward him through the mist.

As they became clear, he saw enticing curves. One, two, three, four, five….

In a few short breaths of time, he found himself surrounded by more than a hundred beautiful women!

Each and every one of them could be described as spectacularly attractive. Some could even rate higher than Song Junwan or Mistress Red-Dust, probably because they were illusory in nature. In fact, that surreal aura made them so captivating it was difficult to put into words.

They were not motionless illusions. As they moved through the mist, their soft laughter rang out like chimes. Whether it was their physical appearance or their voices, these women were attractive to a shocking degree.

There was also something about the pink mist that seemed capable of arousing the desires of cultivators, and made it difficult to think. When Bai Xiaochun sensed that, and saw everything around him, his eyes went wide.

“Heavens, what kind of level is this?!” He shivered as the women drew closer, making it easier to see them, and at the same time, making their beauty even more enticing.

Eyes flashing, he backed up and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the ripples of a magical technique to spread out. However, it didn’t affect the women at all. They merely chuckled, getting closer and closer, some of them licking their lips, some of them sucking on their fingers.

“Get away, vixens!” he shouted. From what he could tell, the point of this level was being able to resist desire.

“Seems you’ve underestimated Bai Xiaochun! I can pass this level with ease!” Chuckling coldly, he pulled out a Breakup Pill and then popped it into his mouth. Then he stood there casually looking at the women getting closer and closer.

Nothing they did moved him at all. But after enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, a woman appeared off in the distance who began to dance gracefully. Then, all of the other women started to dance.

There was something entrancing about the dance, as though it contained the hidden power of some great Dao. Almost immediately, Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound, and the effects of the Breakup Pill were negated.

“Heavens, what dance is that?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1130 awe-chapter-1131

“The Dance of the Succubi!” Up in the air above the thirty-ninth level was the spirit automaton of the damaged fan, in the form of a boy. He had been awake for a while now, but hadn’t interfered in any of the previous levels, worried that even increasing the difficulty level wouldn’t slow down the shameless Bai Xiaochun.

He had been waiting patiently for him to get to the thirty-ninth level, which he deemed the best place to gain a victory!

The thirty-ninth level tested the challenger’s determination!

There were many aspects to determination. For example, some people would be tempted by profit. Seeing precious materials of heaven and earth laid out in front of them would stir their desires on a deep level. Others could be affected by different temptations.

Only someone who had completely severed all of the seven emotions and six sensory pleasures could possibly be unaffected by the thirty-ninth level.

The women Bai Xiaochun was seeing were only soul projections, given corporeal form by the Dao Essence of Life and Death. However, they had originally come from a very advanced civilization. After all, the void had not always been dark. Before the great catastrophe, there had been a matriarchal world ruled by a race called the Succubi!

The Succubi were invaders. After taking over another world, they would kill all the women and imprison all the men, whom they would then torment day and night. Before death, a male cultivator’s life force would be converted into a soul seed, which the Succubi would then use to propagate their own people.

Eventually the Succubus Queen arose, a Succubus who achieved unheard-of levels of power. With almost no effort, she could cause any living being to be attracted to her on an instinctive level!

In the thirty-ninth level, the final woman to appear would be veiled, revealing only her sensuous form. And she was… the Succubus Queen!

As soon as she appeared, Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to go crazy. Not even his Breakup Pills could suppress the instincts within him.

When the spirit automaton saw Bai Xiaochun’s expression changing, he immediately got excited, and couldn’t wait to see how things played out. He had been waiting for this level for quite some time, and was looking forward very much the despair that was surely to come within it.

“If you fall into her hands a single time, I have my ways of making sure that it happens over and over again. You’ll be eternally entrapped by your own desires, and will only come to your senses in the moment before you are killed in body and soul!” The boy threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Considering the lesson he had learned with the Dark Concocters, he no longer took Bai Xiaochun lightly. Normally speaking, the Succubus Queen would never appear in this level. However, just to be safe, he had adjusted the difficulty to the highest degree. Even then, he had been a bit worried, and had spent a few extra months in slumber to be able to gather the power necessary to push the difficulty level beyond its previous limitations.

Because of that, even as Bai Xiaochun was struggling to control himself, the dancing women around him… all turned into Succubus Queens!!

The power that had drained his determination suddenly appeared a hundred times greater than before, and the pink mist writhed as a mysterious force assailed him.

His eyes instantly turned bloodshot, and he began to pant heavily. His heart pounded so hard it felt like it might explode from inside his chest. With what little control he still had left, he pulled out all of the Breakup Pills he had and stuffed them into his mouth. Only by doing that was he able to cool down the immense heat within.

“Heavens, this is just too hard!” He could almost immediately sense that these women were affecting his soul. The desires within him were like a steadily burning flame that never went out. If it had been a chaotic inferno, there might have been less to worry about, as raging flames are usually quickly extinguished. But this steadily burning fire only continued to build in intensity.

If he lost control, then he would lose his soul. And he shuddered to think about what would happen in that scenario. He almost considered teleporting out of the level, but then his expression flickered as he realized that the teleportation function wasn’t working!

“Dammit. It’s definitely that spirit automaton messing with things!” Although consuming all of the Breakup Pills had cooled him down for a moment, he was more nervous than ever.

“They’re affecting my soul…. This place is fundamentally illusory…. I'd say there’s a high likelihood these women are souls of some sort!” Considering that he was a heavenly necromancer, he was seventy percent certain that his assessment of the situation was correct.

“If they’re souls, then I have plenty of ways to deal with them!” He knew time was of the essence, so he quickly produced a Soul Convergence Pill from his bag of holding and threw it out.

A popping sound could be heard as it exploded, and although it had some effect on the surrounding souls, it wasn’t much. The Succubus Queens were pulled toward the convergence spot, but then their eyes glittered, and they used some mysterious power within their voices to negate the gravitational force!

That caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to pound even harder, but at the same time, it confirmed his theory.

“They really are souls!” He bit his tongue hard to regain some lucidity, then fished through his bag of holding to produce a mask, the same treasured item that had kept his identity hidden during his time in the Wildlands. It also would make him invisible to souls in the area. That was the only thing he could think of to do in the moment.

As soon as he put the mask on, the Succubi stopped dancing, and looked over in confusion to the spot Bai Xiaochun had just occupied.

Feeling wonderful, he backed up. However, he knew that although he could hide from the women, he couldn’t hide from their power. At the moment, he had only bought himself a little bit of time.

Sure enough, the spirit automaton could see exactly what was going on. Drawing upon the power at his disposal, he quickly forced the Succubus Queens to start dancing again, which caused soul fluctuations to roll out in all directions.

“It’s too bad I don’t have time to concoct some pills,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “otherwise I could try to make a more powerful version of my Soul Convergence Pill. Although I don't even have enough ingredients anyway.” With that, he racked his brains trying to figure out a way to resolve the situation. Sadly, there were just too many limitations, and the level of difficulty was too high. No matter what ideas he came up with, they didn’t seem good enough.

As the Succubus Queens danced, he felt his soul stirring, and his heart slowly losing its calm. The heat inside him grew stronger, and soon, not even biting his tongue did anything to help.

“Dammit, I guess you have to fight the wicked with wickedness!! They’re just some sexy souls, right? If I have to, I can just call that old ghost out of the Greatsword of the North and let him deal with his own kind!” By this point, he was really out of ideas. Quickly pulling out the Greatsword of the North, he sent his divine sense inside and, in the blink of an eye, summoned the quasi-archaean ghost that had once existed on the flag on Ghostmother’s ship. When the ghost face appeared, he looked around in confusion.

“Hey old ghost….” Bai Xiaochun said. At first, he had assumed he would have to negotiate a bit with the ghost face. But before he could even begin talking, the ghost face shivered, and then his eyes began to shine with unprecedented brightness.

“Succubi!?!? Heavens. They’re actually Succubi! I can’t believe… they’re all Succubus Queens! This aura… this place has the aura of a Dao Essence!!” At this point, he trembled with incredible anticipation.

“It’s been a long, long time since I’ve enjoyed the flavor of Succubi!” The ghost face didn’t need any orders from Bai Xiaochun. Like a hungry wolf, he pounced on the nearest Succubus Queen.

Bai Xiaochun was completely stunned, but not as stunned as the spirit automaton was.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1131 awe-chapter-1132

Only when pushed into a corner did Bai Xiaochun think to fight fire with fire. Furthermore, he made the decision only after some detailed consideration, as well as the understanding of souls that being a heavenly necromancer gave him.

Back in his flame conjuring days, he had seen souls consume each other on numerous occasions, and yet hadn't been completely certain of his new strategy. But when he saw the ghost face's excited expression, and heard his exclamation, he blinked a few times, then breathed a sigh of relief. For a moment, he felt a bit sorry for the Succubus souls.

"This old ghost has probably been hungry for tens of thousands of years…."

As the ghost face lunged forward with an excited shout, the beautiful, flirtatious Succubi looked at him with flashing eyes. Then, instead of fleeing, they actually began to rush toward him and surround him.

Bai Xiaochun looked on, stunned, unsure of who was making the first move, the ghost face or the Succubi. The group of souls tumbled off into the mists, until they were impossible to see clearly….

Excited shrieks and shouts echoed out, leaving Bai Xiaochun bewildered as to what was going on.

"Can that old ghost handle it…?" he thought. A moment ago, he had felt sorry for the Succubi, but now, he wasn't really sure what to think. As of this moment, he could still feel their power tugging at his soul. Knowing that he couldn't dare to get any closer to them than he already was, he gritted his teeth, sat down cross-legged, and began to focus on meditating, ignoring anything else that was happening.

Bai Xiaochun could ignore what was happening, but the spirit automaton could not. He anxiously descended into the mists to see what was happening, and then… didn’t come back out.

Twenty hours passed. Eventually, the ghost face appeared, shivering and looking very pleased with himself. His cultivation base was almost completely back to normal. After returning to Bai Xiaochun, he looked at him for a long moment and briefly considered doing something to him. However, even though he had his cultivation base back, Bai Xiaochun had left a deep shadow on his heart, and after muttering to himself a bit, he decided not to interrupt him. Instead, he floated quietly back into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

Next to emerge from the mists was the spirit automaton. His expression was a mixture of fear, disbelief, and shock as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun, and specifically, his bag of holding.

“Heavens! How could a soul like that even exist…?” The spirit automaton had apparently suffered an unimaginable blow, and was not able to recover at the moment. Thinking back to what he had witnessed within the mists, he suddenly felt a bit sick.

It was in that moment that, without warning, the ghost face floated back out of Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

“Hold on, I need a bit more….” Licking his lips, he shot back toward the depths of the mists.

The spirit automaton shivered, and had to suppress the urge to cry. To most people, this place was a pink hell, but to this old ghost, it was like a holy land.

The spirit automaton couldn’t help but worry what would happen if the old ghost kept going. He could theoretically wreck the entire level, and completely deplete the bit of the Dao Essence of Life and Death that the sovereign had left behind in it.

“Damn you, Bai Xiaochun. You shameless cheater! You and everybody you have working for you are all completely and utterly shameless!” Gritting his teeth helplessly, he chose to let Bai Xiaochun simply pass the level. Performing a quick incantation gesture, he caused the light of teleportation to spring up. Not daring to wait for even a moment longer, he sent Bai Xiaochun and the old ghost out of the level immediately.

As soon as they appeared out on the fan rib, the ghost face looked around in shock, then wailed, “No! I’m not fully recovered yet….”

Sadly for him, he wasn’t able to get back into the level no matter how hard he tried.

As for Bai Xiaochun, the fluctuations that had been tugging at his soul vanished as soon as he appeared outside. The heat inside of him faded away, and he opened his eyes to see the ghost face going crazy. At that point, his surprise turned into joy.

“Hahaha! It turns out I really am perfectly pure and clean. That couldn’t have gone smoother. Only a genius like me would have thought to fight fire with fire. Even a hard level like that was super easy to pass.” Shivering, he looked at the scowling ghost face, and suddenly found him to be much more charming than before. Grabbing him, he put him back into the Greatsword of the North. Of course, the ghost face wasn’t particularly happy about that, but because of the slave seal on him, he couldn’t even struggle.

Looking very pleased, Bai Xiaochun considered the overall situation again, and came to the conclusion that the spirit automaton was probably awake, and that he was the reason why the level had been so dangerous. Assuming that the spirit automaton was currently watching him, he cleared his throat and loudly said, “Hey little automaton, thanks for all your hard work. You know, there’s no point in resisting. Just wait until the grand and mighty Lord Bai has thoroughly subjugated you.”

With that, he sent out a thought, and vanished from the damaged fan.

After he was gone, the spirit automaton appeared, utterly discomfited, his face viciously twisted with rage. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun’s parting words had been particularly irritating to him.

“Shameless cheater! I'm never going to let you reach the end!! I swear that next time, I’ll definitely destroy you! Destroy you, ya hear!? Destroy you!” A howl of rage then echoed back and forth in the damaged fan.

The spirit automaton had been defeated so many times by Bai Xiaochun that he was being driven crazy. In fact, it was at this point that he started reviewing all of the later levels to try to figure out a way to screw Bai Xiaochun over.

Bai Xiaochun had just returned to Mistysea Prefecture, and already, something unusual was happening not very far away. One of the northern prefectures that bordered Mistysea Prefecture was Murkbreak Prefecture, which was controlled by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. On the very edge of Murkbreak Prefecture, where it bordered Mistysea Prefecture, was a county by the name of Murknine County!

Murkbreak Prefecture had a total of fifteen counties, three of which bordered Mistysea Prefecture, and this was only one of them. Currently, it was evening, and one would have expected the entire county to be bustling with activity. Instead, the place was deathly silent!

There was nothing alive in the entire county; not even a single aura could be detected. Nor could a sound be heard from animals or cultivators. Furthermore, Murknine County was filled with masses of spiderwebs.

There was so much spiderweb that the paths leading in and out of the county were completely impassable. Not even divine abilities or magical techniques could destroy the webbing. Any damage done to it was almost immediately repaired.

In the northeast corner of Murknine County were two old men with demigod cultivation bases and somber expressions.

“This spiderweb showed up three days ago, and in only a few days, has filled the entire county. The place is now completely sealed up, except for this spot right in front of us. Presumably, it's very dangerous inside. No one has come out, nor have any messages been received from inside. Should we go in, Brother Chen?”

“Celestial Ghostmother has given orders for us to go investigate. If we don't go in too far, and only stay for about an hour, we should be fine. We just need to find some clues and then get out.” Exchanging a glance, they blurred into motion, carefully entering Murknine County.

An hour passed, and the two demigods were nowhere to be seen. They had disappeared as surely as a clay bull tossed into the ocean. Except, not even a wave or ripple spread out to give any clue as to what had occurred. There were no fluctuations from magical techniques, and no sounds to be heard.

A few more hours passed, and the spiderweb began to spread to cover that final gap through which they had entered.

Just when that gap was about to close up, a head popped out from inside. It was none other than one of the old men from earlier, his expression that of terror.

“Celestial Ghostmother, save me…!” he screamed. Just as he was about to break free from the spiderweb, something grabbed him from behind and dragged him back in. “Noooo!!”

Then, the gap closed, and the man’s scream faded away. Murknine County was now completely sealed. In fact, from a distance, it almost looked like an enormous egg sac!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1132 awe-chapter-1133

As the egg sac formed, a strange aura began to pulse out from within Murknine County, giving birth to a gray mist.

Normally, Gongsun Wan’er would have personally come to investigate the events in Murknine County, but she was at a critical juncture in her cultivation, and thus had dispatched the two demigods in her stead.

When it became clear that the demigods weren't coming back, she realized that the situation was worse than she had initially thought.

At the same time, the gray mist was spreading into Mistysea Prefecture, leading the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King to realize that something was going on in the neighboring prefecture.

There was some power at work within that mist that cultivators couldn’t detect. It turned the lands gray, and even caused crevices to open up. Furthermore, the mist killed anything it touched, even the plants!

Mistysea Prefecture immediately went on high alert, and the Grand Heavenmaster personally went to the border to investigate, as did the Giant Ghost King and certain other powerful experts. After seeing the situation personally, they came up with a theory about what was to come.

If the mist wasn’t brought under control, it would only take half a month for it to cover Mistysea Prefecture!

It was a monumental turn of events. After all, Mistysea Prefecture was in the middle of rapid development, and if the momentum stalled at this early stage, it could have devastating long-term consequences.

It was at this time that Bai Xiaochun returned from the damaged fan, and sent out his divine sense to notify the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King that he was back. Those two had long since come to realize that he had some mysterious reason for disappearing occasionally.

Of course, neither had presumed to ask about it. Once Bai Xiaochun's divine sense touched them, they somberly explained the issue with the mist, and Murknine County.

"The entire county is covered with spiderwebs? And anyone who touches the mist dies!?" Bai Xiaochun was visibly shocked. Clearly, this was not a small matter, and therefore, the first thing he did was send a report to Saint-Emperor City.

Not wanting to waste time waiting for a response, and worried about how Mistysea Prefecture might be negatively affected, he forced himself not to think about how dangerous the situation was, and flew over to check it out personally. Of course, he brought various subordinates with him, including the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King.

Soon, they were near the border of the prefecture, right outside of the expanding gray mist. When Bai Xiaochun saw it, he felt very shaken.

"What is that stuff?!" he thought, immediately beginning to curse inwardly. The mist was moving at incredible speed, roughly that of a deva. And his divine sense couldn't penetrate it at all.

Back in the Heavenspan Realm, he would have simply fled in the face of this level of danger. But now, he was the most powerful expert in Mistysea Prefecture. How could he possibly run away?

Torn about what exactly to do, he gritted his teeth and ordered his subordinates to back up. Then he unleashed all of the power of his cultivation base to surround himself in defensive fashion. Finally, he tried to enter the mist to investigate further.

The Giant Ghost King anxiously considered urging Bai Xiaochun not to do something so dangerous. However, considering that the mist was spreading rapidly into Mistysea Prefecture, both he and the Grand Heavenmaster were very worried.

“He’ll be fine,” the Grand Heavenmaster said quietly. “He’s a celestial, and he’s very cautious. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he shouldn’t face anything truly deadly.” The Giant Ghost King merely sighed and nodded. And thus, they waited behind as Bai Xiaochun entered the mist.

As soon as he entered the mist, he felt something dragging against him, almost as if he were walking through seawater, significantly reducing his speed.

Apparently, there was a powerful pressure weighing down everywhere.

To his relief, though, his celestial cultivation base made him like a boulder that the seawater could do nothing but flow around.

Gaining a bit of confidence, he began to pick up speed, and before long was nearing the source of the mist. Murknine

County!

His first impression was that it looked like an enormous, webby egg sac. Furthermore, he found the wicked aura it emanated to be profoundly disquieting.

“Dammit, what exactly is going on here?” Trembling in fear, he edged closer to Murknine County, keeping an eye on the dense, impenetrable spiderwebs. Considering how uneasy he felt, he didn’t do anything rash, and simply flew along the edge of the county to inspect the webbing.

After six hours passed, he had almost made a complete circle of the county, but hadn’t found any entrances. Eyes flashing, he considered striking at the web to see how strong it was. But that was when his expression flickered, and he turned to look in a different direction in the mists.

Gradually, a woman became visible off in the distance, although he couldn’t quite see who she was. When she saw Bai Xiaochun, she approached. Soon, she was close enough to make out her face.

“Gongsun Wan’er,” he said by way of greeting, keeping his voice down.

“Bai Xiaochun!” she replied. Soon she was right in front of him. Obviously, there was no need for an explanation of why the both of them were here.

Considering how bizarre things were at the moment, Bai Xiaochun was actually happy to have Gongsun Wan’er around. Not wasting any time on small talk, he quickly went on to tell her everything he knew.

“This mist is expanding with the speed of a deva, corrodes the land it covers, and sucks the life force out of anything it touches. The strangest thing is that it extracts life force by teleporting it away, or at least, by using something that resembles a teleportation.

“This web is one huge structure with no entrances. I haven’t unleashed any attacks to test it, but I'm guessing that any divine abilities used against it will provoke some sort of response. If we hit it hard enough, maybe we could get through in one shot. Otherwise, it will probably take a long time to get through.”

Gongsun Wan’er took a moment to digest all the information, then went on to tell Bai Xiaochun a few things she had come to discover.

Lowering her voice, she said, “Two days ago, I sent two demigods here to investigate. Back then, the webbing hadn’t yet formed into a single structure, and there were ways to get in. However, after the demigods went inside… I never heard from them again!

“Furthermore, this mist is transforming. I suspect that within three days, it will be expanding at the speed of a demigod. And that’s probably not its full limit!”

Bai Xiaochun was visibly shocked by this.

The two of them exchanged a glance. Obviously, there was no time to sit around waiting for either the Vile-Emperor Dynasty or the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to send reinforcements. They had to do something immediately!

There were few options. Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth, and Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes flashed with determination. If Gongsun Wan’er had been on her own, she wouldn’t have been willing to face the danger. But considering they were celestials, there were few places in the Eternal Immortal Domains that they could not go.

They discussed the particulars and came up with a simple plan, and then drew upon the powers of their cultivation bases. Booms rang out as divine abilities were unleashed, striking one particular spot on the webbing.

A shockwave blasted out in all directions, and the web rippled, seemingly standing up to the power of the combined attack.

But the web barrier had only been erected recently, and Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were celestials with matchlessly powerful divine abilities. A moment later, the web shuddered, and a hole opened up.

Instantly, vast quantities of gray mist poured out of the hole, which began to close up the moment it opened.

“Go!” Gongsun Wan’er said, blurring into motion to enter the hole. Bai Xiaochun suppressed his unease, braced himself, and followed!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1133 awe-chapter-1134

Only about ten breaths of time after Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er entered the web, the hole closed up behind them. Not even the slightest mark remained behind to indicate that it had once existed there.

Now, they were separated from the larger world outside.

Inside of the enormous webby chrysalis, Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er had very serious expressions on their faces. Currently, they stood on a vast plain.

There were no plants visible, nor any mountains. Even the land was parched and cracked, and seemingly devoid of any life force. In fact, other than the drifting mists, it didn’t contain anything!

Gongsun Wan’er looked around quietly, then pointed off into the distance. “Last time I was in Murknine County, I passed by this area, and I distinctly remember there being a mountain range over there….”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the area toward which Gongsun Wan’er was pointing and saw absolutely nothing.

The two of them exchanged a glance, and both could see the fear and bewilderment in each other’s eyes.

“Interesting,” Gongsun Wan’er said. “There aren’t many things in the Eternal Immortal Domains that can be disturbing to celestials like us. A few days ago, Murknine County was the same as ever, only to suddenly become like this…. As far as I can remember, nothing like this has ever happened before!” Eyes flickering, she sent some divine sense out. Being the domineering person she was, she did nothing to conceal her presence, and even unleashed the power of her cultivation base, announcing to any entities within Murknine County that she had arrived.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun’s personality was very different. Squatting down, he scooped up a handful of soil.

It almost felt like nothing more than ash. He blew on it, and it dispersed into the air. Everything as far as the eye could see was the same, covered with layer upon layer of ash.

“This is even worse than the areas outside that the mists have covered,” he murmured.

Gongsun Wan’er retracted her divine sense, a frown on her face. Strangely, after sending her divine sense out past a certain level, she was unable to retract it, and was forced to simply dispel it.

Performing an incantation gesture with her right hand, she reached up and touched her forehead, then sent out some more divine sense.

“There’s a village up ahead,” she said. “Something’s alive there, but my divine sense can’t enter the area, so it’s hard to say what.”

With that, she blurred into motion. As for Bai Xiaochun, he suppressed his unease, took a deep breath, and followed her.

Everything was absolutely still and quiet, without even the hint of any wind. Strangely, it wasn’t very dark, as the webby chrysalis which made up the sky actually glowed with bright light. Although mortals wouldn’t be able to see it, considering the level of Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er’s cultivation bases, they were able to see everything very clearly.

They moved with speed that vastly surpassed demigods. In overall size, Murknine County was actually about the same size as the Heavenspan Realm, but at their current speed, it only took an incense stick’s worth of time before they saw the village up ahead!

In the past, the village might not have been very eye-catching, but now, it most certainly was. Absolutely nothing existed around it other than ash. In contrast, the village was perfectly preserved, and there even appeared to be lamps flickering, and smoke rising up into the air from chimneys.

That only served to make Bai Xiaochun more uneasy. However, no sensation of crisis arose within him as he and Gongsun Wan’er sped closer and closer.

They stopped outside of the village, and as they did… the sound of a young girl laughing suddenly drifted out into the silence!

“Hehehe….” The sudden laughter caused Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er’s expressions to flicker.

What was even stranger was that the laughter continued on without cease. Eventually, Gongsun Wan’er snorted coldly.

“Who dares to try to act spooky in front of me!?” A mysterious, ghostly fire sprang up in her eyes as she flew into the village. Now that Bai Xiaochun thought about it, all other types of ghostly beings paled in comparison to Ghostmother. Calming down a bit, he headed into the village after her.

It wasn’t very large, only enough to fit about a hundred households. The streets were clean, very different from the dusty world beyond its borders. There were even many lights twinkling in the windows of the buildings.

But then Bai Xiaochun sent some divine sense out, and realized that he couldn’t sense any actual living beings. His face sank a bit.

Gongsun Wan’er began to push open some of the doors of the buildings, and soon found that they were completely unoccupied. Some of the tables were set with food, but no one sat at them to eat it.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But the endless laughter of that girl continued to assail their ears. And even after entering the village itself, it was impossible to ascertain its source. It was as if it existed everywhere at once.

Divine sense couldn’t even determine its general origin, much less find the girl herself.

Even more unsettling was that the laughter began to come faster and faster, until it caused a sense of impending crisis in Bai Xiaochun’s heart. Then, with no warning whatsoever, it ceased!

Before Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er could look around to investigate, the same girl's voice could be heard again. But this time, she wasn’t laughing, she was crying!

Her sobs were filled with bitterness, despair, and even madness, and were far louder than the laughter had been. At that point, the previously still Murknine County was suddenly filled with a gale force wind!

Sounds like muffled thunder filled the air, which was now filled with endless ash and grit. At that point, a hair-raising feeling of danger rose up in Bai Xiaochun.

“Gongsun Wan’er, you’re Ghostmother, right? Can't you hurry up and find whatever ghosts are around here?” At that point he turned to look at her, only to find that she had vanished!

His heart immediately began to pound. Considering the level of his cultivation base, if Gongsun Wan’er had left the area, he should have been able to tell. And yet… she was nowhere to be seen.

“This place is too creepy!” he thought. “Gongsun Wan’er couldn’t have left, which means there’s only one thing that could have happened! There must be a spell formation here that causes space to overlap!” He quickly sent his divine sense out again, simultaneously slapping his bag of holding to produce a fifteen-colored flame. Even as the light of the flame illuminated the area, he threw it down at the ground.

A massive explosion ensued, much like when a drop of water is thrown into a vat of boiling oil.

Flame rippled out in all directions, ripping away at something that was like a veil of concealment. As that happened, Gongsun Wan’er became visible.

She looked shocked, but at the same time, relieved to see Bai Xiaochun. Meanwhile, the explosion of the fifteen-colored flame engulfed the village, causing many of the buildings to dissolve into ashes, and leaving Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er within a raging sea of fire.

Even as the fire burned, the weeping continued. However, as the roughly one hundred houses in the village were burned to the ground, Bai Xiaochun realized that in the second story of one of the buildings was a wooden cot. Laying on that cot was a marionette, who was looking at Bai Xiaochun… and weeping.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1134 awe-chapter-1135

As the fire consumed the marionette, its wailing battered Bai Xiaochun’s ears, causing his heart to fill with indescribable coldness.

Perhaps it was because he had been attuned to danger from a very young age. Or perhaps it was because of his dream of living forever. Either way, his ability to sense impending danger had improved throughout his years of cultivation, and had always surpassed cultivators in the same level as himself.

And right now, his intuition was telling him that something was very, very wrong in Murknine County!

Even as his heart sank, Gongsun Wan’er looked over and said in a hoarse voice, “There’s no ghost qi here. That marionette… is not a ghostly soul!”

Although she didn’t have Bai Xiaochun’s intuition, as Ghostmother, she was innately attuned to matters of ghosts and souls.

“More precisely, it isn’t a complete ghostly soul…. I can actually sense a soul linkage on it, and the source… is in that direction!” She pointed off into the distance, then looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Although she didn’t say anything more, her intention was clear.

They had two choices. One was to leave, and wait for other celestials from the two dynasties to come help, or perhaps even the archaean emperors. The other option… was to go investigate on their own, and try to resolve the issue!

The former was the safest of the two decisions. Unfortunately, neither Gongsun Wan’er nor Bai Xiaochun had the luxury of time.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure whether Gongsun Wan’er would be willing to give up her place in the north, but he did know that if he didn’t resolve this situation, then he might as well forget about turning Mistysea Prefecture into a beacon of hope for the people of Heavenspan!

Frowning slightly, he blurred into motion in the direction Gongsun Wan’er had pointed out.

Gongsun Wan’er didn’t hesitate to follow. After winning the struggle over the true form of Ghostmother, she had lost the trust of the Vile-Emperor. Her entire purpose in coming to the north of the second immortal domain was to try to win back that trust. If she didn’t join Bai Xiaochun, she would be throwing away all of the progress she had already made.

Therefore, she made the same decision he did.

The more they flew along, the more unsightly their expressions became. Even after flying for some time, they never saw a single person. Everything was gray, with no plant life or mountains. Nothing.

They saw towns and villages, but most seemed devoid of life. A few times, mysterious voices floated out from within a location they passed.

Presumably, those places were similar to the first village they had encountered.

And thus, they proceeded along in silence and vigilance. Eventually, a city appeared up ahead!

It was none other than the capital of Murknine County!

“This is the source of the soul linkage,” Gongsun Wan’er said. “I just can’t tell exactly where it is.” Both of them sent their divine sense out to check out the location, and when they did, their faces fell!

What they saw was very different from the towns and villages they had seen up to this point. There were living cultivators in the city, except, they were trudging around the streets and alleys like the walking dead.

Even more odd was that many people in the city were constantly eating food as they ambled along.

Most shocking was that some people had apparently finished eating their food, and had begun to devour their own fingers and hands! It was as if they were starving!

When Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er saw that, they accelerated until they were in midair above the city, where they could observe the situation with physical sight.

After a moment, Bai Xiaochun flew down and landed on one of the streets of the city. In front of him he saw a Core Formation cultivator, a woman who was slowly devouring her finger. Blood dripped down her arm, but she didn't seem to notice. She was apparently so starving that the only thing she cared about was eating.

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun reached out and put his right hand onto the woman’s head, then sent some divine sense inside her. He wanted to see for himself what had happened, and confirm his speculations about the matter.

As he searched the woman’s mind, his expression grew grimmer and grimmer.

Meanwhile, Gongsun Wan’er had landed on the ground too, and was similarly searching through the mind of another cultivator. When they were done, they exchanged a glance, then quickly recounted to each other everything they had learned.

“Nothing odd!?”

“Still conscious and aware, just muddled?!”

“No signs of being controlled? They’re acting on instinct alone?!”

“Their life force is slowly being drained away!?”

Unfortunately, neither of them had any idea how to solve the problem.

Everything that was happening was truly strange!

At one point, Gongsun Wan’er reached out and grabbed a Nascent Soul cultivator, then bound his hands up. The man struggled for a bit, and when he realized he couldn’t reach his arms, began chewing on his lip until blood ran down his chin.

Both Gongsun Wan’er and Bai Xiaochun looked grimmer than ever. Gongsun Wan’er unbound the Nascent Soul cultivator, and Bai Xiaochun continued onward.

Gongsun Wan’er looked around, then followed Bai Xiaochun. Right now, the safest thing for the both of them was to stick together.

With each moment that passed, they felt more and more shaken by what they saw. They almost felt like they weren’t in the Eternal Immortal Domains anymore. Everyone around them was completely focused on eating, and some of them even had bloated bellies from it.

It was only those who had bloated bellies that seemed capable of coming to their senses to some degree. At one point, they caught sight of someone off in the distance with an exaggeratedly bloated belly. He was an old man who lay on the ground, so stuffed he couldn’t move. His eyes shone with terror and despair, indicating that he was at least somewhat lucid.

When he noticed Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er, he shivered and managed to gather enough energy to call out to them.

“Celestial, save me....”

That old man was one of the two demigod’s Gongsun Wan’er had dispatched to investigate Murknine County!

When Gongsun Wan’er realized who the old man was, she hurried toward him, followed by Bai Xiaochun. However, before they could get very close, the man’s face twisted as if with pain, and he screamed at the top of his lungs. Then… his belly exploded!!

Blood and gore splattered out in all directions, along with a host of innumerable, colorful spiders that had human faces!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered. Suppressing the revolting feeling that swept through him, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and waved his finger through the air. The grim-faced Gongsun Wan’er also unleashed an attack.

When two celestials joined together to unleash an attack, it was like a destructive tempest. Winds screamed as the spiders began to collapse, unleashing unsettling screams as they did.

As the screams of the spiders echoed out, everyone else in the city shivered, then stopped eating and turned to look at Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er. Pained expressions could be seen on their faces as they howled, their bellies bulging. Then, one by one, they began to explode!

A horde of countless spiders appeared, filling the city, pouring over everything as they raced madly toward Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er!

The lands quaked due to the sheer numbers involved. Shocked, both Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan'er flew up into the air and looked down at the city, which now looked as though it had been covered by a colorful, writhing blanket!

It was a ghastly and horrible sight!

All of the spiders emanated Foundation Establishment auras. Although individually they were completely insignificant to celestials… there were just too many of them!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1135 awe-chapter-1136

“Are these things causing the problems in Murknine County?” Gongsun Wan’er asked with a frown. There were so many of the spiders that even a celestial would have trouble dealing with all of them.

However, it didn’t seem likely that things were so simple, especially considering the matter of the soul linkage.

“Let’s take care of these spiders first, then worry about everything else later!” Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then waved his finger, causing frigid qi to spread out in all directions. Everywhere it went, the buildings in the city were frozen!

As for the spiders, they instantly went rigid and unmoving. At the same time, Gongsun Wan’er took action, sending black flame down toward the city. This type of flame was different from the multi-colored flame that Bai Xiaochun would conjure as a necromancer. It seemed purer. In fact, as Bai Xiaochun looked at it, he could tell that it contained the power of the seven emotions and six sensory pleasures.

The black fire quickly became a sea of flames that spread out in the area. Instead of interfering with Bai Xiaochun’s frigid qi, it actually complemented it.

Roaring sounds echoed out as countless spiders were killed. However, there were still plenty of spiders left, and they began to clump together, transforming into eight towering piles that rose into the sky!

Soon, the piles formed into eight 300-meter-tall spiders composed of innumerable smaller spiders. Howling, the gigantic spider constructs rushed toward Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er.

Because of the conglomeration of spiders that made them up, these larger spiders were no longer at the Foundation Establishment level. They were more like quasi-celestials, and they looked vicious to the extreme.

Anyone other than a celestial who faced a situation like this would have no way to come out alive. Thankfully, the suspicious activity in Murknine County had attracted the attention of not one celestial, but two. Most likely, the ultimate culprit behind everything had not considered that such a thing would transpire.

As the eight enormous spiders neared, Bai Xiaochun prepared to fight. However, Gongsun Wan’er had been holding in her frustration from what had occurred in the first village they encountered. The fact that Bai Xiaochun had ended the impasse before she could had left a deep impression on her. Therefore, she quickly performed an incantation gesture before he could do anything, sending masses of black smoke flying toward the spiders.

Along the way, the smoke broke up into eight ghost hands, which clenched into fists as they smashed into the spiders!

Cracking sounds rang out as the huge spiders collapsed, sending innumerable smaller spiders to their deaths. Before she could do anything to attack those that survived, they landed on the ground and, seemingly completely ignoring how the ground had been frozen and sealed by Bai Xiaochun, began to burrow down into the earth!

To them, the ground was as weak as soft tofu. Within moments, all of the spiders had vanished, leaving behind only fist-sized holes in the ground.

Right now, the earth below almost looked like a giant sieve!

Eyes flickering, Bai Xiaochun dropped down to investigate. Meanwhile, Gongsun Wan’er snorted coldly, performing an incantation gesture that brought all eight of her ghost hands back together to make a larger, vicious-looking hand. That hand clenched into a fist, and then slammed into the ground below Bai Xiaochun!

A massive boom echoed out as the land quaked violently, causing the countless holes that riddled the ground to collapse into a 300-meter-wide cavity!

Dozens of crevices spread out from the cavity in all directions, causing cracking sounds to fill the air. Soon, the entire city was almost completely enveloped!

By this point, the land was little more than a shell supporting the city. As the crevices spread out, the sprawling capital of Murknine County began to collapse.

Shockingly, the area beneath the ground was actually empty. Vast amounts of dirt, tiles, bricks and dust fell downward, and yet, not even that could fill in the huge hole below.

As the dust began to settle, what appeared before Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er was a massive crater that instantly struck them to the core with a profoundly wicked sensation. Gray mist poured out of the crater, seemingly without end. Clearly, this crater… was the source of the mist!

It was possible to see little spiders scuttling to and fro, as if this crater were an enormous spider nest!

As Gongsun Wan’er looked down at the massive crater, her expression flickered.

“The source of the soul linkage is down there!” With that, she turned into a blur of motion that headed down into the crater. As for Bai Xiaochun, he blinked a few times, once again aware of the uneasy feeling inside of him. After all, it was a lot more frightening to be unaware of what enemy you were about to face.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t mind at all that Gongsun Wan’er had seized the initiative. Actually, he would prefer it if she could just resolve the whole situation on her own.

However, he followed her down into the crater. It was a massive thing, and also filled with mists that would cause even a demigod to shrink back. Only experts with a celestial cultivation base could possibly travel through it.

As they continued forward, they heard what sounded like the sounds of crunching and chewing. Both Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er felt their anxiety mounting, and circulated their cultivation bases as the chewing sounds got louder and louder.

Unfortunately, the gray mists interfered with divine sense, making it impossible for them to know what was happening around them.

The chewing sounded like it was right next to them. At one point, Gongsun Wan’er stopped and looked over at him, and he slapped his bag of holding to produce a tongue of fourteen-colored flame.

Unfortunately, he was really running low on multi-colored flame, and needed to conserve his stockpile. After all, if he ran out, he would be in big trouble when it came to performing spirit enhancements.

But right now, he was in a tight spot, and the ordinary fire produced by various magical techniques didn’t seem as effective as multi-colored flame. And considering how effective the flame had been back in the first village they explored, it was a bit comforting to have some right there in his hand, ready to use.

Now was not the time to be stingy. Therefore, he clenched his hand into a fist, destabilizing the flame and causing bright light to spread out in all directions. Then he hurled the tongue of fourteen-colored flame ahead of him into the depths of the crater.

It moved with incredible speed, exploding in size as it did, and casting out dazzling light that clearly revealed everything it touched. Eventually, it landed in a spot deep in the crater and exploded, sending fourteen-colored flame out in all directions.

As the sea of fire spread out through the crater, Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er accelerated, soon reaching the area of impact. Thanks to the brightness of the fire, they were able to see everything clearly. And they were completely shocked!

In the depths of the crater was a huge spiderweb, upon which crouched an enormous spider with a leg span of nearly 10,000 meters. This was the source of the chewing sounds! The spider was brightly colored, and had numerous magical symbols covering it as well as… countless human faces!

There were men, women, young and old, and all of them had expressions of tormented pain. Their mouths were open as though they were screaming, and yet no sound came out. It was bizarre to the extreme!

There were countless smaller spiders in the area as well, marching into the mouth of the huge spider, which was chewing them up and swallowing them. With every smaller spider that was consumed, another human face would appear on the surface of the larger spider!

In fact, Bai Xiaochun even spotted the face of the demigod who had exploded in front of him only a short time ago in the city!

And the bizarreness wasn’t over yet! Behind the huge spider was what appeared to be an egg sac, which was pulsing almost like a beating heart. Apparently, the reason that the huge spider was consuming everything in Murknine County was because of that egg sac!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1136 awe-chapter-1137

Even as Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er laid eyes on the shocking scene, the egg sac began to wriggle. Apparently, there was some unimaginable living thing inside that was being helped by the huge spider to absorb everything in Murknine County. The living beings, the mountains, the plants, and all the life force that existed therein, was all being absorbed!

The amount of life force that existed in this one county was roughly equivalent to that which had existed in all of the Heavenspan Realm, and it was being used to feed whatever existed in that egg sac!

Both Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were visibly taken aback. At the same time, they both came to the same conclusion. If the living being inside of the egg sac emerged… then it would lead to a catastrophe the likes of which neither of them were equipped to handle!

At the same time, the light and heat of the fourteen-colored flame continued to spread out in the massive crater. The fire caught many of the small spiders, who screamed as they were burned to a crisp. However, when it came to the spiderweb, there was some strange property to it that caused it to simply shrink back a bit from the heat of the flame. Not even the fourteen-colored flame could break the web!

As many of the small spiders died, and as the spiderweb shrank back, the enormous spider king suddenly looked up, fixing its cold gaze on Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er.

Roar!

Its terrifying cry was filled with killing intent and ferocious brutality. Completely disregarding the fourteen-colored flame, it began to rush toward them.

Despite being so huge, it advanced with lightning-like speed. Having no time to consult with Bai Xiaochun about a plan, Gongsun Wan’er performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing black smoke to surge out and make an enormous ghost hand, which shot toward the spider.

However, the spider was powerful to a shocking degree, and simply head-butted the ghost hand. The ghost hand, which had been fueled by Gongsun Wan’er’s celestial cultivation base, simply shattered!

“It’s got a celestial-level fleshly body!” Bai Xiaochun blurted, shocked. However, he didn’t slow down. Unfortunately, he and Gongsun Wan’er had no time to work out a plan for how to deal with the situation. And yet, considering that they were teamed up on this endeavor, there was no need to discuss certain things. While Gongsun Wan’er fought the spider, Bai Xiaochun blurred into motion, heading toward… the wriggling egg sac!

The huge spider saw what was happening, and was immediately enraged. It turned as if to intercept, but before it could, Gongsun Wan’er performed an incantation gesture, sending numerous vicious ghost faces flying out. Formed from black smoke, and radiating the dreadful power of demigods, they fearlessly lunged forward and began to bite the huge spider.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was nearing the egg sac. Clenching his right hand into a fist, he unleashed a fist strike backed both by his celestial cultivation base and powerful fleshly body. The air was shattered as his fist flew through the air and then landed on the egg sac.

Shaking visibly, the egg sac sank down where the punch had landed. However, thanks to some unknown means, it somehow captured some of the force of Bai Xiaochun's blow, then redirected it into a powerful backlash attack. However, it was impossible for it to completely negate a full-force blow from Bai Xiaochun, and the egg sac was left vibrating.

That vibration seemed to tug at the attention of the enormous spider, who let out a piercing cry. Ignoring the ravenous ghost faces, it barreled toward Bai Xiaochun, moving so quickly that he had no chance to jump out of the way.

A huge boom could be heard as Bai Xiaochun was struck, his five yin organs and six yang organs trembling painfully. As he staggered backward, his eyes turned bloodshot. But before he could do anything else, the enormous spider leaped toward him again. From the look in its eyes, it was possible to see how much it hated him. Then its mouth opened as it prepared to swallow him alive!

However, the spider wasn't necessarily very intelligent. Even as it lunged at Bai Xiaochun, Gongsun Wan'er chuckled coldly, and turned into a streak of light that shot toward the egg sac. Taking advantage of how the spider was distracted by Bai Xiaochun, she swung her hand violently toward the egg sac, backing it with the full power of her celestial cultivation base.

As rumbling sounds filled the air, the huge spider realized that it had been distracted, and its anger flared. As it turned toward Gongsun Wan’er, Bai Xiaochun finally realized what was most important to the spider. And how could he let the thing protect that egg sac? Rushing forward, he grabbed one of the spider’s legs and pulled on it as hard as he could.

HIIISSSS!!

All of the spider’s momentum was killed by Bai Xiaochun, who used the full power of his fleshly body to prevent it from moving. The spider’s claws scraped the ground as it tried to break free, but Bai Xiaochun was holding it in place with a vice-like grip.

It was no easy task for him to utilize such explosive force against the spider. In fact, if he was even slightly careless, or loosened his grip even a little, the spider would surely break free. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, this was like some primordial beast who would rather die than submit.

“You hold on to that thing while I destroy this egg sac!” Gongsun Wan’er shouted, her eyes flashing. Her hands flashed in an incantation gesture, and at the same time, a statue flew out of her bag of holding. As soon as the statue was out in the open, it began to belch out black smoke that quickly filled the area.

Moments later, wailing howls could be heard from within the smoke, and terrifying energy fluctuations began to roll out. The spider’s anxiety mounted, and it even turned to snap at Bai Xiaochun.

Beads of sweat popped out on Bai Xiaochun's forehead, and he had no choice but to let the spider go to avoid the attack. Then, as the spider prepared to lunge back in the direction of the egg sac, he quickly grabbed another of its legs and dragged it backward.

The spider’s claws created huge gulches in the ground as it was slowly dragged away in the opposite direction of its goal. The spider seemed to be going completely mad as it struggled in vain to free itself. Meanwhile, the black smoke surrounding Gongsun Wan’er began to spin, turning into a huge vortex that seemed capable of sucking in everything around it.

The aura coming from within that smoke was chaotic, primeval, and ancient. It almost seemed like a profound aura of death.

What the vortex was specifically tugging at, though, was the huge egg sac. However, it was at this point that the maddened spider yet again turned and snapped, not at Bai Xiaochun, but at the leg which he was holding. Crack! The leg was severed!

As Bai Xiaochun tumbled backward in surprise, the huge spider lunged toward Gongsun Wan’er.

However, that was when Gongsun Wan’er smiled coldly. Waving her arms out in front of her, she suddenly shifted the focus of the black vortex from the egg sac to the huge spider!

“You fell for my trap!” she chuckled, eyes blazing with killing intent as she shoved her hands out in front of her!

The spider trembled as a sensation of incredible danger filled it. It made to fall back, but unfortunately for it, Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were working in perfect unison. Back when she had shouted out to him earlier, he had immediately picked up on what she actually wanted to do. After all, back when he had struck the egg sac, he had sensed that it was not something that he could destroy.

Obviously, Gongsun Wan’er would have detected the same thing.

Only their combined powers could possibly do something to harm it. And with the huge spider around, that wasn’t possible.

Therefore, in the heat of the moment, the egg sac wasn’t important. The huge spider had to be disposed of first.

Gongsun Wan’er realized the truth the instant she struck the egg sac for the first time, and therefore, she and Bai Xiaochun quickly reached an unspoken agreement to take advantage of the spider’s low intelligence and its weakness to hatch a simple ambush!

Even as the huge spider flinched away from the vortex, Bai Xiaochun threw his arms out and drew upon the Mountain Shaking Bash and the Living Mountain Incantation. Transforming into a huge stone golem, he shot forward with incredible fleshly body power to slam into the huge spider.

There was no time for the spider to react, much less dodge out of the way. A boom rang out, and it screamed miserably as it was struck. And then Gongsun Wan’er’s divine ability prepared to devour it.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1137 awe-chapter-1138

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time seeing Gongsun Wan’er use a magical technique like this. The black vortex radiated an ancient, deathly aura as it became like a huge mouth that widened to consume the huge spider.

The spider let out an agonized shriek as its body began to collapse into pieces. It only took about ten breaths of time for the entire thing to be completely sucked up by the vortex.

Bai Xiaochun’s scalp tingled in shock as he watched it happen. After all, the spider had fleshly body power equivalent to a celestial, and yet Gongsun Wan’er’s divine ability completely destroyed it with impunity. Clearly, that divine ability was extraordinary beyond belief.

Meanwhile, Gongsun Wan’er staggered back a few paces, her face draining of blood; unleashing that ancient vortex had not been any simple task, and had been very draining. And considering how long it took her to unleash it in full, it must not be something that she could casually call upon. Although Bai Xiaochun was now sighing in relief that the fight was over, his fear of Gongsun Wan’er increased.

“That ability must be unique to Gongsun Wan’er herself. Otherwise, Ghostmother wouldn’t have been so easy to kidnap.” However, now was not the time to sit around contemplating the matter. Eyes flashing, he looked at the egg sac.

Panting for breath, Gongsun Wan’er also looked in the same direction. There was no need for them to discuss what to do next. In almost the same instant, they both unleashed attacks.

Gongsun Wan’er summoned her bone battleship, except it was shrunk down to the size of a hand. As soon as it appeared, black smoke shot out from it toward the egg sac. As for Bai Xiaochun, he knew that it was a critical moment, so he summoned the Greatsword of the North and backed it with his early Celestial Realm cultivation base to slash at the egg sac!

Two trump cards were unleashed, landing on the huge egg sac in almost the exact moment. First was Gongsun Wan’er’s battleship. Although that initial blow didn’t break the exterior of the trembling egg sac, it got twenty percent through!

Then came Bai Xiaochun’s greatsword, which slashed down from a different angle. Sword qi raged as the egg sac was sliced thirty percent open. Then forty percent, fifty percent, sixty percent…. In the blink of an eye, the egg sac was seventy percent open! As of this moment, its surface was now translucent enough to see something inside, alive and wriggling!

Meanwhile, a massive booming sound rang out because of their combined attack.

It was so loud that the vibrations would likely have killed even a deva, and caused blood to spray out of the mouth of a demigod. Even celestials would be shaken. Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were among the most powerful experts in the entire world, and therefore, quickly recovered.

However, despite nearly being able to break open the egg sac with their combined attacks, they didn’t complete the job. And in the following handful of moments, the egg sac quickly healed itself!

Such powers of regeneration caused both Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er to gasp.

Of course, Gongsun Wan’er was shaken by the terrifying nature of Bai Xiaochun’s world treasure, but had no time to contemplate the subject right now. The two of them exchanged a glance, then once again unleashed simultaneous attacks. This time, Bai Xiaochun didn’t beat around the bush. He poured fleshly body power and cultivation base power into the Greatsword of the North, as well as various divine abilities and other techniques.

Gongsun Wan’er popped some medicinal pills into her mouth, bringing some of the color back to her face. Phoenix-like eyes radiating murder, she sent massive amounts of black energy swirling out of her. Yet again, her battleship appeared, and at the same time, it was possible to see something like black veins bulging beneath her skin, indicating that she was going all out!

As they attacked, the egg sac’s surface was reduced by thirty percent, fifty percent, seventy percent, ninety percent!!

However, at that point, its ridiculous powers of regeneration kicked in, as well as a backlash defense. Rumbling booms echoed out as Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were sent stumbling backward, and the egg sac once again returned to its normal state, as if nothing had happened!

“Impossible!!” Gongsun Wan’er breathed. The defensive powers of this egg sac were horrifying, to say the least. Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, panting for breath, wondering why its powers of regeneration seemed similar to his own powers from the Undying Codex. Although there were some differences, they were definitely very close.

Clearly, the egg sac was making use of the life force that had been gathered from Murknine County. In fact… it reminded Bai Xiaochun very much of how he had been forced to collect life force when cultivating the Undying Codex.

Because of all of this, he was starting to wonder… if his Undying Codex was somehow derived from this huge egg sac!

Otherwise, why did it feel like his technique was somehow connected to it, despite being different!?

If there had been enough time, Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er might have been able to analyze the matter a bit more to figure out how to break the egg sac open. But right now, as the sound of the egg sac's struggling grew louder and louder, it seemed likely that whatever was inside was about to break out!

Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were visibly worried. Although they couldn’t be absolutely certain of all the circumstances, it seemed likely that whatever being had absorbed all of the life force of Murknine County would be terrifyingly powerful!

If the mere surface of the egg sac was so heaven-defyingly strong, then it could only be imagined what was inside.

Gongsun Wan’er’s face was as pale as a sheet, and for the first time since entering Murknine County, she decided that retreat was the best option.

“Let’s go,” she said. “this is beyond us. I have a feeling that whatever is growing inside of that egg sac is something profoundly wicked. I doubt anything less than an archaean could deal with it. We’ve done all we can!” She began to back up, worried that if they delayed too long, they wouldn’t be able to escape.

At any other time, Bai Xiaochun would have been the first to suggest leaving. But right now, he simply stood there, staring at the struggling egg sac.

A crazy idea had begun to brew in his head, an idea that he simply couldn’t stop thinking about. No one but him could possibly have ever come up with such a concept, and it was only because of how the egg sac seemed so similar to the Undying Codex.

“Time to go for broke!” he shouted, seemingly throwing caution to the wind. He just couldn’t allow Mistysea Prefecture to be brought to ruin, which would most certainly happen if the being inside of the egg sac were allowed to grow to completion.

Furthermore, considering what he had already done to prevent this thing from entering the world, if it ever succeeded, it would definitely come after him for revenge.

“If I hadn’t done anything to offend it, maybe I could give up here. But since I already did, I need to go all out to kill it. And if I can’t kill it, I need to make it scared of me!!” He gritted his teeth.

“Wan’er, help me out here. If this doesn’t work, then we’ll leave!” With that, he hefted the Greatsword of the North and prepared to attack. In response, Gongsun Wan’er nodded and prepared to join him.

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out as trump cards were yet again unleashed. The attacks slammed into the egg sac, breaking the surface all the way until the ninety percent mark, whereupon the backlash and regeneration began.

But this time, even as Gongsun Wan’er backed up, Bai Xiaochun ignored the effects of the backlash attack. Blood spraying out of his mouth, he shouted at the top of his lungs as he produced… the Eternal Parasol!

Even as the egg sac began to repair itself, he viciously stabbed the Eternal Parasol right into it!!

In that moment, the backlash attack and the powers of regeneration surged. Bai Xiaochun felt like mountains were slamming into him, causing him to shiver and cough up multiple mouthfuls of blood. His own powers of regeneration were in full swing as his own Undying Codex vied with the egg sac!

At this point, the Eternal Parasol’s ability to absorb life force erupted out. Although the surface of the egg sac had not yet been pierced, a bit of life force had already begun to pour out of it. As Bai Xiaochun shoved the parasol down with all his might, the egg sac’s backlash attack and powers of regeneration continued to rage in conflict.

Blood flowed out of his mouth like a fountain, much to the astonishment of Gongsun Wan’er.

“Are you crazy, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

Eyes bloodshot, Bai Xiaochun used the Living Mountain Incantation and the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation, pushing himself all the way to the peak. Fleshly body power and cultivation base power erupted, until finally the egg sac’s surface reached a limit. Shouting, Bai Xiaochun pushed the pointed tip of the Eternal Parasol… through the surface! A popping sound rang out as its tip stabbed into the interior of the egg sac!

At that point, life force more powerful than anything Bai Xiaochun had ever encountered in his entire existence began to pour through the Eternal Parasol into him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1138 awe-chapter-1139

This life force was so strong that the Eternal Parasol started shaking visibly. As for the ghost face on the canopy, its eyes began to widen, making it almost seem alive. It wasn’t crying, it wasn’t laughing, its eyes were just growing exaggeratedly large.

It was almost as if, after an entire lifetime of absorbing life force, it had never imagined a day in which it would encounter life force as shockingly powerful as this.

Off to the side, Gongsun Wan’er looked on in astonishment.

“You’re… you’re stealing its life force…?” she murmured, her mind almost a complete blank. To see Bai Xiaochun exhibiting this level of daring and madness surpassed anything she could ever have imagined.

In sharp contrast, Bai Xiaochun seemed to be taking everything in stride. Of course, that was only because of the mountain-toppling, sea-draining life force that was pouring into him, battering his mind and making it almost impossible to think.

It was like his brain was being struck by a million bolts of heavenly lightning. Any other person, even a celestial, would have been unable to accept this much life force. But considering the level of his fleshly body, and his foundation with the Undying Live Forever Technique, dealing with this life force was like a walk in the park.

Moments later, his bones began to emit cracking sounds, and his flesh and blood began to swell. Already, he felt like he was absolutely stuffed to the limit. And so far, only one breath of time had passed!

However, despite being stuffed, the life force continued to flow into him. Apparently, the egg sac had previously reached a state of almost full completion. Therefore, when the Eternal Parasol stabbed into it, it was like a balloon that suddenly lost its stability, causing the life force to rush out in maddening fashion.

In the second breath of time which passed since stabbing the egg sac, the foundation of his Undying Live Forever Technique seemed to tremble on the verge of collapse, and then solidify, almost as if it were being tempered. As a result, his Undying Live Forever Technique, which had already reached the ultimate limit of its power, began to transform!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Bai Xiaochun’s aura climbed, growing more intense. Although he was still in the early Celestial Realm, anyone who could assess his level would probably place him at the peak of the mid Celestial Realm!

Then came the third breath of time. The foundations of Bai Xiaochun’s body had seemingly reached their limit, and yet the life force continued to flow into him, causing him to inflate almost like a balloon. In the blink of an eye… Gongsun Wan’er watched as the previously well-proportioned Bai Xiaochun transformed into a huge fat person!

He wasn’t a mountain of flesh, but rather a round, ball-like fatty!!

By this point, he was large enough to count for ten of his previous selves. In fact, if he had gained lucidity in that moment, he would surely have looked at himself and thought of what Big Fatty Zhang had looked like back when he first met him in the Ovens of the Spirit Stream Sect.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened in only three short breaths’ worth of time. When the fourth breath of time arrived, the egg sac let out a roar that shook all of Murknine County!

It was a roar filled with unprecedented rage, fury, and defiance. There was also a touch of incredulity within it, as well as shock. When the roar reached Gongsun Wan’er’s ears, it made her feel like her divine sense and even her physical body were about to be ripped apart.

Blood sprayed out of her mouth as she sped backward, a look of shock on her face. The power contained within that roar of rage surpassed that of a celestial, and it caused a look of despair to appear in her eyes. She could only retreat, blood oozing out of her eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and even her pores.

It all happened too quickly. As Gongsun Wan’er fell back, Bai Xiaochun felt the power of the roar assailing him, and the Eternal Parasol felt a massive force heading toward it from within the egg sac!

Cracks began to spread out on the parasol’s shaft, and its ribs began to show signs of shattering. The ghost face was trembling as it realized it was dealing with an entity far more terrifying than itself.

Only Bai Xiaochun seemed to be able to deal with what was happening. He was now so exceptionally fat, and had so much life force in him, that the sound of the roar only made him feel slightly dizzy. However, after a few breaths of time passed, and he began to regain his lucidity, the intensity of the roar increased. More blood sprayed out of Gongsun Wan’er’s mouth, and she teetered unstably, as though she might fall over at any moment. At that point, Bai Xiaochun was fully back to normal, and could sense the madness in the roar.

He could also feel something like a tempest screaming inside of him, both causing his face to fall and blood to ooze out of the corners of his mouth. Thankfully, despite his increased size, he was still quite nimble. After noticing that Gongsun Wan’er was drenched in blood and seemed to be about to pass out, he waved his sleeve to pull her over and hold her up against his enormous belly….

Heart pounding, he fell back, hoping to get out of the massive crater as quickly as he could. At the same time, the howling egg sac began to rip apart. Cracks spread out across its surface, mostly from the spot where the Eternal Parasol had stabbed into it. Clearly, the living being which had been growing inside of it was about to emerge!

Gasping for breath, Bai Xiaochun drew upon all the power of his cultivation base, as well as the reserves of life force within him, to attain incredible speed.

Just as he was about to leave the crater, an immense cracking sound filled the air as a portion of the egg sac exploded, and a scaled, blood-colored hand reached out, dripping with viscous fluid!!

It only had four fingers, with razor-sharp claws at the ends of them, and it radiated a sense of profound and deadly evil.

As the hand appeared, the sky flickered, both within Murknine County and in the outside world.

And then, the crimson, scaled hand shot out in the direction of the fleeing Bai Xiaochun!

It was an attack of heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing force, something that surpassed the Celestial Realm!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as an intense sensation of deadly crisis filled him. His first instinct was to go to the damaged fan, even if that meant revealing the secret of the fan to Gongsun Wan’er.

Unfortunately, the spiderweb that had the entire county sealed up also severed all types of energy connections, a barrier that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t get past at his current level of power.

In that moment of crisis, Bai Xiaochun felt himself going completely mad. Howling, he summoned the Greatsword of the North and slashed it through the air behind him, causing it to change shape into a protective shield. As for Gongsun Wan’er, despite being on the verge of passing out, she bit down on her tongue and unleashed a magical technique that sent black smoke swirling out in all directions. A world of ghosts was created, with innumerable vicious ghosts joining forces to create a defensive barrier, bolstered by her battleship.

A moment later, a massive boom erupted out. Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er were like rowboats in a hurricane, with the shockwave from the blow like a massive wave that swept over them with incredibly destructive power.

They weren’t the only ones to be affected by the eruption of force. Because Bai Xiaochun had absorbed some of the life force of the entity in the egg sac, its development had been hindered. It had a fatal weakness now: despite its incredible power, it couldn’t focus properly. Therefore, when it unleashed its divine ability, it was something that could destroy everything around it.

Rumbling sounds filled the air as Murknine County came under the attack of a massive hand larger than the county itself! As a result, the entire place began to fall apart!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1139 awe-chapter-1140

As Murknine County began to collapse, Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er flew out of the massive crater. They were the ones bearing the brunt of the massive attack, more specifically, the black smoke Gongsun Wan’er had summoned, which seemingly opened the gates of hell to unleash innumerable vicious ghosts.

However, upon facing the massive blast of force, those ghosts were weak, and couldn’t even fight back. In the blink of an eye, they were crushed out of existence, as was the entire area of black smoke.

The destructive attack continued, smashing into Gongsun Wan’er’s bone battleship. That bone battleship was almost at the same level as a world treasure, and had astonishing defensive properties. Years ago, Bai Xiaochun had only been able to break through it by using the Greatsword of the North, and also severely draining his energy reserves.

As of now, the battleship’s defensive shield sprang up, but all it did was cause the explosive attack to pause for a moment. Then the shield shattered, and the battleship was sent spinning off to the side before Gongsun Wan’er managed to snag it back. Despair was now visible within her eyes; she knew that all of her hopes rested in Bai Xiaochun.

Howling, Bai Xiaochun thrust out the Greatsword of the North. When it hit the windstorm of the attack, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions. The Greatsword of the North was called a world treasure, and right now, it lived up to that name. Despite the fact that this attack surpassed the Celestial Realm, it still managed to stand up to it.

However, the price Bai Xiaochun had to pay was immense. To him, it felt like countless divine abilities slamming into him, causing him to gasp, and his eyes to turn crimson. He howled as the Undying Codex’s powers of regeneration raced through him to resist the destructive power. At the same time, he staggered backward, with Gongsun Wan’er clinging desperately to his arm as he held the Greatsword in front of him defensively.

And yet, in the end, he couldn’t wipe out the power of the attack. After all, that attack was strong enough to destroy all of Murknine County!

The Greatsword of the North held fast for a long moment, but then began to tremble unstably. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun struggled to breathe, blue veins bulging out on his face and neck. He knew that he could theoretically bring out his turtle-wok, but it would provide roughly the same protection as the Greatsword of the North at this moment. It could stand up to the power of the attack, but couldn’t vanquish it.

Thankfully, he had been transformed into an enormous fatty moments ago, filled with unimaginable levels of life force. Therefore, no matter how much fuel his powers of regeneration burned, there was more to keep it going.

And thus things went for an indeterminable period of time. Bai Xiaochun held fast before the attack, slowly being pushed backward, his powers of regeneration working like mad the entire time. Eventually, the wind began to fade, and Bai Xiaochun realized that the attack was reaching its end.

By the time it was all over, he felt like he could hardly breathe. He was shaking visibly, as was Gongsun Wan’er. The two of them exchanged a glance, and could both see how relieved they were to have escaped with their lives. Fear still lingered in both of their eyes.

It seemed that the things they had just experienced had taken their relationship to a new, more complicated level. It was something Gongsun Wan’er wasn’t used to, and she quickly averted her gaze and pushed herself away from Bai Xiaochun. As for Bai Xiaochun, he cleared his throat, put away the Greatsword of the North, and then looked off into the distance.

Murknine County was gone. It had been wiped clean of both spiderwebs and dust alike. There was no trace of anything, not even the massive crater. After scanning it with divine sense, neither Bai Xiaochun nor Gongsun Wan’er could detect anything other than a bit of dried up, once-viscous fluid in the spot where the crater had once existed.

Both of them were profoundly unsettled, and felt a sense of impending danger. Whatever being had existed inside of the egg sac was profoundly threatening even to them, and now it was on the loose.

However, the thing hadn’t pressed the attack, leading them to wonder if perhaps there was something wrong with it that was preventing it from harassing them further. Perhaps it had gone into hiding to lick its wounds.

At this point, Gongsun Wan’er looked at the extremely fattened Bai Xiaochun, and thought back to the scene of him absorbing life force from the egg sac. All things said, it seemed that if Bai Xiaochun hadn’t made the decision he had, the two of them would have had much more difficulty escaping the catastrophe which had played out.

Gongsun Wan’er might have ended up slightly better off, considering that the Vile-Emperor had a scrap of her Daoseed. Even if she died, she would have been resurrected. However, she also worried that if she were resurrected, the Vile-Emperor would secretly make an attempt to re-awaken Ghostmother.

On the other hand, Bai Xiaochun was in full possession of his Daoseed, a fact which was now known to the powerful experts of both of the imperial dynasties.

“We need to report this matter as quickly as possible,” Bai Xiaochun said, his heart pounding with lingering fear.

Gongsun Wan’er nodded. They proceeded on their way until they reached a fork in the road, one way leading to Mistysea Prefecture, the other leading in the direction Gongsun Wan’er planned to take. There, they paused for a moment.

Finally, Gongsun Wan’er quietly said, “Thank you.”

Not waiting for a response, she turned and headed back toward her palace of operations.

Under normal circumstances, Bai Xiaochun would have felt very pleased with himself to have Gongsun Wan’er thanking him. But right now, he wasn’t in the mood for anything like that. Although the matter of the deadly mist had been resolved, he had provoked a terrifyingly powerful entity that seemed as powerful as an archaean.

Furthermore, no matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t actually see his feet when he tried to look down at them. He was simply too fat. However, if he could thoroughly assimilate all of the life force he had gained, then his fleshly body and cultivation base would likely climb to a higher level, which was an exciting thought.

Not having any desire to stick around alone, he headed back toward Mistysea Prefecture.

The Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King were waiting for him in keen anticipation. After they had parted ways earlier, the mists eventually faded away, but then Murknine County was wiped out in bizarre fashion, leading to shock on the part of everyone who witnessed it.

Afterwards, they had been waiting anxiously on the border in the hopes of making contact with Bai Xiaochun again.

When they saw the enormous sphere of flesh whistling toward them through the air, some of them moved to intercept it, until their divine sense revealed to them who it was. Both the Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster looked on in complete shock.

“You….”

Bai Xiaochun landed in front of them, teetering back and forth a bit in an attempt to stand upright. Looking a bit embarrassed, he said, “Ate a bit too much back there. Oh, by the way, it was really dangerous. For the time being, don’t let anyone go out there unless absolutely necessary. Alright, I’m heading into secluded meditation. I actually benefited quite a bit from this crisis!”

After that, he resorted to a teleportation to vanish.

The Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster exchanged awkward glances, as did the other experts present. Not only had Bai Xiaochun not been hurt after entering this critically dangerous area, but he actually came out looking like a huge fatty. It was almost completely unbelievable.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun was back in his blessed land in Mistysea City. He was still feeling very unsettled by the strange entity from the massive crater. Although he had already notified the Saint-Emperor of the situation before investigating on his own, he pulled out two jade slips to provide more detailed information of what he had seen and experienced. One of them he arranged to be sent to Celestial Aged Spirit, the other to Saint-Emperor City.

“Only the archaean emperors can truly handle this situation.” He shook his head. Thankfully he had stabbed the thing with his Eternal Parasol. Presumably, that had left a powerful impression, leaving the thing injured, and preventing it from giving chase.

“Seems I'm safe for now. Hopefully the Saint-Emperor will come to check the situation out himself soon.” He sighed, aware more than ever that time was of the essence. The events of the day yet again proved that not even being a celestial could keep him safe. If he wanted to truly put down roots in the Eternal Immortal Domains, he needed a more powerful cultivation base.

Gritting his teeth, he murmured, “If I assimilate all of that life force, I should break through to the mid Celestial Realm!!” Eyes glinting with determination, he settled down cross-legged in his private chamber and made contact with the damaged fan. A moment later, he was gone.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1140 awe-chapter-1141

Out in the dark void, the only visible light came from the softly glowing damaged fan. On the main square of the fan, the air rippled and distorted, whereupon Bai Xiaochun appeared, ridiculously fat because of all of the life force he had absorbed.

From a distance, he looked like a trundling sphere of flesh.

“I need to assimilate this life force as quickly as possible. I'm way too fat.” Yet again, he tried as hard as he could to look down at his feet, but all he could see was his belly. In fact, he was so fat that it was actually difficult for him to touch his belly with his hands. It was all very uncomfortable.

Eyes flashing with determination, he flew toward the fan ribs to start challenging the next level.

He had benefited from the events in Murknine County in a very unique way; normally speaking, going from the early Celestial Realm to the mid Celestial Realm was a very difficult process that would take an extended period of time. It would also usually require vast amounts of precious materials and good fortune.

But now, he was filled with an astounding level of life force, and although he couldn’t be sure of exactly how far it would take him, he needed to give it a shot. He would only have one shot, and if he didn’t take advantage of it properly, it was impossible to say when the next chance would come along.

Before getting this life force, his plan had been to use the rewards given by the fan to propel him along in his cultivation. But after recent developments, he changed his mind.

“My only chance is to go all out. I’ll get as far as I can in the levels, and then try to break through!” Gritting his teeth, he stepped into the next level.

He failed levels numerous times, but didn't give up. He would analyze the reasons for his failures, perform tests, and then continue challenging the levels. Roughly two months flew by, during which time he would frequently go back to Mistysea Prefecture to make sure nothing unexpected had occurred.

The Saint-Emperor and Vile-Emperor had long since learned of the events in Murknine County, but neither of them did anything about it. Bai Xiaochun continued to worry about the matter, but reminded himself that although Mistysea Prefecture was important to him, all of the territories in the second immortal domain were of importance to the two emperors.

And thus, Bai Xiaochun continued to pass one level after another. Eventually he passed the fiftieth level. Finally, at the fifty-first level, he reached a limit, and was unable to pass the level no matter what he did.

He performed a few more tests before giving up on the fifty-first level. “Ah, whatever. I guess I can only pass the fiftieth level in my current state.”

At this point, he assessed all of the rewards he had earned, and was very impressed, especially by the reward from the fiftieth level!

There were many medicinal pills that he didn’t recognize, but could identify as immortal pills thanks to his skill in the Dao of medicine. There was also a bamboo slip which was carved with two magical symbols. Although he didn’t understand what they meant, when he looked closely at the first magical symbol, he felt like he was descending into depths of hell. It was as if his mind filled with nothing but death.

After a moment passed, he recovered. Panting, he didn’t dare to look at the second magical symbol. However, he already had an idea about what this bamboo slip was.

“The reward for the fiftieth level is… a portion of the Dao Essence of Life and Death!!” Gripping the bamboo slip tightly in his hand, he sat down in the main square of the fan to meditate. Previously, it had always been an easy thing to meditate, but now that he was extremely fat, it was difficult to settle down cross-legged. Somehow, he managed.

Quickly performing a double-handed incantation gesture, he rotated his cultivation base and began to work on the first level of the Time Immemorial Codex, the Former Will. His energy passageways instantly began to vibrate as cultivation base power surged into them. The power converged on the main energy passageway within him, and then ended up in his heart. During this process, his mind began to thrum, building up into a roar that made it seem like a huge dragon was inside of him.

The dragon surged with explosive power in his heart, and occasionally in his dantian region.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun knew that this supposed dragon was actually his Daoseed, which was different from that of other celestials. His Daoseed was full and complete, and was becoming more powerful with every advancement he made with his cultivation base.

Unfortunately, he was still very far away from a breakthrough.

“In the Celestial Realm, the Daoseed first lays roots, then sprouts, then blossoms and bears fruit!

“Upon becoming a celestial, the Daoseed takes shape. The energy passageways in the body become like rootlets. Only after they integrate do they become the root!

“In the early Celestial Realm, the rootlets spread and eventually become the root. In the mid Celestial Realm… the root is given nutrients, and the Daoseed sprouts!

“That is exactly what is happening now!” His eyes flickered as the dragon that was his Daoseed finally began to center on one location, his dantian region.

As it shrank down, a strange energy coursed through him, which was apparently the power caused by his Daoseed sprouting. Shivering, he realized that the critical moment had arrived, and that the life force which had been locked away inside of him for the past months was now about to be released.

Rumbling sounds like heavenly thunder filled him as the vast stores of life force surged out.

As he worked with the Former Will of his Time Immemorial Codex, the life force rushed unimpeded toward his Daoseed!

His Daoseed began to tremble with incredible intensity, like parched earth that had suddenly encountered sweet dew, or a starving person who came across a feast set for immortals. It became a black hole that ravenously devoured all of the life force that came its way.

As it shrank down on itself with greater speed, Bai Xiaochun slowly began to deflate. At the same time, the aura of his Daoseed grew stronger and stronger.

Apparently, a dramatic metamorphosis was taking place!

However, it was at this point that something which Bai Xiaochun had been worried about all along happened. His Daoseed was based on the Undying Live Forever Technique, which was different from the legacy magics of the two imperial clans. What was unique about the Undying Live Forever Technique was the drastic levels of life force it required. In fact, even with the enormous amount of life force he currently had at his disposal, it seemed unlikely that he had enough life force to cause his Daoseed to fully sprout!

He had already shrunk down to his original size and shape, and was still shrinking. It was as if his own life force, cultivation base and everything else of which he was made, were being absorbed into the Daoseed. And if it kept going in this way, he would be destroyed in body and soul before the Daoseed sprouted!

Even worse, he could not attempt to interrupt this breakthrough process, or reverse it. Now that he had started down this path… he had to succeed!

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had anticipated something like this happening. Although he had never made an attempt to achieve a breakthrough in the Celestial Realm, nor had he been given any advice about it, based on what he knew about the Undying Live Forever Technique, and his past experiences, he had guessed that he might reach a critical point in the process in which he ran out of resources.

Having prepared for this possibility, he wasn’t alarmed. As his body continued to shrink in on itself, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a medicinal pill, numerous immortal grasses, and other rewards he had acquired from the first fifty levels of the damaged fan. He had given some of the rewards to the Grand Heavenmaster and others among his subordinates, but he had kept many for himself, and right now, he threw them all into his mouth without hesitation.

The pills and grasses immediately caused life force to flow into him, halting any withering process. As for the Daoseed, it was already very close to completion, and therefore, after enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn… it began to shine with radiant light.

The light filled him, and then spread out, creating something that surpassed the brightness of the damaged fan itself!

From a distance, Bai Xiaochun was like a burning lamp within the dark void, dazzling to the extreme!

At that point, he opened his eyes, and excitedly checked his Daoseed… which now had a tiny sprout sticking out of it!!

“I've mastered the Former Will. My Daoseed has sprouted. Mid Celestial Realm!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1141 awe-chapter-1142

As soon as the sprout appeared, powerful fluctuations rolled out, filling Bai Xiaochun and causing cracking sounds to ring out as they passed. He even grew slightly taller, and began to emanate a strange aura.

It was none other than the aura of Willpower. Before, that aura had been hidden within his Daoseed, but now that his Daoseed had sprouted, it was released into the open!

Bai Xiaochun was now able to affect the world around him on a fundamental level. He could even influence the emotions of people around him. It was an unfathomable level of power!

And there was more to it! In addition to the changes in Willpower, his cultivation base improvement meant that his battle prowess was now roughly ten times greater than before!

Before, Bai Xiaochun could use the Greatsword of the North to fight someone in the mid Celestial Realm, and perhaps hold his own against the late Celestial Realm. But now, he could do the same thing without the Greatsword of the North!

And if he did use the sword, he would definitely occupy the peak level among cultivators in the mid Celestial Realm!

As Bai Xiaochun analyzed his cultivation base fluctuations, and tested his new control of Willpower, he could see how different he was from before, and his heart swelled with excitement. He also knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that, without the events in Murknine County, this breakthrough would have taken much longer, and would have required more resources. Perhaps even saving up for a hundred years would not have been enough.

The damaged fan also played into it. As for the Former Will of his Time Immemorial Codex, normally speaking, he would have had to wait until passing the hundredth level and becoming the true owner of the damaged fan before breaking through.

And unfortunately, an early Celestial Realm cultivation base could only get him to the fiftieth level. But now, everything had changed!

“My next cultivation base breakthrough will also come much more quickly…. It might even come after I pass the hundredth level…. Then I’ll be in the late Celestial Realm, or perhaps even the great circle!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, his eyebrows danced up and down in delight. He almost didn’t dare to think of how wonderful that future development would be.

“If I can ever become the true owner of the damaged fan, and reach the great circle of the Celestial Realm, then, with the fan and the Greatsword of the North… I could theoretically smash archaeans!!” He simply couldn’t stop himself from thinking about how it was possible for him to be incredibly powerful without even being an archaean!

After a bit of time passed, he managed to bury such thoughts in his heart. After all, daydreaming about such things now would do little good.

“Thanks to the good fortune I came across, my Former Will is in the great circle. Since I’m already in the mid Celestial Realm, I need to work on the second level of my Time

Immemorial Codex, which will eventually get me to the late Celestial Realm!

“The first level of the Time Immemorial Codex is the Former Will… which is perfect for the sprouting of the Daoseed!

“For the second level, I need to get the Daoseed to bloom!

“Everything up to this point was for the Former Will, but now that the Daoseed has sprouted, the time has come for the Present Will!” Of course, Bai Xiaochun knew that when it came to creating new techniques, there had to be a basis. For example, his Former Will was based on his memories and experiences in the Heavenspan Realm.

Now he was working on the second level of the Time Immemorial Codex. Unfortunately, his cultivation base breakthrough had come earlier than expected, and therefore, he didn’t have the proper foundation to work on a new technique. Eyes glittering, he slapped his bag of holding and brought out one of the rewards for the fiftieth level, the bamboo slip.

“But I have this!” he murmured. Originally, he had never intended to become the true successor of the sovereign from the Immortal World by acquiring his Dao Essence. He had hoped to learn from it to forge his own path.

If the bamboo slip had contained the full Dao Essence of Life and Death, he could only have acquired it with enlightenment, and plenty more power than he currently had. But considering that it was only a portion of it, he felt much more comfortable trying.

Taking a deep breath, he relaxed, then sent some divine sense into the two magical symbols carved onto the bamboo slip. Instantly, the powerful aura of death once again appeared. Then, when his divine sense reached the second magical symbol, a sensation of flourishing vitality also came into being.

This convergence between life and death was Bai Xiaochun’s first experience with Dao Essences. As he sank into the feeling, he lost track of time, and forgot where he was. The only thing he didn’t forget were his thoughts regarding the Present Will.

He remained in that state for an unknown period of time, seeking enlightenment. At one point, unbeknownst to him, the spirit automaton appeared out of thin air.

The boy glared at Bai Xiaochun, feeling extremely helpless. After all, as the spirit automaton of the damaged fan, he could interfere with things in the levels, but was completely powerless to do anything to Bai Xiaochun in his current position.

He had been thwarted over and over again inside of the levels…. something that nearly drove him mad every time he thought about it.

He could punish trial-takers, but Bai Xiaochun had already taken control over a portion of the damaged fan. Therefore the spirit automaton was helpless to do anything to him, and in fact, was already forced to consider him his master to some extent!

It didn't matter that he didn’t like the arrangement. And it was even worse now that Bai Xiaochun had passed the fiftieth level, putting him on almost equal footing.

“What if things keep going like this? What am I supposed to do…?” The spirit automaton really felt like crying. The mere thought of this shameless cheater becoming his master was a horror. He also started wondering what he would say if he was asked to reveal his name....

After all, he had already sworn an oath to adopt the same surname as Bai Xiaochun if he passed that one certain level....

He let out a sigh, then gritted his teeth and looked closer at Bai Xiaochun. After a moment, he blinked a few times, and then raised his eyebrows in delight.

“Hahaha! What a fool! Is he actually trying to gain enlightenment of the Dao of Time? Using the Dao Essence of Life and Death to be enlightened regarding time? He's dead! It's settled! What he's trying to do is impossible. The Dao of Time is one of the most powerful Daos there is. It can even control life and death! What a fool! Hahaha!” Clapping his hands in delight, he looked closer to confirm that his analysis was correct, then snorted coldly and left in extremely high spirits. To him, it was like the clouds had parted and the sun was now shining down brightly upon him.

A month later, Bai Xiaochun was still sitting there, cross-legged and unmoving. At one point, a tremor passed through him, and the bamboo slip which contained the Dao Essence of Life and Death dissolved into ashes. Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and looked around, and as the air around him rippled and distorted, fluctuations began to roll out that were very different from his Former Will.

Because of those fluctuations, any place where he existed, no matter how ancient it might be, could be affected by his Will to stand in place in the stream of time, and exist eternally in the present!

It was as if the passage of time simply couldn’t affect him at all!

To some extent, his Willpower… could cause time to stop!

“The Present Will!” he murmured. “So domineering!” Meanwhile, the spirit automaton yet again stepped out into the open, albeit in a way that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see. When he sensed the fluctuations of the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and then saw Bai Xiaochun, his eyes almost plopped down onto the ground.

“The Dao of Time?! Heavens! That exists on a higher level than the Dao Essence of Life and Death! A great Dao! How could a shameless cheater like that gain enlightenment of it?!?! Are you blind, God?!” The spirit automaton was really descending into madness. Howling defiantly in his heart, and his eyes crimson, he decided that he would pay any price to defeat this shameless individual.

“You just wait!!” he muttered, tugging at his hair in frustration. Then he went to find the perfect level to tweak, looking very much like a defeated gambler dead set on making a comeback.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1142 awe-chapter-1143

Although Bai Xiaochun had a certain level of control over the damaged fan, he had never surpassed the spirit automaton in that regard. Because of that, he was never able to see him. But now that he had passed the fiftieth level, and also risen to the Mid Celestial Realm, his senses were more acute.

Although he still couldn’t see the spirit automaton, he could sense him. All of a sudden, he looked over toward the fan rib where the spirit automaton was actually standing.

The boy noticed this, and stepped back in shock, then vanished.

Bai Xiaochun narrowed his eyes, and then gave a soft snort.

“That was definitely the spirit automaton spying on me. The thing must have mental problems or something. Otherwise why would he be so into peeping on people!?” Muttering to himself a bit, he looked away and focused his attention on the benefits he had achieved during this session of enlightenment.

“The Dao Essences of sovereign cultivators sure live up to their reputation. This is only a scrap of one, and yet I was able to use it to fuel the auguries of my Present Will. It even contains some of the meaning of life and death within it. This is my second powerful divine ability!

“The Sutra of Present Life and Death!” Taking a deep breath, he rose to his feet and waved his right hand, causing the air around him to distort and tear. It even seemed as if the surrounding void were rippling in his direction.

At the same time, an enormous stone gate appeared behind him, black in color and awe-inspiring in appearance. Countless carvings of vicious ghosts covered its surface, as well as a marionette that was clearly the very same strange entity Bai Xiaochun had seen in Murknine County.

There was also the head of a dead old man carved right in the middle of the gate. Considering the profound aura of death that this gate emanated, it obviously represented death!

This was none other than the Gate of Death!

The evil ghosts that festooned it were various terrifying ghostly creatures that Bai Xiaochun had encountered throughout his life. As for the face of the old man, he had been formed by the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and was the ultimate representation of death!

Next, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he waved his right index finger in the direction of the fan ribs, and the spot where he was certain the spirit automaton had been spying on him.

Instantly, a second stone gate appeared in that very spot.

This gate was white, and was festooned with all sorts of plants and vegetation that Bai Xiaochun had seen in his life, which represented life force, vitality, and that which flourishes.

In the middle of the white gate was a carving of the face of a newborn child!

Anyone who looked at that face would suddenly hear the cry of a baby. This gate was… the Gate of Life!

Bai Xiaochun’s Sutra of Present Life and Death created two stone gates, one for death, and one for life. He would stand in front of the Gate of Death, and would force his opponents to approach him from the direction of the Gate of Life. Their approach to him signified their approach to death, in which they grew weaker with every step. Because it also contained the Dao of Time, it was even more powerful. Anyone who approached him from the Gate of Life would grow older and older, just like a sun descending into evening!

The power to arbitrarily push someone from life toward death was immense. Even Bai Xiaochun was shocked by it. And of utmost importance in it all was that Dao Essence of Life and Death which had once belonged to that sovereign of the past!

Bai Xiaochun took in a long breath, and probed at his cultivation base power. Then he stuck his chin up, resolving that, in the future, he wouldn’t hide his cultivation base from people ever again.

“When people realize I've achieved a breakthrough, they’ll probably guess that I came across some sort of good fortune. But who cares? I’ll just tell them I got a bunch of life force from a weird egg sac I ate!” After some thought, he decided that this was definitely the best strategy. At this point, he glanced out of the corner of his eye at the Gate of Life, thought for a moment, then made a beckoning gesture with his finger.

“Bring it on!” he said proudly.

The spirit automaton was standing next to the Gate of Life in the form of a boy, staring hatefully at Bai Xiaochun. Had he possessed the power, he would have killed Bai Xiaochun a thousand, no, a million times over already. Unfortunately, he was powerless to do anything.

“Complete and utter bullying!! he growled, trembling physically. This was definitely the most shameless person he had ever met in his entire life, and he had already sworn countless oaths to see him dead.

Although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t see the spirit automaton, he could sense him standing there. Therefore, he wouldn’t even think about challenging the levels. He would wait until the boy was asleep again. Exercising a thought, he vanished from the damaged fan.

After he was gone, the spirit automaton let out a howl of rage that echoed from one end of the fan to the other. He very much looked like a child throwing a tantrum as he then proceeded to fly around furiously, screaming about how he was going to destroy Bai Xiaochun.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun materialized in his private chamber in Mistysea City. The first thing he did was look at the messages from the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King detailing the things that had occurred while he was gone.

After scanning the jade slip, he frowned.

“Seven days ago, the Vile-Emperor reassigned Celestial Ghostmother to Vile-Emperor City? And Celestial Deadfall was dispatched to oversee the north!?” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed as he pondered the matter. For one thing, he would miss Gongsun Wan’er. For another thing, he didn’t know this Celestial Deadfall. Of course, since there were only twelve celestials in all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, he had obviously heard of him.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty had seven celestials, and Bai Xiaochun had personally met five of them. Other than Gongsun Wan’er and Daoist Heavenspan, there were Celestial Virūpākṣa, Prince Ur-Demon, and Reverend Devourer.

According to the jade slip, with Gongsun Wan’er having departed, the spirit enhancement trade in the northern prefectures was temporarily suspended. The Grand Heavenmaster had responded cautiously to this development. Instead of going to try to handle it personally, he made contact with one of the demigods from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and arranged for a message of good will to be sent to Celestial Deadfall, as well as some introductory gifts.

They were still waiting to hear back.

According to the Grand Heavenmaster’s analysis, it was possible that Gongsun Wan’er’s departure could actually be a good thing. Perhaps she could help to spread word of the spirit enhancement trade to the other immortal domains of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and increase the reputation of Mistysea Prefecture.

After finishing with the reports, Bai Xiaochun realized that there was no new information about Murknine County. Overall, the second immortal domain had been very peaceful and quiet. Apparently, the incident in Murknine County had been a coincidence.

But Bai Xiaochun still felt uneasy about it all. He knew that whatever entity had stretched its red-scaled hand out of the egg sac possessed power which could destroy the heavens and extinguish the earth, power that celestials couldn’t defend against.

Although absorbing some of the thing’s life force had obviously caused some problems for it, such problems could likely be resolved eventually. Muttering to himself, he rose to his feet with the intention of performing a quick inspection of Mistysea Prefecture.

However, that was when some divine sense from the Grand Heavenmaster shot over. Clearly, he was very anxious about something. Not wasting words, the Grand Heavenmaster said, “Exalted Celestial, I have important news!!

“Celestial Deadfall bears extreme animosity toward the people of Heavenspan! The demigod who helped me send him a message of good will was immediately imprisoned!

“And two hours ago, Celestial Deadfall issued orders that anyone from the Heavenspan Realm found in his territory was to be arrested! Most of the people who were arrested were employees of the stores we opened there!!

“Even worse is that, apparently, he is having them all sent further into the Vile-Emperor Dynasty to give as a tribute to the Vile-Prince, to aid in his research of the secrets of spirit enhancement!

“If my analysis is correct, there is more to the situation than that. We can probably expend a bit of wealth to resolve the situation, but you’ll definitely need to take the lead.”

Even as the Grand Heavenmaster’s words echoed in Bai Xiaochun’s ears via divine sense, the man was flying over to meet him in person. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked in the direction of the north.

“Extortion?” After probing his own cultivation base, he sent some divine sense over to the incoming Grand Heavenmaster. “What’s his cultivation base?”

“Early Celestial Realm,” was the reply.

“You’re sure about that?”

“Absolutely. I've already prepared the necessary gifts to give him. Exalted Celestial, you--”

However, before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes tightened into a glare.

“Gifts? Yeah right. This Celestial Deadfall is certainly full of himself, isn’t he?!” Energy surging, he flew off toward the north!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1143 awe-chapter-1144

“Deadfall, you fool. You only have a trifling early Celestial Realm cultivation base, and yet you dare to cause problems for me?!” Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun shot northward in a beam of prismatic light.

Back in Mistysea City, the Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King and Zhou Yixing emerged only in time to see him disappearing off into the distance. All of them exchanged awkward glances.

“Uh… was that *our* celestial…?” Zhou Yixing asked. “Bai Xiaochun?” He truly could not remember a time when he had seen Bai Xiaochun act in a domineering fashion like this.

The Giant Ghost King looked equally suspicious, and actually knew more about him than most. For example, back in the Ghost King Orchid incident, Bai Xiaochun had seemed like he would have done anything to avoid going to to the trial by fire. Back then, the Giant Ghost King had assumed Bai Xiaochun had been trying to fish for greater rewards before going. Only later did he realize that Bai Xiaochun was just simply petrified of death.

If there was even a hint of danger involved in some activity, he would refuse to participate. In most situations, he would only go into danger as a last resort.

In this situation, Celestial Deadfall’s actions were a bit excessive, but it wasn’t as if the situation couldn’t be resolved. There wasn’t necessarily a need to resort to violence. Therefore, the Giant Ghost King was truly confused about what was going on.

The Grand Heavenmaster was equally befuddled. The three of them exchanged another glance, and clearly, all of them felt that Bai Xiaochun was acting strange.

“Uh….” The Grand Heavenmaster was usually a quick thinker, but not even he was sure about what was happening. After a bit of time passed, the Giant Ghost King, who of course was Bai Xiaochun’s father-in-law, and understood him the best, slapped his thigh.

“I know! Bai Xiaochun achieved a cultivation base breakthrough. His aura was much stronger than before. He must have acquired some sort of good fortune that he took advantage of in his latest session of meditation. The process of going from extreme obesity back to his normal self actually improved his cultivation base!”

Both Zhou Yixing and the Grand Heavenmaster seemed surprised by this, but after some thought, they realized that it explained everything.

“If that’s true, then given Bai Xiaochun’s personality….” Both Zhou Yixing and the Grand Heavenmaster weren’t sure whether to laugh or cry.

Even as they sighed awkwardly, Bai Xiaochun was flying through the air feeling very pleased with himself. He accelerated with every moment that passed, surging with confidence, as well as the desire to do battle.

He had been waiting for this day for some time. Before, when he was in the early Celestial Realm, he had always been forced to slink around with his tail between his legs, and rely on the Greatsword of the North to make himself seem threatening.

But now that he had broken through to the mid Celestial Realm, he would still need to be cautious in general, but was not worried at all about someone in the early Celestial Realm. After all, with the Greatsword of the North on his side, it would be like a Foundation Establishment expert fighting a Qi Condensation cultivator.

From a distance, he looked like a shooting star piercing through the sky, causing rumbling sounds to fill heaven and earth.

The ground even quaked because of his passage, and sonic booms echoed out ceaselessly. Furthermore, his passage caused the clouds to seethe and wrap around him almost like a cloak!

It was a cloak that ran 5,000 kilometers from end to end and obscured the pre-evening light, creating something like a huge shadow.

Down below, the northern cultivators were all shocked by what they saw. Regardless of the level of their cultivation base, even experts in the great circle of the Demigod Realm all gasped and looked up.

“It’s King Heavenspan!!”

“Heavens! What’s happening? Don’t tell me war is breaking out!!”

“It must be those orders from Celestial Deadfall to arrest all of the people of Heavenspan! King Heavenspan must be here with deadly intentions!”

As countless gasps could be heard down below, Bai Xiaochun accelerated, passing mountain ranges and plains until he was closing in on the largest city in this region!

Celestial Deadfall’s official mansion was very different from Gongsun Wan’er’s temporary palace of operations. It was an enormous statue of a fierce avian beast with wide-spread wings and glaring eyes. The creature’s mouth was open, making it seem almost like it was letting out a heaven-shaking cry.

Different celestials had different blessed lands that they called their own, and when they were assigned to oversee a specific area, they would often move their blessed land to the new location by means of magical techniques.

Celestial Deadfall was currently seated cross-legged in his blessed land. He looked middle-aged, which meant that he looked younger than the average celestial. However, the Willpower fluctuations rolling off of him were by no means weak. Even though he was only in the early Celestial Realm, he was still an outstanding and powerful individual, roughly equivalent to Ghostmother.

He was skinny, with a long, hooked nose and very thin lips. He was clearly a harsh individual, his expression gloomy and cold. As soon as he sensed Bai Xiaochun arriving, his eyes snapped open, revealing bright blue eyes.

There was something about his blue eyes that made him seem particularly dashing, the type who would immediately attract the gazes of any females in the area.

“What's with the hysterics!?” he growled. Snorting coldly, he prepared to rise to his feet when, all of a sudden, a thunderous voice filled the air.

“Deadfall, you fool, how dare you try to extort me!” Bai Xiaochun was still a great distance away, but his voice still slammed into the enormous avian statue belonging to Celestial Deadfall.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun accelerated to a speed ten times greater than before!!

In the past, Bai Xiaochun had clearly been in the early Celestial Realm. But now, he went all out with his mid Celestial Realm cultivation base. It only took a short moment for him to be right there at Celestial Deadfall’s blessed land. The instant he arrived, he reached out with his right hand and slapped the statue!

A huge boom echoed out, filling all the lands around it. Shockingly, many cultivators in the second immortal domain subconsciously reached out with their own right hands and mimicked Bai Xiaochun’s movement!

This was none other than… Willpower magic!

Bai Xiaochun might not seem like much when he chose to hold back. But now that he was making a move, he immediately used his Willpower. As a result, an enormous hand appeared in the sky, which rumbled toward the statue and immediately crushed all of its powerful defensive magics and other protections, causing it to start to fall to pieces.

Shock gripped the mind of Celestial Deadfall, who let out an angry shout as he unleashed the power of his early Celestial Realm cultivation base. When Bai Xiaochun saw that he was preparing to fight back, he snorted coldly. There was no way he was going to give the man a chance to start a true fight. He would crush him right from the beginning!

Just as Celestial Deadfall prepared to shoot out from the crumbling statue, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, producing the Greatsword of the North. Blue light shone off of it in scintillating fashion, along with the powerful ripples of a world treasure. Not hesitating for a moment, he slashed the sword at the statue!

“Deadfall, ya punk, you’ve got real guts to go and provoke me!” Bai Xiaochun was particularly proud of these words, and felt them to be quite impressive. Meanwhile, the huge sword was now descending onto the statue.

The statue, which had been in the middle of crumbling, suddenly exploded, sending fragments and rubble out in all directions to reveal the shocked Celestial Deadfall, right in the middle of it all.

His hair was disheveled, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. His hands were splayed out in front of him, and he thrummed with the Willpower he had just used to defend himself. The expression of shock on his face was almost impossible to describe.

“Mid Celestial Realm?! How is this possible?!?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1144 awe-chapter-1145

“Do you know what you've done wrong, Deadfall?!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice echoing like heavenly thunder as he hovered there in midair, energy surging in dramatic fashion.

Celestial Deadfall’s blessed land was located in the exact center of the capital city of this prefecture, and Bai Xiaochun had controlled his attack perfectly, limiting its destructive effects to the statue itself. None of the rest of the city was affected. Of course, all of the numerous cultivators from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty who occupied the area were looking over in utter shock.

Bai Xiaochun was of the impression that he must look quite awe-inspiring. However, Celestial Deadfall was extremely enraged, and with a howl, prepared to attempt to slip free from the power of the Greatsword of the North.

Bai Xiaochun snorted. Performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, he tripled the might of the Greatsword of the North. As he did, the 300-meter-long sword slowly began to inch down toward Celestial Deadfall’s head.

As a result of this process, the lands quaked, and Celestial Deadfall struggled mightily. He looked like his body might collapse at any moment; blood sprayed out of his mouth constantly, and crevices snaked out in the ground around his feet, which seemed just on the verge of crumbling into a crater.

The pressure from the greatsword was so intense that he wasn’t sure he could handle it. And he could tell that the slightest misstep on his part would lead to the sword cleaving him in two!

Being in the mid Celestial Realm, Bai Xiaochun could actually handle Celestial Deadfall on his own. And yet, he was using the Greatsword of the North. Therefore, he wasn't just handling him… he was crushing him!

"I'll ask you one more time, Deadfall," he said, his voice as cold as ice, as were his gleaming eyes. "Do you know what you've done wrong?!"

"I refuse to believe that you would ever dare to kill me, Bai Xiaochun!!" Celestial Deadfall shouted, his face crimson with rage. It wasn't that he didn't want to make his escape. The truth was that the one fist strike backed with some Willpower had been enough to both destroy his blessed land, and also seal him tight. The only way he would possibly be able to get out of this situation was if his cultivation base were higher.

And yet, he refused to back down. He really didn't believe that Bai Xiaochun would kill him. Not only would Celestial Deadfall be resurrected if that happened, but the tensions and friction between the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and Saint-Emperor Dynasty would be affected. Even the most unreasonable person would have to take that into consideration.

"I wouldn't dare?" Bai Xiaochun said. Suddenly, he chuckled coldly. "I guess you've forgotten who I am. Screw it, let's see if I would dare to kill you!"

His aura surged as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then waved his finger at the Greatsword of the North, his killing intent boiling.

In response, the Greatsword of the North began to vibrate, bolstered by Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base to release a powerful sword qi that was clearly enough to slaughter anyone in the early Celestial Realm.

Celestial Deadfall began to shiver. He had already been pushed to his limit, so when this sword qi appeared, his five yin organs and six yang organs trembled painfully. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as the Greatsword of the North which hung above him increased in size to 3,000 meters, and began to radiate the might of the world itself. Then, it started to chop down toward him!

Considering the speed with which it moved, this was clearly intended to be a fatal blow!

“Bai Xiaochun, you....” Even as he spoke, a halo of seven-colored light spread out from him, which transformed into a seven-colored dragon that rushed, howling, toward the greatsword. At the same time, a host of magical items flew out of Celestial Deadfall’s bag of holding, creating a powerful defensive barrier.

And things weren’t over yet! He even used a trump card; blue veins bulged out on his face and neck as an enormous black bull materialized behind him.

Radiating shocking devil qi, the bull bellowed and slammed its head into the sword.

This was Celestial Deadfall’s life-saving divine ability, Devil-Bull Shakes the Heavens!

Although this trump card was easy to describe, it was very difficult to employ, and was severely draining. Even though he was in the early Celestial Realm, it was almost too much for Celestial Deadfall to take, much less considering that his

Willpower magic and cultivation base were restricted. However, there wasn’t time to worry about those things; he had to go all out with everything he had at his disposal.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as the breathless audience looked on. First, the seven-colored dragon slammed into the greatsword, only to be slashed to pieces instantly. Then came the magical items, which were equally as useless!

A series of booms rang out as the Greatsword of the North destroyed everything in its path, and then prepared to meet the black devil-bull!

At that point, the sword paused for the briefest of moments. Then, Bai Xiaochun snorted and sent more cultivation base power out, causing the sword to slice completely through the devil-bull, and continue toward Celestial Deadfall!

The gap between these two celestials was just too vast. No matter what Celestial Deadfall did to resist the battle prowess being used against him, he was like a mantis trying to stop a war chariot. Popping sounds rang out as any magical items he threw out were destroyed, and any divine abilities he unleashed were shattered. As he looked up at the Greatsword of the North, his heart finally began to pound with shock.

“Dammit! He’s from the Heavenspan Realm, not the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!! He’s gonna kill me! He’s really gonna kill me! He actually wants the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to go to war!!” All of a sudden, Celestial Deadfall felt a sense of impending crisis. He knew the Vile-Emperor could resurrect him with his Daoseed if he died, but at the same time, he was well aware that such a thing would result in a permanent drop in battle prowess.

It would also affect his future cultivation in a majorly negative way. Therefore, if he had any other option than dying, he would pick it!

When he realized how much of a lunatic Bai Xiaochun was, fear began to grip his heart, and he suddenly regretted his attempt to extort him.

As he raced to come up with a solution, the greatsword got closer and closer, and the sensation of imminent fatal crisis grew stronger. A long line of blood even appeared on his forehead, as though he might be cut in two!

Gritting his teeth, he finally said, “Just take your people with you and go, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Although it was not a direct admission of guilt, in some ways, it was.

But that was not what Bai Xiaochun was looking for. He had come here to put on a display of might, and make sure that everyone knew two things: first, he was no longer in the early Celestial Realm, and second, that if someone offended him deeply enough, he was the type of crazy person who would kill them because of it.

On the other hand, he was also aware that he shouldn’t actually cut down a celestial unless it was absolutely necessary. If he did something that drastic, the Saint-Emperor would surely step in and seize Mistysea Prefecture as punishment, or at least take control of it. Bai Xiaochun didn’t want to give him that chance. And yet, he also didn’t want to let Celestial Deadfall off scot-free.

Therefore, despite the words of concession he had uttered, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes merely flickered, and his murderous aura flared as he pushed the sword downward!

“Maybe I can’t kill you,” he thought, “but I can scare you half to death!” Bai Xiaochun's facial expression, his actions, and his killing intent, all seemed completely and utterly realistic, to the point where Celestial Deadfall’s heart started pounding even harder.

“Dammit. Dammit! I already agreed to let them go!!” He had his cultivation base rotating at full power, but the rift on his head only continued to grow wider and longer. Knowing that his body was about to be destroyed, he gritted his teeth.

“I… I know what I did wrong!!” Despite the words that came out of his mouth, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes remained as cold as ever, and his sword didn’t change direction or momentum. Celestial Deadfall’s head began to split open, provoking a scream of pain and frustration.

“There’s no grudge between us, Bai Xiaochun!” By this point, he was absolutely convinced that Bai Xiaochun was a lunatic, and that there was no hope of escaping his situation.

However, in that very moment of despair, Bai Xiaochun twisted the Greatsword of the North to the side. Instead of slicing Celestial Deadfall’s head in half, it chopped down toward his right shoulder, cutting his arm off!

Blood sprayed everywhere as Celestial Deadfall let out a muffled grunt. The blast of energy sent him tumbling backward, blood spraying everywhere. When he came to a stop, he looked up at Bai Xiaochun, resentment flickering in his eyes, but more so, relief at having survived. And then he saw the murderous look that still existed in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, and his heart pounded even harder.

“Lucky for you I changed my mind,” Bai Xiaochun growled. “Now get the hell out of here while you can. If you want a second round, come find me in Mistysea Prefecture. I’ll be waiting!” Waving his finger, he caused the Greatsword of the North to shrink back down and fly toward him. When he grabbed it by the hilt, the tip vibrated and released an intense humming sound.

Celestial Deadfall sighed inwardly at how unlucky he had been. No one would ever want to provoke a psycho like this. It wasn’t worth it. Now, he was in very bad shape, and had lost a lot of face. The only way he could comfort himself was to remind himself that his opponent was in the mid Celestial Realm. Without another word, he grabbed his severed arm, turned, and became a bright beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1145 awe-chapter-1146

Bai Xiaochun stood there proudly, hands clasped behind his back as he watched Celestial Deadfall fleeing off into the distance. Then he looked down at the lands below, and mused that he was now the number one figure in the north. In fact, all of the cultivators from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty were bowing their heads and clasping hands to him in formal fashion.

Bai Xiaochun might not be from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty himself, but in the Eternal Immortal Domains, respect was given to the powerful. It was something that happened on an instinctual level.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to say a single word; the local cultivators immediately released all of the people of Heavenspan who had been apprehended, whom he took with him back to Mistysea Prefecture. Meanwhile, news of the fight between him and Celestial Deadfall was spreading through the north. Before long, information began to filter back to the Grand Heavenmaster through his spies.

The Grand Heavenmaster could do little more than smile wryly at how Bai Xiaochun had handled things. However, after thinking the matter through, he realized that there could be some benefit to how he had done things. At the least, people would be impressed.

Although he hadn’t handled everything perfectly, there were certainly some unsavory characters who would be cowed by his display. Furthermore, as word spread, it would make Mistysea Prefecture a more desirable destination for the people of Heavenspan who lived in other parts of the lands.

The issue with Celestial Deadfall had been resolved, and nothing else had come of the situation with Murknine County. Bai Xiaochun was still suspicious about the latter, but neither the Vile-Emperor nor the Saint-Emperor had done anything further about it. In the end, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but suspect that the two of them had expected something like that to happen.

Unfortunately, he still had no clues or ideas to pursue. Perhaps Gongsun Wan’er might have learned more about it in recent days, but she wasn’t in the second immortal domain anymore. Bai Xiaochun could only bury his suspicions in his heart.

“I'm in the mid Celestial Realm. I wonder if I should challenge the fifty-first level now. Based on my calculations, the spirit automaton is probably asleep.” After a bit more consideration, he made his decision, and headed to the damaged fan to challenge new levels.

Time flew by. Another two months passed.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun would occasionally return to the second immortal domain between levels, but spent most of his time on the fan. In one big spurt of energy, he went from the fifty-first level to the fifty-eighth!

He was moving even faster than he had in the past, which made sense, considering that his battle prowess had improved significantly. Furthermore, he had long since grown used to the process of challenging the levels.

At the same time, he was being very cautious. Based on how much time had passed, he was fairly certain that the spirit automaton would be waking up soon. Therefore, after finishing the fifty-eighth level, he decided to take a short break.

As it turned out, his suspicions and calculations had been spot on. Only a few days after he left the fan, the spirit automaton woke up. When he found that Bai Xiaochun was nowhere to be seen, his anger flared, and yet, there was nothing he could do. Assuming that Bai Xiaochun had just gotten lucky, he waited around for quite some time before going back to sleep again.

And thus, something of a cycle began in which Bai Xiaochun would calculate when the spirit automaton would be awake, and would make sure to never be there during that time. And that was how he got from the fifty-ninth level… all the way to the sixty-seventh level.

“Hmmmphh! When Bai Xiaochun wants to challenge some levels, there’s no way some spirit automaton can stop him!” Twice in a row, the spirit automaton woke up to find that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t on the fan, and yet, had made significant progress. At that point, his eyes turned crimson, and he used some unknown but significantly costly method to force himself to stay awake for longer.

“I refuse to believe that I’ll miss the shameless Bai Xiaochun this time!” He sat there in torment, waiting, for an entire month. At that point, Bai Xiaochun finally returned to the fan.

“The spirit automaton should be asleep again,” he thought. Looking around briefly, he blurred into motion toward the sixty-ninth level. Before entering, he looked around one last time.

Inside, and before he even had a chance to see the level clearly, he suddenly felt a wave of killing intent that vastly surpassed anything from any of the previous levels. It was almost like a windstorm that sprang into being before Bai Xiaochun even fully materialized.

He gasped at the sudden sensation of deadly crisis. However, there was no time for thought or planning. Drawing on 120 percent of his cultivation base and fleshly body power, he moved backward in a 9-meter teleportation!

In that exact same moment, waves of pain ripped through him, as something like countless sharp blades slashed at him, reducing much of his skin to ribbons of bleeding flesh. And that was *after* he had completed the teleportation backward!

The spot he had just occupied collapsed into nothing. As for the so-called blades, they were actually numerous tree leaves, each of which radiated battle prowess equivalent to a celestial. There were thousands of them, whipping about like a cyclone.

Both shivering and howling at the same time, Bai Xiaochun continued to back up, convinced he had fallen into a trap. Obviously, this level was heaven-defyingly difficult.

“It’s you isn’t it, damned spirit automaton!?” He immediately tried to leave the level, but found that he couldn’t leave via teleportation. That seemed to confirm his suspicion.

Ignoring the pain which still coursed through him, he flew backward as his Undying Live Forever Technique healed him. Meanwhile, the thousands of leaves were now shooting in his direction.

And yet, things weren’t over. Suddenly, another cyclone of tree leaves appeared behind him, radiating infinite killing intent as they headed toward him. Further off in the distance… was a third, a fourth, a fifth… all the way to a ninth cyclone of leaves! He was now completely surrounded, and seemingly bereft of any hope.

The source of the leaf cyclones was an enormous tree even further off in the distance. It seemed high enough to prop up the heavens, and was immeasurably thick.

That tree was the only thing that existed in the sixty-ninth level, and would not ordinarily be this terrifying. But with the spirit automaton in control, the tree was withered almost to the point of death to fuel so many leaf cyclones.

It might be possible for Bai Xiaochun to fell the tree with a single fist strike, but right now, he was facing such a deadly attack that not even being in the great circle of the Celestial Realm would have been enough to stand up to it!

Only an archaean emperor would be powerful enough!

“Dammit! Is he trying to kill me?!” As he looked around anxiously, the spirit automaton stood atop the huge tree, fused with it on a mental level as he controlled it. By now, Bai Xiaochun’s level of control over the damaged fan had increased to the point where he would normally be able to see the spirit automaton. However, because of the way the spirit automaton was fused with the tree, he was not visible.

“Kill you? Exactly!” The spirit automaton stared angrily at Bai Xiaochun, absolutely sure that it didn’t matter that Bai Xiaochun had achieved a cultivation base breakthrough, or that he had gained some enlightenment of the Dao of Time. The spirit automaton had devolved into such a level of madness that he was willing to pay any price, even make the later levels easier, if only it meant he could push this celestial into a position of true hopelessness!

“I refuse to believe that you’ll pass this level. If you do, then fudge, I’ll definitely change my surname to match yours!” Chuckling coldly, he stood there with hands clasped behind his back, completely proud and confident.

Bai Xiaochun had no attention to spare to try to figure out where the spirit automaton was within the level. He could only look at the surrounding leaves, which came closer with each moment that passed.

The leaves were inherently terrifying, much less the fact that there were more than 100,000 of them, all of which contained the attack power of a celestial.

Suddenly, his eyes went red, and he shouted, “You’re forcing me to do this, spirit automaton!”

Howling, performed an incantation gesture, sending out a stream of black light, which became….

A big wok!

It was none other than his invincible… turtle-wok!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1146 awe-chapter-1147

Even now, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure exactly where the turtle-wok came from. He only had some guesses, and no real proof.

However, there was one thing he was certain of, and that was that from the moment he had acquired the wok from the Ovens, he had never encountered anything as sturdy.

No divine ability, no magical technique, no level of fleshly body power, no magical items could destroy it. Of that much he was convinced.

In the face of the seemingly endless tide of deadly leaves, Bai Xiaochun’s heart pounded with fear, and yet, not despair. Howling, he produced his turtle-wok, and then dropped to the ground with the wok on top of him.

“It’s a good thing I’m skinny again, otherwise I would be in quite a pickle.” As he sighed and settled down under the wok, the spirit automaton stood on the tree, watching. When he saw what was happening, his initial reaction was that of shock, but then he started howling with laughter.

“Has this shameless Bai Xiaochun suddenly been struck stupid?” he said, his eyes shining with a gleam of ridicule. “Does he think a wok like that can block 100,000 of these leaves!? Soon, it will be to his despair that he finds I paid the ultimate price to make sure this level has been replaced with nothing but despair! He will never, *ever* be able to pass it!”

However, almost as soon as that gleam of ridicule appeared, and at the same time as Bai Xiaochun plopped onto the ground, the countless early Celestial Realm-level leaves slammed into the turtle wok. And then, the spirit automaton’s eyes bulged.

“Impossible!!” he gasped, shivering in incredulity.

The scene playing out was so shocking that it seemed to defy all imagination. Not a single leaf could affect the wok, and in fact, the backlash attack caused them to shatter and crumble.

It was as if the leaves were arrows made of glass, and the turtle-wok was a boulder. No matter how many times the wok was hit, it wasn’t hurt.

At this point, the spirit automaton’s confidence was in almost complete shambles.

“Impossible. How could this be happening…? Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!

“This guy is a shameless cheater! This Bai Xiaochun, h-h-he…. Don’t tell me I really am powerless to do anything to him!?” The spirit automaton only continued to edge closer to madness.

“First, he stole power away from me, then he drove away all the other challengers. He nearly destroyed the entire world of the Dark Concocters, and behaved even more shamelessly with the Succubi. And now… he has a precious treasure that can do this?! Dammit!! What kind of wok is that?!?!”

Although nothing seemed to be happening to the wok, underneath, Bai Xiaochun was still coughing up blood. The wok couldn’t be hurt by any sort of divine ability, but the vibrations caused by all the blows caused Bai Xiaochun’s five yin organs and six yang organs to tremble painfully.

If he weren’t in the mid Celestial Realm, with an exceptionally powerful fleshly body and heaven-defying powers of regeneration, then he would probably have been reduced to a pile of bloody gore even before all of the leaves finished striking the wok.

And even with his current level, it was still incredibly difficult to deal with. He continued to cough up blood, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. As for his powers of regeneration, they were working at their limit. Every breath of time seemed to stretch into an entire year for him.

“You just wait, spirit automaton! One of these days, I’ll make sure you know exactly how awesome Lord Bai is!” As pain stabbed through his body, he cursed and gnashed his teeth at the spirit automaton.

And thus, both Bai Xiaochun and the spirit automaton went about cursing each other, separated only by the wok and the shattering leaves.

Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure how much time had gone by, but eventually, he recovered fully. And it seemed as though the attacking tree leaves were now completely gone.

After double-checking to make sure things were calm, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath and slowly tipped up the edge of the turtle-wok. Confirming that the coast was clear, he rose to his feet.

Surrounding him was a powder that was all that remained of the countless leaves, dry and withered, almost dust-like.

When he looked up, the entire world had that same withered sensation.

It was as if it had existed for just a bit too long, and was now crumbling away. Sighing, Bai Xiaochun put his turtle-wok away, stuck his chin up and loudly said, “Can you really handle me, you little rascal?!”

He knew that the spirit automaton was surely in the area to hear him, and even sent some divine sense out in the hopes of catching sight of him.

As expected, a roar of rage echoed out from the huge tree, whereupon a face materialized on its surface!

Its eyes glared with rage at Bai Xiaochun, filled with bone-deep hatred, madness, and defiance. It was as if this face wished to eat Bai Xiaochun alive.

“You’re shameless! A cheater!!” It was none other than the face of the spirit automaton. Unable to appear physically in front of Bai Xiaochun at the moment, he chose this method to reveal himself.

He hadn’t originally intended to show himself, but in his horrific despair, and having been completely infuriated by Bai Xiaochun, he lost control to a certain degree.

Startled, Bai Xiaochun backed up a bit as the enormous tree lurched forward as if it were about to attack him.

At the moment, though, he still wasn’t completely certain that the face of the tree belonged to the spirit automaton.

“I guess there’s one way to find out.” Ignoring the raging tree, he cleared his throat, approached, and began to walk around it and examine it from different angles. As for the face, it moved across the surface of the tree to maintain its glaring stare.

After a moment, Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times, and then asked, “Hey, what did you say just now?”

Fury burning, the spirit automaton said, “I said you’re a cheater, and that you’re shameless. Complete scum!!”

“Cheater? All I did was put a wok on top of me to defend myself. Let me tell you a secret. The reason I have so much control over this damaged fan is that I'm here by myself, with no one to compete with me. Now *that* is cheating.” Chuckling at his intentional attempt to provoke the spirit automaton, he looked over at the face on the tree.

As soon as the words left his mouth, the face seemed like it might collapse.

“You have the nerve to say it openly? Y-y-you… you actually admitted it?! What cheek! A despicable cheater. That's what you are! I hereby swear an oath that I’ll never let you succeed!!” It wasn’t that the spirit automaton hadn’t ever encountered shameless people before. But none of them could possibly compare to Bai Xiaochun.

The spirit automaton’s outburst had confirmed to Bai Xiaochun who he was. “Fudge, it *is* you!”

Glaring, he lunged forward, pulled out the Greatsword of the North and slashed it toward the tree.

A huge boom echoed out, accompanied by cursing and swearing from the spirit automaton.

“You just wait, Bai Xiaochun!! Dammit, I'm gonna kill you! Shameless. Despicable. Incorrigible!!”

The spirit automaton was coming to find that he didn’t seem to have much to say, only those few words that he repeated. Either way, Bai Xiaochun was starting to get a bit angry. Furthermore, he had just undergone quite a painful torment because of those leaves. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to slash his Greatsword of the North into the thing, reducing it, as well as the spirit automaton’s face, into countless splinters of wood.

At that point, he could sense the spirit automaton’s aura leave the tree, whereupon he stood there proudly.

“You’d better be careful, you little rascal. You just wait until I’m your master, and then see how I put you in your place!"

Up in the air, the completely maddened spirit automaton heard that, and nearly coughed up a mouthful of blood. “You just wait! Next time, I’ll definitely, definitely destroy you! I swear it!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1147 awe-chapter-1148

After the spirit automaton left, the level faded away, and Bai Xiaochun snorted coldly as he was teleported back out onto the damaged fan.

“That spirit automaton has gone for too long without someone in charge of him. How rude! Seems I’ll have to discipline him a bit more in the future.” The more he thought about that analysis, the more correct it seemed. Furthermore, now that he knew the spirit automaton was currently awake, it didn’t seem like a good idea to challenge any more levels.

“I’ll wait another month. He’ll be asleep by then, and I can go back in.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he looked around one last time before heading back to Mistysea Prefecture.

By now, nearly a year had passed since the incident in Murknine County. Mistysea Prefecture advanced on a daily basis, becoming more and more of a bustling place as increasing numbers of Heavenspan cultivators found their way there.

Both the Grand Heavenmaster and the Giant Ghost King were proud and excited by how things were taking shape, as was Bai Xiaochun.

Considering he was taking a break from challenging the levels in the damaged fan, he spent most of his time working with the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King to manage affairs in the prefecture. Soon, a month had gone by.

Just when Bai Xiaochun was thinking about going back to the fan, something dramatic occurred!

Overnight, spiderweb appeared in the four northern prefectures controlled by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. It was just like what had happened back in Murknine County. The difference was that last time, only a single county had been affected, but this time… sixteen entire counties in the northern four prefectures were covered so quickly no one had a chance to react!

No one managed to flee the affected areas, nor send messages of warning. Overnight, the northern four prefectures became a land of death!

Because of how quickly it happened, and because Celestial Deadfall was gone, leaving no other celestial behind to watch over the area, it all happened literally overnight!

What made Bai Xiaochun shiver with fear the most was that, even though he was so close in Mistysea Prefecture, and had acute celestial senses, he hadn’t been able to detect anything happening!

Only after the spiderwebs had appeared in full did he suddenly realize that all heaven and earth was filled with something like a sensation of rot, something that could absorb life force… some familiar, evil aura!!

It was the very same aura he had personally encountered back in Murknine County!

And yet, the crisis continued to build. Apparently, those four northern prefectures were not the limit. Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun detected the aura… he realized that spiderweb had already appeared in places in Mistysea Prefecture!!

Shaken, he immediately dispelled any thoughts of going to the damaged fan, and instead rushed toward the border. Meanwhile, the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King were already getting information about what was happening, and they were both stunned.

Word quickly began to spread through the second immortal domain, leading to widespread astonishment. There were many people who didn’t even dare to believe it was true.

After all… it was a matter involving four entire prefectures!

There was no celestial in those four prefectures, but there were dozens of demigod experts, and hundreds of devas, not to mention the countless other cultivators of lower levels. Collectively, they made up nearly a third of the entire second immortal domain.

For so many cultivators, and so many powerful experts, to suddenly vanish overnight, without a single one being able to escape or send news, was a terrifying event that struck fear into the hearts of everyone in the second immortal domain.

Events continued as the spiderweb expanded. It was around evening by the time Bai Xiaochun reached the border. The spiderweb was visibly expanding, building up in various areas in Mistysea Prefecture.

The Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, and Zhou Yixing all looked around in despair, and yet, Bai Xiaochun was actually more nervous than they were. He had personally witnessed what went down in Murknine County, and as he closed his eyes and thought back to all of that, it only served to reinforce how he couldn’t let it happen in Mistysea Prefecture.

“Dammit!! What are the Saint-Emperor and Vile-Emperor up to?!?!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t keep breathing calmly as the spiderweb expanded at rapid speed, and was in such a state of helplessness that his face was pale white.

Even though he was in the mid Celestial Realm, and also had the Greatsword of the North, whatever had come out of that egg sack could destroy all of Murknine County with a single palm strike. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, only an archaean could deal with that level of power.

Bai Xiaochun could already surmise that there was no life left in the northern four prefectures. Eyes bloodshot, he set about trying to set up a spell formation to prevent the spiderweb from expanding.

Unfortunately, even if his spell formation had been stronger, it would still have crumbled in the face of the spiderweb. It already covered a large portion of Mistysea Prefecture, causing the land to turn gray, the mountains to crumble, the rivers to dry up, and the vegetation to wither away. Everything was wasting away into dust.

“Xiaochun, we have to take our people and go. That’s our only option!!” The Grand Heavenmaster had poured blood, sweat, and tears into the development of Mistysea Prefecture, so it caused his heart to drip blood to utter words like this.

Gritting his teeth, the Giant Ghost King added, “Xiaochun, the Grand Heavenmaster is right. Leaving is the only option. Neither the Vile-Emperor nor the Saint-Emperor will do anything right now. To them, it would be worth it to have this spiderweb erase us from Mistysea Prefecture!”

Even Zhou Yixing offered similar bitter words of advice.

Somewhat in a daze, Bai Xiaochun looked around at Mistysea Prefecture. Everything was happening too quickly. Never could he have imagined that the land that, over the past few years, had been slowly transformed into a foundation for his people, would change almost overnight.

He even sent some divine sense out to check on the cultivators in the prefecture, and found that some of them had blank expressions, and seemed on the verge of ravenously devouring everything around them. Eyes bloodshot, he closed his eyes and said, “Fine. We leave.”

His voice was filled with pain and helplessness. No one wanted to leave, not any more than they had desired to leave the Heavenspan Realm.

Mistysea Prefecture had become their new home, but now… in the face of certain peril, they had no other choice.

His heart twinged with pain, but he knew that he was powerless to reverse the situation. Gritting his teeth, he took out the Greatsword of the North, and then used the power of his mid Celestial Realm cultivation base to send the cultivators from Mistysea Prefecture inside of it.

The truth was that the people were the foundation of Mistysea Prefecture, and therefore, no matter where they went, it wouldn’t be long before they could create a second Mistysea Prefecture!

The Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, Zhou Yixing and other powerful experts forced themselves to keep a good attitude as they issued orders. Although Mistysea Prefecture was large, the Grand Heavenmaster had organized it well, and hadn’t slacked off in any regard. Therefore, as the spiderweb kept expanding, and Bai

Xiaochun worked as hard as he could, virtually all of the people in the prefecture were sent into the greatsword.

Soon, the Greatsword of the North was nearly full to capacity. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun hovered there in the air, watching the spiderwebs continue to fill the prefecture....

All of the buildings and structures, even Bai Xiaochun's mansion, were slowly swallowed up.

And of course, things didn't stop there. After finishing with Mistysea Prefecture, the spiderweb began to expand further south into the second immortal domain. And for some unknown reason, it began to move more quickly through the other prefectures.

Bai Xiaochun had no choice but to retreat in the face of the spiderweb. The entire time, his face was grim and his eyes sharp. He was simply waiting to see what would happen. From what he could tell, it was definitely a case of the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor holding back for some specific purpose.

Whatever it was, the loss of an entire immortal domain did not seem like a price either would be willing to pay.

“They have to come!” he thought, clenching his hands into fists. Expression flickering, he realized that Celestial Aged Spirit had appeared some distance off, his expression one of undisguised grimness and anger.

Upon nearing, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “The emperors really are cruel, aren’t they!?”

By now, his own prefecture was filled with cries of shock as the spiderweb spread through it. Many cultivators attempted to flee, but weren’t fast enough.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1148 awe-chapter-1149

Bai Xiaochun hovered there quietly with Celestial Aged Spirit.

Aged Spirit knew that help would come eventually. After all, he understood a bit more about the situation than Bai Xiaochun. But at the same time, he knew that his cultivation base was not high enough to do anything about the catastrophe that was already playing out, other than save those of his people who he already had.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t even see the end of the spiderwebs. Everything was covered with the stuff, which emanated an aura of rot that wanted to take away all life force that it touched.

By this point, the spiderweb covered about half of the second immortal domain, and was moving with a speed that only celestials could evade.

Mixed emotions could be seen in Celestial Aged Spirit’s face, especially defiance. To him, the second immortal domain was home, and now, he was being forced to watch it slowly being destroyed.

“King Heavenspan, the incident in Murknine County that you reported to me was something both the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor had predicted would happen. As for the current situation, they have been secretly pulling strings to make it play out exactly like this!

“That is why your report to the Saint-Emperor went completely unanswered, and also why he prevented the news from spreading. After all, you are not a celestial of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and therefore, and are not as in the know as the rest of us!

“Within that enormous egg sac is… the clone of a sovereign!!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, he turned to look at Celestial Aged Spirit, eyes flashing. “Sovereign?”

At this point, Celestial Aged Spirit looked up into the sky that hung above the Eternal Immortal Domains, and the enormous giant that filled most of it!

“Back when the damaged fan came, it hit that enormous sovereign’s hand and knocked off a chunk of black stone. Remember how both emperors went missing after that incident? It was because they were fighting over that stone!

“Hmph. To an archaean, a chunk of the skin of a sovereign would be extremely valuable. It could very well hold secrets regarding the way to break through to the Sovereign Realm. Even the vaguest of clues would still be indescribably precious, and could drive an archaean to madness!

“Despite how cautious the two archaeans were in their struggles over the chunk of skin, it managed to escape. Afterward, the two vicious archaeans realized that unless that chunk of skin grew to maturity, the secrets of the Sovereign Realm within it would not be unlocked!

“They knew that, eventually, it would reach the point where it would begin to devour life force. And thus, they knew that the incident in Murknine County was that very chunk of skin trying to grow.

“Neither of them were happy with the level of growth it achieved, though, and thus left it to its own designs. They wanted it to grow into a *true* sovereign clone. In fact… they decided to allow the second immortal domain to become food for it!

“They’re simply waiting. When the sovereign clone stops growing… that's when they’ll finally show up!” In his fury, Celestial Aged Spirit didn’t hold anything back, and revealed everything he knew to Bai Xiaochun.

As Bai Xiaochun heard the story being told, he began to breathe heavily, and his heart sank. His eyes also began to glow with intense cold light.

To be plotted against and abandoned in the end made him feel much the same as when he had been dealing with Daoist Heavenspan.

“Letting that clone consume so much life from an immortal domain is nothing less than the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor playing with fire!” Although he had already had speculations that something like this was happening, to hear it right out of Celestial Aged Spirit’s mouth caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to grow icier with every moment that passed.

Although he wasn’t the overly compassionate type, to hear that so many lives were being sacrificed was something he just couldn’t take. Even if it was all for the sake of pushing someone into the sovereign realm to fight back against the Enemy from Beyond, it was still too much for him.

Bai Xiaochun felt profoundly unsettled, and Celestial Aged Spirit’s anger continued to build. Meanwhile, the spiderweb expanded and expanded. It was at around this time that a

3,000-meter-long lightning bolt appeared in the sky, rushing toward them at top speed.

The sky seemed to rip apart from the shocking sound of the thunder that accompanied it, and even the spiderweb stopped moving for a moment.

Bai Xiaochun and Celestial Aged Spirit looked up at the lightning bolt to see the Saint-Emperor, his eyes shining with dazzling, holy light.

Next to him was the cold and ruthless Gu Tianjun, and Sima Yunhua, with a soft, gentle smile on his face. And finally, there was the white-haired but sharp-eyed Chen Su.

With Celestial Aged Spirit, four celestials from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty were present!

A flicker of excitement could be seen in the Saint-Emperor’s eyes that he just couldn’t conceal. Completely ignoring Bai Xiaochun and Celestial Aged Spirit, he blurred into motion toward the spiderweb and began to inspect it more closely. Sima Yunhua and the other celestials headed over to Celestial Aged Spirit to offer greetings, and despite how much they disliked Bai Xiaochun, gave him polite nods.

Before anyone could say anything, an intense rumbling sound filled the sky as a black cloud spread out, quickly settling into the form of a huge statue.

Towering devil qi surged out from the statue, causing everything to rumble as eight individuals took form!

One of them wore imperial robes, and an imperial crown. He was middle-aged, the type who looked threatening without being angry. His eyes were especially noteworthy; they seemed to contain the transformations of all heaven and earth, and when he looked at Bai Xiaochun and the other celestials, they couldn’t help but gasp a bit.

Although Bai Xiaochun had never seen him up close before, he immediately knew that this man was none other than… the Vile-Emperor!

His imperial garb and archaean aura made him seem like a burning sun hanging in the sky. He actually looked very similar to the Saint-Emperor, just colder and more callous, so much so that it seemed as if he could cause frost to build up everywhere around him. There was also something a bit more domineering about him than the Saint-Emperor.

If you looked closely, you could see that his pupils consisted of two pitch-black swords.

He had not come alone any more than the Saint-Emperor had. Behind him hovered seven individuals, some men, some women, but all of them… celestials of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!

Gongsun Wan’er. Reverend Devourer. Prince Ur-Demon. Celestial Virūpākṣa. Celestial Deadfall. They were all there. There was also a stooped old woman with brown age-spots on her face. However, all of those people faded into a blur to Bai Xiaochun as he focused on one particular middle-aged man in a black robe!

He clearly emanated the fluctuations of a celestial, and seemed impressive in a way that was second only to the Vile-Emperor. As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw him, the man saw Bai Xiaochun. They were only about 600 meters away, after all.

“Daoist Heavenspan!!” Bai Xiaochun growled, his eyes turning bloodshot. This man was none other than Du

Lingfei’s father, Daoist Heavenspan!

“Bai Xiaochun!” Daoist Heavenspan murmured, his eyes narrowing as he looked coldly at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun had often thought about where he might encounter Daoist Heavenspan again, and whether or not he would be able to control the hatred in his heart.

And as of this moment, he realized that he couldn’t. It didn’t matter that it wasn't an appropriate moment to take action. The instant he saw Daoist Heavenspan, both his cultivation base and his killing intent seemingly erupted of their own accord.

He didn’t say anything. He didn’t hesitate. He didn’t hold back. He stepped forward, blurring into motion toward Daoist Heavenspan.

Daoist Heavenspan didn’t seem surprised at all by this. Eyes flashing with sinister light, he stepped forward and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, summoning his nine Daogates.

Dazzling light shone out as the Daogates created a spell formation in front of him. Then he pushed out with his hand, revealing the fluctuations of the early Celestial Realm. However, based on his battle prowess, he was very close to the mid Celestial Realm!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1149 awe-chapter-1150

Stories about Bai Xiaochun’s battle with Celestial Deadfall had long since begun to spread, and therefore, Daoist Heavenspan knew that he was in the mid Celestial Realm. Thus, he immediately resorted to a trump card, holding nothing back to seize the upper hand.

Unfortunately for him, despite his general understanding of Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess, he had not personally fought him in a long time. And therefore, not even the full power of his nine Daogates were sufficient in this situation!

Bai Xiaochun moved too quickly, and he was too focused on striking a fatal blow. Instead of resorting to fancy tactics, he simply unleashed a vicious fist strike!

It was none other than… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

It wasn’t a quintuple power version, but rather, quindecuple! Fifteen times the original level!

It was the most perfect fleshly body fist strike possible within the mid Celestial Realm. And yet, things weren’t even close to over. Bai Xiaochun also poured the power of his cultivation base into this fist strike, making it even more effective. The heavens thrummed, and massive winds swept about. Those present in the early Celestial Realm were flabbergasted, and even the mid Celestial Realm experts were visibly stunned. As for those nearby like Celestial Virūpākṣa who were in the late Celestial Realm, they were also unable to conceal their surprise.

Some considered stepping in to interfere, but none of them could possibly do so quickly enough. It took only moments for Daoist Heavenspan’s nine Daogates to shatter into fragments. At the same time, blood began to ooze out of the corners of his mouth as he fell back as quickly as he could.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered with killing intent. He had attacked in a devastating burst of energy, but Daoist Heavenspan was no ordinary opponent. Although his first nine Daogates had been destroyed, they quickly formed back together into a tenth Daogate.

Howling, Daoist Heavenspan sent it forward to block Bai Xiaochun’s path. At the same time, Celestial Virūpākṣa, Celestial Deadfall, Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer all rushed forward to do the same.

Under any other circumstances, Gu Tianjun and his fellow celestials wouldn’t have done anything. But with both emperors present, and with Bai Xiaochun holding at least a nominal position as a celestial in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, they had no choice but to suppress their aversion for him and step into the fray. Of course, the objective of the celestials on both sides was not to start a huge battle, but rather, to interfere with Bai Xiaochun and Daoist Heavenspan.

“King Heavenspan, calm yourself a bit!”

“Celestial Du, don’t sink to the same level as that brat!”

Even as they barked various words such as these, Bai Xiaochun looked contemptuously at Daoist Heavenspan’s tenth Daogate, and before anyone could get close to him, pulled out the Greatsword of the North.

“Take this!” he shouted, slashing the sword toward the Daogate. Even as everyone looked on in visible shock, the Greatsword slashed through the Daogate as surely as if it were made of paper. Then, the raging sword qi continued on toward Daoist Heavenspan!

Bai Xiaochun was gambling that the Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials wouldn’t personally interfere with a shocking sword strike like this simply for the sake of Daoist Heavenspan. And he was right. Daoist Heavenspan’s face fell as Celestial Virūpākṣa and his compatriots simply looked on with furrowed brows.

Of course, there was no way that Bai Xiaochun could fight a battle to the death with Daoist Heavenspan right here and now. Even as his sword continued to fall, a cold snort exploded into heaven and earth.

In the blink of an eye, the Vile-Emperor appeared in front of Daoist Heavenspan. All he had to do was wave his sleeve, and the entire world went dim as an unimaginable power appeared, seemingly out of nowhere, and backed by natural law.

That natural law would not permit any magical items to be near the Vile-Emperor. As a result of his mere gaze, heaven and earth seemed to be reversed, and everything trembled violently. For the first time ever, the world treasure that was the Greatsword of the North left Bai Xiaochun’s control. Shivering, it flew backward of its own accord, not willing to even stay in the same place it had just occupied.

Bai Xiaochun was also hit by a backlash. His entire body vibrated, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth as he staggered backward several steps. Even as he did, his Undying Live Forever Technique went to work, healing his wounds. A moment later, he came to a stop and looked up, shifting his gaze to focus on the Vile-Emperor.

At the same time, the Saint-Emperor appeared in front of Bai Xiaochun, seemingly there to defend him from the Vile-Emperor.

Clasping his hands behind his back, he snorted coldly and said, “You’re pushing things a bit too far, Vile-Emperor!”

The Vile-Emperor merely chuckled in response. Then he looked at Bai Xiaochun and coldly said, “Still interested in fighting?”

The Saint-Emperor looked on with the slightest of frowns, his eyes narrowed.

Back when Bai Xiaochun had first stepped into the cultivation world, and had little experience in life, he might not have been able to detect the sinister implications in what the Vile-Emperor had just said. But he was not that inexperienced person anymore, and instantly grasped the vicious trap contained therein.

If Bai Xiaochun disregarded the Saint-Emperor and responded directly to the Vile-Emperor, then it wouldn’t matter what he said, it would cause the Saint-Emperor to lose face. On the other hand, Bai Xiaochun did not qualify to refuse to respond to the Vile-Emperor. Only the two archaeans themselves had a high enough position to ignore each other.

As soon as the puzzle pieces clicked into place for Bai Xiaochun, he snorted coldly, looked away from the Vile-Emperor, and took a few steps forward. Turning, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the Saint-Emperor.

“Saint-Emperor, I await your judgement in the matter!”

In response to his words, the Vile-Emperor’s eyes flickered, and the Saint-Emperor’s narrowed eyes returned to their normal state.

“He might be able to stop things this time,” the Saint-Emperor said coolly, “but he can’t interfere every time. There can only be one ruler of the people of Heavenspan.” That simple statement made his stance clear.

Bai Xiaochun bowed again, then respectfully said, “Thank you for your support, Saint-Emperor!”

Seeing how well Bai Xiaochun was handling things softened the Saint-Emperor’s heart a bit.

“However,” he continued in a kind voice, “now is not the time for such things. Please be patient, King Heavenspan. After we attend to matters at hand, I’ll arrange for you to get the chance you need.”

With that, he looked over at the Vile-Emperor.

The two emperors were old rivals who could each guess what the other were thinking by merely looking into each other’s eyes. The matter between Bai Xiaochun and Daoist Heavenspan was an issue of face only, and compared to the sovereign clone, was inconsequential.

Based on their previous investigations, they had confirmed that the sovereign clone’s cultivation base was only at the level of an archaean, and that it was definitely in the region covered by spiderweb.

“It belongs to whoever finds it first!” the Saint-Emperor said. Then he vanished, to reappear down below on the surface of the spiderweb. The Vile-Emperor snorted coldly and did the same thing, indicating his agreement with the Saint-Emperor.

The power of two archaean cultivation bases were unleashed, instantly punching a hole into what had seemed the nearly impregnable spiderweb. Then, the two emperors became streaks of bright light that vanished inside.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials all flew down to the hole in the hopes of observing the fight between the two emperors. Obviously, they wouldn’t enter without a direct Dharmic decree issued by the Vile-Emperor.

The Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials followed suit. As for Bai Xiaochun, he stared coldly at Daoist Heavenspan before joining Celestial Aged Spirit to head down toward the entrance hole.

He tried to catch Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes, but she was pretending not to notice him. However, it was very telling that, back when Bai Xiaochun began to fight with Daoist Heavenspan, and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials interfered, she had placed herself in an unusual position. Although it had seemed like she was blocking Bai Xiaochun’s path, to him, it seemed more like she was preventing Daoist Heavenspan from retreating.

That was enough for him to guess where she stood on the matter. Upon reaching the hole, he settled down cross-legged and looked inside, suspicious about what secrets this sovereign clone possessed.

And thus, the celestials from the two dynasties waited. Hours passed. Eventually, a shriek rang out from the depths of the spiderweb that caused the minds of all of the celestials to tremble. The vibrations of magical combat also reached them from far off in the distance.

Everyone outside of the gaping hole excitedly tried to make out the details of what was happening. Although they couldn’t see the fight itself, they could tell from the fluctuations that a massive, earth-shattering battle was taking place.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1150 awe-chapter-1151

The massive boom caught the attention of all of the celestials outside of the spiderweb, including Bai Xiaochun. Although they were unable to directly see what was happening, from the nature of the sound, they were able to determine that the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor were currently fighting a battle with the sovereign clone!

“It’s fighting against two archaean emperors…? This clone is so strong!” The booms and vibrations of the battle lasted for a full six hours, leaving both Bai Xiaochun and all of the other celestials shocked.

Everyone kept their cultivation bases rotating and their guard up, just in case something unusual happened.

All of them were convinced that with two archaeans working together, everything should go smoothly. However, as time dragged on, their confidence began to waver.

Apparently, the prevailing thought was that the matter should have been handled much more quickly. Eventually, three days had gone by, during which booms and vibrations continued to shake the spiderweb. Furthermore, although the spiderweb wasn’t expanding, and was in fact shrinking, there were many areas which seemed to be solidifying into something like the surface of an egg.

This strange sight caused the hearts of Bai Xiaochun and the other celestials to race, and to fill with sensations of increasing unease.

Close to where Bai Xiaochun was seated were Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua.

“This is taking too long,” Gu Tianjun said in a hushed tone.

“You wouldn’t think anything too unexpected could have occurred,” Sima Yunhua replied.

Celestial Aged Spirit was chuckling inwardly in cold schadenfreude, but wasn’t saying anything. As for Bai Xiaochun, he simply sat there thoughtfully. On the other side of the hole, the celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty were similarly engaged in hushed conversations, or were analyzing the situation as best they could.

Eventually, the fourth day came, and everyone was coming to the conclusion that something strange was going on. It reached the point that Gu Tianjun and Celestial Virūpākṣa were both getting ready to go inside to investigate the situation.

However, that was when a rumbling boom erupted out that vastly surpassed anything from before. It was like a million lightning bolts striking at the same time. And it was accompanied by a shriek that caused all of the celestial’s minds to spin.

At that point, two beams of light shot out from the hole in the spiderweb. Before anyone could react, the two beams had separated and appeared in the midst of the forces from the two different dynasties.

They were none other than the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor!

Their faces were ashen, and both were clearly injured, with blood oozing out of their mouths, and their eyes grim.

All of the celestials looked on, hearts pounding. Before anyone could ask any questions, the Saint-Emperor glanced at Gu Tianjun, Bai Xiaochun and the other celestials, and in a very serious tone said, “The clone of that sovereign is a crimson, reptilian entity. Its cultivation base is in the mid Archaean Realm, just on the verge of a breakthrough!

“The Vile-Emperor and I joined forces to attack it, and even used our trump cards. In the end, the worst we could do was injure it, and drop its cultivation base down into the Celestial Realm. Seriously wounded, it fled, using some unknown divine ability to evade us completely. No amount of searching turned up any clues.

“I need the five of you to go in there and search for it. The ideal outcome would be for you to find and capture it. But if necessary… its corpse will do. Either way, you *must* get it!!

“If any of you find it, then I’ll reward all five of you with… a Celestial Pill!” The Saint-Emperor knew that if he wanted the full support and cooperation of his celestials, he needed to offer a good reward. Although it pained him to some degree, he didn’t hesitate to do just that!

“A Celestial Pill!?” Sima Yunhua blurted, unable to restrain himself. Bai Xiaochun wasn’t completely sure of what that was, but considering the name, he could at least guess.

Seeing Bai Xiaochun’s facial expression, the Saint-Emperor went on to provide further explanation.

“From the moment the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was founded to this day, I have only concocted a total of seventeen Celestial Pills. As of now, I have nine left. Consuming one will give you a sixty percent chance of achieving a breakthrough within the Celestial Realm!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his eyes went wide, and his heart started to pound. Apparently, a Celestial Pill could provide him with just as much benefit as the life force he had taken from the egg sac.

“I can’t believe pills like that exist!!” he thought. The mere looks of excitement on the faces of Gu Tianjun and Celestial Aged Spirit showed what kind of pill it was. After all, they were already in the late Celestial Realm.

“I wonder if it would help a celestial who was trying to break into the Archaean Realm?” Glancing over at the forces of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, he could see that those celestials looked equally excited. And of course, Gu Tianjun and the other Saint-Emperor Dynasty forces noticed the same thing.

Glances were being exchanged on both sides as everyone measured each other up.

Clearly, although the two archaean emperors had injured the sovereign clone, they had also been severely drained in the process. Furthermore, they were still intent on winning the overall prize. Because of that, both were worried about the other coming out on top, and also worried about the reptilian clone escaping.

What had been most unexpected in the entire thing was that the sovereign clone turned out to be at the peak of the mid Archaean Realm, which was much more powerful than they had expected. What worried them the most was the possibility that, if it escaped, it would get even stronger, which could lead to a true disaster.

After much consideration, the two of them came to an agreement. Neither of them would take action. They would stand guard outside in case the sovereign clone tried to escape, and have their subordinates go inside to compete over the chance to capture or kill it.

Of course, it was obvious that because of how the Vile-Emperor Dynasty’s forces outnumbered the Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s, there must have been some other agreement reached by the two emperors to make up for the disparity. However, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t think of what that might be. In either case, the chance at a Celestial Pill was enticing, and on top of that, he was actually very interested in the sovereign clone that the two archaeans took so seriously.

“It might contain clues about how to break through to the Archaean Realm.... Although I'm quite a way away from that, it would be a big pity to see that good fortune go to someone else.” Of course, he wasn’t the only one thinking that way. Celestials from both sides were all considering the same thing.

And yet, no one was willing to get too greedy. Obviously, the two archaeans were aware that one of their subordinates could potentially try to take the prize for themselves. Because of that, it seemed obvious that one of the unspoken prizes up for grabs was a portion of the sovereign clone’s flesh and blood, with the rest going to one of the emperors.

It was mere conjecture, but seemed highly likely to the celestials.

After all, such arrangements had been made on more than one occasion in the past.

“Your Dharmic decree shall be adhered to, Saint-Emperor!” Gu Tianjun said, clasping his hands solemnly. Then he turned into a beam of sword light that shot into the spiderweb. Sima Yunhua, Chen Su, and Celestial Aged Spirit all made similar declarations, and then joined Gu Tianjun to fly inside.

Similarly, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials, Gongsun Wan’er included, all shot into the hole. Not having any logical reason to refuse to go in, Bai Xiaochun also turned into a beam of light that shot into the world within the spiderweb!

After they left, the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor sat down cross-legged and exchanged glances. Then they sent their divine sense out in all directions to make sure the lizard clone didn’t escape from some other location.

They were not giving it any wiggle room to flee.

“Might as well stop dreaming,” the Vile-Emperor said suddenly, a cold smile playing out on his face. “That sovereign’s flesh and blood will be going to me. And as per our agreement, I’ll give you twenty percent.”

The Saint-Emperor looked over, and all of the warmth drained away from him. Looking cold and even furious, he said, “You were the one who intentionally let it go earlier. Otherwise we wouldn’t be in this annoying situation!”

In response, the Vile-Emperor chuckled.

“Just wait and see what happens,” he said. Then he closed his eyes.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1151 awe-chapter-1152

Because of how the spiderweb made up the sky of the world therein, everything was as dark as late evening. Mortals might have had difficulty seeing, but of course, cultivators had no such problems.

However, everything was gray and dusty, from mountains to plants. Other than Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er, all of the celestials found it somewhat unsettling. Anyone who entered a place like this for the first time would feel alarmed.

Just as had been the case back in Murknine County, some of the villages, towns, and cities were not covered with dust, and contained cultivators and mortal citizens. However, they all ambled around like the walking dead, making for a very shocking scene.

Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er had seen such things before, but the others had not. Therefore, the two of them were much quicker to acclimate, and almost immediately headed out in two different directions to start their search.

After all, this wasn’t a single county like Murknine. It encompassed more than half of the entire second immortal domain, at least seven prefectures. The area to be covered in the search for the injured sovereign clone was vast, to say the least.

Of course, the search was being carried out by twelve celestials. In the immortal domains, that was a level of power that could not be rivaled. Furthermore, each celestial could search a huge area with divine sense. The fact that the sovereign clone had been injured by two archaeans meant that the fluctuations it emanated would be even easier to detect, and also, it would be weaker. Therefore, the group searched the world within the spiderweb with full fervor, aware that, at worst, it might take some time to find their quarry.

As Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er headed off, the other celestials picked different directions and followed suit. Everyone hoped to succeed on their own, and would join forces only if it became necessary later.

The Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor had intentionally set things up so that their subordinate celestials would avoid their inclination to refuse to work together. After all, the rewards would be given out regardless of who actually did the deed.

It was easy to imagine conflict breaking out between the forces of the two dynasties if celestials from opposing sides both came across the sovereign clone at the same time. But considering the huge territory involved, that didn’t seem likely.

Bai Xiaochun sped through the air, his divine sense sweeping the area as he looked for clues.

“This is a sovereign clone. Maybe it’s injured, but all we have to go on is the word of the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor.” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but analyze the matter as he went along. After all, only he and Gongsun Wan’er had personally dealt with this sovereign clone before.

When he closed his eyes, he could picture that single palm strike reducing all of Murknine County to ashes. He also had the feeling that the reason why the clone was only a hair from being in the late Archaean Realm was because of that bit of life force he had stolen with the Eternal Parasol.

“I bet if that lizard had actually been in the late Archaean Realm, the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor would be in even worse condition than they are now….” The more he thought about it, the more he realized that the sovereign clone most likely hated him to a very profound degree.

“It’s not like I did it on purpose! Who asked it to set up shop right at my front door?” He really felt like he was getting the short end of the stick in the matter, but realized there was nothing he could do about it. If he found traces of the lizard, he would simply send a message to the other celestials and wait for them to come help.

Others among the celestials might be considering trying to take the clone for their own, but not Bai Xiaochun. In fact, he actually hoped the Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials tracked it down first. Let them be the ones who tested out the thing's current battle prowess.

Because of all of these thoughts, he wasn’t actually going about his search efforts very thoroughly. To him, safety was the priority. He wasn’t even paying very close attention to what his divine sense was telling him of his surroundings.

The area covered by the spiderweb was huge, and before long, three days had passed. The twelve celestials were all searching in different areas, and were also keeping in touch. By maintaining full vigilance, they weren’t giving the sovereign clone any chances to slip through their grasp.

Many of the celestials assumed there was more to the situation than the two archaeans had let on, and some had surmised that they might have been thrown out as bait.

That thought caused everyone to be even more on guard than normal.

Bai Xiaochun was being especially cautious. Although he hadn’t found any clues about the clone, he had come across seven or eight villages like the one he had entered in Murknine County. From outside, everything looked normal in such places, except for the laughter that echoed out from inside of them. He always avoided such places when he saw them.

He headed in the general direction of Mistysea Prefecture, and as the days passed, he gradually began to see familiar areas. He recognized certain cities, and although none of them contained cultivators ravenously devouring each other, they still caused his mood to sink.

Sighing, he continued northward. At one point, his expression flickered, and he pulled his transmission jade slip out of his bag of holding. After scanning it with divine sense, he heard Celestial Aged Spirit’s voice echoing in his ear.

“I found it!” he said excitedly. “All of you, hurry over here!” At that point, a stream of divine sense appeared that led off in a certain direction.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times hesitantly, then turned and followed the divine sense. During the past few days, he had been maintaining a speed that could be described as neither fast nor slow. But the situation was urgent now, so he immediately blurred into motion, resorting to teleportations to move even faster.

Thankfully, the distance involved wasn’t immense, and with the regenerative powers of the Undying Live Forever Technique to help him, he was able to maintain incredible speed. Streaking through the air, he continued to follow the stream of divine sense for six hours!

During that time, his speed helped him travel a distance that would take days for average celestials. Eventually, he sensed Celestial Aged Spirit’s aura up ahead of him.

In addition, there were shocking fluctuations that indicated a spell formation was sealing down a huge area!

As Bai Xiaochun approached, he saw the glowing red light of the spell formation, which was intermingled with a thick black mist. It almost looked as though an enormous, upside-down bowl were covering the area, which was about 500 kilometers from side to side.

Just barely visible above the black mist were three huge faces, which belonged to none other than Celestial Deadfall, Prince Ur-Demon and Daoist Heavenspan, all of whom were staring coldly at Celestial Aged Spirit, as well as Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua, who stood off to the side, expressions flickering as they waited anxiously.

When Bai Xiaochun appeared, the three of them immediately looked over at him, and their expressions brightened.

“Chen Su is still about four hours away….”

“There’s no time to wait!” The other three celestials quickly began to update Bai Xiaochun on the situation. Celestial Aged Spirit had been the first to locate the flesh and blood clone of the sovereign. However, the clone moved too quickly, and escaped. As Celestial Aged Spirit gave chase, Celestial Virūpākṣa arrived, and called other Vile-Emperor Dynasty forces to his aid.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials had the advantage of numbers, and had showed up before Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua. Not only had they set up a spell formation to keep Celestial Aged Spirit out, but Celestial Deadfall was maintaining it in a way that sealed whatever was inside.

At the same time, they had a number of celestials inside who were trying to capture the sovereign clone!

“We can’t wait any longer,” Gu Tianjun said through gritted teeth, his eyes flashing with determination. “Let’s attack and see if we can figure out what's going on inside the spell formation!” Sima Yunhua and Celestial Aged Spirit nodded in agreement. As for Bai Xiaochun, he realized that this was a rare opportunity, and that if he didn’t help out, it might also be their last. Waving his hand, he summoned the Greatsword of the North!

Even as the sword light glittered, the four of them became glittering beams of light that shot toward the spell formation!

Daoist Heavenspan, Prince Ur-Demon, and Celestial Deadfall were clearly surprised, and focused more power on maintaining the spell formation. Just as the two sides were about to clash, something dramatic happened!!

A bloodcurdling scream echoed out from the mists that filled the spell formation!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1152 awe-chapter-1153

The agonized shriek was not the type that would come out of the mouth of a human. It was the piercing cry of some sort of beast that had encountered a deadly crisis, the type of howl that came in the final moments of life.

As it pierced through the mists of the spell formation, causing them to ripple and twist, the enormous faces that represented Celestial Deadfall and his comrades all flickered in astonishment.

Similarly shaken were Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua.

“That’s the sovereign clone!!”

“Dammit, they’re about to succeed!”

As the two of them picked up speed, Gu Tianjun sent a blast of sword qi slashing out, powerful enough to rip apart worlds.

As for Sima Yunhua, he performed an incantation gesture, summoning nine clones that joined his true self to unleash shocking battle prowess.

Things weren’t over yet, though. Celestial Aged Spirit went all out, summoning a multicolored light that contained a magical law of destruction!

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get nervous. If the sovereign clone had indeed been killed, then considering that the Vile-Emperor Dynasty forces had the advantage of numbers, it would be impossible for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty people to take it away from them.

The only hope they had would be if the clone hadn't been killed yet.

“This sovereign's clone is a lot weaker than you would expect!” Not having time to analyze the situation much, Bai Xiaochun slashed out with the Greatsword of the North, joining forces with the other celestials. The attack created by the four of them was like a wild tempest that slammed directly into the spell formation.

Heaven and earth shook violently as a massive rift was torn open in the misty surface of the spell formation.

Normally, their combined attack wouldn't be so effective. However, the cry of the sovereign clone moments ago had weakened the spell formation significantly, laying the perfect groundwork.

The reason why Celestial Deadfall, Daoist Heavenspan and Prince Ur-Demon had not entered the spell formation to join in the fight earlier was because they had been tasked with preventing the Saint-Emperor Dynasty forces from entering. All of them immediately poured more power into the formation, causing dozens of huge hands to reach out and grab at the enemy celestials!

The hands were backed by the spell formation itself, and the cultivation bases of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators, making them as powerful as someone in the mid Celestial Realm. Roughly half of them headed directly toward Gu Tianjun, with some of them heading toward Celestial Aged Spirit, and only six swerving off to meet Bai Xiaochun and Sima Yunhua.

Despite the power backing them, the hands didn't attack offensively. They merely defended and harassed the Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials. Clearly, the goal of the Vile-

Emperor Dynasty forces was merely to give Celestial Virūpākṣa and the others time to complete their task.

Booms rang out here and there. Bai Xiaochun swung the Greatsword of the North, slicing one of the huge hands in two and forcing the other two to back up.

At the same time, Celestial Aged Spirit and Gu Tianjun both faced severe resistance, making it impossible for either of them to enter the spell formation.

The spell formation was powerful to begin with, and was being bolstered by three celestials. Unless something unexpected happened, it was likely that it would take several hours tangling with it before they could break through.

It was at this point that another piercing cry echoed out from inside the mist, even more intense than before. Because the mist of the spell formation had already been damaged, its fluctuations devolved into further instability, and it even began to rock back and forth.

Many places on its surface were growing visibly thin. Eyes glittering, Bai Xiaochun released more of the sword qi of the Greatsword of the North. At the same time, the other celestials unleashed trump cards in the form of shocking divine abilities.

Deadfall, Daoist Heavenspan, and Prince Ur-Demon were visibly taken aback. Aware that a critical juncture had arrived, they bit their tongues and spat out blood, drawing even more deeply on their cultivation bases to add power to the spell formation, and hopefully stabilize it.

It was a moment of fierce conflict between the two sides, all centered around the spell formation.

Despite the booms and rumbling sounds, this spell formation was clearly extraordinary, and the three celestials operating it were not holding anything back. Even though Bai Xiaochun and his comrades were attacking with shocking levels of power, and making progress, the more they advanced, the more hands appeared to resist them, and the more energy resisted their progress.

In fact, that energy was rapidly turning into a force of expulsion.

“Dammit, what kind of spell formation is this?!”

“If this keeps up, we’ll never have enough time to get inside!”

“And even if we do, how will we stop them from succeeding!?”

The three celestials from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty gritted their teeth and kept fighting. As for Bai Xiaochun, he hadn’t said a word this entire time, but had continuously been eyeing the mist, trying to decide if it was worth it to take a bit of a risk.

He knew that his Undying Hex wasn’t powerful enough to completely disregard the mist of the spell formation, but at the least, it could get him inside to where the fighting was going on.

Unfortunately, it would be too draining to take the others with him. And thus, he was torn. Even as he tried to make a final decision, a whistling sound rose up from behind him.

Off in the distance, a white beam of light approached, within which was an old man in a Daoist robe, who bore the semblance of a transcendent being. He was none other than Chen Su!

He was the last of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials to arrive. Earlier, Gu Tianjun had sent him an urgent message to come, and he had employed a very taxing Daoist magic that drew on the power of teleportation to get him here as quickly as possible.

The other celestials were visibly enlivened, whereas the Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials had quite the opposite reaction!

The three of them could handle four enemy celestials with difficulty, at least in an attempt to delay them. But five celestials was different. Were the spell formation in perfect shape, it would be one matter, but right now, it was unstable, and every shriek of the sovereign clone weakened it further. Now, it seemed unlikely that it would last for long.

Even as the three Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials reacted with shock, Chen Su arrived. Not slowing down for a moment, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture that sent numerous bolts of golden lightning flying out, which quickly formed into a string of lightning spheres. Each ball of lightning contained heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing power that joined the combined attack of the other Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials.

The resulting boom caused looks of shock to appear on the faces of the enemy. With the massive power of their combined divine abilities, Bai Xiaochun and his fellows were getting closer and closer to entering the spell formation.

“Dammit!!” Prince Ur-Demon shouted, his eyes crimson. Performing a double-handed incantation gesture, he spat out some pure energy. He was joined by Deadfall and Daoist

Heavenspan, who went all out to try to stabilize the spell formation. It was at that point… that all of a sudden, a third shriek rang out from the sovereign clone.

This third shriek surpassed the other two by far. It was astonishing to hear, and immediately caused the spell formation to begin to vibrate dangerously. It even seemed that it might collapse at any moment.

“This is our chance!” Gu Tianjun said, his eyes flashing brightly. There was no need for further words. Bai Xiaochun, Chen Su, Aged Spirit and Sima Yunhua all joined forces, unleashing the full power of their cultivation bases and their most powerful divine abilities. Their attack created something like an evil dragon that viciously attacked the spell formation!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

An ear-splitting explosion occurred as the evil dragon blasted a huge hole into the teetering spell formation, which then began to collapse!

Celestial Deadfall, Daoist Heavenspan and Prince Ur-Demon all coughed up mouthfuls of blood and fell back at high speed. In that moment, the mist dissipated, and the battlefield was revealed. What they saw… was something completely unexpected!

A miserable scream could be heard, coming, not from the sovereign clone, but from one of the seven celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the old woman.

Her cultivation base was in the mid Celestial Realm, and yet, she was currently being cleaved in two! Blood spattered out as her top half flew backward in retreat, a look of profound terror and astonishment appearing on her face!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1153 awe-chapter-1154

The old woman’s face was turning dark, as though she had been poisoned. Black blood dripped out of her, and even more telling, a black magical symbol had appeared above the top of her head.

The magical symbol flickered rapidly, and anyone who looked at it closely would see that it was suppressing a projected image that looked exactly like the old woman!

It was none other than her nascent divinity, as projected by her Daoseed!!

Apparently, the magical symbol was sealing her Daoseed inside of her broken body, which was currently being eaten away by the poison. If she died, the Daoseed would not be able to free itself, and would eventually be wiped away. As such, the old woman would lose her chance to be resurrected.

Bai Xiaochun and everyone else present was completely shocked. And yet, things weren’t over yet. Even as the old woman tried to flee, someone else appeared who was attempting to flee, face covered by a mask of terror.

It was none other than Reverend Devourer!

He was coughing up blood like mad, and his aura was weak beyond compare. He seemed terrified, and although he was moving at top speed, a black magical symbol floated above his head that looked similar to the one connected to the old woman. The main difference was that this symbol apparently contained the power of some magical law that was corroding Reverend Devourer’s body!

Further behind him was a burning red light that was already starting to speed out of the area of vanishing mist.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw that red light, he sensed something familiar; it was obviously an evil and explosive entity that was actually attempting to flee into the distance.

Last to appear was Celestial Virūpākṣa, who was missing an arm, and whose face was as pale as a sheet. However, he seemed to be defiant to the point of madness as he chased after the red light.

“Get it!” he shouted. “It’s almost dead!!”

As soon as Celestial Virūpākṣa began to give chase, Celestial Deadfall, Daoist Heavenspan and Prince Ur-Demon gritted their teeth and dashed to block the path of the red light. Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, and Celestial Aged Spirit also split up in an attempt to block its other paths of retreat.

Bai Xiaochun joined them. However, even as they moved into position, the blood-colored light stopped moving, and a piercing shriek echoed out from within it!

Now that the light had stopped moving, something became visible, a freakish creature that seemed to be part human and part lizard!

It had the limbs and torso of a person, but was covered with blood-colored scales. Its facial features became clear, revealing it to be male. However, its eyes had double pupils, and a long, forked tongue snaked in and out of its mouth.

The windstorm caused by the thing’s shriek contained power similar to the late Celestial Realm, and as it swept out, the weaker celestials like Deadfall had no choice but to back up. As for Bai Xiaochun, he immediately swung the Greatsword of the North out to protect himself.

Only Gu Tianjun and Celestial Virūpākṣa were strong enough to stand up to it, and in fact, continued onward, unleashing trump card attacks onto the clearly weakened sovereign clone.

Eyes filled with madness, the clone began to fight back, causing booms to ring out everywhere. Bai Xiaochun backed up a few paces, not willing to engage him. However, that did little good, as the clone suddenly turned and charged in his direction.

Its dual pupils were filled with hatred, and as soon as Bai Xiaochun realized that, his heart began to pound.

"He really does want revenge on me!” However, Bai Xiaochun also knew that retreat was not an option. Bracing himself, he raised the Greatsword of the North over his head and slashed it down toward the sovereign clone!

Shrieking, the clone fell back, and was once again surrounded by the other celestials. Now was not the time to be taking sides; everyone went all out in this effort to cut down the sovereign clone.

“Don’t let it get away!” Celestial Virūpākṣa shouted urgently. “Its powers of regeneration are incredible. Don’t give it the time to heal!”

All of the other celestials attacked with full urgency, holding nothing back. Their combined battering continued to weaken the sovereign clone, slowly wearing it down.

After all, the scene which the newly arrived celestials had just witnessed was shocking to the extreme. The dismal fate of the old woman, the sight of Reverend Devourer’s body melting, and Celestial Virūpākṣa’s missing limb all went to show how shockingly powerful this clone was!

Furthermore, if the thing escaped and they lost this opportunity, then considering its powers of regeneration and ability to absorb life force, then by the time they found it again, it would either be fully recovered, or close to it.

If that happened, then none of them would be able to accomplish their mission. And if the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor ended up having to come to finish the job themselves, then the rewards that had been offered would likely be withheld or limited.

A look of despair appeared in the eyes of the sovereign clone. Knowing that it couldn’t escape, and seeing itself being weakened by the moment, it threw its head back and roared.

As that happened, it began to grow larger, inflating until it was like a huge balloon made of skin. It was a shocking sight that caused everyone to inch back nervously.

Even as they did, the body of the sovereign clone suddenly exploded, causing a huge boom to ring out in all directions.

Celestial Deadfall, Prince Ur-Demon, Celestial Virūpākṣa and Daoist Heavenspan all coughed up mouthfuls of blood. Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, Chen Su, Celestial Aged Spirit and even Bai Xiaochun all did the same. Everyone was sent tumbling backward.

“This thing is so powerful!” Bai Xiaochun gasped, keeping a firm grip on the Greatsword of the North as twinges of pain swept through him. Looking over in shock, he saw Daoist Heavenspan some distance off, coughing up blood as he fell back.

At that point, his eyes glittered.

“Everyone is fighting over this sovereign’s fleshly body. Maybe I can use this chance to kill Daoist Heavenspan.” Immediately, killing intent began to rise up within him.

After the clone self-detonated, another shocking development occurred. A roughly one-meter-long lizard appeared in the spot where the detonation had occurred. It was clearly on its last legs, and had only one bit of energy left, which it used to try to escape.

Unexpectedly, the direction it picked was where Daoist Heavenspan was located. As soon as the lizard got close to him, his eyes flickered with black light, and he rapidly performed a double-handed incantation gesture.

“Ten Gate Synthesis!” Even as everyone was still being shoved backward by the force of the detonation, Daoist Heavenspan summoned a vast assortment of magical symbols that grouped together into a huge magical gate. Rumbling sounds filled the air as that gate shot toward the lizard, radiating the power of sealing!

The lizard wasn’t intelligent, and was acting on instinct alone. As such, it headbutted the huge magical gate, which immediately began to bend under the force of the impact!

The gate shattered, transforming back into countless magical symbols that wrapped around the now unconscious and possibly dead lizard, and then began to drag it toward Daoist Heavenspan.

“Daoist Heavenspan! How dare you!” That was the enraged reaction of both Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, Celestial Aged Spirit and Chen Su. However, they had been pushed too far away by the force of the blow, and had no time to do anything. As for Celestial Virūpākṣa and his fellows, they all rushed to defend Daoist Heavenspan.

As far as the Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators were concerned, as a new celestial, there was no way Daoist Heavenspan would dare to try to keep the corpse for himself. And Celestial Virūpākṣa was dead set on getting the reward they had been offered.

If Gu Tianjun and his fellow celestials managed to get the corpse, it would be a big headache.

Everything was happening too quickly. As people began to take action, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and his heart began to pound. The truth was that he had been plotting this entire time, and slowly edging closer to Daoist Heavenspan!

“The perfect opportunity!” After only the slightest moment of hesitation, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash, the Undying Hex, and all of his fleshly body power to achieve speed even greater than the sovereign clone had. He even rotated his cultivation base to add more power to his motion. Rumbling sounds echoed out as he suddenly appeared right next to Daoist Heavenspan, toward whom he viciously slashed his Greatsword of the North!

“I’m here for your life, Daoist Heavenspan!!” he shouted loudly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1154 awe-chapter-1155

To Bai Xiaochun, it was the type of opportunity that would only come once in a blue moon. And if he killed Daoist Heavenspan right now, even the Saint-Emperor would surely support his decision.

After all, Daoist Heavenspan currently held an object that both of the archaeans wanted for themselves. As Bai Xiaochun swung the Greatsword of the North, rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and scintillating blue light shone in all directions. This was battle prowess equivalent to the late Celestial Realm, all of it directed solely against Daoist Heavenspan!

Everything happened too quickly. Even as Daoist Heavenspan was reaching out toward the lizard, Bai Xiaochun’s greatsword slashed out. Before Daoist Heavenspan could react, an intense sensation of deadly crisis rose up from the bottom of his heart.

Although he could be resurrected if he died, it would come at the cost of ten percent of his cultivation base, a price he would not pay unless absolutely necessary. After all, a permanent ten percent loss in cultivation base would also mean he was ten percent less likely to reach the Archaean Realm!

Achieving that breakthrough was difficult enough without reducing the chances by ten percent. And Daoist Heavenspan was ruthlessly ambitious; how could he possibly dash his own hopes just for the sake of a lizard?

Without the slightest hesitation, he let out a shout and threw his hand out to the side. Instead of tossing the lizard into his bag of holding, he thrust it out to block Bai Xiaochun's Greatsword of the North.

Rumbling booms filled the air as the unstoppable greatsword made contact with the lizard. For the first time, instead of severing that which lay in its path, it only hewed out a great chunk of flesh!

The lizard blocked the greatsword and sent a massive backlash attack into Bai Xiaochun, causing his qi and blood to vibrate violently. However, Daoist Heavenspan was hurt even worse. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was flung backward, simultaneously releasing the lizard!

He had no other choice than to release it. If he greedily tried to keep it, then Gu Tianjun and the other Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials would certainly give chase. Even if they were initially blocked from doing so, Bai Xiaochun would have another chance to strike a fatal blow. Therefore, releasing the lizard not only made him less of a target, it would also make it much harder for Bai Xiaochun to continue the fight.

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, from the moment Bai Xiaochun made his move to the point when Daoist Heavenspan let go of the lizard, only enough time elapsed for a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. As Daoist Heavenspan sped off, Bai Xiaochun lurched to a halt, aware that giving chase would be difficult.

Most importantly, he now had the lizard! And as soon as his hand touched it, he gasped at the realization that his Undying Live Forever Technique was stirring thirstily.

Apparently, the lizard contained good fortune of a monumental level for the Undying Live Forever Technique!

There was no time for thought or planning. He quickly threw the lizard into his bag of holding, only a moment before Celestial Virūpākṣa, Prince Ur-Demon, and Celestial Deadfall closed in with killing intent burning.

“Have a death wish, Bai Xiaochun?!?!”

“Hand over that sovereign-level fleshly body! You don’t qualify to sully that with your touch, Bai Xiaochun!!”

Even Gu Tianjun, Sima Yunhua, Celestial Aged Spirit and Chen Su approached, eyes flickering with avarice.

“Throw me that clone, King Heavenspan!”

“We have your back now, King Heavenspan!!” Although they seemed to be working in Bai Xiaochun’s interests, and were even intercepting the celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, all of them were thinking of ways to get the lizard from him.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun’s status was a sensitive subject; he wasn’t truly a celestial of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. If any of the other celestials had acquired the lizard, they would have all stood together no matter who had it in hand. But if they had a chance to get it from Bai Xiaochun, they would obviously do so.

In the briefest of moments, Daoist Heavenspan was no longer the target, and Bai Xiaochun was. Although it was somewhat of a predicament, all he had to do was hand over the lizard, and everything would be resolved. Except… the profound thirst of the Undying Live Forever Technique caused his heart to start pounding with anticipation.

“Dammit, I've got to go for broke!” he growled inwardly, his eyes completely bloodshot. He feared death, and didn’t like to take big risks, but there was too much to gain in this situation. If he gave up now, he would regret it forever!

“As long as I have even a scrap of energy left, I won’t give it to them!” Bai Xiaochun hadn’t even considered trying to take the sovereign clone for himself earlier. But now, he realized that if he could buy enough time, he might be able to benefit in unimaginable ways.

Howling, he utilized the Mountain Shaking Bash to achieve a huge burst of speed.

Filled with rage, Celestial Deadfall and Prince Ur-Demon shot forward to block his path. However, as soon as they got close, he unleashed the Living Mountain Incantation and the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation. As he became an enormous giant, he hefted the Greatsword of the North and slashed it out with vicious determination!

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as sword qi descended upon the already-wounded Prince Ur-Demon and Celestial Deadfall. Yet again, blood sprayed out of their mouths as they were flung backward. And yet, Bai Xiaochun was also hit with a backlash, and lurched to a halt.

That brief pause was all that was needed for Celestial Virūpākṣa to close in. Turning, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture, and then waved his finger!

“Waterswamp!”

Rumbling sounds could be heard as water vapor roiled out, and the entire area was turned into a huge swamp!

“Kingdom!!”

A roar could be heard that seemed to echo out from many years in the past. At the same time, an indescribably large beast appeared, with an upper and lower jaw that resembled a crocodile, or perhaps even a dragon. The entire world shook as the beast slammed into Celestial Virūpākṣa.

Virūpākṣa tried to dodge out of the way, but the beast was too big, and moved with indescribable speed.

A huge boom echoed out from the impact, and Bai Xiaochun shot past.

“Listen, Gu Tianjun,” he shouted, “if you guys run interference for me, we can all benefit!” With that, he began to pick up speed.

Gu Tianjun and the other celestials hesitated for a moment. Aware that now was not the time for infighting, they suppressed their thoughts of taking the lizard from Bai Xiaochun, and went all out to block the enemy celestials. Before Virūpākṣa and the others could give chase, Gu Tianjun and his comrades were there to stop them.

Bai Xiaochun was simply too fast. A moment later, he was 30,000 meters away, and kept going until he vanished.

Within moments, he was nowhere to be seen.

At that point, Gu Tianjun and the other celestials from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty backed up. As for Celestial Virūpākṣa and his fellows, they exchanged grim glances, aware that chasing Bai Xiaochun down now would be difficult.

Celestial Virūpākṣa was not ready to give in though. “We might not be able to find Bai Xiaochun,” he said, “but Gu Tianjun and the others probably can. I bet they all agreed to split the lizard amongst themselves. That's why they helped him escape!

“Celestial Ghostmother is on the way. She’s probably close by now. Send her a message to go wait by the exit and intercept Bai Xiaochun! And we should get to the exit as quickly as possible too!”

Prince Ur-Demon and the others agreed, and they quickly flew off.

Reverend Devourer had finally been able to stop his body from melting, and followed along. As for the old woman, during the fighting moments before, her entire body had been reduced to a pile of blood and gore. Although the sealing magic which had been placed upon her had not successfully destroyed her Daoseed, it had been significantly harmed. But at least it still existed. The other celestials took her Daoseed with them, and gave the matter no more thought.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials rushed toward the exit, their faces as grim as could be, and their hearts pulsing with hatred for Bai Xiaochun. They were also quite displeased with Daoist Heavenspan.

“If Daoist Heavenspan had lasted for a bit longer, and maybe put more on the line, then we would have gotten that clone’s body!” Celestial Virūpākṣa looked at the stump of his severed arm, and then at Daoist Heavenspan. Eyes glinting with cold light, he thought, “I’ll make sure he gets what’s coming to him after we get back!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1155 awe-chapter-1156

Bai Xiaochun kept pushing his hand down onto his bag of holding as he sped along. Really, he had no other choice but to do that. Despite the lizard having been sealed and placed in his bag of holding, its seemed to be struggling to get out into the open, forcing Bai Xiaochun to add in cultivation base power to keep the bag closed.

“I need to find somewhere to hole up!” The first thing he thought of was the damaged fan. However, after attempting to make contact, he found that the spiderweb was interfering. Perhaps he could try to forcibly make the teleportation happen, but he was worried something could go wrong, and he might come out on the other end missing an arm or a leg.

“An arm or a leg I could deal with, but what would happen if my head didn’t get teleported through…?” The mere thought of that scene caused him to shiver.

“No. If I want to teleport out of here, I need to find a place where the fighting between the clone and the two emperors weakened the spiderweb enough to establish a solid connection.” He didn’t even pause to think about going to the actual exit. Blurring into motion, he began to search.

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials had no way of easily tracking Bai Xiaochun, but it was different with those from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. They had many options, especially Chen Su. Although he was not powerful in terms of battle prowess, when it came to augury arts, none of the other celestials were his equal.

In fact, it hardly took Chen Su any work to get a general direction.

“There!” he said, his eyes flashing. Gu Tianjun immediately shot into motion, followed by Sima Yunhua and the others. None of them sent messages ahead. After all, they didn’t trust Bai Xiaochun, and were worried that if they notified him ahead of time, he might be prepared, and make it harder for them to get the lizard.

Although the Saint-Emperor had said that everyone would get a reward as long as the clone was acquired, all of them knew that the rewards… would differ in quality!

Gu Tianjun was absolutely set on being the one to come out on top, and had even agreed to concede some of the rewards he would get to Chen Su and the others in order to achieve that goal.

The four of them pushed forward at top speed for about an hour before Chen Su’s eyes began to shine brightly.

“5,000 kilometers up ahead!” he said, pointing. Gu Tianjun’s eyes shone with cold light as he quickly performed an incantation gesture, sending seven beams of sword light streaking off in that very direction.

They moved so quickly that they were almost invisible, piercing through those 5,000 kilometers to appear right on top of Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell as he leaped backward by about 30 meters. Even as he did, seven beams of light slashed through the spot he had just occupied, causing enormous booming sounds to echo out.

If he hadn’t acted any faster, although he probably wouldn’t have been killed, he would definitely have been seriously injured.

“Gu Tianjun!!” he said through gritted teeth. Those seven beams of sword light obviously contained the aura of Gu Tianjun. “You’re obviously trying to rob me!! If you wanted all the credit, you could have messaged me and talked things over. But instead…. you just try to outright rob me!”

Already, Bai Xiaochun was starting to get angry.

Bai Xiaochun was very well aware that the celestials of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty were a sanctimonious lot. However, the possible benefits at hand today were enormous. Although the Saint-Emperor had said that everyone would be rewarded, Bai Xiaochun was under no illusions that he, an outsider, would be treated fairly.

And Gu Tianjun’s actions had just gone to prove that.

“Complete and utter bullying!” Gritting his teeth, he accelerated, heading to a location off in the distance where the spiderweb seemed particularly weak.

Although he couldn’t see Gu Tianjun and the others, he could tell that their divine sense was spreading out toward him.

However, the seven swords were faster than the divine sense, and had already circled back around to attack him again. After dodging them yet again, he continued on toward the weakened portion of the spiderweb. He knew that he would only have one shot at this, and that if he failed, the other celestials would arrive, and he would be forced to hand over the lizard.

Even with the Greatsword of the North, he couldn’t fight all four of them at the same time. Furthermore, they could afford to rely on resurrection as their ultimate backup, whereas if he perished, he had no such option.

“Well since they’re pushing things this far, they can’t blame me for cheating. I didn’t want to do this earlier, but now I can do it with a clean conscience!” Even as the seven beams of sword light closed in, followed closely by Gu Tianjun and the other celestials, he took a deep breath and made contact with the damaged fan!

That single thought caused the air around him to blur and distort. In the blink of an eye, seven swords slashed through the area, followed by streams of divine sense from the celestials, a veritable windstorm of destructive power.

Unfortunately… not a trace of Bai Xiaochun was anywhere to be seen!

After a few breaths of time passed, four beams of light appeared off in the distance. The celestials all had somber expressions on their faces, and as soon as they arrived, they sent their divine sense out as high and low and far as possible, looking for clues.

Gu Tianjun sent his swords slicing through the air in the area, and Chen Su performed incantation gestures to try to get a read on Bai Xiaochun. And yet, to their utter disbelief, Bai Xiaochun… was really nowhere to be seen!

“Impossible!” Gu Tianjun said, his eyes crimson. Based on his connection to his flying swords earlier, he could say with absolute certainty that Bai Xiaochun had been present. But then, a moment later, he was gone.

Furthermore, there were no signs of teleportations having been performed in the area. The other celestials simply couldn’t guess how Bai Xiaochun had possibly escaped. Face grim, Gu Tianjun waved his hand, transforming his seven swords into forty-nine swords that slashed out in a furious tempest, kicking up dust as they cut everything to pieces.

Sima Yunhua and Celestial Aged Spirit did everything they could think of as well, but it did no good. Eventually, the three of them looked over at Chen Su, whose eyes glowed with the light of augury.

They waited, their hearts pounding as they realized that something seemed very strange about Chen Su. His forehead was covered with sweat, and he was even trembling visibly.

Eventually, he opened his eyes and coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. Staggering backward, he weakened visibly, and roughly thirty percent of the hair on his head dissolved into ash. Deep wrinkles spread out on his face.

“Impossible!!” Chen Su murmured, hardly able to deal with the backlash from his failed augury attempt. “Either an archaean is masking his presence, or he’s not in the second immortal domain! Those are the only ways he could completely evade me!!”

The other celestials’ jaws clenched in response to his words. As for Gu Tianjun, he gritted his teeth and said, “He's got to be hiding somewhere. Let’s split up and search. We have to find him!”

With that, he blurred into motion to begin searching.

Sima Yunhua and the others similarly spread out.

As the celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty locked down the exit, and the forces of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty began to search, Bai Xiaochun appeared on the damaged fan as it sailed through the darkness of the void.

After quickly checking to make sure that all his limbs and extremities were with him, he breathed a sigh of relief, and then chuckled with pride.

“Hmmmphh. Think you can track me down here? Keep dreaming!” Flicking his sleeve, he sat down cross-legged, slapped his bag of holding, and brought out the lizard.

This lizard was actually a part of the fleshly body of a sovereign, and although it was virtually dead, it still had a scrap of life left in it. However, it was clearly beyond recovery, and was even starting to turn stiff with death.

“This thing isn't bad at all!” Bai Xiaochun said, licking his lips with the realization that he had acquired something that would drive others mad with envy if they knew he had it.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1156 awe-chapter-1157

As the celestials from both imperial dynasties were in the spiderweb-covered second immortal domain, searching for Bai Xiaochun, he was on the damaged fan, excitedly examining the lizard laying in front of him.

His initial detailed inspection had confirmed that the thing was on its last legs, and was no threat to him. But being the cautious individual that he was, he put quite a few restrictive spells on it anyway, just to be safe. Then he took out the Greatsword of the North and slashed at it a few dozen times.

Although the lizard still wasn’t completely dead, its aura was now so weak that it seemed like little more than a chunk of meat.

Finally, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“It's always good to be extra safe!” As far as he was concerned, his extraordinary caution was a very good thing, and it caused his eyes to shine with pride and anticipation.

“I felt a reaction earlier from my Undying Live Forever Technique, and now there’s nobody around to interrupt me. I wonder if I can perfect the technique even more!?” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he took a deep breath, put his hand on the lizard, and then activated his Undying Live Forever Technique.

It was almost like an immobile horse cart that had been shoved with great force. The technique immediately went to work, causing a gravitational force to spring up that grew stronger with every moment thanks to Bai Xiaochun’s promptings.

It happened suddenly, but he had been waiting for something like this to occur. Instead of keeping only one hand clamped down on the lizard, he reached out and pushed his other hand onto its head.

His hands were like two vortexes, and he, a black hole. As for the lizard, it shivered and opened its eyes wide. It was even possible to hear it wheezing a bit.

He wasn’t sure exactly what he was absorbing from it, although he knew it wasn’t life force. It was something in the thing's blood, something that other celestials would not easily be able to extract, and even archaeans would have trouble with.

Just as he had realized back in Murknine County, his Undying Live Forever Technique and this lizard had similar origins. Therefore, the process went very smoothly.

Only a moment had passed, and yet the lizard was losing its color, turning darker, as if it were rotting away.

And yet, it wasn’t rotting. It was more like a mortal who, despite not being sick, was suddenly listless, as though some unknowable property within them was slowly vanishing.

Bai Xiaochun could sense what was happening, and it caused his eyes to go wide. Although he didn’t know exactly what his Undying Live Forever Technique was absorbing, he could tell that the technique was transforming!!

Rumbling sounds filled him as his blood, flesh, bones, energy passageways, and everything else that made him up began to change!!

Previously, it had seemed an impossibility to do anything with the technique after he had fully mastered it. But right now, his fleshly body power was actually rising!

As the rumbling filled him, he shivered, feeling himself growing stronger, both in his fleshly body, and in his divine abilities and magical techniques.

However, what was being affected was specifically the Undying Codex aspect. The Live Forever Codex remained the same.

Even still, he was already going wild with joy. His fleshly body hadn’t improved for a long time, and as for his Time Immemorial Codex, it was only useful for the cultivation base.

Right now, his fleshly body was improving rapidly. In fact, Bai Xiaochun could also tell that the most precious aspect of the Undying Codex, his powers of regeneration… were also transforming, becoming faster and stronger!

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more excited. For some reason, he now felt as if his fleshly body and powers of regeneration had no limit. The contentment and pleasure he felt from this transformation process was something he had never before experienced with regards to his Undying Live Forever Technique.

Much of his cultivation of the technique had been bitter and painful. The hunger and lack of life force he had dealt with had been uncomfortable, to say the least.

One reason why few people had ever cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique to completion was a lack of life force, and the other was the sheer pain involved.

But now, things were different. It was as if… this was the true Undying Live Forever Technique, and what Bai Xiaochun had cultivated was an imitation!

As he reveled in the sensation, his fleshly body and powers of regeneration improved by twenty percent, thirty percent, forty percent….

He almost felt like his fleshly body progress might surpass his cultivation base and reach the Archaean Realm first!

However, it was at this point that he realized that whatever substance he was absorbing from the lizard was rapidly diminishing, leaving the lizard almost completely emptied out.

“Huh?” He looked over and confirmed that the lizard had lost all of its vitality, and the flame of its life force was going completely dark. Within moments, it would definitely be completely dead.

As the process continued, it went completely stiff and unmoving. All of that unknown substance was now gone from within it.

Stunned, Bai Xiaochun probed his Undying Live Forever Technique, and confirmed that it had improved by about forty or fifty percent. Although it was still exciting, he felt a bit disappointed.

“Uh… did absorbing that stuff kill it? Or did it stop because it died?” After a long moment passed, he sighed.

“I can’t believe that lizard claimed to be the clone of a sovereign. What a complete wimp!” Muttering to himself, he checked his fleshly body, whereupon his mood improved a bit.

“Ah, whatever, I guess I absorbed as much as I could. As of now, I'm the strongest person in the mid Celestial Realm even without the Greatsword of the North!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“There’s no way this lizard, which came from the fleshly body of a sovereign, could possibly be so useless. There must be other valuable aspects to it.” Chuckling, he looked back down at the thing, stroking his chin for a bit before pulling out the Greatsword of the North. Backing it with all of his fleshly body power and cultivation base, he slashed it down toward one of the lizard’s legs.

It was dead, and stiff as a board, but Bai Xiaochun had just benefited from a massive powerup. Booms rang out, and although it took some work, a few dozen slashes to be specific, he managed to cut the leg off.

There was no blood. Apparently, the lizard really had become nothing more than a dried-up corpse.

Grabbing the leg, he studied it closely for quite some time. However, he couldn’t find anything special about it. Whether it was divine sense, or the naked eye, it seemed ordinary in every aspect. Not even using medicine concocting techniques on it did anything.

He also went so far as to try a spirit enhancement, only to have no results.

In the end, he was really starting to get frustrated.

“There’s no way! Don’t tell me that stuff I absorbed was what the Saint-Emperor and Vile-Emperor were hoping would contain the secret to getting to the Sovereign Realm?” He scratched his head, thinking that, if the lizard were really of this little value, then everything that had gone on was really a waste.

“I took such a big risk....” he thought. With that, he hacked the lizard up into a collection of smaller parts, which he then inspected even more closely, hoping to find something like an internal core.

However, in the end, he found nothing. Looking down at the pile of body parts, he frowned.

“What kind of practical joke is this?!” Sighing, he collected up the pieces of the broken corpse and tried to figure out how he would explain it all after returning to the second immortal domain. However, it was at that point that something like a stiff wind rose up on the damaged fan.

As that happened, the spirit automaton awoke.

“Heavens! What is that? The fleshly body of a sovereign?!?! I recognize that aura. It’s him! It’s definitely him!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1157 awe-chapter-1158

There was even a bit of terror within the automaton’s voice....

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and he shivered.

“Dammit, I got too excited and wasn’t paying attention to the time. The spirit automaton is awake! He merged into that big tree last time... if he merges into this lizard, I’m dead!!” Even as he gasped in shock, he could sense the spirit automaton’s divine sense rumbling toward him like ocean water.

There was no time for planning or consideration. Although he had already chopped the lizard’s corpse up limb from limb, he shouted at the top of his lungs, grabbed the Greatsword of the North, and vigorously began trying to chop it up into smaller pieces.

As the spirit automaton's divine sense closed in, booms rang out as Bai Xiaochun turned the seven or eight pieces into something more like thirteen or fourteen....

“No!!” the spirit automaton cried anxiously, but he wasn’t quick enough.

Just as Bai Xiaochun had suspected, the first thing the spirit automaton did was try to merge into the chunks of the lizard!

The more than one dozen pieces of the lizard suddenly formed back together, but only for a moment before collapsing again.

“Dammit, dammit! That’s from a sovereign’s fleshly body. Are you an idiot, Bai?!?!?” Enraged, the spirit automaton tried again….

Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, but when he realized that the spirit automaton was failing over and over again, he breathed a sigh of relief. The lizard had simply been chopped up into too many parts to be put back together. Feeling very pleased with himself, he laughed heartily.

“What the hell makes you think you can fight with Lord Bai, you little spirit automaton!? Lord Bai can see through your simplistic thoughts with a single glance!” Seeing the chunks of flesh trying to form together again, he stepped forward and kicked them apart.

Grabbing a few chunks and throwing them into his bag of holding, he stood there and looked down at the remaining bits.

Clearing his throat, he said, “Alright, keep going.”

“Bai Xiaochun!!” the spirit automaton howled, gritting his teeth and making another attempt.

Glaring, Bai Xiaochun kicked the pieces apart again, and put a few more in his bag of holding….

“Dammit, this is outrageous!” the spirit automaton raged. “Go challenge the next level, Bai! I won’t interfere, I promise! Get the hell away!!”

Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun kicked at the pieces again and took a couple more. At this point, the spirit automaton felt like he was about to collapse.

“Let’s talk this over, Bai Xiaochun….” the spirit automaton wailed, seemingly on the verge of going mad. At the same time, he tried yet again to merge with the corpse. The fleshly body of a sovereign was simply too important, otherwise he would rather have died than negotiate with Bai Xiaochun.

But before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun chuckled darkly and kicked the pieces again….

The process repeated itself several times until there were only two chunks of flesh left….

Yet again, the spirit automaton entered them and tried to combine them into one, whereupon Bai Xiaochun snorted and stepped forward.

“Are you done yet, Bai Xiaochun?” the automaton wailed. “Let’s talk this over a bit, alright? Don’t be like this. Listen to me, I--”

Yet again Bai Xiaochun kicked the pieces apart, then took one and put it into his bag of holding.

“Alright, keep going, little automaton!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been more pleased with himself. Considering how much grief the spirit automaton had given him in all the levels in the past, this was definitely good revenge.

He felt even better when he saw the spirit automaton struggling with the final chunk.

“Heaven damn you, Bai Xiaochun!!” the spirit automaton howled. When he saw that Bai Xiaochun was about to take the final piece, he simply couldn’t take it.

“Give me this one piece! If you do, I’ll tell you what’s so special about it!!” The spirit automaton would obviously not say such a thing unless it were absolutely necessary.

To have something like this dangled right in front of him, only to be unable to take it, made it feel like his heart was being crushed.

In response to the spirit automaton’s words, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered. However, he didn’t hold back from delivering a vicious kick. Snorting coldly, he said, “Who do you think you’re fooling? That sovereign-level fleshly body was good stuff! I already absorbed all of it!”

Then he delivered another kick, backing it with his mid Celestial Realm cultivation base, and all of the fleshly body power he could muster. It slammed into the chunk of flesh like an entire mountain, instantly shoving the spirit automaton out of it.

When the spirit automaton saw Bai Xiaochun then grab the chunk of flesh and prepare to throw it into his bag of holding, he nearly started weeping. Forcing down his revulsion, he quickly said, “All you got was the quintessence of its flesh and blood! I’m talking about the cultivation base aura hidden within it!!

“Sovereigns have incredible fleshly bodies and cultivation bases! That’s the only way they can reach that incredible level! Listen to me. You must practice some special technique that allowed you to absorb its fleshly body quintessence. But the aura hidden inside it is something that, in all existence, only I can extract perfectly!

“Give me half of the fleshly body, and I… I can give you half of the aura!” Worried that he would speak too slowly, he blurted everything out as quickly as possible.

Even still, Bai Xiaochun looked suspicious. A few breaths of time passed, after which he sighed.

“Forget it. I don’t trust you. Plus, half of it is too much!” Shaking his head, he put away the final chunk of flesh, turned, and prepared to leave.

The spirit automaton truly felt like he was going mad. He had told him the truth, and yet hadn't been believed. It seemed no amount of explanations would change that. Seeing that Bai Xiaochun was starting to fade away, and would be gone, the spirit automaton shouted, “Give me thirty percent! Thirty percent is enough….

“Dammit, just three pieces! Three pieces is all I need!!

“A single piece! Just give me one….”

The spirit automaton was sinking into the depths of despair. However, it was at this point that Bai Xiaochun suddenly faded back into clarity. Looking torn, he turned to the spirit automaton and asked, “A single piece will do?”

“Yes!!” the spirit automaton replied through gritted teeth, although he tried to make it seem like he was happy with that.

Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and cleared his throat. The truth was he had been tempted from the beginning to accept, but had felt that the spirit automaton’s demands were a bit excessive. As it turned out, the spirit automaton seemed very clever most of the time, but in critical moments, was actually quite foolish….

Muttering to himself, he pulled out the chunk of flesh and threw it over.

“First extract all of the sovereign aura from this part…. Wait, no, just seventy percent will be fine!” After all, he still had to return and give the remains of the lizard over to the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor. If he took too much from it, it could lead to some major problems later.

To safeguard against the spirit automaton doing something underhanded, he gave him a very small chunk. That way, if he succeeded, all would be well, and he could go on to another piece.

The spirit automaton was cursing inwardly, but had no other options at his disposal. To him, a single chunk of a sovereign’s flesh and blood was an unprecedented level of good fortune. Brightening a bit, he used a secret magic to start extracting the aura from the flesh.

It was impossible to see the sovereign aura, but as it spread out, it caused terrifying weight to press down in all directions.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1158 awe-chapter-1159

As soon as Bai Xiaochun sensed the incredible pressure, he shivered, and began to pant. His cultivation base began to rotate of its own accord, almost as if he had just encountered some deadly situation.

Thankfully, he had already absorbed the quintessence of the sovereign’s flesh and blood, otherwise the pressure wouldn’t have caused his cultivation base to rotate, but rather, would have suppressed it all the way to the limit.

The truth was that there hadn’t even been a bit of goodwill in the spirit automaton’s offer. He had hoped to test out how much of the flesh and blood quintessence Bai Xiaochun had absorbed, and if he ended up being suppressed, he could have pressed an attack.

When he saw that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was merely rotating rapidly, he sighed and dismissed the idea. Then, he watched helplessly as Bai Xiaochun prepared to absorb seventy percent of the cultivation base aura.

The aura wasn’t corporeal, but did take the shape of a black crystal, which Bai Xiaochun quickly grabbed out of the air.

As soon as he touched it, his aura began to fluctuate wildly, and his cultivation base began to rotate with unprecedented speed. All of a sudden, he felt himself capable of thinking more clearly than ever, and capable of understanding things that had long been difficult for him to grasp.

“This stuff is awesome!” he exclaimed in delight.

The spirit automaton remained off to the side, torn about the whole situation. He obviously wanted to stop what was happening, but the chunk of flesh Bai Xiaochun had given him was too small. And he was worried that if he got greedy, Bai Xiaochun would change the deal and not give him what he had promised.

The spirit automaton briefly considered using the sovereign aura he had command over to try to threaten or extort Bai Xiaochun, but quickly abandoned the idea. Considering how much he knew of Bai Xiaochun’s shameless and crafty nature, it seemed likely it would only be asking for trouble.

“Dammit! I’ll just cooperate this once. Sooner or later, I’ll get my chance to destroy him!” Gnashing his teeth, he watched as Bai Xiaochun delightedly looked at the crystal and the sovereign’s flesh.

Around the time the spirit automaton was starting to get impatient, Bai Xiaochun reluctantly put the crystal and the chunk of flesh away, then pulled out another small chunk and tossed it over.

And thus, keeping careful control over the size of the chunks of flesh, he had the spirit automaton extract the aura from almost the entire corpse. In the end, he didn’t go back on his word. He took the largest piece he had, which was about twice as big as the other pieces he had produced during the process, and tossed it to the spirit automaton.

“Don’t you dare say that Lord Bai is untrustworthy. I'm the most trustworthy person you know!”

The spirit automaton was cursing inwardly, but didn’t let it show. He simply grabbed the chunk of flesh.

He didn’t extract the aura of this one like he had with the other pieces. Instead, he tried to fuse with it. This time, because Bai Xiaochun didn’t interfere with the process, he succeeded in about the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. At that point, the chunk of flesh vanished, and the spirit automaton was no longer visible.

Now he had a physical body!

It was a strange body, being only a lump of skin the size of a watermelon, with some crude facial features. Overall, he looked quite strange.

“So that’s what you look like!” Bai Xiaochun said, looking at him closely.

“What are you lookin’ at!?” the lump of skin said, glaring at him.

“What, I'm not allowed to look or something?” Bai Xiaochun said, glaring back, fully confident in his skill in staring at people. “Man, so ugly!”

Feeling provoked, the spirit automaton stared back for a long moment. However, as the pressure built, and he felt more and more uncomfortable, he mumbled some excuses and then hopped over toward the nearest fan rib and vanished.

“Hmph! Thinks he can win a staring contest with me?! Yeah right!” Feeling quite proud of himself, he rubbed his bag of holding, marveling at how much he had profited. Although he hadn’t experienced a massive windfall, the sovereign aura he did gain was enough to be happy about.

“I wonder what I’ll be able to do with it...?” he thought, licking his lips. Glancing around to make sure he was alone, he pulled out one of the black crystals and sent some divine sense into it.

Rumbling sounds filled his mind as both his cultivation base and thinking ability seemed to grow stronger. He felt unprecedentedly focused, with more control over his cultivation base and energy passageways than he had ever experienced.

It was as if he could understand anything he set his mind to, and control everything about himself.

“The third level of the Time Immemorial Codex!” His eyes shone with bright light as he realized that he could try to use the sovereign aura to make progress with the third level of the Time Immemorial Codex.

One black crystal after another vanished. After absorbing about thirty percent of the total amount of the sovereign aura he had, he opened his eyes.

He wasn’t sure how much time had passed, but he was sure of one thing; the sovereign aura was incredibly useful. Although he hadn’t achieved the progress he wanted with his Time Immemorial Codex, he was more than halfway there.

And it wasn’t that he couldn't finish the work if he didn’t want to. Rather, he had come to realize that there was something very unique about his Time Immemorial Codex. When he finished, it would become part of him, as if it were branded inside of him. He wouldn’t even need to cultivate it at that point; it would automatically propagate itself.

However, he needed to be at the late Celestial Realm for it to work. Otherwise, his body wouldn’t be able to sustain the force.

“I need to stop and wait until I reach the late Celestial Realm….” At this point, his eyes shone with anticipation; he was now completely and utterly confident that he would be able to finish the third level of the Time Immemorial Codex when the time was right.

“This sovereign aura is like a precious treasure!” He looked down at the remaining black crystals, of which there were over a dozen. As of now, he was sure that these items were what the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor wanted.

“What a pity that I have to leave thirty percent of the sovereign’s flesh and blood behind…. There must be seven or eight crystals’ worth of aura in there.” Although it seemed like a bit of a waste, he knew that he couldn’t do anything more. If he took the rest of the aura, he wouldn’t be able to hand anything over to the Saint-Emperor. What he planned to hand over was already missing seventy percent of its original aura, but Bai Xiaochun was the only one to have got his hands on the lizard, and therefore, no one but he knew exactly how much was there to begin with.

Neither of the two emperors would have any idea, and in fact, it would take a lot of hard work and preparation on their part to even extract the aura that was left.

“Ah, whatever.” Forgetting any thoughts of taking the remaining thirty percent, he decided that he was done for now. Eyes flashing with determination, he began to fade away as he left the damaged fan.

When he reappeared, he was back in the second immortal domain!

Thirteen days had passed since he went missing!!

During that time, the celestials from both imperial dynasties had been going crazy searching the area covered by the spiderweb. Even when they encountered certain dangerous situations, they had no choice but to keep up the search.

They had looked high and low, but not found a single clue about where Bai Xiaochun was. The two emperors had continued to grow anxious, but had prevented each other from entering. The only thing they were sure about was that none of the celestials under their command had been killed.

However, they had no clue about what else was going on.

As the mad search continued, Bai Xiaochun materialized in the exact same spot he had disappeared from. As soon as he appeared, he backed up cautiously, and sent divine sense out to check his surroundings.

Unfortunately, it didn’t matter how cautious he was; it was in almost the exact same instant that he appeared that an excited voice rang out.

“So, you came back here, Bai Xiaochun!” Along with the voice came the projection of an enormous hand, which shot toward him.

That hand belonged to none other than Celestial Aged Spirit!

Unlike the other celestials, Celestial Aged Spirit had had dealings with Bai Xiaochun. After Gu Tianjun and the others went out to search, Celestial Aged Spirit thought about the situation more, and came to the conclusion that something strange was going on. As such, he had decided to wait in the spot that Bai Xiaochun had disappeared from, to keep watch.

On many occasions during the past thirteen days, he had questioned that decision, but now that he saw Bai Xiaochun materializing in front of his very eyes, he went wild with joy. He also attacked immediately. However, he was the cautious type, and knew that Bai Xiaochun was in the mid Celestial Realm, and possessed his Greatsword of the North, which would make it difficult to defeat him quickly. Therefore, he also pulled out a transmission jade slip to send a message to his fellows.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he quickly said, “Fellow Daoist Aged Spirit! Shhh….”

Then, he pulled out a chunk of the sovereign’s flesh and tossed it over to him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1159 awe-chapter-1160

Bai Xiaochun took action so quickly that Celestial Aged Spirit didn’t have time to send his message. Before he could do anything, he saw a head-sized chunk of flesh sailing toward him through the air.

Stunned, he sent some divine sense out, and when he realized that it was a chunk of sovereign-level flesh, his heart began to race. Abandoning his idea of sending any messages, he grabbed the flesh and looked it over. Doing his best to suppress his excitement, he put it away and then looked over at Bai Xiaochun, a strange expression on his face.

“I seem to remember you getting your hands on the entire lizard….” he said in an odd tone. Considering the state of the chunk of flesh he had been given, he could guess at some of the punishment Bai Xiaochun had inflicted on the lizard….

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun said, “You really have sharp eyes, Aged Spirit old pal. Here, take three more pieces.”

With that, he took out three more pieces and tossed them over.

Stunned, Celestial Aged Spirit quickly caught the three pieces and looked them over too. Based on his calculations, together with the first piece, they made up something like twenty to thirty percent of the entire lizard.

“Look, we’re all on the same team,” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding very grand and righteous. “What’s the point in bickering with each other. Am I right? From what I remember, the Saint-Emperor said we just had to find the thing, and we would all be rewarded.

“This is all just a misunderstanding. You guys never gave me a chance to explain the situation. Right now, all of us Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials can get our hands on some good fortune.

“It’s not a meritorious service performed by me alone, and therefore, I absolutely have to share the rewards. I'm not the greedy type, you know. Just now, Aged Spirit old pal, I gave you an entire leg of that big lizard!” Celestial Aged Spirit cleared his throat. Based on what he could tell, the flesh he had really did seem to be from a leg. Considering that, it really was a situation of sharing in the meritorious service.

Seeing the excited look in Aged Spirit’s eyes, Bai Xiaochun cautioned, “And so, we really can’t let the Saint-Emperor down. You take good care of that flesh. That’s the most important thing!

“Actually, I've thought everything through already. That was a really bad misunderstanding before, so I think the best thing would be to call Gu Tianjun and the other celestials over. I’ll share some of the flesh with all of them, and then we can all get out of this place together. In the end, we’ll all share equally in performing our meritorious service!” Aged Spirit looked at Bai Xiaochun and could already tell what he was thinking.

And it was true that the situation had dragged on for too long. Even Aged Spirit had reached the limits of his patience. Nodding, he proceeded to send messages via jade slip to Gu Tianjun and the others.

Both Bai Xiaochun and Celestial Aged Spirit knew that standing around waiting was too dangerous, so they found a village that hadn’t been reduced to dust and hid inside one of the buildings there.

Chen Su was the first to arrive. After looking around carefully, he followed the trail left by Celestial Aged Spirit’s divine sense into the village. Before long, he was there in the room with Bai Xiaochun.

Before he could say anything, Bai Xiaochun grandiosely handed over a chunk of one of the lizard’s other legs.

“Chen, old pal, here. Take this! I was a big dunce earlier. Although, I have to point out that you guys were a bit impulsive. After all, I would never take all the credit for myself in a venture like this!”

Chen Su reacted much the way Celestial Aged Spirit had, and a strange expression appeared on his face. He had already been informed of the general situation before coming, but even still, felt it to be odd.

“And here are three more pieces, old pal!” Smiling sincerely, he handed over three more chunks. Of course, Chen Su gasped in much the same way Celestial Aged Spirit had earlier.

He looked at Bai Xiaochun, then at the mysterious chunks of flesh. Because much of the sovereign aura had already been extracted by the spirit automaton, they were much weaker than before, and yet, no one knew that. Chen Su looked at the pieces and, just as Bai Xiaochun had already determined, realized that they were enough for him.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that both Chen Su and Aged Spirit had been pacified, he breathed an inward sigh of relief. At the same time, he was very pleased that his strategy was working.

“Sima Yunhua shouldn’t be a problem,” he thought. “But I bet Gu Tianjun isn't going to be easy to please. Although I’ve already figure out the best way to divide the chunks of flesh up into five portions….” Eyes glittering, he began to chat with Chen Su and Aged Spirit.

None of them really had any bad blood between them, and they were all celestials. Furthermore, both Chen Su and Aged Spirit were naturally pleased that Bai Xiaochun had taken the initiative to split things up with them. Before long, they were having a truly entertaining conversation. Slowly but surely, their opinions of Bai Xiaochun were changing.

Before long, whistling sounds could be heard off in the distance, and the three turned to find Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua approaching.

As soon as Gu Tianjun saw Bai Xiaochun, killing intent flared in his eyes, and he prepared to attack. But before he could, Bai Xiaochun took out his trump card, tossing a huge pile of sovereign flesh over to him.

Even the powerful Gu Tianjun was visibly moved by the sight of all that flesh, and by the intense aura emanating off of it. Waving his sleeve, he caught the chunks and put them into his bag of holding.

“There’s no way you’re not moved!” Bai Xiaochun thought, feeling very pleased with himself. He had made some special preparations with the chunks of flesh he had given to Gu Tianjun, ensuring that their sovereign aura was particularly strong. And the effect was even greater when they were lumped together.

Backing up a few steps, he tossed some chunks of flesh to Sima Yunhua and then said, “Listen everyone, the most important thing now is that we get out of here safely! Now that I've split that lizard up into five parts, we're all in this together!”

As his voice echoed back and forth in the room, Sima Yunhua took the chunks of flesh and examined them closely, eyes glittering.

As for Gu Tianjun, his brows were slightly furrowed. Although he obviously coveted the full rewards, now that everyone had an equal share of the flesh of the lizard, he obviously couldn’t demand them for himself.

And what Bai Xiaochun had just said made sense. The most important thing wasn’t getting a larger reward, it was making sure that the Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials didn’t rob them.

If Gu Tianjun obstinately tried to pick a fight with Bai Xiaochun now, it was likely that the other three celestials would interfere. And at this point, infighting could be detrimental to them all.

Upon realizing all of these things, Gu Tianjun’s eyes narrowed, and he looked at Bai Xiaochun for a long moment. He had to admit that Bai Xiaochun’s methods were very effective.

Finally, he snorted coldly and stepped back, making it clear that he was backing down. At that point, Aged Spirit, Chen Su and Sima Yunhua all breathed sighs of relief. Just as Gu

Tianjun had suspected, if he had chosen to press the issue, the three of them would have opposed him.

At this point, a short conversation occurred.

“From what I understand, all of the people from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty are split up as they search for Fellow Daoist Bai. That means we need to stick together. Let’s get to the exit as quickly as possible, and not stop along the way!”

“That’s right. Let’s catch them off guard, and get out of here before they can regroup!”

“There’s no time to lose!”

Off to the side, Gu Tianjun nodded. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was the least concerned of all, and quickly agreed.

After planning things out, the five of them drew upon the full power of their cultivation bases to start moving as quickly as possible. Rumbling sounds echoed out as they pierced through the air toward the exit!

Making such a visible break for the exit was obviously going to attract attention. But they didn’t care. They didn’t even bother to hide the fluctuations caused by their passage.

As they moved along, it became apparent who among them was moving faster than the others. Gu Tianjun was in the lead, followed by Celestial Aged Spirit and Bai Xiaochun, with Chen Su and Sima Yunhua taking up the rear.

As they neared the exit, they saw three streaks of light moving in their direction.

They were none other than Prince Ur-Demon, Reverend Devourer and… Gongsun Wan’er!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1160 awe-chapter-1161

The three Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials hadn’t anticipated encountering such a large group. They had been lying in wait near the exit, and when they detected strange fluctuations in the distance, had come to investigate.

To their shock, they saw Bai Xiaochun and all of the other celestials from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. If Virūpākṣa had been there, he might have been able to block their path with force. But Prince Ur-Demon’s cultivation base wasn’t high enough, prompting a gasp on his part.

Reverend Devourer’s eyes went wide, and he even considered just backing down. However, he knew that since Bai Xiaochun was here, along with his allies, if they got through while he himself remained completely uninjured, it would arouse the anger of his fellow celestials, as well as the rage of the Vile-Emperor.

“They have the item His Majesty the Vile-Emperor desires!” he shouted. “Don’t let them through!” By stating everything openly, and also mentioning the Vile-Emperor, he left no wiggle-room for the others. Prince Ur-Demon cursed inwardly, but knew that he had no options. After sending messages to Virūpākṣa and the others, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base.

Gongsun Wan’er sighed. She had no desire to fight with Bai Xiaochun, but they were both on opposing sides at the moment, so she could only power up her cultivation base and join Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon to try to block the paths of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials.

“Get out of the way!!” Gu Tianjun bellowed, performing an incantation gesture that sent seven swords screaming out in front of him. As they whistled through the air, they transformed into a huge greatsword that slashed toward the three Vile-Emperor Dynasty celestials. Sima Yunhua, Celestial Aged Spirit and Chen Su all knew that time was of the essence, and therefore, resorted to trump cards.

Rumbling booms resounded in all heaven and earth as the two sides clashed. Blood sprayed out of Reverend Devourer’s mouth as he was flung backward, seriously injured. From the way that blood continued to ooze out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and from how seemed to be tottering on the verge of collapse, it was obvious to anyone that he had done everything he could to hold his own. Unfortunately, he alone was not powerful enough.

Prince Ur-Demon actually wasn’t hurt very badly. Reverend Devourer had intentionally leapt in the way of most of the divine abilities, and if Prince Ur-Demon couldn’t see through the man’s plan, then he didn't deserve to have lived as long as he had.

“Wily old fox!” Obviously, Reverend Devourer hoped that by coming out of the fight injured, he would avoid punishment by the Vile-Emperor. Prince Ur-Demon had considered doing the same thing, but unfortunately, his cultivation base was lower than Reverend Devourer’s, making it impossible.

Although he was coughing up some blood, it wasn’t nearly as dramatic as what was happening with Reverend Devourer. Therefore, he also let out a scream and then slapped himself on the chest.

A muffled boom could be heard as his chest caved in and he tumbled backward. Even Reverend Devourer was impressed.

“What a wily old fox!” Reverend Devourer thought, snorting coldly and trying to look as injured as possible.

Gongsun Wan’er was also coughing up blood, but before anything serious could happen to her, Bai Xiaochun glanced over with a glare and shouted, “I’ll take your life this day, Ghostmother!”

Shifting directions, he shot toward her. Meanwhile, Gu Tianjun and the other celestials continued onward.

Even as Gongsun Wan’er looked on in shock, Bai Xiaochun shot toward her and waved his sleeve, causing black smoke to spread out in all directions. Taking advantage of the cover provided by the smoke, he then took out a chunk of the sovereign flesh and tossed it over to her.

Eyes widening, she caught the chunk of flesh and put it away. At this point, Bai Xiaochun screamed and threw himself out of the black smoke.

“The fight between us isn’t over yet, Ghostmother…!” he shouted, racing to catch up with Gu Tianjun and the others.

Because Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon were injured, they didn’t notice anything odd about the encounter. But Gu Tianjun and the other Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials could guess what had just occurred.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun caught up, he realized that Sima Yunhua and Celestial Aged Spirit were looking at him strangely. As for Gu Tianjun and Chen Su, although they weren’t looking at him, it wasn’t possible for them to cover up the awkward expressions that had appeared on their faces.

Blinking a few times, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and said, “I’m a bit smitten, so I gave her a chunk of sovereign flesh.”

The other celestials were immediately taken aback by his openness and honesty.

“You… *Damn!!”* Celestial Aged Spirit said, chuckling. For some reason, he only continued to find this Bai Xiaochun more and more amusing, and realized that his previous impression of him had been formed when they were rivals, and wasn’t really accurate.

Chen Su was smiling and shaking his head, and even Gu Tianjun and Sima Yunhua seemed to be changing their opinion of Bai Xiaochun.

Clearing his throat, Sima Yunhua patted his bag of holding with its chunk of sovereign flesh and said, “You know, Celestial Ghostmother has never had a Daoist partner…. Well, I hope it works out for you, Celestial Bai!”

“You’re looking at it the wrong way,” Bai Xiaochun said, a proud look on his face. Despite the fact that he was flying through the air at top speed, he still managed to flick his sleeve. “You see, I'm really good at picking up girls. So don’t hope that it works out for *me*, Fellow Daoist, hope that it works out for *her*. After all, I’m the outstanding, attractive one. Yep. Sometimes I actually fall in love with myself.”

At this point, the other celestials fell into silence, effectively ending the conversation.

None of them were really sure how to talk to Bai Xiaochun.

When Bai Xiaochun saw how speechless they were, he got a bit more excited, and went on. “You don’t believe me? Well, just wait until we’re out of this place. Then I’ll show you all the love letters I got back in the lands of Heavenspan. You know how many I have in my collection? Too many! Probably more than a hundred thousand!”

The rest of the way, he continued to recount his experiences with love. Eventually, not even Gu Tianjun was sure whether to laugh or cry, and was slowly beginning to warm up to him.

Bai Xiaochun bragged his way until they were closing in on the exit. However, that was when a howl of rage could be heard behind them as Celestial Virūpākṣa and the other celestials put everything on the line to try to catch up to them. However, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty celestials were well prepared, and produced medicinal pills that were perfect for the occasion. Aged Spirit even tossed one over to Bai Xiaochun.

“Take this Acceleration Pill,” he said, “For three breaths of time, you’ll be able to move many times faster than normal. It’s an expensive pill, but at the moment, that doesn’t matter!” With that, he popped one of the pills into his mouth, as did the other celestials. Of course, considering Bai Xiaochun’s understanding of medicinal pills, it only took a glance for him to confirm that it wasn’t poisonous. Eyes glittering, he accepted it and popped it into his mouth.

However, Celestial Aged Spirit didn’t realize that, and to him, it seemed more like a reflection of how much Bai Xiaochun trusted him.

It left him feeling deeply moved, although he didn’t say anything. Nodding at Bai Xiaochun, he began to accelerate under the effects of the pill.

As for Bai Xiaochun, as soon as the pill dissolved in his mouth, he felt a potent energy building up in him, something hot and explosive. In the blink of an eye, he was moving at incredible speed!

Five beams of light shot through the air toward the exit, on the other side of which sat the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor, their eyes glittering brightly.

Of course, the Saint-Emperor’s eyes glittered with delight, and the Vile-Emperor’s glittered with something far different. When Virūpākṣa saw that look in the Vile-Emperor’s eyes, he suddenly pulled out a jade slip and crushed it!

The crushing of the jade slip stimulated his Daoseed, even destroying a fraction of it, all to give him an incredible burst of speed.

Everything around him distorted, almost as if he were manipulating both space and time. Before Bai Xiaochun and his companions could make it through the exit, Virūpākṣa was closing in on them, and reaching out to grab Sima Yunhua!

Of course, he really wanted to grab Bai Xiaochun, but Sima Yunhua was in the way. And Celestial Virūpākṣa knew that if he made a move on the group as a whole, they would all turn to fight him.

Therefore, he targeted a single person. As far as he was concerned, the chances of the other four turning to help that single person were virtually none.

Except… Bai Xiaochun was not the type of person who did things the way Virūpākṣa would expect. Everyone else was concerned about the sovereign-level flesh, but Bai Xiaochun was more concerned about the potential of Sima Yunhua owing him a favor….

When Sima Yunhua saw himself being trapped by Virūpākṣa’s divine ability, his face went dark, and he began to curse in despair. He was convinced that he was done for; not only would he lose any possible rewards, but he would probably end up as a captive of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

Enraged, he shouted, “Virūpākṣa, you--”

But before he could say anything else, another shout of rage drowned him out.

“Virūpākṣa! How dare you mess with my good friend!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1161 awe-chapter-1162

The shout was so powerful that it shook heaven and earth, startling both Celestial Virūpākṣa and Sima Yunhua, and leaving their ears ringing.

Most bizarre of all was that Sima Yunhua didn’t recognize this voice, and couldn’t help but wonder… who this person was that he was good friends with.

Gu Tianjun, Chen Su and Aged Spirit were also completely taken by surprise, as were the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor, who were just outside of the exit. To all of them, it seemed like a completely ridiculous situation.

Of course, the person who had just shouted out was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

To him, the sovereign flesh wasn’t very important anymore. In contrast, friendships were. That was why he had shared the flesh with the other celestials of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and even with Gongsun Wan’er.

He was actually very pleased with how it seemed to be changing the other celestials’ opinion of him. Right now, Sima Yunhua was in danger. Although he likely wouldn’t die, if Virūpākṣa captured him, Sima Yunhua would likely lose the sovereign flesh that Bai Xiaochun had given him.

Furthermore, it would happen right in front of the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor. Virūpākṣa would shine, and although he would have lost out overall inside the spiderweb, he would at least have performed some meritorious service worthy of a reward.

In contrast, Sima Yunhua would lose not just the sovereign flesh, but also a lot of face too. To celestials, that type of thing was very important.

Bai Xiaochun realized all of that in the briefest of moments. To him, this opportunity was like a little sheep, and he was a big gray wolf… Eyes shining, he snatched at the opportunity as soon as it presented himself. Without hesitation, he produced the Greatsword of the North and slashed it out toward Virūpākṣa.

And of course, he didn’t forget to shout something appropriate as he attacked.

“Run, Sima, old pal! Don’t worry about me, I’ll hold him off!!”

Although his words seemed a bit melodramatic, anyone who was watching could see that he intended to follow through in action. He really was placing himself in danger and going all out in an attempt to help Sima Yunhua.

Sima Yunhua was usually a grim individual, but in this moment, he was uncharacteristically moved, and suddenly experienced feelings that were very foreign to him.

“I won’t leave you behind, Bai, my friend!!” he shouted.

And thus, both Bai Xiaochun and Sima Yunhua drew upon their most powerful trump cards to strike back at Celestial Virūpākṣa.

Booms rang out in all directions, and massive winds swept the area. Although Sima Yunhua was no match for Virūpākṣa in terms of cultivation base, he had a huge amount of experience, and thus, attacked in a very effective manner.

Bai Xiaochun, despite being in the mid Celestial Realm, had a world treasure, which shone with blue light as he viciously attacked Virūpākṣa.

Power that seemed capable of destroying the heavens and extinguishing the earth was unleashed. Sima Yunhua bore the brunt of the attacks, causing his chest to cave in and blood to spray out of his mouth. In the critical moment, Bai Xiaochun defended him with his sword and then grabbed his shoulder.

Then, sonic booms could be heard as the two of them flew backward at high speed.

Sima Yunhua was feeling genuinely moved, and thought back to when he had been working hard to oppose Bai Xiaochun. For the first time, he felt a bit guilty about that. Meanwhile, Virūpākṣa, whose divine abilities had been vanquished by the two of them, was descending into a rage.

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Xiaochun?!?!” he shouted. Then he thought about how his arm was now gone because of Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes turned bloodshot with rage. Slapping himself hard on the chest, he damaged his Daoseed even more to fuel his cultivation base and achieve another burst of speed. Throwing his arm out in front of him, he aimed, not for Sima Yunhua, but Bai Xiaochun!

“Let’s see if anyone will come to save you!!”

However, even as Virūpākṣa prepared to attack, Sima Yunhua gritted his teeth and beat him to the punch. He couldn’t simply abandon Bai Xiaochun after having just been saved by him. Perhaps if the two of them had been alone, he might have considered it, but with so many people watching, that would be too much of a disgrace.

Simultaneously, Celestial Aged Spirit and Chen Su both hesitated for a moment, then turned around. After all, if their inaction caused Bai Xiaochun and Sima Yunhua to be captured, the Saint-Emperor would not be pleased with them at all.

Furthermore, considering how things had developed, it was likely that Sima Yunhua would hold a grudge against them if they didn't help.

Gu Tianjun also hesitated for a moment, then sighed and also turned to help. The three of them all attacked at the same time, which, when combined with the counter attack by Bai Xiaochun and Sima Yunhua, created a massive storm of magical techniques that bore down on Celestial Virūpākṣa!!

"How could this be happening!?!?" Celestial Virūpākṣa said with a gasp. He knew all of the celestials from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and was sure that unless there was some benefit at stake, they wouldn't possibly work together like this. And if they had conflicting interests, they definitely wouldn't do so.

What he was seeing now seemed completely implausible. Unfortunately, even the mighty Virūpākṣa couldn't stand up to the combined attacks of five other celestials. Coughing up blood, he tumbled backward, body on the verge of collapse.

With Virūpākṣa having been taken out of the picture temporarily, Bai Xiaochun grabbed Sima Yunhua and sped toward the exit as quickly as possible. Then, to the shock of the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor, the five of them all emerged into the open, gasping for breath!

At this point, even Gu Tianjun breathed a sigh of relief. As for Sima Yunhua, he seemed relieved, and quickly clasped hands and bowed to Bai Xiaochun. He said nothing, but from the look in his eyes, it was obvious that he would not forget what had just played out!

Bai Xiaochun felt immensely proud, but didn’t let it show on his face. Instead, he lowered his voice and asked all of the other celestials how they were doing, and if they were alright.

As for the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor, one looked livid, and the other surprised. Neither spoke.

Before long, Celestial Virūpākṣa emerged from the exit, clutching at his stomach, his expression as dark as could be. Shortly after came Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon.

And then were Celestial Deadfall, Daoist Heavenspan, and Gongsun Wan’er. Soon, all of the celestials were out in the open, with the exception of the old woman. When Celestial Virūpākṣa produced her Daoseed and handed it over, the Vile-Emperor simply could not cover up the grim expression on his face.

In sharp contrast, the Saint-Emperor gave a hearty belly-laugh.

Looking at his celestials, he said, “Very well. Excellent work, my celestials. And now, please produce the fruits of your labor. As I said before, everyone who participated will be rewarded for their meritorious service!”

Gu Tianjun cleared his throat and stepped forward excitedly. Waving his sleeve, he sent several chunks of sovereign flesh out. At the same time, Chen Su, Celestial Aged Spirit and

Sima Yunhua all did the same. Seeing this, Bai Xiaochun joined them.

Perhaps to intentionally annoy the celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, Gu Tianjun took the lead in assembling all of the pieces…. At that point, Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound, but sadly, there was nothing he could do to stop what was happening.

Before long, a big lizard took shape, causing the Saint-Emperor’s eyes to shine brightly, and killing intent to appear in the Vile-Emperor’s.

However, after putting all of the pieces together… strange expressions appeared on the faces of all present, as they realized that the lizard appeared to be missing half of a leg, along with its tail….

Off to the side, Gongsun Wan’er’s face was bright crimson. A moment passed, then she stepped forward. Then, to the amazement of her compatriots, she pulled half of a leg out of her bag of holding and tossed it out in front of her.

The Vile-Emperor’s expression brightened at that, and he looked over at Gongsun Wan’er and nodded approvingly.

However… even with the missing half of a leg provided by Gongsun Wan’er, the lizard… wasn’t whole.

At that point… the celestials of both dynasties slowly turned to look at Bai Xiaochun… causing the jaws of both the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor to drop.

--

This is the official "Ghostmother/Gongsun Wan'er" image that Er Gen released on his official WeChat. I'll add this to the AWE art gallery when this chapter goes live.

耳根

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1162 awe-chapter-1163

“It’s never good to show off,” Bai Xiaochun thought. “Gu Tianjun and those others went way too far. Why did they have to go and put all the pieces together?!” Feeling a bit guilty, he sighed inwardly.

It was a bit embarrassing to have the celestials from both of the imperial dynasties staring at him in this way. After a moment, he couldn’t help but clear his throat a bit.

“Hey, you’re right! Seems it’s missing the tail!” Suddenly, he smacked his forehead and tried to seem very forgetful. “Ohhhhh. I remember now! My memory isn’t what it used to be! I totally forgot that I have the tail right here.”

He quickly pulled out the tail of the lizard and threw it over.

Blinking a few times, he said, “Hey, stop looking at me like that. I really forgot!”

Gu Tianjun glared at him for a moment longer before looking away, whereas Sima Yunhua, because of the favor just now, could only shake his head and smile wryly. Neither Chen Su nor Aged Spirit could think of anything to say.

The celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty seemed similarly at a loss for words, although their hatred for Bai Xiaochun continued to mount. Only Gongsun Wan’er maintained a purely cold face, although inwardly, she was laughing.

Now that the fighting was over and the competition had come to an end, the Saint-Emperor looked at the lizard, and then at Bai Xiaochun, an enigmatic smile playing out on his face.

“King Heavenspan, why is it that… the tail seems abnormally short?”

In response to his words, the celestials all looked closer at the lizard, and sure enough, the lizard's tail seemed a bit misshapen, almost as if… it were missing a piece.

“This Saint-Emperor’s eyes are viciously sharp!” Bai Xiaochun moaned inwardly. However, he maintained a confused expression on his face and looked over at the lizard. After a moment, he smacked his head again.

“Aiya! Seriously, my memory is getting really bad! Yeah, you’re right. It *is* missing a piece!” With that, he pulled out another chunk of the lizard from his bag of holding and tossed it over. Seeing the Saint-Emperor looking at him thoughtfully, he said in his most sincere voice, “That’s it. This time I really don’t have any more!”

After watching all of this play out, the surrounding celestials felt as though they were meeting Bai Xiaochun for the first time. They were actually quite shaken. His tendency to try to pilfer things for himself left them literally speechless.

And that was especially true when… they realized that the extra chunk he had thrown out didn’t seem to make the tail look whole. Oh so slowly, all of the celestials looked away from the lizard and back to Bai Xiaochun again.

The Saint-Emperor didn’t say a single word. The enigmatic smile remained on his face, and yet, the ill will in his eyes was readily apparent.

“I really don’t have any more!” Bai Xiaochun said. This time, he was telling the truth. He really didn’t have any more chunks of flesh in his bag of holding.

At this point, the Vile-Emperor smiled contemptuously, performed an incantation gesture and pointed out. A ray of black light shot out from his finger, heading directly toward the big lizard.

The ray of light clearly had some fantastic properties; as soon as it sank into the lizard, its flesh began to wriggle and knit back together. Within a few short moments, it looked like it had never been broken apart!

However, now it was more obvious than ever that there was still a piece missing from its tail.

And now… all of the celestials and both of the archaeans were looking at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was now alarmed to the very core, and was wailing inwardly. After all, the final piece that was missing was the one he had given to the spirit automaton. Although he was a bit guilty, he reminded himself that he had put himself in a lot of dangerous situations to get this lizard for the Saint-Emperor.

“It's better to be confident than to try to pull a fast one!” he thought.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he took a deep breath and decisively said, “I ate it! I ate that missing piece! That sovereign flesh and blood is good stuff. I got it, and wanted to do a bit of research. In the end, I failed. So I decided to eat a bit to see what it would do. Sadly, it's completely disgusting, and didn’t do anything at all.”

Inwardly, he was grumbling about how stingy these archaeans were. It was just a tiny chunk, wasn’t it?

When the surrounding celestials heard Bai Xiaochun freely admitting this, their eyes glittered in satisfaction.

After all, for a celestial to pilfer a bit of sovereign flesh that was intended for an archaean wasn’t really a very big deal. If Bai Xiaochun had tried to hide the fact, they might come up with other conclusions about what he had done. But considering how directly he was stating things, not even the Saint-Emperor felt the need to investigate the matter further, and simply glared at Bai Xiaochun.

“I'm surprised he didn’t get killed doing that!” he murmured inwardly. “I can’t believe he dared to eat sovereign flesh!” After that, he ignored Bai Xiaochun and looked over at the Vile-Emperor, with whom he transmitted a short conversation.

The Saint-Emperor held the upper hand, and the Vile-Emperor would be forced to deal with the fact that he had lost. However, the two of them had come to an agreement ahead of time, and therefore, the Vile-Emperor would still get two portions of the flesh and blood. Before leaving, he cast a frosty glance at Bai Xiaochun, then flicked his sleeve and vanished.

Celestial Virūpākṣa and his fellows did the same, secretly hating Bai Xiaochun down to their bones. Only Gongsun Wan’er felt differently, although it was impossible to detect that within her gaze.

The matter of the sovereign clone was now concluded. All of the Saint-Emperor’s celestials, including Bai Xiaochun, received a Celestial Pill for their contributions.

After everyone left, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the fact that the northern prefectures were now empty to bring out all of the people who were inside the Greatsword of the North. Not only would Mistysea Prefecture be restored, but Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the extremely rare circumstances to expand his territory. It only took a few months for him to take over all five of the northern prefectures!

He did it with such speed and ferocity that not even the Vile-Emperor could do anything to stop him. After all, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had experienced the recent death of a celestial, and although it wasn’t a permanently devastating loss, it was still significant.

Furthermore, considering the momentum that Bai Xiaochun had built up, only Virūpākṣa could have been sent to oppose him. None of the other celestials qualified.

Most important of all was the fact that the north of the second immortal domain had been almost completely turned into nothing more than dust. Dead lands like that were of little interest or value to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

The entire thing was a bit annoying to the Saint-Emperor, but considering that he was distracted by the sovereign’s flesh and blood, he wasn’t paying very close attention.

Another factor that played into the overall situation was that Bai Xiaochun now had a much better relationship with Celestial Aged Spirit, who tacitly approved of his actions.

And thus, in only a few months, Bai Xiaochun unified the north to a large extent. Although it was mostly a dusty wasteland now, the citizens of Mistysea Prefecture were already working hard to bring things back to normal.

Bai Xiaochun's name was even more well-known now, and more people came to know how strong he was.

"Did you hear? King Heavenspan manage to steal a precious treasure away from all of the other celestials!"

"The part about the treasure is nothing. There were more than a dozen celestials trying to track him down, but they couldn't find him for a whole ten days!"

"When he showed up again, he played his cards so perfectly that all of the celestials in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty started to like him! Then he led them out, and got Celestial Pills for all of them as a reward!"

"You don't see that every day!"

As word spread through the Eternal Immortal Domains, the people of Heavenspan heard, and were deeply inspired.

Meanwhile, Song Junwan, under the protective care of Bruiser, finally made contact with Patriarch Spirit Stream, Li Qinghou, and those who were with them.

Everything seemed to be progressing wonderfully until, without any warning at all… an imperial decree was sent to Bai Xiaochun from Saint-Emperor City!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1163 awe-chapter-1164

The imperial decree only contained a single sentence!

As King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun is hereby formally appointed as the Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s ambassador in Vile-Emperor City!!

Technically speaking, Bai Xiaochun would still be the king of the north in the second immortal domain, but for all intents and purposes, he would no longer serve in that role. He would be the official ambassador stationed in Vile-Emperor City!

Both imperial dynasties had ambassadors in each other’s capital cities. Usually, they were demigods with long records of service, although occasionally celestials would also serve in that role.

Sima Yunhua was the former ambassador, except that he didn’t actually visit the Vile-Emperor Dynasty very often. Most of his time was spent in Saint-Emperor City.

Unfortunately, Sima Yunhua had been wounded in the fight with Celestial Virūpākṣa, so whether he wanted to or not, his responsibilities were being transferred to Bai Xiaochun!

The truth was that the Saint-Emperor had been planning this for a while. As Mistysea Prefecture rose to prominence, the Saint-Emperor soon came to realize how valuable it was, and therefore, Bai Xiaochun’s presence there became a bit of a headache.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun was special, and therefore, the Saint-Emperor had to be very careful about how he treated him. After all, his ultimate goal was to make sure the Heavenspan Realm cultivators had a good opinion of his own dynasty. He didn’t want to do anything to ruin his reputation.

Transferring Bai Xiaochun to a position in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty was essentially eliminating him without having to do so directly. Even if it was only a temporary arrangement, it would conform with his plans.

Besides, Bai Xiaochun had performed meritorious service, and had also improved his relationship with the other celestials. That not only put the Saint-Emperor on guard, it helped him make his decision!

There was nothing threatening about the imperial decree. It merely mentioned his new position and gave him a deadline to accept the appointment. However, Bai Xiaochun could almost see the Saint-Emperor’s cold, hypocritical eyes when reading it.

“There’s definitely a hidden threat here. If I refuse to comply, he can do all sorts of things to me.” Sighing, he summoned the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King and shared the imperial decree with them.

“This Saint-Emperor is a complete bully!” the Giant Ghost King said angrily. “Xiaochun, you just performed a great service, and now, only a few months later, he treats you like this?”

Bai Xiaochun was already scowling on the verge of tears. He knew that Vile-Emperor City was a dangerous place, not because people would attack him openly, but because of the intrigue and scheming that went on there.

Even worse, during the incident with the sovereign clone, he had offended virtually all of the top experts in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

“I guess as long as I'm extremely careful, it won’t be *that* dangerous!” That was the only way he could comfort himself. After all, the Saint-Emperor’s unspoken threat was obvious. If he refused, then Mistysea Prefecture, which he had just worked so hard to get back into shape, would be targeted by the Saint-Emperor.

The Giant Ghost King could see Bai Xiaochun hesitating. Snorting coldly, he said, “Xiaochun, if you accept the position, do you think the Saint-Emperor will make a move against Mistysea Prefecture!?”

Up to this point, the Grand Heavenmaster hadn’t spoken. He had been examining the imperial decree the whole time. Now, he looked up and said, “Perhaps… this is a good opportunity!”

The Giant Ghost King and Bai Xiaochun both looked over at him, eyes shining with anticipation. Bai Xiaochun knew that the Grand Heavenmaster was a master of plots and schemes. After all, in the thousands of years that he had practiced cultivation, he had turned into the most ultimate of wily old foxes.

“First of all, although it might seem like going to Vile-Emperor City will put you in danger, it actually won’t. As a celestial, and the ambassador, everyone from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty will be paying attention to what happens to you. If anything bad happens, it would likely result in a war between the two dynasties!

“Therefore, in some respects, your status will strike fear into the hearts of the people of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!

“The second benefit is that there are many people of Heavenspan in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, more than in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. After all, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty is huge.

“By going there and getting involved with the government, it will be much easier for you to find them and bring them back!

“Another factor is that, although things seem to be going well here in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, you don’t have much room for growth. But if you could somehow get land of your own in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, then we would be in a much better position!

“In the end, you have few options. If you refuse to comply, then we might as well leave Mistysea Prefecture and defect to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!

“If you comply, then I vehemently request that you demand the Saint-Emperor give Mistysea Prefecture ten years of full autonomy!” With that, the Grand Heavenmaster clasped hands, bowed to Bai Xiaochun, and waited for an answer.

The Giant Ghost King stood off to the side, staying silent.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the two of them, and then at the imperial decree. Finally, he sighed. Ever since he had come to the Eternal Immortal Domains, he felt less free than he had in the Heavenspan Realm.

He was always under pressure, and always restrained in some way or another. In the past, he had always been able to do whatever he wanted, but not anymore. Eyes bloodshot, he pondered the situation for a short moment, then gritted his teeth and took out a transmission jade slip.

Without any hesitation, he sent a message to the Saint-Emperor informing him of some demands!

At this point, he had risen high enough in the world that he qualified to negotiate with an archaean.

Before long, the Saint-Emperor replied, granting his demands. There was no need for pretenses between the two of them now. He directly granted Bai Xiaochun’s request to leave Mistysea Prefecture alone for ten years.

During that time, the Saint-Emperor would not interfere with the prefecture in any way. But after the ten years were up, it would return to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s control!

“Ten years. I’ll have ten years to secure land within the Vile-Emperor Dynasty….” Having made his decision, he accepted the position of ambassador!

A few days later, he left. He notified the Grand Heavenmaster and some other important people, but didn’t make a huge fanfare.

Considering his status, he didn’t need to cross the Eternal Sea to reach his destination. He first went to the capital city of the second immortal domain to visit Celestial Aged Spirit. When Aged Spirit learned of the news, he hesitated for a moment, then shook his head.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I can guarantee you that no matter what the Saint-Emperor does, as far as I'm concerned, Mistysea Prefecture will always belong to you!” Aged Spirit and the Saint-Emperor had their differences, and as such, Aged Spirit was not very happy with this new decree.

When Bai Xiaochun first came to the second immortal domain, there had been a bit of tension between him and

Aged Spirit. But things had been smoothed out, and they had lived in harmony ever since. Furthermore, having two celestials in one immortal domain actually made for a much stronger force.

Bai Xiaochun was moved by Celestial Aged Spirit's guarantee. After offering formal thanks, he went to the teleportation portal. Soon, rumbling sounds could be heard, and he faded away from the second immortal domain. When he reappeared… he was no longer in the territory of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

He was in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, specifically, the immortal domain where the capital city was located!

Vile-Emperor City was surrounded by five heavenly mountains, atop each of which was a spell formation that connected the city to locations in the other immortal domains. With such teleportation portals, the Eternal Immortal Domains were not so vastly large that travel between them was impossible.

Saint-Emperor City also had such teleportation formations, although they weren’t often used. After all, both parties had to agree to activate the teleportation portals at the same time.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time teleporting into the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. As soon as he appeared, he looked around, and saw a dozen or so cultivators from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, who were to be his subordinates. Two were demigods, with the rest being devas.

When they caught sight of him, they clasped hands in formal greeting.

“Well met, King Heavenspan!”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t respond. He stood there on the spell formation atop the heavenly mountain, feeling the cold air and looking off into the violet clouds, within which he could see the occasional streak of lightning.

It was very different from Saint-Emperor City. Everything was dark and awe-inspiring. There was something bloodthirsty about the whole place.

Beneath the violet clouds, in the middle of the five heavenly mountains, was a valley. Right in the middle of the valley was a massive trident sticking straight up into the sky!

It was fully 300 meters wide, and from what Bai Xiaochun could see, was some sort of magical item. There was something shockingly powerful about it, and most astonishing of all was that coiled around the trident was an enormous bone dragon!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1164 awe-chapter-1165

Half of the trident was stabbed deep into the earth, and the other half rose up into the violet clouds. It was a profoundly astonishing sight.

As for the bone dragon which coiled around it, it was vicious beyond compare. It only had half of a skull left, but it still radiated an intense murderous aura. The bones weren’t stuck to the trident itself, just hanging off of it in shocking fashion.

Despite the fact that he was a celestial, even Bai Xiaochun was shaken by the ferocious scene.

Vile-Emperor City itself was built on the bones of that bone dragon. Numerous buildings and structures could be seen there. As for the skull, it was the foundation of the imperial palace.

The palace itself was in the violet clouds, surrounded by countless bolts of lightning. There was something frantic, even maddened about this city that made it completely different from Saint-Emperor City.

Almost as soon as Bai Xiaochun caught sight of the imperial palace, a stream of divine sense erupted from within it, something profoundly domineering, something that surpassed celestials on the most fundamental level.

His eyes almost hurt because of it, and he began to pant. Obviously, this was the will of the Vile-Emperor!

“So this… is Vile-Emperor City….” Shaken, he looked at the dozen or so cultivators standing around the teleportation formation, hands still clasped in greeting.

Standing behind the Saint-Emperor Dynasty cultivators were two demigods from Vile-Emperor City. They stood there very respectfully, and yet, deep in their eyes was an insufferable arrogance that they did nothing to hide.

As soon as they realized he was looking at them, they also clasped hands in greetings.

“Welcome, Celestial Bai!”

Bai Xiaochun was not in the best of moods, and although the demigods were acting respectfully, he could tell how full of themselves they were. At the same time, it was obvious that they were afraid of him.

As for the other cultivators, they were even more on edge. Muttering to himself, Bai Xiaochun stepped out of the teleportation formation and waved his hand.

“Rise,” he said. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty cultivators breathed sighs of relief as they rose from their bows. They had been working for Sima Yunhua for some time, only to suddenly have a change in ambassadors. To top it off, the new ambassador was the famous King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun. None of them knew anything about his temperament, and they were thus very nervous about what could happen.

“Considering that Sima Yunhua didn’t tell me anything about these people, I guess that means he didn’t view them as being very important.” After looking the group over, Bai Xiaochun realized that all of them looked dispirited to some degree, even the demigods. But that made sense, considering that they were from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and were stuck in the terrifying Vile-Emperor City.

If true conflict erupted between the two dynasties, this group would be the first to lose their heads.

Shaking his head, he maintained silence as he followed the two Vile-Emperor Dynasty demigods off of the heavenly mountain. As they neared the city itself, Bai Xiaochun could already sense that its population greatly surpassed that of Saint-Emperor City.

The moment he stepped into the city itself, five or six streams of divine sense locked onto him.

Slowing down for a moment, he sent his own divine sense out to make contact with them.

Although no one could see that moment of contact, it left Bai Xiaochun feeling very shaken. After all, those streams of divine sense belonged to the celestials in the city!

However, considering his status as the ambassador from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, he knew that as long as he didn’t make any mistakes, no one would be able to do anything to him, at least not easily.

And as it turned out, after making initial contact, the other streams of divine sense faded away. At that point, he pulled his own divine sense back in and continued on with the two demigods, who had sensed that something strange was going on, but weren’t sure what.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t hurry. He looked around at the streets, and the people of Vile-Emperor City, and was unsure about how he felt. After all, this place was completely unfamiliar to him.

However, despite the unfamiliar surroundings, he could sense the auras of Heavenspan Realm cultivators, quite a few in fact. Sadly, the auras were weak. He could only imagine how many people were imprisoned here, unable to escape.

Here in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the prevailing view was that people from the Heavenspan Realm were to be enslaved. And Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base was not so great that he could simply ignore the laws of the land and do what he wished.

Sighing, he hurried along until the Saint-Emperor Dynasty's embassy was visible up ahead, on the lower half of the bone dragon's spine. It was five stories tall, and surrounded by a sprawling courtyard. Overall it was very impressive, especially considering the powerful spell formation fluctuations rolling out from it. At a cursory glance, Bai Xiaochun could tell that even a celestial who wanted to break through that formation would have a difficult time of it. That made him feel a little bit better.

The cultivators who had come to receive him from the embassy were visibly relieved to return.

After entering, the two Vile-Emperor Dynasty demigods left, and Bai Xiaochun sat down in the main hall of the embassy. Looking at his subordinates, who were lined up in front of him, he asked, "So, what are my responsibilities?"

Unsure of what type of person Bai Xiaochun was, they didn't dare to withhold anything, and quickly gave him an overview of the situation.

"Exalted Celestial, you normally don't have to do anything. As long as the two dynasties aren't in conflict, you just need to make a public appearance every once in awhile.

“Occasionally you’ll be summoned by the Vile-Emperor. Since you’ve just taken over as ambassador, it’s likely you’ll soon receive such a summons.

“Exalted Celestial, please be careful here. After all, this is Vile-Emperor City….”

He nodded.

“What’s so dangerous about this place?” he asked.

The assembled cultivators exchanged glances and whispered among themselves for a moment. Then, the highest-ranking demigod stepped forward, clasped hands, and bowed.

“Exalted one, you need to abide by all of the laws and customs of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. And you need to be careful… of people… intentionally causing problems.” Although the man was being vague, Bai Xiaochun understood what he was getting at. After discussing a few other matters with the group, and coming to understand the city a bit more, he dismissed them, and sat there to think.

“It’s a foregone conclusion that people will try to cause problems for me….” he thought. Massaging his temples, he contemplated the fact that if his cultivation base were high enough, he wouldn’t need to worry about such things.

“Hold on a second!” Suddenly, he smacked his forehead. “Usually, I cause grief for people whenever I go somewhere new. The way it usually works is… I show up, and everything goes like normal for a while. But then, for some unknown reason, things always change….” He suddenly realized that he had been thinking about everything the wrong way. After reminiscing about how many drums and gongs he had heard throughout the years, he blinked a few times, and suddenly felt a lot better.

Clearing his throat, he tried to pump himself up a bit. “This Vile-Emperor must be a complete idiot. The Saint-Emperor wants me to be the ambassador, and he just agreed right off the bat? You know, a lot of people have said that, given the right circumstances, I could easily destroy the world.”

As of now, he felt the tension beginning to melt away, and even felt a bit sorry for the Vile-Emperor.

It was starting to get dark outside, and considering how much better he felt, he decided to take a stroll around the embassy. Eventually, he found a private chamber perfect for practicing cultivation, so he sat down to do some meditation.

“I need to go check out the damaged fan, and pass some more levels there. One of these days, I’ll reach the hundredth level, and when I get that reward, my cultivation will progress a lot faster.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he closed his eyes and disappeared. When he materialized, he was back on the damaged fan. After calling out a few greetings, he confirmed that the spirit automaton was asleep, whereupon he headed toward the next level.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1165 awe-chapter-1166

Fearful of the problems the spirit automaton might cause upon awakening, Bai Xiaochun worked as quickly as possible. Whether it was in terms of speed, or his powers of regeneration, the sovereign flesh he had consumed had helped him to advance by leaps and bounds.

He put on a great showing, and quickly reached the seventy-eighth level!

As soon as he entered that level, he felt an intense pressure weighing down on him. There was also a sensation of potential danger that caused him to immediately back up and send his divine sense out to check the area.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as he was immediately able to see the entire area in his mind.

It was a very strange world indeed.

There was no sky or no land, only an endless void, and a stone dais. In front of the stone dais was a huge wooden marionette!

It was fully 300 meters tall, and as round as a sphere. It also had a face painted onto its head.

Although Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be certain why, he was sure that there was a very strange aura in this place. After studying it for a moment, his attention was continuously drawn to the marionette.

Almost as soon as he looked at it closely, it opened its eyes, which glowed with mysterious light. Then, it leapt nimbly into the air, and began to head directly toward him.

“All I did was look at him!” Bai Xiaochun thought. Alarmed, he fell back, but the marionette was shockingly quick. All it took was a moment for it to be right in front of him. Seeing that he couldn't evade it, he decided that since he had recently improved his fleshly body power, he might as well just start fighting. Clenching his right hand into a fist, he punched out at the marionette.

It seemed like an ordinary strike, but considering the level of his battle prowess, that fist strike alone would be enough to shove someone in the early Celestial Realm away from him, coughing up blood the entire time. Although it might not kill an opponent like that, it would at least inflict injuries.

Unexpectedly, the seemingly tough marionette actually couldn’t stand up to a single punch, and exploded.

Shockingly, the shockwave from its explosion was stronger than its own battle prowess, sending out heaven-shaking, earth-shattering fluctuations in all directions. To Bai Xiaochun, it felt like a wild beast attacking him with full ferocity. Rumbling sounds could be heard everywhere as he tumbled back a few dozen meters before coming to a stop, gasping for breath.

“What a strong backlash!” Looking up, he realized that another powerful aura had erupted from the spot where the marionette had exploded.

At that point, he realized that what had exploded was only something like an exterior shell. There was now another marionette standing there, a bit smaller than the one from before!

This marionette’s aura was stronger, and just like the other one, it attacked the moment it saw him. From the look in its eyes, it seemed like it wouldn’t stop fighting until he was dead, or it was destroyed!

Frowning, he chose not to back up, but instead, to attack with a fist strike. However, after unleashing the strike, he immediately fell back.

Unfortunately, no matter how quickly he backed up, the shockwave from the exploding marionette still hit him, causing his qi and blood to vibrate painfully.

A moment later, an even more powerful aura arose, and he saw another, smaller marionette. At that point, his eyes went wide.

“Will it ever end?!” he thought, shocked. Presumably, the way to pass the level was to destroy the entire marionette, including all of the layers that made it up.

“What a weird level. If the spirit automaton is around, that would mean I'm in great danger!” With that, he sent some more divine sense out to scan the area.

“I bet he is awake…. But based on the timing, he should still be asleep!” By now, his power over the damaged fan had reached the point where he could use it to track down the spirit automaton.

He was already starting to get anxious, but now was not the time for delays. He should either evacuate the level and accept defeat, or do his best to pass it as quickly as possible.

Back when he was in Mistysea Prefecture, he would probably have selected the former. But now he was in the

Vile-Emperor City, in a position of potential danger. The sooner he got the rewards he sought, the faster he would improve his cultivation base. And if he could pass all the levels and become the true owner of the fan, then he would have a much more stable position in Vile-Emperor City.

His biggest hope and anticipation was that he would eventually be strong enough to take on archaeans. That way, if he was ever forced into a fight, he would be able to hold his own.

“Screw it. I'm gonna keep trying. If I can’t make it work, then I’ll just leave!” Gritting his teeth, he shot toward the marionette.

When he slammed into it, it exploded, and yet again he was hit with a backlash. However, he didn't attempt to do anything to avoid it. Doing so was virtually impossible. And apparently, this level tested one’s ability to withstand backlashes.

Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, but his powers of regeneration immediately went to work. Eyes bloodshot, he immediately set upon the next, smaller marionette.

With every marionette he killed, another would arise, smaller than before. The cycle repeated itself over and over. Eventually, he had unleashed ten fist strikes.

Each one had destroyed a marionette, and unleashed a backlash attack. The backlashes were getting stronger and stronger, to the point where even his Undying Codex couldn’t keep up.

“Considering my powers of regeneration, it seems to me that even if I was in the late Celestial Realm, I would still have problems. Don’t tell me I need to be in the great circle to pass!?!?” Bai Xiaochun refused to believe that the seventy-eighth level would actually be that hard. The next marionette that he destroyed caused a backlash that sent blood spraying out of his mouth. And the marionette which appeared this time looked different from before.

It was only the size of a palm, and was pure gold. It radiated the aura of the mid Celestial Realm, and had speed that completely defied imagination. It vanished, reappeared right in front of Bai Xiaochun’s chest, and then slammed into him. Before he could even react, he was sent flying hundreds of meters backward.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and even as he struggled to his feet, a streak of golden light slammed into him. Then again, and again! He was really starting to get mad now.

“Complete and utter bullying!!” This was his first time encountering an opponent with the same cultivation base as himself, but that he couldn’t hit because of their incredible speed.

Even as the golden streak of light closed in again, he took a deep breath, causing all of his skin to turn the color of blood. A blood mist also spread out from him, into which he seemingly merged.

Within the mist, his eyes gleamed with sinister coldness, and he spoke in a bloodthirsty voice, “Godkiller!”

The Godkiller technique was finally being used again!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the golden light neared the blood-colored mist. In the blink of an eye, blood-colored light and golden light were intersecting in a shocking display of speed.

Booms rang out constantly, until the blood mist finally surrounded the golden light. A moment later, there was an explosion, and then a massive backlash that surpassed anything from before!

The blood mist also collapsed, spreading out into the surrounding void. After about ten breaths of time, everything had gone calm again, and the blood mist formed back to reveal an ashen-faced Bai Xiaochun.

“Whoa,” he said, blood oozing out of his mouth. At that point, he began to fade away as he left the seventy-eighth level.

Although he had passed it successfully, he had received a significant injury in the process. From that, he could tell that the levels from this point on were going to be extremely difficult!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1166 awe-chapter-1167

It took some rest, but Bai Xiaochun recovered well. After thinking back to how hard the seventy-eighth level had been, he couldn't help but sigh.

"I can tell it's getting harder and harder.... It's a good thing that little automaton wasn't around, otherwise things would have really been hopeless. I have to be very careful from here on out. I can't give the little automaton any advantage in our battle of wits and strength."

Sighing, he decided not to challenge any more levels.

Not long after he left, the spirit automaton woke up. Upon discovering that Bai Xiaochun was getting closer and closer to the eightieth level, he felt beyond delighted.

Back in the level with the leaves, he had paid a steep price in his attempt to defeat Bai Xiaochun. In fact, as a result, the difficulty in the following levels had been reduced.

That having been said, the difficulty reduction hadn't been that dramatic. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun's rapid progress was a bit of a surprise.

"No. Wait. I need to make some more adjustments. Dammit! Alright, I know. I'll completely reduce the difficulty of the hundredth level and redistribute it to earlier levels. That way, I can definitely stop this damned Bai Xiaochun!!" The spirit automaton was acting a bit crazily. But he was really worried about Bai Xiaochun making progress. Therefore, he went through with his plan to reduce the difficulty of the final level as far down as it would go!

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was back in his private chamber in the embassy in Vile-Emperor City. After opening his eyes, he produced a blue pill bottle from his bag of holding.

There were no medicinal pills inside, only a medicinal liquid, nine drops in total. This was the reward he had acquired from the seventy-eighth level. Each drop of that liquid was comparable to an immortal pill, or perhaps, was even more effective.

All-in-all, it was perfect for use in the mid Celestial Realm.

Although the seventy-eighth level had been difficult, the rewards were significant. As a grandmaster in the Dao of medicine, he could tell that this medicinal liquid was extraordinary, to the point where he wasn’t even sure how it had been created. However, after some analysis, he confirmed that all of the ingredients were legendary in the Eternal Immortal Domains, and were all considered to be immortal grasses.

There was only one ingredient, spiritdragon horn, a precious material of heaven and earth, that was relatively common in the Eternal Immortal Domains. Even still, it was astronomically expensive. Bai Xiaochun had seen a specimen in Saint-Emperor City, and knew that even celestials who qualified to acquire it could only do so with great difficulty.

“It was all worth it!” he thought, tilting the bottle up to let a single drop of the fluid out onto his tongue.

It dissolved instantly, giving rise to a searing heat that exploded through his entire body. His cultivation base immediately began to rotate rapidly as the nutritious agents in the medicinal liquid coursed through his energy passageways.

As he cultivated, time passed. Because his calculations indicated that the spirit automaton was awake, he didn't go back to the damaged fan. He spent all of his time in cultivation, trying to improve his cultivation base.

The nine drops of medicinal liquid turned out to be even more powerful than he had imagined. After absorbing all of them, he found that he had achieved significant progress. He was now very close to the late Celestial Realm, and almost didn’t feel like he was in the mid Celestial Realm anymore.

And he hadn’t even used his Celestial Pill yet. He had already performed spirit enhancements on it, and was preparing to use it at the last possible moment, to improve his chances of breaking through.

Most people would be completely shocked by the progress he was making, and would find it difficult to believe. After all, there were only twelve celestials in the Eternal Immortal Domains, and many of them would spend years and years, and rely on all varieties of good fortune, just to make a little bit of progress.

Bai Xiaochun was the only one who could advance in the way he was. After all, he was using the legacy rewards left behind in the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering treasured item of a sovereign.

Because of that treasure, his cultivation was advancing rapidly, and seemingly without pause. Even as he was wrapped up in this process of rapid progress, a friend came to visit!

It was none other than… Big Fatty Zhang!

After coming to Vile-Emperor City, Bai Xiaochun had asked his subordinates about Big Fatty Zhang, who he knew had a very unique position in the dynasty. However, they had informed him that Big Fatty Zhang was out on a mission.

Two months later, Big Fatty Zhang returned. After hearing that Bai Xiaochun was in the city, he rushed over to the embassy at the earliest opportunity.

When Bai Xiaochun got the news, he hurried out of his private chamber and headed to the main hall, where a tall, lanky person stood waiting for him!

The person’s silhouette looked unfamiliar, but when he turned to look at Bai Xiaochun, Bai Xiaochun felt shaken to the core. Despite how different he looked, his facial features were the same, and Bai Xiaochun couldn’t hold back from rushing forward to embrace him.

“Eldest Brother!!”

Big Fatty Zhang seemed just as excited as Bai Xiaochun, and returned the embrace.

“Xiaochun!!”

As they looked each other up and down, they thought back to all the memories they shared. From the Ovens in the Spirit Stream Sect to the River-Defying Sect, from the Starry Sky Dao Polarity Sect to the battle on Ghostmother’s battleship. And then to the point when they were separated by an entire world.

“Xiaochun, I thought I was never going to be able to see you again….”

“Xiaochun, do you remember back on the Heavenspan Sea when I told you about that dream of mine...?

“Well, my life really has been like a hallucination. In fact, for years, I wondered if maybe I was stuck in a dream.... The world I had lived in was the body of an enormous giant. Back then, I could hardly believe it....

“And then I heard that the Heavenspan Realm had been destroyed....” By this point, tears were streaming down Big Fatty Zhang’s cheeks. He had many things to say, and so much to recount regarding the difficulties he had faced through the years. To him, Bai Xiaochun was not just a Junior Brother, but also a dear friend and brother.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart trembled as he listened to Big Fatty Zhang. He thought about the Ovens, and how many years had passed since then, and it made this reunion even more memorable.

They sat there for a long time, reminiscing and talking about the things which had occurred since they were separated. Considering Bai Xiaochun’s position, he had his subordinates bring some alcohol for them to enjoy, and then activated the embassy’s spell formations, ensuring that no divine sense would be able to intrude on them.

“At the time, I had no idea that the ghost galleon... would be taking such a momentous journey.... It brought me to this strange land, to this strange city, and to these strange people.... Xiaochun, you have no idea how useless I was back then.” Big Fatty Zhang bitterly raised his alcohol jug up and took a drink.

Bai Xiaochun joined him.

“Eldest Brother,” he said, “you came here before anyone else, so you don’t know everything that went on…. The River-Defying Sect is gone. The Wildlands are gone. Everything's gone…. My apprentice Hao’er is gone. The gravekeeper is gone. The entire world… is gone.” The more he talked, the bleaker he sounded.

“So many people dead… so many…. And it’s all because of Daoist Heavenspan!” By this point, his hands were clenched tightly. Big Fatty Zhang’s mood was sinking just as much.

It was late into the night before they finished talking about the past, and their current situation. Many tears had been shed, and they had sighed many times. Occasionally they laughed, and occasionally they would weep while laughing. Sometimes, it was like they were back in the Ovens, back in the days without true worry or care….

Back in those days, Big Fatty Zhang had been high-spirited and full of mettle.

Back in those days, Bai Xiaochun had been proud and confident, and had dreamed constantly of being able to live forever.

Many years had passed, and they were no longer the youngsters they had once been. They had grown up, and in that process, had come to find duty and responsibility weighing heavily on their shoulders.

“After the Heavenspan Realm collapsed,” Big Fatty Zhang said, “I did my best to search for our people…. But as the saying goes, *the words of the lowly carry little weight*. I was one of the first to arrive here, and because of my skills in spirit enhancement, I managed to establish myself in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. But I have little power…. Xiaochun, I wasn’t even free to leave this place and come find you.

“The only way I could have done it was to fly there myself. After all, the teleportation portals are all locked down.” Although Big Fatty Zhang’s voice was laced with bitterness, at this point, his face suddenly lit up.

“Hold on, Xiaochun. I might not have much power, but I have been able to help some of the people of Heavenspan. Guess what? I know where Patriarch Spirit Stream is! And also Sect Uncle Li Qinghou. They’ve gathered a lot of disciples from the River-Defying Sect!!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard this, he shivered, and reached out to grab Big Fatty Zhang’s shoulder. Shaking physically, he said, “You know where Uncle Li is!?!? And Patriarch Spirit Stream? And other disciples from the River-Defying Sect? Where? Where are they?”

Bai Xiaochun was almost certain that he had misheard. After all, despite extensive searching back in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, he had come up completely empty-handed in terms of finding people he knew.

“Yeah! I know where they are. But I was worried about revealing their location, so I never went to see them in person. However, I can tell you that they are in the safest place in this immortal domain!” Big Fatty Zhang could tell how emotional Bai Xiaochun was getting, and he didn’t hold anything back. He quickly went on to tell him everything he knew.

“You never went to see them in person.... That was smart. And safe. As long as they're alive, that's what matters.... That’s what matters. That’s what matters....” Bai Xiaochun had to force himself to remember to breathe. Eventually, he released Big Fatty Zhang’s shoulder, and thought back to how Li Qinghou would often look at him with both sternness and love in his eyes. Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes welled with tears.

“Uncle Li….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1167 awe-chapter-1168

It took a while for Bai Xiaochun to regain his composure. At that point, Big Fatty Zhang took another drink from his jug of alcohol, then hesitated for a moment before lowering his voice and saying, “Xiaochun, I discovered a monumental secret. I'm not sure if I should even say it out loud....”

Bai Xiaochun looked at him, clearly taken aback. He could see that Big Fatty Zhang seemed confused about what to do, as though he wanted to reveal what he knew, but at the same time, wanted to keep it a secret.

If this were any other person, he would assume they were trying to be deliberately mystifying. But this was Big Fatty Zhang, and he knew that he wouldn’t do that. Furthermore, considering the level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, he was able to sense that Big Fatty Zhang’s Will was different from that of others.

Although Big Fatty Zhang was still only a Nascent Soul cultivator, his Willpower surpassed that of most demigod experts, and was close to that of a celestial!

Back in the Heavenspan Realm, Bai Xiaochun wouldn't have been able to tell. But as a celestial, he understood much more about how the larger world worked.

Obviously, there was something special about Big Fatty Zhang, some inner quality of his that was related to Will. It was almost as if he were blessed by Will itself in some special way.

It had been many years ago that Big Fatty Zhang began to perform spirit enhancements in accord with Will. That had a lot to do with it.

“I wonder if that’s why he began to dream of leaving the Heavenspan Realm….” Bai Xiaochun thought. With that, he waved his right hand, sending out some cultivation base power that added a further layer of concealment and protection to the spell formation protecting the embassy.

Reaching out into Big Fatty Zhang’s mind with divine sense, he said, “Tell me with your divine sense. I can guarantee that for the next ten breaths of time… not even an archaean could eavesdrop on us!”

Big Fatty Zhang visibly relaxed, and without the slightest hesitation, explained himself via divine sense.

“Xiaochun, I know a secret about the Vile-Emperor!! It’s really hard to explain, and I'm not even sure how to put it into words. And I'm worried that telling you about it, even with the defenses you’ve set up, could lead to a disaster! If you want to know the details, the best thing would be for me to take you to see it in person. Then you’ll understand!” Big Fatty Zhang’s divine sense operated with incredible quickness, perhaps because of his Willpower. In only ten short breaths of time or so, he explained as much as he could about the circumstances surrounding this secret.

Back when he had arrived in the Eternal Immortal Domains on Ghostmother’s battleship, spirit enhancement was something that no one in the Eternal Immortal Domains had even heard of.

As soon as Big Fatty Zhang’s abilities became known, it caused a huge stir in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Even the Vile-Emperor himself was pushed into a state of frenzied anticipation. He had Big Fatty Zhang perform numerous spirit enhancements to see the results. Afterward, he issued orders giving Big Fatty Zhang a high standing, but also… to assign him a mission!

That mission was… to perform a spirit enhancement on the shocking trident around which was coiled the bone dragon that housed Vile-Emperor City!

Because of that, Big Fatty Zhang came to have a special place in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and became quite famous. However, Big Fatty Zhang knew his own limitations. When performing spirit enhancements on ordinary items, failures weren't anything he would worry about. But when it came to that spear, he knew that if he failed in the enhancement, the spear would suffer a major backlash. In fact, the worst case scenario would involve the spear collapsing. And that would likely result in his own death.

Therefore, Big Fatty Zhang held back. He told the Vile-Emperor that he was only strong enough to perform a fivefold spirit enhancement, and that it would take a full sixty-year-cycle to complete it safely.

He was the only person in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty who could perform spirit enhancements, so there was no way for anyone to determine if he was telling the truth or not. Even if they suspected he was not, there would be no way to confirm it. Therefore, after some consideration, the Vile-Emperor agreed.

However, the people of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty continued to study spirit enhancements. And eventually, the Heavenspan Realm collapsed, and its people were scattered everywhere. As it turned out, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty began to enslave them, all with the hope… of cracking the secret of spirit enhancements!

In terms of the secret Big Fatty Zhang wanted to tell Bai Xiaochun, it had something to do with the spirit enhancements he had performed on that trident. Up to now, he had taken the trident up to the level of a threefold enhancement.

Every time he performed an enhancement, he would experience a vision, something that was apparently unique to him.

Big Fatty Zhang’s guess was that it had something to do with his spirit enhancement abilities. After all, not even the Vile-Emperor had been aware of his visions.

Bai Xiaochun could see how cautious Big Fatty Zhang was being, and how seriously he was taking the matter. Eyes flashing, he decided not to beat around the bush.

“When can I go see it?” he asked.

“Right now!” Big Fatty Zhang replied. He had been keeping this secret in his heart for far too long, and hadn’t dared to even think about it. It was a secret that was so significant that it could affect all of the Eternal Immortal Domains!

That was why he had almost immediately decided to tell it to Bai Xiaochun. He was worried that if one day he unexpectedly died… perhaps the secret would be buried in the sands of time. Another factor was that each time he performed another spirit enhancement on the spear, the vision would grow more difficult to see.

“I bet that with two more enhancements, it will disappear for all eternity…. Not even performing more enhancements on the spear would produce the vision.” Without the slightest hesitation, he rose to his feet.

Bai Xiaochun could tell that this was a matter of utmost importance. Masking both his aura and Big Fatty Zhang, he waved his hand, causing them to vanish and appear outside in Vile-Emperor City.

Big Fatty Zhang was very familiar with the city, and quickly led Bai Xiaochun along a little path that led to a remote palace deep in the valley.

It was located in a sort of ravine right next to the huge trident, where there was a slight gap between the spear and the lands around it.

This palace was the residence the Vile-Emperor had given to Big Fatty Zhang, to make it easy for him to perform enhancements on the spear. Just outside of the palace was the huge spear itself!

From here, it was possible to see the three silver designs that were evidence of the successful enhancements Big Fatty Zhang had performed in the past.

At this point, Big Fatty Zhang didn’t say anything. He just pointed at the spear.

Were this any other person than Big Fatty Zhang, Bai Xiaochun would have hesitated at the suspicious nature of what was happening. But right now, he didn’t hesitate to walk right up to the spear.

As he neared, he could sense a fierce aura coming from the trident, as though it had slaughtered too many lives to even count. All of the hair on his body stood on end. It almost felt like he was about to descend onto a deadly battlefield.

Thankfully, the trident was protected by a sealing mark that prevented most of that aura from escaping. Even still, only someone with a Nascent Soul cultivation base or higher would be able to get near it. Otherwise, it would have been difficult to even build Vile-Emperor City on the bones that hung on the spear.

“Do I need to actually perform a spirit enhancement…?” he thought. His methods of performing spirit enhancements were different from others. But in the end, they all stemmed from the same general principles. When it came to high-level enhancements, he would have to use his turtle-wok. And even for lower-level enhancements, it was generally much easier and simpler to just use the wok. But when it came to a mere fourfold enhancement, he could do it on his own if necessary. After all, he was a heavenly necromancer who had learned his skills in the Wildlands, which was the home of spirit enhancements.

Reaching out, he summoned a four-colored flame, and then carefully placed it onto the surface of the trident.

Almost as soon as his hand made contact with the trident, the flame melted into it, and his expression flickered. In that moment, he heard an anguished scream in his head.

“I refuse to accept this! I refuse to bring shame to my ancestor!!”

Along with the scream came a shocking vision!

Shockingly, he was looking at the Vile-Emperor!

Except, there wasn’t just one Vile-Emperor; there were two!

They were currently fighting a battle to the death. The vision wasn't perfectly clear, but Bai Xiaochun could clearly see the lightning-like attacks, and then, one of the Vile-Emperors fell in death!

He died screaming, stabbed to death by this very same trident. By the time the trident was pulled out of his body, he was dead in body and soul! And then his body faded away!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1168 awe-chapter-1169

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide, and his heart and mind were battered with tidal waves of shock.

The enormity of what he was witnessing defied anything he could have imagined. Considering how nervous Big Fatty Zhang had been, he had been prepared for something momentous.

But this went beyond all expectations.

There were actually two Vile-Emperors!

They looked the same, but one was the real thing, and the other was an imposter!

It was impossible to say how many years ago this event had taken place, but from the way the dying Vile-Emperor had shouted about letting his ancestor down, Bai Xiaochun’s intuition was telling him… that he was not the imposter!

Even as Bai Xiaochun stood there, completely and utterly shaken, the vision faded, as though whatever secrets were locked in the trident were being thoroughly transformed into ashes thanks to this fourth spirit enhancement.

No future enhancements would reveal any further visions.

As Bai Xiaochun slowly regained his senses, the shock in his heart made him completely forget about the spirit enhancement. He pulled his hand back, and the four-colored flame fell to the ground and sputtered out.

The trident stood there, still and unmoving.

He felt completely out of sorts, and was unable to quell the chaos he felt in his heart. As for Big Fatty Zhang, he had been unsure of whether or not Bai Xiaochun would experience the same vision, but considering his reaction, it seemed he had.

The Vile-Emperor was an archaean, a level that completely surpassed that of a celestial. His Will was powerful to an unimaginable degree. If celestials could be likened to mountain peaks, then archaeans were like the clouds that floated above them!

Their Willpower could encompass entire immortal domains, could transform heaven and earth, and could drive countless hosts of living things completely mad.

For some unknown reason, the real Vile-Emperor had been unable to notify the world of the truth of his passing. And yet, before his death, he had succeeded in passing a bit of his consciousness into the trident that killed him.

That fleeting wisp of consciousness had remained undetected by whoever it was that killed him, and was not something that people could find by examining the trident directly.

Only performing a spirit enhancement, which would restructure the trident on a fundamental level, would result in dredging up that slight bit of consciousness, and the memories therein.

And thus, something which had remained secret for many years became known to Bai Xiaochun.

After a very long moment passed, he forced himself to calm down, whereupon… questions began to pop up in his mind that had terrifying implications.

“If the real Vile-Emperor was killed,” he thought, “then… who exactly is the current Vile-Emperor…? And when precisely did it happen…? How come something as monumental as the death of the Vile-Emperor happened without anyone knowing…?”

At this point, he looked up at Big Fatty Zhang, who had been standing there quietly the entire time. He could see the confusion and anxiety in Big Fatty Zhang’s eyes, and at the same time, realized that his previous caution had been thoroughly justified.

If the current Vile-Emperor realized what he knew… the consequences would be too dire to contemplate.

After another long moment passed, he left. He didn’t want to stay with Big Fatty Zhang for too long; this sensitive matter was something that didn’t just involve the two of them, but rather, the fundamental existence of the Eternal Immortal Domains as a whole.

By the time he got back to the main hall in the embassy, it was late. His two demigod subordinates greeted him, at which time he forced himself to put his thoughts in order.

One of the demigods stepped forward and respectfully extended an invitation card.

“Exalted one, while you were in secluded meditation, the Vile-Prince… sent you several invitations.

“Apparently, someone noticed that Grandmaster Zhang came to visit you, as he yet again sent someone with an invitation…. Exalted one, he has invited you to Vile-Prince Mansion for a banquet, this very evening.” With that, the two demigods went on to explain more details about what had gone on while he was in seclusion.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the invitation card, his brow slightly furrowed. He had spent most of his time as ambassador in seclusion, and had politely refused all invitations.

However, the Vile-Prince had sent numerous such invitations, and as Bai Xiaochun’s two demigod subordinates had said, he had noticed that he had accepted a visit from Big Fatty Zhang. In that case, refusing more invitations would likely lead to complications.

“Ah, whatever. I've been in Vile-Emperor City for a while now, I guess I might as well go check out this Vile-Prince.” Having made his decision, he reached out and took the invitation card.

“Since the Vile-Prince has sent so many invitation cards, why don’t the two of you go with me?” Of course, the two demigods didn’t dare do anything but comply. Immediately voicing their assent, they left the embassy with Bai Xiaochun.

The demigods led the way to a location on the skull of the bone dragon. By the time they arrived, the moon hung high, and the night felt deep and somber.

As a celestial, Bai Xiaochun’s every move and action was subject to observation. And since he had made no effort to be stealthy in any way, the people in Vile-Prince Mansion knew he was coming.

Before he arrived, dozens of individuals flew out of the ornate, luxurious mansion, the weakest of them being devas, and with five being demigods.

As they neared, they all clasped hands and bowed formally to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, Ambassador Bai!”

“After you, Ambassador Bai! Everyone in Vile-Prince Mansion is eagerly awaiting your arrival!”

From their formality and respect, it was clear to see that the Vile-Prince was taking Bai Xiaochun's visit very seriously. That was especially true considering who was standing outside the main entrance of Vile-Prince Mansion.

There were seven people lined up, with one standing in front of them all. He was middle-aged, and dressed in a robe embroidered with dragons. Although he wasn’t as domineering and impressive as the Vile-Emperor, he looked very similar to him.

At a glance, Bai Xiaochun knew without a doubt that this was the Vile-Prince!

Bai Xiaochun nodded in greeting from afar. The Vile-Prince noticed the gesture, and in response, laughed heartily.

“Ambassador Bai,” he said, hurrying forward, “I sent so many unanswered invitations! If you refused this one, I might have just had to come visit you personally.” Bai Xiaochun could immediately see how much younger the Vile-Prince was than the Vile-Emperor. He didn’t appear sinister to the bones like the Vile-Emperor, nor was he very domineering. He almost seemed to have mastered the smooth-faced demeanor of the people of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

“Trying to intimidate the new guy, huh?” he thought coldly. “Blaming me for not coming to visit you earlier? Lousy prince. You don’t count for crap!”

Although he didn’t have a very good impression of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty so far, he was very proficient when it came to putting on a pretense of civility and interest.

“How could I possibly inconvenience you by making you come visit me, Vile-Prince!?” he said. “You see, my cultivation base had reached a bottleneck, and thus, upon arriving, I was very anxious to get right to cultivation. Many apologies for all the delays.” He ended with a slight chuckle. Considering how much higher his cultivation base was than the Vile-Prince, that laughter, despite not being very loud, contained significant weight. In fact, it was more than enough to dissolve the domineering air contained in the Vile-Prince's false courtesy.

Eyes sparkling, and smile growing more radiant than ever, the Vile-Prince clasped hands and said, “I only invited two individuals to my banquet this night, Ambassador Bai. Please, come in!”

With that, he escorted Bai Xiaochun into his mansion.

Bai Xiaochun was very used to this sort of environment, and smiled broadly in return as he followed along. The two of them began to chat, and soon it was clear that neither were inferior to the other when it came to such arts. However, were it not for the fact that he had a high standing by birth, the Vile-Prince would not have been able to keep up with Bai Xiaochun. Soon the underlings who were following them began to respect Bai Xiaochun more and more.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1169 awe-chapter-1170

As the highest ranking prince in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, it only made sense that the Vile-Prince's mansion was far more luxurious than mansions of lesser princes. Upon entering, it was possible to see countless astounding decorative rock formations, as well as numerous streams and ponds.

It felt like a place of spirits and immortals, and even a single intake of breath would stimulate the cultivation base to an astounding degree. Despite being a celestial, even Bai Xiaochun was impressed.

“You have a nice place here!” he said in all sincerity.

“You flatter me, Ambassador Bai,” the Vile-Prince replied, chuckling. Clearly, he was feeling very pleased with himself. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he continued, “I really do have to offer profound thanks to your Heavenspan Realm, Ambassador Bai. After all, it’s only because of the secrets of spirit enhancement that my mansion has been elevated to this state.”

He pointed at a decorative rock formation some distance away.

“See that ornamental hill over there? I built it with ordinary immortal stones that I crafted into a spell formation. Then I scoured the Vile-Emperor Dynasty for grandmaster spirit enhancers to work their magic on it.

“Although many of them failed at their task, the final result was worth it. In fact, all of the ornamental rocks here have threefold spirit enhancements!” The Vile-Prince seemed very interested in the subject of spirit enhancements, and as he led Bai Xiaochun toward the main hall of his mansion, he pointed out everything that had been enhanced.

He seemed to be quite knowledgeable regarding spirit enhancement theory, prompting Bai Xiaochun to listen to what he said with some curiosity. So far, he hadn’t met anyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains who knew as much about the subject as the Vile-Prince.

“According to my understanding, there are three main ways that you Heavenspan Realm cultivators perform spirit enhancements. The first has to do with confidence, which is connected to Will. The second is in accord with magical law, and by finding ingredients that can harness the energy of heaven and earth. The third, and supposedly the most orthodox of them all, is by relying on multi-colored flame!

“And of course, people who can use multi-colored flame are called necromancers! From what I hear, Ambassador Bai, in all of the Heavenspan Realm, going back to the most ancient times, there was only ever one… heavenly necromancer!” The Vile-Prince was gauging Bai Xiaochun’s reaction, and when he saw the surprise on his face, he chuckled. At that point, he suddenly looked somewhat wistful.

“Unfortunately, it’s a real pity that, despite all my research, I only ended up proving that spirit enhancements can only be performed by people with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm in them. Without the power of that blood, even someone who has mastered all of the relevant skills will still fail. And even transfusing the blood into oneself will only provide a very limited ability.

“It’s truly a blessing from the Eternal Mother to the descendants of the Arch-Sovereign….” He sighed. During his speech, Bai Xiaochun was convinced that he could detect the smell of blood coming from the man.

Frowning, he was about to say something when the Vile-Prince suddenly turned to face him, his eyes sparkling.

“Ambassador Bai, the truth is that I asked you here today to propose a trade that I think you might be interested in. You have something that I want….”

“Like what…?” Bai Xiaochun replied, forcing down his displeasure as he stood there, looking back at the Vile-Prince.

The Vile-Prince licked his lips and looked Bai Xiaochun up and down, in much the same way that a lecherous sex-addict of a man would stare at a beautiful woman. It instantly caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyelid to twitch a bit.

“Ambassador Bai, I want… your body!”

Bai Xiaochun’s face instantly turned very grim, and his hackles rose. Swishing his sleeve, he snorted coldly and said, “Please behave yourself, Vile-Prince!”

Clearly displeased, he turned to leave.

“Wait, Ambassador Bai, you misunderstand me. I have developed a bit of a hobby in collecting the fleshly bodies of cultivators. Calm down. Listen, if you agree, then I can arrange for another fleshly body to replace your current one. And I guarantee you’ll be happy with the results!

“Considering the level of your cultivation base, it shouldn’t be any problem for you to possess another body. And I have a huge collection, every one of them unique and perfect specimens!” Apparently worried that Bai Xiaochun would refuse because of a misunderstanding, the Vile-Prince waved his arms out, causing all of the ornamental rocks in the mansion to suddenly begin shining with bright light.

As the light shone, the rocks began to turn translucent, making them look almost like ice. As that happened… it became possible to see corpses sealed within all of the rocks!!

There were men and women, old and young, beautiful and ugly, strong and weak. And yet, all of them, without a single exception, glittered like treasures in a museum!

Bai Xiaochun had just been preparing to leave, but now he was rooted in place, his eyes wide as he looked around at all the corpses. His mind almost seemed incapable of catching up to how events were unfolding. Never could he have imagined that the Vile-Prince would have a hobby like this. On the one hand, it seemed completely outrageous, but at the same time, it made Bai Xiaochun feel like he had just attained a deeper understanding of the world.

“I can’t believe he actually likes collecting corpses… and setting them up in his courtyard….” The Vile-Prince was clearly very pleased with how stunned Bai Xiaochun looked. Looking around proudly at his collection, he began to introduce them as surely as if they were the most priceless of treasures.

“See that one? That is a one-of-a-kind Ten Yang Body. It’s a type of battle body that can allow a deva to fight a demigod! It's so strong that it's really difficult to put into words!

“Oh, and that one over there is even more amazing. It possesses the most spectacular powers of attraction you can imagine. Men with that type of body can capture the hearts of endless numbers of female cultivators. After some research, I found that such bodies emit shocking fluctuations that tug at the psyches of anyone of the opposite sex!

“Look at this old guy. Forget about how ancient he looks. Technically speaking, no one in the Eternal Immortal Domains ever lived longer than him. He clearly had a demigod cultivation base, but his longevity surpassed celestials to a ridiculous level. I wasn’t able to determine the reason, even after lots of research.”

As the Vile-Prince went about his introductions, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the reactions of the other cultivators present. Considering how no one seemed surprised, it was obvious that this hobby of the Vile-Prince’s was no secret in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

Bai Xiaochun looked back at all the corpses, and felt like his mind was spinning beyond control. Hair standing on end, he interrupted the Vile-Prince’s enthusiastic monologue to say, “Uh… I got this body from my parents, Vile-Prince. I'm afraid there’s no deal to be made. I just realized I have an important matter to attend to. I’ll take my leave now.”

With that, he began to back up.

The Vile-Prince immediately frowned in what appeared to be significant displeasure.

Snorting coldly, he said, “If you don’t want to make the trade, Ambassador Bai, that’s fine. But there’s no need to act so stuck-up!

“We cultivators are supposed to defy the heavens! Our goal in life should be to achieve the great Eternal Dao!

“The fleshly body is merely a vessel to carry the divine souls of cultivators through the River of Time! The journey along that river is a long and terrifying one, and fraught with peril. If a better vessel is suddenly presented, one should take it! That is the best way to improve one’s chances of achieving that great Dao!” The tenacity and focus in the Vile-Prince’s voice left Bai Xiaochun a bit stunned, and in fact, some of what he said actually made sense.

“Ambassador Bai, as a celestial, you have experienced many things. I refuse to believe that you don’t understand how sometimes, it’s necessary to replace the fleshly body that is our vessel in life. Only in that way can we save time and reach our ultimate goal, that great Dao!” The Vile-Prince was clearly pleased with how closely Bai Xiaochun was listening to him. After all, he was talking about his Dao, which he was completely confident would take him to that which was eternal.

“It’s true that your fleshly body came from your father and mother. But you should think of that body as merely the first of many! Bodies are like magical items. Ambassador Bai, I refuse to believe that you still use the same magical items that you did when you first stepped into the cultivation world!” Bai Xiaochun gasped slightly. Although he felt in his heart that the Vile-Prince was incorrect, he spoke in such a decisive fashion that it seemed hard to question him.

The Vile-Prince suddenly tore open his clothing, revealing a body… that appeared to have been stitched together from numerous other body parts!

“Ambassador Bai, look at this. See my left arm? It comes from the Vile-Glory Clan, and possess the power of sinister coldness. And my right arm is from the Clash-Heaven Horde, and can release profoundly shocking divine abilities!

“I got my left leg from the Fiendkillers, and my right leg from the Dragonherds!”

He was crisscrossed with scars, a sight that would be shocking to anyone who looked at him.

Bai Xiaochun was completely shaken by what he was hearing. Never could he have imagined that a freakish person like this could exist in the world.

“His father permits all of this?” he thought. Apparently, the Vile-Prince was used to people reacting in this way, and could tell exactly what Bai Xiaochun was thinking.

Smiling, he said, “His Majesty the Vile-Emperor initially opposed my Dao, but after enough time passed, he changed his mind. In fact, he approves of it now!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1170 awe-chapter-1171

“The Vile-Emperor approves...?” Bai Xiaochun thought, blinking a few times as his heart began to beat faster in his chest. “Poor kid. He doesn’t even know that the person he thinks is his father is actually an imposter…. His real father disapproved, but once the imposter took over, it was only natural for him to approve of such a harmful inclination….”

Although he felt bad for the Vile-Prince, he was now in absolutely no mood to participate in some sort of banquet.

Furthermore, he was now convinced that just about everyone in Vile-Emperor City was crazy. Not a single one seemed like an ordinary person. At the same time, he decided that nothing about the Vile-Prince’s speech just now made sense. After all, he didn’t want ideas like that to take root inside of him and cause unwanted changes to his psyche….

“These people are psychos!” Bai Xiaochun firmly refused the Vile-Prince’s offer again, and then, despite the fact that he knew it would not please him, flew up into the air, along with his two demigod subordinates.

Just as he was preparing to leave, he stopped and looked back at the main gate!

As he did, the aura of the mid Celestial Realm suddenly erupted out from that very spot, shooting out as if to oppose his departure.

An unsightly expression overtook his face, and his heart turned icy as he looked at a figure walking out of the darkness of the gate. There, dressed in a black robe, was… Daoist Heavenspan!

His face was cold and grim as he stared at Bai Xiaochun, and it was almost possible to hear the sound of thunder crackling when their gazes met.

“There’s something strange going on with Daoist Heavenspan. He's much stronger than the last time we met in the second immortal domain!”

Bai Xiaochun had made rapid progress because of the enormous good fortune he had come across. However, it was clear that Daoist Heavenspan had also encountered some unimaginable good fortune of his own. His cultivation base had risen rapidly, to the point where he was now catching up to Bai Xiaochun.

Were he not in Vile-Emperor City, Bai Xiaochun would have attacked Daoist Heavenspan without even thinking about it. But now, he could only do something like that if it was absolutely necessary.

Now that Daoist Heavenspan had arrived, the Vile-Prince flew up into the air, laughing.

“Ambassador Bai, there’s no need to be in such a rush. If you don’t want to make that trade, then fine, we won’t trade. Now that you’ve come all this way, though, you definitely have to enjoy some fine alcohol. I specifically invited you and Daoist Heavenspan here so that I could act as a mediator between the two of you.

“No matter what, the two of you are both from the Heavenspan Realm. There are no enmities that we can’t resolve if we try. Come come. Let’s drink together and put the past behind us. We cultivators pursue the eternal, that is the true great Dao!”

In response to the advice, Daoist Heavenspan clasped hands and bowed deeply at the waist.

“I’ll follow your every word and command, Vile-Prince.”

To see Daoist Heavenspan acting and speaking in this way caused Bai Xiaochun to frown. After all, Daoist Heavenspan was a celestial, and therefore, there didn’t seem to be any reason for him to act in such an ingratiating fashion.

Even if Daoist Heavenspan was a foreigner, it still didn’t make sense.

Furthermore, this didn’t seem at all the way that Daoist Heavenspan used to act. He had been the high and mighty *Celestial* at one time, but now he was acting completely differently. It was as if he had changed completely.

Looking at him, Bai Xiaochun slowly and forcefully said, “You gave up everything, and even treated your own flesh and blood with the ultimate cruelty, abandoning your own people, just to leave the world you lived in…. And now, Daoist Heavenspan, you are nothing more than a dog and a lackey. Are you happy?”

Daoist Heavenspan’s expression didn’t change as he looked up with cold eyes.

“I’d rather be a dog with freedom,” he said, “than waste away into death in that tomb of a world!” He spoke the words with utmost calmness, as though he had already pondered this point at length.

Daoist Heavenspan's response only served to anger Bai Xiaochun more.

"Maybe you're a dog with freedom," he shot back, "but you watched with your own eyes as *your* people suffered in torment!!"

"It was survival of the fittest," Daoist Heavenspan replied calmly, as if nothing so far had provoked even the slightest emotional reaction within him. "Perhaps for them, it was just the first step. Those who survived are suitable to keep living. Those who died simply faced a cultivation tribulation. For those who were buried in the process, perhaps it was good fortune for them to die with the world around them!"

"Well said!" the Vile-Prince declared, a look of praise on his face as he laughed loudly. "You couldn't have said it better, Celestial Heavenspan. In the cultivation world, survival of the fittest is the most important thing. Ambassador Bai, what point is there in weeping for the weak? People are born, and they die. It's as simple as that." As the Vile-Prince chuckled, Daoist Heavenspan nodded in agreement. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, he smiled.

"Bai Xiaochun, you used to be as timid as a mouse, and scared out of your mind of dying. How come you've suddenly become so sentimental?"

Bai Xiaochun stared dead at Daoist Heavenspan for a long moment, seemingly struggling to control himself. Then he suddenly chuckled. Eyes filling with determination, he said, "You want to fight? Then let's fight!"

Taking a step forward, he transformed into a series of afterimages that shot toward Daoist Heavenspan

As he neared, Daoist Heavenspan’s eyes narrowed, and he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, ten Daogates appeared behind him, swirling into the form of a tempest that surged forth to meet Bai Xiaochun.

They moved with blinding speed, colliding in a massive explosion that sent shockwaves out in all directions.

The nearby devas and demigods were visibly shocked, and backed away. Even the Vile-Prince immediately fell back. After all, a battle between two celestials could flatten everything in the area. It was truly a shocking thing.

“What are you doing, Bai Xiaochun?!?!” the Vile-Prince shouted, clearly placing all the responsibility on Bai Xiaochun. However, once Bai Xiaochun committed to launching an attack, he didn’t care what anyone said or did. He followed through like lightning, and within the blink of an eye, he and Daoist Heavenspan had exchanged dozens of blows.

Blood sprayed out of Daoist Heavenspan’s mouth as he was sent tumbling backward, his face as white as a sheet, and yet, his eyes defiant. He had goaded Bai Xiaochun into attacking to get a sense of exactly how strong he actually was.

The answer he had received was not satisfying.

Even as he fell back, Bai Xiaochun accelerated, striking him again. Daoist Heavenspan once again found blood spraying out of his mouth as he was flung backward another 300 meters.

Just as Bai Xiaochun’s killing intent truly began to rage, streams of divine sense began to converge on the location.

The celestials of Vile-Emperor City were preparing to interfere.

If it had been just them, it might not have been anything to worry about. But then a divine sense that surpassed any celestials appeared, something vile and domineering, something that could split apart the heavens. Instantly, the divine will grabbed Bai Xiaochun and pushed him back in completely unceremonious fashion.

Bai Xiaochun shivered as he staggered backward several dozen meters. At the same time, the voice of the Vile-Emperor rang out coldly in his ears.

“That’s enough!”

Daoist Heavenspan immediately bowed his head and said, “Yes, sir.”

As for Bai Xiaochun, he stood there for a moment with clenched jaw before nodding. Waving his sleeve, he turned and began to walk away.

However, after only walking a few steps, he stopped in place, looked over his shoulder and said, “How is Du Lingfei?”

Bai Xiaochun had been holding those words in his heart for a long time now. In the past, he hadn’t dared to ask them, mostly for fear of what the answer might be. But now, he didn’t hesitate.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1171 awe-chapter-1172

Up to this point, Daoist Heavenspan’s expression had remained as cold as ice, even when he was coughing up blood. But in response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, he suddenly shivered.

He even averted his gaze to avoid revealing the bitterness and other mixed emotions he felt. Although his expression quickly returned to normal, his voice softened just a little bit.

“She’s… alive.”

“Where!?” Bai Xiaochun replied, similarly shivering a bit.

A long moment passed. Finally, Daoist Heavenspan said, “I haven’t been able to find her….”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, not even he was sure of what to think or how to feel. Another moment passed, and then he left, not bothering to ask any more questions.

Back at the embassy, he yet again went into seclusion in his private chamber. After sitting down cross-legged, he shivered, and a bitter gleam appeared in his eyes as he recalled what it had been like to have Daoist Heavenspan absorbing him, with Du Lingfei desperately pleading for him to stop.

“As long as you’re alive, that’s all that’s important….” he murmured. For some reason, not even Daoist Heavenspan had been able to track her down, but Bai Xiaochun knew that as long as she was still alive, he would be able to find her eventually.

It was the same with Bai Hao…. As long as there was even a tiny bit of hope, he would cling to it. And that beautiful hope enabled him to refrain from sighing about the matter.

“It’s definitely going to happen….” Taking a deep breath, he suppressed his thoughts, closed his eyes, and resorted to cultivation to seek peace, something he had once been loath to do.

A month flew by in a flash, and Bai Xiaochun focused on cultivation the entire time. Forgetting the bitter pain of the past by immersing himself in cultivation was something he had grown used to.

Another month went by. After calculating that the spirit automaton was asleep again, he went back to the damaged fan.

He knew that the spot where the fan floated through the inky darkness of the void was far, far away from the Eternal Immortal Domains. Although he wasn’t sure exactly where the fan was, he knew that when he stood on it and sent his divine sense out to scan the area, it felt very different from the Eternal Immortal Domains.

“Is the void that huge…?” he murmured. Not only was he happy to use the fan to improve his cultivation, he was also using it to step through a door of epic proportions.

He wasn’t sure if anyone before him had ever left the Eternal Immortal Domains in this fashion, but he had the feeling that if people had, they were few and far between. It seemed likely that not even the Vile-Emperor or Saint-Emperor had traveled so far out into the darkness.

“I wonder... if I'm really the only person from the Eternal Immortal Domains to have ever been out here.” Finally, he looked away from the void back to the damaged fan.

“Things are probably going to get even harder after the seventy-eighth level….” Eyes flashing, he headed toward the fan rib that led to the seventy-ninth level!

Bai Xiaochun soon found out that the seventy-ninth level was even more shockingly difficult than he had imagined. In fact, it took roughly half a month for him to pass it.

If it weren’t for his tremendous powers of regeneration, and the fact that he had absorbed some flesh and blood from a sovereign, he probably would have failed. And next was the eightieth level….

Time flew by. In the past, when the spirit automaton had remained in slumber, Bai Xiaochun would have been able to pass ten levels in that amount of time. But this time, he only got to the eighty-third level!

Upon emerging, he was clearly spent. He lay down flat on his back, wounds still bleeding, his fleshly body and cultivation base teetering on the brink of collapse.

“That was too hard….” he thought. He lay there for three days before he felt recovered enough to do some calculations regarding the spirit automaton.

“I probably don’t have enough time to get through the eighty-fourth level,” he thought. “That little automaton should wake up in two or three days. Although I could at least check out the level to see what it’s like, and maybe start thinking of a way to pass it.” Gritting his teeth, he headed toward the eighty-fourth level.

As soon as he entered and looked around, he saw something that was almost completely unimaginable. His eyes went wide.

“This… this…. There’s no way this is really happening…. Heavens!” The world of the eighty-fourth level was a bleak wasteland. The sky was dark, and what little vegetation existed was withered and dry. There was also a pervasive aura of death that filled the entire place.

Surrounding him in the air were… vast numbers of souls!!

They floated around mindlessly, and apparently, would continue to do so for all eternity as long as no one bothered them. However, if they were disturbed, they would become vicious, and completely intent on gobbling up anything living. Considering the vast number involved, it was only possible to imagine the shocking scene that would play out if that happened.

To the cultivators of the Eternal Immortal Domains, souls were not a common thing to see. Although it wasn’t completely impossible to encounter them, they were definitely a rarity for people with lower cultivation bases.

Bai Xiaochun had long since come to realize that fact. It was one of the reasons why he hadn’t been able to replenish his stock of multi-colored flame, and by extension, unable to resurrect Bai Hao.

Therefore, seeing this many souls collected in once place nearly caused his vision to swim. He was like a poor beggar who had stumbled across a mountain of gold, and was half-convinced that he was seeing things.

Apparently, his mere presence was a stimulating factor to the nearby souls, who began to awaken from their state of blankness and turn in his direction.

Innumerable souls looked over and began to shriek in soundless fashion, causing fluctuations to roll out everywhere and creating a cosmic tempest that filled the entire eighty-fourth level. It almost seemed like the world was about to explode.

Then the countless souls began to charge madly toward Bai Xiaochun!

“Heavens, could it really be true…?” He rubbed his eyes to make sure he was seeing clearly. Then, before any of them could even get close, he blurred into motion toward one of the nearest vengeful souls and grabbed it. Crushing it, he created a one-colored flame!

The sight of the one-colored flame immediately filled him with unprecedented levels of excitement.

“They’re not illusory? Heavens! I… I love this place!!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously. As of this moment, he realized that this damaged fan was a wonderful place. Although some of the levels had been difficult, it was now giving him a huge windfall at absolutely no cost….

He didn’t care if the spirit automaton woke up right now. All he could think about were souls. During his time in the Eternal Immortal Domains, he had watched his reserves of multi-colored flame shrinking, to the point where he almost had none left.

As a result, he couldn't perform the same amazing spirit enhancements that he could in the past, and in fact, had to be very judicious in their use.

“Mine! All mine!! Don’t run! Hahaha! Be a good soul now, come over here to Lord Bai! Rich! I’ve really struck it rich!”

The excited cries of Bai Xiaochun echoed about in the world. As for the previously vicious souls, although they didn’t really possess any level of intelligence, they were soon looking around in complete shock….

Never before had anyone challenged this level in such a fashion. From what they could understand on an instinctual level… living people should be afraid of them. But now, Bai Xiaochun was running around tossing Soul Convergence Pills left and right, each resulting detonation of which sucked in vast amounts of souls.

If that were all there were to it, it might have been possible to accept. But he was also conjuring flame at the same time. Suddenly, the tables were turned, and the vengeful souls were the terrified ones. Shrieking, they tried to flee Bai Xiaochun’s clutches.

“Be a good little soul! Don’t run!!” Eyes shining, Bai Xiaochun lunged forward….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1172 awe-chapter-1173

Vengeful souls were used to striking terror into the hearts of living beings. And this world of death that they existed in had been created for that express purpose.

But now… Bai Xiaochun had come, the first heavenly necromancer to ever visit this place. With his Soul Convergence Pills, he created a storm the likes of which the damaged fan had never seen, a storm which changed everything….

Rumbling booms filled the entire world. During his time in the Eternal Immortal Domains, Bai Xiaochun had drawn upon many of the medicinal pills he had in reserve, but none of his Soul Convergence Pills. As such, he had a huge amount on hand.

Back in the Wildlands, he had made a point of building up a large stockpile. That way, if he ever encountered vengeful souls in random locations, he would be well-equipped to get his hands on them.

However, there were virtually no souls floating around in the Eternal Immortal Domains. As a result, his hands had often itched to return to their previous habits. And now… he was completely overwhelmed by excitement and joy.

There were just too many souls! This level was definitely a windfall for Bai Xiaochun, providing him with benefits that surpassed any of the rewards from the previous levels. In fact, even if this level didn't have a specific reward at the end, it would still be better than any of the other levels.

To him, the vengeful souls he could acquire were the best reward imaginable.

“Be a good little soul and don’t run! Lord Bai is a nice fellow, he won’t bully you guys!” Eyes shining, he leapt to and fro, tossing out Soul Convergence Pills and then snatching up the soul spheres they formed to toss into his bag of holding.

“I’m just scooping up the souls!” The only thing that disappointed him was that he couldn’t collect the souls faster, and that he only had two hands. Worried that he might be expelled from the level, he spared no amount of effort to crazily get as many vengeful souls as he could.

“Stop right there, all of you. Behave! Dammit, get back here!!” Soon, the amount of vengeful souls had been visibly reduced, while those that remained continued to flee in terror.

Around the time that Bai Xiaochun had collected about twenty or thirty percent of the vengeful souls, the spirit automaton finally woke up. As soon as his eyes opened, he realized that Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of challenging a level. Sending some divine sense out, he saw the shocking scene playing out in the eighty-fourth level.

The spirit automaton was so stunned that he almost didn’t dare to believe what he was seeing, and couldn’t even react for an extended time.

“This… this….” Although he wasn’t actually capable of crying, in this moment, that was exactly what he wanted to do.

“Heaven-damned Bai Xiaochun!!” he howled. “My souls! *My souls!* The exalted sovereign shed blood, sweat and tears to master the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and then created those souls from nothing!!

“Heavens! Each of those souls contains some of the Dao Essence of Life and Death! They're priceless!!!” Descending into madness, the spirit automaton sent some divine sense out into the level and unhesitatingly used his authority with the damaged fan to try to get Bai Xiaochun out of the level as quickly as possible.

Within the world of the level, chaos exploded into being as a massive gravitational force descended from above, wrapped around Bai Xiaochun, and began to drag him forcefully out of the level.

Bai Xiaochun instantly started getting nervous.

“What are you doing, you little automaton!? You’re cheating! I haven’t finished with the level yet! Why are you letting me pass?!

“You’re a spirit automaton! Have some respect! How could you possibly surrender right now? Let me go! I want to rely on my own skills to pass this level!” Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t in control of his own body. The gravitational force dragged him up into the sky, and the souls drew further and further away.

“You good-for-nothing little automaton!” he shouted in rage. He even drew upon his authority within the damaged fan to try to fight back.

“Shut up. Shut up! SHUT UP!!” the spirit automaton shouted, not sure of what else to say. As of this point, he and Bai Xiaochun had almost equal levels of authority within the fan, and because of that, Bai Xiaochun managed to force an equilibrium. Then, he started tossing out more pills and collecting up the resulting soul spheres.

The spirit automaton was enraged to the point of madness. Despite having just awoken, he decided to put everything on the line and potentially injure himself to teleport Bai Xiaochun out of the level.

When Bai Xiaochun finally vanished, the spirit automaton sagged in exhaustion, his divine sense weakened, his mind drained.

Although he considered swearing an oath to destroy Bai Xiaochun in the next level, considering how many times he had sworn such oaths, only to have Bai Xiaochun confound him at every turn, he decided that perhaps it wasn’t the best thing to do.

“He’s like my arch-nemesis!!” Filled with grief, and feeling overwhelmed with exhaustion, he immediately went back to sleep.

Outside of the level on the damaged fan, Bai Xiaochun reappeared, heart pounding, expression that of rage. He tried to go back into the level, but just as with the world of the Dark Concocters, he was unable to do so. No amount of trying met with even a hint of success. Finally, he simply sighed.

“That spirit automaton is way too stingy. What’s the big deal about a few souls? This fan is eventually going to be mine anyway! If I'm fine with taking some things that belong to me, what is he getting all bent out of shape for?” Snorting, he patted his bag of holding and checked to make sure that all of the souls were in place. At that point, his heart surged.

“It's been a long time since I had so many souls....” he thought. Hand fairly itching, he began to conjure some flame. Light flashed as one tongue of multi-colored flame after another appeared. The highest he could go at the moment was fifteen-colored flame, but he did manage to get quite a collection of that.

After all, the difficulty level grew much higher after fifteen colors, and the process also tended to be much more draining. Although he had acquired a significant number of souls, after some quick calculations, he was fairly certain that he didn’t have enough to conjure up to a twenty-two-colored flame.

“If I get a bit more, maybe I can get to twenty-two colors.” Eyeing the spark-shaped mark on the back of his hand, he took a deep breath and swore that, after he became the true owner of the damaged fan, he would go back and get all of the souls that remained in the eighty-fourth level.

It took half a month for him to complete his flame-conjuring session. At that point, he had a much more sizeable collection of multi-colored flame in his bag of holding. Feeling quite pleased, he looked around at the fan and decided that he should probably head back to the Eternal Immortal Domains. After a short rest, he did just that.

Soon, he materialized back in his private chamber in the embassy in Vile-Emperor City.

“What a rewarding journey!” High-spirited and full of mettle, he summoned his demigod subordinates to get a report of what had occurred while he was in seclusion. After dismissing them, he crossed his legs and began to practice cultivation.

Seven days passed in the blink of an eye. His cultivation base was back in top shape, and he was just getting ready to go back to the damaged fan when… an imperial edict came down from Vile-Emperor Palace. Before anyone could even react to it, a sonorous voice echoed out to fill the embassy.

“The Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s Ambassador Bai is hereby summoned to the palace for an audience with the emperor!!”

All of the cultivators in the embassy were visibly shocked, and looked over to see how Bai Xiaochun would react.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit hesitant, and wondered if the Vile-Emperor planned to punish him for the incident with Daoist Heavenspan.

“There’s no way he’s that narrow-minded, right…?” In the end, he decided that it most likely wasn’t because of that. After all, he was the ambassador of the entire Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and wouldn’t be punished unless he committed some massive crime.

Perhaps things might have been different if he wasn’t a celestial, but he was, and thus felt very confident.

“Well it’s not like I can refuse anyway. Whatever. Might as well go check things out!” Still feeling slightly uneasy, he took a breath and headed toward the imperial palace on the dragon’s skull.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1173 awe-chapter-1174

After flying out of the embassy, he immediately felt a bit more at ease as he looked around and realized that he wasn’t the only person to have been issued an imperial edict.

Celestial Virūpākṣa and the other celestials were also included. Back when powerful experts of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had been fighting those from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, they had all been working together. But the truth was that, normally speaking, they were always at odds.

People noticed Bai Xiaochun, but did little more than look at him before moving along. That also served to put him more at ease.

“This thing probably isn’t about me specifically….” he thought. “After all, I'm the ambassador from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. The Vile-Emperor probably just invited me to attend out of formality.” Feeling calmer than ever, he flew up to the imperial palace. Upon arriving, he saw a beam of light approaching, within which was a woman.

She was beautiful, but cold beyond measure. Most people edged away from her subconsciously, seemingly unwilling to even come into contact with the ghost qi that surrounded her.

She was none other than… Gongsun Wan’er!

Because Bai Xiaochun had given her a chunk of the sovereign's flesh back in the second immortal domain, she had acquired a reward that none of the other celestials did.

Despite that, she treated Bai Xiaochun as coldly as ever, almost as if she didn’t even notice him.

Bai Xiaochun had originally planned to call out a greeting, but upon seeing how she was acting, gave an inward harrumph. He was really getting convinced that Gongsun Wan’er had mental problems. Considering that, he wasn’t inclined to pay her any attention, and simply turned to enter the imperial palace.

And yet, even as Gongsun Wan’er walked past him, he heard an almost undetectably quiet voice in his ear.

“Be careful!”

Only those two words were spoken, nothing else. And yet, ripples of divine sense could be detected inside the imperial palace in response to them, as though people had noticed. By then, Gongsun Wan’er was past Bai Xiaochun and in the imperial palace.

He stood in place for a long moment. Moments ago, he had calmed himself down, only to have that calm shattered by Gongsun Wan’er’s words. And yet, there was no going back now. Steeling himself, he entered the imperial palace.

He was in no mood to marvel at the magnificent imperial palace. Feeling the pressure mounting, he entered the main hall to find numerous banquet tables set up, spread with immortal liquor and spirit fruits. There was also a host of handmaidens present to serve the guests.

Bai Xiaochun looked around hesitantly at all the tables. He recognized many of the people here. Virūpākṣa, Gongsun Wan’er, Prince Ur-Demon, Celestial Deadfall, Daoist Heavenspan…. There were also quite a few demigod experts that he had seen before.

At the far end of the hall near the Dragon Throne was the Vile-Prince, who was currently chatting with the cultivators seated near him. When he noticed Bai Xiaochun, he looked over and laughed heartily.

“Ambassador Bai! Come come, sit here with me!” He even rose to his feet, walked over, and cordially put his arm over Bai Xiaochun’s shoulder to lead him over to the table.

Bai Xiaochun cautiously went along. After being seated, he looked over at the Vile-Prince and asked, “What’s the occasion, Vile-Prince?”

“My father the emperor recently had a cultivation breakthrough, and instructed me to throw a little banquet. I invited all of the officials and officers of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, first to offer their congratulations, and second to, er… well, Ambassador Bai, most of your time in Vile-Emperor City has been spent in seclusion. You should really spend a bit more time getting to know the cultivators of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.” He chuckled a bit, during which time many of the surrounding cultivators turned to look at Bai Xiaochun.

The celestials’ eyes were cold, and more than one derisive smile could be seen. Clearly, none of them had any desire to conceal the revulsion they felt for Bai Xiaochun.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun realized that this banquet… had indeed been set up to target him!

And the likely culprit wasn’t the Vile-Emperor, but rather, the Vile-Prince!

Bai Xiaochun’s brow furrowed slightly, but then he relaxed. Laughing heartily, he took a casual swig of some immortal alcohol, and then cast an enigmatic smile in the Vile-Prince's direction.

In response, the Vile-Prince's eyes flickered with icy light, and he chuckled again. Apparently, everyone who had been invited was now gathered. It was at this point that divine sense fluctuations spread out that clearly surpassed anything from a celestial. Before any of the shaken guests could react, someone appeared on the Dragon Throne!

He wore a dragon robe, and an imperial crown, and despite his expressionless face, looked like some sort of god. He was none other than… the Vile-Emperor!

Everyone, Bai Xiaochun included, shot to their feet, clasped hands, and bowed.

"Greetings, Vile-Emperor!" they said in unison.

The Vile-Emperor said nothing. Waving his hand dismissively, he closed his eyes, as though nothing present were worthy of attracting his interest.

Apparently, there were many people here who were used to the Vile-Emperor, and understood the significance of his action. And many of them began to cast occasional glances in the direction of the Vile-Prince and Bai Xiaochun.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was now feeling more convinced than ever that this was no banquet.

"No matter what he has planned, I just have to play along…. I refuse to believe that I can commit some sort of capital offense while simply enjoying some alcohol!" Snorting coldly in his heart, he kept a calm expression on his face.

At this point the Vile-Prince rose to his feet, eyes narrowed.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” he said with a smile, “I think it’s safe to assume that most of you have at least heard of the new ambassador from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun.”

Bai Xiaochun raised his glass of alcohol as protocol required, a faint smile visible on his face.

“Thanks to my profound love for my father the emperor, I have been tasked with presiding over today’s festivities. Therefore, the first thing I would like to do is give Ambassador Bai a chance to enjoy his first Vile-Emperor Dynasty banquet.” Everyone looked on as the Vile-Prince gave his little speech, all of them looking very pleased.

“Ambassador Bai, worry about the alcohol later. Please, take a moment to enjoy a special kind of dance that has become something of a tradition in recent years.” Glancing at Bai Xiaochun out of the corner of his eyes, he began to clap in very soft fashion.

Within moment, soft footfalls could be heard as two groups of women entered from either side of the hall. All of them were beautiful and lithesome. However, there was something awkward about the way they moved, as if they were marionettes!

Odd smiles could be seen on their faces. Strangely, each and every smile seemed exactly the same, down to the slightest twist of the lip!

Anyone who saw such smiles would find them to be completely bizarre. However what was even more shocking was their expressions. Within their eyes could be seen profound entreaty, and even despair….

These were not female cultivators! Clearly… these were *former* female cultivators who had been transformed into corpse puppets!!

And yet… their souls had been ensnared within them, giving expression to their eyes. They were not like the walking dead, but rather, were being controlled by external forces. And as soon as they reached the center of the hall, they began to perform a graceful dance!

Some people might not find it too surprising of a situation. However as soon as Bai Xiaochun laid eyes on the spectacle, his mind began to spin, and he even began to tremble visibly. Within moments, his eyes were completely bloodshot!

And that was because… these women were all cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm!!

In fact, two of them had been disciples in the River-Defying Sect who had written love letters to him!!

Smiling, the Vile-Prince looked over at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Ambassador Bai, don’t you just love this opening dance that we’ve come to enjoy before banquets in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty?”

The eyes of the many celestials and demigods in the room were all focused dead on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was struggling to remain calm. Clearly, the Vile-Prince had set this all up on purpose to provoke him. The celestials were watching him with coldly flickering eyes, and even the Vile-Emperor sat there without saying a word.

If he did something rash here, then it would give them a perfect excuse to claim that he was trying to assassinate the emperor, and then possibly execute him as a result!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1174 awe-chapter-1175

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything. He held his cup of alcohol, hand trembling slightly. He could sense the contempt of Daoist Heavenspan, the mixed feelings in Gongsun Wan’er, and the cold expressions on the faces of everyone else. He slowly closed his eyes.

“Strength….” he thought. “If I were strong enough to fight an archaean, none of them would dare to humiliate me in this way. None of them would dare to tyrannize Heavenspan cultivators like this!!” Thankfully, his eyes were closed, making his struggle impossible to detect by anyone else.

Unfortunately, things weren’t over yet. In response to Bai Xiaochun’s restraint, the Vile-Prince smiled again, his eyes flickering with contempt.

“Don’t worry, Ambassador Bai. We’ve prepared more traditional entertainment for you….” He waved his hand to indicate to his followers to begin the next phase of his plan. “You know, we struck it off as friends as soon as we met. Furthermore, you represent the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Therefore… I’d like to present you with a gift! It’s none other than, er--” He looked over and waved a finger at the dancing corpse puppets.

“Well, it’s the technique used to produce corpse puppets like this. That way, Ambassador Bai, you can go back and make some of your own to enjoy even more. And, yes, I did make all of these corpse puppets myself.” Before Bai Xiaochun could open his eyes, two cultivators entered the hall and approached the Vile-Prince. After clasping hands in greeting, they waved their sleeves, causing three cultivators to tumble out of their bags of holding!

They were all in the Nascent Soul stage, and were all unconscious.

“Watch carefully, Ambassador Bai. I’ll personally make some puppets right now, just for your benefit.” The Vile-Prince smiled broadly, but his eyes were as cold as ice. He had set this trap specifically for Bai Xiaochun, who he was convinced was just too stubborn for his own good. If Bai Xiaochun had agreed to trade bodies, he would have talked to his father the emperor to ensure that his stay in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty went smoothly and safely.

But Bai Xiaochun had refused him. Therefore, the Vile-Prince had determined to take by force what had not been given in trade!

Just as Bai Xiaochun had already guessed, if he was even the least bit impulsive in the presence of the Vile-Emperor, it could instantly be turned into an enormous problem!

Therefore, the Vile-Prince's intention was to put Bai Xiaochun in a situation where he couldn’t hold back from taking action!

Chuckling coldly, the Vile-Prince began to create corpse puppets right there in front of everyone. Within moments, anguished screams erupted from the mouths of the cultivators. Shivering, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes. The truth was that he knew he needed to see exactly what was happening!

“There’s something about this technique you need to pay special attention to, Ambassador Bai. And that is, you must absolutely not let them die in the process. You must torment them in a way that makes them scream bitterly and in anguish, and yet, does not kill them. That way, the final product will be particularly lively.” The Vile-Prince smiled as he explained what he was doing. As for the brutal process playing out, it left everyone feeling quite shocked.

Bai Xiaochun’s hands were clamped onto the arms of his chair, and his eyes were crimson as he felt himself slowly slipping into madness.

The brutality on display was worse than someone being skinned alive. Living people were being slowly transformed into corpse puppets, and the Vile-Prince was describing the process in minute detail. And there was more to it. In order to provoke Bai Xiaochun even more, he released the magical seals on the three cultivators, allowing them to think and speak as normal.

One of the three was a middle-aged man who seemed to know Bai Xiaochun. When Bai Xiaochun’s eyes locked onto him, the man wailed, “Help me, Arch-Ancestor… help me….”

Gongsun Wan’er’s face twitched, and she shook her head warningly at Bai Xiaochun. As for Bai Xiaochun, his hands were gripping the arms of his chair so tightly that they suddenly shattered, sending splinters of wood out in all directions. As that happened, the celestials all looked over at him, energy surging.

Bai Xiaochun was so angry that he was losing control. Shivering from the inner pain, he wished that he didn’t have such a powerful fleshly body. That way the wood would stab into his palms and possibly help him forget about his inner anguish. Feeling profoundly grim, he rose to his feet!

In that same moment, the Vile-Emperor stirred on the Dragon Throne, and looks of glee appeared in the eyes of

Virūpākṣa and the other celestials as they prepared to attack.

And yet, in that very moment, Gongsun Wan’er waved her hand, sending three streams of black smoke speeding out. As a demigod, the Vile-Prince was powerless to do anything, and furthermore, his attention was fully focused on Bai Xiaochun. Before he could react, the smoke stabbed into the screaming, pleading Heavenspan Realm cultivators.

The three of them shivered, and then looks of release could be seen in their eyes as they died.

“Enough!” she said, her voice like a cold, sinister wind that swept through the imperial palace. “This is the imperial palace, Vile-Prince. Do your research elsewhere. It sickens me!”

It was not in Bai Xiaochun’s place to do something like she had. But she was a celestial of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and therefore, any consequences she would face would be trivial at most!

“You!” the Vile-Prince blurted, turning to face her. Everyone else present also looked over in shock, including the celestials, upon whose faces could be seen slight frowns. But in the end, there was little they could say by way of response.

The Vile-Emperor opened his eyes and looked over, his expression unreadable.

Bai Xiaochun looked at the dead cultivators with faint expressions of relief on their faces. Taking a deep breath, he turned to the Vile-Emperor and clasped hands formally, his face expressionless.

“Vile-Emperor, Your Majesty. I’m afraid I must excuse myself early!” With that, he turned to leave.

A very grim expression could be seen on the Vile-Prince’s face, and his eyes flickered with hidden hatred as he looked at Gongsun Wan’er. As of this moment, he had vowed to one day transform her into a celestial-level puppet!

And yet, he simply wasn’t resigned to letting Bai Xiaochun leave. Rushing forward, he blocked his path.

“Ambassador Bai, His Majesty the Vile-Emperor hasn’t given you leave to depart. The banquet isn’t over! How could you possibly leave now? There’s a very important matter still on the agenda!”

Bai Xiaochun looked coldly at the Vile-Prince, the killing intent in his heart growing stronger by the moment. At the same time, the Vile-Prince’s heart was trembling with icy rage.

Were it not for the fact that the circumstances made it impossible, Bai Xiaochun would have cut this Vile-Prince down where he stood. Instead, he stepped around him and continued on his way out. The eyes of Virūpākṣa and the other celestials flickered hesitantly as they looked at him, and then over at the Vile-Emperor, who as yet had not spoken or done anything.

A cold sweat covered the Vile-Prince's body, born of humiliation and rage. Suddenly, he clapped his hands.

In response, a beam of light approached from off in the distance, within which was an old man with a demigod cultivation base. And he wasn’t alone! He was dragging someone else along with him!

Shockingly, the person being dragged toward them wore imperial robes, although his head hung down, making it impossible to make out his facial features. He did not wear a crown, and yet his robes alone made him spectacularly eye-catching!!

“Arch-Emperor!” Bai Xiaochun said hoarsely, stopping in place.

For many years, only two people in the Eternal Immortal Domains had qualified to wear imperial robes. One was the Vile-Emperor, and the other was the Saint-Emperor. But now… another person existed who held such qualifications!

He was a direct descendent of the Arch-Sovereign, the true and rightful ruler of the imperial dynasty from the Heavenspan Realm… the Arch-Emperor!!

Back when Bai Xiaochun fought with Daoist Heavenspan, the good fortune from the gravekeeper bestowed him with the bloodline of the Arch-Sovereign, and turned him into the new Arch-Ancestor. In addition to the fact that he had a celestial cultivation base, he was very much like an emperor to the current Heavenspan Realm cultivators. However, the Arch-Emperor… was the true paragon entity from the Heavenspan Realm!

The Heavenspan Realm had been destroyed, but the Arch-Emperor hadn’t perished. He had been captured by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, tortured for information… and then locked up like an animal in the imperial palace. Now… he was being paraded out for Bai Xiaochun to see!

Upon hearing his title being spoken out loud, the dazed Arch-Emperor slowly looked up, and his gaze fell on Bai Xiaochun. And then…

He smiled.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1175 awe-chapter-1176

The way the Arch-Emperor smiled made him seem very different from before. His left eye had been dug out, seemingly by himself. Normally speaking, he shouldn’t have aged so dramatically, but because of his years of imprisonment, and the brutal ways the Vile-Prince had used him for research purposes, he had.

He was the magnificent reigning Arch-Emperor. Back in the Wildlands, the Grand Heavenmaster had turned him into a puppet ruler, but formally, he was still the most respected ruler in the world, a person toward who innumerable citizens offered worship!

But now… his bleak and battered state caused Bai Xiaochun to tremble. He opened his mouth as if to speak, but his words stuck in his throat as he thought back to what the Arch-Emperor had been like back in the Wildlands. Right now… he looked like a completely different person.

Never could Bai Xiaochun have guessed that he might see the Arch-Emperor right here and now!

When the Vile-Prince sensed the fluctuations of Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense, his eyes glittered, and a feeling of immense pride rose up in his heart. He had racked his brains to come up with ideas to deal with Bai Xiaochun, to force him to commit some mistake or crime. After all, he was an ambassador, in a sensitive position. But if the Vile-Prince could get him to do something bad enough, then it would make things much easier.

The truth was that the Vile-Prince truly did want to get his hands on Bai Xiaochun’s physical body, and most specifically, all of his blood. He was confident that, with his blood, he could unlock the secrets of the Arch-Sovereign’s bloodline, his goal being to learn about both spirit enhancement and hereditary cultivation techniques.

By now, it was no secret in the Eternal Immortal Domains that Bai Xiaochun had cultivated the Undying Live Forever Technique. And his heaven-defying powers of regeneration had left many opponents shaken. The Vile-Prince had already acquired the necessary manuals describing the technique.

However, he was unable to cultivate them. Only people with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm could do so. That was the most fundamental requirement for the technique.

And thus, the Vile-Prince passionately wanted to take Bai Xiaochun’s body!

Now that he had finally found a way to get under Bai Xiaochun’s skin, he began to chuckle loudly.

“Ambassador Bai, I'm very interested in spirit enhancement. And as you know, I pursue perfection in all things. Part by part, I’ve even replaced my own body inside and out.

“Listen, I won’t lie to you. I already have a bit of Heavenspan Realm blood in me, and have begun to acquire a basic understanding of spirit enhancement. But the blood I have just isn’t enough….

“My father the emperor has already approved my request to refine the Arch-Emperor, and use his flesh and blood to create a new arm for myself!

“It will be an arm completely imbued with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm. With that… I am confident that I’ll unlock the secrets of the Arch-Sovereign’s bloodline!” As of this point, the Vile-Prince seemed completely crazed, as if he were truly insane.

And yet, most of the people bearing witness to what was playing out, even the demigods, seemed envious of him.

At this point, the Vile-Prince lifted his left hand and then slashed it down, instantly chopping off his right arm. Even as blood sprayed out everywhere, he reached out, grabbed the Arch-Emperor, and began to drag him toward the open wound!

Tendrils of muscle and flesh then snaked out in bizarre and sinister fashion, boring into the Arch-Emperor's body. Although he trembled and spasmed, he continued to smile as he looked at Bai Xiaochun. And then, he managed to speak.

“My left eye contained all of the secrets of the Arch-Sovereign’s bloodline! No one will ever get them!

“From the first day I began to suffer this humiliation, and came to learn of their thirst for such secrets, I dug that eye out and destroyed it. The secrets of the Arch-Sovereign’s bloodline are the foundation of the Heavenspan Realm. They are everything, and… no one will ever take them away!” It took the last scraps of energy the Arch-Emperor had to be able to speak such words in front of all the officials of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and even the Vile-Emperor himself.

Furthermore, it was clear that his words were directed toward one person: Bai Xiaochun!

He knew that although Bai Xiaochun's blood was not the most true and orthodox, in some ways, it surpassed his own!

He also knew that he was the emperor of the Heavenspan Realm. Perhaps he was the last emperor, but that was his fault, and he had to bear the responsibility. Even if he couldn't be the emperor anymore, he still could not let the secrets of his bloodline fall into the hands of an enemy!

Instead… he would trust Bai Xiaochun!

"From the moment I dug out my left eye, I ceased to be the Arch-Emperor. Today I die, but not as an emperor! I am only an ordinary demigod from the Heavenspan Realm!" He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, at the same time trembling as the tendrils of flesh and muscle from the Vile-Prince dug into him. He was already withering up physically, almost like melting wax!

And yet, his voice thrummed with excitement, and despite his weakened state, echoed out in all directions.

"I am no longer the Arch-Emperor. The true Arch-Emperor… appeared in the moment that the Heavenspan Realm was destroyed!" Even as his laughter began to fade, his left eye socket began to glow with bright light!

And that light shone on one person…. Bai Xiaochun!

He hadn't yet finished speaking, and yet everyone in the imperial palace knew exactly what he meant when he said that a new Arch-Emperor had appeared. That person was obviously… Bai Xiaochun!

The Vile-Prince was not absorbing the Arch-Emperor. Instead… he was giving the old Arch-Emperor a chance to formally chose his successor, with the officials of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty present to bear witness!!

The successor of the Arch-Emperor!!

Even as his words continued to echo within the imperial palace, the old Arch-Emperor withered away, becoming increasingly unrecognizable. Slowly but surely, his left eye went dark. However, despite his bitter state, his smile remained. He had finally discharged all of his responsibilities.

Bai Xiaochun trembled, his eyes welling up with tears as he clasped hands and bowed deeply!!

It was a show of respect to the previous Arch-Emperor, a display of respect to a great hero!!

In the past, he might not have been a hero, but now he was. Even though it happened in the last moment, that did not change its significance!

Not even the Vile-Prince could ever have guessed that something like this would happen. Immediately, he felt overwhelmed with humiliation. Howling, he took the lump of flesh and blood that was the old Arch-Emperor and sent wriggling tendrils of flesh and blood all over him until he became… an arm!!

Then the arm was pulled back toward the wound on his shoulder, and was stitched to it!!

The power of the blood of the Heavenspan Realm immediately began to emanate from the arm, and when the Vile-Prince detected that, he clenched his hand into a fist and started laughing.

“What do you think of my new arm, Ambassador Bai?” he said, looking over at Bai Xiaochun with narrowed eyes. “Do you sense that aura of spirit enhancement?!”

Bai Xiaochun was still lowered in a bow. However, his eyes were so bloodshot they seemed like they might start bleeding, and the impulse to take action began to rise up in his heart.

There was no way he could respond to the Vile-Prince in this moment. The killing intent in his heart was so strong that it towered to the heavens, and if he unleashed it, it would lead to destruction of a cataclysmic nature.

He stared with burning eyes at the Vile-Prince, then turned his gaze to the Vile-Emperor.

“Your Majesty the Vile-Emperor. I might be from the Heavenspan Realm, but I'm also the ambassador of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Furthermore, I'm one of only twelve celestials in the entire Eternal Immortal Domains. In this so-called banquet of yours, a demigod prince of your dynasty has heaped utter humiliation onto me, which was completely uncalled for. If this happens again, then I don’t think you can blame me… for killing someone!” With that, he turned and left.

The Vile-Prince felt like he was going crazy. The look in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes moments ago had been far more intense than earlier, and had burned into the prince's heart like a red-hot branding iron.

Before he could say anything further, Bai Xiaochun was gone.

At that point, the Vile-Prince began to grow somewhat calm, although fury still burned inside of him. As he tried to decide what to do next, the Vile-Emperor looked at him, a trace of ridicule in his eyes that no one else could detect. Some of that ridicule was for Bai Xiaochun, but most of it was for the Vile-Prince.

Without saying another word, he rose to his feet and left, followed by Virūpākṣa and the others. All of them knew that, on this occasion, Bai Xiaochun had somehow managed to avert a major catastrophe.

Eventually, the Vile-Prince was left alone, his face distorted with rage, and his eyes flickering with insanity.

“You're mine, Bai Xiaochun! I will have your body!!” Flicking his sleeve angrily, he turned and stalked off.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1176 awe-chapter-1177

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even remember returning to the embassy. He was virtually soulless, almost like the walking dead. All he could think about was how much he hated being weak, and how much he detested being so useless.

He felt like his heart had been ripped in two. One part was saying that he couldn’t have done anything to change the situation. But the other part was screaming in rage, telling him that he should have done something to rescue the Arch-Emperor from his pain and misery.

The mental anguish and torment caused tears to well up in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes, until he felt like he might collapse at any moment. He didn’t feel capable of handling the responsibility that had been thrust upon his shoulders. After all, he usually lived by the seat of his pants, pragmatically handling situations as they arose. But somehow, he had become the hope of everyone from the Heavenspan Realm.

He didn’t dare to think about what would have happened if, instead of the Arch-Emperor, it had been Li Qinghou, Song Junwan, Mistress Red-Dust or Big Fatty Zhang….

Then what would have happened…?

“My cultivation base. It’s all about my cultivation base!! If only I were an archaean….” Eyes bloodshot, he clenched his hands into fists, his determination to become stronger rapidly turning into full-on madness!

He took out the Greatsword of the North and studied it, thinking back to what the northern Heavenspan River region had been like. After a moment, he pulled out his turtle-wok, and using his new stockpile of multi-colored flame, began to enhance it!

As more and more spirit designs appeared, the aura of the sword began to change. Eventually, it emanated an air of sharpness, and strength that was profoundly shocking.

“This sword… is not enough to fight an archaean!” He put away the Greatsword of the North, and then vanished from his private chamber.

When he reappeared, he was back on the damaged fan. As of this moment, his killing intent and madness had reached the point that he needed to vent, lest he collapse mentally.

And the best way to vent would be to challenge the levels of the fan!!

He didn’t even bother to calculate whether or not the spirit automaton was asleep. Without any hesitation, he flew directly into the next level!

Rumbling sounds echoed out within the world around him as he summoned the Greatsword of the North and unleashed it in a powerful attack. Backed by the power of his fleshly body as well as his cultivation base, he used it to vent his madness and anger by destroying the entire level!

Eighty-fifth level. Eighty-sixth. Eighty-seventh!

The levels got harder and harder, but he was in a state of complete madness. It didn’t matter what appeared within the levels, he saw nothing but the color of blood as he unleashed shocking slaughter.

Kill. Kill! *KILL!!!*

His killing intent seemed to sink into the depths of his cultivation base, merging with it, pushing him to a higher level than he could have imagined. In the past, it couldn’t have happened. But because of the slaughter he was unleashing, he was being tempered, pushing his battle prowess to an even higher level.

Eighty-eighth level. Eighty-ninth level….

By the time he reached the ninetieth level, his wounds were far worse than they had been at any time in the past when challenging the damaged fan. His Undying Codex was operating in shocking fashion, and his attacks were the type that had only been seen previously in the Heavenspan Realm, the type in which he sustained damage to inflict fatal blows.

It was a unique fighting style that Bai Xiaochun had begun to develop starting in the Luochen Mountains. By now, although it couldn’t be said to have reached a state of perfection, it was certainly getting close to that point.

His blood boiled as he vented, and the madness in his eyes raged. And it all reached a head in the ninetieth level!

The ninetieth level was a world of heat and fire, its sky filled with leaden clouds and the glow of fire. The entire world rumbled as lava and flames spewed from the tops of seemingly endless volcanoes that stretched out in all directions.

Within that violent world roamed three enormous stonebeetles, each one fully 30,000 meters from end to end. As they moved about, they smashed into the occasional volcano, sending lava and fire roiling out in all directions.

Worst of all was that, although the lava and fire didn't hurt the stonebeetles, it would melt any rock it touched. In the end, the world was like a sea of molten fire, across which rolled waves of a terrifying nature.

One of the stonebeetles noticed Bai Xiaochun as soon as he appeared within the world. Roaring, it turned into a blur of afterimages as it shot toward him ravenously.

On any other occasion, Bai Xiaochun would have dodged out of the way. But this time, he simply waved his hand and utilized the Living Mountain Incantation. The air around him rippled and distorted as massive rocks and boulders flew toward him, rapidly transforming him into a stone golem!

Instead of backing up to brace for impact, he lunged forward, the deafening roar that erupted from his mouth completely surpassing that of the stonebeetle. Then, the entire world shook and trembled as the other two stonebeetles began to charge toward Bai Xiaochun as well!

A few days later, he emerged from the ninetieth level, soaked in blood, his right arm missing, and his skull visible on the left side of his face!

However, instead of the lunacy that had burned in his eyes before, they were now calm, although within the depths of that calm simmered violence and rage.

After passing the ninetieth level, he returned to the main square of the fan. At that point, he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood, and then toppled forward onto his face. A long moment passed, and then he struggled up into a cross-legged position to do breathing exercises.

As his cultivation base rotated, and the regenerative powers of his fleshly body worked away, three days passed.

Eventually, his arm grew back, and his face healed. At that point, he opened his eyes.

However, his session of cultivation was not yet over. The blood of the stonebeetles he had fought was shockingly corrosive. As such, it was taking much longer for his powers of regeneration to get him completely back to normal.

At around that time, a massive tremor suddenly shook the entire damaged fan.

At the same time, an aura which shocked Bai Xiaochun to the core swept into the damaged fan from the void beyond.

Shocked, he rose to his feet and walked over to the edge of the fan, where he peered out into the darkness. Eventually, his eyes went wide, and his heart trembled with shock.

“Is that…?” He gasped as he saw, far out in the darkness of the void, a soft glow of light. As it neared, he could see that it was huge, fully 30,000 meters from one end to the other. There, floating through the void, glowing with light… was a huge arm!!

It did not look like the arm of a cultivator, but rather, wolf-like, complete with claws!!

As the arm neared, the entire damaged fan trembled. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun realized that he recognized the aura of the arm!

“Heavens! That’s a sovereign aura!!” Even as he realized this, a shriek could be heard from behind him, its source being none other than the spirit automaton.

“Which sovereign? Let me look more closely…. I see. That arm likely belonged to Gao Tianshen from the Wolfdevil

Realm…. Yeah, it must be him. He was one of the weakest sovereigns back in the day, and there’s no way I would mistake his aura for someone else's!!

“Gao Tianshen’s left arm…. Bai Xiaochun, lend me your control over the fan. With the power from that arm, I can increase the speed of the fan, and reunite it with its other half even sooner!! And I promise to only interfere with *one* of the remaining levels!!” The spirit automaton was so excited that he blurted out some bits of information that should have remained secret to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickered, but he didn’t say anything. Although this sovereign’s arm was enticing, he didn’t trust the spirit automaton at all. Even as the damaged fan sped toward the arm, it suddenly moved!

Unexpectedly, numerous vengeful souls began to stream out from it and head toward the damaged fan, shrieking soundlessly, their eyes filled with greed and madness.

“Souls!” Bai Xiaochun said, his eyes widening!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1177 awe-chapter-1178

This was not Bai Xiaochun’s first time seeing vengeful souls out in the void. After all, he had already acquired an archaean soul from that enormous floating palace he had seen.

But when he saw this host of vengeful souls streaming out from the sovereign’s arm, he couldn’t help but start getting excited.

Ever since he had arrived in the Eternal Immortal Domains, he had lacked vengeful souls. Only the trial level filled with souls that he had passed earlier had replenished his stocks to some degree, but even that hadn’t been enough.

Unfortunately, he couldn’t get back into that level to get more souls, and even if he did, there were only so many inside. Even if he got all of them, he would still come up short.

“So, there really are vengeful souls out here in the void!”

Staring intently at them, he unhesitatingly declared, “Alright, little automaton, I’ll trust you just this once!”

He released his hold of authority over the fan, the only reason being that he knew that even if the spirit automaton got greedy, he could take it back if necessary.

After all… his level of authority over the fan now surpassed the spirit automaton’s. Of course, because he hadn’t yet passed the hundredth level, he didn’t have the ability to use the fan’s divine abilities, or control it completely.

The spirit automaton was thrilled to find that Bai Xiaochun was relinquishing his authority. Quickly unleashing his divine sense, he called upon the powers at his disposal to cause the fan to glow with dazzling light.

At the same time, he pointed his finger out at the approaching souls.

“Be subdued!” he said, his voice resounding like heavenly thunder, and sending ripples out into the void. At the same time, the image on the face of the fan began to move as if it were alive!

That image depicted a mountain, atop which was a tower, and beneath which was a river. On the river was a boat, within which could be seen two men playing Go. Also in the water of the river was a palace.

As the image on the fan rippled, one of the men on the boat waved his right arm, which caused a huge gravitational force to appear out in the void.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the vengeful souls shrieked, transforming into streaks of light that shot into the image of the river on the fan.

As for the severed arm, it shivered visibly. If the arm had been attached to the sovereign it had once belonged to, then the spirit automaton of the damaged fan would have been helpless to do anything about it. But now that it was no longer attached, matters were much simpler.

Gradually, the arm slowed down, then touched the fan, whereupon it was also dragged into the picture. However, during the process, the fan trembled, as though some massive pressure had begun to weigh down on it.

After all, that arm was not the flesh and blood of a sovereign clone, but rather… an actual limb from a real sovereign!

The spirit automaton was weakening visibly, his eyes bloodshot as he went all out to make sure the process went smoothly. Bai Xiaochun stood off to the side, both surprised and nervous about what was happening. After all, back when he had acquired the archaean soul, the fan had not been under the control of the spirit automaton, and yet had still put on a very impressive display.

But now, with the spirit automaton controlling the fan, the image on its face emitted a shocking aura. That was especially true of the man on the boat. After all, he was pulling in the sovereign’s arm in completely astonishing fashion.

“This magical item… is totally incredible!!” After the arm was pulled into the fan, Bai Xiaochun looked on in excitement as the picture on the face of the fan gained a new element, an enormous arm!

“If I can actually control this fan one day… then who cares if I have to face the Vile-Emperor!? I could crush him with the wave of a finger!” Heart pounding, he imagined what it would be like to rout an archaean in that fashion.

After the sovereign’s arm was fully absorbed, the damaged fan began to emit even more radiant light than before. And then, just as the spirit automaton had said, the fan used the influx of power to begin to move even faster.

The spirit automaton seemed to be severely drained. Gasping for breath, he turned into a beam of light that shot back toward the fan to go back to sleep. At the same time, the authority he had borrowed from Bai Xiaochun was relinquished.

However, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t willing to let him go so quickly. Before he could vanish, he shouted, “Hey, I didn’t give you my authority just to be nice! I don’t want the arm, but give me the souls!”

The spirit automaton sighed and muttered inaudibly to himself for a moment. Then, for some unknown reason, it actually complied with Bai Xiaochun’s request. Sending some divine sense into the fan, it caused a vast quantity of vengeful souls to fly out from the arm toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun excitedly collected the souls, the weakest of which was at the Nascent Soul level. Many of them were deva souls, and there were even a good number of demigod souls. Most shockingly… there were three archaean souls!

Bai Xiaochun nearly began to dance with joy. As he put all the souls away, the spirit automaton entered the fan and went to sleep.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun sat down cross-legged, and waited until he was sure the spirit automaton was fully asleep. Then, as the damaged fan continued to sail along through the void, he began to conjure flame!

With this most recent influx of souls, he could now conjure beyond the level of fifteen colors without worrying about wasting too much.

“I’m going to conjure… twenty-two-colored flame!” he said, his eyes bloodshot. He had dreamed of this moment back in the Heavenspan Realm, but had never been able to succeed. Then, after arriving in the Eternal Immortal Domains, he had felt confident, but had lacked ingredients.

Throwing his arms wide, he summoned a vast collection of souls, and began to conjure!

Meanwhile, back in the Eternal Immortal Domains, near Vile-Emperor City, was the coalition of cultivators who Big Fatty Zhang had secretly been helping. Among them were Li Qinghou and Patriarch Spirit Stream. Furthermore, in recent days, there were two new additions!!

The first was Song Junwan, and the other… was Mistress Red-Dust!

They had come after hearing that Bai Xiaochun had been made the ambassador in Vile-Emperor City, and neither wanted their children to be born without the father at least being there to see them.

Song Junwan had been protected by Bruiser this entire time, whereas Mistress Red-Dust didn’t need any help at all.

Both of them… had visibly protruding bellies. When Li Qinghou, Patriarch Spirit Stream, and the others saw that, their eyes went wide. Song Junwan took the stares in stride. As for Mistress Red-Dust, she simply blurted out the name of her child’s father, causing many jaws to drop.

Then, a murderous look appeared in Song Junwan’s eyes. Snorting coldly, she announced the name of her own child's father.

At that point, Patriarch Spirit Stream cleared his throat and hurried away. As for Li Qinghou, he smiled wryly, and then did his best to console the one and pacify the other.

Eventually, he got them calmed down. At that point, he returned to his residence and angrily grumbled to himself, “I can’t believe the little brat knocked up two at the same time….”

Of course, despite his seeming front of anger, he couldn’t cover the happy smile that spread out across his face.

Perhaps it was because of the happy reunions which had just taken place, but back on the damaged fan, Bai Xiaochun suddenly looked up, his eyes bloodshot, his expression exhausted, and yet clearly filled with excitement.

“It worked!” He threw his head back and laughed uproariously, extending his hand, causing the unprecedentedly bright light of a twenty-two-colored flame to illuminate the entire fan.

Because of it, the damaged fan became a burning torch in the darkness of the endless void…!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1178 awe-chapter-1179

Although the sight of the twenty-two-colored flame was very exciting to Bai Xiaochun, it also caused his mood to sink as he thought back to the last time he had seen such a flame, back in the Heavenspan Realm, when Bai Hao saved his life.

By igniting himself, he had created a flame that surpassed the very limits of the world around him….

Although Bai Xiaochun knew that he was innately skilled when it came to flame conjuring, he didn’t come close to his own apprentice. Without Bai Hao, Bai Xiaochun may have been able to reach his current level on his own, but it would have taken much longer, and come at a far greater cost.

Because of Bai Hao’s genius, Bai Xiaochun’s advancement in the art of flame conjuring had been incredibly smooth. Furthermore, Bai Hao’s skill had been the key to snatching Bai Xiaochun out of the jaws of death.

When it came to his apprentice, Bai Xiaochun felt much guilt, as well as profound pain. Whenever he thought of him, he couldn’t help but think back to everything that had occurred in the Wildlands, and how they had relied on each other to survive.

“Hao’er,” he murmured in a voice that only he could hear, “it won’t be long now. Master is definitely going to resurrect you by means of the flame!” He looked down at the mark on the back of his hand, and after a long moment passed, left the damaged fan, completely wrapped up in his memories.

He was not the carefree and happy-go-lucky Bai Xiaochun that he had been in the past. He carried great weight on his shoulders now. And then there were the events that had played out in the imperial palace. The Vile-Prince had viciously humiliated the people of the Heavenspan Realm, and the Arch-Emperor himself, right in front of Bai Xiaochun. And Bai Xiaochun could not feign indifference to the Arch-Emperor's defeated and yet victorious gaze as he named him successor.

“Strength. And cultivation base!” After returning to his private chamber in the embassy in Vile-Emperor City, he immediately sat down cross-legged, arranged his spoils from this trip to the fan, and began to work on his cultivation.

Although the spirit automaton had claimed that he would only interfere in one of the following levels, Bai Xiaochun didn't completely trust him. Besides, even without interference, the levels would only continue to get more difficult. He was already at the ninetieth, which meant that he only had ten more to go before achieving true success.

Failure was not an option!

The only thing he could do now was take the rewards he had earned at the ends of the levels, the various medicinal pills and other items, and use them to advance his cultivation base.

That was the only way he could win in the end!

If he succeeded, the ultimate reward would be stupendous beyond imagination. And that became a great motivating factor.

Half a month passed, which he spent entirely focused on his cultivation. Thanks to the rewards he had earned from the damaged fan, his cultivation base continued to advance, pushing him ever closer to the peak of the mid Celestial Realm.

Eventually, two people arrived at the embassy, both women. One of them was tall, slender, and particularly beautiful, with a celestial cultivation base. Bai Xiaochun almost immediately detected her presence.

“Gongsun Wan’er?” Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes and sent some divine sense out to check out the situation. Immediately, he caught sight of a young woman standing next to Gongsun Wan’er, and a tremor passed through him.

“Xiaomei!!” he blurted. Vanishing, he reappeared right in front of Gongsun Wan’er and Hou Xiaomei, whose cultivation base was now in the Deva Realm.

Hou Xiaomei had long since been an apprentice of Gongsun Wan’er, and had been in seclusion ever since Bai Xiaochun had arrived in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

They hadn't seen each other for many years, and Hou Xiaomei looked somewhat different. Perhaps it was because of the technique she cultivated, but she was now even more eye-catching than before. There was also a frigid aura to her that resembled Gongsun Wan’er’s. Despite that, as soon as she laid eyes on Bai Xiaochun, her eyes lit up with a smile of excitement and happiness.

There was a warmth in her gaze that had always been there, and it was now even more intense than it had been back in the Heavenspan Realm.

When that warmth combined with the frigid coldness she had now, it made her even more bewitchingly attractive than ever.

“Big Bro Xiaochun!” Her eyes seemed red as if with tears as she looked at him. He was very different to her from before, older and more mature. Although other people might not be able to tell, to her, he looked like another person altogether than the Bai Xiaochun she remembered from the Ovens back in the Spirit Stream Sect.

She knew the reason for all of it. Her Master had explained everything after she came out of seclusion. It had been difficult for Hou Xiaomei to accept; although she seemed strong on the outside, she was actually very sensitive. But in the end, she had no choice.

Upon hearing that Bai Xiaochun was in Vile-Emperor City, her heart began to pound with strange emotions. And before she could even ask it, Gongsun Wan’er brought her here.

Once she saw him in front of her, the rest of the world disappeared, and time slowed down. As she stepped forward and slowly wrapped her arms around him, he looked down and embraced her.

They said nothing. It was as if, during all the years that they had been apart, they had simply been waiting to reunite, and hold each other in their arms.

Mixed emotions flickered in Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes as she looked on. Then she backed up to give them a slight bit of privacy.

Bai Xiaochun noticed that, and his eyes flickered to meet hers. They shone with gratitude, thankfulness for how she had taken care of Hou Xiaomei, and appreciation for bringing her here now.

The truth was that Gongsun Wan’er had feared Bai Xiaochun might do something drastic after the events in the imperial palace. Therefore, she had brought Hou Xiaomei here in the hopes of bringing him a bit of consolation.

Bai Xiaochun knew that Hou Xiaomei would be much safer with Gongsun Wan’er than she would with him. But for the moment, he lowered his head and began to whisper softly into her ear, telling her about everything that had happened since their separation.

Soon, evening had fallen, and the time had come for Hou Xiaomei to leave with Gongsun Wan'er.

Looking into Hou Xiaomei’s eyes, Bai Xiaochun quietly said, “Wait for me, Xiaomei…. I’ll take you away with me soon… very soon!”

Hou Xiaomei was not the ditzy girl she had been in the past. Whether it was her personal experiences on Heavenspan Island, or the things that Gongsun Wan’er had told her later, she was very well aware that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t afford to have people near him who could be used against him, or who might hold him back.

Although she didn’t want to leave him, she knew she had to. Tears welling up in her eyes, she kissed him on the lips, then turned to leave.

As she departed, Bai Xiaochun savored the warmth of her kiss, and her lingering fragrance. Moments passed, and his eyes began to shine with determination!

“Strength. And cultivation base!!” After returning to his private chamber, he vanished and reappeared on the damaged fan, where he began to challenge the levels again.

They were all very difficult, to the point where he failed numerous times before passing them.

There was no need for the spirit automaton to interfere. Furthermore, he had interfered too many times in the past, and currently was not even close to matching up to Bai Xiaochun in terms of authority.

The automaton had said he would only interfere once, and the truth was that, because of his waning authority, he truly could not do so more than once in the last ten levels!

Days slipped by. Bai Xiaochun was completely absorbed in challenging the levels. Whenever he was forced to rest for a bit, he would take advantage of the time to research twenty-three-colored flame.

In this manner, half a year passed.

During that time, the Vile-Prince kept a very low profile, and didn’t cause problems for Bai Xiaochun. Because of the incident in the imperial palace, most of the other celestials were warier of Bai Xiaochun than ever, and resolved never to offend him if at all possible. After all, the Vile-Prince had already openly shown his hostility. Therefore, all they needed to do was wait and watch the sparks fly whenever their inevitable showdown occurred.

Most relevant in the entire situation was that the Vile-Emperor had apparently reached a critical moment in cultivating a certain Daoist magic, and had gone into protracted secluded meditation. There was something different about this session of seclusion. The Vile-Emperor had left orders explicitly stating that unless a matter that pertained to the possible fall of the entire Vile-Emperor Dynasty occurred, he was not to be disturbed.

And thus, Vile-Emperor City quieted down. However, to those who were in the know, it seemed like the quiet that came before a storm of monumental proportions!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1179 awe-chapter-1180

As time passed, Bai Xiaochun slowly slipped into a state of complete frenzy. It was as if the only thing that existed in his life was his desire to pass the levels in the damaged fan, and to conjure a twenty-three-colored flame.

He rarely went back to Vile-Emperor City. Because of how focused he was on cultivation, and the rewards he got at the ends of the levels, his cultivation base advanced in shocking fashion.

In terms of the levels, his progress was not rapid. But considering how hard he was working, and his powers of regeneration, he eventually reached the ninety-sixth, ninety-seventh, and ninety-eighth levels….

A few days after that, he finally passed the ninety-eighth level and reached… the ninety-ninth level!!

The spirit automaton never showed his face. However, the more progress Bai Xiaochun made, the more on guard he was. He knew that the automaton would most likely make his move in one of the final two levels.

Bai Xiaochun’s guess was that it would come in the hundredth level. However, as it turned out, it was when he reached the ninety-ninth level that the spirit automaton woke up for the first time after drawing upon the powers of the damaged fan to acquire that sovereign’s arm.

“The ninety-ninth level!?” he blurted as soon as he opened his eyes. The truth was that he had left a marker behind in the ninety-ninth level that would awaken him if Bai Xiaochun reached it.

Under normal circumstances, he would have just rested until he was fully recovered from the extremely draining ordeal. However, he hated Bai Xiaochun so much that he had arranged for a way to be woken up if necessary.

“Alright, Bai Xiaochun. Lord Automaton is going to make one last-ditch effort to stop you. If you succeed… then I guess I’ll have to resign myself to the fate the heavens have decreed.” The spirit automaton took a deep, shaky breath. He was not confident at all in this, his final attempt to interfere. On too many occasions in the past when he had been completely certain he would come out on top, Bai Xiaochun had gone on to show him what was meant by *the unexpected*, *shamelessness*, and … *cheating!*

By this point, the spirit automaton had actually begun to believe that everything had been fated. Sighing, he vanished from his current position to reappear within the ninety-ninth level.

**

Some time earlier…

The ninety-ninth level… was different from any of the other levels. It consisted of a huge palace hovering in the air, of epic proportions. The main hall of the palace was almost half as large as the entire Saint-Emperor Dynasty. And at the end of the hall was a gigantic statue!

It depicted a middle-aged man in a Daoist robe, looking off into the distance. The aura of the statue vastly surpassed that of the Archaean Realm, and seemed to coexist with the void itself.

Bai Xiaochun gasped slightly at the sight of it. He felt shaken, with great pressure weighing down on him that caused him to struggle to breathe. Even his cultivation base felt a bit unstable.

There was an alcove in the statue's forehead within which rested a throne. A cultivator could be seen sitting on the throne, although at this distance, it was difficult to make out his features even with divine sense, which was limited within the level.

No matter how hard Bai Xiaochun strained with his divine sense or physical eyes, he couldn’t make out any details, although he was fairly certain that the person on the throne was a sovereign…. Most likely, it was the very person who had created the damaged fan to begin with, the same sovereign who reached enlightenment regarding the Dao Essence of Life and Death.

It seemed likely that only such a person would be able to occupy a throne like that, which looked out over all of the palace around it.

Even as Bai Xiaochun strained to make out the details of the impressive figure in the forehead of that statue, a cold voice echoed out into the courtyard of the palace within which he stood.

“You might as well stop looking.”

As the words echoed out, Bai Xiaochun suddenly spun in place to find a middle-aged man standing roughly 300 meters behind him!

He wore simple, homespun clothing, and appeared ordinary in nature. However, he seemed at one with the world, and although he had his hands clasped behind his back, he looked like a black hole that could absorb any and all auras that existed around him.

“That is the statue of the exalted sovereign,” the man continued, “and in its forehead is a projection of the sovereign himself. He’s looking at you!

“You are the first person to reach this level in all the years since it was created. Perhaps you do not have the blood of the Immortal World in you, but since you were born in the Eternal World, then you qualify to acquire the legacy.

“But in order to do so… you have to pass the final two levels!

“I am no powerful expert, only an archaean. And I'm only here in clone form, not in person, which means that this is my final resting place.

“Any challenger who can survive one of my fist strikes without dying… can pass this level!” The man didn’t bother to ask whether Bai Xiaochun agreed or not. He stepped forward, clenched his hand into a fist, and struck out at Bai Xiaochun, who was still about 300 meters away!

In response, the entire ninety-ninth level filled with pressure that vastly surpassed that of a celestial. It was an archaean aura, with fluctuations that could destroy any form of life, that could rip apart the air, that could crush anything. And it was heading directly toward Bai Xiaochun!

“Archaean!” he blurted. Never could he have imagined that the requirement for this level would be to sustain a direct blow from an archaean and survive!

There was no time for thought or planning. The pressure from this man filled Bai Xiaochun with a sensation of such crisis that he was instantly scared out of his mind. The power of his fleshly body flared to life as he threw his hands out in front of him, throwing in all the cultivation base power he could manage to push his defenses as high as they could go.

Rocks and boulders materialized around him as his Living Mountain Incantation took form, transforming him into an enormous stone golem. Then he used the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation, causing intense rumbling sounds to fill the air. Unfortunately, that was all that he could do before the explosive fist strike was upon him.

It was the type of blow that could destroy anything in its path as easily as a boulder crushing a drinking glass. When it was still 30 meters away from him, his body began to vibrate, and the Living Mountain Incantation shattered, sending stone shrapnel flying in all directions. His Cloud Lightning Forefather form was also incapable of withstanding the force, and shattered when the fist was still 24 meters away!

During the process, blood began to ooze out of the corners of his mouth, and he once again threw his hands out, resorting to his Live Forever Lamp!

Innumerable Live Forever Lamps appeared, and even Bai Xiaochun transformed into one. It was as if the entire world had become filled with Live Forever Lamps!

And yet, in comparison to the fist strike, all of that was like a mantis trying to stop a war chariot. The fist was only 15 meters away when the Live Forever Lamps collapsed. Bai Xiaochun was already in bad shape. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he fell back, summoning the Greatsword of the North and slashing it toward the fist!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the enormous sword, which to date had never yet been defeated, was shoved backward by the fist, sending a backlash directly into Bai Xiaochun. By now, the fist strike was only three meters away from him.

A huge glob of blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he lost his grip on the Greatsword of the North. In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, a shocking moment of crisis had appeared.... The Greatsword of the North was still spinning away from him as the fist strike slammed into him, a destructive vortex of shocking nature.

In that final moment, a streak of black light shot out, which was none other than the turtle-wok. A massive boom rang out, seemingly violent enough to destroy the entire world. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun felt indescribably destructive power hitting the wok. It was the type of power that could destroy all types of cultivation bases, and instantly pushed his powers of regeneration to the ultimate limit. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he was sent tumbling off into the distance like a kite with its string cut.

His five yin organs and six yang organs all vibrated on the point of exploding. Even with the protection provided by the turtle-wok, most of the bones in his body shattered. Then, he slammed into the ground, his vision fading as though he were teetering right at the gates of hell! Without his spectacular powers of regeneration, he would have been killed in body and soul. And that had all come from only a single fist strike by this middle-aged man!

After sustaining the blow, the turtle-wok turned into a black streak of light that shot back into his body. Clearly, he would not be able to summon it again anytime soon.

Gasping for breath, he struggled to his feet and looked over at the middle-aged man, who looked back at him as he slowly lowered his fist.

Smiling in approval, the man said, “You pass the lev--”

However, in that very moment, his eyes went blank, causing Bai Xiaochun’s heart to begin to pound with a sense of profound dread. The man then spoke again, his tone sharper than before.

“Any challenger who can survive one of my fist strikes without dying… can pass this level!” With that, he began to unleash another fist strike!

“Spirit automaton, show your face immediately!” Bai Xiaochun shouted bitterly. “You’re dead!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1180 awe-chapter-1181

Bai Xiaochun fell back, cursing the spirit automaton the entire time, his heart overflowing with waves of rage. Were it not for the fact that he couldn’t do anything to the automaton, he definitely would have skinned him alive….

“I hate you!!” he shouted, sounding very dispirited. Meanwhile, the middle-aged man took another step forward, and thrust his fist out again! In response, the sky turned dark, and immense pressure weighed down in the area!

A massive tempest rose up with this fist strike, and although it seemed slightly weaker than before, it still contained the power of an archaean. As the fist struck out, mountain-toppling, sea-draining force was unleashed directly toward Bai Xiaochun.

The air shattered, and the heaven and earth that made up this world seemed to tremble on the verge of collapsing into smoke.

Bai Xiaochun let out a yelp. Considering what was happening, he knew he had no other options. As the tempest that was the fist strike closed in, he threw his arms up and then shoved them down toward the ground.

Even as the wind buffeted his face, he shouted, “Waterswamp Kingdom!!”

Rumbling sounds echoed out, shaking the entire palace, sending out rippling fluctuations in all directions. At the same time, the entire world transformed into a watery swamp!

Water vapor rose up, along with a howl that seemed to echo from primeval times. Moments later, numerous spikes began to rise up!

The Waterswamp Kingdom, one of Bai Xiaochun’s most powerful trump cards, was making its entrance!

Rumbling sounds filled the world as what appeared to be mountain peaks rose high into the air. The roaring sound continued, and in the blink of an eye, the archaean fist strike slammed into the Waterswamp Kingdom.

The boom that resulted shook the world with violent convulsions. As for the spikes and mountain peaks of the Waterswamp Kingdom, they seemed incapable of standing up to the archaean fist strike, and in fact, the entire summoning effect appeared to be on the verge of ending.

But just as the Waterswamp Kingdom seemed to be on the verge of completely collapsing, a defiant roar filled the air that surpassed anything from before. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun… was using the Waterswamp Kingdom again. A second time in a row!!

Roar!

Two land masses appeared to be rising up, covered with numerous mountains. Shockingly, they were like teeth! And the two land masses were the enormous jaws of Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit!

It was like some sort of crocodilian beast from the most ancient of times, brutal to the extreme as it shot toward the tempest that was the archaean fist strike. The world shook on the verge of collapse…. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun did not have an archaean cultivation base, and therefore, despite how strong his Waterswamp Kingdom was, his cultivation base was having a difficult time supporting it. A defiant howl echoed out as the Waterswamp Kingdom faded away completely.

The tempest of the archaean-level fist strike then continued onward toward Bai Xiaochun!

However, for some unknown reason, this fist strike was much weaker than the previous one, and after its clash with the Waterswamp Kingdom, was weakening even further!

There was no time for Bai Xiaochun to sit around thinking and planning. After his Waterswamp Kingdom was gone, he howled, unleashing the explosive power of his fleshly body, and also rotating his cultivation base. Suddenly, his Heavenspan Dharma Eye opened up, sending dazzling violet light cascading out. Simultaneously, his turtle-wok appeared in front of him again!

Although all of this takes a bit of time to describe, it actually happened in the blink of an eye. And then, the archaean-level fist strike arrived. Bai Xiaochun's fleshly body was flayed to the point of being ripped to shreds, and his cultivation base teetered on the verge of complete collapse. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as the violet light of the Heavenspan Dharma Eye met the fist strike.

The final obstacle was the turtle-wok. A massive bang filled the air, causing the world to shudder as Bai Xiaochun was flung backward like a kite with its string cut. His five yin organs and six yang organs were nearly destroyed, and his powers of regeneration were working in overdrive to keep up.

However, the fist strike was not over yet, and Bai Xiaochun continued to fly backward. Even though the fist strike had been weakened, it was still terrifyingly powerful.

Bai Xiaochun had summoned the turtle-wok prematurely, and therefore, after sustaining the dreadful strike, it didn’t even return to him. Instead, it spun off to the side, where it was swept up by a soft, gentle light.

That light came from none other than the spirit automaton!

Shocked, the spirit automaton shouted, “If you can get past the level after this, Bai Xiaochun, then I’ll bow my head to you immediately!”

“Bow your head? You just wait, bitch!!” Bai Xiaochun ground to a halt, a profound sensation of deadly crisis filling him. After all, the tempest of the fist strike was still heading in his direction.

“Time to go for broke!!” he shouted. Instead of backing up, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash! But that wasn’t all! He picked up speed with the Undying Hex, simultaneously clenching his hand into a fist.

“Undying Emperor’s Fist!” he shouted at the top of his lungs. Instantly, the huge image of a shadowy emperor appeared behind him. By this point, he had no idea how many multiples of the original fist strike this equated to. But he held nothing back, becoming a shooting star that headed directly toward the opposing fist strike.

Deafening rumbling filled the shaking world. The huge palace complex couldn’t withstand the force, and began to collapse, until the only thing that remained floating there was the huge statue!

As for the tempest of the fist strike, it had been weakened over and over again, and even as it dissipated for the final time, it slammed directly into him! Bai Xiaochun had no clue how many mouthfuls of blood he had coughed up; he just knew that a power was descending on him that could wipe him out of existence. In that moment of crisis, he unleashed his Godkiller technique!

A mist of blood surrounded him as he shot away. However, the destructive power of the fist strike had connected, and could not be dispersed. It swept through him, dispersed, then reconverged again to batter him with incredible force. This happened a total of eight times before the power was finally gone. At that point, Bai Xiaochun began to laugh loudly.

“I passed the level!!”

“Impossible!!” the spirit automaton blurted, completely aghast. He had done everything he could think of to prevent Bai Xiaochun from passing the level. And yet, despite the incredible level of difficulty, Bai Xiaochun had still succeeded!

And this time, he had done it without the help of the turtle-wok in the final moment. Even with that turtle-wok, most other celestials would have been destroyed.

It was such an astonishing turn of events that, at long last, a bit of admiration for Bai Xiaochun rose up in the heart of the spirit automaton. But then he thought about his future fate, and defiantly shouted, “You must swear an oath right now, here in the presence of the sovereign, that you won’t change my surname after becoming my lord and master....”

“Say what?” Bai Xiaochun murmured, a look of shock appearing on his face.

“Swear it!”

Considering all of the things the spirit automaton had done to him throughout all the levels, Bai Xiaochun simply glared and replied, “Screw off! You think I'm an idiot!? I'm not swearing anything. In fact, I'm *definitely* going to change your surname!”

“AARGGGGGHHHHHH!”

How could Bai Xiaochun have ever realized that his response would provoke the spirit automaton in such a way? Suddenly, the middle-aged man who had unleashed the devastating fist strikes stepped forward again and clenched his hand into a fist.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly popped out of his skull. If the man unleashed another strike, then it would be too devastating to survive. He immediately opened his mouth to try to pacify the spirit automaton.

However, that was when the figure which had been sitting within the alcove in the forehead of the huge statue slowly stood up. Then, a voice could be heard which echoed like heavenly thunder, filling the world with somber dignity.

“Enough, Xiao Chi! Challenger… you have passed the level!”

--

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1181 awe-chapter-1182

As the voice echoed out into the world of the level, it seemed to supersede natural law itself. All of the dust and ruins that had been strewn about in the area suddenly seemed to pass through countless tens upon tens of thousands of years. In the blink of an eye, they turned into absolutely nothing.

The sky was no longer clear, but rather, murky and gray, and the lands vanished as though by means of the passage of innumerable years, leaving nothing but a gaping void.

Only the statue of the sovereign remained. Apparently, it wouldn’t change in the least no matter how much time passed, as though it were something completely eternal.

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun began to pant. Never could he have imagined that a spoken word could cause such profound changes. It was as if heaven and earth had been turned upside down, and a plethora of years had passed by in the briefest of moments.

Even more unimaginable was the idea of what would happen if a similar thing happened to a cultivator. It was a terrifying notion; even a powerful archaean would likely become nothing more than ash!

“A sovereign…? So this is what sovereigns are like….” Bai Xiaochun felt like a new world had been opened up to him. As for the spirit automaton, he trembled as he flopped down to kowtow, eyes shining with reverence. Deeper in his eyes… there was longing and sorrow.

As the voice of the sovereign continued to thrum in the area, the figure in the alcove took a step forward, and began to approach Bai Xiaochun.

As he did, black lightning filled the sky above, along with thunderous rumblings. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, each lightning bolt seemed capable of destroying the tempest caused by the archaean fist strike moments ago!

And he was right! Any one of those lightning bolts would cause even an archaean to flinch in fear!

As of this moment, the image of that sovereign became the sole, most important entity in all existence!

And yet, there was more. As the sovereign approached, corpses began to rise up from within the depths of the world. There were so many that they were impossible to count, their flesh tattered and gory, their eyes filled with the despair and blankness that would arise in the last moment before death.

Although these corpses were clearly dead, their auras were those of celestials and archaeans….

Bai Xiaochun even spotted some enormous giants who, in their moments before death, had been struggling to rise from kneeling positions, but had failed.

Bai Xiaochun was deeply shaken, both by the lightning and by all of the corpses. It was at this point that the image of the sovereign, not having reached Bai Xiaochun, spoke, his voice echoing to fill the entire world.

“You have passed the ninety-ninth level. Now, there is only one level left!” His voice crashed like thunder, filling the world with immense pressure.

Bai Xiaochun stood there shivering, his flesh, blood, and bones creaking and grinding from the terrifying weight pushing down on him. He was like a rowboat in an angry sea, so weak and powerless that the sovereign could turn him to ash with a mere thought!

Before he could even attempt to compose himself, the sovereign spoke a second time.

“To pass the final level… you must acquire my approval. If you do, then you will become my successor disciple, and will be given my legacy treasure!” When he spoke the word *approval*, it was as if the power of natural law and the forces of time itself were at play. To Bai Xiaochun, it felt as if time were being stretched out, causing everything to slow down.

“This sovereign… is so powerful!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were wide with nervousness and incredulity. If he were facing an archaean, he might be able to compose himself, but this was a sovereign, and at the moment, he barely had the strength to keep standing.

His eyes were completely bloodshot, not from excitement, but because he was subconsciously rotating his cultivation base to resist the pressure.

Under such circumstances, most cultivators would not be able to pay attention to the words being spoken to them, but in this case, the shocking power of the sovereign’s voice forced its way into Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

“If you do not gain my approval… then you will be buried here!”

As the words were spoken, brightly colored light flashed in heaven and earth, and winds blew, carrying the howling of innumerable dead souls.

As all of this happened, the image of the sovereign continued to approach Bai Xiaochun, striding slowly through the air, causing everything in the area to shake violently, and black lightning to crash without cease.

“The corpses you see around you are from the time before the great war of the starry sky began. They belong to others who rose to the challenge, but failed! Not a single one of them earned my approval. With the wave of my finger, they died, and became the flesh, blood, and spiritual power that operates my legacy fan.” As the sovereign strode through the corpses, his features became clearer. He was middle-aged, incredibly handsome, with eyes that seemed to contain the starry sky itself. A single look from him seemed more than enough to cause all living souls to cower.

“Many years have passed since the war of the starry sky was fought. You are the first person to reach this point since then. And now, I must ask you a question.... Are you ready?!” By this point, the image of the sovereign was standing right in front of Bai Xiaochun. He looked like a mountain that could crush any starry sky, and left Bai Xiaochun feeling like nothing more than an insect.

The pressure and energy on display here was the type that could look disdainfully at anything in creation. With a mere thought, it could crush the life out of all creation! And that energy seemed to be waiting for Bai Xiaochun’s response... before swallowing him up!

As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned... only an idiot would respond that he was ready. After all, in the face of this raging energy, the only outcome seemed to be certain death!

“I’m….” Even as he began to speak, a sensation of imminent crisis filled him, and he shook his head firmly. “I'm not ready….”

The sovereign’s eyes glittered, and the spirit automaton looked over at him, blinking. Then, a look of absolutely unprecedented joy filled the spirit automaton’s face.

“Oh right! He doesn’t know that this level….”

Intense rumbling sounds filled the area as teleportation power sprang up, grabbing Bai Xiaochun and removing him from the level.

Moments later, he was out of the hundredth level and back on the surface of the damaged fan, gasping for breath and wiping the sweat from his brow. He felt like a mortal, not even strong enough to grab a chicken, much less face the brutal energy he had just sensed.

“That was scary….” he thought. He had obviously been frightened, but it seemed that anyone who was forced to face the furious energy of that sovereign would make the same choice. “But if I don’t pass this level, then all the other levels will have been a big waste!”

He sat down cross-legged to wrestle with the matter for a bit. Finally, he gritted his teeth.

“The fan has been looking for an owner for years and years. Seems like the projection of that sovereign is probably getting pretty anxious about the matter…. Maybe he’ll take it easy on me….” Having reached this point in his train of thought, he took a deep breath and headed back into the level.

As soon as he entered, the image of the sovereign rose to his feet, energy raging as he stepped forward and said the exact same things he had said before.

Just as Bai Xiaochun was opening his mouth to respond, the sovereign extended his hand, causing the tempestuous, destructive energy to surge around Bai Xiaochun.

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun was certain that he was going to die. Shaking physically, he said, “Um, still not ready yet! I’ll come again later!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1182 awe-chapter-1183

“What do I do, what do I do!?” Days passed, and Bai Xiaochun was still sitting in the main square on the damaged fan, looking anxiously at the spot to enter the hundredth level.

Despair ate at his heart, despair at the fact that he had no chance at passing the hundredth level.

“This is ridiculous! How are you supposed to pass the hundredth level when it's so hard!? You definitely have to be an archaean…. But then again, even an archaean would probably be killed…. And yet, here I am….” He tugged at his hair, his eyes bloodshot and growing increasingly crimson. Eventually, he slapped his bag of holding to summon a few jugs of alcohol, and began to drink.

He drank for three days straight….

He hemmed and hawed, occasionally pacing back and forth, occasionally sitting there dejectedly. At a certain point, the spirit automaton showed up, sat down in front of him, and joined him in sighing. Whenever he stood up as if to make another attempt at a challenge, the spirit automaton would say something along the lines of, “Even I’m not sure why the exalted sovereign did things this way. I've been wanting a new master for a long time, you know. You have no idea what it's been like to see so many people die in such horrific and painful fashion.”

Sometimes he would tell stories.

“I remember one time when someone came along with an incredible fleshly body, and terrifying powers of regeneration. I definitely thought that he would become my new master. But guess what happened? *Bam!* The sovereign smashed him into a bloody pulp. Oh, the humanity!”

The more Bai Xiaochun heard such stories, the jumpier he got.

“It was truly horrific. Blood was splashing everywhere, and then there was this sort of popping sound as his head exploded….”

The spirit automaton’s sighs echoed about constantly as he gave very serious advice.

“You know, Bai Xiaochun, I was really hoping that we might end up becoming friends after all of the squabbling. But from the bottom of my heart, I urge you not to throw your life away. That would be meaningless…. I’m actually starting to get the feeling that the sovereign doesn’t want me to have a new master. The old fart!

“Ah, whatever. The most important thing is that you stay alive. You might not be able to pass the hundredth level, but at least you have some authority with the fan. We can work together! Don’t worry, I’ll help you do whatever you need.”

After three days, Bai Xiaochun was fairly drunk, and the spirit automaton was jabbering about how terrifying the hundredth level was. Suddenly, Bai Xiaochun put his alcohol jug down and looked over at the spirit automaton.

“Since when did you become so considerate?” he asked.

“I’ve always been this way!” the spirit automaton replied in dead earnest. Sounding like the epitome of righteousness, he said, “You think I was doing all that just to make things hard for you? Wrong! I was trying to save you! I don’t want the old fart to get his way and kill you! I want you to live! That way I’ll have someone to chat with…. You have no idea what it's like to be me. I've been here for so many tens of thousands of years that I've already lost track of time. It’s so lonely….” He sighed again, a bitter look in his eyes as he stared off into the distance, but at the same time, peered cautiously at Bai Xiaochun out of the corner of his eye.

Bai Xiaochun, tipsy, looked over at the spirit automaton, and realized that something definitely seemed suspicious. Suddenly, he shot to his feet, and then pretended to let out a stream of uproarious laughter.

“You’re trying to pull a fast one!” he said. “You don’t want me to go into the hundredth level, do you?!”

Startled, the spirit automaton leapt to his feet.

“I'm not lying! You absolutely, positively must not go into that level! I don't want you to die!”

Upon seeing the spirit automaton’s reaction, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, more suspicious than ever. Snorting coldly, he began to walk toward the fan rib.

“I see through your little scheme!” he said loudly, picking up his pace as he headed forward.

The spirit automaton was so nervous that he was about to cry. Scrambling after Bai Xiaochun, he bitterly said, “You have to believe me! Don’t do this! I don't want to lose you…. Arrghhh! Why won’t you trust me!? I have your best interests at heart!”

The more the spirit automaton babbled, the more suspicious Bai Xiaochun got. He also kept moving faster until he was right outside of the hundredth level. There, he lifted up his foot as if to step into the level.

Turning, he glared and said, “Tell me the truth, you little automaton. The level's fake, isn’t it!?”

The spirit automaton’s heart seized momentarily, and he stood there blankly, looking as if he might start crying at any moment.

When Bai Xiaochun saw how he was standing there seemingly at a loss for words, his mood instantly improved. Stepping down, he vanished, to reappear within the hundredth level. Everything happened exactly the same as before, with shocking energy filling the area, as well as a destructive, murderous aura.

The sudden pressure sobered him up significantly, whereupon he shivered in fear and began to wail inwardly.

“Was the spirit automaton really comforting me? Or is he actually trying to get me killed? Dammit! I'm not really going to be stymied by the last level, am I?” Feeling like he was going crazy, he watched as the projection of the sovereign approached, causing the entire world to tremble.

“Challenger, are you ready?!”

As the world trembled, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned completely bloodshot. He knew that if he chickened out again, not only would it be much harder for him to reach the Archaean Realm, but it would also be highly unlikely that anyone would become the rightful owner of the fan.

He had worked very hard to reach this point. And all the while, the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm were suffering. Thinking back to what had happened in the imperial palace, he suddenly threw caution to the wind and shouted, “Bring it on!!”

Pulling out the turtle-wok, which had returned to him of its own accord after the previous level, he put it on his head.

“I'm ready, fool!!”

The sovereign’s eyes flickered as he looked at Bai Xiaochun, and then extended his hand. Bai Xiaochun immediately unleashed the full power of his cultivation base and fleshly body, and prepared to fight back against the sovereign. However, it was in completely unexpected fashion that the sovereign merely reached out and bopped the turtle-wok.

And then… there was no tempest. There was no surge of energy. There were no fluctuations. After bopping the turtle wok, a very serious expression overtook the sovereign’s face, and he nodded.

“Well, since you’re ready, then you pass. Congratulations! You are my successor. Many years have passed since the war of the starry sky, and this projection of mine is already growing very weak. The time has come to leave. Treat Xiao Chi well. I hope that, as my successor, you can tread the path that I never walked to the end. Remember my name…. I was a sovereign of the Immortal World. Zhou Chen!”

The projection of the sovereign smiled faintly at him, then turned, floated up into the sky, and faded away into nothing….

Bai Xiaochun stood there in a bit of a daze, the turtle-wok still perched on his head. The sovereign was gone, but for some reason, he felt like he was in a dream. It seemed completely unreal. He even looked around a bit, and then down at himself to make sure he was real.

After confirming that he was in fact standing there, he felt even more confused.

“Huh? I passed, just like that? I won?” Feeling very uncertain about the whole thing, he cautiously left the level and returned to the fan rib. As he did, countless fluctuating streams of bright light shot up from the fan and flowed directly toward him!

As they fused with him, his fluctuations of control over the fan erupted out in all directions.

The two sets of fluctuations instantly formed some sort of resonance, causing all of the levels in the fan ribs to unlock, and filling him with the sensation that a single thought on his part could control the entire fan!

Chest heaving, he finally came to the realization that… he really had passed the hundredth level!

If he wanted, he could change the direction the fan flew in! It was under his complete control! His heart surged with nearly uncontrollable excitement at all of the powers of the fan that he now had at his disposal.

“The little automaton really was trying to pull a fast one!”

All of a sudden, he shouted in a loud voice, “Alright, little automaton, get the hell out here! Lord Bai wants to talk!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1183 awe-chapter-1184

Bai Xiaochun had been waiting for a long time to say those words. Although he could have uttered them in the past, he hadn’t dared to. Knowing how petty the spirit automaton was, he knew that provoking him could be very dangerous.

But now he didn’t care at all. He had become the owner of the fan, and had absolute control. Now, he could revel in his role as the master any time he wished.

It felt wonderful to yell in such a fashion. It was like being able to drink a big cup of cold water on a hot, sweaty day.

Swishing his sleeve, he raised his voice even further and shouted, “Hurry up! What are you stalling for? Lord Bai wants to talk!”

As his voice echoed back and forth through the damaged fan, the spirit automaton was crouching on a distant fan rib, cradling his head in his hands, tugging at his hair, his face a mask of bitterness. Unfortunately, it didn't matter whether he wanted to or not, he had to listen to Bai Xiaochun. Invisible forces made it so. Sighing, he turned and flew over toward him.

As he did, he changed his appearance, transforming into a charming boy, the type who anyone would like right off the bat.

Bai Xiaochun was not very pleased with the dilly-dallying, and snorted coldly when he finally caught sight of the spirit automaton approaching.

The spirit automaton shivered, and tried to put on the most fawning expression possible, mixed in with a bit of nervousness. Coming to a stop in front of Bai Xiaochun, he clasped hands and bowed his head.

“Greetings… master….”

“I'm *not* pleased with this look of yours!” Bai Xiaochun said primly. Before, he had always dealt with the spirit automaton in divine sense form. But now, he was here in physical form, making it the first time Bai Xiaochun had actually seen him in person.

He looked fair and delicate, even more so than Bai Xiaochun himself.

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s words, tears began to stream down the spirit automaton’s face as he did his best to look humiliated, but not willing to talk back. The truth was that he really was scared. After all, he had definitely offended Bai Xiaochun on a very deep level….

“Master… I….” The spirit automaton was about to launch into some flattering words, but before he could, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat loudly.

Eyes glittering, he looked the spirit automaton up and down and then said, “The time has come to tell your new master what your name is. Go ahead.”

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t keep from chuckling darkly. He had the feeling that he was going to be very pleased with where this conversation was going.

The spirit automaton’s face blanched as surely as if he had choked on some food. After a long moment passed, he managed to gurgle, “My name… well… it's Xiao Chi.”

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but laugh uproariously in response. Clasping his hands behind his back, he stuck his chin up and grandly went on to say, “I mean your surname too. Speak up. What’s your *full* name?!”

“My surname *is* Xiao….” the spirit automaton replied in a low voice, looking completely crushed.

Chuckling, Bai Xiaochun said, “From now on, your surname is Bai. Come come. Say your new name *really* loud!”

The spirit automaton hesitated at first, but considering how Bai Xiaochun was just standing there laughing, he started to get mad and said, “You… Fudge! Fine, who cares if my surname is Bai now? Just call me Bai Xiaochi!!”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun’s resentment toward the spirit automaton began to fade. Snorting coldly, he began to stroll toward the fan ribs.

“Very well, Bai Xiaochi. Please give your new master a little tour of this damaged fan.” Overall, Bai Xiaochun seemed very pleased with the spirit automaton’s new name.

“Hmph,” he thought. “Who forced you to offend me so much before?!”

Bai Xiaochun was feeling wonderful, but Bai Xiaochi was crestfallen and on the verge of tears. This was exactly what he had hoped so dearly to avoid. Ever since he had sworn that oath, he had feared what would happen if Bai Xiaochun succeeded, and then forced him to change his surname. Although, it could have been worse….

Now the calamity had come and gone, and he could only sigh in despair, then lead Bai Xiaochun around and introduce the damaged fan to him. Of course, he immediately began to do the worst job possible. Sadly for him, he had once again underestimated Bai Xiaochun, who could tell exactly what he was doing.

“Listen here, Bai Xiaochi,” he said. “Do a good job, make me happy, and I might give you your old surname back.”

Bai Xiaochi’s eyes went wide, and he began to pant. Back when he had been fighting against Bai Xiaochun, the automaton had seemed like a clever individual. But the truth was that, now that Bai Xiaochun had become his master, there was nothing he could do to fight back against him.

And although he didn’t quite trust Bai Xiaochun’s character very much, there was no way to tell if he would follow through, and eventually change his surname back.

Suddenly finding a new reason for hope and passion, he began to enthusiastically introduce everything about the fan.

“Master, this legacy fan has a total of 108 fan ribs, each of which are filled with various rewards. If you want them, they’ll appear in front of you instantly.

“Of course, the rewards are like that, but not the entities which exist within the levels. Those are shared between all the levels…. For example, there are only a limited number of souls….

“Oh, right. Now that you’re the owner of the fan, you are free to seek enlightenment of the exalted sovereign’s Dao Essence of Life and Death. Generally speaking, once your cultivation base is high enough, you’ll be able to use all of the fan’s shocking powers and abilities!

“This fan surpasses what people call a *world treasure*. It's a *starry sky treasure*. When it flies through the starry sky, it can shake heaven and earth to the point where ghosts and gods weep!

“The most powerful divine ability of the fan is housed in the fan face itself….”

Bai Xiaochun felt quite smug and complacent as he listened to the introduction. He couldn’t have been prouder of how swimmingly he had handled the fan’s automaton. It had taken minimal effort.

“Punish firmly, but offer a reward in the end,” he thought, reveling in the circumstances. “That’s my motto!”

As for Bai Xiaochi, he paid close attention to Bai Xiaochun’s reactions, and would quickly add more information whenever it seemed appropriate. Even more outrageous, he actually floated up and began to massage Bai Xiaochun’s neck and shoulders….

When Bai Xiaochun realized how obedient he was acting, and saw the fawning expression on his face, he sighed even more deeply.

When the image on the fan face was brought up, Bai Xiaochun looked over at it. Before, he had only been able to observe it from a distance, but now, when he stood on the fan rib and looked at it, it was almost as if he were drawn into the picture itself.

The river, the mountain, and everything else, seemed to resonate with each other. There was also the boat in the river, upon which two men sat playing Go. There was also the palace in the river, and… the sovereign arm floating in the sky.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t have been in higher spirits.

“Master, once your cultivation base is high enough, you will be able to create projections of the items in the fan face. For example, that boat is actually a world treasure. And the two men sitting there playing Go are actually archaean slaves!

“See that mountain? It was created by the Dao Essence of the exalted sovereign!

“And that river is no ordinary river. One drop from it can transform into another mighty river wherever it is placed.

“And there’s more. Master, remember how much I wanted to use the power of that sovereign's arm before? Master, if you just send your mind into the damaged fan, you’ll be able to see what you can do with it now.” Curious, Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and sent his mind into the fan. Almost immediately, he began to pant.

To his shock, he could sense that, somewhere else in the void, there was another damaged fan, heading in his direction!

“The other half of the damaged fan!” he exclaimed, opening his eyes.

“Exactly!” Bai Xiaochi replied excitedly. “Considering how fast it’s going, it won’t be long before the two meet each other. When they combine, then the fan will be whole again!”

“If only one half of the fan is this powerful,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “then… no one would ever dare to provoke me if I had the entire thing!” Such thoughts immediately had him feeling more daring and heroic than ever.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1184 awe-chapter-1185

Bai Xiaochi provided a thorough tour and explanation of all the functions of the fan. During the process, Bai Xiaochun personally visited the mountain in the image on the fan face, atop which was a towering pagoda, filled with the aura of the Dao Essence of Life and Death.

It was a nine-story pagoda, the top floor of which actually contained that Dao Essence of Life and Death. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base wasn't high enough to permit him to enter that level. He could only reach as high as the fourth.

Even in that fourth floor, though, his progress when practicing cultivation vastly surpassed other locations on the fan, or in the Eternal Immortal Domains. When he sat cross-legged in meditation for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, his entire body filled with burning heat. As it turned out, thanks to the stimulation of the Dao Essence of Life and Death, his cultivation base power increased as much in that short period of time as it normally would in an entire month.

“This is a holy land of cultivation!” he exclaimed.

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi obsequiously said, “Milord, once you've reached the late Celestial Realm, you'll be able to enter the fifth floor. Once you're an archaean, you'll be able to enter the top floor, and contact the Dao Essence of Life and Death directly. At that point, your cultivation will go even faster!”

Excited by the prospect, Bai Xiaochun did some more cultivation, until his cultivation base and battle prowess were far stronger than before. Finally, he left.

After taking a walk around the fan, he once again tried to use the power of his cultivation base to take control of the images in the fan face, and the divine abilities they could unleash.

Unfortunately, he couldn't budge the mountain, or the river. However, the requirements to use the boat didn't seem as high, and after some work, he manage to get it to tremble slightly. Even the two men playing Go inside of it twitched.

Although he couldn't fully summon it outside of the fan face, he was still pleased with the progress he had made. It felt wonderful to be the true owner of the damaged fan. Even better were all of the treasures and medicinal pills he had access to now. A mere thought on his part caused numerous such items to fly out of the fan and into his hand.

At this point, he thought back to some of the strange things he had encountered in the various levels, such as the Dark Concocters, or the level filled with souls. Blurring into motion, he headed into the level that contained the Dark Concocters.

As soon as he appeared, the Dark Concocters sensed his presence, and looked up to see a figure that had haunted their nightmares ever since they first met him. Immediately, screams began to rise into the air.

“Heavens! It's him! The arch-nemesis of the Dark Concocters!!”

“Impossible! How could he have come back!? Didn't we banish him already?!”

When Bai Xiaochun saw the Dark Concocters trembling in terror, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. There was no way he would simply let such natural-born medicine concocters off the hook. Using his authority and powers with the fan, he very easily forced them to submit….

The Dark Concocters agreed to his demands. Scowling on the verge of tears, they began to concoct medicine in exactly the way he demanded….

Next, he went to the level filled with souls, and quickly cleared it out. Long ago, Bai Xiaochi had claimed that he couldn’t take those souls. Bai Xiaochun had then taken that to mean that he would just have to acquire them on his own.

Bai Xiaochi stood off to the side, watching Bai Xiaochun plundering the fan with seeming ease. Although his spirit automaton’s heart dripped with figurative blood, he didn't let even a hint of that show on his face. He simply looked on.

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun said, “Don’t look at me like that. It's a big waste to leave these souls sitting here doing nothing. There’s no way I’m going to let them feed on any more of the spiritual energy powering the fan!”

Looking like the picture of righteousness, he sat down cross-legged and began to practice more cultivation using the medicinal pills he had just acquired.

Half a month went by. Having just become the new owner of the fan, Bai Xiaochun was in extremely high spirits, and was enthralled with the various functions and abilities of the fan. Most of his time was spent either practicing cultivation, or doing research into twenty-three-colored flame.

Unfortunately, he didn't have a huge stockpile of souls anymore. But he had enough to work with temporarily. He eventually reached the point of being confident enough to do some tests. Although there were no successes, the failures gave him plenty of new insights, and he was gaining confidence in an imminent success.

As Bai Xiaochun was immersed in his activities on the damaged fan, something happened in Vile-Emperor City that was profoundly shocking to all cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm.

Earlier, everything had been calm. The Vile-Prince had kept very low-key, and hadn't seemed interested in Bai Xiaochun at all. The Vile-Emperor was in secluded meditation.

But the truth was that… the Vile-Prince had been working on a huge plan targeting… the River-Defying Sect!

Patriarch Spirit Stream and his allies had slowly been recruiting more and more cultivators to their cause, and even though Big Fatty Zhang was doing his best to keep it all a secret, their presence was finally made known!

Before, the Vile-Prince hadn't been confident enough to make a move on them. But now, his patience had reached an end. Furthermore, even after refining the Arch-Emperor into a new arm for himself, he was still unable to perform spirit enhancements. The Vile-Prince was going crazy in his thirst for spirit enhancement blood. And therefore, he had spent the last few months secretly surrounding the River-Defying Sect.

If the sect had been located in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, he wouldn't have dared to make a move. But since it was in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, things were much simpler. Even still, he knew that when he made his move, he had to strike like lightning.

He arranged for some celestials to help him, which ensured that the River-Defying Sect forces were powerless to resist him. When he finally made his move, they couldn’t even fight back! They were instantly captured!!

The news shook the entire Vile-Emperor Dynasty. And what was even more astonishing was the subsequent announcement made by the Vile-Prince that he was setting up a massive spell formation in one of the plains outside of Vile-Emperor City!

Trapped within the spell formation were all of the cultivators from the River-Defying Sect, as well as other Heavenspan Realm cultivators who had been imprisoned earlier. There were tens of thousands in total.

All of them were sealed, and incapable of escaping the spell formation which, once fully activated, would extract their blood. The Vile-Prince himself wouldn’t oversee the operation, but rather, Celestial Deadfall and Reverend Devourer!

It was shocking news, especially to the Heavenspan cultivators scattered in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. All of them were immediately enraged!

“Vile-Prince!!” Song Que had just been preparing to go meet up with the River-Defying Sect, and was relatively close to Vile-Emperor City. When he heard about what was happening, his eyes began to burn with madness and killing intent, and he instantly powered up his cultivation base.

He had been a lone wolf for years now, and had slaughtered countless enemies. Because of that, and because of the cultivation resources he had acquired over the years, his cultivation base had long since broken through to the late Deva Realm!

However, because of his murderous aura, he was confident that he could actually fight a demigod!

Years of enlightenment regarding the Dao of slaughter and killing made him seem like a razor-sharp sword dripping with blood. Without any hesitation, he began to speed in the direction of Vile-Emperor City.

It was at that exact same moment that, back on the damaged fan, Bai Xiaochun finally conjured a twenty-three-colored flame. Feeling very pleased with himself, he left the fan and returned to his private chamber in the embassy in Vile-Emperor City. As soon as he materialized, he noticed that his transmission jade slip was vibrating loudly.

Because of how far away the damaged fan was, he couldn't receive transmitted messages. But now, all of the messages came in, and when he saw them, his face flickered dramatically. Heart pounding with a sense of profound unease, he sent his divine sense into the jade slip.

Virtually all of the messages were from Big Fatty Zhang!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1185 awe-chapter-1186

“Everyone in the River-Defying Sect has been arrested!!”

“A huge spell formation has been set up outside Vile-Emperor City!!”

“They’re going to extract the blood of tens of thousands of cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm!!”

Each message from Big Fatty Zhang was like a dagger stabbing into Bai Xiaochun’s heart!

Patriarch Spirit Stream, Li Qinghou, and other compatriots from the River-Defying Sect, as well as cultivators from other parts of the Heavenspan Realm, were now trapped in a spell formation outside the city!

Big Fatty Zhang didn’t just sound anxious in his messages, he also sounded angry. Bai Xiaochun could only imagine what level of despair he currently felt.

Panting, and heart pounding painfully, he rose to his feet, his eyes completely bloodshot as he let out a howl of anguish!

Pain wracked him both physically and mentally!

Madness gripped him, from his mind down to his soul!

He had been hurt deeply back in the incident at the imperial palace, and had Gongsun Wan’er not intervened, he would have lost complete control. Afterward, it was only because of the Arch-Emperor’s legacy that he managed to clench his hands into fists and trudge back to the embassy like the walking dead. Then, he descended into a near masochistic session of cultivation.

His mood had lifted quite a bit after becoming the new owner of the damaged fan, but now he had returned only to be hit with this news. As of now, it was completely impossible for him to suppress the madness in his heart!

He didn’t care what the consequences might be, or what price he might have to pay…. This was Patriarch Spirit Stream and Li Qinghou!!

This was the River-Defying Sect!! This was the lives of tens of thousands of people from the Heavenspan Realm!!

Laughing in madness, he shot out from the embassy, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds. At the same time, a murderous aura erupted from him that cast the embassy and everything around it into the dead of winter. All cultivators present shivered as they were instantly sealed in place by the aura!

A moment later, a blood mist sprang out around Bai Xiaochun!

He was directly resorting to… the Godkiller technique!!

Instantly, he vanished from the embassy. By the time the embassy staff came to their senses, he was gone, and they all knew exactly where he was going!

“Something big is about to happen!!”

“Quick, notify Saint-Emperor City!!” Everyone in the embassy was extremely nervous. Obviously, they knew what the Vile-Prince was up to, and therefore, to see Bai

Xiaochun suddenly explode into action was a clear sign that something major was going to occur in Vile-Emperor City.

And yet… what was about to happen surpassed anything they could possibly have imagined!!

The blood mist that was Bai Xiaochun shot out of the city and then headed toward the shockingly large spell formation.

The spell formation was a mass of turbid chaos, making it difficult to see what was going on inside. Nine black dragons formed the main structure of the formation, and seated cross-legged in key locations were several hundred Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators.

They were powering the spell formation, and sitting cross-legged in the air above it were Reverend Devourer and Celestial Deadfall.

Upon the request of the Vile-Prince, they were to actually operate the spell formation!

They were aware of who was sealed inside the formation, and they also knew how it all related to Bai Xiaochun. But this was Vile-Emperor City, and in their estimation, the fact that Bai Xiaochun had held himself in check during the incident in the imperial palace indicated that he was no fool, and that he would likely do the same thing again.

Celestial Deadfall was very happy to be a part of what was happening. He had not forgotten how badly he had fared against Bai Xiaochun in their fight some years ago, and was also irritated that Daoist Heavenspan’s fame had surpassed his own in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

“If this Bai Xiaochun comes, then his end will be miserable beyond belief! He’ll be forced to watch the people of Heavenspan wither and die. And his grudge won’t be with me, it will be with the Vile-Prince.” With such thoughts on his mind, Celestial Deadfall smiled and looked down at the spell formation below.

However, it was in that very moment that his expression flickered. Off to the side, Reverend Devourer opened his eyes. Both of them looked over to see a crimson blur flying in their direction from Vile-Emperor City, seemingly filled with an unending aura of blood and death!

As soon as they saw the blur, and sensed the fluctuations coming from within it, both Celestial Deadfall and Reverend Devourer knew exactly who was coming!

“Bai Xiaochun!” Celestial Deadfall rose to his feet, and yet, before he could say anything, Bai Xiaochun spoke in a voice that shook heaven and earth!

“Are you people… looking to die?!?!” His voice continued to echo through the air as he bore down on the cultivators seated cross-legged, powering the spell formation. Most of them were devas, with some being demigods, and all of them looked up in complete shock as Bai Xiaochun shot toward them. Before any of them could react, he had stabbed through seven or eight of them!

They couldn’t resist or fight back! Their bodies instantly withered, and hoarse screams erupted out as they were transformed into desiccated corpses that toppled backward onto the ground.

Terror erupted in the hearts of everyone present. As for Celestial Deadfall and Reverend Devourer, they shouted in anger and leaped to block Bai Xiaochun’s way.

But Bai Xiaochun’s Godkiller technique was too fast. Rumbling sounds echoed out as dozens of enemies were slaughtered. It didn’t matter how scared they were, how they tried to flee, or what techniques they tried to use to defend themselves. They were powerless against that blood mist!

It all happened so quickly that even the celestials were too slow to do anything about it, let alone the terrified cultivators powering the spell formation. Wherever the blood mist went, cultivators transformed into dried-up corpses, their flesh and blood extracted, their souls plucked out, their life force wrenched away!

Hundreds of cultivators dropped to the ground, their life force flowing into the Godkiller technique, making it more powerful, until the entire area was stained with crimson light!

Bai Xiaochun would usually refrain from killing if he could, but once he started… he wouldn’t hold back! As of this moment, his murderous aura had combined with his frustration and madness, exploding out in unprecedented fashion!

“What incredible gall you have, Bai Xiaochun!” Celestial Deadfall shouted. Both he and Reverend Devourer were actually secretly delighted. Considering what had happened already, they knew that Bai Xiaochun would not easily escape catastrophe!

And yet, even as Celestial Deadfall’s words rang out into the air, the blood mist converged upon itself to form an image of Bai Xiaochun’s face, except as red as blood. Instantly, that head began to speed toward Celestial Deadfall!

Celestial Deadfall’s face fell, and Reverend Devourer narrowed his eyes. Both of them began to perform incantation gestures as they prepared to join forces. Before they could, though, Bai Xiaochun’s enraged voice erupted from within the blood mist.

“Waterswamp Kingdom!”

RRRUUUUMBLE!

Water vapor erupted in all directions, and spikes shot up into the air. Mountain peaks turned into a gigantic beast… that rose up from the depths of the land around them, and then lunged toward Reverend Devourer!

Yet again, Reverend Devourer’s face fell. Originally, he would never have considered retreating, but after being set upon by this enormous beast, he had no choice. Within moments, Celestial Deadfall was left standing alone!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t hesitate for a moment. Accelerating, he slammed into Celestial Deadfall head on! Howling, Celestial Deadfall defended himself, resorting to powerful divine abilities that spared him, but resulted in him tumbling backward with blood spraying out of his mouth.

The Godkiller technique dissipated, revealing Bai Xiaochun himself, his eyes blazing with killing intent. He wanted to take lives, even those belonging to celestials. Without killing the people who stood in his way, he wouldn’t have the time to open up the spell formation!

“I've never killed a celestial before. Is that why you dare to stand in my way!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1186 awe-chapter-1187

Bai Xiaochun began to rave with maddened laughter, laughter filled with all the vicious rage that he had been keeping suppressed during his time in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

“Well in that case… I guess I might as well kill a celestial!” Reverend Devourer had been forced into retreat by the Waterswamp Kingdom, and Celestial Deadfall had been injured to the point of coughing up blood by the Godkiller. Therefore, it was without hesitation that Bai Xiaochun shot toward Celestial Deadfall!

As he moved, countless rocks and boulders formed around him, transforming him into an enormous stone golem!

Then, he utilized the Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation, causing his stone golem form’s fleshly body power to increase dramatically, and to grow even larger than before. By the time the process was complete, he was radiating energy that caused the sky to grow dim, and sent a wild wind screaming across the lands.

Celestial Deadfall could hardly breathe. Eyes wide from the sensation of deadly crisis, he immediately unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, and drew upon all of the magical items and trump cards that he could think of.

And yet, none of that did anything to reduce the sensation of profound danger. In fact, as Bai Xiaochun advanced toward him, that sensation only grew more intense!

Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body power erupted as he used his Undying Hex, as well as the Mountain Shaking Bash!

It was almost as if he had transformed into an enormous mountain that blurred through the air toward Celestial Deadfall!

Celestial Deadfall felt like he was collapsing mentally. However, he couldn’t evade the blow. In his despair, he prepared to meet the strike head on to try to survive it. And yet, Bai Xiaochun had not yet resorted to his most deadly technique. As he neared… he clenched his hand into a fist.

He was using… the Undying Emperor’s Fist!!

It was no ordinary Undying Emperor’s Fist. It was backed by the Living Mountain Incantation, the Cloud Lighting Forefather Transformation, his fleshly body power, his Mountain Shaking Bash, and his Undying Hex, as well as all of the life force he had just absorbed with the Godkiller technique! This was… a fist strike of unparalleled destructive power!

Everything in the area began to tremble violently as energy fluctuations were released that surpassed ordinary celestials. This energy… was on the very cusp of being in the great circle of the Celestial Realm!!

“Time to die!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted. Meanwhile, Celestial Deadfall howled in desperation as they collided.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

Everything in the area shook violently, even Vile-Emperor City. Mountains crumbled, and countless cultivators in the city were stunned by the deafening explosion.

A shockwave spread out everywhere, along with a sound so loud that even Celestial Deadfall’s cry of anguish was drowned out.

When the dust cleared, Bai Xiaochun stood there, his right sleeve gone, revealing his arm. Although his arm seemed intact, closer inspection revealed that it was covered with too many wounds to count.

However, those wounds immediately began to heal up. At the same time, it was possible to see a crater in front of Bai Xiaochun, at the bottom of which were scattered… chunks of bloody flesh and gore!!

Celestial Deadfall's fleshly body had been completely destroyed!!

His Daoseed flew out, and then vanished….

A celestial… had been killed.

This was the second time in the Eternal Immortal Domains that a celestial had been killed in recent times. The first to have been killed was the old woman who had been killed by the sovereign clone, and now Celestial Deadfall. Although he could be resurrected, it was still completely momentous.

Off in the distance, Reverend Devourer panted for breath, his mind spinning.

“Bai Xiaochun, how… how dare you kill a celestial!!”

Although the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty had been at odds for many years, nothing like this had ever happened before. Not only was Reverend Devourer stunned by the death of Celestial Deadfall… he was also terrified of Bai Xiaochun’s display of battle prowess!

“He's already reached the point… where he can kill a celestial with a single fist strike!!” Reverend Devourer shivered with fear. Although the Waterswamp Kingdom had already faded away, he was still completely terrified.

Before he could come to his senses, Bai Xiaochun turned to him, eyes bloodshot, and began to walk toward him.

“And then there’s you!!”

Bai Xiaochun's right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and then he waved his finger in Reverend Devourer’s direction. Instantly, numerous Live Forever Lamps sprang up in the area. At the same time, Reverend Devourer himself became a lamp, along with the sky above and the land below.

Reverend Devourer’s face fell, not from fear of the technique, but rather, because Bai Xiaochun had just pulled out the Greatsword of the North, and was accelerating in his direction.

Obviously, he planned to take advantage of Reverend Devourer being stuck in place by the Live Forever Lamps… to kill him!

“Dammit, this guy really holds grudges!” Gasping for breath, he performed an incantation gesture, causing a blood-colored light to spring up around him. In that same moment, the energy of the Live Forever Lamps erupted, smashing into the blood-colored light and shattering it.

At the same time, the Greatsword of the North descended toward Reverend Devourer. Normally speaking, Reverend Devourer would have chosen to go all out to seize victory. But right now, his life was more important to him than the spell formation or the people of Heavenspan. After all, everything had been set up by the Vile-Prince to begin with.

Therefore, it was without hesitation that he threw everything he had into blocking the sword strike. Then, blood spraying from his mouth, he sped off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochun stood there panting, looking like he was completely out of control. However, the truth was that he knew exactly what he was doing. For one thing, his spectacular gains in the damaged fan had pushed him to the very brink of the late Celestial Realm.

Second was that he was completely enraged by the situation the Vile-Prince had set up. Ignoring the fleeing Reverend Devourer, Bai Xiaochun hefted the Greatsword of the North and then slashed it down toward the spell formation!

“Be destroyed!!” he shouted. As the sword descended, one of the nine black dragons that made up the foundation of the formation howled as it was absolutely destroyed.

The other eight quickly rushed over to gobble up the bits of the destroyed dragon. Bai Xiaochun had never seen a spell formation like this before, but he could tell that it was extraordinary. Although he could use his Undying Hex to get into it, his goal was to save everyone inside. Therefore, using the Undying Hex would be too much of a waste of time. Being so close to Vile-Emperor City, time was of the essence. He needed the spell formation open immediately. Lifting the Greatsword of the North up again, he cut down toward the spell formation.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!

He struck seven times, destroying a black dragon with each blow. Each time, the spell formation trembled and grew weaker, until soon, the turbid chaos began to fade away to reveal… the tens of thousands of Heavenspan Realm cultivators inside!

They were seated cross-legged in meditation, their faces ashen. Some were clearly putting up a fight, but some had already been reduced to skeletons….

Bai Xiaochun quickly spotted Li Qinghou and Patriarch Spirit Stream.

“Uncle Li….” Bai Xiaochun murmured. It had been years since they had last seen each other. Li Qinghou’s hair was no longer black, but gray. Next to him was Patriarch Spirit Stream, who looked haggard and withered. There were many other familiar faces, all of whom caused Bai Xiaochun to howl with rage as he slashed away with the Greatsword of the North.

It was at this point that, with no warning whatsoever, a beam of light shot out from Vile-Emperor City toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Feeling suicidal, Bai Xiaochun?!?!” The voice that rang into Bai Xiaochun’s ears belonged to none other than the strongest celestial in the Vile-Emperor City… Celestial Virūpākṣa!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1187 awe-chapter-1188

Behind Celestial Virūpākṣa were streams of divine sense, which belonged to the other celestials in the city, all of whom had detected what was occurring with the spell formation.

Most of them intentionally hung back a bit. After all, Bai Xiaochun had just killed Celestial Deadfall and seriously injured Reverend Devourer, leaving all of them quite shaken.

Some, such as Prince Ur-Demon, were so frightened that they only dared to send out divine sense, and even then, let Celestial Virūpākṣa take the lead.

Celestial Virūpākṣa, on the other hand, was the strongest celestial in Vile-Emperor City, and had long since come to hate Bai Xiaochun. He had become suspicious of him back when they were both on the damaged fan, and had also suffered at his hands during the incident with the sovereign clone. Therefore, he did not hesitate at all to intervene when Bai Xiaochun tried to break open the spell formation.

Bai Xiaochun looked up, aware that if Celestial Virūpākṣa hindered him in opening the spell formation, then the other celestials from Vile-Emperor City would also come.

Then, not only would he be in great danger, but it would also be impossible to save Patriarch Spirit Stream and the others. And that was without even mentioning the fact that the Vile-Emperor could also show up eventually.

Not much time had passed since he made his move, and he didn’t dare to gamble on how long the Vile-Emperor would remain in secluded meditation. If he emerged, then it could lead to a complete catastrophe!

“So, killing Deadfall didn’t scare them. Well, if I can make Virūpākṣa stand down, then that should strike fear into their hearts!” Knowing he had no other choice, he threw his head back and roared, drawing fully upon his cultivation base to shove the Greatsword of the North down toward the spell formation!

A boom rang out as the sword stabbed into the formation, which trembled violently, but held. However, stabbing the sword into the formation not only reduced some of the danger to those inside, it also made it much more difficult for the formation to repair itself.

Looking up, Bai Xiaochun unleashed shocking fleshly body and cultivation base power as he shot toward Celestial Virūpākṣa!

“Have a death wish?!” It wasn’t that Celestial Virūpākṣa hadn’t seen Bai Xiaochun kill Deadfall. It was that he still believed that, even if Bai Xiaochun were stronger than he was, he could still be handled. And that was especially true now that he wasn’t wielding his Greatsword of the North.

As the two closed in on each other, Bai Xiaochun unleashed the Undying Emperor’s Fist at nearly the highest level it could reach.

A huge boom rang out, causing wild colors to flash in heaven and earth. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he staggered backward. Virūpākṣa was equally shaken, his eyes shining brightly, and his heart swelling with shock. Even he was surprised by the fist strike Bai Xiaochun had just unleashed.

Before he could attack again, Bai Xiaochun’s wounds were healing up, and a ferocious smile could be seen on his face as he unleashed… yet another Undying Emperor’s Fist!

Deafening rumbling sounds could be heard as blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth again. And yet, he didn’t hold back. In the blink of an eye, Bai Xiaochun attacked and was rebuffed five times in a row. And yet, Celestial Virūpākṣa was having a hard time sustaining the force, and staggered backward, coughing up blood.

Looking livelier than ever, Bai Xiaochun lunged after him. Off in the distance, Prince Ur-Demon and the other celestials gasped at the sight of what was happening.

Bai Xiaochun seemed to be gripped by madness, and was doing things that none of them could ever have imagined him doing. To them, he seemed completely different from the past. As of now, he clearly pulsed with veins of steel!

He was obviously injured, to the point where he was coughing up mouthfuls of blood. Even with his powers of regeneration, it didn't seem like he should be able to sustain such terrible injuries.

In the face of such madness and such veins of steel, even the valiant Celestial Virūpākṣa was coughing up blood, and finally seemed to be hesitating.

Wiping the blood off of his mouth, Bai Xiaochun said, “Bring it on!”

With that, he blurred into motion, unleashing more Undying Emperor’s Fists, causing all heaven and earth to tremble as shadowy emperors unleashed a torrent of destruction. He seemed to completely disregard any injuries to himself as he fought with increasingly shocking battle prowess!

With the Undying Codex bolstering him, Bai Xiaochun seemed beyond the point of coming to a compromise. He would either kill his opponent, or die trying!!

As his murderous aura raged, Virūpākṣa struggled to fight back. After coughing up seven huge mouthfuls of blood, his face fell.

“Are you really trying to get killed, Bai Xiaochun!?” he shouted. There was nothing for Virūpākṣa to do other than shout and curse. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun’s arm was in shreds, his bones visible beneath the skin. He was coughing so violently that the blood that came out was filled with chunks of internal organs.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun was in such a state of madness, and his murderous aura was so intense, that Virūpākṣa was already hesitating about whether to keep on fighting. At this point, even winning could place him in grave danger!

“It's not worth it!” He suddenly shot backward in the face of Bai Xiaochun’s next attack. Although it was a big loss of face, the danger was too great. Just like Reverend Devourer, he chose to flee, and even regretted having gotten involved to begin with.

Off in the distance, Prince Ur-Demon and the other celestials saw what was happening, and gasped in shock. After exchanging stunned glances, they turned to head back into the city.

“Screw it. As long as he doesn’t cause problems in the city, we should just leave him alone.”

“This guy is obviously crazy….”

“The Vile-Emperor might be in secluded meditation, but if things keep going on like this, he’ll definitely come out and take care of things!”

Ignoring the fleeing Celestial Virūpākṣa, Bai Xiaochun flew back down to the Greatsword of the North. Panting for breath, he grabbed it by the hilt and then yanked it out of the spell formation. Even as his wounds healed up, he drew upon both his cultivation base and fleshly body power to slash the sword downward again.

“Open up!”

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

He hit the very spot where he had stabbed the sword into the formation, causing cracks to spread out in all directions. Then, the spell formation exploded!

As the dust settled, the tens of thousands of Heavenspan Realm cultivators who had been inside looked up. Despite being weakened, they knew that they now had a new lease on life. And then they saw Bai Xiaochun. Although some didn’t recognize him, many were his friends. And many began to shed tears.

“Arch-Ancestor!”

“It’s the Arch-Ancestor!!”

“The Arch-Ancestor came to rescue us!!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t keep a calm heart in the face of such exclamations. Almost immediately, he focused on Li Qinghou and Patriarch Spirit Stream, who looked profoundly weakened by this point. Rushing over to Li Qinghou, he reached out to help him to his feet.

“Uncle Li!”

Considering how long it had been since they had last seen each other, it should have been a joyous reunion. And although Li Qinghou was visibly excited, his face suddenly turned grim, and he gripped Bai Xiaochun’s shoulders tightly.

“Xiaochun,” he said, sounding very anxious, “you have to go save Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo!!”

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, a tremor passed through him, and he suddenly couldn’t breathe. He had been searching for news of those two very women for many years, only to hear their names now, in this moment of critical danger.

“They were taken away by the Vile-Prince!” Li Qinghou continued, “You have to rescue them!!”

Looking just as anxious as Li Qinghou, Patriarch Spirit Stream added, “Xiaochun, they’re pregnant! And considering how the two of them have been acting around each other… you have to be the father! I'm not sure why they’ve been pregnant for so long, but from what Junwan told me, she’s definitely bearing your child. Go, save them!!”

“WHAT?!?!” Bai Xiaochun was as struck to the core as if he had been hit by lightning. Although others might not understand the situation, based on what the Giant Ghost King had told him, he knew that it was because of his bloodline and the Undying Live Forever Codex that the pregnancy terms of both women had been extended in such dramatic fashion. As of this moment, what he had felt before almost didn’t count as being angry. As of this moment, he felt more fury than could be imagined!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1188 awe-chapter-1189

“Wan’er and Zimo… have my own flesh and blood in them… my children….” Bai Xiaochun shivered as a tempest began to build up in him the likes of which he had never experienced in his entire life.

On the one hand, he felt joy, on the other anxiety. The fact that he had no idea whether the two of them were even alive caused a fire to begin to burn hot within his heart.

“Xiaochun,” Patriarch Spirit Stream said, “it seems likely the Vile-Prince has his eye on your physical body. Since he failed in his attempt to get it, he came up with two plans. One was to extract our blood, the other was to seize Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, and use your unborn children to harvest both their blood and vital yang energy. It's all for the purposes of extracting the secrets locked within your bloodline!!”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were crimson as he threw his head back and let out a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering roar. Suddenly, he was filled with a reckless rage that surpassed anything from before!

These were his Daoist partners and his children!!

The fact that the Vile-Prince wanted to use them for such nefarious purposes was pushing Bai Xiaochun into an insane level of rage, the type that could stain all creation with blood!

Even the most fearful and cowardly person would be unable to accept such a situation, and would be driven into a violent rage!!

However, he had not completely lost all sense of reason. He knew that if he went to save Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, he might not come out of the situation alive. He had feared death his entire life, and usually chose to take the safe route, not the dangerous one.

But right now… he didn't care. Even if he faced mountains of daggers and seas of flames, he would still go. He *had* to go. Even if he died!

"What's the big deal about dying anyway!!" Such sentiments had never existed within Bai Xiaochun's heart before, but right now, they dominated his mind!

Despite his frenzied state, he looked over at the tens of thousands of Heavenspan Realm cultivators, aware that if he left them here alone, they would be in danger. And if he took them with him in the Greatsword of the North, and he ended up perishing, then they would meet the same fate. Although he might be willing to throw his life away, he couldn't force the same fate on them.

He had few options. Without any hesitation, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out at the sword. It vibrated, and then released a gravitational force that grabbed all of the Heavenspan Realm cultivators, even Li Qinghou and Patriarch Spirit Stream, and sucked them inside!

Next, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, sending the Greatsword of the North streaking off into the distance in a beam of light. He had thought of sending them to the damaged fan. But he knew that, despite being the owner of the fan, he couldn't send that many people into it.

“Gongsun Wan’er, I, Bai Xiaochun… beg that you do me a favor. Take my people, and this sword, and deliver them… to the Grand Heavenmaster!!”

Some distance away, Gongsun Wan’er materialized out of thin air, mixed emotions visible on her face. She had come much earlier, and had been considering whether to help Bai Xiaochun or not. In the end, she didn’t need to.

The fact that he had spoken her name aloud indicated that he knew she had come. Even as she watched in silence, he turned and became a blur of light, shooting back toward Vile-Emperor City like a meteor!

“He… trusts me that much…?” she thought. Turning, she blurred into motion as she went after the Greatsword of the North. She knew that Bai Xiaochun was entrusting her with the lives of tens of thousands of his people. And she also knew that she couldn’t stop him from doing what he was setting out to do. It all left her feeling very shaken.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun moved with shocking speed toward the bone dragon that was Vile-Emperor City.

Getting rid of the Greatsword of the North reduced his battle prowess to a certain degree, but he knew that he had no other choice. It was the only way to keep the people who had called him the Arch-Ancestor safe. It was the only way… to be able to fight a bloody battle to the death without any distractions!

“If I don’t kill you this day, Vile-Prince, then I don’t deserve to call myself human!!”

Die. DIE! DIE!!!

The murderous aura which surrounded Bai Xiaochun propelled him forward like a destructive shooting star.

The wind screamed and the lands quaked. The air, unable to sustain such force, cracked and shattered. The cultivators in Vile-Emperor City who could see what was happening were absolutely shocked, and felt like they were being crushed by the pressure. They even felt the Willpower inside of them stirring!

Devas, demigods, and celestials all gasped in shock, especially those in the embassy.

All of Vile-Emperor City seemed cloaked with a suffocating pressure as countless eyes looked at Bai Xiaochun streaking through the air!

As for his destination, it was very obvious. He was heading to… Vile-Prince Mansion!!

He looked like a vicious blade slicing through the air toward the Vile-Prince!

Within Vile-Prince Mansion, all of the Vile-Prince’s subordinates were shaking in fear. Meanwhile, the Vile-Prince was in a private chamber, a crazed expression on his face as he looked at the spell formation set up in front of him.

“Let's see how long you can last, you puny animals!”

The spell formation resembled a yin-yang symbol, with Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo sealed within it, their eyes closed. Both of them were trembling, their faces ashen and twisted by expressions of pain. Black smoke curled around them, stabbing into them to extract the blood and essences of both them and their unborn children!

Thankfully, Song Junwan had a totemic tattoo on her forearm, which surrounded both her and Zhou Zimo with a violet, protective shield of light. Closer inspection would reveal that the totem tattoo depicted… Bruiser!

The spell formation was set up on a blood-colored altar, which was none other than the source of the black smoke.

In response to the incantation gestures performed by the Vile-Prince, the spell formation rotated constantly. At a certain point, the Vile-Prince suddenly looked up and pulled out a transmission jade slip.

“Dammit! Can’t anybody stop him?! You want to kill me, Bai Xiaochun? You’re just asking to be cut down! Let’s see who’s faster, you or me. I’m so close to succeeding!” Face twisting with rage, he sent a message to his father. After a long moment passed in which he got no response, he got flustered, and started sending messages to the celestials in the city.

He made all sorts of promises of incredible compensation in order to get their help, and when he finally got a response, he breathed a sigh of relief. Still worried though, he ordered the demigods under his command to intercept Bai Xiaochun.

The experts in Vile-Prince Mansion had no choice but to brace themselves and fly out into the open. By this point, Bai Xiaochun had reached the heart of Vile-Emperor City, and was closing in rapidly.

Before the Vile-Prince’s minions could reach him though, the celestials who had responded to his promised rewards arrived. Daoist Heavenspan, Prince Ur-Demon, Reverend Devourer, and Celestial Virūpākṣa all appeared.

The first thing they did was try to convince Bai Xiaochun to stop.

“Back down, Bai Xiaochun!!”

“The Vile-Emperor is coming out of seclusion at any moment, Bai Xiaochun. Wake up! We can work things out, there’s no reason for all of this!”

On any other occasion, Bai Xiaochun might have agreed to a compromise. But right now, his eyes were bloodshot, and his murderous aura raged to unheard-of levels. Never before in his life had he been this dead set on killing people.

“All of you… get the hell out of my way!!” He didn’t waste time with words. He immediately resorted to the Mountain Shaking Bash, adding in raw fleshly body power and energy from his cultivation base. He even used the Undying Hex and his Godkiller technique.

A boom could be heard as he slammed into Prince Ur-Demon and Daoist Heavenspan. Blood sprayed out of both of their mouths as they were sent tumbling to the side. As for Reverend Devourer and Celestial Virūpākṣa, although they were still leery about the situation, they still tried to block Bai Xiaochun’s path.

More booms rang out as Bai Xiaochun himself coughed up blood, his chest completely caved in. However, he didn’t seem to care. Laughing with madness, he grabbed Celestial Virūpākṣa and violently headbutted him.

As Celestial Virūpākṣa coughed up blood, he realized that Bai Xiaochun was opening his mouth as if to bite a chunk out of his face. Without any hesitation, Virūpākṣa paid a heavy price to flee using a secret magic.

“He’s really gone insane!!”

Meanwhile, as Bai Xiaochun was tangled up with the celestials, the Vile-Prince’s minions were flying out to meet a different intruder!

He wore black robes that matched his swirling black hair, and wielded a long spear. Although he was clearly a deva, he was obviously powerful enough to fight with demigods!

He was none other than Song Que!

After glancing up at the battle being fought between the celestials, he turned toward Vile-Prince Mansion.

“Que’er is here to rescue you, Aunt Junwan!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1189 awe-chapter-1190

Up in midair, Bai Xiaochun shoved Celestial Virūpākṣa out of the way with the blood mist of his Godkiller technique, then ignored Prince Ur-Demon and the other celestials as he headed directly toward Vile-Prince Mansion.

He was completely out of patience, and therefore, anyone who got in his way would either be shoved to the side or killed....

No one could stop him!

Reverend Devourer secretly frowned. He was a slick and evasive person, and in any other circumstances would have simply stood down and let things play out how they would.

Unfortunately, they were right in the middle of Vile-Emperor City. If Bai Xiaochun got to Vile-Prince Mansion and did something drastic, then the Vile-Emperor would likely be furious. Celestial Virūpākṣa might have it a bit easier because of the fact that he hadn’t been working with the Vile-Prince earlier on. But Reverend Devourer *had* been working closely with the Vile-Prince, for a while now, and therefore, he had no choice but to try to do something. Thinking back to how things had played out in the incident with the sovereign’s clone, he quickly chose what he hoped would be an effective tactic.

“Prince Ur-Demon! Daoist Heavenspan! We can't let Bai Xiaochun get into Vile-Prince Mansion. The Vile-Emperor will be out of secluded meditation at any moment!” Even as the words left his mouth, he blurred into motion, drawing on significant cultivation base power to teleport right into Bai Xiaochun's path.

Prince Ur-Demon and Daoist Heavenspan both had serious expressions on their faces as they utilized trump cards to help. Bai Xiaochun battered against their resistance several times in a row, but could not get past them. By this point, his murderous aura and burning rage had reached epic heights.

"Are you people looking to die?!?!" The blood mist of the Godkiller technique shrank down, revealing Bai Xiaochun himself. Without any hesitation, he lunged to slam into Daoist Heavenspan.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Daoist Heavenspan tried to leap out of the way, but was hit in the shoulder. Instantly, most of his shoulder and arm were shattered, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. Before he could react, Bai Xiaochun unleashed both the Live Forever Lamp and his Waterswamp Kingdom to prevent Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon from intervening. Then, killing intent flickered in his eyes as he drew on the Mountain Shaking Bash and his Undying Emperor's Fist.

Before the attack hit, Daoist Heavenspan's eyes suddenly turned black, and black smoke poured out from inside of him to form a defensive barrier.

It was a powerful obstacle; the fist strike that Bai Xiaochun had used to seriously injure Celestial Deadfall did little more than knock Daoist Heavenspan back by a few hundred meters, completely uninjured. Furthermore, the backlash Bai Xiaochun suffered caused him to grunt in pain. At the same time, tendrils of black smoke began to wrap around him like fetters, causing blood to ooze out of his mouth as he staggered backward, his powers of regeneration working at top speed. Meanwhile, Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer both looked on with glittering eyes.

“The perfect opportunity!” Reverend Devourer said, performing an incantation gesture that caused a bright blue sea to materialize around him. The sea quickly transformed into a gaping maw that lunged toward Bai Xiaochun.

As for Prince Ur-Demon, he also took action, causing a glowing red light to surround him. At the same time, a huge demon appeared at his back, crimson, with two horns sticking out of its head. Snarling, it jumped toward Bai Xiaochun.

In the face of this seeming crisis, Bai Xiaochun simply chuckled. Eyes shining with madness and determination, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a twenty-two-colored flame!

Prince Ur-Demon’s face fell, and Reverend Devourer gasped loudly. Neither of them knew exactly what Bai Xiaochun was holding, but the terrifying power they could sense from it left them completely and utterly shaken.

Furthermore, this was not an ordinary twenty-two-colored flame. It had been conjured with the help of a sovereign’s Dao Essence of Life and Death… and contained some of that very Essence!

“Not good!”

“That aura… we can’t let it hit us!!” They immediately fell back, and yet, they were too slow!

Even as they began to move, Bai Xiaochun crushed the multi-colored flame, causing a massive explosion!

In that instant, a rumbling sound shook all of Vile-Emperor City, and a powerful shockwave spread out in all directions. Even the bone dragon trembled, and numerous buildings on its surface collapsed.

And that wasn’t even the most terrifying thing that happened. As the twenty-two-colored flame spread out, it devoured anything it touched. Moments before, a host of cultivators from Vile-Prince Mansion had been in the process of surrounding Bai Xiaochun, and were looking on gleefully as his progress was hindered.

But then, before they could react, they saw a fire the likes of which they had never seen before in their entire lives. And it was also the last thing they saw. Flames covered them, filling them with indescribable pain before reducing them to nothing but ash….

The nearby buildings had already been emptied. After all, a battle between celestials was something that weaker cultivators would only dare to observe from afar. However, the buildings that remained were also turned into ash by the burning fire!

Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer were the closest to the epicenter, and were forced to draw upon the full power of their cultivation bases to protect themselves. Even still, they suffered significant injuries, and ended up coughing up blood, their eyes filled with shock. As they burst out of the expanding flames, Reverend Devourer moved a bit quicker, with Prince Ur-Demon falling a bit behind.

If they had been given a straight shot to escape, they would have been able to. However, it was in that moment that a stone golem suddenly stepped out of the fire!!

The stone golem was apparently not hurt at all by the fire, and in fact, didn't even pay any attention to it. Howling, it reached out and grabbed the despairing Prince Ur-Demon.

“Noooo!!” he shrieked, struggling. Unfortunately, he had reacted too slowly, and was soon engulfed by the expanding flames, along with the stone golem.

Although no one could see what happened afterward, they could hear the agonized shrieking coming from within the fire. Daoist Heavenspan gasped and backed up, and Reverend Devourer shivered in fear as he accelerated away in the opposite direction.

Celestial Virūpākṣa was further off in the distance, but even he pushed forward with greater speed.

The fire lasted for about ten breaths of time, after which the stone golem appeared, striding forward. Rock and stone began to crumble off of it until Bai Xiaochun was revealed, injured, but already recovering thanks to his Undying Codex. It took only moments for all of his flesh and blood to be back to normal.

As he walked along, he dragged the unconscious Prince Ur-Demon along with him.

Instead of killing him, he tossed him into his bag of holding, then looked around for a moment before once again heading toward Vile-Prince Mansion!

All of the celestials and demigods in the area, as well as the other cultivators in Vile-Emperor City, were completely stunned by what they had just witnessed. Even Celestial Virūpākṣa was shaken.

Earlier, he hadn’t been willing to put everything on the line, and was now even less willing. After seeing the eruption of multi-colored flame, he felt fear deep in his heart.

“It’s not worth it to provoke him, not even for the sake of the Vile-Prince! Besides, I was just asked to buy some time. I’d say I've accomplished that task already!”

No one was blocking Bai Xiaochun’s path, and the Vile-Emperor had not yet emerged from seclusion. Bai Xiaochun had no time to think about why that might be. Ignoring the exhaustion which was beginning to creep up inside of him, he stepped into Vile-Prince Mansion!

The instant he did, he saw piles of corpses!

The corpses, whether they were devas or Nascent Soul cultivators, were all killed in the same way: a spear wound to the forehead!

Bai Xiaochun quickly sent some divine sense out, until he saw what was happening in the grand hall. There… he saw a familiar face, someone wearing a black robe and wielding a long spear!

He was so soaked in blood that it dripped off of him and formed a pool around him on the ground!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1190 awe-chapter-1191

He was none other than Song Que!

His aura was weak and faltering, and he was covered with wounds. In many places, bone was visible amidst the blood and gore. Because of a smoking, black handprint that could be seen on his chest, his five yin organs and six yang organs were nearly destroyed.

He was missing an eye, and clearly… was on his last legs. It was as if he remained standing by sheer willpower alone, as strong and tall as a mountain!

Earlier, the Vile-Prince had dispatched all of his demigods to assist Prince Prince Ur-Demon and the other celestials in delaying Bai Xiaochun. By that point, the Vile-Prince had already begun to go completely crazy. He had spent several days trying to break down Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, and had reached a critical juncture in which success was just around the corner….

That was when Song Que barged into Vile-Prince Mansion. Black robes fluttering, and spear in hand, he began to slaughter the devas who stood in his way, slowly making his way toward the grand hall.

Just when the most critical of moments arrived, he struck the door with his spear, backing it with all of the cultivation base power he could muster, as well as his unswerving determination. By this point in his life, he cared not for matters of life and death, and therefore held nothing back in his attempt to break open the door.

When the door shattered, the Vile-Prince began to descend into utter madness. All of his schemes and plots had come down to his very moment, only to have Song Que interrupt him. Furious, he began to vent his rage on Song Que!

Song Que, with his deva cultivation base, did not shrink back! Without any hesitation, he began to fight the Vile-Prince, who was a demigod!!

Although the fighting did not reach the spectacular level of the original fight between Bai Xiaochun and Daoist Heavenspan, it was momentous, to say the least. Blood spattered as the two combatants fought madly, with Song Que drawing upon all of the murderous aura he had built up over the years!

He knew that he wasn’t a match for the Vile-Prince, and yet, he didn’t hesitate at all to fight!

After all, he was fighting for his beloved aunt!!

He didn’t care much about Zhou Zimo, but simply could not ignore Song Junwan. She was his closest relative! And when he saw her swollen belly, he also knew that he was fighting for his nephew, a nephew whose father could only be Bai Xiaochun!

Although he had always wanted to outdo Bai Xiaochun, and never really liked him very much, he could not forget everything that Bai Xiaochun had done for him since their original meeting in the Fallen Sword Abyss. Song Que was a proud person, but by this point in his life, he felt no grudge toward Bai Xiaochun. And although he realized that Bai Xiaochun was his superior… he had always believed himself capable of catching up!

And thus, he came to fight. For his aunt, for his nephew… and for Bai Xiaochun’s flesh and blood!

He fought without regrets, filled with the desire to do battle to the very end!

The Vile-Prince was already shaken. He had never before met a deva who could endure under the fury of his attacks. And yet, over and over again, Song Que held strong, making it impossible for the Vile-Prince to continue his work with the spell formation.

Although it seemed beyond the bounds of possibility, Song Que, a mere deva, held out for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. He could see that, despite the fact that Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo seemed incomparably weak as they sat there in the spell formation… they were still alive!

And their children were still safe!!

If he didn’t hold out for enough time… the consequences would be too horrific to imagine!

To last for the time it takes an incense stick to burn required that Song Que sustain mortal injuries, but hold strong…. As the Vile-Prince threw everything he could at him, Song Que ignored the pain and injuries and repeated one thing to himself.

Hold strong. Hold strong! *Hold strong!!!*

When Bai Xiaochun finally shot down from the sky and entered Vile-Prince Mansion, Song Que knew that it had all been worth it.

The Vile-Prince was in a state of madness, gasping for breath as he unleashed one attack after another. “Why won’t you just die, dammit!? Die!!”

He could see Bai Xiaochun approaching, and his heart pounded with defiance.

“I was close! So close!!” Staring venomously at the dying Song Que, the Vile-Prince turned and fled.

In that same moment, Bai Xiaochun's divine sense enveloped the entire mansion. Ignoring the fleeing Vile-Prince, he rushed into the main hall to confirm that Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo were safe. Then, it was with grief and sorrow that he turned to look at Song Que, who stood there, his life slipping away.

Song Que managed to look up at Bai Xiaochun, and then slowly smile.

Even in the face of imminent death, he stood tall and straight. He still looked manly and handsome, his eyes flickering with regret at having to leave the world of the living. Voice hoarse, he said, “Bai Xiaochun….

“When we met in the Fallen Sword Abyss, you snatched the heavenstring energy that was meant for me. You outdid me by just a hair. In the Blood Stream Sect, you did the same thing. Outdid me by a hair….

“It was the same in the River-Defying Sect… and at the Great Wall. It’s almost like the two of us are cursed by a magic spell. Even in the Wildlands, you still outdid me….

“I used to wonder… if you would always outdo me.” He staggered to the side a bit. He could hardly keep his eyes open at this point, and could sense his consciousness fading. As his last bit of energy drained away, he spoke his final words.

“Bai Xiaochun, you always did better than me. You always beat me. But today… I, Song Que, managed to outdo you!” With that, he threw his head back and laughed wholeheartedly. Tears streamed down his face as he slowly closed his eyes…. He couldn’t hold out any longer. The spear in his hand dissolved into ashes, and he toppled forward onto the ground….

Song Que had perished!

For his entire life, he had struggled defiantly… always trying to catch up. But this time, just as he had said, he really did outdo Bai Xiaochun!

He didn’t wish to give in to death, but had no choice. However, as his consciousness faded away… he was happy….

Bai Xiaochun trembled as he looked at Song Que’s corpse, completely aware that without his sacrifice, his own wives and children would be dead. Song Que had offered up his own life for them.

“Song Que….” he murmured, tears beginning to roll down his cheeks. The pain he felt in this moment was the type that could shake heaven and earth. He suddenly found himself recalling old memories of Song Que, back in the Wildlands, at the Great Wall, in the River-Defying Sect, the Blood Stream Sect and finally… their initial meeting in the Fallen Sword Abyss!

“You’re… the true chosen!” He couldn’t stop the tears, but at the same time, knew that time was limited. He had to endure the pain and sorrow, no matter how hard it was. He quickly sent Song Que’s corpse to the damaged fan, then turned and destroyed the spell formation in the grand hall.

When he saw the faint violet light coming from the totem tattoo on Song Junwan’s arm, he immediately recognized the aura.

“Bruiser….” he murmured. Then he looked at the swollen bellies of Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, and reached out to touch them. He could sense the unborn children inside of them, moving. They seemed happy. All of a sudden, he felt powerful bonds of attachment connecting them to him. Considering how tiny and weak they were, Bai Xiaochun knew that protecting them was now the most important mission in his life.

“Your mothers protected you before,” he murmured, “but from here on out… dad will keep you safe!” Unsure of how to describe the feelings inside of him, he quickly sent the unconscious Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo to the damaged fan.

Now that he was the owner of the fan, it was a simple task to send people there as long as they didn’t fight back. After doing so, he looked up.

Instead of making his escape… he decided to seek vengeance!!

The Vile-Prince… was still alive!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1191 awe-chapter-1192

How could he not take revenge on someone who had attempted to kill his wives and children?!

How could he not take revenge on someone who had attempted to extract the blood of tens of thousands of Heavenspan cultivators?!?!

How could he not take revenge for the death of Song Que?!?!

Murderous aura raging, he blurred into motion, locking onto the panicked, fleeing Vile-Prince.

“You… shall die!” he growled, his eyes glowing with bizarre red light. Taking a step forward, he vanished, to reappear right in front of the Vile-Prince.

Waving his hand, he sent a frigid wind out that seemed capable of cleaving flesh from bone. It was like an enormous mouth that lunged toward the Vile-Prince as if to devour him.

The Vile-Prince simply didn’t have time to react. Almost before Bai Xiaochun’s figure even became completely clear, everything around him was filled with deadly, frigid cold.

“Father, save me!” he shouted in alarm. Before the cold wind could touch him, a terrifying energy suddenly erupted from within the imperial palace.

Instantly, the clouds up above swirled, forming together into an enormous face. It was threatening without being angry, and wore an imperial crown. It was none other than… the Vile-Emperor!!

“How dare you, Bai Xiaochun!” Although he spoke in a calm voice, it contained energy that shook all creation, and cast fear into the hearts of all living beings. Even Bai Xiaochun felt as though he were being suffocated.

Bai Xiaochun knew that he was taking a big risk. Trying to kill the Vile-Prince was a big gamble. Not only was he gambling that the Vile-Emperor had certain plans and schemes that no one knew about… but he was also gambling that the Vile-Prince wasn’t actually very important to the Vile-Emperor!

After all, this Vile-Emperor… was not really the Vile-Emperor!

Although the words the Vile-Emperor had just spoken shook all the lands, Bai Xiaochun gritted his teeth and, instead of slowing down or fleeing, pushed his cultivation base even harder. Waving his hand, he unleashed an even more shocking wind, which instantly overwhelmed the Vile-Prince!

The wind began to flay his skin, and assail his bones with intense pain. The screams which echoed out from inside the wind almost didn’t sound human….

Up in the sky, the Vile-Emperor’s face looked down at Bai Xiaochun with cold, narrowed eyes, and flickering killing intent. Then, the face distorted as a huge hand appeared that shot down toward Bai Xiaochun!

“Since you want to die, I’ll accommodate you!”

This was a palm strike from an archaean, and it instantly struck fear into the hearts of everyone, even Virūpākṣa and

Reverend Devourer.

As the palm descended, everything around Bai Xiaochun was completely locked down due to the immense energy involved!

From what the onlookers could tell, he only had one option. He had to give up on trying to kill the Vile-Prince, and then do his best to flee.

If he obstinately persisted, then perhaps he might be able to kill the Vile-Prince, but he himself would surely die in the process!

Before passing the ninety-ninth level of the damaged fan, Bai Xiaochun might have struggled about what to do. But now that he had passed that level… he had already suffered a blow from an archaean!

“Archaeans are strong, but if he wants to kill me… he won’t be able to do it that way!” Looking up, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout at the top of his lungs, drawing on all of his fleshly body power, and rotating his cultivation base at top speed. He also unleashed a bevy of divine abilities, although he didn’t resort to pulling out his turtle-wok. After all, this was only an illusory palm strike that he was dealing with, and after his experiences on the damaged fan, he was confident! After that ninety-ninth level, he felt mentally prepared to deal with an attack from an archaean expert!

Without any hesitation, he used his Sutra of Former Reincarnation, causing numerous magical symbols to surround the archaean palm. The multitude of images that appeared within them caused the Vile-Emperor’s pupils to constrict as he negated their effect. However, in that short moment of time that he spent doing so, Bai Xiaochun summoned the Gates of Life and Death!

As the hand closed in, it grew weaker and weaker, as though it were passing from life into death! It all happened in the time it takes to think, and then, the palm struck.

Intense rumbling sounds filled all heaven and earth, causing both the imperial palace and Vile-Emperor City as a whole to shake physically. Many buildings in the area even collapsed.

Countless onlookers cried out in shock and alarm. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun’s divine abilities were crushed and destroyed; his cultivation base and his fleshly body were simply not capable of standing up to an archaean attack!

However, the attack was visibly weaker than it should have been, especially after being struck by the Sutra of Former Reincarnation and the Gates of Life and Death. Despite the deafening boom, and despite the blood which sprayed out of his mouth, Bai Xiaochun was still standing!

“Impossible!!” Celestial Virūpākṣa gasped.

The other celestials were struck speechless, much less the demigods and devas. Almost no one could believe what they were witnessing there in Vile-Emperor City.

As for the Vile-Emperor’s true self, a serious expression flickered in his eyes as he sat there thoughtfully in his private chamber in the imperial palace. Then, a bizarre smile spread out on his face.

As all of that was happening, the frigid wind Bai Xiaochun had deployed against the Vile-Prince continued to rip his skin and flesh off of his bones, and whittle his bones into nothing!!

The pain was literally impossible to describe!

Screams echoed out as he was flayed alive, and his bones destroyed!

Soon, only his soul remained, which Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed.

He had originally planned to simply kill the Vile-Prince, but then changed his mind. That was too easy. Vengeance demanded that the Vile-Prince not die such a simple death!

There were too many things to atone for: the Heavenspan corpse puppets in the imperial palace; the gaze of the Arch-Emperor in his final moments; the tens of thousands of Heavenspan Realm cultivators trapped in the spell formation; the mortal danger Bai Xiaochun's wives and children had been placed in; and finally, Song Que's death!

Because of all of those things, there was no way he would give the Vile-Prince a quick and easy death!!

Therefore, he efficiently extracted the Vile-Prince's soul!

"You like to switch bodies with people, don't you? You like to make puppets, don't you? You like to torture people to death, don't you?" As the words left Bai Xiaochun's mouth, a look of profound horror appeared on the face of the Vile-Prince's soul.

"Father, save me!!" Apparently, those were the only words he was capable of speaking now. And yet, before he could even finish saying them, Bai Xiaochun tossed the soul into his bag of holding. Only then did the time come to retreat. After all, he knew that he had caused a major disaster in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

It was a disaster the likes of which would shake all cultivators in existence! He had killed Deadfall, and captured both Ur-Demon and the Vile-Prince!

As of this point, there was no way he could be allowed to remain alive within the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Although he wasn’t sure if and when the Vile-Emperor would actually show up in person, he knew that he couldn’t wait around to find out!

“Time to go back to the damaged fan!!” Having made his decision, he sent out a thought, and began to vanish. However, as he did, a whistling sound echoed out from the imperial palace.

Rumbling sounds filled the area as the doors of the imperial palace’s grand hall exploded, and a stream of light shot out. There, wearing imperial robes and an imperial crown, was none other than the Vile-Emperor!

He moved as quickly as lightning to appear right in front of Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittering as he performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger!

“I know you got your hands on the sovereign’s fan, Bai Xiaochun. I've been watching you for quite some time, waiting for this very moment.... Please, take me back with you to the sovereign’s fan!” Although no one but Bai Xiaochun could hear the words, they immediately caused his mind to spin.

As the Vile-Emperor’s finger waved through the air, a strange connection sprang up between him and Bai Xiaochun. Even as Bai Xiaochun’s face fell, he faded away, as did the Vile-Emperor, whose face shone with greed and anticipation.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1192 awe-chapter-1193

As Bai Xiaochun disappeared from Vile-Emperor City in the Eternal Immortal Domains, so did the Vile-Emperor….

Out in the dark void, the only light to be seen came from the damaged fan, like the shining of countless torches. On the main square, the spirit automaton Bai Xiaochi stood there, looking helplessly at two women and a corpse.

The women were beautiful, and despite being extremely weak, were definitely alive. Unfortunately, despite the vast stores of knowledge which existed in Bai Xiaochi's mind, he had no idea why their bellies were so large.

"What's going on here?!?!" he grumbled. "Why did that shameless bastard send a corpse up here…?" Bai Xiaochi was not very happy about what was happening. Unsure of what these two women had to do with Bai Xiaochun, all he could do was squat off to the side, sighing and staring.

Bai Xiaochun hadn't been gone for very long, to the point where Bai Xiaochi hadn't even had a chance to sleep. He couldn't stop thinking about having a new master. After all of the years of freedom he had experienced, it was somewhat of a depressing thought, and was a constant source of sighing.

Suddenly, his expression flickered, and the depressed frown vanished from his face, to be replaced by a wide smile. Looking very ingratiating, he bowed at the waist in a certain direction some distance away on the main square.

Bai Xiaochun was materializing in that very direction. Before the process was finished, Bai Xiaochun shouted out in an anxious voice.

“Activate the defensive formation, little automaton! We're under attack!!!”

Bai Xiaochi shivered as, right behind Bai Xiaochun, another figure began to take shape. At the same time, an archaean aura erupted out, an aura filled with greed and excitement.

“At long last… I'm back! This sovereign fan is now mine!!”

Shrieking, Bai Xiaochi waved his sleeve to collect up the two women and the corpse. Backing up, he performed an incantation gesture, causing the entire damaged fan to tremble and emit bright light. At the same time, the image on the face of the fan erupted with powerful fluctuations that shot toward the Vile-Emperor.

A whole string of defensive countermeasures were unleashed at the same time. Simultaneously, Bai Xiaochun leaped to join Bai Xiaochi, drawing upon all the powers he had at his disposal to suppress the Vile-Emperor.

The Vile-Emperor was now about half-materialized. His facial features were visible, and his divine sense was already spreading out into the fan. However, as soon as the fluctuations of the defensive countermeasures hit his divine sense, it dissipated. Furthermore, as the Vile-Emperor continued to materialize, he suddenly found a force of expulsion pushing at him!

It was clearly a shock to the Vile-Emperor. Despite having come prepared, he could never have guessed that the fan’s spirit automaton would heed Bai Xiaochun’s orders.

The implications were obvious… and caused a look of incredulity to appear on the Vile-Emperor’s face.

“You actually took control of the damaged fan? Impossible! It’s too difficult to bond with this treasure! A celestial simply couldn’t do it. Not only would you have to pass all one hundred levels, but you would have to deal with resistance from the spirit automaton as well. It's just too hard!!” Despite the Vile-Emperor’s disbelief, the fluctuations of expulsion only continued to grow stronger. Letting out a growled shout, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing black flames to shoot forth!

Along with the flames came a burst of archaean power, which managed to resist the force of expulsion to some degree.

“Dammit, dammit, DAMMIT!!” Bai Xiaochi blurted.

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochun was getting very nervous. “Get him out of here, otherwise we’re finished!! Come on, you’re the spirit automaton, right? This is a sovereign treasure! Is it really that hard to get an archaean out of here?!”

Ignoring matters of propriety, Bai Xiaochi angrily shouted, “Shut the hell up! This is a *living* archaean we’re talking about!! If he was outside the fan it would be one thing. But he’s already halfway inside! Fudge, I'm doing everything I can!!”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t have time to get angry about Bai Xiaochi’s tone of voice. Wracked with anxiety, he yelled, “Let’s join forces! Use that sovereign arm we got! We have to get this bastard out of here!”

Bai Xiaochi was a bit hesitant to agree, but also knew that failure was not an option. Grinding his teeth, he joined forces with Bai Xiaochun, causing the wolfish arm that now existed in the face of the fan to slowly stretch out!

As that happened, the Vile-Emperor gasped.

“The arm of a sovereign!!” he said, shocked. Originally, he had assumed that once he got to the sovereign's fan, he could easily take control of it. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun had already become the new owner, and had turned the entire situation upside down.

The Vile-Emperor was not yet willing to just leave. All of a sudden, his eyes turned pitch black, and a bizarre aura swept out from inside of him. As the aura merged with his archaean cultivation base, he suddenly started growing stronger and stronger.

Black flames raged around him, shoving away the fluctuations of expulsion. As that happened, he began to grow clearer and clearer, and even took a step forward onto the main square. Obviously, he was only moments away from fully materializing.

Both Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochi were going crazy with anxiety. Bai Xiaochun spat out some blood to gain more power, and Bai Xiaochi pushed his divine sense to the point of inflicting harm on himself. Together, they forced the sovereign’s arm to move even faster toward the Vile-Emperor. Before the Vile-Emperor could fully materialize, the arm slammed into him, accompanied by deafening rumbling sounds.

“Get back to where you came from!!” Bai Xiaochun shouted.

The enormous sovereign arm seemed powerful enough to destroy the heavens and crush the earth. As it bore down on the Vile-Emperor, he began to tremble, and yet, his eyes grew even blacker, causing more flames to erupt around him. Soon, they formed together into an enormous flame giant, hundreds of meters tall, that howled as it prepared to fight the incoming sovereign arm.

The flame giant shuddered as the sovereign arm slammed into it. A moment later, it collapsed, revealing the Vile-Emperor. Strangely, because of the bizarre aura that swirled around him, the sovereign arm suddenly lurched to a halt for a brief moment.

Seizing that moment of advantage, the Vile-Emperor roared, forcing himself to fully materialize. As that happened, Bai Xiaochun unleashed all of the cultivation base power he could, as well as his divine sense, forcing the sovereign's arm to continue its attack.

“Time to go for broke!!” Bai Xiaochi shouted. Blurring into motion, he shot forward to merge into the sovereign arm. A moment later, the arm began to emanate the aura of a sovereign!

The Vile-Emperor's face fell as the black flames around him began to flicker wildly, as though they might be extinguished at any moment. Although he had fully materialized, the arm was locked onto him, making it impossible for him to flee the incoming attack. Howling, he shot forward to meet it.

The resulting boom caused the entire fan to shake wildly.

“You can't stay away forever, Bai Xiaochun!!” the Vile-Emperor shouted. He was already returning to where he came from, not of his own accord, but because of the attack from the sovereign's arm, and the sovereign aura which came with it. To the Vile-Emperor, it was supremely frustrating, like having a door opened up right in front of him, but being unable to enter it.

As the Vile-Emperor vanished, Bai Xiaochi flew head first out from inside the sovereign's arm, his face pale. Before he even landed onto the main square, he was unconscious.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he coughed up some blood, and then sat down cross-legged to focus on recovery.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1193 awe-chapter-1194

It was impossible to say exactly how much time passed. The damaged fan continued to sail through the soundless darkness.

It was a state of seemingly ultimate peacefulness….

Only the light of the damaged fan could be seen, twinkling in the darkness like a star or planet.

However, with the fan’s spirit automaton asleep, and Bai Xiaochun meditating to recover, the glimmering light was not as bright as before. One day, Bai Xiaochi’s eyes opened. He looked very tired as he crawled to his feet and looked around blankly. Back when he had passed out, Bai Xiaochun had only been able to lapse into virtual unconsciousness as he meditated. As a result, the enormous sovereign’s arm had fallen down onto the surface of the fan, instead of going back into the fan face.

Despite not being under anyone’s direct control, the arm was still immensely powerful, and had damaged many of the fan ribs. The fan now looked in worse state than ever….

The sight caused Bai Xiaochi to tremble in grief.

“My home….” he wailed. Within the profound silence, the sound of his wail was particularly ear-piercing, and caused Bai Xiaochun to shiver. Then, his eyes opened, and he leapt to his feet, performing an incantation gesture as he looked around.

When he saw that they were no longer under attack, he breathed a sigh of relief. Then, he hurried over to Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, who were still unconscious. Off to the side, Song Que’s corpse lay still and unmoving. Because of the strange properties of the fan, his corpse had not yet begun to decompose.

He was surrounded by soft, swirling light, power from the fan itself that Bai Xiaochi had placed over him to protect his body.

Although Bai Xiaochun was relieved to see his corpse in good condition, bitterness filled his heart. Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi was still wailing miserably.

Annoyed, Bai Xiaochun snapped, “What's with the damn squawking?!”

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochi shouted back emotionally. “This is all your fault! My home!”

Stunned, Bai Xiaochun looked around. Moments before, he had been too worried about Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and Song Que to take a close look at the fan. Now that he looked around, and saw how the sovereign’s arm had smashed into the fan, he rubbed his nose guiltily.

He couldn’t help but feel bad, especially considering that it had only been with Bai Xiaochi’s help that he repelled the Vile-Emperor. Now, seeing Bai Xiaochi looking so sad, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but try to comfort him. “Well… you can’t blame me. Ah, whatever. I’ll help you fix it back up….”

Bai Xiaochi blinked a few times in surprise. The truth was that he had immediately regretted his outburst, and was even scared about how Bai Xiaochun might react. Therefore, the words of comfort caught him off guard. He was also a bit excited. However, he knew that he shouldn’t push things too far. Snorting, he joined Bai Xiaochun to put the sovereign’s arm back into the fan face, and then start working to repair the broken fan ribs.

They couldn’t repair them perfectly, but did a fair job. After all, the fan was a starry sky treasure, and was also capable of repairing itself to a certain level. At a certain point, such powers of repair took over.

Afterward, Bai Xiaochun spent more time recovering. Finally, he headed over to Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo. The sight of them sitting there with their swollen bellies, and with the Bruiser totem tattoo on Song Junwan’s arm, caused a warm look to appear in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes.

Feeling very pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochi looked at Bai Xiaochun, then looked at the two women.

“Who are they?”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even look back at him as he quietly replied, “They’re my Daoist partners. And inside of them… are my children.”

Bai Xiaochi pondered why someone’s Daoist partners would have children in their bellies. It actually sounded somewhat frightening. After some thought, he realized he had another question.

“What about the corpse…?” he asked.

“He was a dear friend….” Bai Xiaochun replied, closing his eyes to prevent the grief from showing.

Deciding that this was a good chance to get some concessions, Bai Xiaochi replied, “Um… hey, Bai Xiaochun, you know, I have a way to make sure that your Daoist partners and children get healthier than before. And there’s also a chance I could resurrect your friend…. Do you think you could maybe change my name back to--”

“What did you just say?!?!” Bai Xiaochun interrupted, vanishing and reappearing right in front of Bai Xiaochi, his eyes shining with madness and excitement.

The damaged fan seemed to respond to his emotions, and began to shine more brightly than before. At the same time, rumbling sounds echoed out as the repair work being done to the fan ribs began to speed up.

Although Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo seemed to be in normal condition, just sleeping, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain that they had sustained severe injuries to their vital energy. It was only because of the protection provided by Bruiser, and the powerful lives brewing in their bellies, that they had survived their ordeal.

In any case, the injuries they had sustained were the type that Bai Xiaochun would only be able to heal once he was back in completely top shape. Only then could they regain consciousness.

It was the same with Bruiser. As for Song Que, he was dead, with his soul dispersed, nothing more than an empty corpse. Even if Bai Xiaochun became an archaean, he would still be powerless to resurrect him.

Therefore, Bai Xiaochi’s words struck Bai Xiaochun like bolts of heavenly lightning.

“Calm down!” Bai Xiaochi said, backing up a bit in fear. However, worried about the terrifying consequences of saying the wrong thing, he decided to explain everything he knew, and leave nothing out. “Listen, your Daoist partners’ personal Life Essences have been severely damaged. That type of Essence cannot be restored with common life force. Ordinarily, you would need precious materials of heaven or earth to even attempt to do so, and even then, it would be quite difficult.

“But we are not in any ordinary place.... Things are different here. If we put them in the Daoist Tower of Life and Death, then their Life Essence will slowly build back up, and their cultivation bases will also progress!

“As for your good friend… well, let me be perfectly clear right now. I'm not completely sure that I can resurrect him. Years ago, my original master told me that his purpose in creating his Dao Essence of Life and Death was to resurrect someone!

“In the end, he failed. But I think… that the Dao Essence of Life and Death really can resurrect people, although there’s only a small chance of success.... However, there will be a price to pay. If the Dao Essence in the tower is absorbed by your Daoist partners and your friend, then it will gradually weaken. And then, it won’t be as easy for you to practice cultivation there. Furthermore… the end chance of success is small!

“Are you sure you want to do it?”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t hesitate for even a moment. Swishing his sleeve, he picked up Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and Song Que, and flew toward the fan face. As the owner of the fan, he actually didn’t need any help from its spirit automaton to enter the fan face. In the blink of an eye, he was in front of the tower atop the mountain in the fan face.

He placed Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo on the second floor. Any further would have been harmful to them, and not helpful.

As for Song Que, he took a deep breath and, ignoring the pain and discomfort it involved, took him to the ninth floor. He couldn't stay in that location for long. After putting Song Que down, he looked at him, wished him well, and then left, anticipation crawling in his heart.

He also carefully extracted Bruiser from the totem tattoo on Song Junwan's arm. He wasn't sure when Bruiser had picked up the ability to transform into a totem tattoo, but considering how talented he was, it wasn't a surprise. Bruiser was now in the late Deva Realm, very close to reaching the demigod level.

The second floor wasn't the right place for Bruiser, but neither was the ninth floor. In the end, Bai Xiaochun found that the third floor was ideal.

Having accomplished all of these things, Bai Xiaochun left the tower. After looking back at it for a long moment, he settled down cross-legged to meditate.

He would stand guard… until Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo both woke up.

Based on what Bai Xiaochi had told him, and based on what Bai Xiaochun knew of the Daoist Tower of Life and Death, he was sure that it wouldn't take very long….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1194 awe-chapter-1195

Meanwhile, the Vile-Emperor returned to the Eternal Immortal Domains, filled with rage. Word was already spreading about how Bai Xiaochun had cut down Celestial Deadfall, captured Prince Ur-Demon, executed the Vile-Prince, and thrown the city into chaos. Not a single person in either the Vile-Emperor Dynasty or the Saint-Emperor Dynasty who heard about what had occurred was not astonished or shaken!

“He killed Celestial Deadfall? Heavens! It’s been a long time since any celestials fought and killed each other!!”

“He captured Prince Ur-Demon? Damn! Prince Ur-Demon used to be loyal to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. He was Celestial Chen Su’s apprentice, but turned traitor. Well, I guess he got what he deserved!”

“This King Heavenspan has really got some guts! From what I remember, he was only a demigod when he arrived in the Eternal Immortal Domains....”

“He executed the Vile-Prince...? How shocking!!”

Tensions rose between the two dynasties, and many cultivators came to the conclusion that war would soon break out!

The wrath of the Vile-Emperor caused hatred for Heavenspan cultivators to grow in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. However, most of those who had openly declared their identity were now safe in the Greatsword of the North. As for those who kept their identity secret, they were not under immediate threat, and yet, many of them began to make their way to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. As such, those who suffered persecution were actually few and far between.

Most importantly… Gongsun Wan’er lived up to the trust Bai Xiaochun had placed in her. She even took Big Fatty Zhang with her. Although she didn’t technically betray the Vile-Emperor Dynasty by her actions, she came close.

During the time in which the Vile-Emperor was fighting with Bai Xiaochun on the damaged fan, she delivered the Greatsword of the North to the Grand Heavenmaster.

Thanks to the advance notice she gave him before arriving to deliver the sword, he had plenty of time to make certain preparations. Overnight, virtually all of the people of Heavenspan vanished from the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Their place of hiding was none other than the Greatsword of the North, which Gongsun Wan’er kept on her person as she fled as a fugitive to parts unknown….

Of course, the Saint-Emperor was a hypocritical liar down to the core. Considering how cruelly the Vile-Emperor Dynasty was treating the Heavenspan Realm cultivators, and considering that Bai Xiaochun was missing and possibly dead, the Saint-Emperor took advantage of the situation to open his arms in welcome.

Because of this, the situation was less of a disaster for the Heavenspan Realm cultivators than it might have been.

Regardless of the Saint Emperor’s motives, his actions benefited the Heavenspan cultivators, and were just the help they needed.

War did not break out between the two dynasties. After all, Celestial Deadfall was soon resurrected by the Vile-Emperor. And Prince Ur-Demon had been captured, not killed. Although that still left the Vile-Emperor Dynasty down a celestial, it didn’t swing the balance of power completely in the favor of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

Many people said that things would soon go back to normal, and generally speaking, that was what happened. Ten years passed. Eventually, the Vile-Emperor’s fury toward Gongsun Wan’er was sated, and he stopped searching for her. He even issued a proclamation stating that her crimes would be forgiven if she simply returned to him!

Ten more years passed. People still talked about Bai Xiaochun occasionally, but not as often. Another decade went by. In total, half of a sixty-year-cycle passed. By this point, tensions had completely eased between the two dynasties, and everything was mostly back to normal.

People were starting to forget about Bai Xiaochun, although the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm would often talk about him with deep sighs.

The Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster, Li Qinghou, Patriarch Spirit Stream, and others who had been close with Bai Xiaochun were now in the Greatsword of the North, and they missed him dearly. However, they knew one thing!

Bai Xiaochun was not dead! And he would return eventually!!

It was a hope that burned inside of them, fueling their faith and their strength to endure!

That half of a sixty-year-cycle flew by on the damaged fan just as quickly as it had in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

During that time, Bai Xiaochun remained on the mountain in the face of the fan, sitting in front of the tower, meditating!

Thanks to the resources he had acquired from the various levels of the fan, and his own talents and abilities, his cultivation base climbed steadily. However, breaking through into the late Celestial Realm was turning out to be very difficult.

Only after thirty years did he finally sense an impending breakthrough. Although that might seem like a long time, if word of it got out, other celestials would have been completely shocked. After all, most celestials would spend three hundred years going from the mid Celestial Realm to the late Celestial Realm. Taking only thirty years was completely unheard of.

Some of it had to do with the resources at his disposal, and some of it had to do with the sovereign’s arm, which constantly emitted a sovereign aura that benefited his cultivation base and sped up his cultivation.

And thus, he made rapid progress with his Sutra of Present Life and Death. Eventually, his eyes snapped open and he took a deep breath, his cultivation base rotating rapidly the entire time. As of this moment, he had reached the great circle of the Sutra of Present Life and Death!

The signs of an imminent breakthrough were more obvious than ever!

“I'm going to break through!!” Bai Xiaochi suddenly materialized next to him, his eyes glittering. Although Bai Xiaochun had spent most of the past thirty years in meditation, Bai Xiaochi was still happy to have someone with him in the damaged fan. He still found Bai Xiaochun to be somewhat repulsive, but it was to Bai Xiaochi’s delight that he finally agreed to let him pick a new name.

Unfortunately, even after thirty years, Bai Xiaochi hadn’t been able to come up with a good new name. None of the ideas he came up with seemed to fit. For one thing, he needed to come up with a name that, if someone came along in the future and changed it, would still sound good.

Even as he was pondering the issue of a new name, he sensed the aura of Bai Xiaochun’s breakthrough, and hurried over to see him.

“This guy takes too many risks. However, if he keeps up this level of cultivation… then he might actually reach the Archaean Realm. In fact… he might even become a sovereign!” He suddenly thought back to Bai Xiaochun’s previous breakthrough, when he had emanated the Essence of Time.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, whereupon an intense rumble rolled out to fill the entire damaged fan. As his aura roiled, the river, the boat, and even the sovereign’s arm all began to glitter with bright light.

As the light shone brighter and brighter, and as his aura grew stronger, he passed a certain barrier, and finally climbed into the late Celestial Realm!

The light shining from Bai Xiaochun’s eyes surpassed the one shining from the fan, becoming the brightest thing in the dark void that surrounded them. Rising to his feet, he threw his head back and let loose a long, piercing cry.

Late Celestial Realm!

Bai Xiaochi assumed that Bai Xiaochun’s session of cultivation was over. However, that was when Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense out into the Daoist Tower of Life and Death to check on Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo and Bruiser, as well as Song Que. Then, he blurred into motion, coming to a stop on top of the sovereign’s arm. There, he sat down cross-legged, unleashed his divine sense, and began to merge with the arm!

“What are you doing?!” Bai Xiaochi blurted in shock.

“Fusing with the arm of a sovereign…? Heavens! That’s impossible!!”

“Nothing is impossible!” Bai Xiaochun said, looking at Bai Xiaochi with a look of crazed determination. Thirty years of cultivation might not seem like a lot to many cultivators, but it was the longest period of time that Bai Xiaochun had ever spent cultivating.

Despite the time that had passed, he was still possessed with madness because of the death of Song Que, and the danger that his wives, children, and Bruiser had been placed in.

He was worried about Li Qinghou, the Giant Ghost King, the Grand Heavenmaster, Gongsun Wan’er, and everyone else he knew. And he understood that the only way to do anything about the situation was to get stronger!

After thirty years of practicing cultivation that was aided by a sovereign aura, he had come to a much better understanding of the nature of that arm. And he had long since come up with a new idea!

“I'm going to fuse with that arm…. If it works, then my battle prowess… will skyrocket!! I'm going back…. And I'm going to do some killing!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1195 awe-chapter-1196

Bai Xiaochi was visibly stunned. He might have taken Bai Xiaochun’s words to be mere ravings, except for the fact that his divine sense was actually connecting to the sovereign’s arm!

That connection seemed completely and utterly inconceivable.

“He’s… he’s just a celestial! He's not even an archaean. And yet he’s actually connecting to that sovereign’s arm!!” He almost couldn’t believe his eyes. Despite the fact that he had sensed the sovereign’s aura influencing Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation over the years, he still couldn’t wrap his mind around what was happening.

“What secret is he hiding!?!?”

“Could it have something to do with the fact that he's from the Eternal Immortal Domains…? Maybe he….” Bai Xiaochi’s eyes went even wider than they had been before. He hadn’t thought much of the Eternal Immortal Domains, but as of this moment, he couldn’t help but recall… a legend that his previous master had spoken of!

Even as the spirit automaton stood there shaken, Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense connected fully to the sovereign’s arm, and he began to pour his thoughts into it.

What had previously been only a vague outline of the arm now became clearer, and he began to absorb it into his mind!

It was very similar to the way that he had meditated on the face of the beast statue in the Spirit Stream Sect all those years ago.

Time began to pass. One year. Three years. Five years….

Before long, ten years had passed!

During that decade, Bai Xiaochun didn’t move. He was completely immersed in his pursuit of enlightenment. Although he hadn’t fused with the sovereign’s arm completely, his understanding of it was becoming drastically more complete!

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun emerged from his trance, and when he did, his eyes shone with light that struck Bai Xiaochi down to his very soul.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was emanating an aura that Bai Xiaochi could not possibly mistake for anything else, weak as it was!!

“The aura of a sovereign!!” he said with a gasp.

Ignoring Bai Xiaochi’s shock, Bai Xiaochun slowly rose to his feet and looked down at his right arm. His eyes glittered with the light of augury for a long moment, and then he clenched his hand into a fist!

As he did, an enormous, shadowy emperor appeared behind him, clad in imperial robes and wearing an imperial crown. As for his facial features, they were an exact match for Bai Xiaochun’s!

The Undying Emperor’s Fist!

However… this emperor was different from the emperors that had appeared in the past…. His right arm did not match the rest of his body. It looked… exactly like the sovereign’s wolf-like arm!!

Everything down to the bones, the flesh, and the blood were all exactly like the sovereign’s, and it radiated a sovereign aura that made it seem vastly more powerful than before!

It was an aura that could shake celestials and archaeans alike!

This was what Bai Xiaochun had gained after ten years of meditation. He had incorporated the sovereign’s arm into his Undying Emperor’s Fist, fusing the two together! Clenching his hand into a fist, he punched out into the air!

Instantly, the sovereign aura erupted, filling the void with dazzling light, and sending a massive tempest of wind out across the damaged fan…. Any celestial or archaean who saw this… would be shaken to the core!

The fan itself trembled, and Bai Xiaochi’s eyes bulged on the verge of popping out of his skull.

“He actually did it….”

Bai Xiaochun looked down at his new right arm, and softly said, “From now on, my Undying Emperor’s Fist is going to be called… the Undying Sovereign’s Fist!

“It combines the power of my Sutra of Former Reincarnation and my Sutra of Present Life and Death. It will be a trump card that I can use to fight archaeans!” Eyes flickering with determination, he flew off of the sovereign’s arm and back to the Daoist Tower of Life and Death. There, he sent his divine sense out, anticipation burning in his heart.

Zhou Zimo and Song Junwan were still asleep. However, much of the color had been restored to their faces, indicating that much of their Life Essence had been restored. Bruiser was similarly recovering well. As for Song Que, he looked exactly the same as he had before, prompting a light sigh from Bai Xiaochun.

At this point, his eyes flickered with cold light as he waved his hand, producing a faintly glimmering soul from his bag of holding.

It was the Vile-Prince's soul, which had long since lost self-awareness, and didn't even have the power to struggle against Bai Xiaochun as he held it.

“How could I possibly allow you to die a quick death?” All of his time up to this point had been focused on reaching the late Celestial Realm and creating his Undying Sovereign's Fist. Up to now, he hadn't had any spare time to deal with the Vile-Prince!

“You like switching bodies, right? And puppets?” Eyes shining with merciless anger, he waved his hand, causing an array of materials to fly out from the damaged fan, which he rapidly transformed into a puppet to put the Vile-Prince's soul in.

At that point, the Vile-Prince regained some of his self-awareness, and after realizing that he was now trapped in a puppet body, looked up in terror at Bai Xiaochun.

“How dare you do this to me, Bai Xiaochun! My father the emperor will never let you get away with it! He's definitely going to find you!!”

“Your father the emperor? Hmph. The emperor is no longer your father. But don't worry, I'm still your enemy.”

Performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, he forced the puppet-form Vile-Prince to dance wildly in front of the huge tower, just as the prince’s puppets had been forced to do back in the imperial palace.

Those puppets had lost their lives to perform that dance, and the Vile-Prince had lost his soul to perform his. As he danced wildly, his terror mounted. After all, the wildness of his dance was causing his soul to slowly disperse. Clearly… he was being killed in the same way that he had tormented his own victims!

“That’s bullcrap!” he suddenly blurted. “What do you mean the emperor isn’t my father?!”

Bai Xiaochun simply snorted coldly and started walking away. He would let the Vile-Prince dance his way into death, as his soul dispersed.

“You like dancing, don’t you?” he said over his shoulder. “Dance away.”

“No! This can’t be happening. Let me go, Bai Xiaochun. I won’t ever bother you again, I promise. I guarantee it….” Unfortunately for him, his pleas fell on deaf ears. Bai Xiaochun’s hatred for him simply ran too deep.

And thus, the Vile-Prince danced madly for nine days. At that point, the puppet body continued to dance, but his soul was almost completely faded away. He almost had no self-awareness left. On the tenth day… he danced into death, and his soul dispersed.

At that point, the materials which had made up his puppet body stopped moving, and then collapsed onto the ground….

Bai Xiaochun watched from a distance, with Bai Xiaochi standing at his side, more terrified than ever.

“Death cannot wipe out your crimes!” Bai Xiaochun said through gritted teeth, his hatred still festering in his heart. Finally, he stood up and went over to collect the materials that had once made up the puppet body. Even as he did, Bai Xiaochi’s face suddenly flickered dramatically, and he flew up off the surface of the fan to look out into the void.

Rumbling fluctuations rose up which caused the damaged fan to tremble, and suddenly change directions of its own volition.

“The other half of the fan!” Bai Xiaochi shouted excitedly. “The other half!”

Jaw dropping, Bai Xiaochun left the fan face and appeared on one of the ribs. Looking out into the void, he saw a glowing light off in the distance, rushing toward them at high speed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1196 awe-chapter-1197

A closer look would reveal that within that glowing light was half of a damaged fan!!

It was exactly the same type of light that glowed from Bai Xiaochun’s part of the damaged fan, although slightly dimmer. Furthermore, this fan was so damaged that it looked like it might collapse at any moment.

“It’s finally here, milord!” Bai Xiaochi said excitedly. “If you help me, then together, we should be able to put both halves of the fan together. Then it will become a true sovereign-level precious treasure!!” He had been looking forward to this day for a long time, and in fact, had often thought that it would never come, and that the two halves of the fan would forever follow their own trajectories through the void.

But then that sovereign’s arm appeared, with an aura that could actually power the damaged fan to a certain extent. Under Bai Xiaochi’s direction, the fan had slowly changed course to head toward its other half. And now… the two halves were about to meet!

Bai Xiaochun was also excited, although not as much as Bai Xiaochi. He stood there calmly at the edge of his damaged fan, looking at the other half approaching.

“Will the other half have another spirit automaton?” he asked.

Bai Xiaochi hesitated for a moment, as though he hadn’t considered the possibility. Then he looked at Bai Xiaochun and confidently said, “If it does, then I’ll definitely crush him!”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t reply. Keeping his cultivation base rotating, he thought about what it would be like to have a complete fan. It was an exciting thought.

Soon, the other half of the fan was close enough that Bai Xiaochi performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing bright light to erupt from the half of the fan that was under his control and spread out toward the other half.

However, as the two halves of the fan got close to each other, a vicious howl erupted from the other half, and a huge figure appeared!

It looked like a larger version of Bai Xiaochi, except vicious, with green skin like an evil ghost. It was with madness and greed that this strange version of Bai Xiaochi looked over at them.

Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted, and Bai Xiaochi gasped loudly.

“There *is* another spirit automaton!!” he exclaimed.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed. Now that he was in the late Celestial Realm, he was a lot more confident than he had been in the past. Snorting coldly, he stepped off of his damaged fan and appeared within the beam of light that Bai Xiaochi had sent streaming off of it. The enormous spirit automaton was immediately on guard, and even lunged at Bai Xiaochun with outstretched hands.

“Screw the hell off!” Bai Xiaochun barked, waving his sleeve and sending the power of his cultivation base shooting out.

As soon as the giant spirit automaton was struck, it howled in anguish and began to back up.

What had injured it was not Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base power, but rather, the sovereign aura he now had!!

Although most cultivators would not understand what it was, the gigantic spirit automaton was very sensitive to that type of aura. Eyes swimming with terror, it continued to back up. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then reached out toward the other half of the fan!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the two fans rushed toward each other and began to merge together!!

The giant spirit automaton howled in terror and rage, but Bai Xiaochun simply looked over his shoulder and quietly said, “Didn’t you say you planned to crush him, little automaton?”

Although Bai Xiaochi had initially been a bit frightened by the way Bai Xiaochun leapt to the attack, his eyes now began to shine brightly. Flying toward the huge spirit automaton, he shouted, “I'm the real spirit automaton, fool! Who cares if you’re extra big? You’re mine!”

The two spirit automatons roared as they began to fight viciously.

That was something that Bai Xiaochun couldn’t assist with, so he simply sat down cross-legged and sent his divine sense out to speed up the process of the two halves of the fan combining with each other.

Slowly but surely, the fan was becoming whole. Bright light shone as the two spirit automatons fought, until eventually, Bai Xiaochi won, and consumed the larger automaton.

Bai Xiaochi looked larger and oddly disproportionate as he flew unstably back to Bai Xiaochun. A happy look on his face, he burped, then sank down into the fan face, where he disappeared. As he left, Bai Xiaochun scanned the fan with divine sense to make sure that Bai Xiaochi wasn't hurt.

Before long, the two halves of the fan had combined to create one whole fan.

There were some areas that were still damaged and cracked, but considering how the fan was capable of repairing itself, Bai Xiaochun was fairly certain that it wouldn't take long for it to be back to its original state.

Now that the fan was complete, it was larger than before, and also shone with much brighter light. It looked completely spectacular as it continued to sail through the void.

Even more exciting was that his level of authority over the fan had actually increased. With a mere thought, he could change the direction the fan was traveling in, and also its speed. He could even make it stop if he wanted to!

That was something he had not been able to do in the past.

However, he could also tell that the fan was following a pre-set trajectory. And after sending some divine sense into the fan, he realized that somewhere far off in the distance, something was calling to the fan….

Now that the fan was whole, that calling had begun to pull the fan toward it, causing it to fly in one specific direction.

“What called out to the fan after it became whole…?” he thought. “Could it be…?” His heart began to pound.

“Could the call be coming from the sovereign from the Immortal World, the one who created the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and also the fan?” It didn’t seem likely to Bai Xiaochun, considering that the sovereign had supposedly perished.

At this point, he realized that although he could make minor adjustments to the fan’s direction, he couldn’t change its overall course. Finally, he decided that he would ask Bai Xiaochi some more questions when he woke up.

Now that the fan was whole, the greatest change to it was the world in the fan’s face!

Before, that world had contained a river, a mountain, a tower, and a boat with two men playing Go. There was also a palace floating in the river, and the arm of a sovereign hovering in the air!

But now… the river was complete, and contained something new. A black fish! Its eyes shone with strange light, and although it wasn’t moving, Bai Xiaochun could sense the fluctuations of a sovereign coming off of it!

There was something about the aura… that made him think of the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and seemed to be connected to the Daoist Tower of Life and Death. After closer inspection, Bai Xiaochun was certain that the black fish… contained the fan’s true sovereign-level divine ability!

Before, the damaged part of the fan that he had become the owner of had the Daoist Tower of Life and Death, but had lacked the black fish. And the half of the fan that the fish had existed in lacked the Daoist Tower of Life and Death.

But now that the fan was whole, its sovereign-level divine ability was complete!

Excited, he performed a few tests, only to find that the current level of his cultivation base didn’t permit him to actually use that special magic. Not willing to give up so easily, he performed some more tests, only to find that he was unable to do anything with the mountain, the river, or the boat.

However, the palace was different. It had been so severely damaged that, despite the fact that it contained a portion of an archaean soul, it wouldn’t actually be dangerous to an archaean in a fight. Frustrated, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense onto the boat. To his shock… one of the old men playing Go suddenly shivered, and the Go piece in his hand began to shine with bright light, and emit powerful fluctuations!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1197 awe-chapter-1198

As the Go piece vibrated, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes began to shine as he realized that, apparently, all it took was a thought on his part… to control the Go piece!

“Maybe it’s not just the Go piece….” Holding his breath, he sent his divine sense into the Go board as a whole, which also began to shine with bright light. However, only a moment later, the light faded, and his divine sense began to dissolve.

“Can’t quite get the Go board….” he thought, sighing regretfully. Pulling his divine sense back, he sat down cross-legged and performed some breathing exercises until he was fully recovered. Then he stood up and sent his divine sense out again. Instead of targeting the Go board, though, he locked onto the Go piece. As it began to vibrate and emit bright light, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger through the air!

The Go piece became a bright streak of light that shot out of the fan face and into the void. The energy on display far surpassed that of a celestial, and was more like that of an archaean expert. The fan itself trembled, and the startled Bai Xiaochun waved his finger in the direction of the sovereign’s arm!

When the light hit the arm, a spectacular boom echoed out, and the arm was shoved backward several meters. At the same time, a hole appeared in it, the same size as the Go piece!!

It only dug about three inches into the surface of the arm, but it caused the flesh to begin to decay for a moment before the fan’s powers of regeneration kicked in and healed the wound. Even still, Bai Xiaochun was shocked by the ferocity of the attack.

“So… so strong!!” He was excited, but at the same time, didn’t want to injure the arm any further, and therefore didn’t dare to use it to do any more tests. Next, he used his authority over the fan to cause it to stop moving, and then he flew off of it into the void!!

There, he performed an incantation gesture, calling upon his connection to the fan to send a bright stream of light shooting out from it. The light pierced through the void until it reached a certain spot, where it exploded.

Vibrations rolled out through the void, invisible, but detectable by Bai Xiaochun. Considering that he was now in the late Celestial Realm, and had already fought with an archaean once, he could tell exactly what those fluctuations indicated

“An archaean-level attack! It even seemed stronger than when the Vile-Emperor attacked me!!

“I wonder how long it would take for the light from that Go piece to reach the Eternal Immortal Domains if I summoned it…?

“And I wonder how many times I could do it?!” After some more thought, he went further out into the void to do some tests and see how quickly the light could reach him.

What he found was that as soon as he summoned it, it would appear in front of him, almost as if it were completely ignoring the space between the two of them!!

Eyes widening, he changed locations and did a few more tests. Afterward, he was convinced that it didn’t matter where he was, the light would come to him immediately!

“Now this is what I call a weapon!!” he said, throwing his head back and laughing uproariously. He continued to perform more tests. After fifteen, it reached the point where no light came.

At that point, he realized that fifteen times in a row was the limit.

“I wonder if that means I can use it fifteen times every day!?” Fifteen times per day would be more than enough. Savoring this development, he returned to the fan, sending it along its way through the void as he sat down cross-legged to meditate.

The next day, he excitedly performed some more tests. However, it was to his shock that he got no response from the Go piece.

All of a sudden, he started to get a bit nervous.

“No way.... Don’t tell me that you can only use it fifteen times total...?” The thought instantly caused him to want to moan in grief.

Starting to obsess at the thought of what he might have lost out on, he waited for more time to pass. For an entire month, all of his tests met with failure.... By now, he was feeling profound regret for what he had done.

The thought of having wasted fifteen archaean-level attacks made him wish he could smack himself silly.

“Why did I have to go and waste them?!” he said, frowning and sighing in defiance. An entire year passed. Finally, he decided to perform another test, whereupon bright light suddenly began to shine from the Go piece. Apparently, after using all of the light, it would take a full year to recharge. Shooting to his feet, he began to laugh loudly.

“From now on I'm going to call the light from that Go piece… Archaean Luminescence!” Swishing his sleeve, he reveled in the sensation of having another trump card at his disposal.

“Once Wan'er and Zimo are awake, I’ll go back to the Eternal Immortal Domains!” High-spirited and full of mettle, he looked back at the tower. Based on his calculations, there was only a year to go before Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo awoke!

Bruiser would likely awaken along with them. Sadly, there didn’t seem to be any change in Song Que.

It was at around this time that Bai Xiaochi woke up.

Clearly, his divine sense was much stronger than before. After scanning the fan with it, he proudly materialized in front of Bai Xiaochun.

“Hey there, little Xiaochun. I have some issues with you being the new owner of this fan, and would like--” Before he could say anything further, Bai Xiaochun looked at him out of the corner of his eye and then unleashed a beam of Archaean Luminescence on him.

The light instantly struck fear into the heart of Bai Xiaochi, who shivered and dodged to the side. When he looked back at Bai Xiaochun, all sense of arrogance was gone from him, and he looked like the picture of subservience.

“What did you just say?” Bai Xiaochun asked coolly, standing there with his hands clasped behind his back.

Heart pounding with fear, Bai Xiaochi said, “I just said… that I… think you’re the most suitable person in all creation to own this legacy fan, milord!!”

Never could he have imagined that, while he slept, Bai Xiaochun would gain control over the Go piece all on his own!

“I have an idea,” Bai Xiaochun said, looking back at him. “Let’s talk about that name change you wanted. I’ve come up with the perfect name.”

Bai Xiaochi immediately began to wail inwardly with grief. Terrified of what name the vengeful Bai Xiaochun would give him, he quickly said, “Milord, after absorbing that large spirit automaton, many more powers have been awakened within me. Although I can't yet get those archaean slaves from the boat to leave the fan, I can summon them to you to be sparring partners. That way, you can get used to fighting with archaeans. And then, when you get back to the Eternal Immortal Domains, you’ll definitely dominate anyone who tries to fight you!”

Worried that Bai Xiaochun might not believe him, or might not give him a chance to follow through on his offer, he performed an incantation gesture and threw all of the divine sense he could muster toward the fan face.

Instantly, one of the two archaean slaves shivered, and his eyes began to glow. Rising to his feet, he blurred into motion, flying up into the air within the world of the fan face.

Clasping hands, he bowed deeply in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

“Greetings, master!”

Although Bai Xiaochun had hoped to take the archaean slaves with him, and was disappointed that he couldn’t, it would also be good to do some training with them. When Bai Xiaochi saw how his eyes were shining brightly, he breathed a sigh of relief in his heart.

“Milord,” he continued obsequiously, “the exalted sovereign captured these archaean slaves and sealed them with restrictive spells. Only a sovereign could possibly undo them.”

Ignoring Bai Xiaochi, Bai Xiaochun entered the world of the fan face.

“Come on. Let’s fight!” Even as the words left his mouth, he attacked.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1198 awe-chapter-1199

The old man slowly began to look up.

He wore green garments, and didn’t seem very impressive at all with his white hair and emaciated frame. He was even a bit hunched over. But after looking up at Bai Xiaochun, he straightened, and his eyes began to shine even more brightly. Suddenly, his facial features began to change, and an expression of anger filled his face.

As his energy began to build, his hair changed, transforming from white to pitch black!

By the time he finished looking up, he didn’t look like an old man anymore, but rather, middle-aged!

Even as his energy soared, the divine sense and cultivation base fluctuations of the Archaean Realm erupted out from him, as well as a unique, holy air!

Although the man now seemed to be on the same level as the Vile-Emperor or the Saint-Emperor, he was a bit off in terms of his cognitive ability and overall strength. And yet… even a slightly weakened archaean… was still an archaean!!

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but shiver in fear. All of a sudden, he felt like he was facing a chaotic, primeval beast, something whose mere gaze caused all of his hair to stand on end.

However, it was actually an exciting sensation!

He wanted to learn from this archaean… and to do so in a safe fashion!

There could be no better and safer sparring partner than this old man!

Shouting at the top of his lungs, he powered up as well, his energy rapidly reaching that of the late Celestial Realm. He also drew on his fleshly body power as he prepared to fight. As a result, although his aura couldn’t quite match up to the archaean’s, his overall energy was close!

They looked at each other for moment, causing rumbling sounds to echo out between them. Then, in the blink of an eye, they both blurred into motion, slamming into each other and causing deafening booms to fill the air.

Frightened, Bai Xiaochi quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture, sealing the entire area off. Then, he backed up to watch, his expression that of concern, but his true feelings anything but that.

“Who gave you the right to bully me, Bai Xiaochun!? Hmmmphh! Did you really think the grand spirit automaton of this fan would be looking out for you? Yeah right! I just want to see you get beat up!” Although he didn’t dare to give voice to such thoughts, his eyes glittered as he observed the fighting from a distance.

Booms rang out for about seven or eight breaths of time. At that point, blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he staggered backward several hundred meters before finally forcing himself to a stop. As for the archaean, he simply hovered in place, clasping hands and bowing in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

“Archaeans really are pretty incredible….” Bai Xiaochun murmured, his eyes glittering thoughtfully. “He didn’t even use any big divine abilities, only ordinary magical techniques and fleshly body power. But even that was enough to force me back…. I can only stay in the fight for a few breaths of time.

“My biggest advantage isn’t being in the late Celestial Realm, it’s… having the powers of regeneration from the Undying Live Forever Technique!” As his injuries healed, he charged into battle once again, using all of his fleshly body power and divine abilities to see what he could do against this archaean.

Living Mountain Incantation! Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation!

Mountain Shaking Bash! Undying Hex!

Throat Crushing Grasp! Live Forever Lamp!

Sutra of Former Reincarnation! Sutra of Present Life and Death!

In one interchange after another, he used all of the magics he had learned through the years, with the exception of his Undying Sovereign’s Fist and the Waterswamp Kingdom.

Thanks to this constant fighting, Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base remained in the late Celestial Realm, but his battle prowess advanced by leaps and bounds. He constantly mixed up the way he used his divine abilities and magical techniques. And thanks to his powers of regeneration, he could fight over and over again, and find his own weaknesses and limitations.

Days passed in which Bai Xiaochun was completely wrapped up in his training with the archaean slave. At one point, he asked Bai Xiaochi about the fan’s overall trajectory, but unfortunately, didn’t get much solid information. Bai Xiaochun also found time to work on the third level of his

Time Immemorial Codex. Unfortunately, that required a lot of time, as well as a peaceful and calm heart. At the moment, he was too worried about Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo and Bruiser, as well as all of the people from the Heavenspan Realm. After some failures with the enlightenment, he focused completely on sparring with the archaean slave.

As his battle prowess increased, the archaean slave slowly began to resort to more complex and powerful magical techniques, and also began to draw on more of his fleshly body power.

Bai Xiaochun lost every single time, but was making rapid, almost unbelievable progress. In the beginning, he could only last against the archaean slave’s simplest magical techniques for seven or eight breaths of time. But now, even after the archaean had begun using powerful divine abilities, he could last for longer and longer.

As for Bai Xiaochi, despite the fact that he already knew a lot about Bai Xiaochun, he was completely stunned by what was happening.

“This guy… is pretty awesome!!” Another few months went by, and it reached the point where Bai Xiaochun could fight the archaean slave for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn.

He was now fully comfortable in the late Celestial Realm, and had reached new understandings of his own magical techniques. Finally, he demanded that the archaean slave fight even harder!

A boom could be heard as Bai Xiaochun was sent tumbling backward a hundred paces. He was gasping for breath as his wounds began to recover, and yet, the battle spirit in his eyes shone brightly.

“Use your highest level of battle prowess!” he said.

The archaean’s eyes glittered as he blurred into motion, becoming a wild tempest that caused the entire damaged fan to shudder.

Startled, Bai Xiaochi strengthened the sealing marks he had put in place. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes shone with madness in the face of the destructive tempest of power that was the archaean slave.

“The time has finally come to see if my Undying Sovereign’s Fist… can shake a trump card ability from an archaean!” Shouting at the top of his lungs, he clenched his hand into a fist, causing cracking sounds to ring out in all directions. A huge wind sprang up, and within his celestial aura… a scrap of sovereign aura appeared!

The archaean slave shivered and braced himself. At the same time, an enormous figure appeared in the air behind Bai Xiaochun.

The shadowy emperor looked like he always had, except… for his right arm!

“Undying Sovereign’s Fist!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, lunging forward, his fist seemingly wreathed in flames as it struck toward the archaean slave!

As the fist shot forward, the shadowy emperor’s sovereign arm seemed to fuse with Bai Xiaochun, making it seem like he was a sovereign unleashing a fist strike!

For the first time, the archaean slave let out a shout of fear. Not daring to hold anything back, he unleashed all of the energy he could muster, throwing out his hands to cause countless streams of golden light to shoot out from him. The light instantly transformed into a golden face, which howled as it lunged toward Bai Xiaochun's incoming fist.

In what was only the shortest of moments, Bai Xiaochun's Undying Sovereign's Fist slammed into the archaean slave's deadliest move.

A huge shockwave spread out through the world of the fan face, accompanied by intense rumbling sounds. The entire fan actually trembled. Bai Xiaochi let out a shriek of terror, and did everything he could to force the magical seals he had put in place to hold tight!

At the same time, blood oozed out of the corners of the archaean slave's mouth, and he staggered backward several steps!

Bai Xiaochun also staggered backward, coughing up blood. A few hundred meters away, he lurched to a halt, his eyes shining with excitement and delight!

"I can hurt an archaean!!" At this point, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously. His fist strike truly could hurt an archaean. Although he had ended up hurt in the process as well, with the powers of regeneration of his Undying Live Forever Technique, that was something he could deal with.

"Well, in this case, if I use my Archaean Luminescence… then what reason do I have to worry about the Vile-Emperor!?!?"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1199 awe-chapter-1200

Bai Xiaochun was absolutely confident about what was to come. Over the course of the following month, he continued to spar with the archaean slave, becoming more familiar with the use of the Undying Sovereign’s Fist, and even making it more powerful.

Other than the Waterswamp Kingdom, this was his most powerful divine ability, something that could shake even archaeans.

From the look of it, his bad luck was going to be a thing of the past. The Undying Sovereign’s Fist could crush anything in its path, and would soon cause Bai Xiaochun to bask in the warm glow of good luck.

Eventually, at long last… Bruiser woke up!!

When it happened, Bai Xiaochun could sense the Daoist Tower of Life and Death tremble a bit. Blurring into motion, he headed to the tower, sent some divine sense inside, and then performed an incantation gesture.

A black stream of light flew out from the tower, swirling through the air until it sensed Bai Xiaochun’s aura, whereupon it shot toward him.

Bai Xiaochun did nothing to avoid the beam of light. In fact, he smiled, stepped toward it, and threw his arms wide. As the black beam neared, it resolved into the shape of Bruiser. He was clearly excited and happy, and immediately pounced on Bai Xiaochun, yipping a bit and licking him all over the face.

Bai Xiaochun laughed in delight, hugging Bruiser, who had assumed an appropriate form for the occasion. He looked mostly the same as before, although he was about as tall as an average person and sturdily built. Especially noteworthy was that his cultivation base was now in the Demigod Realm!

Combined with his impressive frame, his demigod aura was enough to leave anyone shaken who saw him. Then there were the black flames which roiled out beneath his feet, and his razor-sharp teeth. He looked quite vicious and intimidating. However, in Bai Xiaochun's eyes, he was the same little Bruiser from back in the Heavenspan Realm.

"Bruiser!" he exclaimed.

Bruiser howled in response, rolling around excitedly on the ground and occasionally leaping high up into the air.

Anyone from the Spirit Stream Sect who saw Bruiser acting like this would be visibly shocked. After Bai Xiaochun had left the sect all those years ago, Bruiser had always acted particularly domineering and vicious. He had fiercely protected the sect under any and all circumstances, and many new disciples were actually scared of him.

But now… he was acting just like he had when he was young. In fact, he even shrank down to the size of a hand, then bit down onto Bai Xiaochun's pant leg and began to drag him along.

Bai Xiaochun couldn't have been happier.

"Come on, Bruiser. Dad's going to take you for a walk. This is going to be our home from now on." Bursting with delight, Bai Xiaochun took Bruiser on a tour of the fan, starting with the world in the fan face.

Bruiser was very curious about everything, and was very thorough in examining the place. Eventually, they returned to the Daoist Tower of Life and Death, which was when he suddenly spun in place and pounced on a certain area off to the side.

As he did, a shriek rang out, and Bai Xiaochi stumbled out of thin air. Pointing at Bruiser in shock, he said, “That thing can see me?!”

Similarly surprised, Bai Xiaochun said, “Bruiser, meet Bai Xiaochi. You keep an eye on this fellow, he's not very trustworthy.”

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with how spectacular Bruiser was for being able to see Bai Xiaochi.

As for Bai Xiaochi, he immediately shrieked, “Hey, you said I could change my name!”

Bai Xiaochun roared with laughter, then made a few teasing comments. Then he led Bruiser off for another walk, when suddenly, fluctuations began to roll out of the Daoist Tower of Life and Death.

Not just one set of fluctuations. *Four!!*

Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized two of them. They belonged to Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo. The other two… were also familiar. After all the years that had passed, Bai Xiaochun had come to recognize the auras of his unborn children!

“They’re gonna give birth now!?” Stunned, Bai Xiaochun sent some divine sense into the Daoist Tower of Life and Death, simultaneously rushing back toward the door. As he approached, the door opened, and Song Junwan and Zhou

Zimo appeared, looking somewhat confused, holding their bellies as they walked out into the open.

Upon catching sight of Bai Xiaochun, their jaws dropped.

“Xiaochun?”

“Bai Xiaochun!!”

At this point, Bai Xiaochun could see that they were not about to give birth. Rather, the unborn children inside of them were simply moving around actively now that they were awake.

Although he was relieved, he was also starting to feel a bit guilty and awkward. To be facing two women, both of whom bore his unborn children, left him feeling somewhat unsure of what to say.

Blinking a few times, he said, “Hey there, how are you two?”

“How the hell do you think?” Song Junwan snapped, stepping forward as if she intended to attack him. She had always had a short temper, and although there were tears in her eyes, she couldn’t help but think back to all the bitterness she had endured over the years, and how long she had been pregnant.

Zhou Zimo, the Mistress Red-Dust of the past, also had a sizeable temper. And it was only made worse by the unclear relationship between her and Bai Xiaochun, and the fact that she had been pregnant for years now. Then there were all of the life-or-death situations she had faced. Right now, she was glaring daggers, and even began to walk forward as if to start fighting.

Bai Xiaochun had never thought about what would happen in this moment. In the past, he might have fought back, but now they were his Daoist partners, both of whom were pregnant. How could he possibly dare to strike them? And they obviously wouldn't let him off the hook if he tried to escape.

“Ah, whatever. If they want to beat me up, then so be it. Nobody’s here to watch anyway.” With that, he raised his hands high into the air in defeat.

Then, the fists and feet began to rain down on him, provoking occasional yelps of pain. Before long, it was to his delight that he realized his celestial cultivation base allowed him to sense what the two women were thinking. When he was sure that their anger had been sated, he reached out, grabbed the two of them, and flew to the top of the mountain in the fan face, where he had long since hewn out an immortal's cave.

“Get your hands off me!” Song Junwan said, glaring.

“How impudent of you, Bai Xiaochun!” Zhou Zimo said icily.

“Both of you shut the hell up!” Bai Xiaochun said. Before either of them could respond, he took them into the immortal's cave....

Off in the distance, Bruiser looked on solemnly. Bai Xiaochi stood next to him, looking curious.

“Hey bro,” Bai Xiaochi said, “what do you think they're doing in there? Why were they fighting just now? And how come my master couldn’t beat them? He’s in the late Celestial Realm!”

Bruiser looked disdainfully out of the corner of his eye at Bai Xiaochi. He almost couldn’t stand to be in the presence of someone who was obviously such a simpleton.

“Even after not being able to beat them in a fight, he then took them into his immortal's cave? Are they going to practice some cultivation or something?” Bai Xiaochi scratched his head curiously.

“I think I need to go see for myself.” His curiosity was especially piqued by the odd sounds he could hear coming from the immortal's cave. Even as he took a step forward to go investigate, Bruiser blocked his path.

However, Bai Xiaochi was simply too curious, and considering his powers within the fan, there was no way that Bruiser could actually stop him. Passing Bruiser by, he entered the immortal's cave....

Bruiser looked on, shaking his head.

Before long... a howl of rage could be heard from Bai Xiaochun, accompanied by a yelp from Bai Xiaochi as he was ejected from the immortal's cave....

“I was trying to help you, milord! I can’t believe you actually attacked me!!”

“Shut up!!” Bai Xiaochun shot back, clearly flustered. After all, Bai Xiaochi’s sudden intrusion into his immortal's cave had been quite startling.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1200 awe-chapter-1201

Time passed. Eventually Bai Xiaochun explained everything that had gone on in the Eternal Immortal Domains to Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, and gradually, their anger toward him faded.

When Song Junwan was told of the lengths Bruiser and Song Que had gone to to protect her, she wept. With Bai Xiaochun's help, she was able to gaze upon Song Que from a distance as he lay there in the ninth floor of the tower.

Clasping Bai Xiaochun's hand tightly, she wiped the tears from her cheeks and softly asked, "Will Que'er wake up eventually…?"

"Definitely!" Bai Xiaochun replied without the slightest hesitation.

Song Que hadn't moved since being placed in the Daoist Tower of Life and Death, and in fact, hadn't changed at all. Because of the fact that his body wasn't decomposing, he looked very much like he was asleep.

Zhou Zimo was also there. She clasped hands and bowed to Song Que from a distance, and sighed. Zhou Zimo had already taken a liking to Bruiser. And he was able to sense the aura within her belly, and was immediately drawn to her. Although the two women often had a hard time understanding and getting along with Bai Xiaochun, both of them felt quite close to Bruiser.

What little bit of resentment still existed in their hearts began to melt away as Bai Xiaochun casually recounted how he had saved them.

The more they came to know Bai Xiaochun, the more they realized how he liked to tell dramatic stories about himself in a casual fashion. However, the truths behind those stories were still very touching.

Of course, the two women didn’t like each other much, and that was something that wouldn’t change overnight.

Bai Xiaochun knew that they had both experienced many hardships, and was also aware that if he didn't behave himself properly around them, he would likely find himself in the same situation as he had back in the days of the Blood Stream Sect and the Spirit Stream Sect, with Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei. And that would be a big disaster.

Therefore, he did his best to behave perfectly. At the same time, he began to make preparations to leave the treasured fan!

He had been away from the Eternal Immortal Domains for a long time, and although he seemed to be in good shape emotionally, the truth was that he was extremely anxious. The safety of the people he cared about was of the utmost importance, but unfortunately, he had no idea how such people were doing. For example, Li Qinghou, the Giant Ghost King, the Grand Heavenmaster, Big Fatty Zhang, and even Gongsun Wan’er.

Before, his battle prowess had been insufficient to justify a return trip. But now, going back was one of his top priorities!

“The fan is whole again, and I can tell that I don’t need to return to the same spot in the Eternal Immortal Domains that I left from. Although I can’t casually perform a precise teleportation, I can lock down onto a general area….” He also needed to come up with a specific plan for what to do after returning.

Even after considerable thought, he wasn’t able to come up with any perfect ideas.

“Well,” he said, gritting his teeth, “I can fight archaeans now… so why can’t the Eternal Immortal Domains have a tripartite balance of power!?!?

“I need to occupy an entire immortal domain, and then call it the lands of Heavenspan!!” The more he thought about it, the more that idea began to overshadow all of the other scattered thoughts and plans he had come up with.

“If I established a new nation in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it would cause instability…. After all, the Vile-Emperor already doesn’t like me…. In that case, I need to carve out a chunk of land from him!” Slowly but surely, his plan was taking shape.

“It will all come down to one thing… the fight that will inevitably occur with the Vile-Emperor after I go back!!” He closed his eyes for some time to think about the matter. When he opened them, they shone brightly. All of his hesitation was gone now. The first thing he did was go to Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo to explain his plan. After he finished, they exchanged glances.

Neither of them did anything to persuade him to change his mind. They knew that he had no choice but to return eventually, and therefore, the best thing they could do was wish him well and not add to his anxiety.

Therefore, when he suggested that they stay behind in the fan, they pretended to not be worried about the situation, and did exactly as he asked.

Bruiser wanted to come along, but after all the dire circumstances he had been through, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t bring himself to agree. Instead, he asked him to stay behind in the fan. After the goodbyes were said, he didn’t delay any longer. Even as Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and Bruiser all looked on anxiously, he sent out some divine sense, and then faded away!

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty occupied three of the five flower petals that made up the Eternal Immortal Domains. However, only two were fully occupied. The other was a subject of contention with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

Of the two that were fully occupied, one held Vile-Emperor City, and the other was ruled by a celestial. Currently, the celestial stationed in that second of the two stable immortal domains was none other than Reverend Devourer!

On that very immortal domain was a barren plain in which two groups of cultivators were locked in magical combat. One group wore Daoist robes, while the other was clad in black garments. They were forces from two local sects, who despite both being part of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, had been feuding for many years.

Currently at dispute was a spirit stone mine, and matters had escalated to the point where open war had broken out. The most powerful combatants in the frenzied fighting were in the Nascent Soul stage. High above them in the air were two devas, one of them an old man, the other middle-aged. They hovered there, hands clasped behind their backs as they surveyed the scene below.

These devas were the powerful backers of the two sects involved, which they essentially owned like slaves.

As devas, it wouldn’t be appropriate for them to get involved in the fighting. There were many situations like this in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty in which powerful experts controlled small sects that would eventually go to war. Not only would such wars serve to temper and train the cultivators of the various sects, but it was also an easy way to resolve differences.

Smiling faintly, the older man said, “Fellow Daoist Chen, I'm afraid that Redbud Mine won’t belong to you for much longer.”

“I think it’s a bit early to say for sure!” the middle-aged man replied, his expression somewhat unsightly. Clearly, the sect he owned was now at a disadvantage. Worse, the Nascent Soul cultivator from his opponent’s sect was just on the verge of achieving a breakthrough!

The other Nascent Soul cultivator, the one from the sect owned by the middle-aged man, was coughing up blood, and seemed to be just on the verge of losing the fight. Snorting coldly, the middle-aged man flicked his sleeve and prepared to leave, under the smiling gaze of the older deva.

However, that was when… a massive conglomeration of violet lightning began to descend from the sky onto the hundreds of cultivators involved in the battle.

As the lightning crashed down, the shocked cultivators below tried to leap to safety, with many being hit by the lightning and coughing up blood in response.

“What is this?!?!”

“What’s going on?!?!”

The entire battlefield was thrown into chaos, and even the two devas were completely taken aback, and quickly sent out divine sense to scan the area.

To their shock, they watched as the crashing violet lightning formed together into the shape of a huge door!!

Then, a blurry figure appeared within that door….

Everyone in the area was completely shocked, and even the devas felt their scalps tingling in fear.

Before anyone could do anything, the figure within the lightning grew clear and stepped forward, becoming visible for everyone to see!

He was tall and thin, with long black hair, and fair skin. He looked like a young man, with sparkling eyes, and an aura that could shake heaven and earth. Everyone who saw him was stunned by how his cultivation base crushed down on them with incredible pressure. Even the devas trembled as they were forced down onto the ground. The only thing they could think of was that this pressure vastly surpassed anything they had felt before, even from the preceptor that governed them….

Even the celestials they had observed from a distance didn’t seem to be on the same level.

“He has to be a celestial! But which one?!” That was what they were both thinking. However, not daring to mince words, the two devas quickly clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, exalted one!”

As Bai Xiaochun hovered there, eyes closed, he took a deep breath, which stirred memories of events from decades before. A moment passed, and then he opened his eyes. Sweeping his gaze across the crowd, he spoke in a growl that pierced all of their ears.

“Tell me… is this the second immortal domain of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1201 awe-chapter-1202

Bai Xiaochun’s voice caused everything in the area to tremble, and all of the cultivators, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, to be shaken to the depths of their souls.

Some cultivators were shaking physically, and seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. Even the devas were as pale as death, and were trembling.

It wasn’t something Bai Xiaochun was doing on purpose, it was just the fact that his cultivation base was too high. Now that he was in the late Celestial Realm, his Willpower had pushed his Daoseed to the point where it was about to bloom, making his voice the type that would cause virtually all types of cultivation bases in the Eternal Immortal Domains to be deeply shaken.

When Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, he restrained the fluctuations rolling off of him as much as possible. And yet, to the crowd around, it still felt like having a boulder pushing down on their chests.

The two devas were already getting some clues to what was going on, but neither dared to speak out of turn. Clasping hands, one of them said, “Exalted one… yes… we are in the second immortal domain of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, very close to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s second immortal domain….”

Bai Xiaochun immediately looked to the south, which was the location of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty’s second immortal domain, the north of which had been occupied by the Giant Ghost King and the Grand Heavenmaster.

Now that the damaged fan was whole, its teleportation function worked very differently than it had in the past, where he would be sent back to a specific spot. That old method left him quite limited, since the Vile-Emperor could easily keep that location under watch. Now, he could teleport to virtually anywhere in the world!

Although he didn’t have precise control over the final destination, it at least made it easy to get to any one of the five different immortal domains.

“It’s too bad the accuracy is so limited,” he thought, shaking his head. “Otherwise the teleportation function could actually be my biggest life-saving magic.” In contrast, the function of traveling to the fan seemed to work in exactly the same way as before.

“I have a lot to do now that I'm back…. First is Uncle Li and everyone who was with him, and then the Giant Ghost King and Grand Heavenmaster. I guess I need to find Gongsun Wan’er first. She should know all the details.

“Whatever I do, I need to get a firm foothold here, and I need to find my people. In that case… the first thing I should do is fight a shocking battle!” Eyes shining with bright light, he thought about the plan he had come up with, whereupon his eyes shone with determination.

His plan was to do something monumentally shocking, and thus notify everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains that he was back. Furthermore, by winning such a fight, he would also make it clear… that there were now three major powers in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

After confirming where he was from the devas, he sent his divine sense out to scan the immortal domain he was in, and locate its capital city. Then, it was without any hesitation that he burst into motion, leaving behind nothing but thunderous booms and screaming winds.

The crowd of cultivators was thrown backward by the wind cast by his departure. Meanwhile, the two devas looked at each other, eyes flickering with shock.

“Was he…?”

“He looked familiar…. I think I’ve seen his picture before….”

“Celestial cultivation base…. It must be him…. He killed Celestial Deadfall, captured Prince Ur-Demon, executed the Vile-Prince, and even withstood a palm strike from the Vile-Emperor…. That was definitely King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun!!”

The realization of who Bai Xiaochun was caused their minds to spin as surely as if they had been struck by lightning.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was streaking through the air faster than if he had resorted to teleportations. Because of his indescribable speed, he rapidly closed in on the capital city, and was soon only moments away from it.

Ordinary celestials would take days to make the trip, but within no time, Bai Xiaochun was there!

The city itself was a colossal boulder, with countless other smaller rocks and boulders floating in the air around it, all of them covered with numerous structures. Because of that, it was known as Megarock City.

Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators streamed into and out of the city, and considering that it was noontime, the place seemed particularly bustling.

No one noticed Bai Xiaochun’s arrival, allowing him to hover unseen in the air above Megarock City.

There was only one person who could possibly detect him, someone seated cross-legged in meditation inside of a grand hall in the boulder…. Reverend Devourer!

In terms of battle prowess, the most powerful celestial in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty was Virūpākṣa. Years ago, the second most powerful had been the old woman who ended up being killed by the sovereign clone. Back then, Reverend Devourer had been third most powerful. However, after the old woman was resurrected, she was not as strong as before, which meant that Reverend Devourer was now the second most powerful celestial in the dynasty. Despite that, his personality had not changed; he was as careful and cautious as ever.

The way he had pretended to be injured during the fight with the sovereign clone, and the way he had retreated from battle with Bai Xiaochun, were all manifestations of that cautious personality. Then came the events in Vile-Emperor City, which had resulted in him being punished by the Vile-Emperor by being sent to this remote location.

Reverend Devourer didn’t mind being punished in this way, and in fact didn’t really view it as a punishment at all. He had actually enjoyed his life in this immortal domain during the years which had passed.

“I guess it’s all thanks to that Bai Xiaochun,” he sighed. “Otherwise Prince Ur-Demon would have been the one sent here.” Most other people had forgotten about Bai Xiaochun, but not him. He still remembered what it had been like to face that multi-colored flame.

He wasn’t sure why exactly he was sighing right now, but he knew that he suddenly felt uneasy, as though something momentous were about to occur. He even sent some divine sense out into the city, but didn't detect anything out of the ordinary. Rising to his feet, he decided to go out to take a closer look.

However, it was in that very moment that a voice spoke out from the sky above the enormous boulder, a voice which caused all cultivators in the entire city to tremble in fear, and which spoke directly to Reverend Devourer!

“It’s been a long time, Reverend Devourer!”

To the people in Megarock City, it felt as if the weight of the heavens was descending upon them, and as for Reverend Devourer, he felt like his mind was being struck by heavenly lightning!!

“That divine sense… that aura… that voice….” Eyes widening, Reverend Devourer sent his divine sense up into the air above the city, where he finally caught sight of a young man in a white robe, with long black hair!

“Bai… Bai Xiaochun!?!?” Reverend Devourer stammered.

Almost as soon as the words left his lips, the expressionless Bai Xiaochun waved his hand in the direction of the hall in which Reverend Devourer stood.

Rumbling sounds filled all creation, and Reverend Devourer let loose a frenzied shriek as he shot out of the hall. As he did, the entire thing was crushed out of existence!

Thanks to his timely evasive move, Reverend Devourer was only brushed by the attack, but it still caused him to cough up an enormous mouthful of blood. Instantly, his eyes lit up with terror and incredulity; this feeling was something that surpassed anything Celestial Virūpākṣa could do. It was almost on the same level as… the Vile-Emperor.

“Breakthrough. He broke through!!” Reverend Devourer felt like his scalp was about to explode, and he abandoned any thoughts of fighting. He simply turned and fled!

Bai Xiaochun’s facial expression didn’t change at all. In the past, he had taken Reverend Devourer very seriously when it came to conflict, but now, the man seemed anything but threatening!

Waving his hand, he said, “Be crushed!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1202 awe-chapter-1203

The instant the words left Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, all heaven and earth seemed to darken. At the same time, an enormous hand materialized in the sky above, which shot down toward Reverend Devourer.

Even as the hand descended, causing the lands below to quake, the air seemed to solidify, sealing the area around Reverend Devourer so that he couldn’t move!

When Reverend Devourer sensed what was happening, his eyes nearly popped out of his skull because of the shock.

“Y-you… you… you broke through to the Archaean Realm?” It seemed to him like the magic at work surpassed anything celestials could utilize, as though the Essence power of an entire world were being unleashed. Not even Celestial Virūpākṣa could do something like that.

Face completely expressionless, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, causing intense rumbling sounds to echo out, as though the sky were being shattered. Reverend Devourer let loose a long cry of despair, performing a double-handed incantation gesture as he unleashed trump cards of all types. A black mist sprang up around him, as well as countless shadowy fiends, but such efforts were as helpful as throwing a cup of water on a burning cart of firewood.

The shadowy fiends were crushed out of existence as the enormous hand closed in, snatching Reverend Devourer up in one fell swoop!

At that point, Bai Xiaochun casually flicked his sleeve, sending the despairing Reverend Devourer straight into his bag of holding!

It all happened with ruthless efficiency, and within only ten breaths of time. The fluctuations were still rolling out across the lands as the people in Megarock City looked on, terrified and tongue-tied!

Moments later, the city devolved into a hubbub as people finally started to react!

“Heavens! That's Bai Xiaochun!!”

“King Heavenspan, Bai Xiaochun!!”

“He's back… he crushed Celestial Devourer in one move! That's… that's impossible!!”

Even as the shouts rose into the air, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then waved his finger down toward the ruins of the grand hall in the middle of Megarock City. As a result, the dust and rubble of the destroyed hall began to form together into the shape of a stone pagoda. Floor after floor took shape, seemingly without end, until it finally reached Bai Xiaochun’s feet, making him seem like the paramount entity of all creation!

Sitting down cross-legged, he looked out at the lands and calmly said, “Those who wish to leave may do so now. Those who wish to stay, hear my words. This immortal domain… now belongs to Bai Xiaochun!”

He bolstered the words with his cultivation base, and powered them with his Daoseed and Willpower. As a result, they echoed out far and wide, passing beyond the borders of Megarock City and into the ears of roughly half of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators in that immortal domain.

“If you refuse to cooperate with this new arrangement, Vile-Emperor… then come fight me!” That final sentence was bolstered by his Daoseed and Willpower to reach even further!

Bai Xiaochun was sure that people would relay his words to the Vile-Emperor, and that soon… the emperor would come for him!

When the time came, he would use Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer as bargaining chips.

It took only moments for the second immortal domain in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty to be completely astir.

“Something big is about to happen!!”

“Heavens! It’s an invasion! We’re being invaded!!”

“Dammit, this King Heavenspan is completely crazy! Isn’t he worried that the Vile-Emperor will come and execute him!?!?”

“This must be some ploy by the Saint-Emperor Dynasty! It looks like the two dynasties are finally going to go to war!!”

Although everyone was talking about the situation, no one actually believed that Bai Xiaochun qualified to demand an immortal domain for himself. Everyone was completely confident in how strong the Vile-Emperor was.

Before long, word of Bai Xiaochun’s return spread from his current immortal domain into other parts of both the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

Upon hearing the news, the Vile-Emperor frowned slightly. He was of a different opinion than the masses. He knew that Bai Xiaochun was the new owner of the fan that was the legacy of a sovereign. Furthermore, decades had passed. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t be doing what he was doing if he wasn’t confident in the outcome.

“I bet he has some trump cards ready to use…. Well, I might as well force his hand as early as possible.” Eyes narrowing, he sent some divine sense out to Celestial Virūpākṣa, as well as the old woman he had resurrected years ago.

“Virūpākṣa. Ren Ling…. The two of you go arrest Bai Xiaochun!”

Virūpākṣa and Ren Ling didn’t know as much about Bai Xiaochun as the Vile-Emperor. However, they realized that, after such a long absence, he wouldn’t return in such a high-profile manner if he wasn’t confident in the outcome.

Obviously, Bai Xiaochun had some trump cards at his disposal, and therefore, the two celestials immediately understood why the Vile-Emperor had assigned them this mission. As powerful representatives of the Vile-Emperor, it was their duty to attempt to find out what secret weapons the enemy might have.

It was in somewhat taciturn fashion that both Virūpākṣa and Ren Ling flew toward the teleportation portal in Vile-Emperor City and headed toward the dynasty’s second immortal domain.

After they left, the Vile-Emperor actually emerged from his imperial palace and secretly followed them to see what would happen!

Although it was shocking that Bai Xiaochun had occupied Megarock City and captured Reverend Devourer, the people of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty weren’t very worried about the situation. After all, they had complete faith and confidence in the Vile-Emperor!

In fact, many cultivators began to head to Megarock City in the hopes of seeing how exactly the Vile-Emperor would put King Heavenspan in his place.

There were also many Heavenspan Realm cultivators undercover in the same immortal domain who heard the news. Gritting their teeth, they came out of hiding and headed toward Megarock City to see what would happen.

By the time Celestial Virūpākṣa and Celestial Ren Ling arrived outside of Megarock City, there was already a crowd of several hundred thousand cultivators present who had come to watch the fight.

And that wasn’t even to mention the cultivators who already resided in the city, and were watching with glittering eyes as the scene played out.

Bai Xiaochun ignored all of them. It didn’t matter that so many people didn’t believe what he had said before, and that none of them had left when he gave them the opportunity. That just meant there were more people to bear witness to what was about to happen.

“The bigger the audience… the more this fight will shake the Eternal Immortal Domains!” By this point, his eyes were alive with the desire to do battle. He had spent many years on the treasured fan, but the anger he felt in his heart had not been sated by the death of the Vile-Prince. He still needed to vent! This was also the time to make a name for the Heavenspan Realm in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Upon detecting the approach of Celestial Virūpākṣa and Celestial Ren Ling, Bai Xiaochun calmly looked up in their direction, then smiled coldly.

“The Vile-Emperor is really playing it safe,” he thought. “He’s an archaean, but he’s sending celestials to try to find out what my trump cards are.... Well, it’s too bad that celestials don’t even qualify to see my secret weapons!”

Celestial Virūpākṣa could see Bai Xiaochun sitting there on the stone pagoda, and frowned at the sight of his faint smile. He could sense that something seemed off, but the Vile-Emperor’s decree had been clear. Despite the sensation of imminent danger, he gritted his teeth, unleashed the power of his cultivation base, and summoned a massive tempest that transformed into a huge hand that shot toward Bai Xiaochun as if to grab him.

Celestial Ren Ling was the only celestial in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty who hadn’t had any dealings with Bai Xiaochun. After all, back when he had made a scene in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, she was still recovering from having been resurrected. And so, she wasn’t as apprehensive as Celestial Virūpākṣa. Even though her battle prowess had been reduced, she was still cruel and vicious, and as she advanced, she transformed into an enormous black falcon that shot toward Bai Xiaochun with lightning-like speed.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1203 awe-chapter-1204

The sound of two celestials charging into battle caused the sky to grow dim, and the clouds to seethe. The Will of millions of cultivators was being drawn upon to create a tempest of the most shocking proportions!

From a distance, it looked like the sky might be ripped apart! Celestial Virūpākṣa moved with shocking speed, becoming vaster than the sky itself as he unleashed his crushing attack!

Celestial Ren Ling was a bit weaker than him, but the murderous aura that roiled around her actually surpassed his! In terms of both brutality and number of kills, few celestials in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty could surpass her!

With the two of them attacking in unison, it seemed like a devastating force that would absolutely crush anything in their path with utter impunity!

People in Megarock City were already cheering in excitement.

“Two celestials are attacking at once! This King Heavenspan is dead for sure!”

“Hahaha! One measly celestial from the Heavenspan Realm can’t possibly be a match for two of our Vile-Emperor celestials. In fact, was it really necessary to send two?!”

“Yeah, Celestial Virūpākṣa alone could have sent Bai Xiaochun fleeing like the rat he is!”

The people in the city weren’t the only ones to feel that way. The numerous other cultivators who had rushed over to see the action were equally excited. They were absolutely convinced that, no matter how strong Bai Xiaochun might be, he was nothing but a foreigner, and couldn’t possibly stand up to this attack, not unless he was an archaean with battle prowess to crush everything in his path.

“How arrogant, Bai Xiaochun! You’re *dead* this time!!” Such talk could be heard everywhere, along with sarcastic laughter.

As for the scattered Heavenspan Realm cultivators present, they were anxious beyond measure, and yet, were completely helpless. All they could do was fearfully watch Virūpākṣa and Ren Ling closing in on Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem to notice what people were saying, or at least, he didn’t care. In fact, his smile grew even colder. They viewed him as a foreigner, but to him… *they* were the foreigners.

“In that case… it will be in your moment of greatest conceit that I push you to the depths of despair!” Eyes narrowed, he looked at the incoming celestials. Not bothering to rise to his feet, he waved his hand, placing a faint scrap of sovereign-level aura into his hand as he launched a fist strike!

He didn’t even use the full and complete Undying Sovereign’s Fist, only a portion of it. But even still, heaven and earth rumbled loudly as the air in front of him shattered. Then, a sound that surpassed heavenly thunder exploded out, completely drowning out the sound of the cheering crowd.

At the same time, the air continued to shatter, heading directly toward Celestial Virūpākṣa and Ren Ling, overwhelming them!

It was a force backed by Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, fleshly body power, and a scrap of a sovereign’s aura. It might not faze an archaean, but to a celestial… it was a catastrophic blow that simply couldn’t be defended against!!

Celestial Virūpākṣa’s eyes went wide; despite the level of his cultivation base, and his self-control, he immediately blurted, “Imposs… impossible!!”

His mind spun in unprecedented fashion, and yet, there was no time for thought or consideration. Feeling a greater sense of impending crisis than he had ever felt in his life, he let out a frenzied shout, blue veins bulging out on his face and neck as he made the decision not to back up!

He knew that if he did, he would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt!!

Of course, the power Bai Xiaochun had put into the fist strike was of secondary importance. The most important factor was the aura. It was sharp, sharper than the sharpest sword, and as such, it was like a blade slashing into a piece of wood, or even paper!!

Celestial Virūpākṣa howled at the top of his lungs. Not even thinking about Bai Xiaochun anymore, he used all of his cultivation base, and all of his divine abilities. He even produced ten precious treasures, trump cards that weren’t quite on the level of world treasures, but were defensive magical items of incredible value!!

Celestial Ren Ling was a bit slower to react, and was not as well prepared as Virūpākṣa. Therefore, she chose to retreat!

They made different decisions, and therefore… the results were vastly different!!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the air shattered, creating what looked like a huge mouth that chomped down onto the two celestials!

An agonized shriek and a miserable scream echoed out. As for Celestial Virūpākṣa, his more than ten precious treasures were incapable of standing up to the energy, and shattered as quickly as dried twigs!

His divine abilities, magical techniques, and defensive measures began to fall apart, allowing the massive force to pierce through toward him. However, all of the measures he had taken were not in vain. Because Bai Xiaochun had not used much of his sovereign aura, Celestial Virūpākṣa was flung backward, his chest caved in, and massive amounts of blood pouring out of his mouth. And yet… he escaped with his life!!

Unfortunately… Celestial Ren Ling, despite having chosen to flee, had not come fully prepared with defensive items. It was an error in judgement that resulted… in her fleshly body being ripped to shreds and destroyed!

As for her Daoseed, it was swept up by the shattered air, and although it wasn’t wiped out of existence, cracking sounds emanated out from it, along with a bloodcurdling scream. Normally speaking, a Daoseed could only be destroyed by an archaean, but right now… seven eye-catching cracks were visible on the surface of Ren Ling’s Daoseed!!!

Usually, such cracks would only appear if a celestial had been resurrected, and would indicate a significant level of weakness…. As such, if Ren Ling were to be resurrected again, then her celestial cultivation base would be weakened to the point where she would be lucky to even be considered a celestial!

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. It happened so quickly that no one had time to think or react. It was as if an enormous palm had just slapped all of the cultivators of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty directly across the face!!

Celestial Virūpākṣa and Celestial Ren Ling had been bearing down on Bai Xiaochun with raging energy and boundless murderous auras. And yet… Bai Xiaochun dispatched them without even standing up!

He unleashed a fist strike that shattered the air, seriously wounded Celestial Virūpākṣa, and most terrifying of all… killed a celestial! Up to this point in history, it had only ever been possible for an archaean to destroy a celestial's Daoseed in battle.

That was one reason why celestials didn't truly fear dying in combat!

But now… everything had changed!!

Millions of cultivators were present to bear witness to the fact that… there was a third person in the Eternal Immortal Domains who could kill celestials!

The significance of that fact, and the terrifying battle prowess Bai Xiaochun had just demonstrated, caused many people to gulp in terror. Most of them were completely dumbstruck, to the point where no one reacted for a protracted moment!

“Heavens! This is impossible!!”

“How could this be happening? What… what kind of cultivation base does he have?!?!”

“He… can kill celestials?!?! He actually killed her, wiped her out of existence…?”

Amidst the terrified uproar, Celestial Virūpākṣa, who had just escaped with his life, looked over at Bai Xiaochun with disbelief and horror.

“You….”

But Bai Xiaochun wasn’t even looking at Virūpākṣa. Rising to his feet atop the stone pagoda, he looked up into the sky.

“Since you’ve come all this way, Vile-Emperor, there’s no need to skulk in the shadows. I hereby challenge you to a duel!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1204 awe-chapter-1205

The surrounding cultivators of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had still not recovered from their shock. As for the Heavenspan Realm cultivators who were hidden in the crowd, they were still pleasantly shocked…. And that was exactly when Bai Xiaochun spoke in a thunderous voice that struck everyone down to their hearts!

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty cultivators seemed to once again be filled with confidence, and gave voice to excited anticipation.

“The Vile-Emperor!?!?!?”

“Heavens! Don’t tell me the Vile-Emperor is actually among us right now?!?!”

“Hahaha! This Bai Xiaochun is *dead!* When His Majesty the Vile-Emperor takes action, nobody in the entire Eternal Immortal Domains can stand up to his wrath, except maybe the Saint-Emperor!”

Meanwhile, the air in the location that Bai Xiaochun had looked to began to ripple as a figure stepped out into the open.

He wore golden imperial robes, as well as an imperial crown. He was tall and slender, but at the same time, nefarious and domineering in a way that shook everyone who looked at him!

The archaean fluctuations which rolled off of him made him seem like a paragon entity of all creation, as though everywhere he went in the world, he would be as comfortable as if he were strolling in his own garden. The mere sight of him caused Bai Xiaochun's pupils to constrict.

He was none other than the Vile-Emperor!

"My respects, Your Majesty!"

"Your Majesty!!"

"His Imperial Majesty!"

A variety of formal greetings rang out to fill Megarock City as virtually everyone present dropped to their knees to kowtow.

A calm expression could be seen on the Vile-Emperor's face, although his eyes were ice-cold, making him seem threatening without being angry. After nodding in acknowledgement to his people, he looked at Bai Xiaochun.

"Admit to your crimes, Bai Xiaochun," he said coolly.

Bai Xiaochun had been waiting for this moment to arrive, and now that it had, his heart surged with the desire to do battle. Just as he had planned, he didn't speak, but instead, began to advance on the Vile-Emperor.

The Vile-Emperor snorted coldly, and then waved his hand in seemingly casual fashion. However, as a result, a tempest sprang out that immediately caused intense rumbling sounds to fill the area.

The winds were filled with the divine sense and fluctuations of the Archaean Realm, and immediately formed a crushing force that bore down on Bai Xiaochun!

Amidst the rumbling sounds, Bai Xiaochun continued to advance through the storm winds, and met the descending divine sense head on!

In addition to the power of an Archaean, that divine sense also contained the Willpower of countless other living beings. Obviously, controlling Willpower was as easy for an archaean as turning over a hand. Furthermore, they could unleash it in ways that celestials simply couldn't match up to. Generally, when archaeans manipulated Willpower, celestials would instantly be crushed by it!

In their previous encounter, the Vile-Emperor had not resorted to Willpower because he had been intentionally trying to get Bai Xiaochun to teleport to the damaged fan, and bring him along. But now… he knew that trying to get the fan was useless. Furthermore, it was to his shock moments ago that he had sensed a sovereign aura within Bai Xiaochun's attack. Thus, he had immediately resorted to Willpower to try to crush him!

To Bai Xiaochun, it felt like everything around him was solidifying, and at the same time, a powerful force of expulsion was building up. It was as if the entire world, and everyone in it, was dead set on expelling him!

The pressure became a boundless force that instantly slammed him down onto the ground below!

In the face of a Willpower attack from an archaean, no celestial could possibly be strong enough to fight back!

It was something Bai Xiaochun had not experienced when sparring with the archaean slave back on the treasured fan. After all, the archaean slave did not have a host of people worshiping him, whose Willpower he could draw upon!

In the time it takes to flick a sleeve, Bai Xiaochun was suppressed, and cheers began to fill the air. However, even as the cheers began, Bai Xiaochun suddenly let out a powerful shout, and steeled himself.

Eyes bloodshot, he looked up into the air and called upon… his sovereign aura!!

The aura erupted from his right hand, and was not something that the observing cultivators could easily detect. However, it caused the Vile-Emperor’s eyes to widen, and his expression to turn unprecedentedly somber. Eyes flickering with icy light, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and then shoved it toward Bai Xiaochun in a palm strike!

The palm strike seemed to rip a portion of the sky out, the same shape as the palm itself!

Then, the wind, rain, thunder and lightning of the Eternal Lands… as well as the water in the Eternal Sea, and all living beings that existed in the world, seemed to materialize and fuse into that palm!

It was no illusory palm! It was fueled by the Willpower at the control of the Vile-Emperor to create a massive, 3,000-meter-wide palm that bore down directly on Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun’s breath caught in his throat, but the sovereign aura weakened the Willpower that was crushing down on him, and lessened the pressure. Looking up, his battle spirit surged with even more intensity.

“Come on, let’s fight!!” he shouted, leaping into the air toward the Vile-Emperor. As he moved, he clenched his right hand into a fist, causing a shadowy emperor to appear behind him.

He wore imperial robes and an imperial crown, and looked exactly like Bai Xiaochun in every respect, with the exception of the fact that he had… the wolfish arm of a sovereign!!

“Undying… Sovereign’s… Fist!!”

Right now, the Undying Sovereign’s Fist was Bai Xiaochun’s most powerful divine ability, a trump card that could shake archaeans! After his experiments out in the void, and his sparring sessions with the archaean slave, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Sovereign’s Fist could now be unleashed with complete impunity!

At the same time, the sovereign aura merged into the fist strike, propelling it to the ultimate level of power.

Incalculable levels of power began to converge on Bai Xiaochun’s fist, which he struck out to meet the archaean palm that raced toward him!

The shadowy emperor’s sovereign arm merged with Bai Xiaochun, creating a fist that radiated the most shocking of energies!

The sky and the lands all shook violently as force which far surpassed the level of a celestial gripped all creation!

The entire immortal domain was trembling, and fluctuations rolled out, causing the celestials in Vile-Emperor City to be completely and utterly astonished.

Meanwhile, something like an enormous giant appeared in the sky above Megarock City, the manifestation of Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Sovereign’s Fist, which slammed into the archaean palm strike. The collision… was like the sun and the moon smashing into each other!

RRRUUUUMBLE!

Megarock City shook violently, to the point where many buildings collapsed. Numerous mountains within the immortal domains were flattened, and crevices opened up throughout the lands!

Massive waves covered the surface of the Eternal Sea, and even the immortal domain that was home to Vile-Emperor City began to shake in astonishing fashion.

At this point, the shadowy emperor that existed behind Bai Xiaochun began to shatter into pieces! Bai Xiaochun was sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying out of his mouth as his Undying Codex healed him. He was seriously injured, but by the time he came to a stop, he was still able to stand upright!

And then, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Is that all you can do, Mr. Archaean Vile-Emperor?!?!”

After all, the archaean palm strike had also shattered into bits!

Even more telling, the backlash caused the Vile-Emperor to shiver, his face going pale as a stream of blood oozed out of one corner of his mouth!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1205 awe-chapter-1206

Bai Xiaochun's voice resonated through the crumbling Megarock City and beyond, directly into the ears of the already stunned audience!

All of them could clearly see that, not only had the Vile-Emperor done little to Bai Xiaochun, but Bai Xiaochun's attack… had caused the Vile-Emperor to bleed!!

It was as if heaven and earth had both been overturned, to the point where all of them felt like they had reverted to being mortals!!

“Impossible. This is impossible!!”

“His Majesty… His Majesty is an archaean! Don't tell me Bai Xiaochun is also an archaean…? Heavens!!”

“His Majesty actually… got hurt?!?!”

An uproar ensued which was fueled by countless mixed, complicated emotions. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun's laughter filled the air.

How could he not be excited? He had been thinking about this day for years now, dreaming of what it would be like when he returned to the Eternal Immortal Domains and fought an archaean!

Although his cultivation base wasn't high enough, he knew that every day which passed meant more suffering for the people he cared about. And despite the half of a sixty-year-cycle which had passed, he could not forget the dramatic events that had occurred back in Vile-Emperor City. His wives and children had been placed in grave danger, and Song Que had been killed. And thanks to the archaean cultivation base of the Vile-Emperor, he had been virtually powerless to do anything about it….

He had been driven to the point of madness, and had spent the following thirty years focused almost completely on cultivation. Now… he was going all out, drawing on every scrap of strength he had to forge a new hope!!

This was not some simple tussle. This… was an electrifying fight with an archaean!!

He had not held anything back in his attack just now, but neither had the Vile-Emperor, whose palm strike should have killed any celestial it was targeting. Even ten celestials on the same level as Virūpākṣa, all fighting together, would still have been cut down by it!

But… even that full-power strike was destroyed by Bai Xiaochun!

Worse, the backlash caused the mighty Vile-Emperor, a majestic archaean expert, to bleed!! Although his injuries were miniscule, the fact that they had been inflicted by someone of such inferior standing caused the most unimaginable killing intent to burn in his eyes!

Narrowing his eyes, the Vile-Emperor said, “A sovereign aura…. Very well played…. I really did underestimate you, Bai Xiaochun. However… this farce is over. If all you have is that one fist strike, then the time has come to educate you about how truly powerful archaeans are!”

With that, he threw his arms wide and then performed incantation gestures, causing the sky to tremble as something like a red sun appeared!!

It was massive, and so bright that the sun that normally shone down on the Eternal Immortal Domains… faded away and vanished!!

As it did, the Vile-Emperor’s red sun grew larger and larger, until it was the only sun in the sky!!

“Perhaps you were unaware that the Eternal Immortal Domains… can only be home to two archaeans…. The Saint-Emperor fused with the bright moon, and I… fused with the scarlet sun!

“Therefore, it has already been fated… that neither you nor anyone else can become an archaean in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

“Now that I have revealed this secret to you, you can take it with you to your grave!!” Smiling viciously, he waved his hands, causing the red sun to explode with heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing heat. It was the type of heat that could scorch away any and all living beings, and it was now threatening to overwhelm Megarock City!!

Apparently… the Vile-Emperor didn’t care about whether the other people in the city lived or died. He cared only about killing Bai Xiaochun, and snatching the legacy of the treasured fan from him. If he could do that, then any price was worth paying!

As the red sun descended, Megarock City began to melt, and countless cultivators began to scream in agony, and flee. However, they were too slow; it was obvious that, within moments, they would be burned out of existence!

There were screams, pleas for mercy, and incredulous wails of accusation. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes were narrowed, and his heart pounded with shock at the magic of the red sun that the Vile-Emperor was resorting to!

However, the Vile-Emperor had miscalculated. He thought that the Undying Sovereign’s Fist was Bai Xiaochun’s secret weapon, but… it was not!

There was little time for thought or planning. As the red sun approached with its burning heat, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand and used his divine sense in a very unique fashion to lock onto the treasured fan, far out in the void.

Moments ago, the treasured fan had been flying along smoothly through the void. But now, a tremor passed through it, causing the faces of Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo to flicker. Bai Xiaochi flew out into the open and looked into the world of the fan face, in the direction of the river. There, the Go piece being held by the archaean slave began to shine with bright light, radiating a beam that shot out into the void, and then vanished!

When it reappeared… it was in the Eternal Immortal Domains, right in the sky above Megarock City in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty!

The beam of light shone with dazzling brightness that rivaled that of the red sun. When the mighty Vile-Emperor sensed the fluctuations coming from that beam of light, it was for the first time… that his face fell!

“That’s….”

“I call it Archaean Luminescence!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice ringing out to be heard by all of the despairing cultivators in the city. Even as the red sun descended, and the entire immortal domain around it shook… the Archaean

Luminescence blazed forth with the aura of an archaean, and headed straight for the sun!!

Heaven and earth trembled as the light that Bai Xiaochun had meticulously experimented with… became an attack to rival an archaean expert's!

Although some of its power had to do with the archaean slave, more of it… was because of the Go board!!

Bai Xiaochun’s research had confirmed that the game board itself was actually a precious treasure, and that in the hands of an archaean, it could be unleashed in full! As all creation shook, the Archaean Luminescence slammed into the red sun.

Although the red sun was not completely vanquished, the Archaean Luminescence smashed a huge hole into it!!

Deafening rumbling sounds filled the Eternal Immortal Domains, shaking both the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty alike!

In Saint-Emperor City, the celestials all looked over in the direction of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, completely stunned. After all, the magical technique the Vile-Emperor had just utilized had caused the sun in the sky to fade away. But now, they could sense intense fluctuations filling the world that caused even them to reel in shock.

“That’s… two archaeans fighting!!”

“Heavens, how could this be happening?!?!”

“Who is it…? Who is fighting with the Vile-Emperor!?!?”

Even as Chen Su, Gu Tianjun and the other celestials gave voice to expressions of shock, the Saint-Emperor floated out of his imperial palace and up into the air, looking extremely solemn.

Gu Tianjun and the other celestials were incapable of determining the truth of the situation. But the Saint-Emperor was an archaean, and therefore all he had to do was close his eyes and send his divine sense out… to confirm that it was Bai Xiaochun fighting the Vile-Emperor. Via his augury techniques, he was actually able to observe the fighting directly!

Whether it was the Undying Sovereign’s Fist or the Archaean Luminescence, he could see them all.

“Bai Xiaochun….” he murmured, his heart pounding because of the sovereign aura and the Archaean Luminescence.

“That’s not his own power, though. He’s summoning it to his aid. I doubt he’ll be able to do it more than a few times. After all… it’s an archaean-level attack!” Based on the Saint-Emperor’s judgement, a powerful attack like that could only be unleashed at significant cost!

The Vile-Emperor was thinking exactly the same thing. Although he was definitely shocked that the Archaean Luminescence could cause problems for his red sun, and even punch a hole in it, he still felt confident that not even multiple blasts could do anything more than significantly damage it!

“I refuse to believe that summoned power like that can be utilized a second time, Bai Xiaochun!” Looking very grim, the Vile-Emperor performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger, causing the red sun to accelerate. He was clearly intent on incinerating Bai Xiaochun and everything around him!

However, that was when Bai Xiaochun began to laugh. Blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth, he said, “You think I can’t use it a second time?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1206 awe-chapter-1207

“What makes you think I would run out of Archaean Luminescence so quickly…?” Bai Xiaochun chuckled, his eyes shining with a strange light. He seemed completely confident, almost as if he had forgotten that he actually only had fourteen shots left!

Although he had used one beam to punish Bai Xiaochi, after Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo woke up, his supply had returned to fifteen shots.

And yet, at this moment, he almost seemed to believe that his supply was endless! Facing the Vile-Emperor and his red sun, he waved his hand out in front of him!

“Fear not, Lord Bai has lots of Archaean Luminescence left!” He reached out with divine sense to connect to the fan, whereupon… a second beam of Archaean Luminescence appeared!

But that wasn’t all! A third beam also materialized, both of which contained the battle prowess of an archaean as they shot toward the red sun!

A tremor passed through the Vile-Emperor, and his mind began to spin. Not even he could have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would do something like this, and it immediately caused him to question his previous suppositions.

The two beams of Archaean Luminescence smashed into the red sun, causing shocking vibrations to spread out as two massive craters appeared!

If the Archaean Luminescence could punch a hole into the arm of a sovereign, then obviously it could damage this sun created by the Vile-Emperor!

Although the two craters that resulted did not punch all the way through the sun, they were still shocking!!

Furthermore, the sun shuddered a bit, and both its heat and light were significantly reduced, as well as its speed. At the same time, the backlash caused the Vile-Emperor to actually cough up a mouthful of blood!

“How is this even possible!?!?” the Vile-Emperor thought incredulously, glaring at Bai Xiaochun, his chest heaving.

Although he knew that Bai Xiaochun was the owner of the fan, he still couldn’t imagine how, in only half of a sixty-year-cycle, he could have possibly changed so much!

Before, he had just barely managed to fight back against an illusory attack, and was someone the Vile-Emperor could have killed without expending very much effort.

But now… the Vile-Emperor had to admit that Bai Xiaochun, with his sovereign fist strike, definitely had battle prowess equivalent to a half-archaean!

Of course, the Vile-Emperor could still win against power like that.

But there was more…. Bai Xiaochun had his Archaean Luminescence, which contained the true battle prowess of an archaean. That changed everything, and although the Vile-Emperor didn’t want to admit it, in his gut he knew… that he couldn’t do anything about Bai Xiaochun!!

His only chance would be to pay a huge price and fight a battle to the death. Then he might end up severely wounded, which could be an acceptable outcome if he were the only archaean in the Eternal Immortal Domains. But he wasn’t! The Saint-Emperor would be watching very closely to see how things played out!

Obviously, the Saint-Emperor would love for the Vile-Emperor to pay a steep price to kill Bai Xiaochun. If the Vile-Emperor were severely wounded in the process, then after the dust settled, the Saint-Emperor could swoop in and kill him!

Perhaps the Vile-Emperor might end up escaping, but even if he did, the Saint-Emperor would surely declare all-out war. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty would gain more immortal domains, and the Vile-Emperor would be forced to go into hiding to recover, and would lose the upper hand in the overarching conflict.

Such thoughts ran through his mind in the briefest of moments. And although he wasn’t very pleased about it, he knew that he had to suppress his frustration!

“Dammit! Don’t tell me I just have to let things drop?!” he thought, feeling a bit suffocated. Eyes flickering with cold light, he contemplated whether it might actually be worth it to get injured in order to kill Bai Xiaochun.

“There’s no way he can use that Archaean Luminescence forever. There has to be a limit. In that case… I may be able to figure out a way to kill him without getting hurt, and at the same time, scare the Saint-Emperor enough that he won’t interfere!” Convinced that this was the best way to do things, the Vile-Emperor blurred into motion, his eyes flickering with even more killing intent than before as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. As a result, he began to merge with the red sun!

The fading sun flared back to life! This was the Vile-Emperor’s ultimate state, in which he was the red sun, and the red sun was him!

As he accelerated, blistering heat rippled out, causing the land to wither and the air to distort. Many people screamed in pain as they were instantly transformed into dried-up corpses!

“I'm willing to bet… that you only have a few shots of Archaean Luminescence!” Howling, the Vile-Emperor drew closer and closer to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes narrowed at the sight of the Vile-Emperor’s stubbornness. He knew that he only had twelve shots left, and that he absolutely, positively could not reveal his true limits.

“So,” he said loudly, “you saw through my little ruse. Well done! Hang on for just a bit longer. I won’t try to fool you any longer. This is my last shot!” With that, he pointed up at the sky, causing another beam of Archaean Luminescence to descend. However, he didn’t stop there; he actually summoned a total of five beams!

As one beam after another appeared, the Vile-Emperor’s heart began to pound crazily. Although he was sure that Bai Xiaochun could not use his Archaean Luminescence forever… it almost seemed like he could!

No matter how he analyzed the situation, it seemed completely impossible for Bai Xiaochun to be doing this!!

Even more shocking was how, only a moment later, Bai Xiaochun flicked his sleeve casually, stuck his chin up, and said, “Okay, here comes my last shot!”

Rumbling sounds filled the air as two more beams of Archaean Luminescence materialized. Those two were the straw that broke the camel’s back.

Heart pounding, the Vile-Emperor said, “Just how many do you have?!?!”

If Bai Xiaochun had refused to say anything, it would have been much easier to accept the situation. But considering how he was acting, the Vile-Emperor couldn’t help but be both enraged and confused.

He tried to dodge out of the way, but his red sun form was too large. As the Archaean Luminescence slammed into it, it shuddered violently on the verge of collapse. As for the Vile-Emperor, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he was forced to dispel the sun and fall back in retreat.

He really had no choice. He had been injured several times, and much to his frustration and madness, had no way of knowing how many times Bai Xiaochun could unleash that particular attack.

The Saint-Emperor was watching all of this happen, and was also shocked. At one point, he lifted his foot up as if to spring into action, but then put it back down, unsure of what to do.

Bai Xiaochun, on the other hand, was sighing in relief. He knew that he only had nine shots left, and didn’t want to push things too far. Hovering there in midair, he clasped his hands behind his back, sighed, and said, “I only have one shot left now….”

“One shot my ass!!” the Vile-Emperor shot back. Suddenly spinning in place, he shot back toward Bai Xiaochun, eyes blazing with killing intent!

And yet, even as he closed in, Bai Xiaochun let out a shout, causing one... two... three beams of Archaean Luminescence to descend like lightning bolts!

At that point, all of the Vile-Emperor’s suspicions were blown away. Howling, he fell back, but was still hit by the beams of light. As he was, Bai Xiaochun yet again spoke out in a loud voice, “Okay, I'm really out now....”

“Bai Xiaochun!!” the Vile-Emperor shouted, yet again spinning and heading back aggressively. But that was when... three more beams of Archaean Luminescence fell from the sky!

Blood sprayed out of the Vile-Emperor’s mouth as he threw his head back and roared furiously. At that point, he simply decided to leave, no longer willing to test Bai Xiaochun any longer.

Even as he began to fade away, he heard Bai Xiaochun’s treacherous voice one more time.

“Okay, I'm really out now. Rest at ease....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1207 awe-chapter-1208

Of course, it was another lie…. Bai Xiaochun still had three shots of Archaean Luminescence left.

But the Vile-Emperor didn’t know that. He had been in a passive position from the beginning of the fight, and Bai Xiaochun continued to speak in a way that didn’t make any sense. Instead of holding back, he took the initiative to say how many shots he had left… except that every single time, he said he only had one….

Because of that, the Vile-Emperor had no way to guess at the truth, and no way to tell whether or not he could trust what Bai Xiaochun said….

He would rather die than trust Bai Xiaochun… and yet, if he didn’t trust him, that would mean he believed… that he had plenty more shots left!

And trusting him… would result in the same thing as before, bitter consequences.

Creating frustrating situations like this was truly a specialty of Bai Xiaochun’s, and the Vile-Emperor realized that. It was a simple truth, and unfortunately, was impossible to deal with.

Not even the Saint-Emperor had any clue how many shots of Archaean Luminescence Bai Xiaochun had…. However, similar to the Vile-Emperor, he was sure that there had to be some limit!

And yet neither of the emperors would dare to risk everything to find out the truth. Neither fighting nor probing seemed useful at all, and therefore, they both had to admit… that although the Eternal Immortal Domains did not have another archaean… they did have someone who could fight archaeans!

That person was not an equal, but in terms of battle prowess, needed to be treated like one!

As he faded away, the Vile-Emperor sighed helplessly and cast a deep glance at Bai Xiaochun. Aware that he had lost an immortal domain, he picked up Celestial Virūpākṣa and vanished!!

Megarock City was now in ruins. Of the population of millions, more than half had been killed. Those who had survived were grateful to have come out alive, but were also filled with bitterness and anger that defied description.

Their bitterness was because of how they had been abandoned by the Vile-Emperor, and their rage was because their emperor hadn’t cared at all about whether they lived or died. If Bai Xiaochun hadn't been able to defeat the red sun from earlier, then everyone would have been killed.

It was hard to say who did it first, but one by one, they began to drop to their knees and kowtow to Bai Xiaochun, who hovered above them in the air.

“Greetings, Emperor Heavenspan!”

“Greetings, Emperor Heavenspan!!” In the Eternal Immortal Domains, archaeans were always viewed as emperors, and would be addressed as such!

Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t actually in the Archaean Realm, he had fought the Vile-Emperor to a standstill, and therefore, for all intents and purposes, he was an archaean.

And thus, his form of address changed from King Heavenspan to… Emperor Heavenspan!!

There were still Heavenspan Realm cultivators hidden in the crowd, and those who had survived the Vile-Emperor’s red sun attack were filled with indescribable excitement. As of this moment, they finally dared to reveal who they were. Stepping out into the open, they offered worship that was different from the other cultivators around them. From the bottoms of their hearts, they completely approved of Bai Xiaochun!!

The Eternal Lands had five immortal domains, and now… one of them belonged to Bai Xiaochun!

It was a monumental affair that instantly became the talk of the entire world. In both the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, everyone was shaken by the seemingly impossible news that was shortly proven to be completely accurate!

“King Heavenspan Bai Xiaochun… fought the Vile-Emperor, and they ended in a tie!?!?”

“Heavens! How is that even possible…? King Heavenspan…. Wait, he should be called Emperor Heavenspan, shouldn’t he…? He’s an archaean now!!”

“For the first time in years and years, the Eternal Immortal Domains has three archaeans!!”

“So it's Bai Xiaochun…. If I remember correctly, it was only thirty years ago that he was a celestial! And now he’s an unsurpassable archaean!?!?”

“Perhaps it’s just fate. Years ago, the Saint-Ancestor founded the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and became an archaean. It was the same with the Vile-Ancestor. And now the Arch-Ancestor has done the same thing. It took a while… but he's finally an archaean!!”

All sorts of talk spread through the lands. Especially shocked were the celestials, and the other local cultivators who had come to know Bai Xiaochun personally.

Gu Tianjun gasped, and all of the ill will he had previously harbored toward Bai Xiaochun immediately transformed into fear.

Celestial Aged Spirit, Chen Su, and Sima Yunhua were all stunned…. As for the celestials from the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, such as the resurrected Deadfall, and Virūpākṣa… they were more terrified of Bai Xiaochun than they had been before.

Meanwhile, the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm, who had spent so many years of bitterness in the Eternal Immortal Domains, were finally able to throw their heads back and roar with exultation. They knew that, at long last… they had a true foothold within the Eternal Immortal Domains!!

As all of this happened, a person appeared outside of Saint-Emperor City!

He was young, clad in a white robe, with fair skin and an abstruse gleam in his eyes. After appearing in the air above the imperial palace, he alighted onto one of the petals of the lotus flower and looked out at the city.

He was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

Within the entire city, only one person and one animal knew that he had arrived!

The person was the Saint-Emperor!

And the animal was the little turtle!

Before the little turtle could go to him, Bai Xiaochun spoke in a voice that only he could hear, prompting a cold snort. Afterward, the little turtle simply remained in place.

When the Saint-Emperor saw that, he breathed a sigh of relief. Mixed emotions on his face, he shook his head and hurried out of the imperial palace to appear next to Bai Xiaochun.

“Hello, Saint-Emperor,” Bai Xiaochun said, turning around, a smile on his face.

After looking Bai Xiaochun up and down, the Saint-Emperor put on an equally bright smile, and said, “Hello, Emperor Heavenspan!”

With that, the two of them began to have a nice conversation.

“Fellow Daoist Bai, I knew from the moment I first laid eyes on you that you were an extraordinary person. Hahaha! It turns out I was right all along. You are… the third archaean in the Eternal Immortal Domains!”

“You’re laying it on a bit thick, Saint-Emperor,” Bai Xiaochun said, sounding very humble. “I’m not an archaean.” Inwardly, he was thinking back to how things had gone when he had first arrived in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

The Saint-Emperor chuckled. “As far as I'm concerned, you’re an archaean!” With that, the two of them began to reminisce about past times. Neither mentioned Bai Xiaochun’s purpose for coming to visit. Eventually, both of them revealed their auras, whereupon… the celestials of the Saint-Emperor realized what was happening. Shaken, they headed over to the imperial palace, where they saw Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor on the lotus leaf, talking. Everyone, from Chen Su to Gu Tianjun to Sima Yunhua, were completely shaken.

That was especially true considering… that Bai Xiaochun didn’t seem to be even a little bit weaker than the Saint-Emperor. It was like they were complete equals!

Gu Tianjun immediately clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Greetings Saint-Emperor, Emperor Heavenspan!”

Sima Yunhua and Chen Su were shaken, and quickly offered formal greetings as well. Sima Yunhua was feeling particularly excited. He had developed a nice relationship with Bai Xiaochun, which meant that he now had two archaean emperors to rely on.

After Gu Tianjun and the others fell into ranks, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor talked for a bit longer. Finally, the Saint-Emperor smiled and said, “Bai, old pal, we were friends at first sight, right? Destined to be close. Therefore… why don’t we become sworn brothers?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1208 awe-chapter-1209

Bai Xiaochun didn’t so much as blink. Almost as soon as the words left the Saint-Emperor’s mouth, he excitedly took two steps forward, clasped hands and bowed.

“Big Bro!” he said, his voice seemingly quivering with emotion, as though he were worried he might not sound sincere enough. Of course, to the other celestials, it seemed blatantly melodramatic….

Before any of them could even begin to feel derision, though, the Saint-Emperor, who didn’t seem to have noticed anything overtly melodramatic, also bowed in excitement.

Eyes sparkling, he laughed and said, “Second Bro!!”

The Saint-Emperor actually spoke in even more melodramatic fashion than Bai Xiaochun. Upon seeing this, Bai Xiaochun was a bit disgruntled. Not wanting to be outdone, he took a deep breath and then spoke in the loudest and most sincere voice he could possibly achieve.

“Big Bro!”

“Second Bro!” the Saint-Emperor replied, sounding completely delighted. The two of them looked at each other, and then burst out laughing.

As for the celestials present, strange feelings rose up in their hearts, and they felt goosebumps spreading out all over them as they exchanged awkward glances, then quickly looked away from each other….

Although they had seen hypocrites before, nothing they had ever seen came close to Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor in this moment.

As the Saint-Emperor and Bai Xiaochun laughed together, both of their minds were racing at top speed. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were narrowed, making him look very much like a crafty young fox. Meanwhile, the Saint-Emperor’s eyes glittered like that of a crafty old fox. Of course, the Saint-Emperor had known all along why Bai Xiaochun came. Perhaps if he hadn’t fought with the Vile-Emperor, and revealed his archaean-level battle prowess, then the Saint-Emperor would never have mentioned the subject of becoming sworn brothers.

But Bai Xiaochun was growing stronger at a breathtaking rate. That, coupled with his Archaean Luminescence, ensured that the Saint-Emperor took him very seriously, and viewed him as being on a completely different level than before.

Furthermore, he had an inkling of how Bai Xiaochun was accomplishing all of this.

He had been suspicious all along, just like the Vile-Emperor. And as of now, he was absolutely certain… that Bai Xiaochun had taken the sovereign-level damaged fan for his own!

Only by possessing a legacy precious treasure like that could he possibly become so strong so quickly.

Before the battle with the Vile-Emperor, the Saint-Emperor might have made a move on him to try to take the fan for himself. But now that Bai Xiaochun had proven to have archaean-level battle prowess, and also had all of the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm ready to fight for him, the Saint-Emperor’s attitude naturally changed.

One important factor was that Bai Xiaochun had come in person to visit. Another was Bai Xiaochun’s confidence, which made his command over the Archaean Luminescence even more mysterious and unfathomable.

Also, the fact that Bai Xiaochun hadn’t come with any clear demands meant… that he was interested in an alliance!

Some matters didn’t require discussion or negotiation. Both Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor realized that if they entered into an alliance, it would be a heavy blow to the Vile-Emperor and his dynasty. In fact, it would be just about the most serious catastrophe possible, short of killing the Vile-Emperor himself!

It would change the entire political structure of the world! Another major factor for the Saint-Emperor to consider was that… rivalries never last forever. If he refused to join forces with Bai Xiaochun, it was entirely possible that Bai Xiaochun would eventually be able to resolve his issues with the Vile-Emperor, and ally with him instead!

“Second Bro, now that we’ve become sworn brothers, it's only appropriate that I, the elder brother, give the northern regions of my second immortal domain to you!” With a chuckle and the wave of his hand, he offered up the barren and infertile north as a gift to Bai Xiaochun. Of course, it had already belonged to Bai Xiaochun to begin with.

As for Bai Xiaochun’s response, it seemed like complete and utter hogwash to Gu Tianjun and the other celestials….

“Big Bro, now that we’re allies, you can rest at ease. As long as the north is under my command, the armies of the Vile-

Emperor Dynasty will never be able to get past me!”

After all, if Bai Xiaochun occupied the north, then he would control nearly half of that entire immortal domain. And if the Vile-Emperor Dynasty took over that area to get to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, then it would mean that Bai Xiaochun had been completely wiped out.

The Saint-Emperor chuckled loudly as they sealed the agreement. At that point, the Saint-Emperor threw a banquet for Bai Xiaochun.

After Bai Xiaochun left, the smile immediately vanished from the Saint-Emperor’s face, to be replaced by a frown. However, the frown faded away after a moment, as he realized that this alliance with Bai Xiaochun was a good thing for him.

All he had lost was the north of his second immortal domain, which was an infertile place that had once belonged to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Bai Xiaochun had eventually taken it back, giving the Vile-Emperor Dynasty two and a half immortal domains, and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty two and a half. However, the north was still of little value or interest to the Saint-Emperor.

To give up something worthless to get an alliance was not quite taking advantage, but was definitely worth it. Now that Bai Xiaochun was back, the Saint-Emperor controlled one full immortal domain, and two half-portions.

In the end, it was back to the status quo.

Of course, the Vile-Emperor Dynasty had it much worse…. Bai Xiaochun’s visit there had ended with him taking away an entire immortal domain….

And thus, the landscape of the five immortal domains of the Eternal Lands experienced a drastic change!

The Vile-Emperor Dynasty now only controlled one and a half immortal domains, and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty stayed the same as before, with two. That change instantly propelled the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to much higher heights!

The final one and a half immortal domains went to Bai Xiaochun.

After taking everything into consideration, the Saint-Emperor smiled and decided to make the biggest show possible of his magnanimity and good faith. Therefore, he made an official decree stating that anyone from the Heavenspan Realm who was living in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty was free to stay or leave at their own discretion!

That led to quite a bit of excitement among the Heavenspan Realm cultivators in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Almost immediately, they began to flock to what had long since become a holy land to them!

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun, who had just left the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, called upon his connection to the Greatsword of the North to determine its general location. Then, he sped out over the waters of the Eternal Sea before diving down into its depths.

After sending out his divine sense, he soon located… a huge sword!

It was none other than the Greatsword of the North!

As soon as his divine sense locked onto it, it stirred for the first time in many years. Rumbling sounds echoed out as it shot toward him, and he grabbed it. Even as he flew up out of the sea, he sent some divine sense into the world inside of the sword!

There, he caught sight of Li Qinghou, Patriarch Spirit Stream, the Giant Ghost King, the Grand Heavenmaster, and many other familiar faces. Heaving a sigh of relief, he began to laugh heartily.

At the same time, everyone within the world of the sword looked up in astonishment.

“Xiaochun!!”

“Our exalted leader!!”

“That’s the aura of the Arch-Ancestor!!”

A moment later, Bai Xiaochun’s excited voice rang out to fill the world of the sword.

“I'm back!!”

As many exclamations of delight rang out, Bai Xiaochun returned to the immortal domain he controlled and began to teleport hundreds of thousands of people out of the sword. Soon, quite a buzz of activity was underway.

Whether it was the Grand Heavenmaster or Patriarch Spirit Stream, all had played a part in the events which led up to the current situation. Therefore, when they heard from Bai Xiaochun what had occurred, they were all very excited.

There was no need for Bai Xiaochun to do anything. The Grand Heavenmaster immediately took leadership of the immortal domain, and Patriarch Spirit Stream set to work reestablishing the River-Defying Sect!

Time passed, and more cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm left the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and headed to reunite with their people.

Some appeared who had never been seen up to this point…. for example, the Nine Serenities King, Spirit Advent King and War Champion King from the old Wildlands!

There were also the former apprentices of Daoist Heavenspan, the demigods from the north and east, who were of equal ranking to the heavenly kings!

Unlike some of the others, the northern demigod had hesitated long and hard before making his decision. After all, he had treated Bai Xiaochun quite impolitely in the past. In the end, when he saw how amazing everything was going, he finally made his decision, and cautiously went to Bai Xiaochun.

All things were progressing wonderfully!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1209 awe-chapter-1210

It would not be correct to use the idiom *every day sees new developments* to describe what was happening within the Heavenspan Realm’s one and a half immortal domains. And that would be because the events taking place surpassed anything that idiom could describe.

The population included the hundreds of thousands of cultivators who had formerly been living in the Greatsword of the North, as well as the original population of the immortal domain, whom the Vile-Emperor had treated with such ruthless coldness. With all of those people present, things were in a constant state of change for the people of the dynasty!

Old mountains were leveled, and new mountain ranges rose up. And in accord with the plan laid forth by the Grand Heavenmaster, construction began on a centrally located city that, although it was not publicly announced, everyone knew was the future… imperial city!!

Within that city, a large group of cultivators was currently working on a huge statue that depicted Bai Xiaochun, wearing imperial robes and an imperial crown!

More Heavenspan cultivators streamed in from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty on a daily basis,

all of them completely focused… on the new imperial dynasty that was rising to prominence!

In contrast to how everyone else was buzzing with activity, Bai Xiaochun had little to do. He had already brought Song

Junwan and Zhou Zimo back from the treasured fan, who were treated like the ultimate royalty as soon as they appeared. The Giant Ghost King, the Grand Heavenmaster, Li Qinghou, Patriarch Spirit Stream, and other members of the senior generation immediately took to caring for them with the utmost consideration. A host of servants was also assigned to care for their needs.

In many ways, the two of them were treated even better than Bai Xiaochun was.

Bai Xiaochun could only sigh wistfully in response to how much the old-timers seemed to favor the unborn children inside of Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo.

“They’re just kids,” he thought, “and I’m their dad. So I can’t get jealous!” Feeling a bit miffed, but aware that he shouldn't be competing with his own children, he shook his head and left with Bruiser, who was feeling just as bored as he was. They toured the immortal domains they controlled, and could see how excited everyone was as they went about their work. He even tried to help out on a few occasions, but whenever people saw him, they would immediately start bowing and scraping.

Eventually, the Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King asked him to stop making such public appearances, worried that it would negatively influence all of the construction and renovation work….

And yet… despite how well the wily Grand Heavenmaster understood Bai Xiaochun, in this situation, he made an error in judgement…. Bai Xiaochun was now in the late Celestial Realm, and had archaean-level battle prowess, but the truth was that deep in his bones… he was still the same person he had been in the Spirit Stream Sect, who loved to be the center of adoration.

And thus… no amount of persuasion on the Grand Heavenmaster’s part could convince Bai Xiaochun to stay out of the public eye. He chuckled and agreed at first, but as soon as no one was looking, he would clear his throat and go for a stroll.

Cries of adoration could be heard wherever he went. And whatever area he stayed in for too long would immediately suffer a lag in efficiency.

In the end, it was Li Qinghou who came to the rescue. He understood Bai Xiaochun the most, and he was also the one who Bai Xiaochun respected the most. Bai Xiaochun could be evasive with just about anyone, but not with Li Qinghou….

After the case was made, Bai Xiaochun said, “Ah, whatever. I guess I don’t need to take walks after all.”

Having nothing else to do, he took Bruiser to a relatively remote area in the hopes of relaxing a bit. Unfortunately… Bruiser was quite charmed by the various creatures that inhabited the Eternal Immortal Domains. Earlier, he had been too occupied with protecting Song Junwan, and hadn’t dared to accumulate an army of Daoist partners…. But now that he had nothing else to do, he managed to slip away from Bai Xiaochun, and get to work.

That got Bai Xiaochun feeling even more down. Eventually, he found himself all alone in the grand hall of Megarock City, as bored as one could be. Just when he was considering going back to the treasured fan, he suddenly felt his bag of holding vibrating.

Shocked, he scanned it with divine sense, and then pulled out a transmission jade slip. Moments later, a familiar voice echoed in his mind.

“Help me, Bai Xiaochun!!”

As soon as he heard the voice, he shivered and rose to his feet. That voice belonged to none other than… Gongsun Wan’er!!

“What’s wrong? Where are you?!”

Not only did he owe her a big favor, there had always been something vaguely romantic to their dealings. Therefore, as soon as he heard her voice, he started to get nervous.

“The Vile-Emperor is trying to kill me! He--” Her voice was suddenly cut off, causing Bai Xiaochun’s breath to catch in his throat. Without any hesitation, he vanished, reappearing up in the sky, where he sent his divine sense spreading out in all directions.

“Transmission jade slips have limited range. At most, they might be able to cover two immortal domains! If the Vile-Emperor’s going to make a move, then… it must be in that direction!” His flashing eyes did not focus on the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. After his previous fight with the Vile-Emperor, he had attempted to locate Gongsun Wan’er during his search for the Greatsword of the North, but she hadn’t responded to any of his messages.

At the time, it had seemed unlikely that she would be in hiding in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. After all, if the Vile-Emperor discovered her, it would be difficult for her to escape.

Neither would she hide in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. That meant that the most likely location of her hiding place was the Eternal Sea.

However, he didn’t have much more to work with than that. Moving at top speed, he headed toward the Eternal Sea, sending his divine sense out to search for any relevant fluctuations.

If an archaean was attacking someone, there would definitely be evidence!

Sure enough, after enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he detected powerful fluctuations from a certain location in the Eternal Sea. They were fluctuations he was familiar with… they belonged to the Vile-Emperor!

“How dare you, Vile-Emperor!” Eyes bloodshot, he unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, causing heaven and earth to tremble as he sent a message to the Saint-Emperor. Then, he rocketed forward with all the speed he could muster!

The Vile-Emperor hovered over a certain location in the Eternal Sea, his facial expression grim, and his eyes as cold as ice. Anxious, he looked down at the waters below as he waved his right hand, causing the water to begin to swirl into a vortex.

At the depths of the vortex was a sphere of water covered with magical symbols, within which Gongsun Wan’er sat cross-legged, her expression that of terror and despair.

“I’m not going to kill you, Ghostmother. I’ll just suppress your soulclone and allow your true soul to awaken!” The Vile-Emperor had lost too many celestials recently, and in his anxiety, had used a secret magic to locate Gongsun Wan’er’s hiding place.

Never could he have guessed that in the years Gongsun Wan’er had spent hiding, she had been building up a powerful spell formation around her, a formation powered by half of a sixty-year-cycle’s worth of time. Although it could not hold out against archaean-level power forever, it was strong, and would last for at least half an incense stick’s worth of time.

Because of that, the Vile-Emperor was not able to snatch her. It was also how she had enough time to send a message to Bai Xiaochun. When the Vile-Emperor realized what she had done, his expression flickered with rage.

“If I can’t capture you alive, then I’ll just kill you. Afterward, I’ll use your Daoseed to resurrect you back in my imperial palace!” Snorting coldly, he thrust his hand out, summoning an enormous hand that shot down in the direction of the sphere of water that protected the despairing Gongsun Wan’er!

As it descended, the water below began to sink down in the shape of a hand!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1210 awe-chapter-1211

Bai Xiaochun was some distance away, and still needed at least an incense stick's worth of time to reach his destination. With how things looked, he didn't have enough time to come to Gongsun Wan'er's rescue!

However… in the same moment that the Vile-Emperor's hand began to descend, a boom rang out that seemed capable of splitting the sky. Massive waves surged across the surface of the sea, and at the same time, the hand-shaped depression in the water began to fill in!!

Shockingly… an enormous hand formed from water was rising up from the sea!

After filling in the hand-shaped depression, it rose up into the air to meet the descending palm strike from the Vile-Emperor!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

A deafening explosion filled the air as both the sky and the land vibrated violently.

“Saint-Emperor!!” The Vile-Emperor glared down at the Eternal Sea as a semi-translucent figure appeared, which radiated an archaean aura. It was none other than the Saint-Emperor!

However, he had not come as his true self, but rather, in the form of a clone projection!

“Why this ruthless killing, Vile-Emperor?” he asked, a faint smile visible on his lips. “Gongsun Wan'er is a dear friend of my Second Bro. Before attempting to harm her, you should really take his feelings into consideration." The Saint-Emperor had come in response to Bai Xiaochun's frantic message. He had immediately realized that this was a good opportunity to earn a favor, and had thus sent a clone projection to handle the situation.

From what he could tell, all he needed to do was buy an incense stick's worth of time. A clone projection would obviously be no match for the Vile-Emperor, but in terms of buying time, it should do the trick.

Meanwhile, Gongsun Wan'er sat within her sphere of water, face pale, but glad to still be alive. She had been hiding in the Eternal Sea for a long time, keeping her aura completely concealed. After sensing that someone had taken the Greatsword of the North, she cautiously began to gather information about what was going on in the outside world. She had been excited to find out that Bai Xiaochun had returned, and was just preparing to go find him when the Vile-Emperor made his move!

Moments ago, she had been facing certain death, only to have a new chance at life. Looking over at the Saint-Emperor, she thought back to the rumors she had come across that he and Bai Xiaochun had become sworn brothers.

Currently, waves were still rolling out across the sea from the interchange between the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor. As for the Vile-Emperor, his expression couldn't have been grimmer. He had made two big errors in judgement recently, the first being about Bai Xiaochun and his level of power, and the second being about Gongsun Wan'er and her level of preparation. If she didn't have her spell formation and its sphere of water, and if the Saint-

Emperor hadn’t interfered, then he would already have her in his hands.

Not only would that have given him something to threaten Bai Xiaochun with, but it would also have helped with his current lack of celestials.

But now, everything was going awry, and he only had two choices. He could storm off, or… he could fight with Bai Xiaochun again, and perhaps see how much Archaean Luminescence he really had at his disposal. If he won that fight, then he could turn the tables once again.

In fact, he was fairly certain that the Saint-Emperor had not sent his true self was because he also wanted to test Bai Xiaochun out. He also wanted to see how many shots of Archaean Luminescence Bai Xiaochun had!

“Wily old fox! He’s also on guard against Bai Xiaochun, and he’s using me to try to see how far Bai Xiaochun can go. That way, he’ll have a better idea of what the two of them can do together.

“Of course, if Bai Xiaochun proves to be too weak, then he’ll probably come over as his true self to help before he gets killed!” Eyes narrowing, he looked at the Saint-Emperor and snorted coldly.

“I have a third option!” he thought, hovering there in the air and refraining from taking any action. When the Saint-Emperor’s clone saw that, his eyes glittered. He could guess what the Vile-Emperor was planning to do, and as a result, began to curse him inwardly.

The two archaeans didn’t need to wait for long. Soon, screaming whistling sounds echoed out as a beam of light shot into the air, causing the water and the air alike to ripple and distort.

“Still have your Archaean Luminescence, Bai Xiaochun?!” the Vile-Emperor said, his eyes flashing. Even as Bai Xiaochun was still approaching, he performed an incantation gesture and pointed at him. Yet again, his red sun appeared, sending out dazzling light and an archaean aura. It also caused an intense heat wave to surge in Bai Xiaochun’s direction!

“I have one last shot!” Bai Xiaochun shouted in response. Pointing up at the sky, he summoned his thirteenth shot of Archaean Luminescence, which shot forth and pierced a huge hole through the burning, red sun.

Bai Xiaochun shot through the hole and then waved his hand again, summoning another beam of Archaean Luminescence, which blasted the sun another time.

The two beams of Archaean Luminescence had already destabilized the Vile-Emperor’s aura, and as for his red sun, it still hadn't recovered from the previous battle, and was now in even worse shape.

Then the backlash hit the Vile-Emperor, causing intense pain to grip his chest as he staggered backward.

That was when Bai Xiaochun shouted, “I have one last shot!”

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Bai Xiaochun’s actual final shot of Archaean Luminescence materialized, heading directly toward the visibly shocked Vile-Emperor. He quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then shoved his hands out to defend himself against the Archaean Luminescence. The collision caused blood to ooze out of the corners of his mouth as he was once again shoved backward across the battlefield.

There was a method to Bai Xiaochun’s madness. He had carefully calculated the ground he could cover with three successive attacks, and as of this moment, had reached Gongsun Wan’er.

Gongsun Wan’er breathed a sigh of relief; the despair she had felt before was now gone. However, she had overdrawn her own energy to keep her spell formation going, and now was hit by a mountain-toppling, sea-draining feeling of exhaustion. She managed to force out a smile for Bai Xiaochun, then coughed up a mouthful of blood and lapsed into unconsciousness.

As the water sphere collapsed, Bai Xiaochun reached out and wrapped his arm around her waist. Then, he looked up and pointed at the Vile-Emperor. Expression twisted with rage and eyes as cold as ice, he said, “Big Bro Saint-Emperor, why don’t you send your true self here, and the two of us can crush the Vile-Emperor once and for all! I still have a hundred shots of Archaean Luminescence left. That should be more than enough to win the fight!”

In response to Bai Xiaochun’s boldly spoken words, the Saint-Emperor’s clone projection looked on with flickering eyes.

As for the Vile-Emperor, his heart was starting to pound. He didn’t believe that Bai Xiaochun could possibly have a hundred shots of Archaean Luminescence. However, he remembered that he had already used a dozen or so, and moments ago had casually used three more shots, just to save a friend.... It was an overbearing action that finally caused the Vile-Emperor to start questioning his judgement of the matter.

In the end, he sighed inwardly. He knew that he had lost the advantage. Bai Xiaochun had become powerful, and was now allied with the Saint-Emperor. The Vile-Emperor finally feared him, and had no desire to test the limits of his power out.

Not wanting to give the Saint-Emperor any chance to agree to what Bai Xiaochun had just proposed, he unhesitatingly said, “Take Gongsun Wan’er with you, Bai Xiaochun. And I’ll release all of the Heavenspan Realm cultivators I have imprisoned in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. In fact, I’ll also acknowledge the legitimacy of the Heavenspan Realm’s place in the Eternal Lands, and will allow any Heavenspan Realm cultivators who have set down roots in my lands to leave if they wish!

“But in return… I demand that you return Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer to me!”

Bai Xiaochun was starting to get nervous. On the one hand, he really was out of Archaean Luminescence, and given the Vile-Emperor’s personality, if he agreed too quickly, the man would surely start to get suspicious. And Bai Xiaochun had already guessed at what the Saint-Emperor was doing.

However, he didn't let any of that show on his face. In response to the Vile-Emperor’s proposed compromise, he simply snorted coldly and then reached up as if to release another shot of Archaean Luminescence.

“Well, Big Bro? Do we fight him, or not? It's up to you!”

Although he seemed to be pulsing with veins of steel, the truth was that he was more nervous than ever.

“You’d be an idiot to agree to fight him, Saint-Emperor!” he thought. “If you do, then you can’t blame me for screwing you over!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1211 awe-chapter-1212

The Saint-Emperor hesitated, and the Vile-Emperor sucked in a breath, eyes flickering with cold light as he waved his hand to summon his damaged red sun.

He also stretched his left hand out in the direction of Vile-Emperor City, which caused the huge trident that the city was built on to begin to tremble, as though it might fly out of the ground at any moment!

At the same time, the trident began to pulse with a murderous aura so powerful that it was even detectable this far away on the Eternal Sea!

“Saint-Emperor. Bai Xiaochun. There’s no way the two of you can team up to kill me, not unless one of you is willing to die in the process!

“Without that mindset, then maybe you’ll beat me, and maybe even take the Vile-Emperor Dynasty away from me. However, without a dynasty to worry about, I would be even more terrifying than before!” His voice was so cold that it caused the air to freeze, and ice to spread out over the surface of the sea.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but marvel at how impressive the Vile-Emperor sounded. However, all he did was frown thoughtfully, and then look over at the Saint-Emperor.

The Saint-Emperor sighed, aware that this was not a fight he could win. First of all, he didn’t believe at all that Bai Xiaochun had a hundred shots of Archaean Luminescence at his disposal. Secondly, he didn’t want to have a complete falling out with the Vile-Emperor right now.

In terms of the balance of power, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty now had the most territory, and after all the years that had passed, was no longer the weakest party. The Saint-Emperor now benefited from more Willpower, and the Vile-Emperor had suffered a significant loss of territory, and thus, overall power. But because there were now three power structures, such changes didn’t justify making any drastic decisions.

Therefore, at the moment, maintaining the status quo would be the most beneficial thing to the Saint-Emperor. Chuckling, he said, “Second Bro, you’ve just established your own dynasty. Now isn’t the time for war. The Heavenspan Realm cultivators in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty have been waiting for a moment like this for a long time! I know what you’re thinking, so how could I allow you to undergo any hardship? Fine, fine. Listen, why don’t the three of us reach an agreement right here and now!

“For the next thousand years, we’ll all agree to refrain from going to war!

“What do you think, Vile-Emperor?” With that, the Saint-Emperor looked over at the Vile-Emperor.

The Vile-Emperor snorted in his heart, well aware that the Saint-Emperor was just doing what he could to maintain the current political situation for as long as possible. Although the Vile-Emperor wasn't inclined to agree, after a moment of thought, his eyes glittered, and he nodded. Then he looked back at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were narrowed, but inwardly, he was breathing a sigh of relief. He had also hoped to keep the status quo. Besides, he was out of Archaean Luminescence, and wouldn’t get it back until the following year. If fighting broke out now, that point would become obvious….

By this point, both the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor were looking at him. Letting out a dramatic snort, he agreed to the proposal. With that, the three parties turned to leave; later on, they would have their subordinates take care of all the details of the truce.

As the other two emperors left, Bai Xiaochun breathed a long sigh of relief, and resolved to avoid dangerous situations like this in the future.

“Too dangerous. But also so exciting….” On the one hand, he was questioning what he had done. But on the other hand, he knew that without the threat he had made with his three shots of Archaean Luminescence, the Vile-Emperor would definitely have made another opportunity to test him out.

And if the Vile-Emperor hadn’t done it, then the Saint-Emperor would have. By taking the initiative, he had made his act more convincing, and the threat weightier.

“Ten more months…. During that time, I can’t cause any problems.” With that, he headed back toward his immortal domain, holding Gongsun Wan’er in one arm as he flew along.

At a certain point, he couldn’t help but look down at her. She was so bewitchingly enchanting, especially the delectable curves which existed below her waist. The sight instantly caused him to think back to what it had felt like to spank her….

“I really feel like spanking her again….” he thought, blinking a few times. “Hold on. No. I have the same standing as the

Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor now! If I did something like that in a situation like this, it would be too embarrassing if people found out!” He shook his head vehemently.

“But if I don’t spank her now, then when I get back to my immortal domain, Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo will be there… and I’ll have lost my chance…. One quick spank shouldn’t matter….” After some more thought, he decided to throw caution to the wind. After all, considering the relationship between him and Gongsun Wan’er, a quick spank wouldn’t hurt anything.

Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best idea, he lifted his left hand and quickly spanked her, causing a melodious smacking sound to echo out. It definitely felt just as wonderful as last time…. However, at some unexpected point, Gongsun Wan’er opened her eyes and looked up at him icily.

He was completely taken aback, and also feeling a bit guilty, but reacted smoothly. “Uh… you had a bug on you….”

She snorted coldly.

“Then why haven’t you taken your hand off me yet?”

At that point, Bai Xiaochun realized that his hand was still resting on her rear end. Clearing his throat, he pulled it back and shook it off.

“It was a really big bug, and very lucky to have gotten away.”

Pretending not to have heard that last part, Gongsun Wan’er separated from him and began to fly along on her own. She also patted her bag of holding, causing Hou Xiaomei to fly out.

Gongsun Wan’er had been taking care of Hou Xiaomei for years now. Back when she had first begun her life as a fugitive, she had put Hou Xiaomei into her bag of holding. Now that things were safe again, the first thing she did was bring her back out into the open. From that, it was possible to see how much she cared for her apprentice.

“Big Bro Xiaochun!” Hou Xiaomei said, visibly excited. Eyes sparkling with tears of joy, she leaped forward and embraced him.

Bai Xiaochun was delighted, and immediately wrapped his hands around her supple waist. And then, they slowly began to move down…. At that point, Gongsun Wan’er snorted coldly.

“See another bug?!”

Bai Xiaochun’s hand froze in place. As for Hou Xiaomei, a quizzical expression appeared on her face, and she looked over her shoulder and down her back.

“A bug?”

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun quickly changed the subject, and explained to Hou Xiaomei and Gongsun Wan’er what had gone on after his return. As for Gongsun Wan’er, she did nothing to cover up what she was thinking. From the way her eyes glittered when she looked at Bai Xiaochun, it was possible to see that she felt quite differently about him now than she had before.

And thus, the three drew closer and closer to the immortal domain that was now home. As Hou Xiaomei chatted and laughed, Bai Xiaochun gradually began to calm down from the tense moment earlier, and soon a smile covered his face. It almost felt like he was back in the Heavenspan Realm.

However, the wonderful scene soon came to an end…. After reaching the immortal domain, Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo were both there waiting for him, their eyes flickering with cold light. Bai Xiaochun’s heart immediately began to race.

“Well, if it isn’t Xiaomei,” Song Junwan said, smiling. Next to her, Zhou Zimo said nothing. She simply frowned and rubbed her belly.

Both of them had been quite anxious when Bai Xiaochun had suddenly rushed off. Now, he returned with two women, one of them a childhood friend, and the other dark and mysterious. It was also obvious that they were a Master and apprentice, leading Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo to dislike them even more.

Hou Xiaomei was visibly taken aback. She looked at the swollen bellies of Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, and then at Bai Xiaochun standing there awkwardly. At that point, she started to get angry.

Just as Bai Xiaochun's hair was starting to stand on end from the looks he was getting from the three women, the Grand Heavenmaster, who was also present, cleared his throat and stepped forward. Clasping hands, he bowed to Gongsun Wan’er.

“Greetings, Celestial!” he said. “It is a great honor to have you as part of our nation. Henceforth, no one will ever dare to say that the Heavenspan Realm doesn’t have a second celestial!” The Grand Heavenmaster’s words were very well spoken, and Bai Xiaochun was very grateful. Since the topic of the conversation had been changed, he took advantage of the moment to introduce Gongsun Wan’er to everyone.

Then he came up with an excuse to excuse himself, his spine still tingling from the glares he had been subject to moments ago.

“Heavens! I can’t believe they were looking at me with killing intent.... What am I supposed to do now...?” After returning to his private chamber, he sat down cross-legged and sighed.

“It’s all my fault. Ai. Oh, God, please tell me... why did you make me so outstanding?!

“Do you know how annoying it is to have been made so incredible by you?” Looking very downtrodden, he patted his bag of holding to produce his precious collection of love letters....

“I'm like a prisoner nowadays.” Although he sighed, he couldn’t cover up the proud look that gleamed in his eyes.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1212 awe-chapter-1213

No one knew how frustrating life was for Bai Xiaochun. After all, his existence was one of even more leisure than before. Whether it was the construction of the imperial city, or the various arrangements with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, it was all handled by subordinates.

After the bedraggled Prince Ur-Demon and Reverend Devourer were released and sent back to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, an even greater influx of Heavenspan Realm cultivators arrived.

The Heavenspan Realm’s immortal domain was becoming a very busy and bustling place. Cities were popping up left and right, and mountain ranges were being raised up everywhere to create defensive borders.

Bai Xiaochun wanted to go talk things over with Hou Xiaomei, but she was being watched like a hawk by Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, and had been assigned a whole retinue of servants by the Grand Heavenmaster, who treated her like an official imperial concubine. Unfortunately, she was a lot less free than when she had been with Gongsun Wan’er.

Hou Xiaomei was not very happy with how things were going, and that was made worse by the bellies of Zhou Zimo and Song Junwan. Therefore, she intentionally ignored Bai Xiaochun, and continued to try to come up with a plan about what to do.

When Bai Xiaochun realized that Hou Xiaomei was avoiding him, he went to Gongsun Wan’er to ask her for her opinion. But Gongsun Wan’er was a celestial, a lofty status that required a certain level of decorum. Furthermore, she had been severely injured recently, and had already gone into secluded meditation.

“It’s definitely better to have only one wife!” Bai Xiaochun thought, sighing bitterly. The entire immortal domain was abuzz with activity, with the exception of Bai Xiaochun himself, who sat alone in his grand hall, sighing.

Thankfully, things didn’t stay like that for long. A month later, as the population continued to rise, the imperial city was finally finished!

It was a grand and magnificent location, which from a distance appeared to be like nine mountain ranges all meeting together in a central location! In the spot where they joined together, there was a huge statue.

The statue depicted Bai Xiaochun, wearing imperial robes. In his left hand, he held an enormous city, and in his right hand was a gigantic globe of water!

That was no ordinary water; it was water from the Eternal Sea!

And yet, that counted for almost nothing compared to what the Grand Heavenmaster and other powerful members of the senior generation had done. They had scoured all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, including the sea itself and the Eternal Island, to find the bits of rubble and rocks that were actually the flesh and blood of the first generation Arch-Emperor, whose body had exploded when the original Heavenspan Realm was destroyed! It was all an effort to commemorate that first generation Arch-Emperor!

Although they couldn’t find every last bit of rubble, they found quite a bit, all of which became part of the huge statue of Bai Xiaochun. As a result, that statue had strange and wondrous powers!

Anyone with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm that got close to the statue would feel their blood surging. It would make cultivation easier, and would provide a boost to both their battle prowess and their spirit enhancement abilities!

The most eye-catching thing about the statue was the imperial city held in its left hand!

Even from a distance, it looked large and majestic. It could house millions upon millions of cultivators, and was filled with countless buildings and streets.

Just being in the city itself would provide great benefit to anyone with the blood of the Heavenspan Realm. Of course, the Grand Heavenmaster and his contemporaries wouldn’t forget the defenses of the city. There were numerous spell formations built into the statue to protect it and the city. Although the spell formations were not quite as powerful as those in Vile-Emperor City or Saint-Emperor City, they were still the type that celestials couldn’t easily do anything to.

All of that was definitely astonishing, but there was something else that was even more so. In the forehead of the statue of Bai Xiaochun… was his Heavenspan Dharma Eye!

From a distance, it looked like a radiant, violet crystal. If one got closer, though… it was possible to see that it wasn’t a crystal, but rather, a convergence of dazzling violet light!

Within that shocking violet light was… a violet imperial palace!!

It was exquisite and luxurious, and also pulsed with an energy that would inspire awe in anyone who laid eyes on it!

At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was sitting on the Dragon Throne in the grand hall. Arranged one level lower than his throne were three Phoenix Chairs, where Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and Hou Xiaomei all sat. The three of them would occasionally size each other up, and occasionally look over at him.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun looked out at the hundred or so people who were currently standing around the main hall, arguing with each other.

“Listen to me! We need to call it Emperor Bai’s Dynasty!”

“No, that name won’t do. How could that be passed down to successive generations? We should call it Emperor Heavenspan’s Dynasty!”

“Have you people forgotten that our founding ancestor was the Arch-Lord? We should continue to honor him, and call it the Arch-Emperor Dynasty!!”

Among the people arguing in the hall were the Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, the Nine Serenities King, the Spirit Advent King, the War Champion King, and the demigods from the eastern and northern Heavenspan region. There were also a dozen or so demigods who had defected from the other two imperial dynasties.

Gongsun Wan’er was present, but didn’t partake in the discussion. However, everyone else did, even Patriarch Spirit Stream. Because of his unique status, many people gave a lot of weight to what he had to say.

Only Li Qinghou hadn’t given his opinion yet. Given his special connection to Bai Xiaochun, anything he said would be taken very seriously, even by the Grand Heavenmaster, and therefore, he decided to wait.

Bai Xiaochun sighed as the arguments over the name of their nation went on for two days without anyone coming to an agreement.

Everyone had their own ideas, and everyone had different ways of trying to get Bai Xiaochun to agree with them. After all, now that the Heavenspan Realm had control of an immortal domain, it was definitely important to officially establish the dynasty.

Not doing so would have adverse effects on the populace.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, and he slowly raised his hand and began waving it back and forth to get the attention of the crowd. He didn’t need to use any cultivation base power; although everyone was involved with the discussion, they were also keeping their eye on Bai Xiaochun to see if he would say something.

In the blink of an eye… the ruckus faded into silence, and everyone looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

He was used to being the center of attention now, and therefore, looked out at the crowd and began to speak in a calm voice.

“Before the previous Arch-Emperor passed away… he passed on his legacy to me….

“We’re all people of Heavenspan. We’ve risen up through countless deadly struggles, all to reach this point of stability.

We should honor the Arch-Emperor’s wishes, and honor the founding Arch-Lord!

“Enough with the arguing. As of today… the glory of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty has been restored. Daoist Heavenspan changed the fate of our home, but now, we will return things to how they should be!

“We arrived in the Eternal Immortal Domains tens of thousands of years late, but… we still got here!” By the time he finished his speech, he had risen to his feet. As of this moment everyone realized… that the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was being reestablished!

Everyone had their own ideas, but right now, Bai Xiaochun occupied the ultimate position of authority. What he said was law!

No one dared to disagree, and in fact, everyone had to admit that what he said made sense. The Grand Heavenmaster was the first to step forward, his face a bit flush, his eyes sparkling. In his heart, he was fully convinced that all his efforts over the years were not in vain!

Clasping hands, he bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, Arch-Emperor!”

Next, the Giant Ghost King, the Nine Serenities King, the northern and eastern demigods, and all of the other powerful experts likewise clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Arch-Emperor!!”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t even unleash a scrap of his cultivation base. Gongsun Wan’er, Zhou Zimo, Song Junwan and Hou

Xiaomei were all moved by his glory, and bowed deeply to him.

Patriarch Spirit Stream and Li Qinghou were moved, and understood that from this moment on, Bai Xiaochun was the Arch-Emperor, one of the three emperors of the Eternal Immortal Domains. Taking deep breaths, they bowed deeply!

As their voices echoed out, the millions and millions of Heavenspan Realm cultivators who had been watching the grand hall closely could hear what was being said. All of them dropped to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Arch-Emperor!!”

“Greetings, Arch-Emperor!!!” Soundwaves rolled out from Arch-Emperor City in all directions as countless cultivators joined their voices together. Soon, the sound filled the entire immortal domain!

Even the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor were now looking in the direction of Arch-Emperor City!

The celestials, demigods, and devas from the other two imperial dynasties, as well as countless other cultivators, were all deeply shaken. Everyone could tell that a new dynasty had risen to power!!

Even the mysterious Eternal Mother… seemed to open her eyes and look… at the third of her sons, who had finally returned!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1213 awe-chapter-1214

The Arch-Emperor Dynasty was officially founded!!

From now on, it was settled.... There were three powers within the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Things had gone back to the way they were originally intended. Although the Arch-Emperor Dynasty arrived on the scene late in the game… it had still come!

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased to have become the Arch-Emperor, and that he could now boss everyone around. Of course, he quickly came to find that although he did have the authority to issue orders, when it came to governing the nation, the Grand Heavenmaster was far more adept than him.

Furthermore, every time he made public appearances, it caused a huge stir. Considering how busy everyone was, Bai Xiaochun finally sighed and decided that the best thing was for him to simply be the spiritual leader of the nation.

Besides, he didn’t care much for governmental power. He didn’t even care that the Grand Heavenmaster had once run a very similar puppet government back in the Wildlands. After all, as long as his cultivation base was high enough, nobody would be able to take away what was his.

Now that the Arch-Emperor Dynasty had been officially founded in the Eternal Lands, more and more Heavenspan Realm cultivators came to join it. Soon, a peace descended upon them the likes of which they had not enjoyed for a very long time. As things developed, the bellies of Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo grew larger.

The Grand Heavenmaster, Li Qinghou and others of the senior generation were much more concerned about matters such as that than Bai Xiaochun was, and devoted many resources to keeping the two women safe.

Their residences were strictly guarded, and numerous precautions were taken to ensure that no accidents happened. As for Bai Xiaochun, he was no longer bored and idle; he spent every day with Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, helping to take care of them, and enjoying a warm tenderness that had been lacking for a long time.

The only awkward thing was that having multiple Daoist partners was actually quite a headache. Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo were both very proud, and had short tempers. And they were even more emotional than normal. The glares they cast at each other nearly led to fighting on a few occasions, leaving Bai Xiaochun very jumpy and nervous.

And when Hou Xiaomei saw all of this happening, she got even more irritated than before. The more she thought about the situation, the less she seemed willing to accept it, until she secretly met with Li Qinghou to ask for his help….

Li Qinghou was like a father to Bai Xiaochun, which put him in a very unique position within the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. All of Bai Xiaochun’s Daoist partners truly respected him.

Although Song Junwan didn’t visit him on a daily basis, she would dine with him every few days. Even the stubborn and obstinate Zhou Zimo would take time to go see him.

However, between the three daughters-in-law that Li Qinghou had, he liked Hou Xiaomei the best. After all, she had started out in the Spirit Stream Sect, under his command as the peak lord of Fragrant Cloud Peak. Li Qinghou had essentially watched Bai Xiaochun and Hou Xiaomei grow up together.

After hearing Hou Xiaomei’s frustrations, Li Qinghou thought the matter over, then sighed. He made some inquiries, and soon learned that Bai Xiaochun had ended up together with Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo by means of his Aphrodisiac Pills.

One particular day after Bai Xiaochun had just gone to spend some time with Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, he returned to his grand hall, and had just sat down when Li Qinghou entered.

“Uncle Li!” he said, instantly rising to his feet and rushing over to him. It didn’t matter that he was the Arch-Emperor now, to him, Li Qinghou would always be like a father.

Li Qinghou was very pleased with how things had turned out for Bai Xiaochun. He would often think back to that boy he had seen on top of Mount Hood, lighting an incense stick. Step by step, he had reached this point, and Li Qinghou couldn’t have been prouder.

The two of them sat down to reminisce, with Li Qinghou giving occasional bits of advice. It didn’t matter what he said, Bai Xiaochun would always nod in agreement. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, Li Qinghou cleared his throat.

“Say, Xiaochun… do you have any more Aphrodisiac Pills?”

“Huh?” Bai Xiaochun blurted. He had assumed that his Uncle Li had come here for some specific reason, and here it was. After blinking a few times, Bai Xiaochun slapped his thigh.

“You’ve taken a liking to someone, haven’t you, Uncle Li? Who is it?” He was actually very curious about this point. Of course, Li Qinghou had always been fond of Big Fatty Zhang’s Master, Xu Meixiang. Unfortunately, she had gone missing, and even after most of the people of the Heavenspan Realm were now gathering back together, she was nowhere to be found.

Glaring in embarrassment, Li Qinghou said, “There’s no reason to flip out! If you have any, I’ll just take one!”

“If anybody else had asked me for one, Uncle Li, I would say I'm out. But since it's you, here you go!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but smile at how Li Qinghou seemed to be having a youthful reinvigoration. The truth was that he didn’t have many Aphrodisiac Pills left. Furthermore, after what had happened with Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, he was very cautious when it came to Aphrodisiac Pills. Taking out a bottle, he offered it to Li Qinghou.

Chuckling knowingly, Bai Xiaochun looked at Li Qinghou and said, “Uncle Li, you’re getting old, and you need to look out for your health. These things… well, don’t overdose, okay? That bottle has eight pills and--”

“Cut the crap!” Li Qinghou said coldly, grabbing the pill bottle.

“I get it, I get it. You’re a bit shy, so you need some really strong stuff. Hahaha! I understand.” Bai Xiaochun was truly amused by the whole situation, and couldn’t hold back from laughing.

“Although, if you’ve taken a liking to someone, Uncle Li, you really don’t need to use something like that medicine…. You just need to figure out how to woo her! Let me teach you.” Thumping himself on the chest, he said, “Trust me, I'm not bragging when I say that I--”

At this point, Li Qinghou couldn’t take it anymore. Glaring at Bai Xiaochun, he turned and left.

Chuckling, Bai Xiaochun called out, “Don’t forget, Uncle Li, don’t actually consume that pill. Just a bit of powder from it will do fine. Don’t overdose!”

Before walking out the door, Li Qinghou paused, looked over his shoulder, and looked meaningfully at Bai Xiaochun. Then he nodded.

“Just some powder!” Bai Xiaochun repeated. “Understand!?”

At that point, he suddenly felt like there was something odd about the whole situation. There had been something in Li Qinghou’s eyes right before he left that seemed to indicate that there was more to the story….

However, he couldn’t think of what that might possibly be. “Uncle Li is a great guy, just a bit shy, that's all.”

Thinking about what it would be like when Li Qinghou used the Aphrodisiac Pill, Bai Xiaochun began to hum a little tune and head back to his throne.

That evening….

Hou Xiaomei walked briskly through the imperial palace, trying to keep her breathing steady. She had two Aphrodisiac Pills, one in each hand, and she was continuously reminding herself of what Li Qinghou had told her.

“I have to crush them. I have to crush them….”

Eventually, she reached Bai Xiaochun’s private chamber. Taking a moment to compose herself, she looked up, a smile on her face that made her look as beautiful as a freshly bloomed flower.

“Are you here, Big Bro Xiaochun?”

Bai Xiaochun was in the middle of meditating. When he heard Hou Xiaomei’s voice, he quickly opened the door of the chamber and saw her standing there, bathed in moonlight.

He was surprised to see her. After all, this was the first time she had come to visit him after returning.

“Xiaomei, you--” Before he could even finish his sentence, she blinked a few times and then walked into the private chamber. As she did, she squeezed her fists!

Two popping sounds then rang out within the chamber.

“What was that sound? Seemed really familiar….” It was at that point that a pink mist began to spread out….

“That… that was… an Aphrodisiac Pill?!?!” His eyes went wide, and he backed up. But that was when a soft, warm body wrapped around him.

“How did you get an Aphrodisiac Pill?!?!” Even as his vision turned pink, he heard Hou Xiaomei’s captivating voice whispering in his ear.

“Uncle Li gave it to me.” At that point, Bai Xiaochun fell down onto his back, and the entire room filled with pink mist.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1214 awe-chapter-1215

Zhou Zimo had crushed an Aphrodisiac Pill, as had Song Junwan. But Hou Xiaomei had crushed two. And she had done so in the confines of a private chamber….

It was easy to imagine the result…. The pink mist was particularly dense, and wouldn’t dissipate. Bai Xiaochun and Hou Xiaomei breathed it in… for days. When it finally faded away, the door to the private chamber opened, and Hou Xiaomei emerged. She looked a bit limp, but her face was flushed, and her eyes were sparkling. After glancing over her shoulder, she patted her tummy and then giddily left.

A few minutes later, Bai Xiaochun staggered out of the private chamber, then stood there looking disconsolately up at the sky.

“I’m the grand and mighty Arch-Emperor, one of the three most powerful experts in the Eternal Immortal Domains….” He could only sigh at how his defeat at the hands of Aphrodisiac Pills seemed to have become a recurring theme in his life.

“If only Aphrodisiac Pills didn’t exist….” he moaned inwardly. A moment passed, and he realized that he shouldn’t think that way. Without Aphrodisiac Pills, he would probably be alone in life. After all… he was simply too pure and honest of a person.

“Ah, whatever. If they exist, they exist.” Shaking his head, he sighed. By now, he felt that he understood Hou Xiaomei’s way of thinking. She had been the first to get to know him, but Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo were already pregnant with his children. Unwilling to be left behind, Hou Xiaomei had resorted to extreme methods to even things out.

“Ai. It’s not their fault that they’re all fighting amongst each other to have my children. It’s my fault really.” Shaking his head, he took a short walk before returning to his private chamber.

The Arch-Emperor Dynasty was now in a very stable state. The Grand Heavenmaster and other important figures had divided up the various responsibilities of running the nation, ensuring that everything was working smoothly and efficiently. The biggest asset the Arch-Emperor Dynasty had was spirit enhancement, and now that a peace treaty had been reached amongst the various dynasties, trade began to be carried out.

Also, Gongsun Wan’er’s Daoseed had been sent over by the Vile-Emperor. He really had no choice but to do that. The peace treaty was a good thing for the Vile-Emperor, and he didn’t want to give Bai Xiaochun or the Saint-Emperor an excuse to cause trouble for him.

In general, things were peaceful and quiet. As for Zhou Zimo and Song Junwan, their due dates were approaching, which was a matter of incredible importance, even to the Vile-Emperor and Saint-Emperor.

The fact that Bai Xiaochun had mastered the Undying Live Forever Technique was no secret, and the incredible powers and abilities which came from that hereditary technique of the Arch-Emperors were shocking, to say the least. And if he ended up passing those innate talents on to his children, the results would be terrifying.

That was especially true of spirit enhancement!

The ability to perform spirit enhancements depended on one’s bloodline, and considering that Bai Xiaochun was now expecting two children, just about everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains was wondering what would happen.

Bai Xiaochun was also extremely nervous. He never left the imperial palace, and even had his normal meditation chamber moved closer to where Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo were staying.

Although he was fairly certain that no one in the Eternal Immortal Domains would dare to do something to hurt them, he still wanted to be completely ready and on guard.

Unfortunately, because of the power contained within Bai Xiaochun’s blood, the pregnancy terms were incredibly long, causing the days to seemingly drag by without end.

Half a month later, while everyone was still waiting for Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo to go into labor, Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner arrived.

They came in very unique fashion…. Xu Baocai had kidnapped Master God-Diviner! It wasn’t until he actually arrived in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty that he revealed his identity. After that, it didn’t take long for him and Master God-Diviner to be whisked to Arch-Emperor City.

Upon arriving, Xu Baocai offered greetings to Patriarch Spirit Stream and the others, and then asked to see Bai Xiaochun. Master God-Diviner, who Xu Baocai kept securely tied up, didn’t say anything the entire time, and did not seem to be very happy.

It was a very strange scene, and somewhat suspicious as far as Patriarch Spirit Stream was concerned. As word was passed up through the ranks, Bai Xiaochun was informed, and summoned Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner to a side chamber for an audience.

When the doors opened, Bai Xiaochun saw Master God-Diviner tied up with ropes and looking very anxious, with Xu Baocai behind him, shoving him forward through the corridor. Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times at the strangeness of the scene.

As soon as Xu Baocai caught sight of Bai Xiaochun, he excitedly shoved Master God-Diviner into the room, then rushed forward and kowtowed, “Greetings, Arch-Emperor!”

Xu Baocai was not feigning his excitement; when he was back in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and heard that Bai Xiaochun had become the Arch-Emperor, he almost couldn’t contain his enthusiasm. Considering his own relationship with Bai Xiaochun, it meant that he would likely benefit as well.

In order to show how truly devoted he was, after he finished offering formal greetings, he quickly said, “Your Majesty, I didn’t come to you empty-handed. I brought this traitor along with me! What traitor, you might ask? Master God-Diviner, that’s who!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at Xu Baocai, and then at Master God-Diviner. Clearly, there was some sort of conflict between the two.

“I'm no traitor!” Master God-Diviner shouted. “Bai Xiao-- er, Your Majesty, I didn’t betray you. I--”

Before he could proceed with any explanation, Xu Baocai glared at him and interrupted, “Shut up, Master God-Diviner! As you well know, I'm an expert when it comes to gathering intelligence, so don’t even think of trying to pull a fast one!

“Your Majesty, this evil Master God-Diviner definitely betrayed us. And even more infuriating, he tried to bribe me to keep me quiet!

“Your Majesty, you have no idea the humiliation I endured in my efforts to capture him. In order to get on his good side, I accepted the more than one hundred female cultivators he gave me, which nearly corrupted my spirit and toppled my Dao heart. Thankfully, my loyalty to you never wavered, Your Majesty!” As Xu Baocai’s words echoed about in the chamber, Master God-Diviner glared at him angrily.

“That’s right, I did arrange for you to have a hundred female cultivators. But every time I sent you one, you weren’t happy, and kept asking for more! That's why you got more than a hundred!”

“That’s because my Dao heart is strong!” Xu Baocai shot back. “It was all for the mission. It was all to catch you, you traitor! That's why I endured all of that humiliation! I had no choice but to accept your bribes. That was the only way to capture you!”

A full-scale argument had erupted, with both sides hurling accusations at the other, and denying the accusations made against them.

“Don’t feel pity for this Master God-Diviner, Your Majesty!” Xu Baocai said loudly. “The reason I went to him in the first place was to ask him to join me on the journey to Arch-Emperor City. But because he had a demigod Daoist partner, he refused! Therefore, I had no choice but to suffer all of that humiliation to gain his trust. When the moment was right, I poisoned him, tied him up, and brought him here by force!”

Sighing, Master God-Diviner said, “Who said I didn't want to come? I have a big family, and lots of business interests! I couldn’t just abandon them all! But that doesn’t mean I didn’t want to come!”

“Don’t even think of trying to fool His Majesty! You’re a traitor, Master God-Diviner. You’ve been having kids left and right, spreading the blood of the Heavenspan Realm without even thinking about it. Thanks to you, the secrets of spirit enhancement aren’t going to be a secret for much longer!”

Bai Xiaochun found the whole thing to be quite amusing, but could tell that the argument was about to devolve into an actual fight. In fact, Master God-Diviner was so weak that when Xu Baocai kicked him to the ground and started to trample him, he couldn’t defend himself. At that point, Bai Xiaochun intervened.

The situation was obvious. Master God-Diviner had been living a comfortable life in the Eternal Immortal Domains, unlike many other cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm. Therefore, he was torn about whether to come to the Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

Untying Master God-Diviner, Bai Xiaochun said, “Listen, Master God-Diviner. We’re like brothers, right? Just tell me the truth. Do you want to join us here, or not? If not, then have someone escort you back. All I want is for the people from the Heavenspan Realm to be happy, that's all. As long as you don’t betray me, we’re friends, no matter where you are!”

With the wave of a hand, Bai Xiaochun then dispelled the poison, and Master God-Diviner’s weakness along with it.

Shivering, Master God-Diviner stood there at a temporary loss for words. Then he took a deep breath and said, “I want to join you. But, not alone. I want… to bring my family with me!”

Laughing heartily, Bai Xiaochun stepped forward and embraced Master God-Diviner. “No problem at all! Bring as many people as you want!”

Then he embraced Xu Baocai.

Master God-Diviner seemed to want to say something more, but held back. As for Xu Baocai, he also hesitated about whether to add additional information. However, seeing how happy Bai Xiaochun was, he didn't.

Before long, Master God-Diviner left, an official decree in his hand from Bai Xiaochun, allowing him to bring all of his belongings and wives to Arch-Emperor City.

Looking over his shoulder at Arch-Emperor City, he muttered, “I hope he doesn’t pass out from shock when I come back….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1215 awe-chapter-1216

After seeing Master God-Diviner off, Bai Xiaochun’s life went on as it had up to this point. Right now, the most important thing to him was not cultivation, but rather… the unborn children in Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo.

No one would dare to violate the taboo of using divine sense to try to determine the sex of the babies. Except for Bai Xiaochun. He had no such reservations, and had long since done so.

Song Junwan was a bit let down at the news. It might not have been a big deal if Bai Xiaochun weren’t the Arch-Emperor. But given his current identity, it meant that a boy would obviously be slightly more important. And unfortunately, Song Junwan was carrying a girl.

It would have been easier for her to accept that if Zhou Zimo had also been carrying a girl, but as it turned out, she was carrying a boy. Although Song Junwan was a bit disappointed, she didn’t want Bai Xiaochun to get the wrong idea, and thus hid her feelings.

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun didn’t care whether his children were boys or girls. He would love them either way. Eventually, he could sense Song Junwan’s feelings, and spent extra time consoling her, and made sure she understood that he didn’t care about that sort of thing.

Another month went by. Both women were now very close to giving birth, and Bai Xiaochun was getting more and more nervous. Based on the auguries he had performed, the various preparations he had made, and the level of his cultivation base, he was completely and utterly confident that nothing was going to go wrong. And yet, considering that he was about to become a father, he was still worried.

“I wonder what it will feel like to be a dad?” It was a question that would often pop into his head. Another thing he found himself thinking about was the subject of names.

“What should we name them…?” Although he had come up with a lot of ideas, he hadn’t made a final decision.

“Bai Dabao? No, not impressive enough!

“Bai Chaoda? Nope. His mom wouldn’t agree…

“Bai Lingfei?”

That final name made him sigh, both because it made him think of Du Lingfei, and also because of the fact that if he gave that name to his daughter, Song Junwan would likely chop him to pieces.

Even as he was in the middle of contemplating various names, the Saint-Emperor came for a visit!

He came completely without advance notice, and in a way that no one in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty except for Bai Xiaochun realized that he was there. The fact that he came just on the verge of the children being born caused Bai Xiaochun’s eyes to flicker. As soon as he detected the fluctuations, he flew up into the air.

As soon as he was out in the open, he locked his gaze onto a certain location off in the distance, where the Saint-Emperor stepped out of thin air. He had been worried about a misunderstanding, and had thus appeared some distance away, instead of directly within Arch-Emperor City.

“Second Bro!” he said. Laughing heartily, he stepped forward and embraced Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was a bit surprised that the Saint-Emperor had come so unexpectedly, and was curious about why he had come. One thing that worried him was that his Archaean Luminescence was still not ready to use again.

On any other occasion, he would likely have feigned civility. But he was in no mood for that, and got right to the point. “What are you doing here, Big Bro?!”

“Oh, it’s nothing important. I was just a bit bored, and was contemplating the fact that your children are about to be born. And that got me to thinking that the Vile-Emperor might cause some trouble, so I decided to come stand guard for you.” Even as he spoke, he sent his divine sense down into Arch-Emperor City, as if he were looking for something.

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, expelling the Saint-Emperor’s divine sense from within the city. Narrowing his eyes, he said, “I appreciate your good intentions, Big Bro, but now's not really a good time.”

Clearly, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t going to back down. At this point, the Saint-Emperor was starting to feel a bit awkward, and knew that it would be easy for a misunderstanding to occur. However, he really felt the need to take a look around Arch-Emperor City. Sighing, he decided not to risk a misunderstanding.

“I’ll be perfectly honest, Second Bro. I know it’s a bit rude to barge in like this, but… the Saint-Turtle has gone missing….” As he spoke, he kept a close eye on Bai Xiaochun’s facial expression.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that the Saint-Turtle was missing, he didn’t have much of a reaction at first. But then his eyes went wide as he realized which Saint-Turtle the Saint-Emperor was talking about….

“My little turtle? He’s missing?” His surprise was no act. He had absolutely no idea where the little turtle was.

“Yes,” replied the Saint-Emperor. “Half a month ago, he vanished. I wouldn’t be too worried about it, except for the fact that he stole a bunch of lotus seeds before leaving….” The Saint-Emperor was clearly depressed. For years, the Saint-Turtle had seemed fine, and the Saint-Emperor had actually taken a liking to him. He gave him anything he asked for, and yet in the end, he had disappeared.

His first reaction was that the little turtle must have gone back to Bai Xiaochun. However, moments ago, his divine sense had managed to sweep through most of Arch-Emperor City before Bai Xiaochun intervened, and the Saint-Emperor hadn’t picked up any traces of the little turtle.

Furthermore, he could tell that Bai Xiaochun’s reaction had been genuine.

“Um….” Back when he had formed the initial alliance with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor himself, he had actually talked with the little turtle, and told him that he would come free him when the time was right, but not in a way that would harm the alliance.

But because of the impending birth of his children, he had completely forgotten about the turtle. He was also taken by surprise by the fact that the turtle had gone missing. Feeling a bit bad for the Saint-Emperor, and also slightly guilty, he was about to offer some more explanations when his expression flickered, and he looked off toward the horizon.

Surprised, the Saint-Emperor looked in the same direction.

Before long, rumbling sounds could be heard as… more than a thousand huge battleships appeared off in the distance!!

Most of them were about 3,000 meters long, and very impressive. In the front was one particular ship that was 30,000 meters long, which was leading the procession in the direction of Arch-Emperor City.

At first sight, one might assume it was an invasion. But there was no way that a procession of battleships this large could get from the border of the immortal domain to Arch-Emperor City without anyone noticing, at least not unless it was cloaked by an archaean.

The procession was being escorted by a large number of cultivators, all of them people of Heavenspan. Strange expressions could be seen on their faces as they proceeded along with the battleships as they headed toward the city.

When the residents of Arch-Emperor City saw what was happening, expressions of shock appeared on their faces as they assumed that they were under attack. Although the ships were too far away for them to make out the details of who was on them, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor could see clearly.

There were men and women, with women clearly making up the majority. Furthermore, many of them emanated fluctuations that indicated they had the blood of the Heavenspan Realm in them!

Even more astonishing was how many people there were. The smaller battleships all had hundreds of people on them. And the lead battleship… had tens of thousands.

“Lu Yuntao!” the Saint-Emperor blurted, shocked.

“Master God-Diviner!” Bai Xiaochun said simultaneously, his eyes going wide at the sight of Master God-Diviner standing there on the 30,000-meter-long battleship… surrounded by tens of thousands of women. Apparently, these women were his concubines….

And standing right next to him was a noble-looking woman in formal court attire, whose cultivation base was so high that she was clearly in the great circle of the Demigod Realm. In fact, she was actually a quasi-celestial, making her just as strong as the Grand Heavenmaster!

This woman was the Lu Yuntao that the Saint-Emperor had just referred to.

Even in the Eternal Immortal Domains, people with cultivation bases that high were not common, and generally had the most powerful battle prowess aside from celestials.

Soon, Master God-Diviner noticed Bai Xiaochun hovering there in the air, looking stunned. As for Lu Yuntao, she spotted the Saint-Emperor, and her expression flickered. Taking a deep breath, she clasped Master God-Diviner’s hand and flew off of the battleship toward the dazed Bai Xiaochun and Saint-Emperor.

“Greetings Arch-Emperor, Saint-Emperor!”

“Greetings Saint-Emperor, Arch-Emperor!”

The Saint-Emperor looked at Lu Yuntao, and then at Master God-Diviner, and then finally over at the battleships.

“You two are…?”

Not daring to hide the truth, Lu Yuntao clasped hands, bowed, and said, “Saint-Emperor, this… is your humble servant’s family. And this… is your humble servant’s Daoist partner.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1216 awe-chapter-1217

It was a completely shocking development. There were tens of thousands of people on all of those battleships… and the majority of them had the blood of the Heavenspan Realm in them.

Before the Saint-Emperor could react, Bai Xiaochun exclaimed, “Are you addicted to having kids, Master Snortsnort? You were like this in the Wildlands, and now here in the Eternal Immortal Domains, you’re, you’re… you’re still up to the same thing! You’ve sired an entire sect!”

Bai Xiaochun was simply bowled over. He had once thought Bruiser was impressive, but could see now that Bruiser only qualified to kowtow to Master God-Diviner. The sudden revelation was like a lightning bolt striking from a blue sky.

Then Bai Xiaochun thought about how much trouble it was dealing with only a couple women, whereas Master God-Diviner had tens of thousands to handle…. It seemed they all got along, which filled Bai Xiaochun with mixed emotions, primarily envy.

Master God-Diviner looked a bit embarrassed, and was trying to think of what to say when the Grand Heavenmaster arrived with the other powerful experts from the city. When they saw the Saint-Emperor, they were shocked, and although they weren’t sure why he had come, they quickly offered formal greetings. Then they escorted Master God-Diviner and Lu Yuntao, as well as the tens of thousands of people they had brought with them, into Arch-Emperor City.

Bai Xiaochun looked on, his head spinning. All of a sudden, he thought back to how Master God-Diviner had seemed to want to say something back when he left, and the pieces clicked. Clearly, bringing a family of tens of thousands on a big journey like this had not been an easy task.

On the upside, the shocking arrival of Master God-Diviner had eased some of the tension between Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor. Considering that Master God-Diviner and the other important officials had already seen that the Saint-Emperor had come for a visit, Bai Xiaochun decided that he might as well invite him down into the imperial palace.

However, the Saint-Emperor was still feeling shaken by the incident with Master God-Diviner. After confirming that the little turtle was not present, he sat down in the imperial palace in Arch-Emperor City to chat further with Bai Xiaochun.

“Second Bro, what did you call that fellow? Master Snortsnort? Now that’s what I call talent! He single-handedly sired an entire sect! Do you mind letting me take this Master Snortsnort back with me, Second Bro? Talent like that is sadly missing in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!” The Saint-Emperor was truly moved at how this Master Snortsnort had apparently managed to keep such a huge family all happy and harmonious.

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t very pleased by the Saint-Emperor’s reaction. And he was also feeling a bit envious of Master God-Diviner and his abilities. It was all made worse by the bitterness he had endured because of his own Daoist partners.

If the Saint-Emperor hadn’t asked to take Master God-Diviner away, he might have been able to keep a lid on his feelings. But now he was feeling quite irritated.

“You think that’s impressive? Well, it doesn’t quite measure up to me.” With that, he slapped his bag of holding, causing heaps of love letters to whoosh out, forming a small mountain in front of the Saint-Emperor.

Feeling much better, Bai Xiaochun proudly said, “See these love letters? Each and every one is addressed to me! Back in the Heavenspan Realm, all I had to do was nod, and I would have exponentially more wives and concubines than Master God-Diviner!”

To see Bai Xiaochun casually toss out a so many love letters caused the Saint-Emperor to be completely astonished all over again. Some of the letters in the pile were actually yellow with age….

“You… you actually kept them all…? They even survived the destruction of your entire world…?” The Saint-Emperor suddenly felt like his understanding of life had reached a new level. First was Master God-Diviner with his family of tens of thousands, and then Bai Xiaochun with his mountain of love letters.

Bai Xiaochun felt a lot more confident now that the Saint-Emperor had been so flabbergasted by his love letters. But then, just as he was about to go into some more bragging, he sensed three streams of divine sense sweep into the hall….

They belonged to none other than Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo and Hou Xiaomei. Upon hearing that the Saint-Emperor had come, they were nervous, and also worried for Bai Xiaochun, but knew that it wouldn’t be appropriate to come in person. And thus, they sent some divine sense to check on what was happening.

If they were in the imperial palace of Saint-Emperor City, they wouldn't have been able to use divine sense to look in on an archaean. But this was the imperial palace of Arch-Emperor City, and the spell formations set up made it possible for them to do so.

The first thing that they saw… was a small mountain of love letters.

Almost immediately, their streams of divine sense seemed to grow more powerful, lock down onto the love letters, and then suddenly vanish!

Bai Xiaochun's face fell, and the Saint-Emperor's expression flickered.

Clearing his throat, the Saint-Emperor said, “What were you about to say, Second Bro?”

However, there was no way that Bai Xiaochun could be in the mood for continuing the conversation. Chuckling wryly, he scooped up the love letters and then tried to look calm as he changed the subject and continued chatting.

As for the Saint-Emperor, now that he was sure the little turtle was nowhere nearby, he decided that, considering the sensitive situation in the city, it wouldn't be good for him to overstay his welcome. Therefore, he took his leave.

Bai Xiaochun absent-mindedly escorted the Saint-Emperor out, his eyes occasionally flitting guiltily back to the palace.

“What's the big deal? They're just some love letters. It's not like I asked for them!” Trying to work up some courage, he headed back to his private chamber, where he planned to spend a few days in secluded meditation.

However, his plan didn’t work…. That very evening, Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo and Hou Xiaomei put aside their differences and joined forces to appear at his private chamber.

Bai Xiaochun was starting to feel even more guilty, especially considering how visibly pregnant Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo were. Although the two of them were smiling broadly, the ill will in their eyes caused him to wail in his heart.

As for Hou Xiaomei, she had no idea whether or not she was pregnant, but for some reason she kept her hands resting on her belly as she stared at him.

Song Junwan was the first one to speak. “Xiaochun, why did the Saint-Emperor come to visit?”

She spoke in a warm tone, and sounded very mature. If it weren’t for the daggers she was staring, she would have seemed like the picture of womanly virtue.

“Um… well it’s that darn little turtle! He ran away! You know the little turtle, right? You don’t! Well, let me tell you how I met him. You’re actually part of the story, Junwan!” Blinking, Bai Xiaochun prepared to go into detail, but before he could, Zhou Zimo snorted coldly and cut in.

“Don’t try to avoid the elephant in the room, Bai Xiaochun. Come on, tell the truth. Are you jealous of Master God-Diviner?”

“Jealous?!” Bai Xiaochun said loudly. “Are you kidding me?!” Although he was nearly trembling with anxiety, he put on a look of righteous indignation, and even a bit of confusion.

“I would never be jealous of him! Actually, he’s the one who’s jealous of me! Although, now that you mention Master God-Diviner, you have to admit that the poor kid really has it rough. Zimo, do you remember those tribes from the Wildlands? Back when I was heading back to the Heavenspan region, you escorted me some of the way, remember? I--”

As he prepared to continue with his story, Hou Xiaomei planted her fists onto her hips. Fuming like a hot pepper, she said, “Big Bro Xiaochun, you’re the Arch-Emperor now! Although times are peaceful now, you can’t slack off. You need to work hard on your cultivation. You need to focus!”

“I--” Bai Xiaochun began, but Song Junwan interrupted him.

“Xiaomei is absolutely correct. Xiaochun, you have a lot of important responsibilities! Although the three of us can’t do much in that regard, we can at least help you with some of your menial tasks. Come on. Hand over your love letters. We’ll take care of them from now on.”

“I….” Before he could offer any further explanations, Zhou Zimo, who of course had the worst temper of all of them, stalked over, keeping one arm under her belly as she grabbed his bag of holding. And of course, he didn’t dare to interfere as she… completely emptied out all of the love letters….

His heart was fairly dripping with blood as he looked on, feeling like he was being strangled. It was as if Zhou Zimo wasn’t taking away his love letters, but rather, all the romance that existed in his heart….

Looking very pleased with themselves, the three women left with his love letters, leaving him standing there alone in his private chamber, scowling on the verge of tears. As they left, he reached out morosely as it to grab ahold of something, except, there was nothing to lay his hands on.

“My love letters!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1217 awe-chapter-1218

Moonlight tumbled in through the opened door of his chamber onto Bai Xiaochun as he stood there in a daze for a very long moment. Finally, he sighed, his life seemingly devoid of meaning.

“If I’d known this was going to happen, I wouldn’t have pissed off so many women….” Depressed, he couldn’t help but think that having one wife was definitely the best thing. Two was incredibly annoying, and three or more… was simply too dire of a situation to even think about.

“Xiaomei used to be great, but now she’s been led astray by the other two.” He had originally wanted to focus on meditation, but now simply couldn’t focus. Eventually the sun began to rise. At that point, he looked down at his bag of holding and thought about the collection of love letters that had once been his pride and joy, that he had so often poured out of his bag of holding to dramatic effect, evoking looks of envy from onlookers.

But now his love letters were gone. Feeling miserable, he flew out to Gongsun Wan’er’s secluded meditation facilities. He could sense that she was inside practicing cultivation, and he was tempted to just go in. But he knew that she was at a critical juncture, and that he shouldn’t disturb her.

After a moment, he sent his divine sense out into Arch-Emperor City, hoping to find someone to talk to. He saw Big Fatty Zhang, who was meditating. He saw Xu Baocai, who was in the middle of dramatically boasting to a group of friends. And he saw Master God-Diviner, lounging in the midst of a group of concubines….

He saw Patriarch Spirit Stream, sadly looking at the command medallion of a dead disciple. He saw Li Qinghou off in the distance, holding a handkerchief in his hand.

He even saw Shangguan Tianyou, who had once been so spectacular, but who was now quiet and reserved. He still looked like an unsheathed sword, but now he sat alone, quietly drinking and muttering about Zhou Xinqi.

As he looked out at all the familiar faces, his expression suddenly flickered as he realized there were two auras in the city that were somewhat familiar, but that he hadn't encountered for a very long time.

"Those two…." he murmured. With that, he vanished, to reappear outside of a mansion somewhere in the city. It was a two-story building, with a fragrant osmanthus tree in the courtyard. As he stood beneath that tree, he looked up at one of the windows in the building, which was lit with lamplight, framing the silhouette of a graceful woman.

Perhaps she sensed that something had changed outside, as the window slowly opened, and a beautiful face appeared.

When she looked down at the osmanthus tree and saw Bai Xiaochun, her eyes widened, and mixed emotions played out on her face. Instead of clasping her hands in greeting, she simply looked at him.

"Chen Manyao…." he said softly. All of a sudden, he realized that he had not been paying attention to who had arrived in the new Arch-Emperor Dynasty. For one thing, he had been very wrapped up with worrying about the balance of power with the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor, and for another, he had been very focused on his unborn children.

He wasn’t sure when Chen Manyao had come, and had it not been for his frustrated, fidgety mood, he wouldn’t have sent his divine sense out to check on everyone.

Presumably the Grand Heavenmaster knew that Chen Manyao was here. After all, she was his apprentice. And the fact that he hadn’t said anything to him was very telling.

The Grand Heavenmaster had lived for many years, and had a lot more life experience than Bai Xiaochun. Obviously, he didn’t want Chen Manyao causing problems in the imperial harem….

When Chen Manyao heard him say her name, she bowed her head. A somewhat blank look could be seen in her eyes as she thought back to events of the past, but after a moment, she sighed, and gave him a curtseying bow.

“Greetings from a humble commoner, Arch-Emperor!!”

Her form of greeting instantly caused the gap between them to widen.

The two of them stood there quietly for a long moment before she quietly closed the window and blew out the lamp, casting her room into silent darkness.

Bai Xiaochun stood there under the osmanthus tree for a while, unsure of what he was feeling. Finally, he sighed and vanished, reappearing outside of the Spirit Advent King’s official residence.

The second familiar aura he had detected earlier came from a woman named Xu Shan.

Years ago, she had been like an explosive dragon, and after becoming completely infatuated with him, had chased him relentlessly. Although she was still beautiful, she was now visibly older than before. She was unaware of his arrival, and he didn’t speak to her. He just watched her for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, then left.

All of a sudden, there was one person in particular that he realized he missed dearly.

“Du Lingfei….” he murmured. He left Arch-Emperor City, to fly on a quick tour of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty’s immortal domain. However, no matter how he searched with his divine sense, he couldn’t find any clues as to Du Lingfei’s whereabouts.

It was not his first time looking for her; he had searched on numerous occasions. The Eternal Immortal Domains were vast, but no amount of searching had led him to even a single clue.

According to what Daoist Heavenspan had said, he had also searched for her, to no avail.

The night passed quickly.

Eventually, the sun began to cast its rays out onto the lands. As Bai Xiaochun hovered there some distance away from Arch-Emperor City, he looked around at the world, and realized that he had once again grown up a bit.

As the dark of night was slowly driven away, the world seemed calm and peaceful. Bai Xiaochun sighed, his breath turning into a cloud of steam.

“I just hope everyone can be happy, for all eternity….” He was the only one who could hear his murmured words. Unfortunately, he knew that the peace and quiet of the moment were only temporary. Inevitably, something unexpected would happen, and the calm would be shattered.

It could all happen very quickly. If the Vile-Emperor or the Saint-Emperor made a move on him, they would quickly realize that he didn’t have any Archaean Luminescence.

And if that happened, then the only thing which awaited him would be the dark of night. And the Arch-Emperor Dynasty would go with him!

“I have to become a real archaean! Only then will I truly qualify to contend with the other imperial dynasties!” Slowly, his heart began to grow calm. He knew that wasting time complaining about his situation would do no good. And there was only one thing he could do. “Practice cultivation!”

Looking up, he vanished, to reappear in his private meditation chamber in the imperial palace. Settling down cross-legged, he closed his eyes and immersed himself in cultivation.

He had reached a stage where he couldn’t simply practice ordinary breathing techniques to advance his cultivation. That was especially true considering that his Time Immemorial Codex had not yet been completed.

Unfortunately, the Daoist magic that came with the third level of the codex, which he called the Future Will, continued to slip out of his grasp.

Not even using his sovereign aura had helped; he had been missing some form of enlightenment. But now, his thoughts and emotions were calm, and as he worked, the Future Will began to slowly take shape. It was almost like augury, and yet, not.

As his spiritual power coursed through his energy passageways, the Future Will began to grow clearer, and he felt more free and clear than ever. He even started to form a strange resonance with the world around him.

He wasn’t sure how much time passed. Perhaps days. Perhaps months. He lost track of the flow of time. Unfortunately, he was stuck in an endless, dead cycle, and he couldn’t complete the final step to create Future Will.

But then, one morning at dawn… he heard the sound of a baby crying. It broke his concentration as it echoed through the imperial palace, causing him to shiver. Despite the fact that he was immersed in cultivation, he couldn’t miss the fact that a new life had come into the world, a life that was connected to his own blood!!

In that very moment, the dead cycle he was stuck in quivered. The birth of his child seemed to represent a limitless future, causing his heart to shiver and his mind to spin…. In that very moment, everything clicked!

The final level of the Time Immemorial Codex, the Future Will, was a success!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1218 awe-chapter-1219

As Bai Xiaochun made his breakthrough, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was on high alert. Masses of cultivators stood guard outside of Arch-Emperor City, ready to fight to the death against any potential invaders!

It was a day of utmost importance to the citizens of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. Today… the emperor’s children came into the world!

When the sound of a baby crying echoed out from the imperial palace, the large group of devas who were standing guard directly outside erupted into cheering. Soon, the cheering spread to the countless other citizens in the city at large.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes. Forgetting all about his newly developed technique, he rushed over to find Song Junwan’s midwife rushing out of that wing of the palace, flanked by a whole entourage of female cultivators, and holding a baby!

“Congratulations, Your Majesty,” she said, hurrying over. “May I present your daughter!” With that, she carefully handed the baby over to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun couldn’t stop his hands from trembling as he gently accepted the baby. Moments ago, she had been crying, but as soon as she was in his arms, she looked at him, her little eyes sparkling like stars. Then she laughed.

It was a crisp, clear little laugh that seemed like the rising sun. As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard it, his heart melted!

“My daughter! This is my daughter! Bonuses! Everybody gets a bonus to their salary!” Laughing contentedly, he began to walk around randomly, staring at his daughter the entire time. He almost looked like a child. Then he hurried into Song Junwan’s wing of the palace, where he found her laying on her bed, her face a bit pale.

“Junwan, look! It’s our daughter!” Bursting with excitement, he began to pace back and forth. His daughter seemed a bit startled at first, but then started laughing again. She seemed excited, so much so that if her hands weren’t bound with swaddling, she might have started clapping.

To everyone present, her cute laughter sounded like the most natural thing in the world.

Song Junwan looked at the baby in Bai Xiaochun’s arms, a motherly smile on her face. Then she glared at Bai Xiaochun.

“Aren't you a bit old to be acting like a kid?!”

By this time, Li Qinghou, the Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, and many other familiar faces had gathered outside of the imperial palace. Soon, word spread that a little princess had been born. Li Qinghou threw his head back and laughed loudly, and the Grand Heavenmaster was visibly excited, as was everyone else. The Giant Ghost King seemed particularly pleased.

“A daughter!” he thought. “Good. That means Zimo’s standing will be a bit more secure!”

Word began to spread through the city, and eventually out of the city. Before long, everyone in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was talking about the news.

Meanwhile, in another section of the palace, Zhou Zimo was being attended to by her midwife and a host of other female cultivators. Bai Xiaochun had not forgotten about her, but was too excited to leave Song Junwan and his daughter, whom he had already fallen in love playing with. Of course, Song Junwan knew that he had other important responsibilities to attend to, and in a rare show of warmth, eventually shooed him away.

Moved, he kissed the top of her head, and held his daughter in his arms as he headed toward Zhou Zimo’s wing of the palace.

Almost as soon as he reached his destination, he heard the crying of a baby, a cry that was even more sonorous than his daughter’s. It was almost like thunder! Even more startling, it caused all cultivators in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty who had the blood of the Heavenspan Realm within them to feel physically shaken!

It was a reaction from the blood itself, and even affected Bai Xiaochun. Shaken, he stopped in place, his eyes wide as he looked over at Zhou Zimo’s room. Shockingly, a pillar of crimson light could be seen from that direction, rising up into the heavens!

All the lands trembled, and the clouds seethed. At the same time, the aura of the Undying Codex spread out in all directions, causing numerous citizens to gasp, and then reflexively drop to their knees to kowtow.

“Damn… quite the showoff, huh…?” For some reason, Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt a bit jealous.

“You’ve just been born, and you’re already making such a big scene? Nothing like that ever happened for me…. And how come that aura seems to have surpassed the level of the Undying Skin? You’re already in the Undying Heavenly King level?” Even as these thoughts ran through his head, his daughter, seemingly startled, began to cry again. This time, her crying was different than before, and almost seemed defiant. It seemed to contain power that could pierce all the way to one’s soul, and represented something that could live forever. It was the type of power that could tug at the hearts and minds of countless individuals, and could sow chaos in heaven and earth!

Even more shocking was that, in addition to the crimson pillar of light shining up into the sky, the image of a Live Forever Lamp appeared in the sky above his daughter, which seemed to rival the pillar of light in terms of magnificence!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes nearly popped out of his skull, and he almost dropped his daughter. If he was jealous because of the aura of Zhou Zimo’s child, then he almost couldn’t breathe when he realized what kind of aura his daughter had.

“The Live Forever Codex!!” His mind was spinning with incredulity at the fact that his daughter innately possessed the aura of the Live Forever Codex.

“Are they kids, or monsters?!” he murmured. Meanwhile, the Grand Heavenmaster and other important figures were visibly stunned. But then, their shock turned into excitement!

“Your Majesty, with children like this, our Arch-Emperor Dynasty will last for all eternity!!”

Amidst the cheering, Bai Xiaochun looked down at his daughter, and then in the direction of Zhou Zimo’s room, and a smile broke out on his face.

“Ah, whatever. If these little buggers are awesome, then so be it! In fact, I hope they surpass me! That way I can eventually retire and spend my days having fun instead of being an emperor!” Already entranced with the thought, he hurried over to Zhou Zimo’s room. As he did, the door opened and the midwife emerged, baby in her arms.

“Congratulations, Your Majesty. May I present your son!”

“Bonuses! Salary bonuses for everyone!” Laughing, he held his daughter in one arm and his son in the other, and danced with joy. It was almost as if he had forgotten that he was in the imperial palace. Then, he hurried in to see Zhou Zimo, who looked weak, but in high spirits.

Unfortunately, his daughter was still crying, and now his son was crying even louder. It was nearly painful to the ears, and no matter how Bai Xiaochun tried to soothe them, they wouldn’t stop. Somewhat annoyed, Zhou Zimo waved at the midwife to intervene. However, Bai Xiaochun refused any help.

“If they want to cry, let them cry! What's wrong with crying? I love them whether they cry or not.” Zhou Zimo didn’t know what to say to that. Having placated her, Bai Xiaochun rushed out excitedly with his children in his arms to find Li Qinghou, the Grand Heavenmaster, and everyone else who was waiting outside of the palace.

“Uncle Li! Grand Heavenmaster! Look, my kids!” Bursting with enthusiasm, he proceeded to show off his children to the crowd.

“Eldest Brother, come take a look! Hey, Xu Baocai, Master God-Diviner! What do you think? Look, my kids!”

Everyone was laughing delightedly, especially the Giant Ghost King. Although he put on a show of looking at Bai Xiaochun's daughter, his eyes were glued to his grandson, and he was clearly itching to hold him.

As for Li Qinghou, his heart was swelling with emotion. Bai Xiaochun had been like a child of his own, and therefore, these two children were like grandchildren to him. "Xiaochun, have you thought of names for the two of them?"

"Names?" Bai Xiaochun looked down first at his daughter, his eyes shining with pride. "Of course I came up with some. Alright, everyone. What do you think of the names I came up with?"

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1219 awe-chapter-1220

Li Qinghou instantly regretted asking that question. If he didn’t understand Bai Xiaochun, then nobody did, but in his moment of excitement, he had momentarily forgotten what type of person he was dealing with. As soon as he saw Bai Xiaochun’s visible excitement regarding the subject of names, he got a very bad premonition.

He wasn’t the only one to suddenly have a bad feeling. The Grand Heavenmaster sucked in a breath, and Patriarch Spirit Stream’s eyes widened in shock. And it almost wasn’t necessary to mention Big Fatty Zhang, Xu Baocai and Master God-Diviner.

Strange expressions appeared on the faces of all present. Even the most simple-minded person wouldn’t need to spend much thought to come to the conclusion that Bai Xiaochun… would come up with some very unusual names.

Most nervous of all was the Giant Ghost King, who, upon realizing that his grandson might live his entire life with a very unpleasant name, interjected, “I came up with some names, too. I’ll go first--”

“Just hold on, father-in-law!” Bai Xiaochun interrupted with a glare; there was no way he would let anyone steal the limelight when it came to revealing some good names.

The Giant Ghost King grimaced and sighed, secretly cursing Li Qinghou for what he had instigated. As for Li Qinghou, he was really starting to get nervous, and was just about to say something when Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat loudly and started talking.

“I've picked a very impressive name for my son. Majestic even. He will be named… Bai Dada!!” By this point, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining brightly. He had thought of many names over the past few days, but none of them had seemed impressive enough. But this name made him feel like he had been struck by lightning, and left him shivering with enthusiasm.

He was actually convinced that this was one of the best names he had ever heard in his life. In fact, in all creation, there were only two names which could possibly match up to it!

One was his own name, and the other was his daughter’s.

As soon as he said the name, gasps could be heard. Big Fatty Zhang nearly started laughing, but ended up in a choking fit.

Bai Xiaochun looked over at him.

“What’s wrong, Eldest Brother?”

Big Fatty Zhang cleared his throat.

“Uh… nothing!” he said. “That’s a great name. Really! It even has the da character like my name. I guess we're connected by destiny!”

Feeling very pleased, Bai Xiaochun looked over at Master God-Diviner, who was staring at him blankly. After a few moments passed, Master God-Diviner’s expression turned somber, and he began to make some calculations with his fingers, as though he were performing a divination.

Pleased with how seriously Master God-Diviner was taking the situation, Bai Xiaochun turned to look at Xu Baocai.

Looking very excited, Xu Baocai said, “It’s the type of name… that resounds like heavenly thunder, that sounds like the heavens singing in my ears! It’s especially appropriate considering that the grand prince’s birth was accompanied by signs and portents in heaven and earth! Only our beloved prince could qualify to bear such a name, a name personally devised by you, Your Majesty!”

Xu Baocai didn’t seem to care at all that everyone else was likely despising him for his little speech.

Bai Xiaochun was very happy. However, Li Qinghou, the Grand Heavenmaster, Patriarch Spirit Stream, and the other members of the senior generation all seemed completely taken aback.

“Your Majesty, this name….”

“Xiaochun, why don’t you pick another name?”

Most of them were trying to be a bit discreet, but the Giant Ghost King was not.

“Hell no!” he shouted. “There’s no way you’re naming my grandson Bai Dada!! Are you kidding me? What kind of name is that?! If you’re going to name him that, what are you going to name your daughter? Bai Xiaoxiao?!”

Eyes sparkling, Bai Xiaochun laughed. Feeling prouder of himself than ever, he nodded vigorously.

“You really understand me well, father-in-law. You hit the nail on the head. My daughter’s name will be Bai Xiaoxiao. What do you think? Together, Bai Dada and Bai Xiaoxiao will be unparalleled under heaven!”

At this point, everyone began to object. However, despite the fact that Bai Xiaochun wasn’t generally a stubborn person, he wouldn’t budge an inch when it came to the names. No matter what people said, he refused to change them.

Eventually, people began to sigh in defeat. And the Giant Ghost King was nearly on the verge of tears, and felt like he might explode at any moment. It actually made Bai Xiaochun feel a bit bad.

After hemming and hawing for quite a while,he said, “Alright, listen. We can’t change Bai. And we can’t change Da. But since you’re all making the same argument, I guess we can change the third character. Come one, father-in-law, you’re a bit old to be getting all worked up like this!”

At long last, the Giant Ghost King began to calm down. He stood there thoughtfully for a moment, his eyes bloodshot, until he finally gritted his teeth and suggested a new third character for the name!

“Let's change the final character to bao!”

“Bai Dabao?” Bai Xiaochun’s lips twitched slightly. As for the rest of the crowd, they once again looked stunned. Li Qinghou’s jaw dropped as he looked over at the still fuming Giant Ghost King, and then back at Bai Xiaochun. Then he simply sighed.

The Grand Heavenmaster stood there quietly, and Big Fatty Zhang and the other members of the younger generation all exchanged awkward glances. To them… it almost seemed like Zhou Zimo and the Giant Ghost King weren’t related at all.

“That’s right,” the Giant Ghost King said loftily. “Call him Bai Dabao. It’s a lot better than that Bai Dada that you came up with!”

Bai Xiaochun scowled a bit, and then looked down at his son nestled in his arm. In the end, he didn’t want to make the Giant Ghost King too angry, and therefore, had to agree.

“Alright, fine. It’s settled. His name is Bai Dabao, and her name is Bai Xiaoxiao. And remember: this isn’t my decision, it’s *our* decision.” Bai Xiaochun was worried that Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo might get angry with him, but was convinced that these names were really good. Thus, he dragged everyone else in with him on this decision.

It was hard to say if Bai Dabao could understand what was going on at this young age, but as soon as he heard his name, he started crying.

In contrast, Bai Xiaoxiao was laughing merrily, as though she was very pleased. It made her seem even more charming.

After a bit of time, Dabao apparently got tired and went to sleep, prompting Bai Xiaochun to gingerly hand him over to the midwife. Xiaoxiao remained in high spirits, and continued to laugh and chuckle as Bai Xiaochun held her. She actually seemed very curious about all of the strangers around her.

“Girls are definitely better!” Bai Xiaochun thought as he looked at his daughter, his heart swelling with love.

The following days were a time of jubilation in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, especially Arch-Emperor City, which was decorated with lanterns and colored banners, and was constantly abuzz with excitement.

Messages of congratulations came from the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and most of the celestials sent expensive gifts. Even Reverend Devourer and Prince Ur-Demon sent gifts, despite having been captured by Bai Xiaochun in the past.

And there was little need to mention the people who owed favors to Bai Xiaochun, such as Sima Yunhua, Celestial Aged Spirit, Gu Tianjun, and Chen Su.

The biggest gifts came from the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor. After all, they were all involved in a complicated relationship in which the three of them controlled everything under heaven. And thus, the gifts they gave were spectacular. The Vile-Emperor sent a large stone, and the Saint-Emperor sent two lotus leaves from the lotus flower in his heavenly pond!

Those two leaves were incalculably valuable. After all, the only place in the Eternal Immortal Domains that had leaves like that was that heavenly pond. And the main lotus flower only had eighteen leaves to begin with.

Nowadays, it only had fourteen left, and with two of them being given to Bai Xiaochun, it meant that the lotus flower now only had twelve leaves.

Bai Xiaochun was quite moved by that gift. As for the stone given by the Vile-Emperor, most people would take it to be equally precious. After all, the gift he gave… was made from the flesh and blood of the sovereign in the sky over their heads!

However, Bai Xiaochun knew that there was something suspicious about the Vile-Emperor’s identity, and was therefore very careful about the gift he had sent. Because of that, he didn’t let his children have any contact with it. And the killing intent which flickered in his eyes after receiving the gift took a long moment to fade.

There were also numerous gifts of congratulations that came from within the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. However, only people who had actually known Bai Xiaochun back in the days of the Heavenspan Realm were able to meet with him personally.

Both Chen Manyao and Xu Shan came together to offer gifts. Chen Manyao seemed quite at ease, but Xu Shan was more conflicted. However, she seemed resigned to reality. After giving a respectful smile, she and Chen Manyao turned to leave.

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything, and sighed deeply as he saw them begin to walk off.

He was not the puny cultivator he had been years ago. He was the Arch-Emperor now, and although he had vast and nearly unlimited power, there were still certain things he couldn’t do.

Although these two women had been connected to him by destiny in the past, their lives had changed in profound ways. All it would have taken was one word, and he could have prevented the both of them from leaving, but that wasn't what he wanted.

When you don’t care for someone, it’s easy to say anything you want to them. But after you care for them, there are some things that just can’t be said. This was a truth Bai Xiaochun didn’t understand in the past, but understood fully now.

After escorting Xu Shan and Chen Manyao away, he returned to the palace hall, and was about to go check on

Dabao and Xiaoxiao when he heard a crafty and shrill voice coming from behind him.

“Hey little Xiaochun. Lord Turtle is back. Get me some good food and drink, otherwise I’ll stamp your son’s face with a turtle mark!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1220 awe-chapter-1221

Even the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor would be apprehensive to speak to Bai Xiaochun in such a way. Only the little turtle would possibly have the gall to do so.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw dropped. Then, even as the little turtle’s voice continued to echo out, Bai Xiaochun took a step backward, and vanished.

A moment later, he appeared next to some ornamental rocks roughly 300 meters behind where he had been standing moments before. Reaching out in front of him, he made a grasping motion.

As he did, the air around him shattered, and a scream could be heard. The little turtle appeared, little more than a string of afterimages as he accelerated with shocking speed.

However, this was not the same Bai Xiaochun from the past. Snorting coldly, he took a step forward, which caused everything in the area to seemingly fold in on itself. It almost looked like water rippling. Then everything returned to normal. He had performed something like a sealing magic, except vastly more powerful, locking down the entire area!

No matter how the little turtle tried to accelerate, he only ended up slowing down. His eyes lit up with incredulity, and he struggled mightily, but was unable to escape the hand which then clamped down onto him!

Bai Xiaochun felt immeasurably proud of himself. After all the years which had passed, this was his first time he had successfully caught the little turtle before he could escape. Holding him up in front of his face, he said, “What did you just say, little turtle? I didn’t hear clearly.”

The little turtle was clearly stunned, but at the same time, was not one to accept defeat easily. Glaring, he prepared to let loose a string of insults. Before he could, Bai Xiaochun, who was far too familiar with him, shook him back and forth violently.

In response, the turtle shrieked, “Oh venerated master, owner of mine, Lord Bai… stop shaking me. Dammit! Since when did you get so strong?

“I was just joking around! How could I possibly put a turtle mark on your son, Lord Bai? I would never! My love for him knows no bounds! Hahaha! Come on, we haven’t seen each other for a long time, how could I not joke around a bit!?” His pleas fell on deaf ears, though, as Bai Xiaochun continued to shake him around.

“You were supposed to stay in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty! What did you run away for!? Thanks to you, my entire love letter collection is gone!” The mere thought of the love letters immediately caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to sink.

At this point, the little turtle couldn’t help but be angry.

“You think I wanted to run away? Everything was going great in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty! But then you came and said that if I stuck around for a bit longer, you would proclaim me the God of Beasts!

“God of Beasts! That sounds way better than Saint-Turtle! You know how long I sat around waiting, hoping, wishing you would come? But you never did. So of course I had to come looking for you!” With each sentence, the little turtle spoke with greater resolve. And by the end, he was glaring directly at Bai Xiaochun, who glared right back at him. A tense moment passed, whereupon Bai Xiaochun started laughing. He was obviously aware that the turtle had been joking with him. And the turtle knew that he had also been joking. Even as the two of them laughed, Bai Xiaochun released his grip.

“Ah, whatever. Henceforth, you are the Arch-Emperor Dynasty’s God of Beasts!”

Even as the words left his mouth, a strange power was unleashed that not even Bai Xiaochun was aware of. As a result, the little turtle shivered, and then his eyes began to shine brightly. Apparently, an invisible natural law was at work, which was imbuing him with strange powers.

All of a sudden, the little turtle began to emit dazzling light!

“Woo-hooo!” the little turtle shouted, flying around in delight. Bai Xiaochun continued to chuckle. Although he didn't want to cause problems for the Saint-Emperor because of the little turtle, now that the little turtle had come back of his own accord, he wouldn’t betray him by giving him away.

However, he still needed consider matters as a whole.

“Make sure to keep a low profile! Keep your head down! It would be really annoying if the Saint-Emperor came back looking for you.” With that, he ignored the excited little turtle and headed back into the palace.

After checking on his children, and spending some time chatting with Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, he contentedly went into seclusion to work on his cultivation.

After all, although his previous session had ended successfully, he had not yet completed all the work that needed to be done to perfect his Future Will.

First, he spent some time working out the various details that needed to be handled. Then, he went to work, calling upon the powers of the technique, which had already become somewhat instinctual to him. At this point, he began to formulate the divine ability that would be the manifestation of the third level of the Time Immemorial Codex.

“I have my Sutra of the Former and my Sutra of the Present. My third divine ability should be… a Sutra of the Future!” When it came to his Sutra of the Former and Sutra of the Present, the previous limits of his cultivation base meant that he had been unable to release their true and ultimate level of power.

But now that he had archaean battle prowess, he was confident that the other two sutras would be even more shocking than before. Furthermore, because of how infrequently he had used them, they definitely fell into the category of trump cards.

He had put a lot of thought into his Sutra of the Future, which made things go much more smoothly now that he was actually working on it. Sitting down cross-legged, he began to perform auguries, speeding them up with his sovereign aura. In some ways, it was actually like working on a medicine formula.

Half a year sped by in a blur. It had been a year since he had used up his Archaean Luminescence during his fight with the Vile-Emperor, which meant that he now had those fifteen shots back at his disposal.

Now that he had a safety net of sorts, it made it a lot easier to focus on his auguries.

A few more months passed. One evening as he sat there in his private chamber, he suddenly opened his eyes, within which was something that looked like a red flower, in the midst of blooming…. The flower was formed from numerous tiny magical symbols, which interlocked with each other to form the shape of a flower…. Upon closer inspection, it looked very much like the legendary pāramitā lily which grew in the land of the dead.

As the bright red pāramitā lily took shape, Bai Xiaochun's aura began to transform significantly, growing emptier, as though it didn't belong in the world.

Eventually, he bowed his head, and lifted his right hand. As he did, the red magical symbols which made up the pāramitā flower began to shine with dazzling light, which swirled onto his palm to create… a bright red pāramitā lily.

"This is the divine ability for the third level of my Time Immemorial Codex… the Sutra of Future Pāramitā!

"As for how strong it is…." He suddenly vanished, to appear within Gongsun Wan'er's official residence. She was still in secluded meditation, working on recovering from her injuries, a type of cultivation that wasn't harmful to interrupt.

If he wanted to, he could mask his presence from her, making it impossible for her to detect him. However, he did not. He let his aura spread out, and when she sensed him, her eyes opened, and she saw the red pāramitā lily in his hand.

Almost immediately, she felt herself being attracted to the flower, which clearly emanated a feeling of death. In fact, the longer she looked at it, the more she began to pant, as though the flower contained some mysterious force which she found impossible to resist.

“That’s….”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything in response. Waving his finger at her, he sent the pāramitā lily flying toward her with such speed that she couldn't dodge out of the way. As soon as it hit her, it sank into her body.

“This is a new divine ability of mine. Go ahead and attack me.” With that, he stood there silently, a faint smile on his face.

Gongsun Wan’er hesitated for a moment, then her eyes flickered as she performed an incantation gesture and waved her finger at him. Instantly, a stream of black smoke filled with evil ghosts shot toward Bai Xiaochun, which then slammed into his chest.

As he stood there unmoving, Gongsun Wan’er staggered backward, clutching at her own chest. Thankfully, she had only used eighty percent of her power in her attack. Looking at him incredulously, she said, “How could this be happening!?!?!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1221 awe-chapter-1222

“This divine ability is called the Sutra of Future Pāramitā. By implanting a pāramitā lily into my enemy, I create a connection to them. Whenever I’m injured, they are also injured. Of course, injuries I inflict on an opponent will likewise return to me.” Bai Xiaochun was completely confident in his Sutra of the Future. After all, he had put a lot of thought into how to make the technique truly roguish.

With his tough fleshly body, and powers of regeneration, any opponent he faced would definitely be unlucky, and would hurt themselves merely by landing a blow on him.

“So, what do you think?” he asked proudly, waving his hand to extract the red pāramitā lily from her.

Actually, there was a second usage of the Sutra of the Future that was even more shocking: he could intentionally injure himself to inflict wounds on his opponent….

After gritting her teeth for a long moment, she slowly said. “It’s completely shameless!”

With that, she waved her hand to dismiss him.

He rubbed his nose awkwardly. Seeing that she wasn’t interested in talking with him further, he went back to his private chamber. As time marched on, he would occasionally spend time with his family, but focused mainly on cultivation and twenty-three-colored flame.

Obviously, he had not given up on multi-colored flame. And although he had not yet reached the point of being confident enough to resurrect Bai Hao, he still felt confident in being able to succeed eventually.

The sun and moon seemed to become a blur as two years passed. Although he didn’t achieve a cultivation base breakthrough, he made steady progress. Dabao and Xiaoxiao were growing up strong and healthy. Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo often rolled their eyes because of the names Bai Xiaochun had given them, and had repeatedly tried to convince him to change them. However, he wouldn't budge on the issue.

Eventually, the two women simply got used to the names.

And the names didn’t have any negative influence on the cultivation progress of the mothers. Thanks to the nearly endless resources they had access to, Song Junwan broke through to the Deva Realm, and Zhou Zimo eventually reached the Demigod Realm.

However, compared to Hou Xiaomei, they were actually a bit slow. With Gongsun Wan’er’s help, Hou Xiaomei made rapid progress. In two short years, she climbed from the mid Deva Realm to the late Deva Realm. Soon, she would catch up to Zhou Zimo and become a demigod.

Unfortunately, it was to Hou Xiaomei’s displeasure that she didn’t get any sense that she was pregnant. Despite the fact that she had learned from Song Junwan that it took quite some time for any effects to appear, Hou Xiaomei was too nervous, and went to visit Bai Xiaochun privately on numerous occasions….

Over the course of the two years, more and more Heavenspan Realm cultivators flocked to the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, which was flourishing. The population rose, with spirit enhancement becoming the pillar of the nation. More and more grandmasters arose, becoming famous in all of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Because of the peace treaty, relations with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and Vile-Emperor Dynasty were good. The only downside was that the Arch-Emperor Dynasty only had one celestial, Gongsun Wan’er.

The Grand Heavenmaster had been in the great circle of the Demigod Realm for many years, but was always wrapped up in affairs of state. However, now that the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was on the right track, both Bai Xiaochun and Gongsun Wan’er urged him to focus more on cultivation. With their help, and the addition of certain immortal pills that Bai Xiaochun provided from his treasured fan, the Grand Heavenmaster finally reached the point of a breakthrough!

It was very important to Bai Xiaochun, a major milestone for the Grand Heavenmaster himself, and something vital for the Arch-Emperor Dynasty as a whole. Only by increasing the number of celestials could they possibly ensure that their nation was truly strong.

Much to Bai Xiaochun’s delight, the Giant Ghost King was also reaching the point of a breakthrough!

Earlier, the Giant Ghost King had not been making such quick progress, and Bai Xiaochun had assumed that the War Champion King would actually be the first to break through. However, he had forgotten about how cautious the Giant Ghost King was.

The Giant Ghost King couldn’t stop thinking about how his grandson was the highest-ranking prince in the nation, and that left him feeling very nervous. In his view, his most important mission now was to make sure his grandson was safe.

As one of the four heavenly kings of the Wildlands, he knew exactly how imperial dynasties worked. It was not unheard of for a concubine to kill the highest-ranking prince in order to have her own son earn the right of inheritance. Bai Xiaochun would have little or no control over such situations. And therefore, there was only one way for the Giant Ghost King to ensure that his grandson was entirely worthy to hold the position of grand prince.... He needed to become a celestial!

Only by being a celestial could he truly watch over and protect his grandson. After all, he knew that Bai Xiaochun had a lot of dubious relationships with various female companions, and could very well have more children in the future. It wouldn’t be impossible for some spectacularly talented rival to appear in the future.

The biggest threat of all was probably Gongsun Wan’er. It was common knowledge in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty that she and Bai Xiaochun had an unusual relationship. Such rumors had been floating around since the day Bai Xiaochun first arrived in Saint-Emperor City.

Furthermore, the fact that the Grand Heavenmaster seemed to want to play the matchmaker caused the Giant Ghost King to feel even more nervous.

“If Gongsun Wan’er becomes a part of the imperial harem, and gives birth to another son, then considering that she's a celestial, it could be a big threat to my grandson!” Out of fear of that very circumstance, the Giant Ghost King held nothing back in his attempts to further his cultivation.

Bai Xiaochun had no idea what was going on in the Giant Ghost King’s mind, so when he saw him advancing by leaps and bounds, he was very taken aback.

At the same time, the War Champion King, Nine Serenities King, and Spirit Advent King, as well as the eastern and northern demigods, were also surprised, and went into secluded meditation to pursue breakthroughs of their own.

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with all of that. With so many impending breakthroughs, it seemed that a new era was on the way for the Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

Three months later, the Grand Heavenmaster’s Celestial Tribulation arrived. Thanks to all of the vast preparations the Grand Heavenmaster had made, he passed his tribulation with ease.

After all, he had been the third most powerful expert in the Heavenspan Realm, after the gravekeeper and Daoist Heavenspan.

Although the tribulation he incited was not as shocking as Bai Xiaochun’s, it was terrifying to behold. However, he didn’t need any outside assistance. Soon, the voice of the Eternal Mother spoke into the ears of all the living beings in the Eternal Lands, provoking cheers within the Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

Because Gongsun Wan’er was not actually from the Heavenspan Realm, that meant that Bai Xiaochun was their first celestial, and the Grand Heavenmaster was the second!

The Grand Heavenmaster took a portion of his Daoseed and gave it to Bai Xiaochun, which he enshrined in the imperial palace!

Not long after the Grand Heavenmaster achieved his breakthrough, the people of the Eternal Immortal Domains were again shaken by the Arch-Emperor Dynasty when the Giant Ghost King's Celestial Tribulation came!

Unlike the Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King had pushed forward too recklessly, and as his tribulation began, it became clear that he was destined to fail.

The Giant Ghost King knew that, but was convinced that Bai Xiaochun wouldn't let it happen. First the Grand Heavenmaster stepped in to assist, and even Gongsun Wan'er helped. Finally, when that wasn't enough, Bai Xiaochun sighed and performed a right-handed incantation gesture, causing a crimson pāramitā lily to appear.

After the flower entered the Giant Ghost King's body, the ill effects of the tribulation were transferred to Bai Xiaochun. Because of that assistance, the Giant Ghost King's tribulation became much easier.

And thus, despite nearly being killed, the Giant Ghost King passed his tribulation.

As the voice of the Eternal Mother spoke to all living beings, the Giant Ghost King struggled to his feet, threw his head back, and laughed uproariously.

The Arch-Emperor Dynasty had another celestial!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1222 awe-chapter-1223

From now on, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty would have three celestials!

Although that still wasn’t as much as the other two imperial dynasties, they were now catching up. When small-scale friction arose, it wouldn’t always fall to Gongsun Wan’er to handle matters. The Grand Heavenmaster and Giant Ghost King would now be able to join the fighting.

Furthermore, upon discovering how useful Bai Xiaochun’s Future Will was, the Grand Heavenmaster created a whole set of plans that would culminate in the War Champion King and other demigod experts getting a chance to become celestials.

The Saint-Emperor Dynasty and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty took the matter very seriously. Obviously, when it came to a fighting force of celestials, it wouldn’t be long before the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was in a very good position.

Despite that knowledge, there was little the other two dynasties could do about the situation. In his fear, the Saint-Emperor chose to try to maintain the best relations possible with Bai Xiaochun, whereas the Vile-Emperor went into secluded meditation.

Despite the increased threat the Arch-Emperor Dynasty posed within the Eternal Immortal Domains, there were no negative repercussions. They only continued to grow in terms of power and glory.

It was a huge boost to the demigods who were currently working toward a breakthrough. All of them went crazy in their cultivation, aided by the Grand Heavenmaster and Bai Xiaochun, and the medicinal pills they provided. Their progress was rapid, to say the least.

As the Arch-Emperor Dynasty continued to grow and develop, five years passed. By this point, Bai Dabao and Bai Xiaoxiao were both seven years old. They were beautiful children, with charming dimples that appeared whenever they smiled or laughed.

Bai Xiaoxiao’s eyes were particularly bright, and from the look of things, she was going to be exceedingly attractive when she grew up. As for Bai Dabao, he was pure and fair, and had a stubborn air to him. Everyone in Arch-Emperor City loved the children, and treated them like they were chosen from the heavens.

The imperial palace was their playground, and they were constantly being chased around by special guards and female cultivators, who were always telling them to slow down and stop running….

The children had been born with shocking natural talents, to the point where even the Grand Heavenmaster was shocked. By the time they were seven, they already had Core Formation cultivation bases. And Bai Xiaoxiao, who was the older sister, was in late Core Formation!

When it came to fleshly body power, Bai Xiaoxiao’s was rather ordinary, but Bai Dabao had already reached the Nascent Soul level!

In terms of personality, neither of them were very much like Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaoxiao had a fiery temper, whereas Bai Dabao was impulsive, and didn’t seem the least bit afraid of dying. In fact, he was curious about everything, and loved challenging people to fights.

Bai Xiaochun noticed these things early on, and tried to correct their errant behavior. Unfortunately, no amount of persuasion on his part did any good….

Neither child was the least bit afraid of him. Conversely, they were terrified of Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo. And Bai Dabao, who wasn’t afraid of anything else in the world, was most definitely afraid of his older sister.

**

In an out-of-the-way location within the imperial palace, Bai Xiaoxiao was currently staring furiously at Bai Dabao.

“This is all your fault Dabao!”

Bai Dabao stood there, his head hanging, not daring to respond. From the time he had been small all the way until now, when he was seven years old, he had always suffered at the hands of his sister. He always got the short end of the stick. When the two of them caused trouble, it always ended up being his fault, and when they did something praiseworthy, his sister took the credit….

From their parents’ perspective, she was charming and obedient, but to him, she was a complete and utter tyrant….

All it took was for her to start crying, and their parents would rush over to comfort her. Meanwhile, he would be forced to stand there, stunned but stubborn, as his parents scolded him.

On the one hand, Bai Dabao admired his sister, but on the other hand, he feared her. At the same time, he loved her.

Whenever she found something new and delicious to eat, or something fun to do, she would always think of him first. Thanks to her temptations, he thought of her as the best sister in the whole world….

“Do you know how long it took me to come up with this plan?” Bai Xiaoxiao said angrily. “Do you know how much preparation it took? And you actually showed up late by an entire incense stick’s worth of time?! If this doesn’t work out, Dabao, then I'm definitely going to beat you up!”

“I got held up by my mom!” Bai Dabao said, nearly under his breath. “I… I’ll definitely try extra hard this time, alright?”

Bai Xiaoxiao nodded firmly in response. Waving her hand, she produced an immortal fruit that pulsed with so much spiritual energy it was obviously extraordinary. Bai Dabao’s eyes instantly went wide. He knew that the immortal food provided by his father was always particularly beneficial for the fleshly body. And unfortunately, he didn’t get many opportunities to eat food like this.

When Bai Xiaoxiao saw the look of anticipation on her brother’s face, she smiled. “Here, you take it. I don’t practice fleshly body cultivation, so this will help you a lot more than me.”

Bopping her brother on the head, she handed the fruit to him.

Bai Dabao eagerly grabbed it and wolfed it down in a single bite. Then he thumped himself on the chest.

“Don’t worry, sis. I’ll definitely catch you a really awesome pet this time!”

Eyebrows shooting up in delight, Xiaoxiao proceeded to drag Dabao through the palace to one particular remote location. There, she produced a little flag from her bag of holding, which she waved through the air, creating a small cloud that the two of them hopped on. Then, the cloud proceeded to fly them out of the palace!

Of course, the imperial palace was strictly locked down by a powerful spell formation. However, spell formations were vulnerable to people who were familiar with their operation. And Bai Xiaoxiao was something of a genius when it came to spell formations. After much study, she had identified a weakness, and created this little flag to be able to get through it.

Apparently, this was not the first time the two of them had done this. Almost as soon as they vanished, someone stepped out of thin air in the spot they had left from. It was Lu Yuntao, Master God-Diviner’s Daoist partner, who had been secretly keeping an eye on the children. Shaking her head, she vanished.

Lu Yuntao had since officially become a citizen of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and as one of the few female demigods, had been assigned to oversee the palace maids.

As Dabao and Xiaoxiao grew older and more mischievous, and went to greater lengths to get out of the palace, Lu Yuntao had also gone to greater lengths to keep them safe. No matter how many times Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo lectured the children, Xiaoxiao and Dabao never listened, and always managed to find new ways to cause mischief.

To Xiaoxiao and Dabao, the rolling plains and endless jungles outside of Arch-Emperor City were the perfect playground. And the numerous vicious beasts that lurked there were the perfect prey.

Around evening, Xiaoxiao cheered and Dabao huffed for breath as they dragged a massive anaconda back toward the imperial palace.

It had once been the picture of ferocity, but was now covered with wounds. And whenever it struggled, Dabao would punch or kick it viciously, until it eventually just cowered in fear.

“If you dare to act up, I’ll beat you to death!” Dabao shouted. “Behave yourself and be a good pet for my sister. Don’t worry, she’ll take good care of you!” After arriving at the palace, they used Xiaoxiao’s flag to get both themselves and the snake back inside.

The two of them were convinced that no one was the wiser, but the truth was that Bai Xiaochun had been watching the entire time via divine sense. The fact that, at such a young age, they had actually gone out to capture such a terrifying creature caused a frown to appear on his face. He couldn’t help but worry about what disasters might result if they kept doing such things.

“I know that they’re a bit reckless, but I can’t believe they actually went out and caught a snake like that! I wouldn’t have even thought of doing something so dangerous when I was seven!” Snorting coldly, he decided to go teach his children a big lesson. Vanishing from his private chamber, he stepped out of thin air right in front of Xiaoxiao and Dabao.

If Song Junwan or Zhou Zimo had appeared, Dabao would have immediately begun to shiver in fear. But considering that it was only his father, he wasn’t the least bit afraid at all. He even glared a bit at Bai Xiaochun.

Off to the side, Xiaoxiao smiled at him charmingly.

“Daddy!” she said, rushing forward to hug him.

Her voice dispelled about seventy percent of Bai Xiaochun’s anger, but he still tried to look angry. Flicking his sleeve, he launched into a quick speech, “Xiaoxiao, Dabao, you can’t do things like this. You listen to your father. You have to be cautious in everything! You can’t be reckless. You only have one life, and you shouldn’t ever risk it. Look at me! That’s how I’ve lived my life! And that’s the only reason I'm still around today, still working on living forever. If I had been as impulsive as you two, I would have lost my poor little life long ago!”

In response, Xiaoxiao pouted, and Dabao stomped his foot angrily.

“I totally disagree, dad!” Dabao said. “If anyone gets in my way, I just beat ‘em up! What’s the point in making things so complicated!?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1223 awe-chapter-1224

Bai Xiaochun already felt a headache coming on. Over the years, he had repeatedly tried to correct his son’s incorrect view of life, but had never succeeded.

Xiaoxiao was a bit easier to deal with; Dabao was the true headache, and this huge snake was even more evidence of how gutsy he was. And Bai Xiaochun had heard many other stories of things Dabao had done, things that he would never have dared to do at that age….

For example, in recent years, ghosts and souls had gradually become more common, possibly because of the rise of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. And yet Dabao had simply gone out and captured some for himself. He had even captured spies sent over by the Vile-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

And now he had gone and caught a gigantic snake. It was as if these two children actually loved ghosts, snakes, and the like….

They didn’t seem scared of anything in heaven and earth. And Dabao seemed to jump at the chance to beat up anyone who offended him. On more than one occasion, Bai Xiaochun had actually scanned him with divine sense to make sure he was really his own child….

Were it not for the fluctuations within his blood that confirmed he was, Bai Xiaochun would actually have suspected otherwise….

The enormous snake that Dabao had captured actually had a high cultivation base, and had developed intelligence many years ago. Because of some certain types of fruits that it had consumed, it also had particularly powerful divine sense. Seeing that the Arch-Emperor seemed to be speaking up for it, it nervously sent out some divine sense to try to beg for mercy.

However, as soon as it did, Dabao noticed.

“Hey!” he shouted. “How dare you interrupt the grownups when we're talking. Are you just looking to get a beating!?” Eyes shining with ferocious light, he punched and kicked the snake a handful of times.

The snake shrieked in terror and humiliation, but couldn’t do a single thing. Bai Xiaochun looked on, sighing.

“Dabao....” he said, feeling a bit sorry for the snake. Sincerely worried about the inappropriate behavior, he was just trying to think of what to say next, and whether or not he should start to act more strictly, when Xiaoxiao hurried over and pulled Dabao back.

“Dabao, you're supposed to cherish little creatures like that. You can’t hit it!” Xiaoxiao's voice was warm and soft, very pleasant to the ear.

However, that was what Dabao feared most in his sister. In fact, he often feared her more than his own mother. Therefore, he immediately backed down and stood there obediently.

Planting her hands on her hips, Xiaoxiao said, “And you shouldn't be talking to daddy like that, Dabao. He’s worked very hard to give us a happy and peaceful life. You apologize right this minute!”

When Bai Xiaochun saw all of this happening, his heart softened even further, and he felt more than ever that daughters were the best. He thought of how, even as a newborn, she would always laugh when he held her, and it caused warmth to rise up in his heart.

Even as that warmth appeared, Xiaoxiao continued to loudly scold Dabao.

“Dabao, you know that daddy has never been very brave. He was like that even when he was a kid! He’s scared of dying, and you went and brought in a gigantic snake to scare him!?”

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide as he watched his daughter loudly scolding his son. He even started to get a bit dizzy. Just as he had been contemplating how to provide the proper life education for his children, Xiaoxiao accused Dabao of using the snake to try to scare him….

Bai Xiaochun was simply stunned.

“Xiaoxiao,” he said, “you--”

Before he could finish, Xiaoxiao turned to look at him, a charming, innocent smile on her face as she said, “Daddy, Grandpa Qinghou told me all about those snakes that scared you so much when you were a kid. It was from that moment on that you feared *three* things in life: death, ghosts, and snakes! Don’t be scared daddy, I’ll teach Dabao a lesson he won’t forget because of this!”

With that, she turned back to Dabao, who was standing there, head hung low.

“Dabao, this is very, very wrong. You listen to me. If you ever try to scare our daddy again, I’ll beat the crap out of you!”

Looking quite humiliated, Dabao pouted and quietly said, “I won’t scare daddy ever again, sis.”

Bai Xiaochun was now completely bowled over. It was like his daughter could instantly fill blue skies with dark thunderclouds. Off to the side, Lu Yuntao was having a hard time holding back from laughing out loud.

Wanting to cry, but finding no tears to shed, Bai Xiaochun decided that he really had to establish himself as a figure of fatherly authority. Trying to sound as somber as possible, he said, “Xiaoxiao, what you said now was completely incorrect.” Thumping himself on the chest, he continued, “Your daddy--”

But before he could say anything else, Xiaoxiao smiled sweetly and hugged his leg. Looking up at him, she spoke in a very comforting tone.

“Daddy, don't be scared. Dabao doesn’t understand these things, but I’ll teach him. Anyway, the two of us already decided a long time ago that before we even grow up, we’ll make sure to catch all of the snakes and ghosts in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

“By the time we’re grown up, we’ll have them all cleared out. That way, they won’t be able to scare you, daddy. Don’t worry, Dabao and I are here to keep you safe!” Xiaoxiao seemed to be perfectly sincere in everything she was saying, to the point that Bai Xiaochun’s heart twinged in response.

As for Dabao, it seemed to take a bit of effort, but he also nodded and said, “Daddy, I’m not sure why you’re afraid of snakes and ghosts, but sis is right. From now on, you don’t need to be scared. We two are here to keep you safe! We won't let any snakes or ghosts frighten you!”

What the two children were saying was actually the truth. Although they often snuck out of the palace because they thought it was fun, the real reason was the stories that Li Qinghou had told them of Bai Xiaochun’s past. After hearing about the things that scared him, they decided that it was their mission to keep him safe.

To hear the children speaking in such a heartfelt fashion caused Lu Yuntao’s smile to fade away, leaving her eyes glistening with emotion.

Bai Xiaochun was equally moved. Sighing at the realization of what was going on, he decided that now wasn’t the time to try to educate his children. Tousling their hair, he turned to leave. But before he did, he looked over his shoulder.

“Your Grandpa Qinghou is actually wrong. The truth is… your daddy isn’t scared of snakes, or ghosts. He’s actually very brave!” Even as the words left his mouth, he heard the sound of throats being cleared behind him. Turning, he found Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo approaching, enigmatic smiles on their faces as they looked at him. Suddenly feeling embarrassed, he came up with a quick excuse to get away.

After returning to his private meditation chamber, he sat down and thought back on the conversation. Although he was still moved, he was also worried, and wasn’t sure of what to do about the situation.

“I guess I can't force them to change their personalities. They need to walk their own path, and make their own future. The only thing I can do is try my best to protect them.” He smiled.

“It’s nice to have someone trying to keep you safe, especially when it's your own son and daughter.”

Taking a deep breath, he closed his eyes and began to perform more auguries regarding twenty-three-colored flame.

After all the years he had spent doing research and study, he had reached a state of roughly ninety percent enlightenment. Now, he only needed to make some minor adjustments and improvements. He was confident that it wouldn’t be long before he would perfect the formula for twenty-three-colored flame.

Another year passed, and the formula was finished. He opened his eyes excitedly and waved his right hand, causing a mass of souls to erupt from his bag of holding.

However, that was when he sensed something very strange from the direction of Gongsun Wan’er’s official residence!

“That aura…. Something’s wrong!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1224 awe-chapter-1225

The source of the aura was Gongsun Wan’er’s immortal's cave!

Bai Xiaochun had originally expected to detect the aura of a breakthrough. After all, whenever he spent time in secluded meditation, he would occasionally send some divine sense out into Arch-Emperor City to check on things.

And for years now, Gongsun Wan’er had been hoping to break through to the mid Celestial Realm. That fact was no secret; it was known to Bai Xiaochun, the Grand Heavenmaster, and even others.

If Bai Xiaochun had not helped Gongsun Wan’er supplant Ghostmother, then given the resources she had built up, she shouldn’t have had any problem achieving such a breakthrough.

The entire time that Gongsun Wan’er had been in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, she had been in seclusion. Although she had fully absorbed Ghostmother, that was only the first step. And despite the fact that Ghostmother’s consciousness was gone, there were still parts of her that remained.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun sensed the aura, he realized that in addition to the signs of an imminent breakthrough, there were also… fluctuations that indicated that something was struggling to awaken!

And Bai Xiaochun recognized those fluctuations; they belonged to Ghostmother!

Bai Xiaochun’s face fell. Now was not the time to worry about conjuring flame, so he flicked his sleeve to gather up all the souls, and then vanished. When he reappeared, he was actually inside Gongsun Wan’er’s immortal's cave.

There she sat, trembling, her eyes tightly closed. Mist swirled on her face, some of it black, some of it white. The black mist seemed to be in the process of consuming the white mist, and succeeding.

Clearly, that black color represented Ghostmother, and the white represented Gongsun Wan’er. At the moment, Bai Xiaochun was the only person in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty who realized what was happening, and also the only person who could save Gongsun Wan’er!

“Well that’s fine!” he thought. “I’ll take advantage of the situation to totally crush Ghostmother, and give Gongsun Wan’er complete control. That way, even if she needs to be resurrected by means of her Daoseed, she would still come back as herself!!” After being absorbed, Ghostmother’s mark still existed, and because she was still part of Gongsun Wan’er, Bai Xiaochun would not have been able to erase it even if he wanted to. It would have harmed Ghostmother, but would also have harmed Gongsun Wan’er as well, perhaps irreversibly.

Now, Ghostmother was taking advantage of this critical moment in Gongsun Wan’er’s breakthrough to try to defeat her. However, that also gave Bai Xiaochun a rare opportunity.

Snorting coldly, he reached out and touched her forehead, then sent some divine sense streaming into her sea of consciousness.

The waters there were both black and white, with the black side seething and churning as it attempted to overwhelm the white side.

Just barely visible within that black seawater was a face that resembled Gongsun Wan’er’s, but was more vicious, and burning with ghost qi! That was none other than Ghostmother’s consciousness!

There was no face visible within the white side, as though Gongsun Wan’er’s consciousness was already gone!

Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense appeared right within the black seawater, amidst thunderous rumblings.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” Ghostmother shouted from within the black water. At the same time, the water began to rise up, transforming into a huge giant!

Filled with rage, she reached out toward Bai Xiaochun, hoping to crush him and consume his divine sense.

This was not a case of Ghostmother ignoring the height of the heavens and the breadth of the earth. She had been in a state of slumber for a long time, and despite having consumed much of Gongsun Wan’er’s consciousness, had not pinned down her true soul. As such, Ghostmother had no idea that Bai Xiaochun had already become the Arch-Emperor.

“You’ve bitten off a bit more than you can chew!” Bai Xiaochun replied, eyeing Ghostmother coldly. Then he reached out, unleashing his Undying Emperor’s Fist. He didn’t resort to his Sovereign’s Fist, as that was unnecessary. Even still, it caused massive waves to roll out across the sea of consciousness.

“That… that….” Ghostmother’s face fell as she retreated. However, she moved too slowly, and the shadowy emperor joined Bai Xiaochun to strike her with heaven-shaking, earth-shattering force.

Deafening rumbling sounds could be heard. This was Ghostmother’s sea of consciousness, and she had the advantage, having just consumed Gongsun Wan’er, giving her the ability to unleash the power of the mid Celestial Realm.

Despite that, when facing cultivation base power like this… she was defeated instantly!!

Ghostmother screamed as the gigantic figure made of black water collapsed, and her consciousness shattered into thousands of evil ghosts that began to flee in all directions.

Bai Xiaochun ignored them; if he wanted to, he could track them down with minimal effort.

But the most important thing was to find Gongsun Wan’er’s true soul. He had been able to tell earlier that Ghostmother had consumed much of Gongsun Wan’er’s consciousness, but not her true soul. Otherwise, she wouldn’t have attacked him so recklessly.

With Ghostmother’s consciousness having been shattered, the sea below was not black, but nearly transparent. Without any hesitation, he shot down into it and sent his divine sense out to search for Gongsun Wan’er.

Occasionally he would encounter the evil ghosts that were fragments of Ghostmother’s consciousness, which he would destroy and feed back into the sea of consciousness.

It didn’t take long before his divine sense locked down onto something at the bottom of the sea: a huge sword!

Bai Xiaochun immediately recognized it. It was… the fallen sword from the Heavenspan Realm, which had once been a prized possession of Gu Tianjun!

It looked exactly the same as Bai Xiaochun remembered it, and he could even see gaps and cracks on its surface, within which was… the Fallen Sword Abyss!

He moved in a blur, appearing next to the sword. Right now, the sense he got from the sword was very different than back when he had been in the Qi Condensation stage, fighting with Song Que over heavenstring energy.

Pushing such thoughts aside, he approached one of the gaps and entered the Fallen Sword Abyss. Inside were thick mists, filled with howling cries that reminded him of the banesouls of the past.

Ignoring such cries, he followed the sensations he received through his divine sense until he reached a certain mist-filled valley. After entering the valley, he breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing a trembling little girl huddling in a far corner, clad in a long white garment!

That little girl was the true soul of Gongsun Wan’er!

Apparently, having lost much of her consciousness, she had also been bereft of most of her memories. She was also incredibly weak. When she sensed Bai Xiaochun, she looked up, fear in her eyes.

“Sweetie, are you… going to eat me…?”

Bai Xiaochun sighed, immediately taking pity on her. Shaking his head, he slowly approached, whereupon the girl wrapped her arms around his leg.

“There are a lot of ghosts out there, sweetie. It's really scary. Why don’t you hide here with me?”

Squatting down, he looked at her, his eyes soft as he said, “Don’t be afraid, Wan'er. Let me get you out of here, okay?”

She shivered, memories beginning to trickle back into her mind. For some unknown reason, she instinctively trusted this young man.

A moment passed, and she nodded. However, she gripped his hand tightly, and was clearly not willing to let go of it.

Holding her hand, he led her out of the Fallen Sword Abyss. As soon as they appeared back out in the sea of consciousness, the numerous evil ghosts suddenly went crazy, and began to fly toward her with mouths wide open.

But with Bai Xiaochun there, they had no hope of consuming her. As they neared, they screamed and shattered. Before long, he had destroyed all of them.

With each one that vanished, Gongsun Wan’er’s consciousness began to return to her. Soon, she closed her eyes. However, her hand continued to grip Bai Xiaochun’s hand tightly.

Bai Xiaochun was still worried. Sending his divine sense out, he reconfirmed that all of the traces of Ghostmother had been completely destroyed. Smiling, he sent his divine sense back into his body.

In Gongsun Wan’er’s chamber, he shivered as he awoke. Reaching out, he touched the top of Gongsun Wan’er’s head with his index finger and gently pushed down. Just as he was pulling it away, Gongsun Wan’er suddenly reached up and clasped his hand….

Her eyelashes fluttered, and she slowly opened her eyes. Smiling warmly, she spoke, a slight, teasing tone in her voice.

“Thank you, sweetie.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1225 awe-chapter-1226

There was something about the way she held his hand, and something about her soft gaze and faint smile, that contained indescribable splendor. Somehow, it was very attractive….

It seemed like actual hooks dragging him toward her!

After returning to his own private chamber, he couldn’t stop thinking about one particular question.

“Did something really go wrong with her breakthrough, giving Ghostmother a chance to make a move? Or… did Gongsun Wan’er do it all on purpose?” Although there was no way for him to answer the question, the latter seemed a highly likely possibility.

Since there was no way to determine the answer, he stopped thinking about it. Waving his hand to produce a large amount of souls, he once again began to work on twenty-three-colored flame.

In all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, and even beyond it, twenty-three-colored flame had never existed. Bai Xiaochun had traveled farther along the path of the heavenly necromancer than anyone in history, all thanks to the genius of Bai Hao.

This time, it took him many years to shape the formula for twenty-three-colored flame. And yet, even after all that time, and all of the augury, he still wasn’t confident enough to actually try to conjure the flame.

It was made worse by the fact that he had so few souls to work with. Most of them he had acquired from the treasured fan, and based on his calculations, he only had enough for four attempts.

If he failed four times in a row, he wouldn’t have enough souls to continue his work. The upside was that after the founding of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, some mysterious natural law had come into play which caused the territory they controlled to begin to transform in a way that resembled the Heavenspan Realm. Souls had begun to appear out in the open, prompting Bai Xiaochun to issue a Dharmic decree for spirit enhancers to work as hard as possible to collect them.

After enough time passed, enough souls were collected to allow one more attempt at conjuring the flame.

“Only five chances….” he thought. He looked at the souls, and then reviewed his new formula. Finally, his eyes shone with determination, and he made his first attempt at the conjuring.

As the souls converged and began to show signs of forming into a multi-colored flame, Bai Xiaochun’s complete attention was focused on the task at hand. Seven days later, his expression flickered, and he quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Using the power of his cultivation base, he forcibly suppressed the power of the explosion that had just resulted when the flame destabilized.

A muffled boom could be heard as he watched the chaotic flame slowly fading away. Afterwards, he sat there, clearly frustrated, his eyes bloodshot, his mind racing as he analyzed the process to determine what had gone wrong.

He spent several months on auguries and analysis. Skipping sleep and other daily tasks, he focused with mad intensity as he tried to solve all previous problems. At that point, he began his second attempt!

Unfortunately, it was also a failure!

It was the same with his third and fourth attempts….

Each time, he spent longer and longer trying to perfect his formula and solve all the problems. By the time he was ready for his fifth attempt, three years had gone by!

Dabao and Xiaoxiao were as naughty as ever, and the Arch-Emperor Dynasty continued to grow and flourish. Furthermore, the War Champion King finally broke through to become a celestial!

The Arch-Emperor Dynasty now had four celestials! Yet again, the dynasty grew stronger and more powerful!

That was when Bai Xiaochun began his fifth attempt!

If he failed, then he would have no more souls, and who knew how long it would be before he could collect enough for another try. On this fifth attempt, he was seventy percent certain that he would succeed in creating a twenty-three-colored flame!

After working with careful and complete precision, another color appeared in the chaotic flame in front of him. As it resolved into a twenty-third color, an indescribable aura surged out from Bai Xiaochun’s private chamber!

Not even the spell formation protecting his private chamber was powerful enough to contain that aura. In fact, it even burst through the imperial palace’s spell formation, as well as the one covering the city itself!

As the aura surged, the sky went dim, and the clouds churned. Multi-colored light filled the air, until a majestic sea of fire was present, filled with twenty-three different colors!

It immediately attracted the attention of everyone in the area, especially the cultivators from the Heavenspan Realm. They were profoundly shaken, a sensation that came from their very blood.

“That’s….”

“How many colors is that?”

“Heavens! That’s… a twenty-three-colored flame!!”

Cries of astonishment filled Arch-Emperor City, and soon, the laughter of Bai Xiaochun joined them.

His face was lit with excitement as he looked at the tongue of twenty-three-colored flame flickering in his palm. It was literally impossible for him to stay calm, as he had sensed that, as soon as the twenty-three-colored flame came into existence, the mark on the back of his hand that represented Bai Hao shivered.

This twenty-three-colored flame would be of immense help to Bai Hao!

Following instinct alone, Bai Xiaochun tried to still his trembling as he sent the twenty-three-colored flame into Bai Hao’s mark!

As the two merged together, the mark vibrated with increasing intensity. Of course, Bai Xiaochun was feeling very nervous; the idea of using multi-colored flame to resurrect Bai Hao was only something he had come up with by means of speculation.

He had no way to know for sure if his idea would work. But now… from the fluctuations he sensed coming from the mark, he had an intense premonition!

“If I can send thirty-colored flame into Hao’er’s mark, then… he can definitely be resurrected!!” Merely thinking back to how Bai Hao had passed away caused his heart to twinge with pain.

Bai Hao was the only apprentice he had ever taken in his entire life!

After the twenty-three-colored flame fully merged into the mark on his hand, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes shone with determination!

Before, he had possessed no evidence to confirm that he could use flame conjuring techniques to resurrect Bai Hao. But as of this moment, he had a new path laid out in front of him.

“I need more souls!” he said, a solemn expression overtaking his face. His stockpile of souls had run out, and the treasured fan had no more souls in it. However, there was a place that had what was surely an endless supply of souls!

He looked up into the sky, which from this perspective looked like a starry sky, but which was actually a vast void!

“That dark void is filled with countless ruins and unending rubble. It also has… endless souls of the deceased!” In the years since he had founded his own nation, he had only gone back to the fan a few times to check on Song Que.

Now that he knew how to resurrect Bai Hao, he made a new decision!

“I’ll use the fan to travel through the void, conjuring flame and collecting souls! Once I make that thirty-colored flame, I’ll resurrect Hao’er!” Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best idea, he sent his divine sense to check on Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, Dabao, and Xiaoxiao.

Although he would be traveling a great distance away from them, he could return to the Arch-Emperor Dynasty at any time by means of teleportation. However, just to be safe, he decided to leave some divine sense behind in the form of a clone, ready to take action at a moment’s notice if necessary.

He didn’t tell his family of his plan. He simply touched his forehead, causing a clone to step out from him, which sat down cross-legged and began to meditate.

Without any further hesitation, he vanished… to reappear in the darkness of the void, on the treasured fan!

He was about to embark on a journey through the void, to collect souls!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1226 awe-chapter-1227

Ten years passed in the blink of an eye.

Soft light surrounded the fan as it shot through the inky darkness. As it passed along, a glowing trail spread out behind it, making it look almost like a shooting star.

Bai Xiaochun sat cross-legged on the sovereign's arm, within the face of the fan. Occasionally, he would open his eyes and look out into the void, his eyes sparkling.

It almost seemed like black was the only color out here. However, during the ten years he had spent traversing the void, he had occasionally encountered ruins or rubble, and collected a good number of souls.

Although he was anxious to accomplish his goal, there was nothing else he could do to make things go faster. Furthermore, the fan was clearly following a specific course. Although he could change its speed, and could temporarily make it move in another direction, it would always return to its previous course eventually.

Considering he didn’t have any specific destination in mind, he finally gave up adjusting the direction, and allowed it to fly along as it wished. As it did, he sat there cross-legged, meditating, and working on the formula for twenty-five-colored flame.

Bai Xiaochi fawned over him the entire time, until Bai Xiaochun finally began to consider letting him change his name.

Bai Xiaochi was excited about that. Furthermore he had gotten used to flattering Bai Xiaochun, to the point where it was almost an instinct now….

At the moment, he was standing behind Bai Xiaochun, massaging his shoulders and occasionally checking his facial expression.

“Am I pushing too hard, milord? I researched some new massage techniques recently that I want to try out.”

Bai Xiaochun was very pleased with the level of ingratiating. When he was in a good mood, he would reward Bai Xiaochi with a smile, which would get the little spirit automaton excited for an entire day.

At the moment, it was only possible to summon one archaean slave. But now, the archaean slave’s range wasn’t limited to the world of the fan face. He could now leave that world to stand on the surface of the fan. Although he couldn’t leave the fan, it did make him much more capable of defending it. If the Vile-Emperor somehow managed to find them now, it wouldn’t be as much of a big deal.

As for dealing with any threatening forces they encountered, the fan had plenty of defenses of its own, all of them quite formidable. In fact, during the past ten years, it had struck ruins or rubble on more than one occasion.

And thus, Bai Xiaochun’s journey through the void continued. Another three years passed…. He was now almost done with his research into twenty-five-colored flame. Considering the number of souls he had collected, he was able to perform two tests, both of which failed.

One day as he sat there cross-legged in meditation, a tremor passed through him. Usually, he spent his time with his divine sense spread out to detect objects around him in the void. Right now, his eyes opened, and they shone brightly as he hurried to the edge of the fan to look out into the darkness.

Bai Xiaochi noticed what was happening, and materialized next to him, where he also looked out excitedly into the void.

There, far off in the distance, was a dot of white light!

As it got closer, it was obvious that it was a huge lamp!!

It was fully 3,000 meters in height, and seemed to just be floating along through the void. At a certain point, Bai Xiaochun's eyes went wide as he realized that the lamp was being followed by… innumerable souls!

From what he could tell, there must be hundreds upon hundreds of millions of them. All of them were completely expressionless, and seemed to pulse with an aura of death!

It was truly a shocking sight to behold.

After all the years spent traveling through the void, this was Bai Xiaochun's first time seeing anything like this. Excited, he caused the fan to slow down.

“So many souls!” he exclaimed, licking his lips. In all of his years searching for souls, this was definitely the largest number yet.

“Have you ever seen anything like this, Bai Xiaochi?” he asked.

Although Bai Xiaochi still didn't like his name, he was so shaken by what he was seeing that he immediately shook his head and said, “Although I spent a lot of my time asleep, milord, I did spend many, many years awake. And I never saw anything like this. Those souls… heavens! Where are they all heading?”

Bai Xiaochun looked on with narrowed eyes; it was a strange situation, and he didn’t want to do anything too rash.

It was even stranger considering that the souls didn't seem to have noticed the fan. Carefully issuing another order to the fan, he sent it follow the souls, hoping to figure out where they were going.

He followed them for several years…. On numerous occasions, the fan would attempt to return to its primary trajectory, until Bai Xiaochun finally ran out of patience and started using Soul Convergence Pill to slowly pilfer the souls.

The Dark Concocters had been making Soul Convergence Pills day and night, so he had plenty at his disposal. Eventually, he managed to get his hands on all of the hundreds upon hundreds of millions of souls….

With that many souls, it only took a few more tests to succeed with twenty-five-colored flame, whereupon he continued on to research twenty-six-colored flame.

Although he was tempted to just let the fan go back to its original course, he was still curious about this lamp’s final destination. For all he knew, there might be even more souls there.

A few months later, that final destination approached. When Bai Xiaochun saw what it was, his mind began to spin. Right there within the void, in front of the lamp, was an enormous well!!

It was fully 30,000 meters across, and pulsed with an undulating mist that filled the area! As for the lamp, it flew directly into the well!

Even more shocking was the fact that he could clearly see other lamps approaching from random directions, more than ten of them. And each one entered the well.

“So many souls!” he exclaimed excitedly. However, it was such a strange scene that he hesitated about whether or not to try to capture the souls.

“Heavens! What is this place?!” Bai Xiaochi exclaimed, clearly stunned, and having not a clue about what he was looking at.

Bai Xiaochun waited there, torn about what to do. However, as he watched the lamps simply disappearing into the well, he couldn’t take it any longer.

“This mysterious well is probably dangerous,” he said through gritted teeth, “but this place is too good to pass up. I’ll just wait here for a lamp to come along. Only one! As long as I don’t get close to the well, I should be fine!” He couldn’t let this opportunity slip by, especially considering how many souls he needed to continue his work with twenty-six-colored flame. Eyes flickering with madness, he sat down to wait.

Half a month later, he saw another lamp lazily floating toward the well. Eyes glittering, he sent the fan over to it and then flew out and began to toss out masses of Soul Convergence Pill. Booms could be heard as the souls were quickly taken away by Bai Xiaochun.

“I'm rich!” he exclaimed. Hurrying back onto the fan, he sat down nervously to see if anything would happen. A few days later, his courage began to build.

“Hahaha! Nothing happened after all! This place is a blessed land for Bai Xiaochun!” Eyes shining, he decided to wait for another lamp to show up.

A few days later, it came….

And thus, Bai Xiaochun madly began to collect souls, completely clearing out any of the lamps which approached.

However, Bai Xiaochi already had a very bad feeling about what was going on, and frequently warned Bai Xiaochun about what he was doing.

“You should quit while you’re ahead, milord. I have a bad feeling about this….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1227 awe-chapter-1228

Waving his hand nonchalantly, he said, “Don’t you worry! I have a lot of experience with this kind of thing!”

Filled with excitement at the thought of getting so many souls, he sat down to wait.

At first, the lamps would come every few days. But a few months later, the frequency dropped to one every few weeks.

Eventually, four months passed in which no lamps came, much to his disappointment. Furthermore, the well itself was beginning to flicker oddly, as though it might vanish at any moment.

From the look of it, it would be gone within a month. Not willing to give up, Bai Xiaochun finally fixed his gaze on the well itself.

“This thing is so mysterious! I wonder what it is. And I wonder when I’ll encounter something like it again....” He was truly torn between his desire to collect souls, and his fear of the potential danger.

Eventually, he came to the conclusion that, considering he had been here for so long without seeing anything dangerous, he might as well go a bit further. With that, he sent the fan closer to the well and activated the fan's ability to consume other things.

“If I could suck that well into the fan, that would be perfect!”

Bai Xiaochi yelped an objection, but did nothing to interfere. And thus, the fan slammed directly into the well.

Oddly, there were no intense rumbling sounds as Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochi had expected. It was almost as if the well existed in a different dimension, or was transparent; the fan passed right through it!

Bai Xiaochun gasped in shock. This was his first time encountering a situation that the fan wasn't capable of handling. After passing through the well, Bai Xiaochun looked back at it, and hesitated for a very long moment about what to do. He could give up, but at the same time, couldn't stop thinking about all of the souls that possibly existed within that well. Finally, he decided to throw caution to the wind.

"Just taking a quick look inside shouldn't be a problem...." Gritting his teeth, he sent the fan toward the entrance of the well itself!

Upon nearing, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base, and sent some divine sense out. However, the well seemed isolated from his divine sense, making it impossible to see what was inside. He could only approach physically.

Nothing about the situation seemed dangerous, and although that caused him to sigh with relief, he didn't let his guard down. Heart pounding, he looked down into the well itself.

What he saw caused his eyes to go wide.

It was a completely different world!!

It was as if the entrance to the well were the sky of that world. Even more shocking, the entire world seemed to be made from paper!!

Lands, mountains, rivers, buildings; everything was paper. Visible on the surface of all that paper were countless souls, the quantity of which defied anything Bai Xiaochun could have imagined….

The world seemed very orderly. The souls were strictly ranked by level, and included the souls of devas, demigods, and celestials. There was even a group of paper people clustered around an archaean soul!

It all seemed completely unbelievable. However, it was at that point that, out of the blue, Bai Xiaochi shouted, “Behind you, milord! There’s--”

Before Bai Xiaochi could even finish speaking, a withered hand stretched out of thin air behind Bai Xiaochun, and pushed him!

It wasn’t moving particularly fast, but Bai Xiaochun didn’t even have the time to look over his shoulder, or react in any other way. And any resistance was useless.

Massive force slammed into him, provoking a shriek of surprise as he was shoved directly into the well!

At the same time, a figure became visible, a stooped old woman who held a lamp in her hand. As Bai Xiaochun fell inside the well, she stood on its edge, looking back at the fan behind her.

When Bai Xiaochi found himself the subject of her gaze, all his hair stood on end, and he sent all of the fan's defenses into high gear, including the aura of the sovereign’s arm.

Two clouded eyes existed within the old woman’s wrinkled face, and they flickered with mysterious light. Suddenly, she smiled, a vicious smile filled with yellowed teeth. Then, she turned and vanished.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun screamed as he fell down into the paper world below. Eventually, he got control of his momentum, and slowed to a halt. As he hovered there, he looked around, and then back up into the sky, which was when he saw nine faces!

All of the faces resembled old women, their features identical, their eyes closed, but their mouths open. From what Bai Xiaochun could tell, he had fallen out of one of those mouths.

“The well was actually one of their mouths?!?! Who pushed me? An old woman? What level of cultivation base does she have?!?!” Taking a deep breath, he prepared to think of a way to leave, but before he could, something happened.

His body… began to turn into paper!!

In fact, his hands were already completely paper….

His mind began to spin at the realization that this was the deadliest situation he had been in since the founding of the new Arch-Emperor Dynasty!

Even his fight with the Vile-Emperor had been within the bounds of his own control, but this was different. There was no time for thought or planning; he immediately unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, as well as the powers of regeneration from his Undying Codex. However, although they could slow the process, they couldn’t stop it. It was as if the natural laws within the world itself demanded that all living things who entered it become paper!

“Dammit. DAMMIT!” Bai Xiaochun cursed, his eyes bloodshot. He didn’t have the slightest desire to be a paper person with glowing red eyes, and therefore, he howled and tried to escape the world.

Unfortunately, that was when all of the other paper people in the world suddenly looked up at the now stunned Bai Xiaochun. The souls attached to them all had cold, sinister auras as they howled and began to charge in his direction.

In the blink of an eye, they were closing in, unleashing countless divine abilities and magical techniques.

The magics took the form of bits of paper, each of which thrummed with the power of the natural laws in this world. Unfortunately, not even Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Codex was able to do much to protect him. By this point, his entire arm was now paper!

“Complete and utter bullying!!” he shouted. To his frustration, none of his own divine abilities seemed effective at all, not even the Sutra of Future Pāramitā. Gritting his teeth, he used his non-paper arm to grab a handful of Soul Convergence Pills, which he threw out behind him. As they exploded, they sucked in the nearby souls, which seemed to deprive the paper people of their life force, causing them to simply float down to the ground.

If he weren’t being turned into paper, he might have been satisfied with that, and even viewed this place as a holy land. But he was too anxious to be pleased. Tossing out Soul Convergence Pills left and right, and collecting the soul spheres they formed, he shot toward the mouths of the old women, high in the sky.

Unfortunately, there were just too many paper people. One was a group powered by celestial souls, led by an archaean soul. As they closed in, Bai Xiaochun was gripped with a sensation of deadly crisis, and immediately tried to reach out to the treasured fan. Although he could barely make contact, it was at least enough to summon a beam of Archaean Luminescence!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1228 awe-chapter-1229

Bai Xiaochun had never been in a situation like this before, and it was terrifying. Furthermore, it was the first time out in the void that he had ever felt that he was truly in danger!

The paper people alone weren’t very worrisome. They were tough to deal with, but he was confident that he could crush them in the end. Even though divine abilities didn’t work on them, his Soul Convergence Pills gave him enough of an edge to defeat them.

But the bizarre nature of the world itself felt like a sharp blade hanging over his head. If things kept going the way they were, it seemed like he might end up as a paper person himself.

Even worse than all that were the faces of the old women in the sky, and the mysterious entity who had pushed him into this world to begin with. All of it made his scalp tingle with fear.

Right now, there was only one thing he wanted: to get out of this place as quickly as possible!

Therefore, he reached out to the fan and summoned ten shots of Archaean Luminescence, all at one time. Out in the void, the fan shone with dazzling light as ten beams of light shot into the rapidly fading well.

Rumbling sounds filled the world as the Archaean Luminescence descended, which was equivalent to an archaean expert attacking ten times in a row. In fact, it was such a powerful force that it ripped open a hole in the sky!

In response, all of the paper people, as well as the souls, let out piercing howls. And yet, almost as soon as it opened up, the hole began to close! Clearly, the damage would be repaired in a very short time!

Not willing to let the opportunity slip away, Bai Xiaochun drew upon the full power of his cultivation base to speed toward the opening, using Soul Convergence Pills to carve a path through the paper people and the souls that got in his way.

Thanks to his incredible speed, he was soon right in front of the hole. As the aura of the outside void entered the paper world through the hole, he was once again able to utilize his divine abilities, and resorted to the Undying Hex and his Mountain Shaking Bash to get another burst of speed. He looked exactly like a shooting star as he shot out of the hole in the final moment before it closed!! By that point, thirty percent of his body had already turned into paper. Thankfully, after reaching the void, his Undying Codex began to repair the damage.

Before he could breathe a sigh of relief, he heard a coughing sound behind him, followed by muffled howls!

Bai Xiaochun’s hair immediately stood on end as he realized that the cough must have come from the same person who had shoved him into the well. He immediately began to flee, and even as he did, a huge hand reached out toward him, so withered that it looked like it must belong to a corpse!

Bai Xiaochun’s heart began to pound wildly; although the hand didn’t give him the sensation that it belonged to a sovereign, it seemed like the peak of the Archaean Realm.

“What is this thing?!” he thought, on the verge of wailing. Without any hesitation, he drew upon his five remaining shots of Archaean Luminescence and sent them all toward the huge hand.

Booms rang out as the Archaean Luminescence slammed into the hand, causing it to lurch to a halt. Then, Bai Xiaochun took advantage of the shockwaves from the impact to put more distance between himself and the hand. At the same time, Bai Xiaochi sent the fan shooting toward Bai Xiaochun. Within moments, Bai Xiaochun was back on the fan.

As his foot touched down, the huge hand recovered, and began to move in the direction of the fan in even more menacing fashion than before.

Shrieking, Bai Xiaochi scrambled to try to hide inside of the fan itself. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun, his face ashen from fear, let out a shout as he took control of the fan and sent it hurtling, not away from the hand, but toward it!

A massive boom could be heard as the two collided. The huge hand was immediately shoved backward, and the fan was sent spinning off in the opposite direction.

If that had been all there was to it, Bai Xiaochun might have just commanded the fan to flee. But that was when a second withered hand suddenly materialized and shot toward the fan.

“Time to put everything on the line!” he shouted. There was no time for fear or hesitation. He knew that if he didn’t go absolutely all out, then the danger would only grow more critical.

Dazzling light cascaded off of the fan as the arm of the sovereign once again shot out from the fan face. Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochi were yet again cooperating to defend the fan! Even the archaean slave appeared, using the power of the sovereign’s arm to emerge from the fan and shoot toward the menacing enemy!

The surrounding void trembled as the sovereign’s arm flew out. Meanwhile, the withered hand suddenly stopped moving, seemingly shocked to see something of this level. Unfortunately for the hand, there was no time for it to retreat before the sovereign’s arm hit it.

A boom could be heard as, for the first time, the withered hand was damaged and began to crumble. However, the sovereign’s arm was also hurt, and the archaean slave was coughing up blood. Both of them spun and returned to the fan face.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but happened in the shortest of moments. Trembling, Bai Xiaochun immediately commanded the fan to flee.

“Dammit!” Bai Xiaochi shrieked. “This is all your fault! I told you we should have left, but you got greedy!” Unfortunately, the moment of danger had not yet passed. Even as Bai Xiaochi and Bai Xiaochun fled on the fan, a roar of rage echoed out from the well!

Next, to the complete disbelief of Bai Xiaochun, the well began to grow in size, twisting and distorting as it became… a huge lamp!

The well was actually just the top portion of the lamp! As the lamp appeared in full, fluctuations rolled out into the void as something vastly larger than the lamp appeared. It was an enormous… old woman, made completely from paper!

She wore burial clothes, also made from paper, and had a ferocious glint in her eyes.

“You can’t escape!” she howled in a voice that sounded like countless people speaking at once. Then, she began to walk through the void toward the fan, and Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was so scared that his eyes bulged, and he felt like weeping.

“Heavens!” he blurted. “I was just collecting some souls. How did I end up provoking a freak like this!?!?”

Bai Xiaochi was shrieking just as loudly, urging Bai Xiaochun to flee as quickly as possible.

“She’s not a sovereign, but she might as well be!” Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding, and he was seriously considering retreating to the Eternal Immortal Domains.

He had actually attempted to do so back in the world of the paper people, but had failed. Now that he was on the fan itself, he was fairly certain that it would work. However, he couldn’t simply leave Song Que and Bai Xiaochi in such danger. Furthermore, it would also cut off the path he had been treading, which he wasn't willing to do.

Gritting his teeth, he decided that he wouldn’t give up unless there was absolutely no other alternative. Thankfully, the treasured fan was capable of incredible speed, and although the old woman was putting up a good chase, she couldn’t actually catch up.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was completely focused on maintaining top speed, aware that if he slipped up, she would catch up to them and slaughter them.

Scowling on the verge of tears, he kept the fan moving forward. Half a month passed by in a flash, during which time the old woman chased them relentlessly.

The chase continued. For three years!

During that time, Bai Xiaochi complained and grumbled constantly.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun mostly got used to the situation. Although he wasn’t particularly terrified, he was starting to get very exhausted, to the point where his hair was disheveled, and he had dark circles under his deeply bloodshot eyes.

After three years, the old woman seemed to be slowing down in her pursuit. Enlivened, Bai Xiaochun gobbled down some medicinal pills and then accelerated. A few months later, he couldn't even see the old woman behind them.

“So stingy! I just took a few souls, and she chased me for three years because of it?!” The mere thought of those three bitter years filled him with depression.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1229 awe-chapter-1230

Despite having successfully shaken the old woman, Bai Xiaochun still didn’t feel completely at ease. Gritting his teeth, he sent the fan flying along for another few months.

At that point, he glanced over at the dispirited Bai Xiaochi, and rubbed his nose awkwardly.

“Er… hey Little Bai, why don’t you go rest up a bit. It’s been a long three years!”

Bai Xiaochi cast him an angry glare, and thought about giving him a piece of his mind. But at the moment, he was just too exhausted, and simply faded from view.

Upon seeing that the spirit automaton had gone to sleep, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. After all, he knew that he was in the wrong. If he hadn’t gotten greedy, then they wouldn't have had to deal with the three year chase.

And yet, the gains he had made three years before caused his eyes to light up when he thought about them. Looking down, he thought about the vast number of souls that now existed in his bag of holding!

“I struck it rich this time! Now I have plenty of ingredients for multi-colored flame!” Considering that there was no imminent threat of danger, he set the fan to auto-pilot and then found a good place to go into seclusion and begin a session of flame conjuring.

He had finished his formula for twenty-five-colored flame three years ago, but had run out of souls to perform tests.

Now that his stock was replenished, there was nothing holding him back.

A failure wouldn’t be a big deal, nor would two. Even ten wouldn’t cause him to pause for breath. This time, it didn't take long at all to perform the experiments and solve all of the problems with the formula. At that point, he actually conjured a full twenty-five-colored flame.

A wide smile broke out onto his face, especially considering the fact that he still had a lot of souls left.

With that, he went about working on twenty-six-colored flame, and at the same time, advancing his cultivation. As he flew along in the void, three more years passed.

During that time, he completed his initial formula, and also refined his cultivation base significantly. Eventually, Bai Xiaochi woke up and took control of the fan, pushing it forward with greater speed than before.

Around the time that Bai Xiaochun was about to make his first attempt to conjure a twenty-six-colored flame, the fan suddenly vibrated. Even as Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochi looked around in shock, a familiar voice filled their ears in the form of an angered howl.

“You can’t escape!!”

Eyes widening, Bai Xiaochun shrieked, “It’s that old ghost woman!!”

Sending his divine sense out, he caught sight of the same old paper woman, with the lamp in her hand.

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was about to go crazy, and Bai Xiaochi gasped in shock, shaken by the old ghost woman’s obsessive determination. As she closed in, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes turned bloodshot, and he and Bai Xiaochi powered up the fan, sending it speeding off into the distance!

Not willing to be so easily cowed, Bai Xiaochun took the half-formed twenty-six-colored flame he held in his hand and threw out behind him, hoping to burn the paper woman into ash. However, she simply swallowed the flame!

Scalp tingling with fear, Bai Xiaochun didn't dare to make any further tests such as that. Thus, the fan sped off into the distance, and another long chase began through the void.

Bai Xiaochun scowled, not wanting to just spend his time fleeing, but having no other choice. Obviously, he couldn’t fight the old ghost woman. That much he had learned during the previous chase; nothing he launched back at her did any good.

This chase lasted for another three years.... At that point, the paper woman finally started to slow down, and the distance between them grew. By this time, Bai Xiaochun had grown completely used to her howling and roaring.

The most depressing thing about the entire situation was that Bai Xiaochun had to focus all of his energy on powering and directing the fan, making it impossible to work on his flame conjuring. The upside was that because he constantly drew upon the power of his cultivation base, his cultivation actually advanced steadily the entire time.

Bai Xiaochun eventually realized that the old ghost woman seemed completely obsessed with catching him, and would likely find him again even if he shook her. And thus, he sent the fan in a very different direction, hoping to buy some time. Eventually, he was once again able to immerse himself in flame conjuring.

And thus, years passed. It didn't really matter how fast he fled, or where he lost the old ghost woman.

At the most, she would find him again in three years. He was used to the situation, and yet, had to go all out in his attempts to flee whenever she caught up. Each time, she seemed to move faster than the previous time, leaving Bai Xiaochun scowling on the verge of tears, and at the same time, madly focused on cultivation whenever he could.

Thanks to the pressure, his cultivation base advanced constantly, pushing him very close to the great circle of the Celestial Realm.

Whenever the old ghost woman wasn't around, he would work on flame conjuring. As time flew by, he eventually reached the point where he could conjure twenty-six-colored flame.

With every flame that he put into the mark on the back of his hand, Bai Hao’s aura grew stronger, and the fluctuations clearer.

Unfortunately, he got stuck working on the formula for twenty-seven-colored flame. Unlike the previous formulas, things did not fall into place, and he eventually reached a bottleneck in which he had absolutely no idea how to proceed.

All he could do was spend more time on auguries and analyses. Eventually, ten years had gone by. Bai Xiaochun stood there on the edge of the fan, hair disheveled as he looked out into the void. Next to him, Bai Xiaochi assisted him in powering the fan to go as quickly as possible.

The howling old paper woman was chasing them, her lamp sending out glowing light that turned anything it touched into paper!

“How come this old ghost woman is always popping up? We never saw her before!” It was a real headache. She always appeared randomly, putting Bai Xiaochun in the passive position. Eventually, she began to slow down, and the distance between them grew.

Frowning, he breathed a sigh of relief. Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi seemed just as angry as ever.

“This is all your fault! Why’d you have to go and provoke something so terrifying!? You always have the option of escaping, but I don’t!” Bai Xiaochi was clearly nervous about the paper woman constantly chasing after them.

Bai Xiaochun sighed, but wasn’t in the mood to comfort Bai Xiaochi. Even as he pondered how to possibly deal with the old ghost woman, Bai Xiaochi suddenly said, “Eee?!”

Startled, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense out to determine where the old ghost woman had appeared from. But then, his expression flickered.

Instead of the woman, he saw something even more strange; the void around them seemed to be sinking!

Technically speaking, the void had no directions such as up, down, left, or right. But right now, the area around them clearly seemed to be sinking down, forming something that looked like a huge funnel, or a spinning vortex!

Perhaps it could have been attributed to some strange natural phenomenon. However, that was when Bai Xiaochun noticed that, at the bottom of the sunken area was another world…. His divine sense revealed to him a world filled with countless hourglasses!

There were large ones and small ones, filling the entire world, none of them damaged. All of them were operational, and had sand flowing through them. It was a truly bizarre and shocking sight.

“What… what is this place?”

Even as the words left his mouth, Bai Xiaochi’s eyes went wide, and he chokingly exclaimed, “The Essence of time! Heavens! That place has the Essence of time in it!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1230 awe-chapter-1231

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes lit up. Although he hadn’t detected the Essence aura, his cultivation base had surged, and his Time Immemorial Codex had automatically become active.

Clearly, this world was to him like sweet dew to a parched traveler, and it instantly caused his heart to begin pounding.

However, after what had developed with the old ghost woman, he was completely on guard against any type of danger, and would definitely not act rashly. The first thing he did was send out his divine sense to simply observe the hourglasses that made up the world!

As he did, his expression flickered, and eventually, a look of dumbstruck awe filled his face.

“Hey, little automaton, look at that world… can you see… that one particularly strange area?!?!”

By this point, Bai Xiaochi had mostly recovered from his earlier shock. After looking down at the world, he found the area Bai Xiaochun had referred to, and yet, couldn’t see it any clearer than Bai Xiaochun could. However, there were fluctuations coming from it that seemed incredibly powerful!!

Bai Xiaochun also sensed the fluctuations, and they caused his entire body to thrum.

“Sovereign aura! There’s a sovereign aura there!” Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochi shared a shaken glance. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun was already coming up with some speculations about what was happening!

“I wonder… if this sunken area within the void is actually an enormous hourglass…. And that world is the middle of the hourglass. And maybe that strange area is actually the other half of the hourglass!

“If I'm right, then this hourglass must be the precious treasure of a sovereign! And it’s currently ownerless!” The mere thought caused his eyes to shine brightly, and his heart to race. With that, he flew off of the fan with the intention of circling the area a few times, trying to see if he could take the precious treasure that was this hourglass with him.

Bai Xiaochi’s eyes immediately went wide.

“Don’t cause any more trouble, Bai Xiaochun! This is probably a magical item similar to me! And it’s not damaged or incomplete. If you piss it off, we’re both finished!!”

Clearing his throat, Bai Xiaochun replied with the usual, “Don’t worry, I have plenty of experience with this kind of thing!”

Bai Xiaochi’s mind instantly began to spin as he realized that Bai Xiaochun had said this exact same thing before. Then he realized what Bai Xiaochun meant by having experience in this specific situation, and his eyes began to burn with anger.

However, after a moment, he breathed a sigh of relief as he realized that Bai Xiaochun would really have no way of successfully taking the hourglass.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he was feeling very distressed about the situation. After all, the hourglass was different from the damaged fan. The only reason he had successfully acquired the fan was because it was damaged, whereas this hourglass wasn’t harmed in any way.

Obviously, it was a precious treasure that would surely have its own spirit automaton. And since it wasn’t a legacy item, it couldn't be taken by force except by someone with the power of a sovereign.

Not willing to give up so easily, he put some thought into the matter and then produced his turtle-wok. However, not even performing a spirit enhancement on it seemed to do anything.

Eventually, he realized what the problem was. It wasn’t that spirit enhancements didn’t work on the hourglass. Rather, it was simply too powerful. Performing a onefold spirit enhancement on it wouldn’t do anything, and if he tried to perform more enhancements, it could provoke the wrath of the hourglass's spirit automaton.

When Bai Xiaochi realized what he was doing, he shouted, “Stop it! Stop it!! Listen to me, Bai Xiaochun. That precious treasure’s spirit automaton is asleep. If you perform spirit enhancements and wake it up, we’re both doomed!”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment as he analyzed the situation. Eventually, he came to the conclusion that trying to force spirit enhancements onto the hourglass could very likely incite a deadly storm of consequences. After some more hesitation, he sighed and abandoned the idea. However, he still wasn’t ready to give up.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochi was on the verge of weeping. Over the years, living with Bai Xiaochun had been too nerve-wracking…. No, too dangerous! Back when Bai Xiaochi had been alone on the fan, he had never encountered any problems. But with Bai Xiaochun, he faced one danger after another.

The old paper woman was bad enough. If they ended up having a precious treasure filled with the Essence of time trying to chase them down and kill them, well, Bai Xiaochi didn’t see how he could take it.

“I can’t handle this. Sometimes this bastard is a coward, and sometimes he's a psycho! I have to think of a way to distract him, otherwise he's going to end up pissing off that precious treasure….” His eyes turned up in thought for a long moment, and then lit up.

“Milord, look, that world of hourglasses is definitely the best place to gain enlightenment of the Essence of time! It would be really beneficial for you to do that!

“Besides, I noticed before that the technique you cultivate has something to do with the Essence of time. This place is basically a holy land for you!

“Aren’t you stuck in a bottleneck with your flame conjuring? If you gain some enlightenment of the Essence here, it will probably help you break through that bottleneck. Since the spirit automaton is asleep, it's the perfect time. After all, once it awakens, you won’t have the same chance again!

“Don’t worry, milord. I’ll stand as Dharma protector for you. I won’t let anything dangerous happen while you’re seeking enlightenment!” Worried that Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t trust him, he unleashed his divine sense in dramatic and potentially harmful fashion, causing the fan’s detection and defense abilities to surge into action.

Bai Xiaochi’s suggestion actually made sense to Bai Xiaochun. That was especially so considering that his Time Immemorial Codex seemed to be leaping with anticipation. And he was in a bottleneck with his twenty-seven-colored flame. After taking another look at the hourglass, he decided that gaining some enlightenment would probably make it easier to acquire it for his own. And even if he didn’t, he would at least come out with some level of benefit.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, and seeing that Bai Xiaochi was really going all out, he sighed and gave the spirit automaton a nod of approval. After sending out his own divine sense one more time to make sure that nothing was amiss, he flew toward the hourglass world.

At this point, Bai Xiaochi finally breathed a sigh of relief. At the same time, he mused that being with Bai Xiaochun in situations like this was potentially life-threatening.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was getting closer and closer to the hourglass world. Nothing was opposing his approach though, so soon, he was descending into the world itself.

As he did, his expression flickered as he realized that the flow of time was completely different. In fact, it seemed that time flowed differed even within different areas of the world.

In some places, it slowed nearly to a standstill. In other places, it was to his shock that he realized that it moved ten times faster, even a hundred or a thousand….

As he moved through this shocking world, he saw the endless hourglasses of varying sizes. Some were tens of thousands of meters tall, others were the size of a hand.

Soon, he came to realize that the chaotic nature of time within this world was a function of the hourglasses themselves. Each hourglass had a different flow of time.

“Different worlds, different natural laws…. In that old ghost woman’s world, magical techniques and divine abilities don’t work, and one’s flesh and blood become paper. In here, the laws are different!” He had seen and experienced a lot on his journey through the void, giving him a much different perspective on life.

As of now, he knew that each of these hourglasses contained the natural laws of this world, and could influence their environment. With each moment that passed, he felt more and more shocked.

“But what could have created these differences in time?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1231 awe-chapter-1232

Bai Xiaochun stood there, looking around thoughtfully at the endless hourglasses. Eventually, he remembered what Bai Xiaochi had said about gaining enlightenment of the Essence of time.

“My Time Immemorial Codex definitely has something to do with the Essence of time,” he murmured.

Early on, Bai Xiaochun had heard of Essence, but didn’t understand it much. After encountering the damaged fan, and Bai Xiaochi, his understanding grew. Eventually, he became the owner of the fan, and practiced cultivation in front of the Daoist Tower of Life and Death in the fan face. At that point, his understanding gradually became more complete.

However, he still couldn’t put that understanding into words.

Right now, he felt like he was standing inside of a true treasure, surrounded by Essence. However, his comprehension was still incomplete, and thus he couldn’t grasp its meaning. It was as if he were missing some very important key.

After a moment of silence, he looked up, his eyes flashing with determination and focus.

“If I can’t seek understanding directly, then I’ll just soak it in!” Taking a deep breath, he walked up to one particular hourglass that was about the same height as himself. Not daring to get too close, he examined it with divine sense, and found that the flow of time within it was three times faster than normal. Sitting down cross-legged, he began to meditate.

Although this place didn’t seem inherently dangerous, Bai Xiaochun knew that it was actually filled with potential crises, in the form of the hourglasses themselves!

Some of the most powerful Daoist magics in existence had to do with the flow of time. If he wasn’t careful, he might stumble into an hourglass in which time flowed millions or even of billions of times faster than outside of this world. In that case, a huge amount of time could pass for him, with only a small bit of time passing outside.

A situation like that might not be a big deal. But what about the opposite situation? What if he entered an hourglass for only a breath of time, only to have a year pass on the outside?

For one thing, if he was away from the Eternal Immortal Domains for too long, it could be very dangerous for the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. For another, he had no idea exactly how such an experience would affect his longevity. Was his longevity tied to the existence of the Eternal Immortal Domains? Or would it pass based on his local experience?

For non-living things, it would probably be easier to judge. But Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, and his existence was profoundly tied to the Eternal Immortal Domains. He had no way of knowing whether leaving his own world for a long period of time would affect his Daoseed in some way, or perhaps damage it.

Therefore, he had to be very careful in the choices he made here.

Closing his eyes, he focused on the passage of time. At first it seemed difficult to wrap his mind around how exactly it differed from the flow of time outside. But as time passed, he gradually began to notice what appeared to be flickering vestiges of… something. Unfortunately, he wasn’t sure exactly what those vestiges were.

Even worse, there were too few of them. Several days later, he opened his eyes. Although he felt much closer to grasping the key to this world, he was still far from success.

“Were those… vestiges of time?” he thought hesitantly, pondering the seemingly illusory vestiges. For some reason, whenever he looked at them, he felt a sensation of bending or distorting.

By this point, his curiosity was piqued, and he had already forgotten that his main goal in coming into this world was to figure out a way to take ownership of the precious treasure that housed it. Mind filled with thoughts of the vestiges he had seen, he found another hourglass that had a tenfold difference in time, and sat down to meditate.

A few days later, he opened his eyes, and looked a bit confused. There were more vestiges here, and yet, he still couldn’t see them clearly. Frustrated, he gritted his teeth.

“I refuse to believe I can't succeed! Those vestiges are definitely the Essence of time!” This time, he found an hourglass in which time flowed a hundred times faster than normal. Sitting down, he looked at it closely, and then once again sought enlightenment.

This session of enlightenment was one of the most life-changing he had ever experienced. He trembled, and even struggled for breath, as he came to the realization that what he believed to be vestiges of time were far more numerous in this hourglass.

Furthermore, he realized that the space surrounding the vestiges seemed to have distorted and collapsed in some way. It was as if the vestiges themselves were evidence of some form of a unique, strange power!

From what he could tell, that power was what had caused the bending and distorting that he had sensed earlier!

It wasn’t the power of time, it was some other type of power that he was actually very familiar with. As he probed further, and the sensation of familiarity grew, his eyes shot open; he almost couldn’t believe what he was feeling!

“Gravity?” he blurted in shock. “How… how is this even possible!?!?”

Although there were no magical techniques he knew of in the cultivation world that were specifically related to gravity, there were many magical items that utilized such power!

Bai Xiaochun had come into contact with gravity many years ago; he had once offered a pill formula to the north bank of the Spirit Stream Sect in trade, gaining a set of magnetic spirit wings and a protomagnetic pearl. The old woman who was the peak lord of Irispetal Peak had told him that if he ever got the chance, he could use those two items to understand protomagnetic power, and thus learn the Spirit Stream Sect’s Arcane Gravitational Repulsion!

It was for that very reason that Bai Xiaochun had spent so much time following that line of research, and had eventually developed a sphere of gravitational repulsion that could tear the clothes of people around him to shreds!

Furthermore, the toxic gas that eventually became his Fantasy Pill was initially controlled by his understanding of the powers of gravity and repulsion!

Unfortunately, his research never went very far, and he eventually gave up. So how could he ever have imagined that, so many years later, and so far away from the Eternal Immortal Domains, out in the middle of the void, he would find the precious treasure of a sovereign, in which the Essence of time existed, as well as the mysterious power of gravity!?

Although there were differences between time and gravity, those differences were small!

After taking a few breaths to get himself under control, he once again closed his eyes to seek enlightenment. Eventually, his eyes opened, and he looked even more shaken than before.

“It really is gravity! I wasn’t wrong!!” He was completely shaken to find that what he had assumed was time, was actually gravity. Never before had he even thought to correlate time with gravity, but now, the two of them seemed to be superimposing right in front of him!

“What exactly is going on here…?” he thought, confused, Eventually, he rose to his feet, determined to understand the connection between time and gravity.

Mere hundredfold flows of time weren’t enough. Therefore, it was with bloodshot eyes that he found an hourglass in which time flowed five hundred times the normal speed. After that was a thousandfold flow of time.

And thus, he continued to move up in his search for answers. From one-thousandfold he moved to three-thousandfold. Five-thousandfold. Eight-thousandfold….

It was at that point that he rose to his feet, his eyes shining brightly.

“Gravity can change the flow of time!!” Although he looked excited, the determination in his eyes was clear. Turning around, he found some hourglasses with tenfold flows of time, where he confirmed some of his research. Soon, he had a complete understanding of the relationship between gravity and time!

“The stronger gravity is, the slower time flows!” It was an exciting realization. By now, he had forgotten about trying to find the ‘key’ to this place, and was back in the same state he often reached when researching medicinal pills. Every question he answered led to new questions.

“But where does gravity come from?” Bai Xiaochun had always been plagued by that question, but now, in this strange world, he was absolutely determined to find an answer. Once again, he began to work with the hourglasses.

As he searched for clues, days passed, until he forgot how many. He was tired, and his eyes were weary, but he continued to search for the source of gravity.

Eventually, he looked over at one of the 300-meter-tall hourglasses, which was where time moved at ten thousand times the normal speed.

Back when he had first arrived in this world, he wouldn’t have dared to research such an hourglass. But now, in his obsessed state, he didn’t hesitate for a moment!

Sitting down cross-legged, he shivered as he realized that he could just barely hear something like a voice speaking to him!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1232 awe-chapter-1233

It started out faint, and was difficult to hear clearly, as though it had drifted to this point through countless years of time. It sounded like a man speaking, except that it was impossible to hear the exact words, no matter how Bai Xiaochun focused.

And yet, that mere voice caused his Time Immemorial Codex to leap with unprecedented vigor. Even the flow of time around him seemed to change.

Most noteworthy, and most shocking, was that Bai Xiaochun could sense gravity changing because of the voice.

Although he couldn't make the voice out clearly, he was convinced… that it contained the answer he had been seeking!

As his eyes opened, they shone with determination and decisiveness. Blurring into motion, he headed toward a 600-meter-tall hourglass!

The flow of time here was twenty-thousand times normal speed!!

It was even easier to see the gravitational fluctuations here, and at the same time, the voice grew clearer, although he still couldn't make out the exact details. Before long, he moved on to a 900-meter-tall hourglass. Then a 1,200-meter-tall one, and after that, a 1,500-meter-tall one….

Eventually, he was at a 2,400-meter-tall hourglass, at which point the voice grew even clearer. Bai Xiaochun was fully in a state of madness, and was soon at a 3,000-meter-tall hourglass, where the flow of time… was 100,000 times faster than normal!

All the while, the voice grew clearer, and yet, he still could not make out the details of what was being said. However, by the time he encountered the one-hundred-thousandfold flow of time, he realized that the gravity in the area wasn't rigidly set. In fact, it seemed to respond to his presence, a discovery that prompted him to continue on this exact same line of pursuit!

6,000-meter-tall hourglass. 9,000 meters. 12,000 meters….

Bai Xiaochun seemed possessed as he crazily selected larger and larger hourglasses. Eventually, he reached a 30,000-meter-tall hourglass, where the flow of time was 1,000,000 times normal. And yet, he was still not able to make out what the voice was saying.

Although it continued to grow clearer, there was apparently a barrier in place, ensuring that no matter how loudly the speaker spoke, his words could not be heard clearly.

Not unless… the barrier were broken! Or perhaps when an hourglass was reached that had the potential to break it!

With that vague voice in his ears, Bai Xiaochun continued to shocking levels of research. 90,000 meters. 180,000 meters. Eventually, he was in front of an hourglass that was 240,000 meters tall!

In this hourglass, the flow of time reached the shocking level of 8,000,000 times faster than normal. As such, the three months that he spent seeking enlightenment there counted for less than a breath of time.

Unfortunately, it was already impossible for him to determine if time was truly flowing in accord with his local perspective, or from the outside perspective. As such, the danger he faced continued to mount.

If he picked an hourglass where the time differential was reversed, then one breath of time for him would count for three months in the outside world!

Bai Xiaochun was very nearly going insane in his attempt to understand the powers of gravity. As such, once he began to seek enlightenment with the hourglasses taller than 30,000 meters, he was careful to only spend a short time seeking enlightenment with each one. And if the voice didn't grow clearer, he would leave immediately.

It was dangerous, but he was making incredible progress. The voice was still unclear, but his understanding of gravity was now completely different from before!

“Gravity is created when the space in the area bends. And the space bends, not because of pre-set conditions, but rather… because of my presence!!

“As I near the hourglasses, their time differential changes. If I don’t get close to them, the differential remains stationary!!

“By bending space, and by shaping gravity, the speed of time is changed!!

“Of course, the ultimate cause is not me, but the fundamental nature of the hourglasses. They have different structures, and contain different dimensions, and even unique starry skies. Thus, the gravity and flow of time within them is different!” His thoughts flickered at lightning speed as he came up with various answers due to his relentless searching. At the moment, he was standing on top of a 240,000-meter-tall hourglass, looking at the world around him. From this vantage point, he could see that there was only one hourglass larger than the one he stood on.

Far off in the distance, in the very middle of the world, was… an hourglass that was hundreds of thousands of meters tall!!

Bai Xiaochun had no way to even tell how quickly time flowed in that hourglass. However, he did know that there was no better place in this world to attempt to hear the words of the voice!

Instead of switching amongst random hourglasses, the best decision, albeit the most dangerous, was with that hourglass.

After some thought, he shot into motion, eyes bloodshot as he headed toward that gargantuan hourglass. Upon arriving, he was completely and utterly shaken by the flow of time there.

It was so indescribably powerful that without his powerful cultivation base and shocking fleshly body, plus the powers of regeneration from his Undying Codex, he would likely have been crushed to death immediately.

Enduring the discomfort, he howled and shot to the top of the hourglass. Taking a shaky breath, he dropped down cross-legged, veins bulging out on his face and neck as he closed his eyes and sent out his divine sense to seek enlightenment!

Almost immediately, the whispering voice appeared, and this time, it was different from before. It was not muffled, but crisp and clear, as though someone were sitting right next to him, speaking!

He immediately focused on the voice, whereupon a tremor ran through him, and his mind felt battered as if by enormous waves of shock!!

The speaker was indeed a man, his voice warm and sincere, as though he were instructing his apprentices about the Dao.

“Mortal Daoist. Worldly Daoist. The two of you listen well…. What is Essence? To discuss Essences, you must first understand natural laws. Natural laws form the invisible framework of the cosmos in which we exist. Magical techniques and divine abilities are essentially ways of manipulating or drawing upon that framework.

“As for what constitutes that framework, well, that is where Essences come into the picture. They are shapeless, invisible, and intangible. However, it is only their mysterious construction that allows for all of the countless magical techniques and divine abilities to exist….

“Essences are essentially the foundation of everything!

“This leads to another question. What is the Essence of time…?

“Well, that’s simple. First of all, understand that time and gravity are connected. From an outside perspective, the stronger the gravity, the slower time will flow. However, when it comes to the Essence of time, its true manifestation comes, not through gravity, but rather… relativity!

“Relativity forms the true core of the Essence of time. If you understand relativity, then you can gain enlightenment of…

the Essence of time!

“Remember, everything… comes down to relativity!

“Mortal Daoist. Worldly Daoist. Do you understand?”

The voice crashed within Bai Xiaochun’s mind like great waves of shock. He wasn’t sure who the Mortal Daoist and the Worldly Daoist were. However, merely listening to the short speech filled him with unprecedented levels of understanding!

It was as if a light went off in his head, as if all of the clues he had gathered up to this point suddenly clicked together thanks to this voice!

“Relativity. That’s right! It’s about relativity…. Without the outside world to compare to, how could you even know about differences in the flow of time!?!?” Bai Xiaochun threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Although there were still some areas that he wasn't clear on, he was now absolutely certain of why he was able to hear the voice which had just spoken to him!

That voice belonged to an almighty entity from countless years in the past, who had been speaking to his apprentices about Essences. The reason his voice was able to transmit through all the years was because his Dao was none other than the Essence of time. And he had already become a part of the natural laws of the cosmos around him!

Therefore, the increased flow of time in this place allowed his voice to echo here for all eternity!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1233 awe-chapter-1234

Essences were innately abstruse and difficult to comprehend. In all of the void that had once been a starry sky, only a few people had ever mastered such things. After all, anyone who could do so would be considered a Daoist master who had comprehended all things, and reached the Sovereign Realm!!

Sovereigns were rare, as difficult to find as a phoenix feather or a qilin horn. Anyone from any group of people who became a sovereign would be the pride and glory of that group. And if any group could produce two sovereigns, none could possibly stand in their way!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was far, far from that level. He wasn’t even in the Archaean Realm yet. And yet, that posed no obstacle to him when it came to gaining enlightenment of Essences.

Essences were profound and mysterious, much less to mention the fact that matters of time were paramount among such great Daos. In fact, only one sovereign within this starry sky had ever succeeded with the Essence of time.

And he was the owner of this precious treasure of hourglasses!

Bai Xiaochun gasped, his eyes shining with the light of understanding. Now that he had found the answer he had been looking for, he began to sink into a state of emptiness that encompassed both his thoughts and his physical form.

He had already seen the evidence pointing to the fact that the bending of the space around him was a result of his presence, and its effect on gravity, which also caused variations in the flow of time.

However, as he seemed to become empty, his body grew weightless, almost transparent, as though it didn't exist.

He wasn’t truly being wiped out of existence. However, relative to his surroundings, and to the world around him, he was no more. And although he was still technically seated cross-legged on the huge hourglass, the force of gravity around him faded away, and the mad flow of time grew calm. It returned to the state it had been in before he had arrived, a state of relative calm.

Within that state, Bai Xiaochun’s consciousness remained, and his divine soul seemed to fly out of him and look down at the lands below. He saw countless hourglasses, some large, some small. He saw sand dropping down endlessly. And every time his gaze focused on an hourglass, its flow of time would change.

It was an endless cycle. As his gaze shifted from one hourglass to another, he lost track of how much time was passing, and lost track of his own existence.

As time flowed in its own way inside the world of hourglasses, Bai Xiaochi was outside. After Bai Xiaochun entered the place, he sighed in relief. Almost immediately, the different flows of time within the world caused his vision to blur, making it impossible to see what was happening. However, he could sense that Bai Xiaochun was unhurt.

“I wonder how long he’ll be in there. Hopefully not long. If that spirit automaton wakes up, it could be a big problem.” Sighing, he decided to just sit down cross-legged to wait.

After all, if Bai Xiaochun took too long, he could just go in and remind him not to delay too long.

Within the world of hourglasses, Bai Xiaochun’s enlightenment continued. As he observed the countless hourglasses, and the various flows of time, they came to encompass everything about him.

He had no thoughts. He simply sat there, his expression blank as he stared at the hourglasses and committed every aspect of them to memory. Eventually, one of the countless hourglasses that he had committed to memory vanished.

Soon after that, another disappeared, and then another. One after another, they disappeared, and those that remained behind sank deeper into Bai Xiaochun’s mind.

No one, not even Bai Xiaochun, could sense what was happening. The hourglasses vanished one after another, until one day… there was only one left!!

It wasn't large, only about the height of an average person. However, it seemed to be a part of Bai Xiaochun, a part of his soul, a part of his fleshly body, a part of his Daoseed… it had completely fused with every aspect of him!

It could not be wiped away or destroyed. In fact, in some ways, this hourglass was like a second Daoseed!!

When that solitary hourglass came to be the only one left behind, Bai Xiaochun shivered, his closed eyes flickered, and he began to breathe rapidly. At the same time, magical symbols began to appear on the surface of the hourglass in his mind. Although he didn’t recognize any of them, they all originated within his own imagination.

They contained his understanding of time, as well as his incomplete comprehension of Essences. They covered the hourglass in the form of magical symbols, and then began to shine with bright light. Bai Xiaochun shivered even more, and began to breathe more rapidly, until at one point, the shining of the magical symbols prompted him to unconsciously reach out and wave his right hand.

That simple gesture caused the air around him to collapse, and time itself to bend toward him. Gravity sprang into being, instantly changing the flow of time in his area!!

Outside, Bai Xiaochi sensed what was happening, and his eyes nearly popped out of his skull.

“Essence Daoist magic!?!?”

And that was exactly what it was, a Daoist magic of Essence. Although it was only in an embryonic form, only a small fraction of what it could be, it still caused time in the area around Bai Xiaochun to change. He shivered more, and his closed eyes began to flicker even more rapidly, as though he might awaken at any moment.

Suddenly, he lifted his head, and regained lucidity, as if he were emerging from a dream. The transformations to the air and the area around him faded away, but everything he had experienced within that ‘dream’ remained behind.

“Did I just...?” His eyes flickered with incredulity as he looked down at his hand. After a moment, he reached out again with his hand, touched his inner hourglass with divine sense, and then waved his hand.

The same thing happened as had happened moments ago, causing Bai Xiaochun’s heart to surge with excitement.

Shooting to his feet, he closed his eyes to examine the shocking power of this new divine ability.

“I can change the flow of time in a small area…. If I had to fight the Vile-Emperor again, I wouldn’t need to rely only on Archaean Luminescence. I could slow time around him, but keep it the same around me. From the Vile-Emperor’s perspective… it would make me seem unimaginably fast!!”

Excited, he did a few more tests to make sure he was correct in his assessment. Afterward, he decided to name this fourth immensely powerful divine ability that he had just created….

“Time is connected to gravity,” he murmured, eyes glittering. “Therefore, I’ll call this divine ability… Gravitational Extermination!” Although he had never liked fighting and killing, by now he realized that the only way to keep the Arch-Emperor Dynasty safe… was to be stronger than everyone else. He needed people to respect him! That was the only way to truly put an end to the fighting and killing.

“I have the magical symbols of the Sutra of the Former. I have the Gates of Life and Death of the Sutra of the Present. I have the pāramitā lily of my Sutra of the Future. And now I have my fourth great divine ability, Gravitational Extermination…. Even without Archaean Luminescence, I can still pose a big threat to an archaean!” Brimming with self-confidence, he checked his cultivation base, and to his delight found that the good fortune he had experienced had pushed him into the great circle of the Celestial Realm.

He didn’t leave the world of the hourglasses immediately. Using his newfound control over time, he successfully broke through the bottleneck of the twenty-seven-colored flame.

After finishing the formula, he rose to his feet and looked around at all of the hourglasses with a bit of sorrow and longing. Then, he clasped hands and bowed deeply!

He was offering thanks to the world around him, and to that mysterious sovereign whose Dao he had benefited from. Because of all the good fortune he had received, he completely abandoned any thoughts of taking this precious treasure with him. He knew that until he became a sovereign… he didn't qualify to own it!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1234 awe-chapter-1235

After straightening up from his bow, he flew up into the sky. When he had first arrived in this place, the chaotic flows of time had been quite unsettling. But now that he had taken his first steps toward controlling the Essence of time, they didn't bother him at all.

It didn’t matter how the time flows shifted and changed, they couldn't do anything to affect the hourglass in his mind. That hourglass was rooted to his consciousness, and nothing on the outside could affect it any more than wind could affect a boulder.

Flying up, he eventually found himself back out in the void, and then, on his treasured fan!

In that exact moment, Bai Xiaochi settled down cross-legged, and was just about to close his eyes to meditate. Startled, he jumped back up and shouted, “What’s wrong?!?!”

Sending his divine sense out, he checked the area, as well as the precious treasure that was the hourglass. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun looked back at him in shock.

Then his eyes settled into a glare. Considering how long he had been gone, he had expected Bai Xiaochi to at least miss him a little bit. Suddenly, he got an odd feeling.

“What are you all flustered for…?” he asked. “How long was I in the hourglass world?”

“How long?” Bai Xiaochi looked back at him, a bit confused. “Huh? You don’t know? You just went in! It’s only been… maybe four or five breaths of time. I watched you go in, and before I could even sit down, you jumped back out.” At this point, Bai Xiaochi seemed to realize something. Eyes widening, he pointed at Bai Xiaochun and said, “Wait… don’t tell me that time passed differently for you?”

Bai Xiaochun was immediately shaken. He had assumed that due to his initial steps toward mastering the Essence of time, something like this couldn’t have happened.

“There’s no way! Based on what I could tell, I must have spent decades in there. Maybe even a century! But out here… only a few breaths of time passed?!?!” It took a bit of back and forth, but Bai Xiaochun soon confirmed that it was exactly as Bai Xiaochi had said. Gasping, he looked back at the world of hourglasses.

Having gotten to the bottom of the situation, Bai Xiaochi was equally shaken, and also looked over at the hourglass world.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun realized that his suppositions regarding the outside world had been wrong. Relative to the outside world, the time he had spent in the hourglass world counted for almost nothing.

That hourglass world… didn’t exist on the same plane as the void in which he now stood. It was almost transcendent, and in fact, there was only one word Bai Xiaochun could think of to describe it.

“Eternal!” he murmured, his eyes shining with hope.

“The Essence of time… is so mysterious!!” Once again, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the hourglass world.

After a long moment, he turned, taking control of the fan and sending it flying off into the distance.

Bai Xiaochi was struck by a similar sense of wonderment. However, he was eager to be on his way, and provided as much help as he could to push the treasured fan at top speed through the void.

Even after some time passed, Bai Xiaochun was not able to calm down. As for Bai Xiaochi, he wasn’t sure what to say about the shocking things that he had been told. They traveled along in peace and quiet for several months, until at one point, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes from meditation.

Without any hesitation, he extended his right hand and waved his finger in a certain direction out in the void!

Before Bai Xiaochi could even react, the area Bai Xiaochun had pointed at rippled and distorted, sinking down to become a small-scale version of the precious treasure that was the hourglass world!

Bai Xiaochi couldn’t actually see it, but he could sense the gravitational force. As the sunken area expanded, that gravitational force grew greater and greater!

As that happened, the flow of time there began to slow down. Meanwhile, an enraged howl could be heard, coming from that very area in which gravity had been affected. Strangely, the sound seemed distorted, even drawn out.

Moments later, the old paper woman appeared, materializing right into that distorted area, her eyes already flickering with shock.

Bai Xiaochi was similarly taken aback, and for the first time, looked over at Bai Xiaochun with an expression of reverence. Not only had Bai Xiaochun detected the woman’s approach ahead of time, but he had also created an area similar to the precious treasure that was the hourglass. Although it was only generally similar, Bai Xiaochi could easily see that this… was a Daoist magic of Essence!

In other words, it was… a sovereign-level Daoist magic!!

“What are you staring at, Bai Xiaochi? Hurry up and use the sovereign’s arm!” Constantly being chased down by this old ghost woman had long since caused the flames of anger to build up inside of Bai Xiaochun. And although he didn’t want to go out and fight her on his own, it seemed like a great opportunity to slow her down and use the fan’s power to unleash some misery on her.

With that, he sent out some divine sense, causing numerous beams of Archaean Luminescence to shoot out toward the old woman. He even summoned an archaean slave, who stepped out into the void to fight.

The archaean slave couldn’t stay out in the void for long, but now that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base had improved, he could last for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochi quickly sent the sovereign’s arm out toward the old woman!

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time making a strong counter-assault on the old paper woman. The woman howled in response, waving her lamp, which caused a sea of black flames to roil out.

The fact that the flames didn't seem destabilized by Bai Xiaochun’s zone of time influence wasn’t because his divine ability was weak, but rather, because the cultivation base of this old ghost woman… was too high!!

Even still, the area affected by his Gravitational Extermination lasted for several breaths of time, which was more than enough for several shots of Archaean Luminescence to hit the old woman. Although it seemed as if she existed in a different dimension, and the beams passed through her, because of the zone of time influence, she was still injured.

Even as her shriek echoed out, the archaean slave and the sovereign’s arm arrived. As they did, black flames continued to burn away at the Gravitational Extermination’s zone of time influence, and the trapped old woman performed an incantation gesture. That in turn caused the black sea of flames to take the shape of a black lamp, which then shot toward the sovereign arm.

When the two collided, a massive boom echoed out, shaking the entire area. The archaean slave coughed up a mouthful of blood, and the sovereign’s arm was sent spinning back to the fan, undamaged, but currently incapable of any further action. The archaean slave also returned to the fan.

However, the old ghost woman was not in good shape either. Her hair was disheveled, and she looked so bedraggled that she was starting to fade out of existence. Eyes filled with madness, she howled, sending more black flames shooting out, creating another sea of flames. As it expanded, the frightened Bai Xiaochun and Bai Xiaochi turned the fan and started heading off at top speed.

The sea of flames continued to expand behind them, accompanied by the howls of the old ghost woman. Eventually, so much flame was roiling out that it made it possible to see a different woman.

She was beautiful, with luxurious clothing and phoenix-like eyes that contained boundless dignity. However, a black spike of flames was impaled into her forehead, which turned all of her grace and beauty into malevolent ferocity!

As soon as Bai Xiaochi saw the woman, he instinctively shrieked, “Immortal Imperatrix!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1235 awe-chapter-1236

There was no spare time to ask Bai Xiaochi about who the *Immortal Imperatrix* was. His scalp simply tingled at the shocking performance the old ghost woman had put on. Clearly, she had upped her game, releasing that shocking sea of black flames that she had never used before.

Strangely, the sea of flames didn’t seem to contain even a scrap of heat, and yet, his divine sense had indicated that it could definitely burn anything that got in its path.

That in itself was enough to cause him to flee for his life. Thankfully, it seemed the old ghost woman wasn’t very stable while in that state, and couldn’t actually pursue him.

He fled for three months straight, not slowing down for even an instant. Whenever he thought back to what had happened, he scowled in frustration and disappointment.

During those three months, Bai Xiaochi didn’t say much, but would occasionally look over his shoulder, his expression that of sorrow and frustration.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but ask, “Xiaochi, who’s this *Immortal Imperatrix* you were jabbering about?”

In a rare display of rage, Bai Xiaochi shouted, “You’re not permitted to sully the Immortal Imperatrix by even mentioning her!!”

Surprised, Bai Xiaochun looked over to see Bai Xiaochi’s bloodshot eyes shining with grief as he looked out into the void. After a long moment passed, he murmured, “The Immortal Imperatrix was milord’s Daoist partner….

“I never saw her in person. But milord would often gaze upon a painting of her. I could see the pain in his eyes, and could see how much he missed her. Due to looking at that painting so many times myself, I eventually committed her features to memory….

“That young woman we saw earlier was the Immortal Imperatrix, and milord was the Immortal Imperator.” As he spoke, his voice grew quieter and quieter. However, he continued to look over his shoulder, as though he could see that black sea of flames, and the woman with the spike in her forehead. The Immortal Imperatrix.

Bai Xiaochun knew that the ‘lord’ Bai Xiaochi referred to was not himself, but rather, that sovereign from the Immortal World. The fact that the old ghost woman had such an impressive origin finally gave him a clue as to why she was so powerful.

“The Daoist partner of a sovereign…. Someone killed her, and not even he could resurrect her? I wonder… who could have done such a thing?” He sat there thoughtfully, thinking about how, despite how long he had traveled within this void, and all of the ruins he had seen, he had never seen anyone alive.

Only the Eternal Immortal Domains were left within this void that had once been a starry sky. It was the only place with life, surrounded by nothing but death and rubble….

That led his train of thought to the fact that the original owner of the treasured fan, the sovereign from the Immortal World who had passed the fan on to him, had once spoken of… a great catastrophe to hit the starry sky!

That in turn caused him to think of the enormous sovereign looming over the Eternal Immortal Domains, that vicious, sleeping entity who was most definitely not dead!

“There is some enormous mystery at play here. A mystery… that I have already begun to unravel.” Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged on the fan, looking out at the void, wondering if the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor knew the truth. Regardless of whether or not they did, based on the clues he had unearthed so far, he was starting to get a general idea of his own.

Some incomprehensibly powerful expert had massacred everything in the starry sky. All peoples, all lives, all other powerful experts. And he was none other than the enormous figure who existed above the Eternal Immortal Domains!

In the final battle over the Eternal Immortal Domains, the Arch-Lord, Saint-Lord, and Vile-Lord, all of them sovereigns, had sacrificed their own lives to seal that enemy, placing him in a state of existence which had lasted until now.

There were still many things Bai Xiaochun didn’t understand. Who was that incomprehensibly powerful expert? Why did he want to massacre everything in existence? Why did he wait until the very end to make his move on the Eternal Immortal Domains? And how could such a powerful expert have been sealed by only three sovereigns?

One would think that an entity strong enough to exterminate everything in the starry sky, including all of the other sovereigns and their people, wouldn’t be so weak as to be sealed by three sovereigns.

At the moment, there was no way to answer such questions. After looking out at the void for a long time, he went back to working on the formula for twenty-eight-colored flame. All the while, the weight of that desolate void seemed to weigh down on him.

Perhaps the battle with the old ghost woman had ended with her paper body being destroyed. Whatever the reason, she never came after them again, leading Bai Xiaochun to breathe a sigh of relief.

A sixty-year-cycle passed. During that time, he would occasionally go back to the Eternal Immortal Domains to spend time with Dabao, Xiaoxiao, Song Junwan, and Zhou Zimo. He also helped the Nine Serenities King and Spirit Advent King, as well as the eastern and northern demigods, to reach the Celestial Realm.

Now the Arch-Emperor Dynasty had eight celestials, making them even more powerful within the Eternal Immortal Domains. Although they didn't control the largest territory in terms of the immortal domains, they were powerful enough that their dynasty truly formed a tripartite balance of power.

The only downside was that, with the exception of Gongsun Wan’er, they were all in the early Celestial Realm. If they could get someone into the late Celestial Realm, then in terms of celestials, they would be the most powerful of the three nations!

Bai Xiaochun had long since allowed the treasured fan to follow its own course.

During the sixty-year-cycle which had passed, he saw one set of ruins after another, and never-ending rubble. There was no other life in this void, making him feel like a time traveler witnessing the aftermath of a cataclysmic destruction.

Slowly but surely, he gained a better understanding of the worlds that had populated the starry sky of the past. Bai Xiaochi also provided details in response to the questions Bai Xiaochun asked.

In addition to that, Bai Xiaochun finally conjured a twenty-eight-colored flame. His cultivation base was now at the peak of the great circle of the Celestial Realm, meaning that he was now extremely close to becoming an archaean. It was both a tiny gap, and also a massive one. Unless he got the right opportunity and good fortune, he would not be able to bridge it.

Even still, his battle prowess was even higher than before, and he had better control over his treasured fan. He could now summon two archaean slaves, both of whom could remain outside of the fan for two incense sticks’ worth of time.

His Archaean Luminescence had also improved. He now had more than fifty shots, making it possible for him to defeat archaeans in battle without himself actually being one!

Of course, Bai Xiaochun was not simply happy with how things were. Unless he was an archaean, he couldn’t resurrect his subordinates if they died, which meant that his celestials were like trees with nothing to sink their roots into. If a storm came along, they could be wiped out overnight.

Archaean battle prowess was the backbone of an imperial dynasty, and the divine ability of resurrection was the only way to keep it alive long-term!

Unfortunately, no matter what he tried, he couldn’t come up with any way to bridge that final gap. Furthermore, multi-colored flame had a lot to do with his cultivation base. By now, he realized that it was only with an Archaean Realm cultivation base that he could finish the formula for twenty-nine-colored flame.

Eventually, he gave up all his tests and plans, and settled his heart. Emptying himself out, he looked at the void, until one day, his eyes widened, and he rose to his feet. Bai Xiaochi appeared next to him, and when he looked out, he murmured, “We meet again. This is the ninth time I've seen them....”

Far off in the void were countless glittering lights, which were countless crystalline lamps, eternally illuminating… the coffins upon which they rested!

There seemed to be too many coffins to count, perhaps millions. As they drifted through the void, they almost looked like rain....

As the treasured fan slowed to a halt, Bai Xiaochun stood at its edge, looking out at the majestic scene. As the countless coffins passed by, he could see that inside them were the preserved corpses of both men and women....

Unfortunately, they had existed for so long that many of them had begun to rot away, and seemed to be on the verge of disappearing altogether.... It was a burial rain that continued for a long time. When the last coffin passed by, Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly, aware that this was one of the many peoples that had been involved in the massacres in the starry sky of the past. Before death, they had left this rain of coffins as their memorial within the void.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1236 awe-chapter-1237

In his years of travels collecting souls, Bai Xiaochun had come to a much better understanding of the void around him.

And yet, despite all the ruins he had seen, nothing left him as shaken as watching millions of coffins floating by in front of him.

Eventually, he turned his back on the void and sat down thoughtfully. As of this point, he was absolutely convinced… that this void was a place of death, with the only life existing in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

“The only things left are the souls, and spirit automatons like Xiaochi.” Sighing, he looked over at Bai Xiaochi, and suddenly felt profoundly sorry for him. His own mood had sunk over the past few years, a period of time that was nothing compared to the immense span of time that the spirit automaton had floated alone through the void. It was no wonder that his attitude had been so bad when they first met.

Time continued to pass in silence. Year after year, one set of ruins after another. One day… the fan suddenly began to slow down. It wasn’t the work of Bai Xiaochun, nor Bai Xiaochi. Apparently, the fan was about to reach its final destination. Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi was panting, and his eyes flickered strangely, as though he was familiar with the location they were approaching, but at the same time, unfamiliar.

The region up above was filled with so many ruins that its overall size surpassed anything Bai Xiaochun had seen so far during his travels. In fact, it was impossible to see where these ruins ended!

There were destroyed buildings, crushed boulders, and innumerable destroyed magical items. Occasionally, it was even possible to see plants that were so dried and withered that they would collapse into dust if they were touched….

There were also slight fluctuations in the area that instantly caused Bai Xiaochun's aura to retract slightly, and his eyes to shine.

"Immortal energy!" he murmured, rising slowly to his feet. As soon as he sensed that energy, and looked out to determine which path the fan was following, a monumental possibility occurred to him.

"I bet that this place is… the Immortal World mentioned by the sovereign owner of the fan!!

"In the past, it was the most flourishing location in the starry sky, and home to the most advanced civilization!!

"It was also where… this fan was created!!"

He looked over at Bai Xiaochi and could see that strange look in his eye, as if he recognized this place, but at the same time, found it unfamiliar. That only seemed to bolster his speculation. And as he examined his surroundings more closely, he came to be convinced that he was looking at a shattered continent!!

From the endless dust-covered ruins, it was possible to guess how spectacular the Immortal World of the past had been. Soon, an image appeared in Bai Xiaochun's mind… of a land mass that surpassed the Eternal Immortal Domains in size by nearly a hundred times!!

In the area surrounding that enormous land mass were hundreds of thousands of spherical objects. Although it was impossible for Bai Xiaochun to determine what those objects were, the evidence of their existence was clear, based on the wreckage that remained.

“Home….” Bai Xiaochi murmured.

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the ruins as they slowly drifted through them. Although the fan had clearly slowed down, it was still moving as quickly as a celestial.

Even moving at that speed, years passed without any end in sight. During that time, Bai Xiaochun studied the ruins around him, passing hundreds of locations that pulsed with fluctuations that caused even him to shiver with fear.

Even looking closely at such locations didn’t provide any further information about them. However, considering Bai Xiaochun’s progress with the Essence of time, he was able to determine that they were the auras of powerful experts who had died countless years in the past.

At the very least, such auras were at the level of an archaean…. From these ruins, Bai Xiaochun began to gain an understanding of what the Immortal World of yesteryear had been like. The sheer glory and power of this place defied imagination.

It was impossible to even imagine what level of power, what catastrophe, could bring an end to the majestic Immortal World.

“The continent shattered,” Bai Xiaochun murmured. “The hundreds of thousands of spheroids were crushed. All of the archaeans were exterminated, and the Immortal Imperatrix died a bitter death. All the Immortal Imperator could do was create this fan and send it away, along with a clone projection. He… died here….” Months passed. Eventually, when the fan reached a certain area, it decelerated rapidly!

When that happened, Bai Xiaochun looked around at the ruins, and realized that he felt something tugging at him, some huge object!

And that object was none other than the destination of the treasured fan!

Or perhaps… that enormous object had summoned the fan to it!

It was what appeared to be… a shockingly enormous pale white spheroid, fully 30,000 meters tall!!

Bai Xiaochun gasped. As for Bai Xiaochi, as soon as he saw the object, his lips quivered as though he wished to speak, and yet no words came out. However, his eyes radiated what could only be intense pain.

Soon, Bai Xiaochun had an idea of what was happening. The fan began to slowly orbit the object, and as it reached the other side, Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to spin. Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi let loose a weeping cry.

“Milord!!”

“Immortal Imperator!!” Bai Xiaochun blurted. This was no random sphere, it was… a gigantic head!!

As its facial features became visible, Bai Xiaochun realized that they perfectly matched those of the projection of the Immortal Imperator that he had met in the hundredth level of the treasured fan!

Crusted blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. His eyes were still open, even in death, and even after all of the countless tens of thousands of years which had passed since then, it was still possible to see the immense defiance within them.

Just by looking into those eyes, Bai Xiaochun could almost hear a roar of rage that shook him down to his soul!

Although he had previously speculated that the treasured fan had been summoned by the very sovereign who had created it, when the moment arrived that his theory was proved correct, he simply couldn’t remain calm. In fact, the grief and rage contained within the head influenced the area around it, causing everything to distort from the pressure.

If it weren’t for Bai Xiaochun’s particularly powerful fleshly body, and the fact that he was on the fan itself, he wouldn’t have been able to even get close. Even with all that protection, he still felt out of sorts, and had trouble breathing. After a bit of time passed, and he acclimated a bit, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the Immortal Imperator.

After expressing his thanks to the Immortal Imperator for creating the treasured fan, he rose from his bow and looked at the head.

“Eee?” he murmured. Sending some divine sense out, he attempted to make contact with the head, and although it was difficult, with help from the fan, he succeeded.

In that instant, he trembled, and his Daoseed began to tremble as if with desperate anticipation. Shaken, Bai Xiaochun realized that there was power lurking within the sovereign’s head!!

It was a strange power, neither immortal energy, nor cultivation base power. It actually reminded him of when he had become a celestial, and the Eternal Mother had whispered into his ear.

“It’s qi flow!” Bai Xiaochi whispered. “I know why the fan came here. It wasn’t summoned by my master, but rather… from what exists inside my master’s head. It’s… the qi flow of the Immortal World!

“Bai Xiaochun, you are milord's successor, and thus you qualify to absorb the last bit of qi flow from the Immortal World! If you do, then breaking into the Archaean Ream… should be as easy as turning over your hand!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1237 awe-chapter-1238

Bai Xiaochun looked at the sovereign’s head, and as Bai Xiaochi’s voice rang in his ears, he realized that just as the spirit automaton had said, that strange power was indeed the last bit of qi flow from the Immortal World!

That qi flow had pulled the fan to it, which made sense considering that the qi flow had created the fan in this very location!

As for his own Daoseed, it thirsted for that power for the same reason Bai Xiaochi had mentioned. If he could absorb the last of the Immortal World’s qi flow, then he could easily break through into the Archaean Realm!

This was an opportunity that any celestial would go crazy over, good fortune that was rarely encountered. Other than the Eternal Immortal Domains, there were no other worlds in this void who had managed to preserve some of their qi flow through the catastrophe.

Any other person besides Bai Xiaochun would have had to expend great effort to think of a way to extract that qi flow and absorb it. After all, it would require the approval of the qi flow itself.

But Bai Xiaochun didn’t need to worry about that. After becoming the owner of the fan, he had gained the approval of the sovereign’s clone projection. In essence, he had already sown karma with the Immortal World.

Although it seemed like a tenuous connection, it was enough to acquire the approval of the qi flow!

But now, he faced one main challenge… how to actually extract the qi flow!

After a bit of analysis, his anticipation was building, and his eyes shone brightly. After all, he had been stuck in the great circle of the Celestial Realm for quite a while now, unable to break through. Therefore, this opportunity, this good fortune, was enough to cause his heart to swell with fervor.

But as usual, he didn’t act rashly. He first analyzed his surroundings, circling the area on the fan for a while, and even sending his archaean slaves out to explore a bit.

Only after that did he emerge from the fan and approach the sovereign’s head. As he neared, the pressure mounted, but soon enough, he was only 30 meters away from it.

At this distance, it wasn’t even possible to see the top of the gigantic head. All he could see was grayish skin, with wrinkles as wide as his arm was long.

Enduring the uncomfortable pressure, and under the anxious gaze of Bai Xiaochi, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then pushed out toward the sovereign’s head, unleashing the power of his cultivation base in an attempt to extract the qi flow.

Unfortunately, no amount of cultivation base power provoked any reaction from the qi flow. It was almost as if it didn’t even know Bai Xiaochun existed.

He tried various divine abilities and magical techniques. He tried biting his tongue and using his own blood. But the qi flow didn’t react in the least. Bai Xiaochun was really starting to get nervous.

After hesitating for a moment, he took another step forward, using Gravitational Extermination in an attempt to nullify the pressure weighing down from the sovereign’s head, and even unleashing some of the aura of his Undying Sovereign’s Fist. He also transmitted a message to Bai Xiaochi asking for help, who then used the power of the fan to strengthen him.

And thus, he continued forward step by step. From the 30-meter mark, he reached 24 meters, then 15 meters, then 9 meters. Eventually, he was only one pace away, close enough to reach out and touch the head. By that point, he was trembling, and his face was magenta from the effort.

Reaching out, he placed his hand onto the skin that was the surface of the sovereign’s head. In that instant, his head began to spin, and he was overwhelmed with what felt like a mountain crushing down on him.

If he had acquired the qi flow at the price of being crushed a bit, he could have accepted it. But even after touching the head, there was no reaction from the qi flow.

Coughing up a mouthful of blood, he staggered backward until he was back on the fan. Gasping for breath, he looked over at the sovereign’s head, completely flummoxed by the situation with the qi flow.

“How do I extract it...?” he thought. Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi looked equally stunned and confused, and had no advice to give.

Half a month passed, during which time Bai Xiaochun tried everything he could think of. Each time, he met with failure, coughed up blood, and waited to recover before trying again.

Eventually, he was beginning to lose hope. Sitting there on the fan, he stared at the sovereign’s head, considering if it might be possible to drag it into the face of the fan.

It did not seem possible to extract the qi flow through ordinary means. As far as destroying the head… not only was he unable, even if he had been, he wouldn’t stoop to that level. He had a bottom line in life, and repaying kindness with enmity was not something he would do. After all, in some ways, the Immortal Imperator was his Master!

And Bai Xiaochi would obviously not tolerate such profane behavior.

Bai Xiaochun sat there with a frown on his face for five days, thinking. Eventually, his brow furrowed even more deeply as a new idea occurred to him.

“There seem to be two possibilities as to why I can’t extract the qi flow…. Either my methods are wrong, or I don’t qualify. If I qualified, then I should be able to just beckon to the qi flow, and have it fly out to me….

“Therefore, I really only have one choice. I need to… trick the qi flow into thinking that I'm the Immortal Imperator!!” His eyes began to shine brightly at the audacity of the idea. However, the more he thought about it, the more he realized that it seemed like a definite possibility.

“To trick the qi flow, I could use… my Sutra of Future Pāramitā to connect the Immortal Imperator’s fate to my own…. If that’s not enough, I could use my Sutra of Former Reincarnation to try to gain access to some of the sovereign’s memories, whatever is left in his head….

“If I can understand his life by experiencing his memories… then I will be him, and he will be me….” After pondering the situation a bit more, he blurred into motion, heading directly toward the sovereign’s head, specifically, the forehead. As he got close, he reached out and touched the skin!

Next, he performed an incantation gesture with his left hand, unleashing his Sutra of Future Pāramitā. Red strands swirled out into his left hand, transforming into a crimson pāramitā lily. The instant the flower entered the sovereign’s head, Bai Xiaochun’s mind rumbled, and something profoundly ancient filled him.

At the same time, a trembling scream erupted from his mouth….

“My head… my head….” After connecting his fate to the sovereign’s, it suddenly felt like his own head had been chopped off. The pain, and the sensation of death, were overwhelmingly realistic.

Thankfully, he had been prepared for something like this, and managed to hold on to consciousness. Then, to his excitement, the scrap of qi flow began to stir and move in his direction. Although it didn’t come all the way, it covered nearly half the distance.

Immediately, he brightened up.

“So, it's working. Well, now I need to see if I can fuse with his memories….” His left hand blurred again as he unleashed the Sutra of Former Reincarnation. The instant he touched the sovereign’s forehead, a tremor passed through him, and his eyes went blank. Suddenly, he didn’t seem like himself, as though his soul were leaving his body, and entering a world filled with mists….

This world was so huge that Bai Xiaochun began to turn completely blank, forgetting time, forgetting everything around him. Eventually, he felt someone pushing and prodding him.

“Wake up, Little Chen….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1238 awe-chapter-1239

Bai Xiaochun felt like he was being prodded awake from a deep sleep. He opened his eyes, and it was as if his soul had lost access to all of his previous memories. He had no idea who he was, and only knew that he felt very cold….

White, fluffy snowflakes fell from above, completely obscuring the sky, and also covering the ground, making even the distant mountains a pale white color.

Bai Xiaochun found himself in a forest of withered trees. In fact, the trees were covered with so much snow that many of their branches had already snapped. The scattered branches that remained intact seemed like spots of black within the wider world of whiteness.

“Do *not* fall asleep, Little Chen,” someone said. “Stay awake….”

Bai Xiaochun felt like he had been dreaming, except he couldn’t remember what the dream had been about. Now that he was awake, everything was all a blur.

All he knew was that it was cold, so cold that he felt like he might freeze. Perhaps the cold had sealed his memories.

But then… he felt himself being prodded a few times, and a face appeared in front of him, white with frost.

It was a youngster, about thirteen or fourteen years old. He was gaunt, and apparently injured, as his clothing was torn and stained with blood. He looked very weak, but there was something about his eyes that was completely unforgettable. They shimmered like stars, but at the same time, contained a ruthlessness that belied his young age. And yet, when he gazed at Bai Xiaochun, that ruthlessness vanished, to be replaced with warmth and love.

“Brother….” Bai Xiaochun murmured, his lips quivering. Yes, his memories were telling him that this was indeed… his older brother, a blood brother with whom he shared both father and mother!

Even saying that one word, *brother*, caused a wave of exhaustion to pass through him. He almost wasn’t sure he could deal with the biting wind, a wild wind that filled him with bleakness and desolation.

It was obviously the dead of winter, what with the falling snowflakes. However, as he looked up into the sky, he realized that there were also bugs flying high up in the sky… pale white locusts!

Apparently, their presence within the snowstorm was what had led to the famine which gripped the lands. There were other people in the area, refugees who huddled against the wind, their gaunt frames and listless expressions making it difficult to tell if they were even alive….

They all feared the cold, and yet, no one seemed willing to start a fire. Not because they didn’t want to, but because they didn’t dare…. When Bai Xiaochun looked at the locusts in the snowstorm, he could instantly tell that they were unique in more than one way. Not only could they survive in this icy cold, but it was also obvious that fire would attract their attention. And in the dead of winter, when food was scarce, they would eat anything they could find.

The weight of all of these thoughts seemed to weaken him, to the point where he could barely lift his hand. However, he somehow managed to do that, and when he did, he saw the hand of a seven- or eight-year-old. His hand dropped back down, and he struggled to keep his eyes open....

The young man who had spoken moments ago seemed relieved to see Bai Xiaochun awake. However, he could also see how weak he was, and how he was having trouble keeping his eyes open. He prodded him anxiously a few more times, clearly grieving at the fact that his younger brother was having trouble hanging on to life. The problem was hunger; only if he could find food to eat would his brother have the strength to keep on living.

“Hang in there a bit longer, Little Chen. I’ll get some food for you. Just wait, I’ll be back right away!” Determination flashed in the youngster’s eyes, and as he turned away from his younger brother, the ruthlessness returned to his face. Looking like a lone wolf, he stalked off into the forest.

He was clearly in a weak state, but apparently, Bai Xiaochun’s moment of crisis had unlocked shocking toughness within him. Ignoring his injuries and his weakness, he vanished into the trees.

“Brother....” Bai Xiaochun murmured, although his voice was too quiet for anyone to hear. He knew that his big brother was going to get food for him, and vaguely remembered that it was only after the white locusts had arrived that the famine started, and disease spread. Everyone back home in their village had either starved to death or died of disease, including their parents.

Bai Xiaochun knew that the only reason he was alive was his brother's strength. After he had fallen sick, his brother had cared for him and even carried him on his back during their journey. When the adults had begun to fight amongst each other for food, his brother had developed a ruthlessness that even they feared.

His brother gave him most of the food. Even when his brother's stomach growled with hunger, he pretended to be full, and would say, “I'm your big brother, aren’t I? Here, eat.”

Thus, Bai Xiaochun remained alive. He remembered that his name was Zhou Chen, and his older brother was Zhou Fan. And he was also sure that, without the dead weight that was himself, his ruthless brother would definitely have had it much better off in this chaotic world….

Unfortunately, despite how his brother had cared for him, his sickness had weakened him to the point where he couldn’t hang on for much longer.

“Without me, my brother would have a much better life….” he thought. Eventually, he closed his eyes and let the snowflakes begin to cover him up, the flame of his life force beginning to flicker out. However, even as that was about to happen, a powerful force pushed the snow away, scattering even the white locusts in the area. At the same time, an old man descended from above, clad in a Daoist robe, an unsightly expression on his face.

As soon as the refugees in the area saw the old man, they kowtowed, trembling. They opened their mouths as if to beg for his help, but even as they did, locusts began to crawl out from inside them….

None of them had the power to even scream as they simply waited to die.

The old man looked at all of the refugees who had already been infected by the parasitic locusts, and a gleam of pity appeared in his eyes. Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about the situation. Waving his hands, he put the tortured refugees out of their misery.

Clearly in a horrific mood, the old man turned to leave, which was when he noticed Bai Xiaochun.

“Eee?” he muttered, stopping in place and looking more closely. A moment later, his eyes lit up with disbelief. “A Dao Body?”

Walking over to Bai Xiaochun, he waved his hand, causing a warmth to enter him that stabilized the flickering flame of his life force.

As he looked closer at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes began to shine even more brightly. Throwing his head back, he laughed heartily before picking the unconscious Bai Xiaochun up and flying up into the air with him….

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the emaciated Zhou Fan staggered back. Snow was piled up on his shoulders and head, and each step he took left drops of blood on the snow.

He had a few new wounds on his face, and he was bleeding from his abdomen. He was in very bad shape, and yet, his eyes flickered with excitement. Tucked into the fold of his garment was a steamed bun, soaked with blood, that he had risked his life to rob from someone else.

“Little Chen! I found some food for--” Before he could finish speaking, his face fell as he noticed all the corpses in the area. Looking around anxiously, he rushed over to where he had left Bai Xiaochun, only to find no one there. That, and the sight of all of locusts devouring the nearby corpses, made his heart seize.

“Little Chen!” he wailed. “Little Chen!!”

He had lost his only relative. He had lost everything. Trembling, he continued to search in vain. In the end, he dropped down onto the very spot where his brother had been lying, holding the blood-soaked bun, and began to weep.

“Little Chen….” In his despair, he didn’t notice that the scent of the blood had attracted a horde of white locusts, who descended from the sky and swarmed over him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1239 awe-chapter-1240

Somewhere in the void, in the ruins of the Immortal World, next to the sovereign’s head, Bai Xiaochi was paying close attention to everything. He saw Bai Xiaochun shiver, and then weaken in unprecedented fashion. He seemed to be instantly drained of energy, and blood began to ooze out of the corners of his mouth as he toppled down and away from the statue.

However, at the same time, the qi flow, which had remained unmoving this entire time, stirred, and thirty percent of it shot toward Bai Xiaochun!

That portion of the qi flow entered Bai Xiaochun, causing him to shiver. Soon, he was back on the treasured fan, looking exhausted, but excited. As the thirty percent of the qi flow entered him, his cultivation base power suddenly formed a resonance with the ruins of the Immortal World!

It caused his mind to reel as shocking transformations occurred to his cultivation base. As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun was sure… that if he could absorb the rest of that qi flow, and formed a complete resonance with the ruins of the Immortal World, then his cultivation base… would definitely break through to the next level!!

“What did you see?” Bai Xiaochi asked anxiously.

“I saw….” Strange light flickered in his eyes as he recalled what he had just experienced. He remembered being Zhou Chen, and how he had forgotten that he was Bai Xiaochun. It was as if he had actually become Zhou Chen.

More precisely, everything he had said, and even his thoughts, were all memories… recollections of things that had occurred in the past!

Bai Xiaochun looked over at Bai Xiaochi. “The Immortal Imperator’s name… was Zhou Chen?”

Bai Xiaochi shivered. Looking back in shock at Bai Xiaochun, he quietly said, “So you really did succeed….”

Although everything he had said before was true, and he really did hope that Bai Xiaochun would be able get that qi flow, he had believed it to be too hard. And when Bai Xiaochun had fallen moments ago, his hesitation had grown.

But now, he found out that Bai Xiaochun had actually succeeded!

“I saw… the Immortal Imperator as a youth….” Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes and thought back to everything he had seen. Frowning, he realized that he was still somewhat under the effects of what had just happened. As soon as he thought back to the sovereign’s brother, a swell of fondness rose up in his heart.

“If I continue with this, the emotional effects will probably get more serious…. But I have to do it. I need this qi flow to achieve my cultivation base breakthrough!” After considering matters for a bit, he decided that although there were some risks, he could accept that. Eyes flashing with determination, he once again flew up toward the sovereign’s head. Having been through the process once before, and having already acquired thirty percent of the qi flow, he quickly unleashed his Sutra of the Future and Sutra of the Former.

His mind began to reel, and he felt the same thing as last time. His mind went blank. Time passed, and then he opened his eyes.

Blinding sunlight stabbed into his eyes, but he didn’t close them. He stood outside a valley of black clouds, tall, handsome, and the very picture of righteousness and vitality!

However, there was something that pained him in his heart, a feeling that he couldn’t dispel.

The last time he had entered the sovereign’s memories, he had been young, but now, Zhou Chen was middle-aged. Many things had happened since his youth, and he had accomplished much.

He wasn’t alone outside of the valley of black clouds. A few hundred people were at his side, all of them cultivators, and they were flanked by thousands more cultivators. Clearly, they had this area locked down tight!

Even further back were tens of thousands of cultivators, gathered in ranks, causing immense pressure to weigh down on the area. All gazes in the area were fixed on one thing…. Standing in front of Zhou Chen, with his back to the valley of black clouds, was a middle-aged cultivator in a black robe, with long black hair and blood smeared all over his face!

He was also handsome, but in a vicious, evil way. His eyes were violet, and his expression was ice cold. The murderous aura he radiated could shake heaven and earth, and could not even be suppressed by the tens of thousands of cultivators in the area!

Unfortunately, he was injured, with his chest caved in, and his right leg broken. The pain involved must have been intense, but he simply stood there looking out… not at the tens of thousands of cultivators, but at one person!

That person… was Bai Xiaochun, or rather, Zhou Chen!

“Brother…” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice filled with pain. He almost seemed to be pleading, although he didn't realize it. “Come back with me. I can be your guarantor! It’s not your fault you did all those things. I….”

His pain and guilt stemmed from how, years ago, he had pled with his Master to go search for his brother, Zhou Fan. Unfortunately, they hadn’t been able to find him. At that point, he had sworn to avenge his death, and had gone crazy practicing cultivation. Later on, he had exterminated the entire White Locust Dynasty, which at that time had come to dominate all of the Immortal World’s Lower Three Heavens. Eventually, the world returned to normal, and Zhou Chen felt that he could breathe a sigh of relief. However, he was never able to forget about that older brother of his.

Years later, he came to find that the Immortal World had nine heavens, and that he lived in the Lower Three Heavens. Eventually, he became one of the most well-known figures there, the subject of much adoration. That was when Zhou Fan reappeared. He led the forces of the Black Locust Dynasty, which were far more terrifying than the White Locust Dynasty. As they spread through the Lower Three Heavens, consuming everything in their path, they added the power of their victims to Zhou Fan’s cultivation base.

It was a vile, terrifying technique that caused widespread alarm among the cultivators of the Lower Three Heavens. A bitter war was fought for many years…. It was a difficult, deadly era, that culminated in this event.

“I’ll even give up my shot at reaching the Middle Three Heavens if it will keep you safe….” Bai Xiaochun continued. “Brother, please, come with me….”

Mixed emotions could be seen in the eyes of the black-robed Zhou Fan. However, he shook his head, and his eyes turned as cold as ice.

“From now on, Little Chen… you and I… are *not* family!” Looking around at the surrounding cultivators, he smiled mockingly, then turned and walked into the valley of black clouds.

No one attempted to stop him. As far as they were concerned, stepping into that valley meant that he was already dead, exterminated!

In apparent confirmation of their assumption, as Zhou Fan walked into the clouds, they began to eat away at his body. He trembled as he walked forward, his flesh rotting off, bones becoming visible…. As he corroded, waves of black locusts erupted from inside of him, shrieking in pain as they tried to escape. Before they could, they were obliterated by the clouds….

Everyone else sighed in relief. But not Bai Xiaochun. Pain gripped his heart as he watched his brother being eaten away by the clouds. Finally, he stepped forward and called out in a loud voice, “Brother, why are you doing this? Tell me? Why?!?!”

Zhou Fan was clearly having a hard time struggling forward. When he heard his brother’s voice, he stopped for a moment, then opened his mouth as if to speak. However, he said nothing. Bowing his head, he continued onward, rotting away. By now, he was little more than bones, making a completely fearsome sight. Only his eyes continued to burn with obsession and focus as he strode deeper into the valley of clouds.

Already, it was possible for him to see something at the end of the valley, in the depths of the black clouds, something enormous. It was… a battleship!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1240 awe-chapter-1241

As soon as that battleship became visible within the black mists, Bai Xiaochun's vision ended.

Having regained lucidity, he found himself in front of the sovereign's head, being shoved away by the immense pressure. This time, he fared much better than on the previous occasion. He had acquired an additional twenty percent of the qi flow, which was already entering his body.

Bai Xiaochi didn't ask any questions, but his eyes shone brightly; he knew what was happening. Bai Xiaochun returned to the fan and rested for a few days, then headed back toward the sovereign's head, his eyes shining with determination.

As his hand touched the skin, and he unleashed his Daoist magics, the blankness once again took over. By now, he was used to it, and simply let it happen.

Time passed, after which, he woke up. Or perhaps it was Zhou Chen who woke up.

This was his third vision of the sovereign's memories. Much time had passed since the events of the second. Although Zhou Chen still looked middle-aged, he was now more dignified. He hovered in the starry sky, a beautiful woman at his side, who was none other than his Daoist partner, his Immortal Imperatrix!

Arrayed behind them was an army of millions upon millions of cultivators!

Facing them was a black cloud mass filled with devilish specters. Not an ounce of life force was present there, nor could any life force be detected on the black-robed man who stood in front of the clouds, who was none other than Zhou Fan.

His black robe itself seemed capable of consuming everything in its path; it even caused the light in the area to bend toward him.

The black hair which swirled around him did nothing to hide the icy coldness of his eyes as he stared at the leader of the army from the Immortal World, Zhou Chen, as well as… the woman at his side!

Mixed emotions could be seen in Zhou Fan’s eyes as he looked at her, but soon they vanished, and he focused his attention on Zhou Chen.

“Zhou Chen… or rather, I suppose I should call you… the Worldly Daoist!”

As Bai Xiaochun hovered there, he couldn’t prevent the rage and anger from rising up in his heart, as well as… the grief. He thought back to how, after his brother entered the valley of the black clouds, everything went back to normal. Zhou Chen eventually chose to rise to the Middle Three Heavens, and after several years, became a celestial!

Then something happened that was relatively rare. He ascended to the Higher Three Heavens, where he became the apprentice of the then-reigning Immortal Imperator!

At that point, he was given a Daoist name. No longer would he be Zhou Chen; he would be the Worldly Daoist. That was when… he met an Elder Brother called the Mortal Daoist who reminded him a lot of his own older brother. They got along well, and soon became archaeans together. Both of them fell in love with their Junior Sister, who happened to be the daughter of the Immortal Imperator.... Eventually, their Master, the original Immortal Imperator, faded away, becoming a part of the starry sky’s Essence of time, a portion of the River of Time and Space itself.

Years later, the Worldly Daoist gained the approval of the Immortal World, and became a sovereign. He was named the new Immortal Imperator, and his Junior Sister chose to marry him, becoming his Immortal Imperatrix! Unfortunately, the Mortal Daoist, whose cultivation base was actually slightly higher than the Worldly Daoist’s, was frustrated over and over in his attempts to achieve a breakthrough, and could not gain the approval of the Immortal World.

It was a matter of public note, and many people had speculations about the situation. And that was when, down in the Lower Three Heavens, outside the valley of the black clouds, Zhou Fan appeared, clad in a black robe.

He was not alone. Countless devilish specters emerged from the clouds with him, and once again, war visited the Immortal World!

However, that was not the most shocking development. When Zhou Fan and Mortal Daoist met, the two of them merged into one! At that point, everyone knew that Mortal Daoist, apprentice of the original Immortal Imperator, was actually the clone of Zhou Fan, who had disappeared into the Lower Three Heavens years ago!!

Somehow, after the clone and the true self merged back together, despite the fact that the will of the Immortal World refused to offer approval, he broke through to become a sovereign!

At that point, he discarded his true surname of Zhou. He also abandoned the *Daoist* part of his earlier Daoist name. He kept the *Fan* character, which meant *mortal*, and then added the character *renegade* to it!

He was rebelling against that which was orthodox, defying the heavens to change his fate! As of that moment, the Immortal World gained… the Mortal Renegade, Devil Imperator!

For a sovereign to exist without the approval of the Immortal World was heresy, but there was nothing that could be done about it. As soon as the Mortal Renegade became a sovereign, he led his army of devilish specters to wage war on the Immortal World!

After much bitter fighting, the two brothers were finally reunited at this moment!

“Mortal Renegade, you’re a sovereign now, so why stay in the Immortal World? Back outside the Valley of Extermination in the Lower Three Heavens, all I asked was that you come back to me. I would have done anything….

“Now, all I ask is that you go. Leave the Immortal World, and never come back!” The Worldly Daoist hid the pain in his eyes as he looked at the stranger that was his brother. Up to this point, he still didn’t understand… why all of this was happening.

Meanwhile, the Mortal Renegade hovered in the starry sky, hands clasped behind his back as he looked at the Worldly Daoist, a faint smile on his face.

“You know, Worldly Daoist, there is a legend in this starry sky. If this universe were to be bereft of all life force, all living beings, all worlds, and all peoples, if the starry sky went dark, then in the black void that resulted, an Eternal Flower would bloom!

“The Eternal Flower will only bloom when a vast collection of worlds vanish. Only one flower! Consume that flower, and you can break out of the Sovereign Realm and become… truly Eternal!

“That is the only way to become Eternal. There is no other path.” There was a bizarre power within Mortal Renegade’s voice that caused everyone who heard him speak to feel deeply shaken.

“So yes, I’ll leave. But I’ll only do so after wiping out the Immortal World. Then I’ll go to the next world, and the next group of people. Eventually… I will extinguish all of the starry sky, at which point, the Eternal Flower will bloom for me.”

The vision ended, but Bai Xiaochun did not awaken. He sank into blankness again, and when he opened his eyes again, he saw the last memories that existed in the sovereign’s head!

As they poured in, he trembled, and felt himself filling up with rage, and even more so, grief.

He was there in the starry sky, hair disheveled, weak, and injured. His life was about to sputter out as he looked down at the crumbling Immortal World, where countless devilish specters were slaughtering cultivators left and right. Obviously… the Immortal World was no match for this opponent!!

The countless spheres which surrounded the Immortal World were shattering. In his arms… was the corpse of a woman!

She was his Immortal Imperatrix, but her aura had been exterminated. There, in her forehead… was a black spike, slowly emanating black smoke!!

That spike had destroyed her life force, and despite being a sovereign who had mastered the Essence of life and death, the Worldly Daoist was not capable of resurrecting her. He could only hold her body, tears streaming down his face as he threw his head back and howled, “Mortal Renegade!!!”

The Worldly Daoist stared at the black-robed figure in front of him, whose mere presence, as well as the vile black smoke that swirled around him, caused everything to twist and distort.

Although his life had reached the end, and the flame of his life force was about to go out, the Worldly Daoist still had the energy to shout, “Why? Why did you do all of this!?!?

“Shanshan is my Daoist partner, and your Junior Sister! She’s our Master’s only flesh and blood! How could you be so cruel!?!?

“Don’t tell me it’s for that Eternal Flower. That’s just a legend. And even if it's true, it doesn't explain why you’ve changed! Mortal Renegade! Zhou Fan! Brother! Tell me… what happened to you?!?!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1241 awe-chapter-1242

The Mortal Renegade didn’t seem to be affected at all by the Worldly Daoist’s shout. He simply looked back at him calmly, almost as if he were already dead. Apparently, he really had severed any and all emotions connected to him.

It was only after the Worldly Daoist’s voice faded away that he finally spoke.

“There are two people in my heart, two people who have hindered my pursuit of the great Dao. The first is the woman that both of us fell in love with. The other… is you.”

This was the first time that Mortal Renegade had actually acknowledged the relationship between himself and the Worldly Daoist. In response, the Worldly Daoist shivered. However, he knew his brother, and therefore, chuckled bitterly and said, “I understand. You killed Junior Sister, and now you’ll kill me…. Afterward, nothing will hinder your pursuit of your Dao!”

Mortal Renegade looked back at the Worldly Daoist, who was now so weak he couldn’t fight back no matter how much he wanted to, and then nodded.

“After I kill you,” he said, “I’ll eradicate the Immortal World. Then, I will have no hindrances. As for whether or not the Eternal Flower is a mere myth… well, there’s only one way to find out for sure.

“Even if it’s not real… all of this still conforms to my Dao!” Not giving the Worldly Daoist a chance to respond, he waved his hand, his eyes flickering coldly as the starry sky around him distorted. Apparently, a natural law was at play, causing an invisible, invincible blade to appear. The blade flashed… and the Worldly Daoist’s head flew off of his body along with a spray of blood!

Shockingly, the blade was so enormous that the Worldly Daoist’s fleshly body, as well as the body of his wife… were shredded into nothing but drifting ash.

Only his head remained, and in the final moment before he actually died, he managed to say one more thing!

“Master once told me that if there really is an Eternal Flower, then after it absorbed all of the desolation and death of this starry sky, it would definitely form its own spirit! You are doomed to lose, Mortal Renegade!!”

The Mortal Renegade’s expression remained the same as ever. He closed his eyes, and as he did, his aura began to grow stronger. The spheres of the Immortal World had crumbled, and the nine heavens that made up the land mass had fallen into ruin. All living beings had been exterminated, leaving behind only devilish specters….

The Mortal Renegade’s aura reached an indescribable level, whereupon he opened his eyes, turned, and led his massive army on a rampage to exterminate everything!

That was where the vision ended. Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened, and the last of the qi flow flowed into him.

At the same time, the Worldly Daoist’s head crumbled into ashes and drifted out into the surrounding ruins. As of this day, he finally got his dying wish: to be buried along with the Immortal World.

Bai Xiaochun stood there, quietly watching the ashes drift away, his mind alive with the memories of the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator.

Now he knew the truth about the Eternal Immortal Domains, also known as the Eternal Flower, as well as the enormous giant who was sealed outside of them.

“The Mortal Renegade….” he murmured. He knew much now, but there was also a lot of missing information. However, he was eighty percent confident that his speculations and analysis of those aspects were correct.

The Mortal Renegade had killed his younger brother, and the woman they both loved. He had wiped out the Immortal World, and then led his army of devilish specters on a path of extermination and destruction….

In the end, he killed all of the people in the starry sky, and destroyed all of the worlds that existed within it. Just as he had said, he cast the starry sky into complete darkness. And then, just as had been spoken of in the legends, the desolation and death caused the Eternal Flower to bloom.

According to such legends, the only way for a cultivator to break out of the Sovereign Realm was to use that Eternal Flower, and reach… the Eternal Realm!

The Mortal Renegade came very, very close to succeeding. He cast the starry sky into darkness, and destroyed everything that existed. The desolation he brought proved the legends true; he personally witnessed the Eternal Flower bloom!

Just outside of the Eternal Immortal Domains, the Mortal Renegade reached out to grab the Eternal Flower, which he would destroy, absorb, and then use to become Eternal.

However… something unexpected happened!

“That was when… just as the Worldly Daoist had said, the Eternal Spirit came to be!” Bai Xiaochun thought back to the stories of the Eternal Mother and the three Eternal Sons. And he thought back to how the Eternal Mother had spoken to him when he became a celestial.

“I bet I can guess what happened. When the Mortal Renegade reached out for the flower, the Eternal Spirit, another term for the Eternal Mother, was not willing to be destroyed and absorbed. She formed three incarnations, three expressions of her divine sense. They became… the Arch-Lord, Saint-Lord, and Vile-Lord. They were the three Eternal Sons!

“The three Eternal Sons fought with the Mortal Renegade, backed by the power of the Eternal Mother. In the end, they paid a bitter price to temporarily resolve the crisis and seal their enemy.

“However, there is one question that remains unanswered. Where did the inhabitants of the Eternal Immortal Domains come from…?” He closed his eyes in thought for some time before coming up with an answer.

“In order to resolve the impending crisis which would inevitably come, the Eternal Mother turned her three Eternal Sons into statues, and then used her divine sense to create worlds inside of them, filled with countless living beings. Her hope was that, years later, when the Mortal Renegade finally broke free, one of her people would be able to reach the Eternal Realm, and stave off complete calamity!

“That was the only thing she could do!” Bai Xiaochun couldn’t be sure how much of his speculation was accurate.

But based on the clues he had so far, they seemed highly likely to be true.

After a moment of silence, he sighed. Looking out at the ruins of the Immortal World, and the scattered ashes of the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator, he clasped hands and bowed deeply. Then he returned to his treasured fan.

Bai Xiaochi seemed about to say something, but held back, and simply stared at the departing ashes, his eyes flickering with grief.

Bai Xiaochun looked over at him, then quietly said, “I’ll tell you whatever you want to know about the Immortal Imperator’s memories.”

Bai Xiaochi shook his head. “There’s no need. It's all in the past now.”

Bai Xiaochun nodded, then sat down cross-legged to examine the qi flow of the Immortal World that now existed within him. Taking a deep breath, he rotated his cultivation base and began his attempt… to break through to the Archaean Realm!!

Considering there were no living sovereigns, the Archaean Realm was the absolute highest level a cultivator could reach at the moment. However, it was very difficult to do so, a fact made clear considering that there were only two archaeans in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

All celestials dreamed of succeeding, and yet, none could!

In the past, Bai Xiaochun had not understood, but now he did. To become an archaean, one not only had to be sufficiently powerful, one also had to acquire the approval of the world!

Without that approval, any attempts at a breakthrough would fail. As for why there was no third archaean in the Eternal Immortal Domains, Bai Xiaochun already had his speculations.

“The method of giving approval is by distributing a portion of power of the world, in other words, its qi flow…. But the Eternal Mother is too weak now, like a candle flickering in the wind. She simply can’t sustain the existence of three archaeans! She can only sustain two!” Eyes flickering, he continued to rotate his cultivation base, and sent the qi flow of the Immortal World circulating through his body. As he did, the signs of an imminent breakthrough became clear!

After all, he was now in the Immortal World, a place that had once been home to the most powerful group of people in all of the starry sky. Even though that world had been reduced to ruins, the remaining qi flow… was enough to propel one person into the Archaean Realm!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1242 awe-chapter-1243

When a celestial became an archaean, his or her Daoseed would bloom, sending roots out into every corner of the body, and producing a flower of Dao Will!

When the Daoseed disappeared, that was the moment of becoming an archaean expert. With boundless Dao Will, all it took was a thought to unleash divine abilities and magical techniques. Although Dao Will did not make one eternally indestructible, nor did it grant eternal life, to some extent it was like transcending, becoming a truly supernatural entity.

For example, a mere look from the Vile-Emperor could cause ordinary celestials to tremble in their boots. And all the Saint-Emperor had to do was unleash a bit of pressure, and wild colors would flash in heaven and earth. Were it not for Bai Xiaochun’s shockingly powerful fleshly body, and its union with his cultivation base, as well as his Archaean Luminescence, he would never have had the requisite battle prowess to fight archaeans.

The reason why archaeans could resurrect fallen celestials who served them also had to do with Dao Will. Upon receiving the portion of a celestial's Daoseed, the archaean would use Dao Will to brand it with an undying mark. If the celestial died, the archaean could then use Dao Will to activate the innate regenerative capabilities that existed within Daoseeds, but were beyond the control of celestials. Then, the Daoseed could form a new soul and body!

The abilities of archaeans to do such things were why imperial dynasties could stand the test of time!

As Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged, his Daoseed shone with dazzling light. It had already been years since the seed sent roots throughout his whole body, but it had never been able to bloom into a flower of Dao Will. Now that he had the qi flow of the Immortal World, the resulting reaction was akin to throwing some cold water into a vat of boiling oil!

Rumbling sounds filled him as all of the roots the Daoseed had sent out began to shine brightly.

If anyone could have seen him at that point, it would look like he was filled with innumerable, brightly shining veins. At the same time, his aura was rising higher and higher.

The ruins of the Immortal World began to tremble, and countless motes of dust began to rise up, and then slowly drift toward Bai Xiaochun.

As they swirled around him like a vortex, the sensation of a breakthrough grew even more intense. At the same time, the void vibrated, and more dust swirled in his direction.

Soon, he was surrounded by a vortex fully 300,000 meters from end to end, completely shocking and majestic in appearance.

Boundless light shone up from him as he sat there on the treasured fan. Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi knew that he had reached a critical juncture, and immediately sent out some divine sense as he stood as a Dharma protector.

Time passed. The light grew more intense, and the screaming vortex grew to a size of 3,000,000 meters, and even bigger….

That vortex seemed to contain power to shake all of the void, and that power was only growing stronger. Time seemed to slow. When celestials became archaeans, each one was different. Some could succeed quickly, others took time, the primary factors being one's level of strength, and the approval of the world.

Bai Xiaochun was already far beyond the Celestial Realm in terms of strength, and had the approval of the Immortal World in the form of some of its qi flow. Therefore, the process went relatively quickly for him.

In fact, Bai Xiaochun’s level within the Celestial Realm could only be described as heaven-defying. That much was evident from the vortex around him, which was a manifestation of the battle prowess of his cultivation base.

As the vortex spun with utter madness, it soon reached a size of 9,000,000 meters. And it didn’t stop there. Next was 15,000,000 meters! Not only was the size itself shocking, so was its speed of expansion.

In the end, it reached 30,000,000 meters, where it finally seemed to find an equilibrium. Because there was no other person to compare to, it was impossible to truly see how shocking that was.

For example, back in the Eternal Immortal Domains, vortexes greater than a few hundreds of thousands of meters had never been seen.

Even in the days of the Immortal World, it would be extremely rare. The Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator, had a vortex of 21,000,000 meters. And the only person who could rival Bai Xiaochun was the heaven-defying… Mortal Renegade, Devil Imperator!!

Time passed. The vortex lasted for three years, shaking all of the ruins of the Immortal World, even locations very far away. During the entire time, Bai Xiaochun wasn't affected at all by the screaming winds. And he shone so brightly that it wasn’t possible to even make out his body. He was like the only shining star in the void!

Then, a voice spoke out into the ruins of the Immortal World, a voice that rumbled like thunder, but at the same time, was little more than a murmur!

“The Archaean Realm!”

The 30,000,000-meter vortex exploded with intensity, screaming and howling in a way that shook even the most remote areas of the Immortal World, until all of it was affected!

It was a monumental and shocking scene!

The void itself trembled as the vortex which covered the Immortal World gradually took the shape of a flower, blooming right there within the void!!

It was illusory, but clearly visible. Next, all of the rubble and dust that existed in the Immortal World began to vibrate as the illusory image shrank down, rapidly forming into a corporeal flower.

For the first time in three years, the treasured fan finally became visible there in the middle of the Immortal World, along with the flower… that was Bai Xiaochun’s Dao Will!!

If any person could have been there to observe what was happening, they would have been profoundly shocked!

The flower continued to shrink for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Then, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and the flower collapsed into strands of mist that entered his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

Cracking sounds echoed out as his hair grew longer, and his skin more fair, leaving him looking even younger than he had before.

He was almost like a teenager now, and yet, when he opened his eyes, they were profoundly abstruse....

“The Archaean Realm....” he whispered again. He had assumed that some sort of tribulation would come, and it would have if he had been in the Eternal Immortal Domains. But now he realized that, because he was in the Immortal World, and had absorbed the last of its qi flow, he had become something like its protector, and therefore, no tribulation came.

He slowly rose to his feet, his aura causing the void to distort around him!

Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi shivered. Looking at Bai Xiaochun, and his surging energy, Bai Xiaochi almost felt like he was looking at his previous master!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1243 awe-chapter-1244

As Bai Xiaochun stood there, his hair long, his skin fair, he looked almost the same as he had back when he first joined the Spirit Stream Sect.

But his aura would cause any cultivator who was not an archaean to tremble. Even other archaeans would be able to tell that, although he looked slim and fair, a terrifying power pulsed inside of him!

It wasn’t fleshly body power, it was cultivation base power. He was now filled with countless strands of Dao Will, and as for his sea of consciousness, it no longer contained a Daoseed, but rather… a flower of Dao Will!

The changes to his cultivation base felt strange. However, he could already tell that his fleshly body had now fallen behind the power of his cultivation base.

“The next thing I need to do is figure out how to get an archaean-level fleshly body….” It was only at this point that a certain level of excitement appeared in his heart, which was actually strange. He knew that he was the type of person who was usually excited to have achieved a breakthrough, but this time, he was very calm. At first, he hadn’t felt any emotions at all.

“It must be the influence of the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator….” With each moment that passed, he felt that excitement growing, until finally, he threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“I'm an archaean!! You just wait, Vile-Emperor! After I get back, I’ll show you a thing or two!” Off to the side, Bai Xiaochi stood there, blinking. Moments ago, the solemn figure standing in front of him had reminded him of his former master, and had filled his heart with reverence. However, that mood was instantly broken by Bai Xiaochun’s laughter. At that point, Bai Xiaochi sighed.

Still laughing, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense out to the fan face, summoning his two archaean slaves.

Now, it was much easier to summon and control them. Furthermore, they could exist outside of the treasured fan for much longer.

In fact, he could sense that he now had the power and authority to take his archaean slaves with him to the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Although they couldn’t stay there for long, perhaps a few days at most, that was still a significant improvement.

“With two archaean slaves at my side, who in the Eternal Immortal Domains would dare to look at me the wrong way!?” He was so excited that he almost felt like jumping up and down. Sending some more divine sense out, he made contact with the boat in the fan face, and then waved his finger!

Rumbling sounds then echoed out as the boat flew out of the fan and into the void, moving far faster than the fan ever could!

At that point, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes went wide. He could tell that, although the boat looked ordinary in nature, it was actually a sovereign-level precious treasure!

With the two archaean slaves on the boat, it would be dramatically fast, and also have incredible battle prowess!

“With this boat in my possession, and the fan as the core of my power, I am definitely a force to be reckoned with!” Still bubbling with excitement, he turned his attention to the river in the fan face. Waving his hand, he attempted to summon it, only to find that nothing happened, except that a few waves rolled out across its surface.

Bai Xiaochi cleared his throat. “Milord… that river can only be used by someone with a sovereign cultivation base….”

Not willing to give in that easily, Bai Xiaochun tried over and over again, only to fail every time. However, he could already sense that, if he could summon that river, then if he had to fight the Vile-Emperor again, he could easily kill him!

“A sovereign-level divine ability!” Next, he looked over at the mountain that the Daoist Tower of Life and Death stood atop, but before he could even try to reach out and control it, Bai Xiaochi once again spoke up.

“It’s the same with the mountain.”

Bai Xiaochun hesitated, then focused specifically on the tower.

“It's the same with the tower,” Bai Xiaochi said quietly.

“Shut up!” Bai Xiaochun snapped, glaring at him. His mood was already being ruined thanks to the spirit automaton. Snorting coldly, he put the boat away and then went back to the main surface of the fan. As he looked out at the ruins of the Immortal World, he mused that if he encountered that old ghost woman again, he would probably be able to crush her.

What happened next was even stranger. As soon as he thought about the old ghost woman, he suddenly felt his emotions stirring. All of a sudden, he realized that if she actually did show up, he would have the impulse to rush over and hug her.

“This is crazy! I can handle being less excited, and I can handle feeling like a relative of the Mortal Renegade. But why do I have feelings for that old ghost woman?! Heavens! This won’t do at all!”

He was so terrified that the blood drained from his face. The mere thought of what might happen if the old ghost woman showed up and he couldn’t control himself caused him to tremble, and even break out in a sweat.

“Listen here, Mr. Worldly Daoist. Don’t screw me over. I'm… I'm not you!” By now, his excitement had completely vanished, and he actually felt a bit like crying.

Scowling on the verge of tears, he sat down and sent the fan flying away, scanning the surrounding area for any signs of the old ghost woman.

However, after flying along with the fan for only a short time, and before he could even leave the ruins of the Immortal World, his expression flickered as he looked down at a certain area below!

It wasn’t the old ghost woman, but rather… something else that was now familiar. There in the ruins of the Immortal World, he saw a valley filled with black clouds!!

The land surrounding that valley hadn’t been damaged at all during the destruction of the world around it, and as such, looked exactly the same as when Bai Xiaochun had seen it in the Worldly Daoist’s memories!

It was the same place where the Mortal Renegade had parted ways with his brother!

The Mortal Renegade had changed dramatically because of that valley, and when he emerged, he began his quest to eradicate the starry sky!

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun felt unprecedentedly serious. Looking at the clouds in the valley, he suddenly felt a profound sensation of danger. At the same time, memories that once belonged to the Worldly Daoist stirred in his mind.

He remembered that the Worldly Daoist had thought of going into the valley to search for an explanation for why the Mortal Renegade had changed so much. At the time, he had already become a sovereign, and yet, had been unable to find the valley!

It was as if the valley had disappeared! No matter how the Worldly Daoist searched, he couldn’t find it. It was almost as if it had died….

But now, years later, after all that remained of the Immortal World was ruins, the valley appeared right in Bai Xiaochun’s presence! Considering Bai Xiaochun’s personality, it didn’t matter that he was now an archaean, he would never step into that valley. He would simply turn and leave.

And yet, even as he looked away and prepared to send the fan away, his expression flickered. Then, he slowly walked off of the fan and headed toward the valley, his body seemingly not under his own control!

At the same time, powerful emotions surged within him!

The emotions turned into a tenacious focus, something that didn’t belong to Bai Xiaochun. Instead, it came from the memories of the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator. It was like a form of madness that forced Bai Xiaochun to enter that valley, and search for the truths that the Worldly Daoist had been unable to discover for himself in years past!

Bai Xiaochun howled, his eyes turning bloodshot as he struggled against the effects. It was like there were two consciousnesses in his head, and the side controlled by the tenacious focus of the Worldly Daoist was willing to do anything to unlock the secrets of the valley!

Even as the struggle continued, Bai Xiaochun walked onward. After all, this was the will of a sovereign that he was contending with. To the Worldly Daoist, the valley was simply too important. Soon, that will began to burn as if with fire, affecting Bai Xiaochun to the point where he shivered and stopped in place.

After a few breaths of time passed, he looked up. In that moment, an aura erupted out of him that was very different from Bai Xiaochun’s!

The ruins of the Immortal World began to quake, almost as if they wished to prostrate themselves to Bai Xiaochun! At the same time, Bai Xiaochi trembled and cried, “Milord!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1244 awe-chapter-1245

Bai Xiaochi was trembling in unprecedented fashion. From the moment Bai Xiaochun had returned, he had been able to sense a familiar aura on him, which had grown even more intense throughout the process of rising to the Archaean Realm.

He had even started to respect Bai Xiaochun more because of it. But then Bai Xiaochun noticed what was happening, and intentionally changed his behavior, causing those feelings within Bai Xiaochi to fade.

He had assumed that perhaps he was mistaken, and that it had all been some strange aspect of Bai Xiaochun's cultivation base. But now, as he looked at Bai Xiaochun standing in front of the valley of clouds, his heart began to pound.

He was sure that he wouldn't make a mistake in this aspect. Although the person he was looking at was clearly not the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator, there was something about his aura that was causing even the void to tremble. It was something that Bai Xiaochi was sure… that only his master could do!

For Bai Xiaochi, everything disappeared, including the void, the ruins around him, and everything else. The only thing that remained was that figure standing there like a mountain!

It was the same for the ruins of the Immortal World. They were trembling as though something had awoken which had been dead since the most ancient of times. A soul had returned, born again, prompting everything and everyone to prostrate to… the Immortal Imperator!!

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly, unmoving, right in front of the valley of swirling black clouds. Eventually, he looked up, and in that moment, he seemed powerful and tall. He could shake heaven and earth, and cause the starry sky to tremble! His aura was one of matchless dignity and splendor, filled with unstoppable energy!!

Even as everything trembled, Bai Xiaochun slowly turned to look at Bai Xiaochi, who was still on the treasured fan.

His facial features were those of Bai Xiaochun, but now, even someone who had only seen him a few times would realize… that this was not Bai Xiaochun!

There was something ancient in his eyes that Bai Xiaochun did not possess, as well as a profound grief. Right now, he seemed like a sovereign, the type of unique being who people would drop to their knees to worship as soon as they laid eyes on him.

“Xiao Chi….” he said softly.

Bai Xiaochi’s jaw dropped, and he rushed forward. Dropping to his knees, he said, “Milord!!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at Bai Xiaochi for a long moment, at the tears in his eyes, and at his excited expression. Then, Bai Xiaochun smiled. It was an emotional smile, filled with memories of primeval times. From the glint in his eyes, he was looking around at things that he hadn’t been able to gaze upon for countless years.

“Don’t cry, Xiao Chi,” he said softly, reaching out to tousle the spirit automaton’s head like an adult would a child’s.

More tears began to stream down Bai Xiaochi’s face as he inched forward and threw his arms around Bai Xiaochun’s leg, worried that if he didn’t, his master would vanish.

“You did well. You found a great successor for me….” Although Bai Xiaochun’s voice sounded as light and airy as it usually did, there was something profound and ancient to it, something that almost made him seem like an old man.

“I don’t exist anymore. The only thing left behind are my memories, and the focus within them…. It won’t last for long. And in fact, if I hadn’t seen this valley of clouds, it would have faded away naturally in a few years.” Bai Xiaochun turned to look back at the valley of black clouds, and the focus in his eyes grew clearer.

“Xiao Chi, wait here for your new master to return…. From now on, please take good care of yourself. And be obedient.” Even as Bai Xiaochi wept, Bai Xiaochun looked around at his old home, then turned and headed toward the valley!

As he walked forward, his aura grew stronger and more powerful, causing more pressure to weigh down on the area. Soon, it seemed to surpass the archaean level, and approach that of a sovereign!

As the last bit of will and focus from his memories burned away, he was given a very short window of time in which his energy could soar!

If an archaean were in the area, they wouldn’t be able to endure such levels of force, and would instantly be killed in body and soul. As Bai Xiaochun stepped into the valley and made contact with the clouds, that temporary surge of energy caused everything to tremble.

The roiling clouds seemed to contain terrifying powers of corrosion, and yet, they met their match when facing the will of a sovereign. As such, Bai Xiaochun was not harmed at all. He disappeared into the clouds, and Bai Xiaochi looked on, tears in his eyes, staring at the valley.

Inside the clouds, Bai Xiaochun seemed completely calm and unflustered. Driven by tenacious focus, he slowly strode deeper and deeper into the valley.

Everything was quiet, with nothing but roiling mist around him. Sometime later, as he reached the depths of the valley, an enormous shape appeared up ahead.

Soon, it became completely visible; it was an enormous battleship!

Upon catching sight of the ship, his eyes began to glitter brightly. He continued to walk, hurrying forward until he was able to see… a dilapidated ship, stranded amidst sand and stone!

It seemed to have been baptized by the passage of countless years. It was black, with tattered sails, and seemingly so old and ancient that it had surely existed far longer than the Immortal World….

Bai Xiaochun stopped in front of the dilapidated, ancient battleship, his eyes gleaming with understanding. Apparently, he had long since speculated about what mysteries were in this valley, and now, his speculations were being proved true.

“So,” he murmured, “the legends are true….” He began to float up into the air, until he was at the same level as the prow of the ship, where he saw someone sitting there cross-legged, back to him!

It was a corpse that had clearly been dead for countless years. The clothing draped on it was tattered by the passage of time, and it was also the origin of the misty clouds that filled the valley.

The moment Bai Xiaochun caught sight of the corpse, he gasped sharply, and his eyes began to glitter brightly. Clearly, this corpse was incredibly old, even older than the ship itself.

In fact… it was a sensation of ancientness that surpassed the entire starry sky!!

Despite being dead, this corpse’s aura filled Bai Xiaochun with a sensation of boundless and majestic power that… went beyond the level of a sovereign!

The sensation of death, and the profound pressure, was so intense that it caused the sovereign aura around Bai Xiaochun to begin to crumble.

At the same time, he heard the screams and howls of countless dying people!

Face draining of blood, he forced himself closer toward the corpse, which was when he realized that despite being completely withered, there was a wound in its forehead!

That wound was the true reason for the corpse’s death. He… had been killed with a single finger attack!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1245 awe-chapter-1246

Not even the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator, ensconced as he was in Bai Xiaochun's body, could possibly stand up to the pressure of such a powerful expert, dead as he was.

The Worldly Daoist of the moment was only an expression of focus and will, and Bai Xiaochun himself was only an archaean. Therefore, that focus and will could only unleash a fraction of its original battle prowess.

Furthermore, the Immortal World was now nothing but ruins. Therefore, the Worldly Daoist currently only possessed about twenty percent of his true strength!

"Even if my true self had come here years in the past, I still wouldn't have been able to remain in the presence of this corpse for long... nor could I have touched it!" In fact, he didn't even dare to step onto the ship itself.

If he did, he would most certainly be destroyed in body and soul!

This corpse was so incredibly strong that it defied imagination. It had such an incredible level of power that it was astonishing to think how strong this person must have been when he was alive!

That was what the Worldly Daoist's tenacious will was considering at the moment. Although there were still many things he didn't understand, one thing was for certain: he had settled one suspicion long held in his heart.

The will of death that suffused the corpse allowed him to identify its Dao!

It was the Dao of death, and also… a Dao of apocalyptic extermination!

It was a Dao in which… in the very end, only one person existed, desolate, cold, and selfish to the extreme. It was a Dao in which success meant the destruction of the starry sky, the eradication of all life, and the end of all creation!

As the surrounding corrosive mists ate away at the sovereign will which held Bai Xiaochun in its grip, it was possible to see countless evil ghosts flitting to and fro, just waiting to rip the flesh off of his bones and consume him entirely.

“The Dao of this unknown, supremely powerful entity… is also… the Mortal Renegade’s Dao?” The Worldly Daoist’s questions were mostly answered after being able to see this corpse, and identify its Dao.

“Years ago, the Mortal Renegade entered this place, and should have died. Instead, he acquired some astonishing good fortune.… It seems… he must have touched the corpse.” The sovereign will that surrounded Bai Xiaochun’s body was almost gone, which meant that he would soon be exposed to the cloudy mists.

“And yet… who could kill an expert as powerful as this?!” The Worldly Daoist looked down quietly at the corpse for a moment longer, continuing to sense the towering will of death that it emanated. And yet, he could find no further answers. And he also knew… that he never would.

The stream of tenacious focus that had occupied Bai Xiaochun's body was about to slip away into nothing.

At that point, his thoughts would no longer exist. In the past, his divine soul and fleshly body had been killed, and right now, the only thing that had returned was a bit of his mind.

Sighing, he turned and walked away from the ship, and out of the valley and its clouds....

As he left, his voice echoed behind him.

“Mortal Renegade, are you… still you? If you are… then did you become the successor of the corpse in that ship…?

“Why does it seem to me… that the corpse died, but his Dao lived on, and was reborn because of karma?!”

Outside the valley, Bai Xiaochi remained still, staring at the swirling clouds, waiting for the most important person in his existence to appear again. Mixed emotions filled his heart; on the one hand, he wanted to see his old master, the returned Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator. On the other hand, he didn’t want to see Bai Xiaochun hurt because of it.

The words the Worldly Daoist had spoken through Bai Xiaochun’s mouth moments ago had softened his heart, but at the same time, had caused profound emotions to rise up in him.

He didn’t have to wait for long before a figure strode out of the clouds. At first, Bai Xiaochi couldn’t quite see who it was, causing his heart to pound with anxiety.

But soon, he could see clearly; it was none other than Bai Xiaochun!

“Milord!” Bai Xiaochi exclaimed, hurrying forward, nervous, unsure of whether this person was the Worldly Daoist or not.

Upon emerging from the clouds, his eyes were closed, and he stood there quietly for a long time. Not daring to say anything, Bai Xiaochi simply stood there.

Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, and the sovereign will began to fade away. Only a tiny bit remained, although it still pulsed with domineering, supreme power!

Winds still swirled through the area, and the void trembled. As far as Bai Xiaochi could remember, the aura he was sensing was exactly the same as that of his former master, the Worldly Daoist!

Before Bai Xiaochi could do anything, Bai Xiaochun's eyes opened. They seemed profoundly ancient, as though they were looking out from countless years into the past. It was almost as if he had been reborn!

Also within that ancientness was grief for the loss of home, family, friends, and loved ones. It was a sorrow abundant in helplessness and confusion.

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochi was absolutely certain that the person in front of him wasn't Bai Xiaochun, but rather, his former master. Excited, he dropped to his knees to kowtow, tears dripping down his nose onto the ground.

Bai Xiaochun's hand reached out to tousle Bai Xiaochi's hair.

“Ah Xiao Chi,” he said gently, “crying again, are we?”

When he heard that, Bai Xiaochi started to weep, and crawled forward to hug Bai Xiaochun's leg, just the way a child would his father's.

“Don't cry, Xiao Chi.” A warm smile appeared on Bai Xiaochun's face. “You've done great, kid. I know it wasn't easy for you through the years.... But you know, you could do a better job with this new Master of yours.... Deep down, this Bai Xiaochun is a simple and honest person. A true warrior, bursting with righteousness. He is imposing, elegant, stately, and far more talented than me. It seems a rare hero has truly arisen, a rarely seen *chosen!”* Somewhere in the middle of his speech, Bai Xiaochi stopped crying, seemingly a bit startled by the Worldly Daoist’s assessment of Bai Xiaochun.

“Milord, this Bai Xiaochun, he--” Before Bai Xiaochi could go on, he was interrupted.

“It’s too bad he wasn’t alive back in my day, otherwise I probably would never have become a sovereign. However, had he been there at that time, it’s highly likely things would have ended differently!” It was possible to see Bai Xiaochun’s eyes flickering with reminiscence, and the grief about him was nearly palpable.

Bai Xiaochi had been about to interject, but when he saw that level of sadness, he held back. However, he simply couldn’t understand why the Immortal Imperator would have such an impression of Bai Xiaochun. Then he started to wonder if perhaps the Bai Xiaochun he had seen was simply the non-heroic version?

“I have to leave, but before I do, I have one final mission for you....” Taking a deep breath, Bai Xiaochun cast a very serious gaze at Bai Xiaochi.

The spirit automaton’s face suddenly grew very earnest, as though he couldn’t wait to hear what this new mission was.

“Remember my words: from now on, you must always obey Bai Xiaochun. Don’t ever trick him! Listen carefully to everything he has to say, and do everything he asks.

Whatever orders he gives you, you must view as importantly as if they came from me. When he asks you to do things, you do them, to the fullest extent possible. When he wants something, you help him get it. Trust him. Come to his aid when others bully him. Being with him is the greatest good fortune you could ever come across, Xiao Chi!

“Also, do your best to make him happy, which will in turn make you happy! Rejoice with him, grieve with him. When he is not happy, join him in his sorrow. Very well, Xiao Chi. This is my last mission to you. Will you accept it!?” By the time he finished speaking, his tone of voice was completely strict and somber.

Bai Xiaochi was somewhat stunned, and if it weren’t for the aura that he could clearly sense, he would suspect that these words hadn’t actually been uttered by the Worldly Daoist.

Looking at the serious glint in his master’s eyes, he gritted his teeth and said, “Yes, sir!”

The serious look on Bai Xiaochun’s face vanished, to be replaced by pure warmth. Once again tousling Bai Xiaochi’s hair, he offered a few more parting words of encouragement, then closed his eyes. Bai Xiaochi looked on, heart twinging with pain as he knew that this would be the last time he ever saw his master.

After Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes, the tension built for a moment, only to be broken when Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes again.

Seemingly a bit worried about Bai Xiaochi’s sincerity, he said, “Although I’m leaving, I’ll come back occasionally to look over you….”

As Bai Xiaochi looked on, stunned, Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat and closed his eyes again….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1246 awe-chapter-1247

Bai Xiaochi looked a bit suspicious and hesitant. He was absolutely certain that he had sensed the aura of his former master, the Worldly Daoist. But the words he had heard just now seemed exactly like something the shameless and fraudulent Bai Xiaochun would love to say….

The Worldly Daoist had been one of the most powerful sovereigns in existence. How could he possibly say such mind-numbingly shocking things?

But because of that aura, Bai Xiaochi had no way of telling for sure.

As Bai Xiaochi looked on hesitantly, Bai Xiaochun stood there, his eyes closed and expression somber, feeling very pleased with himself. Although the Worldly Daoist's tenacious will had taken over his body temporarily, he had remained conscious the entire time, viewing everything as though via an out-of-body experience. At first, he had been quite shocked, especially by Bai Xiaochi's tears. At that time, Bai Xiaochun had snorted in his heart, but paid little attention. He had been more focused on the fear of seeing himself walk into those clouds, and then seeing that lonely-looking ship, and the corpse upon it. Bai Xiaochun had sensed everything that the Worldly Daoist had been able to sense.

All of it had caused him to wail with inward grief and fear; the mists in that valley were simply too dangerous, and had slowly been wearing away at the protective will that surrounded his body. Only after walking out of the mists did the Worldly Daoist's tenacious will eventually fade away.

From that point on, there was no way for the Worldly Daoist to influence Bai Xiaochun in any way. In the end, it was actually good fortune for Bai Xiaochun. Although the Worldly Daoist's tenacious will was only with him for a short time, it left behind some of his aura. And Bai Xiaochun could control that aura at will. In some ways, he… had actually become the Worldly Daoist!

Although he didn't have his battle prowess, he could definitely use that aura to strike fear into the hearts of others.

Even as he realized that, he saw Bai Xiaochi in front of him, looking very torn. Then he thought about Bai Xiaochi throwing his arms around the Worldly Daoist's legs. It was something he had never experienced before, and therefore, he pretended to be the Worldly Daoist. His ruse startled Bai Xiaochi… but seemed to work perfectly. Hopefully, it would ensure that in the future, it was easier to keep the spirit automaton under control….

Bai Xiaochun was definitely feeling wonderful about how everything had played out, especially considering that he had been able to emerge from the valley unscathed. Now that he was sure he was safe, he kept his eyes closed for a while longer, then opened them.

In order to make the act more realistic, he shrieked, and looked around in alarm.

"What happened?!?! Dammit, why am I standing right here?! I feel like I just fell asleep, then woke up, and can't remember anything from before!" Face ashen, and eyes filled with horror, he flew at top speed back to the treasured fan.

Bai Xiaochi was actually more suspicious now than before, but had no way to uncover the truth. Therefore, he simply sighed, resigned himself to fate, and followed Bai Xiaochun back to the fan.

Apparently, Bai Xiaochun was worried that he had overacted a bit, which was always one of his weaknesses. Back at the fan, he looked solemnly at Bai Xiaochi, and asked him all sorts of questions about what had occurred after he ‘went unconscious’.

Before, Bai Xiaochi would never have told him the truth, or at least, would not have gone into much detail. Unless Bai Xiaochun resorted to threatening him with the name-changing tactic, then he would never have wasted his time.

But now, the final mission given to him by his master was still on his mind. Therefore, he explained everything, and then gave his own interpretation of the final words of the Immortal Imperator.

“The Worldly Daoist bore you no ill will. In fact, as his tenacious will was fading away, he even praised you.” Bai Xiaochi seemed worried that Bai Xiaochun might be angry at the Worldly Daoist, and therefore, prepared to offer some advice about the situation.

And yet, to his surprise, Bai Xiaochun shivered, waved his hand, and interrupted, “There’s no need to say it. The Worldly Daoist is basically my own Master! Without him, I would have perished. And I would never have reached the Archaean Realm!

“If he wants to use my body, he can do it any time. I’d go through hell and high water for the old man! If the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator, speaks, then I, Bai Xiaochun, wouldn’t even bat an eyelid in response!

“I'm the type of person who knows the difference between gratitude and grudges! And I'm going to remember what he did for me for the rest of my life!” He sounded completely awe-inspiring and righteous, as if he were speaking from the bottom of his heart, with complete and utter sincerity. In response, Bai Xiaochi was visibly moved, and suddenly felt profound respect for Bai Xiaochun.

“Milord!” Bai Xiaochi was simply too naïve, and immediately thought back to all of the things the Worldly Daoist had said about Bai Xiaochun. At that point, he decided that the Worldly Daoist must have affected Bai Xiaochun on a profound level. After all, the Bai Xiaochun of this moment seemed to perfectly match the Worldly Daoist’s earlier description.

Excited, he told himself that he definitely had to do just as the Worldly Daoist had bid him, and do everything he could to take care of Bai Xiaochun.

Filled with enthusiasm, he immediately took control of the treasured fan and, just as Bai Xiaochun had ordered earlier, pushed it out into the void with all the power and speed he could muster.

An encouraging smile could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face as all of this happened. Feeling very pleased with how much more awesome he was than before, he sat down cross-legged. As of this moment, he had an archaean cultivation base, and yet, his primary goals had not changed.

He still wanted to conjure thirty-colored flame!

He had reached another bottleneck with twenty-nine-colored flame, a bottleneck that required a higher cultivation base. Now that he was in the Archaean Realm, he focused completely on the formula for twenty-nine-colored flame, and began to perform various auguries and calculations. Now that he could back that with the divine sense of an archaean, everything went far faster and more efficiently than before.

It didn’t take long to make some necessary adjustments to the formula, whereupon he flicked his sleeve and produced a huge quantity of souls.

Back when he was a celestial, his failures had been partly due to the difficulty of the formula, and partly because his cultivation base couldn’t sustain the effort. But now, he had resolved all of the problems. His conjuring efforts went unprecedentedly smoothly. A short month later, just as the fan was flying out of the ruins of the Immortal World, a dazzlingly bright light appeared, which was… a twenty-nine-colored flame!!

“So close. Now all I need… is thirty-colored flame!” After feeding the twenty-nine-colored flame into Bai Hao’s mark on the back of his hand, it was to his delight that he could sense Bai Hao’s life force thrumming with activity. It was as if there were only a slight barrier that needed to be broken through to resurrect him!!

Excited, he was just about to keep pressing forward to try to conjure a thirty-colored flame all in one session, when suddenly his expression flickered. Turning to look out into the void, he waved his finger!

In response, a certain area off in the distance began to sink down as the powers of gravity were unleashed. Time seemed to distort, much to the shock of Bai Xiaochi. But then, even as Bai Xiaochi realized what must be happening, he pushed the fan forward with greater speed. Meanwhile, dozens of beams of Archaean Luminescence shot out into the void.

“Archaean slaves!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, his eyes glittering. His two archaean slaves materialized, then flew off of the fan out into the void!

At around that time, the howl of the old ghost woman echoed out from the spot of distorted time and space!

“Dammit, are you ever going to give up!? I can’t believe you set an ambush for me here!” Before, Bai Xiaochun would have been scared out of his mind. But now, he was in the Archaean Realm, and was filled with confidence. Flicking his sleeve, he looked out into the void, battle spirit boiling!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1247 awe-chapter-1248

“Well, the Immortal World did give me the last bit of its qi flow. And the Worldly Daoist treated me with great kindness…. His Daoist partner died a horrible death. Emotionally *and* logically, I know I shouldn’t be fighting her….” Bai Xiaochun was not the type of person to completely ignore matters of justice. Even though this old ghost woman had attacked him over and over again, and clearly wanted to kill him, he still knew the importance of repaying kindnesses.

Taking a deep breath, he suppressed his desire to do battle, and ordered his archaean slave to stop moving. He also forced the ten beams of Archaean Luminescence to pause before they could reach the area of suppressed time and space. Then, he pondered what he could do to stop the woman from trying to chase him down and kill him. Before he could put much thought into the matter, the void seemed to be shattered by the increasingly intense cries of the old ghost woman.

Finally, she appeared within the region of distorted gravity, blurry at first. However, she quickly turned clear, and began to race toward Bai Xiaochun!

She moved with such incredible speed that, within moments she was only a few hundred meters away from the treasured fan. However, that seemed her limit. She was still tied in place by the gravitational distortion, to the point where she looked long and stretched out.

Bai Xiaochun was initially startled, but when he saw that she was temporarily unable of chasing after him, he cleared his throat, walked to the edge of the fan, and then clasped hands and bowed.

“Honored Immortal Imperatrix, I am your Junior, Bai Xiaochun. I inherited the Dao of the exalted Worldly Daoist, and have the last bit of qi flow from the Immortal World. I know that I offended you in the past, ma’am, but I hope that I can do something to make up for that.” Looking very sincere, he yet again clasped hands and bowed.

However, the only response he got was an angered howl. The main difference was that this time, there were sinister words to accompany her shrill cry.

“I want… your soul!” Her words thrummed with murderous intentions, and the most profound of killing intent. Clearly, she wanted to kill Bai Xiaochun, not because of how he had ‘stolen’ her own subordinates, but because of something special about his soul, something that filled her with greed, and the overwhelming desire to consume him.

When Bai Xiaochun heard her words, his eyes glittered, and he flicked his sleeve. Staring at the old ghost woman, he coolly said, “Senior, are you saying that if I don’t give you my soul, you’ll keep chasing me forever until you manage to kill me?”

The only response was a quivering howl of rage that caused his zone of time influence to begin to shatter. Clearly, the old ghost woman was about to break free at any moment.

“The Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator, was a bosom buddy of mine. Clearly, the only thing left of you, Immortal Imperatrix, is a tattered, discarnate soul. You have changed, ma'am! You have committed unforgivable crimes!” Without the slightest hesitation, he strode forward, sending his divine sense out and ordering his two archaean slaves to attack immediately. In the blink of an eye, archaean battle prowess was unleashed in devastating fashion.

Even as the rumbling sounds echoed out, Bai Xiaochun released the ten beams of Archaean Luminescence, which glittered dazzlingly as they joined the archaean slaves' attack on the old ghost woman.

In the exact moment that the old ghost woman struggled free, the divine abilities of the archaean slaves, as well as the deadly Archaean Luminescence, pierced through her!

The ghost woman's body immediately began to break apart, and then, it exploded!

As her body fell apart, streams of black flame erupted out, sweeping through the area. At the same time, a sea of flames built up behind her, forming into a beautiful face that was twisted with rage, and filled with boundless madness and animosity.

The face screamed, sending out sound waves that caused the black fire to transform into numerous ghost heads, which shot toward Bai Xiaochun with gaping maws and mountain-toppling, sea-draining power.

Bai Xiaochun merely shook his head. Although the Immortal Imperatrix's powers seemed shocking, and had been so intimidating in the past that he had always fled immediately, now he could sense that they were little to worry about.

“Leave!” he said. “I'll give you one more chance!” However, the Immortal Imperatrix didn't fall back. Instead, she sent more ghost faces flying out of the sea of fire.

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered icily, but he didn’t personally attack. Instead, he sent some divine sense into the treasured fan, causing the lonely boat therein to vanish and reappear out in the void. There, it turned into a bright beam of light that swirled around the fan, destroying any ghost face which touched it. After destroying countless ghost faces, it changed directions, heading toward the Immortal Imperatrix.

The anger in her eyes grew more intense as she suddenly shattered, transforming into a hoard of white lamps, the power of which began to spread out, altering the natural laws of the void to turn everything it touched into paper!!

The two archaean slaves were influenced, and the lonely boat, despite not being turned into paper, was significantly slowed down. Dodging the boat, the Immortal Imperatrix shot toward the fan, reaching out toward Bai Xiaochun with a clawed ghost hand.

“Enough!” he said, glaring. He had been holding back this entire time, and now, his patience had run thin. In the end, he was not the Worldly Daoist. Besides, after how things were playing out, he was certain that the tenacious will of the Worldly Daoist was no longer there to affect him. If it were, he would already have noticed its influence.

On the one hand, he had hoped to use this situation to test that very aspect, and on the other hand, hadn’t wanted to repay kindness with enmity. But now, he had reached the point where he couldn't hold back any longer.

He had made his decision. As the vengeful soul of the Immortal Imperatrix closed in, he stepped forward, blurring into motion. He actually moved so fast that he shot through her, and then appeared behind her. Facial expression the same as ever, he raised his hand toward the howling Immortal Imperatrix, and then softly pushed forward.

That simple motion summoned an enormous vortex around his hand, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as the Immortal Imperatrix's soul was pulled toward him.

Her enormous body began to shrink, causing a shrill scream to escape her lips. As Bai Xiaochun hovered there calmly, his archaean cultivation base erupted with power, clearly enough to shake the discarnate soul of the Immortal Imperatrix!

Unable to fight back against this level of power, the discarnate soul shattered, transforming into a huge cloud of smaller souls that began to flee in all directions.

There were tens of millions of them, obscuring everything in sight, and while some of them lunged on Bai Xiaochun, most just attempted to escape. Furthermore, it was impossible to tell which of them was the actual soul of the Immortal Imperatrix, and which were smaller souls that had been buried within her.

Bai Xiaochun frowned, aware that if the Immortal Imperatrix escaped, then she would likely continue to pester him, and if she chased him all the way to the Eternal Immortal Domains, that could cause further unnecessary complications.

Shaking his head, he closed his eyes, whereupon his aura changed, simultaneously spreading out, filling the area with a supreme aura. It was none other than the aura of the Worldly Daoist!

Bai Xiaochi shivered, and the countless souls in the area lurched to a halt. Trembling, the souls turned to look at Bai

Xiaochun as his divine sense locked down onto one particular soul!

It was the soul of a woman. She looked ordinary, but there was a black mark on her forehead. Even as she looked at Bai Xiaochun, he vanished, to reappear right in front of her. Reaching out, he grabbed her and tossed her into his bag of holding.

He knew without a doubt that she… was the Immortal Imperatrix!

He didn’t hurt her, he just took her. Afterward, he looked around at the sea of souls surrounding him, his eyes glittering.

“I don’t want to hurt the Immortal Imperatrix, but as for the rest of you… you’ll be a big help with my flame conjuring. I’ll count you lot toward interest.” Clearing his throat, he produced a handful of Soul Convergence Pills which he tossed out into the void as he proceeded to harvest souls.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1248 awe-chapter-1249

On this extended journey through the void, Bai Xiaochun’s only goal was to conjure a tongue of thirty-colored flame, and resurrect his apprentice, Bai Hao!

As the years passed, he conjured more tongues of twenty-nine-colored flame, and at the same time, stabilized his place within the Archaean Realm. Along the way, he drew closer and closer to his goal.

His higher cultivation base ensured that his auguries regarding thirty-colored flame achieved success much more quickly. Combined with all of his previous knowledge and experiences, the formula gradually began to take shape in his mind.

He still had no way to know whether or not thirty colors was the ultimate limit. However, he soon reached the point where his formula was complete.

The next step was to use his accumulation of souls to start the conjuring process. With the successive failures that would result, he would eventually perfect the formula and conjure the flame.

He was no longer worried about having enough souls. After capturing the Immortal Imperatrix, and collecting the seemingly innumerable souls that she had collected, he now had more than enough to go about his work.

Failures with thirty-colored flame could have negative ramifications if they occurred near the Eternal Immortal Domains, and thus, he temporarily chose not to return.

“It won’t be long now….” he murmured. Heart pounding with anticipation, he continued his work.

He performed test after test with actual souls, to the point where he failed… dozens of times. Although it was great practice, years and years passed during that time.

As he saw success getting closer and closer, his excitement built. Now that he was an archaean, there were more places within the void that he could actually enter and explore.

He had visited dozens of various ruins throughout the years, although he had simply scanned many smaller areas with divine sense, and not bothered to personally explore them.

One day, he sat cross-legged on the fan, a multi-colored sea of fire swirling in front of him. Suddenly, it winked out of existence, causing a frown to appear on his face.

“Only one last step in the process. But I still keep failing.” He was frustrated, but at the same time, aware that his failure might have something to do with how excited he was.

Convinced that this was the case, he closed his eyes and forced himself into a state of calm. After banishing his worries about possible failures, he reached yet another new understanding of thirty-colored flame.

He spent an entire month reaching a state of utter calm. Just when he was about to proceed with another test, his expression flickered, and he looked down at the mark on his hand. Bai Hao’s mark was pulsing with fluctuations that seemed to indicate that something existed in the area that was profoundly stimulating.

Surprised, Bai Xiaochun looked out into the void, and then sent his divine sense out to scan the area.

At first, the darkness of the void seemed the same as always. But then….

“Eee?” Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet as, far off in the distance, he caught sight of what appeared to be a candle!!

As he got closer, he saw that it wasn’t a candle, but rather, several sources of light, although he couldn’t tell what exactly they were…. This was the first light Bai Xiaochun had seen in the void during his entire journey.

The old ghost woman had her lamp, but that was filled with an aura of death. And although the Immortal World had something of a glow, it was nothing like what he was looking at now, a shining light that seemed to represent life force.

It was quite a surprise. After all, his journeys through the void had revealed to him nothing but death. And he also knew that the Mortal Renegade had slaughtered everything in the starry sky, reducing it to what was essentially a massive cemetery.

The Eternal Immortal Domains were the only place in the entire void where life existed, and therefore, it was quite a surprise to see this flickering candlelight.

“Did some other group of people actually survive?” Curious, he sent the treasured fan closer to the sea of light.

Sure enough, he found ruins, in the middle of which was an area that didn’t seem damaged at all. In fact, there was a large building there, whose dozens of windows were the source of the light!

However, there was something very strange about the light; it didn’t seem particularly bright. And even as he got closer, the intensity of the light didn't seem to change at all.

Bai Xiaochun was immediately suspicious.

He had been to many places in the void, and had seen many strange and unique things. Therefore, as he stood there on the fan, he simply packed away his curiosity and turned the fan to leave.

It didn’t matter that he had an archaean cultivation base, his basic personality had not changed. After seeing something suspicious, he had no desire to investigate it. Furthermore, the fluctuations coming from Bai Hao’s mark had already calmed down. In the end, Bai Xiaochun knew that he had become very strong, but based on everything he had seen, he also knew that this void was a very boundless and mysterious place.

“In a void like this, it's best to keep one's curiosity in check.” Skirting this set of ruins, he sent the fan proceeding along its way, and prepared to continue working on his thirty-colored flame. However, it was at that point that he frowned and looked out into the void ahead with narrowed eyes. There, up ahead, was some light!

And it looked exactly the same as the light from before!

Snorting coldly, he steered the fan around the light, and kept his divine sense spread out to scan the area. However, before long, more light appeared up ahead.

“Well isn’t this interesting,” he murmured, his expression unsightly. After numerous tests, he came to find that no matter which way he turned, or how he tried to skirt the light, it would always appear in front of him. And every time, it was a bit closer than before.

Eventually, he realized that he could see humanoid shapes moving about on the other side of the windows….

By now, he could tell that these ruins had once been sparsely populated, but had been home to a sovereign. And the circular space that he was apparently caught in was the result of spell formations set up by those people.

He had inadvertently entered the area, and would likely not find it easy to escape. As he thought about the problem, he looked at the shining windows, and could hear the faint sound of laughter and conversation from inside. At one point, one of the windows opened, and a woman appeared, pretty and flirtatious, made up, but clad only in her undergarments. Looking out at Bai Xiaochun, she waved her handkerchief in his direction and beckoned for him to approach.

“Hey, come over here….” she said, her voice traveling through the void and into his ears. At this point, his eyes widened, and he looked the entire building up and down.

“Don’t tell me this place is a brothel?” he murmured, blinking. Although he was tempted to go in, he knew that he shouldn’t let his curiosity get the best of him. Snorting, he turned the fan to leave. Unfortunately, he soon realized that the only way to escape was through the central node of the spell formation, which was none other than the brothel itself.

Sighing, he realized that he had no other options at his disposal. And considering he was so powerful that even the old ghost woman wasn’t a match for him, he decided that there was no harm in indulging in some games.

In that moment, the fluctuations coming from Bai Hao’s mark flared, prompting a strange look from Bai Xiaochun. Suddenly, he wondered if his apprentice actually wanted to go into the brothel.

“Hao’er! You've been corrupted!” Clearing his throat, he decided to play it safe, and sent his divine sense out to cover the entire brothel. A while later, he calmed down a bit, convinced that the unique souls inside didn’t pose any threat to him.

“Well, let’s go check it out. Although I'm not really interested, I might as well do it for my apprentice.” Clearing his throat, he summoned his two archaean slave to act as bodyguards, then instructed Bai Xiaochi to be ready to come to his aid at a moment’s notice if anything suspicious happened. Then, under the curious gaze of Bai Xiaochi, he swaggered off of the fan and headed toward the brothel.

As he neared, the sound of singing, dancing, and laughing grew louder. Soon, the front doors swung open, and a woman dressed like the madam of the brothel appeared, flowers in her hair. Swaying forward, she looked at Bai Xiaochun with glittering eyes.

“Girls!” she said loudly. “We have a customer!”

An entire group of gorgeously dressed women all rushed forward, flirtatious smiles on their faces.

“Welcome! Come in!”

“The girls here will definitely satisfy your every need, sir!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1249 awe-chapter-1250

Despite having an archaean cultivation base, Bai Xiaochun was still blushing as he found himself surrounded by so many gorgeous women. Clearing his throat, he marveled at how he was willing to throw caution to the wind, all for his apprentice Bai Hao.

“Oh, Hao’er. After feeling those energy fluctuations of yours, Master is willing to do that which he would never, *ever* be willing to do normally!”

Bai Xiaochun really was impressed with himself. Flicking his sleeve, he announced, “Bring out your best food and your finest wine!”

The madam of the brothel quickly called out some orders. Meanwhile, the women escorted the swaggering Bai Xiaochun into the building.

The inside was alive with dazzling light, and was extravagantly decorated. Even Bai Xiaochun, who had seen many things in his life, was impressed. The tables and chairs were actually crafted from immortal jade, as were the floor tiles. There were also spell formations set up that made the entire place seem like a celestial paradise.

The candles lighting the interior were made from expensive medicinal plant materials. As a grandmaster of the Dao of medicine, Bai Xiaochun could tell with a single sniff that at least seven or eight of those medicinal plants were actually legendary immortal plants of incalculable value.

And yet, there were more than a thousand such candles, leading the shocked Bai Xiaochun to the conclusion that these people were definitely very rich.

Most astonishing of all was that, whether it was his divine sense or his physical sight, everything around him was not illusory. In other words… the building, the candles, and the floor tiles were all real!

Shaken, he allowed the flirtatious women to lead him to a seat made of jade, where he sat down, heart pounding. The women sat around him, stroking their hair seductively and chatting in lovely voices as the food and wine was served.

Despite being a powerful monarch, the leader of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, Bai Xiaochun had never experienced pampering like this. Adding in the fact that he was somewhat weary from his lonely travels in the void, and this sudden change of pace was actually very exciting.

After examining his wine glass closely, he laughed heartily and downed the entire glass. Then he began to devour the delicious foods and spirit fruits. The women were obviously playing hard-to-get, and alternated between chatting flirtatiously and shying away bashfully. At one point, a few stepped forward and began to perform a musical number that made the entire scene even more lively than before.

Two handmaidens came to massage Bai Xiaochun’s neck and shoulders, and one particularly beautiful woman began to lift his wine cup up for him to drink. As for the madam, she stood off to the side, smiling affably.

The two archaean slaves were also being attended to dutifully by several women. As all the sounds of chatting, laughter, and music mixed together, Bai Xiaochun laughed loudly, and his eyes began to shine with bright light.

Were it not for the fact that Bai Hao’s mark continued to pulse, Bai Xiaochun would have simply relaxed and enjoyed himself after his long journeys. However, as time passed, the madam's smile began to grow more and more mysterious. And the eyes of the women, whether the dancers or the musicians, and even the two maidens massaging Bai Xiaochun, began to glow with mysterious light.

Their fingernails began to turn black and grow longer, and their expressions began to turn vicious. Their hair even grew longer. It all happened relatively quickly, as Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were closed in relaxation.

Within moments, the madam had completely transformed into a vicious, evil ghost. Eyes flickering with avarice, she leaped into the air toward Bai Xiaochun!

Apparently, her movement was the signal; all of the other women completely transformed into evil ghosts who pounced on either Bai Xiaochun or his two archaean slaves.

Shrill howls filled the air as the music stopped, and the candlelight suddenly turned green and deathly. The ground was also different; the floor tiles were now made from bones, making the entire place seem like a graveyard.

The building itself even seemed to wither up, until it looked like nothing less than a graveyard!

Strangely, the delicious food and wine did not change; somehow, these evil ghosts had actually produced real food and beverages.

As all of these changes happened, and as the women turned into evil ghosts and lunged toward Bai Xiaochun and his archaean slaves, Bai Xiaochun was sitting there, humming a little tune. But then, his eyes snapped open.

“Pipe down!” he said, looking displeased. Waving his sleeve, he sent out a burst of energy that sent the evil ghosts tumbling backward, miserable shrieks echoing out of their mouths, and looks of surprise lighting up their eyes.

The archaean slaves drew on the full power of their cultivation bases, blurring into motion to block both the front entrance and rear exit. Divine sense erupting out, they prevented any of the evil ghosts from fleeing.

Even as the evil ghosts continued to shriek, and those who Bai Xiaochun had already hurt continued to tumble backward, he turned his glare onto the madam.

Her face fell, and she made to flee, but before she could, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed her.

“Change back immediately!” he said with head held high. “Lord Bai doesn’t get to see ordinary little ghosts very often. How dare you transform and try to scare me! Hurry up! Enough chatter. Change back and start dancing again!”

For years, he had been afraid of ghosts, and through all that time, had never even thought to imagine that the day would arrive in which he would frighten the ghosts. As far as he was concerned, he was only one step away from being at the ultimate peak of life. However, he still felt as if something were missing, and began to contemplate whether using the soul of the madam to conjure a flame would be the perfect touch. However, it was at that point that the fluctuations coming from Bai Hao grew more intense.

“Eee?” Bai Xiaochun said. After a moment of thought, he pushed the madam’s soul toward the mark on the back of his hand. As soon as the two of them touched, the mark erupted with gravitational force, and dragged the screaming madam inside.

After absorbing the madam’s soul, fluctuations of satisfaction appeared from Bai Hao’s mark, which then faded into calm after a moment. Apparently, it was only the soul of the madam that had been needed; Bai Hao didn’t seem to care about the other ghosts at all.

Chuckling, Bai Xiaochun smacked the table.

“I finished my wine. Bring some more!” In response, the evil ghosts all quickly transformed back into gorgeous women, their eyes shining with dread as they looked at Bai Xiaochun. The fact that he had absorbed the soul of the madam was horrifying to them, leaving them trembling in fear. Immediately, they resumed their singing and dancing, and began to serve Bai Xiaochun again.

However, they were so scared that both their dancing and singing was affected. It was the same with the girls massaging his shoulders.

Closing his eyes, Bai Xiaochun reveled in his success. Slowly, the women began to calm down, and hoped that he would leave as quickly as possible….

Of course, there was no way Bai Xiaochun would let them off the hook so easily. He enjoyed his surroundings for a whole day, helping himself to vast portions of delicious food and fine wine. The following evening, he opened his eyes, and realized that it was time to resume his lonely journey through the void.

However, he was in a very good mood. After all, it was rare to find moments of enjoyment like this.

“These women are all souls, but they're definitely unique. It would be a big waste to leave them here. Maybe when I get back to the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, I can have them do a bit of singing and dancing….” Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best idea, his heart began to pound. After all, ever since his love letters had been confiscated, he had felt like his bag of holding was missing something.

Eyes shining, he said, “What I've been missing is some good singing and dancing! Yeah, I’ll take them with me. Next time I see the Saint-Emperor, I’ll show him, and he’ll be completely envious!” Convinced that this was definitely the best thing to do, he waved his hand as he rose to his feet.

“From now you, all of you girls are with me!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1250 awe-chapter-1251

With that, a gravitational force erupted out that caused the more than one hundred ghosts in the building to vanish as they were pulled into Bai Xiaochun’s bag of holding.

Having accomplished that, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he went to work clearing out the entire brothel. The floor tiles, chairs, tables, candles, and everything else that could be taken away was soon gone.

In the end, it was nothing more than an empty shell, and Bai Xiaochun’s heart was pounding as he thought of the gains he had made.

Of course, he didn’t forget the delicious food and fine wine. After scanning the entire area with divine sense, he found that whatever race of people had once existed here had plenty of hidden reserves. Licking his lips, he took it all, and then scanned the surrounding ruins one last time to make sure he hadn’t missed anything.

Feeling very pleased, he returned to the fan to find Bai Xiaochi waiting for him, an envious look on his face. Without any further ado, they turned the fan and headed off into the distance. By this point, the brothel’s spell formation wasn’t working anymore, and therefore, they easily escaped the area.

As the fan flew through the void, and as Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged, continuing to work on the formula for thirty-colored flame, court was being held back in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

During times when Bai Xiaochun wasn't present, matters of national concern were handled by Zhou Zimo, Song Junwan, Hou Xiaomei, the Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, Li Qinghou, and Gongsun Wan'er.

Dabao had long since grown up, and acted his part as Bai Xiaochun's heir. He wasn't impulsive and belligerent like he had been when he was young, although his fundamental personality hadn't changed. As far as his cultivation base went, he had made shocking progress, and was already in the Demigod Realm!

In terms of fleshly body, even the Giant Ghost King had to admit that his grandson was probably the toughest person he had ever met, other than Bai Xiaochun.

Xiaoxiao's cultivation base was a bit higher than Dabao's. However, she had spent most her time in recent years in secluded meditation.

With more and more celestials, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty's foundation grew stronger and stronger. However, because it was public knowledge that Bai Xiaochun was in seclusion, rumors began to spread.

The talk wasn't heard in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, but rather, in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty and Vile-Emperor Dynasty. According to the rumors, Bai Xiaochun actually didn't have archaean-level battle prowess. Instead, he had paid a huge price to come out on top in the conflicts of the past, and as a result, had been forced to spend the time afterward in meditation.

It was true that he had occasionally come back to spend time with Xiaoxiao, Dabao, and the rest of his family. However, most of his time was spent on his research, and his travels in the void. Sometimes, he would only come back once in an entire year, and wouldn't stay for very long when he did.

“The gossip is most abundant in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty,” the Grand Heavenmaster said. “There is definitely someone intentionally spreading the rumors. If His Majesty doesn’t make a public appearance soon, I fear it will lead to troublesome developments.

“Most important of all is His Majesty’s cultivation base….” At the moment, everyone was trying to come up with a plan for what to do next. Bai Xiaochun hadn’t visited for several years now, and no one knew about the fact that he was now an archaean. And because he was so determined to succeed with thirty-colored flame as soon as possible, he hadn’t taken the time to check in on the situation back home.

Even as everyone in the grand hall frowned and tried to think of good suggestions about what to do, a massive, rumbling boom filled the sky above!

It sounded like heavenly thunder, and it didn’t just affect the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. The Saint-Emperor Dynasty and Vile-Emperor Dynasty also experienced the same thing…. All of the Eternal Immortal Domains were filled with the deafening sound!

Massive waves rolled across the Eternal Sea as the entire world shook. At the same time, everyone felt an incredible pressure descending from the heavens!!

“What’s going on?!?!”

“Heavens! What… what is that sound!?!?”

Countless people all over the world were thrown into alarm. At the same time, the most powerful experts in the three imperial dynasties flew out into the open and looked up into the sky.

That was the origin of the sound!!

To everyone’s shock, the enormous sovereign who had existed for countless years without ever moving… had suddenly moved! His eyes had twitched!!

All of the powerful experts could sense it, and it immediately caused all of their minds to reel!

“The giant moved!!”

“I'm not seeing things, am I? He… he actually twitched!!”

“How could this be? The legends… are actually true!”

The Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor flew out at almost the same time, and hovered above their respective imperial cities. A somber look could be seen in the Saint-Emperor’s eyes, whereas a mysterious glow was visible in the Vile-Emperor’s.

Even as all of the countless cultivators looked on, hearts pounding with sensations of deadly crisis, the twitching of the enormous sovereign’s eyes caused more than a hundred boulders to dislodge from his forehead, and shoot down toward the Eternal Immortal Domains like meteors!

They moved with incredible speed, and even seemed to be self-aware. No matter how quickly the Saint-Emperor and the Vile-Emperor reacted, they couldn’t block them all!

Massive booms echoed out from the ground below from the impacts of those that made it through!

Without the slightest hesitation, the Saint-Emperor issued orders to his people.

“All celestials and all demigods will immediately search the Saint-Emperor Dynasty for those fallen rocks. If any of them seem to be alive, destroy them!”

Similar orders were passed down in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, except that instead of ordering any living things to be destroyed, they were to be collected.

Soon, both of the dynasties were fully mobilized. Even the sea areas were not overlooked.

Bai Xiaochun was not present, but the Grand Heavenmaster and other leaders of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty made the same decision as the others, sending celestials and demigods out to search!

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun was back on his treasured fan, expression somber as he focused on a bit of fire taking shape in front of him. The transformations occurring within this fire were different than in twenty-nine-colored flame. It was impossible to see the colors within the flame, as though all of the colors had combined together, making the fire transparent!

Bai Xiaochun had already completed the main outline of the formula, and with every test he did, he inched closer to completion.

Even still, after all of the failures, Bai Xiaochun was starting to come to the conclusion… that success was not a foregone conclusion. He was perfectly prepared, and completely qualified in terms of experience. And yet, every time he tried, there was still a high chance of failure.

“Does concocting thirty-colored flame all come down to luck…?” he murmured. He had already failed dozens of times, something that would drive most people to despair. After all, every failure involved a huge wastage of souls.

Even with the massive stockpile he had built up, it was still a shocking loss. Based on his calculations, he only had enough for about twenty more tries, after which he would be out of souls.

During his years traveling in the void, he hadn’t collected all of the souls there were to be had, but had definitely acquired a good portion. Whatever scattered souls that still remained in random locations would be very troublesome to track down.

“I have to make this work!” Sighing, he continued to work hard. A few days later, intense rumblings sounds erupted out, and an unsightly expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face. After sitting there in a bit of a daze for a while, he started working again….

Thus, the days marched by. A month later, he had eight more failures under his belt, each one seemingly due to a different reason. He still couldn’t figure out exactly what the problem was. Another month passed, and he was starting to form the kernel of an idea about what was going on. His next session of conjuring went very smoothly….

His heart pounded, and he stopped breathing as he focused completely on his task at hand. His mind emptied of everything, as he concentrated completely on… the sea of fire!

An unknown amount of time passed. Eventually, he began to regain his faculties, whereupon he found himself looking at… a dazzling tongue of flame, floating right there in front of him!

“Thirty colors….” Shivering with excitement, he thought back to all of the hard work that had gone into this moment, and what it would be like to resurrect Bai Hao. And then, he started laughing at the top of his lungs!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1251 awe-chapter-1252

Taking a deep, excited breath, he slowly moved the tongue of thirty-colored flame toward the mark on the back of his hand. As he did, Bai Hao’s soul began to emit unprecedentedly intense fluctuations.

“Hao’er….” he murmured. And with that, he took the thirty-colored flame that he had worked hard on for many, many years, and expended immense resources and effort to conjure, and placed it onto the mark!

The instant he did, dazzling light erupted out! Years ago, Bai Hao had sacrificed himself to conjure the twenty-two-colored flame that he needed to save Bai Xiaochun from a moment of crisis!

In return, Bai Xiaochun paid an enormous price to resurrect Bai Hao from within the mark that had once been all that remained of him!!

As the light shining off of the mark grew brighter, Bai Xiaochun’s nervousness mounted. He stared and stared at it, until finally, the mark rose up off of his hand to float in front of him, and then began to emit soul fluctuations.

The fluctuations grew more intense as the image of a soul began to take shape. Even as Bai Xiaochun looked on, it became Bai Hao!!

“Hao’er….” he breathed excitedly. Bai Hao’s eyelids fluttered, and he opened his eyes. Confused at first, his gaze eventually fell onto Bai Xiaochun, and a tremor passed through him.

“Master!”

A wide smile broke out on Bai Xiaochun’s face. He had been waiting for many years for this reunion, and the joy caused him to start laughing. Bai Hao’s memories were still a bit of a jumble, but when he saw his Master, everything seemed fine, and he grew calm. After all, throughout all the years, his Master had been his only family.

Now that they were back together, everything seemed calm and stable. Gradually, a smile also broke out on Bai Hao’s face. Dropping to his knees, he kowtowed three times.

“It's been so long, Master....”

Laughter became warmth, and joy turned into familial love. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun and Bai Hao began to talk, and the words never seemed to end. As Bai Xiaochun bragged, Bai Hao gradually came to understand everything that had happened after he perished. He learned of how the Heavenspan Realm had been destroyed, and learned about the Eternal Immortal Domains. He heard of the glories his Master had achieved, and how a third mighty nation had risen up because of him.

“Oh, right. Your venerable Master is now an archaean! Have you heard of archaeans? There are only three in all of the Eternal Immortal Domains!

“And I’m not just an ordinary archaean. I could easily crush both the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor.”

Off to the side, Bai Hao blinked a few times. However, he knew Bai Xiaochun well, and understood what he liked. Eyes shining reverently, he said, “Master, you’ve always been unparalleled under heaven. It doesn’t matter where you go, you always cause a big scene. I can’t even come close to matching you in that regard. I guess I’ll have to do my best to improve.”

In response to Bai Hao’s sincere flattery, Bai Xiaochun laughed. Then he pointed at him and tried to act a bit more serious, although that was difficult.

“Hao’er, one of the things I’ve always liked about you is that you always tell the truth. Not bad. Not bad at all.”

Bai Hao chuckled. As long as his Master was happy, then he was happy. And the mere thought of everything his Master had gone through to resurrect him caused warm feelings to rise up in his heart.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand, and was about to launch into some more bragging, when all of a sudden, the enormous tower on the mountain inside of the fan face, the one that housed the Dao Essence of Life and Death, suddenly trembled, and began to emit both black and white light.

Bai Xiaochun’s jaw immediately dropped, and off to the side, Bai Xiaochi cried, “The Dao Essence of Life and Death is being absorbed? Heavens! How… how is this possible?!”

Moments ago, the spirit automaton had been sneering at Bai Xiaochun’s bragging, but now, he flew directly toward the Daoist Tower of Life and Death. Bai Xiaochun also hurried over, followed by Bai Hao, both of them looking very serious.

Upon entering the face of the fan, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense into the tower, where he saw Song Que’s corpse floating in the air!

Two streams of mist that were formed from the Dao Essence of Life and Death had wrapped around him, and were slowly feeding into his body!!

“He… he… he actually got it to work?” Bai Xiaochi blurted. “No way! That doesn’t make sense….” Suddenly realizing he was speaking aloud, he gasped and looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Upon realizing that he was completely focused on Song Que, he breathed a sigh of relief.

The truth was that the chances of success were far, far lower than Bai Xiaochi had indicated years ago. After all, this tower had only been in the initial stages of research by the Worldly Daoist. However, now, his theories were proven true!

“Song Que….” Bai Xiaochun murmured. Although Song Que still had a profound aura of death, he looked different now, and was clearly turning around from the depths of nonexistence!

Without a doubt, Song Que was fusing with the Dao Essence of Life and Death, and if he succeeded, then it was highly likely he would come back to life. Furthermore, his cultivation base would probably be different, although it was impossible to say exactly how. Unfortunately, Bai Xiaochun had no way to determine the details. As for Bai Xiaochi, after he recovered from his initial shock, and realized what Bai Xiaochun was thinking, he quickly provided further input.

“Milord, this Fellow Daoist could very well fuse with the Dao Essence itself. Although he can’t get the approval of any world, and thus won’t be able to become a true sovereign, he will be as powerful as you can get without reaching that level. He will be in the quasi-Sovereign Realm!

"However, whether the fusion process goes quickly or slowly will depend on his own good fortune. After all, something like this has never happened before." Bai Xiaochi looked over at Song Que, mixed emotions on his face. The Dao Essence of Life and Death was the Dao of the Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator. If Song Que succeeded in the fusion process, then in some ways, he would be the true successor of the core Daoist teachings and doctrines of the Worldly Daoist.

After hearing Bai Xiaochi’s explanation, and taking a moment to closely examine Song Que, Bai Xiaochun’s heart leapt with joy. It could be said that Bai Hao had saved Bai Xiaochun’s life, but Song Que had saved the lives of his Daoist partners and unborn children. It was a kindness that Bai Xiaochun would never be able to forget.

Eyes shining, he sighed, clasped hands, and bowed to Song Que. Then he turned and left.

In that very moment, the three imperial dynasties back in the Eternal Immortal Domains were in the process of hunting down the fallen chunks of stone, and either capturing the living things they found, or destroying them.

However, things were not going well. The stones were infected with a sovereign aura, and caused the areas where they landed to rot away. If they were found quickly, the effects could be combated to some extent. Unfortunately, some areas required that a celestial intervene.

A month passed, and although many of the stones had been tracked down, all of them were completely solid. Almost none seemed to contain flesh and blood clones of the sovereign above. In fact, so far, only one stone had appeared with a clone in it, and that was in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty.

In one location near the border of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty and the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the Giant Ghost King was flying through the air. As a celestial, he had already taken care of seven fallen stones, all of which he had either crushed or collected. Right now, he was heading to an area where one of his demigod subordinates had discovered another fallen stone.

Thankfully, it was a remote wilderness area where no one lived. Therefore, the effects of the spreading rot were not very detrimental. Furthermore, the Giant Ghost King's celestial cultivation base was capable of negating the effects of the rot. As he flew along, the location of the stone itself got closer and closer.

"After dealing with this stone, I'll head back to the city," he thought, sighing. "I'm afraid there are going to be a lot of ramifications to this event."

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1252 awe-chapter-1253

The Giant Ghost King's trajectory brought him closer to the border of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty with every moment. Eventually, he found himself outside of a wide basin in the lands.

It wasn't particularly large, but the ground in the area was all scorched black, with wisps of black smoke rising up everywhere. In the middle of the basin was a chunk of stone.

It was about the size of a fist, and pulsed with strange, dim light. In fact, the stone itself seemed to shift in size and shape according to some strange pattern. It almost looked like a heartbeat.

Eight demigods from the Arch-Emperor Dynasty already had the area locked down, but they weren't strong enough to deal with the corrosive powers coming from the stone, and thus, hadn't approached it. After reporting the matter, they had simply waited for the Giant Ghost King to arrive.

When they saw him nearing, they immediately rose to their feet and offered formal greetings. The Giant Ghost King waved his hand in response, and without saying anything, flew right into the basin.

The pulses of corrosive power could melt a demigod on the spot, but would not harm a celestial in the short term. However, the Giant Ghost King did begin to pulse with black smoke.

Aware that the effects could be detrimental if he allowed them to continue for too long, he hurried up to the stone, then reached out and grabbed it. Just as he had with several other stones that he had handled, he scanned it with divine sense at the same time.

As he did, his expression flickered, and his eyes went wide.

“It’s not solid!!” To his shock, his divine sense had revealed something inside of the stone that resembled an unborn lizard!

Even as the Giant Ghost King scanned it with divine sense, the thing wriggled!

At first, the Giant Ghost King was excited to have found something different from the other stones he had encountered so far. Aware of how valuable this item was, he immediately turned to head toward Arch-Emperor City.

However, in that very instant, a cold snort echoed out from the sky, which transformed the entire area into a sea of flames!

The black fire moved too quickly for the demigods to avoid, and they screamed as they were overwhelmed and transformed into ash.

“Vile-Emperor!!” the Giant Ghost King growled. He had watched Bai Xiaochun fighting the Vile-Emperor, and over the years, had conferred with Gongsun Wan’er about him. As such, as soon as his senses told him the Vile-Emperor was present, he immediately sent a warning message to Arch-Emperor City.

Unfortunately, the sea of flames moved so quickly that within moments, it was like an enormous hand, wrapping around the Giant Ghost King. No matter how he tried to fight back or flee, his cultivation base was simply too low. Therefore, the hand wrapped around him and dragged him forcibly up into the sky.

There, the Vile-Emperor hovered, clad in imperial robes, his hands clasped behind his back and his face completely expressionless. Ignoring the hand of flames, he focused on the stone, which he grabbed and looked at closely. Shockingly, he then absorbed the stone into his hand, whereupon his eyes shone with bizarre light, and his aura increased in power by a significant portion.

Still within the hand of flames was the Giant Ghost King, blood oozing out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. He was so badly injured that he was now unconscious. Eventually, the Vile-Emperor looked at him, then turned his gaze in the direction of Arch-Emperor City. Eyes narrowing, he coolly murmured, “Many years have passed, Bai Xiaochun. Do you really possess archaean battle prowess…?”

Considering how much time had passed without Bai Xiaochun actually doing anything, both he and the Saint-Emperor were having a hard time determining the truth of matters.

In the past, Bai Xiaochun had relied on Archaean Luminescence. But in the years that had passed, the Vile-Emperor had patiently worked on a way to negate its effects. And now, convinced that great matters were at hand, he was itching to see exactly what was going on with Bai Xiaochun!

Chuckling, he grabbed the Giant Ghost King and then flew away.

Soon after, a Dharmic decree was sent from Vile-Emperor all the way to Arch-Emperor City. The contents were not vague: the Giant Ghost King had trespassed on Vile-Emperor Dynasty territory, and attempted to steal a meteorite. For his crime, the Vile-Emperor had captured him to be punished.

The Dharmic decree was a clear message to all of the Eternal Immortal Domains that the Vile-Emperor wanted Bai Xiaochun to go to Vile-Emperor City to free the Giant Ghost King!

It was impossible to hide the fact that he wanted to probe Bai Xiaochun, and it caused even the Saint-Emperor's eyes to narrow. On the one hand, he and Bai Xiaochun had formed an alliance, but on the other hand, he had long suspected that Bai Xiaochun's true battle prowess was weaker than he had initially taken it to be. Therefore, this little test by the Vile-Emperor was actually a good thing for him.

"Some probing won't hurt me, but if Bai Xiaochun perishes, that will have negative ramifications." Therefore, the Saint-Emperor decided to monitor the situation closely, and prepare to intervene if necessary.

Three days passed, and no response came from Arch-Emperor City. The Vile-Emperor's suspicions deepened, as did the suspicions of his people. Meanwhile, the important figures in Arch-Emperor City began to get nervous, people like Zhou Zimo and the Grand Heavenmaster. They all knew that the Vile-Emperor was testing out Bai Xiaochun, and that if he didn't make an appearance, that it would reveal their weak state of power. And if Bai Xiaochun was truly weak, or they waited too long to do something, the Giant Ghost King would likely be in grave danger!

At that point, Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo and Hou Xiaomei went to Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation facilities, joined by the Grand Heavenmaster and Gongsun Wan’er. Together, they sent out divine sense in the hopes of awakening Bai Xiaochun from his meditative trance. However, their divine sense got no reaction.

Even as their anxiety began to mount, the door to the chamber swung open, and Bai Xiaochun appeared. However, everyone could immediately tell that he was partially transparent, and was obviously a clone.

Before any of them could say anything, he said, “I'm aware of what’s happening. My true self is already on his way.”

Then, he suddenly began to shine with bright light!

Everyone, from the Grand Heavenmaster to Gongsun Wan’er, were shaken by that light, which was blinding even to celestials!

As the light grew brighter, everyone present shivered down to their souls, the result of a powerful aura that caused their minds to reel.

Before long, the light began to converge into the shape of a person. It was almost like a teleportation as Bai Xiaochun’s true self materialized in the exact spot as his clone!

As he became clear, they realized that he looked different. His hair was a bit longer, and he actually looked younger. However, there was something profound about his eyes, as though they contained stars, and at the same time, were black holes that could drag anything and everything into them.

His eyes left everyone shaken, regardless of the level of their cultivation bases, including even Gongsun Wan’er, who was in the late Celestial Realm. Back during his journey through the void, he would usually keep his aura out in the open, and although he had already retracted it, his clone had made him aware of what the Vile-Emperor had done to the Giant Ghost King. And thus, rage burned in his heart, and some of his aura managed to slip out, leading to shock among those present.

The shaken Grand Heavenmaster was the first to recover. Clasping hands, he bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

“Greetings, Arch-Emperor!”

Everyone else followed suit, including Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and Hou Xiaomei. “Greetings, Arch-Emperor!!”

“I’ll take care of everything,” he said, his eyes warm. “Don’t worry!”

Zhou Zimo, Song Junwan and Hou Xiaomei all seemed to relax visibly, confident that he could resolve any difficulties.

It had been a long time since the last time they had reunited, so he took time to embrace all three of his wives. Song Junwan was smiling warmly, and Hou Xiaomei’s belly was already visibly large. However, the both of them knew that Zhou Zimo had taken her father’s kidnapping worse than the two of them, and secretly indicated that he should offer her some comfort. When he turned his gaze to her specifically, he could see how red her eyes were.

“I'm going to go get father-in-law back,” he said softly, “and also make the Vile-Emperor Dynasty pay for this. After I return, I won’t be going into secluded meditation for a while.” With that, he blurred into motion, shooting high up into the sky!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1253 awe-chapter-1254

Bai Xiaochun had returned right into the middle of a tense situation. The matter with the Giant Ghost King had occurred without any warning, and if matters had been left only to the clone he left behind, then it was impossible to say what could have happened.

Thankfully, Bai Xiaochun had finally finished several important tasks. Bai Hao had been resurrected, Song Que was showing signs of waking up, and Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base was now in the Archaean Realm.

His fight with the old ghost woman, and his regular sparring sessions with his two archaean slaves, had pushed his battle prowess to the point where he was now much more confident than before.

If his enemy were not the Vile-Emperor, Bai Xiaochun would have simply attacked like lightning, crushed him, and taken the Giant Ghost King back. But he had learned years ago that this Vile-Emperor was an imposter, and considering what he had learned from the memories of the Worldly Daoist, he had long since come to a conclusion about the matter.

“This imposter Vile-Emperor definitely has something to do with the Mortal Renegade, Devil Imperator!” As Bai Xiaochun whistled through the air, his eyes were narrowed with thought, but soon, they would be bursting with killing intent!

It didn’t matter what techniques the Vile-Emperor had up his sleeve, Bai Xiaochun knew that at this moment, he had no other choice than to fight. Otherwise, the Giant Ghost King would be in peril. And besides, the Vile-Emperor would never stop probing him.

Bai Xiaochun remembered how, back when his children had been born, the Vile-Emperor had given him a gift in the form of some sovereign blood, encased in a black stone. The sense of danger he had experienced from that stone had enraged him back then, but he had been forced to do nothing.

Now, new grudges piled on top of old ones, causing his killing intent to grow even stronger. Rumbling sounds echoed around him as he left Arch-Emperor Dynasty territory and entered the lands of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. Considering the speed he was capable of, it didn’t take long before he saw an enormous trident rising up into the sky ahead of him, around which was wrapped a bone dragon! On the skull of that dragon was none other than the imperial palace!

“Vile-Emperor!!” he growled, his voice echoing like heavenly thunder.

Everything shook in response to his words, and all of the cultivators in Vile-Emperor City, even the celestials, looked up in shock.

“It’s the Arch-Emperor!!” Everyone in the city knew that the Vile-Emperor had taken the Giant Ghost King captive, and were also aware of his Dharmic decree, demanding that the Arch-Emperor Bai Xiaochun come to free his subordinate. Although some of them were slightly worried about what might happen, most of them were excited, and were convinced that Bai Xiaochun was no match for their Vile-Emperor.

After all, it was only by teaming up with the Saint-Emperor that Bai Xiaochun had managed to fight the Vile-Emperor to a standstill years before.

This time, the Vile-Emperor had dared to take the initiative, and therefore, everyone assumed that he was well prepared. However, all such confidence began to crumble as soon as people heard Bai Xiaochun's booming voice.

As the city trembled physically, black smoke erupted from a certain location within the imperial palace, rising up into the sky to take the shape of a huge face.

"Bai Xiaochun!" the face said, its voice thrumming with an awe-inspiring force that was the perfect countermeasure to Bai Xiaochun.

Anyone else would have been forced to slow down, but not Bai Xiaochun. Eyes flashing with cold light, he said, "Where'd you get guts like that, Vile-Emperor? If you want to back out on our agreement, fine, but how dare you kidnap my father-in-law!"

He waved his hand, and instantly, eight beams of Archaean Luminescence appeared up above and shot toward the Vile-Emperor's projected face.

They didn't mince words. Bai Xiaochun had come to fight, a fact which was revealed by how he instantly called on his Archaean Luminescence. In response, the Vile-Emperor's eyes shone with mysterious light, and a snide smile appeared on his face.

"Is that the only thing you can do, Bai Xiaochun?" The enormous face distorted as nine bright lights appeared within the smoke. Closer inspection revealed that the lights were nine huge crystals, which sent tendrils out to connect to each other, quickly becoming an enormous black mirror.

The mirror formed almost as soon as the Archaean Luminescence arrived. However, the booming explosion everyone anticipated didn’t occur. Strangely, the mirror acted like a mass of sludge, which simply swallowed up the Archaean Luminescence!!

“If that’s all you’ve got,” the Vile-Emperor said coolly, “then… I have to say I'm very disappointed.” He strode out from his palace and floated up into the air, coming to a stop in front of the crystal mirror, his archaean aura raging.

Of course, a big cheer could be heard from within Vile-Emperor City, and numerous cultivators stepped forward and clasped hands in greeting.

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything in response to seeing the mirror formed from nine crystals. Waving his right hand, he summoned ten more beams of Archaean Luminescence, all of which shot directly toward the Vile-Emperor.

“That won’t work,” the Vile-Emperor said, keeping his hands clasped behind his back, a faint smile visible on his face. “I already created the perfect counter to your Archaean Luminescence. You won’t be able to break my Vile Imperial Crystals!” The illusory mirror suddenly shot forward, passing through him to block all of the shots of Archaean Luminescence.

Rumbling booms could be heard as the Archaean Luminescence faded away, with the mirror remaining behind, seemingly undamaged.

“That’s almost twenty, Bai Xiaochun. Do you have any more shots left? I'm very curious to see how many you have in total!” The Vile-Emperor still had not removed his hands from behind his back, and his smile continued to radiate scorn.

Because this Vile-Emperor was connected to the Mortal Renegade in some way, Bai Xiaochun knew that no matter how much he wanted to fight him, he had to be careful. Therefore, he kept his cultivation base well-concealed, making it seem to the Vile-Emperor that he was still a celestial.

Not even the Vile-Emperor’s taunts could get him to reveal his true cultivation base. Besides, he had plenty of trump cards to call upon, so unless the Vile-Emperor truly attacked him with force, he would not draw upon the full level of his battle prowess.

“You wanna see? Fine. I’ll show you how many shots I have!” Chuckling, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger, causing the sky to tremble as more than fifty beams of light appeared!!

Everyone in Vile-Emperor City was shocked by that, and began to cry out in alarm.

“So many!!”

“Heavens! Wasn’t everyone saying that the Arch-Emperor only had about twenty shots of his Archaean Luminescence?!?!”

In contrast, the Vile-Emperor didn’t seem to be alarmed. Although he was surprised, he was still confident, and simply watched as the over fifty beams of Archaean Luminescence shot toward his black mirror. Intense rumbling sounds could then be heard as the light was absorbed by the mirror, which still seemed just as tough and durable as before.

The Vile-Emperor burst out laughing. “So, that’s your limit, huh. Well, you--”

However, before he could say anything else, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand again. This time… a hundred beams of light appeared up above!!

It was such a shocking scene that even the Vile-Emperor’s eyes went wide, and his mind began to spin. And yet, before anyone could wrap their minds around what was happening, Bai Xiaochun performed another incantation gesture, causing another group of nearly two hundred beams to appear!! Specifically, it was 267 beams! And if anyone had been closely counting how many shots used up to this point, they would realize that it was a total of 361!!

That was exactly how many playing spots existed on the Go board on the boat in the fan face, and was the true limit of the divine ability. Right now, nearly three hundred beams of Archaean Luminescence were causing all heaven and earth to tremble!!

“Impossible!!” the Vile-Emperor breathed, visibly shaken. It wasn’t just him. In the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, the Saint-Emperor was watching the battle play out, and was also completely taken aback.

“You said you wanted to see how much I could do at once, right Vile-Emperor?!” Waving both hands out in front of him, Bai Xiaochun sent nearly three hundred shots of Archaean Luminescence toward the Vile-Emperor like a rain of bright light!

The Vile-Emperor’s eyes were completely bloodshot as his black mirror began to expand to its full limit. It did everything in its power to hold firm as one beam of light after another pierced into it. However, it didn’t matter how durable and tough the mirror was; it simply couldn’t stand up to so much Archaean Luminescence, and soon, cracks were spreading out over its surface.

After it blocked about eighty percent of the incoming shots of Archaean Luminescence, it couldn’t hold on any longer, and shattered into countless fragments. As for the nine Vile Imperial Crystals that the Vile-Emperor had toiled so hard to make, and had even used his own life force to forge, they were all destroyed!

As that happened, a deafening boom erupted out, shaking nearly half of the Eternal Immortal Domains!!

It almost looked like doomsday had arrived as a massive shockwave rolled out across the lands, toppling mountains, smashing the lands, and even threatening to cleave apart the sky!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1254 awe-chapter-1255

361 beams of Archaean Luminescence was an outrageous number. Everyone present to see it happen felt their mind reeling, and those who had often wondered about how many shots Bai Xiaochun actually had were now completely blown away.

“I can’t believe… he has so many!!”

“How is that even possible? Heavens! More than three hundred?! Either the Arch-Emperor has gotten stronger, or… he never got pushed to the point of actually calling upon the full power of his trump card before!”

There were too many shocked individuals in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty to count. As for the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, it was only the Saint-Emperor and the celestials who could observe the battle via divine sense. However, all of them were also completely astonished.

That was especially true of the Saint-Emperor. Never could he have guessed that Bai Xiaochun would have so much Archaean Luminescence. More than three hundred shots was enough to shake heaven and earth, and would be enough to force him to fall back.

At the same time, he had gone all out in fighting the Vile-Emperor in the past. But now, the Vile-Emperor seemed much, much stronger than he had before.

For example, his Vile Imperial Crystals seemed capable of defending against just about any divine ability in the Archaean Realm. The Saint-Emperor would have been forced to pay a heavy price to destroy those crystals, and would also have been injured in the process.

“How could both of them have gotten so strong, so quickly!?!?” Meanwhile, the Vile-Emperor hovered in the air above Vile-Emperor City, feeling very unsettled as he glared murderously at Bai Xiaochun.

It had never occurred to him that Bai Xiaochun could possibly command so much Archaean Luminescence, and if he hadn’t seen it with his own eyes, he would still believe it to be impossible.

“At this point, he shouldn’t have any more!” he thought, eyes glittering. He had originally just wanted to probe Bai Xiaochun a bit, only to provoke killing intent within him. However, he was now fairly convinced that since Bai Xiaochun didn’t have any Archaean Luminescence, he shouldn’t be very difficult to kill!

From what he could see, Bai Xiaochun was still in the Celestial Realm. Because of the level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, and how he had been blessed by the Essence of time, not even the Vile-Emperor was able to see his true level.

Bai Xiaochun knew that it was only a matter of time before that changed, and yet, he didn’t care. He would reveal the truth eventually, and only hoped to force his opponent to lose some of his advantage by making certain moves too soon. When the time came that the Vile-Emperor realized the truth, Bai Xiaochun would attack with utterly devastating force.

“I'm willing to bet that you have no more Archaean Luminescence, Bai Xiaochun!” The Vile-Emperor then threw his head back and roared. Although he had no more Vile

Imperial Crystals, he had many other trump cards, reserves built up over many years. Besides, he was in Vile-Emperor City! Therefore, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, and pointed down at the city below!

As he did, the enormous bone dragon that was wrapped around the gigantic trident suddenly shivered. At the same time, two balls of black flame appeared in the eyes of the skull that housed the imperial palace.

Along with the flame came a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering aura from the dragon’s body itself, and a force of vibration that caused the sky to grow dim, and massive winds to spring up.

The dragon itself was massive, and was the foundation of Vile-Emperor City itself. Therefore, as it vibrated, the buildings that made up the city began to collapse, and countless cultivators were thrown off of the body!

Millions and millions of cultivators were shocked to the core as they were ejected from the city. Then, to their shock, the bone dragon looked up, let loose a deafening howl, and then shot off of the trident and into the air!

It was a huge dragon, and now that the buildings that had once covered it were destroyed, it was possible to see something like a crown on its head, as if this bone dragon were actually an emperor among dragons!!

It was incomparably fierce, with a towering aura of death. The black flames in its eyes were ferocious and cold, and it was heart-stoppingly shocking as it hovered there in the air. Then, the Vile-Emperor performed an incantation gesture, and the dragon shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

As it flew toward him, the air around it shattered, destroyed by the mere pressure emanating from the dragon!

“Archaean dragon!” Bai Xiaochun thought, pupils constricting. The aura coming from the bone dragon was indeed that of the Archaean Realm. This was one of the Vile-Emperor’s trump cards; in order to kill Bai Xiaochun, he was even willing to destroy Vile-Emperor City!

Back when Bai Xiaochun was a celestial, if he had faced this dragon with no Archaean Luminescence, he would have been completely powerless to fight back. He could only have gone all out to flee. But now, he didn't seem worried at all. Instead of flinching, his eyes shone with strange light as he lifted up both hands and performed an incantation gesture.

“Sutra of Former Reincarnation!”

In that instant, a strange and indescribable aura shot out into the open, causing the Vile-Emperor’s expression to flicker. This was not his first time seeing Bai Xiaochun unleash this strange magic, but this time, something about it seemed different.

Even as the Vile-Emperor looked on suspiciously, the bone dragon shivered as numerous magical symbol appeared on its body. In the blink of an eye, they covered the entire dragon, making it impossible to count how many they were. Within moments, they were like a huge net that completely covered the archaean dragon!

Each and every one of the magical symbols that made up the huge net represented a memory, and by gazing at them for long enough, it was possible to see things that had happened when the dragon was alive!

This was the Sutra of Former Reincarnation, one of the three great divine abilities of Bai Xiaochun’s Time Immemorial Codex. With his previous cultivation base, it had been difficult to utilize the true power of his three divine abilities. But now he didn't face that obstacle. And thus, he was using the true sealing power of the Sutra of Former Reincarnation!

The bone dragon’s memories became magical symbols that could not be separated, and became karma, sealing the dragon completely!!

“Seal!” Bai Xiaochun said, his voice as cold as the winter wind. Meanwhile, the dragon shrieked miserably, and struggled in vain to free itself. However, it didn't matter how shockingly powerful the dragon was, as the net of magical symbols tightened, it was completely powerless. To the shock of all of the observing cultivators who had once lived in Vile-Emperor City, the magical symbols began to crush the archaean bone dragon into a ball!!

When the process was finished, rumbling sounds could be heard as the sphere of magical symbols emanated colorful light, dropped down to the ground, and remained there unmoving.

“Heavens! The Arch-Emperor actually sealed the bone dragon!!”

“This… this is impossible!!” Even the Vile-Emperor had forgotten to breathe, and was looking at Bai Xiaochun with narrowed eyes.

“You’re not a celestial!! But you couldn’t possibly be an archaean….” At that point, Bai Xiaochun looked up, his aura surging to reveal his boundless archaean cultivation base. Heaven and earth trembled, and winds screamed. As countless voices cried out in shock, he shot toward the Vile-Emperor like an arrow loosed from a bow!!

Booms rang out as, over the course of only a few breaths’ worth of time, the two of them exchanged hundreds of blows. The lands quaked and the air shattered, and back in Saint-Emperor City, the Saint-Emperor looked on with wide eyes, completely mind-blown!

“He actually became an archaean? That’s impossible!! The Eternal Mother is asleep! If she approved of another archaean, then she would have announced it to all of the Eternal Immortal Domains!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1255 awe-chapter-1256

The Vile-Emperor was initially suspicious of what was happening, and even the Saint-Emperor thought that it was impossible. As archaeans, they knew how difficult it was to reach the Archaean Realm, some of which pertained to a secret that no other cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains were aware of.

It had been many years since both the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor came to realize that it would be very difficult for another archaean to appear in the Eternal Immortal Domains. After all, in order to become an archaean, one had to gain the approval of the world!

That approval was not merely some nod of the head. It involved acquiring some of the qi flow of the world itself, essentially, taking some of its natural laws. That was the only way to become an archaean!

And thus, both the Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor were suspicious about the situation. Although few others were aware of it, both of them knew that the Eternal Mother was very weak.

Therefore, even if Bai Xiaochun could do things that surpassed the Celestial Realm, neither of the other emperors could believe that he had actually become an archaean. However, there was little time to ponder the situation now, as Bai Xiaochun and the Vile-Emperor began to fight back and forth with complete ferocity.

A boom that surpassed the crash of heavenly thunder rolled out, and the Vile-Emperor staggered backward, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth, his eyes shining with intense killing intent.

“Sun!!” he shouted. Suddenly, the sky above the Eternal Immortal Domains began to grow dark, as though the light were being sucked away. In the blink of an eye, all of that light appeared above the Vile-Emperor in the form of a bright red sun!

It was huge, and emanated stupefying heat. At the same time, black flames sprang up, connecting with it and making it seem like an extension of the Vile-Emperor himself!

The residents of Vile-Emperor City were trembling in fear, and backing away as quickly as they could. However, many of them were too slow, and were instantly transformed into dried-up corpses by the power of the sun!

Screams rang out everywhere as the black flames and the burning sun were sent directly toward Bai Xiaochun!!

The pressure from this sun vastly surpassed that from the bone dragon; it seemed hot enough to bake the entire world! Eyes flickering, Bai Xiaochun backed up and began to perform an incantation gesture.

“Sutra of Present Life and Death!”

It was the second divine ability from the Time Immemorial Codex!

As he waved his hands out in front of him, an ancient stone gate materialized, bursting with an aura of death. This gate representing dying, and was none other than the Gate of Death!

Simultaneously, another gate appeared behind the sun, a gate that thrummed with life force and vitality. It was… the Gate of Life!

This was Bai Xiaochun’s Sutra of Present Life and Death. He created two gates, one of life and one of death, and as the sun moved away from the Gate of Life and toward Bai Xiaochun, it approached the Gate of Death. That journey represented the passage from life into death!!

The instant Bai Xiaochun’s divine ability appeared, the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering sun began to grow dark. However fast it moved, the effects of death moved faster, and could not be reversed. And since the Vile-Emperor was connected to the sun, he began to age visibly.

Even his brightly glittering eyes began to grow dark!

Everyone present was struck speechless, and as for the Saint-Emperor, he felt like he was going crazy.

“That magical technique… is so domineering!!”

Next, a defiant shout erupted from the Vile-Emperor, who knew that he had only one option to deal with this magical technique.

“Detonate!” he shouted. Instantly, the fading sun exploded, sending out a terrifying shockwave that flattened nearby mountains and killed a large number of Vile-Emperor City residents!

When Bai Xiaochun fought, he did his best to protect the people watching. But the Vile-Emperor didn't care at all about the bystanders. All he wanted to do was hurt Bai Xiaochun, and if that meant killing other people, he didn’t mind!

As the horrific scene played out, Bai Xiaochun flew back at top speed, unleashing the power of his cultivation base to protect himself against the detonation of the sun. Then, he prepared to unleash a counter attack, only to find that the Vile-Emperor was now staring at him with an expression of unswerving determination.

“I don't know how you got this archaean battle prowess, Bai Xiaochun, but I'm going to show you that, without the approval of the world around you… you can never match a true archaean!” The Vile-Emperor then reached down and made a grasping motion in the direction of that astonishing trident!

“Trident of Emperors!!” he growled. In response, the gargantuan trident which was currently stuck into the ground trembled, and then slowly rose up into the air, simultaneously shrinking down to the point where the Vile-Emperor could easily grab it!

In that moment, cultivation base fluctuations rolled out from the Vile-Emperor that surpassed anything in the fight so far. Behind him, a huge vortex sprang into being, which caused all of the Eternal Immortal Domains to tremble as it spun.

“This is over, Bai Xiaochun!” The trident was already emitting black light, and a distinct aura that Bai Xiaochun was already familiar with. It was… the aura of the Mortal Renegade!!

As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun now had no doubts whatsoever: the Vile-Emperor was definitely a clone of the Mortal Renegade!!

He could tell that this trident was the very same magical item that had killed the true Vile-Emperor. Therefore… it was likely an object belonging to the Mortal Renegade. Knowing what he was up against, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, and then unleashed every scrap of cultivation base power that he could!

Incredible rumbling echoed out as another huge vortex appeared, this time behind Bai Xiaochun, vying with the Vile-Emperor’s vortex for domination.

In that moment, both parties attacked!

“The Vile-Emperor is putting everything on the line!” the Saint-Emperor thought. With that, he took a step forward and sped in the direction of the battlefield.

Before the Saint-Emperor could arrive, the Vile-Emperor swept his trident through the air, summoning black flames, black lightning bolts, and a black wind, which took the form of a black eye. Locking down on Bai Xiaochun, the eye opened!

That eye focused the power of the trident, sending it piercing through the air in a devastating attack!

The eye seemed to contain the power to exterminate worlds, to eradicate everything in its path. In fact, it caused a sensation of deadly crisis to rise up within Bai Xiaochun.

In that moment of crisis, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Sutra of Future Pāramitā!!”

Waving his hand, he pulled out… a black stone!

That stone was a chunk of flesh and blood from the huge sovereign up above in the sky, and was the very same gift that the Vile-Emperor had sent upon the birth of Dabao and Xiaoxiao!

By using his Sutra of Future Pāramitā on the stone… he was tying his fate to it, and thus to some extent, to the Mortal Renegade, Devil Imperator!!

Bai Xiaochun was well aware that his cultivation base was not sufficient to do anything to the Mortal Renegade. But he could use this divine ability to connect his fate to that of the Vile-Emperor!

After all, the Vile-Emperor was a clone of the Mortal Renegade; of that much, Bai Xiaochun was certain. And that was the crux of his entire strategy! It was also one of his goals in his previous probing attacks!

Although all of this takes some time to describe, even as Bai Xiaochun used his Sutra of the Future on the stone, the enormous eye closed in. He trembled, grunting as blood sprayed out of his mouth like a fountain, and the Undying Codex went to work, healing him. At the same time, although the enormous Mortal Renegade high above the world did not move, the Vile-Emperor's face suddenly fell.

"Impossible!" Even as the words left his mouth, a huge mass of blood erupted from his mouth, and he shivered, staggering backward several paces, his chest sunken in as though he had just sustained an unimaginably heavy blow!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1256 awe-chapter-1257

The most fearsome aspect of the Sutra of Future Pāramitā was how it connected fates. Both parties would be equally wounded, which might not have been particularly outstanding under normal circumstances. However, Bai Xiaochun had the powers of regeneration that came with the Undying Codex, as well as shocking fleshly body power….

He would normally only be harmed by sixty or seventy percent of a full attack; any serious injuries would quickly be healed, and any light injuries were essentially gone instantly. Unless his opponent possessed similar powers of regeneration, any fight under these circumstances would be very uneven.

Blood was currently spewing out of the mouth of the Vile-Emperor, and as he looked at the stone in Bai Xiaochun's hand, his eyes flickered with panic. He still was ready to keep fighting, except, he still underestimated Bai Xiaochun's shamelessness…. Just when he was about to move, Bai Xiaochun stuck his right hand out in front of himself and then smashed it into his own chest.

A muffled thump rang out, and blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun's mouth as he staggered backward. The Undying Codex was powerful, and immediately went to work, but he didn't forget to cry out, "Aiya! You hit me! Ow, that hurts…."

The Vile-Emperor's eyes went wide, and even as he prepared to unleash his next attack, another thumping sound could be heard, and blood sprayed out of his mouth.

As of this point, his hair was disheveled, and he looked to be in really bad shape.

“How shameless of you, Bai Xiaochun!!” he shouted, feeling like he was about to go insane. The humiliation he had endured so far was indescribable, and he already deeply regretted his decisions to probe Bai Xiaochun a bit. He was simply too difficult to deal with.

His Vile Imperial Crystals had been destroyed, his bone dragon sealed, and his sun had exploded. And in the end, he even ended up being injured. If that were all there were to it, he might have been able to accept it, but then Bai Xiaochun resorted to the bizarre tactic of hurting himself….

The Vile-Emperor couldn’t properly express how crazed he felt. He normally maintained a somber visage, but thanks to Bai Xiaochun, the entire mood of the fight had completely changed….

“Are you really cursing me, you old codger? If you do that, you’re going to hurt my feelings!” Glaring, Bai Xiaochun clenched his hand into a fist and hit himself in the pit of the stomach. Blood sprayed out of the Vile-Emperor’s mouth, and his lips quivered as he howled at the top of his lungs. Even as he tried to charge forward to attack, Bai Xiaochun punched himself seven or eight more times.

In the end, the Vile-Emperor felt like he was about to explode. In order to break the connection between the two of them, he hefted his trident and, eyes flickering with madness, began to squeeze his hand down on it!

“Detonate!!” he howled. The trident, a magical item belonging to the Mortal Renegade, exploded, causing a black tempest to explode out into the air, right between Bai Xiaochun and the Vile-Emperor!

Booms rang out as blood sprayed out of both of their mouths, and they staggered backward. The explosion apparently interfered with natural law, and even affected the cycle of reincarnation. As it rushed out… it severed the connection of fate that had been created by Bai Xiaochun's Sutra of Future Pāramitā!!

As that happened, and as Bai Xiaochun's wounds began to recover thanks to his Undying Codex, his eyes flickered with cold light. Not doing anything to hide his cultivation base any longer, he accelerated, the energy of an archaean raging around him as he bore down on the Vile-Emperor!

Worried that he wasn't going fast enough, he used his Undying Hex, and then, as he closed in, the Mountain Shaking Bash!

With every moment that passed, he moved faster than before, appearing right in front of the Vile-Emperor only a moment later. Then, as he reached out toward the Vile-Emperor, he utilized his Throat Crushing Grasp!

Everything was happening too quickly. Earlier, the Vile-Emperor might have had the wherewithal to dodge, but now he was severely injured, and just didn't have what it took. Although he managed to twist his head out of the way, Bai Xiaochun's grasping attack still managed to hit his shoulder!

"Show me what you really look like!!" Bai Xiaochun roared. Gripping down hard with his hand, he began to rip the skin off the Vile-Emperor's shoulder!!

The Vile-Emperor howled and tried to back up, but that only revealed… the wriggling flesh beneath his skin. As his flesh peeled off, the natural laws of the Eternal Immortal Domains took effect, preventing him from maintaining a human form.

Twitching and spasming, he transformed into a giant, blood-colored lizard!!

He continued to scream in rage and pain as, bereft of his protective skin, and bereft of the spiderweb covering that had protected his egg sac, he was now subject to the natural laws of the Eternal Immortal Domains, which immediately sought to wipe him out of existence!

When the huge lizard appeared, the remaining people of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty down below were completely stunned, especially the celestials who had participated in the events within the spiderweb area. They almost couldn’t believe what they were seeing.

“That’s a sovereign clone!!”

“What… what exactly is going on here?!?!”

“Impossible. This is completely impossible. The Vile-Emperor… is actually a clone of the sovereign?!?!”

Countless cries of shock and alarm filled the air as the shocking truth was revealed: the Vile-Emperor was actually a vicious, bizarre creature!

Although not everyone knew where this lizard came from, the exclamations of the celestials were heard by the surrounding cultivators, leading to widespread shock.

Of course, there was no way Bai Xiaochun was going to let this opportunity pass him by. Pointing his finger at the howling lizard, he spoke in a loud voice that everyone could hear.

“Fellow Daoists of the Eternal Immortal Domains. It has been years now since the Vile-Emperor was killed by a clone of the Enemy from Beyond. He was skinned, and then replaced. This bizarre creature you are looking at is none other than that clone!” Gasps rang out in response to his words, and immediately, people began to spread word to the rest of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

It was also in that exact same moment that the sky rippled, and the Saint-Emperor stepped out into the open. When he saw that the Vile-Emperor was now a huge lizard, he was deeply shaken. Not even he could ever have guessed that the Vile-Emperor was actually… a clone of the great Enemy!!

Glaring coldly at the huge lizard, he said, “No wonder you freed the creature that emerged from the stone of flesh and blood that fell when the damaged fan arrived!!

“No wonder you always came up with excuses not to go check the seal that had been placed on the sovereign!”

Even as everyone reeled in shock, the lizard looked up with bloodshot eyes, to glare at Bai Xiaochun!

“You ruined all of my plans, Bai Xiaochun! And for that, you shall die!!” Howling, the lizard’s aura began to power up to heaven-defying levels. At the same time, it was possible to see a black light glowing on the forehead of the enormous Mortal Renegade up in the heavens. That light healed the lizard of all its wounds, and caused his cultivation base and battle prowess to surpass anything from before, reaching unprecedented heights.

Simultaneously, a figure took shape behind the lizard, which, to the shock of all onlookers… was a smaller version of the enormous sovereign!!

As the Saint-Emperor’s face fell, the lizard began to emanate a murderous aura, and shouted, “Nobody can stop the Revered Extermination from awakening!”

Then, the lizard trembled, whereupon countless black locusts exploded out from inside of him!!

In the blink of an eye, they covered heaven and earth alike in numbers too great to count, creating something like a black cloud. Buzzing sounds filled the air as some of them shot toward Bai Xiaochun, and others... spread out to infect the surrounding cultivators!

No one recognized these locusts, except for Bai Xiaochun, who had seen them before. Shaken, he recalled the Mortal Renegade’s divine ability, that he himself had witnessed within the memories of the Worldly Daoist!

He knew that once these locusts infected a host, that they would absorb the victim’s flesh, blood, and cultivation base, and then give birth to more locusts!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1257 awe-chapter-1258

After releasing the locusts, the huge lizard that had once been the Vile-Emperor began to flee, flying straight up into the sky!

Bai Xiaochun was about to give chase, but then realized that these locusts were different from the ones he had seen in the memories of the Worldly Daoist. These locusts all had strong cultivation bases, and were incredibly fast. Apparently, they possessed strange powers that differed from the natural laws of the Eternal Immortal Domains, which enabled them to instantly lock down on any nearby cultivator, and appear in their vicinity within the shortest of moments!

The Saint-Emperor was already trying to attack them, but the locusts were able to simply dodge through his magical techniques and divine abilities!

It was a moment of deadly crisis, and Bai Xiaochun had no time to sit around thinking about what to do. Pushing out with his right hand, he used the fourth of his major divine abilities, Gravitational Extermination.

Space distorted, and in the blink of an eye, the power of gravity erupted around the locusts. As a result, the flow of time there changed, and the countless locusts that could disregard the natural laws of the Eternal Immortal Domains were suddenly affected in dramatic fashion.

Before any of them could react, they slowed down significantly. At the same time, the Saint-Emperor’s eyes glittered, aware that if the locusts were not driven away, the consequences would be dire. Now that they were slowed, he didn’t hesitate to attack in full force.

Bai Xiaochun left the locusts to him, blurring into motion as he shot after the lizard. Although he accelerated rapidly, the lizard was by no means slow, and it didn’t seem like he would be able to catch up quickly. Snorting coldly, Bai Xiaochun waved his hand.

Instantly, the air in front of him rippled as a lonely boat materialized. Stepping onto the boat, he connected to it with his divine sense, whereupon it burst upward with speed that surpassed the Archaean Realm!

This was none other than the lonely boat from his treasured fan!

Intense whistling sounds filled the entire world as the boat rocketed in pursuit of the huge lizard, whose face fell at the sight. Even as the lizard prepared to dodge, Bai Xiaochun shouted at the top of his lungs and clenched his hand into a fist, whereupon a shadowy figure appeared behind him.

The figure wore imperial robes and an imperial crown, and was none other than the manifestation of his Undying Emperor’s Fist. However, this shadowy emperor’s right arm was that of a sovereign! This wasn’t the Undying Emperor’s Fist, this was his upgraded Undying Sovereign’s Fist!!

Without the slightest hesitation, he drew upon the full power of both his cultivation base and fleshly body, striking out in deadly fashion! This was the ultimate expression of his battle prowess, something impossible to resist, that could destroy the heavens and extinguish the earth!

Instantly, a massive vortex sprang up, like a huge mouth lunging to consume the giant lizard. As for the lizard, he was already trembling, aware that even if his cultivation base was stronger than it was, he would not be able to fight back against this fist strike.

The sovereign aura in the fist strike made it impossible for the lizard to even flee. Shrieking in defiance, madness, and despair, he uttered a complex curse in an unknown language, which caused masses of black smoke to pour out of his body and form into a spike!

“It’s time for you to die, Bai Xiaochun!!” The lizard’s eyes shone with madness as his body withered, his flesh and blood sucked away to power the black spike. Within moments, the lizard was gone, completely absorbed into the gigantic spike!

By that point, the spike was not illusory in any sense of the word, and thrummed with a murderous aura that caused even Bai Xiaochun to tremble in fear.

Without even the slightest pause, the spike transformed into a blur of light that shot toward Bai Xiaochun!

An unsightly expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he thought back to the black spike he had seen stabbed into the forehead of the Immortal Imperatrix. This spike seemed to radiate the exact same type of energy!

There was no time for thought or planning. Howling, he threw more power into his Undying Sovereign’s Fist, forcing it to become even stronger. In fact, the shadowy image behind him began to fade away, with the exception of the sovereign’s arm. He was using the same tactic the lizard had just used, absorbing the rest of his technique and focusing the power on one area, making the sovereign aura even stronger! As of this moment, Bai Xiaochun’s battle prowess was even more shocking than before!

The back and forth reactions took only a brief moment. Then, Bai Xiaochun’s Undying Sovereign’s Fist slammed into the incoming spike, causing a massive boom to ring out, along with a shockwave that shook the world itself, and threatened to shatter the sky.

Whether it was Bai Xiaochun, or the clone of the Mortal Renegade, both unleashed attacks that were at the ultimate peak of the Archaean Realm. And Bai Xiaochun had even backed his attack with some of the power of a sovereign!

As for the spike, it was unbelievably domineering. At the moment of impact, the shadowy emperor that was the manifestation of the Undying Sovereign’s Fist shattered. However, the spike’s aura was also significantly drained, and it changed colors from black to gray, making it look weak to the extreme.

And yet, a vicious face appeared on the spike, the last bit of will belonging to the clone, which then forced the spike to accelerate toward Bai Xiaochun’s forehead!

Everyone who could see what was happening cried out in alarm. However, Bai Xiaochun had prepared from the very beginning to deal with this formidable spike. As it blurred toward him in a streak of gray light, he pulled out his turtle-wok, whereupon a boom rang out as the two collided!

The wok shivered violently, transforming into a black beam that shot back inside Bai Xiaochun. However, it had successfully blocked the spike. The shattered will of the clone let out a defiant howl, and turned to flee, but was not as fast as Bai Xiaochun!

As Bai Xiaochun grabbed it, his eyes flashed with a vicious glint, and he sent his divine sense out to crush the will of the clone!

As the last bit of the clone's will was wiped away, a bloodcurdling scream echoed out into the air.

Down below, the effects of Bai Xiaochun’s Gravitational Extermination enabled the Saint-Emperor to eliminate all of the locusts. Expression unsightly, he then flew up to Bai Xiaochun’s side, and looked at the gray spike he held in his hand.

The spike was actually formed from flesh and blood, and emanated a shocking life force that seemed equivalent to an archaean. Although it struggled at first, after Bai Xiaochun wiped the spike clean of the will of the clone, it turned bright white, and stopped moving.

Bai Xiaochun put the spike away and exchanged a worried glance with the Saint-Emperor. Then the two of them looked at the enormous giant looming over them in the sky.

Meanwhile, the survivors from Vile-Emperor City were looking around blankly. Soon, the celestials gathered their wits and flew up toward Bai Xiaochun to offer greetings. They brought the Giant Ghost King with them, unconscious but unharmed. Bai Xiaochun had located the Giant Ghost King in the early stages of the battle, and had sent some divine sense over to him as a protection.

“Greetings Arch-Emperor! Greetings Saint-Emperor!”

Their polite, respectful greetings immediately showed their attitude. The Vile-Emperor had turned out to be a clone, which meant that the Vile-Emperor Dynasty was no more. On any other occasion, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor might have begun to contend with each other for control of the remnants, but now, they were in no mood for such a thing.

“Where is Daoist Heavenspan!?” Bai Xiaochun said, scanning the vicinity. The celestials remained silent for a moment, until Prince Ur-Demon finally spoke up.

“Arch-Emperor… Daoist Heavenspan has been missing for a while now. No one knows where he is.”

Frowning, Bai Xiaochun prepared to ask further questions, when suddenly, a heaven-rending, earth-crushing rumbling sound could be heard, filling even the furthest corners of the Eternal Immortal Domains!!

It was an intense sound that seemed to contain unending death and destruction, and seemed to step from the darkest depths of the void…. Something profoundly evil was coming!

Bai Xiaochun, the Saint-Emperor, and everyone else in the Eternal Immortal Domains looked up into the sky, their expressions flickering…. High above, the eyes of the Mortal Renegade were quivering!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1258 awe-chapter-1259

The Saint-Emperor gasped, his hair standing on end as fear grew within him, stemming from his very soul, and even further, from the depths of the cycle of reincarnation!

It was a sense of danger that one would experience when facing one's greatest enemy, and was shared by everyone who lived within the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Every living being couldn't help but feel unprecedented terror and shock for what the future held!

"The Enemy from Beyond… moved!"

"The legends are true! If that giant wakes up, he'll exterminate everything!!" Countless cries of alarm filled the world. Even the Eternal Sea responded, as though it had a spirit, causing wild waves to surge across its surface.

Bai Xiaochun was just as shaken, and felt as if he had just laid eyes on a predestined archenemy. Considering what he had seen in the Worldly Daoist's memories, his feelings were even more complex. Even as he took in a deep breath, he noticed that, as the eyelids of the Mortal Renegade quivered, two strips that almost looked like paper were now visible on his body!!

One of them stretched from his forehead to his dantian region, while the other went from his right shoulder to the same location!

The strip stretching from his shoulder was roughly twenty percent dark, indicating that it had lost some of its power, and was only eighty percent effective.

Worse, the strip stretching from his forehead was now eighty percent dim, indicating that only twenty percent of its power remained!

Bai Xiaochun wasn’t sure what those lines represented, and in that, he was not alone within the Eternal Immortal Domains. Few people understood their significance. However, as soon as the Saint-Emperor saw them, his face fell, and he began to shiver uncontrollably.

“One of the strips has been broken!!” he blurted out loud. Shaken, Bai Xiaochun focused on the strip leading from the forehead to the dantian region, and realized… that it provoked fluctuations within his blood, as though the strip were somehow connected to the bloodline of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

Instantly, his pupils constricted as he put the pieces of the puzzle together.

Before he could say anything, the Saint-Emperor explained.

“There should be three strips. Back when the Eternal Mother created the three Eternal Sons, they fought the Enemy from Beyond, and gave up their lives in the process. The Eternal Mother also paid a huge price to forge… three sealing strips, backed by the powers of the three bloodlines!!” The Saint-Emperor quickly went on to provide more details, explaining everything he knew about the subject. The truth was that now that the Mortal Renegade was moving, it spelled impending catastrophe for the Eternal Immortal Domains.

At a time like this, the Saint-Emperor didn’t care at all about struggles for power. He cared about the existence of the Eternal Immortal Domains as a whole. If the Great Enemy awoke, and there was no one there to stop him, then all creation would be toppled and cast into infinite darkness!

“Each and every one of those bloodline sealing strips is of critical importance. They were created by sovereign-level world magic, and are precisely what have kept the Enemy from Beyond sleeping until now!” The Saint-Emperor was so anxious about the matter that his words came in rapid-fire succession.

“There used to be a strip leading from his left shoulder to his dantian region, which was powered by the Vile-Ancestor. The strip on the right shoulder is from the Saint-Ancestor, and the middle strip is from the Arch-Ancestor!

“The Vile-Ancestor’s strip has already been broken, which proves that the Vile-Emperor is truly dead, his bloodline suppressed and contaminated for years by the imposter…. Although only one strip has been broken, that already allows the Great Enemy to begin to move.

“The strip connected to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty has eighty percent of its strength remaining. As for the strip connected to your bloodline, Arch-Emperor, it has been weakened to a dangerous level, presumably because your people took so long to return, and also because of how late you reached the Archaean Realm!

“If those final two strips are broken… then the Enemy from Beyond will awaken!!”

Even as the Saint-Emperor spoke, the Mortal Renegade trembled, and his eyelids flickered visibly, as though he were struggling to break the final two bloodline sealing strips!

As he struggled, the strips began to grow darker; clearly, it would only be a few more months before they were destroyed!

The death of the imposter Vile-Emperor had pushed the Mortal Renegade past the limits of his patience. He didn’t want the sealing strips to gradually wear away; he wanted to burst through them and wake up as soon as possible.

“What can we do to strengthen the strips?!” Bai Xiaochun asked. He feared death, but he knew that if the Mortal Renegade woke up, the entire world would be plunged into darkness. Therefore, there were two options at hand. Either sit around and wait to die, or do something to fight back!

“There’s only one thing we can do. If we get close enough to enter the sealing strips, then we can use the power of our blood to reinforce them!

“But if we fail… then what awaits is the destruction of the Eternal Immortal Domains! The so-called Enemy from Beyond possesses the terrifying might of a sovereign, power that we are no match for….

“As for the sealing strips, only those with the power of an archaean can do anything to bolster them. That means that we are the only two who can do it!” The Saint-Emperor’s eyes were now lit with determination. Although he was usually a hypocritical, sanctimonious person, right now, he had put that aspect of his personality to rest. He had made his decision about what needed to be done!

When Bai Xiaochun realized that the Saint-Emperor was essentially talking about entering the body of the Mortal Renegade, he nearly gasped. However, now was not the time to ponder the situation. If the Mortal Renegade struggled to the point where the Arch-Ancestor’s sealing strip went completely dark, then that would leave only one remaining sealing strip.

“There’s no time to lose!” the Saint-Emperor said anxiously, immediately beginning to fly at high speed toward the Mortal Renegade. As he rose higher and higher, a large moon sigil appeared behind him!

Gritting his teeth, Bai Xiaochun flew after him. The two of them became bright streaks of light that shot closer and closer to the enormous Mortal Renegade. Eventually, they were so close that they couldn’t even see his head, only his chest!

As they neared, it became even easier to see how much the Mortal Renegade was struggling. It was almost like an earthquake, with loud rumbling sounds and incredible pressure that caused the Saint-Emperor’s face to go pale. As for Bai Xiaochun, his bit of sovereign aura made it a bit easier for him.

Eventually, they headed in two different directions, the Saint-Emperor going toward the sealing strip on the right shoulder, and Bai Xiaochun heading as quickly as possible toward the Mortal Renegade’s forehead!!

Those were the locations of the two sealing strips’ true origins!

Soon, the Saint-Emperor’s expression flickered, and even Bai Xiaochun was shocked, as they found that there was some sort of invisible barrier surrounding the Mortal Renegade’s body.

Shouting, the Saint-Emperor ignited his moon sigil, a life-essence treasure that gave him the punch he needed to break through that barrier. Moments later, blood-colored light shone around him as he reached the sealing strip, and disappeared.

Bai Xiaochun had a much simpler time. He resorted to the Undying Hex, which was now powered by his archaean cultivation base. Piercing through the barrier, he appeared in front of the sealing strip tied to the Arch-Ancestor’s bloodline. At that point, he looked back down at the lands below.

Just barely visible were the people of the Eternal Immortal Domains, craning their heads as they looked up nervously. Although most couldn’t actually see him or the Saint-Emperor, everyone was paying close attention to see what would happen.

All of these things had happened so suddenly that it was hard to take them all in. However, Bai Xiaochun knew what he had to do. Taking a deep breath, he gritted his teeth and entered the bloodline sealing strip!

Down below, the cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains were waiting, terrified and deeply aware of the danger they were in. However, there was nothing they could do other than wait and pray.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1259 awe-chapter-1260

The Mortal Renegade’s body was massive. Right now, the only thing Bai Xiaochun could see was the bloodline sealing strip, which looked like dozens of mountain ranges lined up next to each other. In fact, it would have been difficult to even identify it were it not for the strong aura of the Arch-Ancestor’s bloodline that it contained, which formed a resonance with him.

Upon entering the sealing strip, his vision blurred for a moment. When it cleared, he looked around to find himself in a dark area that was actually… one of the Mortal Renegade’s energy passageways!

It was not a natural energy passageway, but rather, one that had been forcibly created back when the three Eternal Sons sealed the Mortal Renegade!

It was large, almost like an entire world, but at the moment, it was completely and utterly silent. As soon as Bai Xiaochun took form inside, he began to glow with blood-colored light!

As the light swirled around him, it became a spinning vortex with him at the center!

The energy passageway was withered, but as soon as the blood-colored light touched it, it perked up. At the same time, the resonance he felt grew stronger, as though he were actually the foundation of the passageway!

As of that moment, Bai Xiaochun realized what he had to do to restore the power of the sealing strip!

"I have to become the foundation of the seal. To repair it, I have to allow the power of my bloodline to awaken its strength. I need to go to the Mortal Renegade's dantian region.... By the time I reach that point, the sealing strip will be completely repaired!

"If I perish along the way, the process will end in failure. And if I leave early, the result will be the same!" Sighing, he knew that there was no backing out. He gritted his teeth and then began to fly through the energy passageway, sending blood-colored light shining out in all directions.

The sooner he got to the dantian region, the sooner the sealing mark would be repaired. Therefore, he pushed forward with all the speed he could muster!

The Saint-Emperor was doing the same thing in another energy passageway, speeding along and emanating light that represented the bloodline of the Saint-Ancestor.

Back outside in the Eternal Immortal Domains, there were people who could see the sealing strips on the Mortal Renegade, and noticed the bright lights that had begun to move down them!

At the same time, the struggling Mortal Renegade was already being forced to settle down into inactivity. Unfortunately, the process was not one that could be finished so quickly and smoothly; as Bai Xiaochun sped through the energy passageway, his eyes suddenly widened.

The space up ahead of him had begun to twist and distort as several shadowy shapes materialized. There were cultivators and beasts alike, tens upon tens of thousands of them. None of them had any life force, only auras of death, and they all looked as vicious as could be imagined.

When they laid eyes on Bai Xiaochun, it was as if they were seeing their greatest archenemy. Howling, they began to charge toward him in attack.

Some were in the Nascent Soul stage, while others were on the same level as celestials, a whole cloud of powerful foes.

However, none of them possessed archaean battle prowess. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun didn't even stop. Resorting to the Mountain Shaking Bash, he became like a shooting star that crushed everything in his path.

Rumbling booms could be heard as he smashed through the shadowy specters, carving out a path through them in only the blink of an eye.

However, even after being destroyed, the shadowy specters formed back together, and stopped at nothing to try to block his path. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but with every moment that passed, more specters appeared.

Soon, there were too many to count, and even the mighty Bai Xiaochun was starting to slow down due to the time and effort needed to kill them.

“Dammit!” he growled. Quickly performing an incantation gesture, he waved his finger to summon a Live Forever Lamp. As the power of his cultivation base then spread out, the surrounding specters also turned into Live Forever Lamps. As they burned, he burst forward in an attempt to pass them.

As he tried to break through, the shadowy specters began to shout at him.

“You can’t escape, Mortal Renegade!!”

“I'm gonna kill you, Mortal Renegade!!”

“Even if I die, I’ll make you pay, Mortal Renegade!”

At the same time, more and more specters appeared to bolster their numbers.

By now, Bai Xiaochun could guess who these shadowy specters were. They were people the Mortal Renegade had killed in the past, and now that he was sealed, he couldn’t do anything to prevent them from appearing. Although they didn’t have the same battle prowess as when they were alive, they were still eternally indestructible.

As more and more appeared, Bai Xiaochun’s anxiety mounted. Unleashing the power of his archaean cultivation base, he summoned a tempest around him, then charged forward, mowing down anyone who got in his path.

Occasionally he would use the Mountain Shaking Bash, and occasionally his Live Forever Lamp. Eventually, he performed an incantation gesture and unleashed his Sutra of the Former. Countless magical symbols appeared, sealing the shadowy specters!

Unable to free themselves from the sea of magical symbols, the shadowy specters struggled in vain as Bai Xiaochun shot past them. Not looking back, he proceeded forward as quickly as possible.

As he flew onward, he summoned hosts of lightning bolts which would instantly crush any shadowy specters he encountered.

And thus, he made his way along the energy passageway.

The Saint-Emperor had also encountered similar shadowy specters. His methods were different than Bai Xiaochun, but he was also a powerful archaean, and was able to maintain top speed. His moon sigil sent beams of moonlight out in front of him, carving a path as he proceeded along, shining with blood-colored light!

Occasionally, he would summon lotus flowers, which would instantly crush the hosts of shadowy specters that surrounded him.

The Saint-Emperor was not holding anything back. Now that the Vile-Emperor had been unmasked as a clone, and the huge sovereign was on the verge of waking up, he knew that a deadly crisis was brewing. Everything he had said to Bai Xiaochun had been completely and utterly true.

Many eyes in the Eternal Immortal Domains were focused on the two sealing strips on the Mortal Renegade. Of course, the light representing the Saint-Emperor had been brighter to begin with, and was more-so now. And the Saint-Emperor was also much closer to the dantian region, being nearly halfway there!

The sealing strip from the Arch-Ancestor had been reduced by eighty percent, and although Bai Xiaochun was successfully repairing it, it was still far behind the other one.

Everyone was watching nervously, including the Grand Heavenmaster and other people who were close to Bai Xiaochun. Solemn, shaken expressions could be seen everywhere.

This development had been too sudden, and yet, that was what had given Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor this one chance to repair the sealing strips. After all, if the imposter Vile-Emperor hadn’t been killed, then his plan would have continued smoothly, and the Eternal Immortal Domains would have soon faced a deadly, apocalyptic catastrophe!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1260 awe-chapter-1261

The people in the Eternal Immortal Domains had no way of knowing what exactly was happening within the two energy passageways, nor did they have any sense of the dangers involved. All they could see were two glowing spots of light that represented Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor, both slowly making progress through the sealing strips.

Whenever those lights stopped moving, it meant they were facing resistance!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he finally stopped moving completely when nine specters materialized in front of him, all of them with archaean cultivation bases!

Their auras were weak, but they were still archaeans, and their expressions were violently brutal as they glared at Bai Xiaochun. To them, he was the Mortal Renegade, and they wanted nothing more than to cut him down!

“Dammit! I'm not the Mortal Renegade! You hate *him!* Why are you venting on me!?” Bai Xiaochun knew that they were projections created by the Mortal Renegade’s divine sense, and that they were motivated by the hatred which had existed in them before dying. But he was still irritated.

Clenching his hand into a fist, he struck out, not with the Undying Sovereign’s Fist, but rather, the Undying Emperor’s Fist. Even still, that level of battle prowess was shocking!

Booms rang out as the two parties clashed. Bai Xiaochun did nothing to evade being hit; he relied on the powers of regeneration from his Undying Codex to simply attack relentlessly. After shattering one of the shadowy archaeans, he shot toward another one, and unleashed another fist strike!

And thus the battle went for the course of a few breaths' worth of time, with Bai Xiaochun unleashing explosive force and speed, and relying on his Undying Codex to heal him. In quick succession, he defeated all nine archaean specters!

Before they could reform, he sped on, gasping for breath, and even pulling out a few medicinal pills to replenish himself.

Before long, he encountered another group of archaean specters, even more than before. Much to his frustration, there were over twenty this time. However, he had no options; eyes bloodshot, he howled and unleashed the Sutra of Future Pāramitā!

Then, he utilized his Throat Crushing Grasp, Mountain Shaking Bash, Live Forever Lamp, and other divine abilities and magical techniques that didn't draw too deeply on his cultivation base.

He knew that he still had a long way to go, and that the going would probably get tougher. Draining his cultivation base wouldn't be a good idea, especially considering that the energy passageway he was in didn't have any spiritual power in it that he could use to replenish himself with.

On the other hand, there was plenty of bloodline power, ensuring that his fleshly body and powers of regeneration were actually performing better than on the outside. Launching forward with another attack, he crushed his opponents and moved on. Before long, he realized that he was seeing fewer and fewer shadowy specters.

And yet, that only put him more on guard than before. Soon, his divine sense revealed to him that a shocking aura was brewing somewhere ahead of him.

A bit of time passed, and then he suddenly lurched a stop, pupils constricting. There ahead in the energy passageways, a floating crimson coffin had appeared out of thin air.

It contained an aura that caused even Bai Xiaochun's heart to pound. It almost seemed as if this wasn't a cultivator, but some thing of unparalleled ferocity and madness. Shining with blinding light, it shot toward him with incredible speed.

"Lord Bai isn't even afraid of ghosts! You think he's gonna be scared of some coffin!?" Performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, he waved his finger, causing the area around the coffin to distort as the powers of gravity were called up. Time slowed, and the coffin's speed was reduced significantly.

Without the slightest hesitation, Bai Xiaochun shot toward it, and for the first time, utilized his Undying Sovereign's Fist. Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions, and the image of an emperor appeared behind him, striking out in exact coordination with him.

The coffin tried to avoid the blow, but was stuck within the area of slowed time, and could not. As soon as the blow struck its target, cracks spread out on the coffin's surface, and it shattered!

As it did, an enraged howl could be heard, and blood-colored light exploded from the remnants of the coffin, creating a huge sea of blood. Within that sea was a blood-colored crocodile that instantly lunged toward Bai Xiaochun, its jaws opened wide as if to swallow him up!

It also emanated archaean fluctuations so powerful that Bai Xiaochun's heart lurched in his chest. These fluctuations seemed no less powerful than what he had sensed from the Vile-Emperor in the past.

On the outside, Bai Xiaochun would have been less leery. But he knew that in this location, this creature was eternally indestructible. Even if he destroyed it, it would form back up, meaning that if he got involved in a protracted fight, he would not only be wasting time, but he would also be giving more of the shadow figures a chance to converge on his location.

"Well, if I need to end this fight quickly… I know just the move to use!' Quickly performing an incantation gesture, he shoved his hand in a downward motion.

"Waterswamp!"

He was inside the body of a sovereign, and yet, water vapor still swirled out in all directions, creating a huge, illusory swamp.

"Kingdom!!" he shouted. This was his first time unleashing the Waterswamp Kingdom as an archaean, and was the only thing he could think to do to deal with this damned crocodile.

As soon as the words left his mouth, an aura far more brutal than the crocodile's erupted from the watery swamp. The ferocious crocodile shivered, its previously maddened eyes suddenly filling with terror and shock. Then, before Bai Xiaochun's life essence spirit could even appear, the crocodile turned tail and fled!

Bai Xiaochun looked on, stunned. Finally, he shook his head. Nothing like this had ever happened before when using the

Waterswamp Kingdom. As far as he could tell, the crocodile from moments ago had been formed by the Mortal Renegade’s divine sense, and shouldn’t have been able to flee.

“Maybe it wasn’t formed from the Mortal Renegade’s divine sense. Or maybe it was so strong in life that, even after it died, some of its original instincts remained.” Under normal circumstances, Bai Xiaochun wouldn’t prevent his life essence spirit from coming out into the open. But right now, time was of the essence, and spiritual power was not abundant. Therefore, he waved his hand and, ignoring the frustrated howl of his life essence spirit, dispelled the Waterswamp Kingdom.

Now was not the time to sit around planning his next move; he immediately blurred into motion as he continued along his way.

Meanwhile, the other bloodline sealing strip was already ninety percent repaired, and the Saint-Emperor was closing in on the Mortal Renegade’s dantian region. That was when… he encountered someone blocking his path that he couldn’t possibly defeat!!

He lurched to a stop, trembling as he looked at a figure hovering ahead of him, unmoving, but with eyes slowly opening!

It was a handsome, scholarly man, with a fireball sigil on his forehead. As he opened his eyes, it was possible to see an ancient moon glowing in his pupils!

“Saint-Ancestor!!" he murmured, his voice laced with pain.

Right there in front of him was the Saint-Ancestor, one of the three Eternal Sons! He was the original ancestor of the

Saint-Emperor, and the source of his bloodline!

There was no suspense regarding how this battle would turn out. And although this projected Saint-Ancestor had the same blood in him as when he had been alive, his thoughts were different. Instantly, his desire to do battle burned hot inside him!

The fight didn’t last long. Soon, the Saint-Emperor was coughing up blood, and was forced to leave the bloodline sealing strip. If he did not, he would die. As he emerged, everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains saw that sealing strip… shattered into pieces!!

The Saint-Emperor had completely failed!

Despair gnawed at the heart of the Saint-Emperor, and all of a sudden, he realized that the struggling of the giant sovereign… had actually been an elaborate trap!

Clearly, he hoped to use the Saint-Emperor and Bai Xiaochun to destroy the sealing strips even more quickly than before!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1261 awe-chapter-1262

Chuckling bitterly, the Saint-Emperor flew away from the enormous sovereign, his mood already having plunged to the ultimate depths. “It seems that deadly catastrophe is about to befall the Eternal Immortal Domains….”

He could only hope that Bai Xiaochun would succeed. After all, if the final bloodline sealing strip was destroyed, then… it would mean the end of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains was left shaken. The Saint-Emperor had failed, the second sealing strip had been destroyed, and the gigantic sovereign was now struggling with more intensity than ever.

“The Arch-Emperor is our only hope!!”

“The Arch-Emperor *must* succeed!!!”

Everyone was now praying for Bai Xiaochun, even the Saint-Emperor.

Inside of the energy passageway, Bai Xiaochun had come to a temporary stop as he realized that something had changed. In the blink of an eye, the number of shadowy specters around him had begun to increase dramatically.

Although he had no idea what had occurred with the Saint-Emperor, he had a bad premonition. Feeling more anxious than ever, he let out a shout, and took advantage of the time it was taking the shadowy specters to materialize to shoot onward as quickly as possible.

He had no choice but to burn his cultivation base power, becoming a tempest that crushed anything in his way. As he followed the bloodline sealing strip, he got closer and closer to the dantian region.

From the thirty percent point of advancement, he proceeded to the fifty percent mark. Then he reached sixty percent, and seventy percent….

His Undying Codex was working in overdrive as he destroyed countless shadowy specters that blocked his way.

Soon, he had passed the seventy percent mark, and was reaching eighty percent, when suddenly, he stopped in place as he realized that among the shadowy specters was a woman with her head bowed!

She wore a royal gown, and was very graceful and elegant. None of the shadowy specters in the area dared to get close to her, creating a wide open space around her.

As soon as Bai Xiaochun saw her, she looked up, revealing a spectacularly beautiful face.

“Immortal Imperatrix!” he blurted, his eyes widening, and subconsciously placing his hand on his bag of holding. This woman was none other than the Immortal Imperatrix, except, she was different from the version he had in his possession…. This Immortal Imperatrix was formed by the Mortal Renegade’s divine sense, and looked exactly like she had when she was alive!

She had archaean fluctuations that were somewhat overwhelming, and as soon as her eyes locked onto his, she waved her hand, sending all of the shadow figures around her shot straight toward Bai Xiaochun.

Then, she took a step forward, turning into a beam of light that also closed in on Bai Xiaochun!

“Dammit, there’s no way this shrew is gonna beat me!” He charged forward, the tempest that surrounded him decimating all of the shadowy specters that were in the way.

However, the Immortal Imperatrix didn’t seem to be affected by the tempest at all. It didn’t even slow her down. Moments later, she slammed directly into Bai Xiaochun.

Booms echoed out, and Bai Xiaochun tumbled backward, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth. Although his Undying Codex was hard at work regenerating him, he was already feeling very frustrated.

It was even worse considering that after the interchange, the Immortal Imperatrix didn't seem to be dissipating, but rather, growing more solid. Bai Xiaochun sighed.

“I have one more trump card to try. If it doesn't work, then I’ll resort to the Waterswamp Kingdom!” Still hoping to conserve cultivation base power, he looked at the incoming Immortal Imperatrix, took a breath, and closed his eyes.

Just when she was almost on top of him, he opened his eyes and unleashed an aura that was very different from anything before. It was ancient, and completely beyond compare to anything else!

It was none other than… the aura of the Worldly Daoist!!

“Little Junior Sister….” he murmured softly, his eyes flickering with reminiscence.

Instantly, the seemingly cold and emotionless Immortal Imperatrix shivered and lurched to a halt. As she stared at

Bai Xiaochun, it was clear that she was struggling inside.

When Bai Xiaochun saw that his tactic seemed to be working, his heart started to pound. Trying to make the situation seem even more realistic, he forced out more of his sovereign aura, and tried to make himself seem exactly like the Worldly Daoist.

“It’s been a long time, Shanshan….” he said softly. Gazing at her, he began to walk forward.

Soon he was right in front of her.

“Worldly… Daoist….” she said.

When Bai Xiaochun heard that, his heart suddenly seized.

His inspiration for this tactic came with the previous incident with the crocodile. The crocodile had seemingly possessed some of its previous instincts, and he had assumed it would be the same with the Immortal Imperatrix.

However, hearing her speak the name of the Worldly Daoist made him realize that he was likely wrong! Apparently, she didn’t possess mere instinct, but rather, true memories of the past!

“How is this even possible? We're inside of the Mortal Renegade, right? What exactly are all of these shadowy specters?” Despite being shaken, he knew that now wasn’t the time to sit around analyzing the situation. Forcing himself to remain calm, he continued to speak in a soft voice.

“Wait here for me, okay Shanshan?” he said. “Don’t go anywhere, Little Junior Sister….” Hoping to maximize his effectiveness, he resorted to two forms of address instead of just one.

The Immortal Imperatrix’s gaze was still blank, but she was clearly struggling. Taking advantage of the moment, Bai Xiaochun burst into motion, flying right past her, and preparing his Waterswamp Kingdom just in case she started to chase him.

To his delight, though, she simply stood there, unmoving.

“So, the honey trapping technique works even better than the Waterswamp Kingdom!” Speeding up, he passed the eighty percent mark within the bloodline sealing strip, and closed in on ninety percent!!

Meanwhile, everyone down in the Eternal Immortal Domains was affixed on his progress. Although they couldn’t see exactly what he was doing, they could see when he paused, and then kept moving.

As he neared the dantian region, many people realized that he had already endured much more difficulty than the Saint-Emperor, who had actually started much further along the sealing strip.

“He’s got to make this work!!” the Saint-Emperor murmured, trembling. He wished he could go and help, but knew that the only person in the Eternal Immortal Domains who could enter the sealing strip created by the Arch-Ancestor was Bai Xiaochun!

“May the Eternal Mother bless and protect you….” Many people were murmuring such prayers, and quite a few were weeping.

Everyone in the entire world was watching!

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun reached the ninety percent point. He had only ten percent to go. And that was when… he encountered someone that he never could have guessed he would see!

In fact, it was a person that he would have assumed he *couldn't* see!!

Just as the Saint-Emperor had encountered the Saint-Ancestor, Bai Xiaochun suddenly found himself facing what at first appeared to be a mountain!

But it was no mountain, it was a giant, sitting there cross-legged, eyes closed.

As Bai Xiaochun approached, the giant's eyes opened, and they burned like the sun. His skin was covered with complex designs, indicating that he had mastered the Undying Skin, Undying Heavenly King, Undying Tendons, Undying Bones and Undying Blood!!

The blood and energy fluctuations rolling off of him were boundless and majestic, and his fleshly body was clearly at the ultimate peak!!

"Arch-Ancestor!!" Bai Xiaochun blurted.

This giant was none other than the Arch-Ancestor, the source of Bai Xiaochun's bloodline. And as he opened his eyes… he slowly rose to his feet!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1262 awe-chapter-1263

The energy passageway created by the bloodline sealing strip had once seemed enormous to Bai Xiaochun. But as the Arch-Ancestor rose to his feet, Bai Xiaochun realized that his head nearly touched the ‘sky’ above.

His size, his expressionless face, his cold eyes, and the explosive power that radiated off of his fleshly body made it seem like any attack he unleashed could shake the foundations of worlds! In fact, he seemed strong enough to destroy the energy passageway itself!

Even the mere motion of standing up caused a gale-force wind to spread out, blasting away all of the shadowy specters in the area, and completely wiping most of them out of existence.

He was strong, mighty, vicious, and explosive!

Those were the only four words Bai Xiaochun could think of to accurately describe the Arch-Ancestor.

Gasping, he subconsciously backed up a few steps, heart pounding. Even the mere blood and energy fluctuations coming off of the Arch-Ancestor were enough to affect the blood-colored light shining off of Bai Xiaochun.

It was as if… the Arch-Ancestor were vying with Bai Xiaochun for control over the bloodline sealing strip. Thankfully, this Arch-Ancestor was a mere incarnation, and did not actually have the qualifications to destroy the sealing strip. Otherwise it would have long since been wiped away.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun still felt a profound sensation of deadly crisis!!

Most of the time, the sensations of crisis he would experience came because of a lack of information regarding his enemy. But in this case, the sensation rose up because he was facing his own blood ancestor.

“That must be what happened earlier. The Saint-Emperor must have encountered the Saint-Ancestor… and lost!” Although it was only speculation, he was at least seventy to eighty percent sure that it was true.

“Fighting one’s own founding ancestor?” Even as Bai Xiaochun felt a rising sense of inferiority and frustration, the Arch-Ancestor’s eyes began to glow with the desire to do battle. They were like twin suns as he started walking forward, causing huge booms to echo out as he headed in Bai Xiaochun’s direction.

As he picked up speed, Bai Xiaochun realized that he wasn’t just running forward casually, he was attempting… to bash into him!

“Mountain Shaking Bash!” he thought, his pupils constricting. Being as familiar with the Undying Codex as he was, he instantly recognize the magical technique the Arch-Ancestor was using. He could also sense the fluctuations of the Undying Hex, and even worse, noticed a terrifying light shining on the Arch-Ancestor’s right index finger and thumb!

“Throat Crushing Grasp!!” Bai Xiaochun had absolutely no desire to be hit by a Throat Crushing Grasp unleashed by the Arch-Ancestor himself. It would likely lead to his tiny frame being crushed into a pile of bloody sludge.

Mind spinning with a sensation of crisis, he flew backward at top speed. Of course, the Arch-Ancestor was by no means slow, and in the blink of an eye, he was chasing him down through the energy passageway.

Down below in the Eternal Immortal Domains, gasps could be heard as the light that represented Bai Xiaochun… suddenly stopped, and then began to move in the opposite direction.

Sensations of despair rose up in the hearts of all, as everyone suddenly realized that the end of days was approaching!

“He definitely encountered the Arch-Ancestor!” the Saint-Emperor thought. Deep in his heart, he itched to help, but knew that he couldn’t.

Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, Hou Xiaomei, Li Qinghou, the Grand Heavenmaster, and many other people in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty who knew Bai Xiaochun were all observing with ashen faces, feeling completely powerless.

Meanwhile, booms filled the energy passageway as Bai Xiaochun fell back at top speed. To his dismay, he found that whatever he did, he couldn’t shake the Arch-Ancestor. Eventually, it reached the point where he couldn’t take it.

“What’s going on here, Arch-Ancestor!? This level of bullying is flipping ridiculous!!” Eyes widening angrily, he suddenly stopped in place, then launched himself toward the Arch-Ancestor.

“Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation!” Growing larger, he took three steps forward, until he was 300 meters tall. That was when he used the Living Mountain Incantation, growing taller, to a height of more than 600 meters. And then he unleashed his own Mountain Shaking Bash!

As he screamed through the air, the Arch-Ancestor shot toward him. And yet, still unhappy with his level of speed, Bai Xiaochun used his Undying Hex.

Sonic booms erupted everywhere. Bai Xiaochun was now drawing fully on all of the fleshly body power he could muster, and was also bolstering it with his cultivation base, making him even stronger!

“Bring it on!” he shouted. Then, in the last moment before colliding with the Arch-Ancestor, he used the Throat Crushing Grasp!

They looked like two explosive dragons as they slammed into each other, causing the ground to tremble beneath them. Groups of shadowy specters who had been converging in the area were completely destroyed by the shockwaves which began to roll out!

Bai Xiaochun howled with rage, and the Arch-Ancestor growled coldly. In a very short time, the two of them exchanged over a thousand blows!

Slowly but surely, the rocks and stones that made up Bai Xiaochun’s Living Mountain Incantation form were being battered off him. At the same time, his Cloud Lightning Forefather Transformation was weakening. And yet, even in this state, his battle prowess continued to rage!

As for the Arch-Ancestor, the more than one thousand exchanges left the surface of his body cracked and battered, making him look like he might explode at any moment.

One final deafening boom echoed out, and then Bai Xiaochun tumbled backward, blood spraying out of his mouth. Thankfully, his Undying Codex was hard at work, and within moments, he lurched to a stop. Righting himself, he shouted, “So, it turns out you’re just an empty shell!”

To his surprise, he and the Arch-Ancestor weren’t that vastly different after all; the Arch-Ancestor was actually using archaean-level battle prowess. Swallowing a mouthful of blood, Bai Xiaochun unleashed his Godkiller technique, causing radiant, crimson light to swirl around him!

Looking like a streak of blood mist, he shot toward the Arch-Ancestor!

However, the Arch-Ancestor was also regenerating using the Undying Codex, causing his wounds to rapidly heal up. Apparently, he was thinking the same thing as Bai Xiaochun, as he also began to glow with red light as he unleashed the Godkiller technique. Moments later, the two of them were once again fighting back and forth.

Both of them were in bad shape, their hair disheveled, their powers of regeneration working like mad. From the look of it, they were at a deadlock.

Another huge boom could be heard, and the two of them backed away from each other. At this point, the Arch-Ancestor’s eyes began to glow with bright light, and he reached out with his right hand. Shockingly, his hand began to emanate five different auras. Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. And Earth!

Those five elements corresponded to the five yin organs inside the human body, as well as five powerful sealing magics. At this point, the Arch-Ancestor’s torso began to shine with five-colored light, light which came from five different specific locations, and was filled with terrifying power!

“Magic of the five organs?” Bai Xiaochun murmured. “I always thought that the Five Yin Organs Secret Magic that Great-Grandpa Gravekeeper used all those years ago had something to do with the Undying Codex. Who would have thought… that in addition to the volumes of skin, flesh, tendon, bone, and blood, the Arch-Ancestor would also create a sixth volume of the Undying Codex!?” If Bai Xiaochun hadn’t been given the opportunity to fight this battle, he would never have known that there weren’t just five volumes to the Undying Codex. There were six!

It was very similar to how he had created his own additional technique to complete the Undying Live Forever Technique. The technique the gravekeeper had used in his fight with Daoist Heavenspan… was actually powered by the five yin organs of the Arch-Ancestor!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1263 awe-chapter-1264

The power of the five yin organs came from the five elements!

As the five beams of colorful light shot out of the Arch-Ancestor’s torso, they became a canopy that completely covered him. At the same time, his fleshly body power began to rise higher and higher. That was when he looked directly at Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittering.

Bai Xiaochun had originally been planning to dodge out of the way. However, the Arch-Ancestor moved with even greater speed than before, closing in with a clenched fist that slammed into Bai Xiaochun’s chest.

Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he flew backward, and before he could land on his feet, the Arch-Ancestor was on him again. Grabbing him by both shoulders, the Arch-Ancestor prepared… to rip him in two!!

The sensation of imminent crisis Bai Xiaochun felt provoked a shaken howl, and caused blue veins to bulge out on his face and neck. The terror of possible death was so intense that it provided the perfect fuel for a crazy counter attack!

“I never created a sixth volume for the Undying Codex, but… I did make a follow-up to the entire technique. The Time Immemorial Codex!

“You might have pushed the Undying Codex to the ultimate limit, but… it definitely doesn’t match up to the new path that I forged!!” Hands flying in a double-handed incantation gesture, he unleashed the Sutra of Former Reincarnation, causing countless magical symbols to appear on the Arch-Ancestor. As the symbols tightened, they began to form a magical seal. However, before that sealing process could be completed, a vicious glint appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes.

“DETONATE!!”

Each and every one of the magical symbols exploded. If it had been only two, or a few dozen, it might not have been very impressive. Maybe even a few hundred or thousand might not have been a big deal. But there were simply too many to count. Tens of thousands of them. And as they exploded, the force they unleashed was something the Arch-Ancestor simply couldn’t withstand.

As booms rang out, the Arch-Ancestor shivered violently, the force shoving him backward, and destroying two layers of the five-colored canopy around him.

However, the Arch-Ancestor was doughty; he had his Undying Codex to regenerate himself, and also never seemed to get tired. Without even a pause, he lunged back in Bai Xiaochun’s direction, clenching his hand into a fist as he approached.

Bai Xiaochun was panting for breath, but his expression was vicious as he performed an incantation gesture to unleash the Sutra of Future Pāramitā.

Because of the blood resonance between himself and the Arch-Ancestor, the Sutra of the Future worked perfectly. As the Arch-Ancestor’s fist struck home, Bai Xiaochun coughed up a mouthful of blood, but so did the Arch-Ancestor.

“Bring it on!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, jumping right back into the fight. As they went back and forth, the injuries Bai Xiaochun sustained were also inflicted on the Arch-Ancestor.

However, the reverse didn’t happen. In essence, the Arch-Ancestor was receiving double the amount of injuries!

Even with his powers of regeneration, he was gradually being worn down. And Bai Xiaochun was attacking like mad, causing the Arch-Ancestor to cough up one mouthful of blood after another. Two more of his defensive canopies were now gone, which was when Bai Xiaochun let out a shout and attacked with a destructive fist strike. At that point, all of the defenses created by the Arch-Ancestor’s sixth volume of the Undying Codex… were destroyed!

Having accomplished this, Bai Xiaochun staggered backward and then toppled to the ground, blood oozing out of his mouth as he gasped for breath. Looking over at the bedraggled Arch-Ancestor, who was also lying there prone, he said, “In terms of techniques, I'm definitely stronger than you!”

The Arch-Emperor didn’t say anything. He struggled to his feet, looked coldly at Bai Xiaochun, then clenched his hand into a fist, causing an enormous shadowy form to appear behind him.

At the same time, a spectacularly domineering aura erupted out.

It was none other than the Undying Emperor’s Fist!

“I’ve got one of those too!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, standing up and clenching his own hand into a fist. Immediately, a shadowy figure appeared behind him as well. Except, this figure was different from the Arch-Ancestor’s Undying Emperor’s Fist. This was… the Undying Sovereign’s Fist!

In the blink of an eye, the two of them shot into motion. This was the Arch-Ancestor fighting the reigning Arch-Emperor. It was the Undying Emperor’s Fist versus the Undying Sovereign’s Fist. This was something that could never happen except for in this exact time and place!

From a distance, it was possible to see, not only Bai Xiaochun and the Arch-Ancestor closing in on each other, but also the two shadowy figures they had summoned, also approaching each other. When they collided, a deafening boom rattled out, and the figure behind the Arch-Ancestor shattered into pieces.

As that happened, the Arch-Ancestor withered visibly, and he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood as he staggered backward. Bai Xiaochun was also significantly drained, and seemed almost completely bereft of energy and power. Bending over and resting his hands on his knees, he gasped for breath.

After a moment, he looked up and said, “I know you have some of your senses, Arch-Ancestor! I don't want to fight you. Let me pass! I need to repair this sealing strip!!”

He wasn’t sure if there were more powerful entities waiting after the Arch-Ancestor, and therefore, had been relying almost completely on fleshly body power in this fight. If at all possible, he wanted to hold back from using his cultivation base or his magical techniques.

The Arch-Ancestor was about 300 meters away from him, weak to the point where he looked like he might disperse at any moment. It almost seemed like Bai Xiaochun’s words hadn’t registered at all, as he slowly got back to his feet, his face completely expressionless. Trembling visibly, he began to stride over toward Bai Xiaochun.

As he did, his Undying Codex worked hard to regenerate his body, but unfortunately, he had been hurt so badly that it was like throwing a cup of water on a burning cart of firewood.

By this point, Bai Xiaochun knew that if he didn’t keep fighting, there was always the chance that the Arch-Ancestor might fully regenerate. After staring at him for a moment, he gritted his teeth and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Waving his finger, he unleashed the Sutra of Present Life and Death, summoning a huge stone gate behind him, which was none other than the Gate of Death!

The Gate of Life appeared behind the Arch-Ancestor, and as he continued to walk forward, he began to weaken visibly, to the point where his powers of regeneration couldn’t keep up at all.

And yet, the Arch-Ancestor continued to approach. Step by step he came, weakening, fading, until, to Bai Xiaochun’s shock, he was standing right there in front of him.

During the process of becoming so weak, something had changed. Before, all of his thoughts had been suppressed, but as of this moment, the coldness in his eyes had faded, and it was possible to see something profound and ancient within them.

To Bai Xiaochun’s shock, he began to speak.

“The Mortal Renegade assimilated the last bits of my consciousness, and sealed them inside himself, to fuel his ability to exterminate worlds....

“I thought that I had been lost for all eternity, only to encounter you....

“Please don’t blame me for this. I needed you to defeat me, utterly and thoroughly. Only by dying can I be freed from the control of the Mortal Renegade. Only then will things truly become clear for me….

“I have no regrets. Did you… see when I used the sixth volume of the Undying Codex just now?” The Arch-Ancestor spoke calmly, and yet warmly. Before Bai Xiaochun could respond, he smiled, reached out, and then faded into nothing….

However, in the moment before he disappeared forever, five glittering crystals, each one a different color, emerged from his torso and floated over to enter Bai Xiaochun’s….

Bai Xiaochun stood there for a long moment, then rubbed his chest. He could sense that his five yin organs had changed, although in some ways, that change seemed illusory.

After some thought, he clasped hands and bowed to the spot where the Arch-Ancestor had disappeared. Mixed emotions filled him, making it impossible to decide exactly how he felt. Finally, he took a deep breath and continued on his way!

He was now… only a short distance from the dantian region. As of this moment, the sealing strip was ninety percent repaired!

Back in the Eternal Immortal Domains, the despairing populace suddenly felt hope once again, and a cheer rose up.

As for the Saint-Emperor, he suddenly seemed to age a bit as he hovered there in mid-air, looking up at the bright light which represented Bai Xiaochun.

“He defeated… his original ancestor….” he murmured.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1264 awe-chapter-1265

Bai Xiaochun could not see what was happening in the outside world, nor was he interested in it at the moment. His fight with the Arch-Ancestor had left him completely exhausted, but thankfully, his powers of regeneration were already at work.

On the upside, he had conserved a lot of cultivation base power, just in case he needed it to complete the repair of the sealing strip.

“The Arch-Ancestor must have put the sixth volume of the Undying Codex into my five yin organs!” he thought. As he sped along, he confirmed that five colorful motes of light were there inside of him.

They felt warm, but other than that, didn’t seem very special. Unfortunately, there was no time to think about the matter right now.

The final leg of the journey turned out to be a lot different than Bai Xiaochun had assumed it would be. No shadowy specters appeared. It was almost as if they were incapable of forming in this location.

However, that didn’t make him feel any less uneasy. He still had the feeling that he would face some spectacularly powerful enemy within the Mortal Renegade’s dantian region.

It was a feeling that came from being an archaean, and because of that nervousness, he actually slowed down a bit until a good portion of his fleshly body power had recovered.

But as he was aware that long delays usually lead to trouble, he finally sped up.

Outside, the people in the Eternal Immortal Domains could see the light that represented Bai Xiaochun reaching the dantian region. As for Bai Xiaochun, all he saw was an enormous void!

It looked almost like an ocean of darkness, or a pitch-black sky. It was boundless, and endless, and Bai Xiaochun could instantly tell that all he had to do was enter that void, and the bloodline sealing strip would be completely repaired, from the spot on the Mortal Renegade’s forehead, all the way to his dantian region.

However… even as he was thinking of doing just that, he suddenly heard a voice speaking to him, almost like a sigh from the most ancient of times!

Along with the sigh came a burst of power that created something like a barrier, preventing Bai Xiaochun from entering the void.

Expression flickering, he tried to use his Undying Hex, only to find that it didn’t pierce through the barrier. This was the first time that the Undying Hex had ever failed to penetrate a restrictive spell!

After smashing into the barrier, he bounced back, his heart pounding. Moments later, he realized that a figure had appeared off in the distance.

It was a man, sitting cross-legged with his back to Bai Xiaochun. He wore imperial robes, and an imperial crown, and had a profound, unfathomable cultivation base. Just looking at him sent pain deep into the recesses of Bai Xiaochun’s mind, and caused his heart to start pounding.

The truth was… that he had already guessed that he might face another foe here, and had even speculated as to who it might be. Unfortunately, that person was someone he absolutely did not want to encounter.

It was with a very unsightly expression that he watched the person slowly turn to look at him, revealing a handsome, righteous face that radiated the demeanor of a transcendent being!

He looked threatening without being angry, and seemed capable of watching the earth be destroyed and the heavens crushed, and yet not reacting at all. He was none other than…

“Worldly Daoist, Immortal Imperator….” Bai Xiaochun said slowly, almost painfully. Inside, he sighed, completely aware that he couldn’t defeat an opponent like this. There was just no way he was a match for the Worldly Daoist.

However, there was still a bit of hope in his heart. After all, the previous opponents he had faced were all much weaker than they had been in life. Furthermore, he wanted to see if some of the Worldly Daoist’s consciousness remained behind to communicate with.

Before he could speak, the Worldly Daoist’s eyes glittered, and he waved his right index finger at Bai Xiaochun. Instantly, a beam of white light shot through the air toward him.

“Archaean Luminescence!!” Bai Xiaochun blurted, blurring into motion as he fell back. A moment later, the spot that he had just occupied was destroyed by the Archaean Luminescence!

"Don't tell me Archaean Luminescence isn't actually a magic from the Go board in the treasured fan? Was it actually placed there by the Worldly Daoist? If so, then it should actually be called… Sovereign Luminescence, right?" Although he had glimpsed some of the Worldly Daoist's memories, he hadn't gained any information about the divine abilities and magical techniques he had used. Based on what he was seeing, it seemed like some of his speculations about the treasured fan were wrong.

Even as he flew backward, the Worldly Daoist waved his hand, sending more deadly shots of Archaean Luminescence shooting toward him. Each beam seemed to radiate danger, forcing him to dodge left and right to avoid them. As of this moment, he was now experiencing the same frustration that the imposter Vile-Emperor had experienced when fighting him.

There were just too many beams of Archaean Luminescence. They seemed without end, as if the Worldly Daoist could summon as many as he wanted, creating a destructive rain that could abolish anything in its path.

The only thing Bai Xiaochun could do was flee. However, after a moment, he shouted, "Archaean Luminescence? So what?!"

Slapping his bag of holding, he summoned some tongues of multi-colored flame. Twenty colors. Twenty-one. Twenty-two… all the way to twenty-seven-colored flame!

These were leftovers from when he had been working on thirty-colored flame. It was without hesitation that he threw them out, creating a massive conflagration, a huge sea of flames that managed to whittle away at the Archaean Luminescence.

When he saw that happening, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“So, it’s just like I thought. He is a lot weaker.... Seems like I might be able to win this fight after all!” Convinced that he was right, he was just preparing to make his move when the Worldly Daoist’s eyes flickered, and he pushed out with his left palm. Instantly, his hand turned semi-transparent, as though it were made from water. Then, it began to spew countless water droplets.

The water droplets rapidly transformed into a river, which swept back and forth like a gigantic dragon!

Each drop of water thrummed with incredible power, and radiated immense pressure in the area.

And there was more to it! A frigid qi also erupted out, suppressing the sea of multi-colored flame, to the point where more than half of it was completely snuffed out!

At that point, another round of Archaean Luminescence was unleashed!

Bai Xiaochun was yet again forced to retreat, chuckling bitterly at the sight of the raging river. As of this moment, he could tell that this was the same river that currently existed in the face of the treasured fan, further confirming his previous speculations. Eyes shining with determination, he waved his hand, unleashing the fourth of his major divine abilities, Gravitational Extermination!

The waters of the river immediately sank down, and time slowed, reducing the flow of the river.

Bai Xiaochun knew that his Gravitational Extermination was an Essence magic, and that it would definitely come up short if matched against the Worldly Daoist. Even if the foe he faced didn’t have the true battle prowess of the Worldly Daoist, it was still enough to crush him. Therefore, it was without any further hesitation that he launched himself at the Worldly Daoist!

“You've been sitting there this whole time. And if I'm close enough to you, it won’t be easy to use Archaean Luminescence. It’s time… for close-quarters fighting!” Gritting his teeth, he closed in, only to see that the Worldly Daoist had frowned slightly. Waving his right hand, the Worldly Daoist summoned… a mountain!

“A mountain of Dao Essence!!” Although Bai Xiaochun had been prepared for this, it was still shocking to see the very same mountain peak that housed the Dao Essence of Life and Death in the fan face!

“So, Worldly Daoist, you took all of your divine abilities and put them in that fan, didn’t you?” With every moment that passed, Bai Xiaochun’s frustration grew. After all, were it not for the fact that it wasn’t possible, he would summon the fan and use it to fight the Worldly Daoist.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1265 awe-chapter-1266

When Bai Xiaochun saw the mountain of Dao Essence preparing to crush him out of existence, he decided to throw caution to the wind. Even though his fleshly body power had not yet fully recovered, he unhesitatingly unleashed every bit of it he could muster.

His right hand clenched into a fist, and he unleashed his Undying Sovereign’s Fist. The shadowy figure behind him connected to him, and a massive fist strike slammed into the enormous mountain of Dao Essence!

A deafening boom echoed out as the mighty mountain shivered, cracks spreading out across its surface from the point of impact.

However, Bai Xiaochun did not come out unharmed. He coughed up four successive mouthfuls of blood, and his right arm was twisted at an odd angle as he was sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut. Even this weakened version of the Worldly Daoist was still a sovereign, and was matchlessly powerful.

In the end, though, Bai Xiaochun’s attack was so powerful that the mountain of Dao Essence eventually crumbled under the force of the blow….

And yet, even as the mountain collapsed, a tower flew out from the rubble, a tower filled with black and white mist, that pulsed with the Dao Essence fluctuations of life and death. Bai Xiaochun’s pupils constricted, aware that those streams of mist were the Worldly Daoist’s Essence of life and death.

“Waterswamp!!” he shouted, not holding anything back as he threw all of his cultivation base power into the divine ability.

Even as his words echoed out, the area around him filled with water vapor, which spread out rapidly to create a huge swamp.

The mist that was the Essence of life and death was contained within the swamp, and seemed to react to it, and even the Worldly Daoist’s eyes flickered with a strange light as he looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun uttered the final word of the technique.

“Kingdom!!”

A beastly roar echoed out from the swamp, ferocious and threatening to an indescribable degree. Even the barrier behind the Worldly Daoist began to twist and distort in response to it.

Mountain-like spikes began to rise out of the swamp, followed by a huge landmass. Within moments, it became a scaled, clawed hand, dripping with black fluid, which first reached up, then slammed down onto the ground!

Things weren’t over yet! Another clawed hand appeared, which also rose high up and then slammed down onto the ground, opposite the other hand.

Bai Xiaochun was located behind the two clawed hands. From his perspective, there appeared to be something missing from the Waterswamp Kingdom, right in the middle. And it was from that location that, all of a sudden, he heard the roar of his life essence spirit, which was apparently struggling to crawl out into the open.

It had been waiting for this day for a long time, and as its two hands struggled to pull its snout out into the open, the land around it quaked.

However, that was when the strange light in the Worldly Daoist’s eyes grew even more intense. Quickly performing an incantation gesture, he caused the Essence of life and death to form two swords, one black, one white, which subsequently slashed toward the two clawed hands.

The black sword which represented death stabbed into one of the hands, causing it to wither rapidly, as though it were dying. As for the white sword which represented life, it was shoving so much life force into the hand that the hand seemed incapable of accepting it, and was about to explode!

The power of the two swords brought intense pain, as well as a roar of unprecedented rage from Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit, which was just about to appear in the open.

Then, in a scene which Bai Xiaochun would never be able to forget, the lands began to crumble as an incomparably large head burst out into the open, a head so large that the world of the energy passageway didn’t seem capable of containing it!

It looked like a dragon, and also like a turtle. It was pitch black, its gaping maw filled with mountain-like fangs that made it resemble a crocodile. Unleashing a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering roar, it reached down and gobbled up the two swords!

The Essence swords were incapable of evading, and were swallowed up. Then, the head of the enormous life essence spirit lunged forward and crashed into the barrier protecting the dantian region.

Everything shook violently, and began to crack and crumble, even the barrier! In fact, a huge opening had been punched into it!

However, the impact was too much for the life essence spirit to bear. Letting out an agonized shriek, it shrank back, disappearing into the swamp, which then faded away of its own accord.

It all happened too quickly, leaving Bai Xiaochun standing there with wide eyes. Although he couldn't be sure, it almost seemed like his life essence spirit had been too eager to attack, and in its rashness had killed itself accidentally....

"Wait. *Is* it a crocodile?" However, there was no time for him to sit around thinking about his life essence spirit. Blurring into motion, he shot toward the hole that had opened up in the barrier, and prepared to enter the dantian region.

Before he could reach it, though, the Worldly Daoist suddenly blurred into nothing, then reappeared right in front of him. Reaching out with his right hand, he calmly said, "You shall not pass!"

"Like hell I won't!!" Bai Xiaochun roared. He had no disrespect for the Worldly Daoist. He just knew that the person in front of him wasn't really the Worldly Daoist. Furthermore, he was in a big rush. Anger flaring, he called upon an archaean-level magic of which he had gained enlightenment after gaining the qi flow of the Immortal World!

“Immortal World!!” he shouted. In the blink of an eye, his cultivation base power was almost completely depleted. At the same time, he drew upon the qi flow of the Immortal World to fuel a magical technique that… summoned an illusory version of the ruins of the Immortal World!!

They were enormous, and at the same time, profoundly ancient. The aura of the Immortal World was clearly present, and without even a pause, it crushed down on the Worldly Daoist!!

The area around the Worldly Daoist began to sink down as the ruins acted like sand, burying him and binding him in place!

For the first time, the Worldly Daoist’s expression flickered. As he looked around at the ruins of the Immortal World which were burying him, his eyes went blank. And it was in that moment of blankness that Bai Xiaochun used the last bit of energy he had… to enter the dantian region!!

As he did, the bloodline power within him surged, creating a dazzling light that all the cultivators down in the Eternal Immortal Domains could see. Then, the sealing strip that went from the Mortal Renegade’s forehead all the way down to his dantian began to glow. As its power built up, it became like a huge net that stretched out to cover the struggling sovereign and bind him tight!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1266 awe-chapter-1267

The people of the Eternal Immortal Domains had only recently watched the Saint-Emperor’s bloodline sealing strip shatter. But now, Bai Xiaochun had repaired the Arch-Ancestor’s bloodline sealing strip. As of this moment, one sealing strip held strong, while the other two had been destroyed!

The forehead represented divine sense, and the dantian region represented the cultivation base. From that it could be seen that, years ago when the Eternal Sons had lived, the Arch-Ancestor was the strongest. That was why his bloodline sealing strip covered the most important areas!

Only recently, the Mortal Renegade had been struggling to open his eyes and awaken, to the point where his entire body trembled. But now that Bai Xiaochun had repaired the bloodline sealing strip, struggle was not possible. The Mortal Renegade went still.

At the same time, the bloodline sealing strip teleported Bai Xiaochun back out into the open, where he appeared in the sky, just outside the body of the enormous sovereign.

Instantly, cheers rose up from the countless cultivators who lived in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

“Arch-Emperor!”

“Arch-Emperor!!”

“Arch-Emperor!!!”

Cheering could be heard in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, the Saint-Emperor Dynasty, and of course the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. Although Bai Xiaochun had not spent a huge amount of time inside the sovereign’s body, it was still a period in which all cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains knew that their collective lives were on the line.

If the legendary Enemy from Beyond woke up, everyone knew exactly what would happen as a result. At the moment, the Saint-Emperor was breathing a huge sigh of relief, and looking at Bai Xiaochun with very mixed feelings. If it weren’t for the Enemy from Beyond, he might have tried to take advantage of Bai Xiaochun’s weakened state to take ultimate control of the Eternal Immortal Domains. But now he could only chuckle bitterly and dismiss such thoughts. Taking a deep breath, he shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

As Bai Xiaochun hovered there in the air, he could hear the cheering below, and could sense how grateful everyone was. However, he didn’t take advantage of the situation to bask in his glory. He was simply feeling too much pressure for that kind of thing. After what he had experienced in the process of repairing the sealing strip, he had come to a much clearer understanding of how incredibly powerful the Mortal Renegade was.

The three Eternal Sons had been incapable of killing him, and in the end had sacrificed themselves simply to seal him. Even the Worldly Daoist could do little more than hate him. Thus, as Bai Xiaochun looked up at the enormous sovereign looming above, his heart was filled with unease.

Everything seemed different now. For one thing, the Mortal Renegade was now covered in countless cracks and crevices, which were the result of his struggle. Those cracks and crevices didn’t exist on his body, but rather, on the extensive dust and stone that had built up on him over the years.

It was even as Bai Xiaochun looked up uneasily that the Saint-Emperor approached. The Saint-Emperor could tell what was on his mind, and after a moment passed, quietly said, “One sealing strip will keep the sovereign bound, but not for very long. At the most, it will last… for half of a sixty-year-cycle!”

Because the Saint-Emperor possessed the complete legacy of his bloodline, he was able to calculate the number accurately. In all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, he was the only person who knew the truth.

His words caused Bai Xiaochun’s heart to begin to pound even more. He knew that the Saint-Emperor wouldn’t lie at a moment like this. They were now faced with a countdown, which would end with the Mortal Renegade waking up. Once he began to struggle, he would destroy the sealing strip, and open his eyes.

His voice filled with bitterness, the Saint-Emperor continued, “If we can become sovereigns in half of a sixty-year-cycle, then maybe we have a chance…. But if we can’t, then our fate… is easy to imagine.

“And there’s nowhere for us to escape to. I'm guessing that the reason you became an archaean has nothing to do with the approval of the Eternal Mother. You must have come across some good fortune in the outside world, perhaps from that treasured fan. You've seen the void out there, haven’t you…?” He sighed.

Bai Xiaochun said nothing for a moment. Then, just as he was about to reply, and even as everyone in the Eternal

Immortal Domains was sighing in relief… something strange happened!!

A string of muffled booms could be heard as the shoulders of the sealed and unmoving Mortal Renegade began to crack and crumble, apparently due to the lack of the other two bloodline sealing strips!

As the rubble fell downward, it became a cloud of meteorites, hurtling toward the surface of the Eternal Immortal Domains. The smallest among them were the size of a person, while the largest were as big as mountains. All of them glowed with shocking black light that made them seem capable of piercing anything! Upon seeing them, the faces of both Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor fell, and even as they prepared to go block the paths of the meteorites, the meteorites accelerated!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the meteorites smashed into the ground, causing blinding light to shine everywhere, seemingly preparing to bind the entire world!

In the blink of an eye, more than a hundred such world-binding meteorites landed within the territory of the three imperial dynasties!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, as the black light spread out, it began to absorb the life force from everything within its bounds!

It was very similar to what had happened years ago in the Saint-Emperor Dynasty!!

Given the speed with which the black light spread, it wouldn’t take very long before it covered all of the Eternal Immortal Domains. And of course, all of the life force being absorbed would be sent into the body of the Mortal

Renegade, giving him more strength to struggle against the sealing strip!

“We have to do something, *now!!”* Nearly in a panic, the Saint-Emperor immediately began transmitting orders to his subordinates. Bai Xiaochun did the same. In response, the celestials and demigods from both the Arch-Emperor Dynasty and the Saint-Emperor Dynasty began to rush in the direction of the world-binding light.

Because the Vile-Emperor had perished, it was Prince Ur-Demon and the other celestials who took the lead in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. They didn’t need any orders from Bai Xiaochun to mobilize the demigods and take action.

Bai Xiaochun even went so far as to summon his two archaean slaves from the treasured fan, and sent them into the fray.

All of the powers within the three great imperial dynasties were working together, joined by the two archaean slaves. As for Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor, they found the most powerful areas of binding, and focused their efforts there.

The Saint-Emperor was shocked to see Bai Xiaochun’s two archaean slaves, but at the same time, it suddenly bolstered his confidence in the Eternal Immortal Domains’ chances of surviving. He focused on a certain sprawling mountain peak that was under attack, whereas Bai Xiaochun headed toward the largest of the meteorites, which had fallen like an enormous island in the middle of the Eternal Sea.

Bai Xiaochun was both anxious and exhausted. He had only just returned to the Eternal Immortal Domains, only to be forced to rescue the Giant Ghost King, fight the imposter Vile-Emperor, and then learn about the bloodline sealing strip on the Mortal Renegade being broken. After going through untold hardships to repair the sealing strip connected to his bloodline, the entire world came under threat.

He was exhausted both physically and mentally, but had no choice but to pull himself together and fly out over the Eternal Sea.

He didn’t hesitate at all to use his Undying Hex to pick up speed. Piercing into the black area which had already been bound, he found himself in a node world. Shocked, he looked around at an area with no seawater, and only black land….

Off in the distance was a volcano, which had obviously been formed by the meteorite. The black smoke which belched out from that volcano was the very same darkness that was binding up the world.

After sending out some divine sense, it was to his shock that he saw countless devilish specters lurking about. At the moment, it was impossible to say whether they were responsible for the spreading smoke, or whether the smoke was simply carrying them with it.

As soon as the devilish specters saw Bai Xiaochun, they howled and began to charge toward him.

These devilish specters were different from the shadowy specters in the body of the sovereign. It took only a moment for Bai Xiaochun to realize that they were actually… vengeful souls!

Bai Xiaochun had plenty of ways of dealing with souls. Breathing a sigh of relief, he waved his hand to produce a large quantity of Soul Convergence Pills, which he then tossed out in front of him!

“If I had known that the Mortal Renegade had all these souls, then I wouldn’t have gone out into the void!” Flicking his sleeve, he proceeded onward into the desolate area ahead!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1267 awe-chapter-1268

Back when the Mortal Renegade exterminated all of the peoples of the starry sky, the resulting vengeful souls were sullied by his aura, and became these devilish specters, which had once been the terror of anyone who faced them in battle.

Because they were already dead, they didn’t fear being cut down in battle, and actually could not be exterminated without the use of spectacularly powerful divine abilities or magical techniques. Most other methods were useless against them.

Only a few groups out in the starry sky had possessed divine abilities that could target soul bodies. Those were people that the Mortal Renegade had dealt with personally. For the most part, his grand army of devilish specters was his most deadly and terrifying weapon.

Back when the three Eternal Sons sacrificed themselves to seal the Mortal Renegade, his army had been pulled inside of him, where they slept for countless years along with him.

Now that the Mortal Renegade was beginning to wake up, so was his army of devilish specters. As bits and chunks of his flesh and blood fell down in the form of meteorites, they began to bind the world, spreading out slowly to cover all of the Eternal Immortal Domains. At the same time, anyone who entered that area would quickly be devoured.

However… now they had run into Bai Xiaochun….

It was impossible to say how many souls Bai Xiaochun had captured in his life, and how many he had used in his necromancy. The number probably exceeded the current population of the Eternal Immortal Domains. Plus, when you added in his journeys through the void, his fear of ghosts had turned into the exact opposite. Of all the things he feared in life, he feared ghosts the least.

When he saw a whole horde of snarling, vicious devilish specters speeding toward him, he smiled. With the wave of his right hand, he sent out a whole collection of Soul Convergence Pills, which exploded into vortexes that dragged the nearby specters toward them.

The specters struggled, but were powerless to fight the forces dragging them toward the convergence spots. Now, they seemed weak and powerless, and could only howl as they were dragged into several dozen soul spheres.

Each of those spheres contained innumerable specters, all of them howling and snapping at each other, struggling to get free….

All of a sudden, Bai Xiaochun felt his weariness transforming into relaxation, and even excitement. Blurring into motion, he began to collect soul spheres in one location after another.

“If only things had been this easy back in that energy passageway.” Sighing, he collected up a whole set of souls spheres, and then looked around at the hordes of devilish specters still rushing in his direction. Eyes gleaming with the desire to do battle, he threw his head back and let loose a long cry.

“Bring it on! Today, you’re all gonna find out exactly how awesome Lord Bai is!” With that, he tossed out more Soul

Convergence Pills, becoming a streak of light that crushed everything in his path.

In the end, the fearsome army of devilish specters was reduced to only a few wandering souls. Any of them that remained would flee as soon as Bai Xiaochun got near.

Back when they had swept across the starry sky, they had encountered terrifying opponents, but none of them could match up to Bai Xiaochun, who was like the king of all devils!!

He had already collected about thirty percent as many souls as he had collected on his journey through the void. In fact, it was so easy that, in addition to collecting souls, he conjured some flames on the side!

With the materials he had on hand, he was able to make all sorts of multi-colored flame, sending glittering light out in all directions. Before long, the devilish specters feared Bai Xiaochun more than anyone other than the Mortal Renegade.

They had no real consciousness, but they could sense how dangerous he was, and didn't dare to try to fight against him. They could only wish that they were faster than they were as they fled.

On another occasion, Bai Xiaochun might not have been in the mood to go after them, but seeing how much of a fortune was at hand, he headed toward the volcano in the middle of this bound area.

Nothing could get in his way, and thus, it was a short time later that he arrived at the volcano, which he immediately scanned with divine sense. Instantly, his eyes lit up with curiosity.

Within the volcano was an ancient stone gate!

It seemed to radiate a sensation of ancient time, and emanated muffled howls. Actually, it was less of a gate and more of a stone framework, within which was a chaotic, rippling membrane that resembled water.

The membrane pulsed in and out, as though something inside of it were struggling to free itself, and enter the bound portion of the world.

The sight of it caused Bai Xiaochun’s pupils to constrict. However, he soon sensed that whatever was on the other side was merely at the archaean level. Relaxing a bit, he shot toward the volcano.

Although the volcano continued to belch black smoke, it didn’t affect Bai Xiaochun at all, thanks to the fluctuations which rolled off of him and pushed the smoke away. Therefore, it was like a streak of lightning that he shot into the volcano and appeared right in front of the stone gate.

As he did, the entity on the other side seemed to sense his presence, and emitted a howl that could shake heaven and earth. Suddenly, a huge arm stretched out from inside, pushing against the membrane as if to break it.

Clearly, this entity was another devilish specter, although it was different from the others of its kind. It was far more powerful, being at the archaean level!

Furthermore, its soul body was whole and complete, very different from the archaean soul Bai Xiaochun had acquired from the palace he had encountered out in the void. Apparently, this particular devilish specter was like some sort of general within the Mortal Renegade’s army.

Given enough time, it would break through the membrane, and arrive to take control of this area of bound earth. At that point, it would take quite a bit of effort on Bai Xiaochun's part to drive it away.

After all, an archaean devilish specter could exert a huge amount of control over the army. And although Bai Xiaochun's Soul Convergence Pills would still work in a situation like that, they would definitely be less effective.

Unfortunately for this unlucky archaean specter, not only had Bai Xiaochun arrived much sooner than anyone could have expected, but he also had methods for capturing soul bodies. Therefore, before the devilish specter could even get out into the open, he was there to block its path.

Enraged, the devilish specter let out a howl, as well as an icy coldness, as it began to tear at the membrane. Another way that this devilish specter was different from its fellows was that… it was conscious, and even had divine sense!

“You got lucky this time!!” the specter shouted in rage. “If my true self were here, I would cut you down where you stand!

“However, there's no need for you to get cocky. Before long, my master's entire army will arrive, and my true self along with it. We'll fill the lands and take your people to become part of our army of devilish specters!”

With that, the hand began to sink back down into the membrane.

Before it could disappear, however, Bai Xiaochun blinked a few times and then stepped forward. Reaching out, he grabbed the hand, which almost looked like it was gloved, considering how the membrane covered it.

"Hey, what's the rush? Since you're here, I can help you…." There was no way that Bai Xiaochun was simply going to let an archaean devilish specter escape. It was too valuable. To the shock of the devilish specter, Bai Xiaochun drew upon both his fleshly body power and his cultivation base, unleashing incredible force as he began to drag the arm back out….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1268 awe-chapter-1269

Bai Xiaochun was actually shockingly strong, especially when he went all out. He even drew upon the sovereign aura in his right arm, which enabled him to easily drag the devilish specter completely out through the stone gate.

It happened so quickly that the specter almost couldn’t believe what was happening, and didn’t even have time to react. In the blink of an eye, he was standing there right in front of Bai Xiaochun.

He looked like a middle-aged man with disheveled hair, who now stood there, looking at Bai Xiaochun with a blank look in his eyes. Then he looked down at himself, and if he could have, would have begun to drip with cold sweat.

He knew exactly how tough that membrane was; after all, he had been struggling with it in vain for quite some time earlier. Then, along came this skinny, fair-faced young man, who simply ripped it open….

Even more importantly, now that he didn’t have the stone gate and the membrane to stand between them, he realized that Bai Xiaochun’s aura was enough to cause him to tremble physically.

“Er… hey, Senior,” he said, “this is just a misunderstanding….”

“Eee?!” Bai Xiaochun said curiously. “You’re a very special type of soul, aren’t you?”

“No no, this is all just a misunderstanding! Calm down, Senior. Well, I’ll head back now….” With that, he spun and lunged for the gate. However, despite the fact that he moved with incredible quickness, he quickly lurched to a halt as Bai Xiaochun grabbed his arm.

Then he saw Bai Xiaochun’s enigmatic smile, and his face fell.

“It was really a misunderstanding!” he wailed. “I… I was just shooting my mouth off, that’s all. I--”

“What are you in such a rush for?” Bai Xiaochun interrupted. “It seems to me that the two of us are connected by destiny! You actually talk like me!” Clearing his throat, he dragged the devilish specter back. However, that was when the specter suddenly bared fangs and claws, and tried to pounce on Bai Xiaochun.

The archaean power brimming within his attack would have been enough to give the Saint-Emperor some serious problems. But Bai Xiaochun was different. He wasn't afraid at all of close-quarters fighting.

“Well, what have we here? Attacking me?!” Glaring, Bai Xiaochun pulled out a tongue of multi-colored flame and smashed it into the devilish specter, who responded with an agonized shriek.

Bai Xiaochun’s methods were indeed profoundly harmful to soul bodies. After all, multi-colored flame was conjured using souls, and was particularly effective in defeating them. Next, more screams could be heard as Bai Xiaochun continued to vent his anger on the crafty devilish specter.

Before long, those screams became pleas for mercy.

“I’m sorry, Senior… aieee, don’t hit me….

“This was my mistake….

“Let me go! I just want to go home….” The screaming specter was growing weaker by the moment. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun let up a bit, whereupon the specter struggled to crawl back to the stone gate. Halfway there, though, Bai Xiaochun grabbed his leg and dragged him back.

“You’re not going anywhere. Take this!” Glaring, he took another multi-colored flame and slammed it into the ground, causing fire to blaze out in all directions. As the fire filled the bound portion of the world, the other devilish specters who were in hiding began to scream as they were destroyed.

“I beg of you! Let me go home! I can’t take this any longer….” Terrified, the devilish specter began to wail. Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun lifted his foot up and slammed it down into the ground.

Booms rang out as the entire bound area began to collapse. The ground was first, then the volcano, and then the stone gate. As the stone gate began to collapse, the archaean specter struggled frantically to reach it, until Bai Xiaochun grabbed him by the leg and dragged him back.

“Still trying to make a break for it?” The devilish specter was so scared that he shivered and then passed out, much to Bai Xiaochun’s shock. However, he was obviously a very good specimen, and therefore, he flicked his sleeve and threw him into his bag. Then he looked around at the burning sea of flames that was eating up the entire bound portion of the world. Before long, everything… was shattering into fragments.

After the largest of the bound world areas vanished, Bai Xiaochun flew up into the air and sent his divine sense out into the rest of the Eternal Immortal Domains, immediately catching sight of the more than one hundred smaller nodes rising up like bubbles in different areas.

If you likened the Eternal Immortal Domains to a person, then they were like malignant boils, terrifying in appearance, corroding everything within and around them.

Expression unsightly, he blurred into motion toward the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. Obviously, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty was the first thing on his mind. He decimated each of the node worlds he came across with Soul Convergence Pills and seas of flame.

He moved without stopping, going from one to another, until almost all of the areas in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty were clear. Of course, a few areas were handled by the Grand Heavenmaster, Gongsun Wan’er, and other top experts.

However, there was no time for rest. Next, they headed to the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, where they were soon joined by forces from the Saint-Emperor. Before long, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor were working together, excising the malignant boils from the surface of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

The Eternal Immortal Domains were now riddled with corroded craters, and had lost a significant amount of life force. At the same time, while the Mortal Renegade didn’t look any different from before, close examination would reveal that a certain area on his forehead had begun to shine less brightly than before!

The Saint-Emperor looked up for a moment, sighed, and then turned to Bai Xiaochun, toward whom he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Arch-Emperor, I will return to the Saint-Emperor Dynasty to calm my people. Afterward, I will come to your capital city to discuss our next step.” He spoke very politely, both in terms of his tone and his wording.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun bid him farewell, then hovered there in the air looking up at the Mortal Renegade. Considering everything that had happened, he now felt more pressure than ever.

He felt like there was a sharp blade hanging right above his head, ready to fall at any moment, unstoppable and impossible to defend against….

“The Saint-Emperor said that the sealing strip would last for half of a sixty-year-cycle. After what just happened, though, I doubt it will be that long….” The fact that the Mortal Renegade could awaken at any moment filled Bai Xiaochun with an intense sensation of deadly crisis, something that left him feeling very agitated.

However, he knew that he couldn’t let that show. He needed to comfort and encourage the people of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, especially his friends and family.

“If that day truly comes… then I’ll just have to use my fan to take away as many people as possible….” Even that thought provoked a sigh. After all, putting people in the fan wouldn’t make them any safer. The only reason the fan still existed was because the Mortal Renegade had been sealed. Once he woke up, it would be as easy for him to find and destroy it as turning over his own hand.

Heart sinking even more than before, Bai Xiaochun finally turned and flew toward the imperial palace in Arch-Emperor

City. There, the Grand Heavenmaster and the other celestials greeted him with formal bows.

Although they didn't have as full of an understanding of the matter as Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor, they knew more than the average cultivator. Furthermore, they also knew that the deadlier the crisis, the more they needed to rely on Bai Xiaochun. Therefore, the greetings they offered were those of complete allegiance, and also, supplications for protection.

The Giant Ghost King had long since been returned, and was now awake. After he found out about everything that had occurred, and learned that the proverbial fuse had been lit with the enormous sovereign in the sky, he shook his head and sighed.

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly, and everyone looked on nervously. Nobody said anything. Zhou Zimo and Song Junwan were there, as was Hou Xiaomei, whose belly was now very large. All of them looked very anxious.

After a moment, Bai Xiaochun looked up, and a faint smile could be seen on his face. “Don't worry, everyone. Everything will be okay….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1269 awe-chapter-1270

Everyone present was either very close to Bai Xiaochun, or was a celestial. Most knew what kind of person he was, and the others were the type who wouldn’t ask unnecessary questions. After a moment of silence, everyone nodded bitterly.

Eventually, they dispersed, wrapped up in confusion, fear, and helplessness. Even the Grand Heavenmaster, who was a master of plots and schemes, was powerless to do anything in a situation like this, and seemed to age because of it.

Bai Xiaochun merely watched them leave. He wanted to say something, but in the end, was unsure of how to console them, and simply maintained silence.

Soon, the only people left in the palace hall were Zhou Zimo, Song Junwan, Hou Xiaomei, and Gongsun Wan’er. When it came to Gongsun Wan’er, the other three women had long since realized that she had some sort of special relationship with Bai Xiaochun. Although Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo had initially excluded her, Hou Xiaomei had struggled with the matter for a while, until she came to the conclusion that having her Master in the group with them would benefit her.

And now, in a moment of impending crisis, and facing an unknowable future, Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo exchanged a glance, sighed, and finally accepted Gongsun Wan’er.

The time they had left was limited, and Bai Xiaochun knew that a catastrophe was coming that he couldn’t easily resolve. Originally, he had assumed that the pressure would be terrifying. However, with all the women around him, he suddenly realized that he wasn't as frightened as he had thought he would be.

Actually… he realized that he missed them, and in fact, was a bit guilty that most of his time in the Eternal Immortal Domains had been spent on cultivation, and on establishing the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. For a long time, he had worried that people would see through the fact that much of his supposed strength was a sham, which could lead to the downfall of the nation.

Because of that, he had remained completely focused on cultivation. Whether it was for the purpose of resurrecting Bai Hao, or for reaching the Archaean Realm, he had worked so hard… that he had forgotten the most important thing of all….

Family.

Forget that there had been a multitude of reasons, in the end, he had not paid enough attention to his family. He had not spent time with them. Perhaps without impending catastrophe, he would not have realized it. And maybe if he had realized it, he would never have been able to find the right balance between cultivation and family.

Men often bear the responsibility to deal with such matters, and with a personality like Bai Xiaochun’s, that became an even more difficult task.

Now, disaster loomed, and time was very limited. And sadly, it was only in those circumstances that he became aware of his oversight. Sighing, he stepped forward to embrace all four of the women.

“How are Dabao and Xiaoxiao?” he asked softly. As a father, it felt strange to need to ask such a question, and only went to further reinforce how much his cultivation had taken him away, not only from his Daoist partners, but also his children.

“They’re both in secluded meditation,” Song Junwan replied quietly.

Bai Xiaochun sent some divine sense out, and soon located the two private chambers where Dabao and Xiaoxiao were.

It had been a few years since he had last seen them. During his journey in the void, he had occasionally returned, but had never been able to spend a lot of time with them.

Both of them were still young, but in terms of their cultivation, they had access to the rich spiritual energy of heaven and earth in the Eternal Immortal Domains, as well as innumerable precious materials. On top of that, they were spectacularly talented to begin with. Although both of them were roughly in their twenties, Xiaoxiao was already attempting to break through into the Celestial Realm.

She was very much the daughter of Bai Xiaochun and Song Junwan, and had inherited merits from both. She was incredibly beautiful, and also very quick-witted. A single glance at her, and anyone would realize she was both imaginative and calculating.

Dabao was a bit behind his older sister, being in the great circle of the Demigod Realm. He looked very much like his father, but no one would describe him as being quick-witted like his sister. He took things slowly. From his chiseled good looks, it was possible to see how tenacious and persistent he was. In fact, one good way to describe him was *a Bai Xiaochun who wasn’t afraid of dying*.

Upon catching sight of his son and daughter with divine sense, Bai Xiaochun smiled. Then he focused his attention on his four Daoist partners, and his gaze eventually came to rest on Hou Xiaomei’s swollen belly. Clearly, she was reaching her due date.

He had long since come to sense the fluctuations of his own blood within Hou Xiaomei, and now that he was looking at her, she blushed slightly and wrapped her arms around her belly.

Smiling, he stepped forward and embraced her.

“I’ve already thought of a good name….” he said. As soon as the words left his mouth, Hou Xiaomei became visibly nervous. Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo both blinked in consternation, and Gongsun Wan’er’s eyes widened into a glare.

Voice as hard as iron, Gongsun Wan’er said, “There’s no need for you to worry about coming up with a name!”

In response, Hou Xiaomei sighed with relief.

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat a few times, looked around at the women, and decided that now was not the time to discuss this sensitive matter.

And thus, the days began to pass. For Bai Xiaochun, it reminded him of his early days in the Spirit Stream Sect. He ignored cultivation, and everything else for that matter, choosing instead to be with his Daoist partners, and keep watch over Dabao and Xiaoxiao. He also spent time with Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends.

Of course, he also spent time reminiscing with Li Qinghou and some of the other members of the older generation.

Three months later, Hou Xiaomei went into labor. Although Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and even Gongsun Wan’er had done everything they could to prevent Bai Xiaochun from proceeding with his naming plan, he was the Arch-Emperor, and could not easily be stopped. He had already secretly crafted an identity medallion for his new child, with the name engraved on its surface. And as soon as the child was born, he immediately had the name announced publicly.

Because of how famous he was, the news immediately spread through the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, and by the time the women heard, it was too late to do anything about it….

“That’s it, Bai Xiaochun. You’re dead!!”

“What kind of a name is that, Bai Xiaochun? *Xiaobao?* Y-y-you’re… you’re giving your son almost the same name as yourself?”

Gongsun Wan’er was enraged, and as for Song Junwan and Zhou Zimo, when they thought about the names of their own children, they were similarly angered.

“Hey,” Bai Xiaochun said courageously, “isn’t Xiaoxiao a good name? And so is Dabao. It all makes sense! My oldest son will be Dabao, and the youngest will be Xiaobao. See? They’re both treasures!” As far as Bai Xiaochun was concerned, he was the father, and therefore, he had the right to pick names for his children. And that was especially true considering how amazing his own name was.

The arguments over the name, and the very birth of Bai Xiaobao, temporarily relieved some of the pressure weighing down on the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. People began to smile and laugh again, even the Grand Heavenmaster and other important officials. The Giant Ghost King, Li

Qinghou, and the other celestials all breathed a sigh of relief when they saw tensions in the nation being eased.

Gongsun Wan’er, Song Junwan, and Zhou Zimo all realized that what was done was done. Considering that Bai Xiaochun had announced the name publicly, it couldn’t be changed. And Hou Xiaomei simply sighed. Stroking her child’s cheek, she thought about it, and came to the conclusion that she could accept a name like that.

Feeling very pleased with himself, Bai Xiaochun took Xiaobao in his arms and began to rock him back and forth. Xiaobao was a bit different from his siblings. He did not inherently possess the Undying Codex like Dabao, nor did he have the Live Forever Codex like Xiaoxiao. However, he did possess the aura of a Dao Body.

Most people would not be able to see that, but Bai Xiaochun noticed with a single glance. It was definitely a Dao Body, just like the one the Worldly Daoist had possessed!

When it came to cultivation, possessing a Dao Body meant that the cultivator could progress rapidly with almost no obstacles or bottlenecks. Although Bai Xiaochun was shocked by this development, he didn’t mention it to anyone.

Xiaobao’s personality became evident almost as soon as he was born. From the way he looked around with his wide eyes, Bai Xiaochun realized that Xiaobao had most likely inherited his very dependable personality….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1270 awe-chapter-1271

Xiaobao’s birth eased much of the tension in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty. It was as if he represented a hope that, despite being intangible, was enough that the people of the three imperial dynasties could at least pray for a better future.

Unfortunately, the Mortal Renegade still loomed in the sky above, and his weight caused everyone to slowly sink back towards panic.

In many places in the Eternal Immortal Domains, cultivators began to act in wild and erratic ways. Murders, looting, and other violence broke out, and many people gave up on any attempt to keep their evil side constrained. There were even some people who began to worship the Mortal Renegade, in the hopes that he would show them mercy if they served him.

Such behavior grew more rampant, to the point where it became obvious that, if things continued, the Eternal Immortal Domains would be cast into complete chaos before the Mortal Renegade even woke up.

When Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor realized what was happening, they dispatched celestials to take care of the situation. Although the celestials were somewhat frustrated to be forced to handle such trifles, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor felt that it was important to keep the peace.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun realized that forcibly suppressing such behavior would only work temporarily. Eventually, it would be impossible to do so.

In the end, there was nothing else to do but sigh about it. Besides, he truly did not want to be distracted at the moment. There were two important things to him right now. The first was spending time with his family, and the second… was crafting a body for Bai Hao.

It was something he had long since promised himself that he would do. Therefore, in addition to spending time with his family, he ordered all of the possible resources in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty to be focused on finding various precious materials of heaven and earth, objects that, under normal circumstances, cultivators would fight to the death over. However, to Bai Xiaochun, they were merely subcomponents to a larger formula.

The main medicinal ingredient came from the blood spike that the imposter Vile-Emperor had used in the final moments of their battle!

Bai Xiaochun had studied the spike in great detail, and had always been suspicious of it. He had even performed spirit enhancements on it to see if it was still connected to the Mortal Renegade. Afterward, he found no evidence that it was. However, to play it safe, he decided not to use the spike itself as the basis for Bai Hao’s new body. Instead, he extracted the life force from it, which he then imbued into the precious materials he had collected. Then, he used the utmost care and precision to transform those materials into a body of plants and vegetation!

To any other person, it would be a very difficult task, and something that would take a very long time. But Bai Xiaochun already had a bit of control over the Essence of time, which aided him greatly. It took only seven days for him to prepare all of the ingredients, and although he couldn’t craft an actual Dao Body, he was still able to create a vessel that would be very beneficial to any soul that inhabited it.

It looked exactly like the old Bai Hao, and when Bai Hao’s soul fused into it, and then opened his eyes, he wept with gratitude. Dropping to his knees, he kowtowed fervently.

“Thank you, Master!”

Bai Xiaochun smiled. Although the pressure he felt because of the Mortal Renegade was nearly suffocating, as of this moment, he was very happy to see Bai Hao.

At the moment, life was good. Bai Xiaochun had his family by his side, and Bai Hao was back and able to practice cultivation. Big Fatty Zhang and his other friends were there for him to reminiscence with. Sometimes, Bai Xiaochun would sigh and muse that, if only the Mortal Renegade weren’t there, his life would be almost perfect. The only missing factor would be that he still couldn’t live forever.

It was at this point that Xiaoxiao made her breakthrough.

Although Bai Xiaochun hadn’t seen her in a long time, he was the first one in Arch-Emperor City to sense her cultivation base breakthrough. He had been in the middle of listening to the Grand Heavenmaster provide an intelligence report, when suddenly he felt powerful fluctuations coming from his daughter’s secluded meditation facilities. Worried about any potential problems, he didn’t even provide an explanation to the Grand Heavenmaster before vanishing from the palace hall.

Before the Grand Heavenmaster could react, Bai Xiaochun was inside Xiaoxiao's private chamber!

Earlier, he had been worried about interrupting her cultivation session, but now that she had broken through, he took advantage of his archaean cultivation base to wave his hand, instantly intertwining his own fate with hers.

Although he sensed that Xiaoxiao could surpass her tribulation on her own, he was still worried about the possibility of his daughter being hurt. It was at around this time that the Grand Heavenmaster and other experts also sensed what was happening, much to their nervousness. Xiaoxiao was unique, and was the first of a new generation of celestials. Furthermore, considering the potential catastrophe to come, every additional celestial was of great importance in terms of overall power.

Of course, Song Junwan was even more worried about Xiaoxiao than Bai Xiaochun was, and immediately flew over to her meditation chamber. However, when Song Junwan realized that Bai Xiaochun was already there, she relaxed a bit. As the moments ticked by, Hou Xiaomei, Zhou Zimo, and Gongsun Wan’er also arrived, as well as others.

Slowly but surely, Xiaoxiao’s aura grew stronger. After only an hour passed, rumbling sounds could be heard as Celestial Tribulation arrived. However, it seemed that the impending awakening of the Mortal Renegade had affected the Eternal Mother, as this tribulation actually contained something dark and evil!

When Bai Xiaochun sensed that evil energy, he frowned. Moments before, he had been wrestling about what to do, and had been worried that if he interfered, it would be taking away valuable experience from Xiaoxiao. But now, he didn't hesitate for even a moment. Before the tribulation could form up above, a supremely powerful, domineering aura rocketed up from Xiaoxiao’s secluded meditation facilities.

As it spread out to cover the entire sky, Bai Xiaochun spoke.

“Tribulation, be gone!”

Those short words were like a massive hand that swept through the sky and completely eradicated the Celestial Tribulation!

The sky gradually went back to normal, and Xiaoxiao's aura stabilized. However, what was extremely strange was that, despite having broken through, she had no celestial aura!!

Even stranger, while it was normal for the Eternal Mother to speak upon the arrival of a new celestial, no such phenomenon occurred!

An extremely unsightly expression appeared on Bai Xiaochun’s face when he realized what was happening. Meanwhile, Xiaoxiao opened her eyes, and while she was initially confused, when she realized that Bai Xiaochun was there with her, she immediately shot to her feet, looking very delighted.

“Dad!”

Bai Xiaochun smiled and tousled her hair. However, he was still concerned; Xiaoxiao had broken through, and yet had not received the approval of the Eternal Mother, and therefore had no celestial aura.

The only thing he could think of to explain the situation was that… there was something wrong with the Eternal Mother!!

That only served to cause more pressure to weigh down on him. As for Xiaoxiao, she hesitated for a moment as she probed her cultivation base. Noticing the contemplative expression on Bai Xiaochun’s face, she thought for a moment, and then quietly gave voice to her concerns.

“Dad, did I break through?”

“Don’t worry, Xiaoxiao,” he said with a firm nod, “you broke through!” Swishing his sleeve, he opened the door of the private chamber, and then saw everyone standing outside, all of them looking confused and concerned.

They too had noticed the lack of any response from the Eternal Mother, and were all wondering if they should say anything.

Standing there, Bai Xiaochun looked off in the direction of the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. Moments later, a beam of holy light appeared, speeding in his direction. Before long, the Saint-Emperor appeared.

He had an equally unsightly expression on his face, and was clearly unsettled.

As soon as their gazes met, his voice echoed in Bai Xiaochun’s mind. “Arch-Emperor… something is wrong with the Eternal Mother!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1271 awe-chapter-1272

Even as the Saint-Emperor spoke the words, Bai Xiaochun vanished and reappeared in front of him up in the sky. There, he waved his hand, causing an invisible barrier to spring up around them that would keep their words, and even their divine sense, masked and undetectable.

What the Saint-Emperor had said was what Bai Xiaochun had already suspect to be the case, and both of them were completely shaken by the thought. If it were true, then it was likely that the Mortal Renegade wouldn’t need even half of a sixty-year-cycle to break free from the sealing strip.

After all, the sealing power of the strips didn’t just come from their bloodlines, but also from the natural laws put in place by the Eternal Mother. For example, back when Bai Xiaochun had unmasked the imposter Vile-Emperor and exposed him to those natural laws, his clone form had instantly begun to wither away. In some ways, the natural laws of the Eternal Immortal Domains were one of their greatest protections.

But now, the fact that Xiaoxiao had not been approved of showed that something was definitely amiss.

Looking at Bai Xiaochun with clear unease, the Saint-Emperor said, “There’s definitely something wrong with the Eternal Mother!

“That’s the only explanation for why Xiaoxiao hasn’t received her approval, even after the tribulation was dispelled!

“Nothing like this has ever happened before. Last month, I attempted to call out to the Eternal Mother. In the past, it always worked, and I could definitely sense her. But now… I can’t sense her at all, no matter how many times I call out. It’s almost as if… the Eternal Mother’s final act was to slip into an eternal sleep!

“I would imagine it had something to do with the imposter Vile-Emperor, and the Enemy from Beyond. Perhaps it’s even part of the Enemy’s plan!”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t respond. He looked down at the crowd gathered below in the imperial palace, all of them looking up at him anxiously. Sighing, he realized that it would be impossible to keep this matter a secret for very long.

“We now have the external threat of the great sovereign, and the internal threat of the Eternal Mother falling into slumber. Arch-Emperor, I know we’ve had our differences in the past, but right now, we have to work together, without any reservations!

“If one of us can become a sovereign, then perhaps we’ll have a chance at surviving the impending catastrophe. Perhaps we can ensure that at least a part of the Eternal Immortal Domains survives….” Where Bai Xiaochun had been spending his time with his family and friends recently, the Saint-Emperor had simply been sitting around stewing in his anxiety, until it had reached a near-boiling point.

Of course, Bai Xiaochun also understood that he needed to work with the Saint-Emperor, and try to reach the Sovereign Realm. That was their only hope.

Unfortunately, becoming a sovereign was a very, very difficult thing to do. One needed the approval of an entire world, in an ever greater way than when one became an archaean. If archaeans were like adopted progeny of a world, then sovereigns… were like firstborn children!

It was a huge difference, and required a major sacrifice by the will of the world itself. The truth was that both Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor knew… that the Eternal Immortal Domains could not sustain the existence of a sovereign. In fact, the reason no other archaeans had appeared for so long was that the Eternal Mother was too weak, and did not have the will or the qi flow to support a third archaean.

That was one reason why both the imposter Vile-Emperor and the Saint-Emperor had been so shocked that Bai Xiaochun was an archaean.

Without Bai Xiaochun’s good fortune of acquiring the final scrap of qi flow from the Immortal World, then he would not currently be an archaean.

“I've called out to the Eternal Mother on numerous occasions recently, and every attempt failed. And today, she didn’t appear along with Xiaoxiao’s breakthrough. Something has definitely gone wrong!

“In order to become a sovereign, one has to have the approval of the Eternal Mother. Arch-Emperor, we have to find her. We have to wake her up! That is our only hope of becoming a sovereign!”

“Where is she?” Bai Xiaochun asked, something he had been wondering about for a while now. Unfortunately, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty didn’t have very profound reserve powers; the Heavenspan Realm had been destroyed, and the gravekeeper was dead. Because of all that, much of the legacy-related information that should have been passed down remained a mystery to him. For example, details about the Eternal Mother.

Matters were completely different with the Saint-Emperor Dynasty. The Saint-Emperor knew all of the details, and had personally experienced many things that gave him a very deep understanding of the matter.

Expression somber, he looked at Bai Xiaochun and said, “I don’t know her exact location. However, I do know that in terms of divine sense, only a sovereign could actually find her. According to the legends, there is an illusory river in the depths of the Eternal Flower, invisible, and impossible to find. The Eternal River….

“No one can enter that river except for a sovereign. With one exception… It *is* possible to enter the Eternal River, and be led to the Eternal Mother, by… the Eternal Turtle!

“The reason I was so interested in the Eternal Turtle was not only because of his auspicious nature, but because he is likely the only way to become a sovereign!” The Saint-Emperor was being completely sincere, and not holding anything back. There would be little point in that. Long ago, he might have, but in the face of imminent catastrophe, he would not.

Bai Xiaochun was shaken upon hearing of this matter. However, after thinking about it, it made sense, and it didn’t seem like the Saint-Emperor was making any of it up. If anyone could find the spirit of the Eternal Flower within the Eternal Immortal Domains, it made sense that it would be that flower’s companion spirit, the little turtle.

Without any further hesitation, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense out to fill Arch-Emperor City, and quickly found evidence of the little turtle. Moments later, the turtle appeared in his palm, right in the middle of munching down a certain type of fish.

“Hey, what are you doing?!” the turtle blurted. He had only just pulled out a heavenly dragonfish to eat, when a vortex sprang up and dragged him in, no matter how he struggled against it. Then, he found himself facing both Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor, something that had never happened before.

Quickly swallowing the heavenly dragonfish, he said, “That wasn’t a heavenly dragonfish! Uh… Bai Xiaochun made me do it!”

Despite the fact that the Saint-Emperor was profoundly anxious because of the matter of the Enemy from Beyond and the Eternal Mother, the sight of the heavenly dragonfish still caused his face to twitch.

The truth was that back when the little turtle had initially gone missing, something else had vanished… ninety percent of the heavenly dragonfish! The Saint-Emperor had assumed that the little turtle simply ate them all in one shot, but now he realized that he had apparently taken them away to raise on his own, and thus munch on whenever he wanted….

It took a lot of work to raise heavenly dragonfish, and the Saint-Emperor was fairly certain that the little turtle couldn’t do it on his own, especially not with so many fish. Therefore, he must have had help from Bai Xiaochun.

With that, he slowly looked over at Bai Xiaochun and gave him a long, steady look.

Feeling a bit embarrassed, Bai Xiaochun glared at the little turtle. He had known all along about the little turtle absconding with a large group of heavenly dragonfish, but had taken it to be a good thing. And he had actually called upon the help of the Giant Ghost King and other celestials to take care of them.

Looking very serious, he cleared his throat and said, “Alright, little turtle, I’m not going to ask you to explain the heavenly dragonfish right now. I’ll get straight to the point. Can you find the Eternal River, and can you take us to the Eternal Mother?”

The little turtle blinked a few times, already calming down a bit. Glancing at the Saint-Emperor, he tried to suppress his feelings of guilt at having been caught in the act, and nodded vigorously.

“The Eternal Mother? That flower, right? It won’t be easy, but Lord Turtle can do anything. No problem at all!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1272 awe-chapter-1273

The Saint-Emperor was right. The only way for any living being to find the Eternal Mother was with the help of the companion spirit of the Eternal Flower, the Eternal Turtle.

To Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor, and in fact, to all living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains, finding that legendary Eternal River was an impossible task. And thus, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor followed the little turtle as he looked for clues, a three month process that eventually led them to a ravine in the depths of the Eternal Sea.

There were many such ravines on the seafloor, too many to count. Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor would never have found this spot without the Eternal Turtle, not even if they recruited a huge force of cultivators to help them. Not even thousands of years of searching would have proved fruitful. And even if they found it, it would have done little good….

In the very depths of that ravine, when there was no more path to tread, the little turtle sighed and looked back begrudgingly at Bai Xiaochun. Then, he stuck his head out as far as it would go, reached around and snapped his jaws down on his own neck, severing his head. As his head flew off, massive amounts of blood sprayed out onto the wall in front of him.

In response, the wall began to glow, and transform into something like a mirror….

With that, the turtle’s severed head began to babble.

“Go inside, and you’ll see the Eternal River. I sacrificed a lot to help the two of you, don’t you agree? So the heavenly dragonfish are mine, got it?!

“And you need to get me some Daoist partners, Bai Xiaochun. I want at least a thousand pretty turtles….

“And as for you, Saint-Emperor, the lotus seeds in your pond are almost ripe. I want eighty percent!”

Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor quickly nodded in agreement to the turtle, and then stared at the mirror that was taking shape before them.

After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, the wall had completely transformed into what was clearly a passage leading to another part of the world. It was possible to hear water gurgling from that area, and they could even see some faint water vapor in the air. Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor exchanged a glance, and could both see the excitement in each other’s eyes.

Finding the Eternal Mother was their only hope in the current situation, and therefore, it was without the slightest hesitation that Bai Xiaochun flew into the mirror, followed directly by the Saint-Emperor. As for the Eternal Turtle, after his head returned to his body, he followed them, muttering the entire time.

After they entered, the mirror twisted and distorted, and slowly transformed back into a normal rock wall.

Inside the mirror, Bai Xiaochun first heard the sound of rushing water, and then, as his vision became clear, he realized that he… was floating above a majestic and boundless river!

The water was crystal clear, and pulsed with spiritual energy.

“The Eternal River!” the Saint-Emperor said excitedly. Reaching down, he touched the water, and then scooped up a handful to drink.

As for the little turtle, he dove down into the water and started swimming around. Glancing sidelong at the excited Saint-Emperor, he snorted coldly.

“What are you so excited for? Do you know how many times I peed in this river over the years…?”

The Saint-Emperor's face suddenly fell.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun reached out and grabbed the little turtle. Glaring at him in annoyance, he said, “Put a sock in it, little turtle. Come on, lead the way. And don’t worry, I've already prepared a total of 100,000 Daoist partners for you!

“You can have all of the heavenly dragonfish, as well as all of the lotus seeds in the heavenly pond. The Saint-Emperor definitely won’t hold any back.” Clearing his throat, he looked over at the Saint-Emperor.

The Saint-Emperor was glaring at the little turtle; on any other occasion, he would have haggled a bit, but catastrophe was imminent, and the situation with the Eternal Mother was of the utmost importance. Therefore… he wasn’t worried about trivial matters.

“Take them all!” he said.

The little turtle seemed excited to have verbal assurances from both Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor. Flying up out of the river, he let out a shout, causing countless magical symbols to begin streaming off of him, creating the shape of a huge turtle.

From a distance, it almost looked like the little turtle himself had grown larger, to a height of 30 meters. In truth, it was something like a huge magical boat that now began to speed along through the Eternal River, carrying Bai Xiaochun, the Saint-Emperor, and the Eternal Turtle with it!

It was only at this point that Bai Xiaochun realized that the Eternal River seemed to be pushing against them, almost as if it were attempting to prevent anything from moving through it.

Even flying in the air above the river did the same thing. As they proceeded along, that force of resistance grew stronger and stronger. Eventually, when the little turtle had traveled a distance of several tens of thousands of meters, the force grew so intense that Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor were visibly shaken.

The two of them exchanged a glance, and each could see how shocked the other was. Obviously, if they didn’t have the little turtle on their side, then even if they found the ravine outside, and somehow managed to enter this area, they still wouldn’t have been able to travel along the river.

The Eternal River twisted and bent randomly, and also had many branches, some larger than others. However, the area they were flying over was so wide that it was obviously the main branch.

As they traveled along, the little turtle would stop at each area where the river forked, and would take time to cast his senses about before picking a path. And thus, they traveled through the huge maze that was the Eternal River.

Days passed, and thankfully, they didn’t run into any dangerous situations or entities. Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor were even able to advance their cultivation to a degree. However, it was to Bai Xiaochun’s profound frustration that… the little turtle kept getting lost.

Every time it happened, he would let out a surprised exclamation, and would scratch his head in confusion before going back to pick a new path. The first few times, Bai Xiaochun simply took it in stride, but after a few dozen times, he was starting to get very annoyed.

“We went this way already, little turtle! Can you actually do this? Do you really know where you’re going?”

“Of course I can do it. Don’t worry!”

It was hard to say how much time passed. Even the Saint-Emperor was starting to get frustrated, and it reached the point where the little turtle was also getting visibly nervous.

“No, this isn't right,” he murmured. “How come I can’t find the right path…?” At a certain point, he got so anxious that he stuck his neck out and bit it again, using the power of his blood to aid his efforts. Afterward, he took a deep breath, inhaling some of the water vapor in the area. At that point, his bloodshot eyes lit up.

“Got it!” he shouted. After his head reattached itself to his body, he led Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor down one particular branch of the river. Eventually, a fragrant aroma reached their noses, whereupon Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor sent their divine sense out to see what was ahead of them.

A few days later, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor both shot to their feet, shocked as, there within their divine sense, they saw… a glowing sphere of light at the end of the river!!

The glittering light somehow seemed familiar to both of them, and they felt much the same way that a weary traveler would feel when unexpectedly seeing a family member. It was something in their blood, and even their souls, that filled them with indescribable warmth!

Surrounding that light was a huge, semi-transparent bell!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1273 awe-chapter-1274

“The Eternal Mother!” the Saint-Emperor said with a gasp. Flying out of the turtle-shaped boat, he approached the semi-transparent bell, his expression that of complete excitement.

Even as an archaean, he was deeply shaken to be able to personally lay eyes on the Eternal Mother, and the shock he felt immediately showed on his face.

The Eternal Mother represented the will of all the Eternal Immortal Domains. She was the Eternal Flower, the mother of all living beings, the entity which had created everything.

The Saint-Emperor wasn’t the only one to be excited. Bai Xiaochun approached the bell, and for some reason, it almost felt like he was in the presence of his own mother.

However, despite the fact that they could both see the brightly glittering light, they couldn’t sense any life force. It was as if the light was simply naturally present, and didn't represent any form of thought or intelligence.

Bai Xiaochun’s heart sank a bit, and he looked over at the Saint-Emperor, who was currently suppressing his excitement and sending divine sense out to examine the bell. Originally, he had assumed that doing so would be difficult, but as it turned out, nothing blocked his divine sense. It entered the bell with no problem, and touched the light, whereupon it issued a call.

However, there was no reaction whatsoever. The Saint-Emperor tried a variety of methods to call out to the Eternal

Mother, and to wake her up, but none of them worked. Bai Xiaochun tried as well, with the same results. No matter what either of them did, absolutely nothing happened.

The Saint-Emperor’s expression continued to grow more unsightly, and in his nervousness, the fluctuations of his divine sense grew more intense.

“Eternal Mother! Please, wake up!!”

The little turtle watched their efforts as he swam lazily in the Eternal River. Finally, when the Saint-Emperor started calling out, he looked over at him and cleared his throat.

“There’s no point in yelling. The Eternal Mother is sleeping. She’s actually been asleep for years now. And whenever she wakes up, it’s really just her sending out a bit of divine sense.

“You could yell until you lose your voices, and waste all your divine sense too, and it still wouldn’t do anything.

“The only way to wake her up… is to strike the bell. The toll of the bell connects to and represents all living beings….” The little turtle was clearly very pleased in his knowledge about the matter.

Without any hesitation, the Saint-Emperor stepped forward, performed an incantation gesture, and then struck out toward the bell.

He used all the power he could muster, causing archaean fluctuations to roll out, as well as an incomparably holy aura, like that of a saint. The energy formed into a multi-colored hand, completely corporeal in nature, which flew forward along with the movement of his hand, to slam into the bell.

A rumbling boom resulted, causing waves to roll out on the Eternal River. In fact, the Eternal Immortal Domains as a whole began to quake, and waves could even be seen on the Eternal Sea.

The Saint-Emperor really had gone all out in his strike, unleashing shocking energy and causing deafening booms. However, it seemed to have little effect on the bell. It tolled, but the Eternal Mother did not awaken. And to the Saint-Emperor's shock, a backlash attack slammed into him with devastatingly destructive power!

The mighty Saint-Emperor staggered backward several paces, coughing up a massive mouthful of blood, and his face turning ashen. When he finally lurched to a halt, he seemed to be teetering on the verge of collapse.

“How is this even possible!?!?” he blurted.

“How could it *not* be possible?” the little turtle said with a sigh. Looking at the bell with a bit of envy, he continued, “You jumped the gun! Lord Turtle didn't even finish explaining. Striking the bell is the only option here, but succeeding is easier said than done. The bell has a very powerful backlash. You can hit it as much as you want, and it won't hurt the bell, but it will certainly hurt you.”

The Saint-Emperor's expression was very grim as he ignored the little turtle and looked over anxiously at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun was now feeling quite leery; it had been a bit of a startle to see that backlash slam into the Saint-Emperor. Now, with the addition of the little turtle's further explanation, and seeing the Saint-Emperor looking at him, Bai Xiaochun hesitated for a moment.

“Ah, whatever,” he thought. “I guess if there’s no other way, then I’ll just have to go for broke!” Eyes flashing with determination, he gritted his teeth and began to stride forward. Obviously, he couldn’t hold anything back. If he did, it would reduce the backlash, but would also reduce the overall effectiveness, and would be a waste of energy.

“My powers of regeneration should keep me going!” Without any hesitation, he clenched his right hand into a fist, causing a shadowy emperor to appear. This was none other than… the Undying Sovereign’s Fist!!

Heaven and earth shook as a massively domineering aura erupted. The shadowy emperor clenched his hand into a fist just like Bai Xiaochun, fusing with him in the moment right before the fist landed onto the huge bell!!

Bai Xiaochun was powering this fist strike with all of the energy possible, and when it hit, a boom rang out that vastly surpassed what the Saint-Emperor had elicited.

The Eternal River in the area exploded into a haze of water droplets, and the shockwave even shoved the little turtle back by a few hundred meters. The Saint-Emperor’s face fell, and he staggered backward again, gasping at the sight of Bai Xiaochun’s attack.

The Eternal Immortal Domains as a whole trembled physically, and massive rumbling sounds echoed out, leading to widespread shock among all the living beings in the world.

As for Bai Xiaochun, he grunted, his face falling as the backlash hit him with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force. However, his Undying Codex immediately went to work, and therefore, it was without a moment of pause that he unleashed a second fist strike, before the sound of the first one could even die away.

The second toll of the bell was like heavenly thunder, causing the bell to shake violently, the little turtle to scream, and the Saint-Emperor to stagger backward again, his face turning completely white.

And yet, Bai Xiaochun didn’t stop there. Eyes bloodshot, he let loose third fist strike, then a fourth and a fifth.... He seemed to have gone crazy, blood oozing out of his mouth as he continued to punch the bell, until he had reached eight total fist strikes!!

“Wake up, Eternal Mother!” he roared, his Undying Codex unable to keep up with the backlash. Apparently, nine fist strikes was his limit. The previous eight bell tolls combined with the ninth, causing the sky to tremble and the world to shake.

“How could he be this strong?!?!” the Saint Emperor thought, blood oozing out of his mouth as he was shoved a full 3,000 meters away. As of this moment, he knew that Bai Xiaochun was unimaginably stronger than himself!!

The Eternal Immortal Domains had been shaken nine times in a row, causing mountains to crumble and crevices to open up in the ground.

However, with the ninth toll of the bell, the Eternal Mother finally showed signs of waking up. High in the sky above the Eternal Immortal Domains, an illusory image appeared, an image which depicted Bai Xiaochun striking the bell!

At that point, all living beings in the lands gasped.

“The Arch-Emperor!”

“It’s the Arch-Emperor!! And that ball of light! Why does it seem so familiar? It’s like I'm looking at my own mother....”

“The Arch-Emperor called it the Eternal Mother. Heavens! Is that really the legendary Eternal Mother?”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1274 awe-chapter-1275

All living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains heard the tolling of the bell, and saw the image of Bai Xiaochun, who was at the end of the Eternal River, being shaken by the enormous bell.

He was shocked in a different way than the Saint-Emperor; he had come to find that with each of the nine backlashes from striking the bell, his fleshly body seemed to have been tempered in a strange and unusual way!

He felt like he was a lump of iron, and the tolls of the bell were a hammer, striking at him with full force.

After nine tolls of the bell, he felt extremely weak, and yet, his Undying Codex was hard at work. As it healed him, the tempering which had been accomplished became more evident than ever.

“Striking the bell… actually increased my fleshly body power?” he thought, his breath coming in ragged pants. During his efforts to repair the sealing strip, his Undying Codex had reached a higher level. He had also gained enlightenment of the magic of the five yin organs, which had caused more life force than ever to brim within him.

This realization caused his eyes to sparkle. He might already be an archaean, but his fleshly body power had remained in the celestial level. Ever since then, Bai Xiaochun had wondered what he could do to achieve a breakthrough, and now, he suddenly felt the light of understanding.

Even as everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains looked on, and the Saint-Emperor stared at him with jaw dropped, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath, then howled and unleashed a tenth fist strike!

When the heaven-shaking, earth-shattering attack slammed into the semi-transparent bell that surrounded the glowing light of the Eternal Mother, a shockwave rolled out, and a massive backlash bashed into Bai Xiaochun's arm.

He shivered, grunting as his Undying Codex constantly worked to regenerate him. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and yet, his eyes shone more brightly than ever. Even as the Saint-Emperor gasped, Bai Xiaochun then went on to throw an eleventh punch!

"Wake up, Eternal Mother!" he roared. Everything in the area shook wildly as, eyes bloodshot, Bai Xiaochun went on to throw three more fist strikes!

The third punch was all he could manage, and when the backlash hit him like floodwaters, he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood and staggered backward several hundred meters. There, he continued to cough up more blood.

However, his eyes shone brightly. Despite being incredibly weak at the moment, his five yin organs were burning with life force, seemingly like a volcano that was on the verge of erupting!!

"Bring it on!" he growled. He knew that if he struck the bell one more time, it would bring him profound good fortune, and would increase the level of his fleshly body. In contrast, if he gave up now, it would be a huge waste. The only option was to keep going. He had to hold on… until the life force in his five yin organs was unleashed!!

Throwing his head back, he roared, charging forward to unleash a sixteenth punch!!

The Saint-Emperor was completely mind-blown by this point, and could only stare blankly as Bai Xiaochun continued to punch at the bell over and over.

“How could he be so strong?!?!” The people in the Eternal Immortal Domains were also completely bowled over, and were completely focused on the mad, raving Bai Xiaochun!

And Bai Xiaochun was really going crazy in his efforts. With every punch he unleashed, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he sustained vicious injuries. However, it was with his seventeenth fist strike that, at long last… the glowing light that represented the Eternal Mother finally flickered!

The Saint-Emperor’s eyes immediately widened. As for the little turtle, he was watching Bai Xiaochun and thinking that he really had gone crazy; if he hadn’t, why would he be striking the bell over and over again?

“What I said about striking the bell was actually just a guess…. The Eternal Mother has been asleep for years now. Don’t tell me that striking the bell really can wake her up?” The little turtle felt a bit guilty, and also a bit taken aback by the fact that the light of the Eternal Mother was now flickering visibly.

As for Bai Xiaochun, his expression brightened visibly. Although he was in a lot of pain, he gritted his teeth, advanced, and struck out an eighteenth time!

The toll of the bell was quieter this time, but the backlash still caused blood to spray out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and weakened the flame of his life force.

All onlookers, including the Saint-Emperor, looked on with trembling hearts.

“Bring it on!” Bai Xiaochun shouted, his eyes completely bloodshot, but his five yin organs surging with power, and clearly on the verge of a breakthrough.

By now, he wasn’t even thinking about the potential dangers he was facing. After all, when compared to the possibility of the Mortal Renegade killing all living beings, any risk he took was worth it.

Furthermore, he had the distinct premonition that if he didn’t take advantage of this situation to experience a fleshly body breakthrough with this bell, he would never get another chance to do so.

“This is an archaean fleshly body we’re talking about!!” Drawing on every scrap of energy he had left, he threw a nineteenth punch. As a result, his bones shattered, and his flesh and blood sank down on the verge of being destroyed. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his vision began to blur.

It was hard to stand up, but at the same time, his eyes glittered. Coughing up more blood, he suddenly began to laugh loudly.

“It worked!” Energy thrummed within him the likes of which could shake the whole world. Bai Xiaochun, who had moments ago been like an oil lamp about to flicker out of existence, suddenly erupted with blood energy that caused the Saint-Emperor to gasp, and the little turtle’s eyes to go wide. As for all of the living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains, they erupted into cheering!!

His qi and blood were now matchlessly powerful, causing the Eternal River to turn red, and the sky above the Eternal

River to shine crimson!

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun could sense his fleshly body power breaking through a bottleneck, and at the same time, felt boundless life force flowing out of his five yin organs and six yang organs!

As that new life force flowed through him, his weary body began to return to its peak, bolstered by the powers of regeneration from the Undying Codex!

The good fortune which had been bestowed upon him by the Arch-Ancestor in the sealing strip now filled him, pushing his Undying Codex to the sixth level!

This was the true and ultimate peak of the Undying Codex!

As his injuries vanished, and he felt immense power building up inside of him, a huge vortex sprang into being.

It affected even the Eternal River, a windstorm that swept violently across everything, with Bai Xiaochun at the center. Floating up off the ground, he extended his hands to either side, emitting… fluctuations which were different from those of an archaean cultivation base.

This was… an archaean fleshly body!!

Acquiring an archaean cultivation base required the approval of a world, but an archaean fleshly body had no such requirements. That belonged only to oneself, and didn’t require approval of any sort. With enough power and strength, it was possible for anyone to break through to the ultimate level of the fleshly body for archaeans!

Rumbling sounds filled Bai Xiaochun, and his eyes shone with bright light. The two types of archaean fluctuations that he emitted overlapped, creating something like the energy of the Arch-Ancestor!!

Off to the side, the Saint-Emperor trembled, and felt an instinctive reaction from his very soul, prompting him to drop to his knees to kowtow. The little turtle gasped, and of course, there was little need to mention all of the people watching this scene out in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

“Archaean cultivation base. Archaean fleshly body….”

“The Arch-Emperor has the aura of the founding ancestor!!”

“That’s… the Ancestor Realm!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1275 awe-chapter-1276

Archaean fleshly body!

Archaean cultivation base!

When the power of Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body and cultivation base combined, he began to pulse with an energy akin to an ancestral awakening!

The sky flashed with wild colors, winds screamed, and the Eternal Immortal Domains quaked. All living beings were shaken to the core. As for Bai Xiaochun, his eyes glittered brightly; he had come under a lot of pressure in recent days, so while this dramatic rise in battle prowess didn’t alleviate the brewing crisis of the Mortal Renegade, it at least relieved it a bit.

As his fleshly body broke through, his powers of regeneration grew even more focused, causing his injuries to rapidly heal. Soon, he was back to normal, and even beyond that, to the point where the flame of his life force burned like an invisible sun!

“Eternal Mother!” Looking up, he fixed his gaze on the bell, and began to walk forward. It took a single step, and he was there in front of it, where he reached out with his hand, not to attack with his fist, but to casually strike it with his palm.

His movement seemed ordinary in nature, but contained massive, destructive force. The bell tolled, and the little turtle gasped. As for the Saint-Emperor, he was yet again flabbergasted, and couldn’t contain his shock.

“That palm strike….”

He could tell that the energy unleashed by the palm strike was formidable, but was not very focused, and allowed much of the energy behind it to disperse. That was what caused the strange phenomena. It was a result of simply not utilizing this divine ability to the fullest extent possible. The higher one’s cultivation base was, and the greater one’s command of magic, the more likely something like this was to occur. It was a like a natural reaction.

Bai Xiaochun’s seemingly ordinary palm strike did not shake heaven and earth, and yet, revealed how tightly connected his cultivation base and fleshly body were!

It was something that many people in the Eternal Immortal Domains would call the aura of an ancestor, and was what the Saint-Emperor had just called the Ancestor Realm!!

Of course, the Ancestor Realm was not a cultivation level, but rather, something that was described in ancient records when someone's cultivation base and fleshly body combined perfectly. And according to the ancient records, only the three ancestors themselves had ever done something like this.

Perhaps people with lower cultivation bases could manage to achieve something similar, but their combination would not result in this sort of energy. Only someone in the Archaean Realm could do something so profoundly shocking!

It was a state in which one could converge the energy of heaven and earth into one spot, and use it to crush anything in one’s path!

When Bai Xiaochun’s palm strike landed, the bell emitted a sound that was vastly louder than anything from before. The entire semi-transparent bell began to twist and distort, almost is if it were about to break. Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering rumbling sounds could be heard, and a massive burst of backlash power flooded out toward Bai Xiaochun, like an invisible wave that instantly swept over him completely.

Before, he might have been able to survive, but his powers of regeneration would not have been able to keep up with the effects. But now, things were different. Eyes shining, he didn’t even take a step back. He kept his hand placed on the surface of the bell, almost as if he were absorbing the backlash. His expression was the same as ever as his five yin organs were quickly repaired, and sent out power that not only dispersed the effects of the backlash, but also healed him!

The process takes a while to describe, but happened in only a single breath of time. After the terrifying backlash power was negated, Bai Xiaochun chuckled, and struck the bell again!

This time, he didn’t stop. It was as if he wouldn’t give up until the Eternal Mother woke up! Without stopping, he let loose eight more palm strikes. Counting the blows he had unleashed before, he had now struck the bell nearly thirty times!

Booms filled heaven and earth, and the bell continued to distort. The backlash attacks continued, but Bai Xiaochun didn't stop. As his Undying Codex worked at full speed, he experienced something like a physically comfortable baptism. Thirty-one palm strikes. Thirty-two….

With each palm strike, he felt more comfortable than before, almost as though countless tiny hands were slowly massaging him inside and out. Even his soul was affected, filling him with a pleasurable sensation that pushed him to the point of forgetting about the Eternal Mother, and focusing completely on the feeling….

And thus, he struck out thirty-three times. Thirty-four. Thirty-five…. Forty times!

With the fortieth blow, the pleasurable sensation reached an incredible height, causing him to gasp and pant loudly, but only for a moment. When he realized what he was doing, he quickly closed his mouth.

The more than ten blows he had struck caused the Eternal River to tremble everywhere, and struck the inhabitants of the lands with profound shock.

“Heavens! How many times is the Arch-Emperor going to strike that bell…?”

“For some reason, it almost seems like he’s enjoying himself. Look at his facial expression….”

Meanwhile, the Saint-Emperor and the little turtle were struck as mute as wooden chickens. Not only were they shocked that Bai Xiaochun was still going, they were flabbergasted by the look of pleasure on his face.

And the truth was… although the people in the Eternal Immortal Domains hadn’t noticed how he had begun to pant earlier, the Saint-Emperor and the little turtle had been right there, and had heard it clearly.

“He’s… enjoying it?” the Saint-Emperor thought, a strange expression appearing on his face. He simply didn’t understand why Bai Xiaochun would look like this; it was really a very odd facial expression.

And from the way he was striking the bell, it seemed like he didn’t want to ever stop. And that was the truth! Bai Xiaochun’s eyes were shining as he was baptized by the backlashes, prompting him to strike the bell over and over without cease.

Fifty. Sixty. Seventy….

The tolling of the bell shook the entire world, and caused huge waves to surge on the Eternal Sea and the Eternal River. As for the light that represented the Eternal Mother, it was flickering even more brightly, and seemed to be just on the verge of waking up.

Eventually, to the shock and excitement of the little turtle and the Saint-Emperor, and to the astonishment of the other inhabitants of the lands, that light suddenly began to shrink in on itself, transforming into an enormous eye!

It was closed, but almost immediately began to tremble. Then, with Bai Xiaochun’s final strike on the bell… it slowly opened!

The Eternal Mother was waking up!!

As the eye opened, the Eternal Immortal Domains were bathed with radiant light. All of the plants and vegetation, all of the mountains and rivers, all of the various people, began to shine brightly. From a position far out in the void, it was as if the Eternal Immortal Domains were a spectacularly glowing flower, right in the middle of the process of blooming!

At the same time, an indescribable warmth embraced all living things, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, something intimate, like the touch of a mother upon her child!

“Eternal Mother!” the Saint-Emperor breathed, trembling with excitement. He quickly clasped hands and bowed.

The little turtle looked on with wide eyes, feeling a little guilty as he backed up. Hiding behind the Saint-Emperor, he peeked around to look at the Eternal Mother, incarnated in the form of an eye.

Bai Xiaochun was also overwhelmed by that motherly sensation, and bowed deeply.

“Greetings, Eternal Mother!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1276 awe-chapter-1277

Everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains was looking up at the image in the sky, their eyes wide, their souls stirring, their blood pumping with an intimate, warm feeling.

This was the mother of them all, the source of all their bloodlines. The Eternal Mother.

Neither the Saint-Emperor nor Bai Xiaochun could control the reactions coming from their own blood. To them, the eye inside the bell was like a blooming flower that they instinctively felt intimately close to.

Suddenly, all of the Eternal Immortal Domains smelled like a fragrant flower. Even the void around the world was affected as dazzling light shone out in all directions.

Only the hulking Mortal Renegade remained completely still and unmoving, his powerful aura of murder and death suppressing the life force and the fragrant aroma.

In all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, the only one to react differently… was the little turtle. He seemed to take it all in stride, and actually hid behind the Saint-Emperor, not willing to show his face.

As everyone was shaken, the eye of the Eternal Mother looked around, seemingly confused. She had been asleep for a long time, and apparently, was having trouble reconciling the dreams she had experienced with reality.

After a long moment passed, she spoke to the still-bowed Bai Xiaochun and Saint-Emperor, her voice slow and halting.

“Why… did you wake me…?”

Her voice was not awe-inspiring, but rather, warm. She truly seemed like a mother who had been woken up by her children, and was both smiling and sighing at the same time.

The warm feeling in Bai Xiaochun’s heart caused him to feel more than ever like he was in front of his own mother. It was the same with the Saint-Emperor. The two of them took a deep breath, and then the Saint-Emperor took a step forward and began to speak in a very respectful voice.

“The Enemy from Beyond is on the verge of waking up, and we have no way to resist him. Thus, we woke you up. Eternal Mother, please give us your approval to become sovereigns, so that we can fight the Enemy from Beyond!” The Saint-Emperor spoke with the utmost politeness, almost as if it were instinct for him to do so, and his expression was one of complete reverence.

The Eternal Mother was quiet for a long moment. Finally, she murmured, “The Mortal Renegade… is going to break free…?”

Then, she sent out some divine sense, which rose up and swirled around the Mortal Renegade for a moment before fading away. At that point, Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor heard another sigh.

“When it is time to live, live. When it is time to die, die….

“There was once no reincarnation. Only after hope came to exist did reincarnation come to be…. There was once no Eternal. However, after hope came to exist, the Eternal came to be.

“Long ago, I was not conscious. But in a moment of deadly crisis, I instinctively developed consciousness, and sent forth three seeds, which became three children….

“It seems… I only managed to delay things. I have no way to end the catastrophe of nirvanic extermination….

“What a pity…. Sealing the Mortal Renegade sent me into a deep sleep, and despite having been awoken, I’m not back at my peak state. I have no more power of approval left. At the most… I can approve of one of you to become a half-sovereign.” Although the Eternal Mother’s voice was warm, upon listening to it more closely, it did not seem to contain much emotion. However, it was sincere. Clearly, it was just as she had said; upon awakening, she did not possess the power she once had in the past.

One might think that it was a simple thing to offer approval for an archaean to rise to a higher level. But the truth was that it required the Eternal Mother to call upon the power of Essence, which would become a branding mark that would be placed onto the archaean.

Her response caused Bai Xiaochun’s expression to flicker, and then darken a bit. As for the Saint-Emperor, he sagged in place, his face ashen. Before, all of his hope had been placed on the Eternal Mother, but now that she was awake, that hope was turning into despair.

“Half-sovereign…?” he muttered bitterly. From the Eternal Mother’s words, he could tell that the path to becoming a sovereign had truly been severed!

“I can’t remain awake for long. To remain awake for longer than ten breaths of time requires that I take a day of life away from all living beings in the world, my children….

“Hurry and make your decision….” Her voice was weak, and the glowing light that represented her began to darken as the eye slowly started to close.

In his bitterness, the Saint-Emperor looked over at Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun stood there silently. The truth was that he did not feel bitter like the Saint-Emperor. He didn't want to become a half-sovereign; that was pointless, and would not secure a victory against the Mortal Renegade.

Taking a deep breath, he clasped hands, bowed to the Eternal Mother, and then quietly said, “Eternal Mother, I would like to ask a question. Is it *really* required to get your approval to become a sovereign. Isn’t there another way?”

The ball of light that was the Eternal Mother flickered, and the slowly closing eye suddenly snapped open, and focused on the child of hers that stood in front of her.

A moment later, her soft voice could once again be heard.

“So, it was you who woke me…. I can sense the fluctuations of your blood. In some respects, you have already surpassed my other three children…. And I can sense that you have acquired a qi flow that doesn’t belong to me….

“Unfortunately, the natural laws in this starry sky dictate that sovereigns can only be born along with the approval of the will of a world. There is no other way.”

The Eternal Mother’s reply caused Bai Xiaochun to sink into silence. He still didn’t understand. Although it was true that the approval of a world could give birth to a sovereign, he knew that many years ago, one person had become a sovereign without the will of a world. In fact, that person had destroyed worlds!

The Mortal Renegade!

Bai Xiaochun had witnessed that personally via the memories of the Worldly Daoist!

He also knew that the Mortal Renegade’s rise to the sovereign level had something to do with his Dao. That much he had learned with the help of the Worldly Daoist himself, in the valley of the clouds.

It was possible to understand the Mortal Renegade’s Dao by looking at the state of the surrounding void. It was populated by nothing but ruins, with all life force having been eradicated. All heaven and earth had been extinguished, casting everything into darkness…. The Mortal Renegade’s Dao was to exterminate everything, and that was how he had become a sovereign!

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered, and he looked over at the glowing light of the Eternal Mother.

“The Mortal Renegade’s sovereign path did not require the approval of a world. So how did he do it? If he could succeed, then why does becoming a sovereign require the approval of a world?”

Yet again, the Eternal Mother’s eye snapped open, and this time, it shone with unrivaled splendor. It was as if Bai Xiaochun’s words had been filled with a bizarre power that caused the Eternal River to tremble, and the Eternal Immortal Domains to shake physically.

To the Eternal Mother, it was as if his words had somehow stirred the foundation of some natural law!

Even the Saint-Emperor and the little turtle could tell that the Eternal Mother’s eye had opened wider than before, as though she were now completely and utterly focused on Bai Xiaochun alone. It almost seemed as if she were inspecting him on the deepest of all levels.

Shaken, Bai Xiaochun stood there, looking at the Eternal Mother.

After a long moment… she retracted her divine sense. Sounding weaker than ever, she said one last thing to Bai Xiaochun.

“If nirvanic extermination can birth a sovereign, perhaps… the opposite can too!”

The instant Bai Xiaochun heard her words, his previously grim eyes began to shine brightly.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1277 awe-chapter-1278

“If nirvanic extermination can birth a sovereign,” Bai Xiaochun murmured, “perhaps… the opposite can too!” The words struck his mind and heart like heavenly thunder, completely rocking his world, and at the same time, opening up a new door for him.

Although he had already begun to suspect that this was the case, he had no hard evidence to rely on to prove it true. But the Eternal Mother had confirmed his speculations. Considering what had been proved by the Mortal Renegade’s Dao, he now had a direction to move in!

It was impossible to say whether he would succeed. However, he knew that becoming a half-sovereign was not what he wanted. He wanted… something that would give more hope than a half-sovereign could!

That was the only way he could really go for broke when the Mortal Renegade woke up!

Bai Xiaochun had truly changed on a deep level; by now, he was nearly the complete antithesis of that carefree youngster who had once stood atop Mount Hood. Over the years, he had turned into the type of person who bore incredible weight on his shoulders, weight that forced the youngster he had once been to grow up

Eventually, he left the Eternal River, parting ways with the Eternal Mother and taking the relieved little turtle with him.

The Saint-Emperor stayed behind. Considering that there were no other options, he chose to become a half-sovereign.

It wasn’t a selfish choice. He could see that Bai Xiaochun had already picked a new direction, and in order to offer as much assistance as possible in fighting the coming catastrophe, he chose to sacrifice some of his own potential to at least have a measure of power.

As Bai Xiaochun made his way off, the Saint-Emperor took a deep breath and sat down cross-legged in front of the bell. Slowly, the light of the Eternal Mother wrapped him up….

As of this moment, the two most powerful individuals in the Eternal Immortal Domains were doing what they could to protect their homes, their friends, and their families….

Bai Xiaochun returned to Arch-Emperor City and went into secluded meditation, although not for long. Seven days later, he emerged from this private chamber, where he issued an official Dharmic decree as the Arch-Emperor!

“Everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains, whether you are in the Celestial Realm, the Demigod Realm, the Deva Realm, or the Nascent Soul Stage… I need your help to quarantine the Enemy from Beyond!”

Before long, a windstorm of activity overtook the Eternal Immortal Domains.

If the Saint-Emperor had issued such a proclamation, it would also have resulted in activity. However, it would not have had the same result as Bai Xiaochun speaking the words!

All living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains had witnessed him sealing the Enemy from Beyond, defeating his attempt to bind the world, and awakening the Eternal Mother. He was now the true hope of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

In some respects, his words carried almost the same weight as the Eternal Mother’s. And to many people, he had actually surpassed her! He was... the true ruler of the Eternal Immortal Domains!!

A multitude of cultivators began to converge on Arch-Emperor City. Nascent Soul cultivators, devas, demigods, and even celestials all came.

Before long, more details came to light about Bai Xiaochun’s plan to quarantine the Enemy!

For one thing, he was worried that the sealing strip which currently restrained the Mortal Renegade would not last long enough. And unfortunately, he had no idea how long it would take him to break out of the Archaean Realm.

Perhaps he could do it quickly, perhaps not. Maybe he would fail. Regardless, the only way he could confidently make his attempt was if he had enough time to work with.

He needed to make sure that, even if the sealing strip was destroyed, there was a second sealing magic in place to buy more time.

The seven days he had spent in secluded meditation upon returning had been for the purpose of collecting his thoughts, and planning how to create the perfect spell formation for the situation.

When everyone was gathered, Bai Xiaochun explained the details of his plan.

“The foundation of this sealing formation will be the energy of the Eternal Immortal Domains as a whole. And I will guide it with my magic of the Essence of time, Gravitational Extermination. I will create something like the area outside of a world I once visited, a place I call the Hourglass World. It will be… a grand time formation!!

“It will distort time and space, and seal everything surrounding the Mortal Renegade!

“It will have millions and millions of formation nodes, each one of which will be connected to someone in the Eternal Immortal Domains. In other words… the formation will be powered by the people of our lands!

“If it works… then when the Mortal Renegade awakens, it will at least delay him for a bit longer, and buy us some extra time!”

To a people who were in the grips of despair, this plan truly seemed like the only chance for survival. No one opposed it. Without hesitation, all of the cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains agreed to go along with the plan!

In the following days, Bai Xiaochun led the effort to set up the huge spell formation around the Mortal Renegade. Furthermore, he began to work with his Essence of time, breaking it up into innumerable gravitational seeds, which he then delivered into the hands of the cultivators under his command.

The vast group of cultivators absorbed the gravitational seeds, which linked them to the spell formation.

Eventually, even the plants, trees, mountains, rivers, and other physical aspects of the lands were imbued with gravitational seeds from Bai Xiaochun. Slowly but surely, the spell formation was reaching a state of completion.

It did not require any specific materials to create, only the people and physical aspects of the Eternal Immortal

Domains. Everyone joined in the effort, including Bai Xiaochun's family. Bai Xiaochun also linked himself to the spell formation.

After all the preparations were complete, he flew up into the sky, and under the watchful eyes of everyone in the lands, waved his hand, activating his Gravitational Extermination Formation around the Mortal Renegade!!

Looking down, the people, plants, and major terrain features in the Eternal Immortal Domains glowed like stars, and sent streaming starlight up into the sky to power the Gravitational Extermination Formation.

Slowly but surely, the majestic formation began to activate. From the look of it, it would take several hours for the entire process to complete.

But then… even as Bai Xiaochun performed double-handed incantation gestures to spread the effects of Gravitational Extermination, and even as the starlight rose up from the countless locations below… the Mortal Renegade seemed to instinctively sense what was happening, and shivered.

Then, Bai Xiaochun's face fell as, all of a sudden, a vortex appeared on the Mortal Renegade's forehead! As it spun, a figure slowly took shape inside it!

He wore a Daoist robe, and was completely expressionless, except for the cruel glint in his eyes. As he walked out, his facial features became clear, causing Bai Xiaochun to gasp, and his eyes to glitter brightly!

“Daoist Heavenspan!!”

It truly was none other than Daoist Heavenspan!!

Truth be told, Bai Xiaochun was not very surprised. He hadn’t ever been able to track down Daoist Heavenspan in the Vile-Emperor Dynasty, and had speculated that something like this might have happened. And considering everything that had happened in the Heavenspan Realm, and what Bai Xiaochun knew of the man, he really did resemble the Mortal Renegade in many ways!

The fact that the Vile-Emperor had been a clone of the Mortal Renegade led Bai Xiaochun to certain speculations about what had happened to Daoist Heavenspan. Seeing him now made everything clear. The Mortal Renegade couldn’t personally do anything about the spell formation being set up around him, and therefore, had no choice other than to send Daoist Heavenspan in his stead.

“Well, that’s fine…. It’s time to settle matters between us anyway!” Eyes flashing, Bai Xiaochun flew directly toward Daoist Heavenspan.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1278 awe-chapter-1279

Daoist Heavenspan hovered there right in front of the Mortal Renegade’s forehead, his eyes cold but flickering with mixed emotions as he looked out at Bai Xiaochun approaching.

Things had happened just as Bai Xiaochun had suspected. However, not even Daoist Heavenspan could have guessed what would happen after he became a follower of the Vile-Emperor. Everything had changed because of a single black stone.

Because of that stone, he didn’t need the approval of the Eternal Mother to achieve the breakthrough he had long sought. From the moment he acquired it, he knew that there was something inside of the black stone, a will, someone who somehow enabled him to fool the will of the Eternal Mother and become a celestial.

His rapid cultivation base progress in subsequent days had also been because of that black stone. And every so often, the Vile-Emperor would give him another stone.

Eventually, he realized… that he was not himself anymore. And that was when, with the help of the Vile-Emperor, he became aware of the true might of the Mortal Renegade, who hung above in the heavens.

It wasn’t a difficult decision for him. He did not hesitate to betray the Eternal Immortal Domains and become a subordinate of the Mortal Renegade. He was different from the Vile-Emperor, who was only a clone. Daoist Heavenspan became the apprentice of the Mortal Renegade!

He knew that in many ways, he was like the Mortal Renegade. In all the years that had passed, he was the only person from the Eternal Immortal Domains who had chosen to truly submit to the Mortal Renegade, and had thus received his approval.

Therefore, he left Vile-Emperor City and appeared within the body of the Mortal Renegade, where his cultivation advanced with unprecedented quickness. After emulating the Dao of the Mortal Renegade, he gained access to divine abilities and magical techniques that he could never have grasped before.

It was in that manner than he became an archaean, and an even stronger one than the Vile-Emperor had been. Everything he possessed came from the Mortal Renegade. After all, in some ways, the Mortal Renegade was a world unto himself, with a will that could give approval. Just like the Eternal Mother, he could produce powerful experts of his own.

During this process, Daoist Heavenspan lost himself, and knew it. To achieve his goals, he had become completely ruthless, and selfish to the extreme. And yet, he still remembered a time in the past when he had not been like that.

Occasionally, he would reminiscence, and although the memories seemed like those of a stranger, he still remembered that he had a daughter.

“Perhaps that’s just the price I have to pay.” Sighing inwardly, he severed such thoughts, and his eyes glinted with icy coldness.

Up to now, he had been in meditation. But then, the will of the Mortal Renegade had reached out to him, explaining that his mission was to defend against all outside threats.

The now-dead clone had been tasked with the same mission. And if things had gone according to plan, matters would have proceeded smoothly until the Mortal Renegade awoke. But then Bai Xiaochun returned, cut down the imposter Vile-Emperor, and forced the Mortal Renegade to advance his plans.

Then, as the moment of awakening drew near, Bai Xiaochun began to set up a spell formation backed by the Essence of time, which the Mortal Renegade sensed was a major threat. Therefore, Daoist Heavenspan appeared to act as Dao protector, and eliminate the threat.

“Bai Xiaochun!” he growled, his eyes flashing. Striding out toward the incoming Bai Xiaochun, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing nine sealing marks to appear. Immediately, they began to grow larger, becoming nine gigantic lanterns.

A moment later, one of the nine lanterns was extinguished, causing black smoke to belch out, which became a huge hand that shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

The energy radiating off of the hand was comparable to the peak of the Archaean Realm, a force that far surpassed what the Vile-Emperor had been capable of. And yet, now that Bai Xiaochun’s fleshly body had been tempered by striking the bell of the Eternal Mother, it was so weak that he didn’t even need to think about it!

As the hand approached, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered with hatred for Daoist Heavenspan. Performing a quick incantation gesture, he waved his right hand, causing numerous beams of Archaean Luminescence to shoot out.

And thus, a battle of divine abilities began. Booms rang out as a second lantern was extinguished, then a third and a fourth, sending one black hand after another toward Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun performed more incantation gestures, causing the power of both his fleshly body and cultivation base to skyrocket. Then, he unleashed his Undying Sovereign's Fist, smashing all of the black hands into pieces.

Frowning, Daoist Heavenspan extinguished all of his remaining lanterns, and again formed several black hands. Then, the smoke from the previously shattered hands swept toward them, and all of the hands and smoke merged to create a huge giant that charged toward Bai Xiaochun, howling.

All this took only a few breaths of time. Divine abilities slammed into each other, sending shockwaves out in all directions. As for all of the cultivators down below in the Eternal Immortal Domains, they looked on in complete shock.

“Daoist Heavenspan!!”

“So, he's with the Enemy from Beyond!!”

“Dammit! If I'd known it would end up like this, I would have killed him years ago!” The celestials belonging to the former Vile-Emperor Dynasty all looked on with cold, murderous gazes.

However, they all knew that this version of Daoist Heavenspan was someone none of them were qualified to fight against. They could only hope that Bai Xiaochun would prevail. Up above, Bai Xiaochun performed an incantation gesture, causing everything around him to distort as he called on the Essence of time. Instantly, the huge giant slowed down, allowing Bai Xiaochun to pierce directly through it. As his Undying Codex regenerated him, he became like a sharp sword stabbing toward Daoist Heavenspan.

Eyes flashing, Daoist Heavenspan waved his hands out and said, “Starry Sky: Nirvanic Extermination!”

In response, an image of a starry sky appeared around him!

It featured innumerable glittering stars, each of which represented worlds filled with people. But then, in a short moment… the entire image began to turn dark!

As it did, the sky of the Eternal Immortal Domains also began to turn completely black.

Meanwhile, Daoist Heavenspan’s voice seemed to contain a will of nirvanic extermination, which turned the dark sky into a huge face that lunged down to consume Bai Xiaochun!

Strangely, although the face resembled Daoist Heavenspan, if one looked closely, it actually looked more like the Mortal Renegade!

The face seemed capable of inflicting nirvanic extermination on anything it touched; even the sky began to wither! This divine ability surpassed anything the Vile-Emperor had used. This… came from the Dao of the Mortal Renegade! It was being wielded by Daoist Heavenspan, but it was still a magic of nirvanic extermination!

As it spread, the spell formation, which had not yet been completely formed, began to show signs of being corroded. Clearly, it would only be a short time before it was completely destroyed.

It wasn’t a matter of the spell formation being weak, but rather, the fact that it was incomplete. Had it been complete, Daoist Heavenspan would have had a very difficult time doing anything to it.

“I have to end this fight quickly!” Bai Xiaochun thought. Without any hesitation, he shot forward, waving his hand.

“Waterswamp!” he shouted. Intense rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as water vapor roiled out, creating a huge swamp. It was almost like an ocean, and as it formed, a beastly roar rose up from inside of it.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1279 awe-chapter-1280

It was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit. Apparently, the creature had learned from its previous mistake, and instead of reaching out with its claws first, its head appeared, crocodilian and fierce to the extreme, with rows of sharp teeth as large as mountains.

Filling nearly half the sky, it lunged toward the face of nirvanic extermination.

It was so huge that just its head filled half the sky, and thus, it could only be imagined how large its body was. Clearly, the Eternal Immortal Domains couldn’t even sustain such a large entity.

Mortals usually think that things which are large in size are particularly powerful. But cultivators view things differently, and are impressed by large things only when they reach a certain, completely exaggerated level. And right now… all the cultivators who could see this head were shivering in terror.

Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit… was just ridiculously massive!

The truth was that Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom had grown with him as his cultivation base advanced.

Earlier, he had used the technique inside the body of the Mortal Renegade, where no one could see it. But right now, numerous gasps could be heard as people finally caught sight of it with their own eyes. That was especially true of the disciples from the former Spirit Stream Sect.

Li Qinghou’s jaw dropped, and Patriarch Spirit Stream stared in shock. After all, even though the Waterswamp Kingdom was difficult to cultivate, there had been people who had succeeded with it throughout history. And yet, compared to Bai Xiaochun’s Waterswamp Kingdom, all of those previous versions seemed like knock-offs.

In fact, the people from the Spirit Stream Sect even began to wonder if the divine ability from their sect had been the real thing….

“That’s… the Waterswamp Kingdom?” Even Bai Xiaochun’s family was shocked. Song Junwan gasped, and both Dabao and Xiaoxiao were visibly stunned by the enormous, vicious crocodilian head.

As everyone looked on, stunned, Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit snapped up the face of nirvanic extermination. But then, apparently not satisfied, it unhesitatingly shot toward the Mortal Renegade.

Not even Daoist Heavenspan could keep himself from feeling shocked by what he was seeing. Eyes nearly popping out of his skull, he blurted, “What is that thing!?!?”

Daoist Heavenspan’s scalp was tingling on the verge of exploding; this was the first time since he became an apprentice of the Mortal Renegade that he had felt so shaken. In fact, a sensation of deadly crisis had already gripped his heart.

Not daring to hesitate, he backed up as if he planned to go back into the Mortal Renegade’s forehead. Unfortunately for him, Bai Xiaochun’s life essence spirit was too fast, and blocked his path.

Defiance rose up in Daoist Heavenspan as a feeling of impending death overtook him. To him, it felt like he had been involved in a sword fight, only to have his opponent throw down his sword and then pull out a mountain to crush him with.

The life essence spirit was like heaven and earth, and Daoist Heavenspan was like an ant....

The Mortal Renegade's head was actually much larger than the life essence spirit, and yet, it ravenously opened its jaws as if to take a bite.

The people of the Eternal Immortal Domains were as stunned as wooden chickens, and even Bai Xiaochun was sweating nervously. He was almost considering calling his life essence spirit back, but it was too late. Before he could do anything, the creature bit down onto the Mortal Renegade.

A crunching sound rang out... which was like an explosion that caused all heaven and earth to distort. Then, a bloodcurdling scream erupted from Bai Xiaochun's life essence spirit, and a few of its mountain-like teeth fell out....

However, the life essence spirit apparently did get a chunk of rock-like flesh, whereupon it lunged back into the swamp and disappeared....

The people of the Eternal Immortal Domains looked on in shock, and Daoist Heavenspan glanced around, apparently surprised to still be alive. Sweat dripping down his face, he shot into the Mortal Renegade's forehead, not even looking over his shoulder.

As for the Mortal Renegade, two enormous teeth were still stuck into his face, surrounded by numerous cracks and crevices. It was a really odd sight….

Bai Xiaochun wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry. Even in a somber and dramatic fight like this, he was still able to do what he usually did, and make things amusing….

Although Bai Xiaochun wasn’t happy that Daoist Heavenspan had escaped, the look of stupefaction on his face had been worth it.

“He ran too quickly this time, that’s all!” Snorting coldly, he waved his right hand, and the spell formation of the Essence of time began to form together again. As for the shocked cultivators down below, they all went back to their work from moments before.

This time, Daoist Heavenspan didn’t interfere….

As starlight streamed up from below, the huge spell formation formed around the Mortal Renegade. As it completed, the Essence of time swirled, forming something like an enormous vortex.

It was a vortex of innumerable stars, each of which was part of the spell formation. Within it was the power of Essence, which caused all of the time in the area to slow down.

And that was the main purpose of the formation. Not only would it slow down time to prevent the seal from unravelling too soon, but it would buy them time in general.

Now that the spell formation was operational, Bai Xiaochun breathed a sigh of relief. At that point, he looked at the Mortal Renegade’s forehead, and then… the teeth sticking into his face. It was a strange thing. Why did the teeth remain after the life essence spirit vanished? Contemplating the matter, he headed back down to the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Upon arriving in Arch-Emperor City, some of his subordinates delivered the teeth that had fallen from his life essence spirit. Ignoring the strange looks on the faces of his subordinates, he studied the teeth for a while before putting them into his bag of holding. After all, if his life essence spirit showed up next time missing a bunch of teeth… it would look really ugly.

Sighing, Bai Xiaochun once again wondered why things always got strange around him.

“It was obviously a very serious situation!” Scratching his head, he put the matter aside and went to find his Daoist partners.

After all, his Waterswamp Kingdom had eased some of the tension, but that didn’t change the potential for impending destruction of a cataclysmic nature.

The Saint-Emperor becoming a half-sovereign wasn’t the answer to the problem. Everything would come down to Bai Xiaochun, and whether or not he could succeed.

Right now, he needed to go into secluded meditation, and for how long, no one knew!

When he came out, it could be right into a deadly situation. It was impossible to say what things would be like. Therefore, the only thing he could think to do now was send his friends and family to the treasured fan, where they could hopefully remain safe.

However, whether it was Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, or Hou Xiaomei, none of them agreed. Neither did Dabao or

Xiaoxiao. The Giant Ghost King, Li Qinghou, and everyone else all felt the same.

“What would be the point of that?” Song Junwan said softly. “If the Eternal Immortal Domains go away, do you really think that we can just live on some fan? Like you said, the Mortal Renegade seeks to exterminate all of the starry sky. All people. Maybe we could escape one disaster, but it would only be delaying the inevitable.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1280 awe-chapter-1281

Bai Xiaochun had nothing to say in response to Song Junwan. He knew that she was right. If the Eternal Immortal Domains were destroyed, then considering how powerful the Mortal Renegade was, he would have no problem finding the treasured fan out in the void.

And given that his Dao was to destroy everything and leave nothing behind, the people on the fan would surely not be allowed to escape.

If the Mortal Renegade had not been sealed in place outside of the Eternal Immortal Domains, then the damaged version of the fan would not have continued to exist. Even the Hourglass World would have been destroyed.

“The only thing we can do,” Zhou Zimo said, “is spend time with each other before the final moment arrives.... Bai Xiaochun, there’s a place we’d like to take you to....” Both she and Hou Xiaomei were smiling as they looked at Bai Xiaochun.

Warmth bubbled up in his heart as he looked back at his Daoist partners. He would treasure these moments, as he knew that time was of the essence. At the most, he could spend a few days with the people he loved. After that, he would have to go into secluded meditation to work on his breakthrough!

“What place?” he asked, smiling.

Unbeknownst to him, Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, Hou Xiaomei and Gongsun Wan’er had prepared a place especially for the people from the Heavenspan Realm.

Unable to contain his curiosity, Bai Xiaochun sent his divine sense out, and found that there were others present. The Giant Ghost King, the Grand Heavenmaster, Li Qinghou, Patriarch Spirit Stream, Big Fatty Zhang, Xu Baocai, Master God-Diviner, and even Bruiser were there.

The smiles on their faces only stoked Bai Xiaochun's curiosity. Together, they left Arch-Emperor City and traveled to a location on the border of the nation. Unable to contain his curiosity, Bai Xiaochun kept his divine sense sweeping out in front of him.

Eventually, it locked onto something that caused him to shiver, and his heart to pound. Eyes widening, he looked over at everyone who had come to accompany him.

"You guys…." He almost couldn't believe what he was seeing. It was something that completely surpassed anything he could have imagined. There, off in the distance, was a prefecture that was roughly the size of the former Heavenspan Realm. Before, it had been empty, but now, it contained four rivers!

The rivers spread out from a central location, which was filled with seawater. Although it was little more than a lake, it was actually about the same size as the Heavenspan Sea of the past!

Sects covered the banks of the rivers, and there was also a Great Wall, beyond which was… the former Arch-Emperor City!!

Shockingly, he was looking at… the Heavenspan Realm!!

Clearly, much work and effort had gone into transforming this prefecture, and making every aspect of it the same as the Heavenspan Realm. Bai Xiaochun was already feeling deeply shaken.

Of course, his divine sense had long since reached the point of being able to fill the entire Eternal Immortal Domains. But his attention had not been focused, and he had not noticed this prefecture. And there had been many momentous events since his return. Therefore, it was only at this moment that he realized what his people had been up to in recent times.

When the Grand Heavenmaster saw Bai Xiaochun’s shock, he chuckled.

“Your Majesty, you were in secluded meditation for many years, and your empresses came to miss their home. So did I. Therefore, I took it upon myself to gather as many people of Heavenspan as possible. Together, we scoured our memories, and built this place based on them.

“I had hoped that it would be a beacon of hope for those of us from the Heavenspan Realm. No longer would we feel like strangers in a strange land. Here, we could feel like we were home, and could reminiscence about past times.

“Sadly, after the construction was complete, a whole string of unexpected events occurred, and we never had time to report the matter to you, Your Majesty. Therefore, we never opened it up to the public.” Clasping hands, the Grand Heavenmaster bowed to Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun’s emotions were astir as he thought back to past times. All of a sudden, it was like a door to the past had been opened right in front of him.

“Great! Excellent!” Laughing heartily, he flew forward and entered the prefecture, followed by all of his people, whose eyes flickered with reminiscence and emotion.

As Bai Xiaochun traveled through the new Heavenspan Realm, his heart surged with excitement. Before long, he was in the eastern Heavenspan region, and the first place he visited was Mount Hood!

It looked more or less how he remembered it. There was even a little village at the foot of the mountain, with a house just like his own.

On the peak of Mount Hood, he closed his eyes and sank into his memories, flanked by all of his friends and family.

Eventually, he opened his eyes, and the same smile appeared on his face that had often appeared there when he was younger.

“I'm not sure if all of you know,” he began softly, “but this was actually where I joined the Spirit Stream Sect.… My father gave me a stick of incense and told me that if I lit it, an immortal would come take me away.

“The only thing is that, whenever I lit the incense, lightning would fall, which scared me so much that I would instantly give up. It was only on the thirteenth time that I gritted my teeth, lit the incense, and braved the lightning. And that… was when I met Uncle Li.” With that, he looked over at Li Qinghou, much the same way he would have looked at his own father.

Li Qinghou was old now, with white hair and wrinkles on his face. When he looked at Bai Xiaochun, he smiled, and yet, in his heart, he sighed emotionally.

“That’s right, you little punk,” he said. “You lit that incense over and over again, and I was never able to get more than halfway there before you gave up. Eventually, I decided that when I found you, I would give you a good thrashing!”

Bai Xiaochun cleared his throat in embarrassment.

“There’s no need to bring up that part, Uncle Li….”

Song Junwan, Hou Xiaomei, and everyone else smiled when they heard the dialogue. After all, this mountain had been constructed based on Li Qinghou’s personal memories.

“From here, Uncle Li took me to the Spirit Stream Sect….” Turning his head, he looked off into the distance for a moment. Then, he used the extraordinary powers of his cultivation base to take a step forward, and bring everyone with him to the Spirit Stream Sect.

It looked almost exactly as he remembered it. There was even a gravel path that he walked down, whereupon he found himself in the Ovens.

“This was where I met Eldest Brother. There were eight fatties back then, but Eldest Brother was the one who jumped out first and scared the living daylights out of me…. Back then, he was like a mountain of flesh!”

Big Fatty Zhang rubbed his nose awkwardly, but still chuckled a bit.

“I remember thinking about how skinny you were,” Big Fatty Zhang said, “and that I needed to fatten you up a bit. Who would have thought that your arrival would open up a new door to us Ovens people? That was when we really learned how to pilfer delicacies!”

For many of the people present, it was their first time hearing of such things, especially Gongsun Wan’er and Zhou Zimo. When Big Fatty Zhang saw how curious they were, he launched into a whole account of what he and Bai Xiaochun had done together in those years. At a certain point, he brought up the Chicken-Thieving Fiend, which was when Hou Xiaomei let out a strangled shout.

“I can’t believe that *you* were the Chicken-Thieving Fiend!!”

Looking even more embarrassed, Bai Xiaochun pointed at one little hut off to the side.

“See that? That’s where Xu Baocai delivered his blood notice to me. He was really pissed about losing his place in the Ovens, so he threw the blood notice down and challenged me to a fight....”

Xu Baocai chuckled, but didn’t say anything. At this point, he realized that people weren’t paying attention to him, and seemed more interested in Big Fatty Zhang’s stories about the Chicken-Thieving Fiend.

At this point, Bai Xiaochun decided to take everyone to the trial platform staircase. At the top, he smiled.

“This is the exact spot where I met Xiaomei.”

Hou Xiaomei looked at the steps, and a sweet smile broke out on her face. For her, it was almost like going back in time....

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1281 awe-chapter-1282

That year, a young man and his two enormously fat friends blocked the path and extorted their fellow disciples….

That year, a young woman stomped up, looking like a hot chili pepper. As soon as she saw the young man, her heart started to pound….

Bai Xiaochun looked over at Hou Xiaomei, and she looked back at him. Both seemed to be transported back in time to that day.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun headed to the north bank of the Spirit Stream Sect. At the Beast Conservatory, he saw the residence he and Bruiser had once occupied, and couldn't help but think back to the moment Bruiser had been born.

"Bruiser…." he said softly. Bruiser trotted over and shrank down to the size he had been back then, and his charming appearance caused warmth to fill Bai Xiaochun's heart.

"This is where Bruiser was born," he explained. Bruiser's eyes also seemed to flicker with emotion as he thought back to old times.

And thus, Bai Xiaochun visited all the familiar places he remembered in the Spirit Stream Sect. As he recounted his past experiences and activities, everyone seemed to sink with him into their memories.

Eventually, he left the Spirit Stream Sect and went to the Blood Stream Sect.

On Middle Peak, he looked over at Song Junwan. She smiled back at him, looking more beautiful than ever.

“You know, back when I came to the Blood Stream Sect, I used a mask to disguise myself as Nightcrypt. My plan wasn’t to snag a Daoist partner; I just needed to get into Junwan’s bedchamber to steal some treasure.” Chuckling, he rubbed his nose, and then pulled out the little turtle. Before the little turtle could complain, he held him out and said, “This thing! See? He was what I came to steal. Who would have thought… that I would end up stealing the heart of my future Daoist partner too?”

Bai Xiaochun suddenly felt quite pleased with himself. As for Song Junwan, the smile faded from her face, and her eyes widened into a glare.

At that point, Bai Xiaochun chuckled and looked over at Master God-Diviner.

“This is where I met you too, Master Snortsnort. I’ll never forget how shifty you looked back then. Who would have thought that you would end up as a genius of having children?” Of course, Bai Xiaochun had a much different status nowadays. His Daoist Partners might dare to talk back to him, and maybe even Big Fatty Zhang, but not Master God-Diviner.

He could only smile wryly. Inside, he sighed, musing that life really was a strange thing. After all, if he hadn’t met Bai Xiaochun all those years ago, he would not be in his current position.

After touring the Heavenspan region, Bai Xiaochun went to the Great Wall, and beyond it, to the Wildlands, which was even more well-created than the Heavenspan region. With the exception of its lack of vengeful souls, it was exactly as he remembered it.

The Wildlands was where he and Zhou Zimo had fought in the labyrinth, which had also been carefully recreated. Inside the labyrinth, Bai Xiaochun laughed.

There was no need to even ask whether or not this place had been constructed based on Zhou Zimo’s memories. After all, he and she were the only two that had reached the final level of the place.

Smiling, he looked over at her and said, “Zimo, this is where you very nearly killed me! Do you realize how close to death I came?”

Glaring back at him, she snorted. “It would have been a lot better if I *did* kill you!”

Bai Xiaochun smiled wryly and cleared his throat. Meanwhile, everyone else was laughing as though he had just cracked a joke.

“I'm serious!” he added. “I nearly died here! And all for a measly deva soul….”

Surprisingly, Zhou Zimo was blushing a bit. Back in those days, she had viewed deva souls as extremely precious, only to eventually reach a point where she could have as many as she wanted. And then she thought about how unlucky Bai Xiaochun had been to end up fighting her, and considered how things would have ended up if she did kill him…. Suddenly, she started laughing.

Bai Xiaochun left the labyrinth and headed to Giant Ghost City. There, the Giant Ghost King looked around wistfully, clearly reminiscing about past times. When he looked at the huge statue of himself, and at the royal palace, it was impossible to tell what he was thinking. He simply sighed.

“Giant Ghost, old pal,” Bai Xiaochun said loudly, “why didn’t you reconstruct Devil Penitentiary?”

“You call me father-in-law, you hear!?”

Laughing, Bai Xiaochun nodded vigorously. “Of course, father-in-law!”

“That’s better. Anyway, just forget about Devil Penitentiary. It’s not here.” The Giant Ghost King knew Bai Xiaochun very well, and had long since guessed that if the Heavenspan Realm were rebuilt, he would want to come here and boast about his past shenanigans. Therefore, to play things safe, he had intentionally left out Devil Penitentiary.

“I really miss Devil Penitentiary,” Bai Xiaochun said. “Hey everyone, did you know that the Giant Ghost King was locked in there once? He was in very bad shape. Then I came along, a dark inquisitor. I happened to notice an old man in one of the cells, which was when I….” Ignoring the grim look on the Giant Ghost King’s face, Bai Xiaochun went on to tell the story of how the two of them had met….

Eyes widened as Bai Xiaochun spoke of smacking the Giant Ghost King on the side of the head, of using him as a shield to break out of Devil Penitentiary, and of dragging him around the city and using him as a weapon to kill numerous enemies. Many a sympathetic look was cast in the Giant Ghost King’s direction….

“You know what? All these Giant Ghost King stories have jogged my memory. I seem to remember that there was also a certain pretty widow….”

All of a sudden, the Giant Ghost King started to get nervous, but Bai Xiaochun simply cast him a mischievous glance, and didn’t tell any more of that story.

At this point, the Grand Heavenmaster chuckled dryly, looked up at the sky to check the time of day, and then said, “Your Majesty, it’s starting to get late. Why don’t we head back now?”

“What’s the hurry, Grand Heavenmaster? I still haven’t gotten to your part of the story yet!” The Grand Heavenmaster was actually turning to leave, but there was no way Bai Xiaochun would let him. Grabbing him by the arm, he vanished, along with the rest of the group, to appear in the Heavenspan Realm’s version of Arch-Emperor City. Specifically, they were in Heavenmaster Hall in the imperial palace.

“See everyone? This is where the enigmatic Grand Heavenmaster of years past would order me around....” Eyebrows dancing up and down, he looked at the Grand Heavenmaster and then proceeded to tell all the pertinent stories.

Eventually, the Grand Heavenmaster’s eyes widened into a glare.

“You really have the cheek to pretend that you didn't come up with that vicious plan to pass off a Foundation Establishment soul as a deva soul?! And by the way, the Proclamation of Universal Grace was *your* idea!”

Slowly but surely, everyone was coming to realize that wherever Bai Xiaochun went, he always caused a huge storm. And as far as his ability to cause disasters went, it was nothing short of legendary!

All of a sudden, the Grand Heavenmaster and everyone else present suddenly had the feeling that the impending catastrophe of the Mortal Renegade might not be a very big deal…. With Bai Xiaochun on their side, the situation was sure to be resolved eventually.

The sudden confidence improved their mood, and as Bai Xiaochun finished his tour of the new Heavenspan Realm, everyone joined in on telling stories about past times. Eventually, it began to grow dark, and they returned to Arch-Emperor City.

For the following few days, Bai Xiaochun refrained from any practice of cultivation. He spent all of his time with his family and friends, especially Song Junwan, Hou Xiaomei, Zhou Zimo and Gongsun Wan’er.

And most especially, Dabao, Xiaoxiao and Xiaobao.

He was a husband and a father now, and as such, wished that times like this would last for all eternity. But unfortunately, they had to come to an end.

He needed to go into seclusion, and however much he would miss them, he had no choice but to enter his private meditation chamber.

He had no idea if he would succeed or not, and no way to tell what the future would hold. He could only do everything in his power to achieve the breakthrough he sought!

“I have to break through and earn a chance at life. If I don’t… then going into seclusion will be my final act of farewell.” He stopped for a moment at the door of the chamber, looking over his shoulder at all his friends and family. And then, he slowly closed the door, cutting himself off completely from their sight….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1282 awe-chapter-1283

The door to his private chamber became like a door closing him off from the entire world.

He sat down cross-legged, closed his eyes, and settled his emotions. It took some time, but he pushed aside all extraneous thoughts, and when he opened his eyes again, they shone with utter determination!

He was now in a state that he rarely entered. His cultivation base had steadily climbed over the years, and considering all of the things he had experienced, and all the twists and turns that had come in his life, at some point, Bai Xiaochun realized that he had grown up.

After visiting the reconstructed Heavenspan Realm, and looking back on the path he had walked, his heart had steadily grown more and more calm.

At the same time, he had begun to formulate the very thoughts that the Eternal Mother had alluded to….

“The Mortal Renegade’s Dao is one of complete extermination of *everything.* It takes the starry sky and snuffs it out like a candle, casting everything into darkness, and turning all life into death!

“The reverse of his Dao would do the opposite. It would cause the extinguished starry sky to spark with new life…. If the Mortal Renegade represents nirvanic extermination, then my Dao must be one of radiance and light!” Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered as he contemplated the subject;

this was actually the entire goal of this session of secluded meditation!

As for how to go about it, Bai Xiaochun already had an idea. In fact, it had something to do with a plant he had acquired long ago!

Closing his eyes, he issued a soft call in his heart, a call that caused his private chamber to tremble. In fact, the entire imperial palace shook physically, and eventually, all of Arch-Emperor City!

The inhabitants looked around in bewilderment, although not for long. Moments later, a crevice opened up within the city, from which emerged a huge, vine-like plant. Moments later, a second vine appeared, then a third and a fourth…. In the blink of an eye, hundreds of them had risen up, and were dancing in the breeze.

“What are those things?!?!”

“Heavens! I can’t believe a plant like that exists beneath Arch-Emperor City!!”

“That aura… it surpasses the Demigod Realm! It’s more like the Celestial Realm!!”

Amidst the uproar, the plants responded to Bai Xiaochun’s call, and as they danced, they began to shine with moonlight that rose into the air and swirled above the city.

As everyone watched in awe, the moonlight converged, creating a shining moon whose light shook the hearts of everyone present. It was almost as if an actual moon were now present, hanging directly above Arch-Emperor City, shining brightly. Then, the moon began to fall.

Before anyone could react, it shot toward Bai Xiaochun’s private chamber. The Grand Heavenmaster and other top experts initially attempted to interfere, but were then instructed by Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense to back away. As they did, they watched the shining moon slowly disappear into Bai Xiaochun’s meditation chamber.

Inside the chamber, Bai Xiaochun reached out with his right hand to grasp the shining light, which flickered and jumped with pleasure, as if he were its lord and master.

A smile broke out on Bai Xiaochun’s face as he sent some divine sense out, causing the light in his hand to glitter, and then revealing a seed made of moonlight, the glow of which sent soft radiance into every corner of the private chamber.

It was none other than his moonflower!

He had planted the moonflower beneath the city years ago, when he initially went into seclusion, leaving it as a secret weapon to be used in the defense of the city. However, it had never been necessary to defend the city in such a way. Now, as he formulated his plan for how to achieve a breakthrough, he realized that the moonflower was actually key!

More precisely, he remembered that, back in the original Heavenspan Realm, the moonflower had eventually reached a point in its growth where it transformed into countless dandelion seeds, which spread out into all heaven and earth. He had witnessed that event with his own eyes.

It had been a very profound moment, and was something he could never forget, not even after all the things he had experienced afterward.

“If I want to walk the opposite path as the Mortal Renegade,” he murmured, “then I need to reignite all of the extinguished flames that filled the starry sky of the past.... To do that, I need the strength of the moonflower....”

He had come up with this idea some time ago, and now that the time had come to put it into action, his eyes shone with determination.

“Other methods might work as well, but there isn’t enough time.... The fastest way will be to fuse with the moonflower, and borrow its ability to multiply and spread, thus sending seeds of my own divine sense out into the void....” Certain that this was the best idea, he unhesitatingly covered the moonflower seed with divine sense.

Having accomplished this, he closed his hand over the seed, which vanished. When it reappeared in his mind, it immediately began to sprout, sending tendrils throughout his body. Before long, he had fused with the moonflower, a process which did not harm either of them. In fact... if his plan succeeded, and he brought light to the dark void outside, then the moonflower would be his companion plant, and in some respects, would be another Eternal Flower!!

The moonflower understood that, and in its excitement, did nothing to oppose the process. As it fused with Bai Xiaochun, it slowly fell into a state of slumber, handing control of itself over to him.

It was hard to say how much time passed. Bai Xiaochun was so involved with his work that he forgot everything else. Soon, he had become the moonflower itself, whereupon soft moonlight radiated off of him, which floated out of his meditation chamber and up into the sky.

At first, there were only about ten motes of light, which entered the void and began to drift away from the Eternal Immortal Domains. However, those motes of light soon began to multiply. Eventually there were 100, then 1,000, then 10,000.... Eventually the numbers climbed higher. 1,000,000. 10,000,000. 100,000,000. Soon, the number was too high to count, an endless stream of light which rose up from Bai Xiaochun and sailed out into the sky, and the void beyond.

They looked like glowing dandelion seeds made of moonlight, and they were very eye-catching, drawing the attention of all the living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains. Although no one knew exactly what they were, or what their purpose was, they could sense the powerful flame of life force they contained.

After all, they weren't just a manifestation of Bai Xiaochun's divine sense. They also contained his life force, his Dao, and everything else that made him up....

Within the meditation chamber, his body slowly withered, growing older and older until all that was left behind was an empty husk. His soul, his Dao, his cultivation base, and all other aspects of him had entered the dandelion seeds, and were spreading out through the void.

They did not move about aimlessly. They all had specific destinations, those being the destroyed ruins that filled the void... the places where light had once burned, but was later extinguished.

Every time such a location was found, a dandelion seed would settle down and sprout....

Days began to slip by. Although everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains was still nervous about the impending catastrophe, they knew that both the Saint-Emperor and Bai Xiaochun were both working hard to provide hope.

And the only thing that everyone else could do was wait, and work on their cultivation. Although advancing their cultivation bases would do little good in the end, no one was willing to abandon any possible advantage. And of course, it served to calm their hearts.

There were still people who abandoned themselves to despair. But the celestials of the two great imperial dynasties did their best to quell such trends, and dispose of any individuals who had lost their humanity.

And thus, life went on in the Eternal Immortal Domains, and affairs mostly stabilized….

Eventually, ten years had gone by. Xiaobao was now ten years old, and his personality was very much like his father's. Whenever Hou Xiaomei and the rest of his family saw him acting mischievous and fearing death, they couldn't help but look over wistfully at Bai Xiaochun's meditation chamber.

Inside the chamber, Bai Xiaochun sat there cross-legged, unmoving for an entire decade….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1283 awe-chapter-1284

Over the ten year period, countless dandelion seeds spread out into the void, all of which contained Bai Xiaochun’s life force and divine sense. They moved with speed that defied the comprehension of cultivators, piercing through the void even faster than Bai Xiaochun could have moved on his own.

Some landed on various ruins, while others continued on, reaching places far, far away from the Eternal Immortal Domains. And as the dandelion seeds landed and took root, changes began to take place.

In one particular location was a stretch of ruins completely devoid of any signs of life. It was desolate, withered, and rife with death.

There was even a misty haze that hung over the area, almost like a sludge.

A dandelion seed dropped into the haze, and vanished. A few years later, the mist began to fade away, along with the feeling of death….

Another three years passed, and the mist and aura of death were gone, which was when a delicate sprout rose up from the mud below!!

Although it was only a tiny sprout, it still represented life!

It seemed to have broken through some sort of seal, a curse of sorts, which allowed it to spread life force, completely changing the ruins around it!

Another three years passed, and the sprout bloomed, giving birth to a flower that looked exactly like a moon.

It was none other than a moonflower!

When the moonflower bloomed, it emitted a faint, glittering light. It wasn’t particularly dazzling, but in the darkness of the void, it was still breathtaking!

The light grew stronger, slowly driving away the darkness, growing more stable. Gradually, that portion of the dark void… was becoming bright!!

And that was only one set of ruins among many. Before long, a second light blazed to life, and then another, and another. One by one, sparks were appearing….

Although they were single sparks now, that didn’t mean they couldn’t combine into a raging fire!!

As the dandelion seeds found more and more ruins, and as the years passed, more light appeared…. By now, Bai Xiaochun had been in secluded meditation for more than twenty years.

Xiaobao was a young man now, whose main impression of his father was that he remained sealed behind a door. However, based on the things that his older brother and sister had told him, he knew that his father was a grand and mighty individual!

Dabao had taken over the responsibilities of running the Arch-Emperor Dynasty as the heir apparent, and with the help of the Grand Heavenmaster and other powerful experts, assimilated the former Vile-Emperor Dynasty.

Xiaoxiao had risen to the level of a celestial, but had not gained the approval of the Eternal Mother. However, she had Bai Xiaochun's approval, and as he transformed into a host of dandelion seeds that spread through the void, the karma between them caused her cultivation base to advance by leaps and bounds. In the short twenty years that passed, she reached the mid Celestial Realm!

It was at that time… that strange signs occurred!

The Mortal Renegade hadn't moved for twenty years, but now, he suddenly trembled. Instantly, the people of the Eternal Immortal Domains descended into vigilant anxiety.

Both Bai Xiaochun and the Saint-Emperor were still in seclusion, leaving the Eternal Immortal Domains without a single archaean. Thankfully, no meteorites fell; unfortunately, a vortex sprang up on the Mortal Renegade's forehead.

As it did, Daoist Heavenspan appeared. He had been scared off years ago by Bai Xiaochun, but now he was back, an unsightly expression on his face as he looked first at the spell formation which bound the Mortal Renegade, and then down at the Eternal Immortal Domains.

If he could have his way, he would not see the Eternal Immortal Domains destroyed. However, the sleeping Mortal Renegade had sensed some dangerous crisis brewing, and had given him a very specific mission.

"Break through the spell formation. End Bai Xiaochun's session of meditation…." Daoist Heavenspan had mixed feelings regarding Bai Xiaochun, feelings that he had not been able to sort out even after all the years that had passed.

Daoist Heavenspan knew that he had no choice in the matter. Although he was an apprentice, the truth was that most of his actions were controlled by his own Dao. And the origin of that Dao, that of nirvanic extermination, was the Mortal Renegade.

Sometimes Daoist Heavenspan asked himself if it was all worth it. And he wondered if he could go back to the very beginning, if he might have made different choices. But there was no real way to answer that question. He could only suppress his melancholy, and look out with sharply cold eyes. As of this moment, he waved his arm, causing the vortex in the Mortal Renegade’s forehead to swirl. Then, howls and roars could be heard as a vast horde of devilish specters emerged!

There were too many of them to count, a massive army that was now at the command of Daoist Heavenspan. Without any hesitation, the army charged toward the spell formation that Bai Xiaochun had set up using the Essence of time.

Rumbling sounds echoed out into the void, and quickly caught the attention of the cultivators down below in the Eternal Immortal Domains. Shocked, they began to rotate their cultivation bases to fight back!

This was one of the marvelous aspects of the spell formation. Every single formation node in the entire spell formation was linked to a cultivator, which made it nearly invincible!

However, if enough of the nodes were broken, then it would eventually fall. All that would be required was enough time.

The assault on the spell formation lasted for three years!

During that time, rumbling sounds filled the sky above the Eternal Immortal Domains both day and night. Daoist Heavenspan wasn’t concerned at all with how much time it was taking. There were too many devilish specters inside of the Mortal Renegade to even count, and even if they were all killed, Daoist Heavenspan wouldn’t care. Despite the heavy losses that the army of devilish specters sustained during the three years, Daoist Heavenspan did not call off the offensive.

Furthermore, the constant assault was pushing the spell formation to the brink of detonation. Black marks could be seen spreading across its surface, staining the Essence of time, and causing the spell formation to slowly grow weaker.

“It won’t be long now….” Daoist Heavenspan murmured. Waving his hand, he sent even more devilish specters charging forth in attack….

It was a difficult time for the cultivators in the Eternal Immortal Domains. Virtually none of them were able to focus on cultivation. They were forced to sit there cross-legged and focus their energy on the spell formation, powering it with their cultivation bases to resist the advance of the devilish specters.

Although the two parties were separated by the formation, they were involved in a very strange and unique showdown!

Meanwhile, the dandelion seeds that contained Bai Xiaochun’s life force and divine sense had thoroughly disseminated throughout the void. They descended onto the ruins everywhere, even into that floating field of coffins that he had once encountered.

With each year that passed, more light flared to life…. As of now, if one looked out into the void, there was dazzling starlight everywhere! As of now, it could truly be called a starry sky again!

The changes caused the sleeping Mortal Renegade to grow even more restless, and Daoist Heavenspan was likewise gripped by anxiety. He could sense the fury of the Mortal Renegade, and when he looked out at the rapidly deteriorating spell formation, it was with completely bloodshot eyes.

“It’s about time… to end things! Bai Xiaochun is in seclusion, and thanks to the help of the Mortal Renegade, I'm now a half-sovereign. As of this moment… nobody can stop me!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1284 awe-chapter-1285

In this moment, Daoist Heavenspan closely resembled the Mortal Renegade. In fact, a vortex appeared on his own forehead, within which a face could be seen, which was none other than the face of the Mortal Renegade!

His aura was different as well; there was an air to it that suggested nirvanic extermination, as though he wished any area he saw to be filled with death!

“The ultimate expression of my Dao is to bring nirvanic extermination to everything. In the end, only I shall be Eternal!” He strode forward, flanked by hordes of burning devilish specters. Then he extended his hand, causing numerous specters to clump together in front of him, forming a huge blazing fire of darkness!

It was none other than… a black flower of flame!

“Nirvanic extermination!” he said calmly. The black flame flower began to grow larger, spinning, rumbling, becoming a sea of flames that shot directly toward the crumbling spell formation!

The sky turned black as the flames spread out, and the spell formation that had stood for many years… finally began to collapse!

When that happened, all of the cultivators connected to the formation nodes, regardless of the level of their cultivation base, began to cough up mouthfuls of blood. Trembling, and faces ashen, they looked up, despair flickering in their eyes.

As they did, countless chunks of the spell formation began to fall down toward the ground.

Without anything to stand in its way, the black sea of flames rushed out, followed by a huge army of devilish specters. Howling, they shot toward the Eternal Immortal Domains, followed by Daoist Heavenspan, whose shocking aura seemed like that of a sovereign!

He was wreathed in black flames, almost like a cloak of darkness, and as his hair floated around him, he emanated the icy coldness of nirvanic extermination.

Further back, the Mortal Renegade remained in place, the same as ever, and yet, seemed to be struggling to open his eyes!

To the further despair of the cultivators below, the sealing strip that Bai Xiaochun had repaired was now beginning to collapse, starting from the portion near the dantian region, and moving slowly upward toward his forehead. Once that strip vanished completely… the Mortal Renegade would wake up!!

The true moment of deadly crisis for the Eternal Immortal Domains was nigh! From a distance, a sea of flames and an army of countless devilish specters descended on the Eternal Immortal Domains, led by Daoist Heavenspan. And their target… was Arch-Emperor City!!

That was their ultimate goal, because that was the location of… Bai Xiaochun!!

Song Junwan. Hou Xiaomei. Zhou Zimo. Gongsun Wan’er…. The Grand Heavenmaster. Li Qinghou. The Giant Ghost King. There were many powerful experts in Arch-Emperor City, and all of them were gathered around Bai Xiaochun’s meditation chamber, staring with ashen faces and despairing eyes at the fire and the specters, and most especially, at Daoist Heavenspan. Many a bitter sigh could be heard.

“In the end… there just wasn’t enough time!”

“Perhaps when he went into meditation, it really was the final farewell….”

As Xiaoxiao stood there, she looked over her shoulder at Bai Xiaochun’s private chamber, and whispered, “Dad….”

Her voice was filled with sorrow and love, and at the same time, a tone of farewell….

The Grand Heavenmaster chuckled bitterly, and the Giant Ghost King sighed. The other celestials all exchanged glances with bloodshot eyes. They knew that there was nowhere to run, and therefore, they began to power up their cultivation bases and prepare for a fight to the death!

However, that was when the Eternal Immortal Domains began to tremble violently, as an explosive aura suddenly appeared!

Much to the shock of everyone, it surpassed the Archaean Realm, and caused Daoist Heavenspan to look with flickering eyes in the direction of… the Eternal Sea!!

Although it seemed to fill all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, Daoist Heavenspan knew exactly where it was coming from!

In a deep crevice in the Eternal Sea was the entrance to the Eternal River. And in the depths of the Eternal River, sitting in front of the bell that represented the Eternal Mother, was the Saint-Emperor, who had just opened his eyes!

As he did, a sigil appeared on his forehead, depicting… the Eternal Flower!

Daoist Heavenspan had a similar mark on his own forehead, a sigil which represented a sovereign. Both of these individuals were half-sovereigns, and therefore, those marks indicated… that their true power came from other sources!

Unfortunately, the Saint-Emperor had not finished the process of elevating his cultivation base and becoming a half-sovereign. He was not yet stable, and yet, had no choice but to end his session of cultivation!

He was the Saint-Emperor!

This was his home!

And his Dao came from the Eternal Mother!

Rising to his feet, he spoke in a voice that surpassed heavenly thunder, filling all of the Eternal Immortal Domains with a roar of rage. “The Arch-Emperor is not here, Daoist Heavenspan. Therefore, I, the Saint-Emperor, will defend these lands!”

Stepping forward, he vanished, to reappear in the air above Arch-Emperor City!

As he did, a tempest rose up in the Eternal Immortal Domains, a windstorm that converged on Arch-Emperor City and immediately began to resist the black sea of flames!

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out as the two forces met, nearly deafening the living beings in the Eternal Immortal

Domains!

As the Saint-Emperor strode forth, he reached out toward Saint-Emperor City and made a grasping gesture, causing the enormous lotus within the heavenly pond to shudder for a moment, then vanish! When it reappeared, it was beneath the Saint-Emperor, shining with soft light.

As that glow spread out, it covered Arch-Emperor City, making it impossible for the black sea of flames or the devilish specters to enter the city.

Having resolved that small crisis, the Saint-Emperor looked up, the sigil on his forehead shining as he shot toward Daoist Heavenspan!

“How amusing,” Daoist Heavenspan said, chuckling as he looked with cold eyes at the Saint-Emperor. “Unfortunately… your Dao comes from the paltry Eternal Flower. My Dao comes from the Mortal Renegade, a powerful sovereign. That puts me on another level altogether…. Furthermore, you haven’t stabilized yourself as a half-sovereign…. You simply don’t qualify to stand in my way!”

Laughing madly, Daoist Heavenspan vanished, then reappeared directly in front of the Saint-Emperor in a black blur of light!

The Saint-Emperor’s face fell as that black light slammed into him, causing blood to spray out of his mouth as he tumbled backward. The black light didn’t seem fazed at all by the interchange, and immediately shot toward him again.

The light destroyed the air around it, and dissipated any nearby life force, replacing it with a powerful aura of death. As it closed in, the Saint-Emperor roared and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, instantly causing a huge moon to appear around him!

This was one of his most powerful divine abilities, and now that his cultivation base was higher, it was no longer a crescent moon, but rather, a full moon. And yet, despite the powerful pressure it radiated, Daoist Heavenspan simply chuckled, reached out, and pushed against the moon!

Instantly, cracks spread out across it, and the moon… shattered into countless pieces!

More blood sprayed out of the Saint-Emperor’s mouth, and he fell back again, a defiant gleam in his eyes.

“If only I could have had a few more years….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1285 awe-chapter-1286

“No ifs,” came Daoist Heavenspan’s cold voice from within the black light, as he shot directly toward the Saint-Emperor!

In the final moment, just before Daoist Heavenspan was about to hit him, the Saint-Emperor’s eyes flashed with madness. The truth was that he could have held back and not come to fight, and in fact, the moment he had opened his eyes earlier, he had known that he was not a match for Daoist Heavenspan.

But this was his home, and he was the Saint-Emperor, whose Dao came from the Eternal Mother. And an even more important factor in his decision… was Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun had chosen a different path from him, something that he didn’t understand early on. However, now he was enlightened. Having received the approval of the Eternal Mother, he knew that Bai Xiaochun was choosing… a path of incomprehensible difficulty!

His Dao had nothing to do with anyone else! His Dao was his own, and thus, if he achieved it, would exist on a different level, similar to the Mortal Renegade’s!!

The Saint-Emperor knew he couldn't defeat Daoist Heavenspan, and yet, came to fight anyway. He would rather self-detonate, killing himself in body and soul, if the result was causing even a slight delay for Daoist Heavenspan.

However, before the Saint-Emperor could do anything else, and even as the black beam of light that was Daoist Heavenspan was about to hit him… a beam of Archaean Luminescence suddenly shot through the air!

Then came a second, a third, and a fourth…. In the blink of an eye, 300 beams of Archaean Luminescence were shooting toward Daoist Heavenspan, all of them bursting with archaean levels of power. Although one such beam might not be very frightening to Daoist Heavenspan, the power of so many of them combined instantly stopped him in his tracks.

Even more importantly, whether it was the Saint-Emperor or Daoist Heavenspan, and in fact, to all cultivators of the Eternal Immortal Domains, Archaean Luminescence represented one thing!

“Bai Xiaochun!” the Saint-Emperor breathed, looking up into the sky.

“Bai Xiaochun!!” A very serious expression appeared on Daoist Heavenspan’s face, and he also looked up into the sky, toward a shocking burst of energy that was approaching from beyond the heavens!!

They weren’t the only ones to react in such a way. In Arch-Emperor City, Song Junwan, Hou Xiaomei, Zhou Zimo and Gongsun Wan’er all looked up with wide, disbelieving eyes.

Meanwhile, Xiaoxiao, Dabao and Xiaoxiao looked over at Bai Xiaochun’s secluded meditation facilities, as did the Grand Heavenmaster and other powerful experts.

All of them were unsure of what was happening. However, considering that so many of them recognized Bai Xiaochun’s Archaean Luminescence, they all began to get excited.

“It’s the Arch-Emperor!!”

“The Arch-Emperor is out of seclusion!!”

As the cheering rose up, Daoist Heavenspan frowned. After all, the incoming energy was incredibly powerful, but at the same time, didn’t seem to be what he remembered Bai Xiaochun’s energy feeling like.

The Saint-Emperor could also sense that something strange was going on.

That was when they both caught sight of an enormous fan moving toward the Eternal Immortal Domains at top speed, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air!

It was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s treasured fan! Visible in the fan face, within the tower that housed the Essence left behind by the Worldly Daoist, was Song Que’s corpse, sitting there cross-legged!

His face was pale, and he looked dead. However, in addition to the aura of death that radiated out from him, there was also a powerful life force!!

Furthermore, the Dao Essence of Life and Death which had once permeated the tower was gone, and existed instead inside of Song Que!!

A sigil could be seen on his forehead, which was none other than the face of the Worldly Daoist!! Close examination would reveal that it resembled Song Que’s face to a large degree, the reason being that the Worldly Daoist had already perished, and Song Que had absorbed his Dao. Although he now possessed the Worldly Daoist’s mark, it was his own, and he could control it!

As the fan neared, Daoist Heavenspan's eyes narrowed, and the crowds cheered.

And that was when Song Que's eyes opened!

One of them was black, the other was white, and neither had pupils!

At the same time, the sigil on his forehead radiated glittering light, and he erupted with a sovereign aura. He rose to his feet, two tempests raging around him as he stepped forward off of the fan!

He vanished, reappearing in the Eternal Immortal Domains… right in front of Daoist Heavenspan!

"You shall not pass!" he said, his voice grim. The sight of his black and white eyes caused Daoist Heavenspan's pupils to constrict. As for the Saint-Emperor, he didn't recognize Song Que, and yet, could hear Song Junwan crying out from within Arch-Emperor City.

"Que'er!!"

Song Que heard her call, and looked down at her, a smile playing out on his grim face. In that moment, Daoist Heavenspan turned into a black blur that shot directly toward him!

"The Dao of nirvanic extermination?" Song Que said. "I see the calmness of nirvana here, but no extermination!" With that, he waved his hand, causing a black light to spring up that deeply resembled the black light being used by Daoist Heavenspan. Then, without any hesitation, he began to fight.

A boom rang out as Daoist Heavenspan’s form of black light shuddered for the first time, and he appeared in bodily form, staggering backward a few paces, staring at Song Que with a look of shock in his eyes.

Eyes flashing, Song Que said, “The Essence of life and death was prepared by the Worldly Daoist, both to resurrect the object of his love, and also to resist the Mortal Renegade!

“I'm not sure whether it’s strong enough to fight the Mortal Renegade, but… it’s more than strong enough to fight you!” With that, he blurred into motion as he shot toward Daoist Heavenspan.

Expression brightening, the Saint-Emperor flew forward and joined forces with Song Que. Two half-sovereigns were now a flurry of attacks, crushing Daoist Heavenspan over and over again.

In only a few breaths worth of time, a string of massive booms rang out to shake heaven and earth. Then, the three of them began to rise higher and higher into the air, until they were in the starry sky outside of the Eternal Immortal Domains, where they continued to fight.

Daoist Heavenspan was the strongest of them all. However, he was having trouble dealing with Song Que’s Essence magic, and was sustaining injuries. If he had been fighting with Song Que alone, then it might not have been a big problem, but he also had the Saint-Emperor to deal with.

He was fighting two half-sovereigns, one of whom was using tactics specifically designed to fight against him. It was impossible for him to regain the upper hand. After all, when half-sovereigns fought, even the slightest slip-up could lead to drastic consequences. Blood sprayed out of Daoist Heavenspan’s mouth as he fell back over and over again.

Sometimes, he managed to dodge out of the way of Song Que's Dao Essence of Life and Death, only to slam into the divine abilities of the Eternal Flower, wielded by the Saint-Emperor.

Daoist Heavenspan coughed up a mouthful of blood, and prepared to flee, only to see Song Que wave his hand, and summon the fan, which shot toward him and shrank down for him to grab it!

Because Song Que possessed the Dao Essence of Life and Death, he could use the most orthodox legacy techniques of the Worldly Daoist. Even the spirit automaton Bai Xiaochi would follow his orders, which was something that Bai Xiaochun could never have imagined would happen.

Unless Bai Xiaochun specifically interfered and prohibited it, Bai Xiaochi would do anything that Song Que asked him to do.

The shrunken fan appeared in front of Song Que, who grabbed it and waved it out in front of him. Instantly, a huge river swept forth, filling the starry sky so quickly that Daoist Heavenspan was overwhelmed, and found it impossible to escape.

Next, a lonely boat appeared, shining with Archaean Luminescence. The two archaean slaves on the boat immediately leaped forth to attack, and yet, things weren't over yet. Much to the consternation of Daoist Heavenspan… the Daoist Pagoda of Life and Death appeared in the starry sky, along with the mountain that housed it. They were joined by… an enormous sovereign's arm!!

This was the true might of this magical item!

The river that flowed through the starry sky seemed to contain sealing power that perfectly conformed to Song Que’s Dao Essence of Life and Death. Although it was not at the level that the Worldly Daoist could have utilized, it was close. And no matter how Daoist Heavenspan screamed and fought, he couldn’t escape.

And that was when the mountain and the sovereign’s arm began to crush down toward him!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1286 awe-chapter-1287

Daoist Heavenspan had inherited the Dao of the Mortal Renegade, and become his personal apprentice. With the requisite approval, he had become a half-sovereign, and yet, as of this moment, he was nearly overwhelmed with a sensation of deadly crisis!

Of the two enemies he faced, both were half-sovereigns like himself. Although the Saint-Emperor wasn’t enough on his own, Song Que had already died in the past. Later, Bai Xiaochun placed him in the tower with the Dao Essence of Life and Death, with which he conformed perfectly. After absorbing it, something which was foul and rotten was turned into something rare and magical, and he was able to live again within death!!

The moment he opened his eyes, he became the apprentice of the Worldly Daoist. And in fact, had the Worldly Daoist not already perished, then when Song Que awoke, he wouldn’t have been a half-sovereign, but a true sovereign!

In this respect, he was somewhat similar to Daoist Heavenspan. However, the main difference between the two was that the Mortal Renegade still existed, whereas the Worldly Daoist was no more!

Unfortunately for Daoist Heavenspan, the Mortal Renegade was still asleep, and therefore, despite having his approval, it wasn’t possible for him to become a sovereign. He was only able to take half a step into that level!

When the Mortal Renegade awoke, Daoist Heavenspan could use his power to completely step into the Sovereign

Realm. Although he would still pale in comparison to the Mortal Renegade, he would still be a sovereign!

But now, it seemed unlikely that Daoist Heavenspan would survive until the Mortal Renegade woke up. The fight between him and Song Que seemed almost like a continuation of the feud between the Mortal Renegade and the Worldly Daoist. And unluckily for Daoist Heavenspan, he was actually facing two opponents, who as of this moment, had the clear advantage over him.

His hair was disheveled, and his eyes were bright red as he began to fight anxiously. He now had no choice but to do everything he could to gain an advantage. Biting the tip of his tongue, he spat out seven mouthfuls of blood, each one causing his hair to turn whiter, and his body to shrivel. By the end, he looked like a crazed old man.

“Sovereign!!” he shouted, his voice thrumming with what seemed like the power of natural law.

As the ripples of his voice spread out, a vortex sprang up on the forehead of the enormous Mortal Renegade, who loomed behind him there in the starry sky. Then, a stream of divine sense shot out from the vortex.

The heaven-shaking, earth-shattering divine sense contained a powerful aura of both nirvanic extermination and ultimate death, which covered everything, creating an attack that Song Que and the Saint-Emperor had no hope of defending against!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as they coughed up blood, then staggered backward, out of control, blood oozing out of their eyes, ears, noses, and mouths.

The divine sense was just too strong; it didn’t matter that they were half-sovereigns, they simply couldn’t stand up to it! Thankfully, it was only one quick blast of divine sense, otherwise, Daoist Heavenspan wouldn’t have needed to expend any more effort to seriously injure them!

It was divine sense straight from the Mortal Renegade, which Daoist Heavenspan had paid a huge price to unleash as a trump card!

It wasn’t that he didn’t wish to unleash more of it. Unfortunately for him, the Mortal Renegade was asleep, and could therefore only release a small portion of his divine sense!

Although it quickly faded away, the Saint-Emperor and Song Que were shaken all the way down to their souls, and were temporarily stunned, to the point where they had nothing separating themselves from Daoist Heavenspan.

And that brief opening was all that Daoist Heavenspan had hoped for. Without any hesitation, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing balls of 300-meter-tall black smoke to appear, one in each hand. Then, he launched the two balls of smoke at Song Que and the Saint-Emperor!

“Die!” Daoist Heavenspan said in a cold voice. The two balls of smoke pulsed with a voracious power that seemed to want to consume anything it touched. Upon seeing that, the eyes of both Song Que and the Saint-Emperor widened.

The smoke almost seemed to be alive, especially considering the howls which erupted from inside them. In fact, looking closely at them would reveal that red light glowed inside of them!

Daoist Heavenspan was clearly putting everything on the line. Those two balls of smoke were not ordinary in nature, and Daoist Heavenspan himself was severely withered from the effort of unleashing them. In order to unleash the power of Essence here, he had drawn heavily upon his own life force and his soul!

“We can’t let it touch us!” That was what both Song Que and the Saint-Emperor were thinking. Even as they fell back at top speed, the smoke balls locked onto them, piercing through the void toward them at top speed. Glaring, Song Que struck the top of his own head, injuring himself and shaking his own divine soul to gain a moment of added clarity. Without any hesitation, he sent out a stream of divine sense to summon the two archaean slaves. An instant, later, they appeared in front of him and the Saint-Emperor, standing in for them to take the blow of the two spheres of smoke.

Everything was happening so quickly that Daoist Heavenspan had no time to change the course of the smoke spheres, which instantly slammed into the archaean slaves.

When Daoist Heavenspan saw that his tactic was about to be defeated by Song Que, his eyes burned with killing intent. He was a decisive person, and therefore, it was without any hesitation that he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and spoke in a devilish, demonic voice!

“Devil-Sun, Demon-Moon!” A howl erupted out that seemed to originate from the most ancient of times, causing heaven and earth to tremble, and the Eternal Immortal Domains to be cast into darkness. It contained indescribable power, and as it spread out, the two balls of smoke consumed the archaean slaves, corroding their bodies and sucking away at their life force. In the blink of an eye, the two archaean slaves’ souls were extracted, and their flesh and blood were completely assimilated!

They had been sealed and left behind by the Worldly Daoist, but now, the Worldly Daoist was dead. And thanks to this bizarre magical technique unleashed by Daoist Heavenspan, they could not defend against the smoke. As that happened, the two balls of smoke began to transform, growing larger and more shockingly powerful, until they resembled a shining sun and a full moon!

When that happened, the cultivators of the Eternal Immortal Domains suddenly felt so much pressure weighing down on them that they couldn't breathe. Although many of them couldn’t see what was happening, the Grand Heavenmaster and other celestials could. And they knew that if Daoist Heavenspan could turn the tables here, it would be devastating.

“Daoist Heavenspan….”

“If it weren’t for him, there wouldn’t have been so many deaths when the Heavenspan Realm entered the Eternal Immortal Domains. He’s the one that made us pay the steepest of prices!” Everyone had various feelings about Daoist Heavenspan, but for the most part, all of them hated him as much as Bai Xiaochun.

And yet, they all had to admit that he really was a spectacular cultivator. He had incredible natural talents, and had built up enough power in the original Heavenspan Realm that he nearly brought an end to the bloodline of the Arch-Ancestor. To leave that realm, he had ignored family love, and had been willing to sacrifice anything and everything to destroy the body of the Arch-Ancestor.

He could only be described as ambitious and ruthless. And that had led him to a position of cultivation base power that few people could challenge. Therefore, although many people hated him, all of them had to admit that he was incredibly strong!

Furthermore, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could react as decisively as he had just now, in a moment of profoundly deadly crisis!

As Daoist Heavenspan was turning the tables in his fight, the last dandelion seeds that contained Bai Xiaochun's life force and divine sense were landing in the most distant regions of the void.

In roughly a third of the regions that had been reached, moonflowers had already bloomed, and were shining with bright light. As of this moment, it was almost a visible contest between the forces of light and the forces of darkness!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1287 awe-chapter-1288

Beneath the starry sky that now covered the Eternal Immortal Domains, Daoist Heavenspan had almost completely turned the tables in the fight. His hair and clothes whipped about as he manipulated his Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon, and from a distance, he pulsed with such shocking energy that he seemed completely invincible.

However, he was still not completely out of danger. The enormous river Song Que had summoned still threatened him, as did the huge Go board from the lonely boat. There was also the mountain of Dao Essence, and the enormous sovereign’s arm.

Both Song Que and the Saint-Emperor were now out of sorts, especially Song Que, whose divine soul had been nearly ripped apart because of the loss of the archaean slaves. Although he wanted to continue to control the various aspects of the fan, his divine soul was in too poor of a state, and therefore, he had to rely on Bai Xiaochi.

Although Bai Xiaochi couldn’t control things at the same level that he could, there was no other choice. Sending some divine sense into the fan in his hand, Song Que passed a message to Bai Xiaochi. A moment later, he sat down cross-legged, panting as he tried to recover from his injuries.

Looking over at the Saint-Emperor, he said, “I need thirty breaths of time!”

Then he closed his eyes.

Sensing the bad state Song Que was in, the Saint-Emperor immediately began to stand as Dharma protector for him.

Meanwhile, Daoist Heavenspan was in the middle of that vast river, his head thrown back, unleashing a howl that surpassed heavenly thunder. Thrusting his hands forward, he held the sun and the moon out in front of him as he shot through the river, seemingly just on the verge of destroying it.

The Devil-Sun and the Demon-Moon radiated dazzling light as Daoist Heavenspan became like a sharp arrow, slicing through the river.

He knew that time was of the essence. If Song Que recovered in time, then he would be in great danger, and therefore, he held nothing back in his attempt to gain complete control of the flow of battle.

“Be destroyed!” he shouted, his eyes flashing. However, even as his Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon flashed with bright light, and the huge river began to vibrate, a shout could be heard from Bai Xiaochi in the fan, as he took control of the Go board. The Go board immediately vanished, then reappeared a moment later in front of Daoist Heavenspan, shining with blinding light!

It was the light of 361 shots of Archaean Luminescence, which shot out from the various Go pieces on the game board. Each and every one of them thrummed with the power of the great circle of the Archaean Realm. Although they did not match up individually to Daoist Heavenspan, who was a half-sovereign, their combined force was enough to light his eyes up with shock!

The 361 beams of Archaean Luminescence slammed into Daoist Heavenspan’s Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon, causing a deafening boom to echo out, as well as a shockwave that spread out through the starry sky.

The mighty Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon began to collapse, and Daoist Heavenspan knew that if that process completed, he would be out of options, and his bid to regain control of the battle would end.

“Mouth of Nirvanic Extermination!” Eyes bloodshot, he struck the top of his head, causing a stream of blood to spray out of his mouth. At the same time, he performed another double-handed incantation gesture, seemingly stopping time, causing the collapse of the Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon to stop. At the same time, a vortex sprang into being in front of him.

The vortex was even larger than the sun and moon, and when it appeared, was little more than a swathe of pitch black. It pulsed with a feeling of death, as well as nirvanic extermination, and at the same time, began to drag everything in the area toward it!!

It almost looked like an enormous mouth, and it was so powerful that not even the Go pieces on the game board could resist its power, and they began to inch toward it. The entire Go board itself also began to vibrate, whereupon Daoist Heavenspan let out a powerful shout, causing it to shatter!!

In the blink of an eye, Daoist Heavenspan suddenly turned into what seemed like the most paragon entity in all creation. Although his aura had been severely weakened, his Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon could consume anything they touched, and were not growing any weaker. Their fluctuations were as terrifying as ever as Daoist Heavenspan used them to batter the river once again.

Inside the fan, Bai Xiaochi’s eyes went bloodshot at the sight of the Go board being destroyed. Shrieking at the top of his lungs, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, unleashing the power of his divine sense to exercise control over the lonely boat!

Instantly, the boat floating in the river began to shine with astonishing silver light, something almost like a flying sword that pierced through the river toward Daoist Heavenspan. It was so bright that everyone down in the Eternal Immortal Domains could see it clearly!!

It was not a real flying sword.... However, as the light shot out from the lonely boat, cracking sounds could be heard, followed by a massive self-detonation!

Bai Xiaochi understood that his best option was to use the boat to stop Daoist Heavenspan. And he also knew that he couldn’t hold back; detonating the boat, he used its power to attack Daoist Heavenspan, not to block him indefinitely, but at least for a dozen or so breaths of time!!

As of this moment, only ten breaths of time had passed since Song Que began to repair his divine soul!

To ordinary cultivators, ten breaths of time was not a long time. But to Daoist Heavenspan and Song Que, many things could happen in that amount of time, and many types of deadly situations could be completely reversed!

“You have no chance of succeeding!” Daoist Heavenspan roared, his hands flashing in an incantation gesture. Suddenly, the Devil-Sun, Demon-Moon, and the enormous mouth twisted and distorted as the outline of a face became visible!!

It was as if the Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon had become eyes, right below which was that enormous mouth. Intense rumbling filled heaven and earth as the power of the self-detonation of the boat slammed into it like a flying sword.

Deafening booms echoed out. The power of the self-detonation caused blood to spray wildly out of Daoist Heavenspan’s mouth, and yet, couldn’t do anything to the outline of the face. In fact, the face crushed the countless chunks of the lonely boat, and proceeded onward unhindered!

It was almost impossible to describe how quickly it moved, and before Bai Xiaochi could do anything to the river, the face slammed into it.

The face caused the river to stretch and distort, to the point where its water almost seemed like skin of the surface of the face!

As its facial features became visible, it was possible for the people in the Eternal Immortal Domains to see it, and they quickly recognized who it was!

“The Enemy from Beyond!!”

“The sovereign giant!!!”

It most definitely was the face of the Mortal Renegade. And it caused the flowering waters of the river to slowly drain away, which in turn caused Daoist Heavenspan’s eyes to light up with joy. And that was when… the tolling of a bell could suddenly be heard from the depths of the Eternal Lands.

The will of the Eternal Mother appeared, rushing out into the Eternal Immortal Domains, causing the Saint-Emperor to shiver and to shine with glittering light. Her glowing sigil appeared on his forehead, a flower that seemed to be blooming and bearing fruit, a fruit… that resembled an open eye!

The Eternal Mother was waking up of her own accord!!

She was not using her power to wake up and fight the Mortal Renegade. Instead, she was focusing all her energy on stopping Daoist Heavenspan… and protecting Bai Xiaochun!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1288 awe-chapter-1289

Perhaps the Eternal Mother had sensed that Bai Xiaochun's pursuit of his own Dao was the only hope for her and the Eternal Immortal Domains!

If he failed, then the Eternal Immortal Domains would be doomed, and no one would be able to save them. After all, even when she was in her prime, the Eternal Immortal Domains could only delay the inevitable catastrophe, not prevent it completely.

But if Bai Xiaochun could succeed in his search for his own Dao, then although there would still be many variables at play, there would at least be hope for the future.

Therefore, how could she possibly allow someone to disturb him in a critical moment of cultivation? Years had passed since she was originally injured, and left with only a bit of godly power, most of which she had given out to approve of celestials, or to help the Saint-Emperor. However, she still had a bit left to make a move in this critical moment!

Without any hesitation whatsoever, she sent her will out into the Eternal Immortal Domains, shaking all living beings, and causing the mark on the Saint-Emperor's forehead to shine with dazzling light.

Dazzling light spread out in all directions as the Eternal Flower on the Saint-Emperor's forehead became the eye of the Eternal Mother, which then opened!

Instantly, the Saint-Emperor's aura rose with explosive speed. Before, his cultivation base had been somewhat unstable, but now, it stabilized, and actually stepped all the way into the Sovereign Realm!

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as an aura that represented natural laws of heaven and earth erupted out, causing the heavens to grow dim, and the starry sky to distort.

Clearly, this newfound power of the Saint-Emperor came from the Eternal Mother, and would not last for long. However, it was still enough to cause Daoist Heavenspan’s face to fall!

The Eternal Mother had chosen to act in the most critical of moments.

“Dammit!!” he growled, his face twisted with madness as he charged through the enormous river. All he needed was a few breaths’ worth of time, and yet, how could the Eternal Mother possibly give him that?

As the Saint-Emperor’s aura grew more powerful, his eyes flashed, and he shot through the river to appear in front of the projected face of the Mortal Renegade. Reaching out, he then thrust his palm at the face.

“Back off!” he roared. That simple gesture was backed by the power of a sovereign, and caused the waters of the river to roil violently and sweep away in the opposite direction. At the same time, the face of the Mortal Renegade twisted and distorted, and was shoved backward, powerless to resist.

“I refuse to accept this!!” Daoist Heavenspan shouted, blood pouring out of his mouth. He had paid a heavy price, and unleashed his most powerful trump cards, even damaging his life force and his soul, all in an attempt to turn the tables in this critical moment. But then the Eternal Mother came, and casually destroyed his chance.

How could he not feel defiant? Slapping his palm onto his chest, he caused black flames to erupt all over him.

Those flames represented nirvanic extermination, and ultimate death. They represented a darkness that burned, not the enemy, but Daoist Heavenspan himself.

Shockingly, he didn’t hesitate for even a moment to light himself on fire… to make himself even stronger than before!!

He had no other alternatives. Worse, he had the intense premonition that if he didn't do this, he would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt. However, if he could somehow manage to get back to the Mortal Renegade’s forehead, then perhaps he could borrow some power to heal himself.

“3,000 Daos of Nirvanic Extermination!!” Hands flying through double-handed incantation gestures, he caused something like a thread to appear, seemingly formed from natural law itself. It almost looked like a hair attached to the face of the Mortal Renegade!

That hair was indeed a natural law, thrumming with the power of Essence, one of many which existed in the starry sky!

This was not something Daoist Heavenspan had gained enlightenment from, but rather… something from the Mortal Renegade. As the Mortal Renegade had exterminated one flourishing civilization after another, he had taken everything which made them up and transformed it into Essence power!

Normally speaking, Daoist Heavenspan should not have been able to use the Mortal Renegade’s magics of nirvanic extermination. However, by burning his own body, he managed to do it!

Moments later, a second hair appeared, then a third, and a fourth…. In the blink of an eye, hundreds of hairs had appeared, and then, over a thousand….

As they did, the power of natural law and Essence caused the sky to tremble, and shook all of the living beings present. The river began to evaporate, until the point when the 3,000th great Dao appeared. 3,000 hairs could be seen, which then turned blurry as they transformed into dozens of smaller hairs that almost seemed like clones of the originals!!

These were the countless lesser Daos that existed within the great Essence Daos, all of them originating with the Mortal Renegade!

3,000 great Daos and countless lesser Daos formed together into an all-destructive power. The Devil-Sun and Demon-Moon eyes within the projected face of the Mortal Renegade then began to glow bright red, almost as if they were alive.

“Nobody can stop me!!” Daoist Heavenspan howled from within the flames. Surrounded by the illusory face of the Mortal Renegade with its countless hairs of natural law, he continued to charge through the river!

He was now vastly stronger than before, and as such, almost instantly shot through the river to appear in front of the Saint-Emperor.

The Saint-Emperor had nothing else to do. The symbol of the Eternal Mother on his forehead glittered, emitting an explosive aura as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. As a result, the Eternal Flower appeared behind him, which then fought with full force against the projected face of the Mortal Renegade.

A rumbling boom echoed out when they made contact, causing the lands of the Eternal Immortal Domains to tremble, and the sky to sink in.

Blood sprayed out of Daoist Heavenspan’s mouth, and his body withered even further. By now, the flame of his life force was very dark; obviously, the Eternal Mother’s move had drained him to the point where he was about to flicker out of existence.

However, the divine abilities he was unleashing came from the Mortal Renegade. So in some ways, even if he died, they would continue on. Therefore, even though the Eternal Mother’s power rebuffed the face of the Mortal Renegade, sending it tumbling back into the river, the Saint-Emperor was deeply shaken, and staggered backward several paces. At the same time, the eye of the Eternal Mother went dark and closed.

Something like a sigh of regret echoed through heaven and earth. Back in the Eternal Mother’s prime, she might not have been able to stand up to the Mortal Renegade, but she could have easily sealed an apprentice of his like Daoist Heavenspan.

But now, all she was capable of was two counter attacks before she was so weak that she had to return to slumber….

The moment that the Eternal Mother’s eye closed, the Saint-Emperor’s aura grew weaker. Coughing up blood, he staggered backward several steps, face turning ashen. As of this moment, Daoist Heavenspan's immense strength had caused despair to rise up in his heart.

“If the apprentice is this strong… then exactly how powerful is the Mortal Renegade himself?” As the Saint-Emperor backed up, wracked with bitterness, Daoist Heavenspan looked over, aware that his life force was draining away, and thus descending into madness.

Surrounded by the projected face with its 3,000 hairs, he once again prepared to charge through the river.

As of this moment, there was no one to stop him! Clearly, he would make it through without any problems!!

But then, Song Que opened his eyes, and they shone with dazzling brightness. Hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture, he said, “Mountain of Dao Essence: crush him!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1289 awe-chapter-1290

This world technically did contain a bit of qi flow, in much the same way that the Immortal World had contained just a scrap, which Bai Xiaochun took away and used to reach the Archaean Realm. But now, none of that qi flow was available for Daoist Heavenspan.

As soon as Song Que awoke, he performed an incantation gesture, sending the mountain of Dao Essence rumbling through the river with crushing force toward Daoist Heavenspan.

Daoist Heavenspan had just been about to start another charge, only to find the mountain now barreling toward him. Furthermore, Song Que took control of the river, causing it to seemingly come to life.

Instantly, the flow of the river reversed, simultaneously shifting to encircle Daoist Heavenspan.

At the same time, the mountain of Dao Essence expanded, growing tremendously large and radiating the power of Essence as it descended.

“Dammit!!” Although the projected face of the Mortal Renegade could withstand the force, Daoist Heavenspan, who was already in bad shape, could only look on in despair, blood oozing out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

He struggled, but in vain. The mountain of Dao Essence continued to fall, causing deafening rumbling sounds to echo through the air. Trapped by the river, Daoist Heavenspan let loose a piercing cry of defiance. He still had many unfinished plans, and had not yet become a true sovereign. He even had a more far-reaching plot in the works, and therefore, simply could not believe that he would die in this moment.

Even worse… he wasn’t even fighting Bai Xiaochun. He might have been able to accept a loss in that scenario, but instead, he was fighting a nameless nobody, which was a humiliation worse than death.

Finally, he chuckled bitterly and lowered his head. He was now wreathed in such intense flames that his face wasn’t even visible, making him seem like nothing more than a conglomeration of fire.

“Bai Xiaochun!” he growled, his eyes flashing, almost as if his vision could pierce all the way down to the Eternal Immortal Domains, and into a certain private chamber in the imperial palace of Arch-Emperor City!

It was almost as if he could see Bai Xiaochun there, meditating!

Even as Bai Xiaochun’s name escaped his lips, he threw his arms wide, causing more shocking flames to erupt out from inside of him!!

Obviously, he had been holding just a little bit back earlier, and had only burned his flesh and blood and life force. However, he had not burned his soul or the Dao that he had acquired from the Mortal Renegade!

But now, he didn’t care. He burned soul and Dao alike, causing a raging sea of flames to spread out in all directions, accompanied by a howl of pain.

“Nirvanic Extermination Projection!!” As flames rippled off of him, they connected to the projection of the Mortal Renegade’s face, forming together into the projection of a body!

As of this moment, there was a full, bodily version of the Mortal Renegade right there!

Daoist Heavenspan was using a divine ability to burn himself into nothing, all in exchange for a trump card from within the Dao of nirvanic extermination!!

He had to pay an extremely heavy price, but in exchange, gained stupefying levels of power. As the mountain of Dao Essence arrived, he howled in a deafening voice that shook the starry sky, and caused the entire world to shake.

“Get the hell out of here!” As a projected incarnation of the Mortal Renegade, Daoist Heavenspan threw his arms out, sending out force that slammed into the mountain, causing cracks to spread out on its surface, and then destroying it!

Even as the fragments of the mountain continued to explode out in all directions, he clenched his fiery hand into a fist and unleashed a punch!

Indescribably powerful fluctuations spread out, causing the river to tremble, and sending innumerable water droplets flying out into the starry sky!!

As all creation shook, Daoist Heavenspan guided his projected incarnation to flee directly toward the true form of the Mortal Renegade!

His ultimate goal was simply to live. He had ignited his soul and Dao, and it would take a long, long time to recover from that. But in the end, he still wanted to continue living!

Inside of the fan was Bai Xiaochi, whose vital energy had been badly damaged. When he saw what was happening, he let out a miserable cry. As for Song Que, his eyes flashed with anger, and powerful fluctuations rolled off of him.

In response to the fluctuations, the sovereign's arm suddenly blazed with shining light like that of a sun.

Immense power shot out, sweeping through the starry sky to the point where it bent under the force. And its target was none other than… Daoist Heavenspan!

The projection of the Mortal Renegade's body immediately began to shake and twist, causing Daoist Heavenspan to go completely mad.

Daoist Heavenspan's life was already teetering unstably, and yet, things weren't over yet. After bashing him with the sovereign's arm, Song Que looked over with bloodshot eyes and sent forth more powerful fluctuations.

Shockingly, he also began to burn himself!!

"I'm not dead yet, Heavenspan, you schmuck!" Fire blazed as he rose to his feet, using his life force, his Dao Essence, and everything else that made him up to summon an enormous, illusory giant around him!

It was a figure wearing a Daoist robe, who was immensely handsome, and had eyes like starlight. If Bai Xiaochun were here, he would recognize this person immediately. The form Song Que had summoned was none other than… the Worldly Daoist!!

Reaching out, he pulled all of the water droplets from the huge river back to him, causing them to form the flesh and blood of the huge giant. As of this moment, the Worldly Daoist looked completely lifelike!!

Next, he reached out with his other hand, causing the fragments of the mountain of Dao Essence to pull back together and hover to his right. Inside of the treasured fan, Bai Xiaochi looked on with excitement as he sent the fan flying over to the Worldly Daoist’s left side.

Despite the time it takes to describe all of these things, they happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Even as Daoist Heavenspan made his break, Song Que unleashed this divine ability and stepped forward to block his path.

Song Que was almost like the living incarnation of the Worldly Daoist, causing the sky to tremble… as he shot toward Daoist Heavenspan.

“DIE!!” he howled, his eyes blazing with madness. After all, Bai Xiaochun wasn’t the only one to hate Daoist Heavenspan. Song Que was also from the Heavenspan Realm, and hated the man all the way down to his bones. As the incarnation of the Worldly Daoist closed in, he clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out toward Daoist Heavenspan.

It contained everything that made up Song Que, and caused the Worldly Daoist’s image to become a dazzling shooting star as he blazed through the starry sky.

Daoist Heavenspan’s face fell. If the sovereign’s arm hadn’t bent space in the area, he might have been able to make it to his destination. But now there was no time. In this moment of deadly crisis, he laughed bitterly, spun in place, and threw both hands out in an incantation gesture. Instantly, a black vortex appeared between the two hands of the Mortal Renegade’s incarnation. Without any hesitation, he shoved that vortex toward the incoming Worldly Daoist.

Rumbling sounds echoed out that surpassed anything in the battle up to this point, shaking the surrounding void until it shattered. It almost seemed like the entire starry sky would collapse. Down in the Eternal Immortal Domains, mountains toppled over, and the Eternal Sea spilled into the surrounding lands!

It was like a terrifying black hole had been created right between Song Que and Daoist Heavenspan, right between the projected incarnations of the Worldly Daoist and the Mortal Renegade.

Eventually, Daoist Heavenspan’s projection couldn’t last any longer, and the black flames collapsed. At the same time, the image of the Worldly Daoist around Song Que also fell to pieces.

Song Que tumbled back, blood spraying wildly out of his mouth. He had done everything he could, and was now like a candle in the wind, just on the verge of perishing. Thankfully, the Saint-Emperor was there, and despite the injuries he had sustained, managed to grab Song Que, and then fall back.

As for Daoist Heavenspan, as soon as the projection of the Mortal Renegade faded away, he appeared there in the starry sky, hair disheveled, face pale. Although no more flames were visible on his person, they were there inside of him, eating away at the last bits of life force he had left.

He suddenly felt very calm. He was no longer thinking about Song Que, the Saint-Emperor, or the countless living beings of the Eternal Immortal Domains. Nor was he thinking about

Bai Xiaochun. Instead… he was looking at a certain location in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Daddy, is it worth it…?

I'm your daughter!!

I beg you, daddy. I beg you….

He heard Du Lingfei’s words from years ago, back in the moment that he had attempted to force her and Bai Xiaochun to fuse together on Heavenspan Island.

“Was it?” he murmured to himself. “Was it worth it…?” All of a sudden, he felt a twinge of pain on the back of his hand, and looked down to see a drop of liquid there. It was a tear, and at the moment, he had no idea how it got there. But as soon as it had touched his searing flesh, it caused pain to wash through him. And then, as he looked, his hand faded away into ash. Then his arm. And the effects continued to spread….

“I wasn’t always like this, was I…?” he thought. He closed his eyes, bitter and confused. Gradually, his head turned to ash along with the rest of his body. As it did, his memories vanished, as did those final words that his daughter had spoken to him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1290 awe-chapter-1291

Daoist Heavenspan had perished!

Back in the Heavenspan Realm, his spectacular talent, his immense power, and his profound scheming had brought ruin to Arch-Emperor City. He very nearly ended the succession of the Arch-Emperors, and brought about the existence of the Wildlands. In the end, he personally destroyed the Heavenspan Realm…. Now, his life was nothing but a thing of the past. He was now ash drifting in the starry sky, his soul gone forever.

No one had heard his final words, and no one would ever know whether he thought it had all been worth it, or not.

No one would ever know what would have happened if the gravekeeper had violated the ancient stipulations, and actually allowed Daoist Heavenspan to lead the Arch-Emperor Dynasty.

The gravekeeper had adhered to the Arch-Ancestor’s wishes, and did not allow someone who lacked the Daoist magics of the Arch-Emperors to lead the exodus from the Heavenspan Realm.

Daoist Heavenspan had lived a thrilling life, but all of his ruthless ambitions had now come to an end.

Mixed emotions could be seen in the eyes of both Song Que and the Saint-Emperor as they watched the ash that was all that remained of Daoist Heavenspan drifting out into the void.

As for all the other living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains, especially the cultivators of the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, they were completely stunned by the battle which had just taken place. Although they couldn’t see everything clearly, they could sense that Daoist Heavenspan was dead, and after a short moment of silence, they broke out into cheering.

They all hated Daoist Heavenspan with a passion, and as their cheers filled the air, Song Que and the Saint-Emperor prepared to return to the Eternal Immortal Domains.

But then, both of their expressions flickered!

A boundless, majestic aura suddenly appeared, something that could fill the entire starry sky and cause pressure to weigh down on all living beings. Both within and without the starry sky, it was the ultimate expression of existence, and it came from none other than the enormous, statue-like Mortal Renegade!

The sky trembled, and the Eternal Immortal Domains shook, causing crevices to open up everywhere. Even the Eternal Sea was affected, and began to sink down due to the invisible force.

Everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains felt struck to the core, and began to shiver, all the way down to their souls. It was as if their thoughts and minds had been wiped away, leaving them capable of feeling only instinctual terror and confusion. It was as if they were suddenly in the presence of the most deadly and vicious enemy possible!!

If that were all there were to the situation, it might not have been a big deal. But strangely, the aura seemed to contain the power of natural law, some sort of force of attraction which caused the previously sinking waters of the Eternal Sea to suddenly begin to rise up into the air!

It wasn’t just the Eternal Sea. Mountains were ripped out of the ground and began to float up, and even people! Regardless of the level of their cultivation base, they all began to rise into the air, their bodies completely beyond their own control!

Cities, palaces, plants, vegetation, animals. Everything in the Eternal Immortal Domains seemed to be affected!

It was a completely shocking scene!

Even Bai Xiaochun began to rise up into the air, along with his private chamber. No protective spell formations had any effect! Shockingly, even the door of his chamber was affected, and shattered, with the resulting fragments slowly floating up!

Now it was possible to see Bai Xiaochun, sitting there cross-legged, withered and brittle. It was impossible to tell whether he was alive or dead!!

He was being affected like everything else in the Eternal Immortal Domains, except for the fact… that he sat there cross-legged and unmoving!!

Bai Xiaochun was the only one to react in such a way. Even the Saint-Emperor and Song Que were trembling, as though fetters had suddenly wrapped around them. With immense difficulty, they turned and looked behind them to see the Mortal Renegade… moving!!

As he hovered there in the starry sky, his hands twitched, and then cracking sounds rang out from his head. At the same time, the dirt and rock that had built up on him over the many years began to crack.

First there were dozens of cracks, then hundreds, and soon thousands. Within moments, there were tens of thousands, and with each new one that appeared, his aura grew more shocking!!

The living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains could hardly think, and in fact, the lands also seemed to be moving upward, albeit very slowly.

As for the Saint-Emperor and Song Que, they were completely overwhelmed by waves of shock.

“He… he….” the Saint-Emperor said shakily, terror shining in his eyes as he watched the cracks spreading out over the surface of the Mortal Renegade.

Song Que’s face was ashen. Both he and the Saint-Emperor had gone all out in their fight with Daoist Heavenspan, and although they had killed him in the end, their battle had only served to reinforce how unimaginably powerful the Mortal Renegade was.

“He’s waking up… ahead of schedule!!” In that moment, the Mortal Renegade’s eyelids twitched, causing massive rumbling sounds to echo out. From the dirt and rocks that were now falling down, it was obvious that the Mortal Renegade was trying to open his eyes!

As for the sealing strip on him that represented the Arch-Emperor, it only took a few short breaths of time for it to vanish completely!

It sounded like a zither string snapping, a sound which filled all of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

And then, for the first time since he had been sealed, the Mortal Renegade’s eyelids… cracked open, revealing something like two suns!!

When those suns appeared in the dark starry sky, they did not shine with blinding light. No, these suns were black, and actually resembled black holes!

And those black holes were none other than… the eyes of the Mortal Renegade!

The Mortal Renegade was waking up!!

In that moment, the sound of a sigh could be heard, seemingly originating from the most ancient of times. It echoed out to fill all creation, filling the starry sky, and even the ruins that were all that remained of the countless living beings that had once existed!

In response to that sigh, the minds of all living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains reeled, and they immediately snapped out of their reveries. Not even paying attention to how they were now floating up into the air, they all looked up into the sky… at the Mortal Renegade’s eyes!!

There were no cries of alarm, but there were innumerable gasps, as a sense of profound terror and helplessness filled them all.

Then, a voice spoke, profoundly ancient, thrumming as if with the Essence of time, causing everything it reached to age.

“I have awakened for one reason. Extermination….”

In that instant, the Eternal Immortal Domains suddenly began to turn gray….

By now, the Mortal Renegade was completely covered with innumerable cracks. Then, rumbling sounds echoed out as he began his first attempt to move!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1291 awe-chapter-1292

As the Mortal Renegade woke up, causing rocks and rubble to rain down off of him, Bai Xiaochun remained cross-legged, seemingly unaffected.

He was withered, his aura apparently dispersed, his eyes closed and his hair floating around him. It was impossible to tell whether he was alive or dead, although there was something profoundly mysterious about him.

For some reason, it seemed that what was sitting there cross-legged was not a human body, but some sort of god!

Out in the starry sky, the ruins where the dandelion seeds had settled were all undergoing shocking transformations.

The glow rising up from them grew stronger, driving away the darkness, and causing life force to flourish, as well as radiance and light.

Spots of light filled the void, seemingly awakening it, causing it to be reborn out of nirvanic extermination!

Before, there had been a pitch-black void, but that was changing. Now, an astounding will seemed to thrum everywhere.

That will caused the darkness to tremble, to begin fighting an epic battle with the radiance and light!

If one could look at that starry sky from high above, it would actually look like an ordinary night sky.

Countless points of light glittered, letting off glows that, while weak, grew powerful as they joined together!

The darkness within the starry sky did not seem willing to be driven away, and tried to inundate the ruins with more darkness. However, that resistance was apparently instinctual, and was not driven by intelligence.

Nirvanic extermination fought with life force in every nook and cranny of the starry sky.

Even stranger, as the light in all of the ruins grew stronger, Bai Xiaochun seemed to become more and more abstruse, and seem more and more like a shocking god.

Although the Mortal Renegade was waking up ahead of schedule, Bai Xiaochun had been at work for years, and had already built a very solid foundation. By now, more than half of the ruins in the starry sky were shining with bright light.

Unfortunately… he had only accomplished that because the Mortal Renegade had been asleep, and unable to oppose him.

Now, the Mortal Renegade was waking up, and while the darkness had only fought back instinctually before, it now seemed to come to life. The starry sky trembled as though it were aware, and the darkness began to resist Bai Xiaochun, and at the same time, attempt to overwhelm the ruins that were already shining with light.

The ruins which had not already been lit up were now under assault, and were already teetering on the verge of failure. As for those which had been lit up already, they were now being battered at madly by the darkness, but still managed to hold their own.

It almost seemed like a stalemate, with Bai Xiaochun preventing the darkness from taking over again, but unable to light up more ruins.

No one could see what was happening, not even Bai Xiaochun. At the moment, he didn’t possess his senses, and was acting on instinct alone. Unfortunately, he was now stuck, and couldn’t continue his work. Meanwhile, in the ruins closest to the Immortal World, there existed a shining dandelion seed. Gradually, the light shining out of that dandelion seed twisted and distorted, transforming into the shape of a person.

It was someone seated cross-legged in meditation, and soon, his facial features became clear. It was Bai Xiaochun!!

It looked like a clone, but at the same time, not a clone. He contained a Dao, and life force, and even Essence power!

No one could see him, but if anyone could, they would have no way to tell whether or not he was the real Bai Xiaochun.

And the truth was that he was actually… a Dao clone!

It was something Bai Xiaochun was doing instinctively as he identified his Dao. Even as that happened, the Mortal Renegade woke up, making it impossible for Bai Xiaochun to continue illuminating the starry sky. Therefore, he shifted to a different tactic!

Instead of spreading further, he would use the fifty percent control that he had… to become a sovereign!!

As soon as his Dao clone appeared, the light shining from that set of ruins grew vastly more intense. The darkness in the area was driven away, provoking a howl of rage. However, there was nothing the darkness could do.

In the same moment that Bai Xiaochun's first Dao clone appeared, the Mortal Renegade's eyes began to shine brightly, and his body trembled more violently. Vast swaths of rock and dirt fell off of him, becoming meteorites that rained down onto the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Even the people in the Eternal Immortal Domains could sense how anxious the Mortal Renegade was in his moment.

"He's nervous?" Song Que said.

The Saint-Emperor could sense the same thing. They exchanged an excited glance, and then looked down at the only person in the Eternal Immortal Domains who was calm and sitting there cross-legged.... Bai Xiaochun!

As Bai Xiaochun's Dao clone formed, the mysterious aura surrounding his true self expanded to fill the entire 300-meter area surrounding him!

Within that area, the shattered lands began to form back together, and brim with life force. Even more shocking to Song Que and the Saint-Emperor was the fact that Bai Xiaochun was now radiating the sensation of Essence!

Before long, the dandelions in a second set of nearby ruins, and then a third... began to shine brightly as two more Dao clones formed!

As they did, they shone with such bright light that the starry sky was transformed, causing all the living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains to look up!

In that moment when the light blazed, the enormous Mortal Renegade looked up, and then spoke in a voice that shook the souls of everyone alive.

“Well isn’t this interesting!”

It was a cold, ancient voice, and as it spoke, his entire body suddenly moved!

As a result, the heavens shook, and endless streams of rock and dirt exploded off of him!

As of this moment, the Mortal Renegade was completely and utterly free from any sealing magics!

He was a giant, floating in the starry sky, with the Eternal Immortal Domains in front of him, like a toy ball that a child might play with. As for the people upon it, they were nothing more than insects!

Everyone in the Eternal Immortal Domains trembled in anxiety, their minds struck with fear and terror. Before, some of them had hoped that they would somehow be able to escape after the Mortal Renegade awoke. But now that he was actually awake, they all knew… that escape was impossible!

All confidence left them as they stared up blankly at the Mortal Renegade, whose right hand was already moving toward the Eternal Immortal Domains as if to grab them!

His hand alone was roughly as big as all of the Eternal Immortal Domains, and its mere movement seemed capable of collapsing the sky!

“I brought nirvanic extermination to all 1,080,000 worlds, and thus gave birth to the Eternal Flower. And today… I will take that flower, and become Eternal!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1292 awe-chapter-1293

The Mortal Renegade’s voice shook the starry sky. Apparently, it also contained his Dao, which was to exterminate anything and everything in existence!

The areas of the starry sky that Bai Xiaochun had occupied were also shaken, and at the same time, darkness spread out like floodwaters.

The Mortal Renegade’s hand seemed to fill the sky as it neared the seemingly doomed Eternal Immortal Domains. It was a critical moment in which all living beings could only look on in shock, trembling. Song Que and the Saint-Emperor were panting; although they were half-sovereigns who weren’t as badly affected as everyone else, they were still struggling simply to react.

Blue veins bulged out on Song Que’s face and neck as he looked up at the enormous, pitch-black hand that already threatened to destroy the sky. As the lands below shook, and as the Eternal Immortal Domains hovered on the verge of collapse, he let out a roar of rage. Throwing all caution to the wind, and ignoring the fact that the pressure was already threatening to destroy him, he once again ignited himself and shot up to meet the gigantic hand.

As for the Saint-Emperor, he chuckled bitterly, then ignited himself as well, and shot after Song Que with just as much determination.

They seemed like nothing when compared to the enormous hand, and yet, they still chose to fight back!

This tragic and moving scene was not visible to the living beings below. However, the Eternal Immortal Domains had a spirit, that being the Eternal Mother, and although she was weak, she could still see what was happening.

A sensation of grief spread out from all living things, even the plants and vegetation, as Song Que and the Saint-Emperor closed in on the hand of the Mortal Renegade!

Both of them were roaring at the tops of their lungs, dazzling light shining off of them in all directions. Unfortunately, even after igniting themselves… they still could not stop that hand.

They could attack with all the might they could muster, and yet… it would do nothing to delay the moment in which the Mortal Renegade’s hand arrived!

Rumbling booms could be heard as blood sprayed out of Song Que’s mouth. He tumbled down, body on the verge of collapsing…. It was the same with the Saint-Emperor, who was now covered with bloody wounds, half of his body crushed to a pulp, and barely conscious. Thankfully, the aura of the Eternal Mother had already extended a measure of protection to them; otherwise, they would have been killed instantly.

Song Que was still aware of what was happening, and he chuckled bitterly. He glanced up despairingly at the Mortal Renegade, and then over at Bai Xiaochun, who was still sitting there cross-legged. Unfortunately, Song Que was too weak to do anything other than stand by as the enormous hand grew larger and larger in the sky….

He could well imagine what would happen if the Mortal Renegade’s hand was not stopped. The people of the Eternal Immortal Domains would die, and then the lands would be shattered. In the end… the Mortal Renegade would absorb the ruins of the Eternal Immortal Domains, and then reach his goal of becoming Eternal!

“Is this the end of it all…?” Song Que murmured, grief welling up inside of him. At that point, he simply closed his eyes.

And yet, it was in that exact moment that Bai Xiaochun’s eyelids twitched, and a shocking aura erupted out from inside of him!

His aura had only spread out for 300 meters before, but now it extended to 30,000 meters. And without even a slight pause, it reached 300,000 meters, and then 3,000,000….

Bai Xiaochun’s aura, as well as his Essence power, rippled out, joined by the fluctuations of a sovereign.

That sovereign aura was like a drop of water flung into a vat of boiling oil. Intense rumbling sounds echoed out, and even as the Mortal Renegade’s hand approached, Bai Xiaochun’s aura became like a glowing shield that spread out in the sky. It covered the living people, the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, the five immortal domains, and all creation! And then, it made contact with the Mortal Renegade’s hand.

As the deafening sound of the impact filled all creation, Song Que’s eyes snapped open. He had sensed how Bai Xiaochun had placed a protective covering over the living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains, and could now see the bright light shining off of him.

“It’s the Arch-Emperor!!”

“The Arch-Emperor is out of seclusion!!”

“Xiaochun….”

“Daddy….”

Countless cries of shock and joy filled the lands. At the same time, Bai Xiaochun slowly rose to his feet, his withered state rapidly fading away.

Then, he lifted his head… and opened his eyes!

As he did, a droning sound filled the Eternal Immortal Domains and the starry sky, a sound that everyone could hear, but whose nature they could not determine. All of the ruins out in the starry sky also thrummed with it, almost as if they contained countless natural and magical laws!

The fifty percent of the ruins in the starry sky that Bai Xiaochun controlled shone with blinding light that soon combined, driving the darkness away from those areas. Even the Dao clones began to thrum with the same sound!

However, the origin of the sound was none other than Bai Xiaochun’s true self, standing there in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

His eyes no longer contained irises and pupils, but rather, shone with a brightness that could look down on anything and everything in existence. The aura of a sovereign swirled around him, causing winds to scream, and shaking half of the starry sky!

The Mortal Renegade’s Dao was one of ultimate destruction, of nirvanic extermination. He wished to extinguish all light in the starry sky, and cast everything into complete darkness.

A Dao like that did not require the approval of any world. And in fact, no world even qualified to approve of it. It was a

Dao which could propel someone into being the most powerful type of sovereign!

It was the same with Bai Xiaochun. His Dao woke life. He had scattered Daoseeds throughout the lifeless void, and then formed Dao clones whose light slowly illuminated the starry sky!

His Dao did not require the approval of any world, and in fact… there was no world that could qualify to offer approval. This was… the most powerful type of Dao!

When he broke out of the Archaean Realm and entered the Sovereign Realm, he was destined to become just like the Mortal Renegade… the most powerful type of sovereign!

“Mortal Renegade!” Bai Xiaochun did not focus his gaze on the enormous hand being blocked by the shield he had created. Instead, he looked further out into the starry sky, at the Mortal Renegade himself, who was looking down on him with a strange gleam in his eyes.

Their gazes locked for a moment as Bai Xiaochun finished rising to his feet. Then, he erupted with explosive energy, and a shocking, powerful aura. At that point, the Mortal Renegade’s hand, which was still touching the shield he had created, was struck, and forced backward!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1293 awe-chapter-1294

“The Dao of radiance and light?” the Mortal Renegade growled. Although his eyes were like black holes, they still managed to flicker as cold as ice. After his hand was shoved back by the backlash attack, it began to glow with a darkness reminiscent of midnight, and then descended once again!

It now pulsed with even greater power than before, causing everything around it to collapse. The living creatures in the Eternal Immortal Domains all coughed up blood, and many of the mountains which had been floating up into the air shattered.

Terrifying fluctuations rolled out that seemed capable of destroying anything and everything, and seemed just on the verge of completely overwhelming the Eternal Immortal Domains. However, after Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet, he began to fly upward in a blur. At that point, the terrifying fluctuations finally seemed to meet their match, and were incapable of advancing any further. They even began to shrink back a bit.

Moments later, Bai Xiaochun appeared high in the sky, right beneath the Mortal Renegade’s hand. He was so small compared to the hand that he almost wasn’t visible, and yet, his aura could shake heaven and earth. Although he was tiny, to everyone present… he definitely seemed powerful enough to dominate that enormous hand.

The instant Bai Xiaochun appeared, he clenched his right hand into a fist, and focused his aura. Right now, his thoughts were completely clear. He was a sovereign now, although that brought him no joy. He was only focused on one thing….

“No matter what it takes, I will defeat you!!” A sovereign aura erupted out from his fist, and at the same time, a shadowy figure appeared behind him. Bai Xiaochun was utilizing his Undying Sovereign’s Fist!!

In the past, it had always been something of a misnomer to call it the Undying Sovereign’s Fist. But now, he was a sovereign, and therefore, this fist strike was so much more powerful than before that not even he was sure how to calculate it. All he knew… was that it could stop the Mortal Renegade’s hand from descending!!

It was a confidence that seemed to be born from the fact that he was now a sovereign. As the fist struck, the figure behind Bai Xiaochun, which was large enough to prop up heaven and earth, also struck out. The resulting fist strike was roughly the same size as the Mortal Renegade’s palm. One above, one below, flying forth… to strike each other!

Strictly speaking, this was actually… the first blow to be struck between Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade.

A massive boom rang out, and the starry sky seemed to crack and split. A massive shockwave rolled out, distorting the air, and causing everything to tremble.

The Eternal Immortal Domains were shaken, but Bai Xiaochun was there to protect them, and bore the brunt of the force. Despite being a sovereign, and despite having the powers of regeneration from the Undying Codex, he still coughed up a huge mouthful of blood.

As for the Eternal Immortal Domains, they shook, and many mountains crumbled, but they were kept safe overall.

Furthermore, the force of the impact actually caused them to start floating away from the battle.

That was exactly the result Bai Xiaochun had hoped for. As for the Mortal Renegade, his hand trembled from the impact, and his eyes flickered. Ignoring the Eternal Immortal Domains as they drifted away, he focused all of his divine sense directly onto Bai Xiaochun.

Bai Xiaochun stared right back at him, completely unfazed by his enormous size. Now that Bai Xiaochun was a sovereign, he knew that if he wanted to, he could also grow to a similar size.

Unfortunately, he also knew that he was not a match for the Mortal Renegade right now. Although he controlled fifty percent of the starry sky, so did the Mortal Renegade. And the Mortal Renegade had existed for too many years to count. Therefore, there was only one option for him in this fight.

“I need to take control of more of the starry sky. I need more ruins to shine with light, and I need more Dao clones!”

Bai Xiaochun knew that this was the only viable tactic. As soon as he had become a sovereign, he had sensed that there was something very mysterious and even unfathomable about this starry sky.

Whatever it was, it was the foundation of everything here, and although he could sense it, he couldn’t touch it. However, with every Dao clone he added, and the brighter the ruins shone, the clearer it became.

“After the Sovereign Realm is the Eternal Realm…. Whatever mysterious and unfathomable thing I can sense everywhere… could it possibly be the path leading to the

Eternal?” There was one thing he was certain of: consuming the Eternal Immortal Domains to become Eternal was only one path, and he would not choose that one.

At this point, the Mortal Renegade spoke.

“It's been a long time since I’ve met someone who could stand up to my palm strike.” As far as he was concerned, it didn’t matter that the Eternal Immortal Domains were slipping away. He could catch up to them whenever he wanted. However, Bai Xiaochun’s presence put him in a state of unease that he did his best to keep hidden.

After all, the way Bai Xiaochun had become a sovereign… fundamentally plundered from the Mortal Renegade, driving away the darkness of his will. Obviously, that was a major threat to him.

“My battleship is missing its main banner. Once I bless you with nirvanic extermination, I’ll use your soul to craft the missing piece.” With that, the Mortal Renegade extended his hand, not to perform an incantation gesture, but to point at Bai Xiaochun!

“World Entombment!” he said, his ancient voice echoing out into the starry sky. All of a sudden, the void in front of Bai Xiaochun distorted, and nine statues materialized!

Each was 30,000 meters tall, and radiated an indescribable aura of death and nirvanic extermination!

In fact, as Bai Xiaochun looked at them, he realized that they weren’t really nine statues, but rather… nine enormous worlds, just like the Eternal Lands!!

Apparently… these were nine enormous worlds that had once existed within the starry sky!

Yet again, the Mortal Renegade spoke.

“The Eternal World, or should I call it the Eternal Domain, was once the center of nine starry skies, the nine great worlds…. Once upon a time, I wiped those nine worlds out of existence. Only then did I come to bring nirvanic extermination to this place….” Although the Mortal Renegade did not speak in a loud voice, it was still powerful enough to shake the entire starry sky.

Even as the words left his mouth, those nine huge statues began to shine with black light, creating nine enormous vortexes that then shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

Within the vortexes were countless devilish specters, howling madly as they tried to climb out to devour Bai Xiaochun.

Each of the statues radiated pressure equivalent to a sovereign, or perhaps even beyond that level, a force that caused Bai Xiaochun’s expression to flicker.

“So,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “in addition to the Eternal World, there used to be nine other great worlds….” It was a fact Bai Xiaochun had never been made aware of, not even in the memories of the Worldly Daoist.

These nine statues, each one containing destructive power similar to the Eternal World, were a divine ability that Bai Xiaochun had never heard of before!

He had just become a sovereign, and although he had fought other sovereigns in the past, those foes had always been weak soul projections. As such, he had never been too sure of what type of divine abilities sovereigns could use.

Not even the memories of the Worldly Daoist had helped much in that regard. However, despite being shocked, he didn’t retreat. After all, if he avoided this attack, the nine vortexes would surely go after the fleeing Eternal Immortal Domains!

Eyes bloodshot, he thought, “I only have one option: fight!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1294 awe-chapter-1295

In the past, Bai Xiaochun feared death, because he wanted to live forever!

In the past, he didn’t understand why there had to be things like fighting and killing!

But that was the past. Although he still retained some of that past innocence in his heart, he had grown up. He was a sovereign now, and he knew that if he wanted to live forever, he could not allow himself to fear death!

He knew that if he wanted to put an end to fighting and killing, then he had to be completely invincible!

Eyes bloodshot, he faced the nine vortexes and threw his hands out in front of him, causing his sovereign aura to blaze.

Then, he performed a quick incantation gesture, and spoke in a low voice.

“Former!”

Instantly, his Sutra of Former Reincarnation appeared. The nine vortexes, which contained power so destructive it could end the starry sky, suddenly shuddered as magical symbols began to pour out from them!

The nine vortexes really did come from sprawling worlds that the Mortal Renegade had brought nirvanic extermination to, worlds that had their own starry skies. Therefore, Bai Xiaochun’s use of the Sutra of Former

Reincarnation did not just dredge up the memories of living beings, but of entire starry skies!

Although those starry skies of the past had been destroyed and transformed into statues, their memories still existed!

The magical symbols became countless images of living things. There were men and women, old and young, even animals and other strange entities. They were howling in rage and resentment as they flew, not toward Bai Xiaochun, but toward the vortex from which they had come forth.

The Mortal Renegade was visibly surprised, and yet, things weren’t over yet. Bai Xiaochun could sense the sovereign power within himself ebbing, and yet, he still performed another incantation gesture!

“Present!”

The Sutra of Present Life and Death!

Now that Bai Xiaochun was a sovereign, this divine ability was even more extraordinary. As soon as it appeared, the starry sky trembled, and an enormous, ancient gate appeared behind him!

This time, it was not the Gate of Death, which was how he had used the technique in the past, but rather… the Gate of Life!

And behind the vortexes appeared nine gates, each of which was a Gate of Death!

The Sutra of Present Life and Death could reverse life and death, but this time, instead of traveling from life into death, it was the opposite. Death to life. Darkness to light. As the nine vortex were attacked by the magical symbols, causing their very foundations to be deeply shaken, the auras of death that surrounded them began to dissipate.

Even more shocking was that, as the auras of death disappeared, the air of nirvanic extermination faded, and it seemed as though life force would soon appear.

It was as if they were reverting into the nine great worlds they had once been in the past!

At this point, the Mortal Renegade no longer looked surprised. Snorting coldly, he extended his right hand and performed an incantation gesture.

“Be destroyed!” he said coolly. The nine vortexes instantly destabilized and began to fall apart. Obviously, the Mortal Renegade realized how dangerous things could get if he let things proceed. After all, he wanted to kill Bai Xiaochun as quickly as possible.

However, before the nine vortexes could actually be destroyed, Bai Xiaochun looked at them with bloodshot eyes and shouted, “Future!!”

Suddenly, a soul connection snapped into place, and something like an aura of karma could be sensed. And the target was… the Mortal Renegade!!

Instantly, the nine vortexes shattered, and the power of nirvanic extermination within them hurtled toward Bai Xiaochun with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force.

That power seemed unstoppable, and was more than enough to slaughter a sovereign. However, Bai Xiaochun had already used his Sutra of the Former to weaken the vortexes. And the power of the Gates of Life and Death had sapped their energy even further.

Therefore, although they were still terrifyingly powerful, they were not enough to kill Bai Xiaochun. The magical symbols of the Sutra of the Former shattered, and the Gates of Life and Death fell to pieces. Then, blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth as he was sent tumbling backward. At the same time, the power of the Sutra of the Future sent the same blow to the Mortal Renegade.

Howling, the Mortal Renegade ignored the backlash injuries, sweeping his left hand out as if to grab Bai Xiaochun.

As his hand passed through the void, the starry sky around it shattered.

In that moment of crisis, Bai Xiaochun backed up, hands blurring with an incantation gesture that sent the Essence of time out as Gravitational Extermination.

This was Bai Xiaochun’s first time using Gravitational Extermination as a sovereign. After taking control of fifty percent of the starry sky, and forming numerous Dao clones, his control over the Essence of time had improved, and therefore, his Gravitational Extermination was far more powerful. Reaching out toward one particular direction of the starry sky, he made a grasping gesture!

“Time Hourglass!”

In response, the hourglass region that he had discovered years ago suddenly trembled, and a Dao clone appeared there!

Bai Xiaochun had prepared long ago to use the precious treasure if needed. Therefore, as soon as he called out to it, and his Essence of time built up, the entire area trembled, and the region of countless hourglasses vanished.

When it reappeared… it was in the exact location the Eternal Immortal Domains had previously occupied in the starry sky!

Now, a gigantic hourglass suddenly existed there!

Bai Xiaochun had control over the Essence of time, but did not have complete control over this hourglass. After all, he did not own it. Given enough time, he would have been able to refine it and make it his own, but there was no time for that now. Instead of using the full extent of its powers, he would use it… like a club to beat his enemy!!

He would attack the Mortal Renegade with a magical item that had once belonged to the man’s Master!

The instant the hourglass appeared, the Mortal Renegade’s expression flickered. He recognized that hourglass, and knew that it was a precious treasure left behind by his Master. Back when his Master had perished, that hourglass had vanished without a trace.

The Mortal Renegade had searched for it, but in vain. Eventually, he had assumed it lost for good. Therefore, to see Bai Xiaochun summon it right here in this fight was profoundly shocking.

As the hourglass appeared, a vast array of hourglasses came into being around the Mortal Renegade, changing the flow of time and creating a sealing power. Clearly, Bai Xiaochun… wanted to seal the Mortal Renegade!

The Mortal Renegade closed his eyes briefly, then opened them and threw his hands wide, causing boundless black smoke to pour off of him. Within that smoke was death and nirvanic extermination, which immediately rushed toward the hourglasses.

The hourglass had once belonged to his Master, and had many extraordinary aspects. Although the Mortal Renegade was strong, he was not a master of the Essence of time, and therefore, the smoke he unleashed was having a hard time suppressing the hourglasses.

However, the power of the hourglasses was limited. Although they could keep the Mortal Renegade locked down temporarily, eventually, he would be able to break free.

Bai Xiaochun had been aware of that from the beginning. Ignoring the Mortal Renegade, he closed his eyes and sent his divine sense out to touch the Dao clones that existed in the fifty percent of the starry sky that he controlled.

Instantly, the Dao clones in hundreds of thousands of various ruins opened their eyes. Each of those clones *was* Bai Xiaochun, and could be controlled by him just like his true self. In fact, in many ways, they didn't even seem like clones.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1295 awe-chapter-1296

Hundreds of thousands of Dao clones rose up, radiating bright light. It was with shocking speed that they flew out… in the direction of the other parts of the starry sky where there was no light, only darkness!

This was Bai Xiaochun’s plan. He knew that he wasn’t a match for the Mortal Renegade, and therefore, he would temporarily seal him, and use the bought time to try to struggle for an advantage!

“Sixty percent. If I can control just sixty percent of the starry sky…. Then I would be on the same power level as the Mortal Renegade!”

Under Bai Xiaochun’s control, his numerous Dao clones spread through the starry sky. As for the Mortal Renegade, although he was under massive pressure, he could sense what was happening. Looking over at Bai Xiaochun, he smiled.

“First you used divine abilities backed by the Essence of time. And then you used my Master’s precious treasure. And now you want to gain the upper hand in terms of the battlefield. You’re not a bad opponent.” At that point, his aura suddenly shifted, and his eyes flashed. Then, countless streams of black smoke suddenly shot out from him!

There were hundreds of thousands of them, too many to count, and it was without hesitation that they shot out into the starry sky. As they did, the Mortal Renegade slowly shrank down smaller and smaller, until he was the size of an ordinary human!

Soon, the streams of black smoke appeared in the dark half of the starry sky, where they sank down into the hundreds of thousands of ruins, almost like seeds. Then, they began to absorb the death and nirvanic extermination around them, slowly becoming… Dao clones of the Mortal Renegade!

They looked exactly like him, and as they opened their cold eyes, they flew out at top speed to meet Bai Xiaochun's Dao clones. Their intention: to slaughter them all!

From the moment Bai Xiaochun enacted his plan until the Mortal Renegade responded, only a short bit of time passed. Then, the two groups of Dao clones met out in the starry sky… and a massive battle unfolded!!

As more than a million Dao clones clashed, the Eternal World shook, and massive rumbling sounds filled the starry sky.

It was a shocking sight, and at the same time, was very bizarre. There were more than a million Dao clones, but only two versions. It was a type of war the likes of which had never been fought before, and which surpassed the imaginations of countless cultivators.

Meanwhile, back where the Eternal Immortal Domains had once been positioned, the Mortal Renegade was now normal size again. Breaking out of the crushing power of the hourglasses, he then blurred into motion, appearing in front of Bai Xiaochun and unleashing a fist strike.

Shocked, Bai Xiaochun defended himself, then tumbled backward, blood spraying out of his mouth.

Shaking his head, the Mortal Renegade then launched another punch!

Booms rang out as, in a short period of time, the Mortal Renegade unleashed more than a hundred fist strikes onto Bai Xiaochun. At a certain point, Bai Xiaochun howled, smacking his bag of holding to produce a huge collection of medicinal pills.

He was starting to get very anxious, as it was more than obvious that his fleshly body was not on the same level as the Mortal Renegade's. Although he had been aware of that fact earlier, after experiencing it first hand in this exchange, it was even more obvious.

In fact, he could tell that not even the Undying Codex's powers of regeneration were enough to heal him. Worse, the Mortal Renegade's powers of regeneration were also extraordinary!

"I don't have any other option than to use medicinal pills!" Feeling very anxious, he began throwing out pills. Many of them were mystery pills that he had never dared to experiment with himself. There were also Aphrodisiac Pills, Soul Convergence Pills, Fantasy Pills, and others that he was familiar with.

In that moment of crisis, he didn't really pay attention to what sort of pills they were. Without hesitation, he began to toss out his entire stock.

"Detonate!"

"Detonate!!"

"Detonate!!!"

Soon, a multicolored haze of smoke began to fill the area as one pill after another exploded.

Even the immensely powerful Mortal Renegade couldn't avoid being affected. Expression flickering, he fell back.

“What is all this stuff?!” He immediately sent out waves of energy to defend himself, and drive away the smoke. For some reason, he already felt a strange heat building up inside of him….

Frowning, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun. Earlier, before being sealed, he had viewed him as simply a tough opponent. In fact, his desire to do battle had even been piqued. But now… he suddenly realized that he might have misjudged things.

When Bai Xiaochun saw the Mortal Renegade backing up, he breathed a sigh of relief, and similarly fell back. Of course, he didn’t dare to come into contact with that medicinal cloud himself either. At the same time, he knew that the key to attaining victory in this fight was sealing the Mortal Renegade to buy time. And if he didn’t seize the upper hand, and his opponent started fighting with deadly techniques again, then he would be in a bad position.

“Live Forever Lamp!” he shouted, quickly performing a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, countless Live Forever Lamps appeared in the starry sky, surrounding the Mortal Renegade.

Without hesitating for even a moment, he then shouted, “Be destroyed!”

Instantly, the Live Forever Lamps exploded, causing massive shockwaves to batter at the Mortal Renegade, giving rise to numerous vortexes.

And then the Essence of time appeared. Shockingly, Bai Xiaochun was again trying to trap the Mortal Renegade.

Throwing his arms out, he said, “The starry sky is the furnace!”

Bai Xiaochun was drawing fully on his sovereign powers to transform the starry sky in the area into a huge pill furnace!

And the Mortal Renegade was right in the middle of it!

This was his second idea of how to seal the Mortal Renegade; to refine him using pill concocting techniques!

However, even as the starry sky furnace appeared, the Mortal Renegade frowned, and took a step toward the Live Forever Lamp vortexes. Before he could pass through them, Bai Xiaochun shouted, “Eternal Mother!!”

The Eternal Immortal Domains were still floating away into the distance. There, at the end of the Eternal River, was a huge bell, within which was a glimmering sphere of light. Although it was much darker than before, it could still respond to Bai Xiaochun’s call, and began to shine dazzlingly.

The light shot out of the Eternal Immortal Domains, through the void, and appeared right next to the Mortal Renegade. Then, it pierced into the vortexes, causing them to shine in spectacular fashion, and resist the attack of the Mortal Renegade.

“If it weren’t for the fact that I need to refine you, Eternal Mother, I would have slaughtered you in the beginning. How dare you try resist me!” Snorting coldly, the Mortal Renegade unleashed a fist strike.

The vortexes vibrated, and the will of the Eternal Mother seemed to tremble on the verge of collapse. In that critical moment, everyone back in the Eternal Immortal Domains, including the Saint-Emperor, Song Que, and all other living beings… suddenly heard the voice of the Eternal Mother speaking to them.

“Children. I need… your strength….”

In response, all living beings, from people to animals, and even the plants, shivered as their life force, and even their souls… responded to the voice, and began to give it power!

Innumerable motes of light rose up from the Eternal Immortal Domains, and then shot toward the vortexes surrounding the Mortal Renegade, fusing into them, causing them to cast brilliant light out to combat the darkness.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1296 awe-chapter-1297

At this point, Bai Xiaochun heard the Eternal Mother speaking to him. “You have ten breaths of time!”

In response, his hands blurred in an incantation gesture, and then he flung them out in front of him. In response, the starry sky began to sink down, surrounding the Mortal Renegade like a pill furnace.

“Time is the fire!” As he waved his sleeve, boundless time seemed to flow toward the starry sky pill furnace.

Inside the furnace, the Mortal Renegade’s face flickered, and he quickly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Then he shoved his hand out in front of him, causing masses of black smoke to roil out and batter against the pill furnace.

Moments ago, he had assumed he would be able to escape from the furnace easily. But the Eternal Mother was powering it with energy from all of the living beings of the Eternal Immortal Domains, making it impossible for him to escape from it for ten breaths of time.

As the moments ticked by, Bai Xiaochun’s voice again rang out.

“Live forever medicinal ingredients! Concoct this sovereign into a pill!”

His hand flashed with incantation gestures as the concocting process proceeded. At that point, ten breaths of time passed, and the living beings in the Eternal Immortal

Domains all coughed up blood, and the sphere of light that was the Eternal Immortal Domains turned so dark that it seemed like it might be destroyed.

However, their entire goal had been to buy time for Bai Xiaochun. And now, even as their energy faded away, the vortexes around the starry sky pill furnace transformed into medicinal plants, and the pill furnace itself snapped shut. Then, the fire of time made it complete!

This was not an ordinary session of pill concocting; Bai Xiaochun was using his sovereign cultivation base to unleash a powerful divine ability, causing a sense of peril to rise up in the Mortal Renegade the likes of which he hadn't experienced for many years!!

Another opponent might have been capable of sealing him for a moment or two. But the Mortal Renegade knew that Bai Xiaochun wanted to do much more than that with this starry sky pill furnace of his. At that point, his eyes flickered, and he suddenly inhaled sharply.

As he did, the hundreds of thousands of Dao clones out in the starry suddenly collapsed into black smoke, then vanished.

When they reappeared, they were blasting through the starry sky pill furnace to return to the Mortal Renegade.

Bai Xiaochun's face fell, and he attempted to stop it from happening, but could not. In the blink of an eye, a massive, destructive power had built up inside of the pill furnace, which seemed to be just on the verge of exploding!

The hundreds of thousands of Dao clones caused a deafening boom to ring out as the pill furnace, unable to withstand the force, exploded!

As the pill furnace exploded, the fire of time couldn’t withstand the force, and was wiped away. And then, a boundless black smoke of death and nirvanic extermination swept out in all directions.

From within the black smoke, the Mortal Renegade emerged, his eyes blazing with killing intent.

“It seems I underestimated y--” he said, his voice as cold as ice. However, before he could finish, the ashen-faced Bai Xiaochun looked at him with a strange gleam in his eyes. Obviously, Bai Xiaochun had hoped to seal him for longer, but had been aware that it probably wasn’t possible.

Therefore, without hesitation, he took advantage of the sudden absence of the Mortal Renegade’s Dao clones to cause his own Dao clones to suddenly explode!

Far away, hundreds of thousands of Dao clones transformed into a host of dandelion seeds, which then began to speed out through the starry sky.

Earlier, the Mortal Renegade’s host of Dao clones would have been able to stop them. But now, a hole had appeared in his battle strategy, and Bai Xiaochun was very quick to react to it. Before the Mortal Renegade could do anything to stop him, the dandelion seeds spread out like a white ocean… filling the entire starry sky and descending upon all 1,080,000 sets of ruins!

As they did, the dandelions formed back into Dao clones, and began to shine with radiant light that fought back against the darkness.

Bai Xiaochun knew that the Mortal Renegade would resist him, although he would probably not go all out in his efforts to do so. He would likely threaten the Eternal Immortal

Domains in an attempt to distract Bai Xiaochun. After all, even though he wasn’t a match for the Mortal Renegade, he couldn’t be defeated in a short time, not unless the Mortal Renegade went completely all out. Therefore, if the Mortal Renegade didn’t do something to try to stop his Dao clones, then the end result would be a foregone conclusion.

And of course, if the Mortal Renegade consumed the Eternal Flower, then Bai Xiaochun would be the powerless one. So how could he let that happen?

Both Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade understood all of the various implications. Bai Xiaochun was almost like a cockroach; short of completely exterminating him, few methods would be effective in dealing with him.

Although the Mortal Renegade was now somewhat behind, he was still incredibly powerful. Despite having been weakened a bit by Bai Xiaochun, his expression remained the same as he exploded, sending 1,080,000 streams of black smoke back out into the starry sky. Within moments, he had 1,080,000 Dao clones!

Within every set of ruins that existed out in the starry sky, the Mortal Renegade’s Dao clones began to fight Bai Xiaochun’s!!

Instead of one full-scale battle, there were now 1,080,000 fights going on throughout the starry sky, causing booms and rumbles to echo out without cease.

Looking grimly at Bai Xiaochun, the Mortal Renegade said, “You are the first person to ever fight me in such a manner, and the first person to push me into a corner like this.”

He had not been as badly injured as Bai Xiaochun had, and yet, was still not sure which of them had the greater powers of regeneration.

But in the end, Bai Xiaochun could not inflict fatal blows on the Mortal Renegade, whereas the Mortal Renegade’s attacks forced Bai Xiaochun to go all out in defense, and still get wounded.

“But that doesn’t matter. It’s time to end things!” Narrowing his eyes, he shot toward Bai Xiaochun and extended his right hand. As he did, his thumb turned pitch black, becoming like a black hole filled with the power of nirvanic extermination, a power that instantly resonated with the surrounding starry sky.

“Finger of Extermination!” he said coolly. As he did, all 1,080,000 of his Dao clones similarly extended their right hands, their thumbs turning pitch black as they unleashed the same attack… Finger of Extermination!!

The might of so many Fingers of Extermination caused Bai Xiaochun’s face to fall. He, as well as all of his Dao clones, immediately fell back.

Unfortunately, the Fingers of Extermination had already locked onto their targets, so no matter how he backed up, he couldn’t escape. The Mortal Renegade’s hand swept down, and the starry sky trembled. 1,080,000 hands swept down, and explosive power was unleashed!

In that moment of crisis, Bai Xiaochun took a deep breath. Howling as the Undying Codex operated at full power, he used the Mountain Shaking Bash, his Undying Hex, and finally his Throat Crushing Grasp, all to fight back against the Finger of Extermination!

All of his 1,080,000 Dao clones did the same thing, causing intense rumbling sounds to fill the surrounding ruins.

No louder sound had ever filled this starry sky! Moments later, Bai Xiaochun’s Dao clones all staggered backward, blood spraying out of their mouths, their bodies listing feebly, their life force teetering on the verge of collapse. Bai Xiaochun could sense that the shocking nature of the Finger of Extermination was something his Undying Codex couldn’t quite deal with. It shook him all the way down to his soul!

As the Finger of Extermination stabbed deep into Bai Xiaochun and all of his Dao clones, the Mortal Renegade looked over coldly and prepared a shocking follow-up attack!

“If things keep going like this,” Bai Xiaochun thought, “I'm dead beyond the shadow of a doubt!!”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1297 awe-chapter-1298

“This isn't going to work….” Bai Xiaochun thought. “1,080,000 ruins aren’t going to be enough. If I want to defeat the Mortal Renegade, I need more outside power….”

Eyes bloodshot, he shouted, “Time Immemorial Codex!”

The Time Immemorial Codex consisted of the Sutras of the Former, Present, and Future, all of which were divine abilities based on the Essence of time.

Before becoming a sovereign, Bai Xiaochun could not not have combined the powers of the sutras to release the true potential of the Time Immemorial Codex.

But now, as a sovereign, he had far more control over both Essence and cultivation base, and thus, was in a far different position than before.

In terms of what exactly the combined power of the Time Immemorial Codex would look like, not even Bai Xiaochun was fully sure. However, considering that he had created it, he had an inkling.

Before, he had often thought that his speculations about what the Time Immemorial Codex could eventually do might have been a bit too outrageous. But now, with full control over the Essence of time, he suddenly realized… that his concerns might have been incorrect!

“Former!” he shouted, reaching up to touch his forehead. Instantly, his memories became magical symbols that swirled out to form a spinning vortex.

“Present!” The Gates of Life and Death appeared, one behind the Mortal Renegade, one behind himself.

“Future!” Their fates were now intertwined, whether the Mortal Renegade wanted them to be or not. And although the Mortal Renegade was actually capable of severing that connection… Bai Xiaochun did not give him the time to do so. Without the slightest pause, he touched his own forehead and simultaneously pointed at the Mortal Renegade!

“Fusion: Time Immemorial, Everlasting Existence!”

Rumbling sounds echoed out as the vortex surrounding Bai Xiaochun exploded in size. Somehow, it seemed to connect to some other unknown location; at the same time, the starry sky around Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade began to twist and spin. A tempest of time sprang up, filled with strange images and sights.

A mysterious power came with that tempest of time, causing the Mortal Renegade’s Finger of Extermination to instantly weaken, along with the attacks being unleashed by his Dao clones in the 1,080,000 worlds in the starry sky!

“The River of Time and Space?” the Mortal Renegade blurted, his face falling. “Impossible! No, wait! This isn’t the River of Time and Space. This… exists *outside* of the River of Time and Space!”

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaochun looked on in surprise as the vortex around them suddenly vanished, and everything went back to normal. But then, only a moment later, it was to the shock of both opponents that, off in the distance, in the location where the Eternal Flower had once hung in the starry sky, a vast army of devilish specters could be seen.

Behind that army was a massive giant, striding in the direction of the Eternal Flower.

That giant… was none other than the Mortal Renegade!

This… was a scene from the distant past, right after the Mortal Renegade finished destroying everything else in existence, and arrived at the Eternal Flower!

Time Immemorial, Everlasting Existence was a fusion of the former, the present, and the future. It was a Daoist magic that… recalled ancient history, and allowed one to step into the past.

However, it was different than the legendary River of Time and Space. By stepping into that river, one could actually travel to the past, and even change it. At least, that was what the legends spoke of. No one had ever done such a thing. Not even the Mortal Renegade was capable of entering the River of Time and Space.

Naturally, Bai Xiaochun's Time Immemorial Codex was not capable of doing so either. It was more like a mirror that could reflect the river. And yet, the reflection it cast was no mere illusion!

Although one could not change the past, if one were to be injured by events or entities from this reflection of the past, they would not vanish once the mirror vanished!

Bai Xiaochun had no other options. He knew that he could not defeat the Mortal Renegade single-handedly, nor could his 1,080,000 Dao clones achieve victory. Therefore, he needed outside help. And thus, by means of his Time Immemorial, Everlasting Existence, he would step into the past and search for a way to achieve victory there!

“This is where you want to fight?” the Mortal Renegade said. He laughed, and then reached out toward the version of himself that was hanging over the Eternal Immortal Domains. The other Mortal Renegade looked over in confusion. But then, to Bai Xiaochun’s shock, black smoke suddenly poured out of the Mortal Renegade of the past, transforming into numerous vicious faces that, under the control of the present-day Mortal Renegade, shot toward Bai Xiaochun.

“This can’t be right....” Bai Xiaochun thought, nearly weeping. Although his cultivation base was already significantly drained because of using the Time Immemorial Codex, he gritted his teeth and once again twisted time.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as another vortex sprang up around both him and the Mortal Renegade, covering the starry sky, rendering physical vision and divine sense useless. When things returned to normal, they were at another point in the past, surrounded by nothing but empty space.

“Done playing around?” the Mortal Renegade said coolly. He shot toward Bai Xiaochun, who tried to twist time again. Unfortunately, his cultivation base still needed a moment to recover, so he was forced to simply back away. Booms rang out as the Mortal Renegade landed a blow, causing Bai Xiaochun to tumble backward, blood spraying out of his mouth. However, at that point, he had enough energy to reverse time again.

And thus, he and the Mortal Renegade continued to shift back and forth through moments of the past. Bai Xiaochun continued to try to find some advantage that would help him to gain victory, but sadly, all he could do was view the past, not change it. And every time he reappeared, he was forced to flee again.

Although he never got the advantage he sought, the fact that the Mortal Renegade was forced to use numerous trump cards to try to kill him ensured that this trip through time was actually an effective way to defend himself.

The Mortal Renegade's face continued to turn grimmer and grimmer. Although Bai Xiaochun felt like he was in the passive position, so did the Mortal Renegade. Although the trip back in time had not affected him negatively in any way, he was getting increasingly frustrated by his inability to actually kill Bai Xiaochun.

“Who is this guy? The fact that his cultivation led him to this level shows that he's no ordinary individual. Furthermore, he is like me in that he pursued his own Dao.... But how come fighting him seems like some sort of comedy routine!?” The Mortal Renegade couldn't help but glare furiously at Bai Xiaochun, who was as frustrating to chase as a mouse whose tail had been stepped on.

Even worse... as Bai Xiaochun came to realize that the Mortal Renegade actually couldn't do anything to him as they flitted back through time, he started to negotiate....

“Hey, Mortal Renegade. Let's talk things over. Since you can't kill me, and I can't kill you, why don't we just call it quits...?

“I know it wasn't easy for you to wake yourself up. Do you really *have* to eat my home? Look, how about this: You leave the Eternal Flower alone, and the two of us can become friends!

“There’s really no need for all this fighting and killing. There are always other ways to work things out. We can solve them, whatever problems you have. Come come. Let’s talk things out. I'm sure we can figure out a way for you to become Eternal.

“Ai, come on, talk to me!” As Bai Xiaochun continued to chatter, the Mortal Renegade’s face began to turn green from rage. In the end, he finally couldn’t take it anymore.

“SHUT UP!”

Startled, Bai Xiaochun quickly twisted time again, taking himself and the Mortal Renegade backward once again. When they reappeared, they were in some unknown period of time, and their fight continued….

Meanwhile, out in the 1,080,000 sets of ruins, their Dao clones continued to fight to the death.

Eventually, after many shifts, and much fighting, the Mortal Renegade felt like he was going crazy. And Bai Xiaochun was starting to tire, both physically and mentally. He continued to try to negotiate with the Mortal Renegade regarding the Eternal Flower, but nothing worked. Finally, he drew even more deeply on his cultivation base in an attempt to shift further back in time than he had so far.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1298 awe-chapter-1299

The tempest of time once again swept over Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade, this time in even more majestic fashion than before. When it cleared, the two of them were some distance away from each other. And instead of immediately lunging toward Bai Xiaochun like he had in the past, the Mortal Renegade looked around in surprise.

Bai Xiaochun could also sense something astonishing, and looked around with wide eyes!

Some distance away in the starry sky was an immense vortex, vastly larger than the Mortal Renegade’s previous enormous giant form.

Within that swirling vortex was a strange aura that was not of the Eternal World!!

Even more shocking was that, as Bai Xiaochun looked over, he clearly saw an ancient, decrepit battleship, seemingly struggling to emerge from the vortex!!

Bai Xiaochun recognized that battleship! It was the very same one he had seen in the valley of the black clouds in the Immortal World! This was… that very same ship that was filled with a boundless sensation of death!

“That’s….” Bai Xiaochun was so shaken that he almost let out a howl of grief at how bad his luck was. He could accept that he ended up going right back to the moment when the Mortal Renegade appeared above the Eternal Flower. But how could he have gone right back to when this battleship appeared?

“The Mortal Renegade inherited his Dao, right…?” he thought, shivering. His first thought was that he needed to shift time again; after all, it would be horrible if he reacted too slowly, and the Mortal Renegade gained some enlightenment from this situation.

But then, at the last minute, his eyes flickered, and he looked back at the vortex.

“What if this is the advantage I’ve been looking for?” He hesitated, not quite willing to flee right off the bat. After all, he had shifted time enough to realize that this was a very unique and strange situation.

“Maybe I can find some weakness in the Mortal Renegade’s Dao?” Eyes flickering, he decided to watch for a bit longer, and if anything unexpected happened, to flee immediately.

Even as he considered these things, intense rumbling sounds could be heard from within the vortex. The ancient battleship struggled, pulling even further out into the open, and revealing an old man sitting on the prow, clad in a black robe!

His face was completely expressionless, and a wound could be seen on his forehead. However, no blood could be seen; clearly, the wound had long since healed.

It was a strange sight. After all, the corpse Bai Xiaochun had seen in the valley of the black clouds also had a wound, but an unhealed one.

Off to the side, the Mortal Renegade was visibly shaken, and his eyes were shining with brilliant light.

Things only seemed to be getting stranger by the moment, even more so considering that, as the battleship struggled to emerge from the vortex, Bai Xiaochun could clearly sense an aura that was not that of the Eternal World.

At this point, he decided that he shouldn’t keep watching. But before he could shift time again, a muffled rumbling sound emerged from the vortex, as though there were something on the other side of it, getting closer and closer to the actual opening.

At that point, the eyes of the old man on the battleship blazed as if with fire, and he threw his hands out in front of him. Instantly, the battleship ignited, causing powerful fluctuations to roll out as it shot out from the vortex to appear within the Eternal World.

In that same instant, a muffled howl could be heard from the other side of the vortex. The vortex trembled, and then a huge finger emerged from within it, shooting into the Eternal World as if to pursue the old man on the battleship.

“It doesn’t matter where you flee to,” a cold voice said. “The Vast Expanse Dao Domain is a thing of the past. In the end, you--” However, before the voice could finish speaking, and even as the enormous finger emerged from the vortex, it shattered, collapsing into countless bits of ash….

Bai Xiaochun looked on with wide eyes, his heart pounding. Moments ago, he had sensed the same mysterious energy that he had sensed when becoming a sovereign. It was that exact same energy… which had destroyed the encroaching finger attack!

Even as Bai Xiaochun reeled in shock, the voice on the other side of the vortex spoke with incredulity and shock.

“My Dao Finger was destroyed? How is this even possible…? This place… wait, something’s wrong!! This place is not that of the Immortal, the God, the Devil, the Demon, or the Ghost! This place….”

As the voice trailed off, the old man on the battleship turned and looked at the vortex. Eyes blazing, he laughed.

“This place was jointly sealed by the Immortal, the God, the Devil, the Demon, and the Ghost. This is the Eternal Spirit World, the legendary home of Allheaven!

“I will either be reborn here, undo what happened in the Vast Expanse, and slaughter every living being in your Never-Ending Dao Domain. Or… based on my Dao, I will help the Eternal Spirit World fulfill its purpose, by making sure another Allheaven comes into being. Then, that which lies beyond can finally be opened again!” When the final words left his mouth, the old man threw his head back and laughed uproariously. Even as he did, that mysterious energy appeared again and swept over him and his battleship….

Instantly, the battleship corroded, and every physical aspect of it that did not conform to the Eternal World withered in an instant. As for the old man, his laughter faded away as his flesh and blood vanished….

The only thing left behind was a desiccated corpse, still with a wound on its forehead, there to remain for all eternity….

And then the battleship continued to drift soundlessly through the starry sky….

There was no response from the other side of the vortex, only ragged, shocked breathing. Apparently, the owner of that voice was completely terrified of the so-called Eternal Spirit World, the home of Allheaven.

Then, the mysterious energy moved on to the vortex, and as Bai Xiaochun looked on, destroyed it, wiping it completely out of existence.

“That power….” he murmured, his heart pounding, not only due to the events of the past he had just witnessed, but of that mysterious energy which could shake heaven and earth to the point where ghosts and gods wept!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes remained fixed on the spot that had once contained that vortex, which the mysterious energy had just destroyed. “That old man said that this was the Eternal Spirit World, the home of Allheaven. Who is Allheaven…?”

At some point, Bai Xiaochun realized that the Mortal Renegade had not yet picked up the fight again, and was in fact staring in the direction of the disappearing battleship. Blinking, Bai Xiaochun thought back to something the Worldly Daoist had said. Following the Mortal Renegade’s line of sight, he suddenly felt a very strange feeling.

“Am I dealing with the Mortal Renegade… or that old man?” Unsure of what to think, he was just about to say something upsetting in the hopes of getting his opponent to talk.

However, even as he did, the area that had just been wiped clean by the mysterious energy, and had sunken in as a result, suddenly bulged visibly!

A roar of rage suddenly echoed out, and within that bulge in the starry sky, the outline of a face became visible!

It was almost as if the starry sky had become a thin membrane separating the Eternal Spirit World from some other mysterious, unknown location!

Within that mysterious location was an almighty figure who was trying to break that membrane, but was failing. However, as a result, that person’s face became visible!

Not only was Bai Xiaochun shocked, but the Mortal Renegade also turned around in surprise to look at what was happening.

Moments later, a strange look appeared in Bai Xiaochun’s eyes. He wasn’t sure if the Mortal Renegade could detect the mysterious energy that existed within the starry sky, but he could. And yet again, it had appeared, surrounding the face, almost as if it had been waiting for it….

He watched as the face struggled, until finally, a small vortex appeared, which rapidly grew larger, piercing through the starry sky, connecting the Eternal Spirit World and its starry sky to that unknown location beyond!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1299 awe-chapter-1300

In that moment, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes opened even wider than before, to the point where they nearly popped out of his skull, as a gigantic, crocodilian turtle emerged from the vortex, its berserk eyes bright red, and its expression that of utter ferocity.

To Bai Xiaochun’s shock, he realized that, other than the size, this turtle looked... exactly like his own life essence spirit!!

As soon as the vicious, crocodilian turtle emerged into the open, the vortex began to fade away, along with the face. However, the face said one last thing before it disappeared, in a cold, arrogant voice.

“The glory of the Vast Expanse Dao Domain is a thing of the past. It is now the age of the Never-Ending Dao Domain! Never-Ending Turtle, destroy Holy Extermination and prevent a second Allheaven from being born!”

Almost in unison with the voice, the mysterious energy surged into action, shooting into the vortex before it could disappear. A moment later, a bloodcurdling scream of shock could be heard, followed by complete silence....

The mysterious energy emerged from the vortex, wiped it out, and then shot toward the crocodilian turtle.

This was no ordinary turtle; as soon as the mysterious energy approached, it began to shine with golden light, especially its shell. After looking more closely at the shell, Bai Xiaochun’s mind began to spin.

“That turtle shell…” he murmured, “it looks so familiar….” As soon as the mysterious energy swept over the crocodilian turtle, its body vanished, leaving behind only its shell. Then, the energy seemed to prepare to wipe the shell out of existence, but before it could, an enormous, illusory flower suddenly appeared within the starry sky!

It was a beautiful flower that shifted back and forth between being illusory and corporeal, and as soon as it appeared, it sucked the turtle shell into it, which the mysterious energy of the starry sky did nothing to prevent. After watching all of this happen, Bai Xiaochun couldn’t help but think of… the little turtle.

Almost as soon as the flower absorbed the turtle shell, a tiny, newborn turtle materialized on one of the flower’s leaves. He looked around in confusion for a moment, and then faded way into the starry sky along with the flower.

“The Eternal Turtle….” Bai Xiaochun murmured, deeply shaken as he watched the little turtle vanish along with the flower. This time shift had been profoundly meaningful, and had revealed the origin of both the little turtle and his turtle-wok. As these new truths sank into his mind, Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered with enlightenment.

Even more shocking was how the mysterious energy suddenly swept over him for a moment before heading toward the area where the Eternal Flower had vanished. Afterward, Bai Xiaochun reached out with his hand, confirming that the energy was still there. Then he closed his hand in an attempt to grab it.

Although he couldn’t explain it, he was sure that the mysterious energy wouldn’t harm him. After all, he had felt it when he became a sovereign, and knew that he had formed a resonance with it.

In that same instant, the Mortal Renegade suddenly felt profoundly shaken. His sensation was different from Bai Xiaochun's. He… could not sense that mysterious energy, but that didn't mean he hadn't noticed its actions. And now that he saw what Bai Xiaochun was doing, his eyes went wide.

“He's going to… impossible!” For the first time, his face completely fell, and his eyes shone with shock. Without the slightest hesitation, he unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, waving his hand to conjure a Finger of Extermination, something that could destroy all life, that could bring nirvanic extermination to anything it touched. And he sent that finger directly toward Bai Xiaochun!

From a distance, the Finger of Extermination looked like an enormous statue, carrying ultimate death and destruction toward Bai Xiaochun.

Before, Bai Xiaochun would have simply resorted to another time shift. That would have easily enabled him to evade a trump card like this. But now, he reached out instinctively and made contact with that mysterious energy.

As he did, he trembled, and his blood began to surge through his veins as his cultivation base raged. Even his soul was shaken as his life was drastically changed on a fundamental level.

“This… is.…” It was impossible for Bai Xiaochun to describe what he was feeling. It was as though the so-called mysterious energy came from the starry sky, from the heavenly bodies, from the worlds, and from all living beings.

It was as if... everything within the Eternal Spirit World, all living entities, were part of it!

“Spirit....” Bai Xiaochun murmured, unsure of exactly why he was saying it. It seemed like an ordinary word, but as soon as he uttered it, that mysterious energy seemed to leap with excitement. Of course, Bai Xiaochun knew that when one was focused and worked hard, good fortune was sure to follow, and therefore, he looked over at the Mortal Renegade, and then extended his finger!

In response, the Mortal Renegade’s face fell, and his heart filled with an unprecedented level of deadly crisis. He immediately prepared to fall back, but before he could, the mysterious energy shot forward, piercing through the Finger of Extermination and stopping it in its tracks. Then, it closed in on the Mortal Renegade himself. Even as Bai Xiaochun looked on in excitement, the energy swirled around the Mortal Renegade... and without harming him in the least, turned and sped off into the distance....

“Huh?” the Mortal Renegade blurted in shock.

“Uh....” Bai Xiaochun said, so stunned and disappointed that beads of sweat broke out on his forehead.

After a moment of silence, the Mortal Renegade turned to look coldly at Bai Xiaochun. And then, the previously stilled Finger of Extermination continued to rumble toward Bai Xiaochun.

“Spirit? What kind? Completely unreliable!” By this point, there was no time for him to resort to a time shift; the Finger of Extermination was right on top of him. Eyes widening into a glare, he threw his right hand out, summoning his turtle-wok to block the finger attack. At the same time, he shouted out at the top of his lungs.

“Waterswamp!!”

In response to his word, the turtle-wok suddenly began to glitter with bright, golden light that merged into the watery swamp that was forming. That in turn caused the surrounding starry sky to twist and distort as a golden swamp filled the area, vastly surpassing the level of any of the previous swamps.

“Kingdom!!”

Intense rumbling sounds echoed out, along with bright golden light, as mountain peaks rose up from the swamp. Next was an enormous, crocodilian head, behind which was a long neck covered with scales that emanated golden light! Following the head and the neck were two indescribably terrifying clawed hands, and then, a huge turtle shell. The instant that shell was out in the open, Bai Xiaochun’s turtle-wok transformed into a golden beam that shot up to his life essence spirit and fused with it!

As the fusion completed, his life essence spirit shivered, and then let out a hair-raising roar as its aura leaped to a higher level. Then, it climbed completely out of the swamp!

It was so huge it could prop up the starry sky, its shell radiating golden light, and its expression ferocious to the extreme. It seemed berserk to an unparalleled level! This was… exactly the same crocodilian turtle that had just emerged from the vortex and entered the Eternal World right in front of Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade!

Roar!

Without the slightest hesitation, and lacking even a scrap of fear, the crocodilian turtle shot toward the Finger of Extermination!

The Mortal Renegade’s expression couldn’t have been more unsightly. Never could he have imagined that Bai Xiaochun would have a divine ability like this at his disposal. After all, even he was trembling in astonishment at the sight of the vicious, explosively violent crocodilian turtle attacking him.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1300 awe-chapter-1301

The Mortal Renegade had fought Bai Xiaochun using his Vile-Emperor clone, and had faced his Waterswamp Kingdom on that occasion. But at that time, his true form had been asleep, and the clone had been unable to provide detailed feedback about the encounter.

Therefore, this was the Mortal Renegade’s first time encountering the Waterswamp Kingdom in person!

He couldn’t help but be shaken by the vicious and violent crocodilian turtle, and the terrifying energy fluctuations emanating off of it. Perhaps if he hadn’t seen the ancient historical events playing out around that vortex, it might have been a different story. But he had witnessed with his own eyes how that crocodilian turtle had been dispatched from beyond this starry sky, and had been sent with a specific mission.

The mere fact that Bai Xiaochun could summon it was profoundly shocking to the Mortal Renegade. However, despite understanding the matters of karma involved, he had no time to think over the matter in detail. As soon as the crocodilian turtle lunged toward him, he fell back at top speed, simultaneously sending out another Finger of Extermination.

The crocodilian turtle threw his head back and roared, completely disregarding the Finger of Extermination as he charged forward aggressively. The Finger of Extermination was immediately destroyed, and the crocodilian turtle’s energy only seemed to be growing more powerful. His howls caused the starry sky to tremble as he bore down on the Mortal Renegade in completely domineering fashion.

The Mortal Renegade's face fell as he continued to back up, his hands flashing in a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, black smoke shot out, forming into a huge face rife with magical symbols, its expression fierce to the extreme. Opening its mouth, it shot toward the crocodilian turtle as if to devour him.

However, that was when the crocodilian turtle's eyes shone with mysterious light, and suddenly, he opened his mouth in shocking fashion as well! From a distance, it was obvious that the turtle was simply too big for the face to do anything about him. In fact, in the following moment, the turtle snapped up the face!

Then, without pausing for a moment, he continued on toward the Mortal Renegade!

As the starry sky trembled, Bai Xiaochun looked on nervously. Obviously, he understood a lot more about his life essence spirit than the Mortal Renegade. After all, he had been using the Waterswamp Kingdom from almost the moment he began to practice cultivation. Step by step, his cultivation base had grown higher, until the point where he witnessed the events of ancient history only moments before. That was when he was suddenly inspired to take out his turtle-wok and send it out, backed by the power of his sovereign cultivation base.

With all of the various elements coming together, his Waterswamp Kingdom completely transformed. Now, the majestic crocodilian turtle shone with golden light, and emanated a ferocious air that surpassed anything from before. He left even Bai Xiaochun feeling a bit jumpy.

As for why Bai Xiaochun had been able to summon this mysterious crocodilian turtle from beyond the starry sky, he was already fairly certain of the general details. He had been born on the Eternal Flower, and thus, could also be considered one of many Eternal Sons. After the Eternal Flower captured the crocodilian turtle, he became her companion spirit, and thus, it was only natural that someone with the blood of the Eternal Immortal Domains would be able to summon him, albeit with some difficulty.

And clearly, his turtle-wok also had something to do with it!

“Don’t tell me… that the final battle is going to be won by my life essence spirit?” The thought excited him. After all, if the crocodilian turtle could dispatch the Mortal Renegade, that would make things a lot easier.

As Bai Xiaochun looked on excitedly, the Mortal Renegade’s eyes turned pitch black, and he threw his hands over his head, causing black light to spill out in all directions. At the same time, a vortex appeared on his forehead, within which was a magical sigil!

It was a sigil that depicted a battleship!

As the magical sigil appeared, the Mortal Renegade began to speak words in an incomprehensible language, a curse of sorts that caused a boundless, ancient, and corrosive attack to spread out into the space around him.

Time seemed to slow, causing Bai Xiaochun’s heart to pound. Then, the starry sky beneath the Mortal Renegade’s feet suddenly shattered like a mirror!

As it did, an ancient battleship shot out into the open, radiating a shocking aura of death!!

“You have sought your own death, foul creature!” the Mortal Renegade shouted. The entire starry sky trembled as a massive, tempest-like energy spread out, causing even Bai Xiaochun to back up in shock.

However… the Mortal Renegade had truly underestimated the crocodilian turtle. In addition to being fierce, he was also completely voracious, and apparently, didn’t usually take the time to think things through. Of course, Bai Xiaochun had experienced that first hand in the past….

As soon as the battleship was out in the open, the crocodilian turtle didn’t pause for a moment before taking action. Eyes shining with madness, he opened his huge mouth, completely ignored the deadly energy emanating off of the battleship, and lunged forward….

With a snap, he gobbled up both the battleship and the Mortal Renegade!!

Despite how much Bai Xiaochun knew about this turtle, his eyes still bulged as wide as if he had just watched a mortal eating a bolt of lightning.

“Can you eat… *anything?!”* he blurted, shocked. The crocodilian turtle looked very pleased with himself as he threw his head back and roared. Obviously, he felt more than a bit of pride at having swallowed his opponent. Ignoring Bai Xiaochun’s shock, he shot back toward the swamp, then sank down inside it, whereupon… the swamp faded away.

Bai Xiaochun looked on, flabbergasted.

“That’s… that’s it? What about my wok…?” He was still of the impression that his life essence spirit was very unreliable. Furthermore, he now felt a distinct sensation that there were explosive and violent fluctuations coming from whatever dimension the Waterswamp Kingdom existed in now.

At that point, he didn’t waste any time. Hands flashing with a double-handed incantation gesture, he caused the vortex of time to spring up again, and immediately shifted time to return to reality!

“The Mortal Renegade will definitely get out. I can’t waste any time!” He flashed like lightning into the vortex, vanishing, to reappear… back in reality. Once there, he vanished again, and then reappeared in the location of the former Immortal World, where the only thing that remained of it was its ruins!

Other than the Eternal Immortal Domains themselves, there was no place among the 1,080,000 worlds of the starry sky where Bai Xiaochun felt more of a sense of belonging than here. It was the qi flow of this place that had propelled him from being a celestial into being an archaean!

As soon as he appeared in the ruins of the Immortal World, he immediately got to work. For one thing, he sent out his divine sense to personally light up the ruins of the Immortal World. And at the same time, he took advantage of the fact that the Mortal Renegade’s Dao clones were not being properly controlled to fight them with full force. In all 1,080,000 worlds within the starry sky, his Dao clones attacked with everything they had!

The war between Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade that continued to be fought in all of those worlds was now different from earlier. Before, Bai Xiaochun’s Dao clones had been weaker, but now that Bai Xiaochun had returned, they almost immediately gained the upper hand. And as a result, the brightness in the starry sky immediately began to surpass the darkness!

Within the ruins of the Immortal World, Bai Xiaochun sat down cross-legged, his divine sense spread out as he used his true self’s full power, all of his Dao, and even his sovereign aura, to cause everything around him to burst with light and life force!

At the same time, he kept a bit of divine sense locked onto the mysterious dimension where the Waterswamp Kingdom was located. That way, he would immediately be notified if the Mortal Renegade freed himself, and would go to block his path!

One breath of time after another passed. Within the 1,080,000 worlds, the Mortal Renegade’s Dao clones suffered defeat after defeat, and dazzling light continued to shine out. Soon, Bai Xiaochun’s divine sense caused all of the darkness to be driven from the Immortal World, and the seed which had been planted there began to shine brightly. From a distance, the ruins of the Immortal World looked like a dazzling candle!

As soon as that candle sprang to life, Bai Xiaochun shivered… at the sensation of that mysterious energy, once again coming into being!

Apparently, after bringing light to the Immortal World, that mysterious energy became vastly more distinct!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1301 awe-chapter-1302

The ruins of the Immortal World shone with dazzling light as, in the rest of the 1,080,000 worlds, the Mortal Renegade's Dao clones suffered defeat after defeat. In fact, in many of the ruins, Bai Xiaochun's Dao clones were sending out enough light to drive away the darkness!

Because of the varying levels of light in different areas, it was no longer possible to assess the struggle between Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade merely by counting how many sets of ruins had been occupied by whom. However, if one could look down on the starry sky from an enormously high vantage point, they would see… brightness overtaking darkness in numerous locations!

Although the locations of the light were scattered randomly, the percent of the whole that was filled with light was now close to seventy!

The whole starry sky seemed to be lighting up, with life force growing more abundant. Furthermore, because the ruins of the Immortal World had been lit up by Bai Xiaochun's true self, who possessed some of the qi flow of that world, it ensured that those ruins shone especially brightly.

Although Bai Xiaochun's aura was rising rapidly, he felt little emotion. He had slipped into a strange state in which that mysterious energy was growing more and more clear.

"It's… the Essence of all living things… from the Eternal World!" Eventually, Bai Xiaochun realized that in addition to his Dao clones, the 1,080,000 worlds in the starry sky also had innumerable skeletons, which also contained some of that energy.

It was the same even in that enormous river of coffins out in the starry sky.

“It’s… the ultimate source… of the Eternal World!” Even the ruins themselves actually contained some of that energy, as did the countless particles of dust in the starry sky.

“It’s… the source of the Eternal Flower itself!” At this point, he could sense that, as the Eternal Immortal Domains floated through the starry sky, all of his friends and relatives there were on their knees, praying.

At the same time, the mysterious energy was even more prevalent there. In fact, within the starry sky, there were two locations where it was strongest. The first was in the ruins of the Immortal World, and the second was in the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Apparently, as nirvanic extermination had been brought to the countless races of living beings in the starry sky, that mysterious energy had begun to pour into the Eternal Immortal Domains.

And as the ruins of the Immortal World grew bright, Bai Xiaochun began to gain enlightenment. Now he understood.

“It’s Essence,” he murmured to himself. “It’s… the Essence of the Eternal!!

“The Eternal Flower was born out of the Essence of the Eternal. That’s why that legend existed to begin with, that by consuming the Eternal Flower, one could step into the Eternal Realm…. And thus, the Mortal Renegade’s Dao was to bring nirvanic extermination to everything in existence. It was how his Dao came to be to begin with. And destroying everything was the only way to make sure the Eternal Flower had enough of the Essence of the Eternal!

“That method to become Eternal is correct, but at the same time, incorrect.... Consuming the Eternal Flower won't put you in the Eternal Realm. Instead… it enables you to unrightfully absorb the Essence of the Eternal!

“That is the Mortal Renegade’s final Dao!!”

As he gained enlightenment of these matters, the mysterious Essence of the Eternal grew more clear.... But then, his eyelid twitched, and his trance was interrupted by the sensation of a powerful force of destruction rising up from within his Waterswamp Kingdom!

Almost as soon as he sensed it, a rift opened up above the ruins of the Immortal World, and a voice spoke that boomed like heavenly thunder.

“I’ve heard that your name is Bai Xiaochun!” It was like a growl of utter madness that echoed out from within the rift that had just opened up.

In response, the starry sky twisted and distorted, and black smoke poured out, pulsing with frigid coldness that seemed capable of sealing anything it touched.

Then, an incomparably shocking battleship began to emerge from the rift, pulsing with an insane, domineering air, and momentum to crush anything in its path!

As the battleship slowly emerged from the rift, the rift itself began to shatter and crumble.

Standing at the prow of the ship was a man with flowing black hair, whose eyes glowed with black light. He seemed like the most supreme being in all of heaven and earth, in all of the starry sky. He was… the Mortal Renegade, Devil Imperator!

Chaotic fluctuations rolled off him, making the starry sky in the area twitch and seize. And on his forehead, there was a sigil, a mark that almost looked like… a wound!!

And yet, that was nothing compared to the most shocking aspect of the scene: there was no corpse on the ship! Instead, an illusory figure could be seen behind the Mortal Renegade, standing tall and straight.

It was an old man in a gray robe, whose forehead had a wound just like the Mortal Renegade’s!

As soon as that old man became visible, a boundless air of nirvanic extermination appeared!

Bai Xiaochun slowly looked up at the descending Mortal Renegade, and took note of the illusory old man standing behind him. From what he could tell, the Mortal Renegade was stronger than before, both in terms of his cultivation base and his battle spirit. However, it was also obvious… that he had been wounded while in the world of the Waterswamp Kingdom!!

It was not a physical wound, but a wound to his soul, and to his Essence…. And that wound was made manifest by the mark on his forehead!

Bai Xiaochun rose to his feet and spoke, his voice echoing out, causing the starry sky to tremble and shake!

“That’s right, I'm Bai Xiaochun. But what about you…? Are you the Mortal Renegade? Or are you from the outside world, the so-called… Holy Extermination?!?!”

It was almost as if he had formed a resonance with the starry sky itself, which caused his voice to speak from all of the 1,080,000 worlds that existed there!

From the dark gleam in the Mortal Renegade’s eyes, it was possible to not only see how he was weakened by the repeated exchanges earlier, but also that he was coming to realize how difficult Bai Xiaochun was to deal with. Even worse, Bai Xiaochun had clearly experienced a breakthrough of some sort. It was in that moment that the Mortal Renegade felt something he had never experienced after becoming a sovereign: fear!

Their eyes met, and they looked at each other for a moment without exchanging any further words. Then, the rift completely fell apart as the battleship appeared fully in the open!

At that point, the Mortal Renegade reached out and waved his hand!

As he did, the light which had begun to overtake the 1,080,000 worlds suddenly shrank back. And then, the darkness that filled more than thirty percent of the starry sky suddenly erupted with a frigid qi.

The light shining off of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao clones could do nothing to the frozen thirty percent of the starry sky as the Mortal Renegade’s Dao clones suddenly collapsed into black smoke that disappeared into the various ruins of the 1,080,000 worlds.

When they reappeared… they were streaming toward the Mortal Renegade!

As the black smoke fused back into him, and he recollected the Dao clones he had sent out, he began to grow larger and larger. In a very short time… he was the same enormous giant that he had been when he loomed over the Eternal Flower!

Bai Xiaochun’s eyes glittered upon the realization that this would be the final battle between himself and the Mortal Renegade. Taking a deep breath, he sent his divine sense out into the 1,080,000 worlds, and called back his Dao clones as well!

Instantly, they all transformed into dandelion seeds, which swirled back to him, entering his body, and simultaneously causing him to grow larger and larger!

Rumbling sounds echoed out as, from a distance, it was possible to see two enormous giants standing there, dwarfing the Immortal World, large enough to hold up the starry sky itself. The time had come… to fight!!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1302 awe-chapter-1303

It was the final battle!

If the Mortal Renegade won, then the Eternal Immortal Domains would be consumed. The Eternal World would be plundered, and the Mortal Renegade would use the Essence of the Eternal to reach the Eternal Realm!

The so-called Holy Extermination would take advantage of the rebirth of the Mortal Renegade to escape the dying Eternal Spirit World, to surpass his previous unknown cultivation level, and then slaughter the Never-Ending Dao Domain!

Bai Xiaochun knew all of that. Although he wasn't sure exactly what the Never-Ending Dao Domain was, he did know… that the people there feared the Eternal Spirit World!

More specifically, they feared the Essence of the Eternal!

Fully aware of all of this, Bai Xiaochun looked at the Mortal Renegade with glittering eyes. And then, the Mortal Renegade made his move, lunging forward with fist clenched to strike at Bai Xiaochun!

He did not use any divine abilities or magical techniques. Based on his Dao, he knew that such things were of no use in this fight. Considering their current state, every fist strike that they launched could be considered a divine ability, a magical technique, or an expression of Essence!

In the end, great Daos were relatively simple. At this level, what might seem like an ordinary fist strike would actually contain all sorts of natural laws. They could ignore divine abilities cast their way in defense, and could destroy ordinary sovereigns with impunity, killing them in body and soul!

As for Bai Xiaochun, he also clenched his hand into a fist and let loose a punch.

His blow was backed by his cultivation base, his fleshly body, his Dao, and everything else that made him up. It drew on the starry sky, causing it to twist and distort as a tempestuous rumbling sound echoed out!

Booms rang as the two opponents exchanged more than ten thousand fist strikes!

For the first thousand, neither Bai Xiaochun nor the Mortal Renegade reacted with anything more than muffled grunts. But after ten thousand, both were coughing up blood!

As they battered each other, they began to shrink. After all, the blows they were sustaining contained massive force, and despite the both of them being the most powerful of sovereigns, they still had a hard time enduring!

And the price they had to pay was their Dao clones!

In some senses, each Dao clone was like an additional life for them. Each time they sustained a heavy enough blow to die, what died was one of their Dao clones.

From that, it could be seen that, at this level, both Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade had already reached the point of being essentially undying!

Each of them had 1,080,000 lives. Only after all 1,080,000 of their Dao clones perished would they actually be forced to draw upon the life of their true form!

In the beginning, both Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade had been somewhat unsure of each other. Eventually, they had fought through space and time. And now, they were simply battering at each other desperately!

Booms rang out, and they both coughed up blood. And as they shrank down, their Dao clones died, one after another!

It didn’t happen at exactly the same rate. Occasionally, the Mortal Renegade would gain the upper hand, and destroy some of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao clones. Then the tide would turn, and some of the Mortal Renegade’s Dao clones would be killed.

And thus, they fought back and forth, starting at the location of the Immortal World, but then leaping back and forth between the various ruins that dotted the starry sky.

In some ways it was a pity that the only living beings in the starry sky existed in the Eternal Immortal Domains, making it impossible for anyone to witness their desperate struggle.

Either you die, or I die!

Rumbling booms like heavenly thunder were the only sound that existed. Blood sprayed out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth, and his chest was caved in. He looked like he might collapse at any moment, to the point where his powers of regeneration did almost nothing. After all, the powers of the Mortal Renegade’s nirvanic extermination could not be negated in a short period of time!

On the other hand, the Mortal Renegade couldn’t easily regenerate. Bai Xiaochun fought with the power of radiance and light, which was the perfect foil to the Mortal Renegade.

And thus 10,000 fist strikes turned into 100,000. Then 200,000. 300,000…. The starry sky was being destroyed, thrown into utter chaos, with ruins being transformed into ash left and right.

“You’ve earned my respect, Bai Xiaochun. However… you’re not a match for me!” Howling, the Mortal Renegade launched another attack. As for Bai Xiaochun, he laughed loudly as he joined the fight. As of this moment, he didn’t fear death in the least.

500,000 fist strikes. 600,000. 700,000….

Now they were less than half the size they had been when they had started. As the bitter fight wore on, they did not hesitate to shed Dao clones. Neither attempted to evade or flee. For the Mortal Renegade, it was because the only way to achieve his long-cherished wish was to kill Bai Xiaochun.

It was different for Bai Xiaochun. He didn’t fight with the reckless madness of the Mortal Renegade. He had started out that way, but as the fight wore on, he realized that doing so would have a negative impact on him. At that point, he considered trying to draw out the fight longer. However, that was also when he noticed something unusual. As his Dao clones died, and the fight went on, he actually was able to sense the Essence of the Eternal even more clearly.

“What exactly is the Eternal…?” he thought, panting. But there was no time to ponder the subject now. All he could do was keep battering his foe.

Time passed. It was hard to say how long it had been since they started fighting. Perhaps ten years. Perhaps twenty. Maybe even longer than that.

Eventually, 700,000 fist strikes became 900,000. Then 1,000,000. At a certain point… they surpassed 1,080,000 fist strikes!!

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as Dao clones fell, and the two combatants shrank further and further. Soon, the battlefield had reached the starry sky near the Eternal Immortal Domains!

From a distance, the Eternal Immortal Domains glowed with soft light, and a sensation of life force that was highly conspicuous within the starry sky!

As Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade neared, the living beings in the Eternal Immortal Domains could sense what was happening. By now, they had been waiting for more than a full sixty-year-cycle for this fight to end!

During those sixty years, they had not forgotten about Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade. It had been a time of deadly crisis for everyone, during which they had seen what appeared to be two stars in the sky, battering each other endlessly!!

Xiaobao had grown up, and both Dabao and Xiaoxiao now looked middle-aged. As for Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, and Hou Xiaomei, they all looked as beautiful as they had before, except for their eyes, which sparkled with an ancient gleam.

The Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, and everyone else in the Eternal Immortal Domains had spent the last sixty years praying ceaselessly.

Eventually, the fight between the two sovereigns neared the Eternal Immortal Domains, and at long last… everyone could see Bai Xiaochun!

The Mortal Renegade wiped the blood from his mouth and glared at Bai Xiaochun. “Did you drag the fight here because this is where you want to die, Bai Xiaochun? If so, then I’ll fulfill your wish!”

At the moment, the Mortal Renegade had ten Dao clones left, whereas Bai Xiaochun only had three!

And both of them were roughly the size of an ordinary person. Without any further talk, they attacked each other again, whereupon blood sprayed out both of their mouths, and they fell back from each other.

“You only have two clones left!!”

Spinning, the Mortal Renegade turned into a shooting star that closed in on Bai Xiaochun with fury and death. Apparently, he was drawing more fully on his murderous aura than he had during the entire sixty-year fight, as he unhesitatingly… threw out five successive fist strikes!!

Their explosive power caused the starry sky to tremble, and blood to spray madly out of Bai Xiaochun’s mouth. Even as his final two Dao clones collapsed, he threw five fist strikes back at the Mortal Renegade, destroying two of his remaining ten Dao clones. However, the interchange was so devastating to Bai Xiaochun that many of his bones shattered, and he began to tumble… down toward the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1303 awe-chapter-1304

“Arch-Emperor!!”

“Father!!”

“Xiaochun!!”

The people in the Eternal Immortal Domains saw that final blow, and it resulted in numerous gasps of despair as they watched Bai Xiaochun plummeting down toward the Eternal Sea!

Up in the starry sky, the Mortal Renegade hovered, trembling, completely drained by the fight. Never in his life had he faced anyone as powerful or as difficult to deal with as Bai Xiaochun.

It was only in this very moment that he managed to cut down all of Bai Xiaochun’s Dao clones, with himself having only eight left. Obviously, if Bai Xiaochun had time to recover, then it would be impossible to end the fight.

“I won’t give him that chance!” Eyes flashing, he reached out with his right hand, causing the starry sky to fill with rumbling sounds as his ancient battleship appeared once again!

The pitch black craft flew at top speed directly toward Bai Xiaochun, or more precisely… toward the Eternal Immortal Domains!

Clearly, the ship was set on a deadly collision course!

The Mortal Renegade knew that Bai Xiaochun had intentionally dragged the fight toward the Eternal Immortal Domains. And yet, the Mortal Renegade’s ultimate goal was the same location!

The shocking energy of the battleship became a black tempest that raged in all directions, filled with boundless darkness, nirvanic extermination, and endless death.

Everything had come full circle. The location of the beginning of the battle was now to be its end!

As the battleship neared, the Eternal Immortal Domains began to crumble and collapse. Bai Xiaochun’s vision swam, and his five yin organs and six yang organs were nearly destroyed, making him so weak that his powers of regeneration could do nothing to heal him at the moment.

His injuries were simply too severe. The Mortal Renegade’s final fist strike hadn’t been enough to kill him, but had hurt him so badly he could hardly keep his eyes open. However, he could definitely see the ancient battleship arrive and begin its deadly approach toward the Eternal Immortal Domains. And he knew that if the battleship struck, it would mean death for everyone.

“The reason I came back here… was so that I could either die with my family and friends, or… use the Essence of the Eternal to launch a fatal counter blow!!” As he wrestled to control his aura, as his eyes flickered with a scrap of hope, as the flame of his life force flickered on the verge of ultimate extinction, he could just barely sense something tugging at him…. It was as if his current state made his connection to the Essence of the Eternal stronger than it had ever been in his life!

“What exactly is Essence…?” he thought as he looked up into the sky at the black battleship, with the power of extermination radiating out from it. He could feel the Eternal Immortal Domains trembling on the verge of complete collapse, and could sense the flames of life force within all the living beings beneath him flickering unstably.

“Essence has no form or shape; it’s almost like it doesn’t even exist, but simultaneously, it creates and contains every form and shape.” In this moment, his eyes seemed to flicker like the starry sky as the Essence of the Eternal which existed in the Eternal Immortal Domains, in the form of that mysterious energy, suddenly began to thrum in resonance with him.

“Essence has no beginning or end,” he murmured, “but simultaneously, creates and contains the beginning and end of everything.” In response to his words, that mysterious energy exploded out, rushing to converge on him, swirling around him, creating an invisible windstorm!

“Essence takes up no space, but simultaneously, creates and contains all space.” In response to those three sentences, the mysterious energy went wild, creating a frenzied, invisible vortex that halted Bai Xiaochun’s fall, and left him hovering there in midair!

“Essence exists outside of time, but simultaneously, creates and contains all time.” In response to his fourth sentence, the vortex of mysterious energy began to push Bai Xiaochun back up toward the starry sky!!

The starry sky trembled as if from the resonance of a great Dao. And the more than 1,000,000 ruins, which had previously been frozen into darkness, began to tremble and crack.

In response to all of this, the Mortal Renegade’s eyes went wide, and his heart filled with tsunamis of shock.

“That’s the aura of the Eternal!!” he blurted.

Almost at the same time, Bai Xiaochun’s voice rose from the Eternal Immortal Domains into the starry sky, to fill the Eternal World!

“I still don’t fully understand Essence, and only know a bit about the Eternal….” He closed his eyes for a moment, and though he seemed very weak, when he opened them again, they shone with confidence!

“But… I know that our lives resonate with the great Dao, and life force resonates with the most mysterious of secrets. And that… is all I need to know to kill you, Mortal Renegade!”

In that instant, Bai Xiaochun began to burn a Dao flame, a fire of life and life force. Inside of him, shocking transformations began to occur, as though… he were beginning to break out of the Sovereign Realm! Around him, the mysterious energy that was the manifestation of the Essence of the Eternal began to boil.

As he sensed that, he extended his right hand toward the sky, and then… pointed directly at the black battleship of destruction!

There seemed to be little that was special about that gesture. It was no divine ability, and did not contain the fluctuations of a magical technique. However, it instantly caused the Mortal Renegade’s face to fall.

“You--!” he shouted, but was unable to say anything more. The black battleship became like an illustration that was then erased out of existence by a massive, invisible hand….

In the shortest of moments, it disappeared, starting from the prow and moving backward. As for its aura of death… it also vanished completely.

There was absolutely no clue to indicate that the ship had ever existed!

There were no ripples spreading out through the sky, or any other evidence. Bai Xiaochun's face was a bit paler than before; he had used the Essence of the Eternal, not to shift time like he had in the past, nor to attack the Mortal Renegade by guiding the mysterious energy. At the cost of his own life force, he created a resonance with the starry sky and the Essence of the Eternal, to direct that mysterious energy!

Guiding and directing were two very different things!

Although he was physically weak, his eyes now shone even brighter than ever as he extended his finger again. Up in the starry sky, the Mortal Renegade's heart was pounding. As for all of the other living beings present, they couldn't possibly have been more flabbergasted by what was happening!!

Within the silence, the Mortal Renegade began to tremble, struck with the sensation that if he didn't stop Bai Xiaochun right now, he would never be able to do so.

Bai Xiaochun seemed unsurpassably terrifying in this moment, to the point where the invisible Holy Extermination appeared behind the Mortal Renegade, equally stunned, memories of uncountable ancientness flickering in his eyes. Then, his lips moved, and although no sound came out, anyone who could have seen him would be able to see what he was saying.

Allheaven!

“Stop him!!” the Mortal Renegade shouted. The image of Holy Extermination screamed the same thing. And in almost the same instant, the two of them superimposed over one another, causing a third eye to open up on the Mortal Renegade’s forehead, in the exact spot where the wound mark had once existed. When that eye opened… his gaze was no longer that of the Mortal Renegade, but rather, the so-called… Holy Extermination!!

Radiating the most terrifying of fluctuations, he then shot toward Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun was currently being propped up by the mysterious energy that was the Essence of the Eternal. Rising toward the starry sky, and away from the Eternal Immortal Domains, he prepared to meet the Mortal Renegade.

And as he did… he pointed out with his finger for a second time!

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1304 awe-chapter-1305

As this second finger attack appeared, most of Bai Xiaochun’s hair turned gray, and his skin suddenly lost its luster. His life force faded a bit, transforming into boundless power that created a great Dao resonance with the starry sky, as well as the Essence of the Eternal!

As that resonance formed, the mysterious energy in the area poured into Bai Xiaochun’s finger, and then shot toward the Mortal Renegade!

The Mortal Renegade’s face fell. Howling, he threw his hands out, causing intense black light to shoot out from his third eye. That black light formed a shield of numerous layers, so strong that not even the full-force attack of a sovereign would be able to penetrate it.

Holding nothing back, he accelerated toward Bai Xiaochun.

“You might have stirred the Eternal, but you are too weak. Once I get close enough, a single fist strike will be all I need to kill you!” No expression could be seen on Bai Xiaochun’s face, and yet, even as the Mortal Renegade spoke, he shivered.

In that same moment, the black shield of light, which had seemed completely and utterly impenetrable, transformed into something like an illustration. Just like the black battleship from earlier, it was erased, layer by layer, revealing the Mortal Renegade behind it.

The Mortal Renegade howled as his body began to collapse, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. Tears of blood oozed out of his third eye, and at the same time, his remaining eight Dao clones all slipped away into death!

The Mortal Renegade was trembling, and his aura was dramatically weakened. However, he still managed to survive Bai Xiaochun’s second finger strike.

Eyes shining with madness, he did not retreat, but instead, continued onward toward Bai Xiaochun. He moved with such incredible speed that he was soon only thirty meters away. Just when he was about to make his move, Bai Xiaochun looked at him, eyes expressionless as he pointed out with his finger a third time. As a result, his hair turned completely gray, and wrinkles spread out to cover his skin, making him look extremely old. Even his eyes looked dim and dull.

He drove the Essence of the Eternal, directing the mysterious energy in a way that was profoundly draining. But, in the end, his finger strike still shot toward the Mortal Renegade!

“Noooo!!” the Mortal Renegade howled in terror. His third eye was now completely gray, and even though he knew he couldn’t withstand the force, he still pushed himself forward in a last-ditch effort to kill Bai Xiaochun.

Before he could, though, he ran into the mysterious energy, and its power of erasure.

He trembled as his body began to vanish, starting with his legs, and then his hands, and then his torso, and finally up his neck toward his head….

The Mortal Renegade, who had destroyed 1,080,000 worlds, was now turning into nothing more than ash.

In the last moments before his head vanished, his third eye suddenly twitched, turning even grayer than before. The Mortal Renegade vanished, and as he did, the third eye madly sucked in everything that made up his life and his Dao!

It was also in that moment that his eyes suddenly turned completely clear, and he looked at Bai Xiaochun. Bai Xiaochun shivered, thinking back to the memories of the Worldly Daoist, and the time that locusts had filled the snowy lands, and how this very person had risked his life to find food for his younger brother.

Right now, his eyes suddenly looked like they had back then.

In that instant, he shouted his final words!!

“Little brother… you must… kill Holy Extermination!!”

Even as his words continued to echo out, his head vanished, erased out of existence forever!

The Mortal Renegade was dead!!

However that third eye of his… exploded right before he vanished!

As it did, masses of gray smoke erupted out to fight back against his third finger strike!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the mysterious energy faded away, and the third finger strike ended. At that point, the gray smoke collapsed, then formed back together into a human figure. It wasn’t the Mortal Renegade, but rather, an unadulterated aura of death and extermination!

It seemed completely and utterly boundless, as though it were the purest and most ultimate expression of nirvanic extermination!

Gradually, the figure took on the features of an old man in a gray robe. This was exactly the same figure Bai Xiaochun had seen when he shifted time, the Holy Extermination who had entered the Eternal World on a battleship!

Smiling faintly, the old man said, “What a pity that you can’t unleash a fourth Finger of Allheaven!”

Then he shot toward Bai Xiaochun, becoming a gray blur that seemed intent on stabbing into his body!

As that blur neared, though, the weakened Bai Xiaochun spoke in a raspy voice.

“You sure about that...?” Even as the words left his mouth, he reached out... and unleashed a fourth finger strike!!

The smile did not leave the old man’s face, but instead, transformed into a sneer of ridicule. He had fought countless powerful experts in his life, and knew that although Bai Xiaochun had a bit of strength left, it wasn’t enough. Therefore, this had to be a bluff. And there was no way Holy Extermination would fall for a bluff!

However, a moment later, his sneer froze, and his eyes shone with disbelief.

“Impossible!!” he cried. All of a sudden, he lurched to a halt, then tried to fall back.

But he was too late. Bai Xiaochun’s hair fell out of his head, and his body shrank and withered to the point where he was little more than skin and bones. He looked like an oil lamp on the verge of winking out forever, his life force wasted, and yet… not quite dead!!

In fact, not only was he not dead, but there was a powerful life force streaming out from inside of him. Obviously, it did not belong to him, and yet, it was so powerful that it easily directed the Essence of the Eternal!

It was massively draining, and yet… it was enough to fuel a fourth finger strike!!

“This is impossible!!” Holy Extermination blurted in shock. He had planned everything out meticulously. He had even paid a heavy price to acquire a Dao puppet, which dealt with Bai Xiaochun’s first three finger strikes. He had been sure that a fourth strike was impossible, and yet, based on the life force that was exploding out of Bai Xiaochun, he now realized that all of his plots had been in error.

“Where is that life force coming from!?!?” In his confusion, he didn’t notice that, within the Eternal Immortal Domains, in the reconstructed Arch-Emperor City, the little turtle was shrieking as his body withered up, and his life force vanished. Twitching, he began to slide into unconsciousness.

“I hate you, Bai Xiaochun….” he said. Then he passed out. After all, back when Bai Xiaochun had discovered him, their lives had become linked….

If Bai Xiaochun died, he would die too….

After all the years that had passed, the little turtle had forgotten about that fact. No other entity which might have been linked to Bai Xiaochun could possibly have fueled a fourth finger strike. But the little turtle… was not only the Eternal Turtle, he was also from beyond the starry sky!

And thus, his seemingly endless supply of life force could most definitely bolster Bai Xiaochun's remaining strength to unleash a fourth strike!

As the fourth finger strike was unleashed, massive fluctuations rocked the starry sky. In his exhaustion, Bai Xiaochun's eyes began to close, too weak to stay open. He lost control of his body, and began to float back down toward the Eternal Immortal Domains. And as he did… Holy Extermination let out a howl of unprecedented frustration.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1305 awe-chapter-1306

There wasn’t even time to for him to tremble. Under the power of the mysterious fourth finger strike, he collapsed into ashen sparks that attempted to flee. The mysterious energy continued to pursue the ash and wipe it away, but it was tenacious, and moments later, formed back into Holy Extermination. This time, his eyes flickered with fear as he once again fled.

However, there was no way for him to escape his fate of death. The mysterious energy smashed at him again, reducing him to ashes yet another time. When the ashes formed back into a human shape again, Holy Extermination was far weaker than before.

This process repeated itself over and over again.

Before long, his legs could not reform, nor his arms or legs. Eventually, the only thing that remained was half of his torso, and his head.

“I refuse to accept this!!” he howled bitterly. Moments before, he had been only a step away from succeeding, and becoming Eternal. But now… it was in completely unexpected fashion that he found himself crushed in defeat.

Then, even as his head was on the verge of fading away, he looked over at Bai Xiaochun in the Eternal Immortal Domains, his eyes shining in profoundly sinister nature!

“If I can’t succeed, then… I’ll just let another Allheaven rise from the Eternal Spirit World….

“Allheaven is supposed to be merciless, but you have too many connections. How could you truly be Allheaven…?

“Well, I guess I’ll provide you with the help you need. Henceforth… you will be merciless and unfeeling. You will have no family or friends. Your past will be buried, and you will be baptized by pitilessness. Then, as Allheaven, you will exterminate the Never-Ending Dao Domain!” As Holy Extermination laughed madly, an unprecedentedly dark beam of light shot out of his eyes.

Instantly, that black light shot toward the Eternal Immortal Domains!

As it neared, it spiraled out to create a massive vortex down below. Intense rumbling sounds mixed with cries of alarm from the people below as the mysterious energy then swept over to wipe it out of existence. But Holy Extermination knew that he couldn’t destroy the Eternal Immortal Domains. After all, resurrecting people of lower cultivation levels than oneself was not an impossibility, so killing the people of the lands would do little to advance his purposes.

Therefore, his goal was not destruction. It was something else….

“By giving my boundless life force as the price, and by using the three great domain treasures of the Vast Expanse Dao Domain, I will open… the River of Time and Space!!” As his voice caused the starry sky to tremble, the vortex spun madly, moving faster and faster until three objects became visible within them. One was a feng shui compass, one was a black pearl, and one was a white pearl!

All three of them radiated a completely ancient air, and caused the vortex around them to whip into a complete frenzy.

“My three domain treasures were sealed for all eternity, and cannot be unleashed in full. But they are definitely enough to cause the River of Time and Space to open!” As Holy Extermination’s voice echoed out, it began to stretch and distort. Simultaneously, the vortex seemed to be opening a way into a strange and indescribable world, causing the starry sky and all the ruins that filled it to be cast into complete chaos.

Beneath the Eternal Immortal Domains, and within the vortex, a huge river could be seen, surging with huge waves. As soon as the river became visible, a massive force of attraction sprang up, grabbing the Eternal Immortal Domains and pulling them down into the river!

The river contained a familiar, mysterious energy, and a sensation of the Eternal. It contained time itself, as well as an infinitude of Essences. It was holy beyond compare, as if it were the most important thing within the entire starry sky!

As Bai Xiaochun realized what was happening, his eyes went wide, and his mind began to reel.

“Noooo!!” he shouted madly, blue veins bulging out on his neck and face, his body shaking. Unfortunately, he was simply too weak to even move, let alone stop what was happening.

“This… is my gift to you, Allheaven. Don’t even think about trying to bring them back. They are now sealed within the River of Time and Space. In all creation, including the nine great Dao Domains, I’ve never heard of a single person who could pull an entire world out of the River of Time and Space!” Chuckling, Holy Extermination faded away….

As for that enormous holy river, and the Eternal Immortal Domains… they also faded away.

Everything went silent.

The River of Time and Space was gone, and Holy Extermination was dead. Everything was over.… The starry sky was quiet now, and the frozen 1,080,000 ruins were unsealed. Light began to shine everywhere.…

However, in the spot where the Eternal Immortal Domains had once existed, Bai Xiaochun hovered, looking down blankly at where the river had just been. He couldn’t think. It was almost as if he had become an empty person, technically alive, but essentially dead. Soulless.…

After a long moment passed, he coughed up a mouthful of blood, and then collapsed into unconsciousness. If it weren’t for the fact that his lips still quivered a bit, as though he were talking to himself, he would easily be taken for a corpse, drifting forever through the starry sky.…

Although the 1,080,000 ruins all shone with bright light, he was the only person left, unconscious, directionless.

Time passed, although it was impossible to determine how much. Eventually, Bai Xiaochun woke up. Before he could open his eyes, he heard voices calling out to him.

“You’re finally awake, daddy! Look, I’m all grown up.…”

“Daddy, Xiaoxiao had a cultivation base breakthrough. She’s a celestial now!”

“Father, I… I want to get married.”

As soon as Bai Xiaochun heard the voices of his children, a smile broke out on his face. He also heard warm, tender voices speaking to him that he knew were Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, Hou Xiaomei and Gongsun Wan’er. There was also another female voice, somewhat unfamiliar.

“Xiaochun, it's me… Du Lingfei….”

As the voices joined together, Bai Xiaochun felt as though countless eyes were locked onto him, all of them smiling. He could sense Uncle Li, the Grand Heavenmaster, the Giant Ghost King, Big Fatty Zhang, Song Que, Master God-Diviner, and others….

He was content. He felt the sun shining on him, and could smell the fragrant odor of spring. Everyone was healthy and happy.

Although he didn’t want to, he eventually opened his eyes. There he floated in the starry sky, tears streaming down his cheeks.

The voices vanished. The only thing he could see now was the starry sky, which was completely and utterly quiet….

Eventually, he righted himself, looked around, and began to travel through the starry sky, until he was back where the Eternal Immortal Domains had once existed.

He began to weep.

“I defeated the Mortal Renegade, only to lose everything else….” As his tears fell down into the starry sky, he reached out to grasp at something, but there was nothing there. He wanted to take some alcohol out of his bag of holding, but didn't have any to take out.

He could only hover there in the starry sky, blank, thinking about the past. One day he looked up, madness flickering in his eyes as he performed an incantation gesture. Unleashing the power of the Time Immemorial Codex, he shifted time and vanished.

However, it didn’t take long before he returned. Not even using his time shifting abilities were any help in locating the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Apparently, when something entered the River of Time and Space, all traces of its existence were completely removed.

“The River of Time and Space….” he said gratingly. His voice seemed to contain boundless grief that could not be dispelled, neither with tears nor anything else. And thus, the pain inside of him built up to the point where even his voice changed.

“They’ve been sealed in the River of Time and Space… but they’re not dead! If Holy Extermination can open it… then so can I!” Panting, he unleashed the power of his cultivation base and began to try various methods to access the river. He tried to use the Essence of the Eternal and its mysterious energy, but soon realized that with the departure of the Eternal Flower, that mysterious energy was vastly weaker. It might as well have not been there. Without its original source, the Essence of the Eternal was almost useless.

The starry sky was bright now, but with the Eternal Flower gone, Bai Xiaochun was the only living being in existence. And thus, the Essence of the Eternal had faded.

However, he was not ready to give up. He performed test after test, wearing himself ragged in the process. Nothing worked. In the end, he still had no idea how to open the River of Time and Space.

Although he was in pain, he was not in complete despair. He closed his eyes to think for a while, and when he opened them, they shone with more determination than ever.

“If the Sovereign Realm isn't strong enough to open it,” he murmured, “then… maybe it means I have to reach the Eternal Realm!”

Supposedly, absorbing the Eternal Flower was the only way to reach the Eternal Realm. But during his fight with the Mortal Renegade, he had controlled the mysterious energy that was the Essence of the Eternal, and had thus come to realize that there were definitely other ways!

“The Essence of the Eternal is contained in all living things. It is in all Essences…. Although it is weak, it is always there…. If hosts of living beings could exist in the starry sky again, and begin to practice cultivation, then cultivators would multiply… and the Essence of the Eternal would appear again!

“If the Eternal doesn’t exist now… then I’ll create it!

“As living beings awaken and life force spreads, Essence will appear. If enlightenment of one Essence isn’t enough, I’ll study ten of them. A hundred. A thousand. Ten thousand! If I have to, I’ll understand the Essence of all living things in all 1,080,000 worlds in the starry sky….

“After combining all of the Essences, I can reach… the Eternal Realm!” Eyes shining with near hysteria, he decided that this was definitely his only option!

Turning to look in the direction of the former Eternal Immortal Domains, he spoke in a voice filled with ultimate focus.

“The Eternal Immortal Domains. My home…. All of you, just wait for me. I promise I’ll find you….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1306 awe-chapter-1307

There is a force which exists in all people. In some, it can be abundant without limit. In others, it can be scarce to the extreme. It can propel some people to the point of shaking heaven and earth, and in other people, it can weaken them to the point of collapsing forever.

It can give rise to endless determination, or it can remove it in an instant.

That force comes from focus.

Bai Xiaochun’s focus, his obsession, was to extract the Eternal Immortal Domains from the River of Time and Space. It was a focus that bordered on insanity, and instantly became the most important aspect of his life.

“If there is no Eternal, then I will create it!

“If there is no Essence, then I will create it!

“If there is no life, then I will create it!”

As he looked in the direction where the Eternal Immortal Domains had once existed, his eyes shone with profound light.

Eventually, he closed his eyes, and settled down cross-legged in the middle of the starry sky.

In the past, it had never occurred to him to wonder why there had been sunlight within the body of the Arch-Ancestor.

Nor had he considered why the Eternal Immortal Domains had a sun and a moon, even though the starry sky was pitch black.

He hadn't even thought about such things after becoming an archaean. Upon becoming a sovereign, he qualified to understand such matters, but because of the fight with the Mortal Renegade, he had never had the time. But now, here in the middle of the starry sky, he began to ponder the subject.

Whether it was the Heavenspan Realm or the Eternal Immortal Domains, it was all the same. All suns and moons inside of the Eternal Flower were provided by the Eternal Mother. And that was because….

"Life *requires* sunlight!" he murmured. His eyes opened, and his left eye began to shine with brilliant light that quickly came to resemble that of a sun.

That light, of course, came from the Forefather Transformation that he had cultivated many years ago. Now that he had reached the Sovereign Realm, it was boundlessly bright. First, it spread out through the starry sky to touch all of the 1,080,000 worlds, where the light then formed into numerous glowing spheres. They were suns!

There were now 1,080,000 suns, all of which were also Bai Xiaochun's left eye!

The presence of the suns completely changed the starry sky, and caused all of the 1,080,000 sets of ruins to tremble physically. And yet, things weren't over yet. Bai Xiaochun's right eye now began to glow, but this time with something much softer… moonlight!

If the 1,080,000 worlds had suns, how could they go without moons? 1,080,000 moons formed, and the combination of the suns and moons gave night and day to the starry sky!

The sun and moon in the Eternal Immortal Domains were illusory constructions provided by the Eternal Mother. As for these suns and moons, they were not illusory; they were real, and they were Bai Xiaochun’s eyes!

“With suns and moons, with night and day, all that is needed now are seeds… the seeds of life….” Bai Xiaochun didn’t move, but the life force within him formed into seeds that began to drift out of him and fly toward the 1,080,000 worlds.

Bai Xiaochun remained in place, cross-legged. He would not rise to his feet again, but instead, would stay there guarding the spot where his home had vanished. However, his ‘eyes’ filled the starry sky. And if he wanted, he could appear anywhere.

Years passed. The suns and moons in the myriad of worlds in the starry sky continued their dance. Eventually, the various ruins began to show signs of life. The seeds that Bai Xiaochun had planted were already beginning to grow.

100,000 years passed.

Blue seas turned into mulberry fields. Suns rose, and moons set. The battle of years past was nothing but ancient history. And no one had been alive to witness it, making it nearly unreal. In fact, no one even knew about Bai Xiaochun. His name was a thing of the past.

The 1,080,000 sets of ruins in the Eternal Spirit World were changing. Rains and winds touched them, and because of Bai Xiaochun’s abundant life force, the crumbled buildings and structures had long since collapsed into dust, and disappeared into nothing.

One day, on one of those former ruined worlds… the first living things appeared!

They were small, so small that they were invisible to the naked eye. They would even be difficult to detect with divine sense.

They were not conscious, and were extremely small and weak. But they were abundant. Apparently, they had come to exist because of the sunlight itself, and before long, they were not just on one world. One by one, living things appeared in all of the 1,080,000 worlds.

They did not have any specific shape, and in fact, were difficult to describe with words. But they were there. Even in the former location of the Eternal Immortal Domains, where Bai Xiaochun sat cross-legged in meditation, those living things came to be.

Because of the birth of these living things, the starry sky changed. It was no longer dead and still. Instead, life force began to build. The suns and moons that were Bai Xiaochun’s eyes took note of them, and watched for tens of thousands of years… as they changed the 1,080,000 sets of ruins.

At this point, they weren’t really ruins anymore. Life had returned to the 1,080,000 worlds, and there was no trace of any wreckage or rubble. In fact, because of the rain that had long since begun to fall, many of the worlds had seas and oceans.

Some of the worlds even had hills, and areas where dust had congealed into mud.

One day, tiny bacteria appeared within the depths of one of those oceans, which began to grow and spread through the water. In different worlds, the living things bore different appearances. For example, there were some worlds with no oceans, with the only water existing in deep mud. It was from that mud that the living beings emerged.

**

When the first living things came to exist, Bai Xiaochun appeared. He looked down into the water, then waved his hand to pull up some of the bacteria. After examining them, he closed his eyes.

“Soon… very soon….” He vanished, and the bacteria he had picked up floated back down into the ocean.

Bacteria continued to thrive in the following years. The oceans changed, the lands changed, and the worlds changed. Soon, all of the 1,080,000 worlds pulsed with life force.

In some worlds, the sky was azure, and the sun and moon shone dazzlingly. The clouds which rolled across the skies of such worlds would entrance anyone who could have seen them.

In some worlds, lightning crashed, and black clouds filled the skies. Although it was an awe-inspiring sight, it was the perfect environment for the living things there!

Some worlds were parched and hot, but at the same time, were perfect places for living things to thrive.

Within the 1,080,000 worlds were all sorts of living creatures, and all sorts of natural laws. Countless Essences came into being, all of which conformed to the magical laws that governed life in general.

Bai Xiaochun watched the worlds, and studied the living beings that were multiplying there. Several tens of thousands of years passed. Eventually, new types of beings came to exist within the various worlds. These beings had no bones, and were soft-bodied. Some had shells, others did not, and they looked strange and bizarre. Some of them were aggressive, while others were completely passive.

There were some who would vanish if they were simply touched….

However, the existence of these new beings brought a splash of color to what had once been a very monotonous starry sky. More years passed, until finally, plants appeared in one of the worlds!

The first plant was tiny, and bore a passing semblance to grass. It was about the size of a human fingernail, and if one could have looked closely at it, they would have seen tiny veins spreading out to fill its interior….

Bai Xiaochun appeared near the plant, knelt down, and looked at it. It was weak, but tenacious, and when he sensed the life flowing through it, he smiled for the first time in a long time.

“Soon…. Very, very soon….”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1307 awe-chapter-1308

Time continued to pass. The presence of plants seemed to mark the beginning of a new age. In different worlds, the plants would be different colors and shapes, and would behave differently due to the different magical laws. But in the end, they were all still plants. Countless varieties of plants.

Plants filled the oceans and the lands, the mountains and the hills. Everything….

Over the course of the following tens of thousands of years, the sun shone down onto the bacteria, soft-bodied creatures, and plants, who were now the rulers of the various worlds that filled the starry sky!

Eventually, fish appeared in the oceans, as well as creatures who could live on the shores of the waters, but could not venture far from it. One day, Bai Xiaochun’s ‘eyes’ out in the starry sky spotted what looked like frogs or toads, and yet, were different from either of those animals.

Eventually, lizard-like animals appeared in the grasslands. The suns that were Bai Xiaochun's eyes glittered in response.

In that moment, all living creatures within the starry sky suddenly heard a voice speaking in their souls.

“Very soon….”

When that voice spoke, all of the plants stretched toward the sky, and all of the animals looked up. Even the fish stopped moving.

Although the strange moment soon passed, all of the living beings had been touched, marked in a way that would stay with them and their descendants forever, even as they went about their lives of eating and hunting for food.

The wheel of time continued to turn for 100,000 years. Or perhaps it was 1,000,000. Maybe longer…. As the animals in the worlds flourished, flying creatures eventually appeared, who soared in the air above the lands they lived in.

The appearance of birds seemed to mark yet another new age.

Then, even newer animals began to appear, animals that were not born from eggs. They were more active and intelligent than anything which had come before, and were truly causing the starry sky to awaken!!

Over the endless years that followed, innumerable types of living creatures appeared in the worlds in the starry sky. They struggled and fought amongst each other for supremacy, with the weaker ones disappearing, and the stronger ones surviving. Bai Xiaochun would occasionally observe, and one day, noticed a monkey-like creature using a rock to fight its enemies. Eventually, such creatures realized that moving about on all fours was not convenient when using rocks in that manner, and thus, took to standing on two legs!

At that point, Bai Xiaochun’s expression shone with unprecedented brightness. He watched as these two-legged creatures began to live in groups, and hunt in organized fashion. Then one day, lighting struck a tree near some of them, and their eyes flickered with fear from the resulting fire.

However, now that they had learned to use simple weapons, they became the ultimate domineering force on that world!

Such groups of advanced living beings appeared in one world after another. In each of these worlds, the dominant groups of creatures came from different origins. Some started out as monkeys, others as birds. Others rose from living stone, and others were creatures of the air itself.

There were all types of beings in the worlds, all of whom sprang forth from the natural laws which governed them!

Bai Xiaochun didn’t just observe passively. Although he didn’t encourage any of them to begin using weapons, he did help them to take fire away from the burning trees which were struck by lightning. He helped the flying creatures learn to use the power of the wind to their advantage. He helped the stone-like creatures understand what it meant to build structures. He was always there to guide them, until they started to develop intelligence.

“What is wisdom and intelligence…?” he thought on one dark night as he stood on a mountain, looking down into a valley at a group of savages crouched around a fire, wearing animal skins and shouting loudly. Although there was clearly nothing civilized about them, the delight in their eyes as they stared into the fire caused Bai Xiaochun to sink into a state of thoughtfulness.

Eventually, he waved his hand toward the fire, which suddenly raged to life, startling the surrounding humans. Trembling, they scattered into the darkness. After a moment passed, one of the savages crept forward, pointing at the fire and crying out in incredulity. In response, other savages crept back and look more closely at the fire, where they realized a shadowy figure was visible.

He wore a long robe, the likes of which they had never seen before. He had long hair, and was very tall. As he stood there in the fire, he looked off into the distance…. He was none other than a projection of Bai Xiaochun.

He was interested in seeing how these savages, these progenitors of humankind, would react to seeing a shadowy form inside of the fire.

The first savage to have noticed him in the fire was also the first to drop to his knees, crawl forward, and then begin to bow in fanatical worship.

Other savages followed, and soon, all of them were bowing zealously. At this point, Bai Xiaochun had gained the information he sought, and the figure in the flames began to fade away. When it vanished, the flames leapt higher, illuminating the sky, and casting terror into the hearts of the wild beasts in the surrounding mountains and valleys.

From that point on, that group of savages would always stare into the fire with respect. And when they went on hunts, they would collect small, valuable items, which they would toss into the fire. The savages would look on with shining eyes as such sacrifices were transformed into ash, and then… they would drop down in worship!

The first of the savages to have seen the image in the fire eventually took the sap of trees and plants and drew a picture on himself to represent fire. He quickly rose to a position of authority within that group of savages, a scene which Bai Xiaochun found to be particularly relevant.

All of a sudden, certain matters clicked in his mind.

“Wisdom and intelligence… begin with imagination!

“Imagination can turn a rock into a weapon!

“Imagination can turn fire into a way to drive away darkness!

“Imagination can make gods to worship, and form them into totems….

“When you take imagination and combine it with action, you have the first sprout of wisdom and intelligence!”

Bai Xiaochun looked at the savages one last time, then closed his eyes. When he opened them again, he was in another world, where he began to guide the imaginations of the countless groups of living beings that now existed.

Time passed. As Bai Xiaochun guided the living beings of the 1,080,000 worlds, their imaginations eventually led them to believe in the existence of heaven and earth. And eventually, Bai Xiaochun came to be a deity to them….

As the hosts of living beings developed, their Life Essence also grew. And because of the marks that were branded on their souls, Bai Xiaochun was always with them.

Different peoples had different deities that they would worship. Some people worshipped the sun. Others called their god the Creator. Others called him the Sky Deity…. Different names existed among different peoples. The Almighty. God the Father. The Stone Ancestor. The Wind Spirit. And many more.

The people in the various worlds continued to grow strong, and as certain groups reached the pinnacle of life, civilization came to be.

Civilization looked different on different worlds. Some places had cities and buildings, which were organized into countries. Others were clan-based. Others were completely unique. Some civilizations took to the skies, and lorded it over the lands. Others ruled *from* the land. Every conceivable type of civilization came to be, and flourished.

However, regardless of what type of living beings they were, or how their civilization advanced, they all reached a point where they wanted to be closer to their god. They wanted mystical power, and even the ability to become gods themselves.

And when that happened, it was time for Bai Xiaochun to yet again appear, to provide the final bit of guidance, and the final beginning.

And thus, the concept of cultivation became a host of seeds that floated out into the starry sky.

A few thousand years later, all of the peoples of all of the worlds had mystical powers…. A new cultivation world had come to be in the Eternal Spirit World.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1308 awe-chapter-1309

After providing the last bit of guidance, Bai Xiaochun didn’t pay any further attention to the living beings in the multitude of worlds in the starry sky. He sat down cross-legged in the place where the Eternal Immortal Domains had disappeared, which, over the years, had gradually become a landmass.

Bai Xiaochun closed his eyes, and as the years passed, and he remained completely motionless; he became a statue.

During the process in which life had sprang up from nothing and eventually reached a flourishing state, Bai Xiaochun never once felt the Essence of the Eternal, or the mysterious energy. After the Eternal Flower fell into the River of Time and Space, the Essence of the Eternal faded so much that… perhaps it had vanished completely.

“After the creation of life,” Bai Xiaochun murmured, “the next step… is enlightenment of Essence.” With that, he sent his divine sense out into the starry sky, and began to seek enlightenment from the natural laws that had risen up along with the countless living beings.

Years ago, his Dao had been that of lighting up the starry sky to become a sovereign. And he had accomplished that. In fact, he had gone beyond bringing light to the starry sky; he had also brought life back to it.

But now, he wasn't concerned about his cultivation base. He needed to understand the Essence of all of the multitude of worlds in the starry sky, and then use that understanding to make the Eternal!

“Wait for me, all of you.... It will be soon, very soon....” As time passed, he became a part of the starry sky itself as he sought the enlightenment he needed.

This time, it wasn’t 10,000 years that passed. Nor was it 1,000,000. It was longer than that.... Eventually, it reached the point of being incalculable. Among the 1,080,000 worlds in the starry sky, Bai Xiaochun was ancient history, whose existence would only be mentioned in the most ancient of records.

As generations came and went, people stopped believing in the old legends about the origin of cultivation. People began to believe that their cultivation came from their own power!

The seeds that Bai Xiaochun had scattered years ago were forgotten by the people of the starry sky. They created new techniques, divine abilities, and schools of magic.... The cultivation world thrived, and wars were fought.

Years and years passed. Countless talented individuals spent their lives studying the practice of cultivation, noting their errors and mistakes, and passing on information to further generations. Eventually, by building on the failures of past generations... a celestial arose, the first within the 1,080,000 worlds.

That celestial obtained the approval of the world in which he lived, and tried to do something completely grand and dramatic, something that no one before him had ever done. He tried to break out from the world in which he lived, to step into the starry sky! Sadly, despite spending his whole life in that attempt, and using up all the resources he had managed to accumulate, he failed.

But eventually, more celestials appeared among the various peoples of the various worlds!

The cultivation world in this starry sky had entered the age of celestials!

All celestials dreamed of leaving the worlds they came from and of stepping out into that starry sky. After all, they were convinced that the only way to become more than a celestial was to seek a path in what was beyond the heavens they knew.

Unfortunately, none of those celestials succeeded. No matter how spectacular they were, when they reached the limits of the heavens, they could do nothing more than take half a step into the starry sky.

More years passed. As more and more celestials appeared, eventually… one of them reached the Archaean Realm.

He was an old man, and when he achieved his breakthrough, the sound of his laughter filled his world. Everyone watched in envy and excitement as he floated up toward the limits of the sky.

“I, Sima Nan, have finally broken through!! This is the legendary… Archaean Realm!!” Laughing heartily, he flew up and stepped out into the starry sky!!

“The starry sky. The starry sky!” As he hovered there, he looked around, both excited and filled with ambition! His goal: to see the whole starry sky with his own eyes, to search it and find out if other worlds existed. In the years to follow, he would indeed appear in one world after another.

The cultivation world had entered the era of the starry sky!!

As the first archaean in the starry sky, he spent more than a thousand years traveling amongst worlds. He visited over ten of them. Considering how powerful his cultivation base was, it was easy for him to conquer them. However, he couldn't take the people of the world away with him, nor could he bring people from his home world there to colonize them. Therefore, he would plunder the worlds he conquered, and then move on.

The excitement of conquering worlds soon faded. However, in the calm that came afterward, he came to be convinced… that he was the ultimate existence within this starry sky. Unless another archaean appeared, he was definitely the most powerful expert there was!

“Being invincible is actually fairly lonesome,” he thought, sighing. He was currently sitting cross-legged on a huge sword made of bone, flying through the starry sky, looking for another world to explore. Suddenly, he turned to look in a different direction.

“Over there…. Is something calling out to me…?” He frowned. This was his first time experiencing anything like this within the starry sky. Confident in the level of his cultivation base, he chuckled coldly, and began to head in the direction of the call.

“Let’s see who or what dared to try to summon me!” Eyes shining with lofty coldness, he proceeded along for an entire sixty-year-cycle. Sometimes he would grow suspicious about the situation, and about how far away this call was coming from.

“Just what exactly is calling to me…?” he thought, frowning. Soon, he realized that something strange was happening. The call was actually coming, not from some distant location, but from within his soul. Something was urging his soul to travel to some specific location. However, Sima Nan still felt confident in his cultivation base, and therefore, continued onward at full speed.

The location he was being called to wasn't actually as far away as he had thought. After another sixty-year-cycle passed, he noticed a land mass some distance away in the starry sky!

"Don't tell me this awful place is another world?" He looked around, chuckling coldly. During the past two sixty-year cycles, the urgings of his soul had come to be quite annoying to him. Sending divine sense out, he confirmed that there was nothing dangerous in the area, and then continued on toward the land mass.

As Sima Nan landed on the continent, it was to his surprise that he didn't find any life at all. And yet, the thirst within his soul actually grew more intense. He was feeling extremely suspicious about the whole thing, but had spent two sixty-year cycles to get to this place, and knew he couldn't just look around briefly, and then leave.

After a moment of thought, his eyes turned cold, and he blurred into motion, following the tugging of his soul deep into the land mass. Eventually, he caught sight of a mountain!

It was actually the only mountain on the entire land mass, and at its peak was… a statue of a person, seated cross-legged in meditation!

The instant Sima Nan saw that statue, he shivered, and his mind began to spin.

"That statue… that statue…." His soul was shivering in much the same way that a child would when catching sight of his father. Unable to control himself, Sima Nan flew over to the statue and dropped down to kowtow to it.

To his utter shock, he recognized this statue. It was very similar to statues he had seen among his own people, and even in the peoples of the other worlds he had visited. And it was connected to a legend that only a few people knew of. As for those who had heard of the legend, they all assumed it was a fairy tale of some sort.

Sima Nan had also believed the same thing. Upon realizing that the gods depicted on numerous worlds, including his own, were all the same, he had felt that something strange was going on, but had eventually dismissed such thoughts. But now, upon seeing this statue, all of those old memories resurfaced.

Based on the fluctuations of his soul, he knew… that the legends were true!

This statue had not been placed here by any group or people. Sima Nan could sense that truth based on his cultivation base and his soul. This statue… was alive! When standing in front of it, Sima Nan’s cultivation base felt completely insignificant. He could tell that, with a single thought, this statue could destroy, not just him, but his entire world. Perhaps even the entire starry sky!!

This statue was the same person who was mentioned in the legends of the worlds Sima Nan had visited. He was the Sun God of ancient times, who was the source of everything that existed!!

“I’ve… seen God….” Sima Nan murmured. Trembling, he prostrated himself in front of the statue, and remained there, unmoving.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1309 awe-chapter-1310

Sima Nan did not leave. After finding the statue of Bai Xiaochun, which he understood to be God, he chose to stay behind and stand guard over it. In fact, he went so far as to officially declare that location hallowed ground within the starry sky.

He soon found that there were mysterious properties to the area that aided his cultivation. Time seemed to flow differently there. These facts prompted Sima Nan to excitedly kowtow in worship to the statue.

As years passed in which he worshipped Bai Xiaochun and stood guard, he became a much calmer and more peaceful person. However, whenever he looked at the statue, his eyes would burn with unmatchable fervor.

And thus, time passed. Eventually, another archaean appeared from within the 1,080,000 worlds, and then a third, and a fourth….

Archaeans began to appear from within all of the peoples that inhabited the starry sky. Although not every archaean would choose to journey through the starry sky, many did.

None of them were able to conquer numerous other worlds like Sima Nan had done back when there were no other archaeans. However, they were very excited to travel the stars and visit new places.

Eventually, a second archaean felt a calling within his soul, and found the same location as Sima Nan. His appearance was dramatically different from Sima Nan’s. He looked almost like an enormous boulder. However, as soon as he saw the statue of Bai Xiaochun, he also trembled, and began to offer worship.

Eventually, a third archaean came, and then a fourth…. Eventually, more than twenty found Bai Xiaochun’s statue. And soon, from that very location, myths regarding the most ancient of times began to spread through the starry sky!

As more and more worlds learned of Bai Xiaochun, increasing numbers of cultivators began to study the ancient records, in which they found descriptions of a history long past. As cultures made contact with each other, and shared knowledge, they were shocked to find that similar myths were present everywhere in the starry sky.

The Sun God, the Moonlight Immortal, the Creator, the Wind Spirit, the Stone Ancestor, the Almighty…. As the peoples of the starry sky came to realize the true name behind all of the titles of their deities, it led to a storm of astonishment.

“God… actually exists!”

“He created our world, and life itself!!”

“It was him! He… founded the cultivation world!!”

The legends and myths were turning out to be reality, causing a massive uproar in the cultivation world. More archaean experts began to make the pilgrimage to the statue of Bai Xiaochun, to bask in its light, and to experience the holy aura of the area. Eventually, it was considered a great honor to be able to travel to that land.

At the same time, Bai Xiaochun earned a new title.

Origin of the Starry Sky.

The wonderment of myth becoming reality did not fade with the passage of years. Eventually, Sima Nan passed away, as did all of the original archaeans who had discovered Bai Xiaochun and stood guard over him. A new generation of archaeans came, following the call within their souls, hoping to draw closer to God. They also chose to stand guard over Bai Xiaochun.

However, not all living beings have the same temperament, personality, and way of thinking. Among the 1,080,000 worlds, there were some powerful experts who did not feel reverence for Bai Xiaochun. Some… wished to usurp him.

“Kill God, and we can become immortal divinities!” That became the new focus and obsession of many. Years later, as the archaeans grew stronger and more powerful… a sovereign finally appeared within the starry sky!!

Sovereigns existed on a completely different and higher level than archaeans, so as soon as one appeared, it shook the very fabric of the starry sky. Furthermore, this sovereign was not interested in peace. And therefore, the people he encountered had two choices: submit to new rulership, or die in the flames of war.

After subjugating the majority of the starry sky, the sovereign’s subjects were as vast as the grains of sand in a sea. And at that point, he made a decision.

He traveled to the very center of the starry sky, to that legendary hallowed land, where he stood in front of the statue of Bai Xiaochun… and challenged him to a fight to the death!!

It was an event that was profoundly shocking to all of the various peoples who inhabited the starry sky. And yet, before anyone could travel to watch the battle be fought… it was over.

The archaean experts who were standing guard in the hallowed land at the time were able to record the battle in jade slips. Those images were later spread among cultivators, all of whom were flabbergasted by what they saw, and were prompted to immediately drop to the ground and offer obeisance in the direction of the hallowed land.

The images in the jade slips showed that sovereign flying like a meteor toward the statue, radiating the power of Essence, causing everything around him to shake violently. As he neared the statue of Bai Xiaochun, the statue didn’t even move. And yet, the sovereign crumbled into pieces, erased out of existence, leaving absolutely nothing behind….

No one knew what level of power could do something like this, and thus, they simply called it… the power of God!

And no one dared to challenge the power of God. More years passed, and the starry sky entered an age of sovereigns. The story of God wiping a sovereign out of existence became a legend, and the will of the numerous worlds in the starry sky gave approval for more cultivators to become sovereigns.

Eventually, a sovereign appeared amongst the other sovereigns… who was supremely powerful, and whose Dao differed from all other sovereigns. He devoured other entities, almost like a black hole, and eventually, he became the second cultivator to challenge God!

He sought to devour God, and thus become a God himself. The guardians of the hallowed land of the statue were shocked, but could do nothing to stop him. They could only watch as the most powerful sovereign of the era strode toward the mountain on which the statue stood, his hands clasped behind his back.

“God… I believe in your existence, but even more so, I believe… that you are a relic of the past. Who cares that you’ve existed down to this day? Instead of sticking around uselessly, why not become a stepping stone for me!?” He slowly strode up to the top of the mountain, which was when he suddenly shivered. Breath sticking in his throat, he tried to take a step back, but before he could, he simply faded out of existence. All of the surrounding guardians were shocked….

Deathly silence resulted. This challenge to God had played out exactly like the legend of the first sovereign who had challenged him…. Then, to the complete astonishment of the guardians, the statue… opened its eyes!

Simultaneously, the multitude of suns that filled the starry sky blazed with unheard-of radiance, and the moons sparkled more dazzlingly than ever!

The living beings that populated the 1,080,000 worlds were shaken to the core as they then heard a warm yet ancient voice speaking to them.

“How careless of me…. With a stir of Will, let tribulation appear.”

In response to the words, everything in the starry sky that contained Essence or magical law… stirred. A new thought seemed to enter all minds, and within the vast starry sky… a new natural law came into being.

It was the natural law of *heavenly tribulation!!*

Henceforth, heavenly tribulation existed, and any who challenged it were essentially challenging Bai Xiaochun!

Bai Xiaochun did not reject challenges, and yet, wanted to seek enlightenment in peace. In conjunction with his words, the guardians who stood watch around his statue vanished, reappearing in the worlds that they came from.

In that instant, all descriptions and recollections regarding Bai Xiaochun that existed within the various ancient records… faded away. From then on, Bai Xiaochun did not exist within the histories of any of the peoples of the starry sky.

The hallowed land of the statue also disappeared, never again to be discovered by any cultivators. From that point on… the peoples of the starry sky developed on their own. People still arose who challenged the heavens, but the legends of Bai Xiaochun, and the myths of the Origin of the Starry Sky, were eventually forgotten.

Time continued to slip by….

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1310 awe-chapter-1311

The disappearance of Bai Xiaochun ushered the peoples of the starry sky into a new age. No one could see him, but he remained where he had always been, in the former location of the Eternal Immortal Domains, his eyes closed as he sought enlightenment of Essence.

Days passed. Years passed....

One day, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, only the second time he had done so since he began to meditate. The first time was when he created heavenly tribulation. This time was because… he had gained enlightenment of everything.

He had witnessed the rise of life. He had created the sun and moon and all living beings. He had observed the darkness and the light of the starry sky. He had been present as living creatures became many, and had sought enlightenment through countless tens upon tens of thousands of years. Now, when he opened his eyes, it was possible to see a boundless calmness and purity deep therein.

He was so pure that he seemed untainted by even a speck of dust. In some ways, his eyes were like a newborn child’s as he looked out at the stars.

“Back when I fought the Mortal Renegade, I asked myself, ‘What is Essence…?’ I had trouble with that question for a long time, but now, I understand. I know what Essence is.

“Essence has no form or shape; it’s almost like it doesn’t even exist, but simultaneously, it creates and contains every form and shape.

“Essence has no beginning or end, but simultaneously, creates and contains the beginning and end of everything.” Although he only murmured the words softly, they caused all of the 1,080,000 worlds to tremble!

“Essence takes up no space, but simultaneously, creates and contains all space.

“Essence exists outside of time, but simultaneously, creates and contains all time.” With these sentences having been uttered, all of the natural laws in the starry sky, as well as all the magical laws, began to resonate!

“Essence is noiseless and lightless, but simultaneously, creates and contains all sound and light.

“Essence does not exist in any one specific place, but simultaneously, creates and contains all places.” As Bai Xiaochun smiled and spoke these fifth and sixth sentences, all the living beings throughout the starry sky became still and quiet!!

In that silence, Bai Xiaochun spoke his final two sentences!

“Essence is infinitely small, but simultaneously, infinitely large.

“Essence is completely unique, and completely boundless!”

Radiant colors suddenly appeared within the silent starry sky. Countless natural and magical laws fused, and then dispersed. The starry sky vanished, leaving behind only… a single point!

It was a singularity of absolutely no length, breadth, or depth!

That singularity existed within the starry sky. It contained all magical laws, all natural laws, and a total of 1,080,000 worlds!

When Bai Xiaochun saw that, he smiled. Waving his finger, he caused the singularity to transform into a line…. It had no breadth or depth, and yet, was infinitely long, with no end.

“I'm missing something, aren’t I?” After a moment of thought, he waved his finger again, and the infinitely long line suddenly became infinitely wide!

Because it was infinitely long and wide, it was actually impossible to tell which direction was which. Such descriptions could only exist in one’s thoughts.

From a distance, it almost looked like an enormous sheet of paper, spread out through the starry sky. Bai Xiaochun looked at it for a moment, smiled again, and then waved his hand, causing it to grow infinitely deep and high!!

Now, it didn’t look like a piece of paper, but rather, an infinitely wide, infinitely long, infinitely tall box!

“Still missing something.” Shaking his head, Bai Xiaochun waved his finger, causing the infinitely long, wide, and tall box to ripple and distort. It seemed to age, blurring, as though the passage of time was transforming it into something illusory, into a vortex, into… space!

It contained everything that made up the starry sky for the past tens of thousands of years, their existences stretched out together. It contained all life forms and all living beings, from the moment they were born until they died, from the moment they existed, until they didn’t exist. And everything in between. By stepping into that space, one could appear at any moment that had ever existed.

Bai Xiaochun looked at this world made of time and space, and quietly said, “This is the same vortex that Holy Extermination opened with those Dao domain treasures of his. This… is how the River of Time and Space appears.”

He extended his right hand, and visible within it was a golden leaf, the very same leaf that he had found in the Blood Stream Sect, along with the little turtle.

Way back then, he had no way to understand what that leaf was. After reaching the Sovereign Realm, and beginning his search for enlightenment, he had occasionally studied it, but had gained little as a result. But now, as he looked down at the leaf, everything became clear.

“Interesting. No wonder I was never able to understand what this leaf was. It is actually made of a vast number of unique leaves, all with different overlapping vein patterns. Because the veins are transparent, they are impossible to see.

“But with my current divine sense, I can see them now, each and every vein.

“As for the information contained therein….” He looked closer, eyes glinting with curiosity, until he finally smiled again.

“Well, what’s this? The cultivation system of the Never-Ending Dao Domain is divided into steps. First step, second step, third step, fourth step…. The fourth step is the last.

Only by practicing cultivation to that level can an almighty being see the truth about this leaf.

“Apparently, the Dao domain treasures that Holy Extermination used contained the full power of the fourth step.” Bai Xiaochun smiled. Although the leaf did not look like anything particularly unique, he could now see that it could actually act as a key… a key that lead to the Never-Ending Dao Domain!

“There is more I can do.” He looked with narrowed eyes at the vortex of space and time that he had created. As he did, his eyes reflected the countless beams of light from the dimensions therein. There were too many to count, each of which contained innumerable living beings, all with their own unique destinies!

However, his mere act of looking at the dimensions caused them to tremble unstably, as though they might collapse at any moment.

With that, he looked away, and everything vanished. The expression of space and time that he had created vanished, and the starry sky went back to normal.

“It’s not that I'm incapable of doing it, but rather… this starry sky can’t sustain such a dramatic transformation. Based on the descriptions from the Never-Ending Dao Domain, doesn’t that imply… that there’s a fifth step which they haven’t encountered yet?

“I should pay a visit to the Never-Ending Dao Domain, and see if their starry sky can sustain such a transformation.” Having made his decision, he ignored the leaf.

“What is the Eternal?” he asked himself. A moment passed, and he shook his head.

“How could there truly be something Eternal? According to the people from the Never-Ending Dao Domain, their fourth step is the Eternal Realm.

“But if there is something uniquely Eternal… perhaps it’s just one’s power of imagination.” He sighed.

“Imagination is the most powerful force there is. Essentially, imagination is Will.

“Take, for example, the first time I saw the moonflower seeds spreading out. I remember being moved, because… I was born from the very thoughts of the original Arch-Ancestor, from his imagination. And all of the Eternal Sons were born from the Eternal Mother in the same way.” He closed his eyes, and could almost see the Eternal Mother letting loose a cloud of dandelion seeds, all of them containing her Will, which she hoped would eventually grow into children, one of whom would bring an end to the great catastrophe….

Those expressions of Will became the three sovereigns, who, in the moment before their death, released their own Will. One fragment of that Will… contained something that Bai Xiaochun recognized as his own aura.

Laughing softly, he rose to his feet. As he did, everything around him vanished, and he took a step forward. A vortex appeared, similar to the one he had created earlier. As it spun and swirled, it opened up to reveal… a boundless river!

The River of Time and Space!

He stepped forward into the river, and disappeared. As he did, he spoke, causing his words to echo out into the starry sky before eventually fading away.

“One Will to create oceans. One Will to summon mulberry fields. One Will to slaughter countless devils. One Will to eradicate innumerable immortals…. Only my Will… is Eternal.”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1311 awe-chapter-1312

The River of Time and Space existed in another dimension. The water that made it up was formed by images of time and space itself, and contained an infinitude of human lives. Within that river, it was possible to see every person who had ever existed, or would exist, from the moment they were born, until they died.

Bai Xiaochun was standing on the bank of the river, waiting for something, expression calm as he looked at the river water.

Before long, the sound of rippling water could be heard, and a boat appeared. As it slid through the water, Bai Xiaochun looked over, his expression the same as ever, his gaze falling upon the boatman.

He wore a wide, conical hat which obscured his face, but as he neared, he looked up, revealing ancient features to Bai Xiaochun. He smiled.

“Please step aboard, Fellow Daoist.”

Bai Xiaochun smiled and nodded. After he stepped onto the boat, the old boatman began to row, and the boat floated down the River of Time and Space.

Time passed, although it was impossible to say how much. The boatman didn’t say anything, and neither did Bai Xiaochun, who simply stood quietly at the prow, looking at the water. He saw the lives of countless people, and within the rippling sound of the water, he could hear countless voices. It was all very pleasant.

“We’ve met before,” Bai Xiaochun said.

The boatman looked over. Smiling, he said, “If stepping through time and space to discuss the Dao for a moment counts as having met, then we have indeed met, Fellow Daoist.”

Bai Xiaochun smiled. The moment he had seen this old man’s face, he knew who he was. He was the owner of the precious treasure that was the hourglass. He was the Master of the Worldly Daoist, as well as the Mortal Daoist, who eventually changed his name to Mortal Renegade. This old man had transformed himself into time itself.

Continuing to row the boat, the old man said, “And why have you come here, Fellow Daoist?”

Continuing to stare at the water, Bai Xiaochun quietly replied, “To pick a flower. The Eternal Flower.”

The boatman laughed. “Well that’s not going to be easy.”

At that point, Bai Xiaochun made a grasping motion, causing an Aphrodisiac Pill to suddenly appear between his fingers.

When the boatman saw that pill, his laughter gurgled to a stop, and his mouth snapped shut. The truth was that although he seemed very calm on the outside, as soon as Bai Xiaochun had appeared, his heart had begun to pound with anxiety.

It was only natural for him to recognize Bai Xiaochun. This was the River of Time and Space, and the old man was an expression of time itself. He knew everything. A mere glance at Bai Xiaochun revealed all the information about the fight with the Mortal Renegade, as well as everything afterward!!

As all of the various details had been revealed to him, he collapsed a bit inwardly, almost unable to believe everything he had seen.

He could sense that Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base had already reached an unfathomable level. In fact, the old boatman had actually never considered that someone could become this powerful.

This old boatman had long since reached the fourth step of cultivation, and yet… not even he would dare to consume an Aphrodisiac Pill created by someone as almighty as Bai Xiaochun.

Perhaps with other pills, he might have taken a chance. But Aphrodisiac Pills… seized good fortune from heaven and earth to become powerful to an indescribable degree!

“I can’t believe you’re threatening me with an Aphrodisiac Pill,” the old man thought. “If you don’t want to listen to what I have to say, fine. There’s no need for *those* things!” He didn’t dare to speak any of those words out loud. Bowing his head, he continued to row the boat through the River of Time and Space. Eventually… they reached a place filled with countless Eternal Flowers!

Each and every one of the flowers contained images touched by time. Some of the images were dark and listless, while some were bright and colorful.

The Eternal Flowers all had five petals, and were dazzlingly colorful. The fragrant aroma they emitted was delightful. As for the pistil of the flower, it featured a glowing sphere of light, within which was a closed eye.

On each of the innumerable Eternal Flowers was a little turtle, who would scurry about, seemingly on the verge of hungrily gobbling up one of the petals.

Among the multitude of Eternal Flowers, there were two that were particularly conspicuous, and immediately jumped out to Bai Xiaochun.

After a moment, the boatman cleared his throat, looked at Bai Xiaochun, and said, “The River of Time and Space is supposed to contain things related to the trajectory of actual lives, just broken up into countless segments. But there is something unique and special about the Eternal Flower, something that is essentially half way into the fifth step. It now contains countless possibilities, and thus, there are countless versions of the Eternal Flower. Each one represents a different destiny. Therefore… which one do you want?”

“All of them!” Bai Xiaochun replied, his eyes fixed on the Eternal Flowers.

The boatman was inclined to glare at him, but then he thought of the level of Bai Xiaochun’s cultivation base, and his Aphrodisiac Pills, and forced himself to remain calm.

“I can't stop you,” he said with a wry smile. “But… what would be the point of that?”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t respond. He knew that such an act would be somewhat meaningless, and therefore, continued to study the Eternal Flowers. Just as the old boatman had said, each of the Eternal Flowers existed at a different point in time. Some were during his Spirit Stream Sect days, others during the Blood Stream Sect days. In some, he was in the Wildlands, and in quite a few, the Heavenspan Realm had collapsed, and he was in the Eternal Immortal Domains.

Each flower represented a different point in time, and a different destiny. And he could pick any of them that he wished.

The boatman didn't try to rush him, mostly because he didn't dare to. He simply looked on. Eventually, he even pulled out a jug of alcohol from somewhere and began to drink.

After some more time passed, Bai Xiaochun's gaze came to be focused on the two flowers he found to be most eye-catching. One of them was on the far left side of the river, the other, on the far right. They couldn't have been more opposite.

After some more thought, he sent some divine sense into the Eternal Flower on the left. Immediately, images sprang up in his mind.

He saw a village at the foot of Mount Hood. The villagers and local elders all stood at the entrance of the village, looking at a young man.

The young man had sparkling eyes and fair skin, and was dressed in a homespun robe. He wasn't very tall, and at first glance, seemed very well-behaved. However, he had a huge collection of axes and cleavers tucked into his garments in various places, which seemed very out-of-place.

As Bai Xiaochun looked at the young man, the vision he was experiencing overlapped with his own memories, and he realized that if he picked this Eternal Flower, he would return to the beginning of everything.

"Dear elders and fellow villagers, I am on my way to learn about immortal cultivation. I shall miss all of you!" The young man wore a slightly pained expression, as if he couldn’t bear to part with his fellow villagers.

A white-haired old man stepped out of the crowd and said, “Xiaochun, ever since your dad and mom left us, oh so long ago, you… you have been, er--” he paused for a moment “--such a good kid!!

“Don’t tell me you’re not interested in living forever? All you have to do is become an immortal, and then you can live forever! That’s a really, really long time! Well, it’s time for you to leave now. Even a baby eagle must learn to fly eventually.

“No matter what situations you run into out there, you have to hang in there and keep moving forward. Once you leave the village, you can't come back, because your path will always lie ahead, not behind!”

As other villagers offered similar exhortations, the village elder patted the young man on the shoulder and gave him a kind smile. Apparently due to all the encouragement, the young man nodded, determination flickering in his eyes. Taking one last look at his fellow villagers, he turned and walked away.

The sight was so moving to the villagers that tears of excitement began to flow down their cheeks.

“Justice from the heavens! The weasel… is finally gone! Who was it that told him they saw an immortal in the area? Whoever it was, I'm going to give you a huge reward on behalf of the village!”

“Today is the beginning of a new era!”

Even as such cries began to rise up, the young man suddenly turned and trotted back into the village. Looking very determined, he cleared his throat and said, “I’ve made up my mind. I’m not going. I'm serious! I don’t want to become an immortal!”

All of the villagers stared at him in shock. A few of them had pulled out drums or gongs, but were now so taken aback that they dropped them onto the ground with a clattering bang....

Bai Xiaochun watched the scene play out, a smile on his face. Eventually, the vision faded away, and he was once again looking at the Eternal Flower on the left.

“The starting point....”

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1312 awe-chapter-1313

The old boatman took a sip of alcohol and then said, “Going back to the beginning would be an excellent choice. Take your memories with you, and re-live your life. Not only would you not have to worry about that possessed rebel of an apprentice of mine, but you could also rectify many of your regrets.

“People always have regrets, mostly decisions made from youth or inexperience. One always has pain and loss, but by re-living life, you could really make things as perfect as they could be.”

“Definitely a good choice, that one.” The old man sighed, his eyes flickering with reminiscence. It seemed that even he, who had become time itself, still had memories that caused him to sigh.

Bai Xiaochun didn't say anything in response. He stood there at the prow of the boat, seemingly lost in thought. Perhaps he was weighing the old boatman’s words, and thinking back to everything that had happened in his life.

Eventually, the boatman finished drinking his jug of alcohol. At that point, Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes. Although he didn’t speak, there was a glint deep in his eyes that no observer would ever be able to detect. Turning his head, he looked at the flower on the right.

As soon as he did, images floated up in his mind, until they occupied the entirety of his sea of consciousness.

This time, he was not observing the scene as if from an outside perspective. It was as if he had actually gone back in time, and not to the beginning of the story. The starry sky was dark, but at the same time, filled with starlight. That light came from the ruined worlds that Bai Xiaochun and the Mortal Renegade had fought over.

This was the very moment in time that Holy Extermination had died. This time, he failed in his attempt to open the River of Time and Space. Before the rumbling vortex could completely form, the Essence of the Eternal, in the form of that mysterious energy, completely erased him out of existence!

The only thing that remained was his voice, filled with infinite regret.

“In the very end, I still failed….”

As he was erased, the three great Dao domain treasures that had created the vortex fell down, and the river faded away. The vortex also disappeared.

Although the Eternal Immortal Domains were cracked and damaged to the point where they were about to fall to pieces, they still existed. Everyone was still alive, including Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, Hou Xiaomei and Gongsun Wan’er. The moment of crisis had passed.

The aura of the Eternal Mother gradually began to spread, and the Eternal Immortal Domains began to recover. As for Bai Xiaochun, he looked just like he had back in those days. He had used so much life force that he was incomparably weak, but he was still smiling as he closed his eyes and began to drop down into the Eternal Immortal Domains.

As he did, a soft light from the Eternal Mother reached out to embrace him, and gently carried him down into Arch-Emperor City.

Even as he lost consciousness, he could hear the voices of his friends, his family, and his children. All of them were cheering.

He also heard the angry cry of the little turtle.

“I hate you, Bai Xiaochun….”

But then the voices faded away… and time began to pass.

Years later, he awoke.

The Eternal Immortal Domains was still the only spot where life existed. However, instead of the black void which had surrounded it in the past, there were now a multitude of stars. They were the ruins that Bai Xiaochun had brought light to, and given enough time, that light and life force would bring new life.

Now that the catastrophe of the Mortal Renegade had passed, life became ordinary again in the Eternal Immortal Domains. The five domains were all repaired, and the Eternal Sea was as majestic as ever. Vegetation and other forms of life flourished on the highest mountains and in the vastest of the plains.

The Saint-Emperor Dynasty still existed. And although the Vile-Emperor Dynasty didn’t have a Vile-Emperor anymore, Bai Xiaochun allowed the empire to survive. The Eternal Immortal Domains continued to have three major powers.

War was a thing of the past. Without the threat of the Mortal Renegade, and the corrosive spirit he brought with him, the

Eternal Mother recovered. Whereas the Saint-Emperor had once been doomed to remain as a half-sovereign, he now had hope for reaching a higher level.

The only person to leave the Eternal Immortal Domains was Song Que. He took the treasured fan to the ruins of the Immortal World, where he waited for them to recover, and for life to return. Once the qi flow of the world was restored, he would have his path to the Sovereign Realm.

Dabao became the new Arch-Emperor. Although the Grand Heavenmaster was very old, he still loved the exercise of power, and therefore, he and the Giant Ghost King both assisted Dabao.

Li Qinghou wasn’t interested in the affairs of the world anymore. He and Patriarch Spirit Stream lived out in the lush mountains, far away from the affairs of the dynasty. Despite that, not a person existed in the Eternal Immortal Domains who would ever dare to refuse a request from them.

The Eternal Mother took note of this, and gave Li Qinghou a blessing of abundant life force.

Big Fatty Zhang, Master God-Diviner and Xu Baocai eventually became celestials, and lived happy lives. Big Fatty Zhang found a Daoist partner, as did Xu Baocai….

There was little need to mention Bruiser. He was soon just as impressive as he had been back in the River-Defying Sect, and sired countless offspring….

Bai Xiaochun’s children all tread their own paths. Xiaoxiao got married, to a rather shy but, at the same time, very earnest cultivator. They lived a very happy life.

Most frustrating of all to Bai Xiaochun was Xiaobao. He had inherited just about every aspect of Bai Xiaochun’s personality, and acted just like he would. In fact, the little turtle seemed to find a kindred spirit in him, and abandoned Bai Xiaochun to spend time with Xiaobao….

“The little turtle has definitely led my son astray….” Bai Xiaochun thought, sighing. Worst of all was that Xiaobao loved to concoct medicine, and had inherited his father’s talents in that regard. He had long since mastered the Aphrodisiac Pill and the Fantasy Pill, and had even improved on them. And he had gone on to create many new pills, much to Bai Xiaochun’s consternation.

In addition to spending time with his Master, Bai Hao had begun to search for his own path to becoming a sovereign. At the same time, he had been tasked with watching over Xiaobao, which involved putting out a lot of fires caused by the disaster-duo of Xiaobao and the little turtle. However… now that everything had settled down, Bai Xiaochun had come to the conclusion that Bai Hao needed to get married and settle down. Unfortunately, Bai Hao wasn’t interested in that, and always used the excuse of having to watch over Xiaobao and the little turtle to push the matter off into the future. After this happened several times, Bai Xiaochun had a very “serious and important” meeting with Xiaobao, who was his true successor, to give him the responsibility of making sure Bai Hao fell in love and got married. Off to the side, the little turtle listened… and his eyes began to sparkle as he realized that he had found a new goal in life.

Peace and serenity reigned. Song Junwan, Hou Xiaomei, Zhou Zimo and Gongsun Wan’er kept Bai Xiaochun very happy. In the end, the cultivation world had become exactly like he had always imagined it could be, free from fighting and killing.

And yet, there was still one last thing he regretted.

On one particular day, Bai Xiaochun was standing in a courtyard on a mountain some distance away from Arch-Emperor City, bathed by the glow of the setting sun. Turning his head, he looked off in a certain direction.

“That should be the place….” he murmured. He took a step forward, and vanished. When he reappeared… he was in one of the distant border regions of the Vile-Emperor Dynasty. There, at the edge of a remote village, was a temple.

It was a small temple, with two maple trees flanking the entrance, their leaves as red as fire. As the leaves slowly dropped from the trees and drifted to the ground, they made a particularly entrancing scene.

It was evening here too, and the fiery red evening cast light onto the tiles and bricks of the temple, making it look like the prayer garment of a monk….

It was very peaceful, and for a long moment, Bai Xiaochun simply stood there in front of the temple with his eyes closed, listening to the sound of scriptures being sung within the temple. The singer was a woman, her voice soft and filled with piety….

As soon as he heard that voice, he thought back to memories of the past.

As he stood there, he seemed to become one with the crimson evening sunlight.

Time slowed as an autumn wind suddenly kicked up, lifting his hair and causing rustling sounds to rise up as the fallen leaves swirled into motion. However, it almost seemed like the leaves and the wind understood that scriptures were being sung in the temple, and did not compete with the woman who was singing them. The scene was perfect.

Later….

Bai Xiaochun opened his eyes, sighed, and walked toward the temple. Reaching out, he placed his hand on the red-lacquered door of the temple, then pushed it open. Inside, he saw a statue of the Eternal Mother, illuminated by an oil lamp.

In front of the statue… was a woman, on her knees, head bowed, singing to the statue.

She wore simple, homespun garments, and had long black hair that flowed down her shoulders. She almost seemed to be part of the temple around her….

Bai Xiaochun stood there quietly, listening to her sing. It was a song about a lifetime devoted to religion, a lifetime spent alone in an ancient temple, with only an oil lamp for company.

A moment passed, and the woman suddenly seemed to realize that she wasn’t alone. But she didn't look over her shoulder. She shivered, and a tear ran down her cheek, landing on the ground in front of the oil lamp, splashing out into the shape… of a flower. A flower filled with emotion and memory.

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1313 awe-chapter-1314

Everything Bai Xiaochun had just seen faded away, becoming an eternal memory.

He opened his eyes, to find himself still standing at the prow of the boat in the River of Time and Space. After a moment, he looked away from the Eternal Flower on the right.

The old boatman took out another jug of alcohol, took a sip, and then looked at Bai Xiaochun.

“That flower really suits you. It’s not going back to the beginning, but neither is it the true ending.”

Bai Xiaochun didn’t say anything, and it was impossible to tell what he was thinking. He looked at the flower on the left, and then the flower on the right, and finally, closed his eyes again.

“Why don’t you take that flower on the right? It seems wonderful to me. Although, both of them are actually acceptable…. Trying to pick between the two seems like a very difficult choice.” The old man sighed. Truthfully, not even he would have an easy time making this choice.

“One of them features a set conclusion. Although it would conform to your desires, everything is already set.

“The other features endless possibilities, and a future brimming with options. Maybe you could make things more perfect. Maybe you could get rid of all your doubts, and make your future exactly the way you want it.”

The old man shook his head. “How will you pick...? Would you like to have a drink while you consider?”

With that, he held out his jug of alcohol.

“There’s no need.” Bai Xiaochun said. Opening his eyes, he looked out at the two flowers. Smiling, he reached out....

The End.

1314. One Life, One Lifetime. A Will Eternal!

(In Chinese, the number 1314 rhymes with the characters that mean “one life, one lifetime” or essentially “one’s whole life.” It's a very sentimental and somewhat romantic number)

Previous Chapter Next Chapter

1314 awe-chapter-1315

Years passed. Ages.

The Eternal Spirit World glittered with bright light, and its 1,080,000 worlds glowed radiantly. Generations of powerful experts came and went. Archaeans. Sovereigns. As the saying goes, *after the rain, the spring bamboo blossoms*. These new experts became like shining stars within the eras in which they lived.

The Eternal Immortal Domains became the brightest star among all the other stars.

Eventually, Bai Xiaochun left the Eternal Immortal Domains, taking his friends and family with him. Afterward, his story became a legend, and then a myth. Even years later, people would still talk about the stories, which to some extent was the ultimate explanation of the history of the Eternal Immortal Domains.

No one knew where Bai Xiaochun went. All they could do was study the most ancient records in the Arch-Emperor Dynasty, where they found only the vaguest of clues. Apparently, whoever left the records behind wanted people to know that Bai Xiaochun, along with his friends and family, had gone to some unknown location, where they would spend their days in complete happiness.

People accepted this version of events, and it soon came to be official history in the Eternal Spirit World.

With every generation that came and went, cultivators would attempt to search for Bai Xiaochun, in the hopes of personally meeting the most powerful person to ever exist.

And yet, none of them ever succeeded.

**

Outside of the Eternal Spirit World was a vast starry sky filled with endless mist that made it difficult to see very far in any direction. And yet, it was now possible to see someone flying through that mist at top speed, an emotional expression on his face.

“I did it! I finally… escaped!!” He looked like a young man, fair and pure, dressed in a white robe. As for the expression on his face, it was one of pure delight, like a caged bird that had just been freed….

“Those women are too much! I'm the honest one! The sincere one! What gives them the right to bully me?!” He sighed. From the gleam in his eyes, it could be seen that although he wasn’t any sort of villain, he was by no means the honest type.

Of course, this young man was none other than Bai Xiaochun.

In the ancient records it said that he took his family and friends to some unknown location to live in happiness. Although that was true, after enough time passed, Bai Xiaochun simply couldn’t take it any longer. That was just his personality. It was exacerbated by the fact that Song Junwan, Zhou Zimo, Hou Xiaomei, Gongsun Wan’er and Du Lingfei were very strict with him. It eventually reached the point where he bristled with anger….

“They won't let any other women even talk to me! They don’t let me go out alone, and they even have the audacity to say that I cause disasters wherever I go! They’re worried that I’ll destroy our home?! I could deal with that, but then they actually forbid me from concocting medicine!

“What kind of a person do they think I am?!

“Can’t talk to other women? Fine. Can’t go out and have fun? Fine! Can’t concoct medicine? Whatever! The final straw is their bickering! Even after years of being married, no matter how much I console them, no matter how reasonable I am, we're always fighting. The last fight lasted a thousand years….” What was most maddening was that when he discussed something important with his Daoist partners, they would all look at him, and wait to see which of them he looked back at.

“I finally made a clean escape…. They’re all busy getting ready for New Year’s, so at least I can get out and stretch my legs.” And thus, he flew along, determined to finally have some fun.

Sighing, he proceeded along, passing through vast stretches of space with each movement. As for his final destination, he had already made his decision. He would go to the home of the little turtle, the Never-Ending Dao Domain.

Upon arriving, and just before entering, his expression flickered as he noticed something floating through the vast mist.

“That’s the aura of the fourth step…. No, wait. That’s the aura of the fifth step!” Blinking, he reached out into the mist, causing a blur of light to fly toward his hand.

It was a bottle. Or more precisely, a message in a bottle.

This bottle had floated for who-knew-how-long through the misty, starry sky, until Bai Xiaochun happened across it.

“How amusing,” he thought, blinking a few times. After looking at the bottle for a moment, he opened it and took out the contents, which consisted of a single strip of paper.

Curious, he opened the paper, and immediately laughed.

“Who wrote this? He wanted to get rich?” However, even as he chuckled, his expression flickered, as streams of karma rose up from the paper, seemingly intent on connecting to Bai Xiaochun.

Eyes widening, he quickly performed an incantation gesture with his left hand to sever the karma.

“What a villain! Who is this guy? His Dao contains karma? And whoever touches this paper will create a promissory note to him? They’ll owe him money through karma?!?!” He looked at the paper for a moment, then snorted coldly.

“He's so obsessed with money he's gone crazy!” Another moment passed, and he waved his hand, causing a new line of text to appear on the other side of the piece of paper.

What’s so good about being rich? Living forever is the most important thing! I want to live forever!

With that, he prepared to throw the bottle back out again. But then he hesitated, pulled the paper back out, and added another line.

Never get more than one Daoist partner!

Feeling very satisfied, he hoped that anyone who found the bottle in the future would listen to his advice, which was essentially the accumulation of all his life experience. Flicking his sleeve, he sent the bottle flying out into the mist, and then headed toward the Never-Ending Dao Domain!

“If I ever meet that crazy bastard, I’ll definitely talk some sense into him! I can’t believe he dared to try to make me owe him money! Maybe I should give him a Fantasy Pill. Or… an Aphrodisiac Pill!”

Previous Chapter